



Spelthorne Borough Council

Staines Town Centre

Draft Urban Design Framework

WE BELIEVE IN
MAKING CITIES WORK
THROUGH OUR UNIQUE
INTER-DISCIPLINARY
APPROACH TO URBAN
DESIGN, TRANSPORTATION,
REGENERATION AND
DEVELOPMENT.

3041

STAINES TOWN CENTRE

THE TEAM

URBAN INITIATIVES:

URBAN DESIGN, PLANNING
AND MOVEMENT

URBAN DELIVERY:

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Aerial View of the Study Area

01 Introduction

1.1 Purpose and structure of the report

This document presents a Draft Urban Design Framework (UDF) for Staines Town Centre prepared by Urban Initiatives on behalf of Spelthorne Borough Council. The report sets out the urban design, planning and movement context for the study area and outlines the key constraints and opportunities which will shape the future growth and regeneration of the town centre.

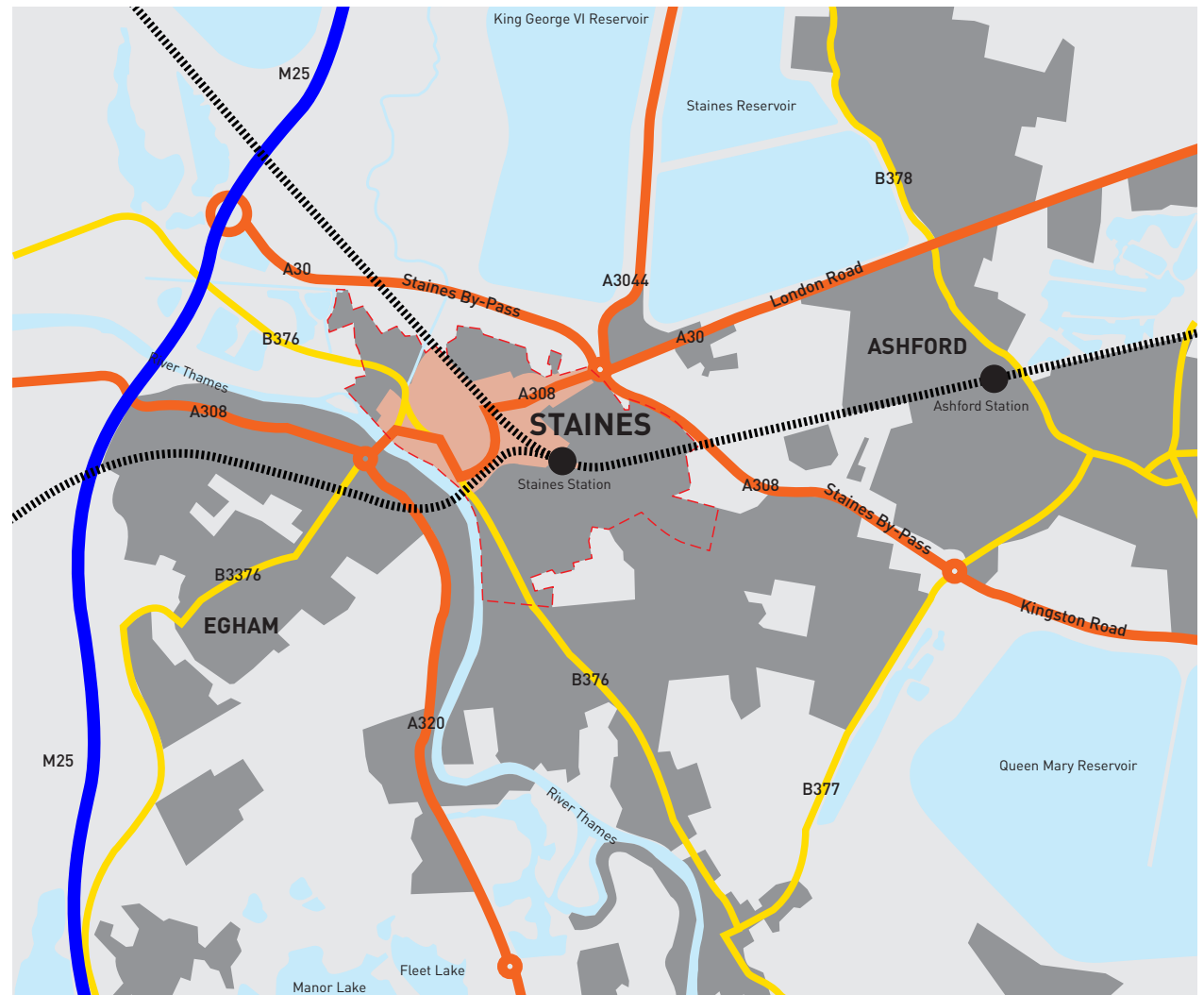
The report is presented in the following sections;

Section 1: Introduction

Section 2: Context

Section 3: Development Framework

Section 4: Delivering the Vision



Plan 01_1: Regional Context



St. Marys Church, Church Street, (Grade II* Listed)

02 CONTEXT

Plan 02_1: Study Area Plan

2.1 Introduction

This section considers the existing context of the study area both spatially and in terms of planning policy. The built environment is considered, including its historic development and current built form, land use and movement patterns. These elements, together with a brief review of the current property sector, inform the constraints and opportunities for future growth and development in the town centre.

2.2 Planning Policy Context

2.2.1 Introduction

The Council is at an advanced stage of preparing its Core Strategy and is progressing an Allocations Development Plan Document in parallel. The Council submitted the two documents to the Secretary of State in June 2007. An examination of the Core Strategy and Policy DPD took place in September 2008. These documents form the strategic Borough level planning documents for Staines Town Centre and a brief review of relevant policies and allocations is presented below.

2.2.2 Review of Core Strategy Policies relevant to Staines Town centre

The vision in the Core Strategy sees the role of Staines as continuing to be a major shopping centre and location for related services to meet the needs of North Surrey.

Objectives 19 and 21 of the Core Strategy support the development of Staines with a mix of town centre uses such as retail, leisure and employment and objective 21 promotes development of sustainable transport system that supports the spatial strategy and provides for the needs of all sections of the community in an environmentally acceptable way and further improve Staines' role as a public transport interchange.

Strategic Policies SP1 and SP4 promote the location of employment and retail in appropriate locations within Staines town centre.

The Core Strategy designates areas for employment within Staines and specifies areas of primary and secondary retail within the town centre. A land use plan is shown in Plan 02_10 Land Use Plan.

Policy EM1: Employment Development seeks the retention and promotion of employment within the designated employment area.

Policy TC1 sets out the role of Staines as the principal town centre serving north Surrey and promotes development of a scale and character suitable for this role. In particular it seeks to make provision for a further 32,000 sqm of retail development to meet the needs of its catchment area.

Supporting text to the policy refers to Spelthorne Retail Study 2004 which was updated in 2007. The update suggests that there would be a capacity for about 18,000 sqm additional retail up to 2016 and scope to 2026 for further development up to and possibly beyond the 32,000 sqm figure in Policy TC1 which is based on the 2004 study. These projections were updated in 2007. They do not alter the general scale of additional retail floorspace required but involve amendments to dates. It however advises that a cautionary approach be undertaken with regard to long term projections of retail floor space.

The Proposals Map accompanying the Core Strategy designates primary and secondary shopping frontages in the town centre. Broadly the stretch along the pedestrianised High Street, the Elmsleigh Centre and Two Rivers is designated as the primary frontage and that to the east and west as the secondary frontage. Policy TC2: Staines Town Centre Shopping Frontage in the emerging Core Strategy seeks to regulate the proportion of retail appropriately along these frontages reflecting their status as primary or secondary frontage.



Plan 02_2: Planning Constraints Plan

2.2.3 Review of Allocations DPD

The Allocations DPD allocates a number of sites for residential and retail uses within and around the study area. These sites, along with the identified capacity are listed in Table 1.

2.2.4 Planning Briefs

There are two specific draft planning briefs relevant to the study area; the Elmsleigh Centre Western and Southern Extension Planning Brief, that will be adopted as Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) in due course by the Council and the Bridge Street Car Park Development Brief.

Elmsleigh Centre Western and Southern Extension Planning Brief

The Elmsleigh Centre Western and Southern Extension Planning Brief sets out the Council's vision for the realisation of the additional retail floorspace needed in the town centre in an integrated manner. It adds further details to the higher level policies in the emerging Core Strategy and Allocations DPD and sets out the future development of the Elmsleigh Centre in two phases Phase 3 being the southern extension and Phase 4 being the western extension of the Elmsleigh Centre. It has the following objectives:

- a) To provide a significant quantitative increase in retail floorspace to secure Staines' retail position and long term vitality and viability.
- b) To ensure that the provision of this significant increase of retail floorspace on the brief site is well integrated with the existing retail area of the town and functions as an integral part of it.

Table 1: Identified Sites within Staines in the Allocations DPD

Site Address	Area	Allocated for	Time Scale
Steel Works and Builders Merchants, Gresham Road, Staines	1.37Ha	100 residential units	2011-16
Builders Merchant, Moor Lane, Staines (site is north of the study area)	0.57Ha	30 residential units	2011-16
Bridge Street Car Park, Staines	0.71Ha	75 residential units	2008-11
The Elmsleigh Centre and adjoining land, Staines	6.62Ha	Phase 3 – extension to the south to provide 2,500sqm of retail floorspace, at least 30 flats and Phase 4 – extension to the west to include at least 18,000sqm of retail floorspace, a mix of related non-retail uses, approximately 65 flats, additional parking and revised access and service arrangements. Improvements to the bus station.	Phase 3; 2008-11 Phase 4: 2011-14

- c) To secure completion of the upgrading of the Elmsleigh Centre and its effective integration with the future Western and South Mall extensions to the retail area.
- d) To provide for other town centre uses including, residential, retention/re-provision of the library and Staines Community Centre and space for a museum, and leisure uses.
- e) To ensure comprehensive access and servicing arrangements, development of a high quality which enhances this part of the town centre and effectively integrates its various existing built elements.
- f) To help secure a sustainable development.

Bridge Street Car Park Development Brief

The second draft planning brief relevant to the town centre is for Bridge Street Car Park. Bridge Street Car Park is a very visible gateway site into Staines town centre from the west. The brief proposes that the primary use of the site should be residential with an element of public and private car parking at ground and any basement level. Any scheme must include provision for the Sea Cadets unless an alternative appropriate and acceptable site can be found for them. The resulting development must be of exceptional quality given the site's prominent location with the Staines Conservation Area, adjoining the River Thames and at an important 'gateway' into Staines town centre. Proposals for the site are at an advanced stage.

2.2.5 Conservation Area

A major part of the western end of the study area is within Staines Conservation Area. Staines Conservation Area Preservation and Enhancement Plan (March 1991) sets out a brief character appraisal of the conservation area and identifies areas for enhancement. The Council's Local Development Scheme identifies a rolling programme starting in December 2008 to review its conservation area plans including the one for Staines.

Proposals for development within the conservation area should seek to preserve and enhance the character of the conservation area in line with PPG15 and Policy EN6 in the Council's emerging Core Strategy.



Staines Bridge, 1832
(Engineers: George and John Rennie, Grade II Listed)

2.2.6 Listed Buildings

There are a number of statutorily listed buildings that are mostly concentrated within Staines Conservation Area in the west of the study area. These are along Clarence Street and Church Street with the most notable being the Grade II* listed Blue Anchor Public House and the Old Town Hall in Market Square. Nos. 44, 46 and 48 High Street, Staines are listed as a group and further to the east the Oast House, Kingston Road is Grade II listed.

The Council also has a local list of buildings and structures of architectural or historic interest. There are again a number of locally listed buildings in the western end of the study area. The local list also includes the Iron Bridge on Staines High Street.

Listed buildings are indicated in the Planning Constraints Plan.

2.3 The Built Environment

2.3.1 Historic Development

Staines owes its existence to its location on the River Thames and the relatively narrow banks and shallow waters which provided an ideal crossing point for travellers.

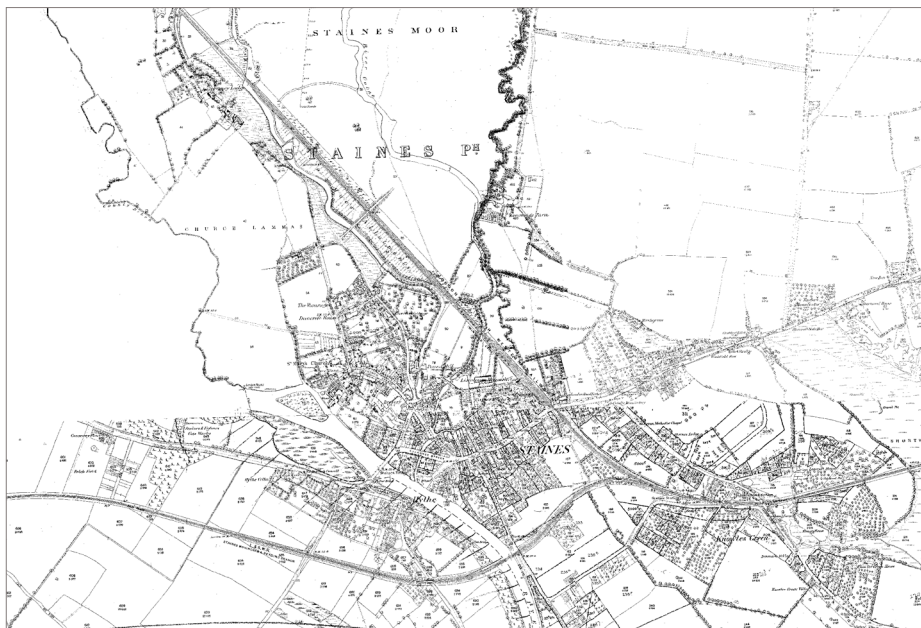
The Romans constructed a bridge crossing at Staines, recognising the strategic importance of the towns position on the main road between London and the southwest.

Staines grew significantly in Victorian period with the advent of the railways and the invention of linoleum which became the main industry of the town in the C19th and was a major employer up until the factories closure in the 1970s.

The C20th saw the town maintain its strategic role through its location close to the countries motorway network and Heathrow Airport.

More recently the Elmsleigh and Two Rivers retail developments have strengthened the towns retail function. Commercial development has located around London Road to the north of the town.

The adjacent historic plans illustrate the historic growth of the town centre and key developments.



