



Borough Council of
Wellingborough

Wellingborough Town Centre
Public Realm
Strategy
Supplementary Planning Document

Regulation 18 Statement

July 2009



1. Introduction

- 1.1 In accordance with Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004, the Council must set out:
- A summary of the main issues raised within the consultation period; and
 - How these main issues have been addressed in the SPD to be adopted.

2. The Purpose of the SPD

- 2.1 The Public Realm Strategy SPD provides robust planning and design guidance to ensure that decisions relating to planning applications, investment and development decisions that affect the town centre's public realm over the coming years can be made in a co-ordinated way.

3. Consultation

- 3.1 Pre consultation was carried out in October 2008 to help inform the baseline study, this included various stakeholder workshops and drop in sessions. A Consultation Statement was published under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 which outlines the scope and content of the initial consultation undertaken on the SPD and is attached at Annex 1 of this Statement.
- 3.2 The Draft Public Realm Strategy SPD was published for formal public consultation between 23rd March 2009 to 4th May 2009. During the 6 week consultation period letters were sent out to inform statutory consultees, other stakeholders and the occupiers of property within the town centre of the consultation period.
- 3.3 A series of exhibitions were held in various locations within the town including, the Swansgate Centre, Wellingborough Library, Morrison's, Sainsbury's and at the Council offices. The document was also placed on deposit at the Council offices and libraries throughout the Borough, whilst various articles and a statutory notice also appeared in the local press.
- 3.4 Two events were held for targeted audiences including Young People and Disabled People. Planning Aid held a workshop on 1st May 2009 to engage with disabled groups whilst officers staged an event on 27th April at the Infusion Youth Centre to gather the views of young people.

4. Summary of Representations

- 4.1 The Draft Public Realm Strategy SPD received representations from various respondents. The following provides a summary of consultation feedback received on the Draft Public Realm Strategy and the recommended response by the Borough Council.

Name	Comment	Borough Council Response
English Heritage	English Heritage will not be able to provide advice in this case. Please accept my apologies.	Noted.
Natural England	No comment	Noted.
The Theatres Trust	No comment	Noted.
Ms J Dixon	Implementation of the Northern Interceptor Road will result in a large amount of traffic information clutter. The proposed traffic lights will be obvious at the junction with Queen Street and outside the Queens Hall. Further back up the High St there will have to be directional signs - straight on for buses, turn left for cars, lorries heavy goods etc, There will have to be directional information on the road surface. There will have to be a waiting area for cars using the church and a pedestrian crossing. Both the Queens Hall and the URC building will be blighted with traffic information clutter.	New signage and junction/crossing arrangements will result from the Northern Interceptor proposals set out in the Town Centre Area Action Plan (AAP). Attention will be paid to ensure that excessive clutter is avoided.
	The PRS proposes the establishment of an orchard of old varieties of fruit trees. The old orchard in the attached photograph* [*photograph supplied] appears in a painting in the corridor outside the Borough Council's Committee room. From its style this painting appears to date from about 1920. The apple trees still fruit well although they have been neglected and the heavy use of weed killer at the base is evident. Attention to this old orchard could make a good target for a quick win in the public realm proposals. In addition the site includes a hedge that is marked on an old map dated c 1875 as a field boundary. It has been damaged by storms and extensive application of weed killer.	The orchard referred to is in Cedar Way, which is beyond the town centre boundary and as such not covered by the PRS.

