

City Centre & Etruria Road Corridor Area Action Plan Mixed Use Development Opportunity Site – Town Road

Town Road (Ref DP8)

Location

Land between Town Road and Potteries Way as shown on the Proposals Map and referred to in Policy SS5.

Ownership/Area

The site is in a mix of private owners and has a total area of approximately 2.01 hectares. The area is bounded by Potteries Way to the east, Town Road and the Potteries Shopping Centre to the North and West and Huntbach Street to the south. The area incorporates the historical streets of Hillchurch Street and Glass Street. Development is dependent upon land assembly.

Existing Uses

The area incorporates a mix of commercial and business premises, night-club and retail premises.

Access and Movement

The site currently operates as an island with active movements around the area but with very little connection into the site currently taking place. The northern gateway is characterised by vehicular use to the detriment of the street environment. Potteries Way and associated changes of level between the carriageways creates a strong movement barrier. The street environment around the Town Road area is compromised by vehicular activity such as bus stops, taxi ranks and on-street parking demands. The shopping centre directly opposite the site, although having a side entrance, does not positively integrate with the Town Road area. There is some pedestrian movement to the existing shops to the south of Town Road but with little or no positive interaction.

Topography

The land gradually slopes from the north into Town Road and continues to slope gradually into the pedestrianised area of Upper Market Square. The low point of the areas topography is the south west corner at the junction of Town Road and Upper Market Square, which emphasizes its gateway character.

The split level carriageway of Potteries Way causes a significant and abrupt change in level which impacts on the pedestrian connectivity across Potteries Way. The Potteries Way frontage moderately slopes from north to south.

Microclimate

Larger buildings in the area create localised shadowing of streets. The Potteries Shopping Centre in particular has a greater impact due to its linear character along Town Road. Due to the narrowness of streets, their alignment to the prevailing SW winds and the scale of some buildings, there is some existing wind funneling. There is also potential for new development to exacerbate this on Huntbach Street and Glass Street.

Ground Conditions

Evidence to be provided via the City Centre Masterplan.

Heritage/Conservation

No buildings within the Town Road site have statutory protection. St Johns Church, located adjacent the site on the opposite side of Town Road, is a grade II* listed building and development within the immediate area should therefore protect its setting. There are a number of buildings of historical and architectural interest within the site, most notably numbers 20 to 32 Town Road and numbers 2 to 4 Hillchurch Street.

Public Open Space and Public Realm

There is no public open space or formal public realm within the Town Road site. Central Forest Park is located approximately 250m to the north west of the site, though there are no positive connections between the park and either the site or the City Centre as a whole.

Legibility and Quality of Frontages

Buildings at the northern gateway are of poor quality and present a broken and inactive frontage to the street. The scale of buildings do not emphasise their role as a key gateway landmark. The Potteries Shopping Centre presents quite a foreboding and dominant presence in this part of the city centre presenting a hard and impenetrable frontage which over dominates key views for example of St. John's Church. This was once was a strong focal point for this area of Hanley but now the only key view is from Hillchurch Street.

A group of buildings on the Town Road frontage relate positively to St John's church and 'turn the corner' from Hillchurch Street

Within the Town Road site there is fragmented development, populated by low rise buildings and surface car parking and side streets are characterised by broken and inactive frontages that make the area unwelcoming.

The southern gateway onto Town Road marks a very immediate transition from pedestrianised street environment to one dominated by vehicles.

Character and Scale

The low rise and open character to the northern gateway does not create a positive sense of arrival into the City Centre, although this is the primary access route into the Potteries Shopping Centre and its car park and is often a visitor's first point of arrival. This area also detracts from the setting of St. John's church. Lower scale in the northern part of the site contrasts significantly with the monolithic character of the shopping centre and the monumental scale of St John's church.

