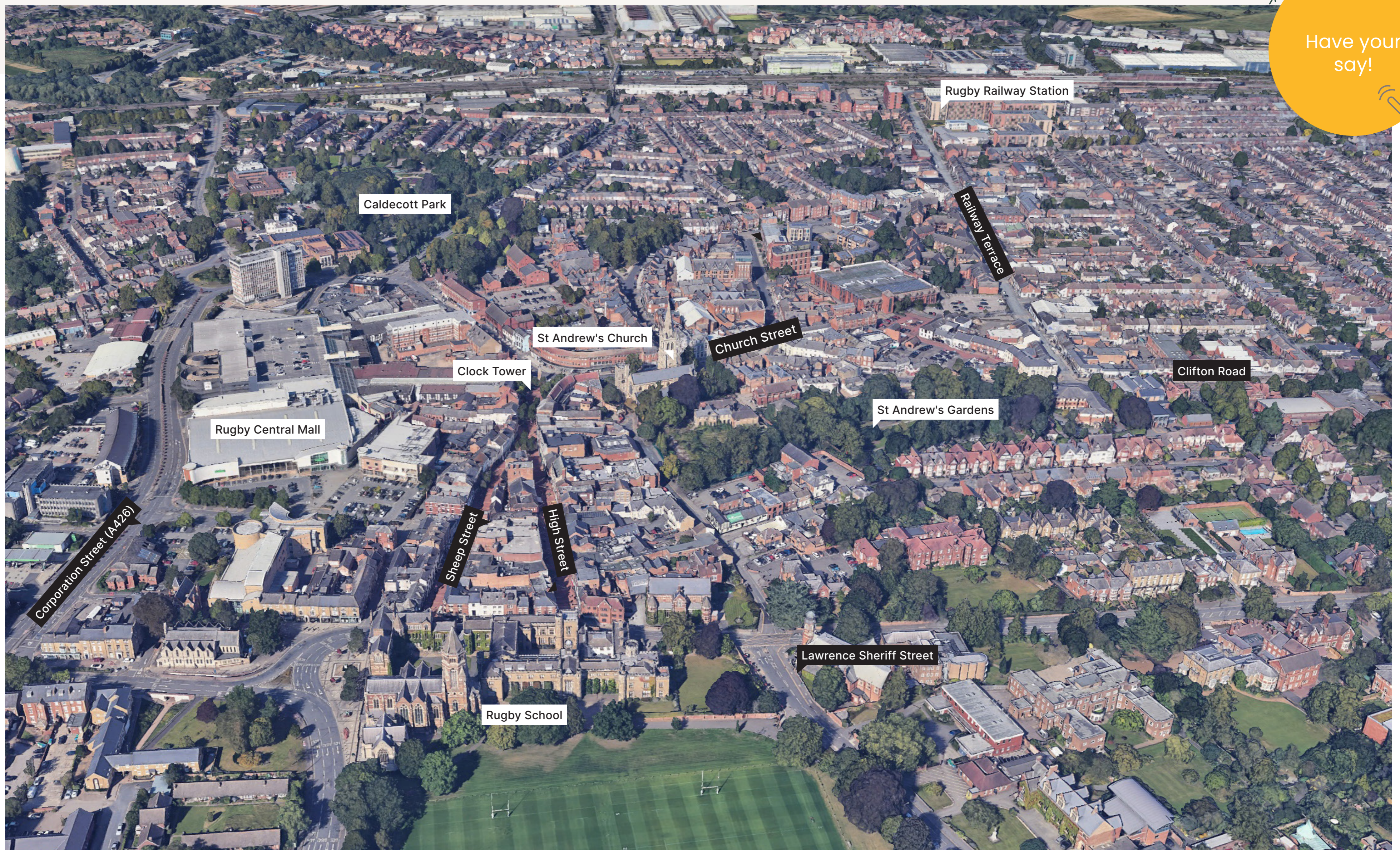


Rugby Town Centre Public Realm Masterplan

Why does Rugby need a public realm masterplan?

Rugby Borough Council are looking at ways to improve the streets and spaces of Rugby town centre. The masterplan aims to create a more vibrant, walkable and attractive town centre, to support community needs and celebrate Rugby's distinctive qualities.



Aerial view of Rugby town centre

What makes Rugby special?

The masterplan seeks to draw upon the existing qualities of the town. These can provide a focus for the location of enhancements, as well as providing inspiration in the stories that the public realm can tell. Rugby has many aspects to be proud of.



Proud Industrial History

Rugby had a international impact through technology and industry as well as sport. The turbojet engine was invented in the town as well as holography. Manufacturing and industrial uses still play a key role in the local economy.



A Unique Story

Rugby is a characterful and historic market town with many famous stories to tell but none more so well-known than that of William Webb Ellis, the founder of the sport. This gives the town a unique status and global prominence that many places could only dream of having.



Arts, Culture & Community

Not only does Rugby celebrate its story and identity through plentiful public art but it has a lively cultural scene anchored in places such as the Rugby Museum and Art Gallery and Art at the Alex. Independent businesses are also thriving putting on events like the spring food festival.



Growing & Well Connected

Rugby's strategic location gives it easy access to major cities across the UK providing a wide range of work and leisure opportunities to residents and making it an easy place to attract visitors to from beyond the town itself.



