

# Southgates Masterplan

## Development Brief Document

Consultation Draft October 2022

Borough Council of  
King's Lynn &  
West Norfolk



**BDP.**

# Foreword

**Cabinet Member and Portfolio  
Holder for Development -  
Councillor Richard Blunt**



I am delighted to introduce this draft version of the Southgates Masterplan Development Brief Document.

The Southgates area is a strategic location for the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk. It is a priority for the Heritage Action Zone Programme, the King's Lynn Transport Strategy and the Town Investment Plan, which identify the potential to create an attractive and active entrance into King's Lynn by delivering major highways and public realm improvements and opening up the historic South Gate as a major asset for the town.

Over recent years the Council has progressed a series of feasibility studies alongside Historic England research exploring the potential for road diversion around the South Gate. The current Masterplan will seek to draw on and learn from this evidence base but will also take its own approach, putting the task of 'placemaking' at its heart.

This is the right time to take on such a task. Changing patterns of living and working, the urgent need to tackle the climate crisis, and the Government's ambition to 'Level Up' the UK create a clear mandate for interventions which deliver active travel, heritage and sustainability improvements, strengthen the identity of the town, and offer benefits for residents and visitors alike.

The scope of the opportunity available is clear, and I hope that you will join us on the journey to deliver transformational change for the Southgates area.





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# 1

## Introduction

This report presents the draft Masterplan Development Brief for the regeneration of the historic Southgates area of King's Lynn.

The Masterplan has been commissioned by the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk (BCKLWN) and prepared by BDP, an experienced practice of urban designers, town planners, architects and landscape architects, together with transport advisors Urban Flow and property advisors Montagu Evans.

The site area is focussed on a highways junction which has functioned as the southern entrance into King's Lynn since medieval times. The presence of the historic South Gate, which is a Grade I listed building and Scheduled Ancient Monument, offers the potential to create a high-quality entrance to King's Lynn to change the perception and first impression of the town, increase pride of place, and strengthen its identity as a sub-regional economic centre by delivering benefits for residents and visitors alike.

The Masterplan sets a vision and series of design principles to guide future investment and development at Southgates, which will sustain long-term economic activity and create an attractive and active gateway to King's Lynn. Subject to further decision-making and review, the vision and principles identified may be secured through adoption of the Masterplan as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), through the next review of the BCKLWN Local Plan.

The recommendations made contain a degree of flexibility, enabling multiple potential iterations of development to come forward. However in order to enable understanding of the site's potential for change, a series of illustrative sketch views have been prepared to indicate the scale, form and character of proposals that may be progressed in future.





Not to scale

Figure 1. Masterplan study area - Aerial base from Google Maps, 2022



# Background

## Relationship to previous studies

Preparation of the Southgates Masterplan is undertaken in the context of a series of existing feasibility studies which have been carried out in and around the Southgates area in recent years. This includes a body of work associated with the King's Lynn Heritage Action Zone, a previous bid for Future High Streets Funding, and a Levelling Up Funding bid that was submitted in August 2022. King's Lynn is a category 1 area for Levelling Up Funding, meaning that it is identified as most in need of investment through the Fund.

The Masterplan will seek to bring together and draw from the existing evidence base, while also ensuring that the approach taken optimises benefits for the people of King's Lynn. While previous studies have tended to have a narrow focus on the South Gate Scheduled Ancient Monument and road junction to the south, the current Masterplan incorporates a wider study area, and champions a 'placemaking' approach to transport, movement and heritage at its core.

## The opportunity available

The renewed focus of the current Masterplan responds to the challenges and opportunities presented by our current political, social and environmental context, including the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, BCKLWN's 2021 announcement of a climate emergency, and the Government's 'Levelling Up' agenda.

These factors present an opportunity for place-based improvements that encourage modal shift to sustainable travel options and deliver real value for the people of King's Lynn. The scope and strength of opportunity available is discussed further in Section 2 of this report.

## Next steps and delivery

In order to provide greater weight to the Masterplan's recommendations, the Development Brief may be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

Following adoption of the Development Brief, further technical highways and cost analysis will be undertaken to ensure the deliverability of the proposals.

Further details on the Masterplan process and next steps are provided on the following page, and Section 7 of this report respectively.



# Masterplan Aims

The aims of the Southgates Masterplan are as follows:

- Provide a development framework that identifies a strategic vision and design principles to guide future development
- Set a strategic direction and inform briefs for detailed studies geared towards delivery
- Open up public debate, encourage political ambition, and seek to generate consensus
- Identify a delivery strategy for the improvements proposed

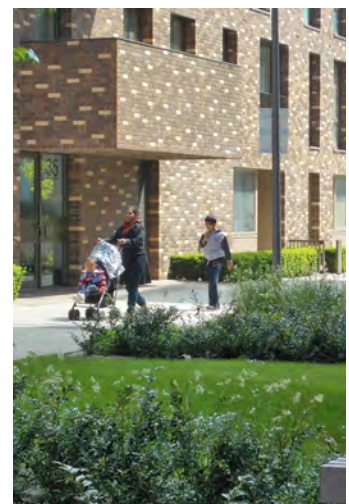


Figure 2. Precedent images illustrating Masterplan aims

# Masterplan Process

The key stages for preparation of the Southgates Masterplan are set out below.

## Stage 1: Baseline Review

The baseline stage of the project involved:

- Auditing the existing evidence base for the area to identify key opportunities and constraints;
- Initial consultation with key residents and stakeholders - in total 54 local residents and 22 stakeholders were invited to participate; and
- Regular discussions with the Masterplan Steering Group, comprised of BCKLWN, Historic England, and Norfolk County Council.

The findings of the baseline stage are discussed further in Section 2 of this report.

## Stage 2: Options Development

The options development stage of the project involved:

- Identification of a series of high-level scenarios, forming the basis for a series of more detailed Masterplan options; and
- Development of proposed scenarios and options through workshops and presentations with BCKLWN Members and local stakeholders. A recording of the project team's presentation to the BCKLWN Regeneration and Development Panel can be found on the Council's YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BAzstqPfxEk>

### **Stage 3: Preferred Scenario and Draft Masterplan Development Brief**

- This Draft Masterplan Development Brief represents the preferred option selected following feedback from local stakeholders and elected Members.
- The recommendations have been developed in collaboration with BCKLWN officers and Members, and the Masterplan Steering Group.

### **Stage 4: Public Consultation**

- A period of public consultation held on the draft Development Brief Document in October 2022

### **Stage 5: Adoption of the Development Brief and Next Steps**

Consultation responses will be used to shape the final draft of the Southgates Masterplan. This will be adopted by BCKLWN as a Development Brief, providing the document with formal status as a tool to guide investment in the area.

Following adoption of the forthcoming King's Lynn and West Norfolk Local Plan, the Masterplan may also be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), giving the document further weight in the planning process. This is subject to further decision-making by the Council.

Sections 7 and 8 of this report set out the recommended next steps to ensure delivery of the Masterplan.





# 2 The Site and Opportunity

The built environment, and the society within which it exists, are changing. The Southgates Masterplan is being developed within a key window of opportunity, where evolving political, social and environmental factors combine to create the conditions for transformational change.

This section provides an overview of the Masterplan site, its strengths and its weaknesses, and how these locally-experienced factors intersect with wider changes and a regional, national and international level to define the scope of opportunity available. Taken together, this leads to a series of key considerations which have informed the shape of the draft Masterplan.



KING'S LYNN

# The Site

The Southgates site is located at a roundabout junction which acts as the southern entrance into King's Lynn, at the confluence of the A148 (London Road/Nar Ouse Way), A149 (Hardwick Road) and Wisbech Road. The below sets out a brief summary of the site's key features and characteristics.

## Heritage, character and urban form

The Southgates area has been used as the southern entrance into King's Lynn since medieval times and retains elements of this historic character today, with the Grade I listed South Gate and associated Southgates bridge still used as the vehicular entrance into town, albeit the bridge is concealed underneath the modern road. The northern part of the site lies within the Friar's Conservation Area, and adjacent to the Grade II listed Buckingham Terrace and 1-11 Guanock Place. The Masterplan site also includes a number of heritage assets of local interest, including the former Prince of Wales Public House, and Southgates Park. Buried assets, including former Civil War defences, are also likely at the northern part of the site, and would be of national importance if discovered.

At the same time, the character of the site in the present day is compromised by the scale of the roundabout and the form and layout of existing development. These result in a poorly defined area, dominated by motorised vehicles with little sense of enclosure. The presence of heavy traffic movement also results in direct physical impacts on the site's heritage assets. As well as general traffic the South Gate is presently subject to the adverse impacts of buses and HGVs passing northbound through the arch, with vehicle collisions degrading the structure itself along with its visual setting and importance as an important town landmark.

## Land use and development context

The area is associated with a number of previous industrial uses, including trade and shipbuilding adjacent to the river since medieval times, and more recently use of the south-western plot as a gasworks. This was decommissioned in 1962 and now lies vacant. Current land uses on the site include the First Bus Depot to the north, and a hand car wash facility together with small commercial units to the west of the site.

Surrounding land uses to the north are largely residential, with some commercial uses along London Road. Recent new development has been concentrated at the site's southern boundary, where a series of residential, commercial and hotel uses have been brought forward in recent years as part of the Nar Ouse Regeneration Area (NORA). Meanwhile, the western part of the site and its surrounds is designated within BCKLWN's current and draft Local Plan as the King's Lynn Waterfront Regeneration Area, which seeks to create a high quality waterfront area contributing to the town's daytime and evening economies.





Figure 3. Site characteristics

## Transport and movement

The Southgates site is located at a strategic road junction and entrance into King's Lynn. Analysis of the existing Southgates roundabout arrangement has demonstrated that, in addition to the detrimental impact on urban form and heritage significance in the area, the present road network performs poorly in a further number of important aspects:

- It presents an unwelcoming and vehicle dominated entry point to King's Lynn
- It is subject to serious and purposeful traffic movements and has a poor road safety record, including a recent fatality
- The roundabout form, large-scale and approach roads are unsuited to the provision of contemporary standards of provision for pedestrian conditions and facilities, in terms of road crossing distances and delays with pedestrian signal controlled crossings on only two of the five approach arms. This is also true of cycle facilities, with no dedicated/segregated cycle lanes; and bus priority measures.
- The layout fails to capitalise on connections to nearby active travel routes along Harding's Way, green spaces within and around the site, or the River Nar to the west.

The scale of the roundabout is derived from its function in being the focus of the convergence of five roads and 18 lanes of entry/exit traffic, with two of those roads primarily strategic in function. This convergence produces an unpleasant and intense environment for those on foot or cycle or living in the vicinity. This is compounded by traffic signal controlled crossings being available on only two of the five junction approaches meaning crossing the junction is inconvenient and hazardous for pedestrians and cyclists. The functional hard landscape also lacks greening to soften the urban feel of the area.





Figure 4. Transport and Movement Issues and Constraints

#### Main Movement Issues



Constant flow of vehicles including heavy vehicles are funnelled towards Southgate creating an intimidating environment for pedestrians and cyclists. This is likely to result in local people choosing to drive the short distance into town



Only brave cyclists would attempt to travel through the roundabout. There is no road safety provision for cyclists. Fast moving vehicles across several lanes creates a significant barrier to cycling



Existing signalised crossings are not on desire lines and require pedestrians to cross in several stages causing delay to journeys. There is no provision for cyclists at these crossings



No formal crossing provision is provided on these arms resulting in pedestrians (and cyclists) having to cross several lanes of continuously moving traffic. The island provision is inadequate, providing only minimal protection. The crossing provision is inadequate for vulnerable road users including those with physical and mental impairments



Footways are narrow and uncomfortable due to heavy traffic, particularly large vehicles



Nar Valley Way is in disrepair. Unpassable by foot. Presents a personal security issue

#### Main Local Movement Constraints



Southgate heritage site is severely impacted by constant heavy traffic. Large vehicles have to slow down to get through causing significant tailbacks



Poorly used green space. Lack of relationship with London Road.