Human scale, period buildings act as a significant contrast to the scale of the Potteries Shopping Centre opposite and create a pinch point in Town Road in proximity to the church. Low rise warehouse buildings create a central fragmented zone within the site that lacks containment. This contrasts with the stature and form of the Salvation Army building. The southern area of the site is marked by strong containment onto the Town Road frontage but buildings are of relatively low quality except one more historic building (4 Town Road). The buildings aligning Huntbach Street are of a lesser scale and quality.

The southern gateway is marked by significant scale buildings but of a negative character with poor corner emphasis. Strong focal corners are a key townscape theme of the city centre.

Historical Analysis and Urban Grain

This area in the 1900's was an integral part of the urban character of Hanley, comprising of a fine urban grain interspersed by larger commercial buildings. The area was characterised by strong frontages created by perimeter block structure and enclosed public realm comprising yards and informal squares. These incorporate a mix of uses which created an active and varied neighbourhood.

During the 1900's and by 1950 the concentration and critical mass of the area was still intact. Indeed the high level of permeability caused by the grid network of streets created a well connected residential suburb to the north west of the area.

Today the urban grain of the area is severed by the construction of the Potteries Way ring road creating fragmented and open blocks along the ring road edge, destroying enclosure and creating

views of the backs of buildings. St John's Church is one of the few remaining remnants of the earlier townscape. The severance caused by the ring road was never properly resolved with very poor connectivity still in existence between the area and the housing to the north west.

Conceptual Urban Design Framework

Following the background analysis work set out above, a number of key design and development principles can be identified for the area which then starts to underpin and develop a conceptual urban design framework. A mixed redevelopment opportunity for residential, retail, leisure and commercial uses which should aim to achieve the following principles set out below and illustrated on the Conceptual Urban Design Framework Plan:

1. Linkage with the primary shopping streets around Potteries Shopping Centre and Upper Market Square is critical;
2. Areas of open space at the northern gateway are to be transformed into a high quality public realm as part of creating the 'Green Ribbon' along Town Road, and to strengthen links with Central Forest Park to encourage pedestrian movement to that asset;
3. Bus routes and general traffic channeled behind the Potteries Shopping Centre via Quadrant Road to avoid Town Road as part of the Public Realm transformation. Alternative options for general traffic should be considered, with the potential for exclusion/management during the day with increased access at night time.
4. Prestige development at the northern gateway to draw people into the city centre and create a high quality sense of arrival. Development to include below ground parking and servicing;
5. Refurbished St John's Church to become a key 'hub' use in the area with mixed uses clustered around it;
6. Existing Town Road buildings to be refurbished with residential above setting the context for finer grain mixed uses in the Hillchurch Street and Glass Street areas;
7. Hillchurch Street transformed by a new square aligned by active frontages with retail and leisure at ground floor. High quality residential provided on upper floors;
8. Town Road to be transformed into a high quality shared surface environment for pedestrians and cyclists. Non-essential traffic should be removed from the Town Road site. Development should take full account of public transport integration;
9. Side elevation to Potteries Shopping Centre to be enhanced and made more 'active' where possible, with potential for ground floor level kiosks, frontage re-modeling and feature lighting;
10. New access created off Huntbach Street to serve southern area. Glass Street enclosed at its eastern end with the potential to create an informal circuit with cross pedestrian links between Hillchurch Street and Glass Street and finer grain, mixed uses at the heart of the area
11. Landmark building at corner of Town Road and Huntbach Street. Huntbach Street aligned by active frontage and with enhanced public realm as a key pedestrian route into the city centre;
12. Potteries Way transformed by a positive active frontage and enhancement as a 'boulevard' route;
13. Possible new bridge over Potteries Way to better connect key pedestrian access and desire line into Upper Huntbach Street;

14. Periphery of site aligned by larger footprint commercial buildings/uses with potential for residential above;
15. Building massing to reflect the topography of the site;
16. Corner of Potteries Way and Huntbach Street marked by a key focal building turning the corner and creating an active, high quality frontage to the public realm;
17. Potential new car park within the site as part of broader development proposals serving offices and residential.

