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December 2004
3rd Draft

Introduction

This Public Realm Strategy has been prepared to establish a locally distinctive framework to guide future regeneration proposals in Ryde.

It has two specific purposes:

- The first is to provide a public realm template against which specific enhancements in the town can be designed and assessed.
- The second is to provide a wider context for the delivery of the Ryde Townscape Heritage Initiative which is jointly being pursued by English Heritage, The Ryde Development Trust and the Isle of Wight Council.

Ryde is one of the main gateways to the Isle of Wight and its largest town. Considerable development in the 19th Century created a town with strong retail, economic, social and tourism functions and a rich wealth of townscape quality. But changes in the patterns of tourism and a gradual economic decline in the town since the 1960s have led to a loss of economic prosperity. This has had an impact on the quality of building maintenance, the loss of traditional urban features and the longer-term vitality of the town as a whole.

In recognition of the problems faced by the Island, since 1994 the Isle of Wight has won significant regeneration funding from national and European programmes including successive Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) rounds. In 2000 the Isle of Wight Partnership and Ryde Development Trust were awarded £6.25m of SRB 6 funding via the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) to implement Ryde 2000 - a range of regeneration initiatives within the themes of learning and employment, social inclusion, physical regeneration and business development.



This public realm strategy is a key initiative within Ryde 2000 and has been developed to ensure that the SRB funding is used to deliver sustainable and appropriate public realm solutions in Ryde, underpinned by quality of design, local distinctiveness and respect for historic character.

Good design can help to create successful places where people will choose to live, work, invest and take their leisure. It can reinforce planning goals, making urban areas such as Ryde more sustainable by encouraging the careful use of resources, creating a quality environment,

attracting business and investment and reinforcing civic pride and sense of place. It is also important to consider cause and effect throughout the town and across all aspects of infrastructure, development and social and economic provision. Conversely, piecemeal and un-coordinated initiatives can damage the character and integrity of a town.

In conjunction with the Public Realm Strategy, a series of complementary initiatives to complete the process are also in hand:

- ❑ Transport and Parking Strategy
- ❑ Land and Property Study
- ❑ Open Space, Recreation and Play Study
- ❑ Retail Study

This strategy is divided into six sections.

Part 1 – Policy Background

The European, national and local planning context is reviewed and the implications for the development of the public realm strategy are established.

Part 2 – Townscape Structure and Character

An understanding of the historic, aesthetic, social, economic and environmental context of the public realm is essential in order to direct future developments. These elements of Ryde are described and key conclusions for the development of the strategy are highlighted. Key character areas are briefly described.

Part 3 – Public Realm Framework

This section of the Strategy sets out the design framework for Ryde, based on its special aesthetic, economic and social characteristics. The Public Realm Strategy provides the strategic vision necessary to strengthen image and legibility and sets out key projects and priorities. Proposed



View of High Street from the Esplanade



The High Street

phasing of the strategy is included both for projects to be implemented in the immediate future and for others planned for the longer term. The phasing has been planned with the aim of ensuring that maximum benefit is enjoyed by all stakeholders as the vision is gradually achieved across Ryde.

Part 4 – Public Realm Guidelines

The detailed guidance sets out the performance standards for the design, implementation, management and maintenance of public realm elements. The guidelines are not intended to be prescriptive. However, specific surface materials and design details, appropriate to Ryde's streets and spaces, have been recommended, in addition to setting out design objectives covering issues including accessibility, sustainability and aesthetics. Detailed guidance is given on:

- ❑ paving
- ❑ street furniture
- ❑ signage
- ❑ trees and soft landscape

Part 5 – How the Strategy Will Work

The application of the strategy is shown by specific demonstration projects for particular areas within Ryde's town centre.

The agenda for the public realm in Ryde:

- ❑ The public realm should be designed to meet the needs of Ryde as a centre of retail, social and economic activity on the Island
- ❑ The public realm should reflect and respect the existing high quality architectural and townscape settings. Low quality treatments which do not respect these characteristics will not be encouraged
- ❑ Quality should not be compromised for short-term improvements

- A consistent and unifying response to the public realm is important for its longer-term appeal and development. Where appropriate, more specialist approaches will be specified and encouraged.
- The setting of Ryde's architectural and townscape should be safeguarded and enhanced by removing clutter from streets and urban places, and by ensuring that any new elements of street furniture are of a high quality.
- The public realm should be designed with the need to reflect the strong historic and continuing relationship between Ryde and the Solent.
- The Public Realm Strategy should introduce detailed guidance for the future development of the Esplanade area as a Tourism Development Area as identified in the UDP. In doing so, appropriate opportunities should be taken to:
 - introduce life and vitality into the public realm
 - ensure that there is safe and adequate public pedestrian activity
 - ensure that visitors are adequately catered for in terms of activities, attractions and facilities and are encouraged to explore and use the full area
 - ensure that the materials and landscaping used are appropriate to the maritime environment.
- The Public Realm Strategy should work towards the development of an attractive, lively and diverse town centre. Appropriate opportunities should be taken to:
 - ensure full pedestrian access into all parts of the centre;
 - enable the development of specific quarters;
 - encourage the development of an attractive environment which will encourage investment;
 - allow easy access between car parks and destinations.
- The gateways into the town should be respected and enhanced.



St. Thomas's Church



Union Street from the shore, 1908



Ryde Carnival



The Western Esplanade, 1904
Source: Images of England, Ryde Postcards

Part 1 - National and Regional Policies

City Centres

Government policy at both a European, national and local level has reinforced the importance of city centres as the focus for social and economic life in urban areas. During the 1980s and early 1990s the huge expansion of “out of town” retail centres was threatening the economic vitality of the traditional centres. Government is now seeking to reverse this trend via a number of measures including PPG6 - Town Centres and Retail Development. This seeks to help sustain city centres. A key requirement for success will be the provision of a high quality pedestrian environment to complement the diverse retail, recreational and tourist attractions in city centres.

Sustainable Development

Commitment to sustainable development with its incorporation into European UK Government policy has also been important. For instance, The South East Regional Assembly has recently published an Integrated Regional Framework which aims to ensure a consistent approach to sustainable development throughout the South East. Greater emphasis has now been placed on city centres, where people can easily be served by public transport. This Public Realm Strategy has been developed to reflect this shift in favour of public transport, cycling and walking. This is particularly important as Ryde is a key gateway to the Isle of Wight. (PPG1).

Conservation

Protection of the historic environment has increasingly been seen as an important planning concern since the 1970s. Fundamental to Government policies for environmental stewardship is the belief that there should be effective protection for all aspects of the historic environment, particularly listed buildings and designated conservation areas. Ryde has a long established Conservation Area and a wealth of Regency and Victorian listed buildings. This strategy reflects this heritage. (PPG15)



A better quality of life in the South-East

Local Policies

The Unitary Development Plan

The Isle of Wight Unitary Development Plan (UDP) was adopted in May 2001 and covers the period from 1996-2011. It provides the statutory development plan for Ryde. Ryde has been identified in the UDP together with Cowes and Newport as being one of the “main locations for residential and commercial development on the Island. The area has an important function in provision of jobs, houses and communication links with the mainland and has one of the greatest concentrations of services, infrastructure and facilities.”

The Plan highlights the recent decline in the fortunes of Ryde. Paragraph 15.13 indicates that retailing on the Island has experienced significant qualitative improvements in recent years. Newport has experienced the greatest improvements, and this has highlighted the relative decline in Ryde. Newport has taken on the role of the Island’s main retail centre. Ryde is expected to act as a local shopping district centre but has understandably seen a reduction in mainstream retail in its core area and businesses are diversifying and specialising.

The UDP states that “each town should have its own town centre management plan setting out how the centre functions, whilst respecting the unique requirements of each in terms of access, circulation, parking, use of materials and townscape.”

Ryde currently does not have any such a plan. Although a number of studies of various aspects of Ryde have been carried out in the past none of these have been comprehensive. The three areas identified in Appendix H of the UDP as requiring Development Briefs are Ryde Seafront, Westridge, Ryde and Smallbrook Stadium, Ryde. With the exception of the Ryde Esplanade study, which addresses a small section of Ryde Seafront, strategies for these areas have yet to be drafted.

However, proposals for incremental development have been permitted in these areas without wider implications or cumulative effects being fully understood.

The present study will assist in developing relevant policies aimed at preserving and enhancing the character of Ryde and preventing piecemeal development.

Detailed policies and proposals are set out for Ryde on Proposals Map sheet 4 of the UDP. Various housing sites are identified both strategically and with various infill and windfall sites in and around the town centre. A major Tourist Development Area (policy T7f) is identified in the Esplanade area. More general policies (policies B5 and B6) apply in the designated Conservation Area which covers extensive parts of the town centre/historic core. The Somerfield supermarket has been developed in the area identified by Policy R3a.

There are a number of significant development sites in Ryde which may provide opportunities to enhance public realm and make links around the town. These include Ryde Transport Interchange, Ashey Road Housing Site, Oakfield Housing Site, Great Preston Road Industrial Site and Westridge Site, designated for employment and recreation but now being developed as partly housing.

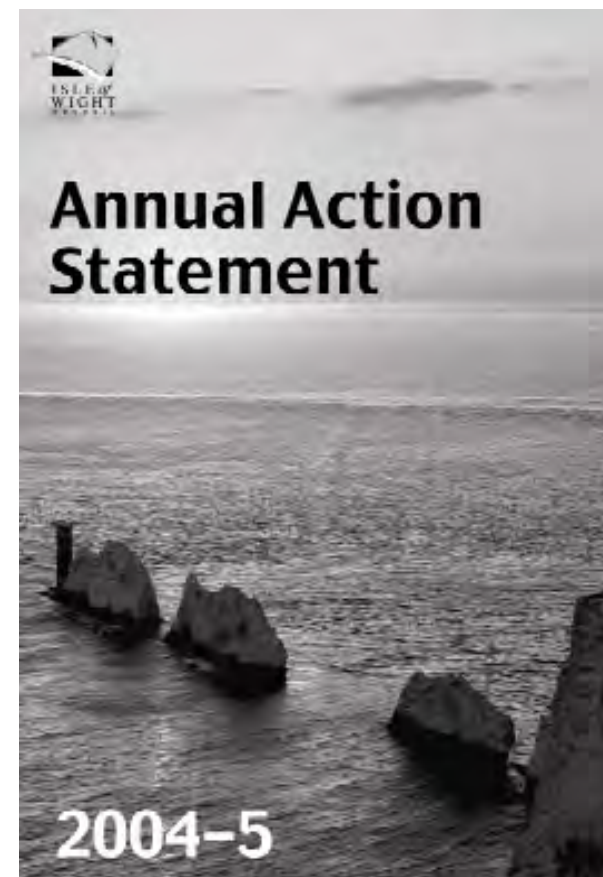
Community Strategy 2002/12

The Island Futures Community Strategy was launched in 2002 and establishes a set of themes for continual improvement of the local environment and quality of life on the Island. A key theme is to provide a quality built environment, and actions for key partners are identified. These include:

- Involving the community in assessing the quality of new design.
- Ensuring high standards of design are a planning requirement.
- Improving provision for travel on foot, by cycle and by horseback.
- Re-developing brownfield sites and promoting the use of higher density development.

Other initiatives include:

- Having Pride in Ryde
- Ryde 2000 - SRB6 Bid
- Island Cultural Strategy
- Community Mapping Audit
- Retail Survey
- Townscape Heritage Initiative
- Island Play Strategy
- Open For Business
- Island Agenda 21



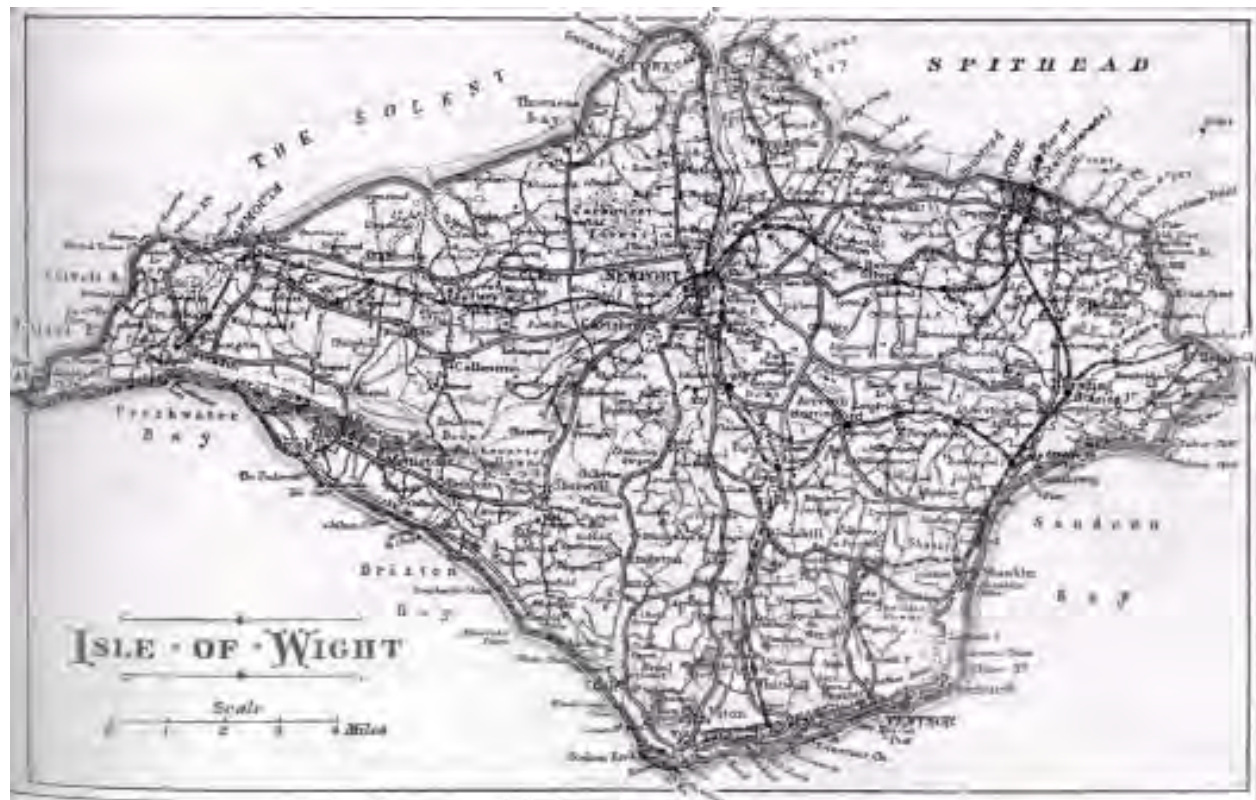
Annual Action Statement

Part 2 - Ryde's History Townscape Structure and Character

The character of Ryde is more than just its component elements of buildings, open space and setting. Its historical and cultural development have shaped its urban form and created the special identity valued by both its residents and its visitors.

Ryde has, for instance, long provided a gateway to the Island and a destination for excursions. But during the late 20th century a townscape and structure designed for the carriage and promenading with a priority for movement north to south has had to adapt to a major change in patterns of movement and scale of use. The experience of arriving in Ryde, either at the pier or by road, is still critical in establishing present day perceptions of the town, but the importance of easy access and legibility particularly in relation to the increase in motor vehicles has changed public needs, expectations and priorities.

In developing a public realm strategy and making informed decisions on managing change within the town, therefore, it is important to understand the character of Ryde as a whole and its relationship with the rest of the island, the sea and the mainland. To identify strengths and weaknesses, the public buildings, churches, open public spaces, the esplanade and beachfront, where many of the social and cultural activities of Ryde take place, need to be analysed, as well as the historical and present commercial viability of the tourism, retail and industrial sectors.



G.E Walker's map of the Isle of Wight

The following pages summarise some of the main influences on our perceptions of Ryde, by explaining the town's physical, historical, cultural and ecological characteristics, its contemporary landscape and townscape character. A more detailed assessment can be found in the companion document Ryde's Townscape Character.

Physical Landscape Elements

As defined by the Countryside Commission in their landscape assessment, Ryde is a coastal settlement with traditional enclosed pastureland to the south with pockets of landscape improvement areas:

- Geology – Geological survey by Ordnance Survey - Bembridge Limestones along the shore, Bembridge Marls rising to the ridge, Alluvium deposits in the valley, Marine Gravel on the ridge.
- Topography – Critical to the character of Ryde is the sloping land from the foreshore to the ridge and the valley that divides the town. This contour based analysis shows how the valley sides and watercourses define the extent of the town
- Within and around Ryde are various Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), as well as a few Historic Parks and Gardens. These areas support a framework of urban wildlife, plants, trees, insects, birds and animals, which add to Ryde's environmental qualities.

Development of the Town

Ryde is a Regency town on the north coast of the Isle of Wight. Lying on gentle sloping ground, from the foreshore to the ridge, its memorable skyline of towers and spires and the Monkton Brook valley that divides the town, are clearly visible across the Solent.



Ryde topography allows long views towards the Solent



Appley Beach Huts – a traditional seaside feature



Appley Park – coastal waterfront park



The Beach – a huge asset to Ryde as a family resort

Until the beginning of the 19th century Ryde was divided into two communities, Lower Ryde and Upper Ryde. Those living in lower Ryde, which had been one of the Island's main ports since mediaeval times, existed on fishing, piloting vessels into nearby ports and boat building. Upper Ryde was a typical mediaeval open field village with farmsteads. The approximately rectangular shape of the fields accounts for the nearly parallel course of the roads that run from the shore to Upper Ryde. In the early 18th century the Player family bought the land and began to develop the village. By the early 19th century it was growing rapidly into the town it is today. In 1814 the pier opened allowing visitors to step from the ferries to the shore without getting wet feet and Ryde soon became the fashionable 'Gateway to the Island'. Union Street, Church Lane, Union Road, George Street, Cross Street, Nelson Street and Dover Street were all developed and villas were built for the wealthier sections of the population. In 1829 the cutting and levelling of Lind Street provided materials that could be dumped along the Dover to create drier ground, which coupled with the successful drainage of the Monkton Marshes, allowed the development of the Strand east along the shore. By 1840 all the chief roads had been laid down with the exception of less fashionable Monkton Street which would later link the shore with the bottom of St John's Road.

This part of the town's development was very much controlled by the Player, Brigstock and Lind families who approved plans and elevations, laid down exact positions and heights of houses within plots and required tenants to provide pavements, specifying materials for construction but allowing builders to adapt styles within certain guidelines.

Further development during the Edwardian, inter-war and post Second World War periods, have created Ryde as it is today.



Ryde, The Pier 1892 – provides the gateway to the island with connecting hovercraft and rail line along the pier.

The Foreshore

Before the construction of Ryde Pier there was no development of the foreshore except for commercial landing places, but between 1829 and 1856 all traces of the natural coastline disappeared under road, sea wall and esplanade. After 1855 when a new railway and ferry company were authorised to link the mainland to the Island at Ryde, tram and train piers were also built alongside the ferry pier. Later the boating lake and North Walk were constructed. And in the late 1980's a substantial area of land was reclaimed from Ryde sands to provide recreation and parking facilities behind the Pavilion and a new harbour. The Pier was listed in 1976.

Open Space

Public open space is limited in Ryde. The promenade has always been and remains, the most significant public open space in the town, both socially and as a form of recreation. Over the years the esplanade has been extended through Appley and Puckpool has been developed as a park.



*Ryde, Union Street 1904,
Source: Francis Frith's the Isle of Wight*

Apart from that Simeon Street recreation ground is the main public open space. It was given to the people of Ryde towards the end of the 19th century, when the completion of the rail link from St Johns to the pier led to the drainage of former marshland.