A Rich Heritage

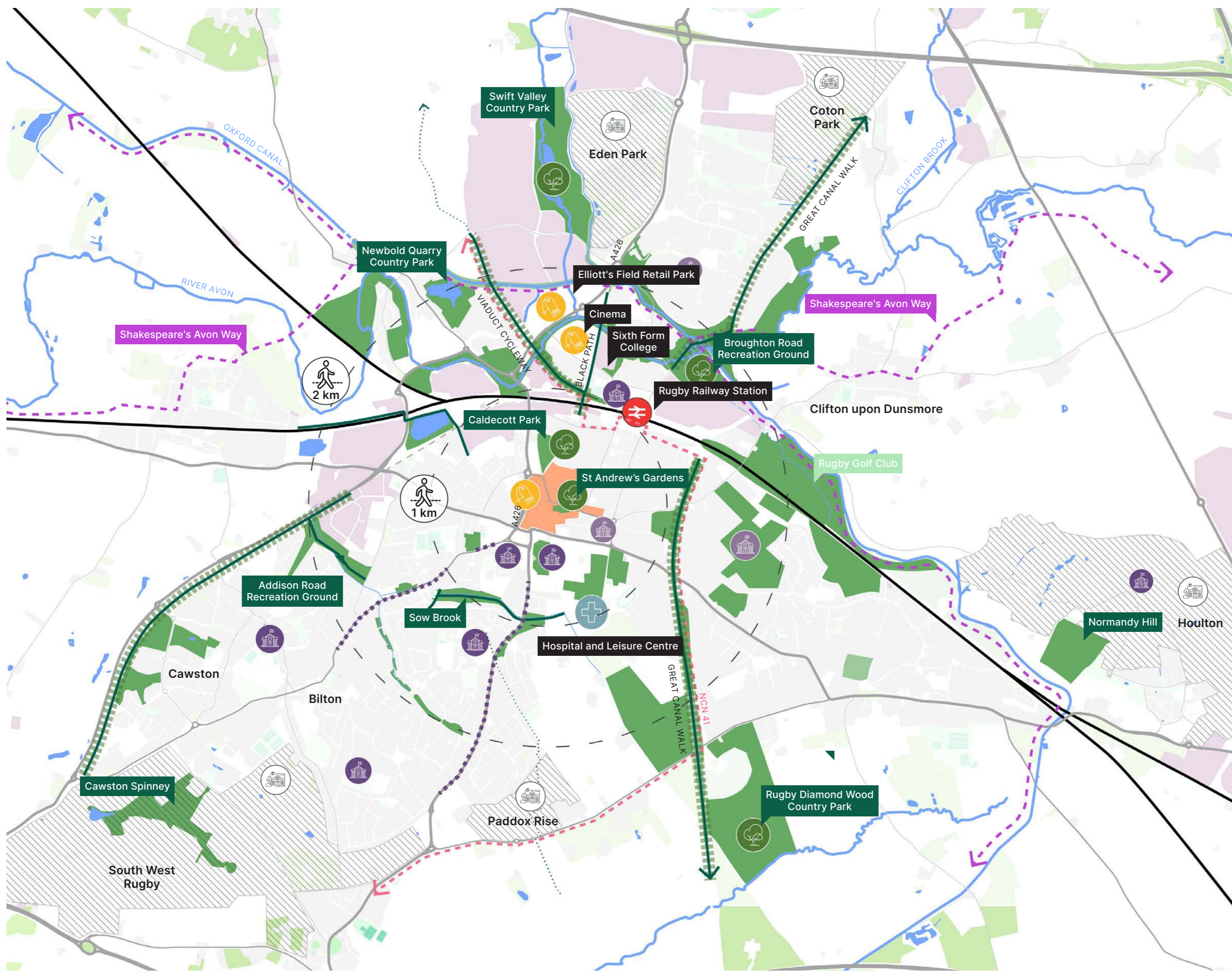
The town centre has clear landmarks that provide a strong visual identity and make it an easy place to get around. Rugby's historic buildings and charming routes and spaces create a town that courages you to explore.



Great Green Spaces

There are high quality parks and green spaces on the inner edges of the town centre, that provide oasis of calm and a chance to connect with nature. Caldecott Park in particular is notable for its Green Flag status which it has been awarded for 17 years in a row.

Understanding the Context



Key	A roads	National cycle network	Green spaces	Bridleway	Secondary school
	B roads	Employment area	Green corridor	Railway station	Primary school
	Local connector roads	Urban area	Strategic housing allocation	Retail	Hospital
	Railway	Town centre	Long distance walking route	Park and garden	Major housing development
	Waterways/waterbodies	Traffic-free path (walking/cycling)	On-road signed cycle route		

Key Findings

Reconnections
There is a disconnect with Rugby's residential neighbourhoods in terms of walking and cycling. Infrastructure is car-focused and the main roads act as barriers.

Arrival and Identity
There is a lack of a sense of arrival in the town centre.

Retail Draw
The retail park to north and other centres in Warwickshire draw businesses and people away.

Green and Blue Networks
The town centre doesn't link up with wider green and blue networks.

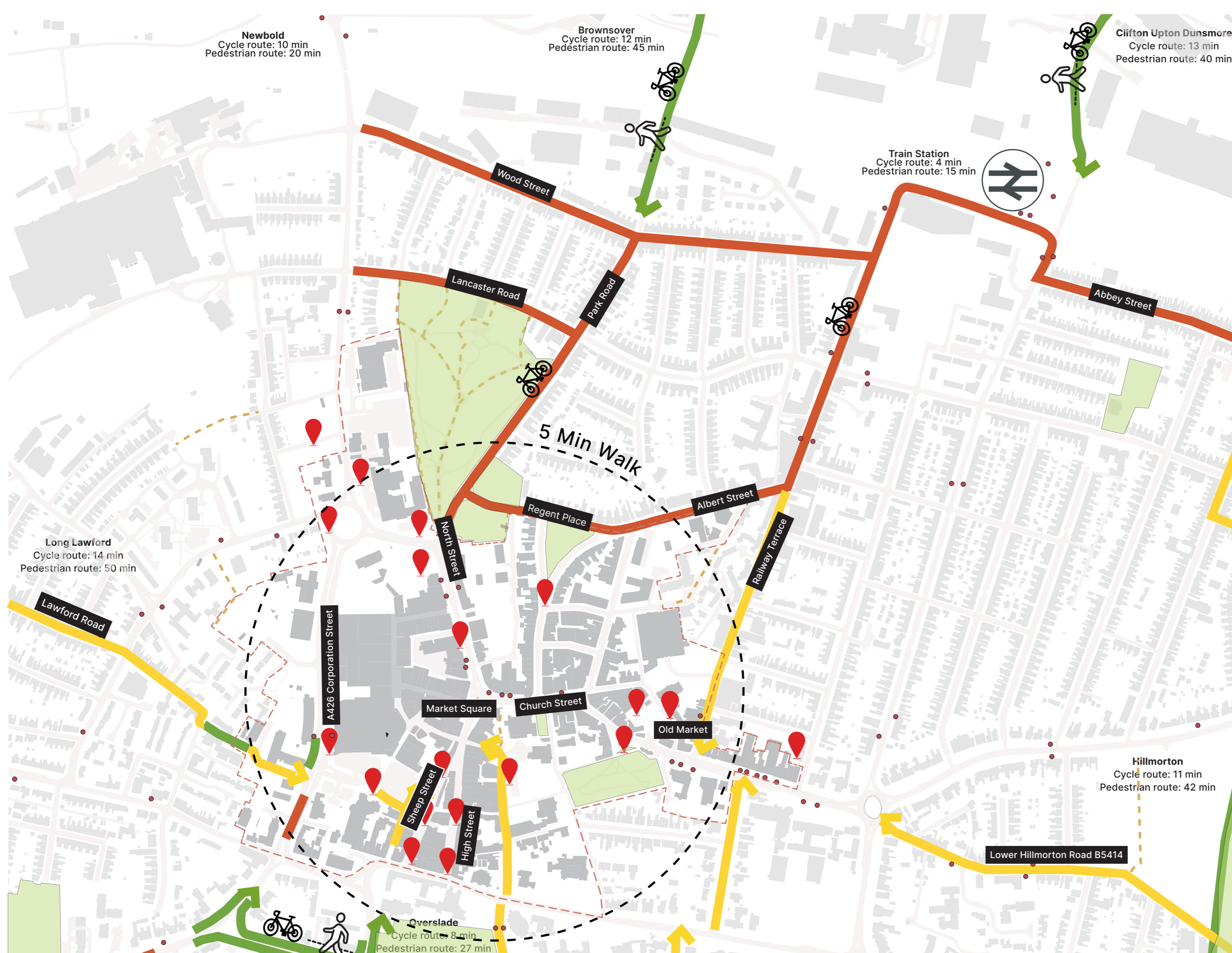
Rich Heritage
There are currently missed opportunities to emphasise and celebrate Rugby's rich heritage, points of interest and unique character.