Development Outputs

As set out above this area needs to develop its role as providing a mix of uses includes shops (A1); restaurants and cafes (A3/A4); offices (A2 and B1a); hotel (C1); dwellings (C3); non-residential institutions (D1) and assembly and leisure (D2)

Residential – approximately 150 residential units

A Housing Market Assessment should be prepared to provide precise details of housing numbers/mix/tenure.

Retail / Leisure – 10,000m²

Hotel / Office – 2,500m²

Open Space – 0.5 hectare

The above outputs are based on potential development parameters which take account of the sites location and relationship to the primary city centre core and with other priority development sites in and around the city centre. There is no specific requirement for affordable housing provision on this site.

Delivery of Preferred Option

Comprehensive regeneration scheme preferred – developer led. Delivery requires further land assembly and securing necessary planning and highway authorisation. Delivery is a long term priority.

Key Developer requirements/Section 106 contributions

- Heritage/Conservation Appraisal and Archeology Report
- Transport Study in consultation with the Council
- Appropriate contribution towards public art and the wider City Centre public realm developments;
- Appropriate contribution to necessary off site highway infrastructure and maintenance;

Evidence Base

- List of relevant documents/strategies

DP8





Key

- | | | | |
|--|------------------------------------|--|--|
| | Prestige office and/or hotel | | Key pedestrian route |
| | Mixed retail/leisure & residential | | Potential cross route |
| | Other offices/residential | | Key areas of shared surface/public realm |
| | Cultural enterprise/residential | | Route of 'Green Ribbon' |
| | Shops refurbished | | Potteries Way Boulevard |
| | Potential car park | | General vehicular access |
| | St John's refurbished | | Restricted vehicular access |
| | Key focal corners | | Rear servicing/access |
| | Secondary corners | | Proposed bus re-routing |
| | Pedestrian squares | | Frontage enhancement |
| | Highway squares | | Potteries Way frontage enhancement |
| | Dropping off facility | | Refer to schedule within document |



Town Road Urban Design Guidance

Conceptual Urban Design Framework

Dwg. Ref: 007 (numbered)
 Drawn: DH
 Date: March 09

Town Road

Urban Design Guidance

Background technical information



March 2009

No positive connection to Central Forest park from the northern edge of the city centre

Northern gateway characterised by vehicular use to the detriment of street environment and pedestrian movement

Street environment compromised by vehicular activity to the north of Town Road.