Curiously, throughout the Regency and Victorian periods when public parks were generally enjoying their heyday, most open space in Ryde was private parkland, belonging

to grand houses. St Johns Estate (now Appley Park) and Ryde House are surviving examples. The only examples of formal communal garden spaces were to be found in Vernon Square and St Johns Park, while the remaining significant spaces were limited to churchyards and cemeteries.

Although Edwardian developments created more public open space, ranging from local parks and small rest gardens to allotments, many of these spaces have subsequently been developed for housing. Interwar and post war housing development was not matched by the inclusion of open space. The majority of space is of an incidental nature and does not encourage either recreational or 'quiet' park use.

Townscape Character Areas

The urban fabric of Ryde can be divided into a range of key character types:

- Esplanade and Pier (Sea front)
- Grand Villas (Pelham Fields)
- Town Centre (Union Road)
- Victorian Town Villas (Lower Ryde, St Johns Park)
- Victorian Terraces (Upper Ryde)
- Edwardian Suburbs (Elmfield, Swanmore)
- Eastern Valley Slope (Oakfield)
- Post War Housing (Mayfield Road)
- Post 1960s (Appley, Spencer Road, Binstead Road)
- Suburban Village (Swanmore)



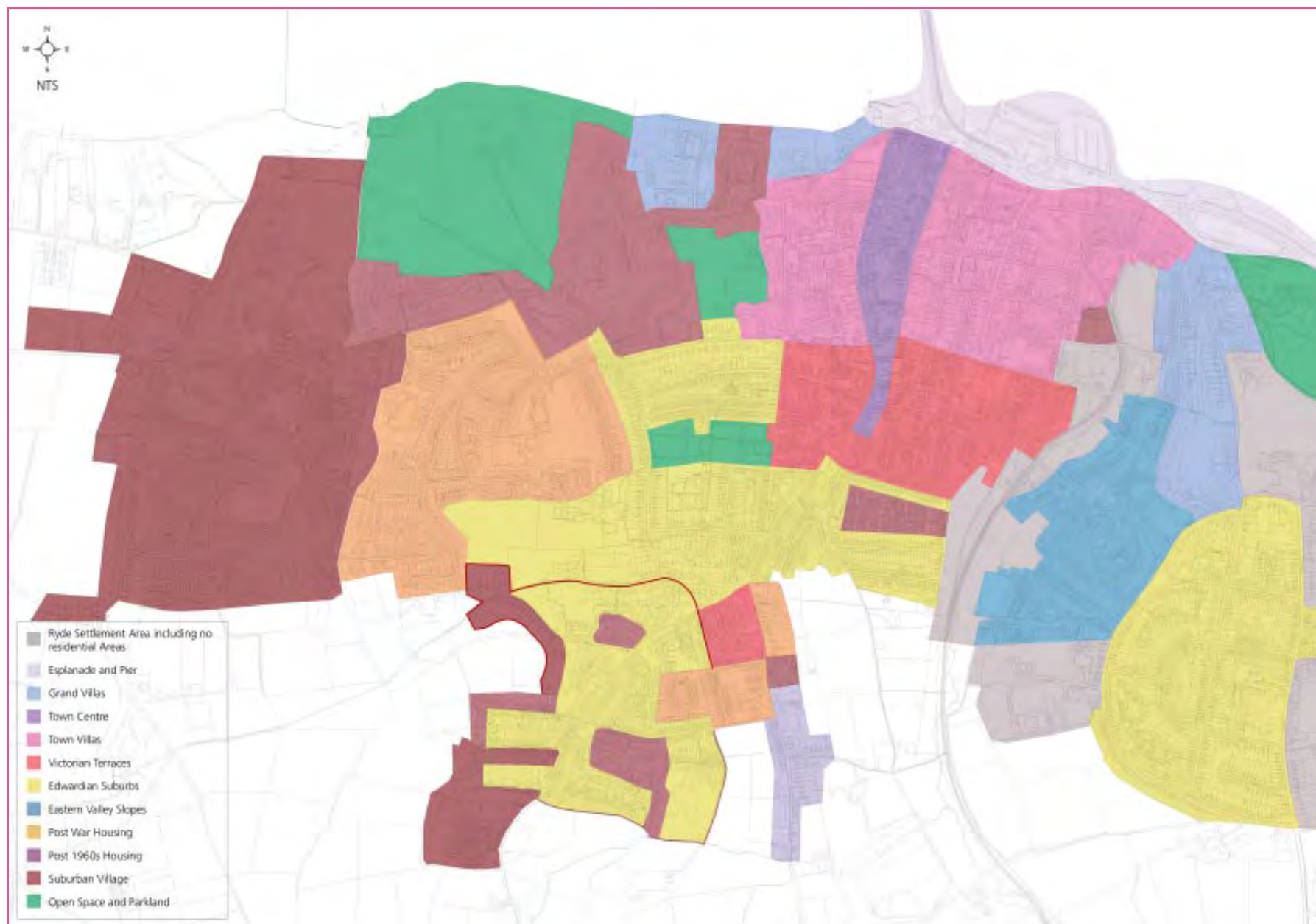
The entrance to the Victoria Bath Pier



The New Pavillion in the Eastern Esplanade Gardens.



Ryde Interchange



Esplanade and Pier

The Esplanade represents a significant period of popularity for Ryde as a seaside resort. Visually the area extends from Ryde House to Puckpool point, but full public access is not available along the entire length. Dominated by the rising town behind and the second longest pier in the U.K. the seafront is softened at both ends by Park land and mature trees. West of the pier "the Prince Consort", a building of outstanding visual significance, gives character and scale to the whole seafront.

The introduction of a Harbour, transport and leisure facilities in modern buildings on reclaimed land in front of the esplanade has interrupted the pedestrian's ability to promenade the seafront.

Key Characteristics

- Straightforward Regency architecture, stuccoed and slate roofed 3 storey villas;
- Houses and hotels facing seafront on landward side, often double fronted;
- Transport interchange, amusements and recreational activities on seaward side;
- Large areas of open space, beaches, gardens and parkland;
- Busy road segregates esplanade from town centre, pedestrian movement is disjointed.



Public Realm Considerations

- Proposals should seek to improve movement east-west along the Esplanade and north-south between the town and the waterfront
- Pedestrian priority is a key issue at Ryde Interchange and at the roundabout junctions along the Esplanade road
- Existing works recently implemented at North Walk should be considered in terms of the choice of street furniture and surface materials
- Public realm improvements could be combined with development in key waterside locations adjacent to the car park, harbour and Eastern gardens



Esplanade - North Walk



Esplanade - Ryde Interchange

Town Centre

This is the principal shopping area of Ryde, with the development of retail outlets alongside contemporary housing development. The area covers Union Street, High Street and Upper High Street. Each of these streets has a distinct character and mass. There are a wealth of historic features in the area ranging from civic buildings to the remnants of old workshops and yards to the rear of the original "upper Ryde village".

Key Characteristics

- Narrow fronted deep plots with housing above and behind shops
- Articulated roovescape with decoration at high level
- Historic shop fronts and signage



Public Realm Considerations

- Footways are often narrow
- Pedestrian priority should be enhanced, reducing vehicle dominance where possible
- Links to the town centre are not clear from arrival points/gateways
- Out door activities/eateries could enhance town centre's offer
- East west connections and movement is limited
- Quality of public realm could be enhanced to improve Conservation Area setting
- Key linking spaces require improvement to promote activity within the town centre
- Vehicle parking and servicing requires rationalising
- Signage/access from car parks could be improved
- Links to spaces beyond main streets should be improved with connection to new attractions
- Materials to be used should reflect historic street furniture and limestone paving



Union St



Jo Daflos Union St.



Union St

Town Villas

The historic core of Ryde contains remnants of the old villages which grew rapidly in the Regency and Victorian boom of Ryde. The area is arranged on wide streets running north/south and buildings benefit from east/west aspect. There are no great architectural statements but many fine examples of straightforward Regency architecture among the public buildings. The houses with their low pitched slate roofs, segmental and semi circular bays and well proportioned windows are generally simpler versions of houses being built elsewhere in England during the same period. The houses give a vivid picture of life in this once fashionable resort. The area has a very strong historical character, which is largely intact.

Key Characteristics

- ❑ Large properties on generous plots
- ❑ Grid pattern to street layout
- ❑ Low slate pitched roofs
- ❑ Semi-circular bays with well proportioned sash windows

Public Realm Considerations

- ❑ Footways and streets tend to be wider
- ❑ Presence of limestone used for paving, kerbs and channels
- ❑ Boundaries tend to be varied with some tall walls adjoining the street
- ❑ On-street parking dominates the street



Monkton Street



Wood Street



Vernon Square

Victorian Terraces

The Victorian streets in this area represent a considerable growth in the size of the town for smaller family dwellings. The properties are modest set on small plots on narrow street patterns. There are some commercial and workshop properties in the area, as well as local shops and pubs. Due to the tight pattern there have been limited opportunities for infill redevelopment. The properties are predominantly single occupancy with a large majority of owner occupier. The streets are set on a north/ south grid pattern with many of the buildings enjoying an east / west aspect. Rear gardens are small and back to back.

Key Characteristics

- Narrow 2/3 bed terrace and semi detached houses
- Square and splayed bay sash windows
- Short enclosed front gardens
- On street parking
- Red brick and slate roofs
- Tight grid pattern of narrow streets



Surrey Street

Public Realm Considerations

- Footways tend to be narrow and are mainly macadam in material finish
- Some loss of front gardens to forecourt parking
- Limestone kerbs remain in many streets
- Few street trees
- On-street parking dominates the street



Well Street

Edwardian Suburbs

There are two Edwardian suburb areas of Ryde.

Elmfield is set in formal crescent layout. It was developed piecemeal on a plot by plot basis with numerous changes of style and mass and aspect. Later infill and backland development has taken place on the former brick works clay pit areas of land to the rear of the original houses.

Swanmore is largely Edwardian in origin forming an extensive band to the South West of the Town Centre. It comprises a tight knit development of largely semi-detached housing in a formal grid. Larger detached dwellings of individual character flank the principal roads to the North and South and are of Victorian origin. The area shows the development of East West movement across the town.



Key Characteristics

- Large properties on narrow plots
- Semi-detached houses with connected street layout
- Slate roofs with steep pitch
- Buildings tend to be brick built

Public Realm Considerations

- Footways and streets tend to be wider
- Some limestone details remain and footway materials vary
- Boundaries vary with some loss of gardens to off-street parking forecourts
- On-street parking dominates the street



Victoria Crescent



Typical dwelling in Victoria Crescent



High Park Road

Eastern Valley Slope

The origins of this area are Victorian but there has been a continued development in various periods which makes the area seem very confused and it has a very mixed character. The properties and streets are generally in a neglected state. There are pockets of employment uses as well as local shops, school and recreation areas. The area has been affected by the impact of the Great Preston Road industrial estate immediately adjacent.

Key Characteristics

- Mixed periods of development around Victorian settlement
- Various street patterns and styles of development
- Properties and streets generally neglected
- Areas of open space - the ownership is poorly defined



Eastern Valley Slopes



St Johns Wood Road

Public Realm Considerations

- Footways and streets tend to be of consistent widths with continuous street frontage and short gardens
- Some limestone kerb and gully details remain and footway materials are predominantly macadam
- Some loss of gardens to off-street parking forecourts
- On-street parking is particularly dominant



Oakfield High Street.

Post War Housing

This area of predominantly semi-detached housing was built as a complete community with associated schools, shops and open space. Consequently it is uniform in character. Material use is more varied and design, borrows aspects of the Arts and Crafts period with hanging tiles and exposed timber detailing

Key Characteristics

- Informal layout
- Detached and semi-detached dwellings
- Road network contorted
- Inter war and Post war house designs
- Character Areas -Mill Grove and Binstead Estates



Public Realm Considerations

- Footways and streets tend to be wider with irregular building lines and set backs
- Some areas of grass within streets occur as either irregular greens or as roadside margins, some with trees
- In some roadside margins replacement tree planting would enhance character
- Kerbs are generally precast concrete
- Boundaries vary with some off-street parking forecourts



Southfield Gardens



Mayfield Road



Westfield Park 1960s/1970s infill development

Post 1960's Housing Cul-de-sac

Building form is mixed detached and linked semi-detached housing of post 1960's style development. Plots are large and open planned. Layouts are informal with loop roads and cul-de-sacs.

Key Characteristics

- Low density development
- Open fronts to gardens
- On plot parking
- Cul-de-sac layouts within later 1970s layouts and within areas of infill development



Public Realm Considerations

- Streets tend to be wider with irregular building lines and set backs
- Some areas have roadside grass margins and planting tends to be ornamental
- Kerbs are generally precast concrete and footways are macadam



Brookfield Gardens



Buckland Gardens



Marina Avenue

Suburban Village

This area consists of three settlements that have been swallowed up in the expansion of Ryde. The villages of Binstead, Haylands and Swanmore originate from Victorian times but the growth of Ryde during the Edwardian Period overtook both settlements and they are now suburbs of Ryde. There have been successive periods of development around both suburban villages, so that the area has a very mixed character.

Key Characteristics

- Hill top village clustered around St Michaels Church
- Short front gardens
- Tight and compact
- Local brick and rough cast render



Public Realm Considerations

- Streets possess distinctive enclosed character, with narrow footways
- Kerbs are generally precast concrete and footways are macadam
- Boundaries vary with some loss of gardens to create off-street parking forecourts



Binstead Village



St Michael's Avenue

Part 3 – The Public Realm Framework

This section sets out the context and aims of the Public Realm Strategy, both for the town as a whole and also the schematic objectives for the distinct urban quarters within Ryde town centre and Ryde Esplanade.

The Public Realm Strategy is one of a number of “Pride in Ryde” SRB funded initiatives being implemented in Ryde. The aim is to combine physical improvements with economic and cultural development and social inclusion programmes, to ensure that Ryde fulfils its potential as one of the major centres and gateways to the Isle of Wight. The strategy’s role must be to create the attractive and vibrant public realm setting against which key commercial and cultural initiatives such as the creation of an arts quarter in Union Street and the re-use of St Thomas Church, can grow and flourish. Opportunity exists to extend the tourist interest in unusual attractions including the Globe Museum, located at Bravinger’s Arcade, which also connects to Union Road to the rear of Union Street.

The strategy has been developed in close consultation with key stakeholders and has been designed to respond to the key issues, opportunities and aspirations identified, by providing a unifying context for Ryde’s built environment, setting out cohesive design guidelines and applying a set of common standards to streetscape details, which will combine with the town’s many high quality, visually complementary natural features, to create clarity and harmony in the public realm.

It shows how the strategy should be used both to enhance the town’s distinctive existing public realm features and also to take advantage of opportunities to extend its approach in new development.



Ryde Carnival



St Thomas's Church



Globe Museum



Other central requirements that have been explored and responded to, in consultation with key stakeholders include:

- ❑ Security and safety
- ❑ A better balance between pedestrians and traffic
- ❑ Resolving parking issues
- ❑ Quality play, open community, respite and refuge spaces
- ❑ Enhancing the setting of shop fronts and public buildings
- ❑ Improved signage
- ❑ Effective lighting and CCTV
- ❑ Improved links to the High Street and Union Street
- ❑ Opportunities for public art
- ❑ Using development space
- ❑ Cost-effective maintenance



Street furniture colour



Outdated equipment

When implemented the strategy should make a real contribution to improving the Ryde “experience” for people living and working in and visiting the town, as well as facilitating new enterprise, economic regeneration and social inclusion.



Street furniture clutter



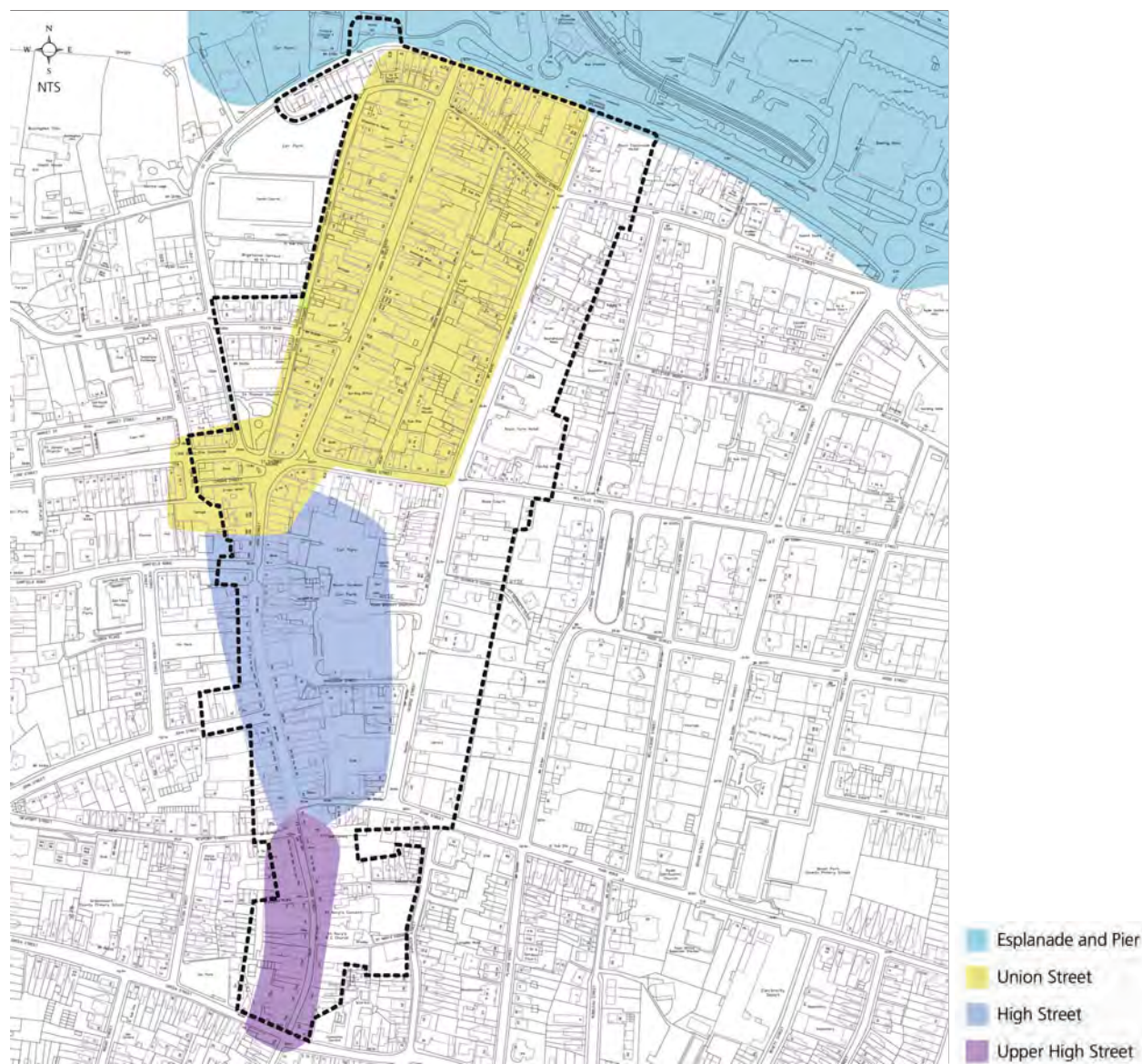
Retain historic street furniture

Urban Quarters

It was generally agreed during the consultation workshops in May 2004, that it is useful to think of Ryde town centre as a series of distinct urban quarters each with its own physical, social and economic characteristics and its own opportunities for improvement. These are:

- ❑ The Upper High Street
- ❑ The High Street
- ❑ Union Street and St. Thomas's Square
- ❑ Ryde Esplanade (subject of the previous study, Ryde Esplanade Comprehensive Development and Improvement Plan).

