

Ealing Urban Realm Strategy

July 2011



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A word cloud titled "Urban Realm Design Guidance: Alphabet Soup". The words are arranged in a circular pattern, with the largest words being "Public", "Design", "Manual", and "Realm". Other prominent words include "Guide", "Street", "Strategy", "Streetscape", "Framework", "Standards", "Guidance", "Space", "Urban", "Highways", "Implementation", "Borough", "Maintenance", "Management guide", and "Streets". The words are in various shades of orange and brown, with some in a darker, more saturated color. The overall shape of the word cloud is roughly circular, with the words "Design" and "Manual" forming the right side, "Public" and "Guide" forming the top, and "Strategy" and "Streetscape" forming the bottom.

Public
Guide
Street
Movement
Streetsmart
Highways
Implementation
Guidance
Space
Urban
Guidelines
Scene
Roads
Borough
Maintenance
Management guide
Streets
Manual
Design
Realm
Strategy
Streetscape
Framework
Standards

00 Overview

In 2010, the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE - now the Design Council) commissioned work to assist with the preparation of guidance on Public Space Design Guidance. That it was considered necessary to have guidance on guidance is in itself testament to the fact that there is a good deal of confusion amongst practitioners, politicians and other stakeholders about why different types of urban realm design documents are for, what they're called, and how they should best be used.

The graphic opposite is comprised of many of the words typically used in the titles of different documents. Across UK local authorities, different terms are often used to describe documents of the same type; while different types of document may just as easily have the same name.

Although confusion over nomenclature is not in itself particularly important, it is representative of confusion about what needs to be done in the urban realm and who does it. This very definitely is important, because it can and does lead to a number of undesirable outcomes such as a poor quality urban realm, wastage of scarce resources (including money), and unintentional conflicts with adopted policies.

CABE's work helped to clarify that there are broadly four different types of guidance, covering the ground from vision to detail. In order of increasing detail, these may be described as:

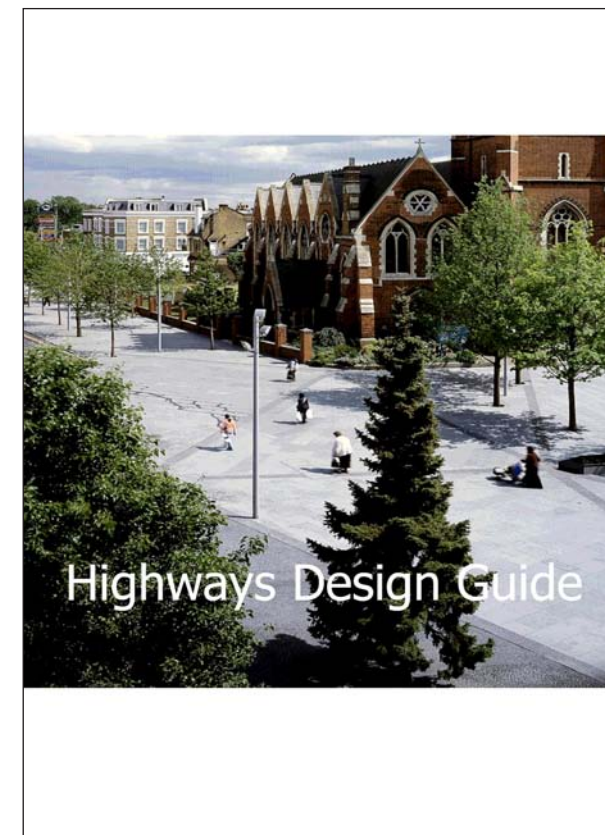
- Frameworks
- Strategies
- Guides
- Manuals

The first two focus on more strategic plan-making, while the latter two represent detailed guidance. While the production of four distinct documents is by no means essential, or necessarily desirable, it is usually highly beneficial for an authority to have guidance of both the strategic and detailed types. The Framework and Strategy documents may be considered together as 'Part A' of an authority's suite of urban realm design guidance; while the Guide and Manual may be considered as 'Part B'.

Part A provides the rationale - the 'Why?' and 'Where?' - for Part B - the 'What?' and 'How?'. Mistakes in urban realm delivery are typically associated with answers to one question being determined in isolation of the others.

Ealing Council has already drafted its 'Part B' document under the title Highways Design Guide (HDG). The latest version of the HDG (v0.9, dated June 2010) is not formally adopted by the Council but is intended for use by 'design engineers' - both Council officers and their consultants/contractors. It is a dynamic document that will be updated as necessary.

This Ealing Urban Realm Strategy (URS) is the Council's 'Part A' document, and was prepared by Urban Initiatives - the company that carried out the above-mentioned study for CABE.



Cover of Ealing Highways Design Guide, June 2010



01 Ealing as a Place

“Ealing is a fantastic place to live and work, the third largest London borough in terms of population and the largest commercially, and one of the most ethnically diverse in the country. If Ealing were a city, it would be the 12th largest in England and Wales”

2026 Development Strategy, Initial Proposals (2009)

Overview

The London Borough of Ealing is hugely diverse. The large number and wide range of different types of urban environment encompassed within the Borough boundary, and the many different types of community, represent both challenges and opportunities in achieving a strategy for an urban realm that is both cohesive for Ealing as a whole and expressive of the individuality of its different parts.

Large areas of the Borough have a completely different character from one another; the main town centres each have similarly diverse attributes; Ealing is known for its many trees and greenspaces; it is tracked through by major transport infrastructure of different types (rail, tube, buses, main roads) that provide strategic access but also often create local severance. An effective Urban Realm Strategy must support this character and diversity, and therefore must first understand it.

Ealing spans both the inner city and the outer suburbs of the Capital, and it has developed its own unique identity. It may be best known for its links to the cinema from the early days of that medium: Ealing Studios is the oldest film studio in the world.

Coined as ‘The Queen of the Suburbs’ in Victorian and Edwardian times, Ealing was popular as a ‘halfway house’ between the country and city. The title still remains today, but more with reference to the number of trees, parks and other of green spaces in a built-up area so close to central London.

Ealing in Numbers

Ealing is a community of sharp contrasts; it shares in West London’s successful economy but equally has pockets of deprivation. Ealing covers 55 square kilometres, making it the 11th largest of the 33 London boroughs by size. It is the 10th least densely populated borough, but has the 3rd largest population, living in around 140,000 households. 41% of the borough’s population belong to black or minority ethnic groups, making it the 3rd most diverse borough in terms of ethnicity.

Ealing is the largest commercial borough in London, with around 150,000 people working for over 11,000 businesses. The borough is traversed by two principal radial transport corridors of differing character: the A4020 Uxbridge Road/Great Western Railway (Crossrail) corridor through the centre; and the A40 trunk road corridor to the north. Ealing is served by three London Underground lines (District, Piccadilly and Central) and there are also nine national rail stations giving direct access to Reading, Heathrow and Paddington.

The borough contains over 100 parks and open spaces (from playgrounds to golf courses), covering 8.4 square kilometres and including 19 major open areas, 10 miles of canals and two rivers (the Brent and the Crane). There are over 500 buildings listed as having special architectural or historic interest.

Urban Design Challenges for Ealing

All of these factors contribute to the varied character of the borough; with neighbouring areas often having a completely different look and feel from one another, despite being in close proximity. The challenges in relation to the delivery and maintenance of an excellent and context-sensitive urban realm are therefore considerable.

All too often, diversity of character is met by one of two responses: a standard approach to every part of the urban realm; or a ‘bespoke’ approach to each of many sub-areas. The former masks the character it should be celebrating; the latter leads to an uncoordinated patchwork of elements that often date very quickly. Finding the appropriate ground between these extremes is the purpose of this Urban Realm Strategy.

The Strategy needs to comprehend the interweaving pattern of town centres, employment areas, industrial estates, freestanding retail centres; major community facilities such as Ealing Hospital; and also the numerous residential neighbourhoods, each with its own distinctive character. Many residential areas are of architectural and/or historical importance, and several are designated as Conservation Areas.

The Strategy must also respond to the vast areas of green space within Ealing and its characteristic tree-lined streets. This is a matter not just of preservation and/or enhancement but also of access.

Last, but by no means least, the Strategy must recognise that enabling movement, especially in ways that minimise both pollution and congestion, is a key role of the urban realm. This means Ealing’s streets need to work hard and by no means just look good.



02 Policy Context & Status

Overview

The Urban Realm Strategy and Highways Design Guide are part of a 'golden thread' that ensures consistency and continuity in the urban realm, from Vision to Implementation (see graphic to right). The two documents, and the high quality urban realm which they promote and enable, form important cross-Borough departmental objectives.

Together, they help establish the 'Corporate Memory' necessary for the continuing delivery of improvements to the urban realm in the long-term, future-proofing Ealing's urban realm quality despite the inevitable changes that will occur in terms of the Council members and officers with relevant responsibilities.

Status

The Urban Realm Strategy is an essential reference document for all those involved in policy-making, decision-making, design and maintenance as these concern the borough's streets and spaces. These include Council members and officers, their contractors, ward forums, Business Improvement District (BID) companies, private sector developers, those working for and on behalf of statutory undertakers, and other third party agencies. The URS also forms an important element of the evidence base to the emerging Local Development Framework (LDF).

The application of the Urban Realm Strategy should in due course be ensured through the creation of an appropriate Council governance structure, involving both members and officers, and potentially third parties. In order to remain effective and robust, the URS and HDG will both be maintained as 'living documents'.

Vision

"To ensure that future development achieves the highest standard of sustainable design and construction, including construction of the public realm, highways and other physical infrastructure."

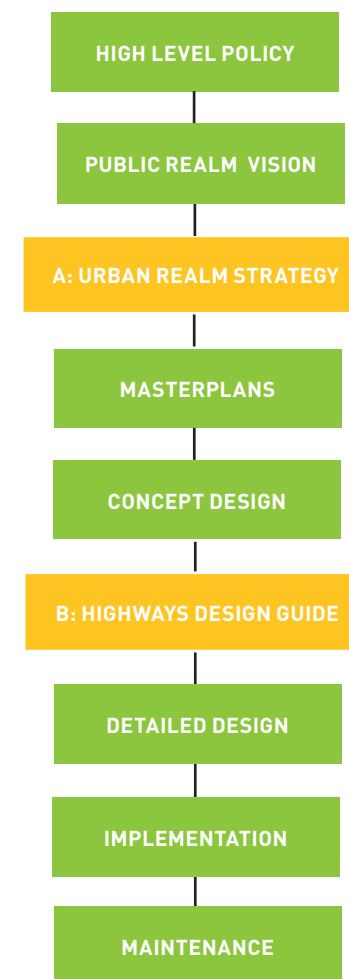
Ealing Development Strategy: Delivery of the Vision for Ealing 2026, p.23

The Urban Realm Strategy equips the authority to implement this vision, creating an environment which is safe, attractive and accessible for all.

Key Policy Relationships

The Urban Realm Strategy will be used in the planning process, in conjunction with the existing Unitary Development Plan, and the emerging LDF. The following table lists these and some of the other key documents to which the Urban Realm Strategy relates:

Tier	Policy, Guidance or Programme
National	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Planning Policy Statements/ National Planning Framework/ Manual for Streets• CABI publications & Building for Life
Regional	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The London Plan• Transport for London Streetscape Guidance & other GLA/Design for London publications
Local	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ealing Unitary Development Plan, and accompanying SPG and SPD.• Ealing emerging Local Development Framework, including the three main Development Plan Documents (Development Strategy, Development Management and Development Sites Documents)• Ealing Sustainable Community Strategy• The Local Implementation Plan (LIP) for Transport• Other, place-specific documents (see Ch.05)



Continuity in Urban Realm Delivery

Character

A place with its own identity

To promote character in townscape and landscape by responding to and reinforcing locally distinctive patterns of development, landscape and culture.

Continuity and enclosure

A place where public and private spaces are clearly distinguished

To promote the continuity of street frontages and the enclosure of space by development which clearly defines private and public areas.

Quality of the public realm

A place with attractive and successful outdoor areas

To promote public spaces and routes that are attractive, safe, uncluttered and work effectively for all in society, including disabled and elderly people.

Ease of movement

A place that is easy to get to and move through

To promote accessibility and local permeability by making places that connect with each other and are easy to move through, putting people before traffic and integrating land uses and transport.

Legibility

A place that has a clear image and is easy to understand

To promote legibility through development that provides recognisable routes, intersections and landmarks to help people find their way around.

Adaptability

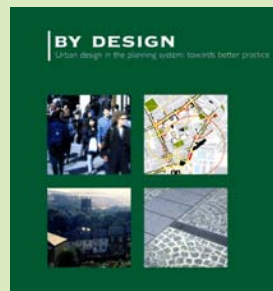
A place that can change easily

To promote adaptability through development that can respond to changing social, technological and economic conditions.

Diversity

A place with variety and choice

To promote diversity and choice through a mix of compatible developments and uses that work together to create viable places that respond to local needs.



By Design objectives

Understand function

A clear understanding of the function of a particular street and a brief that articulates this is one of the fundamentals of creating great streets. The improvements need to reflect whether the street is primarily a retail high street, a residential road, a place for cultural activity, a busy through route, or something else; the more capable the street is of bearing heavy pedestrian use, the more appropriate the removal of segregation measures is likely to be.

Imagine a blank canvas

It will not always be possible or even necessary to redesign an existing street from scratch; many projects will involve taking what exists and seeking to improve it. But it is nonetheless always worth imagining the space as a blank canvas, challenging each of its existing features as to whether it really needs to be preserved. Every feature that remains or is replaced should be carefully justified, and care should be taken to minimise the clutter of lighting, signage and materials.