Advertising hoardings impact on visibility and road safety. Creates an intimidating space for pedestrians



Residential properties impacted by vehicle movements, associated poor air quality and noise



Lack of activation and access to the River Nar. Vegetation and river in poor condition. Creates a barrier to local and strategic movement





The South Gate and former Honest Lawyer Public House, viewed from Southgates Park and adjacent pavement



Statue of Frederick Savage, London Road

Former Prince of Wales Public House

Former Ford Garage



Vehicular movement through South Gate arch

Middleton Stop Drain, Southgates Park



Hardings Way

Connections to River Nar





Grade II Listed 1-11 Guanock Place, London Road



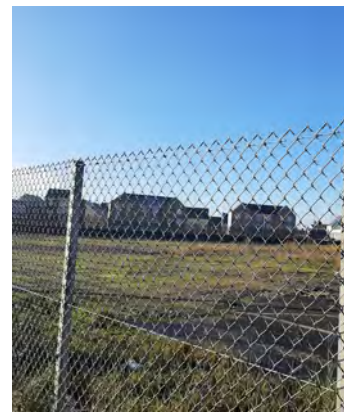
Grade II Listed Buckingham Terrace, London Road



First Bus Depot



Traffic queue along Vancouver Avenue



Former gasworks site and adjacent NORA development



View across the Masterplan site to the former Prince of Wales Pub, former Ford Garage, former filling station and Bus Depot (L-R)

# Constraints

During the initial stages of the Southgates Masterplan project, a baseline audit was undertaken of the existing evidence base for the Southgates area, together with a series of initial stakeholder engagement and site visits by the project team.

This was used to identify a number of constraints which the future Masterplan must address, set out below and on the diagram overleaf.

**Contaminated land.** Previous and ongoing industrial and commercial uses have resulted in the presence of contamination across the masterplan site. This is likely to act as an abnormal constraint for any built development coming forward, which would need to incorporate appropriate mitigation measures.

**Market conditions and third party ownerships.** Initial review of the property market demonstrates that there are likely to be viability challenges faced by redevelopment, particularly for residential and office uses. Third party ownerships may also limit BCKLWN's ability to implement changes in these areas of the site.

**Utilities.** The presence of underground utilities may prevent significant changes to the layout of the highways network and/or introduction of new built development.

**Vehicle dominance.** The site is currently dominated by vehicle movements around the roundabout and congestion on surrounding roads. This results in difficulties with local access, poor road safety and barriers to active travel, and environmental issues including noise and air pollution. This also prevents the South Gate from reaching its full potential as a visitor attraction.

**Constrained land parcels.** The dominance and scale of existing highways infrastructure means that the surrounding land plots are constrained in size and access, with poor pedestrian and cyclist connections between.

**Lack of enclosure.** The scale of the roundabout and relationship between road width and building height fails to provide a sense of enclosure, desire lines or wayfinding for those on foot.

**Flood Risk.** The site sits within Flood Zones 2 and 3, although it does benefit from existing flood defences along the River Nar.



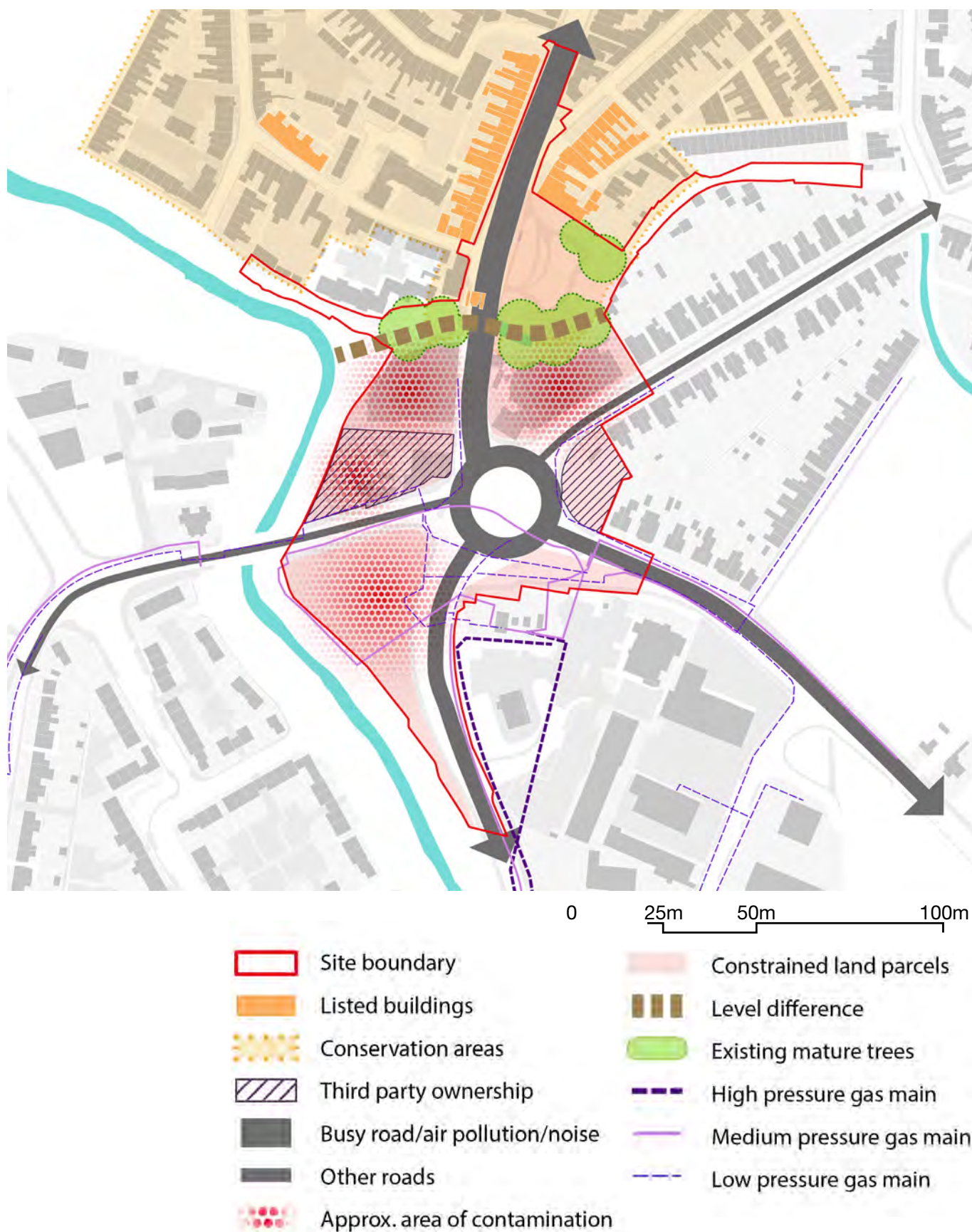


Figure 5. Site Constraints

# Opportunities

The baseline analysis undertaken also identified a series of key site strengths, including those identified on the diagram overleaf and as follows:

**Gateway.** The site acts as the main entrance to King's Lynn from the south, which presents the opportunity to create an arrival point, aiding legibility and creating a sense of place grounded in its historic, aesthetic and communal value. There is an opportunity to enhance the area's function as a gateway and improve appreciation South Gate's historical significance.

**Heritage assets.** To the north, the Masterplan area contains or lies adjacent to a number of heritage assets, providing the area with a character and sense of place that can be built on by interventions across the site. Most significant of these is the South Gate Scheduled Ancient Monument but there is also the opportunity to enhance the setting of listed buildings along Buckingham Terrace and Guanock Place.

**River connections and corridor.** The site lies in close proximity to the River Nar to the west, presenting an opportunity to connect in to the landscape corridor brought forward as part of the NORA development to the south, and routes along the Nar Valley Way.

**Active travel connections.** The site is accessible by foot and bike from a wide catchment area including the town centre. Improvements to active travel around the road junction can link in to existing routes such as cycle access along Hardings Way and the Active Travel Hub to be delivered at NORA. Both Hardings Way and Southgates are identified as priority schemes in the King's Lynn Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (2022).

**Surrounding development.** The Masterplan area lies at the interface between the Nar Ouse Regeneration Area to the south, currently under development, and the Waterfront Regeneration Area to the north which is allocated within the Local Plan. This presents the opportunity to integrate with the wider regeneration of King's Lynn and complement the land uses brought forward within these two areas, as well as existing residential and commercial development along London Road and the surrounding streets.



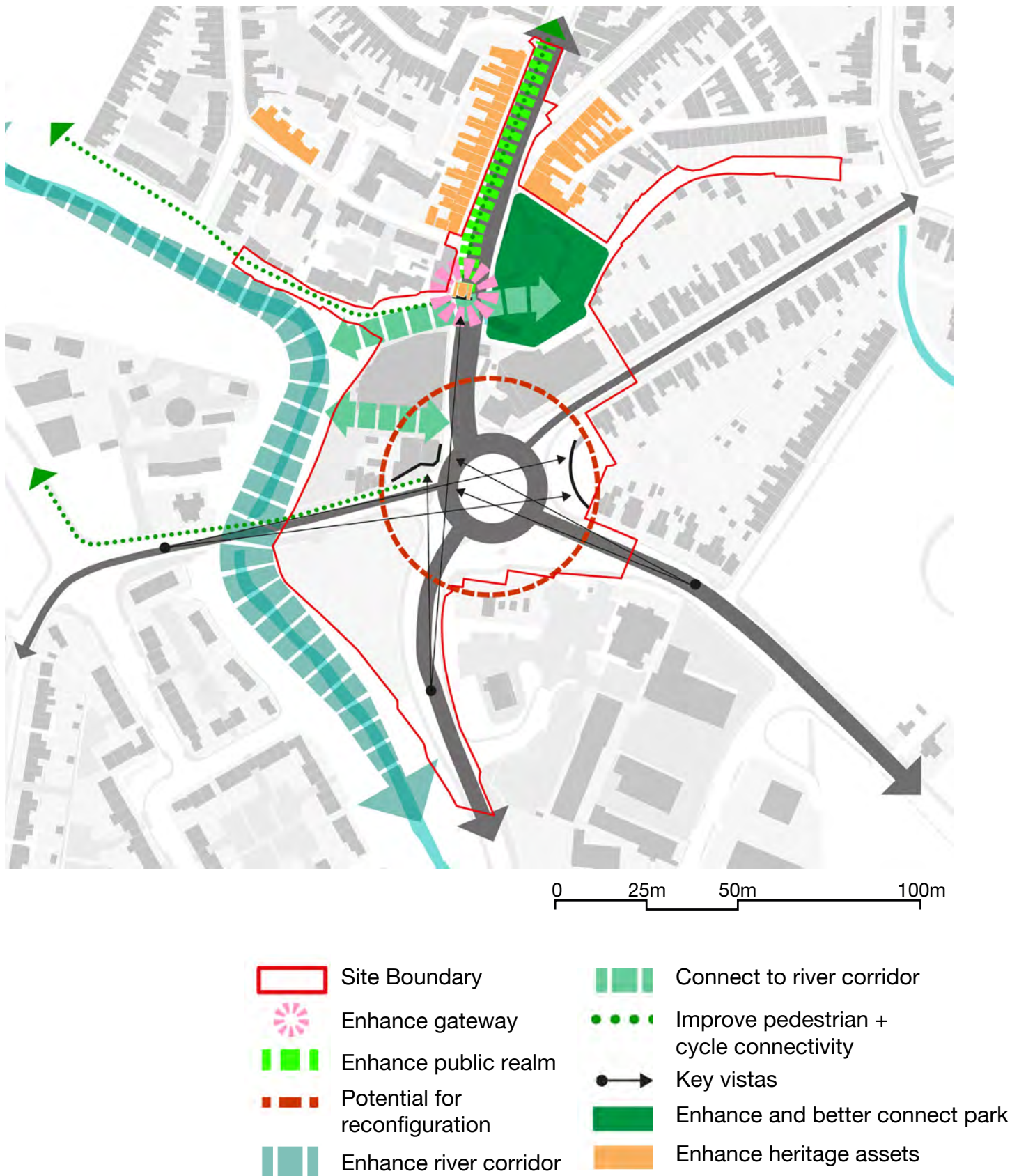


Figure 6. Site Opportunities



# The Opportunity

The way that people live, work and travel through the built environment is shifting. The increasing prevalence of digital technology in our everyday lives, the urgency of the climate emergency, and changing work and leisure patterns have all been accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic. These regional, national and international trends intersect with locally-experienced issues and opportunities to form a wider political, social and environmental context that offers a clear window of opportunity for meaningful change at Southgates.

