

# APPENDIX 03

## HEMEL HEMPSTEAD TOWN CENTRE VISION

### PUBLIC REALM OPPORTUNITIES



This Public Realm Opportunities document has been developed as a 'blue print' to help inform and direct future schemes and changes to the public realm as they come forward in a considered and holistic way. It could support future funding bids. This appendix supports the Hemel Hempstead Town Centre Vision, providing considered reflections on the areas heritage, character and spatial characteristics that are central to the development any public realm scheme.

Through the development of this document, we have set a vision, and parameters for future projects, which the council and stakeholders can work towards collectively. The creation of these ideas and interventions is not an indicator that the public sector will provide the measures suggested. Specific projects will be subject to individual detailed design processes as and when appropriate. This document forms a starting point to set out expectations around streetscape and how public realm can support the Hemel Hempstead Town Centre Vision.



HEALTH AND WELLBEING

SKILLS, SCHOOL & TECHNOLOGY

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTS

SAFETY

RESILIENCE

HEMEL IS A FAMILY OF WELCOMING NEIGHBOURHOODS AND THRIVING COMMUNITIES. WORKING TOGETHER WE WILL SHAPE OUR FUTURE WITH CONFIDENCE.

ENTERPRISE AND ECONOMY

DBC CORPORATE VISION:

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP TO CREATE A BOROUGH WHICH ENABLES THE COMMUNITIES OF DACORUM TO THRIVE AND PROSPER

SUSTAINABILITY

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

BIODIVERSITY

CELEBRATING EXISTING ASSETS

SOCIAL VALUE

MMC



COMMUNITY COHESION

HIGH-QUALITY HOMES

MEANWHILE

# WHERE IS HEMEL

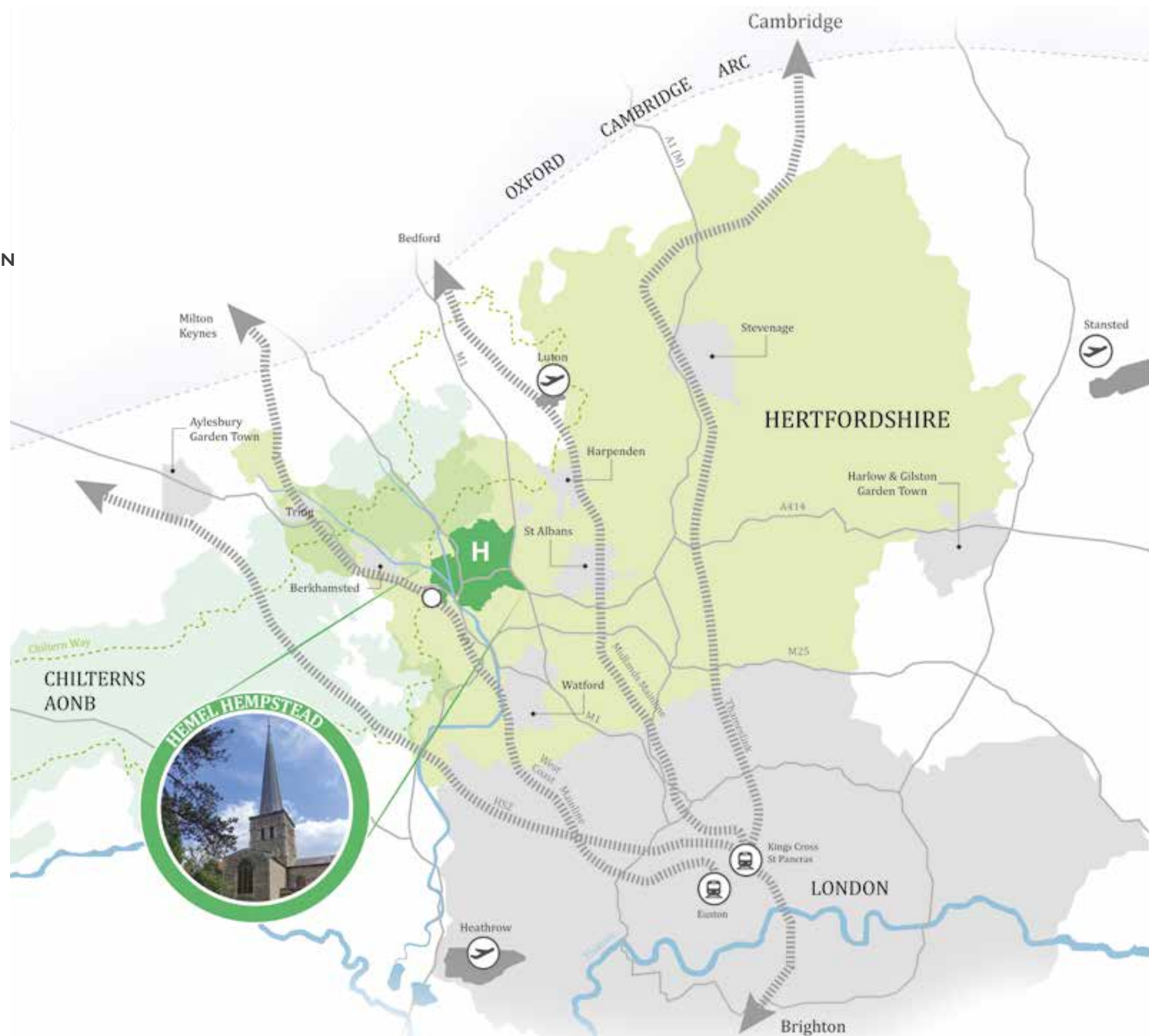
**24** MILES NORTH-WEST OF LONDON

**1539** HENRY VIII GRANTED A CHARTER OF INCORPORATION TO HEMEL HEMPSTEAD

**93,591** HEMEL HEMPSTEAD POPULATION\*

**26** MINUTES  
EUSTON STATION

**25** MINUTES  
LUTON AIRPORT

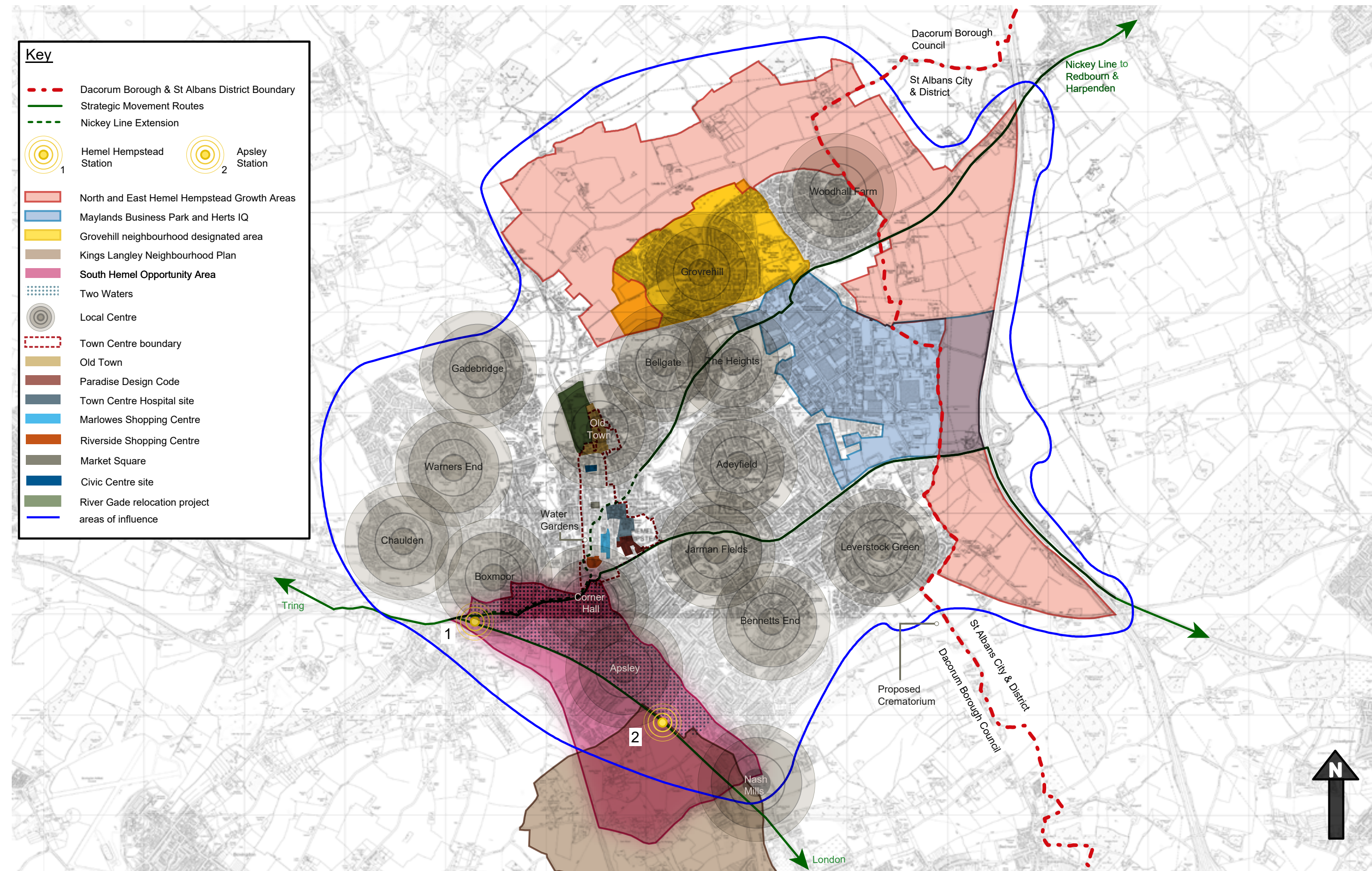


# HEMEL HEMPSTEAD

# HEMEL HEMPSTEAD

# HEMEL BUBBLE PLAN

- Key**
- Dacorum Borough & St Albans District Boundary
  - Strategic Movement Routes
  - Nickey Line Extension
  - Hemel Hempstead Station
  - Apsley Station
  - North and East Hemel Hempstead Growth Areas
  - Maylands Business Park and Herts IQ
  - Grovehill neighbourhood designated area
  - Kings Langley Neighbourhood Plan
  - South Hemel Opportunity Area
  - Two Waters
  - Local Centre
  - Town Centre boundary
  - Old Town
  - Paradise Design Code
  - Town Centre Hospital site
  - Marlowes Shopping Centre
  - Riverside Shopping Centre
  - Market Square
  - Civic Centre site
  - River Gade relocation project areas of influence



\*Dacorum Borough Council Data Dashboard - Hemel Hempstead total population in 2019

Hemel Hempstead Town Centre was established in the 1950s and 1960s as part of the Masterplan for the Hemel Hempstead New Town. The centre is linear in form and runs north to south along the valley floor. Geoffrey Jellicoe created the original plan based around the idea of a town in a park with generous open spaces in and around the town centre and the residential neighbourhoods. Whilst his Masterplan was substantially modified by the Development Corporation, his vision for the town centre was largely retained.

The main shopping area of the town centre was remodelled in the 1990s to include a pedestrianised area along Marlowes with an indoor shopping centre. Service yards flank Marlowes to the east and west.

To remedy this situation specific issues need to be addressed including the poor quality public realm characterised by dated frontages, surfaces and street furniture, and access and movement difficulties such as relate to pedestrians, cyclists, buses, taxis and private vehicles. The town centre has an underdeveloped evening and leisure economy and is failing to make the most of its natural and cultural assets. Regeneration and upgrading of key sites together with restoration of heritage assets is required to help secure the town centre's long-term prosperity and to create an appealing, attractive and sustainable location with a high quality environment.

By 1962 the New Town Masterplan was substantially complete. Today, Hemel Hempstead rivals Watford as Hertfordshire's largest town with a population of around 94,000.



aerial view of Hemel Town Centre

The Local Planning Framework Core Strategy identified seven distinct but interlinked zones with the town centre, each with a clear identity and character. These comprise the Old Town, the civic and educational area of the college and public sector uses along with the Market Square, the original area of Marlowes, the primary retail area along Marlowes, the Hospital and light industrial area of Paradise, the Water Gardens and the large scale buildings around the Plough roundabout. Accordingly, these seven areas are identified as individual "Character Zones" within the Core Strategy.

There is a marked difference between the Old Town in the north and the new town centre to the south. The Old Town is centred upon the High Street with its rich heritage and historic character. The High Street contains a concentration of listed buildings and is protected as a key part of the Old Town Conservation Area. In contrast, the primary shopping area focussed at the southern end of the town centre along Marlowes and the adjacent Water Gardens (registered in 2010 as a Garden of Special Historic Interest) exhibit a strong New Town character.



view of the High Street in Hemel Old Town



view of Marlowes pedestrian area in the new town centre



view of the Walled Gardens in Gadebridge Park looking north towards the spire of St Mary's Church



view of Jellicoe Water Gardens looking south toward the Kodac tower

The main areas for investment are in Hemel Hempstead town centre, spanning an area from the Old Town Hall in the north to Bank Court in the South. This represents a coherent strategy that will integrate the currently separate components of the town centre so that the whole is more than the sum of the parts.

This area can be sub-divided into the following areas of focus: Town Centre South and Town Centre North

Town Centre South - Including the opportunity areas of Bank Court and Waterhouse Street

Proposed improvements in Town Centre South include:

- improved lighting
- a dedicated cycle route and shared surface treatment with more and safer crossings on Waterhouse Street
- public realm enhancements at Bank Court to promote food and beverage uses
- enhancement of East-West links between the Marlowes and Water Gardens heritage feature
- creation of new green spaces and planting to enhance biodiversity
- new seating
- improved bus stops
- new public art
- creation of a heritage and wellbeing trail
- a meanwhile use project to be delivered on Market Square, complemented by the development of a meanwhile use strategy for the town centre as a whole (identification of sites, projects, uses and partners with a delivery strategy) and delivery of the identified projects.



**1. BANK COURT**

This historic financial centre of Hemel Hempstead, Bank Court is an attractive plaza with classic “New Town” architecture.



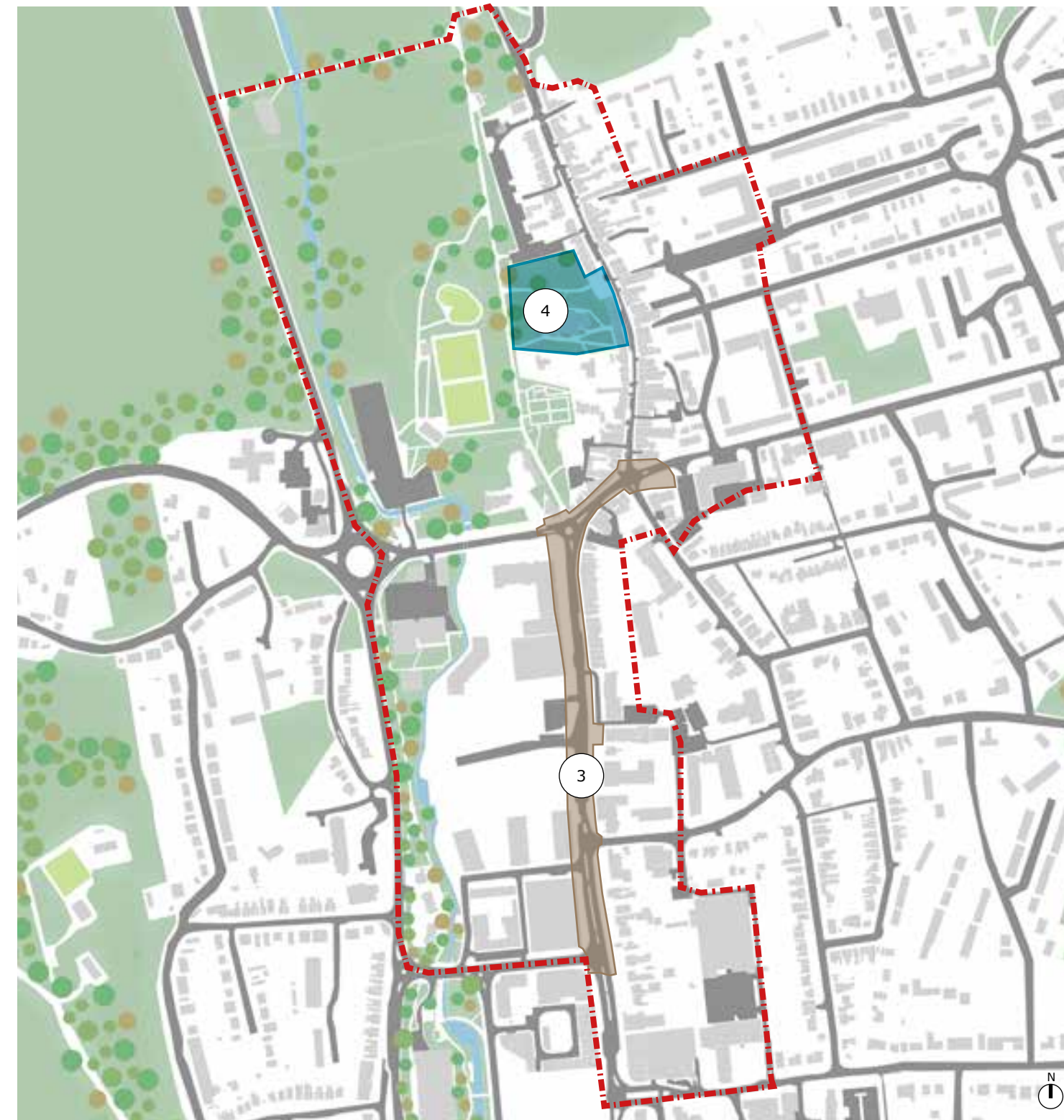
**2. WATERHOUSE STREET**

Running parallel to the Marlowes Parade, Waterhouse Street abuts Bank Court and the Water Gardens.



