

# Cirencester Town Centre Public Realm Design Code

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May 2017





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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose of the Design Code

- 1.1.1 Following on from the redevelopment of the former Post Office site / Black Jack Street improvements and the approval of the new public realm scheme for the Market Place, the Town Council are aware of the importance of achieving further public realm improvements throughout the town.
- 1.1.2 The need for a Design Code has been identified within a number of Town Council documents:
- Cirencester Concept statement.
  - Cirencester Planning Statement.
  - CDC Reg. 18 Development Management Consultation Document.
- 1.1.3 Portus + Whitton have been commissioned by Cirencester Town Council to produce a Design Code for the public realm of Cirencester. The Town Council require an overarching strategy to refer to when considering future streetscape works within the town, whether they be brought forward by the public or private sector.
- 1.1.4 The objective behind the writing of this Public Realm Design Code is to fill the gap between a number of existing guidance documents, namely:
- The Cotswold Design Code, Cotswold District Council, March 2000 (currently being redrafted).
  - Cirencester Conservation Area Character Appraisal & Management Plan, Cotswold District Council, 2008.
  - Cirencester Town Centre SPG, Cotswold District Council, November 2008.
  - Highway Authority Manual for Gloucestershire Streets, April 2016.
- 1.1.5 Although all of these documents touch on public realm design, none of them deal with it in detail and often useful information is lost due to the broad scope of these documents. The objective of this Design Code is to produce a single concise document that is easy to use and provides clear guidance on appropriate public realm treatment for the streets within Cirencester town centre and Conservation Areas.
- 1.1.6 Having a fully justified and approved Design Code in place will enable Cirencester Town Council to take an informed position on Planning Consultations; help to improve design standards; ensure that new built development and changes to the public realm are appropriate to the character of the town; and help to direct investment into the town's public realm.

## 1.2 Town Location & Setting

- 1.2.1 Cirencester is located within Gloucestershire, in the south west region of England.
- 1.2.2 The town is located within an area known as the Cotswolds, a low limestone plateau rising gradually northwest from the neighbouring counties of Oxfordshire and Wiltshire to form a dramatic natural scarp slope known as The Edge. Much of this Cotswolds landscape, including Cirencester Park on the west side of the town, is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty [AONB].
- 1.2.3 The local limestone has given rise to the distinctive landscapes and building types that are internationally renowned as of quintessentially English lowland character, rich in architecture of many periods and styles.
- 1.2.4 Cirencester sits on the River Churn, a tributary of the River Thames. Located in a shallow bowl it is surrounded to the north and west by the Cotswold Hills. To the south lies the relatively flat expanse of the Upper Thames Valley.
- 1.2.5 Cirencester is often referred to as the 'Capital of the Cotswolds'. Cirencester currently has a population in excess of 20,000 making it the largest town of the Gloucestershire Cotswolds.
- 1.2.6 The town lies at the nexus of a significant road network with important routes to Gloucester, Cheltenham, Warwick, Oxford, Swindon, Chippenham, Bristol and Bath, and Stroud. Good transport links bring the town passing trade whilst the ring road and by-pass takes much of the traffic away from the town centre.

## 1.3 Historical Development

- 1.3.1 This section is intended to provide an overview of the history of the town and how Cirencester's history has shaped its development over time, thus determining its present physical form. It is in the main an abridged version of text from the Cirencester Conservation Areas Character Appraisal and Management Plan, 2008.
- Roman Corinium**
- 1.3.2 The town apparently had little importance until the Roman period, when Corinium Dobunorum became a Roman town so large it was second only in size and status to London. It is located at the junction of the Cotswold Hills and the broad valley of the upper Thames, at the crossing point of the Fosse Way and Ermin Street, two of the most important arterial roads of Roman Britain. The town developed into a centre of local government and an agricultural market for the many local estates.
- 1.3.3 A large military fort was established here in c.AD50 and by the end of the first century Corinium had a regular street grid and impressive public buildings, including the second largest basilica of any Roman town in Britain. Through successive centuries, the town became a prosperous regional centre and by the fourth century it was the provincial capital of Britannia Prima, one of the four provinces in Britain.
- 1.3.4 Corinium was enclosed by a town wall initially constructed as an earth rampart but later faced with stone; today the late twentieth-century ringroad follows an almost parallel line around the outside of the Roman rampart.
- 1.3.5 The Roman grid street pattern has little perceptible impact today but principal roads of Roman origin radiating from the town are still very evident, and the crossroads at the junction of South Way, Tower Street and Lewis Lane marks almost the exact site of the central crossroads of the Roman town.
- The Medieval and Early Post-Medieval Period**
- 1.3.6 A long gap in our knowledge of the town exists throughout the Saxon Period to c1086 when references to the "new market" are followed by the founding of St Mary's Abbey by Henry I [1100-1135] and the growth of the Cotswold wool trade. The Abbey is known to have been built on the site of a major Anglo-Saxon church and had a major financial stranglehold over the towns people. The Abbot was Lord of the Manor and the Abbey's great wealth stemmed from its extensive land holdings in the town and the surrounding countryside.
- 1.3.7 By the twelfth century the construction of the present Parish Church of St John Baptist had begun. The townsfolk enjoyed



considerable prosperity from the fourteenth century onwards, by which time Cirencester had surpassed Winchcombe as the principal outlet for Cotswold wool and the central market town for the south Cotswolds.

- 1.3.8 Cirencester continued to develop throughout the medieval period although its commercial affairs were heavily controlled and influenced by the Abbey. The market place and the parish church were at the heart of the town with the principal streets radiating from it towards the sites of the former Roman gateways which still served as entrances to the town.
- 1.3.9 In 1539 Henry VIII ordered the demolition of the Abbey as part of the dissolution of the monasteries and the Abbey's properties were redistributed; by 1563, the Oakley Estate on the west side of the town had been sold to Sir Benjamin Bathurst, and in turn, the Abbey Grounds on the east side were granted to Dr Richard Master, the Queen's personal physician, in 1564. The two families were to have a profound influence on the development of the town.

### Seventeenth Century

- 1.3.10 Seventeenth-century Cirencester witnessed continued and increased prosperity based on the wool trade. This resulted in some fine stone buildings replacing many of the timber-framed domestic buildings of the medieval period.
- 1.3.11 A new type of local vernacular style developed around the needs of the inhabitants and the capability of the stone; typically gabled two-storey houses incorporating stone mullioned windows and stone slate roofs with stone chimneys, were built off the pavement edge in densely packed terraces; a surprisingly large number of such buildings survive today.
- 1.3.12 The restoration of the monarchy in 1660 resulted in the further development of the two private estates in the town held by the Bathurst and Chester-Master families, namely Cirencester Mansion and Park, and Abbey House in Abbey grounds.

### Eighteenth Century

- 1.3.13 The eighteenth century however witnessed a distinct change in architectural fashions in contrast to the vernacular buildings of the previous century; the newly-elegant classically-inspired houses served to demonstrate the growing wealth and social standing of their inhabitants.
- 1.3.14 The development of Cirencester Park by Allen, first Earl Bathurst, was a very important physical change in eighteenth-century Cirencester. The Earl rebuilt the Mansion House in subdued classical style but his real achievement, and a lasting one, was the laying out and planting of the 1000 acre park with its attendant follies, geometric pattern of rides and naturalistic planting. He was assisted by his friend and fellow-Tory the poet Sir Alexander Pope. As part of these plans, Earl Bathurst also planted the iconic yew hedge in c.1710 which to this day so effectively screens the Mansion from the town. He died in 1775 and his successors continued to realise his designs and extended the park to the north resulting in the present Broad Ride extending from Cecily Hill. The Park is now Grade I Registered Park and known as one of the best surviving designed landscapes, of its type, in the country.
- 1.3.15 A Jacobean residence, called Abbey House, was built by the influential Master family on the site of the former Abbey. By 1776, it had been replaced and by 1825 it had been extended in Greek Revival style. It was substantially extended again c.1868 to provide a large service wing. By the end of the nineteenth century the house was let and remained so until shortly after the Second World War. Lying empty and deteriorating for over a decade, it was demolished in 1964. The present flats for the elderly were then built on the site and the grounds presented to the town as a public park by Mr R G Chester-Master in 1965.
- 1.3.16 In 1789, a branch of the Thames and Severn Canal was created, providing a new transport link to markets further afield (including via the Thames to London). The canal terminated in a wharf now marked by the north end of Trinity Road. By the end of the century, Cirencester was at the centre of a network of turnpike roads with easy access to markets for its produce of grain and wool.



Figure 1.1: Cirencester Map—1795, image courtesy of Bingham Library Trust



### Nineteenth Century

- 1.3.17 The export of wool and grain continued in the early part of the century but by c.1850 cloth making had declined and trade in corn and cheese took its place as evidenced by the building of a new covered Corn Hall in Market Place in 1863. Former warehouses in Querns Lane are reputedly cheese warehouses associated with the former nearby canal terminus.
- 1.3.18 The town at the start of the century was still largely confined to the north of Lewis Lane and Querns Lane, and still less than half the size of the former Roman town. As elsewhere, overcrowding and poor sanitation in the town were commonplace. Members of both the leading Bathurst and Masters families combined with others to set up a Commission in 1825 to improve conditions in the town for the expanding population. The Bathursts in particular built a number of almshouses, shops and other buildings in a consciously Cotswold vernacular style.
- 1.3.19 New 'improvements' and changes in the town included the demolition in the 1830s of a tightly packed group of medieval properties to the south of the Church including Shoe Lane, Butter Row and the Shambles which opened up the Market Place further. Public realm improvements included the construction of mains drainage, the culverting of watercourses, the laying of paving and the installation of new gas lights in the streets from 1833.
- 1.3.20 The Watermoor suburb south of Lewis Lane developed slowly throughout the century and by 1850 it had its own church designed by the famous Victorian architect Sir Gilbert Scott [1811-1878] who had been responsible for such designs as St Pancras Station and the Albert Memorial in Hyde Park, London. Holy Trinity Church was paralleled by the construction of other nonconformist chapels and provision for Baptists, Methodists and Congregationalists throughout the now extended town; in 1896 a Roman Catholic Church was built in St Peters Road.
- 1.3.21 The Great Western Railway arrived in 1841 linking Cirencester with Kemble and onward to the growing railway network at Swindon. The station at the east end of the Tetbury Road was designed by the engineer Isambard Kingdom Brunel [1806-1859] and by 1883 a further branch line station was opened at Watermoor by the rival Midland and South Western Junction Railway. Until the 1960s the town was served by two stations providing both passenger and freight services.
- 1.3.22 New institutions and facilities also enabled the cultural life of the town to develop. The Wilts and Gloucestershire Standard moved to Cirencester in 1840 and soon developed a wide circulation. In 1870 a public outdoor swimming pool, one of the first in the country, opened off the River Walk. In 1880 education was made compulsory making the building of new schools increasingly more important. New facilities brought with them new architectural styles and materials. The increased use of brick, and Welsh slate and clay tile for roofs, made a significant addition to the traditional Cotswold palette of local materials.

### Twentieth and Twenty-First centuries

- 1.3.23 The early part of the new century brought additional facilities. By 1905 a new public library was provided in Dyer Street by the private benefactor Daniel George Bingham; Bingham Hall followed in 1908 and new styles of architecture, in many cases influenced by the Arts and Crafts Movement, made their mark on the town.
- 1.3.24 Cirencester, in the later part of the twentieth century needed to provide housing to meet the needs of a rapidly expanding population with a consequent rise in residential development on the outskirts of the town such as the Beeches & Chesterton Estates.
- 1.3.25 In the town centre, in line with post Second World War thinking on urban design, demolition of medieval and later developments was undertaken to provide for bold new buildings better suited to the needs of a modern society. Many schemes, including supermarkets and retail centres, are those that are generally least admired today; No 21-27, Dyer Street [currently partly occupied by Argos] are examples of buildings of large scale, bulk and massing that lack ornamentation and feature unsympathetic materials; there is a clear and sharp contrast with the genteel and lively,

distinctive, features of their more ancient neighbours.

- 1.3.26 The introduction of the car and its increasing importance has also had a major impact with the provision of large car parks developed on land freed up by the closure of the railways and on former nursery land. The construction of the dual carriageway ring road, whilst taking away the worst excesses of congestion from the town, has severed different communities and facilities. The amphitheatre and hospital, and housing development in the Chesterton and Beeches Estates are now, in visual terms if not completely in physical terms, divorced from the town centre.
- 1.3.27 On the whole, many twentieth-century developments, whilst often providing practical solutions to everyday needs and desires, can be considered to have diluted the historic character of the town. As a result, towards the end of the century and continuing into the twenty-first century, a greater understanding of the impact of change has resulted in developments which continue to meet the needs of their users whilst also trying to pay due regard to their context.