Decide the degree of separation

Within the constraints of the street's functions, segregation of road users should be avoided wherever possible and only introduced where it is clearly essential for safety or other functional reasons. That people can act responsibly and can take reasonable risks should be recognised.

Reflect character

Most London streets have an historic character of their own: Victorian, 1920s, post-war, boomtime yuppie. The design of the street should reflect that character, not through slavish pastiche but through recognition that the street is the foreground to the buildings on it and that the buildings frame the street. A one-size-fits-all design manual approach that produces the same outcome in all locations is unlikely to be appropriate.

Go for quality

Materials should be used in a consistent way and should be of the highest quality and durability that can be afforded. The life of a public realm project is long-term and the choice of materials should reflect the fact that good quality materials often last very much longer, while still looking good, and are less expensive to maintain than cheaper, less durable alternatives. Good workmanship, and attention to detail and finishes can make all the difference.

Avoid over-elaboration

A street is almost by definition a stage or backdrop for human interaction. It should not compete with the activity it is intended to host. Over-elaborate design is rarely impressive over the longer term. Great streets are created by the buildings and trees that frame them and the activities they contain. The purpose of street improvements is to complement the one and facilitate the other, not to make a loud statement.



Better Streets principles

03 Urban Realm Principles

“Have nothing in your *streets and spaces* which you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful”

William Morris

Although Morris actually used the word ‘house’, not the words ‘streets and spaces’, this phrase is very helpful in encapsulating the over-riding principle at the centre of this Strategy: everything in Ealing’s urban realm should have a real purpose (not just a theoretical one) and/or make that realm more attractive to real people.

Bearing in mind the ‘alphabet soup’ of terms used to describe urban realm guidance documents (see graphic page 4), there is an obvious danger of overkill in terms of establishing ‘yet another’ set of principles. Nevertheless, there is good reason why Ealing should want to ensure that the urban realm principles it adopts are suitable for the Borough, not just taken ‘off the peg’ from someone else’s work. To address this issue without reinventing the wheel, the approach for the Ealing URS has been to take two particular, well-established documents, one national and one for London, as the starting points for developing Ealing’s own urban realm principles. The two documents are:

- *By Design* (DETR/CABE, 2000) – National guidance on urban design
- *Better Streets* (Mayor of London, 2009) – London-wide guidance on street design

By Design establishes the following objectives for Urban Design generally, and these are expanded in the graphic on the facing page:

- Character
- Continuity & Enclosure
- Quality
- Ease of Movement
- Legibility
- Adaptability
- Diversity

Better Streets is the London Mayor’s approach to improving the capital’s streets and spaces (excluding parks and other major greenspace). It sets out the following principles, which are also expanded upon in the graphic on the facing page:

- Understand Function (both ‘movement’ and ‘place’)
- Reflect Character
- Decide the Degree of Separation
- Imagine a Blank Canvas
- Go for Quality
- Avoid Over-Elaboration

Both sets of principles have been used to derive the following urban realm design principles for Ealing:

- **Character** (design must respond to the kind of place it’s located in & strengthen local identity)
- **Activity** (design must respond to the local movement user hierarchy and aim to integrate the many and diverse other activities in the area)
- **Quality** (design must be attractive & fit for purpose)
- **Simplicity** (design should be timeless; nothing should go in or out of the urban realm by default)
- **Longevity** (the urban realm must be maintainable & sustainable)
- **Inspiration** (design should take appropriate opportunities to promote beauty, interest & civic pride)

A third essential reference document is the following:

- *Manual for Streets 2: Wider Application of the Principles* (CIHT, 2010)

MfS2 sets out a total of 15 principles that cover ground including not just design but also methods of working and approaches to the use of guidance. It is not necessary to repeat these principles here, but it is perhaps helpful to highlight the central thrust of MfS2 that the way in which any street is designed and managed should respond to both its ‘movement status’ and its ‘place status’. In other words, it is essential to consider, on a case by case basis, not only the people who are moving to, from and through a street, but also the people who do, or may want to, stay there – whether that is to live, work, shop, trade, eat, drink, socialise, see the sights or any combination of such activities.

In addition to the six main ‘design principles’, it is recommended that the following two ‘process principles’ should also be established, since failure here can fundamentally undermine the delivery of the principles, however sound they may be.

- **Deliverability** (design should be fundable and buildable)
- **Governance** (a system should be established both to embed ‘Corporate Memory’ and to guide and ensure delivery, not leave it to the capacity or goodwill of individual members/officers)

What each of the six design principles might mean in practice is illustrated on the following pages. Guidance on their application in Ealing as a whole and in specific locations within the borough is then set out in chapters 04 and 05.

Character



Traffic management elements, most of which are optional, almost never add character. but frequently disguise or hide it.



Simple changes, e.g making yellow lines narrow & pale not wide & bright, can minimise negative impacts on character.



Attempts to add character with 'bespoke' treatments & crude gateway features rarely work & tend to date very rapidly.



Loss of hedges, fences & walls for garden parking damages local character & often impinges on footways.



Vivid colours for markings and surface treatments should be used sparingly, rather than by default, & respond to context.



Flowers can be a welcome presence, but planters & boxes must be part of an overall design, not 'quick-fix' add-ons.

Activity



Where 'two-wheels-up' is prevalent in narrow streets, bays should be marked to regularise & maintain footway width.



Markets & footway trading can be a boon to street-life, but should be managed to ensure people are able to pass easily.



Even daunting challenges - Camden's Britannia Junction - can be met when a better balance of activities is struck...



Successful design responds to how people do & will use streets; doesn't impose a designer's view of how they should.



Simple design innovations, like this footway-level loading bay, allow streets to flexibly accommodate different activities.



...and while this photo-realisation may seem unrealistic, the junction is now being reworked on this basis. Open in 2012.

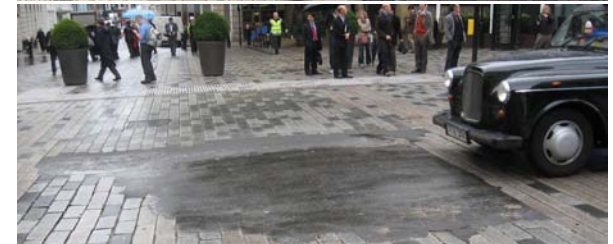
Quality



If 'quality' is prioritised below the assumed requirements of different guidance/standards, the results are often dismal.



Whatever the choice of materials, good workmanship will always be an essential component of urban realm quality.



The use of natural materials usually implies greater costs & higher risks. Maintenance considerations must be addressed.



Quality is often compromised by failure to integrate the new & the old. Scheme 'red lines' must not be observed too literally.



Detailed, context-specific, design is vital. If multiple cuts will be required, the design &/or the material choice is flawed.



The more that is spent on 'quality', the more obvious small failures will be. This risk should be addressed at the outset.

Simplicity



Many streets, especially footways, have too many things in them. Often these are there by default, not on basis of need.



Even where the number of street elements is minimal, their negative impacts can be minimised further by co-location.



Guardrails are too often there by default & not achieving a safety benefit. Removal can make streets more walkable.



Even where many street elements are present, simple footway zoning means they need not get in pedestrians' way.



Replacing lighting columns with luminaires on walls is an option where space is tight or visual clutter a key issue.



Common problems: 'A-boards' - they can be permitted or enforced; 'keep left bollards' - they're typically unnecessary.

Longevity



Choice of materials must consider upkeep. Light paving will show mess, so good cleansing regimes must be secured.



Bespoke designs and unique elements may look good on a plan and on 'Day 1', but what happens if they need replacing?



Materials must be fit for purpose. Using bollards in this instance would compound, not solve, the problem.



A mix of materials is a good idea in locations where spillages are anticipated, since the pattern reduces their visual impact.



Typical problems with location-specific materials/colours: they date quickly; may not be robust; & are hard to replace.



Recent research confirms that paving front gardens destroys habitat, adds to 'heat island' effect & overloads drains.

Inspiration



Threshold features that are 'natural' in context can enhance local image. Bridge treatment like this could work for Acton.



Urban realm design should not only reflect local character but can & should improve the setting of notable buildings.



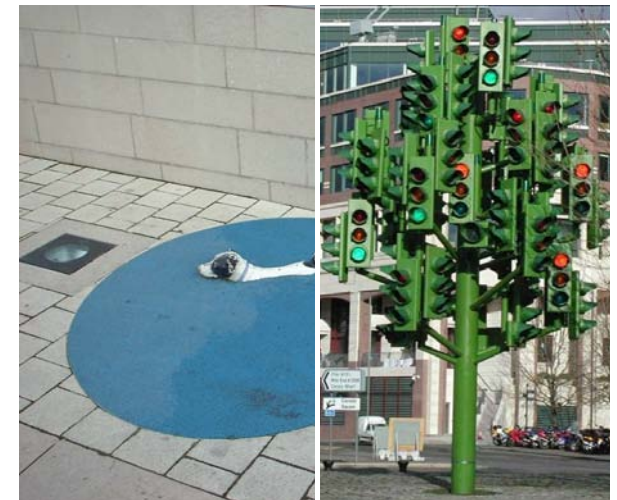
Adding to Ealing's 'green' heritage is a key theme; the best way of doing so should respond to context & opportunity.



Feature lighting, thoughtfully used, can transform places from whole town centres to footways under bridges.



Meeting demand for sitting enables people to stay & enjoy. Thoughtful design can encourage 'pro-social' behaviour.



Opportunities to install 'public art' that will be genuinely appreciated by people should be considered in key places.



04 Generic Application of Principles

4.1 Introduction

The urban realm principles established in the previous section are applicable both generically and locally. This section recommends ways in which they should be applied generically across the Borough and, where appropriate, how they might be applied in certain broad categories of location.

The generic application of the urban realm principles across the Borough is set out in the form of 'defaults' relating to each principle. These are established in the table overleaf and are to be considered the starting point in terms of application – it always being allowable for exceptions to be made if properly justified.

These defaults are intended as simple, robust guidance in relation to the main challenges encountered. Since these challenges can vary between different types of location, the way in which principles should be applied may also vary. Where this is the case, appropriate mention is made in the table. In essence, if the defaults are followed then the urban realm outcomes should always be of at least acceptable quality.



