

Christchurch Town Centre Strategy Refresh



“
OUR HERITAGE
GUIDES
OUR FUTURE
”

FOURTH DRAFT.

August 2015

BARR GAZETAS

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Proposed

Heritage

- 1 Old Town Hall:**
Preserve and enhance its character and re-focus the High Street around the Old Town Hall by revitalising its ground floor through sensitive glazing.
- 2 Old Town Walls**
Celebrate the heritage assets within this area to promote a "Site of Discovery".
- 3 Castle Gateway:**
Create a "Heritage Triangle" by revitalising internal links and enhance current built assets to promote a "Site of Discovery" and sense of drama.

High Street Experience

- 4 Regent Centre:**
Celebrate the Heritage assets in this area. Unified signage to front of the building to celebrate the original architecture
- 5 High Street Experience:**
Enhance the physical appearance of the shop fronts and upper floors, through the unification of signage to stimulate an active and vibrant street scene. Enhance pedestrian movement by simple traffic management.
- 6 Wick Lane:**
Celebrate the Heritage assets in this area. Opportunity for new housing.
- 7 Church Street:**
Repave and encourage a 'cafe culture' style street scene.

Places and Connectivity

- 8 Bank Close**
Enhance the historical assets by creating attractive pathways between the Old Town Walls and the High Street.
- 9 Bargates and Fountain Gateway:**
Enhance the pedestrian link between Bargates and the High Street via a newly developed Fountain Gateway junction and pedestrian routes.
- 10 Waterfront:**
Create a high quality waterfront by revitalising the physical appearance of the existing rowing club, creating a new boathouse restaurant and cafe.
- 11 Place Mill Court:**
Repave area linking the old tea rooms and the Place Mill to create an attractive pedestrian-friendly piazza.

The accelerated social and technological advances of the 21st Century have impacted all aspects of how we live, work, and spend our leisure time. These changes have had many impacts in our coastal and market towns. They have faced decline in traditional industries, the challenge of out-of-town shopping centres, increasing levels of traffic, and social interaction which is becoming less personal and more influenced by digital communication.

The challenge in Christchurch is to adapt to these changes while encouraging and maintaining a vibrant and prosperous Town Centre at the heart of the community; a place where you can use your cherished heritage and environmental assets to help guide our future.

To overcome the challenges there are a number of interventions we can make or encourage; particularly enhancing the town's physical fabric as well as its local heritage assets. We can also create a retail and leisure destination and to enhance local economic activity by:

- Enabling more people to live in or close to the Town Centre in order to encourage a more consistent sense of community and create demand for a wide ranging retail experience.
- Enhancing your prized heritage and environmental assets to make the town attractive for people to live in, work and enjoy.
- Balancing the needs of pedestrians and vehicular traffic to create a more enjoyable experience for all.

Our vision has to articulate the look and feel of the Town Centre over the next 10 to 15 years in response to the challenges and the interventions.

By the end of this period we seek to achieve:

- A more accessible Town Centre and enriched High Street experience
- A greater variety of shops and attractions
- Greater recognition of the Heritage appeal of the town
- A vibrant living and working community

In order to meet the challenges and deliver the vision we have set out our interventions in a number of themed areas. Over the course of the next 10 to 15 years we will continually refresh existing, and identify new interventions to help keep pace with further economic and social change.

INTRODUCTION

There are three themes in this document which link together as a refresh of the 2003 Town Centre Strategy.

HERITAGE
 “OUR HERITAGE GUIDES OUR FUTURE”

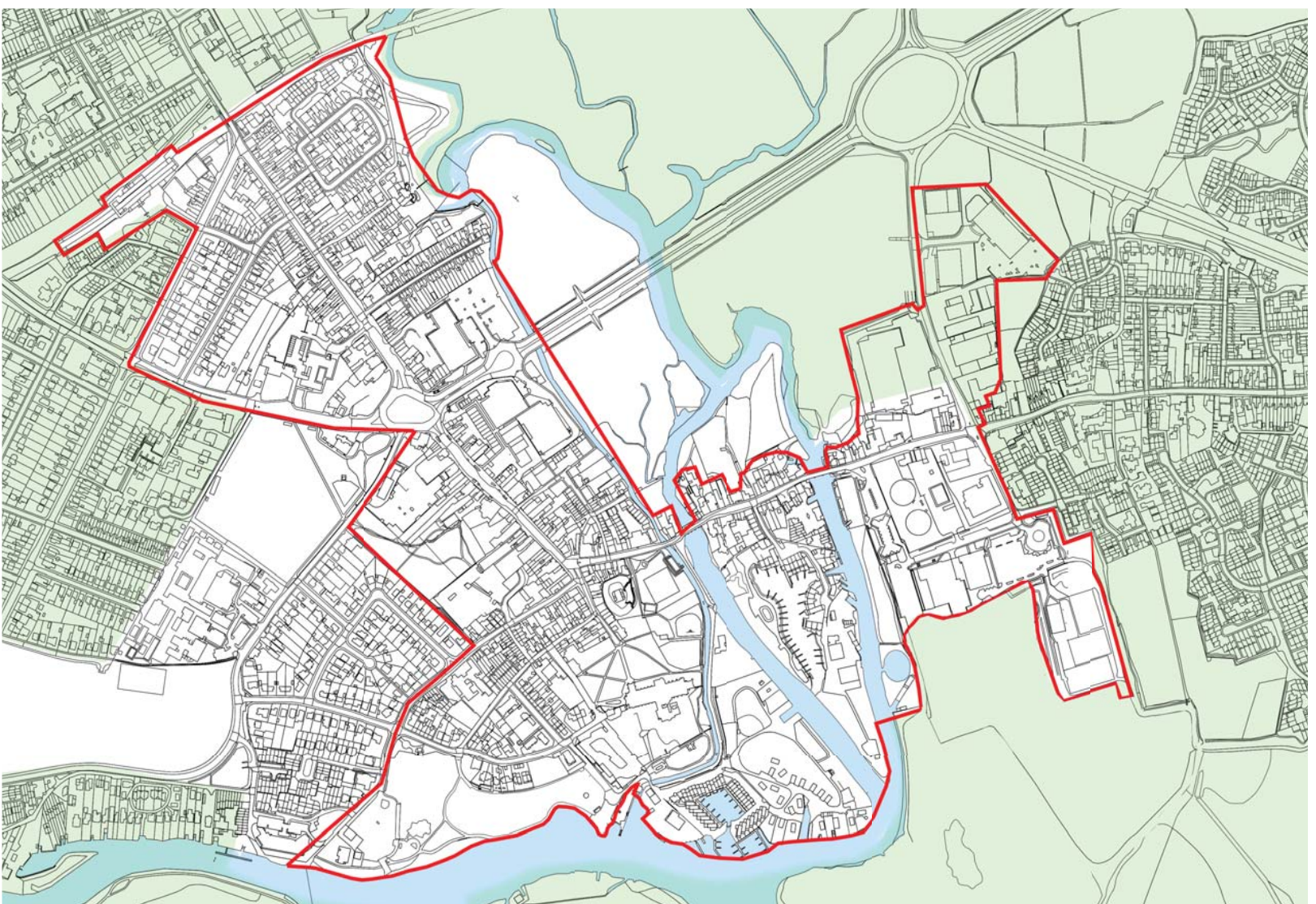
Christchurch has a unique heritage which has been diluted over the years by uncoordinated changes. We must use this heritage to focus on the future, to create a vibrant and attractive centre.

HIGH STREET EXPERIENCE

The High Street user experience has a great deal of potential. We can make this experience much more pleasurable and attractive by targeting change with precision. By working together with Dorset County Council we can create a High Street to be proud of.

PLACES AND CONNECTIVITY

The town centre has always been seen as a series of special places. These are of exceptional quality, but the links between them lack appeal. We can enhance connectivity to create great places linked by enjoyable routes.



