



# GILLESPIES

NORTHAMPTON MARKET SQUARE & EMPORIUM WAY

STAGE 2 DESIGN REPORT

01 JUNE 2020



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01

INTRODUCTION

# 01 INTRODUCTION, PURPOSE AND APPROACH

## STRATEGIC CONTEXT

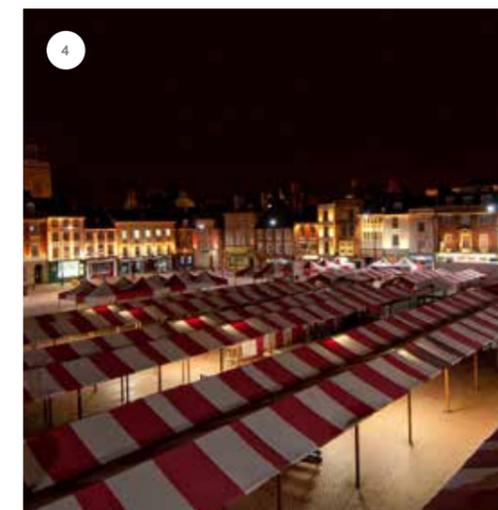
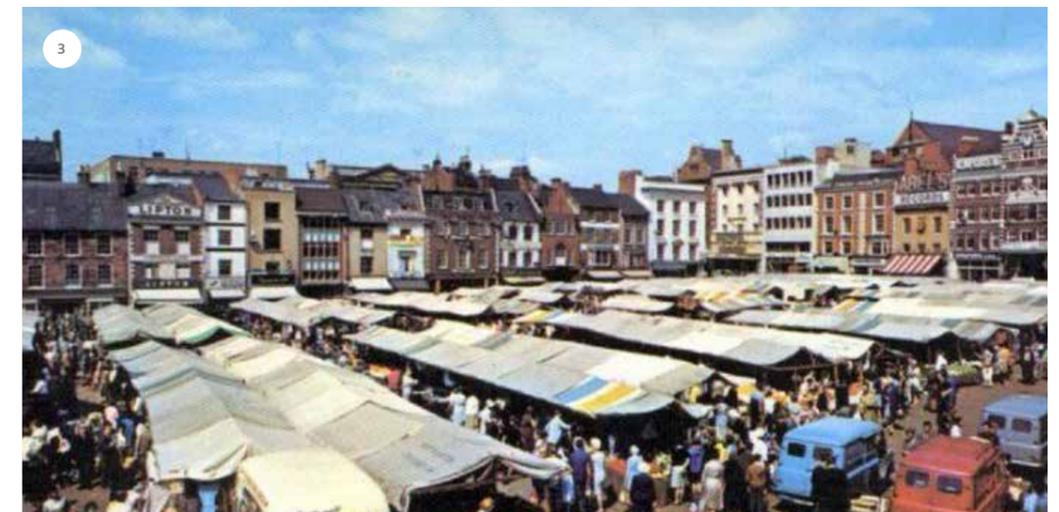
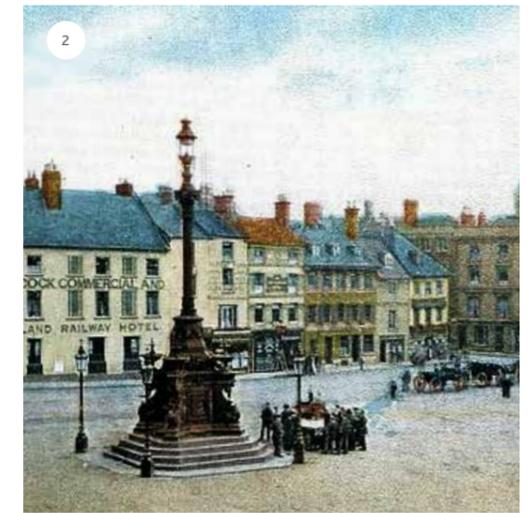
Gillespies have been appointed by Northampton Borough Council to support their bid to secure funding from the Government's Future High Streets Fund. Following a strategic high level study of 'the Northampton Town Centre Masterplan (October 2019)' undertaken by 5plus Architects, a series of development and regeneration opportunities were devised to establish a transformative vision for the town centre.

The town centre masterplan identifies catalyst projects, within long term strategic objectives, which set the tone for the future direction of Northampton town centre, one of which has been identified for significant improvement is the public realm, in particular the town's historic Market Square and a proposed new route linking this to the north of the town.

This piece of work collaboratively, with Northampton Borough Council and its partners on the Northampton Forward board has developed schematic proposals for the regeneration of the Market Square and associated public realm, and the creation of the new link called Emporium Way. It outlines a process of research and analysis, followed by an appraisal of design options taken to public consultation and the development of a landscape masterplan and concept specification to RIBA Work Stage 2.

The purpose of this document is to outline the value and justification for potential investment into the Market Square and Emporium Way. It demonstrates that this key space in the town is in a poor state with many vacant shops and a dwindling market. This important space needs a refresh so that it can once again act as the public realm heart to the town and a catalyst for regeneration and the reinvention of the town centre.

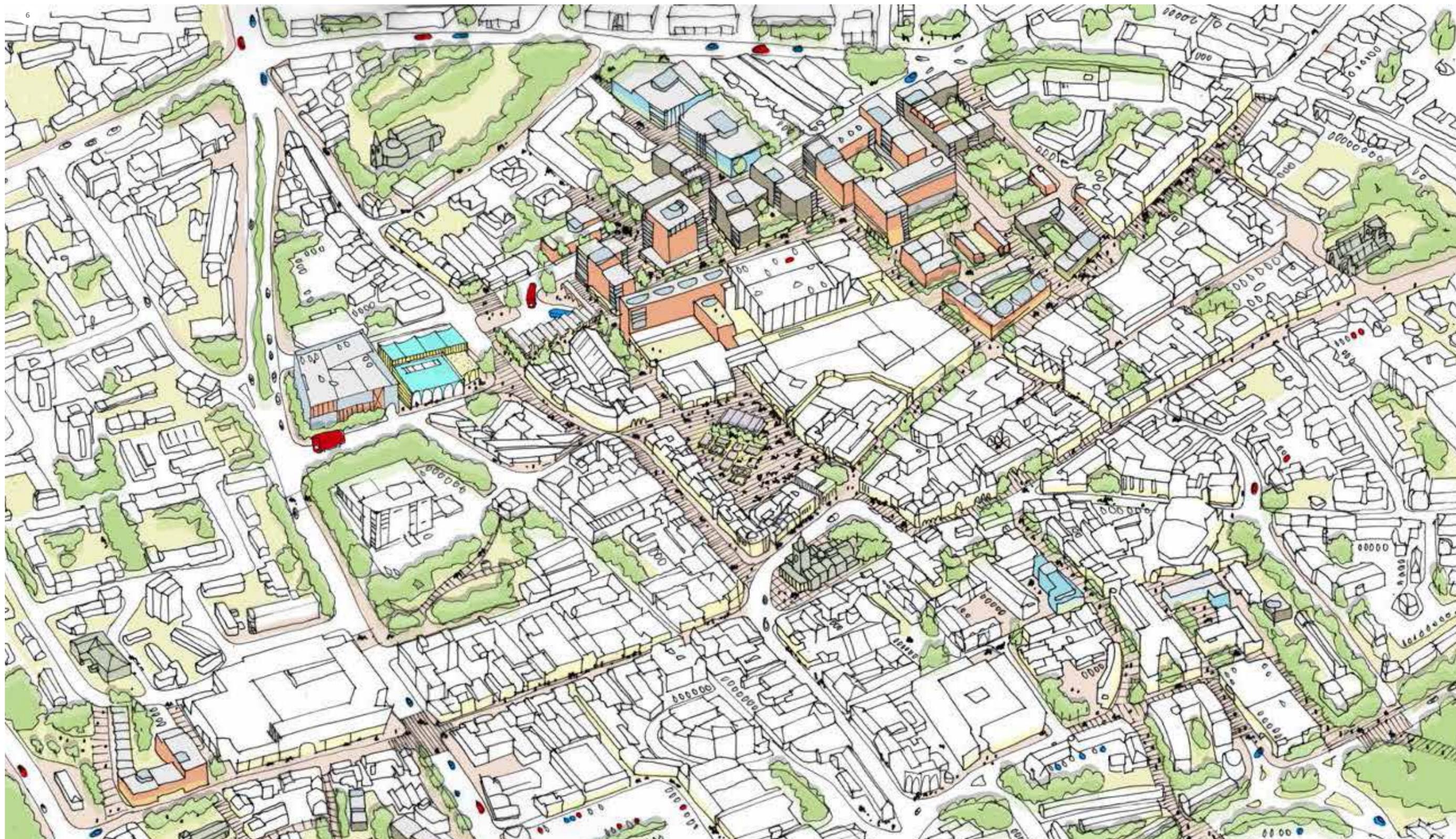
This document will provide the basis of the supporting information (as an appendix) to the bid for the Future High Streets Fund bid on behalf of Northampton Borough Council.



1. Market Traders mid 20th Century
2. Early 20th Century, with fountain
3. Market traders mid-late 20th Century
4. 2010 Lighting transformation
5. Google aerial image 2019
6. Illustrative strategic masterplan for Northampton, produced by 5plus architects

# 01 INTRODUCTION, PURPOSE AND APPROACH

## STRATEGIC CONTEXT





02

ANALYSIS

## 02 ANALYSIS

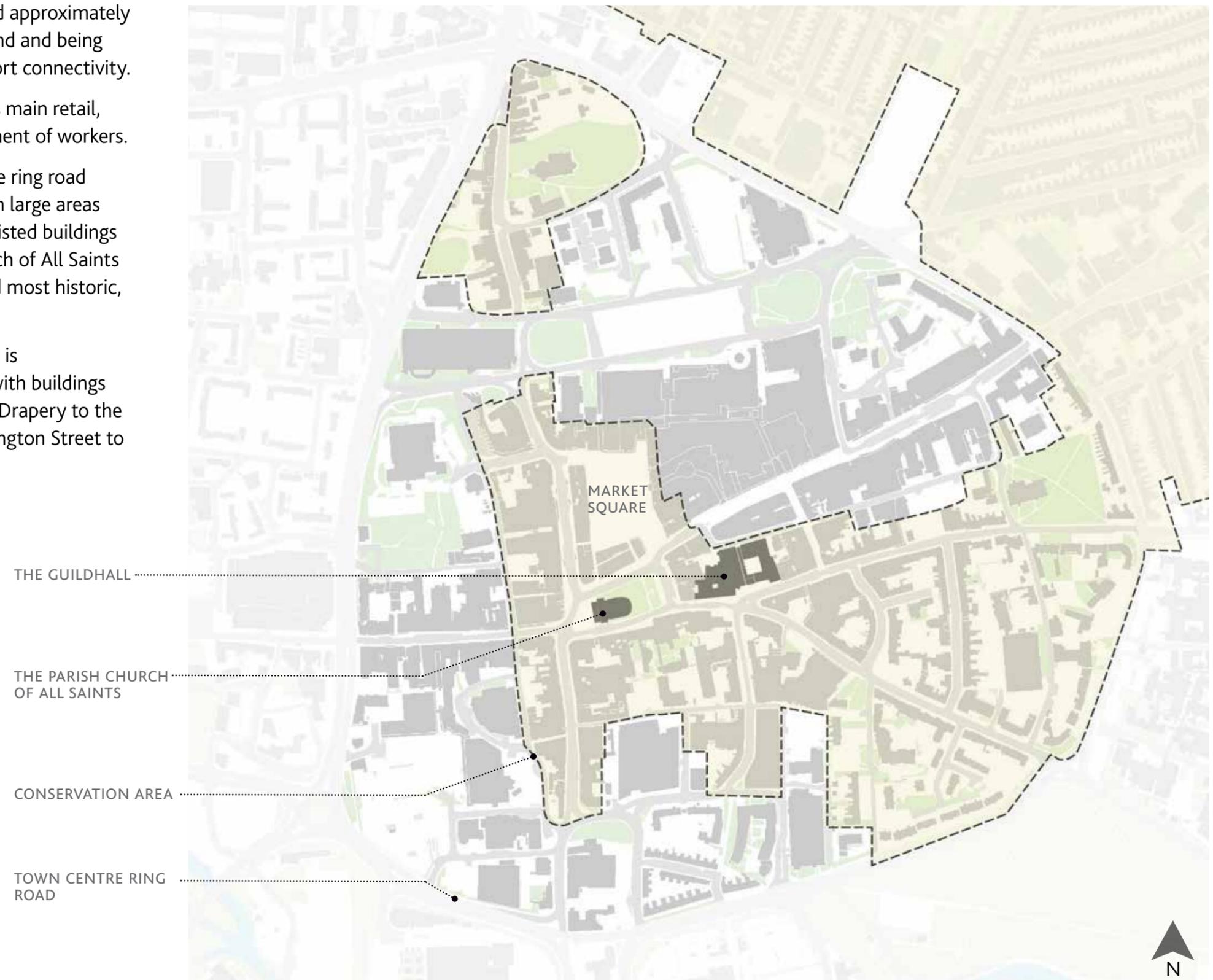
### THE TOWN OF NORTHAMPTON

Northampton is the largest market town in the UK, located approximately 65 miles north of London. Being fairly central within England and being served by the M1 motorway it offers good national transport connectivity.

It is the county town of Northamptonshire and is the areas main retail, cultural and employment centre, drawing in a large catchment of workers.

Northampton Town Centre is contained by the town centre ring road and is approximately 63 hectares. It has a historic core with large areas contained within conservation areas and some significant listed buildings and heritage sites, including the Guildhall, The Parish Church of All Saints and the Market Square which is one of the UK's largest and most historic, dating back to the 12th century.

The Market Square is located in the centre of the town and is approximately 2 acres in size. It is a well contained space, with buildings on all four sides with two primary access points, one from Drapery to the west and the second from Mercers Row, connecting to Abington Street to the south.



## 02 ANALYSIS

### THE MARKET SQUARE



1. Street sign for Market square
2. Beethoven house, Market square
3. Diwali parade
4. Fruit and vegetable market
5. Summer 'beach' in the square
6. Christmas Lights switch-on

Northampton's town centre is made up of a mosaic of architectural language and history. The Market Square itself demonstrates this with buildings dating from the 16th century and from all centuries following. Some provide far greater contributions architecturally than others.

Market Square has a strong connection with Abington Street because of the retail use and its proximity to a wider area of pedestrian friendly routes through the town centre. The Parish Church of All Saints is located to the South of Mercers Row, and its grounds and openness relate to the square as well as its tower providing an important vista from the northern boundary of the square.

Today the square is dominated by its market trading function. Half of the square contains permanent market stalls, with an additional smaller area providing semi-permanent structures to be used on a seasonal basis. There are also a number of trading vehicles, including up-to 5 hot food vendors. The market runs from Monday - Saturday, but with Monday providing fresh fruit and vegetables and cut flowers and plants only. At its peak demand the market can host up-to 90 market stalls from across its 60 traders on the books, but in recent years the trading stalls are in decline and the overall quality of produce and products being sold is depleting.

The square has an events programme throughout the year including Christmas lights switch-on, a parade at Easter and for Diwali in Autumn, a summer 'beach' with fairground amusements and other smaller scale events across the seasonal calendar.

There is a periphery vehicular route that runs around the inside of the square providing service delivery access for both market traders and buildings, particular those facing Drapery. The square has a 24 hour parking exclusion, with the exception of unloading which is usually carried out before 11am.

The overall appearance of the square is rather tired and underused. A significant portion of the market stalls are not occupied, the increase in vacant ground-floor buildings and building uses such as betting offices become an attractor for frequent antisocial behaviour and the congregation of homeless people.

# 02 ANALYSIS

## HISTORIC CONTEXT OF MARKET SQUARE

The history of Northampton can be traced back to Roman times. In 1285 a Royal Charter was granted for a market to be set out in the centre of Northampton. With large numbers of visitors using the Great Road from the south to the north, by the 16th century Northampton had become a prosperous market town.

The majority of the existing frontages in the square date from the 19th century, when Northampton evolved at an extremely rapid rate. In 1901 the historic Parade House was demolished to make way for Emporium Arcade.

Until the second World War Northampton's medieval streetscape survived in relatively good condition, but following the war the rate of change was rapid. Between the 1950s and early 1970s significant works were undertaken to clear the town centre 'slums'. At this time the story of the Market Square's historic buildings also became one of decline, as handsome buildings were lost to replacements with little visual or architectural merit to them. This dramatic time of change also saw the introduction of the ring road which lost the clear legibility of Northampton's ancient roads which originated from the Market Square.

The most notable aspect of the heritage of the square is the significance of trading for over 700 years. Buildings have come and gone, roads have shifted and ceased but the town has always preserved its market's heritage and its need for a central public open space.



- 1. Early 20th Century
- 2. Historic map showing ancient road layout
- 3. Emporium Arcade, early 20th Century
- 4. Historic photograph (photographed from a version located in Northampton Borough Council offices - circa 1920)

<p><b>1189</b> Northampton received its first market charter allowing markets and fairs to be held on the ground east of All Saints.</p>	<p><b>1516</b> The town was destroyed by fire for the first time.</p>	<p><b>1675</b> The Great Fire of Northampton devastated the Town Centre, destroying over 600 buildings in just six hours. Local people raised around £25,000 towards rebuilding the town centre based around the Market Square.</p>	<p><b>17th Century</b> Large-scale horse markets in the town were described by Daniel Defoe as 'the centre of all horse markets and horse fairs in England'. They were held four times a year.</p>	<p><b>1845</b> Mr Gyngell the tightrope walker and fireworks 'expert' ascended a tightrope whilst holding two lit fireworks. Halfway up the rope he threw one of them into the watching crowd, killing Mrs E Smith.</p>	<p><b>1873</b> The town's cattle market was built. Before which, animals were penned and sold on the Market Square and the surrounding streets - hence the names of the Sheep Street and Marefair.</p>	<p><b>19th Century</b> Fun fairs offering the popular amusements of the day such as dancing bears, acrobats, jugglers and sideshows were regularly held on the Market Square. Steam driven Carousels and other rides also made appearances</p>	<p><b>1930's -</b> The Square was the venue for an open-air cinema with films used to enlist troops for the armed forces.</p>
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<p><b>1285</b> The market moves to its present location in the Market Square after Henry III forbade the selling of goods in the churchyard of All Saints.</p>	<p><b>1530</b> The Market Square was paved</p>	<p><b>16th and 17th Centuries</b> Strict legislation covered all aspects of trading. No foreign traders were allowed on the Square and discord among females appears to have been rife: an order from the time states "No butchers or fishmonger's wife shall fall out with one another nor use or speak any evil or slanderous words or otherwise revile" Anyone who flouted the order was under the threat of the stocks or a three shilling fine.</p>	<p><b>1828</b> A balloon ascent from the Square ended with it failing to take flight and the female aeronaut having to escape through an attic window.</p>	<p><b>1863</b> A cast iron fountain was presented to the town by a Captain Isaacs to commemorate the marriage of Prince Albert (later King Edward VII) to Princess Alexandra of Denmark. The fountain stood until 1962.</p>	<p><b>1874</b> The Square was the scene of the Bradlaugh Riots when supporters of radical Charles Bradlaugh believed an election had been rigged. Soldiers fired shots over the heads of the crowd to disperse them.</p>	<p><b>1913</b> King George V visited and was received on the Market Square.</p>	<p><b>Second World War</b> The square was used for War Weapon Weeks to raise money for Spitfires, Warships and Tanks</p>
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## 02 ANALYSIS

### HISTORIC CONTEXT OF MARKET SQUARE



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The Market Square

# 02 ANALYSIS

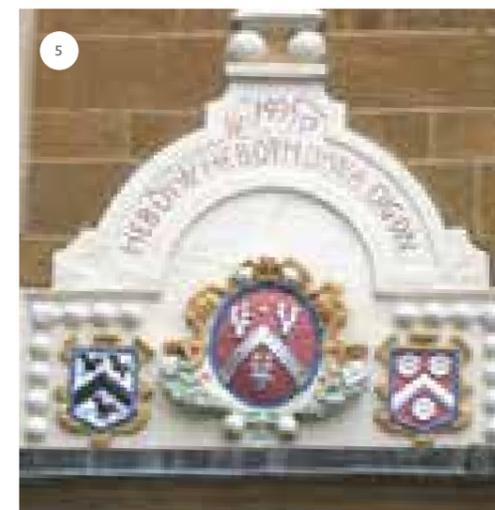
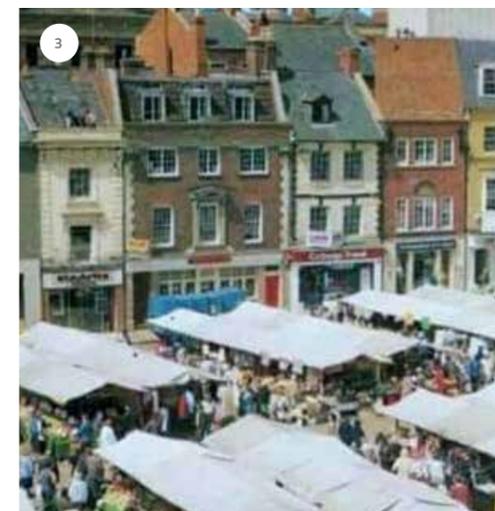
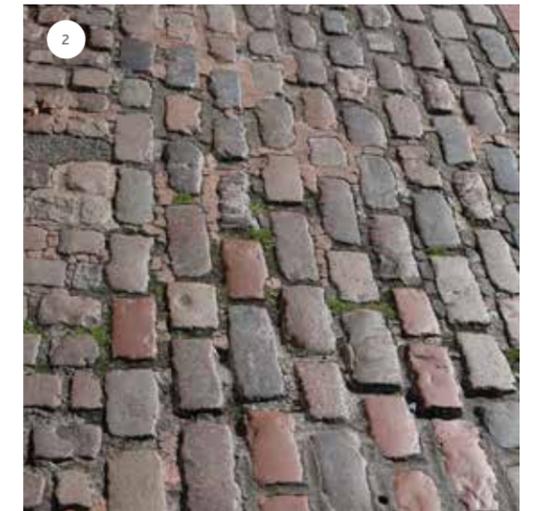
## HISTORIC FEATURES

There are limited original historic features in terms of the square itself. There is however a rich tapestry of architectural styles framing the square mixed with some unsympathetic regeneration and development to the northern and eastern edges of the square.