Borough-wide Application of Principles

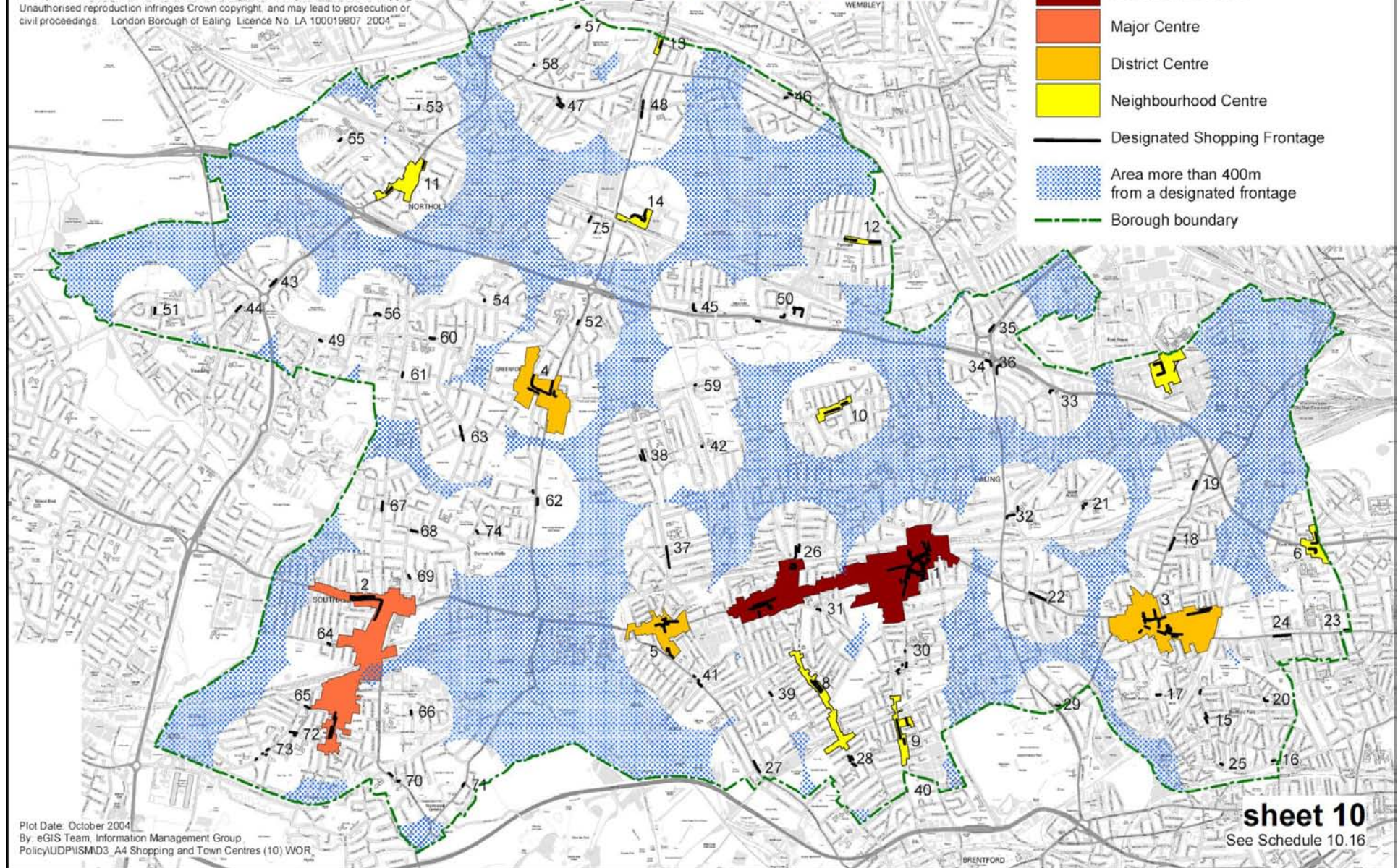
Whole Borough	
Principles	Defaults
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban realm design, including surface materials, should relate to and wherever possible enhance the local built environment, delivering a consistent visual environment • Use of any furniture, signs and lines should be justified by need and deployed to avoid obscuring local built environment character • Bespoke/custom materials &/or colour schemes to differentiate locality should be avoided unless clearly justified by, and harmonious with, local character & context • Crude/simplistic 'gateway' treatments should be avoided; more sympathetic/context-sensitive 'threshold' treatments, e.g. to mark town centre entrances, are preferable • In residential streets without yellow-line parking controls, no further conversion of front gardens into parking forecourts with crossovers • Footways to be 600x600 ASP slabs, unless in Conservation Areas, other special character area, or industrial areas. Tarmac may be used where tree root damage is possible • Footways in industrial areas to be tarmac with granite or PCC kerbs; robust specification to withstand vehicle over-run and minimise need for protective bollards • In Conservation Areas/other areas of special character, kerbs to be granite or 'conservation' style. Where granite kerbs exist, they should be retained/reused where possible • Maximise the number of street trees in all areas, to enhance bio-diversity, reduce impact of climate change, and strengthen Ealing's green/'Queen of Suburbs' character • Placement of new trees should be according to clear plan for street/space in question, not <i>ad hoc</i>, usually be within the prevailing 'furniture' zone • Similarly, provision of hanging baskets/flower boxes should be part of overall design for a street/space, not an <i>ad hoc</i> quick fix • In commercial/office areas, there should be a clearly legible and direct connection between the public footway and the building entrances • The character of the private realm that is visible from the public realm and/or regularly used by members of the public, should follow the other defaults established here
Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A prioritised user list should be considered for each location, e.g. pedestrians first in town centres, then buses & cyclists; pedestrians then cyclists & local vehicular access in residential areas; general traffic first on A40 and also on A4020, if not also in another character area (e.g. town centre) • Where two-wheels-up footway parking is prevalent in view of demand relative to carriageway width, mark footway parking zone to ensure minimum effective footway of 2m • In town centres and other areas of high demand for pedestrian movement & vehicle waiting/loading, low/no-kerb footway-level parking bays should become the norm • Street trading will be restricted to specifically designated and/or licensed areas. Overspill from such areas (including private forecourts) will be rigorously enforced against, especially where impact on available pedestrian width is unacceptable • In town centres, recycling bins will be grouped and located off, but close to, the main thoroughfare, including in car parks • Trade refuse. Consider use of inset paving discs for each business to aid least obtrusive locations of waste and enforcement, if necessary • While bus stops should be conveniently located for local origins/destinations, the location of bus stop infrastructure should not obstruct easy pedestrian movement • Cycle parking provision should be made in response to actual and likely future need; the number of stands can be easily increased over time so 'optimistic' provision should be resisted. Stand spacing/grouping should reflect local need and available space • Parking in industrial areas to be clearly designated and regulated appropriately, bearing in mind the needs of HGVs to move and also to park
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materials used should generally be robust and capable of being easily maintained; a limited palette of materials should be used to enhance visual quality • Natural materials should be used, if feasible, in areas of special character • Footway crossovers in residential streets (where allowed) should be formed of poured concrete or well-laid, reinforced concrete slabs • Use solid sub-base and reinforced slabs for footways where these are likely to experience over-runs and/or two-wheels-up parking • Install street trees of appropriate species wherever space allows, especially in residential areas, town centres and specific commercial/industrial areas • Tree pit design should encourage/protect growth & be easy to walk on; not necessarily maintenance-free. Value of trees to Ealing justifies necessary maintenance costs • Agreement should be sought with private forecourts owners, where these are effectively part of the public realm, to allow use of a common palette of materials • The highest standards of workmanship should always be sought. Appropriate provision in capital budgets will reduce ongoing maintenance burden

Principles	Defaults
Simplicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No street furniture of any type, or painted markings, to be installed without a clear understanding of purpose and need in local context; established custom and practice is not a compelling justification Locate all street furniture (including trees) in a linear 'furniture zone' on the footway, usually alongside the carriageway (see diagram on p.15) Presumption against pedestrian guard-rails in residential areas. Generally, need for guard-rails to be determined using a suitable methodology that allows scope for broadly-based professional judgement is assessing key concerns, such as safety. Bollards not to be used to prohibit footway parking as a substitute for enforcement measures (e.g. CCTV) Minimise poles through co-locating signs, waiting/loading restrictions plates, etc. on the same pole or lamp columns; traffic signals and lamp columns should be combined in areas of special sensitivity to clutter, where wall-mounting lighting should also be considered Street names, and waiting/loading restriction plates, to be located on walls wherever possible; low signs at back of footway as first fall-back; tall poles as last resort, except in industrial areas Tactile paving: presumption against in residential areas; in other areas a standard depth of 800mm to be provided at flush crossings, but no tails; non-standard colouring (i.e. not red or buff) can be considered in areas of special character Litter bins to be located on clear demonstration of need. If necessary in industrial areas, litter bins to be provided on private forecourts by agreement In all retail locations, private forecourts and adjacent public footway to be laid to the same materials if at all possible. Private/public boundary to be delineated by metal studs 'Keep left' bollards (mountings for signs to Diagram 610 of the TSRGD) should only be deployed where there is genuine concern that the obstruction they are placed on will not be readily visible to drivers and where that obstruction would be likely to do harm to people if struck. Following on from the above, pedestrian refuges, splitter islands, etc., should generally be of very low profile. A Borough-wide regime should be introduced for the strictly-controlled licensing of advertising 'A' boards and the rigorous enforcement of unlicensed boards.
Longevity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Footways in all areas, but especially the busier locations like town centres, to be of robust construction and capable of withstanding vigorous cleansing regimes Materials to be selected on the basis of realistic assessment of future use; robust materials will minimise future maintenance burden All materials to be sourced as locally as possible, to minimise carbon footprint Materials selection to consider continuity of future supply of replacement elements 'Bespoke' street furniture should be restricted to specific locations only, with a clear statement of reason, and supplies of spares should be maintained Conversion of gardens and other soft landscaped areas to hard-standing should be strongly resisted to avoid habitat loss, 'heat island' effect & rapid rainwater run-off Sustainable urban drainage systems should be investigated in association with all major new development proposals In order to minimise cost & reduce energy consumption, Department of Transport special authority should be sought to avoid or minimise the need for 'Keep left' bollards to be internally or externally illuminated.
Inspiration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For retail centres and other specific locations, opportunities should be sought to introduce/improve context-related entry threshold treatments. These can help to enhance both image & sense of place, which have benefits in terms of local civic pride, inward investment and attractiveness to visitors Feature lighting should only be considered in areas of very special character, and also in locations such as important pedestrian routes under bridges/railway arches & in underpasses which are dark and particularly unattractive to users. Lighting design should always be part of the overall design for the street/space Special treatments can be designed to enhance the setting of important buildings, ensuring this is integrated with design of the surrounding urban realm Context-sensitive and carefully-located new street trees & other planting will help to increase the public value of specific streets/spaces & strengthen Ealing's image Resist removing seating due to concerns about 'anti-social behaviour'; seek instead to relocate/redesign to encourage 'pro-social' activity. Seating enables people to stay & enjoy streets/spaces, not just move through them. Opportunities for new/improved seating in town centres should be under regular review Public art & other features for public delight should be actively considered in town centres & other special areas, always through engagement with the intended beneficiaries

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Shopping and Town Centres

- Metropolitan Centre
- Major Centre
- District Centre
- Neighbourhood Centre
- Designated Shopping Frontage
- Area more than 400m from a designated frontage
- Borough boundary



Plot Date: October 2004
 By: eGIS Team, Information Management Group
 Policy/UDPI/ISMD3_A4 Shopping and Town Centres (10) WOR

sheet 10
 See Schedule 10.16

05 Application of Principles to Specific Locations

5.1 Introduction

This section deals in more detail with how the six urban realm design principles should be applied to specific places, starting with the Borough's five largest town centres; those designated by the London Plan as either Metropolitan, Major or District Centres.

The Council believes that the Borough's town centres should be truly central to the lives of its people and the focal point of communities: thriving places where living, working and shopping can be enjoyed; places that can instill a shared sense of local pride and attract business and jobs. Town centres provide an essential service for people living and working in the borough: not only shopping, but also a range of civic, amenity, employment and leisure services, and their image and appearance is important to local community life and identity.

The Council's aim for Ealing's town centres is therefore to:

- build on the range and quality of shops
- enhance the character of our town centres
- alleviate congestion and make it easier for people to get around

The Council's strategic policy for shopping centres is:

To encourage convenient shops and services throughout the borough, by recognising the distinctive functions of the metropolitan, major, district, neighbourhood and local centres, and the importance of a good environment for the mixture of shopping, business and community activities needed to sustain these centres.

Within Ealing, as elsewhere, a hierarchy of shopping centres has evolved over a considerable period of time. These range from the Metropolitan Centre of Central Ealing, to small local shopping parades. It's important that development in one centre does not harm the vitality and viability of any existing town centre, or part of an existing centre.

All of these shopping centres, both large and small, contribute to the economic and social well-being of a community, and their success depends on their maintenance, regeneration, and creation of a centre that is attractive to shoppers.

One of the most important aspects of enhancing shopping centres is improving the physical environment, including the streetscape. The importance of Ealing's main town centres to the Borough as a whole makes them the natural places to begin in considering how urban realm improvements should in future be delivered according to the URS.

At the top of the list of the Borough's town centres, Ealing Metropolitan and Southall Major Centres, have attained a status that extends beyond the borough. They offer a wide range of activities that includes shopping, recreational and community facilities.

Acton and Greenford District Centres are shopping centres that also offer an important range of activities and services for their surrounding areas. Hanwell is also designated as a District Town Centre.

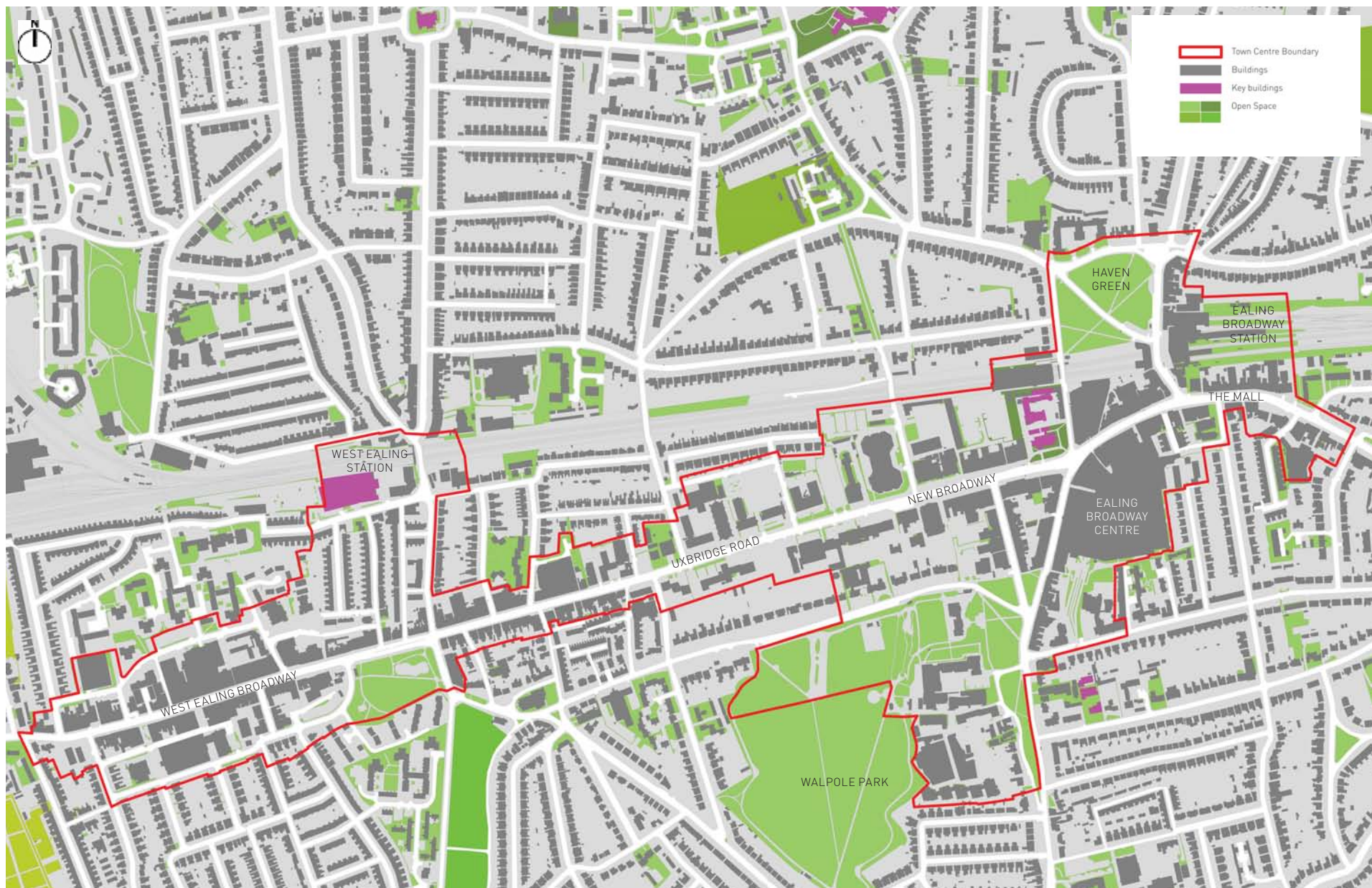
Because each is unique, the Council has previously prepared Town Centre Strategies for all five: statements of how competitiveness can be maintained or, as necessary, how the centre can be regenerated.

