

People First Zone Consultation

Have your say on plans to create a more people-friendly space in Newport High Street and St James' Square

As part of the Newport High Street Heritage Action Zone programme, the Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) Partners have drawn up initial plans to improve Newport High Street and St James' Square. This is part of a series of actions which aim to bring out the town's rich heritage while looking to the future needs of a changing town centre, which needs to become a place full of diverse activities where people want to spend time. We want it to be a place to be proud of.

The proposals prioritise pedestrians over vehicles in some areas to create high-quality spaces where people can move around freely and easily with room to stop and browse in shop windows or chat to a friend on the street. In total around 1,000m² more pedestrian space will be created, for comparison St James' Square is about 750m². This is a mixture of widened footways, extensions to St James' Square and creation of a new plaza in front of The Guildhall.

Plans have been developed by a community design panel, made up of design professionals from Hampshire County Council, local residents, businesses and user groups. The plans also take into account feedback from our previous consultation exercise which gathered views on problems with the town centre's streets.

The plans are at an outline stage and still undergoing further technical evaluation, but we want to ensure the community's input can genuinely influence the final scheme so are seeking your views now. Your feedback will help set a vision for the historic centre of Newport and shape the detailed design stage which will follow on later in the year.

We expect the plans will be delivered in three phases, with work on a first phase early in 2023. Further phases will be dependent on securing additional funding and may even require some changes to the wider road network before they can be implemented. As such, your feedback to the ideas in this consultation will also help inform longer-term work to make the historic centre of Newport a People First Zone.

Newport High Street Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) is a programme of activities to regenerate our historic High Street. The HAZ is a partnership between Newport and Carisbrooke Community Council, Historic England and Isle of Wight Council. You can find out more about the HAZ at iwhaz.uk/town/newport/

Responding to the consultation

You can respond to the consultation online or on paper.

1. Through our online consultation – just visit iwhaz.uk/pfz
2. By completing a printed consultation response form and sending it to Newport High Street Heritage Action Zone, c/o Newport & Carisbrooke Community Council, Granary Court, 128 Pyle Street, Newport, PO30 1JW.

All responses must be received by Wednesday 16th March 2022.

Plan of Proposals



Illustrative plan of the proposed improvements



Indicative view of the areas where pedestrian space will be extended (shown in blue)

