

1. Cornhill, Buttermarket and arc – the heart of the town centre

OVERVIEW
Historic Cornhill and Buttermarket are the commercial heart of Bury St Edmunds. Together with the award winning market and the arc shopping centre, this part of the town centre attracts visitors all year round. In order to capitalise on this success, and ensure it continues into the future, additional investment is required. This will help to enhance the historic environment, introduce additional retail and other uses in the area, and make it easier, safer and more comfortable for people to find their way around.



Artist's impression of Cornhill showing pedestrianised square

PRIORITIES
Movement
Give greater priority to pedestrians by reducing/removing traffic and parking in Cornhill and Buttermarket during the day. In addition, improve the connections between Cornhill and the arc by making the Market Thoroughfare more attractive and removing through traffic from St Andrews Street South next to the arc up to the corner of Risbygate Street. Improve the top of Cornhill to create better pedestrian links with St Johns Street.

Activity
Ensure the market retains its place as the key activity in Cornhill and Buttermarket. Allow for the expansion of the arc to meet the need for new retail uses in the town centre. Consider further redevelopment opportunities, particularly between the arc and Cornhill, to better integrate and connect the two locations.

Place
Unify the paving and appearance of the whole area to enhance the character and appearance linking the arc to the historic location in the town centre. Remove barriers to access by creating a clear, safe and direct pedestrian route from the arc, across St Andrews Street South, through to Cornhill to Buttermarket.

ASPIRATIONS
Market Thoroughfare – improvements to provide continuity from the historic centre to the arc.
St Andrews Street South between Risbygate Street and Woolhall Street – close to through traffic, retain service access, and reroute buses providing new stops in convenient and accessible locations.
Cornhill top – improve maintenance and connectivity with St Johns Street.
Develop area between the arc and Cornhill i.e. St Andrews Street South to provide for a mix of uses and to establish closer integration.
Enable retail provision through extension of the arc to meet the needs of the town.
Access pedestrianisation or part pedestrianisation of Cornhill and Buttermarket.
SEBC will be the lead working with SCC Highways and MAP implementation group.
An individual project plan will be developed for each area of activity.
Further feasibility studies will be carried out.
By working with private sector partners to assess option and implementation processes and programmes.
Through use of a mixture of public and private sector funding.
By pursuing other grant funding opportunities.

Who
SEBC will be the lead working with SCC Highways and MAP implementation group.

How
An individual project plan will be developed for each area of activity.
Further feasibility studies will be carried out.
By working with private sector partners to assess option and implementation processes and programmes.
Through use of a mixture of public and private sector funding.
By pursuing other grant funding opportunities.

Where
Market Thoroughfare, Cornhill Top, Cornhill, Buttermarket and St Andrews Street South.

Dependencies
Working with the existing businesses adjacent to Market Thoroughfare.
Option appraisal for car parking around the town.
Agreement of alternative routes with Bus and Taxi Operators.
Public Consultation on the proposed options for pedestrianisation.

When
Market Thoroughfare – short term
Cornhill top – medium term
Pedestrianisation St Andrews St South – short term
Pedestrianisation – Cornhill and Buttermarket – medium term

MEETING MAP OBJECTIVES
Aspirations at Cornhill, Buttermarket and the arc will contribute to meeting MAP objectives 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8.

2. The Northern Gateway

OVERVIEW
The Northern Gateway Character Area of Innovation focuses on the part of the town centre between the main town centre and the railway station, and primarily the corridors along St Andrews Street and St Johns Street. The Gateway has a mixed character with edge-of-centre uses along Tayfen Road, car showrooms etc., contrasting with the residential character closer to the heart of the town centre. Key opportunities focus on better connecting the railway station with the rest of the town centre, linking into proposals for St Andrews Quarter and the area around Station Hill.



Artist's impression of a new pedestrian crossing from the railway station and development adjoining Tayfen Road

PRIORITIES
Movement
Enhance and encourage pedestrians and cyclists to move between the main town centre and the railway station, with a focus on St Andrews Street and St Johns Street, whilst maintaining access for cars. Provide a more attractive pedestrian environment along Tayfen Road to improve the gateway to the town centre.

Activity
Introduce new uses that will better front onto streets and spaces and create a more active, attractive and safer environment.

Place
Through enhancements improve the image and character of this part of the town centre, making it a more attractive and welcoming gateway for Bury St Edmunds.

ASPIRATIONS
New pedestrian crossings over Tayfen Road.
Improved signage, wayfinding and cycle access to and from Town and Station.
Landscape improvements – paving and tree planting to Tayfen Road and St Andrews Street North.
New frontage development along Tayfen Road and St Andrews Street North.
Outside the MAP area, Campaign Way gateway and Station Hill are key locations. It is critical to ensure these are integrated into the wider town centre.

Who
SEBC will be the lead working with SCC Highways, and MAP implementation group.

How
An individual project plan will be developed for each area of activity.
Highways assessments will be undertaken to inform design.
Further feasibility studies will be carried out.
By working pro-actively with private sector partners and landowners to enable development.
Through use of a mixture of public and private sector funding.
By pursuing other grant funding opportunities.

Where
Tayfen Road.
St Andrews Street North.
St Johns Street/Spurth Street.
Linkages from this area to the Station and Cornhill.

Dependencies
Land being brought forward for development.
Highways and junction/crossing design.
Availability of funding.

