Headington Centre Improvement Plan

Phase 2 Report - Final

February 2023

ARU

Control sheet

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This report has been produced on behalf of Headington Action by AR Urbanism in collaboration with project partners Wedderburn Transport Planning in February 2023.

Contents

Introduction

1.0   Setting the Scene

1.1   Project Background

1.1.1   This document is the draft Headington Centre Improvement Plan (HCIP). It captures work done in terms of understanding Headington Centre and ideas for improvements that have been developed subsequently.

1.1.2   Headington is a vibrant neighbourhood in the eastern area of the city of Oxford, with a strong and diverse community, a rich history - including a high number of listed buildings - in an attractive setting. Headington is a multifunctional neighbourhood; a highly residential area with a growing population which is also home to a larger number of renowned institutions and universities standing at the forefront of innovation, science, research and education in the UK.

1.1.3   At the heart of Headington neighbourhood is Headington Centre. The centre is focused on the retail area along the busy A420 London Road, and also extends north and south along Windmill Road and the Old High Street to include retail along here as well as the two public car parks. The centre is home to over 150 businesses providing amenities for a wide catchment area that includes; Headington, Wood Farm, Northway, Marston, Barton, Sandhills and Risinghurst. The centre also includes the entrance to Bury Knowle Park, at the park's south-western corner.

1.1.4   The heavily trafficked A420 London Road is a major arterial route connecting to Oxford City Centre. Previous efforts undertaken by the Oxfordshire County Council to improve London Road in Headington Centre (between 2009 and 2011) made significant changes to the streetscene and amenity. However despite this, London Road remains traffic-dominated and lacks a strong sense of identity.

1.1.5   The centre is home to an array of shops and services and facilities catering for local residents, workers and visitors - including the busy Saturday Market. However, like town centres across the UK it is being affected by significant social, economic and lifestyle changes. Moreover, the wide array of business, medical and educational institutions located in the Neighbourhood Plan area are not visible in the centre.

1.1.6   There is a need to revitalise the centre of Headington to meet 21st Century demands, better prepare it for future challenges, and strengthen its identity while catering for the needs of local residents, workers and businesses.

1.1.7   Headington Action (HA) and Headington Neighbourhood Forum (HNF) have been making efforts to help improve the area. In 2021 Headington Action, working with residents and stakeholders prepared a vision for the future of Headington Centre, with the following key strategic objectives:

- It will be welcoming, inclusive, and easily accessible for all, encouraging active and sustainable travel;

- It will have lively and vibrant gathering spaces;

- It will provide an extended hours economy and a mix of services for our diverse demography; and

- It will reflect the presence of local institutions.

1.2   This study

1.2.1   In May 2022 HA and HNF, with the support of Oxford City Council (OCC), commenced work on the Headington Centre Improvement Plan (HCIP). HA commissioned urban design practice AR Urbanism, with the support of Wedderburn Transport Planning, to prepare the HCIP to implement the above vision. The HCIP is intended to identify specific interventions which can be used to incrementally deliver the vision for Headington Centre.

1.2.2   The HCIP describes a range of different potential improvement projects across the study area. Projects include range from small measures; short-term wins to larger interventions; longer-term strategies.

1.2.3   The preparation of the HCIP has been funded by OCC via Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding. The implementation of proposed interventions and projects will progress incrementally as and when funding becomes available, over the course of the Headington Neighbourhood Plan period, 2017-2032.

1.3   Document Structure

1.3.1   The first report has been prepared by the consultant team, and is structured into four main sections, as described below.

- **Introduction** provides context and background in terms of planning policy, relevant studies, previous engagement activity, socio-economic considerations and national trends.

- **Baseline Analysis** comprises a wide-ranging analysis that sets out the design team's understanding of Headington Centre as a place covering townscape, natural environment, uses and amenities, movement, and property. This includes a summary of the initial engagement activities undertaken in Phase 1 of the project, and concludes with a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats (SWOT) analysis.

- **Vision and Design Themes** illustrates the vision for Headington Centre, which is then expressed as a set of six design objectives. This forms a precursor and framework for potential ideas for improvements.

- **Improvement Ideas** describes the potential projects that form the heart of the HCIP. Ten key projects are presented in detail with imagery and guiding principles for subsequent design development. A further set of potential additional projects are summarised in brief, along with supporting measures.

- **Appendix A: Engagement** summarises all stakeholder and community engagement undertaken

- **Appendix B: Level change study** provides further detail reviewing level changes within London Road.

Fig 1. Headington Centre in the wider neighbourhood context (not to scale)

Old Headington

Old High Street

Bury Knowle Park

LONDON

A420

London Road

Windmill Road
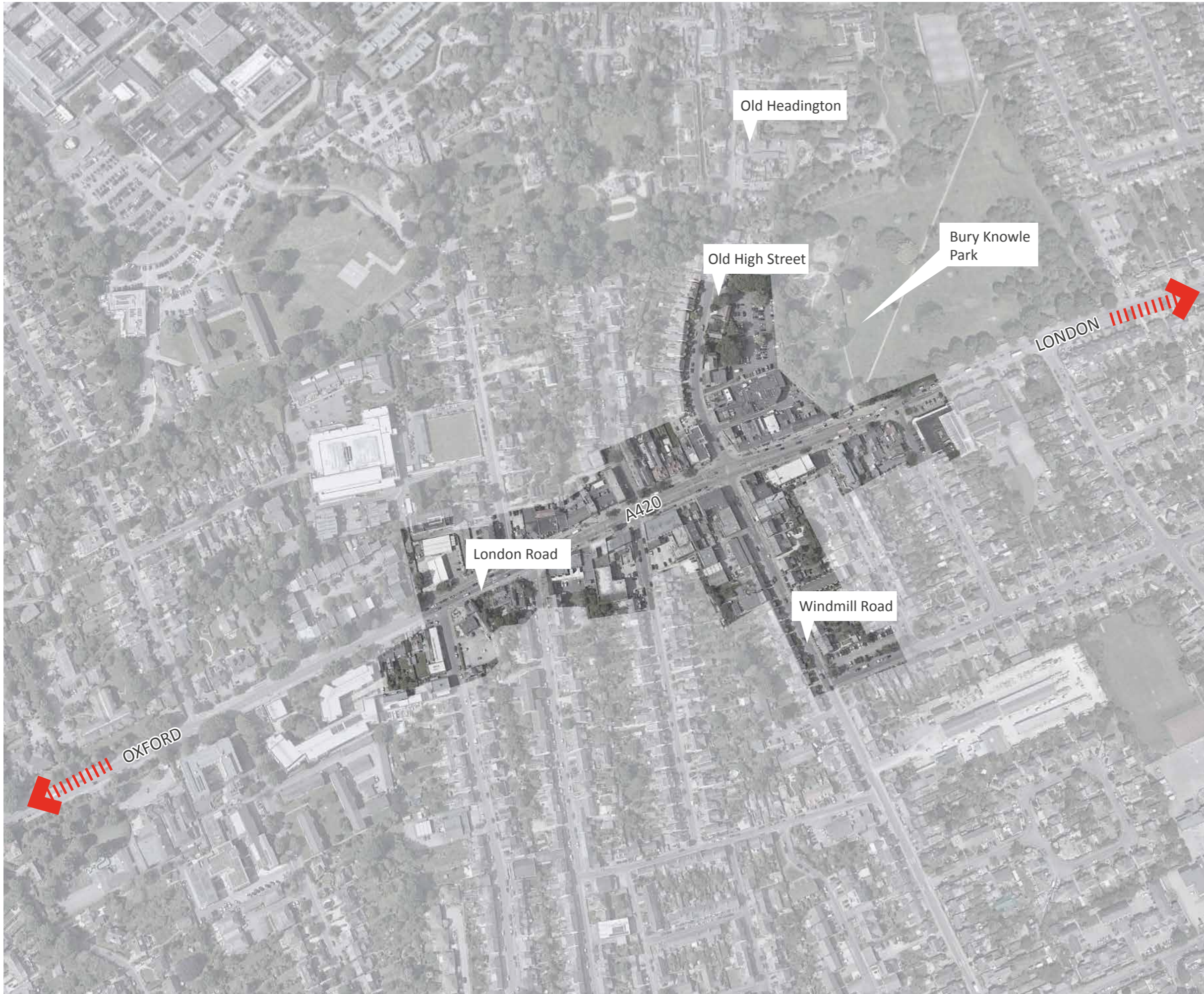
OXFORD

2.0   Context

2.1   Overview

2.1.1   The neighbourhood of Headington is on the eastern edge of Oxford, located approximately 3.4km from the City Centre, at the top of Headington Hill overlooking the city. Headington borders Marston to the north-west, Cowley to the south, and Barton and Risinghurst to the east.

2.1.2   Headington District Centre- as defined in the Oxford Local Plan - is focussed on the main arterial of the A420 London Road the main road between London and Oxford. The district centre boundary encompasses a wide range of retail and services, the majority of which are concentrated around the crossroads of London Road with Windmill Road and Old High Street, and along London Road west of this junction. The centre offers services including banks and estate agents, as well as a local library in Bury Knowle Park. There is a mix of national chains and independent businesses in the area. A large proportion of the food and drink offer is independent, notably on Windmill Road and the western end of London Road.

2.1.3   There are a large number of institutions of national importance in Headington neighbourhood including the Oxford Brookes University Headington Campus, the John Radcliffe Hospital, Ruskin College, Churchill Hospital, University of Oxford - Old Road Campus, Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre, the Wood Centre for Innovation, and Science Centre Oxford. These sites variously attract a large number of workers, students and visitors. This richness of local institutions is not currently visible in the centre.

2.1.4   For this study, Headington Centre is defined as the area along London Road, stretching east-west between the Coop and south-western corner of Bury Knowle Park to the Shell Garage, and north-south between Waitrose car park entrance and the St Leonard's Road/Windmill Road junction. The heart of Headington Centre is at the crossroads of London Road and Windmill Road / Old High Street.
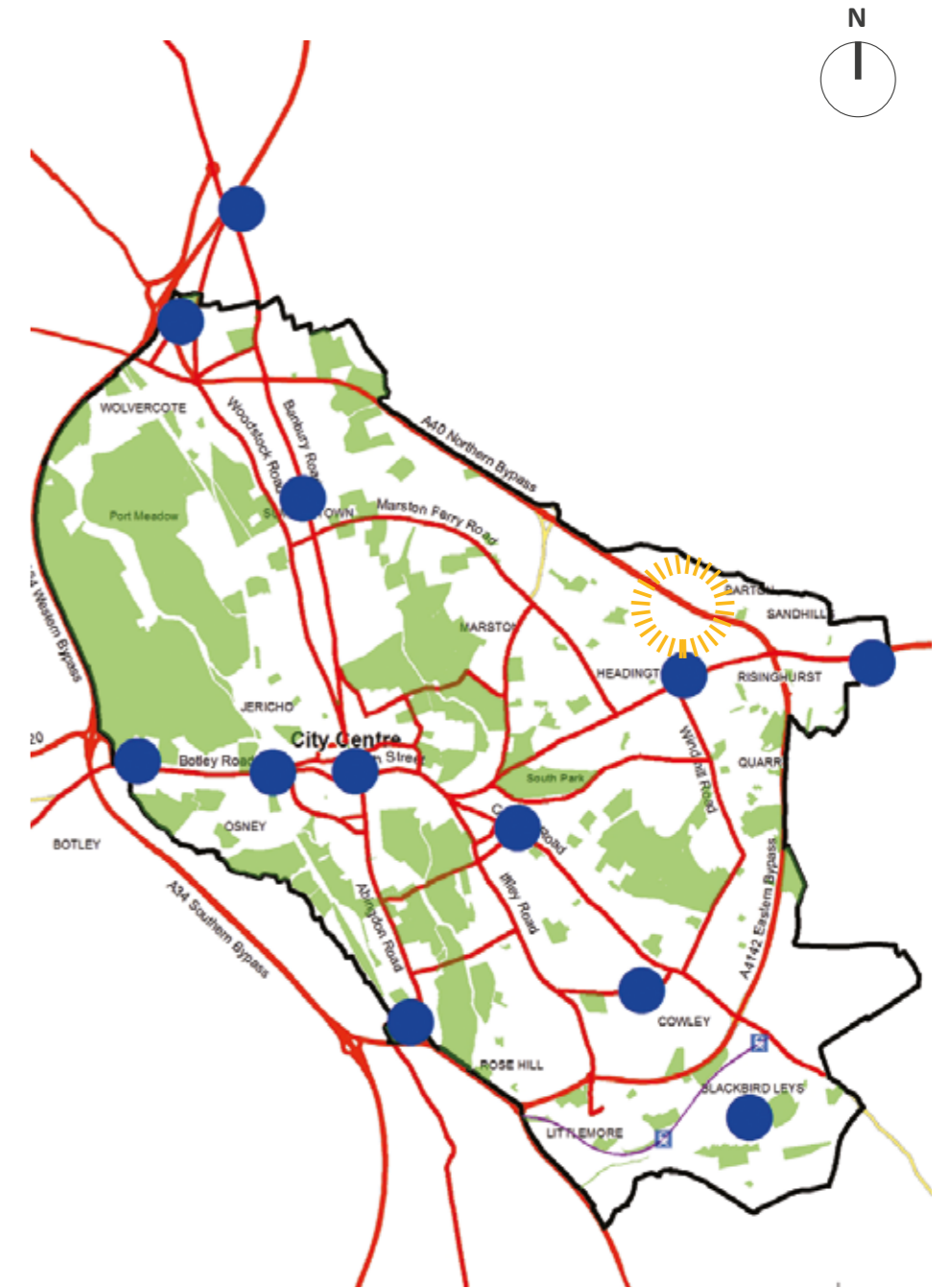

Fig 2. Site location in Oxford
(source: Oxford Local Plan, Spatial Strategy Map, not to scale)

2.2   Socio-economic profile

2.2.1   The following is a summary of key socio-economic data for Headington Ward - which Headington centre falls within - based on information from Oxford City Council and District Data Service published in January 2021. 2021 Census data is not yet available at ward level.

2.2.2   Population: According to ONS 2020 Mid-Year estimates, the population of Headington was around 6,244 people. 46% of the population are men, and 54% women. In terms of ethnicity, there are fewer White British residents than the national average, and more Non-White and White Non-British residents.

2.2.3   In terms of age structure, Headington Ward's population sits between the Oxford and National averages for working age (ages 16-64) and ages 65+. However it is below average for the 0-15 year age cohort; 17% of the population compared with the national average of 19%. The largest cohort is working age, at 66%, higher than the national average of 62%.

2.2.4   Economic Activity: Economic activity rate measures the proportion of people of working age either in employment or unemployed but seeking work. Within Headington Ward, there is a total of 3,166 economically active people, or 73%. This figure is substantially greater than the averages for both Oxford and England; 63% and 70% respectively. The average annual household income in the Headington Ward is £58,400 compared to the national average of £43,966.

2.2.5   Qualifications: Headington Ward has a relatively low proportion of working age residents with no qualifications; 9% of the population compared with a national average of 23%. 60% of working age people have qualifications of degree level or higher, significantly greater than the national average of 27%.

2.2.6   Unemployment: Department for Work and Pensions figures show only 1.8% of the resident working age population claim unemployment benefits; below the national average of 5%. Youth (18-24 age cohort) unemployment figures indicate only 1% unemployment, compared to 5% nationally.

2.2.7   Access and Transport: Households where no car is owned in Headington Ward is higher compared with the England average; 30% to 26% respectively. A slightly larger proportion of households have access to one car than average; 45% to 42% respectively.

2.2.8   Community Needs: These indicators consider factors relating poor community and civic infrastructure, relative isolation and low levels of participation in community life. It shows that Headington scores higher than the England average on some factors such as satisfaction with the local area as a place to live (83% compared to 79%) and getting on with people from other backgrounds (82% compared to 76%), but notably less well on feeling part of the neighbourhood (49% compared to 59% respectively).
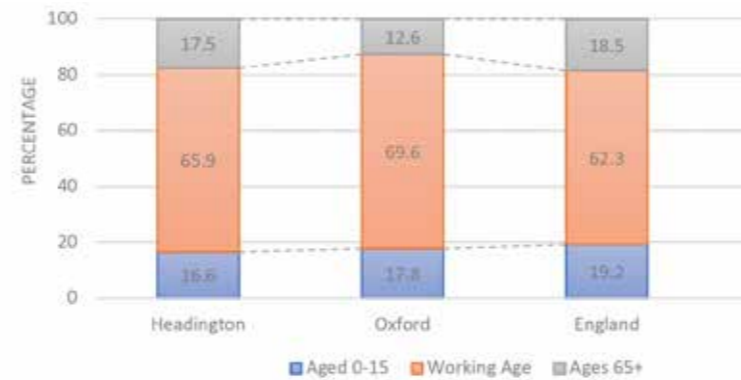
Fig 3. Population by age cohort comparing Headington (left) to Oxford and England (right)
(Source: Mid-Year Estimates (ONS) 2020/Oxford City Council and District Data Service)
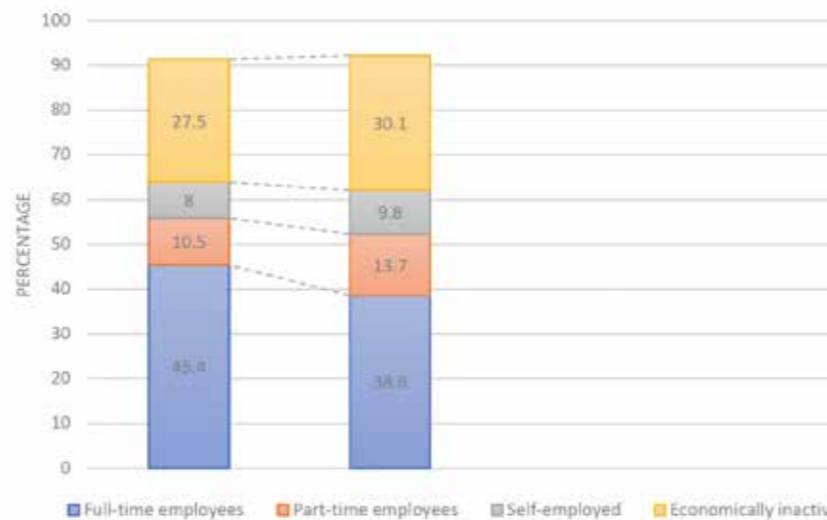
Fig 4. Economic activity comparing Headington (left) and Oxford (right)
(Source: Census 2011/ Oxford City Council and District Data Service)
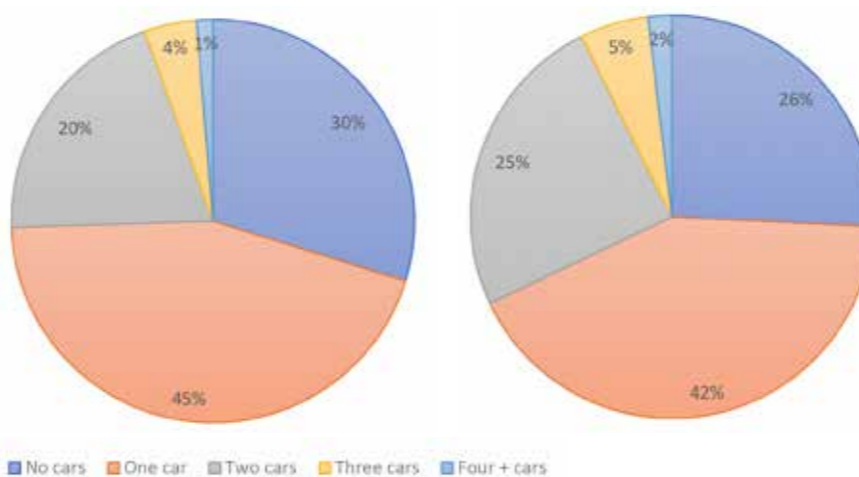
Fig 5. Car access compared between Headington (left) and England (right)
(Source: Census 2011/ Oxford City Council and District Data Service)
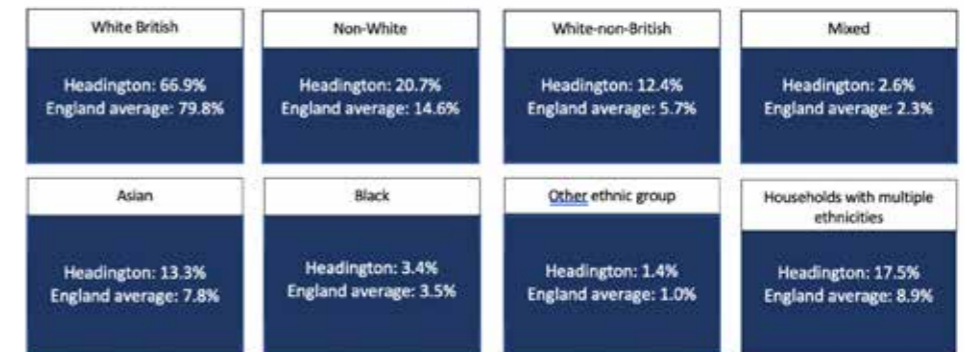
Fig 6. Ethnicity in Headington compared with England
(Source: Census 2011/ Oxford City Council and District Data Service)

Fig 7. Community needs identified in Headington
Source: Place Survey/Charity Commission/Oxford City Council and District Data Service (OCSI)

2.3   Planning Policy Context

National Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework

2.3.1   The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how they are expected to be applied. It champions sustainable development through detailed guidelines under thirteen subheadings including:
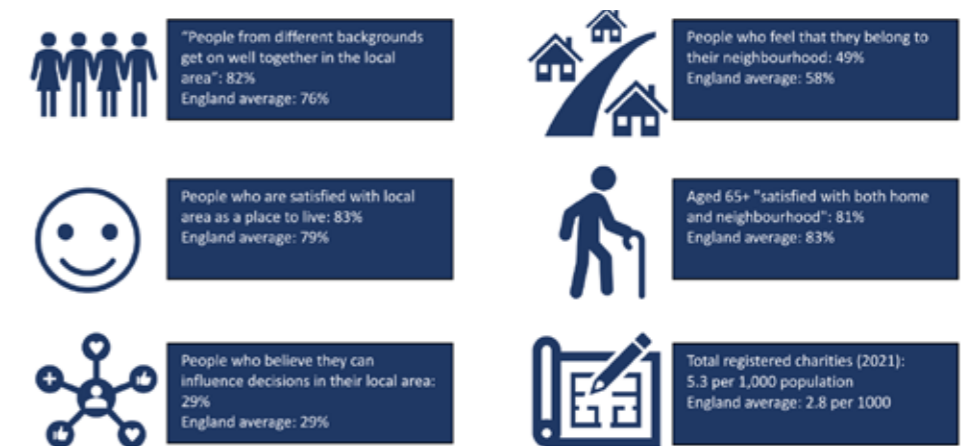
- Building a strong, competitive economy
- Ensuring the vitality of town centres
- Supporting a prosperous rural economy
- Promoting sustainable transport
- Supporting high quality communications infrastructure
- Delivering a wide choice of high-quality homes
- Requiring good design
- Promoting healthy communities
- Protecting Green Belt land
- Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
- Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals.

2.3.2   In paragraph 23 'ensuring the vitality of town centres' the NPPF states that planning policies should be positive and promote competitive town centre environments. It states that Local Plans, should:

- Recognise town centres as the heart of their communities and pursue policies to support their viability and vitality.
- Define a network and hierarchy of centres.
- Define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas, based on a clear definition of primary and secondary frontages in designated centres, and set policies that make clear which uses will be permitted in such locations.
- Promote competitive town centres that provide customer choice and a diverse retail offer.

- Retain and enhance existing markets and, where appropriate, re-introduce or create new ones.
- Allocate a range of suitable sites to meet the scale and type of retail and leisure development needed in town centres.
- Ensure that the needs for retail and leisure are "met in full" and "not compromised by limited site availability". Assessments should therefore be undertaken of the need to expand town centres to ensure a sufficient supply of suitable sites.
- Allocate appropriate edge of centre sites for main town centre uses that are well connected to the town centre where suitable and viable town centre sites are not available. If sufficient edge of centre sites cannot be identified, set policies for meeting the identified needs in other accessible locations that are well connected to the town centre.
- Set policies for the consideration of proposals for main town centre uses which cannot be accommodated in or adjacent to town centres.
- Recognise that residential development can play an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres and set out policies to encourage residential development on appropriate sites.
- Where town centres are in decline, local planning authorities should plan positively for their future to encourage economic activity.

Local Planning Policy

The Oxford Core Strategy 2026

2.3.3   The Oxford Core Strategy 2026 (adopted 2011) in Policy CS1 'Hierarchy of Centres" defines Oxford's hierarchy of centres as follows:

- City Centre
- Primary District Centre (Cowley)
- District Centres (Blackbird Leys, Cowley Road, Headington and Summertown)
- Neighbourhood Centres

2.3.4   Policy CS1 states that District centres, and their immediate surroundings, are appropriate locations for medium to high-density development for retail, leisure, employment and other uses serving district-level needs. Planning permission will be granted for new development provided it is of an appropriate scale and design, and maintains or improves the mix of uses available.

Oxford Local Plan 2036

2.3.5   Oxford Local Plan 2036 (OLP) is the main planning document at the local level. It provides a planning policy framework for sustainable economic growth and expansion of Oxford up to 2036.

2.3.6   The study area falls within Headington District Centre which is described by OLP as an 'area of change', where significant change is expected or best directed.

2.3.7   Policy AOC6 relates to Headington District Centre 'area of change' and states that "planning permission will be granted for new development within the area of change where it would take opportunities to deliver the following, where relevant:

- Improve connectivity across London Road;
- Make more efficient use of land by consolidating uses and through infill and taller development;
- Enhance the public realm."

2.3.8   The key considerations mentioned in the policy include the following:

- "The setting of listed buildings within the area and also the impact on the historic character of adjoining Conservation Areas (Headington Hill, Old Headington and Headington Quarry)."
- "The centre is characterised by 2-3 storey, moderate sized terraced properties (...) There may be an opportunity to redevelop some of these sites in a more intensive way which would still be in keeping with the character and the function of the centre."
- "At 15m (approximately 5 storeys) and above buildings may create a skylining effect in views from Elsfield and will need careful design and justification."

2.3.9   The vision for the centre in this policy is to "create a high quality environment that builds on the community function of the district centre".

2.3.10   Policy M1 is also relevant, and relates to prioritising walking, cycling, and public transport. It states that "planning permission will only be granted for development that minimises the need to travel and is laid out and designed in a way that prioritises access by walking, cycling and public transport."

2.3.11   Selected key elements mentioned that are relevant include:

- Ensure that the urban environment is permeable and safe to walk through and adequately lit, with good and direct connections both within and across the wider network.

- Make improvements to the pedestrian environment including the provision of high quality crossings points where needed, seating, signage and landscaping.
- Support high quality public realm improvement works (refer to Policy DH1) and ensure that footways are sufficiently wide to accommodate the level of use.
- Provide connected, high quality, convenient and safe (segregated where possible) cycle routes.
- Provide cycle parking facilities.
- Ensuring that road space is managed efficiently to support public transport.
- Supporting the County Council in their management of both scheduled and tourist coaches.
- Promoting bus/rapid transit access to and between major employers, hospitals, schools and colleges in the Eastern Arc (including the Headington and Marston area), Wolvercote/Cutteslowe and Cowley and Littlemore.
- Ensuring sufficient space is provided particularly within the city centre and district centres.

2.3.12   Policy V4 relates to district and local centre shopping frontages. It states that: "planning permission will only be granted at ground floor level within Headington Centre for the following uses:

- Class A1 (retail) uses; or
- Class A2 – A5 (financial and professional services, restaurant, pub and take-away) uses where the proposed development would not result in the proportion of units at ground floor level in Class A1 use falling below 50% of the total number of units within the defined Shopping Frontage; or
- Other town centre uses where the proportion of A1 does not fall below 50% of the total number of units within the defined Shopping Frontage and the proportion of Class A uses does not fall below 85% of the total number of units within the defined Shopping Frontage."

Conservation Areas

2.3.13   There are three conservation areas in Headington; Old Headington, Headington Quarry and Headington Hill.

2.3.14   Old Headington Conservation Area encompasses Bury Knowle Park and borders Headington Centre, while Headington Hill conservation area is adjacent to the centre in the west. (See more in chapter 3; History and Heritage).

Legend

- Oxford City Boundary
- Areas of Change
- DH2 - View Cones
- DH2 - Historic Core Area
- DH4 - City Centre Archaeological Area
- RE3 - Flood Zone 3b
- RE3 - Flood Zone 3a
- RE3 - Flood Zone 2
- E1 - Category 1 Employment Sites
- Allocated Sites
- G5 - Outdoor Sports
- G4 - Allotments
- G2 - Oxford City Wildlife Sites
- M1 - Local Cycle Connection Routes
- G2 - Local Wildlife Sites
- G3 - Green Belt
- G2 - SACs
- G2 - Natural England SSSI
- Northern Gateway AAP
- Barton AAP
- G1 - Green and Blue Infrastructure Network
- V1 - City Centre
- V1 - District Centre
- V1 - Local Centre
- V1 - Primary Shopping Area
- V2 - City Centre Secondary Shopping Frontage
- V2 - City Centre Primary Shopping Frontage
- V2 - Westgate Shopping Frontage
- V3 - Covered Market Shopping Frontage
- V4 - District Centre Shopping Frontage
- V4 - Local Centre Shopping Frontage
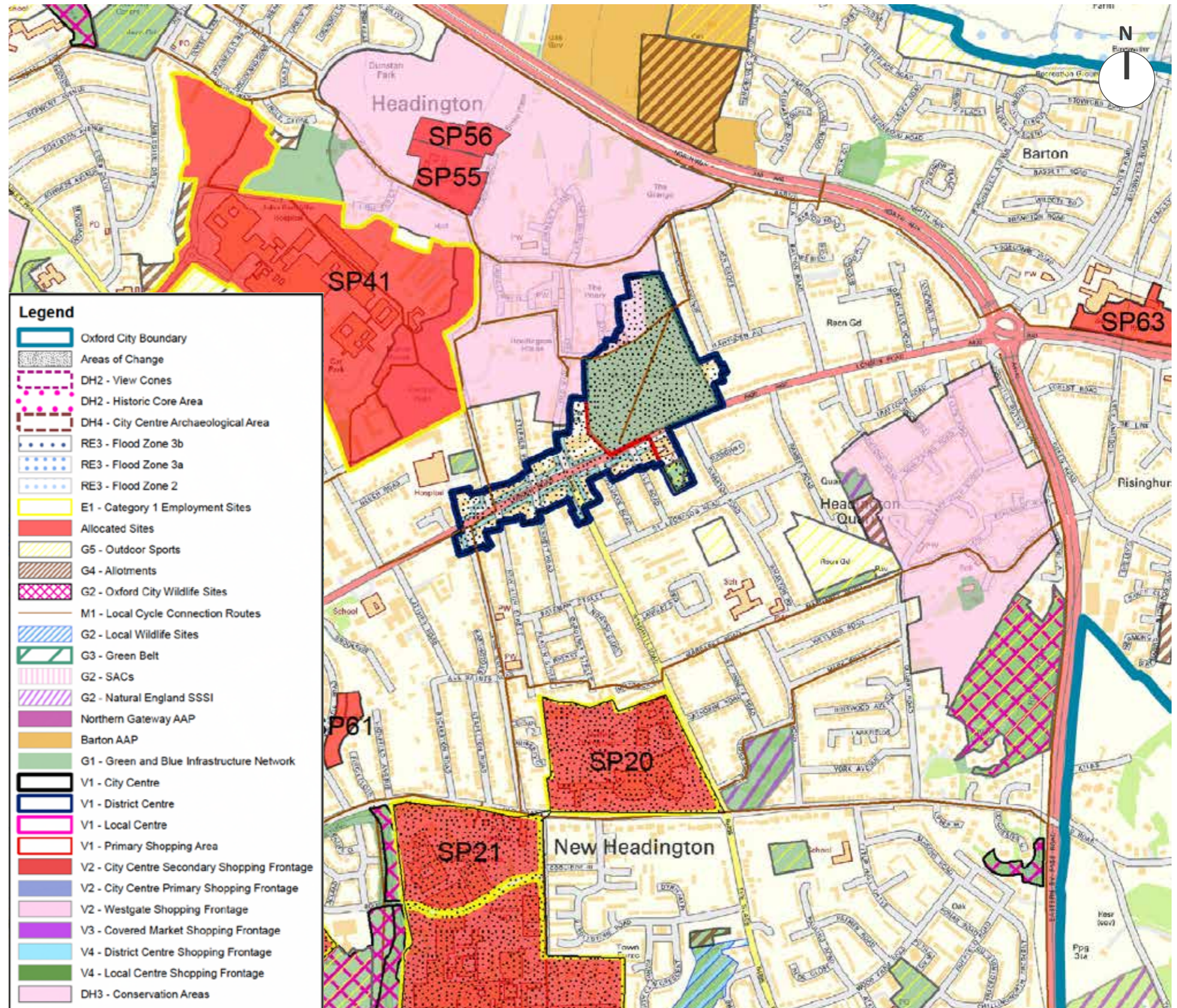- DH3 - Conservation Areas

Fig 8. Oxford Local Plan, policy map Headington District Centre

Headington Neighbourhood Plan 2017-2032

2.3.15   The Headington Neighbourhood Forum prepared a Neighbourhood Plan for the Headington Neighbourhood Area, which was adopted in 2017. The Headington Neighbourhood Plan (HNP) is used to guide future development and manage change alongside Oxford's Local Plan.

2.3.16   HNP celebrates the diversity and identity of Headington neighbourhood. It seeks to work towards balancing the opportunities in Headington in order to provide a healthy, positive and vibrant environment for people to live, work and study in.

2.3.17   The Plan has three overarching objectives which guide policy making throughout the Neighbourhood Plan process. These are:

- Improving the quality of life for residents, workers and students.
- Establishing and promoting an identity which embraces the diverse nature of Headington.
- Fostering beneficial development.

2.3.18   The planning and community policies and associated projects set out in the Plan seek to deliver the Vision and Aims. Each policy is designed to deliver at least one of the aims. They will be implemented over the coming ten years and by 2032 Headington neighbourhood will be improved in the following ways.

- **A greener place** - It will be greener with the existing parks and smaller green spaces enhanced and more green spaces created within new developments. The green setting both within and around Headington will be protected and enhanced. Biodiversity within Headington will thrive through increased protection and more imaginative planting and stronger green corridors.
- **Better amenities** - There will be an improved range of amenities reflecting the diverse character of Headington. This will be through increased public access to private facilities and the protection and improvement of existing facilities.
- **A thriving centre** - Headington centre will be a thriving and prosperous shopping and leisure area supported by a strong business community. There will be a diverse range of shops and cafés responsive to the changing patterns of demand.
- **Strong identity with a diverse character** - Headington will have a strong identity based on clearly defined boundaries and a diverse range of

neighbourhood areas each with their own individual character. Innovative design will be encouraged so that the built environment is continually refreshed and updated.

- **More key worker housing** - There will be more housing for key workers in essential services, reducing the level of commuting into Headington. There will also be stronger community control over planning applications.
- **Improved school provision** - Education facilities for school age children will be improved.
- **Better for pedestrians and cyclists** - It will be a better place for pedestrians and cyclists with improved networks of paths and better facilities for people with disabilities. There will be less traffic congestion as more people shift to non-car modes of transport and to car sharing.

