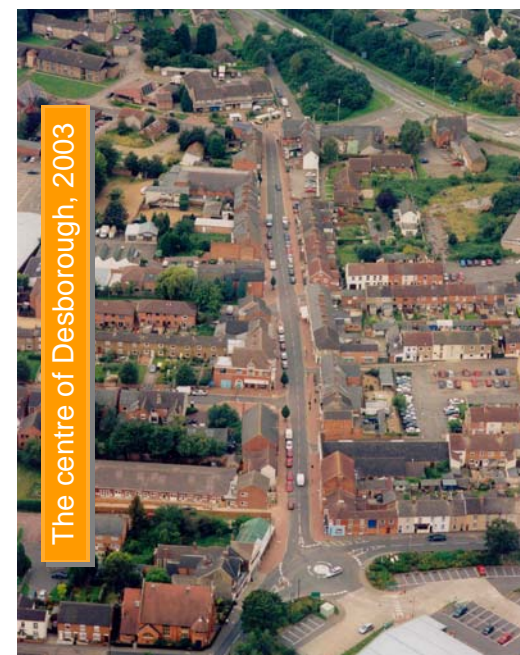


A NEW HEART FOR DESBOROUGH



1.0 FOREWORD AND INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Desborough faces a challenging future. It is set to grow significantly over the next 10 or 15 years, and this brings pressures and concerns. Ensuring that there is an appropriate level of facilities within the town, improving the quality of the local environment, enhancing the vibrancy and vitality of the town centre and most importantly ensuring that the essence of the town's character is maintained are all important issues.
- 1.2 Desborough is not a typical small town and at first glance it doesn't have the qualities that makes it particularly attractive. This is made worse by the results of past events and decisions that significantly changed the town centre, compounded by a general decline and lack of investment over a sustained period. In some respects these circumstances make it more difficult to effect change but it also presents an opportunity to radically improve the quality of Desborough - as a place for people.
- 1.3 One of the main attributes of Desborough is its sense of community, embodied by the people who live and work there. Despite its problems there is a strong sense of local pride and a desire to improve things in the town to make it a vibrant and attractive place. The purpose of this document is to help the community achieve some of its goals by shaping change in a positive and beneficial way for the town.
- 1.4 The intention for the Desborough Town Centre Urban Design Framework is to produce more than just a glossy urban design document. It is about developing a vision that will deliver long term and sustained improvements to Desborough for many years to come. In doing so it will help shape Desborough into a vibrant and forward thinking town. It is also about rebuilding the community's confidence, so that in partnership, the goals being set for its future can be delivered. This document has been prepared with the involvement of the community of Desborough.
- 1.5 It is important that those involved with Desborough share the vision in order to help secure the changes and improvements the local community aspire to. The Market Towns Initiative was established to identify and then drive forward improvements. An action plan has been prepared to deliver the improvements and consequently it is intended that this framework will work alongside that plan shape the improvements to the town.
- 1.6 The Urban Design Framework is informed by a comprehensive analysis of the town looking at its evolution and the issues that affect it today. It is important to understand the towns origins and its strengths, weaknesses and opportunities in order to come up with solutions and projects that are appropriate and capable of delivering appropriate change.



2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 In 2002 Kettering Borough Council decided to prepare the Desborough Urban Design Framework, a long-term strategy for the improvement of the town centre of Desborough. The framework aims to tackle the most important physical, social and economic issues that presently affect the town centre and to build a platform upon which to secure a sustained improvement for the future. It will be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance. It will provide the basis for:

- Discussions with landowners
- Bidding for resources
- A framework for planning decisions

2.2 Desborough will undergo significant change and expansion over the next 10 to 15 years and it is important to the community that the town centre responds positively and adapts to these changing circumstances. This will help to provide for the town's people, its businesses, visitors and those who will move to the town in the future.

2.3 The Market Town Initiative (MTI) established with the help of the Countryside Agency has created momentum for change and an action plan has been prepared by the MTI based on the main themes of developing the local economy, increasing the sense of community spirit and improving the town centre. The Desborough Urban Design Framework seeks to reinforce and be consistent with the MTI Action Plan.

2.4 The overall purpose of the design framework is to identify a series of initiatives that will help reinforce Desborough's role in serving its population and that neighbouring villages for everyday needs. Moreover, it also aims to improve Desborough to provide a character and range of activities that will prove attractive to visitors.

2.5 On Saturday 12th October 2002, two half-day urban design workshops were undertaken with the Desborough community, involving a number of local groups and individuals. The issues, concerns and ideas that arose have helped shape this strategy.

2.6 In November 2002, interim consultation was undertaken with people who had attended the workshops, providing a list of potential projects for them to prioritise. The responses form the basis for the action plan within the design framework. The results of the consultation are attached as Appendix 1 to this document.



The Vision for the Desborough UDF

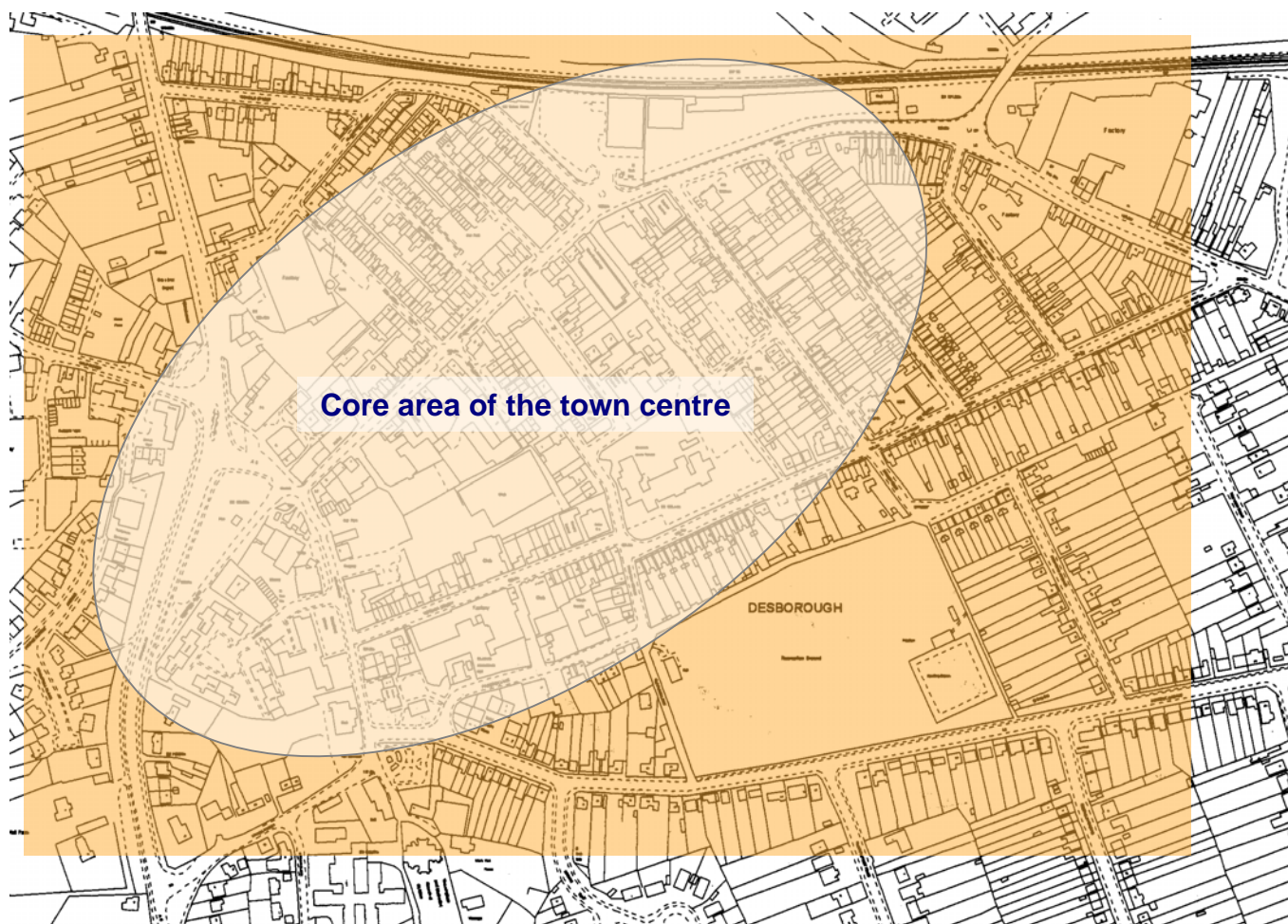
To help create an attractive and accessible heart to the town by enhancing:

- Its environmental quality
- Its range of facilities and shops
- Its civic pride and sense of community
- Its accessibility, particularly for pedestrians

The area covered by the framework

2.2.1 For the purposes of the framework the area identified as the town centre is shown below. It doesn't mean that the area outside of this is unimportant, but the chosen area is seen as the hub of the town and the place where concerted action is needed to deliver the improvements that Desborough most urgently requires.

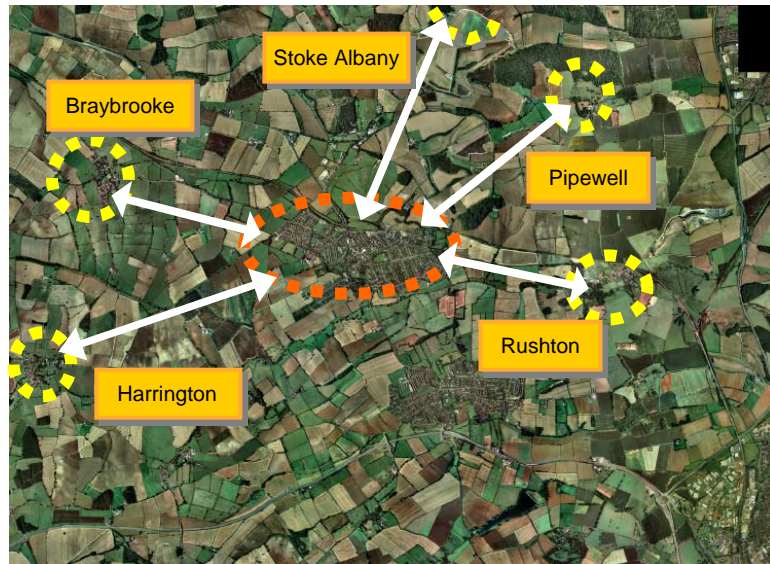
2.2.2 However, the boundary is not entirely inflexible and it is envisaged that some degree of flexibility will be necessary in interpreting the document for peripheral areas of the town centre and to ensure that there isn't an abrupt transition between within and outside the area.



3.0 ANALYSIS

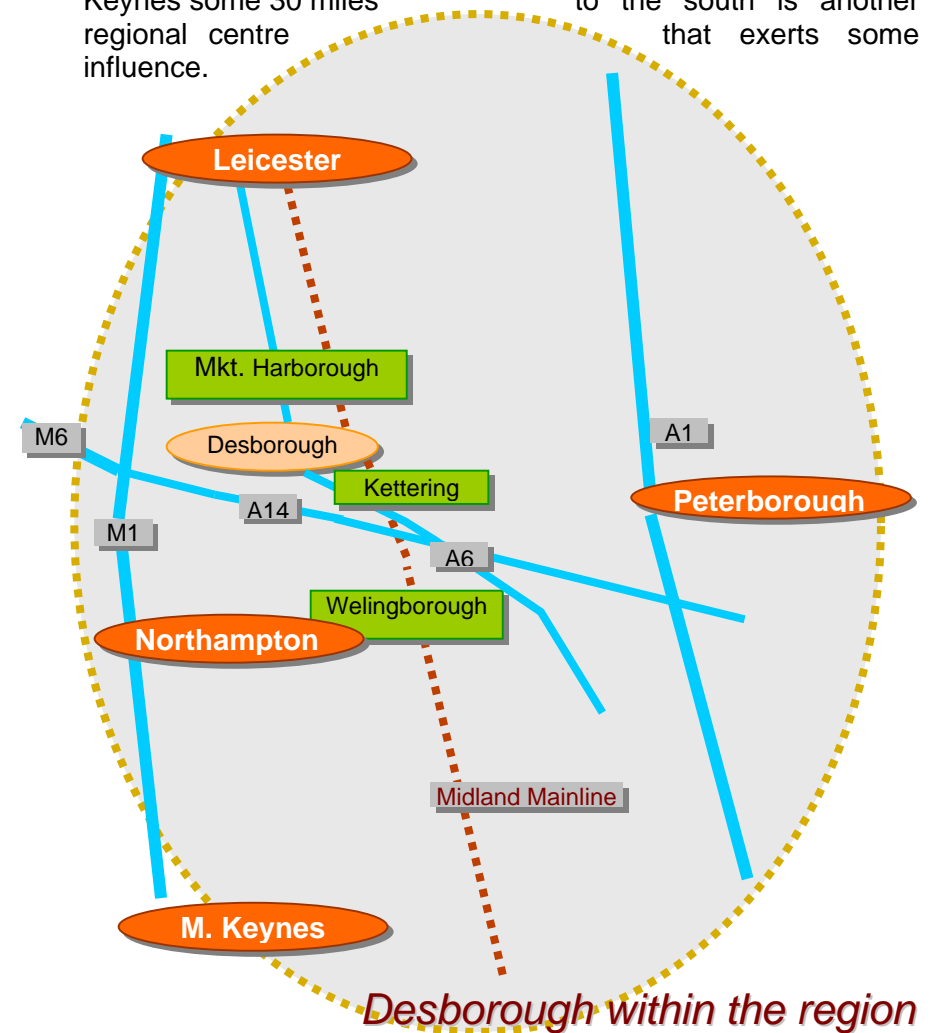
3.1 Spatial context

- 3.1.1 Although Desborough is located in the northern part of the Borough of Kettering and is administered as part of Northamptonshire, it has a close spatial and functional relationship with Market Harborough in southern Leicestershire, which is some 4 miles to the north. This dual relationship influences both how Desborough functions as a local centre, but also the pressure it faces as a small town with two larger neighbours close by.



- 3.1.2 Desborough has a population of circa 8,000 and is one of the three “A6 towns” that, along with Kettering, make up the urban area of the Borough of Kettering. The town has several villages nearby that use it as a local centre for day to day activities. It performs an important function therefore in terms of helping to sustain local rural communities, a fact recognised by Desborough’s inclusion in the Market Towns Initiative.

- 3.1.3 The Borough of Kettering lies between three important urban centres: Leicester, Northampton and Peterborough. Northampton is the closest and is located some 14 miles from Desborough whilst Leicester is approximately 20 miles away. Peterborough is located some 30 miles to the east. Milton Keynes some 30 miles to the south is another regional centre that exerts some influence.



3.1.4 The key road link to the town is the A6 that presently runs through its centre. However, the construction of the A14 (A1-M1 link) has meant that the Borough has become far more accessible and Desborough is no exception (although at present access to the A14 from Desborough is via Rothwell. The completion of the A6 Rothwell-Desborough bypass in August 2003 will provide Desborough with a more direct link to the trunk road network in the future.

3.1.5 The Midland Mainline railway runs through the Borough providing a direct connection between London St. Pancras and Leicester. There are frequent services from Kettering station but although the railway line runs through the town, Desborough no longer has a station.

3.2 Origins and evolution of Desborough

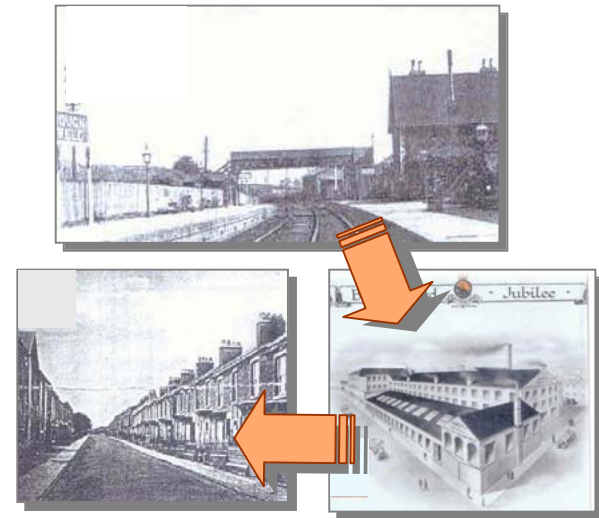
Up to early 20th century

3.2.1 Although Desborough's origins lie much earlier in history, the major phase of town development occurred during the Victorian and Edwardian periods (late 19th and early 20th century). This was a very important time as the boot and shoe industry and iron ore extraction triggered Desborough's transformation into a town and created much of the character that we see today.

3.2.2 Desborough has been the site of human activity since prehistoric times. During pre-history and the early Anglo Saxon period it was an important site with royal status and several important archaeological finds have been discovered in the area, the most notable being the Desborough mirror. Until the industrial revolution Desborough was a modest village that had evolved slowly during the medieval period. The medieval core of the settlement was around High Street, Buckwell Street and Lower Street.

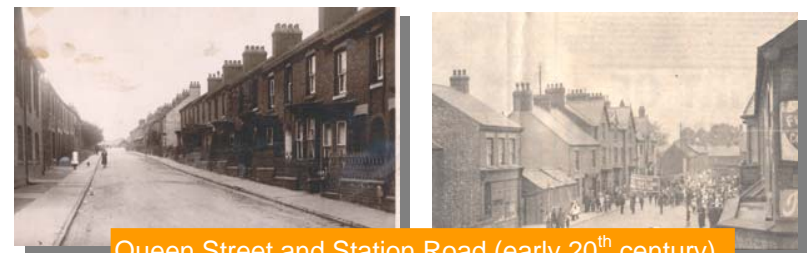
3.2.3 The railway came to Desborough in 1853. This was the main cause of industrialisation alongside the development of mechanised shoe

manufacture, which led to the establishment of larger factory premises in the town. This in turn resulted in the need for new housing to accommodate a growth in population brought about by the new businesses.



The process of urbanisation

3.2.4 Most of the new development took place along the route up to the station (Station Road) and generally to the east of the established village centre. The maps on the following page illustrate the development of the town.



Queen Street and Station Road (early 20th century)



3.2.5 The Co-op also developed into a major influence in the town during this period. Urbanisation led to the establishment of a number of local businesses and the Desborough Co-operative Society was formed in 1863. Over a relatively short period the society grew significantly, acquiring land and undertaking development, particularly in the Station Road area but also in the established centre along High Street. This area provided a strong focus for the newly emerging town in the late 19th century.

