

# Policy Review and Development Panel

Grand Jury Room, Town Hall  
23 September 2009 at 6.00pm

The Policy Review Panel deals with reviewing policies and issues at the request of the Cabinet or Portfolio Holder, or pro-actively identifying issues that may require review; dealing with those issues either directly or by establishing Task and Finish Groups, monitoring progress of these Groups and assessing their final reports.

# Information for Members of the Public

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# Terms of Reference

## Policy Review and Development Panel

- To review strategies and policies at the request of the Cabinet either directly or by establishing Task and Finish Groups, and to make recommendations back to Cabinet for decision.
- To review issues at the request of a Portfolio Holder either directly or by establishing Task and Finish Groups and to make recommendations back to the Portfolio Holder for decision.
- To monitor progress of Task and Finish Groups and assess their final reports prior to their submission to either the Cabinet or the Portfolio Holder.
- To proactively identify issues that may require review and improvement and to seek Cabinet's agreement as to whether and how they should be examined.

**COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL  
POLICY REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL  
23 September 2009 at 6:00pm**

**Members**

Chairman : Councillor Julie Young.  
Deputy Chairman : Councillor Nick Barlow.  
Councillors Nigel Chapman, Mike Hardy, Justin Knight and Jill Tod.

**Substitute Members** : All members of the Council who are not Cabinet members or members of this Panel.

**Agenda - Part A**

(open to the public including the media)

**Members of the public may wish to note that Agenda items 1 to 6 are normally brief and the last Agenda Item is a standard one for which there may be no business to consider.**

**Pages**

**1. Welcome and Announcements**

(a) The Chairman to welcome members of the public and Councillors and to remind all speakers of the requirement for microphones to be used at all times.

(b) At the Chairman's discretion, to announce information on:

- action in the event of an emergency;
- mobile phones switched off or to silent;
- location of toilets;
- introduction of members of the meeting.

**2. Substitutions**

Members may arrange for a substitute councillor to attend a meeting on their behalf, subject to prior notice being given. The attendance of substitute councillors must be recorded.

**3. Urgent Items**

To announce any items not on the agenda which the Chairman has agreed to consider because they are urgent and to give reasons for the urgency.

**4. Declarations of Interest**



The Chairman to invite Councillors to declare individually any personal interests they may have in the items on the agenda.

If the personal interest arises because of a Councillor's membership of or position of control or management on:

- any body to which the Councillor has been appointed or nominated by the Council; or
- another public body

then the interest need only be declared if the Councillor intends to speak on that item.

If a Councillor declares a personal interest they must also consider whether they have a prejudicial interest. If they have a prejudicial interest they must leave the room for that item.

If a Councillor wishes to make representations on an item on which they have a prejudicial interest they may do so if members of the public are allowed to make representations. In such circumstances a Councillor must leave the room immediately once they have finished speaking.

An interest is considered to be prejudicial if a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard it as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Councillor's judgement of the public interest.

Councillors should consult paragraph 7 of the Meetings General Procedure Rules for further guidance.

## **5. Have Your Say!**

(a) The Chairman to invite members of the public to indicate if they wish to speak or present a petition at this meeting – either on an item on the agenda or on a general matter not on this agenda. You should indicate your wish to speak at this point if your name has not been noted by Council staff.

(b) The Chairman to invite contributions from members of the public who wish to Have Your Say! on a general matter not on this agenda.

## **6. Minutes**

**1 - 3**

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 10 August 2009.

## **7. Historic Town Centre Improvements**

**4 - 6**

See report by the Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration

i.	Draft Colchester Town Centre Public Realm Strategy	<b>7 - 72</b>
ii.	Draft Colchester Town Centre Lighting Strategy	<b>73 - 115</b>
<b>8.</b>	<b>Night Time Economy</b>	<b>116 - 136</b>
	See report by the Head of Environmental and Protective Services	
<b>9.</b>	<b>20mph Task and Finish Group</b>	<b>137 - 147</b>
	To note the minutes of the meetings held on 18 February, 26 May and 18 August 2009.	
<b>10.</b>	<b>Waste Prevention and Recycling Options Appraisals Task and Finish Group</b>	<b>148 - 150</b>
	To note the minutes of the meetings held on 17 August and 7 September 2009.	
<b>11.</b>	<b>Work Programme</b>	<b>151 - 155</b>
	See report by the Head of Corporate Management.	
<b>12.</b>	<b>Exclusion of the public</b>	
	In accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and in accordance with The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended) to exclude the public, including the press, from the meeting so that any items containing exempt information (for example confidential personal, financial or legal advice), in Part B of this agenda (printed on yellow paper) can be decided. (Exempt information is defined in Section 100I and Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972).	

# POLICY REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL

## 10 AUGUST 2009

*Present:-* Councillor J. Young (Chairman)  
Councillors Barlow, Chapman, Hardy, Knight and Tod.

### 6. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 15 June 2009 were confirmed as a correct record.

**Councillor J. Young (in respect of her membership of Essex County Council and the Board of Colchester Borough Homes) and Councillor Chapman (in respect of his membership of the Board of Colchester Borough Homes) declared their personal interest in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(3).**

### 7. Colchester Tree Policy

The Panel considered a report by the Head of Life Opportunities inviting the Panel to review the draft Colchester Tree Policy. Bob Penny, Parks and Recreation Manager, and Ian Baalham, Parks and Recreation Officer, attended to assist the Panel.

The draft Tree Policy was currently undergoing a period of public consultation. The period of public consultation had been extended to September 2009. The views of Essex County Council and Colchester Borough Homes were particularly significant and Panel members had raised the need to respond with these organisations. The Panel considered that it should review the draft policy again once comments had been received from these organisations.

In addition, the Panel gave particular consideration to the following issues:-

- Whether the policy had been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment. The policy may have a particular impact on the elderly or those with disabilities, especially those who were housebound or had visual impairments. The Panel asked whether the policy could be more flexible to allow exceptions, depending on the circumstances of the individual?
- The practicality of the policy. Officers stressed that the intention of the policy was to set good arboricultural standards which would set a framework for service delivery and a consistent approach to issues relating to trees.
- The arrangements for the funding of future maintenance work on trees, particularly given the expansion in tree planting in recent years. In the light of current economic climate with low interest rates, the Panel queried whether commuted sums were a practical way of ensuring funding was available in future. Officers clarified that commuted sums were linked to the Retail Price Index rather than to interest rates.
- Policy 08 on Customer Service needed to include references to the service to be provided to Councillors.

**RESOLVED** that:-

(a) The contents of the draft Tree Policy be noted and the issues highlighted above be taken into consideration in future drafts of the policy.

(b) The draft Tree Policy be resubmitted to the Panel once the consultation was complete, so it could take account of the comments received from Essex County Council and Colchester Borough Homes in particular.

## **8. Historic Town Centre Improvements**

The Panel received an update on the Historic Town Centre Improvements from Howard Davies, Town Centre Project Manager. He stressed the achievements made in the Quick Wins programme, further details of which were given in the briefing note in the agenda. The Panel was particularly pleased to note that works on the Essex and Suffolk Fire Office were now underway.

Work on the Implementation Plan would be commencing very shortly. This would look at the whole range of issues impacting on the town centre, rather than concentrating on highways issues which had tended to dominate previous studies. The importance of cross party support for this work was stressed. There would be a period of public consultation in November 2009, although the detailed arrangements for this were yet to be finalised. A further, more detailed update would be provided to the Panel at its meeting on 9 November 2009.

*RESOLVED* that the progress on the Historic Town Centre Improvements be noted.

## **9. Work Programme 2009/10**

The Panel considered a report from the Head of Corporate Management setting out the current situation regarding the Panel's work programme for 2009/10 and including an update on the 20 mph Task and Finish Group together with the notes of the Mayoralty Task and Finish Group meeting on 7 July 2009 and the Waste Prevention and Recycling Options Appraisal Task and Finish Group meetings on 22 June 2009 and 9 July 2009.

### **(a) Mayoralty Task and Finish Group**

Councillor Lewis attended and, with the consent of the Chairman, addressed the Panel. A number of recommendations of the Civic Committee from its final meeting on 7 February 2007 had not been carried forward. The issue of a cellar book had been misunderstood. The proposal had not been for the maintenance of a wine cellar, but for a ledger to record the amount of wine used at each event. This would be a useful audit tool and would help monitor the cost of individual civic events. In respect of the Regalia Book, it was suggested that the Town Hall Guide could be made more comprehensive and extended to include information about the Regalia. Councillor Lewis invited the Panel to consider recommending to Cabinet reconvening the Civic Sub-Committee.

The Panel noted the conclusions of the Mayoralty Task and Finish Group and also Councillor Lewis' comments. The Panel considered that each of the political groups should be given the opportunity to consider the conclusions of the Task and Finish Group and that the Panel should resume consideration of the issue once this had taken place.

### **(b) Waste Prevention and Recycling Options Appraisal Task and Finish Group**

Nick Chilvers addressed the Panel, pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(1). He stressed the importance of the public consultation to be undertaken by the Task and Finish Group. This needed to be properly funded and he sought clarification on the following points:-

- Would views be sought on more than one option?
- Would consultation documents be sent to town and parish councils, residents associations, civic and conservation societies and Friends of the Earth?
- Would views be sought from Colchester Borough Homes and housing associations?
- How would views from local residents be sought? Would the Panel be approving the consultation methods? Would opinions be sought or would the consultation rely on closed questions?
- Would there be public meetings and would the Task and Finish Group be going out into the community to seek views?
- Would the financial costs of the various options be put in the public domain before a recommendation was made to Cabinet.

In response, Councillor J. Young indicated that the Panel understood the importance of the public element of the work of the Task and Finish Group. The consultation needed to be thorough and wide ranging and it would include a public meeting. Councillor Barlow, in his capacity as Chairman of the Task and Finish Group, explained that that he would ensure Mr Chilver's queries were considered by the meeting of the Task and Finish Group on 17 August 2009.

The Panel noted the notes of the meetings of the Task and Finish Group on 22 June and 6 July 2009. The timetable had been amended since the meeting of 6 July, but the work of the Panel continued to progress well.

### **(c) 20 mph Speed Limit**

Pam Donnelly, Executive Director, provided an update on the work of the 20 mph Speed Limit Task and Finish Group. There had been a mixed response to the consultation. Essex County Council had indicated that it did not view the introduction of 20 mph speed limits as a priority for its highways budget. Therefore if the Council wished to pursue this it would need to find other sources of funding. However discussions with the County Council were ongoing and they had indicated they were willing to look at individual schemes.

Essex Police had indicated they would not support a blanket introduction of a 20 mph speed limit as it would not have the resources to enforce this. However it would support a 20 mph speed limit in particularly vulnerable areas, such as around schools.

The Panel noted that monthly meetings had now been scheduled for the Task and Finish Group.

### **(d) Night Time Economy Task and Finish Group**

It was reported that the draft conclusions of the Night Time Economy Task and Finish Group would be reported to the next meeting of the Panel.

*RESOLVED* that:-

- (a) The progress on the Waste Prevention and Recycling Options Appraisal, 20 mph Speed Limit and Night Time Economy Task and Finish Groups be noted;
- (b) The conclusions of the Mayoralty Task and Finish Group be considered by each of the political groups and the Panel resume consideration of conclusions of the Mayoralty Task and Finish Group at its meeting on 9 November 2009.
- (c) Subject to the change above, the contents of the Panel's Work Programme be approved.



## Policy Review and Development Panel

Item  
**7**

23 September 2009

<b>Report of</b>	<b>Head of Strategic Policy &amp; Regeneration</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Howard Davies</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Historic Town Centre Improvements</b>		<b>☎ 507885</b>
<b>Wards affected</b>	Castle		

**This report concerns** – This briefing paper provides an interim update on the Historic Town Centre Improvements Project currently underway and concentrates on preliminary presentations of early drafts of the Public Realm Strategy, together with the supporting Lighting Strategy which are key elements of this town centre project

### 1. Decision(s) Required

- 1.1 To note the progress with the Historic Town Centre Improvements work and comment on two presentations:
  - A draft Public Realm Strategy
  - A draft Lighting Strategy
- 1.2 The Panel are asked to note that this work is at a draft stage and their comments would be a valuable indicator as this work moves forward

### 2 Background

- 2.1 The Panel will remember that a report on the early/quick wins and verbal update was presented to the August Panel. It was also agreed to bring further updates to the Panel in November. It was agreed to return with further updates to the panel on the longer term issues surrounding the Transport study at the November meeting. However we would like to hear comment from the panel on two projects that form a constituent part of the overall work. They are the Public Realm Strategy and Lighting Strategy, both at a draft form currently.
- 2.2 The studies consider the unique heritage of the Town Centre core and promote the creation of a “Colchester identity” within the public spaces of the town. The Lighting Strategy will form part of the Public Realm Strategy
- 2.3 It is important that the key linkages between projects are understood and exploited not only to bring about even greater benefits but also to demonstrate to the public that all areas within the Council are working together with the common aim of making our town centre an even better place to live work and visit. These various projects are being brought together following the collation of the key projects already underway or planned within the town centre and an officer Steering Group has been established consisting of both CBC and ECC officers to monitor progress and ensure a clear link.

- 2.4 The Transport element continues and it is anticipated that a detailed report on progress can be brought back to a future Panel once the consultants become established in their role. This is expected to be available at the November meeting.
- 2.5 This work has been funded through Haven Gateway funding and is an integral part of the transport element of the Town Centre Project, in particular in areas where traffic management solutions may result in increased areas of pedestrian priority.
- 2.6 Research is ongoing but it is anticipated that this work could lead to the future implementation of an Area Action Plan for the Town Centre if it were deemed to be desirable.

### **3. Next Steps**

- 3.1 In respect of the wider town centre project, the Steering Group will meet in the next few weeks to discuss key milestones in terms of promotion and public engagement as it is crucial to all of the work packages that they are promoted as part of a common approach to improving the Town.
- 3.2 In respect of the individual reports brought today to the panel, both are in early draft format and will now be subject to extensive stakeholder consultation before final drafts can be completed. Both strategies will also now play a key role within the transport package and will be used to inform the consultants of the Council's aspirations for future public realm, especially when considering higher levels of pedestrian and cycle priority.

### **3. Alternative Options**

- 3.1 A decision could be made not to move ahead with this project, but this would mean losing funding already secured and the ability to make significant economic, social and transportation improvements to the Town Centre Core and in particular the High Street, would be lost.

### **4. Supporting Information**

- 4.1 Transport for Colchester, adopted by Colchester Borough Council in November 2003, highlighted key priorities for the Historic Core Zone;
  - Make the town centre accessible for all people who live in, work in or visit the town
  - Make the town centre a place where people want to be – a pleasant and safe environment with low traffic volumes and speeds
  - Priority will be given to those on foot, closely followed by bike and bus access. Deliveries and access for residents and disabled will be planned for, but non essential traffic will be discouraged
- 4.2 These themes have been included within the Local development Framework Core Strategy covered by transportation and public realm policies.
- 4.3 A workshop was held jointly by Essex County Council and Colchester Borough Council in May 2008 to discuss the best strategy for the delivery of the Historic Town Centre Improvements Project. It was agreed that an incremental approach should be taken and some key short term outcomes were established: for the period August to end 2008,
  - ❖ The appointment of a project lead and subsequent creation of a project Team and Project Board which would include Council Members from CBC and ECC,
  - ❖ The definition of a vision for the Town Centre Core, i.e. what will define a successful, safe and economically vibrant town centre

- ❖ The Development of a realistic Implementation Plan with some key milestone projects in the short, medium and longer term.
- ❖ The delivery of some of the short term “quick win” projects which would start to make a difference to the High Street in particular

## **5. Strategic Plan References**

- 5.1 Realise Colchester’s potential as a preferred destination for visitors, businesses, location and investment.
- 5.2 One of the key aims to delivering quality services is better co-ordination of our and our partners’ resources to meet business needs.

## **6. Consultation**

- 6.1 Ongoing consultation will take place with business and retail representative groups by Colchester Borough Council. It is expected that extensive public consultation will take place towards the end of November

## **7. Publicity Considerations**

- 7.1 A communication/media plan is being put in place to maximise positive publicity for the projects.

## **8. Financial Implications**

- 8.1 As mentioned above CLG funding (£100,000) has been secured for financial year 2008/9 and needs to be spent within this financial year. In addition, a further amount of £150,000 has been secured from, CLG in 2009/10. We are currently negotiating for further monies from CLG in years 2010/11. The role of the project lead will include sourcing additional funding for specific projects as identified by the Project Team.

## **9. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Implications**

- 9.1 All reports will contain a section on equality, diversity and human rights

## **10. Community Safety Implications**

- 10.1 No implications identified at this stage

## **11. Health and Safety Implications**

- 11.1 No implications identified at this stage

## **12. Risk Management Implications**

- 12.1 All projects will contain a full risk register statement



## Colchester Town Centre Public Realm Strategy

As the pressures and trends of the twenty first century place their demands on how town centres perform Britain's oldest recorded town will be confirming position as a prestigious regional centre. At its heart the town centre will be the focus of growth, retail and culture. This strategy sets the vision for the setting of all the activity in the town centre; the public realm.

The public realm is the space between buildings. It is the materials and furniture of each street, it is the amenity afforded in each public space and its functionality is crucial to people enjoying the town. Our perception of this space greatly informs our experience of the town centre as a whole and in particular a positive pedestrian experience is vital to a successful town centre.

*It is essential that town centres provide a high-quality and safe environment if they are to remain attractive and competitive. Well-designed public spaces and buildings, which are fit for purpose, comfortable, safe, attractive, accessible and durable, are key elements which can improve the health, vitality and economic potential of a town centre. PPS6*

The benefits of a high quality public realm have been the subject of many publications, including those from CABI and English Heritage, to name but two, and there are numerous case studies providing empirical evidence of the aesthetic, social and economic gains from public realm improvements.

As part of providing a high quality public realm we must consider how we make an inclusive and egalitarian place where people are free to enjoy the town centre without the domination of traffic. Although Colchester has a car free core area there are some streets where the large amount of traffic is an impediment to the vitality and function of the town centre.

Colchester is now at a position where significant changes to the town centre are planned and this is the best time to look at the old and new as one and to address the town centre in a holistic manner. The piecemeal manner in which our current public realm has been established and maintained is to be addressed by this strategy. The need for well designed spaces throughout the town is undeniable and the ad hoc and inappropriate paving materials, signage and lighting do little to enhance Britain's oldest recorded town or justify the conservation area status

This strategy will make clear what improvements can be made, providing developers, managers and public bodies, within a single guide, containing the design principles and material guides to implement and maintain a high quality environment.

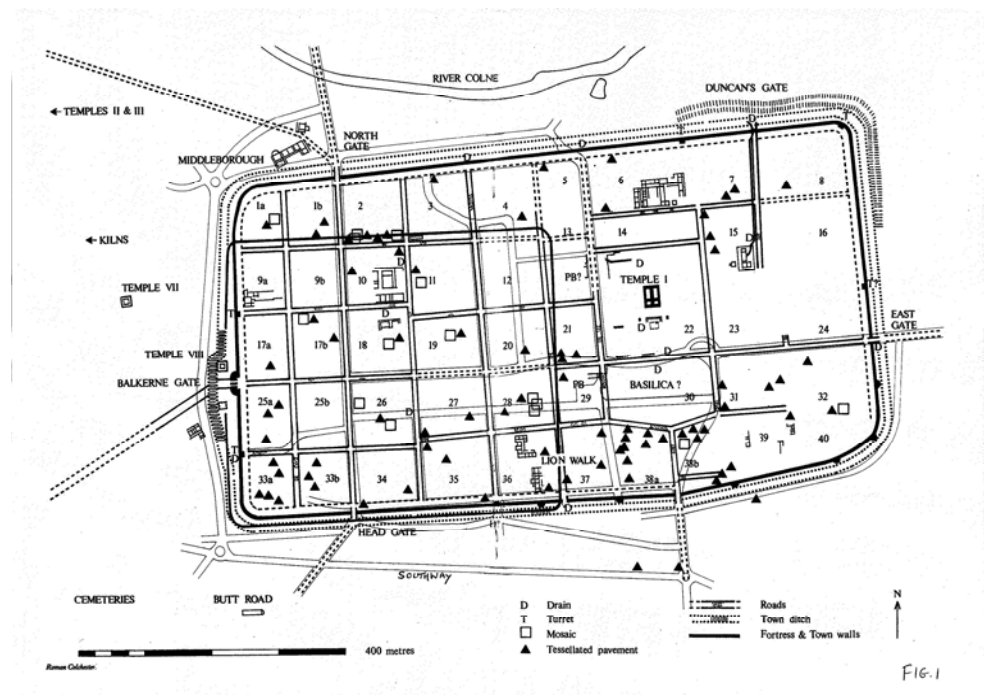
## Colchester Town Centre Context

### History of the Town Centre

Colchester has been the principal town in north Essex for as long as those words have had any meaning. Modern Colchester, seamed with new roads and ringed with housing estates, industrial parks and hypermarkets may seem far removed from its Roman and medieval ancestors, but like them it is shaped by its site and the surrounding countryside.

The history of Colchester begins before the Roman occupation of Britain. At the beginning of the first-century AD the British king Cunobelin (Shakespeare's Cymbeline) ruled over the kingdoms of the south-east from a capital upon the Colne. This capital was called Camulodunum, after the Celtic war god Camulos.

Camulodunum was a natural objective of the Roman army when Britain was invaded in AD43, and the ridge to the south-east of the native capital was chosen as the site of a legionary fortress succeeded by the first colonia of veteran soldiers to be founded in Britain. This colony became a prosperous town and an important pottery and tile making centre. In the later first century it was fortified with walls which, like the monumental west or Balkerne Gate are still standing today, (Fig.1).

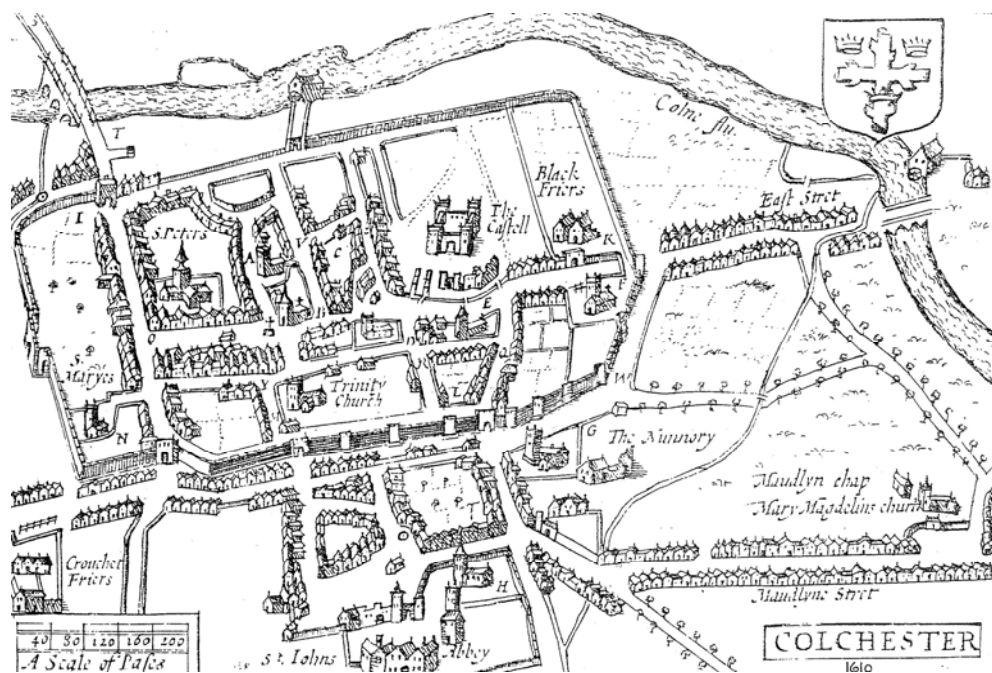


The main streets of the Roman town have become the main streets of modern Colchester, except that the High Street once ran through to the Balkerne Gate in the west wall, whereas today it stops at the line of North Hill and Head Street.

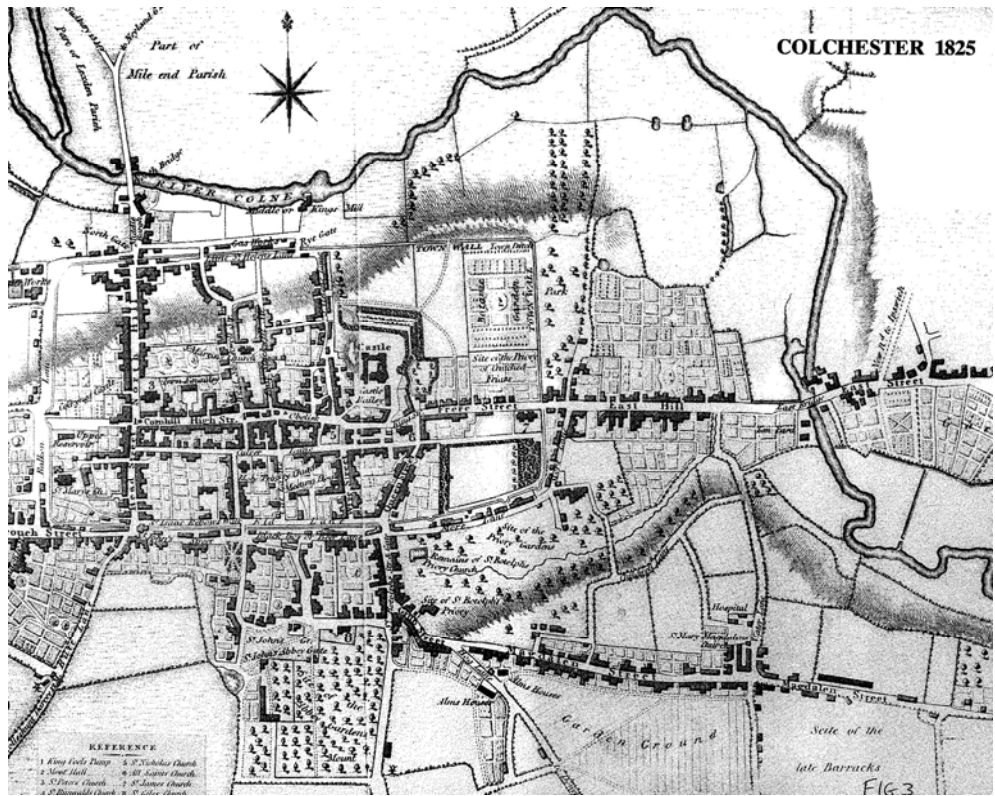
By the time of the Norman Conquest Colchester was a town of some importance, with a mint and a court, and the strongest defences in Essex.

Domesday Book shows Colchester to have been a populous place in 1086 with several churches. Of the churches standing today, Holy Trinity has a Saxon tower and St. Peter's is mentioned by name in Domesday Book. The lost church of St. Runwald's in the High Street (demolished 1878), seems to have been another Saxon foundation.

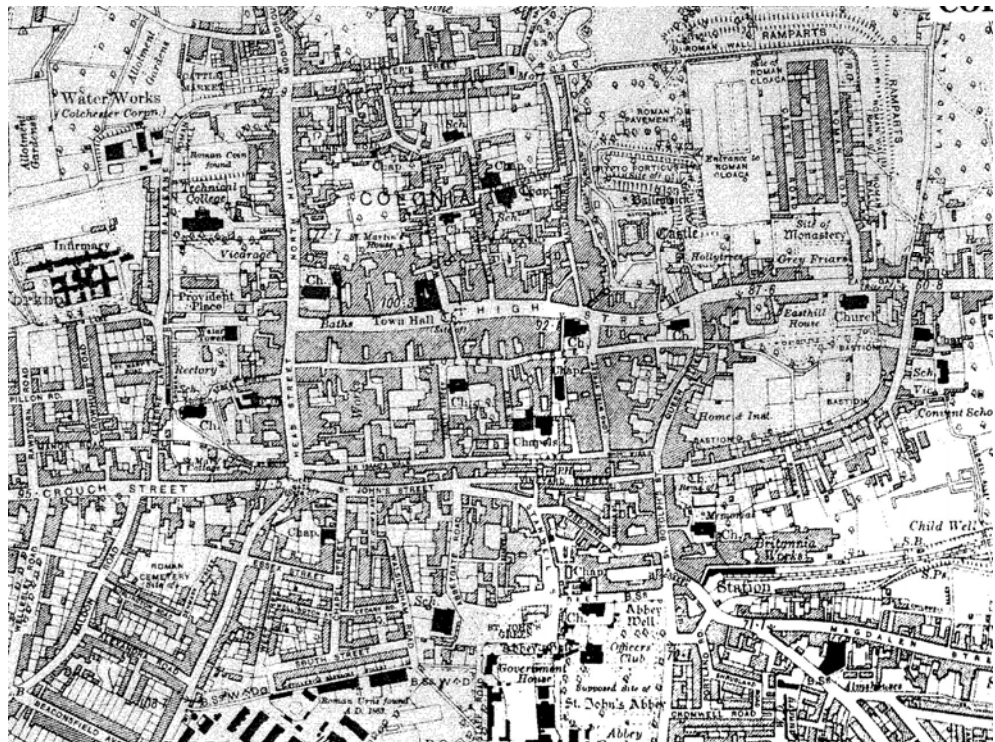
By the end of the eleventh-century a powerful castle had been built with its keep, the largest known of its kind, raised over the base of the Roman temple, all surrounded by a timber and earth rampart with a defensive ditch, around which the High Street has to deviate and bend to the south. What affected Colchester more however was a series of recessions in the cloth trade. Salvation came however with the Protestant refugees who fled from Spanish rule in the Netherlands. Those Flemings or Dutch as they were locally known are still recalled today in that area of the town centre north of the High Street which bears their name, (Fig.2).



The Napoleonic Wars brought a garrison to Colchester, but these buildings were demolished in 1817, (Fig.3). The military did open a permanent military camp in 1856 thirteen years after the arrival of the railway line from London. The railway fed an engineering industry and encouraged the town to expand rapidly. The churchyards within the town were closed and a municipal cemetery opened in 1856, and six years later the cattle market was moved from the High Street to the foot of North Hill (Middleborough), where it remained for over 100 years. The general market remained in the High Street.



At the centre of the town a bus park, now the site of St. John's Walk shopping precinct, was opened in 1923, and the High Street was invaded by chain stores in the early '30's, (Fig.4). The growth of motor traffic began to choke the main streets, and in 1933 a by-pass road was opened on the north side of town, (Avenue of Remembrance/Cowdray Avenue). By 1939 the by-pass had attracted ribbon development with service roads, and extensive demolition for car-parks had begun in the old town.

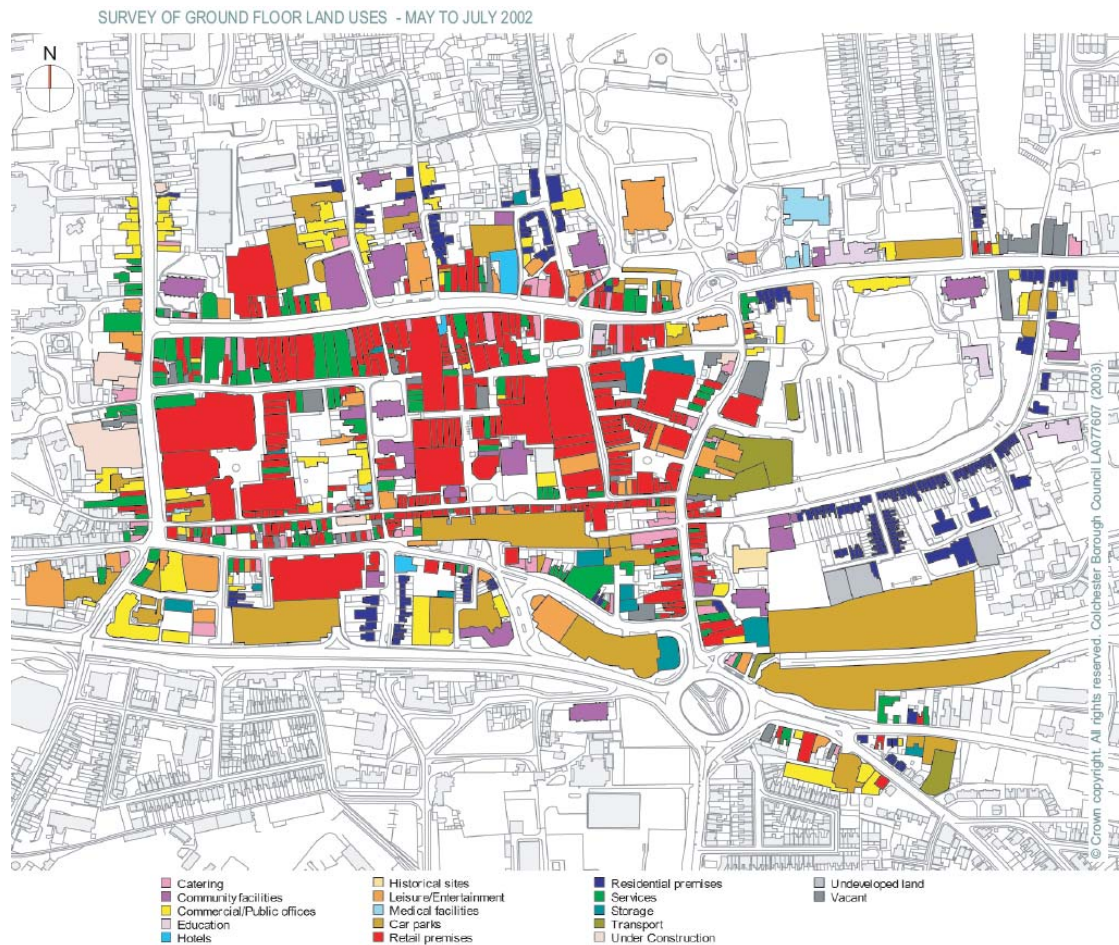




After the war the unfinished public library (Waterstones), in Shewell Road (Culver Precinct) was finally opened to the public in 1947, but it was not until the late 1950's that the town's public face began to change noticeably. There was much new housing, commercial and industrial developments as the rail links to London were improved. Above all motor traffic increased. The most important single change was probably the introduction of a one-way traffic scheme in 1963 that temporarily swept the Saturday market out of the High Street. Five of the central parish churches were closed in 1954 with one, St. Nicholas, being demolished, to be replaced by the Co-operative Store, though the churchyard has been kept as a small garden. The bus park moved to East Hill in the 1960's bringing a heavy flow of traffic into the area enclosed by the town walls.

