



**King Street Masterplan
Interim Planning Guidance**

July 2020

Document Control

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<i>Project Number:</i> 1510	<i>Report Reference:</i> KSMIPG-001-B	<i>Issue Detail:</i> 17/06/20	

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1 Introduction

This King Street Masterplan establishes a coherent vision for the regeneration of the King Street area.

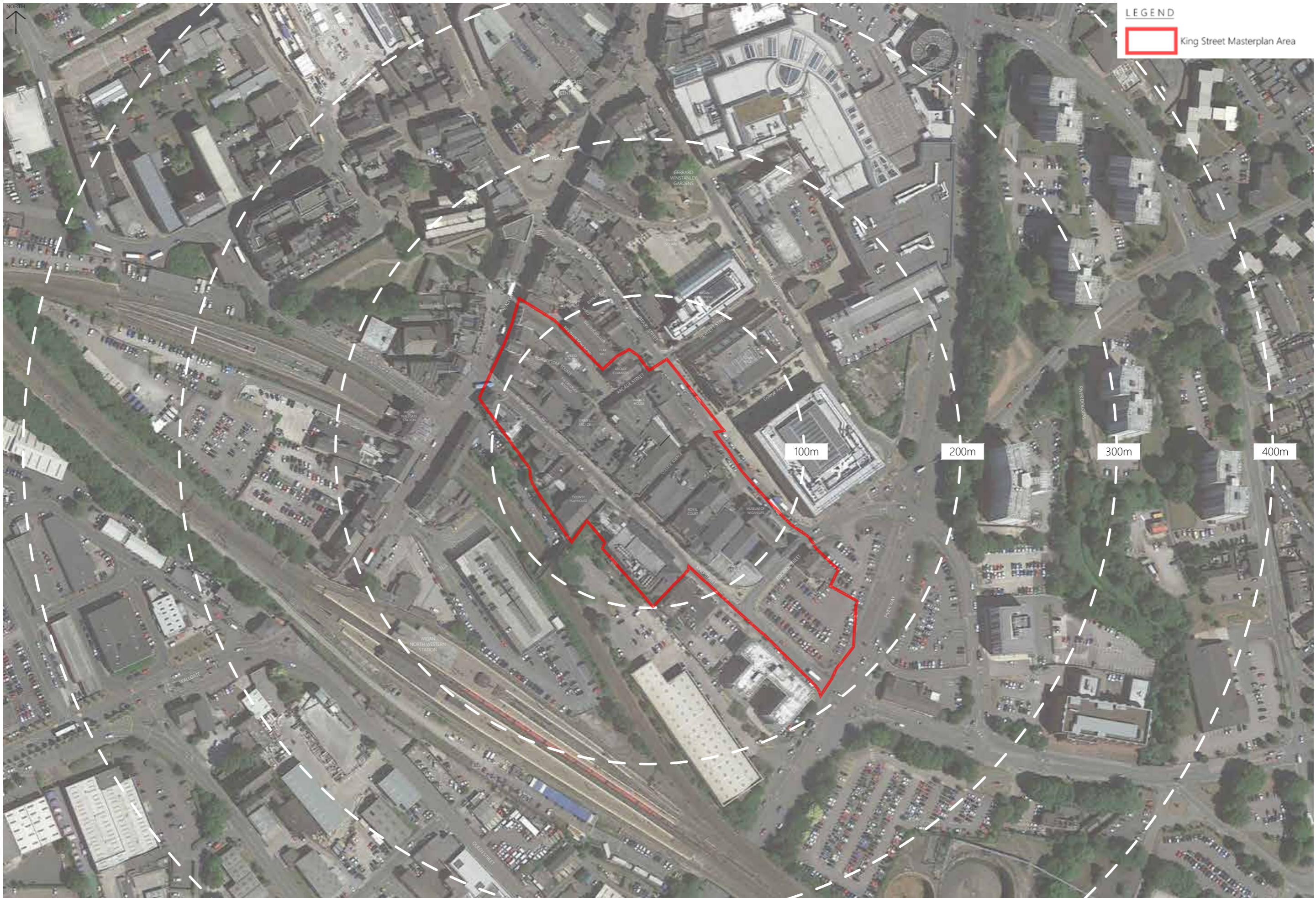
King Street is identified as a key focus for regeneration in the Wigan Town Centre Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF). It lies within the Wigan Town Centre Conservation Area and has recently secured High Street Heritage Action Zone status.

King Street is suffering from a high level of vacancy, it has a limited range of uses focused upon the late night economy, and a lack of investment and unsympathetic alterations to buildings has contributed to the deterioration of the streetscape. By diversifying the uses on King Street and attracting a wider range of people during both the day and evening, calming the night-time economy and capitalising upon its heritage we can help to breathe new life into vacant and underused buildings and regenerate this important part of the town centre.

The aims of the King Street High Street Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) are:

- For King Street to be an integral part of the town centre with a vibrant mix of uses attracting a range of people during the day and evening;
- To secure a sustainable future for the historic fabric of King Street and use its strong heritage to underpin a sense of place and cultural identity.

