



HEREFORD TOWN CENTRE: STREETSCAPE DESIGN STRATEGY

KEY PRINCIPLES

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WHY DO STREETS MATTER?

The economics of town centres are changing.

The functional role of the town centre as the principal location for the exchange of goods and services is increasingly being challenged by larger, out-of-town retail outlets. The internet and changes in communication patterns are likewise transforming the way in which we interact and exchange information. Town centres increasingly serve as a focus for people coming together to fulfil broader human needs to engage with each other, and to connect with a distinctive and identifiable location and community.

Town centres are likely to survive where people want to spend time, not because they need to. This change has profound implications for the economic relevance of the streets and spaces that make up the public realm. Hereford's future prosperity is closely linked to the ability of its streetscapes to attract and to foster social interaction and the economic activity it generates.



INTRODUCTION

WHY IS A MANUAL NECESSARY?

In past decades, the management and maintenance of a city's streetscapes were rarely seen as critical factors. Streets were subject to uncoordinated decisions by a multitude of agencies and interests, with the emphasis on the functions of traffic and movement. Few local authorities have, until recently, established streetscape design and management as a core responsibility, able to combine all the many complex influences on the public realm to reflect the values and qualities upon which a city's future prosperity depends. A Streetscape Manual will provide the working basis to establish a coordinated approach to the design, management and maintenance of Hereford's streets and public spaces. It forms a key part of the Vision for Hereford, clarifying the key principles and practical details that will guide and inform future investment in the public realm.

WHO IS IT FOR?

The Streetscape Manual will serve as both an expression for the long-term aspirations for the City and as the basis for practical decision-making for wherever changes and development take place. It is intended to provide guidance to all those involved in the development, management and maintenance of new and existing streets, including:

- Consultants and contractors engaged by the authority
- Local authority members and officers
- Developers and their consultants
- Traders and businesses operating in the City
- Suppliers or materials and equipment
- Local residents and all those with a stake in the City's future

“A Streetscape Manual provides the working basis to establish a coordinated approach to the design, management and maintenance of Hereford's streets and public spaces.”



SCOPE

The Streetscape Manual will have relevance to the City as a whole. Whilst the principle focus will relate to streets within the City Centre and the area defined by the Conservation Area, the principles will be equally relevant to new developments outside the historic walled area. The Manual will be especially relevant to the redevelopment of the ESG Regeneration Area to the north of the City Centre, and to changes planned in relation to new links with key locations such as the railway station. The Manual will also seek to establish key principles for successful street design that will be relevant for other market towns and villages throughout Herefordshire.

REVIEW ARRANGEMENTS

The Streetscape Manual is intended to be a working document, to be reviewed, extended and amended in light of experience and changing circumstances. The Manual will benefit from regular review to take account of new techniques, new sources of materials and changing priorities. Initial focus on Widemarsh Street as a principal connector between High Town and new developments to the north of the Centre will help to refine and extend the Manual. A regular three-year review is recommended.

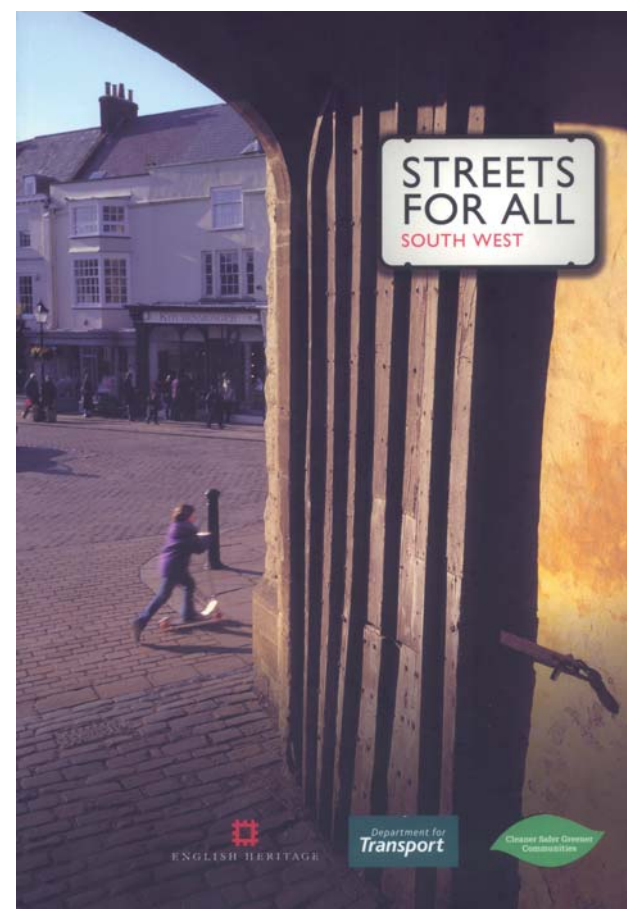
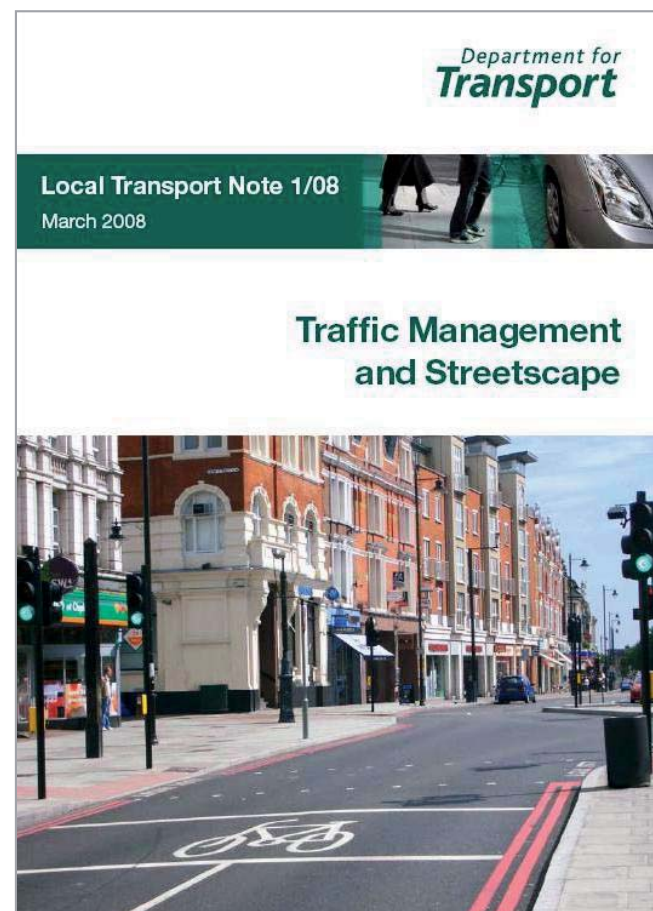


STATUS AND RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER STRATEGIES

The Streetscape Manual will not, initially, be published as formal Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). However, the Streetscape Manual will form the basis for advice to all developers and to those involved in the management and maintenance of the City's public realm, and will be used to inform, train and educate all those with an influence on the City's built environment. The Manual will help inform forward investment programmes and bids for funding, and will therefore be relevant to bodies such as the Regional Development Agency and other partner bodies.

THIS DOCUMENT

This overview represents the first phase in the development of a Streetscape Manual. It is intended to set out the key strategic principles and to establish the overriding principles upon which the Manual will be developed. It identifies the main elements to be covered by the Streetscape Manual and sets out a series of issues to be addressed in order to prepare a programme of streetscape renewal. A subsequent phase will build on these principles to establish detailed recommendations and refine selection of materials, street furniture and related elements.



The Hereford Streetscape Manual will build on best practice outlined by CABE, English Heritage, the Department for Transport and others.



2.0 KEY PRINCIPLES

The following principles underpin the specific spatial and material recommendations of the Manual and establish the basis for all decisions relating to streets and public spaces.

SECTION 02

KEY PRINCIPLES

INTEGRATION OF ACTIVITIES

The Manual will promote the integration of movement, exchange and all the activities associated with successful streets. There should be minimal separation between the function of streets as corridors for movement, and the role of streets as places for meeting and spending time. This contrasts to conventional segregation between the highway function of streets and intersections and their civic functions.



O'Connell Street, Dublin: integrating traffic movement, public space and strong civic identity

STREETS AS PLACES

The principle objective of all investment in streets is to provide places for economic and social activities. Movement of people and vehicles is intended to support and enhance such activities. Traffic movement is not an objective isolated from economic and social activity.



This space performs a number of functions simultaneously, from the movement of traffic and people to somewhere to stop and sit. Seven Dials, Covent Garden

UNDERSTANDING PEOPLE

Successful streets respond to the patterns of behaviour of humans interacting in public space. Rather than try to channel or constrain patterns of movement, the Manual will encourage an analysis of typical pedestrian movement patterns (desire lines), and observation of the often complex and unpredictable interaction of people and places. An understanding of the value of risk and intelligent response to context will be central to the Manual.



New Road, Brighton responds to the need for movement of pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles without detracting from the quality of public space

STREETS AS NETWORKS AND SPACES

Each street in Hereford has its own distinctive character. Each forms a connection between specific places, and might incorporate a sequence of places and landmarks along its route. Together such streets and spaces constitute the public realm. The Manual will encourage a recognition of each street as a connector and as part of a coherent network.



This sub-division of space compromises the ability of Hereford to operate as a single, coherent place. Here movement networks for traffic and pedestrians are separated from one another

KEY PRINCIPLES

THREE-DIMENSIONAL DESIGN

The Manual will promote an understanding of streets as three-dimensional spaces, drawing character and qualities from the relationship between horizontal surfaces and the vertical elements of buildings, street-furniture and light. Street design will be encouraged that responds to the specific context generated by buildings and activities.