Enhancing the public realm in these four areas forms the basis of this strategy and should be the priority for early implementation. However, supporting initiatives for the surrounding areas are also set out and can be implemented as funds become available. The individual sites are referenced on Strategy Plans 1 to 3 and a detailed description of issues and opportunities relating to each site is set out in Appendix A



The Town Centre

Key Buildings

Wherever possible the setting of key buildings identified as part of the Townscape Heritage Initiative study should be included within public realm proposals for key spaces and within street works as projects emerge. They include:

- Victoria Hotel, St. Thomas's Street
- Royal Squadron Hotel, Union Street
- Victoria Arcade, Union Street
- Roundhouse Hotel, George Street
- Vectis Hall, Melville Street
- Duffetts Mill, High Street
- St. Thomas's Church, St. Thomas's Street
- Town Hall, High Street

Key Spaces

The following spaces illustrated in Strategy Drawings 1 and 2, Figures 3.2 and 3.3, were identified as initial priorities in improving the public realm in Ryde to enhance quality, experience and connections to principal spaces:



Duffetts Mill



Vectis Hall



St. Thomas's Church



Victoria Arcade



Royal Squadron Hotel



Town Hall

The Upper High Street (Green Street to Star Street)

This section of the High Street possesses a variety of retail outlets, many of a specialist nature with some residential land use interspersed, creating a mix of uses and good levels of activity. The street is contained in spatial terms with narrow pedestrian footways and mainly two storey buildings. Footfall is reasonably high and the users are predominantly residents. In general the condition of the environment is fair, but pedestrian accessibility is the main issue. Throughout this section the footways are very narrow and obstructed by street furniture in places, making it difficult for wheelchair and pushchair users to negotiate. Proposals for this section include footway widening, although this will require some reconfiguration of carriageway levels to resolve levels and avoid an exaggerated 'gull-wing' arrangement and back falls on the footways which might adversely affect buildings. Traffic calming measures to side road entries would improve the pedestrian environment. New lighting and street furniture within this stretch of the High Street would be contemporary in design limited to essential equipment only due to the tight nature of the street.

The High Street (Star Street to St Thomas's Square)

This section of the High Street has changed considerably in recent years with an increase in the number of well known high street shops. A number of outlets including Somerfield supermarket which adjoins the High Street, are connected by alleys and informal spaces. The High Street itself is contained with predominantly two/three storey continuous street frontage. The public realm environment is tired and in pressing need of upgrading to improve the shopping experience for both local people and visitors. At present it is unclear to pedestrians and vehicle drivers, whether the High Street is wholly pedestrianised. A clear stipulation for access and servicing of the units along the pedestrianised section of the street is needed. Within the section of the High Street which is not pedestrianised, there is an

opportunity to reduce the dominance of through traffic and improve connections and accessibility north-south for pedestrians. It is also important to encourage more visitors to venture further uphill into the High Street area. New areas for outdoor eating, not only throughout the pedestrianised section of the High Street, but also on widened footways and within some of the adjoining alleys and spaces would create diversity and increase the street life.

It is proposed that the High Street is resurfaced and equipped with new contemporary street furniture and lighting. The design of the space should be flexible to allow for temporary use of the street for outdoor eating, extending the potential for shoppers to spend more time there. A principal element of the scheme should be the restriction of traffic, loading and servicing to certain hours to reinforce the role of this street as a pedestrian haven. Consideration will need to be given to design elements and avoiding street clutter as deliveries must be allowed for and the street is used seasonally for Ryde Carnival. Access for buses will be maintained through the lower section of the High Street, From St. Thomas's Square to Garfield Road. From Garfield Road to Star Street, delivery times will be restricted to certain hours to reinforce the pedestrian environment. The progression of this scheme will require agreement of the business community and local residents.

The possibility of upgrading the current "square" off Anglesea Street to accommodate family space as well as retaining the market square potential should also be explored.



Chertsey, Surrey, an example of footway widening, design principles which could be applied in The Upper High Street



Colchester High Street and Market - An example of natural Stone used within a historic Shopping Centre

Union Street and St. Thomas's Square

The principal design intention for St Thomas's Square should be to create an attractive and active space which connects Union Street and the High Street and encourages visitors to venture beyond the top of the former and into the latter. In general the vehicle routes should be traffic calmed with raised tables to create a seamless pedestrian environment. Integrating St Thomas's Churchyard and connections to the former Town Hall (Ryde Theatre) with this space will be a key consideration. To further improve pedestrian movement, Crown Street should be pedestrianised with restricted vehicle movement. In the longer term there may be opportunities to reconsider the role of the Bank situated within the centre of this key space.

Union Street is the part of the town centre where most visitor activity in Ryde Town Centre is concentrated. The types of shops, bars and restaurants reflect this, with more tourist focused business. The scale of the street is greater, with three storeys plus and key buildings such as Victoria Arcade. The consultation process considered the potential to develop the tourism offer by reinforcing the existing arts presence with an Arts Quarter centred on the Union Street area. In terms of the public realm the existing quality is good, if a bit dated. There are opportunities for improvements to the pedestrian environment and rationalisation of car parking and loading.

It is however recommended that the mixed circulation of the street for pedestrians and vehicles is maintained. In the longer term it is proposed that the carriageway capacity is reconsidered to determine whether there is potential to widen footways generally. In places it is suggested that build-outs are created to accommodate outdoor seating and permanent benches. Rationalising parking and loading bays would do a lot to improve the quality of the environment and establish the pedestrian priority within the street. Raised crossings will contribute towards traffic calming measures and improve accessibility generally. In the longer term it is suggested that footways are repaved with larger unit natural stone paving to complement the plethora of Listed Buildings within this striking street.

Creating better links from St Thomas's Street car parks through the Royal Victoria Arcade as part of comprehensive shop front conservation programme and also from Union Road to Union Street, should be explored as a priority.

Links and Alleys

The series of spaces adjoining the High Street could be improved for use as active outdoor spaces. Many of these spaces are adjoined by public houses, cafés and restaurants and with some collaboration, there is potential to create a vibrant series of spaces which reflect the character of Brighton's Lanes district. Creating different types of spaces offering outdoor eating will encourage longer stays within the town centre.

New Development

There are many small to medium sized development sites around the town centre which offer opportunities to create new links to the key spaces such as Union Street and the High Street. New east-west links should be encouraged as part of mixed use developments. Public realm design for these links should be in accordance with the general design guidance. Improvements to the lanes and adjoining spaces surrounding the town centre should also automatically be built into proposals for developments in those areas.



Chepstow - White Lion Square, high quality pedestrian environment



Active alleys, Brighton



Somerset House fountains - a summertime waterfront attraction within key spaces

Redevelopment of Existing Buildings

Buildings which have the potential to be redeveloped to house new attractions have been identified. These are generally located close to Union Street or the High Street and therefore proposals should reflect the initiative to promote the Arts within Union Street and to diversify the shopping experience within the High Street

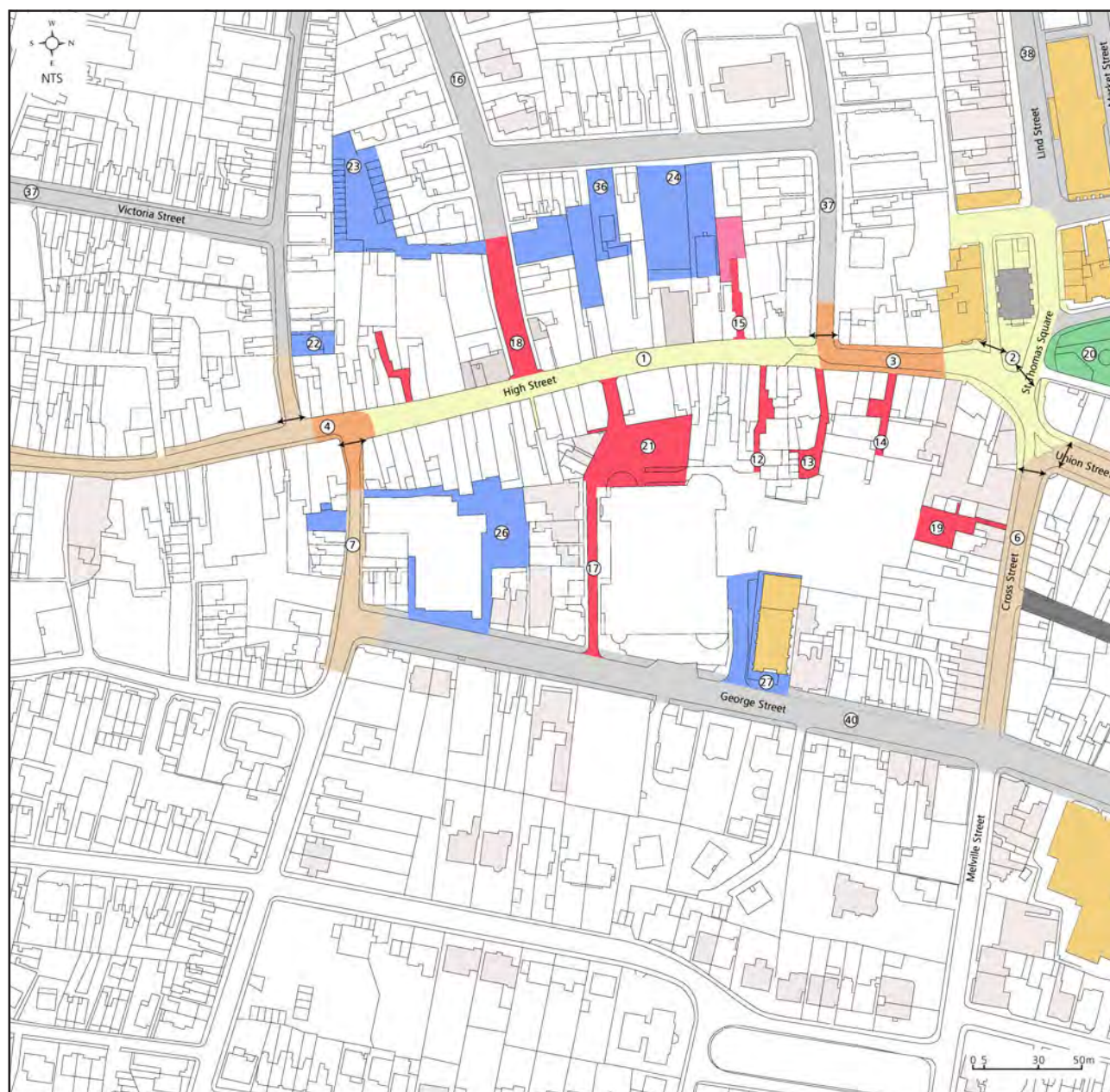
Green Spaces

These include St. Thomas's Church Yard, Western and Eastern Gardens and the environs of the Boating Lake. Designs for these spaces require detailed consideration in terms of their potential use and the development of appropriate detailed designs. However the overall approach must be to recognise their importance and ensure that they are handled with care, restoring historic features and improving their integrity with appropriate improvements. New tree planting which reflects the character of vegetation in this coastal location should be considered. A common approach to paving and street furniture will reflect the palettes to be adopted for either the town centre or Esplanade locations. Where there is the potential to include new kiosks or attractions within these spaces the design of these elements should be considered carefully.

Although outside the town centre, the restoration of St Johns Park should be considered an important part of the town's park programme with a formalizing of the current ad-hoc public access arrangement. The creation of a network of open spaces throughout the town and beyond should also be part of the longer term strategy.



Western Gardens could be extended to create a focal events space connecting the Esplanade to the Town Centre





- Key spaces which have been identified as a priority for improvement
- Priority traffic calming links to improve north south pedestrian movement
- Traffic calming and environmental improvements to include footway widening, formalising car parking and loading and provision of additional informal pedestrian crossings
- Rear lanes which could be improved with simple carriageway treatment and threshold detailing to rear courtyard development
- Longer term environmental improvements to be carried out in accordance with the design guidelines
- New links/direct crossing points
- Buildings**
 - Listed buildings
 - Landmark buildings
 - Buildings with opportunity to develop as a resource for arts tourism or to create new links through the street blocks
- Sites/Other spaces**
 - Opportunity sites which could be improved, with/without associated development
 - Open spaces which could be enhanced to provide additional uses/improved environmental quality
 - Courtyards and alleys connecting to car parks and potential development sites which could be improved with new surfaces, street furniture, lighting, and signage
- Potential to develop part of car park site to generate more activity within rear lanes.

Note: For detailed site description see Appendix A.

Ryde Esplanade

The Esplanade does not relate well to Ryde town centre, principally in terms of access and connections to and from the Ryde Interchange, an arrival point for both island residents and visitors. Additionally east-west access along the Esplanade, is not direct and is impeded by barriers such as the rail line and the disjointed nature of the waterfront route. The proposed approach for the Esplanade is summarised below. Detailed design considerations can be found in Part 5.

Ryde Interchange and Arrival Space

Ryde Interchange is being taken forward with an open architectural design competition for the new building. The design of the area should be considered in the context of the initial experience of the island. The site and surrounding area should be designed as a whole, ensuring a seamless public realm which improves accessibility to the town centre and along the Esplanade.

Traffic Calming and Environmental Improvements

It is difficult to cross between the waterfront and the town centre along the entire Esplanade. Widened footways and reduced carriageway widths are needed, especially at the junction of Union Street and the Esplanade. Proposals should also include wide crossings and encouraging the creation of outdoor eating areas by existing hotels, restaurants and cafes on the Esplanade. Street furniture should reflect equipment chosen in the town centre, taking into account the different colour used for the waterfront promenade along the Esplanade.

Opportunity Sites and Development Areas

Redevelopment and renewal of leases for current concessions should consider potential to introduce high quality new development at strategic waterfront sites, for example opposite the harbour and within the car park.

Green Spaces

Open spaces include Western Gardens, Eastern Gardens and The Boating Lake Area. Western Gardens has potential for improvement to incorporate an events space close to both the town centre and Ryde Interchange. It would also be possible to gain space from the carriageway to help to create a larger multi-functioning space.

Eastern Gardens has retained a lot of its character and offers a second waterfront park area. Some features within the gardens have become outdated/redundant and works in this space should also explore the potential to improve the waterside promenade. New tree planting and environmental improvements to the boundary of the gardens would reinforce the landscape structure. Proposals in Part 5 illustrate a contemporary approach with contemporary lighting and seating along the harbour side.

Ryde Boating Lake, subject of a separate study, offers the potential to provide a sheltered retreat from the waterfront. Its enclosed character and location could accommodate a series of well managed all-weather activities, including, play areas, a new café to complement the existing swimming pool facilities.

Keys spaces in Need of Improvement

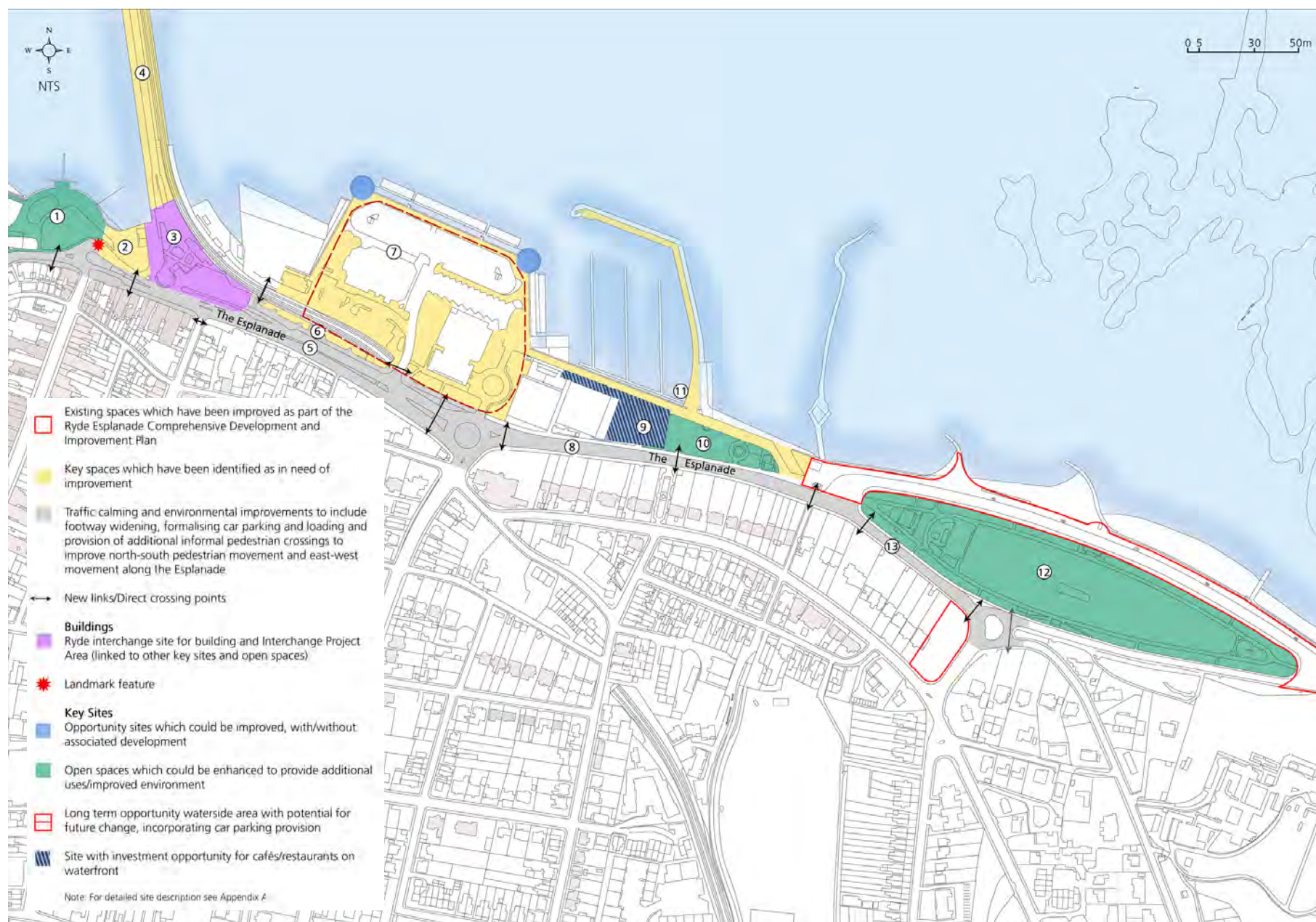
At North Walk, new public realm works have recently been completed which improve the pedestrian walk, raising the levels to allow views over the sea wall, removing old shelters and providing rationalised car parking and traffic calming measures.

The public realm in other areas of the Esplanade is still somewhat disjointed in areas and has been considered in more detail in the previous study, 'Ryde Comprehensive Development and Improvement Plan'. In general the

aims and objectives of that study remain relevant and the following principles are reiterated:

- ❑ Opportunity to vary the waterside experience and views of the Solent
- ❑ Create a continuous direct route along the Esplanade incorporating environmental improvements
- ❑ Rationalise paving and street furniture and lighting
- ❑ Improve links to the town centre
- ❑ Explore opportunity to insert new development/ attractions along the Esplanade waterside route

Individual project areas have been included from the previous study and are numbered on the proposal plan. In depth analysis of the sites was undertaken as part of the previous study and therefore the proposals have been summarised in the Appendix under Ryde Esplanade.