— Town Centre Boundary

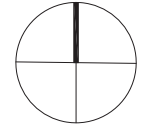
Christchurch Town Centre Strategy



Existing Christchurch Activities

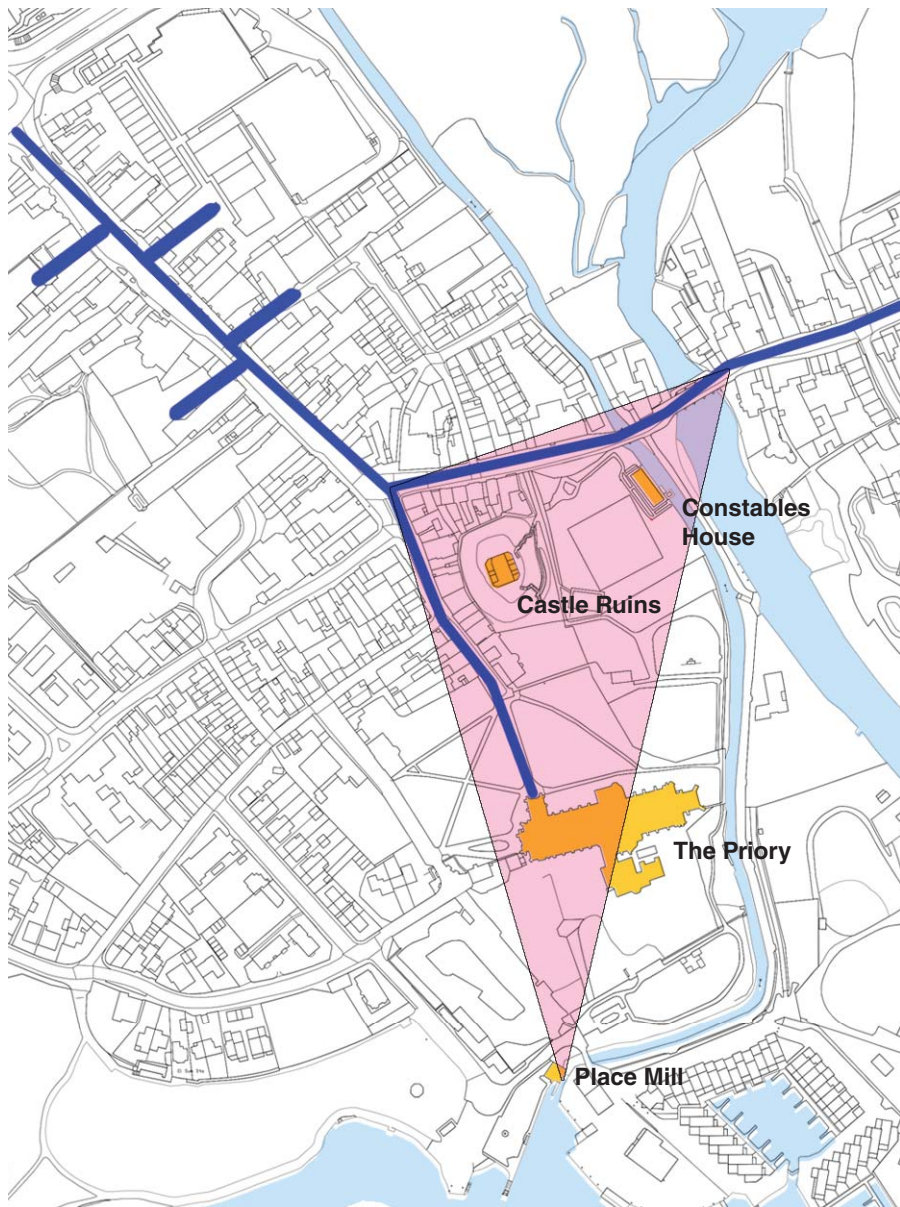


Castle Gateway





HERITAGE - ONE

“OUR HERITAGE GUIDES OUR FUTURE”



THE HERITAGE TRIANGLE ENCOMPASSES THE CASTLE PRIORY, CONSTABLES HOUSE AND PLACE MILL AND REPRESENTS THE EXCEPTIONAL RICHNESS OF HISTORY IN CHRISTCHURCH. THE TOWN CENTRE MUST RE-CONNECT WITH THIS TO ENHANCE THE PAST AND GUIDE THE FUTURE.

- KEY**
-  Gateways to the Heritage Triangle
 -  Heritage Triangle



The Priory from the river in 1925



The end of Castle Street in 1840



Bowling Green and Tea Garden in 1925



The Priory



The Constable's House

Christchurch has a unique heritage which is a defining characteristic of the town.

The vibrancy of the Town Centre is not just the shops and services it contains. The life comes from how those amenities relate to the character of the environment they are situated in. It is this unique character that we want to enhance and preserve.

Christchurch has some well established shops and a Monday Market, but it faces threats from other shopping offers. The Town Centre cannot keep still if it is to survive, instead it must constantly evolve to respond to changing demands.

We propose to put the “Heritage Triangle” in the historical heart of the town and to create clear and attractive routes to link to it. The High Street forms the backbone to all our proposals. Historically it has been linked to all key areas, and we want to reinforce the great work that began with the Millennium Trail. The paths are an essential part of the link between the High Street and the Heritage Triangle. If arrival at the High Street is celebrated, then these become “gateways” which will contribute to a more enjoyable pedestrian movement around town.

“OUR HERITAGE GUIDES OUR FUTURE”

HERITAGE - TWO

Old Town Hall



Ground floor to be glazed to create a new use for the building



Existing open undercroft of Old Town Hall today



Existing Old Town Hall today



1860 image showing previous infill of ground floor



Old Town Hall, built in 1745

The Old Town Hall is a Council owned Grade II listed building in a prominent location. It makes a key contribution to the character of the Conservation area. We want to preserve this character and enhance its use.

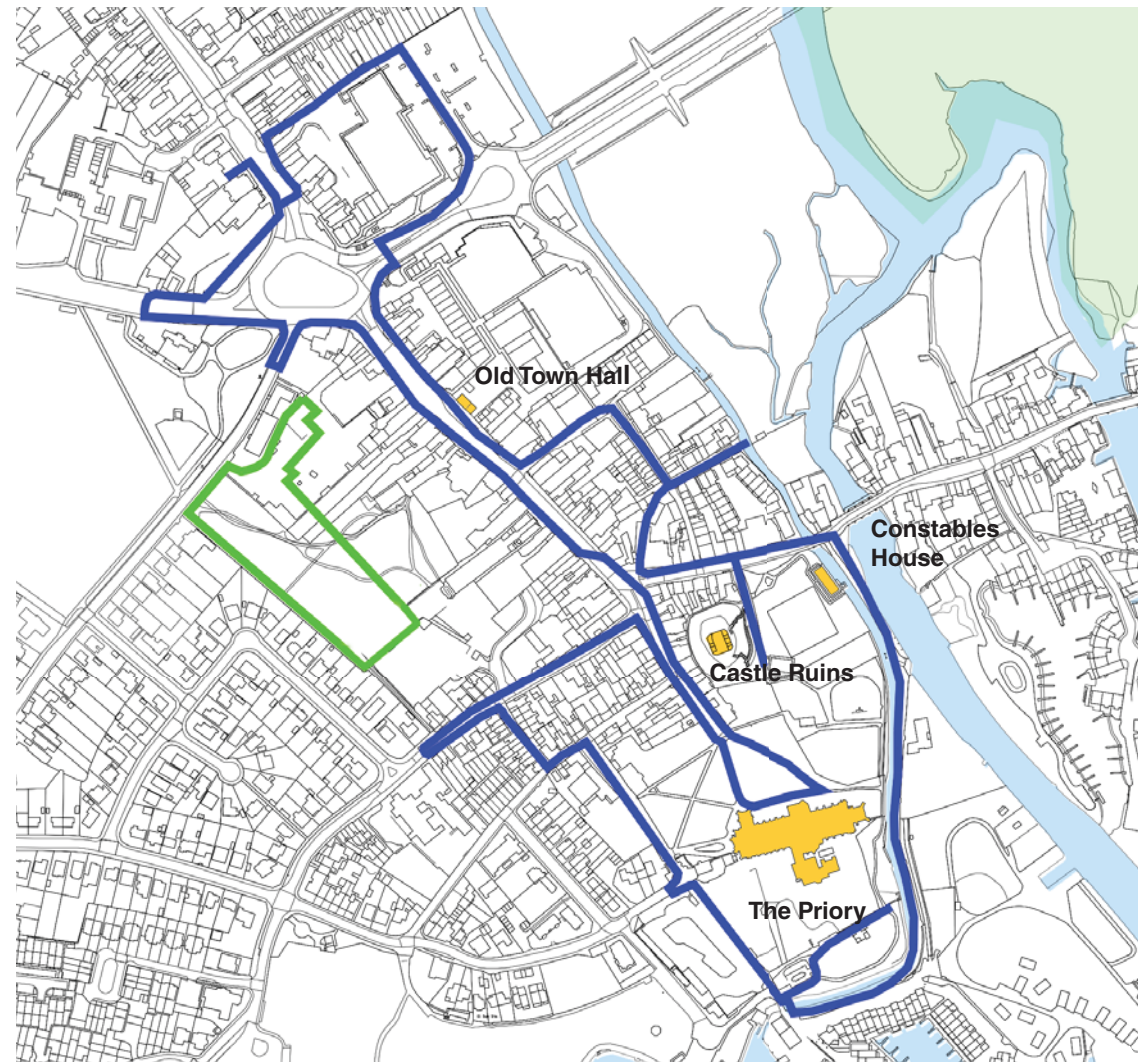
The space at ground floor level is currently underused and sometimes abused. We want to refocus the High Street around the Old Town Hall as it once was. This will demonstrate a commitment to support Heritage in the whole study area.

The ground floor of the Old Town Hall should be glazed in to form an arrival point to the High Street and Town Centre. The Farrell Review of 2015 promotes the idea of an Urban Room as a place to celebrate design and heritage and this could be one of the first in the country, acting as an introduction to the whole Town Centre and complementing the existing information centre.

A simple and sensitively glazed infill will provide a point of focus for the ongoing improvements. Access for all to the upper room could be explored as part of a later phase.