This masterplan is intended to form interim planning guidance for the King Street area. By clearly articulating the ambition for regeneration it will help to fulfil the objectives of the SRF and HAZ and provide certainty for investors and occupiers in respect of the opportunities and expectations for the street as a whole.



Map Data © 2019 Google

Figure 1 - Aerial Photograph

2 Masterplan Site Analysis

2.1 Historical Context

King Street lies within the Wigan Town Centre Conservation Area and largely developed during the late 18th and 19th centuries, as part of a planned extension to the town at a time of rapid growth of manufacturing industries and the associated railway connections nearby.

King Street contains a number of listed buildings, in particular the Royal Court Theatre. The architecture at King Street was varied in style, however with a few exceptions was fairly consistent in scale and massing. The overall character was not elaborate or over-stated and provided an interesting and varied historical streetscape.

A number of newer buildings have replaced original properties and, although these generally conform in height and scale, they are of limited architectural quality. Similarly, a number of original buildings have been modified unsympathetically.

2.2 Existing Land Use

King Street developed as a mix of commercial premises and, particularly at the southern end, as a centre of entertainment, with numerous theatres, public halls and assembly buildings apparent even on the earliest maps as the street was developed. Latterly King Street has evolved from a focus of civic entertainment into a principally night-time economy of bars and nightclubs, resulting in other uses moving out of the street and hastening a general decline both in the character and quality of the streetscape and leaving large parts of the available floorspace, especially upper floors, vacant or under-utilised.



Figure 3 - Historical Map from 1849



Figure 4 - Historical Map from 1892



Figure 4 - Historical Map from 1927



Figure 5 - Historical Map from 1939



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Figure 6 - Heritage Context



Figure 7 - Existing Land Use (Ground Floor)
 (at December 2019)

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Figure 8 - Existing Land Use (Upper Floors)
(at December 2019)

2 Masterplan Site Analysis

2.3 Public Realm Spaces

There is a lack of public realm spaces within the King Street area. Beyond the study boundary and within close proximity there are a series of public spaces as shown on Figure 9. Connectivity to the existing College Avenue Public realm will provide an important pedestrian link.

Access to and within the King Street area is fundamental to its success. This includes both permeability and 'legibility' – how easy it is for a visitor to find their way around the area to reach their destination.



- ① All Saints Graveyard
- ② Market Place
- ③ Gerrard Winstanley Gardens
- ④ Believe Square
- ⑤ College Avenue
- ⑥ Concert Square

Figure 9 - Existing Public Realm

2.4 Public Transport

The area is well served with public transport links. The town has two primary railway stations which are located on Wallgate. Wigan Wallgate station is only 50m from the northern point of King Street.

Bus routes run along King Street itself, and this generates pedestrian footfall within the area.

Beyond King Street, there is a strong pedestrian link to Wigan Bus Station which runs through the All Saints Graveyard as shown below on Figure 10 and opposite on Figure 12.



- ① Wigan Wallgate Station
- ② Wigan North Western Station
- ③ Wigan Bus Station

Figure 10 - Railway and Bus Stations

2.5 Car Provision

King Street is a one-way street and has restricted access. It is closed between 7pm and 7am on a Friday and Saturday.

The A49 River Way to the south forms a physical barrier to the area. It also causes congestion at peak times especially along Rodney Street

Access by car, including an effective road network and appropriate car parking, is important to the function of any town centre location. The diagram below shows the location of the principal car parks. There is a range of car parking provision, convenient for visitors and residents, with the HX Car Park on King Street and the Rodney Street Car Park the closest in proximity as shown below on Figure 11.



- ① Rodney Street
- ② HX
- ③ Harrogate Street
- ④ Chapel Lane
- ⑤ Wigan North Western
- ⑥ Wigan Wallgate
- ⑦ Wilds
- ⑧ Wigan Wallgate Station
- ⑨ Civic Centre
- ⑩ Millgate Multi-storey
- ⑪ Grand Arcade APCOA

Figure 11 - Car Parks



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Figure 12 - Existing Movement Analysis

2 Masterplan Site Analysis

2.6 Pedestrian & Cycle

The main drivers of footfall and the cycleway infrastructure for the surrounding area are shown in Figure 13. The existing link and footbridge from King Street to Wigan Wallgate Railway station is not welcoming, poorly lit and suffers from anti-social behaviour.

King Street serves as a route for pedestrians connecting the area of Scholes to the town's main shopping area along Wallgate and Standishgate.

Permeability from east to west connecting the municipal buildings along Library Street to King Street has several constraints. The closing of Grimes Arcade has removed a key route along Arcade Street to King Street. The route along College Avenue is dark, enclosed and unwelcoming.

2.7 Access

Service access for deliveries and emergency access is an important function for the area. Ideally, servicing should be separate from the main unit frontages. Serviced streets, like King Street should have restriction times for deliveries to avoid congestion and give priority to pedestrian movement.

The current arrangement provides a series of loading bays along King Street. Some units are served from the rear with breaks in the building line notably between 15 and 17 King Street and 47 and 64 King Street. The Royal Court and Grimes Arcade have potential to be serviced from the rear.