Area 1. St James' Square

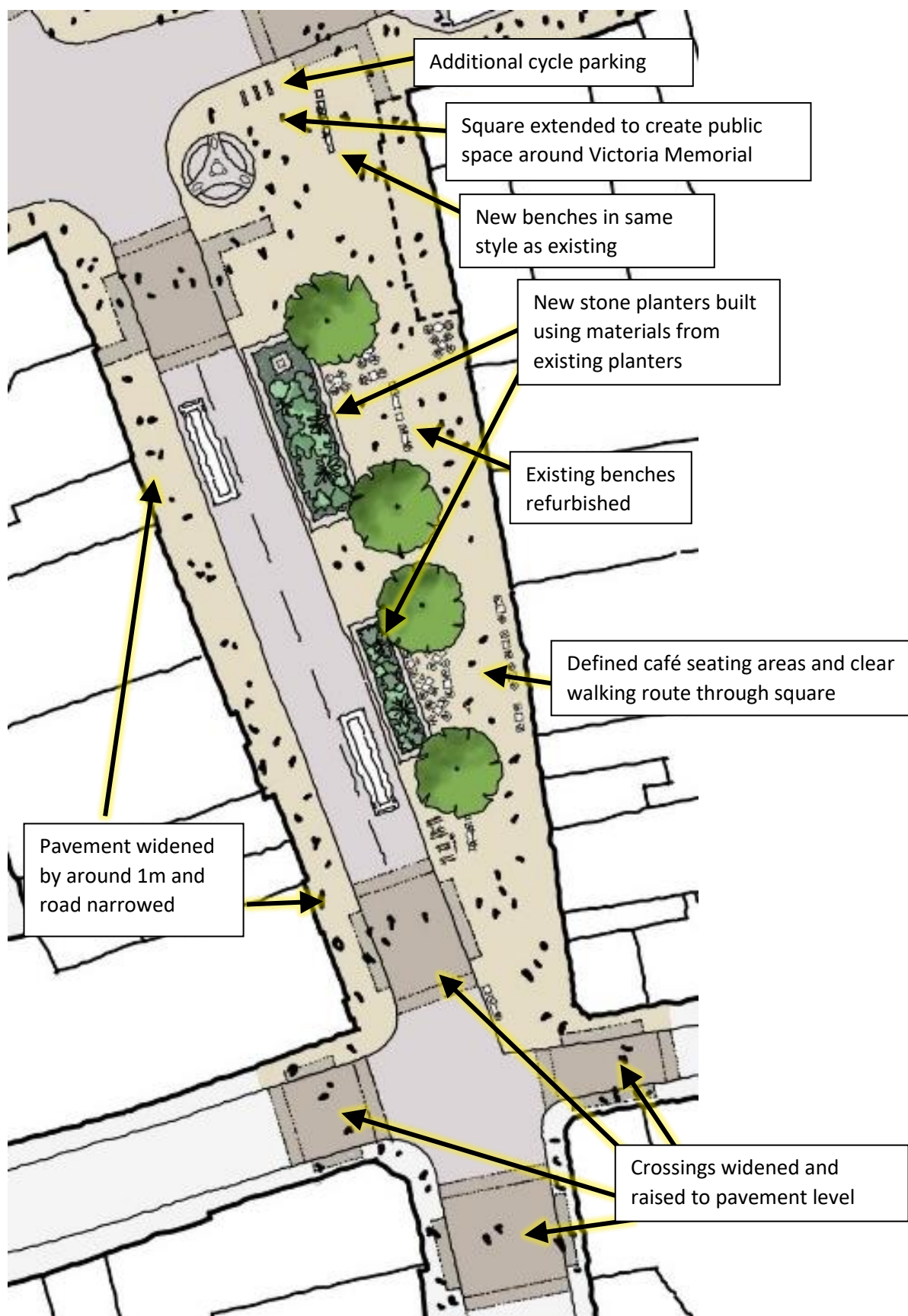
Introduction

The aim here is to improve the quality of this well-used public space, making it easier to use and more attractive, with flexibility to use the square for different purposes, from al fresco dining to events. The plans also seek to enhance the town centre conservation area, particularly the setting of important listed buildings.

Key changes included in the plans

- Extending the square at the High Street end to provide more space for people, ease movements between the various crossings, and improve the setting of the Victoria Memorial and County Club, both listed buildings.
- Repaving the pedestrian square in a consistent material to improve the look and feel of the space.
- Relocating and narrowing the existing stone planters to ensure lots of greenery remains while maximising the amount of flexible space available for activities.
- Refurbishing seating (8 benches) and adding 3 additional benches in similar style.
- Creating defined café seating areas leaving a clear walking route through the square
- Clustering street furniture (benches, posts, cycle parking etc) to reduce clutter.
- Widening the pavement on the west side of the square to give more room for people shopping and walking along this section of the street.
- Narrowing the road to make it easier to cross and reduce traffic speeds.
- Providing additional cycle parking at the north end of the square.
- Creating raised tables at crossing points - these provide a level crossing area for people, with vehicles having to change level. This should particularly improve the crossing for people using wheelchairs, mobility scooters and pushchairs, as well as slowing vehicle speeds.
- Removing the inset loading bay in St James' Square, with alternative provision made on the High Street.

There is also an option to make changes to traffic flow through the square, reducing the number of vehicles. We have created a separate section on this issue, see below.



Illustrative plan of the proposed improvements in St James' Square

How it could look

The images below show photos of the area now and artist's impressions of how it could look if the changes are made.