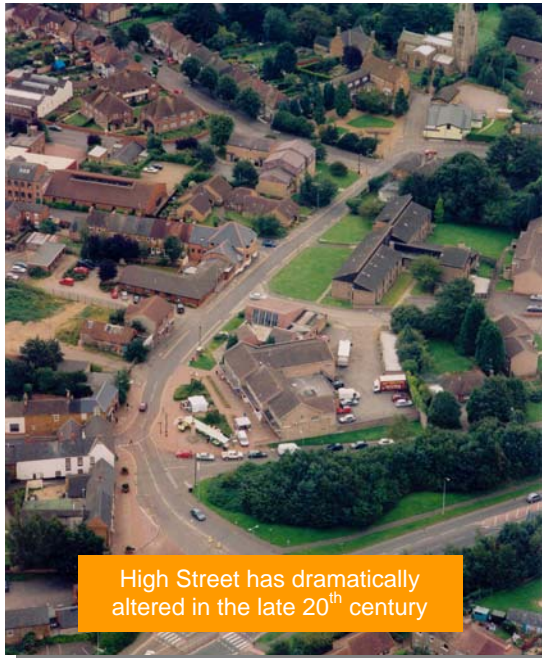
3.2.6 The prosperity and in-migration brought about by boot and shoe manufacture and the emergence of Desborough as a town led to the development of social infrastructure to support the enlarging community. Schools, social clubs and places of worship were built and amenities like town gas, street lighting, improved sanitation and parks and allotments were also introduced around this period. By the end of the 19th century, only 50 or so years after the commencement of major growth, Desborough had become a fully functioning and thriving town.

Early 20th century onwards

3.2.7 Desborough's growth continued into the latter part of the 20th century. However, the driving force was not the boot and shoe industry but other factors. During the inter-war period the growth of the private housing market led to ribbon type development along the main roads, particularly the A6, and growth to the east and west of the town. This was increased by several large housing schemes by the local authority. A further phase of sustained private sector housing development during the latter part of the 20th century expanded the town on its periphery resulting in the town as we see it today.

The evolution of Desborough (taken from NCC Extensive Urban Survey 2000)

- 3.2.8 The decline of the boot and shoe trade resulted in closure of most of the factories located in the town. In their place, other businesses grew up, taking up some of the vacant industrial space but several factory buildings were demolished and developed for infill housing.
- 3.2.9 Several businesses have re-located outside of the town with the development of the industrial enclave off Stoke Road and more latterly the development of a small industrial estate off Pipewell Road. This has resulted in many larger businesses operating away from the town centre.
- 3.2.10 The countryside surrounding Desborough has a number of long established villages and hamlets that have evolved around agriculture. Although historically there was never a formal market in Desborough, the villages formed a relationship with the town for certain services and facilities, a link that continues to this day.



3.3 Land use and activity

- 3.3.1 A detailed survey of the land uses in the town centre was undertaken early in 2002 and updated for the urban design strategy. These are plotted on the map opposite based on ground floor uses, on a unit by unit basis.
- 3.3.2 The commercial core of the town centre has a number of activities taking place, primarily retail and residential but also other uses such as offices, a couple of pubs and hot food takeaways, as well as a small amount of industry. The Borough Council neighbourhood office, the library and a doctor's surgery are also located in the town centre.

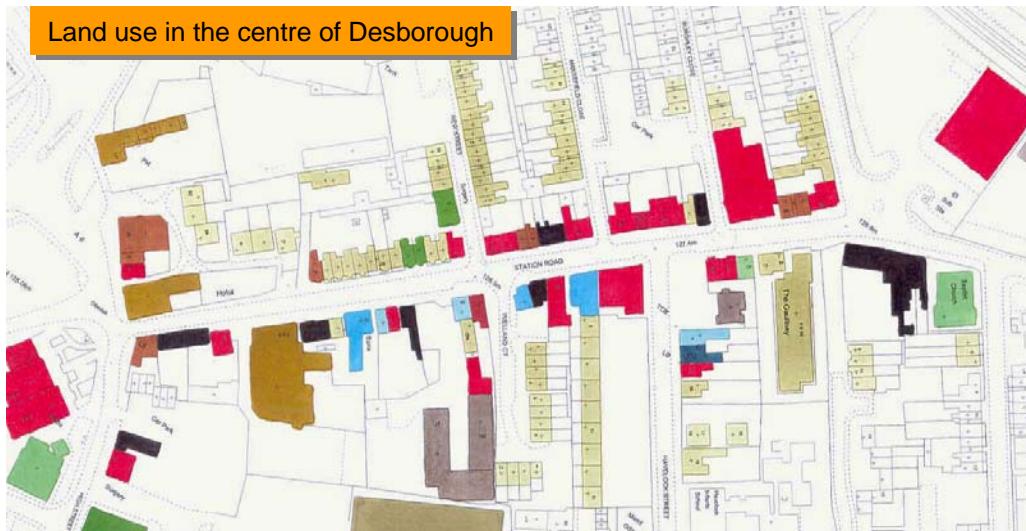
Current commercial offer in Desborough

The extent and range of use within the centre currently provides for basic local needs of the town and its surrounding villages and includes:

- Budgens and Co-op supermarkets
- Clothing,
- Furniture/electrical store
- Chemist/pharmacy
- Toy shop
- Card and gift shop
- Bakers
- Butchers
- A florist
- A post office
- Newsagents
- Bookmakers
- Optician
- Travel Agent
- Hairdressers

3.33 There is no formal centrally located public space in the town and consequently the town lacks a focus for its activities. A small market takes place on the area adjacent to the monument at the junction of High Street and Station Road, but this “temporary” feel restricts its attractiveness as a feature for the town.

3.3.1 Although there are two public houses in the town centre, the George and the former King’s Arms (The Oak Tree), as well as the Ritz Club, there are no restaurants or other similar uses to add to the vibrancy of the town centre. This has been identified as a weakness during consultation and contributes to the impression of inactivity in the town centre, especially during the evening.



KEY			
	Retail		Civic/religious
	A3 (pubs)		Vacant/derelict
	Offices		Residential
	Industrial		Bookmakers
	Banks/Building Societies		Medical
			Sport/leisure
			Post Office
			A3 (takeaway)

Urban character

3.3.2 Desborough is literally a town of two halves, separated by the re-aligned A6. The town centre sits within the eastern portion and is characterised by higher density grid-iron development originating mainly from Victorian times. It is interspersed with occasional infill development from the late 20th century on former factory sites. On the southern and eastern periphery, housing is lower density, estate type form of 20th century origin.

3.3.3 The historic core was originally centred upon High Street and would have been the highest density area with enclosure caused by properties abutting the road with yard areas and terraces behind. However, the highway improvements to the A6 in the 1970’s brought about demolition of much of this area, and it was replaced with lower density development, which many would argue has deprived the town of one of the main elements of its historic character. A comparison between the historic urban pattern and that of today is shown overleaf.

3.3.4 From the comparison it is noticeable that the Victorian parts of the town centre are still relatively intact but the work to the High Street area has created a more open character. There are also several gap sites in High Street and Station Road that create opportunities for new development.

3.3.5 One of the main physical factors to have shaped the town centre is the railway line, which prevented development encroaching further northward. This area was exploited for ironstone and only very recently were proposals made to develop there (it is now the site of the recently approved Grange development). The other main feature influencing physical form is the re-aligned A6, which at present is a strong barrier to east-west movement.



High Street 1950s



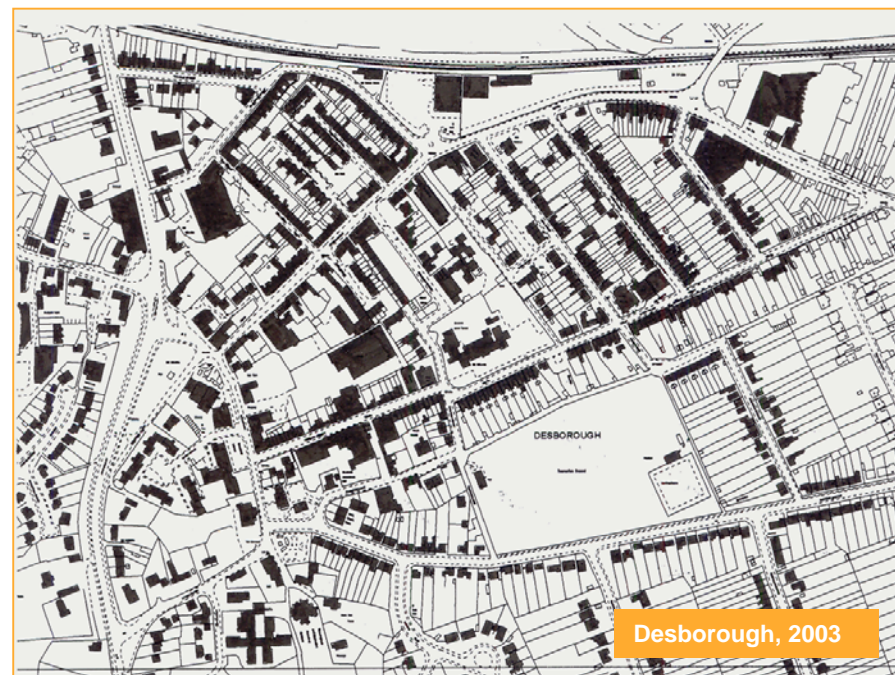
High Street 2003

3.3.6 Outside of the town centre, the major element of land use is residential interspersed with some industry and other uses. The vast majority of the town is located within 800 metres or 10 minutes walk time of the centre. But this is distorted by the topography of Desborough, with the southern areas of the town located on the valley side, less accessible due to the uphill walk to the town centre.

3.3.7 The Grange development to the north of the railway line will further enlarge the town, likely to include 700 homes, a leisure centre and country park. This new housing should be accessible to the centre by foot due to its more favourable topography and the provision of a footbridge.



Desborough, circa 1900



Desborough, 2003

3.4 Townscape analysis

Entrances into Desborough (gateways)

- 3.4.1 There are four main approaches to the town centre (see page 11). From the north and south the A6 (Harborough and Rothwell Roads) provides the main entry. On the outskirts these roads have a tree lined, lower density character which changes closer to the centre (particularly Harborough Road). The easterly and westerly approaches from Pipewell Road and Braybrooke Road have more of a rural feel at the town's edge.
- 3.4.2 On Harborough Road, entry to the centre is marked by the railway bridge whilst on Rothwell Road it is the corset factory that makes this approach distinctive. From Braybrooke Road into Gold Street the row of cottages on the northern side of the street marks arrival whilst the railway bridge on the Pipewell Road forms the gateway into the town centre.

Distinctive buildings and features (landmarks)

- 3.4.3 There are a number of landmark buildings and features within the town centre area. The key built landmark is St Gile's Church, which is visible from distance, particularly from the south. However, there are also numerous local landmarks and key buildings that also help to make the town centre distinctive and aid orientation within it. These include:
- 1) The monument at the junction of High Street and Station Road
 - 2) Havelock Junior and Infant Schools, Havelock Street
 - 3) The Church of the Holy Trinity, Victoria Street
 - 4) The war memorial in High Street
 - 5) The George and Oak Tree Public Houses, High Street/Station Road
 - 6) The main Co-op building, Station Road
 - 7) Lawrence's factory, New Street

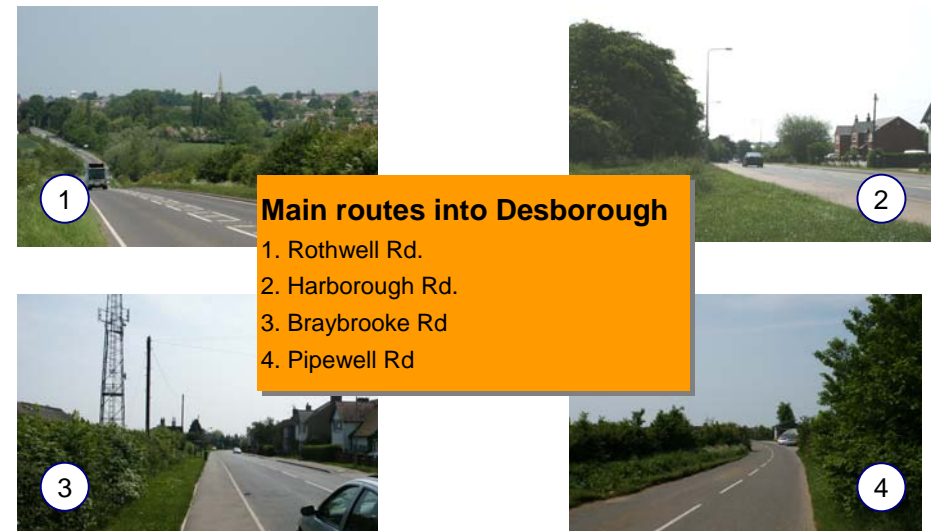
- 8) Littlestone and Goodwin factory, Victoria Street
- 9) The Baptist Church, Rushton Road
- 10) Terrace of ironstone cottages, Havelock Street

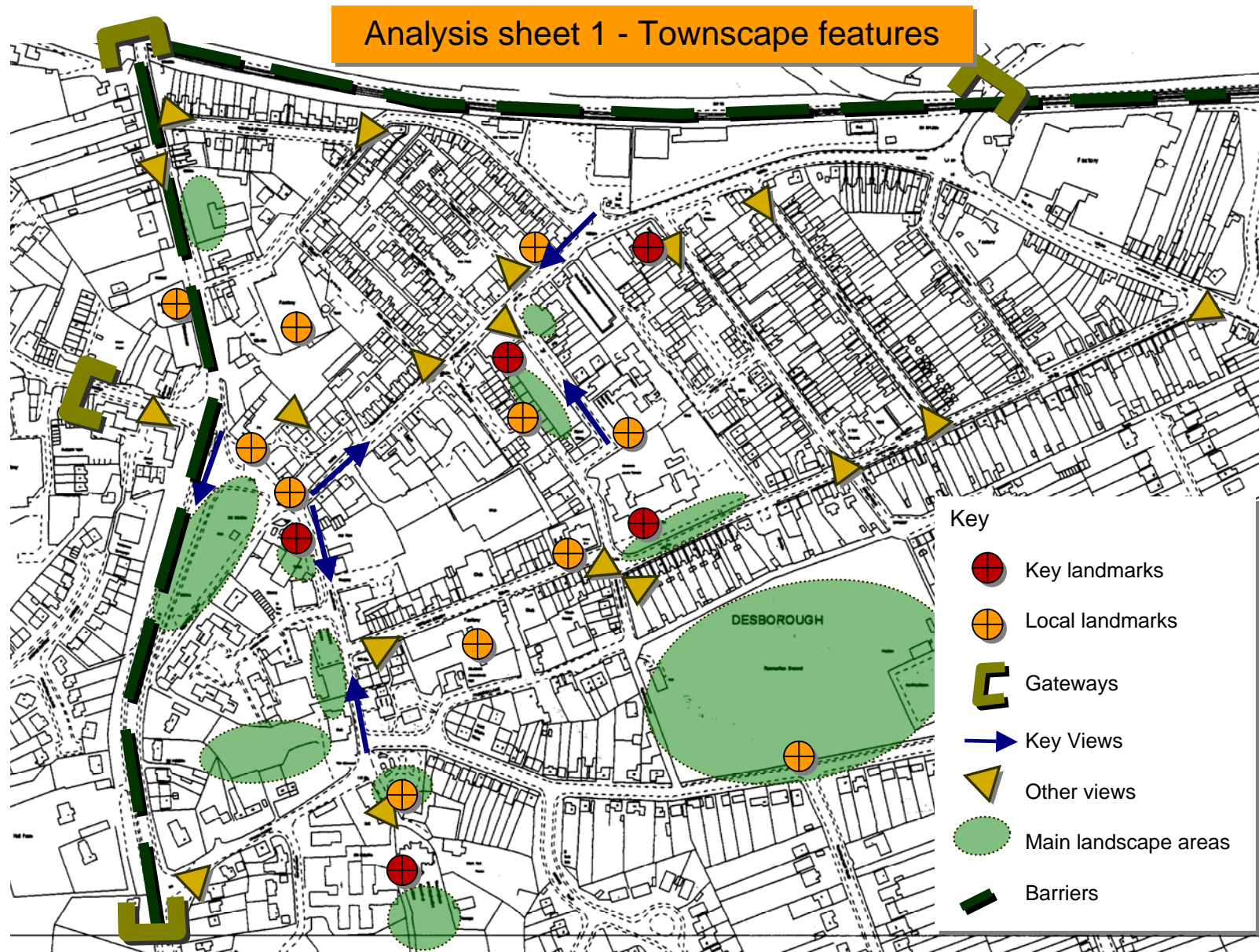
Main landscape features and public spaces

- 3.4.4 The town centre area lacks any significant or memorable landscape features, primarily due to the Victorian origins of the town. Larger open spaces exist nearby such as the park on Dunkirk Avenue and the area around the church. Several smaller incidental areas have been created over time within the centre itself, which for the most part, add to the general quality and ambience. These are:
- 1) The paved area at the junction of High Street and Station Road
 - 2) The public gardens at the junction of Havelock Street and Station Road
 - 3) The memorial gardens opposite Havelock Infant School
 - 4) The garden area next to the war memorial, High Street.
 - 5) The grassed area in front of Hazelwood House, High Street
 - 6) Mounded landscape buffer adjacent to A6
 - 7) The grounds of Havelock Junior School
- 3.4.5 The town centre does not have significant mature tree planting but the trees that are viewed within the street help to soften the appearance of the centre. The area around the church offers the largest area of tree coverage in close proximity to the town centre creating attractive views from the south. Other than the areas mentioned above, the Harborough Road approach has a stronger landscape setting arising from trees within private gardens (particularly the eastern side) but this tapers out closer to the junction with High Street. From the south, the street trees along the A6 provide a strong landscape character on approach to the town centre and provide a possible design cue for the future improvements to the A6.