King Street also includes two bus stops along its length and provision for DDA car parking.

Library Street has a wider aspect between buildings, and subsequently feels more open than King Street. Library Street includes loading bays and on street parking.



- ① College Avenue
- ② Grimes Arcade
- ③ Existing Railway Footbridge
- ④ Potential Railway Footbridge

Figure 13 - Cycling and Pedestrian Movement



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Figure 14 - Current Access Provision

2 Masterplan Site Analysis

2.8 Streetscape : Architecture

Although a number of original and significant buildings remain on King Street, including several that are listed, the majority have been poorly maintained or subjected to unsympathetic alterations or additions, in particular to the ground floor elevations and former shop fronts. Inappropriate alterations include infilling or blanking out shop window glazing, garish signage and illuminations and introducing decking and canopies across the footways.

In addition, there are a number of new infill or replacement buildings which detract from the overall character of the street. Although some of these appear to be in beneficial use, replacement or face-lifting of the elevations would enhance the streetscape. In particular Rodney House, at the southern end of King Street provides a poor quality 'gateway' to the street.

Similar issues are apparent on Arcade Street and Library Street, which are both dominated by the poor quality and badly maintained elevations to 'Wallpaper Supplies'.

Key landmark buildings include the former Royal Court Theatre, the former County Playhouse cinema and Grimes Arcade, which also formerly provided an important pedestrian link between King Street and Arcade Street / Library Street.

Notwithstanding the need for more substantive works to bring buildings back into active use, there are facade improvements that would enhance the streetscape architecture. These are identified as indicative schedule of works in Table 1.



Table 1 - Streetscape Architecture

PROPERTY ADDRESS	Building demolition/ replacement	Major upgrade to Elevation	Replace GF shop front/ windows	Upgrade GF shop front/ windows	Replace Upper floor windows	Major repair to Upper floor windows
King Street East Side						
2-6						
8-12						
16						
18						
22-24 (Grimes Arcade)						
28						
30						
32						
34						
36-44						
46-48						
50						
54						
56-58						
60-74						
King Street West Side						
1-3						
5						
7						
9						
11						
13						
15						
17-19						
21-25						
27 (Playhouse)						
29-33						
35-37						
39-45						
47						
49						
Arcade Street						
The Observer Building						
1-5						
Arcade Chambers						
Grimes Arcade (rear)						
Library Street						
32 (Corner)						
55						
57						
59						
Rodney Street						
4						

Figure 15 - Streetscape - Architecture

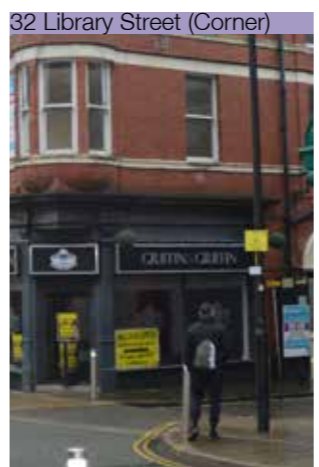


Figure 16 - Streetscape Review - Architecture Photographs

2 Masterplan Site Analysis

2.9 Streetscape Public Realm.

The following photographs and descriptions analyse the current public realm within the area, highlighting the challenges and opportunities which exist.

Overall the quality is poor within the area, there are no spaces within the area which are attractive or desirable for people to spend a significant time in. Pedestrian through routes are enclosed and subject to antisocial behaviours.

The quality of the hard materials are functional and don't add any value to the character of the area. Street furniture has evolved over a period of time, is inconsistent in its style, excessive and adds unnecessary clutter to the streetscape.



Entrance to King Street from Rodney Street. The street scene is dominated by the street furniture, bollards, gates, litter bins and signage. The gate is closed to restrict access on a Friday and Saturday evening.



The existing kerb line meanders to take account of loading bays, bus stops and parking arrangements. The extensive use of bollards is visible and intrusive. The street furniture is inconsistent and does not form a consistent suite.



The existing route to Wigan North Western Railway Station is via a footbridge connected by a footpath with runs between 27 and 29 King Street. The route is enclosed by existing stone walls, railings and the gable ends of buildings. The area is subject to fly tipping and unsociable behaviour.



The existing footbridge is covered in graffiti and aesthetically is unwelcoming. This forms an under utilised route to Wigan North Western Train station.



A common feature of the street scene on King Street are wheelie bins.



The existing arrangement of bus stop and disabled access parking bays creates a pinch point within the highway. The bus stop does however generate pedestrian movement along King Street.



College Avenue is currently open to one way traffic and provides a pedestrian link from the municipal buildings on Library Street through to King Street. The space feels very enclosed.



Cars are often parked upon the existing pavement along Rodney Street, despite car parking provision being available in the area.



Sandstone setts and slabs are a common finish within Rowbottom Square, Bretherton Row and Arcade Street.



Along Wallgate high quality paving materials add to the character of the street. Sandstone setts are utilised within bus stops and loading bays. Sandstone edges define the sandstone slab footpaths and the highway is surfaced in tarmac with a red granite chipping.



