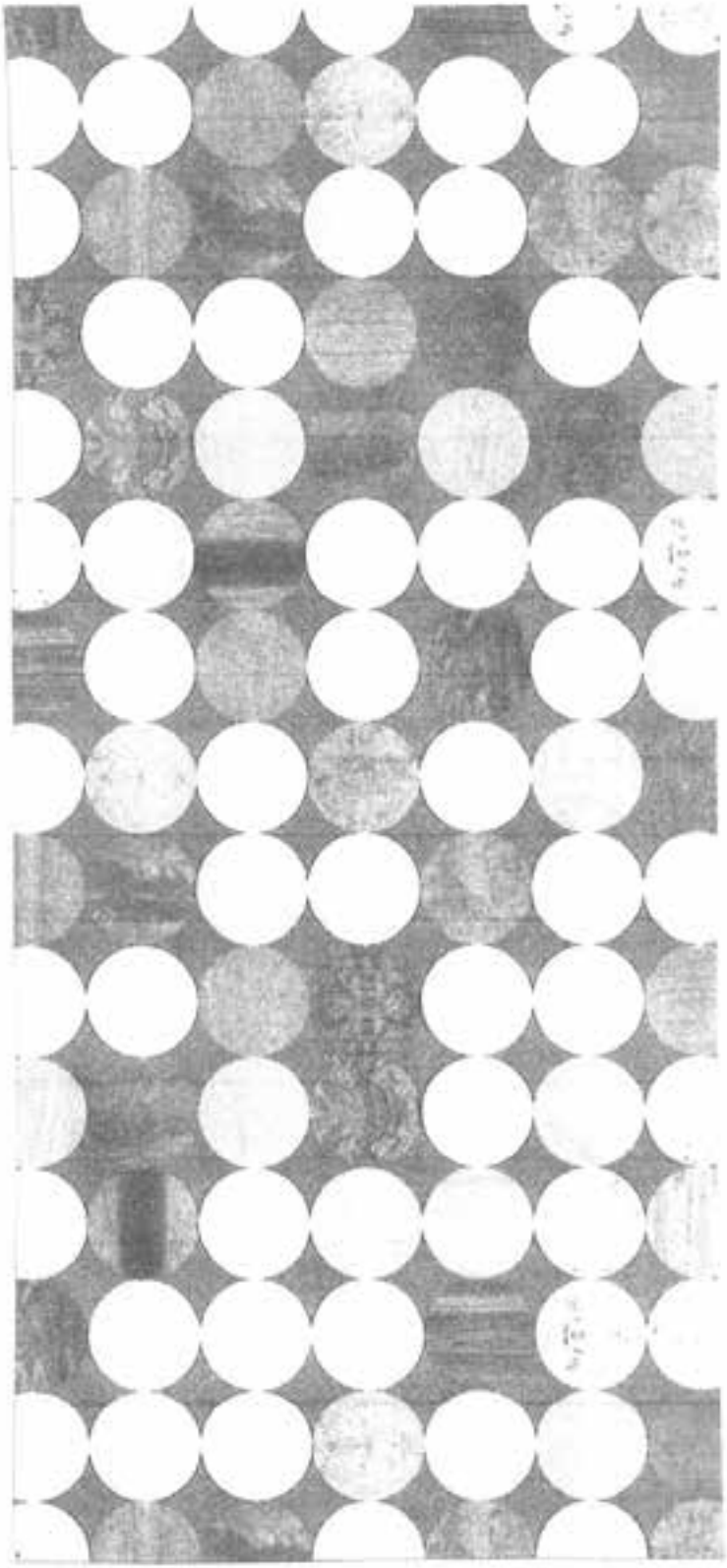
# The Wimbledon Society



THE BROADWAY SOUTH PARK ROAD MANSELL ROAD
SIR CYRIL BLACK WAY TRINITY ROAD RUSSELL ROAD
ST GEORGE'S ROAD MONTAGUE ROAD KING'S ROAD
HARTFIELD CRESCENT QUEEN'S ROAD PRINCE'S ROAD
WORPLE ROAD MEWS GLADSTONE ROAD ALT GROVE
ALEXANDRA ROAD HARTFIELD ROAD TABOR GROVE
GRAHAM ROAD VICTORIA CRESCENT ALWYNNE ROAD
BEULAH ROAD ASHBOURNE TERRACE STANLEY ROAD
WIMBLEDON HILL ROAD THE PIAZZA FRANCIS GROVE
HERBERT ROAD DUNDONALD ROAD RAYMOND ROAD
PALMERSTON ROAD COMPTON ROAD WORPLE ROAD

# VISION 2040

## Proposals for Wimbledon Town Centre

2018

THE WIMBLEDON SOCIETY

2018

# VISION 2040 PROPOSALS FOR WIMBLEDON TOWN CENTRE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**Vision 2040** has been produced by The Wimbledon Society's Planning & Environment Committee

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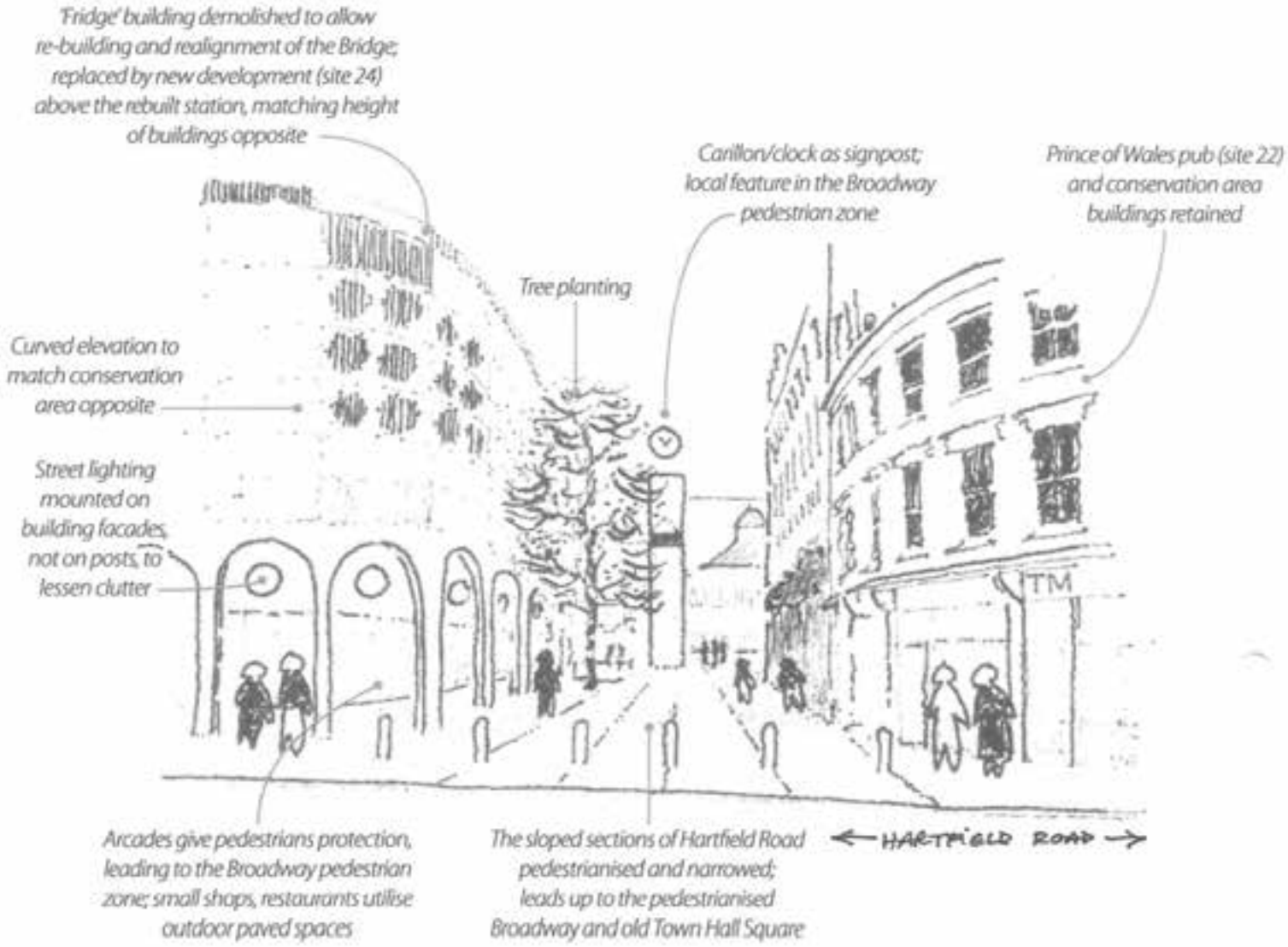
We acknowledge with thanks the valuable contributions of WEHRA and other local groups in recent months.




***The current view of the Hartfield Road slope (below) and how it could look, pedestrianised and narrowed (above)***

# VISION 2040

## PROPOSALS FOR WIMBLEDON TOWN CENTRE

**Foreword**

Established in 1903, the Wimbledon Society is a Civic Society and a registered charity, whose overall objective is to enhance the quality of life and protect the amenities of Wimbledon for present and future generations. Its objects include promoting high standards of planning and architecture in the area.
We currently have about 950 members.

Wimbledon Town Centre is at the very heart of the Society's area of benefit.
Its condition and its future have long been a source of concern to our members, and we have been pressing Merton Council for many years to devise a plan to improve the area. In 2017 the Society published its own outline plan identifying "future opportunities for the Town Centre".
In its preamble we commented that -

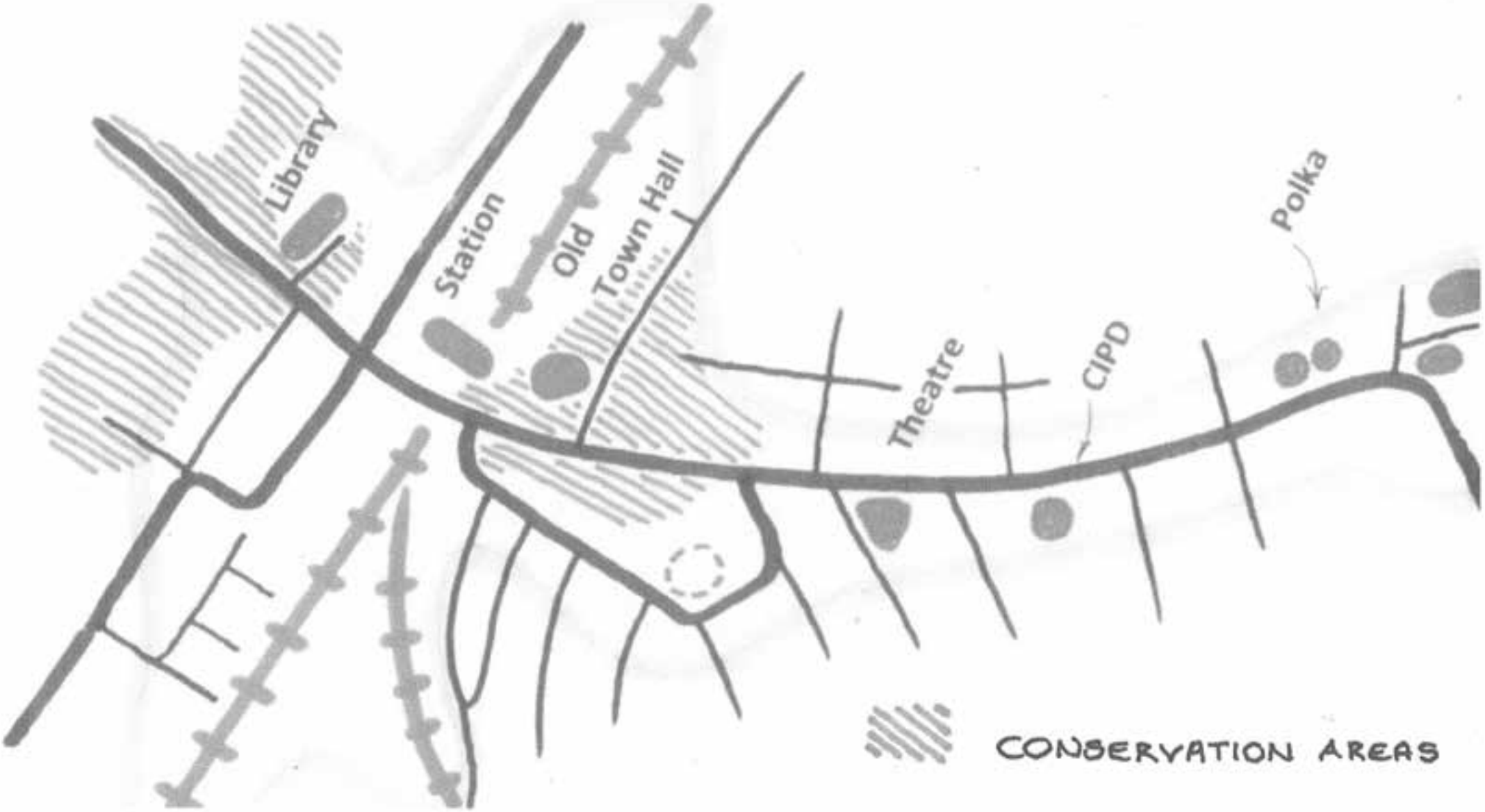
*"Our town is traffic dominated, unmemorable, likely to lose out as all town centres face up to major changes. And it is dull. But now we have Crossrail 2 with its major impact on the ground, and on the Town's accessibility.*
*We now need a plan up to 2040 that will both facilitate the CR2 works, and integrate them into the town of the future.*
*And one that is a proactive plan, not merely reactive as now, and made with and by the public, not just the Council and developers."*

We are very pleased indeed that, within a year of that appeal, the Council has grasped the nettle and produced a very detailed draft "Masterplan".
Clearly, a huge amount of work and thought has gone into its preparation and we commend the Council and its officers on this achievement.
We also commend the Council on its willingness to consult with the Society and the town's many stakeholders.

We should start by emphasising that the Society fully endorse the Council's "Vision" – its mission statement – as set out in the Masterplan:

*"...to maintain and build on [Wimbledon's] current vitality and viability as one of London's major town centres, improving the transport interchange, with more business and professional services and quality shops, balanced with community,*

# Wimbledon Town Centre



*leisure, arts, culture and associated facilities including tourism, achieving a noticeable uplift in the quality of the centre.... An exemplar for good quality placemaking."*

The Wimbledon Society is committed to trying to help the Council give effect to that "Vision". We agree, by and large, with the Council's strategy for doing so: enhancing the retail core, encouraging an active street frontage, providing leisure and cultural facilities to attract visitors, improving the public realm especially traffic management, etc.
We perceive, however, that the strategy has some significant shortcomings.

We are concerned in particular about the push to make Wimbledon a Metropolitan Centre, which involves a major increase in commercial development (and a corresponding increase in building heights) just at a time when business requirements for office space are starting to change quite radically. Evidently, the push has not come from the Wimbledon community itself, so who wants this, and why?

Another concern is the absence of a scheme to alter significantly the flow of traffic through the town centre, and the lack of a proposal to pedestrianise part of the centre, to make it a safer and attractive space for visitors.
We do not see how the plan as drafted will deliver genuine improvements to the public realm *"to make the centre ... easier to get around for both pedestrians and traffic"*.

Last but not least, we are concerned about the absence of a concrete proposal to build an arts venue/concert hall for which local people have been clamouring for for so long, and which we consider to be a key factor for achieving the Council's professed aim to *"attract visitors to the area all year round"*.

The purpose of this document is to attempt to set out the Society's preferred approach to these issues, in the hope that the Council will decide to incorporate some or all of these ideas into its final masterplan document to be submitted for Cabinet approval.
A great deal of careful thought has gone into this document and we hope that Merton Council and its officers will regard our ideas and suggestions as constructive and achievable, in the context of our shared desire to make Wimbledon Town Centre a vibrant and attractive locality once more.

**Jeremy Hudson**

**Chairman** **The Wimbledon Society** **December 2018**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Unless one has a plan with clear targets, how does one know where today's decisions lead?
Rather than being a 'plan' of a single end-state, this Vision 2040 is more like a 'kit of parts', some elements of which can be accelerated, some held back, as the public decides through their Council.

We clearly need a new approach to the planning of the town: one based primarily on the 'wishlists' of local people (whose town is it anyway?), and which is essentially proactive, not reactive as now.
But our town centre also faces real pressures from social and economic forces, that obviously cannot be resolved by relying on developers' ad-hoc planning applications. So what is being suggested?

The present domination of the whole centre by traffic (danger, noise, fumes), with pedestrians allowed to use the space left over should not be accepted. A significant amount of pedestrianisation should be provided throughout the town centre, achieved in stages, to create safe and pleasant spaces that encourage people to not only come to the town, but stay. And use it.
Achieving pedestrianisation will not always be easy, but traffic control technology is improving all the time.

Local character and the nature of the place is also important. Current ad hoc decisions fail to convince.
So we propose setting clear limits on the amount and height of new development, and encouraging only a modest amount of new offices, which independent assessments indicate is prudent for Wimbledon.
But also encouraging new housing in the centre, which is not only needed, but humanises the centre and ensures that there are 'eyes on the street' at all times.
There are also specific proposals for a significant amount of tree planting and 'greening'.

We identify zones exclusively for smaller shops, and for lower rent workplaces for startups, and improve the design quality of buildings in the two conservation areas, by using a small-grant scheme.

New buildings themselves should be designed to be far closer to an 'energy neutral' objective, and not as many are now, outdated designs with the odd solar panel clipped on as an afterthought.

The Council-owned sites (P3 and P4) should be used creatively: the P3 Hartfield Road site has enormous potential as a future concert hall with a Frank Gehry design, a project that could transform the reputation and drawing power of the whole town. There is no other Gehry building in the UK, and the effect on other European cities where his work has been built is said to be remarkable.
We understand that there is far more envisaged than the 'concert' element, with activities that will draw on and enhance the wider arts, cultural, performance and educational scene in the Borough.
Opportunities of this kind are rare, and few Councils will find it easy to respond with imagination.

New big buildings can severely affect local residents, infringing their daylighting, sunlighting and privacy, as housing is so close to the centre. Specific limits on the height of new buildings in the centre are proposed.

If the Crossrail 2 project proceeds, we suggest how the potentially highly disruptive works could be harnessed. New transport improvements, particularly to buses and cycles and pedestrians, are proposed.
Development above the station should be designed to eventually link in to the surrounding area.
And tunnelling from the Thames end (not the town centre end) is seen as an absolute essential, so that waste material is removed by river than by lorry on our roads: otherwise the very large-scale disruption would be highly damaging over many years.

And lastly, how is all this, a new direction and approach for the town centre, to be organised?
The current plan has reactive policies encouraging tall buildings. Today's developers have secret pre-app discussions with Council staff before submitting applications, giving the public 3 weeks to 'object'.

We suggest instead that a new kind of plan is now needed, one based on proactive proposals.
All pre-app discussions should be in the public domain, with the public encouraged to contribute to the creation of the project. All facilitated by a local 'planning shop' in the town centre where the Council (and the CR2 team) could interact with local groups.
And lastly, that a Councillor 'Champion' be appointed, advised by a town centre steering group of local people/businesses, to drive forward the very different creative planning approach that is now needed.

## INTRODUCTION

A Town centre is the heart and focus of its local community.
It needs to have its own distinct identity, to be memorable and useful, not a clone town.

The Council's current local Plan is largely reactive, it just responds to developers' ad hoc planning applications. No-one is able to see what kind of future town we are planning for: it is not proactive.

A number of influential and thought-provoking reports recently (Portas, Grimsey, Timpson) have signalled that our town centres will have to change significantly if they are to recapture their primary role of being the heart of their communities. Words and policies alone will not be enough.

We need proposals and coordinated local action, unified around a shared public vision for the town. And we need strong and focussed leadership from the Council, working closely with local people.

Our town is dominated by traffic, with its danger and air pollution; pedestrians are allowed to have the space left over. Lumpy new developments are being built with little relevance to local character. Many seem to be no different to schemes that could have been 'designed' 20 or more years ago. Opportunities for improvements are being lost, the 'public' and civic activities that make the town useful are being lost. Smaller shops and independent businesses and start-ups are being priced out. Many of the shops are of national chains, with branches in many of our neighbouring towns; are there enough really good reasons why local people should shop locally?

**But it does not have to be this way.**
This is not to denigrate the efforts of the town's businesses of today, but we have to nurture them, give them a better future, and make the town a place where people do not just 'shop and go', coming in to town just because they have to.
One of the key objectives surely has to be to encourage people to stay longer in the centre, because it is a pleasant and interesting and useful place to be.

Because the town centre has residential areas immediately surrounding it, local people are naturally affected and bound up with the nature and character of the place. They are supportive users of local shops and businesses. But they can also be adversely affected by traffic, parking and servicing, anti-social behaviour, air pollution, even by the loss of light when big development takes place at the end of their gardens. Given the interdependence of the centre and its residential hinterland, any plan has to work for both viewpoints. And as someone once said: "Whose town is it anyway?"

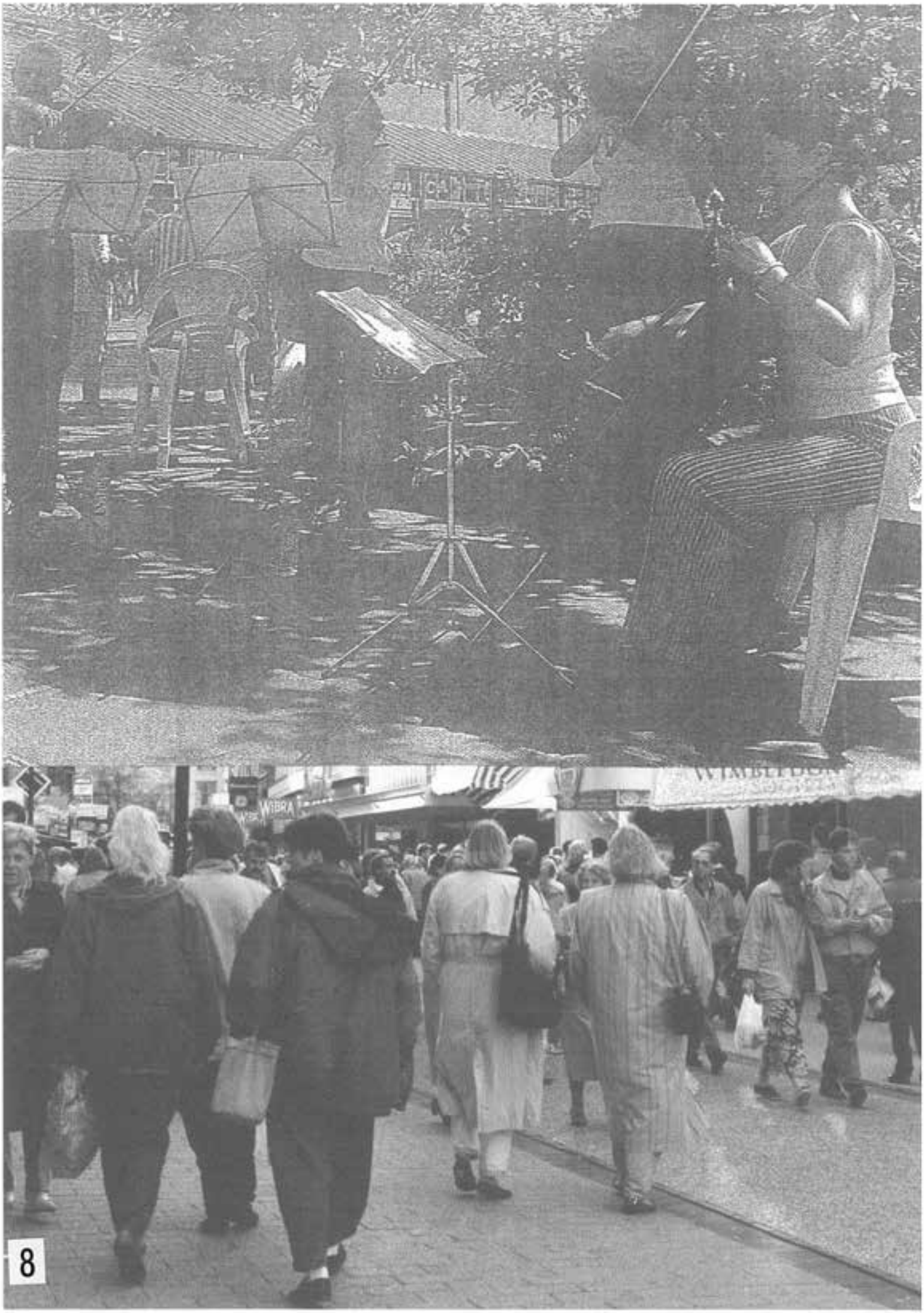
**We need a new approach, a new type of plan for the town centre.** What follows is an attempt to set down what this could be. It needs to look much further ahead than the next meeting with a property developer. With the authoritative indications of major technological and other changes that are emerging from the UN, European Union and Government, 2040 is the date we have chosen.

It is important to remember that this "vision" approach is not a restrictive "Masterplan".
There is no sense in claiming to know everything about the future. There will need to be options and variations, so that our successors can have the freedom to adapt what we leave them.
That is why we are setting out our proposals as a series of phases, of options; a kit of parts rather than a blunt, take it or leave it end-state. Our working title is simply **VISION 2040.**

We believe that if the underlying objectives are broadly agreed and spelled out, then each individual decision can be seen to be contributing to that commonly agreed goal.

Our report has to respond to two fundamentals. Firstly we have to respond well to the 'Wishlists' of local people, as expressed in local 'workshop' meetings. Unless we do this, no plan should succeed. And secondly we have to respond to the quite major changes that are now affecting towns, and the way we live, and we have to anticipate those that we expect to emerge in the next twenty years.

***"Each town centre (should) have a strategy produced in partnership with local (people)."*** *GLA 1/18*
This report suggests what we feel should be the way ahead, and starts by recording what local people are saying, and what they want to see in their town.