The public realm is not divorced from townscape, but rather a foreground for it. Hereford's architectural richness does not translate into the rest of Widemarsh Street

LOW-SPEED ENVIRONMENT

The Manual will promote, and build on, the principle of design based on low-speed traffic flow. Increasing evidence from other European cities suggests that speeds of less than 18-22 mph can provide more efficient traffic movement as well as greater safety, accessibility and civility. The principle of low design speeds helps inform dimensions, stopping distances, materials, lighting and many other key elements. A low speed environment may, if appropriate, be reinforced by a formal 20 mph speed limit. However, promoting an appropriate low speed context will be the overriding consideration.



Zutphen, Netherlands, where a slow speed traffic environment permits all road users to use space responsibly and communicate

MINIMISING BARRIERS

The Streetscape Manual will help promote a barrier-free public realm, allowing free movement as far as possible for people with all ranges of abilities. The Manual will seek to enhance access for people with limited mobility and, through the avoidance of pedestrian barriers, excessive street furniture and sudden changes in level.



Lyngby, Copenhagen. Simple, barrier-free street design creates a legible and accessible public space

IMPROVING LEGIBILITY

The Manual will encourage design measures that allow the form and patterns of the City Centre to be easily read and understood by pedestrians, bicyclists and drivers. This will include navigational and guidance clues for people with visual impairment. Clear gateways and transition points will be encouraged that define the boundaries of the public realm. Convoluted one-way systems will be avoided wherever possible. Simplicity will remain a governing principle.



Odense, Denmark where different movement functions are understood from the subtle distinction of space created by different materials

SECTION

02

KEY PRINCIPLES

CO-ORDINATED ELEMENTS

The Manual will assist in designing streetscapes as a whole, rather than as a series of separate components. All components of the streetscape, from paving materials to highway signing, will be co-ordinated as far as possible.

SUSTAINABILITY

The Streetscape Manual will recognise the critical role played by the design and management of the public realm in reducing emissions and in conserving resources. Minimising energy use, promoting the use of durable and local materials, and minimising the adverse impact of transport will inform the recommendations.

LONG-TERM VALUE

Streets endure. Decisions on the use of materials and components are likely to have enduring effects on the quality of the City and its public realm. The Streetscape Manual will seek to avoid measures that require replacement in the short-term, and seek to promote elements that will minimise the long-term costs and maximise long-term benefits.

TIMESCALES

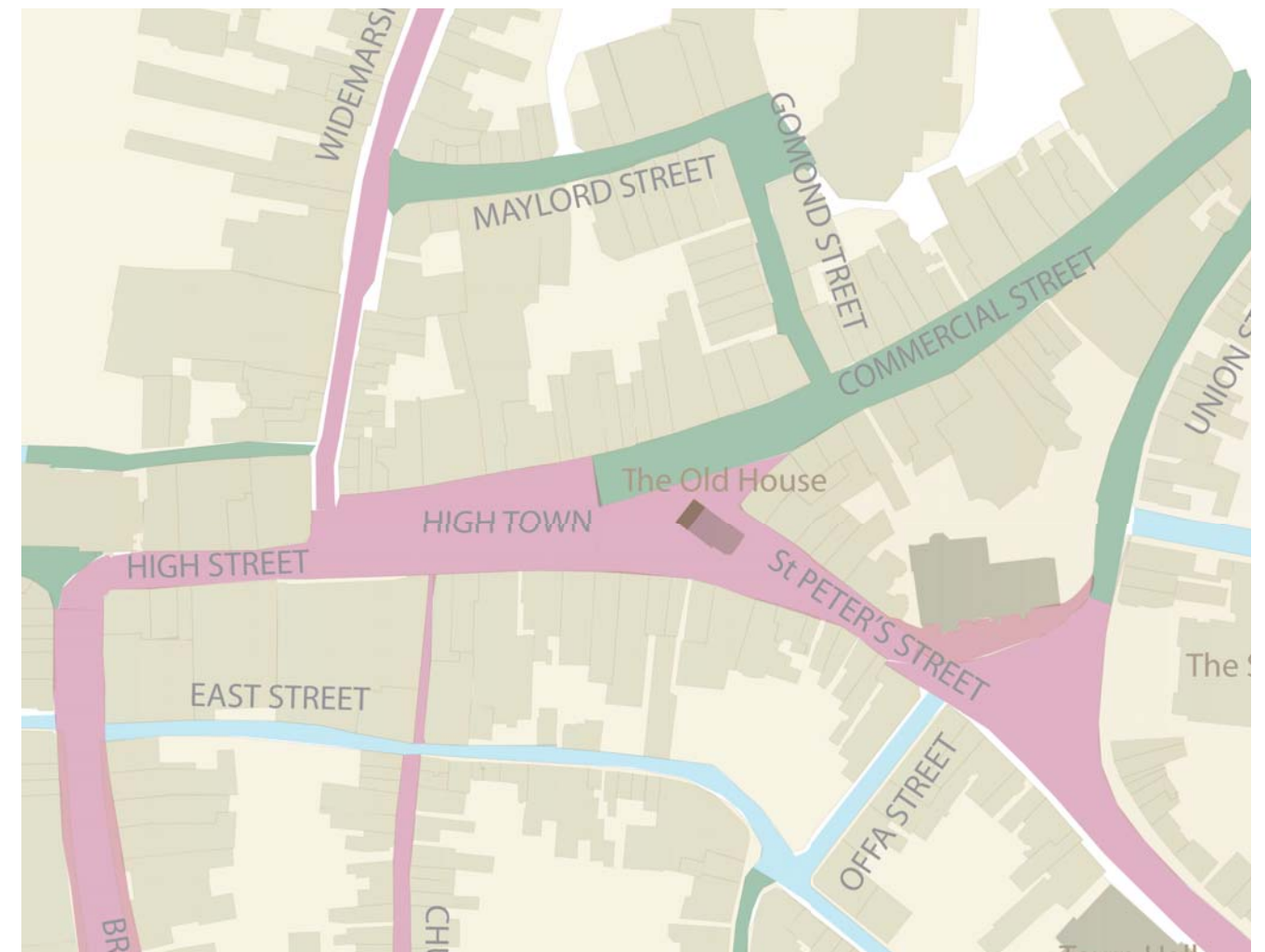
Streets change very slowly, and the disruption and costs involved require careful planning. The Manual will recognise the importance of sufficient time being given to the design of streetscape projects, and to establishing adequate public consensus and support for key changes.

DISTINCTIVENESS

The Manual will seek to promote designs which reflect the distinctive qualities of Hereford, and avoid repetition of standard solutions applied elsewhere. Wherever possible, design principles will be informed by an understanding of the history, context and particular character of Hereford.

PRACTICALITY

Ease of maintenance and designs which promote simple, robust and easily adapted solutions will be promoted.



3.0 ANALYSIS OF EXISTING STREETSAPES

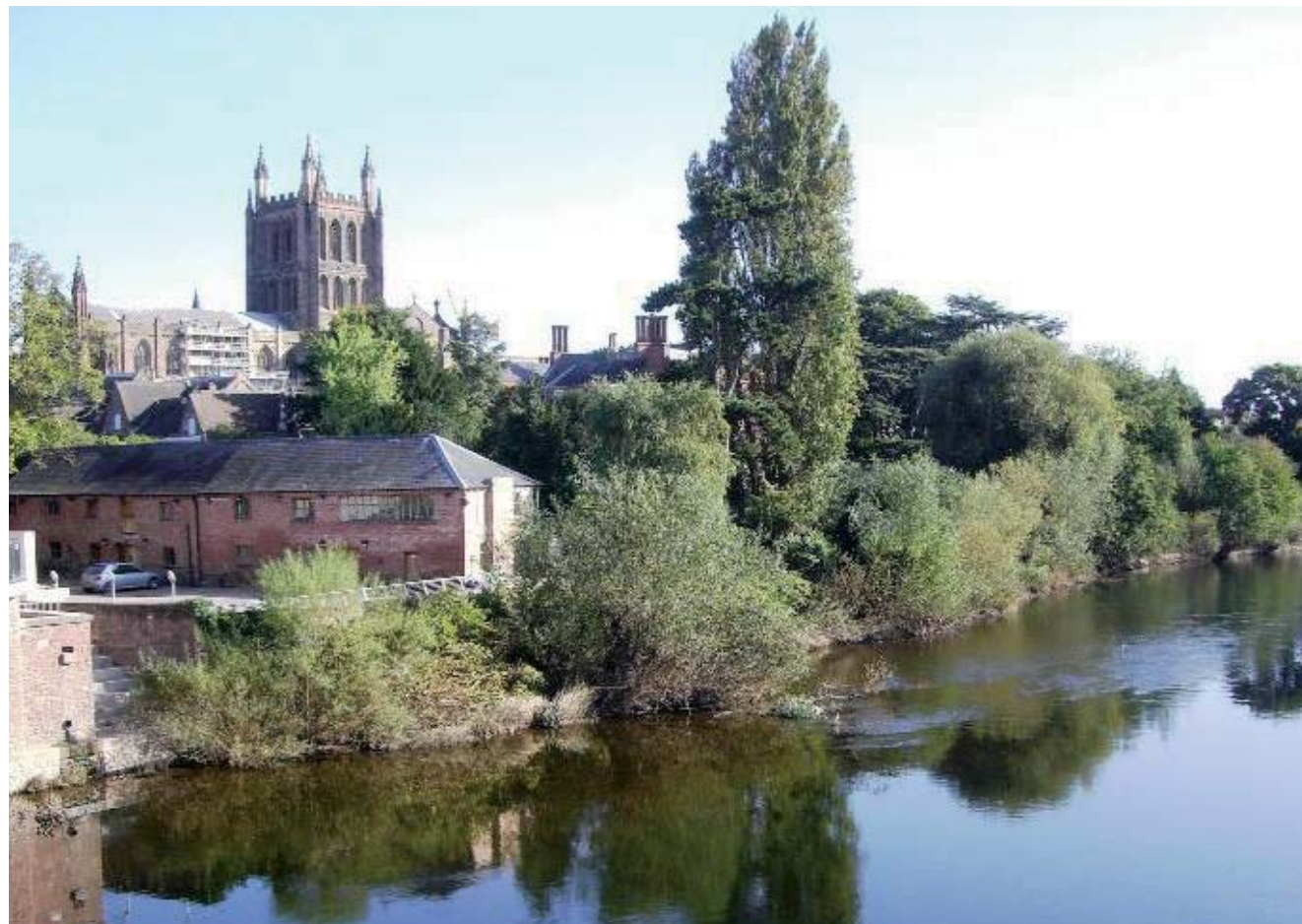
The Streetscape Manual will reflect the specific context and circumstances of Hereford, taking account of its historic form and recent developments. This section draws on the most important factors relevant to Hereford's existing streetscapes.