The below sets out the key factors contributing to this context for change, before considering how these might intersect to enable delivery of a transformational plan for Southgates.

## The climate emergency

Recent years have seen increasing awareness of the environmental sustainability agenda, which only becomes more urgent. In the summer of 2021, BCKLWN announced a climate emergency, and in November of the same year published a Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan setting out the initial steps of a phased approach to aid the reduction of emissions both within the Council and district-wide.

New public realm, transport and movement infrastructure and built development brought forward by the masterplan therefore presents an opportunity to respond to the climate emergency as well as implement wider sustainability measures.

## Changing patterns of living, working and travel

The increasing prevalence and sophistication of technology in our everyday lives is leading to long-term shifts in the way that we live and work, which has been hastened by the rise of remote and hybrid working during the Covid-19 pandemic. In turn, this has also accelerated the pre-pandemic shift in movement policy and action, first precipitated by climate change and health and wellbeing agendas, towards active travel and away from motorised traffic as the default travel mode. This is evident in the Southgates context where the pandemic saw a reduction in peak congestion traffic levels in the area.

Although the duration and magnitude of this change is uncertain, it appears unlikely that the pre-pandemic movement environment will be fully restored. We may expect some continuation of remote and hybrid working, a greater reliance of local amenities for everyday needs, and the resultant reduction of traffic levels, most notable during traditional morning and evening peak hours. Overall, there is a clear opportunity to capitalise on shifts towards active and sustainable movement, by creating a built environment that is conducive to these modes of travel. This is evidenced by NCC and BCKLWN's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) adopted in spring 2022 which proposes a range of active travel interventions across the Southgates area and beyond.

## 'Levelling Up'

Opportunities are also created by the current Government's 'Levelling Up' agenda, which seeks to extend opportunity and deliver positive change across the UK. The assessment criteria set by the Levelling Up Prospectus, published in March 2022, demonstrate how the societal shifts described above have led to a broadening of the assessment of infrastructure projects beyond their effects on vehicular movement, to also consider social, economic and environmental factors.

In particular, the focus in the Levelling Up White Paper on encouraging local pride and belonging through engagement in culture and community speaks to the challenges and opportunities present within the Southgates area, and which has the potential to form an attractive and active gateway to King's Lynn through interventions which draw on the area's rich heritage and existing assets.

## Delivering a transformational plan

There is a window for significant change within the Masterplan area, afforded by the momentum for urgent action on health and socioeconomic wellbeing, the climate emergency, and potential to capitalise on longer-term shifts in these areas which have been accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic. This includes reduced road traffic volumes, the embedding of remote and hybrid working into the working week, the rise of local living and the encouragement of active travel modes.

There are clear synergies between these aims, with action on each individual area of interest benefiting the others too. The process of placemaking provides a strong basis for combining those elements into a positive framework for change.



Figure 7. Masterplan opportunities and outcomes



Agency



Active travel & model shift



Enhanced sense of place and local pride



Sustainability Enhancements



enda

**THE  
OPPORTUNITY**

Reflection on the current issues faced by the site, and the opportunities presented by both its immediate characteristics and the wider environment for change have given rise to a series of key considerations that have shaped the draft Masterplan.



### **Extent and ambition of highways interventions**

The current political and policy context, informed by the challenges of climate change and impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, emphasises the importance of active travel and sustainability enhancements to the future of transport and travel, seeking to widen the agenda beyond optimisation of vehicular movement.

The prevalence of active travel, wellbeing and environmental goals has led Norfolk County Council to reconsider earlier proposals to further enlarge Southgates junction in order to address prevailing traffic congestion concerns. The Development Brief must therefore consider the wider benefits that transport and highways interventions might offer beyond strategic, road based issues - in terms of promoting active travel improvements, addressing the challenges of climate change, delivering social value, and contributing to the placemaking process.

The site constraints identified suggest that one of the key challenges posed by the current highways layout is the dominance of the roundabout junction in terms of scale and vehicular movement, resulting in spatial and access constraints for surrounding development plots. This indicates that comprehensive reconfiguration of the existing highways layout could unlock major benefits for the area, and is likely to be necessary to deliver long-term meaningful change.



### **Heritage influence**

Heritage assets within and around the site represent a key opportunity to promote Southgates' 'sense of place' by reflecting the historic core of King's Lynn at this gateway site.

Previous studies exploring diversion of the A148 around the historic South Gate have generated public debate over the optimum heritage solution for the site, and how the historic gateway function of the asset is best balanced with the need to protect its physical fabric by limiting vehicular movement through the gate.

Sensitive diversion of the road around the South Gate has achieved support from a number of key stakeholders, including Historic England. The Development Brief has explored how this could be achieved in a way that preserves and enhances the heritage significance of the asset, including retaining some form of movement through the gate, as well as delivering wider heritage and public benefits.



### **Viability and extent of development**

Market conditions and the values likely to be generated through new development are unlikely to be able to fund major highways intervention or deliver quality development without achieving external funding, particularly given likely abnormal costs associated with ground conditions across the site.

The alignment of existing BCKLWN ambitions for the Southgates area with the current and forthcoming availability of funding opportunities, such as the Levelling Up, Shared Prosperity and Brownfield Land Release Funds; Homes England opportunities; and the Community Infrastructure Levy therefore presents a key opportunity for delivery of the Masterplan.



### **Scope and timings of transformational improvements**

The delivery of comprehensive improvements to the Southgates area will be a long-term process undertaken over a number of years, which must align with forthcoming funding opportunities as well as the aspirations of development partners. The site sits adjacent to the BCKLWN Waterfront Regeneration Area, which is subject to a number of Local Plan site allocations and anticipated to experience significant growth and development in coming years, resulting in a changing context for the site.

As such, the Masterplan should consider whether there are interim or smaller-scale interventions that could be undertaken as part of a phased approach, to deliver shorter-term improvements prior to longer-term change aligned to funding and surrounding development timescales.



# The Masterplan Vision

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**The vision for Southgates is to create an attractive and active gateway to King's Lynn, which draws upon the rich past of the site in order to meet the needs of the present day, and optimise benefits for the town's residents and visitors alike.**

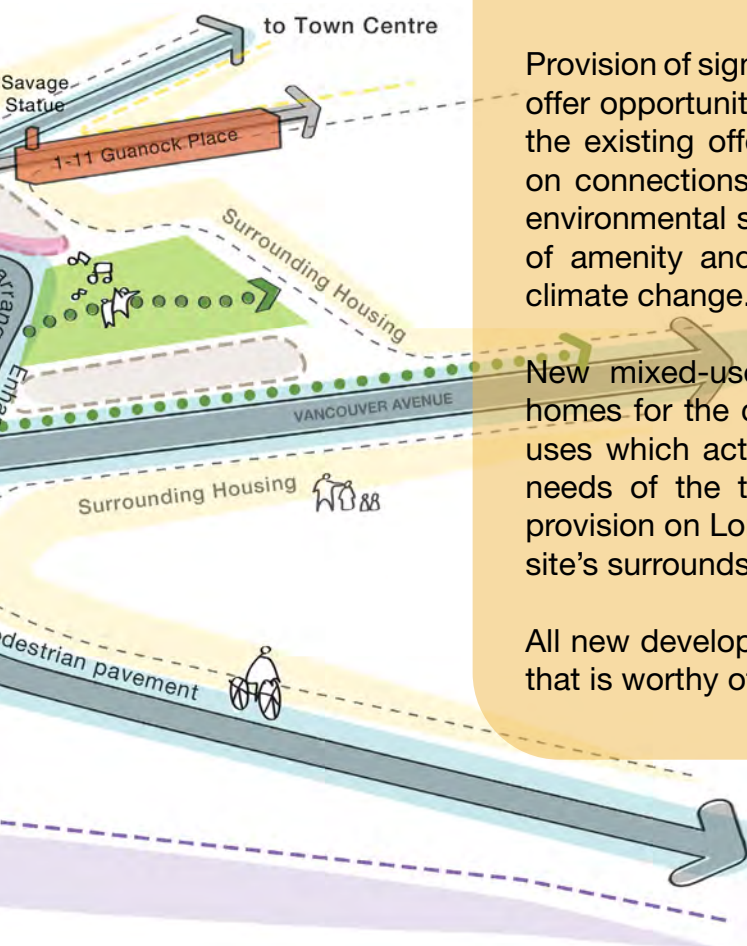
The site's heritage assets will be revealed and enhanced through sensitive retention and conversion where appropriate. The Grade I listed South Gate will be the centrepiece to the area, retaining its historic function as the entrance to the town, with an improved setting that is no longer compromised by vehicle dominance.

This will be aided by improvement and simplification of the road junction to ensure efficient movement of motorised vehicles alongside safe and convenient pedestrian and cyclist access, encouraging modal shift through connections to existing and future active travel routes surrounding the site.

Provision of significant areas of public realm and green space will offer opportunities for recreation and reflection, integrating with the existing offer within and beyond the site, and capitalising on connections to the River Nar. New development will place environmental sustainability at its heart, ensuring a high quality of amenity and addressing the challenges of flood risk and climate change.

New mixed-use development will provide high quality new homes for the community, together with commercial and retail uses which activate the area as a local destination, serve the needs of the town's people, and complement both existing provision on London Road and planned development within the site's surrounds.

All new development must create a first and lasting impression that is worthy of the town, its historic past and future needs.



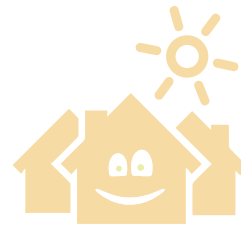


# Masterplan Objectives

The Masterplan Vision will be achieved through a series of seven objectives, set out below:

## Placemaking

Create a sense of place linked to Southgates' role as a key gateway into the town, in order to facilitate pride of place and belonging. This will be achieved by enhancing existing heritage assets, as well as high quality new development responding to local character.



## Heritage

Preserve and enhance the area's nationally and locally important heritage assets through interventions that bring them into new use and relevance while respecting their historic significance.