Greener Streets
Creating greener streets will improve the look and feel of the urban environment while also improving air quality and connections to the parks and greens spaces.



Movement and Access

Pedestrian and cyclists



Key Findings

Vehicular traffic
At the moment there are very few traffic free paths and most are far from the centre.

Active Travel
Opportunities to implement segregated cycle paths and introduce more cycle hoop locations within the town centre.

Public Transport
Bus stops are currently concentrated along the main roads adding to congestion and traffic in this important area.

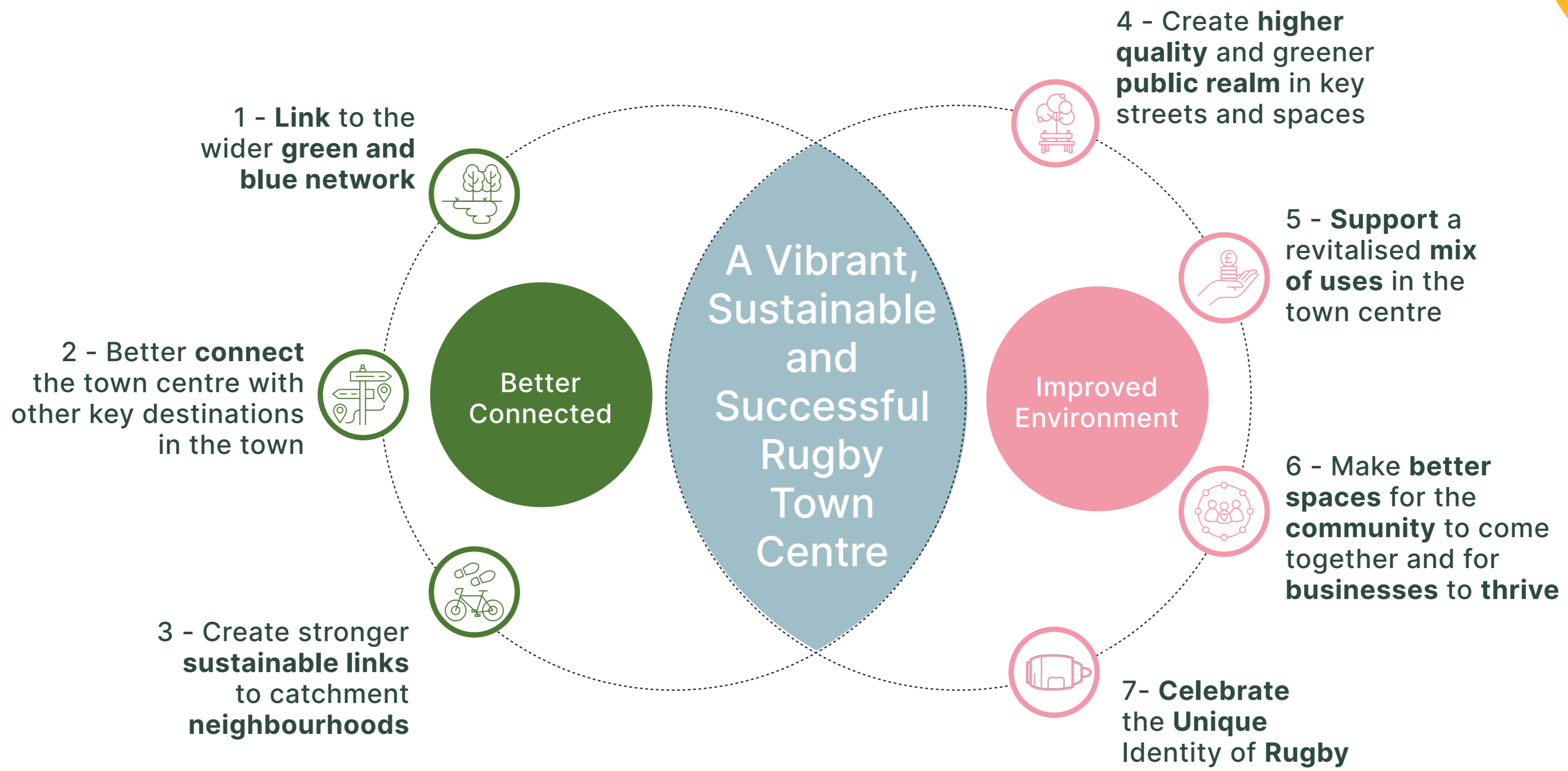
Key	Traffic free path / shared use foot/cycle path
	On-road signed cycle route
	On-road links between cycle paths
	Cycle hoops locations
	Bus stops
	Town centre boundary
	Green Spaces
	Train Station

Identifying Opportunities



The opportunities for Rugby town centre are drawn jointly from the public realm masterplan objectives and the key takeaways of our analysis of the town centre.

Focussing on the two key themes of **a better connected** and **improved environment** will deliver an improved heart to the town to be cherished by all.



Green & Blue Infrastructure



- Key**
- Green Destinations
 - Water
 - Potential Green Links
 - Possible Links
 - The Stitch
 - Footpath - No Cycling
 - Green Space
 - Town Centre Boundary

Connecting with the green routes, parks and waterways around Rugby will connect communities while increasing biodiversity.

Increase opportunities for recreational activities that make Rugby a more healthy, desirable place to live and visit.

Providing clear and comfortable links to all neighbourhoods will attract a more diverse range of people to the centre of town.

Improving road crossings and reducing the dominance of cars on key routes will better connect the town centre to its communities and promote safety for pedestrians and cyclists.

Connecting Neighbourhoods



- Key**
- Improved Neighbourhood Links
 - Town Centre Boundary

Connecting Destinations



- Key**
- Town Centre Boundary
 - Community Centre
 - Cemetery and Park
 - Train Station
 - Hospital
 - Allotments
 - Council Office
 - Sports Field
 - Place of Worship
 - Green Space
 - Industry
 - Play Area
 - Retail
 - Schools