Figure 1.2: 1938 Ordnance Survey Map



1.3.28 A number of sites have been successfully redeveloped in the town centre; they include the rear of the Post Office in Castle Street and refurbishment and redevelopment of the Corn Hall and King's Head Hotel in the Market Place.

#### Timeline of Recent Developments

1.3.29 The town has undergone some significant changes to its built fabric and infrastructure over the past fifty years, the key milestones are summarised as follows:

##### 1960s

- Rail stations closed.
- Police Station and Magistrates Court built.
- CUDC is gifted the Abbey Grounds.
- Redevelopment in Dyer Street including the Catalpa Square development.

##### 1970s

- Redevelopment in Dyer Street including the premises now occupied by Argos.
- The new Library opened.
- Redeveloped Corinium Museum opened.
- the ring road was completed as a dual carriage way connection from the Stroud / Tetbury junction (A419/ A429) to the Swindon Road (A419), the Burford Road (A 429) and the Cheltenham Road (A435).
- Brewery Arts Centre opened.

##### 1980s

- The Woolmarket shopping centre opened.
- Cricklade Street was the subject of a traffic restriction order limiting vehicles access 9.30-4.30 Monday – Saturday inclusive.
- Swan Yard is opened as a privately owned gated pedestrian lane.

##### 1990s

- Bishop's Walk, developed off Cricklade Street.
- Heavy congestion of the ring road was relieved following the completion of the A419/417 Swindon / Gloucester bypass.
- Waitrose moved from the east end of the town in Dyer Street to the west end, Hammond Way.

##### 2000s

- The Leisure Centre relocated north-west allowing the redevelopment of its former site.
- Public realm improvements to the western end of Castle Street, Park Lane, Park Street and Silver Street.
- St James's Place, developed new office accommodation on the former Leisure Centre site on Hammond Way.
- The Post and Sorting Office was redeveloped including a new pedestrian link from Castle Street to Black Jack Street and linking through to Swan Yard.
- The Corn Hall is re-opened following refurbishment and now includes independent retail units and a high quality pedestrian link through the building.

##### 2010s

- The renovation of the town hall / front porch of the Parish Church.
- The renovation of the Kings Head Hotel is completed.
- Public Realm improvements to the Market Place.

## 1.4 Protected Heritage Assets

### Conservation Areas & Listed Buildings

1.4.1 There are currently four designated Conservation Areas in Cirencester (see Figure 1.3):

1. Cirencester Park.
2. Gloucester Street & River Walk.
3. Cirencester Town Centre.
4. Cirencester South.

1.4.2 A full and detailed assessment of the Conservation Areas is contained within the 'Cirencester Town Centre Character Appraisal & Management Plan', Cotswold District Council, 2008.

1.4.3 In aggregate, these Conservation Areas cover most of the town centre areas within the ring road, the exceptions being pockets of twentieth century housing development to the north and south of the Abbey Grounds, and a strip of

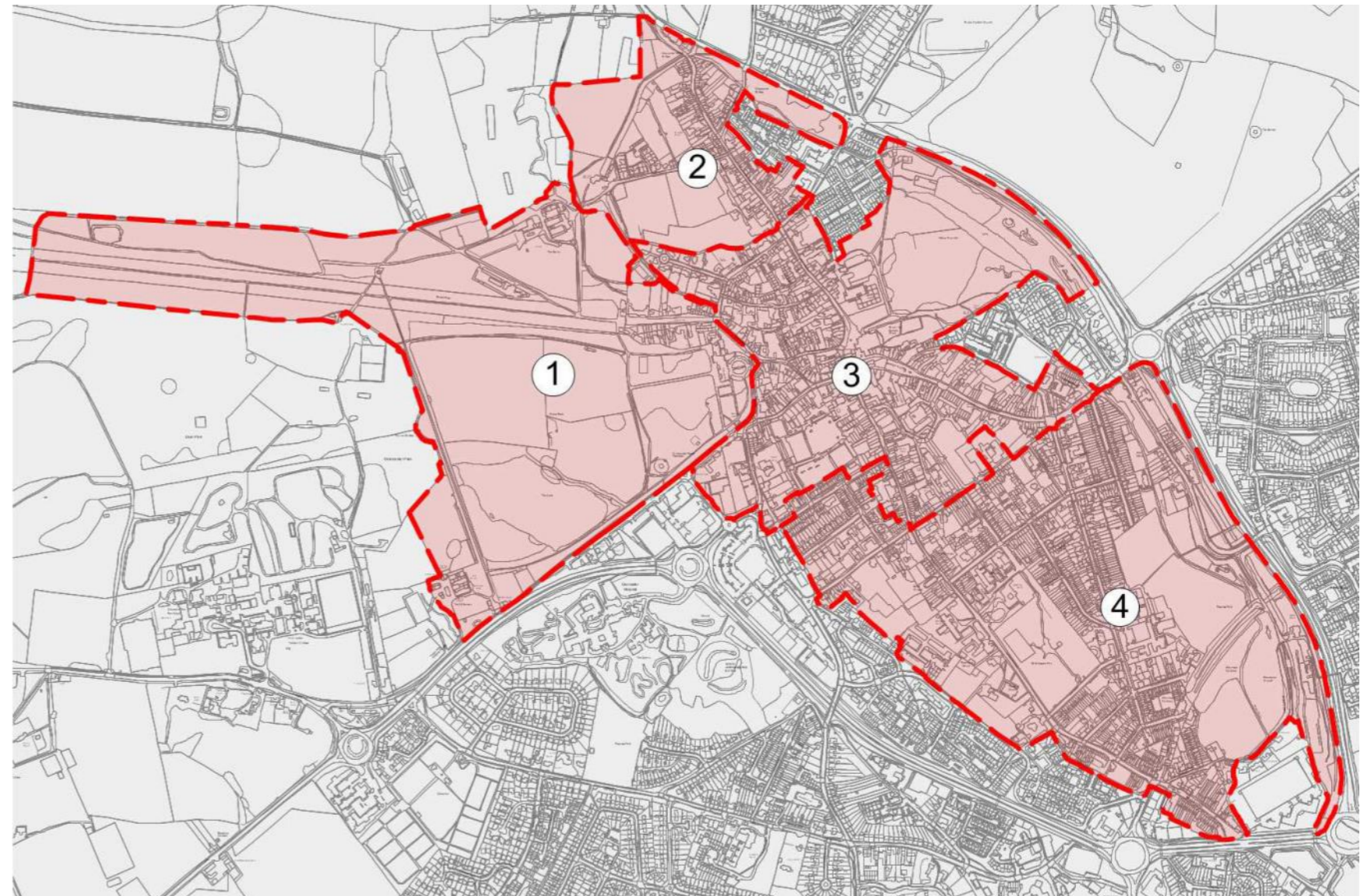


Figure 1.3: Conservation Areas



twentieth century residential and commercial development extending from Trinity Road in the south to Waitrose and St James's Place in the north.

- 1.4.4 The Park Conservation Area has an unusually high proportion of listed buildings within its boundary, 6 of which are listed Grade II\* and the remainder, of some 36 in total, listed Grade II.
- 1.4.5 The Gloucester Street and River Walk Conservation Area also has a high proportion of listed buildings within its boundary; the surviving arcade of the hall of the Hospital of St John, founded by Henry II in 1133, is a Grade I Listed Building. There are also five Grade II\* listed buildings with the remainder, 49 out of a total of 55, listed Grade II.
- 1.4.6 The Cirencester Town Centre Conservation Area has a high proportion of listed buildings within its boundary. The exceptional parish church of St John Baptist is listed Grade I. Also given the highest grading is the gatehouse to the former Abbey known locally as the Norman Arch. There are also nine Grade II\* listed buildings and 168 listed Grade II in this area.
- 1.4.7 The Cirencester South Conservation Area contains a fairly low number of listed buildings within its boundary compared with the other conservation areas. This is most likely because the majority of the historic buildings it contains are Victorian or later in date. Of the 30 listed building entries on the Register, two are listed Grade II\*, namely 1 Querns Lane / Watermoor Road, and the Church of the Holy Trinity, Watermoor Road. The remaining 28 entries are listed Grade II.

**Scheduled Monuments**

- 1.4.8 Cirencester has a rich archaeological heritage due to the activity of the town's inhabitants over many centuries. Much of what remains is buried but is close to the ground surface and so vulnerable to damage from development or changes that require excavation.
- 1.4.9 In recognition of the national importance of Cirencester's archaeology, large areas of the town are designated as scheduled monuments under the Ancient Monuments (see Figure 1.5) and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. The designation seeks to ensure that the case for preservation is fully considered when any proposals for development are being prepared.
- 1.4.10 Given the nature of the archaeological remains in Cirencester, it is important to consider the archaeological constraints and the potential for archaeological finds when carrying out public realm improvements. This can have significant implications for finances, timescales and design decisions. Minimising the depth and extents of excavations can be a sensible approach to mitigating the risk when working in nearly all areas of the town.



Figure 1.4: Listed Buildings

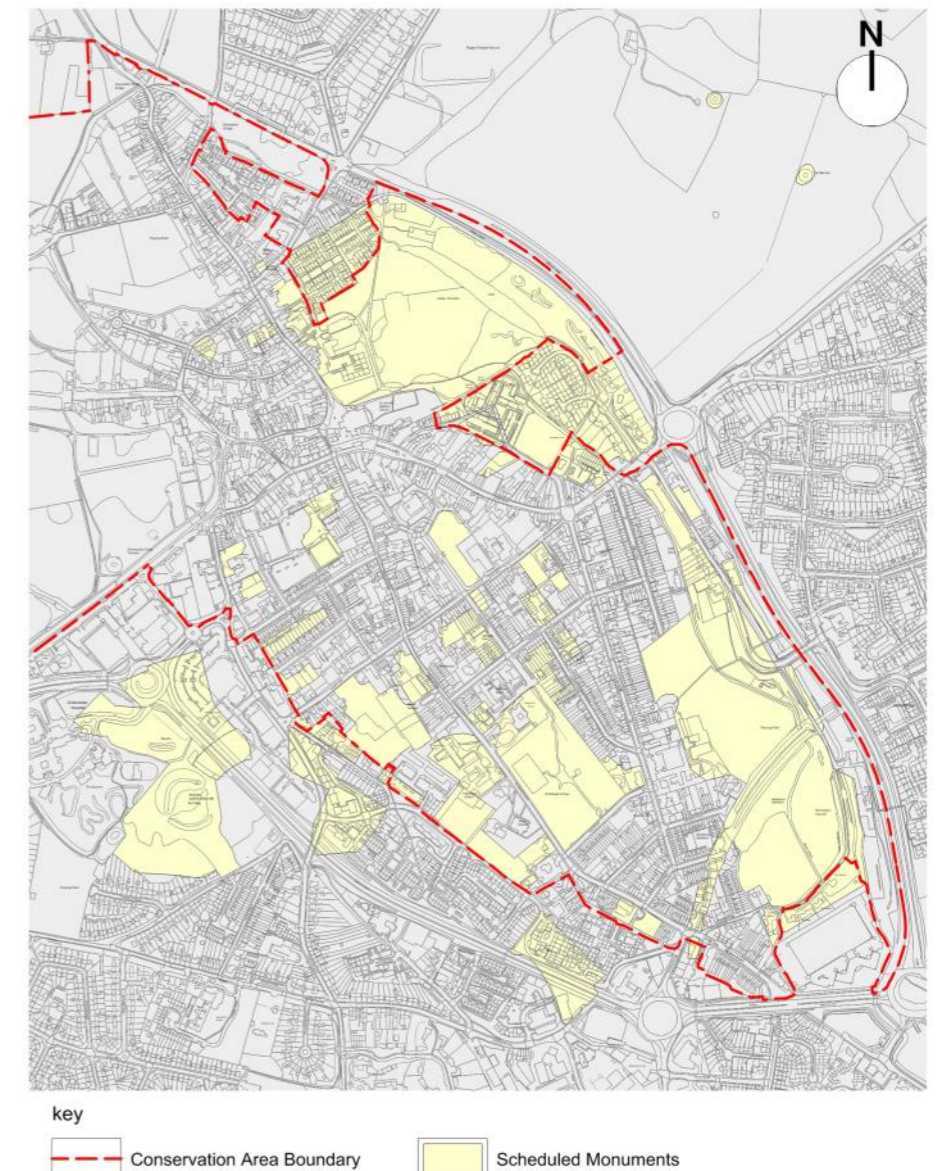


Figure 1.5: Scheduled Monuments



# 2 Public Realm Strategy

## 2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The following section describes the proposed Public Realm Strategy for future change. This is in part informed by Cirencester's past and the layers of historical development which have evolved and shaped the pattern and character of Cirencester's streetscape. An understanding of this rich history should in turn inform and enhance future development.