Plan 02_3: Historic Mapping c.1860's

Key Developments

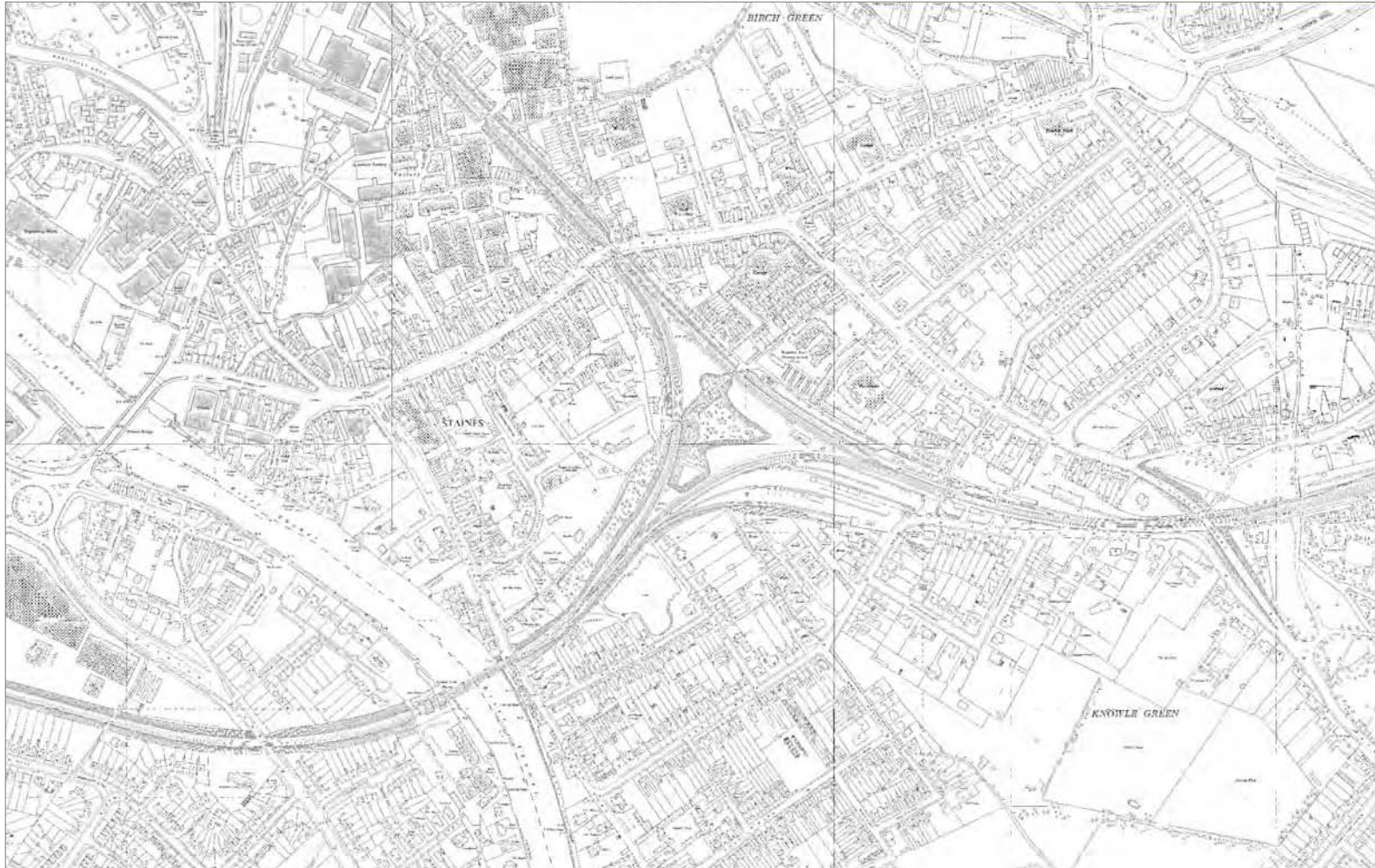
- Staines Station and railway line
- Windsor Line (South West Trains)
- Waterloo to Reading Line (South West Trains)
- London Road
- High Street
- Bridge Street
- Clarence Street
- Wraysbury / Laleham Road (B376)
- St Marys Church



Plan 02_4: Historic Mapping c.1910-20

Key Developments

- Staines to West Drayton Line across - Staines West Station 1885
- Staines Chord
- Linoleum Works Extension north of railway line
- Residential Development north of railway line / Kingston Road / London Road
- Staines Aquaduct & Staines Reservoir 1901
- Town Hall



Plan 02_5: Historic Mapping c.1960

Key Developments

- Additional residential development north of railway line / Kingston Road / London Road
- Staines By Pass (A308) Highway Infrastructure / Roundabouts*
- King George VI Reservoir 1947*
- Colne Valley Park Regional Park incorporating River Colne Valley including Staines*

Moor and Staines Reservoirs designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest

(*Not shown on map)



Key Developments

- M25 Motorway
- Industrial decline
- Reduced railway infrastructure including the closure of Staines West Station / removal of the Chord and significant growth in patronage
- Pedestrianised High Street / South Street
- Elmsleigh Shopping Centre
- Commercial development along London Road
- Two Rivers Shopping Centre

2.3.2 Urban Analysis

Staines is located on low lying land adjacent to the River Thames. The 'two rivers'; the River Wraysbury and the River Colne meet in the Town Centre, to the north of Church Street, before flowing south to the Thames.

The Town Centre is centred on the High Street which provides the historic link between the towns outlying residential areas to the east and the River Thames.

The historic High Street and those streets within the Staines Conservation Area display some fine quality townscape and buildings of architectural quality with fine grain, mixed use development with active ground floors. The historic streets are well enclosed with continuous building lines creating positive view corridors.

The historic settlement was built to predominantly 2/3 stories, in line with other Surrey market towns and the town centre generally maintains these heights.

The High Street lies between two more recent retail developments; namely the Two Rivers Centre and the Elmsleigh Centre. These developments which were built on the historic back lands and former industrial sites provide significant quantum of the towns retail floorspace within these large blocks.

These blocks are serviced via modern highway infrastructure which forms the main east west thoroughfare. These routes dominate the Town Centre and, together with the rail network, provides a significant barrier to pedestrian movement.

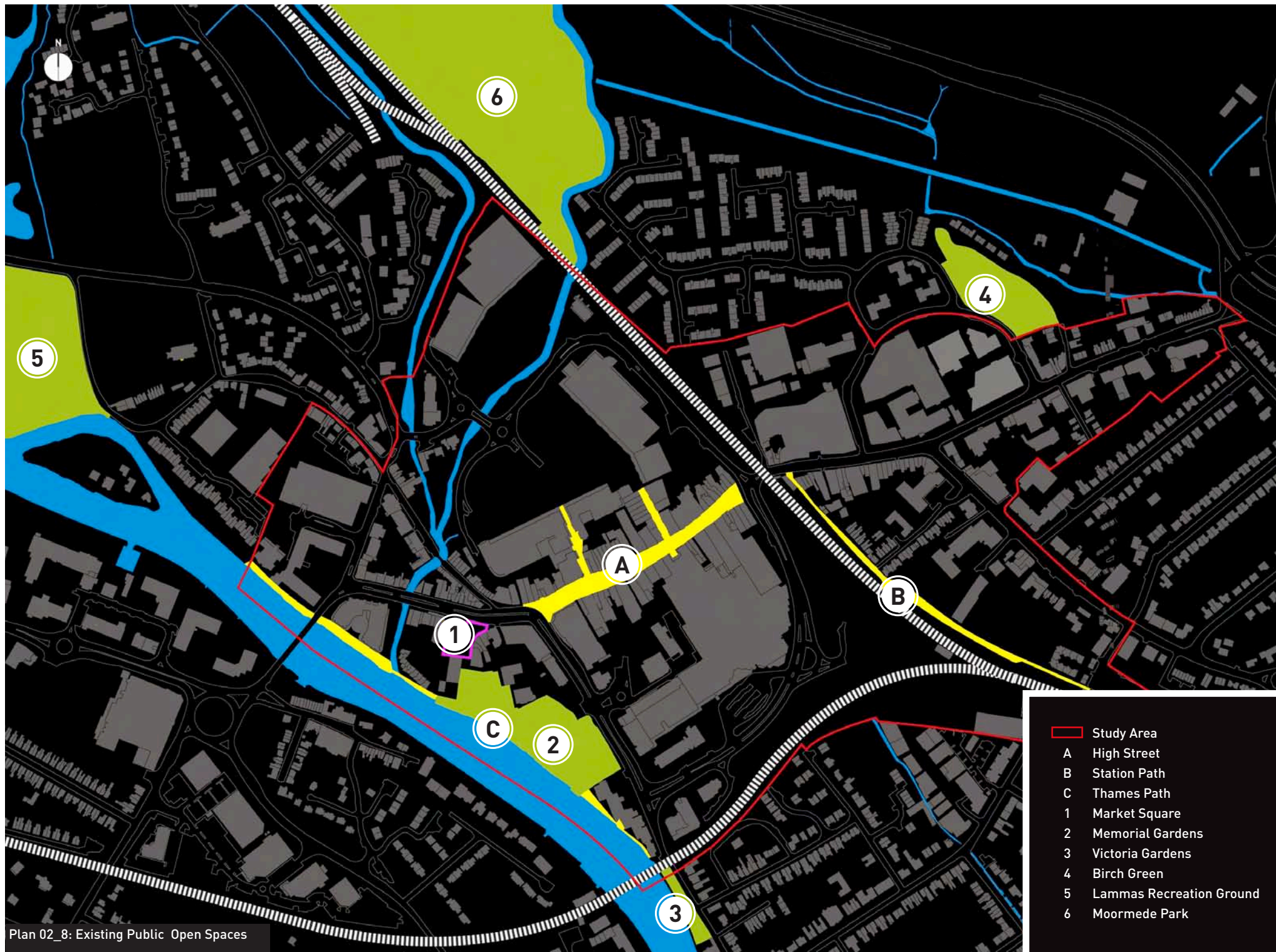


The Two Rivers shopping centre is oriented around large surface car parks which serve the development. The Elmsleigh Shopping Centre is laid out as an internal mall serviced via extensive car parks, again located at the rear. Both developments lack continuity and enclosure of streets and space creating inactive backs that lack natural overlooking and surveillance are prone to vandalism. Thus car borne visitors primary view of to the Town Centre is from the back, reinforcing negative perceptions of the Town.

The Town Centre contains several large surface car parks which represent inefficient land uses for urban areas.

Memorial Gardens form the key public open space for the Town Centre. The Gardens are well located on the banks of the River Thames. A number of smaller hard spaces are also provided in the study area but they lack any coherent network of connections.

The emerging business quarter to the east of the railway line is significantly taller than the general 2 storey height found elsewhere in the Town Centre. Current proposals indicate heights in excess of 10 storeys providing local Town Centre scale landmarks. Longer views towards the Town Centre are available from St. Anns to the south and along the London Road to the east and from the footpath between the Staines North and South Reservoirs to the north of the town.



Plan 02_8: Existing Public Open Spaces

2.3.3 Character Areas

Introduction

The study area comprises several distinct character areas which display specific land uses. These areas will inform the generation of the draft Urban Design Framework outlined in section 3.0. Character areas include:

- High Street
- Two Rivers
- South Street
- London Road
- Thames Side
- Church Street

2.3.4 Land Use

Staines is the primary shopping centre within Spelthorne and is also its largest office location. The catchment area of Staines extends beyond the Borough and is the principal town centre serving North Surrey. It is identified as a sub-regional centre in the South East Plan and its proximity to Heathrow, the M25, good public transport connections to London and location along the River Thames give it the potential to further improve its position as an attractive town centre.

Staines town centre has seen major development in recent years such as the Two Rivers shopping centre and more recently the refurbishment of the Elmsleigh Shopping Centre which have helped improve the popularity of the town centre. At present there are a number of other major developments in the pipeline which create the opportunity to further transform Staines into a destination.



The primary retail in Staines is concentrated around the pedestrianised High Street extending southwards to include the Elmsleigh Centre and northwards to include the retail offer of Two Rivers. Secondary retail frontage extends eastwards to the junction of the High Street with Kingston Road and westwards to include the frontage along Clarence Street and Church Street. The scale and nature of the built environment reflects the primary and secondary role of these locations. In the secondary shopping areas retail is more interspersed with other uses such as professional services, restaurants and take aways.



Debenhams, Clarence Street



Elmsleigh Centre, Thames Street



Two Rivers Shopping Centre, Norris Road

There is a concentration of commercial development along London Road in the eastern part of the study area. The buildings along London Road mark the vehicular entrance into Staines Town Centre from the M25. Many of the developments are fairly recent and developments such as 1 London Road establish a firm building line. There is good street enclosure with a general shoulder height of 3-4 storeys. The only exception to the shoulder height in the area is the former Centrica building (10 storeys, now demolished), the BT building (7 storeys)* on Fairfield Avenue and Majestic House (7 storeys) on the High Street. The flat topography of the area enables taller buildings to be seen from some distance. For example the former Centrica building with its large north-south façade could be seen from the vicinity of Ashford Hospital.

There is a further concentration of offices along Church Street East. There is less capacity in this area for change compared to the employment area along London Road. This is because of the lower scale nature of this area predominantly designated as a Conservation Area.

The southern part of the study area comprises the back of the Elmsleigh Centre with the bus station and the surface car park beyond. This area will also accommodate the Staines Chord as part of the AirTrack proposals along South Street.

In terms of leisure uses there is a limited offer within the town centre with the cinema and a gym (Holmes Place) as part of the Two Rivers development being the only buildings in leisure use. There is a library and a day centre at the back of Debenhams on Thames Street.

*The BT Building was constructed with large floor to ceiling heights to accommodate exchange equipment and it has a significant overall height.

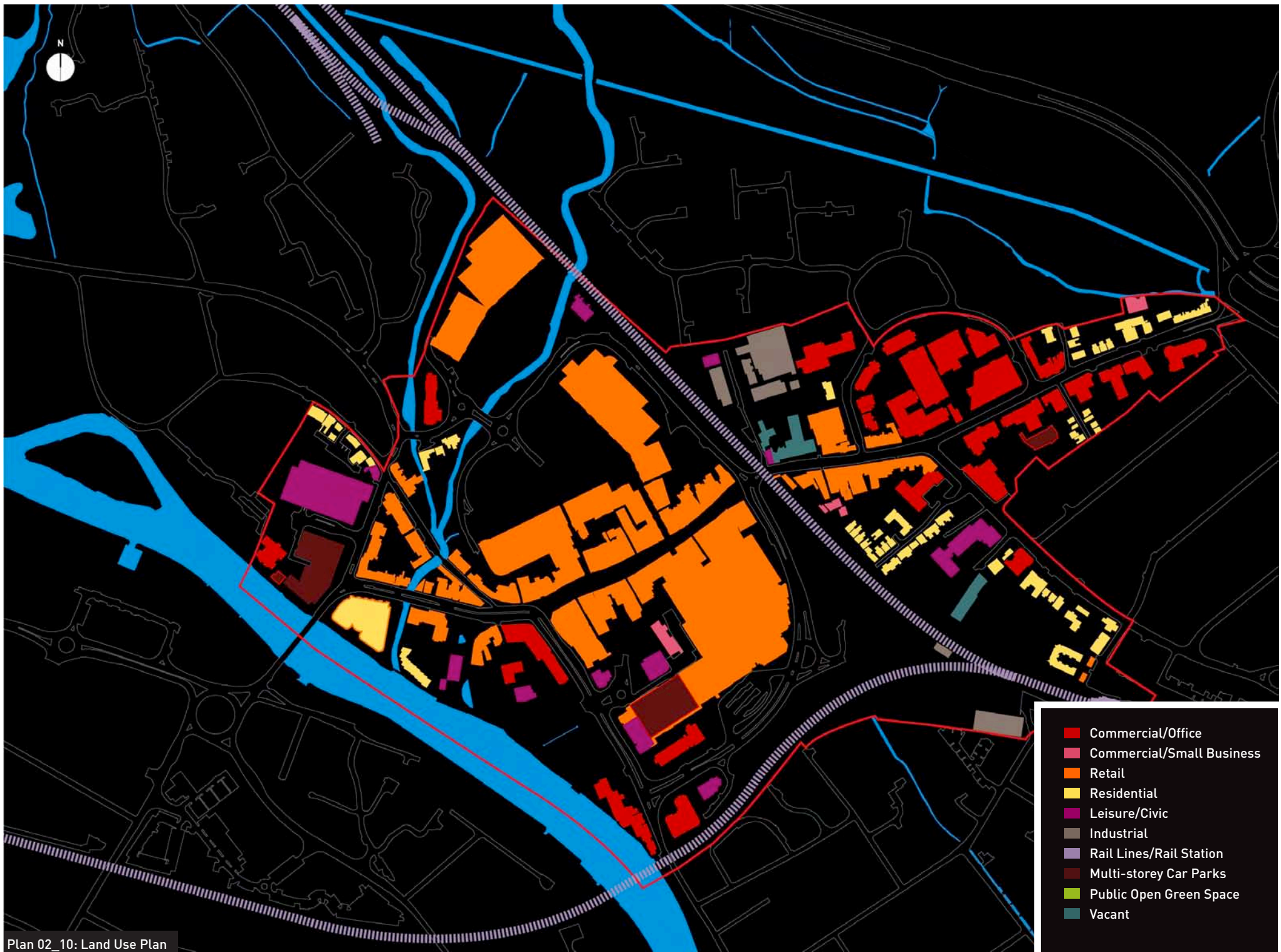
Staines' residential hinterland lies beyond the study area boundary. Within the study area residential uses are on the edges of the core of the town centre. A large proportion of residential development is located in the south-eastern part of the study area around the existing Staines railway station. A recent scheme that has introduced more residential into the town centre has been the Thames Edge development. Most new proposals in the town centre now have an element of residential in line with government policy promoting mixed use developments making more efficient use of land particularly in town centre locations with good public transport links.