2.3.19   The HNP includes various policies relevant to development of the HCIP. These include the following:

- **GSP3** - Conserving and enhancing biodiversity.
- **GSP5** - Provision of allotment land.
- **AMP1** - Protecting and enhancing sports, leisure and community facilities.
- **CIP4** - Protecting important assets.
- **TRP2**- Connectedness.
- **TRP4** - Provision for people with disabilities to use active forms of transport.
- **TRP5** - Promotion of cycling.
- **BRC2** - Creating a Headington Business Association.
- **CIC1** - Reinforce the identity of Headington.
- **TRC1** - Promoting safety and active transport.

Headington Centre Regeneration Mission and Vision, 2021

2.3.20   In 2021 Headington Action led the development of a vision for Headington Centre with the community of Headington. The result was a mission to 'develop the centre as the heart of Headington', with a guiding vision statement:

- A place which is welcoming, inclusive and easily accessible for all while prioritising active travel and public transport.
- An active, lively and vibrant place with creative gathering spaces.
- An extended hours economy which provides a mix of services for our diverse demography.
- A place which reflects the presence of our local unique world class healthcare and educational institutions.

Other studies

Oxford City Council Retail and Leisure Study, Headington District Centre - Health Check Assessment, Carter Jonas, 2017

2.3.21   The 2017 Headington Centre Health Check Assessment concluded that Headington is predominantly meeting the needs of its local resident catchment population. Key headline findings and recommendations are detailed below.

2.3.22   The key strengths identified are as follows:

- The town centre has a generally pleasant environment.
- Headington has a strong food store and convenience offer that is mainly dominated by key supermarket operators including Waitrose, Tesco, Sainsbury's, Iceland and the Co-op.
- There is a low vacancy rate in the centre.
- The service sector is well represented and current provision is significantly above the national average.
- The street market makes an important contribution to the overall attraction, vitality and viability of the town centre as a whole. Its role and offer should be maintained and enhanced.

2.3.23   The key weaknesses identified were as follows:

- Poor mix of comparison goods provision.
- The centre benefits from very good accessibility however it is on a major thoroughfare creating a traffic hotspot and congestion, particularly during peak hours.

2.3.24   The key recommendations made by Carter Jonas in 2017 were as follows:

- There is potential to enhance the town's independent food and convenience offer, subject to need and market demand assessments.
- There would also appear to be potential to improve the quality of the centre's comparison goods offer. Attracting a wider range of quality (multiple and independent) retailers particularly fashion and footwear to the centre would help the centre compete with other nearby District Centres. However, attracting and accommodating new retailers will also depend on forecast need and market demand, and the potential availability of suitable sites/buildings in or on the edge of Headington.
- The centre has a particularly high over-provision of charity shops and this should be monitored in the context of the centre's comparison goods mix.

- The centre would benefit from improving the quality of its independent and multiple restaurant and café offer to benefit both its daytime and evening economy.
- The centre would benefit from a comprehensive review of its public realm and specifically the pavement areas. As part of this recommendation the report suggests additional short term lay-by parking both along London Road and Windmill Road, if this can be provided without compromising the pedestrian environment
- The key to unlocking the potential of Headington as a retail and commercial leisure destination would be to "capture" more of the traffic passing through the centre, and increase trips and dwell times.
- Additionally, there is potential to create an offer that is targeted, and taps into, the passing trade as well as the substantial student and worker populations that surround the centre.

Transport Policy Context

Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP), and Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan (COTP), 2022

2.3.25   Oxfordshire County Council has recently adopted a new Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP), which along with supporting strategies replace the previous 2015 plan. The new LTCP represents a material shift in transport policies affecting Headington. The old plan still sought to balance rhetoric on sustainable transport with policies supporting significant growth in road capacity justified to 'ease congestion' and accommodate further car-dependent growth. The new plan is much more ambitious in its vision to deliver a zero-carbon transport system and replace or remove 25% of car trips by 2030 and 33% by 2040. The Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan (COTP) forms part of the countywide LTCP and sets out policies for the urban area of Oxford and key corridors into the city. It includes three major proposals for the city, namely a package of six traffic filters, a workplace parking levy and a zero emission zone.

2.3.26   In terms of significant changes to public transport, the old LTP supported a 'Science Transit Strategy' where Headington centre would be at the crossroads of two of the three core bus rapid transit (BRT) routes. Line 2 would be a radial cross-city route terminating at Thornhill P&R and line 3 would be an orbital route linking Oxford Parkway to various campus locations including John Radcliffe Hospital and Oxford Brookes University. The COTP includes a citywide core bus network of high-frequency routes, retaining the proposal for an orbital network linking the institutions around Headington. Under these proposals the orbital network would intersect with London Road near to Headington School and Oxford Brookes, meaning that the main interchange would no longer be in Headington centre itself.

2.3.27   The new LTCP adopts a transport user hierarchy that places pedestrians at the top and then cyclists (policy 1). It includes policy and infrastructure measures to shift local trips to walking and cycling (policies 1-9), as well as a policy supporting community activation to create and activate places within local communities (policy 10). This policy provides direct support to the Headington vision for an active centre for local residents and employees of nearby institutions. A headline target of the LTCP is to increase the number of cycle trips in Oxfordshire from 600,000 to 1 million cycle trips per week by 2030. The COTP confirms that London Road will form part of the Quickways cycling network, while retaining the emerging Quietways cycling network.

2.3.28   The new LTCP includes clear parking policies to support its vision, to ensure that parking requirements are in line with the transport user hierarchy (policy 58) and to incrementally reduce car parking availability to promote mode shift (policy 59). The COTP clarifies that on-street parking will be removed where necessary on corridors on the Quickways cycle network and/or core bus route network.

2.3.29   Furthermore, it is supportive of transport innovation including micro-mobility (policy 69) and shared mobility (policy 70) and promotes the management of these new modes to complement active travel and public transport. The COTP proposes a series of transport hubs enabling interchange between public transport and shared mobility, including a potential hub in Headington centre.

2.3.30   The new LTCP also places emphasis on freight consolidation and last-mile zero emission deliveries (policies 86-89). Headington centre is well-placed to benefit from these policies since it is surrounded by institutions with ample excess parking that could be converted for freight micro-consolidation.

Oxford Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), 2020

2.3.31   Oxfordshire County Council published the Oxford Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) in 2020, outlining a series of measures and programmes to achieve substantial growth in cycling and improve the environment for walking in Oxford. The key policies in the LCWIP align with the LTCP including the introduction of LTNs, city centre traffic control points, workplace parking levy, better speed control on main roads, parking management, public realm improvements and school travel programmes.

2.3.32   The LCWIP provides detail of the proposed Oxford Cycle Network including both Quiet and Quick routes. In Headington the network includes the London Road corridor (route 10) and alternative quiet routes running to the north and south of London Road (routes 8, 9 and 11). The proposed cycle design standards for sections of main roads with high pedestrian volumes such as Headington centre recommend on-carriageway cycling with a 20 mph speed limit reinforced with traffic calming to slow vehicles and encourage pedestrians to cross. Large surface cycle logos should be used to identify cycle routes.

2.3.33   2.3.33 The LCWIP also states that the County Council will assess the feasibility of Quality Pedestrian Corridors within 1km of key local shopping areas including Headington. This would ensure that pedestrians are provided with a smooth obstacle-free continuous footway on the main walking routes into the shopping area.

Other Transport Related Studies

2.3.34   Headington has been the target of sustainable transport investment in the past. In 2011, the County Council was successful in bidding to the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LTSF) for the extension of the Thornhill P&R site, London Road bus lanes and a range of travel planning initiatives. The objectives of this package of measures were to support growth in the Eastern Arc, enhance access to its key institutions and significantly reduce car travel.

2.3.35   A series of measures packaged as the Access to Headington project were implemented in 2016 to enhance orbital transport connections and access to the hospital and employment sites. These measures included the upgrade of signal controlled junctions for better bus detection, improved cycle routes, parking restrictions on Windmill Road and Headley Way, and new and improved crossings.

2.3.36   The County Council proposed a further package of measures to support active travel in 2021/22 including:

- Quickway cycle routes on Old Road and Marston Road with links to Headington.
- A Quietway cycle route running south of London Road along Margaret Road and linking up to the John Radcliffe Hospital via Latimer Road and Sandfield Road.
- Three Low Traffic Neighbourhoods in Old Headington, New Headington and Quarry (the latter two have since been deferred).
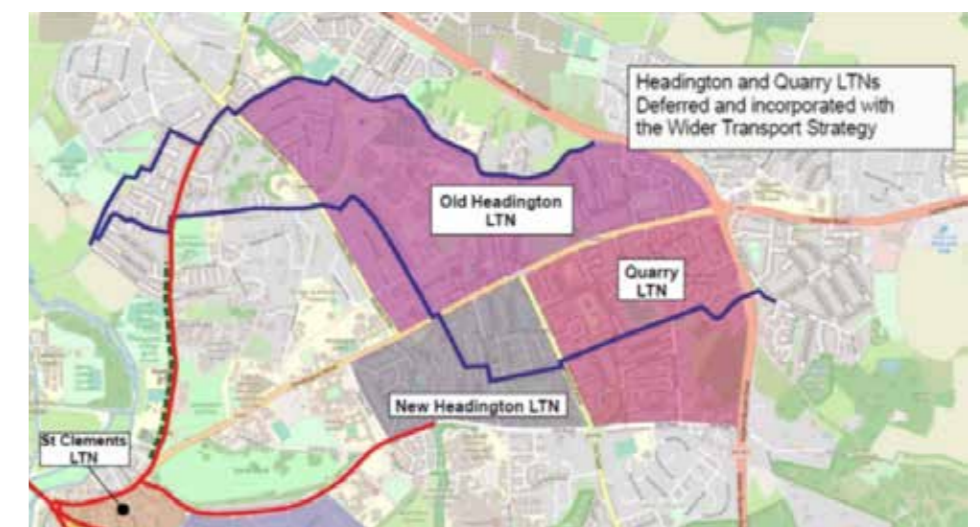

Fig 9. Oxford City Active Travel: Overview of all active travel 2021/22 proposals

2.4   National Trends

2.4.1   Consumer and economic trends in the retail and leisure sector have important implications on the formulation of planning and spatial strategies and the future vitality and viability of town and neighbourhood centres across the UK, and are relevant to Headington Centre.

2.4.2   Trends in recent years have been well documented. They closely follow global economic fluctuations, growth in on-line shopping/multi-channel retailing; changes in the property and space requirements of retail operators; evolution towards multi-dimensional town centres; the growth of the commercial leisure sector; and changes in the convenience goods sector with the growth of discount retailers and more varied food shopping habits. Sectoral analysis and published evidence confirm that town centres will need to continue to evolve and adapt to remain vital and viable locations.

2.4.3   The Covid-19 pandemic shut high streets across the UK in March 2020. The longer term impact of Covid-19 on wider society and our town centres is still emerging, but it is widely accepted that town centres will bounce back to varying degrees, and that Covid-19 has accelerated trends and challenges facing our high streets.

The Evolving Role of the Town Centre

2.4.4   Retail will continue to be an important footfall driver in town centres, and whilst high streets are evolving, the role of retail and retail operators should continue to form an important element to any town centre strategy moving forwards. Nevertheless, trends and the need to inject life into our high streets have introduced new, multi-dimensional elements to town centres which should be promoted and incorporated alongside retail into emerging town centre strategies. These can be summarised as follows:

- The development of an 'experience' for visitors who are increasingly seeking to combine retail and leisure activities as part of a single 'going out' trip. Town centres must provide an attractive experience for visitors which the internet is unable to match. This might include specialist markets, independent cinemas, street food and seasonal events, for example.

- Town centres acting as genuine hubs for their communities, and the need to create a vibrant social, commercial and cultural destination. Uses might include cultural space, co-working space, space for small and medium-sized enterprises (SME's), community facilities including libraries, education space, community halls/meeting venues, and health centres.

- Larger scale 'destination' uses including conference centres, hotels, offices, cultural and performance venues.

- Growth in town centre living and residential space/student accommodation – delivering footfall in the evenings and at weekends as well as during the daytime. A centre strategy will require consideration of noise, environmental health and licensing hours in order to consider residential amenity alongside a supported evening economy.

Online and Multi-Channel Retailing

2.4.5   Online spending has become a firmly established method of shopping. Evidence demonstrates the continued growth of this sector in terms of those that have internet access, those that use the internet every day, the methods and modes used to undertake such transactions, and the breadth of the population taking advantage of what is on offer, with the largest rise in the 65+ age group in recent years.

2.4.6   Importantly for town centres, it has been evidenced that only 15% of online shoppers buy all of their fashion items online, with the remaining 85% using both online and physical stores. This highlights the importance of having a 'joined-up' town centre 'experience' to lure shoppers away from the internet and instead to visit the high street and to extend their dwell time through a range of retail and leisure attractions.

Covid-19 and Online Shopping

2.4.7   Experian report that there has been a marked increase in online shopping since the Covid-19 crisis broke, which has further accelerated the already strong growth trend seen over the past decade. Internet sales share of total retail surpassed 19% in 2019 before lurching up to over 30% in the second quarter of 2020, against less than 5% in 2008.

2.4.8   With lockdown measures related to Covid-19 relaxing since the second quarter of 2020, the share of internet sales in total retail transactions has eased from its peak. This unwinding is expected to continue, however it is anticipated that some of the increase in the internet sales share seen during the pandemic will remain throughout the forecast period. The charts below illustrate the

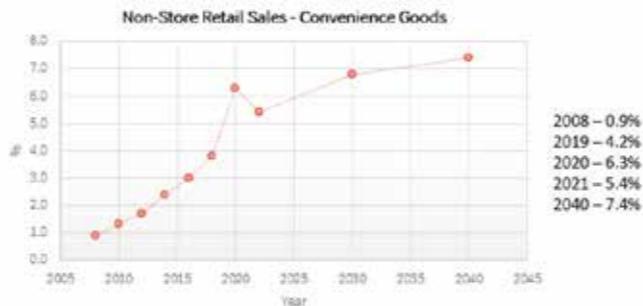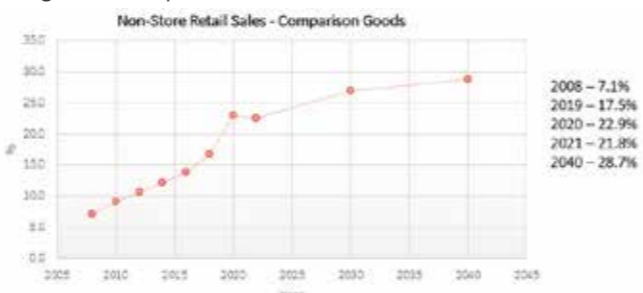Fig 10.   Convenience Goods Internet Sales Growth Trends and Forecasts

Non-Store Retail Sales - Convenience Goods

2008 – 0.9%
2019 – 4.2%
2020 – 6.3%
2021 – 5.4%
2040 – 7.4%

Fig 11.   Comparison Goods Internet Sales Growth Trends and Forecasts

Non-Store Retail Sales - Comparison Goods

2008 – 7.1%
2019 – 17.5%
2020 – 22.9%
2021 – 21.8%
2040 – 28.7%

small drop from the high peak of growth, but not to pre-Covid-19 levels, and will be followed by continued steady forecast growth.

2.4.9   The ease of online purchasing has also continued to improve rapidly, with technological advances, particularly around smartphones and connectivity. Faster delivery ties, including same day delivery, and easier returns processes have also encouraged the trend.

Click and Collect

2.4.10   Research indicates that the click and collect market will grow by a further 46% by 2023. Click and collect allows a shopper to order and pay for a product online, and then have it delivered to the nearest physical retail store of that operator. This is an important opportunity for town centres, as it can act as a footfall generator in its own right. Research demonstrates that 39% of consumers make an additional purchase in that town centre when collecting an item from a store.

2.4.11   John Lewis, for example, state on their website press releases that "in the last five years alone, Click & Collect orders have increased more than 50% as customers enjoy the ease and convenience it provides. Currently 57% of all online orders are delivered through this service with 25% of packages collected at John Lewis shops and 75% at Waitrose shops".

2.4.12   A challenge to the continued growth of click and collect is the rise of instant delivery and saver delivery services, as businesses aim to match efficient delivery options and consumer expectations. This includes same day delivery, one-hour delivery windows, and delivery passes whereby a consumer pays an annual subscription to guarantee same day, next day or timeslot delivery options. The impact of this on click and collect and associated opportunities for town centres will need to be monitored.

High Street Losses

2.4.13   The trends referred to above have had a significant and permanent impact on consumer shopping and spending behaviour. In turn, this has created significant hurdles for traditional 'bricks-and-mortar' retailing and the high street.

2.4.14   These national trends have added to operator challenges already being experienced as a consequence of the retail property business model. Notably, operators face high costs of running retail outlets, including rents, business rates and high labour costs; they experience low profitability caused by high costs, slow growth in sales, squeezed profit margins and heavy price competition. They have been slow to respond and to prepare for the fast-paced changes being experienced on the high street, overlooking and disregarding the need to invest.

2.4.15   Operators have experienced a significant impact from the economic environment, the rise in online shopping and the property market, with many high profile high street casualties in recent years. Many operators will survive, but may instead look to rationalise their store portfolios.

2.5   Development Context

Cooperative Supermarket Site

2.5.1   A planning application (21/03361/FUL) was submitted to demolish the existing Coop building (Use Class E) at 152 London Road Headington Oxford and erect a new building at 1 to 5 storeys containing retail store (Use Class E) and hotel (Use Class C1), service area, landscaping, cycle parking, and drop off bays on Stile Road.

2.5.2   In March 2022 the application was refused by OCC for the following reasons:

• Inappropriate scale, height, width and massing, and an inappropriate over-development of this open and prominent peripheral edge of District Centre.

• The proposed development fails to take into account the effect of the proposal on the significance of St Andrews CE Primary School, as a non-designated heritage asset.

• The proposed development, by reason of failure to provide operational parking on site and drop off/pick up lay-by.

• The proposed development fails to adequately provide accurate trip generation of the existing retail store and appropriate TRICS data for the proposed development to accurately assess highway impact.

• The proposed development (...) will create an intrusive and overbearing form of development, a loss of privacy through overlooking, and shading, detrimental to the amenities of the occupiers of the adjacent school and neighbouring dwellings on Stile Road.

• The proposed development by reason of its use of opaque glass will result in a poor outlook and amenity for the occupiers of the hotel, and a substandard level of accommodation.

• The proposed development fails to demonstrate that the proposal will meet BREEAM Excellent standard.

BT Street Hubs

2.5.3   BT has made three planning applications to install BT Street Hubs on London Road at numbers 92, 101, 144. Street Hubs are structures with digital screens that incorporate payphones, free wifi, a touch screen providing information, and charging facilities.

Fig 12.   Cooperative Supermarket Site - visualisation of development proposal (Source: planning application)

Fig 13.   BT Street Hubs - mock up of Hub (left) and visualisation on London Road (right) (Source: planning application)

Baseline Analysis

3.0   Townscape

3.1   Urban Structure and Built Form

3.1.1   The Headington Centre study area comprises a nearly 500m long stretch of London Road from the Shell Garage (52 London Rd) to Coop food store (152 London Rd). It also extends north along the Old High Street incorporating the Waitrose car park, and south along Windmill Road incorporating the St Leonard's Road car park. To the north east the site is bounded by Bury Knowle Park, which lies within Old Headington Conservation Area.

3.1.2   London Road presents a built up urban fabric, generally fine-grained, with a relatively uniform scale and mostly continuous building line addressing and enclosing the street. It has an architecturally mixed frontage that includes buildings ranging from the Victorian period, through different parts of the 20th Century, to contemporary developments. Typologies include terraces and blocks of flats with town centre uses on the ground floor, and larger single use buildings such as supermarkets.

3.1.3   The focal point of Headington Centre is the crossroads of London Road and Windmill Road and Old High Street, with commercial uses continuing in four directions from here. The junction is given some prominence with the building on the SE corner of London Road (no 122) and Windmill Road which has a characterful clock tower, and the north-west corner with the attractive 1930's former Barclays Bank. Both of which act as minor landmarks, giving some structure to the area and aiding navigation. Holyoake Hall and the Britannia Inn are also landmarks by virtue of being more distinctive and visible within the rest of the townscape.

3.1.4   The built form creates a very linear environment, characterised by a strong west-east orientation along London Road, which is considered a primary route in terms of urban structure. The buildings enclose views along the road. This is especially the case when looking west along from the Bury Knowle Park end, and east from the New High Street junction. Also along Windmill Road, both north and south.

3.1.5   The built form is broken into sections by the various residential streets joining London Road from the north and south. These are generally secondary or tertiary routes in terms of urban structure. Each is quite mixed in architectural character. A row of 1930's two-storey houses on the north-east side of London Road between Old High Street and Bury Knowle Park, is the most consistent section characterised by small footprint and consistent roof and frontage line, while buildings elsewhere vary in terms of footprint, age and height.

3.1.6   The fabric is generally fine-grained due to smaller plot sizes. The exceptions are the larger plots-occupied by: the Shell garage and BT telephone exchange building at the rear; the Coop supermarket ; and Waitrose. The Shell garage and the Coop site the either end of London Road mean that the fabric is looser and less well-defined here, and result in a poor sense of arrival into the centre.

3.1.7   The centre is surrounded by residential streets mainly Victorian and Edwardian, with some inter- and post-war housing. Typologies are generally terraced or semi-detached, with some detached homes.

Key points:

The Centre is largely linear, running east-west, with short sections running north and south along Old High Street and Windmill Road

London Road's built form defines the high street with a mostly fine-grained, continuous building line addressing and enclosing the street.

The focal point of Headington Centre is at the junction of London Road with Windmill Road and Old High Street

The built form and road alignment create contained views along London Road, and also along Windmill Road

The urban fabric at either end of the centre along London Road (Shell garage and the Coop site) is less well-defined and presents a poor sense of arrival

Fig 14.   Urban structure

Key:

- **········** Primary route
- **------** Secondary route
- **-------** Tertiary route
- ◯ Major node
- ○ Minor node
- ★ Landmark
- ▨ Area of centre
- ▢ Other areas

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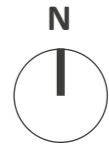
Fig 15.   Built Form (not to scale)

Key:

◼ Built form (in centre)

◼ Green spaces

1 Shell Garage

2 Co-op supermarket

3 Waitrose supermarket

Waitrose Car Park

Bury Knowle Park

OLD HIGH STREET

Stephen Rd

Osler Rd

LONDON ROAD

WINDMILL ROAD

Holyoake Rd

Stile Rd

Kennett Rd

New High Street

Lime Walk

St Leonard's Rd

1

2

3

Key points:

Headington Centre is characterised by two to three-storey height buildings with a small footprint

The stretch of London Road between Windmill Road and New High Street has more of a mix of heights and footprints

There are several one storey buildings, should these be redeveloped increased height could help improve consistency

The most prominent building is Holyoake Hall, 136 London Road, with a four to five storey corner volume that's visible from the approach

3.2   Building Heights and Massing

3.2.1   Headington Centre is characterised by two to three storey buildings, generally accompanied by a small footprint as the buildings present to the street, with a few exceptions.

3.2.2   The height and roofline of buildings along Windmill Road and to the north-east of the Windmill Road / Old High Street junction are generally uniform and building heights are not greater than two storeys.

3.2.3   Buildings of larger footprint and greater height are located on the south-east side of London Road along from the Windmill Road / Old High Street junction. Buildings along the two blocks between Windmill Road and New High Street are generally three-storeys, with a handful two- and four-storeys.

3.2.4   There are several one storey buildings including the Shell petrol station, Waitrose, the Coop and a row of commercial buildings 'The Parade' on 1-4 Windmill Road.

3.2.5   The larger and most prominent High Street buildings include;

- 67 London Road - a three-storey building with a slanted corner addressing the corner of London Road and Osler Rd,

- 89a London Rd - a three-storey office building on the corner of Stephen Rd,
- 92 London Road - the three-storey' turret house' on the corner of New High Street,
- Child's Funeral Parlour, 69 London Road, on the corner of Osler Road
- 73-75 London Road, a three-storey building, with protruding bay windows,
- 81 London Road, a four-storey building residential building with a commercial ground floor,
- 116-120 London Road on the corner of Windmill Road,
- 122 London Road with it's clock feature on the corner of Windmill Road,
- Holyoake Hall, 136 London Road, a large art-deco building with four-five storey corner 'tower' on the junction of Holyoake and London Rd,
- The former Barclays Bank on the corner of Windmill Road.

3.2.6   Any development that was to come forward that was more than four storeys would be notable for lack of consistency with the rest of the high street. Conversely, property that has one-storey buildings has potential to be increased in height to create more consistency within the centre.

3.2.7   The spread of photos overleaf highlights some of the buildings referred to above and in the a later chapter on heritage.

Fig 16.   Building Heights (not to scale)

Key:

- 1-storey
- 2
- 2.5
- 3
- 3.5
- 4+

Waitrose Car Park

Bury Knowle Park

OLD HIGH STREET

Stephen Rd

Osler Rd

LONDON ROAD

WINDMILL ROAD

Holyoake Rd

Stile Rd

Kennett Rd

New High Street

Lime Walk

St Leonard's Rd

0   50   100m

Key:

1. Grade II Listed Britannia Inn
2. The Royal Standard (1861)
3. Corner of Osler Road
4. The Headington Shark (1986)
5. Building with clock tower
6. Barclays Bank (1930)
7. Terraces on London Rd
8. Bury Knowle House
9. Passage along the park
10. Bury Knowle Park, London Rd
11. Bury Knowle Park toilet block
12. Holyoake Hall (1907)
13. Holyoake Hall, Holyoake Rd
14. Frontages on Windmill Rd

Key points:

Heavy traffic on London Road has a severe impact on the quality of the public realm

The pedestrian environment is cluttered, which along with level changes reduces effective footway widths

Street furniture and paving is generally consistent in London Road, however does not continue throughout the whole area of the centre

Headington is lacking a formal central space for gatherings and community focus.

The entrance to Bury Knowle Park - a key local asset - is not clearly visible

There is little to give the area distinctiveness and identity, both in terms of public realm and also architecture

Signage and wayfinding requires improvements

3.3   Public Realm

3.3.1   Heavy traffic on London Road has a severe impact on how people experience the public realm in Headington Centre, affecting it greatly with by noise and air pollution. Vehicles also visually dominate the street, both when moving and parked.

3.3.2   The footways are generally paved in consistent materials (concrete block pavers) along most of London Road. The western end (past New High Street) and most of Windmill Road and Old High Street are not consistent with the rest of the centre however, being paved with asphalt, some of which suffers from having been dug up and replaced.

3.3.3   Footway widths vary through the centre, ranging from a little over two metres in locations (e.g. outside Medina Food Market, and in the public part of the footway between 93 and 99 London Road) to around eight metres in others (e.g. outside Oxfam). However the effective width is significantly reduced by various street elements as described below.

3.3.4   In general, the centre lacks visual cohesiveness and feels cluttered. The pedestrian environment feels cluttered with road signage, bins and rubbish bags, benches, bicycle racks, e-scooters and freestanding signage and advertising. On the roads adjacent to London Road parking on pavements can also cause obstructions for pedestrians.

3.3.5   Outdoor restaurant and cafe tables, and greengrocers stalls provide activity on street, but in some locations cause obstruction to pedestrian movement as do some of the bus stops both in terms of the infrastructure and people waiting at them.

3.3.6   There are various changes of levels at a number of locations along London Road within the pedestrian environment to provide access between pavement level and ground floor level of commercial uses. These are dealt with differently at different places, including steps (single and flights), ramps, and with railings for protection in some places. The ways level changes are dealt with restricts pedestrian movement.

3.3.7   The core of the shopping area is between the focal point of the junction of London Road with Windmill Road / Old High Street to Osler Road / New High Street. However there is no formal central public space within this area, or indeed elsewhere in Headington Centre for informal use or events. The Saturday Market uses the footways within the core area for its stalls, and community events are hosted at Bury Knowle Park.

3.3.8   Areas of public realm on the junctions with some of the residential streets (such as Osler Rd or Holyoake Road) provide somewhat more generous pavements and present opportunities for public realm improvements to create pocket spaces. However road space reallocation would need to be considered to create a more substantial public space.

3.3.9   Windmill Road, with its parade of local shops and generous footways on the east provide respite from the busyness and physical constraints of London Road.

3.3.10   Street furniture such as seating, litter bins, and notice boards are of uniform style, and they have been installed in recent years. However these styles are largely used in London Road. Windmill Road and Old High Street have a mixture of types of elements.

3.3.11   The entrance to one of the main local assets of the neighbourhood - Bury Knowle Park- is not very visible. The park is hidden behind a stone wall, and the entrance itself is not particularly prominent plus obstructed by bus shelters on London Road.

3.3.12   Street greening is provided by a range of trees of varying types and sizes. At some locations such as the corner of Osler Road these provide an intensive pocket of greening, however the overall effect is sporadic greening along London Road. Windmill Road has some planter boxes, though at the time of our site visit not all were planted.

3.3.13   There are very few building elements or spaces that give the area identity, other than Bury Knowle Park and, for many, an important landmark - the Shark on New High Street. In terms of distinctive buildings, the Britannia Inn is the oldest building in the area but is on the periphery of the centre. In general, the area lacks distinctiveness and identity.

3.3.14   Signage and wayfinding require improvement. There is no information in Headington Centre to direct visitors to other key destinations in Headington such as key institutions, hospitals, green areas and amenities such as the Library and the Park. Signposting is inadequate for visitors and for and moreover it is not clear to newcomers that they have arrived in Headington.

3.3.15   Hear in Headington is a recently installed intervention to highlight heritage and stories of the local area via freestanding audio posts. One of these is embellished with a shark sculpture however the others are not very obvious. Moreover the traffic noise makes them hard to use effectively.

3.3.16   The spread of photos overleaf highlights some of the key aspects of the public referred to above.

February 2023

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Fig 17.   Public Realm (not to scale)

Waitrose Car Park

Bury Knowle Park

OLD HIGH STREET

Stephen Rd

Osler Rd

LONDON ROAD

ES

ES

ES

WINDMILL ROAD

Holyoake Rd

Stile Rd

New High Street

Kennett Rd

Lime Walk

St Leonard's Rd
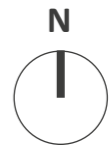
Key:

Bus stops

Information / notice board

ES Electric scooters

Benches

Bicycle racks

Pedestrian crossings

Trees

0   50   100m
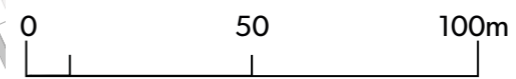
Key:

1. Corner of Osler Rd
2. Corner of New High Street
3. Corner of Kennett Rd
4. Bus stop HS1
5. Bicycle racks on London Rd
6. Bus stop HS2
7. Benches on London Rd
8. Bins on London Rd
9. Main crossroads
10. View of main crossroads
11. Bury Knowle Park entrance
12. Seating on Windmill Rd
13. Planters on Windmill Rd
14. Street clutter on Windmill Rd

4.0 Heritage and History

4.1 Historic Development

Old Headington Conservation Area includes Bury Knowle Park located north-east of the study area

Headington Hill Conservation Area is located adjacent to the centre bordering it on the west

Bury Knowle Park is an historic public parkland, with Grade 2 listed Bury Knowle House which provides a home for the local library

The Britannia on the corner of Lime Walk and London Road is the only (Grade II) listed building within the study area

4.1.1   The mediaeval village, now known as Old Headington, developed rapidly in the early 20th century, around the original parish church of St Andrew located on St Andrew's Rd, north of London Road. In 1927, Old Headington became an urban district separate from the Headington Rural District and in 1929 it was added to the city of Oxford. New Headington refers to the area on the south side of the London Road, originating as a late 19th-century suburb. Other neighbourhoods of the modern Headington suburb include Highfield, Quarry, and Headington Hill.

4.1.2   Headington Centre, focused on London Road, was a part of the farmland of Old Headington. The London Road was laid out as a new turnpike road to Stokenchurch in the late eighteenth century, to ensure a smoother journey for coaches between Oxford and London. The oldest buildings on this stretch of London Road are the White Horse public house on the Oxford/ Headington boundary (1841) and the Royal Standard (1861) on the corner of New High Street and London Road, both now rebuilt. The Britannia on the corner of Lime Walk and London Road is the only (Grade II) listed building within the study area.

4.1.3   There are three conservation areas in Headington; Old Headington, Headington Quarry and Headington Hill Conservation Areas. Old Headington Conservation Area includes Bury Knowle Park located north-east of the study area, while Headington Hill Conservation Area is located adjacent to the centre bordering it from the west.

4.1.4   Bury Knowle Park is an historic public parkland, with Grade 2 listed Bury Knowle House built in c.1800 by the Oxford goldsmith Joseph Lock as his country retreat. The park was opened to the public on 2 April 1932 and is approximately seven hectares. It is surrounded by a stone wall that is Grade 2 listed together with the Bury Knowle House, which has been home to the local library since 1934. It is a well-used space for picnics, leisure, sports and community events. There are several sculptures in the park as well sensory gardens, a children's play area, tennis courts, carved seating and picnic tables, and wildflower areas.

4.1.5   Headington Centre had seen very few shops until the 1920s. In 1892 the Coop opened on the site of the old toll house and a bicycle shop (with Headington's only petrol pumps) was opened next to Holyoake Road in 1908. The first bank, Barclays, opened in 1925 and Headington Cinema (now replaced by flats) opened at the top of New High Street in the 1920s. A transformation from residential units to shops and offices in this area gradually continued from the 1930s.

4.1.6   The most prominent buildings in terms of heritage and distinctive characteristics within the study area include:

- Grade II listed The Britannia Pub was built as a coaching inn, and is marked 1793–4 maps with its original name, the White House. It was the first inn on London Road that was cut through fields in the 1770s.

- The Royal Standard (1861) pub at the termination of New High Street created an attractive group of historic buildings with Mount Pleasant and the Britannia Inn pubs.

- Barclays Bank, a two-storey brick building located at the central junction in Headington since 1930.

- Holyoake Hall, a large Art Deco building built by the Co-op for its Headington employees in 1907, with a large ballroom on the upper floor. In 1980 the Co-op moved to its present site on Stile Road, the five ground-floor units were let out separately.

- Old Headington Post Office 144 London Road, a pair of semi-detached houses built in 1926.

- The Headington Shark, which was installed on the roof of 2 New High Street in 1986 on the 41st anniversary of the dropping of the atomic bomb on Nagasaki. Created by the sculptor John Buckley, it became an unofficial symbol of Headington.

- Child's Funeral Parlour, a three-storey brick house on the corner of Osler Road.

- St Andrew's Primary School is adjacent to the study area and dates from 1894 (west section) and 1928 (east section), which is an important part of Headington's heritage.

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Fig 18.   Public Realm (not to scale)

Old Headington
Conservation Area

Waitrose
Car Park

OLD HIGH STREET

Stephen Rd

Osler Rd

Bury Knowle
Park

Key:

Conservation area

Listed buildings/structures

Buildings of interest

LONDON ROAD

WINDMILL ROAD

Holyoake Rd

Stile Rd

Kennett Rd

St Leonard's Rd

New High Street

Lime Walk

0   50   100m

5.0   Natural Environment

Key points:

Existing trees provide irregular and sparse greenery and there is no lower level greening along the high street, meaning there is little buffer for pedestrians from heavy traffic

Freestanding planters have been added in some locations but do little to increase amount of greenery

Bury Knowle Park, historic parkland provides the main local open green space

Rock Edge Nature Reserve at the southern end of Windmill Road provides a recreational area located around 10mins walking distance from the centre.

5.1   Green Spaces

5.1.1   Headington Centre has no green space within the study area itself, though it adjoins Bury Knowle Park to the north east. The proximity of Bury Knowle Park and the library makes Headington an attractive place for visitors and families to visit. The Park provides views of open space and is an outdoor social gathering place. It is a much loved local asset that is being looked after by among others Friends of Bury Knowle Park group who are committed to:

- Make a positive contribution to the local area.
- Have a say in the park's facilities.
- Improve the local conservation value.
- Get exercise, and improve your health and wellbeing.