When
New Crossing – short term
Environmental and signage improvements – medium term
Frontage development – long term

MEETING MAP OBJECTIVES
Aspirations at The Northern Gateway will contribute to meeting MAP objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7.

3. St Andrews Quarter

OVERVIEW
The St Andrews Quarter Character Area is focused on the site of the existing car park between St Andrews Street North and Parkway. The area also includes the bus station and Government offices, Triton House and St Andrews House. There is a significant opportunity to redevelop the area for a mix of uses and also improve the character and appearance of the town centre.



Artist's impression of St Andrews Street North adjacent to the library

PRIORITIES
Movement
Optimise car parking provision to serve the town centre and accommodate growth. Improved pedestrian links to the arc and Cornhill. Provide bus facilities to meet the needs of the town and improve the pedestrian environment along St Andrews Street North alongside a review of traffic movement.

Activity
Explore all redevelopment opportunities including potential for new housing, student accommodation, hotel, parking and business opportunities.

Place
Redevelopment has significant potential to establish a higher quality and standard of development, particularly along St Andrews Street and Tayfen Road. The proposals must protect the amenity of local residents through careful design.

ASPIRATIONS
Provision of additional parking with access from Parkway and St Andrews Street.
Provide bus facilities to meet the needs of the town.
Mixed use development to improve road frontages and mix of active uses.

Who
SEBC will be the lead working with SCC Highways and MAP implementation group including:

How
An individual project plan will be developed for each area of activity.
Review of options for additional car parking.
Review of options for bus facilities.
Liaison with third party public and private sector land owners.
A number of the projects will be publicly funded with some private sector enabling funding.
Other grant funding opportunities will be pursued.
Further detailed feasibility studies will be carried out.
By working with private sector partners to assess option and implementation processes and programmes.

Where
Land between Tayfen Road and St Andrews Street, including existing government offices, car parking and bus station.
Street frontages

Dependencies
Relocation of existing public sector uses.
Option appraisal for car parking development.
Availability of third party land.
Agreement to any alterations to bus station with Bus Operators and County Highways.
Public Consultation on the proposed development options.

When
Car parking – short term
Bus facilities – medium term
New development – long term

MEETING MAP OBJECTIVES
Aspirations at St Andrews Quarter will contribute to meeting MAP objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7.

4. Churchgate

OVERVIEW
The Medieval grid of Churchgate is a distinct and characterful part of the town centre. In excess of 350 listed buildings contribute to an outstanding townscape rich in heritage. The mixed-use nature of the area is more evident to the north, between Churchgate Street and Abbeygate Street, with a more residential character to south between Churchgate Street and Westgate Street. The area also has a strong community focus particularly in relation to the two schools located there. It is important to ensure that the character of Churchgate is preserved and enhanced, with a particular focus on traffic management and street maintenance. There are also opportunities to consider how key locations, including Angel Hill, are used.

PRIORITIES
Movement
Limit vehicle access through the Churchgate area to minimise rat-running, improve safety, and enhance the character of the area.

Activity
Maintain the mixed-use character of the area, particularly to the north of Churchgate Street, and acknowledge the predominantly residential nature of the remainder of the area.

Place
Carry out a programme of enhancement and repair to streets, spaces and pavements raising the overall quality of the environment appropriate with its historic identity. Recognise the importance of large gardens to amenity and character of the area and surrounding properties

ASPIRATIONS
Reinforce identity of Angel Hill as a multi-functional space.
Review of vehicle restrictions on Abbeygate Street.
Traffic calming and improved traffic management particularly in relation to predominantly residential streets and around the schools.
Review of one-way operation and identification of options for improvement.
New crossing point on Crown Street/Angel Hill.

Who
SEBC will be the lead working with SCC Highways, The Bury Society and MAP implementation group.

How
An individual project plan will be developed for each area of activity.
Traffic assessments will be carried out.
Highway design solutions will be developed for further consultation.
A programme of cultural events for Angel Hill will be identified and promoted, in partnership with relevant third parties.
Projects will be publicly funded supported by private sector enabling funding where appropriate/available.
Other grant funding opportunities will be pursued.

Where
Angel Hill, Crown Street and Abbey Gate.
Adjacent/link locations affected by any proposed highways alterations.

Dependencies
Securing relevant SCC highways agreements and solutions.
Traffic orders.
Outcomes of future consultation.

When
Angel Hill multi event space – ongoing
Traffic calming assessments – medium term

MEETING MAP OBJECTIVES
Aspirations at Churchgate will contribute to meeting MAP objectives 2, 4, 5, 6, and 7.

6. Parkway

OVERVIEW
The Parkway Character Area covers the western most edge of the town centre. It runs from the end of Tayfen Road, across the junction with Risbygate Street and south along Parkway. Areas around the Risbygate junction, including the Lloyds Bank building and B&Q, as well as the car park to the west of Parkway are all included. Parkway plays an important role and function in movement terms, bypassing the main town centre, provides parking facilities, and is an important and historic route into the town centre.

PRIORITIES
Movement
Enhance and improve pedestrian access across Parkway particularly at Risbygate and the arc. Maintain vehicle movement along Tayfen Road and Parkway to facilitate access to the town centre. Accommodate redirected bus routes along Risbygate and Parkway to improve the pedestrian environment of St Andrews Street South.