Memorial Gardens on the riverside comprises the largest area of open space in the town centre. The pedestrianised High Street and the Market Square offer a different scale of open space which is well used for street markets and cafes. The Tow Path along the river is a high quality pleasant open environment which can be a key strength of Staines town centre. The Station Path is lined with mature Sycamore trees but generally with the exception of the frontage along No. 1 London Road there is potential for more street planting in Staines town centre. The planting as part of the pedestrianisation of the High Street is of a very small scale and fails to make a strong impact on the streetscape.

Staines Railway Station is located to the south east of the study area away from the primary retail and commercial area. It is connected to the town centre via a busy pedestrian footpath along the railway embankment. The rail connections from Staines link to Windsor and Eton and Reading to the north west and Weybridge to the south. As a result the railway lines form a 'y' junction which restricts direct connections across the town centre.



Courage Brewery, Bridge Street



Plan 02_10: Land Use Plan

2.4 Movement and Traffic

2.4.1 Local Transport Policy

Surrey's second Local Transport Plan (LTP2), covering the period 2006/07 to 2010/11 is the primary transport policy document applicable to Staines. The following table from LTP2 summarises Surrey's over-arching transport objectives.

Staines is one of a small number of towns in Surrey that constitutes effectively the 'second tier' of urban centres below what the LTP2 describes as the "three regional hubs" of Guildford, Woking and Redhill/Reigate. Staines is identified in the emerging South East Plan as a secondary Regional Centre and Surrey County Council classify the town as a 'sub-regional hub'.



High Street

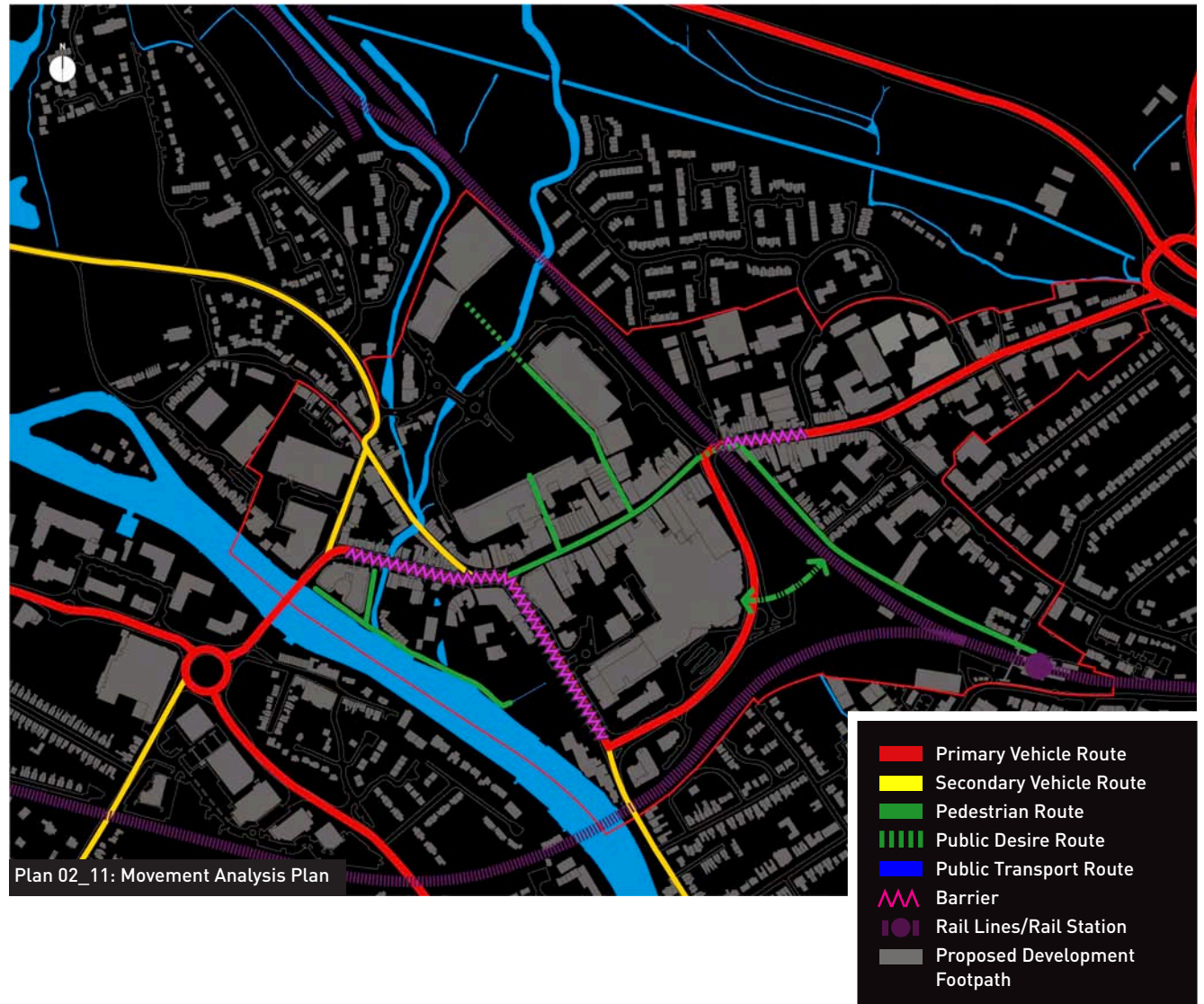
Specific references to Staines in LTP2 include the following:

- Tackling congestion. Depending on the level of LTP funding, the focus for tackling congestion in Surrey may be extended from the three hubs to Staines in the period to 2011. Specific opportunities which may arise to address congestion include interchange improvements at Staines associated with the development of AirTrack.
- Increasing accessibility. The main focus for new and extended Quality Bus Partnerships and improved public transport interchanges will be the three hubs plus Staines, Camberley and Epsom.
- The potential for park-and-ride bus services to reduce congestion will continue to be explored for the main Surrey towns, including Staines. It is recognised that complementary parking policies and standards will need to be applied in such town centres in order to make P&R financially viable.

Spelthorne is looking to lead a transport study of the Town Centre. Some of the transport related issues identified in this report will be developed in that study.

Objective	Indicators
1. Tackling congestion to limit delays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> , limit growth of peak hour traffic flows into main urban centres , limit growth of area wide traffic (vehicle km)
2. Increasing accessibility to key services and facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> , increase the proportion of 16– 19 year olds who travel to schools or colleges by sustainable modes of transport , increase the share of school trips by modes other than single passenger in a car , increase bus patronage , increase the number of all survey respondents who are satisfied with bus services , increase the number of passengers who are satisfied with bus services , improve bus punctuality , increase the satisfaction with travel information , increase the number of cycling trips , increase the number of cycles parked at railway stations
3. Improving road safety and security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> , reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured (KSI) , reduce the number of children killed or seriously injured (child KSI) , reduce the number of slight casualties
4. Enhancing the environment and quality of life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> , reduce the concentrations of NO₂ at a key location in Air Quality Management Areas (Spelthorne and other districts if identified as necessary) , limit growth of traffic on Surrey's roads , increase the proportion of buses in Spelthorne with Euro III compliant engines , increase the proportion of population which benefits from noise reducing surfacing , reduce the total emissions of CO₂ , reduce total emissions of NO₂ , reduce total emissions of particulates (PM₁₀) , increase the percentage of recycled material used in maintenance
5. Improving management and maintenance of the transport network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> , improve the condition of Principal roads (BVPI 223) , improve the condition of Non Principal classified roads (BVPI 224a) , improve the condition of Unclassified roads (BVPI 224b) , improve the condition of Footways (BVPI 187)

Table 2: LTP2 Extract



2.4.2 The Highway Network

The study area is well located relative to the strategic highway network, with the M25 to the west of town and the A30 to the north. Both these roads provide good links with Heathrow airport, which adds to Staines' attractiveness as a location for business and for people who value living in a place that has easy access to numerous employment and other destinations.

Key features of the highway network include the following:

- The A308 runs east-west through town from the A30/A308/A3044 roundabout to the east and the A30/M25 (Junction 13) to the west.
- There are pinch-points and consequent congestion hot-spots at the Iron Bridge where the A308 passes under the Windsor railway line and at the Staines Bridge where it passes over the Thames.
- The historic, direct vehicular route through town was closed by the pedestrianisation of the High Street, with through traffic now going via South Street and Thames Street to the south of the Elmsleigh Centre.
- Outside the pedestrianised High Street, traffic and/or the highways themselves are a dominant feature of Staines (e.g. the dual carriageway of South Street, the severance caused by Mustard Mill Road, and the unattractive environment of London Road).
- The layout of Clarence Road, which is effectively the western section of the High Street, unduly favours the car, creates an unattractive pedestrian environment and contains no formal pedestrian crossing facilities between Debenhams and Bridge Street.

- The right turn into London Road from the locally important Kingston Road is banned, with the manoeuvre being facilitated by a loop via Fairfield Road, which is one way northbound between London Road and Moormeade Crescent and creates severance between London Road and the residential area to the north.

2.4.3 Parking

A parking study by JMP, the final version of which is dated January 2008, looked primarily at how current levels of provision for public parking in the town centre will be expected or may need to change as a consequence of (a) the redevelopment of existing car parks and (b) the generation of new demands for parking associated with new development of all kinds.

As regards parking for new developments of all types, Policy M8 of the Spelthorne Borough Local Plan 2001 states that, 'Development proposals will be required to make appropriate off-street parking provision applicable to the uses for which permission is sought or the other uses to which the development may be put without the need for planning permission'. In support of this policy, Spelthorne has set out its parking standards in the form of Supplementary Planning Guidance (June 2001).

Key parking issues for the development of the UDF include:

- Generally, broad agreement on appropriate levels of publicly available town centre parking in the future, bearing in mind differing assumptions as regards demand, in the light of future development scenarios. (The JMP parking study will need to be refreshed in the light of this.)

- In the light of the above, the need to identify any new parking provision for the town centre, bearing in mind the proposals to redevelop existing car park sites (e.g. Bridge Street and Kingston Road), the potential (temporary and permanent) loss of spaces relating to the AirTrack initiative (including the Elmsleigh surface car park and the access arrangements for the Elmsleigh multi-storey car park), and any other proposals affecting existing public car parks (e.g. the possible demolition and replacement of the Tothill multi-storey car park as part of the Phase 4 Elmsleigh Centre extension).
- The critical impact for the eastern part of the town centre (north and south of London Road) of the loss of the Kingston Road facility, it being the only publicly-available car park east of the Iron Bridge and there being no obvious sites for replacement provision.
- The unattractive town centre environment and inefficient use of land represented by the three surface car parks at Two Rivers.
- The potential conflict between the provision of parking to support economic activity and the desirability in sustainable transport policy terms of reducing the amount of parking, at least proportionately to the amount of development.
- Reviewing and, as appropriate, revising Spelthorne's adopted parking standards applicable to different land use types within the town centre.

2.4.4 Servicing

Providing and maintaining access for service vehicles and deliveries is particularly important for a town centre with such a strong (and growing) retail component. Existing arrangements in relation to the Elmsleigh Centre are designed with vehicle priority in mind. The complex highway layout is effective in terms of traffic capacity but visually intrusive on Thames Street.

Key servicing issues for the UDF include:

- The re configuration of access for deliveries in relation to future phases of the development of the Elmsleigh Centre, including especially the impact of AirTrack on the proposal to focus access in the vicinity of the existing South Street access to the multi-storey car park.
- Reducing the visual impact of servicing yards on the town centre environment and thereby also increasing the proportion of active frontage to the public highway away from the core retail streets.



Staines Railway Station

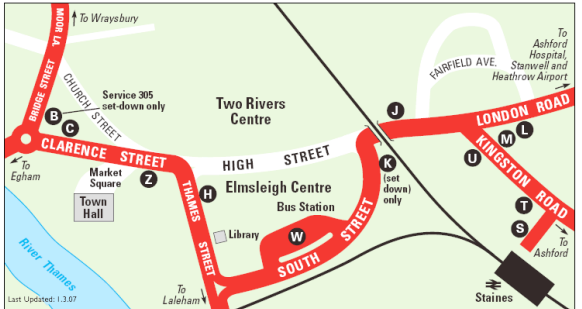
2.4.5 Rail

Staines station is easily accessible by frequent trains connecting to the east with stations to Waterloo and to the west with stations to Windsor & Eton and to Reading and Weybridge. The Windsor & Eton trains run on the line that heads north from the station across the Iron Bridge, while trains to both Reading and Weybridge use the line that runs to the south of South Street. Lying immediately south of the confluence of these two lines, Staines station is necessarily some way distant from the town centre, with the main walk link being the generally wide foot-cycleway that lies to the east of the Windsor branch and connects with western part of the town centre via a couple of underpasses.

Heathrow Airport Ltd (part of BAA) is currently promoting the AirTrack proposal, which would provide a new branch from the Windsor line, north of Staines, leading direct to Heathrow Terminal 5. It also involves both reinstating the old railway chord adjacent to South Street that would link the Reading/Weybridge line to the Windsor line just south of the Iron Bridge and the creation of a new 'Staines High Street' station immediately north of the Iron Bridge as currently envisaged. However, until detailed proposals for the scheme are published for consultation in September 2008 there remains a degree of uncertainty about exactly what BAA will be proposing. Though of considerable potential benefit to Staines and people living there, AirTrack has a number of potentially negative environmental and other impacts that means Spelthorne Council has reserved its support pending clarification of the nature and scale of such impacts and the measures that would be introduced to minimise/ameliorate them.

Key rail-related issues for the UDF include:

- How the UDF can successfully accommodate both with- and without-AirTrack development scenarios, both of which are possible at this stage.
- The influence of the proposed High Street station on the nature and scale of future development in its vicinity if it proceeds.
- The form of access to the proposed new High Street station: our initial thinking is that the 'preferred' option is less favourable for the town centre than one of the alternatives identified in BAA's February 2008 consultation document. This alternative is less well-located relative to the High Street but facilitates both good access to the east and west and provides a new public access across the railway corridor. It also takes the main station access point away from the very cramped location against the Iron Bridge, as proposed in the 'preferred' option.
- The potential temporary and permanent impacts of the reinstatement of the old railway chord alongside South Street, especially in relation to the future physical environment in that location, access to the Elmsleigh Centre, loss of part of the Elmsleigh surface car park, and future access to what will be a 'rail-locked' triangle site.
- Improving the quality and safety of the pedestrian environment of the existing walk routes to Staines Station, especially after dark and in relation to the rail underpasses.



