Four Squares and Streets Investment Plan

Part of the Coalville's Changing Programme

Foreword

Our Four Squares and Streets Investment Plan follows the publication of the Regeneration Strategy for Coalville Town Centre, produced in partnership with the Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment.

The Council is committed to delivering much needed place improvements within the town centre and starting to take forward some of the recommendations made within the Strategy. Many of the improvements are dependent on private sector led investments in the town, however as a Council we aim to make a difference in those areas where we can – the town's existing streets and public spaces.

> **"a simple, yet effective concept of developing the town around four squares, linked by vibrant streets"**

Our Regeneration Strategy is based upon a simple, yet effective concept of developing the town around four squares, linked by vibrant streets. Two of these squares, Memorial and Marlborough, already exist, with two additional squares proposed. The street network to link these four squares exists in places, but needs to be either repaired or created in others.

This plan is focused on making streets and spaces for people and reversing the often dominant impact of vehicles within our town centre, in turn creating places that look, work and feel better.

Investing in the public realm will not only offer considerable economic benefits, but offers a major opportunity to 'green' our streets, reinforcing our identity as a town in the heart of the National Forest as well as supporting our environmental efforts through our Green Footprints programme.

The concept proposals within this plan are intended as a starting point for discussion and I would encourage you to offer us your thoughts on the ideas presented. These concept proposals may well change over time, but they do at least offer us some exciting and inspiring ideas on how our town centre could look and work in the future.

Whilst we cannot transform the town overnight, we can step by step start to change Coalville into the place we all want it to become.

Councillor Matthew Blain
Deputy Leader of the Council
Coalville's Changing Champion

North West Leicestershire District Council
February 2010

Part One: What we're aiming to achieve

Part Two: North West Leicestershire 8 point checklist for good places

Part Three: Coalville Squares and Street Palette

Part Four: Conceptual proposals

Appendix

Front cover image: Cowan, R. (2005), The Dictionary of Urbanism, Streetwise Press, Wiltshire

1.1 The need for investment

In 2009, the Council worked with the Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment (PFBE) to create a Regeneration Strategy for the Coalville town centre. Their diagnosis of the town indicated that aside from a need to improve the quality of the town centre 'offer', the town was suffering from the equivalent of the 'heart attack' due to the lack of connected streets and spaces, particularly through the heart of the town centre.

The lack of connected and good quality streets and spaces is now understood to be having a significant effect on contributing to the town's declining health and the increasing appeal of other town centres. To resolve this, a Framework Plan was developed by the PFBE. The Framework Plan illustrates where new streets and squares should be located to reconnect the town centre and in turn 'unblock' the town centre.

A full spatial analysis of the town centre is provided within the adopted 'Coalville Regeneration Strategy' (the 'Strategy') published in February 2010.

1.2 Aims and objectives of the Plan

1.2.1 Aims

To improve the vitality and viability of Coalville town centre by enhancing the town's existing streets and squares, and by creating new streets and squares as identified within the adopted Framework Plan.

To capitalise on the opportunity to create a distinctive town centre environment that enhances the setting of the town's 'hidden gems'* and

transforms the town into a 21st century 'forest town' at the heart of the National Forest.

* the Strategy identified a series of buildings, called 'hidden gems' within the town centre of architectural merit that could be revived and enhanced. Please refer to the Strategy for further details.

1.2.2 Objectives of the plan

a. To identify a series of public and private sector led investment projects ranging from small scale environmental improvements, major refurbishment works through to the creation of new streets and squares.

b. To propose a design process 'protocol' for the development of each of the investment projects.

c. To create a series of objectives for each of the projects.

d. To prepare a series of conceptual proposals for each of the projects.

e. To prepare a Coalville Streets and Squares palette, detailing materials and items of furniture for the town centre.

f. To prioritise projects.

g. To identify potential sources of funding for public sector led projects.

h. To complement the objectives of the Council's Green Footprints programme and its design initiative.

1.3 Framework Plan

1.3.1 The Strategy presents a robust examination and diagnosis for change within the town centre.

1.3.2 The Framework Plan (please refer to the Regeneration Strategy) developed for the town centre following a Space Syntax analysis of the town presents a public realm masterplan for the town centre.

1.3.3 The Framework Plan will be delivered through this Four Streets and Squares Investment Plan and the successful implementation of eighteen projects requiring both private and public investment.

1.4 Investment projects

1.4.1 The Framework Plan has been developed into a series of eighteen projects with the exception of the proposed Memorial Square relief route along Market Street which is subject to further consultation with Leicestershire County Council.

1.4.2 There are two key areas of work. The first is reliant on private landowners and investors creating and reinforcing the street and space network. The most significant being the creation of a new public space and new streets in the heart of our town centre on the site of the existing Belvoir Centre Shopping Centre. The second is the responsibility of the District and County Councils – the refurbishment and enhancement of existing streets and spaces.

1.4.3 The Council will seek to encourage and support investment that supports the delivery of this Plan and the Strategy. Investors will be

required to work closely with the Council to ensure that developments support the Council's aspirations. It is essential that planning decisions reflect both the Plan and the Strategy to ensure that required spatial connectivity within the town centre is achieved over the long term.

1.4.4   It is conceivable that it will take at least 15 years to deliver the town centre improvements required. The Council will seek to work closely with the County Council to secure the inward investment and technical expertise required to implement this Plan.