Hemel Hempstead Town Centre - South Area

- Town Centre South
- Bank Court opportunity area
- Waterhouse Street opportunity area



Hemel Hempstead Town Centre - North Area

- Town Centre North
- Upper Marlowes opportunity area
- St Mary's Square and Old Town Hall opportunity area



**3. UPPER MARLOWES**

Upper Marlowes reflects Hemel Hempstead's varied architecture with old and new developments alongside one another.



**4. ST MARY'S SQUARE AND OLD TOWN HALL**

The original town square acts as the focal point for the community, situated between the Old Town high street and St Mary's Churchyard and Gadebridge Park. On the southern side of the square is located the Old Town Hall, a theatrical and cultural events venue located at the heart of Hemel Old Town.

Town Centre North - Including the opportunity areas of Upper Marlowes and St Mary's Square and the Old Town Hall.

Proposed improvements in Town Centre North include:

- creation of dedicated cycle lanes and shared surface treatments and pavement improvements
- improvement to existing green space including enhanced biodiversity
- new public art and improved bus stop
- a heritage and wellbeing trail
- new seating and a new playful crossing feature
- enhanced East-West connections including between the Old Town and Gadebridge Park
- Removal of parking in St Marys Square and improve attractiveness of area

Benefits

The above outputs will achieve the following benefits:

- Increased visitor numbers and footfall across the town centre
- Improve connection between main destinations in Town Centre, Marlowes shopping area, Old Town, Water Gardens and Gadebridge Park
- Greater visitor dwell times and levels of spend
- Reduction in town centre voids
- Uplift in property values, incentivising investment and promoting development and better use of underused sites and properties
- Increased community participation in activities
- Enhanced air quality and resident health
- Greater pride in the town centre through an improved environment that celebrates the town's identity
- Greater safety, reduced crime and fear of crime
- Increased range of activities in the town including an evening economy and use of public realm for community events
- Increase attractiveness of Hemel Hempstead and reframe reputation to be a choice for leisure and investors

# I. BANK COURT - VISION FOR A NEW CAFE' QUARTER

Bank Court was the financial centre, and remains the geographic centre of the New Town. Residents would meet here and go about their business. It is centrally located between the Marlowes Parade and Waterhouse Street, and still experiences high footfall. However, as times have changed the way residents use high streets have changed. Bank Court needs to be brought into the 2020s. Displaying the very best of Hemel Hempstead's New Town architecture, Bank Court has the potential to be the new recreation heart of the town. Utilising the sheltered outdoor space close to attractive buildings and the Water Gardens, Bank Court could be Hemel's new Café Quarter. It can also serve as a strategic East-West route between Waterhouse Street and the Marlowes.

The components of the proposed interventions at Bank Court are:

- enhancement of the public realm at Bank Court to create a strategic East-West route between Waterhouse Street and the Marlowes and to encourage economic activity with the objective of becoming Hemel's new Café Quarter,
- building on the site's New Town architecture and views to the Water Gardens
- enhanced lighting, pedestrian and cycle links
- creation of shared surfaces, planting and seating
- creation of biodiverse green spaces



Hemel Hempstead Town Centre - South Area

--- Town Centre boundary  
 Bank Court opportunity area

# I. BANK COURT - VISION FOR A NEW CAFE' QUARTER

Bank Court Yesterday



Bank Court Today



# I. BANK COURT - EXISTING CONDITION

- 1 Liberty Tea Rooms and Community Centre
- 2 Coral Bookmakers
- 3 Jenny's Restaurant and Take Away
- 4 Computer Care
- 5 A.T. Nails
- 6 Caffè Nero
- 7 The Hospice of St Francis
- 8 Vodafone



- 9 Willow
  - 10 La Belle beauty lounge
  - 11 NatWest Bank
  - 12 NatWest Bank
  - 13 Barclays Bank
- Bank Court site boundary: 4,760 sqm    
  Active frontage    
  Inactive frontage    
  Access to residential property    
  Access to commercial property

NOTE: The information shown on these pages is indicative only and subject to measured survey verification

# I. BANK COURT - EXISTING CONDITION



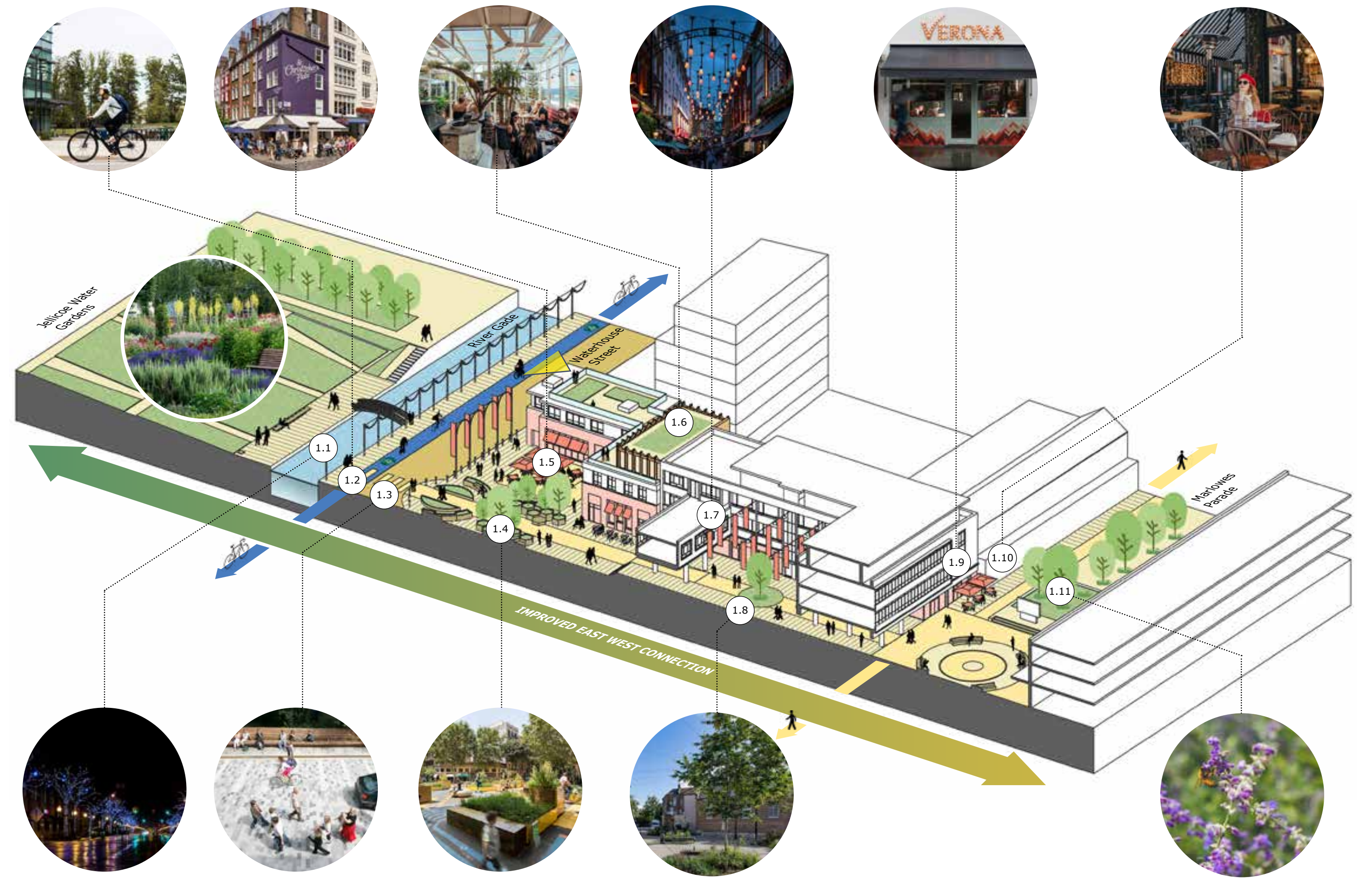
- CONSTRAINTS**
- Bank Court has some architectural challenges, with the low ceiling of the entry point from Marlowes, old/ weathered materials, and size limitations.
  - It is part residential with restrictions around noise, light, and opening times. From a pedestrian's point of view, it is difficult to see Bank Court from the Marlowes.

- OPPORTUNITIES**
- Designed by Jellicoe as the centre of the New Town, Bank Court has an embodied advantage for development. It is prominent, walkable, and safe for residents with great potential for leisure and recreation use, especially café culture.
  - Bank Court has the best view of the Water Gardens, and is the prime demonstration of the "town in a garden" spirit.



I. BANK COURT - VISION FOR A NEW CAFE' QUARTER

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I. BANK COURT - VISION FOR A NEW CAFE' QUARTER



- 1.1 Improvement of the lighting along the River Gade to improve the walkability of Waterhouse Street without compromising the wildlife of the river
- 1.2 Creation of a dedicated cycle route along Waterhouse Street to promote and support active and sustainable means of travel
- 1.3 Potential to transform part of Waterhouse Street in a shared surface street in order to improve the walking experience along the River Gade and support the creation of a café quarter
- 1.4 Public realm upgrades in the Bank Court pedestrian area by introducing new planters and seating areas
- 1.5 The Bank Court to be the 'new western entrance' to the Town Centre. Potential to relocate the banks in the Marlowes shopping area and replace the banks with cafés and restaurants
- 1.6 Potential to maximise the use of the terrace above the bank court buildings by introducing rooftop bars/restaurants with views looking towards the Jellivoe Water Gardens (interventions not to be included in the LUF cost plan as buildings are not in DBC ownership)
- 1.7 Improve the east-west connection between Water Garden-Bank Court-Marlowes by introducing suspended seasonal art and lighting installation
- 1.8 Introduction of a new green space at the heart of the courtyard to reinstate the original Jellivoe concept, improve the public realm and give to the Bank Court residents the opportunity to look into a new green area
- 1.9 Promote improvement works to shop front and development of a new design guide is helping to raise the standard of shop fronts and signs across the Town Centre
- 1.10 Promote the installation of high quality seating area in the Marlowes Parade to facilitate the creation of a cafe'/restaurant quarter
- 1.11 Improve the biodiversity of existing green areas in the Marlowes parade by planting new plant species, flowers and trees
- 1.12 New lamp post banners to enhance the new entrance to the Town Centre. Intervention to create a vibrant gateway, including an art commission which celebrates the local identity of Bank Court.

## 2. WATERHOUSE STREET - PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS

Waterhouse Street occupies an underused area in the town centre. Situated between the Jellicoe Water Gardens to the East and the Marlowes to the West, Waterhouse Street has unique characteristics for Hemel Hempstead. Imaginative repurposing and bold design interventions along Waterhouse Street is key to enhancing East-West connectivity in the town centre.

Currently, Waterhouse Street is a barrier between the Marlowes and the Water Gardens. It is a vehicle-dominated road running parallel to the pedestrianised high street, dividing open public spaces. Developing enhanced connections between Waterhouse Street and sites one and two would greatly improve accessibility to the Water Gardens, and embrace Jellicoe's original New Town principles of a town in a garden.

The components of the proposed interventions along Waterhouse Street are:

- Improvements to Waterhouse Street to enhance East-West connectivity
- improving accessibility between the Water Gardens and the rest of the town centre through shared surface treatments
- attractive street furniture
- enhanced cycle and pedestrian facilities
- paving improvements
- improved bus stops
- parklets
- heritage and wellbeing trails
- new public art



Hemel Hempstead Town Centre - South Area

--- Town Centre boundary  
 Waterhouse Street opportunity area

## 2. WATERHOUSE STREET - EXISTING CONDITION

Waterhouse Street Yesterday



Waterhouse Street Today



## 2. WATERHOUSE STREET - EXISTING CONDITION



Waterhouse Street map - existing condition

NOTE: The information shown on these pages is indicative only and subject to measured survey verification

Waterhouse Street site boundary

## 2. WATERHOUSE STREET - EXISTING CONDITION



Waterhouse Street aerial view

### CONSTRAINTS

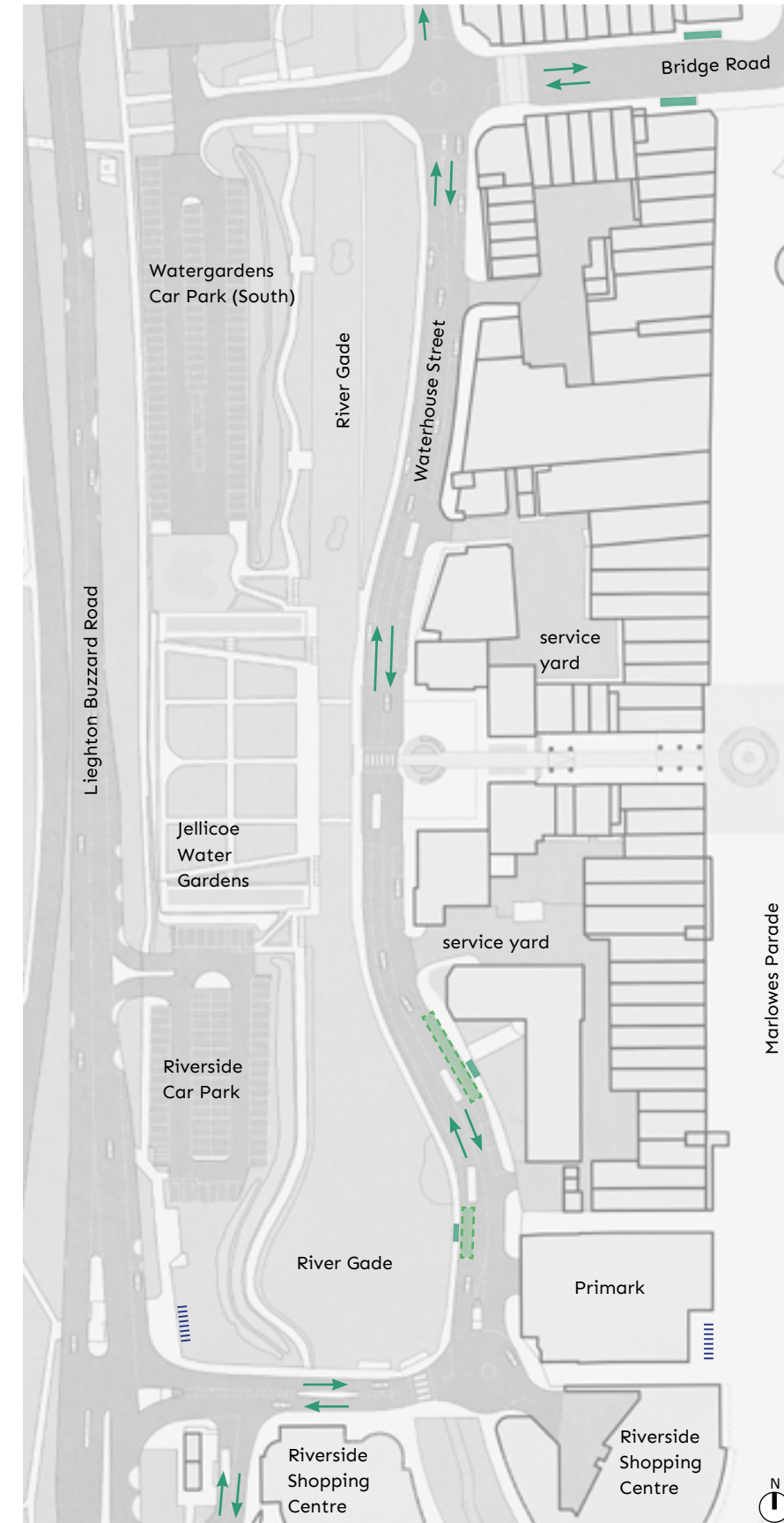
- Heading north, Waterhouse Street is taxi and bus only from Moor End Road to Bridge Street. Heading south it is one-way for private vehicles from Bridge Street as well.
- There are only three pedestrian bridges over the River Gade along this section: two opposite Bank Court and one being Bridge Street itself.
- The street is regularly used as access for deliveries to the back of retail units fronting onto the Marlowes.