Route	Destination	Bus Stop	Route	Destination	Bus Stop
41/43	Egham, Englefield Green, Windsor, Slough	W, Z	446	Chertsey, St. Peter's Hospital, Addlestone, Woking	W, Z
117	Ashford, Feltham, Hounslow, West Middlesex Hospital	J, M, W	451	Chertsey, Addlestone, Byfleet, Weybridge, Walton, Kingston	W, Z
203	Ashford Hospital, Stanwell, Hatton Cross, Hounslow	J, W	461	Chertsey, St Peter's Hospital, Addlestone, Weybridge, Walton, Kingston	W, Z
216	Ashford Hospital, Ashford, Sunbury, Hampton, Kingston	J, W	500	Egham, Sunningdale, Windlesham, Bagshot, Camberley	W, Z
218	Laleham, Shepperton, Walton, Kingston	W	551	Chertsey, Addlestone, Ottershaw	W, Z
290	Ashford, Sunbury, Hanworth, Twickenham	J, M, W	566/567	Egham, Thorpe/Stroude, Virginia Water, Knowle Hill	W, Z
305	Waysbury, Horton, Colnbrook, Poyle	W, Z	570	Wheatshaf Lane	W
400	Ashford Hospital, Ashford, Charlton, Shepperton	J, W	571	Sunbury, Grange Farm	J, W
426	Chertsey, St Peter's Hospital, Woking	W, Z	572	Sunbury, Sunbury Common	J, W
438	Royal Estate, Laleham, Shepperton	J, M, W	591	Stanwell, Stanwell Moor	J, W
441	Ashford Hospital, Stanwell, Stanwell Moor, Heathrow Airport	C, H, J, W	593	Chertsey, Lyne, Ottershaw	W, Z
441	Egham, Englefield Green (Cherrywood Avenue)	K, L, W, Z	950	Thorpe Park	S, W

Existing Bus Service

2.4.6 Bus

Staines is generally well served by bus routes, with a total of 16 regular services and 7 occasional services either passing through or (mostly) terminating at the bus station on South Street. The map below shows where buses stop around the town centre and indicates which places are served by which routes.

The future development of the town centre presents the opportunity to increase the quality, frequency and number of services. However, the location of the bus station to the far south of the retail area means both that bus access for Two Rivers is relatively poor and that bus access generally is perceived as somewhat peripheral. Additionally, while the bus station helps to anchor the Elmsleigh Centre, the closure of the centre in the evenings makes the bus station an isolated and unattractive location at such times.

Key bus-related issues for the UDF include:

- Clarifying that the bus station will remain in broadly its current location.
- Improving the quality of pedestrian access to the bus station after hours.
- Improving the relationship of new development with both the bus station and other town centre bus stops, the latter being capable of relocation should this improve bus accessibility to key development/attractions.

Making provision for excellent bus-rail interchange in connection with AirTrack.

2.4.7 Walking

Whatever mode of transport people use for travelling to and from the town centre, walking is how all will experience its attractions and gain final access to the range of destinations provided. It is therefore essential that provision for other modes is made in such a way as, if at all possible, to enhance the pedestrian experience, and certainly to reduce any negative impacts to the minimum.

Key pedestrian movement issues for the UDF include:

- Identifying, and making excellent provision for movement along, the main pedestrian 'desire lines' within the study area, and using these routes as the basis for a hierarchical walking network covering the town centre and links to adjacent areas.
- Improving pedestrian crossing facilities where these are currently poor (e.g. Clarence Street and Mustard Mill Road), including crossings of the railway corridors.
- Improving pedestrian priority at key pinch-points (e.g. the Iron Bridge).
- Making the most of opportunities to enhance pedestrian access to the rivers, including the crossing of Thames Street, continuing to develop the Thames Path and opening up the River Colne still further. Additionally, providing better, direct links between the town centre and Staines Moor.
- Generally, considering the needs of pedestrians as a priority in relation to all new development (see also references to pedestrian movement in relation to other modes, above).



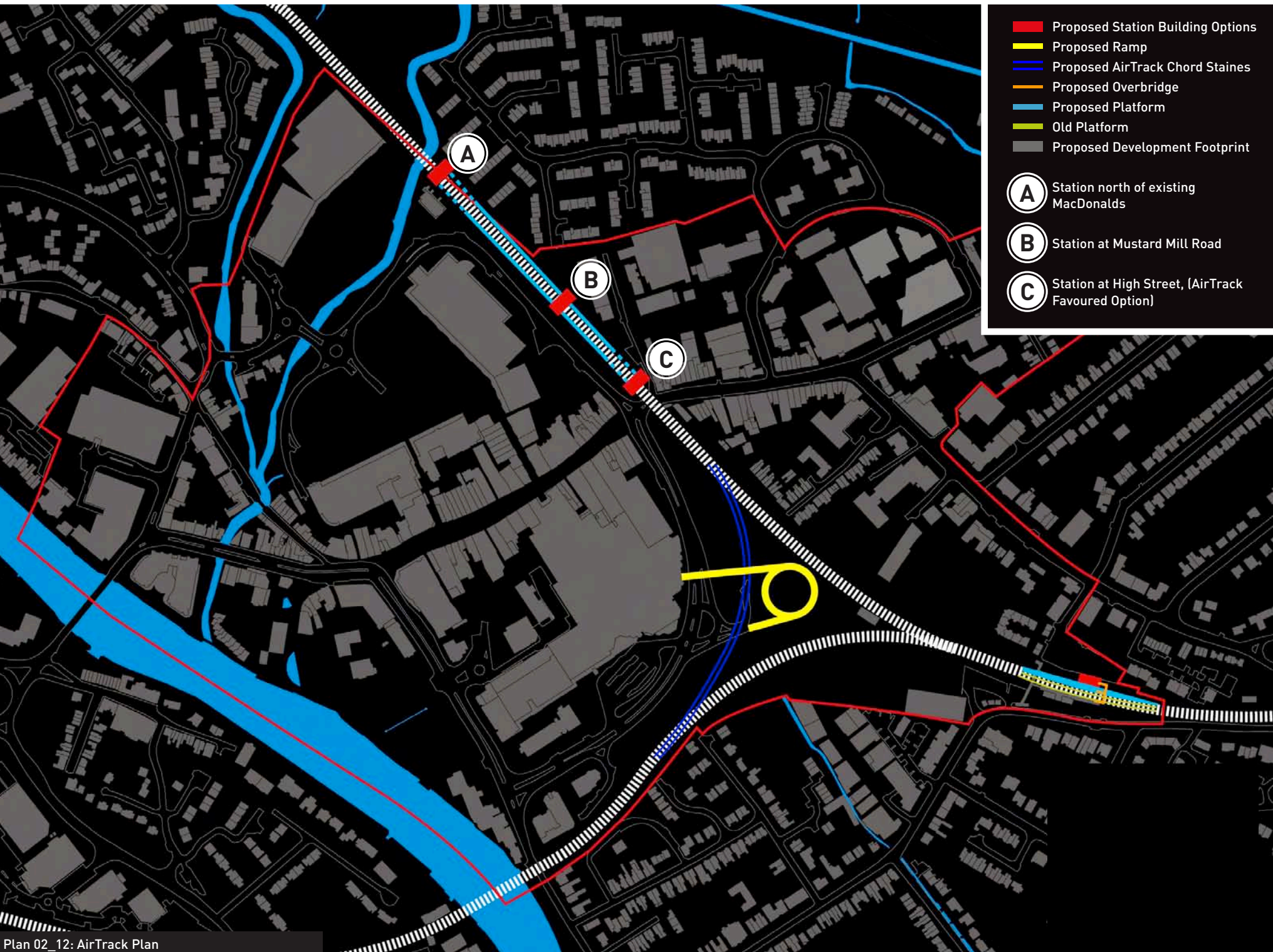
Mustard Mill Lane



Thames Street



Tothill MSCP



2.4.8 Cycling

Encouraging more cycling to and from Staines, especially for local trips that are currently made by car, should be part of the package of measures aimed at reducing congestion. The topography of Staines is generally encouraging for cycling, with few off-putting gradients in the vicinity. However, many local roads are traffic-dominated and hostile to cycling, especially by those who are not currently regular or confident cyclists. There are a number of cycle routes of differing types and usefulness within the study area which should form the basis for future developments.

Key cycling issues for the UDF include:

- Where possible, making provision for improved cycle priority in key locations.
- Enhancing and effectively joining-up the existing cycle routes within the study area to form a coherent town centre cycling network, focusing on routes to and from adjacent areas where cycling has the potential genuinely to influence future town centre travel patterns.
- Promoting improved cycle parking facilities, both publicly in relation to key attractions (e.g. the main shopping areas, the railway station, leisure facilities) and in relation to new development of all types (especially employment and residential).

2.5 Market and Property

2.5.1 Introduction

The objective of this section of the [baseline report] is to provide a short and focused overview of the property market in Staines town centre. The focus for the section is on the commercial (office) and retail sectors.

2.5.2 Strategic location

Staines benefits from a very strong location with excellent proximity to the strategic motorway network (M25, M4 and M3), airports (Heathrow: 4 miles, and Gatwick: 38 miles) and major conurbations such as Reading, Slough and London (rail services to Waterloo are 35 minutes).

As a result of these benefits Staines is likely to experience significant pressure for growth in all of the major property sectors in the medium to longer term.

Industrial and distribution: as a result of proximity to Heathrow (particularly for specialist airport related warehousing) and the M25, M4 motorways.

Office: as a result of proximity to Heathrow, London and location on the 'M4 Corridor'.

Residential: as a result of more macro trends in growth of demand across the south east of England.

2.5.3 Commercial (office)

The recent Economy and Employment Land Report (May 2006) for Spelthorne District expressed that market demand for offices in the town has been relatively stagnant over recent years as a result of broader market trends including weakness in the office sector over the last few years. However, it indicated that the opening of Heathrow T5 and the proposed AirTrack rail could support growth in the future and provide Staines with a strong competitive advantage over other locations.

Within the study area, the historic focus for office development is along London Road, to the east of the railway line. This area contains a concentration of office accommodation that varies significantly in terms of size, scale and quality.

There is very little up-to-date evidence of achieved rents for office space in the study area. However, FOCUS (2008) report that one recent deal (31/01/07) at Venture House for 1,100sq.m (12,000sq.ft) achieved a rent of £280psm (£26psf). Evidence from elsewhere (Estates Gazette, Regional Focus, 2007) shows that this is marginally above levels for other locations across Surrey such as Woking and Reigate which are typically between £215psm and £270psm (£20 and £25psf). However, with little information about this one deal, it is difficult to assess if this is a true reflection of office rents in Staines or a result of specific lease terms.

A number of significant opportunities for new office developments have been identified by the private sector and are currently at various stages of progression. In general, all of the proposals would result in a significant uplift in the amount of available office floorspace on London Road and a significant increment in the quality of space available. Any proposals to replace historic, lower quality office or industrial stock with new, high-specification office accommodation should be considered seriously by the Council in order to continue to provide a strong offer for potential inward investment and support continued town centre economic development.



Recent commercial development along London Road

2.5.4 Retail

The Spelthorne Retail Study (2004) found that Staines is the primary retail destination for Spelthorne District with a catchment area that extends to cover the entire local authority area. Research provided by FOCUS (2008) estimated that the retail catchment population includes 50,000-100,000 people.

Within Spelthorne, Staines contains the greatest amount of convenience and comparison floorspace, again reinforcing its primacy in the local authority area as shown in the table below:

Supply of retail floorspace in Spelthorne Town Centres (2004)

Town centre	Total existing gross floor space (net)	Existing convenience gross floor-space (net)	Existing comparison gross floor-space (net)
Staines	88,681 [62,077]	5,433 (3,803)	83,248 [58,274]
Ashford	10,239 [7,167]	3,074 (2,152)	7,164 (5,015)
Shep-perton	5,359 (3,751)	2,129 (1,490)	3,230 (2,261)
Sunbury Cross	6,590 (4,613)	3,164 (2,215)	3,426 (2,398)

Source: Spelthorne Retail Study, 2004

Colliers CRE report Zone A rents across the town as (£1,318psm) £127psf in June 2007. Zone A rents have remained stable at this point for the last three years having increased significantly since the 10 year low of £915psm (£85psf) in June 1997. This data reflects and extends that provided in the 2004 Retail Study as shown below.

Research undertaken by FOCUS has shown that the number of requirements for retail premises in Staines has increased steadily since 1994. At the most recent recording (October 2007), there were 88 requirements for retail premises in the town indicative of a well performing centre.

In terms of future capacity the 2004 Retail Study and 2007 Update focus the provision of any new floorspace towards the an extension to the Elmsleigh Centre (see below). The original 2004 study estimated that capacity to 2011 could be up to 17,000sq.m of new floorspace that effectively justifies proposed expansion to the Elmsleigh Centre. However, the 2007 update tempers this level of growth commenting that in the short-term there is likely to be less capacity than previously thought and that sufficient capacity is unlikely to exist until around 2016 to justify the Elmsleigh Centre extension (Phase 4).

Within the town centre itself there are three important concentrations of retail activity; the High Street, Elmsleigh Centre and the Two Rivers retail park.

Zone A retail rents in Staines Town Centre

Year	1992	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2007
Rent (£/m²)	969	915	915	969	1,023	1,076	1,292	1,318

Source: Colliers CRE

High Street

The High Street is a relatively short pedestrianised area containing a large range of national high-street multiples. The High Street has benefited from a recent programme of enhancements including pedestrianisation, tree planting, new street furniture and improved lighting and safety.

Evidence from the 2004 Retail Study and a site visit has indicated that this area trades relatively well. It provides a high-quality environment, with a good range of stores and experiences low levels of vacancy which has remained around 7% or 8% over recent years. This could be assumed to be a reasonable attrition rate or “churn” to allow for a steady turnover of tenants.

Key tenants include:

- Debenhams,
- WH Smith,
- Burton,
- Millets,
- Dorothy Perkins,
- Monsoon, and
- Peacocks,



High Street

The Elmsleigh Centre

The Elmsleigh Centre is a traditional shopping mall opened in 1979. It currently extends to a total of 28,800sq.m (309,888sq.ft). The Elmsleigh Centre has gone through a number of ownerships over the last 10 years including BP Pensions, MEPC, Dusco, Clerical Medical and is currently owned by Insight Investments (part of Clerical Medical). The centre is managed by CBRE and let by Green and Partners.

The Elmsleigh Centre benefits from significant provision of related surface and multi-storey car parking with direct access to the mall.

The Elmsleigh Centre has undergone recent internal refurbishment, which has helped it remain a strong destination despite its relative age. The Elmsleigh Centre is anchored by Marks and Spencer (which also has frontage onto the High Street) and BHS and contains a number of other national multiples including (FOCUS, 2008):

- Matalan,
- Mothercare,
- New Look,
- Next,
- River Island,
- The Body Shop, and
- Woolworths.

At the time of writing, there were no vacancies within the Elmsleigh Centre, indicative of a strong and well performing product. This trend is echoed by the 2004 Retail Report which found that average vacancy rates over the period 1994 to 2002 ranged between 4% and 19% which might be considered a reasonable 'frictional' rate or sufficient to allow for a steady turnover or "churn" of occupiers. We are advised that the 19% spike was the result of a period of partial refurbishment resulting in abnormally high temporary occupancy.