5.1.2   The park has been awarded a Green Flag by Keep Britain Tidy, recognising and rewarding the best green spaces in the country.

5.1.3   Existing trees provide irregular and sparse greenery with a concentration of larger trees on the western stretch of London Road. There is no lower level greenery, and the trees provide only a limited buffer to protect pedestrians from noise and traffic. Windmill Road and the top of Kennett Road includes some freestanding planters which have relatively recently been installed though not all are planted (at time of site visit).

5.1.4   Residential streets leading to more leafy residential areas and terminating at London Road also provide very little greenery with an exception of Stephen Road. Front gardens however provide visual amenity via lower-level greening, and enhance suburban character.

5.1.5   The hanging baskets at the Royal Standard Public House and other places along London Road are organised by Headington Action with the support of Oxford City Council and in some cases contributions from local businesses. They make a positive contribution to the visual environment and enhance the street scene.

5.1.6   Rock Edge Nature Reserve at the southern end of Windmill Road provides a recreational area located approximately 10 minutes walking distance from the centre. Other green spaces include Margaret Road Recreation Ground and Dunstan Park.
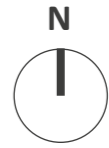
Fig 19.   Green Spaces and Old Headington
Conservation Area (not to scale)

**Old Headington
Conservation Area**

**Bury Knowle
Park**

**to Rock Edge Nature
Reserve**

Key:
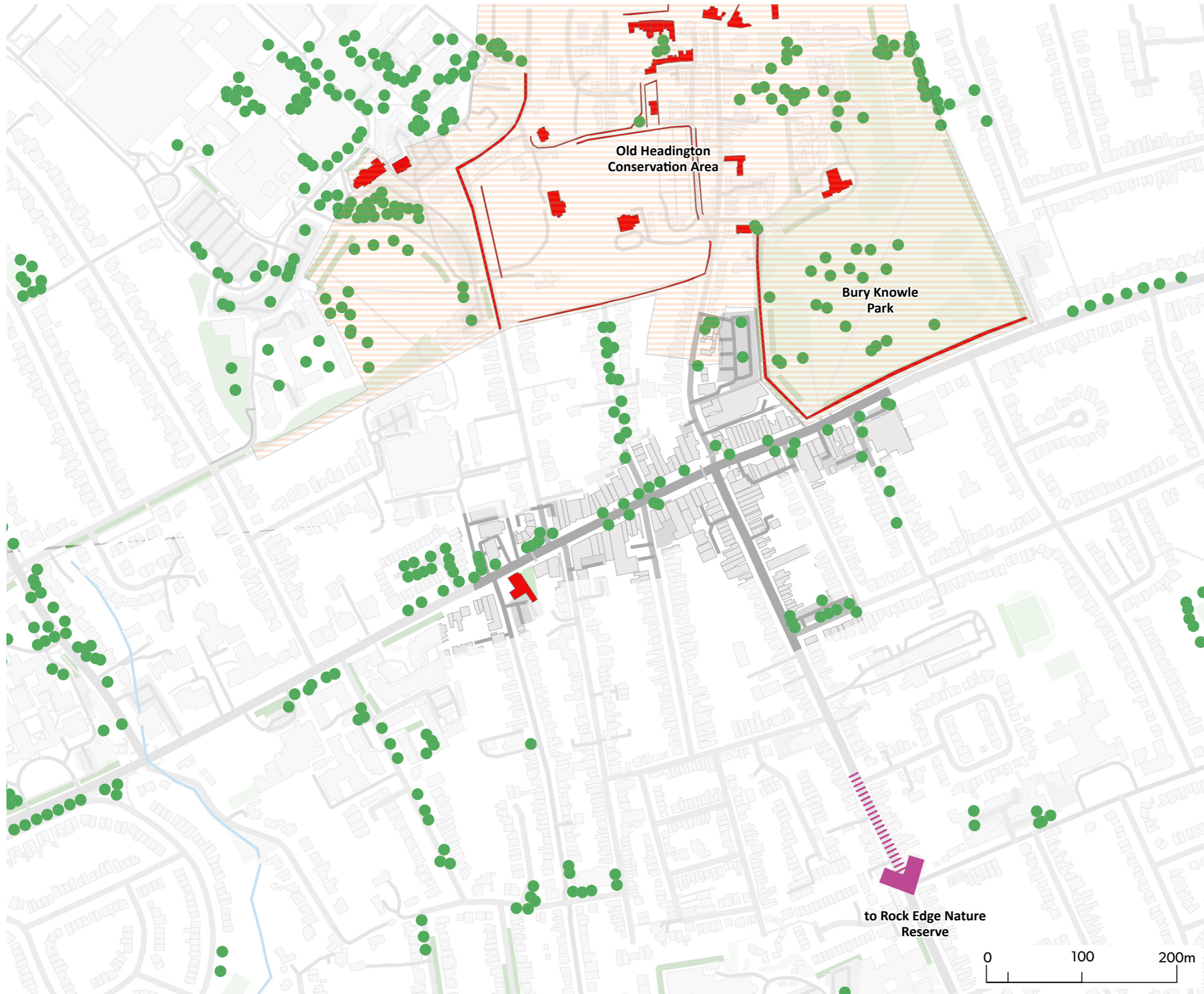
Conservation area

Listed buildings/structures

Green open spaces

Trees
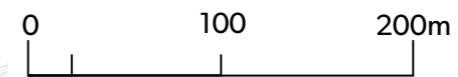
N

0   100   200m

6.0   Uses and Activities

6.1   Local Offer

6.1.1   Ground floors of the properties along London Road present active frontages. Upper floors are typically residential.

6.1.2   Land uses are mixed. There is a wide range of retail and service establishments including large supermarkets, independent shops, banks, personal services, and cafés/restaurants. The centre provides amenities for a wide catchment area including the neighbourhood, but also capturing passing trade.

6.1.3   The food store and convenience offer is mainly dominated by large supermarkets such as Waitrose, Tesco, Sainsbury's, Iceland and the Co-op.

6.1.4   The Saturday Market held weekly within the core of the centre makes an important contribution to the overall attraction, vitality and viability of the town centre. It continues to attract new traders and now has stalls on both sides of London Road.

6.1.5   There are few vacant units in Headington. The empty units as of May 2022 have been marked in red on the map opposite.

6.1.6   Independent shops, cafés and pubs attract visitors for shopping and leisure purposes. The area however lacks a community focus such as community centre or similar space.

6.1.7   The majority of shops and businesses close by 7pm, however there are a number of pubs, restaurants, and takeaways which do remain open longer. These provide some evening activity, albeit sporadically along London Road and Windmill Road rather than clustered. The area lacks other cultural or entertainment venues such as theatres, cinemas, music venues, galleries, or similar (though the Theatre at Headington School is not far).

6.1.8   Some restaurants and cafés provide outdoor seating however the busyness of London Road does not offer a pleasant environment for sitting out and is constrained in places. Businesses on Windmill Road benefit from wider footways for additional sitting out and lower levels of traffic, albeit still noisy and of poor air quality when busy.

6.1.9   Community notice boards are located on both sides of London Road to promote local events.

6.1.10   Potential development opportunities have been highlighted on the map opposite. The Coop site is already being explored for redevelopment. The BT Telephone Exchange is still in use but should it become available for development in the future could provide an opportunity for new uses to support activation, community use and footfall to support local businesses.

Fig 20.   Headington Centre uses (not to scale)

Key

- C - Residential and Hotels

Commercial, Business and Service

- E (a) Display or retail sale of goods, other than hot food
- E - (b) Sale of food and drink for consumption (mostly)
- E - (c) Services
- E - (d) Indoor sport, recreation or fitness & (e) provision
- F1 - Learning and non-residential institutions
- F2 - Local Community
- Sui Generis (incl. public houses and take-aways)
- Vacant (June 2022)
- Development opportunity

Waitrose Car Park

Bury Knowle Park

OLD HIGH STREET

Stephen Rd

Osler Rd

LONDON ROAD

Holyoake Rd

Stile Rd

WINDMILL ROAD

Kennett Rd

New High Street

Lime Walk

St Leonard's Rd

0   50   100m

Key points:

The various large institutions play a huge part in Headington, yet are poorly connected physically to the centre by virtue of the street network and in some cases infrastructure quality

There is a lack of wayfinding and information about the institutions in the centre

The centre should offer different amenities to what is provided within the various campuses to appeal to the people who work, visit, and study

There is potential for a manifestation of the institutions within the centre, via creative design elements as well as programmed outreach activities

6.2   Institutions in the Neighbourhood

6.2.1   There is a large network of significant institutions and organisations in the Headington neighbourhood. The diagram to the right highlights the key ones, broadly categorised as educational, medical and science-related, although it is important to note that there are synergies and overlaps in roles especially around research.

6.2.2   In terms of the relationship to Headington Centre, they are all a relatively short distance away. For example: from the core of Headington Centre it is around a 10 minute walk to John Radcliffe Hospital; 15 minutes to Churchill Hospital; and 18 minutes to the Science Oxford Centre. However as noted in the previous section on pedestrian environment they feel disconnected by virtue of the street network, and pedestrian infrastructure is not always sufficient (e.g. narrow footways, footway parking, lack of crossings on desire lines). Moreover there is no wayfinding information to guide people walking between to/from these places. This would be a relatively straightforward issue to remedy with maps, signage, and route-marking.

6.2.3   Many of these institutions are large campus type environments, and have their own services on site for the people who go there, whether students, patients, visitors or staff. Encouraging these people to stop and spend time in Headington Centre will require the centre to offer something that is different to these places, such as more unique leisure or eating opportunities.

6.2.4   The centre also conveys nothing of these institutions within its boundaries. Given their important role in the neighbourhood this should be addressed. There are a range of means that could be considered to promoting their presence in the centre, from wayfinding as already mentioned, to creative design features such as graphic elements or art, and potentially even via programmed outreach type activities such as public lectures or workshops within a community space.

John Radcliffe Hospital, on approach from Headington

Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre, on approach from Headington

University of Oxford Old Road Campus, at Churchill Drive

N

Fig 21.   Headington; institutions and businesses (not to scale)

Key:

- Retail area of Headington Centre
- Bury Knowle Park
- Medical institutions
- Educational institutions
- Science institutions

Ruskin College

John Radcliffe Hospital

Hedena Health

OLD HIGH STREET

Hedena Health JR Site

Manor Surgery

OSLER ROAD

Manor Hospital

LONDON ROAD

Headington School

WINDMILL ROAD

LIME WALK

Oxford Brooks University, Headington Campus

Science Oxford Centre

Wood Centre for Innovation

Barclays Eagle Lab Oxford

The Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre

OLD ROAD

University of Oxford, Old Road Campus

Churchill Hospital

7.0   Movement

Key points:

Previous surveys (2017) indicate the largest mode share for trips to Headington Centre is walking, followed by car, then bus

London Road and Windmill Road carry high volumes of traffic, however traffic reduction during the pandemic was much more significant on Windmill Road than London Road

London Road is a barrier to pedestrians due to traffic volumes as well as specific conditions, notably the lack of a crossing on the Lime Walk to Osler Road desire line, and the Windmill Road / Old High Street junction being designed for vehicle priority

Connectivity analysis shows that the high street and Windmill Road are better connected than surrounding roads at the 5-minute walking scale

Analysis of a 10-minute walking scale shows the medical and educational campuses do not sit easily within the traditional street grid and walking routes to/from them are not intuitive

There is no dedicated cycling infrastructure through the centre on London Road and the volumes of activity at bus stops, plus parking and loading activity, do not currently allow for safe cycling infrastructure

Headington is very well connected by bus and coach, however interchange between services is optimal in one direction but not the other due to bus stop locations

7.1   Trips to Headington

7.1.1   The most recent comprehensive survey data available for people visiting Headington Centre is found in the 2017 Carter Jonas report for Oxford City Council (see Context chapter for details). This report includes summary results of a household telephone survey. This reveals the following about travelling to the centre.

- Frequency of trips: Around 33.3% of respondents said they generally visited the centre either four to six days a week. A further 27.1% visited every two to three days, and 10.4% every day.
- Mode of travel: The majority of respondents (37.5%) said they travelled to the centre on foot. The next largest proportion was car as a driver or passenger at 33.3% and then bus at 20.8%.
- Purpose of visit: Respondents were more likely to be visiting the centre to buy food items at the shops (47.9%), followed by meeting someone (20.8%) and 10.4% for services (such as visiting the post office, banks and hairdressers).

7.2   Highways

7.2.1   Headington Centre lies on the busy A420 London Road, which carries 13-16,000 vehicles on a typical weekday (07:00-19:00). The busiest orbital roads in and around the study are Windmill Road and Headley Way with 8,000 and 11,000 vehicles respectively per 12-hour day.

7.2.2   Differential levels of traffic reduction were experienced on these roads during the Covid pandemic. Count data from January 2020 shows that while London Road peak traffic volumes fell only marginally, the peak hour flows on Windmill Road and Headley Way both fell to below 250 vehicles per hour from 700 and 1,050 respectively.

7.2.3   Pedestrian crossing facilities in Headington centre include the zebra crossing at the entrance to Bury Knowles Park, the signalised junction with Windmill Road, a signalised crossing located to the west of Kennett Road. There is no controlled pedestrian crossing located on the pedestrian desire line between Lime Walk and Osler Road, although the bus gate incorporates an island that serves as a courtesy crossing with dropped kerbs.

7.2.4   One strategy to improve conditions for pedestrians on the high street would be to make it easier to cross the junction of London Road, Windmill Road and Old High Street. This junction has an all-green pedestrian phase and it can be observed that more able-bodied pedestrians sometimes cross diagonally. The current geometry makes it difficult to formalise this diagonal crossing arrangement because the maximum crossing distance would increase from approximately 13m to 26m, and options to tighten the junction geometry would be required. The removal of the separate left-turn flare on the Windmill Road arm would allow a significant tightening of the junction. While the Old High Street arm only has a single entry and exit lane, the lane width and kerb radius are wide so there may be some scope to tighten this arm of the junction too while still accommodating deliveries to Waitrose. In light of the policy context and traffic reduction targets, there is also scope to explore other alternative junction and crossing designs at this location (e.g. non-signalised).

7.3   Pedestrian network and connectivity

7.3.1   The pedestrian network in the 800m (approx. 10-minute walking) catchment around Headington Centre has been assessed. The connectivity metric used is similar to a Space Syntax approach but uses a standard frontage weighting method and scale, thus allowing the pedestrian network in different sites to be benchmarked.

7.3.2   The first key indicator of pedestrian network connectivity that is important for high streets is connectivity at a 400m (5-minute walking) scale. Figure 22 shows the results of this assessment. As expected, the high street and Windmill Road have higher connectivity values than some of the surrounding streets. Values in excess of 10,000m of frontage in a 400m catchment are typical for suburban high streets surrounded by streets in a traditional urban grid layout.

7.3.3   The second key indicator is pedestrian flow potential at a 800m (10-minute walking) scale, which illustrates the hierarchy of routes in the surrounding area. Figure 23 shows the results of this assessment. This is calculated by overlaying the pedestrian routes for all possible pedestrian connections in the connectivity analysis. The historical north-south alignment along Old High Street and Windmill Road is clearly a key access corridor into Headington Centre. The medical and educational campuses do not sit easily within the traditional street grid and both the Nuffield and John Radcliffe campuses are separated from intuitive routes to the high street by large areas of parking.

Fig 22. Connectivity - 400m catchment
(not to scale)

Key:

Metres of frontage within
400m walking catchment

— Less than 3,000
— 3,000 to 6,000
— 6,000 to 9,000
— 9,000 to 12,000
— 12,000 to 15,000
— 15,000 to 18,000
— 18,000 to 21,000
— Greater than 21,000

Connectivity is defined as the
number of spaces immediately
connecting a space of origin
(pedestrian connections) within a
catchment. The more the pedestrian
connections in an area the higher the
connectivity.

Bury Knowle
Park

OLD HIGH STREET

Osler Rd

LONDON ROAD

WINDMILL ROAD

Stile Rd

New High Street

Lime Walk

0   100   200m

N
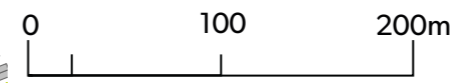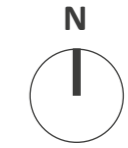
Fig 23.   Pedestrian movement potential - 800m catchment (not to scale)

Key:

Pedestrian movement potential (800m)

Less strategic route

More strategic route

Pedestrian movement potential is defined by overlaying the pedestrian routes for all possible pedestrian connections within a catchment. People naturally chose their routes based on the shortest and most direct route.

Bury Knowle Park

OLD HIGH STREET

Osler Rd

LONDON ROAD

WINDMILL ROAD

Stile Rd

New High Street

Lime Walk

0   100   200m

7.4   Cycling network

7.4.1   Headington Centre has a large catchment of residents and employees/visitors of surrounding institutions who are located just beyond a 10-15 walking distance. Cycling and micro-mobility already play a significant role in providing access to the high street and will become increasingly important as measures to restrict car traffic are implemented.

7.4.2   There is currently no dedicated cycling infrastructure through Headington centre on London Road. The City and County councils have pursued a strategy focusing on cycle access to, across and around the high street. Improved cycling conditions on the high street itself will be required to meet the objectives of the LCWIP since the volumes of activity at bus stops, as well as parking and loading activity, currently make safe cycling on the high street challenging.

7.4.3   The most recent proposals for the Quietway linking Margaret Road, Latimer Road and Sandfield Road will allow more cyclists of all abilities to bypass Headington centre safely or to reach the edges of the high street area.

7.4.4   There are frequent cycle parking stands provided in the study area, which appear generally well-used and well-maintained. There are also several marked areas for e-scooter parking, and compliance appears to be good where areas are clearly marked although some inconsiderate parking can be observed near to bus stop H6 where there is no marked area.

7.5   Bus and coach

7.5.1   It should be noted that bus numbers in following text are current at time of writing, but may change over time. The London Road corridor between Oxford city centre and Headington roundabout is served by just under 20 buses per hour for most of the day (routes 400, 8, 9, 280, U1 and X8). In addition, coaches to London (3 per hour) and Heathrow airport (2 per hour) serve Headington.

7.5.2   There are also routes serving John Radcliffe Hospital and/or the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre, which pass through Headington (routes 10, 700, H5, ST2, X1 and X32). There is an aspiration expressed in the Local Transport Plan to strengthen orbital routes in the Eastern Arc, which would make Headington a key node in the public transport network. Yet currently some of the orbital routes have to run in large loops to effectively serve the institutional campuses, leading to complex routes through Headington rather than a clear orbital corridor.

7.5.3   The total number of buses and coaches serving Headington centre exceeds the operational planning capacity for a single bus stop, and therefore the bus stops are split. For users of Headington centre, the bus stop locations are organised so buses with common destinations generally share the same stop.

7.5.4   In terms of Headington's role as a bus interchange, the situation is optimal in one direction but not the other. Heading eastbound into Oxford city centre, the coaches use bus stop HS4 while both radial and orbital local buses have a common interchange stop at HS2. In the westbound direction, the orbital routes (and P&R route 400) use bus stop HS1 while the radial routes stop at use HS5, which is located over 200m further along London Road.

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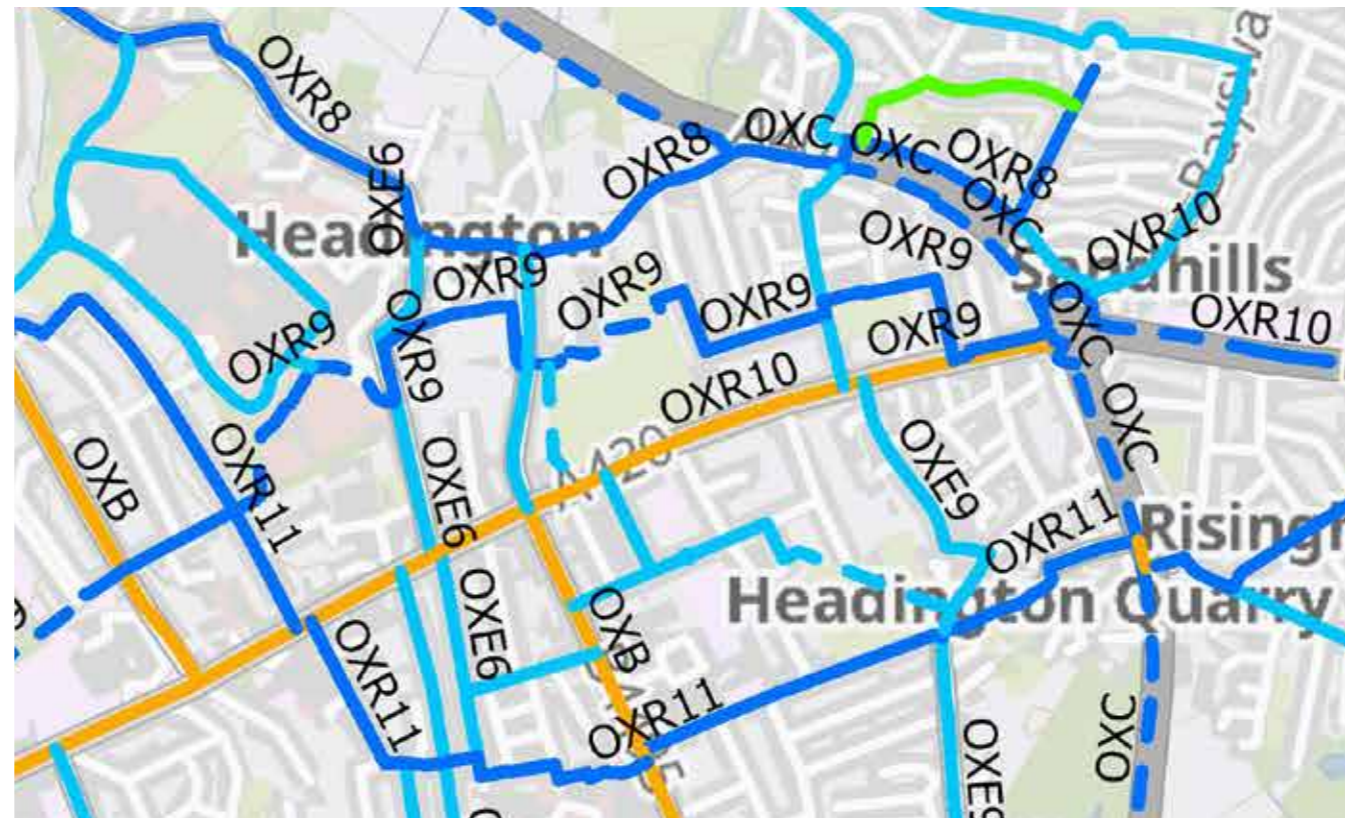
Fig 24.   Cycle network (not to scale)
Oxfordshire County Council

- Quiet Routes Off Road
- Quiet Routes On Road
- High Traffic Route
- Connecting Routes Off Road
- Connecting Routes

N
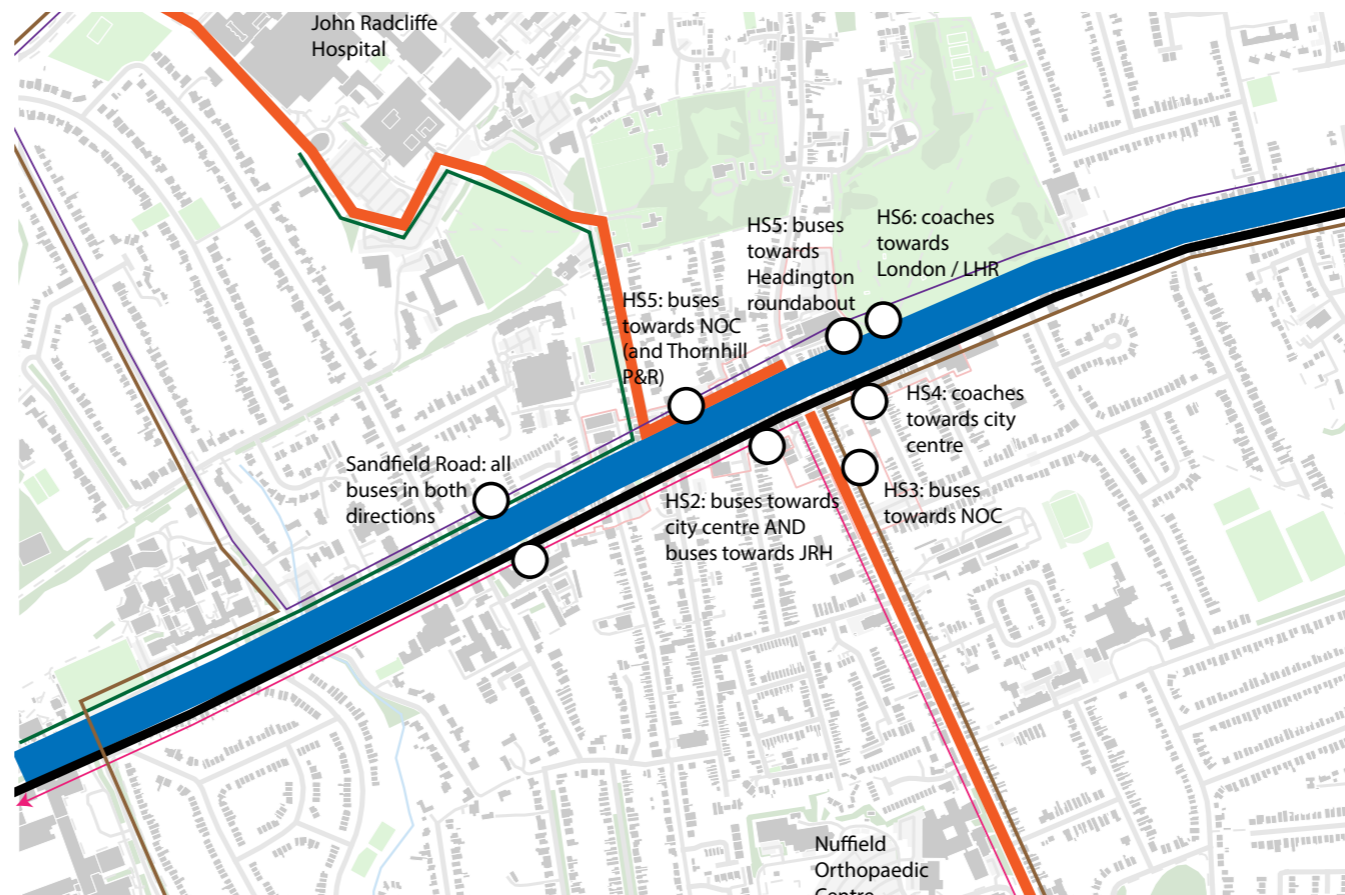
Fig 25.   Bus network (not to scale)

- London and airport coaches (5 bph)
- City to Headington radial routes (19 bph)
- JRH to NOC (5 bph)
- Parkway P&R loop (2 bph)
- City centre to JRH (2 bph)
- City centre to NOC (1 bph)
- Barton to John Radcliffe Hospital (1 bph)

Thickness of lines showing bus routes indicates relative frequency expressed as buses per hour

Key points:

Some of the businesses rely on loading from the high street itself, notably the north side between Osler Road and Old High Street

The two off-street car parks provide most of the public car parking for the centre, with a total of 167, of which six are EV charging spaces

There are very few (8) short stay parking bays on the high street itself, though some short stay bays are located just off the high street on side streets

Large volumes of staff, visitors and students travel to the campus institutions in Headington; many of the trips, especially on foot and by bus, pass through Headington centre, however, car journeys to these institutions contribute to high traffic volumes in Headington centre

7.6   Car parking/loading, servicing

7.6.1   Some sections of the retail units in Headington centre rely on loading bays located on the high street itself. In particular, the north side of the high street between Osler Road and Old High Street contains a large number of units that are serviced from the street.

7.6.2   Headington centre has two large off-street car parks at Waitrose (Headington Car Park, 120 spaces) and in Windmill Road (St Leonard's Car Park, 47 spaces). The parking tariffs in both car parks start at one hour for £2.20 to £15.20 for all-day parking. EV parking is currently only provided in the Waitrose car park. Both are owned and managed by the City Council.

7.6.3   Some of the side streets contain some short stay parking bays in addition residents' parking. Finally there are around eight short stay parking bays located on the high street itself, along with disabled and motorcycle parking bays.

7.7   Travel patterns in the surrounding institutions

7.7.1   Large volumes of staff, visitors and students travel to the campus institutions in Headington. This represents an opportunity since many of the trips, especially on foot and by bus, will pass through Headington centre. However, car journeys to these institutions contribute to high traffic volumes in Headington centre.

Oxford Brookes campus

7.7.2   The Headington campus caters for over 2,000 staff and around 12,000 students. Two thirds of students live within 5 miles of the campus and 43% (around 5,000) choose to walk there. Brookes has also been successful in promoting bus travel for students resulting a 48% bus/coach mode share. Conversely, two thirds of staff live over 5 miles from the campus. The staff travel mode share (2019 survey) includes 34% trips by car (27% single occupancy and 7% shared), 21% bus/coach and 20% cycle.

Old Road Campus

7.7.3   There are over 2,200 people working at the Old Road Campus (ORC), set to grow to 3,400 by 2030 as the campus develops. The staff travel mode share (2017 survey) includes 35% trips by car (33% single occupancy and 2% shared), 11% bus/coach and 34% cycle. This represents around 750 cycle trips to ORC although few of these will pass through Headington centre.

John Radcliffe and Churchill Hospitals

7.7.4   These two hospitals are the largest facilities managed by Oxford University Hospitals (OUH). The organisation as a whole has over 15,000 internal and contract staff, over 1 million annual outpatient appointments, over 100,000 emergency department visits, and additional travel demands created by visitors. As well as patient and staff transport, the hospitals have 24-hour access requirements for servicing, some of which is time and temperature sensitive. The proportion of single occupancy car trips by hospital staff is persistently higher than the neighbouring education institutions, reflecting complex shift patterns and the availability of car parking on site.

N

Fig 26.   Transport and Parking (not to scale)

Key:

Car park

Bus stops

ES   Electric scooters

⟷   Pedestrian crossings

Rear servicing access

Servicing from the street

L   Loading

(L)   Loading (night-time only)

P   Short stay parking

D   Disabled

M   Motorcycle

Waitrose Car Park

Bury Knowle Park

Co-op Car Park

OLD HIGH STREET

Stephen Rd

Osler Rd

HS6

HS5

M D D P P

ES

HS4

ES

L   P   P

(L)

LONDON ROAD

HS1

L   L

D   P   P   L   L

ES

HS2

L   P   D

Holyoake Rd

Stile Rd

WINDMILL ROAD

HS3

Kennett Rd

New High Street

Lime Walk

L

St Leonard's Car Park

St Leonard's Rd

0   50   100m
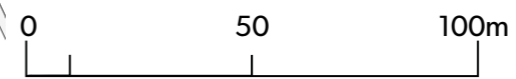
8.0   Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT)

8.1   Phase 1 Engagement

8.1.1   Public and stakeholder engagement activities were undertaken alongside baseline analysis, to: make people aware of the Headington Centre Improvement project; uncover local aspirations, needs and priorities; and, identify specific project priorities and opportunities. This included:

* A stand at Headington Festival
* An online questionnaire survey directed at members of the community
* An online questionnaire survey directed at businesses and organisations
* An online 'listening and learning' workshop with a various key stakeholders

8.1.2   Full details are included in Appendix A: Engagement.

8.1.3   The feedback from these activities was used to inform and deepen the AR Urbanism team's understanding of Headington Centre and its surroundings and help shape and test the ideas presented in the HCIP.

8.2   SWOT Analysis

8.2.1   This page and the next summarise strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats related to Headington Centre, drawn from the analysis and engagement activities. This has informed the design themes and ideas for potential improvement projects presented in subsequent chapters.

STRENGTHS

* Centre is a natural heart to neighbourhood and its environments (residential, commercial, educational etc.)
* A good mix of shops and services including independents and multiples
* Generally fine-grained urban form with consistent heights and massing
* Low level of vacant units
* Saturday Market is highly successful
* Local residential catchment has reasonable connectivity and is walkable
* Community very active and engaged; appetite for improvements
* Generally reasonable width of footways
* Generous amount of public space at various corners
* Strong radial public transport corridor with bus and coach stops
* Bury Knowle Park is a well-used significant asset as amenity and green infrastructure
* Centre benefits from being on a vital through route connecting to major destinations
* Large supermarket within centre which has entrance oriented to centre and parking at the rear
* Many businesses have rear access for servicing
* Safe cycle routes (existing and planned) into the centre
* Good cycle parking provisions
* Micro-mobility provisions
* Spaces for light touch interventions which can create identity / reanimate
* Holyoake Hall is relatively prominent in the street

WEAKNESSES

* The centre lacks an identifiable centre; intensity of activity vs major junction
* Poor sense of arrival into Headington from all directions
* Heavy traffic dominates and detracts from sense of place / destination
* Mixed quality of shop fronts and architecture
* Lack of historic assets or tangible heritage in immediate area to help with identity
* Few facilities for children or young people
* Evening economy is limited
* Infrequent and fragmented orbital public transport routes, and sub-optimal interchange
* Street design could be improved in terms of accessibility
* Need to retain vehicular access for essential trips
* Lots of street clutter on a busy street
* Crossings not in the right place and traffic too high for informal crossing
* No access to the park from the west side
* Park has poor presence on street / in the centre
* Layout and orientation of campus and institutions makes them difficult to connect to
* Loading / servicing on footway for some businesses (e.g. around Tesco)
* Lack of wayfinding makes it difficult to navigate to major destinations
* Lack of greenery at lower level
* Level changes create obstructions; pedestrians and servicing
* Public realm quality mixed (last improvements 2015)
* Conflict between different users (pedestrians, cyclists, wheelchair users, scooters)
* Footways not quite wide enough for events and market
* Pedestrian conflict at bus stops / limited space
* Bus stop locations not optimal for interchange
* No dedicated community facilities in centre
* Nothing that highlights presence of major institutions

OPPORTUNITIES

- Reallocate road space to widen footways (relocate parking)
- Capture people making through movements and encourage dwell time?
- Bus improvement measures might bring more people in to centre
- Green interventions to mitigate impact of traffic through planting as buffer (must be coordinated across area)
- Bury Knowle Park toilets could be redeveloped, with enhanced entrance area into park
- More considered use of wider corners to create pocket plazas
- Local Transport Plan commitment to a third reduction of traffic by 2040
- LTN measures generate mode shift?
- Opportunity for cycle routes away from the high street; as proposed
- Development opportunities (Shell / Telephone Exchange & Coop; potential to secure new community centre and/or public space?
- Large number of heritage buildings outside of centre that could relate to / extend walking routes to (e.g. trails)
- Attracting footfall and spend from students, patients, staff and other people visiting large institutions
- Vacant buildings present immediate opportunity for change
- Traffic data from pandemic period provides evidence that suggests potential to reduce traffic on side streets
- Holyoake Hall tower could be minor landmark if illuminated
- Funds available via CIL for further studies or implementation of small projects

THREATS

- Traffic displaced from LTN area
- Pandemic evidence suggests that significant suppressed demand for traffic movement on the high street
- Further decline of retail due to wider trends; need new / more mixed businesses to attract users
- Inability to provide support for businesses
- Some bus improvement measures might negatively affect some sections of the high street
- Opposition from locals to change especially related to LTN and similar measures
- Need to maintain vehicular access for servicing

Vision and Design Themes

9.0 Vision and Design Themes

9.1 Vision

9.1.1 A vision statement is a road map, expressing both the desired outcome for a place, and setting transformational initiatives by defining a direction for growth or change.