	<p>High St Place is a lovely open space with trees. It could be enhanced as a new plaza or space by the removal of the modern brick addition to the listed Queens Hall building. This would open up the view of the URC church framed by trees. There would be access either from the pavement in front of the Drill Hall (to the north) or from the existing access. It would improve the appearance of the Queens Hall. If the modern building behind the photographer's was demolished in order to open up vistas towards Leighton Coach House and give the opportunity for more open space and a pedestrian route to the town. This would also perhaps serve the new residential development in Jackson's Lane car park. The area could be landscaped through from High St Place to the whole area around the Coach House.</p> <p>There is also a date stone carefully mounted in the garden of High St Place – it is important to preserve evidence of prior dwellings.</p> <p>Entrance to High St Place from High St. This shows the trees that make this little square so attractive.</p>	<p>The adopted High Street / Jackson's Lane Development Planning Brief identifies that land to the rear of the Queens Hall is required for redevelopment. However, the brief does indicate how landscape improvements should be introduced to improve the setting of Leighton Coach House.</p>
<p>Wellingborough Civic Society</p>	<p>Very pleased with the document and hope that the Council will go forward with the recommendations.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<p>Anglian Water Services Ltd</p>	<p>No comment</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<p>Mr P Bell</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you support the key design principles? Yes 2. Do you agree with the potential projects? No - not to waste money on small patches of cobbles in Short Lane of which at least 50% are now missing. 3. Is there any Public Realm projects that you would like to suggest? No 4. Can you think of any important aspects relating to improving the public realm of the town centre that are not captured in the Strategy? Ensure free car parking 5. Would you like to see greater emphasis placed upon any of 	<p>Noted.</p> <p>The cobbles are referred to on p121 of the draft Appraisal. Small areas of cobble survive and their repair is identified as a potential public realm enhancement (Referred to as the Short Lane project no.11 of the Appraisal - see Figure 20, p195). Although it is agreed that this should not be a priority for investment in relation to other candidate projects, enhancement of the area of cobbles could be considered as part of the</p>

	<p>the following themes within the town centre – heritage values, contemporary design, sustainability, culture and art etc? No</p> <p>6. Would you like to suggest any significant events, people, building or locations that should be celebrated within the town centre through public art or other means? No</p> <p>7. Do you have any other suggestions as to how the Strategy might be improved? No</p>	<p>Jacksons Lane / High St proposals.</p>
<p>Wellingborough Library</p>	<p>1. Do you support the key design principles? Yes</p> <p>2. Do you agree with the potential projects? Yes - should have been done 10 years ago</p> <p>3. Is there any Public Realm projects that you would like to suggest? Having the public library as the community/cultural hub</p> <p>4. Can you think of any important aspects relating to improving the public realm of the town centre that are not captured in the Strategy? Visibility of the library</p> <p>5. Would you like to see greater emphasis placed upon any of the following themes within the town centre – heritage values, contemporary design, sustainability, culture and art etc? If so what would you like to see and where would you like to see it? Difficult to say as it is a mix/blend of all of those. A 15 minute walk from Birmingham’s Train Station into its centre has the right balance</p> <p>6. Would you like to suggest any significant events, people, building or locations that should be celebrated within the town centre through public art or other means? The public library which has over 4,200 visits each week. More in the school holidays</p> <p>7. Do you have any other suggestions as to how the Strategy might be improved? The use of modern art sculptures generate a focal point and would be a welcome addition in and around the town centre</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Establishing a newly redeveloped library / Ideas Store as a highly visible community hub is included in the AAP.</p> <p>Agreed - add at 10.2 p77 “Events could relate to the new library / Ideas Store proposal set out in the Town Centre Area Action Plan.”</p> <p>Agreed. This is addressed in Chapter 10.2 and in Part E of the document.</p>
<p>Lifetime Mortgage</p>	<p>1. Do you support the key design principles? Yes</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

Office	<p>2. Do you agree with the potential projects? If not, please explain. Yes</p> <p>3. Is there any Public Realm projects that you would like to suggest? No</p> <p>4. Can you think of any important aspects relating to improving the public realm of the town centre that are not captured in the Strategy? No</p> <p>6. Would you like to suggest any significant events, people, building or locations that should be celebrated within the town centre through public art or other means? No</p> <p>7. Do you have any other suggestions as to how the Strategy might be improved? No</p>	
Mr L O'Malley	<p>1. Do you support the key design principles? Yes</p> <p>2. Do you agree with the potential projects? Yes</p> <p>3. Is there any Public Realm projects that you would like to suggest? No</p> <p>4. Can you think of any important aspects relating to improving the public realm of the town centre that are not captured in the Strategy? No</p> <p>5. Would you like to see greater emphasis placed upon any of the following themes within the town centre – heritage values, contemporary design, sustainability, culture and art etc? If so what would you like to see and where would you like to see it? Contemporary Design.</p>	Noted.
Mrs J Kirk	<p>1. Do you support the key design principles? Yes</p> <p>2. Do you agree with the potential projects? Yes</p> <p>5. Would you like to see greater emphasis placed upon any of the following themes within the town centre – heritage values, contemporary design, sustainability, culture and art etc? If so what would you like to see and where would you like to see it? Make sure there are a lot of variety of shops - at the moment there are 4 mobile phone shops and a phone accessory shop in the Swansgate Centre</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Although the Borough Council will do what it can to promote the creation of a variety of shop types and sizes in the areas identified for redevelopment, it has limited control as a Local Planning Authority over the occupation of existing shop units.</p>