In due course, this section of the URS can be expanded to encompass other specific places like:

- Neighbourhood retail centres (e.g. Northolt)
- Strategic roads (TLRN, SRN), e.g. Uxbridge Road corridor
- Conservation Areas
- Regeneration Areas (e.g. South Acton Estate; Southall Gasworks)

The application of URS principles for each specific place is presented in tabular form in the following sub-sections, and is considered to represent a simple yet robust 'starting point' for design work based on local character and conditions. While exceptions to the 'defaults' established in the tables are allowable if properly justified, the fact of each table having been derived for a quite specific area means that exceptions should be expected very much to be exceptions.

In four of the five town centres, one specific location has been used for the purposes of illustrating the scope for change should the design principles and place-specific 'defaults' be properly applied. These exemplars are in locations where real change is considered necessary, and the initial proposals are illustrated using annotated sketches and supporting photos. For Greenford, which has recently been the focus of urban realm improvements under the 'Good for Greenford' initiative, an overview of these improvements is presented, along with a brief illustrated commentary.



Plan of Ealing Metropolitan Town Centre

5.2 Ealing Metropolitan Town Centre

Ealing Metropolitan Town Centre in 500 Words

Ealing town centre feels like at least three places in one: strung like beads along the Uxbridge Road. At the eastern end, there's the main shopping core with the bigger high street names that underpin the centre's Metropolitan status. The West Ealing shopping area, by contrast, has a much more local and cost-conscious offer. In between, there's a section that doesn't seem like a town centre at all: a part of the corridor lined with office, education and some new residential buildings of a much greater height than almost everything else in the area, and most set well back from the street itself, often behind a private car park or forecourt.

Pedestrian movement is extremely important in both the retail areas, but less prevalent in the middle section, for obvious reasons. General traffic runs through the whole, with a number of frequent bus services forming an important component. While Ealing as a Borough has a number of high streets named 'Broadways', not many are notably wide. One that does is the New Broadway within the eastern shopping core, a section of street between the Christ the Saviour Church and Perceval House, which although only around 300m long has the potential to be perhaps the grandest street in the Borough. That potential is currently unfulfilled.

In addition to the three main areas, there is much else to consider in the context of the Urban Realm Strategy. There are a number of important greenspaces within the centre itself – Haven Green, Ealing Green and Dean Gardens – and Walpole Park just to the southwest of the core shopping area. There is clear room for improvement in the quality of the walk links to and from them and the park. Ealing Broadway Station lies opposite Haven Green and provides excellent tube and rail access to the eastern end of the centre (via First Great Western, Heathrow Connect, Central Line and District Line services), as well as being the focus of a busy bus-rail interchange. However, links between it and the Broadway shopping area are rather illegible, the numerous buses that feed the interchange have a negative impact on the quality of the green, and the station forecourt layout and use is hostile to pedestrian movement. West Ealing Station is served by far fewer trains (no tubes) and is even further removed from the main area of town centre activity.

It is likely that few people who use the Metropolitan Town Centre in 2011 will be satisfied with the experience of its urban realm. Pedestrian movement, especially across the Uxbridge Road, is very constrained in some of the busiest locations, but all user groups will feel that more could be done to assist them, and few will be inspired by the aesthetic qualities of the streets and spaces. Simplistic even-handed or laissez-faire approaches in such busy, complex locations often just perpetuate the dissatisfaction of all. The best response for Ealing will be to establish clear priorities and strike a balance accordingly.

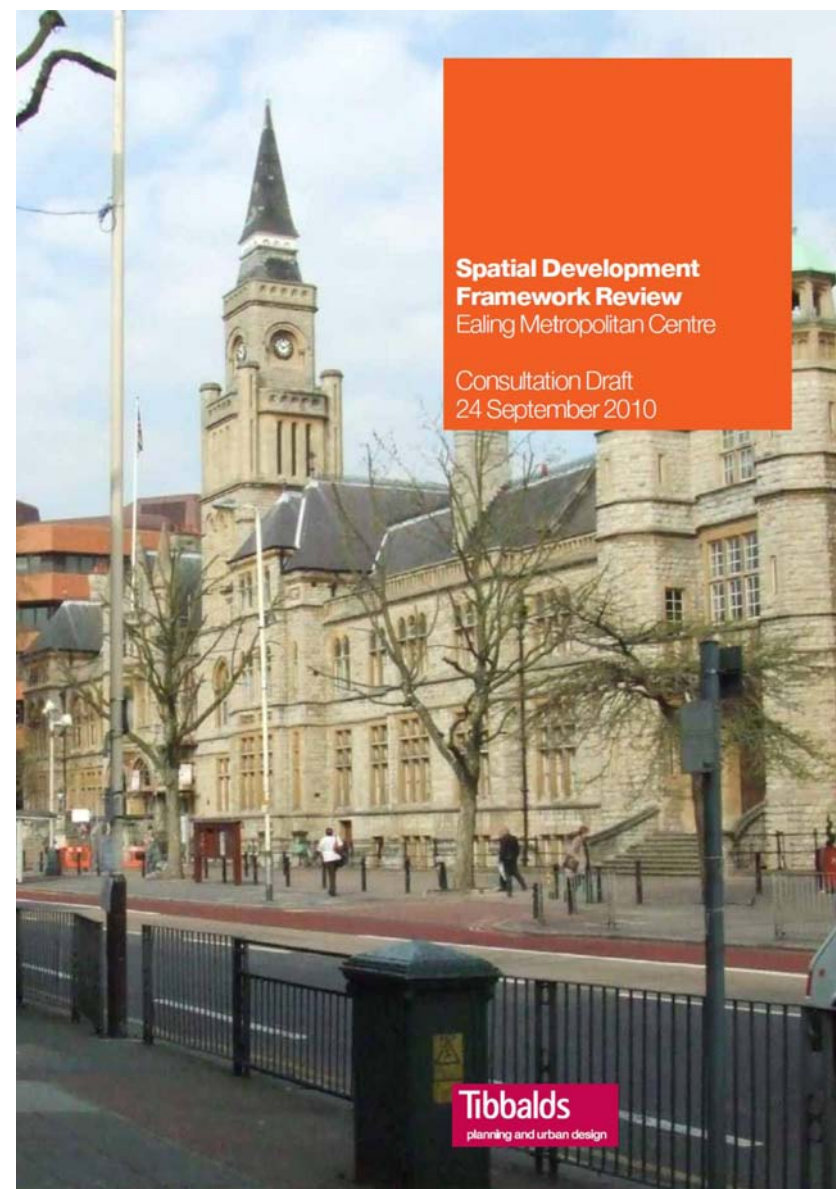
Key Documents & Strategies

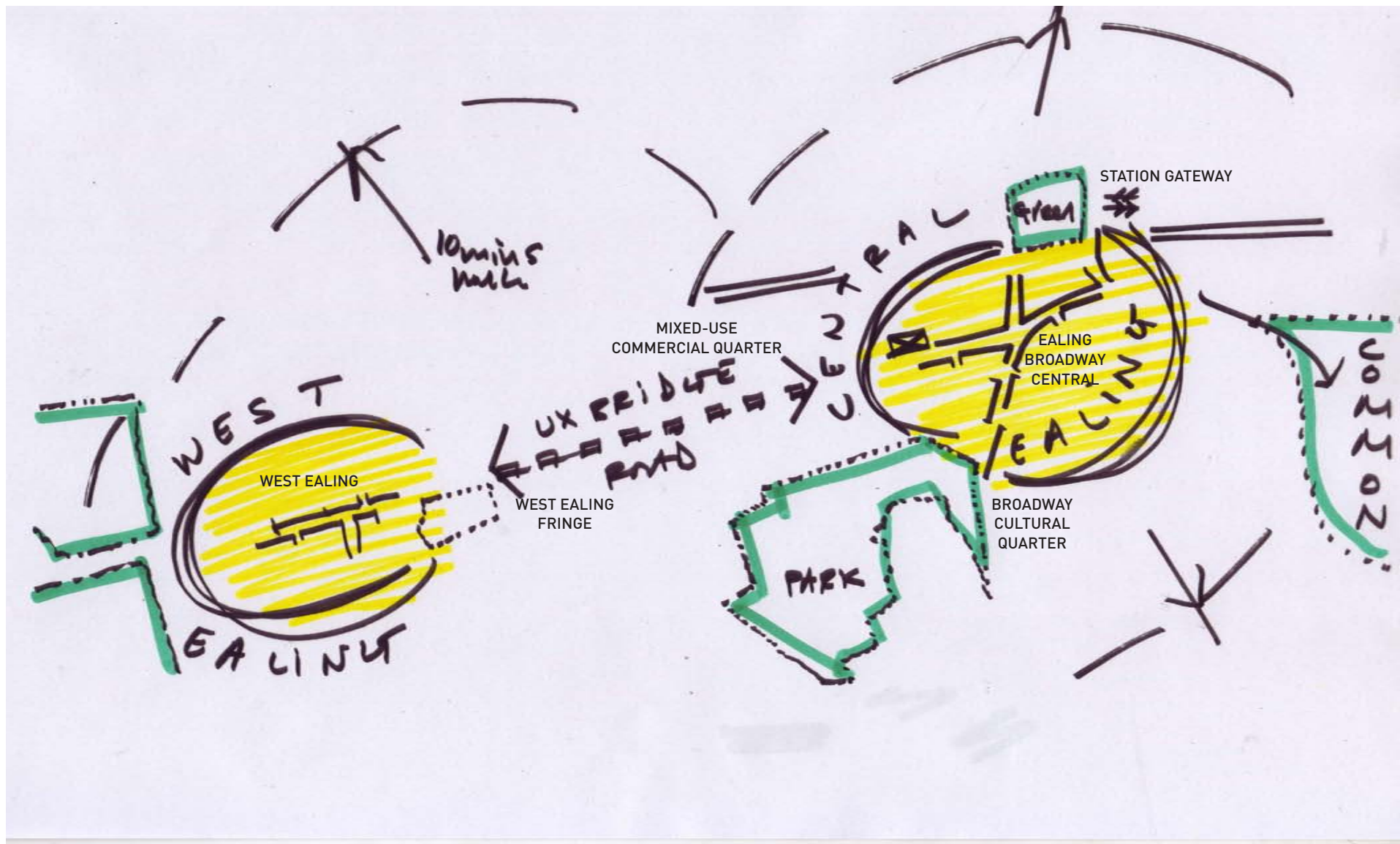
- Ealing LDF Core Strategy (Draft, 2010) – Includes proposals to: *define and reinforce the distinctive character and roles of different parts of the town centre; introduce new town squares and public spaces; to improve permeability with the introduction of a high quality pedestrian orientated retail circuit linking Ealing Broadway and the Haven Green transport interchange with the various retail destinations throughout this part of the town centre; and develop a "boulevard" along the Uxbridge Road with an increase in the number of street trees, other planting and active ground floor frontages.*
- Ealing Town Centre Strategy 2002-12 (Supplementary Planning Guidance, 2004) – Contains a commitment to making sure that: *Ealing will be renowned within London as a distinctive town centre, an attractive location for investment and a desirable place in which to live, work, shop, study and relax.*
- Ealing Metropolitan Centre Spatial Development Framework (May 2008)
- Ealing Metropolitan Centre Spatial Development Framework Review (Consultation Draft, September 2010 2008) – Establishes a Spatial Vision that encompasses six distinct character areas (see sketch following) and includes objectives to: improve pedestrian linkages through high quality streets to allow easy access between the range of uses and facilities on offer; and to improve access to public transport
- Ealing Broadway Interchange Study (August 2010)

- Ealing Town Centre Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan (both December 2007)
- Ealing Green Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan (both March 2008)
- Haven Green Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan (both March 2008)

Recent & Ongoing Initiatives

- Improvement of the streetscape in Bond Street (complete 2010), Phase 1 of a programme for the Ealing Broadway area. Featured Yorkstone paving and bespoke street furniture elements, including large planters. To be considered a benchmark for other local streetscape improvements.
- Dickens Yard. Under construction in 2011, this is a large mixed-use development adjacent to the Town Hall & Christ the Saviour Church, which will also provide new areas of public open space.
- Arcadia Centre. Major redevelopment has been actively pursued since 2007. A revised planning application was expected to be submitted in 2012. It is understood that the developer is no longer able to move forward with the scheme due to financial difficulties. It is expected that other proposals would come forward in due course.
- Ealing Broadway Station Interchange & Cycle Hub. Long-sought major improvements under active consideration in association with Crossrail.
- Melbourne Avenue, West Ealing. Reworking of section from Broadway to Leeland Terrace in 2010. Use of granite paving and bespoke planter/seating elements, along with new cycle stands. The success of the design should be monitored.