Wider Projects for Ryde

Traffic Calming

This will include widening of footways in main thoroughfares to improve the pedestrian environment and accessibility, traffic calming measures such as side road headway tables and speed tables within the carriageway at informal crossing points.

Wider Environmental Improvements

Within more outlying areas of the town centre it is suggested that the approach adopted for the key spaces should be in accordance with the general guidance for Ryde as a whole, with the use of natural stone or concrete paving. Significant development sites which may provide opportunities to enhance the public realm and create links around the town include Ryde Transport Interchange, Ashey Road Housing Site, Oakfield Housing Site, Great Preston Road Industrial Site and Westridge Site, designated for employment and recreation but now being developed as partly housing.

Signage and information

A comprehensive signage network to welcome visitors to the town and guide them to all amenities should be created. The network should include signposting from the ferry terminal at Fishbourne.

Town Trails based on Ryde's history, characters and events should also be developed supported by the signage network and pedestrian guides.

Pedestrian and cycle links with the surrounding area
Further development of the coast and countryside
pedestrian and cycle routes should be linked with the creation of a network around the town centre to connect all parts of Ryde with the rest of the Island.

Part 4 Design Guidance

This section outlines the general design guidance objectives and then considers common elements of the streetscape in turn, providing guidance, for example on the location and choice of street furniture. More detailed guidance on individual streetscape elements follows.

Technical sheets have been prepared where appropriate as a means of providing easy reference to agreed standard items, to avoid the specification of many different styles of elements such as seats, litterbins and bollards.

The guidance is not intended to be prescriptive but rather to promote consistency in the approach to each element. Full account has been taken of best practice guidance including:

- Streets for All - a London Streetscape Manual (English Heritage 2000). This guide to the management of London's streets shows how to solve common highway problems and reduce clutter, co-ordinate design and reinforce local character. Although the guide relates solely to London, the principles of good practice are applicable universally.
- Paving the Way – how we achieve clean, safe and attractive streets (CABE 2002). This sets out an agenda to create better designed, better managed streets, which satisfy the needs of all who use them.

A series of aims have been identified to enhance the public realm:

- Improve pedestrian crossing, ensuring they are direct wherever possible
- Promote pedestrian movement between the Esplanade and town centre
- Promote pedestrian movement between Union Street and the High Street and Upper High Street to the south
- Promote movement east-west through the street blocks, especially to/from the High Street and Union Street
- Implement new works in accordance with the design guidance and illustrative proposals
- Where appropriate, rationalise the car parking and loading, reconsidering access to pedestrianised areas



*Far Left: Paving the Way
Left: Streets for all*

Overarching Objectives

The principal overarching considerations in the design of the public realm in Ryde are:

- Respecting the architectural and historic character of Ryde
- Reducing the impact of street clutter
- Designing safe and welcoming environments
- Improving pedestrian accessibility
- Ensuring safe and appropriate traffic circulation

Respecting the Architectural and Historic Character of Ryde

Earlier sections of this strategy have set out the nature of Ryde's development into a thriving retail, commercial and cultural centre. Any works in the public realm should set out to respect rather than to conflict with the rich heritage of Ryde's townscape. Natural methods should be used wherever possible and practicable. The setting of key buildings should be both respected and highlighted.

Particular attention should be given to public realm works in the Conservation Area as they will affect the wider physical improvements to the historic building stock that will take place as part of the Townscape Heritage Initiative investment.

Reducing the Impact of Street Clutter

All works in the public realm should seek to restrict street furniture and signage to the minimum level necessary for pedestrian convenience and legislative requirements. Excessive or uncoordinated street furniture can often conflict with the historic character of an area and compete with its importance.



Forum Waterfront, Barcelona



The Strand London



Co-ordinated street furniture proposed for Ryde Esplanade



Traffic sign finished

Reducing street furniture within narrow streets will improve accessibility generally. Combining sign poles and traffic lights with lamp columns reduces the amount of equipment required. There are already examples within Ryde where this approach has been taken to positive effect.

There may be instances where an audit of existing street furniture reveals items which are no longer required, need replacing or are simply superfluous. Wherever possible reducing the requirement for street furniture, signage or traffic management equipment should always be considered.

The treatment of street furniture colour will be consistent throughout Ryde, except for Ryde Esplanade where new street furniture will continue to be specified using a similar or the same street furniture, finished in RAL colour 5009.

Extending the colour used on the Esplanade through the town was considered, but it was felt to be inappropriate to the Conservation Area of the town centre. Instead the same or contemporary style of street furniture will be used, but finished in black. Stainless steel street furniture finishes should be kept to a minimum, although it does not preclude the use of stainless steel or other contemporary finishes for special designs within high profile spaces.

Extending the black finish to other street furniture equipment, such as signs, traffic lights, CCTV equipment can create a seamless effect in terms of the appearance of all equipment employed in the streetscene. Signs plate can be supplied with their rear faces finished in black, further reducing the intrusive nature of the equipment when viewed from behind.

Designing Safe and Welcoming Environments

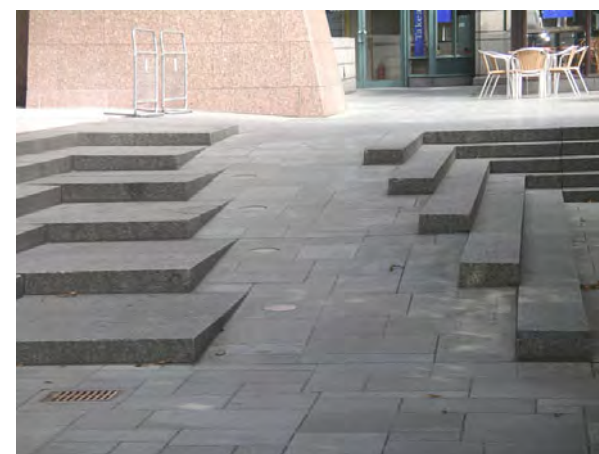
There are many ways in which the design of the public realm can reduce crime. It should be noted however that it also requires the design of associated development to provide good levels of natural surveillance of public realm areas. Good surveillance is achieved by locating active uses such as cafés and also housing so that windows and doors adjoin public spaces. The activity generated then provides a level of continuous surveillance of spaces. In Ryde the street pattern is generally continuous building frontage adjoining street spaces which works well to promote clearly defined public and private spaces. There are spaces which could be improved with a combination of new development, and public realm improvements. Small-scale changes such as kiosks or introducing outdoor eating areas which attract people, can provide a means of surveying and in some cases managing facilities such as toilets. There are several potential development



Ramps and steps at St. Pauls Walk



Street Clutter in St Thomas's Square



Steps and ramps Royal Exchange Square, London

sites which adjoin proposed new pedestrian links and it is therefore important that the new developments promote good natural surveillance with active frontages.

In terms of design of public realm spaces, ways in which the choice of streetscape elements could promote a safe environment include:

- Choosing street furniture or equipment which discourages fly-posting, graffiti and other anti-social behaviour
- Reducing street clutter will improve lines of visibility and a better sense of security
- White light sources improve CCTV imagery
- Specifying soft landscape, such as trees and large shrubs should consider the eventual size and need for maintenance in areas close to pedestrian routes

Improving Pedestrian Accessibility

Increasingly accessibility is becoming central to the design process as it has benefits for all members of the community. Designing for those with specific needs should be considered in all aspects of the public realm. The Disability Discrimination Act, or DDA95, requires premises accessible to the public to incorporate features which overcome physical barriers. In terms of Building Regulations, Document M, 2004, provide guidance and is relevant when considering access into a building from the edge of a site and disabled parking facilities. In terms of the public realm consideration needs to be given to changes in level, creating unobstructed thoroughfares and positioning of street furniture to avoid creating new obstructions in the streetscape. Much can be done to improve accessibility in Ryde simply by prioritising the pedestrian and facilitating better movement generally across streets and between the town centre and the Esplanade.



Outdoor eating area, Yelf's courtyard, Ryde

Ryde is built on a hillside and the issues relating to accessibility need to be carefully considered within the site limitations. Accommodating changes in level will be necessary when specifying seating and equipment to ensure that equipment is sited on localised level areas. In some instances it may be more appropriate to specify a single seat, rather than benches, such as those illustrated within the alternative contemporary street furniture ranges at the end of this section. On site such as St Thomas's it may be appropriate to consider combined step and ramp design solutions as illustrated opposite, to accommodate level changes across open spaces.

Ensuring Safe and Appropriate Traffic Circulation
Traffic circulation has a major impact on both economic vitality in the town centre and the attractiveness or otherwise of the local environment to pedestrians. This public realm strategy does not directly address traffic management systems in the town. However, in pursuing any traffic management proposals in general and in the Conservation Area in particular the overarching objectives above will be applied in the detailed design of any

proposals. Key to this will be to ensure that the architectural and historic character of Ryde is reflected in the scheme's design and the appropriate use of materials. Consideration will also be given to improving accessibility into the town centre for public transport, cyclists and pedestrians.

Key to this process will be the sensitive incorporation of the Transport Interchange Project and associated traffic measures on the Esplanade into the local traffic network and streetscene. It will be expected that the design of the Interchange relates to this Public Realm Strategy



Outdoor eating, London

Detailed Guidance

Paving and Surfaces

A key objective should be to rationalise the use of paving materials for all new projects. Some general design principles include:

- ❑ Paving should be designed with consideration for English Heritage's streetscape manual 'Street for All'.
- ❑ Throughout the town centre the design of the paving should be such that cross falls and long falls are easy to negotiate, and provide consistency.
- ❑ Use of a single sized paving slab, whether it is pre-cast concrete or natural stone unit.
- ❑ Natural stone paving is used in areas with historic or key buildings of stature.
- ❑ Pre-cast concrete should be adopted as a standard paving material within other parts of the town centre.
- ❑ Bound gravel or exposed aggregate concrete finishes should continue to be used within the waterside Esplanade pedestrian routes where it has been used previously.

Materials

Natural stone should be used in key spaces such as Ryde Interchange Arrival space, St. Thomas's Square and within the High Street. It is suggested that a limited palette is adopted and that it reflects the historic paving which still exists in many side roads.

The design of new pavements in key sites, particularly around key buildings as outlined in the Townscape Heritage Initiative Study, should aim to reintroduce



Natural stone paving is used in many contemporary schemes

appropriate traditional natural stone details. It is therefore suggested that Portland Stone be used where possible, reclaiming existing pavements and kerbs.

It is recommended that a single choice is adopted for the natural stone paving.

Where kerbs are concerned, trieff kerbs should not be used, except in exceptional circumstances, as they tend to be incongruous with the street scene.

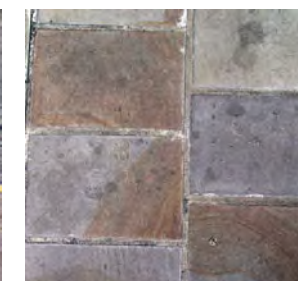
It is however appropriate to consider using raised bus stop kerbs where footways are wide enough to achieve the required level changes. This would promote accessibility of buses.



Limestone details, Ryde



Raised Bus Stop Kerbs



Natural Yorkstone paving

Bound gravel should be used along the Esplanade where appropriate, matching the hue and texture of the exposed aggregate concrete finish, recently used in the Boating Lake Area. Water permeable resin bonded gravels should also be used for tree pit details.

Paving Sizes

A standard paving unit size should be adopted for either natural stone or pre-cast concrete paving. Use of smaller unit paving, 400 x 400mm or 100 x 200mm units should be phased out in the longer term. It may be appropriate to re-use some paving units in the short term, to promote sustainable use of materials. Mesh reinforced concrete slabs are available and as such their size should be considered when deciding the design sizes for larger unit paving in order to obtain consistency across the paved footway.

In general paving should not be cut to lengths of less than 300mm and the minimum offsets for joints should be 150mm. To achieve these tolerances, it may be necessary to introduce additional cuts and these aspects should be considered at the detailed design stage. In terms of the depth of paving slabs, standard sizes (50-65mm) should only be used in areas where vehicle over-run is not going to occur. Whether natural stone or pre-cast concrete paving is to be used, chamfered paving should not be used, instead use flush edge paving.

Salvaging Materials

Wherever possible historic limestone paving and kerbs should be retained and recycled. An effective example of this approach can be found on Ryde Esplanade where the original limestone kerb stones have been retained as design details within the overall scheme.



Resin-bonded gravel used at Streatham Green



Limestone kerbs re-used as edge detail within promenade at North Walk



Concrete paving



Portland or Purbeck Limestone

Maintenance

It is essential that reinstatement works are inspected to ensure that works carried out by statutory undertakers are monitored. Poorly patched materials can create problems such as trip hazards and diminished accessibility.

As most contracts within the Isle of Wight are let to contractors, advice on the cleansing and maintenance regimes should always form part of the design proposals. The New Road and Street Works Act, 1992, requires that reinstatement of footways and carriageways match existing materials. Interim repairs can be made in a different material; but these must be made good within six months. The Act sets out a code of practice for the specification and longevity of reinstatement works.

Simplifying the palette of paving will reduce costs and in the longer term will enable more rapid ordering and storage where possible of a single material.

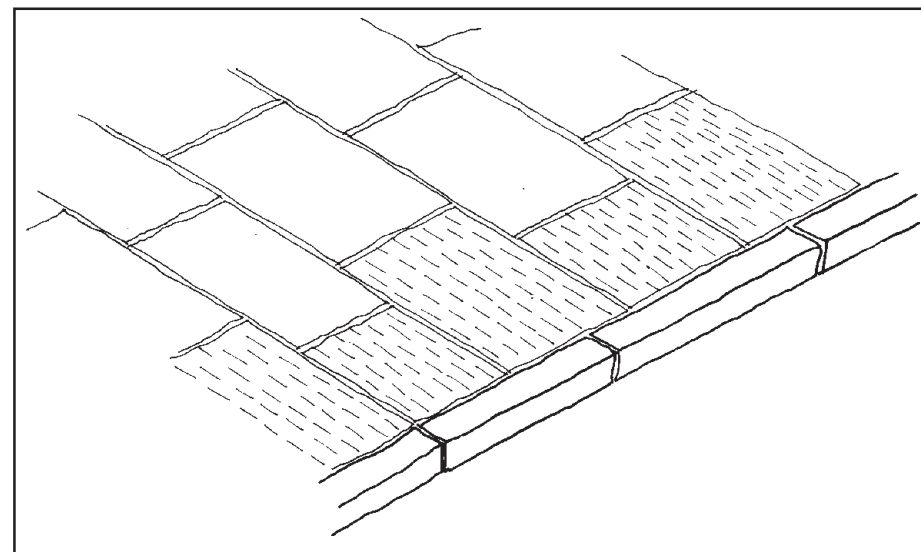
Vehicle Over-Run

Enforcement of pavement parking regulations is the best way of controlling repeated overrunning of footways. Unfortunately, this is not always achievable and it is, therefore, essential to consider the detail design of paving within 500-600mm of the kerb. Reinforced footway construction is preferable to introducing bollards or other street furniture as a parking deterrent. The following approaches could be adopted in the pavement construction to contribute towards a vehicle resistance:

- Mesh reinforced pre-cast concrete slabs set on a concrete bedding
- A mesh reinforced bedding which may not be achievable within areas which contain a lot of underground services
- Use of thicker natural stone paving slabs, generally in excess of 75mm, but advice should be sought from suppliers



Reinstatement of original paving needed



Use of reinforced slabs can reduce potential for breakage with vehicle overrun

Private Accesses, Forecourts and Underground Cellars/Voids

The treatment of private vehicle accesses with legal rights to cross the footway can be treated in the two ways illustrated below:

Whichever solution is chosen, or dictated by the location, pedestrian accessibility must be catered for with drop kerbs or a level walking surface.

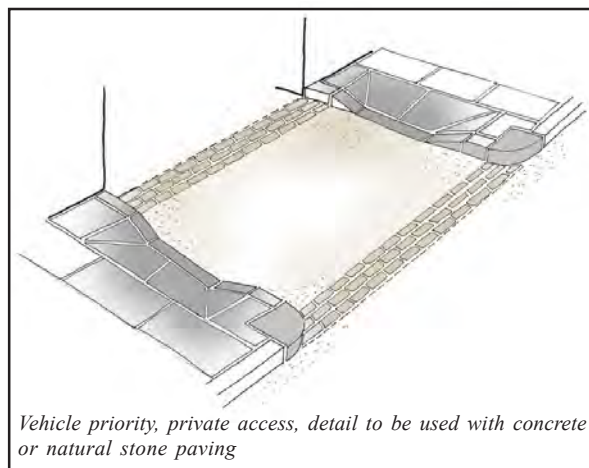
Private forecourts do not appear to be a common feature in Ryde town centre; but land ownership plans should always be consulted to determine the highway boundary. Where there is an opportunity to improve a forecourt area, paving it with the same material as the footway creates a consistent finish. Negotiations and approval will be required from the land owner.

In areas with cellars and underground voids it is essential that access is made available to survey their extent. When implementing a scheme it is also important that a cellar condition survey is carried out to record the condition of underground structures in the vicinity, before works begin.

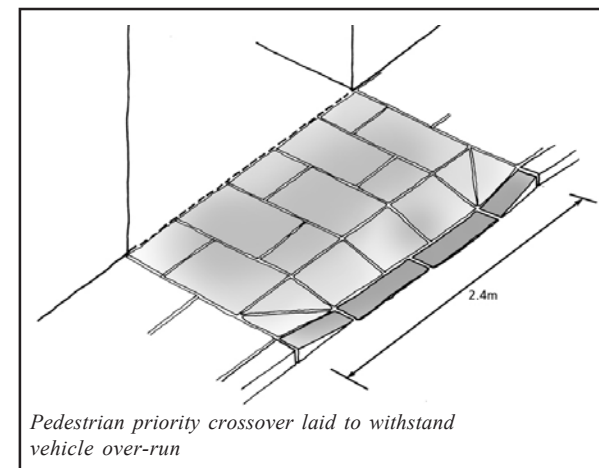
Traffic islands and Pedestrian Crossings

Traffic islands or extended central median strips should be paved in split granite setts. A paved central median should be used in preference to guard railing and often enables pedestrians crossing the street informally, to do so safely.

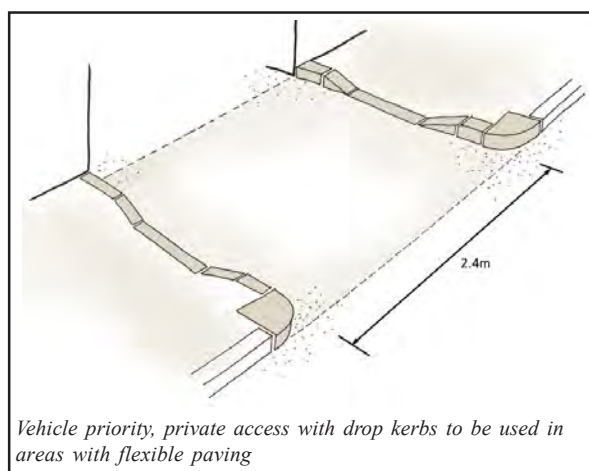
Pedestrian crossing configurations should always be straight in preference to staggered crossings. In Ryde, this should nearly always be achievable as roads are generally narrow. The pedestrian refuge areas should be paved in the same material as footways and crossing should include tactile paving.