	<p>fitted outside my property (38 Broad Green) and others. Also more policing of litter should be implemented.</p> <p>2. Do you agree with the potential projects? Yes broadly</p> <p>3. Is there any Public Realm projects that you would like to suggest? No</p> <p>4. Can you think of any important aspects relating to improving the public realm of the town centre that are not captured in the Strategy? Less traffic and more pedestrian areas</p> <p>5. Would you like to see greater emphasis placed upon any of the following themes within the town centre – heritage values, contemporary design, sustainability, culture and art etc? If so what would you like to see and where would you like to see it? Pedestrianisation, café, outdoor areas, heritage areas – less traffic</p> <p>6. Would you like to suggest any significant events, people, building or locations that should be celebrated within the town centre through public art or other means? No</p> <p>7. Do you have any other suggestions as to how the Strategy might be improved? No</p>	<p>The accompanying Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal also provides proposals for enhancing Broad Green.</p> <p>The AAP identifies a range of proposals geared to traffic management and promoting pedestrian, cycle and bus facilities. Detailed work is ongoing to take these proposals forward.</p>
<p>Mr Andrew Howard</p>	<p>The town centre area should be extended to encompass Swanspool Gardens and Bassett’s Park as these are very important areas of public open space.</p> <p>The ‘historic and traditional character of the town’ developed with its prosperity prior to the introduction of the current ‘poor quality space and highway dominance’. Please take care to avoid the pitfalls of the past and ensure that proposals have the full support of the businesses that will create the future wealth for the town.</p>	<p>These spaces are formally excluded from the town centre boundary which is confirmed in the AAP. However, the PRS emphasises the importance of these spaces in Chapter 6.</p> <p>Noted.</p>

	<p>The Western Gateway should be shifted west (not east) to approximately the Oxford Street junction with West Villa Road with the new town centre designated area as Fig 1.1 shrinking back to match</p>	<p>The town centre boundary has been formally confirmed in the AAP. However, the position of the western gateway has been reconsidered in the light of comments. In many instances the location of 'gateways' can be defined precisely by an obvious change in character, a focal point or similar. However in this instance - and it is a typical quality of British towns - there is a zone of transitional change along a length of road where the character changes progressively from the suburb to the town centre, and there is no precise point of change. The proposed junction with West Street marks a point where the turning and an enlargement of the road width, as well as a small area of unused green space provide the opportunity to define a key punctuation to public realm works. The junction with West Villa Road does not appear to mark any particular change. The proposed junction with West Street marks a good location for a gateway feature. However, the setting of the Listed Buildings and Buildings of Townscape Merit around the Sharman Road junction would undoubtedly benefit from an extension of general public realm improvements up to the Sharman Road turning. Figure 4.1 and supporting text will therefore be refined to propose this revision to the western gateway.</p>
	<p>The pedestrian count (fig 5.2) appears to be of persons moving between the town centre and the car parks. It appears that a</p>	<p>The pedestrian counts were undertaken at key streets / crossings. A count was not done for</p>