Sketch of different character areas within the Ealing Metropolitan Town Centre



Application of Principles

Ealing Metropolitan Town Centre	
Principles	Place-specific Defaults
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interventions should respond to the <i>genius loci</i> of the six character areas defined in the Spatial Development Framework Key local buildings can justify 'special' urban realm treatments: Christ the Saviour; Town Hall; Polish Church Canopies on south side of New Broadway should be restored and footway below kept clear of clutter (A-boards) In West Ealing, develop Leeland Road and north end of St James Avenue as public spaces, using same palette as recent Melbourne Avenue scheme (and applying any lessons learned). Similar treatment can also be rolled out to comparable street spaces on north side, between Broadway and Singapore Road (e.g. Brownlow Road, Walsingham Road, Green Man Lane) Strengthen Ealing Green as a cohesive space, by reducing clutter, improving formal and informal pedestrian crossing points, and using new wayfinding elements to enhance connections between Broadway area and Walpole Park
Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pedestrians to be considered highest priority user group along Uxbridge Road from Eccleston Road to Northfield Avenue and Longfield Avenue/Barnes Pike to Hamilton Road Increased provision for informal pedestrian crossing throughout Westbound carriageway between High Street/Springfield Road and Broadway Station junctions (contains no bus stops) can be reduced from 2 lanes to 1
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For Ealing Broadway character area (eastern end), the recent Bond Street scheme should act as template for future works in terms of quality and materials For West Ealing, use of granite in Melbourne Avenue scheme should be rolled out to other side-street-spaces
Simplicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See under 'Quality' re Bond Street scheme as template. Yorkstone to be rolled out throughout Ealing Broadway character area In Ealing Green character area, seek to eliminate all pedestrian-guardrails. Where necessary, replace with low 'heritage' white timber-post boundary railings
Longevity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departures from the existing materials palette should generally be resisted New legibility materials (signs/plinths) should be considered, and should conform to the 'Legible London' standard to aid timelessness
Inspiration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A public art and feature lighting strategy should be prepared, focusing on the 'Ealing Broadway Central' character area The New Broadway, from Barnes Pike to High Street, should be reworked & celebrated as the 'grand avenue' it has the potential to become A threshold treatment should be considered at the west end of the centre, at the junctions of Uxbridge Road with Eccleston Road & Coldershaw Road

The exemplar project selected for the Ealing Metropolitan Town Centre, focuses on the key issue of enabling better pedestrian access in an environment dependent for its future success on its attractiveness to people moving between shops, cafes, workplaces, bus stops and the station. The location is the section of the Broadway in the heart of the 'Ealing Broadway Central' retail area.

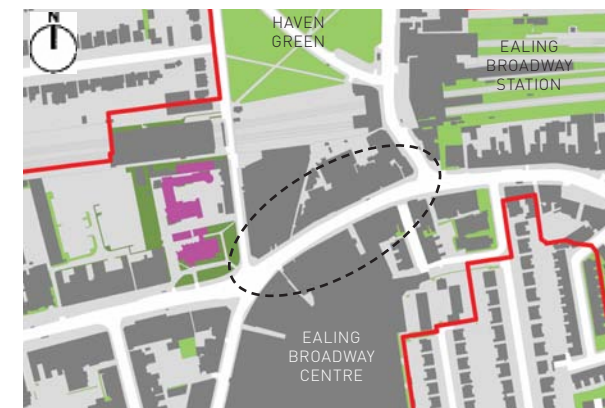


Exemplar Location: Broadway between High Street and The Mall - EXISTING

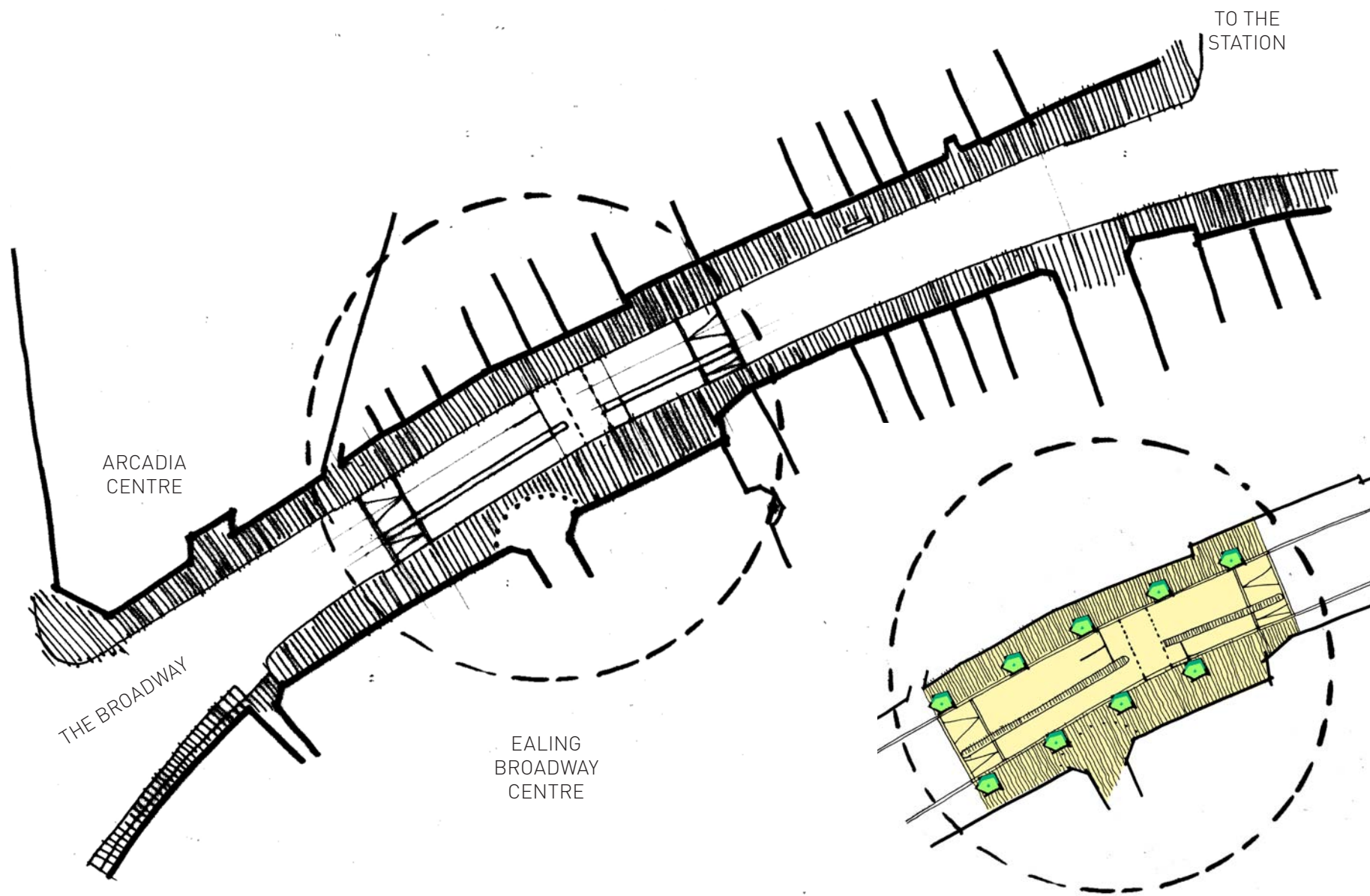
Exemplar - Key Elements

See sketch opposite

- Focus on assisting pedestrian crossing movements
- Removal of guardrail following application of appropriate review methodology
- Pelican crossing maintained in essentially the same location as existing, but placed on raised table
- Repaving throughout in Yorkstone - to continue recent works in Bond Street
- Reduction in number of westbound lanes from two to one (flare at High Street junction stopline to maintain capacity)
- Introduction of median strip throughout - protected by kerb in raised area, but mountable in the rest of the street section
- New street trees if space/cost/underground services allow



Location Plan



Exemplar Location: Broadway between High Street and The Mall - Sketch of FUTURE, with focus on central crossing



Plan of Southall Major Town Centre

5.3 Southall Major Town Centre

Southall Major Town Centre in 500 Words

While Southall has a strong unifying character that is derived, perhaps paradoxically, from its cultural diversity, the town centre is more disparate in spatial terms. Many will have travelled east-west along the Uxbridge Road corridor (The Broadway) and considered that Southall town centre consists principally of that bustling street where shop displays overflow onto footways and pedestrians overflow into the carriageway. A turn at the Town Hall junction, however, would take them along South Road, which is generally broader than the Broadway and has a different range of shops and services. But the town centre doesn't stop there, even though it may seem like it does. The Great Western Railway corridor may provide Southall with its station, but it is also a major physical and perceptual severance feature which, along with the over-engineered junction of South Road with Merrick Road, makes the Southall Green area to the south feel much further away from the rest of the town centre than it actually is. Indeed, the separation is so distinct that Southall Green almost feels like another centre in itself.

The over-riding impression of the town centre during its many busy periods is of a place barely able to contain all the activity it encompasses. People and vehicles seem to jostle with one another, almost physically, for space; while the shops and services people are there for can use up so much of the public space themselves, either for active selling or for the display of wares or advertisements, that their customers are squeezed into comparatively narrow stretches of footway.

There are bus lanes in both directions along the Broadway, justified by the importance of bus services in moving people along the Uxbridge Road corridor, both short and relatively long trips; the location of local railway stations in Ealing generally – including Southall – means that train services do not compete well for local trips. South Road and The Green are also heavily busied, with six routes running north-south past the station. General traffic and cyclists also, of course, lay legitimate claim to some carriageway space, emphasising the sense of the town centre being 'quart in a pint pot'.

There are a number of prominent buildings to which the town centre urban realm should respond. These include the Town Hall, the Himalaya Palace cinema building, and numerous gurdwaras, mosques and temples, several of which, though striking, are located off the main thoroughfares. As for urban realm materials, these are often hidden beneath thousands of feet, which is no bad thing in itself, and should guide thinking money on expensive materials is best spent.

Overall, there is a clear case for giving people proportionately more space, relative to vehicles, than is currently the case. This is less a tactical issue, such as in relation to the number of collisions involving pedestrians to pedestrian waiting times to cross streets; rather it is a matter of ambience, of creating a town centre urban realm focused on those who will underpin its future success – people out and about buying, selling, socialising and otherwise doing business.

Key Documents & Strategies

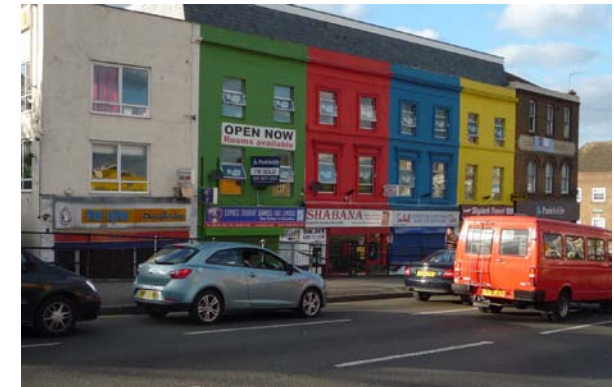
- Southall Town Centre Strategy 2002-12 (Supplementary Planning Guidance, 2004) – Set out this vision for Southall: *to be an international gateway for excellence in multi-culturalism and commercial development; to improve the competitiveness of the town centre; to be an easier place to get into and out of for users of public and private transport and pedestrians; and to make Southall a more attractive town centre in terms of its public realm*. It was further acknowledged that: *the key to success is enhancing what makes the town special*.
- Framework for Southall (April 2008) – Includes the vision to: to foster a stable yet diverse community with a strong sense of identity and local pride. Southall will have a broad retail and community offering suited to and accessible by people in and around the Southall area. It will be a well connected place where it is easy and safe to get from one place to another.
- Southall Station Area Development Study (February 2010)
- Southall Gas Works Development Stage III Planning Report (March 2010)

Recent & Ongoing Initiatives

The Town Centre Strategy (2004 SPG) refers to a five year Streetscape Improvement Programme (2001-2006), of which Phases 1 and 2 had been implemented by 2004 and Phase 3 was currently being implemented. This programme included:

- granite paving with unique decorative trim incorporated within the paving
- renewal of street furniture
- pocket parks

Southall Broadway Public Realm Project – main works currently programmed for 2013/14



Application of Principles

Southall Major Town Centre	
Principles	Place-specific Defaults
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep surfaces grey; granite in priority locations; possible consideration of 'special' materials in limited feature areas The footway icon/symbol can continue to be used in occasional paving slabs if desired Let shops, people and buildings provide the multi-cultural character; don't try to make urban realm impose it The physical hiatus between the Park Avenue & Hortus Road junctions should be addressed urgently to reduce perceptions of severance and 'forgotten' Southall Green area
Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pedestrians first, hence preparedness to reduce carriageway width/remove bus lanes; key traffic management issue may be car park locations/access points/signage Ensure appropriate provision for cyclists, especially on Broadway Footway trading/displays to be better controlled
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More street trees would be beneficial; imported species may be appropriate if they can withstand local conditions A limited palette of surface materials should be maintained A new suite of legibility elements (fingerposts & plinths) should be considered: a Southall 'twist' on the Legible London standard is allowable
Simplicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Footway trading/displays to be better controlled South Road signal 'mast arm' should be removed
Longevity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bespoke & culturally-specific treatments should generally be resisted to avoid likelihood of rapid dating Imported materials should generally be resisted
Inspiration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The wasted space at the junction of King Street & Western Road should be transformed in association with changes affecting adjacent sites (church and coach depot) Threshold treatments should be considered for Broadway (west), High Street (east) and Norwood Road (south) entry points Feature lighting for the Broadway, South Road and The Green/King Street can be considered Culturally-specific interventions should generally be resisted to avoid fragmentation of the overall urban realm

The exemplar project for Southall has been selected to support the current initiative to improve Southall Broadway further, and specifically to introduce better balance between the requirements of pedestrians, the economic vitality of local shops and services, and the strategic traffic function of the A4020. The location is the 'western gateway' to the town centre, between Townsend Road and Hambrough Road, and the concept sketch and ideas presented have been produced by Project Centre, the Council's designers for this initiative.