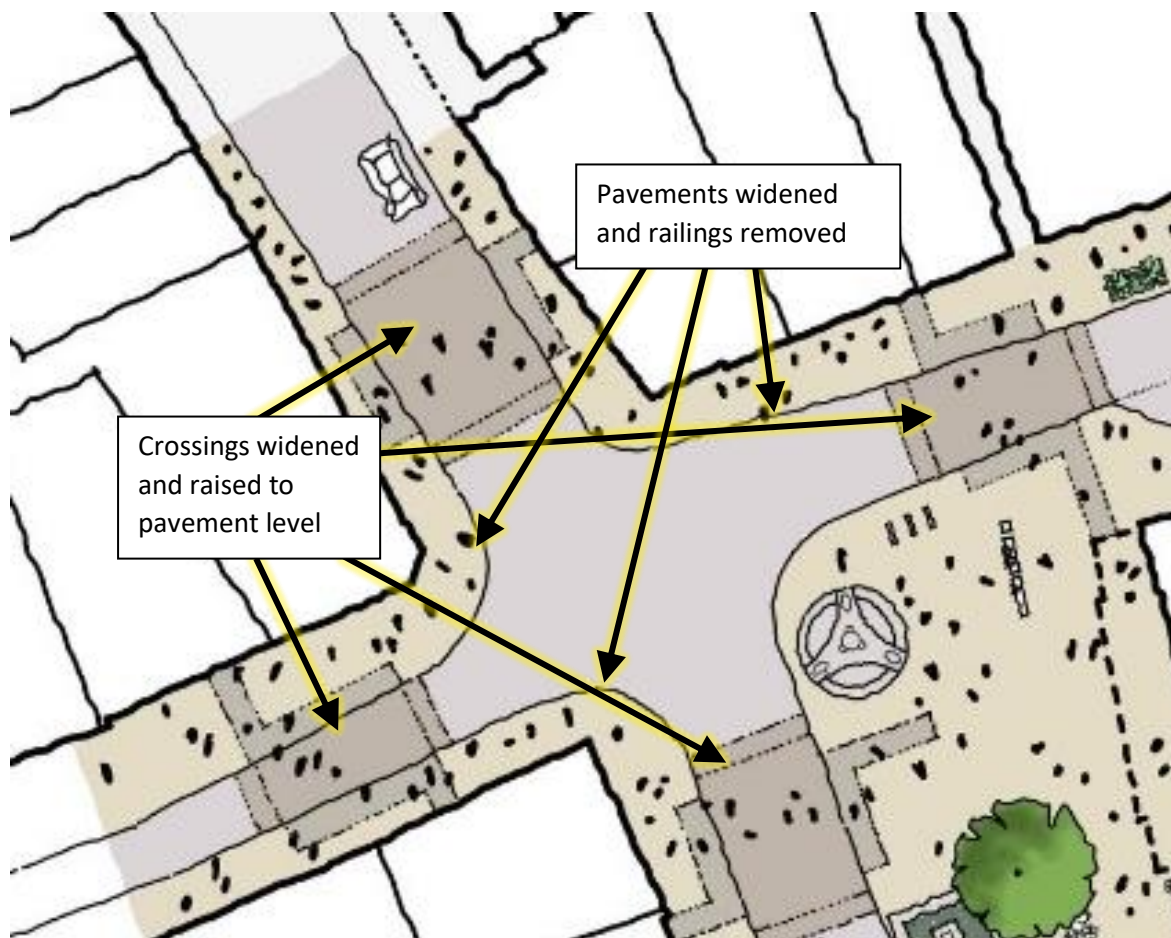
Area 2. High Street/St James Street Junction

Introduction

Improvements to this junction seek to provide more space for pedestrians and reduce the visual impact of the junction on the historic streets of the county town. Movements of buses and delivery vehicles through this area restrict what can be achieved in a fairly confined space, but the plans aim to reprioritise people while still allowing for those vehicle movements.