	<p>count was not done on persons moving between the multi-storey car park at Swansgate and the town centre. Does this multi-storey car park attract as many visitors as the other car parks?</p>	<p>Swansgate Car Park for this exercise as the Council has figures for the intensity of the car park usage.</p> <p>As part of another study on town centre parking, the Council commissioned car park occupancy surveys in November 2008. This indicated that the Swansgate multi-storey has peak occupancy of 684 vehicles or 72%. In percentage terms this is lower than other town centre car parks, but higher numerically.</p>
	<p>The deterioration of the surface materials is directly related to the number of times they have been dug up. The utilities have a lot to answer for! The dominant use of the same material can be boring but being in good order is more important. The concrete block pavements and (recent) small module concrete slabs are too weak and break up under stiletto heels!</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
	<p>Consider the opportunity of widening and developing the Swanspool Brook into a significant recreational feature through the town centre and Croyland Park. At the moment it is nothing more than an open storm water ditch but it has huge potential!</p>	<p>Agreed - this is dealt with in Chapters 14.4 and 17.4 of the PRS.</p>
	<p>All the activities of the County Council, especially within the town centre must be vetted by the Borough Council before implementation in order to ensure proper integration.</p>	<p>The Council and Northamptonshire County Council are working in partnership on this exercise.</p>
<p>The Wildlife Trust</p>	<p>The Wildlife Trust welcomes the inclusion of Green Infrastructure into the proposals and supports any biodiversity improvements of Swanspool Brook. However the balance of human recreation with measures to promote wildlife and ecology are very important. We would recommend that while some areas of the Brook are opened up, others remain less accessible to allow wildlife to flourish. In particular the stretches to the west of the town centre, that are known to contain significant water vole populations.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Agreed. Chapter 14.1 references the AAP policy requirement to “balance human recreation with measures to promote wildlife and ecology.”</p>

	<p>Where possible all ecological enhancements should be informed by survey work and aim to meet BAP targets.</p>	<p>Agreed. - add to last sentence in para. 2 of Chap. 14.1 (p133) “and where possible all ecological enhancements should be informed by survey work and aim to meet Biodiversity Action Plan targets.”</p>
<p>Mr D Pearson</p>	<p>The experience at the Sheep St/Market St/Burystead Place crossing. Is at present one of noise, pollution and, particularly when emergency vehicles are trying to force their way through with all systems blazing, danger. This experience can only be improved by the removal of the vehicles. Is it not possible to close Sheep St to through traffic and give priority to pedestrians? I find it amazing that in all the proposals there is no mention of the largest blight on the town centre - that of vehicular traffic. No amount of ‘quality materials’ will improve the settings of listed buildings when they can only be experienced as a backdrop to vehicles.</p>	<p>It is agreed that this crossing could be substantially improved and is recommended for priority attention. Due to wider traffic circulation requirements it is not possible to remove traffic from Sheep Street.</p> <p>Chap. 5 addresses the difficulties of walking within the town centre due to vehicular traffic and highway design. Chap 12 goes on to propose measures to improve pedestrian facilities.</p>
<p>Kelly McDermott, Northamptonshire Police</p>	<p>Northamptonshire Police are supportive of the Public Realm Strategy and Shop Front and Advertisement Guide in principle but consider that attempts at designing out crime, particularly in the guide, are weak (despite many references that identify the need) and is not reflective of the local crime and disorder issues, including anti-social behaviour currently present in Wellingborough Town Centre.</p>	<p>In-principle support noted. The PRS has been formulated in consultation with Northamptonshire Police. The Borough Council sought further clarity from Northamptonshire Police and advice was provided in respect of revised wording, as set out below.</p> <p>Section 5.9 of the PRS summarises the key safety and security issues that were highlighted by Northamptonshire Police in discussions held whilst the Draft PRS was being formulated. It is proposed to insert a new sub-heading entitled ‘5.10 Key safety and security issues’ on p49 after the sentence that ends “...lamp stands in evidence” which will serve to draw out and distinguish the text following on from the preceding section 5.9 which focuses on the</p>