9.1.2 As noted earlier in this report, Headington Action has collaboratively developed a vision for the future of Headington Centre. This is expressed as the statement below.

To develop the centre as the Heart of Headington, and for it to:

- Be welcoming, inclusive, and easily accessible for all, encouraging active and sustainable travel;
- Have lively and vibrant gathering spaces;
- Provide an extended hours economy and a mix of services for our diverse demography; and
- Reflect the presence of local institutions.

9.1.3 The vision is expressed graphically to the right.

Fig 27. Graphic illustration of the vision for Headington Centre

9.2   Design Themes

9.2.1   The SWOT analysis in chapter 8 has informed a set of overarching themes for improving Headington which support the HA vision. The six themes are:

- 1. Strengthening local identity
- 2. Supporting community vitality
- 3. Creating lively public spaces
- 4. Connecting people with places
- 5. Connecting and showcasing the institutions
- 6. Re-imagining key roads as places for all

9.2.2   The themes are illustrated and described on the following pages.
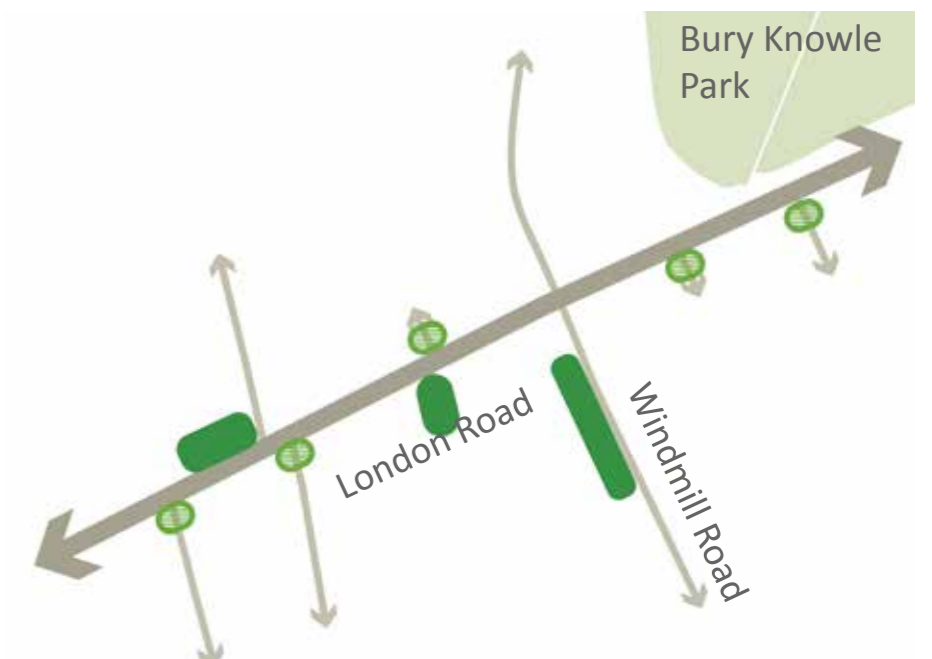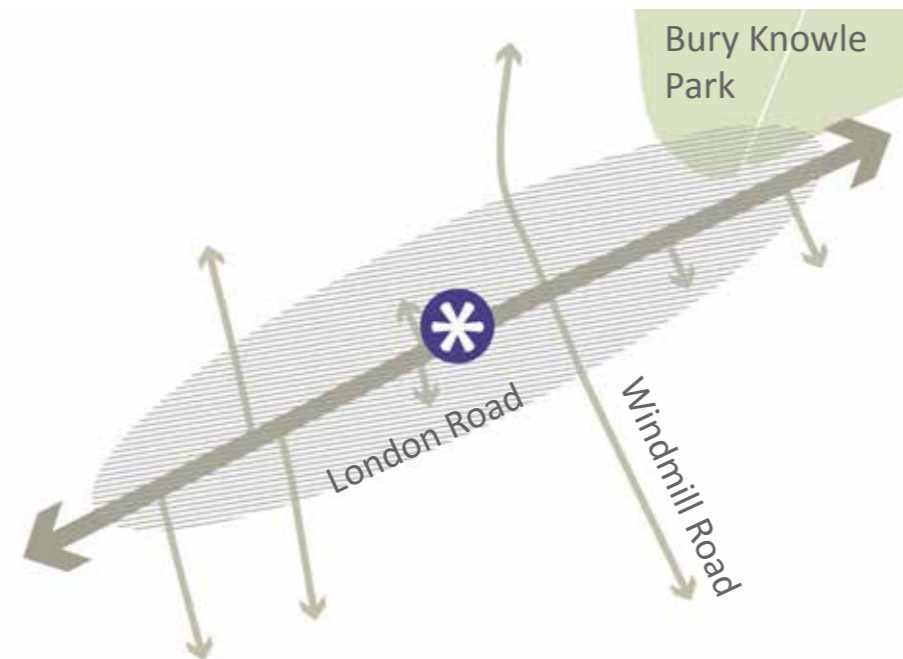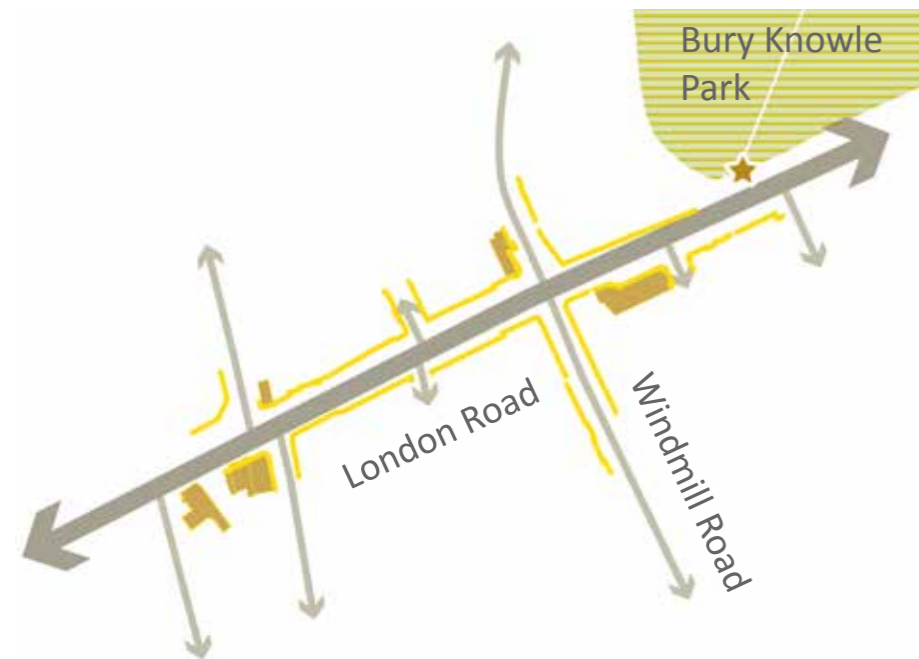
1. Strengthening local identity

Special elements to celebrate Headington as a place including:

- Art and public realm elements that add character
- Shop front improvements and enhancements to buildings
- Highlighting heritage and history
- Feature lighting

2. Supporting community vitality

Supporting the Headington business and residential communities including:

- A new community oriented space in the Centre that caters for a diverse neighbourhood
- Supporting Saturday Market success
- Improving the appearance of the centre to attract more footfall and new businesses
- Exploring potential long-term development opportunities that have community benefit

3. Creating lively public spaces

New and improved public spaces of high quality:

- New 'pocket' public spaces which make the most of constrained space available
- That improve amenity and adding greenery
- That are attractive to people of all ages and abilities
- Have flexibility for small-scale events and informal activities
- Complement and support adjacent businesses
- With distinctive design elements
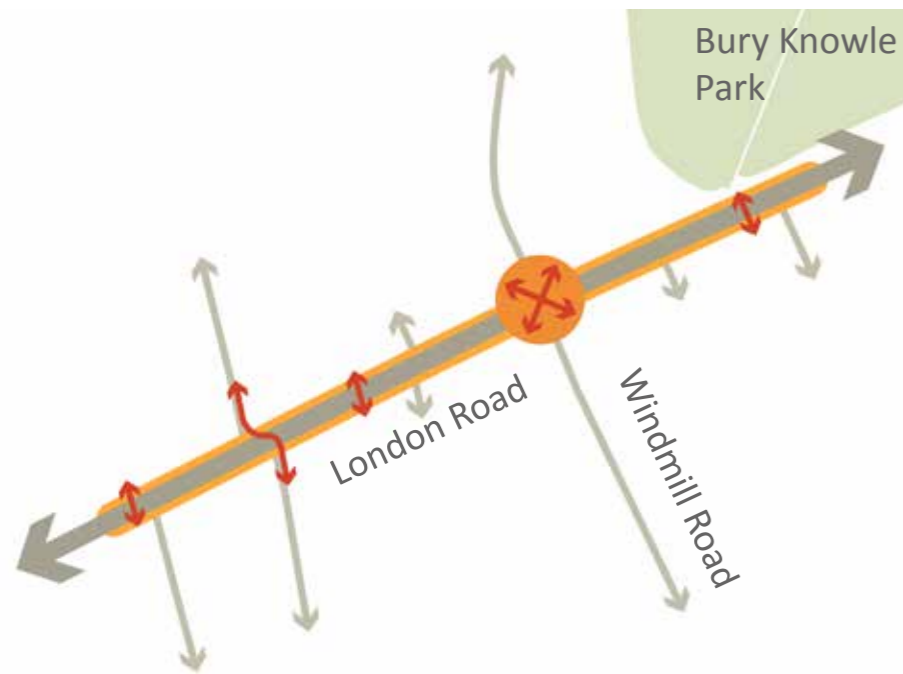
4. Connecting people with places

Improved active and sustainable travel provisions, with a focus on

- Ease and comfort of walking along and crossing London Road
- Designing for people of all ages and abilities
- Improving cycle access and connecting to the wider cycle network
- Ensuring good access to bus and coach services
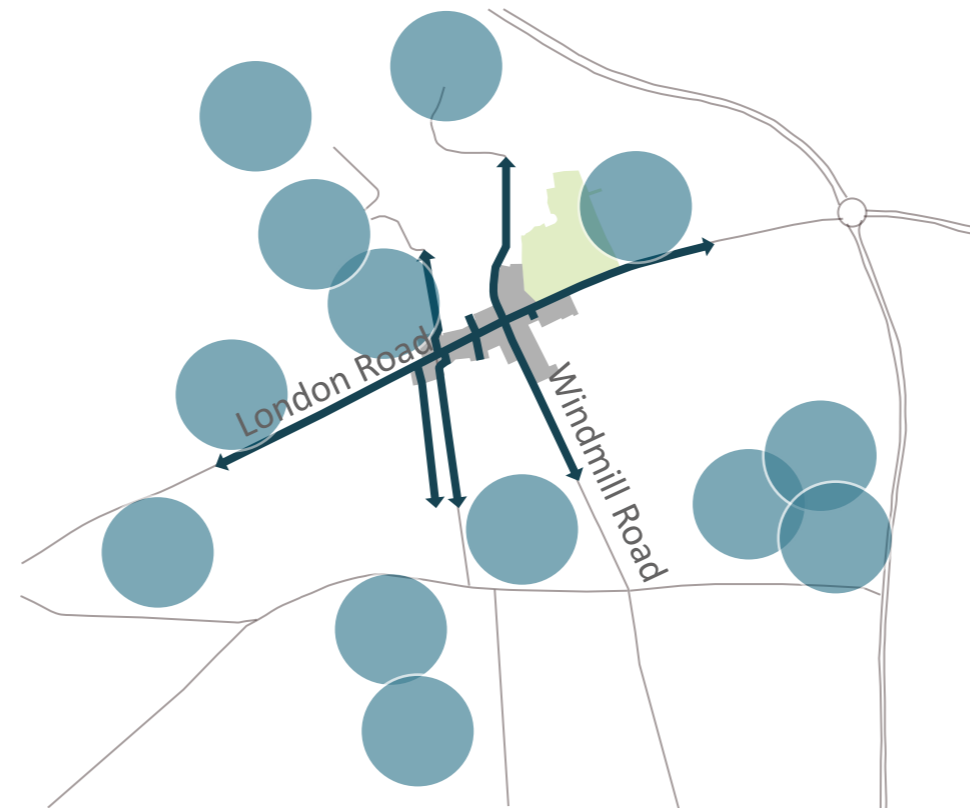
5. Connecting and showcasing the institutions

Responding to the range of important institutions within Headington Neighbourhood within the Centre by:

- Improving pedestrian access and navigation between the Centre and institutions
- Strengthening the presence of institutions within the Centre
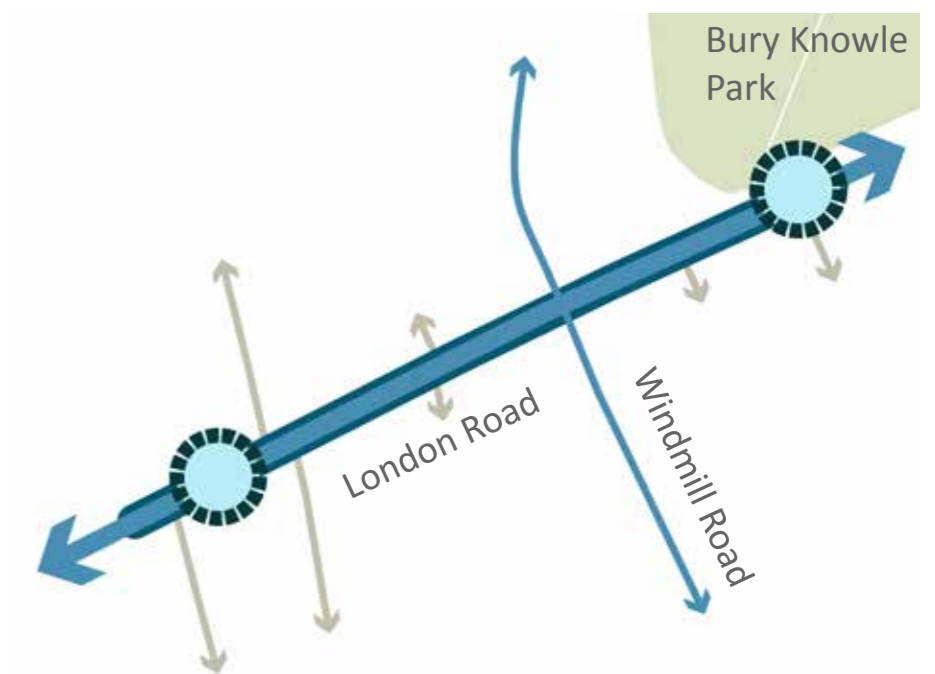
6. Re-imagining key roads as places for all

A transformed environment along London Road to:

- Turn it into a place for people to spend time in and enjoy, mitigating the impact of traffic, while recognising its important role as one of Oxford's key arteries
- Enhanced sense of arrival at east and west gateways to help define the Centre and as a distinctive 'place' on the artery
- Supported by review and consideration of changes to on-street parking and loading

10.0   Development of Improvement Ideas

10.1   Mapping opportunities

10.1.1   Using the outcomes of the SWOT analysis, and in line with the vision, potential improvement opportunities were mapped and developed into a project long-list.

10.1.2   The initial map of opportunities is illustrated in the plan on the next page, categorised by design theme (where they involve a specific location; some interventions are area-wide or non-spatial). This mapping exercise was a first step; some opportunities have evolved over the course of the project.

10.1.3   An accompanying summary table of the long-list was prepared, with brief description of each intervention. Including early consideration of order of magnitude costs, timescales, and delivery complexity.

10.2   Stakeholder workshop - Testing ideas

10.2.1   An online workshop was held with stakeholders at this point to 'test' the early ideas. The workshop was used to:

- Present the vision, themes and initial ideas for potential improvement projects
- Facilitate discussion about the ideas and get feedback on them
- Understand stakeholder priorities

10.2.2   Appendix A provides a summary of the workshop and feedback received.

10.3   Assessing opportunities

10.3.1   All potential projects in the long-list were qualitatively assessed using a multi-criteria framework. This helped the ARU team and the Project Board collectively identify priorities and sift out less important interventions. It was also used to identify potential 'quick wins'.

10.3.2   The initial ideas were then further refined in light of the workshop outcomes and results of the multi-criteria assessment.

10.4   Public exhibition

10.4.1   The key ideas developed as a result of preceding stages were showcased in a public exhibition, held on Saturday 28th October 2022, at St Andrew's C Of E Primary School, Headington. The exhibition attracted an estimated 150 people.

10.4.2   Eight A1 boards were prepared by the ARU team and exhibited at the event. Digital versions were also placed on the HA website at the same time. These showcased 11 ideas:

- 1. Headington Centre gateway areas
- 2. Placemaking elements
- 3. Walking improvements
- 4. Osler Road corner pocket plaza
- 5. Kennett Road pocket plaza
- 6. Windmill Road public realm
- 7. A community hub
- 8. Making more of institutions
- 9. Saturday Market
- 10. Shop front improvements
- 11. A long-term vision for London Road

10.4.3   People were invited to indicate support where they liked improvement ideas. Ideas were generally received positively but with different degrees of support. Feedback on specific aspects of ideas helped the team understand aspects that people did / did not like, or had concerns about. Detailed comments were provided via a survey; this provided further insight into these specific aspects.

10.4.4   Appendix A provides a summary of the exhibition and feedback received.

10.5   Key projects

10.5.1   Improvement ideas have been reviewed and refined following the exhibition and feedback received. The initial list of 11 ideas has been refined into 10 ideas. There are various changes in the suggested approach made to many of them. These 10 ideas form the key projects, and are:

- 1. Headington Centre gateway areas
- 2. Placemaking elements
- 3. Walking and accessibility improvements
- 4. Osler Road corner pocket plaza
- 5. Kennett Road pocket plaza
- 6. Windmill Road public realm
- 7. A hub for Headington community and institutions
- 8. Saturday Market expansion
- 9. Shop front and facade improvements
- 10. A long-term vision for London Road

10.5.2   It should be noted that some of these projects have sub-projects with more specific elements. The intention is that these sub-projects can be taken forward separately, as and when funding might be available, without being dependent on other projects. Nevertheless the intent is that the outcome of delivering several sub-projects is more than the sum of the parts, catalysing a more significant change in the look, feel and function of Headington Centre.

10.5.3   These ten projects are described in chapter 11 . These are presented as key priority projects to pursue.

10.5.4   Chapter 12 presents a range of additional projects. These are ideas which are considered generally medium or lower priority, but may be considered if there is a suitable opportunity to do so (e.g. specific funding source or policy objective that they align with).

N
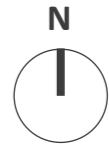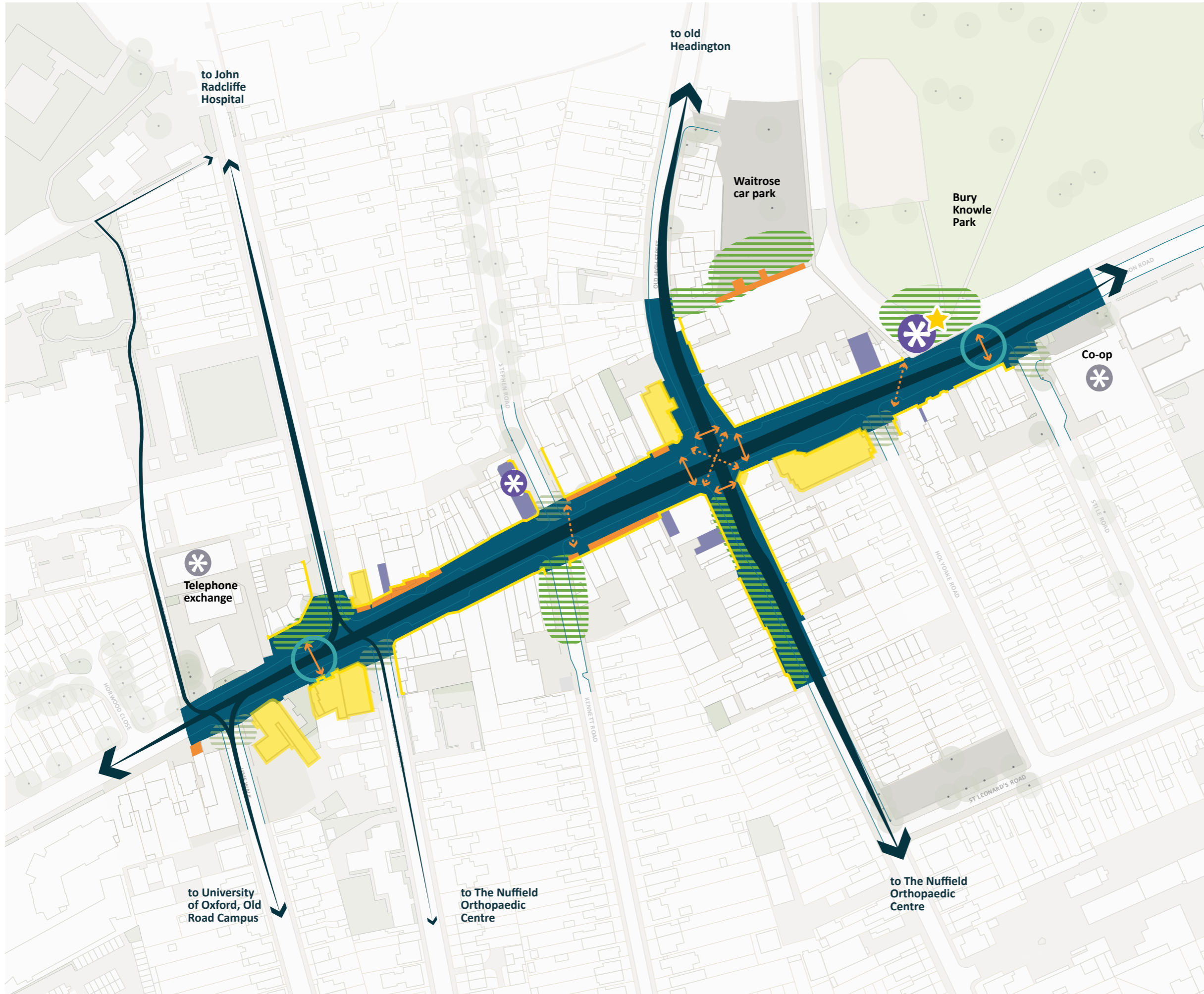
Fig 28. Initial opportunities identified,
categorised by design theme

to old
Headington

to John
Radcliffe
Hospital

Waitrose
car park

Bury
Knowle
Park

Co-op

Telephone
exchange

to University
of Oxford, Old
Road Campus

to The Nuffield
Orthopaedic
Centre

to The Nuffield
Orthopaedic
Centre

**Re-imagining key roads
as 'places' for all**

**Connecting people with
places**

**Creating lively public
spaces**

**Strengthening local
identity**

**Supporting community
vitality**

**Connecting and
showcasing the
institutions**

Improvement Ideas

11.0   Key Projects

11.1 Introduction

11.1.1   The table on the next page summarise the ten projects proposed, with details including:

- Name and brief description
- Indication of the categories the project covers
- Indicative assessment of deliverability, e.g. likely complexity, contingencies, or difficulties that might affect delivery
- Suggested timescale for delivery (short, medium, long)
- Suggested priority for delivery

11.1.2   The pages after the table provide further description of these projects, with key design principles, sensitivities involved, potential project leads and partners, and next steps to take the project forward. These are intended to provide general guidance for a potential design rather than a definitive solution. All projects would be subject to design development and feasibility checks when funding is secured, with further consultation and approvals as relevant.

11.1.3   As noted earlier, some of the projects are effectively 'umbrella' projects for a selection of smaller elements, that can be delivered separately or together. This allows flexibility of delivery, depending on funding available and appetite for scale of works involved.

Key for project table overleaf

Deliverability

How complex or straightforward is the project to deliver, considering land ownership, stakeholders, contingencies, traffic impacts etc.

●●●●●   Least complex/ most straightforward

○○○○○   Most complex/ least straightforward

●●●●●

E.g. single land ownership, few stakeholders, standard planning process, no traffic changes, no listings etc..

●●●●○

E.g. multiple land ownership/ stakeholders, minor traffic changes, listed buildings/ other contingencies

●●●○○

E.g. more significant traffic or structural changes

●●○○○

E.g. requires wider architectural interventions, archaeological contingencies

●○○○○

E.g. affects strategic traffic movement, requires site acquisition/assembly, or complex planning or stakeholder negotiations

Timescale

Likely timescale within which project could be delivered, dependent on feasibility studies, availability of funding, other infrastructure works etc.

- **Short**- Potential to be defined and pursued immediately, and delivered within the next year or two
- **Medium**- Longer lead time, may be linked to other projects or require approvals from various parties
- **Long**- Require series of scoping, design and approval stages, and dependent on other projects or many stakeholders.

Quick win

Whether it is considered likely that a project could be delivered (fully or partially) in a relatively short time scale with limited funds and low risk and effort. E.g. through temporary or smaller-scale interventions without many dependencies. These could either remain in situ or potentially act as a stepping stone to other more permanent changes in the long term.

Cost

- Broad indication of order of magnitude of cost for delivery of project, based on cost estimates of similar scale and type of projects elsewhere:
- £ = Up to £40,000
- ££ = Between £40,000 and £80,000
- £££ Between £80,000 and £250,000
- ££££ Between £250,000 and £1 million
- £££££ Between £1 and £5 million
- ££££££ More than £5 million

	Project name	Overview	Category	Deliverability	Timescale (S/M/L)	Quick win (Y/N)	Priority (L/M/H)
1.	Headington Centre gateway areas	Redesign two locations on London Road to provide a strong sense of arrival into Headington Centre from both the east and the west. The design should improve pedestrian crossing movement, and encourage drivers to travel slowly and carefully through the centre.	Walking, cycling, public transport, highways, public realm	●○○○○	S	N	H
2.	Place-making elements	• 2A. Celebrate local heritage - providing information to highlight both heritage buildings/ structures, and Headington's history more generally. • 2B. Public art interventions - working with the local community to develop art installations that add interest and distinctiveness. • 2C. Creative lighting - using feature lighting selectively to provide visual interest and highlight special features or places. • 2D. Street furniture specials- replacing standard items of street furniture with more characterful items.	Public realm, place-making, heritage, community	2A ●●●●● 2B ●●●●○ 2C ●●●●○ 2D ●●●●○	S	Y (some)	M
3.	Walking and accessibility improvements	• 3A. Decluttering - removing, rationalising and/or relocating street furniture that restricts pedestrian movement along London Road. • 3B. Level changes - redesigning level changes in London Road. • 3C. Crossings - improving pedestrian crossings and side road crossovers. • 3D. Wayfinding - providing wayfinding signage within the Centre and beyond. • 3E. Pedestrian Quality Corridors – improving footways on the main approach routes into the local shopping area	Walking, public realm, institutions	3A ●●●●● 3B ●●●○○ 3C ●●●●○ 3D ●●●●● 3E ●●●●○	S- M	Y (some)	H
4.	Osler Road corner pocket plaza	Enhance existing pavement area, to create an informal public space with additional planting, seating, and feature lighting. Retain some pavement space free for small events and use by adjacent businesses as spill-out for seating.	Public realm, place-making, greening, business	●●●●○	M	N	H
5.	Kennett Road pocket plaza	Create a small new public space by narrowing the northern end of Kennett Road and extending the pavement, incorporating seating, planting, and other amenities. The space could be used for Saturday Market stalls and other small events. Vehicular access would be maintained through the space to meet general circulation and servicing requirements.	Public realm, place-making, greening, business	●●●○○	M	N	H
6.	Windmill Road public realm	Enhance the public realm along the west, wider side of the Windmill Road, making it greener and more attractive, while supporting adjacent business activity.	Public realm, place-making, greening, business	●●●●○	M	N	H
7.	A hub for Headington community and institutions	Provide a dedicated multi-purpose building in Headington Centre for use by the community and the various institutions in the Headington neighbourhood, with a supporting programme of events and activities. This could be undertaken in stages: • 7A- Testing demand via temporary reuse of an existing building in Headington Centre, with light touch refurbishment. • 7B- If testing stage is successful, develop a permanent space (refurbishing existing building or in new development)	Community, institutions, development	7A ●●●●○ 7B ●●○○○	7A = S- M 7B = M-L	N	H
8.	Saturday Market expansion	Facilitate improvement of market stall layout and expansion, plus enhanced storage for stallholders' equipment.	Business, community	●●●●○	M	N	H
9.	Shop front and facade improvements	Develop and run a match-funding programme to improve shop fronts and building façades, helping to create a visually appealing and coherent townscape.	Business, place-making	●●●●○	M	N	H
10.	A long-term vision for London Road	A major project to re-imagine and redesign the part of London Road within Headington centre, to make it a distinctive and attractive place for people to come to and spend time in, as well as supporting its vital function as a movement corridor to/from central Oxford with prioritisation of active and sustainable travel modes.	Walking, cycling, public transport, highways, public realm	○○○○○	L	N	H
11.	New public toilets	Replace existing toilets in Bury Knowle Park with a new building providing a more comfortable and attractive public convenience in same location.	Community	●○○○○	M	N	M

1. Headington Centre gateway areas

Timescale: Short

Quick win: No

Priority: High

Category: Walking, cycling, public transport, highways, public realm

Deliverability: ●○○○○

Cost: £250,000 - £500,000

11.1.4   Redesign two locations on London Road to provide a strong sense of arrival into Headington Centre from both the east and the west. The design should improve pedestrian crossing movement, improve the cycling experience, and encourage vehicles to travel slowly and carefully through the centre.

11.1.5   The gateways could help catalyse further change along the rest of London Road, as explained in idea 11, Long Term Vision for London Road.

Potential design elements

11.1.6   Design elements could include the following.

- Install a central median strip within the gateway area (approximately 1.5 to 2.0 metres wide). This would help facilitate ease of pedestrian crossing, provide space for planting, and provide a traffic calming feature (width restriction).

- Design must be safely and comfortably tie in with adjacent cycling infrastructure (including taking account of potential changes as developed as a result of idea 11), and not create a pinchpoint for cyclists.

- Design will need to continue to cater for movement but reinforce slow speeds. It should retain existing number of traffic lanes with reduction in carriageway width to acceptable minimum.

- Retain existing bus gates. Ensure design works to maintain or enhance the priority granted to bus and coach (and emergency vehicle) access. At the eastern gateway this should include reconfiguring the road layout to facilitate better coach and bus egress from stop HS5, e.g. by removing layby and allowing buses to go straight ahead, with a mini-bus gate so merging traffic gives way accordingly.

- Different surfacing within carriageway (e.g. buff-coloured anti-skid surface dressing) to reinforce to drivers that they are entering the centre.

- Improve pedestrian crossings at both gateways to better provide for pedestrian desire lines. This could include a new zebra crossing at the western gateway location (replacing existing pedestrian refuge island).

- Enhance identity using landscape elements. Planting could include trees (small or columnar-shaped to avoid vehicle strikes) or low-level shrubs/groundcovers. Design must allow overrunning by emergency vehicles if required.

- Feature lighting could be used to provide further visual interest and amenity. This could take the form of distinctive lighting columns and/or catenary lighting.

- At the eastern gateway the pavement area at the entrance to Bury Knowle Park should be enhanced to more strongly announce the presence of the park, and provide an informal space for people to pause. This could include new surfacing, seating, artwork, and park name signage.

Sensitivities and considerations

- Cycle safety (avoiding pinchpoint)
- Traffic volumes
- Emergency vehicle access
- Bus and coach operations, including future growth in usage
- Parking provisions, especially disabled parking
- Parking enforcement
- Servicing requirements of frontagers
- Relationship to Bury Knowle Park
- Heritage

Synergies with other projects

- 3. Walking improvements
- 4. Osler Road Pocket Plaza
- 11. Vision for London Road

11.1.7   This project is intended to be taken forward as a precursor to redesigning London Road, however would require subsequent integration into the design (which may require some adjustments, depending on design details).

Project lead and partners

11.1.8   This would be require feasibility work to develop, test, and approve a design before it was implemented. Would need to be led by the County Council as Highways Authority, in close collaboration with the City Council. Key stakeholders would include bus and coach operators, the institutions, emergency services, local businesses (notably London Road frontagers), civic and community groups.

Supporting studies required

- Bus and coach stop review
- Utility surveys
- Feasibility design study

Location

Existing situation - west end of the centre

Existing situation - east end of the centre

Conceptual visualisation of how the eastern gateway might look, with bus stopping and movement improved, new central median feature and surfacing, feature lighting, improved pedestrian crossing, and enhanced public realm at Bury Knowle Park entrance (View west along London Road from outside Bury Knowle Park entrance)

Example of gateway area with central median, tree planting, and pedestrian crossing (Northwood Hills, London)

Example of gateway area with central median, special carriageway surfacing, and pedestrian crossing (Frideswide Square, Oxford)

57

2. Place-making elements

Timescale:	Short
Quick win:	Yes
Priority:	Medium
Category:	Public realm, place-making, heritage, community
Deliverability:	2A ●●●●●
	2B ●●●●○
	2C ●●●●○
	2D ●●●●○
Cost:	Varies by type and number of interventions, but specific elements could be delivered for up to £40,000

11.1.9   This project comprises three different elements, which can be taken forward separately. These are:

- **2A. Celebrate local heritage** - providing information to highlight both heritage buildings/ structures, and Headington's history more generally.
- **2B. Public art interventions** - working with the local community to develop art installations that add interest and distinctiveness.
- **2C. Creative lighting** - using feature lighting selectively to provide visual interest and highlight special features or places.
- **2D Street furniture specials**- replacing standard items of street furniture with more characterful items.

Potential design elements

11.1.10   For **2A celebrate local heritage,** this could include the following:

- Work with the community to identify interesting aspects of local history to celebrate. This could include specific heritage buildings, listed or unlisted (e.g. The Britannia Inn, Holyoake Hall), people who lived in Headington, important events, stories from Headington's development etc.
- Develop designs for a family of physical elements to highlight these aspects. E.g. using interpretation panels, plaques, markers and similar.
- Minimising physical and visual clutter. E.g. where possible attaching items to walls or existing street furniture, or minimising the size of new structures.
- Creating a trail that people can follow. E.g. using smaller wall or pavement markers, supported with an online map.
- Heritage elements should complement the Hear in Headington project recently installed.

11.1.11   For **2B public art interventions,** this could include the following:

- Identify places for potential art interventions in collaboration with the local community and property owners. For instance public spaces, pavements, blank walls, shop shutters, and vacant shop units. Priority should be given to locations that help animate unloved spaces.
- Develop artwork for these locations, involving local artists and/or students from Headington schools and university campuses.
- Consider temporary artworks. A rotating programme of time-limited art interventions could be used to showcase different types of art, renew interest, and help ensure artworks are not left to become tired and poorly maintained.

11.1.12   For **2C creative lighting**, this could include the following:

- Sensitively design and install uplighting to highlight selected building façades that are important from a heritage perspective or act as local landmarks. E.g. Holyoake Hall.
- Install festoon lighting in selected mature trees. E.g. within the Osler Road corner pocket plaza described at idea 4, or trees along London Road.

- Explore potential for catenary lighting in conjunction with public space proposals, and other locations shown on map (see next page).

11.1.13   For **2D street furniture specials**, this could include the following:

- Develop a Headington street furniture design specification to replace standard items such as benches, bins, cycle stands, bollards with something more distinctive.
- These could be high quality ready-made items that provide a more characterful look and feel. Alternatively selected items could be bespoke designs, e.g. done in collaboration with local artists and students.