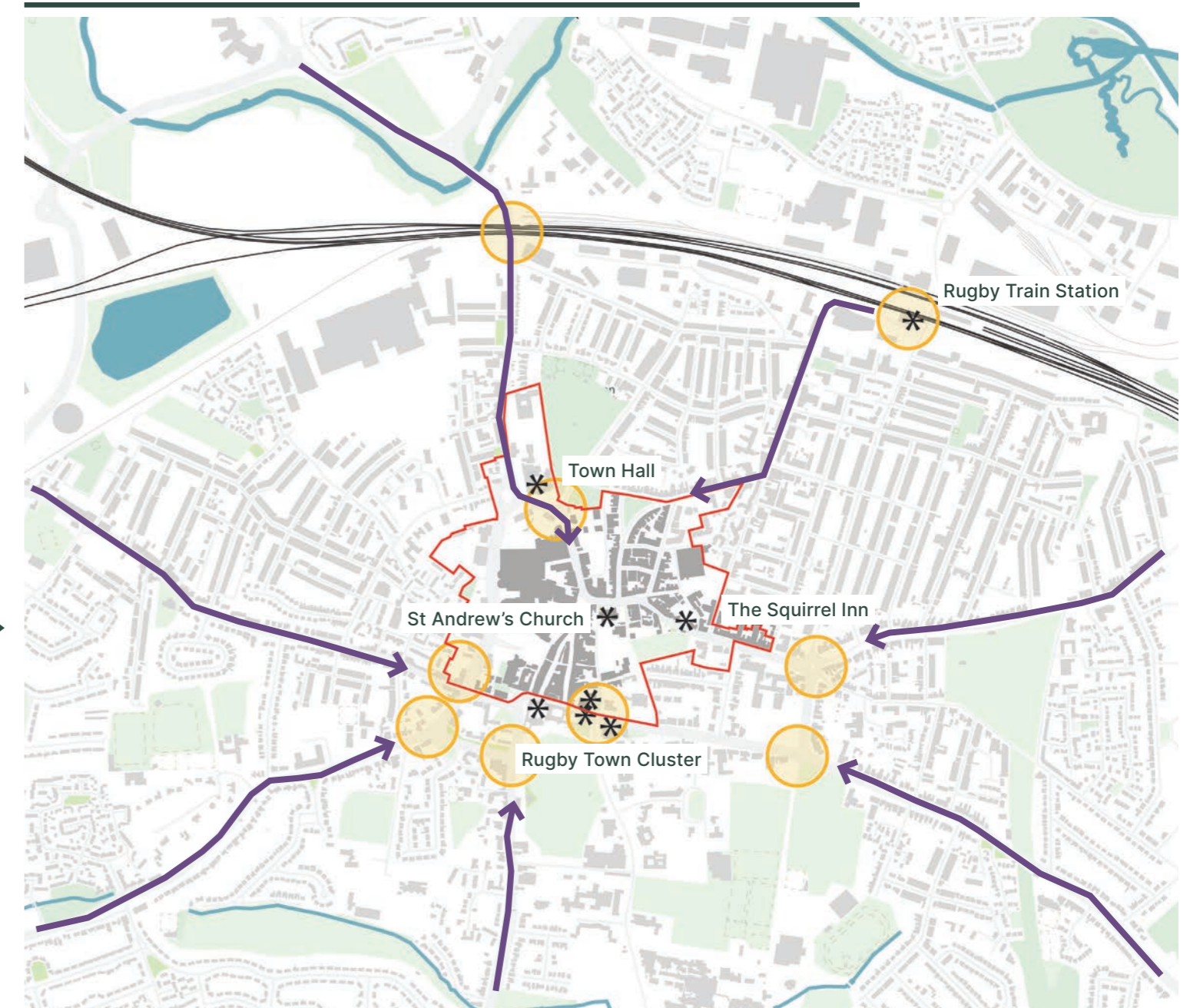
Better walking and cycling connections to key destinations and amenities outside of the town centre.

Enhance the setting of community facilities within the town centre - vacant buildings may be re-purposed for community use.

Enhanced gateways/markers on the main routes into town. Using paving, planting, signage to signify these arrival thresholds and influence drivers to slow down.

Improved arrival experience at the main town car parks and train station to welcome visitors.

Arrival Points & Gateways



- Key**
- Town Centre Boundary
 - Main Routes
 - Building of importance (landmark/ community)
 - Gateways

Our Draft Public Realm Masterplan



Improved Arrival and Gateways

- A** Newbold Road
- B** Murray/Mill Road
- C** North Street
- D** Clifton Road
- E** Laurence Sheriff Street
- F** Bilton Road
- G** Russelheim Way

Better Places and Spaces Projects

- The Stitch**
- 1** Market Place to Old Market Place
- 2** North Street
- 3** The Pleasance Garden & Clifton Road
- 4** Chapel Street Square
- 5** Library, Museum and Art Gallery Entrance
- 6** Laneway Improvements
- 7** Street Enhancements

Illustrative Masterplan

Public Realm masterplan

Objectives:

- Create **high quality places to build civic pride** that attract visitors, workers and residents and improve peoples health, wellbeing and enjoyment
- Create a public realm that **reflects the heritage** of Rugby
- Provide opportunities for **active travel**
- Ensure that all improvements are **adaptable to climate change**
- Integrate water management, biodiversity, air quality priorities, renewable energy creation as part of **healthy streets and spaces**
- **Enhance and connect green spaces** across the town centre
- Provide **clear priorities for improvements**

The draft masterplan identifies opportunities within the public realm for enhancements within Rugby. We have grouped these into the following themes:

- **Arrivals and Gateways**
- **Connecting Communities**
- **Better Places and Spaces**

In order to revitalise the town centre without too much disruption to residents, businesses and visitors, the aim is to stage these works over the next 10-15 years.

A central focus - 'The Stitch'

Through our initial work on the masterplan we identified that there was a disconnect between two parts of the town - north and south of Church Street.

The Stitch is focussed on improving the street environment of North Street, Church Street and Clifton Road so that it is a nicer place to linger and to make it easier for people to get from one side to the next. In that way the centre of Rugby will become more unified, breathing life into the heart of the town.



Potential Projects: 1



Connecting Market Place to Old Market Place

The geographical heart of Rugby is the Clock Tower. As the catalyst project of the town centre improvements, we aim to update the setting of this historic landmark and connect it with the Old Market Place.

Giving the clock tower space to breathe will enhance the area for the market stalls and make it a more enjoyable place to sit and spend time in.