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## WHAT LOCAL PEOPLE WANT TO SEE IN THEIR TOWN: THE WISHLIST SUMMARY

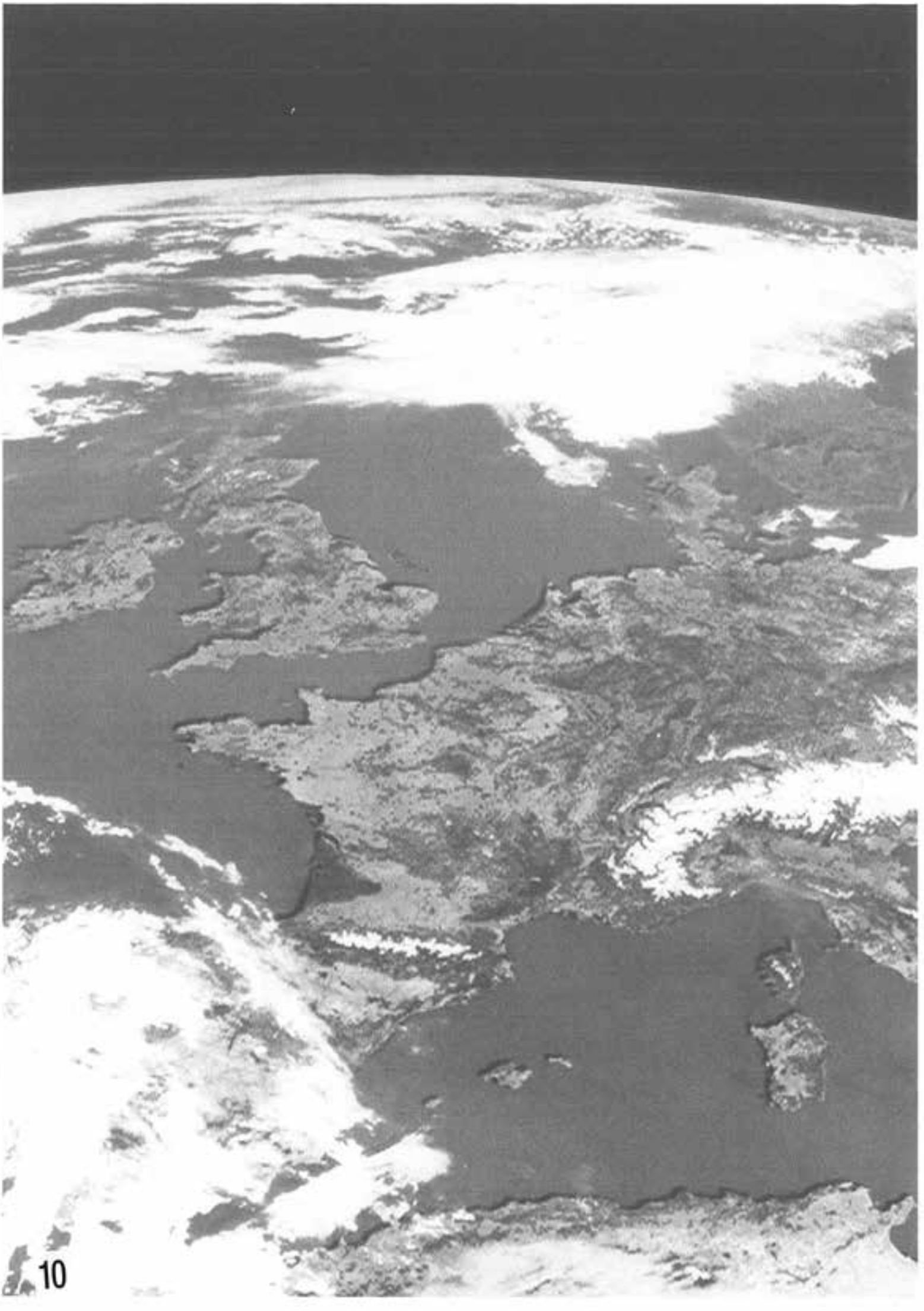
Local groups have set down their ideas, and a selection are included in the Appendix.

So what in essence do these 'Wishlists' say, and what does a new plan have to do?

- A new type of Plan: made by the local people and the Council working together, not handed down for the public to comment on
- A Plan that is Pro-active, not just Re-active: that spells out what needs to be done in 3D so that it can be understood by everyone in the community, and that has some adaptability in the future
- A Plan that can work whether the Crossrail 2 (CR2) project proceeds or not
- A town that is memorable, quite distinct from any other, with its own character, that encourages people to stay and enjoy, with a wide range of useful and pleasurable attractions
- Respect and build on the existing scale and character, with a 22m height limit, less in places
- Pedestrianise the heart of the town, based around the Old Town Hall, with traffic taken around the town centre, not through it
- Protect pedestrians from the weather by malls, arcades, canopies
- Create far more planting, green space and pocket parks/squares in the pedestrian zones
- Significantly improve the presently poor air quality, particularly where people gather
- Retain and improve good local buildings
- Rebuild the station if Crossrail 2 (CR2) proceeds, and build new development above it
- Design new development to be flexible/adaptable in use, as future needs will change
- Slow down traffic, limit access by polluting vehicles, maintain van servicing access to businesses
- Create an integrated public transport hub at the Station with Bus/Taxi/Tram/Tube/Rail & CR2
- Rebuild the existing bridge over the tracks (needed for CR2), & realign it towards Hartfield Road
- Provide another road bridge (and a pedestrian/cycle bridge) over the tracks to give flexibility
- Safeguard the town, local roads & residents during the 10 year building phase of CR2, with tunnels bored from the Thames end to lessen local disruption: also helps spoil disposal via river
- Promote educational/cultural/music-based development generally, specifically on the Council's Hartfield Road site: a major draw and icon: link this to the Wimbledon College of Arts
- Retain/replace the lost 'useful' public and civic functions that should define any town
- Find a way of protecting small shop zones, with lowered rents
- Retain some low cost/low facility small offices for start-ups
- Limit increased office space unless linked to Crossrail 2
- Re-house locally those residents and businesses that are affected by CR2 demolition works
- Provide new housing inside the town centre for 'eyes on street' safety, and monitoring
- Protect housing in and beside the town centre from aggressive new development and traffic
- Require new development to be energy and CO2 neutral, linked to a local energy scheme
- Encourage shops and restaurants to utilise outside paved zones, market stalls
- Set up a local planning centre to steer new projects, bringing Council and local groups together.

**To be accepted, any plan for the town needs to be measured against these public aspirations.**

But we also need to see the context, the wider picture: and this is set out on the next page.



## THE WIDER CONTEXT

### CLIMATE & ENERGY & ECONOMY

"There is global warming, with a rise towards unliveable temperatures, & the window for firms & banks to reduce financial risks from climate change is now finite, and closing". *Mark Carney, Bank of England 10/2018*

"Premature deaths from air pollution are between 29,000 - 40,000 per year in UK". *Prof H Barton WHO 2018*
Global emissions of $CO_2$ have increased by 50% since 1990: human activities are the cause *UN CC panel 2018*

"UK's carbon emissions footprint is smallest (6 tons $CO_2$pp yearly) since 1890, due to less use of coal: Electricity has to be produced by non-fossil fuel plants eg local solar". *Claire Perry, UK Energy Minister 2018*

"UK Economy has grown by 2/3rds since 1990 whilst cutting emissions by 40% ) *Greg Clarke 10/18*
Low carbon energy sources are now supplying 50% of UK electricity." ) *Sec of State Energy & Business*

Half of all the UK's power should be provided by renewables by 2025. *National Infrastructure Commission 2018*

**TRANSPORT** The European Union has agreed to cut CO2 emissions from new cars by 35% by 2030. *EU*
"Combustion engines no longer have any future." *Marcus Fasse: Handelsbank 2018*
Sales of combustion engine vehicles in UK are to end by 2040. *(by 2032 says Select Committee) HMG 2018*

"Half of all cars sold in Europe (will) have to be electric by 2030." *Herbert Deiss: Volkswagen 2018*
Electric vehicles in UK (now 150,000) will become 17 million (mainly vans) by 2040 and
60% of all van and car sales will be electric or plug-in by 2030 *UK Dept of Transport Research 2018*

London aims to be a Zero Carbon city by 2050 *TfL 2018*
'Rides on demand' car sharing fleet in Europe will be 7.5 million by 2030's with each
one replacing 10 owned cars: these will be "self-driven computers on wheels." *ING report 2018*
Self-driving cars' surveying systems will be linked to the rollout of 5G networks. *Oxbotica/Addison Lee 2018*

**PROPERTY** Business Rates derived from the larger WTC commercial properties are over
£20 million annually, of which some £7 million plus is retained by the Council. *LBM Email 8/2018*
Developers give advice to Councils, but the advice is in their interests, not necessarily the Council's.
Property value in WTC may be some £2 billion: value of hinterland property is some £20 billion. *WEHRA*

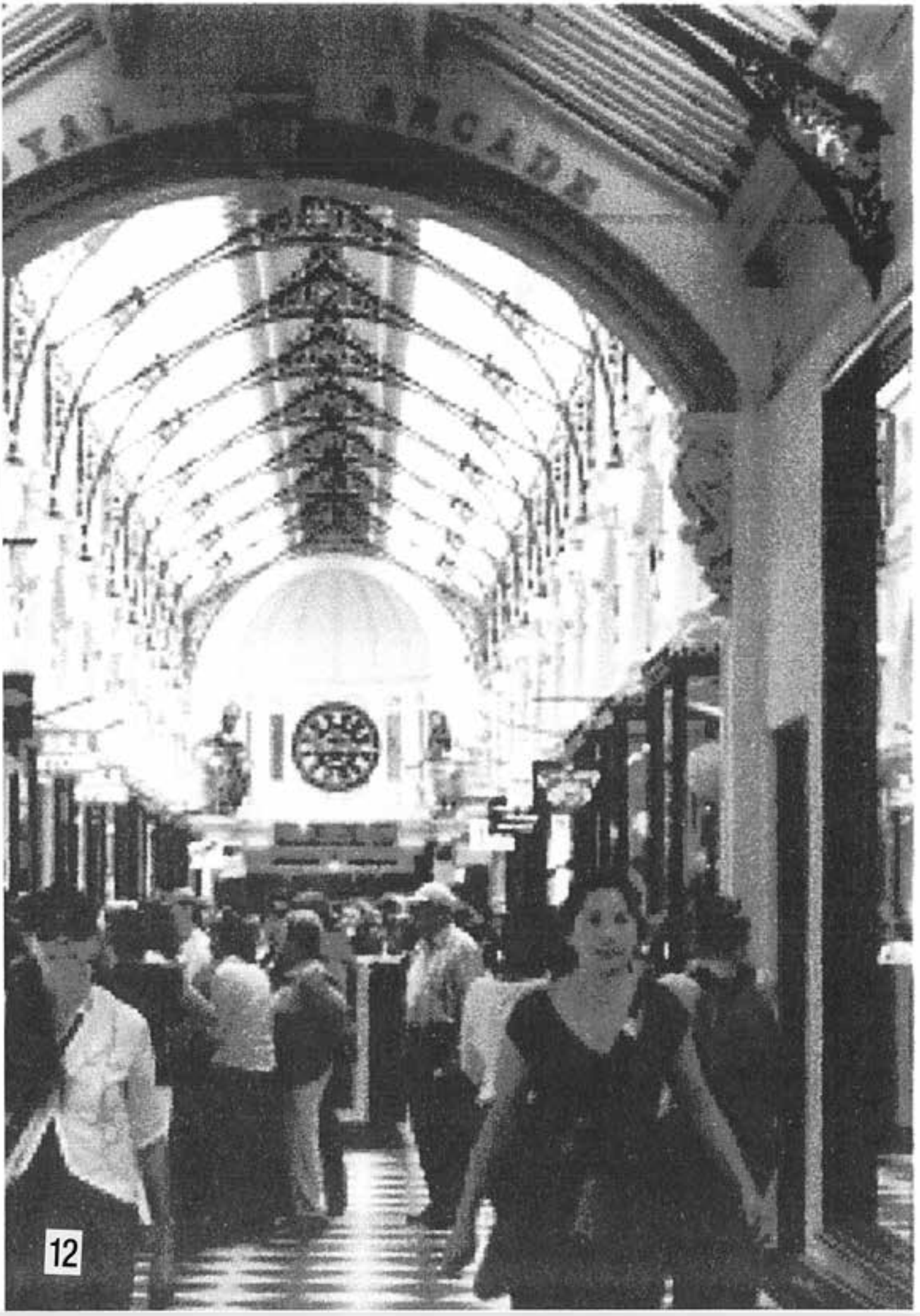
**GENERALLY** Impossible is not a fact, it is an opinion: impossible is potential. *Muhammad Ali*
Specialist advisers should not say it cannot be done: their task is to say how it can be done. *Anon*
A goal without a plan is just a wish. *de Saint-Exupery*
The way of progress is neither swift nor easy. *Marie Curie*
Progress depends on the unreasonable man. *George Bernard Shaw*

We are probably the first generation to realise that we may be destroying the planet.

"The way a neighbourhood looks and feels has a lot to do with its liveability and vibrancy. People are looking for the good life, for places to meet, shop, spend time with their families: places where they feel safe. A great neighbourhood needs a great street as its backbone, and this city needs to have the political backbone to realise that. Local Leadership is (critical) to kick-start progress and make things happen". *Eric Garcetti Mayor of Los Angeles 2013 – present*

"Every High Street and town centre can have a positive future ... by becoming gathering points for whole communities. We still rely on old models (of town centres) that are not fit for the 21st century, and this is holding back change. Apple are looking to re-name their shops as 'town squares' where people go for great experience – if Apple gets it, why can't we?
The distinct heritage of a town should be central when developing places that people will engage with.
Strong leadership is needed from (Councils) working closely with the community"
*Bill Grimsey: Town Centre Review 2: 11/2018*

"The successful re-imagination of a town centre results from local ambition, combined with community support, co-ordinated by an inspirational leader" *Sir John Timpson: The High Street report 2030: 12/2018*



## WHAT THE VISION 2040 HAS TO ACHIEVE

So we now know what the Public wants for the future of their Town; the 'Wishlists' give us that.

We also have some indication of the powerful climatic, social, technological and market-driven forces for change that seem likely to be shaping town centres more generally.

It is clear that any Plan for the future of our Town has to respond positively to both of these.

We also need to plan holistically; transport, heritage, character, energy, greening and economics all must be an integral part of the planning approach. Fragmented 'silo plans' will not work.

We need to start with the clear understanding that it is not sensible to have a permanent and fixed 'end state' type of plan: this approach stifles imagination, and limits what our successors will want to do.

Instead, what we need is a route map, setting out the phases that give us an idea of what we should aspire to in the future, but which also has enough inbuilt flexibility to respond to new ideas.

At each stage we need to show how the town is being improved, with specific gains for the public.

Promises of future benefits can only be believed if they are built on achieved benefits now.

Councils generally have a reputation for promising future benefits, but then setting aside the promises of their predecessors, the Civic Hall in our own town being but one example.

So the achievement of specific public benefits from the start, and at each stage, is a prerequisite.

One major element is currently undecided: whether the Crossrail 2 (CR2) is to proceed at all.
So we set out our suggestions for the first stage works assuming that CR2 is not implemented in the early stages.

But if and when it proceeds, and when we know in detail how it will be designed, we can then suggest how it should be integrated into the life and fabric of the Town.
If of course the decision to proceed with CR2 is brought forward for an earlier start, then the later stages will need to be brought forward accordingly.

We see a number of elements to the future planning approach, each having an essential role to play. All need to operate together, holistically and in harmony.

- A reorganisation of the road system, to create a pedestrian heart: although a highly important ingredient, road reorganisation alone would not deliver an attractive and interesting place:
- improved pedestrian spaces and public squares
- clear design concepts about human scale, local character, conservation and heritage
- improved air quality, personal safety and greening
- land use initiatives, encouraging activities that draw people in to the town, and discouraging those that provide 'dead' frontages, or contribute to anti-social behaviour.
- improvement and imaginative investment initiatives by the public bodies, particularly the Council
- creative collaborative working between the public, the Council and the development industry
- the appointment of a Councillor 'Champion' who will be responsible for driving forward the whole project. This is a vital role on which the future of a successful town depends.

  Achieving the objectives and proposals set out in this report requires important 'buy-in' support from the Council on a non-partisan basis.
  This will not be easy, as new thinking is needed, old attitudes will need to be challenged.
  But without such a Councillor as 'Champion', progress will be fragmented, and the future of the town will revert to the failing formula of processing ad hoc planning applications.

So what proposals for action do we suggest are now needed in the town centre?

Noting that these are specific Actions, not high-sounding Policies or well-meaning intentions.

## IMPLEMENTATION — Stages ONE & TWO — Before Crossrail 2

Our proposals would need to be carried out in stages: the diagrams that follow on pages 17-25 illustrate the proposals and stages in more detail.

- Set up the town centre Vision group, comprising both the Council and the local community, with an appointed lead Councillor to act as 'Champion' to drive the project from inside the Council
- Input to the Crossrail 2 (CR2) designs, & to the Parliamentary Bill stage (see next page)
- Re-organise traffic & create partial pedestrianised zones – firstly only during special days eg Sundays, then to more days if and when the town users adapt to the changes, & responding to public support
- Close off the northern end of Russell Road, to prevent through traffic & simplify the intersection with the Broadway traffic movements: creates an enlarged pedestrian space with trees beside the Theatre: cycle parking: stage door access and large vehicle unloading facilities maintained across the paving
- Sophisticated traffic light system using 'red-ahead' sequencing, to create slower but consistent speeds in the town, lessen noise and fumes, provide capacity: extends from Wimbledon Hill Road through Hartfield Road and Sir Cyril Black Way, and into Eastern Broadway:
  The planned gaps between these slower-moving vehicle cohorts allows pedestrian/cycle crossing times: Transponder priority provided for emergency vehicles and 'green' buses
- Limit service traffic access to premises to 'out of hours' (eg 7pm – 7am) to protect pedestrian zones
- Planning brief needed for the Council's P4 site beside the Theatre, via a developer/architect competition for the lease (p42)
- Planning brief and lease of Council's P3 site on Hartfield Road for Concert Hall/Museum/Community at less than market value given safeguards (p42)
- Planning briefs for other sites: eg Piazza complex (creating covered market and arcade leading to the Concert Hall): Barclays/St Mark's Place: the Station complex: adjoining the Theatre (p42)
- Demolition of some sites held back if CR2 is to proceed, to lessen the amount of destruction and disturbance to the town centre 'offer', & lessen impacts of construction traffic on local environment
- Refurbish Broadway Conservation area properties, and shopfront improvement works, using grants
- Refurbish Wimbledon Hill Road Conservation area properties, shopfront improvement works, grants
- Designate new Conservation Area in St George's Road/Tabor Grove/Alt Grove
- Set up temporary use of the Council's vacant St George's Road site, as a local planning centre staffed by locals, with CR2 and Council presence
- Local paving and street tree planting within the public pedestrianised zones (see pages 17-25)
- Designate an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) for the town centre, and implement an Air Quality Action (AQUA) plan: introduce an additional charge zone for polluting vehicles
- Adopt Local Plan Policies on daylight/sunlight protection to neighbouring lands (p39), height of building limits (p37), tree years replacement, integral energy generation and storage, zero pollution from new developments, shop frontage design guide, limits to shop widths in Conservation Areas (p36), Article 4 Direction controls on cumulative impacts of certain uses in retail zones
- Link the licensing & planning functions for controlling both anti-social activity, and cumulative impact
- All pre-app discussions with developers to be fully public, and involve local groups from the start
- Major Town Centre designation retained, and potential Metropolitan Centre status set aside.

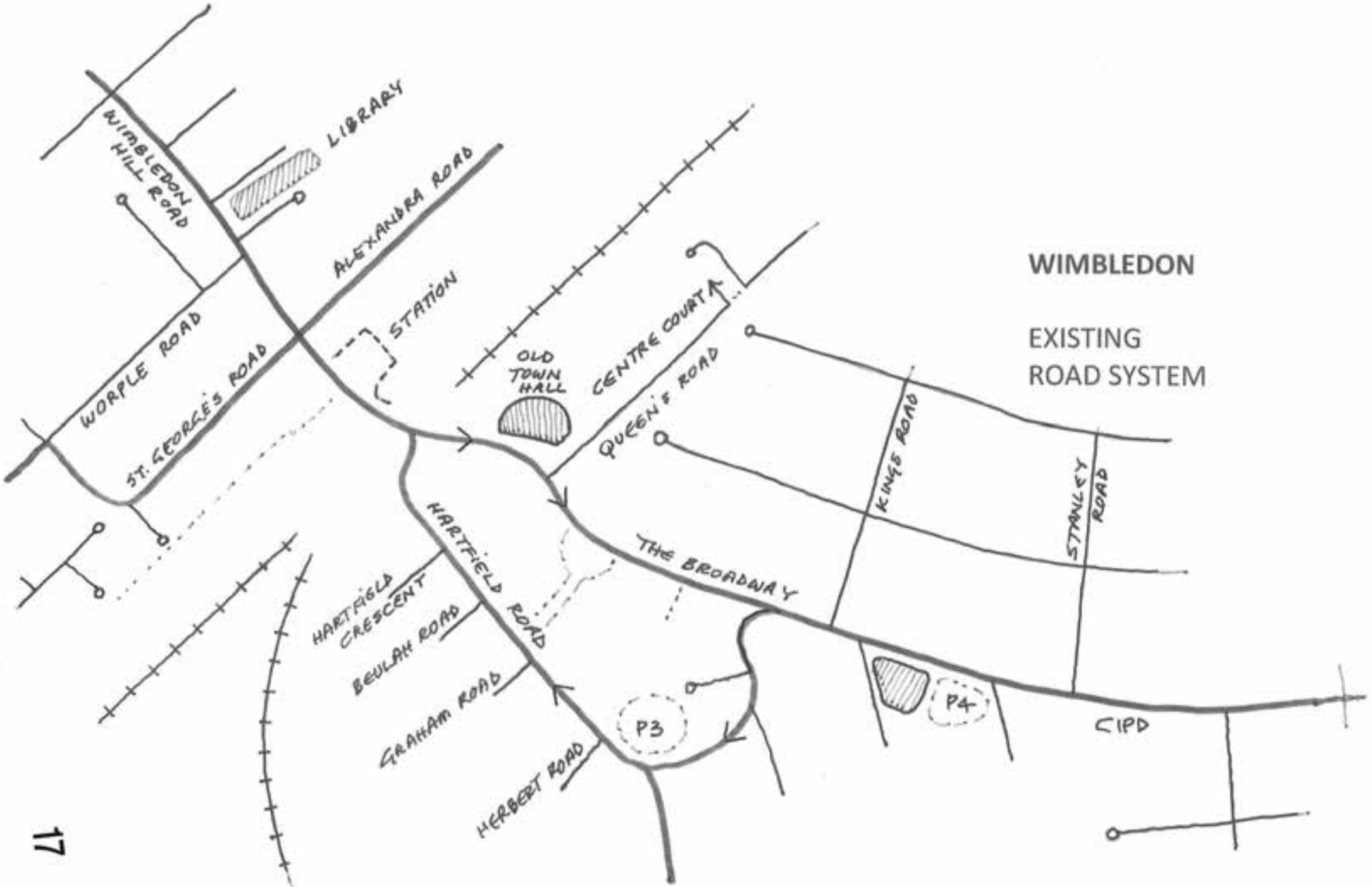
**IMPLEMENTATION** **Stages THREE & FOUR** **Crossrail 2 on site**

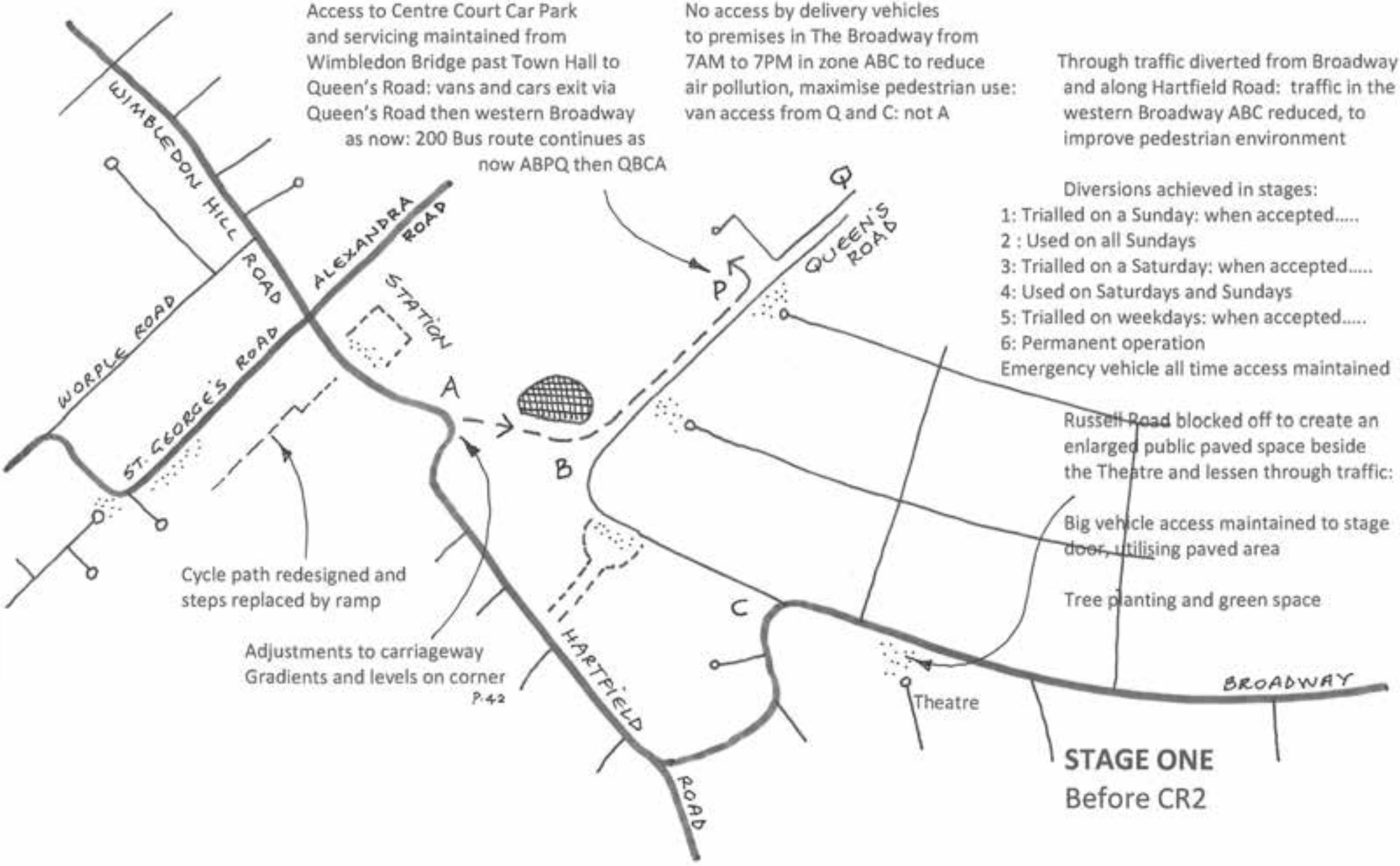
*Items marked + should be planned for, irrespective of whether CR2 proceeds or not*