2.1.2 The existing network of streets within the town centre and conservation areas have been both analysed and then categorised, in broad terms to better understand their distribution, character and function.

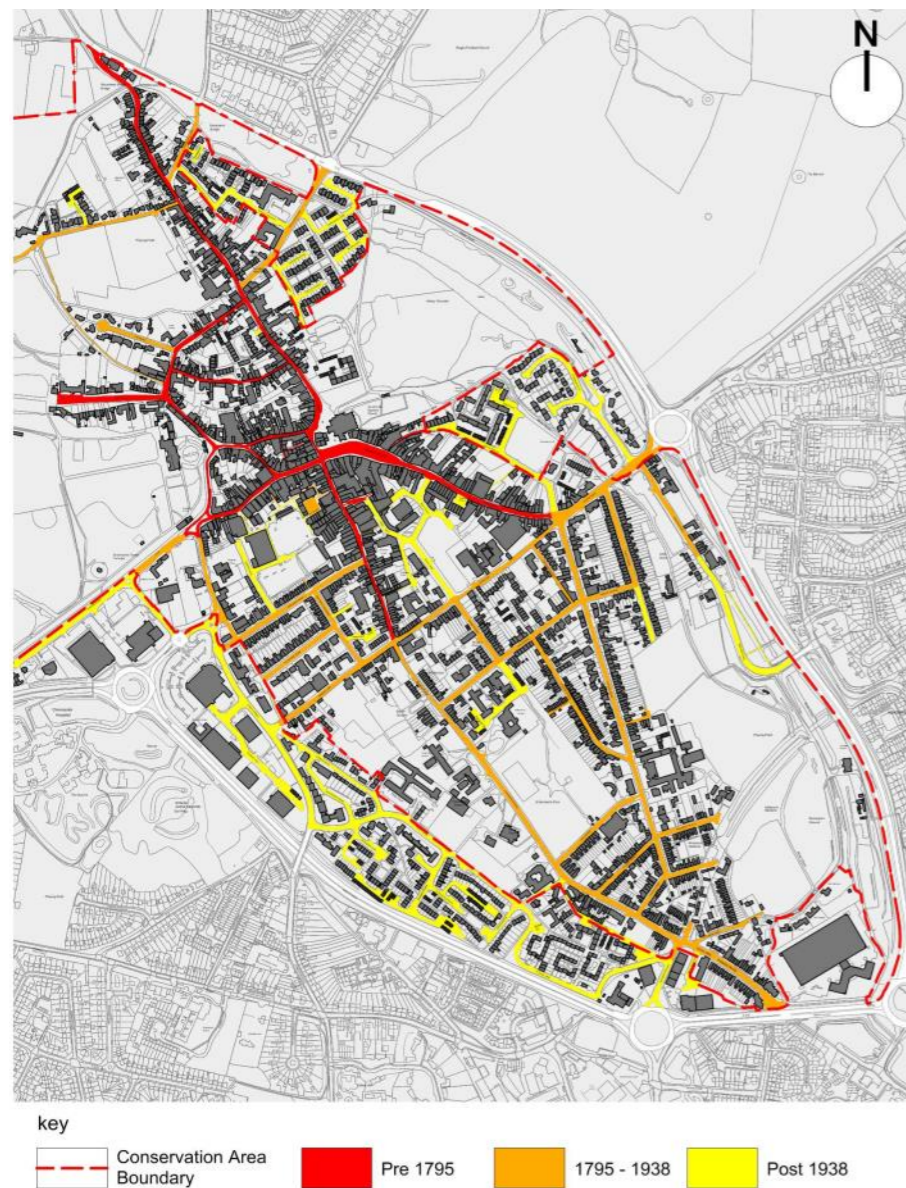


Figure 2.1: Street Character Map

2.1.3 By its nature, this categorisation of streets is a simplification of the individuality of the streets in Cirencester. However it is important that the strategy achieves an overall coherence, and that this Design Code is not overly complex, therefore generalisations have been made in order to create a clear and easy to use strategy.

2.1.4 The intention is not to create a homogenised approach to public realm, rather to draw out the individual character of streets and reflect their distinctiveness.

2.1.5 This section summarises the existing street character and materials, before outlining the strategy for future change.

## 2.2 Street Character

2.2.1 The streets of Cirencester town centre and the Conservation Areas can be split into three broad character types based on the age of the built fabric (see Figure 2.1):

- a) **Medieval streets** - based around the town centre core and the streets to the north, these are typically narrow winding streets, with Cotswold stone buildings. The extents of the town remained quite tightly confined until the nineteenth century and there are a number of notable Georgian buildings within this medieval core. Reference has been made to the 1795 plan of Cirencester (Figure 1.1) which shows the built extents of the town at this time.
- b) **Victorian & Edwardian Streets** - these are typically streets from the Victorian and Edwardian periods, many of which developed following the arrival of the railways. Consequently the materials are more varied with the widespread use of red brick evident in some streets. Most of these streets are to be found to the south of town centre core. These streets typically have a rectilinear street pattern and are wider sometimes including formal street tree planting. Reference has been made to the 1938 ordnance Survey map of Cirencester (Figure 1.2) which shows the built extents of the town at this time.
- c) **Modern 20th Century Streets** - These are the streets that have been developed post Second World War. This includes pockets of redevelopment around the edges of the town centre as well as larger swathes of development that took place following the closure of the railways in the 1960s.



Figure 2.2: Medieval Streets - Gosditch Street



Figure 2.3: Victorian Streets - Ashcroft Road

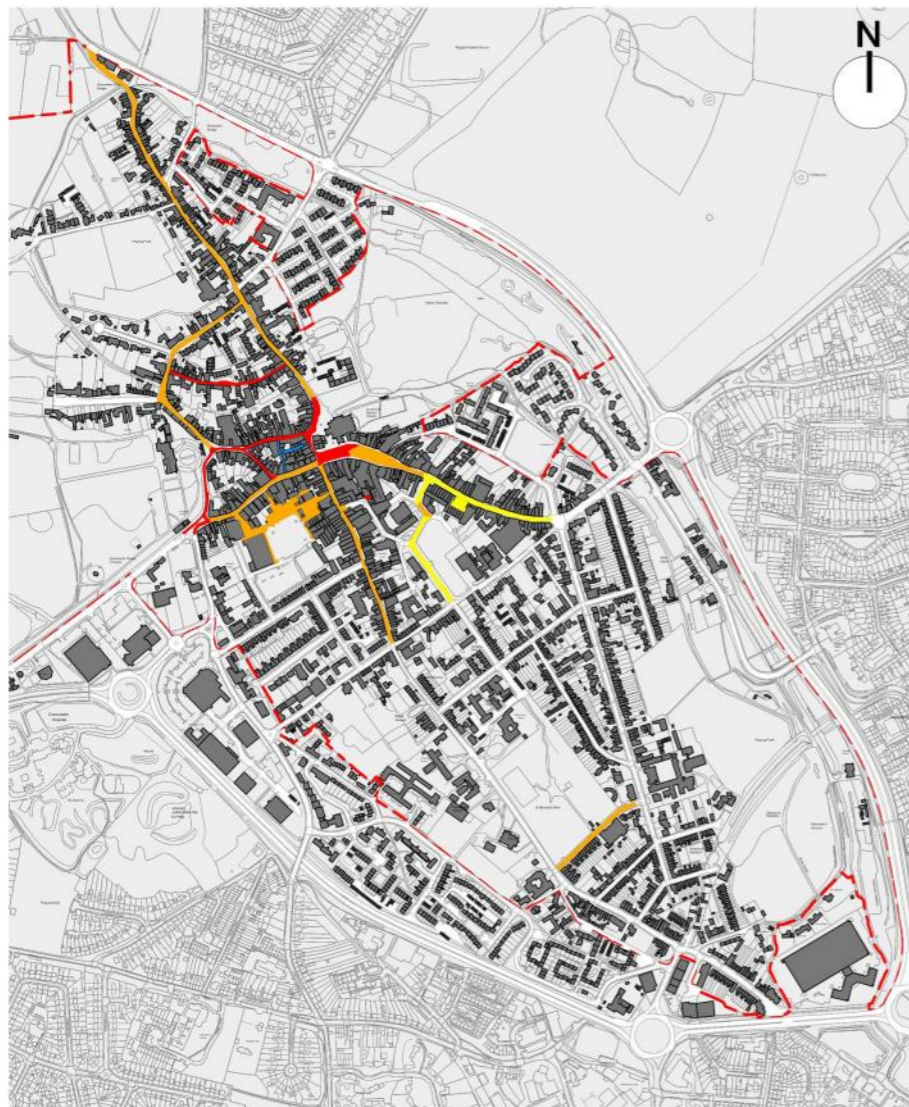


Figure 2.4; Modern 20th Century Streets - South Street



## 2.3 Existing Public Realm

2.3.1 In addition to the standard bitmac/asphalt finishes, the paving materials currently used within the town centre comprise a mix of natural stone paving, pre-cast concrete block and flag paving, and small areas of blue brick paving. The non standard paving types are generally restricted to the town centre core, retail areas and the older parts of town, with basic bitmac/asphalt used in the more peripheral and residential areas to the south. Public realm detailing is examined in more detail within Section 3.2 of this report.



KEY TO EXISTING PAVEMENT FINISHES

- Natural Stone Paving
- Precast Concrete Block Paving
- Precast Concrete Flag Paving
- Blue Brick Paving
- Tarmac Footways

Figure 2.5: Existing Pavement Finishes Plan

## 2.4 Proposed Public Realm Street Types

2.4.1 As well as considering the character and historic qualities of each street, the public realm strategy also considers how each street functions as part of the overall network of streets. Each street is categorised into a hierarchy of street types based on its location, character, and how it is used (Figure 2.7).

2.4.2 A series of 7 street typologies have been developed to guide street improvements within the town (see Figures 2.6). These are designed to incorporate a variety of different complementary surface treatments, appropriate to different settings, that used together, create a coherent public realm.

2.4.3 Three different surface treatments are proposed for footways/pavements:

- Natural stone paving in key spaces within the town centre (street types 1-3).
- Concrete block paving to be widely used on the streets around the town core (street types 4-5).
- Asphalt footway to be used on peripheral streets (street types 6-7).

2.4.4 Across all street types kerbs and channels need robust detailing. There is a preference for using wide top kerbs on main streets where street widths allow. Within the town centre core and within the older parts of the town, a block/sett channel detail is preferred. Elsewhere a simpler flush concrete channel should be used.

2.4.5 As an overarching principle, where the carriageway is surfaced in asphalt, rolled in chippings should be used to soften the appearance.