Important views/vistas

- 3.4.6 There are a number of important views and vistas into and within the town centre.
- 3.4.7 The principal long distance views of the centre, which is located on the rising valley side of the River Ise, are on approach from Rothwell to the south. The church with its mature landscaped foreground and the extensive area of Victorian terraced housing to the east provide an interesting visual contrast.
- 3.4.8 From the north the town centre is mainly obscured from view until reaching the railway bridge on Harborough Road, with an occasional glimpse of the spire of the Church of St. Giles over the ridgeline. From the west, views of the centre are largely restricted until reaching Gold Street due to the road alignment, whilst from the east, glimpsed views of the centre gradually increase until reaching the railway bridge where the eastern edge of the town centre finally comes fully into view.
- 3.4.9 Within the town centre the main views are affected by topography and the road layout. High Street and Station Road are the dominant vistas but the gridiron form of the streets also creates other more local views. These are shown on the following page.
- 3.4.10 The view down High Street toward the Church of St. Giles from the monument is historically the most important but also the most attractive. However, the effect has been lessened by the loss of the original High Street buildings and creation of a more open streetscape.
- 3.4.11 The views along Station Road in both directions are also very important to the character of the town centre but the lack of containment at the Station Yard end with no focal point undermines it. By contrast, the view in the opposite direction, where the vista narrows at the junction with High Street, creates a framed view of the monument. This important landmark acts as a focal point in this view but also in views up High Street.





Traffic and parking

- 3.5.6 The main vehicular route through Desborough is the A6. The junction of High Street with the A6 is the most heavily used. Off the A6, High Street and Station Road provide the main vehicular access through the town. Of the two, Station Road is the most heavily used route principally because it is the main shopping street, has limited on street parking and carries through traffic travelling toward Corby. At certain times it does become congested with traffic. The access to the centre from Lower Street is less heavily used
- 3.5.7 There is very little public parking in the town centre. This has been highlighted in consultation responses as a major factor affecting the quality and attractiveness of the town centre for both residents and potential visitors. There are a number of potential solutions to provide more parking. These are linked to new development proposals, townscape improvement schemes and better use of existing parking facilities (for example the car park next to the bowls club) as well as better use of on street parking.

Pedestrian movement and activity

- 3.5.8 The main areas of pedestrian activity are Station Road and High Street, as they are the two main commercial areas within the town centre. However, there are also several less busy streets that lead off the key ones. Despite its Victorian grid layout, the town centre it is not highly permeable, primarily due to the loose form of the road layout and because there are few pedestrian “lanes” running from the main streets.
- 3.5.9 The main focus of activity centres upon the junction of High Street and Station Road and lies at the heart of the town. It provides a ready made location for any intended community focus for the town such as a market square. There are also several other more minor locations where activity occurs in the town centre. These locations called “nodes” in urban design language are shown on the diagram overleaf.

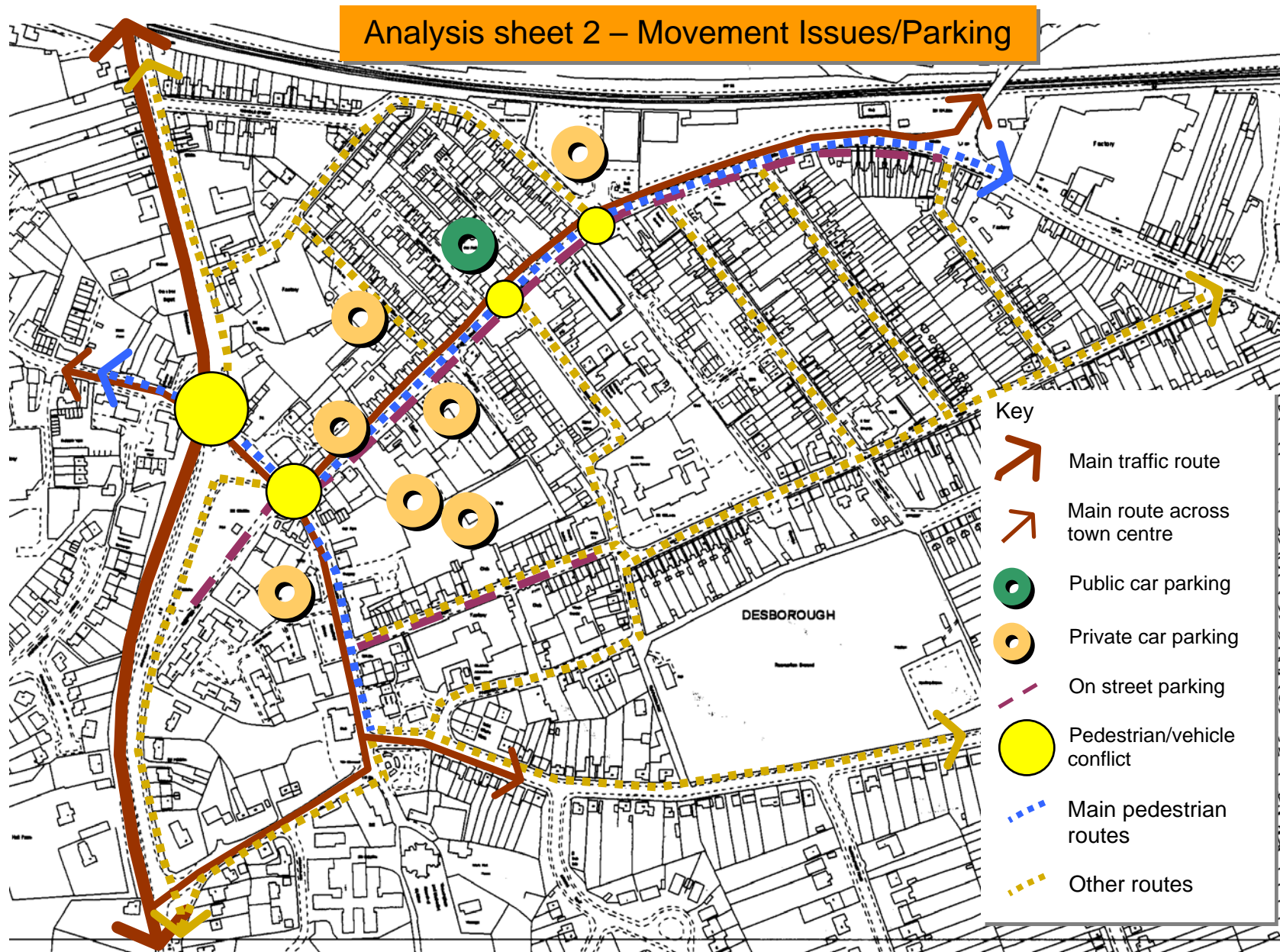
- 3.5.10 The town centre’s connections to the western part of Desborough are severely hampered by the barrier created by the A6. Even at the crossing point on Harborough Road this restricts the level of connection within the town and affects the ease with which residents on the western side can use the town’s facilities.

- 3.5.11 The A6 is presently a very well used vehicular route primarily for through traffic, but isn’t well used by pedestrians because of the poor quality of this area for pedestrians and cyclists. The creation of the Desborough by-pass and de-trunking of the A6 through the town presents a major opportunity to make this route more attractive to pedestrians and cyclists.



- 3.5.12 There are also other locations within the town centre where pedestrians and vehicles come into direct contact and which need to be resolved by urban design proposals.





Townscape quality

3.5.13 Desborough's distinctive character, created by the domination of buildings, the gridiron street pattern and lack of any significant spaces or landscaping means that the appearance of buildings and frontages are particularly important to the feel of the town.

3.5.14 For the most part the quality of built frontages within the centre has been eroded as a result of the following factors:

- Demolition of large parts of High Street and redevelopment with inappropriate buildings that have a weaker street presence;
- The presence of vacant sites in key visual locations
- Inappropriate alterations to buildings, including window, doors, shop fronts, roofing and poorly designed and finished extensions
- General deterioration in the fabric and appearance of buildings through inadequate or inappropriate maintenance/repair
- Removal and inappropriate alteration of boundary structures like walls and railings.

3.5.15 There are a number of individual buildings, the appearance or setting of which either has a positive or negative impact in the street scene in the town centre area. Some of the main ones are:

Positive impression

- 1) The main Co-op building in Station Road
- 2) 3 storey former factory, 68 and 70 Station Road
- 3) The George Public House, High Street/Station Road
- 4) The Kings Arms, High Street
- 5) The Servicemen's Club, Lower Street
- 6) Catholic Church and Sunday School, Victoria Street
- 7) Havelock Infant and Junior Schools
- 8) 3-19 Havelock Street (ironstone terrace)

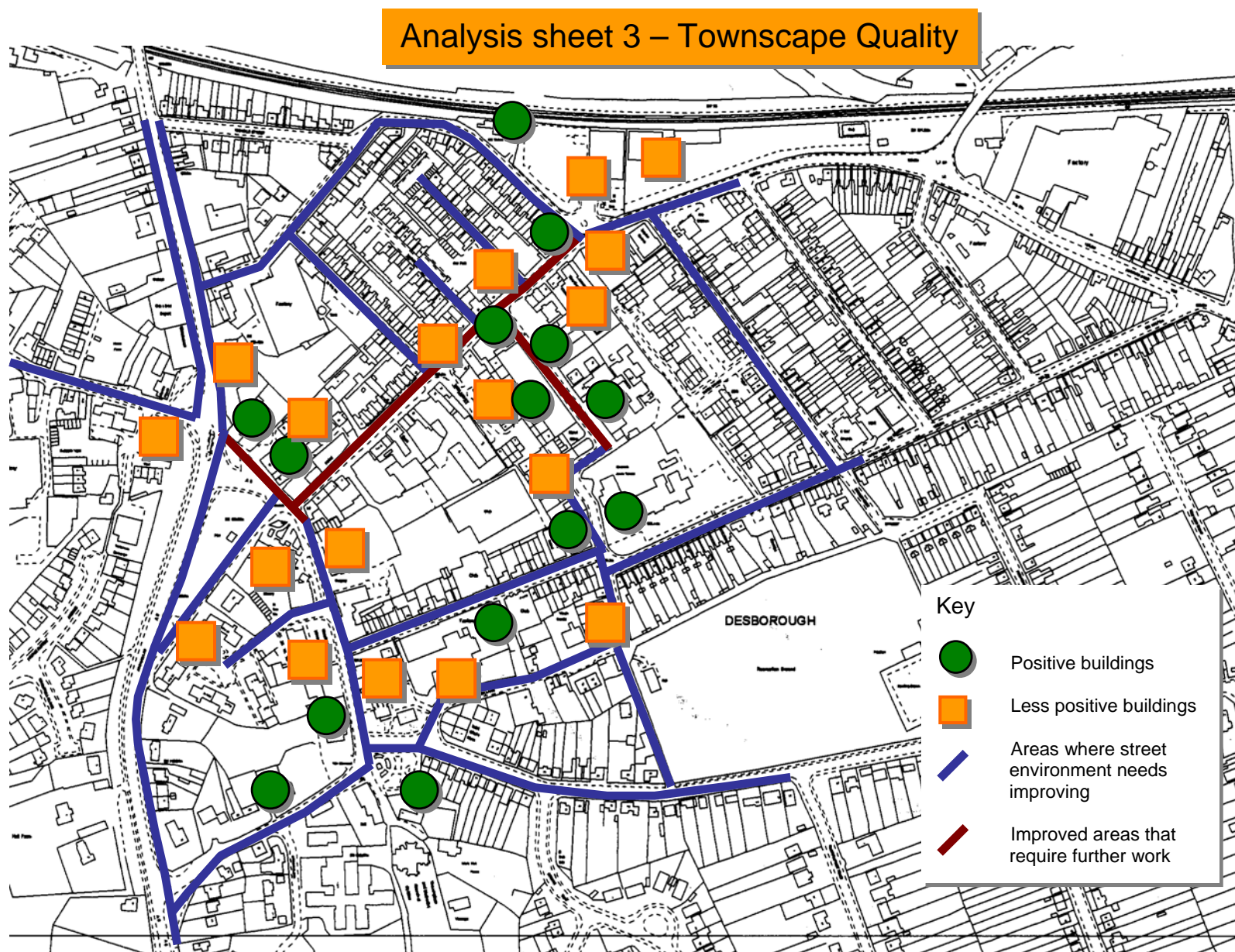
Negative impression

- 1) Shops at the corner of Buckwell Close/High Street
- 2) Hazeland House, High Street
- 3) 42 – 66 Station Road (various shop fronts and alterations)
- 4) The Gaultney sheltered housing, Station Road
- 5) Desborough Co-op furniture store, Station Road
- 6) Budgens food store, Station Yard
- 7) The Desborough Motors and Lawrence factory site, Harborough Road/New Street
- 8) 69/71 Station Road

3.5.16 The Lawrence factory site is viewed very differently by various sectors of the community. Some see the site as an eyesore and a hazard which needs to be removed to enable re-development of the site, whilst others see it as a noteworthy building of local historic significance which requires conservation and sympathetic re-use.

3.5.17 Desborough Civic Society submitted proposals for redevelopment of the site for a mixed use development, including community uses, retaining the original building. This proposal was granted planning permission and gives a strong indication that mixed use development, retaining the main building, is expected at this site

3.5.18 Whilst the main factory building does have local historic importance it has been significantly extended and the site is presently an eyesore due to dereliction and the fly tipping, although recently the site was fenced off and secured. In its present condition the site has a negative impact on the appearance of the town and this urgently needs addressing. However, it is a site that is also very important to the future of the town as one of the key town centre opportunities for positive intervention. Consequently, it is one of the areas of the town centre considered in more detail later in this document.



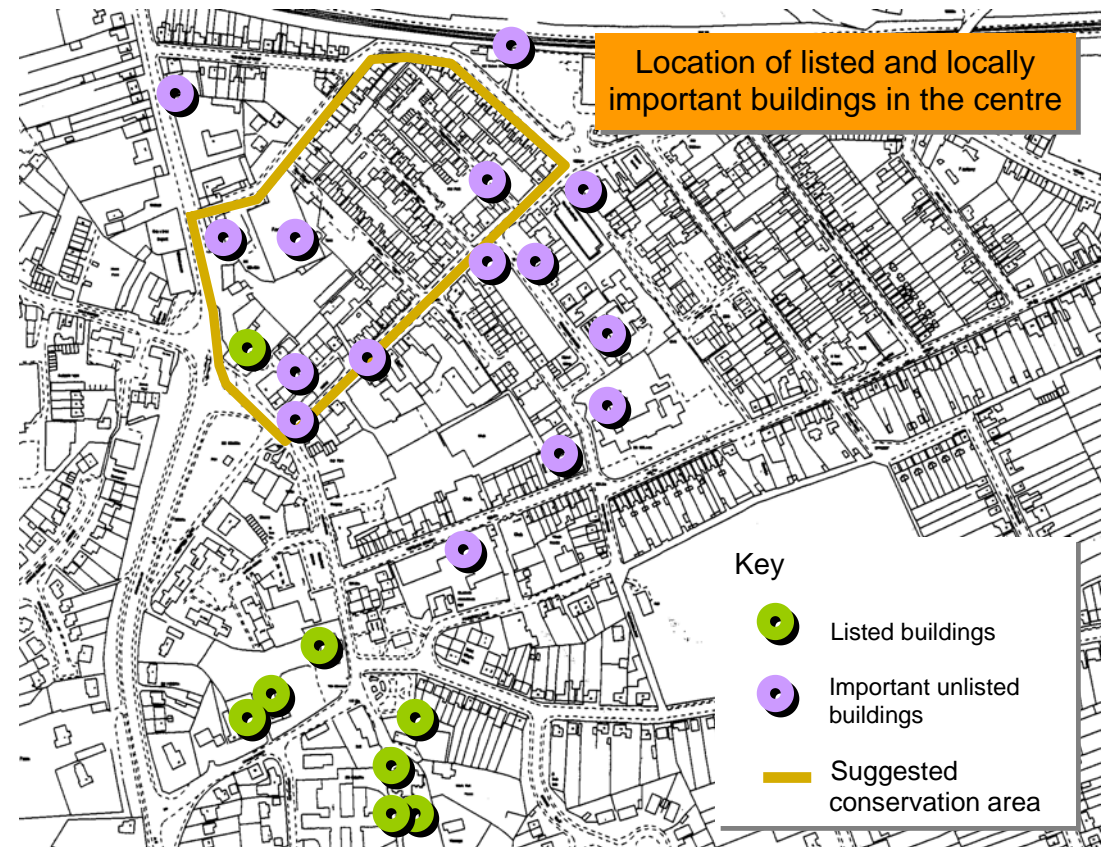
Heritage Issues

3.5.19 As discussed previously, Desborough is not a typical market town and does not have a significant number of listed buildings (of special architectural or historic interest), or for that matter a conservation area. The most notable listed buildings are the Church of St Giles, the rectory and the Services Club, all focused in the High Street/Lower Street area. Desborough does however have an interesting more recent history based upon industrialisation and there is a growing appreciation of what this period contributes to heritage value.

3.5.20 The Civic Society has been lobbying for the designation of a conservation area in the town centre to recognise and protect what it considers to be important historic townscape, centring upon the Lawrence factory. At the urban design events one group ventured to identify the extent of a potential conservation area, which is shown on the plan inset. Also on the plan are noteworthy buildings that are unlisted and the buildings that are protected by listing.

3.5.21 This document is not the means by which to specifically identify and protect Desborough's built heritage but, it is very important that proposals made later in this document are sympathetic to conservation objectives and recognise the contribution that built heritage conservation can bring to successfully regenerating the town centre in a sympathetic and attractive manner.

3.5.22 Conservation objectives need not stifle enterprise or economic diversification. In fact there are an increasing number of examples of high quality regeneration where the historic built environment is the lynch pin, and often the catalyst to wider rejuvenation of places. Conservation may be one of the means by which the town can revive itself, alongside the implementation of high quality new development, townscape enhancement and an increased level of vibrancy and usage.