HERITAGE - THREE

Old Town Walls Heritage Trail



Existing Millennium Trail
 Trail Extension: Old Town Walls



Excavating the site of the Old Town Walls in 1972



Bronze age barrows discovered in an excavation of the Old Town Walls in 1977



Medieval wall discovery in Bank Close and Druiitt Gardens

The Millennium Trail was a great success in 2000. The time has come to expand and enhance this trail. The old town walls are located to the rear and east of Bank Close car park, continuing into Druiitt Gardens and a section of Wick Lane car park. The southern part of the area falls within the sensitive Old Town Walls scheduled monument, with visible, above ground remains between the car park and the adjacent overgrown land.

The Council own the car park and the small brick buildings; these were previously leased to a candle maker and are currently empty. M&S have rights of way at the north of car park.

The vision is for Heritage assets to be excavated on this site with the opportunity to promote a 'Site of Discovery'.

Old town walls will be exposed and restored where possible and celebrated with the possibility to mark out areas of archeology in a sensitive manner. New signage and promotion of a new heritage trail is critical to publicise this initiative to visitors and residents alike.

Current estimates are that approximately ten parking spaces may have to be relocated to achieve this vision.

Partnership with Historic England would be the catalyst in this development, along with the appointment of an archaeologist to produce a schedule/programme for excavation and to develop further design ideas on how this will be celebrated. A joint venture between the Council, Historic England and Bournemouth University's School of Archaeology is potentially a good way to begin.

Bournemouth University Archaeology students have worked on the recent Duro polis ruins finds near Blandford Forum.



Extent of Old Town Walls



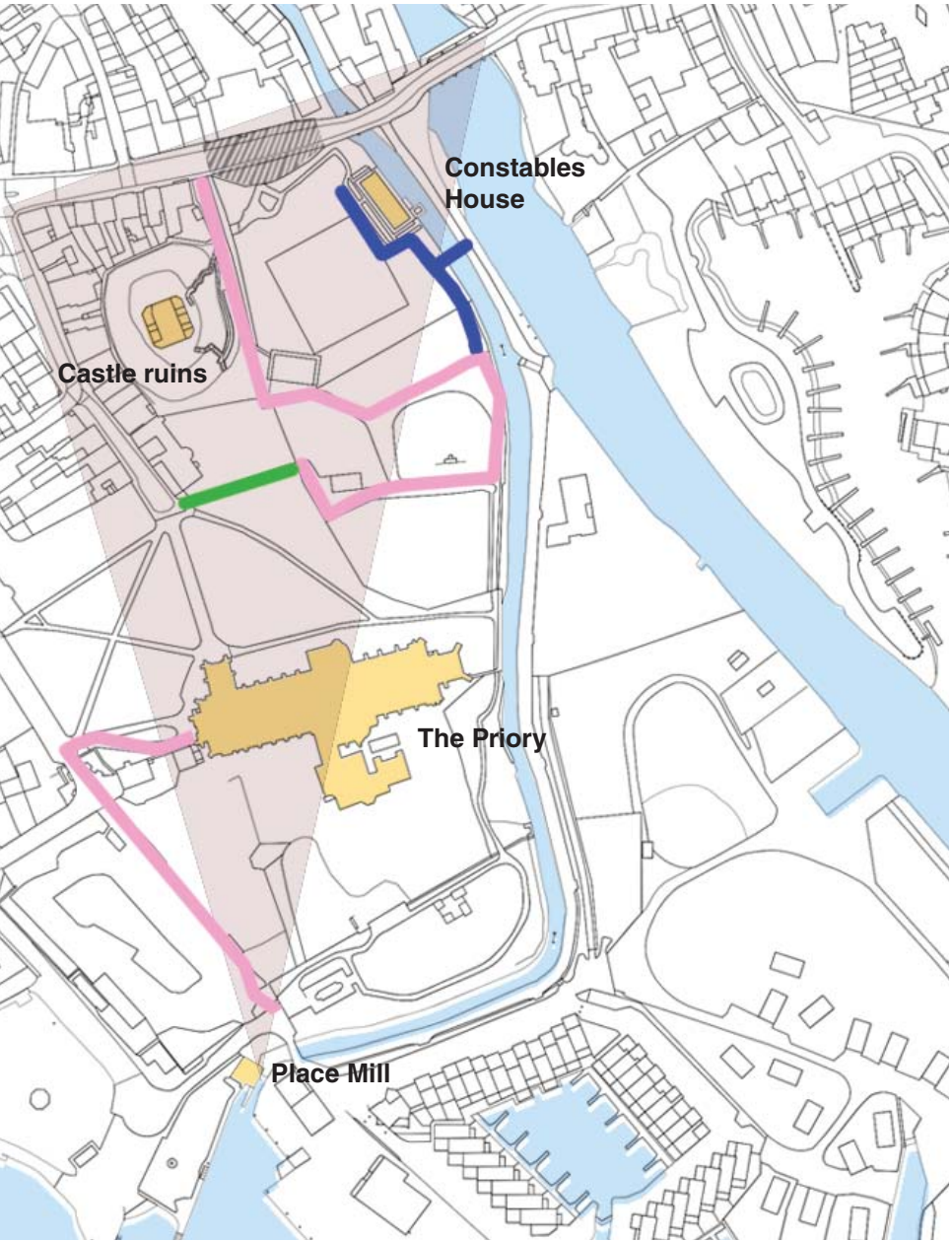
Existing overgrown land burying the scheduled monument at the Druiitt Gardens/Bank Close boundary








Bletchley Park - Celebration of Archaeology

HERITAGE - FOUR

Castle Gateway



- KEY**
-  Repaving to emphasize "Castle Gateway"
 -  Small extra links, including Mill Stream Bridge and access to Church Hatch Gardens
 -  Existing paths needing small improvements
 -  Overgrown paths needing signage, lighting, clearing and extending
 -  Heritage Triangle

Castle Gateway is a 1.4 hectare site in the historical centre of Christchurch. They are the oldest built assets you have in this area and offer great potential to better interpret and celebrate the historical context.

The site is currently very underused due to its disconnection from popular pedestrian routes, random linkage between monuments and general lack of a sense of discovery and drama.

The environment has potential for generating income. Functional enhancements are needed; such as building a bridge from Bowling Green to Convent Walk, creating a link to Church Hatch and improving existing links from the Priory Church Car Park to Place Mill Court. By celebrating the castle's role in history and its links to King John and the Magna Carta, the area will attract more attention.

The vision is to create a Heritage Triangle by revitalising internal links and enhance current built assets to promote a 'Site of Discovery'. There are remains from Saxon times onwards that could be sensitively excavated as an annual Historic Event. This would create publicity, funding and worldwide interest.

We will appoint an arboriculturalist to survey the trees on site and develop concepts to enhance and celebrate the heritage in this location. We believe that this survey will reveal that trees are being crowded out by self-seeded trees and shrubs. This unmanaged growth is damaging existing trees and historical walls. Removal of some trees and reducing the height of others will revive views of the Priory and Castle ruins that have been lost in recent years.

In addition, the Motte-and-Bailey runs alongside existing paths. The original profile could be unearthed with a new information board to strengthen the historical presence and interpretation here.

There are ownership issues to explore but initial conversations demonstrate that all parties recognise that working together could produce exceptional results.

These enhancements will act as a key part of improving public perception of the unique nature of Christchurch. This will stimulate footfall and will give many economic benefits.