The 1970's saw the construction of a new dual carriageway motor road around the southern and western edge of the historic town, and the town centre saw a major pedestrian shopping development at Lion Walk, (opened 1976), followed a decade later by a similar scheme off Culver Street opened in 1987 which cut this street in two. Both of these developments inaugurated a new street pattern at the heart of the town centre.

### **The Town Centre Today**



The most recent significant redevelopment of the town centre last took place when the Culver Square and Lion Walk developments were carried out. Whilst these two precincts remain vital to the town other large scale twentieth century interventions have not fared so well. St James House and Roman House in Queen Street together with retail and commercial developments on the other side of the street have long been regarded as inappropriate to the Conservation Area and the town in general.



In 2003 the Borough Council commissioned a masterplan for the eastern side of the town, recognising that a significant area of this part of the town could regenerate to create additional commercial, cultural and residential attractions and uses. The St Botolph's Quarter Masterplan presents an enormous opportunity for this part of the town centre, identifying spaces for a major new shopping centre, magistrate's court and additional new culturally focused area.



The public realm within these new developments will reflect the importance and vitality that these additions will bring to the town but must also illustrate sympathy to the rich architectural wealth of the Town Centre Conservation Area.

Currently it is only the High Street that has been subject to a considered design of public realm suitable for its status and which was implemented in 2000. Elsewhere the streets have a patchwork of materials laid without an overriding principle for consistency or sympathy to the built heritage and street scene and use. The inconsistency of street furniture around the town has similar characteristics to the surface materials. There are limited individual



elements, such as the steel bollard with a heraldry insignia for Colchester that has an appropriate conservation style and is unique to the town centre.

Comparatively Colchester has few public squares and spaces that people can use and enjoy. The Culver Square is seemingly the only successfully attractive urban space in the core area that draws people in to sit, chat and relax but has little evening use or function. Colchester has many underused and uncared for spaces that could potentially add to the choice and wealth of public spaces in the town and that could play an important role in increasing opportunities.



St Nicolas Square and the forecourt of the Baptist Church are both under utilised spaces.

The most negative aspect of the town centre public realm is the amount of vehicular traffic that circulates in and traverses and parks in the centre. Not only is this problem related to the increase of private cars but public transport and taxis have also added to the dominance of vehicles over pedestrians and cyclists.

Colchester has held a market for centuries. Traditionally the market took place in the High Street where the street width and limited traffic provided a prime location and exchange space. Today the market is dispersed, with the majority of stalls located in Culver Street West. In recent times there has been an increase in food stalls and this has provided opportunities for local produce and diversity of traders. However for many the market lacks the traditional ambience of a lively, local cultural event and this must be attributed to the dispersed location and quality of some stalls. More can be done to make the market an important and unique attraction of the town centre.



There is also a farmers market held monthly in St Mary's Church but this important local market has no relationship to the street market.

The night time economy in the town is vibrant and exciting for the people that participate but the activity tends to be concentrated in "time bands" and there is a need to spread the activities over a wider time span to attract a greater variety of users. The wider streets in the centre have seen a rise, in recent years, of restaurants and bars and a defined zone of evening and night time activity can be identified which with careful encouragement and management could add to the vibrancy of the town centre.





## Aims and objectives

### The vision



Colchester is a comparatively small town centre in which many activities take place. In realising the full potential of the town centre it will need to be responsive to the demands of those that use it, prioritising the pedestrian and the shopper during the day then providing an environment for an evening culture that minimises conflict in a safe and enjoyable place.

Colchester has a unique identity, built upon its long standing history and significance as a principal town. It has a rich architectural heritage which should not be lost or diluted through the imposition of fashions or globalisation. The new

developments within the St Botolph's Quarter will enhance the identity of Colchester through considered design making a significant addition to the vitality and choice within the town. The new developments must not be seen as just a collection of buildings; equally important is the public realm to be developed with these buildings. It must be designed to seamlessly link into the existing town centre providing integration between old and new, giving the continuity and legibility essential to a successful town.



A significant new public space will be developed in the quarter that brings new opportunities and qualities to the town centre, providing space for activities and productions in a rich feature filled environment adjacent to the major new cultural attraction of the visual arts facility.

The High Street improvement of the 1990's brought a higher standard of design and materials to Colchester in a scheme supported and funded largely by English Heritage and Essex County Council. Elsewhere the approach has been more utilitarian using basic materials of shapes and colours unrelated to the architectural and historic context in which they are laid.

Throughout the town there is a need to take what is currently an uncoordinated and patchy public realm and create series of beautiful streets and spaces. There are defined character areas or overriding functions within the town and these will be enhanced by introducing a simple but appropriate palette of high quality furniture and materials that gives continuity and legibility, particular to each group of streets or corridor. For example, a single material used throughout the principle shopping core that can be used in different gauges and bonds gives recognition and continuity to the common activity but allows paving design to be sympathetically tailored to the character and scale of individual streets.

Many spaces that the public access within the town centre are underutilised and make little of their potential contribution to the vitality and cultural richness of the town. Many of the spaces are small managed churchyards, some without a functioning church and many in a poor physical state. Other churchyards sit fenced and gated without public access. This common theme between them will be exploited to create a series of tranquil, beautiful spaces across the town, each one providing a variation on their common theme, with an individual design for relaxation, meeting and enjoyment. Interest will be provided by public art inspired by the history and heritage of the location as either individual works of art or as craftsmanship embedded into the surfaces and furniture of the space.



Traffic congestion in Colchester, like most towns, is a growing problem. . Even since the High Street improvements there has been a considerable growth in congestion arising from the increasing use of the private car along



with increased bus congestion and this street often seems overburdened with traffic. This domination extends to other principle routes that cross the town centre. The study area has been chosen to omit the arterial route of Southway but the significant flow of traffic in Head Street and Queen Street largely match the situation of the high street. For the town centre, the excessive traffic has a negative impact, especially during the day when the build up of vehicles in Head Street and the High Street is such an obvious conflict with the activities and enjoyment of other users.



In many of the smaller streets of the shopping core the servicing of retail and general access by vehicle has been controlled and restricted to times when it does not conflict with the economic and social priority of the day. There is an obvious reason behind the restriction; in simple spatial terms the town centre is small and easily walkable for most people, the car is a large and dangerous vehicle. Beyond the simple logic of restricting vehicles in small streets there is now much greater recognition that the car can be made to share space in a more egalitarian way.

The principles of shared space are most pertinent to the town centre, where the exchange and interactions of the primary functions cannot be easily aligned with the through movement of vehicles. Colchester is fortunate to have a shopping core of small streets, largely devoted to the pedestrian but outside this core there remain conflicts with vehicular traffic that, if resolved could add much to the quality, function and potential contribution of the wider streets. A prominent feature of town centre surveys is that many people would like to see fewer cars and their perception of the danger from traffic is reflected in the survey results.



One of the biggest opportunities to improve the town centre will be made by rationalising the movements of vehicles that are passing through. Current guidance within the Manual for Streets (DTR 2008) and best practice from many towns now looks to abandon much of the railings, traffic control and clutter designed to let the car travel unimpeded by the desires of pedestrians. The once considered radical removal of highway safety equipment in Kensington led to the reduction of accidents rather than a predicted increase but it also gave the pedestrian a far less cluttered and overly controlled environment.

Although this can be seen treating the symptoms of traffic domination, rather than actually reducing traffic, it is now considered to be a worthy practice if only for aesthetic benefits. In conjunction with the current strategic revision of town centre through routes it will be possible to create an environment that suites the wider aspirations for the town centre. The opportunities for improved public transport and cycling in the town are greatly increased by the reduction in private car access.

[It is possible to detail some preferred options here and the future of bus stops can be detailed here.](#)

One other such wider ambition for the centre is to increase the space available for pavement cafes. It must be acknowledged that there would not be an opportunity for creating smoking areas outside pubs and bars and this will be controlled through licensing and town centre management. Yet the activities associated with food and coffee, as a pavement activity, can be seen as an increasing cultural phenomenon. The town centre and particularly the High Street, lends itself to café culture by having an east, west orientation of streets. This provides the northern side of a street with a constant sunny exposure and the ideal location for pavement cafes. Whilst this activity will be encouraged we will also consider appropriate locations and what constraints will be required for the safety of the passersby and the control of aesthetics or advertising.

Between the vibrancy of the day time and the transition to the evening economy Colchester suffers a lull, a time when neither activity occurs and the town has an empty feel. Several strategies are developing to address this issue from a managerial perspective, the public realm will also adapt as vitality increases.

As the size of Colchester and its hinterland increases more people come to the town. This growth puts increased pressure on the town centre to function properly especially as the expansion of the town means an increase in footfall and patronage of the town centre. As the pavements and shopping centres become more heavily used the clutter of street furniture becomes a much bigger handicap. Reducing the signage, posts, rail and other furniture on the street will be of great significance when more and more people will be treading the same pavements. It may be that shops can be persuaded to stay open longer, giving people more choice as to when they give their patronage.



This strategy recognises that the pedestrian's perception of the town centre is perhaps the most important one. It is the pedestrian that brings activity, vitality and wealth to the town so it is their experience that really counts. The pedestrian must feel like they have ownership of the streets in the town; their priority should be established wherever there is contact with other forms of movement but most especially in the shopping core. Pavements must be wide enough for the busiest times and free from the clutter of boxes, posts and all unnecessary items of furniture. The pedestrian at night must feel safe from antisocial behaviour in a well lit and well managed environment.



The cleanliness of our streets has an enormous impact on the perception of the town, having the best cleaning and maintenance regimes gives a sense of pride for all stakeholders in the town. It is vital that utility companies have appropriate reinstatement procedures that ensures that the street as always look as good as possible.

For the visitor to the town there must be clear and unambiguous signage so that our many major attractions are easy to find. The cultural facilities that attract many to the town should be accessed in a safe and unchallenging way at any time of the day or night.

The pedestrian at night must feel safe from antisocial behaviour in a well lit and well managed environment. A new lighting strategy will address these two issues but also look at ways of creating stronger ambience where the current lighting is perhaps utilitarian. Architectural features and streetscape character can be significantly enhanced at night by well designed lighting,

enhancing the intrinsic quality of the town centre and bring greater quality to the after dark experience.

Shop fronts are as much part of the public realm as the streets and pavements between them. It could be argued that the shop fronts are the main attractors in any retail street, the term window shopping suggests a preoccupation with the attractions behind the glass but the presentation of the shop itself makes an important statement about what you may find inside. Well designed shops add character to streets and Colchester is fortunate to have some wonderful period designs still intact.



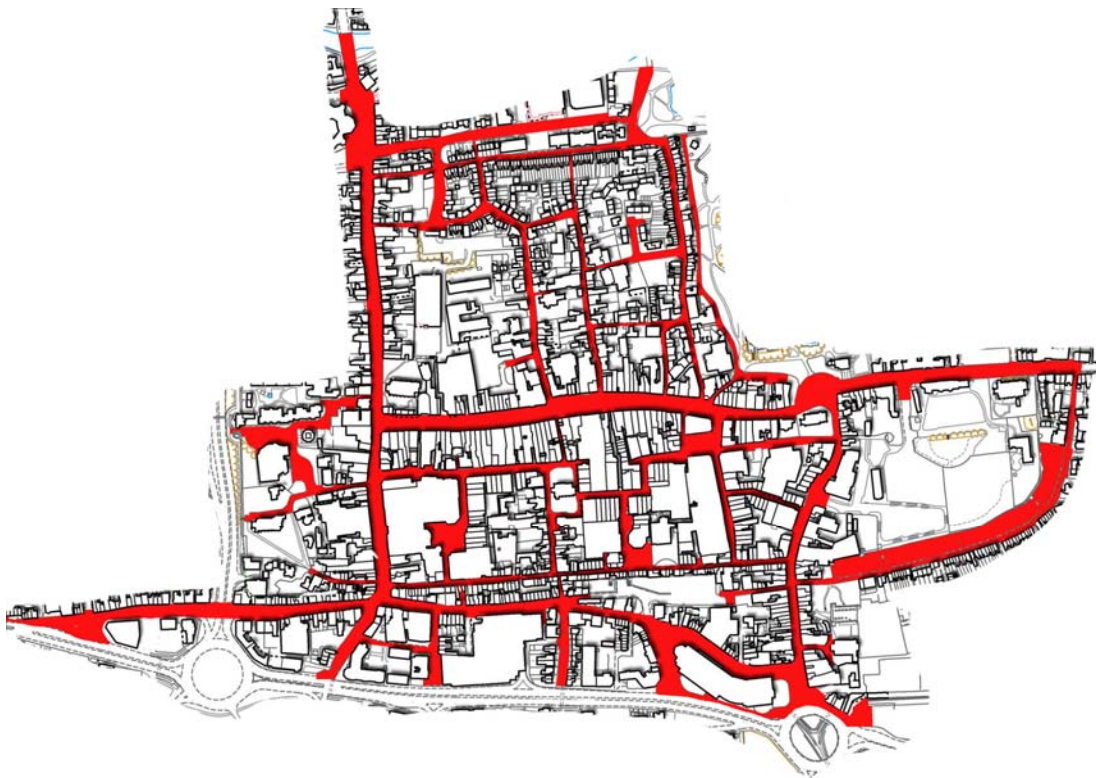
Elsewhere more modern shopping centres have a continuity and style of their own. As part of this strategy the council will form a study of our shop fronts to inform planning officers and their customers of what is appropriate design. A study will identify areas of character and whether individual shop fronts make a positive or negative contribution to the locality's character.

All of the aspirations for a better town centre are trying to enrich people's lives. In this document the approach is to create a public realm that reflects all that is good about Colchester and develop ways to express a pride and interest that draws people to the town centre. No such ambition would be complete without a desire for more art in the built environment.

Public art is art that gives a location a sense of identity, engages people in ideas or feelings about a place, and is located in areas that are accessible to the public. Public art may be permanent or temporary, free standing or an integral part of the design, it may make a bold statement or be an intimate detail. As such, public art can add richness and distinctiveness to many locations within the town centre and can give enjoyment to many of the people that will come here.



# The Study Area



### **The extent of the public realm to be considered in this study.**

The study area has been drawn to include the thresholds into the town. This considers the town centre public realm from the point at which people enter and will provide definition to the extent of the town centre and recognition of the centre from each entrance.

The northern boundary has been drawn at the river Colne. As an obvious and legible landmark this mark has also been selected as the division between this strategy and the strategy developing via the North Station Masterplan. These two documents share common ambitions for the public realm and relate especially to the legibility and quality of the route from railway station to town centre.

The southern boundary of the scheme has been selected to include two major roundabouts on the main arterial route of 'Southway', as gateways these car dominated places are difficult for pedestrians.

The western boundaries are largely defined by North Hill, where many town centre functions occur but the spaces around the St Mary's Art Centre and the Mercury Theatre have been included because these are important generators of movement to the town centre but there are legibility issues with the location.

Further south, the western boundary has extended to include Crouch Street West. This area contains high quality streetscape, perhaps one of the most attractive frontages in the centre and some of the smaller more individual shops that give Colchester it's individuality as a town. The inclusion of this street in the strategy will allow for a suitable public realm to be considered that will be sympathetic to the high quality of the built form.

At the eastern boundary are the fine listed buildings at the top of East Hill. Their quality and emerging new uses form part of the new cultural quarter. This regenerating area of the town centre will have both exciting contemporary architecture as well as the beauty of its listed buildings.

The study area also loops into Priory Street where the setting of the largest expanse of Town wall forms the backdrop to the public car park. The setting for this scheduled ancient monument is being reconsidered as part of Colchester desire to illustrate its prestigious heritage.

At the south east corner of the study area is the St Botolph's rail station and imposing roundabout of the same name. In this location there will be significant changes, generated by an exciting new civic building; the magistrate's court, and the Vineyard Gate shopping complex which will reshape a significant area of the south east corner.

The inclusion of the Dutch Quarter can be justified in a geographic sense; because of its direct relationship to the High Street. This quarter also warrants inclusion because of its special character. The rich architectural



heritage is consistent throughout the area and it also contains some wonderful, but understated archaeological displays.

Between the buildings, the public realm of the Dutch Quarter, however, does not compare to the wonderful townscape. The inclusion in this strategy is therefore to establish a worthy public realm in this neighbourhood that will enhance the area and where possible allow for the sensitive, interpretation of its long and intricate history.

Illustrations of positive and negative aspects of each area will be included as small thumbnails to accompany this text.

## **Principles of Design and management**

There are three ambitions that this strategy seeks to achieve within the public realm of the town centre. They are too ambiguous and generic to be implemented by themselves but they do capture the essence of good stewardship and design for the public realm.

**Identity** - enhancing and reinforcing the distinctive character and identity of Colchester and to establish its position as a prestigious regional centre.

**Amenity** – providing a safe, attractive and accessible town centre that is well cared for.

**Coherence** – a set of design principles for all the streets within the town centre to provide a continuous high quality environment

To bring more understanding and detail to the three aspirations there are a series of principles that identify priorities for the public realm. These principles form the basis of this strategy.

### **Principles**

#### **Quarters and character**

The town centre is a multifunctional place with areas of differing character. The Dutch Quarter, for example, is an intrinsic part of the centre yet distinctly different from the other parts in both appearance and use. The public realm should be laid out to emphasize the individuality of each area and designed to enhance the character and historic interest of the town centre.

#### **Public spaces**

Spaces are distinct from pavements and movement corridors, they provide the opportunity to stop and rest, to meet and talk. Public spaces add value to the town when they provide well designed opportunities to relax or for activities away from the busy shopping pavements. Interest can be generated through the quality of the landscaping, art and information or interpretation of heritage as well as commercial opportunities for dining out or coffee shops. These spaces are an important reflection of the level of investment in the town centre and the provision for its citizens to enjoy the town centre. Designing spaces to be inclusive is important; often spaces are occupied by young people which can have an exclusive result for others. Spaces should be available for all people and by having a choice of spaces to inhabit reduces the perception of exclusive occupation

**Illustrate this with global examples**

#### **Rejuvenating spaces**

In the town centre there are many underused spaces, some are of very poor quality. There are ten spaces managed by CBC in the town centre. Many are gated church yards, with restricted hours of opening. But all have the potential to make a better contribution to amenity in the town centre. The council will work with landowners and stakeholders to make the most of the spaces in the town.

### **Lively new spaces**

Within the St Botolph's regeneration area there will be two significant new public spaces for the town. Designed to the highest standards of public amenity, these spaces will serve as locations for events and productions as well as accommodating high quality public realm works that could include water features, specialist lighting and public art.

### **Places to eat and drink**

On sunny days especially, having lunch or coffee outdoors is an enjoyable experience that more and more people aspire to. Having a break from shopping or meeting friends over a coffee or lunch can be an intrinsic part of a visit to town making the experience more social and relaxing. Where and how street cafes are located does need control, encouraging these places must not lead to simply creating more smoking areas where they would be inappropriate.

The criteria in which regulations and zones for cafes is explained appears in the design section of this document

### **A cycling town centre**

Encouraging more people to cycle is desirable for many reasons. Visiting the town centre on a bicycle can be made easier by providing more parking in locations that have good surveillance and will not contribute to street clutter.

Currently the one way system of the town centre obstructs strategic east to west and south to north routes for cycling. In conjunction with changes to vehicular priorities the local authorities will further the cycle access across town and provide non-conflicting and free flowing strategic routes for those cycling through the town.

### **Walking town centre**

Providing the people with the best experience will necessitate giving the pedestrian more priority over vehicular traffic. By adopting a strategy for sharing space in the town centre people will have more freedom to enjoy their activities without the domination of the car. Tourists can also be given more freedom to explore the whole experience of Colchester if they are not dominated by traffic and congestion.

A rationalisation of the town's signage and street furniture will add to the quality of the environment by reducing pavement clutter and freeing up space for movement.

### **A less congested historic core**

The local authorities will work together towards a less congested town centre. Reducing traffic dominance will make people friendly streets; increasing the enjoyment of the town and making Colchester feel a safer place.

### **Public Transport**

[This principle is to follow](#)

### **Public Art**

The Councils Creative Spaces Strategy sets out the vision for Colchester's approach to artistic intervention in the public realm and defines the key objectives for public art, they are;

- To preserve, interpret and increase access to Colchester's heritage – old and new.
- To influence and champion high quality and ambitious design in our built environment.
- To create opportunities for local people to influence their environment to engender a distinct sense of place and community ownership.

For the town centre public art is a vital part of the vision. Key opportunities and locations for public art will be identified in the public Realm strategy and the council will adopt a flexible approach to securing public in these and other locations within the town centre. The Council will seek a contribution to a communal pot on all developments in the town centre as a percentage for art or a 106 contribution. Where possible other funding opportunities will always be considered.

### **The cleanest and greenest**

Colchester will initiate the most appropriate and best value cleaning regimes and complement this by developing the most sustainable methods of maintenance within the town centre. Street wardens will have a more visible presence and role in a well maintained and safe town centre. The issues of global warming and environmental protection will always be given adequate consideration when making decisions about the town centre.

### **Shop front strategy**

Greater emphasis will be placed on securing shop front designs and alterations that are sympathetic to the locality and enhance the building and street scene to which they relate. Guidance for the detailing of shop fronts will

be provided by the council, made available to all those wishing to alter or improve shops within the town.

### **Integrating new developments into the town**

The new developments in the St Botolph's quarter will integrate with the existing town centre. New streets and pavements will knit seamlessly into the streets and materials of the old town. New public spaces will add new and exciting places to the existing network of spaces across the town.

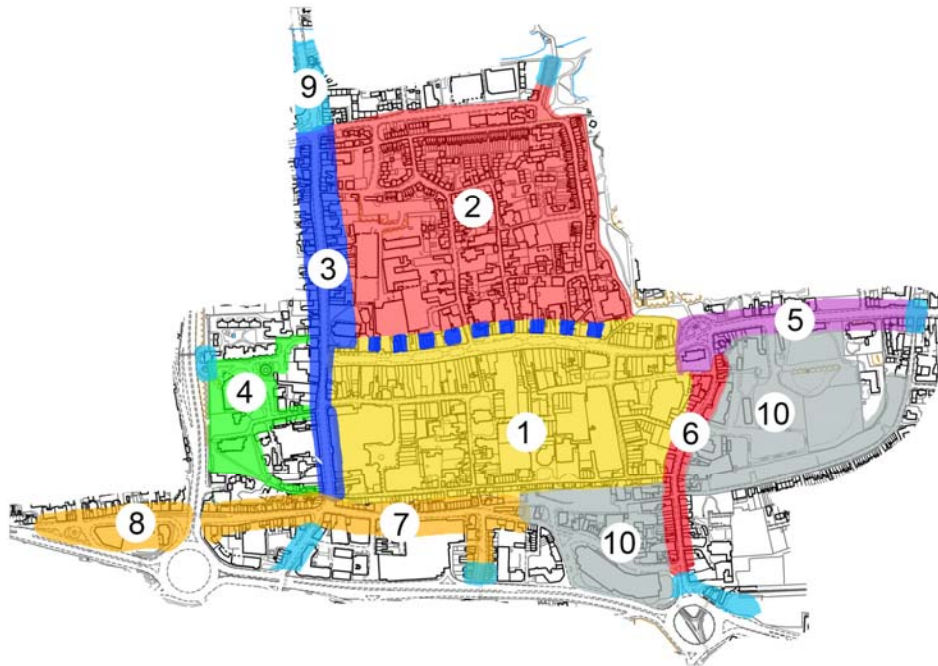
A new space will be delivered in St Botolph's Quarter that will be suitable for events and organised activities. As a large new public space for the town the design will provide a multifunctional area that will be an exciting and stimulating space for all ages but be flexible so that exhibitions and events can happen in a managed and secure manner.

## Design Principles and Character areas

This section will detail the principles of design for each character area. There is an analysis of the area and its function as part of the town with a critique of its public realm that identifies strengths and weaknesses. The design proposals respond to the strengths by enhancing character and function.

The character areas have been designated as;

- 1 Shopping core
- 2 Dutch Quarter
- 3 Head Street/North Hill
- 4 Balkerne Gardens
- 5 East Hill
- 6 Queen's Street/St Botolph's Street
- 7 St Johns Street/Crouch Street East
- 8 Crouch Street West
- 9 Thresholds
- 10 Regeneration Areas



Also included is a strategy for the underused spaces in the centre. As these have a common theme they are dealt with in a single section to show how to achieve a series of spaces that are connected by their context but individual in their design.

The St Botolph's Quarter regeneration is creating exciting new attractions for the town. To ensure that the new developments achieve continuity with the existing town centre, a section on what the new public realm should achieve is included in this strategy.

### **Character Areas**

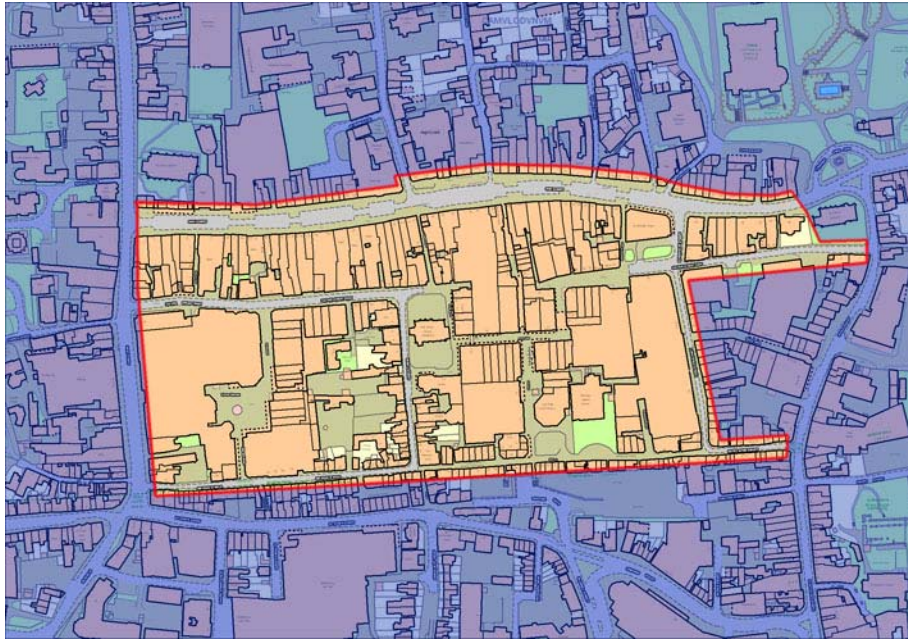
A key principle of the public realm strategy is to define distinct areas or either function or character within the town centre and build upon the identity, aesthetic or function. Some of the areas identified have been given a boundary for definition within this study but in reality the boundaries of function are vague. In some cases a single street or route is defined because of how it functions or because of its aesthetic qualities.

The public realm for each area should be designed to emphasise and enhance the identity of the location but also to respond to the impacts that its function places upon the public realm. For some areas or streets the degree of intervention suggested is much more than others, this is where the current realm is seen as having a negative impact on the whole town centre and the opportunity for a better contribution has much to do with the quality of the public realm.

The character and function can also be enhanced through lighting, especially in areas where the evening economy is active or by a particular surface material where important routes require strong legibility.

The rejuvenation of the public spaces within the town centre require a series of linked designs that reflect the historic ties between them and yet give each space a special, unique identity.

### **The Shopping Core**



### Current character

The shopping core comprises of the very heart of the town, in both a functional and geographic manner. The high street at the north of the area was upgraded to a York stone surface in the early 1990's. The street has the largest scale of all the streets in the town centre and the refurbishment made a significant contextual improvement by creating a high quality public realm sympathetic to the fine built form of the High Street. Traditionally the primary shopping focus for the town, the high street has over the past few decades been relegated from this distinction as shopping precincts have been built and evolved as the primary attractors for retail. The grandness of the High Street remains with fine examples of built form from several centuries but it functions now in a dual role of predominately retail on the southern side of the street to a more diverse mix of uses on the north side.

Cafés and bars have colonised the pavement and there is also a robust evening and night time function to the north side of the street from bars, pubs and a large night club, all of these give rise to the dominant function in the evenings and at night when many young people enjoy the night life found around the periphery of the shopping core. This dual role is pertinent to most of the streets outside the core, whereas in the shopping core itself there are fewer establishments catering for the night time economy.

The high street is heavily used by vehicles; both private cars and public transport are highly dominant. The single town centre taxi rank with its central High Street location often appears inadequate for the number of taxis waiting for business yet, parking two abreast; the taxis have a strong visual impact.

Cyclist are well catered for in the High Street with good parking facilities in well observed places but the single traffic direction is disadvantageous to cyclists wishing to travel east to west.



Core zone improvements. Once the Historic Town Centre Improvements are agreed a more detailed section will be added here.

Bus operation will be.

Parking in the high street is also very dominant.

South of the High Street the principle shopping core is a series of smaller scale streets in which vehicular access has been restricted to avoid conflicts with the primary function. Running parallel to the high street is Culver Street West. The architecture is a mix of late 20<sup>th</sup> century retail and the back of the southern side High Street buildings. To the south of this, running parallel are St Isaac's Walk and Eld Lane both of which support the similar street materials to Culver Street but these streets are of a much smaller scale and contain many small individual retail units.

Long Wyre Street runs north south and has a more recent character than the other streets of the core; although it does have some good architecture it lacks the finesse and ambience of others. Trinity Street has some of the town's oldest domestic buildings and a fine church with delightful Saxon elements. Sheregate Steps is a delightful surviving gateway to the core and the narrow intra-mural streets of Eld Lane and St Isaac's walk. The south side of these streets are medieval constructions over the Roman wall.

The public realm of these streets is a mix of budget conscious refurbishment and, in certain places, very patchy lengths of uncoordinated pavement materials. There is little by the way of street furniture which is a positive, especially on the narrower pavements but the functionality of high kerbs and narrow pavements is not good. Street lighting throughout the core is utilitarian at best with only the Town Hall given architectural illumination.

Also within the shopping core are three private centres. Culver Square, Lion Walk and Priory Walk. All three make important contributions and connections within the core, linking the public streets and in the case of Culver Square providing the town with its most vibrant and active public square. Each of the private arcades remains open to the public at night and therefore has all the functions and perception of true public realm.

## Vision

The shopping core requires continuity and quality of material to justify its use, primacy and legibility. In the varying scale of streets, a quality stone surface should be established in differing gauges and bonds that complement the character of the built form and scale but a single, high quality, material is used to provide identity and continuity to the core. The High street will become more pedestrian orientated with traffic, highway furniture and parking rationalised to provide a better quality experience for all. Access for through traffic will be restricted enabling greater freedom for pedestrians during the day. Public transport will continue to use the High Street with a reconsidered arrangement of bus stops and information.

The council will work with the owners of land within the core to ensure that this strategy can deliver consistent enhancements across all places publically available to the people of Colchester. Street cafés bring vitality to the public realm and will be encouraged in appropriate zones and licensing introduced to control the safe and appropriate use of public space.

The characteristics to be achieved

High street

A greater pedestrian priority will be established with the restriction of the private car during shop opening times.

Removal of street clutter by rationalising highway and other signage in conjunction with changes to traffic movements. Street furniture to be of a single colour and design and to a suitable conservation area standard.

Retention of pavement definitions for heritage justifications but redesigns should achieve ease of movement across carriageway by adopting shared surface principles and associated vehicle speed restrictions.

Public transport facilities to be rationalised to provide less dominant shelters (remove advertising) both visually and physically within street café zones.

Distribute taxi rank in other streets to provide less dominant yet more reachable facilities for people.