3.7 Character areas within the town centre core

3.7.1 The core of Desborough town centre covers a modest geographical area but it does have several distinctive character areas that it is important to recognise and understand when considering the management of change (in a physical, economic and social sense). The factors that influence this are:

- The form of buildings
- Range and mix of uses
- Presence of local landmarks and focal points
- The streetscape
- Landscape characteristics
- Boundary structures
- Topography
- Building density
- The relationship between buildings and spaces
- Ease of movement
- Vehicular issues

Station Road

3.7.2 This is the main retailing area of the town containing a mixture of uses, including a significant proportion of residential properties. The street does not have any restaurants or pubs just a single fish and chip shop. Whilst the area is busy during retail hours it lacks life and vitality at other times. The presence of a significant number of ground level residential properties also means that altering the mixture of uses needs to be undertaken sensitively to ensure that these properties are not badly affected by new un-neighbourly activities.

3.7.3 Compared with the centre of Rothwell, which is of similar size to Desborough, there is a significant imbalance in town centre activity. Rothwell has a number of pubs, restaurants and takeaways which with the other uses provide a more balanced and vibrant centre.

3.7.4 At its western end, Station Road is characterised primarily by residential properties on the northern side, comprising elderly person bungalows and terraced houses, with a mix of uses on the southern side including the Ritz, offices, retail and residential use. A break in the street frontage on the southern side is created by Tailby's Yard. This creates an underused site that could be exploited for new development as well as general townscape improvement.



3.7.5 Further up Station Road, roughly half way along, the concentration of non-residential uses increases significantly and is largely dominated by the Desborough Co-op. However, there are a number of other smaller retail uses as well as offices, including the district office of Kettering Borough Council.

3.7.6 In general terms this area is characterised with building frontages right up to the pavement edge creating enclosed views up the street. Buildings are mainly two storey in form, aligned parallel to the street but there are also occasional 3 storey buildings as well as buildings gable end onto the road.

- 3.7.7 A few of the properties retain original features and some examples have interesting and unusual elements creating variety in the street. However, the majority of buildings have been significantly altered, many in an insensitive way. This detracts from what could be a quite pleasant street environment. The neglect of the fabric of some buildings also detracts from the visual quality. Virtually all of the shop fronts have been altered in the street.
- 3.7.8 The traditional material usage in the area would have been red brick and slate with stone window surrounds and sills and sliding sash windows on domestic buildings and above shops. Shop fronts would have been traditionally constructed in timber. Unfortunately there are very few examples of buildings that retain this character.



- 3.7.9 Historic photographs show that Station Road also had sections of boundary walls and railings that would have enriched the visual character of the street. These too appear to have been lost over time, primarily to widen the pavements but also as a consequence of individual adaptation of buildings. Some walling does remain, for example in front of the terrace of cottages on the northern side of the street, but it too has been drastically altered and retains little of its original character.



- 3.7.10 Changes to the street and pavement surfacing and highway furniture have also contributed to the change in character of the street, including the more recent environmental improvement works by the Borough Council.
- 3.7.11 There are also a couple of examples of inappropriate modern development that further erode the visual character of the street. Budgens supermarket for example at Station Yard lies within a very prominent position but the form of the building does not reflect the importance of the site as a landmark or focal point in the Station Road vista. The design and finish of the building does not reflect the importance of the site or the character of the wider area. In many ways it is an opportunity to create a quality form of development that has been missed.

3.7.12 Because Station Road is the main shopping street and the main east-west route through the town centre it does on occasions get congested by traffic, exacerbated by the lack of on and off street parking in the centre. This has been highlighted by the community, both at the urban design workshops but also during other forms of consultation. This is discussed more fully in a previous section of this document.

High Street

3.7.13 High Street was once the main focus for Desborough. It was lined by cottages, shops and public houses that abutted the winding street, creating a strong sense of enclosure, which framed views of the church of St. Giles. Many of the buildings were built in Ironstone, as this was the main focus of the late medieval village that pre-dated the Victorian expansion of Desborough.



3.7.14 Today High Street has a very different appearance. In the 1970's the area was severely affected by the road improvements to the A6, which led to many of the old buildings being demolished. In their place some newer buildings were erected but in locations and of a style that did not contain the street in the same way. The materials, scale and design of the buildings also departed from those that were characteristic of the High street. The winding form of the medieval street was also straightened out by the road improvements. These changes drastically altered the appearance and feel of the area, which has weakened it in townscape terms.

3.7.15 The northern end of High Street is predominantly commercial, with two pubs and two takeaways and it is the centre of the limited night time activity in the town centre. There are remnants of the historic fabric in this area and the former Kings Arms has recently been listed as a building of architectural or historic interest. This part of the High Street has been radically changed by the road improvements that has widened out the street and created significant areas of space, the most recent of which created the paved area around the monument in the mid 1990's. The mound screening the High Street from the A6 is heavily planted with semi-mature trees and shrub under planting and was created some 10 or so years ago



3.7.16 On the opposite side is a parade of shops built in the 1960s and the library building which is of a distinctive, modern design. These buildings are angled away from the original street line and are not as strong at enclosing the street as the buildings that preceded them. In particular the shops are of a form that does not contribute significantly to the character of the area.

3.7.17 The combination of these elements leads to a very open feel for this part of the town. However, the space recently created in the urban fabric could be used positively to create a new focus for the town's activities such as a market square and civic area.

3.7.18 Further down High Street, which slopes southward toward the Church of St. Giles, there is an absence of traditional buildings on both sides of the street. Here the street narrows but it is still weakly enclosed. The buildings in this area are modern and include a chemists, a doctors surgery, and two complexes of sheltered housing. Hazelwood House, one of those buildings, is set back from the street with an area of green space in front.



3.7.19 At the bottom of High Street where it meets Lower Street, buildings are of a more traditional form and include the Servicemens Club, a rendered building, which is grade, II listed. This property sits on an

elevated site and is contained by a stone wall around the curtilage. Other notable buildings in this area are constructed in stone including the church of St Giles and the Rectory.



3.7.20 On the opposite side of the road, a formal garden has been created in association with the war memorial. This is one of the few formal spaces within the town and along with the grounds of the Servicemen's Club provides an open feel to this end of High Street.

3.7.21 The road deviates 90 degrees and slopes down toward the A6. On the north side a row of stone cottages sit on an elevated site with lengthy front gardens contained by walling, whilst more modern buildings, built closer to the road form the southern edge of the street.

3.7.22 There is no pavement in this area and with a narrow roadway serving two-way traffic it is not an attractive or safe route for people on foot. The strong sense of containment and the narrow street frames the view to the west out of the town centre to the A6 and the embanked area beyond.

3.7.23 The area of townscape around the Church of St Giles is the most intact area of medieval fabric and provides an historic focus for this part of the High Street character area. The buildings are mainly built in Ironstone and lie within an informal street pattern. This area reflects the feel of what High Street used to be like some 40 or so years ago.

- 3.7.24 The green space around the church has mature trees and provides a green edge to the south of the town centre, which enhances the setting of the church and provides an attractive foreground when approaching the town from Rothwell. It is crucial that this green area is retained and enhanced.



Area east of High Street/south of Station Road

- 3.7.25 This is the largest character area within the town centre. It represents the main area of Victorian expansion in the mid to late 19th century and arguably is the most intact area of post-industrial townscape. The area contains a mix of uses including factory premises, schools, shops and religious and social buildings but the area is dominated by residential properties, primarily of a terraced form.

Victoria Street area

- 3.7.25 It is characterised by the use of red brick, slate roofs with chimneys, stone dressings above windows and doorways and timber sash windows with plain wooden front doors. Terraced properties are built up to the pavement and the area is interspersed by non-residential uses such as the Littlestone and Goodwin factory, the Conservative Club and the Catholic church of the Holy Trinity.

- 3.7.26 Many of the residential properties have been altered and original windows, doors and roofing replaced, some unsympathetically. Domestic buildings are predominantly 2 storey in height and the even topography creates a strong horizontal emphasis and rhythm carried through by ridge and eaves lines. The only real punctuation arises from the non-domestic form of buildings like the factory and the church. These buildings are local landmarks that help to characterise this part of the town.



Union Street/Havelock Street

- 3.7.27 Union Street is similar in character to Victoria Street, comprising terraced properties constructed in brick, with similar detailing. The area has a more open feel with properties set back from the road creating small front gardens enclosed by walls fences and hedges. Some of the properties have bay windows. Many of the properties have been altered from their original form by changes to windows, roofing and doors.

3.7.28 Union Street is dominated at its western end by the Havelock Junior School, an ironstone building that lies within landscaped grounds with mature trees enclosed by metal railings around the perimeter. This is one of the key landmark buildings in the area dominating the junction of Union, Havelock and Victoria Streets.



3.7.29 The western end of Union Street is primarily residential, but with a corner shop where it adjoins Victoria Street. Towards its eastern end the housing is occasionally interspersed by commercial premises and non-domestic uses, however the area remains primarily residential.

3.7.30 The street is narrow with two-way traffic and on street parking which gives it a busy but often congested character, which makes it a less attractive environment for pedestrians

King Street/Queen Street area

3.7.31 This area is also characterised by terraced housing, similar in form to that of Union Street with small enclosed front gardens. Historically the small garden walls were topped by railings but many have been lost or replaced over time whilst the houses themselves have also been significantly altered.



3.7.32 Amidst the housing were several factory premises but the downturn of the shoe making industry resulted in their closure and eventual demolition and redevelopment. The resulting housing, undertaken in the late 1980s is different in character based on cul-de-sac principles and has interrupted the pattern created by the terraced, enclosed streets.



Havelock Street

3.7.33 There is no predominant building typology in this area. The buildings vary in scale and form along its length. The Havelock Junior School is the largest scale building at the southern end, whilst alongside it, Havelock Infant School, a red brick building, with modern extensions, is also a key building.



3.7.34 Further up the street a distinctive row of ironstone Cottages are set back from the road with extensive gardens enclosed by red brick walls. Within the gardens a row of trees frames the view up the road. The cottages were built circa. 1860 to house ironstone quarry workers.

3.7.35 The other noteworthy properties in the street are a pair of cottages with painted stucco exterior and ornate mouldings. However at ground floor level they have been significantly altered.

3.7.36 Environmental improvements have recently been undertaken including re-paving and creation of a rose garden and a small informal square at either end of the street.

Area north of Station Road

3.7.37 This area between Station Road and the railway line is the earliest area of industrial expansion and represents the densest character area in the town. The character of the area varies from small terraced 2 up 2 down housing to larger villa type houses on Nichols Street

Burghley Close, Mansfield Close, New Street, Gladstone Street

3.7.38 This area is the densest area of the town with terraced cottages butting up to the narrow streets and is sparsely vegetated in comparison to some areas of the town centre. Rear gardens are

modest and in some the remnants of workshops are still present (the workshops being a feature of the earliest phase of shoe manufacture). The narrow enclosed streets create strong localised views.

3.7.39 Originally the building would have been simple red brick and slate with pain doors and timber sash windows. However, there has been an incremental erosion of this uniform character with the alteration of windows, doors and roofs as well as the application of render to some properties.



3.7.40 The human scale and compactness of the area is punctuated by the Lawrence factory site, which opens up the northern end of New Street. This brick rectangular building with modern extensions is one of the few factory buildings left in the town but has been derelict for some time and has attracted vandalism and fly tipping. The site perimeter has recently been sealed off but visually and environmentally its derelict condition remains a major concern for the town. The site is addressed specifically later in this document.



- 3.7.41 Constructed in ironstone, the old station house forms an interesting contrast to the brick terraced housing, providing an important local landmark in this part of the town.



Nichols Street & Harborough Road (eastern side)

- 3.7.42 This area is significantly different to that of the high density terraced area to the south. The properties in this area are of a later origin and comprise more ornate building forms set within larger plots, with terraced, semi detached and stand alone properties. Most have small front gardens enclosed by brick walls, although some of the boundaries have been altered or walling replaced with fencing.



- 3.7.42 Nichols Street and Harborough Road have a leafier character than other parts of the town centre giving a softer character and acting in contrast to the higher density form of the area immediately to the

south. This also creates a graduated increase in density toward the town's core and enhancing the gateway into the town centre. This makes it one of the most attractive areas of the town centre.

- 3.7.43 Some small areas of modern housing have been constructed in the area but this doesn't add to the overall character creating unsympathetic building forms in an otherwise pleasant street environment. The vacant garage site and the Lawrences factory behind detract significantly from the southern edge of the area.

Gold Street & Harborough Road (western side)

- 3.7.44 This area contrasts with the other side of Harborough Road and is dominated by the old bus depot building on Harborough Road, which is currently used for furniture manufacture and storage. It is an early 20th century building, in dark brick, built up to the pavement. The other buildings create a fragmented edge being set back from the road and comprising a garage premises and detached housing.

- 3.7.45 Gold Street is an area that has seen modern development but also there are more traditional elements that mark the gateway into the centre from the west. The quality of this entrance is significantly undermined by the modern development close to the A6.



4.0 Ideas for action

Key Issues

- 4.1 The analysis and workshop events have identified the following issues that are significant for Desborough and which need to be tackled by this Strategy if it is to succeed in bringing about the required change.
- 4.2 At the workshops the participants were asked to suggest the things that they felt the UDS had to get right, These have been consolidated into the following (the order in which they appear does not signify the level of importance of each):

- Improved street lighting
- Conservation of the historic environment
- Resolving the conflict between people and cars in the town
- Improvements to public transport in the town
- Higher quality new development and new architectural image
- Better parking including on-street parking
- Provision of a family pub and other facilities
- More green areas/parks
- A new public square and better area for the market
- A new public/civic building
- Leisure facilities for the young including cafe
- Flexible design to allow adaptation and future change
- Better pedestrian environment
- Create identity, sense of place and arrival
- Involve landowners and the community (including the young)
- Provide for a railway station
- Improvement grants and resources
- Create a framework plan
- Protect retail units and maximise potential of Station Road
- Town centre housing

- Retain community spirit
- Improve town centre retail offer including new supermarket and develop factory shops complex
- Narrowing of the A6
- Road link to Federation Avenue
- Develop derelict sites
- Locate police station in town centre
- Create a safer & more secure place

From these “commandments” a number of potential projects were identified and prioritised by workshop participants. The results are produced at Appendix 2. From this information the following key areas for action have been identified:

Transport

- 4.3 One of the key issues affecting Desborough is the issue of traffic management. The A6 has a significant effect upon the functioning and general perception of the town. Although it provides ready access to the strategic road network, with the benefits that it brings to the town, it has created a significant barrier between the eastern and western parts of the town and discourages people from walking into the centre from the western half.
- 4.4 There are “hot spots” where people and cars come into conflict other than the A6. The junction of High Street and Station Road is another potential hazard for pedestrians and is particularly important bearing in mind the potential of the area near the monument as a location for the market square, which was raised at the workshops.

Objective 1: To reduce the barrier created by the A6 to allow people to walk/cycle more easily into the centre from the west of the town and other pedestrian/vehicle hot spots will also be tackled

- 4.5 Parking is the other major traffic issue facing Desborough. On street parking and a small area off Mansfield Close provide the only public parking areas for the town, with more extensive areas associated with Budgens, the Bowls club and The Ritz going relatively unused. Government policy seeks to reduce car use by reducing car parking but, If Desborough is to improve as a town centre for local needs and encourage visitors more parking needs to be provided for the town. This is a priority issue with a need for adaptability and creative thinking to secure improvement as quickly as possible.

Objective 2: To improve the level and quality of parking provision in the town centre, both in the shorter and longer term.

Land Use

- 4.6 Desborough faces major expansion in the future. A Strategic Development Area is being planned for the town, which will entail significant growth on the periphery of the town. However, there are also a number of opportunity sites in the town centre that need to be re-developed both to provide additional facilities but also to improve the physical image of the town centre.

Objective 3: To secure significant enhancement of the town centre in conjunction with the new development arising from the Strategic Development Area

Desborough's Community and Image

- 4.7 What the town lacks in physical appearance it makes up for in the way the residents perceive the town and enjoy living there. It has a strong identity and character.
- 4.8 Like many small towns, the population is an ageing one as young people seek opportunities away from Desborough. In order to maintain a balanced, thriving community it is important that the town

offers the opportunities for housing, work and leisure pursuits that will encourage more young people to stay there when they reach adulthood.

- 4.9 To its townspeople, Desborough has a strong character and sense of pride but to the outside it is a town that needs to be re-packaged to ensure the opportunities that present themselves are realised. It is seen as important by the community that in taking these opportunities the essence of the town's identity is maintained so that the new growth and development does not swamp it. People want Desborough to stay a town for them as well as one for the new residents that will move there. The MTI action plan reflects this desire in its objectives to achieve a balanced and inclusive community.

Objective 4: To seek to build upon the character of Desborough and the strength of its community in the town centre improvements.

Economic factors

- 4.10 Retail provision in the town is relatively poor. Representation is largely restricted to local retail businesses with only a few High Street "names", the most important of which is Budgens. The Desborough Co-op has a strong representation providing food, clothing, a chemist and furniture retailing and banking. However, it could be argued that the Co-ops presence and importance has been a deterring factor in a wider range of retail uses coming to the town.

Objective 5: The range and scale of retail provision in Desborough will be increased to provide a better retail offer in the town.

- 4.11 For a town of its size there is also a lack of other complementary town centre uses, particularly leisure and food and drink uses like restaurants. The consultation and workshops have identified this as an issue for the town. A

greater number of suitable town centre uses needs to be provided.

Objective 6: The range of complementary town centre uses will be increased to create greater vitality and variety within Desborough both during the day and evening.

- 4.12 The local economy is relatively buoyant with a number of employers either within or adjacent to the town but there is also a significant amount of out commuting as people take advantage of lower house prices in the town but work elsewhere. Out commuting is probably made worse by the lack of higher order job opportunities in the area.
- 4.13 The town has a market that takes place near the monument in High Street. However, its size is restricted by the lack of space available for it and consequently any improvement in this facility is only likely if a more appropriate location can be provided as part of the improvements in the town centre.

Objective 7: To provide an enhanced setting to enable the local market to flourish and expand as part of public realm improvements within the centre of Desborough.

- 4.14 There is no tourist related business in the town to speak of and it is unlikely that it will contribute significantly to the local economy in the future. However, the town does have an interesting history that could provide a small niche tourist attraction in conjunction with other regeneration initiatives such as establishing factory outlets in the town centre.

Objective 8: To encourage local manufacturers to locate their factory shops within the town centre at a central site identified for the outlets

- 4.15 There has been a trend toward businesses moving out of the town centre to the industrial estates on the periphery of the town. Whilst it is important to ensure a good quality town centre environment it is also important to retain some employment activity within the town centre.