The most recent recorded letting by FOCUS (2008) in the Elmsleigh Centre was in February 2005 when The Body Shop took on 140sq.m (1,500sq.ft) of space at an average rent of £567.00psm (£52.57psf). It should be noted that this is an average rent for the entire property, the level of rent for Zone A space was not available.

The Two Rivers Retail Park

The Two Rivers Retail Park is a traditional out-of-town retail park unusually located in Staines town centre on an ex-industrial site. The retail park was developed by MEPC and opened in 1999. It extends to 34,500sq.m (371,552sq.ft) of retail floorspace and includes a significant area of surface car parking.

The Two Rivers Retail Park is anchored by a Waitrose foodstore and a Warner Village leisure complex. It also includes a number of national comparison multiples; tenants include (FOCUS, 2008):

- PC World,
- JJB Sports,
- Gap,
- Furniture Village,
- Boots,
- Carphone Warehouse,
- Currys, and
- Burton.

Evidence provided in the 2004 study, with data for its first two years of trading indicate very low vacancy rates, similar to the other two core retail areas, again providing confirmation for strong and well performing product.

2.6 Constraints

There are a number of constraints that will influence the future growth and development of the Town Centre. The key physical constraints include; the severance created by the railway lines, the River Colne and Wraysbury River and associated floodplain and the barriers to pedestrian movement created through roads; namely South Street and Thames Street. Other constraints that need to be considered include land ownership patterns and the historic built environment.

The Draft Urban Development Framework will respond to these constraints.

Staines Town Centre today presents, and is presented with, a number of strengths and opportunities, as well as weaknesses and threats. One weakness, as described in the brief, is its relatively narrow offer (lack of “middle class appeal”), although the relatively recent award-winning improvements to the High Street shopping and riverside environments are obvious strengths.

However, there are some challenges arising for Staines in connection with this success.

This points to the fact that any truly successful town centre must have more than one string to its bow and that the UDF for Staines town centre must broaden and deepen its offer.

Threats to Staines’ success include its poor image (false though some impressions may be), competition from other centres, and peak period highway congestion.

The current and emerging major development proposals, while in some measure a threat, and indeed one of the drivers of this commission, should also be understood and grasped as significant opportunities, if they can be harnessed effectively to deliver a cohesive plan for the centre as a whole.



Plan 02_13: Physical Constraints Plan

2.7 Opportunities







2.7.1 Development Opportunity Sites

Concerning opportunities, the most potentially transformational single proposal is AirTrack, consisting of the improved rail connections and services, especially of course to Heathrow.

We appreciate that there are a number of significant issues concerning AirTrack's delivery, not least environmental impact. The Council does not currently formally support the project and has deferred coming to a view on the scheme until all the details are available. Nevertheless, its completion is considered possible by 2013/14, and this relatively short time-frame makes it a material consideration in how the town centre could change over the next few years, specifically in relation to land use and urban form.

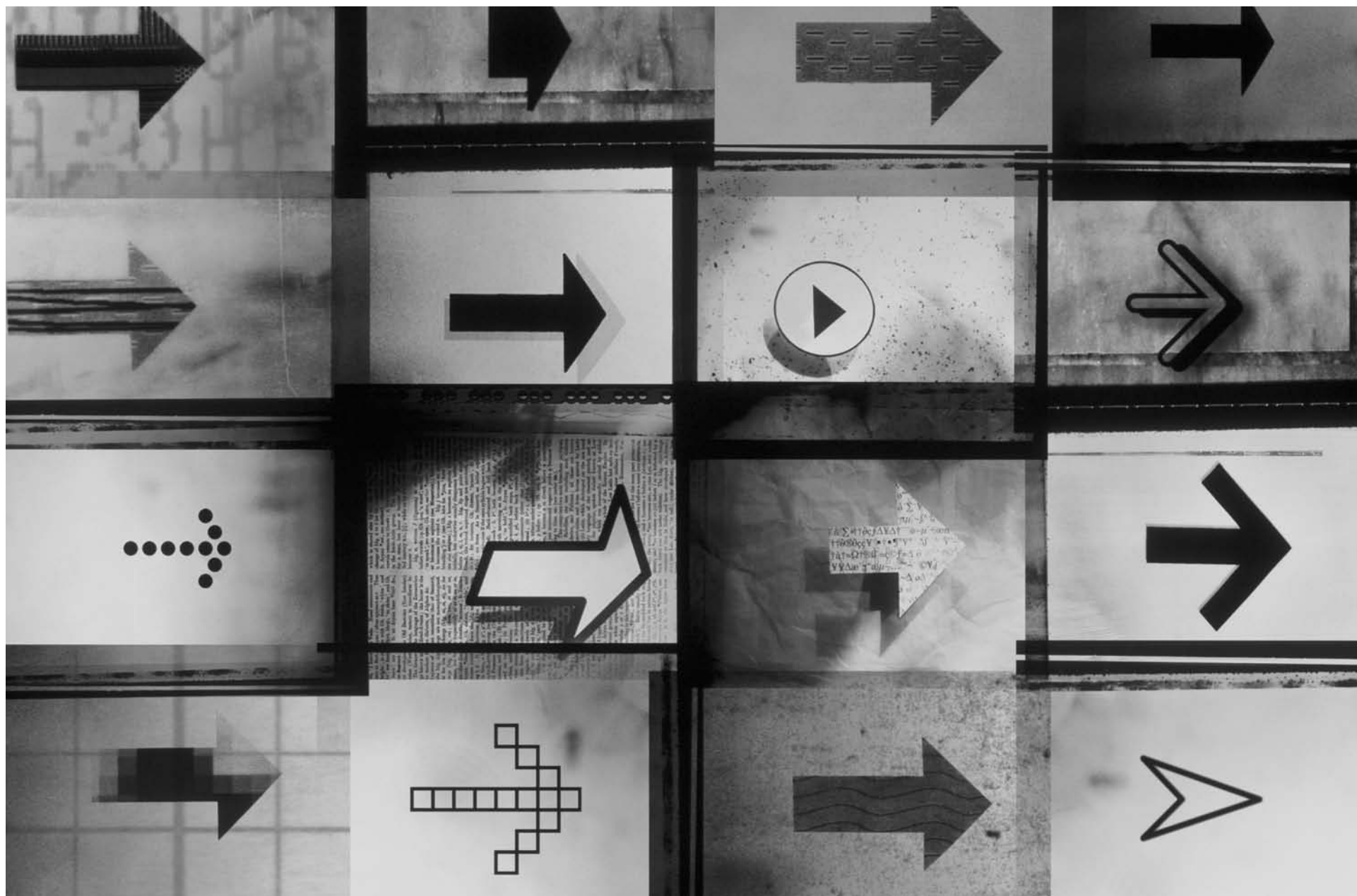
There are several other development opportunities relating to specific sites which will drive the sustainable regeneration of the Town Centre. These are indicated in the adjacent plan and include both soft sites which may come forward earlier in the life span of the Framework and hard sites which will come on stream later in the process.

The following section presents the Draft Development Framework which builds on the constraints and opportunities outlined here.

-  **Development Schemes**
 - 1: Centrica 1
 - 2: Centrica 2
 - 3: Majestic House
 - 4: Oast House / Kingston Road
 - 5: Steel Works / Gresham Road
 - 6: High Street / Mustard Mill
 - 7a: Elmsleigh Centre - Phase 3
 - 7b: Elmsleigh Centre - Surface Car Park
 - 7c: Elmsleigh Centre - Phase 4
 - 8: Bridge Street
-  **Proposed Footprint**
-  **Soft Sites – Medium Term**
 - A1: Mill Mead
 - A2: BT Site
 - A3: London Road
 - A4: Thames Surface Car Park
-  **Soft Sites Long Term**
 - A5: Two Rivers Surface Car Park
-  **AirTrack Sites**
-  **Proposed Development Footprint**



Plan 02_14: Key Development Sites



03 DRAFT URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK



3.1 Introduction

This section presents a vision for the Town Centre , outlines the approach to urban design and presents the Draft Development Framework.

3.2 Vision

The consultants brief notes Spelthorne Borough Council's requirement that the UDF for Staines Town Centre should:

- Express an ambitious vision for the town;
- Be comprehensive and robust;
- Embody a proactive approach to dealing with development proposals within the study area;
- Promote a town centre that is distinctive and valued by everyone because of the quality of the environment as a whole; and
- Above all, help to create a vibrant sense of place.

3.3 Design approach and objectives

In order to meet the aspirations and vision for Staines Town Centre above, it will be essential to create an attractive, desirable and characterful place which will act as a centre of gravity for new business and investment and which will draw in people to live, work and spend leisure time.

Recognised qualities of good place making are set out in 'By Design' Urban Design in the planning system; towards better practice' (DLTR 2000). These qualities are essential to making successful places.

The Draft Development Framework is based on these urban design qualities which can be summarised as;

- Character and Distinctiveness,
- Continuity and Enclosure,
- Quality of the Public Realm,
- Legibility,
- Adaptability,
- Diversity, and
- Integration and Efficiency.



Former Courage Brewery, a local landmark which has recently been converted into residential use.

To achieve the vision for Staines Town Centre, new development must follow a clear urban structure. The translation of these objectives and qualities into a spatial structure is expressed in the Development Framework in terms of the following aspects of form outlined in 'By Design':

- Urban Structure;
- Urban Grain;
- Density and Mix of uses;
- Scale: Landmarks;
- Scale: Heights and massing;
- Façade and Interface;
- Materials and details; and
- Landscape and public realm.

The Development Framework should promote diversity and choice through a greater mix of compatible uses that work together to create vital and viable places, and meet a wide range of local needs.

Character and Distinctiveness: through the enhancement of the character of the area by respecting its locally distinctive patterns of development, sense of history, culture and traditions.

The Development Framework should promote new development form which builds on those qualities and characteristics of Staines Town Centre which merit retention and enhancement, specifically the fine grain townscape and buildings of architectural value within the Staines Town Centre Conservation Area.

Continuity and Enclosure: through reinforcing the continuity of street and the enclosure of space by development, which clearly defines private and public areas. New development proposals should promote well defined, enclosed streets and public spaces with continuous street frontages to encourage natural surveillance. The Development Framework should promote a built form which provides active frontage enclosing all streets within the town centre creating a pleasant vital public realm. New development must address the current lack of frontage along South Street, Thames Street and Mustard Mill Road.

Quality of the Public Realm: through the quality of the space between buildings by providing spaces and routes that are safe, uncluttered, active and identifiable. The Development Framework should promote a series of new and enhanced public open spaces which serve to promote walking through the town centre and encourage pedestrian circulation between the retail led High Street, the emerging business district at London Road and the wider landscape including the River Thames and the open space fringing the Town Centre and the surrounding residential neighbourhoods.

All public open spaces should have a clear role of function be appropriately sited and designed and detailed to a very high specification. The Development Framework identifies the location for new spaces within the Town Centre and the role of these spaces within a hierarchy of public spaces. A Supplementary Planning Document could provide more detailed guidance in terms of general layout, materials palette including; surfaces, signage, lighting and street furniture and management regime.

Legibility: A place that has a clear image and is easy to understand.

New development within should improve legibility and the arrival experience through development that provides a system of recognizable routes, nodes and features to aid orientation. The Development Framework should seek to reduce the severance created by the road and rail network and promote development which enhances legibility.

Adaptability: A place that can change easily.

The Development Framework should promote development that can respond to changing social, technological, economic and market conditions and promote variety of building typologies which provide opportunities for adapting buildings to new uses. Development should be designed to be easily adapted for alternative uses in the future. For example multi storey car parks may be designed in such a way that they may be converted to alternative uses as travel patterns change over time.

Diversity: A place with variety and choice.

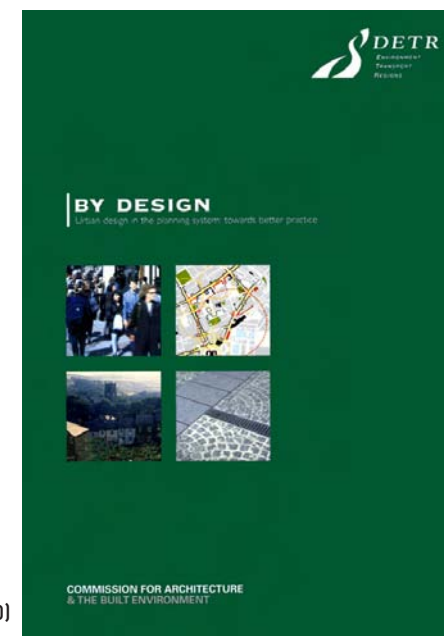
The Development Framework should promote diversity and choice through a greater mix of compatible uses that work together to create vital and viable places, and meet a wide range of local needs. Residential development should be designed as part of a sustainable community with a mix of housing typologies and ownerships which are tenure blind.

Integration and Efficiency: Sustainability

The Development Framework provides opportunities for sustainable development in a highly accessible location that has the potential to be served by a choice of modes including walking, cycling and public transport. The Development Framework should promote a robust structure and sustainable pattern of development which integrates land uses, transport and the natural environment, promotes walkability and reduces the need to travel.

The Development Framework should seek to integrate the Town Centre with the emerging business quarter at London Road and the adjacent residential neighbourhoods. All new development in the Town Centre should seek to raise design quality in line with government policy.

By Design” Urban Design in the planning system; towards better practice’ (DLTR 2000)



3.4 Development Framework

3.4.1 Introduction

The following section outlines the proposed urban structure for the Town Centre and elements of built form including: Urban Grain; Building Heights; Frontages; Public Realm and the Mix of Uses.

The Council wants to achieve an ambitious vision for Staines Town Centre that is comprehensive and robust and embodies a more proactive approach to dealing with the large-scale development proposals within the study area. It wants to promote a town centre that is distinctive and valued by everyone because of the quality of the environment as a whole and above all helps to create a vibrant sense of place.

Given the initial appraisal of the site and the scale and significance of the emerging proposals the Development Framework promotes an organic extension of the existing urban structure.

The urban structure is made up of the large-scale spatial elements that define a place, these include;

- 'New Places' - character areas
- 'New Connections' - primary transport and movement corridors
- 'New Spaces' - public open spaces

3.4.2 New Places

The Majestic House development requires a new link road between Fairfield Avenue and Mill Mead called the Fairfield Avenue link. This allows the current vehicular areas of Mill Mead and High Street to be closed and become pedestrian only. The new link road creates a parallel route to the High Street. This connection would encourage future development opportunities at Mill Mead to come forward in a manner which provides greater permeability / connectivity for both the development and the residential community to the north of Mill Mead.

It is recommended that a pedestrian underpass is provided here under the railway providing a direct link to Two Rivers.



New Places

- 1: Fairfield Avenue / London Road
- 2: Riverside
- 3: South Street / Elmsleigh Centre
- 4: Two Rivers
- 5: Staines Conservation Area



New Spaces

- 1: Fairfield Square (New)
- 2: Mill Mead (New)
- 3: Station Square (Enhanced)
- 4: Norris Square (Enhanced)
- 5: Colne Gardens (New)
- 6: Elmsleigh Square (New)
- 7: Market Square (Enhanced)
- 8: Memorial Gardens (Enhanced)

New Connections

- A: Landscape Links



- B: Civil Streets Primary Streets



- C: Civil Streets Pedestrian Streets



Plan 03_2: Draft Development Framework Plan

Fairfield Avenue / London Road

Fairfield Avenue / London Road area functions as the Town Centre business quarter providing high quality commercial floorspace. Recent development of Centrica 1 has consolidated this and proposed schemes at Majestic House and Centrica 2 will significantly increase the available B1 office space in Staines in the short term.