SECTION 03

ANALYSIS OF EXISTING STREETSCAPES

HEREFORD'S DEVELOPMENT AS A WALLED CATHEDRAL CITY

The horse-shoe shape of the City Centre described by the traces of the former defensive walls, the site of the castle, and the bend in the River Wye give the City a memorable and comprehensible form. In addition the dominant position of the magnificent cathedral provides the key reference point for the south of the City Centre. A successful streetscape strategy will seek to emphasise and reinforce these distinctive characteristics.



HEREFORD'S TYPICAL "CLOSED STREET" PATTERN

Hereford City Centre includes a notable variety of street types, many of them incorporating gentle curves, and often terminating in views of fine buildings. Broad Street, High Street and Widemarsh Street are particular examples. A strategy for Hereford's public realm should seek to build on these particular characteristics.



Buildings 'enclosing' the street to contain public space



ANALYSIS OF EXISTING STREETSAPES

POVERTY OF EXISTING PAVING MATERIALS

An initial audit of paving materials illustrates the lack of any coherent or dominant paving material in the City Centre. There are relatively few areas of natural stone compared to comparative historic towns, and there appears to have been a gradual accretion of poor quality concrete and ad-hoc surface materials. The audit highlights the need to introduce a simple and consistent palette of quality materials appropriate to the historic status of the City, and one that will endure as a timeless backdrop for the fine architecture.



Pre-cast concrete materials do not enhance the setting of high quality townscape





SECTION
03

ANALYSIS OF EXISTING STREETSCAPES



- KEY
-  Concrete Blocks (200mm x 100mm)
 -  Concrete Blocks (Tegula or similar)
 -  Concrete Flags
 -  Concrete in-situ
 -  Bitmac
 -  Brick Pavers
 -  Natural Stone Flags
 -  Carriageways
 -  Hereford Cathedral Close

-  Concrete Blocks (200mm x 100mm)
-  Concrete Blocks (Tegula or similar)

ANALYSIS OF EXISTING STREETSCAPES

THE INNER RING ROAD

The former moat on the outer edge of the former city walls has been lost to a dual carriageway. This road forms part of the A49 and A438, and includes Victoria Street, New Market Street, Blueschool Street and Bath Street. The heavy-handed engineering of this ring road and its high volumes of traffic represent the greatest challenge to the quality of Hereford's public realm. Establishing connectivity and permeability of New Market and Blueschool Streets will be a key challenge for the proposed development of the cattle markets and former industrial areas forming the ESG Regeneration Area. Repairing the damage wrought by this ugly collar around the city may require bold interventions over many years, and may require measures outside the palette of the streetscapes for the rest of the historic core. Nevertheless, the Streetscape Manual will need to take account of the long-term need to transform the ring road and to create a suitable transition space between the inner and outer city.



ANALYSIS OF EXISTING STREETSAPES

LINKS TO KEY LOCATIONS

Whilst initial emphasis is likely to be focused on city centre streets, the Streetscape Manual will aim to address key locations and their links to the city outside the central area. The existing forecourt of the Railway Station represents a notably inadequate entry point for the city, matched by poverty of the route along Commercial Road. Likewise the splendid new Courtyard Theatre on Penhaligon Way lacks an appropriate link into the city centre. The principles of good street design should be equally capable of helping to improve key routes and connections throughout the built environment.



SECTION

03

ANALYSIS OF EXISTING STREETS CAPES



4.0 STREET ALIGNMENT AND LAYOUTS

The following sections address the key issues and recommendations for the alignment and configuration of streets and spaces, for the selection of materials, and other key considerations. These will be developed in detail in the Streetscape Manual.

STREET ALIGNMENT AND LAYOUTS

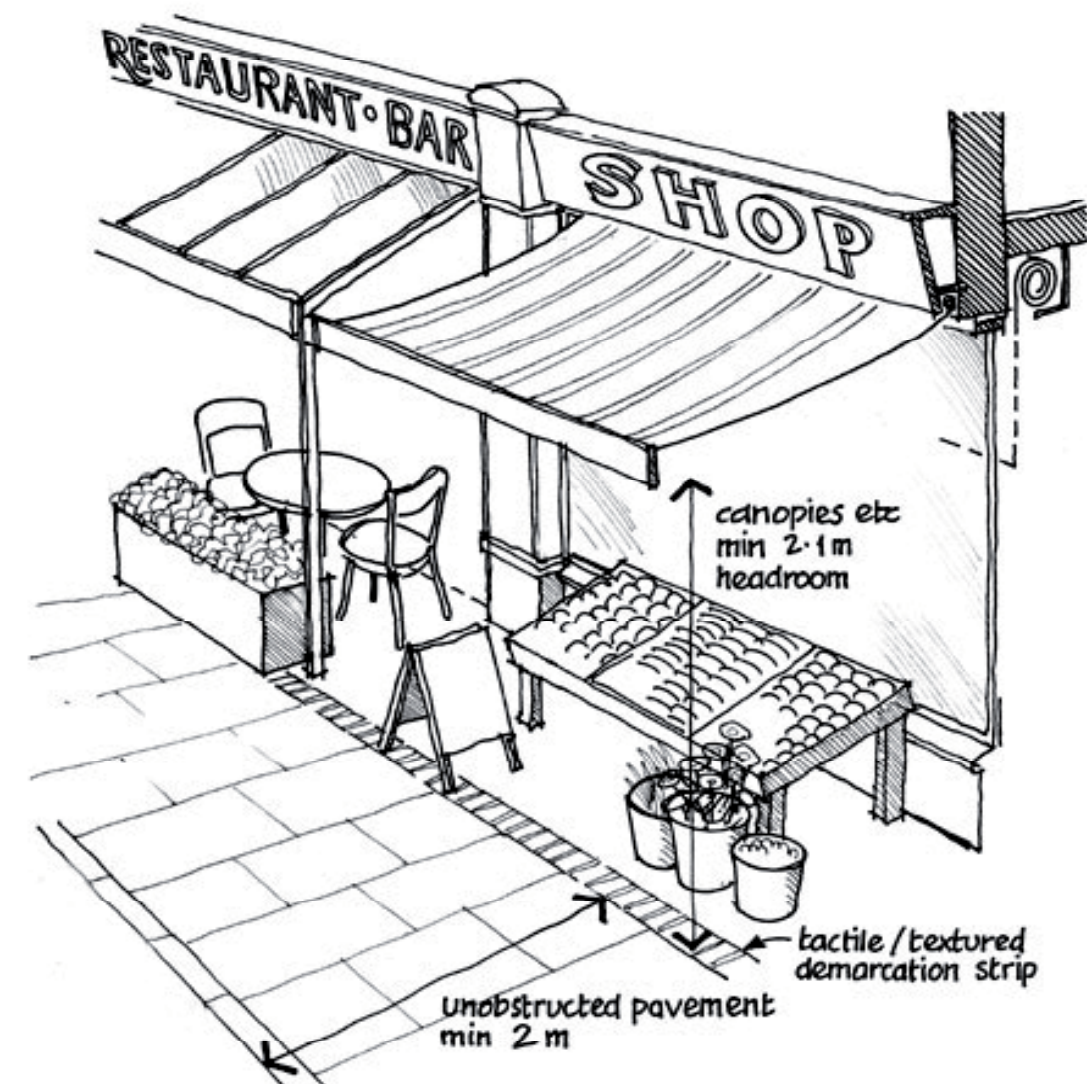
PAVEMENT WIDTHS, STREET FURNITURE AND KERBS

The overriding principle in the modification of Hereford's streetscapes should be to maximise the convenience, comfort and delight of pedestrians. Wherever practicable, a minimum of 2 metres clear footway should be provided. Street furniture, planting and other street equipment should be carefully positioned within a linear zone between footway and carriageway, spaced and positioned where necessary to discourage inappropriate parking. Low kerbs, typically between 25-50 mm, should be designed to provide guidance and structure to streets without forming barriers to those in wheelchairs or with baby carriages.

Kerbs and footways should also be designed to incorporate additional tactile and physical guidance to add clarity and assist blind or partially-sighted people. Where space permits, it may be appropriate to include a 1-1.5 metre wide spill-out space in front of shops to promote trading vitality. Such space can be defined by a simple demarcation strip to provide additional visual and tactile guidance.



Excellent quality kerb detailing and tactile surfaces, Sheffield



Indicative division of space for different uses in the street, image courtesy of Richard Guise

STREET ALIGNMENTS AND LAYOUTS

CARRIAGEWAY WIDTHS

The definition of a slow speed context for vehicles permits narrower carriageway widths, tighter turning circles and shorter sightlines than would be conventional for streets designed for 30 mph. Narrower carriageway widths in turn help to establish a lower-speed context. In most instances, kerb-to-kerb widths of 6 metres is appropriate for two-way streets, with a maximum of 3,5 metres for one-way operation. Additional visual narrowing to lane widths of 2 – 2.5 metres should be created by careful edge and kerb detailing to help maintain low speeds.