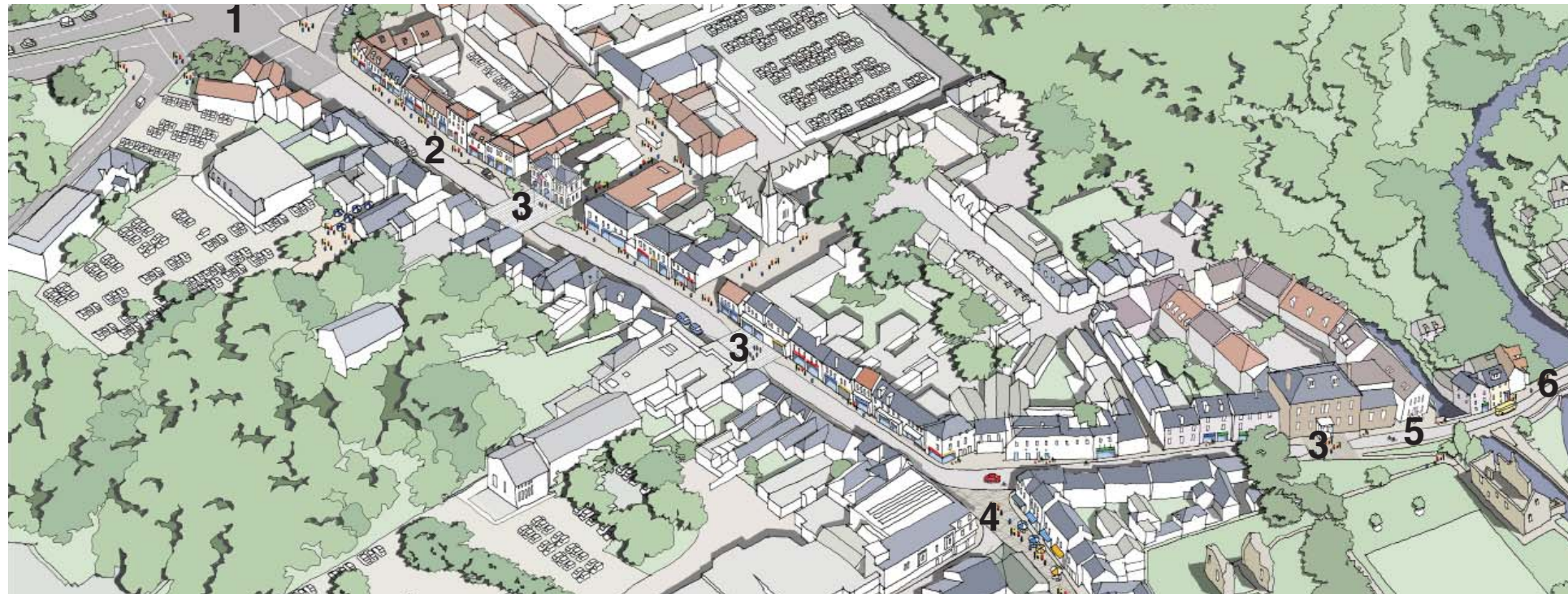


New links to the Castle Gateway



Constable's House showing new bridge

HIGH STREET EXPERIENCE - ONE



Aerial sketch of the High Street Experience
1 Fountain Gateway **2** High Street **3** Raised Area **4** Church Street **5** Castle Street **6** Bridge Street

EXTENT

The High Street experience starts at Fountain roundabout, north west of the Town Centre, and continues in a south eastern direction connecting to Church Street to the south and Castle Street to the east. Castle Street then leads into Bridge Street heading in an easterly direction.

CURRENTLY

The High Street appears congested and creates an environment that discourages socialising and leisurely shopping. The shop fronts and physical clutter has deteriorated its appearance which further discourages use.

CREATE SPECIAL PLACES

The three raised areas by Old Town Hall, the Regent Centre and Castle Gateway will create an architectural presence and a clear space in pedestrian movement. Church Street can be made more pedestrian friendly by simple traffic management shown in the Places and Connectivity section on page 11.



An improved pedestrian-friendly Church Street



Existing traffic congestion along High Street



Existing parking outside the Regent Centre

HIGH STREET EXPERIENCE - TWO



Proposed future improvement of Regent Centre frontage



WiFi throughout High Street



Existing Regent Centre Shopfront

ENHANCE SHOP FRONTS

New shopfronts must be of high quality and in line with an enforced Shopfront Guide. Existing low quality shopfronts should be enhanced by use of grants and Section 106 contributions. Empty floors above shops can be brought back into residential use by similar mechanisms. Free WiFi can be provided for the whole High Street.

MANAGEMENT

There are many examples of volunteer Town Teams making significant contribution to improvements. One example is Belper in the Derwent Valley who were crowned last year's "Winner of Winners," and awarded The Great British High Street Of The Year Award. The council could support and enable this process which may lead to the formation of an Business Improved District in due time.

TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENT

This topic is discussed in the next theme; Places and Connectivity.



High Road example before frontage enhancements



High Road example after frontage enhancements



Belper, High Street of The Year Award 2014



Lymington, New Forest



Lymington, New Forest

PLACES & CONNECTIVITY - ONE

Traffic



The High Street with reduced traffic flow and a more pedestrian and cycle friendly atmosphere

There are eight steps to improving connectivity in the High Street. They all depend upon close collaboration from Dorset County Council.

1. Cars, Taxis and Buses

The High Street should become more pedestrian and cycle friendly whilst retaining vehicle access for those who need it. This can be achieved by widening footpaths, emphasising crossing points and reducing on-street parking. These changes have been well researched and executed in many locations. They can be achieved by working alongside Dorset County Council.

2. High Street Surface

The road should be level with the pavement at the Old Town Hall and repaved in granite to form a natural crossing zone. A similar approach should be provided at the Regent Centre.

3. Corner of High Street, Church Street & Castle Street

The existing cobbles in Church Street should be extended to this junction to discourage unnecessary access onto Church Street. An alternative traffic management plan would be developed to support this by making changes to signage and priorities across the town centre. Due regard will be applied to keep full accessibility to residents and the emergency services.

4. Castle Street

The road should be level with the pavements to form a crossing place, and repaved with granite to create a Heritage Gateway outside the King's Hotel with revised parking and better links to the Bowling Green and the Heritage Triangle.

5. Loading

Loading in the High Street can be better managed to minimise disruption to traffic and avoid congestion caused by loading vehicles. We propose restricted loading to be primarily between 7am and 9am and with a regime of permits and dedicated bays. The Monday Market proves that deliveries can be pre-planned and we can build on this precedent to satisfy the retailers' needs whilst improving the High Street environment.

6. Traffic Speeds

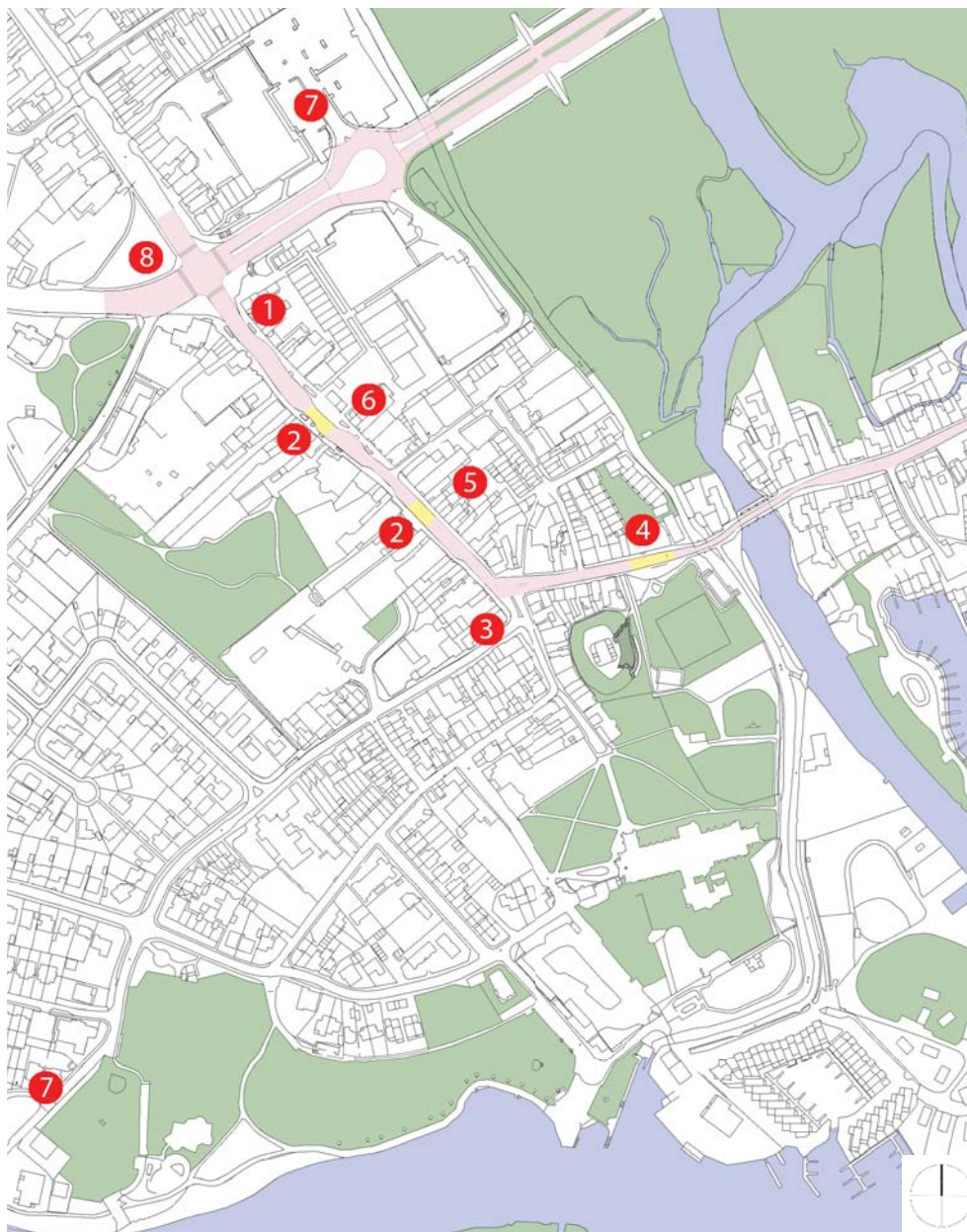
As a by-product of the above we anticipate reduced traffic speeds will become self-enforced.

7. Car Parks

Links and way-finding signage can be improved to make it clearer for visitors how to reach the High Street from car parks. Improving blue badge access at the waterfront and providing better information about parking availability is the target.

8. Fountain Roundabout

We propose to redesign this to make a crossroads with all pedestrian and cycle crossings at one level. There is an aspiration to re-design this. Dorset County Council have already begun the process but require money to get to the next step. Dorset County Council have noted this in their Local Transport Plan. We support this plan as it will make better links to Bargates. See Places and Connectivity on page 12 for more details.