The quality of hard landscape materials along King Street is lower than those used on Wallgate. King Street is currently paved in buff concrete paving flags, with a natural stone kerb. The highway is a standard tarmac finish.

3 Masterplan Proposals

3.1 Streetscape : Architecture and Buildings

The proposals aim to revitalise the streetscape by removing those elements that detract from, and improving those elements that enhance, the essential character and heritage context of the street and by allowing appropriate adaptations to buildings to enable them to be adapted for a range of suitable uses. This is to be achieved through the following interventions:

- Demolishing a small number of buildings which are either unsuitable for conversion and improvement or in a very poor state of repair.
- This also presents the opportunity to improve the adjacent public realm, for instance by stepping back the front elevation to 46-48 King Street to allow a small square adjacent to the Royal Court.
- Upgrading the elevations of a number of poor quality or unsympathetic modern buildings, but which are however in beneficial use or a reasonable state of repair, to accord more with the historic character of the street. This may include for example, removing unsightly additions such as the decking in front of 29-30 King Street and rebuilding the two-storey bay that has been removed from the front elevation at 34 King Street.
- Replacing particularly unsympathetic ground floor elevations and shop fronts with more traditional designs, including pilasters, stall risers, traditional glazing patterns and friezes or cornices above.
- Upgrading those shop fronts which, through retaining some historic elements such as the original surrounds, have been modified or filled in clumsily or unsympathetically. These may be restored to their original character without wholesale replacement and retaining those elements which remain.
- Replacing windows to the upper storeys, where modern replacements to the original designs have been introduced, with new windows in the original style and methods.
- Repairing and restoring those original windows to upper storeys that remain but which have been poorly maintained and allowed to fall into disrepair.
- Encouraging new uses that will bring vacant and underused buildings back into productive use. The degree to which physical alterations may be required to buildings will vary between uses and buildings, but in all cases alterations should be sympathetic to the character and significance of the building.
- Uses that contribute to diversifying the offer along King Street will be particularly welcomed, in principle employment generating uses and residential use are acceptable subject to detailed assessment. Ensuring adequate amenity for new uses will be important as the street undergoes transformation, particularly in terms of mitigating the potential impact of noise on residential uses. King Street may be particularly well suited to live-work accommodation identified as a target intervention in the Wigan Town Centre SRF .
- The relationship between buildings and the street is particularly important in order to create an active and interesting streetscape. Ground floor uses should have active frontages and particular consideration should be given to their visual and physical relationship with the street and public realm.



- LEGEND**
- King Street Masterplan Area
 - Listed Building
 - Potential Demolition / Remodelling
 - New Shop Front / Elevation Treatment
 - Upgrade to Shop front / Elevation Treatment
 - Potential New Infill Buildings / Street Frontage enhancements required

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Figure 17 - Proposed Masterplan

3 Masterplan Proposals

3.2 Streetscape : Public Realm

Public spaces between the buildings are important, not just the quality of the materials, provision of seating and lighting but also how spaces actually function. The design of spaces should have the same emphasis on the end-user as the design of buildings. Successful spaces encourage people to pause and spend time there, spaces for people to meet, be entertained or simply a space to contemplate or 'dwell'.

The Public Realm has been designed to serve the interests of all users and takes account of the following:

- Scale – in relation to the height of the proposed surrounding buildings.
- Location - in terms of connectivity to other spaces and routes.
- Sun-path – so as to maximise the amount of sunlight and 'warmth' within the spaces.
- Use – in relation to surveillance and activity achieved through the ground floor use of adjacent buildings.
- Views – in and out-of spaces to afford people the best all-round-views.
- Local Distinctiveness – to give a sense of local place
- Inclusion – Create accessible spaces for all
- Security – enhanced due to the increased footfall.
- Civic Pride – create spaces where people want to visit and spend time enjoying.

The importance of high-quality public realm will help create a setting for the historic environment of the area. Consideration has been given to the pedestrian prioritisation of road space, increasing footways, introducing discretionary crossing points etc. This will significantly improve pedestrian comfort and safety.

The Masterplan proposes a central pedestrian focused core within the King Street area. The core would pick up pedestrian routes from College Avenue and the Grimes Arcade to the east and the enhancement of links to Wigan North Western Railway station to the west

By controlling the servicing activity and creating clearer pedestrian priority (potentially through a shared surface) and landscape improvements the area can be enhanced for pedestrians. Wider connectivity would be enhanced between the historic core, the local transport network and the municipal buildings on Library Street.

Road kerbs are to be re-aligned to create a consistent straight form from north to south, utilising a high quality material. The accommodation of parking, loading bays and bus stops are formed on the western kerb face, removing the meandering nature of the current arrangement. This along with the setting back of the elevation to 46-48 King Street allows for the development of a public square at the junction with College Avenue.