As shown on the historic map (opposite), circa 1947 the urban grain retained its small scale and modulated elevations until the significant changes of the second half of the 20th Century. Notable building uses include pubs, hotels, halls, clubs, a printing works and a picture theatre.

The tradition of having an ornament in the Square was a long standing one: the first Market Cross was built in 1285, the second in 1535 and the Market Cross stump which graced the Square from 1675 was replaced in 1780 by an obelisk. In 1863 the Pump and Gas Standard which had stood in the Market Square since 1805 and 1826 respectively were replaced with a grand fountain.

The water fountain was erected in 1863 to commemorate the marriage of Prince Albert to Princess Alexandra of Denmark. It was no ordinary cast-iron fountain, 45 feet high and 19 feet wide with many of the enrichments cast in valuable bronze. The structure was seated on an octagonal plinth with four steps leading to the base of the fountain which formed a St. Andrew's cross. Drinking basins were located on the north and south sides. In 1930 the Market Square fountain was renovated, and the globe lamp which had already been replaced by 1900 was replaced once again with four suspended lamps. After being a much loved focal point of the Market Place for almost a century, the cast iron fountain was removed in 1962 due to repeated vandalism and the opinion that the structure was unsafe. This opinion was proven false when it took several days, six men, a crane and a blowtorch to remove it. The stone steps remained and were used by market traders to stack their goods. In due time the steps and the cobbles in the square were also removed leaving no vestige of the fountain ever being there.



- 1. Existing Cobbled surface
- 2. Existing cobbled surround
- 3. Existing modulated elevations
- 4. The Historic water fountain
- 5. Plaque on Welsh House (oldest building)
- 6. Historic Map from 1947

# 02 ANALYSIS

## HISTORIC FEATURES



# 02 ANALYSIS

## THE MARKET SQUARE- ARCHITECTURE AND BUILDING USE



NORTH-FACING ELEVATION



EAST-FACING ELEVATION

## 02 ANALYSIS

### THE MARKET SQUARE - ARCHITECTURE AND BUILDING USE

The architectural value and the ground floor use of the buildings surrounding the Market Square play an important part in defining the space and how it is used. A number of factors which contribute to the visual appeal of frontages within the market square is set out (opposite), extracted from Building Frontage Appraisal; Market Square 2008. These factors all have an impact on likely use and activation spill out into the public realm, as well as aesthetic appeal.

#### North-facing elevation:

The buildings at the southern end of the square, facing north are varied in their architectural form, notably with Waterloo House being of fairly recent construction and unsympathetic in its detailing and design. Generally the other buildings have interesting modulation and variety in materials and silhouette which create a strong architectural elevation. Currently there is one building with an A3 use; a small cafe.

#### East-facing elevation

A much longer elevation of over 100m, the East-facing elevation is made up of over 10 different ground floor premises, including a number of A3 uses of a pub, a cafe and takeaway. This is architecturally the most significant elevation with very little recent or unsympathetic buildings. There is a variety of modulation, heights, architectural styles and use of materials resulting in an interesting frame to the square.

#### *Factors Which Contribute to the Visual Appeal of the Market Square's Frontages*

**Modulation:** *The manner in which the frontages are not all built on the same plane but dressed forward and back (albeit only by small amounts) greatly enlivens their visual appeal.*

**Frontage Width:** *Just as ranks of evenly widthed frontages might appear monotonous, so the appearance of the streetscape is enhanced by the irregularity in the width of the frontages.*

**Frontage Height:** *The variance in the height of the frontages enlivens the punctuation of the skyline. This variance is enhanced on the Square's east and west sides by virtue of the 3m fall in the gradient from north to south.*

**Fascia Board Height:** *Encouraging each frontage to be read individually and not as part of a homogenised run of frontages, the variation of fascia board heights (determined by internal floor level) further excites the rhythm of the streetscape.*

**Variations in Architectural Styles and Detailing:** *Whilst evidently working in the same architectural language, incorporating elements from a 'limited palette', the subtle variations in treatment (for instance of window detailing, structural opening sizes etc.) lend distinctiveness to each façade whilst ensuring that it corresponds (happily) with its neighbours.*

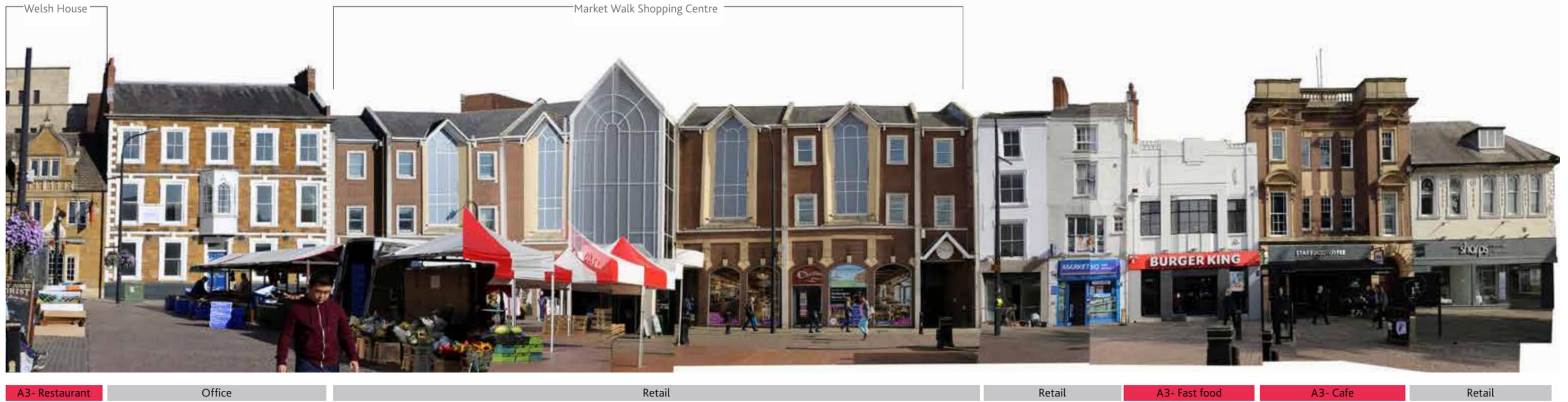
**Variety in Building Materials:** *The chief means by which the frontage of each plot is visually distinguished from its neighbour is through the variance in tone and hue of its exposed brick, stone or painted render frontage. The patterns and rhythms created by the variance in the frontages' breadth and height are further enlivened by these differences in tone and hue.*

**Silhouette:** *The variety in frontage heights, the lack of uniformity in the roof heights and gradient of pitches, the non-standard treatment of dormer windows and chimney stacks all contribute to a skyline which is charmingly lively whether seen from nearby or across the Square. Whilst this skyline may seem somewhat random, it is comprised of elements designed in accordance with a certain subtle language. For instance, whilst in other historic settings gabled frontages are commonplace, here the only historic gable on the Square is that at no. 3 the Parade (a frontage which effectively stands on the Drapery).*

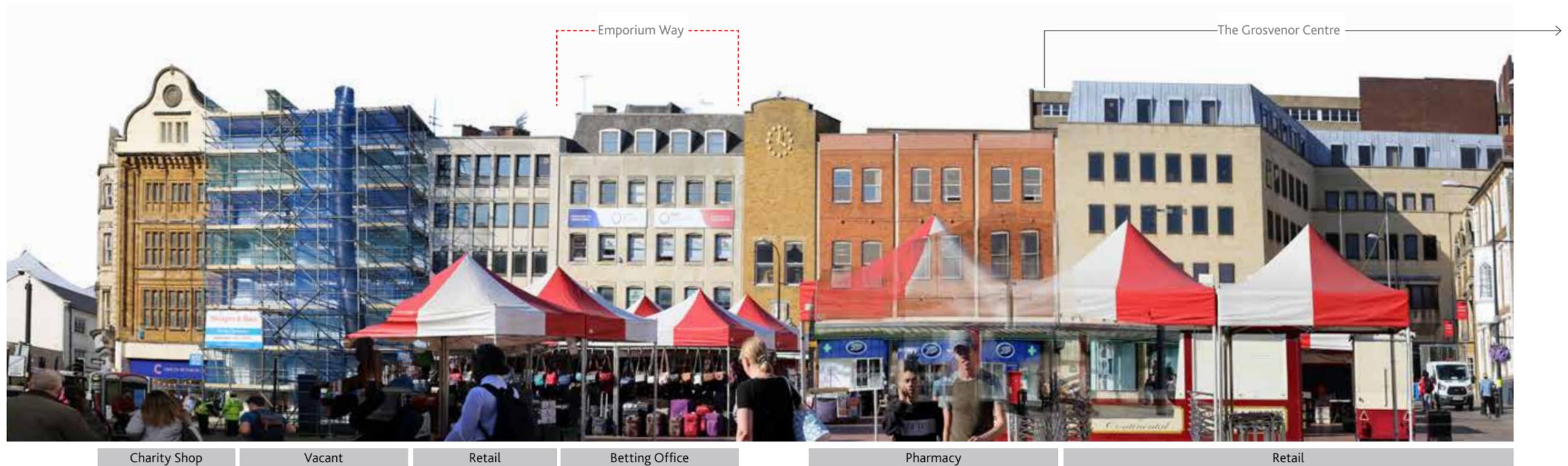
*Extract from Building Frontage Appraisal; Market Square 2008*

# 02 ANALYSIS

## THE MARKET SQUARE- ARCHITECTURE AND BUILDING USE



WEST-FACING ELEVATION



SOUTH-FACING ELEVATION

## 02 ANALYSIS

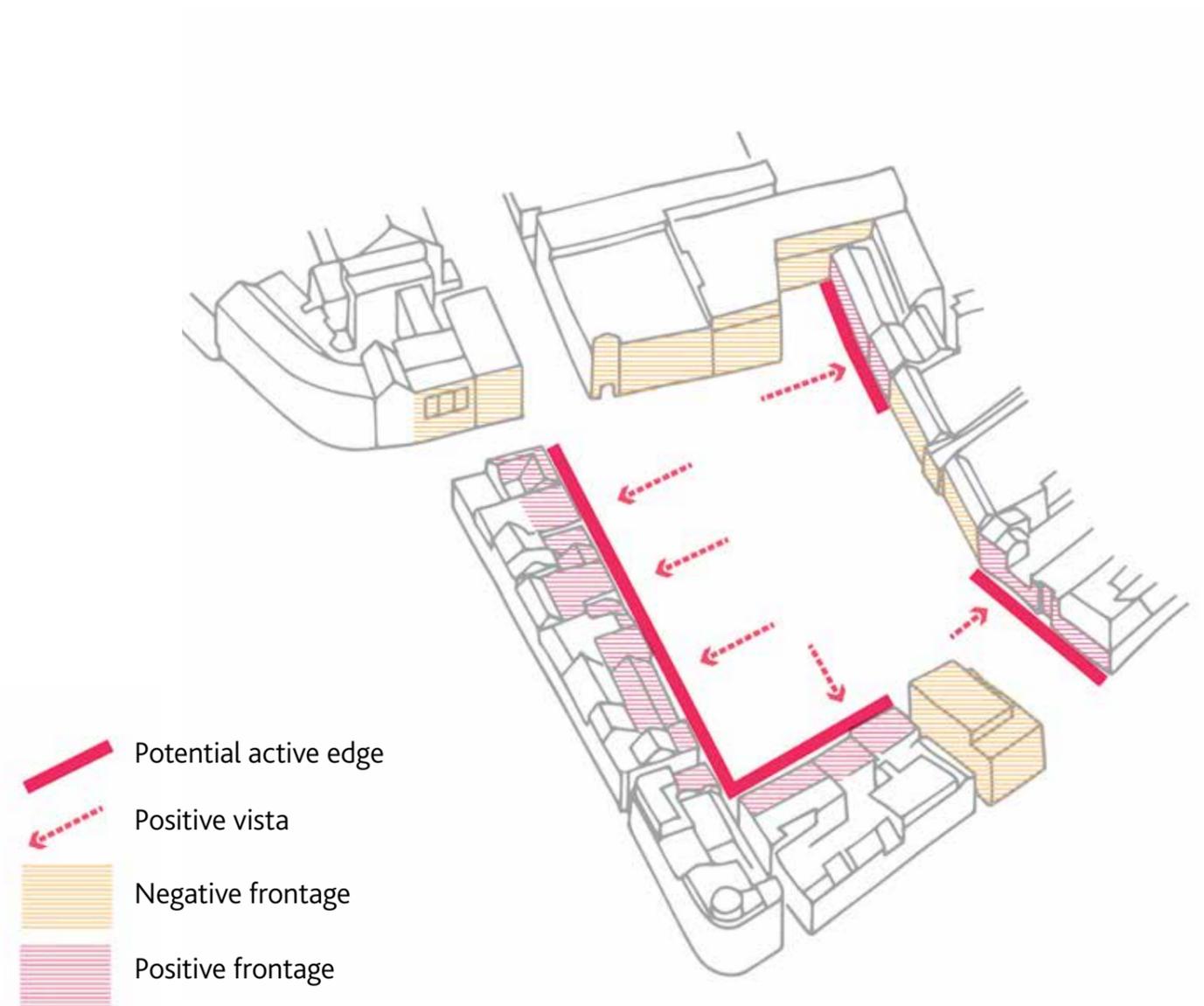
### THE MARKET SQUARE - ARCHITECTURE AND BUILDING USE

#### West-facing elevation:

The majority of buildings facing west are of fairly recent construction and typically unsympathetic in their detailing and design, this is particularly true of the Market Walk shopping centre which has little respect for the Square's architectural heritage or rhythm, notably its use of 'gabled' double height windows. At the northern end of the square two handsome buildings are located, one Welsh House which is the oldest building remaining in the square, dating back to 1595. The long expanse of market walk allows for limited modulation and variety, however the smaller buildings to the south have a richer make-up of style, materiality and use.

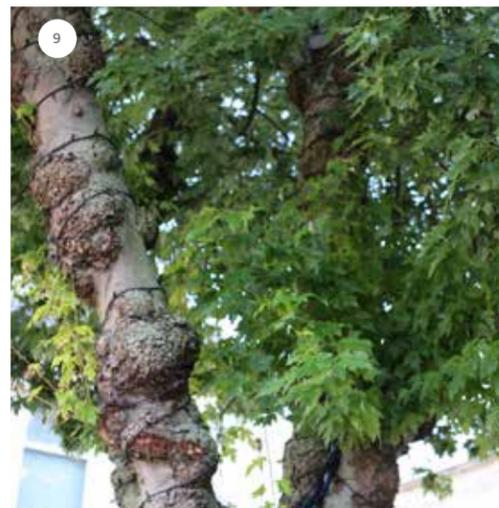
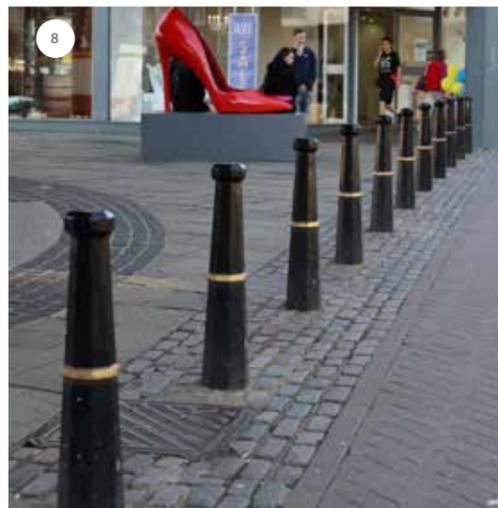
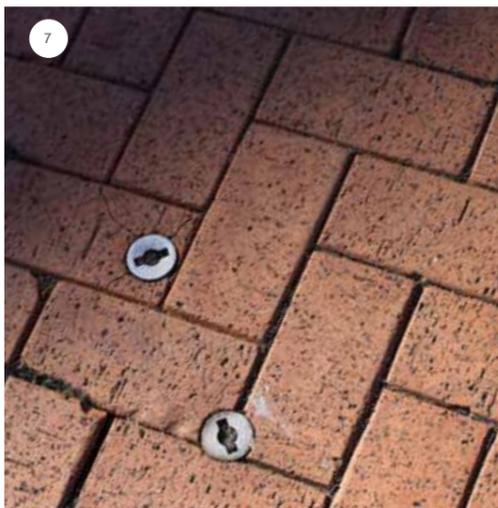
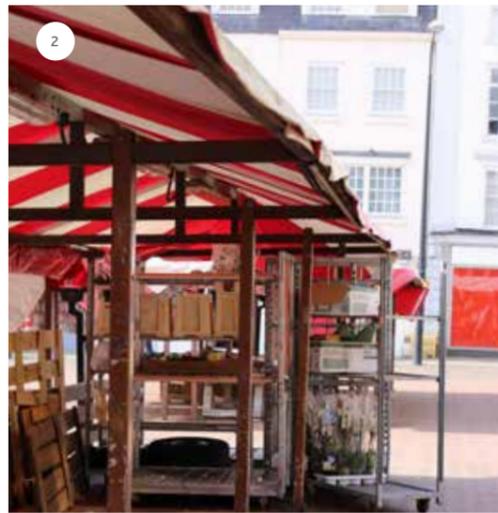
#### South-facing elevation

The south-facing elevation is dominated by the Grosvenor centre, which does not specifically contribute to the Square's historic frontages, but also does not unduly detract from the visual rhythm. Typically this elevation is made up of larger units, with very limited modulation, and variety in height, style and materiality.



## 02 ANALYSIS

### CONSTRAINTS- PHOTOGRAPHIC ASSESSMENT



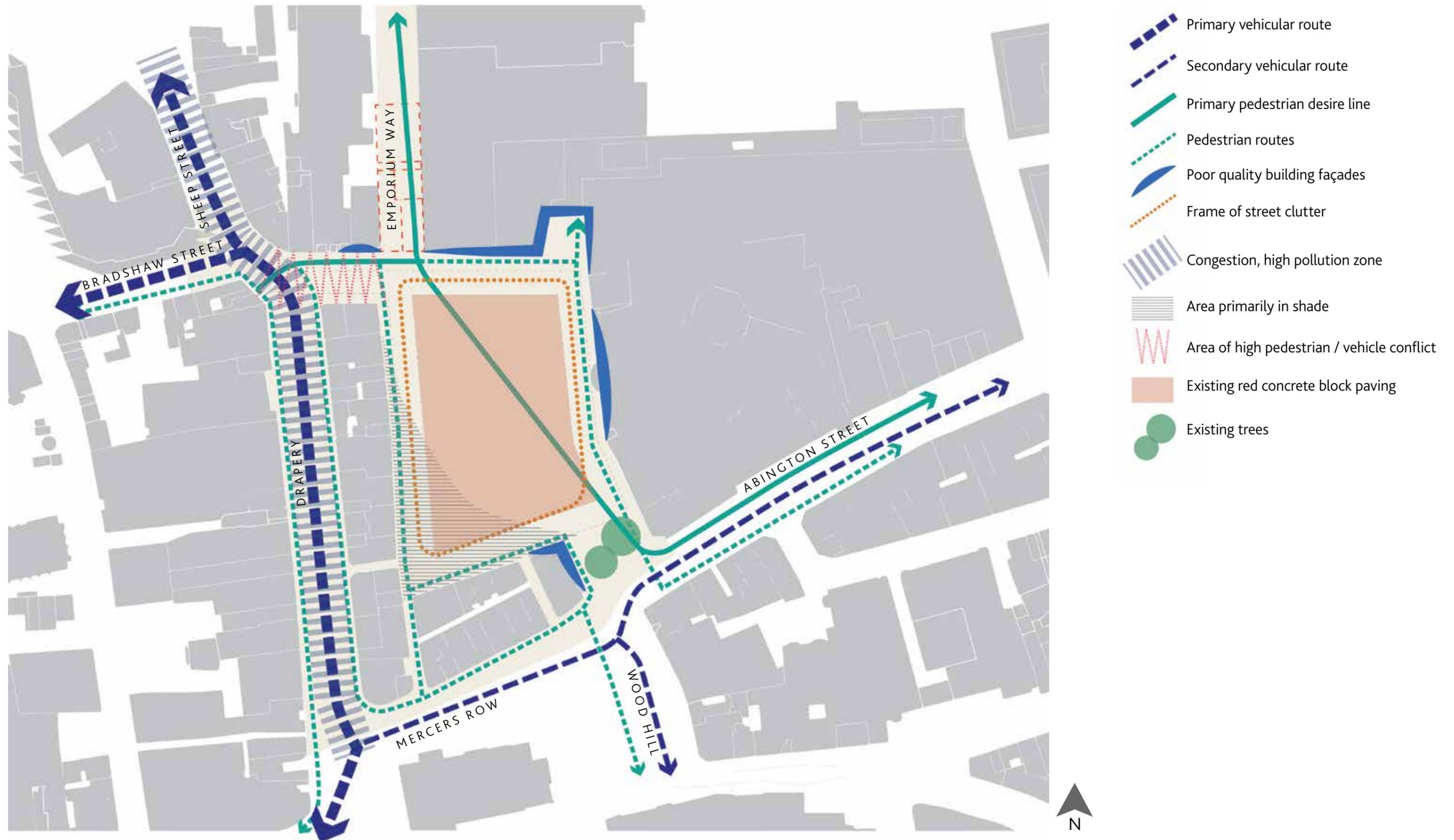
The following sets out some of the key issues identified within the Market Square today:

- Dwindling market despite low stall rents
- Very poor pedestrian connection, shared with vehicles to access the Square from Drapery
- Mixed and poor quality paving
- Large amounts of street clutter, including bollards, lighting, bins all poorly located and not unified in design.
- Limited seating within the Square.
- Poor quality architectural façades to the North and East.
- Detracting shop frontages, and building uses including betting shops and vacant properties
- Existing trees (silver maples) with poor crown form, significant canker and roots disturbing paving surround.