Access Strategy Plan



Gammeltorv, Copenhagen

Previously a busy car park in 1953; but was transformed when the Strøget pedestrian zone was laid out in the 1950s.

BEFORE



AFTER, 2013



TPP is an independent consultancy which offers client-focused pragmatic advice on all transport aspects of development.

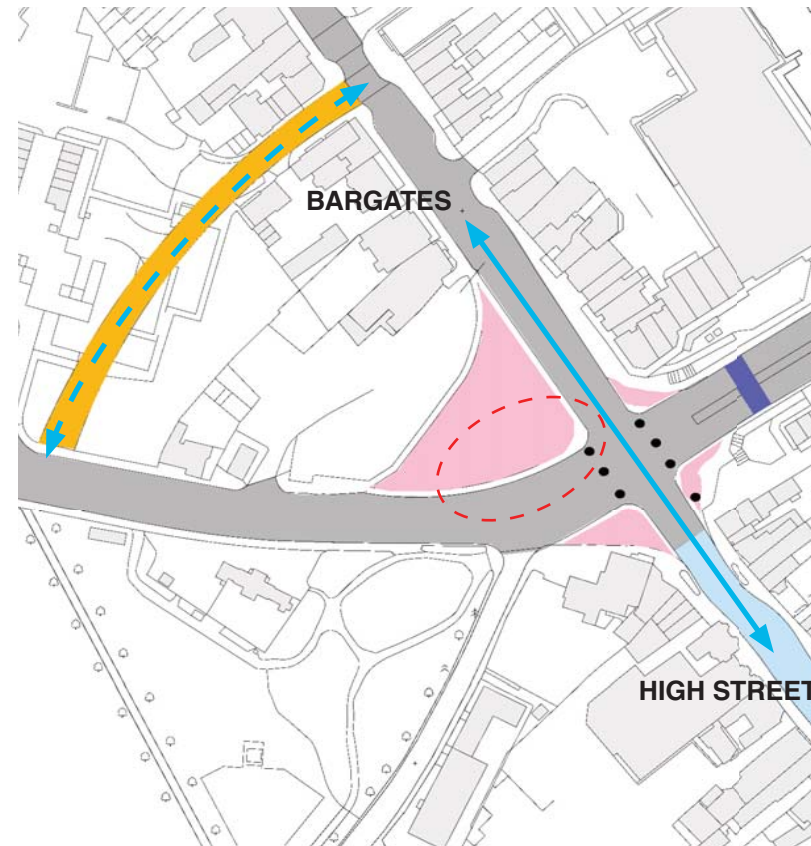
TPP initially undertook the role of assessing the traffic and congestion issues in the Town Centre and produced 8 steps shown to help amend these problems.

PLACES & CONNECTIVITY - TWO

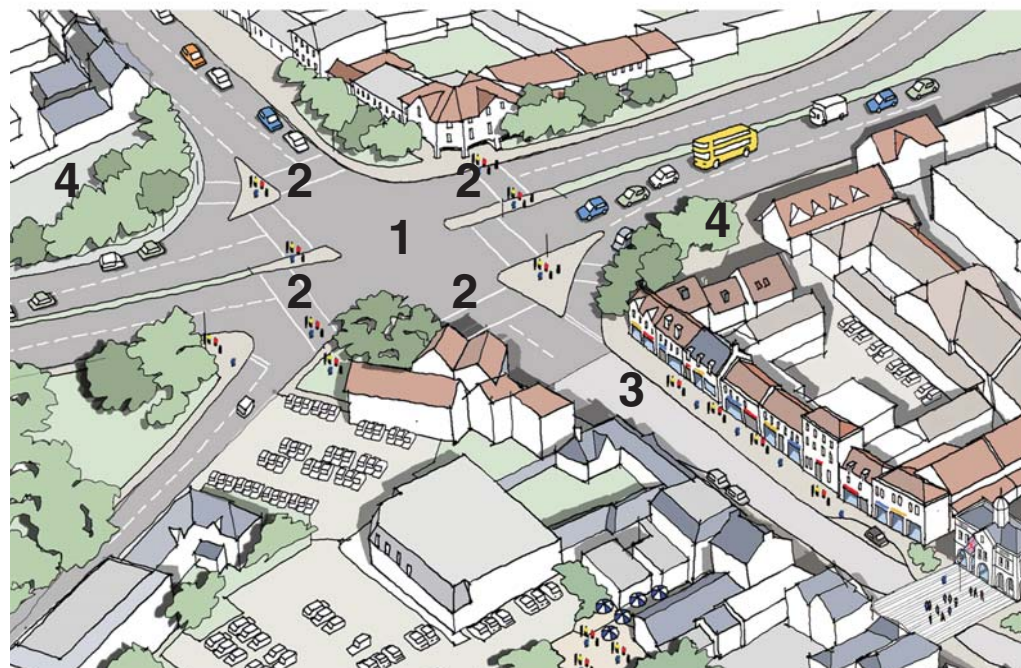
Bargates and Fountain Gateway



Aerial view of Existing Roundabout



Proposed new layout of Fountain Gateway by Dorset County Council



Aerial view of Proposed Junction

- Improvement area gained by new cross roads
- At grade crossing zones
- Infill underpass
- Existing roundabout removed
- New proposed crossroad
- Traffic calming zone in High Street
- Potential new link road on the Bargates development

- 1 Cross roads:**
New cross roads to be formed
- 2 Crossing Facilities:**
Current underpass infilled and at grade crossing facilities introduced
- 3 Repaving:**
Road to be repaved at start of High Street to mark sense of arrival
- 4 Greenery:**
Supporting a sensitive transition through the integration of green areas

There is a strong impetus to improve the connection between Bargates and the High Street.

North west of Christchurch Town Centre, the roundabout adjoins 5 roads including the High Street, Barrack Road, Sopers Lane, Fountain Way and Bargates. Dorset County Council own the road and the Borough Council have the right of way for the Waitrose car park on the north of Fountain roundabout.

The roundabout location acts as a gateway into the historic Town Centre marking the transition from the Saxon Burh to Bargates, a settlement outside the town walls with origins from the 13th Century. Currently, the roundabout forms a barrier between the historic core of Christchurch and the Bargates area. There is a need to provide a more sensitive transition between Bargates and the High Street and increase the safety of pedestrians and drivers.

The vision is to improve the pedestrian link between Bargates and the High Street by infilling the underpass and providing at grade crossing facilities. The majority of the site is not within the flood plain but lies within the Christchurch Central Conservation Area therefore considerations will need to be made to the Coastal Area, Primary Shopping Area and Prime Transport Corridors.

Dorset County Council have begun the process of redesigning this junction, taking in to consideration the setting of listed buildings looking onto the roundabout. This strategy explicitly supports this change. We will work closely with Dorset County Council to achieve the local plan timescale of 2018 to 2022 delivery.

A link road through the Bargates redevelopment area will help to reduce the volume of traffic moving through the Fountain Junction and make the removal of the roundabout possible.

PLACES & CONNECTIVITY - THREE

Bank Close Gateway

The entrance from this car park is one of the key 'gateways' to the High Street. The council owns the car park, small brick buildings and the Ex-Candleworks building which is currently used for storage and is decaying. M&S have rights of way at the north of the car park.

We believe that the Ex-Candleworks building can be sensitively refurbished to form an attractive and useful gateway to the High Street. A cafe or a speciality shop would make an ideal tenant for this building.

The area can be repaved and better lighting added. Improved signage will make this arrival point onto the High Street a pleasant and enjoyable experience. In this way the High Street can have a gateway of the quality it deserves.

Ideally this work would be linked to the excavation and display of the Old Town Walls in the car park. This scheme would be a key symbolic first step to demonstrate commitment to our heritage guiding our future.



Existing aerial image

1 Bank 2 Ex-Candleworks building 3 Existing cafe — Bank Close Gateway



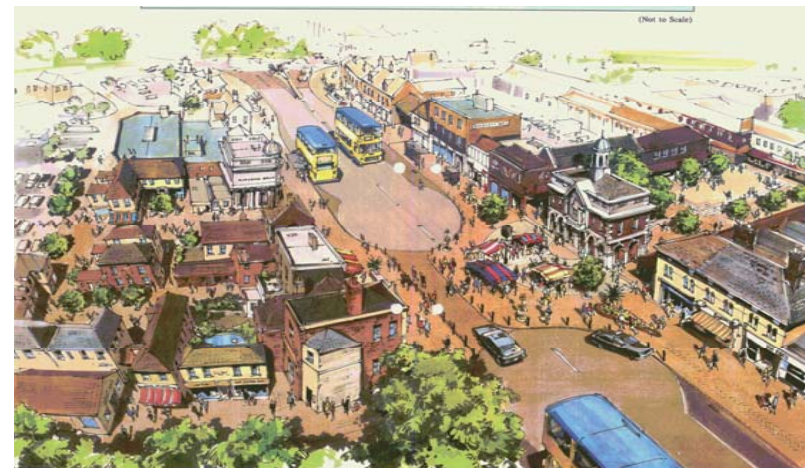
New paved gateway between the car park and the High Street with cafes or speciality shops either side



Existing Bank Close Gateway



Proposed Lanes Development Plan, 1995



Proposed Lanes Development, 1995

PLACES & CONNECTIVITY - FOUR

The Lanes, Wick Lane & Community Facilities

The Lanes

The Lanes are a series of small alleyways leading south west from the High Street. They are bounded by Druitt Gardens to the south east and Bank Close car park to the north.