Paving materials should be consistent through out giving a sense of identity. Areas to be trafficked should be in smaller size units to the adjacent pavements. Materials should be selected for their durability, functionality and appearance and take regard of:

- Local reference and consistency of use
- Fitness for purpose
- Robustness and durability
- Ease of maintenance and replacement
- Sustainable sourcing
- Embodied energy over the full lifespan of the product
- Capacity for re-use or recycling
- Efficiency and sustainability
- Whole design life cycle impacts

Appropriately selected species of urban street trees should be accommodated where practically possible. As well as environmental and aesthetic benefits to the streetscape, they will also serve as an informal restraint in reducing any "pavement" car parking.

The promotion of public art brings cultural, environmental and economic benefits to new development and to the local community and gives a bespoke sense of place. This could be in a variety of forms from a public gateway feature from Rodney Street through to more subtle integration into the paving design.



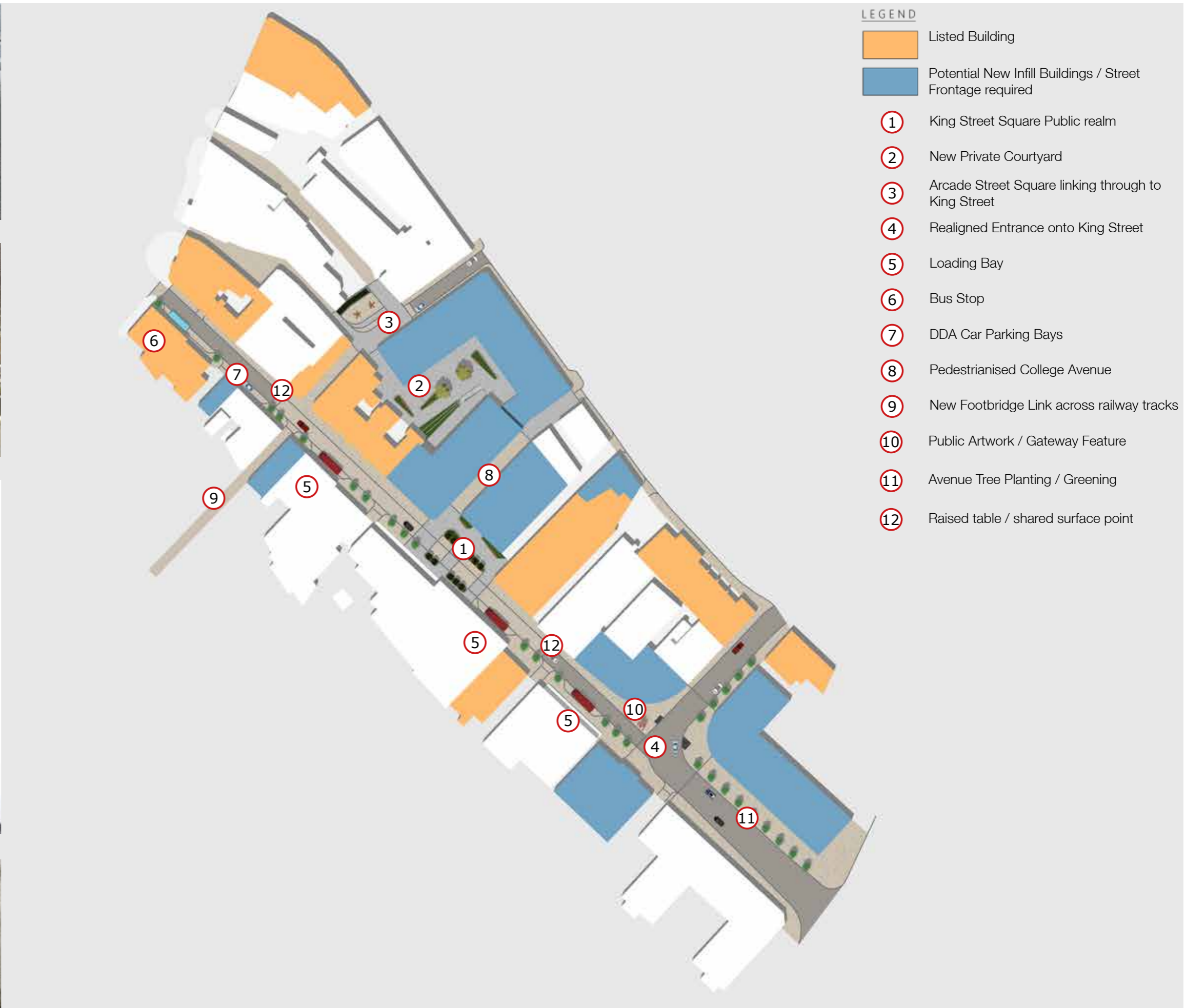


Figure 18 - Public Realm Proposals

3 Masterplan Proposals

3.3 King Street Square

The proposed masterplan creates a central square adjacent to the Royal Court Theatre and College Avenue. This space will be a place for contemplation and reflection, a meeting point for people working or living along King Street or for visitors, for example those attending events at the refurbished Royal Court Theatre.

The setting back of the existing elevation brings into general views the existing side elevation of the Royal Court and 44 King Street.

Raised beds provide a multi functional use, protecting planting and restricting undesired street car parking whilst also giving both formal and informal seating opportunities.