1. Permanent market stalls vacant
2. Stall holders spreading into unused space
3. Poor quality frontages and activation
4. Narrow Vehicular route
5. Confusing pedestrian environment
6. Untidy and poor quality frontages
7. Red concrete paving blocks
8. Mixed cobbles and natural setts
9. Existing trees uneven in form and outgrowing tree pit

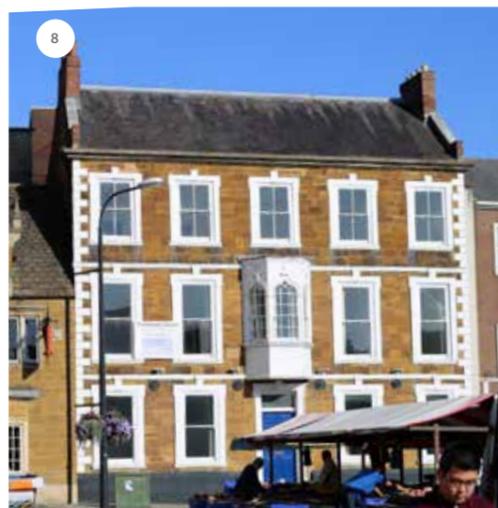
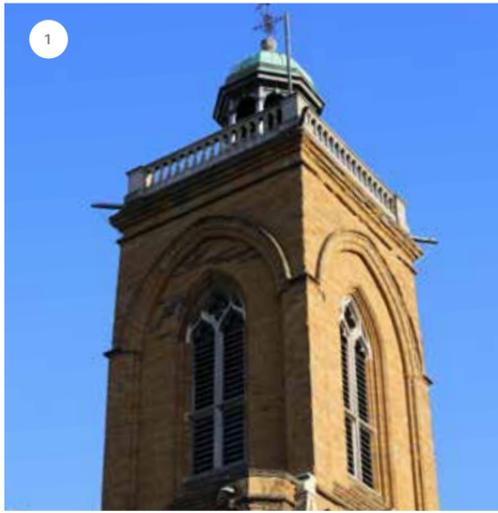
# 02 ANALYSIS

## CONSTRAINTS APPRAISAL



## 02 ANALYSIS

### OPPORTUNITIES- PHOTOGRAPHIC ASSESSMENT



The following sets out some of the key opportunities identified within the Market Square today:

- A key view of the Parish Church of All Saints tower can be seen within the square, providing a framed vista to draw people through the space
- There are a number of existing buildings with current A3 building use at ground floor which could be enhanced to provide spill out and activation with the Square.
- The north-south orientation of the Square provides a sheltered and sunny micro-climate in the north east corner
- Large existing trees provide green / amenity value
- There is a strong visual connection between the Wood Hill, Mercers Row and church area to the south of the square
- A close connection to Abington Street and the retail and pedestrianised part of the town centre
- There is a gentle level change of approximately 2.5m across the Square
- Today's market has a variety of traders with some very successful and busy stalls
- There is an existing and varied calendar of events held within the square
- Some existing quality natural stone surface materials

1. Views and connection to church tower

2. High modulation and architectural variation

3. Some vibrant and busy market stalls

4. Large available space

5. Quality old signage

6. Evening sun trap in north east corner

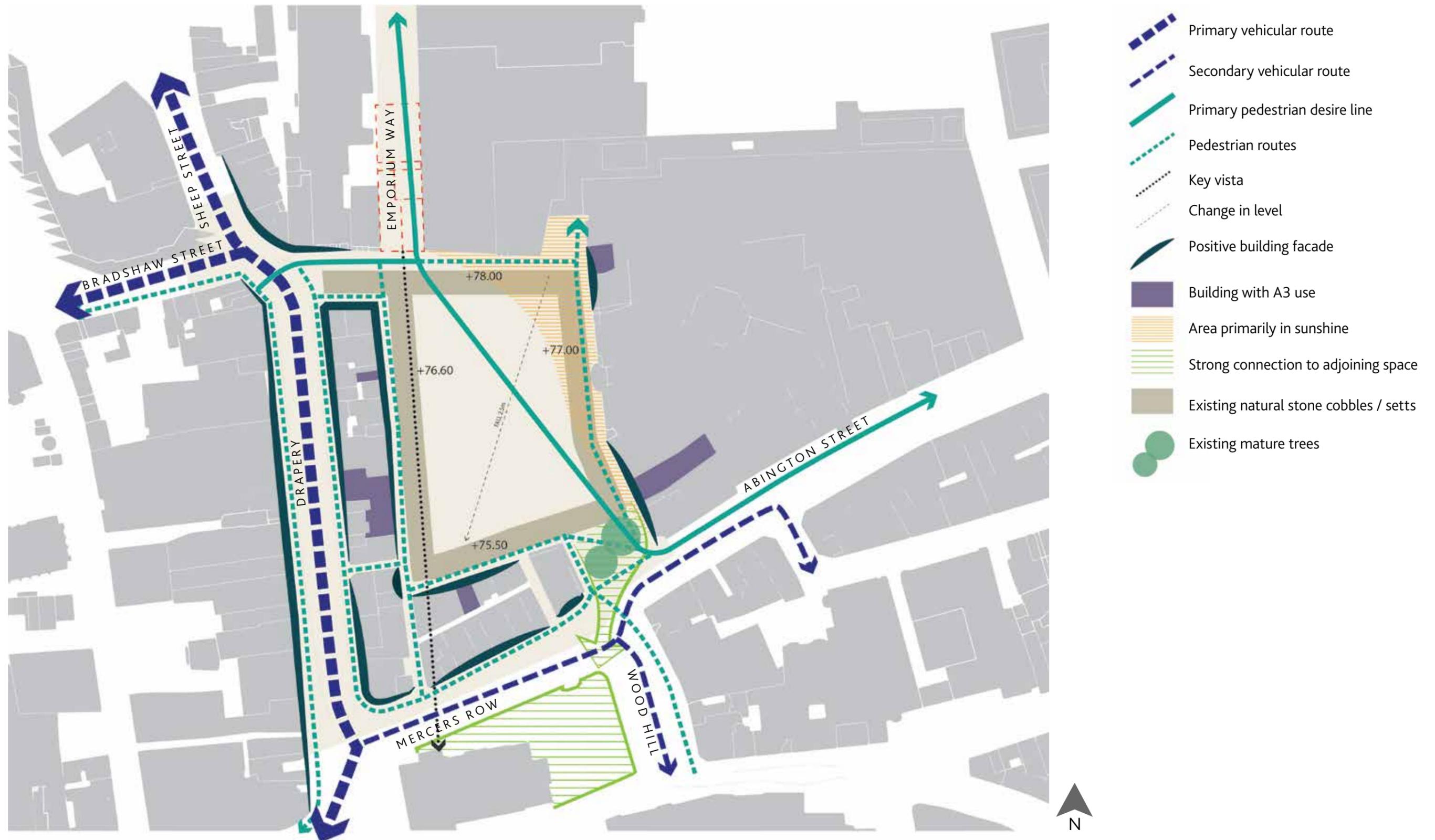
7. Natural stone setts / cobbles

8. Handsome and historic architecture

9. Existing trees providing green amenity

# 02 ANALYSIS

## OPPORTUNITIES APPRAISAL

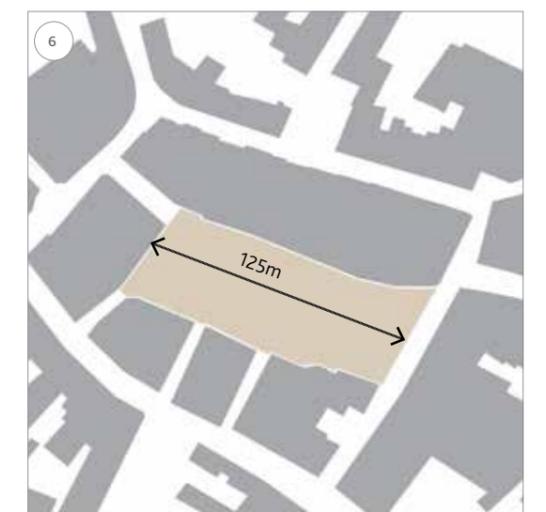
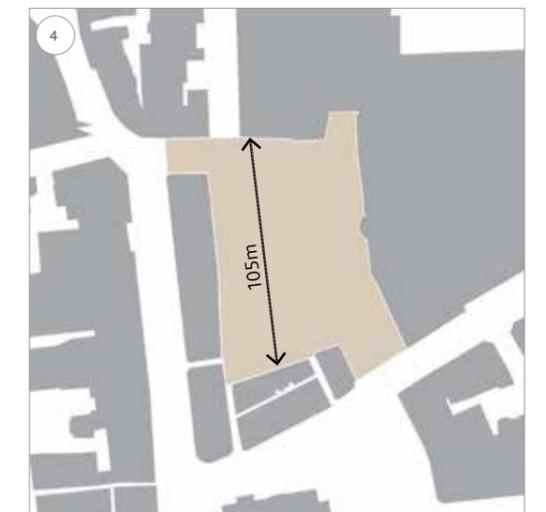


# 02 ANALYSIS

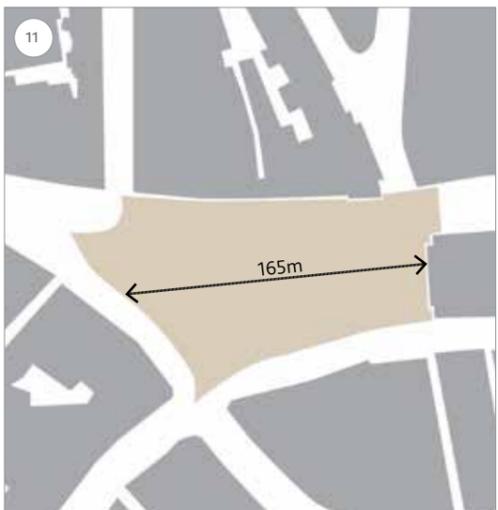
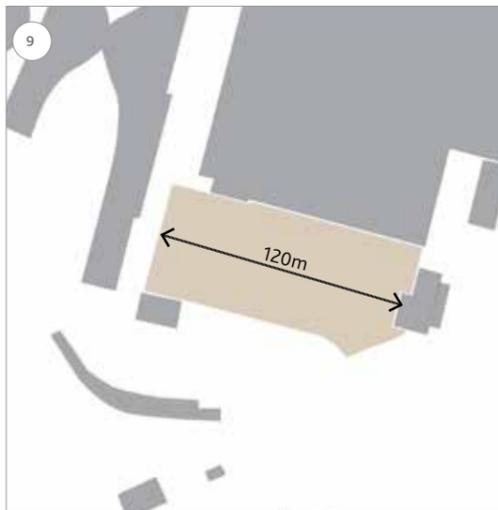
## COMPARABLE SPACES

Northampton Market Square is approximately 8,300m<sup>2</sup>, and just over 100m in length from North to South. Understanding similar examples of multi-functional spaces, their scale, capacity and uses at day and night have informed the design proposals for Northampton Market Square.

Precedents included are Nottingham Market Square at approx. 10,000 m<sup>2</sup>, Grote Markt Vilvoorde, Belgium at approx. 6,100 m<sup>2</sup> and Granary Square, Kings Cross, London at approx. 6,400 m<sup>2</sup>. These are all examples of public squares that have the capability to host markets, but at the same time provide elegant and robust spaces for a variety of other uses including interactive water features, seating and space for a variety of events.



- 1. Grote Markt Vilvoorde, Belgium
- 2. Gillett Square, Dalston, London
- 3. Skierniewice, Poland
- 4. Northampton Market Square (approx. 8,300 m<sup>2</sup>)
- 5. Tonsburg, Norway
- 6. Grote Markt Vilvoorde, Belgium (approx. 6,100 m<sup>2</sup>)



- 7. Bollnas Brotorget, Sweden
- 8. Bollnas Brotorget, Sweden
- 9. Granary Square, Kings Cross, London (approx. 6,400 m<sup>2</sup>)
- 10. Grote Markt Vilvoorde, Belgium
- 11. Nottingham Market Square (approx. 10,000 m<sup>2</sup>)
- 12. Granary Square, Kings Cross, London
- 13. Grote Markt Vilvoorde, Belgium



03

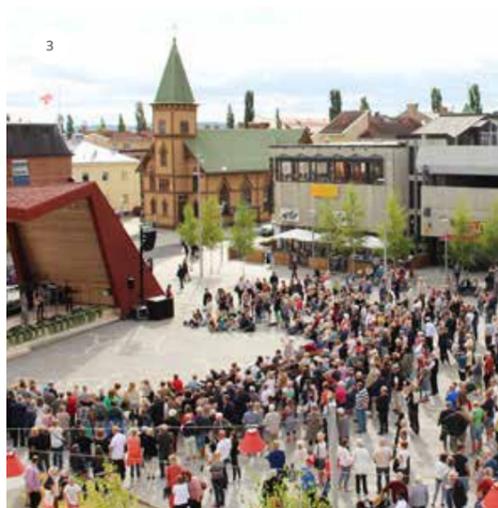
**BRIEF DEFINITION**

# 03 BRIEF DEFINITION

## DESIGN OBJECTIVES

The vision for the new Market Square is the creation of a place that encourages the regeneration and transformation of the town centre. It is required to invite people to gather, explore and engage with their surroundings.

A number of key objectives have been developed in conjunction with Northampton Borough Council and their partners Northampton Forward to assist with defining the brief for the new square.



1. Bench , Piazza Mazzini, Italy

2. Kerb Market, Kings Cross, London

3. Grote Markt Vilvoorde, Belgium

4. Radiant Lines by Asif Khan

### 01 A REVIVED 'HEART' OF THE TOWN

Enabling the market square to be the beating heart where people meet, gather and stay. It should be the primary space that provides the life and soul of Northampton.

### 02 AN ICONIC AND ATTRACTIVE SPACE

The Square should be identifiable and unique, picking up Northampton's important heritage and emphasising the positive qualities, such as historic existing architecture.

### 03 A FLEXIBLE CANVAS FOR EVENTS

The proposed square should enable a diversity of different uses across the seasons, including markets, festivals, performance and installations.

### 04 A CONDENSED, IMPROVED QUALITY MARKET

The existing traders market should be reduced in size and upgraded with a mixture of permanent and temporary stalls. This should enable a smaller number of higher quality stalls.

### 05 A SPACE FOR EVERYBODY

The square should provide a space attractive, accessible and exciting for a large diversity of the community, including families, tourists, young professionals and the elderly.

### 06 A CATALYST FOR TRANSFORMATION OF THE TOWN

The square is critical to the wider regeneration of the town, providing the centre-point for the transformational change, and setting the precedent for the future vision of Northampton.

### 07 A NEW LEISURE DESTINATION

The Square should be diversifying its appeal to the wider community, providing opportunities to visit more frequently and to stay longer, including places to eat and drink both in the day time evening.

### 08 A TRIGGER FOR THE REGENERATION OF SURROUNDING BUILDINGS

An improved public realm for the Square would also trigger important positive change to existing buildings and their associated ground floor uses and activation and spill out into the square.

## 03 BRIEF DEFINITION

### A FLEXIBLE SPACE FOR TEMPORARY AND SEASONAL USES

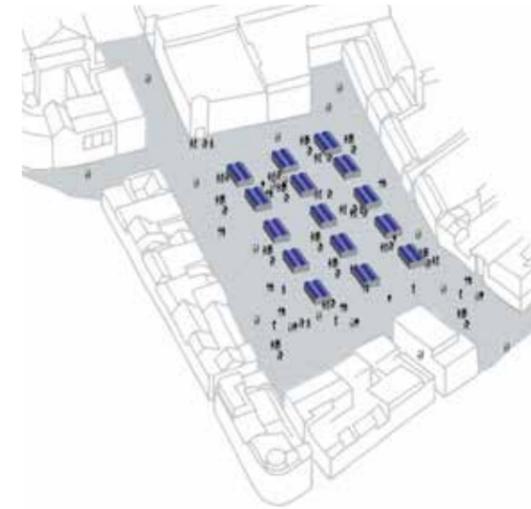
The proposals for the square consider a diverse and flexible programme of potential events to take place within the space alongside more day to day activities such as the permanent traders market.

Whilst these potential events should not dominate the design development of the space a number of considerations have been built into the scheme to enable sufficient flexibility such as; available clear space for stalls or vans, including pedestrian circulation and queuing; emergency access through an event, allowance for power, water and cleaning; surfacing to be designed to withstand vehicular loading and resistance to stains.

The existing events programme will develop and expand over time and could include the following:

- Local food and produce market (temporary/ pop up)
- Music, theatre or art performance
- Concerts
- Christmas market and Christmas tree
- Amusements and fairground including summer beach
- Exhibitions or art installations
- Parade and festivals
- Vintage or craft fairs
- Seasonal Ice rink
- Outdoor cinema / sports screening
- Night-time leisure destination (eating / drinking)

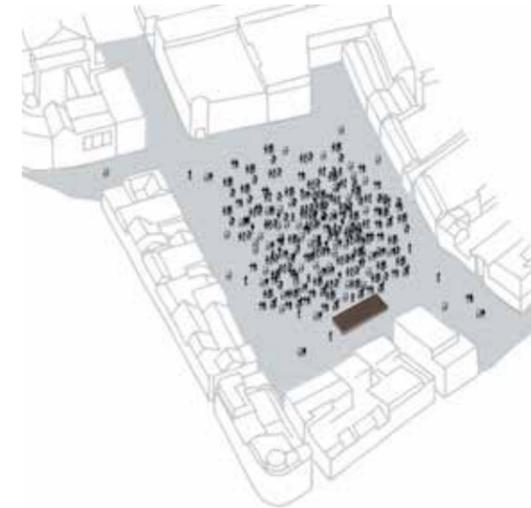
LOCAL MARKET



OPEN-AIR CINEMA



CONCERT



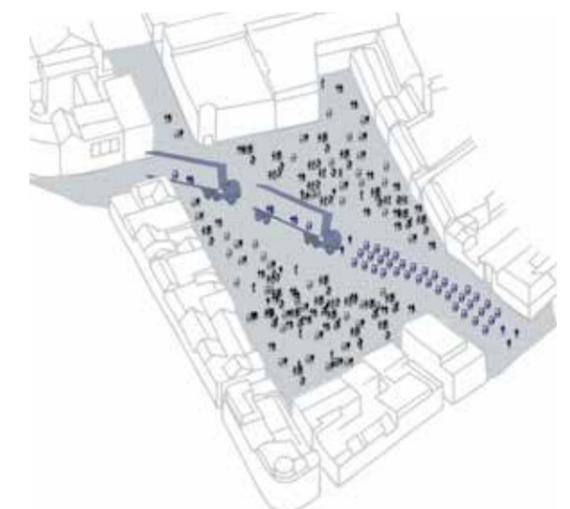
SEASONAL EVENTS



PERFORMANCE



PARADE





04

DESIGN APPROACH

# 04 DESIGN APPROACH

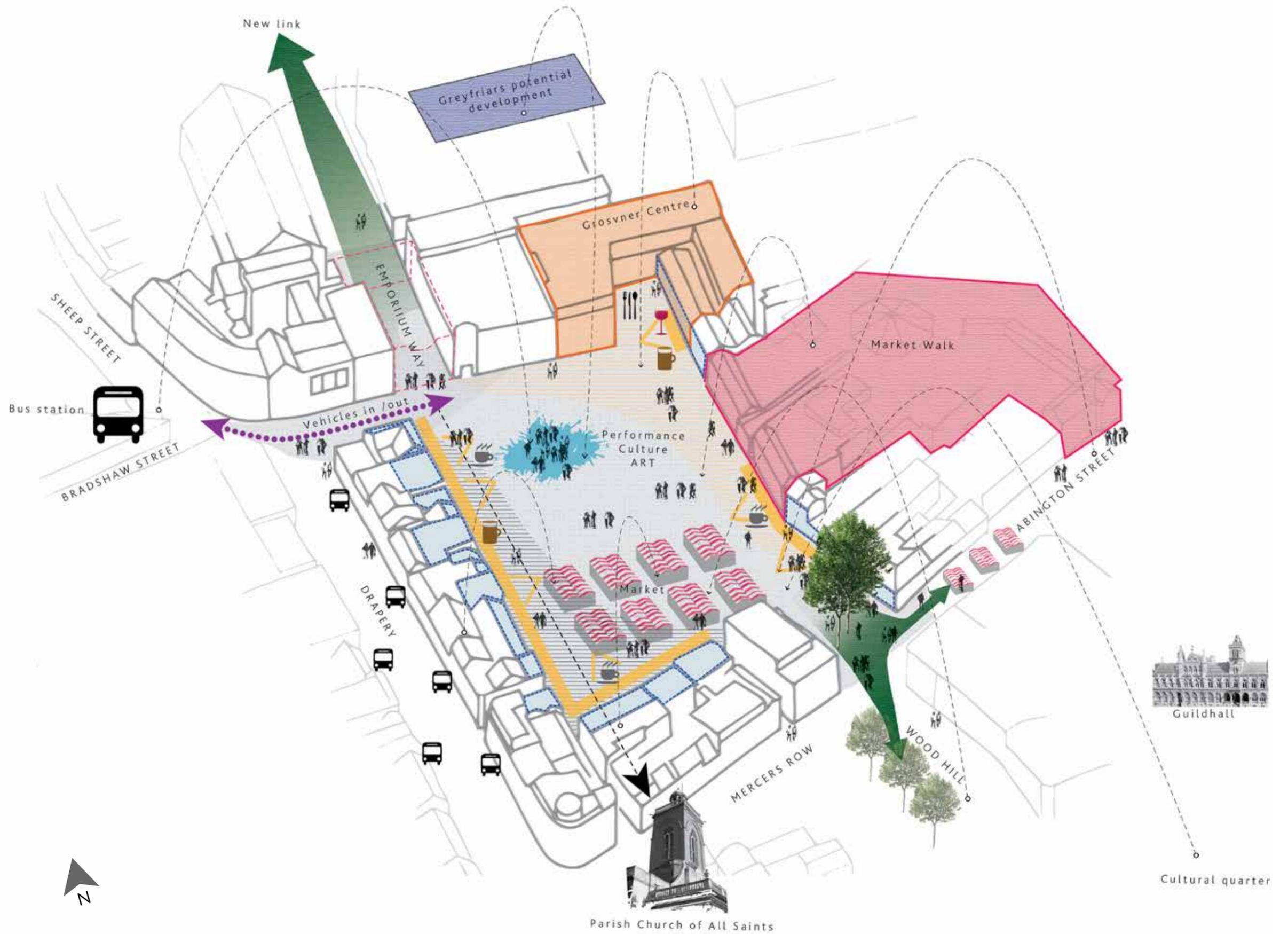
## KEY CONSIDERATIONS

The Market Square has a strong architectural frame which provides a sense of enclosure to the space. This relationship with the buildings, their current and future uses, and the potential creation of spill-out space is critical to the success of an active and engaging public square.