They are currently unmarked alleyways from the High Street, full of overgrown shrubbery, redundant buildings and appear uninviting.

Despite these initial characteristics the Lanes sit on an historic Burgage plot with low rise buildings that contributes to the character of the area in terms of its boundaries as a preserved plot. It is adjoined by a locally listed building, No.19 High Street. There is a wall dating from 1817 and is reputedly built from stone from Waterloo Bridge. The scheduled monument designation covers the former walls of the settlement and some archaeological investigation has taken place in the area; it is a site with high archaeological potential.

Wick Lane

Wick Lane is located south of the High Street behind the Regent Centre, accessed via Regent Way which is off Wick Lane and bounded by Druitt Gardens to the north of the site. The entrance is currently indistinguishable at both approaches.

The lane is within the conservation area and covered partly by the Old Town Walls scheduled monument, giving the site high archaeological potential. This area formed open land behind the Burgage plots, now converted to a car park. Its lack of built form could be considered to be part of its historical interest.

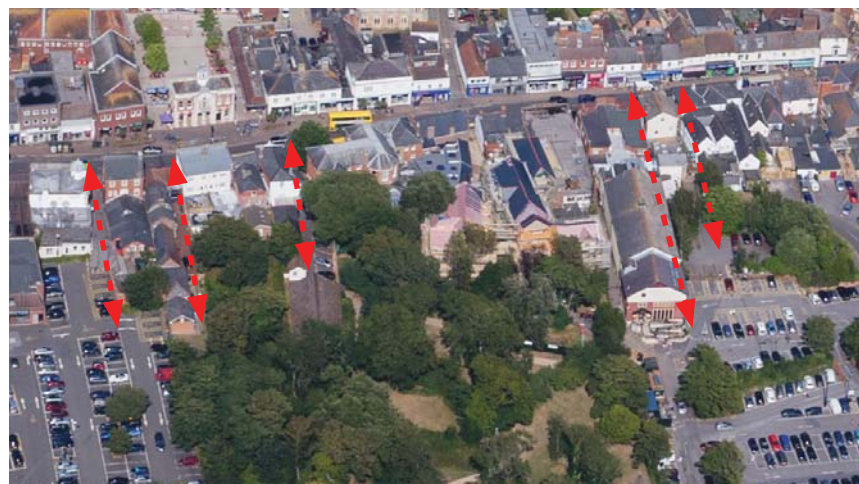
This is a main gateway to the High Street. Initial small impact changes will be to move the recycling bins within the archway, open the gateway and add better lighting here. This can act as a stimulus to the wider changes that this refresh aims to implement.

There is potential to gain parking spaces here by rationalising the existing landscape. A detailed landscape study will be undertaken to decide which trees should be encouraged and which neglected shrubs should be removed or replaced. A full archaeological analysis will also be carried out prior to any work, consulting relevant stakeholders at every stage.

Community Facilities

Christchurch has excellent provision for community spaces but the situation is always evolving.

We will conduct a one year study of how each of the eleven facilities listed (left) are being used. This study will indicate how the community assets can meet the ongoing needs of the Town and community.



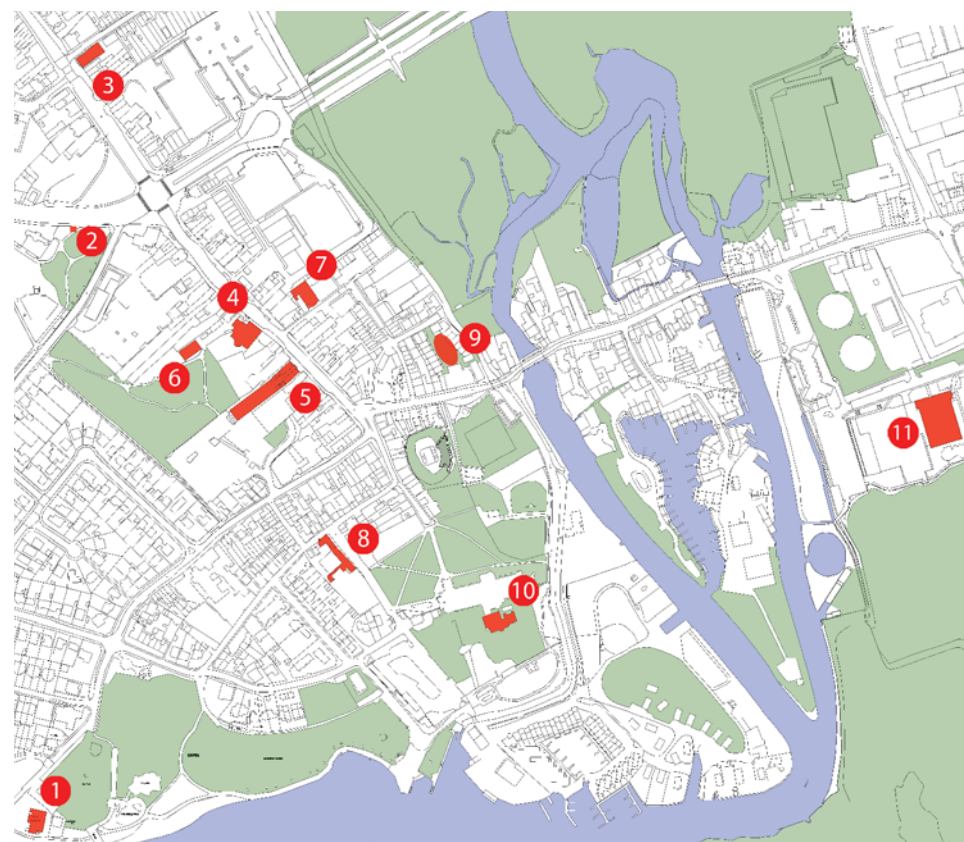
Aerial view potential of Lane locations
 ◀ - - - - ▶ High street entrance and route through lane



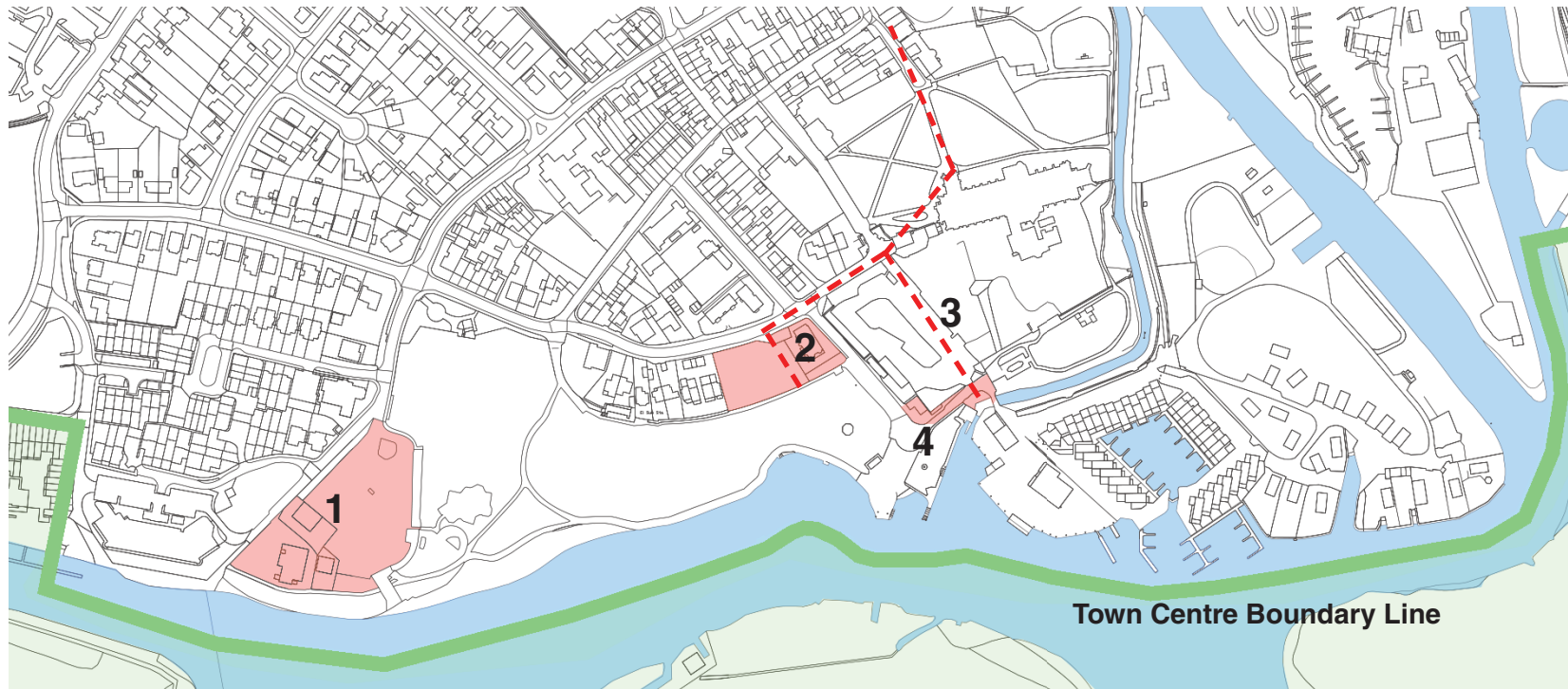
Potential retail and cafe culture within lanes linking to the High Street, precedent in Lymington