### OPPORTUNITIES

- Waterhouse Street is the perfect site for dedicated sustainable and active travel routes. The Marlowes Parade, running parallel to Waterhouse Street, is already pedestrianised and well used.
- As modes of personal transport modes such as cycles and electric scooters grow in popularity, Waterhouse Street could host dedicated cycle/scooter lanes, avoiding the explicitly pedestrianised areas. This would improve safety for residents and make the town centre more accessible.
- Extending these active travel pathways to Hemel Hempstead station through Station Road and London Road will improve overall connectivity in Hemel Hempstead.
- Areas such as Bank Court, Riverside shopping centre, and passageways either side of Primark can be developed into new East-West connections to improved areas of public realm, with shared surfaces and attractive street furniture.

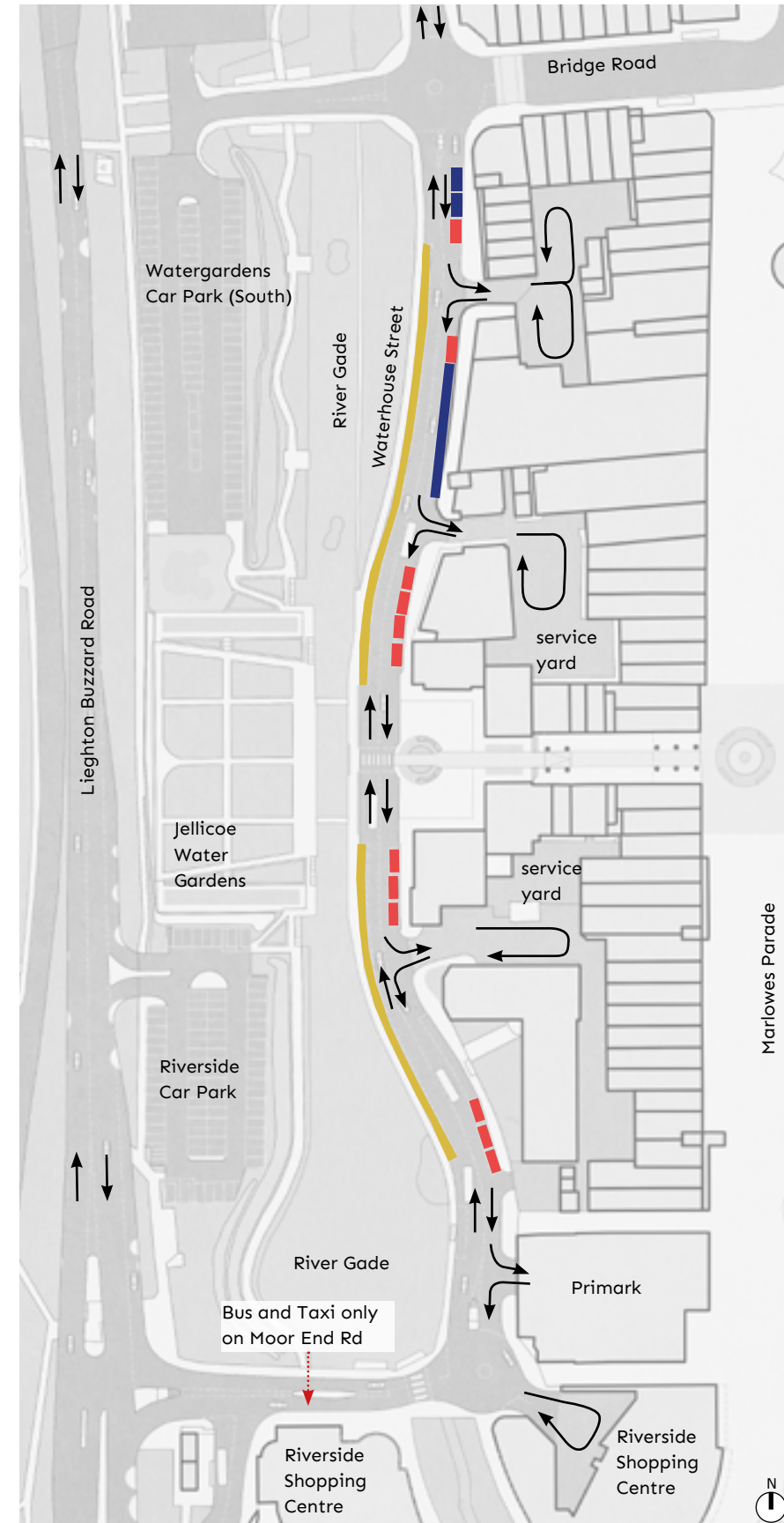
## 2. WATERHOUSE STREET - EXISTING CONDITION

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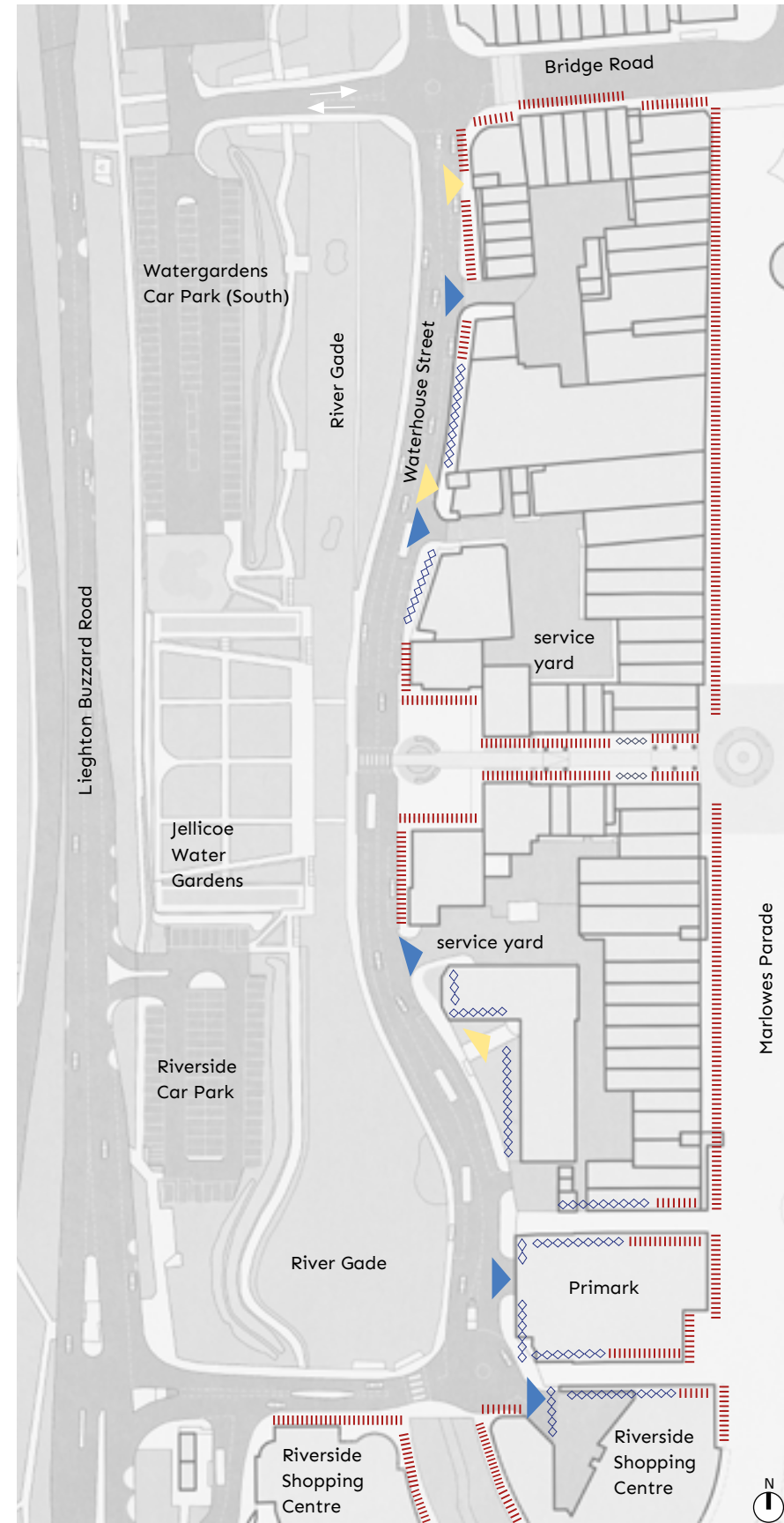
Waterhouse Street map - existing bus routes

- Existing bus routes
- existing bus stop
- existing cycle racks
- existing bus stop area



Waterhouse Street map - existing servicing and parking

- servicing routes
- accessible parking bay
- traditional parking bay
- taxi parking bay

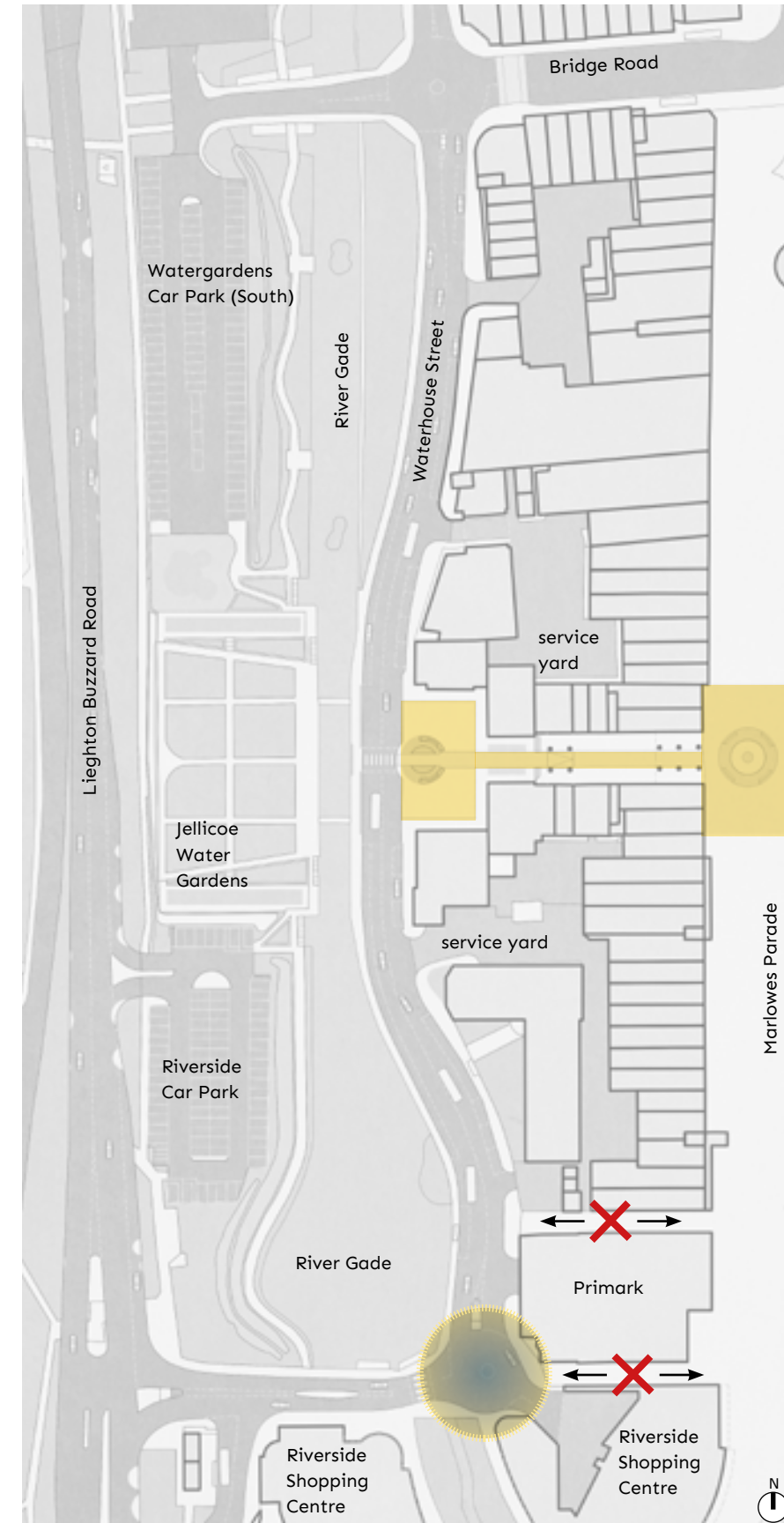


Waterhouse Street map - existing street frontages

- Existing active street frontages to be maintained
- Inactive street frontage
- ▶ Access to residential properties along Waterhouse Street
- ▶ delivery access along Waterhouse Street

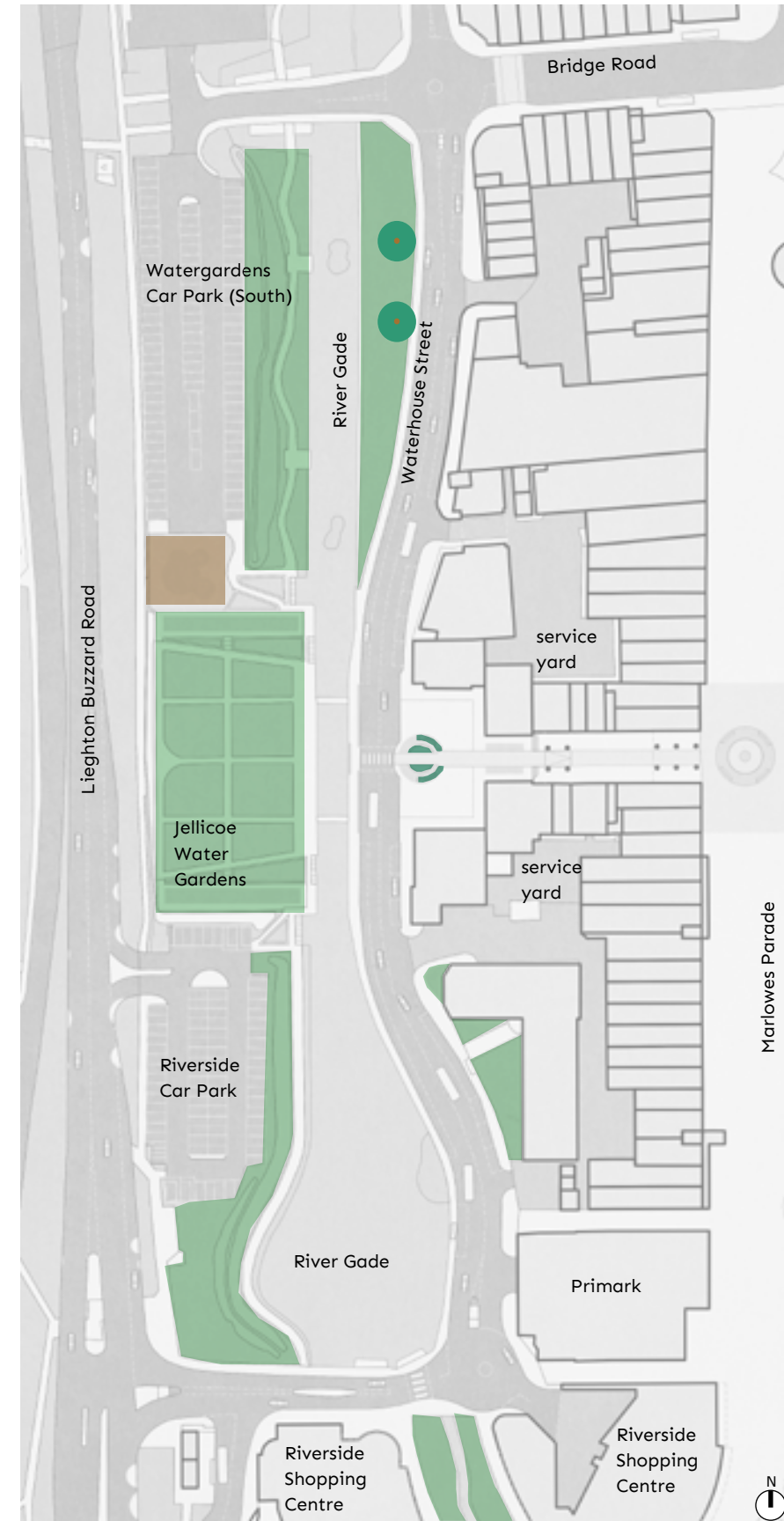
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## 2. WATERHOUSE STREET - EXISTING CONDITION