Privately owned internal parking areas off side roads/lanes

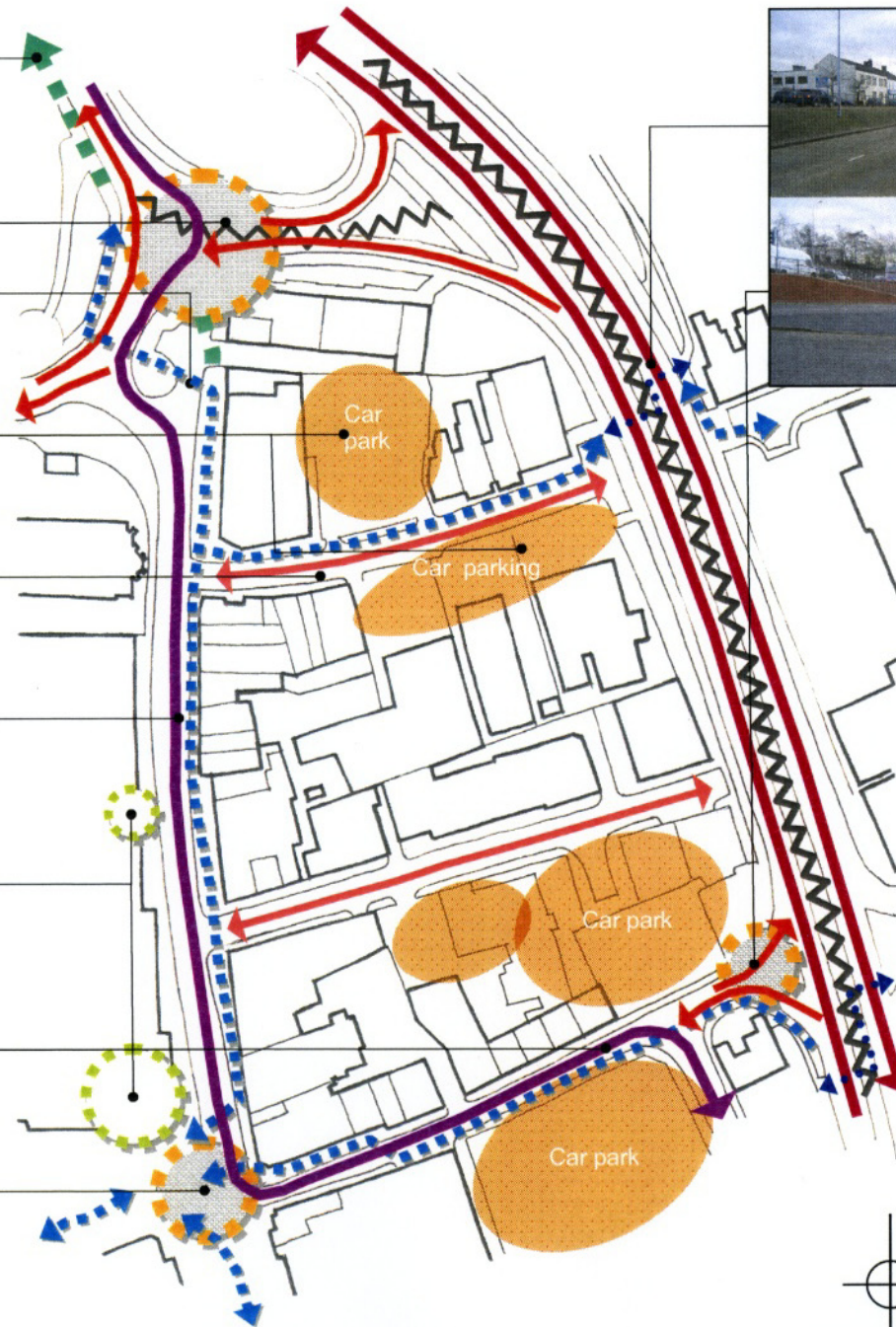
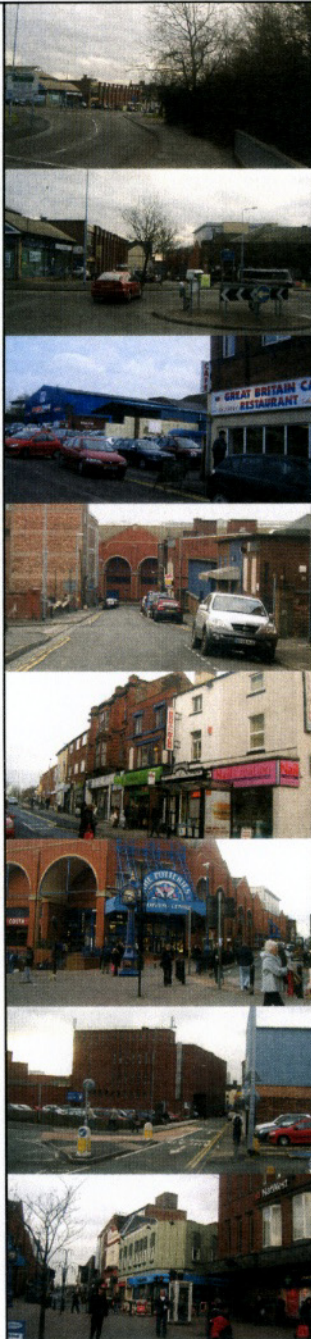
Sides streets used for informal and specialist parking (disabled badge holders) and generally quiet