Key:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Christchurch Rowing Club.
<i>Rowing Club, lounge & bar</i> | 7. Christchurch Christian Centre,
Elim Church.
<i>Religious Services and hosts children's Sunday school</i> |
| 2. Stour Cottage Youth Centre.
<i>2 small rooms to hire</i> | 8. Red House Museum.
<i>Museum, gallery space and education rooms</i> |
| 3. Christchurch Baptist Church & Hall.
<i>Religious Services, hosts community meetings & support groups</i> | 9. Christchurch Bowling Green.
<i>Outdoor public space</i> |
| 4. Christchurch Library & Learning Centre.
<i>Business, educational rooms and IT suites</i> | 10. Priory House.
<i>2 rooms to hire</i> |
| 5. Regent Centre.
<i>Theatre and studio</i> | 11. East Dorset Indoor Bowls Club.
<i>Public space to hire</i> |
| 6. Druitt Hall.
<i>Public Hall with a 3 year lease</i> | |



Existing community provision



Proposed - - - - Proposed footpath routes

- 1 Rowing club, Mayor's Mead Car Park, Sea Cadets and Rivershack**
Our vision to create a high quality waterfront by merging and re-cladding existing buildings. Creating a new riverfront cafe and a blue badge dominated car park; a waterfront gateway.
- 2 Boathouse Restaurant**
To create a destination restaurant and improve pedestrian links from the Town Centre to the waterfront.
- 3 New Route**
Through car park linking the Place Mill with the Heritage Triangle.
- 4 Place Mill Court**
To improve the pedestrian links between the tea rooms and Place Mill.



Suggested alterations to the Rowing Club and Sea Cadets Waterfront Composition

PLACES & CONNECTIVITY - FIVE

Place Mill Court, Boathouse Restaurant, Rowing Club, Mayors Mead, Sea Cadets

PLACE MILL COURT

The existing area is both a danger to pedestrians and drivers; our vision is to improve the pedestrian links between the tea rooms, the Priory and Place Mill. This will involve collaboration with the Priory and Historic England. We propose an opening at the end of the Priory car park to allow a route through.

BOATHOUSE RESTAURANT

We want to create a destination attraction here to replace the underused mini golf. This will also create better pedestrian links from the Town Centre to the waterfront. A single storey building will create an appropriate backdrop to the Quomps.

ROWING CLUB, MAYOR'S MEAD & SEA CADETS

Our vision is to create a good quality waterfront composition by combining and re cladding existing buildings. An upper level cafe can be created with public access. The percentage of blue badge users here should be increased to give waterfront access. Coach drop off should be a maximum of 10 minutes, with the intension that coaches will park long term at Willow Way car park.

THE FARRELL REVIEW of Architecture + the Built Environment

Every town and city without an architecture and built environment centre should have an 'urban room' where the past, present and future of that place can be inspected.

These 'Place Spaces' should have a physical or virtual model, produced in collaboration with local technical colleagues or universities, and they should be funded jointly by the public and private sectors not owned exclusively by one or the other.



Greg Clark MP
Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government
responsible for the overall strategic direction of the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)

NEXT STEPS - ONE THE TIME IS RIGHT TO IMPLEMENT

We are aware and in contact with the bodies shown below who are promoting improvement to areas of public realm in towns and cities in the UK.

There is a groundswell of opinion across the whole country that says it is not enough to watch High Streets fade away. If we do not act the unique qualities of Christchurch will be lost.

We recommend the Old Town Hall to be our 'Place Space' following recommendation from the Farrell Review.

Historic England offer a paid Heritage visit over a two day period, followed by a report.

Mary Portas has recently said, 'our High Streets will thrive if we re-imagine them'. This document proposes this sentiment to work alongside 'Our Heritage Guides Our Future'.

We have begun the process of consulting and involving local people through the initial exhibition held in October 2014 but this is just the first step in our plans over the longer term. This refresh itself is a living document and needs to respond to both scheduled and unscheduled changes which may take place as further opportunities arise or individual elements are completed.

Having identified our themed areas we need to ensure that we have the right mix of technical experts and interested parties to work with the Council to help shape our ideas and further assist in bringing them together. Therefore, for each theme we will bring together a group of these people to work closely with the Council in an advisory and supporting capacity to work up initial ideas more fully.

Some grant funding is available from the Heritage Lottery Fund in particular but these need fully researched applications. The overall plan document will need to be formally approved by the Council and this will include the setting up of the theme groups and also wider consultation with the Community when this is appropriate.

A more detailed plan for how this will work can be developed once Members have approved the first draft of the strategy which will be the framework for further development of the detailed plans in fulfillment of the vision.

The following pages list the key recommendations under our three topic headings in a proposed sequence of importance and practicality. This will be influenced by permissions and funding decisions.

An Exhibition Space

A Learning Space

A Community Space

Exploring our Past

Planning the Future



Street Design for All

An update of national advice and good practice



Mary Portas
Retail Consultant and Broadcaster
The Portas Review:
An independent review into the future of our high streets



Evolving High Streets: Resilience & Reinvention

Perspectives from Social Science

Editors: Nell Wrigley & Erin Brookes

HERITAGE - OUR HERITAGE GUIDES OUR FUTURE

- This must be the catalyst to all other proposals and will demonstrate a commitment to refresh the Town Centre Strategy.
- We will glaze the ground floor of the Old Town Hall to create an “Introduction to Christchurch.”
- Areas of the Old Town Wall shall be excavated and use this to add to and relaunch the Millenium Trail.
- Put Castle Gateway in the centre of Heritage by a small bridge over the Mill Stream, and a discreet path to the Church Hatch.
- Use initial excavations at Castle Gateway to create publicity and footfall at annual events.
- Commission an Historic England two day visit to act as a catalyst to all the above.
- The sites that have been considered have been reviewed against development plan policies and relevant planning restrictions.

HIGH STREET EXPERIENCE

- The experience of the High Street can be transformed to create a welcoming environment for residents, visitors, shop owners and market traders.
- Three raised areas will be created outside the Old Town Hall, Regent Centre and Castle Gateway. These will enhance the Heritage Sites and limit traffic speeds.
- Quality in shopfront designs and units above will be encouraged in new Planning Applications and improvements in existing shopfronts will be encouraged by matched funding to owners and tenants.
- Free Wi-Fi in the High Street will be enabled.
- Deliveries will be limited to agreed times and designated bays.
- We will work with the Yellow Bus Company to optimise capacity and usage.
- The entry points at Bank Close and Wick Lane will be enhanced as High Street Gateways to improve the arrival sequence from the car parks.
- The existing Chamber of Commerce should be encouraged to establish a Town Team that may grow into a Business Improvement District.
- Traffic management improvements and street alterations will improve accessibility. These are noted in Places and Connectivity.

PLACES & CONNECTIVITY

- The eight steps to improving connectivity have been agreed in principle with Dorset County Council. The implementation of these should now begin.
- The lanes adjacent Druitt Gardens have great potential to form small shops and cafes off the High Street if ownership issues are reduced.
- There is excellent provision of Community Facilities currently but this needs to be flexible to accommodate changing needs of the population. A study will be undertaken to detail usage patterns and make recommendations. This will future proof the range of spaces available to suit the evolving population profile.
- The Waterfront is a defining part of the Christchurch experience yet it is underused and disconnected from the High Street. A simple pedestrian link can be made by collaboration with the Priory across the car park. Another attraction can be established adjacent the Boathouse restaurant with a new path to the Quomps. The Rowing Club and Sea Cadets building can be rationalised and re-clad to create a café, better parking and waterfront.
- The Fountain Gateway project may be achievable by 2018-2022, but it must always form the key component of the High Street proposals.

“
**OUR HERITAGE
 GUIDES
 OUR FUTURE**
 ”



TOWN CENTRE STRATEGY OUR IDEAS - YOUR COMMENTS

BOARD 1
INDICATIVE ONLY

Welcome to our public exhibition.

Why this exhibition?
This exhibition is designed to enable Christchurch Borough Council to understand your views on possible enhancements and improvements to the Town Centre. Nothing is set in stone.

What?
We have a vision for regeneration projects within Christchurch Town Centre to celebrate the heritage assets and encourage economic growth. This is celebrating our heritage to create our future.

Who?
We are a coordinated team who have had success in many projects like this in the past. We are working in close collaboration with Christchurch Borough Council.