Sensitivities and considerations

- Existing information including 'Hear in Headington'
- Heritage structures
- Accessibility of pedestrian environment
- Property ownership
- Maintenance requirements

Synergies with other projects

- 3. Walking and accessibility improvements
- 4. Osler Road corner pocket plaza
- 5. Kennett Road pocket plaza
- 6. Windmill Road public realm
- 10. Long term vision for London Road

Project lead and partners

11.1.14   These interventions could be led by Headington Action, in close collaboration with both the City and County Councils, and property owners. As Highways Authority the County would need to approve any installations within the highways environment, with necessary arrangements for maintenance. Key stakeholders would include local businesses, civic and community groups.

Supporting studies required

- Design development of specific elements
- Physical surveys / inspections as relevant to intervention
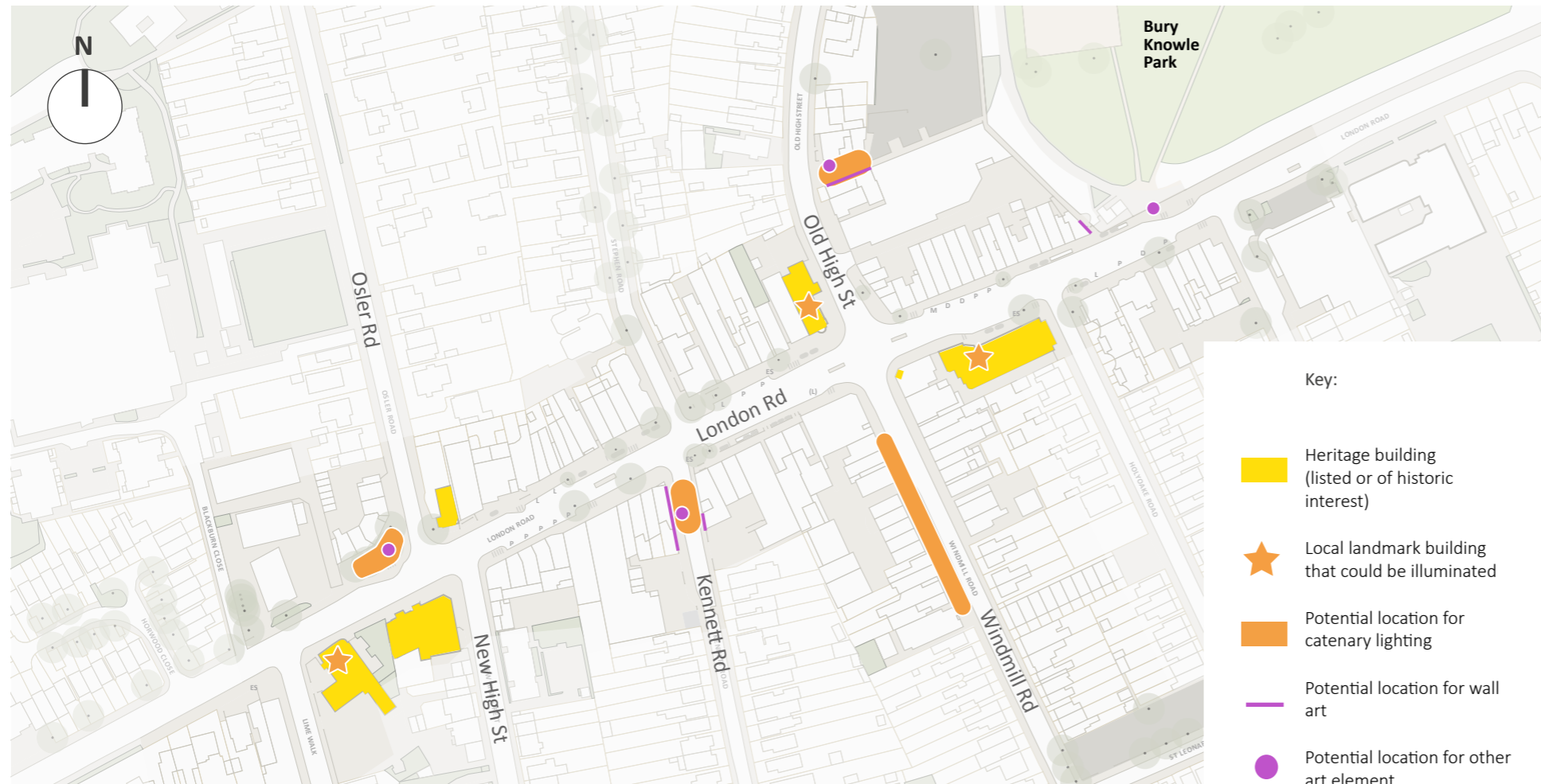
Fig 29.   Potential locations for place-making elements

Key:

■ Heritage building (listed or of historic interest)

★ Local landmark building that could be illuminated

▬ Potential location for catenary lighting

— Potential location for wall art

● Potential location for other art element

2D Street furniture specials

Examples of feature seating: items from a high quality standard range (above, East India Quay, London); and bespoke items designed by young designers (below, from the London Festival of Architecture)

2A Celebrate local heritage

Examples of heritage interpretation panels: above, wall-mounted (Sydney, Australia); right, free-standing (Barcelona, Spain)

2B Public art interventions

Examples of mural (above left, Philadelphia, USA), and pavement art (above right) that also celebrates heritage

2C Creative lighting

Examples of feature lighting used to highlight architectural landmark (above left, Hamburg, Germany); and as part of artwork (above right, Bath)

59

3. Walking and accessibility improvements

Timescale: Short to Medium

Quick win: Yes

Priority: High

Category: Walking, public realm, institutions

Deliverability:
3A ●●●●●
3B ●●●○○
3C ●●●●○
3D ●●●●●
3E ●●●●○

Cost:
3A / 3B / 3C / 3D each = £80,000 to £250,000

3E = £250,000 to £500,000

11.1.15   This project comprises three different elements, which can be taken forward separately. These are:

- **3A. Decluttering** - removing, rationalising and/or relocating street furniture that restricts pedestrian movement along London Road.
- **3B. Level changes** - redesigning level changes in London Road.
- **3C. Crossings** - improving pedestrian crossings and side road crossovers.
- **3D. Wayfinding** - providing wayfinding signage within the Centre and beyond.
- **3E. Pedestrian Quality Corridor**s – improving footways on the main approach routes into the local shopping area

Potential design elements

11.1.16   For **3A decluttering,** this could include the following:

- Seek to provide clear and unobstructed pedestrian space with effective width sized to accommodate the main pedestrian movement routes taken along London Road, accessing building entrances, around bus stops, and when the market is in operation.
- Audit London Road street furniture and signage and identify items that should be retained, those that can be removed, others that could be rationalised (e.g. combining signage with street furniture), and items that could be relocated.
- Locate the required increase in cycle and scooter parking in line with the transport user hierarchy. These should be accommodated on London

Road in a clear street furniture zone or on footway build-outs without obstructing footway space, including by re-purposing existing parking or other carriageway space or where necessary relocating scooter and cycle parking to side road entries just off London Road.

11.1.17   For **3B level changes,** this could include the following:

- Review all instances of level changes which reduce pedestrian space and cause pinchpoints, create discomfort or trip hazards, and impact adversely on wheelchair users.
- Work with private property owners to develop design solution that integrates with the highways environment, and to seek agreement regarding construction and maintenance. Specific locations will require a bespoke design approach.
- Resolve small level differences by regrading paving. Avoid creating pavement with a significant fall, by look at raising and regarding a wider area of pavement. Where close to a side road entry there the design solution could be integrated with providing a continuous footway treatment across the road junction (see below).
- More significant level differences will need to retain some form of ramps and steps. Each location should be reviewed in conjunction with neighbouring properties to identify optimal solution of shared ramps and steps which minimises footprint while meeting all access requirements.
- Use consistent surfacing, railings and balustrades in all locations.
- Use planting areas in place of retaining walls if space allows.
- Integrate seating within level changes to help resolve and also keep pedestrian movement routes clear.
- Retain and reprovide space for outdoor terrace seating as necessary.

11.1.18   Appendix B provides further details on locations and potential design approaches for resolving level changes.

11.1.19   For **3C crossings**, this could include the following:

- Provide continuous footway crossings across all side street entries.
- Provide a new zebra crossing on London Road west of the Osler Road junction, replacing existing pedestrian refuge island (see also idea 1. Headington Centre gateway areas).

11.1.20   For **3D wayfinding**, this could include the following:

- Promote Headington as a trial location for wayfinding signs, aligning with the County's aspirations in the emerging Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan.
- Review and map key destinations, and decision points in the centre and wider Headington area for wayfinding signage. Involvement of the institutions will be vital to capture navigation requirements between the centre and each of the institutions.
- Develop wayfinding design approach, considering a family of products that include maps and directional information as appropriate. E.g. boards

with area-wide maps (monoliths or miniliths) and finger-posts providing directions, and walking distances / times.

- Make use of wayfinding products that do not add to street clutter. E.g. posters to go in bus stop shelters, boards that can be attached to walls, graphic markers that can be applied to or integrated in pavement surfacing.

11.1.21   For **3E pedestrian quality corridors**, this could include the following:

- Work with Oxfordshire County Council to identify and audit the key walking routes into Headington Centre in a 1km catchment, including both routes from residential areas and the surrounding institutions.
- Develop and implement a prioritised list of improvements to pedestrian footways and paths including improved crossing of side roads, footway widening, surface maintenance and removal of obstructions.
- Use the Neighbourhood Plan and relevant supplementary planning documents to secure safe, accessible and comfortable pedestrian routes from surrounding institutions, including the Nuffield and John Radcliffe Hospital campuses, in the future.

Sensitivities and considerations

- Amount and location of cycle parking provisions, considering growth in demand
- Car parking provisions
- Accessibility requirements of different users
- Property ownership relating level changes
- Drainage issues associated with level changes
- Wayfinding signage to align with County aspirations
- Wayfinding signage updates and maintenance

Synergies with other projects

- 1. Headington Centre gateway areas
- 4. Osler Road corner pocket plaza
- 5. Kennett Road pocket plaza
- 6. Windmill Road public realm
- 10. Long term vision for London Road

Project lead and partners

11.1.22   As Highways Authority the County would be the appropriate organisation to lead on this work in collaboration with the City. Wayfinding will require close collaboration with institutions and other key organisations that are trip destinations in the Headington area. Key stakeholders would include local businesses, civic and community groups.

Supporting studies required

- Design development of specific elements
- Physical surveys / inspections / utility surveys as relevant to intervention
- Feasibility design study for level changes and crossings

3A Decluttering

Examples of cycle parking in a re-purposed car parking space, installed in with footway build-outs at each end (Hackney, London)

3B Level changes

Examples of a level change in a street resolved by using bespoke seating (Uppsala, Sweden)

3C Crossings

Examples of continuous footway crossing providing level surface and pedestrian priority over a side road entry (from top: Greenwich; Southall; and Clapham, London)

3D Wayfinding
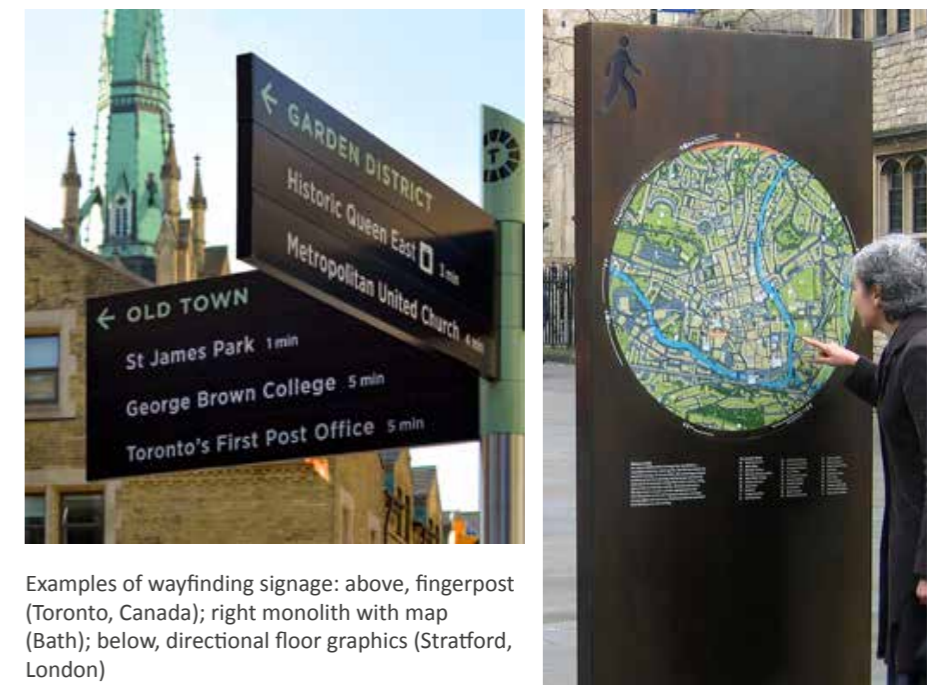
Examples of wayfinding signage: above, fingerpost (Toronto, Canada); right monolith with map (Bath); below, directional floor graphics (Stratford, London)

4. Osler Road corner pocket plaza

Timescale:	**Medium**
Quick win:	**No**
Priority:	**High**
Category:	**Public realm, place-making, greening, business**
Deliverability:	●●●●○
Cost:	**£80,000 - 250,000**

11.1.23   Enhance existing pavement area, to create an informal public space with additional planting, seating, and feature lighting. Retain some pavement space free for small events and use by adjacent businesses as spill-out for seating.

Potential design elements

11.1.24   Design elements could include the following.

- Resurface the pavement with high quality, distinctive materials. The majority of the pavement is County highways land, with a small area under private ownership. Design work should include liaison with frontagers to agree consistent repaving across entire area.

- Retain existing trees and incorporate new areas of low-level planting around them (e.g. shrubs and groundcovers). These could be either ground-level or raised planting beds (subject to utilities).

- Retain areas of pavement for flexible use. Clear, uncluttered areas should be provided and sized appropriately to accommodate business spill-out and stalls for events etc.

- Install continuous footway style treatment across southern end of Osler Road. The raised area and ramps need to be constructed to a sufficient standard for use by heavy goods vehicles.

- Install seating, strategically located to avoid obstructing pedestrian movement. E.g. integrate into edges of planters.

- Position seating, planting and other street furniture to prevent vehicle incursion into pedestrian space. Bollards or other furniture should be included outside Subway to prevent illegal parking.

- Incorporate special place-making features designed in conjunction with the local community. This could include artwork within the paved area, and/or informal play elements (e.g. pavement markers or stepping stones).

- Explore potential to reprovide existing cycle and/or scooter parking within Osler Road. This should be close to the London Road end of the street, e.g. converting part of existing car parking to cycle/scooter parking. Alternatively reprovide the parking within the design of the space, but positioned to avoid obstructing pedestrian movement (e.g. integrated into planter design).

- Install creative lighting (e.g. catenary or festoon lighting).

- Integrating shelter for protection from sun and rain.

Sensitivities and considerations

- Accessibility of pedestrian environment
- Property ownership
- Maintenance requirements
- Servicing requirements of businesses

Synergies with other projects

- 2. Place-making elements
- 3. Walking improvements
- 11. Vision for London Road

11.1.25   This project is intended to be taken forward separately to redesigning London Road, however would require subsequent integration into the design (which may require some adjustments, depending on design details).

Project lead and partners

11.1.26   Feasibility work would be required to develop, test, and approve a design before it was implemented. The project would need to be led by the County Council as Highways Authority, in close collaboration with the City Council. Key stakeholders would include local businesses, residents, civic and community groups.

Supporting studies required

- Utility surveys
- Feasibility design study

Location

OCC Highways extents (area in pink)

Existing situation

Conceptual visualisation of how the Osler Road corner plaza might look
(View from pavement on NW corner of London Road and Osler Road, looking east)

Example of pocket plaza created at street corner with planting and seating

Example of catenary lighting in informal public space (Sydney, Australia)

Example of informal play elements integrated into landscape design of street (Lambeth, London)

5. Kennett Road pocket plaza

Timescale: Medium

Quick win: No

Priority: High

Category: Public realm, place-making, greening

Deliverability: ●●●○○

Cost: £80,000 - 250,000

11.1.27   Create a small new public space by narrowing the northern end of Kennett Road and extending the pavement, incorporating seating, planting, and other amenities. The space could be used for Saturday Market stalls and other small events. Vehicular access would be maintained through the space to meet general circulation and servicing requirements.

11.1.28   If successful a similar approach could be explored to be undertake to other side road entries along London Road (e.g. Lime Walk, New High Street, Stephen Road, Holyoake Road, and Stile Road), tailoring the design (e.g. smaller-scale / lighter touch interventions) to reflect specific local conditions.

Potential design elements

11.1.29   Design elements could include the following.

- Build-out the pavement on the western side of Kennett Road between London Road, up to the end of the row of short stay parking bays. The build-out could be similar width to that of the current parking bays. It would require the removal of some parking bays, however one or two could be retained, potentially converted to disabled parking.
- Narrow the carriageway by a corresponding amount, allowing sufficient width for two-way general traffic and large vehicles, and ensuring safety for cyclists (noting that Kennett Road is a two-way cycle route).
- Pave widened area and adjacent footways in high quality materials.
- Raise and pave the carriageway area in special materials (e.g. a suitably coloured or textured asphalt). The raised area and ramps need to be constructed to a sufficient standard for use by heavy goods vehicles.
- Install continuous footway style treatment across northern end of road.
- Design the paved area for flexible use. Clear, uncluttered areas should be provided and sized appropriately to accommodate typical market stalls.
- Integrate power and water supplies to cater for market stalls and events.
- Install seating, strategically located to avoid obstructing use by market stalls, while also helping prevent vehicle incursion into pedestrian space. Bollards or other furniture should be included on the eastern footway to prevent illegal parking.

- Incorporate planting. This should ideally be trees or other in-ground planting (subject to utilities). If not possible consider raised planters.
- Incorporate special place-making features designed in conjunction with the local community. This could include artwork within the paved area, or potentially on blank walls (subject to landowner permission), and/or informal play elements (e.g. pavement markers).
- Reprovide and increase cycle parking provisions within the space.
- Install creative lighting (e.g. catenary or festoon lighting).
- Work with landowners to improve appearance of service yard fences.

11.1.30   With this design in place, the top end of the road should be closed to traffic during hours of market set up and operation. This would require proactive management by the Saturday Market, closing the southern end of Kennett Road at the Bateman Street junction on market days. During these times, Kennett Road would become two-way access only for residents with no or very limited deliveries to the servicing yards allowed.

Sensitivities and considerations

- Traffic movement and volumes
- Emergency vehicle access
- Parking provisions, specifically loss of short stay bays (currently there are four spaces available for up to 30 minutes, between 07:00 and 20:00).
- Parking enforcement
- Servicing requirements of adjacent businesses
- Heritage

Synergies with other projects

- 3. Walking improvements
- 9. Saturday Market
- 11. Vision for London Road

11.1.31   This project is intended to be taken forward separately to redesigning London Road, however would require subsequent integration into the design (which may require some adjustments, depending on design details).

Project lead and partners

11.1.32   Feasibility work would be required to develop, test, and approve a design before it was implemented. The project would need to be led by the County Council as Highways Authority, in close collaboration with the City Council. Key stakeholders would include local businesses (notably those with service yards and rear access from Kennett Road), residents, the Saturday Market, civic and community groups.

Supporting studies required

- Utility surveys
- Parking review
- Movement surveys
- Feasibility design study
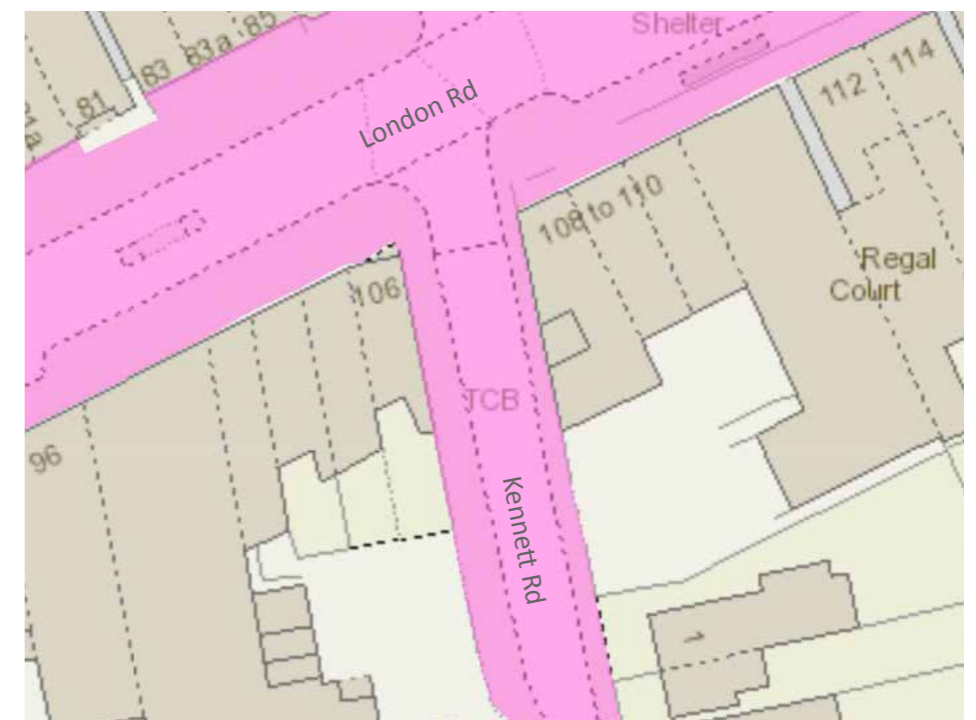
Location

OCC Highways extents (area in pink)

Existing situation

Conceptual visualisation of how the Kennett Road pocket plaza might look on market day (view south from London Road end of Kennett Road)

Example of pocket plaza created by widening pavement space while still allowing vehicular access, and incorporating tree planting and seating (Shoreditch, London)

Example of market stalls within street environment (Clapham, London)

6. Windmill Road public realm

Timescale:	Medium
Quick win:	No
Priority:	High
Category:	Public realm, place-making, greening
Deliverability:	●●●●○
Cost:	£250,000 - £500,000

11.1.33   Enhance the public realm along the west, wider side of the Windmill Road, making it greener and more attractive, while supporting adjacent business activity.

Potential design elements

11.1.34   Design elements could include the following.

- Resurface the pavement with high quality materials. The existing paved areas are part County highways land (alongside the kerb), and part private land (alongside the businesses). Design work should include liaison with frontagers to agree consistent repaving across entire area from back of kerb to building line.

- Provide permanent planting along the street edge. This should ideally include street trees (subject to underground utilities) and low-level planting to create an intensive strip of green that helps buffer the pavement space from traffic. If utilities prevent in-ground planting, then raised planting beds could be used instead.

- Integrate seating, located to avoid obstructing pedestrian movement. This could be freestanding or integrated into edges of planters.

- Retain and incorporate existing cycle parking into the design.

- Ensure planting, seating, cycle stands and other street furniture are positioned to prevent pavement parking, as the existing arrangement does.

- Keep pavement alongside businesses free and uncluttered for spill-out space and flexible use.

- Incorporate special place-making features designed in conjunction with the local community. This could include artwork within the planting, paved area, and/or informal play elements (e.g. pavement markers).

- Install creative lighting (e.g. catenary or festoon lighting).

- Complement with shop front improvements. Shops with shutters could feature artwork on them. See also idea 9.

Sensitivities and considerations

- Accessibility of pedestrian environment
- Property ownership
- Maintenance requirements
- Servicing requirements of businesses

Synergies with other projects

- 2. Place-making elements
- 3. Walking improvements
- 9. Shop front improvements

Project lead and partners

11.1.35   Feasibility work would be required to develop, test, and approve a design before it was implemented. The project would need to be led by the County Council as Highways Authority, in close collaboration with the City Council. Key stakeholders would include local businesses, residents, civic and community groups.

Supporting studies required

- Utility surveys
- Feasibility design study

Location

Existing situation

OCC Highways extents (area in pink)

Example of street where a relatively narrow planted strip creates an attractive buffer from the street, with pavement seating for businesses behind (Dalston, London)

Example of catenary lighting

Example of street where the public highway and private land have been comprehensively repaved in the same material, with in-ground planting along the street edge, and spill-out space for businesses (Francis Road, Leyton, London)

Example of a raised planter with shrub planting which provides a buffer for bench seating, and cafe seating from adjacent businesses (Summertown, Oxford)

Example of cycle parking and planter aligned to avoid obstructing pedestrian flow (Elephant & Castle, London)

7. A hub for Headington's community and institutions

Timescale:	7A Short to Medium
	7B Medium to Long
Quick win:	No
Priority:	High
Category:	Community, institutions, development
Deliverability:	7A ●●●●○
	7B ●●○○○
Cost:	7A £80,000 - £250,000
	7B £1 million - £5 million

11.1.36   Provide a dedicated multi-purpose building in Headington Centre for use by the community and the various institutions in the Headington neighbourhood, with a supporting programme of events and activities. This could be undertaken in two stages:

- 7A- Testing appetite via temporary reuse of an existing building in Headington, with light touch refurbishment.
- 7B- If the testing stage is successful, develop a permanent space, either refurbishing an existing building or within a new building.

Potential design elements

- Provide a flexible space(s) which can accommodate a range of community uses and activities including workshops, classes, meetings, exhibitions, events, performances, film screenings etc.
- Develop an accompanying programme of activities to cater for Headington's diverse demography, catering for all ages from children and teenagers through to older people.
- Include a space for showcasing research work done by the institutions and facilitating their engagement with the Headington community, e.g. via lectures and exhibitions.
- Work with institutions to develop an accompanying event programme.
- Incorporate a use such as a cafe that can be open throughout the day and early evening to help activate the building when not in use for other activities.
- For both stages 7A and 7B the space should be a prominent location within the centre that is easily accessible for all.
- For 7A, the hub could be within an existing building or units capable of being re-purposed temporarily. Potentially an office or retail unit(s) that are already vacant or approaching lease end date.
- Consideration could be given to locating the facility in Bury Knowle House, so that it works in synergy with the Headington Library.

- For 7B, a permanent space could be provided by fully refurbishing an existing building. Alternatively it could be a dedicated new space incorporated within a larger development site. E.g. within a revised proposal for the Cooperative site, should their be an opportunity for this (at the time of writing the status of this development was unknown).

Previous community hub idea

11.1.37   An idea previously explored was to provide a dedicated new community hub building in place of the existing toilet block building in Bury Knowle Park. The suggestion was that the toilets be reprovided as a new, better facility in the same location, incorporated into a compact building which also provides space for community use. The design approach mooted was to reuse the already developed land occupied by the existing toilet block and associated paving, with additional space at first floor level, which would make the building visible over the park wall. Such a design would naturally need to be very sensitive to the park as public open space, the mature trees nearby, the Conservation Area status, and the listed park wall. However this idea is now considered unsuitable in view of recent proposals by Courtside for a cafe and community space nearby at the tennis courts in Bury Knowle Park. Moreover it does not align with the emerging City Council Thriving Communities Strategy. In light of this it is suggested that an alternative location be found for the hub.

Sensitivities and considerations

- Existing community spaces within the area, including Headington Library, Headington Community Centre on Gladstone Road, and Courtside's proposed space
- Planning designations and approvals
- Management requirements
- Accessibility considerations

Synergies with other projects

11.1.38   Synergies will depend on specific location.

Project lead and partners

11.1.39   Given the multi-purpose nature of the hub it would be best led by Headington Action or a dedicated provider of similar spaces. Close collaboration with the City Council and other community space providers would be required to take account of synergies or conflicts, and also with the various institutions to develop an appropriate space and programme of activities. Key stakeholders would include local businesses, civic and community groups.

Supporting studies required

11.1.40   The project will require an in-depth review of existing community facilities to understand current offer, plus engagement with community groups and institutions to understand likely demand, and specific types of uses and facilities which might be needed. A sustainable business case would be required, covering development, programming, day-to-day running etc.

Example of temporary multi-purpose hub in a re-purposed retail space (Enfield, London). The 'Culture Palace' provides space for community services, a bookshop and is a venue for performances, film, workshops, children's parties and activities, live music etc.

Examples of small-scale purpose-built community hub buildings: left, in Hackney Wick, London; right, in Rodermark, Germany.

8. Saturday Market expansion

Timescale: Medium

Quick win: No

Priority: High

Category: Business, community

Deliverability: ●●●●○

Cost: Unknown

11.1.41   Facilitate improvement of market stall layout and expansion.

Potential elements

- Review pavement space on London Road, seeking to declutter and rationalise street furniture and signage (see also idea 3. Walking improvements) in order to make the space more flexible for stall usage. E.g. relocate cycle and scooter parking to side road entries, locating in pavement build-outs.
- Redesign north end of Kennett Road to accommodate market stalls (see idea 5. Kennett Road Pocket Plaza).
- Provide a larger dedicated and weather-protected storage area for market stalls, bins, and other equipment. This could be a shipping container, located in an existing service yard or similar area leased from a property owner. The container could be branded and design to double as a sheltered space for use during market operation (e.g. sitting area for eating and drinking).

Sensitivities and considerations

- Market management
- Servicing requirements, for market and adjacent premises
- Pedestrian movement and accessibility considerations

Synergies with other projects

- 3. Walking improvements
- 5. Kennett Road pocket plaza
- 11. Vision for London Road

Project lead and partners

11.1.42   Headington Action suggested as project lead, in partnership with the County and City councils. Changes to street furniture and signage would require approval from the County as Highways Authority. Key stakeholders would include local businesses, civic and community groups.

Supporting studies required

- Market stallholder needs assessment
- Street clutter audit

9. Shop front and facade improvements

Timescale: Medium

Quick win: No

Priority: High

Category: Business, place-making

Deliverability: ●●●●○

Cost: £80,000 - £250,000

11.1.43   Develop and run programmes to improve window displays, shop fronts and building façades, to create a visually appealing and coherent townscape.

Potential elements

- Run a window display initiative as a first step to start the discussion about improving the appearance of street-facing businesses. E.g. this could be a competition for premises to take part in, or as a business support scheme with free advice from a window-display expert. It could be used as a springboard to create a network and gauge level of interest in improvements.
- Prepare a Headington Centre shop front design guide in collaboration with local businesses and community.
- Set up a match funding programme which business landlords or tenants can apply for to develop and implement improvements
- Collaborate with successful applicants to develop improvements with advice and support from architects, brand identity specialists, and builders. This could cover aspects such as: graphic design of brand identity, facade architectural elements, lighting, shutter artwork, and awnings for shelter from sun and rain.

Sensitivities and considerations

- Grant fund programme management
- Heritage

Synergies with other projects

11.1.44   Synergies will depend on specific location.

Project lead and partners

11.1.45   Headington Action suggested as project lead, in partnership with the City Council. Key stakeholders would include local businesses, civic and community groups.

Supporting studies required

- Shop front design guideline development. Useful examples can be found from across the country. Follow these links for examples from: **Waltham Forest** (London); **Chard** (Somerset); **Uttlesford** (Essex).

Examples of the results of shop front and facade improvement schemes: top, Leyton, London; bottom, Glasgow.

Window displays: left, Hornsey, London; right, San Francisco, USA.

10. Long Term Vision for London Road

Timescale: Long

Quick win: No

Priority: High

Category: Walking, cycling, public transport, highways, public realm

Deliverability: ○○○○○

Cost: £5 million +

11.1.46   This would be a major project to re-imagine and redesign the part of London Road within Headington centre (see location plan), to make it a distinctive and attractive place for people to come to and spend time in, as well as retaining its vital function as a movement corridor to/from central Oxford with prioritisation of active and sustainable travel modes.

11.1.47   The design elements described below are intended to align with the modal hierarchy and spatial policies of the draft Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan (COTP). They represent an aspiration for delivery over a longer timeframe when funding becomes available. The COTP contains emerging proposals that are the subject of consultation; the detailed locations of some proposals such as improved orbital bus routes and transport hubs may change.

Potential design elements

11.1.48   The proposed starting point for the vision is as below. These are initial ideas and will require full exploration through a design feasibility study.

- Ensure wide and unobstructed footways throughout Headington centre. Priority should be given to building out the very narrow sections of footway, such as outside Medina Supermarket.
- Redesign the London Road / Windmill Road junction to improve the pedestrian experience. For example introducing diagonal crossings coupled with an increase in pedestrian green time to facilitate safe crossing, or an alternative junction and crossing design to create a better balance between pedestrians and vehicles in a low-speed environment. Diagonal crossings would require junction geometry to be tightened by reducing carriageway space, thereby reducing the SW to NE corner crossing distance.
- Improve the geometry of the crossing adjacent to Bury Knowle Park and replace the courtesy crossing west of Osler Road junction with a zebra (see also ideas 1 and 3).
- Reduce vehicle speeds via design measures that encourage drivers to maintain a slow, steady speed, and reinforce the 20mph speed limit. Explore potential to seek approval for a lower speed limit of 15mph.

- Create safe cycling infrastructure along London Road. The design approach could be based on either segregated tracks, or mixed with vehicles in a slow speed zone where cyclists ride in primary position within traffic. The specific approach will need to be decided via a feasibility study for London Road, including redesign of London Road / Windmill Road junction.
- Review location of bus stops, retaining them in the centre but shifting along London Road to increase the effective footway width where crowding is a problem. This is subject to retaining sufficient kerb space for the high volume of bus and coaches that stop in the centre, taking account of planned future growth in bus usage.
- Retain bus gates (see also idea 1). Ensure design works maintain or enhance the priority granted to bus and coach (and emergency vehicle) access.
- Retain existing number of traffic lanes. I.e. one general traffic lane in each direction through the centre and on approaches, with a westbound bus lane east of the centre, and an eastbound bus lane west of the centre.
- Reduce width of traffic lanes to acceptable minimum for large vehicles (typically 3m). This would reinforce slow speed and enable cycle lanes or footway widening.
- Retain / re-provide on-street loading facilities for units with no rear servicing access. These could be integrated into the footway, so they function as pedestrian space when not in use by loading vehicles.
- Retain / re-provide disabled parking bays on London Road or the side streets, with an aim of increasing disabled parking supply overall. Remove the remaining on-street parking from London Road (approximately 9 bays) and re-provide some short stay parking on side streets. To support this, formalise parking arrangements at top end of side streets using marked parking bays and build-outs. Seek stronger enforcement of parking by OCC, working with bus operators and businesses to identify illegal or inappropriate parking activity.
- Identify a suitable location for a transport hub to offer interchange between public transport and shared mobility services, together with conveniently located parcel delivery lockers.

Sensitivities and considerations

- Traffic volumes
- Emergency vehicle access
- Bus and coach operations, including future growth in usage
- Parking provisions, especially disabled parking
- Parking enforcement
- Cycle network connectivity
- Pedestrian environment accessibility (see also idea 3)
- Servicing requirements of frontagers
- Heritage

Synergies with other projects

11.1.49   This would be a comprehensive project entailing consideration of the geometry and design details of London Road within Headington Centre and the adjacent areas east and west of the centre where the design would need to tie into. It has synergies with many of the other ideas within the HCIP, notably:

- 1. Headington Centre gateway areas
- 3. Walking improvements
- 4. Osler Road Pocket Plaza
- 5. Kennett Road Pocket Plaza
- 6. Windmill Road Public Realm

11.1.50   These projects are intended to be able to be taken forward separately to redesigning London Road, for subsequent integration into the design (which may require some adjustments, depending on design details).

Project lead and partners

11.1.51   This would be a complex and long-term project with extensive feasibility work required to develop, test, and approve a design before it was implemented. Would would need to be led by the County Council as Highways Authority, in close collaboration with the City Council. Key stakeholders would include bus and coach operators, emergency services, the institutions, local businesses (notably London Road frontagers), civic and community groups.