Bus stops, taxi ranks and on-street parking dominate the Town Road street environment with significant through movement by larger vehicles

Shopping centre entrances not linked directly to key pedestrian desire lines across/along edge of site

Huntbach Street is a key pedestrian link blighted by vehicular movement including buses and cars – this is a major deterrent to use by pedestrians

Southern gateway onto Town Road marks transition from pedestrianised street environment to one dominated by vehicles



Ringroad and associated changes of level between carriageways creates a strong movement barrier. Split level crossings do not create direct pedestrian connectivity

Junction of Huntbach Street onto Potteries Way does not present a positive pedestrian gateway due to street character, and the poor quality, indirect crossing arrangement

Key

- Site gateways
- Shopping centre entries
- Pedestrian routes
- Pedestrian barriers
- Pedestrian crossing
- Strategic vehicle route
- Secondary vehicle route
- Public transport route
- Side roads/Lanes

Town Road Urban Design Guidance

Site analysis 1 Access and movement

Dwg. Ref: 002
Drawn: DH
Date: March 09

The land gradually slopes from the north into Town Road and continues to slope gradually into the pedestrianised entry into Parliament Street

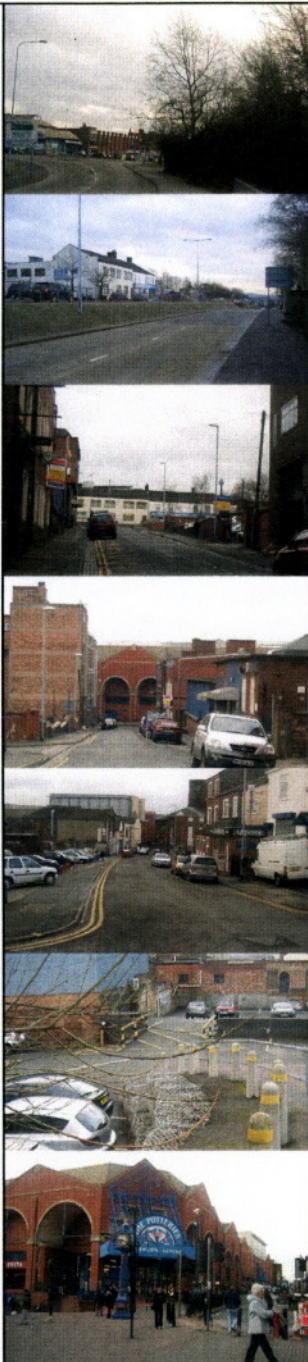
The split level carriageway of Potteries Way causes a significant and abrupt change in level which impacts on the pedestrian connectivity across Potteries Way. The Potteries Way frontage moderately slopes from north to south

Larger buildings in the area (the Potteries, Nat West and Britannia office buildings) create localized shadowing of streets. The Potteries in particular has a greater impact due to its linear character along Town Road.















Due to the narrowness of streets, their alignment to the prevailing SW winds and the scale of some buildings, there is some existing wind funneling. There is also potential for new development to exacerbate this on Huntbach Street and Glass Street.

Significant levels changes within the body of the site between Glass Street and Huntbach Street are addressed by retention walling.

The low point of the area's topography is at the south west corner at the junction of Town Road and Parliament Street at Market Square, which emphasizes its gateway character.