Exemplar - Key Features

See concept sketch by Project Centre opposite

- Central reserve up to 3.0m wide with tree planting and possible cycle parking
- 25-50mm kerb face to footway and central reserve
- Central reserve detailed to match footway, encouraging 'shared space' principles of informal pedestrian crossing environments
- Carriageway raised with ramps at either end
- Natural stone paving materials, details reflected in carriageway to enhance traffic calming
- Gateway tree planting to frame space and change character of the highway as a whole
- Side street entry treatments: table tops increased in width to include full pedestrian desire line along building frontages
- Inset parking/loading bays
- Granite facings to ramps/entry treatments



Location Plan

Exemplar Location: Southall Broadway 'western gateway' between Townsend Road and Hambrough Road - EXISTING

KEY



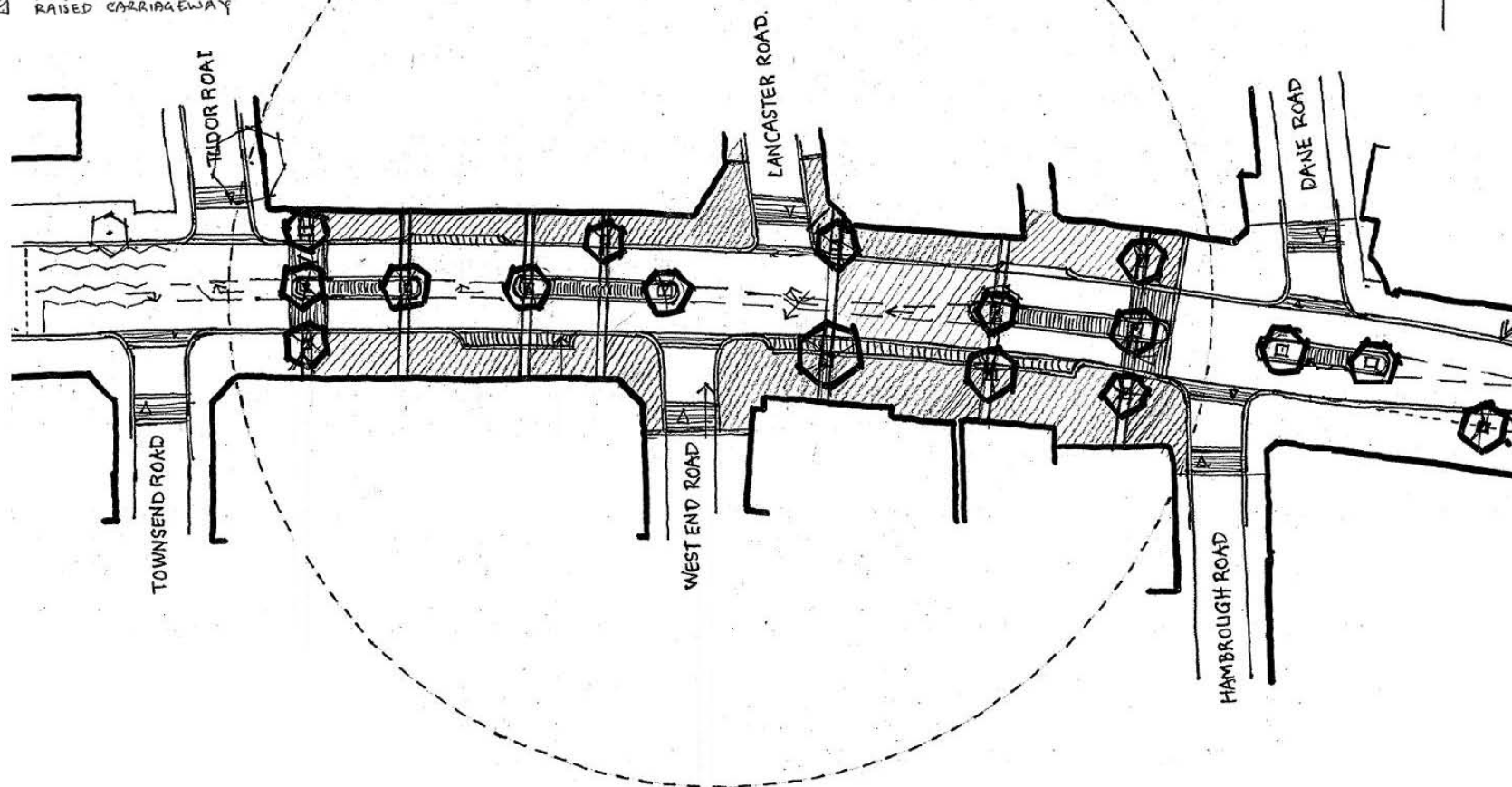
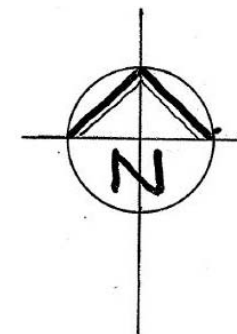
PROPOSED AND EXISTING TREES



GRANITE SETT RAMPS AND
SIDE ROAD ENTRY TREATMENTS
RAISED AREAS OF MAIN
CARRIAGEWAY.



FEATURE PAVING AREA
PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY
RAISED CARRIAGEWAY



Exemplar Location: Southall Broadway 'western gateway' between Townsend Road and Hambrough Road - Project Centre initial concept



Plan of Acton Town Centre

5.4 Acton District Town Centre

Acton District Town Centre in 500 Words

The town centre of Acton lies within an area that is one of London's largest to carry the same name. This is exemplified by the fact that no other part of the capital has as many stations – seven – with a single name featured. The Acton stations are: North, South, East, West, Central, Town, and Mainline. And yet, one of the main issues affecting the success of the town centre and influencing its urban realm is that none of these stations is particularly close by. Acton Central Overground Station is the nearest, over 600m east of the Town Square via Churchfield Road. Acton Town Tube Station is around 800m away from the Town Square by the shortest route.

While the recently reworked Town Square can be said to be the main focal point in the town centre, there are many other important attractions and buildings scattered about the designated centre, each with its own contribution and/or challenge in respect of the urban realm. The Morrisons supermarket to the north of the Town Square is the single biggest people draw, and has the centre's largest car park alongside and beneath. To the east there is the Oaks Shopping Centre. This has a tired internal 'public' realm, and access both onto the High Street and onto Churchfield Road. The latter access is via a surface car park that makes it rather unwelcoming, particularly to pedestrians, but even to those coming in cars. Further east still along the High Street lies a cluster of noteworthy civic buildings – including the Town Hall, Library and swimming pool – for which there are active redevelopment proposals.

The town centre boundary stretches as far east as the Overground railway corridor, where the bridge on High Street and the level crossing on Churchfield Road act as entry thresholds, even if the immediate impression after crossing either is that of a local shopping parade, not a significant centre. Urban realm improvements can and should assist in changing this perception. At the western end, the de facto gateways to the town centre are the High Street/Steigne Road junction and the northern access to the Morrisons car park, neither of which are welcoming or a justifiable source of any local pride.

As with all but one of Ealing's five main town centres, Acton lies along the Uxbridge Road corridor, and the challenges of creating a great town centre urban realm in the context of a busy arterial route and a constrained physical environment apply. These challenges are experienced not only at the western 'gateway' but all along the High Street. Here, the pedestrian environment and the ability to cross and re-cross the street is adversely affected by the carriageway space and signal priority allocated to general traffic (much of which is just passing through), buses (six separate services at the busiest point), bus stops, and waiting/loading facilities. Pedestrian movement is therefore in terms of footway space, extensive guard-railing and the lack of formal crossing opportunities. For the sake of the town centre as a whole, its urban realm needs to become somewhere it is far easier, more pleasant and safer to walk.

Key Documents & Strategies

- Acton Town Centre Strategy 2002-12 [2002] – Set out a vision of the town centre as: *a thriving, multi-cultural community, with a clear identity and sense of belonging, where all residents and businesses are able to benefit from the opportunities arising from its West London location.*
- Acton Town Centre Development Framework [2008] sets out a vision to: *Make Acton the centre of choice for local residents by improving the diverse and mixed retail, leisure and community experience alongside a high quality, attractive physical environment that encourages visitors to stay longer.* It also recommends enhancing the quality of public realm through environmental changes/aesthetic improvements and improving accessibility. Specific public realm and streetscape improvements are identified, including:
 - Acton High Street public realm improvements, including a raised table between the Town Hall and Oaks site
 - Improved pedestrian routes between the Town Centre and Acton Town, Acton Central, South Acton stations (as well as improvements to the station areas themselves)
 - Junction improvements (e.g. raised tables) in key locations
- Acton Town Centre Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan (both April 2009)
- Acton Town Hall & Surroundings Draft SPD (February 2010).

Recent & Ongoing Initiatives

- A new Town Square in Acton was completed in November 2006, at 'the Mount' (junction of King Street and High Street). The project was to renew the square as a flexible public space with kiosks, shops, cafes, bars, market stalls and space for public events. It includes new paving, street lighting, trees, planters and benches, though the aim for an uncluttered feel means such elements are kept to a minimum and lighting is fixed to buildings where possible. Seating is in natural stone to match the granite paving.
- A programme of additional public realm improvements was delivered between 2008 and 2010. This included:
 - New hanging baskets, lamp posts and Christmas lights.
 - The Acton Central Station improvement scheme, which includes repaving, new street furniture and raised carriageway sections
 - Uplighting to St Mary's and Acton Hill Churches
- A LIP-funded corridor scheme for Acton is programmed



Application of Principles

Acton District Town Centre	
Principles	Place-specific Defaults
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep surfaces grey; granite in priority locations Acton Central rail bridge should be treated to provide a more interesting entry point at the east end, incorporating enhanced entrance to Acton Park
Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pedestrians first, especially in relation to maximising effective footway width and supporting formal and informal crossing Improved conditions for cyclists on key east-west route along A4020 Footway level waiting/loading bays should be implemented along High Street Strengthen links between Central Station and both the shopping core and nearest bus stops on Uxbridge Road (legibility signage/maps; improvements to Acton Park paths)
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on improving the overall streetscape quality of the High Street (between Town Square to Town Hall) - essential to raise overall image
Simplicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive de-cluttering study for town centre, focusing on Uxbridge Road from/including Steyne Road junction to Acton Central rail bridge/Acton Park entrance
Longevity	
Inspiration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urban realm should enhance the setting of the Town Hall & Library Feature lighting scheme can be considered for Churchfield Road link between retail core and Central Station Town Square at times is more 'bleak' than 'uncluttered'; opportunities should be considered to add limited new elements (e.g. public art, seating) in well-thought-out locations to enable more pro-social activity more of the time

The exemplar project from Acton has been selected for two main reasons: the opportunity to explore the centre-wide challenge of reducing the impact of Uxbridge Road and its traffic on the vitality of Acton; and the opportunity to build upon current initiatives to restore the value to Acton of key buildings of character, like the Town Hall and Library. The location is the section of the Uxbridge Road between the Town Hall junction in the east and the entrance to the Oaks Shopping Centre in the west.



Exemplar Location: Acton High Street between Oldham Terrace and Winchester Street - EXISTING

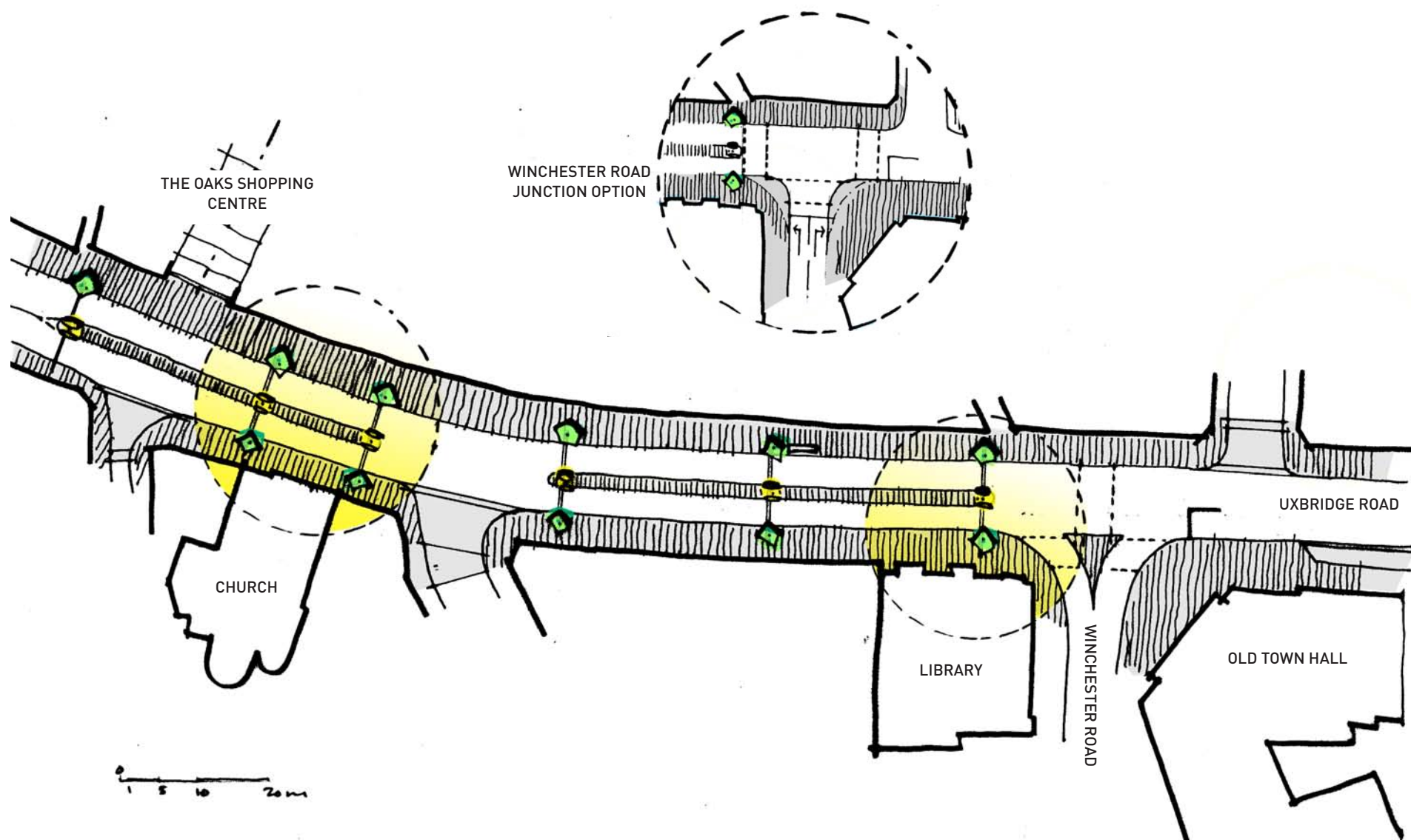
Exemplar - Key Elements

See sketch opposite

- Focus on improving the pedestrian environment generally; movement both along and across
- Removal of guard-railing following application of appropriate review methodology
- Local footway widening where possible - single running carriageway assumed, and bus stops moved slightly as necessary
- Introduction of mountable median strip to assist crossing
- Winchester Road junction remodelled to enhance pedestrian-friendly qualities and improve visually link Old Town Hall and Library buildings/forecourts
- Optional controls for this junction: development of existing or (inset) 'all red' phase if capacity permits
- Materials palette - likely to be simple/ASP
- Raised footway crossovers at Berrymead Gardens & Oldham Terrace reworked using footway materials
- New street trees if feasible