Rationalise traffic impacts of both parked and through going vehicles.

Traffic decisions affect the high street so much this section can be much better completed when we know more about traffic changes. Cycling improvements to be included here.

Encourage and licence pavement cafes in appropriate zones.

Establish a high quality lighting scheme for architectural landmarks and ambience that has a positive effect on the night time economy.

Other streets

A simple and functional public realm is to be created that enables the free movement of pedestrians, the use of single surfaces or minimal upstands on kerbs will be acceptable to all users because of the existing traffic restrictions. Components to be utilised

The High Street surfacing requires relaying to the appropriate BS EN 1341: 2001. Highway furniture needs audit and rationalising.

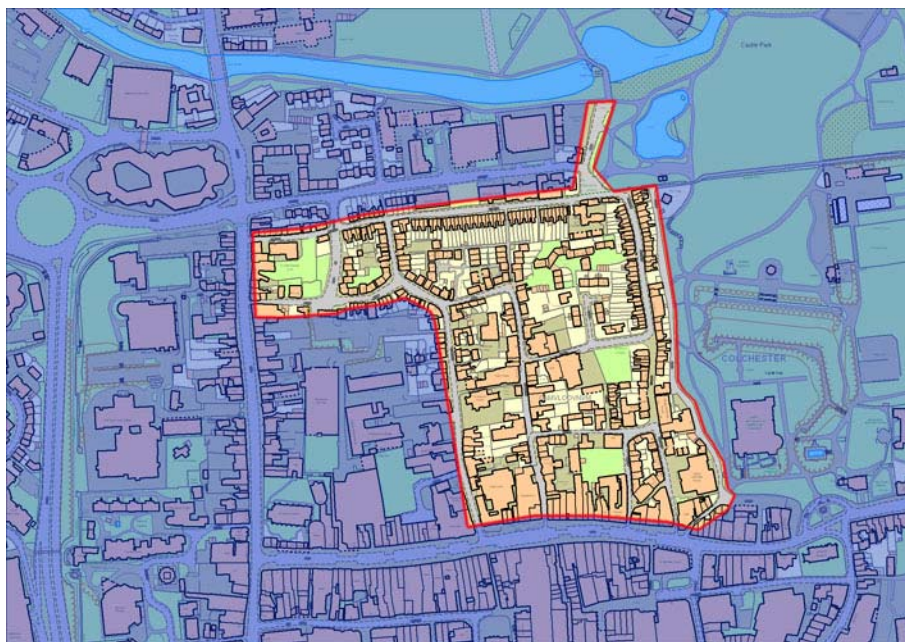
In other streets within the core a stone finish as in the High Street should be used in grades and bonds that respond to scale and character of individual streets.

illustrate the bonds and styles that will be appropriate.

Develop lighting that defines night time zones and makes a distinction for where revellers zone ends.

Provide a single, simple and robust range of furniture for the core zone and all streets that will provide continuity and ease of maintenance.

## Dutch Quarter



The historic Dutch quarter was first settled by Dutch refugees in around 1570. Later settlers came in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and added much to the prosperity of the town through their trade and skills in fabrics and their raw materials. The quarter has a significant numbers of fine buildings with the main character established by 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century residential timber framed buildings. Residential buildings dominate the streets apart from the 20<sup>th</sup> century interventions of the BT tower and Nuns Road car park. There have been some sensitive 20<sup>th</sup> century interventions where highly sympathetic housing has been introduced to match the historic character of narrow streets and courts.

The public realm is a patchwork of unsympathetic materials laid without a plan or contextual references. The one way system and parking restrictions have led to a signage and yellow line arrangement that has a very negative impact on the character of this place.

- Vision for the public realm

The Dutch Quarter needs a considered and coordinated approach to the public realm, one that is highly sympathetic to the fine character. The area does not have the attractors and footfall of the shopping core and does not justify an expensive carriageway transformation; it does however warrant a continuous and good quality paving material and a well chosen single surface for all the carriageways.

It is necessary to establish a simple and subtle method of delineating on street parking and parking restrictions with a stone or conservation set as opposed to yellow and white lines. Signage should be minimalistic and fixed upon buildings where possible, rationalising the arrangement of all street furniture will reduce much of the clutter adversely affecting the area.

The area has a good proportion of natural stone kerb and this should be retained. It may be that matching stone gullies are concealed under the contemporary carriageway surfaces and when resurfacing takes place these should be uncovered, cleaned and replaced. Where historic patterns of materials exist these features should remain and enhanced where possible.

- The characteristics to be achieved.

A simple continuous treatment for the carriageway and a separate continuous material for all paved areas. Abandon the visual complications of islands and contrast areas of paving.

Preserve and enhance elements of historic paving where existing.

A minimum of street furniture and signage.

Retain and enhance historic materials where possible.

- The components to be utilised.

High quality, natural aggregate rolled finish to all carriageway surfaces. Small gauged, robust paving material; can be cement based product.

Parking bays and areas identified with stone or conservation sets.

20 mph and restricted parking zone to be established that negates the need for yellow lines.

Natural granite kerbs to match existing.

'Colchester badged' bollard and single lamp column design only.

### **Head Street/North Hill**





Both Head street and North Hill have a large percentage of listed buildings that enclose a wide street. The procession of fine buildings up North Hill provides a quality aesthetic to the street which has St Peters church as a dominant landmark at the top of the hill.

Head Street has a mixed use of shops and eating/drinking establishments as well as the only cinema of the town. North Hill has a mix of uses with a prevalence of restaurants over secondary retail and office uses. Both streets therefore have an evening function and together with the High Street provide the mainstay of the evening and night time economy.

Bus stops crowd parts of Head street where other substantial pedestrian movements compete for space. This pedestrian congestion is undesirable on such a wide street and could be resolved through a combination of pavement widening, carriageway narrowing with a rationalisation of parking on the opposite side of the street. The advertising on bus stops is a far from satisfactory intrusion on the visual amenity of the street and any rationalisation of stops and public transport must seek to remove these visual handicaps.

- [Vision for the public realm](#)

[These streets will have a continuous pavement treatment. Materials need not be the same as the High Street but should retain large scale rectangular flag style where overriding is not an issue. Street clutter will be reduced to a minimum and clear pedestrian desire lines will be given priority over the positioning of all furniture.](#)

[Taxi provision should be provided in Head Street for the night time economy. This is to provide a variety of ranks for taxis at night, which are better related to demand than a single central rank. Bus stops should also be reconsidered](#)

where spatial conflicts occur on pavements. **Core zone improvements. Once the Historic Town Centre Improvements are agreed a more detailed section will be added here.**

Lighting can play a role in legibility of the route from the north through the illumination of landmark buildings at the top of North Hill. The ambience for the night time economy can be enhanced through lighting these streets in appropriate ways. Defining the night time realm can give users a sense of place and also define its extent so when moving into a different lighting scenario the change enforces the end of the zone both physically and socially.

The characteristics to be achieved.

An uncluttered and minimalistic approach to street furniture. Single surface material for all pavements with lesser side junctions bridged by pavement to establish greater pedestrian priority.

Some seating on the hill to be provided for anyone struggling to walk up.

Lighting design for the illumination of landmarks buildings and ambience for night time economy.

- The components to be utilised.

A robust and large scale flag paving material to be used continuously. Where side junctions are bridged by pavement an overridable material of the same colour will be used.

The same furniture as for the High Street to be utilised throughout.

Advert free bus stops to be installed where changes to physical layout are established.

Lighting for legibility and night time zoning.

Speed and parking zone to be established with corresponding reduction of highway signage and furniture.

## **Balkerne Gardens**



This part of the town plays host to a mix of cultural and residential uses. It has a well established landscape value from the many mature trees and green spaces. The Arts Centre in St Mary's church and the Mercury Theatre are significant attractions within the town centre and together with the Victorian water tower, known as Jumbo' create a unique place of striking architecture in a series of spaces. There are also fine houses enclosing the arcadian spaces which are connected to the town via three very narrow streets; Church Street, Church Walk and Balkerne Passage. Entering via these lanes is visually rewarded by the discovery of the drama of the architecture and the greenness of the space.

This space is bound to the west by the Roman wall and Balkerne Gate, an original feature and entrance to the town. This gateway continues to function as such providing a spectacular threshold to the town for pedestrians who cross the bridge from the residential area of St Mary's.

The area suffers from the domination of disabled and indiscriminate parking on pavements and undefined spaces. Some private rear parking areas are un gated and add a further negative impact. The pedestrian route through from Balkerne Gate provides a great expectation but is heavily compromised by arriving to a wide carriageway with heavy yellow lines that are often parked on. The pavement is narrow and immediately runs off at right angles to the desire line. When entering from Head Street the narrow lanes have a distinct character but the pavements are so narrow in places that the pedestrian feels disadvantaged and compromised when vehicles pass.

- [Vision for the public realm](#)

[The significance of this part of the town is that it more often functions in the evening as a cultural quarter making lighting and ambience improvements important characteristics to achieve. This will not only enhance the characteristics and buildings of the area but also provide a stronger](#)

perception of safety for the patrons of the higher culture venues. There is much green space that can be further utilised for recreational space including St Mary's church yard and incidental spaces which should be reconsidered for their contribution to the daytime use of this area.

Creating a shared space thoroughfare combined with open access to the adjoining green spaces would allow for events and organised activities as well as providing opportunities for people to sit and enjoy a quiet haven from the bustle of the streets.

The access arrangements and thoroughfare can be much more sympathetic to the activities and ambience of the area and pedestrianising with limited vehicle access will only add character and quality significantly.

- The characteristics to be achieved.

Enhancement of the 'green' landscape as a functional addition to the town's open space, for daytime opportunities.

Add park furniture of individual design and reconsider the design of incidental spaces to allow people to utilise the setting as public space.

Create a shared space surface for pedestrians and vehicles in which the pedestrians have greater freedom and priority of movement. Manage servicing times to enhance the pedestrian priority and public space function. Provide stronger definition of private areas, especially parking courts, with gates and enclosures.

The lanes should be given an historical surface treatment similar to that surviving in Balkerne Passage.

- The components to be utilised.

Materials and furniture will be unique to this area and therefore distinct from the materials used in the central streets. Shared space surfacing should be robust for service vehicles yet sympathetic to the desired character.

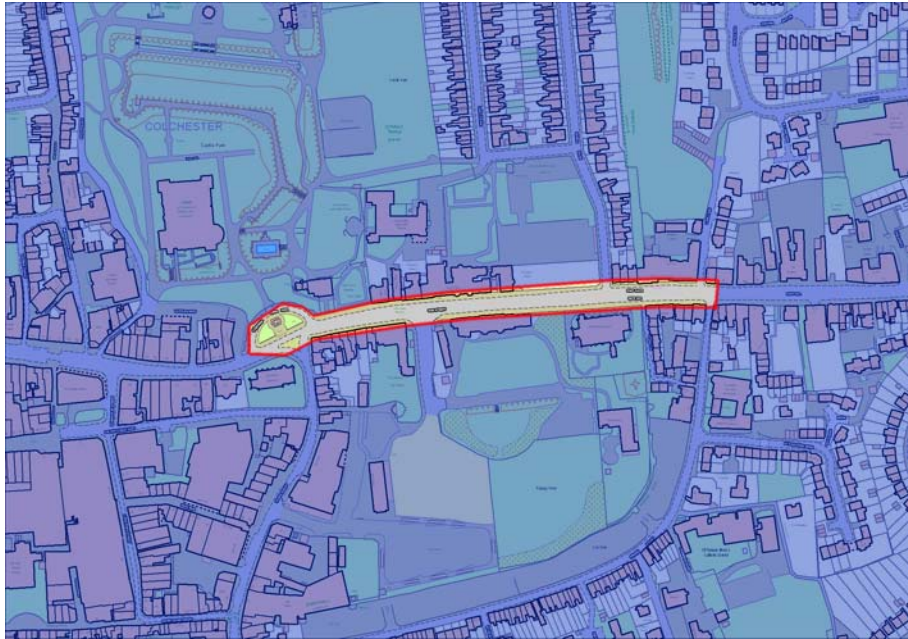
Around the Roman gate a sympathetic floor material should be considered to enhance the setting of the monument and express the threshold of the town centre.

Lighting should exploit landmark buildings and look to enhance the green space. The perception of a safe and high quality environment must prevail.

This area can be further enhanced as a cultural quarter and a recreational area through public art embedded into the location as functional elements of furniture and as individual sculptural pieces.

### **East Hill and east end High Street**





This continuation of the High Street into East Hill has a grand appearance created by fine two and three storey listed buildings which include the former college of Greyfriars and East Hill House. On the edge of the centre and without the central retail and evening uses it has contained office and educational uses until their closure in the last two years. There are now plans to introduce new uses into the major buildings on the street and these will add further diversity and vitality to his end of the town centre.

The street has well proportioned pavements and only one area of significant clutter at the castle junction where a combination of lighting columns, highway and way finder signage together with heavy duty CCTV column detract from the function and aesthetic of the pedestrian island on which they sit and also impact negatively on views in all directions.

- Vision for the public realm

Extending the stone surfacing from the main part of the High Street through this place will add a more sympathetic and appropriate material to the street scene. The complementary uses and activities to be introduced here can function on a street but the way in which road surfacing and crossings are established can ensure that a stronger sense of place is established. There will be a strong desire line across the carriageway to the new visual art facility and East Hill House. Increasing pedestrian priority at the Queen Street junction will make a significant enhancement making the quarter better connected to the central area. **Core zone improvements. Once the Historic Town Centre Improvements are agreed a more detailed section will be added here.**

- The characteristics to be achieved.

An appropriate setting for the listed buildings is to be established with suitably calmed traffic and strong pedestrian priority where desire lines cross the carriageway. Remodelling should seek to create a stronger sense of place.

The castle junction should be de-cluttered to improve the general setting and aesthetic.

Architectural lighting can be considered for the better quality buildings of this street.

- The components to be utilised.

The furniture and materials of the High Street should continue through this part of the street.

Lighting should enhance the buildings in their settings and could also be designed to designate the distinction between the cultural activities here and the activities that take place in the centre.

A threshold may be created at the war memorial or park gates to give this entrance to the town the same artistic value as the other designated thresholds.

### **Queen's Street/St Botolph's Street**



#### **The current character**

These streets have some fine buildings but also have some very unsympathetic buildings; consequently the overall visual character is poor. There is a variety of uses including some long established shops and night time venues. There are many fast food outlets which although also well

established add to the poor perception of the street, especially in the evenings and night time.

As a major pedestrian desire line into the town from the south there are elements of the evening uses that give a negative perception. At times the amount of traffic using this through route down the hill also adds to the poor perception. More problematic is the dominance of traffic and pedestrian control furniture. Although the carriage way has been visually narrowed by white lining the pavements remain narrow in places. Elsewhere the introduction of kerbside barriers has added to the traffic domination and confinement of pedestrians. Private cars often use the vacant highway edge between the carriage way lines for drop off and illicit parking which adds to the many functional and aesthetic problems of the street.

- Vision for the public realm

Much of this street will be remodelled as part of the St Botolph's regeneration program and the public realm will be enhanced in response to the uses and functions that emerge. The character and function of this street will change dramatically and a streetscape upgrade will be an integral part of the regeneration.

**Core zone improvements. Once the Historic Town Centre Improvements are agreed a more detailed section will be added here.**

It will be important to provide good access and movement for cyclists and pedestrians using the street as both an exchange space and a thoroughfare. Bus stops will also be required for this end of the town and opportunities to establish better facilities adjacent to new developments should be considered.

- The characteristics to be achieved.

A strong pedestrian priority will be established with easy and unrestricted crossing of the carriageway on all significant desire lines. This will be facilitated by parking and speed restrictions.

A clutter free street scene will be established with minimal highway furniture. Legibility and desire lines to new attractors will be established by surface design and lighting for the nighttime.

Where it is acceptable with regard to utilities and archaeology, tree planting will be included in the new developments giving this quarter added identity. Where space permits large planters can be used for trees if constraints do not allow ground planting.

- The components to be utilised.

**Core zone improvements. Once the Historic Town Centre Improvements are agreed a more detailed section will be added here.**



## St Johns Street/Crouch Street East



These two streets have a secondary role with regard to shopping although they have many individual shops that add to the uniqueness of Colchester. They are both dominated by traffic or parking with pavements that are often narrow and feel cramped at busy times or by parked cars in the case of Crouch Street. Currently the streets are in decline with retail units and cafes failing. An improved and more spacious pedestrian environment would be of benefit to the market attractiveness of these streets.

St Johns Street has a major town car park which provides pedestrian access to the core but the arrival from the car park is poor where the street furniture and noise from the air system of the car park is too dominant. This location also provides a large and well used multi route bus stop under the integral shelter of the St Johns shopping complex. This combined with the pedestrian access for the car park creates significant footfall in a relatively confined area. The pedestrian movement and desire lines are further constrained by railings which give a negative aesthetic.

- Vision for the public realm

The impacts of Vineyard Gate will change the use of these streets with regard to both traffic movements and pedestrian desire lines. Extensive pedestrianisation may be possible and a logical enhancement. The movement and stops for buses could also have opportunities for improvement and relocation once the Vineyard Gate scheme has been developed.

**Core zone improvements. Once the Historic Town Centre Improvements are agreed a more detailed section will be added here.**

In the short term an enhancement of these streets must deliver wider pavements where necessary to improve the accessibility and appearance.

This street design gives an overbearing priority to motorised vehicles and this should be addressed through speed restrictions and redesign to enable crossings of the carriageway at desire lines and the removal of railings and barriers.

- The characteristics to be achieved.

Pavements in these streets should be made wider to facilitate pedestrians and exchange activities.

Declutter highway furniture and reposition way finder signage where significant townscape is compromised by current poor positioning.

Establish single surface treatment for pavements in St Johns and Crouch Street.

Remodel crossings and space at the foot of Sheregate Steps and Head Street junction.

Carry pedestrian priority and surfacing over secondary junctions to increase pedestrian priority and functionality for daytime users.

Improve the ambience of St Johns Street by quietening the air system on the car park.



Pedestrian priority designed over minor junctions greatly increases the freedom for pedestrians.

- The components to be utilised.

These streets will have a continuous pavement treatment. Materials need not be the same as the High Street but should retain large scale rectangular flag style where overriding is not an issue. Street clutter will be reduced to a minimum and clear pedestrian desire lines will be given priority over the positioning of all furniture.

The simple set of street furniture should be used that is specified for the core and North Hill.

### **Crouch Street West**



This part of Crouch Street is almost isolated from the centre by the arterial road Balkerne Hill. Crossings are provided either via an unpopular underpass or at a surface crossing with a central island. Restrictive furniture makes this pedestrian route less than ideal.

Crouch Street has a charming and elegant street scene on the north side where the shops other uses are well patronised. The quality of buildings justifies the areas inclusion in the Lexden Conservation Area. The time limited parking on the north side adds to the local centre appearance although the much younger south side redevelopments provide a larger scale of architecture associated with the centre. The street has a good vitality from the mix of uses that create attractors into the evening.

The current parking arrangement appears cramped and provides little opportunity for pedestrians to cross the street. Although the pavements are generally of good width, street furniture and A boards add to the cramped appearance, this can be exacerbated by long vehicles overhanging the pavement of the north side from the angled parking bays.

At the western end of the street is a small landscaped space for sitting and bicycle parking. This is a popular space in good weather but the furniture and generally quality is utilitarian.

- [Vision for the public realm](#)

The parking arrangement is to be reconsidered to provide more opportunities to cross street and ease of entry into cars. Although this may result in a reduction in parking pedestrian improvements at the Balkerne Hill crossing will better connect this street to the centre. Signage and street furniture should be reduced where possible to create better visual amenity and assist the free movement of people.

Although recently upgraded the square paving and pavers have a less than sympathetic relationship to the many fine buildings and shop fronts. A more traditional rectangular flag should be considered. The west end of the highway should also be reconsidered to create a shared surface, allowing pedestrians more space and priority where there are only service vehicles and access allowed.

There is a significant amount of illegitimate parking that takes place on the opposite side of the carriageway to the legitimate parking spaces and this should be addressed as part of the street management.

The space at the west end should be redesigned to provide better facilities and soft landscape. This space is an ideal opportunity for embedding public art into the streetscape thus providing a far better place for the people that use it and the overall experience of the town.

- The characteristics to be achieved.

Redesign parking to provide crossing.

Declutter pedestrian realm and control A boards.

Redesign park and turning head at west end to provide enhanced pedestrian experience.

Soften the street scene with the introduction of new street trees at new crossing points on the north side.

- The components to be utilised.

A pavement surface of robust quality and traditional appearance, suitable and sympathetic to the conservation area.

The street furniture chosen for the town centre should be used in this street.

The space at the west end should be designed with high quality materials to an individual specification , public art can be embedded into the space

## **Public Spaces**





Colchester has relatively few public spaces or squares. The only central functioning public square is the Culver Centre but around the town are many spaces with the potential to make a similar contribution to the social and functional aspects of the town centre. Spaces are important for many reasons, they provide opportunities for people to meet and step out of the hustle and bustle on the street. To have more than one space for such activities gives people choice and adds the vitality of the town. There are other spaces in the town that are not suitable for public access. This is mainly because they lack natural surveillance and could therefore encourage antisocial behaviour. These spaces could, however, be utilised as additional opportunities to enhance the biodiversity and green links within the town centre.

#### Spaces suitable for public access

Two significant spaces are the church yard to Lion Walk URC church and the adjacent forecourt of Eld Lane Baptist church. These underutilised spaces have the potential to hold events and organised activities but at the current time suffer from poor design and underuse. *Illustrate*

The Trinity Church Yard was unenclosed for many years but was subject to antisocial behaviour from a neighbouring public house, now a shop. The church yard would provide a quite, tranquil space if reopened either permanently or for a limited period during the day. *Illustrate*

St Nicholas Church Yard is now barely recognisable, since the church was pulled down all that remains are two walled patches of ground containing horizontal graves stones and two Yew trees. Much of the land around this



space is dedicated to highway and yet the potential for this area to function as a square is great.

The Priory is a schedule Ancient Monument and has open, grassed space to the east and south with a graveyard to the north. In the St Botolph's Masterplan this important space will have the Heritage Trail passing through it. The space lacks natural surveillance and has been subject to antisocial behaviour. Better management and new developments will provide a better environment here and allow more people the opportunity to enjoy this valuable site.

To realise the potential for more open spaces landowners of the spaces will need to work with the borough council to rejuvenate the spaces. Some like St Nicolas have great potential to become vital spaces for people.

### Spaces for limited access and biodiversity

There are several other church and grave yards, including several in the Dutch Quarter, that are closed or have limited access. Generally they all lack adequate natural surveillance therefore utilising them as public open space may not be desirable but they will make valuable contributions to the town's biodiversity and green link network with considered planting and design.

### Vision for the public realm

Spaces that will have public access should be designed for relaxing and provide a place of different qualities than the busy surrounding streets. Large spaces must also be able to hold events such as a market or exhibition. Public spaces should have a different set of materials from the streets and contain furniture that is of individual design and bespoke where possible. The integration of public art is important and the inclusion can be made by embedding artist work in the materials and furniture or with individual pieces of sculpture, lighting or other decorative measures.

Cafes and street performers will be encouraged where appropriate to add to the diversity of attraction.

- The characteristics to be achieved.

The Yew tree has a long established relationship with burial spaces and church yards. Where possible the existing trees should be utilised as a feature of each space and its heritage. This will provide a common theme between the spaces, particularly those that have lost the appearance of their original use.

A clear aspect should be maintained for the user to deter anti-social behaviour, e.g. the crowns of trees raised, the shrub layer minimised and hard cut back and herb layer well maintained. Seating within intact grave yards

should for the most part be avoided as it potentially attracts anti-social behaviour, seating should rather be set outside the space but focus on it (these particularly focused on any main access points/vistas through the site), this approach helping with passive surveillance of the site.

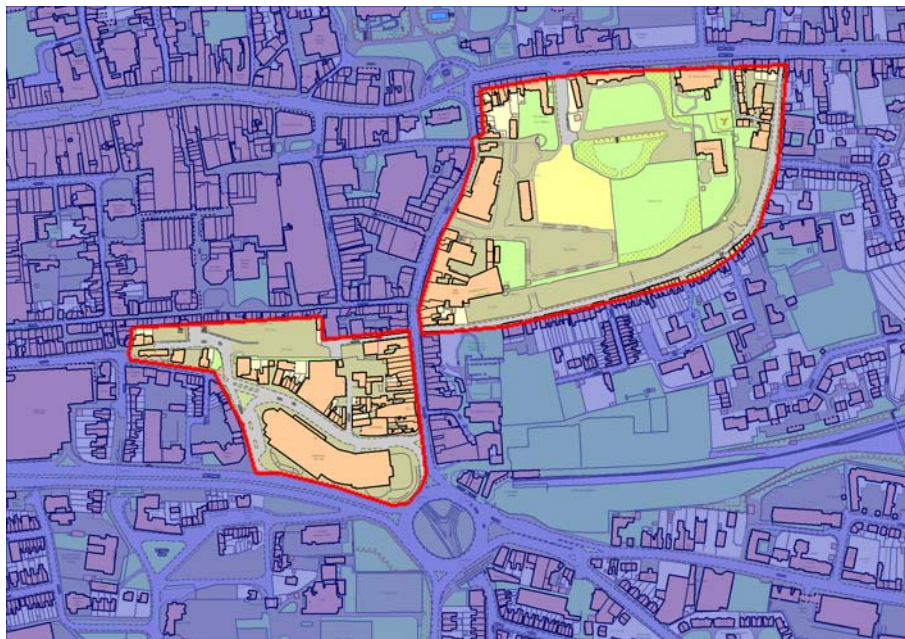
Within graveyard sites, where appropriate, the historic element can be emphasised by superimposing a ghosted outline of the church stencilled in as part of the hard landscape layout, supported where possible with an inset interpretation plaque.

- The components to be utilised.

The spaces for public use will be defined by a set of surface materials that are different to the streets. A common theme of materials and or furniture should link the spaces.

Public art should be a significant element of each public space. Trees and other soft landscape will enhance the heritage of the site. Spaces not suitable for public access will have soft landscaping that maximises the potential for biodiversity.

### **New areas of regeneration.**



When the opportunities of the St Botolph's Quarter Masterplan are realised there will be significant attractors at the east end of the town. These attractors will extend the activities of the town centre, establishing an extension of the shopping core at Vineyard Gate and a second cultural quarter, with the Visual Arts Facility at its centre. The Magistrates Court creates a public new space fronting the Town Station. This space will provide a formal entrance to both the station and the Court buildings.

Adding to the shopping core at Vineyard Gate will increase the pedestrian traffic to this new place and lift some existing secondary retail locations into primary locations and correspondingly the need to uplift the materials and streetscape to reflect the importance will occur. The vineyard gate development will create a major retail attractor outside the historic wall, this will require the routes between the core and the new development to be easily read understood by pedestrians. This can be achieved with signage but defining the route with consistent materials is important.

The new cultural quarter will be accessed via the High Street adjacent to East Hill House. At 15 Queen Street there will be a need for continuity with Queen Street. Details of other links and connections will be written **once the Historic Town Centre Improvements are agreed. A more detailed section will be added here.**

### Vision for the public realm

In association with the social and economic benefits these developments need to enhance the strategic green links. Whilst the historic core an established street pattern in which additional trees would be inappropriate, the new developments create opportunities for a softer, green public realm. These development sites are the only large sites where the public desire for more trees in the town centre can be realised.

Priory Street car park will be redesigned. The imposing town wall to the rear of the car park will be given a more sympathetic treatment at its base and the car park will be softened with tree planting. Improvements to lighting for security and illuminating the wall will be incorporated.

Station Square will be designed to accommodate the movements of commuters and provide a sense of arrival at Colchester from the station platform. This space must also provide an appropriate forecourt for the Magistrates Court, sympathetic to the architecture and the court function.

- The characteristics to be achieved.

Public Spaces will be designed to a high quality and be of materials unique to the space. Designs must consider the full range of functions and activities possible to provide Colchester with unique and exciting opportunities.

Opportunities for new public art as individual pieces, temporary displays and embedded art in furniture will be expected in new public spaces.

The enhancement of green links and planting of new street trees will be required in appropriate areas of new developments.

Street connections and new streets must provide continuity and legibility for desire lines from existing quarters whilst expressing the significance of new primary attractors.

- The components to be utilised.

The public realm will be consistent with the surrounding network as detailed in this strategy. Elements of primary retail will use the same pallet of materials as the shopping core, including the linkages between.

Opportunities for street trees, where appropriate, must be fully explored with regard to archaeology and other constraints. New trees can be placed in containers.

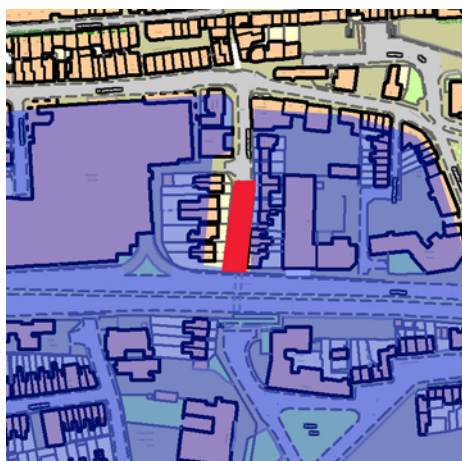
## Thresholds

Historically for towns the gateway is a both a physical announcement of a spatial distinction and a symbolic gesture of social significance, often associated with controlled admission and the security provided within. Today the symbolic gateway is a common expression in buildings and streetscape. For a town centre the gateway is an announcement of similar values to the historic ones; inside there is trade, enjoyment and security.

Although these areas are separate and of differing character they need to be considered as a group because they mark the thresholds of the town centre. As demarcations of the town centre boundaries these are landmark locations should announce the arrival at the centre.

The major roundabout of St Botolph's is a contemporary gateway to the town centre; although it is heavily trafficked it does provide a point of definition that has strong legibility if only because of the scale of the engineering. The roundabout also has a long underpass providing pedestrians with a disjointed approach to the centre. There are pedestrian crossings as an alternative to the underpasses but the pedestrian has little priority, poor legibility and must travel far from an obvious desire line. The pavement on the north side of the roundabout is the actual threshold but the area is highly cluttered and has a poor sense of place.

Abbey Gate Street.



This small section of street is accessed from the underpass of the arterial route Southway. **Does the underpass get replaced??**. The transition from the south into the town centre is strongly pronounced by the underpass but the residential street does not give instant recognition of the centre. The residential character has a good sense of place from the fine period terraces and mature trees. Access private parking is over paved areas and in this way has a strong sense of shared space and could with considered enhancements have increased function and aesthetic if given a homezone design approach.

North Street North Bridge.



The river is a strong landmark; it makes a definition between the North Station Road local centre and the North Hill ascent into the town centre. This area has a poor public realm created partly by the highway clutter and partly by the unkempt appearance of other parts. The important legibility of a route from the north to the town breaks down in this section of street between the bridge and the base of North Hill.

Middle Mill.

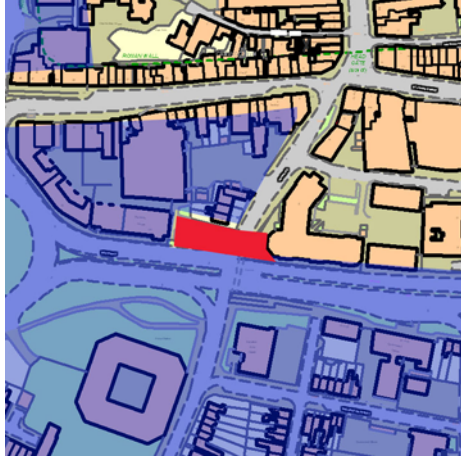


The bridge over the sluice gates, on the site of the old mill marks the transition in to the town centre from Lower Castle Park. Once over the bridge is a small stretch of street called Middle Mill. This space has poor public realm which



detracts from its significance. The large and dominant carriageway once served a local authority depot but now the site has been sold the need for carriageway has lessened.

#### Southway/Head Street Junction



The junction of Southway and Head Street defines the beginning of the town centre and is an obvious distinction from the virtually pedestrian free Southway where the pedestrian has a subordinate and highly controlled experience. Currently the only way into the town across the arterial road is via an underpass. Given the growth of population on the garrison and its access via Butt Road works on this junction should seek to rebalance the priorities by providing at grade crossings over Southway. This would enable a better distinction of threshold than the current exit of the underpass.

#### East Hill.



The grand buildings at the top of East Hill where it becomes High Street mark this gateway. The change in character defines the change in function but a specific boundary threshold is not legible. Given that the Roman wall would be crossing carriageway around the Priory Street junction it would be appropriate to establish the threshold at this point and extend the public realm improvements to this point.



## Balkerne Gate.



The Roman gate of the west wall is a pedestrian entrance to the town from the west by the Mercury Theatre. This is the historic gateway through the wall, approaching from the outside the gate creates a strong sense of expectation but the sense of arrival once through is compromised by the layout of the pavement and carriageway. Whilst the landmarks of the theatre and water tower are impressive in the scene the route through is dominated by the carriageway and the pedestrian realm has a distinctly subordinate feel.