Key

-  Significant change in level between carriageways
-  Abrupt levels change within site
-  Gradual slope
-  Moderate slope
-  Steeper slope
-  Tiered crossings
-  Areas of greater street shadowing
-  Prevailing winds
-  Existing wind funneling
-  Potential wind funneling
-  Solar path
-  Main vehicular movement
-  Vehicular pedestrian conflict
-  Limited opportunity for improvement

Town Road Urban Design Guidance

Site analysis 3 Microclimate and physical constraints

Dwg. Ref: 004
Drawn: DH
Date: March 09





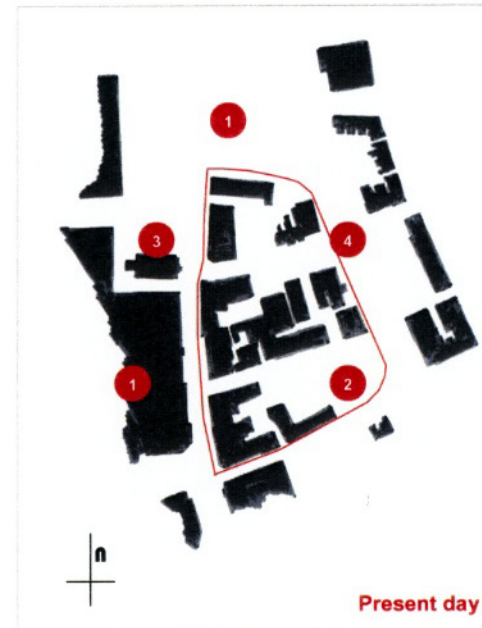
c.1900

- 1 Fine urban grain interspersed by larger commercial buildings
- 2 Strong frontages created by perimeter block structure with enclosed public realm
- 3 Secondary frontage created by finer grain, yards and informal squares
- 4 Urban structure incorporates a mix of uses creating an active and varied neighbourhood
- 5 St John's and Tabernacle Churches key landmarks on Town Road



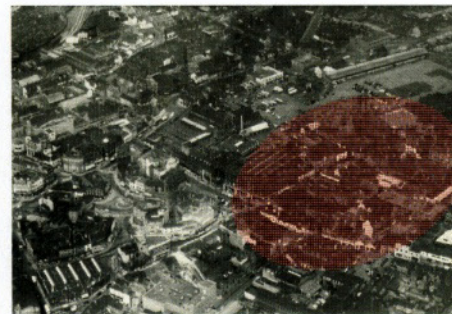
c.1950

- 1 Concentration and critical mass of the area still intact
- 2 High levels of permeability caused by the grid network of streets
- 3 Further infilling of blocks at the heart of the area between Glass Street and Hillchurch Street with larger commercial buildings
- 4 Well connected residential suburb located to the north west of the area with strong connections to the heart of the town centre



Present day

- 1 Urban structure annihilated by the ring road and larger buildings (in particular the Potterie's Centre)
- 2 Fragmented and open blocks along the ring road edge, destroying enclosure and creating views of the backs of buildings
- 3 St John's one of the few remnants of the earlier townscape
- 4 Severance and very poor connectivity between the area and the housing to the north west



Images of Town Road area - 1960s

Town Road Urban design Guidance

Site analysis 4 Urban Grain

Dwg. Ref: 005
Drawn: DH
Date: March 09

Low rise and open character to the northern gateway does not create a positive sense of arrival into the City Centre and detracts from the setting of St John's Church

Lower scale in the northern part of the site contrasts significantly with the monolithic character of the shopping centre and the monumental scale of St John's Church