Activity
Consider redevelopment opportunities around the Risbygate/Parkway junction.

Place
Reconfigure the Risbygate/Parkway junction to make it a more attractive to pedestrians and to emphasise the historic route of Risbygate into the town centre.

ASPIRATIONS
Seek opportunities to improve pedestrian linkages across Parkway.
Improve traffic movement, including prioritisation of pedestrian and cycle routes.
Introduce mixed use development to frontage of Risbygate, Parkway and corner of the junction.
Redesign and enhance the character of Risbygate as a key historic gateway.

Who
SEBC will be the lead working with SCC Highways input as required, and MAP implementation group.

How
An individual project plan will be developed for each area of activity.
Promotion and interpretation of Risbygate, through highway and streetscape design work and associated consultation.
Identify and test feasibility of options for new car parking and associated Land assembly issues.
Develop and test design for enhanced pedestrian routes.
Actively work with land owners, occupiers and developers to enable developments that positively contribute to improved frontages and pedestrian links.
Utilise a mix of public and private sector funding.
Other grant funding opportunities will be pursued as appropriate.

Where
Risbygate, Parkway and connected landholdings

Dependencies
Rerouting of buses.
Viable highways design.
Availability of land for development and parking.
Co-operation of land owners/occupiers.

When
Securing improvements to junction and redefinition of character – medium term
Implementation of development and associated environmental improvements – long term

MEETING MAP OBJECTIVES
Aspirations at Parkway will contribute to meeting MAP objectives 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, and 7.

5. Ram Meadow

OVERVIEW
The Ram Meadow Character Area is a functional, mixed-use location to the east of the town centre. It has an extensive, long-stay car park, is home to the local football club and has vehicle showroom and servicing uses fronting onto Cotton Lane. It is an allocated housing site identified within the Vision 2031.

PRIORITIES
Movement
Maintain existing number and potentially increase parking provision within any redevelopment. Improve pedestrian routes and accessibility into the town centre and also consider the options for shuttle services with other locations in the town centre, potentially using electric vehicles.

Activity
Provide enhanced routes towards and around the riverside area and maintain areas of space for ecological value. Increase the mix of uses within the area including residential development to make a more cohesive town centre neighbourhood.

Place
Introduce attractive, well designed buildings into the area to further enhance its appearance and character. Create attractive built street frontage onto Cotton Lane complementing its residential neighbourhood.
Ensure sustainable flood measures and the preservation of and access to the water meadows and river corridor are integrated into any redevelopment.

ASPIRATIONS
Increase public access to the river side.
Plan for a new residential-led neighbourhood.
Enhancements to key approaches to the Town Centre through improved signage, paving, lighting and traffic management.

Who
SEBC will be the lead working with SCC Highways input as required, and MAP implementation group.

How
An individual project plan will be developed for each area of activity.
A detailed Development Brief will be drawn up and consulted on for the establishment of a new residential neighbourhood, enabling increased public access to the river side.
Land assembly and access issues will be addressed.
Design for enhanced pedestrian routes will be developed and feasibility tested.
Enhancement Projects will be publicly funded supported by private sector enabling funding where appropriate/available, and through associated residential development.
Other grant funding opportunities will be pursued.

Where
Ram Meadow.
Eastgate and Mustow Street.
Pickwick Crescent and Pump Lane.

Dependencies
Relocation of football ground.
Relocation of Vauxhall Dealership.
Approval of Design Brief.
Outcomes of Future consultation.
Addressing flood risk.
Development proposals coming forward.

When
Development of Planning Brief – short term
Securing land assembly – medium/long term
Implementation of development and associated environmental improvements – long term

MEETING MAP OBJECTIVES
Aspirations at Ram Meadow will contribute to meeting MAP objectives 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, and 8.

8. Lark and Linnet Riverside

OVERVIEW
The Lark, the Linnet and associated river meadows are an important asset providing ecological and wildlife interest, opportunities for walking and informal recreation, as well as quieter and more peaceful areas away from the bustle of the main town centre. In addition, the water meadows are important in terms of natural and sustainable flood alleviation. The Abbey Gardens, Cathedral and the Great Churchyard are also closely related to the riverside area. There is a significant opportunity to enhance awareness of these areas and better connect them together, making them a better known resource as well as a setting for the town centre. Importantly, the heritage significance of this area is vital to the character and identity of the town, and enhancements to heritage conservation and interpretation has potential to increase visitor numbers to the benefit of the local economy.

PRIORITIES
Movement
Improve the character and quality of existing links between the town centre and the Lark and the Linnet. Expand and enhance riverside pathways past the town centre towards Moreton Hall and the Leg of Mutton.

Activity
Promote the informal recreation, health and wellbeing benefits associated with exercise and the natural environment.

Place
Improve awareness of town centre pedestrian and cycle routes that include the riverside areas.

ASPIRATIONS
Improve links between Abbey Gardens and Ram Meadow, including passive security.
Enable public access to the riverside and improvements to flood defences as part of any waterfront development.
Expansion of Abbey Gardens into Eastgate Nursery.

Who
SEBC will lead, with MAP implementation group and the Abbey of St Edmund Heritage Partnership.