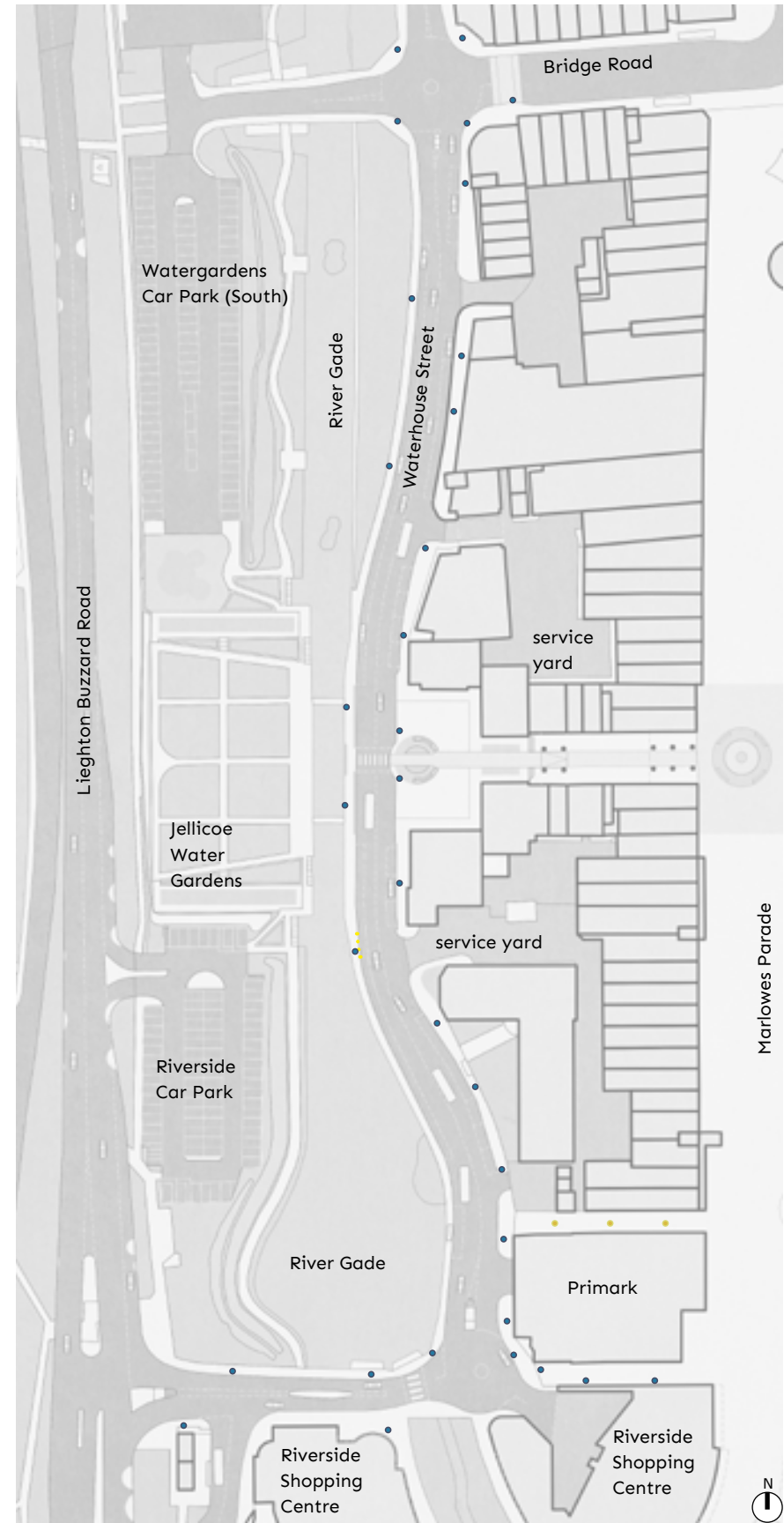
Waterhouse Street map - road and pavement surface

- good quality pavement area
- area with potential but perceived as back of house space and lack of proper drop off point
- X lack of connection between Marlowes Parade and Waterhouse Street



Waterhouse Street map - existing green spaces

- existing green space
- existing light touch greening and benches
- existing trees along Waterhouse Street
- existing play area

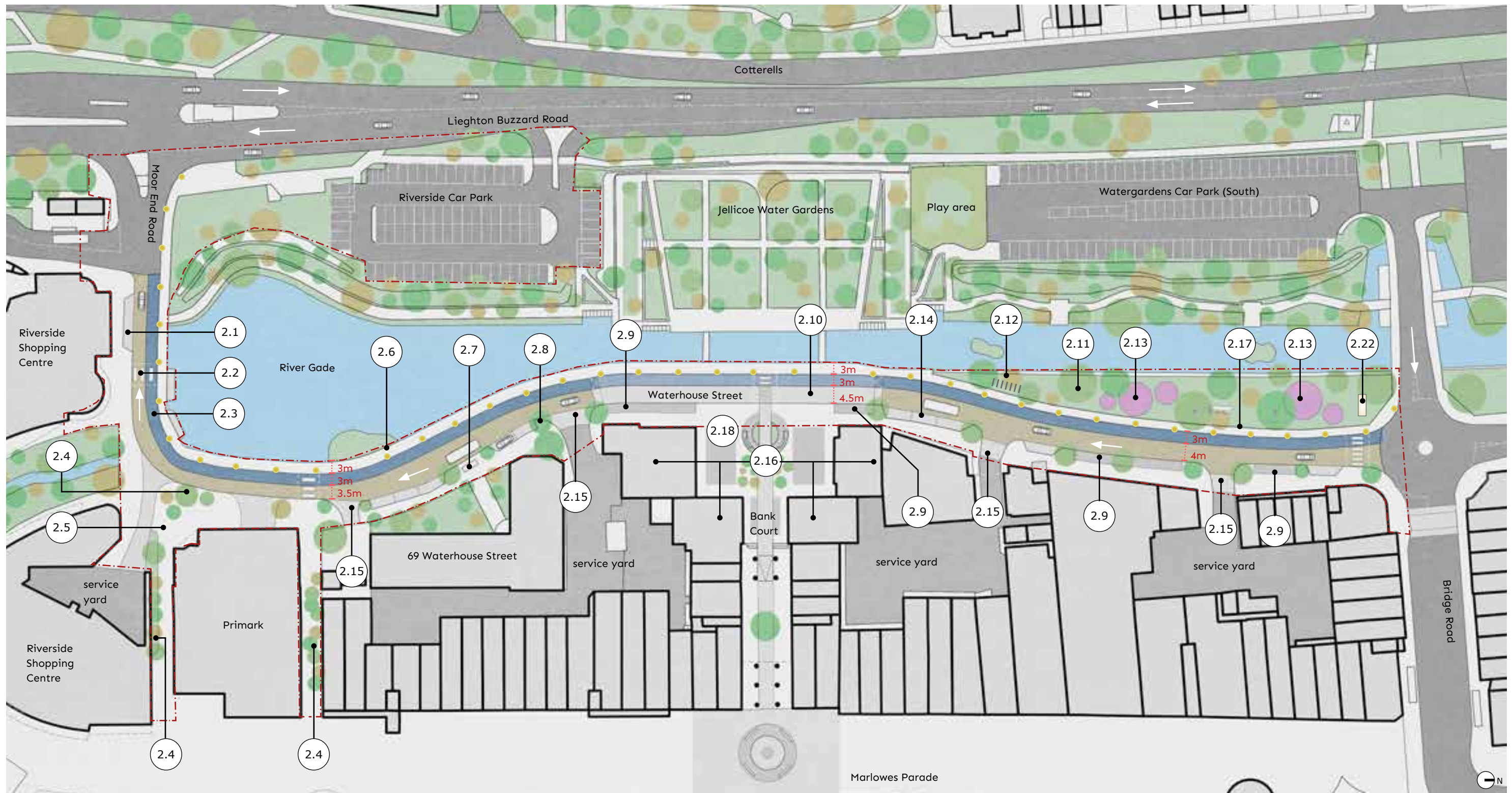


Waterhouse Street map - existing lighting

- existing light fitting type 1
- existing light fitting type 2

## 2. WATERHOUSE STREET - PROPOSED PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS

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Waterhouse Street map - proposed public realm interventions

NOTE: The information shown on these pages is indicative only and subject to measured survey verification

Waterhouse Street site boundary

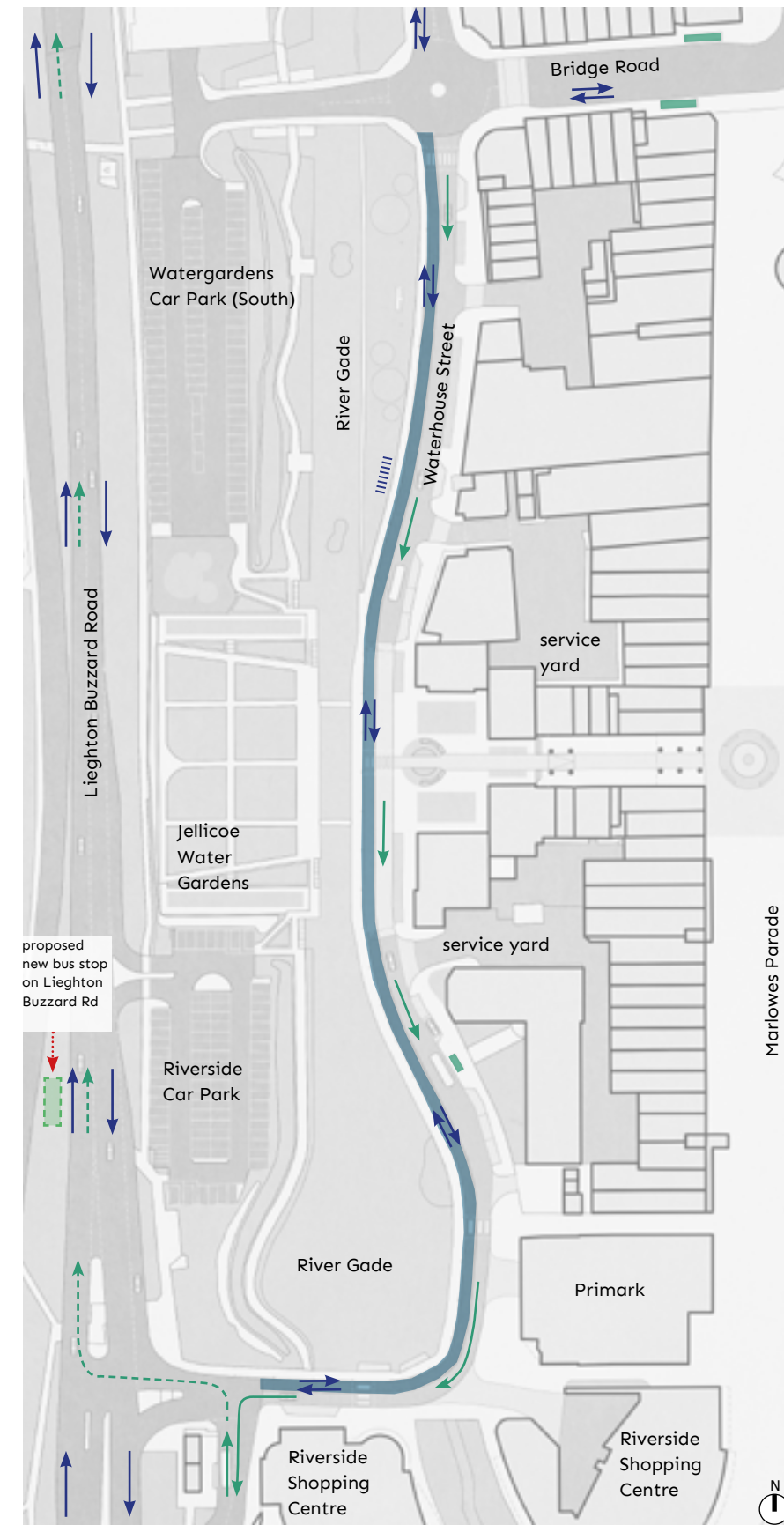
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## 2. WATERHOUSE STREET - PROPOSED PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS

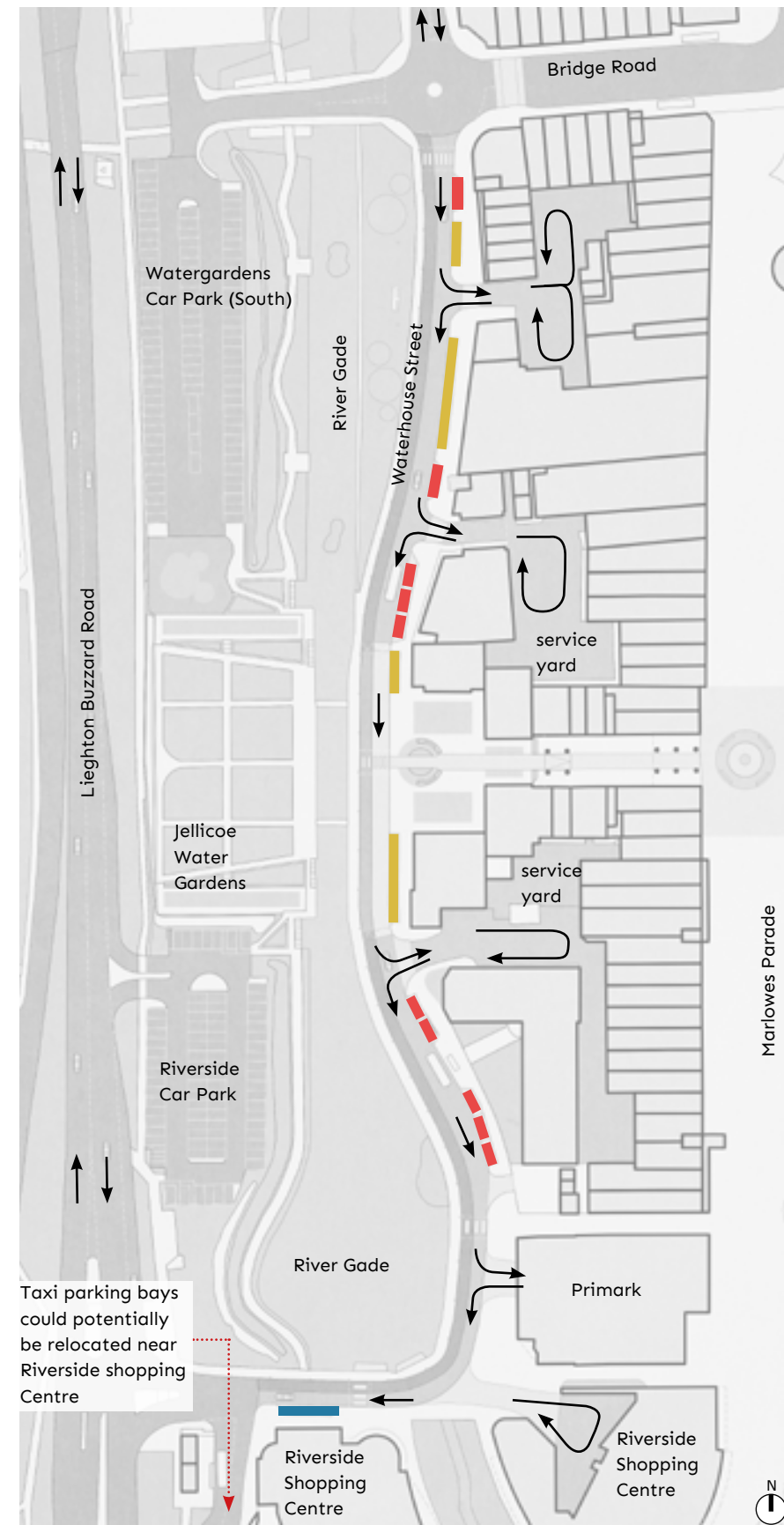
- 2.1 Pavement improvements: increase width and quality of pavement and creation of a dedicated drop-off and pick-up point
- 2.2 Playful crossing: Introduce a playful crossing feature to enhance the walking experience along Waterhouse Street
- 2.3 Cycle experience improvements: Improve quality of paving along bridge to provide a legible and safe pedestrian and two-way cycle route, including clear demarcation between vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians.
- 2.4 Light touch greening: Incorporate planting within the street to enhance the pedestrian environment.
- 2.5 Paving improvements: Improve the pavements to make the area more attractive for all users and to enhance supporting activity. Shared surface area to allow to vehicular/delivery access to Riverside Shopping Centre and Primark building
- 2.6 Improved lighting: Improve the provision of lighting to increase safety and legibility of routes. New lighting to improve the walkability of Waterhouse Street without compromising the wildlife of the river
- 2.7 Improved bus stop: Improve current bus stop on Waterhouse Street to make it more colourful and inviting
- 2.8 Enhancing ecology and biodiversity: Improve and further develop greener and more ecological edges and spaces long Waterhouse Street by adding new trees and green edges
- 2.9 Parklets: Integration of parklets, stalls and/or movable planters into car park spaces to increase activities and greening in the street
- 2.10 Pavement improvements: create a shared surface area in front of Water Gardens in order to improve connection with Bank Court and make the area more attractive for all users and to enhance supporting activities
- 2.11 Enhancing ecology and biodiversity: improve existing green space by adding new trees, plants and flowers to improve biodiversity
- 2.12 Cycle experience improvements: provide new cycle parking space to support cyclists
- 2.13 Play and wellbeing street: Provide playful stopping points along the river walk along with exercise area to promote health and wellbeing
- 2.14 Accessibility improvements: maintain same quantity of accessible parking bays along Waterhouse Street improving the quality of the parking street surface
- 2.15 Level street crossings: Provide continuous pedestrian footways across side roads to prioritise pedestrians and improve safety.
- 2.16 Highlighting local landmarks: Highlight historic buildings and landmarks by adding feature lighting. Development of heritage trail to bring Hemel past to life
- 2.17 Heritage and wellbeing trails: development of new wayfinding along walking and cycling routes to promote heritage and wellbeing trails (e.g. on floor signage, public art)
- 2.18 Cafe' and restaurant to spill out space: commercial units in Bank Court to use public space as external spill out space and contribute to the maintenance and upkeep
- 2.19 A new active frontage along Waterhouse Street on both corners of the Primark building and 91 Waterhouse Street (interventions not to be included in the LUF cost plan as buildings are not in DBC ownership)
- 2.20 New public art: Improve the east-west connection between Waterhouse Street and Marlowes by introducing suspended seasonal art and lighting installation on both sides of Primark building
- 2.20 Playful benches: Painting existing benches and bins to add more colours to the street
- 2.22 New public art: Creation of new artwork piece to enhance the design/visual quality of the spaces, and encourage people to pause in these shared spaces and interact to promote social wellbeing.

## 2. WATERHOUSE STREET - PROPOSED PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS

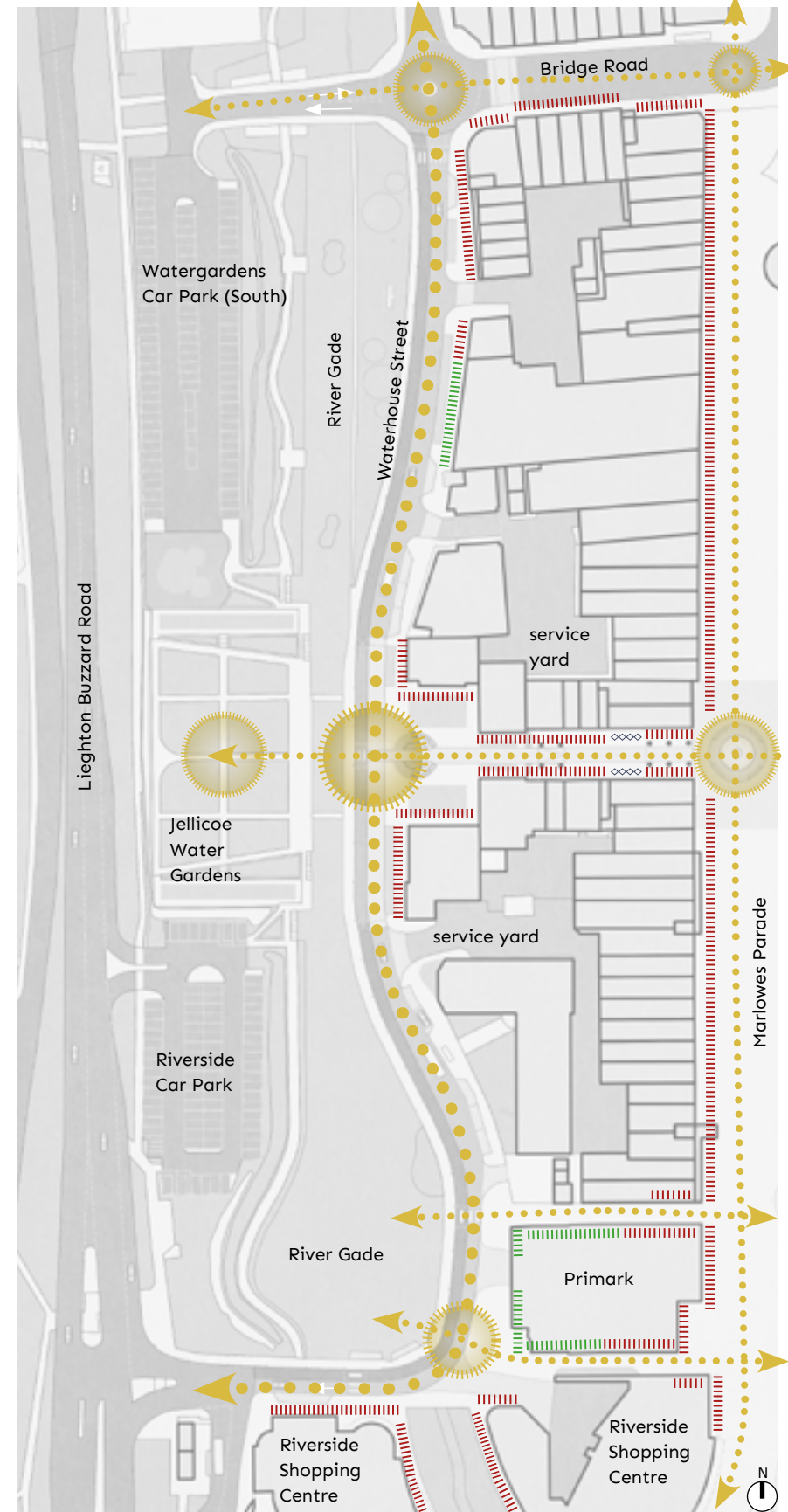
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- Waterhouse Street map - proposed bus and cycle routes
- Existing bus routes
  - existing bus stop
  - proposed cycle routes
  - cycle racks
  - Proposed bus route
  - new bus stop
  - dedicated cycle lane



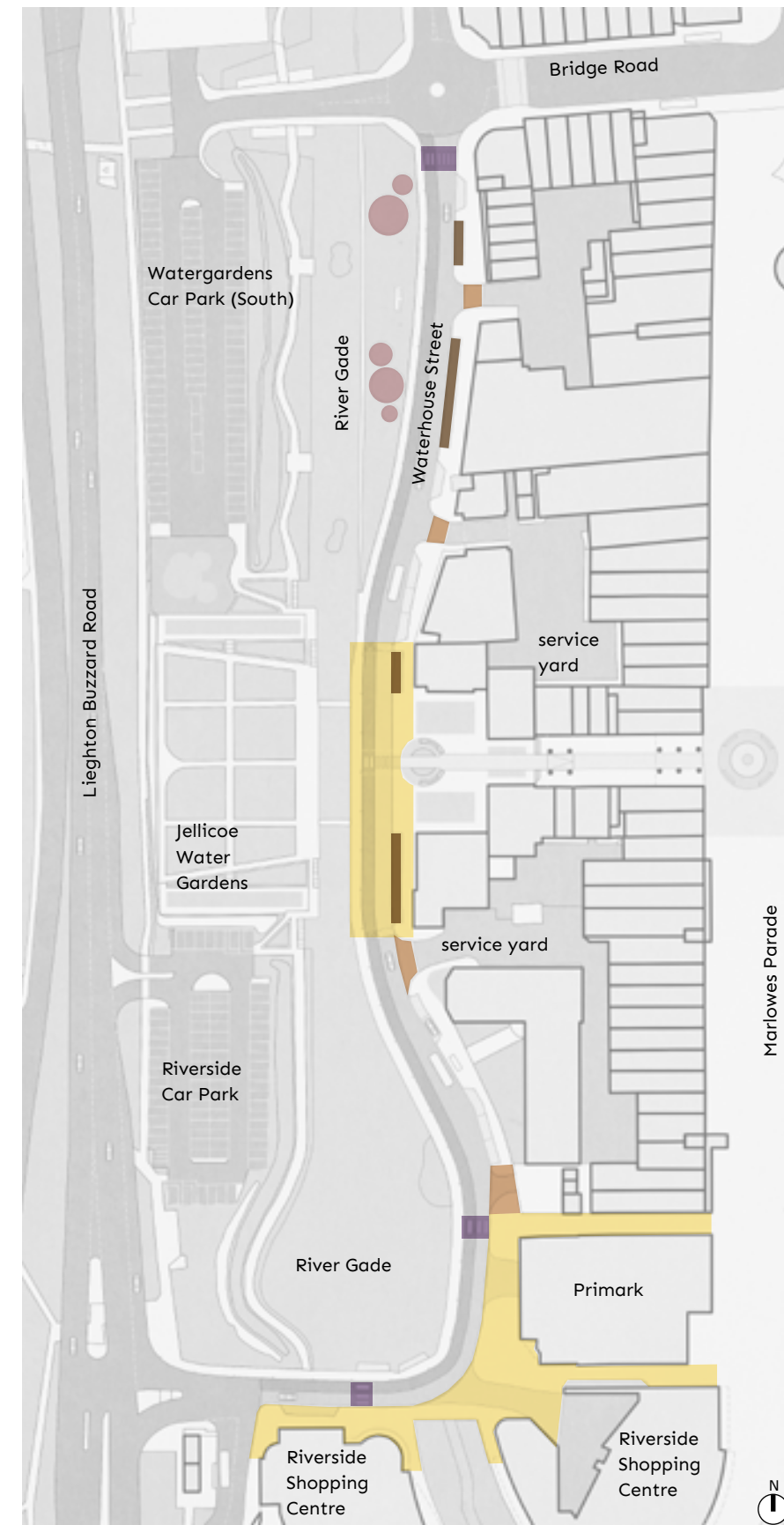
- Waterhouse Street map - proposed servicing and parking
- servicing routes
  - drop-off/pick-up point
  - accessible parking bay
  - flexible area for parklets, stalls, movable planters



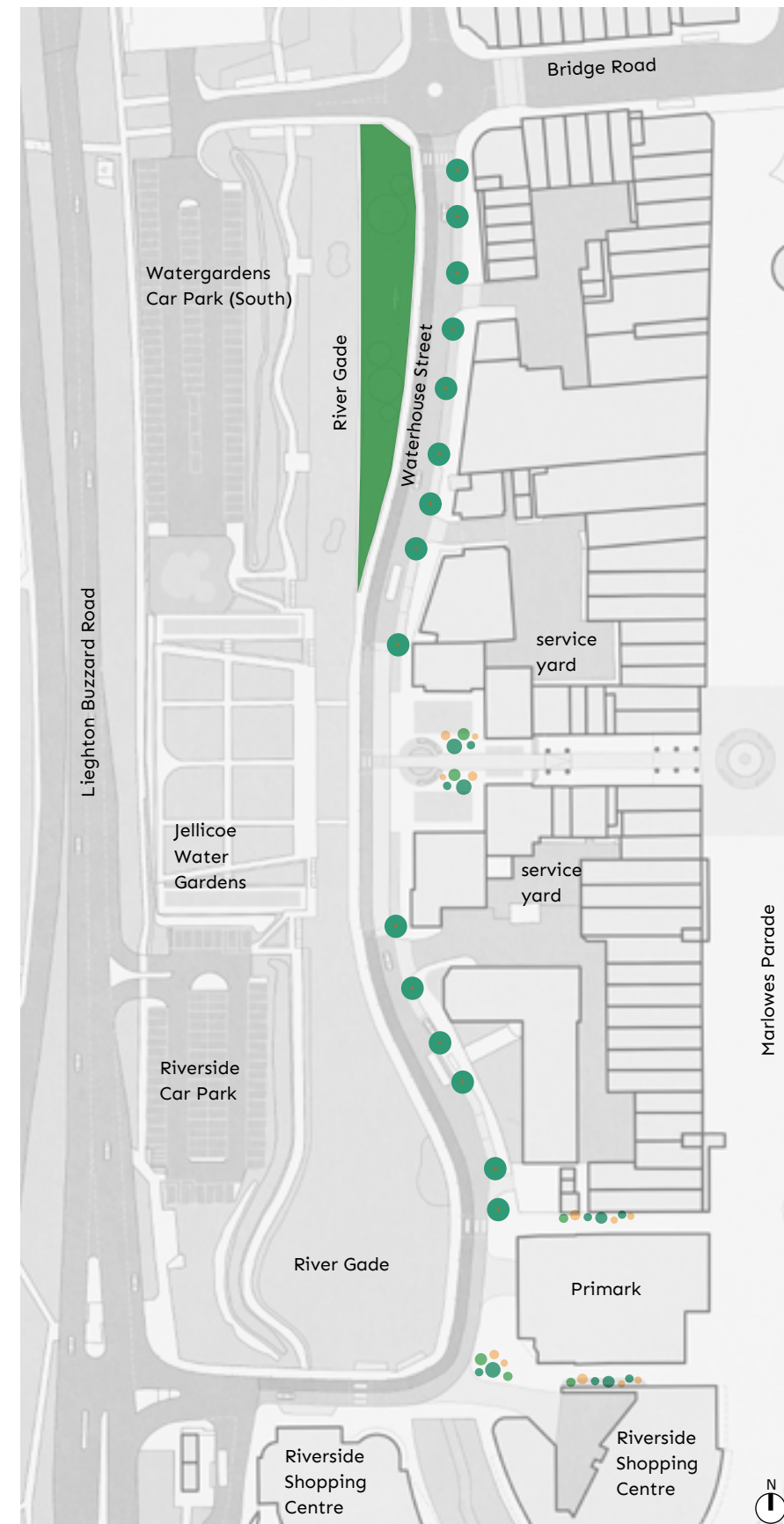
- Waterhouse Street map - active street frontages and key connections
- Existing active street frontages to be maintained
  - pedestrian connections to be enhanced
  - Proposed new active street frontages
  - focal point to be enhanced