The Development Framework seeks to strengthen this with the provision of a new link between Fairfield Avenue and Two Rivers. All forthcoming development in this quarter should;

- Provide ground floors should provide continuous / active frontage
- Contribute to the definition and enclosure of the proposed Square at Fairfield Avenue
- Encourage the new connections north south route proposed in this Framework
- Provide substantial footway widths and street tree planting along London Road
- Provide all car parking with basement car parks as per the Centrica 1 development
- Provide a mix of use including; office, residential, and retail land uses



44-48 High Street, (Grade II Listed)



London Road



Plan 03_3: Fairfield Avenue / London Road

Riverside

The Riverside area is bounded by Thames Street , Clarence Street, Bridge Street and the river itself. Development which comes forward here must relate to the riverside context and the proximity to the Conservation Area.

Thus development proposals will be;

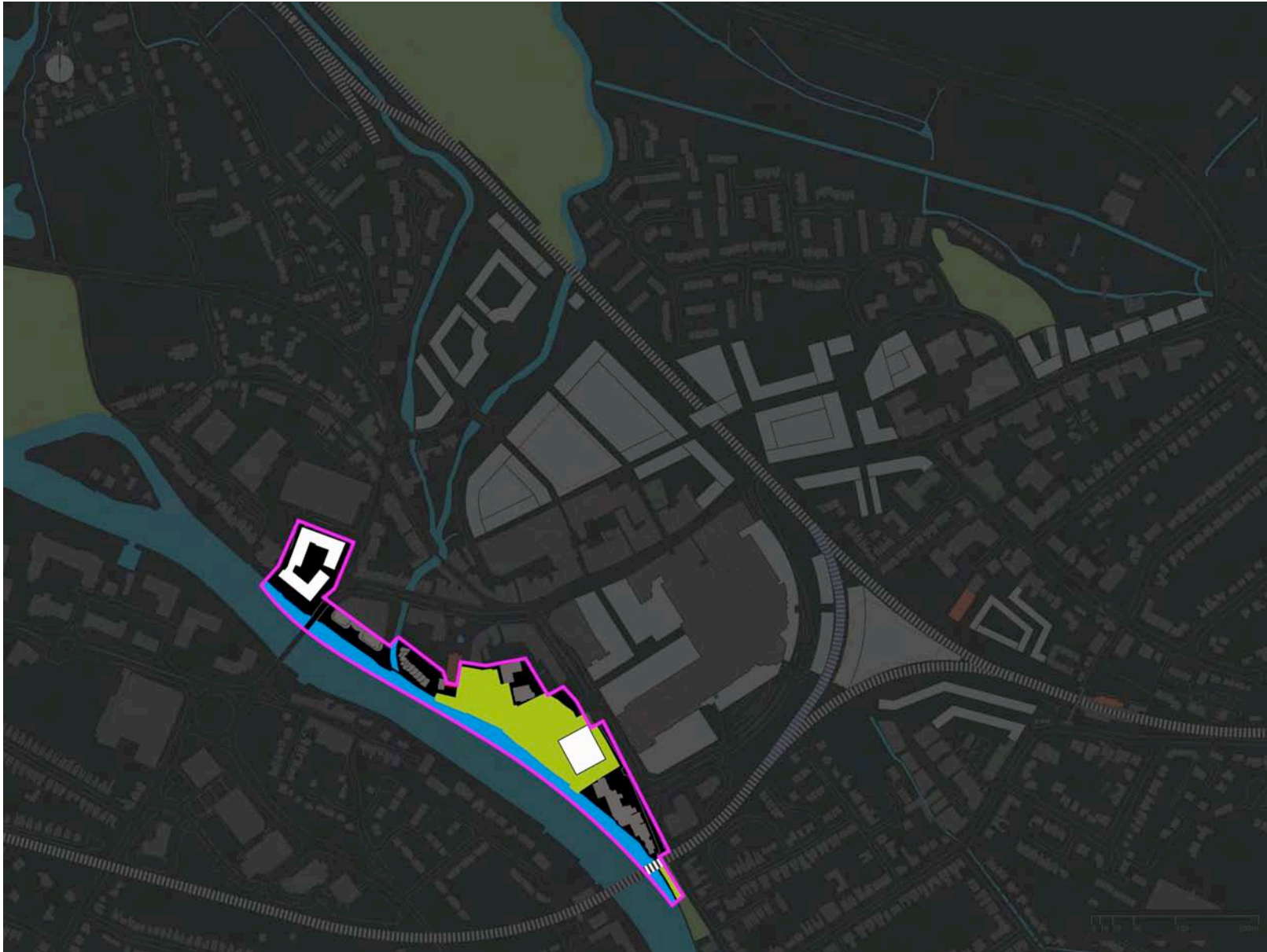
- of exceptional high quality
- of appropriate scale height and massing which complements the pattern and scale of adjacent buildings
- provide active frontage to the River Thames and promote natural surveillance and views along the towpath and Memorial Gardens
- be constructed of materials which compliment nearby listed buildings
- elevations and roofline will break up the scale of the building, reflect historic grain and form



View along the River Thames Path



View towards Staines Bridge from Memorial Gardens



Plan 03_4: Riverside

South Street

South Street is currently defined by the highway infrastructure which promotes through traffic and servicing to the Elmsleigh Centre. The area lacks enclosure and is characterised by inactive frontages and a poor pedestrian environment.

The construction of the proposed new chord line as part of the AirTrack scheme provides significant opportunity to regenerate this area of the Town Centre. New development will;

- provide new development sites which front onto and enclose South Street
- generate a new highway layout which reduces severance and promotes pedestrian movement

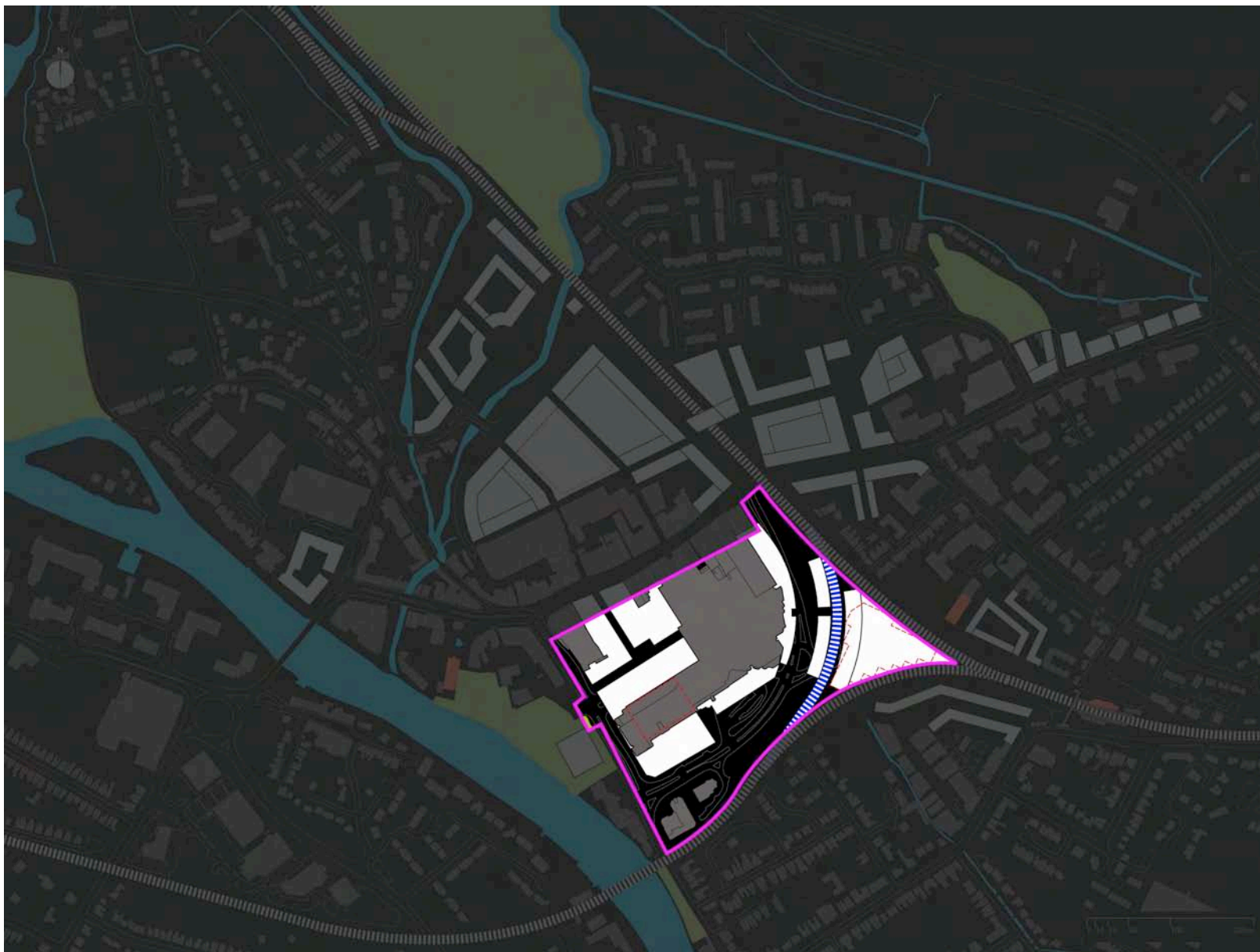
The Development Framework promotes the provision of a new structured multi storey car park at the existing Car Park at Elmsleigh Centre Surface Car Park.

Elmsleigh Centre

The 4th phase of development at the Elmsleigh Centre brings forward significant retail expansion to the Town Centre over the medium term. The scheme will provide significant levels of new retail / leisure floorspace configured around a new central square. The new square and connections to the Elmsleigh Centre, the High Street and Thames Street will be built as traditional open streets fully integrated into the public highway.



New retail development should provide active street frontage



Plan 03_5: South Street

Two Rivers - Mixed Use Development

Whilst Two Rivers is a relatively recent scheme completed in phases in the late 1990's and early 2000, there is scope for longer term retail expansion which will provide opportunities to re configure Two Rivers and create active frontage along Mustard Mill Road / Hale Street.

The Two Rivers shopping centre should be reconfigured to have a structured car park in the middle with retail wrapped around. This would significantly improve the vehicle dominated environment at this northern end of the primary retail area and give an opportunity to create active frontages along Mustard Mill Road linking with the new station and the commercial development beyond. This would also create a better and safer environment for development on the corner of High Street and Mustard Mill Road.

The development of the surface car park also provides the opportunity for new residential development above the ground floor shops and business premises.

Two Rivers - Residential Development

It is considered that the existing retail development to the west of the River Colne could in the longer term, as further retail development is included in the area, generally be a more appropriate location for residential development, given its remote location at the fringe of the Town Centre. The Development Framework promotes a new residential community in this location which will support a wide range of housing types and a balanced community.

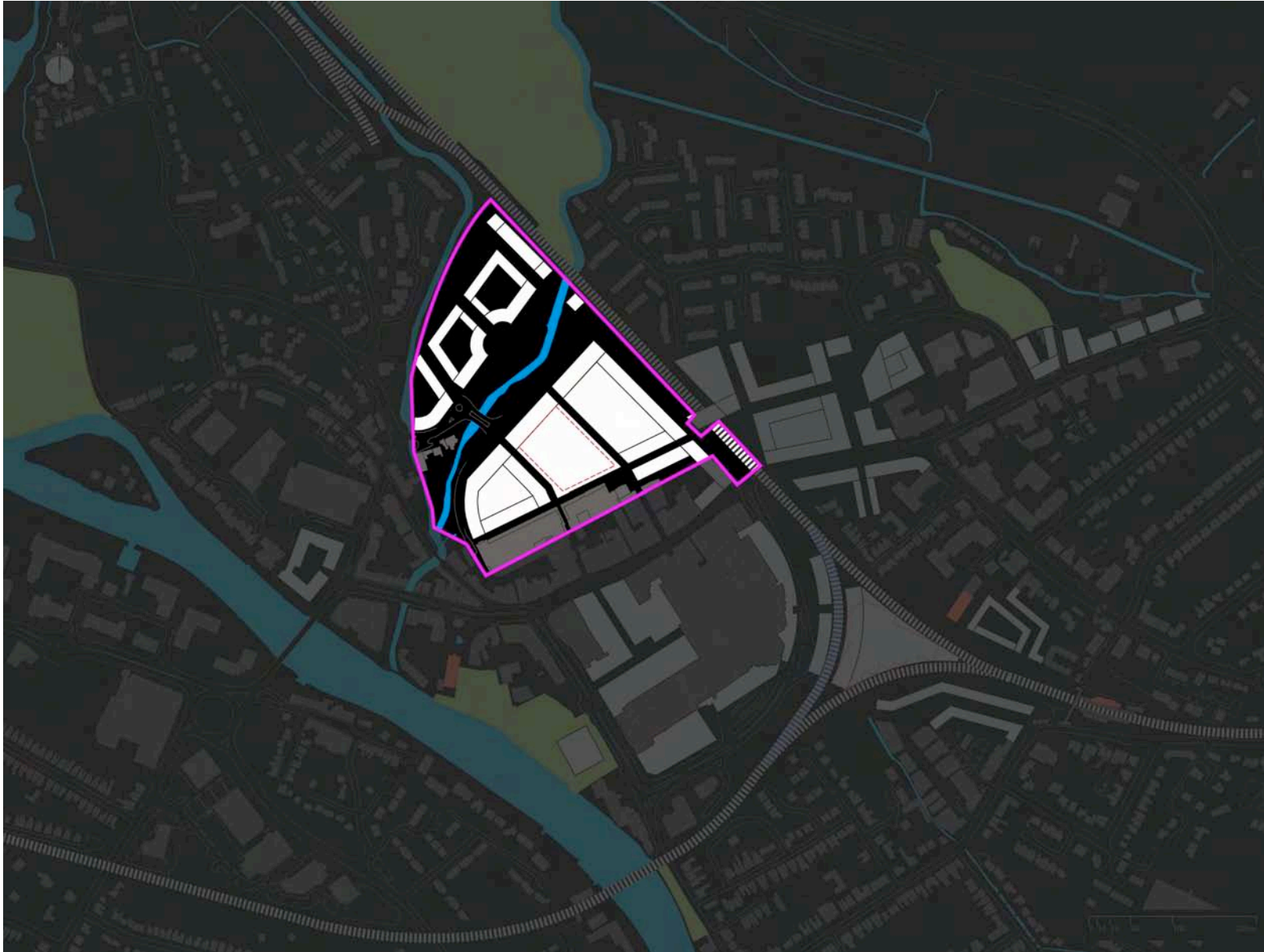
The layout of the Two Rivers residential development will embrace the new public space along the river and will provide high quality homes within walking distance of the amenities of the Town Centre.



Recent development in Glasgow which clearly defines the adjoining public realm and provides a variety of residential types within a continuous frontage



A new MSCP at Castle Street Canterbury which is wrapped with residential development which overlooks the street



Plan 03_6: Two Rivers

Staines Conservation Area

All development proposals coming forward within the Conservation Area should seek to conserve and enhance those special characteristics of built form which define the Area.

The Conservation Area includes a number of key streets within the town centre including Clarence Street and Church Street. These historic routes provide and contain some of the finest buildings within the study area. The relatively fine grain of the buildings provide ideal floorspace for start up, independent and niche retailers. These uses are essential to provide a balanced retail offer and encourage a wide range of visitors to the Town Centre.