How
An individual project plan will be developed for each area of activity.
Through preparation of a suitable development brief for Ram Meadow (see Ram Meadow).
Through improved signage as part of overall development package.
Through sensitive overlooking from new development to improve security, secured in negotiation with developers.
Detailed design and feasibility of integration of Abbey Gardens, the Cathedral, Great Churchyard and Eastgate Nursery.

Where
Ram Meadow and riverside.
The Crankles.
No Man's land meadow.
Abbey Gardens and Eastgate Nursery.

Dependencies
Ram Meadow development.
Financial viability.
Securing mechanism for improved access, linkages and environmental enhancement – medium term
Implementation of improvements – medium term
Integration of nursery and Abbey Gardens – medium term

MEETING MAP OBJECTIVES
Aspirations at Lark and Linnet riverside will contribute to meeting MAP objectives 4, 7, and 8.

7. Kings Road and Robert Boby Way

OVERVIEW
The Kings Road and Robert Boby Way Character Area provides an important retail and parking function for the town centre, with a Waitrose supermarket anchoring the site. There are pedestrian links between the retail area and the arc across Kings Road which is a mix of commercial and character residential properties. There is an opportunity to consider retaining and enhancing the existing retail offer given its close proximity to the arc. This could include reconfiguring or expanding some of the existing buildings on the site.

PRIORITIES
Movement
The priority is to enhance pedestrian safety and movement across Kings Road from Robert Boby Way area and the arc. In addition, an enhanced pedestrian crossing from Kings Road across Parkway would help link the town centre with the residential neighbourhoods.

Activity
Maintain the primary use of the area for retailing.

Place
Work with landowners to enhance the existing buildings, car parks and spaces to make them substantially more attractive. Explore potential for improvements through redevelopment.

ASPIRATIONS
Explore the potential to reconfigure or expand the existing retail area.
Enhance pedestrian crossings across Kings Road from Robert Boby Way to the arc.

Who
SEBC will lead with SCC Highways related work, SEBC will lead development opportunity work, with MAP implementation group.

How
An individual project plan will be developed for each area of activity.
Highways assessments will be carried out to inform highways design, and any land ownership implications of proposed crossings.
Land assembly issues arising will be addressed.
Pro-active partnership working with third party land owners, occupiers and developers to establish and test opportunities for further retail expansion/reconfiguration.
Through a combination of public and private sector funding.
From Robert Boby Way across Kings Road.
Through to existing retail development.

Where
Kings Road.
Parkway

Dependencies
Highways design.
Co-operation of third party landowners (arc).
Availability of land for reconfiguration, and co-operation of owners and occupiers.
Parkway junction improvements.

When
Pedestrian crossings – short term
Reconfiguration of retail – dependant of landowners

MEETING MAP OBJECTIVES
Aspirations at King Road and Robert Boby Way will contribute to meeting MAP objectives 1, 2, 3, 6, and 7.

9. Across the Town Centre

OVERVIEW
The aspirations in this section are those which benefit more than one, and in many cases all, of the above Character Areas. They will assist in bringing the town centre together through providing a consistent approach throughout the area and help to make using the town centre a more pleasurable experience for all. As part of the implementation of all proposals across the town centre there will be a need to maintain a strategic overview to ensure that the scale of development and associated access and parking requirements are fully considered and assessed. Wider strategic issues will also be considered as part of the Local Plan review process.

PRIORITIES
Movement
Enhance movement for pedestrians and cyclists throughout the town centre. Improve opportunities to stop, sit and enjoy the town centre.

Activity
Improve access to a range of activities, including links between the different areas of town.

Place
Preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the town centre, making it more attractive, accessible and convenient for everyone who uses it.
Ensure consistency with adopted Street Scene Strategy.

ASPIRATIONS
As part of a programme provide consistent, well designed and convenient street furniture to include more public seating and a review of the litter bins and waste facilities relocating increasing as required.
Repair and maintain pavements and walkways using sympathetic and appropriate materials.
Provide dedicated cycle facilities including secure parking.
Include provision of additional tree planting, planters and displays in all schemes where appropriate and possible.
Identify new opportunities for on street parking and the provision of electric vehicle charging points.
Optimise access into and around the area for people with disabilities and mobility difficulties. This could be achieved by addressing issues such as dropped kerbs, street clutter, surfacing and access to shops and businesses.
Improve information about the town centres heritage and areas of interest for visitors and residents alike.
Review options for park and ride/walk/cycle provision and shuttle bus services.
Seek opportunities to improve provision of publicly accessible lavatories.
Work with businesses and landowners to improve the appearance and maintenance of buildings within the town centre.

Who
SEBC/SCC will lead as appropriate to each case, with MAP implementation group.

How
Each activity will be reflected in the project plans for character area specific works, to ensure a comprehensive town wide approach.
Through monitoring of aspirations by the MAP implementation Group.
As part of relevant Development Brief preparation and planning processes.
Through negotiation and discussion with developers as part of implementation of relevant development projects.

Where
Across all project areas in the town centre, and as part of any town wide initiative.

Dependencies
Identified Character Area projects coming forward.
Availability of funding.
Financial viability.
Land availability (e.g. for Park and Ride etc).

When
Over the entire programme of project delivery, 2018 to 2031 with an early focus on repair and maintenance.

MEETING MAP OBJECTIVES
Aspirations Across the Town Centre will contribute to meeting MAP objectives 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8.