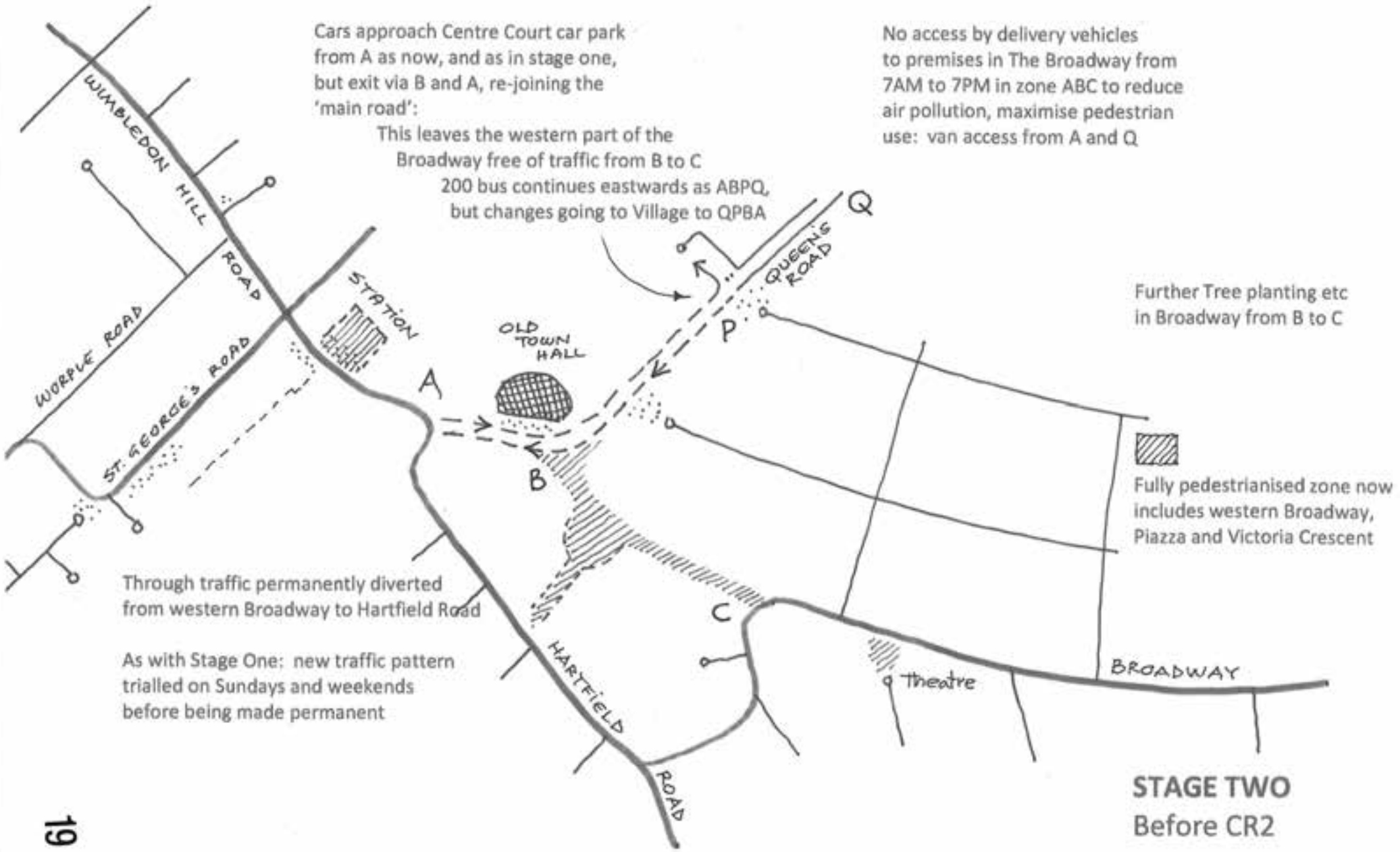
- Acquisition and demolition of the property within the defined zone (by CR2)
- Relocation within the area, of residential and business occupiers of all demolished property (by CR2)
- Establishment of working sites for rebuilding of WHR bridge, of new bridges, of station (by CR2)
- Tunnelling works to start from the Thames end, to allow spoil etc to be trans-shipped via barges: tunnels would 'arrive' in Wimbledon after 3+ years: allows the Station and platform rebuilding works, existing bridge rebuilding, and two new bridges all to proceed in the first stage, and without the need to provide a very large and highly disruptive working site complex for the tunnel works (by CR2)
- Tunnelling for the relocation of the 'Express' fast lines from Berrylands, positioned below the current running tracks and emerging close to Clapham Junction, to allow CR2 tracks to be at near present platform level at the station: (this presumes that the yet-to-be-approved CR2 scheme will be designed accordingly, as in the Wimbledon Society scheme 2017) (by CR2)
- Construction of the replacement of the Wimbledon Hill Road (WHR) bridge, aligning with Hartfield Road, allowing the present WHR bridge to remain operational until the new bridge is complete: eventual demolition of the present bridge, and incorporation of its site into the overall design of the new station complex (by CR2)
- Existing station square enlarged, trees planted, and incorporated into new development (by CR2)
- + Construction of new bridge between Alexandra Road and Queen's Road, as in previously planned schemes by the Council: also to provide options for traffic if the conditions require (by CR2)
- Construction of new pedestrian/cycle bridge between St George's Road and Dundonald Road, replacing the present stepped footbridge (by CR2)
- Adaptations to local road system to accommodate heavy CR2 traffic & safeguard local people/business
- + Bring in stringent area access controls on vehicle emissions/noise within the wider town centre
- Traffic reorganisation and additional pedestrianisation after new WHR bridge completed (see sketches)
- + Refine the previously installed sophisticated traffic light sequencing and vehicle speed controls to favour low speed, and continuous quieter movement of vehicle cohorts through the town
- Reconstruction and realignment of the widened platforms and track layout in the station, incorporating central columns etc within the new platforms for the future development above; undertaken in stages, with the new station 'ceiling' slabs utilised as part of the contractors' working space, and ultimately as the base structure for the c.6 storey high intensive development above the station and tracks (by CR2)
- Tram, Thames link, Sutton link tram ideally kept within the station (by CR2)
- Construction of the bus and taxi hub beside Alexandra Road, and links to major bus bays on both sides of the new bridge (by CR2/TfL)
- Construction of the development above the station and transport hub, extending between the new WHR bridge and the new bridge between Alexandra Road and Queen's Road, in stages: public concourses and retail malls connected in to the upper mall of Centre Court, and bus station hub, with offices/leisure and residential on upper floors, including storage for 300 cycles
- Hold back further demolition/redevelopment projects in the town, until new development repairs the floorspace losses around the station and CR2 complex, to maintain the town's 'offer' & lessen traffic
- Maintain full passenger access to rail station/buses/taxis/cycle storage throughout the works (by CR2)
- + Tree planting in pedestrianised Broadway & new Town Square centred on the Old Town Hall
- + Local paving and planting initiatives
- + Planning 'shop' for public groups, CR2 team and Council, for public information and help (by CR2)
- + Planning briefs for development sites produced jointly by public and Council
- + Reintroduce 'public' and 'civic' functions into the town to encourage attraction
- + Reintroduce 24 hour public loos within new station, to replace crude 'pop-up' facility (by CR2)
- + Upgrade the 'no-steps' public foot/cyclepath from Raynes Park through into the Station complex and then onwards to a new strategic/dedicated cycle route beside Alexandra Road up to Gap Road (by CR2)

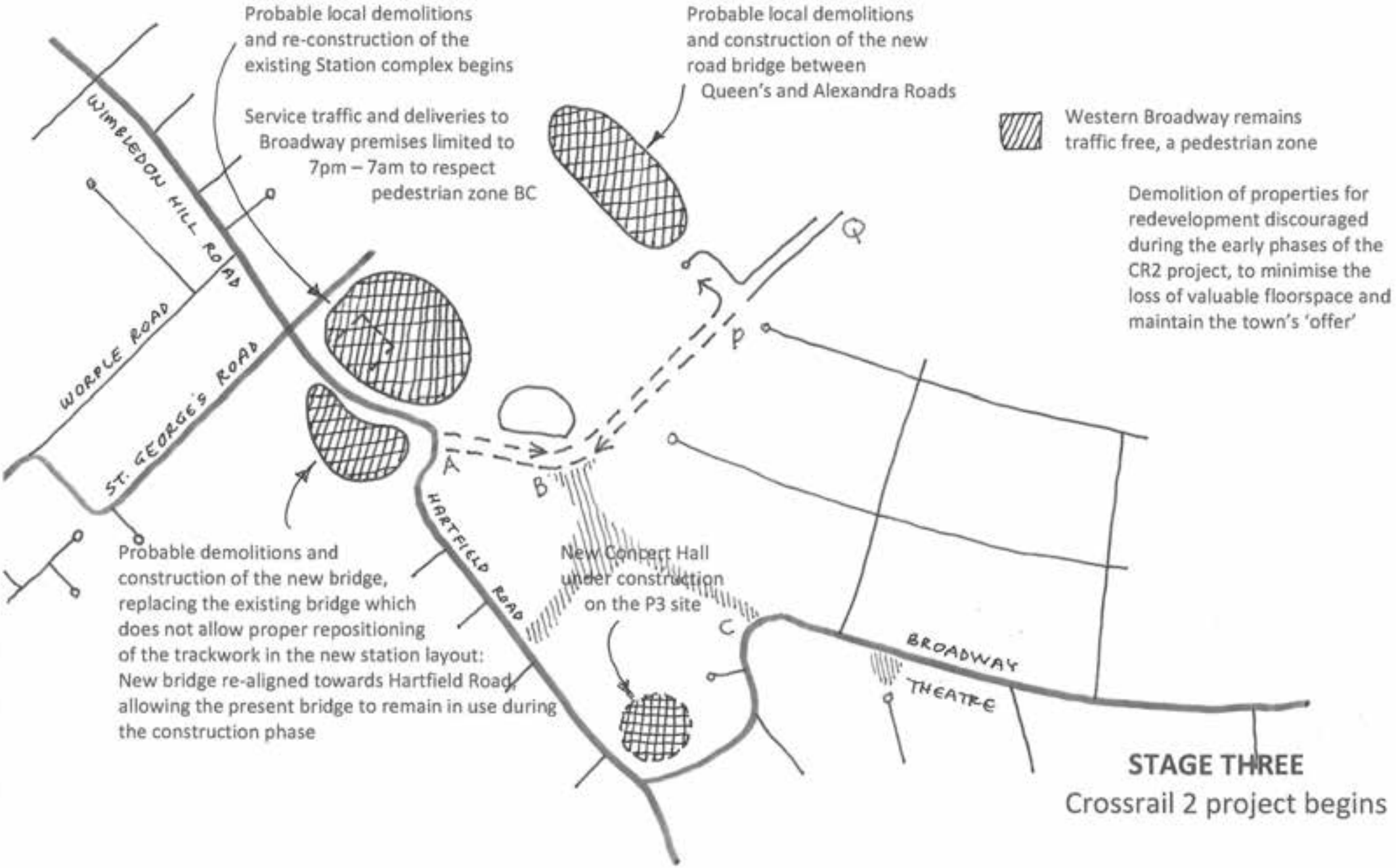
**IMPLEMENTATION** **Stages FIVE, SIX, SEVEN** **Crossrail 2 works part completed**

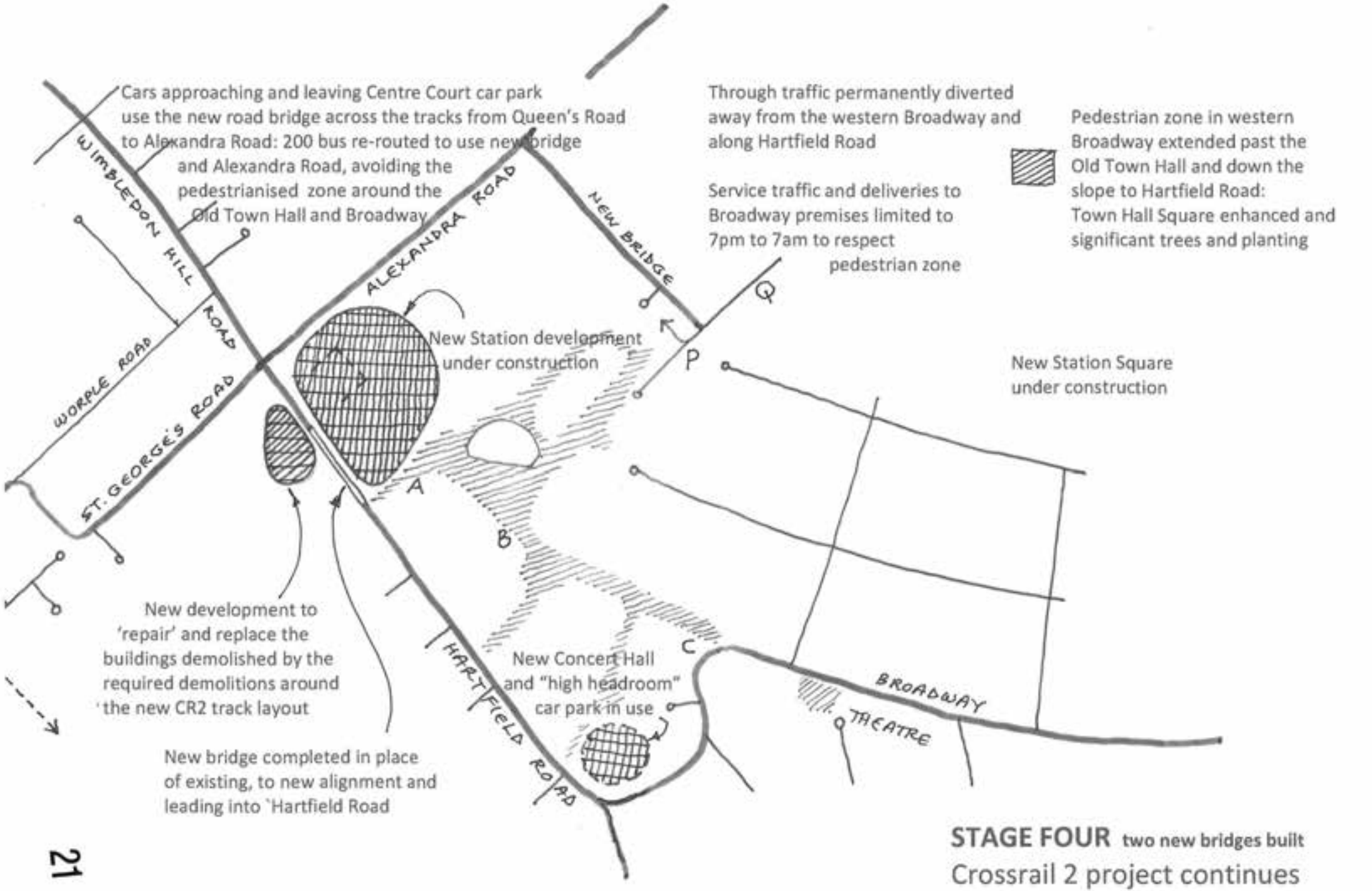
- Bus routes reorganised, and centred on the new bus/taxi station 'hub' built as part of the station project beside Alexandra Road, and on both sides of the new bridge (p29) (by CR2 /TfL)
- Create public entrances to the new station complex from all four sides, including the new 'upstream' bridge, to maximise accessibility from the wider residential hinterland (by CR2)
- Repair the damaging demolitions when the CR2 working sites are eventually vacated, and stitch buildings back into the local 'environmental fabric': eg: 2 and 3 storey residential terrace continuations at Dundonald Road
- Refurbishing of the Dundonald Statutorily Listed 'airplane' shed for public recreational use (by CR2)
- Commercial/residential with leisure and public service buildings fronting St George's & Alexandra Roads (by CR2)
- Enhance the basic cycle network, taking advantage of the low traffic speed zone throughout the town, linked up to the 'strategic' cycle network (p27): shared use with pedestrians coupled to a strong educational programme plus detailed design constraints, to limit aggressive/disruptive cyclist action
- Further intensive development above vacant tracks if this is required, up to 18 and 22m eaves height limit, including residential, recreational and commercial (p37) (via CR2)
- Releasing of the restriction on demolition and redevelopment, in place during the CR2 works
- Conversion and grant-aided retrofitting of existing commercial buildings to lessen electrical energy importation into the town: phasing out of natural gas use, achieve greater self-sufficiency utilising electricity storage, and linking up to a CHP scheme:
  Capture storm water run-off by attenuation chambers for controlled release
- Introduce further significant financial and accessibility constraints on harmful emissions from vehicles in and around the wider town centre, and from existing as well as proposed developments: Encourage zero emission vehicles via easing accessibility, costs and parking concessions
- Utilise the existing bus station site (Sir CB Way) for cycle parking and pocket park greenspace, improving the setting for the iconic concert hall
- The greatly increased public transport accessibility when CR2 is in full operation will affect both the town centre and the wider hinterland. As our understanding of that aspect grows, there will be a need to review the planning approach, and take a view on future action.
- By that time we could expect to see a significantly different transport picture, with autonomous vehicles, many electrically driven. Air quality, vehicle quietness and perhaps pedestrian safety should improve as a result
- Changes in working practices (home working for example) may impact on both travel patterns and the way the town centre is used (p34/5)
- These and other questions will need to be brought forward for constructive dialogue between the public and the Council. The diagrams which follow illustrate these proposals in more detail.


WIMBLEDON
EXISTING
ROAD SYSTEM
WIMBLEDON HILL ROAD
LIBRARY
ALEXANDRA ROAD
STATION
WORPLE ROAD
ST. GEORGE'S ROAD
OLD TOWN HALL
CENTRE COURT
QUEEN'S ROAD
KINGS ROAD
STANLEY ROAD
THE BROADWAY
HARTFIELD ROAD
HARTFIELD CRESCENT
BEULAH ROAD
GRAHAM ROAD
HERBERT ROAD
P3
P4
CIPD


Access to Centre Court Car Park and servicing maintained from Wimbledon Bridge past Town Hall to Queen's Road: vans and cars exit via Queen's Road then western Broadway as now: 200 Bus route continues as now ABPQ then QBCA
No access by delivery vehicles to premises in The Broadway from 7AM to 7PM in zone ABC to reduce air pollution, maximise pedestrian use: van access from Q and C: not A
Through traffic diverted from Broadway and along Hartfield Road: traffic in the western Broadway ABC reduced, to improve pedestrian environment
Diversions achieved in stages:
1: Trialled on a Sunday: when accepted.....
2 : Used on all Sundays
3: Trialled on a Saturday: when accepted.....
4: Used on Saturdays and Sundays
5: Trialled on weekdays: when accepted.....
6: Permanent operation
Emergency vehicle all time access maintained
Russell Road blocked off to create an enlarged public paved space beside the Theatre and lessen through traffic:
Big vehicle access maintained to stage door, utilising paved area
Tree planting and green space
WIMBLEDON HILL ROAD
ALEXANDRA ROAD
WORPLE ROAD
ST. GEORGE'S ROAD
STATION
QUEEN'S ROAD
HARTFIELD ROAD
BROADWAY
Theatre
A
B
C
P
Q
Cycle path redesigned and steps replaced by ramp
Adjustments to carriageway Gradients and levels on corner
P.42
STAGE ONE
Before CR2

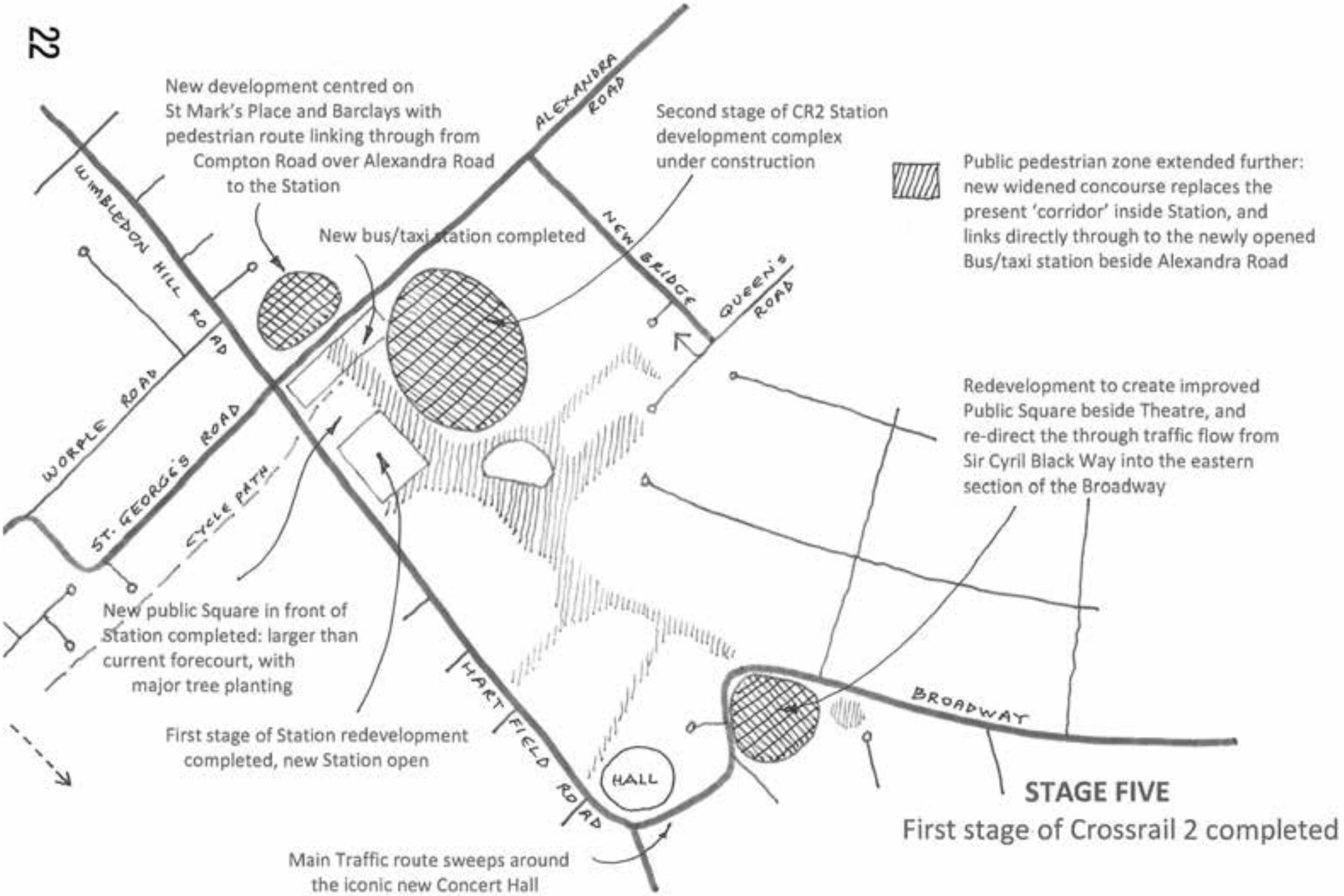

Cars approach Centre Court car park from A as now, and as in stage one, but exit via B and A, re-joining the 'main road':
This leaves the western part of the Broadway free of traffic from B to C
200 bus continues eastwards as ABPQ, but changes going to Village to QPBA
No access by delivery vehicles to premises in The Broadway from 7AM to 7PM in zone ABC to reduce air pollution, maximise pedestrian use: van access from A and Q
Further Tree planting etc in Broadway from B to C
Fully pedestrianised zone now includes western Broadway, Piazza and Victoria Crescent
Through traffic permanently diverted from western Broadway to Hartfield Road
As with Stage One: new traffic pattern trialled on Sundays and weekends before being made permanent
WIMBLEDON HILL ROAD
WORPLE ROAD
ST. GEORGE'S ROAD
STATION
OLD TOWN HALL
QUEENS ROAD
A
B
C
P
Q
HARTFIELD ROAD
Theatre
BROADWAY
STAGE TWO
Before CR2


Probable local demolitions and re-construction of the existing Station complex begins
Service traffic and deliveries to Broadway premises limited to 7pm – 7am to respect pedestrian zone BC
Probable local demolitions and construction of the new road bridge between Queen's and Alexandra Roads
Western Broadway remains traffic free, a pedestrian zone
Demolition of properties for redevelopment discouraged during the early phases of the CR2 project, to minimise the loss of valuable floorspace and maintain the town's 'offer'
WIMBLEDON HILL ROAD
WORPLE ROAD
ST. GEORGE'S ROAD
HARTFIELD ROAD
BROADWAY
THEATRE
Q
P
A
B
C
Probable demolitions and construction of the new bridge, replacing the existing bridge which does not allow proper repositioning of the trackwork in the new station layout: New bridge re-aligned towards Hartfield Road, allowing the present bridge to remain in use during the construction phase
New Concert Hall under construction on the P3 site
STAGE THREE
Crossrail 2 project begins