Objective 9: To retain suitable employment opportunities within the town centre to encourage vitality and activity

Environmental quality and sense of place

- 4.16 The analysis identified several gateways to the town and the town centre that help set impressions of the town and its character. In addition, when the A6 bypass has been opened there will be further need to signpost the town from that route given its distance from the town core.
- 4.17 Gateways to the town require enhancement to improve its general appearance but also to make it more “readable” so that visitors and residents find it a more memorable and rewarding place. The town centre gateways also provide an opportunity to enhance the identity of the town by promoting improvements and new development that make it distinctive and create a new character.

Objective 10: To enhance the town’s gateways with creative new development and townscape improvement to provide a more memorable and attractive entry to the town. The town centre will also need to be identified from the A6 bypass to announce Desborough to visitors.

- 4.18 It is widely acknowledged that Desborough lacks a central public space to give it a civic heart and focus. This has been highlighted in consultation with the community. It prevents certain activities occurring in the town, as well as restricting the scale of the market, which could become a valuable facility for residents and visitors alike.

Objective 11: To create a new main public square, most probably at the junction of High Street and the A6, to provide a focus for the town’s civic activities and to provide a proper setting for the market

- 4.19 Although some environmental improvement work has been undertaken, principally in Station Road and High Street there are larger areas of the town centre that require significant street improvements to help enhance the quality of the built environment. This applies to pavement and road surfacing as well as street furniture and lighting. In conjunction with other improvements, creating a high quality streetscape will significantly enhance the feel of the town.

Objective 12: To undertake high quality streetscape works, in the first instance in High Street and Station Road then in other areas of the town centre.

- 4.20 New development in Desborough needs to be of high quality and make a significant contribution to improving the town's environment, only then will the overall image and character of the town be improved. There are several key opportunity or gap sites where new high quality development will be encouraged. However, it will be expected that all forms of development in the town centre will need to be of higher quality than in the past to establish a new and improved architectural image for the town.

Objective 13: To secure high architectural quality in new developments with a view to creating a new architectural image for the town. This will apply equally to key sites as well as lesser ones.

Community/leisure facilities

- 4.21 There is a need for improved leisure and community facilities in the town centre to complement those that exist or that are to be created at the Grange development. During consultation a centralised community building was identified as a priority. Discussion centred upon the community building being in a central position associated with the new civic square. Proposals for the Lawrence factory site, submitted by Desborough Civic Society, identified a community use

within that building. In either location a multi purpose community facility serving all ages would be a valuable asset and improve the quality of the town centre.

Objective 14: To encourage new community facilities in the town centre, including the provision of a centralised multi-use building either at High Street or at the Lawrences factory site. This will provide for a range of uses, possibly including a police station

- 4.22 During consultation, a lack of leisure facilities for young people was identified as an issue for the town. In addition to facilities within the proposed community building additional facilities were requested at Dunkirk Avenue Recreation Ground.

Objective 15: To provide youth facilities at the Dunkirk Avenue recreation ground.

Community safety

- 4.21 An important aspect of improving the town will be to create a safer more people focused place. This is particularly important for use at night time, especially in the winter months. Activity, lighting, and building design will all play an important role in creating a safer town centre.

Objective 16: To ensure that the safety and enjoyment of the town centre by all age groups will be improved through better building design, maximising activity at all times of the day and early evening and through enhanced street lighting and CCTV.

Opportunity Sites/areas

- 4.22 There are several key opportunity sites that will play an important role in improving the town both physically and in terms of its vitality, in the shorter term. It is important that these are seen as beacons to encourage high quality development in other parts of the town.

- 1) High street/Gold Street/Station Road/A6 junction
- 2) Lawrence factory/Desborough Motors site
- 3) Station Yard

- 4.23 Other parts of the centre present opportunities that will also play an important part in enhancing the town. Some of these sites are actively used and it may be some time before they become available for development. However, it is important that their value is recognised and that in due course they are developed to a very high standard.

- 1) Bowls Club
- 2) Factory site, Station Road
- 3) Littlewood and Goodwin factory, Victoria Street
- 4) Garage building to rear of public open space – Station Road/Havelock Street
- 5) St Johns Ambulance Hall, Paddock Lane
- 6) Factory premises at junction of Union Street/King Street
- 7) Gateway sites at Gold Street/A6 junction
- 8) Former omnibus depot and garage, Harbrough Road
- 9) Gateway site, Pipewell Road (part of approved housing site)
- 10) Premises and shops next to Baptist Chapel, Station Road
- 11) Hazelwood House, High Street
- 12) The Gaultney, Station Road
- 13) The former Co-Op Dairy site, High Street

Objective 17: To ensure that detailed design and planning guidance for opportunity areas secures high quality development that promotes architectural/landscape design quality and land usage that contributes to the vitality and aesthetic quality of Desborough.

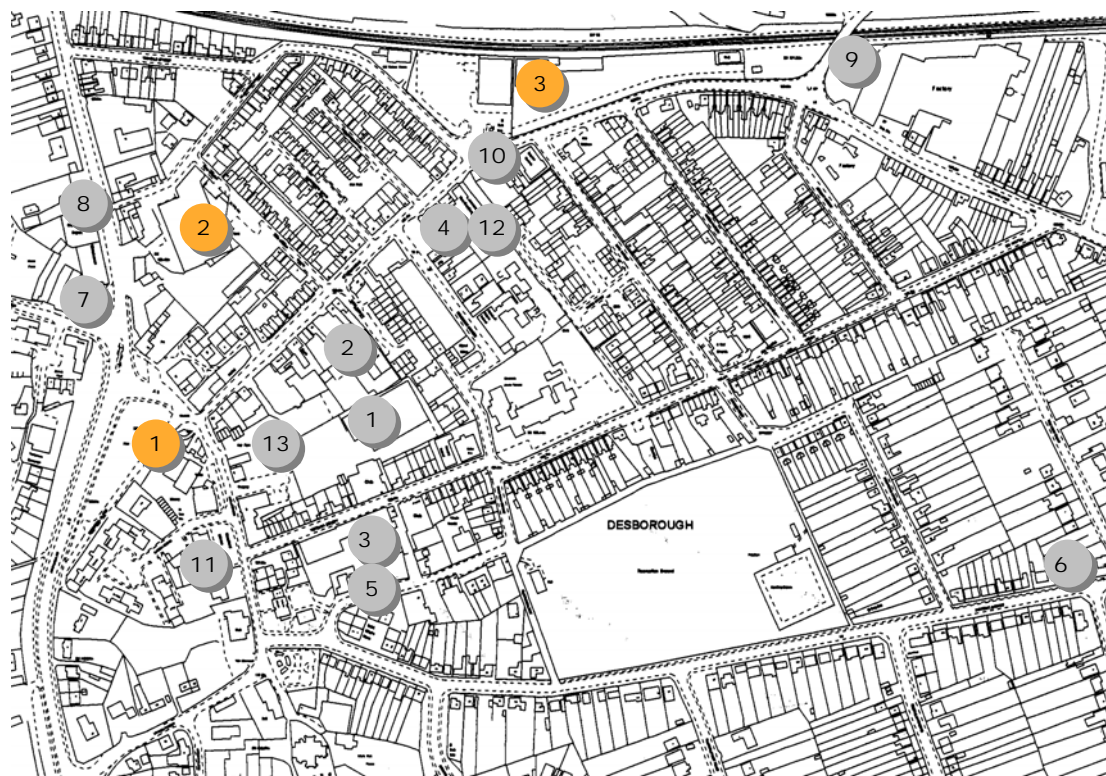
Heritage

- 4.24 The heritage value of the town has not been acknowledged in the past leading to significant loss of historic buildings and settings such as High Street and more recently former boot and shoe factories. This has significantly diluted the value of heritage in Desborough. However, the remaining elements could be used positively to help shape regeneration of the town.

- 4.25 There is a strong urge on the part of the Desborough Civic Society to promote the heritage value of the town and to designate a conservation area. The proposals of the UDF will seek to complement future conservation efforts by ensuring that new development and townscape improvement has regard to heritage issues and by encouraging uses and activities that will promote Desborough's heritage and industrial past, as well as in the provision of a heritage centre and interpretation information and signage.

Objective 18: To help ensure protection of heritage assets where possible and assist the delivery of a heritage strategy that seeks to take advantage of these historic assets to promote heritage based regeneration and tourism, including the establishment of a heritage centre, possibly at the Lawrences site.

Opportunity sites in the town centre



1 Key Opportunities

11 Other Opportunities

5.0 Improvement concepts

Developing the ideas into proposals

- 5.1 From the ideas and objectives described previously, a number of concepts have been developed which inform and lead the development of the detailed proposals identified in the next section of the Framework.
- 5.2 The concepts have been grouped into three main themes:

Movement and Transportation

Concerning accessibility within the town and the linkages to the town centre looking at access by foot/cycle, public transport and car.

Main Improvements

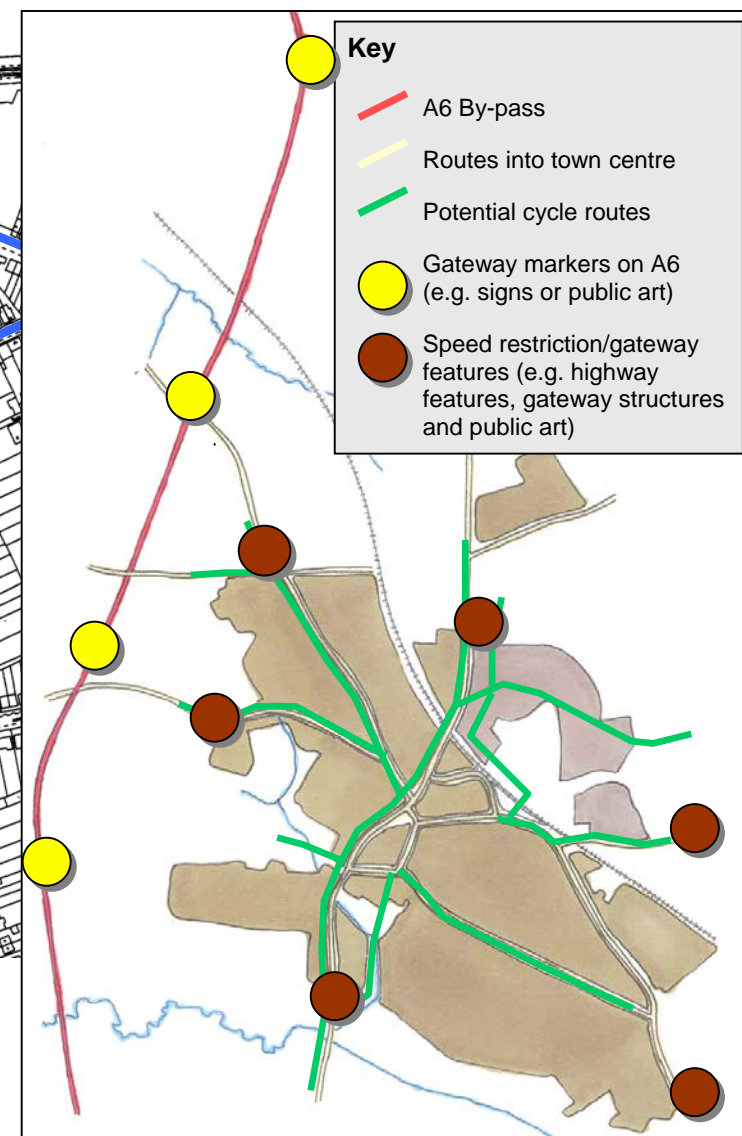
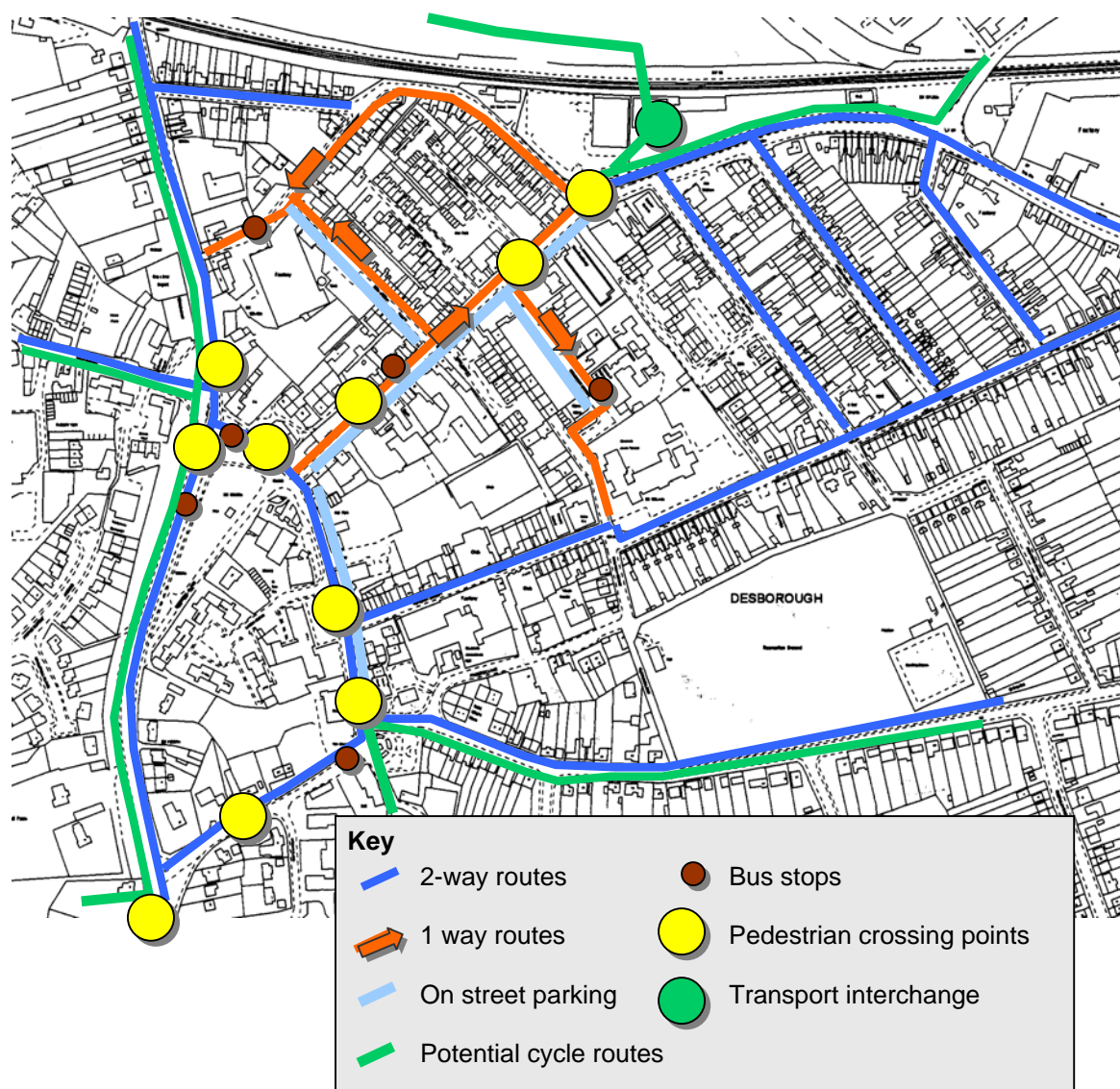
Focusing on the key redevelopment and improvement principles such as opportunity sites, parking areas, linkages, reinforcement proposals and public realm and wider environmental improvement.

Streets and Spaces

Develops ideas for improved connections to a sequence of spaces within the urban fabric based upon public realm improvements and reinforcement of different character areas.

- 5.3 Photographs of features and schemes from other towns and cities have been used to illustrate ideas and to give a flavour of what might be achieved.

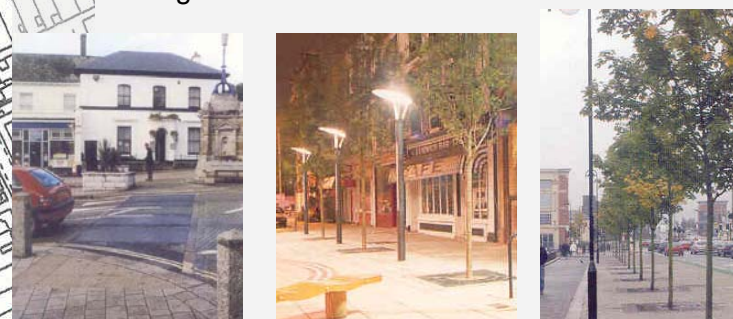
Concepts sheet 1: Movement & transportation



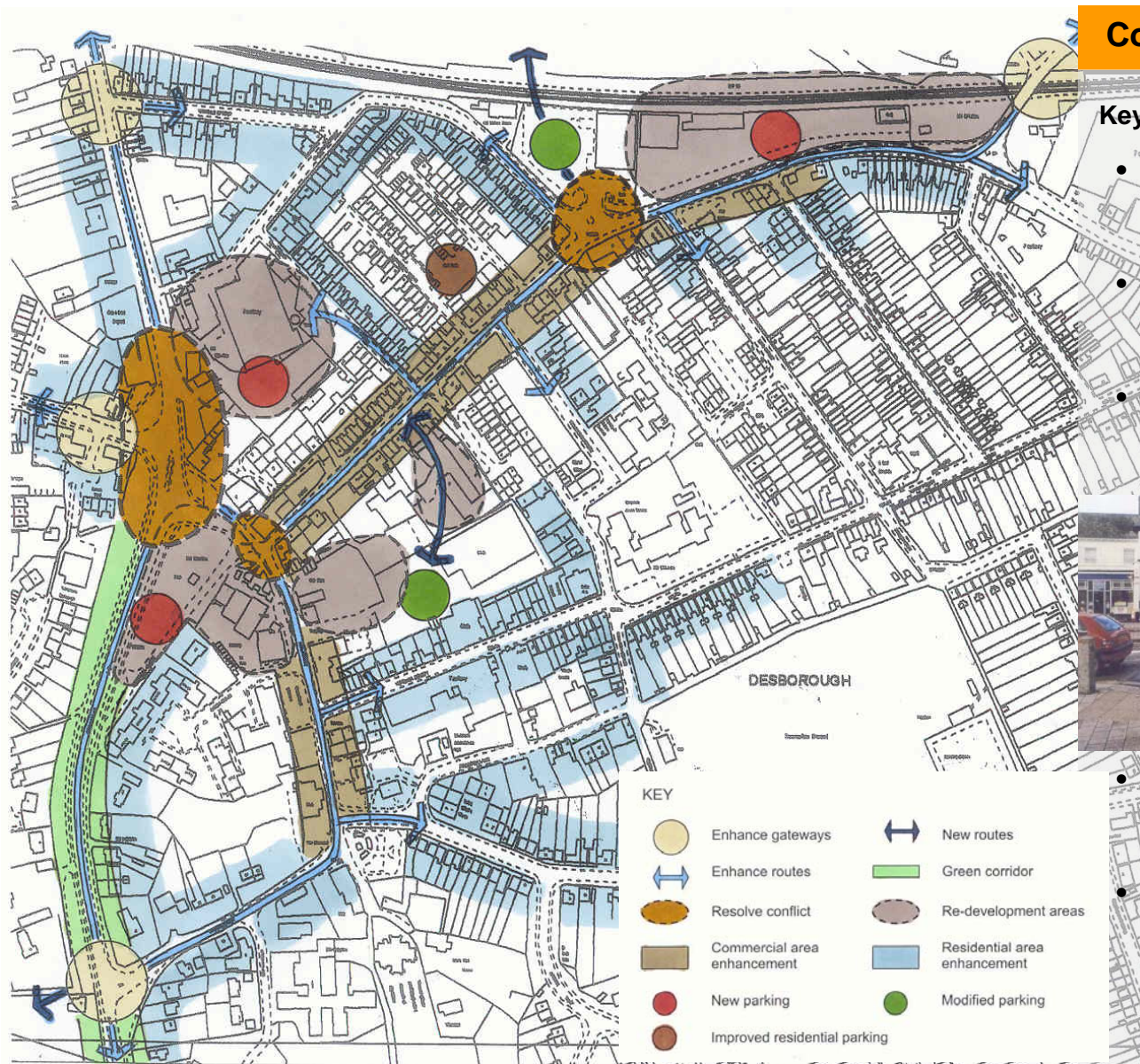
Concepts sheet 2: Main improvements

Key Principles

- Pedestrian/vehicle conflict addressed through sensitive road alterations and new pedestrian focused crossing arrangements.
- Areas of major re-development focused on Station Road and northern end of High Street to reinforce the core commercial area
- New parking created in association with new development and by modifying the use of existing facilities.