A well defined soft landscape scheme will provide a gentle background to new development and will help define the legibility and identity of the area. The arrangement of planters and footpaths take account of the pedestrian movement as people arrive within the square from the north, south and eastern directions.

Paving materials should be consistent with the wider streetscape, including smaller unit sizes for trafficked areas.





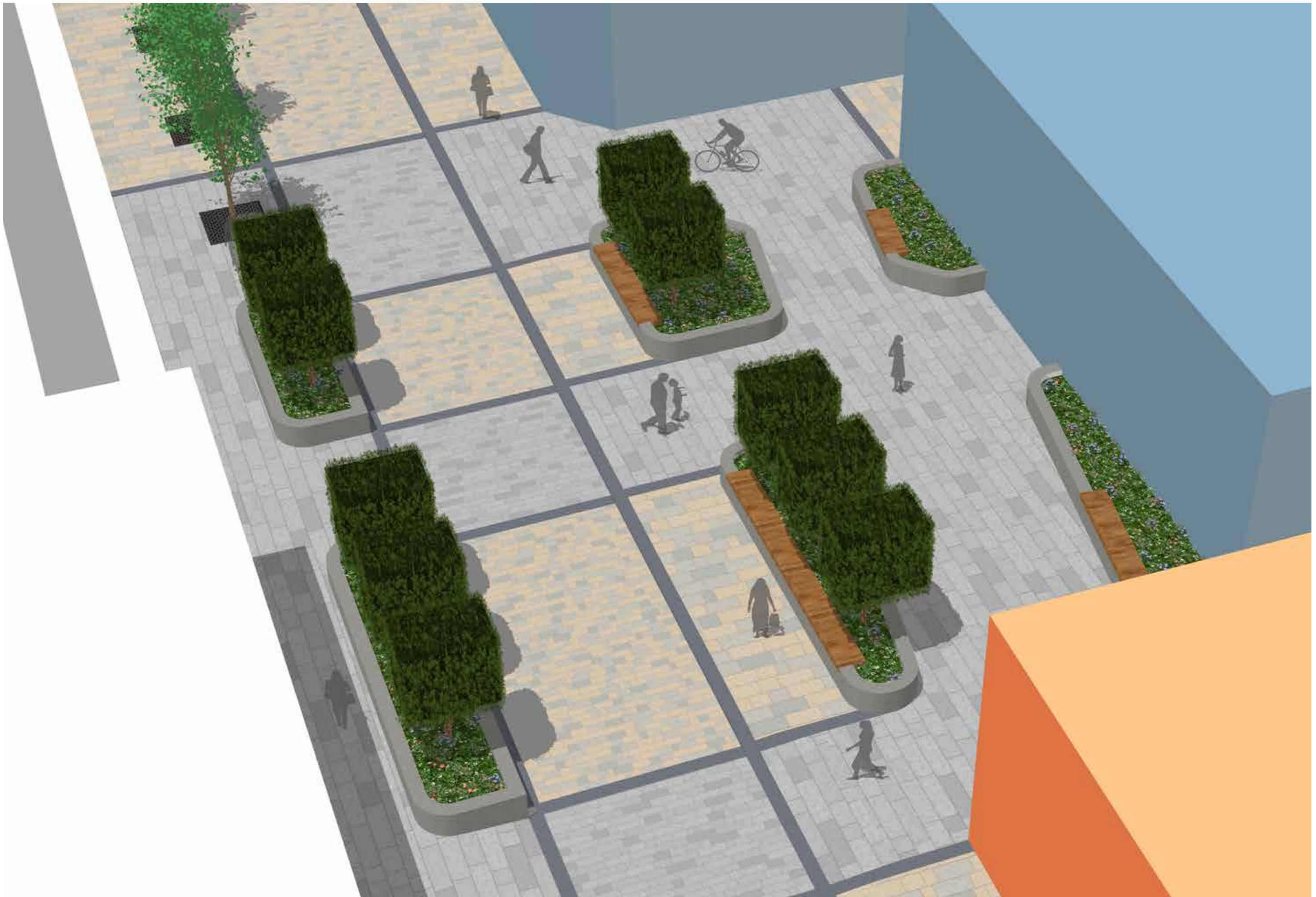
- ① Raised Planter with Integrated Seating
- ② Pleached Trees
- ③ Avenue Tree Planting
- ④ Loading Bay
- ⑤ Pedestrian Area paved in large units
- ⑥ Vehicular Area paved in smaller units to match pedestrian areas
- ⑦ Pedestrianised College Avenue
- ⑧ Potential New Infill Buildings / Street Frontage required