In Shrewsbury, narrow carriageways, courtesy crossings and sensitively marked parking bays help to create a slow speed environment

ON-STREET PARKING

All on-street parking in the city centre should be limited to short-term space for deliveries or collection or for provision for disabled people. Parking spaces should be clearly defined by paving and discrete marking. This will permit the introduction of a “Restricted Parking Zone” (RPZ) throughout the City to avoid the need for yellow lines and other restrictions, and to improve parking management and enforcement. The paving of parking spaces should be distinct from that of the carriageway, allowing the space to be associated with pedestrian space.



In Sheffield, careful use of materials to denote parking bays and carriageways helps to imply a slower speed is required without the use of any signage

STREET ALIGNMENT AND LAYOUTS

SIMPLE KERB LINES

Wherever possible kerb alignments should reflect the building line. Build-outs and sudden changes in kerb alignment should be avoided.

PROVISION FOR CYCLISTS

The low speed environment of the City reduces the necessity for separate cycle lanes, and most cyclists will be expected to share the carriageway with other vehicles. Only on specific streets with very high volumes, such as Blueschool Street and New Market Street, will specific cycle lanes be included. As a general principle, all one-way streets will be permissible for two-way cycling to maximise direct and convenient routes. The forthcoming review of traffic signs is anticipated to facilitate this simple measure.



PEDESTRIAN ROUTES AND CROSSINGS

Each streetscape improvement project will be informed by a careful analysis of existing and anticipated preferred patterns of movement for pedestrians, the “desire lines”. Such analysis will help determine likely crossing patterns. The form and location of measures to assist street crossings will align with such patterns. Artificial diversions, barriers or staggered crossings away from desire lines will be avoided. Wherever possible, informal “courtesy crossings” will be preferred to formal “zebra” or signal-controlled crossings.



Monchique, Portugal. Use of materials help to define the pedestrian desire line across the highway. Speeds here are consistently low.



Courtesy crossing in use in Petersfield, UK

PLACE MAKING AT JUNCTIONS

Crossroads and intersections traditionally provided focal points within a network of streets, with corner buildings commanding higher rents as a result. The Streetscape Strategy will aim to emphasise the “place” function of junctions, to provide a series of punctuation marks in the street vocabulary. Paving, lighting and other elements will be configured to reinforce the spatial characteristics of each intersection, to help provide beginnings, endings and incidents along each street. Where appropriate additional “places” will be emphasized outside notable buildings or focal points of activity.



Haderslev, Denmark. – More than merely an intersection between two streets, this junction forms a clear and distinctive place through careful use of materials and positioning of street furniture

SECTION 04

STREET ALIGNMENT AND LAYOUTS

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

A low-speed environment reduces the necessity for complex traffic management arrangements. Wherever opportunities arise, barriers to all forms of movement should be removed in order to maximise permeability, legibility and simplicity. Turning restrictions and one-way systems should be avoided wherever possible, and removed as opportunities permit.





5.0 PAVING MATERIALS

Incorporating appropriate paving materials is an essential means by which local distinctiveness and quality street design can be incorporated. Section 5 outlines the principles upon which the Streetscape Manual will be developed.

PAVING MATERIALS

The audit of paving materials in Hereford's City Centre confirms that the quality and use of materials for surfaces has declined significantly in recent decades. Paving has evolved incrementally over a number of years, resulting in a muddled, piecemeal and incoherent streetscape. There is little evidence of continuity or specialist paving skills now expected for historic environments and cathedral cities.

NATURAL STONE

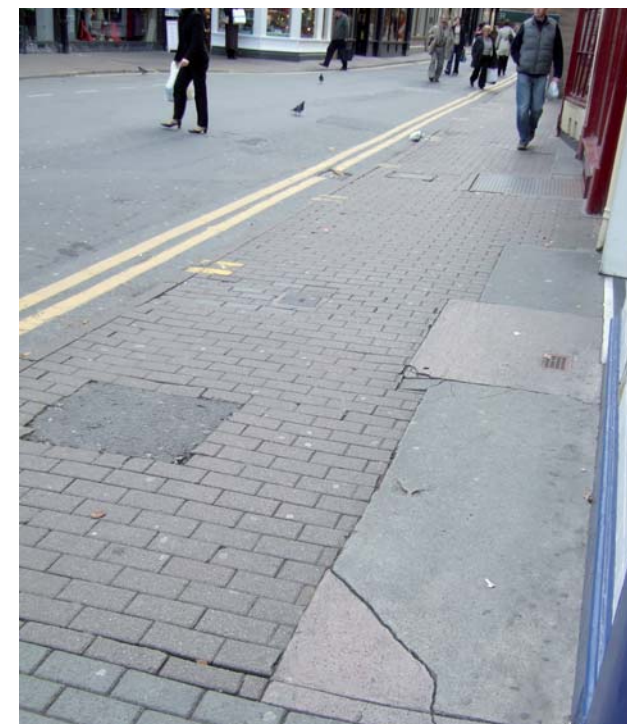
For a cathedral city, rich in buildings of architectural heritage, it is surprising that there is such little evidence of natural stone paving. It would seem that any traditionally cobbled or paved streets have either been overlaid or removed during the last 30 years.

Small quantities of old riven sandstone flags are to be found in Church Street and Palace Yard, the former being compromised by channels of 'Tegula' style concrete block paving. More recently some sandstone has been laid at the south end of Bridge St. There are also some lines of engraved natural stone flags in High Town.

CONCRETE BLOCK PAVIORS

As in many UK towns and cities the most common pedestrian surface in Hereford is pre-cast concrete block paving. Almost certainly laid between 10 and 20 years ago, the standard unit is not dissimilar to a brick in size. They are quick and easy to lay, and offer an economic, albeit short term, solution. Unfortunately they suffer from loss of colour due to exposure to sunlight and cleaning as well as a gradual erosion of the surface. The durability of this material is therefore limited. Where this material has not been dug up or compromised by settlement it will continue to function as a pedestrian surface. However, most are now of a shabby appearance and create a negative impression of the city, and should be replaced as early as possible. In particular their use in streets rich in architectural heritage, notably St Owen Street, Bridge Street, King Street, Widemarsh Street and Broad Street, is wholly inappropriate.

'Tegula' style concrete block paviors are a small improvement on the traditional concrete block paving in appearance only. Marketed throughout the UK as a pre-cast 'conservation' sett, they are frequently to be found in the vicinity of Conservation Areas and in association with buildings of historic interest, such as 'The Old House' in High Town, and Church St. Elsewhere there are a few locations, such as High Street and Palace Yard, where, due to its resilience, it has been used as a surface on carriageways. However in terms of wear and tear it is no different from other concrete blocks and will usually require replacement within 10-15 years.



Pre-cast concrete block paving showing signs of erosion and poor repair

CONCRETE PAVING FLAGS

Pre-cast concrete flags of various sizes are evident in a number of locations throughout the City Centre. It is possible that many of these, particularly those of a larger unit size, such as in King Street, pre-date the pre-cast concrete blocks. It is considered likely that, as in many other UK towns and cities, pre-cast flags were phased out in favour of the smaller unit paviors, which are easier and quicker to lay, during the 1980s and 1990s.

Many of the older pre-cast flags, as laid in both King Street and Castle Street, are reaching the end of their useful life, and need replacing. The more recently laid flags, in High Town and Eign Gate are relatively modern in appearance and provide a clean and safe walking environment. They may be considered satisfactory, although in the context of the scale of the streetscape their unit size may not be appropriate and once again there must be a question mark over their durability and life expectancy. They are not a suitable material for extensive use in historic areas such as High Town.



Pre-cast concrete flags on King Street in need of replacement and more recent smaller unit paviors

IN-SITU CONCRETE

Perhaps surprisingly there are several examples where pavements have been surfaced with poured concrete, sometimes textured. Acceptable perhaps in industrial estates, this surface is wholly inappropriate in streets such as Castle Street and St John Street, which are residential tree lined streets, rich in architectural heritage. There are also a number of instances where some of these pavings have been further compromised by a patchwork of bitmac, probably resulting from remedial work undertaken by utility companies.

ASPHALT / MACADAM

Bitmac / Macadam has been used fairly extensively as a pavement surfacing material, notably in less high profile central streets, such as East Street and West Street. Whilst this material enjoys the virtues of being cheap, resilient and versatile, it is nevertheless a utilitarian material associated with standard highways, with few distinctive qualities unless dressed with gravel or chippings. As noted above it has also been used to patch up excavations made by utility companies and others.

Red pigment has been applied to highlight the cycle route in Broad Street. This unsubtle colour adds a further inappropriate material to the streetscape undermining the historic integrity of this street and contributing to the visual confusion.

PAVING MATERIALS

BRICK PAVERS

A few examples of historic brick paving survive in private courtyards and back alleys. Hereford owes much of its historic legacy of fine red brick architecture to the extensive seams of Downtonian Red Marls and the resulting brickworks in the County such as Holmer, Pontrilas, Leominster as well as around Hereford itself.

Modern wire-cut red brindle brick pavers have been laid extensively in pedestrianised streets around the City Centre, notably in High Town, Commercial Street, Maylord Street and Gomond Street. Extensive areas of undifferentiated brickwork in streets such as Commercial Street have begun to fail, and give a flat and souless character to the space. The introduction of some brick trims provides some visual quality in Maylord Street. The more durable quality of clay brick pavers have fared better than the concrete materials. Although not an ideal material for Hereford, it is likely that brick pavers may play a secondary role for future paving policy in the City Centre.



Modern brick pavers on Maylord Street, pattern of bricks provides some visual quality and interest to the street

KERBS

Few original stone kerbs survive in the City Centre, and most of the kerbs are standard pre-cast concrete. A few examples of “conservation kerbs” have been used in places. In a few places, such as Widemarsh Street, stone kerbs survive as flush drainage channels.