THE BURY ST EDMUNDS MAP

A Masterplan for the Town Centre



The Bury St Edmunds MAP (the MAP) is a masterplan focused on the town centre. The MAP is a policy response to the Vision 2031 and has been produced to inform development proposals. As such it proactively identifies opportunities and improvements to help address the current and future needs of the town centre, as set out in the Bury St Edmunds Vision 2031. The Vision 2031 is the adopted local plan for Bury St Edmunds, providing the policy background against which the MAP has been produced.



WHAT IS THE BURY ST EDMUNDS MAP?

The MAP is adopted by St Edmundsbury Borough Council as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and, together with the Vision 2031, supports the statutory planning policy for the town centre. It supplements existing policies in the Vision 2031, providing more detail and guidance on their implementation, and is supported by a Delivery Strategy. Only the Vision 2031 and subsequent Local Plans can contain policies allocating sites for specific land uses. The MAP will also help support other Council documents, particularly the 2009 Streetscape Manual, and will be considered as part of the Local Plan review process.

As well as supporting current planning policy the aspirations set out in the MAP will also be used to shape the future of the town centre by encouraging a diverse, vibrant and modern economy to increase jobs and enhance prosperity. The town centre will continue to be a vibrant place that people enjoy for a variety of reasons, as a home, a place to relax and shop, for recreation or to work.

The MAP is only a part of the wider work by local public services and partners to manage

growth in St Edmundsbury to improve and support the economy, encourage more jobs, enable housing development, create opportunities and support the well-being of communities.

As such the MAP draws together a range of related and complementary initiatives covering economic development, community activities, leisure and wellbeing, accommodating growth, and preserving and enhancing the historic and cultural environment of the town.

With this in mind the MAP is a flexible framework rather than a rigid blueprint, setting out clear aspirations that we would like to achieve while being able to accommodate potential future need. This will be subject to the work of all our partners as well as the availability of funding and land. It is an enabling document, providing opportunities for beneficial investment and change, but mindful of protecting those qualities that make Bury St Edmunds special. In this regard the MAP will help the town to reset its history, without becoming history.

WHY ARE WE PRODUCING A MAP?

Change within the town centre is inevitable. It is known that our local population will grow. West Suffolk is a desirable place in which to live and we need to look to 2031 and beyond to make sure we have the right mix of town centre facilities to support our growing population.

Bury St Edmunds has one of the best retail, culture and leisure centres in the region and continues to attract people from across Suffolk and neighbouring counties. Our ambition is for our town to continue to be vibrant and prosperous, especially as other centres are looking to increase their offer – so we need to start planning for the future.

We know that there are current pinch points to the parking and roads infrastructure; the MAP gives us the opportunity to tackle these issues for car and other road users, plan for

future growth and ensure that the town centre is accessible for people with a range of different needs, including pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users.

Without masterplans, all local authorities can do is react to planning applications submitted by developers and others on an 'as they arrive' basis. A masterplan enables St Edmundsbury Borough Council to be proactive, tell developers what the people of Bury St Edmunds want to see and provide encouragement and certainty for investors, residents and visitors in our town. The MAP also provides a positive framework for the town centre that demonstrates to the outside world that we are 'open for business' setting out clearly what has to be met when preparing planning applications.

PREPARATION OF THE MAP

The MAP has been prepared in four main stages.

The first stage was analysis and review of all existing information about the town centre. The second stage (Issues and Options) was the identification of key issues facing the town centre and options for how the MAP might address those. This stage was subject to extensive public consultation and engagement.

Stage three was the production of the draft MAP, which included aspirations directly based on the results and public comments from the Issues and Options consultation. The Draft MAP was also subject to further consultation and engagement. The fourth and final stage were revisions to the MAP based on the outcomes of the consultation. This has produced the final masterplan which the Council has adopted as a supplementary planning document (SPD).

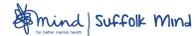
Production of the MAP has been overseen by a Working Group comprising elected members from St Edmundsbury Borough Council, Bury St Edmunds Town Council

and Suffolk County Council. The Working Group also includes representatives from The Bury Society, Suffolk Chamber of Commerce (in Bury St Edmunds), Our Bury St Edmunds (Business Improvement District), Bury St Edmunds Town Trust, the Market Traders Association and St Edmundsbury Cathedral. A consultant team comprising David Lock Associates and Peter Brett Associates have supported St Edmundsbury Borough Council in producing the MAP.

It has been shaped with input from the Bury Assembly of Associations, representing all residents' associations in the town, the Bury Accessibility Group consisting of a range of organisations representing people with additional needs, and Suffolk MIND through their Suffolk's Needs Met wellbeing model. This has helped to ensure that an inclusive range of mobility, health and wellbeing considerations have been built into this work from the start.

December 2017

Prepared on behalf of St Edmundsbury Borough Council by David Lock Associates with Peter Brett Associates



WHAT ARE THE ISSUES AND OPTIONS?

As part of the preparation of the MAP, analysis of the town centre was undertaken including a review of existing studies, proposals, and policy documents. An engagement and consultation exercise was also undertaken by the Borough Council and its partners. This was a two-stage process initially targeted at stakeholders including residents' associations, businesses and community groups. An Issues and Options report was then prepared which was subject to a second stage of consultation and engagement. In total over 1,100 responses and close to 6,000 comments were submitted at this stage.