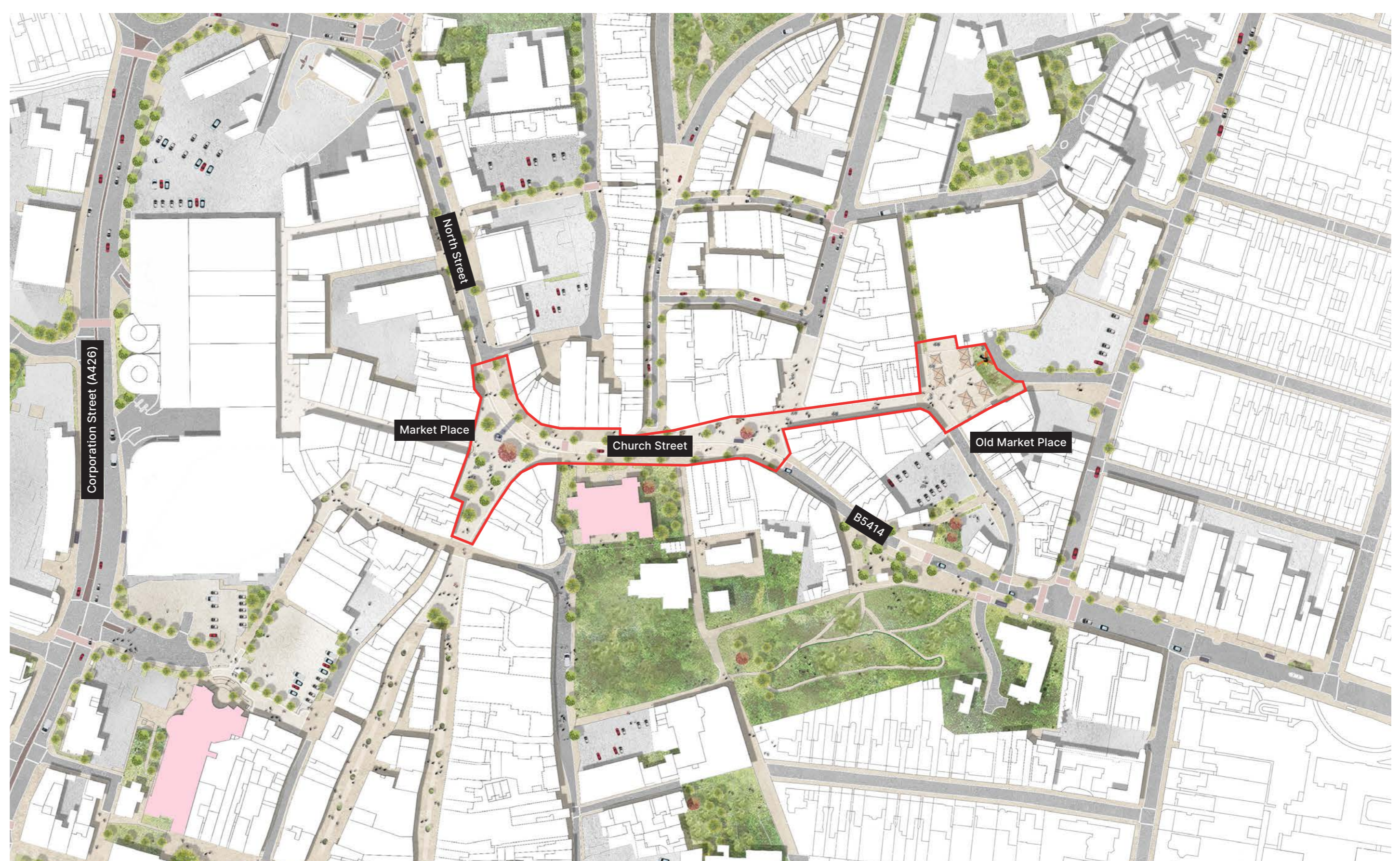
As the central part of the stitch, enhancements are proposed to extend from Market Place to the Old Market Place. This will help connect the two sides of Church Street. At Old Market Place, we are looking to transform what is currently a car park into a flexible new public space.

Linking the two public spaces with street improvements provides continuity and creates a smooth flow between areas. The addition of fun play features will make these spaces lively and encourage people to come out, interact, and enjoy themselves.



Project Scope

- Reduce width of vehicle lanes giving more space to pedestrians
- Use materials to unify the space and inform vehicles that it is a slower speed area
- Enhance the character of the towns streets and public spaces by introducing harmoniously designed street furniture, featuring additional seating and improved lighting. This will create inviting environments that encourage people to linger and enjoy their surroundings
- Trees and street planting to soften the spaces, improve biodiversity, provide seasonal interest and to moderate local temperatures (reducing urban heat island effect), as well as for taking rainwater runoff
- Provide signage to help people find their way through the town centre.



— Project Extent - Market Place to Old Market



Existing view - Church Street (looking west)

Proposed Features

- The road is narrowed and crossing is made easier by the introduction of new crossing locations
- Existing crossings are enhanced with new materials
- Barriers and street clutter are reduced making it a nicer environment to walk and cycle in
- Trees and planting, street furniture and lighting, all serve to improve the space and setting of the historic Clock Tower and Saint Andrew's Church.



Church Street visualisation

Potential Projects: 2 & 3



The 'Stitch' is the transformation of the main route through the town centre, stitching the town together again by slowing vehicle speeds, removing pedestrian barriers, introducing regular courtesy crossings, with the aim to reduce vehicle numbers and make it easier for pedestrians and cyclists to inhabit and navigate through. The first stage of this piece would be to connect to areas north of the town centre.



Existing view - North Street looking Southeast

Project 2 - The Stitch North

- The road width is reduced, naturally calming traffic
- Planting absorbs surrounding water run-off and creates a buffer between pedestrians and vehicles as well as providing colour, texture, biodiversity, shade and shelter
- Cycle parking is introduced and the general decluttering of street elements creates a more social, flexible public space.



North Street visualisation



Existing view - Church Street looking northwest

Project 3 - The Stitch South

- The road is narrowed, giving more space to pedestrians and reducing the speed of vehicles travelling through
- Crossing Church Street is made easier by the reduced road width and improved crossing treatment
- Barriers and street clutter is reduced making it a nicer environment to walk and cycle in
- The setting of the Pleasance Garden is enhanced with more trees and planting to aid biodiversity and seasonal interest.



Church Street visualisation



Potential Projects: 4 - 7



Project 4 : Chapel Street Square



Illustrative Masterplan Zoom Area

- Small square embedded in the existing urban fabric
- Sense of discovery while walking in the city centre. Existing buildings frames the square view, creating an attractive destination
- Paving, planting, street furniture and lighting contributing to a more attractive space / meeting place
- Seasonal interest and shade from tree planting.



Cafe spill out as attractive amenity



Meeting place for locals

Project 5 : Library, Museum and Art Gallery Entrance



Illustrative Masterplan Zoom Area

- Improve the setting of the library and make it more accessible
- Soften existing car park with more vegetation / trees
- Drury Lane improvements - enhancing the link to the high street
- Make the existing square more attractive as an event space / temporary exhibitions venue.