The design considerations set up the baseline for the design proposals and help inform and create the key design principles.

Some key design considerations are illustrated opposite and listed as follows:

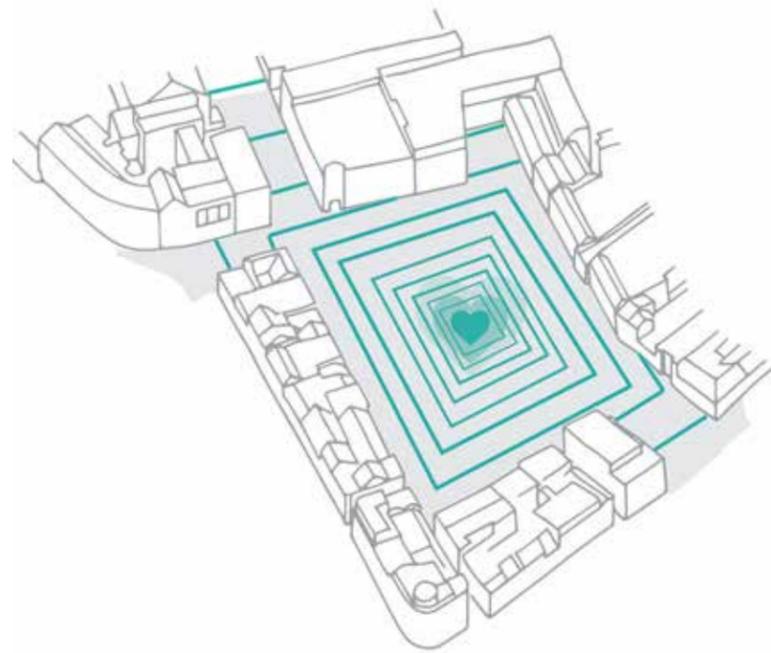
- Pedestrian connectivity to the town centre and transport hubs
- Practical functionality of service delivery access for shops and buildings
- Building relationship to the square, maximising frontages and façades that have potential to 'give back' to the square
- Creation of place and identity that connects to its history and heritage
- Facilitating transformative change whilst retaining market function
- Enhancing green connections to Parish Church of All Saints and by opening up Emporium Way



# 04 DESIGN APPROACH

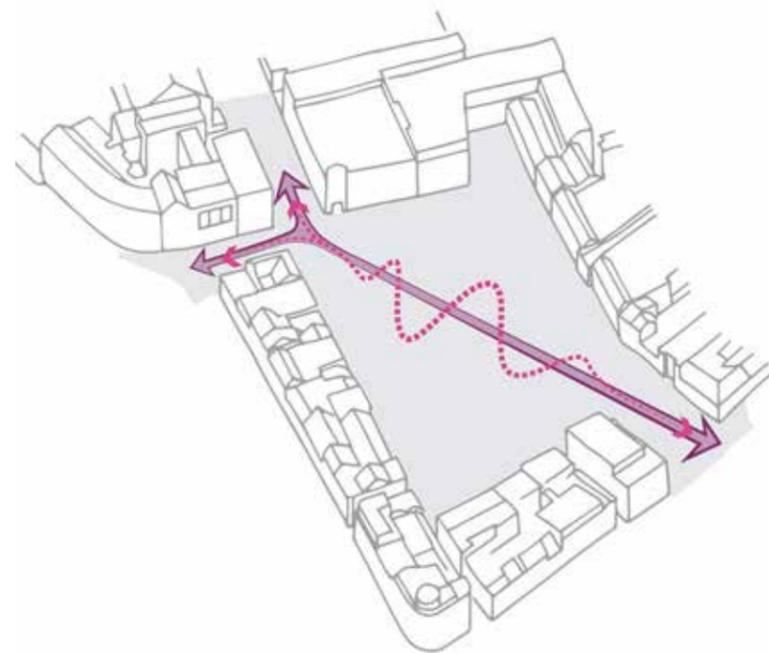
## KEY PRINCIPLES

By considering the design objectives in conjunction with the site analysis and design considerations the following design principles emerge that underpin the proposals for the square:



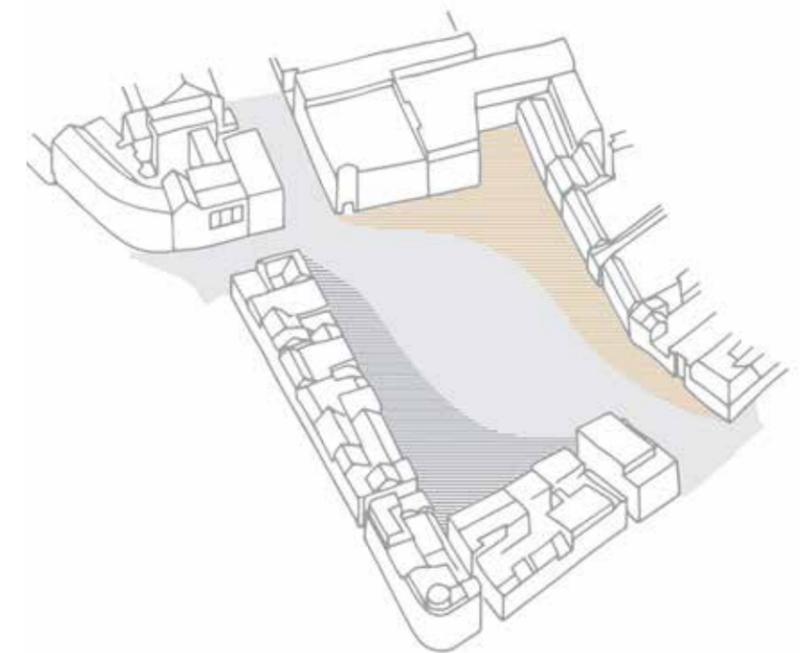
### CREATING THE HEART

Located in the middle of the retail core the square will form the heart of the town drawing people through and into the space.



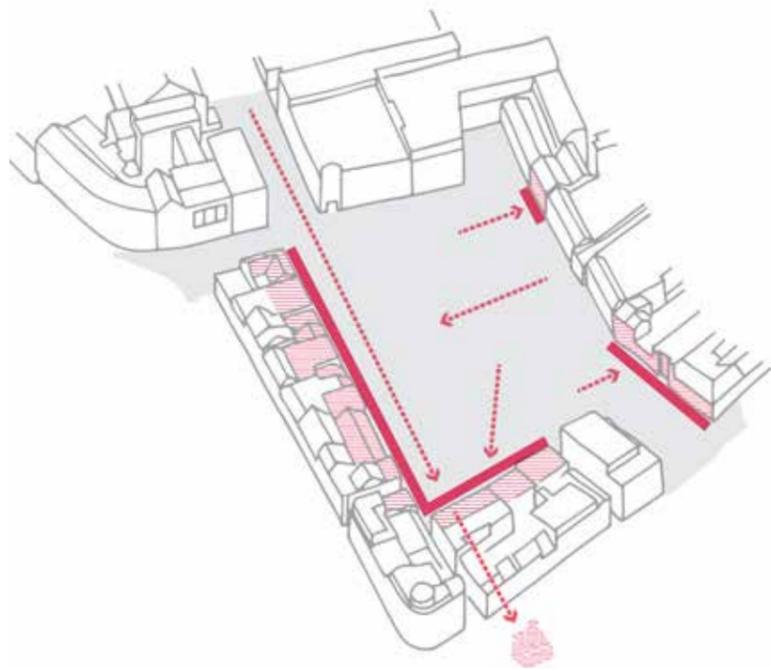
### ENABLING CONNECTIVITY

Maintaining the primary pedestrian routes through the square, enabling both direct and meandering routes with opportunities to stop



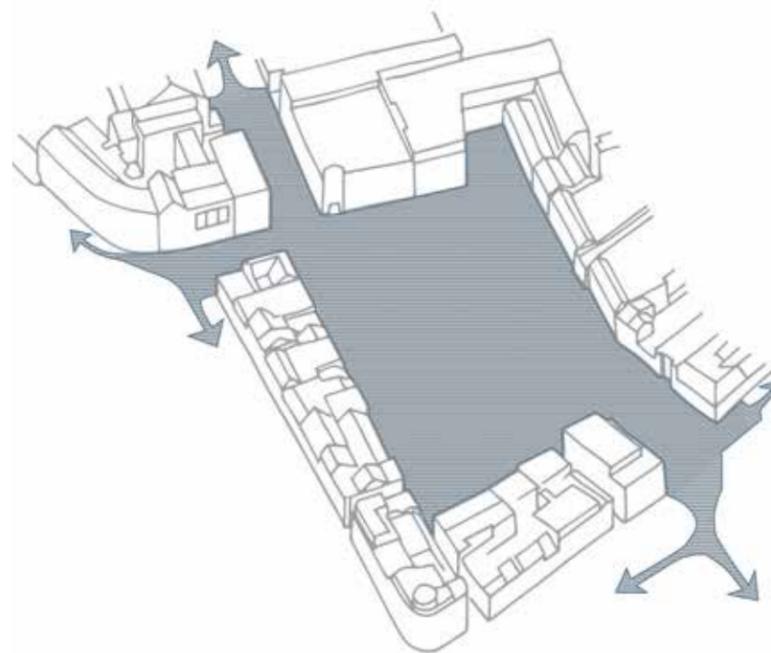
### RESPONSIVE TO MICRO-CLIMATE

Proposals will respond to the micro-climate of the site as it changes through the day and with the seasons. Seating areas and dwell spaces will be concentrated in sunnier areas, with tree planting to create shelter year round, and dappled shade in summer.



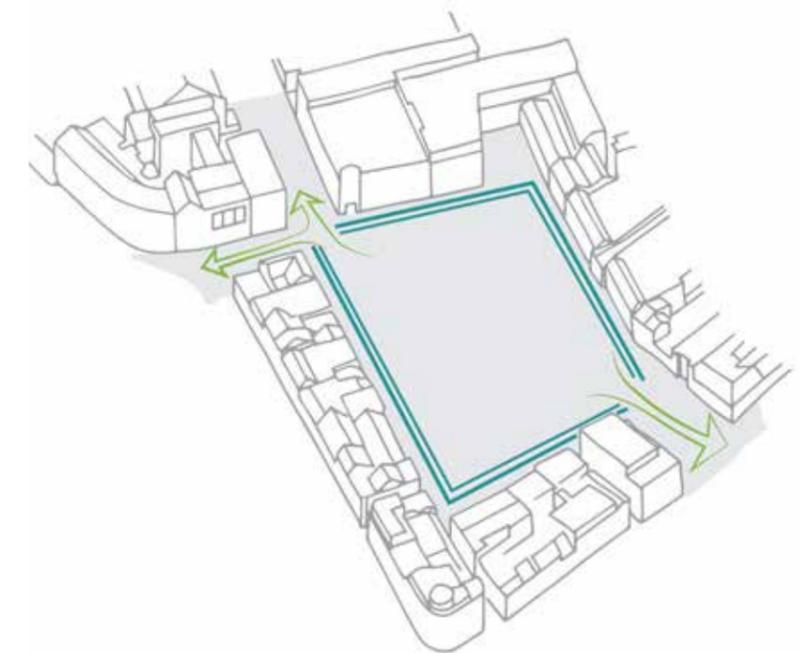
#### MAXIMISING QUALITY FAÇADES

The design will emphasise the positive relationships with the quality building frontages and help facilitate activity and engagement across building thresholds.



#### REACHING OUT TO THE WIDER TOWN

Proposals will not be an isolated proposition. They will extend and help connect the square into the town centre, and north through Emporium Way to unlock potential development platforms.



#### FRAMING THE SPACE

The design will utilise building façades and vertical elements to create a sense of containment and screening to maximise vistas and the relationship to the open space.

# 04 DESIGN APPROACH

## KEY COMPONENTS

The proposed design of the new Market Square will be made up of a number of different design components. These include a variety of hard landscape elements such as a canopy structure or stage, seating and a water feature, soft landscape such as trees, and spaces and surfaces that are designed for specific uses such as markets or events. Depending on priorities these components will be varied in size to suit how the square could be used across the year.



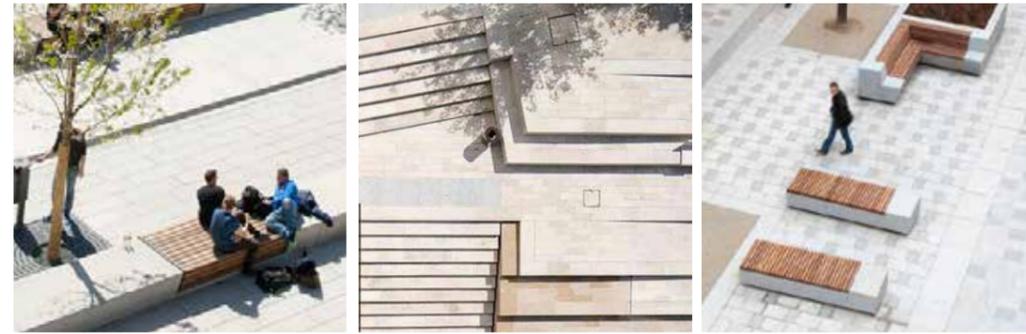
INTERACTIVE WATER FEATURE

An interactive water feature provides activation and engagement at times when the square may be less busy.



TREES AND GREEN AMENITY

Tree planting is beneficial to both the environment by removing pollutants and carbon dioxide and to peoples well being and mental health.



SEATING

A variety of options for both informal sitting and perching along with more traditional benches create opportunities for people to linger longer.



CANOPY / STAGE

An architectural feature or plinth for events, markets or performances could provide a focus for events.



CAFE SPILL OUT SPACE

Provision of space to allow existing and potential retailers to 'spill-out' and use the square for eating and drinking will contribute to the activation.



PERFORMANCE & EVENT SPACE

An open and large area that could be used for a variety of different events and uses throughout the year to provide flexibility in function.



PERMANENT & TEMPORARY MARKET STALLS

A number of fixed permanent market stall for regular traders and an area designated for seasonal or temporary pop-up markets.



05

OPTIONS APPRAISAL & CONSULTATION

# 05 OPTIONS APPRAISAL & CONSULTATION

## INITIAL OPTIONS

A number of initial concept options were developed to test components and their relationships versus functionality within the square. A series of five high level strategic options were initially developed and following client review these were tested and consolidated into three options that were taken to Northampton Forward Board members.

The options demonstrate a number of different priorities and scenarios to test against the design principles and objectives of the square. This process enabled the design and client team to 'fine-tune' the important components and elements through a critical review and comparison process.



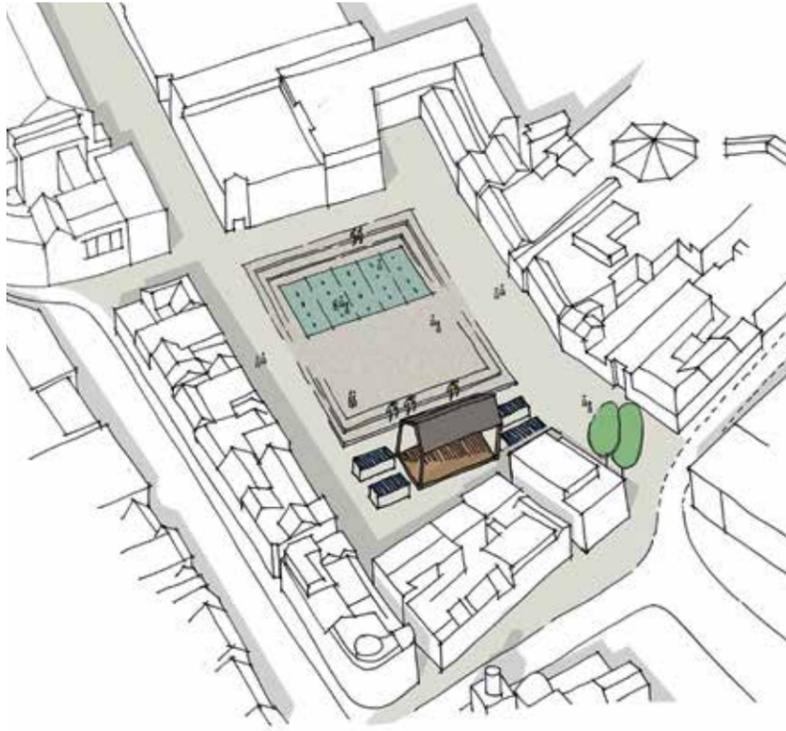
THE GARDEN SQUARE

- Green heart with semi-mature tree planting
- Large, simple, elegant open space
- Feature performance stage / plinth
- Traditional and formal geometry
- Large central space for events
- Periphery market stalls set with trees



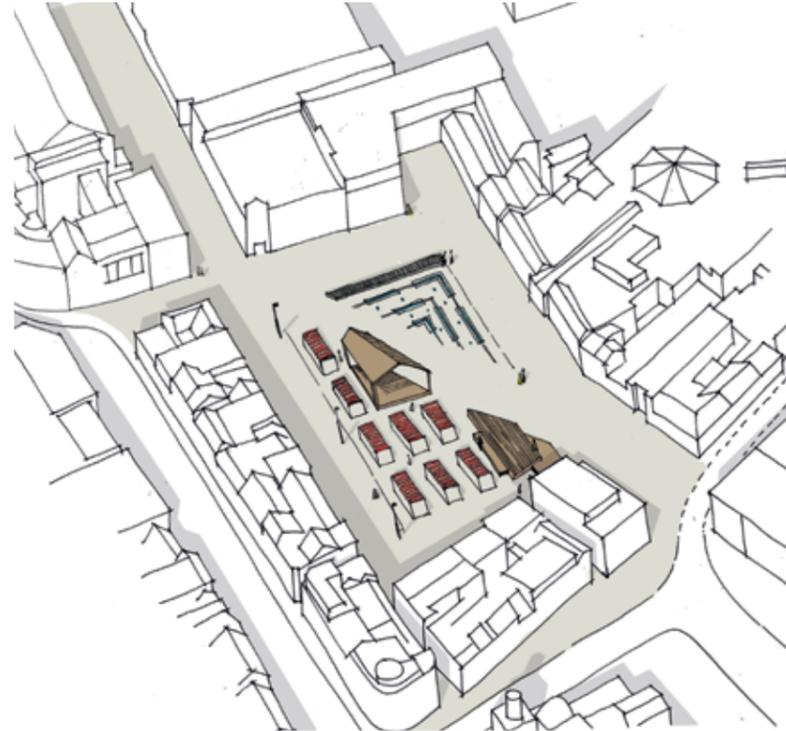
THE DE-CONSTRUCTED SQUARE

- Contemporary de-constructed geometry
- Inclusion of canopy / structure as focal feature
- Re-defining a traditional 'square' with no periphery vehicular route
- Large central space for events
- Minimal area for markets



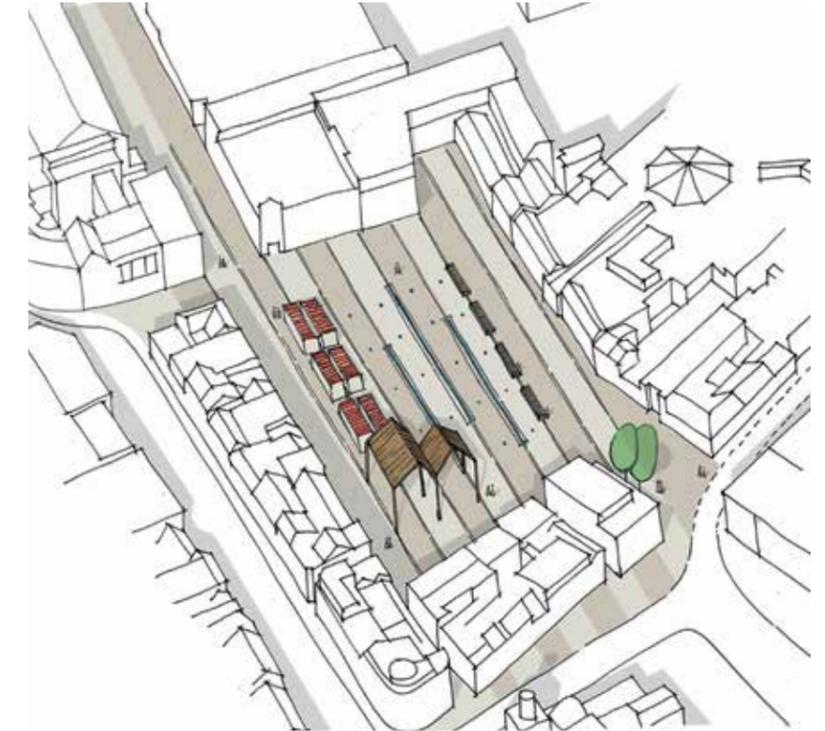
THE STEPPED SQUARE

- Utilising level change to create seats and steps
- Defining separate spaces for the market / with flexible event space and the public 'square'
- Smaller area for events with level access limitations
- Large central water feature



THE DIAGONAL SQUARE

- Prioritising a direct route and vista based on a desire line
- Defined separate spaces for the market / with flexible event space and the public 'square'
- Minimal area for events
- Large central canopy / structure



THE BANDING SQUARE

- Bold banding and patternation providing order to elements within the square
- Large central space for events
- Large canopy / structure as feature

# 05 OPTIONS APPRAISAL & CONSULTATION

## DEVELOPED OPTIONS

Three concept options were developed to challenge the thinking of a traditional market square;