	<p>It is noted that crime is included within the SA as having a social and economic impact which we are delighted to see recognition of. We would, however, argue that crime can also and often does have an environmental impact. Consider for example the environmental impact of arson and also the carbon cost of crime which is estimated at 2.5 tones of carbon for each crime of burglary (Ken Pease 2009). We therefore believe that this should be recognised in the guide.</p> <p>In formulating the guide we recommend that appropriate recognition of Safer Places (ODPM 2004) and the Supplementary Planning Guidance for Planning Out Crime in Northamptonshire (2003) should be referenced together with recognition of the need to consult with Northamptonshire Police Crime Prevention Design Advisors during the pre-app and post</p>	<p>experience of the town centre after dark.</p> <p>Chapter 10.4 sets out proposed actions that flow directly from the Chap 5.10 analysis. To clarify this it is proposed to insert the word “proposals” into the sub-heading to read “10.4 Safety and security proposals”.</p> <p>Noted - incorporate within the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) accordingly.</p> <p>Noted. Revise Appendix D of the SA to include reference to these documents.</p> <p>Agreed - insert at the end of Section 10.4 (p82) “Consultation is required with Northamptonshire Police Crime Prevention Design Advisors during the pre-application and post application planning stages.”</p> <p>Replace “the emerging Sustainable Design SPD on p13 with:</p> <p>“Sustainable Design SPD (Published by NNJPU 2009) This Sustainable Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) provides guidance on policies within the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy that relate to design and sustainability.”</p>
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	<p>app stages as defined within the Planning Out Crime Protocol (2004) agreed between BCoW and Northamptonshire Police.</p> <p>Further consideration needs to be given to counter-terrorist preventive prevention measures to be incorporated as referred to in the draft revision of Safer Places (2009) and in a range of 'Crowded Places' publications by NaCTSO that promote good practice in town centres and leisure facilities.</p> <p>We also recommend that Secured by Design is adopted as the standard for which developments are to be built or refurbished</p>	<p>To expand the reference to Planning Out Crime in Northamptonshire SPG on p13 with:</p> <p>“Supplementary Planning Guidance for Planning Out Crime in Northamptonshire (2003). The aim of the SPG is to minimise crime and fear of crime by ensuring that new development incorporates crime prevention measures through design.”</p> <p>To include reference to Crowded Places Shopping Centres (NaCTSO 2008) publication as described below.</p> <p>Noted - insert the following after the second sentence in the first paragraph of Section 10.4 (p81) “Developments will be built or refurbished to the Secured by Design standard, the benchmark developed nationally by the Association of Chief Police Officers.”</p> <p>Noted.</p>
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	<p>to.</p> <p>Developments that result in the local community experiencing unacceptable levels of crime and or anti-social behaviour by users of the environment, legitimate or otherwise could be considered as a breach of the local authorities Section 17 responsibilities under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 as amended by the Police and Justice Act 2006 which places a duty on each local authority to: "exercise its functions with due regard to the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area including Anti-Social Behaviour, Alcohol and Drugs" This situation is more likely to occur when the local crime context has not been fully taken account of and appropriate design standards have not been prescribed and enforced.</p>	
<p>Lancaster David, Northamptonshire Police</p>	<p><i>The Borough Council sought further clarity from Northamptonshire Police in relation to the above feedback and the following comments provided:</i></p> <p>1.1 Introduction – Add additional words as shown below to reflect safety as a key aim of design</p> <p>It also requires recognition of the central role that the design of public spaces has in shaping the quality of the town centre, delivering a safe and sustainable environment. Influencing the way it is used and providing the setting for the everyday lives of local people where the opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour are reduced.</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>Agreed.</p>