## Crouch Street West.



The west end of Crouch Street defines the beginning of the town centre from the west. Although, like Middle Mill, this threshold has no relationship with the town wall the changes in activity and use of buildings make an obvious statement. This threshold is a pedestrian only and may therefore only require delineation on the pavement.

- Vision for the public realm

Thresholds provide a marker and definition of the town centre and can be unified through a series of public art works designed for each location. Whilst

particular to each location they should have a unified theme. These pieces need not be free standing but could be embedded into the location as floorscape (literally a threshold), with lighting or street furniture.

- The characteristics to be achieved.

A series of public art works that demarcate the boundaries of the town centre.

- The components to be utilised.

To be decided when the commissioning process is completed.

## **Materials and Details**

### Introduction

The choice of materials in the public realm and the way in which they detailed has a great affect on people's perception of Colchester. It is vital that these materials are robust and attractive so that the streets remain beautiful and can be maintained to high standards.

The choice of materials must respond to the built form of the town and enhance the character. They must provide a coherent sequence of streets and spaces from a limited palette and be of high quality so that the public realm contributes to the richness and visual wealth of the town centre. Good quality streets and spaces should be designed to enhance the uniqueness and prestigious heritage of Colchester.

### **Historic Materials**

Evidence of historic materials in the streets of Colchester is limited. Although evidence of Roman archaeology provides good detail of their streets evidence of later periods is minimal.

The Septaria stone and flint are the only really vernacular stones. Both are evident in the churches, castle and Roman wall around the town but there is no evidence to suggest they were used in surfacing and road finishes. Post Roman era historic evidence is negligible and it is not until the 19<sup>th</sup> century that it is possible to find stone sets and other stone surfaces that were brought to Colchester by train in Victorian times. Maidenburgh Street to the north of the High Street has the Victorian surface remaining with evidence of tracks worn by cart wheels.

### Illustrate

From early photographic images it is possible to establish a tradition of flag stones used within the major streets of the town centre, a type of material of size and shape that has creates an appropriate perception and formality in the wide civic Victorian pavements. It seems apparent in the variation of colour, evident in many pictures, that stone was used predominantly as opposed to early concrete or tarmac products that would have a far more uniform appearance.

### Illustrate

### **Surface Materials**

### **Principles**

The choice of surface materials should be limited to a small palette of quality finishes. By selecting a small palette the pedestrian will experience continuity through the streets and spaces. By using the palette in ways that respond to the scale and built form a sympathetic richness and variation will add to the overall experience of the town centre whilst emphasising the hierarchy of streets and their functions.

Detailing of materials is crucial to the elegance and beauty of the public realm. Within the design process accurate detailing of junctions with buildings and vertical elements as well as drainage points and access covers must be specific and clear. Paving and all multi piece layouts must be fully considered at the design stage to reduce on site cutting and improvised on site accuracy.

All jointing must be detailed at the design stage to achieve narrow and even joints so that a consistent and safe surface is created.

Any design process for the public realm in the town centre must have the involvement of an urban designer or landscape architect from the Design and Heritage Unit from Colchester Borough Council in association with members of the Highway Authority design team.

### **Codes and Standards and workmanship**

All materials must be installed to the appropriate codes and British Standards. On site handling and health and safety procedures should be observed together with workmanship standards by the design team throughout implementation. Sample panels should be produced prior to full implementation to ensure that the overall scheme will achieve the desired standard and quality.

Contractors should be selected for their experience of town centre environments and their ability to manage a project appropriately. Equally the contractor must be able to demonstrate their experience and qualification with the chosen materials, specifications and standards.

### **Material selections**

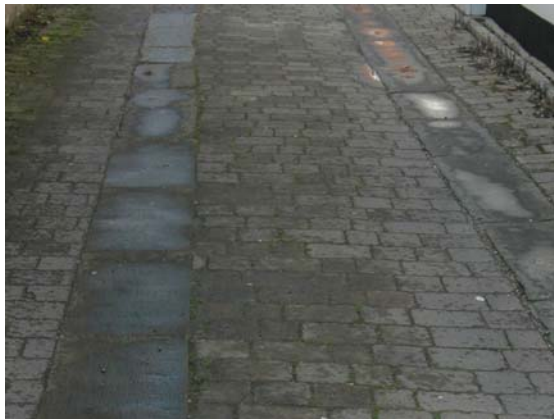
- Shopping core

The central area of small streets and the High Street is the major retail hub and is relatively free of vehicles for its most active periods. Its importance and historic character demands the highest quality surface materials of all the town centre. For all the streets in the core York stone in a matching appearance to the High Street will be used. The differing scale and character of each street will require an individual bond and layout of natural stone to enhance the architectural character and ambience. The smallest and solely pedestrian streets will have a pattern of small 100mm to 160mm sets arranged in a layout sympathetic to the overall character. Wider streets will have a larger gauge of York stone pavements with Granite kerbs. The carriageways used by service vehicles will have York stone laid in small sets in fan pattern

or small straight gauges for robustness, an alternative to York stone in the carriageway may be considered but a natural stone product, complementary in colour must be used.

- Dutch Quarter

There is a need for simple uniformity of the public realm in this area. A rectangular natural concrete flag should be used for all pavement surfaces; the inappropriate square flag must not be used. In the smaller streets, that are currently laid as a shared surface, a similar concrete flag can be used with the historic carriage tracks reinstated in granite kerb stones laid sideways and flush. The surfaces for vehicles must be laid with an aggregate chippings surface finish. Elements of paving and furniture used as traffic control must be minimal and integrated with simple measures, avoiding islands and contrasting materials.



Where possible small unadopted areas aside the pavement should be laid in the same material as the pavement with minimal delineation of ownership. Alternatively the use of cobbles can be similarly negotiated with land owners to enhance the simple continuity required. Granite kerbs should be used for all raised and flush applications.

illustrate

Head Street/North Hill

In these wider scaled streets the 3 by 2 natural concrete flag has been established as an appropriate traditional surface material. This material should be used consistently for all pavements with small regular mortar joints. The pedestrian route should be established across all minor accesses and side roads by using natural concrete pavers where vehicle overriding would damage flag paving. It is vital that the chosen manufacturer supplies both flags and pavers in a matching colour that avoids the variation caused by different sands used in production. A good number of granite kerbs still remain in situ and these should be retained with additional stocks obtained for consistency in both streets.

- Balkerne Gardens

The three lanes that provide access to this important cultural quarter will be used by less vehicular traffic but may still need to be designed for large service vehicles and the emergency services. Balkerne Passage currently has a typical historic treatment still visible in parts, although badly maintained.



The visual character and pedestrian movement through these lanes will be enhanced by reproducing the historic surfacing. This is to be a single, level surface without raised kerbs but using large granite kerbs, laid on the side that would have been spaced for carriage wheels. Between and outside the granite tracks should be laid in small sets either in a small gauge or as regular squares. The three lanes should not be laid exactly the same and the variation of gauged or square form sets will provide suitable variation. The junction between these lanes and Head Street, North Hill will require careful consideration. It is preferable to lose the carriageway junction in favour of establishing pedestrian priority across minor side streets. Therefore the terminus of the main street pavement and the beginning of the lane layout must be elegant and logical.

The more open area around the Mercury theatre and Jumbo has a very different character than that of the lanes from which it is accessed. The open and green nature of this space should be the dominant feature and for this reason the hard landscape will be minimised in scale and a shared surface of neutral coloured paving will be laid. The material can be a tumbled concrete block with drainage channels in the same material although a natural stone surface would be a more traditional and aesthetically pleasing choice. Thresholds and private delineations should be made with granite kerbs or string courses.

Hard standings around seating and other furniture should be in the same material but can be laid in ornate bonds such as circles or fan patterns.

- East Hill

It is logical that the York stone of the High Street should continue through this street. The sizes and edge details to buildings and other furniture should also be carried through to achieve continuity. The threshold marker for East Hill will need to act as a termination of the York stone and the design of the threshold must detail the transition appropriately.

- Queen's Street/St Botolph's Street



Much of the pedestrian realm in these streets will be substantially remodelled when the St Botolph's regeneration schemes are implemented. For the main, north/south street pattern the concrete flag as specified for Head Street and St John's Street will be used for all paving. Granite kerbs should be reinstated where concrete ones have been previously allowed. Overridable sections at minor accesses to be laid in colour matched concrete pavers to establish pedestrian priority where necessary.

Where new desire lines are established across Queens Street a careful consideration of materials should seek to provide strong routes to primary attractions and generators of movement that are directly fronting the street. The route to the Visual Arts Facility, for instance, demands good legibility

- St Johns Street/Crouch Street East

The existing design and modifications of these streets avoids overriding by vehicles. This makes the use of large, traditional concrete flags an appropriately robust material for the pavements. The layout and design should be the same as that used in Head Street to establish continuity of the streets outside the shopping core. Minor accesses and side streets will lose the vehicle priority by taking the colour of the pavement across the junction in natural concrete pavers. Granite kerbs should be used throughout with an up-stand of constant size throughout. Bus stops may require the high 160mm up-stand for passenger convenience.

- Crouch Street West

This attractive street of fine period buildings requires a sympathetic public realm. Although this street is severed from the centre by Balkerne Hill and its underpass the treatment of the eastern part of the street should extend to this western side. Large scale natural concrete flags and colour matched pavers are to be used on the pavements on the north side. A granite kerb would be an appropriate detail within the Lexden Conservation Area. On the south side, unless ad hoc on pavement parking can be stopped, the surface may need to be in smaller modules. Square shapes are not considered appropriate for historic environments and must not be used but a small, rectangular flag can be laid to be overridden by vehicles, alternatively a series of low bollards can be used to deter the most insistent drivers.

## Spaces

The churchyard spaces and the new spaces within regenerated areas are to be designed so as to create an individual and different experience from that of the streets. In public spaces materials that are unique to the series of churchyards or an individual space must be used. Where a strong desire line passes through a space the street material can be used for this path but predominantly the spaces will be designed to be significant investments in the physical and social infrastructure of the town centre that can be seen as a series of oasis outside the bustle of the exchange space in the street.

The materials chosen for each space should form part of the linkages between the series of related spaces to be used as public open space.

### **Street furniture**

Colchester town centre is a relatively small, compact area. The furniture within it should be simple, robust and appropriate to the conservation area status and its built heritage. For these reasons there should be a single type of each element of furniture for the whole town centre. Litter and recycling bins should be sourced from one manufacturer. In consultation the public perception is that more litter bins are required. It will be possible to accommodate more bins providing that they are placed tightly against walls or the back edge of pavement where they will not be an obstacle.

One type of bollard should be used and the unique bollard with the Colchester insignia is the most appropriate. Lamp columns should be plain simple and black. Posts for signage should also be black but only used when a wall fixing cannot be accommodated or negotiated. Some signs can be on shared posts of lamp columns. A single style of bench and seat should be used on the streets where a vista can be taken or where adequate space allows. North Hill should have some strategically placed seating for people who may tire walking up the hill.

Bus shelters must be plain without adverts, their real time information units fixed to the shelter and not on separate posts. Bus shelters should be designed to have minimal impact on clutter and the movement of pedestrians. They should be robust and have a simple maintenance regime. The design should be unique to Colchester whilst compatible with the aesthetics of the conservation area.

Information regarding the new arrangement of stops and the design of super stops to be added here.

Highway furniture must be minimised throughout the town. Yellow lines must not be used on stone surfaces and a zone control approach will be established in the core. When using furniture to restrict traffic it may be possible to place columns, litter bins or seating in such a way that additional bollards would not be required. Cycle parking should be simple stainless Sheffield Stands

The furniture in static spaces as opposed to that used in the streets should be of bespoke design and individual to the space. The theme of churchyard spaces can allow for common features of furniture and materials in these spaces but variations for each space must exist. The intended use of the space will dictate what type of furniture will be required. The spaces that will act as public squares will require a co-ordinated set of furniture to meet the needs of all users.

### **Shop fronts**

The design of shop fronts makes a significant contribution to the public realm. For Colchester's historic centre there are many contextual constraints on design and whilst there is a case for modern, contemporary design where appropriate, the traditional stall riser and proportions are the most dominant and relevant style for the town.

An audit of all the shop fronts in the town centre has been undertaken in which each shop front has been assessed in relation to the character of its street or immediate surroundings. The assessment has identified a street or area character and whether each shop front makes a positive or negative contribution to this character.

The audit and recommendations are used as a reference when planning applications are made but can be seen by request by contacting the planning department.

### **Trees / Planting**

Trees are important to the public realm for several reasons. They provide shade, are a significant vertical element in the streetscape, provide a focal point and connectivity throughout the town and also screen pedestrian areas from the surrounding roads.

The principle green space of the town centre is upper and lower castle park. This area contains numerous fully mature trees that were planted during the Victorian period. It is also evident throughout the town that there are remnants of other tree plantings from the same period, defined quite strongly by the large Oaks, Holm Oaks, Beech, London Plane and Horse Chestnut in various positions. These trees form key arboricultural and landscape features of Colchester and everything possible should be done to retain these key features in good condition.

In general trees are scattered across the 'shopping and pedestrian' areas of Colchester and are few and far between. Principally they are contained within old church yards and the remains of the gardens of large feature properties. At present these areas are relatively unused as public amenity space and are usually isolated from each other. Whilst these 'green oasis' are important in their own right further effort is required to connect these areas and as a consequence improve connectivity throughout the town as a whole.

It is noted that a large number of the trees that do affect the public realm are contained within privately owned land. It is vitally important that these trees are cared for in the same vain as those within publicly owned land as, to a larger extent, it is these trees that will provide the large trees within the streetscape given the fact that there is only limited availability of public owned space for this size trees to be provided.

Therefore the following should be considered:

- Existing trees in public spaces should be monitored and consideration given to re-planting where they no longer provide high amenity value.
- Existing trees, including those within private land, within 15m of proposed changes to the public realm i.e. installation of street furniture, changes of paving/curbing etc, require due consideration in the form of an arboricultural impact assessment to limit the loss of feature trees that influence the public realm.
- Due consideration will be given to those larger 'feature' trees from the Victorian period, that influence and are visible from the public realm prior to any changes to the public realm.
- Where services will be installed by statutory undertakers or agents working on their behalf the above point will be considered and the guidance contained within NJUG 4 used.
- Tree planting should be considered for public space to provide visual interest, shade and connectivity.
- Consideration should be given to introducing tree planting as a unifying element and to define routes and spaces.
- Tree planting should be used to create focal points within the streetscape.
- Where possible all trees should be planted at the natural ground level. Trees behind retaining walls should be avoided given that they will be lost in the long term.
- Appropriate species should be used both in terms of mature size, natural growth habit and origin/provenance.
- The choice of tree should reflect the scale of the space.
- The appropriate size of stock should be used when planting new trees i.e. if immediate impact is required an extra-heavy standard should be used instead of a standard tree.
- New planting should be sited in such a way that they do not conflict with services.

### Shrub and Herb Layers

Views across the key spaces, roads and lanes need to be secured by ensuring tree canopies are maintained with a clear stem at no less than 2.5m high. Allowance should also be made for CCTV surveillance; however

tree cover should not be compromised for lack of sufficient numbers of cameras.

A clear hierarchy of planting needs to be appropriately established, as outlined above forming the principal structural elements, and in some case, e.g. the yews emphasised as principal features, all bringing character and structure to individual spaces. Beneath this the shrub and herb layer, at a more human perspective should be far more eclectic and flexible in their composition and usage, being used to bring vibrancy and colour to individual areas, their structure in most cases defined by the layout of the planters, hanging baskets, etc, whilst as with the trees allowing for free pedestrian movement and surveillance.

Shrub and herb layer planting should be robust and well coordinated, blocks of planting should be used to complement the scale of individual areas and planting pallets should reflect local & climatic conditions, e.g. through the use of swaths of grasses and sedges.

Subtle lighting should be used to highlight/up-light planting to making individual spaces more usable after dark whilst still highlighting the planting.

## **Lighting**

This section will set out the principles of lighting the town centre at night. A consultant will be required to produce an appropriate lighting strategy for the town. Our current lighting is somewhat utilitarian and there is a great opportunity to introduce positive ambience and quality to the town at night. Positive and controlling lighting for the night time activities

To be completed in association with the consultant

## **Way finder signing**

The signing for local heritage and attractions should be clear and unambiguous. The locations of signs and their design should not add to street clutter or detract from the street scene.

As the principle media for directing people to the many heritage and cultural destinations within the town the way finder furniture should have an appropriate aesthetic and design that people associate with tourist information.

## **Public Art**

### **Art in the town centre public realm**

Art can be integrated into the public realm in many ways; a key factor of successful integration is the involvement of an artist in the design process at the earliest opportunity. Similarly, the involvement of stakeholders and the

public, where possible, give a good sense of ownership and pride, both are key elements the success of a town centre.

Public art can take many forms and the diversity of public art is a great asset when building on local distinctiveness and heritage. Within the open spaces network we will seek to embed the work of artists into the street furniture, creating bespoke designs unique to Colchester and its public spaces.

### Illustration from Bury St Edmunds

The diversity of public art must be taken into account when designing the public realm so that opportunities for lighting, exhibitions and performances can be accommodated. These can be associated with large spaces but intimate, smaller spaces can be successful hosts to all types of art.

### Licensing and zoning Street Cafes

The places for pavement cafes should not conflict with movements of pedestrians or simply be a smoking area outside a bar. The Borough Council has A Policy and licensing procedure for pavement cafes. This guidance is available via [the website address and at](#)

[This section will be completed and the zones established when the Historic core zone study is completed.](#)



## **Maintenance and Management**

### **Maintenance**

Maintenance has a far reaching effect on the appearance of any streetscape project. The lifetime of a scheme has to be carefully considered, costed and approved in advance of implementation. Without a full understanding of the level of maintenance required, the costs associated with this and also a firm commitment to carry this work out, the investment in improvements is severely undermined and compromised.

Modern cleaning methods and current specification can sometimes be in conflict and design and maintenance therefore need to come together on a range of issues that includes cleaning, security, litter collection and de-icing. The improved streetscape environment will require ongoing management if the contribution it is going to make to town centre life in Colchester is to be sustained. A critical objective to the ongoing maintenance is both retaining the visual appearance and sense of quality and to ensure that surfaces and features remain safe and useable. This in particular relates to surface finishes with regular checking of paved finishes to ensure that trip hazards are not created through the settlement or displacement of paving units. Such ongoing work relates to providing a town centre useable by all and relates to the need to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act and other relevant guidance.

Under the provisions of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007, a Health and Safety file is required to be prepared and held available permanently. The file must contain information on any future work required after the completion of the project. This would normally include: 'As built' drawings and important production information. Construction details, materials and street furniture schedules and specification reinstatement procedures maintenance requirements apparatus or equipment manuals public utilities drawings.

### **Maintenance Manual**

To ensure that reinstatement is carried out to the same specification as the original works a maintenance manual should be prepared by the original designer before works are completed. This should incorporate;- 'as built' drawings - procedures for maintenance works - the exact materials used - the names and contact information of all suppliers - procedures and specification for reinstatement. The maintenance manual should be distributed to all Colchester Borough and Essex County Council departments and those Public Utilities that wish to carry out their own reinstatement. An agreement should be reached with public utilities whereby those that choose not to carry out their own reinstatement works to the standards specified in the manual should reimburse the Council for the cost of reinstatement to the requisite standard.

### **Maintenance of Specialist Elements**

Maintenance agreements for any specialist items, such as water features, may need to be drawn up and should be informed by input and maintenance schedules and instructions provided by the relevant consultant and contractor. This will be necessary to ensure these features remain the dramatic focus envisaged.

### **Training**

People involved in the maintenance of the public realm may not have experience or training in specialist, high quality workmanship. Many workers may not appreciate the importance of quality detailing. A skills audit should be carried out to determine where training and recruitment will need to be focused to ensure the appropriate maintenance of the public realm. A training programme should be developed that is specifically tailored to meeting the requirements of Colchester's high quality public realm.

### **Materials Stockpile**

For paving materials not readily available, a stock of up to 10% of the total quantity of the scheme should be set aside. This can be stockpiled or laid in a discrete place for lifting and re-laying when required for repair and larger reinstatement work.

### **Environmental Education**

While there is an increasing intolerance of poor surfaces and uneven paving the awareness of public spaces as an important and valued aspect of our towns and cities is generally still quite low. Even in Colchester, which has an effective streetscape management regime for its existing spaces, the extent of litter and staining, particularly through chewing gum, are persistent problems. The careful siting and adequate provision of litter bins and drainage channels is an important aspect for tackling the problem. The level of investment and frequency given to street cleaning is also important.

A litter free environment can positively influence behaviour. The preponderance of chewing gum staining in the town centre's streets and spaces indicates that there is a central role for education in raising awareness of the public realm as something of value within the community. Hopefully as the role of the public realm continues to expand into providing a venue for events and civic life then respect for its fabric will increase.

### **Continued Design Involvement**

There are often benefits to streetscape schemes through the retention of the original designer to provide a watching brief for the project. This post-completion service may run for a number of years, helping to monitor the project and avoid uncoordinated additions such as inappropriate street furniture or ill-considered signing. Some streetscape projects suffer in time from a lack of continuity that incrementally weakens the vision.

Amenity Lighting and CCTV Improved lighting will dramatically change the character of the city centre after dark, making it a place that people will want to spend more time in. In addition, the introduction of Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) to streets and spaces has been proven to reduce vandalism and

crime. By integrating lighting solutions with monitoring equipment and help buttons, an area's safety is substantially increased.

This throws up a number of design issues related to making people aware that there is CCTV coverage in a space to deter anti-social behaviour but doing it in such a way that it doesn't detract from the visual quality of a scheme.

### **Reinstatement of Surfaces**

Streetscape surfaces that are underlain with services will inevitably require to be uplifted for access at some stage. Utility companies have powers to dig up the street under the New Roads and Streetworks Act 1991. This can be the single greatest cause of annoyance and disturbance to users and reinstatement work is more often of low quality. The impact of disturbing surfaces can be reduced by maximising the amount of ducting and allowing spare capacity for increased use in the future. A method for opening –up and reinstating paved surfaces should be agreed as part of the design, written into the maintenance manual and disseminated among the statutory undertakers. Such an approach reduces the chances of damaged material, service track settlement and so on.

Repairs to road and pavement surfaces are to be done with “prescribed material” to a “prescribed standard” and street works supervisors and operators have to prove themselves capable of organising and carrying out reinstatement work. The Street works Act is a positive instrument for achieving a higher standard of quality control. This is essential if critical decisions on the future quality of streets are to be determined.

### **Satisfactory Completion of Contractor's Maintenance**

For most items it is good practice for the contractor to attend to emerging defects immediately after they become apparent, rather than waiting until the end of the maintenance or defect liability period. This will also prevent defects from becoming a nuisance, a hazard, or increasing in extent. Snagging items must be actioned well in advance to allow the local authority to adopt the street for maintenance operations.

The details of the maintenance period arrangements should be agreed with the relevant local authority departments in advance of the project being implemented. Such detailed consideration should anticipate any site specific issues that might otherwise create a split of maintenance responsibility.

### **Staining and Specialised Cleaning**

Specialist cleaning operations should be in place for the completion of a project that can tackle particular problems such as staining caused by chewing gum, soft drinks and oil from standing vehicles. The construction and detailing of surfaces, particularly areas around and below street furniture, should be developed with maintenance operations in mind.

The Impact of Cleaning Methods Street cleaning operations can have a major impact on paving surfaces. Flexibly laid surfaces need time for the joints to

seal and a more impervious pavement to mature. This process can be compromised by the use of vacuum suction cleaning machinery and high pressure hoses. In the early months of the life of a paving surface, cleansing operations should be restricted to manual sweeping.

There are several ways of removing chewing gum from pavements. The most established method is steam cleaning, using specially designed equipment that concentrates water at 110 degrees Centigrade out of a nozzle. The softened gum is scraped off and the paving brushed clean. The surface staining caused by oil spillages can be effectively treated by limited use of super concentrated soaps and careful power washing.

New methods are being promoted all the time and it is important for the maintenance authority to keep abreast of technological changes and not to enter into long-term agreements. Sealants are available to protect stone surfaces but these tend to change the natural colour of the stone and require regular application.

## **Context and background**

### **Methodology**

This strategy has been produced through the following process; it has been conducted by key officers of Colchester Borough Council in association with Essex County Council Highways and private consultants where their expertise has been required.

### **Review of best practice and literature**

Review of guidance from CABE, English Heritage, and Historic Towns Forum etc to establish principles for materials, best practice and other physical aspects. Policy review that included Conservation Area Appraisal of town centre, PPS6, LDF policy. The Creative Spaces Strategy. The Death and Life of Great American Cities (Jane Jacobs 1961)

A review of the Council's accessibility requirements and an understanding of the Disability Discrimination Act and its impact on the urban environment.

### **Policy Background**

#### **Conservation Area designations**

This strategy has regard for many constraints and whilst needing to be an inspirational document it must have regard to the policies for achieving appropriate development. The most significant designation and corresponding constraint is that of Conservation Area.

The study area sits, largely, within two conservation areas. The western end of Crouch Street is within the Lexden Conservation Area (Colchester No 2) with the bulk of the study area within the Town Centre Conservation Area No1. First designated in 1968, with amendments in 1978 and 1980, it covers the whole of the ancient walled town and includes parts the historic extra-mural settlements immediately outside the walls, including East Hill, Abbey Gate, St John's Green and St Botolph's. The borough council commissioned a character appraisal of the Town Centre Conservation Area in 2008.

Illustration of area boundary here

The conservation area status provides the need for any works within the public realm to preserve or enhance the character and historic interest that has justified the designation and of equal significance any works must make positive contributions towards the setting of Listed Buildings within the town centre.

Guidance within Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 - Planning and the Historic Environment asks that satisfactory works within the public realm are achieved through negotiation between Highways authorities the planning authority and English Heritage. This guidance emphasises the need to reduce highway dominance and clutter in designated areas and points towards further guidance by EH and the Historic Towns Forum for achieving sympathetic



design appropriate to the character and historical interest. (Find an appropriate place for this text)

## **Core Strategy Policies affecting the Town Centre**

### **SD3 – Delivery of Key Community Facilities**

Table SD3 – Firstsite, Cultural Quarter, Magistrates Court

**CE1/2 – Mixed Use Centres** – town centre primary location for retail (67K sqm net), office (40K sq m gross), leisure and entertainment uses. Allocations also include Gateways and Town centre fringe –within 300 metres of core  
Offices within 500 metres (PPS6 definition)

**H1 Housing** – 2000 units town centre and fringe 2001-21

**H2 Housing Density** – Town Centre – Very high densities over 75 du/ha (indicative)

**H4 – Affordable Housing** – 35% target, threshold of 10 units

**UR1 – Regeneration Areas**, including St Botolphs and North Station and their key projects (Table UR1) – Firstsite, Cultural Quarter, Magistrates court, New bus station, Vineyard Gate (35K sq m), New pedestrian/cycle bridge

**UR2 – Built Design and Character** – Requires context appraisals, high quality design, enhancement of historic character.

**PR1 – Open Space** – Council aims to provide network of green space, new development to meet recreational needs, provide public open space, private/communal open space

Table PR1 New Facilities, Town Centre – Historic core/High Street improvements, Berryfield Park, Vineyard Gate Square, St Botolphs Square

**PR2 – People-friendly streets** – Council will promote and secure attractive, safe and people-friendly streets – Manual for Streets standards used

**TA2 – Walking and Cycling** – Council will seek to provide excellent walking and cycling connections into and through the Town Centre.

**TA3 – Public Transport** –Improve public transport, increase modal shift. Gateways enhanced to provide attractive entry points, including St Botolphs rail and bus stations.

Table TA3 – Key transport projects, Town Centre – Historic Town Centre Improvements, new bus station, southway pedestrian cycle bridge, North and Town Station improvements.

**TA4 – Roads and Traffic** – Within the Town Centre, through traffic will be reduced and servicing will be facilitated in a manner that is sensitive to the streetscape.

Table TA4 – Road Network Improvements – Town Centre – Historic Town Centre Improvements, A133 Central Corridor, North-south capacity improvements (A133/134)

**TA5 – Parking** – Within the Town Centre, long stay car parking will be reduced to discourage car trips that could be made by sustainable modes.

Short stay parking provided where necessary. Park and Ride provided to offer alternative to town centre parking.

### **Study tours**

A series of visits and tours have been undertaken related to comparable centres locally and to examples of good design or successful public realm strategies.

### **Audit of public realm**

The structure and function of the existing public realm has been evaluated through a series of mapping and survey exercises. Both the physical and social aspects of the town centre have been considered to establish the following.

The streetscape has been assessed to understand how the current surface materials provide legibility and continuity and that permeability of primary functions and routes is reflected in the consistency of materials.

The furniture within the town centre has been assessed for its consistency, age and appropriateness and also whether its location, with regard to function and the ease of pedestrian movement, is appropriate.

Shop fronts have also been audited to establish their individual impact upon the distinctiveness and quality of the town centre and to identify positive and negative contributors to the public realm

An assessment of the spaces (as opposed to pavements or streets) within the centre has been made to establish the contribution each makes towards social function and aesthetic improvement of the town centre.

Soft landscape has been assessed to establish what consistency and quality exist within the town centre. Maintenance issues have been considered which have included an Arboricultural Survey to establish the quality and stability of trees within the town centre.

The lighting of the town centre has been surveyed to establish its quality and suitability for safety, quality and suitability for Colchester.

The use of the pavement for café and bar areas has been considered and a policy for good practice and locations for further café zones will form part of this strategy.

Assessment of night time economy, established from records and surveillance to establish its impacts on the public realm with relation to crime, movement patterns and desire lines, lighting and CCTV.

Review of the current signage strategy and audit of the signs in the streets, to consider their functionality and relevance.

A review of public art in the study area has been undertaken and an assessment of potential sites for new works established

### **Consultation and workshops**

EH ECC public stakeholders(see Howard) workshop with related officers and departments

Discussions with street services and the street warden's team about management and maintenance of the town centre both socially and physically.

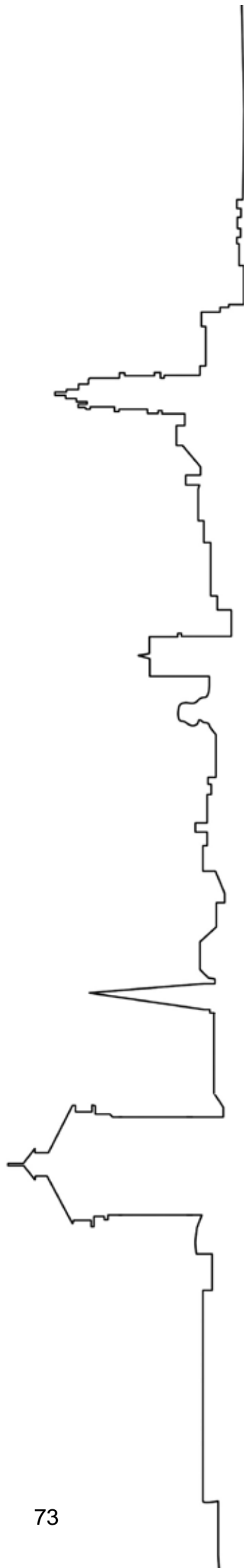
Questionnaires and tourism information

Utilities companies – Howard???

To be completed once the level of consultation is established and the appropriate assumptions regarding Historic Core Zone and Cycle Town can be made.

# Colchester Town Centre Lighting Strategy

Draft Issue: 28/08/2009







# Contents

1. Introduction
2. Executive Summary
3. Existing Lighting Conditions
4. Vision
5. Strategy
6. Architectural Opportunities
7. Routes
8. Spaces
9. Light-art
10. Festive Lighting
11. Overarching Lighting Principals
12. Glossary



# 1. Introduction

Colchester is a historic town. But it's also a young city in the making, receptive to new ideas and challenges. Colchester needs to differentiate itself in an increasingly competitive market for inward investment, skills and entrepreneurialism. Creative lighting projects have been found to deliver major economic benefits by helping to deliver this differentiation.

Sutton Vane Associates were commissioned by Colchester Council to review existing lighting in Colchester town centre and to develop a comprehensive lighting strategy.

This document has been created to provide an organised and cohesive lighting approach to Colchester town centre by night. This document aims to:

- *Provide an organised and cohesive lit environment for all areas within the project boundary;*
- *Provide framework for future lighting proposals, and;*
- *Act as a catalyst for future funding.*

The intention is that this document will be used by Designers, Developers and Planners to help guide future lighting schemes within Town Centre. Doing so will ensure that future lighting schemes successfully sit in harmony with one another once implemented.