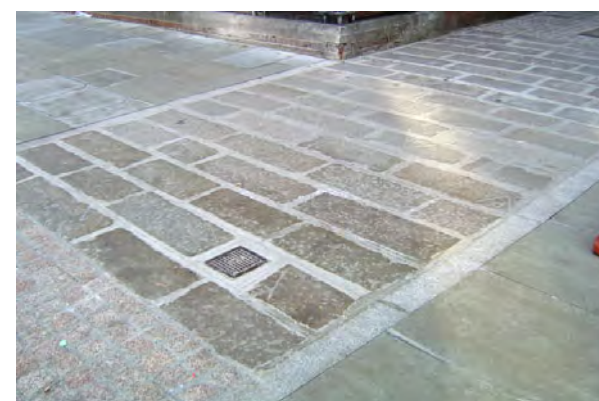
Vehicle priority, private access, detail to be used with concrete or natural stone paving



Pedestrian priority crossover laid to withstand vehicle over-run



Vehicle priority, private access with drop kerbs to be used in areas with flexible paving



Private access paved in granite kerb, Streatham, London

Footway Corners

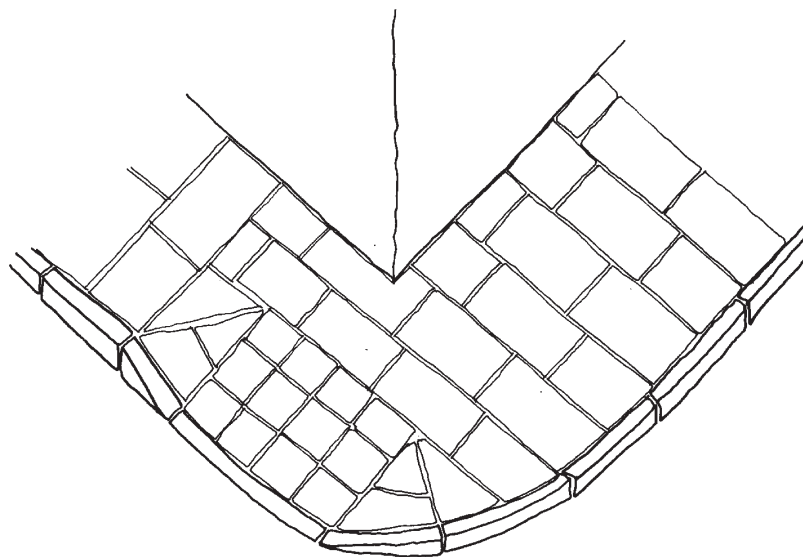
Paving patterns around footway corners should follow the direction set out on the principal street. The design of the street corner should consider requirements for side road entry treatments, tactile paving and drop kerbs. For changes in materials - from natural stone on the principal route to concrete paving on the side road, for instance - transitions should be seamless, with no details to draw attention to the change in surfaces.

Side Road Headway Treatments

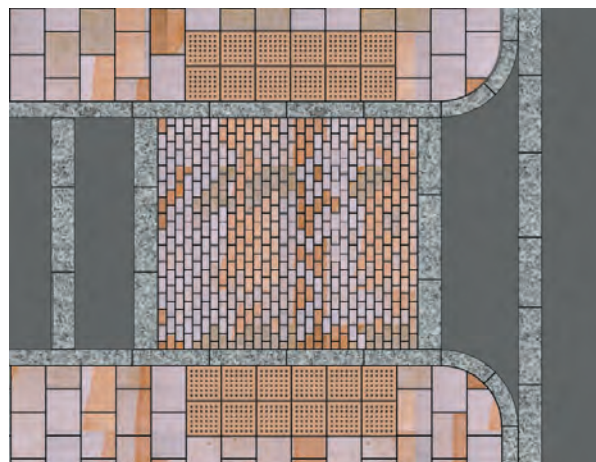
As things stand, traffic calming and side road entry treatments vary considerably throughout Ryde. From now on the aim should be to ensure that new traffic calming works are more seamlessly integrated with the wider public realm, so that there are no abrupt transitions in paving material, level changes and kerb lines. Wherever possible pedestrian walking surfaces should be paved in a block, possibly a natural stone or granite setts where natural stone has been adopted for footways. Ramps should be finished in macadam to match carriageways as this withstands heavy vehicle traffic.

Footway Widening, Levels and Drainage

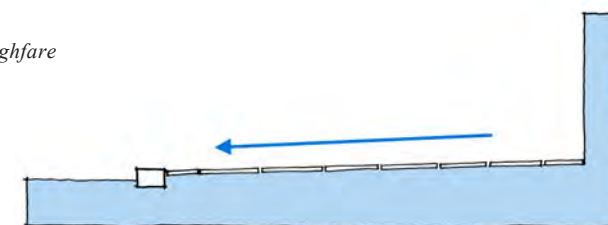
Cross falls on footways should be at a gradient of 1:40, although the background gradients in areas of Ryde are often much steeper. Falls should be directed away from buildings or to a central flat drainage channel. Back falls to building lines should be avoided, and where possible reconstruction of carriageway levels to achieve falls may need to be considered. One such example is the Upper High Street, between Star Street and Green Street, where carriageway levels will need to be reduced to achieve footway widening.



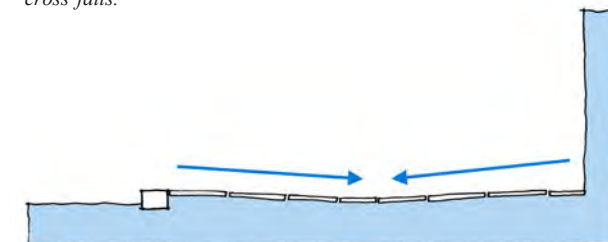
Footway corner - Paving pattern should follow through main throughfare



Side Road entry treatment with paved crossing



Footways should fall to the kerb-side at a cross fall gradient of 1:40 wherever possible. Where cost is not prohibitive potential to locally reduce carriageway levels should be considered to achieve cross falls.



Gull-wing drainage layouts should fall to a centrally located 300mm wide flat channel.

Tactile Paving

Many recent schemes have used natural stone tactiles rather than the more usual red/buff, in areas where natural stone paving has been adopted as the design approach. Experience has shown that the conventional approach is actually of little visual benefit in the dark or inclement weather conditions for which they are predominantly designed. It is suggested that this approach should be pursued in Ryde. In areas where pre-cast concrete paving is proposed a grey tactile slab, 400 x 400 x 63mm should be used. All tactile paving should be in accordance with DfT standards.

Utility Covers

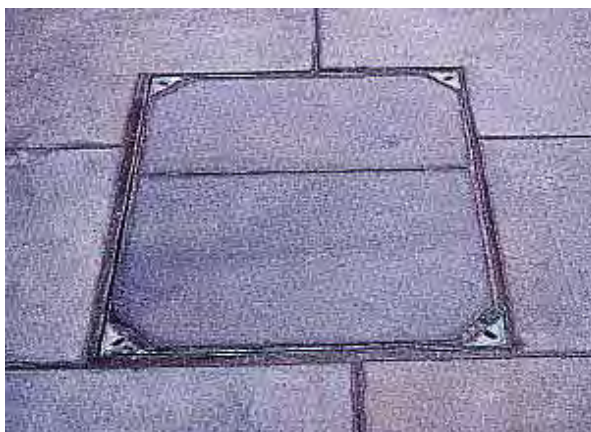
Where budgets allow for new schemes, recessed covers provide a way to create continuity in the paving. One benefit of simplifying paving material choices is that there is less chance that recessed covers are returned to inspection chambers with misaligned paving patterns after inspection.

Carriageways and Channels.

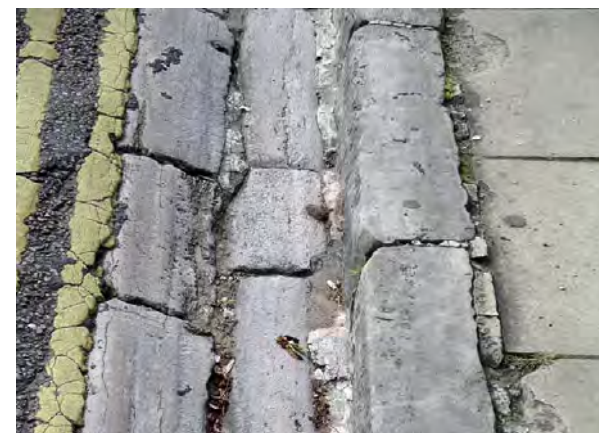
A number of streets in Ryde have natural stone kerbs and channels and this traditional detail should be incorporated in works within these areas. In other streets a 300mm chip free channel should continue to be used. Surfacing for carriageways should match the existing and a single approach continue to be used throughout Ryde.



Natural stone tactile paving



Recessed covers



Gully Detail

Street Furniture

Simplicity should be central to the approach for street furniture. Avoiding a visually cluttered environment is paramount, not least because it will ensure that spaces remain flexible for alternative use such as Ryde Carnival and other seasonal events. During the consultation process it was agreed that a single contemporary approach to street furniture should be adopted. Black was the preferred colour choice.

The style of street furniture should be understated, simple and contemporary. It would not be appropriate to reflect a particular historic era, as part of the great charm of Ryde is its rich mix of buildings from different periods.

Even with black furniture, paint and colour finishes do vary enormously and it is therefore suggested that two approaches are considered before making a final selection for the street furniture palette. These are:

A completely new start - introducing a system of street furniture which is coordinated in terms of both components and finish. This would be the preferred solution for new schemes in the town centre, providing the opportunity to install contemporary street furniture which enhances the environment of the town as a whole and will be essential to creating the right impression in key arrival and event spaces.

Short term solutions - coordinating existing equipment with new introduced items and repainting existing equipment where appropriate. In this case all furniture should be finished in black (RAL colour 5009). This approach may be considered appropriate for the wider town centre.

The Esplanade

It is suggested that the dark blue/green finish used around the Boating Lake is maintained but is limited to the waterside areas. There is a natural break between the waterfront and the rest of the town



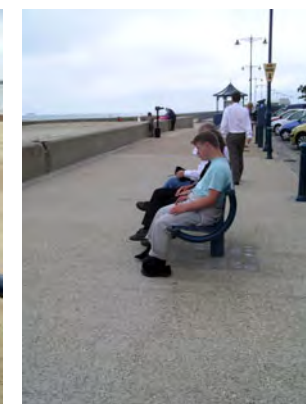
Geo Seat with arms black frame



Street Furniture use at North Walk



Contemporary seating within a square at London Bridge



Bespoke Street Furniture

For certain sites which will be fulfilling specific functions it may be more appropriate to consider one-off design solutions, and in these cases bespoke equipment should not be precluded.

General Design Principles

- ❑ Auditing street furniture is essential to determine equipment to be retained or replaced
- ❑ New street furniture should be provided as reflected in street furniture palettes, consulting with Council Officers
- ❑ Designs should be capable of complementing a range of architectural settings
- ❑ Listed structures or street furniture should be retained and relocated if appropriate
- ❑ Location of street furniture should not obstruct pedestrian thoroughfares or key views and it should be grouped coherently.
- ❑ Choice of materials should be coordinated and resist skate board use and vandalism

Some specific guidance follows which relates to street furniture equipment generally and this applies whatever choice of equipment is made for different areas. The specific equipment options are set out at the end of this section and illustrations within this section are limited to specific aspects of streetscape equipment.

Cycle Stands

- ❑ Locations should be visible and set back from busy pedestrian thoroughfares with good natural surveillance
- ❑ Consider overall distribution, providing opportunities to incorporate cycle parking close to stations

- ❑ Avoid locating cycle stands close to other street furniture equipment
- ❑ Consider co-locating motorcycle parking locking points
- ❑ Cycle stands could be located on footway build outs in lieu of car parking spaces

Bollards

- ❑ There is opportunity to reduce the number of bollards in key spaces
- ❑ Use of bollards in preference to a standard 150mm kerb upstand is not advised as it would result in street clutter
- ❑ Bollards should not be used to define public/private property boundaries or private forecourt areas
- ❑ In general bollards should only be used at the end of parking bays, to define crossing points and to protect buildings close to the carriageway, or overhanging the footway, where space will not allow more conventional solutions
- ❑ Consider opportunities to combine bollards with signage or use alternative street furniture elements e.g. Litterbins to fulfil the function.

Litterbins

- ❑ The frequency of litterbins will increase in shopping streets
- ❑ Simplicity of design will aid cleansing, with open top bins providing easy access.

Bus stops and shelters

- ❑ Bus shelter presently do not carry advertising which if introduced will add to the visual clutter in the town centre

- ❑ Advertising should not be introduced in the Conservation Areas and avoided wherever possible and leases do constrain the future choice of bus shelters.
- ❑ It is suggested that designs are simple and promote an open safe environment
- ❑ Design for shelters throughout the town could be common in design style, relating to the future Interchange Facility and incorporate travel information which promotes integrated public transport.

Guard Rails and Railings

- ❑ Wherever possible the use of guard rail should be avoided
- ❑ Existing guard rail which is to be retained should be painted black, particularly in areas outside the town centre
- ❑ Historic railings should be retained repaired and repainted black, particularly within squares.



Brighton Square with new railings



Geo bench & bin finished in black

Seating

- ❑ Within streets, particularly those on slopes such as George Street and Union Street, seating should be provided at intervals.
- ❑ Seating should have intermediate arms to aid use by the elderly or those with disabilities
- ❑ Informal seating can be provided in the form of steps and low walls

Outdoor Tables and Chairs

- ❑ Outdoor tables and chairs can contribute to visual clutter, if many styles are used by different operators
- ❑ Outdoor seating can also cause obstructions to the footway, but if well managed can attract tourist activity
- ❑ Ancillary equipment such as umbrellas and menus and delineation of outdoor eating areas should be carefully considered coordinating approaches for streets or spaces as a whole



Outdoor seating, Brighton

Telephone boxes

- Although not so prevalent in Ryde, increasingly the style of telephone kiosks are becoming more varied and a common approach should be promoted
- Kiosks are often inaccessible to wheelchair users
- Kiosks should be grouped to the back of the footway
- Advertising should not be permitted on kiosks
- In conservation areas the K6 model should be installed, allowing for accessibility modification

Waste Containers and Recycling

Although waste containers are generally not visible on main thoroughfares in Ryde consideration should be given to coordinating this equipment by using the standard black finish adopted for street furniture.

New mixed use developments should consider potential to include recycling points, including underground recycling, although this requires special waste collection vehicles.

Palettes

Key Street, Arrival and Event Spaces

A selection of contemporary street furniture is put forward for consideration. These elements would be used in the key spaces within the public realm strategy areas. In many respects these pieces of equipment would provide focal points or features within the public realm scenes

Wider Town

A slightly different range of street furniture is suggested for the wider town centre beyond those key spaces identified in the public realm strategy area

Pedestrian Signage and Interpretation

Signage will be a key consideration in Ryde when addressing issues including connecting Ryde Interchange with the Esplanade and the town centre. Wherever possible traffic and pedestrian systems should be integrated reducing the need for sign poles and reducing clutter. A single system is recommended through the town and this should be coordinated with arrival and welcome signage within the Ryde Interchange area and at tourist attractions/locations. The following design considerations apply:

- All signage should be installed at set heights for elevated signs such as directional finger post signs, eye level signs, which might include building mounted signs or interpretative signs and low level signs such as bollard mounted parking restrictions.
- A clear hierarchy of signs adopted and used for certain types of locations

- A common text style should be adopted, which considers the needs of the visually impaired. The RNIB recommend white text on a black background.
- The size and location of Arrival gateway signage should be carefully considered
- Consult with the Conservation Officer for installation of signage within Conservation Areas and the setting of Listed Buildings
- Advertising Drums are not recommended within Ryde as these occupy substantial areas of the footway
- Advertising A-boards create street clutter and should be discouraged and enforced
- Interactive 'I'plus kiosks can provide tourist information but should only be provided in locations where they are actively maintained and monitored
- At present street name plates are a standard uniform format and this should be adopted as standard, where possible locating sign plates on buildings, by agreement

Illustrative examples of black street furniture

Seat



Furnitubes International Jubilee seat.
Mild steel frame and slats, with a black coated finish.

Bench



Bollards

Furnitubes International,
Warminster Square base
bollard. Cast iron, Primed



finish.Gloss Black.

cover. 25 and/or 70mm recessed cover for tarmac and pavers.

Cycle Stands



Underground Cabinets

Landmark
Telescopic feeder
pillars
cabinet.Comprising
reinforced concrete
box housing with
raising and
lowering gas
spring counter-
balance units.
Metal work in
stainless steel and
heavy galvanized
Steel. Optional top cover. Flush Galvanized anti-slip top



Broxap Cyclestands. Stainless steel.

Parking Meter



Metric Group Ltd.
Pay and display
parking meters.

Solar Powered Parking Meter

Metric Group Ltd.
Pay and display
parking meters
with solar panel



incorporate.

Signage

Woodhouse UK Plc. Geo finger post. Directional signage



Broxap. 2 rail panel bearing post. Cast iron. Root fixing, 340mm into the ground.

Railing

Broxap. 2 rail panel bearing post. Cast iron. Root fixing, 340mm into the ground.



Railing



Recycling

Landmark.
Underground re-
cycling / bottles
bank. Comprising
reinforced concrete
box housing with
raising and
lowering gas
spring counter-
balance units.
Metal work in
stainless steel and
heavy galvanized
Steel. Optional top cover. Flush Galvanized anti-slip top
cover. 25 and/or 70mm recessed cover for tarmac and
pavers.



Contemporary Street Furniture Ranges - Technical Sheets



- Coordinated contemporary palette
- Can be used with GEO lighting ranges
- Bollards and signs finished in Anaoloc stainless steel, a black finish



Contemporary Street Furniture

Supplier: Escofet



- Escofet seating used throughout Barcelona in coastal locations
- Single seating options could be used where levels are quite varied
- Seating could be located in close proximity to the beach or on the beach in instances
- Simple robust designs provide sculptural quality to street spaces
- Some adaptation may be required to deter skateboarding



Public Art Town Trail

A town trail and a series of themed walks which all begin in the Union Street Arts Quarter could help to ensure that visitors are directed to attractions such as the Globe Museum or a dedicated Ryde Arts Centre and also taken to sites of local interest throughout the town. The trail could be marked in a number of attractive and interesting ways including a series of public art pieces such as sculpture, mosaics or paintings and with plaques or illustrated information points.

Another possibility might be to create a trail of automata, ever popular on traditional fairs, each telling a different story about the town. A growing number of artists now specialise in automata who could be commissioned to create pieces. The advantage of this approach would be the pleasure of repeat visits for both residents and visitors to the town.

As an alternative to commissioning, there could be annual competitions linked with the Ryde Carnival to create locally relevant automata and other pieces of public art. The winning entries could be used to create a new trail each year and the previous trail retired to an ever-changing, very enjoyable and entirely relevant local museum. To continue the end-of-the-pier/fairground theme the museum itself could perhaps be housed in a locally relevant re-creation of a travelling Spiegeltent located in an appropriate space on the Esplanade, which could also be used for other events and exhibitions throughout the year.

Designing and building the Spiegeltent could be a community project, allowing traditional boat-building skills to be passed on, conserved and celebrated for generations to come. Local Heritage Initiative funding could be sought for the project.