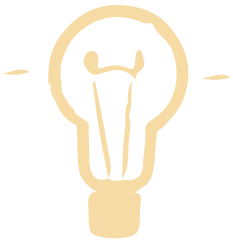
## Active travel and transport

Resolve existing highways issues including vehicle dominance, accident rates, congestion, and associated air quality, noise quality and accessibility issues. Promote and enhance active travel connections through and beyond the area.



### Social value

Create longlasting social, economic and environmental outcomes for the people of King's Lynn, and ensure that due consideration is afforded to social and environmental benefits - such as meeting local housing needs and responding to the climate change emergency.



### Environmental Sustainability

Resolve existing issues including land contamination, flood risk and poor air quality, and offer subsequent enhancements which enhance local environmental amenity and meet wider challenges of climate change.

### Interface with surrounding development

Complement surrounding development in order to lever maximum benefit for the area as a whole. This includes long-standing land uses along London Road, the Nar Ouse Regeneration Area, the West Winch Growth Area, and forthcoming new development at King's Lynn Waterfront.



### Deliverability

Ensure that proposals are deliverable through either private investment or public funding; including the ability to achieve a high quality of design.





# 4

## Masterplan Options

The site vision and objectives identified have been used to develop a series of three scenarios for the future of Southgates, each proposing a greater level of intervention. These are set out overleaf.

Following feedback received during initial stakeholder consultation, and considering the level of ambition required to deliver meaningful change in full accordance with the vision, objectives and opportunities available, Scenario 3 (highest intervention) was considered to best meet the vision and objectives and four sub-options were developed. This remainder of this section sets out the rationale behind selection of the preferred option, and the potential benefits that this affords.

The scenarios proposed are not however mutually exclusive, and a range of measures from Scenarios 1 and 2 could be used to deliver a first phase of interim or ‘meanwhile’ improvements prior to implementation of the full Masterplan.





# Proposed Scenarios

The following three scenarios were explored at the options stage. These are not mutually exclusive, but rather a means to test key design moves before arriving at a preferred option containing the optimum combination of measures.

## Scenario 1: Do minimum.

- Retain existing junction
- Minor public realm improvements around the gate, the park and the roundabout
- Plots developed to accommodate a pedestrian/cycle route along the river and through the park
- Ford garage façade retained with a mixed use redevelopment with views to the River Nar
- Pub retained

## Scenario 2: Intermediate.

- Improvements to roundabout junction
- Greater ambition in terms of public realm
- Development forming a new space to the southwest of the gate, with frontage allowing for wider pavements along the ford garage plot
- East- west routes across the northern plots
- Maximising development across all plots

## Scenario 3: Do maximum.

- Comprehensive reconfiguration of junction and road network
- South Gate used as pedestrian / cycle route, linking to wider network
- Beneficial if the masterplan extends to the wider area
- Potential for creating a destination which contributes to the regeneration and growth of the town and complements to town centre offer

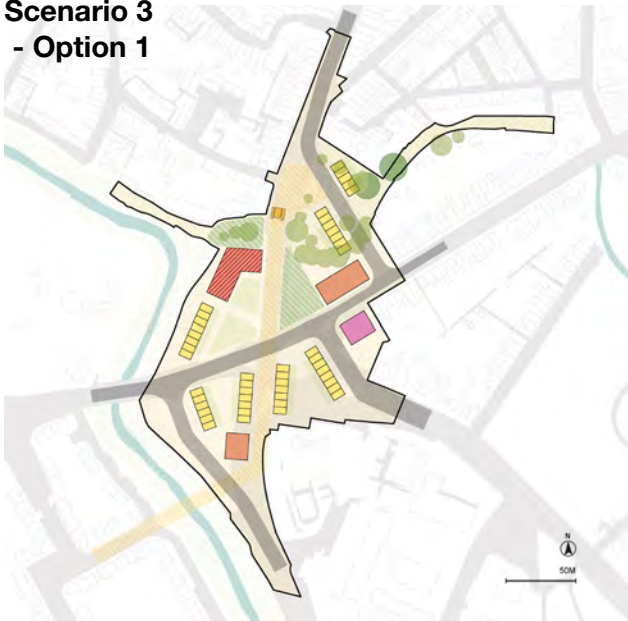
**Scenario 1**



**Scenario 2**



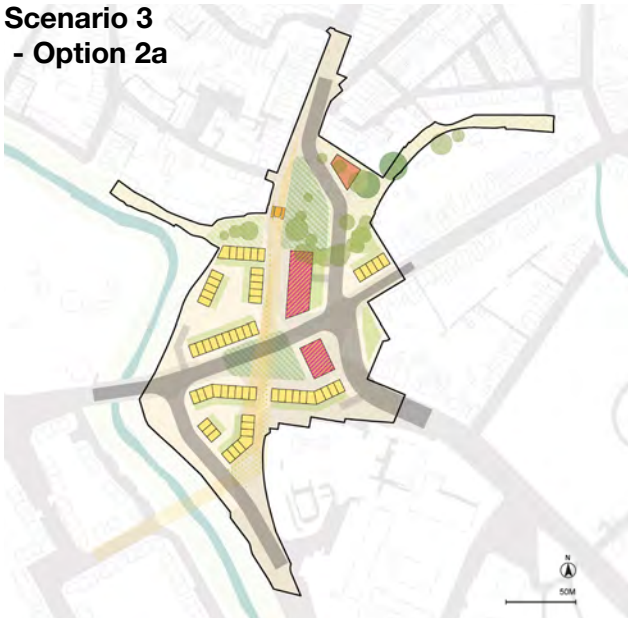
**Scenario 3  
- Option 1**



**Scenario 3  
- Option 2**



**Scenario 3  
- Option 2a**



**Scenario 3  
- Option 3**



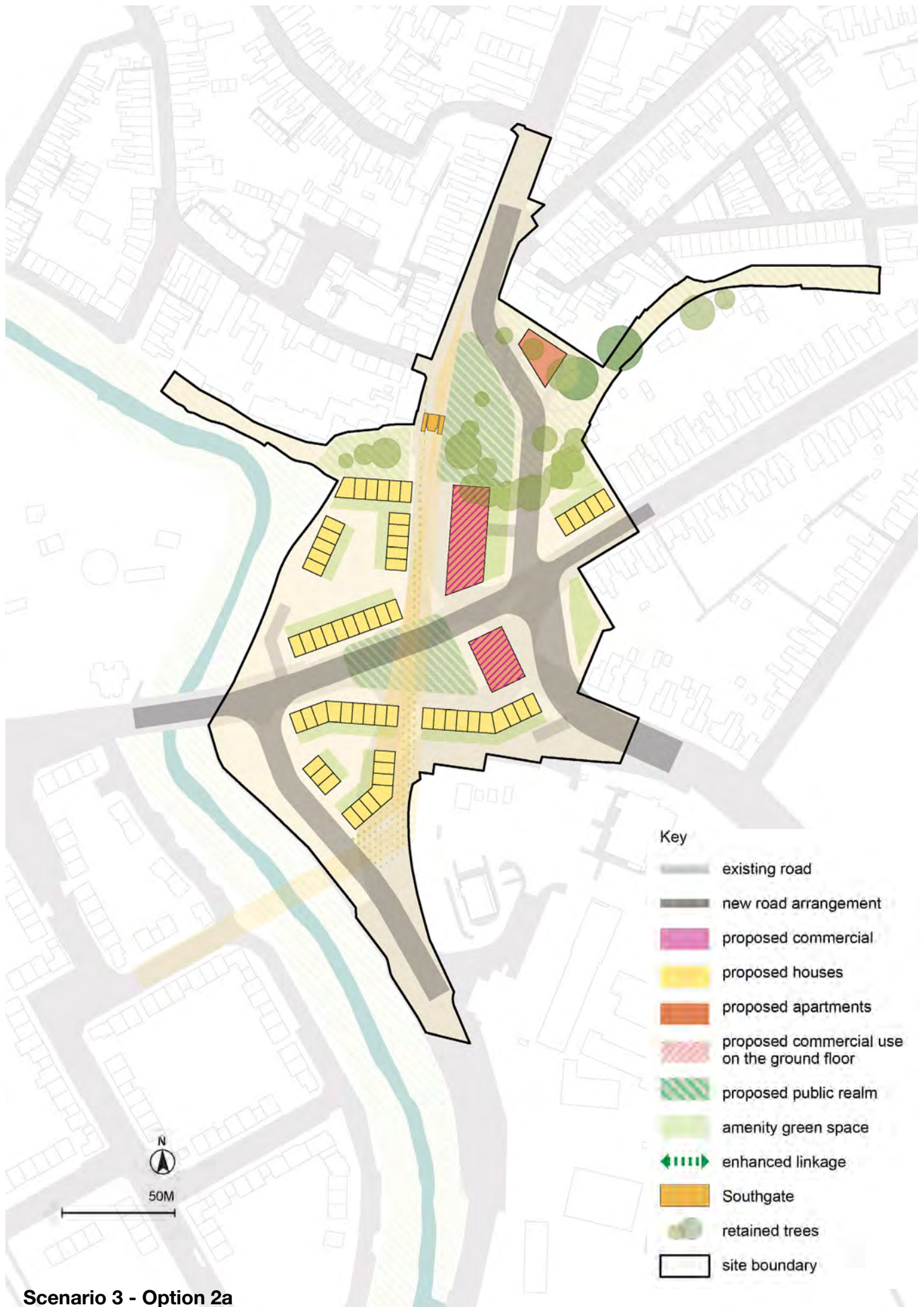
Figure 9. Proposed scenarios



# Options Assessment

The three scenarios identified were tested against the Masterplan objectives in order to understand the potential for each to contribute to the vision for transformational change. A summary of this assessment is set out below, which indicates that the preferred option is likely to be a variation of Scenario 3. This was tested with key stakeholders, with Option 2a emerging as the most favourable option, subject to layout improvements to maximise visibility of the South Gate. This is reflected in the Illustrative Masterplan in the next chapter.

Masterplan objectives	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3
Placemaking	x	-	✓
Heritage	x	x	✓
Active travel and transport	x	x	✓
Social value	-	-	✓
Environmental sustainability	x	x	✓
Interface with surrounding development	-	-	✓
Deliverability	-	-	- (✓ with external funding opportunities)



# The Preferred Option

As stated above, Scenario 3 is considered to offer the greatest potential for transformational change, capitalising on the opportunities available and best meeting the Masterplan vision and objectives set. The below sets out the anticipated benefits of this approach, and considers how these should be understood in light of changing approaches to transport assessment.

## The benefits

In comparison to Scenarios 1 and 2, re-drawing the road network to reduce the number of converging approaches from that single focus point changes the form of the junction and considerably reduces its scale in the general location of the present roundabout. The proposed road arrangement options are set out on the previous page, and show the partial relocation of London Road to the east and/or Nar Ouse Way to the west, along with some local realignment of Hardwick Road approach. This delivers the following benefits in comparison to the present roundabout arrangement:

- A much improved visual setting for the South Gate monument, with the realigned London Road some c.15-25m distant from it
- Substantial opportunities for new public realm and related amenities, including the opening up of new views to the South Gate
- The potential for the relocation of enhanced / enlarged green space in replacing that area of the park affected by London Road realignment
- A considerably calmer traffic environment for local people in the South Gate vicinity
- The presentation of the east-west Vancouver Avenue to Wisbech Road link as a 'street' in contrast to the present dominant traffic carrying 'road(s)'
- Maintenance of movement through South Gate through alignment of pedestrian and cycle links
- The provision of coherent and convenient walking links across the Southgates area connecting communities and opportunities
- Dedicated cycle facilities including the potential for segregated cycle lanes, for example an east-west lane from Vancouver Avenue to Wisbech Road
- The opportunity to provide integrated bus priority facilities within the re-planned road arrangement.
- An arrangement of development land parcels in such a way that site areas are more sizable and favourable in development terms, access is more straightforwardly facilitated.