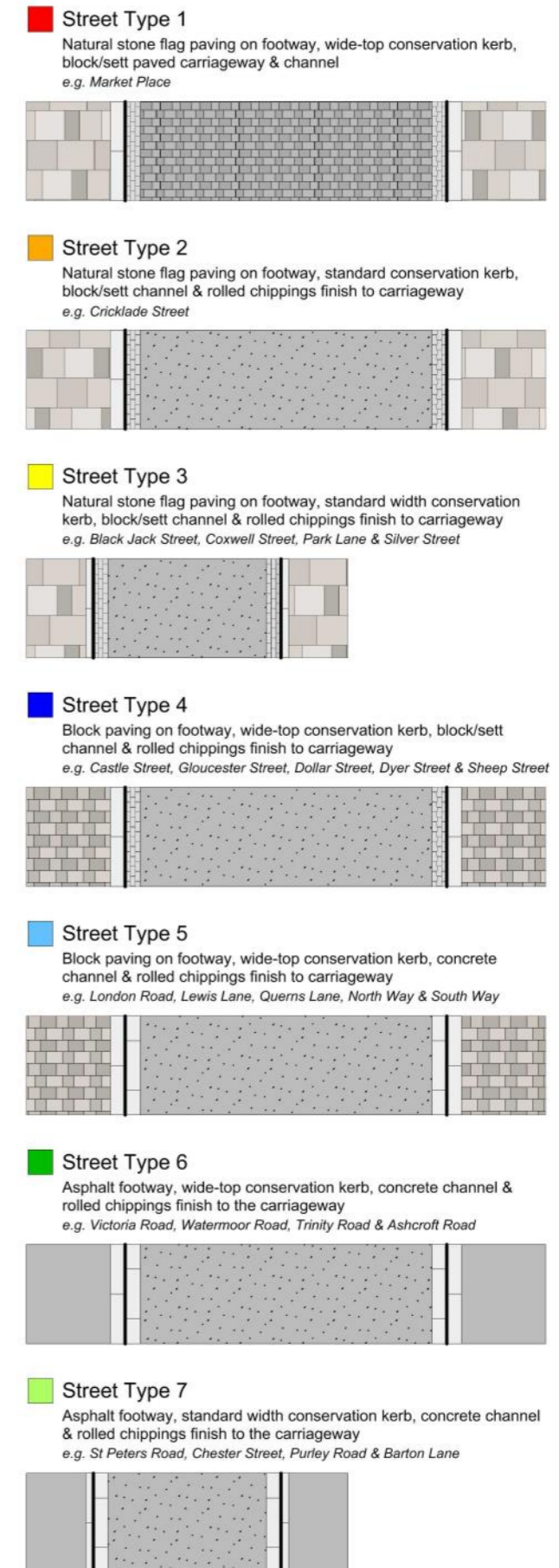
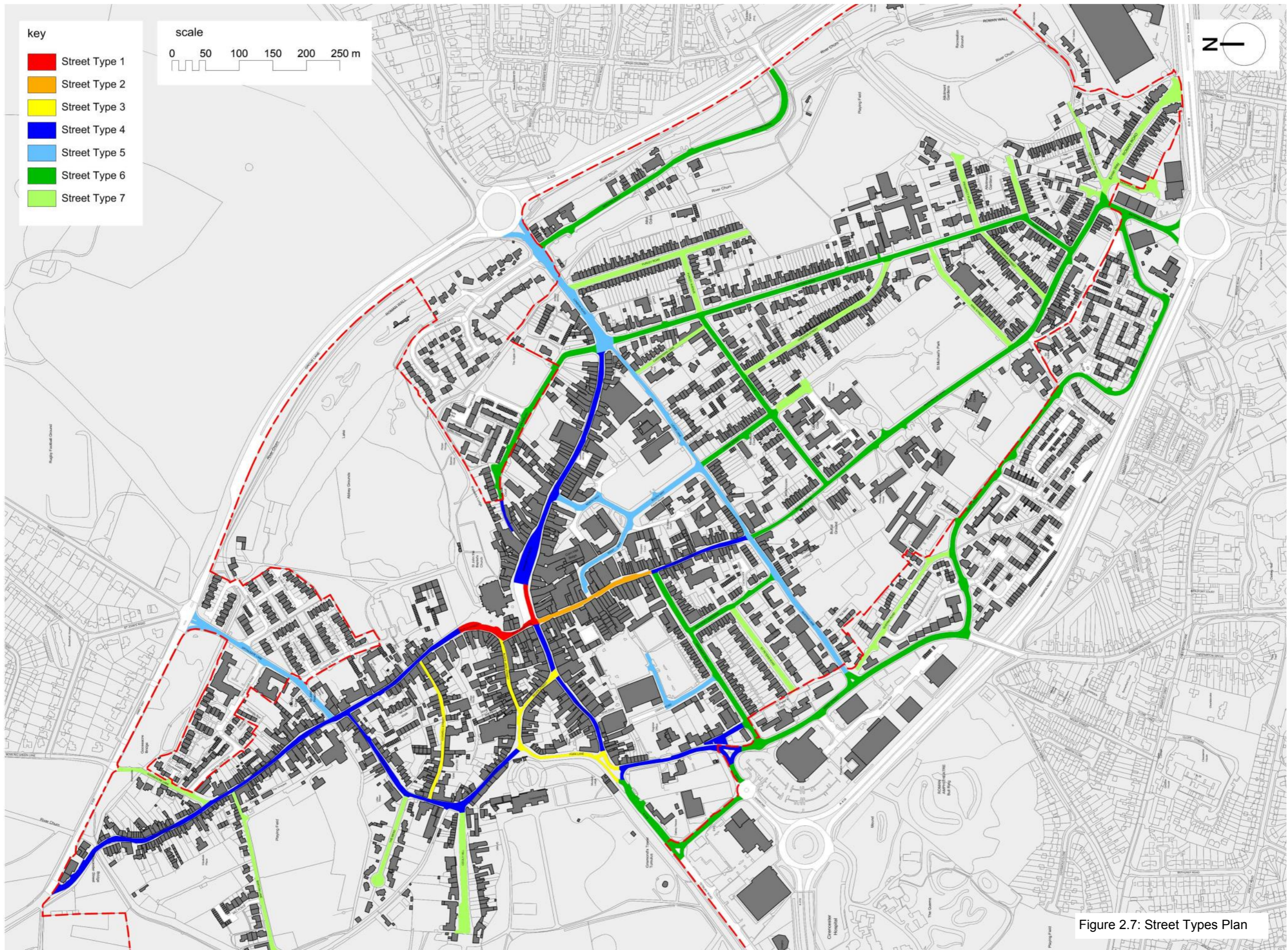


Figure 2.6: Proposed Street Type Details







### (i) Natural Stone Paved Streets (Street Types 1-3)

- 2.4.6 Natural stone is the highest quality of paving finish and also a traditional paving finish. It is already used on footpaths in a number of locations within the older parts of town. It is however the most expensive paving finish and so its use should be focused in areas where it has most beneficial effect.
- 2.4.7 Natural stone paving is most appropriate in the more historic parts of town, outside key buildings and in the parts of the town centre with the most footfall.
- 2.4.8 **Street Type 1** is for use in key spaces, where traffic flows are limited, the use of concrete block or sett paving in the carriageway should be used to signal to both pedestrians and vehicular users that there is a greater emphasis on pedestrian use within the space.
- 2.4.9 **Street Types 2 & 3** are variations for use with an asphalt carriageway, with alternative kerbing options depending on the width of street.

### (ii) Block Paved Streets (Street Types 4-5)

- 2.4.10 The use of concrete block paving on footways achieves a balance between affordability and aesthetics. Though not being as high quality as natural stone, when used well concrete block paving can provide an attractive, durable finish that is sympathetic to the character of the town.
- 2.4.11 **Street Type 4** is equivalent to the palette of materials being used widely in the public realm improvement scheme in the Market Place. The concrete block paving is a robust and durable replacement for the cracked concrete paving flags that they replace and are more sympathetic to the street character. The sett channel at the edge of the road is an attractive traditional looking detail which narrows the perceived width of the carriageway.
- 2.4.12 **Street Type 5** is intended for use on the busier connecting streets outside the medieval town centre core. These streets deal with high volumes of vehicular traffic but are very important to the appearance and perception of the town, as for many these streets provide the first impression on arrival in Cirencester. The suggested palette of materials is therefore very similar to those suggested for Street Type 4, but the channel detail is changed to large flush concrete channel. These are already in common use within the town, outside the medieval core, and provide a more robust detail than a sett channel.

### (iii) Asphalt Footway (Street Types 6-7)

- 2.4.13 Asphalt footways are proposed for many of the peripheral streets around the town centre. Many of course are already

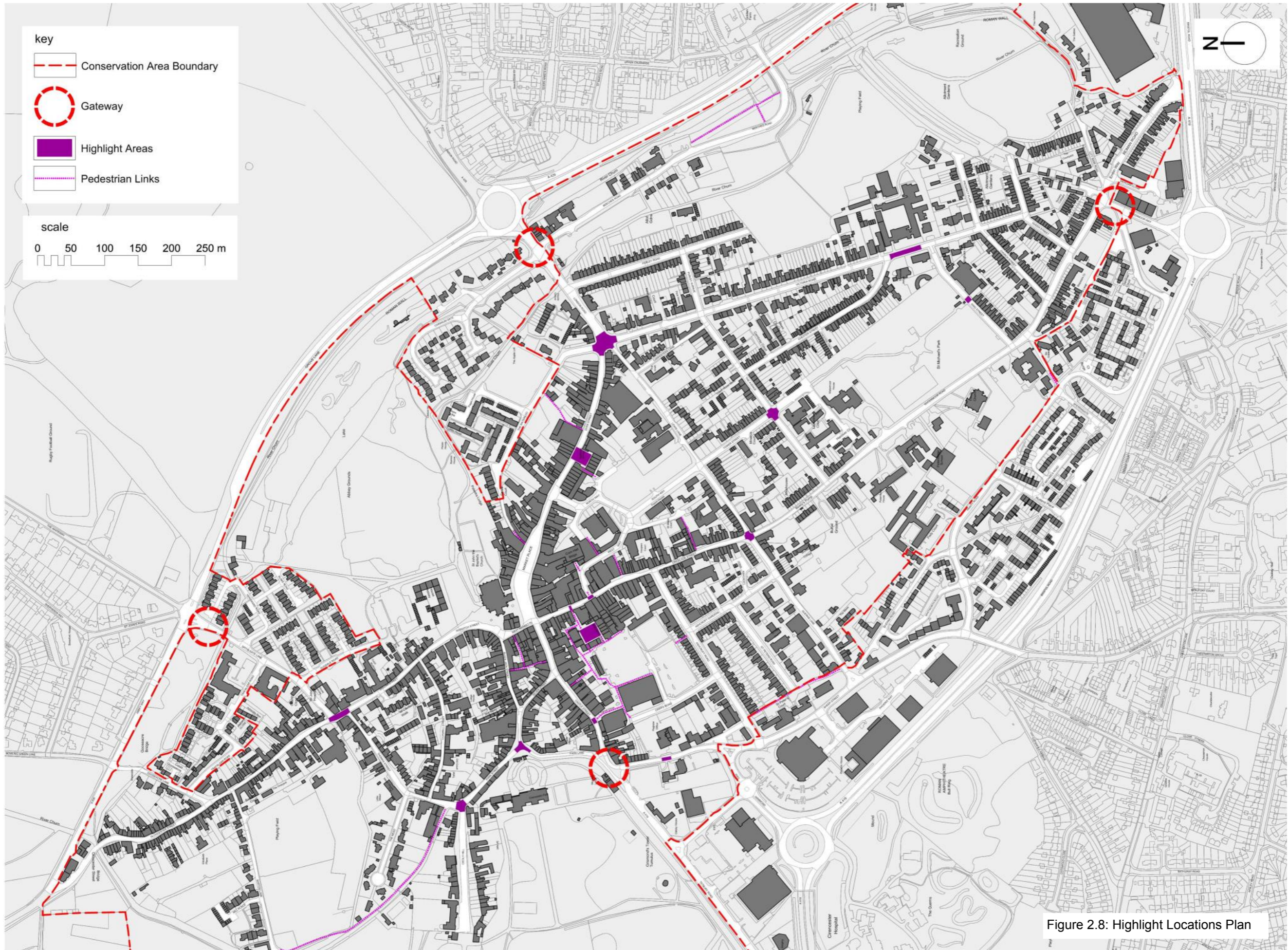
surfaced in this way and it is appropriate that they should stay this way. Tar was first used to bind stone chippings on roads in the 19th century and its use became widespread in the early 20th century so the use of asphalt/bitumen macadam on the streets around the periphery of the town centre is in keeping with the architecture in these Victorian, Edwardian and twentieth century residential streets.

- 2.4.14 **Street Types 6 & 7** are two variations with alternative kerbing options depending on the width of street.