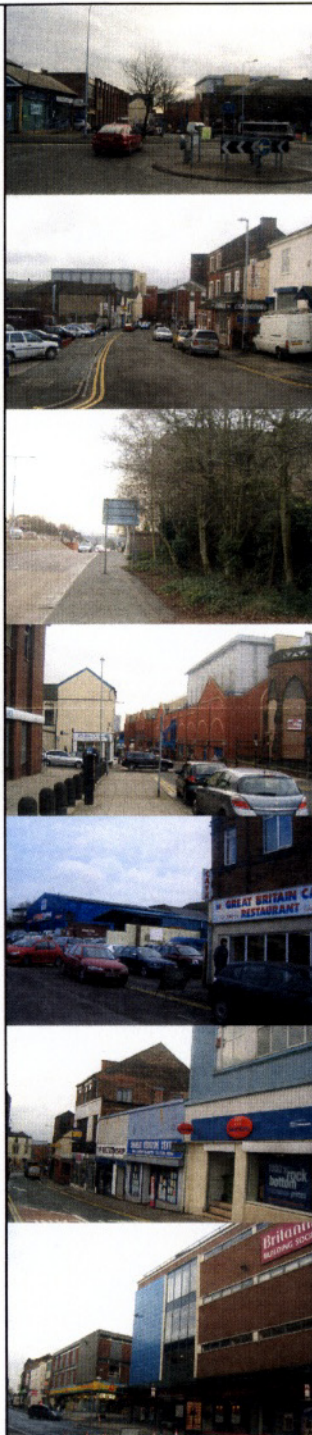
The open grained, low rise edge to Potterie's Way creates a negative impression of the area with leakage of views from key routes. The width of the road provides an opportunity to create a stronger perimeter block form containing and providing a high quality edge and entries into the area

Human scale characterful buildings act as a significant contrast to the scale of the Potteries opposite and create a pinch point in Town Road in proximity to the church. Corner could be improved.

Low rise warehouse buildings create a central fragmented zone within the site that lacks containment which contrasts with the stature and form of the Salvation Army building – uses add to the character of the area

Southern zone marked by strong containment on Town Road frontage but buildings of relatively low quality except one more historic building (4 Town Road). Buildings aligning Huntbach Street are of a lesser scale and quality. Open car parks further erode the urban grain.

Southern gateway marked by significant scale buildings but of negative character with poor corner emphasis. Strong focal corners are a key townscape theme of the city centre.



Key

- Monumental
- Monolithic (4+ storey)
- Mid scale lesser quality modern (2-3 storey)
- Low rise commercial (1-2 storey)
- Low rise warehousing and club
- Mid scale higher quality traditional
- Mid scale lesser quality traditional
- Open parking
- Open spaces
- Poor corners requiring transformation
- Potential for new primary focal corners
- Potential secondary corners

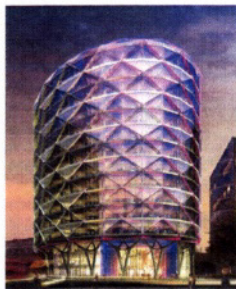
Town Road Urban Design Guidance

Site analysis 5 Character and scale

Dwg. Ref: 006
Drawn: DH
Date: March 09



Landmark gateway development wrapping around the Potteries Way frontage and stepping and reducing in scale to the junction with Hillchurch Street with key focal point at corner of Town Road and Quadrant Road



Existing buildings on Town Road to be retained and refurbished. Scale and massing to remain unaltered by enhancements. The existing landmark of St John's Church to be enhanced as a 'hub' use in the area