The Conservation Area should be protected from inappropriate land uses and the environmental improvement schemes to reinforce the areas character and independent business composition as an alternative to the ubiquitous high street multiples found elsewhere in the Town Centre. This can also be strengthened through provision of Shop Front Design Guidance and potentially, Shop Front Improvement and LOTS Grants.



Church Street

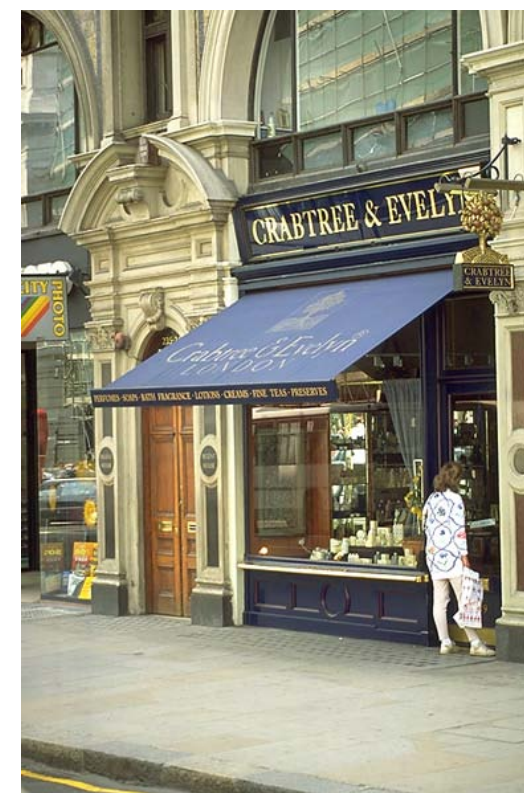


No115 Church Street / 2-4 Vicarage Road (Grade II Listed)

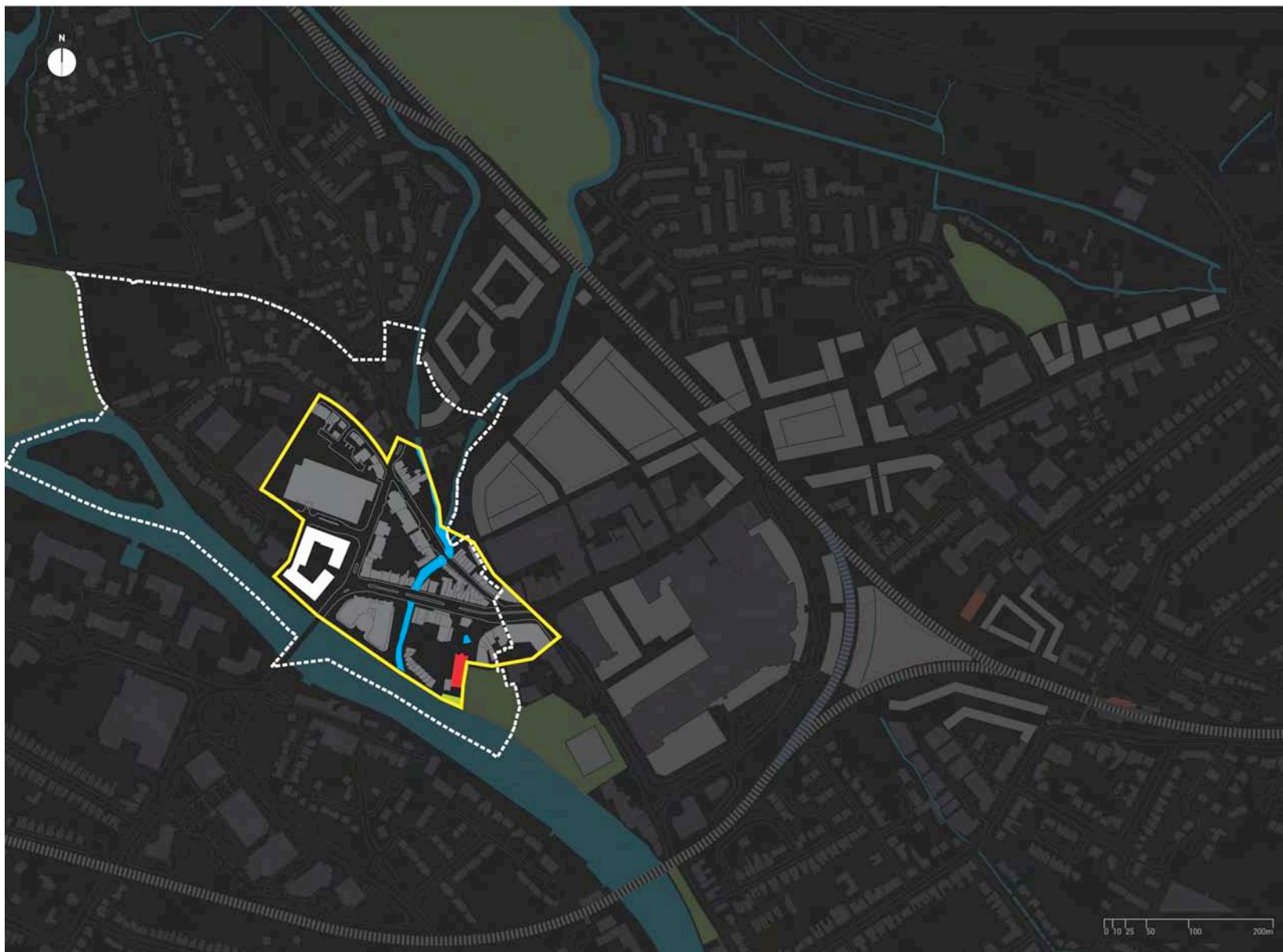
Church Street lies within close proximity of the High Street and major retail and leisure anchors such as Debenhams. However the existing layout of the High Street and significant severance created by vehicle orientated highway design and limited pedestrian access at Clarence Street act as a disincentive to pedestrian movement through the Conservation Area.

Development proposals within the Conservation Area will;

- be of exceptional high quality
- be of appropriate scale height and massing which complements the pattern and scale of adjacent buildings
- provide active frontages to the River Thames and promote natural surveillance and views along the towpath
- be constructed of materials which compliment nearby listed buildings
- ensure elevations and roofline will break up the scale of the buildings and reflect historic grain and form



Shop front design guidance promotes well designed and managed and maintained retail units



Plan 03_7: Staines Conservation Area

3.4.3 New Connections

The Development Framework promotes a new network of streets and spaces to create a legible, walkable town centre. The proposed network seeks to integrate new development opportunities into the fabric of the town centre and builds on Staines existing movement network. This section considers the following elements;

- New Transport and Movement Network
- Landscape Links
- Civil Streets

New Transport and Movement Network

Historically Staines Town Centre was organised around the High Street but the Two Rivers retail has effectively given the town an additional focal point. A new east-west route will be equally significant to the High Street and serve to connect the emerging business quarter at London Road which comprises the redeveloped Centrica site, Majestic site and re configuration of Two Rivers to provide a sound basis for an integrated regeneration of this part of the town centre. This new route will address the issue of severance to the east-west movement caused by the railway embankment. It will further support a network of public spaces discussed below.

The north-south links to this new route will be strengthened bringing making the residential development north of Fairfield Avenue and south of the High Street more integrated with the town centre. A new north-south route linking the High Street to George Street might be created. The route from the existing station to this new station will also be strengthened through public realm improvements and widening where it meets the High Street. The residential area to the north of Fairfield Avenue will be more integrated into the town centre with strengthened links.

The first will address the entry point through London Road. The existing arrangement of planting and widened pavement in front of 1 London Road is supported. We feel that this can be carried forward on London Road as the character of London Road and the eastern end of the High Street is set to change in the future with the redevelopment of the Centrica site and the Majestic site and our emerging vision for the consolidated regeneration of this area. The bigger scale of development will be supported with an appropriately proportioned tree lined boulevard.

A more radical approach to improving access to the Town Centre is also recommended here. The existing High Street is currently pinched at Iron Bridge and the 'kinked' highway alignment limits the visual integrity of the High Street as it passes beneath the rail line. It is recommended that a new vehicle route is considered underneath the rail line immediately south of the Bridge. The Iron Bridge would be retained, providing a new and significant pedestrian link between the business quarter and the retail core.

The existing High Street, Tillys Lane, Norris Road and links to the Elmsleigh Centre and, in due course Elmsleigh Phase 4 provide a 'figure of 8 circuit' which links the whole of the central retail area together, ensuring a good pedestrian access and physical integration into a cohesive whole.

The proposed links to the Fairfield Avenue and connections to the Riverside and Two Rivers seek to expand this network seeking to integrate the town centre with the rest of the town centre and the residential hinterland.



Iron Bridge, High Street, (Locally Listed)

Landscape Links

Residents and visitors to Staines benefit from the town centres location at the confluence of the River Wraysbury / Colne and the River Thames.

The Development Framework seeks to improve pedestrian access to these rivers and the associated public open space through the creation of the following new and enhanced links;

- River Thames Path
- Colne Riverside Route

River Thames Path

The Borough Council have undertaken public realm works to enhance the route of the River Thames Path and associated public open spaces including the award winning landscape scheme at Memorial Gardens.

Development proposals adjoining the Thames should be laid out in a manner which promotes overlooking of the Thames Path and any adjoining public open spaces.

Active ground floor uses should be brought forward including a mix of appropriate uses.

Development proposals should contribute to the enhancement of the public realm including high quality paving / street furniture and lighting.

Colne Riverside Route

The proposed Colne Riverside Route seeks to improve links between Staines Moor and the Colne Valley Park into the town centre via the enhanced 'Colne Gardens' within what is Two Rivers along the banks of the River as described previously. A new pedestrian access under the rail line (possibly using an existing blocked-up pedestrian access way) will be required to provide this link.



Staines Bridge from the riverside

Civil Streets

Accessibility by a choice of modes, with emphasis on walking, cycling and public transport will be crucial for long term sustainable development of the Town Centre. Achieving the most sustainable pattern of movement will require a step change in the quality of the Staines street network.

Pedestrians and disabled people

Features of the Development Framework that will benefit pedestrians and disabled people include a permeable network of streets which will enable pedestrians and disabled people to find their way around and move around the Town Centre more easily and safely.

Wider footways, landscaping, public realm enhancement, improved lighting, tree planting which will provide a better public realm; a network of new streets provided for by new development will be more pleasant to use, especially if their design emphasises the role of walking as being the primary consideration. Improved lighting and natural surveillance from buildings will help to reduce the fear and actuality of crime. The use of native deciduous trees will allow light penetration in the winter and provide shade in the summer as well as supporting ecological corridors in the form of Landscape Links

Cyclists

Features of the Development Framework that will be of benefit to cyclists include a permeable network of streets Increased route choice. Ease of cycling around the area for all purposes. Confident cycling on a street network that has been designed with cyclists in mind.

Public transport

Features of the preferred Development Framework that will be of benefit to public transport include a more permeable and legible network of streets.

Motor traffic

The Development Framework promotes a hierarchy of street user groups and streets that places greater emphasis on reducing road danger, enhancing the role of walking, cycling and public transport use. This places emphasis on the importance of streets as 'places', and not merely corridors for motorised transit.

The forthcoming Transport Study will develop the recommendation presented in this report.



Artists Sketch of proposed improvements at Blue School Street, Hereford.

Hierarchy of Streets

The proposed hierarchy of streets relates not only to the 'movement status' but also the place status of each street, in accordance with the guidance in the Manual for Streets (DfT, 2007) .

Streets in the town centre will accommodate the movement of pedestrians, cycles, public transport and general motor traffic with priority to non-car modes generally enhanced. Thus, in broad terms, the following streets will be allocated the following functions:

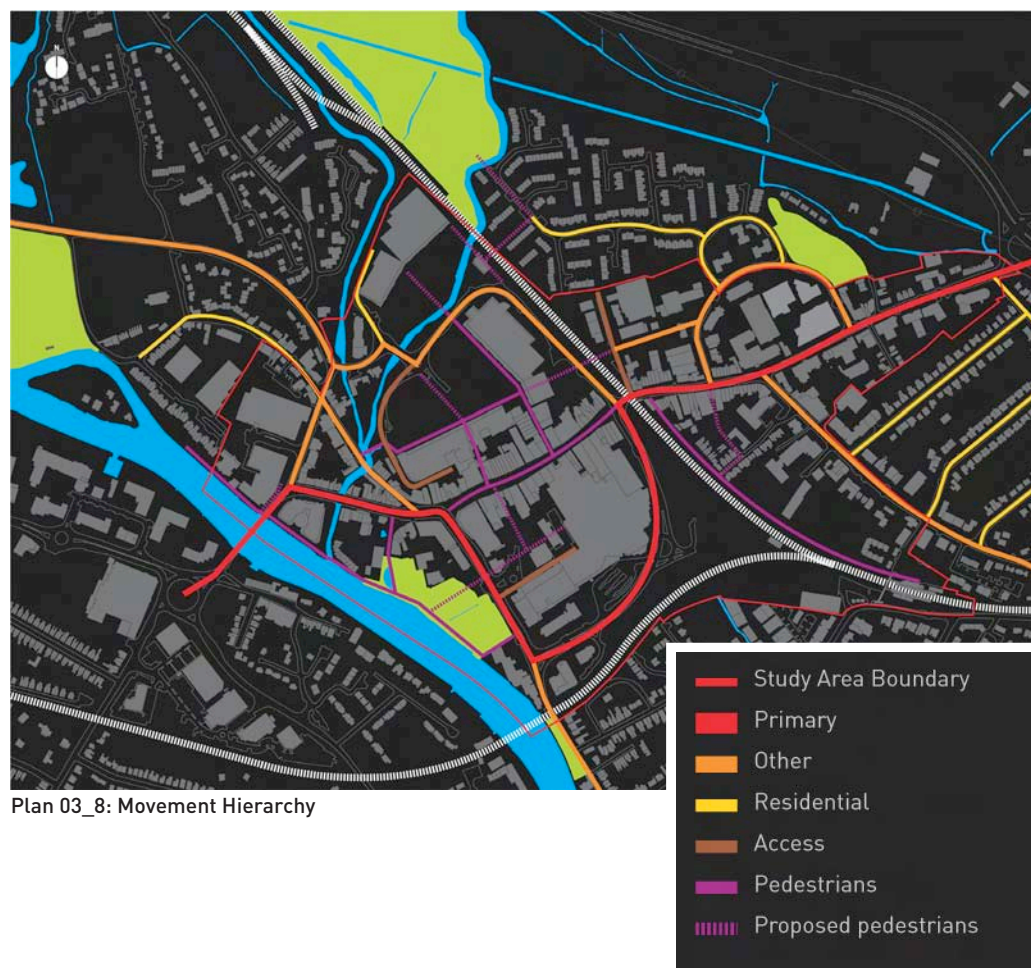
Primary Streets: where motor traffic has priority over pedestrians but is not allowed to dominate i.e. South Street, Clarence Street, Thames Street Mustard Mill Lane and London Road . These streets will be designed with standard street layout with high quality materials and public realm in key locations, minimal street furniture and street markings, well-organised parking and loading arrangements. Driver behaviour is modified through psychological and physical traffic calming measures.

Pedestrian Streets: where motor traffic is banned or restricted to off peak time i.e High Street or banned at all times i.e Station Path and Thames Path. These streets will be considered suitable for shared spaces, high quality treatments, events and in an environment that is primarily for social interaction and a wide range of street-based activity.