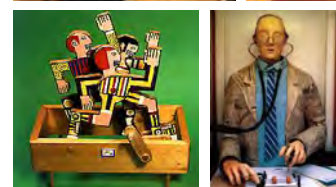
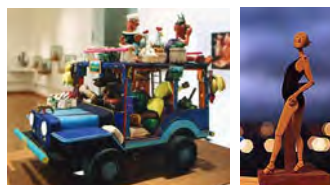
Sculpture at GLA HQ London



Interactive arts, Forum, Barcelona.



Spiegeltent



Automata exhibits could form part of an arts trail



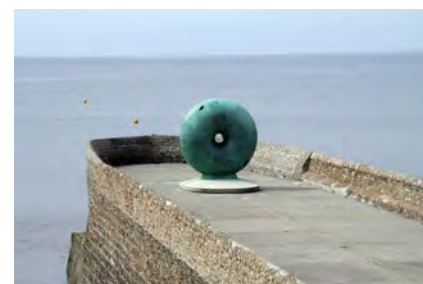
Art displayed within shop windows



Footway mazes could involve artists in public realm design



Footway markers



Art within the environment in Brighton



Sculptural Seating

Tree Planting

Ryde is fortunate in its significant examples of coastal tolerant tree species including Maritime Pine and Evergreen Oak in locations including the sheltered bay of Appley Park and spaces such as the cemetery, the educational campuses and parks. However, there has been no new tree planting in the town centre in recent years and there is also a need to consider the longer term management and replacement of tree planting in certain parts of the esplanade, such as the Boating Lake.

The following design considerations should be taken into account:

Existing Trees

- ❑ Raising, lowering or constructing a new footpath adjacent to trees can have a detrimental effect upon the tree, causing compaction or damaging fibrous tree roots close to the underside of a paved surface
- ❑ In general it is important to establish a root protection zone, which varies according to the size and tree species and protect this from construction activity with fencing, storage of materials and vehicular traffic
- ❑ Trees should be monitored and inspected to ensure public safety
- ❑ In relation to street works and development trees should be protected in accordance with 'BS5837, Trees in relation to Construction'
- ❑ Trees planted in planters are generally not successful unless the resources are available for more intensive maintenance regimes



Use of semi-mature tree planting at GLA HQ London



Tree detailing at GLA HQ London



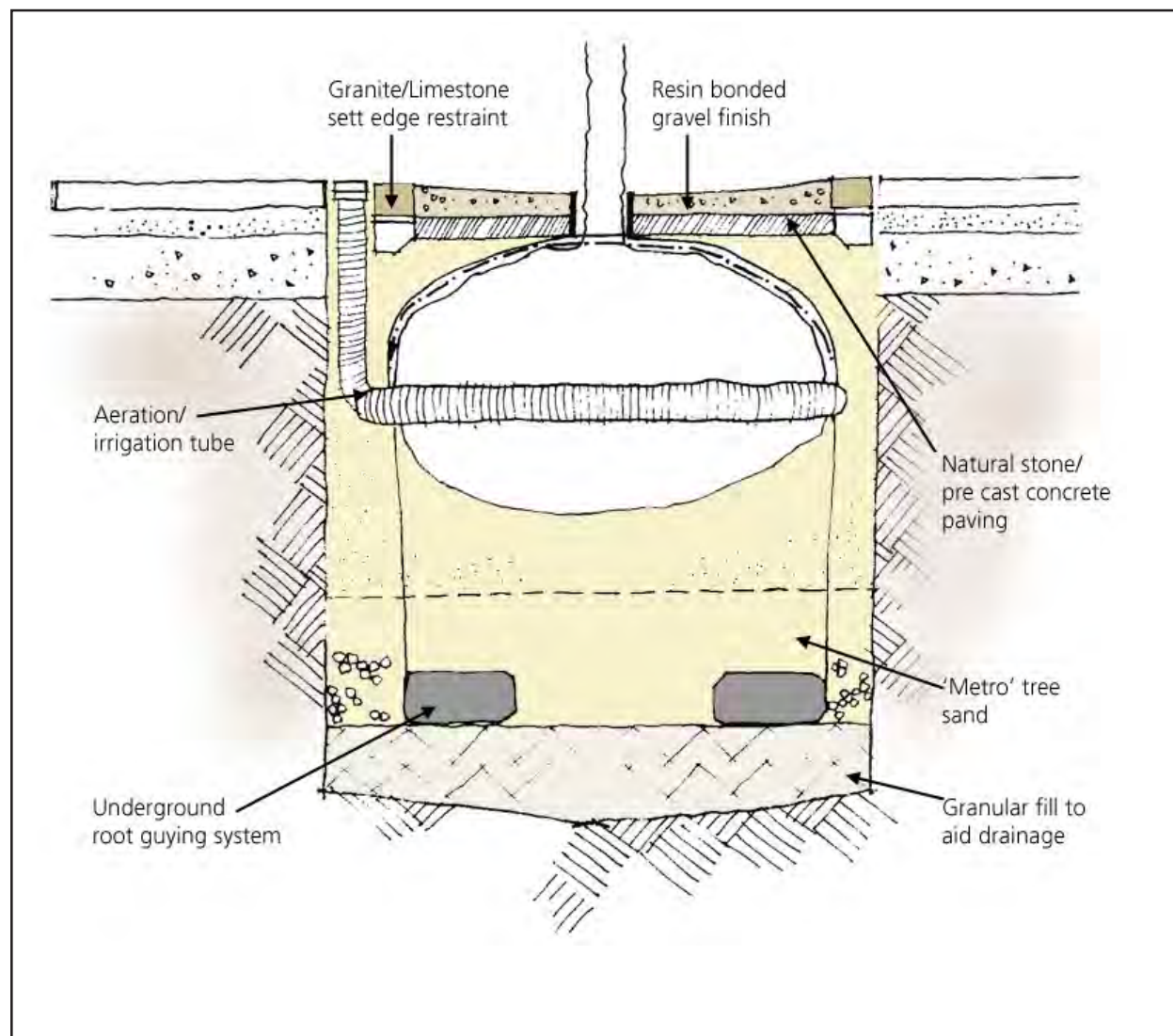
Tree detail using bound gravel and discreetly detailed irrigation tube/aeration tube

New Trees

- Trees should be located with consideration for underground services, CCTV sight lines and lighting columns
- Tree pit sizes should be maximised and incorporate only necessary root barriers, aeration/irrigation tubes and drainage in areas prone to water logging
- Semi-mature trees should be specified with a clear stem of 2.0 metres to avoid damage from vandalism and a minimum girth of 20cm

Tree Pit Detailing

The design of the tree pit should be simple avoiding the use of tree grilles and guards, which are costly to maintain and often accumulate litter. An alternative specification is use of a permeable resin-bonded gravel which matches the adjacent footway or a self binding loose gravel in areas with lower footfall



Traffic Management

The public realm and traffic management need to be well coordinated to ensure the most effective solutions for everyone using Ryde town centre. This can be achieved in a number of ways:

- ❑ In Conservation Areas the design of certain elements such as sign plates could be modified to be more sympathetic to the environment
- ❑ New equipment to be located within the setting of Listed Building should be undertaken in consultation with the Conservation Officer
- ❑ The finish of traffic management equipment should be coordinated for aspects such as traffic light and sign poles, rear faces of sign plates

Road Traffic Signs

- ❑ In general the number of traffic signs should be minimised
- ❑ These should be combined with lamp columns, mounted on walls and combined on single posts to reduce street clutter
- ❑ Signs should always be positioned at the top of poles
- ❑ Parking information should be combined with pay and display machines where appropriate

Coloured Surfaces and Lines

- ❑ Within Ryde there is little use of coloured surfaces at present, increasing use of coloured surfaces can contribute to visual clutter if overused.
- ❑ Minimise the use of ghost hatching
- ❑ Yellow lines in historic and Conservation Areas should be 50mm Primrose Yellow
- ❑ Bus stop cages should be delineated with yellow lines



Rear face of sign has been finished in black, Pall Mall, London



Traffic signs in historic locations

CCTV and Lighting

Lighting and CCTV contribute to the perception of a safe environment and as such should be considered together to maximise benefits:

CCTV

CCTV has been installed throughout the town centre of Ryde and at Ryde Esplanade. Much has been done to reduce the impact of the CCTV cameras and to combine CCTV with different equipment. However there are some general design considerations in the provision of new CCTV or in the ongoing management of the present system:

- White light sources provide better recognition for CCTV imagery
- Location of CCTV cameras and mounting options needs to be considered on a site by site basis
- Wall or roof-top mounted cameras are less visually intrusive, but this does not always provide the zone of monitoring required, due the building limiting camera manoeuvrability. Negotiating way-leaves for cameras and cabling conduits are also a consideration
- All equipment should be finished in black
- CCTV cabinets can be located underground reducing the inherent bulk of columns bases or the need for remote cabinets which can contribute to street clutter
- Dome and 'mini' dome camera housing can be less intrusive in Conservation Areas, but the 'shoe box' camera housing remains more versatile, with better image quality
- More often than not CCTV cameras require their own extremely rigid poles and therefore should be sited carefully to avoid creating street clutter if they are in close proximity to traffic signal or lighting columns – the potential to combine the CCTV pole with other equipment should always be considered



Union St. CCTV



Church Lane. CCTV sign

Lighting

Lighting is a key feature within the public realm, potentially contributing much to the night-time experience and economy as well as the view of Ryde from the mainland. Lighting can help to define the character of individual town centre quarters, define key buildings, focal and linking spaces trees and also help with visitor orientation. The following types of lighting should be considered:

- ❑ Ambient lighting, an ambient white light which contributes to a safe well lit environment
- ❑ Accent lighting to define landmarks entrances and focal points which may be coloured
- ❑ Low level localised lighting to define pedestrian walkways, such as the waterfront or pier pedestrian routes, gateways and nodal points which help with orientation and direction
- ❑ Feature lighting to illuminate or uplight features such as statues, trees or public art.

Design Considerations include:

- ❑ Minimising lighting pollution with the use of full cut off luminaires
- ❑ New luminaires should be simple and contemporary in design
- ❑ Consider the combined effect of street lighting in combination with other sources such as shop frontages and residential developments
- ❑ Lighting should conform with BS 5489 Code of Practice for Crime and Safety
- ❑ Consider the location of wall mounted ducts and locate behind downpipes and fascias where possible.

Palettes

It is suggested that street lighting is considered on a site specific basis.

Union Street. Lighting has already been chosen and installed based on a heritage style. It is adaptable, allowing Christmas decorations and hanging baskets to be added to columns. However the columns are xxx meters high and would not be suitable in a smaller scale of street.

The High Street and Upper High Street should be lit with either 4 metre columns or preferably with wall-mounted lighting to reduce street clutter.



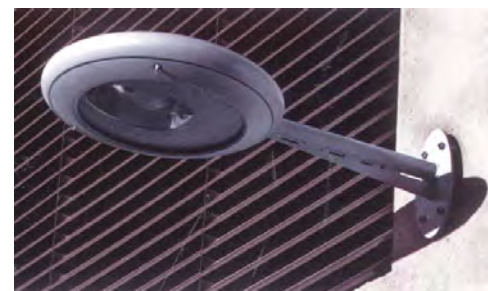
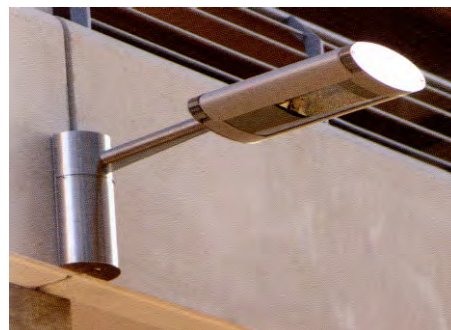
Contemporary lighting in Portsmouth

Bespoke Lighting. In other key focal areas it is suggested that new lighting forms an integral part of new developments, whether it is designed as part of new buildings or as bespoke lighting relating to a public realm area. Areas which could potentially require a more considered approach include:

- ❑ Ryde Interchange arrival space as set out in RECDAP;
- ❑ St. Thomas's Square and Church Yard
- ❑ Western Gardens
- ❑ The Harbourside and Eastern Gardens



Geo-range highway and footway lighting



- ❑ GEO Range and Escofet ranges
- ❑ Coordinated column and wall mounted lighting also available in black painted finish
- ❑ GEO columns can be adapted to receive banners' hanging baskets and decorations
- ❑ Escofet lighting could be used as accent lighting within certain waterfront locations

Woodhouse GEO ranges

Part 5 – How the Strategy Will Work

The following pages show the Ryde public realm strategy in action. The approach in six key spaces, within the main character areas, is illustrated:

The Upper High Street Plan

The Upper High Street Before and After

The High Street Plan

The High Street Axonometric

The Town Square and Union Street Plan

The Town Square Axonometric

Rear Courtyards within Union Street Arts Quarter

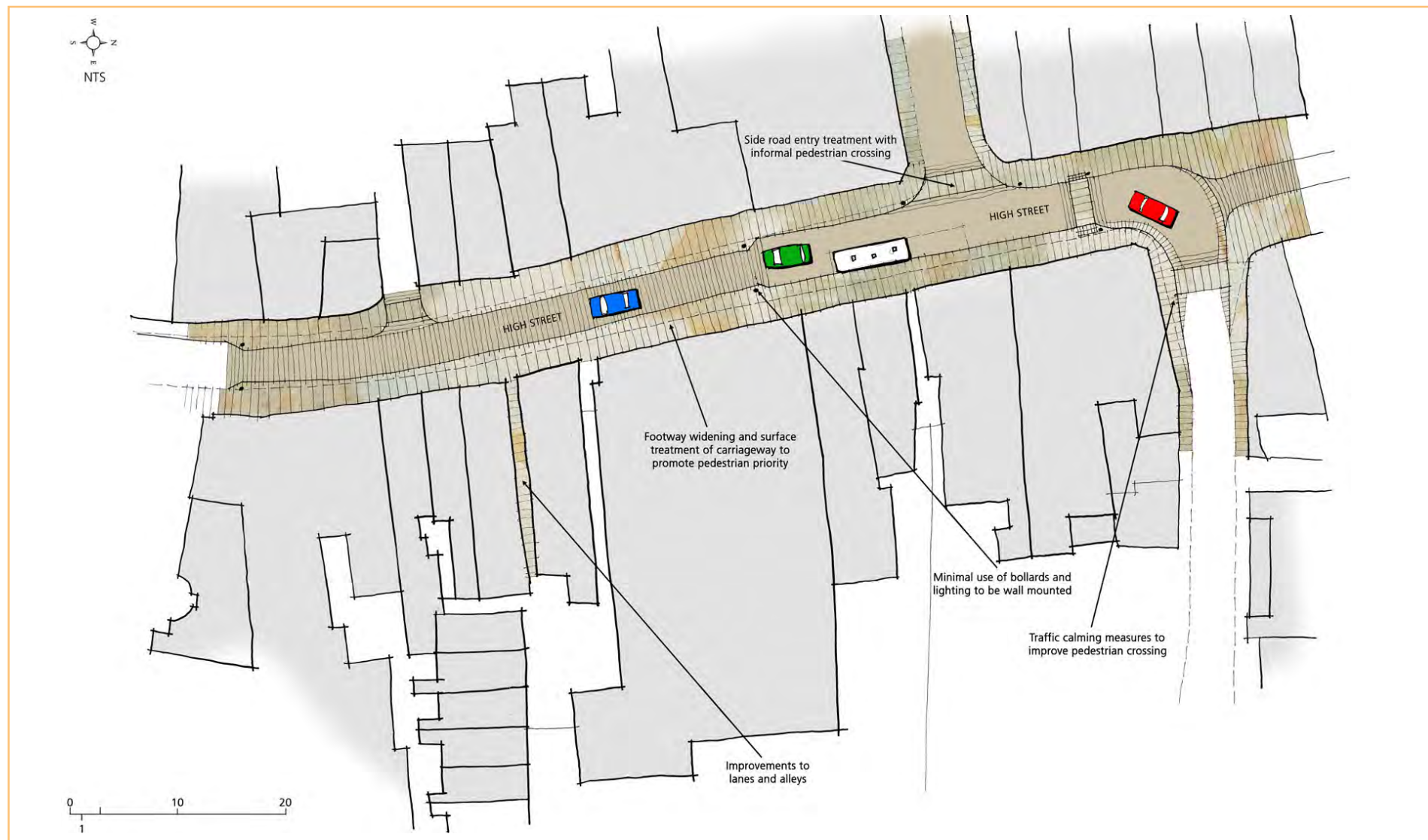
Ryde Esplanade and Interchange Plan

Western Gardens Events Space

Eastern Garden and Esplanade improvements

These were the key spaces identified during the consultation process as central to improving the public realm in Ryde town centre and should be the priority for implementation. The same approach should be rolled out to other parts of the town centre as funds allow.