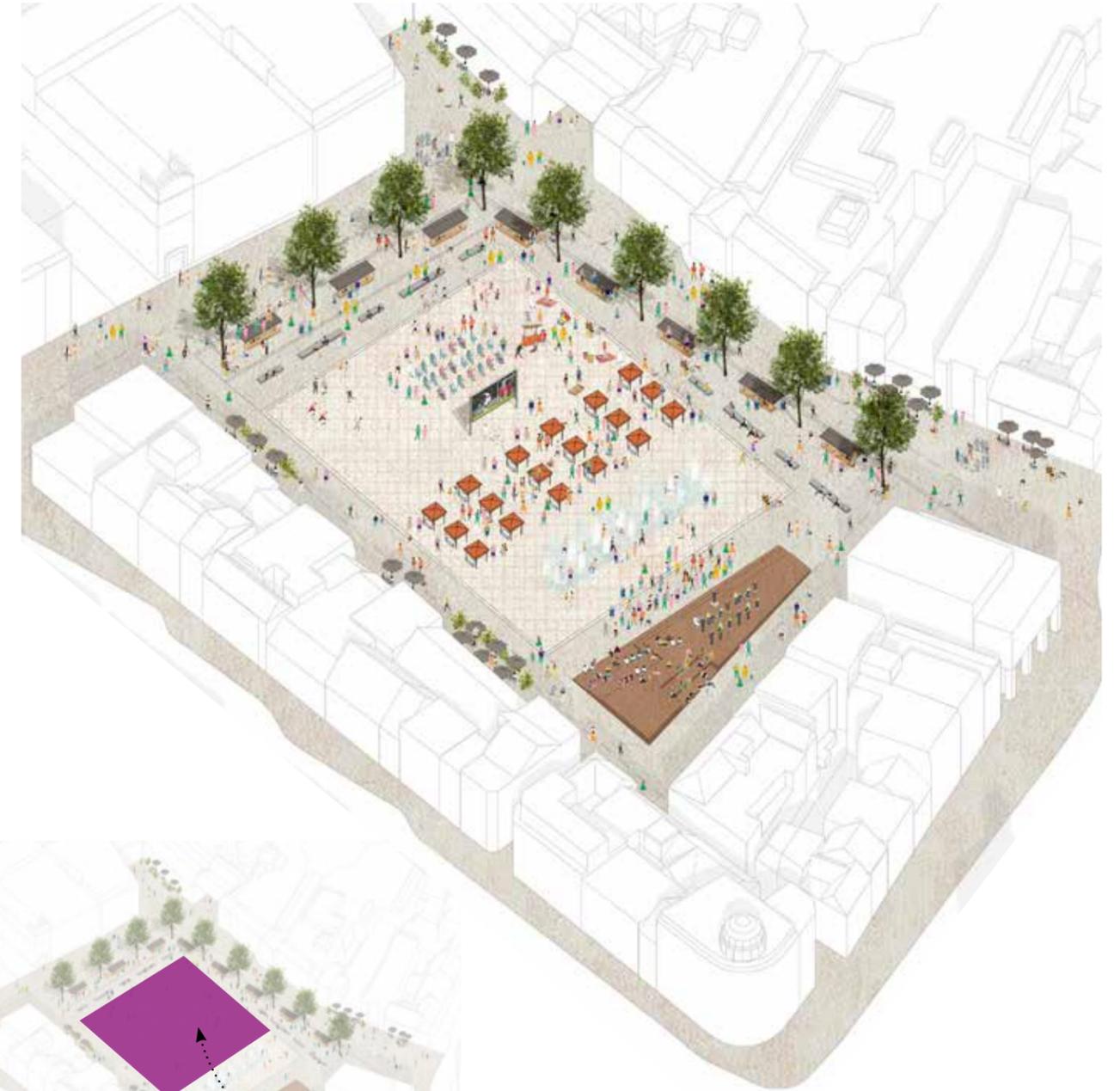
- The Garden Square was based on the idea of a large simple open space in the centre of the square with day to day activities and activation pushed to the periphery of the space. The 'traditional' square is framed by tree planting to assist with screening of poor architecture and combines this avenue planting as a setting for the market stalls.
- The De-constructed Square goes against the typical convention of an urban square by utilising geometric forms not directly correlating to the building edge. This enables spatial planning, and activity areas to have more freedom in size and shape to suit their needs and to respond to site and micro-climate opportunities.
- The Stepped Square seeks to maximise the natural level change across the square to create opportunities for seating and containment of activity spaces.

Following a review with Northampton Borough Council and their partners Northampton Forward, it was agreed that the De-constructed Square was the preferred option. It provided a greater flexibility in layout for the variety of components and the linear water feature which utilises the natural fall across the site could strongly contribute to activating the western edge of the square.

A critical review of the components in regards to budget and best value was undertaken. Consideration for transformative impact, flexibility and longevity of use as well as ongoing maintenance costs were reviewed.

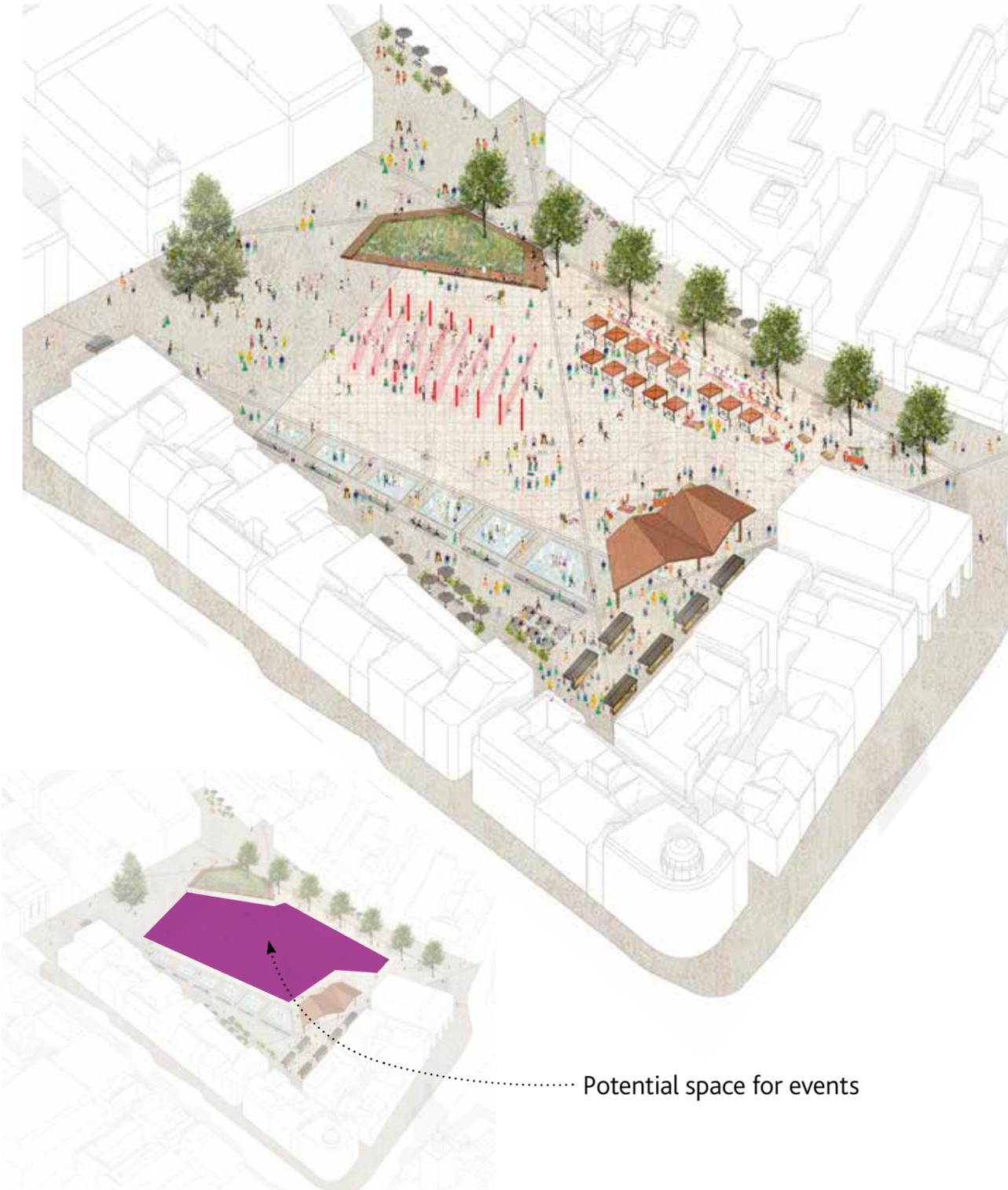
It was agreed that the inclusion of an architectural feature such as a market canopy or plinth for events would be too static for the space and not provide good value in terms of seasonal flexibility.

THE GARDEN SQUARE

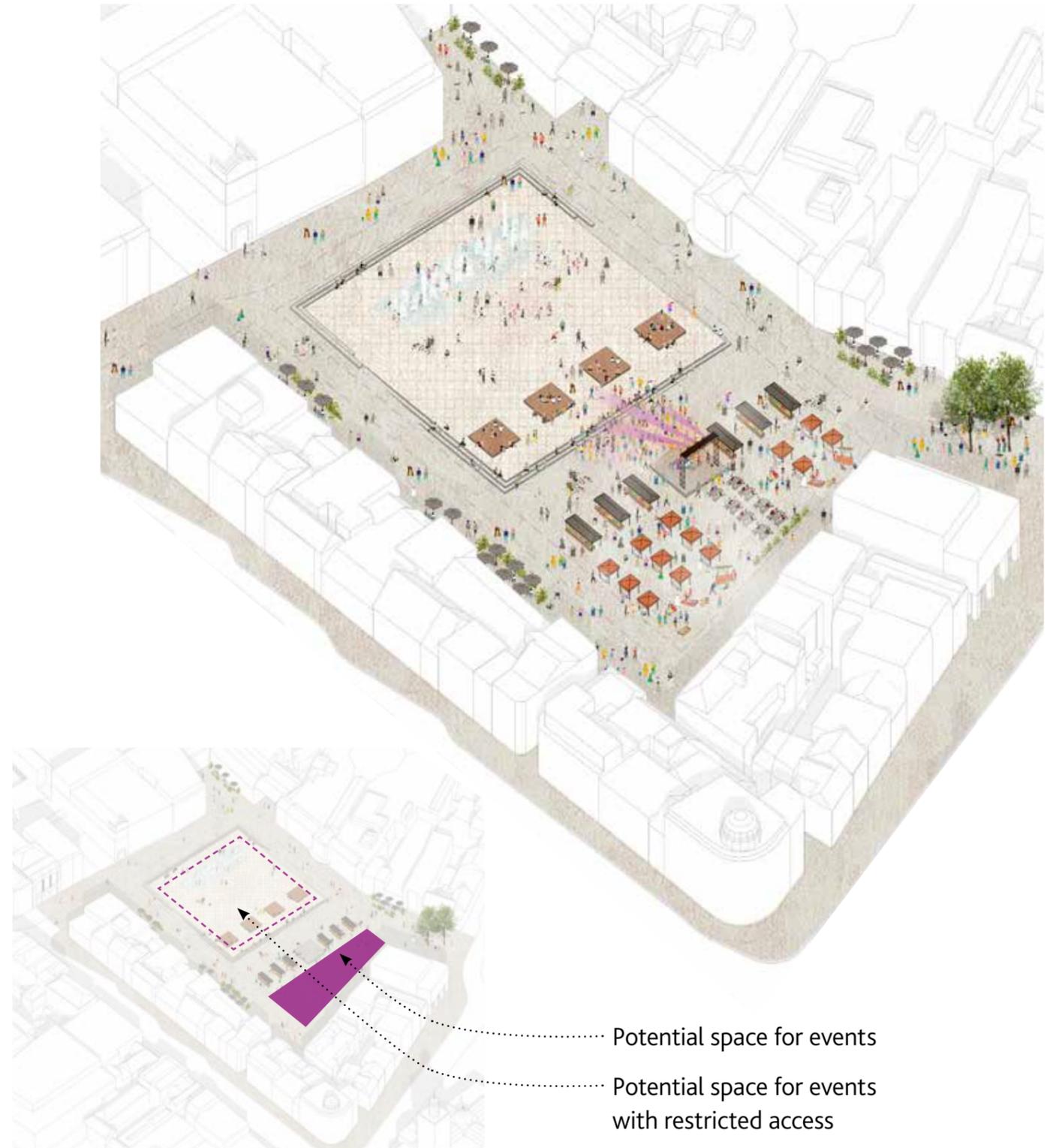


Potential space for events

THE DE-CONSTRUCTED SQUARE



THE STEPPED SQUARE



# 05 OPTIONS APPRAISAL & CONSULTATION

## CONSULTATION OPTIONS

The preferred option was developed into three schemes for public consultation. These explored the location and scale of various components such as grove or avenue tree planting, linear or square water feature and number of permanent market stalls.



LINEAR TREE AVENUE



WATER FEATURE



MARKET STALLS



SEATING FEATURE

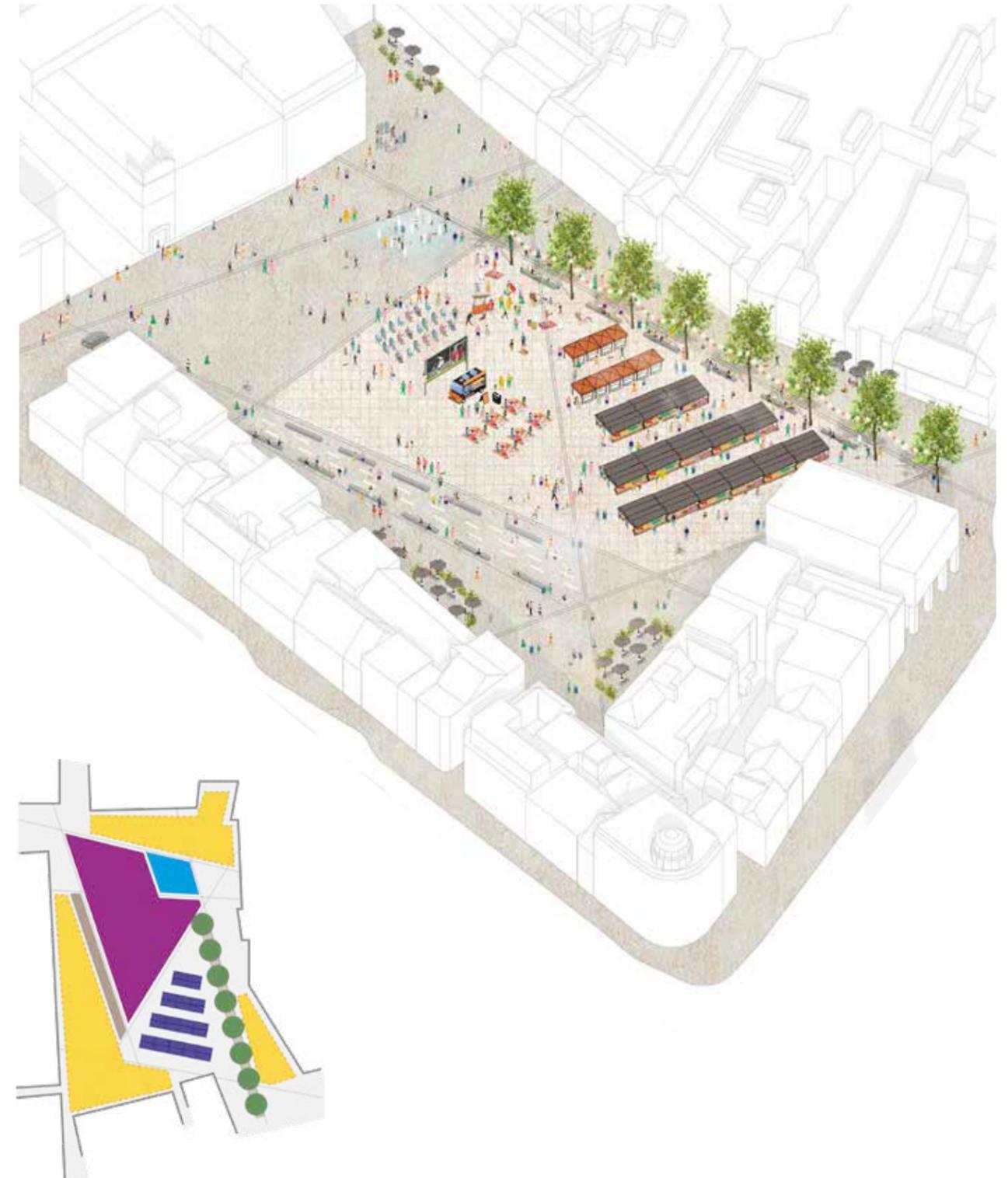


EVENT SPACE

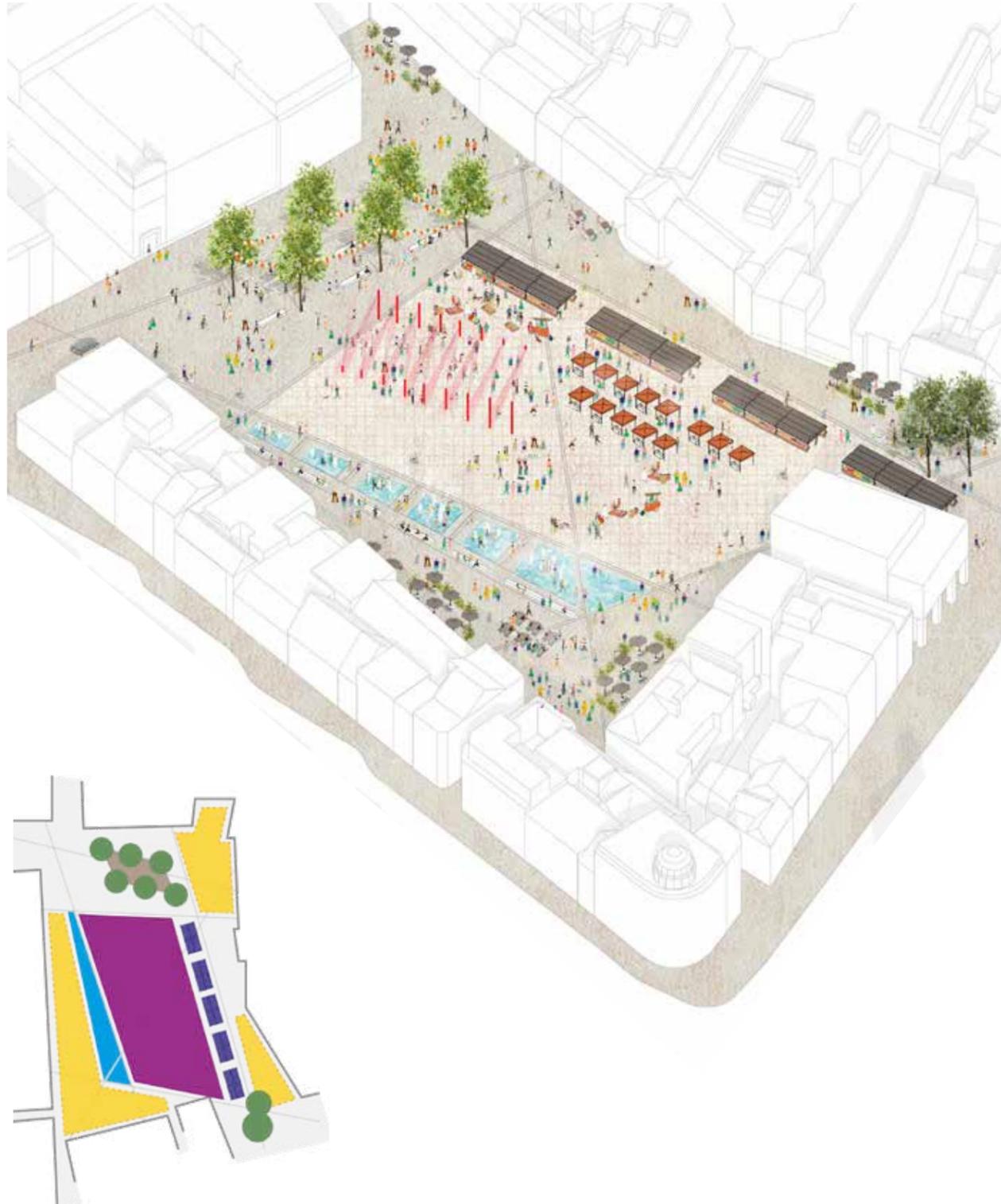


SPILL OUT SPACE

OPTION ONE



OPTION TWO



OPTION THREE



# 05 OPTIONS APPRAISAL & CONSULTATION

## PUBLIC CONSULTATION

In December 2019 three design options for the Market Square were taken to public consultation to help inform and develop the proposals. These options tested what local people wanted in terms of layout and the scale of various components such as tree planting, the water feature and number of permanent market stalls.

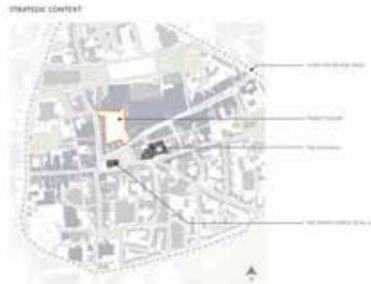
An event within the Market Square was held to engage as many people as possible, along with an online survey and publication in the local press. The consultation material, explaining the process and illustrating the options is set out below.

**Northampton Forward** | GILLESPIES

### INTRODUCTION

**NORTHAMPTON MARKET SQUARE**

Options have been identified to propose design proposals for the Market Square in Northampton. The design proposals will be developed in consultation with the Council and community, with an emphasis on Northampton Forward, a plan and a number of actions that have been developed. The design proposals will be developed in consultation with the Council and community, with an emphasis on Northampton Forward, a plan and a number of actions that have been developed. The design proposals will be developed in consultation with the Council and community, with an emphasis on Northampton Forward, a plan and a number of actions that have been developed.