A comprehensive consultation period was undertaken with the following directives identified as the primary aims of the lighting strategy. They are to:

- *Celebrate Colchester's unique historic character;*
- *Interpret Colchester's key architectural features;*
- *Improve the perception of a safe experience when visiting by night;*
- *Create a sense of place;*
- *Create a thriving evening economy;*
- *Improve wayfinding by night;*
- *Improve the quality of the lit environment to help influence behaviour;*
- *Enhance forthcoming public realm developments, and;*
- *Develop a sustainable lighting approach.*

Whilst the areas within the project boundary are to be the main focus this strategy does, in some cases, refer to important buildings/areas that sit outside the scope of these boundaries. These have been added as they are considered relevant to the success of the overall lighting strategy.



## 2. Executive Summary

This Lighting Strategy has been developed in conjunction with the Colchester Town Centre Public Realm Strategy (CTCPRS). Whilst the information within the CTCPRS is clear and concise, it has not been possible to characterise the areas within this strategy in the same format due to the differences in the way in which the town centre is used by night.

The CTCPRS identifies the following areas within the project boundary. These areas are referred to within this document but the addition of 'zones' was deemed appropriate to ensure that a hierarchical structure could be further developed. The opposite maps details these additional zones.

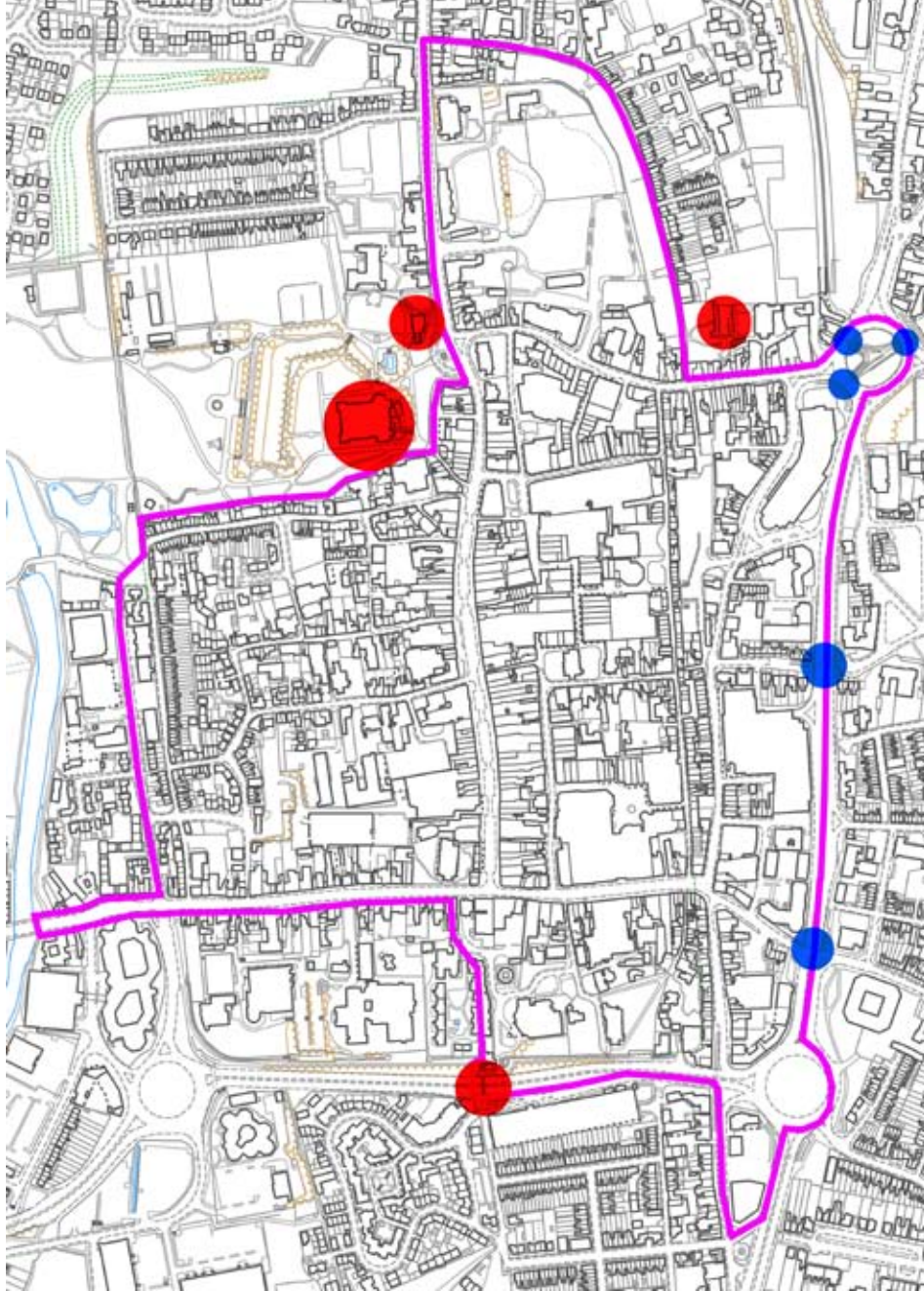
Further areas that sit outside the project boundary have been included within this strategy. These areas are considered fundamental to the success of the town centre lighting strategy:

- Priory Church Remains
- Colchester Castle
- Holly Trees Museum
- Balkerne Bridge

This strategy also addresses the pedestrian subways that lead visitors into the town centre. General guidance is provided though it is acknowledged that future works may supersede these comments.

At the point of writing no money is available for the implementation of any lighting scheme. With this in mind this strategy was developed with a realistic view of what can be achieved in the long term for Colchester Town Centre. To ensure that a structure is maintained, a hierarchy is set out with the primary focus on pivotal projects that fulfil the majority of the desires of this strategy. This approach will enable future funding to remain focussed on the most critical projects that offer the most to the town centre by night. That is not to say other lighting schemes should be prevented; private funded schemes on buildings not mentioned in this strategy should be considered in conjunction with this document.

Due to the sensitivity of the town centre being located within a conservation area all future lighting proposals must be approved by Colchester Council.







### 3. Existing Lighting Review



In general the existing light levels are below those recommended by British Standards. However, there is nothing to suggest that increased light levels provide a better night-time environment. In fact it has been found that extensively lit spaces often create the same feeling of uncertainty that underlit areas do. Even so, the existing levels in Colchester Town Centre are inadequate for evening activities associated with a thriving night-time economy.

Whilst the lamp technology is dated and in need of replacement, so is the majority of the luminaires and associated highway columns. The existing equipment comprises of a range of fittings that do little to enhance the surrounding environment. Surface mounted luminaires have been added to some areas, such as the High Street, which helps remove the visual clutter from the street; however, the majority of these luminaires are dated and will need replacing in the near future.



Very few buildings within town centre are architecturally lit. Those that are are generally associated with evening use (such as bars and clubs) and do little to improve the perception of the space by night. Colchester has a wide range of historic buildings and structures that currently sit in darkness and simply silhouette the night sky.

A night-time lighting survey was undertaken as part of the consultation process. Unsurprisingly, the results of this survey were not dissimilar to those of other towns and cities where the lighting has not been the focus.

The existing lighting within Colchester is in most part utilitarian. Surface mounted highway lanterns or columns are used to provide lighting to the highways and the pedestrian areas but it does little to enhance the environment by night. This simple approach has been implemented across the town and has resulted in lighting that fails to provide any structure to the areas and spaces.

It could be easier for visitors with no previous experience of Colchester to understand where the centre of the town is. During the day there are many indications such as architectural landmarks which allows a subconscious perception which help visually describe the location, however by night there is little to distinguish between the areas and spaces. This should be a key consideration.

In many ways, the existing lighting does not enhance the potential experience that Colchester could offer by night. The existing dimly lit environment creates an unwelcoming town centre that can feel threatening to some members of the public. This reduces the possibility of a thriving evening economy.

The quality of the light is also fundamental to the success of any town centre lighting scheme. The existing lighting consists mainly of sodium (SON or SOX) lamps which produce a very yellow light. This lighting was installed mainly for highway uses but it is also used for pedestrian routes and spaces. This particular lamp technology is now considered old and insufficient for the demands of modern town and city centres as the colour rendering properties are poor and do little to enhance the character of surrounding areas and buildings.

## 4. Vision

The overarching vision is to celebrate Colchester's leading role and developing status in the East of England region by celebrating its routes and key architectural features through creative and inspiring lighting.

The existing lighting within Colchester does little to enhance the town centres' unique character. In general each area is dimly lit with little assistance being given to visitors who may be experiencing Colchester in the evening for the first time. There is also a growing perception from the general public that the town centre is unsafe and unsuitable for all age groups after dusk.

These issues are problematic and need to be addressed before a broader night-time economy can realistically establish itself and be expected to survive.

This chapter considers the overarching key issues that need to be addressed site wide. Whilst some aspects are aspirational it is important that all issues are considered and understood at an early stage.

### Creating Structure

Five lighting zones have been developed to assist with structuring the lighting. Each zone has identified the areas' unique character. Guidance and advice have been developed for each of these areas to ensure that the town maintains its feel both by day and by night.

Details for each area are described in the next chapter.

### Improving Wayfinding

The creation of the five lighting zones will inevitably assist visitors with their understanding of the areas and spaces within Colchester by night. Whilst this is a valuable tool, assistance is also needed to ensure visitors can confidently navigate themselves around the town centre by night.

In general the public rely on visual clues to distinguish their position and whereabouts. These visual clues are often subconscious during the day but by night controlled lighting assistance is needed. Colchester is fortunate to have a large collection of historic buildings that can be used as a navigational tool. However, there once again needs to be some structure as to which buildings are lit as a random selection of lit buildings will only work against their purpose. For this reason a hierarchy of possible buildings has been drawn-up. The buildings identified are mainly located within the Central Core (Zone 1). Focusing architectural lighting within these areas is logical as it helps define the town centre as well as celebrate the heritage of the existing buildings. Other architectural opportunities have been identified and detailed within the summary section for each zone.

### A safe environment

The current night-time atmosphere is 'lively' and considered a young's persons environment. To improve this perception, lighting should be used to create pedestrian friendly spaces and routes that are welcoming with the focus on people, not vehicles. This means improving the quality of the light (white light) and also creating contrast and depth to what are currently bland and uninspiring spaces during the evening.

Simply increasing existing light levels will do little to improve the perception of a safe place. A careful balance of highway lighting, architectural lighting, landscape lighting will add interest and encourage use and pedestrian movement, once footfall has increased the public will feel safe and prepared to invest both time and money in the evening.

Focusing lighting into the key spaces and at the correct times is the most sustainable solution available. These areas will inevitably be those of historic importance as well as those that offer opportunities to an improved night-time economy.

### Creating a positive experience

Improved lighting conditions are essential if a night-time economy is to establish itself within the town centre at night. Other cities within the UK, such as Sheffield, Liverpool and Newcastle have seen huge financial benefits as a result of improved lighting schemes within their city centres. The introduction of a 'café culture' has seen not only an increase in use during evening hours, but also from a wide range of age groups. Colchester needs to adopt a similar approach where 'sophisticated' lighting schemes not only improve the perception of a safe environment but also create a feeling of civic pride.

### Enhancing character

During the day Colchester's heritage is available for all to see, but by night these historic buildings disappear. This is a missed opportunity that needs to be addressed.

Architectural lighting schemes to key buildings provide a sense of civic pride that should be encouraged. These schemes are often simple, cost effective and consume much lower energy than most people think,

### Interpretation

The Association for Heritage Interpretation states that interpretation:

- reveals hidden stories and meanings;
- bring places, objects and ideas to life;
- creates thought-provoking and memorable experiences;
- connects us with our natural and cultural heritage; and
- deepens our understanding and expand our horizons

This can be achieved through a variety of media from plaques to tours, books and works of art and lighting

can be part of that mix which would bring a richness and diversity to the visitor experience, create a sense of place and engender a sense of civic pride for local people.

### **A sustainable approach**

This lighting strategy sets out principles to ensure that lighting solutions are as sustainable as possible, recognising resource constraints, biodiversity and ecology, carbon reduction and health and well-being. It promotes the use of low lifetime cost solutions and the recycling and reuse of lighting components when they have reached the end of their life.

All details included within this document have been developed with sustainability in mind. Additional details can be found in Chapter 7.



## 5. Strategy

Good lighting will enhance and highlight the unique character of Colchester town centre: its heritage, its historic buildings and its public realm. This chapter provides an organised and cohesive lighting approach that when implemented will greatly improve how the town centre can be used at night.

The town centre has been divided up into five distinctive zones. Each zone reflects each of the unique characteristics the town centre has to offer by night. The five zones are as follows:

- Zone 1: The Central Core
- Zone 2: Shopping Core
- Zone 3: Dutch Quarter
- Zone 4: Regeneration Areas
- Zone 5: Other spaces

These areas are unique to this lighting strategy and though similar are not the same as the Public Realm Strategy spaces as detailed in image below.



**Zone 1: The Central Core Zone**







The Central Core combines the key spaces located within the 'heart' of the town centre.

The heart of a town centre by night is vibrant, unique, a focus point and an area that can be utilised for special evening activities. The current lighting conditions do not achieve a sense of place. Visitors are given no visual clue to the location of the town centre by night, nor are they able to distinguish between the routes or the venues. By using light to identify this area, this space will become a source of civic pride and a sought after destination in its own right.

### The 'Heart'

Historically, the High Street was considered the heart of Colchester. This should be reinstated as main focus point by night. Lighting should be used to create a welcoming experience and to enhance the character of public realm and the historic fabric of the surrounding architecture.

### Connecting venues

Both the Mercury Theatre and the newly designed Visual Arts Facility connect the High Street and provide evening experiences that should be capitalised upon.



The High Street provides a perfect opportunity for those visitors whom may wish to venture further into Colchester during an evening. For this to happen the lighting needs to be welcoming to ensure that the public are attracted into the town centre at night. The high street connects these two venues and should be enhanced to create a more socially agreeable experience.

### Creating a welcoming environment

The existing lighting within the Central Core is in most part utilitarian. Highway lighting currently provides the ambient lighting for the entire space. Whilst this is common with older lighting schemes, this type of lighting does not ensure a warm friendly environment for pedestrians after dusk. In addition there needs to be a balance between what is considered safe lighting for vehicles and a more pedestrian friendly solution so these schemes work in harmony.

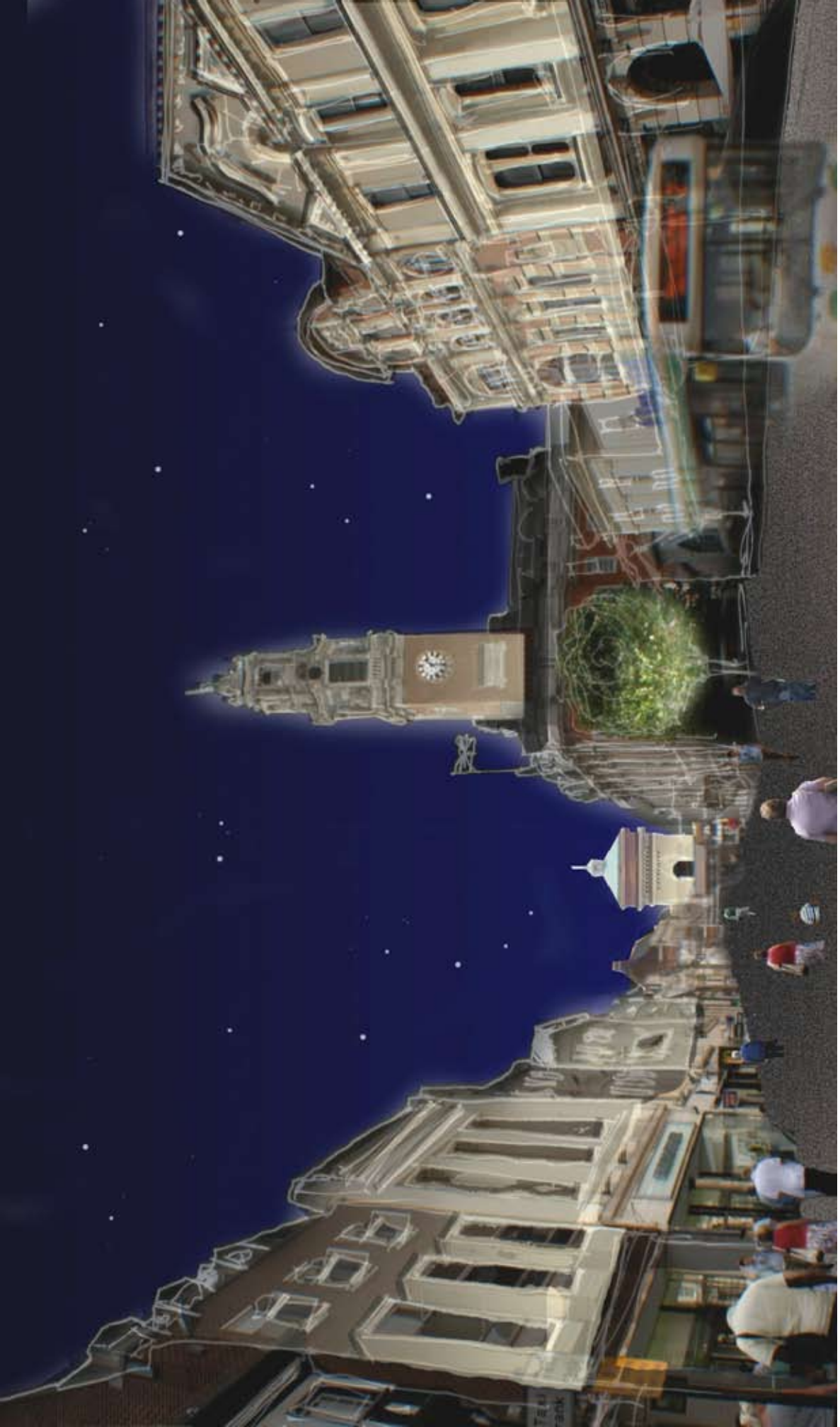
The general ambience of the central core should be of the highest quality. Investment in these areas is particularly critical to the success of the town centre economy by night as it assists with creating the aesthetic people require to use the space. Lamps with a high colour rendering index (CRI) make it easier to distinguish between colours. Generally, the appropriate range of colour rendering should be a minimum of 65 Ra and a maximum of 100 Ra. For the Central Core it is recommended that a minimum Ra of 80 should be adopted as this will ensure the public recognise the importance of the space. To enhance its character, a subtle and sensitive approach to the base lighting of the public realm across

the Central Core is proposed. A warmer white light (2700-3300K) is proposed as this particular type of lighting sits more comfortably within the surroundings. This will be used for these external spaces and routes. Lamps with a warmer colour temperature naturally enhance materials and surfaces at the red end of the visual spectrum which is beneficial when considering the natural finishes of the historic fabric housed within the town centre.



The characteristics of the lighting within these spaces are relevant to the historic context of the buildings and the public realm and complying with the preferred colour temperature will achieve a co-ordinated approach that unites all spaces within the Central Core by night. However, this should not dictate the designs of any architectural lighting of buildings or structures within these spaces. Each venue or structure should be lit to its own strengths.

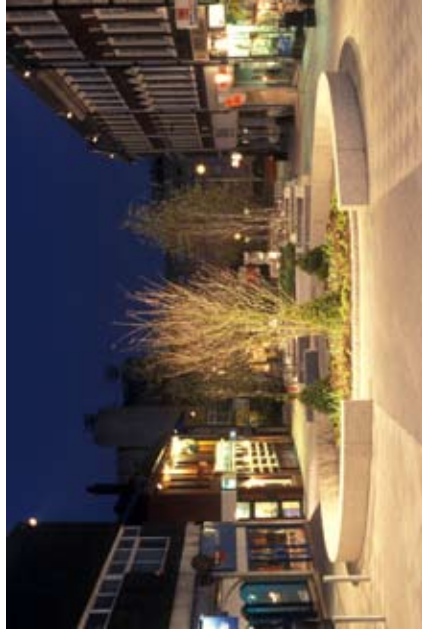




### Reducing visual clutter

Lighting equipment within the Central Core needs to be carefully considered. In particular it is important to use a 'clutter free' approach where possible.

Lighting along the high street is currently surface mounted to adjacent buildings; this approach should be continued for the future. However, buildings with architectural lighting attached should be avoided as additional highway luminaires would be a distraction and likely be a source of glare.



### The use of coloured light

The possible introduction of colour could be considered within the Central Core. Colour can add fun and drama when used effectively, but it can also dominate and distract and therefore the use of coloured light should be carefully considered and justified.

Coloured light has a low Colour Rendering Index (CRI) and so it is hard to see colours accurately and therefore the implications for security, the recognition of objects (for example, signage) and facial recognition must be considered at all times



In principle, designers should only use coloured light for architectural lighting of new buildings or features. Historic buildings, along with spaces and routes should be lit with warm white light (2700-3000K) only. A limited colour palette is recommended as this tends to produce a more sophisticated outcome that is desired for the Central Core



## 2. The Shopping Core



The Shopping Core consists mainly of independent and commercial retail outlets which by its very nature creates a 9-5 usage. During the darker winter months these spaces are busy with high volumes of pedestrian activity. However, this movement of people relates solely to the opening hours of the shops and disperses once the outlets are closed. Very little pedestrian movement occurs through the Shopping Core once the shops have closed, leaving these spaces void of people and reducing the opportunity of an improved evening economy.

### Improving the evening economy

Improving the lighting in certain areas would help persuade retailers to review their opening hours. Whilst this might not be true of the larger retail outlets it might be possible to influence the smaller independent retail outlets within the Shopping Core.

In general the independent outlets are located along routes that connect Primary Routes, thus making them ideal connections for shoppers. The routes in question are:

- Sir Isaacs Walk
- Eld Lane

- Trinity Street
- Scheragate
- Pelham's Lane

The historic character of these routes makes the above mentioned roads unique to Colchester. It is also extremely beneficial that each route is solely for pedestrian use.

### Proposals

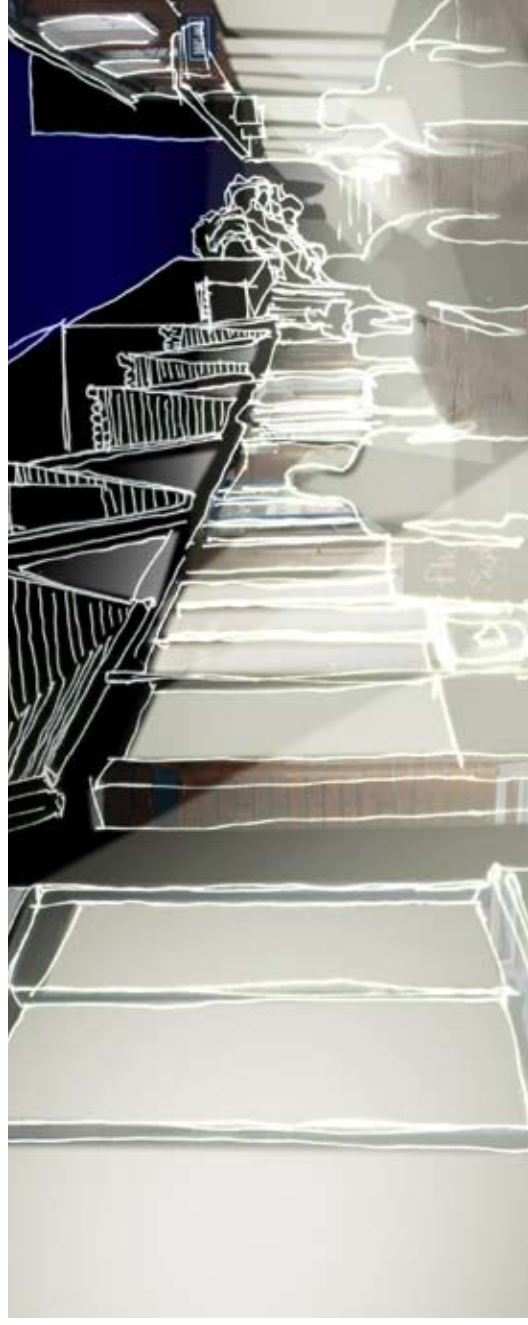
To create a visually pleasing environment each route will be lit with warm white light. The existing decorative Victorian lanterns should be maintained and replaced where necessary.

The focal point should be Holy Trinity Church and its surroundings. Lighting the church tower would help create a beacon that would help pedestrian navigate themselves around the Core. Additional lighting to the church facades is desirable though this should only be considered once all other aspects are introduced as they will only benefit those passing through the square.

Lighting opportunities also exist within the square attached to Eld Lane. Forthcoming public realm designs should be developed in conjunction with a lighting consultant to ensure that the character and style of the Core is maintained.

Lighting within Pelham's Lane will help attract pedestrians into the core. This narrow space should be carefully considered as increased light levels may not be the solution if the Church is lit, mainly because the view through could obscure the Church's appeal.

The remaining areas within the Shopping Core should remain consistent to their current use. Light levels should meet adoptable standards with equipment matching surrounding street furniture. Bespoke solutions are not recommended.



### 3. Dutch Quarter



The majority of the Dutch Quarter (with the exception of Nunns Road Car Park) is residential. Lighting within the Quarter should reflect this use and to some extent deter pedestrians from passing through the area at night. The current configuration is problematic as it tends to attract pedestrian movement from the High Street and along West Stockwell Street. This movement is the consequence of the roads' proximity to the bars and clubs and can therefore result in anti-social behaviour.

A simple lighting scheme should be adopted where safe levels of 'white' light is provided without competing against the Primary Routes of the High Street and North Hill.

Generally, the appropriate range of colour rendering should be a minimum of 65 Ra with a warm colour temperature of 2700-3300K.

### 4. Regeneration Areas



There are a number of Regeneration Areas that will have a major impact on how the Town Centre operates both by day and by night. The lighting within these areas needs to match with the aspirations of this lighting strategy.

The St Botolph's Quarter and Vineyard Gate are prominent developments for Colchester. The general principals for lighting routes and spaces have been covered within the Central Core section of this document.

### 5. Other Areas



The remaining spaces within the project boundary need to be considered but are not integral to the success of how Colchester will operate by night.

Lighting should always meet the minimum requirements as adopted by the lighting authority and in general colour renderings should be a minimum of 65 Ra with a warm colour temperature of 2700-3300K.



## 6. Architectural Opportunities

Lighting structures, buildings, gateways and spaces with architectural lighting will create a distinctive lit environment and add to the spectacle and legibility of Colchester's town centre.

This strategy identifies a hierarchy to assist others with making sensible priority-led investment decisions. Priority has been given to those buildings/structures that offer clear benefits and for this reason a hierarchy has been developed to assist others to invest appropriately when future projects or funds become available.

The structures and spaces identified have been chosen due to their relevance to their surroundings, their importance, and their own individual characteristics. The structures and buildings have also been considered by analysing the way users will navigate through the town centre and into the Central Core by night. For example, lighting vertical structures assists with wayfinding because lit structures and spaces become recognisable focal points to aid navigation.

The architectural lighting has been placed into a range of categories depending on the visual importance of the building or structure and their perceived contribution. It is recommended that funding is focused on those areas considered most important. There are three levels or tiers of priority for lighting of structures, buildings

and spaces. These are detailed below, followed by an assessment of each building within these tiers.

The plan detailed in opposite shows the proposed lighting for buildings, structures and spaces in tiers 1, 2, and 3. This demonstrates how the tiers work to create a consistent and coordinated approach for future lighting designs elements.

### Tier 1 Schemes – Indicative Proposals

Architectural lighting of tier 1 structures is considered imperative and necessary to create focal points which will enhance the surrounding space, aid wayfinding, improve the feeling of a safe environment and celebrate Colchester's unique heritage. These include:

- Balkeme Water Tower (Jumbo)
- Colchester Town Hall
- Cowdray Crescent War Memorial
- Colchester Castle
- Mercury Theatre
- Natural History Museum (All Saints Museum)
- Visual Arts Facility, St Botolph's Quarter
- St Peters Church
- Essex and Suffolk Fire Office (156 High Street)
- St Nicolas Building

### Tier 2 Schemes

The additional lighting of tier 2 structures is aspirational and will support the first tier and complete the full lighting picture, but has a lower priority than tier 1 structures.

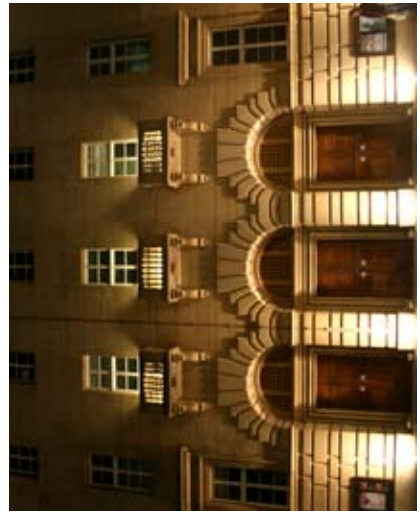
- 3, 4, 6, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 25, 30, 31, 31a, 32, 34, 35, 37, 38, 39 and 131 High Street
- Colchester Arts Centre
- Balkerne Roman Wall
- Balkerne Bridge
- Balkerne Passageway

### Tier 3 Schemes

The additional lighting of tier 3 structures is the lowest priority in terms of their contribution to creating a successful Central Core.

- Hollytrees Museum
- Museum Street (depending on Castle being lit)
- Remaining facades along High Street







## Balkerne Water Tower (Jumbo)



The Water Tower is a large unique structure that dominates the skyline by day but is lost by night. In addition it can be seen from the train station and is clearly a recognisable icon of the town. Its location within Zone 1 also makes this building a priority as it will serve as the most prominent building that will assist with Wayfinding by night.

The following lighting proposals and comments are noted:



- Architectural lighting scheme should be used to highlight the unique character of the structure
- The tower should be lit with white light and colour should be forbidden
- All lighting equipment should remain hidden at all times with special care and consideration with regards to protecting the buildings fabric
- Luminaire positions will need to be positioned to avoid glare

**Estimated cost: £80-100K**  
*Estimated cost includes for supply and installation, professional fees and VAT*

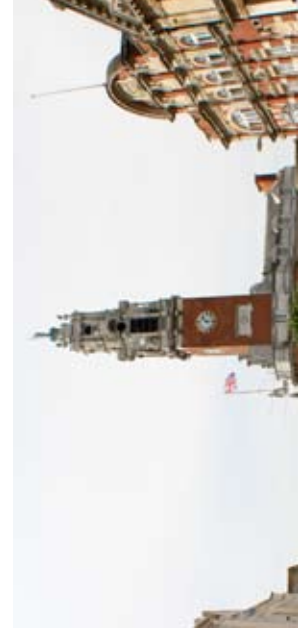
## Colchester Town Hall



It is currently unknown whether the existing lighting scheme of the town hall is operational. The existing lighting scheme was recently installed and the lighting equipment seems to be in satisfactory condition. However, the Town Hall was not lit during both site visits carried out by the lighting consultant and it is therefore unknown whether the lighting has been deliberately switched off, or whether it is faulty and yet to be maintained.

**Estimated cost: £85-100K**

*Estimated cost includes for supply and installation, professional fees and VAT*





### Cowdray Crescent War Memorial



The War Memorial acts as a gateway beacon to those travelling into town from the west.

A simple uplighting scheme would be dramatic, cost effective and energy efficient. Special consideration to the historic fabric of the monument will need to be considered, as will the implications of the structural foundations and the final locations of the lighting equipment and any associated cabling.

**Estimated cost: £4-8K**  
*Estimated cost includes for supply and installation, professional fees and VAT*

## Natural History Museum (All Saints Museum)



The museum is located on the corner of the High Street and Queens Street which connects two of the most important primary routes. When illuminated the building would aid wayfinding as well as act as a beacon for those travelling from the west. It may be that the Cowdray Crescent War Memorial should be considered in conjunction with the museum as this would complete the view into the High Street from the west.

Ideally all of the building would be lit, however if funds were limited it would be possible to phase the works

with the focus firstly of the tower only. The buildings facades could then be reviewed at a later date.

**Tower & Facades - Estimated cost: £55-65K**  
*Estimated cost includes for supply and installation, professional fees and VAT*

**Tower Only - Estimated cost: £10-15K**  
*Estimated cost includes for supply and installation, professional fees and VAT*



Fig. 1



## Mercury Theatre



A vibrant lighting scheme is proposed as it would echo the use of the theatre. Colour, projections and animated AV could be considered as this would create drama and excitement. Special consideration to the surrounding public realm is essential as it may be advantageous to incorporate other areas into the final lighting scheme.

There may be an opportunity to create a number of lighting 'scenes' which would reflect the use of the building at any given time. For example; the lighting could be attractive and vibrant before a show, it could then reduce and settle into a more fixed scheme whilst a performance was running. This would indicate how the building was being used which would promote the theatre and activities held within.

There is currently a small amount of the architectural lighting to the theatre so it may be that this can be reused and built upon with any new lighting scheme.

In general, all decorative lighting schemes should be switched off at midnight as this preserve energy. Whilst this is sensible for most areas within the Central Core it would be acceptable if the theatre's times were dictated by the performances and when visitors leave the building. It would therefore be acceptable to have any architectural lighting switched off 30 minutes after curtain call.