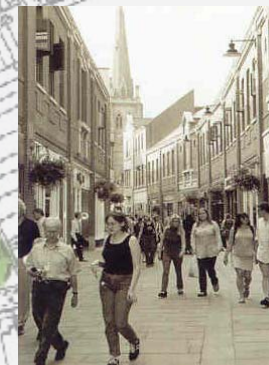
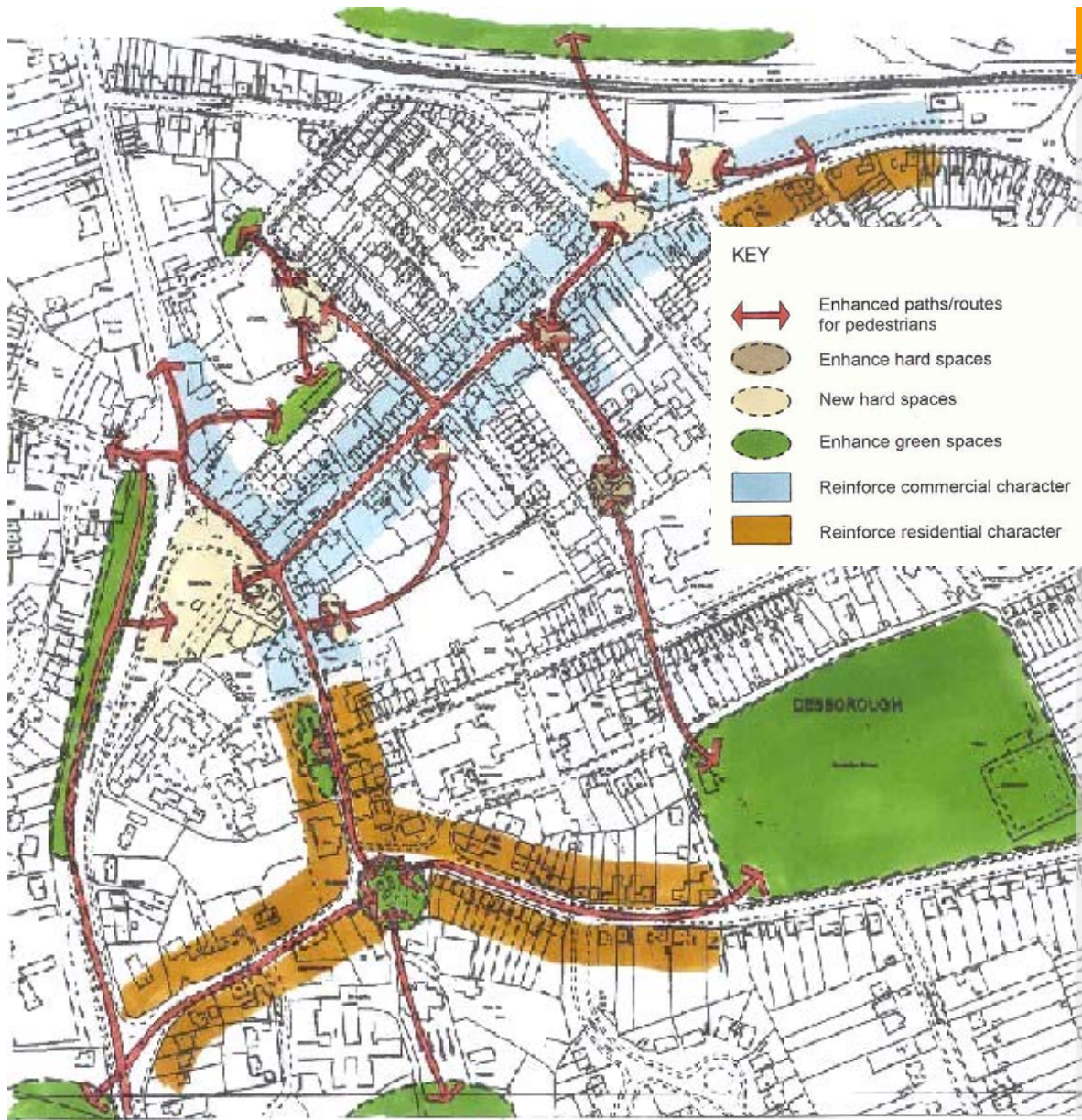
- Enhance gateways into the town centre to create a more memorable first impression for visitors and to enhance sense of arrival.
- Improve paths and routes within town centre and create positive new routes through to proposed new developments adjoining the centre and linking development areas within the town centre.



Concepts sheet 3: Street and spaces

Key Principles

- Enhance/reinforce the main retail/commercial area by increasing pedestrian activity - providing a wider range of uses, better quality buildings and frontages and an improved street environment.
- Strengthen pedestrian links between existing public spaces and enhance those areas. Create new public spaces along routes and in new developments to create wider variety and interest linking areas of different character.



- Reinforce the parts of the town centre with a distinct residential and commercial character to sustain variety, protect amenity and concentrate commercial activity.

6.0 Proposals

Firming up the concepts

- 6.1 Having established the concepts for improvement the next step is to outline the proposals that are the main thrust of the framework. These proposals are the primary actions that will drive forward the framework objectives and deliver the physical, environmental and economic change that is needed to enrich and sustain the town centre.
- 6.2 The proposals have been divided into 3 types: **key site proposals** which look at the main regeneration sites; **area proposals** which deal with the wider public realm and area based changes/enhancements and lastly **other proposals** i.e. proposals and ideas that have come forward but which do not readily fall within the other two groups. Some of these will be the “quick wins” identified at the urban design workshops.

Key Site proposals:

- High Street/Station Road public square development
- Lawrences Factory site (including Desborough Motors)
- Station Yard redevelopment

Area proposals:

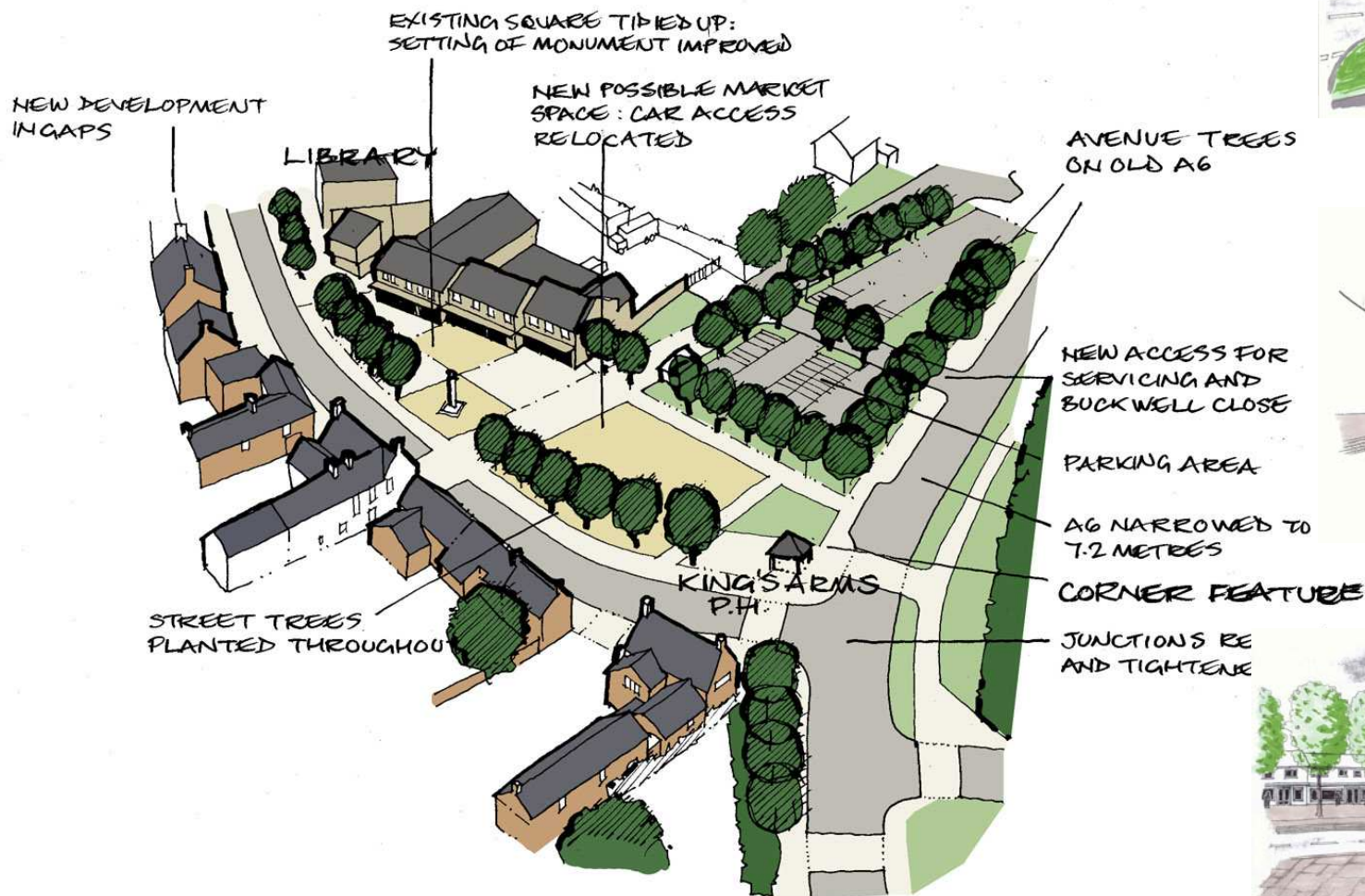
- North end of High Street/Station Road
- Southern High Street/Lower Street/A6 Corridor
- Dunkirk Avenue/ Victoria Street/

Other proposals:

- Quick wins
- Minor projects
- Non-physical proposals
- Other identified projects

- 6.3 The key site and area based proposals are detailed on the following 7 pages of this document.
- 6.4 In addition, at the end of the section there are some specific proposals relating to heritage and public realm that aren't covered in detail within the main proposals. This seeks to reinforce understanding of the wider design aspirations for Desborough and how the form of individual schemes and public realm changes will achieve this. But, it also aims to provide the basis for the preparation of more detailed design/conservation guidance at a later date, the purpose being to sustain high quality design in new development and public realm improvement beyond the implementation of the main projects.
- 6.5 Also, at the end of this chapter a section is included outlining the importance of considering the needs of young people in the regeneration of the town and also the valuable contribution that they can make to help shape and deliver change.

Proposals: Key Site 1 – High Street/Station Road (initial idea)



View of market square from Gold Street junction

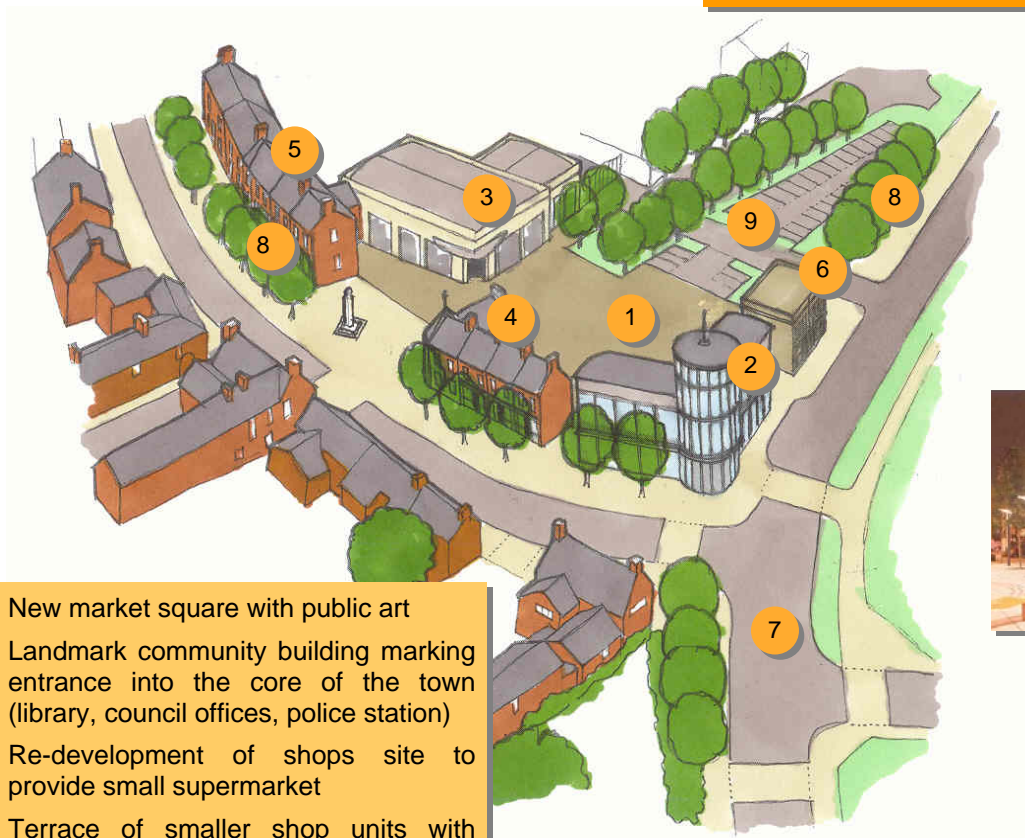


View up High Street towards market square



View over High Street toward market place

Proposals: Key Site 1 – High Street/Station Road (preferred option)



- 1) New market square with public art
- 2) Landmark community building marking entrance into the core of the town (library, council offices, police station)
- 3) Re-development of shops site to provide small supermarket
- 4) Terrace of smaller shop units with corner building enclosing the square and providing historic feel and street enclosure
- 5) Terrace of vernacular style properties wrapping round and enclosing High Street and the square
- 6) Freestanding building marking southern end of the square providing office and residential accommodation.

- 7) A6 narrowed with improved people friendly crossings possibly linked with traffic light phasing
- 8) Street tree planting along A6 and High Street
- 9) Car park served off new access to Buckwell Close and service access to new supermarket



A safe, accessible and varied environment in the centre of Desborough integrating high quality new development with the remaining historic fabric.



Street scene view of High Street and Market Square

Proposals: Key Site 2 – Lawrences factory/Desborough Motors

- 1) New Street re-surfaced and made one-way. Road and pavements surfaced in high quality materials with new street furniture. Residents parking area reduced in size. Controlled on-street parking created.
- 2) Factory converted/refurbished with extensions including canopy and atrium. Provision of mixed uses including specialist retail, offices, enterprise units, crèche, restaurant and residential.
- 3) New building constructed on vacant part of site formerly occupied by factory. Designed to reflect scale and form of existing factory building but of a contemporary design using high quality materials. Building to accommodate mixed uses to complement adjoining building.
- 4) Gladstone Street also made one-way. Bus and servicing layby created adjacent to site in conjunction with courtyard space in front of atrium to provide outdoor seating/activity area.
- 5) Cottages renovated and converted into Heritage Centre with possible extension of exhibition space into ground floor of new building
- 6) New development to enclose Harborough Road. Development oversailing access/egress into Lawrences development. Principally for office use and 2 or 3 storey in height.
- 7) New parking area to serve the development and wider town centre. Servicing for new development provided from this area out of hours. Parking provision a combination of subterranean and surface level making use of site levels to maximise parking area.



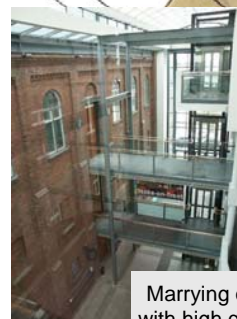
- 8) Linear park along southern edge of development creates a green link between Harborough Road and New Street, providing a buffer between commercial development and residential properties to the south of the site. Landscape design intended to protect boundaries, provide an attractive green edge to the development but also to enable surveillance of the site and the footpath.



A range of uses provided by an innovative approach to creating space such as a glazed atrium and loft development.