**STRATEGIC CONTEXT**



<https://turnkeywebdesignconsultancy.com/home/>

**Northampton Forward** | GILLESPIES

### SITE ANALYSIS

**NORTHAMPTON MARKET SQUARE**

**CONSTRAINTS**



**OPPORTUNITIES**



- 1. High quality public realm
- 2. High quality public realm
- 3. High quality public realm
- 4. High quality public realm
- 5. High quality public realm
- 6. High quality public realm
- 7. High quality public realm
- 8. High quality public realm
- 9. High quality public realm
- 10. High quality public realm



**Northampton Forward** | GILLESPIES

### THE VISION

**NORTHAMPTON MARKET SQUARE**

**DESIGN OBJECTIVES**

- 01 A REVISED 'HEART' OF THE TOWN
- 02 AN ECONOMIC PICTURE POSTCARD SPACE
- 03 A FLEXIBLE CHANGING ROOMS FOR EVENTS
- 04 A CONDENSED, IMPROVED QUALITY MARKET
- 05 A SPACE FOR EVERYBODY
- 06 A CATALYST FOR TRANSFORMATION OF THE TOWN
- 07 A NEW LEISURE DESTINATION
- 08 A PLACE FOR THE REGENERATION OF BUILDINGS

**PROPOSED EVENTS AND ACTIVATION**



**Northampton Forward** | GILLESPIES

### DESIGN APPROACH

**NORTHAMPTON MARKET SQUARE**

**DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS**



**DESIGN PRINCIPLES**

- 01
- 02
- 03
- 04
- 05
- 06
- 07
- 08

**Northampton Forward** | GILLESPIES

### COMPONENT ELEMENTS

NORTHAMPTON MARKET SQUARE

**Northampton Forward** | GILLESPIES

### OPTION ONE

NORTHAMPTON MARKET SQUARE

**Northampton Forward** | GILLESPIES

### OPTION TWO

NORTHAMPTON MARKET SQUARE

**Northampton Forward** | GILLESPIES

### OPTION THREE

NORTHAMPTON MARKET SQUARE

# 05 OPTIONS APPRAISAL & CONSULTATION

## PUBLIC CONSULTATION RESPONSE

All survey data was collected and analysed by Think Turquoise, and the highlights of this information have been summarised below with graphics to support opposite.

*There is a desire from the general public for the market square to be rejuvenated and the three proposed designs were favourably received.*

*Key for respondents is ensuring that the market square is a welcoming, usable, safe space that at its heart is a market square (with quality traders) but can also be a space that lends itself to other events.*

*Those surveyed want greenery and trees to be featured and for there to be seating so that it can become a space where you can sit and relax. Cafe and restaurant spill out was also seen to be a welcomed element of the designs.*

*Anecdotally from the open comments given by the public if the market square is rejuvenated it is important that the surrounding area, buildings and shops are also refreshed and fit in with the new look and feel of the market square. Without improvements to these areas as well the impact of the rejuvenated market square will be lessened.*

*Similarly maintenance and upkeep of the rejuvenated market square going forwards will be a key point of concern that may need to be addressed amongst the general public. Cleaning, litter, maintenance of the water feature, managing anti-social behaviour and ensuring a high standard of traders are maintained are key to ensure the value of the investment.*

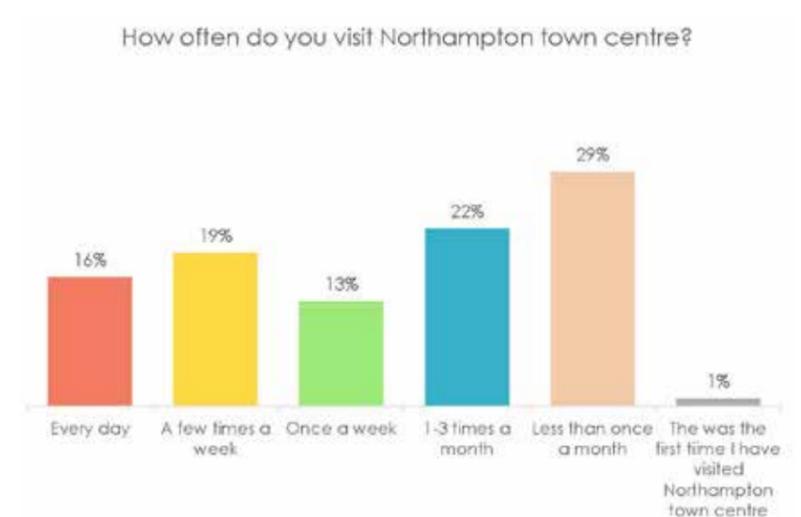
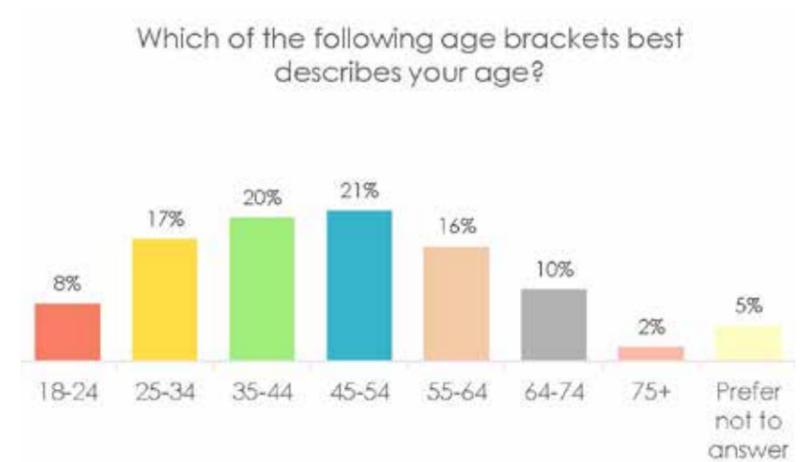
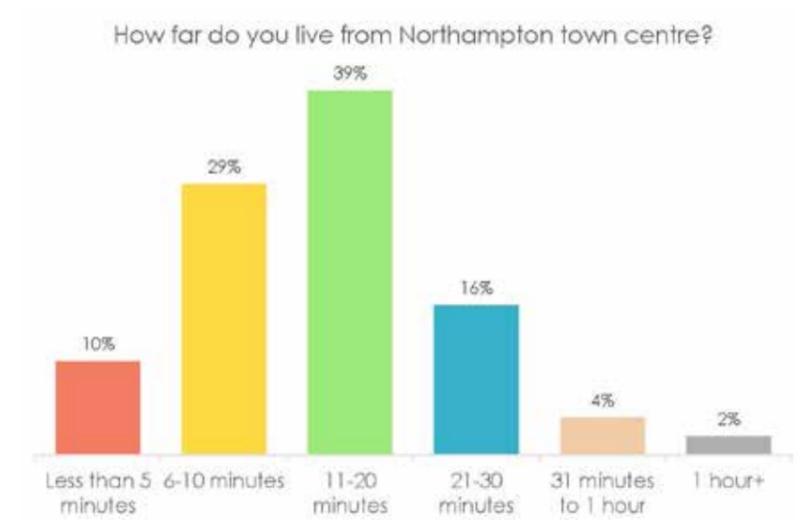
Design Option 3 was the public's preferred option and along with other comments is developed into a RIBA Stage 2 design proposal as set out in the following chapters.

With regards stepped seating terraces there is a desire for any design to include this element.

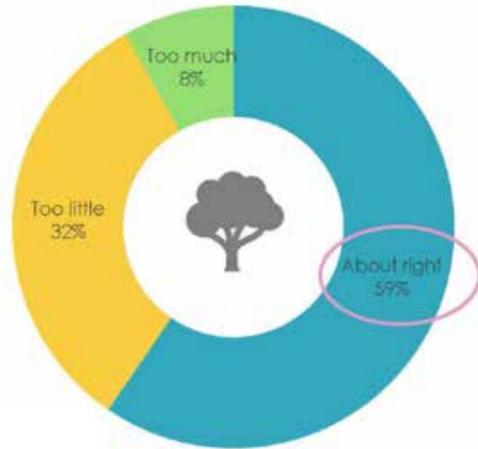
A linear interactive water feature within the design is preferred.

The proposed level of tree planting within the designs is about right and they favour a design that includes a tree grove with an interspaced linear avenue of trees.

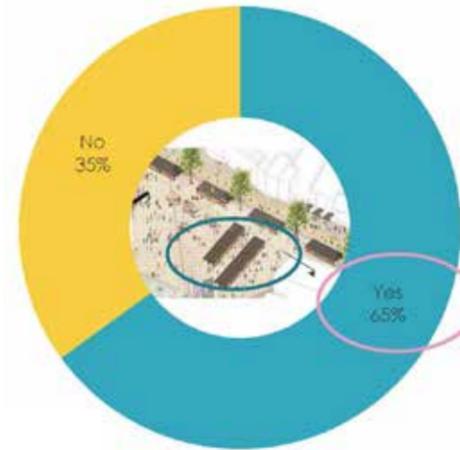
With regards market stall placement there is a desire for any design to include the additional permanent stalls to the south side.



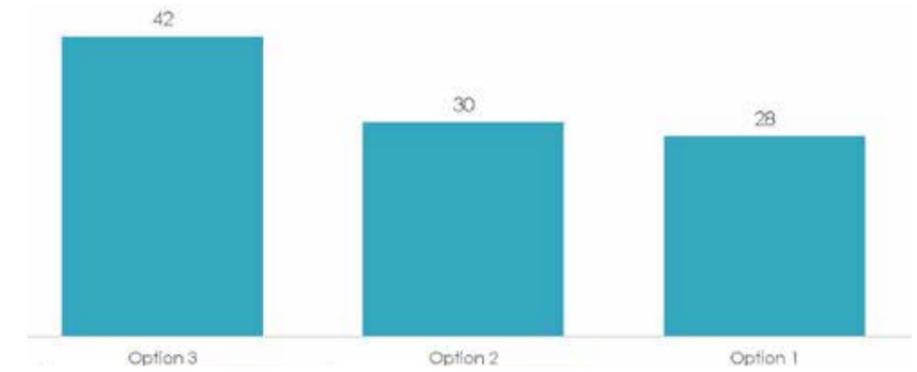
Overall, across all designs, how do you feel about the level of tree planting proposed?  
 More than half of respondents (59%) felt that the level of tree planting proposed was about right.



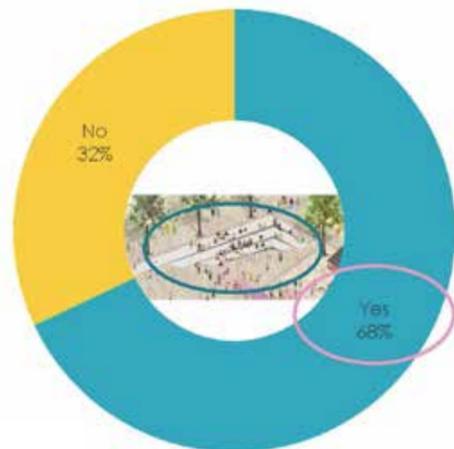
Design option 3 has additional permanent stalls to the south side of the square. Are these additional stalls something you would want to see incorporated regardless of which design is implemented?  
 Nearly two of thirds of respondents would like to see the additional permanent stalls incorporated regardless of which design is implemented.



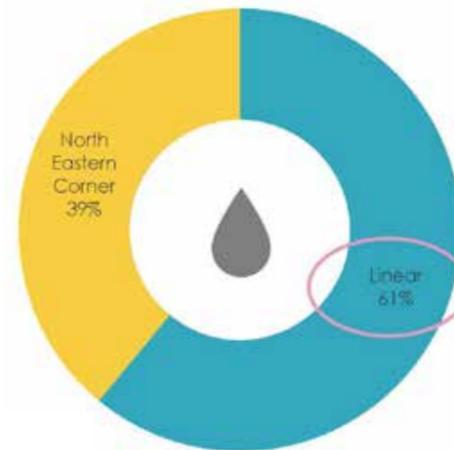
Taking the above aspects explored into consideration, overall which of the proposed Northampton market square designs do you prefer?  
 Design 3 proved to be the most preferred overall with 42% of respondents selecting this design.



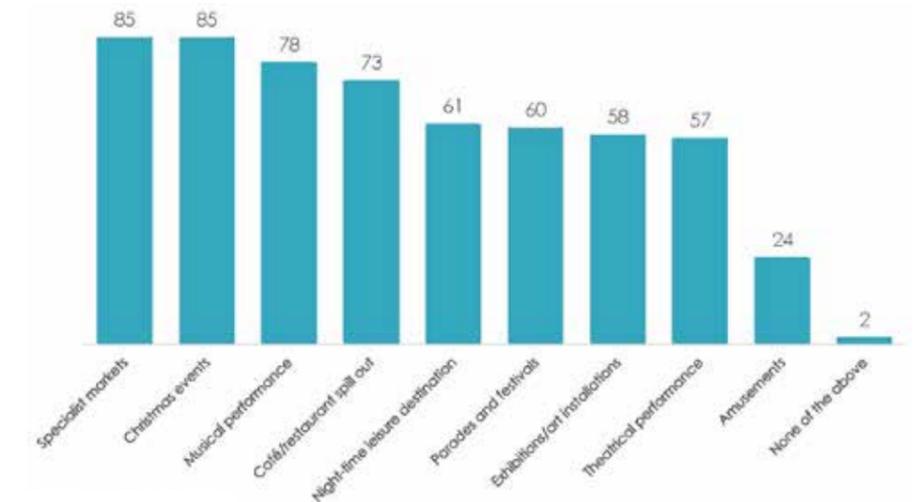
Option 3 shows stepped seating terraces in the north-eastern corner of the square. If this something you would want to see incorporated regardless of which design is implemented?  
 Just over two thirds of respondents would like to see stepped seating terraces incorporated regardless of which design is implemented.



There will be an interactive water feature within the square, would you prefer to see a linear feature such as option 2 and 3 or an area to the north east as illustrated in option 1?  
 61% of respondents preferred a linear water feature as opposed to a water feature in the North East corner.



The intention is that the square will also become an area to host even more seasonal and diverse events. Which of the following kinds of events do you feel should be hosted?  
 Specialist markets and Christmas events were the most popular types of event that could be hosted in the market square.





06

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

# 06 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

## RETAINING THE HERITAGE

Some comments and discussion from the public consultation highlighted the importance of the history and heritage of the square to local people. The existing cobbles within the square are an important asset that enable people to connect to the heritage of the Market Square. As part of the development of design proposals inspiration was taken from the historic routes into the town centre that once all converged into Market Square and All Saints Church plaza. The idea of clear routes being demarcated and to draw people into the square from surrounding streets can be realised with the reuse of the existing cobbles. These strong ground patterns can be used to help frame different spaces and uses within the square, whilst adding a tactile element of interest across a large area of hard standing.



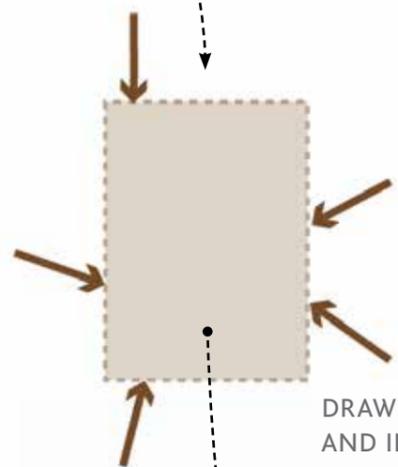
- 1. Existing Cobbled surface
- 2. Existing cobbled surround
- 3. 1810 engraving by George Cole
- 4. Historic map showing ancient road layout
- 5. Existing cobble stone layout

# 06 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

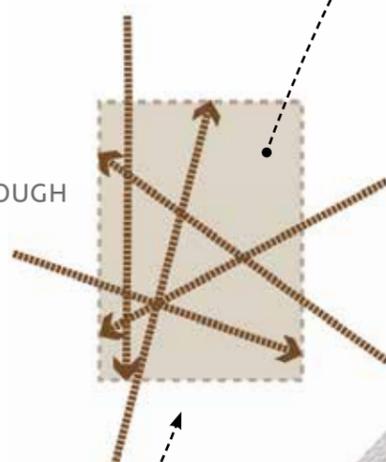
## RETAINING THE HERITAGE



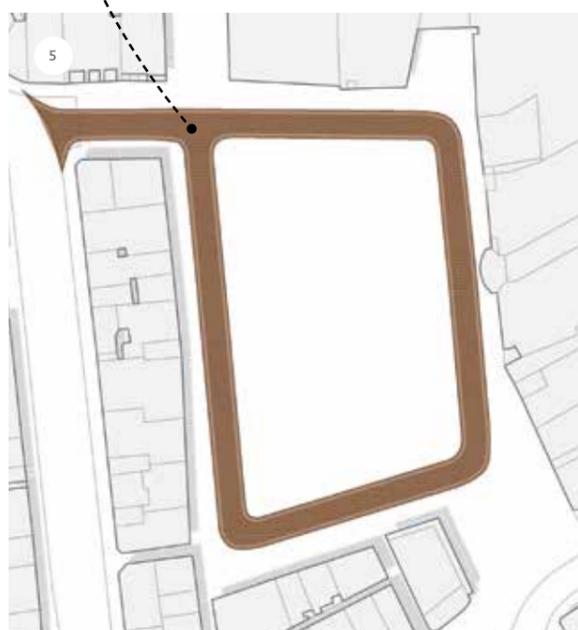
HISTORIC ROUTES MEETING AT THE SQUARE



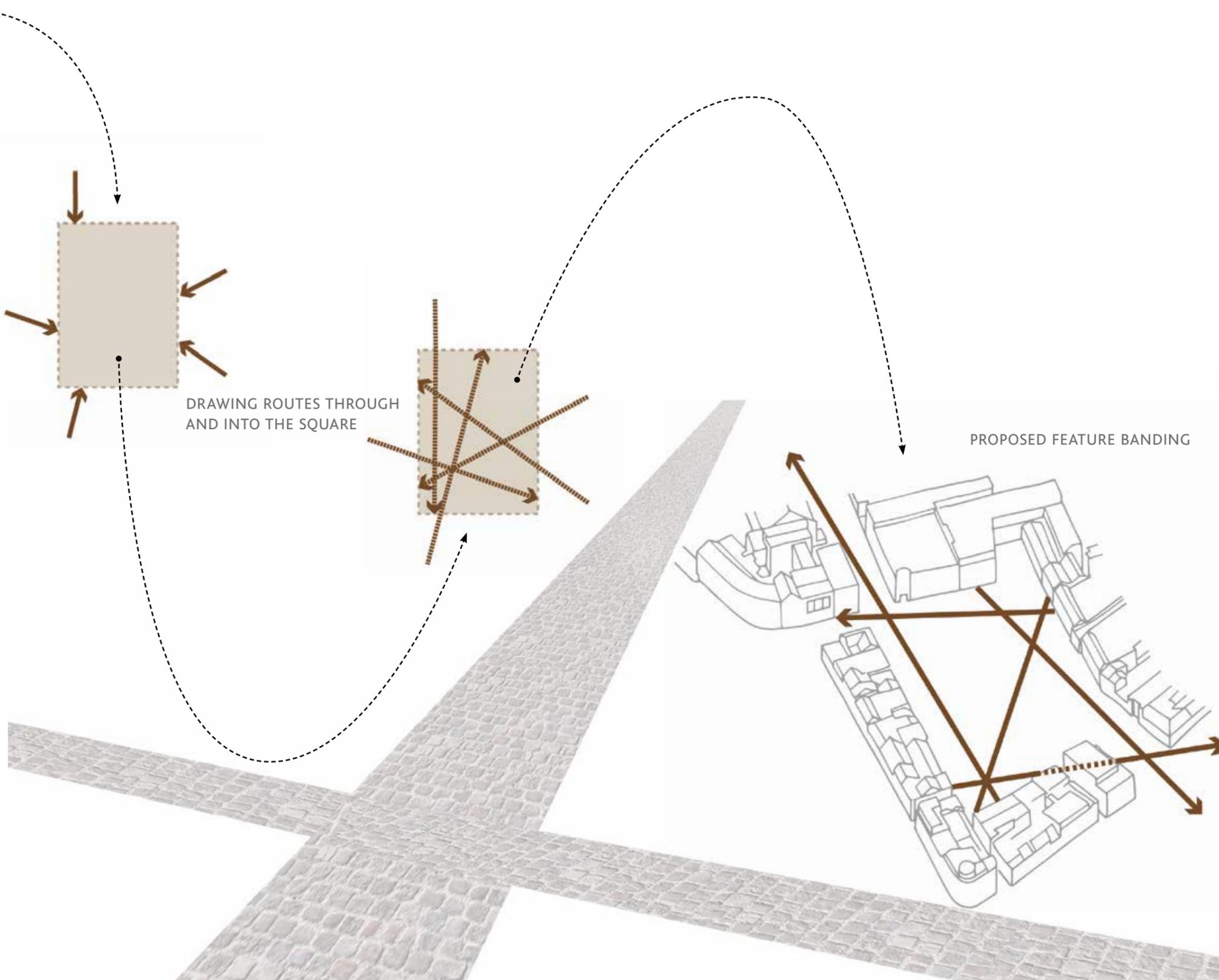
DRAWING ROUTES THROUGH AND INTO THE SQUARE



PROPOSED FEATURE BANDING



EXISTING PERIPHERY COBBLE ROUTES



## 06 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

### EMPORIUM WAY

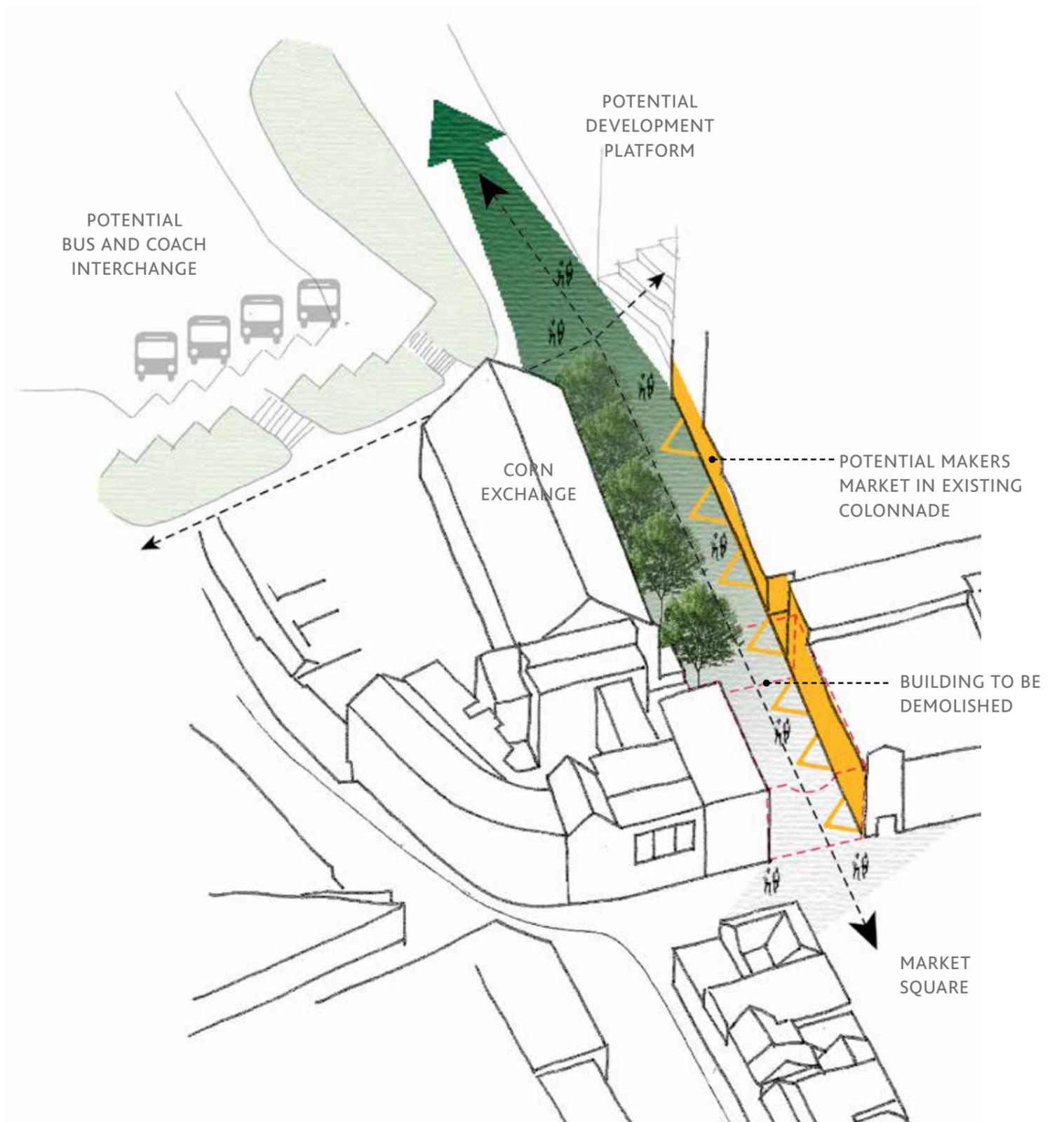
As part of the wider proposals for the regeneration of the Market Square, a key connection that will unlock further investment within the town is the northern route to Greyfriars, proposed as Emporium Way.