1.4.5   The eighteen projects are detailed within Figure 2. Projects are prioritised according to their strategic importance to the town centre (including the preferred sequence of investment sites in accordance with national planning policy and the defined town centre), improving accessibility and the availability of any known funding opportunities.

Project	Title	Lead sector	Priority (1= highest)
CV01	**Marlborough Square**	**Public**	**1**
CV02	*Market Place*	*Private*	*1*
CV03	*Bridge Street*	*Private*	*1*
CV04	*Broadway*	*Private*	*1*
CV05	*Needhams Walk*	*Private*	*1*
CV06	**Railway crossing**	**Public**	**1**
CV07	*Long Lane (extension of Broadway)*	*Private*	*1*
CV8	**Snibston Greenway (linking the town centre to the country park)**	**Public and private**	1
CV9	High Street	Public	2
CV10	Hotel Street	Public	2
CV11	Belvoir Road North	Public	2
CV12	Belvoir Road South	Public	2
CV13	Stenson Green	Public	2
CV14	Jackson Street/Belvoir Road	Public	2
CV15	Mantle Lane/Stephenson College Link	Public	3
CV16	Whitwick Road (Stenson Square to Stephenson Way)	Public	3
CV17	Memorial Square	Public	3
CV18	Ashby Road	Public	3

Figure 1: Investment projects

Denotes concept plan prepared

1.5.1   Initial design objectives for investment projects are defined within this Plan (please refer to Part 4) and have been adopted by the Council following the approval of this Plan by the Council's Cabinet.

1.5.2   At least three conceptual options (including the options within this Plan) must be prepared for each of the four squares and tested against the design objectives.

1.5.3   Once identified, a preferred option must be developed following a public consultation process which must include representatives from the Town Centre Partnership, Shop Mobility and the Opportunities Forum. The Royal British Legion will be consulted on any proposals affecting Memorial Square.

1.5.4   Private sector led investment projects should also subject to the adopted Design Process Protocol.

1.6   Funding

1.6.1   The impact of the public realm on the social, cultural, perceptual and economic vitality of towns and cities has been recognised both by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) and the East Midlands Development Agency (EMDA). In 2008, EMDA published a report entitled, 'The Economic Impact of the Public Realm'.

1.6.2   This Plan seeks to positively respond to the research conducted by both CABE and EMDA by seeking to maximise the value of town centre's public realm assets.

1.6.3   In view of reduced opportunities for securing external grant funding due to the current economic conditions, the Council reserves the right to review the prioritisation of projects in response to funding opportunities that may be available. As such, it may be necessary to re-prioritise a project in response to the level of funding available.

1.6.4   It is expected that funding will be secured from:
-   Regional sources, such as the East Midlands Development Agency Prospect Leicestershire and Growth Point,
-   The National Forest Company,
-   Leicestershire County Council,
-   North West Leicestershire District Council.

1.6.5   The Council will seek to access alternative sources of funding as and when opportunities arise.

2.0 North West Leicestershire's 8 point checklist for good places

2.1 The following qualities apply to all aspects of development throughout North West Leicestershire and should be referred to as basic principles to ensure that the development enhances the town centre's public realm, maximising its social, economic, environmental and cultural value. The checklist has been developed for North West Leicestershire and is based on the Objectives of Urban Design cited within 'By Design' (CABE, 2000).

2.2 These qualities are:
1 People First
2 Memorable – not forgettable
3 Buildings that relate well to their environment
4 Welcoming Public Spaces
5 Connected Places
6 Easy to get around
7 Environmentally Responsible
8 Interesting

Our natural and built environments need to support each other to create places within our towns and villages that look good, work well and lift our spirits.

People First

2.3 Places should be designed primarily for people - not cars. The quality of our everyday lives needs to be more than just a functional one, but one that lifts the spirits and enhances our everyday lives. Creating places that look good, work well, where people and businesses are proud to call their home is not only essential for our overall sense of wellbeing and sense of community, but for the economic and social prosperity of our towns and villages.

2.4   Local communities and stakeholder groups must be identified at the earliest possible stage of any proposed development to capture their thoughts and aspirations for a development site.

Memorable – not forgettable

2.5   Good places have distinctive characters. All too often new developments are 'placeless' and merely express a developer's preferred architectural style, whether they are a hotel chain, supermarket, fast food outlet or house builder. All developments should enhance the appearance of a place, creating or reinforcing its distinctive character.

2.6   Our town and villages all have particular features that make them special and different. These features range from the layout of places, the relationship between buildings and the street, the size and shape of buildings, the density of development, the mix of uses, the use of landscaping, materials and details. Well designed places will successfully take positive cues from the local area* and blend these with 21st century creativity - rather than simply replicate the past. The best places sit harmonously within their surroundings.

2.6   All developments should also contribute to improving the local community by positively contributing towards the way a place looks and works.

*including the National Forest.

Buildings that relate well to their environment

2.7   The best streets and public spaces are well enclosed by buildings, with clear fronts and backs (with backs hidden from view and connected with other backs by forming perimeter blocks) and no 'left over' spaces. Buildings must have a positive relationship with the public realm adjacent to them.