Key changes included in the plans

- Wider crossing areas to allow more space for people waiting to cross the road.
- Widening of pavements where possible while still allowing for buses and delivery vehicles turning here.
- Raised tables at crossing points - these provide a level crossing area for people, with vehicles having to change level. This should particularly improve the crossing for people using wheelchairs, mobility scooters and pushchairs, as well as slowing vehicle speeds.
- Crossing of the east side of High Street will not have a raised table as the pavement is already at the same level, but the crossing will be visually highlighted.
- Opportunities to provide more crossing time (green man) are currently being assessed.
- Guard rails will be removed to maximise available pavement space.



Illustrative plan of the proposed junction improvements

How it could look

The images below show photos of the area now and artist's impressions of how it could look if the changes are made.



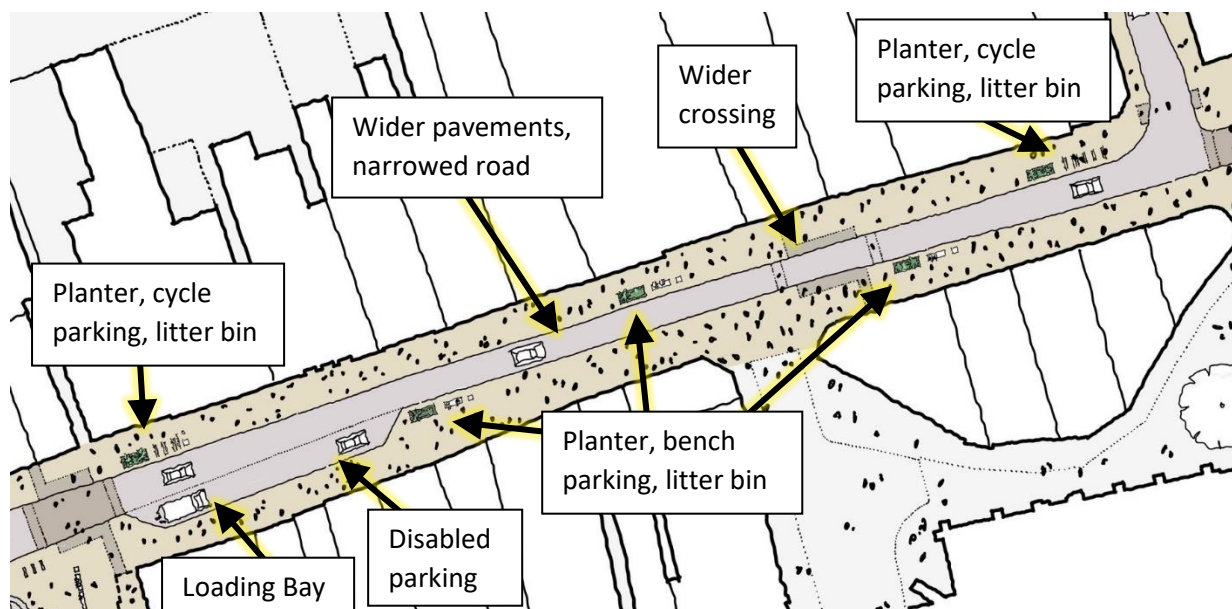
Area 3. High Street (St James Street to The Guildhall)

Introduction

The aim in this area is to rebalance the street to provide more space for people. The majority of the street is currently given over to moving and parked cars, with people squeezed into narrow pavements at the edges. The design aims to change the street to one which is focused first on pedestrians and looks like a public space where people are prioritised. Vehicles are restricted to a single lane and expected to pass through the people-first zone with care.

Key changes included in the plans

- Widening the pavements on both sides of the street to allow more space for people walking, browsing or stopping to chat. This will provide a more suitable width for the nature of the street and the number of people using it.
- Narrowing the road to encourage lower speeds and create a visual appearance that cars are guests in a people-first environment.
- Removing or relocating street furniture (posts, parking meters, planters etc) that can clutter the street and make moving around more difficult.
- Providing two new dedicated parking bays for disabled people
- Retaining and extending the existing High Street loading bay.
- Removing other on-street parking to create more space for pedestrians and reduce risk from manoeuvring vehicles. Alternative parking provision exists nearby in Quay Street, further along the High St and in nearby car parks (several within 3 minutes' walk).
- Repaving the pavements in consistent materials to improve the look of the street.
- New planters, seating and cycle racks, installed in clusters to minimise clutter.
- Creating a much wider pedestrian crossing outside Boots, to provide more waiting space with enough space for people to pass by comfortably as well.