TACTILE PAVING

Surfacing at crossing points is generally pre-cast concrete blister paved modules coloured buff / yellow as contrast. In addition there is pre-cast corduroy type hazard warning paving along both King Street and High Town to demarcate between vehicle and pedestrian areas.

As in many towns, the use of tactile surfaces has been applied haphazardly over time, and the language lacks clarity and consistency. The pre-cast concrete blister paving has deteriorated badly in many places. There are opportunities from the development of the Streetscape Strategy to introduce a coherent language of guidance materials, either cut into the paving or applied in suitable metal studwork.



Evidence of original wide stone kerb stones



Example of typical cracked and faded tactile paving





**RECOMMENDED PAVING PRINCIPLES
HIERARCHY OF STREETS**

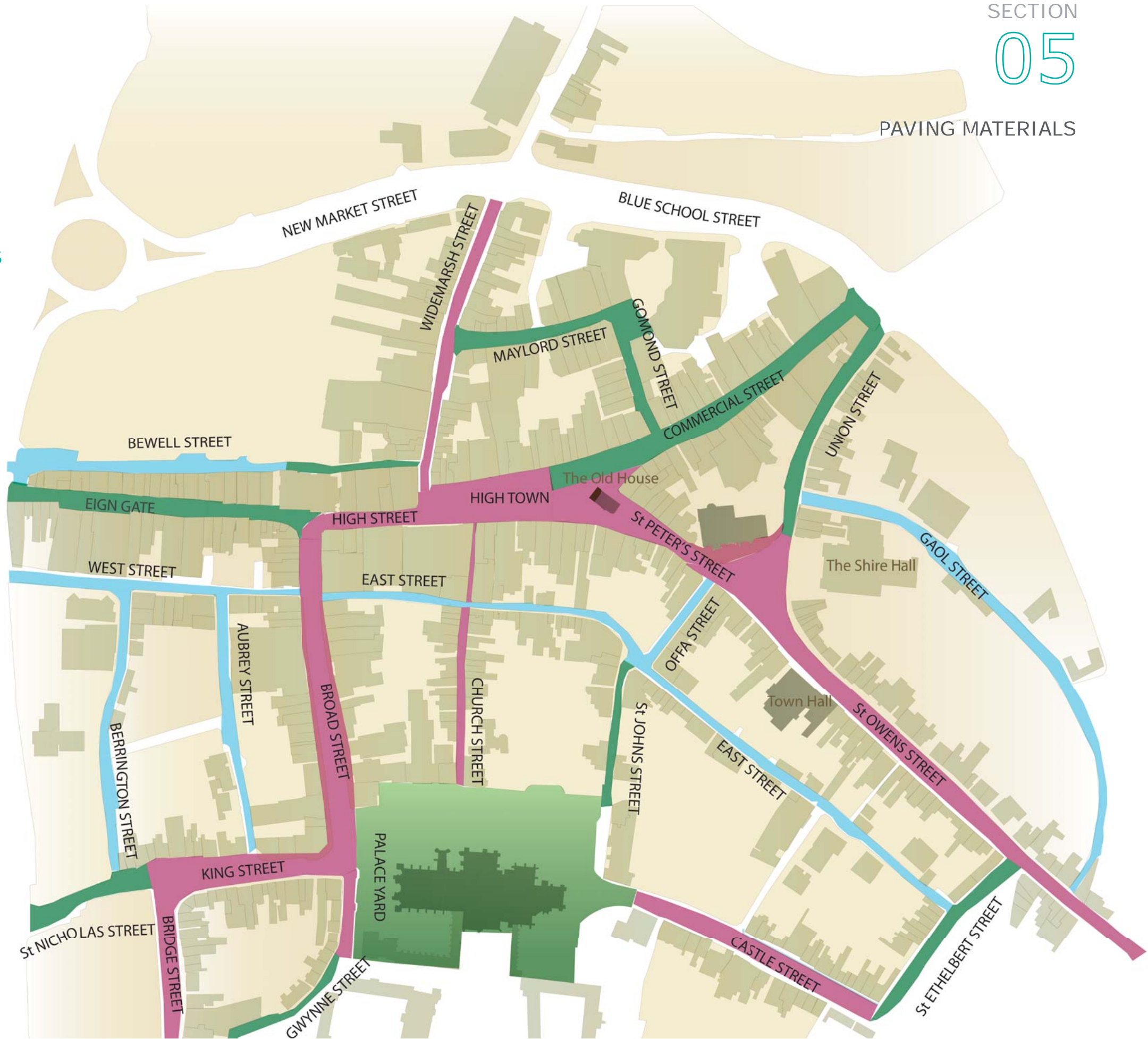
The lack of a consistent or dominant quality paving in Hereford lends urgency to the need to establish a palette of materials that will be durable, sustainable and appropriate to the historic quality of the built fabric.

A simple hierarchy of street forms is recommended to reflect different roles within the overall network. Such a hierarchy will both inform priorities and reflect budgetary realities. As a general principle, there will be an assumption in favour of tackling smaller areas to a high standard, rather than reducing quality across the City as a whole.

It is proposed that a suite of paving materials is established for city centre pavements and carriageways based on the following hierarchy:

KEY

-  Category A
-  Category B
-  Category C
-  Hereford Cathedral Close



PAVING MATERIALS

PRINCIPAL STREETS (CATEGORY A)

These comprise main thoroughfares, which are also at the heart of the historic context of Hereford. These might include:

- High Town
- St Owen St
- Broad St
- Widemarsh St
- King St
- Bridge St
- Castle St
- Church St
- Palace Yard

For these principal streets it is crucial that the paving materials compliment the historic context of the city. For this reason it is recommended that all pedestrian paving should be natural stone. Natural stone not only has aesthetic and timeless qualities which are essential in an historic environment but its durability and wearing qualities provide value for money over the longer term.

Both geographically and geologically Hereford is well placed to take advantage of the local stone. Pennant sandstone is quarried close by in the Forest of Dean as well as in South Wales. Pennant sandstone would seem the most appropriate stone to specify. It can be supplied both as flags, or setts, the latter usually being more suited to trafficked surfaces. It can also be supplied as kerbing. As part of the design process, consideration will need to be given to a number of detailed factors including:

- Appearance: riven or sawn
- Laying pattern: regular or random sizes
- Supply: call-off time and reliability of quarry
- Specification: ability of quarry to supply to specified tolerances

In some instances it may also be appropriate to introduce granite, either as kerb units or as setts. These can be supplied in a number of shades of grey / silver and pink, and finishes including flamed, split and picked.

SECONDARY STREETS (CATEGORY B)

These would comprise commercial and residential streets which also enjoy some historic context. These might include:

- Commercial St
- Eign Gate
- Maylord St
- Gomond St
- Union St
- St Ethelbert St
- St John St
- Offa St
- St Nicholas St
- Bewell St (part)

In view of the historic context of many of these streets, as well as the aim to achieve a coherent streetscape, the natural stone referred to for Category A is the preferred option. In some instances an appropriate alternative might be clay brick pavers. However these would need to be carefully selected to present an aged character which complements the mellow orange bricks evident in many of the traditional buildings of Hereford. In this respect Belgian clay pavers, supplied by Vande Moortel, should be considered, as well as the Dutch range, supplied by Hardscape.

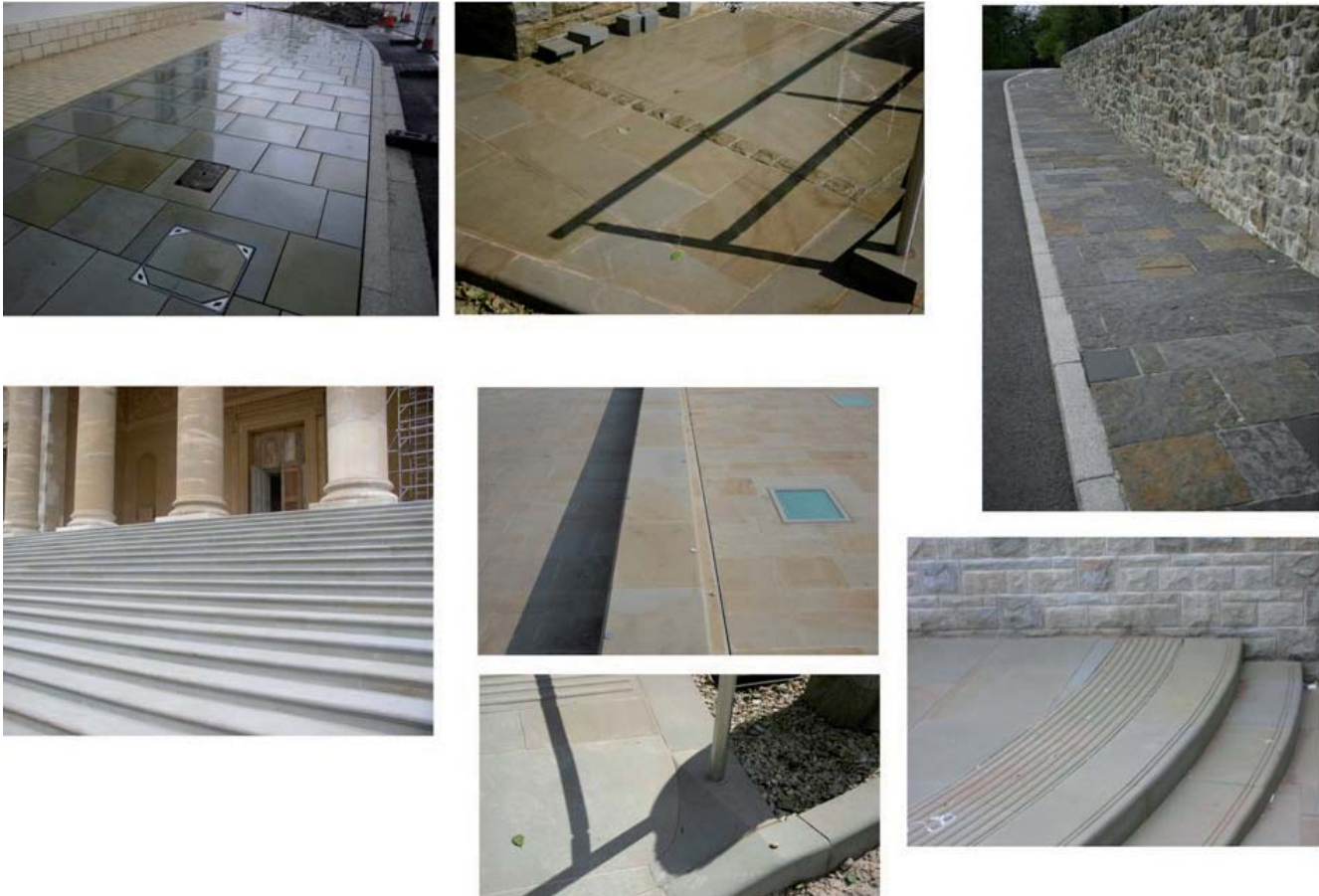
TERTIARY STREETS (CATEGORY C)