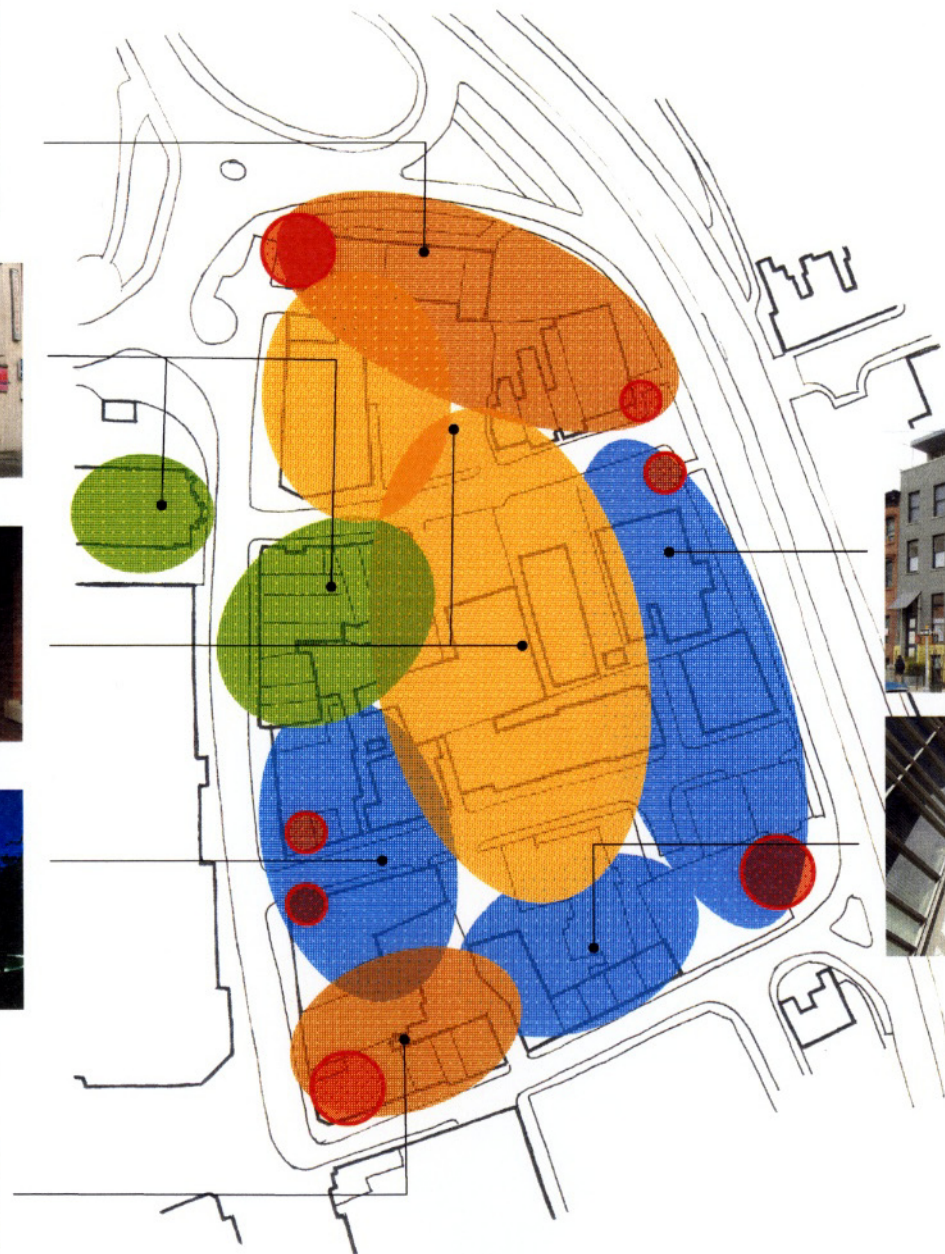
Central part of the site characterized by finer grain smaller scale buildings with massing creating interest and variety at street level and in short views within the site








Southern area of Town Road to reflect the scale of existing buildings, but with more responsive massing and significantly improved architecture within new building design



Southern gateway to be announced by significant scale landmark building of similar stature to existing building but with a stronger architectural form and more active ground floor, interfacing with Upper Market Square and Huntbach Street



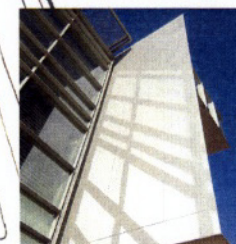
Key

-  4 to 6 storey
-  3 to 5 storey
-  2 to 4 storey
-  Existing to be retained
-  Gateway entry features (enhanced scale)
-  Focal elements (enhanced scale)

Eastern edge along Potteries Way defined by high quality office development with varied massing reflecting site topography. Scale of development to help positively contain the route of Potteries Way.



Huntbach Street better contained with higher quality buildings with varied and responsive massing to reflect importance as key pedestrian route. High quality built edge to transform pedestrian route.



Town Road Urban Design Guidance

Illustrative Urban Design Principles Scale and Massing

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Date: March 09