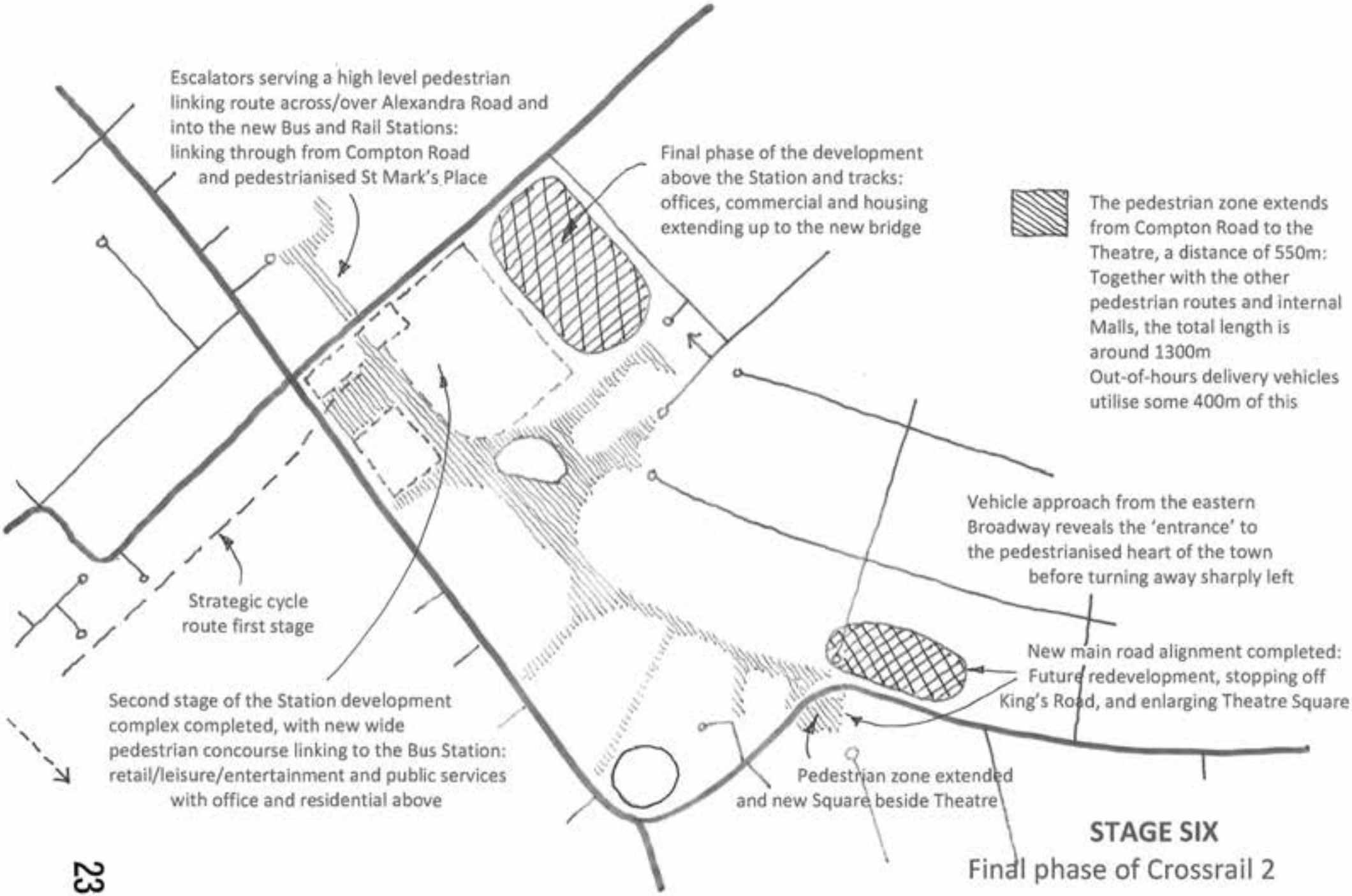

**STAGE FOUR** two new bridges built

Crossrail 2 project continues

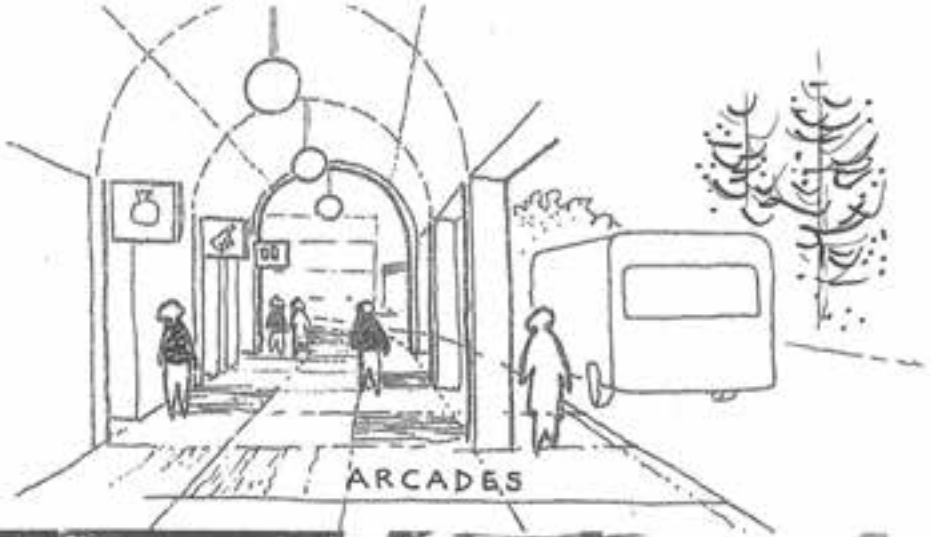



**STAGE FIVE**

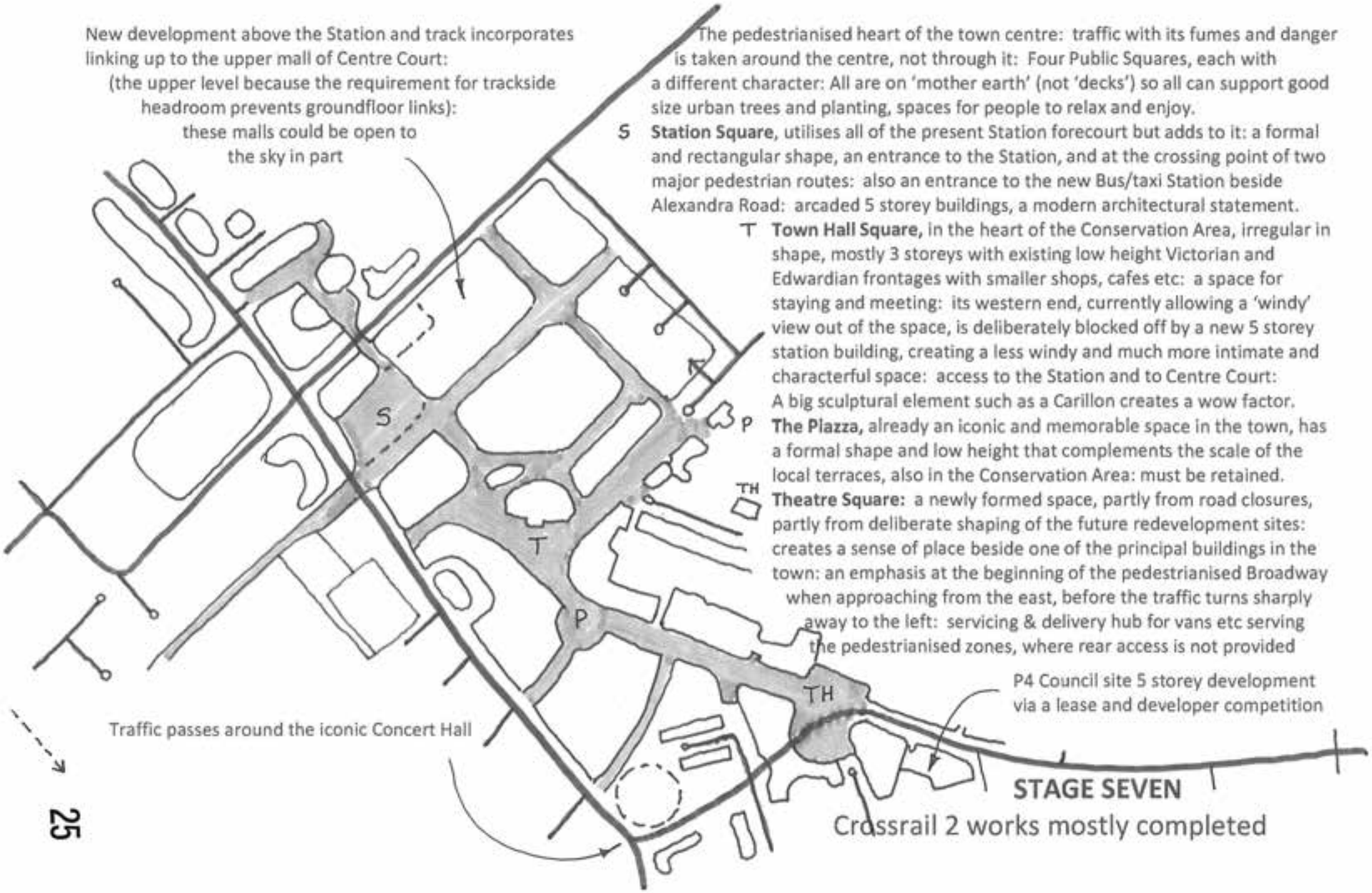
First stage of Crossrail 2 completed

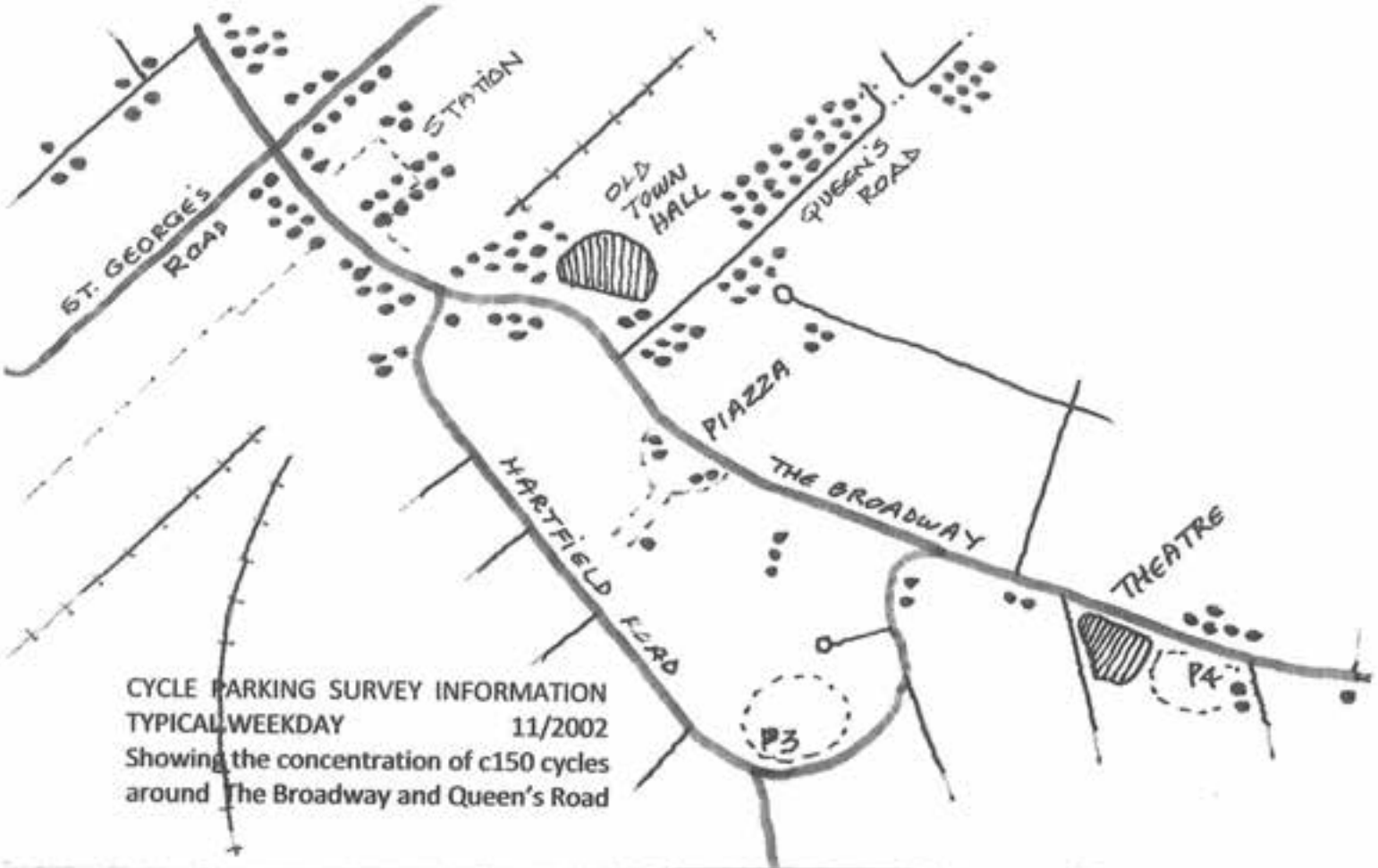

Escalators serving a high level pedestrian linking route across/over Alexandra Road and into the new Bus and Rail Stations: linking through from Compton Road and pedestrianised St Mark's Place
Final phase of the development above the Station and tracks: offices, commercial and housing extending up to the new bridge
The pedestrian zone extends from Compton Road to the Theatre, a distance of 550m: Together with the other pedestrian routes and internal Malls, the total length is around 1300m
Out-of-hours delivery vehicles utilise some 400m of this
Vehicle approach from the eastern Broadway reveals the 'entrance' to the pedestrianised heart of the town before turning away sharply left
Strategic cycle route first stage
New main road alignment completed: Future redevelopment, stopping off King's Road, and enlarging Theatre Square
Second stage of the Station development complex completed, with new wide pedestrian concourse linking to the Bus Station: retail/leisure/entertainment and public services with office and residential above
Pedestrian zone extended and new Square beside Theatre
STAGE SIX
Final phase of Crossrail 2

LANES

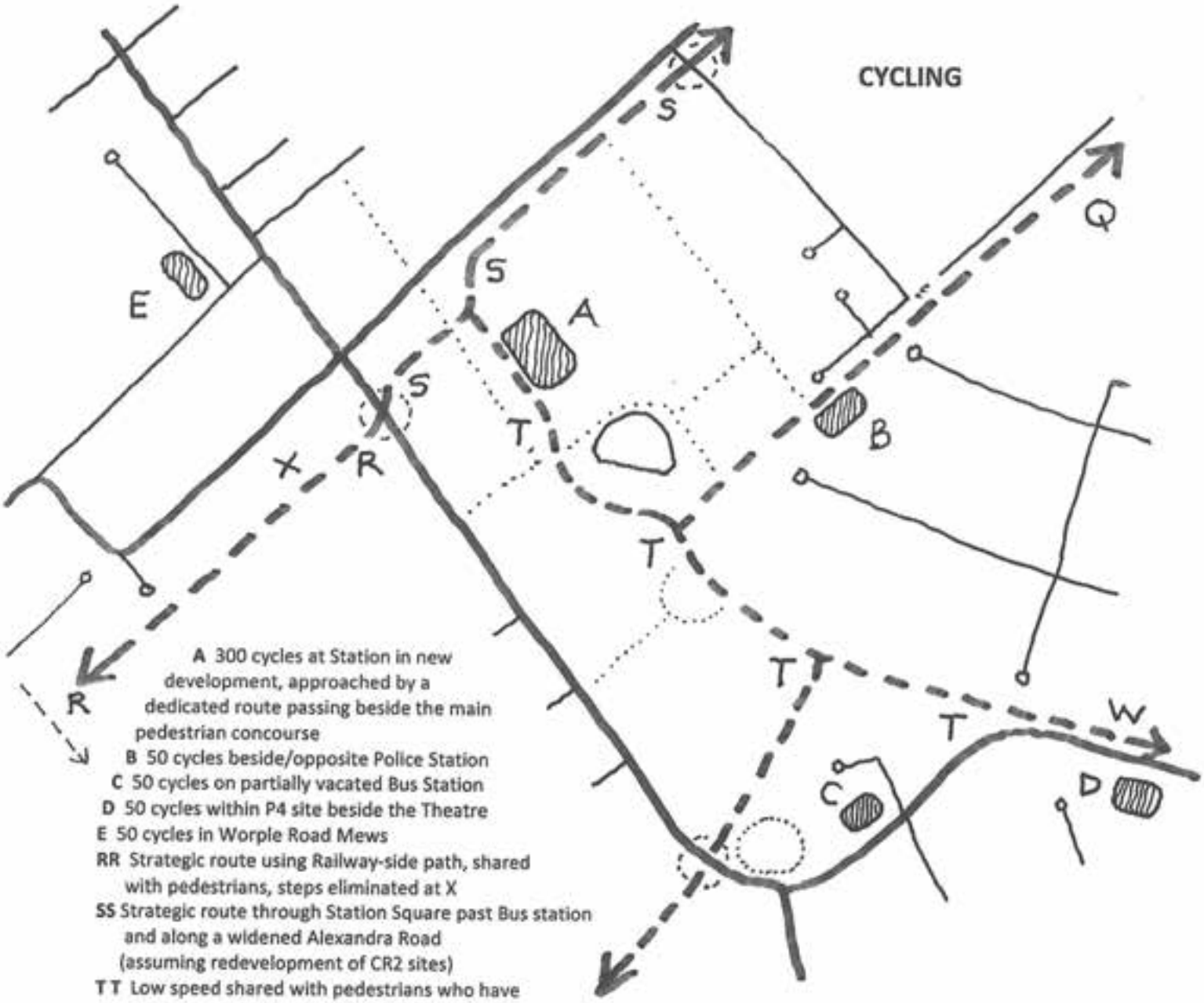


ARCADES


New development above the Station and track incorporates linking up to the upper mall of Centre Court:
(the upper level because the requirement for trackside headroom prevents groundfloor links):
these malls could be open to the sky in part
The pedestrianised heart of the town centre: traffic with its fumes and danger is taken around the centre, not through it: Four Public Squares, each with a different character: All are on 'mother earth' (not 'decks') so all can support good size urban trees and planting, spaces for people to relax and enjoy.
S Station Square, utilises all of the present Station forecourt but adds to it: a formal and rectangular shape, an entrance to the Station, and at the crossing point of two major pedestrian routes: also an entrance to the new Bus/taxi Station beside Alexandra Road: arcaded 5 storey buildings, a modern architectural statement.
T Town Hall Square, in the heart of the Conservation Area, irregular in shape, mostly 3 storeys with existing low height Victorian and Edwardian frontages with smaller shops, cafes etc: a space for staying and meeting: its western end, currently allowing a 'windy' view out of the space, is deliberately blocked off by a new 5 storey station building, creating a less windy and much more intimate and characterful space: access to the Station and to Centre Court:
A big sculptural element such as a Carillon creates a wow factor.
P The Plazza, already an iconic and memorable space in the town, has a formal shape and low height that complements the scale of the local terraces, also in the Conservation Area: must be retained.
TH Theatre Square: a newly formed space, partly from road closures, partly from deliberate shaping of the future redevelopment sites: creates a sense of place beside one of the principal buildings in the town: an emphasis at the beginning of the pedestrianised Broadway when approaching from the east, before the traffic turns sharply away to the left: servicing & delivery hub for vans etc serving the pedestrianised zones, where rear access is not provided
P4 Council site 5 storey development via a lease and developer competition
Traffic passes around the iconic Concert Hall
S
T
P
TH
TH
STAGE SEVEN
Crossrail 2 works mostly completed




CYCLE PARKING SURVEY INFORMATION
TYPICAL WEEKDAY 11/2002
Showing the concentration of c150 cycles around The Broadway and Queen's Road




**A** 300 cycles at Station in new development, approached by a dedicated route passing beside the main pedestrian concourse
**B** 50 cycles beside/opposite Police Station
**C** 50 cycles on partially vacated Bus Station
**D** 50 cycles within P4 site beside the Theatre
**E** 50 cycles in Worple Road Mews
**RR** Strategic route using Railway-side path, shared with pedestrians, steps eliminated at X
**SS** Strategic route through Station Square past Bus station and along a widened Alexandra Road (assuming redevelopment of CR2 sites)
**T T** Low speed shared with pedestrians who have priority through the pedestrianised Broadway: no cycle access to Piazza & Victoria Crescent, respecting pedestrian priority nor to the 'internal' shopping malls
**TH** Strategic route Herbert Road to Broadway via existing alley and past the new Concert Hall
**TQ** Strategic route along south side of Queen's Road
**TW** Strategic route along north side of Broadway
Light controlled crossings

## CYCLING

Currently there are some localised cycle parking facilities, token road markings etc, but a future cycle plan for the town centre needs to provide a far more coherent network, involving 'strategic' routes, proper secure storage and parking arrangements, as well as the small scale localised initiatives.

Future cycle use is projected to increase, (noting also the growth of 'assisted' cycles, scooters etc), but the present provision of routes is both patchy and perceived as not sufficiently safe.

The plan above suggests firstly the setting up of segregated 'strategic' cycle routes, which would then provide the framework for the more local routes. And secondly, it suggests where the principal public cycle parking places should be. Cyclists invariably wish to get as close as possible to their destination, so a dispersed pattern is needed, with the (rebuilt) station being the principal parking place. Additionally, new developments (both commercial and residential) should provide for integral cycle storage. Cyclist behaviour and respect for pedestrians needs to improve if both are to share spaces. A much improved linkage to the Village High Street remains unresolved at this stage.

## BUSES AND TAXIS

Nine bus routes (plus a night bus) currently pass into or through the town centre. By their nature, bus routes are able to be suddenly introduced, modified, or withdrawn as their operators respond to innovation and demand. The current 'through' and 'terminating' routes are:

57 from **Clapham Park** through the town via Raynes Park, Norbiton to **Kingston**
93 from **Putney** through the town via Morden to **North Cheam**
131 from **Tooting** through the town via Raynes Park, New Malden to **Kingston**
200 from **Raynes Park** through the town via Colliers Wood to **Mitcham**
493 from **Tooting** through the town via Village, Southfields, Putney Heath to **Richmond**

156 from the town centre via Wimbledon Park, Wandsworth to **Vauxhall**
163 from the town centre via Wimbledon Chase, Raynes Park to **Morden**
164 from the town centre via Wimbledon Chase, Morden to **Sutton**
219 from the town centre via Tooting to **Clapham Junction**

Currently, Taxis mainly operate from a dedicated slip road beside the station.

The principal changes to the road system involve the pedestrianisation of parts of The Broadway and Queen's Road, and the construction of a new bridge linking Alexandra and Queen's Roads.

Additionally, the major rebuilding of the Station and its surrounding area creates an opportunity to radically improve the bus and taxi facilities, and create a much improved connection to the Station.

As the road system evolves, as shown in the drawings of Stages 1 – 7, and the pedestrian zone expands, the bus routes will need to adapt. In stages 1 & 2, where traffic in the western part of the Broadway is reduced, instead of buses circulating the (present) one way system, routes would need to be progressively run along Hartfield Road. It is possible that some routes (including the 200) may need to continue to use the semi-pedestrianised western Broadway at slow speed until facilities, stops, and signalling systems are in place along Hartfield Road. Allowing 57, 93, 131, 219 to continue to use the western Broadway at the start of stage one would be possible/desirable; moving across into Hartfield Road only when the new traffic scheme had 'settled down'.

When the CR2 project work begins, the replacement of the present road bridge creates an important opportunity for a significant widening to accommodate bus stops on both sides directly opposite the Station square and entrance. Whether bus passengers cross the road to the Station at grade via light controls, or via a subway or overbridge walkway needs further study when the detailed design of the new Station complex is evolving. There is a difference of level between the present Station concourse and Alexandra Road of some 2m and, depending on the design of the CR2 scheme, this change of level may impact on the level of the intersection and local roads.

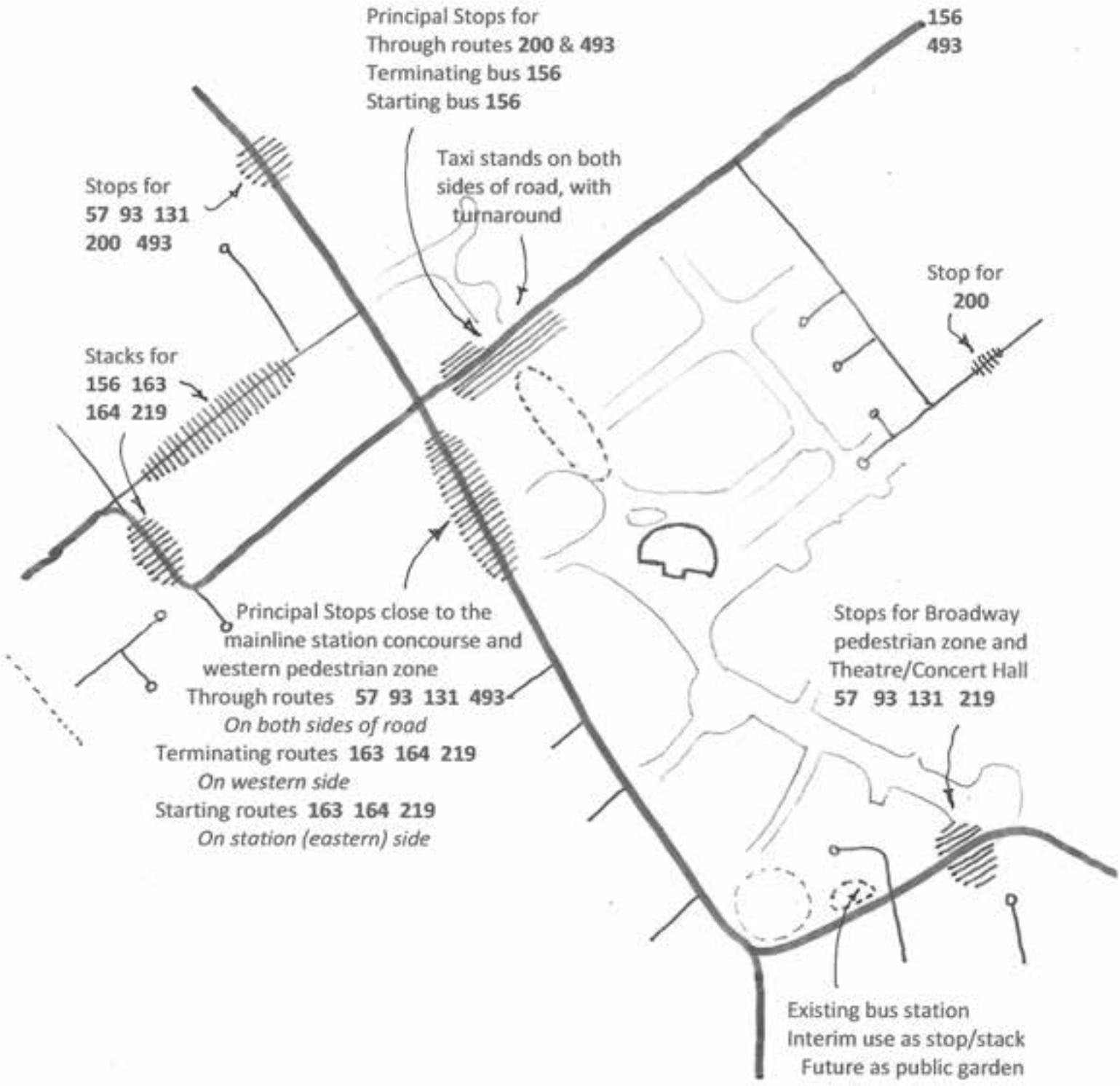
The construction of the new road bridge between Alexandra and Queen's Roads also allows the 200 to follow a more direct route via Alexandra Road, St George's and Worple Roads, and up the hill.