These would comprise those streets which may be regarded as minor thoroughfares and which generally give access to residential and commercial properties. These include:

- East St
- West St
- Aubrey St
- Berrington St
- Gaol St
- Bewell St (part)

Whilst a more cost efficient approach to materials selection should be a priority, materials should nonetheless complement their surroundings and contribute positively to the streetscape. In this instance pre-cast concrete flags, pavers and kerbing are appropriate. Once again they need to be carefully selected to reflect the character and scale of each street, as well as the vernacular of the adjacent buildings.

“For these principal streets it is crucial that the paving materials compliment the historic context of the city. For this reason it is recommended that all pedestrian paving should be natural stone.”



Pennant Sandstone from the Forest of Dean is a locally produced, robust paving material that will contribute much to the quality of townscape in Hereford for generations to come



An example of high quality materials and simple street design help to frame key views of statues and landmarks in Edinburgh

PAVING MATERIALS

CRITICAL STREET RENOVATIONS

The upgrading of the former ring-road, such as New Market Street and Blueschool Street, will require the introduction of some additional materials and details in order to respond to the particular widths and complexity of these busier arteries.

SIMPLICITY AND CONSISTENCY

Paving techniques and materials will aim to provide a language appropriate for a variety of contexts, loadings and circumstances. The range of materials will be restricted to the minimum necessary in order to establish a consistent quality to Hereford's streetscapes and allow for long-term replacement and maintenance.



Ahrensburg, Germany. A simple combination of robust natural materials

SELECTION OF MATERIALS

The selection of paving materials will require careful consideration by the Herefordshire Council with advice from a number of specialists and suppliers. Feedback and experience from initial schemes will help review and refine the selection of sources and suppliers. Decisions will be based on a range of factors, including:

- Local traditions and historic qualities
- Durability and robustness
- Aesthetic quality
- Availability and security of supply
- Life-time cost, including maintenance costs
- Likely available paving skills

SOURCING AND STOCKS

The requirements for consistency may require ensuring that materials are available from a number of independent sources. The ability of the Council and its contractors to store adequate reserves of materials will be an important consideration.

TRANSITIONS BETWEEN MATERIALS

Particular care will be given to the points of transition between different materials. Wherever possible, transition of materials should coincide with changes in building form or building lines. The jointing between materials will be carefully detailed to minimise differential wear and to avoid arbitrary or sudden transitions.

INSPECTION COVERS

Where opportunities arise, inspection covers should be rebuilt to align with the grain of any paving materials. Particular care should be given to the use of flush covers that allow paving patterns to continue across inspection covers, and to avoid infill around openings in smaller materials.

DRAINAGE

All paving should be carefully designed to channel surface water to consistent lines, either along kerb lines, or to central drainage channels. Particular account should be taken of increasing risk of extreme conditions arising from climate change and potential flooding.



Simple, robust drainage details can help to remove water from the street and promote the quality of the streetscape

GRADE CHANGES

The topography of Hereford reduces the need for substantial changes in levels. Paving design and detailing should aim to avoid any significant changes in grade in order to maintain a coherent and consistent barrier-free streetscape with maximum accessibility.



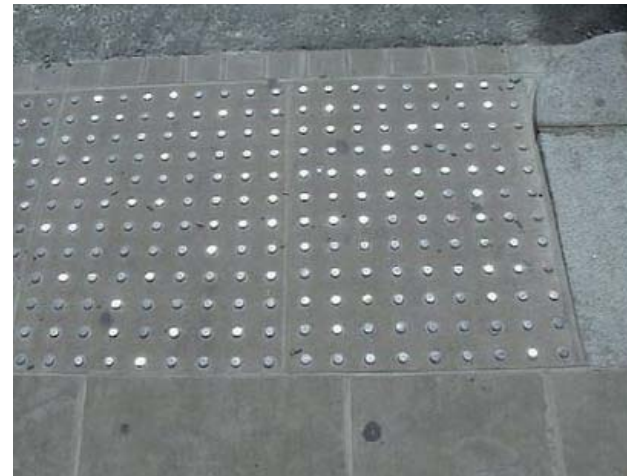
Drainage can also form part of the design of the street as a means of emphasising orientation and street geometry. (Zutphen, Netherlands)

SECTION 05

PAVING MATERIALS

TACTILE CLUES

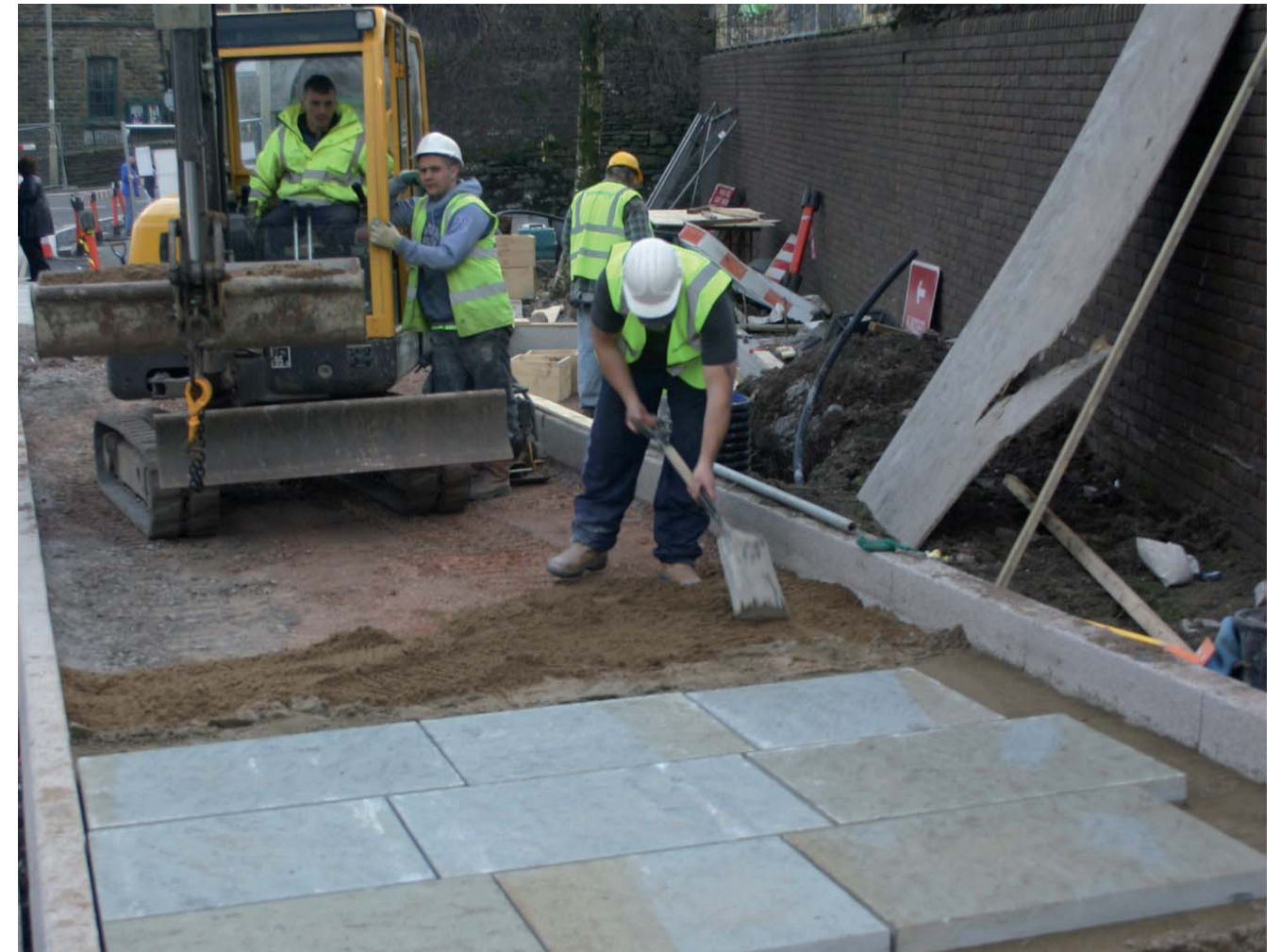
The selection and detailing of paving should include careful attention to maximising guidance and navigational clues for blind or partially-sighted people. Linear guidance may be included to reinforce kerb lines and to warn of changes and transition points. In all primary and secondary streets such guidance should be integrated into the paving.



There are a variety of ways of integrating effective and more attractive tactile paving that will have a much longer life span.