- 9) New square created in front of development off New Street to provide an informal activity space and urban streetscape feature as the foreground for the new development. High quality materials and street furniture with tree planting to help screen existing residential properties. Public art incorporated within the space and change of levels utilised. Buildings and features sensitively lit to add interest and quality



Marrying old and new with high quality design and materials



High quality development and public realm works to transform the appearance and character of the site and provide an attractive setting for its new use

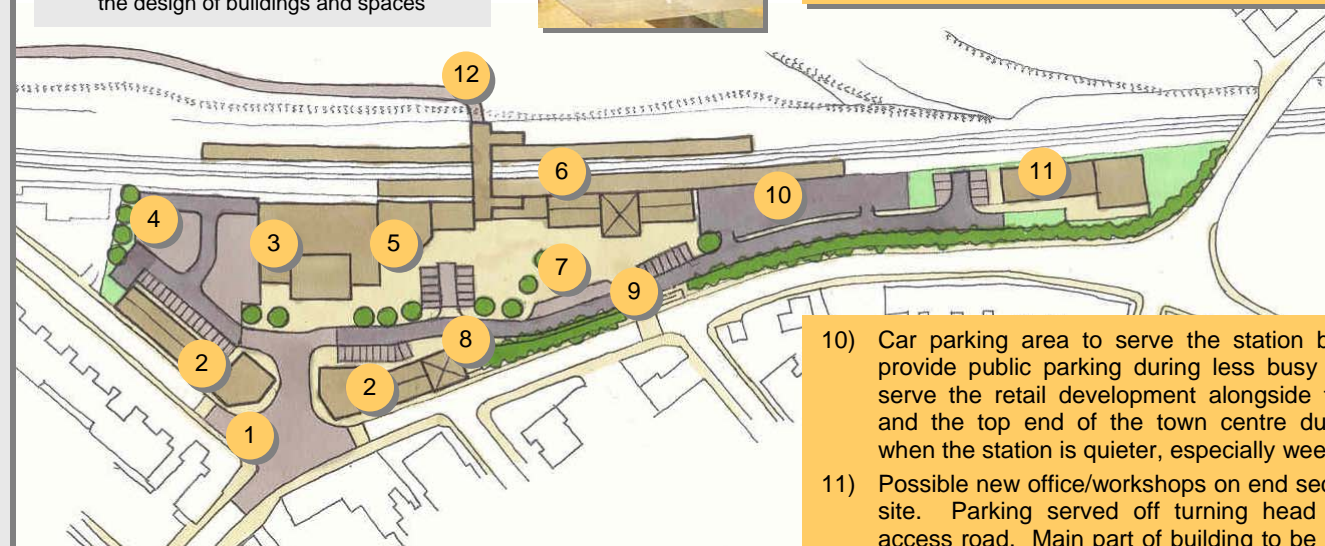


Proposals: Key Site 3 – Station Yard

- 1) Road redesigned to create a positive highway feature allied to 1-waying of Station Road and entrance development to Station Yard.
- 2) Two “gateway” buildings constructed to mark entrance of Station Yard and to enclose vista up Station Road. Scale responsive to surroundings with end towers taller to create landmark character (3 or 4 storey). Mixed uses including offices, workshops, shops (and possibly restaurants) and potentially some residential.
- 3) Food store altered and re-aligned to open up site. New “focal” front section added to give extra visual presence and architectural quality creating foyer entrance with atrium or offices above.
- 4) Food store car parking and servicing modified to accommodate new development. Multi-use parking to also serve top end of the town centre.
- 5) New smaller scale retail stores to complement main food store with limited parking to front. Designed to complement modifications to food store and the new station building.
- 6) New station with footbridge and platforms. Footbridge made accessible for the disabled. Station to include ancillary office and restaurant accommodation. Central tower feature visible as landmark from Queen Street (4 or 5 storey).
- 7) New Pedestrian Square created in front of Station and shopping area with street trees and high quality surfacing and lighting. Bus drop-off point in front of Station and cycle storage facilities within Station area as part of transport interchange facility.



An opportunity for a contemporary approach to the design of buildings and spaces



A high quality contemporary approach responsive to local context

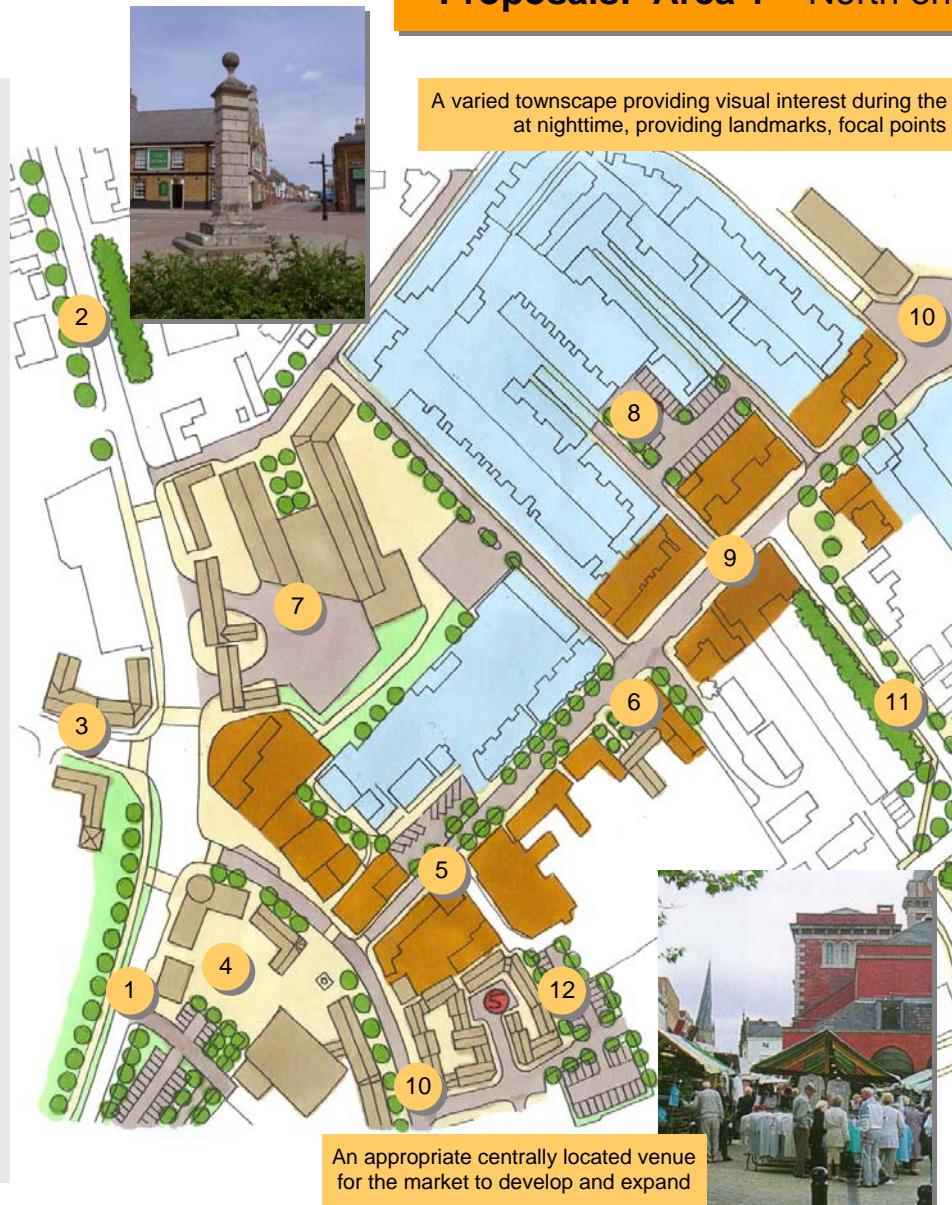


- 8) New road running through the site positioned close to embanking to minimise impact from the street. Embanking as close to Rushton Road boundary as possible to maximise the site area.
- 9) Pedestrian crossover and access via ramps into the site making it more accessible for the infirm with wide crossing point in front of the station leading into the square.

- 10) Car parking area to serve the station but also to provide public parking during less busy periods to serve the retail development alongside the station and the top end of the town centre during hours when the station is quieter, especially weekends.
- 11) Possible new office/workshops on end section of the site. Parking served off turning head at end of access road. Main part of building to be linear form of 2 or 3 storeys whilst end towers to be 4 or 5 storey to increase floorspace yield and make the building visible in Gateway. Alternatively site could be used for additional car parking for station and town centre
- 12) Footpath/cycleway link to the Grange development. Link over railway embankment creates level access to end of railway bridge for the footpath/cycleway. Footpath to be sensitively lit having regard to the proximity of the Plens.

Proposals: Area 1 – North end of High Street/Station Road

- 1 A6 narrowed and landscaped. More attractive pedestrian/cycling environment created. Improved crossing facilities in conjunction with traffic lighting
- 2 Harborough Road entrance reinforced by avenue planting on western side to create green "gateway"
- 3 New gateway development at junction of Gold Street with the A6
- 4 New market square and associated community and retail re-development (see above)
- 5 Western end of Station Road more enclosed through street tree and boundary improvement. Sheltered housing parking and circulation areas improved and landscaped.
- 6 Gap site used to create public space in Station Road and enclosed by small-scale commercial/leisure or retail development. Access to factory maintained providing scope for longer-term re-development.
- 7 Re-development of Lawrences factory site (see above).
- 8 Burghley Close/Melton Street area environmental and streetscape improvements to enhance public realm in conjunction with conservation activities. Car park upgraded/improved.



A varied townscape providing visual interest during the day and at nighttime, providing landmarks, focal points



- 9 Station Road/High Street enhancements. High quality public realm works, including resurfacing, street tree planting and high quality street furniture and lighting. Lighting strategy for key buildings to enhance the nighttime character/legibility. Wider range of uses to enhance the vitality of the area. High quality development to improve architectural image with upgrade of existing buildings and frontages.
- 10 Improved street environment by redesigning Station Road/Rushton Road area to create informal urban square and associated spaces. Landmark gateway buildings marking entrance into Station Yard as part of re-development of Station Yard site (see above).
- 11 Havelock Street further enhanced by further public realm works including enhancement of open spaces at either end, resurfacing and street tree planting.
- 12 Possible new visitor car park, utilising part of the Bowls club and the Ritz car parks.

An appropriate centrally located venue for the market to develop and expand

Proposals: Area 2 – Southern High Street/Lower Street /A6 corridor

- 1 A6 narrowed to 7.2 metres and trees planted along central section on both sides to define the town core. New north-south footpath/cycleway created alongside the A6 with convenient cross over points at Lower Street, Buckwell Close in front of new civic square and the re-developed Lawrence's site. Improved links with housing and prospective future development sites on west of A6
- 2 Appearance of housing fronting onto A6 improved through tree planting in verges and enhanced boundary treatments.
- 3 Gateway feature provided for at junction with Lower Street to mark the start of the town centre from the south. Appearance of properties behind enhanced through landscaping and boundary improvements.
- 4 Lower Street resurfaced with high quality paving, street furniture and lighting. New pedestrian crossing point created midway along Lower Street. New paving carried down toward the church. Lower Street to remain 2 way up to Dunkirk Avenue junction. Infill development to north of Lower Street to further enclose vista up the street
- 5 Avenue planting reinforced at junction of Dunkirk Avenue with High Street. War memorial gardens re-designed to give a more contemporary feel to the space, whilst retaining its essential character and atmosphere.



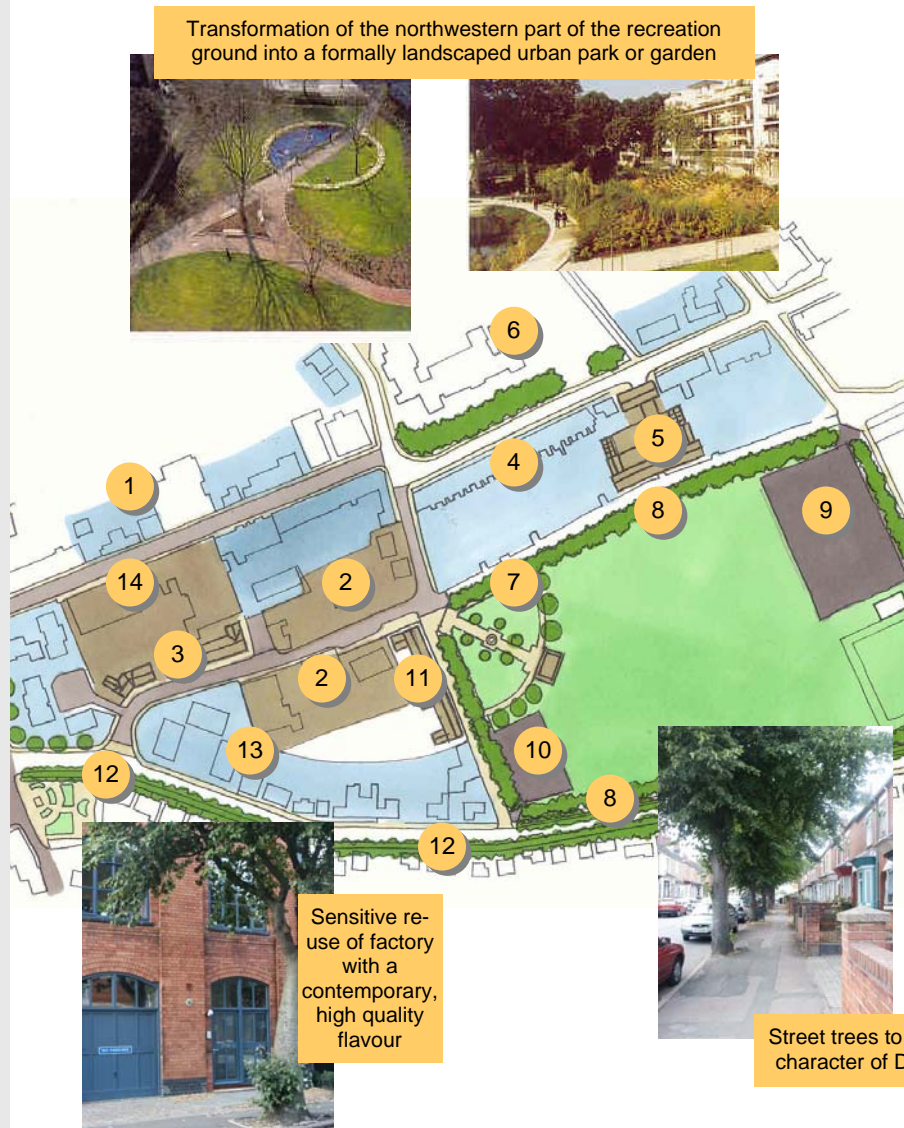
- 6 Lower end of High Street improved through avenue planting. Appearance of Services Club enhanced through restoration of boundary wall and landscaping of car park area.
- 7 Open land in front of Hazelwood house transformed into a civic green space through tree planting and other landscaping. New railings erected behind to provide defensible boundary for Hazelwood House.
- 8 Streetscape works and landscaping to enhance appearance of as a side street leading onto High Street
- 9 High Street narrowed and repaved in high quality materials. Contemporary high quality street furniture and lighting. Street trees planted where possible. High Street made 2 way but traffic managed to create a people dominated environment.



High quality lighting, street furniture and paving providing a pedestrian focused environment

Proposals: Area 3 – Victoria Street/Union Street

- 1 Victoria Street resurfaced with high quality paving and new street lighting to match High Street. Frontages renovated where appropriate including works to the Conservative Club
- 2 Possible longer term sites for infill or re-development to improve street enclosure and containment. Scale and form of development to relate to surroundings.
- 3 Potential shorter term re-development site behind Littlestone and Goodwin factory. St Johns Ambulance encouraged to relocate to new central community building. Development to be well related in form and design to local context.
- 4 Frontage improvement to Union street to include restoration of original features of buildings and walling to front curtilages. Pavements resurfaced in high quality materials.
- 5 Possible shorter term re-development of garage site providing infilling and Mews type development overlooking part of the recreation ground.
- 6 Tree planting in school grounds to be reinforced with new planting.
- 7 New ornamental garden in north west corner of recreation ground with a contemporary pavilion for open-air performances.
- 8 Tree planting around the perimeter of the park reinforced. Railings repaired/painted



- 9 Possible future site for re-location of indoor bowling facility to enable re-development of that site.
- 10 Site adjacent to children's play area to accommodate youth facilities in a location where natural surveillance can occur.
- 11 New mews type development to provide natural surveillance over new gardens and lane linking Paddock Lane and Dunkirk Avenue. Lane to provide parking in front of properties.
- 12 Gaps in tree planting along Dunkirk Avenue filled by new street tree planting. Pavements resurfaced and new high quality lighting installed. Cycleway created within roadway.
- 13 Residential character reinforced and appearance of properties and boundaries enhanced.
- 14 Potential future re-development of Littlestone and Goodwin factory. Building to be conserved and adapted with possible access from Paddock Lane. Potential to link re-development with the site off Paddock Lane.

Other Projects

6.6 As a consequence of the community input a number of specific projects have been identified that haven't been addressed by the more fundamental changes discussed previously. These additional projects are listed below:

- Development of a heritage strategy for Desborough (Conservation area, local listing etc.)
- Improved youth facilities at Dunkirk Avenue recreation ground
- Developing a network of new cycleway routes outside the town centre
- New pre-school facilities
- Incidental improvements/repairs e.g. painting of railings at Dunkirk Avenue recreation Ground
- Improved ornamental displays in the town centre
- Tree planting and general greening of the town
- Identify opportunities for centralising factory outlets and/or improving awareness and signage to them

Heritage and interpretation

6.7 Desborough has its own character which until relatively recently has not been seen as a heritage asset in its own right. However, the Desborough Civic Society has been active in raising awareness of the history and value of the town in heritage terms. In the near future the towns first heritage centre is going to be opened; this will be the first step in promoting and exhibiting the towns history to its residents and visitors. Where it can act positively, this framework should assist development of a heritage strategy by securing the physical elements and in some instances additional resources to enable the overall plan to be implemented. The areas where it is envisaged that the framework would be active in a heritage strategy are:

- Site identification for the permanent heritage centre (potentially as part of the Lawrences factory proposals)
- Heritage signage and interpretation material as part of the suite of new street furniture
- Signposting of the town from the A6 and improved gateways into the town centre
- Protection of historically important buildings and settings from insensitive development
- Promotion of sympathetic refurbishment and enhancement of buildings and spaces
- Integration of a possible heritage trail within wider townscape enhancement
- Use of heritage sensitive materials and designs in streetscape works (where appropriate)
- Promoting an overarching design approach that is sensitive to the heritage context (through development/urban design briefs and site development principles)
- Providing a framework of change against which to make gap and specialist funding applications
- Providing facilities, activities and uses that will enhance the quality of the heritage experience (including good quality parking and toilets)
- Creating varied, safe and attractive routes between particular features of interest.