2.8   The trend for placing vast expanses of parking in front of many types of development not only creates weak spatial enclosure but prevents streets from

benefitting from 'active edges' (ground floor uses such as shops, café and restaurants) that create vibrant streets that are pleasant places to walk along. It is possible to do this simply by placing car parking behind buildings and creating developments that fit the place, rather than imposing a standard floor plan on a given site.

Welcoming Public Spaces

2.9   The best public spaces are those that are well enclosed by buildings, clearly defining and overlooking spaces and offer plenty of places for people to meet others, participate in recreational activity or simply watch the world go by.

2.10   In residential settings, streets, parks and open spaces should be well overlooked by the fronts of homes. In urban settings, public spaces function best with 'active edges', with the activity generated by people coming and going or simply sitting outside a café drinking a coffee enlivening the place. Public spaces should be flexible and allow a range of activities to take place within them. Spaces should be easy to cross through and therefore features such as landscaping and public art should be located roughly in the middle. The management of spaces is as important as their design.

Connected Places

2.11   Routes should not only be located to provide pedestrians and cyclists with the shortest and most direct route, but designed in such a way that they a safe and comfortable to use. All routes must be overlooked.

2.12   Places need to be connected to one another and offer a variety of attractive routes, using not only streets but 'greenways' such as footpaths, bridleways, cycle paths, waterways, parks and open spaces and retired railway lines.

Easy to get around

2.13   Successful places are those where it is easy, convenient and pleasant to get around, particularly on foot or by bicycle. We should also seek to design places

that also provide ease of access for the least mobile and most vulnerable within our communities.

2.14 Psychological accessibility is as important as physical accessibility – whilst a ramp may provide physical accessibility, if it is narrow and isolated it will not be psychologically accessible, particularly after dark.

2.15 Also known as 'legibility', good places are easy to navigate. We all create mental maps of a place, but if everywhere looks the same and there a no navigating features, places become difficult and in some cases, frustrating to orientate.

2.16 Legible places use a variety of orientating features. These features are called: nodes, edges, paths, landmarks and character areas. Developments should either create or help to reinforce existing orientating features.

Environmentally Responsible

2.17 With the threat of global warming, it is essential that we create places that meet our needs without compromising our natural environment – and the environment of future generations.

2.18 Buildings should be energy efficient and flexible, and located in places that reduce the need for people to travel by car. To reduce car usage, complementary uses should be mixed where possible and the goods and services we need on a daily basis should be located within a short five to ten minute walk from our homes.

2.19 Buildings and spaces can help the natural environment by incorporating features such as habitat creation and creating urban drainage systems that can reduce water run off.

Interesting

2.20   Good place offer a variety of experiences. By mixing complementary uses, it is possible to create places that are not only more interesting places to visit and in which to live and work, but reduce the need for people to travel as often by car, particularly if the places and facilities people need for their everyday lives are within a short walk from home.

Good places are socially, culturally and visually rewarding places to live, work and visit.

3.0   Coalville Streets and Squares Palette

3.1   A palette of materials comprising of paving materials, lighting, street signage, landscaping has been prepared for the town centre.

3.2   All public realm schemes including streets and spaces created by the private sector must be designed to be consistent with the palette. This also applies to streets and spaces within the town centre that are privately managed.

3.3   Details of the palette are contained within Appendix One.

3.4   Expansion of and substitutions of the palette are delegated to the Director of Environment in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

3.5   All items identified are subject to detailed discussions with Street Management relating to maintenance liabilities.

4.0 **Conceptual Proposals**

4.1 A series of concept plans have been developed for the four squares and street network. These initial concept plans have been prepared in response to a series of initial design objectives for these spaces.

4.2 It is intended that as funding opportunities arise, or private sector investment is forthcoming, these concept proposals are explored and developed in consultation with the public and key stakeholders such as the Town Centre Partnership, Shop Mobility and the Opportunities Forum.

4.3 It is essential that in designing new or enhancing existing spaces, careful attention is afforded to the manner in which vehicles pass through and use the space.

4.4 To create vibrant, social spaces it is essential that the centres of spaces are not 'sterilised' by the divisive effect created by vehicle infrastructure, levels of vehicle flow and the nature of vehicle movement.

For example, spaces with active ground floor uses ('active edges') are sterilised by the requirement to accommodate the aforementioned requirements of vehicle movement. Such highways infrastructure not only makes spaces difficult to negotiate on foot and therefore concentrate pedestrian movement along the edges of a space rather than across it, but such spaces are in turn visually and socially unattractive (for example due to noise, fumes, the vast array of highways related signage and the areas of left over space created by highways infrastructure that do not lend themselves to any meaningful nor practical purpose) and unattractive places that fail to maximise their

full value as social and cultural nodal spaces within the urban landscape.

4.5   Each concept plan is preceded by a series of objectives that need to be considered in developing designs for that particular street or space. For the purposes of this Plan, one option has been suggested for each street and square.

CV01 Marlborough Square

Aim:

Refurbish Marlborough Square as part of the 'Four Squares and Streets Plan' for Coalville Town Centre

Objectives:

1. Improve the visual approaches towards the square.
2. Improve pedestrian accessibility to, from and within the square.
3. Reduce vehicle dominance within the square, placing an emphasis on creating a pedestrian centred environment.
4. Create a versatile space for hosting events, such as seasonal markets.
5. Create opportunities for relaxation and 'people watching'.
6. Introduce new public art within the square drawing inspiration from the area's former role as a Cattle Market.
7. Increase the amount of tree planting within the square, creating a piece of the National Forest within the town centre.
8. Accommodate short stay parking provision, taxi pick up and bus stop(s).
9. Provide space for an outdoor seating area for the Monkey Tree public house.
10. Encourage local businesses to improve their shop fronts.