This connection would be enhancing an existing, very weak pedestrian route by demolishing a building to create a direct and strong pedestrian thoroughfare.

Based on the principles of the masterplan it is intended to activate the eastern facade, an existing colonnade, with the creation of small craft units that could facilitate a makers market.

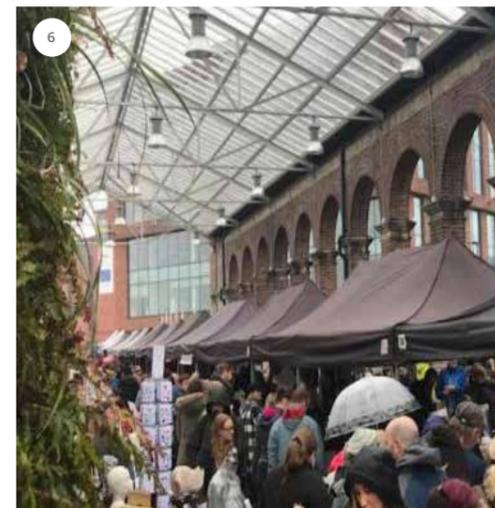
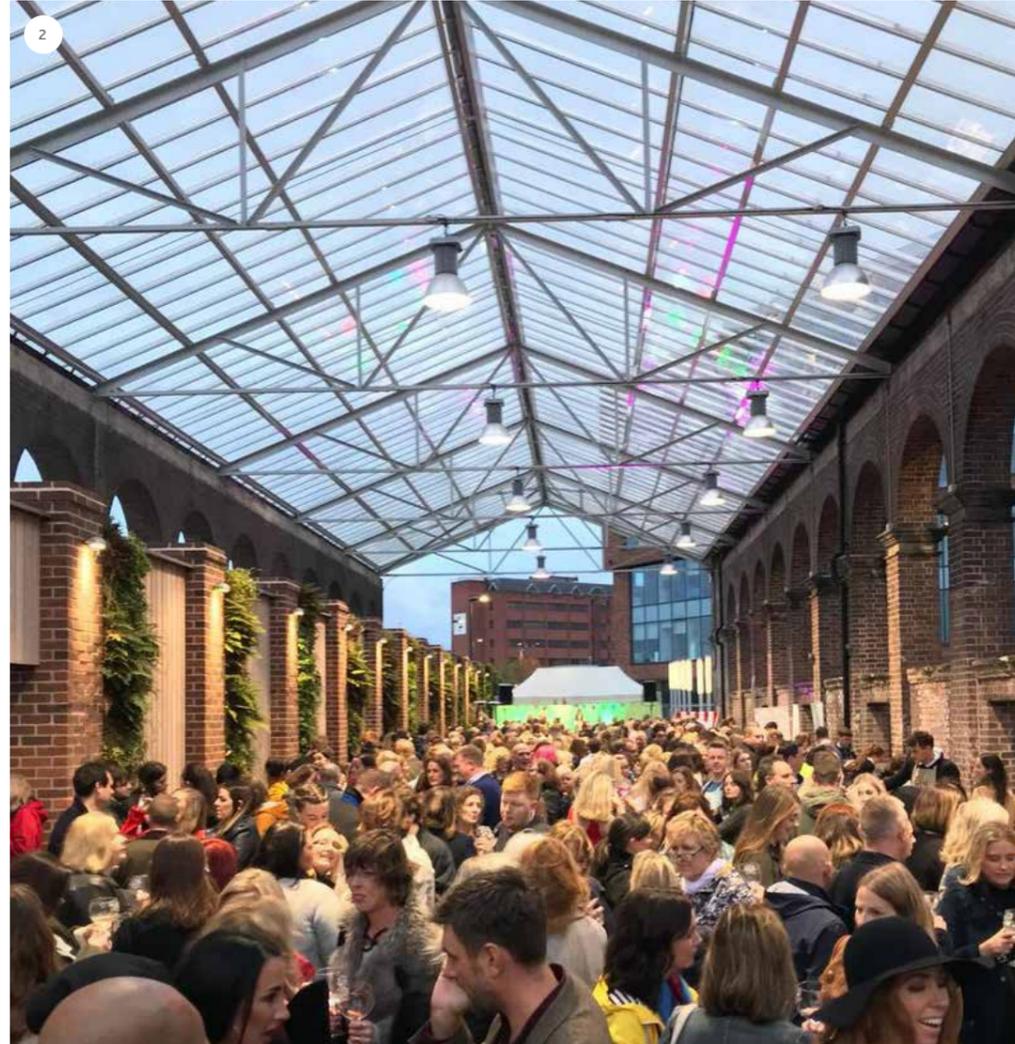
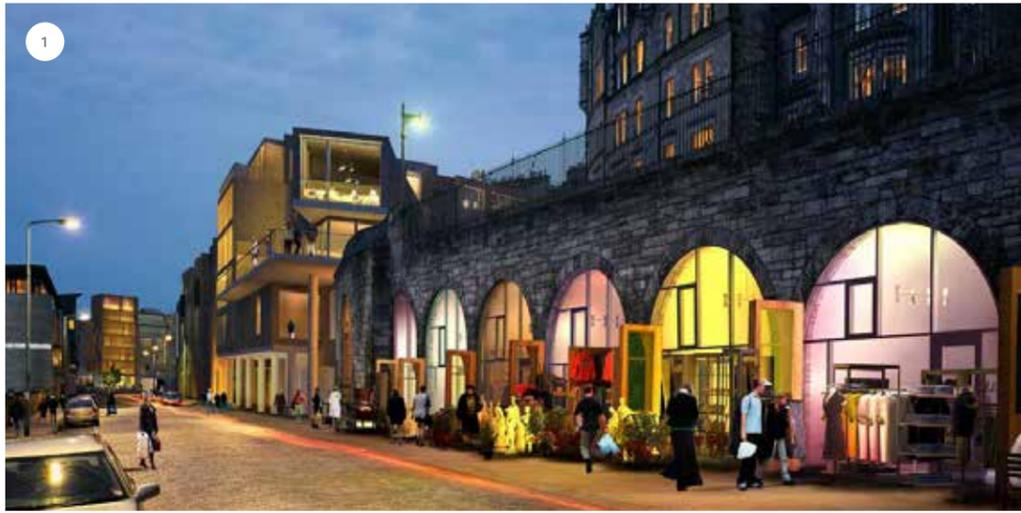
The western facade, the old Corn Exchange provides a very poor frontage to Emporium Way with limited windows or permeability to the buildings. This provides an opportunity to add in some significant 'green' in the form of tree planting and lower level shrub and herbaceous planting.

At approximately 15m wide there is ample space to allow people to stop and linger and interact with the 'makers market' so seating and places of rest should be provided.



# 06 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

## EMPORIUM WAY



The existing colonnade, will be transformed into a makers market with small craft units for independent makers and sellers of craft products.

The refurbished colonnade is proposed to be a mixture of:

- Makers-market units, to include power, water and data
- Single unit kitchen / bathroom facility for makers market occupants
- Market Square event storage, for seasonal/ pop-up furniture etc.
- Refuse store (for square fronting buildings - as existing use in colonnade)

1. Market Street Arches, Edinburgh

2. The Carriage Shed, Chester

3. Brixton Arches Market

4. Handmade crafts

5. Handmade crafts

6. The Carriage Shed, Chester with market stalls



07

DESIGN PROPOSALS

# 07 DESIGN PROPOSALS

## THE MASTERPLAN

The illustrative masterplan sets out the proposals for both the Market Square and Emporium Way. These are proposed to be part of one continuous space with the same materials palette moving through Emporium Way connecting to the north from the square.

The key activities across the square are broadly zoned by the paving banding, creating periphery activity to engage with the building frontages and a clear open central space for flexible events and activities.

The following pages show the key areas of the square in greater detail.

THE MARKET SQUARE



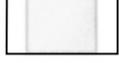
# 06 DESIGN PROPOSALS

## THE MASTERPLAN

### EMPORIUM WAY



### HARD LANDSCAPE LEGEND

-  Paving Type 1 - Central Square  
Granite Setts (mixed smaller units)
-  Paving Type 2 - Square surround  
Granite Setts / slabs (mixed larger units)
-  Paving Type 3 - Water feature  
Carved and textured granite stones
-  Paving Type 4 - Banding  
Re-used existing cobbles
-  Stepped seating  
Granite slabs / stones
-  Space for temporary / seasonal market stalls
-  Fixed permanent market stalls
-  Proposed granite kerb
-  Granite bench
-  Cafe spill out area
-  Lighting column
-  Timber bench
-  Fixed bollards
-  Demountable bollards
-  Interactive wall

### SOFT LANDSCAPE LEGEND

-  Existing trees to be removed
-  Proposed large tree in hard landscape
-  Proposed medium tree in hard landscape
-  Proposed small tree in soft landscape
-  Mixed shrub and herbaceous planting

# 07 DESIGN PROPOSALS

## MARKET AVENUE

The markets has been condensed but will be significantly improved with the inclusion of a number of fixed permanent markets stalls and an area set up to receive temporary or seasonal stalls. It is intended that key desire lines and routes from transport connections to Abington Street will pass in close proximity to the market stalls to assist with footfall.

The two large existing trees are proposed for removal and replacement. The existing trees, albeit mature and provide green amenity are not ideal species, nor have a particularly elegant form and would not endure the life expectancy of the new square proposals. Proposed trees are suggested to replace the existing, and will be constructed with large underground cells to ensure they will have the potential to reach maturity.



- 1. Kings Cross Market, London
- 2. Waddeson Manor seasonal market, Buckinghamshire
- 3. Seasonal coffee shop, Canterbury





# 07 DESIGN PROPOSALS

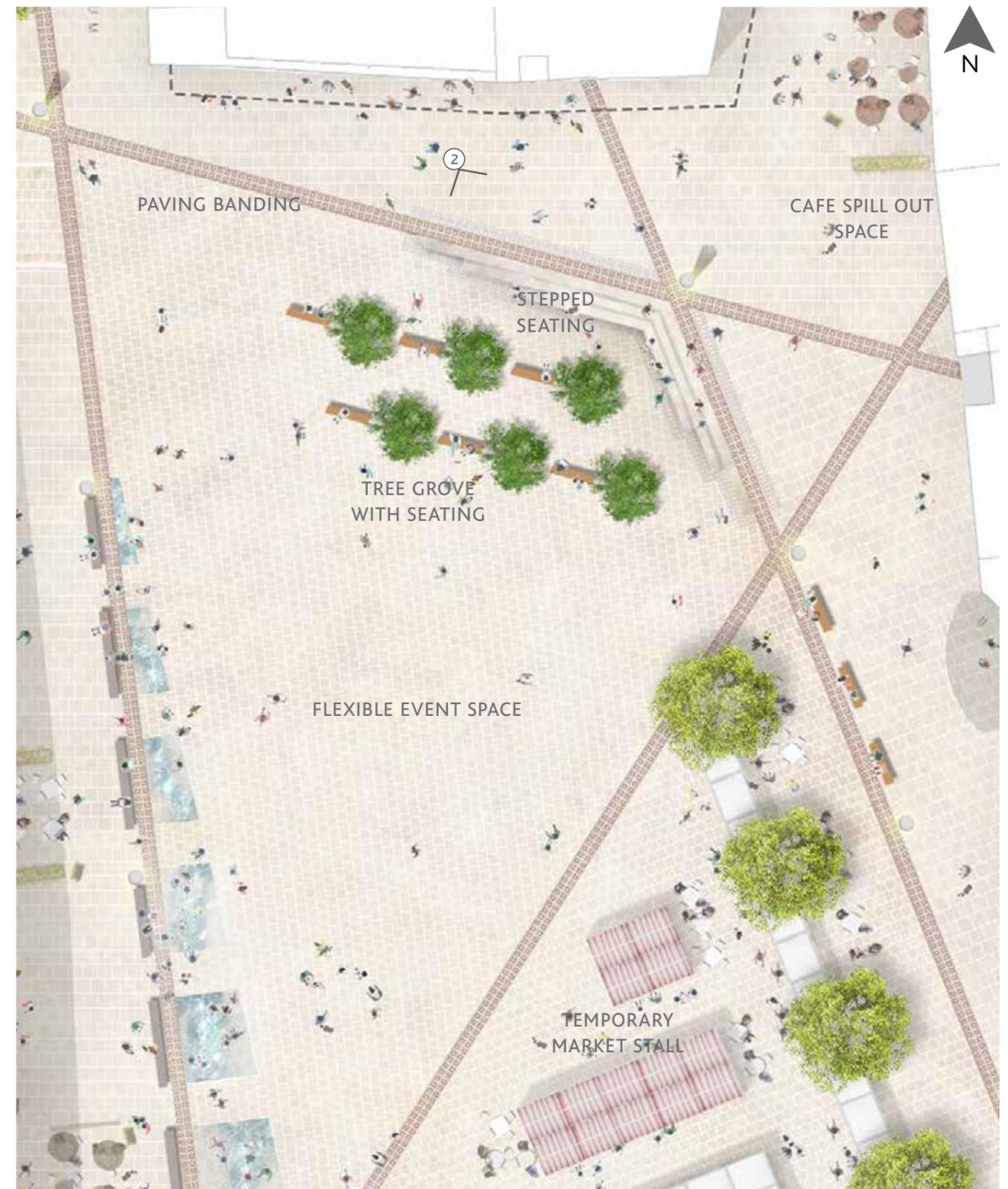
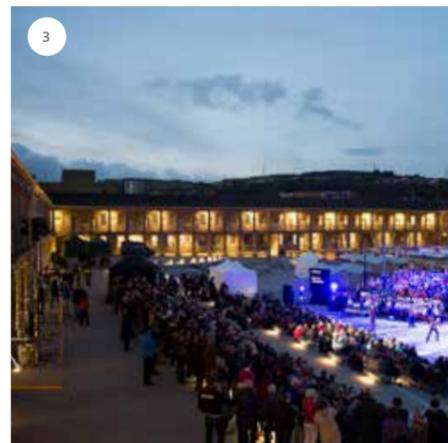
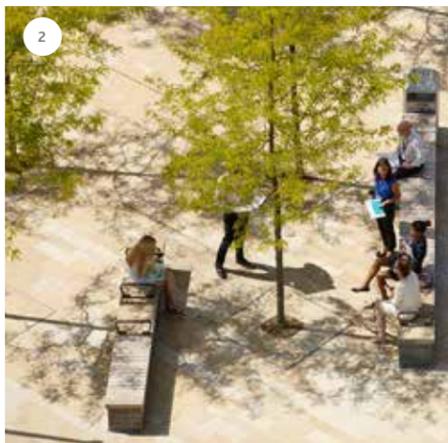
## GROVE SEATING AND EVENT SPACE

To the north of the square lies a grove of trees that will provide dappled shade during the summer months. These trees help to frame the central event space and provide screening for the architecture to the north of the square. The stepped seating area utilises the subtle level change across the square and provides an informal resting place for people to congregate and enjoy looking across the square.

The large event space (illustrated by the dashed line below) is approximately 1,500m<sup>2</sup> which will have the capability to host a variety of types and sizes of events, performances and seasonal activities within the square.



- 1. Granary Square, London
- 2. Sovereign Square, Leeds
- 3. The Piece Hall, Halifax





# 07 DESIGN PROPOSALS

## WATER FEATURE

The water feature is designed to be the central attraction that provides everyday animation within the square. Its linear design is intended to support the activation of the western façades which are most suitable for cafe spill out interaction with the square.

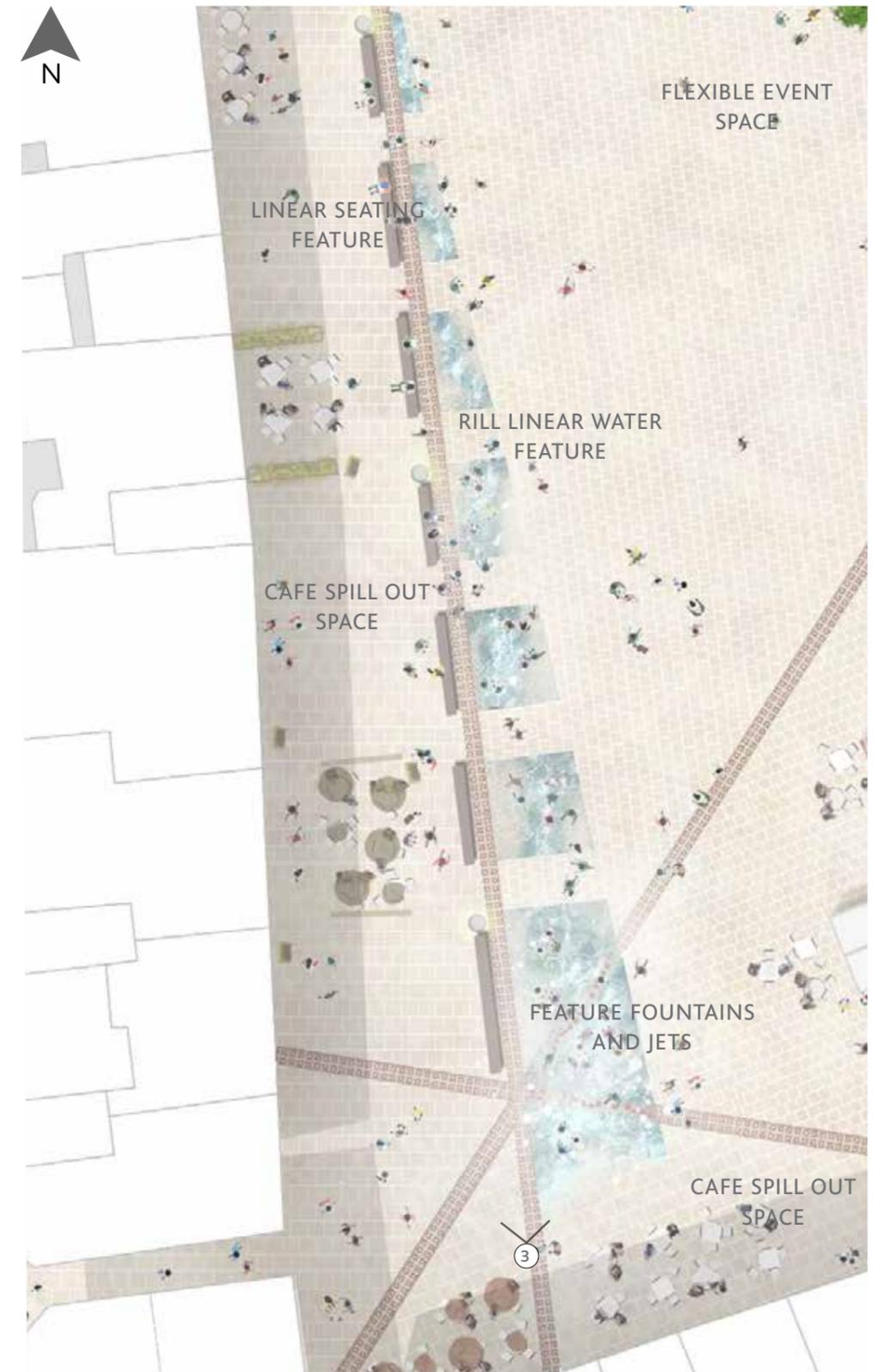
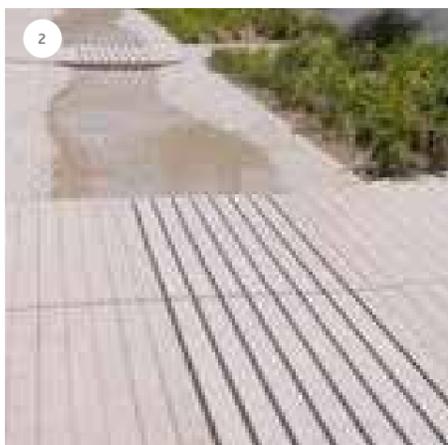
The feature will utilise the natural fall (where possible) from north to south to create a rill type feature with small crossings to create east west permeability. The feature will end in the southern corner of the square with a larger, shallow pool with interactive jet fountains to create vertical interest and play provision.