## Assessing the benefits

### The assessment criteria

The benefits set out on the previous page indicate the advantages of the preferred option over the present roundabout-based arrangement.

At the same time however, most of these benefits do not have ready metrics with which to weigh their impacts. Conventionally, road traffic performance modelling has often been the focus of decision making for such interventions, coming with convenient metrics relating to road capacity and delays to motorists, but with little or no consideration of wider matters. The question “Does it work” has largely been limited to answering this single interest question with road capacity metrics. Times have though changed, as evidenced by central government funding criteria now demanding a much wider and comprehensive view be taken in support of infrastructure funding.

In considering the traditional road network modelling approach, it is not necessarily the case that replacing the present partially signalised roundabout junction with an arrangement comprising one / two additional junctions will perform less well than the present roundabout. The present roundabout’s performance is tuned to minimise motorist delay and maximise throughput, omitting three signalised crossings in the interests of reducing measured delay to motorists at the expense of pedestrian convenience. In contrast, the new arrangements are envisaged to provide for all turning movements with traffic signals where necessary regulating competing movements and providing pedestrian and cyclist crossing facilities, with much decreased road crossing distances and ‘island-hopping’.

Another factor is that of which scenario is appropriate for any such road network performance testing considering the upheaval in those established pre-pandemic behaviours and patterns and the questions that remain relating to traffic flow levels in future years. The maintenance of current reduced traffic levels compared to pre-pandemic levels seems likely, though we may only speculate regarding the timeframe for that. Then there is the matter of the effects on movement of future initiatives aimed at addressing the range of other important considerations, for example addressing climate change, supporting active travel, enabling development and growth, and placemaking objectives amongst others.

### Next steps

Further and more detailed road network design will be needed to understand the effects of the proposed changes along with road network modelling to assess and refine a preferred road arrangement. That work is programmed to be undertaken by NCC taking account of the need to provide significant bus priority measures to complement the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) and improvements for Active Travel modes. However, the concept options presented here embody the desire for transformational change whilst delivering development and growth with placemaking at its heart.

An aerial photograph of the Southgates area, showing a river on the left, a residential neighborhood with various houses and buildings in the center, and a multi-lane road with traffic in the foreground. A large blue square is in the top left corner.

# 5 Illustrative Masterplan

The following illustrative material demonstrates how the site strategies and principles could be built out, in order to bring life to the Masterplan Vision.

This is one of many possible iterations for the future of Southgates. It will be necessary for the final form of development proposed to respond to the results of further technical studies, and the social, political, economic and environmental context of the time, including new development that may come forward in the Masterplan site surrounds in the meantime.







# Illustrative Masterplan

- 1.** Retained bridge and wall
- 2.** New space with views to the South Gate and the bridge
- 3.** New building to retain alignment of Ford Garage building
- 4.** Public space enhancing the setting of the South Gate
- 5.** Retained former pub
- 6.** Retained trees
- 7.** South Gate view corridor and new cycle / pedestrian route



Figure 10. Illustrative Masterplan









Figure 11. Artist's impression of the Masterplan site









Figure 12. Artist's impression of the approach to the South Gate









# 6

## Site Strategies

Building on the vision, objectives, and preferred option identified, this section sets out a series of key principles organised into four site strategies:

- Placemaking and Urban Form
- Travel and Movement
- Heritage
- Environment and Sustainability

The strategies and principles identified are not intended to be prescriptive or restrictive, but rather to provide a positive framework to guide future development. The following pages lock in a series of key moves to ensure design quality, while allowing flexibility for proposals to incorporate creativity, and respond to changing social, environmental, economic and political circumstances.

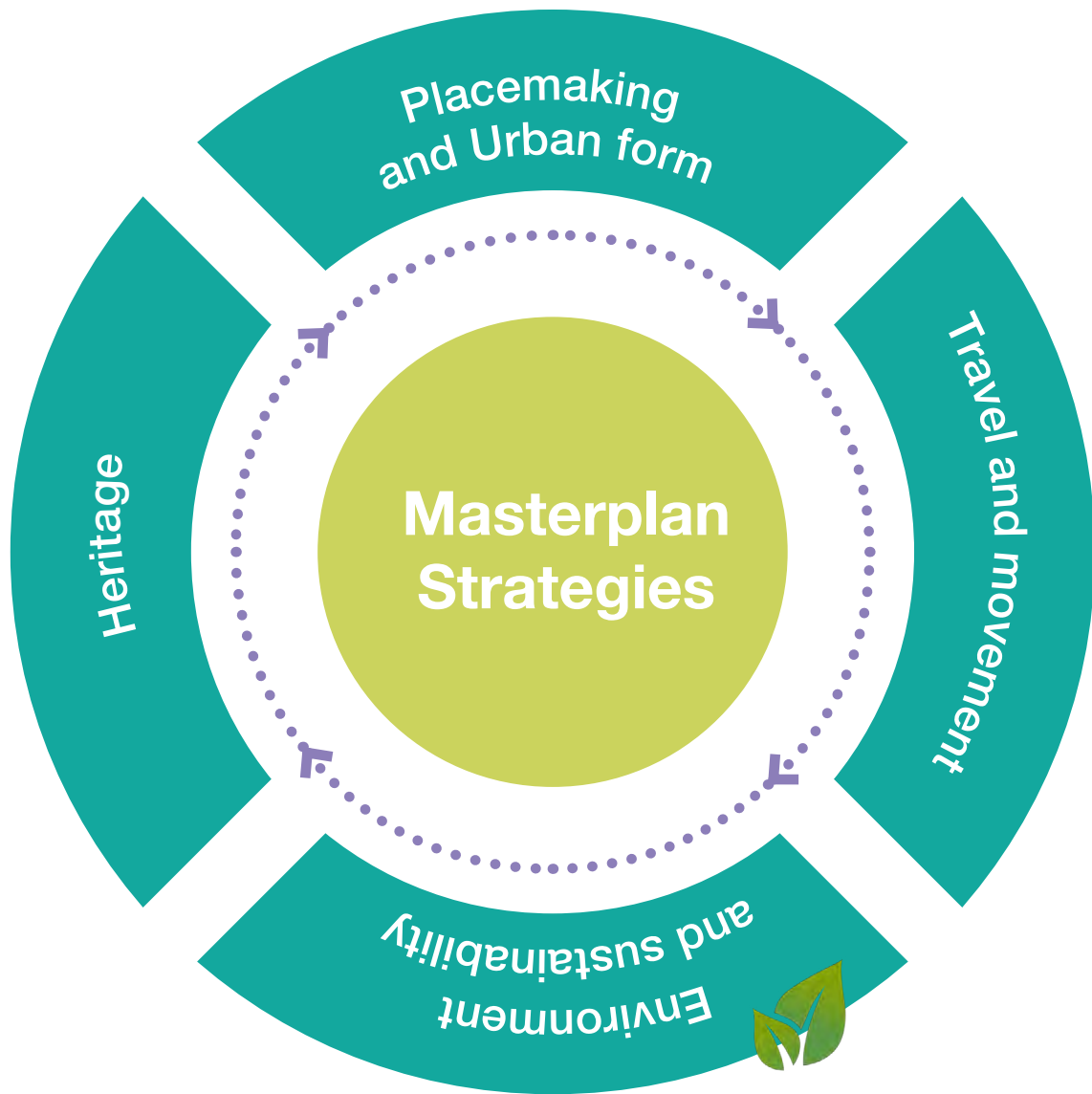


Figure 13. Masterplan Strategies

# Strategy 1: Placemaking and Urban Form

1A - Existing poor quality buildings and structures should be removed, and replaced with high quality buildings and spaces that reflect and enhance the character of Southgates and wider King's Lynn.

1B - The reconfiguration of highways layout should create well proportioned streets that help generate activity and visual interest.

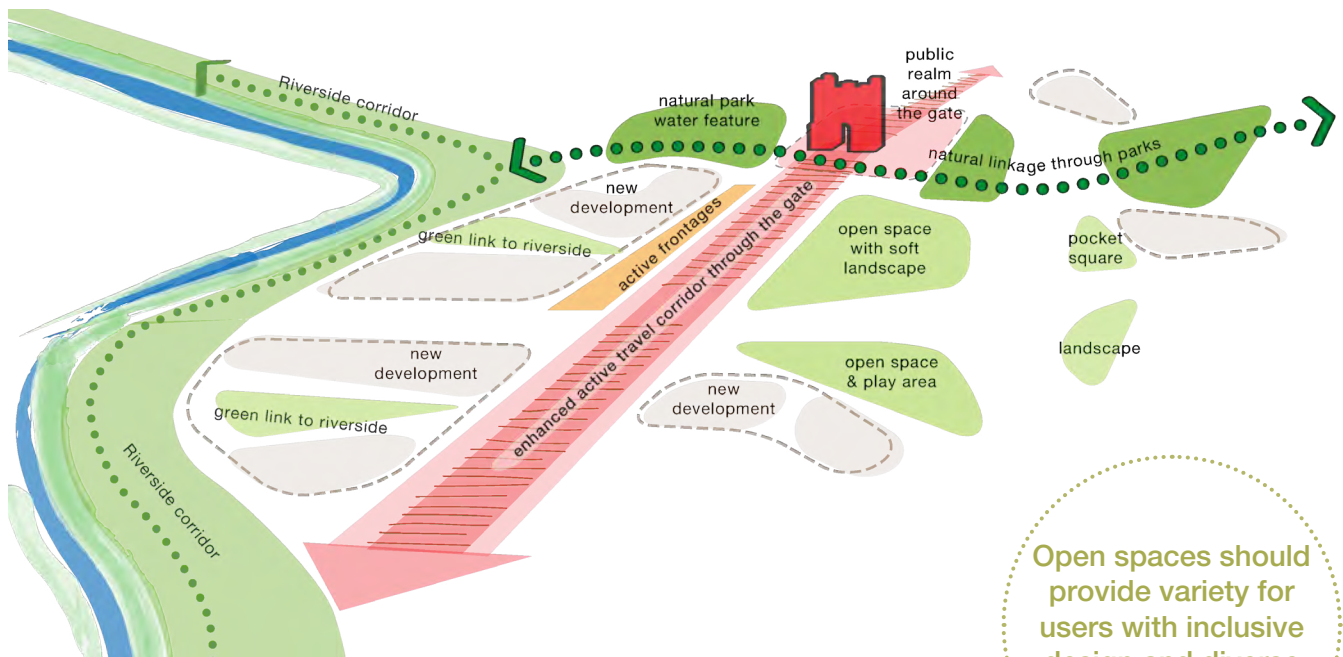


Figure 14. New development plots and open space



Figure 15. Variety of users and activities in open spaces

1C - New areas of public realm should enhance the function of the Southgates area as both a gateway and destination, enabling movement, recreation and rest, and integrating with existing and proposed land uses. These should also improve access to the South Gate.

1D - Visual and physical connections to key site features including the South Gate and River Nar should be strengthened through the alignment of public realm and new buildings, framing key views and outlook, and providing easily-navigable pedestrian and cyclist links beneath the gate and to the river. Proposals should seek to enhance interpretation and function of the South Gate as a visitor attraction.