## 2.5 Public Realm Highlight Locations

- 2.5.1 Overlaying the coordinating strategy of street types and character, there is also the need for the public realm to respond to individual locations, gateways, key junctions, and pedestrian routes etc. This has been shown on a separate plan (Figure 2.8) as the treatment of these locations will not necessarily strictly conform to a standardised palette but instead will be an adaption of the palette for the adjacent streets. Notwithstanding other considerations such as the treatment of traffic calming, taxi rank provision, disabled parking, bus stops and loading/unloading for local businesses.
- 2.5.2 **Gateway locations** have been identified at key entry points into the town centre. As well as uplifted public realm treatment, these locations may also be marked by signage, stone totems (as seen at the western end of Castle Street), sculpture (for example the March Hare sculpture on Watermoor Road) or other interventions to improve the sense of arrival.
- 2.5.3 Other highlight locations include **key junctions** within the town. These warrant articulation, potentially with uplifted public realm treatment and an increased emphasis on pedestrian priority.
- 2.5.4 **Key buildings** and **important historic locations** should be acknowledged in the public realm design. This may be achieved in different ways. Whilst the most appropriate approach in front of key buildings is likely to be through the surface treatment, other historic locations may be more effectively highlighted through interpretive signage, or bespoke street furniture.
- 2.5.5 One of the positive features of Cirencester are the numerous small alley ways and mews secreted within the town centre. These are important features that are easily missed, The public realm design should acknowledge these important pedestrian linkages in the surface treatment of footways, carriageways and **crossings**.







## 2.6 Pedestrian Links & Spaces

- 2.6.1 There are many alleys, mews and pedestrian routes within the town. Not all have been identified within the strategy just the key linkages (Figure 2.8).
- 2.6.2 Traditional detailing for these routes prior to the nineteenth century used natural stone flags and setts of different sizes in combination. This should be the approach within the medieval core of the town.
- 2.6.3 In the Victorian period blue bricks were commonly used in such spaces and this type of detailing has been used successfully in the redevelopment of the old Post Office and it lends a strong character to Swan Yard and the linking alleyway.
- 2.6.4 Many contemporary schemes just use concrete flag paving for pedestrian links but this approach doesn't respond well to the scale of the space nor to the character of Cirencester. Instead pedestrian links in contemporary spaces should be surfaced primarily in concrete block paving laid in courses. More traditional detailing found elsewhere in Cirencester could also be adopted in such areas including the use of blue brick or natural stone setts.
- 2.6.5 It is a similar situation with public squares within the town. Both Brewery Court and Catalpa Square would benefit from new public realm treatment and the use of paving materials or detailing with more local character.



Figure 2.9: Pedestrian alley off Castle Street



Figure 2.10: Brewery Court

## 2.7 Green Streets

- 2.7.1 With the exception of the large cedar tree to the west of the parish church, street trees do not form part of the streetscene within the medieval core of Cirencester. However to counterbalance this, the Abbey Grounds to the east and the Bathurst Estate to west, provide large open green spaces close to the centre of the town.
- 2.7.2 Within the Victorian parts of the town the character of Cirencester is quite different, front gardens create a leafier character. The streets are generally wider and a number of streets, most notably The Avenue and Victoria Road, include street trees.
- 2.7.3 Post war development within Cirencester has maintained this leafy character through the use of street trees (for example along South Way). In some areas the character becomes more suburban due to the introduction of wide grass verges and ornamental shrub planting
- 2.7.4 The tree planting strategy in Cirencester should enforce the character of the streets as described above. Tree planting should be kept out of the narrow medieval core of the town and should only be used to form formal avenues within the wide Victorian streets. Street trees can also be used to enhance contemporary development within the town although further suburbanisation through the use of grass verges and ornamental planting should not be encouraged.
- 2.7.5 When proposing new tree planting, the archaeological constraints need to be considered. This makes new tree planting within the Scheduled Monument areas (see Figure 1.5) very difficult. With this in mind every effort should be made to retain existing trees within these areas.



Figure 2.11: The Avenue







# 3 Streetscape Detailing

## 3.1 Approach

- 3.1.1 The very high quality of the built form within Cirencester's town centre and Conservation Areas is not, on the whole, mirrored by good quality public realm. The public realm offers significant opportunities for enhancement and interpretation of the town's rich architectural and historic past.
- 3.1.2 Recent public realm improvements at the west end of the town centre, specifically Park Lane, Silver Street and Black Jack Street, serve to demonstrate the considerable benefits of investment in the public realm. The Market Place improvements create a positive step change for the public realm within the town and is likely to highlight the shortcomings of other key areas such as Cricklade Street.
- 3.1.3 As a Design Code for future public realm improvement, this document provides a coherent strategy with clear guidance on appropriate public realm treatment for the streets within Cirencester town centre and Conservation Areas.
- 3.1.4 Future public realm development and improvements within Cirencester should comply with the following broad principles:
  - a) Streetscape designs should enhance the public realm and create a safer and more legible, relaxed environment for pedestrians.
  - b) Materials should respect the fabric of the historic streets and Market Place to reinforce local identity and will be selected from a limited palette of high quality materials to ensure design continuity.
  - c) Materials should be easy to maintain, fit for purpose, durable, and sustainable.
  - d) Designs should accommodate the needs of people with disabilities that may affect mobility, sensory or cognitive impairment.
  - e) The design of spaces should be flexible enough to accommodate various uses both now and in the future.
  - f) The design of the public realm should highlight and articulate special places and buildings within the townscape including entrances to key buildings; pedestrian routes and crossings; and sitting areas.

## 3.2 Surface Treatment

### Traditional paving detailing

- 3.2.1 The surface treatment within Cirencester town centre and Conservation Areas consists predominantly of plain black asphalt/bitmac to most carriageways and to many of the footways.
- 3.2.2 Traditional paving detailing can still be seen within the town though. Local Cotswold limestone is generally not robust enough to be used for paving except in the form of rough setts bedded on edge (Figure 3.1). Traditionally paving flags tended to be made from Yorkstone or local pennant stone. Once weathered the two stone types look very similar.
- 3.2.3 The area outside the western doors of the parish church and across to Gosditch Street is paved in natural Yorkstone paving flags (Figure 3.3). Typically this paving is random length flags laid in courses of varying widths. In places the paving has been cut in tapered courses to allow the creation of faceted paving patterns that respond to the complex curvilinear street pattern. The Yorkstone flag paving has been used in conjunction with panels of limestone setts. The kerbs are Yorkstone and there are Yorkstone channels as well.
- 3.2.4 Coxwell Street is another example where Yorkstone flag paving can be seen used in combination with Yorkstone kerbs (Figure 3.2).



Figure 3.3: Yorkstone flags on Gosditch Street

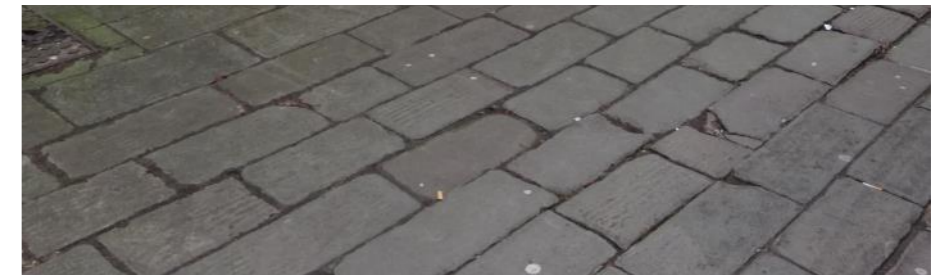


Figure 3.4: Large random length setts in Castle Street



Figure 3.1: Limestone setts in Gosditch Street



Figure 3.2: Yorkstone flags and kerbs in Coxwell Street



Figure 3.5: Wide top natural stone kerb and channel on Tetbury Road

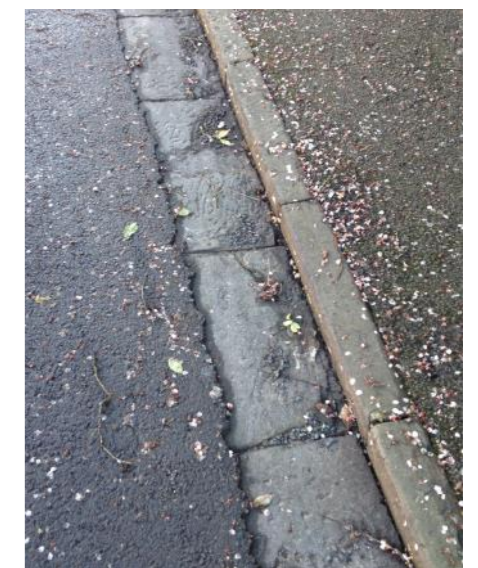


Figure 3.6: Standard width natural stone kerb & channel on Cecily Hill





Figure 3.7: Diamond chequered blue brick pavers is widely used in front gardens on Ashcroft Road



Figure 3.8: Mosaic detail found in the paving on Dyer Street

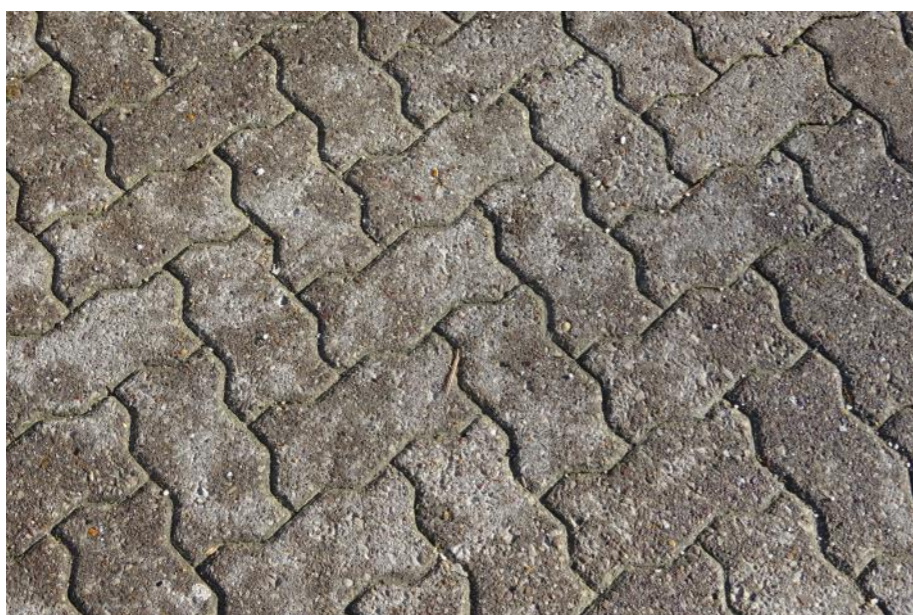


Figure 3.9: Modern interlocking concrete block paving detracts from the character and appearance of the streetscape

3.2.5 Many of the alleyways within the old medieval core of the town retain some historic paving detailing. This mostly consists of stone setts of varying types and sizes, including large to medium pennant stone setts and small granite setts.

3.2.6 Following the arrival of the railway in the 19th century the palette of building and paving materials used within the town diversified. Along with the use of red brick in buildings came the use of Staffordshire blue brick paviers for paving. These were used particularly in the front gardens of residential properties, often in combination with blue clay edgings, a detail which can still be seen to the front of many of the properties along Ashcroft Road (Figure 3.7).

3.2.7 Slightly more unusual form of detailing is the use of mosaics at the thresholds to shops and offices which is in evidence both on Dyer Street and Gloucester Street (Figure 3.8).

### Contemporary paving schemes

3.2.8 Interlocking concrete block paving has been used widely throughout the town including in the Market Place, Castle Street, Cricklade Street, Dollar Street, Gloucester Street, Brewery Car Park, Brewery Yard and in the Watermoor area of town along King Street. This block paving has an unsympathetic form and texture and generally detracts from the character and appearance of the streetscape (Figure 3.9).

3.2.9 More recent public realm schemes have been more successful though.

3.2.10 In the 1990's Park Lane, Park Street and Silver Street were repaved. This scheme used random length Yorkstone flags on the pavements and dark grey granite kerbs. The carriageway is generally surfaced in asphalt with rolled in granite chippings but to either side 3 rows of tumbled Yorkstone setts are used to form a channel next to the kerb (Figure 3.10). Tumbled Yorkstone setts are also used for parking bays and to mark uncontrolled pedestrian crossings.

3.2.11 This scheme was implemented as part of the Cirencester Traffic & Environment Plan (CTEP), a joint initiative between the Town, District and County Councils to tackle traffic management and environmental improvements in Cirencester town centre. The scheme has delivered a high quality public realm which sets the benchmark for public realm in the town.

3.2.12 In the late 2000s as part of the privately funded redevelopment of the old Post and Sorting Office a pedestrian alley was created linking Castle Street with Black Jack Street via Swan Yard. The pedestrian alley and Swan Yard have been surfaced with blue engineering bricks (Figures 3.11 & 3.12) whilst Black Jack Street has been paved with Yorkstone flags with a black asphalt carriageway and flush granite sett edging (Figure 3.13). Whilst the



Figure 3.10: Successful natural stone paving scheme in Park Lane using Yorkstone flags and setts and granite kerbs



Figure 3.11: Blue brick paving used in the redevelopment of the old Post Office to give a strong Victorian character to the alleyways





Figure 3.12: Blue brick paving in Swan Yard



Figure 3.13: Yorkstone flags, granite setts and blue brick paving on Black Jack Street

standard of finish and detailing may not be as high as that achieved with the earlier CTEP scheme the redevelopment has nonetheless been very successful and has had a positive effect on the local streetscape.