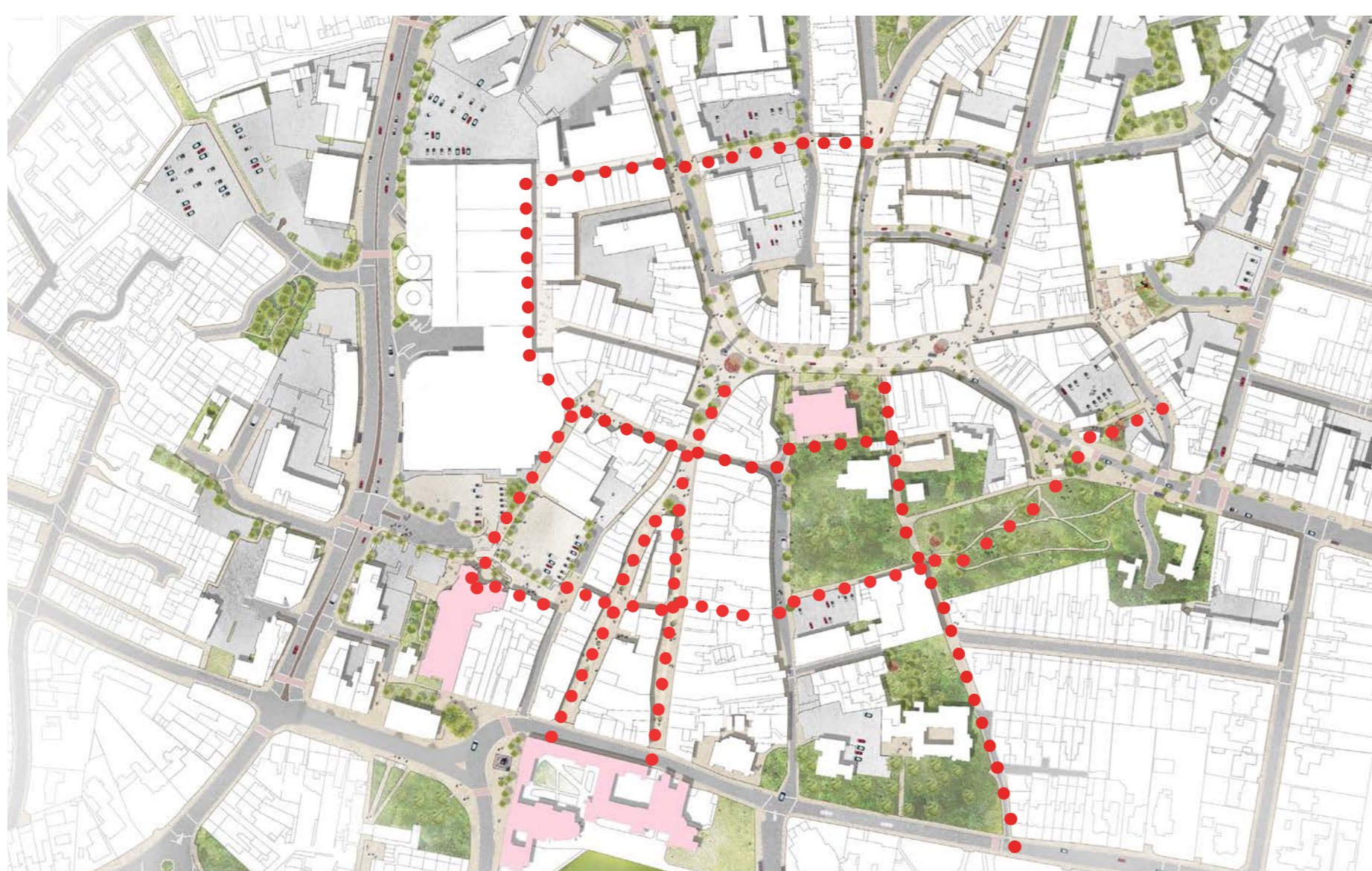


Library spill out in relaxing and lush environment



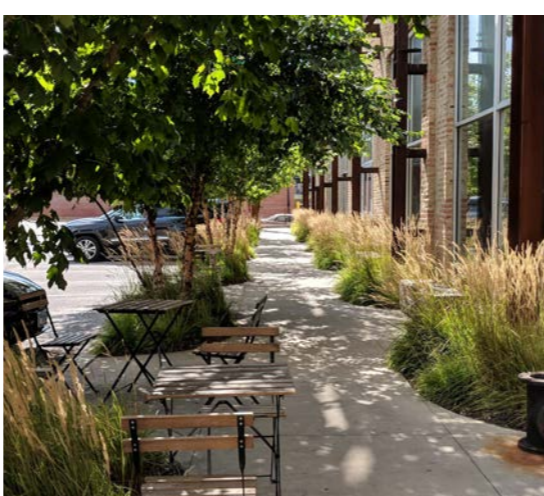
Green areas to soften the look and feel of buildings and public space

Project 6 : Laneway Improvements

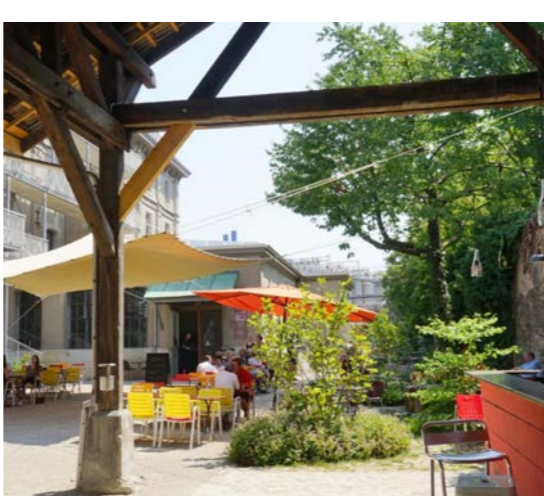


Illustrative Masterplan Zoom Area

- Improved entrance/ connection to the park. The area adjacent to the park entrance could be better activated and made more safe for pedestrian users
- Consistent furniture and lighting strategy
- Softer frontages and hedges could help improve the whole look and feel of this area
- Pedestrian friendly area where business spill out is encouraged. This would require amendments to the existing Traffic Regulation Order including alterations to the current access arrangements.