Figure 2: Concept plan for Marlborough Square

CV02 Market Place

Aim:

Provide a new focal point space at the heart of the town.

Objectives:

1. Create an open space in the centre of the town located in the vicinity of the existing space within the town centre, extending eastwards utilising land currently occupied by retail units.
2. Creation of a space that offers easy and direct pedestrian links to other parts of the town centre.

3. Create a space for the town's market offer and one that is versatile for use by other events and activities.

4. Frame the space with buildings on all sides, with appropriate form and massing to afford the space strong spatial enclosure.

5. Creation of a landmark building as a visual and social anchor within the townscape.

6. Surround the perimeter of the space with active ground floor uses that support a vibrant street scene and offer space for outdoor seating areas.

7. Locate passive (including residential) uses first floor level and above to afford the space surveillance opportunities and people

8. Create opportunities for relaxation and 'people watching'.

9. Introduce new public art within the square drawing inspiration from the town's rich social history.

10. Accommodate a significant amount of tree planting within the square, creating a piece of the National Forest within the town centre.

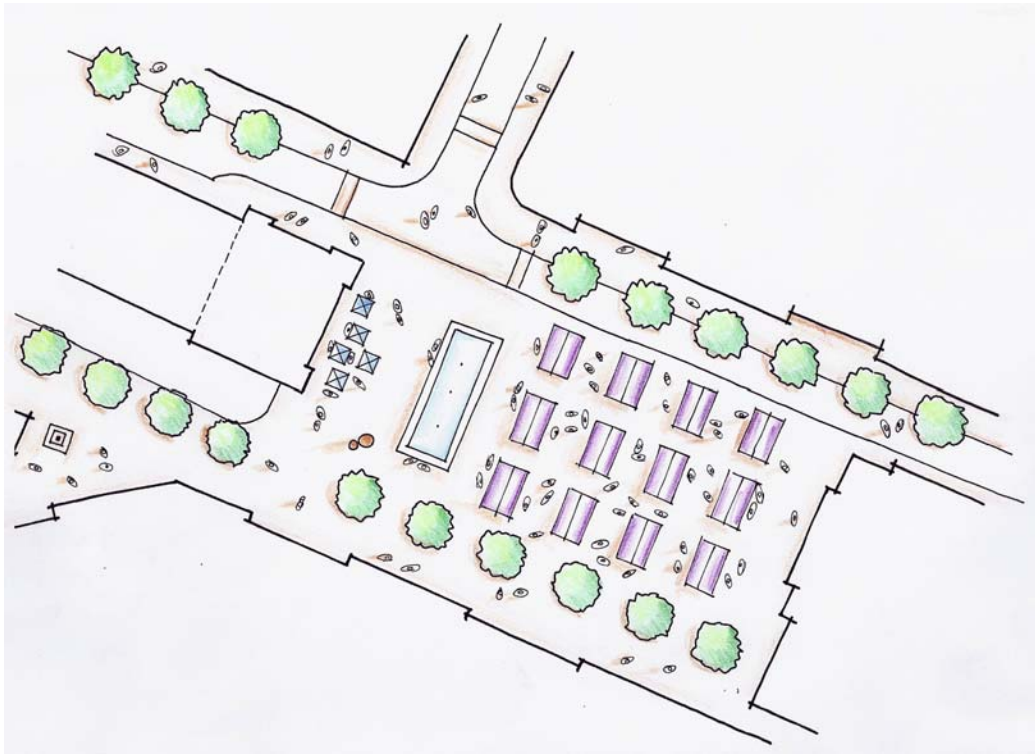11. Accommodate taxi pick up and bus stop(s).

Figure 3: Concept Plan for Market Place

CV13 Stenson Green

Aim:

Create a useable public space at the intersection of Whitwick Road, London Road and Hotel Street adjacent to the Council Offices.

Objectives:

1. Improve the visual approaches towards the square.
2. Improve pedestrian accessibility to, from, within and across the square.
3. Improve the physical enclosure of the space with buildings of an appropriate form and massing.
4. Enhance the setting of the old Council Offices building.
5. Reduce vehicle domination within the space.

6. Surround the perimeter of the space with active ground floor uses that support a vibrant street scene.
7. Locate passive (including residential) uses first floor level and above to afford the space surveillance opportunities.
8. Create opportunities for relaxation and 'people watching'.
9. Accommodate tree planting within the square, creating a piece of the National Forest within the town centre.
10. Introduce new public art within the square celebrating the town's founding father – William Stenson.
11. Accommodate the Rotary Clock.
12. Accommodate bus stop provision.

CV17 Memorial Square

Aim:

Enhance the setting of the town's War Memorial and create a more pedestrian friendly space within the town.

Objectives:

1. Enhance the setting of the town's War Memorial working in close partnership with representatives from the Royal British Legion.
2. Identify any necessary works required to repair, conserve and preserve the War Memorial.
3. Improve the visual approaches towards the square.
4. Improve pedestrian accessibility to, from, within and across the square.
5. Frame the space with buildings on all sides, with appropriate form and massing to afford the space strong visual enclosure.
6. Reduce vehicle domination within the space.
7. Improve pedestrian accessibility to, from and within the square.