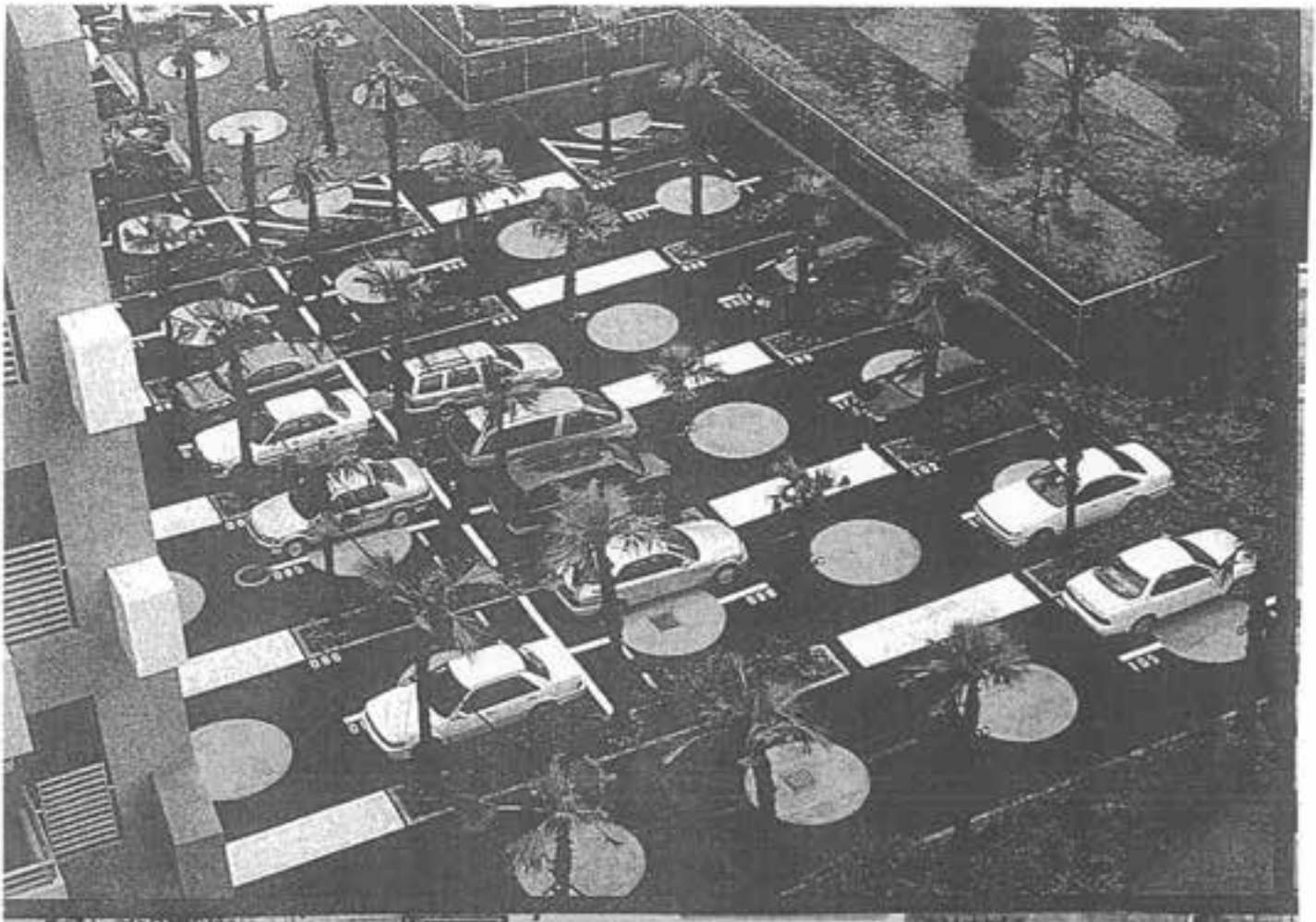
The Taxis could be best located on both sides of Alexandra Road, directly linked to the new station: this allows easy access to any destination. A taxi turnaround needs to be provided in the new development of the Station complex, located where the taxis now enter their slip road.

A future bus system would expect to be fume free and quiet, electrically driven, with transponders linked to the sophisticated traffic light control system for the town, its information and timing tied into the rail network: full under-cover weather protection access, stacking space for terminating buses maintained (currently Worple Road) with staff/rest rooms, no-step facilities and so on.

## BUSES AND TAXIS

Potential routes and stops
and stacks at Stage 7





## TRAFFIC AND PARKING

A significant element in the Vision 2040 proposals is of course the alteration of the road system in order to improve the environment, and create a pedestrianised heart to the town.
A town's road system invariably has to provide for various 'users'.

There is the non-local traffic, that simply wants to pass through on its journey. There is the traffic generated by local people and local businesses. There are delivery vehicles, buses, taxis.
And of course there are pedestrians and cycles. All will often 'compete' for space and perhaps priority, in the relatively narrow roads that are characteristic of so many urban areas.

Old photographs show our principal roads with very little traffic, but over the years vehicles have dominated the heart of the town, and the result has been that pedestrians have been left with the 'space left over'. This is one of the reasons why many town centres are so unattractive that they 'have problems'. Without pedestrians walking freely, without the danger and fumes and limited space that comes from mixing with busy traffic, no town centre can thrive.

Progressively removing traffic from areas that should be pedestrian-focussed, and then relocating traffic to alternative routes is a significant change for any town. Changing established patterns can be disruptive in the first instance, which is why it is often best to make the changes in small steps.

This is why the creation of a pedestrianised heart to the town should be done in stages, and pages 17-25 illustrate this. Changes to bus and taxi routes and cycle paths are also explained.

With any pedestrian zones, it is essential that access for emergency vehicles is provided for at all times. Deliveries to business premises are also essential, and one way is to limit such access to late evenings/early mornings, so as not to compromise the pedestrian space.
Detailed calibration of access times are best left to be decided by the authorities and businesses.

As to the ability of the road system to accommodate the required volume of traffic: it has been known since the Buchanan report of 1963 that it is quite impossible and/or impracticable to provide enough road space to handle all the traffic that theoretically could be generated in an urban area. The result has been a general acceptance that traffic has instead to be 'managed'. Early bus lanes were strongly resisted as the resulting "narrower roads could not cope"; but now they all work. Pedestrianising the northern arm of Trafalgar Square similarly "was impossible": it now exists.

In the next 20 plus years to 2040, very significant changes in the way that traffic 'works' seem likely. Autonomous (ie largely self-driving) vehicles are already being tested in London, and many will be electrically driven, with sophisticated control and avoidance systems becoming the norm.

Traffic lights similarly will be able to 'talk' to and 'read' individual vehicles, allowing the signalling systems to optimise continuous (probably low speed) movement through the town. Not only traffic capacity, but the individual needs of pedestrians and cyclists will input to the control system.
It would also be possible to introduce ways of 'charging' for vehicles that were for example seen as polluting, (or acting in ways that were anti-social) much as is already done in parts of central London.

Car parking is seen by the 'gurus' of future town centres (Portas, Timson, Grimsey et al) as an essential, without which a town will decline. Yet many Councils feel that "people should not use their cars". The answer might lie in technology and adaptation. New car parks should be designed to be convertible into other uses in the future if they were no longer needed.
With a 4 metre clear headroom and potential alternative access, this would allow future flexibility.

With autonomous cars, we are being told that soon it will be possible to leave our car, then tell it go and park somewhere by itself (probably on a cheap site well away from the town centre).
And then call it up to come to you automatically when you need it.
All making town centre car parks rather less relevant.

What seems clear is that basic car parking for the town is needed now, but that we need to be prepared to adapt both our attitudes and our buildings, as times and technology change.

## WRONG

Lopping to stumps

1. Mass of straight branches grows from each cut: cut rots, branches fall.
2. Tree shape destroyed and foliage much increased.
3. Constant and frequent pruning needed with many boughs to cut each time.

## RIGHT

Thinning out branches at the trunk

1. No further growth from cuts which heal over with bark.
2. Tree shape preserved and foliage permanently reduced.
3. No further attention needed for many years.

With the creation of a revitalised pedestrian-based heart to the town centre, there are significant opportunities for the planting of good-sized trees, in 'pocket parks'. In the 4 Squares, the western Broadway, and the southern end of Queen's Road, there is enough space to plant some 40 good-sized trees, at some £400 per tree (Forestry Commission costings)

The planting of trees and other 'greenery' throughout the town centre is seen as an essential ingredient in creating an attractive and healthy place. There are clear benefits to local health, air quality is improved, and the connection to nature and the seasons is also important.

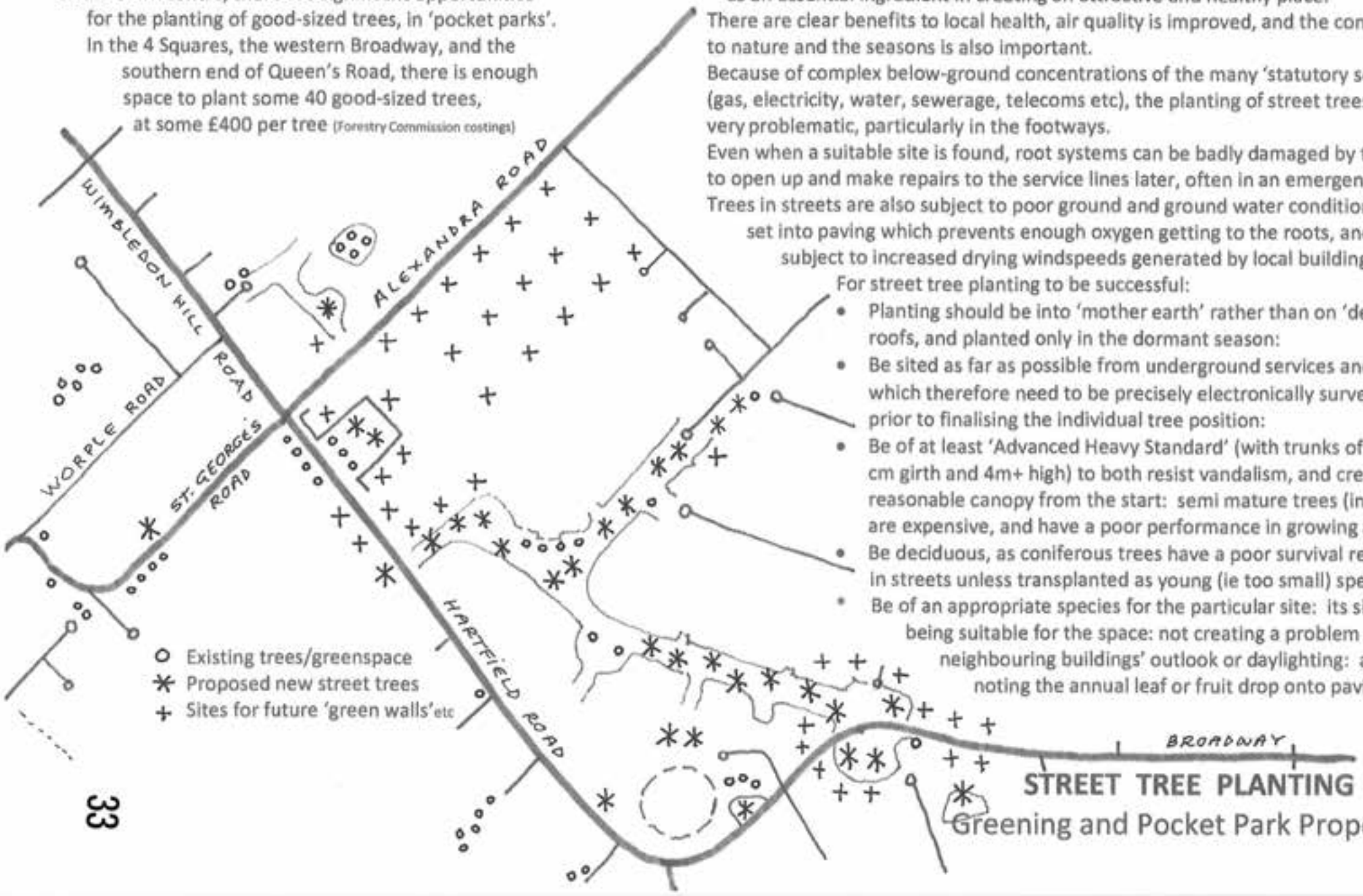
Because of complex below-ground concentrations of the many 'statutory services' (gas, electricity, water, sewerage, telecoms etc), the planting of street trees can be very problematic, particularly in the footways.

Even when a suitable site is found, root systems can be badly damaged by the need to open up and make repairs to the service lines later, often in an emergency.

Trees in streets are also subject to poor ground and ground water conditions, are set into paving which prevents enough oxygen getting to the roots, and are subject to increased drying windspeeds generated by local buildings.

For street tree planting to be successful:

- Planting should be into 'mother earth' rather than on 'decks' or roofs, and planted only in the dormant season:
- Be sited as far as possible from underground services and mains, which therefore need to be precisely electronically surveyed prior to finalising the individual tree position:
- Be of at least 'Advanced Heavy Standard' (with trunks of 16-18 cm girth and 4m+ high) to both resist vandalism, and create a reasonable canopy from the start: semi mature trees (in streets) are expensive, and have a poor performance in growing away:
- Be deciduous, as coniferous trees have a poor survival record in streets unless transplanted as young (ie too small) specimens:
- Be of an appropriate species for the particular site: its size being suitable for the space: not creating a problem for the neighbouring buildings' outlook or daylighting: and noting the annual leaf or fruit drop onto paving.




# STREET TREE PLANTING

## Greening and Pocket Park Proposals

## OFFICES

Offices and the employment they provide, are an important part of the town centre. The current stock of office buildings in the town range from the local 'rooms over the shop' through to the most modern. But we know that the way in which people use offices is changing, and whether we need more floorspace, and what kind it should be, is being questioned.

Two independent and influential reports recently are instructive. The first is the ***London Office Policy Review(LOPR) by Ramidus/CAG for the GLA*** *in 6/2017*. Its views are summarised below.

| | *refs* |
|---|---|
| • The London Plan implications of Brexit for offices in the short term, are much as now | 2.1.70 |
| • Medium term – much less certain, but likely to be characterised by **prolonged uncertainty** | 2.1.70 |
| • Long term – likely to be a gradual shift in dominance of London in Europe's financial services: **Implications for the whole office market are very significant** | 2.1.71 |
| • 'Agile working' will increase: eg laptops, smart phones, tablets etc lead to new ways of working: part time working, shared hot desks, with the public realm being part of the workplace eg atriums, public squares, coffee shops. Offices are becoming less a place to work on tasks, more a place to interact with colleagues | 3.1.19 (25) |
| • With 16 sqm of office space per worker in the 1990's dropping to 11sqm currently, there **could be growth in worker numbers, without adding floorspace** | 3.1.19 |
| • London's total office stock is c.26 million sqm, with c.2million office workers | 3.1.55 |
| • If overall office floorspace per worker reduces to 12sqm, then the overall demand for office space in London drops to 24 million sqm | 3.1.55 |
| • London's office workforce is forecast to grow by 600,000 by 2014, so 7 million sqm of additional office space could be needed by 2040 | Section 9 |
| • **London's office market has never been more uncertain than at present** | 3.1.58 |
| • **Speculative offices on accessible sites in outer London are classed as being 'No Change'** | App 6 |
| • London's office vacancy rate generally is mostly below 3% *(but Croydon 14%: Richmond 9%)* | App 5 |
| • LB Merton's office floorspace has dropped 15% in past 20 years from 260,000 to 220,000 sqm | App 2 |
| • LB Merton lost 6% of its office floorspace to residential via PD between 2013 & 2016 | fig 7.10 |
| • LB Merton has 22,000 (2018) office employees in 220,000 sqm floorspace | fig 7.11 |
| • Total number of office workers in Merton projected to grow to 30,000 by 2040 | fig 9.3 |
| • This floorspace in the whole of Merton is projected to increase by 24,000 sqm by 2040 | fig 9.14 |
| • **Wimbledon's GLA viability assessment is "protect" but not "promote"** *(Croydon is 'promote')* | 9.1.12 |

The second is about **Offices in Wimbledon Town Centre specifically**:

***(Knight Frank Office on Market Outlook** 2018)*

- "(There is) **uncertainty in the short and medium term**, both over the length and magnitude of disruption from the construction industry" (eg CR2).
- "The Council is encouraging developers to (produce) larger and taller buildings. The ambition is laudable but **somewhat problematic"**
- **"The profile and scale of demand in the market place does not support the scale of development envisaged".**
- **"The Local Authority should be setting their sights lower (literally)".**

## OFFICES (continued)

It is clear from these independent assessments that the pursuit of large scale office developments in Wimbledon is highly questionable. It may be that there is a wish to generate Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payments: or to increase the number of workers generating trade in the town at lunchtime. Or to finance the upgrading of existing offices (and increase their rents?) by adding more storeys.

In any event the projected end result of going for massive office growth in Wimbledon Town Centre is **not supported by independent studies:** it also creates a town which is unbalanced in its employment profile. That it also changes the nature and character of the place in a way which the public 'wishlists' clearly opposed is doubly unfortunate.

A rather different approach is needed.

- **We should follow specialised and independent advice.**
  The amount of **office floorspace growth should be very limited**, and be largely concentrated on the Station and railway land. This would help to generate some funding for the CR2 project, and encourage use of the public transport hub by incoming workers.

- The strategic aim should be to plan for **only modest and 'natural' growth**, not artificially stimulated.

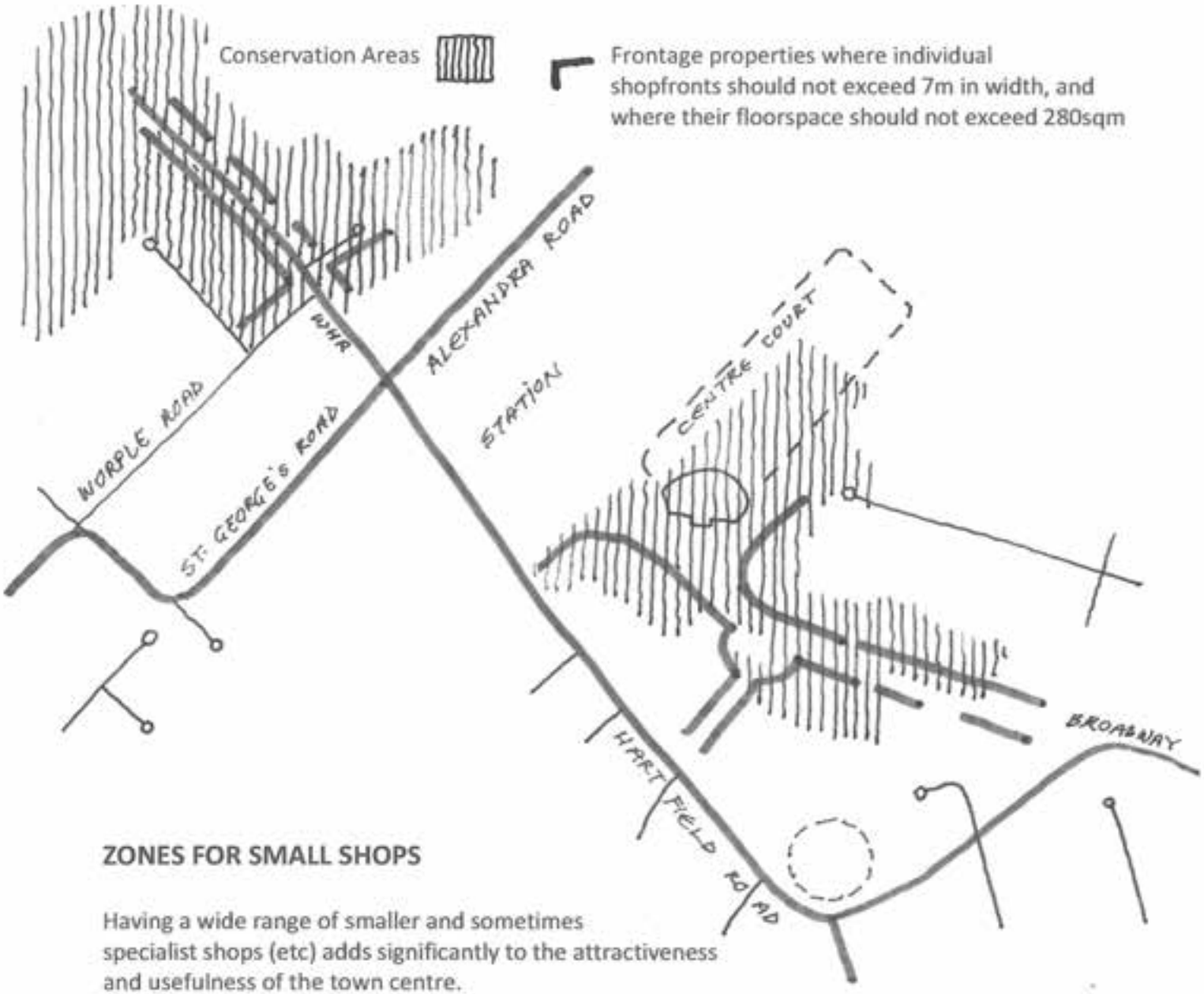
- The **height of new development** should not exceed 22m (being 5 floors of office above a ground floor -- the CIPD building in the eastern Broadway is 21.5m high at its eaves level).
  Higher than this runs counter to the clear wishes of local people, and creates a town character that is not 'Wimbledon': noting that this height limit (p37) needs to be much lower in some parts of the town.
  Attempting to finance the CR2 works by high slabs ruining the character of the town is not an option.

- There needs to be **a range of office 'standards'**: not just the modern, highly serviced floorspace at top rents affordable only by the bigger players, but also mid-range offices with lower standards and lower rents to match.
  Smaller offices are also needed, perhaps above shops in older buildings and with less sophisticated access and facilities, all of which means that their rents are lower.
  Rather than pandering to the developer-led grandiose tower, we need a more tailored approach to making the town a more diverse and economically resilient place. It has been said before that when developers give advice to Councils, it is likely to be in their own interests, not the Council's.
  A range of standards and rental options for incoming business is more sustainable and desirable.

- As home working and 'agile working' increase, we need to encourage some office space that caters for **short term occupancy**, serviced spaces, meetings hire and so on.
  As the **Ramidus report** quoted above reminds us, offices are becoming less a 'place to undertake tasks' and more a place to interact with colleagues. Places to have meetings generate a need for covered spaces and coffee shops etc, either inside an office complex, or indeed in the town itself.

- To control change of use from office to housing (or any other such changes that may be suggested by a future Government) **Article 4 Directions** should be applied to all properties in the two conservation areas, and in the Tabor Grove enclave.

- To make the town attractive to potential office users, it needs to have that 'something extra'.
  It could be character, with safe pedestrian spaces and planting, to enjoy time away from the desk.
  It could be the bonus of a world class Concert Hall building putting on lunch-time happenings.
  This shows how important it is to have a holistic and overall view of the future town, as each element in the future plan links up with and complements the others.




## ZONES FOR SMALL SHOPS

Having a wide range of smaller and sometimes specialist shops (etc) adds significantly to the attractiveness and usefulness of the town centre.
Pedestrians have more to interest them, and are more likely to stay and populate the town centre.

Amalgamation of smaller premises decreases both choice and visual interest. Natural market forces tend to favour big units and wider frontages, particularly in newer developments.
The Town Centre Health check analysis by GLA (2018) says that ***"Local plans should (have) policies to promote a diverse range of uses in town centres, and support their vitality and vibrancy".***
It also recommends that there should be ***"a broader mix of store sizes and formats"***.

The two Conservation Areas are largely based around older terraces, which by their nature were suited to and designed for narrower individual frontages. Restricting the maximum allowable frontage width per shop in these areas would both ensure that there was a range of accommodation for the smaller business, and also create zones of greater interest for the pedestrian.

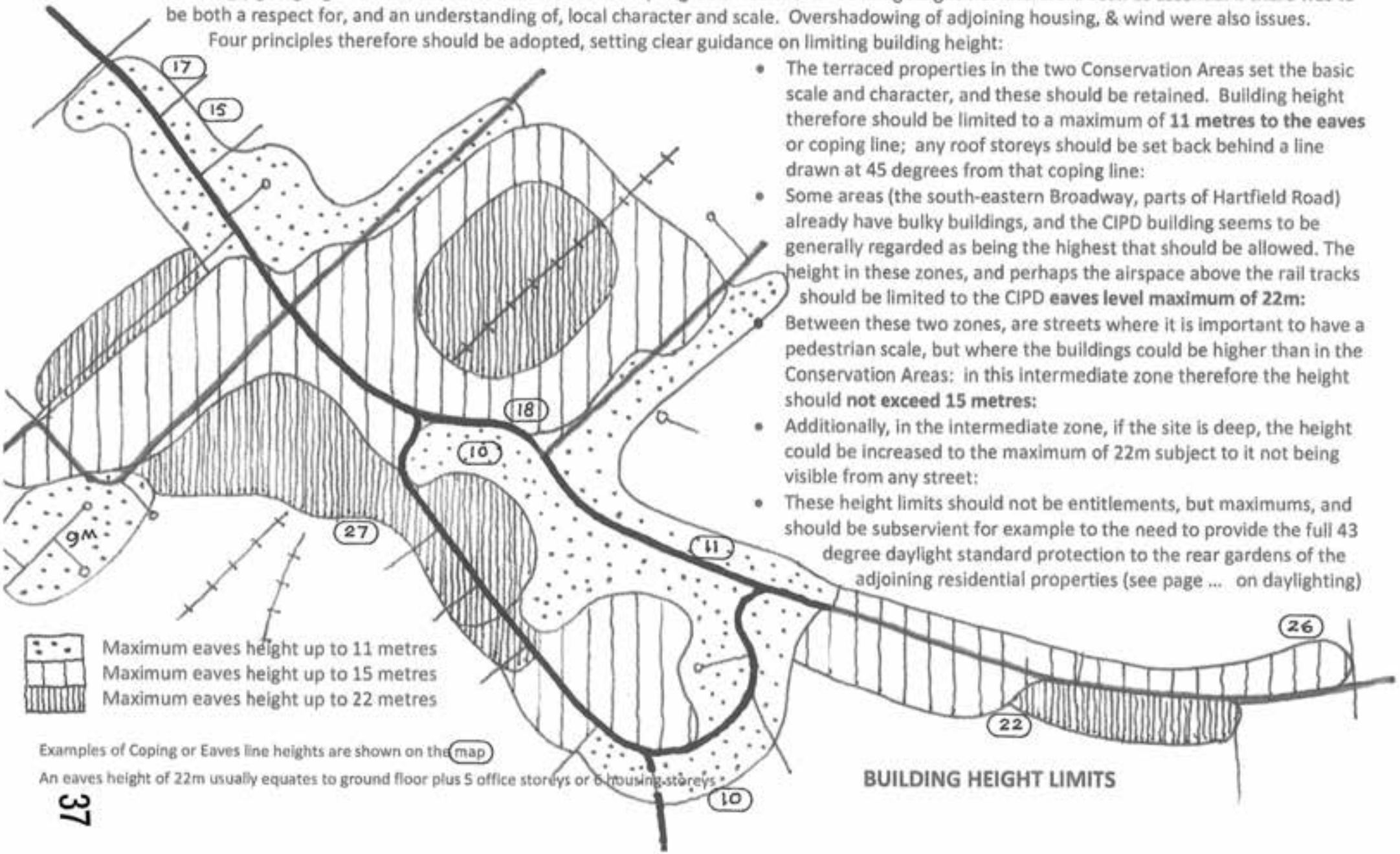
Restricting the floor area of some shop units is already adopted as the Council's planning Policy for Wimbledon Village (DMR1A3). Introducing the same approach, centred on the two Conservation areas in the town centre, and including a limit on frontage width is what we propose.
The sketch plan above shows the proposed areas for this Policy designation.