### Design principles

3.2.13 Notwithstanding the principles set out in the street hierarchy (section 2) the following overarching principles should be adopted for the design of the public realm in Cirencester:

- a) Paving design should respect the scale and proportion of streets and the age and character of the surrounding built fabric.
- b) Paving materials should be of a high quality, durable and suitable for the anticipated loading.
- c) Paving materials should match or complement the historic palette.
- d) Areas of surviving historic surfacing should be retained as part of any scheme.
- e) Historic pavement features such as cast iron gullies should be retained.
- f) Street design shall comply with the Highways Authority standards.
- g) Paving should be easy to repair so that utilities work does not lead to bad patched repairs. Where unusual paving materials or sizes are used, a stock of replacement materials should be kept.
- h) Kerb lines should be retained and defined by both material and a level change. Use of a low kerb (50 mm drop) forms the best balance between the needs of visually impaired users who require a physical edge to the side of a carriageway and those such as buggy users who require minimal level change to enable free movement. Use of kerbs of contrasting colour to the footway/carriageway should be considered as an aid to the visually impaired, as long as the materials used are appropriate to the setting.
- i) Pedestrian crossing points should be defined by tactile paving. In areas of natural stone paving tactile paving should be made from the same material. This is preferable to the use of generic coloured (buff / red) pre-cast concrete tactile paving.
- j) Inspection chamber covers shall be carefully integrated within the paving through the use of recessed covers.
- k) Ducting should be incorporated in sensitive or high quality areas in order to avoid future disruption associated with installation of future services.

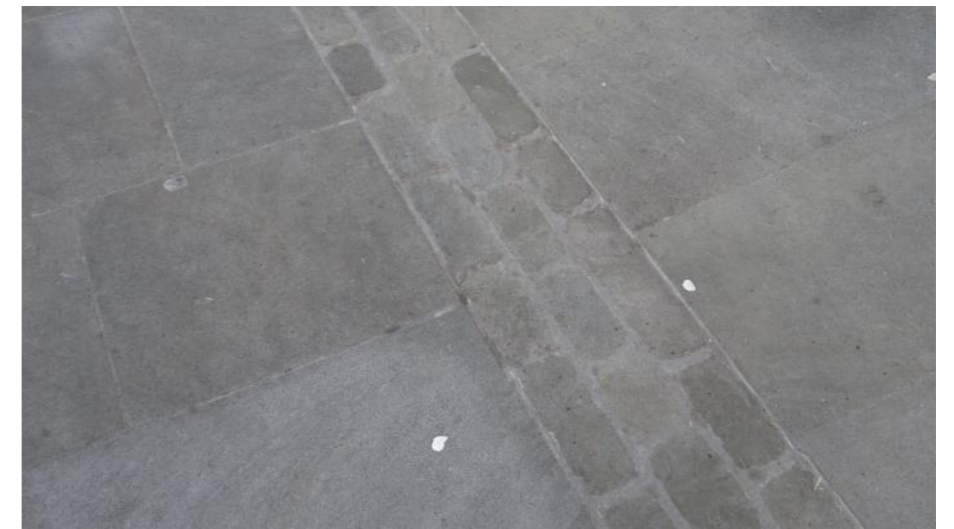


Figure 3.14: Yorkstone flag paving with Yorkstone sett channel detail on

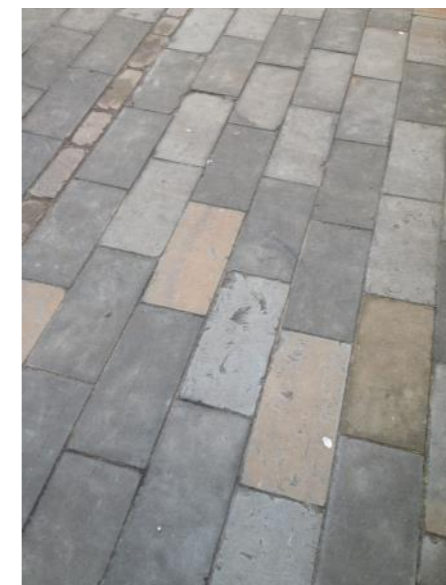


Figure 3.15: Large Yorkstone setts across a vehicular access on Park Street

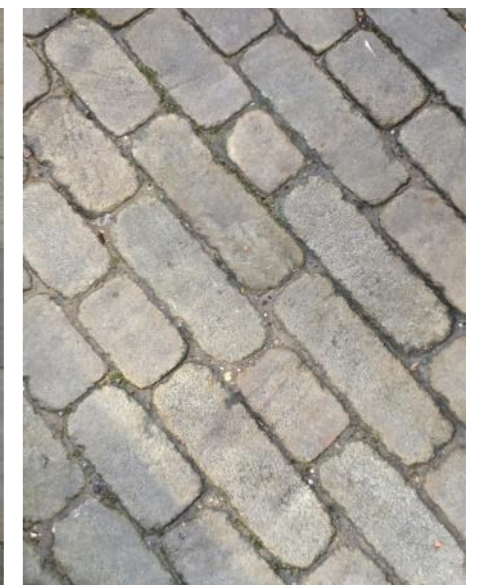


Figure 3.16: Tumbled Yorkstone setts to parking bays on Park Lane Street



Figure 3.17: Historic cast Iron gully detail on Gloucester Street



### 3.3 Street Furniture

3.3.1 **Seats and benches** of various designs can be found throughout the town, these are mostly unobtrusive and simple in design although in places perhaps too few in number. These include:

- Simple slatted steel seats in Catalpa Square, at the Library, outside the Corn Hall, on Gosditch Street and a much older example on Tetbury Road (Figures 3.18 and 3.19).
- Timber benches in the Market Place.
- A timber bench around the cedar tree (Figure 3.20) on Gosditch Street.
- A timber and cast iron tree seat at the junction between West Way and Cricklade Street.
- A heritage style cast iron bench with timber slats in Brewery car park.
- Concrete benches on South Way.
- Timber seats on Cecily Hill.

3.3.2 The type of **litter bin** most commonly used within Cirencester is a cylindrical green reinforced plastic design (Figure 3.21). It is traditional in style without being ornate. These litter bins are inoffensive but not particularly attractive. A few litter bins include separate compartments for recyclables (Figure 3.22). This is likely to be an increasing requirement.

3.3.3 **Cycle stands** are currently provided on Gosditch Street; in the Brewery car park; at Waitrose; at the Library and at the Leisure Centre. They are generally a tubular steel hoop design in various types of finish.

3.3.4 A range of **bollards** are in use within the town. Large square section timber bollards have been used extensively within the town including in the Black Jack Street / Park Street / Silver Street area (Figure 3.23). They have a traditional, rural feel and are also quite distinctive. Traffic signage can easily be mounted onto these bollards, reducing clutter. They work well within the town. In more formal areas, like outside Cirencester Park on Park Lane, a square section cast iron bollard has been used (Figure 3.24), whilst stone bollards form a gateway feature at the western end of Castle Street (Figure 3.25).

3.3.5 Other examples within the town are more generic and detract from, rather than add to the character of the town. These include generic black cast iron bollards on Cricklade Street; green cast iron bollards around the Brewery car park; concrete bollards on The Waterloo and plastic bollards in residential areas.



Figure 3.18: Simple slatted steel seats, as here on Gosditch Street, are common throughout the town and work well in the rural market town setting



Figure 3.19: Slatted metal seat dating from 1887 on Tetbury Road



Figure 3.20: Feature tree seat on Gosditch Street



Figure 3.21: Standard green reinforced plastic litter bin (Broxap)



Figure 3.22: Combined litter & recyclables bin



Figure 3.23: Timber bollards are used widely throughout the town centre, as here on Gosditch Street



Figure 3.24: Square section cast iron bollards on Park Street



Figure 3.25: Square section stone bollards act as a gateway feature at the western end of Castle Street



## Design principles

### 3.3.6 The following principles should be followed:

- High quality street furniture should reflect and enhance the character of the historic core and should be appropriately placed to reduce clutter while enhancing pedestrian spaces.
- Surviving historic street furniture should be retained and refurbished as necessary.
- There is a need for a balance between consistency of design in street furniture, and appropriateness in terms of setting.
- The design of the street furniture should be coordinated using a limited pattern of traditional materials such as stone, wood and metal. The design should have a timeless quality that is capable of accommodating future additions or changes. It should not be ultra modern nor fussy in style.
- The use of standardised “heritage” designs is rarely appropriate, compromises the genuine heritage environment in which they sit and often look incongruous adjacent to modern buildings.
- Metal street furniture should be painted in a colour chosen from a selected palette including shades of sage/olive green (Figure 3.26). These shades of green complement the colour of the local stone and are appropriate to the rural town context. The lighter of the two greens is also a traditional shade of green for painted timber in the Cotswolds. Making this link to the Cotswold aesthetic is therefore an obvious choice for a town in the Cotswolds. The darker shades of green may be more suitable for some applications where greater colour contrast is required.
- Street furniture should be sustainable, durable, easy to maintain, resistant to vandalism and any unintended use such as skateboarding.
- The siting of street furniture, including signs, bins, bollards, cycle stands, utilities’ boxes, lighting, etc, should be designed with the aim of reducing visual clutter.

#### Seating

- Seats must be carefully placed to be visible and encourage proper use; where suitable, litter bins can be helpful in close proximity.
- Seats must be accessible, particularly for elderly or disabled people, be comfortable and ergonomically designed.
- In high profile locations such as the Market Place, seats and benches should be made from natural stone and timber. This combination provides a high quality solution in keeping with its surroundings. The use of natural stone provides a strong unifying link to the floor plane and reduces the appearance of street clutter. Local stone could be used and there is potential to tailor seats to their setting through the inclusion of appropriate motifs created by local skilled sculptors. The timber seat allows for a warmer, quicker drying surface for sitting on.
- For general street use, black or green painted metal seats

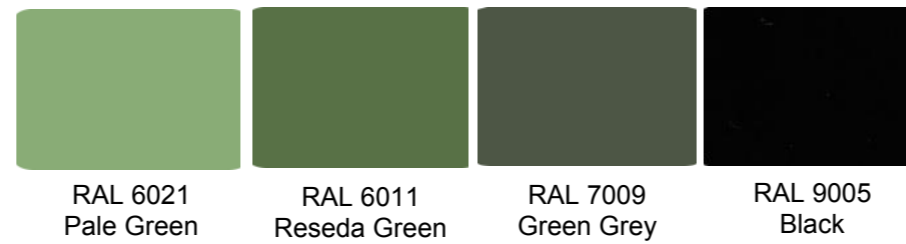


Figure 3.26: Selected colour palette for street furniture and signage



Figure 3.27: Timber and natural stone seats and benches (supplied by Omos) are proposed as part of the new public realm improvements for the Market Place



Figure 3.28: ‘Chapelton Seat’ from Broxap, is similar in style to the steel seats already used in Cirencester



Figure 3.29: ‘S16 Dual Recycling Bin’ from Omos



Figure 3.30: ‘College Cycle Stand’ from Furnitubes



Figure 3.31: Green Oak timber bollard with four-way weathered top

with backs should be used. These provide a robust and durable solution that is comfortable and can easily be maintained. Ornate cast iron seats are not appropriate.

#### Litter bins

- Litterbins need to be neutral in design to reduce their impact on the public realm but conveniently sited to attract use.
- They must be of an appropriate size to conveniently service and clean. They must be of a robust design to cope with heavy usage and potential vandalism.
- Litter bins should include provision for collecting recyclable waste (e.g. Figure 3.29).

#### Cycle stands

- Secure cycle racks should encourage demand and be placed where they are likely to be used without causing obstruction or clutter. They must be overlooked and well lit at night to make them secure.
- Simple hoop style cycle stands, painted black, should be used as standard (Figure 3.30).

#### Bollards

- The number of bollards used should be minimised to reduce street clutter but sufficiently closely spaced to prevent cars entering areas that could accommodate illegal parking.
- Square section timber bollards should be used as the standard bollard within the town centre and conservation areas (Figure 3.31).
- Cast iron bollards should be used when a more robust bollard is required or where the architectural setting demands a grander design of bollard.
- Square section stone bollards should be used to mark gateways to the town centre.