Other Mixed-Use Streets: where motor traffic is allowed in a controlled environment that gives priority to pedestrian and cycle movement. These streets will be considered suitable for shared spaces, high quality treatments, other features that give the message that motor traffic is 'cautiously welcomed'.

Residential Streets: where access is intended primarily for residents and their visitors, where the residential character of the streets should be preserved, and where access / parking by non residents could be reasonably be controlled.

Access Streets: specifically for service and delivery access to retail areas, and dedicated routes to the major car parks.



Plan 03_8: Movement Hierarchy

South Street

South Street forms part of the primary movement corridor through the Town Centre and provide service access to the Elmsleigh Centre and bus station. As noted previously, the street is designed for traffic movement with reduced pedestrian accessibility and a negative impact on the public perception of the Town Centre.

The Development Framework promotes a series of environmental enhancements to the street whilst maintaining traffic capacity.

Thames Street

The current layout of Thames Street reduces accessibility between High Street, Church Street and the Memorial Gardens and from one side of the road to the other. This can be overcome through a highway design approach which encourages pedestrian movement.

Mustard Mill Road

An opportunity for a second boulevard arises along Mustard Mill Road. This will create a high quality public realm at the new station entrance on this road and link in with the re configuration of the Two Rivers development to allow an active frontage along the road. These streets would benefit from ;

- Removal of unnecessary street furniture including pedestrian guard railing, bollards etc
- Reduction in format and quantum of traffic signage
- Incorporate informal crossing points within median strips

Clarence Street

The overengineered nature of Clarence Street reduces opportunities for safe pedestrian movement between High Street / Church Street and Market Square. Clarence should be remodelled to minimise severance and encourage connectivity. (See Market Square 3.4.4)

Kensington High Street

This award winning scheme in central London strikes a successful balance between the desire to create a high quality pedestrian friendly public realm with the need to maintain high volumes of traffic. The scheme reallocates highway space, providing substantial footways and central median strips which incorporate mature street tree planting and cycle parking. Capacity is maintained through the retention of two traffic lanes in each direction and defined turning lanes.



3.4.4 New and Enhanced Spaces

Traditionally successful public spaces serve as; meeting places where people gather to socialise; market places that encourage trade and traffic spaces which are concerned with movement and civic spaces which provide a location for communal / civic events. The Development Framework propose a series of new and enhanced public spaces embedded within the network of new and existing routes. These include;

1. Fairfield Square - New
2. Mill Mead - New
3. Station Square - Enhanced
4. Norris Square - Enhanced
5. Colne Gardens - Enhanced
6. Elmsleigh Square - New
7. Market Square - Enhanced
8. Memorial Gardens - Enhanced



Fairfield Square

A new public square will be created using the opportunity created by the redevelopment of Centrica 2 and the Majestic House site. The square will be the focus of the north-south and east-west connections in this area utilising the proposed Fairfield Avenue link to Mill Mead. This will be linked with another square via a pedestrian tunnel under the railway at Mill Mead which will further connect to the existing informal public space in Two Rivers which works well with Costa Coffee spreading out onto it and the Time Continuum public art.

This new Square would be fronted by taller elements of adjoining development sites accommodating taller building heights to the north of London Road. A cluster of taller buildings of 8-10 storeys (2 times the general height will be promoted to frame the new public square on Fairfield Avenue. This will have two benefits (1) Signal Staines as a sub-regional centre through the creation of a visible landmark buildings and (2) allow the creation of a new public space through balancing the loss of the building footprint by building vertically. The tall buildings framing the square will be of very high architectural quality, well designed, well proportioned, slender and elegant local landmarks for Staines.

Mill Mead

As noted previously, AirTrack are currently consulting on options for the location of a proposed railway station at Staines. The Development Framework promotes AirTrack Option B as the location which provided the greatest benefits for the long term regeneration of the Town Centre.

The proposed public open space at Mill Mead will serve as a collection point for visitors seeking orientation upon arrival at the station. The space is orientated to provide views towards the Iron Bridge and High Street and Station Path, the pedestrian route to Central Station.

The Development Framework promotes a new link between Fairfield Avenue and the Town Centre. This link builds on proposals for a new AirTrack Station in the town. The link would provide vehicle access between Mill Mead and Fairfield Avenue and remove vehicles from Mill Mead providing an opportunity to create an enhanced pedestrian route to High Street.



View towards Mill Mead from High Street

Station Square

Staines Central Railway Station currently fronts onto a poorly laid out and poorly managed car park which has a distinct lack of sense of arrival and civic-ness. It is envisaged that Station Square is redesigned to address the requirements for; short term car parking; taxi ranking; drop off and all other users.

The Square will be laid out to in a manner which encourages interchange and emphasises pedestrian priority. The space may be defined with mature street trees and development sites should be arranged to provide active frontage to the square should opportunities come forward in the longer term.

A limited palette of high quality robust materials will be employed which will build on architectural qualities of the locally listed station building and footbridge. In addition the station building and square should be well lit and inviting during the evening.



Station Central Station

Norris Square

Norris Square is currently located at the western end of Norris Road adjacent to the Two Rivers surface car park. This area currently subject to high levels of footfall generated from extensive visitor parking at the western side of the Town Centre. In the longer term the Development Framework envisages that these large areas of surface car parking will be removed and new mixed use development will come forward here providing additional floorspace within an enhanced network streets and spaces. This will provide a significant opportunity to enhance this space by enclosing the square with active frontage on all sides.

The existing car parking and re-provided in the form of multi storey facilities off Mustard Mill Road.



Norris Road

Colne Gardens

Colne Gardens are located on the existing open space along the banks of the River Colne at Two Rivers. Although the existing scheme utilises high quality materials and is well maintained it does not provide public access to the waterside. This is due to the steep banks and risks to public safety.

It is proposed that the current open space is re configured to allow public access to the public open space for future residents at Two Rivers. The alignment of the River also provides an opportunity to create a direct connection from the Town Centre to the Colne Valley Park. The Development Framework promotes the long term reorganisation of the land to the west of Mustard Mill Lane from current retail land use and surface car parking to residential land use. New pedestrian links across the River will provide direct links between the new residential development and the Town Centre. The gardens would be informally laid out in a manner which relates to the riverside context and proximity to the Colne Valley.



River Colne, Mustard Mill Road

Elmsleigh Square

Elmsleigh Square will be brought forward as part of the retail led development scheme for Elmsleigh Phase 4. The scheme will provide additional retail floorspace for the medium and long term. It is envisaged that the scheme will provide significant levels of new retail floorspace configured around a central square. As noted previously the new square and connections to the Elmsleigh Centre, the High Street and Thames Street will be constructed as traditional open streets fully integrated into the public highway.

It is envisaged that Elmsleigh Square will provide an important new public open space within the series of open spaces and routes which seek to enhance the existing pedestrian circuit and connect entry points to the Town Centre such as bus / rail stations and car parks to the retail areas of High Street / Two Rivers / Elmsleigh / Church Street; Memorial Gardens and the River Thames.

The Framework promotes the provision of active frontage along Thames Street which strengthens links westward to the riverside and take advantage of the long views to the Thames.

The square will be hard paved and be designed to accommodate activities associated with adjacent retail and leisure uses.

Market Square

The area of hard standing around the former Town Hall has been subject of a landscape improvement scheme as part of the Memorial Gardens project. The square provides an important gateway to the Gardens and the River Thames for visitors walking from the retail areas at High Street and Church Street, however this route is poorly defined and suffers from severe severance created by the over-engineered highways at Clarence Street.

It is recommended that the Square is extended across the street to provide a more attractive route, enhancing pedestrian circulation. This proposal should be taken forward in conjunction with other initiatives outlined in the 'civilising streets' concept outlined previously.

It is envisaged that the space will host a range of civic and market events.

A limited palette of high quality materials is suggested for Market Square which complements the building materials present in surrounding listed properties. The space should be laid out in a simple style which seeks to minimise visual clutter and allows for ease of maintenance. Natural stone surfacing is recommended and should be robustly constructed to withstand vehicle loading.



**Staines Town Hall, Market Square,
(John Johnson 1879, (Grade II Listed))**



Clarence Street

Memorial Gardens

The Development Framework seeks to strengthen Memorial Gardens role as the town centres primary recreation space. The space benefits from its location on the River Thames and although subject of recent landscape improvement scheme the space does not fully capitalise on the proximity to the river and the opportunities that enhanced access to the river could bring to Staines.

Other towns in the Thames corridor have delivered successful mixed-use riverside regeneration projects which fully utilise the opportunities riverside locations afford.

In order to ensure Staines remains competitive with neighbouring towns and attracts new visitors to the Town Centre it is recommended that the Memorial Gardens are re configured to provide more direct access to the river. Additional boat moorings may be provided to encourage riverboat tourism and enhance activity along the Thames Path.

The Development Framework envisages that the development brought forward as part of the Elmsleigh Phase 4 retail expansion will create new pedestrian connections across South Street linking the Gardens with the development which will provide active frontage along Thames Street overlooking the Gardens. The existing surface car parking may be removed in the longer term and replaced with new development which will provide active frontage onto the space with opportunities for cafe uses to further activate the space.

It is envisaged that the Gardens will continue to provide a space for informal recreation. The Gardens provide a less formal environment than the adjacent Town Hall Square and other public spaces promoted in the Framework and this will be reflected in the approach to the landscape design which will promote the retention of lawns and extensive tree and shrub planting.



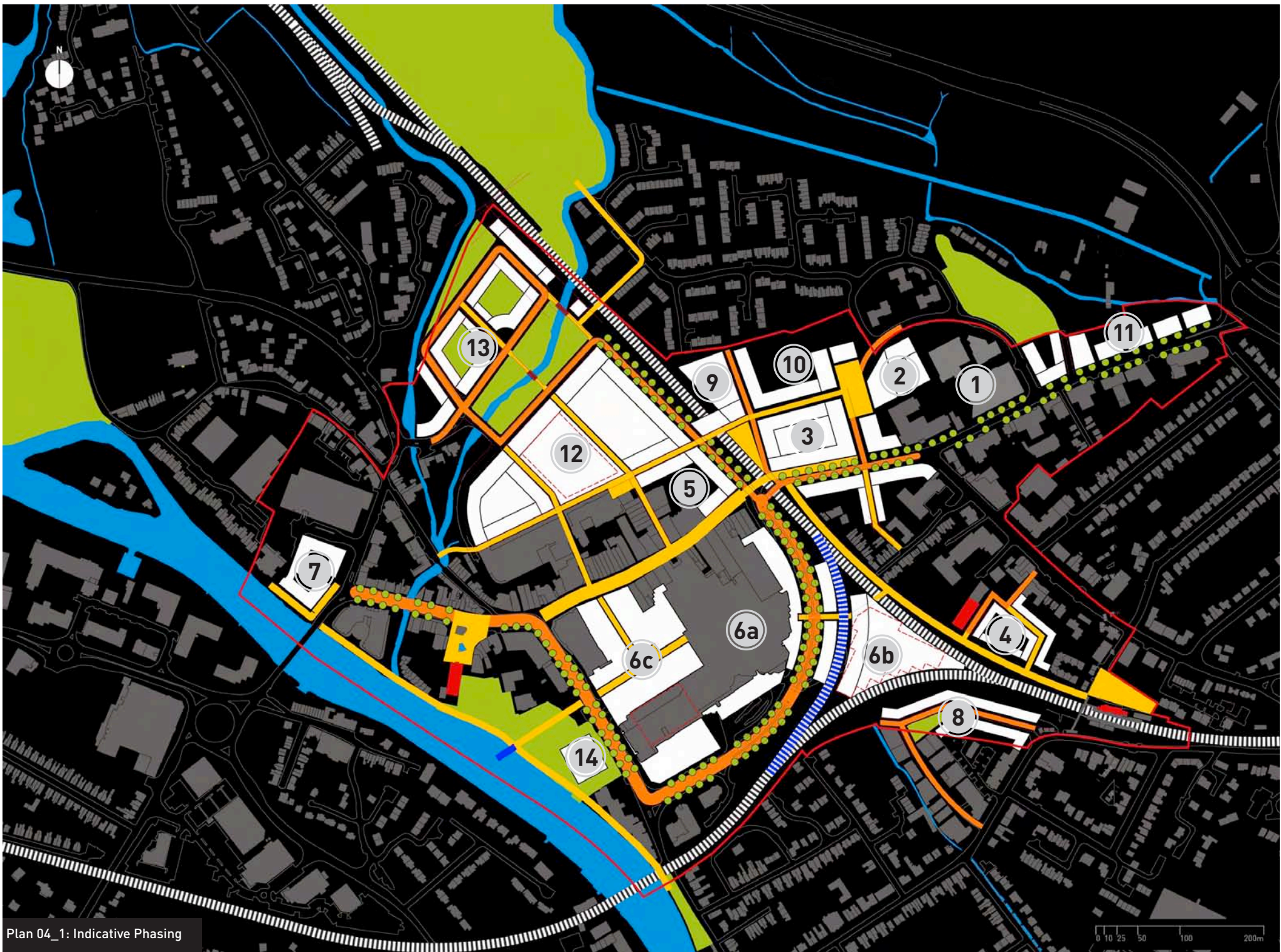
Staines Town Hall, Market Square,
(John Johnson 1879, (Grade II Listed)



Clarence Street



04 DELIVERING THE VISION



Plan 04_1: Indicative Phasing

4.1 Phasing

The Development Framework is a long term plan which seeks to guide development in the Town Centre over the next 20 years. At this stage the following sites are likely to come forward by the indicative time periods.

Opportunity Site	Completion
Short Term	2008-2013
1: Centrica 1 (2010)	
2: Centrica 2 (2012)	
3: Majestic House (2011)	
4: Oast House / Kingston Rd (2011)	
5: High Street / Mustard Mill	
6A/B: Elmsleigh Centre (Phase 3)	
7: Bridge Street Car Park	
Medium Term	2014-2018
6C: Elmsleigh Centre (Phase 4)	
8: Steel Works / Gresham Road	
9: Mill Mead	
10: BT Site	
11: High Street / London Road	
Long Term	2019-2028
12: Two Rivers Surface Car Park	
13: Two Rivers Residential Scheme	
14: Thames St. Surface Car Park	

4.2 The Way Forward

There are several development opportunities coming forward in Staines Town Centre including significant commercial sites at Majestic House and Centrica 2. The preceding Development Framework sets out key principles on how these sites should be integrated in the fabric of the Town Centre and proposes new connections and spaces which will create a more legible, sustainable and attractive place for visitors. It is essential that the planning framework under the new LDF is designed to exploit these major opportunities.

It is recommended that the following elements of work be brought forward to realise the Development Framework;

- Consult / lobby AirTrack to deliver the preferred links between the Staines and the Town Centre
- Adopt the Development Framework as planning policy and use it to inform planning policy including Supplementary Planning Documents
- Develop robust Transport and Movement study to take forward the civil streets principles outlined in this report and current best practice
- Test commercial viability of direct intervention in land assembly for sites that are heavily constrained by, for example multiple ownership, contamination and / or perceived low values
- Consider approach to leading site specific interventions and how the Council might work with public and / or private partners to deliver change
- Test the costs and benefits of more active area management initiatives to improve environmental quality such as town centre Business Improvement Districts
- Prepare development briefs for opportunity sites
- Develop Public Realm Strategy to include concept designs for the public spaces promoted in the Framework and identify appropriate management and maintenance regimes
- Prepare Shop Front design guidance for historic core