Illustrative plan of the proposed improvements in the High Street

How it could look

The images below show photos of the area now and artist's impressions of how it could look if the changes are made.



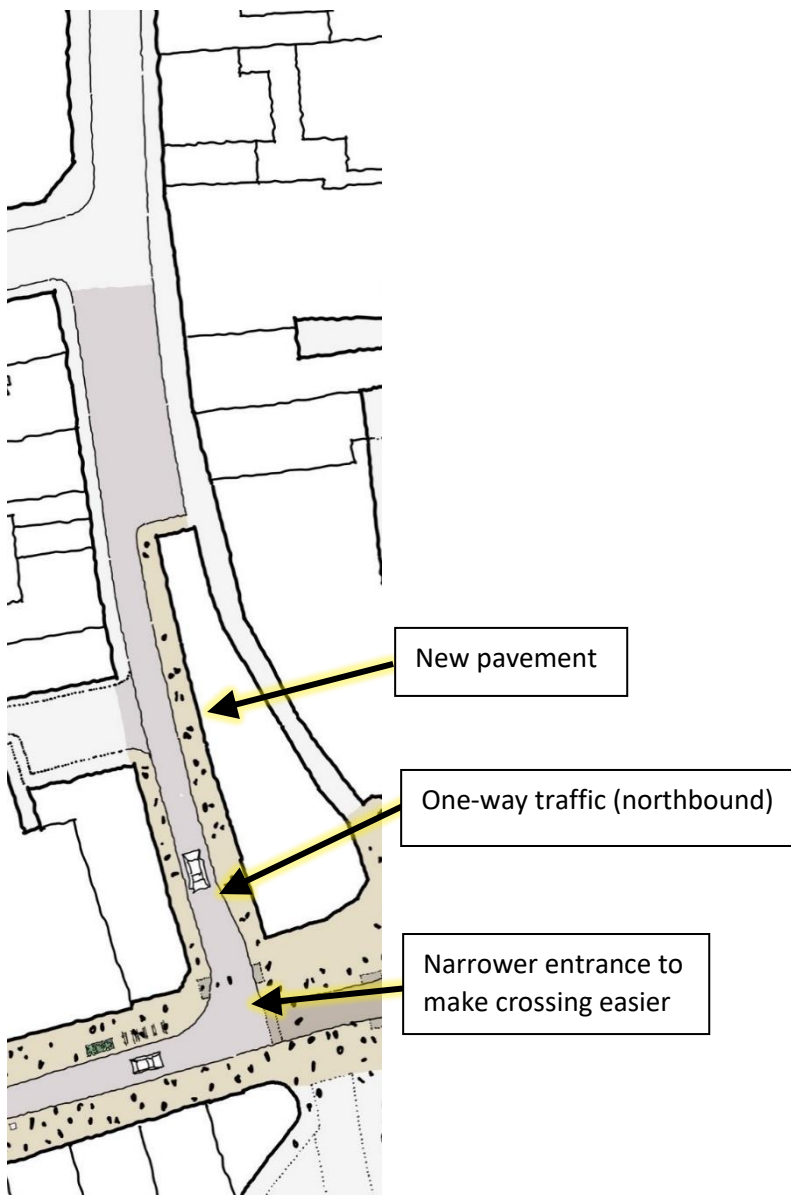
Area 4. Holyrood Street

Introduction

The plans allow improvements to Holyrood Street which has narrow/missing pavements but is very heavily used by pedestrians and forms an important walking route.

Key changes included in the plans

- Creation of a new pavement on the east side of the street.
- Widening of the pavement on the west side to reduce the need for people to walk in the road.
- Narrowing of the junction with High Street and introduction of a one-way restriction to reduce risk to people crossing the road here.