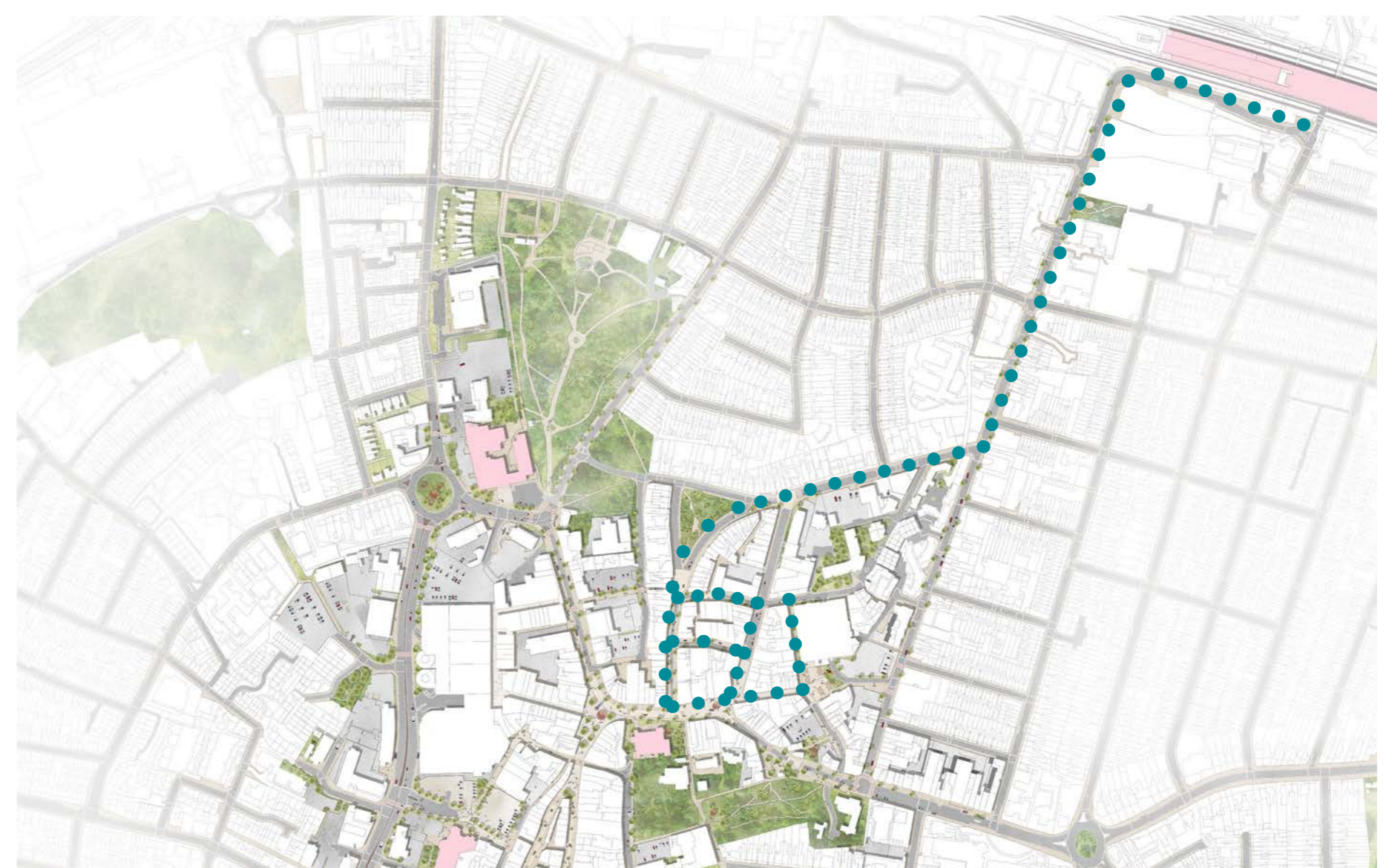


Softer and welcoming buildings frontages



Reception areas for park users

Project 7 : Street Enhancements



Illustrative Masterplan Zoom Area

- Greener and more welcoming street section thanks to the addition of trees and vegetation
- Addition of street furniture and lighting
- Clear signage and routes connecting the city centre to the station
- Slower vehicle speeds encouraging more cyclists
- More accessible and clear pedestrian crossing points.



Green streets with integrated furnitures



Clear route and way findings between centre and station

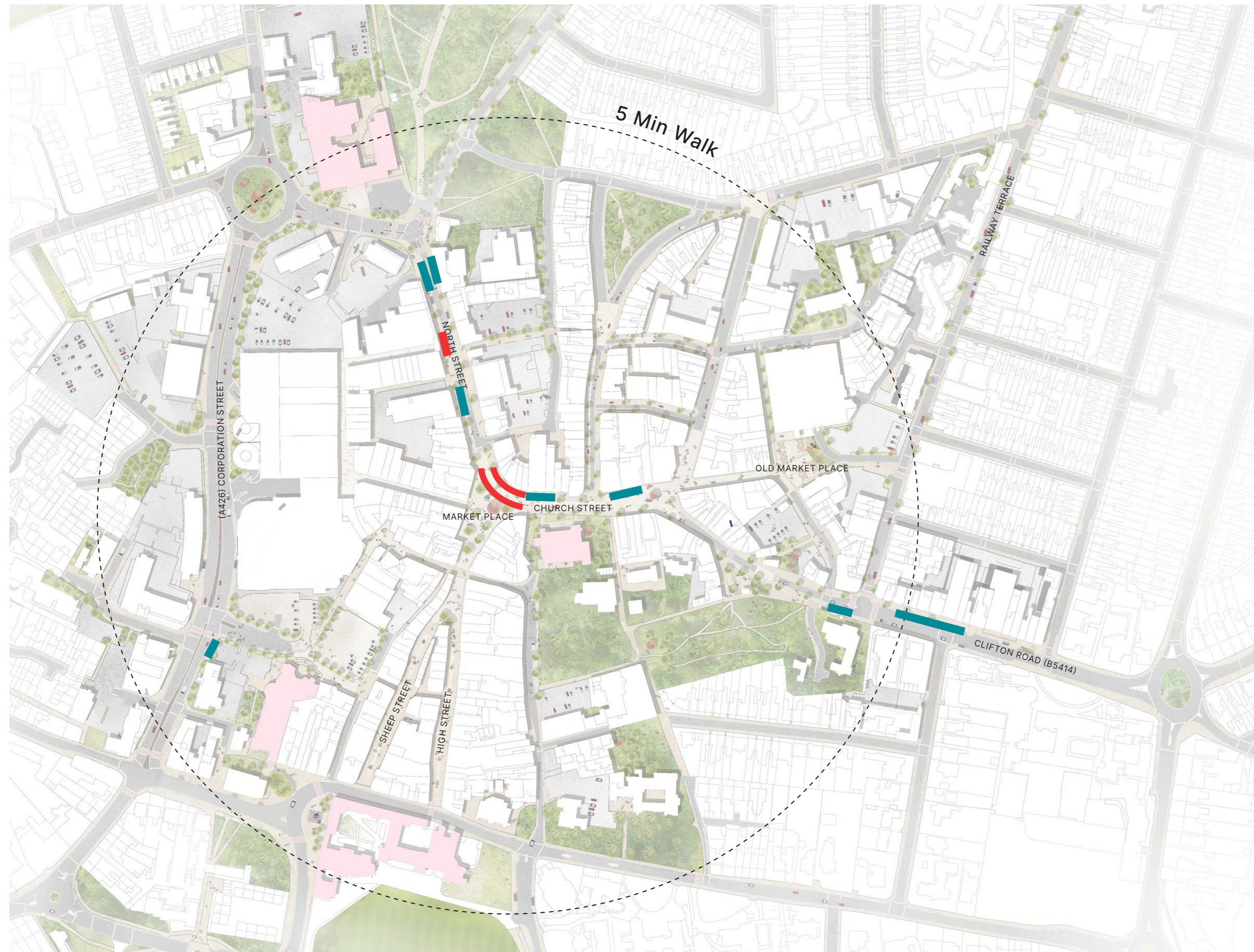
→ GRAB A POST-IT & TELL US WHAT YOU THINK
How would you like this place to feel?

Making it Work



Taxi and Bus Provision

Existing



Existing Bus Stops and Taxi Ranks

Revitalising the town centre is essential for enhancing the pedestrian and cycling experience, encouraging visitors to linger and spend time in the town.

Currently, taxi ranks at Market Place obstruct views of the clock tower and detract from the overall aesthetic and comfort of the space.

A June/July 2024 survey revealed that the busiest time for taxis is weekdays from 12:00 to 13:00, with 35 taxis per hour and 36% of activity being standing use. Additionally, bus lay-bys along North Street, Church Street, and Clifton Road occupy significant space, indicating inefficiency. By consolidating taxi and bus locations and utilising in-lane stops, we can create wider footpaths, attractive vegetation and improved street furniture.

Key

- Existing Taxi Rank Locations
- Existing Bus Stops

Proposed



Proposed Location Options

The Market Place proposals provide more space for pedestrians and moves the existing taxi bays away from the historic clock tower, distributing them along the stitch- with this project being the heart of the town centre. Potential new locations for these taxi bays are shown on the adjacent plan, ensuring they remain accessible for all.

Currently, bus lay-bys along North Street, Church Street, and Clifton Road take up a lot of space. By consolidating bus stops and using in-lane stops, the space dedicated to buses can be reduced whilst maintaining a similar level of service and allowing for wider footpaths, more greenery, and additional street furniture.

Key

- Proposed Taxi Rank Locations
- Proposed Bus Stop Lay-by
- Proposed In-lane Bus Stop

Wayfinding and the Sense of Place

As part of the project we have been exploring ways to improve pedestrian connectivity within the town of Rugby. Good wayfinding is more than just signs, it can improve the town's identity by providing a rooted sense of place as well as help people navigate with ease.