**Estimated cost: £50-85K**  
*Estimated cost includes for supply and installation, professional fees and VAT*





## St Peters Church



The Church and the surrounding courtyards are important for a number of reasons. Firstly the building acts as a beacon to those travelling up North Hill into town. It also located opposite Balmerne Passage which will help pull pedestrians into the High Street from Balmerne Gardens and surrounding areas. Finally the courtyard links the rear of Essex and Suffolk Fire Office (156 High Street) and is visually pleasing and potentially adds depth to the space.

The church tower is the most prominent feature and offers the most value for money when lit. Lighting the facades would improve the overall ambience of the immediate surroundings but it would offer little in the way of a navigational tool. It is therefore proposed that the tower is the focus until the courtyard is developed into a usable space, only then should the facades be considered.

**Tower & Facades - Estimated cost: £40-50K**  
*Estimated cost includes for supply and installation, professional fees and VAT*

**Tower Only - Estimated cost: £10-15K**  
*Estimated cost includes for supply and installation, professional fees and VAT*



## Essex & Suffolk Fire Office (156 High Street)



The front façade and the colonnade are architecturally interesting and add character to the east end of the High Street. In addition the building is the starting point for architectural lighting schemes along the high street and is therefore an important landmark that should be lit.

Lighting to the colonnade columns would be desirable though special care would need to be taken if any lighting was implemented at ground level, particularly with regards to the structural foundations and how the external spaces might be used in the future. For example, recessed uplights could cause a health and safety issue if the desired 'café culture' is developed along the high street as the lighting may be more of an obstruction. A more sensible option would be to backlight the columns from high level as this removes the above mentioned risks.

The top façade of the building should be lit from balcony level. Luminaires would be hidden but special care would need to be taken to ensure that light spill did not penetrate the windows.

The top section of the building could be lit from the balcony through a more desirable lighting effect may be provided by spotlights hidden on opposing buildings (6 High Street). Wayleave consent would be required if this was considered the most appropriate location.

**Estimated cost: 25-35k**  
*Estimated cost includes for supply and installation, professional fees and VAT*





## St Nicholas House



St Nicholas House is not the most architecturally pleasing building within the Central Core but the building does offer other benefits due to its location on the High Street and within St Nicolas Square. A creative lighting scheme would help connect the High Street with St Nicolas Street, Long Wyre Street and Museum Street which links to the Castle.

The proposal would be to use the building façades as a blank canvas for projections. These projections could incorporate colour or AV animation, though a cheaper and more realistic option of white gobo projections is currently proposed.

It could be that permanent projectors are installed so that community projects, such as local artists or school children, can design images. This cost effective approach was implemented in Sheffield and is still operational today.

**Estimated cost: 25-50k**

*Estimated cost includes for supply and installation, professional fees and VAT*



3, 4, 6, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 25, 30, 31, 31a, 32, 34, 35, 37, 38, 39 and 131 High Street



There are a number of prominent and visually interesting facades along the high street that lend themselves to architectural lighting. Whilst they offer little on their own a series of lit buildings would help link the Tier 1 schemes throughout the Central Core. A similar approach was identified and implemented along Grey Street in Newcastle illustrated in Image 1.1.

Lighting of these buildings is reasonably simple and cost effective. Wayleave agreements will be necessary and decisions will need to be made about how the lighting will be powered, for example, the lighting could be fed from the feeder pillars within the public realm, or it could be fed local from within the building. The latter would be considered more desirable as it limits cabling and the visual effect it has on the building by day, however, an agreement will be needed with the building owner so they can either receive a funding grant or some other agreement which covers the cost of the electricity. It may be that the building owners are encouraged to propose lighting for their own buildings and in such cases the lighting strategy should be reviewed but it should not be the responsibility of the local authority to fund such schemes.

**Estimated cost: 2-20k (depending on building size)**  
*Estimated cost includes for supply and installation, professional fees and VAT*





## Balkerne Bridge

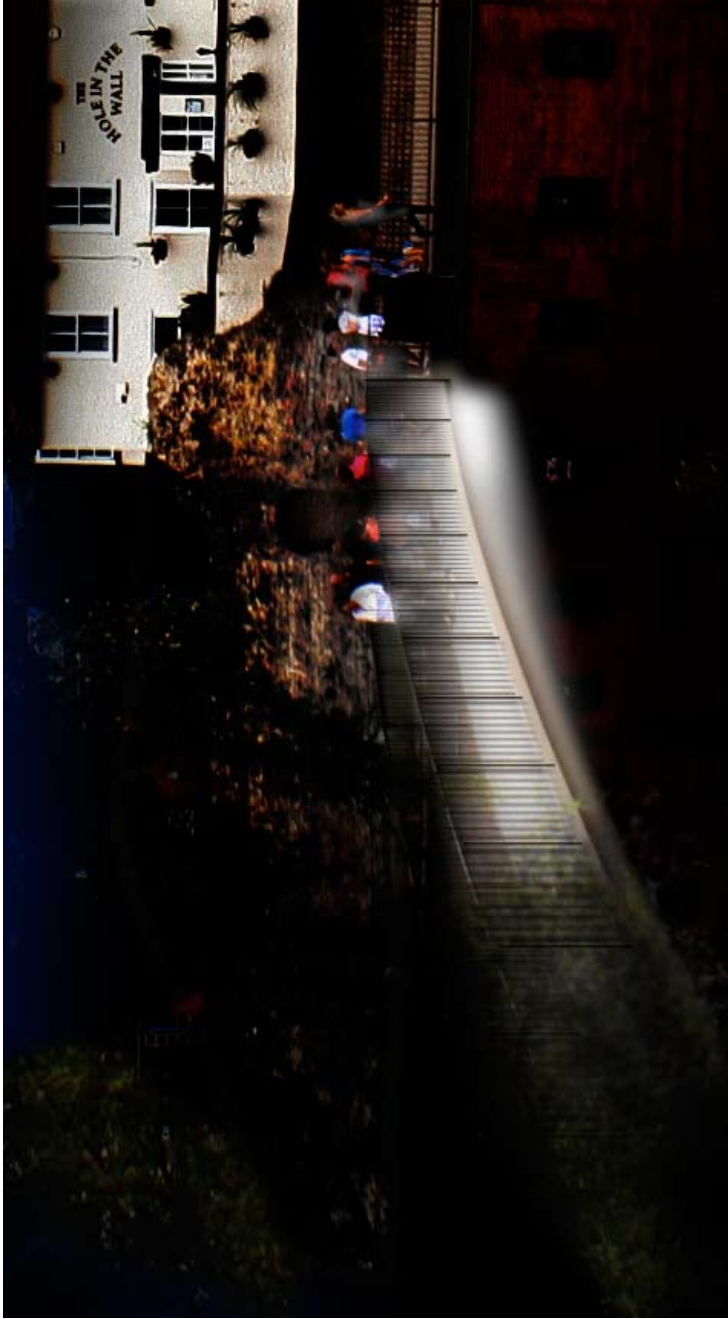


As previously stated within the Routes section of this strategy this bridge offers numerous benefits to those visiting the Mercury Theatre, it is also highly visible for those motorists passing below.

A simple LED lighting scheme to the outer sides of the balustrades is proposed. For more information please see details in Routes section of this document.

**Estimated cost: £15-25K**

*Estimated cost includes for supply and installation, professional fees and VAT*





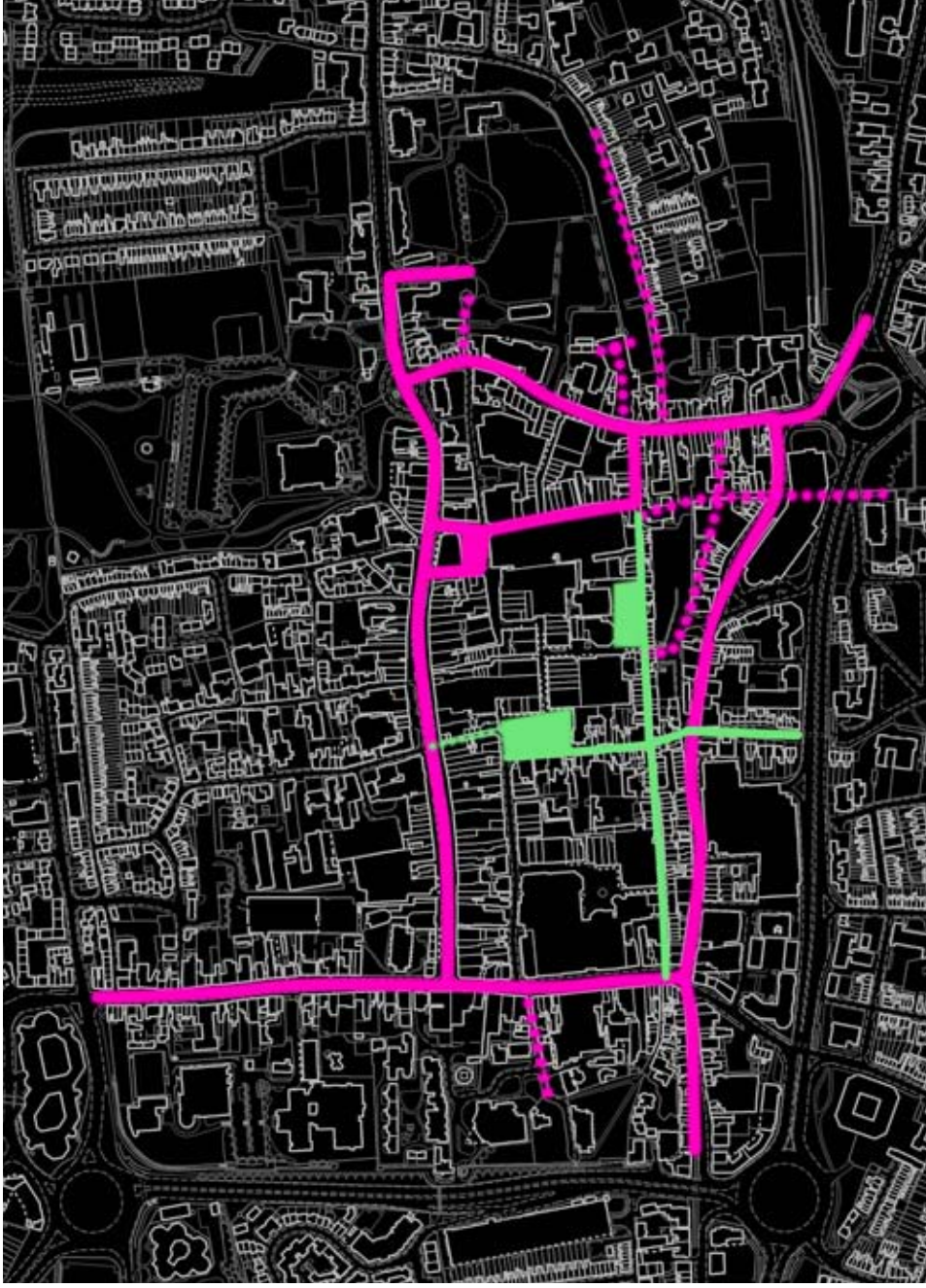
## 7. Routes

Improving overall lighting conditions to the key routes is the most cost effective way of generating impact. Simply improving the quality of the lit environment will help influence social behaviour and broaden the use of the town centre by night.

Lit routes have been identified by examining how the key aspects of the town centre should be connected at night. Venues, communities, evening activities have all been considered to ensure the safe movement of pedestrians. In some cases additional enhanced lighting will be required to ensure that some places, such as subways, are not only safe and accessible, but also attractive.

Lighting all routes in the same way will do little to improve wayfinding within the town centre by night. For this reason a hierarchy of primary and secondary routes has been developed so that priority can be given to those which help connect key spaces, venues and surrounding communities. Doing so will ensure that footfall is maximised along main routes which is beneficial, rather than dispersing the public throughout the town centre. This results in increased footfall which in turn improves the perception of a safe environment.

The detailed routes have been developed in conjunction with the Public Realm Strategy and with consideration to existing and forthcoming development sites. Whilst the exact location of some routes may change (potentially within the Vineyard Gate Development) the principals described will remain the same.



Primary Pedestrian Routes  
Possible Future Routes  
Secondary Pedestrian Routes

### Primary Pedestrian Routes

The following routes have been identified as being Primary Routes due to their importance of connecting key spaces and venues. The majority of these routes are already heavily used after dusk:

- High Street
- Head Street
- North Hill
- St John's Street
- Osborne Street
- St Botolph's Street
- Short Wyre Street
- Long Wyre Street
- St Nicolas Street
- Queen Street

There are potentially a number of additional Primary Routes that could be added depending on the outcome of future developments. These routes are shown on the plan as dotted lines as their exact location may differ once designs are completed. They are:

- Vineyard Gate route from Lion Walk to St Botolph's Street, via Eld Lane
- Vineyard Gate route from North to South Priory Street (Once St Botolph's is complete)
- Routes into St Botolph's development
- Church Street or Balkeine Passage (Once Mercury Theatre public realm is defined).

Highway lanterns currently supply all the lighting to the above mentioned routes, this does little to reinforce the perception that the pedestrian takes priority over the vehicle, it also does little to differentiate between priority and minor routes. The high street is focal point and a pedestrian friendly environment by night. For this reason a more pedestrian friendly lighting solution is proposed.

The lighting conditions of the Primary Routes should be of the highest quality. Investment in these areas is critical to the success of the town centre by night as it

assists with creating the friendly environment desired by the general public.

### Recommendations for Primary Routes

Lamps with a high colour rendering index (CRI) make it easier to distinguish between colours. Generally, the appropriate range of colour rendering for a route should be a minimum of 65 Ra and a maximum of 100 Ra. Primary Routes should ideally have a minimum Ra of 80 as this will ensure that these routes are clearly identifiable to the general public. (see below)

To enhance character a subtle and sensitive approach to the routes is required. A warmer white light (2700-3300K) is proposed initially as this particular type of lighting will sit more comfortably along these routes. Lamps with a warmer colour temperature naturally enhance materials and surfaces at the red end of the visual spectrum which is beneficial when considering the historic buildings within Colchester town centre. (see below for example of proposed colour temperature)

Lighting equipment for Primary Routes needs to be carefully considered. A clutter-free approach is desirable and proposed where possible. Lighting along the high street is currently surface mounted to adjacent buildings, this approach should be continued, however, buildings with architectural lighting attached should be avoided as additional highway luminaires would be a distraction and likely to be a source of glare.

Where columns are necessary, it may be possible to consider additional features which will help define a primary route both by day and by night. Possible examples include:

- Bespoke highway columns
- Bespoke highway columns with secondary decorative light source=Graphic banners with associated lighting

Light levels should be consistent with British Standards, as adopted by Essex Highways department. Dimming should also be considered where possible though consultation with the highways department is essential.





### Secondary Pedestrian Routes

The Secondary Routes identified connect the centre of Shopping Core with surrounding routes and spaces. These routes are for pedestrian use only. They are generally narrow routes that are integral to the independent retail outlets. The routes are:

- Sir Isaac's Walk
- Trinity Street
- Trinity Square
- Pelham's Lane

The character of the above routes are unique to Colchester and the lighting should reflect this.

The proposed lighting approach is to utilise existing Victorian lanterns. The lighting conditions with regards to colour temperature and colour rendering should match those described within the primary routes section. (see below for concept proposal of Sir Isaac's Street lighting arrangement)



### Highway Routes

Whilst the intention is to improve the lighting conditions for the pedestrian, highway routes can not be ignored. The amount of vehicle movement within the town centre is minimal by night, restricted mainly to the use of public transport. These highway routes are:

- High Street
- Queen Street & St Botolph's Street
- Osborne Street
- St John's Street
- Head Street & North Hill
- Headgate
- Southway

Lighting along these routes should meet the necessary statutory regulations, however lighting to routes identified within the Primary Routes section should meet the proposals detailed. This will mean additional investment in order to improve the quality of these routes.

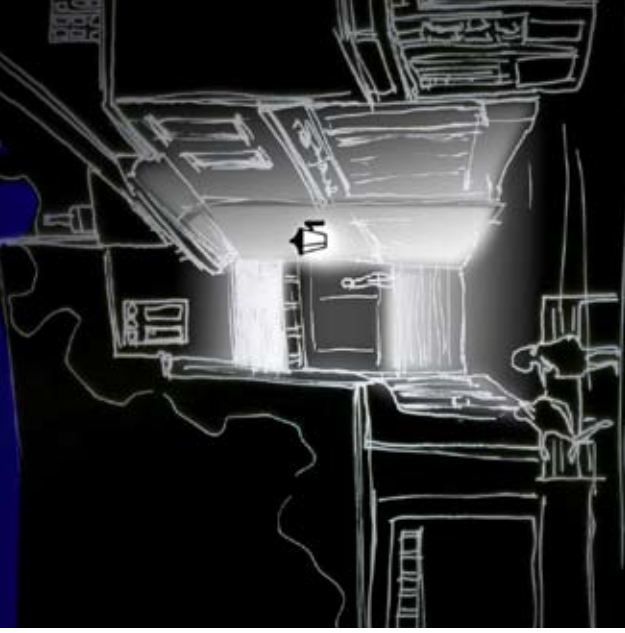
### Thresholds (into site):

Lighting is a powerful tool that can greatly influence peoples understanding of how a town centre operates by night. Illuminating thresholds greatly assists with this, it also makes a clear statement about the quality of the lit environment within the town centre by night. The following have been identified as being particularly important:

- North Station Road River Bridge
- Balkeme Hill Bridge (Linking Multi-Storey Carpark with Balkeme Gardens)

There are also numerous pedestrian subways that connect the town centre that should be considered.

Each of the above mentioned thresholds provide important connections into the town centre. They each have their own design quality, character and potential problems that would need to be addressed; even so, an improved lighting would greatly benefit wayfinding by night.



### North Station Road River Bridge

North Bridge is located outside the project boundary but is relevant to this lighting strategy as it is the main through route into the north of town. The bridge position is ideal but the architectural form is problematic as it does not provide a sufficient form for lighting. There are also concerns to the biodiversity associated with the bridge and its surroundings. Even so, the potential for architectural lighting should not be ruled out and should be considered if any of the following become relevant:

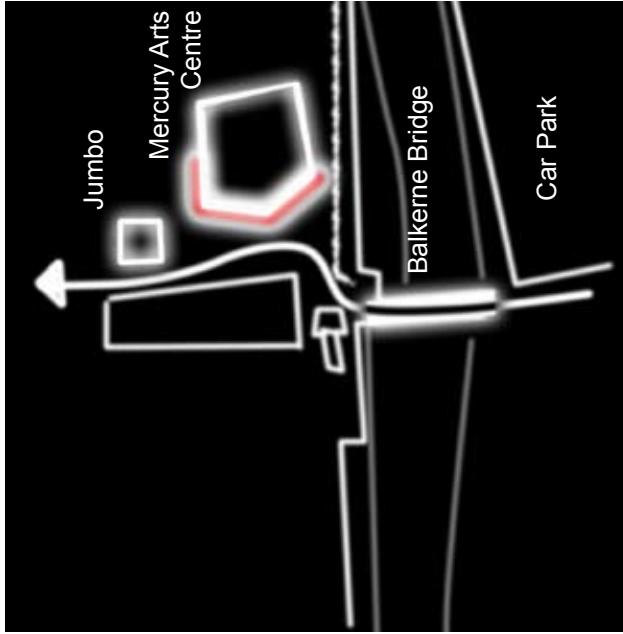
- River walks are developed to the extent that the bridge structure offers greater views.
- Evening use around the bridge increases.

At the time of writing it is assumed that no architectural lighting will be considered. British Waterways will also need to be consulted if future developments influence the opportunity for lighting.



### Balkerne Hill Bridge approach

In general, most visitors to the Mercury Theatre travel by car and park in the Balkerne Hill Multi Storey Car Park. For these people Balkerne Hill Bridge represents the main gateway into the town centre by night. For this reason a simple lighting design to the bridge would create a welcoming feature to those crossing and it would make reference to the route to motorists passing below.





**Subways (Indicative details)**



The majority of the pedestrian subways are dim and unappealing. Creative lighting would improve these conditions, though simply raising the levels is considered unsatisfactory as it would not persuade users in its own right. To improve footfall the following is proposed:

Introduction of architectural lighting scheme. Possible use of colour, maybe projections or Light-Art installation would add interest.

Special consideration needs to be taken with regards to vandalism and other forms of anti-social behaviour.

**Estimated cost: £10-50k (depending on scale)**  
*Estimated cost includes for supply and installation, professional fees and VAT*



## 8. Spaces

Lit spaces which create an interesting and exciting environment would create a new experience for Colchester by night. A well considered lighting scheme would help create a destination in its own right. It would also provide economic opportunities to local businesses, provide a location for evening festivals and events, create civic pride and enhance a sense of place.

Additional feature lighting incorporated within surrounding elements of the public realm will add depth and improve the feeling of a pedestrian orientated environment. Lighting incorporated within specially designed features such as seats, stone details and water features can add drama and excitement to a space by night and are therefore encouraged.

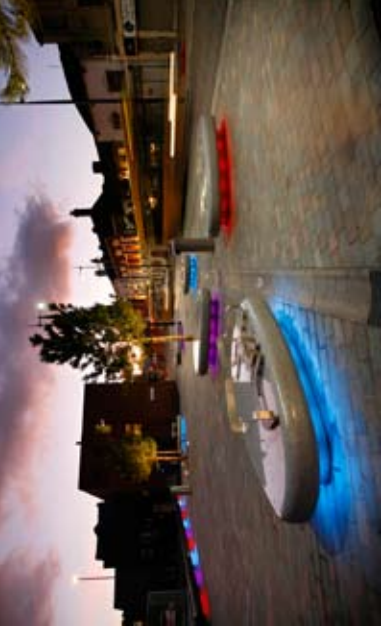
The following spaces have been identified as being an integral part of the Central Core by night and should be considered when future public realms schemes are developed:

- High Street (All areas within the Central Core, though predominantly the spaces between Head Street and Cowdray Crescent).
- Mercury Theatre and surrounding spaces
- St Botolph's Quarter (direct surroundings to the Visual Arts Centre, including route to High Street)
- St Nicholas Square
- Cowdray Crescent

Special consideration with regards to vandalism, running costs and maintenance is essential and for this reason advice should be taken from an independent Lighting Consultant (rather than from a lighting manufacturer as they tend to offer biased advice).







## 9. Light-Art

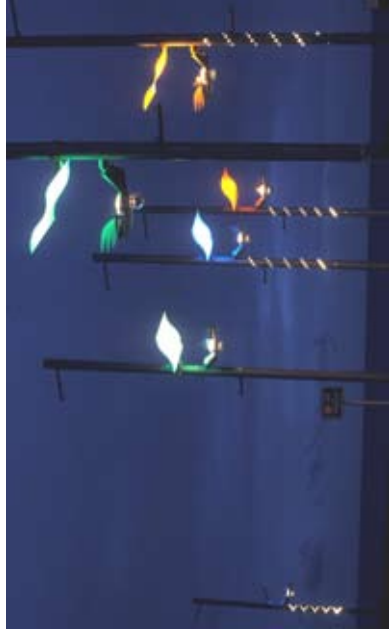
Light-art is an extremely popular way of adding something new and exciting to a space or structure. Successful installations can be seen across the UK and are often a great way of adding drama whilst becoming a source of civic pride. Light-art can take many forms, from simple projections to permanently installed three dimensional objects.

There are many advantages to implementing Light-Art installations. Firstly, unlike other three dimensional art works lighting installations can be developed to be invisible to the public by day. This in turn helps maintain a clutter free environment desired within the town centre.

Temporary installations can also be introduced to accommodate a larger arts programme where local community groups contribute to the content. For example images produced by school children could be projected on to buildings, or specially designed site specific work by a local artists.

One of the most powerful tools that light could be used for is to assist with interpretation. This can be achieved by highlighting architectural features, revealing historic memories or it could be used to simply emphasise visions of the town in a new and interesting way.

The collaboration of an artist with an independent lighting consultant is recommended to ensure that all aspects of the installation are considered and understood prior to installation.





## 10. Festive Lighting

The common perception of festive lighting is little more than a series of 'festoon lamps' suspended from buildings with a selection of symbolic neon shapes attached to highway columns. Whilst this is the standard approach other (more contemporary) solutions should be considered.

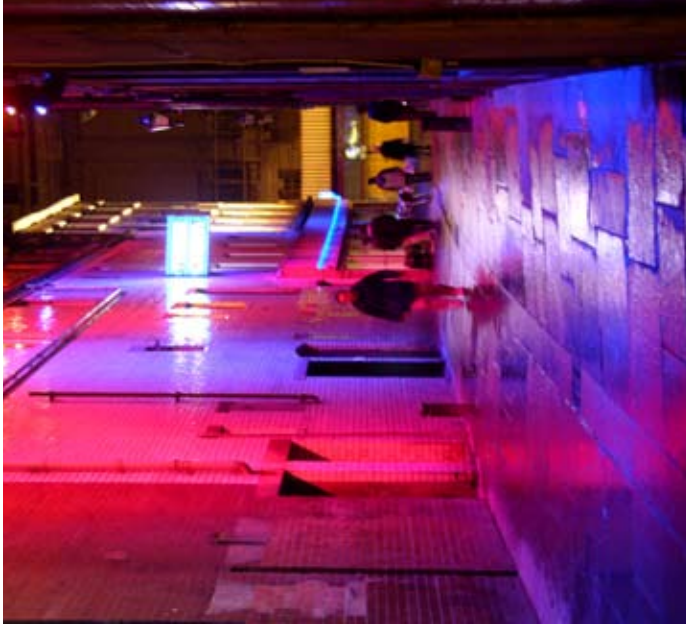
Festive lighting is in general very inefficient and a major cost to the local authority in terms of storage, installation, maintenance and on going running costs. For this reason the local authority may wish to look at new ideas and technologies that could provide a new evening experience unique to Colchester. Doing so would help define the town centre, enhance civic pride and boost the evening economy during the Christmas period.

The location of a new Christmas lighting scheme needs to correspond with the structure set-out within this strategy. A random selection of areas and buildings will only dilute the impact of the streetscene, for this reason any new lighting should be focused within the Central Core and predominantly along the High Street.

This document provides a suggestion of how this can be achieved so to assist others with understanding the opportunities. Possible options include:

### A colourful High Street

One of the most cost effective ways of adding excitement would be to add coloured filters to the architectural lighting schemes. This would crate a vibrant feel to the central core and overall cost would be minimal.



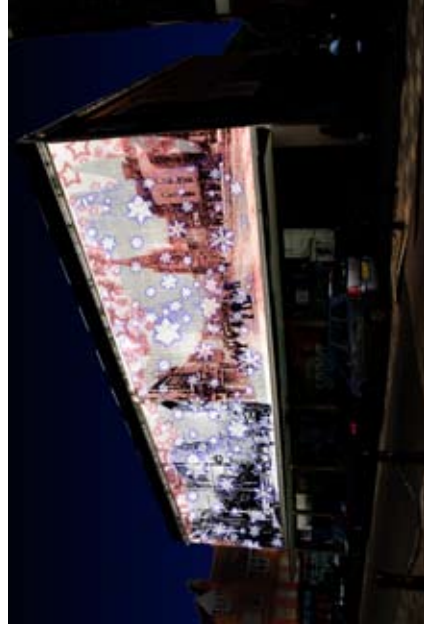
### Projections onto building facades.

These could be static, moving or AV animations. The content for these projections could be provided by local artists or community groups such as school children. One of the main advantages of using projected artwork is that you can easily add new material each year which ensures that the public do not become tired with the installation.



### LED Matrix / Digital display

Animated images are easily achieved using a LED matrix system. Colour changing shapes and forms would animate the spaces and could be re-programmed easily each year to ensure variety.



# 11. Overarching Lighting Principals

## 11.1 Sustainability

It is important that all future lighting schemes within Colchester are as sustainable as possible.

The control of luminaires can have a significant impact on the sustainability and environmental impact of the project, especially as it concerns the amount of energy that the equipment uses. The energy consumption of lighting is the total of the electricity used plus the energy costs of replacement lamps and other spare parts.

Energy savings can be made by reducing the number of hours that luminaires run. Reducing the number of hours of usage also reduces the number of lamp replacements needed. Architectural lighting should generally be switched off at midnight to reduce energy consumption. This lighting schedule should only be extended for special occasions such as New Year or a specially organised evening event. The exception is architectural lighting to subways which will remain on during the day and night.

When equipment is redundant or has reached the end of its life, decisions have to be made about the possibilities of re-use, recycling or other methods of disposal. The requirements of the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) regulations should be followed.

## 11.2 Maintenance & Running Costs

Understanding the overall cost of a lighting scheme is essential. Successful lighting schemes identify not only the project build costs but also what money is needed to maintain and fund the running of the lighting scheme. Most failed schemes are the result of the local authority failing to replace lamps. It is therefore essential that all costs are fully understood prior to any decision being made on a particular scheme.

The local authority Street Lighting Department is currently responsible for the upkeep of the highway lighting. This includes lighting needed to safely illuminate public highways and pedestrian spaces. The introduction of Architectural or Feature lighting is not currently within their remit and so an agreement would have to be made with additional funding agreed.

## 11.3 Control (Hours of operation)

Lighting of routes should be controlled by a combination of photocell or time switch. Dimmable control systems are available and could be considered if considered acceptable by the Essex Highways. The lighting should remain operational between dusk and dawn. Subways will be lit at all hours.

Architectural lighting should be switched off at midnight unless there is a special event, in which case it should be switched off up to an hour after the event is finished. It is essential to have a manual override so that the lighting can be left on for longer or turned off in case maintenance is needed or if there is, for example, a function or event running particularly late. This may be the case for both the Mercury Theatre and Visual Arts Facility.

## 11.4 Biodiversity

Artificial lighting can cause disturbance to ecological systems because animals, insects and plants can all be affected adversely.

The lowest amount of appropriate light should be used to achieve the needs of the lighting. Light levels for routes and highways should meet highway standards, however where lighting is not a necessity there should be no light.

## 11.5 Dark skies policy (light pollution)

Light pollution, also known as 'obtrusive light', is man-made light which ends up in places where it is not wanted. It is generated by poorly designed lighting schemes which employ luminaires that are either incorrect for the lighting application, inappropriately directed, or provide poor lighting control as a result of their inferior optical design. Light pollution has a number of aspects; the main sources are sky glow, light spill, glare and light trespass.

**Sky glow** is the brightening of the night sky, usually over cities, caused by vast numbers of luminaires, predominantly street lighting, leaking light upwards. The street lighting contribution to sky glow can be minimised by the use of flat glass luminaires as these cannot project light above the horizontal.

**Light spill** is the accidental illumination of areas by light that has overshot its destination.

**Glare** is the discomfort caused by viewing a bright light source against a dark background. Glare can be caused by direct view of the light source or by direct view of any part of the optical system of the luminaire. Generally, if the view of a light source is seen at an angle of more than forty five degrees then it is not significantly

distracting. Glare is also disabling for CCTV cameras and in these cases is not reduced by the angle of the lighting.

The source intensity of any light source used should comply with the ILT Guidance Notes for the reduction of obtrusive light for the specific environmental zone.

**Light trespass** is the spilling of light beyond the boundary of a property.

All efforts should be made to minimise light pollution, the following principles should be applied:

- High performance precise optical systems should be used in all luminaires to direct the light to the surface to be illuminated and restrict it from other surfaces;
- Street lighting luminaires should only emit light below the horizontal axis of the luminaire. The use of "flat glass" luminaires will achieve this;
- Lighting should be carefully focused once installed;
- Lockable luminaires should be used, where possible, to ensure that they are not accidentally refocused during servicing and maintenance;
- Provision should be made for louvers, cowls, snoots, and other accessories that control upward light spill and reduce glare or light trespass.

In addition to the above, each lighting scheme should comply with both the ILE Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Light Pollution and the CIBSE SLL Lighting Guides for The Outdoor Environment.

Due to the nature of the town centre being within a conservation area all lighting schemes should be designed by an independent lighting consultant and approved by Colchester Council prior to installation.

## 11.6 Specification

Not all lamps are suitable for external use. Incandescent and tungsten lamps should be avoided as they are not energy efficient and are unlikely to be maintained. A summary of lamp types and their suitability can be found at the end of the Glossary section of this document.

Luminaires also need to be carefully considered for the environment they are intended. Water ingress, vandalism, light spill, maintenance are all issues that need to be suitable addressed before a design can be submitted for review by Colchester Council.

Water features are commonly lit and special care needs to be taken to ensure that chemical solutions that treat the water do not have an adverse effect on the luminaire. A clear understanding of how the feature is going to be maintained is also essential as this will need to correspond with how the lighting is serviced.



## Colour Temperature

Colour temperature is one way of measuring the quality of white light. It describes coolness or warmth of the lighting. The higher the number in degrees Kelvin, the cooler the appearance of the light. So 3,000K light has a warm appearance while a 5,000K light is cool and bluish looking.