8. Surround the perimeter of the space with active ground floor uses that support a vibrant street scene and offer space for outdoor seating areas.
9. Locate passive (including residential) uses first floor level and above to afford the space surveillance opportunities and people
10. Create opportunities for relaxation and 'people watching'.
11. Accommodate an increased amount of tree planting within the square, creating a piece of the National Forest within the town centre.
12. Accommodate taxi pick up and bus stop(s).
13. Create a versatile space for hosting events, such as seasonal markets.

CV projects (with the exception of CV01, 2, 13 and 17) - New and enhanced street network

Aim:

To create a network of high quality street environments that support the creation of a pedestrian friendly town centre, which is easy to get to, attractive and safe to use and encourages people to use the town centre more often and stay for longer.

Objectives:

1. To improve physical and psychological accessibility, particularly on foot, public transport and by bicycle.
2. To improve the quality of connection both to and within the town centre.
3. To create a series of streets with a distinctive identity supporting efforts to transform the town into a 'forest town' at the heart of the National Forest.
4. To create pleasant and comfortable street environments where the impact of vehicles is softened through the use of softer surface materials, car free areas, shared, pedestrian priority areas, improving pedestrian crossings, reducing street clutter and reducing vehicle speeds.

5. To ensure that streets are well defined as spaces by built form.

6. Locate passive (including residential) uses first floor level and above to afford streets surveillance opportunities.

7. Create opportunities for relaxation and 'people watching'.

8. Accommodate tree planting within the streetscape.

Appendix One:

The following materials palette has been prepared.

For product illustrations, please contact the Urban Designer (01530 454 768) for:

Woodhouse Catalogue
The Hillier Designers Guide
Charcon Product Portfolio
DW Windsor Urban Furniture Range
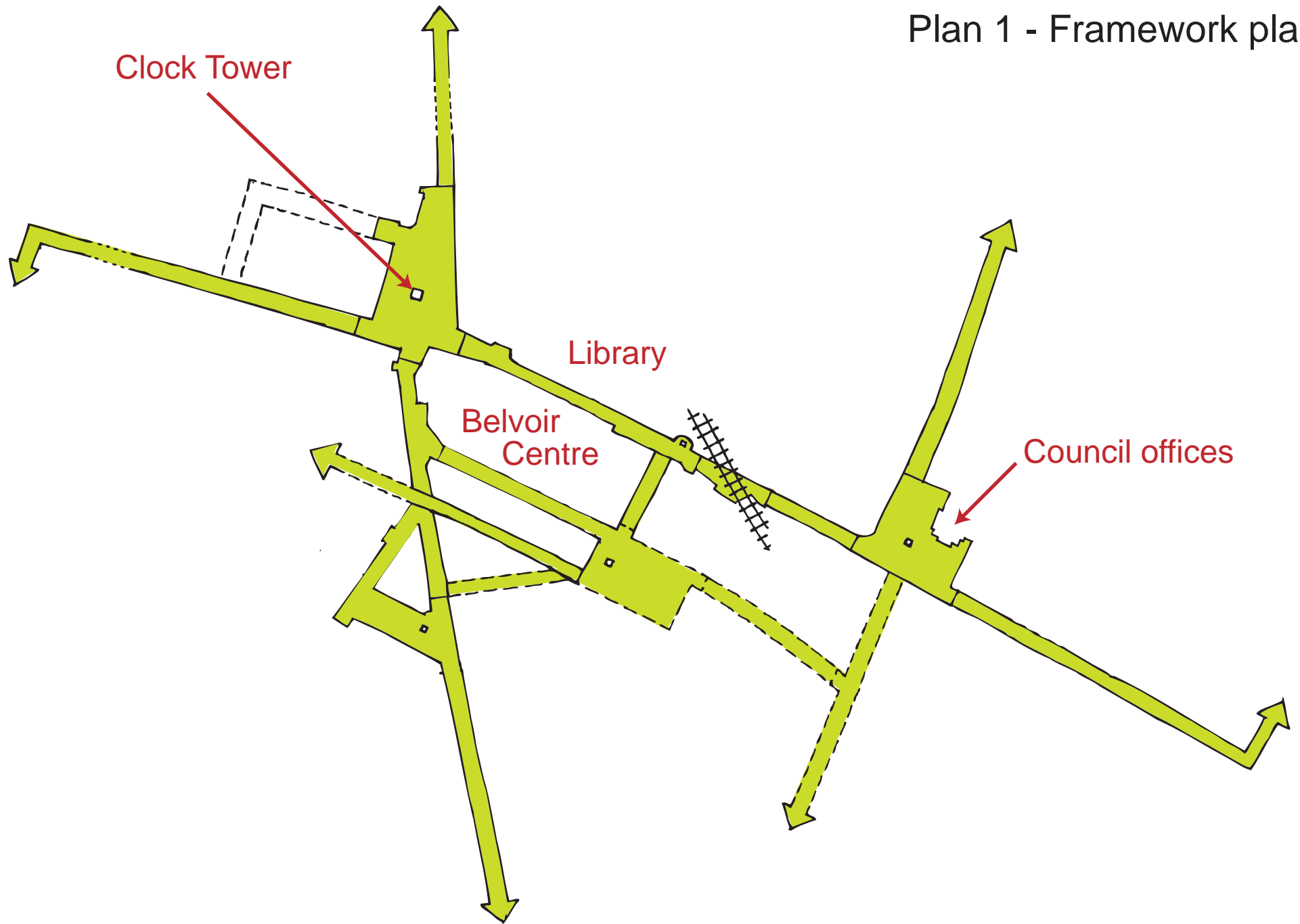Broxap Street Furniture Guide
External Works 18