Location Plan



Exemplar Location: Acton High Street between Oldham Terrace and Winchester Street - sketch of possible FUTURE layout



Plan of Greenford Town Centre

5.5 Greenford District Centre

Greenford District Town Centre in 500 Words

Greenford is the only one of Ealing's five main town centres not to lie astride the Uxbridge Road, being located instead at and around the junction of the A4127 Greenford Road and the B455 Ruislip Road (the 'Red Lion' pub crossroads). Although the designated town centre is understood locally as a compact hub for shopping, services and community facilities, its wider prominence and image is in part compromised by the fact that the name Greenford covers a much larger and comparatively ill-defined area of West London. 'Greenford' stretches as far north as across the A40 trunk road, the Grand Union Canal and up to Whitton Avenue (A4090), with Greenford Station being more than 1.5km north of the Red Lion and, being the other side of the A40 flyover junction, even more distant in terms of perception. In other directions, 'Greenford' covers as far south as the Golf Links Estate, and west-east broadly between Ravenor Park and Perivale Park.

In terms of movement, its distance from the station (which is served by Central Line Underground services on the West Ruislip branch and is the terminus of the First Great Western mainline 'shuttle' to Paddington) means that the town centre's public transport accessibility is underpinned by bus services. A total of 13 daytime bus services pass through the Red Lion junction, with 4 of these terminating. While these therefore provide good connections in all directions, they also demand a considerable share of the available junction capacity (at the crossroads) and available highway space (for movement, stopping and standing).

Both Greenford Road and Ruislip Road are well used by traffic heading to and from the town centre and also passing through, and this can contribute to congestion at the crossroads. There is a limited amount of short-stay on-street parking, but the town centre shops are reliant on the main pay & display car park and accessed rather illegibly from Oldfield Lane. There is small Tesco car park (free for 1 hour) situated behind the Metro store and accessed from Greenford Road: knowledgeable drivers finding it full can find their way through to the main car park. Although through traffic imposes several disbenefits on the town centre, it is appropriate in terms of the roles of the A4127 and B455 in the local highway network.

Despite the traffic, the streets of the town centre are pleasant to walk around, having footways that are wide, tree-lined and, thanks to the recent 'Good for Greenford' investment, well specified in terms of materials, side-street crossovers and workmanship.

As a District Town Centre, Greenford does pretty much 'what it says on the tin'. It's an attractive place for people from the surrounding district to come, principally for convenience shopping, but also for other shops and services, for the library, for events (e.g. at Greenford Hall), and to eat, drink and socialise. Vacancy rates seem encouragingly low, and the 2011 user experience is a positive one overall.

Key Documents & Strategies

- Greenford Town Centre Strategy 2002-12 (2002)
 - Established a vision of: *A Strong and Healthy Urban Village; a place that aims to serve most of the shopping, leisure and community needs of a local population of between 20–25,000 people. The town centre will be accessible by all modes of transport; and increasingly Greenford will support public transport, walking and cycling as a means of tackling increasing traffic growth and congestion. Greenford's environment will be attractive, pedestrian friendly and a pleasure to use. The Centre will promote and improve the quality of its streets, landscape and buildings. The Centre will invest in and create new public squares and improve its links to neighbouring open spaces.*

Recent & Ongoing Initiatives

The £5m 'Good for Greenford' project to revitalise the heart of Greenford was launched in June 2008, with the aims of improving safety, reducing congestion, and creating an attractive and safe town centre for everyone to enjoy. The improvements included:

- new street paving in high quality Yorkstone
- redesigning junctions to improve pedestrian safety and reduce congestion
- new benches, street lighting, flower beds and other street furniture
- improved pedestrian crossing points, including raised side street treatments
- River Brent bridge repairs & visual improvements
- junction improvements, including signal changes and raised tables
- new parking, waiting and loading facilities



Application of Principles

Greenford District Town Centre	
Principles	Place-specific Defaults
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain use of Yorkstone throughout centre • Maintain and improve tree stock when opportunities arise
Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek opportunities to further promote informal crossing on Greenford Road north and the Broadway (e.g. low-profile refuges, medians) • Consider how to strengthen links with Greenford Station in tandem with improvements to the station itself
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Good for Greenford' set a high standard - ensure budgets are adequate to maintain quality
Simplicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Good for Greenford' minimised clutter - ensure all future actions by Council do not compromise this
Longevity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep success of tree pit design under observation - improve as necessary
Inspiration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The setting of Greenford Hall is poor (in keeping with the overall appearance of the building), and the main route to the car park, as well as the car park itself, is inauspicious. Attention to the Oldfield Lane South, in keeping with the recent improvements elsewhere, should be prioritised • Consider threshold treatment at Greenford Road/Locarno Road junction

In view of the recent implementation of the comprehensive 'Good for Greenford' project, no exemplar site for improving Greenford is considered. Instead, the following two pages provide a simple overview of the project, along with illustrations and commentary on the some of the project elements.

The Good for Greenford project has more than £5.1 million in funding, including more than £2 million from Transport for London to improve the town centre. A key priority is to improve the safety for all road users, particularly school children, pedestrians and cyclists. The scheme also aims to reduce congestion and enhance the appearance of the town centre to make it a better place to live, work and shop.

Following a detailed consultation of residents and businesses, a number of improvements have been agreed.

The improvements include:

- New street paving in high-quality Yorkstone
- Redesigning junctions to improve pedestrian safety and reduce congestion
- Stop and shop parking facilities to make it easier to shop
- Grants for businesses to upgrade their shopfronts
- New benches, flower beds and other street furniture to make the town centre more attractive
- New street lighting to improve safety in the town centre

In addition to the programme outlined here, other work will be carried out to address issues on specific roads.

Good for Greenford

Revitalising the heart of Greenford

Work programme

The works have been separated into six phases that will follow on from one another:

Phase 1: Ruislip Road East (south side)

23 June – 31 August 2008 9 weeks

- New Yorkstone paving from the River Brent Bridge to Greenford Road
- New street furniture
- New street lighting
- Improved pedestrian crossing points across the LIDL and private entrances (surface to be raised where appropriate)
- General maintenance improvements to the River Brent Bridge

Phase 2: Greenford Road South

15 September – 31 December 2008 15 weeks

- New Yorkstone paving from Ruislip Road to Otter Road
- New paving from Otter Road to Bingley Road
- New street lighting in high quality paved areas
- New street furniture
- New crossing points with traffic lights outside Cardinal Wiseman High School and Our Lady of the Visitation School
- Provision of inset parking bays and a new traffic lane for buses between Bingley Road and Ruislip Road
- Raised entry surfaces for Bingley Road and Otter Road to improve pedestrian safety and accessibility

Phase 3: The Broadway

26 January – 30 April 2009 14 weeks

- New Yorkstone paving from Oldfield Lane South to Ruislip Road East
- New street furniture
- New street lighting
- Raised junction at Windmill Lane / The Broadway to improve safety for all road users
- Improved pedestrian crossing points across side roads
- New loading and parking bays
- New cycle parking facilities

Phase 4: Mansell Road

1 June – 7 September 2009 14 weeks

- New Yorkstone paving
- New raised junction on Mansell Road and raised service lane to improve safety for all road users
- New inset loading and parking bays
- New street furniture

Phase 5a: Greenford Road North (from Tesco to 582 Greenford Road)

10 August – 31 October 2009 12 weeks

- High quality pavement resurfacing
- 'Half-on half-off' footway parking for residents
- Rebuilding part of the brick boundary wall that runs alongside the pavement
- A new traffic lane for buses
- New street furniture
- Improved pedestrian crossing points on the side roads along Greenford Road.

Additional Phase: Oldfield Lane South

Details to be confirmed

Phase 6: Ruislip Road East (north side)

21 September – 30 November 2009 10 weeks

- New Yorkstone paving from the Greenford Road to Costons Lane
- New paving from Costons Lane to River Brent Bridge
- New street furniture
- New street lighting
- Changes to Costons Lane junction to improve safety and congestion

Phase 5b: Greenford Road North (from Ruislip Road to Tesco)

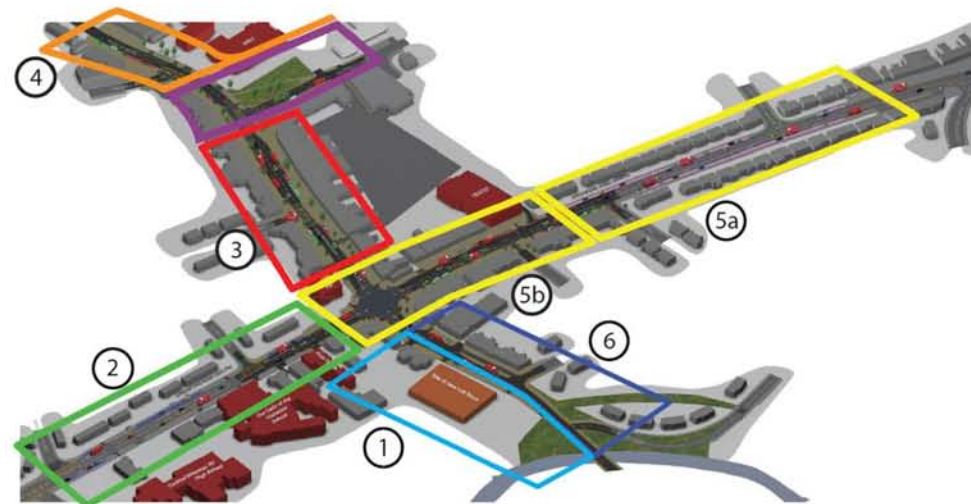
1 November – 31 December 2009 9 weeks

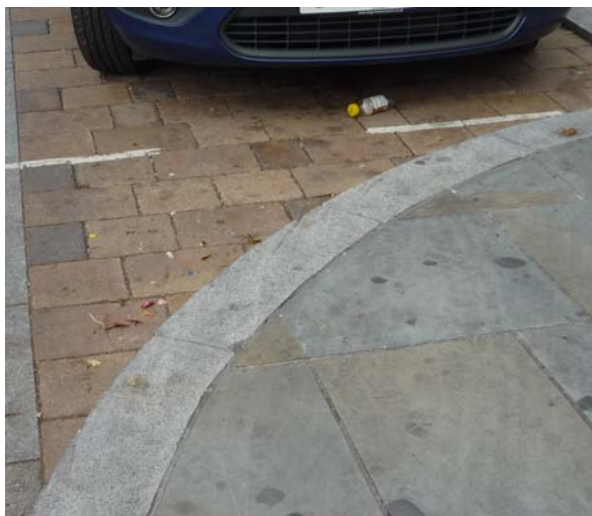
- New Yorkstone paving from Ruislip Road to Tesco
- New street lighting
- New street furniture
- New loading and parking bays
- Pedestrianisation of service road outside Tesco to improve access for pedestrians
- New crossing point with traffic lights outside Tesco
- Changes to the Greenford Road/ Ruislip Road junction to improve pedestrian and traffic flow.

More information

If you would like more information about the project or would like to discuss any aspect of the works contact Customer Services on 020 8825 6000.