Figure 19 - King Street Square - Indicative Layout



Figure 20 - King Street Square - Artist Impression 1



3 Masterplan Proposals

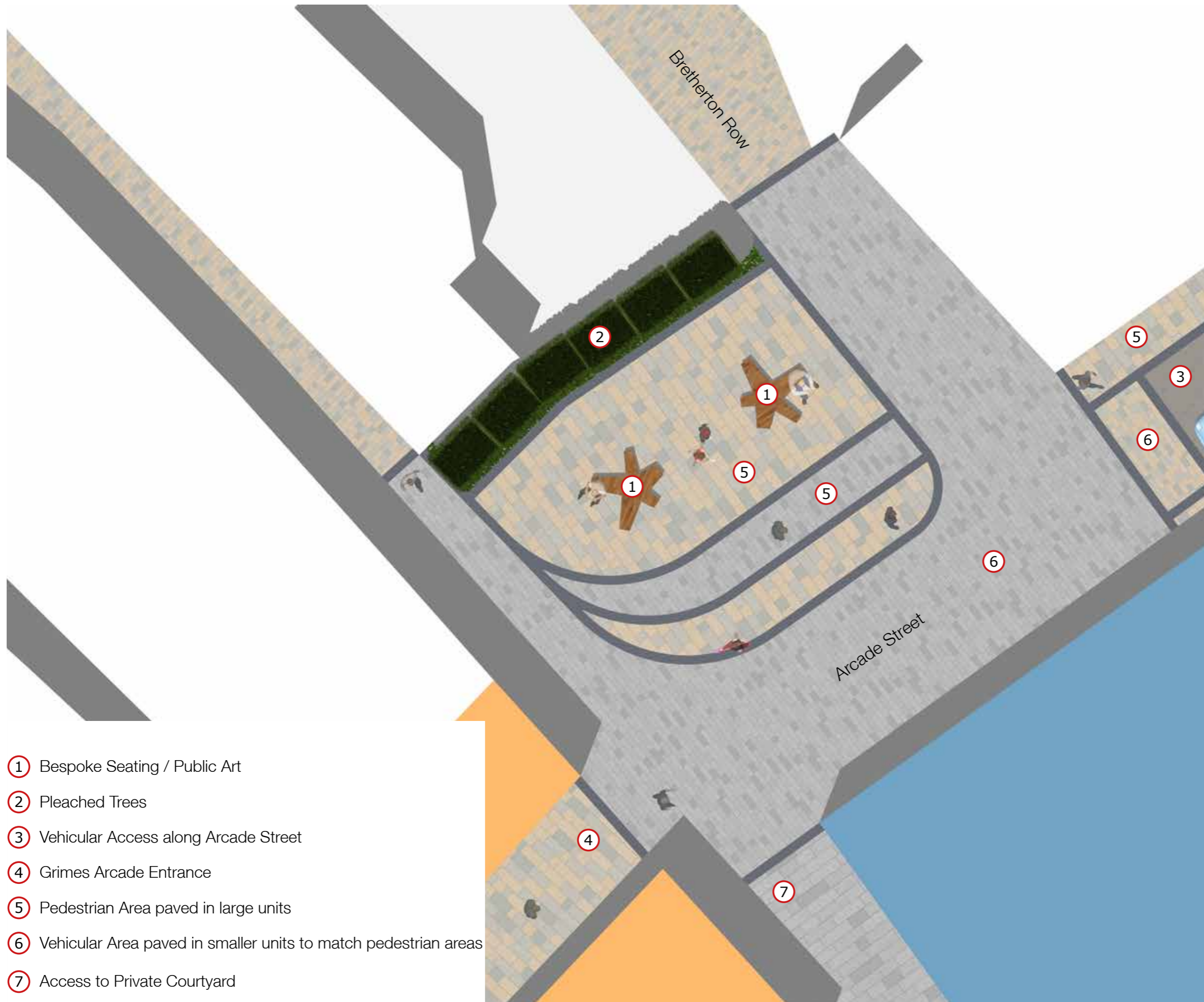
3.4 Arcade Square

The opening up of Grimes Arcade will provide great benefit to the pedestrian movement within the area. The additional creation of improved public realm would provide an outlook and aspect to the redevelopment plans for the building.

The use of bespoke designed seating, incorporating elements of cultural significance would assist in the place-making process. The use of architectural planting will define the space within the area and give a focus to the pedestrian routes.

The King Street area contains little green space and this area gives opportunity to introduce some structure planting and feature trees.