The Upper High Street Plan



The Upper High Street Proposals



Existing

Design Considerations

- Create a pedestrian priority environment in which traffic gives way to pedestrians
- Achieve design speeds of 20mph with traffic calming measures such as side road entry treatments and informal raised crossing points
- Explore potential to incorporate on-street parking with restrictions and bus stops for discreet sections of the street which do not conflict with parking and servicing needs of local businesses
- Explore potential to widen footways for continuous sections for the street
- Reconstruction of the carriageway may be needed to achieve minimum kerb heights along the street
- Designs need to incorporate bus route requirements

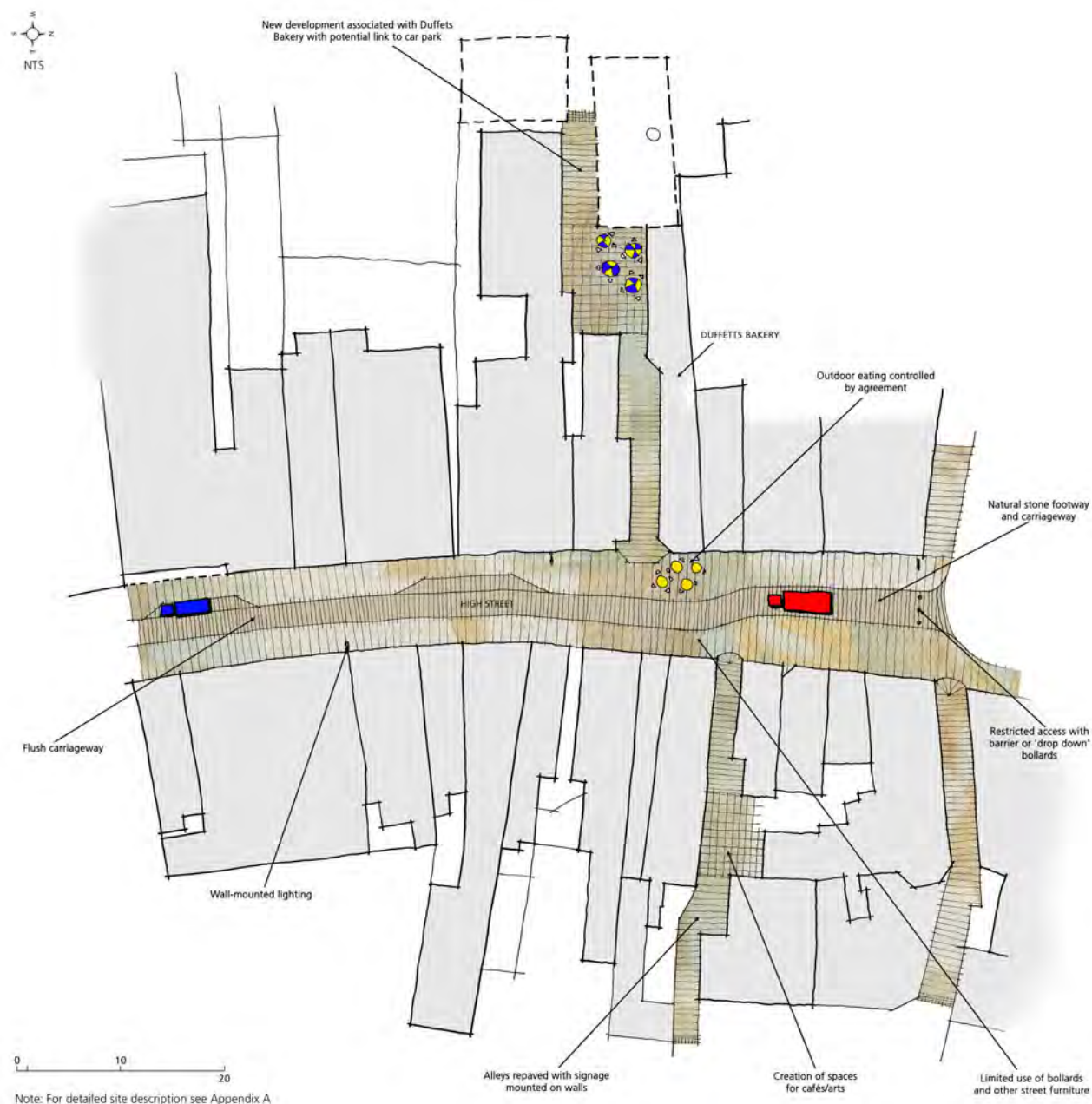


Proposed

The High Street Plan

Design Considerations

- Reconsider access for deliveries, with designated times for servicing
- The existing carriageway construction is considered to be poor and this should be considered at the detailed design stage
- Sewer vents are located in the existing carriageway
- Delineation of the carriageway needs to be carefully considered to avoid the use of large number of bollards or other street furniture, given that reintroducing kerbs, a preferred design solution would be costly
- New paving needs to consider the levels within the High Street and the need to provide additional drains to control run-off, northwards, down the High Street
- Where possible the paving in adjoining alleys should be coordinated with new paving within the High Street

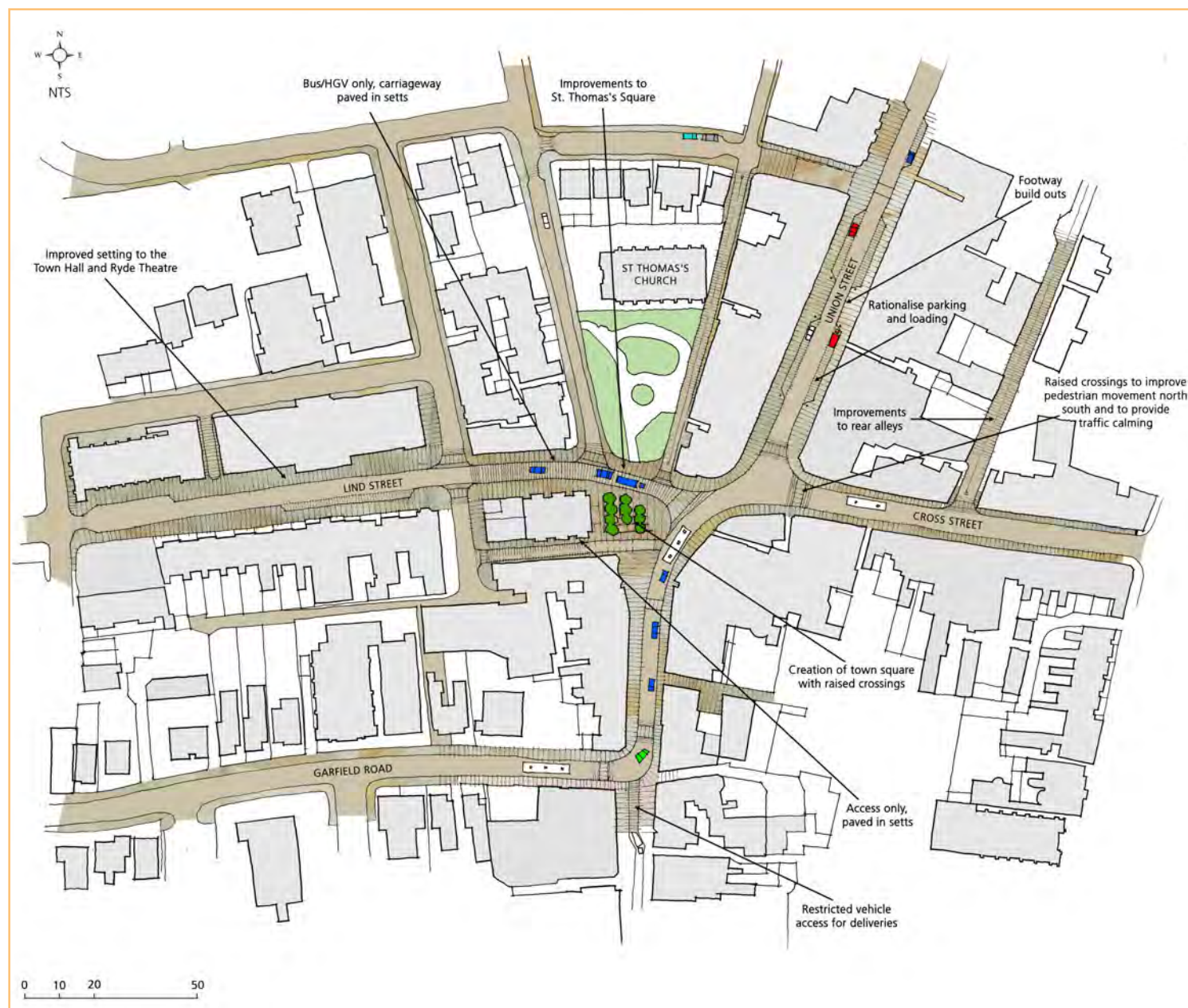


The High Street Axonometric



Existing

The Town Square and Union Street Plan



The Town Square Axonometric



Existing

Design Considerations

- Explore ways of modifying site levels to improve accessibility across the square
- Explore potential to limit vehicle access, reconsidering the direction of traffic using Cross Street
- Change in surface to Lind Street carriageway, where it passes through St Thomas's Square would help denote its pedestrian priority
- Retain minimum kerb heights rather than create a shared surface within Lind Street/St. Thomas's Square to avoid use of excessive bollards to delineate the footways from carriageways



Proposed

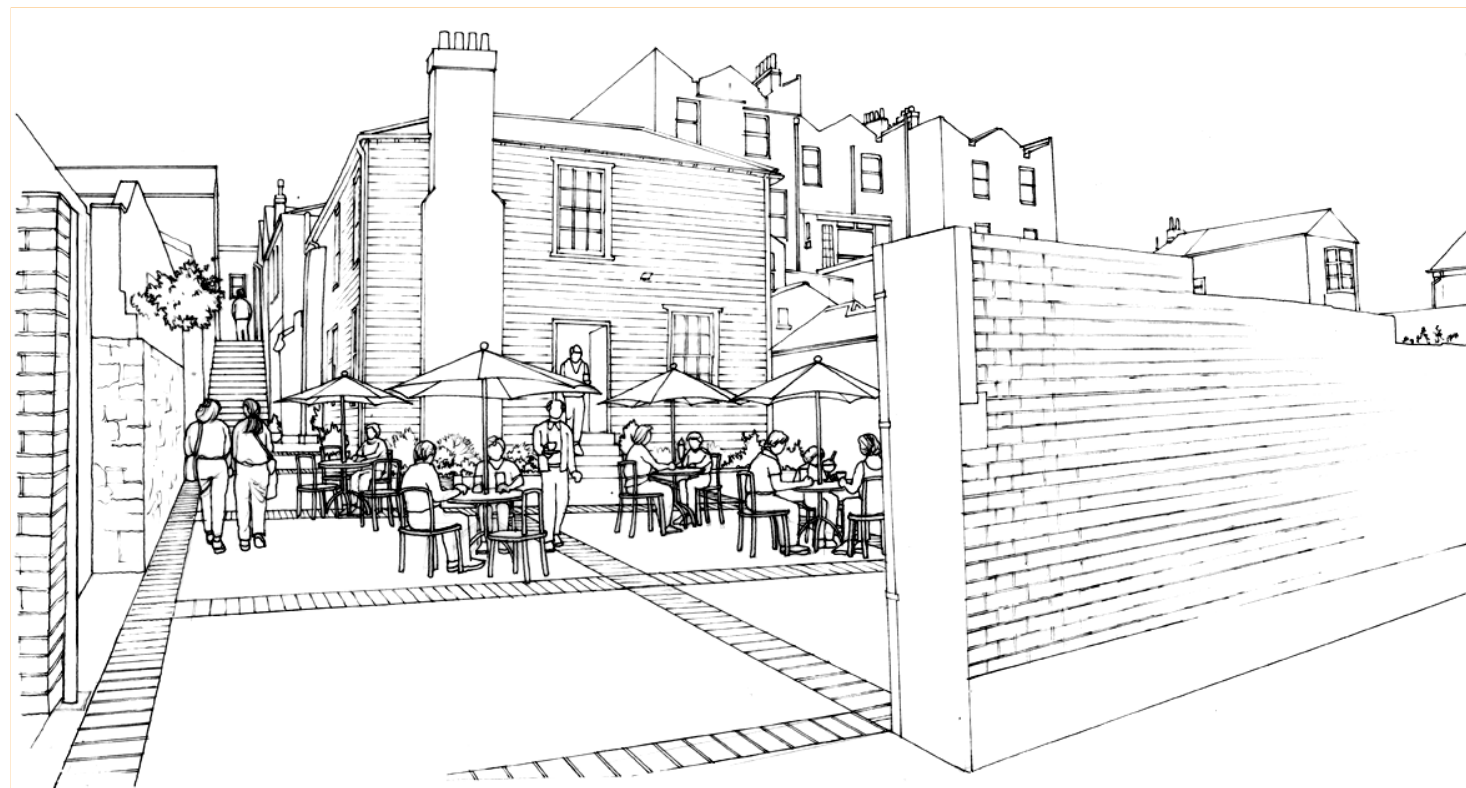
Rear Courtyards within Union Street



Existing

Design Considerations

- Explore potential to diversify existing businesses to encourage use of rear courts to create eateries or workshop areas
- Create accesses from Union Street to rear court activities to promote permeability through the street block in an east-west direction



Proposed

Eastern Garden and Esplanade Improvements



Existing

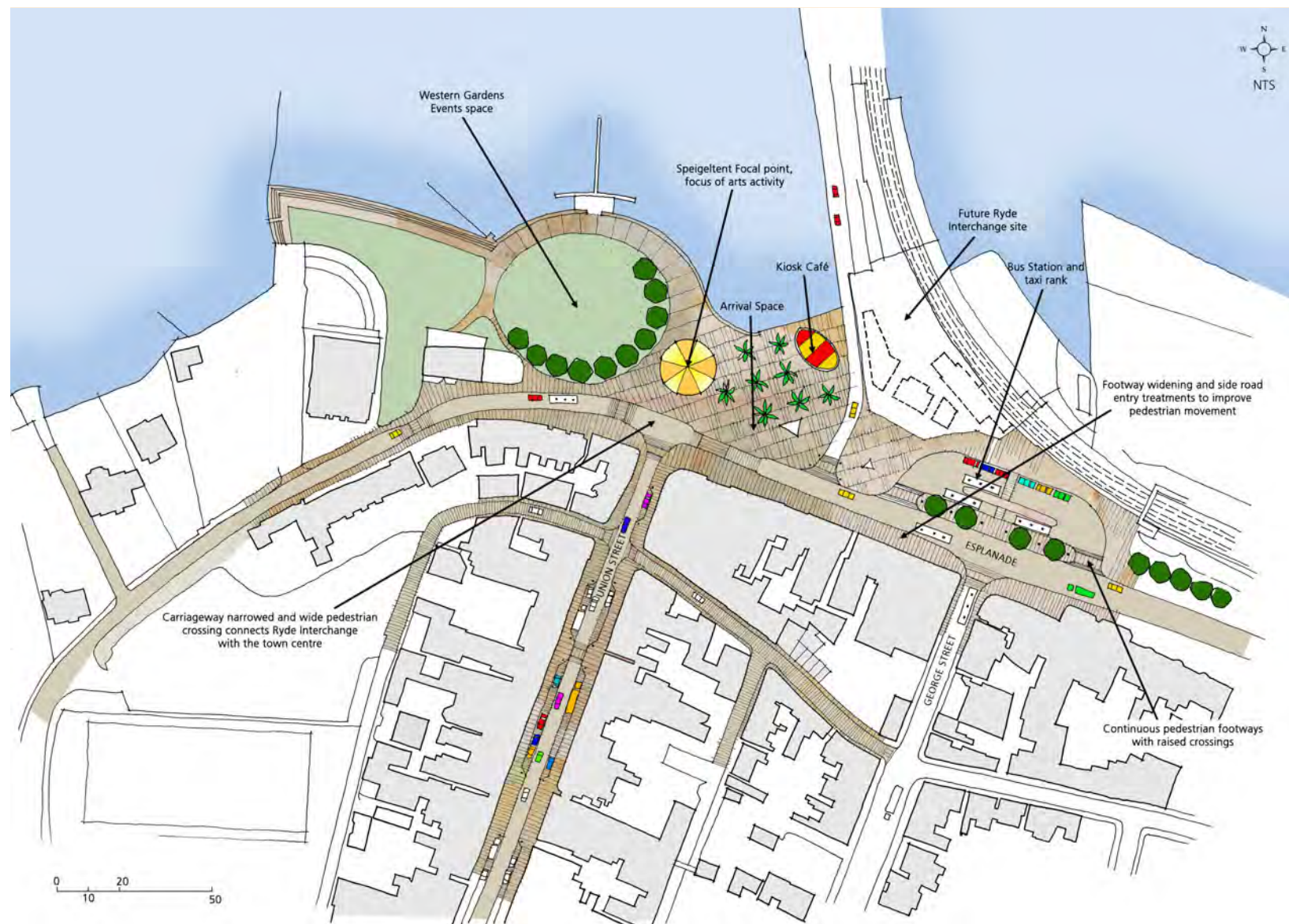
Design Considerations

- Explore potential to rationalise existing concessions and kiosks, and promote development of harbour side café/ restaurant
- Improvements to waterside promenade should incorporate potential works to Eastern Gardens boundary and new planting in addition to removal of redundant play equipment
- New seating and lighting could be contemporary in nature and relate to any emerging new development at the harbourside



Proposed

Ryde Esplanade and Interchange Plan



Western Gardens Events Space



Existing

Design Considerations

- Design of Arrival Space and Ryde Interchange external layout should be progressed in conjunction with the Interchange Building
- Western Gardens should be extended, reducing the carriageway width of The Esplanade to gain the space for pedestrian use
- Explore the idea of a community project celebrating the Island's boat-building heritage to design and build a unique re-creation of a travelling Speigeltent, in addition to a landmark, events based feature
- Improve pedestrian crossings throughout the area, with wide crossing points both along the Esplanade, through the Interchange and to the town centre



Proposed

Appendix A

Spaces

Key spaces

1. High St (Garfield Road - Star Street)

- ❑ Semi-pedestrianised street with poor quality paving, furniture and decorative lighting;
- ❑ By allowing limited vehicle access, shops and cafes are not utilising pavement space for outdoor seating;
- ❑ Pedestrian comfort and perceptions of safety are limited by presence of occasional traffic;
- ❑ Opportunities for resurfacing footway and carriageway with materials that complement the historic character of the street, such as high quality natural stone or concrete slabs and setts;
- ❑ Opportunity to restrict vehicular access to the street between 10am and 4pm to allow pedestrians to linger in the street more and provide the potential for increased street trading, such as specialist markets;
- ❑ Removal of outdated brick seating and planting areas which create street clutter and replacement with a new strategically located suite of high quality contemporary black street furniture would enable easier access through the space and visually enhance it;
- ❑ Street forms important part of route of Ryde Carnival. New street furniture should be carefully positioned or be removable, to facilitate crowd movement.

2. Thomas' Square

- ❑ Square fronted by attractive historic buildings such as the Colonnades on Lind Street, the Crown Hotel, St Thomas' Church and Lind Hill. Important view to Town Hall tower to west;
- ❑ Natwest Bank within centre of Square is visually incongruous and detracts from the perception of this space as a formal square;
- ❑ Main vehicular route through town centre takes traffic through Thomas' Square as part of the one-way system. This limits pedestrian movement and reduces its attractiveness as a space to linger in;
- ❑ Opportunities to enhance area to front of Natwest Bank and Crown Hotel, widening pavements and providing attractive seating area;
- ❑ Use of high-quality, contemporary black street furniture would mark the transition between the town centre spaces' strong historic character and a more understated vision for the High Street;
- ❑ Use of high quality natural stone for paving should be used to enhance the setting of the adjacent historic buildings;
- ❑ Paving should be used to unify the space and minimise the impact of the vehicular routes through it;
- ❑ Opportunities to modify traffic flows/restrictions within the town-centre could reduce vehicular access to parts of the Square in the evening, allowing increased for its use by pavement cafés;

- ❑ Alternative potential for relocation of Natwest Bank and redevelopment of the site in the centre of the Square. This could either be a civic square or provide a site for a new contemporary building. If replaced, the building should contain a high proportion of glazing to maintain the visual integrity of the square. Redeveloping this site as a bar or restaurant would provide the opportunity for increasing evening activity within the square, provide a link with Ryde Theatre and the shops in The Colonnade.

Priority traffic calming links

3. High Street/Garfield Road junction

- ❑ Part of main route through town-centre one-way system;
- ❑ Important link between Union Street and High Street. Busy traffic and pavements could be deterring visitors from continuing from Union Street into rest of shopping area;
- ❑ Opportunity to widen pavements to reduce dominance of vehicles and provide additional space for pedestrians. Could provide additional space for outdoor seating to the front of the Crown Hotel and adjacent premises in the future;
- ❑ Hub of town centre; warrants high quality natural stone or pre-cast concrete materials for durability and visual enhancement.

4. High Street/Star Street/ Newport Street junctions

- Staggered junction marks end of pedestrian-priority area of High Street, deterring pedestrians from continuing along High Street;
- Traffic turning into the High Street creates a hazard for pedestrians crossing to/ from the High Street to The Upper High street;
- Important southern 'gateway' to main shopping centre of Ryde from the south;
- Opportunities for incorporating traffic calming measures to the High Street and Star Street to calm traffic speeds prior to reaching the junction;
- Resurfacing this area with unifying high quality, attractive materials would visually link the pedestrianised area with the High Street.

Environmental and traffic improvements.

5. Union Street

- Important shopping street connecting town centre with The Esplanade;
- Attractive views across The Solent to the north;
- Regency properties and predominance of independent retail outlets provide unique character;
- Short-term on-street car parking impedes pedestrian movement;
- Opportunities for encouraging outdoor seating at bars and cafes by widening footways/ narrowing carriageway. Footway widening especially important at The Esplanade junction;
- Traffic calming and rationalisation of car parking into parking bays and footway widening would reduce visual dominance of cars and carriageway;

- Potential to provide special treatment to footway as a setting to buildings such as Royal Victoria Arcade and Bravinger's Arcade to draw attention to their architectural importance. It would be preferable to use natural stone throughout these areas;
- Overhead Christmas/summer decorative lighting is currently tired in appearance;
- Potential for lighting which is discrete and contemporary in style;
- Street furniture and lighting should be black and contemporary in style. Contemporary interpretations of heritage designs are not recommended;
- Opportunities for enhancing pedestrian permeability of the area with new/improved links connecting Union Street to Union Road and Church Lane.