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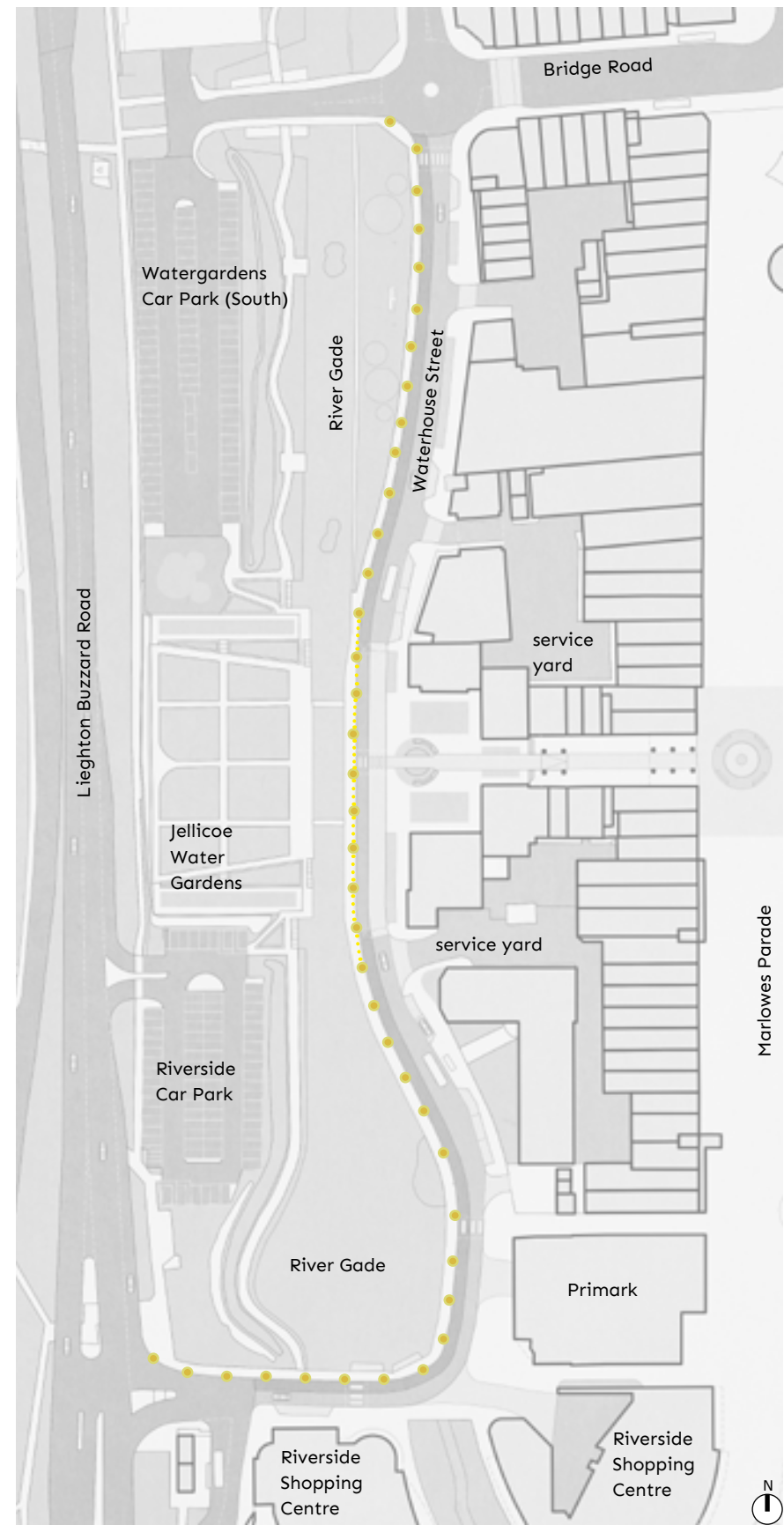
## 2. WATERHOUSE STREET - PROPOSED PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS



- Waterhouse Street map - road and pavement surface
- shared surface
  - flexible space for parklets, stalls and/or movable planters
  - level street crossing
  - outdoor exercise and play area
  - playful crossing



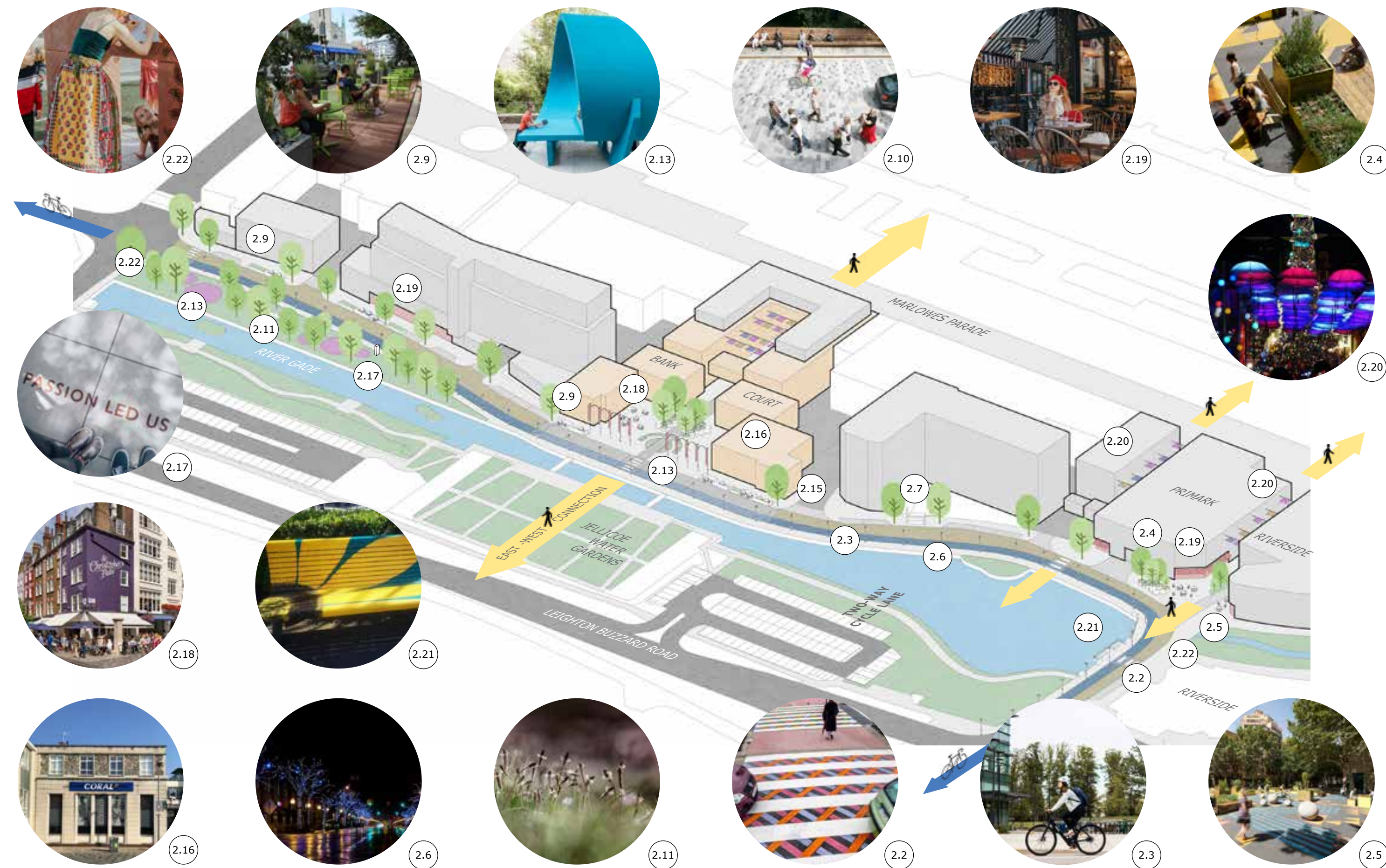
- Waterhouse Street map - proposed green spaces
- existing green space to improve with more trees, plants and flowers
  - new trees along pavement
  - light touch greening and benches



- Waterhouse Street map - proposed lighting
- a new consistent low height lighting along the pedestrian and cycle lane
  - festoon lights at Bank Court to enhance the new gateway to New Town and Marlowes Parade

## 2. WATERHOUSE STREET - PROPOSED PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS

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## 2. WATERHOUSE STREET - PROPOSED PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS



- 2.2 Playful crossing: Introduce a playful crossing feature to link towards to the linear park
- 2.3 Cycle experience improvements: Improve quality of paving along bridge to provide a legible and safe pedestrian and two-way cycle route, including clear demarcation between vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians.
- 2.4 Light touch greening: Incorporate planting within the street to enhance the pedestrian environment.
- 2.5 Shared surface area to allow to vehicular/delivery access to Riverside Shopping Centre and Primark building
- 2.6 New high quality lighting to improve the walkability of Waterhouse Street without compromising the wildlife of the river
- 2.9 Integration of parklets, stalls and/or movable planters into car park spaces to increase activities and greening in the street
- 2.10 create a shared surface area in front of Water Gardens in order to improve connection with Bank Court and make the area more attractive for all users and to enhance supporting activities
- 2.11 improve existing green space by adding new trees, plants and flowers to improve biodiversity
- 2.13 exercise area to promote health and wellbeing
- 2.16 Highlight historic buildings and landmarks by adding feature lighting. Development of heritage trail to bring Hemel past to life
- 2.17 Heritage and wellbeing trails: development of new wayfinding along walking and cycling routes to promote heritage and wellbeing trails (e.g. on floor signage, public art)
- 2.18 Cafe' and restaurant to spill out space: commercial units in Bank Court to use public space as external spill out space and contribute to the maintenance and upkeep
- 2.19 not to be included in the LUF cost plan as buildings are not in DBC ownership)
- 2.20 Improve the east-west connection between Waterhouse Street and Marlowes by introducing suspended seasonal art and lighting installation on both sides of Primark building
- 2.21 Playful benches: Painting existing benches and bins to add more colours to the street
- 2.22 Creation of a new artwork piece to enhance the quality of the spaces, and encourage people to pause in these shared spaces and interact to promote social wellbeing

### 3. UPPER MARLOWES - PROPOSED PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS

Upper Marlowes is an important site in the town centre. The street hosts a range of public services, from West Herts College, the council and library in the Forum, and the NHS health and wellbeing centre. There are several businesses based here, mostly professional services to the south, and hospitality, culture, and leisure to the north. There is significant footfall due to the nearby Gadebridge Park and the further education college. Several buildings along this site are of heritage value, such as The Bury, Old Hempstead House, and the Victorian dwellings along Upper Marlowes.

The components of the proposed interventions along Upper Marlowes are:

- enhancing the connection between the Old Town and the Marlowes through creating shared surfaces, new cycle infrastructure, heritage and wellbeing trails, pavement improvements
- creation of biodiverse green spaces, public art,
- enhanced public realm treatment around local landmark buildings
- improved bus stops



Hemel Hempstead Town Centre - North Area

--- Town Centre boundary  
 Upper Marlowes opportunity area

### 3. UPPER MARLOWES - PROPOSED PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS

Marlowes Yesterday



Marlowes Today







Upper Marlowes map - existing condition

--- Upper Marlowes site boundary



Upper Marlowes aerial view

**CONSTRAINTS**

- The town centre is very long, approximately 1.5km, and the town centre economy cannot support a sustained retail offering along the whole route.
- Although there are pedestrian crossings, there is frequent traffic along the road, with bad parking practices as well.
- The retail units on the north east of the upper Marlowes occupy historic buildings but appear rundown and cramped with parking and street furniture obstructing.

**OPPORTUNITIES**

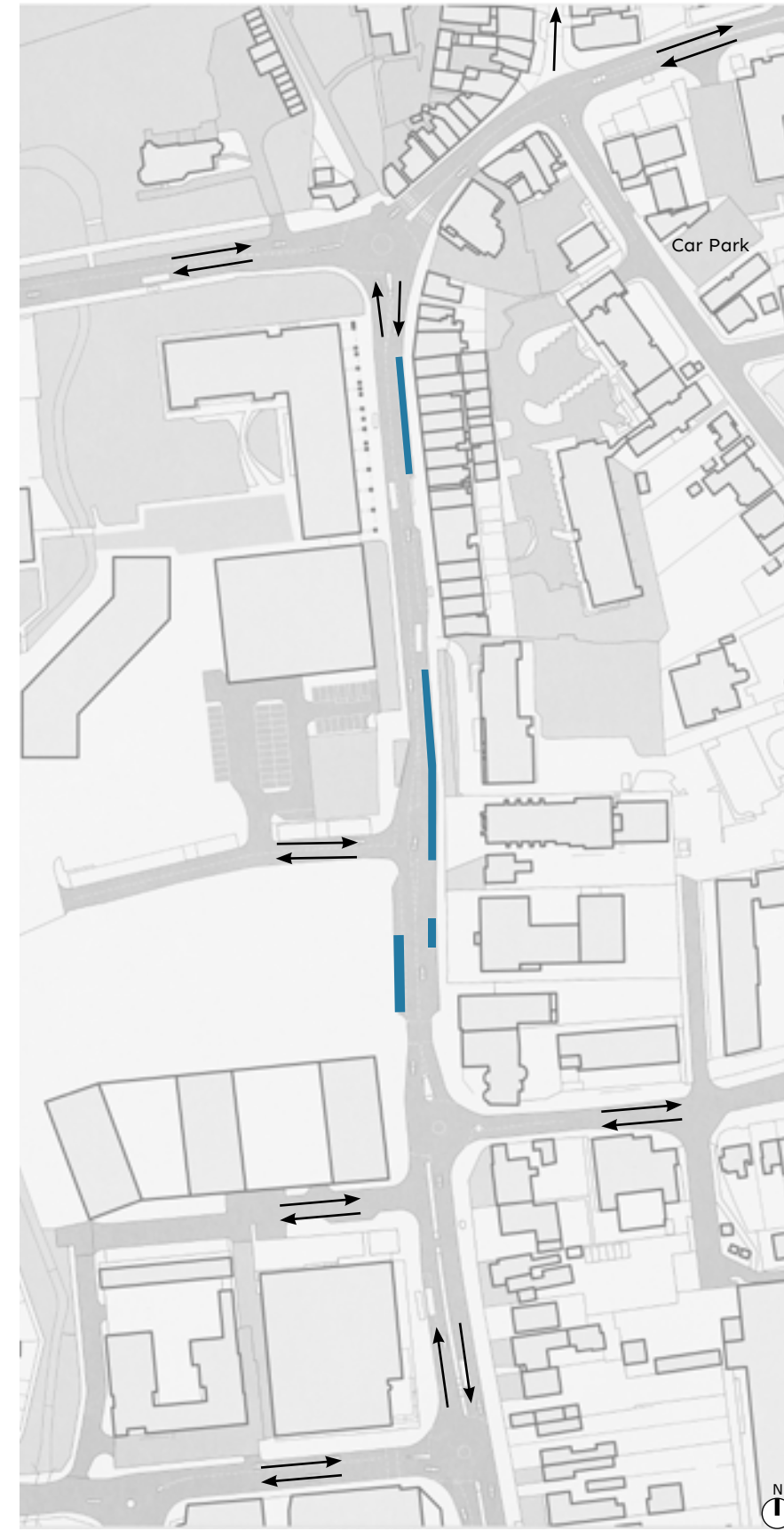
- Upper Marlowes occupies a strategic location, serving as the connection between the Old Town and the Marlowes Parade.
- The top of the Upper Marlowes, merging onto Queensway, could become a shared surface area to better connect the two economic centres and adjacent public space.
- Existing street furniture, such as the wrought metal gateway into the Old Town, benches, and cycle storage, can be enhanced to create a preferred location for resting and storing cycles.