Large, elegant double sided seating will sit along the length of the feature to allow for increased activation and people watching.

The water feature will be illuminated at night time with variable and seasonal display loops.



- 1. Princess Diana Memorial Fountain, London
- 2. Gondrecourt-le-Château, France
- 3. Granary Square, London







08

OUTLINE SPECIFICATION

# 08 OUTLINE SPECIFICATION

## HARD LANDSCAPE MATERIALS

### GENERAL DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

All hard landscape areas shall be fit for purpose and have the capability to withstand the appropriate level of vehicle loading and trafficking.

It is proposed that all of the square is laid on a rigid concrete sub-base construction, but that the central area will need to meet greater wear and tear requirements and stain resistance.

A clear colour contrast with appropriate light reflectance value (LRV) will be used to demarcate any changes in level.

The proposed hard landscape should be robust and cost effective with a long term life expectancy, considerate of future uses and flexibility.

### STRATEGIC DESIGN

The re-use of the existing cobbles to create the feature banding will help to reference the heritage of the site. These would need to be hand-picked, cleaned and sorted to source the best units for re-use.

The proposed colour palette is warm tones of natural stone. These should include a subtle variation of buff, pink and cream tones found in granite.

The demand for flexibility and variety of uses suits a small size sett or block rather than slabs that would be susceptible to cracking.

Laying pattern, stone finish, shape and size of units will provide interest and variation across larger areas of open paving.

All design intent is subject to review and coordination with engineers.



# 08 OUTLINE SPECIFICATION

## HARD LANDSCAPE MATERIALS



### Paving Type 1 - Central square

Granite setts: variety of finishes and colours as above.

2 coursing widths: 100mm x random length  
150mm x random lengths

### Paving Type 2 - Square surround

Granite setts: variety of finishes and colours as above.

3 coursing widths: 150mm x random length  
250mm x random length  
300mm x random length

### Paving Type 3 - Water feature

Bespoke carved granite stones

Variety of finishes and colours as above.



### Paving Type 4 - Feature banding 1m wide

Re-use existing cobbles. Hand-pick, clean and sort to source the best units for re-use. Feature lighting, inlays or coloured grout to be used to enhance feature.



### Stepped level change / seating

Granite slabs to match granite paving to create large stepped seats. Contrasting colour granite used were required. Corduroy tactile paving used at top and bottom of steps.

# 08 OUTLINE SPECIFICATION

## WATER FEATURE

### STRATEGIC DESIGN CONCEPT

The water feature is based on a concept of a flowing rill from north to south, which can utilise the natural gradient of approx 2.5m.

Constructed out of natural stone, meanders and textures to be carved into the stone to create variety and interest in flow.

All areas are to be accessible and safe for children and adults to play.

The feature will be illuminated at night time with variable and seasonal display loops.

Plant room location (preferably above ground) and water tank storage location to be considered for best value proposals and successful long term management and maintenance.

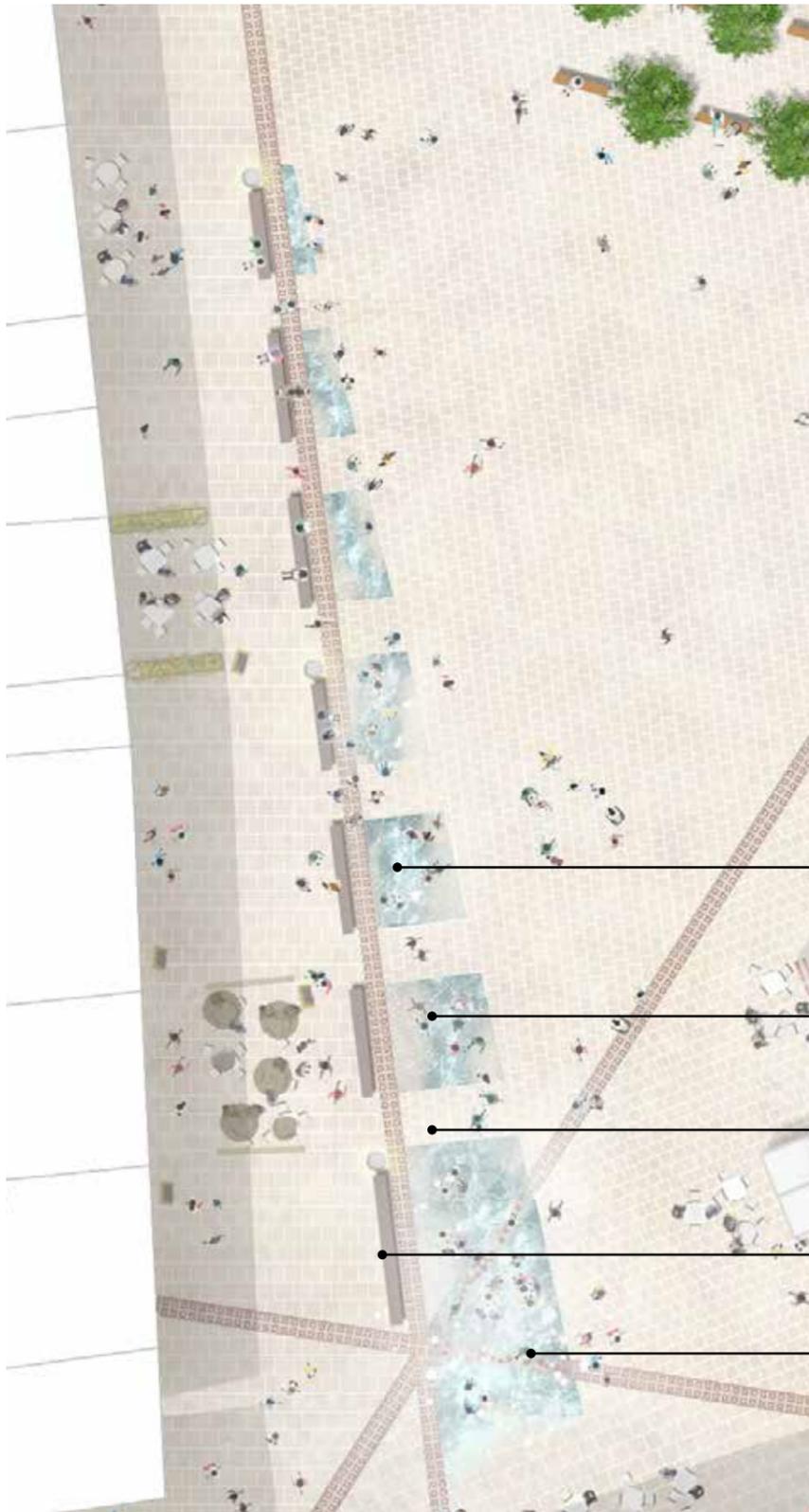
Surface run-off drainage to be separate system from water feature.

All design intent is subject to review and coordination with engineers and specialist water feature designers.



# 08 OUTLINE SPECIFICATION

## WATER FEATURE



Open rill feature with sloped sides and meandering water flow

Variety of textures / patterns carved into stone surface

Paved crossing feature, to allow water to flow under

Linear feature granite seating

Main feature with fountains and jets over paving banding

## 08 OUTLINE SPECIFICATION

### STREET FURNITURE



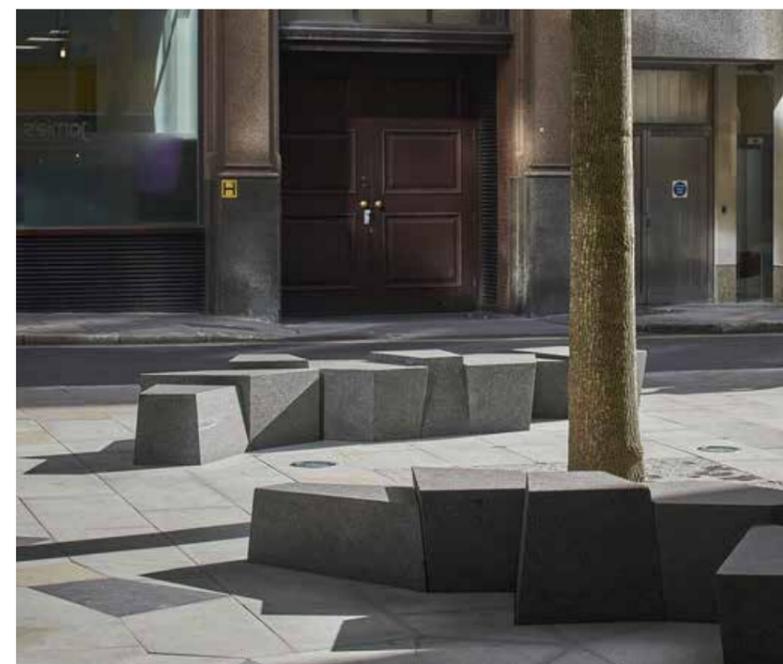
**Timber (and metal) bench**

Lighter-weight, with potential for being moved for large events or replaced after 5-10 years.



**Bespoke granite bench - adjacent to water feature**

Robust, solid granite linear seats



**Bespoke granite bench - Abington St entrance**

Designed to meet HVM rating PAS 68 to prevent vehicular access. Use of varied shapes and forms to allow people to congregate.

# 08 OUTLINE SPECIFICATION

## LIGHTING AND ENGINEERING



Inset feature lighting for paving banding and level changes



Feature lighting for seating and trees



High quality amenity lighting - columns and architectural façades.

NOTE potential to refurbish existing lighting on façades



Permanent and pop-up service units



Stainless steel slot drains

# 08 OUTLINE SPECIFICATION

## SOFT LANDSCAPE



**Large mature trees (60cm girth or above)**

Suggested species - *Platanus x hispanica*  
- *Liriodendron tulipifera*

Trees to be in cellular tree pit with underground guying



**Medium semi-mature trees (30-40cm girth)**

Suggested species - *Acer campestre*  
- *Gleditsia triacanthos*

Trees to be in cellular tree pit with underground guying



**Tree grilles**

Heavy duty stainless steel tree grilles with in-laid paving including up-lighters



**Small trees in soft landscape (18-20cm girth or m/s)**

Suggested species - *Amelanchier lemarkii*  
- *Carpinus cordata*



**Mixed shrub and herbaceous planting**

Shade tolerant species including *Hebe*, *Hydrangea*, *Ferns* and groundcovers

# 08 OUTLINE SPECIFICATION

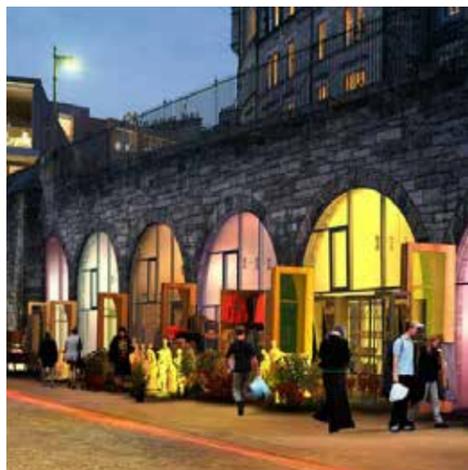
## MARKET STALLS



### Temporary and permanent market stalls

Bespoke designed units to allow stall holders to rent lockable, fixed position stalls.

Temporary pop up stalls for seasonal demand.



### Emporium Way Makers Market (Excluded from Scope of works / cost plan)

Refurbished Colonnade to include power, water and data, plus shared kitchen / toilet facilities

## 08 OUTLINE SPECIFICATION

### ART AND CULTURAL OVERLAY

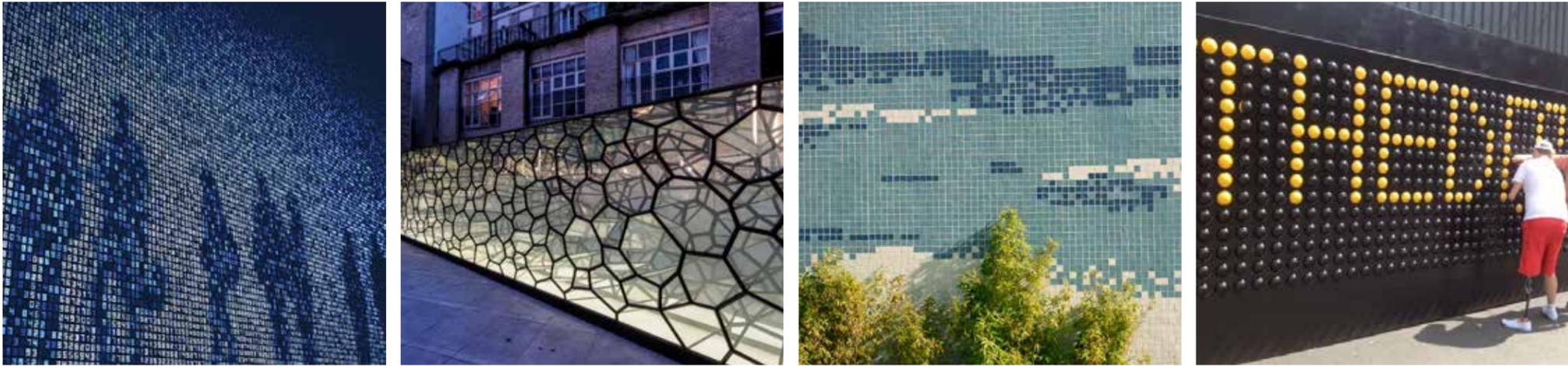


#### Art, branding and curation overlay for Square

Suggestion to allocate budget (£250,000) for providing, engagement with local artists for potential art installation, branding or event curation.

## 08 OUTLINE SPECIFICATION

### ART AND CULTURAL OVERLAY



#### Art Screen / Wall

Large art installation with graphics, branding and lighting to enhance the Corn Exchange elevation





09

VALUE OF PROPOSALS IN A POST COVID-19 WORLD  
(ADDENDUM - MAY 2020)

# 09 VALUE OF PROPOSALS IN A POST COVID-19 WORLD

ADDENDUM (MAY 2020)

## THE NEW NORMAL

The current Covid-19 Pandemic has significantly changed the world and how we currently occupy it both temporarily, but also likely in many permanent ways. The importance and role of public open space and how people can and should interact in these spaces is likely to evolve over the coming years as we find a 'New normal'. Throughout history, significant diseases have shaped cities by driving change in planning and development of infrastructure. It is hoped that anticipated changes will bring positive progress in raising the profile and importance of external environments that people can inhabit, share and enjoy.

Design of spaces should not be about permanently minimising everyday interactions, but allowing greater flexibility to ensure public open spaces are accessible and resilient to whatever the future holds.

For the time being many activities will be safer outdoors than indoors. Almost certainly, the recovery will happen in public spaces, with outdoor functions and activities being prioritised. This significantly increases the need for people to shop, dine and work outside where possible.

This emerging 'New normal' puts increased significance and worth in the current proposals for Northampton Market Square. The following sets out some thinking in regards to the value that the proposals can offer the community and town of Northampton in a post Covid-19 world;

- Greater need and importance to access open space
- Flexibility in where people work
- Increase in demand for outdoor dining and shopping
- Flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances
- Emphasis on active travel and improving routes



1. Social distance installation after lockdown, Vicchio, Italy

2. Pavement dining, Covent Garden, London

3. Restaurants and bars with alfresco offer

4. Outside food stall / markets

5. Temporary painted circles in Domino Park, New York

# 09 VALUE OF PROPOSALS IN A POST COVID-19 WORLD

ADDENDUM (MAY 2020)



## GREATER NEED AND IMPORTANCE TO ACCESS OPEN SPACE

Following the UK's lockdown advice, people were unable to travel as far as they were used to, and instead forced to get to know and spend time within their local, walkable area. The importance of daily exercise and engaging with nature have been highlighted to improve mental health and well-being. Fresh air, water and sunlight in particular rate as high priorities. When living in a city or in a town centre, access to space outdoors for recreation, play and exercise is even more important where private gardens are limited.

In the likely event of a recession or economic downturn people will be restricted in their capacity to travel and holiday, and therefore will have a greater need for free outdoor leisure events and activities that are local to them. Curation and programming can help strengthen and rebuild a sense of community and create places for people to connect, especially the more vulnerable and elderly. An emphasis on arts and culture will help restart a damaged sector, but more importantly highlight the joys of being human. The proposals for the Market Square provide the perfect space to bring the community together again. The large open and flexible space can enable events of different scales and activities to occur, even in times where social interactions may be restricted there is available space to accommodate a range of user activities.

## FLEXIBILITY IN WHERE PEOPLE WORK

The dramatic overnight shift from office based working to working from home is anticipated to have some longer term impacts in the way, and where we work in the future. Working remotely and in a more flexible way is likely to become more common place. As more freedom of movement and social interaction becomes acceptable people are likely to want to work in cafes, parks and plazas and shared community work hubs. People will want to stay local but get a change of scene or some peace and quiet from family life, especially if time is saved on commuting and travel.

Public open space and town centre squares like in Northampton can provide a heart and hub for people to use. Cafes with indoor and outdoor facilities and small interventions such as power sockets can be incorporated into seating to enable greater opportunities for people to have more choice in where they choose to work.

Given Northampton's proximity to London, it is a prime location for people wanting to live and work most of their time away from the capital but with good train connections for intermittent office attendance.

# 09 VALUE OF PROPOSALS IN A POST COVID-19 WORLD

ADDENDUM (MAY 2020)

## INCREASE IN DEMAND FOR OUTDOOR DINING AND SHOPPING

During times of social restrictions the core leisure activities of shopping and dining will be safer and easier to facilitate when outdoors. Even without knowing the longer term implications in regards to social distancing there will be an increased emphasis and a likely public desire to undertake these activities outdoors as a preference.

The revitalisation of the square in Northampton is the perfect opportunity to enhance the existing market offer and provide generosity in space for café culture to spill out and both engage and enhance the character of the square.

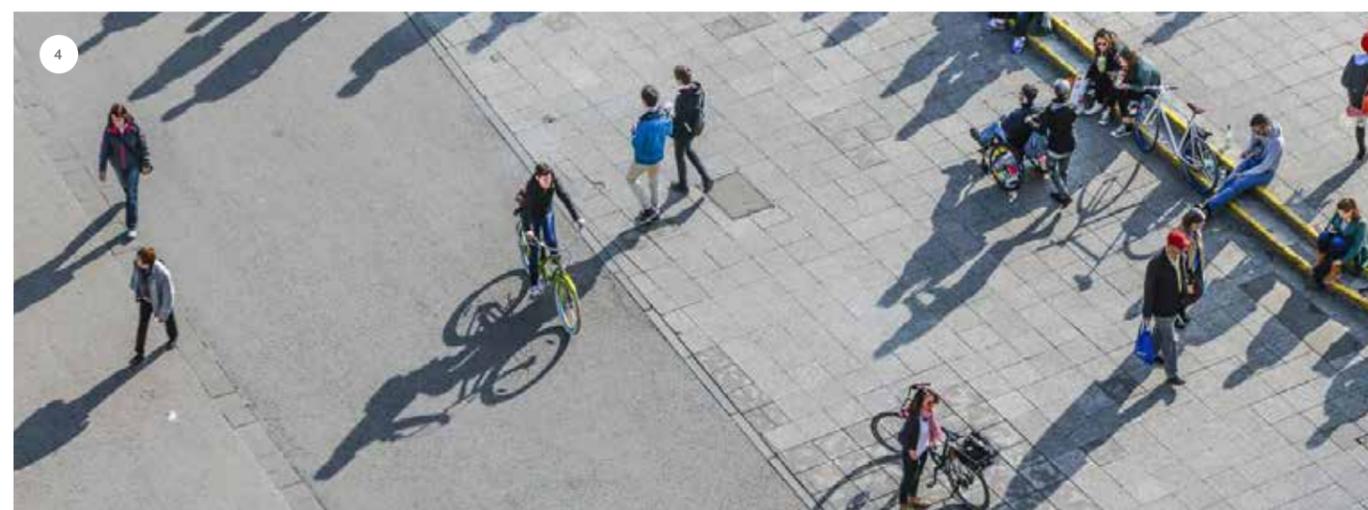
## FLEXIBILITY TO ADAPT TO CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES

With so many unknowns looking ahead at how people will be able to interact, how long some restrictions might be in place or if likely to be a more regular occurrence, resilience, flexibility and adaptability are key requirements for public space design. Considerations for social distancing can include things like queue management, seating provisions including longer benches, and large open spaces for people to gather but with adequate space requirements.

The proposals for the Market Square provide a robust and flexible scheme that can adapt to changing unknown circumstances. The principles of the proposed design allow for a variety of interaction level and activities, whilst the existing square is very prescribed in its function, layout and use.

## EMPHASIS ON ACTIVE TRAVEL AND IMPROVING ROUTES

Social distancing has forced people to move away from using public transport. With reduced commuting and less vehicles on the roads people are enjoying the benefits of active travel (cycling, running or walking) and hopefully some of these changes are here for the longer term. The design of new public spaces and streets can provide improved, safer routes and connections with minimal clutter and obstacles. The proposed route north of the market square, Emporium Way can provide a positive contribution to improving pedestrian connections within the town centre.



1. Long length benches, Ruhr West University of Applied Sciences, Germany

2. Walking and cycling routes, Brighton © Gehl Architects

3. Increased flexibility in working remotely

4. Increase in walking and cycling as principle means of transport

5. Clear and clutter free pedestrian routes, Bad Salzflun, Germany

# 09 VALUE OF PROPOSALS IN A POST COVID-19 WORLD

ADDENDUM (MAY 2020)



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