The Issues and Options consultation asked residents, visitors, workers and students whether they agreed with eight key objectives that had been developed from the town centre analysis and initial consultation. These objectives, have shaped the development of the MAP and are:



Objective 1: Accommodating and supporting growth

Capitalising on Bury St Edmunds' status as the sub-regional centre for west Suffolk through supporting the continued growth of the economy, offering a town rich with employment and retail opportunities, green and blue open spaces (rivers and waterways) and historic and cultural assets. 89% of respondents agreed with this objective.



Objective 2: Maintaining a strong, historic heart for Bury St Edmunds

Recognising that Bury St Edmunds serves a wider catchment than the town itself, it is important that Bury continues to serve as a destination for visitors and tourists owing to its important heritage assets and character. 97% of respondents agreed with this objective.



Objective 3: Identifying an arc of opportunity

Recognising and acting upon opportunities presented by key development sites that adjoin the town centre, 78% of respondents agreed with this objective.



Objective 4: Supporting thriving mixed-use neighbourhoods

Maintaining a mix of uses in those areas principally residential in character, to support those living in the town centre. 89% of respondents agreed with this objective.



Objective 5: Providing welcoming gateways and approaches

To identify opportunities for enhancing the experience of arriving in Bury St Edmunds and address the impression of disconnection between different locations. 88% of respondents agreed with this objective.



Objective 6: Encouraging vibrant, well-designed streets and spaces

Improving the attractiveness of streets and spaces within the town centre. 77% of respondents agreed with this objective.



Objective 7: Managing and enabling accessibility for all

Promoting sustainable modes of transport and ensuring that all uses across the town are easily accessible by users of all types of mobility. 96% of respondents agreed with this objective.



Objective 8: Capitalising on green and blue spaces

Enhance access to and the quality of the green and blue edges to the town centre, recognising the leisure and health benefits which green infrastructure can provide. 97% of respondents agreed with this objective.

Overall, the top ten suggestions for improvement in the town centre (by number) were:

- Increase places to sit and relax in the town centre including social spaces.
- Discourage vehicles in the town centre and provide more pedestrian areas including pedestrianisation.
- Improve the quality of public spaces and undertake maintenance and repairs.
- Improve routes into and around the town centre for cyclists and pedestrians.
- Enhance the environment of the town centre with additional tree planting, planters and displays.
- Park & Ride or similar provision.
- Increase provision of public toilets.
- Address litter with more bins in convenient locations.
- Improve bus provision and accessibility to/from around Bury St Edmunds.
- Provide safe access to and around the town centre including better pedestrian crossings.

Looking at all the responses received through the public consultation they can be summarised and grouped under three main themes – **movement** in and around the town centre; **activities** that go on in the town centre; and the character and appearance of the town centre – what sort of **place** it should be.

The most mentioned issues (problems) and options (suggestions) by the public to tackle them) to the Issues and Options consultation are summarised below.



MOVEMENT ISSUES AND OPTIONS

Issues and options put forward in the consultation responses fall into three main categories – **Pedestrians and cyclists, Public transport, and Parking and vehicle access.**

Pedestrians and cyclists

Issues – unsafe and unclear pedestrian and cycle access, conflict between cars and pedestrians/cyclists, accessibility issues for people with mobility difficulties.

Options – Increasing safety and ease of access through providing more pedestrian areas in the town centre and improvements to existing routes, including cycle lanes and walkways and the link between the arc shopping centre and the established town. Improving convenience through better signage and increased cycle parking. Removing obstacles to accessibility including street furniture and A-board signs.

Public transport

Issues – poor links between key locations and lack of public transport options.

Options – Improved links between key locations in the town, such as the railway station and Ram Meadow car park by providing safer and clearer routes. Options include providing a 'hopper' bus and a Park and Ride or similar facility. Increased access to, from and around the town centre by bus, including improved information.

Parking and vehicular access

Issues – widespread illegal parking, lack of choice over long stay/short stay options, insufficient parking provision, cost of parking and road layout.

Options – Review parking charges; improve enforcement especially on-street; introduce pay on exit parking; provide free parking for first half hour; enhance existing provision to make it more attractive; and consider provision of more parking to serve the town. Improve highway infrastructure to enable traffic to get in, out and around the town centre.

ACTIVITY ISSUES AND OPTIONS

Activity Issues and options put forward in the consultation responses fall into three main categories – **Housing in the town centre, Retail and leisure, and Community and the arts.**

Housing in the town centre

Issues – lack of affordable housing in the town centre, concerns about unsympathetic development, parking and demand on local facilities associated with new residential development.

Options – provide mixed-use development such as retail and community facilities with housing, to include affordable homes in all developments; provide well-designed housing for mixed generations and utilise spaces above shops. Ensure new housing includes consideration for parking.

Retail and leisure

Issues – concerns about becoming a generic town centre indistinguishable from others, need to retain the town as a destination for shoppers, improvements needed to social spaces and leisure provision.

Options – Increase and encourage key retailers as well as a focus on independent traders which are special to Bury St Edmunds. Increase cultural, leisure and sports activities, venues and events in the town including those for children/young people. Encourage more cafe space and outdoor seating.

Community and the arts

Issues – inadequate visitor information, lack of display space for local artists and few community-focused venues.

Options – Increase access to and information about community spaces in and around the town centre; increase health provision including a drop-in centre; ensure appropriate facilities are available for residents; increase provision of arts venues and facilities; improve visitor experience through information (e.g. an app) and signs.