This information can be found on the Ealing Council website at: www.ealing.gov.uk/greenford





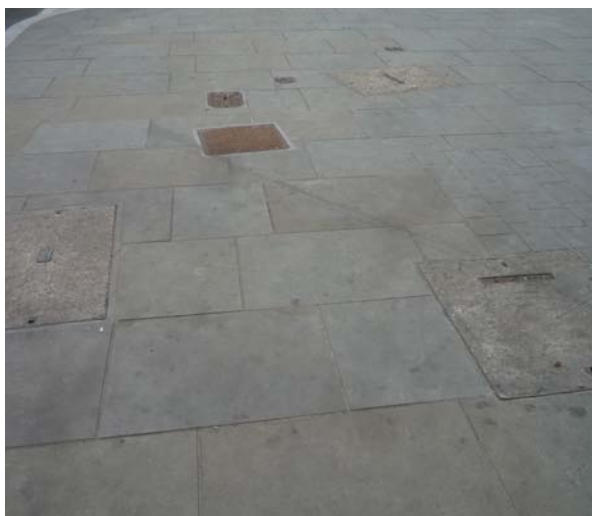
Good for Greenford deployed Yorkstone throughout the main shopping area, with attractive detailing of parking bays & other features, such as bus stops and steps.



New trees on wide footways add to the many mature trees and strengthen the green image. The success of the tree surround treatment - a loose gravel mix - is being monitored.



Side-street crossovers were raised to footway level, improving pedestrian access. Yorkstone tactiles match the footways and granite ramps match the kerbs.



Although an additional cost, and resisted by certain utilities companies, Yorkstone recessed into trays on access covers would have better complemented the new paving.



The new street furniture, including cycle racks and seating, does not draw attention to itself and provides useful facilities for many of the town centres users.



The Good for Greenford programme did not include new signage or legibility materials. This old signpost now looks badly dated in comparison to its new surroundings.



Plan of Hanwell Town Centre

5.6 Hanwell District Town Centre

Hanwell District Town Centre in 500 Words

Hanwell District Town Centre is just half a kilometre west along the Uxbridge Road from the westernmost end of West Ealing, and its proximity to the borough's largest town centre is likely to have much to do with the fact that in many ways it feels more like a village than a town centre. Although Hanwell is a name that, like Greenford, covers a comparatively large and not terribly well-defined part of the borough, the centre itself is very compact, focused on the 'Clock Tower' junction of the Uxbridge Road with Boston Road and effectively defined by the River Brent (and Viaduct pub) in the west, the Wickes DIY store to the south, and both St Mellitus and St Joseph at Church Road to the east.

Most of the town centre activity is focused on the east and south arms of the junction, with the Uxbridge Road between Boston Road and Church Road presenting a fairly conventional high street environment. The continuity of that environment is damaged by the large gap created by the entrance to the Lidl store site on the south side, with the existing poor quality 'public space' treatment doing little to make up for the fact that the store itself is recessed behind its surface car park. In terms of land use, the high street contains unexpected idiosyncrasies with specialist services including vintage car sales and hi-fi equipment shop.

Hanwell has its own railway station, with First Great Western and Heathrow Connect suburban trains, and in due course by Crossrail. However, the walk between the town centre and the station entrance 'on the wrong side of the tracks', is long (around 600m from the Clock Tower) and illegible. Buses are therefore the mainstay of local public transport access, with six services running through the centre and three more available nearby, at Ealing Hospital or on Church Road.

Local highway access is made comparatively complex by the fact that Boston Road is one-way only southbound to its junction (by Wickes) with Lower Boston Road, which operates one-way only northbound. To the north of the Uxbridge Road, local access is yet more arcane, with a number of closures in residential streets to prevent rat-running and Cherington Road operating one-way westbound only between Church Road and the Clock Tower. There is short-stay on-street parking in the centre, but the car park at Lidl is a very important feature for the economic health of the centre.

While Hanwell is a pleasant enough local shopping centre, its users would probably be surprised to know that it's formally one of Ealing's top five. Nevertheless, there is undoubted potential for Hanwell to re-establish itself as a very special place within the borough. At the literal and geographical heart of such change must be the transformation of the Clock Tower junction from a technical area for managing traffic movements into a truly attractive and people-friendly space. Recent improvements have begun this work; more is needed to let Hanwell truly be Hanwell

Key Documents & Strategies

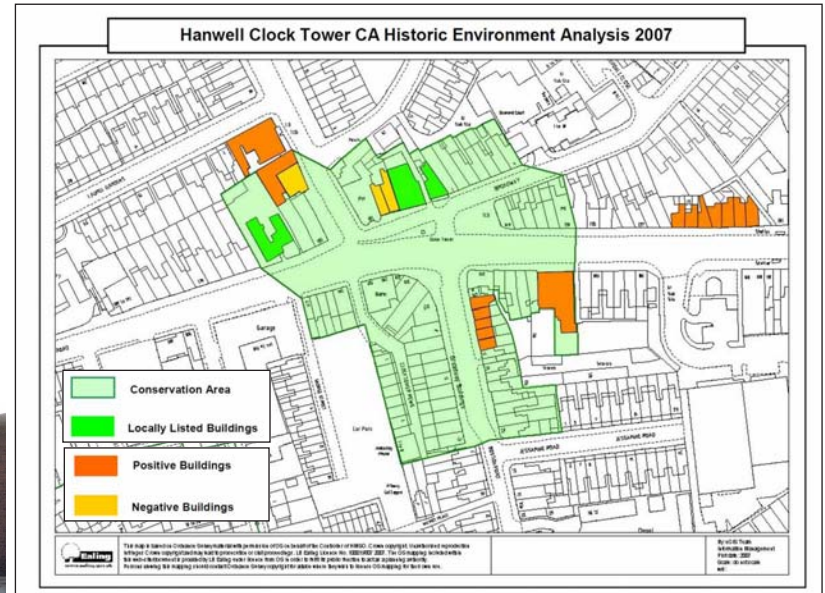
- Hanwell Town Centre Strategy 2002-12 (2002) – Established the vision to: *to create a successful, safe, attractive and accessible town centre, serving the needs of a local population of around 25,000 people. This includes: improving public transport and pedestrian access whilst upgrading the quality of car parking and the streetscape; and preserving the architectural heritage, conservation areas and townscape and improve links to the Brent River Park and other surrounding open spaces.*

- Hanwell Clock Tower Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan (both March 2007)

Recent & Ongoing Initiatives

£1m has been invested in the Hanwell town centre regeneration programme over the three year period 2008/2009 to 2010/2011. Streetscape improvements to the town centre include: new stop and shop bays; new inset loading bays; raised vehicle crossovers; base of tree treatment; de-cluttering of redundant street furniture; and installation of new street furniture such as bins with ash trays and new cycle racks. Concrete paving was re-laid and bespoke paving slabs – with a Hanwell crest (a phoenix rising out of the flames) inlaid – placed at intervals. A way-finding signage board will be produced later on in 2011 in line with the borough-wide strategy.

Concerning the Clock Tower, the clock mechanism has been fixed and a new masonry shelter coat applied to the concrete surface. Pavement up lighting has also been installed on three sides of the clock. Along the Uxbridge Road, new heritage style lamp columns have been introduced and special brackets have used to install festive lights and hanging baskets. After negotiations with Lidl, the superstore car park is now open for three hours to town centre shoppers and a planning application for re-landscaping the forecourt area has been granted and is due to start later in 2011.



Application of Principles

Hanwell District Town Centre	
Principles	Place-specific Defaults
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the most of the Clock Tower and the space around it (see exemplar proposal) • Keep surfaces grey; possible use of granite for 'Clock Tower Square' • Continued use of 'Phoenix' crest in occasional paving slabs • Generally, focus on enhancing/revealing the character of the Conservation Area
Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrians first between Station Road and Church Road, including junctions • Signalised crossing facilities must be improved: there are none east of the pelican opposite Lidl (including at the Church Road junction); and there are pedestrian phases on only two of the four arms at the Clock Tower junction • Uxbridge Road acts as a major barrier to pedestrian movement; improve provision for informal pedestrian crossing using low-profile/mountable refuges • Enhance legibility of the walk route to the railway station via Station Road
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The space between Uxbridge Road and Lidl store front is of very poor and needs to be improved in terms of both its aesthetic and functional qualities • Trees/greenery in the enclosure near the Clock Tower should be removed but replaced by other trees in 'Clock Tower Square'
Simplicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Clock Tower junction remains too cluttered (guard-rail & signs) and the space to the northeast (in front of 'Microcentre' shop) is a dumping ground for 'green box' kit
Longevity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choice of materials should continue to focus on life-cycle costs; natural stone is not generally needed for aesthetic purposes
Inspiration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transforming 'Clock Tower Square' could transform the fortunes of Hanwell as a whole • The Church Road junction presents an inauspicious entry point and is difficult for pedestrians to cross. A threshold treatment that responds to the churches on either side should be considered • Hanwell's location allows it to be a gateway to the Brent River Park; the walk route between the Clock Tower junction and Viaduct junction should be better signed; and the transition between the dual carriageway and single carriageway at the viaduct should be better exploited as a town centre threshold.

The exemplar project for Hanwell Town Centre has been selected on the basis of its ability to transform the experience and image of the centre from a pleasant enough local centre to a more vibrant and attractive place that makes a much greater contribution to Ealing's character, diversity and economy. It is the 'Hanwell Clock Tower Square'.



Exemplar Location: Hanwell Clock Tower 'Square' - EXISTING

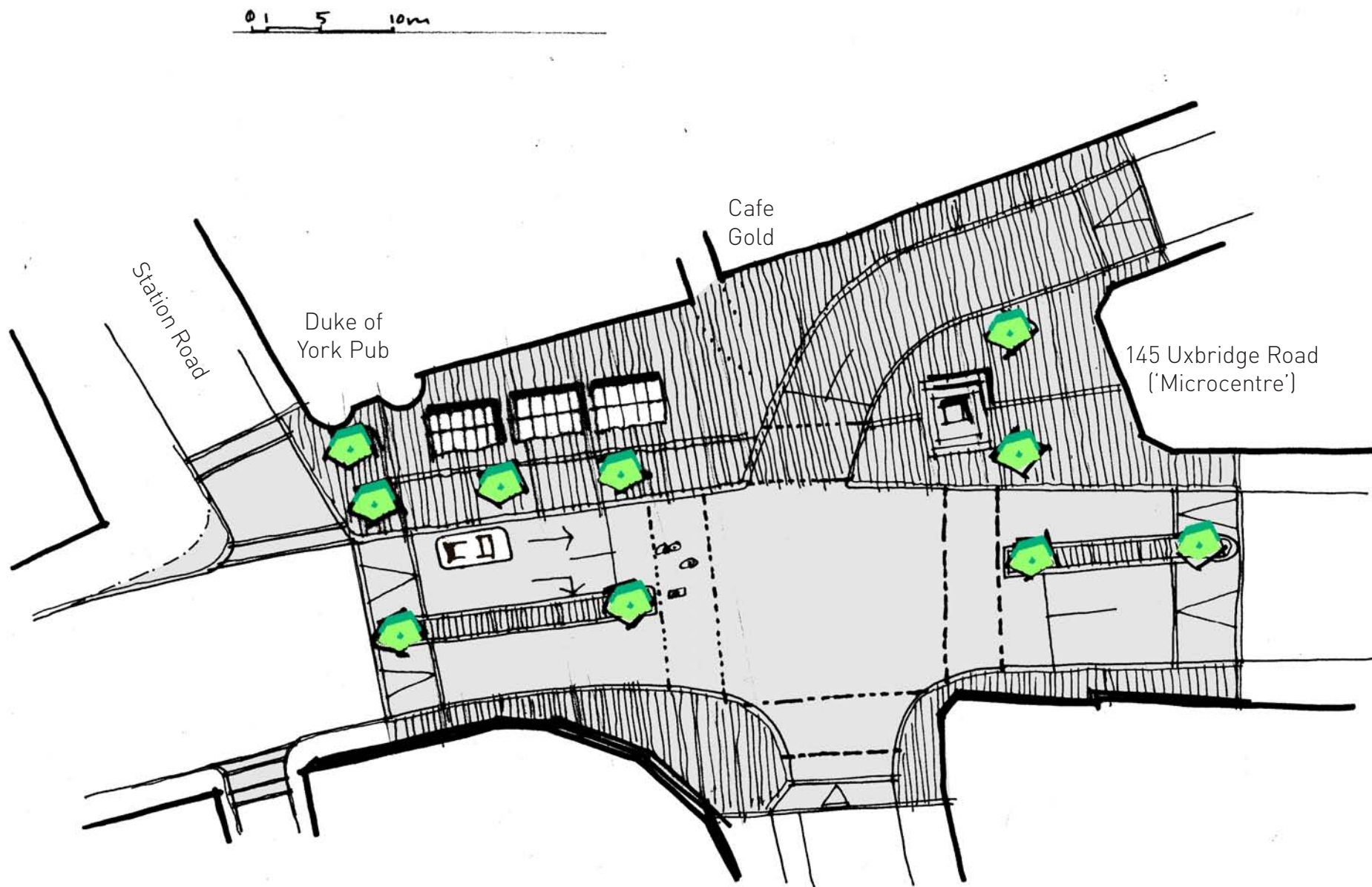
Exemplar - Key Elements

See sketch opposite

- Focus on unifying a still badly-fractured space, but one which has the potential to be a genuinely attractive and effective pivotal location, inspiring the further regeneration of the town centre
- Use of same, simple, cost-effective material palette as recent improvements elsewhere in the centre
- Northwest area further decluttered and made suitable for more occasional events (including market?)
- Northeast area: existing planted area removed and BT and other service boxes relocated locally; Clock Tower relocated here as a more prominent feature
- Work with owners of no.149 Uxbridge Road (Microcentre) to improve building appearance/use
- New tree planting, including on new medians
- While junction raised and carriageway dressed (Shellgrip) to match grey palette
- Traffic arrangements essentially unchanged
- Station Road & Cherington Road junctions reworked to better integrate with the space



Location Plan



Exemplar Location: Hanwell Clock Tower 'Square' - sketch of possible FUTURE layout