#### Pedestrian Guard Rails

- The use of pedestrian guard rails should be minimised to reduce street clutter and to promote pedestrian priority over cars within the town centre and Conservation Areas.
- Where they are necessary, they should be painted black and consideration should be given to using ornamental posts (Figure 3.32).



Figure 3.32: Pedestrian Guard Rails at the junction of Castle Street and Silver Street prior to public realm improvement works



### 3.4 Signage

3.4.1 Parts of the town centre are blighted by the clutter of traffic-related street furniture and road markings as well as security measures such as CCTV cameras. This is especially noticeable in the Market Place where the needs of the pedestrian are subservient to the needs of the driver and the vehicle is dominant. Here and elsewhere in the town, traffic signs are sometimes too large in size and too great in number, having an unduly dominant impact on the special historic and architectural character of the town.

3.4.2 Tourist information signs with a town map are located outside the parish church in the Market Place, at the Forum Car Park, Beeches Car Park, Waterloo Car Park, Sheep Street Car Park and at Brewery Court. Recently installed, these follow two different design styles: a contemporary stainless steel design is used in the car parks (Figure 3.33); and a heritage style black cast iron design has been used in the Market Place and on Cricklade Street (Figure 3.34).

3.4.3 Pedestrian wayfinding signage is provided in the form of heritage style fingerposts (Figure 3.36) located at Waterloo Car Park: on North Way; Market Place, Cricklade Street; Brewery Court and Park Lane. There are also a number of highway style brown signs for walking routes to New Brewery Arts, Corinium Museum, Public Library and the Amphitheatre.

3.4.4 Enamel road names in various forms create an attractive feature in the town centre. Individual property names and small informative plaques also make a positive contribution. In all there are over 50 blue plaques on buildings within Cirencester celebrating the town's history. These are an effective and non-intrusive way of adding interpretation into the town.

#### Design principles

3.4.5 The following principles should be followed:

- A new wayfinding signage system should be commissioned for the town. A coordinated system of fingerposts, maps and interpretation signs would help improve the appearance of the town, would improve legibility around the town and is also an opportunity to introduce more local character into the streetscape. A common colour should be used as a unifying colour for all wayfinding signage. Sage/olive green is proposed. This shade of green complements the colour of the local stone and is appropriate to the rural town context. It is also a traditional shade of green for painted timber in the Cotswolds. Making this link to the Cotswold aesthetic is therefore an obvious choice for the 'capital of the Cotswolds'.
- A review of existing pedestrian and traffic signage should be carried out, with the objective of minimising the number of signs and where appropriate reducing their size and impact. Existing signage should be rationalised by the removal of redundant and duplicate signs; by moving signs to less intrusive locations where doing so would not compromise safety; and by combining signs where possible.
- Genuine historic signage should be retained and restored where possible.
- Where possible, signs should be fixed to walls or incorporated with other streetscape elements, such as bollards, to reduce clutter. Wall mounting of signs may not be appropriate on listed buildings or where it will detract from buildings on architectural merit.
- Wall-mounted signs or signs set in paving should be included at features of interest and at main pedestrian orientation points.
- Freestanding information signs should be sited carefully to avoid visual clutter.



Figure 3.33: Contemporary stainless steel information board at Sheep Street Car Park



Figure 3.34: Generic black heritage style information board in the Market Place



Figure 3.35: Open Air Swimming Pool sign adds character to the street scene

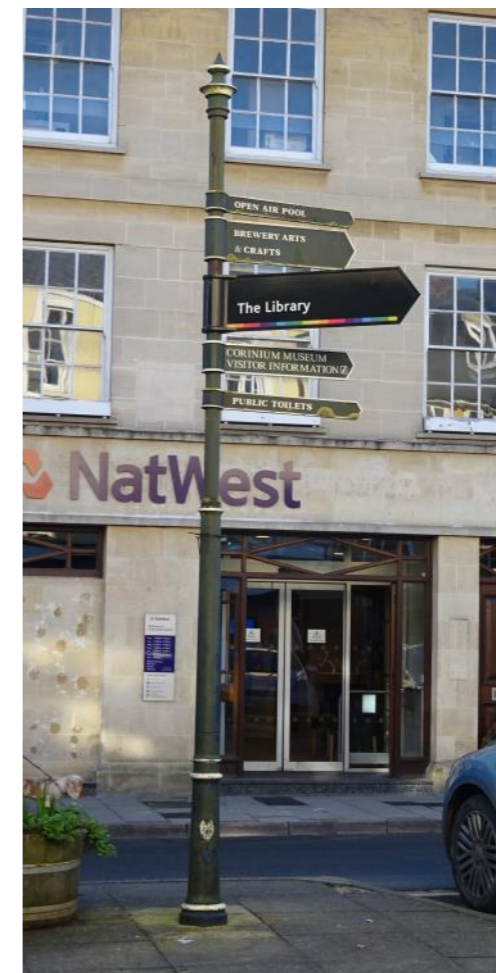


Figure 3.36: Standard heritage style finger post signage within the town centre, in green with cream details and crest. The library sign has been added at a later date and to a different colour scheme



Figure 3.37: One of many Blue Plaques to be seen on buildings around Cirencester

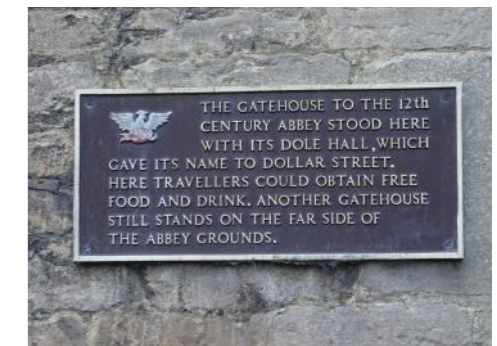


Figure 3.37: Interpretation Plaque on Dollar Street



Figure 3.38: Interpretation of the site of the Roman Forum is poorly maintained and could be improved



Figure 3.39: Bronze Town Walk plaque set into pavement on Silver Street



### 3.5 Lighting

- 3.5.1 Street lighting within the town is on the whole unobtrusive in nature, and mostly utilises modern columns and lanterns.
- 3.5.2 Reproduction lanterns can be found in a number of locations including Cecily Hill (Figure 3.40) and along the River Walk past the open air swimming pool, and help to enhance the traditional qualities of these spaces.
- 3.5.3 A unique example can also be found in the centre of Catalpa Square. This light, mounted on a stone base, was erected by the people of Cirencester to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of King George V in 1935.
- 3.5.4 Elsewhere in the town centre some individual buildings have their own lights designed to co-ordinate with the design of the building. These quite rare and attractive elements add interest and variety to the street scene.
- 3.5.5 Wall mounted versions of various standard modern lanterns fixed to building facades help to minimise physical obstruction to narrow pavements in the town centre and the older parts of the town. Mid twentieth century examples can be found in various locations around Castle Street, Black Jack Street and Gloucester Street (Figure 3.41). Their simple slim-lined appearance is unobtrusive and adds character to the street. These fittings should be retained where possible.
- 3.5.6 Pastiche Regency style lighting columns have been used in a number of places within the town with mixed results. The tall hoop topped lighting columns in Market Place (Figure



Figure 3.40: Reproduction lantern street lighting on Cecily Hill, is similar in style to lighting that appears in early 20th century photographs of Cirencester Market Place. This type of lighting looks best in smaller scale streets and pedestrian spaces within a historic setting



Figure 3.41: Mid 20th century wall mounted street lighting on Gloucester Street, is slim-lined and unobtrusive. This style of wall mounted fitting is still fairly common in the older parts of the town and should be retained where possible



Figure 3.42: Pastiche Regency style street lighting in the Market Place (left) and West Way (right), is best suited to the larger scale town centre streets

3.42), whilst appearing very tall, do reduce the total number of poles required to light the space. Similar lighting on a shorter column with a straight bracket to the rear of the Corn Hall is more in keeping with its surroundings.

- 3.5.7 Contemporary half spherical lanterns on a tapered column have been used effectively in a number of locations in Cirencester including on North Way / South Way and as part of the Park Lane / Park Street / Silver Street improvements (Figure 3.43). The green painted finish complements the stone colour of the surrounding buildings. Arguably it is best suited to main streets in the more contemporary parts of town but it also works successfully as a wall mounted fitting, when painted cream to match the local stone (Figure 3.44).
- 3.5.8 The contemporary utilitarian lighting now being used in the town is fairly unobtrusive but adds little to the streetscene (Figure 3.45) and so is best suited for use in peripheral residential areas. The wall mounted version of this light fitting looks a little bulky and so is not ideal for this purpose.
- 3.5.5 Within the mix of street lighting currently found within the town there are also a few twentieth century utilitarian designs which look dilapidated and detract from the townscape. These include street lights with concrete lighting columns and high mast flood lights.

#### Design principles

- 3.5.6 The following principles should be followed:
  - a) Lighting should be designed to provide the required levels for safety, security, traffic management and pedestrian flow.
  - b) Genuine historic light columns and lanterns should be retained and restored where possible.
  - c) The use of reproduction lanterns should be restricted to smaller scale streets and pedestrian spaces within a historic setting.
  - d) The use of Regency style lighting should be restricted to larger scale town centre streets around the Market Place.

- e) The contemporary half spherical lighting design should be used as the standard lighting design for the town centre core and for new development areas.
- f) Use of contemporary utilitarian street lighting should be restricted to peripheral residential areas.
- g) Poor quality street lighting and street lighting of inappropriate design should be replaced.
- h) Any new lighting scheme should aim to be more energy efficient than that which it is replacing and to reduce light pollution.
- i) Where possible street lights should be mounted on building facades in order to reduce clutter. Wall mounting of new street lights may not be appropriate on listed buildings or where it will detract from buildings on architectural merit.
- j) Consideration needs to be given to the impact of street lighting on building users especially in residential areas.
- k) Feature/accent lighting should be used to enhance existing architectural landmarks and to define entrances into the historic core.
- l) Pedestrian links should be clearly and attractively lit for safety, security and to encourage night-time activity within the town centre.
- m) The scale of lantern and height of lighting column should be appropriate to the scale of the streets in which they are being used.



Figure 3.43: Contemporary half spherical lantern on a tapered column on Park Street



Figure 3.44: Wall mounted version of the contemporary half spherical lantern, painted cream to match the local stone on Castle Street

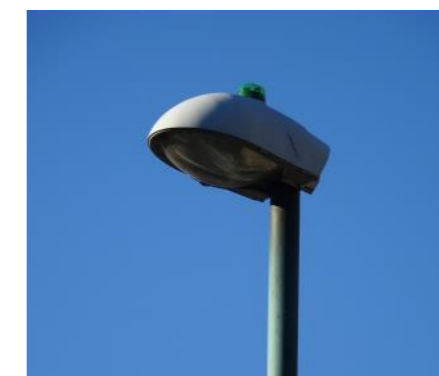


Figure 3.45: Contemporary utilitarian street lighting, as here on Watermoor Road (left), is fairly unobtrusive but adds little to the streetscene and so is best suited for use in peripheral residential areas. This type of fitting looks a little bulky when wall mounted as found on Gloucester Street (right)



### 3.6 Trees & Soft Landscape

3.6.1 Much of Cirencester town centre is notable for its lack of trees and yet trees play a significant role; providing focal points; softening the built form; and defining green space within the town.

3.6.2 As described in the Green Streets strategy in Section 2, many of the trees that influence the character of Cirencester's streets are planted on private land or within the town's public green spaces. But trees also have a role to play within the public realm.

#### Design principles

3.6.3 The following principles should be followed:

- Tree planting should be avoided in the narrow streets in the medieval core of the town.
- Individual trees that act as focal points within the old town, such as the cedar tree outside the parish church, should be retained (Figure 3.46).
- Existing street tree planting within the wider Victorian streets should be maintained and missing trees replaced.
- There is opportunity to enhance a number of the wider streets within Victorian and contemporary parts of the town with additional tree planting, as highlighted in the Green Streets Strategy.
- Street trees should be used to enhance contemporary development within the town.
- Suburbanisation through the increased use of grass verges and ornamental planting is not encouraged.
- Ornamental planters should only be placed in locations where they do not obstruct pedestrian flows.