Supporting studies required

- Bus and coach stop review
- Parking review
- Utility surveys
- Movement surveys
- Feasibility design study

Existing situation

Location
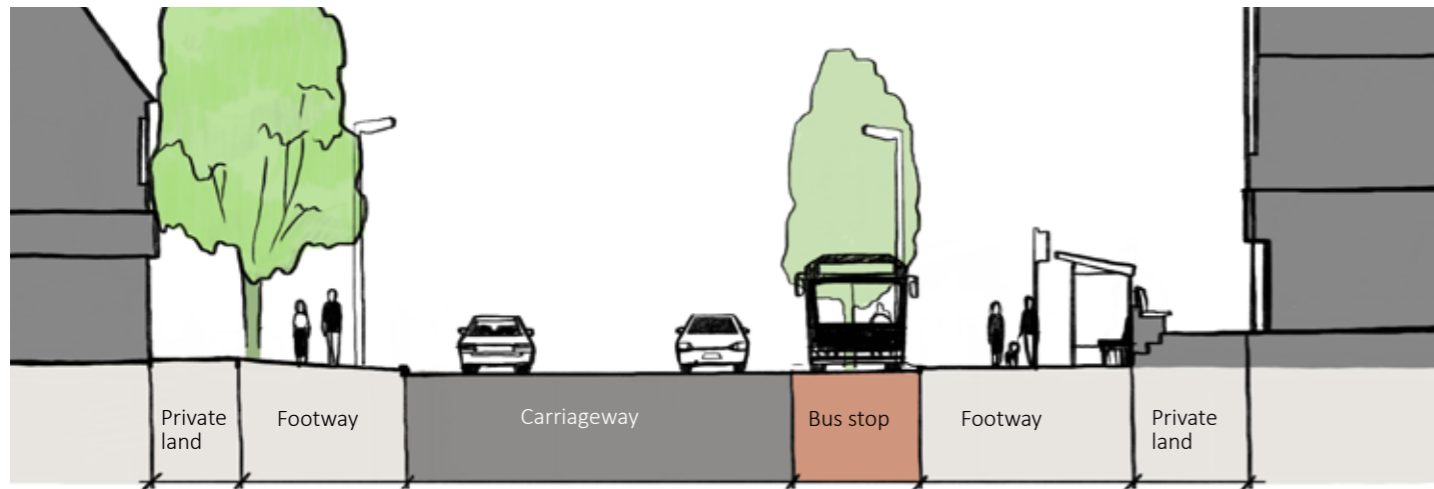
Fig 30. **Existing**: this cross-section shows a typical situation on London Road - privately owned land adjacent to shops, public footway space, traffic lanes (one in each direction), and a bus stop on one side of the road

Example of lanes narrowed to minimum and widened footways in high street environment (Walworth Road, London)

Example of protected cycle lane in a high street environment (Glasgow)
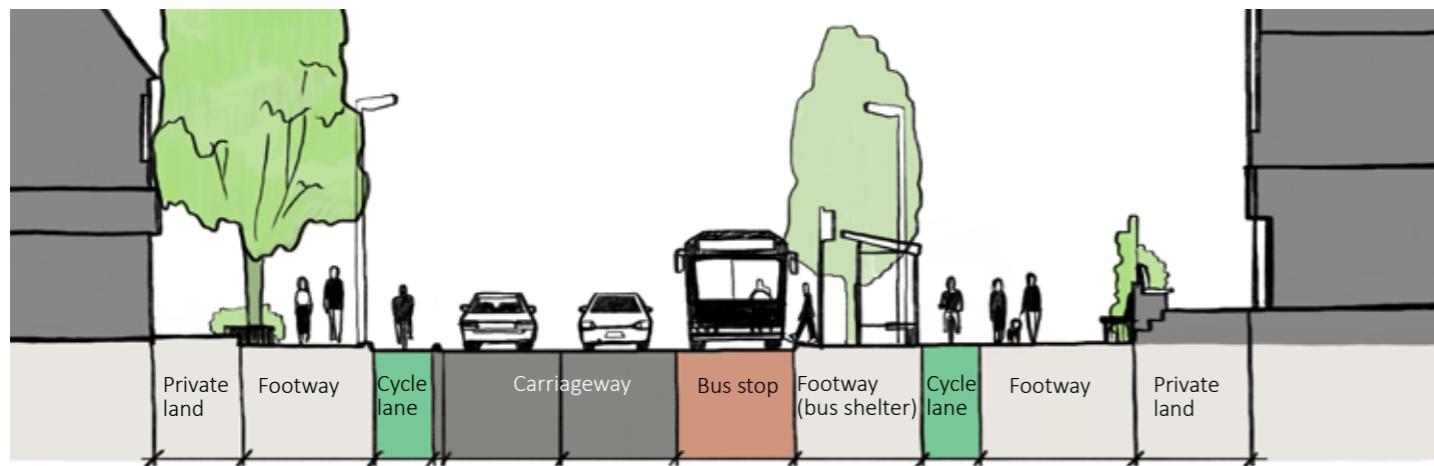
Fig 31. **Potential with cycle lanes**: this cross-section shows how space could be redistributed to provide segregated cycle lanes on each side of the road. Traffic lanes are retained and narrowed (maintaining width suitable for buses and large vehicles). Bus stop is retained. Footway width is reduced slightly while maintaining at least 3.0m width.

Example of loading bay integrated within the footway (Walworth Road, London)

Example of cycle lane and 'floating' bus stop (Oxford Road, Manchester)
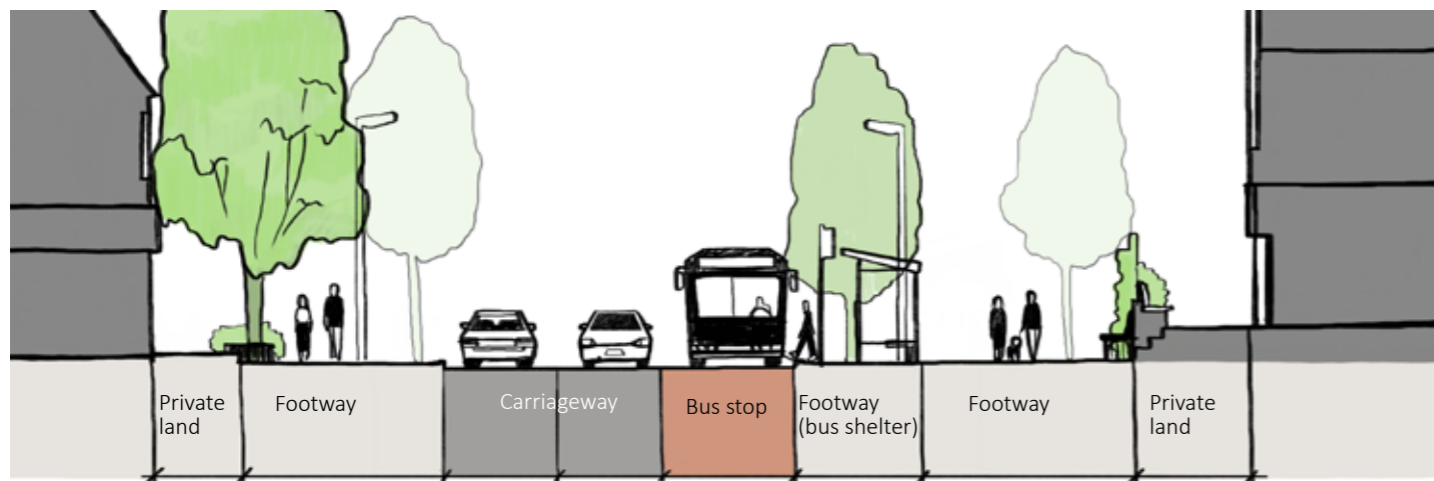
Fig 32. **Potential with mixed traffic**: this cross-section shows how space could be redistributed to maximise pedestrian space. Traffic lanes are retained and narrowed (maintaining width suitable for buses and large vehicles) to reinforce designation as a slow speed environment where cyclists travel within the carriageway in primary position. Bus stop is retained. Footway width is increased.

Example of diagonal pedestrian crossing (Oxford Circus, London)

Example of alternative junction design in a slow traffic environment (Frideswide Square, Oxford)

11. New public toilets

Timescale: Medium

Quick win: No

Priority: Medium

Category: Community

Deliverability: ●●○○○

Cost: £250,000 - £500,000

11.1.52   Replace existing toilets in Bury Knowle Park with new building providing more comfortable and attractive public convenience in same location.

Potential design elements

- Consider a high quality standalone modular toilet block unit from a specialist manufacturer to replace existing building. The unit could be finished with bespoke materials to suit context.

- Alternatively, explore potential to develop bespoke architectural design for toilet (e.g. this could be done via a design competition).

- A bespoke design approach should carefully consider the relationship to the listed park wall. The solution should find a way to make the building more visible and accessible from the London Road side of the wall, working with the existing gaps in the wall in a positive way.

- A sedum or other form of green roof could be considered for either the standard or bespoke option.

Sensitivities and considerations

- Heritage
- Property ownership
- Maintenance requirements
- Security, anti-social behaviour

Synergies with other projects

- 1. Headington Centre gateways
- 2. Place-making elements
- 11. Vision for London Road

Project lead and partners

11.1.53   Feasibility work would be required to develop, test, and approve a design before it was implemented. The project would need to be led by the City Council as landowner and operator of existing facilities. Key stakeholders would include local businesses, residents, civic and community groups.

Supporting studies required

- Feasibility design study

Location

Existing situation

Examples of modular toilet blocks (manufacturer: Danfo) in parks, clad in context-sensitive materials and with green roofs (top, London Fields, Hackney, London; bottom, Vasteras, Sweden)

Conceptual illustration of a new toilet block with timber exterior and green roof viewed from London Road (NB this is a cropped version of same illustration for idea 1: Headington Centre gateway areas)

12.0   Additional Projects

12.1 Overview

12.1.1   The adjacent table summarises 11 additional projects. These are ideas that were considered at earlier stages, but via the multi-criteria assessment framework were identified as being medium or low priority. As a result further development of these ideas was not progressed. Nevertheless there may be opportunities where these ideas could be pursued, reactively rather than proactively.

Item no.	Project name	Overview	Category	Deliverability	Timescale (S/M/L)	Quick win (Y/N)	Priority (L/M/H)
12.	Old High Street and Windmill Road streetscape	Enhance the public realm to the same standard as the long term vision for London Road, to create a seamless and distinctive impression of Headington Centre.	Walking, public realm, place-making	●●●○○	M	N	M
13.	EV parking	Work with Council to increase the amount of EV parking in the centre including both car parks, and in short stay parking bays on side streets.	Parking, road space	●●●○○	S	N	L
14.	Waitrose lane public realm	Enhance the pedestrian lane between Old High Street and Waitrose with new surfacing, greening feature lighting, seating and artwork. Explore potential to create a plaza area within the car park as part of this work. (NB potential synergy with transport hub idea in OCC's COTP).	Public realm, place-making, greening	●●○○○	M	N	M
15.	Side road entrance enhancements	Redesign side road entrances with footway build-outs on one or both sides, depending on specifics. Install cycle parking and planting in build-out.	Public realm, place-making, greening	●●●○○	S	N	M
16.	Bury Knowle Park amenity	Improve amenity in the park to cater for wider range of user groups, including additional facilities for teenagers and young people	Community	●●●○○	M	N	M
17.	Micro consolidation centre	Create a facility for managing local deliveries / pick-ups, both for residents and businesses to use.	Community, business, freight	●●○○○	M	N	M
18.	Meanwhile Uses	Repurpose vacant retail unit(s) for temporary uses, e.g. rolling programme offering to different occupiers for a set period.	Community, business	●●●○○	L	N	L
19.	Community toilet scheme	Work with local businesses to make more clean, safe and accessible toilets available to the public. Identify premises with a sticker in window and on interactive map (e.g. similar to London Borough of Richmond upon Thames and other locations)	Community	●○○○○	S	Y	L
20.	Walking routes to institutions	Upgrade footways and public realm at key locations on routes to/ from institutions.	Walking, public realm	●●○○○	L	N	M
21.	Encouraging student use	Encourage footfall in the town centre by working with businesses and universities to identify facilities that are attractive to students living in campuses / student halls nearby.	Community	●●○○○	M	Y	L
22.	Pop-up space in institutions	Work with institutions to identify a regular pop-up events space in their campuses for Headington businesses and market traders.	Community	●●●●○	S	Y	L

13.0 Other Measures & Next Steps

13.1 Development Opportunities

13.1.1   HA should seek to use influence via the HNP to proactively shape development for the benefit of the centre and wider Headington area. This is generally dependent on when sites come forward. However there may also be opportunities to shape development via other planning and regeneration studies or policy review processes undertaken by the City Council.

13.1.2   The key site that is the subject of development interest is the Co-op supermarket site. As noted earlier the planning application for this site had been refused permission. At the time of writing no new application had been made nor any details made public by the scheme developer. Nonetheless, the scale of the potential development is such that it presents a significant opportunity to secure something of benefit to the community. For example, a new community space as previously described, or a contribution to new public realm on London Road.

13.1.3   At present there are no other major development sites in the pipeline. However it is plausible that at some point in the future BT may decide to dispose of the telephone exchange, for example, or the Kwik-Fit may relocate and the site be redeveloped. If they do HA should seek to influence the outcomes here, being key locations within the centre.

13.1.4   Should development opportunities arise that relate to land in the wider area between the centre and the institutions, HA should advocate for more legible and connected urban form and routes. By way of example, the Nuffield campus is inward looking, has poor interface with surrounding streets, and the walking route to/from the centre is indirect and difficult to navigate. If redevelopment of part of the campus or adjoining land were to take place there would be potential to remedy these weaknesses.

13.2 Headington Centre Management

13.2.1   Currently Headington does not have any dedicated management organisation or business association by which to help drive forward the delivery of the HCIP schemes, nor undertaken other general centre management initiatives (cleansing, security, maintenance). Potential options to address this that could be explored include:

- Establishing a Business Improvement District (BID) - a formal business-led and business funded body formed to improve a defined commercial area.

- Appointing a Town Centre Manager- a funded position to work with partners and businesses to help support business footfall, drive public realm projects, coordinate maintenance and upkeep etc.

- Establishing a Community Interest Company- a limited company set up to an enterprise set up to make a profit for the benefit of the community, to run specific facilities, such as community centres.

- Establishing a Town Team- an independent group of local residents, businesses and community representatives who come together to make the area a better place to live and work, and lead on improvement projects.

- Establish a local Business Association / Network - this could be a formal chamber of commerce type organisation, or more informal business community networking and campaigning organisation.

- HCIP champions- an officer in the City Council and in the County Council who can help drive support for relevant HCIP initiatives, keep HA abreast of funding opportunities, lead project delivery etc.

13.3 Next Steps

13.3.1   This document is a starting point. It has identified a range of specific improvements in Headington Centre that can be delivered separately or in tandem with one another, as and when funding or other delivery opportunities are identified. Project descriptions provide general guidance for further design work. The specifics of design approach and details will require specific feasibility studies and design development, as appropriate to each project. As such, following approval of this document, the next steps for HA will be:

- Continue conversations with City and County councils regarding relevant improvement ideas, to build support and align thinking with emerging policy and local initiatives that they are involved in.

- Seek funding opportunities for design and implementations, considering a wide range of sources, including direct funding from local institutions, development-related funding, central government funding schemes, local government initiatives, and specialist funding pots from statutory organisations, charities, and similar.

- Work with lead organisations to design, deliver, and maintain specific interventions.

Appendix A:
Engagement

Engagement in Phase 1 - Issues & Opportunities

Introduction

This chapter summarises the engagement work undertaken by the AR Urbanism team over the course of the HCIP study. It explains the various activities undertaken with the public and stakeholders, and the inputs and feedback collected via those activities. This has been used directly to inform the development of the HCIP, during both Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the study.

Overview

The objectives of the engagement during Phase 1 of the study were to make people aware of the Headington Centre Improvement project, uncover local aspirations, needs and priorities and identify specific project priorities and opportunities.

Engagement activities undertaken during Phase 1 included:

- A stand at Headington Festival
- An online questionnaire survey directed at members of the community
- An online questionnaire survey directed at businesses and organisations
- An online 'listening and learning' workshop with a various key stakeholders

Headington Festival was attended by representatives of AR Urbanism and Headington Action.

The online surveys were promoted by Headington Action on their website, via direct email sent to various stakeholders, via posts on their social media channels, and by directly approaching businesses in the centre. The survey was kept open for five weeks from May 28th to July 4th 2022.

The workshop was attended by the local stakeholders including representatives of various community groups, organisations, businesses and councillors. They were invited to participate in the event via email.

The feedback from these activities was used to inform the team's understanding of Headington Centre and its surroundings. It confirmed and extended the team's knowledge of issues and opportunities and in turn was used to help shape the development of the improvement plan, and identify specific ideas for interventions.
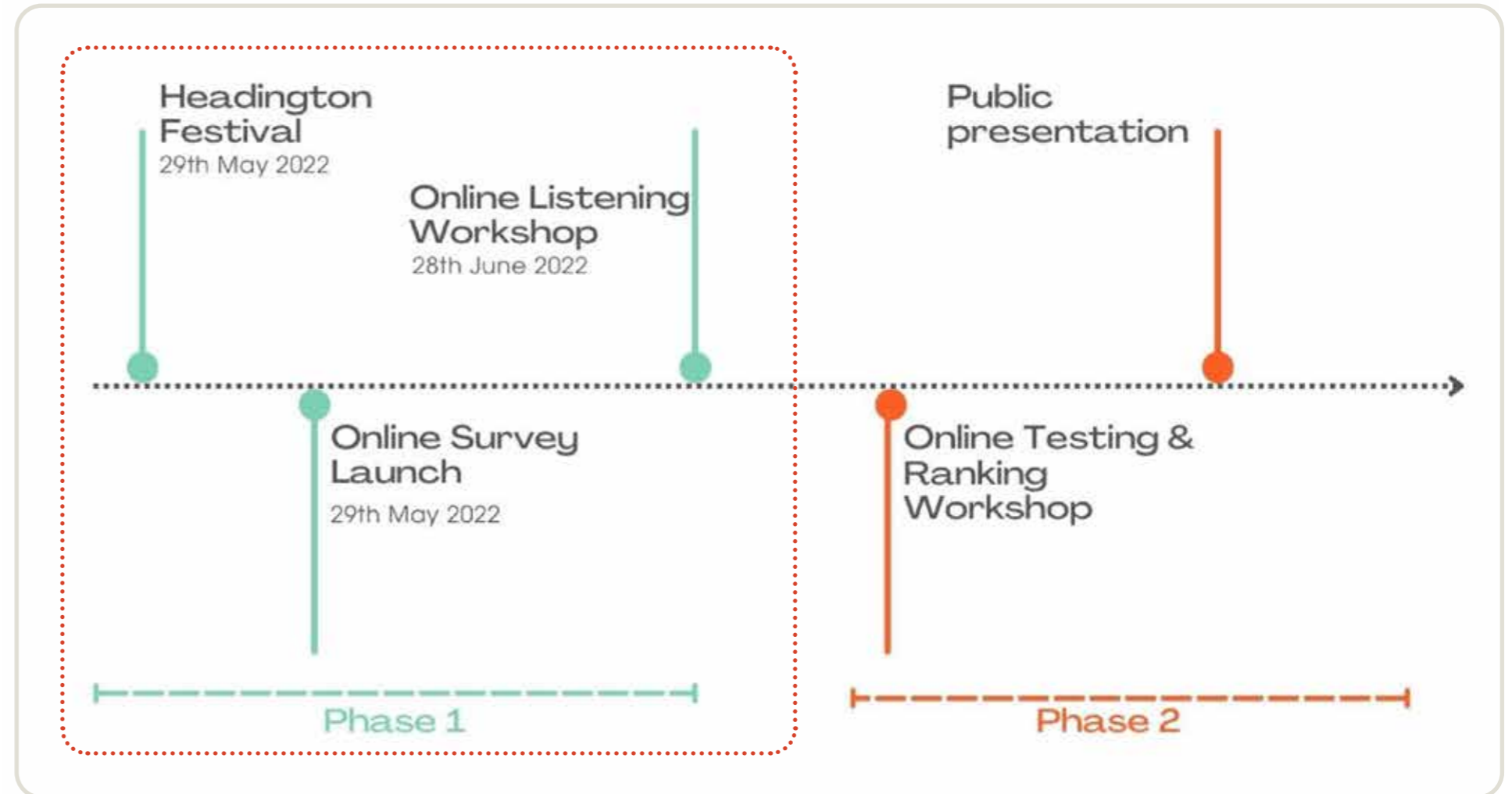
Fig 33.   Diagram of engagement activity highlighting Phase 1 activity

Headington Festival

On 28th May 2022, AR Urbanism and Headington Action had a stand at the Headington Festival. The purpose of the stand was to raise awareness of the project and launch the online survey. During the festival, business cards with a QR code and link to the online survey were handed out to festival attendees.

The stand included three boards:

- Board 1: The first board provided context of the project, a map of the project area, and explained he purpose of the project and background to it.
- Board 2: The introduced the ARU project team. It also provided a QR code and link to the online surveys as well as outlining the project timeline, indicating upcoming opportunities for future engagement.
- Board 3: This contained a simple activity whereby people could stick dots on a scale ranking the importance of the following issues:
  - Shops and Services
  - Gathering places
  - Getting around the Centre
  - Community amenities and activities
  - Identity, character and heritage

The outcome of the activity is shown on the picture to the right.

Overall, we spoke to over 80 attendees and handed out cards to raise awareness about the online survey.

Fig 34.   Photos from the Headington Festival stand

Online surveys

The online surveys were launched on 29th May and were open until 5th July 2022. Two surveys were undertaken, one aimed at local businesses and organisations, and a second one aimed at the wider community. In total 331 responses were received across both surveys.

Community Survey

The survey received 312 responses.

Demographic information that was collected showed that:

- 61% of participants were female,
- 4% of participants were between 18-29 years old, approximately 40% were between 30-49, and nearly 38% of respondents were between 50-69, and
- The majority of respondents were in full-time employment (nearly 45%), and 24% were retired.

The main part of the survey comprised nine close-ended and multiple-choice questions and one final open-ended question. The questions were:

1. Which of the following best describes your involvement in Headington?

2. What do you generally visit the Centre for?

3. How often do you visit the Centre?

4. How do you travel into the Centre?

5. On average, how long do you stay on a visit to the Centre?

6. How do you think the pandemic has changed the way you use Headington Centre?

7. What are the positive aspects of the Centre?

8. What are the negative aspects of the Centre?

9. The project will look at ways to improve Headington centre, making it welcoming, inclusive and accessible for all. Where do you think effort should be focused to improve the centre the most?

10. Have you got any other comments regarding Headington centre that you would like to share with us?

What's your age?
312 responses

Age	Count
18-29	13 (4.2%)
30-39	40 (12.8%)
40-49	86 (27.6%)
50-59	65 (20.8%)
60-69	52 (16.7%)
70 +	47 (15.1%)
prefer not to answer	9 (2.9%)
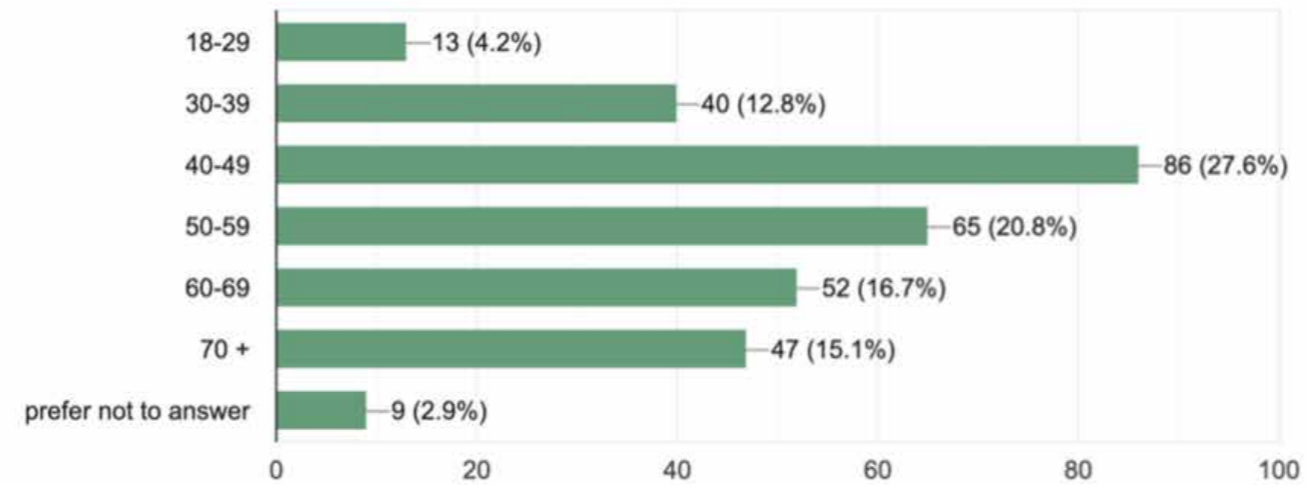
What's your employment status?
312 responses

Status	Count
Employed full-time	140 (44.9%)
Employed part-time	45 (14.4%)
Self-employed	35 (11.2%)
Unemployed	3 (1%)
Retired	75 (24%)
Student	3 (1%)
Prefer not to answer	4 (1.3%)
Housewife	1 (0.3%)
Semi retired	1 (0.3%)
Stay at home parent.	1 (0.3%)
Retired + freelance + part ti...	1 (0.3%)
Housewife	1 (0.3%)
Local councillor	1 (0.3%)
2 part time jobs	1 (0.3%)
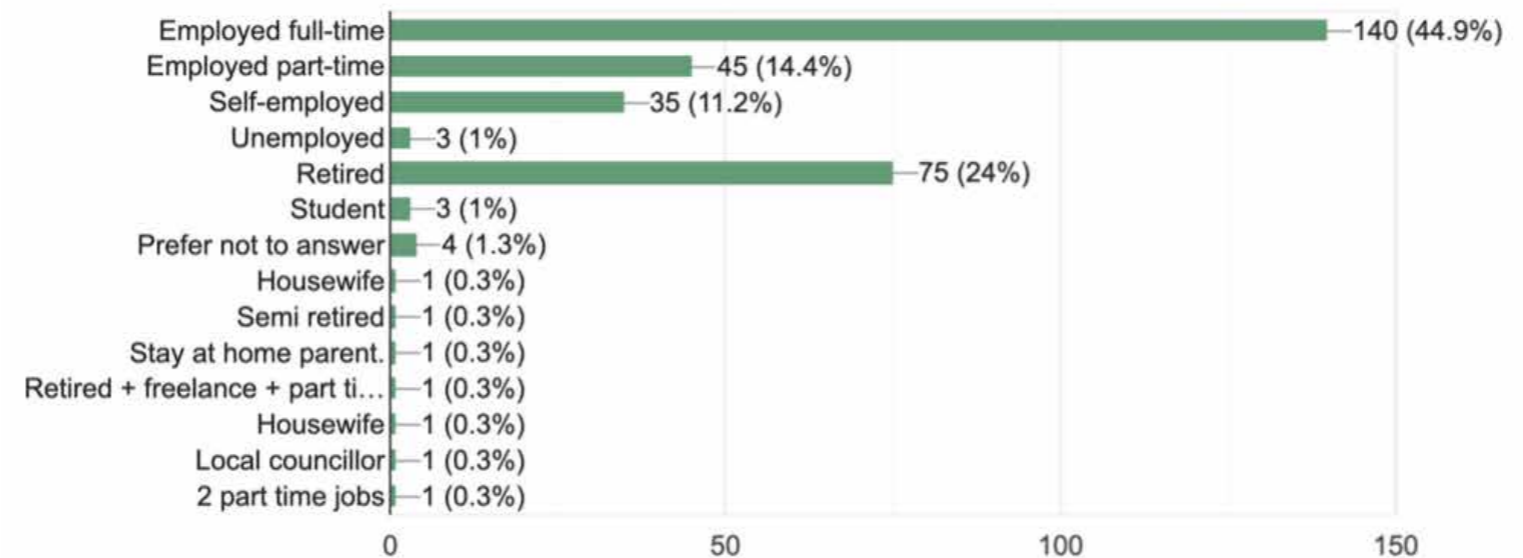
The following presents a summary of the survey responses, considering the highest scoring answers to each question. Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number in the text.

Question 1

Which of the following best describes your involvement in Headington? (Multiple answers could be chosen)

- The majority of respondents live in Headington (83%).
- 27% of respondents work in Headington.

Question 2

What do you generally visit the centre for?

- The majority of respondents (90%) visit town centre for convenience shopping such as drinks, food, toiletries and newspapers.
- 78% of respondents use the Centre to visit Bury Knowle Park.
- Some other high scoring answers were: leisure e.g. eating out (72%), access to services such as a bank, post office or library (71%) and access to personal services including hair and beauty and medical appointments (63%).

Question 3

How often do you visit the Centre?

- The majority of respondents visit town centre more than once a week (45%).
- A third of respondents visit the centre on a daily basis.

Question 4

How do you travel into the Centre? (Multiple answers could be chosen)

- The most common answer was walking; 61% of respondents travel into the centre by foot.
- 18% of respondents travel by car.
- 15% of respondents cycle.

1. Which of the following best describes your involvement in Headington? You can select multiple options.
312 responses

I own or run a business in Hea...	7 (2.2%)
I work in Headington	83 (26.6%)
I go to school in Headington	8 (2.6%)
I live in Headington	260 (83.3%)
I visit Headington sometimes (I...	38 (12.2%)
Walk dog in local park	1 (0.3%)
School governor	1 (0.3%)
I shop in Headington and spen...	1 (0.3%)
I visit Headinton regularly	1 (0.3%)
I shop in Headington	1 (0.3%)
I shop in Headington	1 (0.3%)
My children go to school in Hea...	1 (0.3%)

2. What do you generally visit the Centre for? You can select multiple options.
312 responses

3. How often do you visit the Centre?
312 responses

Daily	104 (33.3%)
More than once a week	139 (44.6%)
Weekly	37 (11.9%)
Fortnightly	9 (2.9%)
More than once a month	9 (2.9%)
Once a month or less	14 (4.5%)

4. How do you travel into the Centre? Pick your usual modes of travel.
312 responses

Walk	191 (61.2%)
Bicycle	48 (15.4%)
Bus	9 (2.9%)
Coach	0 (0%)
Car	56 (17.9%)
Motorbike or scooter	1 (0.3%)
Taxi	0 (0%)
Wheelchair	1 (0.3%)
Wheelchair	1 (0.3%)
Walk and bicyle. Your questi...	1 (0.3%)
walk or cycle	1 (0.3%)
You survey only allows for o...	1 (0.3%)
I use car or bike. Not sure w...	1 (0.3%)
I live there	1 (0.3%)

Question 5

On average, how long do you stay on a visit to the centre?

- The majority of respondents (47%) stay in the Centre for one hour or less.

- A similar number (46%) stay for one to two hours.

Question 6

How do you think the pandemic has changed the way you use Headington Centre?

- 'No change' was the highest scoring answer for all categories.

- A significant number of respondents answered 'do this more' for spending time in parks and public spaces, walking, using local shops, and shopping online.

- A large number of respondents answered 'do this less' for using public transport, eating out or going to pubs, and driving.

Question 7

What are the positive aspects of the centre? (Multiple answers could be chosen)

The highest-scoring answers were as follows:

- Headington Saturday Market (60%)

- Cafés/ restaurants (60%)

- Services e.g. banks, Post Office, Library (52%)

- Ease of walking around (40%)

- Ease of bus and coach access to the centre (33%)

5. On average, how long do you stay on a visit to the Centre?
312 responses

- 1 hr or less — 47.1%
- 1-2 hours — 46.5%
- 3-4 hours, i.e. half a day or an evening
- all day

7. What are the positive aspects of the Centre? Choose up to 5 answers.
312 responses

Aspect	Value
Physical appearance	16 (5.1%)
Cleanliness	23 (7.4%)
Retail offer	88 (28.2%)
Cafes / restaurants	186 (59.6%)
Pubs / bars	46 (14.7%)
Services (e.g. banks, Post...	161 (51.6%)
Leisure facilities	19 (6.1%)
Activities for children and...	21 (6.7%)
Cultural activities / events	12 (3.8%)
Evening economy	9 (2.9%)
Headington Saturday Market	186 (59.6%)
Public spaces	110 (35.3%)
Personal security	43 (13.8%)
Ease of walking around	126 (40.4%)
Ease of access for disable...	6 (1.9%)
Ease of cycle access to a...	20 (6.4%)
Ease of bus and coach ac...	103 (33%)
Ease of car access to the...	16 (5.1%)
Ease of car parking	28 (9%)
Waitrose	2 (0.6%)
Park	1 (0.3%)
Library but not banks	1 (0.3%)
nothing	1 (0.3%)
Having a variety of facilitie...	1 (0.3%)
Meeting people I know	1 (0.3%)
none	1 (0.3%)
Coaches to London and ai...	1 (0.3%)
tennis courts and drop in c...	1 (0.3%)
It offers the "15 Minute City"	1 (0.3%)
Coco Noir/Beirut/Croissan...	1 (0.3%)
Bury knowle park and play...	1 (0.3%)
Ease of buses to London	1 (0.3%)
Very easy to get to Heathr...	1 (0.3%)

6. How do you think the pandemic has changed the way you use Headington Centre?

Legend: Do this more / No change / Do this less

Categories: Spending time in parks and public spaces, Walking, Cycling, Using local shops, Attending local events, Shopping online, Driving, Using public transport, Eating out or going to pubs

Question 8
What are the negative aspects of the centre? (Multiple answers could be chosen)

The highest-scoring answers were as follows:

- Physical appearance (55%)
- Retail offer (47%)
- Ease of car parking (30%)
- Cleanliness (30%)
- Services e.g. banks, Post Office, Library (23%)

Question 9
The project will look at ways to improve Headington centre, making it welcoming, inclusive and accessible for all. Where do you think effort should be focused to improve the centre the most? (Multiple answers could be chosen)

The highest-scoring answers were as follows:

- Quality of street environment (64%)
- Trees and planting on-street (47%)
- Availability of short stay car parking (38%)
- Facilities for community use e.g. community centre (36%)
- Public spaces for events and activities (35%)

Question 10
Have you got any other comments regarding Headington centre that you would like to share with us?

This Question received 168 comments. Some of the key aspects that were mentioned are listed below. The full list of comments is provided as a separate document to accompany this report.