	<p>1.4 Amend bullet 7 to read</p> <p>To incorporate 'secured by design' principles taking into account counter-terrorist preventive measures to ensure that spaces are safe and secure.</p> <p>2.2 Other Planning Policy – suggest amend following to reflect need to consider crime and disorder</p> <p>National planning policy</p> <p>PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Communities (2006) provides over-arching guidance on the preparation of planning policy and emphasises the role of “high quality and inclusive design” that should create “well-mixed and integrated developments.” It emphasises the importance of “well-planned public spaces that bring people together and provide opportunities for physical activity and recreation... ensuring a place will function well and add to the overall character and quality of the area.” (para. 35). PPS1 also requires that in preparing development plans, planning authorities should seek to: ‘promote communities which are inclusive, healthy, safe and crime free, whilst respecting the diverse needs of communities and the special needs of particular sectors of the community. (para 27, iii).</p> <p>2.2 Other Planning Policy – after the Planning Out Crime SPG add references to the following three publications</p> <p>Crowded Places Publications (NaCTSO 2008)</p> <p>Crowded Places publications cover a range of topics relevant to the public realm and provide protective security advice to</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>Agreed - include reference to these documents. However, as these are not ‘other local guidance’ this is not the correct place to refer to them. Section 2.2 will therefore be modified as “Other planning policy / guidance” and the sub-heading below this modified to “National planning policy / guidance.” The proposed document references will be placed under the reference to PPG17. A new sub-heading will be placed</p>
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	<p>reduce the risk of a terrorist attack and limit the damage an attack might cause; protecting people going about their daily lives.</p> <p>Safer Places – The Planning System and Crime Prevention (ODPM 2004)</p> <p>Safer Places is the companion guide to PPS1 with the aim of creating safe and sustainable communities that succeed now, economically, socially and environmentally, and respect the needs of future generations in the delivery. Designing out crime and designing in community safety should be central to the planning and delivery of new development. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 as amended by the Police and Justice Act 2006 requires all local authorities to exercise their functions with due regard to their likely effect on crime, disorder, anti-social behaviour, drugs and alcohol and to do all they reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder occurring.</p> <p>Safer Places Amendment (2009) to reflecting counter terrorist threat addition to Safer Places</p> <p>The purpose of this guide is to fill this gap and supplement the <i>Safer Places</i> good practice guide to provide practical advice and guidance in designing out terrorism, particularly in relation to crowded places.</p>	<p>above RSS8 entitled “Regional planning policy” for clarity.</p>
<p>Event for the disabled</p>	<p>An event, organised by Planning Aid, was held at the Tithe Barn on 1st May 2009 in order to elicit the views of disabled groups. Key findings from the event were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant improvements to the town centre are required; • The proposals in the TCAAP are generally welcomed; • The area of greatest concern relates to access and a number of locations where participants experience 	<p>Noted. The Council will continue to consult with disabled users on proposals as they are worked up in further detail. It should be noted that with the introduction of the Northern Interceptor route as proposed in the TCAAP, through traffic in Gloucester Place would be substantially reduced.</p>

	<p>difficulties in crossing the road were highlighted with Oxford St and Cambridge St appearing to be of most concern; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally, participants support the proposals for 4 of the 5 'focus areas' outlined in the draft Strategy. There was, however, some concern about the 5th focus area (Gloucester Place) arising from a general feeling the area is very congested and lacks sufficient space. 	
<p>Youth event</p>	<p>Officers of the Borough Council staged an event at the Infusion Youth Centre in the town centre on 27th April 2009. Key findings from the event were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is considerable support for the use of Market Square as an area for public events; • More seating, particularly in the Market Square area and in the parks should be provided; • A majority of those participating in the event walk to the town centre although other forms of transport, particularly cycling, are used; • Existing pedestrian crossings are generally considered to be in the right place, although several suggestions for new crossings were received; • Cycle lanes and parking facilities for bicycles and skateboards were viewed as important facilities for young people; and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several other facilities were suggested including a skate park and an area for trail bikes. 	<p>The findings are noted and the Borough Council will engage further with young people on the proposed Church St/Market Square Supplementary Planning Document.</p> <p>Proposed improvements to pedestrian crossings and cycle facilities are consistent with proposals contained in the Draft PRS. The site-specific detailed suggestions will be considered further as part of the public realm improvement implementation work being taken forward.</p> <p>Trail bikes are not considered to be compatible with the needs of pedestrians and neighbours in respect of the town centre parks, though this could be considered elsewhere within the town. The provision of a skate park could be considered as part of future plans to improve Castlefields and the second bullet point on p121 relating to potential improved facilities for Castlefields will be modified to include potential skate park provision.</p>