SKILLS AND TRAINING

The quality of paving will largely depend on the skills available amongst local contractors and specialist pavers. The lack of traditions for higher quality paving in the area underpins the importance of promoting local training initiatives to raise standards of skills and workmanship associated with good streetscapes.



The main contractor must have the necessary skills required to carry out the works to a high standard



6.0 STREET FURNITURE

Street furniture is an important part of the wider streetscape. The style, siting and number of items of street furniture needs to be carefully considered. The Streetscape Manual will develop the following principles.

STREET FURNITURE

Good quality, contemporary, robust and consistent street furniture will be selected. Items of street furniture will generally be kept to a minimum. It is important that each item is considered as an integral part of the overall proposals for any given project, and that the gradual accrual of street furniture is avoided. Wherever space permits, street furniture should be positioned within a well-defined strip parallel to the kerb.

CYCLE STANDS

Simple “Sheffield” stands will be installed to provide well-distributed secure bicycle parking throughout the City. Such stands will be grouped in small numbers, and spaced sufficiently far apart to allow street cleaning to occur and to avoid creating large barriers. Cycle stands can also be positioned to protect trees, and to discourage inappropriate parking.



Simple Sheffield cycle stands

BINS

The design and selection of rubbish bins should be carefully coordinated with those involved in the street cleansing and waste. Bins should be covered to avoid collecting water or snow, and be positioned at a discrete distance from benches and gathering points. Wherever possible, bins will be wall mounted or attached to other items of street furniture.

BENCHES

The provision of benches can add to the vitality of streets and encourage greater pedestrian activity. Seats and benches will be designed and located to take advantage of the natural flow of a street or public space, and to face outwards into the street.



New Road, Brighton. Benches positioned to take advantage of the flow of the street

BOLLARDS

There will be a general presumption against the excessive use of bollards. Where they are essential for protecting buildings or guiding vehicles, they should be designed and selected to be robust, easily maintained, and to provide additional benefits. They may, for example, incorporate small information signs, or be profiled to provide informal seating.



Effective use of bollards can reduce clutter and contribute to clutter which detracts from the quality of the buildings. Well designed and coordinated, they can define space, limit inappropriate parking and guide traffic.
(Top left and Top Right: Hereford. Bottom Left: Sheffield. Bottom Right: Bilbao)

STREET TRADING

The design and management of streets will aim to maximise trading and exchange in the public realm. The temporary use of streetscapes for trade displays, cafés and temporary events will be encouraged. However any screens or other equipment should be capable of removal without damaging the general paving, and planned to minimise any disruption or unnecessary barriers. Shop front trading spaces will be defined by discrete paving details, and items such as 'A' boards will be carefully controlled.



Carefully controlled street trading in Copenhagen

PEDESTRIAN GUARDRAILS

Recent research has raised significant doubts about the safety benefits of pedestrian guardrailing. The principle of low-speed movement renders their use unnecessary for the City Centre. Consistent with the policy of minimising barriers, the use of pedestrian guardrails will be avoided throughout the City Centre, and existing lengths gradually removed.



Existing guardrails in Hereford limiting movement



Direct crossings without guardrails in Nottingham



7.0 LIGHTING

Lighting design will be carefully integrated into the design of each and every streetscape project. Whilst the design and selection of fittings will evolve as technology develops, a number of key principles can be established to inform the development of the Streetscape Manual.

SMALLER, LOW HEIGHT FITTINGS

Standard high level highway lighting will be avoided within the boundaries of the City Centre. Lower height fittings improve the pedestrian environment, and a variety of sources and opportunities for lighting will be encouraged.

INDIRECT LIGHTING

Lighting should be designed to illuminate and reflect from building and other surfaces, rather than providing direct vertical light. Lighting should aim to animate and enhance the architecture and built environment of the City, and to highlight key buildings and spaces.

BUILDING MOUNTED FITTING

Every opportunity should be taken to agree simple wayleave agreements to allow fittings to be sensitively mounted on buildings. This saves long term maintenance and capital costs, and reduces street clutter.

HIGHLIGHT SPACES AND INTERSECTIONS

Lighting provision will seek to avoid bland provision of even, minimum lighting. Contrast between lower lit and brighter focal points will be used to accentuate the form and legibility of the City's streetscapes.

FLOOR LIGHTING

Hereford's Streetscape Manual will aim to exploit recent developments in lighting technology that allow the use of robust, low-voltage Halogen and LED lighting to provide uplighters where appropriate. Discrete kerb and paving lighting may provide opportunities to enhance guidance for partially sighted people.



Illumination plan for Oxford Westgate illustrating the principle of highlighting spaces and intersections



Building mounted lighting can help to reduce the number of items on the street



Sensitive and subtle building mounted lighting to illuminate the street and shopfronts



Lighting can highlight routes and spaces giving a greater sense of safety in the evening



Inset lighting can highlight features such as steps, trees, public art and needs to be considered as part of the broader lighting strategy



8.0 SIGNS, MARKINGS AND SIGNALS

Matching the quality of streetscape, with the quality of townscape in Hereford, will require street designers to carefully consider the impact of signs, markings and signals on future schemes.

ALL BUT ESSENTIAL ROAD MARKINGS

The principle of low-speed design for the City Centre permits a robust policy to be introduced that will minimise the use, and size, of traffic signs and other markings. The forthcoming review by the Department of Transport is likely to increase the scope for minimising the use of traffic signs and markings in urban areas. The Streetscape Manual will aim to avoid all but the most essential road markings. Where these are needed in order to guide or inform, they will be carefully integrated into the paving design. Traffic signs will be kept to the minimum size and number, and will be incorporated into other street furniture and building wherever opportunities arise. Improvements in reflective surfacing avoid the need to individually illuminate traffic signs.

Traffic signals are unnecessary for low-speed urban environments. No further signals will be installed, and a gradual programme for their removal will be introduced as funds and opportunities arise.



Disabled parking bay in Edinburgh illustrates how a simple approach to regulations and signage can be adopted in the UK in contrast to the use of painted yellow road markings



CONTROLLING PARKING

The Streetscape Manual will promote and exploit the potential for creating a “Restricted Parking Zone” throughout the boundaries of Hereford. This may initially apply to the Central Area, and be expanded as opportunities permit. An RPZ permits the definition of defined parking spaces, and avoids the necessity for yellow lines, signs and other parking restrictions.

On-street parking in the City Centre will be limited to short-term deliveries and collection, and to the provision of some parking for disabled people.

The definition of parking spaces will be agreed and defined for each streetscape project. Spaces will be defined so that the paving and detailing defines them clearly, so that they are not perceived as part of the carriageway. Long blocks of parking will be avoided.



RPZ's can result in parking areas which do not require the display of individual parking regulation notices and better looking streets



9.0 TREES AND PLANTING

Section 9.0 illustrates how trees and planting can contribute to the quality of the environment in Hereford

TREES AND PLANTING

THE ROLE OF TREES IN HEREFORD

Hereford is a city of intricate streets of varying widths and form. There are few long avenues or sweeping boulevards, and the character of Hereford arises from interlocking street patterns framed and enclosed by handsome buildings. With the exception of the bank of the River Wye, the Cathedral Close and Castle, trees do not play an especially significant part on Hereford's city centre streetscapes. With a few exceptions, extensive lines of trees and planting are not likely to be a key component of the City Centre.

IMPROVING CONNECTIONS AND LANDMARKS WITH TREES

Outside the line of the city walls, the wider Victorian and 20th century streetscapes offer greater opportunities for consistently managed street planting. Street trees offer the potential for contributing to clear legibility for radial routes and key links, such as the connection between the Railway Station and the City Centre along Commercial Road. They can also serve a useful role in providing landmarks and reinforcing a sense of place at key points in the street network.



Frankfurter Strasse, Hennes, Germany highlights the positive impact that trees can make on urban environmental quality

GREENING THE CONCRETE COLLAR

Longer term plans to upgrade the quality and overcome the barrier effect of the inner ring road (New Market Street, Blue School Street, Bath Street, Victoria Streets etc) are likely to require trees to play a significant role in a future strategy. The wider scale of the inner ring road and the critical task of overcoming the disadvantages imposed on the city by this collar suggest that larger scale tree planting and associated landscaping will be central to any regeneration proposals.

In addition to the well-documented environmental and ecological benefits to be gained from street trees, the implications of climate change (such as higher temperatures and more intense periods of rainfall) increase the importance of street trees in a public realm strategy.

The positioning and selection of trees needs to be carefully considered in relation to surrounding buildings, drainage, street furniture and both underground and overhead services. Long established concerns relating to the potential damage to services and buildings have largely been overcome by the advent of structural soils, root barrier systems and irrigation systems.

A more detailed guidance on the planning, selection, planting and maintenance of street trees will form a key part of the future Streetscape Manual.