- Address issues related to parking
- A public space for events
- Improve traffic flow through the centre
- Improve shopping offer; provide more options
- Reduce the noise from traffic
- Reduce street clutter
- Activities for younger people

8. What are the negative aspects of the Centre? Choose up to 5 answers.
312 responses

Answer	Count
Physical appearance	170 (54.5%)
Cleanliness	94 (30.1%)
Retail offer	148 (47.4%)
Cafes / restaurants	28 (9%)
Pubs / bars	25 (8%)
Services (e.g. banks, Po...	73 (23.4%)
Leisure facilities	50 (16%)
Activities for children an...	40 (12.8%)
Cultural activities / events	52 (16.7%)
Evening economy	49 (15.7%)
Headington Saturday M...	6 (1.9%)
Public spaces	24 (7.7%)
Personal security	20 (6.4%)
Ease of walking around	31 (9.9%)
Ease of access for disab...	30 (9.6%)
Ease of cycle access to...	34 (10.9%)
Ease of bus and coach...	5 (1.6%)
Ease of car access to th...	48 (15.4%)
Ease of car parking	95 (30.4%)
None	2 (0.6%)
Pollution is the biggest p...	2 (0.6%)
Badly parked cars - bloc...	1 (0.3%)
Parking on pavements,...	1 (0.3%)
Too many cars both on t...	1 (0.3%)
Poor quality parking and...	1 (0.3%)
By the above, I mean it i...	1 (0.3%)
lack of good quality toilet...	1 (0.3%)
loss of facilities, e.g. ban...	1 (0.3%)
Too many hairdressers,...	1 (0.3%)
Traffic and number of ve...	1 (0.3%)
Too few retail shops, far...	1 (0.3%)
Cyclists on pavement an...	1 (0.3%)
I really dislike bicycles a...	1 (0.3%)
traffic light bottleneck for...	1 (0.3%)
Takes too long to cross t...	1 (0.3%)
Natwest is useless	1 (0.3%)
Lack of decent shops, b...	1 (0.3%)
inappropriate car parking...	1 (0.3%)
The overall mix and mat...	1 (0.3%)
No or expensive parking...	1 (0.3%)
Little provision for young...	1 (0.3%)
The car situation has got...	1 (0.3%)
too many of the same ty...	1 (0.3%)
Too much traffic	1 (0.3%)
No negatives	1 (0.3%)
lacks a pedestrian centr...	1 (0.3%)
Too much through traffic...	1 (0.3%)
Through traffic	1 (0.3%)
Medina Whole Foods	1 (0.3%)
To many charity shops....	1 (0.3%)
Trees in middle of cycle...	1 (0.3%)
Cost of car parking	1 (0.3%)
lack of EV charging (the...	1 (0.3%)
Betting shop, scruffy are...	1 (0.3%)
Outside eating/drinking...	1 (0.3%)

9. The project will look at ways to improve Headington town centre, making it welcoming, inclusive and accessible for all. Where do you think effort s... centre the most? You can select multiple answers.
312 responses

Answer	Count
Public spaces for events...	108 (34.6%)
Quality of street environ...	200 (64.1...)
Trees and planting on-st...	147 (47.1%)
Bury Knowle Park	102 (32.7%)
Celebrating heritage	34 (10.9%)
Headington Saturday M...	64 (20.5%)
Activities for different ag...	68 (21.8%)
Safe walking routes into...	63 (20.2%)
Safe and comfortable ac...	63 (20.2%)
Safe cycling routes into t...	84 (26.9%)
Availability of cycle parking	69 (22.1%)
Availability of short stay...	118 (37.8%)
Encouraging leisure uses	77 (24.7%)
Encouraging the evenin...	100 (32.1%)
Facilities for community...	112 (35.9%)
Facilities for business us...	11 (3.5%)
Headington is full of esta...	2 (0.6%)
Banish bikes from pave...	1 (0.3%)
More bars and restaurants	1 (0.3%)
Getting rid of the traffic.	1 (0.3%)
Skate ramp for BK park....	1 (0.3%)
need good quality toilet f...	1 (0.3%)
Reduce speed of vehicles	1 (0.3%)
Needs a more welcomin...	1 (0.3%)
Better variety of shops -...	1 (0.3%)
Security. There is more...	1 (0.3%)
wider pavements, less...	1 (0.3%)
widen the road to improv...	1 (0.3%)
Make it easier for pedest...	1 (0.3%)
Stop pavement parking	1 (0.3%)
Would be good to have...	1 (0.3%)
More effort to increase g...	1 (0.3%)
Shop rates need to be le...	1 (0.3%)
Maintenance of tennis c...	1 (0.3%)
Promotion of walks to vi...	1 (0.3%)
Less charity shops and...	1 (0.3%)
I think Bury Knowle Park...	1 (0.3%)
reduce the 'inner ring ro...	1 (0.3%)
Getting rid of all the traffic.	1 (0.3%)
Need proper traffic light...	1 (0.3%)
The Headington Market i...	1 (0.3%)
Artisan bakery, more var...	1 (0.3%)
Banks, decent Post Office	1 (0.3%)
More range of shops	1 (0.3%)
Better variety of shops,...	1 (0.3%)
It's so dirty! especially th...	1 (0.3%)
Repair the EV charging...	1 (0.3%)
Stop illegal parking in str...	1 (0.3%)

Business Survey

The business survey received 19 responses.

The survey comprised ten close-ended and multiple-choice questions and one open-ended questions. The questions were:

1. What is the name of your business?
2. In which sector does your business operate?
3. What is the main product or service of your business?
4. How many employees do you have?
5. How do you travel to your place of business?
6. What are the positive aspects of the Centre?
7. What are the negative aspects of the Centre?
8. What local amenities do you consider most beneficial for your business?
9. What local amenities do you consider most beneficial for your employees?
10. The project will look at ways to improve Headington town centre, making it welcoming, inclusive and accessible for all. Where do you think effort should be focused to improve the centre the most?
11. Have you got any other comments regarding Headington centre that you would like to share with us?

The summary of the survey responses takes into account the highest scoring answers to each question. Due to the small sample size, care needs to be taken drawing conclusions.

Question 1
What is the name of your business?

A variety of businesses responded to this question. For reasons of privacy the names are not reproduced here.

Question 2
In which sector does your business operate?

This question was asked to understand the nature of the businesses responding. The majority of businesses operate in the retail sector whilst the next most common sector was the category of pubs, restaurants and takeaways.

Question 3
What is the main product or service of your business?

The answers to this question shows a wide variety of products or services offered.

Question 4
How many employees do you have?

The vast majority of businesses are small, having one to nine employees.
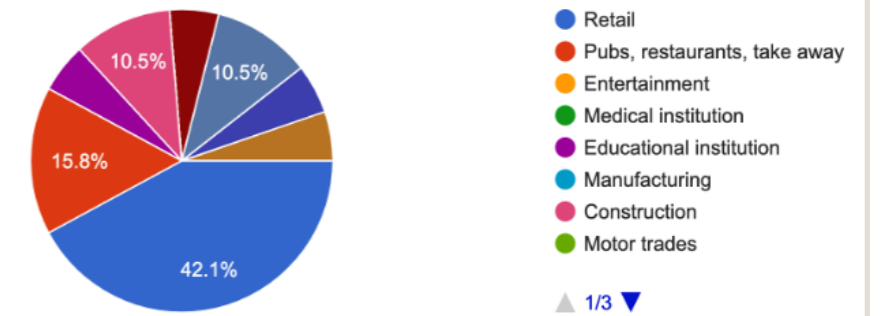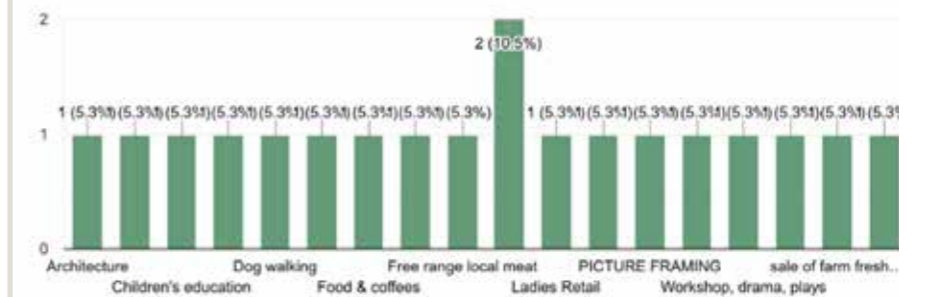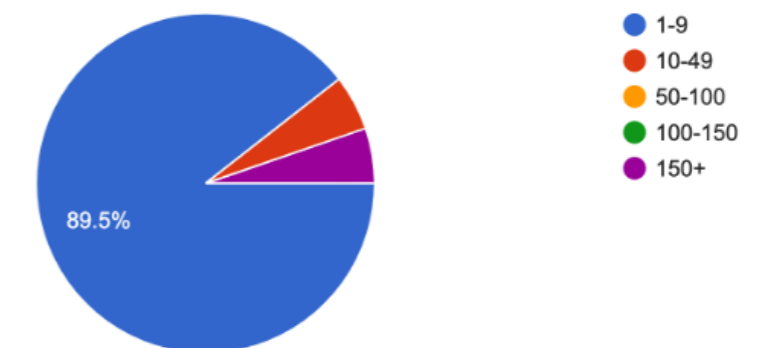
Question 5
How do you travel to your place of business? Pick your usual modes of travel.

The most common answer was car 53% of business owners travel into the centre by driving. 47% travel into the centre by walking.

Question 6
What are the positive aspects of the Centre? (Multiple answers could be chosen)

The top five answers were as follows:

- Headington Saturday Market (74%)
- Cafés/ restaurants (58%)
- Customer catchment area within walking distance (53%)
- Ease of bus and coach access to the centre (37%)
- Ease of walking around (32%)

Question 7
What are the negative aspects of the Centre? (Multiple answers could be chosen)

The top five answers were as follows:

- Services e.g. banks, post office, library (58%)
- Ease of car parking (47%)
- Retail offer (42%)
- Physical appearance (32%)
- Cleanliness (32%)

5. How do you travel to your place of business? Pick your usual modes of travel.
19 responses

6. What are the positive aspects of the Centre? Choose up to 5 answers.
19 responses

7. What are the negative aspects of the Centre? Choose up to 5 answers.
19 responses
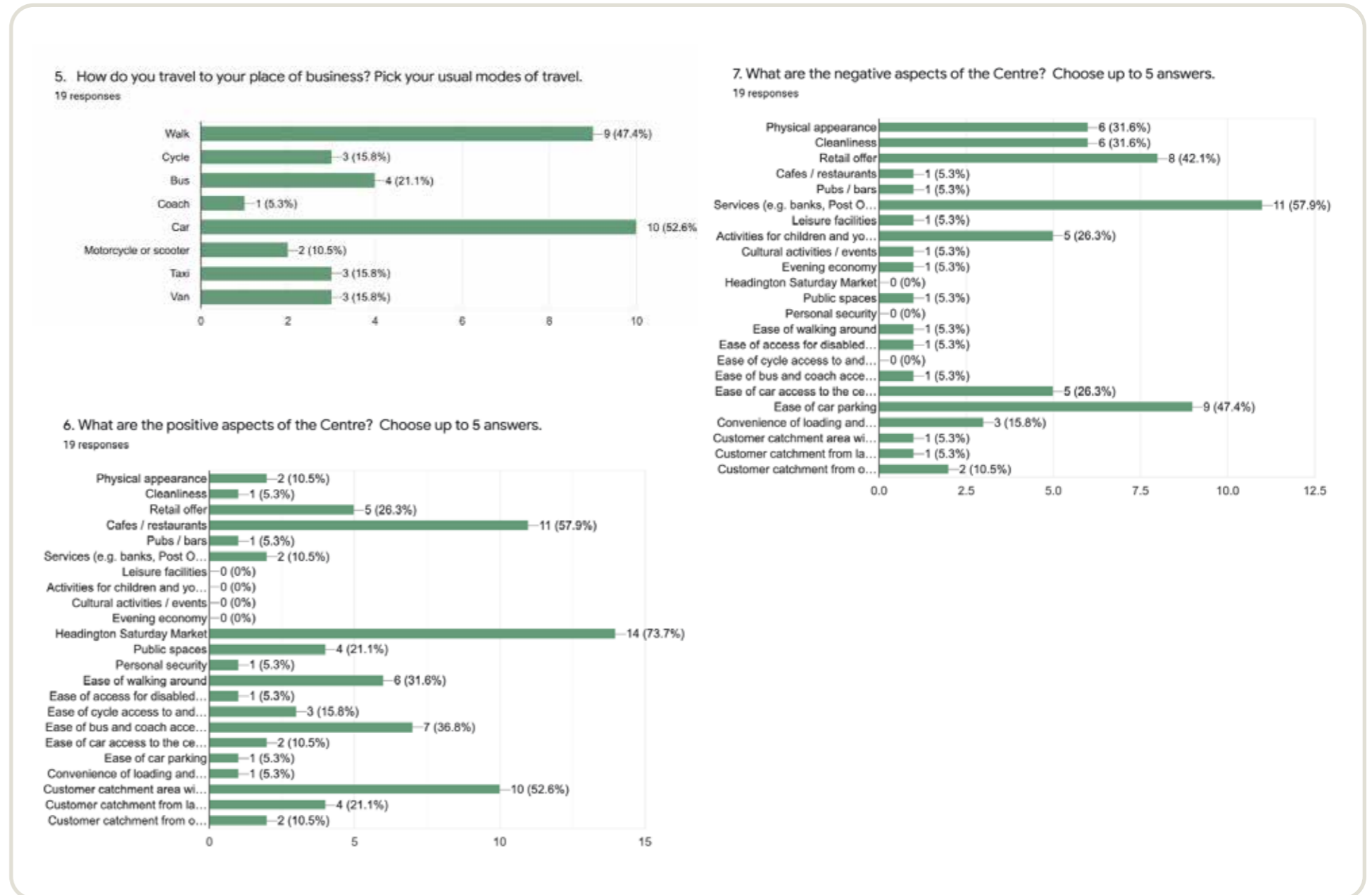
Question 8
What local amenities do you consider most beneficial for your business? (Multiple answers could be chosen)

The top five answers were as follows:

- Quality of street environment (47%)
- Short stay customer car parks (42%)
- Cycle parking for customers (37%)
- Dedicated public space(s) for events and activities (37%)
- Trees and planting on street/pavement space for business use/ease of crossing the road/footway width/bus and coach stops nearby all received the five votes each (26.3%)

Question 9
What local amenities do you consider most beneficial to your employees? (Multiple answers could be chosen)

The top five answers were as follows:

- Bus and coach stops nearby (58%)
- Safe cycling routes (42%)
- Cycle parking provision (37%)
- Car parking nearby (37%)
- Quality of street environment e.g. paving, seating, lighting (32%)

Question 10
The project will look at ways to improve Headington centre, making it welcoming, inclusive and accessible for all. Where do you think effort should be focused to improve the centre the most? (Multiple answers could be chosen)

The highest-scoring answers were as follows:

- Availability of short stay car parking (58%)
- Quality of street environment (47%)
- Public spaces for events and activities (42%)
- Headington Saturday Market (42%)
- Safe cycling routes into the centre (42%)

Question 11
Have you got any other comments regarding Headington centre that you would like to share with us?

This question received six comments:

- Parking costs keep continually rising with the hour slot introduced in recent years at a very high cost this I believe has deterred people from staying longer in the area and dining, shopping etc. We often have customers rushing off because of car ticket running out. Sad that we are still losing retail shops to property development or becoming food outlets . Too many charity shops are often here. I support charity shops but do think there can be just too many although we know that now after covid and the demise of high streets all across the UK, this is a big problem

- More retailers that could increase the footfall in the town. Currently the town is flooded with charity shops property agents and coffee shops

- Permanent barriers.

- It is a noisy, harsh environment which is not child friendly. When the Market moved back from Quarry Hollow Park (relocated due to Covid) we lost a lot of customers who said they would not come to London Road as it was too noisy, fumes (electric cars will help), its a stressful and not relaxing experience and dangerous for young children. Also you could have children's activities, music, indoor craft market, etc. in the park. Anything to improve these aspects with a better environment & facilities would be great.

- As a market trader obviously it would be handy to have a more permanent market set up. Also to have some of the less used and more in the way street furniture moved. Basically thinking about how the market would fit in to the high street in future.

- While centre is good, it is spoiled by the volume of traffic, with traffic made worse by the petrol station. Increased pedestrianisation would really help the overall feel of the community.

8. What local amenities do you consider most beneficial for your business? You can select multiple answers
19 responses

9. What local amenities do you consider most beneficial to your employees? You can select multiple answers
19 responses

10. The project will look at ways to improve Headington centre, making it welcoming, inclusive and accessible for all. Where do you think effort shoul… centre the most? You can select multiple answers.
19 responses

Stakeholder Workshop

Overview

An online stakeholder workshop was facilitated by the ARU team on 28th June 2022. The participants were invited to register via email to join the event by Headington Action. Over 30 people registered and the event was attended by 21 participants including local councillors, representatives of local organisations, civic groups, businesses owners, along with Headington Action members.

The workshop objectives were to listen and learn from stakeholders about:

- Issues affecting Headington Centre generally
- Challenges related to your organisation in relation to the Centre
- Opportunities and ideas for potential improvements in the Centre

The agenda of the event was as follows:

- Welcome by Patrick Coulter of HA
- Introduction to the ARU team (ARU presentation)
- Project overview and context (ARU presentation)
- Workshop: Interrogating issues and opportunities
- Workshop: Mapping ideas for change
- Wrap up and next steps

Workshop session 1: Interrogating Issues and Opportunities

During the first interactive workshop session, attendees were asked to answer questions on an interactive Mentimeter presentation.

The aim of the questions posed during this section of the workshop was to clarify issues emerging from the survey responses, and provide the project team with an understanding of how Headington Centre could be improved to cater for the organisations that stakeholders represented.

A series of three questions was asked:

- 1. What do you like most about Headington Centre?
- 2. Responses to our online survey so far rank physical appearance / quality of environment as the most negative aspect of Headington Centre. What specifically do you think we need to consider?
- 3. How could Headington Centre better cater for my organisation's needs?

For question 1, attendees were asked to write short answers. The image to the right is a word cloud summary of the main points noted by attendees. This question received 32 unique answers. The most common answers were Bury Knowle Park, transport links, and shops which were all mentioned eight out of 32 times.

For question 2, attendees were asked to answer a multiple choice question in which they could only choose one option. The outcomes from question 2 as shown in image on the previous page show that 'obstruction/clutter' received the most votes; seven out of 22. This was closely followed by 'greening' which received six votes. 'Shop fronts' and 'sense of place' both received three votes each, 'street furniture quality' received two, and 'paving quality' received one vote. The remaining options lighting, public art and other all received zero votes.

For question 3, attendees were asked to answer a free text question in which they were able to write short answers. The responses were wide ranging, with 27 unique answers. From this question the ARU team opened up the group discussion regarding further issues and potential interventions.

Workshop: Mapping ideas for change

An interactive 'Miro Board' was used to record the key messages, as highlighted to the right. ARU typed comments and marked up places mentioned by stakeholders during the workshop.

Fig 35.   Question 1 results from workshop session 1

Fig 36.   Question 2 results from workshop session 1

How could Headington Centre better cater for my organisation's needs?

Mentimeter

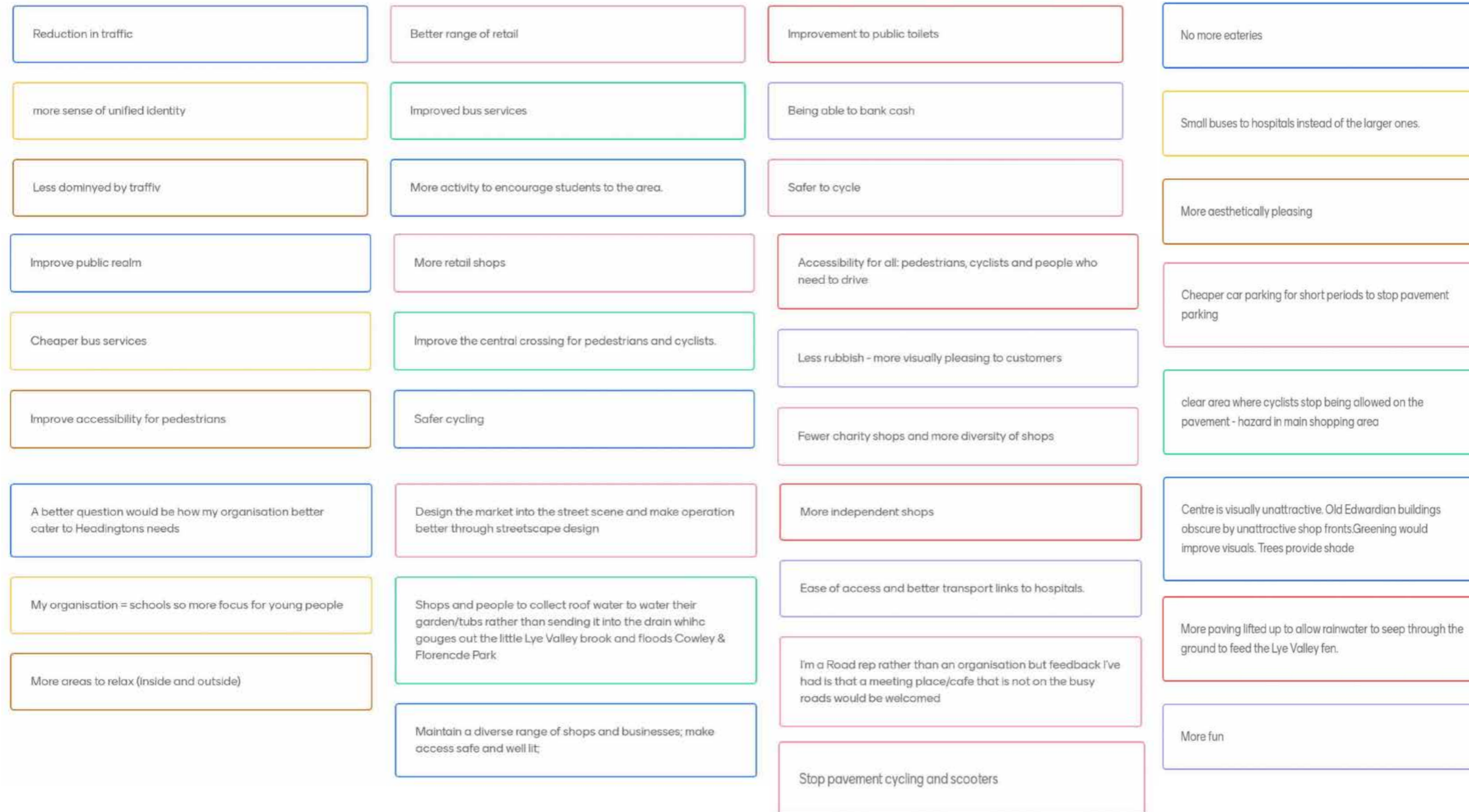|			
Reduction in traffic	Better range of retail	Improvement to public toilets	No more eateries
more sense of unified identity	Improved bus services	Being able to bank cash	Small buses to hospitals instead of the larger ones.
Less dominyed by traffiv	More activity to encourage students to the area.	Safer to cycle	More aesthetically pleasing
Improve public realm	More retail shops	Accessibility for all: pedestrians, cyclists and people who need to drive	Cheaper car parking for short periods to stop pavement parking
Cheaper bus services	Improve the central crossing for pedestrians and cyclists.	Less rubbish - more visually pleasing to customers	
Improve accessibility for pedestrians	Safer cycling	Fewer charity shops and more diversity of shops	clear area where cyclists stop being allowed on the pavement - hazard in main shopping area
A better question would be how my organisation better cater to Headingtons needs	Design the market into the street scene and make operation better through streetscape design	More independent shops	Centre is visually unattractive. Old Edwardian buildings obscure by unattractive shop fronts.Greening would improve visuals. Trees provide shade
My organisation = schools so more focus for young people	Shops and people to collect roof water to water their garden/tubs rather than sending it into the drain whihc gouges out the little Lye Valley brook and floods Cowley & Florencde Park	Ease of access and better transport links to hospitals.	More paving lifted up to allow rainwater to seep through the ground to feed the Lye Valley fen.
More areas to relax (inside and outside)		I'm a Road rep rather than an organisation but feedback I've had is that a meeting place/cafe that is not on the busy roads would be welcomed	More fun
	Maintain a diverse range of shops and businesses; make access safe and well lit;		
		Stop pavement cycling and scooters	

Fig 37. Question 3 results from workshop session 1

Mapping ideas for change:
Tell us about specific locations that could be improved and what you would like to see

Fig 38.   Comments and marks up on the map recorded in workshop session 2

Comments and suggestions made verbally in the workshop are summarised below, categorised by theme.

Bury Knowle Park

- *Comment:* The park is the most attractive part of Headington Centre but feels disconnected from the rest of the Centre.
  Suggestion: Highlight the park entrance and make it more visible.

- *Comment:* There is not much to do once you are in the park.
  Suggestion: The inclusion of other activities and amenities e.g. a community café would make the park more appealing.

- *Comment:* The toilet block is unattractive.
  Suggestion: This area could be redeveloped or redesigned.

- *Comment:* There are no activities for older children.
  Suggestion: Introduce a skate ramp or similar attraction in the area next to the tennis court.

Bus stops

- *Comment:* Bus stop on London Road west of Windmill Road (HS2); the parking spaces are problematic for buses, making difficult to access stop.
  Suggestion: Remove / relocate the parking spaces.

- *Comment:* Bus stop HS3 on Windmill Road is located on a narrow pavement which causes congestion for pedestrians.
  Suggestion: Redesign the waiting area or relocate the bus stop.

Parking

- *Comment:* The tops of side streets adjoining London Road are used by people informally parking to duck into shops; this frustrates residents on these streets.
  Suggestion: Parking in the centre should be reviewed to encourage drivers to use formal bays in parking areas, away from the residential streets.

- *Comment:* Stephen Road highlighted as a specific location where this occurs.
  Suggestion: Introduce designated pick-up / drop-off locations.

Crossings

- *Comment:* The central crossing on the junction of Windmill Road/London. Road should be improved as it is currently unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists.
  Suggestion: Advanced stop lines for the cyclists, better timing of lights and diagonal crossings for pedestrians.

- *Comment:* The zebra crossing in front of Co-op site that leads into Bury Knowle Park is a safety concern for pedestrians.
  Suggestion: Redesign this crossing to make it safer.

Community Facilities

- *Comment:* There should be a community centre in Headington closer to the centre.
  Suggestion: Potential to provide within new development opportunity or redeveloping the toilet block at the entrance to Bury Knowle Park.

Identity & Character

- *Comment:* Currently there is nothing to announce arrival into Headington.
  Suggestion: Both the eastern and western 'gateways' on London Road. should be improved somehow to create a sense of place and entrance to Headington Centre.

- *Comment:* Currently nothing that reflects the presence of education and health institutions.
  Suggestion: Work with the institutions to create bespoke design for cycle parking specific to Headington.

Saturday Market

- *Comment:* The crash barriers which are put up on market days are unattractive.
  Suggestion: Could we create a more attractive alternative to the crash barriers potentially using landscape treatments.

Engagement in Phase 2 - Testing and refining ideas
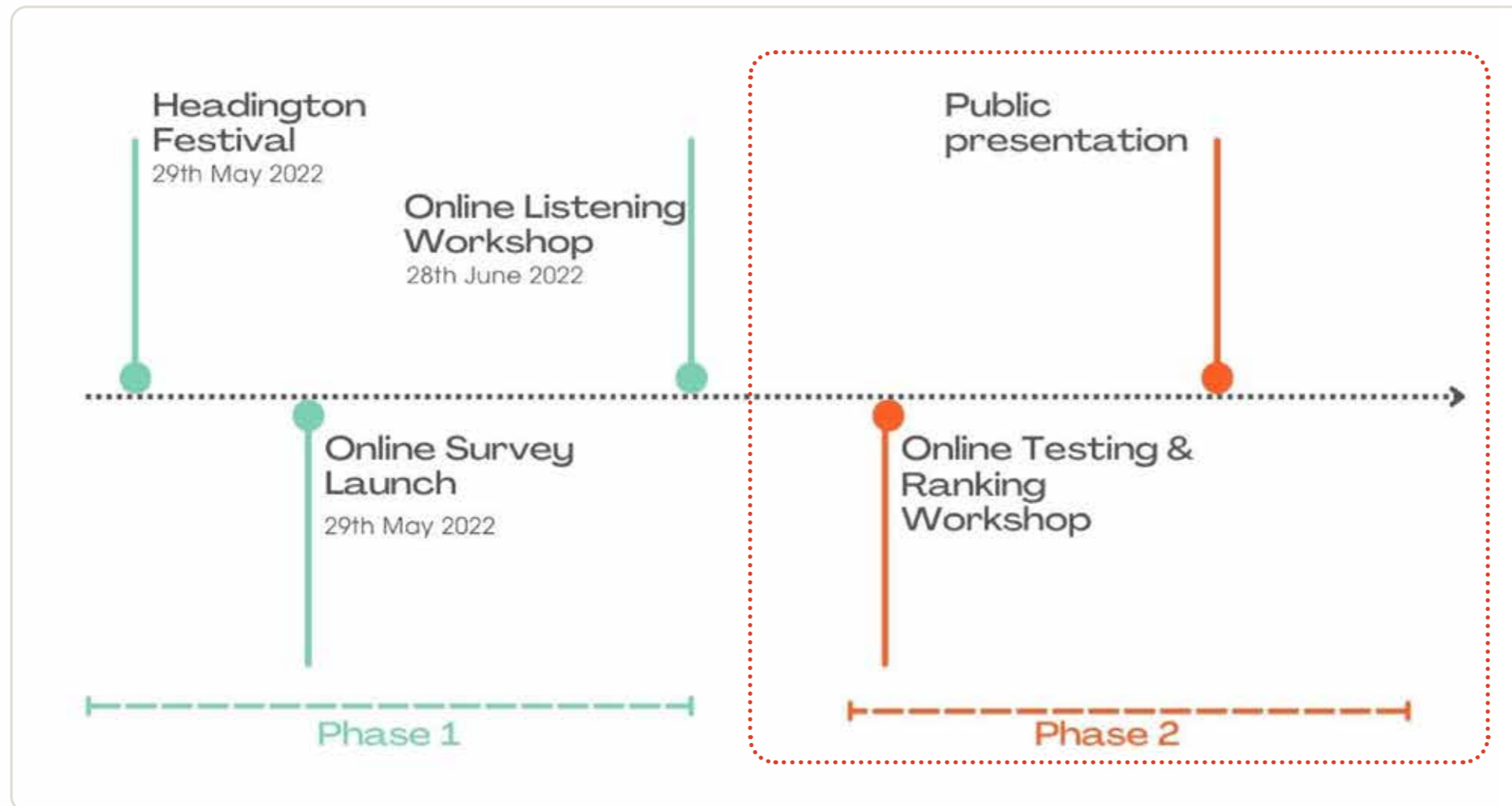
Fig 39.   Diagram of engagement activity highlighting Phase 2 activity

Overview

This chapter summarises the activities, and feedback received, from public and stakeholder engagement undertaken in Phase 2 of the study. The purpose of the engagement was to test emerging ideas, and refine them following feedback, to then finalise the HCIP.

The objectives of the engagement during Phase 2 of the study were to:

- Present the vision, themes and ideas for potential projects to stakeholders and the public
- Facilitate discussion about the ideas and get feedback on them
- Refine initial ideas and prioritise projects
- Inform the development of the HCIP

Engagement activities undertaken as part of Phase 2:

- An online 'testing' workshop with HA stakeholders
- A public exhibition of ideas

These activities are summarised in the following pages.

Online 'Testing' Workshop

Overview

An online stakeholder workshop was facilitated by the ARU team on 15th September 2022. The participants were invited by HA, with emails sent out to HA members and key stakeholders. The event was attended by 23 participants including local councillors, representatives of local organisations, civic groups, businesses owners, and other HA members.

The ARU team presented the draft vision, design themes, and first thoughts on ideas for potential improvement projects. The aim of the event was to 'test' these with the attendees, and:

- Receive feedback on the ideas for improvement projects;
- Gauge views on level of importance of each project; and
- Identify any gaps or concerns

The agenda of the event was as follows:

- Welcome by Patrick Coulter of HA
- Presentation: Introduction and recap on previous work
- Presentation: Ideas for potential interventions
- Discussion: Feedback on the ideas
- Workshop: Identifying priorities
- Wrap up and next steps

Discussion: Feedback on the ideas

Following presentation of the idea, the ARU team facilitated an open discussion. The purposes was to hear reactions from the attendees to the ideas: any thoughts and concerns generally; how the improvements align with the needs of the organisations they represent; and how they might improve Headington Centre.

Discussion was prompted via two questions:

- 1. Which idea do you feel will be most effective/why?
- 2. Which idea do you feel will be least effective/why?

The following discussion was wide-ranging. Key comments made include:

- Generally good support for both the vision and range of ideas presented.
- There is a potential need to consider other 'soft' measures related to management arrangements / structures to encourage business involvement in the maintenance and improvement of the centre
- Participants asked about the feasibility of different ideas for London Road in terms of sufficient road width and potential reallocation of space, and what the County are likely to support.
- Emphasis placed on 'low-hanging fruit'; projects that can be delivered quickly and easily demonstrating change to residents. It was suggested that the gateway ideas could potentially be such a project.
- The need to avoid interdependency of projects was noted; i.e. so that projects can be delivered independently as and when funding is available.
- Oxford Brookes representative suggested that potential for student involvement in some projects (e.g. wayfinding, community hub, art projects).
- Support expressed for improved amenities in Bury Knowle Park, specifically referencing children and young people.
- Design details will need consideration as and projects are developed. It was noted that block paving (shown on a precedent image in presentation) is prone to failure from overrunning by vehicles, making it a safety hazard.
- Support expressed for installing covered cycle parking in place of selected car parking bay(s) (e.g. in side street).
- Idea of a pop-up shop was liked. Something similar to the one in Abingdon would be good, however, it requires active management and oversight.
- Concern expressed about engineering feasibility, capital costs and maintenance implications of large-scale improvements to London Road.
- General emphasis on necessity of reducing traffic volumes for to change the nature of London Road and boost success of ideas.
- Suggestion that the ARU team consider and present a recommendation for London Road redesign.
- Suggestion that London Road redesign include a mixture of formal and informal crossings, mediated by medians.
- Suggestion for having a 'theme' for Headington, e.g. using lighting or other design elements etc.
- The idea of a pocket plaza for Kennett Road was liked. It was suggested that the top end of New High Street could incorporate something similar.

Workshop: Identifying priorities

Following the open discussion, attendees were invited to rank ideas in order of preference. This was done by design theme, with a list of ideas by theme. Participants could use Mentimeter to rank the ideas in each theme in order of preference. Following this was an opportunity for any further comments.
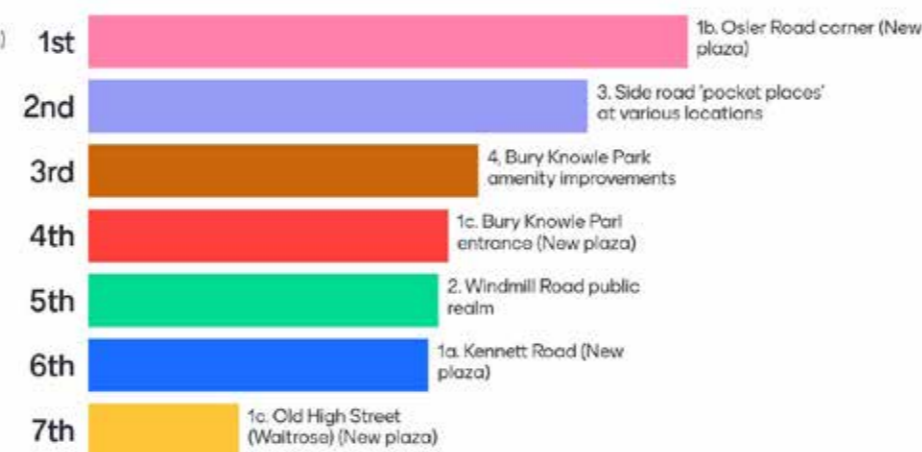
The results of the ranking exercise are shown on the next page.