6. Cross Street

- Secondary commercial street, connecting George Street with St Thomas's Square;
- Concentration of Victorian properties and predominance of small independent shops and catering outlets give street a distinct character;
- Traffic calming through narrowing of carriageway and widening of pavements would improve the visual scale of the street;
- Replacement of mixed style of concrete flag stones with pre-cast concrete paving with a natural finish would enhance historic character and reinforce the importance of this area as a gateway to the town centre;
- Street furniture and lighting should be black and follow a standard range;

- Contemporary interpretations of heritage designs are not recommended;
- Important vista towards Thomas's Square to the west. This view should be considered in any designs for Thomas's Square.

7. Star Street (Cinema – George Street)

- Short section of street with a mixture of uses and architectural forms and styles. Lacks visual cohesion and is dominated by traffic;
- Opportunity to widen footways/ reduce carriageway widths to calm traffic flow and enhance pedestrian environment and safety;
- Use of high quality pre cast concrete paving would enhance historic character and reinforce the importance of this area as a gateway to the town centre; Opportunity to enhance entrance to Iceland car park with replacement boundary treatment (wall and railings) and tree planting; Important to enhance junction of George Street and Star Street. Consider opportunity to reduce width of George Street carriageway.

Rear lanes

Union Road - Lane historically providing rear access to rear of Union Street and George Street. Dominated by areas of private car parking with occasional brick cottages and commercial premises and warehousing; Opportunity for frontage infill development within street, with development of disused/parking areas, to create a mews character; Boundary treatments are mixed and often in poor condition. Chain link fencing, close-board fencing and low brick walls should be replaced by unified boundaries constructed from local stone, possibly recycled; Glimpses of The

Solent to the north are important and should be considered when assessing impact of planning applications for new development; Poor quality carriageway would benefit from resurfacing. If further development occurred in the area, this could warrant upgrading the current pavement to natural stone or sett paving or the creation of a shared-use carriageway; Location close to central shopping area would make this an ideal area for arts and crafts workshops incorporating exhibition space outdoors or as showrooms. Existing globe workshop could be associated with a museum. If developed in this way, the street could form part of a heritage trail; Important to create additional pedestrian links with Union Street through the street block - this could be facilitated by redevelopment of private sideways and backyards of shops in

Union Street

Church Lane - Rear of properties on Union Street create a continuous frontage to the eastern side of the lane, giving it a more enclosed human scale than Union Road. Mixture of uses including residential dwellings and mews developments;

- Important vista to the north across The Solent should be conserved and considered when assessing impact of planning applications for new development;
- St Thomas's Church and Brigstocke Terrace are important landmark buildings. The gardens associated with both buildings provide important areas of vegetation in an otherwise built-up area. Views to these areas should be protected;
- St Thomas's car park at the northern end of Church Lane is poorly connected to Union Street and the town centre. Opportunities to create more through-routes should be explored, especially via Royal Victoria Arcade; (see 51)

- The lane is very narrow, with an inadequate footway width. It would benefit in both visual and practical terms from a block paved shared-surface for both vehicles and pedestrians.

8. Yelf's Road

- Eastern end of Yelf's Road has been closed to traffic, creating a popular outdoor seating area for the adjacent Yelf's Hotel bar;
- Examples of original limestone paving should be conserved;
- There are many opportunities for creating other similar spaces in the town centre; especially off Union Street and High Street.

Spaces/Alleys with Potential for Improvement

9. Link Via Somerfield Car-park - Cross Street

- Well-used route between Cross Street and Somerfield car park. South-facing area at northern end of car park closely fronted on three sides by buildings on Cross Street;
- Three coffee-shops/sandwich bars back on to the area, making it a potential site for the creation of a courtyard space with outdoor tables and chairs, with minimal loss of car parking;
- Area would benefit from resurfacing. Low walls, hedges or railings could be used to separate the space from the adjacent car park and create better approach to the town centre. Improved surfacing within the alley would provide a visually more appealing, safer environment.

10. Somerfield Car-park – High St (northern end)

- Important link between car park and High Street. Signage should be mounted on adjacent walls to indicate where passageway leads;

- Passageway would benefit from additional lighting on walls close to the High Street;
- Passageway is currently surfaced with black tarmac. Although in relatively good condition, its dark colour and functional nature do not enhance the historic character of the area. The area would benefit from resurfacing with natural stone or pre-cast concrete paving.

11. Somerfield Car-park – High St (Garfield Road junction)

- Important link between car park and High Street. Signage should be mounted on wall to indicate where passageway leads;
- Street lighting would enhance night-time security and contribute to visual amenity;
- Passageway not visible from car park end due to enclosure by fencing. Would benefit from enhanced signage;
- Close-board fencing along part of the passageway is of poor quality and would benefit from replacement by a low stone wall;
- Passageway is currently surfaced with black tarmac. Although in relatively good condition, its dark colour and functional nature do not enhance the historic character of the area. The area would benefit from resurfacing with natural stone or pre-cast concrete paving.

12. Somerfield Car-park – High St (Albert Place)

- Important pedestrian route between High Street and Somerfields/George Street;
- Attractive vista through to Old Forge building should be conserved;
- Passageway is dark and would benefit from repaving with natural stone or pre-cast concrete paving;

- Lighting should be mounted on adjacent buildings to provide safe, attractive night-time environment.

13. Duffetts Bakery

- Alley adjacent to the bakery could be utilised for outdoor café seating;
- Currently visually unappealing but would benefit from re-surfacing with natural stone or pre-cast concrete paviors and the enhancement of building facades;
- Alley currently leads to Duffetts Mill a derelict building that has the potential for being demolished or redeveloped. Any redevelopment here could incorporate a pedestrian route between the High Street and the Victoria Street car park.

14. John Street

- Street is relatively quiet at its southern end with the character of an urban open space adjoining the High Street;
- Perpendicular street parking along northern side of the street contributes to its 'urban square' feel;
- Masonic Hall and adjacent housing and retail units provide attractive mixed use elevation that should be conserved and enhanced;
- Public House on the High Street junction provide opportunity for outdoor tables and chairs;
- Street should be resurfaced to reinforce its character as an open space. The pavements should be widened and resurfaced with limestone flags. The carriageway shows evidence of stone setts beneath the tarmac and these should be restored or replaced.

- Street furniture should be black and of a simple contemporary design;
- The street is wide enough to benefit from planting with an avenue of relatively small street trees;
- The Woolworths loading area lies on the southern side of John Street. This open area with poor quality fencing presents a poor frontage to the street. If this site could be redeveloped it would provide an ideal opportunity to restore street frontage to John Street. (see **23** below)

15. Anglesea Street

- Well-used pedestrianised street with historic cottages and small shops on southern side and Somerfields supermarket on northern side;
- Black bollards, concrete pavers and granite setts contribute to the historic character and pedestrian scale of the street;
- Ideal area for outdoor cafe seating next to Thorntons;
- Area of cycle racks outside Somerfields are poorly used;
- Ideal area for small street tree planting, although practical problems of Somerfields underground parking would need to be considered;
- Use of hanging baskets in the summer would visually enhance the area. These could be sponsored by adjacent retail outlets.

16. High St Service Area

- Service access adjacent to shops in High Street;
- Offers potential for enhancement to incorporate outdoor seating;
- Would benefit from re-surfacing with natural stone or pre-cast concrete paving and the enhancement of building facades.

17. Link between George Street - Union Road

- Semi-public pedestrian link provides useful short-cut. Investigation into ownership is required and if necessary, negotiation to obtain public right of way;
- Resurfacing with natural stone or pre-cast concrete paving and use of wall mounted signage at each end would promote this potential link;
- Attractive vista eastwards towards nineteenth century property in George Street. This could be enhanced;
- Attractive variety of brick and stone building and boundary walls along southern edge of passageway should be conserved;
- Adjacent private parking yard off Union Road offers potential for redevelopment. This could be associated with the enhancement and visual enclosure of the passageway.

Also see:

51. Royal Victoria Arcade
Open Spaces/Potential Play Spaces

18. St Thomas's Church Yard

- One of the few green spaces in Ryde open to the public. - Important to conserve and enhance character as a church yard;
- Provides attractive setting to St Thomas's Church-improve visibility by re-instating historic railings in boundary adjoining St Thomas's Square;
- Dominated by paved central area with some lawn. Variety of mature ornamental trees;
- Gardens would benefit from re-design to produce a high quality setting to the church and amenity gardens. This should include a reduction in the

paved surface area, the removal of the raised brick planter and an increase in the grassed area. The standard municipal park furniture should be replaced by a higher quality, contemporary alternative.

19. Town Square, Somerfields

- ❑ Urban space between Somerfields supermarket and the rear of WH Smith on the High Street. Traditionally known as Town Square;
- ❑ Recent enhancement of space, with seating, tree planting, ornamental paving and hanging baskets. Historic bust of Queen Victoria has been relocated here to form focal feature;
- ❑ Area currently lacks pedestrian activity and has an open, empty character when not used for markets;
- ❑ Potential location for childrens' town centre play area, being adjacent to a well-used pedestrian route to Somerfields supermarket and public car park. Facility could be developed in collaboration with Somerfields, WH Smith and/or the nearby Surestart Nursery in Ryde Baptist Church

Opportunity Sites and Spaces

20. St John's Ambulance Hall, Newport Street

- ❑ Attractive redbrick Edwardian hall;
- ❑ Potential for converting hall and enhancing the northern elevation of Newport Street;
- ❑ Area to rear (see **23** below) is currently an private parking and garage area and if both were ultimately developed this could include new pedestrian links between John Street and Newport Street.

21. Rear of John Street

- ❑ Relatively large area of private garages and parking, which includes servicing yard for Woolworths on John Street;

- ❑ Potential for redevelopment to provide mews housing or live/work workshops;
- ❑ Redevelopment could include new pedestrian links between John Street and Newport Street and provide rear access to High Street shops;
- ❑ Redevelopment of all or part of Woolworths servicing yard would help reinstate the southern frontage of John Street, contributing to enclosure of space.

22. Victoria Street

- ❑ Parking yard services shops on the High Street, giving Victoria Street a 'back street' feel;
- ❑ Redevelopment of this site along the Victoria Street frontage would reinstate and enhance this elevation.

23. Victoria Street Car Park

- ❑ Car park creates a relatively large void in the eastern elevation of Victoria Street;
- ❑ Potential to redevelop car park with housing or commercial premises, incorporating basement or concealed ground level public parking if necessary;
- ❑ Site links with Duffetts Mill to the north, presenting a wider development opportunity and the potential to provide a pedestrian link between Victoria Street and the High Street;
- ❑ If site isn't developed, the visual impact of the car park should be minimised by the use of an enclosing low stone wall along the street frontage.

24. Rear of Cinema/Bingo Hall, Star Street

- ❑ Relatively large area of 'backland' which is not formally restricted in terms of public access;

- ❑ Enhancement of public access could be provided to allow an alternative route between George Street and Star Street and provide rear access to shops in High Street;
- ❑ Potential for mews development of workshops or housing;
- ❑ Potential for outdoor seating area or garden, perhaps with café or bar provided in conjunction with Cinema/Bingo Hall.

25. Ryde Baptist Church frontage, George Street

- ❑ Church providing community facilities. Building is set back from adjacent frontage of housing, providing an area of forecourt;
- ❑ Potential to use high quality paving, seating and railings to define entrance to the church and provide a meeting place for church users;
- ❑ Incorporation of evergreen ornamental planting would soften the impact of an otherwise hard area.

26. Ryde Development Trust, Union Road

- ❑ Old post office Sorting Office with parking yard on street frontage. The building is co-occupied by the Isle of Wight Pearl Jewellers on Union Street;
- ❑ Opportunity for continued use with arts and crafts workshops or community offices and meeting rooms;
- ❑ Important to minimise the impact of car parking on the Union Road frontage by excluding or limiting parking provision from new development.

27. Union Road Opportunity Site 1

- ❑ Relatively large private parking yard to rear of properties on Union Street. One of a number of similar sites along Union Road, reinforcing its character as a 'back street', servicing Union Street;
- ❑ It is important to restore the urban fabric along Union Road, defining a sense of enclosure and its reinstatement as a street in its own right, rather than a series of yards. Sites such as this could ultimately be redeveloped to provide mews housing and arts/crafts work-shops;
- ❑ To minimise the impact of car parking, new developments should have limited parking and/or incorporate parking in underground/concealed ground floor spaces;
- ❑ New buildings should front on to Union Road, creating a relatively continuous frontage of cottages and workshops;
- ❑ Where parking yards are not redeveloped, boundary treatments fronting on to Union Road should be enhanced, with recycled brick and/or stone walls replacing poor quality fencing.

28. Union Street/Union Road Opportunity Building/Site

- ❑ Vacant property occupies plot linking Union Road and Union Street;
- ❑ Opportunity to develop yard on Union Road and incorporate pedestrian link between Union Street and Union Road;
- ❑ See **29** above for further details.

29. Union Road Opportunity Site 2

- ❑ See **29** above.

30. Union Road Opportunity Site 3

- ❑ See **29** above.

31. Bravingers Arcade, Union Street/ Globe Workshop, Union Road

- ❑ Building of historic and architectural interest connecting Union Street and Union Road
- ❑ Retail unit on Union Street is currently vacant and should be restored;
- ❑ Globe workshop occupies part of building on Union Road. Potential for expanding this unique space as a tourist attraction, including it on a heritage trail and/or developing museum in an adjacent property.

32. Union Road Opportunity Site 4

- ❑ See **29** above.

33. Royal York Hotel frontage

- ❑ Art Deco landmark building;
- ❑ Opportunity to enhance pavement surfacing and ornamental planting around frontage to reflect the status of the building.;
- ❑ Potential for simple bold architectural planting and limestone paving slabs.

Longer Term Environmental Improvements

34. Newport Street

- ❑ Attractive small-scale street with variety of rendered and stone cottages;
- ❑ Important vista towards All Saints Church spire should be conserved;

- ❑ Street would benefit from resurfacing to reflect its historic setting, for example with the use of stone or high quality concrete setts;
- ❑ Important to enhance street for pedestrians, either widening pavements or providing a shared surface.

35. Victoria Street

- ❑ Victorian semis and terraces with gaps in street frontage for car parking/private yards;
- ❑ Attractive vista towards Ryde Methodist Church with mature tree in the foreground should be conserved;
- ❑ Poor quality pavements with mixture of slabs and concrete surfacing. Mixture of boundary walls lack visual harmony;
- ❑ Street dominated by parked cars;
- ❑ Opportunity to widen footways in places, restricting parking and providing opportunities for street tree planting;
- ❑ Footways should be resurfaced with pre-cast concrete slabs.

36. Garfield Road

- ❑ Commercial street leading to High Street, with converted houses, a filling station and Ryde Methodist Church;
- ❑ Opportunity to enhance paving, using either natural stone or pre-cast concrete paving quality concrete flags and setts. Particular attention should be paid to the setting of the Methodist Church, a local landmark building.

37. Lind Street/ Market Street

- ❑ Regency terrace on southern side of Lind Street and Town Hall/Ryde Theatre on northern side contribute to the grand scale and formal character of the street;
- ❑ Historic character warrants a high quality public realm treatment, with limestone or quality concrete flags;
- ❑ Potential to widen pavements and provide street trees, reducing domination of parked cars.

38. St Thomas Street (southern end)

- ❑ Attractive side street with variety of historic properties facing on to St Thomas' Church gardens;
- ❑ Opportunities for enhancing historic character of street with use of natural stone or pre-cast concrete paving;
- ❑ Narrow width of pavements and carriageway mean street would benefit from a shared-use surface.

39. George Street

- ❑ Wide street with variety of historic villas, many now with commercial uses, but no retail outlets;
- ❑ Attractive long views towards The Solent to the north should be protected;
- ❑ Scale of street would accommodate widening of footpaths to allow for planting of medium sized street trees such as Norway Maple (*Acer platanoides*);
- ❑ Especially important to enhance environment at southern end of street where buses stop;
- ❑ Street should be resurfaced with natural stone or pre-cast concrete paving.

40. St Thomas Street (southern end)

- ❑ Attractive side street with variety of historic properties facing on to St Thomas' Church gardens;
- ❑ Opportunities for enhancing historic character of street with use of natural stone or pre-cast concrete paving;
- ❑ Narrow width of pavements and carriageway mean street would benefit from a shared-use surface.

41. George Street

- ❑ Wide street with variety of historic villas, many now with commercial uses, but no retail outlets;
- ❑ Attractive long views towards The Solent to the north should be protected;
- ❑ Scale of street would accommodate widening of footpaths to allow for planting of medium sized street trees such as Norway Maple (*Acer platanoides*);
- ❑ Especially important to enhance environment at southern end of street where buses stop;

Street should be resurfaced with natural stone or pre-cast concrete paving.

Buildings*Landmark Buildings*

[This section is subject to change with findings of Townscape Heritage Initiative Study]

Ryde Baptist Church

- ❑ Brick built Victorian church with dominant slate roof. Important landmark building in George Street.

Methodist Church, Garfield Road

- ❑ Late nineteenth century limestone church is important focal feature at end of Victoria Road.

Crown Hotel, High Street

- ❑ Coaching inn dating from late eighteenth century. Impact of attractive east façade is currently weakened by the presence of the busy High Street while the Natwest bank screens views towards its northern façade.

Lind Hill

- ❑ Regency terrace is currently screened by Natwest bank. If bank building was redeveloped, Lind Hill would form an attractive edge to Thomas Square.

Ryde Theatre/Town Hall

- ❑ Victorian municipal building with central tower. Grand scale means it forms a main landmark in Lind Street'

The Colonnades, Lind Street

- ❑ Attractive Regency terrace with semi-open walkway and small retail units. Forms attractive enclosing element on northern side of Thomas Square.
- ❑ Setting of building is adversely affected by Natwest Bank building on other side of Lind Street.

St Thomas' Church

- ❑ Victorian stone church with tower. Attractive building in town centre set within mature gardens.
- ❑ Currently awaiting de-consecration and transfer to Isle of Wight Council for community/leisure use.

Brigstocke Terrace

- ❑ Five storey Regency terrace with apartments overlooking St Thomas' Street car-park.

Yelf's Hotel

- ❑ Nineteenth century coaching inn. Important landmark building on western side of Union Road.
- ❑ Popular outdoor seating area has recently been formed from the closure of the eastern end of Yelf Road. (see **1**)

Royal Victoria Arcade

- ❑ Single-storey Victorian arcade connecting Union Street with Church Lane, containing small retail units. Unique building in town centre.
- ❑ Currently in relatively poor condition, with low-value shops. Potential to restore the arcade and enhance its economic potential with a greater range of shops. Suitable location for specialist shops such as arts and crafts showrooms.
- ❑ Important link for pedestrians between St Thomas' Street car park and Union Street. Currently is not well marked or attractive to use. Important to improve access and setting to the rear of the building with resurfacing, a ramp and improved signage in Church Lane.

Royal York Hotel

- ❑ Four storey Art Deco hotel is important focal feature in George Street, both in terms of scale and style.
- ❑ Hotel is currently in need of some restoration. (see **35**)

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