1E - The scale and layout of new buildings and spaces must create an improved sense of enclosure through use of appropriate street to building height ratios, to assist with wayfinding, interest and sense of place.



Figure 16. Active frontage at ground floor

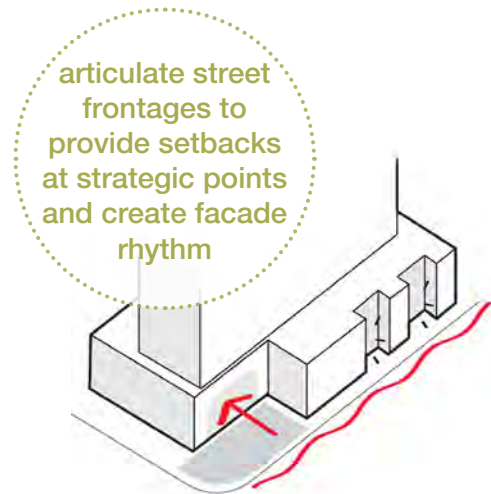


Figure 17. building frontages and set back

1F - Buildings should be a maximum of three storeys tall (plus roof level), and offset at least 20 metres from the South Gate to provide space within its immediate setting.

1G - New public realm should incorporate an appropriate mix of hard and soft landscaping to provide recreational opportunities, contribute to greening and visual attractiveness of the site, and enhance the setting of heritage assets, including the historically hard-landscaped setting of the South Gate.



Figure 18. landscape contributes to placemaking

1H - The location and alignment of public space should ensure that it receives appropriate overlooking and natural surveillance in order to ensure the safety of users.

1I - Commercial uses should be located at ground floor, in locations which provide active frontages to public space and pedestrian routes.



Figure 19. Precedent images of active frontages

## Strategy 2: Travel and Movement



Figure 20. Existing road junction

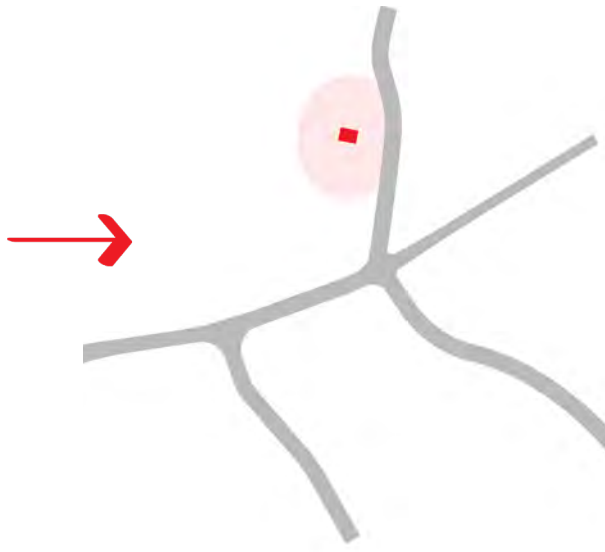


Figure 21. Proposed highway improvement

2A - Undertake major highways improvements which transform the existing road junction and connecting roads to a more human scale, while affording convenient vehicular passage.

2B - Traffic movements along London Road should be diverted around the South Gate in order to protect the structure from damage and provide appropriate context and setting.

2C - The configuration of active travel links should facilitate pedestrian and cyclists movement beneath the South Gate to retain its historic gateway function.

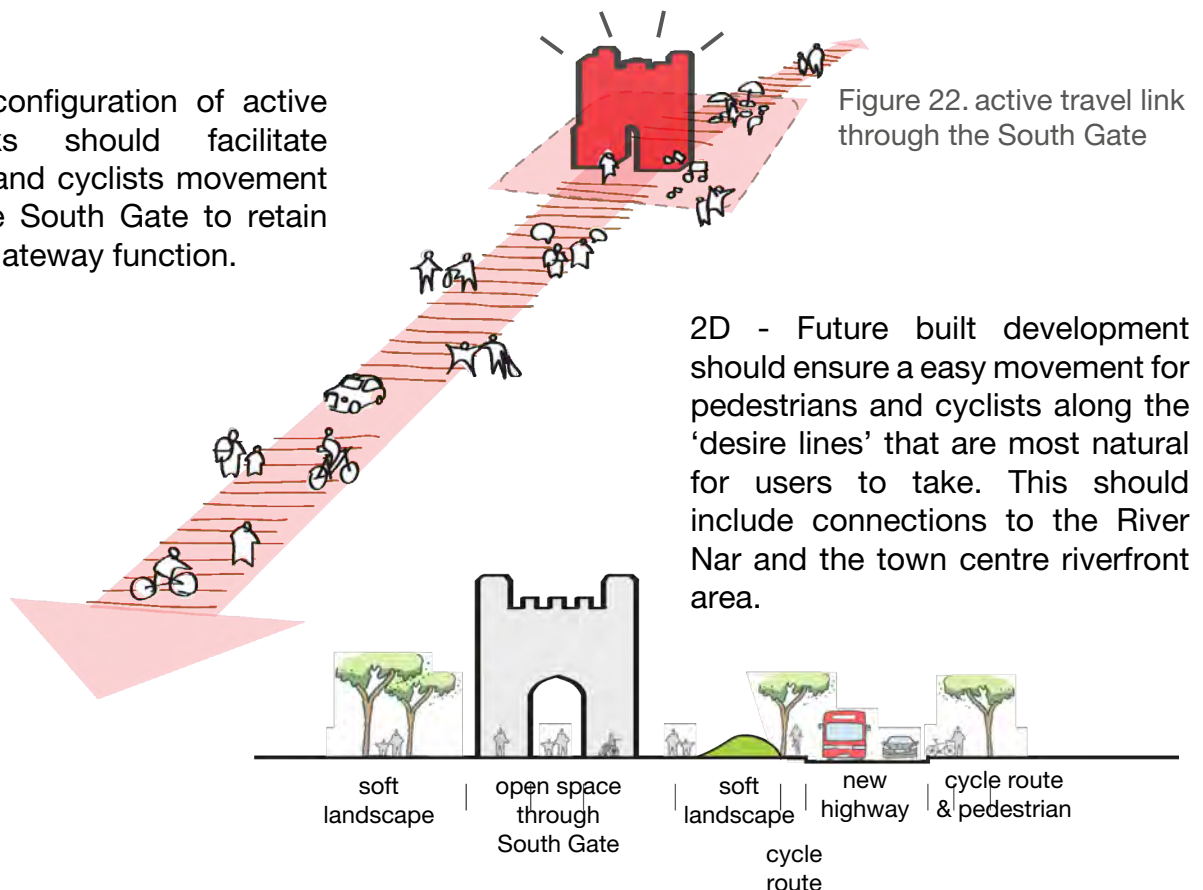


Figure 22. active travel link through the South Gate

2D - Future built development should ensure a easy movement for pedestrians and cyclists along the 'desire lines' that are most natural for users to take. This should include connections to the River Nar and the town centre riverfront area.

Figure 23. Indicative west-east section



2E - Highways improvements should incorporate dedicated cycling facilities such as segregated cycle lanes and priority crossings to provide for longer-distance journeys between key destinations and communities.



Figure 25. Precedent images of green linkages

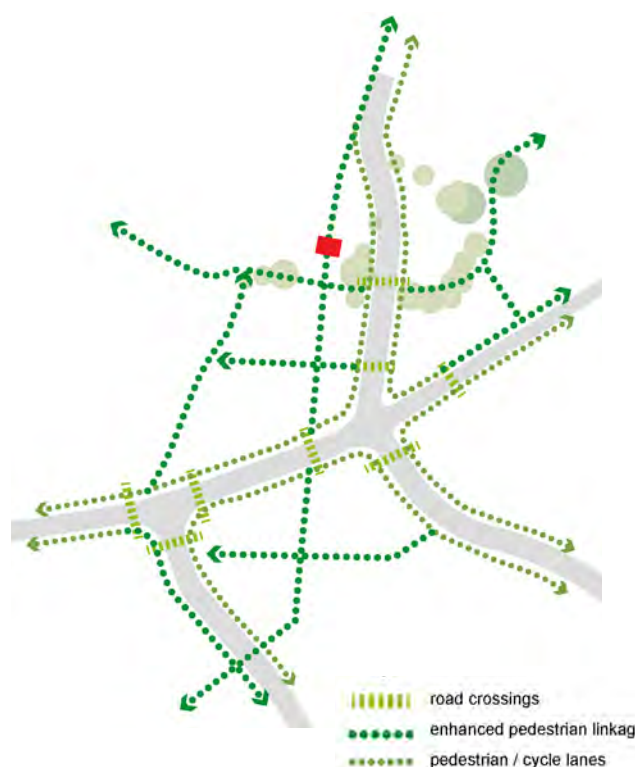


Figure 24. Proposed green linkages and riverside connections

2H - The principles above should be implemented in line with the NCC and BCKLWN Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) adopted in spring 2022. In addition to conventional network modelling metrics, measures and metrics for non-highways matters, such as the Healthy Streets appraisal framework, should be applied to assist in assessing the impacts of proposed improvements.

2F - Arrangements for pedestrians should provide a coherent walking link network with improved footways and facilities, enabling safe and convenient access and crossing facilities.

2G - The transport network should incorporate bus priority measures, appropriate waiting facilities and route information in order to encourage patronage of public transport.



Figure 26. Healthy Streets Indicators



## Strategy 3: Heritage

3A - New buildings and spaces must improve the setting and access to existing heritage assets within and around the Masterplan site, preserving elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset, and seeking to better reveal its significance. This includes improving visitor access to the Gate.

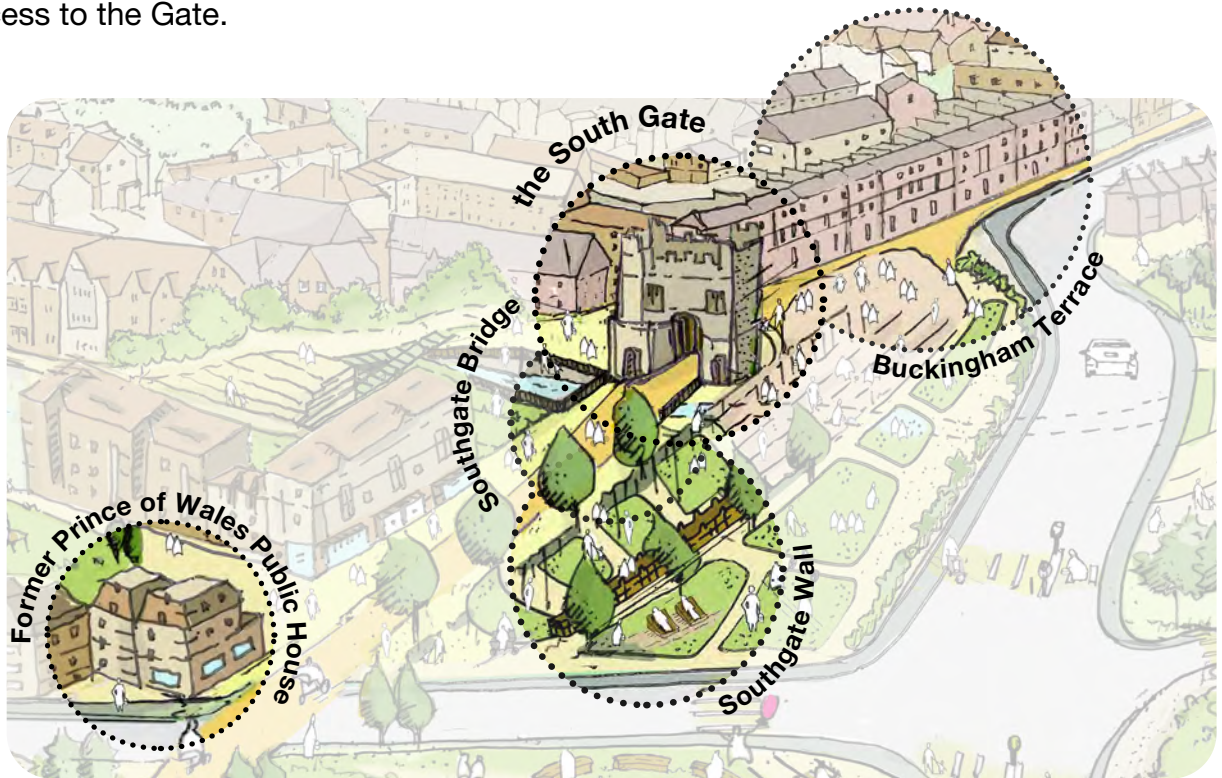


Figure 27. Existing heritage assets within the site

3B - While realising the benefits of highways improvements, the historic movement function of the South Gate should be retained via alignment of active travel movements beneath the gate.