Illustrative plan of the proposed improvements in Holyrood Street

How it could look

The images below show photos of the area now and artist's impressions of how it could look if the changes are made.



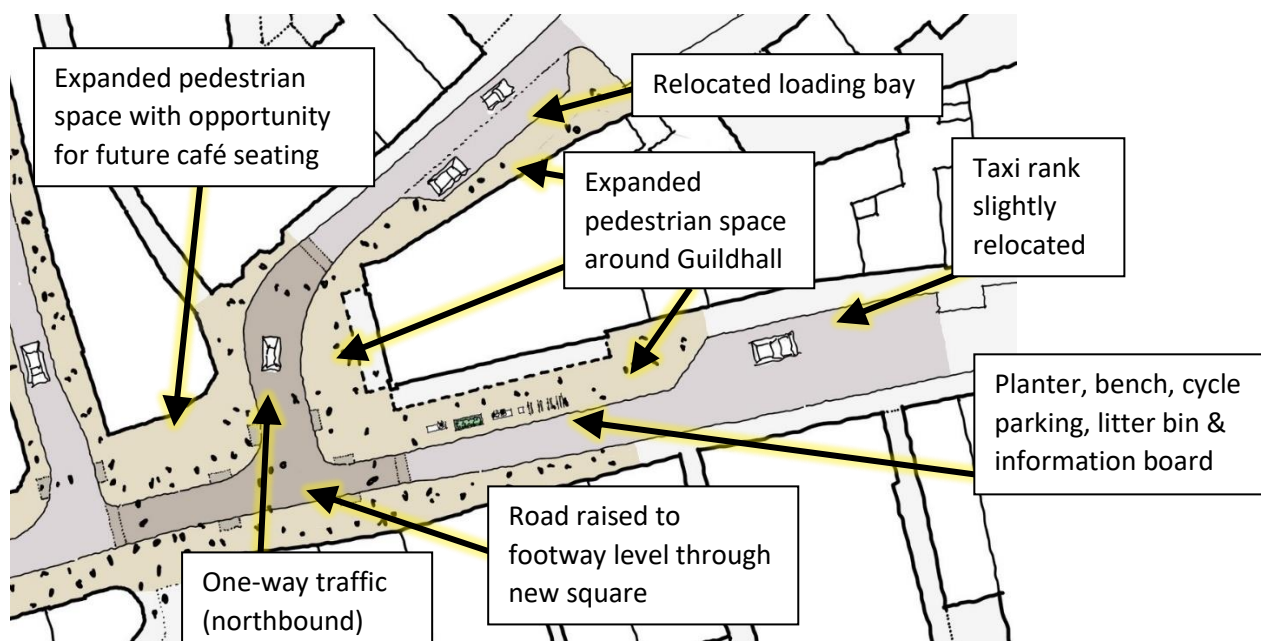
Area 5. Guildhall Square

Introduction

The Guildhall is a landmark building for the town, and another HAZ project is looking at options for bringing the building back to life. Linked with this, improvements to the public areas outside will create more space for people and improve the visual setting of this grade 2* listed building.

Key changes included in the plans

- Creation of a new public space around The Guildhall
- Narrowing the road to slow traffic and visually reinforce the sense of a people-first zone.
- Adding a raised table at the Quay Street junction to provide level pedestrian crossings and slow vehicles.
- Opportunities for café seating between Quay Street and Holyrood Street (subject to the needs of current or future occupiers).
- New planting, seating and cycle parking in clusters to minimise clutter.
- Making Holyrood Street and Quay Street one-way to allow for widened pavements/narrower roads and reduce conflicts between turning cars and people crossing.
- Repaving in consistent material to improve the look and feel of the space.
- Changes to loading bay provision, relocating the existing High St and Quay Street Bays into a new combined loading bay on the south side of Quay Street.
- Relocating the taxi rank slightly to the east to allow for pavement widening by The Guildhall.
- Creating a new pavement alongside The Guildhall, opening up options for different uses of the spaces under the colonnade, improving the setting of this landmark building and providing enhanced public spaces to allow for exciting future uses of The Guildhall.
- Widening of the pavements on both sides of the street to allow more space for people walking, browsing or stopping to chat. This will provide a more suitable width for the nature of the street and the number of people using it.