### 3. UPPER MARLOWES - EXISTING CONDITION



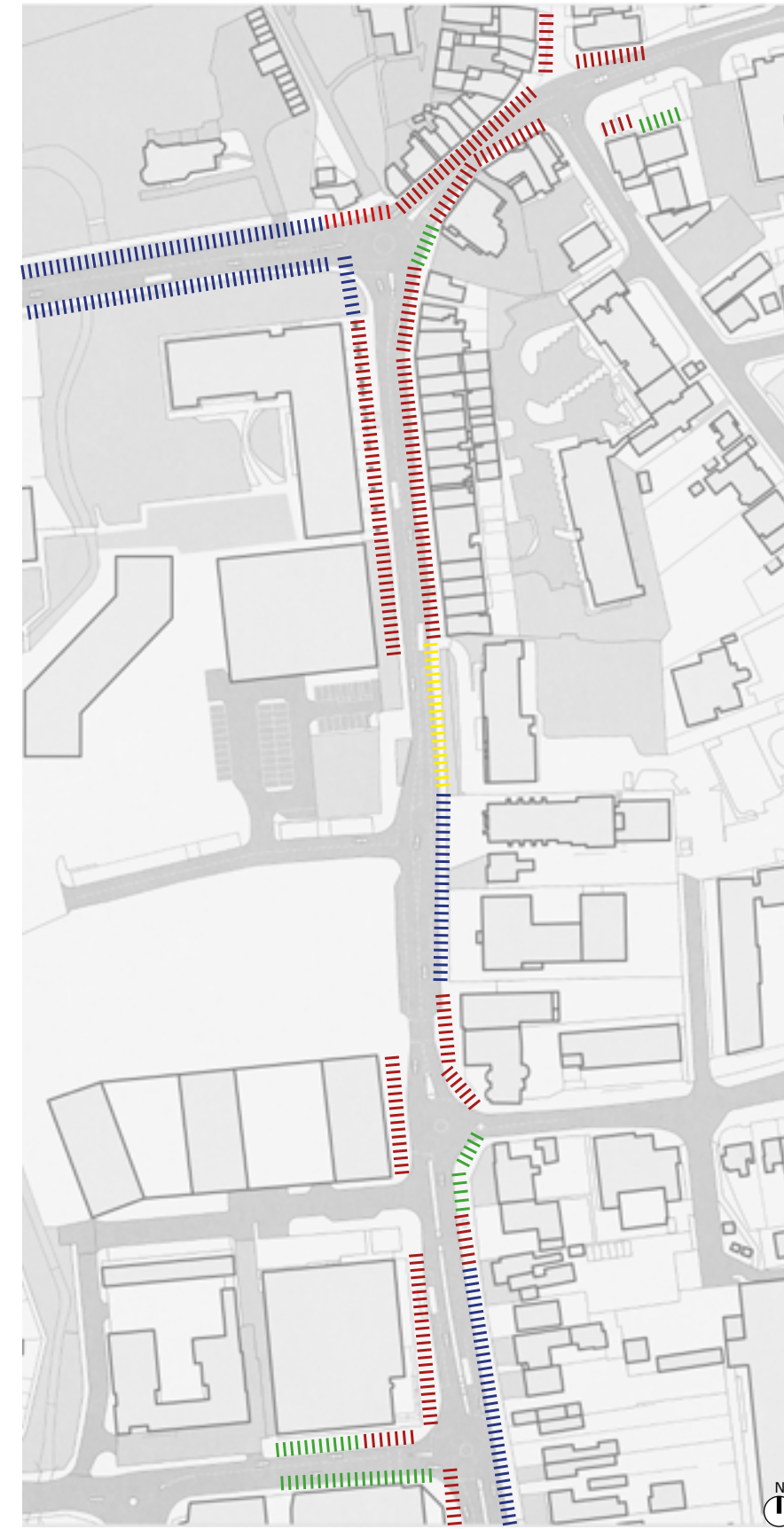
Upper Marlowes map - existing bus and cycle routes

- Existing bus routes
- existing cycle racks
- existing bus stop
- existing bus stop area



Upper Marlowes map - existing car routes and parking

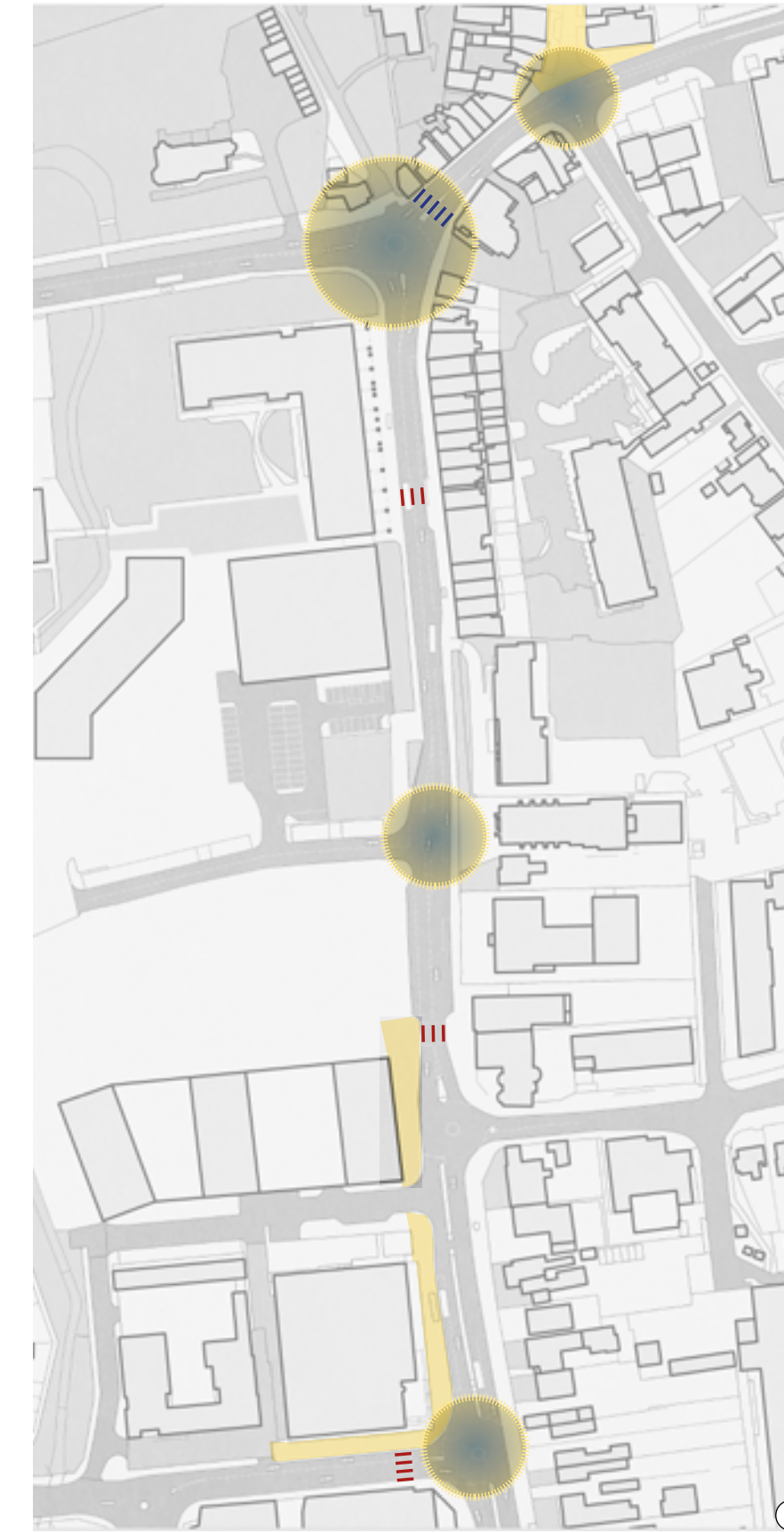
- car routes
- traditional parking bay
- accessible parking bay
- taxi parking bay



Upper Marlowes map - existing street frontages

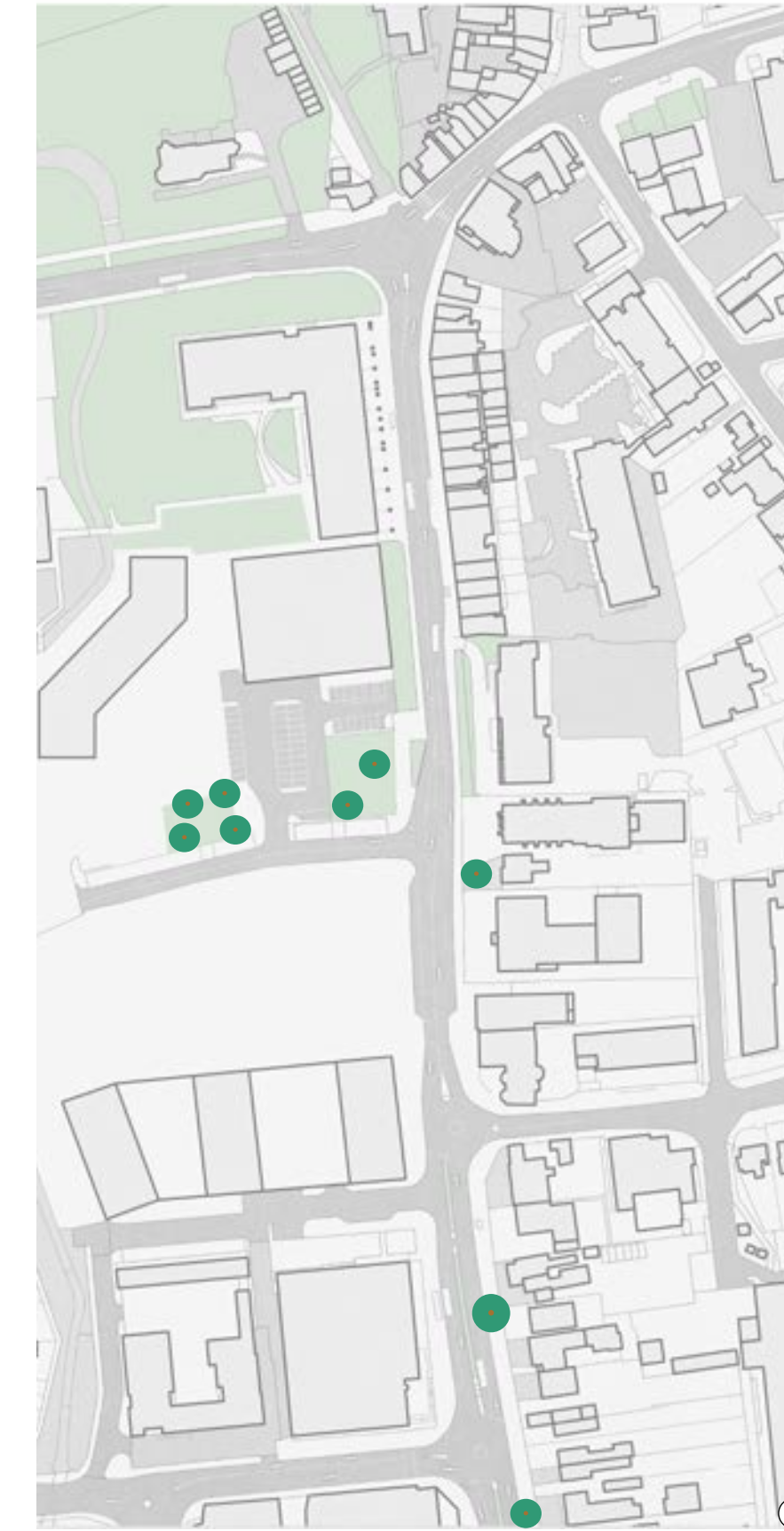
- Existing active street frontages to be maintained
- existing low level wall and private front garden
- Inactive street frontage
- Existing green shrub front garden

### 3. UPPER MARLOWES - EXISTING CONDITION



Upper Marlowes map - road and pavement surface

- good quality pavement area
- Crossing point with traffic lights
- Traditional street crossing point
- area with potential for shared surface pavement



Upper Marlowes map - existing green spaces

- existing green space
- existing TPO



Upper Marlowes map - existing listed buildings and conservation areas

- Listed Buildings
- Building of Local Interest
- Building of architectural merit
- Old Town conservation area

### 3. UPPER MARLOWES - PROPOSED PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS

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Upper Marlowes map - proposed public realm improvements

--- Upper Marlowes site boundary

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### 3. UPPER MARLOWES - PROPOSED PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS

<p>3.1 Cycle experience improvements: creation of dedicate cycle lanes with green space buffer zone between the road and the cycle lane</p> <p>3.2 Pavement improvements: create a shared surface parking area</p> <p>3.3 Heritage and wellbeing trails: development of new wayfinding along walking and cycling routes to promote heritage and wellbeing trails (e.g. on floor signage, public art)</p> <p>3.4 Pavement improvements: create a shared surface area in front of Carey Baptist Church at the junction between the Marlowes and Dacorum Way</p> <p>3.5 Pavement improvements: create a new seating area with wooden benches in the existing green space</p> <p>3.6 Pavement improvements: removal of existing retaining wall facing the Marlowes and adjustment of ground levels. Creation of new steps to allow accessibility to green space and seating area</p>	<p>3.7 Enhancing ecology and biodiversity: improve existing green space by adding new trees, plants and flowers to improve biodiversity</p> <p>3.8 Playful crossing: Introduce a playful crossing feature to enhance the walking experience along the Marlowes</p> <p>3.9 New public art: Creation of new artwork piece to enhance the design/visual quality of the spaces, and encourage people to pause in these shared spaces and interact to promote social wellbeing.</p> <p>3.10 Pavement improvements: create a shared surface area between the West Herts College, Gadebridge Park entrance and Old Town entrance at the junction between Queensway, Alexandra Road and the Marlowes.</p> <p>3.11 Highlighting local landmarks: Highlight historic buildings and landmarks by adding feature lighting. Development of heritage trail to bring Hemel past to life</p>	<p>3.12 Pavement improvements: removal of existing retaining wall facing the Marlowes and adjustment of ground levels. Creation of new steps to allow better accessibility to Carey Baptist Church</p> <p>3.13 Improved bus stop: relocation of bus stop to allow creation of dedicated cycle lanes</p>	<p>3.14 Highlighting local landmarks: upgrade and refurbishment of existing shop front (Cost not to be included in LUF application )</p> <p>3.15 Cycle experience improvements: provide new cycle parking space to support cyclists</p>
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3.6