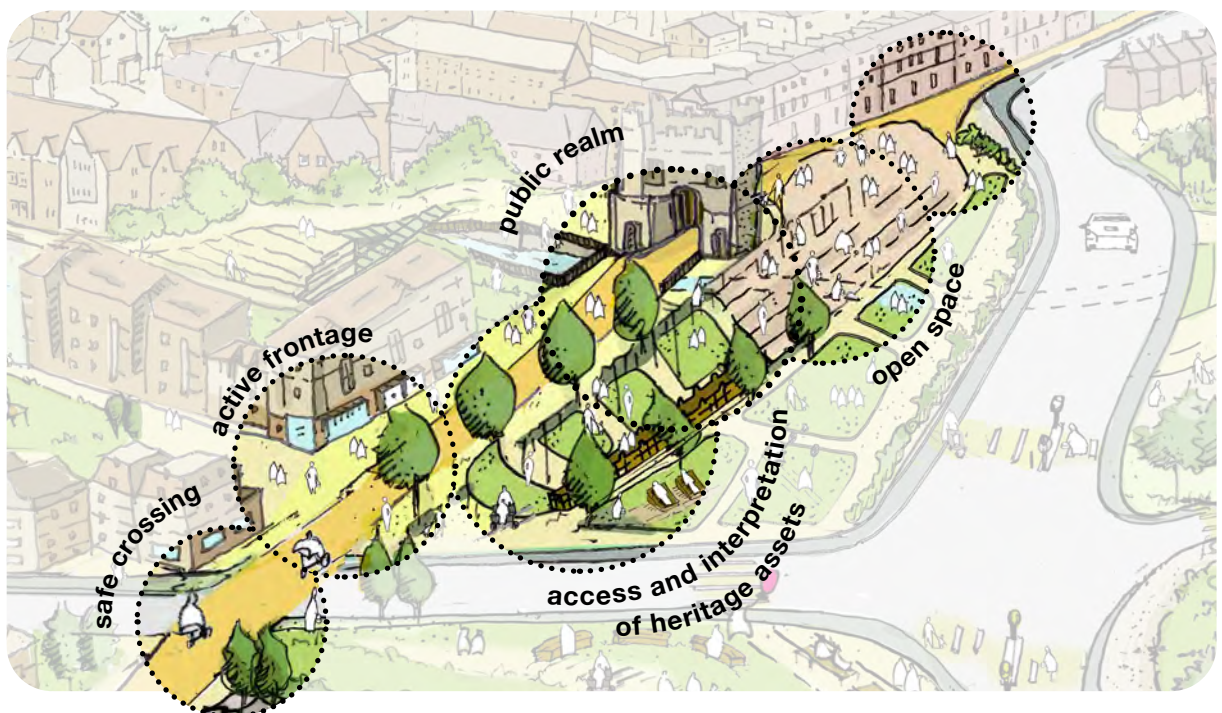


Figure 28. Activities along the proposed active travel link through the South Gate



3C - The route through the South Gate should be easily identifiable as the main historic route into King's Lynn. Thus should be achieved through the use of hardstanding material which references and is reminiscent of the historic carriageway.



Figure 29. Scale and height of new buildings

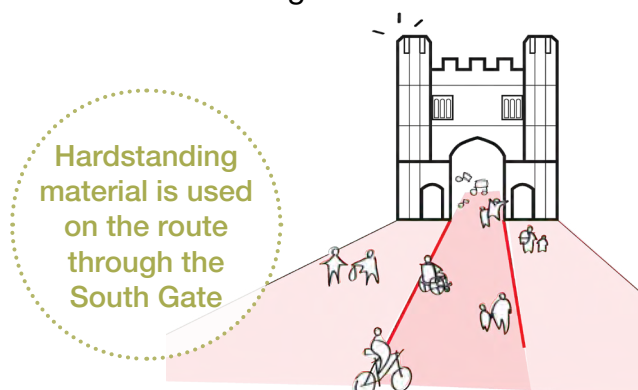


Figure 30. Hardstanding material on the route through the South Gate

3D - Highways alterations around the South Gate should consider the feasibility of revealing the medieval structure of the Southgates bridge.

3E - Locally significant assets should be retained and sensitively restored where this is feasible and can be used to lever benefits for the wider redevelopment of the site. Any replacement buildings or spaces must be of high quality, to outweigh the harm caused by loss of these assets. The potential to incorporate significant elements of previous buildings, such as the Ford Garage sign, should also be explored.

3F - Public realm improvements should extend to the northern part of the Masterplan site to deliver improvements to the King's Lynn Conservation Area, and the setting of listed buildings along Buckingham Terrace and London Road.

3G - Future development must seek to understand the likely archaeological impacts of proposals and to protect buried heritage assets such as civil war defences, including consideration of retention in situ, and/or display.



Figure 31. The South Gates, King's Lynn 1854 by Thomas Baines



Figure 32. Precedent images of new buildings and public realm responding to historic context

# Strategy 4: Environment and Sustainability

4A - The design of buildings and spaces should ensure that all new development is protected from and mitigates flood risk - through measures including incorporation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), and location of bedrooms on first floor and above.

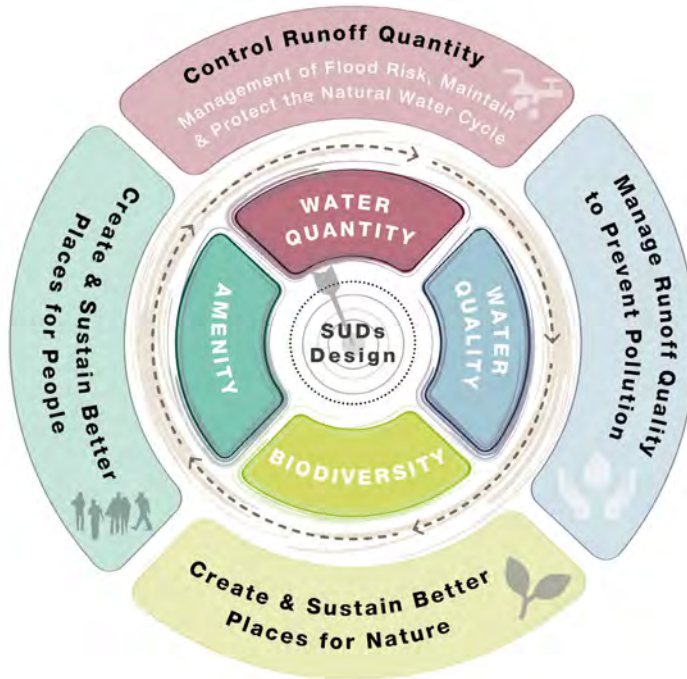


Figure 33. Four Pillars of SuDS Design (The SuDS Manual C753, Ciria)

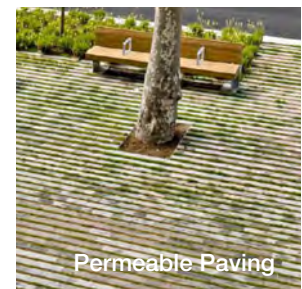


Figure 34. Precedent images of SuDS



Figure 35. Precedent images of biodiversity improvements

4B - New development should deliver green infrastructure and biodiversity improvements via provision of soft landscaping and planting which is visually attractive and offers multifunctional amenity benefits wherever possible. This should integrate sensitively with the site's existing heritage context.

4C - All development which has the potential to be affected by land contamination must be subject to appropriate technical assessment, and incorporate remediation and mitigation measures as required.



4D - New development should be responsive to the challenges of climate change, and seek to achieve best practice in energy efficiency and sustainability terms. This may include reference to Future Homes, RIBA, LETI or NABERS targets.

4E - The configuration of highways, public realm and residential development should seek to minimise adverse air and noise quality impacts on users and occupiers, with appropriate mitigation measures to be incorporated at a detailed design stage, where appropriate - such as the orientation of habitable rooms.