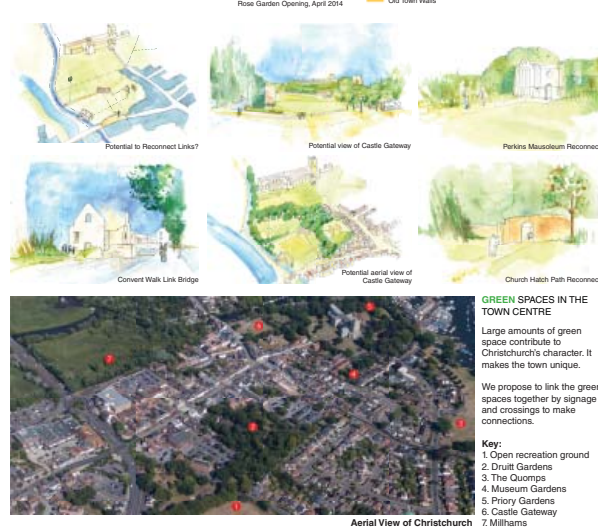
A NEW HERITAGE FOCUS

BOARD 4
INDICATIVE ONLY

Christchurch's heritage is currently understated; a series of small enhancements could help transform your Town Centre.

Your heritage assets could be improved with better paths and linkages, improving views of the Castle, digging trial trenches to uncover archaeological artefacts, and celebrating the old town walls.

We propose to increase pedestrian links from a bridge over Mill Stream adjacent to the Constable's House.



SMALL CHANGES CREATE TRANSFORMATION

BOARD 2
INDICATIVE ONLY



Glazed undercroft to the Mayor's Parlour and potential rear extension with wheelchair access.

Mayor's Parlour could potentially be a new Heritage Centre or the Tourist Information Centre.

Vacant spaces above shops could be vibrant business hubs for young start up companies.

Street furniture of a suitable style and quality for the town.

A mix of units to promote viability by a retail gap analysis.

High Street Will
We are considering providing free will throughout your High Street.

Improved Shopfronts
To improve the composition of the street scene, retailers will be encouraged to follow the Shopfront Design Guide, 2005.

Town Centre Management
We are discussing the possibility of a Town Team or Business Improvement District.

We intend to undertake a 2 year study of community usage patterns across the whole Town Centre.

Key:
1. Christchurch Rowing Club. Rowing Club, lounge & bar
2. Stour Cottage Youth Centre. Rooms to hire
3. Christchurch Baptist Church & Hall. Religious services, hosts community meetings & support groups
4. Christchurch Library & Learning Centre. Educational rooms and IT suites
5. Regent Centre. Theatre and studio
6. Druff Hall. Public Hall with a 3 year lease
7. Christchurch Christian Centre, Elm Church. Religious services and hosts children's Sunday school
8. Red House Museum. Gallery space and education rooms
9. Christchurch Bowling Club. Outdoor public space
10. Priory House. 2 rooms to hire
11. East Dorset Indoor Bowls Club. Public space to hire

Existing Community Provision Plan

HIGH STREET HOMES CREATE MORE ECONOMIC VITALITY

BOARD 5
INDICATIVE ONLY



4 Potential Sites:

1. **Saxon Corner:** Potential for up to 40 apartments and 90 extra car parking deck spaces on Wainman car park to maintain parking numbers.
2. **Millham's Corner:** Potential for up to 40 apartments and development of a gateway to the city.
3. **Bank Close:** Potential for up to 15 apartments celebrating this area with reveal of the old town walls.
4. **Wick Lane:** Potential for up to 21 apartments.

We are also in the early stages of investigating a long term plan with other sites for homes and businesses.

3 Long Term Sites:
A. Beagle
B. The Gas Site
C. The Golf Course

ACCESS AND MOVEMENT

BOARD 3
INDICATIVE ONLY

Introduction:
A key part of enhancing the High Street experience and making it more attractive to visit is to manage traffic more efficiently by lowering vehicle dominance, traffic volume and speed. We will listen to your views and develop a strategy. We want to maintain access to Town Centre car parks whilst reducing through traffic in the High Street and Church Street. This will create a better environment for people, whether on foot, bicycle, or in a bus, taxi or car.

1. Fountain Roundabout
We propose to redesign this to make a crossroads with all pedestrian and cycle crossings at one level.

2. Cars, Taxis and Buses
We think that the High Street can become more pedestrian and cycle friendly whilst retaining vehicle access for those who need it. This can be achieved by widening footpaths, emphasising crossing points and reducing on-street parking.

3. High Street Surface
The road could be level with the pavement at the Mayor's Parlour and repaved in granite to reinforce the heritage of the building. A similar approach could be provided at the Regent Centre.

4. Corner of High Street, Church Street & Castle Street
The existing cobbles in Church Street could be extended to this junction to discourage unnecessary access onto Church Street. An alternative traffic management plan could be developed.

5. Castle Street
We are considering a road level with the pavements and repaired with granite to create a heritage Piazza outside the King's Hotel with revised parking and better links to the Bowling Green and the Heritage Triangle.

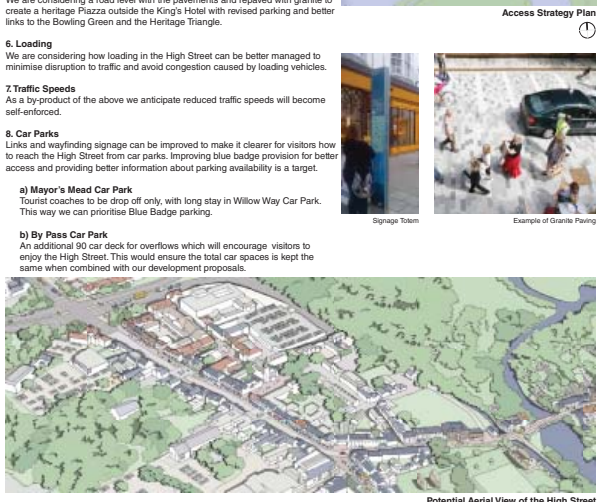
6. Loading
We are considering how loading in the High Street can be better managed to minimise disruption to traffic and avoid congestion caused by loading vehicles.

7. Traffic Speeds
As a by-product of the above we anticipate reduced traffic speeds will become self-enforced.

8. Car Parks
Links and wayfinding signage can be improved to make it clearer for visitors how to reach the High Street from car parks. Improving blue badge provision for better access and providing better information about parking availability is a target.

a) Mayor's Mead Car Park
Tourist coaches to be drop off only, with long stay in Willow Way Car Park. This way we can prioritise Blue Badge parking.

b) By Pass Car Park
An additional 90 car deck for overflows which will encourage visitors to enjoy the High Street. This would ensure the total car spaces it kept the same when combined with our development proposals.



OUR IDEAS - YOUR COMMENTS

BOARD 6
INDICATIVE ONLY

Thank you for attending our public exhibition today. If you have any questions, please speak to a member of the project team.

We would very much like to hear your views, so please take the time to fill in one of the feedback forms provided. We will review all the comments we receive, and use the feedback to refine proposals and produce the agreed strategy.

The exhibition boards on display today will also be available to view at:
The Regent Centre, 51 High Street, Christchurch
Between Tuesday 7th October - Monday 13th October 2014 (10am-10pm)

Queries: please contact
- Rachel Sharpe of Christchurch and East Dorset Partnership on 01202 795047 or at RSharpe@christchurchandeastdorset.gov.uk
- David McFarlane of SP Broadway (community consultation advisors) on 0203 405 1400 or at david@spbroadway.com

Alternatively visit the dorsetforyou website, where all the information from today's exhibition will be available to view at:
<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/christchurch-town-centre-strategy>

All comments to be submitted by 20th October 2014



SP BROADWAY

Building Relationships

APPENDIX A

Exhibition

The overall plan document will need to be formally approved by the Council and this will include the setting up of the theme groups and also wider consultation with the community when this is appropriate. A more detailed plan for how this will work can be developed once members have approved the first draft of the strategy which will be the framework for further development of the detailed plans in fulfillment of the vision.

The public exhibition was held on 6th October from 10am-4pm at the Old Town Hall; it allowed residents and stakeholders to view the exhibition boards as shown opposite and comment via feedback forms on the day or online at their leisure.

From the 7th – 13th October; an unmanned exhibition was held at the Regent Centre; and then at the Civic centre for a following 5 days, giving residents the opportunity to view the proposals for further details or in their own convenient time.

324 residents attended the public exhibition and 370 total feedback forms received.

The exhibition was widely advertised through:

1. Press release and briefing
2. Posters around Christchurch Town Centre
3. Bournemouth Echo
4. Christchurch Advertiser
5. New Milton Advertiser
6. Christchurch Eye
7. Personal invitation letters to Christchurch Borough Council's stakeholder mailing list

Christchurch Town Centre Enhancements Public Exhibition

We would be grateful if you could take a few minutes to provide us with your comments - your views are important to us, and will help us to refine our plans.

Personal information:

Name:

Address:

Postcode: Phone:

Email:

Please provide your comments in the box below. All comments are welcome.

Once completed, please post your form in the ballot box provided. Thank you.

If you wish to send us your completed form at a later date, please post to SP Broadway, 50 Broadway, London SW1H 0RG, or email to john@spbroadway.com by Monday 20 October 2014 at the latest.