3.12

3.12

### 3. UPPER MARLOWES - PROPOSED PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS

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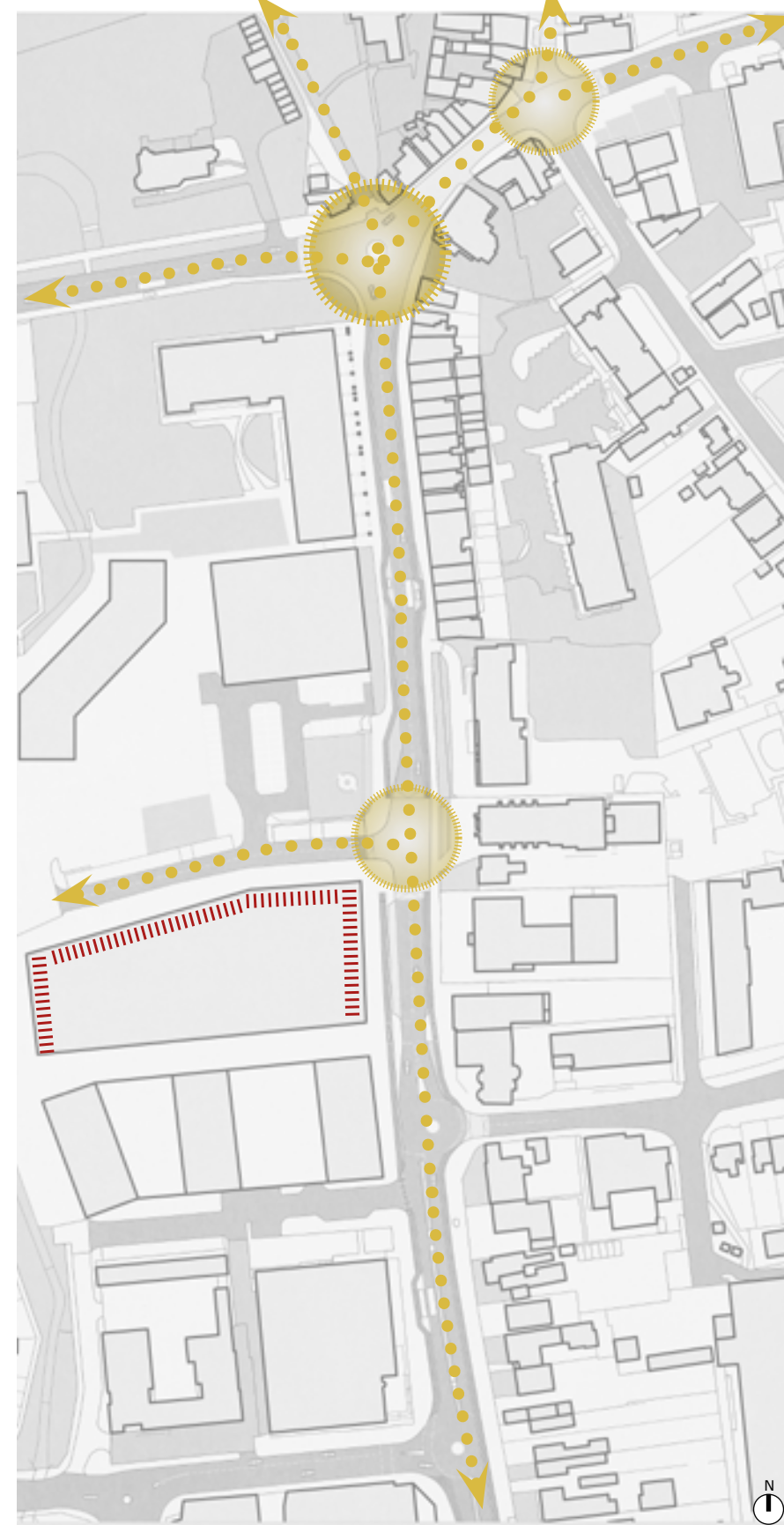
Upper Marlowes map - existing bus and cycle routes

- New cycle lanes
- Existing bus routes retained
- bus stop to be relocated
- existing bus to be maintained
- new cycle lane (MAT 05)
- existing cycle racks to be maintained
- existing cycle racks to be relocated
- new cycle racks



Upper Marlowes map - proposed car routes and parking

- car routes
- Crossing point to be maintained
- New artistic painted crossing point
- location of traditional parking bay to be maintained



Upper Marlowes map - active street frontages and key connections

- Location for potential new active frontages
- pedestrian connections to be enhanced
- focal point to be enhanced

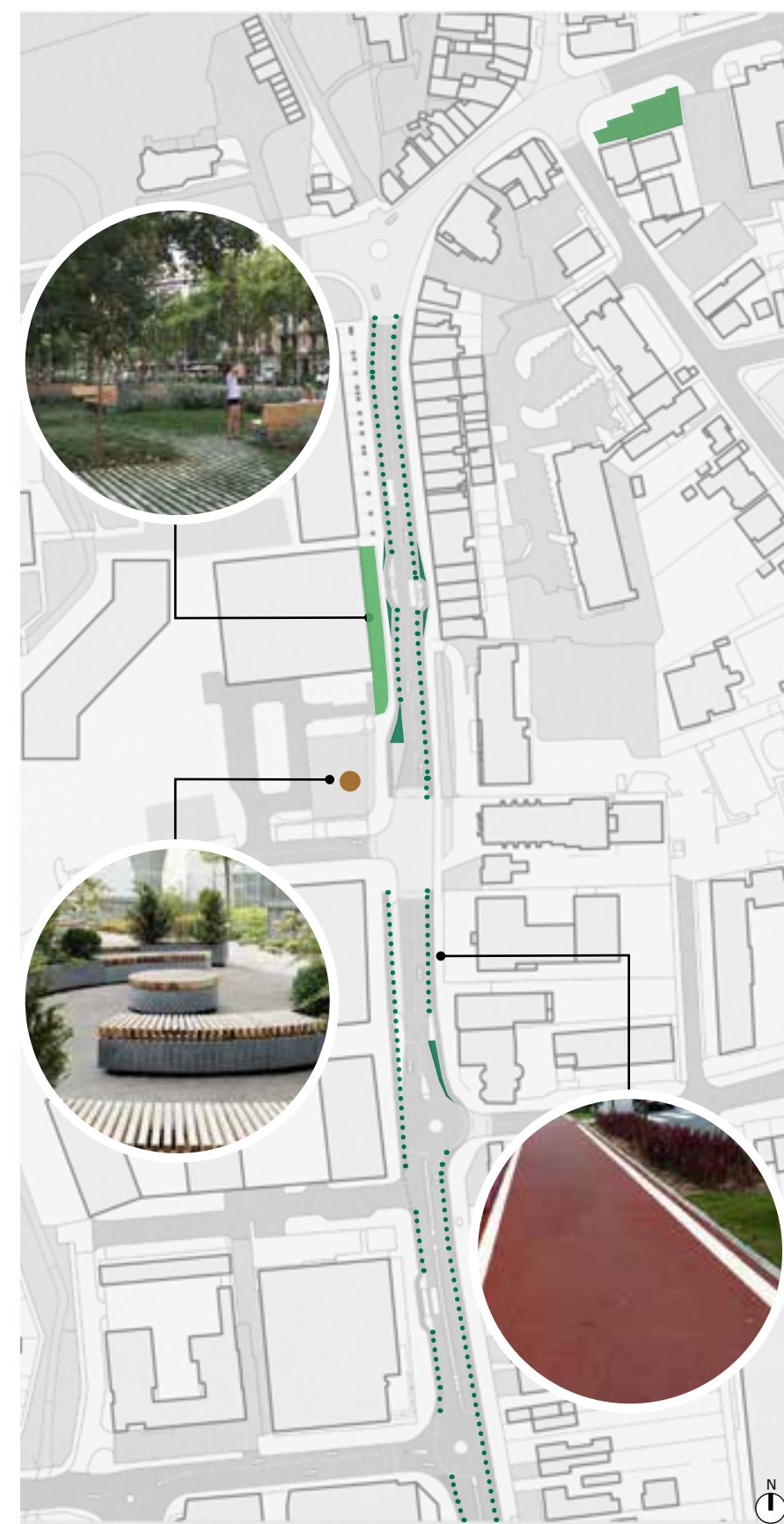
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### 3. UPPER MARLOWES - PROPOSED PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS



Upper Marlowes map - road and pavement surface

- new shared surface area
- existing finish of pavement (asphalt or slabs) to be replaced with new paving slabs
- level street crossing
- removal of existing retaining wall and adjustment of ground levels. Creation of new steps, seating areas and new paving



Upper Marlowes map - existing green spaces

- existing green space to be improved with more trees, plants and flowers to enhance biodiversity
- new green space
- new seating area in existing green space
- green lane to provide separation between road and cycle lane



Upper Marlowes map - wayfinds and landmarks

- Highlight historic buildings by adding feature lighting
- Upgrade and refurbishment of existing shop front (Cost not to be included in LUF)
- key view point
- new wayfindings
- new public art

St Mary's square acts as the focal point for the community, situated between the Old Town high street, and St Mary's Churchyard and Gadebridge Park. The Old Town Hall is adjacent, a theatrical and cultural events venue located at the heart of Hemel Old Town. This area is a brilliant community asset in need of greater development.

The components of the proposed interventions in St Mary's Square are:

- pavement improvements
- enhanced lighting, new street furniture and installation of new planters
- Use of public realm interventions and cultural activities to improve the east-west connection between Gadebridge Park, St Mary's Square and the Old Town
- enhance the setting of key cultural and community buildings



Hemel Hempstead Town Centre - North Area

--- Town Centre boundary  
 Upper Marlowes opportunity area

Old Town Yesterday



St Mary's Square Today





St Mary's Square map - existing condition

--- St Mary's Square and Old Town Hall site boundary



Upper Marlowes aerial view

**CONSTRAINTS**

- St Mary's Square is used as a disabled car park during the day.
- The presence of cars further separates the high street from St Mary's Church and Gadebridge Park.
- The Old Town Hall is a small venue. This limits its potential usage.

**OPPORTUNITIES**

- An access route between Gadebridge Park and the Old Town, connecting the footfall of the park to the picturesque high street nearby.



St Mary's Square map - proposed interventions



4.1 Pavement improvements: relocation of parking spaces in High Street Car Park and removal of existing bollards to create a more flexible space for events, markets and festivals



4.2 Street Furniture: installation of new transportable planters with integrated seating areas



4.3 Creation of new active frontages on both sides of St Mary's Square (interventions not to be included in the LUF cost plan)



4.4 Street Furniture: creation of temporary pop-up store to support activation of the Old Town Square



4.5 Improved lighting: creation of a new uplights to illuminate trees around St Mary's Church and improve walkability experience between Gadebridge Park and Old Town



4.6 Improved lighting: creation of a new lighting installation in the green space around St Mary's Church to enhance connection between park, church and Old Town square



4.7 Street Furniture: creation of a new metal portal/s at the entrance of St Mary's Cl from Gadebridge Park



4.8 Use of public realm interventions and cultural activities to improve the east-west connection between Gadebridge Park, St Mary's Square and the Old Town

# CASE STUDIES

A number of initiatives from around the world reveal diverse approaches to placemaking implementation, yet strikingly all show rapid impact and meaningful community participation. A closer look at several of them can help envision how placemaking initiatives are being developed, implemented, and scaled.

## MILAN, Italy - Piazze Aperte



Piazza Dergano - before  
Piazza Dergano - after

Through a tactical urban planning intervention, the city of Milan is building new spaces for residents to meet and socialize through the project "Piazze Aperte". This intervention will be accompanied by paintings on the ground, the installation of racks for bicycles and temporary bollards to ensure respect for the pedestrian areas. The goal for these light interventions is to lead to structural changes across neighborhoods and public spaces.

## BARCELONA, Spain - Superblock



Sant Antoni Superilla in Barcelona - before and after

With these superblocks ("Superilles" in Catalan), up to nine city blocks are combined. Pedestrians and cyclists have priority within these superblocks. The dreary gray of the street is replaced by planted raised beds, flower pots and trees. Streets become an extended living room. You can hear children laughing instead of the noise of the car, breathe in fresh air instead of exhaust fumes, and meet relaxed residents who talk to each other.

## ABEELSTRAAT, Belgium - School Street



School Street in Abeelstraat

A School Street is a road closure strategy to restrict motorised traffic, where walking and cycling zones are created in front of schools, at least during dropoff and pick up times. School Streets are emerging as a low-cost, simple intervention to reduce vehicle usage, pollution, improve safety, as well as encourage walking and cycling in an effort to enhance community health and increased comfort among children, and their families.

# HEMEL HEMPSTEAD

## UTRECHT, Netherlands - Catharijnesingel canal



Catharijnesingel canal in 2009  
Catharijnesingel canal in 2018

Utrecht is restoring the beautiful Catharijnesingel canal that had been filled in during the 1970s to make a large highway. The removal of the motorway is in line with the new Utrecht policies that determine that the main road users in the city are people cycling and walking, not people using private cars, a broader attempt by the municipality to sideline the car and promote healthier living.

## LONDON, United Kingdom - King's Cross



Public space at King's Cross in London

King's Cross is one of the largest and most successful redevelopments in London. An underused industrial site has been transformed and rejuvenated with new streets, squares and parks, homes, shops, offices, galleries, bars, restaurants, schools, and even a university. The location, the connections, the canal-side setting, the heritage, an exciting cultural scene, a thriving business community, and a strong sense of local community.

## LONDON, United Kingdom - Folly for a Flyover



Images of Folly for a Flyover

Folly for a Flyover transformed a fenced-off undercroft of the A12 motorway in Hackney Wick into a public outdoor waterside cinema, café and performance space that bring the community together in a forgotten, disused corner of the city. Folly for a Flyover was assembled by a team of volunteers over the course of a month, using reclaimed and donated materials. It remains in place for six weeks, staging a series of movies and performances as part of the Create festival.

## LOS ANGELES, U.S.A. - People Street



Livable streets in Los Angeles

Communities can transform underused areas of Los Angeles largest public asset into active, vibrant, and accessible public space with People St, a program of the City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation. Eligible Community Partners can apply for approval to create projects that enhance the quality of life in this city. The Application Cycle features two innovative types of projects are available: Plazas and Parklets.

# HEMEL HEMPSTEAD

## STEVENAGE, United Kingdom - Shopping Precinct



Pedestrianised and play areas in Stevenage now town centre

Stevenage new town looks and feels like an urban jungle. Built between 1946 and 1980, the area has a more expansive high street with its car-free areas – the UK's first completely pedestrianised town centre – and a range of more affordable housing options. Work is currently underway to regenerate central Stevenage, creating 7,300 new homes by 2028, revamping the railway station and building new bars, restaurants, shops and leisure facilities.

## SHEFFIELD, United Kingdom - Grey to Green



Sheffield before  
Sheffield after

Grey to Green is a groundbreaking environmental and economic development strategy devised by Sheffield City Council. It responds to the need to re-connect the Castlegate area, including the Law Courts and Victoria Quays, with the rest of the city centre, the need to re-use a large amount of redundant highway; and the severe impact that the floods in June 2007 had on Castlegate.

## COVENTRY, United Kingdom - UK City of Culture 2021



Radford Brook Linear Park in Coventry that runs from Nauls Mill Park to the city centre and under the Ring Road - before and after

Coventry did a massive investment in the city centre and wider area, such as the UK Battery Industrialisation Centre, major events and festivals dominate the diary, RISING has been created as a global platform to advance thinking and understanding about peace and reconciliation and the city has just begun its celebratory year as UK City of Culture 2021.

## VIENNA, Austria - Grätzlose Parklets



Images of parklets in Vienna

Since 2015, the city of Vienna has given residents organisational and financial support to realise ideas that activate public spaces and create more opportunities for people to socialise and spend time outdoors. Citizens can submit ideas for improvement of public or semi-public spaces using an online form. A jury selects ideas according to submission criteria, such as that the projects need to be inclusive and cannot be commercial.

# CASE STUDIES

## LONDON, United Kingdom - Illuminated River



Image of Southwark Bridge  
Image of Westminster Bridge

Illuminated River is a large-scale public art commission which lights up nine bridges in central London across the River Thames. Designed by American artist Leo Villareal in collaboration with British architects Lifschutz Davidson Sandilands, it uses LED light fittings to produce sequenced patterns of moving light across the bridge structures. Each of the bridges has been lit differently, in part as a consequence of them all being built differently, but also to reflect local areas.

## LONDON, United Kingdom - St Christopher's Place



Images of St Christopher's Place

St Christopher's Place is a square near Oxford Street, full of shops and restaurants. It is an oasis of calm, a completely different experience to the crowds and tourist shops on Oxford Street. It has a village feel, there are wooden benches to relax on and hanging baskets full of colourful flowers. This area feels unique rather than uniform with many independent shops and with canopies and umbrellas outside the restaurants.

## LONDON, United Kingdom - Aberfeldy Street



Aberfeldy Street - before  
Aberfeldy Street - after

Aberfeldy Street is a street in Poplar which has undertaken a huge makeover. All shopfronts along the street have been painted with bright colours and patterns. Part of a project to boost businesses during lockdown. It's a response to the economic havoc being caused by Covid-19 pandemic. The colours and patterns have been designed by local people and inspired by the Bangladeshi tradition of Kantha which is about recycling and transforming something old into something new.

## ÁGUEDA, Portugal - Umbrella Sky Project



Images of the Umbrella Sky Project in Águeda

Inspired by the magical Mary Poppins, the Umbrella Sky Project first appeared in 2011 as a part of the famous annual Ágitedade Art Festival in the Portuguese city of Águeda. Every summer, Sextafeira designs a handful of the city's narrow streets with colorful umbrella canopies that provide shade for the pedestrians passing through. Rooftop cables are strung with numerous parasols that help cool the roadways in a creative and cost-effective way.





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