Montelimar, France where trees provide shade and shelter to town centre streets and parking areas



Trees can be interspersed with street furniture to help define route and delineate spaces



SECTION

09

TREES AND PLANTING



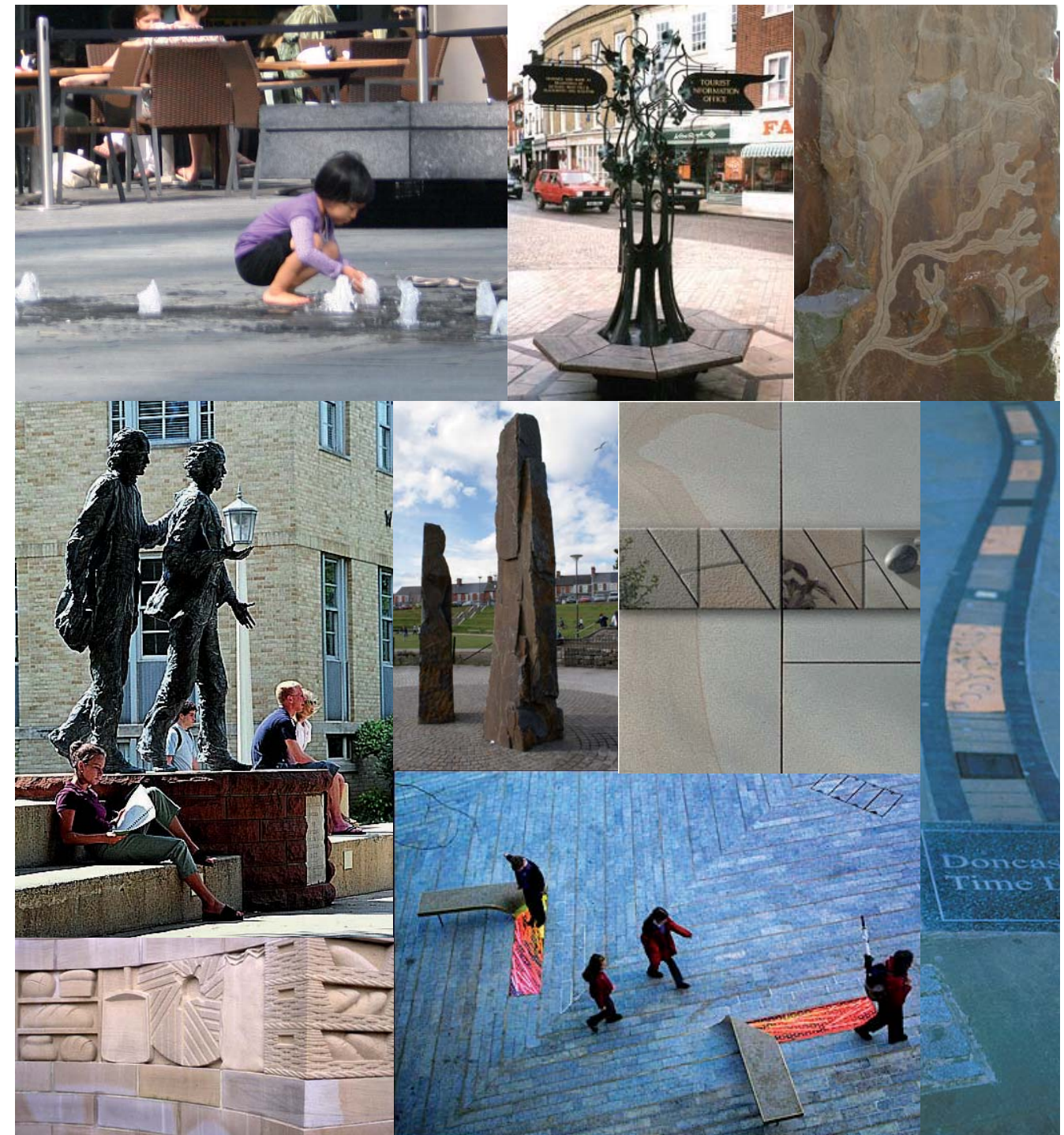
10.0 PUBLIC ART

Public art can have a significant impact on the quality of public space. Public art can contribute to creating a streetscape that is recognisable and unique whilst conveying the values and history of the town.

PUBLIC ART STRATEGY FOR HEREFORD

The regeneration, management and maintenance of Hereford's streets will be closely integrated with the development of a public art strategy for the city. Any investment in the public realm offers particular opportunities to express and communicate the distinctive qualities and characteristics that make Hereford unique.

A successful public art strategy will be closely integrated with the streetscape strategy. This requires a change in working relationship between those involved in promoting and facilitating public art, and the engineering and design professions associated with streetscapes. Rather than considering public art as an optional embellishment to be added towards the end of any street design project, the streetscape strategy will seek to set artistic creativity alongside engineering at the outset. Close collaboration between artists and other members of the design team helps avoid the tendency for ad hoc additions to the public realm and can ensure that a consistent and continuing story is seamed into the fabric of the city's streets.



Public art can be incorporated into the street scene in numerous ways. Some elements can be active and engaging where as others will be passive, adding richness to the environment.



CONCLUSIONS & SUMMARY

The following sections present an overview of the critical elements that must be considered in the development of the Streetscape Manual.

CONCLUSIONS

The regeneration of Hereford's streets and public spaces forms a critical component for the long-term vision for the City, and will be essential for maintaining and enhancing the economic and social foundation for the community. A streetscape strategy will provide the basis for establishing a set of principles which can be developed into a comprehensive manual for investment in Hereford's public realm.

The streetscape strategy requires a number of principles to underpin the approach to the regeneration of Hereford's streetscapes. These echo the findings and recommendations of the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE), and consist of five critical elements.

1. Vision

A streetscape strategy requires the development, maintenance and communication of a clear and consistent set of physical and organisational principles to express the long-term aspirations of the community.

2. Commitment

A streetscape strategy requires commitment over long delivery timescales and to the continuing management and maintenance thereafter.

3. Integration

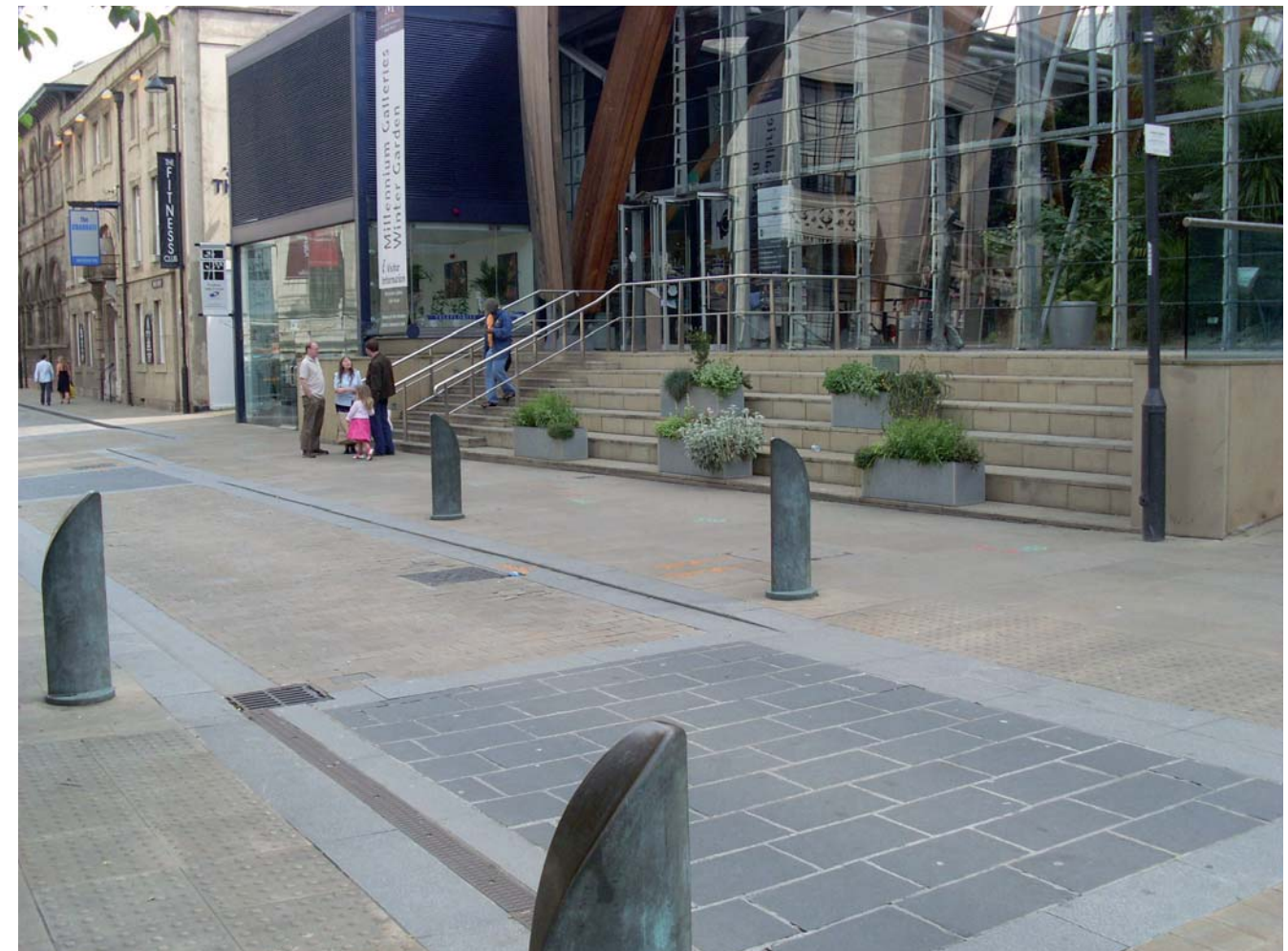
A streetscape strategy will require the organisational and professional realignment to provide seamless coordination of the many complex contributions to the public realm. This will require overcoming the separation and segregation of functions and responsibilities that have characterised streetscape management in the past.

4. Adaption

The streetscape strategy will take account of the changing economic, social and environmental demands on the public realm and provide scope to respond to the specific context and circumstances of Hereford.

5. Coherence

The streetscape manual requires projects where organisational, political and technical issues are resolved to achieve coherent and consistent design solutions.



The Streetscape Manual for Hereford is intended to reflect and respond to the wider vision for the future of the City. It is intended to be a practical document to guide and inform all those involved in the creation, enhancement, management and maintenance of the public realm. It is intended to take account of significant recent changes in approaches to the management of traffic in towns, and to recognize the increasingly critical contribution of a distinctive and attractive public realm to the longer-term prosperity and civility of towns and cities. As the County Town of Hereford, the emerging streetscape policies are intended to set standards and illustrate opportunities for other market towns and smaller villages throughout the County.

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