Figure 3.46: The cedar tree acts as a major focal point on Gosditch Street



Figure 3.47: Ornamental planters are a popular addition to the streets of Cirencester. This example on Gosditch Street in front of the Abbey Grounds boundary wall is well planted with clipped box balls and colourful spring bulbs. It is important that the planters are good quality and of a simple design. The inclusion of sponsorship logos should be avoided as this can detract from the planting

#### Street trees

3.6.4 The planting of trees within paved areas requires special consideration. The detailing of the hole into which trees are planted (known as the tree pit) is fundamental to the success of trees planted in paved areas.

3.6.5 It is important that sufficient air and water reaches the tree roots; that they have sufficient soil and space to grow; and adequate drainage to ensure that they stay in good health. It is also important to consider the structural design of a tree pit so that the loadings on the paving don't cause compaction of the root zone or collapse of the paving around the tree roots. In Cirencester there is also the added consideration of Roman archaeology which can be quite close (0.2 metre) to the surface and therefore can prevent the digging of a tree pit that would typically be 0.9m deep.

#### Design principles

3.6.6 The following principles should be followed:

- The potential for finding/damaging archaeology, in particular Roman remains, should be considered when evaluating whether a location is suitable for the planting of tree trees.
- Tree pits should be as large as possible. Where multiple trees are planted in groups, the tree pits should be joined to form a continuous trench. Tree pits should be detailed to incorporate as much soil as possible and the use of modular reinforcement systems should be considered to allow for the incorporation of large tree pits without undermining the structural integrity of adjacent hard landscape areas.
- Tree pits in paved areas should include irrigation and

aeration systems.

- Trees in paved areas should be underground guyed.
- Where tree grilles and guards are used they should generally be of simple design made from black painted metal (Figure 3.48). The use of tree guards is not always necessary. They often become a litter trap and the money can be better spent on larger trees and better tree pit detailing.
- In high profile areas the use of recessed galvanised steel tray tree grilles (Figure 3.49) should be considered to allow for the construction of large tree pits whilst still extending the paving treatment up to the base of the tree.
- Porous resin bound gravel is also considered suitable surfacing for tree pits (Figure 3.50) and would be appropriate in more contemporary surroundings.
- The choice of tree species should take into account:
  - Available space at ground and above ground level, to prevent undesired obstructions to movement, light or views, and interference with buildings and walls when the tree has reached its mature size.
  - Impact of litter: all trees will shed something at some point in the year, whether flowers, leaves, needles, fruits or bark. In some locations (e.g. in soft landscape areas) this may be less of an issue than in others. Fruit and bird droppings will not be desirable in areas with high pedestrian traffic and large leaved trees may also present problems. Trees producing honeydew should be avoided over surface car parks or on-street parking.

Figure 3.48: Black ductile steel tree grille. Image shows 'Adur' tree grille from Green Blue Urban



Figure 3.49: Using a recessed metal tray tree grille system allows the paving to extend closer to the trunk of the tree, simplifying the appearance and minimising the potential for trapped litter etc. Image shows 'Adur' tree grille from Green Blue Urban



Figure 3.50: Porous resin bound gravel tree pit surfacing. Image shows 'Addastone TP' from Addagrip





### 3.7 Boundary Treatment

3.7.1 Boundary walls and railings are an important part of Cirencester's character. The Cotswold stone walls create a strong link between the built fabric of the town and the streetscape. Boundary walls help to define public and private spaces and in many cases provide a sense of privacy and enclosure. The tall estate wall and yew hedge at the gates to the Bathurst Estate on Park Street is a prime example of this (Figure 3.51).

3.7.2 Ironwork railings often on a stone base and with stone pillars are also a common sight within the town, often associated with the grander Georgian properties they lend much to the character of the town. None more so than the impressive Grade II listed wrought iron gates and screen at the entrance to the Bathurst Estate at the top of Cecily Hill.

3.7.3 Low boundary walls and railings are also associated with the residential streets from the Victorian era (e.g. Figure 3.56 & 3.57). Unfortunately many of these walls and railings have been removed in residential areas to make way for vehicular driveways. This loss of character and increase in clutter has been to the detriment of the streetscape.

#### Design principles

3.7.4 To help protect and enhance the historic streetscape of Cirencester, the following principles should be followed:

- a) Retain existing historic boundary features.
- b) Cotswold stone walling and metal railings in poor condition should be carefully repaired/restored.
- c) Encourage the reinstatement of traditional boundary walls and railings.



Figure 3.51: Tall estate wall and yew hedge at the gates to the Bathurst Estate on Park Street



Figure 3.52: Pointed Cotswold stone wall with flat coping on Park Street



Figure 3.53: Cotswold 'dry' stone wall with rounded concrete capping on Spitalgate Lane



Figure 3.54: Pointed Cotswold stone wall with 'cock-and-hen' coping on Watermoor Road

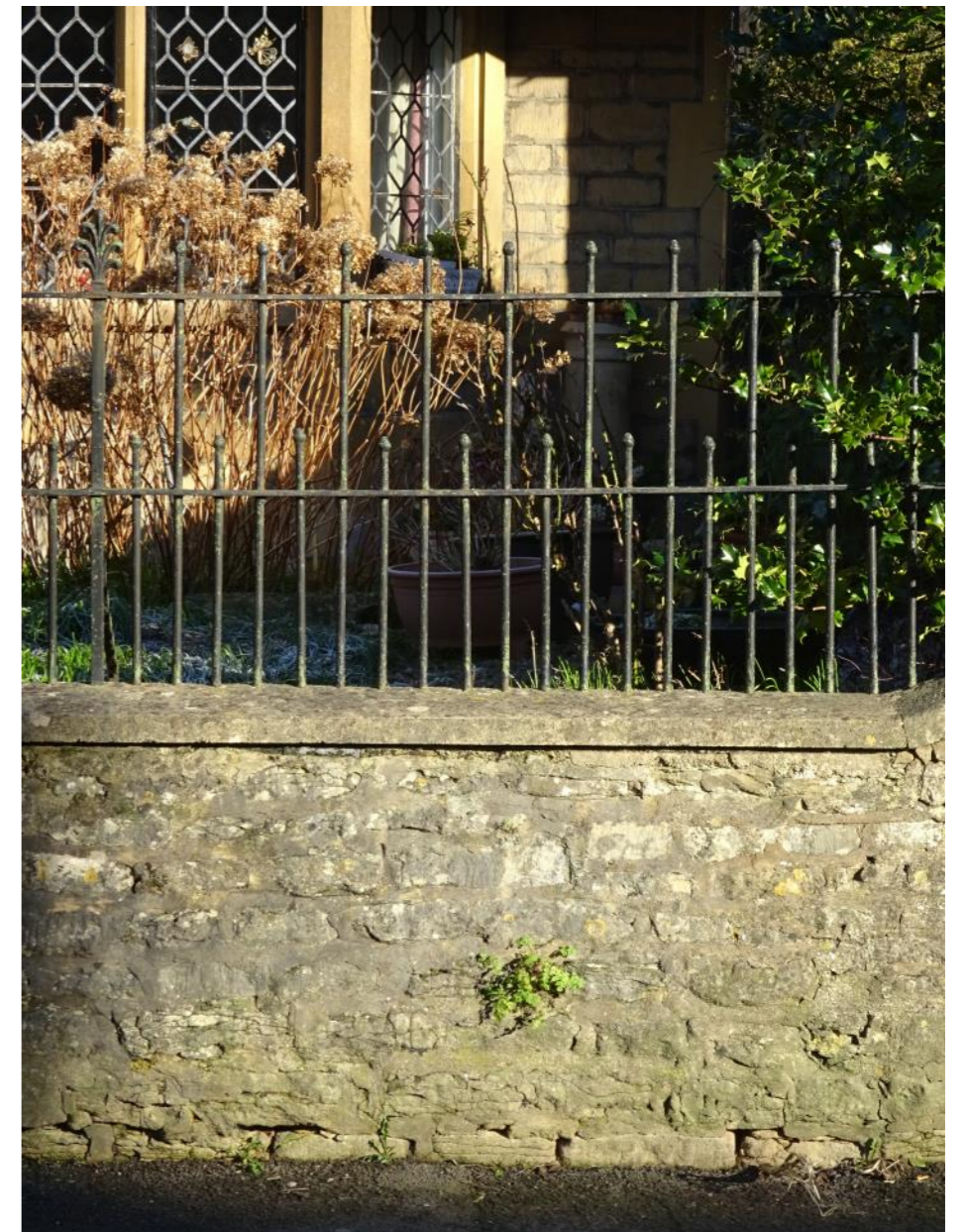


Figure 3.55: Metal Railings on top of a stone wall on Watermoor Road



Figure 3.56: Metal Railings on top of a low stone wall on The Avenue

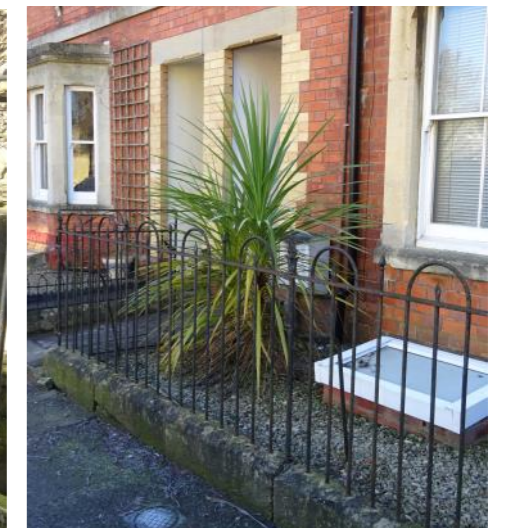


Figure 3.57: Metal Railings on top of a low stone wall on The Avenue



### 3.8 Public Art

- 3.8.1 There are good examples of public art in the town, including “*The Prophet*” by Willi Soukop in The Avenue (Figure 3.58), the former contemporary sculpture by Sophie Ryder which was located in Brewery Court and the Bronze Ram sculpture by Jill Tweed (Figure 3.59), in the Woolmarket. This art complements various wooden sculptures on the perimeter of the town centre at the Amphitheatre and City Bank.
- 3.8.2 The hare mosaic, a replica of one in the Corinium Museum and emblematic of the town, forms a distinctive focus in the paving in Brewery Court (Figure 3.60). Given the Roman origins and relevance of mosaics to the town it would seem appropriate that further use of mosaics could be used to enliven the public realm and reinforce local distinctiveness.
- 3.8.3 In 2014 Cirencester also held its first March Hare Festival which led to fifty 1.5 metre tall hares being placed around the town for a number of months before being auctioned off for charity. The festival proved to be a success and returned in 2015 with a number of Hares being installed as permanent features.

#### Design principles

- Public art features should be incorporated to help create and reinforce a sense of place.
- Art should respond appropriately to the historic/ local context.
- Small scale works of art, e.g. a mosaic, detailed paving area, or ornamental stonework should be included where it is compatible with historic character and will enhance the public realm and highlight cultural or historical themes.
- Gateway features at the entrances to the town centre should link through a common theme or material.
- Public artwork should be used to improve the legibility and understanding of the history of Cirencester.
- The opportunity should be taken to engage the local community when developing public art projects in residential areas.
- When considering public art it is important to look to the present in celebrating the here and now, as well as looking to the past for inspiration; using local art knowledge and experience in developing a more ambitious public art programme towards truly embracing the 'placemaking' concept of public spaces.



Figure 3.58: Sculpture “*The Prophet*” [Willi Soukop]



Figure 3.59: Bronze Ram sculpture in the Woolmarket



Figure 3.60: Hare Mosaic in Brewery Court



Figure 3.61: March Hare sculpture on Beeches Road



# 4 Conclusion

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## 4.1 Application of this Design Code

- 4.1.1 All towns are uniquely formed by the geographical, economic and cultural conditions that exist and change over time. These factors have combined to provide Cirencester with a particularly rich and valuable architectural townscape heritage.
- 4.1.2 This Design Code is intended to provide an overview that will help to recognise, express, celebrate and develop the town's historic and future character. It aims to do this by bringing a consistent approach to the hierarchy of the streets and the public realm and to the utilitarian elements of street furniture whilst, simultaneously, encouraging future designers to acknowledge and develop the local distinctiveness and sense of place that exists both within the town as a whole and its many distinct neighbourhoods.
- 4.1.3 It is intended that this Design Code will be used by Cirencester Town Council and design professionals alike. The aim is to improve design standards, ensuring that new and refurbished development and changes to the public realm enhance the character of the town.



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