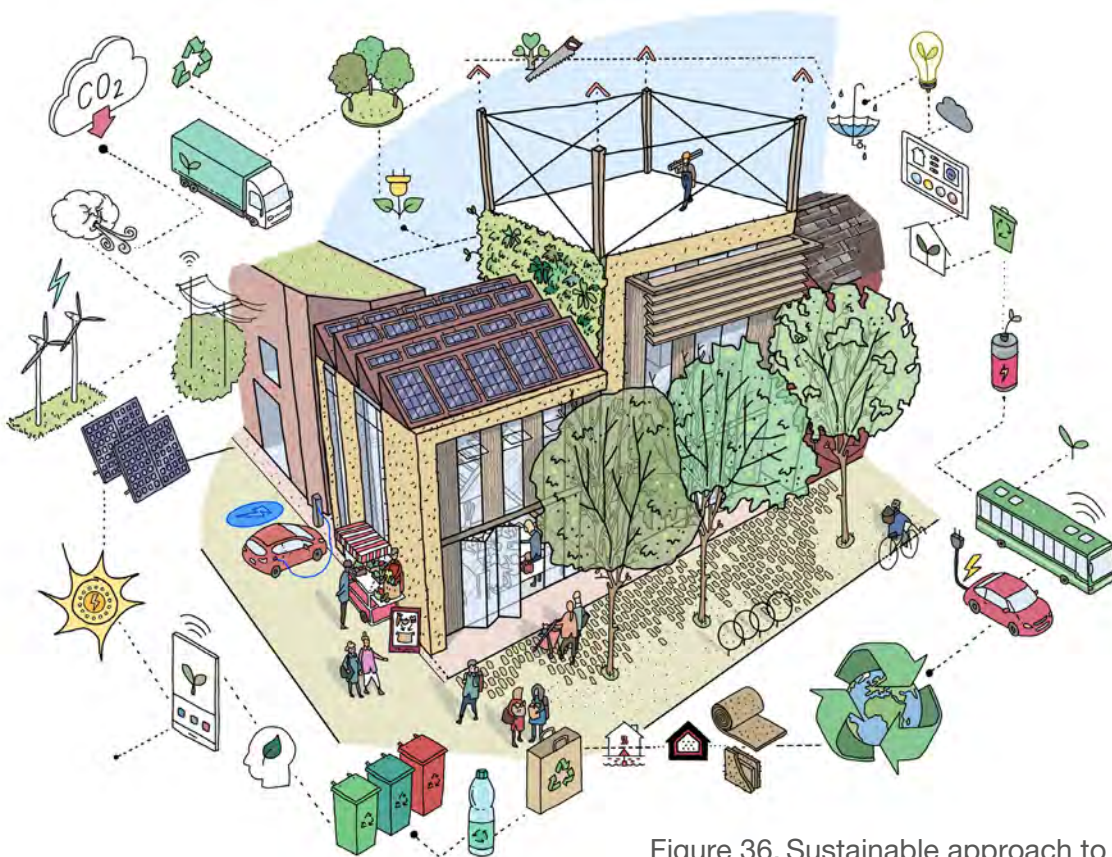


Figure 36. Sustainable approach to development



Figure 37. Precedent image of daylighting

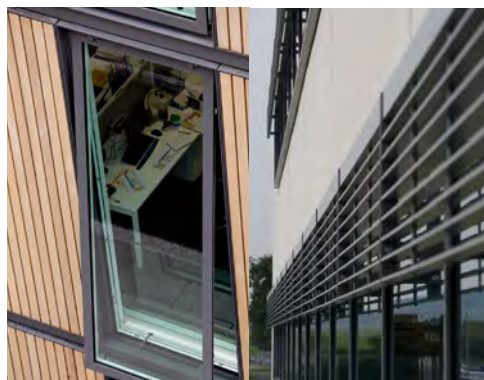


Figure 38. Precedent images of natural ventilation

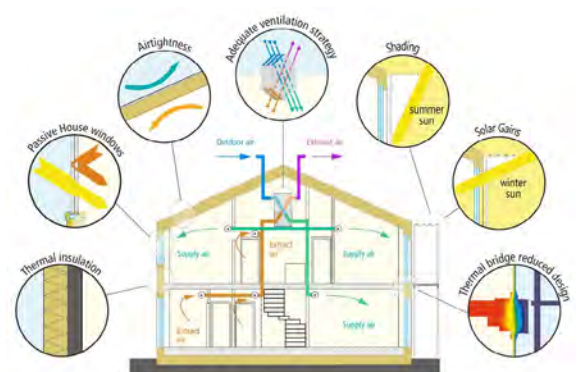


Figure 39. Low Carbon Passive Design Principles



# 7

# Implementation & Delivery

This section of the report sets out how the interventions recommended in the Southgates Development Brief will be delivered over time, in tandem with wider projects across King's Lynn.

BCKLWN will seek to ensure that reconfiguration and redevelopment of the Southgates area is consistent with the vision, strategies and principles set out by the Masterplan.

The majority of land within the Masterplan site is owned by BCKLWN, with highways under the control of Norfolk County Council (NCC). The two councils will therefore play an important role in bringing the vision for Southgates forward in terms of identifying delivery partners and funding opportunities.







# Delivery Strategy

## Delivery Mechanism

BCKLWN is currently undertaking a market testing exercise with housing providers in order to understand the practicalities of delivery and identify a preferred delivery route, while also refining the proposed mix and quantum of uses. Once complete, this will enable decisions to be made on how delivery could be phased over time.

Following market testing, the next stage in realising the vision for Southgates will be to identify an appropriate delivery mechanism to bring forward the improvements proposed by the Masterplan.

The viability of the scheme – and therefore the delivery approach which has been tested to date – has been based on a traditional developer-led approach. There are however alternative approaches to delivery – and in some cases – these may offer a better “fit” to the project. There is not a one size fits all delivery mechanism for projects and the choice should reflect the size and nature of the Masterplan.

Initial viability analysis of the Masterplan proposals indicates that abnormal constraints across the site, such as the presence of land contamination and areas of third-party ownership, create challenges for private sector delivery of a viable development. Alternative routes may be more viable and deliverable and this will become clear throughout the market testing exercise. Some potential delivery options might include the Council partnering with BCKLWN Housing Company or other Housing Associations, where there is access to other funding opportunities to support the abnormal development costs and a lower than market rate developer return is considered acceptable.

Delivery of the Masterplan is likely to be undertaken with the input of a development partner, and any agreement entered into will be on the basis that the land contributes to the wider vision set out within this report. BCWKLN also recognises that successful delivery of the Masterplan may require acquisition of third party land in order to remove complexity for potential developers and ensure that the full extent of the Masterplan area is able to come forward for redevelopment. Further work is required to understand the full extent of third party acquisition costs.

## Funding opportunities

In addition to the abnormal constraints associated with the existing site, the proposed scale of highways amendments and extent of public realm to be created in the Masterplan is beyond that which a developer would typically be expected to provide. This is however considered a critical piece of infrastructure, which would support the delivery of the Masterplan vision and provide wider public good.

Recognising this, in August 2022 Norfolk County Council submitted an application to the Government’s Levelling Up Fund seeking funding for the highways, active travel and public realm elements of the Masterplan. Where possible, additional funding streams will be identified, recognising that the funding regime is likely to evolve over the delivery timeframe of the Masterplan and additional opportunities may arise.

## **Further studies**

### Transport analysis

The Masterplan has been subject to initial transport and highways analysis, taking account of Government aspirations for traffic reductions. It is considered to represent a viable way forward which offers multiple benefits in terms of encouraging active and sustainable travel.

Following adoption of the Development Brief, further and more detailed road network design will be needed to understand the effects of the proposals and refine a preferred arrangement. This work will be undertaken by NCC.

Defining the road network design will also enable a more detailed understanding of the funding required to bring highways amendments forward.

### Land contamination and remediation

Further work will also be required to clarify the nature and extent of contaminated land across the entirety of the Masterplan site, and devise a remediation strategy. This will assist with refining viability analysis and understanding the funding required for remediation works. Subject to funding availability, these could come forward prior to developer involvement in order to create an attractive investment proposition. The next page considers how 'meanwhile uses' could be provided on remediated land.

## Archaeological investigations

Further archaeological investigations will be required in order to understand the potential for buried assets across the site, particularly around the South Gate and Southgates bridge Ancient Monuments, and within Southgates Park. This will help to determine how development can best preserve, enhance and showcase important archaeological assets on the site, and may assist in achieving funding for the necessary measures to do so.

## **Supplementary Planning Document**

Following adoption of the forthcoming Local Plan, the Masterplan may be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), providing it with further weight in the planning process. This is subject to further decision-making and review as part of the Local Plan process.

## **Future planning applications**

The Council will also use its role as Local Planning Authority, together with NCC as Highways Authority, to manage development proposals throughout the planning process. This will also help to ensure that high quality schemes are planned, designed and delivered in accordance with the Masterplan and the wider Local Plan for King's Lynn.

At the planning application stage, detailed assessment will be required to understand the full impact of proposals in terms of heritage and archaeology, transport and movement, residential amenity and environmental and sustainability concerns.



# Development Phasing and Delivery Interfaces

As described above, it is expected that the Southgates Masterplan will be delivered in a number of phases as funding opportunities become available. This may also be affected by interfaces between the Southgates area and wider development across King's Lynn, as set out in the table opposite.

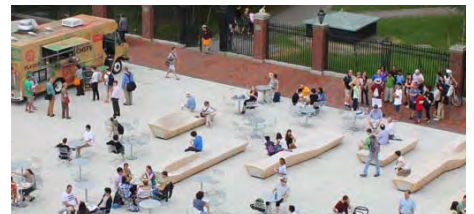
In order to ensure that improvements can be delivered in a timely manner, while longer-term proposals are developed in line with funding opportunities and the aspirations of development partners, there is an opportunity for a series of 'quick win' improvements, meanwhile or interim uses that could be brought forward in a shorter time period. These will signal that transformation is underway in the Southgates area, and can act as a catalyst for change.

Potential ideas for meanwhile uses, which will be explored further as part of the site delivery strategy, are set out below.



Temporary road closures to provide active travel routes beneath the South Gate and enable close-up interaction with the heritage asset, signalling permanent improvements to come.

Signage and displays encouraging engagement with the history of the area and providing information on historic assets that will be uncovered as part of future works, such as the Southgates bridge and civil war defences.



Footpath connections to the River Nar and provision of land and water based recreational opportunities.

Creation of public spaces on existing vacant plots, or following demolition of buildings, prior to further development.



'Pop up' events such as an outdoor cinema or heritage displays, particularly on remediated land which may be less suited to soft landscaping.

Project description	Delivery Partners	Funding Streams	Priority	Timescales
<b>Nar Ouse Enterprise Zone, Business Park site infrastructure, and employment premises and plots</b>	Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk  Norfolk County Council  New Anglian LEP	Enterprise Zone Pot B  NALEZ Growth Fund	High	Phase 1 - current  Phase 2 - next 20 years
<b>Waterfront Regeneration Area</b>	Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk	To be confirmed	High	To be confirmed
<b>West Winch Growth Area</b>	Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk  Norfolk County Council  Homes England  Private Sector	Major Road Network and Large Local Major Programme	High	To 2026 and beyond
<b>Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)</b>	Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk  Norfolk County Council	King's Lynn Town Investment Plan  Active and Clean  Town Deal	High	To March 2026
<b>Town Centre Gyatory</b>	Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk  Norfolk County Council	Levelling Up Fund	High	By 2026





# 8

## Next steps

This report has set out the draft Masterplan for the Southgates area, which will be subject to public consultation in October 2022 in order to build a wider mandate for change.

The consultation responses received will be used to shape the final draft of the Southgates Masterplan. This will be adopted by the Council as a Development Brief, providing the document with formal status as a tool to guide investment in the area. It will also be a material consideration for any decisions on planning applications in the area.

Following adoption of the forthcoming King's Lynn and West Norfolk Local Plan, the Masterplan may also be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), giving the document further weight in the planning process. This will be subject to further review and decision-making by the Council.

Section 7 of this report set out a series of next steps to ensure implementation and delivery of the Masterplan. It is expected that the Masterplan will be delivered in a number of phases as delivery opportunities become available in tandem with wider development across King's Lynn, which presents the potential for interim and meanwhile uses to signal that transformation is underway in the Southgates area, and act as a catalyst for change.

# Have your say

From January to June 2022 we undertook a series of engagement with key stakeholders including local interest groups, and residents and businesses located in the immediate vicinity of the Masterplan site. The feedback received was used to shape the preferred scenario, vision and objectives presented in this report.

We would now like to invite you to have your say on the Southgates Masterplan.

## When?

Consultation on the Southgates Masterplan Development Brief Document is open from **Monday 3rd to Monday 31st October 2022**.

## Where?

This document and a series of exhibition boards will be on display at King's Lynn Tourist Information Centre (Stories of Lynn) throughout the consultation period.

They can also be viewed online, at <https://www.visionkingslynn.co.uk/southgates-masterplan/>.

Drop-in events will be held at the following times and places, with an opportunity to speak to BCKLWN, NCC, and the team responsible for developing the Masterplan:

- **Online Launch Event: 18:00-19:00, Monday 3rd October 2022**, at <https://www.visionkingslynn.co.uk/southgates-masterplan/>. The event will be available to watch online throughout the consultation period.
- **Public Exhibitions at the Tuesday Market Place** from 11:00-18:00 on Tuesday 11th, Wednesday 19th and Friday 28th October 2022.

## How?

Please take time to read the Development Brief Document, and if possible attend our consultation events.

Once you have done so, we invite you to provide your response by completing a short questionnaire, available at the following link online: <https://www.visionkingslynn.co.uk/southgates-masterplan/>.



**BDP.**

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