Item	Product	Supplier
SURFACING		
Standard paving flag (Squares)	EcoPave flag	Charcon
Surfacing (pavements)	Resin Bond Gravel	Various suppliers
Shared surface	Woburn Original/Rumbled	Charcon
Pedestrian crossing	EcoPave flags	Charcon
Vehicle cross pavement access way, parking bays, loading bays, bus bays	Woburn Original/Rumbled Granite setts	Charcon Charcon
Tactile studs	Tactile raised studs	Various suppliers
Kerb	EcoKerb Countryside Classic Wide Top Kerb	Charcon Charcon
Edging detail block	Andover Washed Charcoal	Charcon
Channel block	Pink granite flush kerb	Various suppliers
Tree grid	Maxim tree grid RAL 7016 – infilled with resin bond Alternative: resin bonded frame	DW Windsor Various suppliers
STREET FURNITURE (excluding lighting)		
Tree guard	Maxim tree guard 1200mm square	Windsor
Trees	Minimum Semi-mature – native species selection to be agreed	Various suppliers
Double bench	Montseny FSC 3000mm	Britannia Traditional

		Metalwork
Single bench	Montseny FSC 1500mm	Britannia Traditional Metalwork
Individual bench	Montseny FSC 600mm	Britannia Traditional Metalwork
Railing	Alba Railing	Woodhouse
Balustrade	Moshi Balustrade	Woodhouse
Cycle stand	GEO Cycle stands (dark grey)	Woodhouse
Totum		Woodhouse
Directional fingerpost	GEO Fingerpost	Woodhouse
Single waste bin	Subject to confirmation	Broxap
Multi waste bin	Subject to confirmation	Broxap
Static bollard (non-illuminated)	GEO Bollard (dark grey)	Woodhouse
Retractable bollard	GEO Bollard	Woodhouse
Bus shelter		JC Decaux
Highways signage	Low level hooped frame mounted signage (dark grey)	Woodhouse
Street name plates	Wall mounted	Various suppliers
Informal secondary seating	Socrates cube	Woodhouse
LIGHTING		
Low level definition lighting (e.g. steps)	GEO Footlights	Woodhouse
Bollard (illuminated)	GEO Illuminated bollard (dark grey)	Woodhouse
Feature lighting	GEO Floodlight bollards (dark grey)	Woodhouse
	GEO Lightstacks with Moshi base	Woodhouse
Space amenity lighting	Catelam columns with outreach baskets	Woodhouse
	Moshi column	Woodhouse

Plan 1 - Framework plan

Clock Tower

Library

Belvoir Centre

Council offices
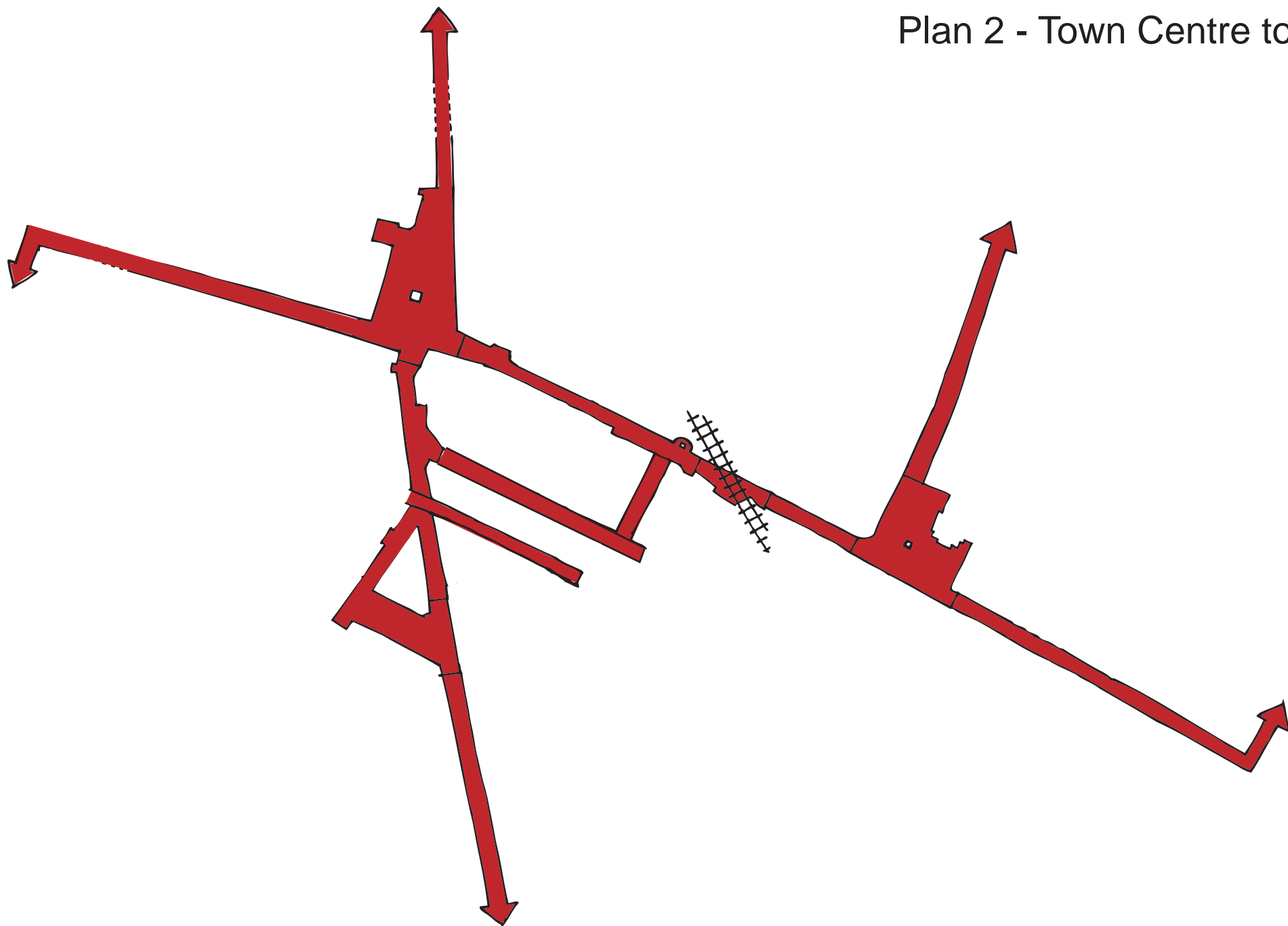
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Plan 2 - Town Centre today