## Colour Rendering

The perception of the colour of an object is influenced by the quality of the light which illuminates the object. Different types of lamps have different levels of ability at showing the colours of objects accurately. The accuracy of rendering colours is known as the Colour Rendering Index (CRI) and the value is often given as an "Ra" number. The best colour rendering is given by lamps with a CRI (Ra) = 100. Lamps with a high colour rendering index approaching 100, are able to show the full range of colours well. Lamps with a low colour rendering index may not show all the colours of an object, or may emphasise some colours and subdue others. It can sometimes be assumed for rough estimates of light quality that the higher the Colour Rendering Index the wider the spectral distribution of the light. Lighting engineers use the term White light for light sources which have a CRI (Ra) above 60. The use of white light reduces the fear of crime, creates a more positive image of an area and encourages its use.

## Lamp & Luminaire

A lamp is the plug in device that actually makes the light (also called a "bulb") The word "luminaire" is used to describe all kinds of lanterns and light fittings.

### Lamp Types

There is a huge variety of sources to choose from. Briefly they include:

#### Low Pressure Sodium (SOX)

Very High Efficacy, long lamp life. Makes a monochromatic yellow colour which is generally disliked and has the worst colour rendering of any lamp in common use. Used only for street lighting where appearance does not matter. Its colour rendering is so bad that it is impossible to identify colours in its light. Low pressure sodium installations are being replaced by High Pressure Sodium which has a better colour appearance and colour rendering.

#### High pressure Sodium (SON)

High efficacy with a long lamp life. Orange colour, though some versions are slightly whiter, poor colour rendering. This lamp can only be partially dimmed and with expensive control gear. This lamp is widely used for street lighting and low quality exterior lighting. It tends to distort surface colours and remove subtle differences.

#### Metal Halide

High efficacy. Medium lamp life. White colour appearance with a range of colour temperatures available. Also available in coloured versions. Good colour rendering. Cannot be dimmed. Metal halide suffered from colour instability, the new ceramic types are much more stable.

#### Ceramic Metal Halide (CDM)

High efficacy. Long lamp life. White colour appearance with a range of colour temperatures available. Also

available in coloured versions. Good colour rendering. Mercury

#### Discharge (MBF)

Medium efficacy and long lamp life. White colour, mostly cool but some warm versions. Acceptable colour rendering. An older technology occasionally used for street lighting in the UK, widely used on the continent and in America. Ceramic metal halide has more or less displaced this lamp type.

#### Induction (QL)

Medium efficacy with extremely long life. White colour available in warm and cool colour temperature versions. Acceptable colour rendering. A compact lamp. This lamp is used for its extraordinary long life (it comes with a five year guarantee) and is used in locations where access for re-lamping is difficult.

#### Linear Fluorescent

Medium to high efficacy. Medium to long lamp life. Wide range of colours and colour temperatures. Wide range of colour renderings and available in coloured versions. Fairly fast start up time and can be dimmed. A long tubular lamp which is useful for special effects in exterior lighting, widely used for sign lighting.

#### Compact Fluorescent

Medium efficacy. Medium to long lamp life. Wide range of colours and colour temperatures. Wide range of colour renderings. Short tubular fluorescent lamp formed into a variety of shapes and sizes. Some versions can be dimmed, some can plug directly into domestic type lamp sockets. Rises to full intensity within a short time, but not instantly. Useful for special effects and lighting small areas. In the domestic market these lamps are known as Low Energy.

#### Cold Cathode and Neon

Medium efficacy. Very long lamp life. Wide range of colours and a wide range of colour renderings. A tubular lamp which may have a fluorescent coating and can be formed into a variety of shapes and lengths. Due to their long life these lamps are often formed into special



shapes for special jobs. But as they may last for twenty or more years, when they do finally fail the cost benefit has been such that it is economical to have another one specially made. Useful for special effects in exterior lighting.

#### **Tungsten Halogen**

Low efficacy. Short lamp life. Cheap lamp price. Easy to dim and has instant full light output. Warm white colour. Excellent colour rendering. Its visual performance is excellent both in colour and colour rendering.

#### **Low Voltage Tungsten Halogen**

Low efficacy. Medium lamp life. Cheap lamp price. Warm white colour. Excellent colour rendering. Easy to dim and has instant full light output. A transformer is needed to convert mains voltage to a low voltage, typically 12 volts, for the lamp. Its visual performance is excellent both in colour and colour rendering. Low voltage tungsten halogen is more efficient than mains voltage tungsten halogen, but it is still much less efficient than for example fluorescent lighting.

#### **Tungsten (GLS)**

Also known as incandescent or filament. Very low efficacy. Very short lamp life. Very cheap lamp. Warm white colour. Excellent colour rendering. Easy to dim and has instant full light output. A domestic lamp whose very short life and low efficacy give it little application in exterior lighting.

#### **Light Emitting Diode (LED)**

High efficacy. Extremely long life. Available in a range of colours and whites of different colour temperatures. Dimmable and gives instant light output. Low to medium colour rendering. Low light output so LEDs are used in large numbers to give a significant light output.

#### **Uniformity**

Uniformity refers to how evenly light spreads over a task area. Nonuniform illuminance can cause inadequate light levels in some areas, visual discomfort and bright spots and patches of light that cause distraction and

generate a low quality appearance. Uniformity values within this Lighting Strategy have been taken from BS5489 and EN1302.

#### **Consultation & Associated Documentation**

The following documents and strategies have been considered in conjunction with this lighting strategy:

- Colchester Town Centre Public Realm Strategy
- St Botolph's Quarter Masterplan
- Street Lighting Policy - Essex County Council
- Street Lighting Operational Plan – Essex County Council
- CIBSE Guides

Lighting requirements in this Strategy have been developed to facilitate future adoption by Colchester Council and Essex Highways and have been taken from the following guides and research:

- BS EN 5489:2006 Code of Practice for the Design of Road Lighting (2006)
- BS EN 13201-2:2003 Road Lighting - Part 2: Performance Requirements
- CIBSE SLL (Society of Light & Lighting) Code for Lighting 2006
- ILE Guidance Note for the Reduction of Light Pollution
- ILE Guidance The Outdoor Lighting guide (2005)
- CIE (International Commission on Illumination) Report: 'Guide on the Limitation of the Effects of Obstructive Light from Outdoor Lighting Installations'
- Countryside Agency's 'Lighting in the Countryside: Towards Good Practice'



## Policy Review and Development Panel

Item

8

23 September 2009

Report of	Head of Environmental and Protective Services	Author	Beverley Jones ☎ 282593
Title	Interim Report on work of Night-time Economy Task & Finish Group		
Wards affected	All		

**This report considers the progress made by the Night-time Economy Task and Finish Group**

### 1. Decision(s) Required

- 1.1 This report is for information only and intended to update the Panel on progress and initial findings from the work carried out.

### 2. Background Information

- 2.1 Colchester, like many town centres in the Country, suffers from a perception that in the evening it can feel an unwelcoming place to many people in the community. There may be concerns about a dominance of certain types of bars and clubs, yobbish behaviour by some, a grubby environment despite all the street cleansing and other initiatives such as night toilets that have been undertaken.
- 2.2 The Policy Review and Development Panel agreed that the issue should be investigated by a Task & Finish Group focusing on the issues arising from the Night-time Economy. The T&F Group were asked to investigate the main causes of the current situation, seek best practice elsewhere and to develop a broad range of proposals/recommendations which seek to address these causes. The agreed outcome of the proposals/recommendations is to deliver a Town Centre that feels safe and welcoming to all in the evening.

### 3. Update

- 3.1 The Night-time Economy Task & Finish Panel is comprised of Cllr Nick Barlow (Chair), Cllr Beverley Oxford, Cllr Beverly Davies, Cllr Kim Naish, Chief Inspector Adrian Coombs, Dominic Kavakeb, President of the Student Union, Essex University & Beverley Jones. The Panel is supported by an Officer Group with representatives from Services across the organisation who bring experience and skills which can help develop the ideas and proposals from the Panel.
- 3.2 It has generally been agreed that one of the main drivers to creating a Town Centre that feels safe and is welcoming to all in the evening is around changing the "monoculture" that currently exists after about 5.30pm when the retail outlets of the town close and the bars, restaurants and clubs open. By increasing the diversity of the "offer" in town, we will be able to increase the diversity of the people using and accessing the town. The greater number of people who find the drink-related anti-social behaviour unacceptable will help create a "self-regulating" culture/atmosphere in town. Alongside the very successful initiatives such as the SOS bus and Street Pastors this "self-regulation"

should help reduce some of the reliance on resource intensive Policing and will contribute to a sustainable future for the Town Centre.

### 3.3 This lead to the development of two key themes for the work of the Group

- The first was to investigating the commercial appetite for increasing the diversity of what is on offer in the town centre. Developing this further is the need to understand the patterns of use & what barriers currently prevent people accessing the town and then, what would entice them in
- The second was to investigate the responsibilities held across Colchester Borough Council and other partner organisations such as the Police in relation to enforcement and influence we can exert across the Town Centre. This is in relation to both controlling behaviour of individuals and the businesses in the Town Centre but also in relation to any strategic plans or policies we may have that can help shape or influence what the Town looks and feels like in the future.

## 4. Diversity of Offer – Commercial Opportunities

4.1 In order to understand the views of the businesses and the complex interaction between the very different approaches that we find during the day and the evening we wanted to consult as widely as possible with all the stakeholders of the Town Centre.

4.2 We developed a workshop which was delivered in May 09 and sent invitations to every business operating within the central Town Centre area, the residents associations serving the Town Centre area, all services within CBC that relate to the Town Centre, external enforcement agencies & other organisations such as Destination Colchester, CORBA, Lion Walk Shopping Centre & Culver Square Shopping Centre.

4.3 We received a reasonable response from most of the invitations, with the exception of the residents associations who did not send any representatives and this enabled us to organise breakout groups as part of the workshop and to focus discussion around specific areas where we wished to understand more. The Facilitator notes for each table are attached to this report. (Appendix 1)

4.4 The workshop had a number of aims which were:

- to bring together as many representatives of local businesses in the town centre as possible to facilitate discussion and cross-fertilisation of ideas
- Obtain information or insight into the problems and barriers that the different groups found in relation to the town centre
- Stimulate ideas and future focussed discussions around solutions for the problems we are currently facing
- Impart information in relation to the wealth of work currently being undertaken in relation to the future development of the Town Centre

4.5 The programme for the workshop is attached to this report. (Appendix 2)

## 5. Enforcement/Strategic Responsibility

5.1 The workshop also enabled representatives from the enforcement teams across the organisation, along with representatives from the Police to have a focussed discussion around their collective responsibilities and provided a mechanism to identify key outcomes in relation to either their own area of work or the joint actions that need to be put in place. The outcome of this discussion is outlined in the NTE Workshop Feedback report which is attached to this report. (Appendix 3)

## **6. Customer Insight**

- 6.1 Through discussions with our Research and Engagement Manager, Mandy Jones we have developed an innovative approach to seeking insight from a range of residents who may, or may not, use our Town Centre.
- 6.2 We are proposing to undertake Peer Research and are encouraging as many of our Borough Councillors as are able to become involved in the project. It is intended to use Mosaic, our socio-economic/socio-cultural modelling tool, to focus our resources on specific geographic areas within each ward. It is hoped that this will provide us with as wide an understanding or customer insight, as possible across the range of residents who might wish to use our Town Centre.
- 6.3 The questionnaire has been developed within the Research and Engagement Team in order to be as user friendly as possible, i.e. can be easily completed on a doorstep and it is anticipated that the completion of the questionnaire should only take on average 10 minutes. A copy of the questionnaire is attached to this report. (Appendix 4)
- 6.4 We have asked volunteers to commit to carrying out 10 questionnaires in order that we can obtain enough data to give us valid insight but should not be so many the commitment is too onerous.
- 6.5 We are offering an informal session for all Cllrs who have signed up to this research to provide some hints and tips around obtaining research information. It is planned that this research is undertaken as soon as possible but we are aware that the holiday season may delay this.

## **7. Best Practice**

- 7.1 An integral part of the project will be researching and understanding the developments that other authorities/towns have made in respect of managing their night-time economy. This is a slightly difficult area as the examples of best practice will depend on the issue you are exploring at the time. It is recognised that in terms of Policing, Colchester is put forward as an area of best practice, with the SOS Bus and Street Pastor schemes achieving national recognition. Similarly, best practice in relation to urban design still may not bring us examples of how the issues around the night-time economy were addressed.
- 7.2 We felt that we needed to obtain examples of best practice that clearly related to a holistic approach to dealing with the problems associated with the night-time economy and in this respect felt that commissioning this research would yield the most useful information.
- 7.3 It is proposed that we approach Dr Martin Hicks who leads the ISTR (Institute for Social and Technical Research) which is an Institute of the University of Essex that combines the social and technological sciences to generate insights into the personal and social use of information and communication technologies. Their objective is to understand what people do, how they do it, how this changes over time and what difference it makes. This understanding is then applied to the design of new technologies, commercial strategies or public policy interventions. The research brief for this piece of work is attached to this report. (Appendix 5)



## **8. Conclusion**

- 8.1 The work of the task & finish group is drawing to a conclusion now, with only the peer research and the best practice commissioned report being the only outstanding elements of research left to complete.
- 8.2 The final piece of work is clearly bringing together all the insight and research we have obtained and setting this against the wealth of work that is already being undertaken in respect of the Town Centre.
- 8.3 The final report aims to identify those key actions either short, medium or long terms that the Task & Finish Group believe will have the most impact on delivering a Town Centre which is safe and welcoming to all in the evening. These key actions may highlight and add importance to work already being carried out but similarly may suggest further key actions that have been identified as part of the research carried out.

## **Background Papers**

All background papers used are attached to this report.

Facilitator notes:

## **Residents – Not used as no participants**

45 minutes

The principle of the break-out group session is that the discussion must be future focussed on solutions rather than the existing problems. The exception to this rule is where the discussion might help to understand a “barrier” or reason why the people would not come in. Remember also the limitation to the time period we are looking at which is 6pm – midnight and discussion should be limited to this time wherever possible.

The discussion should focus around the following theme:

### **“What would encourage you off your sofa on a typical weeknight?!”**

We want to understand what activities, events or situation would encourage the use of the town centre. We would like to be in a position where we are able to demonstrate a market to encourage businesses to open longer/later.

If discussion flags you could try the following prompts:

**“Would changes to the lighting in the town in the evening make a difference to how you feel about it?”**

**“Are there any particular offers, (event + meal etc) that would be attractive?”**

**“Is there anything you would change about the Town Centre right now?”**

Again we are looking for changes or solutions to the root causes of what the town centre is at the moment rather than just looking at removing the symptoms (young people, drunks, litter etc)

At the end of the discussion you will be asked to *very briefly* present *three* of the top “solutions/ideas” that have come out of your discussion.

We will capture all the ideas and discussion which will feed into the final report but we would like the table to put some weight/priority on their suggestions by choosing their top three.

Facilitator notes:

## **Students/Young People – Not used as no participants**

45 minutes

The principle of the break-out group session is that the discussion must be future focussed on solutions rather than the existing problems. The exception to this rule is where the discussion might help to understand a “barrier” or reason why the Town Centre is not used. Remember also the limitation to the time period we are looking at which is 6pm – midnight and discussion should be limited to this time wherever possible.

The discussion should focus around the following theme:

### **“What would encourage you out of the Uni Bar on a typical night?!”**

We want to understand what activities, events or situation would encourage the use of the town centre. We would like to be in a position where we are able to demonstrate a market to encourage businesses to open longer/later.

If discussion flags you could try the following prompts:

**“Are there any specific events or offers that would be attractive to you?”**

**“Are there any reasons why you *wouldn't* come in?”**

**“How do you feel about Colchester – do you feel connected to the place?”**

**“Is there anything you would change about the Town Centre right now?”**

Again we are looking for changes or solutions to the root causes of what the town centre is at the moment rather than just looking at removing the symptoms (young people, drunks, litter etc)

At the end of the discussion you will be asked to *very briefly* present *three* of the top “solutions/ideas” that have come out of your discussion.

We will capture all the ideas and discussion which will feed into the final report but we would like the table to put some weight/priority on their suggestions by choosing their top three.

Facilitator notes:

**Table 1 – Businesses principally operating during the day**

**Facilitator – Karen Turnbull**

**Panel Member – Cllr B Davies**

45 minutes

The principle of the break-out group session is that the discussion must be future focussed on solutions rather than the existing problems. The exception to this rule is where the discussion might help to understand a “barrier” or reason why the business may not want to operate in the evening.

Remember also the limitation to the time period we are looking at which is 6pm – midnight and discussion should be limited to this time wherever possible.

The discussion should focus around the following theme:

**“What would encourage you open later to take advantage of the potential market that exists in the early evening?!”**

We want to understand what support businesses would need to make the shift in opening hours. How many businesses would it take to create a market of competition? Are they open to collaboration on offers/events to bring people in?”

If discussion flags you could try the following prompts:

**“Is there any support that you need to make it happen?”**

**“How would you feel about taster events to test the market – would you be willing to participate?”**

**“How do you feel about a Summer late night shopping evening similar to the late night shopping evening on the lead up to Christmas?”**

**“Are there any changes to the infrastructure that would encourage you to open later – i.e. lighting, transport & roads, car-parking?”**

**“Is there anything you would change about the Town Centre right now?”**

Again we are looking for changes or solutions to the root causes of what the town centre is at the moment rather than just looking at removing the symptoms (young people, drunks, litter etc)

At the end of the discussion you will be asked to *very briefly* present *three* of the top “solutions/ideas” that have come out of your discussion.

We will capture all the ideas and discussion which will feed into the final report but we would like the table to put some weight/priority on their suggestions by choosing their top three.



Facilitator notes:

**Table 2 – Businesses principally operating in the evening**  
**Facilitator – Howard Davies**  
**Panel Member – Cllr K Naish**

45 minutes

The principle of the break-out group session is that the discussion must be future focussed on solutions rather than the existing problems. The exception to this rule is where the discussion might help to understand a “barrier” or reason why the business may not want to operate in the evening.

Remember also the limitation to the time period we are looking at which is 6pm – midnight and discussion should be limited to this time wherever possible.

The discussion should focus around the following theme:

**“Accepting in one respect we *do* have a thriving night-time economy what can we do to help support this and change the potential negative perceptions held?!”**

We want to understand what support businesses would need to help them contribute more positively to the picture of the town centre in the evening.

If discussion flags you could try the following prompts:

**“How would you feel about a wider range of businesses operating in the town centre during the evening?”**

**“How would you feel about taster events to test the market – would you be willing to participate by altering what you “offer” on these particular evenings (i.e. cater for families etc)?”**

**“How do you feel about a Summer late night shopping evening similar to the late night shopping evening on the lead up to Christmas?”**

**“Are there any changes to the infrastructure that would see as positive– i.e. lighting, transport & roads, car-parking?”**

**“Is there anything you would change about the Town Centre right now?”**

Again we are looking for changes or solutions to the root causes of what the town centre is at the moment rather than just looking at removing the symptoms (young people, drunks, litter etc)

At the end of the discussion you will be asked to *very briefly* present *three* of the top “solutions/ideas” that have come out of your discussion.

We will capture all the ideas and discussion which will feed into the final report but we would like the table to put some weight/priority on their suggestions by choosing their top three.

Facilitator notes:

**Table 3 - Regulatory Services**  
**Facilitator – Matt Sterling**  
**Panel Member – Cllr N Barlow**

45 minutes

The principle of the break-out group session is that the discussion must be future focussed on solutions to the root cause rather than fixes for the existing problems. Remember also the limitation to the time period we are looking at which is 6pm – midnight and discussion should be limited to this time wherever possible.

The discussion should focus around the following theme:

**“What part do you have to play in delivering sustainable solutions to the?!”**

We want to understand what solutions can be delivered by either enforcement activities or by using our influence via policies etc which will shape the future direction of the town centre.

If discussion flags you could try the following prompts:

**“Are there plans to align the Licensing Policy with the Planning Policy based Area Action Plan for the Town Centre?”**

**“What responsibility do you think you have for helping to deliver the town centre of our vision?”**

**“Are there any action you could take right now that would help the situation?”**

**“Are there any plans for action in the pipeline or any novel approaches that other places are using that we could implement – is there support needed to implement these?”**

**“Is there anything you would change about the Town Centre right now?”**

Again we are looking for changes or solutions to the root causes of what the town centre is at the moment rather than just looking at removing the symptoms (young people, drunks, litter etc)

At the end of the discussion you will be asked to *very briefly* present *three* of the top “solutions/ideas” that have come out of your discussion.

We will capture all the ideas and discussion which will feed into the final report but we would like the table to put some weight/priority on their suggestions by choosing their top three.

**Night Time Economy Workshop**  
**14 May 2009. Lion Walk Church, 2pm-4pm**  
**Programme**

<i>Session</i>	<i>Speaker</i>	<i>Time allocation</i>	<i>Key messages</i>	<i>Anticipated outcome</i>
<b>Pre-workshop briefing for workshop facilitators</b>	Bev Jones	15 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aims of workshops</li> <li>• How they should be led/driven</li> <li>• Anticipated/expected outcomes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarity on what workshops should deliver</li> </ul>
<b>Welcome &amp; introductions</b>	Bev Jones	10 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• [Bev] Outlines format of the session</li> <li>• &amp; states how it forms part of the NTE Working Group which is a</li> <li>• Cross party working group ...</li> <li>• [Cllr Offen] States objectives of the event which are to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be the first of an ongoing series of events to engage with local businesses (particularly in the town centre), to open a dialogue with them and use future events to update and address key concerns (like opening later at night to form a more diverse evening economy...)</li> <li>• Council can't do this alone, needs to work with local people and local businesses</li> <li>• Set out a vision for how Colchester will change in the next 5 years or so</li> <li>• Start to capture key concerns which will need to be addressed</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scene set for the event</li> <li>• Prepares people in advance</li> </ul>
<b>Colchester: regaining its former status</b>	Karen Turnbull	10 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>An important past</b> – 1<sup>st</sup> capital of Roman Britain</li> <li>• <b>A vibrant present</b> – variety of things to do, places to live, quality of life, desirable place, hotspot for inward investment (despite recession)</li> <li>• <b>A dynamic future</b> – changed town centre, larger, more diverse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connects history and heritage with contemporary life in Colchester</li> <li>• Sets the scene for change</li> </ul>

<b>Session</b>	<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Time allocation</b>	<b>Key messages</b>	<b>Anticipated outcome</b>
<b>Why change?</b>	Lindsay Barker	15 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Places now compete for attention, interest, spend from residents, inward investors, visitors</li> <li>• Population growth – 170,000 current growing to 220,000 by 2021</li> <li>• People need more services or they will travel elsewhere to get them</li> <li>• Concerning feedback from (Destination Benchmarking) research – need to change/invest</li> <li>• Concern at night time imbalance at present</li> <li>• Protect Colchester as it is</li> <li>• Develop Colchester as it needs to be</li> <li>• Change needs to be social and cultural as well as physical – we will outline how the place is changing but the social change has already impacted from Weds early closing to Sunday trading – is the next change evening opening?</li> <li>• What would happen if there was no investment/change? Slowly decline as people chose to spend their time, money elsewhere</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• States clearly the case for change</li> <li>• Sets the seed for later opening in the evening</li> </ul>
<b>What will Colchester look and feel like in 2015?</b>	Howard Davies	15 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Making Colchester a place for people: a place where people want to be</b></li> <li>• Change is already taking place – list out changes for Colchester wider than town centre (new A12 Junction, HGP investment, North Station Masterplan etc)</li> <li>• The vision for the town centre (presentation)</li> <li>• Transport: Park &amp; Ride, more balanced/managed use of High Street (not just by cars), Easy car parking/special offers</li> <li>• St Botolph's regen, public realm strategy, quality improvements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspiring vision</li> <li>• But acknowledge that this may create concerns</li> </ul>



<b>Session</b>	<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Time allocation</b>	<b>Key messages</b>	<b>Anticipated outcome</b>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not just CBC but private sector too – Lion Walk</li> <li>• Tourism - major events, many attractions in town centre, new Cultural Quarter, Roman Circus, new hotels – evening vibe</li> <li>• New shops – St Botolph’s &amp; Vineyard Gate</li> <li>• New residential areas – St Botolph’s, new communities</li> <li>• Existing communities: Dutch Quarter, above town centre shops, Priory Street, St Mary’s etc</li> <li>• How it will feel in the daytime / evening – safety, enjoyment, relaxed, confident</li> </ul>	
<b>Tea/coffee break</b>		15 mins		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chance to digest info from above</li> <li>• Opens up networking opportunity</li> </ul>
<b>What does this mean to you/your business?</b> Workshop session - Split into groups Includes tea/coffee/ comfort break time	Facilitators (choose from):  Cllr N Offen  Bev Jones  Howard Davies  Karen Turnbull  Matt Sterling	45 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshop key issues of concern/delight among those attending</li> <li>• Allied to the AAP themes (tbs by Howard)</li> <li>• Summarise and report back</li> <li>• Table specific groups – residents / retailers / CBC Planning, Licencing, Street / Restaurants, cafes, bars</li> <li>• Based on open questions – what would encourage you to go into town in evening, design questions to fit the vision</li> <li>• NTE Panel Members to participate in workshops (Cllr Barlow, Cllr Naish, Cllr Bev Oxford. Cllr Davies)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tests how far they are making the connection between what’s going to happen and their business operations</li> <li>• Exposes key issues / sensitivities we will need to be aware of/address and resource in future</li> <li>• Exposes potential actions for CBC</li> <li>• Provides the basis for future dialogue with them</li> </ul>
<b>Summary &amp; Close</b>	Chair of NTE T&F Panel	10 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview of the session</li> <li>• Confirm feedback captured</li> <li>• State intention for ongoing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creates (or attempts to establish a</li> </ul>

<b>Session</b>	<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Time allocation</b>	<b>Key messages</b>	<b>Anticipated outcome</b>
			dialogue & say when next meeting will be	level of) confidence in process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• States positive intention for future working together</li> </ul>

## Feedback from NTE Workshop

### Table 1 - Retailers

The objective, everyone agreed, was to increase (sustain in these times?) footfall in the town centre

1. Offering a quality experience in the town centre – this covered customer service, street furniture, cleanliness, consistency of experience so that people could rely on Colchester (& in turn be confident of recommending it to friends and relatives), taking a mixed approach to different events so that different groups of people would be attracted here and also packaging, which would mean that businesses would work together to offer deals with things like car parking and possibly entrance into visitor attractions – these packages would be attractive to people and could be offered through hotels. There is a long term aspiration to pedestrianise the High Street.

**Action/Recommendation:** Continue work on the Public Realm Strategy in order to design a space that people feel comfortable, safe and attracted to.

**Action/Recommendation:** Investigate the potential to pedestrianise or make the High Street “car-free”. There are possibilities around “shared spaces” which changes the way the High Street is used and feels, whilst keeping the evening traffic element which maintains a flow through and is important for safety.

**Action/Recommendation:** Work with ECC Highways Department to investigate the flow of traffic around the town centre.

**Action/Recommendation:** Commission study to understand footfall in the Town Centre in order to inform both Public Realm outcomes, event/initiative locations, parking strategy & offer combinations of parking + event in order to influence footfall through the Town Centre.

2. Licencing & Policing issues – the impact of the smoking ban on ‘forcing’ people out on the streets and the intimidating look and feel of these groups was mentioned and there was a desire to ‘make’ such businesses set up a smoking area at the back of their premises. There was also some question on how CBC was interpreting the licensing laws which none of us could answer but worth further consideration and a definite desire for feedback on this one.

I don’t know if it was the retailing bias around the table but there was a strong feeling that the answer to the 5-7.30pm gap is for the restaurants, cafés and bars to open at that time (most are??!) and that retail would follow. There then followed an interesting perspective from both Lion Walk and Culver Square about how impossible it is for them to get all their shops opening and closing at the same time due to the different policies of chain shops so it might be that they feel that they couldn’t impose (or possibly even influence) later opening in the evening.

I guess what they are saying is that there needs to be other reasons to come into/or stay in town and then the retailers would respond to increased footfall. However, when we discussed the forthcoming Tour Series cycle race the main shopping centres said they didn’t feel that it was good for them as people would simply queue up at the barriers waiting for the event to start and they wouldn’t want to do that with bags of shopping... so type of events need consideration in future.

**Action/Recommendation:** Investigate how Licensing can work with the Police to address the issue of the smoking ban and influence/ensure that the smoking areas are not on the street. Learn from best practice in other towns.

3. Variety – it was agreed that there was a need to sustain and develop the current variety of things to see and do (& shops) in the town centre. It was felt that this is one of the things which makes Colchester special and encourages footfall.

**Action/Recommendation:** CBC has a role to play in helping the entrepreneurial spirit. There should be a case study on either the Philosophy Café or Pizza Express which could be used as shared learning with other businesses.

**Action/Recommendation:** Need to secure 4 -5 anchor events/activities as catalyst to start of culture change and stimulus for other venues to follow.

**Action/Recommendation:** Adult Evening Courses – why couldn't these be held at cafés? Investigate possibility of bringing 3 or 4 course providers together with venues in order to secure 3 or 4 suitable courses provided in alternative Town Centre locations. CBC has a role to facilitate finding suitable venues. This principle could also be extended to children's courses as they are already delivered in the Minories and could be provided in alternative venues.

**Action/Recommendation:** Investigate Museum outreach possibilities in relation to providing workshops in alternative venues to the Museum buildings.

**Action/Recommendation:** Source target venues (which don't need to be cafés) and use Mosaic to assist social targeting.

**Action/Recommendation:** CBC should lead by example with Museum events and blue badge talks rather than walks etc.

#### Table 2 - Licensed Premises

1. The market could be used much more effectively. It has been 10 years since the market was set up and it is in need of review. The table were keen to see an evening market which could possibly move around the town.

*Post-workshop investigation – There is a formal consultation currently being run in respect of the market by Street Services. There is a desire to find a more permanent location which would enable services to be provided such as power. This would enable the market to be used for other things.*

**Action/Recommendation:** Review the provision of the Market in the town with a view to introducing regular, themed, evening markets. Variations such as; Antiques, French, Farmers Market, Car-boot Market, Free-swap or Plant-swap were suggested.

2. There should be regular meetings or similar workshops to carry on the momentum of the work

**Action/Recommendation:** To continue the workshop concept on a regular basis including all stakeholders for the Town Centre.

#### Table 3 - Regulatory Services

1. Licensing, Planning and other CBC services should be better aligned to adopt a more strategic approach to influencing the feel of the night-time town centre. In particular this



means exploring the link between the Area Action Plan for the town centre and Licensing; and improving communication between those 'responsible authorities' that can challenge a venue's licence in the event of breaches

**Action/Recommendation:** Licensing Policy & Planning Policy to work together to look at zoning and shaping areas of the town.

2. We should increase the tidiness of the Town Centre during the night-time to combat the perception that the 'rules change' after dark. This could be achieved either by CBC Street Cleaning working through the night as they did before Christmas (but with the obvious resource implications); or by enforcing litter notices against some businesses such as fast-food outlets

**Action/Recommendation:** To investigate an extension of the street cleaning programme which should be carried out *while* people are in the town not just after the town has closed.

**Action/Recommendation:** To take a more proactive stance in relation to street cleanliness by extending the use of street litter control notices.

3. We should act as the catalyst for change by organising events such as the workshop and bring people together.

**Action/Recommendation:** To continue the workshop concept on a regular basis including all stakeholders for the Town Centre.

4. The Police and Licensing Authority should continue their joint visits of pubs and clubs; and use the 'action plan' approach to improve the way venues operate and comply with the law

**Action/Recommendation:** Continue and develop the joint approach to managing venues within the Town Centre. Investigate best practice and proactive approaches carried out by other towns of similar size and nature.