PLACE ISSUES AND OPTIONS

Place Issues and options put forward in the consultation responses fall into three main categories – **Heritage and design, Places and spaces, Environment and management.**

Heritage and design

Issues – the town does not celebrate its heritage enough, buildings can be left empty, maintenance and preservation is vitally important.

Options – improve and increase the museum offer; increase heritage-led community celebrations, ensure historic buildings are used and open to the public, ensure new development is sympathetic to the historic context and prioritise maintenance and preservation.

Places and spaces

Issues – surfaces of walkways and public spaces in poor repair, few green/peaceful spaces in the town centre apart from Abbey Gardens, rivers/water meadows areas little known and not always accessible.

Options – walkway improvements and repairs using appropriate materials, increased green/peaceful spaces throughout the town centre, improved publicity of access to rivers and water meadows areas.

Environment and management

Issues – inadequate seating and public toilets, lack of clear and appropriate lighting, signage and information, litter, preference for centrally located toilets, desire for more greenery.

Options – increased seating and social meeting places, centrally located toilets, more and well located litter bins, more trees and planting and improved, coordinated and accessible signage and lighting.

HOW DOES THE MAP ADDRESS THE ISSUES?

The MAP sets out aspirations for the town centre, based on the Options put forward by the public, that aim to address the issues identified through research, analysis and consultation. The overall aim is to set out a coordinated plan to provide for the needs of existing and new communities and support economic development in Bury St Edmunds, as set out in Vision 2031.

The aspirations put forward in the MAP refer to specific 'Character Areas' across the town centre, as described on the other side of this document. The aspirations are organised around the overarching themes of **movement, activity and place**. Many are closely interlinked supporting one or more themes. Consultation in the MAP and the aspirations has been undertaken, and changes have been made to reflect and take account of the comments received. Overall the majority of people who took time to comment were supportive of the MAP and the aspirations.

The MAP and the aspirations are supported by more detailed work on deliverability. They will be subject to the availability of funding and land, the work of other partners. Details on delivery priorities are set out in a separate Delivery Strategy.



MOVEMENT

The MAP proposes a range of measures that will improve the way people move around the town centre, with a particular focus on more sustainable forms of transport. These include:

- Pedestrianisation or part pedestrianisation of specific areas of the town centre to enable safer and easier travel together
- Easier and safer pedestrian and cycle routes into, out of and around the town centre
- Increasing car parking capacity to improve choice and ease current and potential parking issues
- Encouraging vehicle routes and access that support the mix of uses within the town centre
- Making improvements to bus travel



ACTIVITY

The MAP proposes a number of opportunities for supporting and increasing the range of uses that take place in the town centre. These include:

- Improvements to the town centre, making it easier, safer and more convenient to move around and access the activities that take place.
- Supporting the retail and leisure offer in the town centre by providing opportunities for new and expanded businesses
- Enabling mixed use developments (for example, shops, restaurants and accommodation) to be developed, making the town more interesting and attractive to spend time in
- Identify areas within the town with the potential to become the sites for new activities
- Bring the town centre together with activities and spaces in its surroundings



PLACE

The MAP provides a structure for the town centre drawing together existing streets, spaces, uses and areas of activity that take place and celebrating the historic character and identity of Bury St Edmunds. This includes:

- Setting out the town centre Character Areas, defined by their appearance, historical interest or the uses that take place there.
- Making the Character Areas easier to get around by better linking them together, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Improving opportunities for physical exercise and enhanced mental wellbeing, by making the town centre safer, easier to get around and more attractive.
- Recognising the importance of the historic environment, preserving and enhancing key locations.
- Use the adopted Streetscape Guidance to inform the design of the streets and spaces in the town centre.

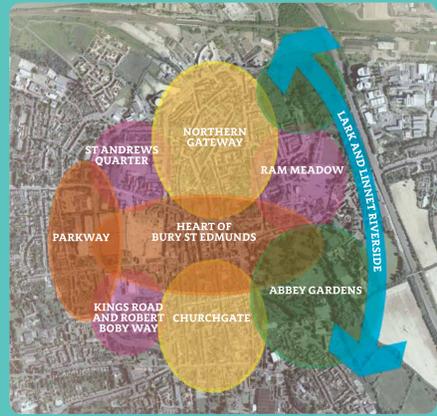
As a Supplementary Planning Document, The MAP does not set out particular uses for specific sites, this is the role of a Local Plan. Rather it suggests where uses might take place and changes be made based on the character, position and current use of areas. It provides a coordinated future vision for the town centre, setting the scene for specific individual projects to take place.

MAP: UNDERSTANDING THE STRUCTURE OF THE TOWN CENTRE

The unique historic legacy of a Norman grid street layout for Bury St Edmunds and the former Abbey has created a number of distinctive and memorable spaces. However, public consultation suggests that this can cause confusion and make it hard for people to easily and comfortably find their way around, particularly if visiting for the first time. It also makes the town centre seem much larger than it is because it is not obvious how to get from one location to another.

In order to help better understand the town centre the MAP proposes a clear structure. This structure recognises different town centre Character Areas that are identifiable through their appearance, historical interest or the uses that take place there. These Character Area are for the purpose of the MAP only.