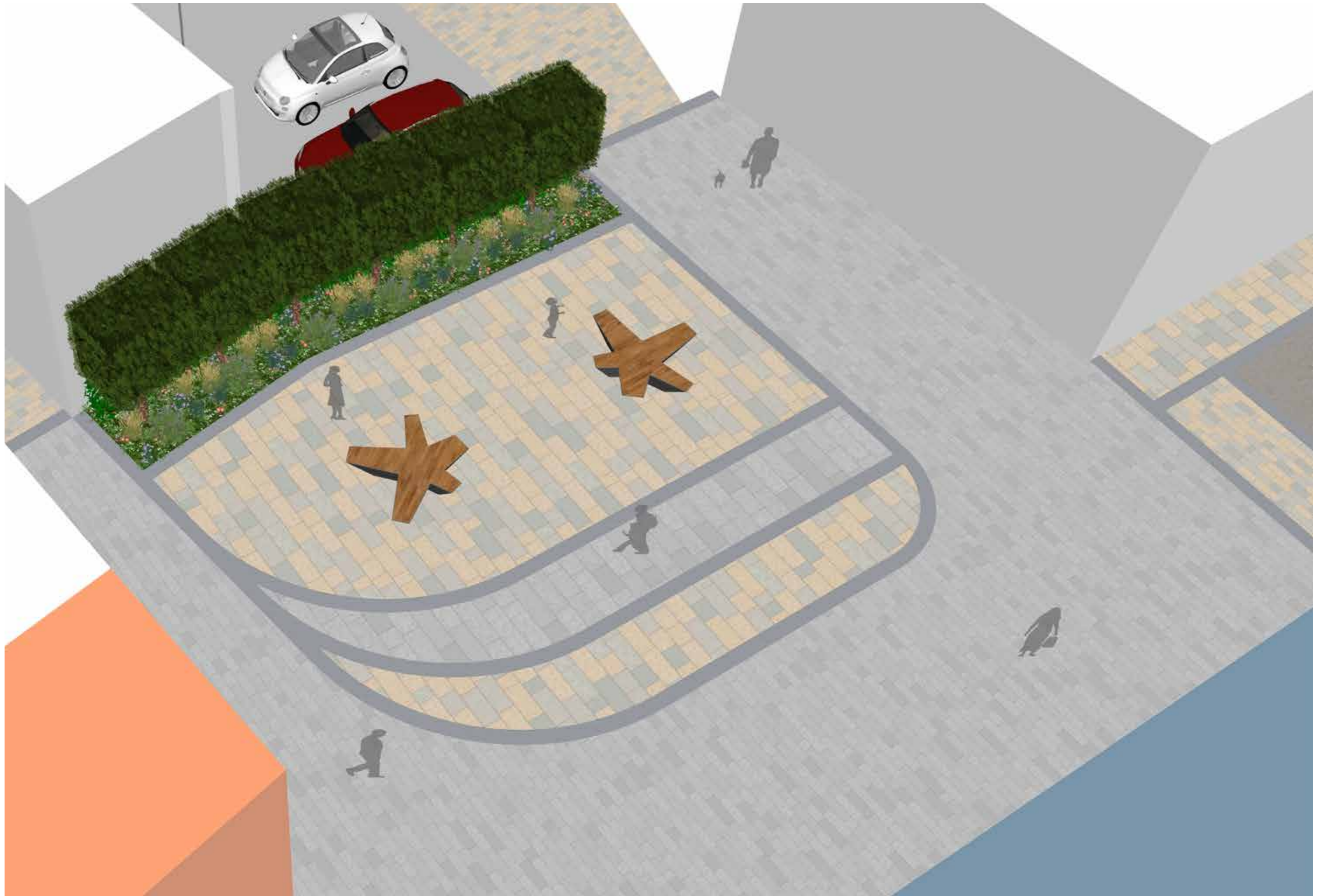
- ① Bespoke Seating / Public Art
- ② Pleached Trees
- ③ Vehicular Access along Arcade Street
- ④ Grimes Arcade Entrance
- ⑤ Pedestrian Area paved in large units
- ⑥ Vehicular Area paved in smaller units to match pedestrian areas
- ⑦ Access to Private Courtyard



Figure 22 - Arcade Square - Indicative Layout

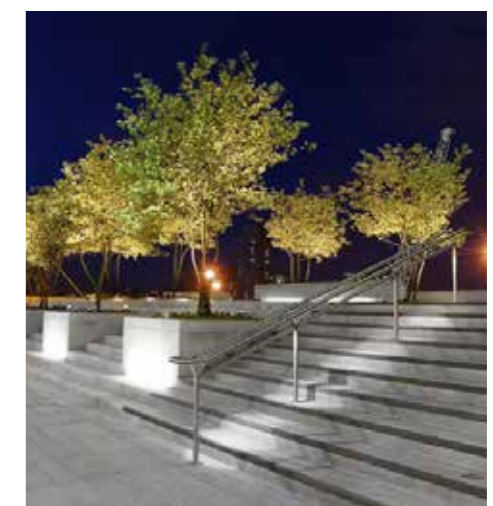


Figure 23 - Arcade Square - Artist Impression 1





- ① Raised Planter with Integrated Seating
- ② Proposed Feature Tree
- ③ Stepped Terrace with shade tolerant ornamental planting
- ④ Access Steps
- ⑤ Service Area / Bin Store
- ⑥ Pedestrianised College Avenue
- ⑦ Entrance from Arcade Street



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Figure 25 - Private Courtyard - Indicative Layout



Figure 26 - Private Courtyard - - Artist Impression 1



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Figure 27 - Private Courtyard - - Artist Impression 2

4 Summary

King Street is an important part of the town centre and will have a key role in contributing to the overall transformation of Wigan Town Centre.

This Masterplan has set out a robust assessment of King Street and its context and from this has presented a strategic masterplan for the area which will guide future development. The masterplan proposals emphasise the importance of quality in new development – protecting and enhancing important architectural detail, enhancing the public realm and encouraging sensitive new development and adaptation of buildings to support a mix of uses that will add to the range of quality of uses along King Street.

By enhancing the positive attributes of King Street and working with partners to address elements that detract from the street, King Street can become a vibrant and attractive place to live, work and visit.

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