## Evening use of the Town Centre

Questionnaire to families with children (18 and under)

**We are consulting with families about whether they visit the town centre together in the evening, including any improvements they would like to see. The results will be fed back into a report which will inform future plans for our town centre.**

**We would be very grateful if you could answer a short survey (5/10 minutes) to help us with our research. Any answers you give us will be treated in the strictest confidence and used only for the purposes outlined above.**

<b>First line of your address</b>	
<b>Your postcode</b>	

<i>About your family</i>										
Q1	What is the make up of your family?	<input type="checkbox"/> One parent and child(ren) <input type="checkbox"/> Two parents and child(ren) <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)								
Q2	What position do you hold in the family in relation to the children?	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent or guardian <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)								
Q3	How many children do you have in each of these age groups?	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2" style="text-align: right;">Number of children</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="width: 70%;">Under 11</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Between 11 and 15</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Between 16 and 18</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Number of children		Under 11	<input type="checkbox"/>	Between 11 and 15	<input type="checkbox"/>	Between 16 and 18	<input type="checkbox"/>
Number of children										
Under 11	<input type="checkbox"/>									
Between 11 and 15	<input type="checkbox"/>									
Between 16 and 18	<input type="checkbox"/>									

**Visiting the town centre: Times and seasons**

**SPRING AND SUMMER TIME**

<p>Q4</p>	<p>How often do you visit the town centre after 6pm with your children <b>during the spring and summer time</b> (May to October)? (This is only approximate. If you have not lived here for a full year, just make an estimate of what you expect to do)</p>	<p><b>During the week</b> (Monday to Thursday)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Once a week or more  <input type="checkbox"/> Once a month  <input type="checkbox"/> Once every six months  <input type="checkbox"/> Once a year  <input type="checkbox"/> Less than once a year</p>	<p><b>At the weekend</b> (Friday to Sunday)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Once a week or more  <input type="checkbox"/> Once a month  <input type="checkbox"/> Once every six months  <input type="checkbox"/> Once a year  <input type="checkbox"/> Less than once a year</p>
<p>Q5</p>	<p>What time would you usually come home from a visit to the town centre with your family in the spring and summer?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Anytime up to 8pm  <input type="checkbox"/> Anytime up to 9pm  <input type="checkbox"/> Anytime up to 10pm  <input type="checkbox"/> Later than 10pm</p>	

**AUTUMN AND WINTER TIME**

<p>Q6</p>	<p>How often do you visit the town centre after 6pm <b>during the week</b> (Monday to Thursday) with your children <b>during the autumn and winter time</b> (October to April)? (This is only approximate. If you have not lived here for a full year, just make an estimate of what you expect to do)</p>	<p><b>During the week</b> (Monday to Thursday)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Once a week or more  <input type="checkbox"/> Once a month  <input type="checkbox"/> Once every six months  <input type="checkbox"/> Once a year  <input type="checkbox"/> Less than once a year</p>	<p><b>At the weekend</b> (Friday to Sunday)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Once a week or more  <input type="checkbox"/> Once a month  <input type="checkbox"/> Once every six months  <input type="checkbox"/> Once a year  <input type="checkbox"/> Less than once a year</p>
<p>Q7</p>	<p>What time would you usually come home from a visit to the town centre with your family in the autumn and winter?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Anytime up to 8pm  <input type="checkbox"/> Anytime up to 9pm  <input type="checkbox"/> Anytime up to 10pm  <input type="checkbox"/> Later than 10pm</p>	

<b>Activities</b>					
Q8	Please indicate how frequently you would undertake the following activities when you visit the town centre with your family				
	<b>Rarely</b> <i>e.g less than once a year</i>	<b>Occasion-ally</b> <i>e.g once a year</i>	<b>Some-times</b> <i>e.g twice a year</i>	<b>Quite often</b> <i>e.g once a month</i>	<b>Usually</b> <i>e.g once a month</i>
	Go for a meal				
	Visit the cinema				
	Visit the theatre				
	Visit a bar or café				
	Go late night shopping				
	Other (please specify)				
Q9	Do you visit the town centre as often as you would like?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes (please go to Q 12)  <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Q10	If you visit <i>less often than you would like</i> is this because of your lifestyle or something about the town centre itself?		<input type="checkbox"/> Lifestyle (please go to Q12)  <input type="checkbox"/> Town Centre itself		
Q11	If something about the town centre stops you from visiting with your family, please can you tell us what this is?				
Q12	What improvements would you like to see in the town centre?				
Q13	Do you have any other comments?				

Thank you for your responses, results of the survey will be posted on our website at [www.colchester.gov.uk](http://www.colchester.gov.uk).



## Colchester Night-time Economy – a study of best practice

### Project brief for consultants

#### 1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. Colchester, like many town centres in the Country, suffers from a perception that in the evening it can feel an unwelcoming place to many people in the community. There may be concerns about a dominance of certain types of bars and clubs, yobbish behaviour by some, a grubby environment despite all the street cleansing and other initiatives such as night toilets that have been undertaken.
- 1.2. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a statutory duty on every local authority to work in partnership with statutory, non-statutory, community and voluntary agencies to develop and implement strategies for tackling crime and disorder. Under Section 17 of the Act, Colchester Borough Council has a duty to 'exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it can to prevent crime and disorder'.
- 1.3. Despite a number of measures in the past including the setting up of a 'STAND' initiative the Town still, at certain times, in certain areas, portrays a poor environment in the evening where people would not choose to bring their families or where young and older people alike would not feel comfortable to walk and linger. This does not take away from the value of previous initiatives or the valiant efforts of street cleaning staff, police and others to ensure that the environment is the best it possibly can be.
- 1.4. It needs to be stated quite clearly that Colchester has a record of being safer than many similar towns. It is also important to state that for most of the day Colchester remains a very attractive place to visitors. The issue is as much about how it feels in the evening in certain areas to all people, the atmosphere and perceived safety as opposed to a poor record on actual crime figures.
- 1.5. There are a number of groups and partnerships that have a role to play. Essex Police in partnership with the CDRP (Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership) has now developed a Town Centre Tasking Group (TCTG) to co-ordinate the work and roles of partners in making the town centre safer. This group brings together, as appropriate to the task in hand, CBC/Police Licensing, CBC Street Services, Transport, Club/Pub Watch, CBC Anti-Social Behaviour Team, CBC Environmental Services, Neighbourhood Action Panel, Neighbourhood Watch and Resident Group representation.
- 1.6. There are Action Plans for the Town Centre Tasking Group which aim to develop initiatives aimed at creating a safer town however some of the recent initiatives, while innovative and very effective such as the Street Pastors Scheme and the proposed SOS and Community Resource Bus, are primarily dealing with the symptoms of the situation. There needs to be a hard look at the causes and how a change to the public's perception of the evening atmosphere in Town can be brought about.
- 1.7. A range of proposals could be considered further such as
  - Bulk review of licenses
  - Award scheme for trade premises that change their approach
  - More visible night time cleansing
  - Night Time Street Wardens
  - Enforcement of industry code on point of sale promotions.

- Physical improvements to design out crime
- More varied offer in evening venues

1.8. These are only initial thoughts and the issue is whether there is best practice elsewhere and the development of a broad range of proposals seeking to address the causes by a range of partners would be able to make a significant difference and add value to the existing work already being undertaken.

## **2. Objectives of the research**

2.1 The objectives of the project are as follows:

- To obtain examples of best practice which relate to increasing diversity of both attractions on offer and public accessing and using the Town Centre, preventing crime & anti-social behaviour and contribute to creating a more vibrant and diverse town centre economy.
- Examples of best practice where either/or Planning & Licensing legislation have been used successfully to create/shape the development of a Town Centre
- To understand how we can overcome any organisational or cultural barriers to using the legislation provided by both the Planning & Licensing Regimes to deliver the desired outcome.

## **2. Methodology**

2.1 We understand the current problems that are experienced by Colchester which are described in the background section above and therefore do not need any further research to understand this in any greater detail.

2.2 We wish to be provided with concrete examples of best practice which has been successfully implemented and the principles of which can be applied to Colchester.

## **3. Outcomes**

3.1 The collected data should be analysed and presented in accessible report format, including:

- The report should be written in a way that is accessible by the public and local business representatives and should also be written in a way that is inspiring to the reader.
- The report should include recommendations for business development and focus of council resources in relation to findings from the data in comparison with national trends.
- An executive summary should be produced with recommendations appropriate to a non-technical audience and clear summaries made at key points at the start of each section of the report

## **4. Project timescales**

4.1

## **Notes of Task and Finish group meeting 18.2.09**

Present :

Cllr Nigel Offen  
Cllr Gerard Oxford  
Cllr Stephen Ford  
Cllr Michael Hardy  
Cllr John Gilli-Ross

Paul Wilkinson  
John Davies

### **Overview**

PW started by running through the presentation given to the Policy and Development Panel.

ECC Speed Management Strategy- too late to input into the consultation.

There are limits imposed by ECC on the types of roads where 20mph zones can be introduced namely Priority Routes PR 1 and PR2. These restrictions may be challenged by CBC as part of this exercise.

The Functional Route Hierachy Plan was circulated - it was noted that was not up to date and there was a need to clarify status of new roads eg Axial Way.

Cllr Ford - it is important how we share public space.

Cllr Oxford - enforcement of new Regulations is important in order to be effective. Signage on its own will not be enough.

Cllr Ford - what is the position of the Police? Are they reluctant to carry out extra enforcement work? In response point was made that there is little difference between enforcement of 20 or 30 mph restrictions.

PW - referred to case study at Graz where 20mph reductions introduced with signing only. Fatal and serious injury accidents were reduced by 24%.

### **Data**

ECC accident data to be provided on geographical basis by vulnerable groups. Can update FSI data for 2008. This data will allow us to identify accident hot spots augmented by evidence from NAPs/Parishes.

Cllr Oxford - important to enforce bad parking on/at physical measures.

Cllr Offen - vulnerable groups to include elderly, who are more in danger from accidents.

Cllr Offen - referred to Public health report for 2008 on PCT website.

## **Objectives**

Group discussed list of objectives and agreed that main objective should be reduction in road deaths within the Borough.

Wording of main objective discussed and agreed as:

To reduce road injuries and deaths in the borough by extending existing 20mph restrictions while also considering other safety solutions.

Group did not want to limit the initiative to urban areas only.

Target discussed - reduction in deaths and serious injuries caused by road accidents to national average.

## **Consultation**

Proposed tabulated list was agreed with the following additions:

- To include Residents Associations
- To include Colchester Association of Local Councils (CALC) and Essex Association of Local Councils
- Consultation with head teachers - Essex Head Teachers Association?
- Voluntary organisations- eg Age Concern, Mencap, other disability groups.

## **20mph Task and Finish Group**

Meeting 26 May 2009 - Notes

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Present:

Cllr S Ford

Cllr M Hardy

Cllr J Gilli-Ross

Paul Wilkinson

### **1. Apologies - Cllr Oxford**

### **2. Membership**

Nigel Offen has stood down a replacement is needed.

**Action** - PW to contact Amanda Chidgey.

### **3. Reporting to Policy and Development Panel**

PW explained that due to resource issues and delays in the supply of data the TF&G would not be in a position to report back in June. The next Policy Panel meetings are 10 August and 21 September.

**Action** – PW to contact Amanda Chidgey

### **4. Objective of introducing 20mph limits/zones**

The objective discussed and agreed at the Feb T&FG meeting was reviewed. MH expressed the view that the main driver for introducing 20mph limits/zones is to reduce the danger to vulnerable road users from motor vehicles. The main objective was confirmed as:

**Objective:** To reduce road injuries and deaths in the borough by extending existing 20mph restrictions while also considering other safety solutions.

### **5. Dft Consultation on Making Britain's Roads the Safest in the World – The Road Safety Strategy Post 2010**

This was briefly discussed as the introduction of 20mph zones in residential areas is a proposal to reduce killed and serious casualties further.

Data from the report was used to illustrate that the age group at greatest risk were young drivers.

### **6. Data from ECC**

3 year plots of all accidents have been received from ECC:

- All accidents
- Accidents involving children
- Accidents involving cyclists
- Accidents involving pedestrians



The plots were greatly appreciated by the group and show the spread and dispersed nature of accidents. It was difficult to pick out significant clusters of killed or seriously injured accidents in residential areas. The most significant cluster was in the town centre where there is already a 20mph limit.

In the rural areas accidents are more dispersed. Based on local knowledge and discussions with constituents the councillors present were surprised how few accidents there were as this doesn't reflect constituents' views. In most cases the local perception of safety is worse than the actual situation.

The Colchester 2008 and first Quarter 2009 data from the Essex Road Safety Casualty Reduction Board was discussed. It was noted that the Board's focus was on the following groups:

- Young drivers
- Drink driving
- Motorcyclists
- Accidents involving excess speed

Copies of the All Accidents plot and Essex Road Safety Casualty Reduction Board data were issued.

**Action** – issue the remaining Accident plots and ERSCRB data so all members of the group have a set.

Detailed data on all the accidents in 2008 has been received along with data by the functional route hierarchy. Yet to receive this broken down by 'built up' and non built up' roads

MH queried the two child fatal accidents that took place on the B1026.

**Action** – PW to review data

SF requested information on the reduction in number and severity of accidents with speed reduction.

**Action** – PW to supply

## 7. Consultation

- A simple consultation paper has been circulated to:
  - i. The Parish Council reps on the Local Highway Panel
  - ii. Association of Secondary Headteachers in Essex (ASHE)
  - iii. Essex Primary Heads Association (EPHA)
  - iv. Association of Special Needs Schools
  - v. Residents Associations on NAPs that have prioritised road safety/speed reduction
  - vi. Essex County Council - Area office and County Hall
  - vii. Essex Police - Casualty Reduction and Road Policing Units
  - viii. Colchester Ambulance Service
  - ix. Colchester's main bus operators - First and Network Colchester
  - x. Colchester and Essex Associations of Local Councils (CALC and EALC)
  - xi. Colchester Age Concern

## xii. Colchester Access Group

A discussion took place on this list:

- Has the right balance been achieved between the rural and urban areas where the democratic structures differ?
- Should Borough Members on the Local Highway Panel be consulted directly?
- SF asked if the Royal Association for the Deaf should be consulted.

**Action** PW to consider these points and also contact Loanda Quested to discuss the review, the NAP action plans and their residents association's responding to the consultation.

A strong view of the group was that we still need to establish where the introduction of 20mph limits/zones would be most useful. A blanket introduction of 20mph limits/zones would be opposed by the group. However if there was local demand then the introduction of a 20mph limit should be considered in line with the approach to greater community involvement set out in circular 01/2006.

### Post meeting notes

- Informal discussions have taken place with the ECC Road Safety Manager. ECC is willing to discuss 20mph limits but will not at this time complete the consultation form. Consultation conflict for ECC to be reported to the Policy Review Panel.

**Action:** PW to include in report

- Informal discussions with Essex Police suggest that they would not support introduction due to lack of resources to enforce. A May 09 Local Transport Today article on Oxford's introduction of signed only 20mph limits and the Police's objection to their introduction on the basis of lack of enforcement was distributed.

## 8. Next Steps and Outstanding Work

**Actions:** PW

- Comparison of accidents and the Functional Route Hierarchy as current ECC policy limits the introduction of 20mph limits to roads classified as non priority routes.
- Undertake benefit analysis of reducing the number and severity of accidents.
- Approximate costs of introducing measures needs to be established. Some are already available but these needs to better relate to a "typical situation".
- Research the criteria used eg accident numbers, child casualties by Oxford City Council to determine their introduction of 20mph limits.

- Start to draft the Policy Panel Report and confirm which meeting to present this to.

#### 9. Speed Management Conference

- A brief note of the Speed Management conference was circulated in April. Reducing speed was a key message in helping reduce the severity of accidents. Most although not all presenters and delegates thought reducing speed was a good thing to help reduce accidents. There was no obvious agreement on the best method of reducing speed.
- Very few new hard facts were presented by those who had introduced signed only 20mph zones and limits.
- A recent Local Transport Today article reporting on the London Borough of Barnet was circulated. It detailed the affects on average speeds when road humps are removed, and then vehicle activated speed cameras introduced to control the 30mph limit.

#### 10. Date of next meeting

**Action** – PW to arrange

Post meeting note – meeting confirmed as Tuesday 18 August 2-4pm,  
Rowan House Rm1

## **20mph Task and Finish Group meeting, 18 August 2009**

### **Meeting Notes**

#### **Present:**

Cllr S Ford, Cllr M Hardy, Cllr J Gilli-Ross  
Paul Wilkinson, Sarah Ward

#### **1. Apologies** - Cllr Oxford

#### **2. Membership**

A replacement on the group for Nigel Offen has not been found. SW to contact Committee Services.

The fact that the Group has no Chair was also raised. It was felt that a Chair was required, as is the case for other T&F groups, to help add formality and weight to the Group and its recommendations, as well as chair the meetings. Of those present only SF has chaired on a T&F Group before so offered to chair from now on. It was suggested that the view of Committee Services was sought on this issue and SF taking on the role.

**Action** - SW to take both up with Amanda Chidgey.

#### **3. Consultation update**

##### **Overview**

SW outlined the consultation work and responses received so far as per the Update issued prior to the meeting and also in a Table of Responses issued to those present. Two subsequent responses are still to be added. The consultee list is as per the Group meeting Notes from May 09. There has been a delay in consulting with the NAP Residents Associations and Borough Members on the Local Area Highway Panel, but this has now been issued to them. The responses so far have broadly been supportive, largely for a site by site basis, with community support and along the lines of the areas suggested eg around schools.

Meetings have been sought from ECC and the Police as key partners in the delivery of 20mph areas. A meeting was held with officers from ECC on 21 July. The Police have declined to meet but their Roads Policing Unit did submit a consultation response. Both organisations expressed reservations about widespread rollout of 20mph areas, largely due to limited financial resources and existing road safety priorities to achieve casualty reductions ie drink driving, young drivers, speeding and motorcyclists. ECC's response to the DfT's "A Safer Way" consultation was also reviewed.

ECC sought the view of the Cabinet Member on the issue of potential demand for 20mph areas in Colchester. To achieve their national target, they will continue to focus their resources on the specific accident groups identified by

the Essex Road Safety Casualty Reduction Board. However, the cabinet member is willing to consider the experience of Portsmouth's 20mph scheme and will be willing to review the impacts of un-engineered 20mph zones, whilst they recognise the likely additional resource implications of this for the Police. (Post meeting note – following local pressure last year ECC did allow the introduction, a 20mph signed only zone into a residential area of Chelmsford). ECC also intend to trial some 20mph areas outside selected schools in the County

**Action** – SW seek confirmation on the East Area Office area school

### **Discussion**

There was general disappointment at the low response rate, although the group felt that further responses were likely to broadly support the views of those already received. JGR expressed disappointment that only one school had responded given that many consider road safety as a significant issue. SW confirmed that the ECC Schools team contact had been requested to issue the consultation to organisations covering primary, secondary and special education school head teachers in Colchester. The group requested it be resent, with a revised closing date of end of Sept, to all Colchester school governor chairs from who a response may be more likely.

It was also queried which NAPs had been consulted. SW confirmed that the residents associations on the NAPs highlighting speeding etc as a priority on the Action Plan had received it. JGR suggested the Constable/Horkesley NAP had this as a priority but had not received it. This was not one of the NAPs received from Community Safety. MH queried if West Colchester NAP had received it as he understood their Action Plan included these issues.

JGR queried if the basis on which Langham Parish Council had responded. SW confirmed that the four Parish Council reps on the LAHP had been consulted, therefore this response represented the views of Town and Parish Councils in Colchester. The CALC also represents LAHP Parish members. JGR reported that the LAHP has decided its priority for allocating funds will be safety and children.

**Actions** – SW to arrange reissue to school governors, any outstanding NAPs, including review West Colchester's again and the other organisations consulted who have not responded so far.

PW informed the Group about a correspondence that had started between Colchester's Living Streets group (part of a national lobby group) and a national road safety lobby group called 20's Plenty for Us. There may be the desire to establish a local 20s Plenty group with an increased pressure to implement 20mph areas in Colchester as a result. The Group asked for a brief background note on 20'sPlenty to be circulated for information and for contact to be made with 20's Plenty.

**Actions** – SW to prepare a note, PW to contact 20's Plenty

Post meeting note - Rod King of 20's Plenty for Us is coming to Colchester on the 10<sup>th</sup> September – PW to meet, time to be confirmed.



#### **4. Data**

##### **Colchester Safety Data**

PW tabled a summary table of Colchester Safety data on accident and casualty totals 2006-08 by ECC road hierarchy category. On average there have been approx 115 KSI/yr over this time. Most accidents and casualties of all severities; fatal, serious and slights occur on Priority 1 and 2 Routes which ECC currently has a policy not to implement 20mph speed limits on. There was only 25 KSI/yr on the non priority routes where 20mph could be delivered with out a change in ECC policy.

When looked at in conjunction with the accident plots maps viewed at the last meeting the accidents occurring on non-PR1&2 Routes are largely scattered across the borough, rather than clustering around hotspots, other than the town centre, which it was commented was already 20mph and was in part due to wider night-time economy issues. There are long term plans to improve the town centre environment which will include this issue and priority for more sustainable forms of transport. It was requested that information on accidents on the High Street be provided to see the cause, split between day/night time etc.

**Action** – PW to review High Street accident data

PW also reported that the TRL 2000 study of approx 50 20mph schemes with physical measure in the UK, including New Town reported approx 8 fatalities and 173 serious injuries before, which decreased by approximately 70% following introduction of the physical measures.

##### **New Town**

PW reported that the approximate cost of implementing the physical measures in New Town of approx 55 “humps” and signs, based on ECC figures would cost approximately £300k.

##### **Discussion**

- **Data vs opinion**

There is little data and evidence available to support widespread implementation of 20mph zones, which can be seen to support the ECC and Police approach of targeting specific groups of road users, rather than using ‘type’ of area eg a housing estate or around schools as the basis. Physical measures are expensive and there are limited number of accidents in the residential areas. There is also limited info on the effectiveness of “signed-only” schemes, many local authorities are awaiting the outcome of Portsmouth’s scheme.

By the “laws of physics” it cannot be denied that a reduction in speed is a good to reduce the severity of accidents and the number of accidents. The issue is how is the reduction in speed is delivered.

A ‘common sense’ view of the issues and consideration of opinions of local residents and other groups like 20s Plenty supports wider introduction of

20mph areas for safety and wider quality of life/environmental reasons. The issue in Colchester and recommendations of the Group need careful consideration and advice was felt to be needed. The initial feeling was that the Group might recommend areas be considered on a community-led basis, however recognise the perception vs data issues and ECC's need to have strong evidence to target funding

- **Accident Costs and Benefits**

Financial values are put on the cost of a casualty to society – current values are :

Fatal casualty - £1,428, 180

Serious casualty - £160,480

Slight casualty - £12,370

From these values cost benefit analysis can be undertaken to assess whether a scheme is value for money or not. This assessment relies on accidents having occurred in the past in the right location and can be saved by the intended measure. In light of the uncertainty of the available data it is premature to undertake further cost benefit analysis.

- **Reviewing the data** - the group requested an opportunity to consider this information and the maps provided, looking at accidents/casualties overall and by category eg motorcyclists, outside of the meeting and report back their thoughts
- **Meeting the Group's stated objective** it was agreed that the focus should be on serious rather than slight accidents. The Group stated that it was within their remit to be able to not recommend the implementation of 20mph areas if no hotspots could be identified
- **Public education** is important and can be promoted, amongst other methods, through School Travel Plans that all schools must have by 2010
- **The Health Profile for Colchester** (the document referred to at Cabinet which partly instigated the formation of the T&F group) is improving towards the national average for road accidents
- MH queried the accident severity decrease with reduced speed graphs. PW explained that there is robust evidence available regarding the amount of force the human body can withstand
- JGR asked if all roads were represented and how the Police record accidents. PW responded that yes, all roads were included and the primary cause of the accident was recorded if for example drink and speed were contributory factors, they wouldn't be double-counting.

**Action** – PW to seek further advice on the way forward

**Action** – all to review data and maps outside the meeting and report back

## 5. Portsmouth conference

Portsmouth is hosting a conference on Tuesday 29 September which is due to include early monitoring information on their city-wide signed-only 20mph scheme introduced recently. Copies of the Programme were circulated. Two spaces have been booked, SW and/or PW will attend. Members of the Group were asked if they wished to attend too – JGR expressed potential interest.

**Action** – JGR to confirm to SW/PW if he wishes to attend.

## **6. Reporting to Policy and Development Panel**

Dates of remaining PRDP meetings and papers circulation dates in this municipal year were circulated.

Councillor Oxford tabled a list of areas which should be considered for 20mph. This was felt premature as the group is not at the position of selecting sites/areas.

## **7. Next Steps**

Along with the actions noted above regarding consultation it was agreed that a draft report should begin to be assembled. SW circulated a draft outline of this. It was agreed that this should be updated to reflect comments during the meeting and circulated for comments.

**Action** – SW to update and circulate outline and then draft report

## **8. Outstanding Actions from May meeting**

- SW to discuss implementation criteria for 20mph schemes with Oxford Council

## **9. Date of next meeting** – 4.30 – 6.30pm, Tuesday 22 September, Rowan House

It was agreed that this meeting would focus on reviewing a draft of the report to PRDP to be circulated in advance

## **WASTE PREVENTION AND RECYCLING OPTIONS APPRAISAL TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

### **NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 AUGUST 2009**

Present: Councillor Nick Barlow (Chairman),  
Councillors Christopher Arnold, Peter Chillingworth, Paul Smith  
and Julie Young.  
Strategic Waste and Sustainability Manager, Chris Dowsing,  
Recycling Operations Development Officer, Joanna Hartga,  
Democratic Services Manager, Amanda Chidgey.

#### **18. Correspondence**

The Chairman circulated a draft response to a letter that had been submitted by Mr Nick Chilvers, seeking certain information about the work and intentions of the Group and assurances regarding the conduct of the public consultation exercise. Subject to minor suggested revisions the draft response to Mr Chilvers was agreed.

Councillor Young explained the extent of representations that she had received on the waste review, much of which related to the desire for or objection to the introduction of wheeled bins. Of additional interest was the inclusion of disposable nappies and incontinence pads in alternate weekly collected containers and the measures adopted elsewhere to address this issue, if at all.

#### **19. General Discussion**

The Group took the opportunity to again revisit certain important issues with Chris and Joanna who had undertaken considerable research in the practices adopted and experiences obtained nationally. Particular issues related to:

- The impact of the introduction of both 'carrot and stick' measures, including a clear sack for residual waste, to encourage greater participation in recycling;
- Contrary to popular belief, evidence demonstrated that waste arisings tended to reduce following the introduction of alternate weekly residual waste collections;
- The small proportion of Authorities (and the likely reasons why) that had opted to revert to weekly from alternate weekly residual collections;
- The success factors associated with the national top 20 performers which had all adopted wheeled bins together with a concerted campaign to raise public awareness of the merits of recycling;
- The potential impact on performance of introducing food waste collections and alternate weekly collections alone.

#### **20. Work Flow Update**

Chris Dowsing updated the Group on the work being undertaken by the Officer Group on the four preferred options and 60 associated variations. He explained that investigations were being conducted in terms of pricing,

equipment and physical space requirements as well as the public perceptions of alternate weekly collections. He also sought agreement from the Group regarding the revised timetable which had been circulated prior to the meeting, as set out below:

- 21 September 2009 - Present four updated options to the Task and Finish Group;
- 5 October 2009 - Following comment and review confirm options with Task and Finish Group;
- 9 November 2009 - Present the four options to Policy Review and Development Panel;
- 9 November 2009 to 18 December 2009 - Public consultation period including Public Meeting;
- 11 January 2009 – Policy Review and Development Panel;
- 27 January 2010 - Cabinet - with recommendation from Task and Finish Group.

Particular discussion took place regarding the period of time available between the end of the consultation exercise and the meeting dates in January 2010 and the potential difficulties of summarising the results of the consultation, the response rate for which was an unknown quantity.

## **21. Future Meetings**

The next meeting of the Group would be on 7 September 2009 and Chris was asked to invite Cathryn Cansdale to attend in order to assist in the determination of the public consultation requirements.

Arrangements be made for the meeting of the Group scheduled for 21 September to be moved to 24 or 25 September 2009.

One further meeting also scheduled for 5 October 2009.



## **WASTE PREVENTION AND RECYCLING OPTIONS APPRAISAL TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

### **NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7 SEPTEMBER 2009**

Present: Councillor Nick Barlow (Chairman),  
Councillors Peter Chillingworth, Paul Smith and Julie Young.  
Strategic Waste and Sustainability Manager, Chris Dowsing,  
Street Care and Recycling Manager, Dave McManus,  
Community Research Officer, Cathryn-Ann Cansdale,  
Recycling Operations Development Officer, Joanna Hartga,  
Democratic Services Manager, Amanda Chidgey.

#### **22. Updates**

The Chairman confirmed that he had received a response from Mr Nick Chilvers, suggesting that he was reasonably satisfied with the contents of the Chairman's letter.

Chris Dowsing outlined the work being done by the officer group and explained that he had undertaken discussions with the Portfolio Holder with a view to revising the timetable which was likely to be too tight to meet adequately.

With this in mind arrangements had been made for special meetings of Cabinet and the Policy Review and Development Panel to take place later in January and early February 2010. Meeting rooms had therefore been booked for 10 February and 18 January 2010 respectively.

At the next meeting of the Task and Finish Group on 24 September, information would be provided which would form the backbone of the consultation for members to determine at the following meeting on 5 October 2009. These recommendations would be submitted to the Policy Review and Development Panel on 9 November which would form the launch of the public consultation.

Councillor Smith sought reassurances regarding recent increased population predictions and the greater proportion of younger people. In response to which Cathryn explained that she was aware that the methodology for these statistics would be changing next year which would lead to a reduction in these predicted levels.

Councillor Smith also referred to publicity given nationally incentive scheme promoted by Windsor and Maidenhead Council based on the issue of credits to high recycling households.


#### **23. Public Consultation**

The Group had extensive discussions regarding the public consultation, in terms of the duration, timing and format, the details of which are set out in the Appendix to these notes.

#### **24. Future Meetings**

24 September 2009 and 5 October 2009.

23 September 2009

<b>Report of</b>	<b>Head of Corporate Management</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Amanda Chidgey</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Work Programme 2009/10</b>		 <b>282227</b>
<b>Wards affected</b>	Not applicable		

This report sets out the current Work Programme 2009/2010 for the Policy Review and Development Panel.

## 1. Decision Required

- 1.1 The Policy Review and Development Panel is asked to note the current situation regarding the Panel's work programme for 2009/10.

## 2. Introduction

- 2.1 At each meeting of the Panel, the opportunity is taken for the work programme to be reviewed and, if necessary, amended according to current circumstances.

## 3. Current Situation

- 3.1 The Work Programme has been updated since the meeting of the Panel held on 10 August 2009 to take into account the following:
- Colchester Tree Policy – resubmission to Panel once consultation complete;
  - Mayoralty Task and Finish Group – Panel to resume consideration in November after discussion in political groups;
  - Draft Public Realm Strategy and
  - Draft Lighting Strategy.
- 3.2 In addition, the work on the Fleet Replacement Strategy, scheduled for this meeting of the Panel, has been delayed because of resources directed towards the work involved in supporting the Waste Options Task and Finish Group, which will cover the vehicle requirements of the waste and recycling fleet, and the need for corporate direction on the small fleet options. Officers want to present Members with the fullest picture reflecting the latest best practice but that also reflects service needs and the Council's financial position. A clearer position will be available at the end of October 2009.
- 3.3 Finally, in relation to the work on Community development / Neighbourhoods which was also scheduled for this meeting of the Panel, whilst progress has continued in the context of cross service workshop sessions, this has not yet been sufficient to formulate detailed proposals for consideration by the Panel. It is hoped, therefore, that more information will be available later in the Municipal Year.
- 3.4 The Lead Officers for each of the Task and Finish Groups have been asked to provide periodic updates on progress to the Panel and notes in respect the 20 mph speed limit; the Night Time Economy and the Waste Prevention and Recycling Options Appraisal have been included separately on the agenda for information.

**4. Alternative options**

4.1 This function forms part of the Panel's Terms of Reference and, as such, no alternative options are presented.

**5. Standard References**

5.1 There are no specific strategic plan references or financial, equality, diversity and human rights, community safety, health and safety, publicity and risk management implications in this matter.



Policy Review and Development Panel  
**WORK PROGRAMME 2009/10**

	<u>15 June 2009</u>	<u>10 August 2009</u>	<u>23 September 2009</u>
<b>Policy Initiatives</b>		Tree Strategy	Historic Town Centre Improvements: - Draft Public Realm Strategy - Draft Lighting Strategy
<b>Review of Corporate Policies</b>	Procurement Strategy 2009 – 2012	Historic Town Centre	
<b>Task and Finish Groups</b>	Night Time Economy // Update Historic Town Centre Improvements // Update Waste Prevention and Recycling Options Appraisal // Update	Mayorality // Report on Findings Waste Prevention and Recycling Options Appraisal // Update	Night Time Economy // Draft Conclusions 20mph speed limit Task and Finish Group // Update Waste Prevention and Recycling Options Appraisal // Update



	<b><u>9 November 2009</u></b>	<b><u>11 January 2010</u></b>	<b><u>1 March 2010</u></b>
<b>Policy Initiatives</b>	Colchester Tree Policy // Post Consultation	Community development/ neighbourhoods	
<b>Review of Corporate Policies</b>	Single Equality Scheme // Draft report Fleet Replacement Strategy	Economic Prosperity Strategy 2007 – 2010 Town Centre Management Strategy // Review	
<b>Task and Finish Groups</b>	20mph speed limit // Draft Conclusions Historic Town Centre Improvements // Draft Conclusions Waste Prevention and Recycling Options Appraisal // Final Report Mayorality // Report on Findings	Night Time Economy // Final Report	20mph speed limit // Final Report Historic Town Centre Improvements // Final Report

<b>Task and Finish Groups</b>	<b>Membership</b>
Night Time Economy	Councillors Barlow, Davies, Naish and B. Oxford
20 mph speed limit	Councillors Ford, Hardy, G. Oxford and Sykes
Mayorality	Councillors Garnett, Hall, Naish and B. Oxford
Waste Prevention and Recycling Options Appraisal	Councillors Arnold, Barlow, Chillingworth, P. Oxford, Smith and J. Young