Together this helps reinforce **movement, activity and places** in the town centre making the MAP work for everyone.



MAP: CHARACTER AREAS

The MAP identifies nine Character Areas across the town centre. Character Areas are specific locations defined by their appearance, historical interest or the uses that take place there. They are also places where change could be made to improve the town centre making sure that it offers something for everyone, and is a safe, welcoming and attractive place to spend time in. All changes need to recognise and respond to the particular characteristics of each identified area.

The MAP sets out aspirations that aim to address the issues and options identified as part of the research, analysis and consultation. Aspirations are not restricted to those areas identified on the MAP. Others will be considered on their own merits having regard to the MAP objectives, deliverability and how they contribute

to the identity, function and structure of the town centre character areas as proposed within the MAP.

The Character Areas are:

- Cornhill, Buttermarket and the arc
- The Northern Gateway
- St Andrews Quarter
- Churchgate
- Ram Meadow
- Parkway
- Kings Road and Robert Bobby Way
- Lark and Linnet Riverside
- Across the Town Centre

For each, key priorities are included relating to the themes of **movement, activity and place**. Aspirations are also listed together with project leads from the many partners involved. In addition, each Character Area is assessed against the MAP objectives to ensure that they contribute towards delivering positive change for the town centre and the communities who use it, as agreed by those communities.

DELIVERING THE MAP

The masterplan has identified a range of projects to be delivered over the short, medium and longer term. These range from relatively minor works of public realm improvement to major development opportunities, and will involve a wide number of stakeholders in the delivery process, including SEBC, SCC, the BID, the LEP, private landowners, developers, local interest groups and ongoing consultation as appropriate.

A comprehensive programme of projects has been developed to identify a high-level project plan for each area of work. This identifies the process, resources, budget, timescales for delivery, dependencies and interrelationships for each separate area of action. This essential work needs to be put in place before work on the ground can begin. The outline delivery principles for each character area are summarised as part of the MAP.

Project Leads and Partners – the 'Who'

Delivery is a high priority for the Council, but will be complex and will be progressed over time. To ensure continuity and understanding of the issues affecting delivery, a MAP Implementation Group will be formed to monitor delivery of the entire programme. This group comprises Chamber of Commerce, Our Bury St Edmunds, Market Traders, Bury Trust, Town Council, The Bury Society, and Suffolk County Council and will provide regular feedback on progress

Funding and Investment – the 'What'

Each aspiration has to be fully assessed and costed to ensure it can be delivered before being taken forward. This will include looking at timing, effects on related pieces of work and areas and how each project will be financed. Potential sources of finance and investment include:

- Private investment in new sites and redevelopments
- £106 contributions (the funding provided by developers for infrastructure and community facilities)
- St Edmundsbury Borough and Suffolk County Council investment
- External funding (for example secured from central Government)
- Other funding sources including the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)

Influencing and Doing – the 'How'

St Edmundsbury Borough Council will undertake some projects themselves, where land is owned by a public body, funding is available and the legal powers of the Council allow this. The majority of projects will however be done in partnership with other organisations. The Borough Council will use its influence and powers to ensure aspirations are taken forward in a timely manner. This will include working with landowners and other partners to identify and bring forward new sites and opportunities for redevelopment. Going forward the MAP will inform and be supported by additional studies examining a range of issues including economic growth, housing density, as well as transport and movement in the town centre.

The MAP in context – the 'Where'

The MAP isn't a stand-alone document, rather it is set within and is informed by a range of studies, policies and work taking place and due to take place, in the town centre. These include but are not restricted to:

- The Delivery Strategy
- The Local Plan
- St Edmundsbury Retail and Leisure study
- Car park studies
- Streetscape Strategy
- St Edmundsbury employment land review;
- St Edmundsbury green infrastructure study; and
- Joint infrastructure and environmental capacity appraisal;
- Joint strategic flood risk and water cycle study; and
- Bury St Edmunds Vision 2031 infrastructure delivery plan.

Timescales – the 'When'

It will take a number of years to put some of the significant changes in place, as the MAP covers the period up to 2031. The Delivery Strategy sets out short, medium and long term targets for delivery and will be responsive to different rates of growth. An early stage of delivery preparation will be to work with the County Council as the local highways authority to develop proposals for each area. This will include where these areas overlap and identify and cost a comprehensive programme of works to roads and footpaths. It is important to look both at individual areas and across the town centre to identify works that can be carried out in more than one area at the same time, saving time and money and reducing disruption. Once a project is identified, assessed and costed, an individual project plan will be developed, including identification of potential funding and funding gaps. These plans will be linked, where possible, to site specific developments. Key steps in the MAP Delivery Strategy include:

- Identification and prioritisation of projects
- Identification of specific sites for development and associated works for each project
- Detailed financial appraisal to assess value, costs and overall deliverability and to identify funding gaps
- Development of project teams: Lead, stakeholders, roles and responsibilities
- Development of individual project plans, setting out the detailed approach to and process for delivery including securing funding, attracting market interest and the timescale for delivery.

Delivery Risk

Whilst every effort will be made to deliver the aspirations set out in the masterplan there are a number of risks that are outside of the Council's control that could affect delivery. The timescales identified within the Character Areas are indicative and could also change due to the risks listed below:

- Multiple land owners
- State of the economy and the property market
- Market confidence
- Grant availability
- Interdependent projects