Illustrative plan of the proposed improvements in St James' Square

How it could look

The images below show photos of the area now and artist's impressions of how it could look if the changes are made.



Optional St James' Square Traffic reduction option

In our previous consultation work one of the main problems people raise is the amount of traffic in the town centre, and the impact that has on noise, air quality, safety and ease of moving about the town.

One option currently being considered alongside the physical changes is restricting motor vehicles in St James' Square to buses in both directions. This would substantially reduce vehicle movements, making it easier to cross the street and reducing traffic noise in St James' Square.

Some exceptions could be made to enable essential access requirements and possibly to allow taxis to use the street.

This option requires minimal physical changes and could be delivered on an experimental basis to test the effectiveness and impacts.

Traffic currently using this route would be diverted via Pyle Street and the High Street, though in practice much of the through traffic is likely to move to other routes around the edge of the town rather than entering the town centre at all.

The remainder of the plans for St James' Square can be delivered with or without this option, and we'd like to hear your views on whether it should be included, subject to further technical evaluation.

Feedback

You can respond to the consultation through our online consultation at iwhaz.uk/pfz or by completing this form and sending it to Newport High Street Heritage Action Zone, c/o Newport & Carisbrooke Community Council, Granary Court, 128 Pyle Street, Newport, PO30 1JW.

All responses must be received by **Wednesday 16th March 2022**.

Please provide feedback on each area highlighted in the consultation document, followed by general feedback on the scheme as a whole.

Area 1. St James' Square

Do you think the proposals will make this area better than it is now? (Please tick one)

☐ Much better ☐ A little better ☐ No change ☐ A little worse ☐ Much worse

Are there any elements of the scheme that you really like? Which ones, and why?

Are there any elements of the scheme that you really do not like? Which ones, and why?

Would you like to give any other feedback on this part of the proposals? You can give feedback on the scheme overall at the end.

In general terms, how strongly do you support this part of the scheme (Please tick one)

☐ Strongly Support ☐ Moderately Support ☐ Indifferent ☐ Moderately Oppose ☐ Strongly Oppose

Area 2. High St/St James St Junction

Do you think the proposals will make this area better than it is now? (Please tick one)

☐ Much better ☐ A little better ☐ No change ☐ A little worse ☐ Much worse

Are there any elements of the scheme that you really like? Which ones, and why?

Are there any elements of the scheme that you really do not like? Which ones, and why?

Would you like to give any other feedback on this part of the proposals? You can give feedback on the scheme overall at the end.

In general terms, how strongly do you support this part of the scheme (Please tick one)

☐ Strongly Support ☐ Moderately Support ☐ Indifferent ☐ Moderately Oppose ☐ Strongly Oppose

Area 3. High Street (St James Street to The Guildhall)

Do you think the proposals will make this area better than it is now? (Please tick one)

☐ Much better ☐ A little better ☐ No change ☐ A little worse ☐ Much worse

Are there any elements of the scheme that you really like? Which ones, and why?

Are there any elements of the scheme that you really do not like? Which ones, and why?

Would you like to give any other feedback on this part of the proposals? You can give feedback on the scheme overall at the end.

In general terms, how strongly do you support this part of the scheme (Please tick one)

☐ Strongly Support ☐ Moderately Support ☐ Indifferent ☐ Moderately Oppose ☐ Strongly Oppose

Area 4. Holyrood Street

Do you think the proposals will make this area better than it is now? (Please tick one)

☐ Much better ☐ A little better ☐ No change ☐ A little worse ☐ Much worse

Are there any elements of the scheme that you really like? Which ones, and why?