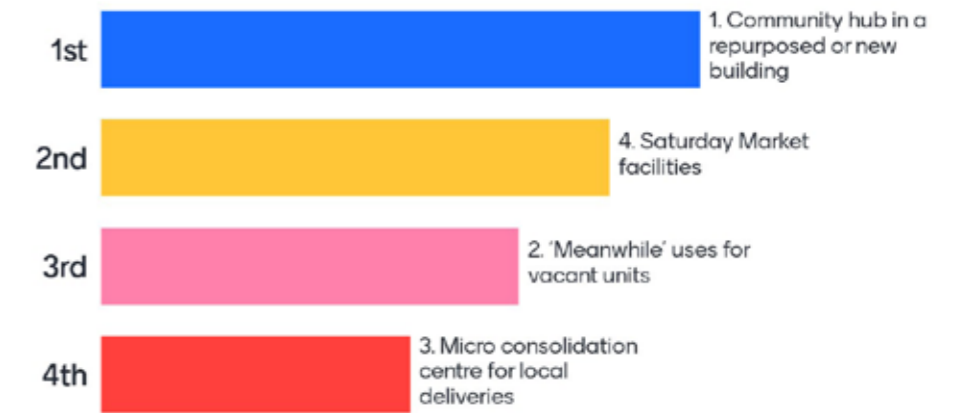Additional comments made are illustrated on the subsequent page.

Theme 1: Creating a 'place' for all

1st — 1a. Simplified streetscape (London Road)
2nd — 1c. Protected cycle lanes (London Road)
3rd — 1b. Central median (London Road)
4th — 2. 'Gateway' treatments that provide sense of arrival
5th — 3. Old High Street and Windmill Road street design to complement London Road
6th — 1d. Full surface treatment (London Road)

Theme 2: Connecting people with places

1st — 2. Removing pedestrian obstructions
2nd — 1. New and improved crossings
3rd — 4. Review and reorganise cycle and micro-mobility parking
4th — 3. Wayfinding signage

Theme 3: Creating lively public spaces

1st — 1b. Osler Road corner (New plaza)
2nd — 3. Side road 'pocket places' at various locations
3rd — 4. Bury Knowle Park amenity improvements
4th — 1c. Bury Knowle Park entrance (New plaza)
5th — 2. Windmill Road public realm
6th — 1a. Kennett Road (New plaza)
7th — 1c. Old High Street (Waitrose) (New plaza)

Theme 4: Strengthening local identity

1st — 4. Art interventions
2nd — 1. Celebrating heritage eg. lighting, interpretation
3rd — 2. Shopfront / building façade improvements
4th — 3. Highlighting Bury Knowle Park entrance

Theme 5: Supporting communities

1st — 1. Community hub in a repurposed or new building
2nd — 4. Saturday Market facilities
3rd — 2. 'Meanwhile' uses for vacant units
4th — 3. Micro consolidation centre for local deliveries

Theme 6: Connecting and showcasing the institutions

1st — 2.Walking improvements on key routes
2nd — 1. Wayfinding in wider area
3rd — 3. 'Here in Headington' hub to showcase work
4th — 4. Encouraging student use
5th — 5. Pop-up events on campuses

Fig 40.   Results of ranking exercise, by theme (Mentimeter)

Any additional comments?

Great selection of options. Looking forward to seeing them realised.

We'll never really get the centre we want without some stricter control on vehicles, including buses, which need to be rationalised.

Areas for cycles to leave their bikes so that they don't clog up the central area leaving more space for the amount of traffic.

Make sure any wayfinding maps point in the direction they refer to so that you don't have to try to remember the whole thing which is upside down or faces the other way. do not confuse bike parking with street clutter.

It all sounds wonderful but I am not sure that you have taken into account the gigantic deliveries in Kennett Road and Old High Street. Also there is a huge number of buses: 14 services use the stop outside Iceland

More greenery in Headington would be an improvement.

Some places have 'dementia-friendly' town centres. Can you incorporate any of their improvements?

My mobile and tablet do not read QR codes - what a good thing I had another laptop to read your survey on. To quote an IT wonk,'Never underestimate the antiquity of your public's hardware and software.'
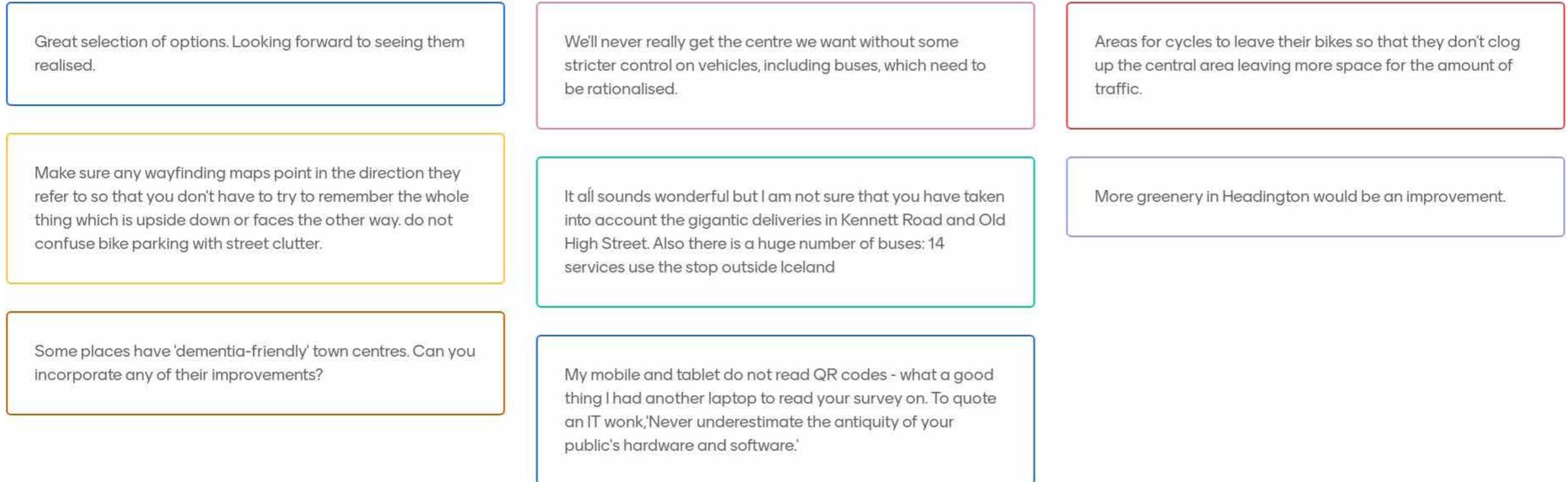
Fig 41.   Additional comments made (Mentimeter)

Public Exhibition

Overview

A public exhibition was held on Saturday 28th October 2022, at St Andrew's C Of E Primary School, London Rd, Headington, Oxford, OX3 9ED. The exhibition ran from 10am to 3pm. Members of HA, ARU and WTP were on hand to speak to attendees and explain the exhibition content. Approximately 150 people attended over the duration.

The aims of the exhibition were to:

- Generate public interest in the project;
- Present the draft HCIP intervention ideas to the community ; and
- Obtain feedback on the ideas to help refine the interventions.

Eight A1 boards were prepared by the ARU team and exhibited at the event. Digital versions were also placed on the HA website at the same time.

The boards were as follows:

- Board 1: This provided context to the project. It explained the project area, described the purpose of the project, and background to it. This board also explained an activity by which attendees could place sticky dots next to the ideas presented on other boards (5-8) which they liked.
- Board 2: This board introduced the ARU project team. It also outlined the project timeline and explained the next steps in the project.
- Board 3: This board provided information on what the team had heard from community and business surveys that were undertaken during May and June. It highlighted key issues identified in the surveys and suggestions for priorities for the team to consider.
- Board 4: This explained the HA vision and the six overarching design themes which ideas in the HCIP are intended to support.
- Boards 5-8: These boards presented illustrative images and descriptions of priority improvement ideas. These boards contained space next to each idea whereby attendees could place a sticky dot if they liked the idea.

Fig 42.   Photos of the exhibition

Fig 43.   Photos of boards 5 to 8,
with sticky dots indicating support
for ideas

Response to ideas presented

The outcome of the sticky dot activity is shown in the pictures on the right. The activity was not intended to be an definitive representation of support, rather a general gauge of sentiment.

Projects that gathered a high density of sticky dots included:

- 1. Headington Centre gateway areas
- 3. Walking improvements
- 4. Osler Road Pocket Plaza
- 5. Kennett Road Pocket Plaza
- 6. Windmill Road Public Realm
- 7. A community hub
- 9. Saturday Market
- 10. Shop front improvements

Projects that had a moderate density of dots included:

- 2. Placemaking elements
- 8. Making more of institutions
- 11. A long-term vision for London Road

When speaking to attendees the ideas numbers 1 and 11 tended to be the ones people had most questions on and or strongest views. It is worth noting the dots placed against specific elements of idea 11, indicating that some people liked a particular design approach or feature but not others. Comments in the feedback survey (next page) reflect some specific concerns that were also expressed during the exhibition about London Road specifically.

Results of exhibition feedback form

A web-link and QR Code to a feedback form was included on the last exhibition board, which provided a means by which attendees could provide more detailed comments. This was also included on the HA website. It was kept open for a week following the event. The form comprised of seven questions . It received 30 responds.

The results of the feedback form are below, in question order.

Q1. Do you support the overall vision of the Headington Centre Improvement Plan?
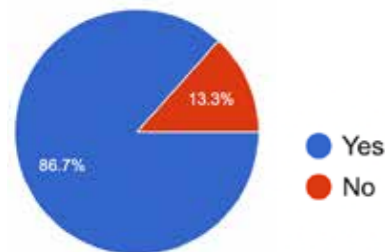
Q2. Is there anything in particular you like or have concerns with in relation to the vision?

Responses to this question are presented verbatim, and have been sorted into themes.

Space/Scaling
- Your scales are off. Your design for the hub will not fit where the toilet block currently is. You think the London Road and pavements are wider than they are. You like everyone else seem to forget about the disabled and their need to drive and park either because buses and walking are not always possible or practical. Slowing traffic will make congestion worse and increase pollution. Cyclists are a menace putting the cycle lane between the pavement and bus stop will cause accidents, putting it between the bus stop and bus will cause accidents. Until cyclists are held accountable for their behaviour and made to get insurance should they be allowed to use the road.
- London Road doesn't seem wide enough to accommodate the gateway areas without creating new conflicts.
- The ideas are lovely but there is insufficient space to carry out some of them: moving parking to side streets, moving the market to Kennett Road, The first graphic seems to have one lane towards Oxford, but the later graphic shows two.
- The space to implement the plans.
- Space appears to be lacking for some ideas, e.g. the relocation of cycle and car parking to side roads. Loading bays could also be problematic.
- The 'green lane-ing' of the London Road seems to assume that all cars and buses are half the width they actually are.

Transport and access
- The traffic!
- I think moving the bus stops further up will cause more congestion on the pavement further up the street. I don't think the road layout will support the volume of traffic that comes through.
- I liked the diagonal crossing as I do that already but the light timings are too short for the elderly.
- I didn't see any plans to fix the confusing junction at Osler road. I did like the idea of the plaza on the corner of Osler road and am okay with closing off the top of Kennet road
- Cycle lanes are mentioned, but not generally shown in the visuals. Where narrow-lane sharing is required, cycle symbols are needed in the centre of each lane (cf recent Highway Code overtaking rules)
- Some discrepancies over two/three lanes (text vs. visuals). In particular, where are the bus stops to be relocated?
- Narrow lanes would prevent passage of (the many) ambulances etc.- have you run this past the emergency services?
- 15mph, including integrating ALL traffic on the road
- Any redesign has to provide segregated cycle tracks on London Rd, and a junction that is safe and accessibly for walking and cycling, including by children.
- The "Oxford Circus" crossing at Headington Carfax was rejected by the County Council not long ago- what has changed?
- I am not sure that you realize quite how many huge lorries deliver to the shops. This is particularly important in relation to the top of Kennett Road, and in addition because of the one-way system the delivery lorries and recycling collection monsters relating to the Royal Standard in New High Street and the Butcher's Arms in Wilberforce Street usually exit via Kennett Road (and will have no other choice if the Highfield LTN is implemented).
- I worry about the lack of disabled parking too, I have sometimes had to use it for my parents.
- Disabled access, especially to shops
- Children students from different areas of the city and outside the city not being able to get to me for piano lessons because they rely on parental car transport to get home after the lesson (they live in areas not served by public transport)

Bury Knowle Park
- Absolutely NO new building in the park. The park must remain a green space, not a single square centimetre must be given up to new buildings.
- I don't like the idea of so much of the corner of bury Knowle being turned into buildings.
- Shops
- A greater mix of shops, rather than multiple repetitions of same kind of retail shops. Ie. Barber shops, charity shops, grocery shops that offer the same thing, rather than different ethnic shops. Too many "dessert and sweet restaurants" etc. Summertown offers a good mix of shops. Suggested improvements to the area is marvellous, and having a greater variety of shops would be super for the community .

Public Realm
- There are no covered areas in the planning that could protect people from rain or extreme sun, which is also an issue for some of the south-facing shopfronts.
- There are many more mobility scooters and rollators in use and the pavement is very cluttered and difficult to navigate because of split levels
- Like more trees. Must stop cycles and scooters on Pavements
- More trees.
- Like the extra trees. Wonder how easy it will be to get landlords to contribute.
- Permissions for pavement cafe tables have recently been fast-tracked; the resulting obstructions could derail any well-intentioned and desirable plans for decluttering
- The Kennett Road plans, inc. Market relocation, would only work if the top of the road were permanently closed to traffic
- The Osler Road 'Plaza' would trespass on existing property and the pavement layout and complex services installed underground would make it impractical. The Kennett Road 'Plaza' takes no account of the need for manoeuvring space for delivery lorries.

General
- I very much like the overall drive to improve the community feel of Headington.
- General visual improvement
- Future use of Co-op building- absence of hotel/visitor accommodation in Headington
- It all seems very utopian and in practical terms, almost completely unachievable. A nice (and probably very expensive) set of visuals for the future portfolios of AR Urbanism and Wedderburn, but of little practical value or application here and very unlikely to get planning approval and/or central funding to implement. The proposed Kennett Road Mural has already been rejected by the property owner.
  Unrealistic without removal of Headington Hospital car parks etc.

Q3. Which of the project ideas do you like the most?

The respondent could select between zero and all 11 ideas.

    1) Headington Centre gateway areas (63%) 17
    2) A long-term vision for London Road (51.9%) 14
    3) Walking improvements (48.1%) 13
    4) Osler Road corner pocket plaza (48.1%) 13
    5) A community hub (40.7%) 11
    6) Shop front involvements (40.7%) 11
    7) Saturday market (29.6%) 8
    8) Windmill Road public realm (25.9%) 7
    9) Kennett Road pocket plaza (22.2%) 6
    10) Placemaking elements (18.5%) 5
    11) Making more of the institutions (0%) 0

Q4. Which of the project ideas do you like the least?

The respondent could select between zero and all 11 ideas.

    1) Kennett Road pocket plaza (47.6%) 10
    2) A community hub (38.1%) 8
    3) Placemaking elements (33.3%) 7
    4) Making more of the institutions (28.6%) 6
    5) Headington Centre gateways (23.8%) 5
    6) Shop front involvements (23.8%) 5
    7) Osler Road corner pocket plaza (14.3%) 3
    8) Windmill Road public realm (14.3%) 3
    9) Saturday Market (4.8%) 1
    10) Walking improvements (0%) 0
    11) A long-term vision for London Road (0%) 0

Fig 44.   Photo of the exhibition

Q5. Is there anything in particular you like or have concerns with about these ideas?

- For the community hub, that would be fantastic. I would only be concerned if much ground space would be lost in terms of the park /green space. And would want to have a view of park/green/trees/playground from the London road entrance, not just a view of building.
- Focus on resolving existing conflicts on roads and pavements.
- Unless Institutions involve and invest themselves more with the community
- Funding
- The lack of space on London Road and the side roads for parking
- Unrealistic view on what can fit. Danger caused by cyclists. Anti disabled attitude. The art mentioned is just a fancy way of saying graffiti which. A mural painted by the schools or of Headington would be better than graffiti.
- Too many cars park illegally on the pavements and at the bus stops of Headington for most of this to work. There is virtually no enforcement of parking misdemeanours.
- Excellent spread of ideas
- Improve the busy pedestrian crossing and cycling routes
- Waste of money on consultancy
- Disabled access: My wife uses a mobility scooter and I am concerned that a great deal of work could be done and disabled access will not improve. In the 12 years we've lived in Headington, access to shops has become worse with new tenants refurbishing their buildings while putting steps or impediments in the doorways. Owners must be made to take more responsibility even if it is not required by law. Every shop should be accessible. They did it in Witney so it can be done here. Please make that part of your plan.
- It is a utopian fantasy which ignores the realities and practicalities.
- I Like slowing traffic to 15mph,. Very Concerned how many bikes and scooters use pavements, you come out of your home and very worried you will be run-down. SAFER in your car at the moment!
- Need to enforce making walking safer- keep Bikes off pavements

- Likes: Improvements to pedestrian road crossings, particularly the diagonal crossing option for the main crossroads. Pavement widening to allow easier use of the shops by both people on scooters and pedestrians. Walking improvements. Resurfacing and better planting at the main crossing end of Windmill Road. Visual improvements to shop frontages and general signage would be great- but absolutely not the community artwork element of it, which has been tried on the Cowley Road (and some parts of London) where it is isn't brilliantly maintained and often gets unrelated tags sprayed on top. I much prefer the option of signing the celebration of local heritage, which might also complement the upgrades giving a smarter feel to Brookes just down the road, too; an element of "heritage" would also emphasise that Headington is very close and connected to both Oxford city centre and the universities / hospitals whilst having its own distinct identity. Improved arrival into Headington, subject to concerns about road narrowing below. Osler Road pocket plaza- as long as it would be maintained. (Planters which have been put in the area at the moment seemed to be being used as dustbins only, last time I looked!) Better wayfinding. Concerns: Possible relocation of the bus stop in the centre of the shops. Its current location in the middle of the shopping area is incredibly helpful for anyone with limited mobility, as the walk from one end of the shops to the other can be very difficult for some. Similarly, relocation of the bus stops at either end of this area to be even further away would be problematic and reduce access for some groups of people- not everyone has or is eligible for a scooter. The artwork on buildings and shops doesn't really fit with the Headington "vibe" for me. I think it makes Headington look like the Cowley Road, whereas I think of Headington as a compromise between the lively feel of the Cowley Road and the much more sedate, upscale one of Summertown. I would prefer the visual upgrade to reflect the fact that Headington houses both students and families, small houses and grand ones in the conservation area- I'm not sure all age groups will like or feel comfortable with the artwork- we're not all trendy hipsters! I'm concerned that any narrowing of London Road will create problems for ambulance and bus speed and that it may also not be helpful if the council is likely to be introducing LTNs that force most cars onto the London Road and through the shops. It would require some very joined up thinking. The suggestion for a community building doesn't seem joined up with the Courtside project for refurbishing the building and sports areas at other end of the park. Toilets would need provisioning - and ideally in a way that commuters and travellers weren't all parading in and out of the community building, if the building might be frequently used by older and more vulnerable members of the community who may be targets for crime. It seems best to keep the majority of toilet provision at the London Road bus stop site, given that the coaches all stop there and shoppers don't necessarily want to walk all through the park with heavy bags just for a toilet stop. Showcasing of research doesn't seem necessary on any significant scale, other than, perhaps, as part of the area's heritage signage- the universities take reasonably good care of this already.

- Two concerns: 1. It was not clear where it is planned to relocate the bus stops to. I think it crucial that these remain very close to Headington Centre. 2. The illustration for the proposed hub made the Bury Knowle Park entrance look rather urban. I would like to ensure that the rural feel is retained for this entrance.

- I am not keen on the idea of closing the access to London Rd from Kennett Road to make space for the Saturday market. For anyone trying to exit from the New Headington area it can be even harder to turn right onto London Road from Lime Walk than from Kennett Road. I would also worry that it will increase traffic and parking of vans in New High Street.

Q6. Any other comments?

- Excellent ideas, good luck.

- Key issues are lack of enforcement of illegal parking, speeding scooters on pavements, too many cars generally, cluttered pavements and level changes. Only the last one is a design problem. Let's talk about enforcement and robust policies to reduce car journeys. I answered no to Q1 but my honest answer is mixed. Some looks good but some looks like it could be an expensive way to achieve little.

- Mechanisms for delivery.

- We need to tunnel the traffic under Headington- Martin reckons only £0.5billion!

- Can the hub, or the library, have a space for events or films or concerts

- Love the image of dividing the London Road with planting.

- Sincerely hope you get the funding to implement these ideas.

- There is little wrong with Headington as it is now, this whole plan seems like a big waste of time and money, for very little benefit. I absolutely oppose any development in the park and will make every effort to have any planning applications to build in the park rejected. The park is a valuable asset to the area, from the point of view of public green space. Any new community facilities should be built in the already built up areas. Which local institutions/businesses did you talk to in your survey? Were they representative of all walks of life?

- I like the triangular paving

- Potential to replace the public toilets along with the community hub. CO OP future?

- Most of the "ideas" which are hardly new, are unachievable

- Plant trees to help clean up air quality

- Make safer for cyclists. Restrict traffic.

- I hope that any improvements will be made with a view to minimising long-term maintenance costs, given the level of austerity which is likely over the next few years. Likewise, I hope improvements by Courtside, the county council (e.g. LTNs) and this project will be fully joined up so that any design changes don't work against each other or duplicate. I hope that any improvements will benefit the full range of the Headington community- students, families, older adults.

- I hope you will hold another consultation when more detailed proposals have been prepared.

- For cyclists, turning right from London Road across the traffic into New High Street can be very risky. Anything that can make this easier and safer will be an improvement. Also there is already a big problem with illegal pavement parking and vehicles exiting New High Street onto London Road against the one way system. If there is no provision for deliveries/mini cabs dropping off passengers on London Road, this will never improve. I watched three minicabs within 20 minutes using the bus stop bay near the traffic lights to do U turns close to the traffic lights on London Road on Sunday afternoon. Hopefully the London Road plan would prevent this sort of risky manoeuvre.

- So many bus routes were cut earlier this year. Replacement public transport must be in place before you start cutting off access and affecting peoples' livelihoods.

- Can I help? I am a life long resident of Headington and a Chartered civil engineer.

Appendix B:
Level changes study

Level Change Study

Introduction

This chapter summarises a review of the various level changes within the pedestrian environment of Headington Centre. These level changes create pinchpoints, reduce space available for pedestrians and can be trip hazards. The review considers typical conditions, and suggests potential solutions that could be explored. The intent of this review is to identify adjustments and improvements that could remove or better resolve level changes, and could be implemented comprehensively (e.g. as part of the long term vision for London Road project) or on an individual basis as and when appropriate.

Background

Headington Centre's topography is such that there the surface rises northeast; east of the Windmill Road intersection, the London Road is descending gently.

Differences in level is one of the key issues contributing to walkability and accessibility of London Road. **Level changes affect access to 15 units on the London Road and also the Waitrose entrance.**

The level changes, with current treatment:

- Limit the available space on pavements
- Make it difficult for people doing different things to negotiate and manoeuvre within space (people walking, using canes or wheelchairs, pushing prams, sitting, boarding or alighting buses etc.);
- Obstruct servicing of commercial units;
- Add to street clutter and can be visually obstructive.

Current situation

The plan on the next page illustrates the location and type of level changes, categorising them broadly by height: one step; two steps; three to four steps.

Ramps are present except where level difference is lower than ~10 cm. However, even a small level change is difficult for people with restricted mobility and a barrier for wheelchair / mobility scooter users.

Several cases feature significant level differences, for example Iceland / Savers / Cancer Research entrance, Waitrose entrance from the car park, Heavenly Desserts entrance and terrace.

Potential solutions

Level differences of 10 cm or less could potentially be addressed with repaving, building up or regrading surfacing to remove the level change. This will generally require looking at a wider area around the level change to avoid creating paved areas that are uncomfortably sloped for pedestrians. The solution is such cases could be raising the wider pavement level, including integrating with side road entry treatments (e.g. continuous footways) where close to a corner. Careful attention to cross-falls will be needed to avoid creating problems with surface water drainage.

More significant level changes require a creative approach to integrate steps and ramps into the streetscape. Railings should be provided where essential, but where possible avoided or integrated with other elements. Retaining walls can also be designed to support or integrate with other facilities such as seating or landscaping.

For smaller level changes:

- Consider design of wider pavement including corners of adjacent side streets.
- Regrade the pavement surface level where possible.
- Remove railings where possible.
- If space allows integrate planting to help reinforce access areas and visually soften railings and walls.

For significant level changes:

- Use retaining walls for integrated street furniture and planters.
- However, avoid any seating on narrow footpaths with high pedestrian traffic.
- Maximise space for business spill-out sitting spaces on raised and level ends of space, away from pedestrian through-space.
- Replace or visually soften railings with landscape e.g. planters with shrubs or railings that also provide structure for climbing plants.

The following pages provide indicative examples of how two instances of level changes could potentially be better addressed.

Seating integrated with planter

Planters used as both retaining wall and to reduce amount of railings for level change

Ramps and stairs can be divided / wrapped by small areas of landscape
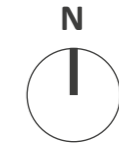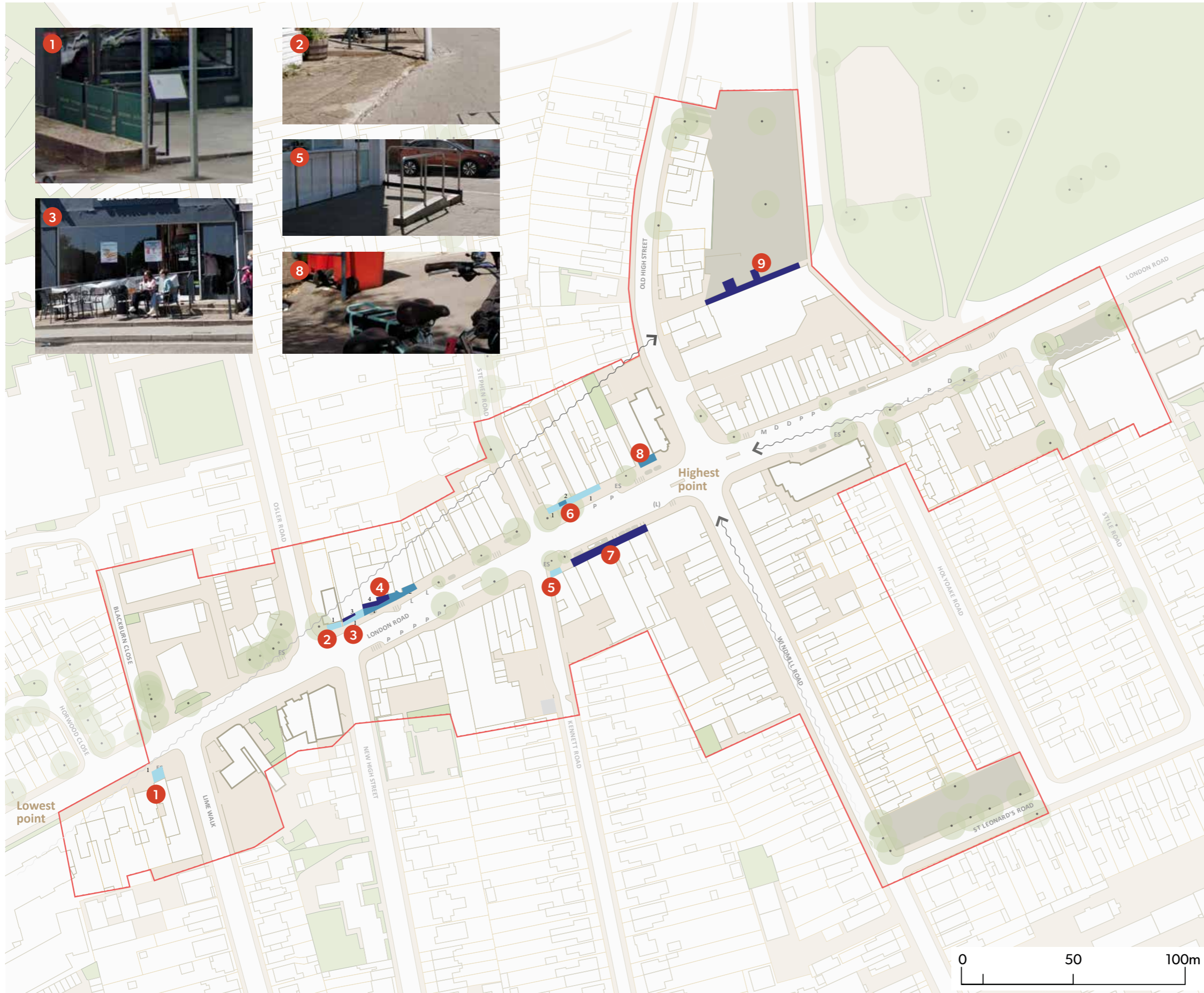
Fig 45.   Level changes
within the site boundary

Key:

Site boundary

Level change, pavement

to entrance:

1 step

2 steps

3-4 steps

Sloping topography.
ascending

Highest
point

Lowest
point

0   50   100m

7 **Iceland, Savers, charity shop entrances**
South side of the London Rd between
Kennett Rd and Windmill Rd

Opportunity to integrate bus shelter with retaining wall

Replace railing with less visually intrusive on ramped areas

Ramp

Level area

Ramp

To provide a barrier but avoid railings, level areas could have planters or seating

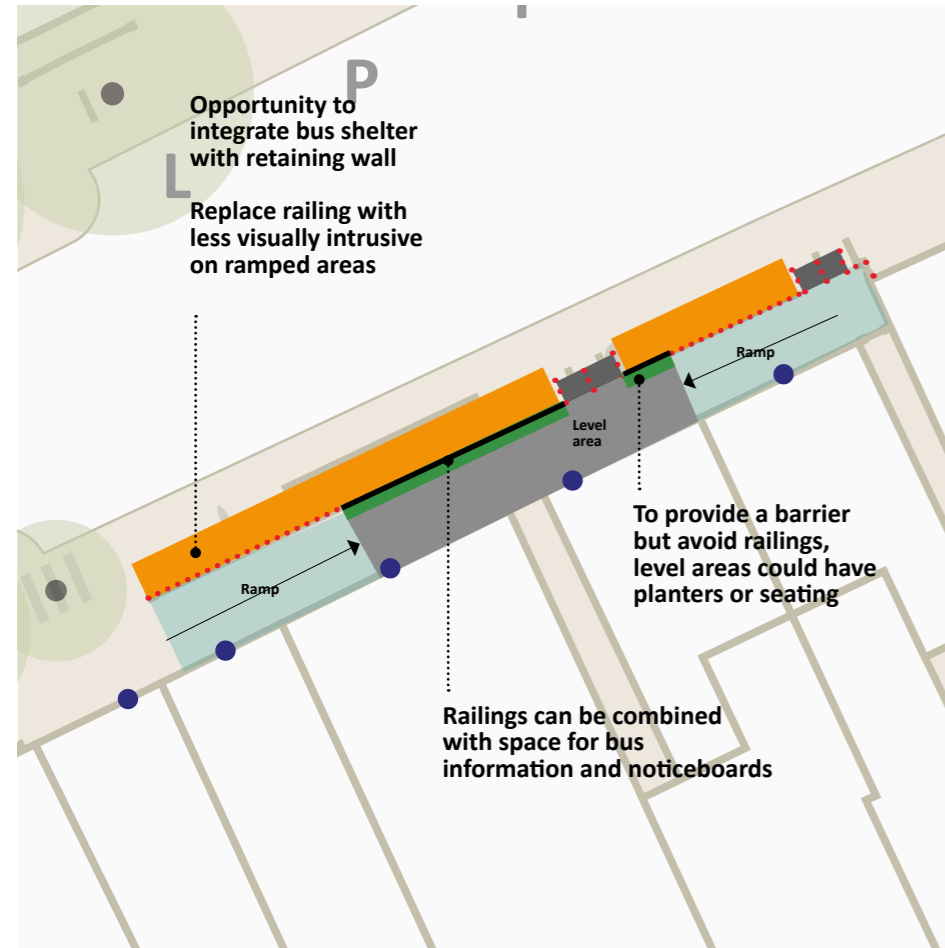**Railings can be combined with space for bus information and noticeboards**

Fig 46.   Level change opportunities and constraints diagram

● Entrances

⠿ Railing

▢ Railing on flat area

▩ Level area

▩ Stair

▩ Potential bus shelter

▩ Potential additional seating or planting

Context:

• Ramped access from the west, stairs from the footway

• Unobstructed level surface at upper level

• Footway at street level has bus shelter, seating, bins

• Bus waiting area is busy

• Area with high footfall

Surface slopes down to stair

Level difference requires barrier

Opportunity for shelter for bus and general seating

Shop fronts visible

Shelter with long integrated bench

Some seating or landscape could be provided on upper level

Fig 47.   Simplified drawing of potential interventions

6 **NatWest bank entrance**
Stephen Rd and London Rd intersection

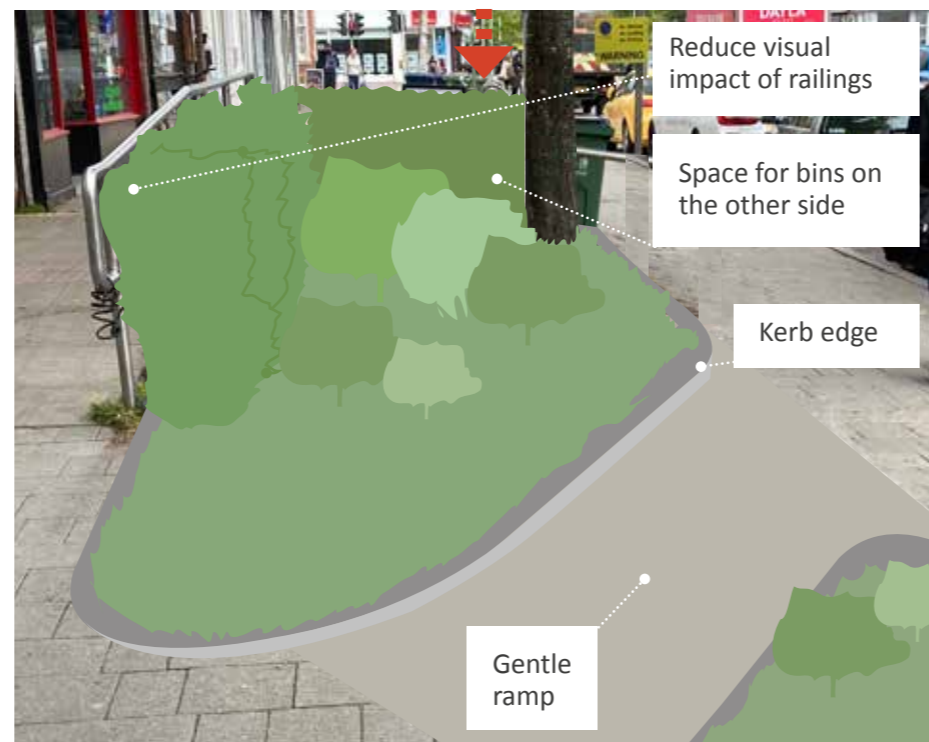Fig 48.   Level change opportunities and constraints diagram

● Entrances

⋮ Railing

■ Level area

■ Potential raised crossing area

   (level to the pavement surface)

■ Potential regrading

■ Potential for planting

Context:

- Stephen Road is a cul-de-sac; the side street entrance could have raised / continuous footway crossing treatment as a gateway.
- Upper level of footway to provide good access to shops.
- Lower level to be comfortable for people walking along the road.
- Regrading to remove steps.

Very narrow section, insufficient for wheelchair access

Footpath sloped

Ramping may not be necessary

Steps restrict footway space and restrict movement / create hazard

Reduce visual impact of railings

Space for bins on the other side

Kerb edge

Gentle ramp

Alternative to the landscaped area could be outdoor table seating

Fig 49.   Simplified drawing of the proposed interventions

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