As a starting point we reviewed the existing signs to get a better understanding of the current issues, where there are gaps in the journey and where there is a need for improvement.



Why are we doing this?

A well-signed and legible environment projects a sense of a well-organised and welcoming place to live, work or visit.

The town is currently known as the birthplace of the game of Rugby, but there is the opportunity with the new signage to highlight other stories which haven't been explored yet. By incorporating key stories and interpretation into the sign design will help visitors to create a deeper connection to the place.

There is also the opportunity to make the signs more accessible for the community and the visitor by introducing more pedestrian friendly mapping and walking minutes to content. This will help visitors to plan their journey and encourage them to stay longer and explore further.



Existing Sign Plan

The existing wayfinding is generally in a poor condition and there are gaps in the town's connectivity. The signs are not bespoke to Rugby and differ in styles.



Proposed Sign Plan

The above plan shows the proposed locations for new signs throughout the town. We are proposing to introduce a bespoke family of signs that creates an improved sense of place and will provide consistent messaging along the journey. On the plan above we have looked at how we can improve connectivity from the railway station to town centre by ensuring there are signs placed at the key orientation points along the route.



Connecting Spaces



Wayfinding and the Sense of Place

To help improve the sense of place, it will be important to explore ways key stories can be interpreted in the wayfinding design. We have set out five themes that categorise the unique stories of Rugby. We have started to explore ways these stories can influence the sign design from the sign form, to materials, fonts and colours.



Heritage

Buildings designed by William Butterfield are identifiable from the patterns and distinct use of 2/3 colours.



Sports

The font **CLARENDON BOLD** is used on Gilbert Rugby balls.



Literature

WW1 English poet Rupert Brooke was born in Rugby.



Horticulture

Caldecott Park is known for its purple allium flowers.



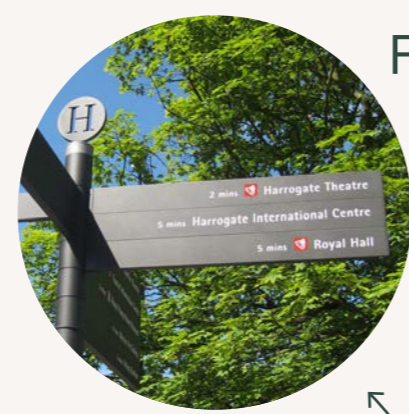
Innovation

The engine Frank Whittle developed has gone on to be used primarily in planes.

Sign Precedents

Shown here are a selection of images of signage solutions that we have designed for other towns and cities. We have highlighted some of the key attributes of these projects.

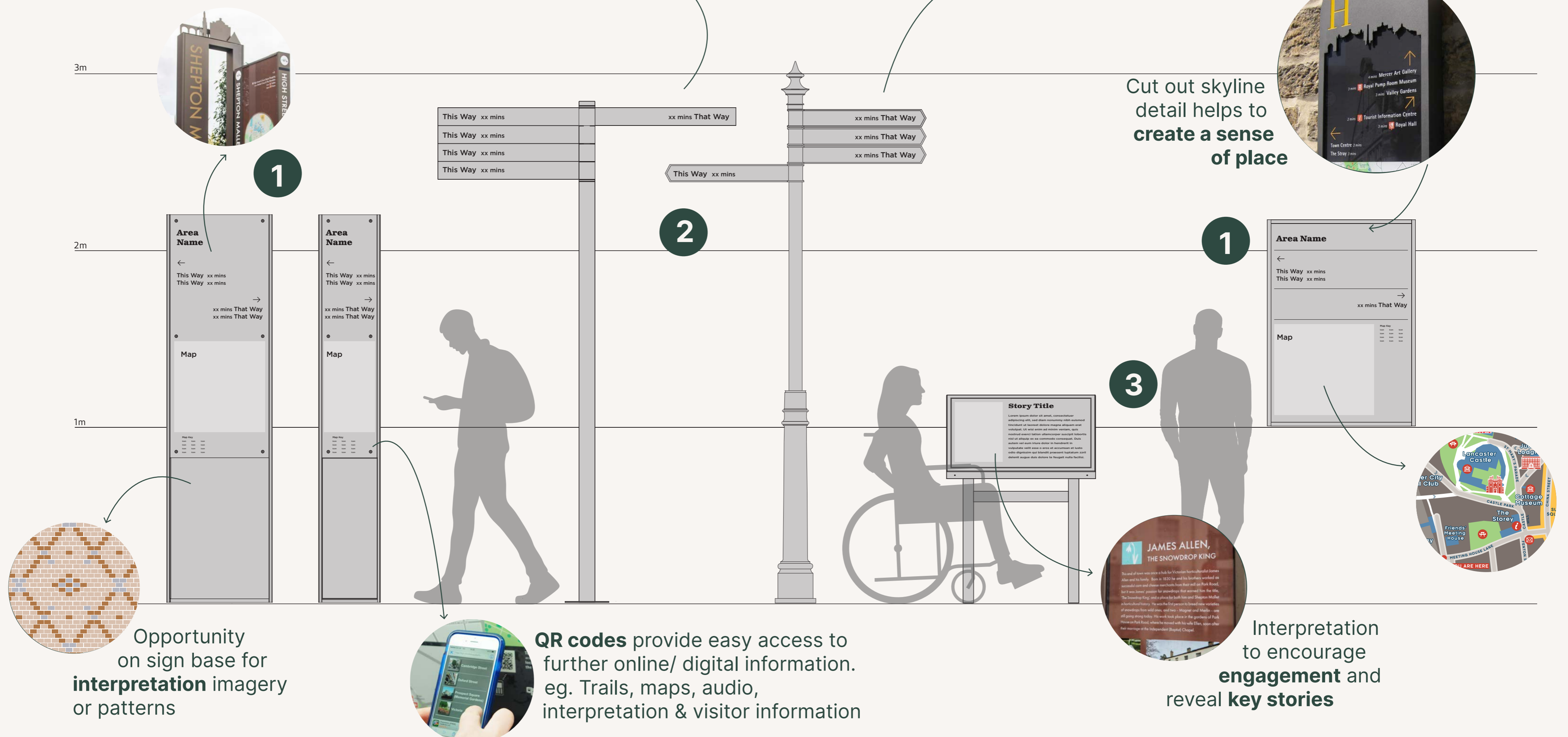
Are there any features highlighted here that would benefit the town of Rugby?



Fingerposts with walking distances in **minutes** and **recognisable icons**



Traditional fingerposts with decorative finials to reinforce the **heritage** of the town



1 Map Monolith
Located at key orientation and arrival points along the pedestrian route, monoliths help to navigate the user to their destination with directional content and a heads up map. These can either be freestanding or wall mounted.

2 Fingerpost
When a full map isn't needed or there isn't the space for a monolith, a fingerpost helps to reinforce the route to a destination. Fingerposts will have walking minutes and iconography.

3 Interpretation
To help reveal the history of the place, interpretation signs can include engaging content to and can give context to the towns art installations.