Some premises would have the opportunity to extend at the rear, and this could proceed as long as their narrow street frontage was maintained, and the floor area did not exceed 280sqm.
Such smaller shop units could of course be present elsewhere in the town.

One of the most firmly and consistently held views in the public workshops was the excessive height of new buildings, and how they were seemingly going higher with no reason other than developer greed. Control of building height was therefore seen as essential if there was to be both a respect for, and an understanding of, local character and scale. Overshadowing of adjoining housing, & wind were also issues.

Four principles therefore should be adopted, setting clear guidance on limiting building height:

- The terraced properties in the two Conservation Areas set the basic scale and character, and these should be retained. Building height therefore should be limited to a maximum of **11 metres to the eaves** or coping line; any roof storeys should be set back behind a line drawn at 45 degrees from that coping line:
- Some areas (the south-eastern Broadway, parts of Hartfield Road) already have bulky buildings, and the CIPD building seems to be generally regarded as being the highest that should be allowed. The height in these zones, and perhaps the airspace above the rail tracks should be limited to the CIPD **eaves level maximum of 22m:**
- Between these two zones, are streets where it is important to have a pedestrian scale, but where the buildings could be higher than in the Conservation Areas: in this intermediate zone therefore the height should **not exceed 15 metres:**
- Additionally, in the intermediate zone, if the site is deep, the height could be increased to the maximum of 22m subject to it not being visible from any street:
- These height limits should not be entitlements, but maximums, and should be subservient for example to the need to provide the full 43 degree daylight standard protection to the rear gardens of the adjoining residential properties (see page ... on daylighting)




Maximum eaves height up to 11 metres
Maximum eaves height up to 15 metres
Maximum eaves height up to 22 metres

Examples of Coping or Eaves line heights are shown on the map

An eaves height of 22m usually equates to ground floor plus 5 office storeys or 6 housing storeys

**BUILDING HEIGHT LIMITS**

## DAYLIGHT, PRIVACY AND SUNLIGHT

**DAYLIGHT:** An entitlement for a plot of land to receive a sensible level of daylight and sunlight has been a cornerstone of the planning system since at least the 1950's. The London Plan Review 1960 referred to the 'Daylight Code' of 1958. The DOE published its definitive Daylighting & Sunlighting guide in 1971. 'Ancient Lights' of course pre-dates this, being Common Law.

Daylight standards try to ensure that a new development does not unreasonably take light from the nearby sites.
This is usually classed as a planning 'right **TO** light': rights **OF** light laws are a matter between site owners, and not the concern of the planning system. Unfortunately, the terms are often confused.

The Building Research Establishment (BRE) documents on Daylight/Sunlight of 1991 (revised 2011) provide the current technical references, which are based on either 'rule of thumb' angles, or a more sophisticated system based on protractors. The technical approach is much it was in the 1950's.

Both ensure that the required amount of light arrives at the site boundary of the nearby properties, (or the centre line of roads), not just the building's windows, as is commonly (erroneously) supposed.

Current Council Plan Policy (admirably and correctly) states that new development must ***"ensure (the) provision of appropriate levels of sunlight and daylight ....to both proposed and adjoining buildings and gardens"*** (DMD2a5). The reference to 'gardens' is highly important, emphasising that the neighbouring rear garden (or other land) is entitled to adequate daylight.

Current plan Policy also states that new development must ***"conserve and enhance the natural environment, particularly in relation to ..... gardens"*** (DMD2a8).

The suggested 'rule of thumb' angles that would provide adequate daylighting are:

- 43 degrees from the neighbouring (rear & side) site boundaries (see BRE 1991 figs11/12/13)
- 43 degrees from the centre line of the road: (see note⊕below)
- 25 degrees from a neighbouring window (see figs 3/6/12/13)

All these struck angle measurements should be taken from 2m above ground level.

⊕ This matches the building heights along the western Broadway: the height of the buildings along the eastern Broadway do not comply. Either a steeper angle should be applied (say 56/60 degrees), or future buildings should be set back away from the road.

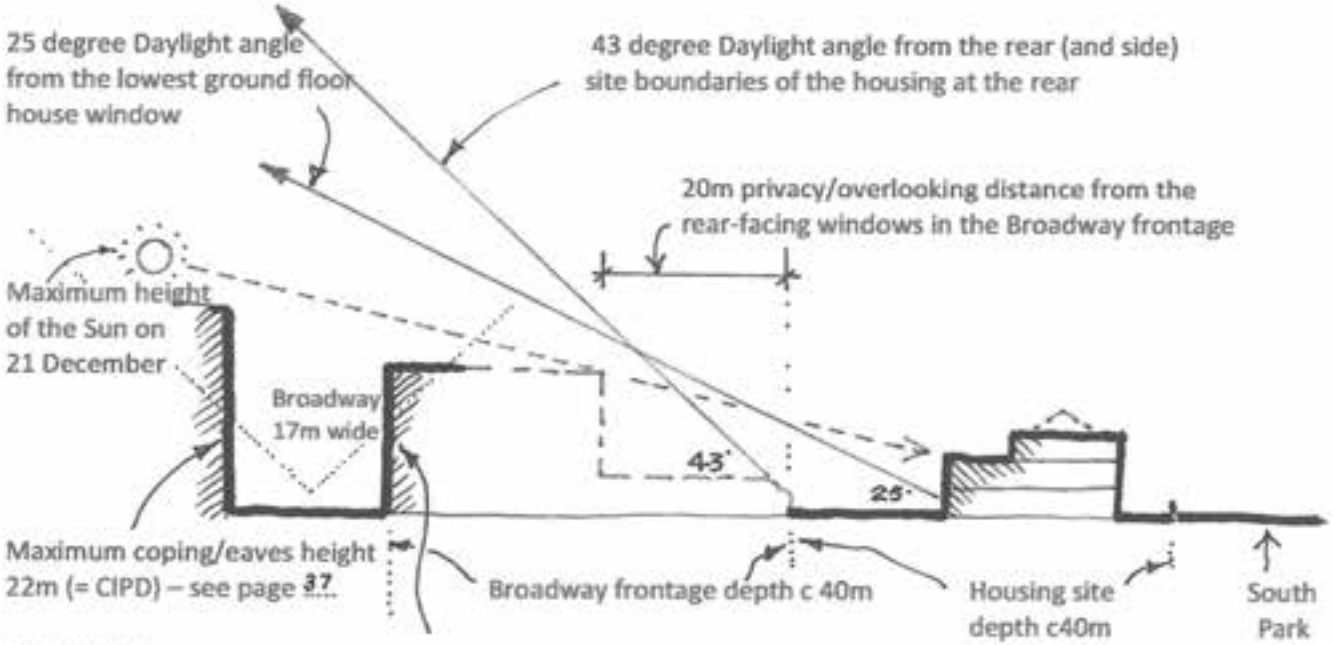
**PRIVACY**: Additionally, unreasonable overlooking of adjoining land should be prevented, and Council policy again ensures this by ***"protecting new and existing development from visual intrusion"*** (DMD2a6).
This is normally ensured by specifying a distance that provides an adequate measure of privacy between a proposed window and either a neighbour's window or a site boundary.
That distance is normally 20m in the Borough (less in dense urban Boroughs, more in outer London).

**SUNLIGHT**: With the increasing use of Solar Panels, and self generation of energy, there is a strong case for ensuring that neighbouring roofs (where such panels are usually located) are not unreasonably overshadowed by taller buildings. Solar panels (whether PV or hot water) work when direct sunlight (as opposed to just daylight) is able to reach them, which is why they are installed on roofslopes that are aligned between SE and SW.
The greatest need for heating and electricity is during the winter months. The height of the sun above the horizon at noon at Christmas is only c.14 degrees: (at equinoxes c.39, mid-summer c.63).

Such a shallow angle means that the long shadow of a taller building impacts on nearby properties.

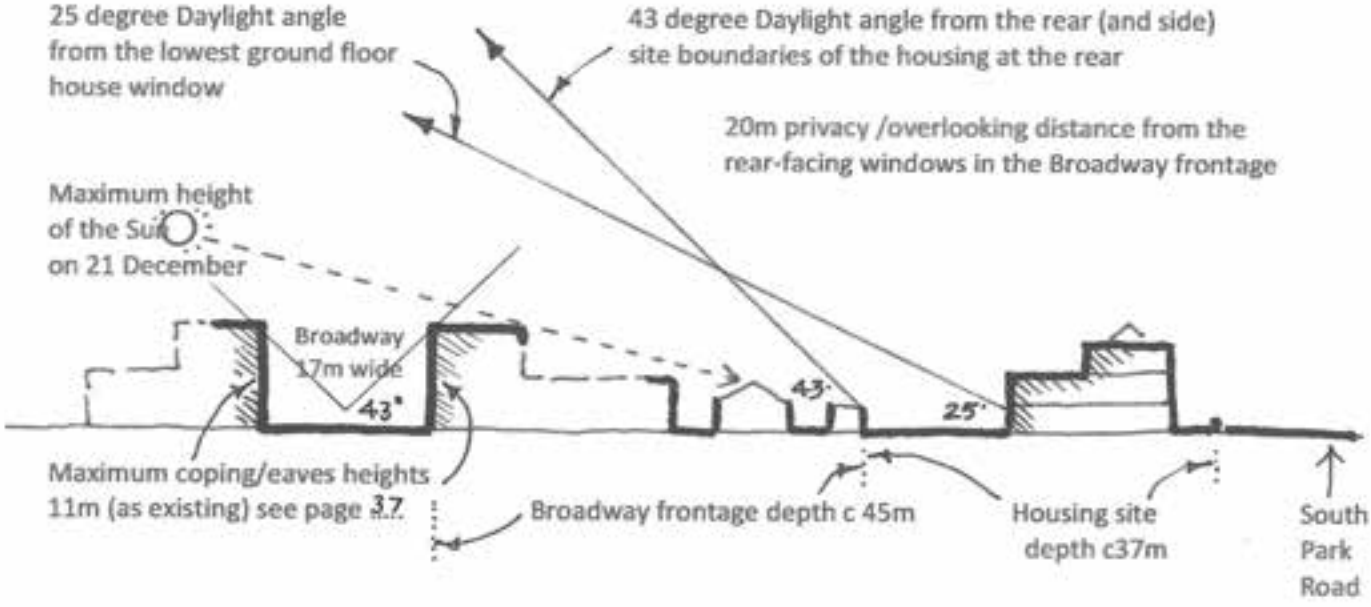
The diagrams opposite indicate how the relationship between the high commercial buildings in the town centre impact significantly on the residential areas that are immediately adjoining.
And how for example the height of the commercial buildings to the north of the Broadway need to be low enough to allow at least partial sunlight to reach the housing land beyond.

**TYPICAL CROSS SECTIONS** through The Broadway, which runs east to west
NORTH-SOUTH
LOOKING WEST
Showing Daylighting and Privacy constraints
as they affect the frontage to the Broadway
and the relationship to the housing behind




**EASTERN BROADWAY**

Maximum coping/eaves height on north side = 15 m (see page 37)




**WESTERN BROADWAY**

CONSERVATION AREA

Noting that, with the low angle of winter sun, no sunlight is able to penetrate to any part of the street: gaps in the southern frontage, and road intersections, are therefore the only places where the sunlight can 'arrive' at the pedestrian level in winter: Current gaps are therefore valuable and should not be infilled

## CONSERVATION, HERITAGE AND STREET DESIGN

There are two **Conservation Areas** (CA's) in the town centre, The Broadway and Wimbledon Hill Road, (the latter extending well beyond the town centre into residential areas).
**Listed** buildings include the Old Town Hall (1931), the Theatre (1910), the Fire Station in Queen's Road (1907), Holy Trinity Church, 11 The Broadway, and the 'sea-plane hanger' off Dundonald Road.
**Locally Listed** buildings include 28, 31/33 (The Alexandra Pub c1860), 35 (The Library: c1885-90, additions being up to c1923), 37 – 47 (Bank Buildings 1885), all in Wimbledon Hill Road (WHR):
The Old Post Office in Compton Road, and 1-8 The Pavement in Worple Road (1907).
Other buildings making a **positive contribution** to the character and appearance of the WHR CA include the long terrace 30-56 (c1881), 58/58a/58b (c1885) and St Mark's Church (1968-80),
1-4 St Mark's Place (1860). Market stall use enlivens St Mark's Place, with its magnificent tree.

Buildings making a **positive contribution** to The Broadway CA include the Prince of Wales Pub, the terrace 1 – 25 The Broadway, the Police Station and Baptist church frontage (1897) in Queen's Road. The curved sweeps of both the terrace of 2-34 The Broadway, and the more contemporary Piazza are both distinctive and a valuable part of local character. Other buildings in the town centre, but outside the CA's, are also noteworthy. The area around Tabor Grove is a potential new Conservation Area.

Both Conservation Areas are seen as essential elements in the town scene, and help to give it its unique nature and special character. Our proposals for both are based on: keeping the present coping/eaves heights, with any roof extensions being angled well back: keeping the narrow frontage shop units, and progressively repairing and replacing the missing elements of the original building design, aided by a small grants scheme: and public realm works.

The Broadway CA is of course an integral part of the pedestrianisation scheme, and as such can develop a more intimate character, where the whole of the floorscape can be designed to be the 'centre of the town'. Significant Tree and other planting space is available, and shop/cafe owners should be encouraged to utilise the public zone, increasing their attractiveness and trading potential.

The Wimbledon Hill Road CA on the other hand is quite different, with traffic still dominating.
Here, in the same way, one would keep the present coping and eaves heights, and the narrow frontage shop units in the terraces.
Also the progressive repairing and replacing the missing elements of the original building.

Central to the progressive enhancement of these two Conservation Areas is a pro-active approach underpinned by a grants scheme. Small grants (financed by CIL funds?), and targeted to returning the publicly-seen facades to their original state, stimulate the building owner to improve. For every pound of public money given in grant, similar schemes have generated up to 14 pounds from private funding. Attempting to secure such improvements via the development control system achieves very little.

But in addition, street design needs to change. Retaining/replacing the granite kerbing and setts, using cast iron bollards of a design which would be contemporary with the buildings: using narrow yellow lines: placing the street lights and CCTV onto the building facades to lessen clutter on the footways. A basic one-page shopfront design guide should be followed (see Appendix), replacing the missing corbels and pilasters, blind boxes and cornices (with grant aid), and unifying fascia depths, but taking a much freer approach to the designing of the inserted shopfront.

Street lighting, not only in the CA's but throughout the town centre, is likely to be one of the 'traditional' elements that change. The development of electronics and the 'internet of things' will encourage lighting in towns to adapt to local needs, both to save energy and to provide operational information for the running of the town. Fake 'heritage' luminaires seldom convince.
Wireless 'mesh' technology, based on internet protocols, may be used to monitor not just traffic but air quality, parking availability, noise levels, crime scenes, car charging and so on. Proximity lighting reflecting the need for additional light, colour changes for enhancing local features, energy storage and re-use, all appear to be emerging (eg City of London, Barking & Dagenham).

## URBAN DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE

**Proposal: The planning system has to design and plan the town: no-one else can do it.**
**Architects have to design and plan their building: no-one else can do it.**
**If the architect tries to design the town, or the planning system tries to design the building, problems.**

The NPPF says that *"plans should ... set out a clear design vision, so that applicants (can see) what is likely to be acceptable"*(25). And refers to *"maintain(ing) a strong sense of place, using the (layout) of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive spaces"*(27).
And be *"sympathetic to local character and history... whilst not discouraging innovation"*(27).
Also that schemes should *"fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings"* (31).
Unfortunately it then goes on to say (27) that a scheme should be *"attractive as a result of good architecture"*. And that schemes *"of poor design"* should be refused (30). Well meaning but meaningless?

Architecture, Style and Design are all quite different terms, and from the NPPF downwards, the present policy on design is confused. Architecture can be defined simply as the art and science of building: (or "frozen music"). Style is wit, here today, gone tomorrow, a fashion: it could be neo Georgian or post-modern. Design is different again: it is a hard discipline, difficult to teach, difficult to learn.
It solves problems, creates solutions, and hopefully something special emerges that has that indefinable special character. Most people misunderstand these terms, and use them in different ways.

For many years the planning system has been asked to deliver good architecture.
Bearing in mind that the great majority of schemes submitted for approval are not designed by architects, if we look at what we have been building over the years, the claim in planning policy documents that only good architecture will be approved is seen as, at best, delusional.

Essentially there are two alternative ways of working for the architect and the planning authority.
One, where the planning system vets the emerging scheme and asks for changes to the architectural concept, 'so that the scheme can be approved'. This invariably leads to tensions between the architectural and planning professions (which is absurd and counter-productive), and to the architects in effect saying that they had to do 'this', in order to get planning permission.

This compromises the architects' responsibility for the quality and integrity of their scheme, and cannot possibly deliver a work of "architecture", as they do not feel that they 'own' the end result.

The other is where the Council's planning office lays out **the urban design criteria** at the very start of the project on urban form, building line, height, relationship to other buildings, trees, access, perhaps materials and all the rest. And then leaves the architect to work within those criteria, and does not concern itself with "how the building looks", or "what style it is".

Although this is the method that consistently delivers far better results (in the view of the writer), the quite personal views of Planning Committee members (and the public) along the lines of "it looks like a power station" can be difficult to resolve.

If better 'architecture' is wanted, the approach should be that ...
***If the architect gets the (urban) design right, then the architectural interpretation should be left to the architects,*** and their clients. Good or bad perhaps.
There will be a very small number of sites where unusual circumstances apply, and there will be a strong case for considering a more specific approach (for example the replication of a half destroyed classical crescent, or the infilling of a gap in a uniform terrace). But these situations need to be treated with care.

This second method of working would involve a significant change to the current working methods, where the first time the planning office now sees a proposal is often when the scheme architects table a fully worked out set of drawings, and is then asked to comment, off the cuff. Often without knowing the site.
Instead, **the planning office should be asked/required to set out the basic urban design brief for the site, before the architect starts to evolve the scheme concepts.**
The mantra should be: **The planning system can enable good architecture, but it cannot guarantee it: The Planning system should just concentrate on the urban design – if it's right, the scheme usually is.**

## PLANNING BRIEFS FOR LOCAL SITES

All subject to the urban design criteria in Vision 2040

### PIAZZA

A Retain existing Piazza shape and character and height: being now a valued 'character' space in the Town and Conservation Area: The Broadway to be a fully pedestrianised area

B Retain a public highway route (now Victoria Crescent) through between Piazza and Hartfield Road

C Retain existing building height along The Broadway, being a Conservation Area

D Active (maximum 7m wide) frontages along Piazza, Victoria Crescent, Broadway, whole eastern side: consider colonnades along Broadway frontage, and facing the Concert Hall, for pedestrian interest and weather protection: consider lining' the large blank facades of bigger units with small specialist units for interest (ie not to repeat the existing dreary frontages of a long supermarket)

E Selective setting back/road widening if required to operate the probable 3 lane Hartfield Road

F New covered and high glazed internal mall/atrium between new buildings, used as a market, and for events, and leading the pedestrian directly to the iconic Concert Hall and the new plaza G

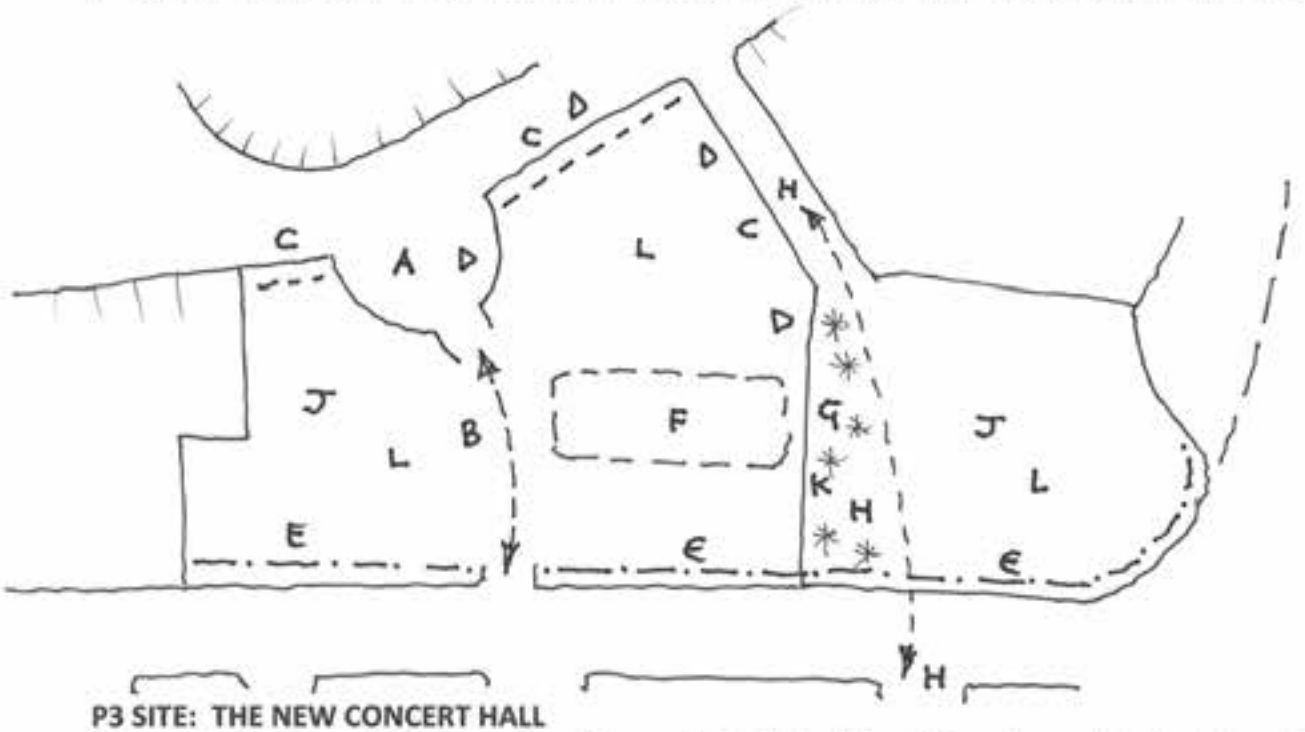
G Pedestrian Plaza facing the new Concert Hall, a major sitting out and tourist area

H Note strategic cycle (and public pedestrian) route passes through from Broadway to Herbert Road

J Provide public car parking for c200 spaces approached from Hartfield Road: headroom to be 3.5m minimum and designed to allow future conversion to other uses as needs change.

K The elevation facing towards the future iconic Concert Hall needs to be suitably imaginative

L Whole development to be energy neutral and a major component of the town's CHP scheme




### P3 SITE: THE NEW CONCERT HALL

Owned by the Council, this is a site with very high (likely to be National as well as London-wide) potential as a major Concert Hall, and being an iconic architectural project, unique in the UK.
It could add immeasurably to the range of 'offer' of the town centre, and to the current 'brand' which is fixated to a large extent on the tennis name.
From the notes above, the main public approach to the Concert Hall is to be from the northwest, ie via the Piazza and the potential internal mall/atrium and the attendant pedestrian Plaza. Such a view towards the Concert Hall could be very dramatic, with the space around the Concert Hall entrance interacting with the space G. Another potential 'pocket park'.
Car parking for patrons is needed, in order to protect local residential streets: as with note J above, it should have high headroom (at least 3.5m) and be designed specifically to be converted to other uses in the years ahead, as needs change. Is the Museum of Music History a potential occupant?
Local community-related arts and educational activities need to be integral to the whole concept.

L Development to be energy neutral and a major component in the town's CHP scheme

**P4 SITE BESIDE THE THEATRE**

Owned by the Council, this is a site beside the Statutorily Listed and Council-owned Theatre. It currently provides car parking for this part of the town centre, and supports the users of both the Theatre and the Polka. Any disposal should be on the basis of a lease, with the Council retaining the freehold. This ensures that the Council is able to both gain financially from rents enhancements in the future (including from eventual redevelopment), it also gives the Council leverage in how the building is being used. Disposal of the lease via a formalised developer/architect competition, working to a common defined urban design framework, is the suggested method.

A The ground floor frontage of the adjoining Theatre is poorly designed and of little interest: the new building's elevation needs to compensate for this, perhaps a colonnade, smaller units

B The junction with the Theatre corner needs care: a negative set-back detail?