Are there any elements of the scheme that you really do not like? Which ones, and why?

Would you like to give any other feedback on this part of the proposals? You can give feedback on the scheme overall at the end.

In general terms, how strongly do you support this part of the scheme (Please tick one)

☐ Strongly Support ☐ Moderately Support ☐ Indifferent ☐ Moderately Oppose ☐ Strongly Oppose

Area 5. Guildhall Square

Do you think the proposals will make this area better than it is now? (Please tick one)

☐ Much better ☐ A little better ☐ No change ☐ A little worse ☐ Much worse

Are there any elements of the scheme that you really like? Which ones, and why?

Are there any elements of the scheme that you really do not like? Which ones, and why?

Would you like to give any other feedback on this part of the proposals? You can give feedback on the scheme overall at the end.

In general terms, how strongly do you support this part of the scheme (Please tick one)

☐ Strongly Support ☐ Moderately Support ☐ Indifferent ☐ Moderately Oppose ☐ Strongly Oppose

Optional St James' Square Traffic reduction option

Do you think the proposals will make this area better than it is now? (Please tick one)

☐ Much better ☐ A little better ☐ No change ☐ A little worse ☐ Much worse

Would you like to give any other feedback on this part of the proposals? You can give feedback on the scheme overall at the end.

In general terms, how strongly do you support this part of the scheme (Please tick one)

☐ Strongly Support ☐ Moderately Support ☐ Indifferent ☐ Moderately Oppose ☐ Strongly Oppose

Your response to the overall plan

Do you think the proposals will make this area better than it is now? (Please tick one)

☐ Much better ☐ A little better ☐ No change ☐ A little worse ☐ Much worse

In general terms, how strongly do you support the overall plan (Please tick one)

☐ Strongly Support ☐ Moderately Support ☐ Indifferent ☐ Moderately Oppose ☐ Strongly Oppose

If the plans were modified to take account of any specific issues you have raised, how strongly would you then support the overall plan?

☐ Strongly Support ☐ Moderately Support ☐ Indifferent ☐ Moderately Oppose ☐ Strongly Oppose

How do the current traffic arrangements in the town centre impact on your experience of the town?

☐ Very Negatively ☐ Moderately Negatively ☐ No impact ☐ Moderately Positively ☐ Very Negatively

Are there any aspects of the current traffic arrangement in the town centre that you particularly like or dislike?

Would having more pedestrian space make your experience of the town better?

☐ Much better ☐ A little better ☐ No change ☐ A little worse ☐ Much worse

Would reducing the amount of traffic in the town centre improve your experience of the town, if there were suitable alternative routes around the centre?

☐ A lot ☐ A little ☐ Not at all

About you

Where do you live?

☐ Newport/Carisbrooke/Gunville ☐ Elsewhere on the Isle of Wight ☐ Not on the Isle of Wight

How would you describe your gender?

☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other description

What was your age on your last birthday?

☐ Under 16 ☐ 16-24 ☐ 25-34
☐ 35-44 ☐ 45-54 ☐ 55-64
☐ 65-74 ☐ 75-84 ☐ 85 or over

Which of the following best describes how often you generally visit Newport town centre?

☐ Daily ☐ Two or more times per week ☐ Once a week
☐ Once a month ☐ Once every six months ☐ Once a year

How do you normally travel to Newport town centre (tick all that apply)

☐ Walking ☐ Bicycle ☐ Bus
☐ Car/Van (driver) ☐ Car/van (passenger) ☐ Other

What is the main way you normally travel to Newport town centre (tick one only)

☐ Walking ☐ Bicycle ☐ Bus
☐ Car/Van (driver) ☐ Car/van (passenger) ☐ Other

Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted or is expected to last at least 12 months?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Prefer not to say

If you are responding for a business or organisation, please specify the business/organisation name

Thank you for taking the time to respond, please send your completed response to:

Newport High Street Heritage Action Zone, c/o Newport & Carisbrooke Community Council, Granary Court,
128 Pyle Street, Newport, PO30 1JW.