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Do not scale off this plan - indicative only

Plan 3 - Improvement projects
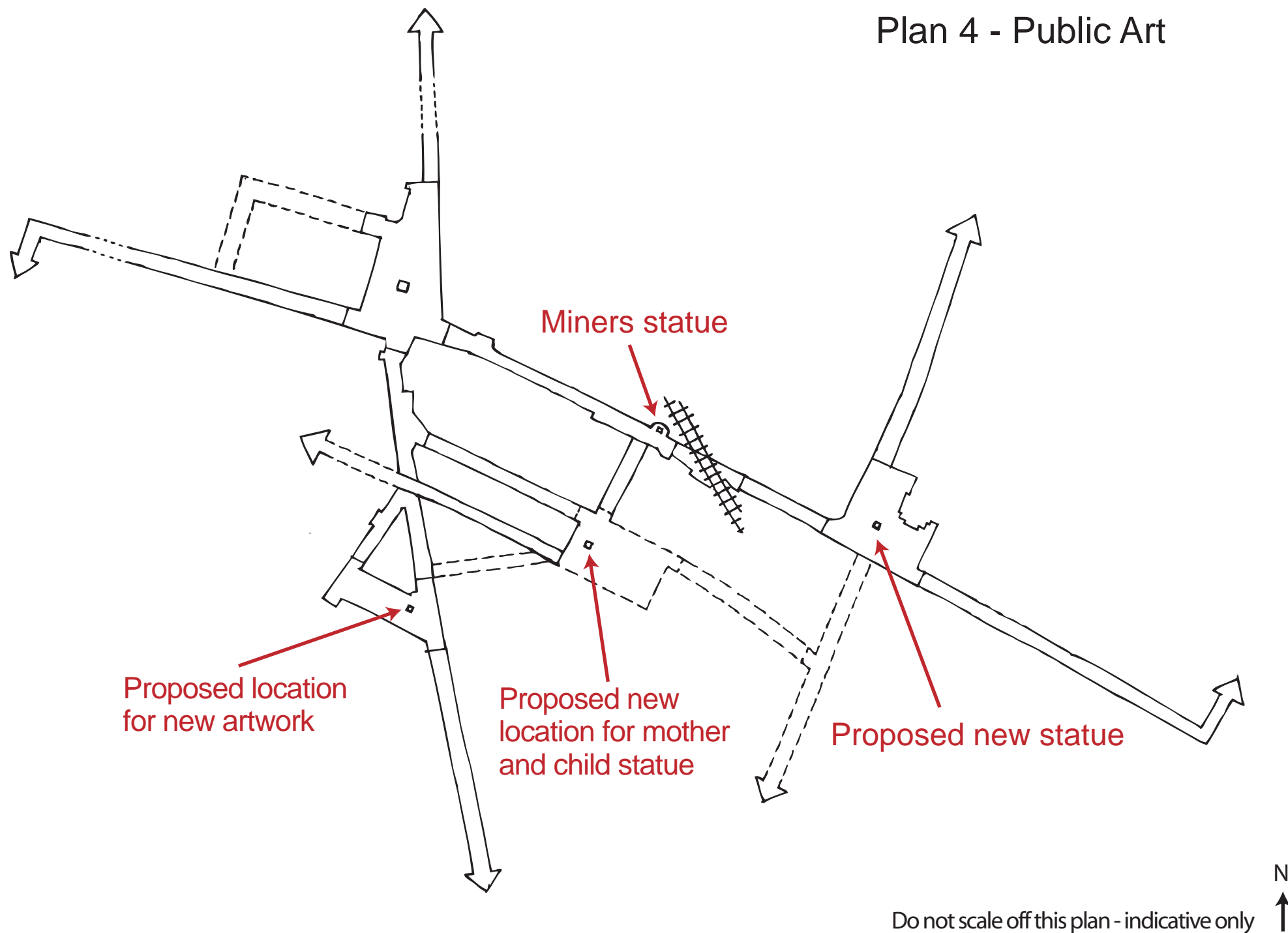
Addendum

CV15

Stephenson College

Memorial Square - CV17

Civic

CV18

Snibston Country Park

Whitwick

CV09

CV06

CV16

CV11

Stenson Green - CV13

Relaxation

CV08

CV04

CV10

CV14

CV05

CV07

CV03

Greenway Link to Whitwick

Market Place - CV02

A new heart for the town

Marlborough Square - CV01

Leisure & Culture

CV12

Potential improvements to London Road

Bardon

Hugglescote

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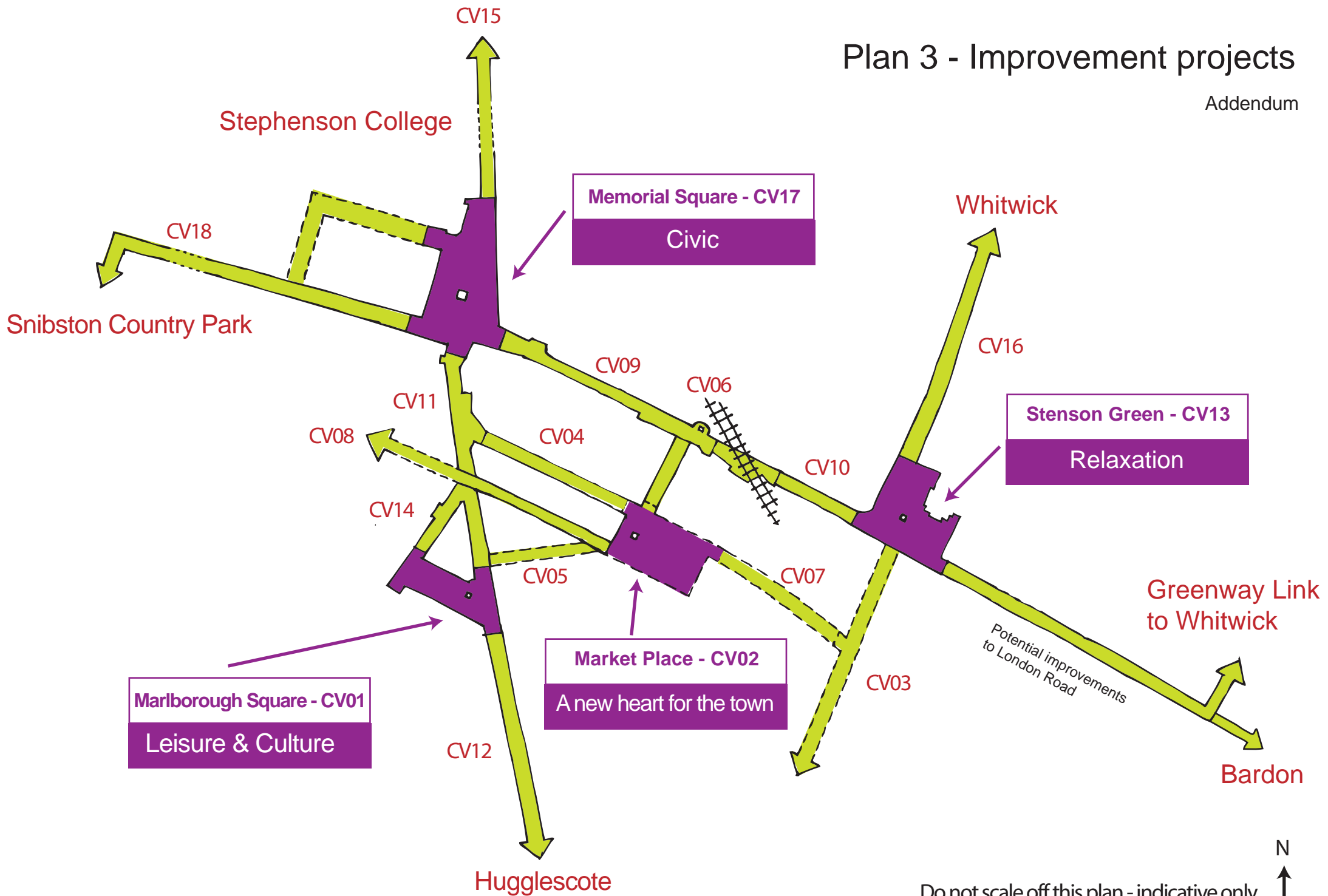
Do not scale off this plan - indicative only

Plan 4 - Public Art

Miners statue

Proposed location
for new artwork

Proposed new
location for mother
and child statue

Proposed new statue

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Do not scale off this plan - indicative only

COUNCIL'S VISION
North West Leicestershire will be a place where people and
businesses feel they belong and are proud to call home

North West Leicestershire District Council,
Council Offices, Whitwick Road, Coalville,
Leicestershire, LE67 3FJ.

This document is available in other formats on request