C Height of the building should not be above the current Theatre coping: the current roof plant is ugly in the long views from the east, and shielding this should be an aim

D Provide car parking for c100 spaces, approached from side roads; headroom to be 3.5m minimum, and designed to allow future conversion to other uses as future needs change

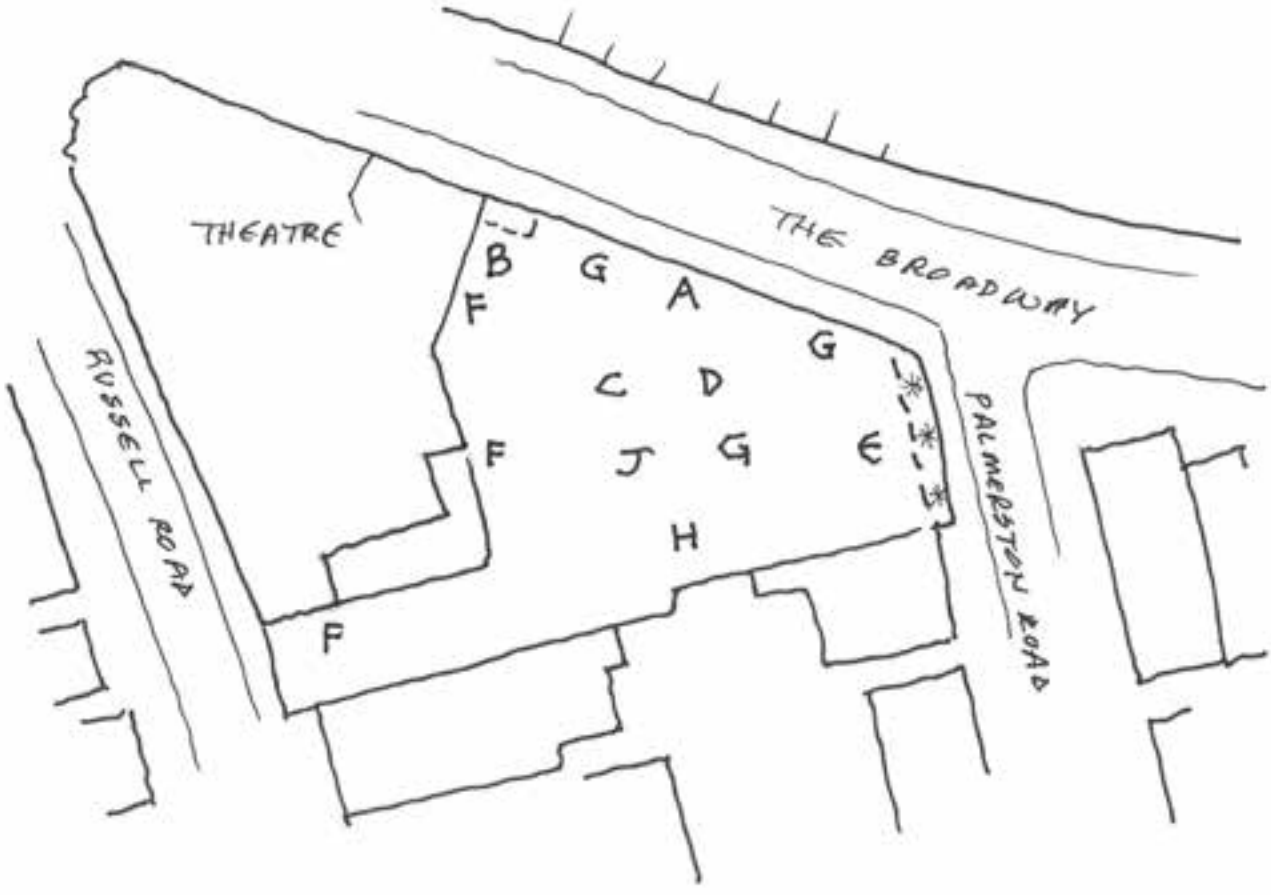
E Set back elevation beside Palmerston Road to match building line: tree planting in frontage

F Establish whether additional facilities are required for the proper future operation of the Theatre, either servicing or access or additional floorspace, potentially additional access at upper floors

G Ground floor to be for cultural and café uses: any residential uses to be suitably insulated from performance noise Set back building to safeguard privacy to adjoining properties

H Set back building to respect privacy of adjoining sites

J Development to be energy neutral, and a major component of the town's CHP scheme

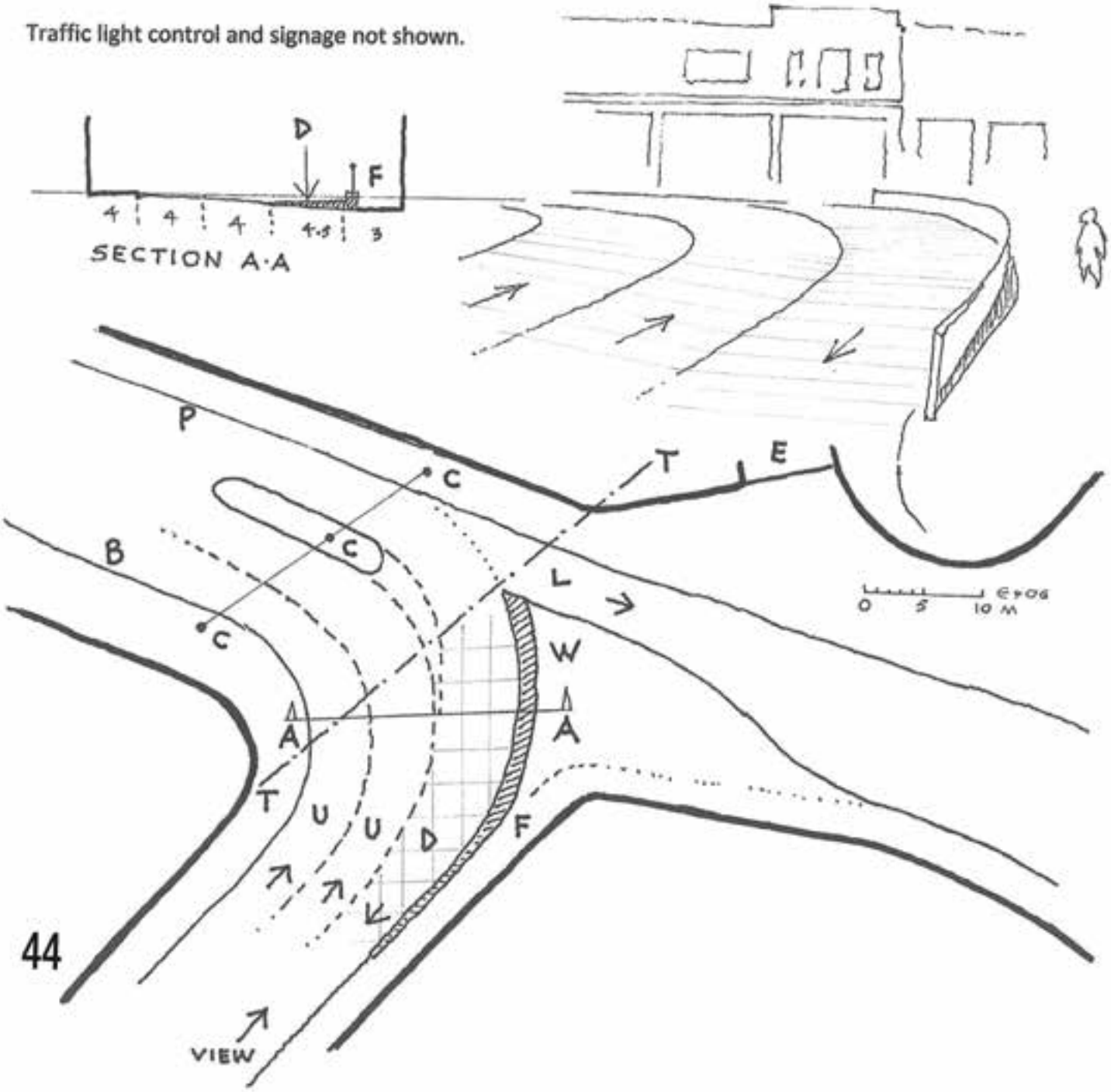


**HARTFIELD ROAD JUNCTION LEVELS**

The existing road camber slopes down at about 8 degrees towards the Prince of Wales Pub.
This is not suitable for traffic travelling from the Station and down the slope into Hartfield Road, as is envisaged in the short term whilst awaiting the rebuilding of the main bridge over the tracks by CR2.
These sketches show a possible revision, where the two existing 'uphill' lanes (**U**) are retained at their present levels; but the third (**D**) 'downhill' lane is raised and made level. (or sloped towards the other lanes). See diagrammatic section **AA**, and illustration below.
This results in a low retaining wall (**W**) and railing along the present kerbline to protect pedestrians.
Probable area of carriageway needing to be raised in level shown hatched.
This concept is shown diagrammatically below, but needs to be reworked by the Council's highway team.

**F** Existing c3.1m wide footway probably narrowed to accommodate the new barrier
**TT** Assumed position of rail tunnels below
**P** Existing car parking bays removed, to allow space for repositioned pedestrian crossing (**C-C**)
**L** Lane for cars going to Centre Court car park, and for buses, and emergency vehicles etc
**B** Existing bus stops retained
**E** Station entrance

Traffic light control and signage not shown.



## ENERGY

The NPPF says that plan policies should *"increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat"* (151). And that developments should *"enable charging of ...vehicles"* (110): and *"support renewable and low carbon energy infrastructure"* (148): and *"should reduce greenhouse gas emissions"* (150): and *"provide a positive strategy for energy from (renewable) sources"*, and *"draw (their) energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems"* (151): and *"comply with policies on decentralised energy supply"*, and *"take account of building orientation ... to minimise energy consumption"* (153).

Nationally, the average UK annual electricity consumption per person is around 5,000kWh.
Comparable figures for other countries are: Germany 6,000, USA 12,000, Canada 15,000kWh.
Electricity and gas use figures for the town centre alone are not available, but non-domestic annual consumption for the Borough appears to be: Electricity c130 million kWh, Gas c400 million kWh.

The London Plan (2011) set a target for 25% of heat and power to be delivered by decentralised energy networks by 2025. The current draft asks for non-housing development to meet a zero-carbon target by achieving a *"reduction of at least 35% beyond the baseline of Part L of the Building Regulations"* (9.2.5). The aim is said to be *"zero carbon by 2050"* (9.3.2).
It also encourages developments to be designed to reduce energy needs by building design, passive ventilation not air conditioning, orientation and shading, insulation, green roofs and walls (S14).

Local planning policy promotes a decentralised energy network in the town centre (DMEP1).
This is the legacy of the previous well-regarded "Merton Rule".

Unfortunately, anecdotal but publicly expressed evidence from energy specialists is that whilst many new buildings appear to comply with the energy performance criteria in the Building Regulations, actual performance in use is 60% or more above those (paper calculations) figures. This should be considered to be an intolerable situation.

So it would appear that despite best endeavours, the use of energy and its associated generation emissions is utterly failing to meet policy targets. We still see applications for office development on sites facing due south, and with an all-glass unshaded façade. Is it the case that some developers seem to still produce a 25 year old building design, apply some token solar panels, build it cheaply, sell, and then leave the future occupier to deal with the high costs of heating and cooling?

The planning system has a duty to do what it can to make a positive contribution to energy reduction. The aim should be **reducing the importation of electrical and gas energy into the town centre**, year on year. Measures should include:

- Introduce and grant aid a town-wide Combined Heat and Power (CHP) system, incorporating a large scale electrical energy storage facility, which is close to being practical and operational
- Adopt building height limits to allow for sun to reach solar panels on roofs in the surrounding area
- Design all new commercial buildings as energy neutral, with natural ventilation and cooling, inbuilt energy generation and storage
- Design new housing similarly, with no single aspect flats, no internal unlit corridors: utilise battery storage held within vehicles
- Design facades to provide natural inbuilt shade, but also achieve solar gains in winter
- Insulation and solar panels as an integral part of the total design rather than add-ons
- Promote air source and ground source heat pumps (using bore holes)
- Install street lights that vary in intensity according to need
- Grant aid the retrofitting of existing premises to achieve higher zero carbon compliance.
- Ask for annual gas and electrical energy importation figures for the town centre to be collected and published by the Government's Dept of Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy.

## IMPLEMENTATION AND FINANCE

Any long term programme of work, as is being suggested in this planning framework, needs the Council to take a clear lead in implementation and co-ordinating action. Up to now the Council has simply reacted to ad hoc planning applications submitted by the development industry. This approach cannot work if the town is to be creatively transformed and managed over the next 15 to 20 years.

Changing the culture to being pro-active, and to deliver the public's 'wishlists' will involve a challenge.
To do this, the Council should consider setting up a Town Centre Sub-Committee with a lead Councillor as 'Champion' to co-ordinate action, and make things happen, all in conjunction with local people.

Fortunately there are some significant positives to work with. Skilled Council staff will be an essential in giving support and finding ways forward. The public groups have a wealth of local knowledge, if only they and the Council can find a way of working together positively.
For a long term project as this is, collaborative non-partisan working, based on shared ideals, would deliver a more positive output.

There are also important sources of finance, or benefit in kind, for example:
**The Crossrail 2 project** by its nature generates a great deal of change. In dealing with the scheme design, and in the build-up to the Parliamentary stage, it will be essential for the Council and the public to press the CR2 team to integrate its project fully into the life and fabric of the town. This needs to be actively promoted at both the design and consultation stage, and at the stage of the Parliamentary Bill.

The CR2 team needs to incorporate and deliver and be wholly responsible for providing some specific items:

- Acquiring the minimum amount of existing property, and fully compensating the owners/occupiers:
- Rehousing the displaced residents and businesses resulting from property acquisition, allowing them to maintain their local presence and connections:
- The new bridge linking Alexandra and Queen's Roads (which is said to be an integral part of the project):
- Construction of a new and wider road bridge to replace the present bridge beside the Station, needed for the new track layout: replacing the many 'underground' services that currently pass across the tracks:
- Maintaining the present bridge in position until the new bridge is able to take over, to minimise disruption to the whole town centre: upgrading the railway path cycle route, eliminating steps:
- Incorporating bus bays on both sides of this new bridge, and linking bus passengers into the station:
- The upgrading of the current pedestrian bridge across to Dundonald Road, eliminating its steps, and making it an important pedestrian and cycle (not road traffic) route, leading to the new development:
- Providing bus and taxi facilities on Alexandra Road, and the cycle parking & routes around the Station:
- Rebuilding the Station, plus the development of commercial, retail, leisure, residential (including social housing) over the tracks, all within the design parameters on height, green-ness, energy generation as we have set out above: Renovating the Dundonald Listed 'seaplane hanger' for public recreational use:
- As yet undefined protective measures (against road traffic, noise/fumes/dust, 24 hour working) to protect local people and business from the effects of the ten year construction cycle on the wider area:
- A 100% commitment to tunnelling being driven from the Thames end, to significantly lessen the extent of local demolition and disturbance to the life of the town, and the major disturbance of the suburban rail services, which would otherwise be caused by the slow-moving engineering support trains:
- Design new development sensitively to eventually 'repair' the gaps and scars created by the initial demolitions required for the large scale engineering works:
- Provide the vital infrastructure and support for new development to take place above the rebuilt station, and the associated trackwork.

It will be important that these and other elements are fully incorporated into the hybrid Bill, so that these major works are able to be seamlessly woven into the fabric of the town. And importantly, these and other items need to be seen as essential and integral components of the CR2 project.
Any attempt to exclude them "to save money" should be firmly resisted. Without them in place, the CR2 project will scar the locality, and will not be properly integrated into the fabric of the town.

**The CILevy** from local site development generates income (some £2m in 2015/16 in the Wimbledon E Zone). Whilst 15% has to be spent on providing facilities that are needed by the development, 80% is then available for infrastructure benefitting the relevant part of the Borough. Public selection of projects is also built into the process, and as the largest economic driver in the Borough, Wimbledon town centre would expect to be a priority. **Section 106** payments are also collected.

**Business rates,** collected from the larger BID payers in the town centre, amount to some £24m annually, of which c£7m is retained by the Borough. Business rates are also collected from the smaller premises that do not have to contribute to the BID, (no figures available) thus adding to the resources pot.
Re-investing the greater portion of this revenue in the town would be expected over the whole period of the plan up to 2040.

**Rents from Council parking sites**: Annual income from the P3 site car park is currently some £600k, with another £150k from the P4 site. Income from a future lease on the P4 site via a developer competition would expect to yield well, noting that this is an approach where the gains to the Council are significantly more that can be obtained via so-called 'negotiation' with a single developer, which should never ever happen.
**Kerbside parking** income is significant also, noting that the Council's parking fund is in surplus.

**External funding projects**: In the same way that the Mitcham Fair Green improvements costing several million were largely funded by aid from TfL, GLA, and others, funding for some of the works in the town centre could attract similar support.

**GLA/TfL initiatives** have regularly supported Cycle & bus/taxi networks and facilities. Traffic diversion to improve pedestrian zones, sophisticated traffic signalling systems, will all need to draw on such external funding supports as they become available.

Tree planting (a relatively low cost spend) should be financed through adoption of a Borough–wide "**Tree Years**" replacement planting policy

**Developers**: external public realm works and planting associated with individual projects can benefit both the scheme and its setting in the immediate area. Covered ways, arcades, setting back buildings to create some road widening, also can provide better facilities for the public, with CHP and other contributions.

**Fees**: are received by the Council for planning applications, licences for highway use etc.

**Housing Associations** have access to funds to acquire the social housing elements of new development.

**Love Wimbledon** derives its annual income of some £400k from the town's BID payers, and uses this to promote and enhance both the businesses themselves and the public experience and enjoyment of the town. This independent-of-the-Council promotional activity is a valuable complement to the economic, environmental and physical transformation of the town.

Setting up a simple shopfront grant scheme in the two Conservation areas (similar to the scheme that the Council had in place for part of the Broadway shops some 5 years ago) is again a relatively low-cost operation, but one which has a transformative effect. For every pound of public money given out in grant, similar schemes have generated up to fourteen times that sum from the building owner.
Additionally, the positive approach improves the whole relationship between applicant and Council, as well as improving the quality of the finished work (unless the work is of a good standard, no grant is paid).
It also encourages the smaller and more skilled building firms.
Bringing in the iconic Concert Hall is another kind of asset, something capable of transforming the reputation of the town and the name of Wimbledon. Its public service functions would also bring business and visitors.

Unimaginative stagnation, leaving all change to the vagaries of the market, with an approach that just encourages ad hoc planning applications without an overall vision, does not address the major issues now facing this town centre, as with many others.

Investing prudently in its transformation, according to a long term overall plan, and then doing things in stages as resources become available, is the more business-like model that should be followed.

Both Town and Council stand to gain from investing in a healthy and successful and resilient centre.

## THE WISHLISTS: HOW DOES VISION 2040 DELIVER ?

How do the proposals in this Vision 2040 'score' in response to the Public's List of Priorities, as set out at the beginning of this document ?

| *Basic Wishlist point (see page 9)* | *What Vision 2040 proposes* |
|---|---|
| • A Plan made by Council & Public together | Not yet achieved: dependent on mutual collaboration |
| • A Plan that is Pro-active | Specific proposals are set out rather than 'policies' |
| • And that is understandable by local people | Not yet tested: await public appraisal and response |
| • And that works independently of CR2 | Proposals are included which are independent of CR2 |
| • A town that is memorable | 2 conservation areas as special zones: extensive pedestrianisation: 4 squares/pocket parks: extensive street tree planting: world class iconic concert hall as a major draw; building height limits limited to pedestrian scale: modest growth in floorspace potential, including housing: improved public safety, noise/fumes lessened |
| • Respect scale and character, lower heights | 2 Conservation areas form the heart of the town, and height controls restrict out-of-character development: an emphasis on pedestrian safety and enjoyment |
| • Pedestrianise the heart of the town | Extensive worked/staged proposals, traffic progressively diverted around the heart of the town, not through its centre: pedestrian zone up to 550 metres long, with more than 1000 metres of pedestrian ways overall |
| • Weather protection for pedestrians | Internal malls, canopies over footways, awnings, Galleria potential between Piazza and Concert Hall |
| • Create Pocket parks and green space | 4 public squares with 'mother earth' planting capability 40 plus substantial street trees, greening walls |
| • Improve air quality beside pedestrians | Removing traffic from pedestrian zones, restricting access to sensitive 'people' areas by polluting vehicles, sophisticated traffic signalling to favour slow continuous movement lessening pollution |
| • Improve good local buildings | Grant aid repairs to conservation area properties, adopt simple shopfront design policy, improve setting of good buildings by removing traffic and associated clutter (eg street lighting can be on building facades) allowing re-paving/tree planting of public spaces |
| • Rebuild station, new development above | achieved only if CR2 proceeds |
| • New development to be flexible in use | Car parking to be designed to easily change to other uses in the future as the need for parking changes |
| • Slow down traffic, limit polluting vehicles | Sophisticated traffic signalling proposed, restrict access to majority of the centre by polluting vehicles via a charging embargo, provide for out-of-hours van access, replace public service vehicles/buses by 'green' models, favoured access status for electric cars |

| | |
|---|---|
| • Create central bus/rail station | Achieved only if CR2 proceeds |
| • Rebuild/realign WHR bridge | Achieved only if CR2 proceeds |
| • Provide a second road bridge over the tracks | Achieved only if CR2 proceeds |
| • Safeguard local people from the CR2 works | Proposes CR2 tunnelling from the Thames end, to allow spoil to be transported by river, to avoid spoil etc going down busy commuter lines: to lessen local disturbance by construction traffic, and to allow the total reconstruction of the station without having to provide for the large scale tunnel mouth service sites: achieved only if CR2 proceeds |
| • Promote cultural activities and the new Concert Hall | Proposes the allocation of the P3 site to the iconic Gehry-designed hall, bringing a whole new National and London-wide dimension to the town, with its extraordinary impact potential, increased visitors and Borough-wide (and beyond) cultural contribution and spin-off: new pedestrian square beside the Theatre |
| • Retain/replace public/civic functions | Proposed but not yet achieved: encouraged in part of the CR2 Station development |
| • Protect small shops, lower rents | Specific upper limits set on (small) shop size and floorspace in the two Conservation areas: lower shop rents not yet achieved |
| • Retain low cost offices for startups | Retention of small scale older offices in the two Conservation areas, whose lower grade facilities generate lower rents; restraint on new development via height limits controlling potential building volume |
| • Limit additional office development | Modest growth only is proposed, given the limitations on heights, and limited needs as defined in the quoted independent reports: until CR2 proceeds, when additional offices and housing can take place above the station |
| • Rehouse residents and businesses affected by the CR2 proposals locally | Not achieved: dependent on CR2 acceptance as their obligation, as an integral part of their project |
| • Provide new housing in the town centre | Achievable in the volume of building proposed but not yet achieved |
| • Protect housing around the town centre | Limit maximum height of new development, to protect Daylighting, sunlighting and privacy/overlooking standards of nearby housing from aggressive new development |
| • Require new development to be energy neutral | Energy neutral standard introduced for all new development; connection to future CHP ditto: as CHP scheme not yet set up, objective not yet achieved |
| • Encourage outdoor use of shop forecourts | Pedestrianised spaces encourage this via highway licences, plus covered malls and market |
| • Set up local planning centre for Council, CR2 team, Love Wimbledon and the public to interact and 'run' the town centre's future | Not yet achieved: dependent on mutual collaboration between Council, CR2 and public groups |

## THE NPPF : HOW DOES VISION 2040 RESPOND ?

In July 2018 the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government produced the updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), setting out the Government's planning policies, and how they should be applied.
It provides a framework for preparing local plans, and has three principal objectives: (8)

- **Environmental**, protecting the natural, built and historic environment, including moving to a low carbon economy
- **Economic**, ensuring that sufficient land, buildings and infrastructure of the right type is provided: and
- **Social**, creating a well-designed and safe built environment, with enough housing.

**Local Plans** are seen as "***a platform for local people to shape their surroundings***". (15)

### How do proposals in Vision 2040 respond to the following statements in the NPPF?

| *Refs:* | ***NPPF policy*** | ***What Vision 2040 proposes*** |
|---|---|---|
| 15 | A local Plan should be a vision for the area's future, and local people should shape their surroundings | The basis of Vision 2040 is the character of the place as defined by local people, and what they wish for: additionally a planning 'shop' would provide public input to pre-app discussions |
| 22 | Plans should look ahead at least 15 years | 2040 is proposed |
| 28 | Plans should establish design principles | Protection of Conservation areas, improve safety and air quality for the major pedestrian zones: reorganise traffic, greening and tree planting, new public squares/pocket parks: height limits to new buildings |
| 28 | Conserve historic environment | Two Conservation Areas become the focus for small businesses, with special character: renovation grants, shopfront design guidance, shop frontage width limits and building height restriction: renovation of listed railway shed: improve setting of listed Old Town Hall, designate new conservation area (Tabor Grove) |
| 29 | Local Communities can produce neighbourhood plans (NP's) | Vision 2040 starts with the public wishlists as its main input, but it is not a NP, as it proposes an alternative approach to Council policy |
| 39 | Improve Pre-application discussions | Proposes that all pre-apps are made public on day one, and that the public has a right to advise and contribute directly at the start of all projects via the local planning 'shop' |
| 53 | Use Article 4 Directions to remove PD rights to protect local facilities, amenity and well-being | Proposes A4D's to limit change of use from eg office to housing to maintain a stock of basic low rent offices for start-ups: also to control antisocial uses and cumulative impact (p35): |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | linking licensing and planning of premises to control anti-social behaviour |
| 85 | Promote Town Centres' vitality and respond to changes in retail | Proposes a new pedestrianised heart for the town, encouraging people to stay: protects and creates small shops zones: maintain car parking |
| 86 | Encourage housing which ensures town centre vitality | Proposes new housing development in centre |
| 91 | Promote social interaction by active street frontages, easy personal contact | Proposes small scale active frontages, plus large scale pedestrianisation over time, encouraging people to stay in the town centre, and use it |
| 91 | Encourage walking and cycling | Proposes pedestrianisation of the heart of the town, and a strategic cycle network |
| 91 | Encourage green infrastructure | Proposes 40+ major street trees in the newly pedestrianised zones and 4 pocket parks: green walls and roofs promoted in newbuild |
| 95 | Ensure public safety in Town Centres | Removes traffic from main pedestrian areas, limit vehicle speed and noise and emissions: Aid foot and cycle crossings via sophisticated signalling control of traffic: Limit anti-social evening uses that drive public away, keep local policing presence: Encourage residential use in pedestrian and shopping zones as 'eyes on the street' |
| 102/4 | Promote public transport, walking, cycling networks | Proposes major bus station and taxi 'hubs' beside Station: segregated pedestrian routes: A strategic grid of cycle routes centred on the station, cycle paths through pedestrian areas |
| 104 | Provide for large-scale transport facilities | Accommodates strategic CR2 via rebuilding of Station, with 2 new road bridges over tracks |
| 110 | Prioritise pedestrian and cycle movement | Pedestrianised Town Hall Square & Broadway, 4 pedestrian squares, cycle parking for 300 at Station plus 200 in satellites |
| 110 | Prioritise access to public transport | New bus/taxi and rail stations linked together |
| 127 | Reflect local character and design | Protect and grant aid 2 Conservation Areas: limit building heights to protect character, and privacy/daylight/sunlight of nearby housing |
| 129 | Use workshops to engage local community | Proposes planning 'shop' in town centre to act as focus for public involvement in town's future |
| 151 | Draw energy supplies from renewables | Proposes energy neutral development, a CHP scheme across the town, retrofitting grants, limiting building heights to protect day/sunlight to neighbouring buildings and gardens |

The Broadway before and after? A new pedestrianised Town Square, with the Old Town Hall on the left. One of the four 'squares' or 'pocket parks' being proposed, each with a very different character. Existing trees around the Old Town Hall building already help to humanise and soften the space, and more trees could be planted (including 'energy trees' where local u/g services prevent planting?). Note the terrace of shops on the right with its coping/window levels stepping down to match the slope. Shops and restaurants now have the space to 'spill out' onto the street, lending character and creating additional trading floorspace. The Square provides space for temporary exhibitions, public events, local bands, entertainment, with arts/sculpture, public facilities. Street lighting could be largely mounted onto the building facades, to reduce clutter. The building straight ahead (with its incongruous windows) could ideally be renovated and restored, with grant aid, to match its neighbours.