Public realm and design quality

Signage & information

6.8 There is some signage in the town but it isn't comprehensive and is of an overly ornate design erected as part of the Station Road environmental improvements in the 1990s. Consequently there are significant areas within the town centre that do not



have signage or information points.

- 6.9 With the improvements outlined to regenerate the town and to attract visitors it will be important to the town's image that high quality signage and information is provided at points of arrival (transport interchange, bus stops and car parks) as well as along routes and at centres of pedestrian activity (public spaces and junctions of paths).
- 6.10 The design of signage, ease of interpretation and relationship to the image of the town are all important in generating a good impression of the town and its character.

Building and boundary frontages

- 6.11 Within the core of the town centre many of the original frontages have been significantly altered and new frontages have not been designed sympathetically. The result has been an erosion of character. In order to improve the appearance of streets within this area there needs to be a proactive approach to frontage improvement both in terms of commercial and residential properties.



- 6.12 In addition to the strategic proposals outlined for different areas, specific guidance needs to be prepared in relation to shop front and boundary treatment design to endeavour to restore some visual quality and appropriateness to the town centre. The character of different areas, the heritage context and the form of strategic improvements for the town centre should influence this guidance. In general terms the guidance should seek to:

- Encourage high quality shop front design including contemporary design solutions and materials but also traditional shop front form in heritage settings

- Provide guidance on shop front signage
- Secure high quality lighting solutions as part of an overall lighting strategy for the town
- Encourage the repair and re-use of upper floors of commercial premises
- Restoration/repair of original detailing where it remains
- High quality alterations/renovations to residential properties.
- Repair/reinstatement of traditional features including walling and railings in appropriate locations.

- 6.13 However, this proactive approach should not be interpreted as stifling contemporary solutions. The important thing is to ensure that development is of a high quality and that it responds to local context. In time this approach will help develop a new and vibrant architectural context for the town.

- 6.14 To supplement the preparation of guidance, resources will need to be directed toward assisting property owners in improving the quality of buildings and boundaries. Specialist funding will need to be sought to establish grant schemes for this type of work, as all parts of the town centre require attention. The priority should be the Station Road/High Street area with further phases of work for other parts of the central area in the longer term.

Tree Planting

- 6.15 The approaches to the town centre from Market Harborough and Rothwell already provide a green character to these gateways. However, other streets in the town centre are largely devoid of tree planting. As part of the overall improvements to the character of the town, street tree planting will be undertaken where possible to give the town a greener feel. Specific areas where tree planting is proposed:



- Avenue planting as part of the A6 downgrading
- Street trees within the streetscape improvement proposals in Station Road and High Street
- Reinforcing street tree planting on Harborough Road
- Trees as an integral part of new development schemes such as the Market Square, Lawrences factory and Station Yard
- In private gardens as a result of special tree planting grants
- As part of new/refurbished open spaces in the town centre
- Within new and existing car parks to help soften their appearance.

6.16 Outside of the town centre street tree planting will be encouraged on arterial routes into the town with sufficient verge to accommodate tree planting, for example Braybrooke Road. Tree planting will also be reinforced in areas with established tree planting, such as Rushton Road.

6.17 The careful selection of appropriate tree species for different areas is important in avoiding nuisance and safety issues in the long term. Consequently species choice will be determined not only by aesthetic objectives but also functional, safety and management requirements relating to particular locations. This should ensure that in the longer term, trees do not cause nuisance or significant management or safety concerns.

6.18 Ornamental displays also play an important part in enhancing and enlivening the street environment. Both civic and private flower displays will be encouraged to brighten the town during the summer months, whilst over the festive period, a more varied Christmas display will be offered.



Streetscape

6.19 The quality of street furniture and surfacing is generally poor in the town centre and there needs to be a programme of replacement during the lifetime of the strategy, focussing firstly upon the core area of the centre then expanding it out to more peripheral areas.

6.20 Street lighting and floorscape, like architecture, should be of high quality and responsive to the character of the town and its origins. However, this should not preclude contemporary design, which should be encouraged for lighting and other street furniture. It is important that a suite of street furniture is developed and used consistently. This will involve additional cost and specialist maintenance requirements for a better quality product.

6.21 To avoid visual clutter, lighting and signage should be mounted on buildings where possible and remaining signage and other street furniture should be minimised and located in less prominent locations. CCTV equipment and mobile phone antennae should be integrated with new buildings to make them less conspicuous.

6.22 Street and pavement surfaces should be of high quality. Many of the present tarmac surfaces have been excavated to undertake works and reinstated poorly, resulting in a street environment that has a neglected and shabby feel. Tarmac is used extensively in the town centre, except where recent environmental works have introduced herringbone paving and concrete paving slabs but this hasn't really added a great deal to the overall quality of surfacing.



- 6.23 It is also very important that surface enhancement is co-ordinated with the activities of utility companies so that utility works do not ruin the appearance of re-designed streets and pavements.



- 6.24 Some general principles regarding street surfacing are:

Roads

- Tarmac limited to linear carriageway and divided frequently by bands of other materials at pedestrian crossing points and junctions (suitable materials being hard wearing stone paving, granite setts and Tegular concrete paving)
- Possible use of resin bonded aggregate in larger specific features within the highway but its use should be examined carefully and be selective.
- Parking areas to be paved in setts and or resin bonded aggregate with tarmac reserved for servicing/access areas.
- Heritage kerbing should be used in historically sensitive locations such as High Street and Station Road, whilst low rise kerbing could be used in less sensitive locations.
- In Station Road and High Street a granite sett channel and gulley could be incorporated into the road surfacing adjacent to the kerb line to emphasise this area in heritage terms.



Pavements and footways

- In High Street and Station Road flagstones or other stone paving should be used as the principle paving, with cobbles or granite setts to mark junctions and areas of private curtilage.
- Resin bonded aggregate may be appropriate to define areas within larger public spaces as part of a cohesive design.

Lighting strategy

- 6.25 Attracting visitors and retaining them into the evening will be assisted by a sympathetic approach to lighting buildings, spaces and landmarks. A lighting strategy will add a sense of quality and distinctiveness to the town at nighttime. It would also enhance community safety and discourage anti-social behaviour. The approach should be developed from the urban design analysis in this framework and should adopt principles to minimise light pollution.



- 6.26 The strategy should encompass the following elements of the town centre:
- Key/landmark buildings such as the church, new civic building, the Lawrences factory redevelopment and buildings in the Station Yard re-development.
 - Improved street lighting of pedestrian areas to enhance public safety
 - Landmarks and focal structures such as monuments and public art

- Landscape features including avenue trees in the commercial area of the town centre
- The lighting of spaces should be sensitively undertaken to achieve aesthetic as well as community safety objectives
- Assisting private property owners to illuminate buildings that contribute to public areas (e.g. the Co-op bank and ladies clothes shop in Station Road).

6.27 Street and pavement lighting should be integral to the strategy. The design and location of street lighting, as with other street furniture, has a major impact on the impression of a place. Poorly placed lighting and/or that of a lesser quality will undermine the environmental benefits of other improvements to the centre of the town. The main principles are:

- It should form part of a co-ordinated suite of high quality street furniture
- It should marry aesthetic and community/highway safety objectives and be based on the minimal amount of luminescence necessary
- Units should be sited on buildings where possible
- Lighting of pedestrian areas should be human in scale



Involving Young People

6.30 It is important that all of the proposals in the UDF fully consider the needs of young people. Where possible, facilities for the young should be included within specific regeneration proposals and more widely additional facilities should be planned into area wide improvements and change. However, it should also be recognised that the young can make a valuable contribution in helping to transform the town but reaching out to this age group and involving them can be difficult to achieve. Consequently, as part of the proposals within this document concerted effort will be required to involve young people in shaping proposals and developing the ideas further. This will involve working closely with the Councils Community and Leisure Team, the local schools (both Junior and senior), local infant and youth groups and potentially young people on the street.

Public Art

6.28 As part of the wider public realm approach public art will be introduced into the town centre to add further visual richness and variety. A number of opportunities will arise to provide public art and local schools and artists will be



7.0 Making it happen

Overall delivery

- 7.1 To enable this framework to bring forward these changes the community must be active in its implementation. Without property owners, developers and the wider participation of all sectors then the framework will have more limited success in reversing the fortunes of the town.
- 7.2 It is also important that the actions proposed by the Desborough and Rothwell Market Towns Initiative Action Plan and the proposals laid out in this Framework work together to deliver the improvements that the town is striving for. The Market Towns Initiative will have an important role therefore in implementing these proposals.
- 7.3 In order to be successful the following principles are applicable to the Urban Design Framework.

Partnership

Partnership between the community and the public agencies involved, the private sector and bodies like the Market Towns Initiative is important to secure support, expertise and the finance needed to implement change.

Changing attitudes

Partners need to be responsive to the concerns and views of others and free of pre-conceptions. Only then will an atmosphere of trust and co-operation be achieved leading to wider public support and involvement.

Maximising existing assets

Making the best use of assets that are already there and undertaking change that builds upon those foundations.

Comprehensive

Single projects will not deliver wholesale improvement. Ongoing work over the lifetime of the strategy (some 15 to 20 years) will create lasting improvement and be more successful in regenerating the town.

Quick wins

It is important that visible improvements are evident from the outset to maintain confidence and momentum in the proposals. Resources need to be set aside to ensure that this is achieved.

Quality

Throughout the process quality must be a main aim. This is important to achieving successful regeneration that is sustainable in the long term. It applies not just to projects themselves but also to how they are publicised, planned and assessed.

Securing design quality

- 7.4 To achieve quality in design it imperative that the right level of guidance is provided to developers and the others involved in bringing about regeneration of the town. Consequently it is recommended that a hierarchy of additional guidance be prepared in relation to the Desborough regeneration proposals. This would entail:

- Detailed urban design/development briefs for key sites
- Site development principles for other prospective development sites
- A frontage improvement and shop front design guide
- A streetscape and street furniture guidance note.

7.5 In order for these to carry weight in the determination of applications and in terms of detailed design and procurement it is appropriate to seek their adoption as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Local Plan and subsequent incorporation within the Local Development Framework. All planning and other proposals affecting the centre of Desborough should be assessed against this framework and the supporting guidance.

Image and publicity

7.6 As part of its regeneration the town needs an image to help drive forward the programme of change. The Market Towns Initiative will play an important part in developing this through promotional and other activities. It is suggested however that the image should be based upon those proposed on the Framework's vision statement repeated below:

The Vision for the Desborough UDF

To help create an attractive and accessible heart to the town by enhancing:

- Its environmental quality
- Its range of facilities and shops
- Its civic pride and sense of community
- Its accessibility, particularly for pedestrians

7.7 It will also be important to mark milestones in the regeneration of the town to retain interest and to showcase achievement. Publicity should be geared toward local participation but also to target regional and national audiences including relevant professional publications such as "Planning", "Regeneration" and "Urban Design Quarterly".

7.8 The use of the Borough Council, Town Council and Market Towns Initiative websites will also be important in publicising the redevelopment programme and progress on particular projects.

7.9 A promotional strategy should also be developed in conjunction with the Market Towns Initiative to forward plan promotional activities and co-ordinate this with funding applications and the implementation of particular projects.

Resources

7.10 The Rothwell and Desborough Market Towns Initiative will be an important partner in helping to secure funding for delivery of many of the projects in this framework. The Borough doesn't have the resources to deliver projects in isolation. Consequently, it will require a concerted and long-term commitment from many participants to bring forward these large-scale improvements to the town.

7.11 Overleaf is a matrix of the projects proposed by this framework. It provides the anticipated implementation date, a priority ranking, and the main agencies/bodies responsible for delivery and the likely funding sources. In addition, at Appendix 3 is a list of potential funding sources (which is not necessarily exhaustive or conclusive).

Timescale, responsibility and funding

Responsibility:

Who could be involved and who could lead projects.

V	Desborough community
BC	Kettering Borough Council
CC	Northants County Council
MTI	Market Towns Initiative
TC	Town Council
LO	Land owners
PD	Prospective developers
HA	Highways Agency
LB	Local businesses
DCS	Desborough Civic Society
SRA	Strategic Rail Authority
NR	Network Rail
MM	Midland Mainline
PLO	Police Liaison Officer

Funding:

Possible sources of funding/resources to deliver projects (other than above):

NP	Northants partnership
EMCR	East Midlands Community Renewables
EMA	East Midlands Arts Council
NL	National Lottery
EH	English Heritage
HLF	Heritage Lottery Fund
CDT	Community Development Trust
HETB	Heart of England Tourist Board
OG	Other grants (e.g. Mawd Elkington Fund)

Project/idea	Responsibility	Funding
Short (up to 18 months from now)		
1 Planning of new town square/market place (designing buildings, spaces, landscaping, road works, public realm works etc.)	BC, CC, LO, TC, MTI, PD, V, PL, NL	BC, MTI, LO, PD
2 Planning improvements to A6 through town (narrowing, cycleway, crossing facilities, tree planting, traffic calming)	BC, CC, TC, V	BC, NCC,
3 Feasibility and planning of the Lawrences factory re-development	BC, DCS, EMCR, PD	BC, NP, LO, EMCR, PD
4 Secure short term public car parking (at Bowls Club and Budgens/Station Yard)	BC, LO	BC, LO
5 Character assessment to inform conservation policies	BC, CC	BC
6 Erect signs/"gateway" features on bypass	BC, MTI, TC, HA	BC, EMA, HETB
7 Plan and implement gateway features to town centre	BC, CC, MTI, TC	BC, CC, LB, LF
8 Improved landscaping within town centre-tree planting in High Street and better ornamental displays	BC, TC, MTI	BC, TC, MTI, LB, LF
9 Selective improvement of street furniture in town centre including railings in Dunkirk Avenue	BC, TC, MTI	BC, TC, MTI, LF
10 Explore opportunities to locate factory outlets in town centre and promote existing outlets through improved signage	BC, TC, MTI, LB	BC, TC, MTI, LB
11 Design of area 1 environmental and street works	BC, CC, TC, V, PLO	BC, CC, HLF, EH, PG, EMA
12 Prepare & adopt additional development/design guidance	BC, LO, PLO	BC

Medium (between 18 months and 4 years from now)		
1 Develop new town square	BC, TC, LO	BC, CC, PG, LO, LF, PD, MTI, V, LB, EMA
2 Develop new buildings around town square	PD, LO, CC, BC,	PD, PG, CC, BC, LO, V, NL
3 Identify opportunities for improved community facilities (e.g. community centre, improved library)	BC, NCC, TC, MTI, V	BC, CC, TC, OG, NL, CDT
3 Pedestrian crossing outside the Kings Arms to new civic square	CC, BC	CC, BC, PG
4 Realign and prioritise roads in central area (High Street/Station Road and A6/Lower Street junctions)	BC, CC	BC, PG, CC
5 Improvement works to the A6 including landscaping and cycleway	BC, CC, PLO	BC, CC, OG
6 Create additional car parking at Buckwell Close and the Bowls Club	BC, TC, CC	BC, TC
7 Explore and implement a one way system for town centre	BC, CC, TC	BC, CC
8 Better provision for bus access within town centre as part of new town square and other development sites and highway changes	BC, CC, TC	BC, CC, PD
9 Undertake mixed use development of Lawrences factory site including enterprise and heritage centres	PD, DCS, BC	BC, LO, PD, HLF, EH, OG, CDT

Kettering Borough Council – working with and on behalf of local people

10 Implementation of area 1 environmental and street works	BC, CC, V	NP, EH, HLF, EMA
11 Secure quality development of derelict and gap sites	BC, LO, PD, TC	LO, PD, HLF, EH
12 Negotiation and planning future railway station and re-development of Station Yard	BC, CC, TC, NP, LO, PD NR MM	BC, CC, RT, LO, PD
13 Designate conservation area to protect/enhance historic character of the town	BC, DCS, EH	BC
10 Prepare list of locally important buildings of architectural/historic interest	BC, DCS, EH	BC
11 Identify opportunities (sites/buildings) for restaurants/family pub etc.	BC, MTI, TC, PD	PD, LO
12 Identify opportunities (site/building) for a pre-school facilities and develop	BC, TC, MTI	BC, CC, TC, OG, CDT
13 Frontage improvements for key buildings in Area 1(e.g. shops in Station Road)	BC, TC, LO, PD	HLF, EH, BC, OG
17 Provide improved youth facilities at recreation ground	BC, V, TC	BC, V, TC, OG
18 Education/ interpretation of historic built environment (e.g. heritage trail, visitor boards)	BC, MTI, DCS, V	BC, MTI, V, DCS, OG, HETB
19 Area 1 improvement grant schemes	BC, LO,	BC, EH, HLF
19 Design of area 2 environmental and street works (except A6 improvements)	BC, CC, TC, V, PLO	BC, CC, HLF, EH, PG

Long (over 4 years from now)		
1 Station Yard re-development including transport interchange	BC, CC, SRA, NR, MM, LO, PD, DC	PD, LO, OG, MM
2 Implementation of area 2 environmental works	BC, CC, V	NP, EH, HLF
3 Design and implementation of area 3 environmental and street works	BC, CC, TC, V, PLO	BC, CC, HLF, EH, PG
4 Possible re-devolpment of Gold Street gateway	BC, NCC, TC	LO, PD
5 Areas 2 and 3 improvement grants schemes	BC, LO,	BC, EH, HLF
6 Design and implementation of new cycleway footpath routes linking to areas outside the centre (e.g. Gold Street/ Braybrooke Road	BC, CC, TC	CC, BC, OG
7 Design and implementation of new urban park/garden at Dunkirk Avenue Recreation Ground.	BC, TC, V	BC, TC, MTI, OG, EMA, CDT