## CONCLUSIONS AND ACTION

It seems clear, to both the public and to the Council, that we need a new approach to the planning of the town centre. We need to respond positively to the changes that face High Streets, primarily by making the centre attractive to people, so that they will not just come, they will want to stay and use the centre. This has almost nothing to do with 'development'.
It has everything to do with pleasantness, safety, useful facilities, ease of access, imagination.

The Council (rightly) started by asking the public what their 'wishlists' were: the mantra presumably being **'whose town is it anyway'**?
Responding to those wishlists, two rather different approaches are emerging.

One, from the Council, suggests that the future lies in large scale development of offices, with the main structure of the town left as it is, but with better "public realm". This approach seems to have generated opposition, not because the Council's general aspirations are rejected – far from it - but because their proposals do not deliver when set against those aspirations. And the public's wishlists are largely ignored. There is the feeling that offices are there because developers say they want them, but there is no benefit to the town or local people. And local character is ignored. And we have seen from independent reports that the need for offices, in Wimbledon specifically, is quite modest. And when developers give advice to Councils, that advice tends to be in their interests, not the Council's.

The other approach is set out in this report, and is very different. It faces up to the current challenge of domination by traffic, with its danger, fumes and all the rest, by carefully and progressively diverting the traffic around the pedestrianised centre. It is also a plan that takes as its starting point the public's wishlists. Our assessment in the last 4 pages of how this Vision 2040 approach measures up against those public wishlists (and indeed the Policies of the Government's NPPF) is instructive.

The creation of a pedestrian-dominated heart to the town then makes other things possible.
The conservation areas become centres for smaller shops. The central pedestrian spine becomes a place for recreation, for tree planting, for enjoyment, for the staging of events. It is an approach that takes the long view, rather than the short termism of developers who build, sell and then disappear.

But it also recognises that the town needs to evolve. So it sets out a number of stages, each one allowing the town, its businesses and the public to adjust gradually. Importantly, each stage creates at least some (albeit small) public benefit; nebulous promises for something good in the distant future are not believed, and seldom arrive. We still await the replacement of the Civic Hall, lost in the 1980's.

Importantly, this is a plan that is based on proposals. Since the 1970's the UK planning system has been fixated on policies. A Council would respond to a developer's scheme by referring to approved policies. In other words, the whole planning basis was reactive, and depended on some other agency to make a proposal.

It seems clear that town centres now need something more imaginative and creative, and very different. Market forces alone seem not be to be able to turn around a town's fortunes.

This new type of plan is based on ideas and proposals and pro-active action, rather than on passive wishes and policies. Rather than 'blaming the developers and the Council', local groups may be asked to adapt to joint working with the Council, and this will often highlight tensions.
We need a new approach by both the local Council, and by the public and local groups. As with all proposals, there may be losers as well as winners; we need to listen, to respect and compensate them.

Planning the town will change from responding to yet another ad hoc planning application from yet another developer, to the Council (with local groups and businesses ideally) taking the initiative.
In public works, in setting out basic planning briefs on every site before the architect puts pen to paper, in resolving the many local issues, the role of the town 'Champion' Councillor will be key.

The Council now needs to consider how the approach set out in this Vision 2040 proposal can be taken on board. The long term future of the town centre is at stake.

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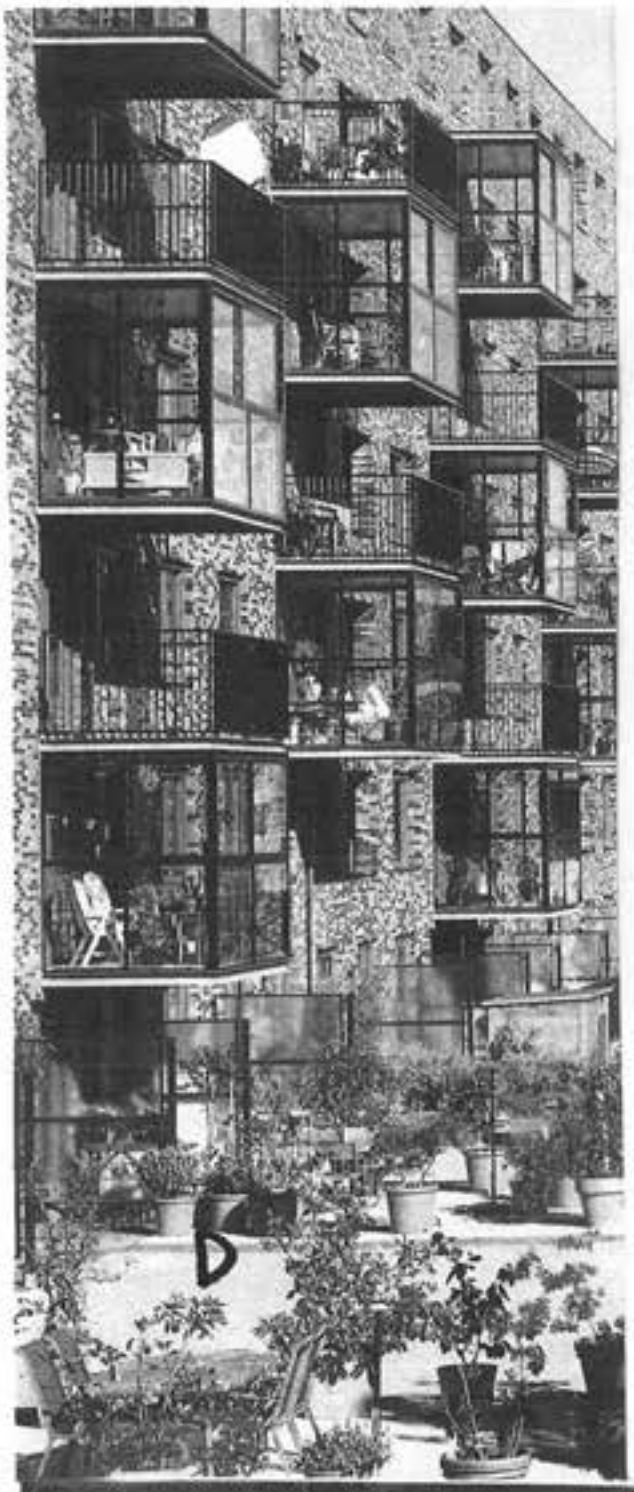


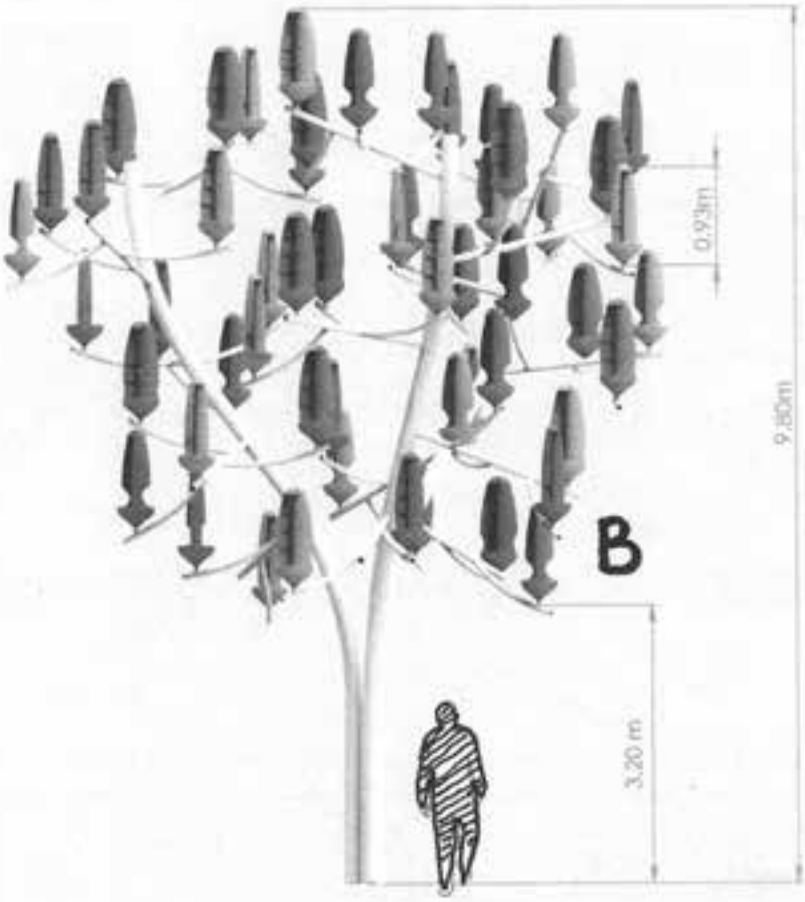


**A** Imaginative painting of an apparent 3D pedestrian crossing, deterring speeding: actually all flat: Iceland
**B** A 'wind power tree'; spinning aero 'leaves' produce electricity: useful if tree root space unavailable: Paris
**C** Moss filled air pollution cleaner with seating (Piccadilly: Crown Estate)
**D** Housing: architect Kees Christiaanse

# Future Wimbledon Masterplan: FIVE BIG IDEAS

*WEHRA members attended the **Future Wimbledon Masterplan Workshop** in January, held in the Library. The session was organised by Future Merton, and about 50 people attended. In closing, we were asked to write down our five **BIG IDEAS** that we believe are essential for any plans for Future Wimbledon.*

**Here are WEHRA's recommendations, all equally important, that we view as ESSENTIAL to the future happiness and economic prosperity here in Wimbledon:**

1. **Transport**
2. **Heritage**
3. **Culture**
4. **Commerce**
5. **Environment**

**1. Transport:** Wimbledon is already one of the best-connected Hubs outside central London. Crossrail 2 is coming. We must continue to provide viable alternatives to the private car: Encourage more car clubs, build professionally, ingeniously designed new pedestrian and cycle paths, and include a flawless disabled access route. We believe Wimbledon should be the best community transport HUB in the UK, and the least polluted.

**2. Dial up Heritage/History/Conservation Areas:** At present, Merton Council appears to be ignoring our requests to protect and maintain local Heritage, local history and to enforce proper care of existing Conservation Areas and fine buildings in WTC, including the Bank Buildings on Wimbledon Hill Road and the many listed Parades. So many of these buildings are not being properly maintained. This is wrong by any count, and especially so here in Wimbledon, where heritage and history play such an important role in the area's international reputation and appeal.

**3. Positioning as a Culture Hub:** Wimbledon is already well established as a Hub for arts, culture, learning, sport (tennis legacy). If Merton Council can be bold, and support this wonderful opportunity, the Morrison's car park site (P3) should be designated as a privately funded/managed Music/Arts Space with finest acoustics, for use by all Wimbledon and Merton groups, as well as a top class venue for other UK and International artists to perform throughout the year. We had a fine Hall, and the Council sold it and spent the proceeds elsewhere. It is time for the Council to return our community asset to Wimbledon.

**4. An Appropriate Commercial Mix in the Town Centre:** Three key groups use Wimbledon town commercial area: **First are the 35,000 households that live within walking distance.** (At present many local residents must travel elsewhere, to find quality goods and services; this is easy to fix – just bring in businesses that suit the local demographic.) Second are the steady stream of thousands of daily visitors, students, daily and UK and international tourists that come through the Station or arrive by coach loads, expecting a memorable Wimbledon experience. They are sorely disappointed at present, as they walk out of Wimbledon Station. This must be addressed. Third is Wimbledon work force that come and go each day in WTC (LW say it is 1,500 and hope for up to 3,000). Merton Council and LW BID) must get serious and correct the commercial balance. It is not fit for purpose, much of the retail sector and few if any 'pop ups' suit Wimbledon needs and wants. We need the BID to focus on QUALITY shopping, not quantity. Also, there isn't one gift shop/souvenir shop in the entire town, for the thousands of foreign visitors, families and university and other students wanting a keepsake. We don't need cheap pop up events, we need bricks and mortar and quality businesses to ensure/enhance future prosperity here in Future Wimbledon.

**5. Green Up the Town Centre:** Wimbledon is world famous for manicured green grass tennis courts and the wonderful, wild Wimbledon Common. Yet the town itself is a real disappointment – low quality buildings, ugly and grey, with a handful of stressed, iconic trees being slowly strangled by cheap twinkly lights. Future Wimbledon must incorporate a dozen new pocket parks, maintained by the tenants by condition, for use by their staff and others. The RHS is urging the nation to **Green up Grey Britain**; that includes Wimbledon's town. Wimbledon is also the Borough's most sustainably built and maintained area (with great upside potential to become the most sustainable town in the Borough). We want each and every new build and re-clad in Wimbledon to be required to be a BREEAM 'excellent' or very good' in terms of sustainability, rainwater collection and redirection/re-use, (for all new sites). We also need a greatly improved waste and recycling system, as today much waste in WTC isn't being properly recycled, and the footpaths are filthy and damaged.

***We urge UWRA and WEHRA members to consider any other issues they would like addressed, in the Future Wimbledon Masterplan, and email ideas to*** *wehraplanning@aol.com*

***LT 6.2.17***

**25 years looking ahead** Proposals to show how they are to be achieved: not just written policies but also drawings. **The planning system has to design and plan the town – no-one else can do it.** What we have now in the town centre is dismal, ordinary, un-inspiring, with no prospect of anything better. A town where ad hoc development control decisions on individual sites over the years has produced hardly anything of any significance: and it is dangerous and unpleasant for pedestrians – why would anyone choose to visit? With over a billion pounds worth of real estate value in the town, this is what the New Plan has to address, with REAL proposals.

**A really attractive and memorable place** A range of activities that keep people in the Town Centre, not just monoculture shops/offices: pleasant spaces, character spaces, pedestrian safety and scale, convenience, with most of what you need available: art, music, events, recreation

**Safe for pedestrians** Pedestrianising the Broadway spine and re-routing traffic around the centre: a town square outside the Town Hall, Piazza, beside Theatre: the heart of the Town and its defined central places: new footpath routes and links: probably the single most important action to transform the town?

**Protection from elements/rain** Canopies, colonnades, blinds, internal covered malls, canopies for protection

**Local character and history** Retention of character buildings, maintaining low building heights beside pedestrians for scale, both the Town Hall Square and the Station Square should be a central focus in the town: low height buildings on the south side of Broadway allows sun to northern side

**Uniqueness, not like other centres** Avoiding high buildings, have height limits in Plans, pedestrian frontages with interest, limit range of façade materials, wide range of uses/activities/entertainment, colleges

**Efficient in energy/water** Town centre shared CHP scheme for energy generation & distribution, ducting services, each building using solar/heat pump/geothermal: lessens import of energy from Grid: electronic communications systems/networks capabilities

**Space for events** Town Hall Square, Station Square, Piazza, Broadway/Theatre, public buildings, others

**Employment for locals & incomers** Offices, other potential employment uses, utilising not only the residential hinterland, but also the incoming transport facilities from the region: workers support shops etc

**Increase the commercial floorspace** Widening of the long narrow centre, including above the Station complex: low height and wide-floor buildings, not high buildings

**High grade transport outwards/inwards** Major Transport Station complex, with all the modes interacting together - CR2 rail, suburban rail, tube, tram, bus, taxi, cycle – all under cover: main bus hub, but with two mini-hubs separated from it for resilience

**Incorporation of the CR2 station** For first c12+ years, demolitions, working sites, new development to fill in the working sites and above the station etc: the integration of the new transport complex and associated development into the fabric of the town centre, facing onto the new Station Square, range of commercial, residential, community & civic uses

**Road system adaptability** Driver-less vehicles changing the nature of personal travel and deliveries and parking: sophisticated traffic controls of speeds and capacity, and pedestrian safety/delays

**Wide range of public services/functions, recreation** Bringing back into the town centre the missing civic and public uses, enhanced education/colleges

**Quality of the public spaces** Design to reflect the changes of level between bridge and the rest eg in the Town Hall Square and Station Square: unifying quality of paving, street furniture

**Interest throughout the day/week** Not just a business quarter: Variety in land uses, colleges, public and community uses subsidised, housing in centre

**Nature, planting, trees** Co-ordinated tree planting not just ad hoc: green walls, integral planting on/in each building

**Quality in design ?** Not Style, Design! Townscape & urban design, height limits, human scale, building lines, uses, nature, energy, respect for neighbours, daylighting/sunlighting/privacy

**Accommodation for smaller firms and startups** eg Worple Road "Pavement"

**Accommodation for "non-economic" activities** Community uses subsidised via profitable development, following the social housing example

**Protection for neighbours** Adjoining housing & gardens respected, low height of neighbouring houses respected, shadowing from higher buildings not to affect neighbouring solar panels

**Adaptability of future floorspace** So that the activities/firms of the future can use some of the current buildings by adaptation, rather than expensive/disruptive demolition: higher floor to floor heights, floor loadings

**Clarity in the Plan** The means by which the Plan can be implemented and communicated to The Public, the development industry, land owners & others involved, via clear briefing: and future adaptability as required.

2017

FW: Future Wimbledon

# MASTERPLAN PRIORITIES

Your top 10 ideas for Wimbledon

## 1. Greening Wimbledon

More trees, planting, green walls, new green spaces, sustainable design.

## 2. Mid-rise contextual architecture

Mid-rise growth, contained in one place, traditional urban blocks and active streets, tight grain (eg, not podiums & towers)

## 3. High quality architecture

Higher quality design. Great contemporary design and materials that reflects, respects and enhances the historic buildings

## 4. Public space

New town square, more smaller public spaces to enjoy, relax, have events, Places for people.

## 5. Cultural space

New concert hall, performance space

## 6. Traffic intervention

Improve traffic management; reduce traffic dominance

## 7. Transport interchange

A world class station with integration of all modes of transport.

## 8. Develop over the railway

Develop above the station and over the tracks. Stitch Wimbledon together

## 9. Independent retail

More independent retailers, niche destinations

## 10. Retail offer

Better quality retail offer, more brands that suit Wimbledon

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# KEY FINDINGS

These 10 key findings are based on mixed methods research which comprises a review of existing literature and surveys with over 200 businesses, high street visitors and stakeholders. The full findings are available in the Evidence Base, published separately.

1. **High streets are significant and growing places of employment.** 47% of businesses outside Central London are on a high street and 1.45 million employees work on or within 200 metres of a high street, and this number is growing.

2. **High streets offer local and accessible economic opportunities for an inclusive London.** Opportunities are highly varied, consisting of employment for marginalised Londoners as much as for highly skilled people seeking full-time employment.

3. **High streets are social, promoting community and cultural exchange.** 45% of surveyed users' primary high street use was non-retail related – evidence that Londoners value the social exchanges that high streets support. This is especially important for vulnerable groups, particularly the elderly.

4. **High streets are important gathering spaces for marginalised and under-represented groups.** Visitors to high streets include a significant proportion of job-seekers, elderly people, young people and recent immigrants. Our study tells us that 51% of visitors to high streets are not in employment, compared with 27% across London.

5. **High streets provide crucial social infrastructure and social services for Londoners.** Both social infrastructure and shops often go beyond their 'formal' role by offering various forms of support and care to high street users. Almost 40% of small businesses interviewed performed some kind of social function.

6. **Nearly 70% of London's high streets don't fall within a town centre boundary.** The majority of high streets have no formal policy designation and are potentially vulnerable to development pressures.

7. **High streets provide a range of work spaces which can meet the needs both of newly formed and long-standing businesses.** The economic capacity of high streets is highly adaptive, catering to existing communities and newcomers alike.

8. **High street businesses struggle to operate and to participate in collective efforts.** Nearly 70% of small businesses find rent to be unaffordable and many find collaboration with each other and local communities difficult due to multiple pressures including rates, sales, competition and time commitments.

9. **High streets are local, walkable destinations and important points of connectivity.** 63% of surveyed users walk to the high street, showing they are accessible and promote healthier, more active modes of transport. High streets are also valued places of transit and connectivity providing access to places beyond the high street.

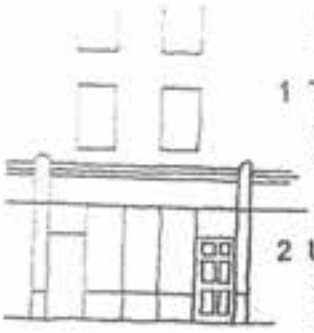
10. **Processes of urban change are perceived acutely on London's high streets.** Londoners' perceptions of change on their local high streets can often be affected by a wider awareness of changes in their local borough and in London as a whole.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings come the following 10 recommendations to help high street stakeholders deliver inclusive, shared and locally-responsive growth on London's high streets through policy, investment and advocacy:

1. Take a strategic place-based approach
2. Promote citizen-led regeneration
3. Be inclusive by engaging harder to reach citizens
4. Protect diversity and choice
5. Recognise the social value of high street economies
6. Value the contribution of high street businesses
7. Champion high streets as social, civic and cultural infrastructure
8. Value high streets as sources of civic pride and local identity
9. Champion high streets as public spaces
10. Uphold an evidence-based approach to maximise social value

# Appendix Shopfront Design Checklist



| BASIC DESIGN ELEMENTS | SUGGESTED APPROACH |
|---|---|
| 1 The Shopfront is usually part of a complete building, and therefore should be a part of its overall design | Ensure that the application drawings have a plan, section and elevation, and also show the adjoining buildings and the building above |
| 2 Upper floors need to have proper access to ensure that they are fully used and the street is lively | Ensure that the independent entrance to upper floors from the street is kept, and not used to widen the shop frontage |
| 3 The main surrounding "frame" to the shop comprising pilasters, corbels, & fascia, should be respected & not covered over, and be replaced where they have been previously destroyed; this is the most important single part of the shopfront design | Find a local example which has original details; keep the fascia narrow; repair the corbels which separate the fascias; repair the pilaster and its mouldings, avoid cladding it, and paint it a single colour if the adjoining owner agrees |
| 4 The detailed design of the "inserted" shop front can usually vary if the main elements listed above are right; In the conservation area, and on listed buildings, use vertical proportions for windows | Select timber or painted metal, rather than bare metal, aluminium or plastic; provide a stall riser in timber/tile, not brick or mosaic; avoid a second fascia, and take windows up to the underside of the original fascia; if the ceiling level is lower than the bottom of the fascia, set it back from the glass line |
| 5 Doors need to be "level" or only slightly sloped to aid access by the disabled | Avoid steps by setting back the door; Never open the door outwards over the footway |
| 6 Provide a blind, to give weather protection to shoppers, and give interest in the street | Provide 2.5m minimum headroom, and place the blind box internally rather than projecting it |
| 7 Where needed, security shutters should ideally be placed inside the glass | Use the perforated type, to allow views into the shop and avoid a forbidding appearance when the shop is closed; place the shutter box internally, rather than projecting it from the shopfront |
| 8 Fascia signwriting should be painted or have applied letters, not internally lit; external lights or halo lighting may be accepted | Always put a sign on the fascia; always put the property number over the door |
| 9 Projecting signs should be avoided in conservation areas, and on listed, locally listed and other good buildings | Never fix projecting signs to corbels |
| 10 Upper floors should not have advertising | Remove redundant wires and brackets |
| 11 Place burglar alarms and switches above the cornice | Paint any switches to match wall colour |
| 12 Information helps local people understand | Display your consent & drawings on site. |

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Established in 1903, The Wimbledon Society is a Civic Society and registered charity which has the overall objectives of enhancing the quality of life, and protecting the amenities of Wimbledon for present and future generations. In particular the Society sets out to:

- Preserve, protect and improve features of historic and public interest in Wimbledon and the local area
- Protect the natural beauty of the area, its wildlife, its woods and open spaces
- Promote high standards of planning and architecture in the area
- Promote and stimulate public interest in the study of local history and architecture.

The Society is managed by an active team of volunteers consisting of an executive committee with two principal sub-committees, museum and planning.

The main activities of the Society are:

- Maintaining a Museum of Local History
- Monitoring all significant planning developments, and providing an input to strategic planning in Wimbledon
- Organising an active programme of lectures, excursions, discussions and special events
- Communicating with members through a quarterly newsletter
- Managing an informative website.

The Society aims to achieves its objectives by:

- Maintaining a strong membership of its main committees
- Attracting a wide base of volunteers
- Keeping a strong financial position
- Widening the membership of the Society
- Developing links with the local Council, residents associations, and other relevant organisations.

Join the Society and you will receive a quarterly newsletter which will keep you up-to-date on local planning and other issues. Between its issues in March, June September and December, updated information is also available on The Wimbledon Society Facebook page at www.facebook.co. where you can take part yourself in the Discussions section.

The Newsletter contains news, features and details of our lively programme of meetings, lectures, literary events, excursions and guided walks, as well as reports from the monthly meetings of the local history group.

It also covers our own Museum of Wimbledon with its rich tapestry of local history using vivid display panels, models and objects, together with a children's handling collection.

Membership gives you a chance to meet other people who share your interest in Wimbledon, and to work with them in safeguarding its future.

All these activities are carried on by enthusiastic volunteers. To continue, we need the active support and participation of the Society's members.
The Society welcomes new members to support its objectives, and participate in its activities.

To join the Society, send us an application form downloadable from the Society website, or PTO.
Membership fees are: Individual £15 Family £20 Affiliated £25

THE WIMBLEDON SOCIETY

protecting our amenities... enhancing our quality of life

## APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

I wish to become a member of The Wimbledon Society and attach a Banker's Order (or cheque payable to The Wimbledon Society) for my Annual Subscription.

Individual £15 ☐ Couple/Family £20 ☐ Affiliated £25 ☐

Signed ..... Date: .....

Please PRINT your full name:

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms .....

Address: .....

..... Postcode .....

Telephone No .....

Email address (please PRINT) .....

| For office use only WTC | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

**Please return your completed form to:**

**The Membership Secretary, 22 Ridgway, Wimbledon, London SW19 4QN**

*If you have any special interest or expertise, please do let us know*

### BANKER'S ORDER

To (Bank) .....

sort code: ..... account no .....

Bank address.....

.....

Please pay on receipt and on January 1st in each succeeding year,

the sum of £ .....(*in words* .....pounds) to

CAF Bank Ltd, 25 Kings Hill Ave, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4TA
for the credit of The Wimbledon Society
sort code 40-52-40 account no 00098659

Name (Please PRINT) .....

Your Address .....

Signature .....Date.....

| For Bank Use Only: Please quote | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

**GIFT AID DECLARATION**

I want to Gift Aid all my donations, including subscriptions, that I make in the future or which I have made in the last 4 years to The Wimbledon Society.
I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.
If my tax situation or address changes, I must notify the charity.

Title.....Initials (or first name) .....

Surname .....

Address .....

.....Postcode .....

Signature ..... Date .....

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