

# Bexleyheath NightVision

December 2009





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A faint, light-colored line-art map of a town centre, showing streets and building footprints, serves as the background for the text.

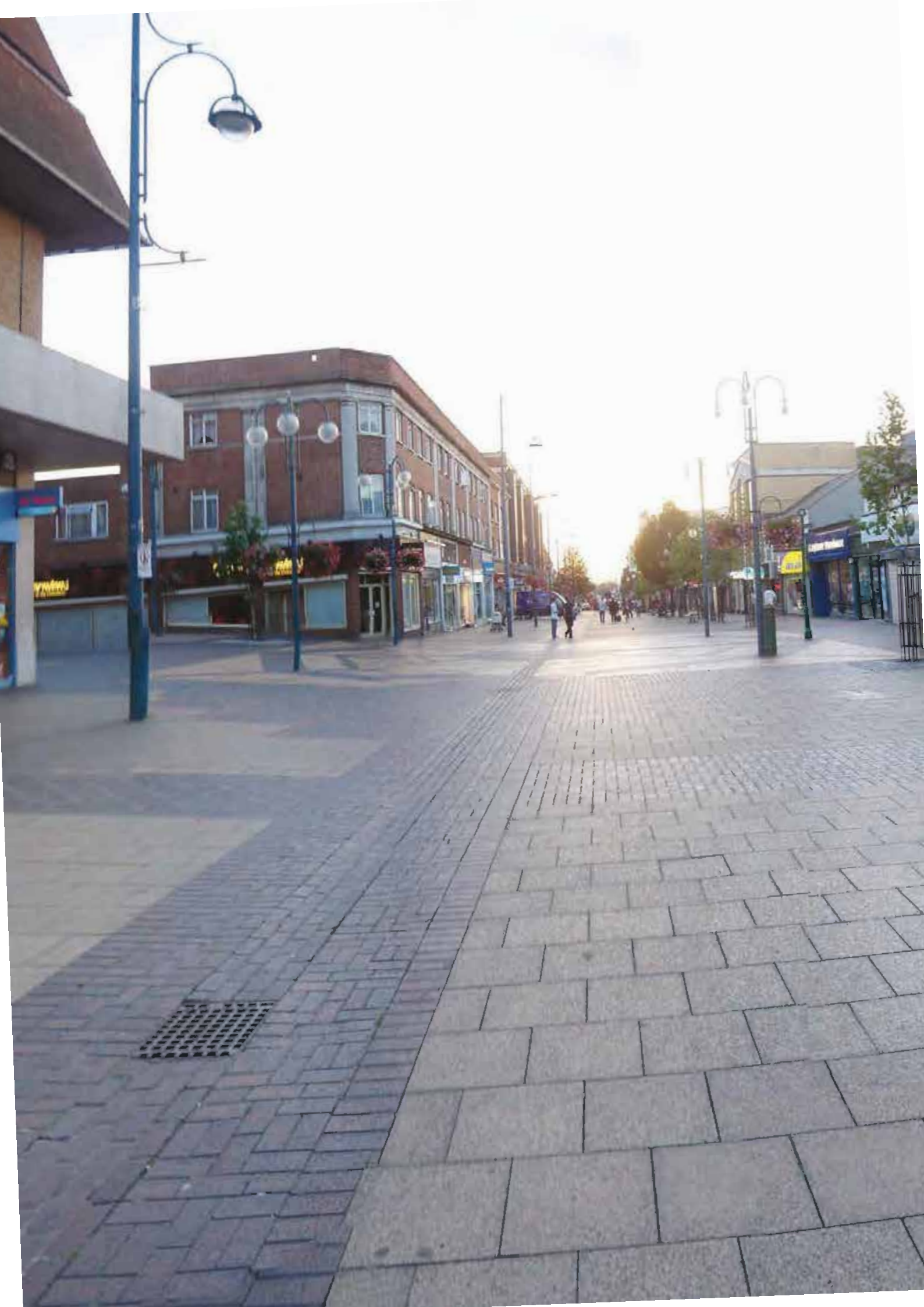
**B**exleyheath was selected as one of the eight Civic Trust NightVision pilot projects. Following discussions with the London Borough of Bexley it was agreed that the NightVision pilot would produce an action plan for the improvement of the town centre at night.

**N**ightVision is a programme created by the Civic Trust to improve the diversity and quality of the evening and night time economy in town and city centres. It is based upon the Civic Trust three year research project titled NightVision: Town Centres for All.

**T**hrough the NightVision programme the Civic Trust works with local authority partners and businesses to discover best practice in managing and developing night time economy areas.

**N**ightVision will inform the Bexleyheath town centre Development and Improvement Framework and Bexley's Local Development Framework. It is a formally adopted Council strategy and will be a material planning consideration.







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# 01 project overview

This section sets out the aims and objectives of the study



In common with many town centres, Bexleyheath consists mainly of pubs and bars that attract 18 - 30 year old people. Along with the expansion in licensed premises, there had also been a rise in alcohol-related violence and anti-social behaviour.

Successful measures have been taken to tackle these issues including:

- the introduction of a cumulative impact policy in 2006
- dispersal zones
- reviews of the licenses of more troublesome premises

Whilst it is considered that crime, violence and anti-social behaviour associated with the night time economy have decreased substantially, it is acknowledged that there is a need to now develop and diversify Bexleyheath town centre's evening and night time economy. To this end a development group

was put together at the start of 2008, with all relevant stakeholders represented, to write a NightVision strategy for Bexleyheath town centre.

In partnership with the London Borough of Bexley eleven tasks were identified for the project:

1. stakeholder engagement and refining the work programme
2. baseline study including a literature review
3. cga 'drinks places' commercial review
4. nightvision audits
5. future opportunities and business diversity research
6. business engagement and survey
7. consumer research
8. a business event
9. an action plan for the Broadway
10. preparation of action plan
11. early win initiatives and good practice.

Desired outcomes included:

- a better range of shops and more late opening nights
- a more diverse range of bars and clubs, especially those that appeal to an older clientele and families
- plans to address the current 'deadzone' on the Broadway at night
- public realm improvements and better design and usage of the public space in the pedestrianised Broadway area
- later opening cafés and pavement cafés
- better publicity and perception of the area at night

The NightVision strategy includes an action plan for the improvement of Bexleyheath town centre at night (see Chapter 10).



*Queues on the street: A good sign for the evening economy as it shows venues are in demand.*

# 02 policy review

This section explains the results of the policy review undertaken and how this has informed the study

## 02.1 Methodology

This study has reviewed policy and research literature associated with the night time economy in Bexleyheath. London Borough of Bexley's revised licensing policy, adopted in early 2008, sets out the policy for the next three years.

The licensing policy is clear that approval under the act does not over-ride town planning or building control. There is also scope to review planning policies in the light of the licensing act and provide interim guidance. Clear points of interest within the context of this study are set out below.

## 02.2 Culture

Within the licensing policy there is an aspiration to offer a wide variety of activities to encourage diversity and inclusion.

## 02.3 Crime and disorder

The policy also states the Council's intention to use powers under the licensing act in co-operation with the police and also its town planning powers to ensure that everyone is able to enjoy the town centres and shopping areas. Applicants for licenses are asked to seriously consider the potential impact on crime and disorder their application may have. Prior to the licensing decision being made one or more of the responsible authorities may visit the premises.

## 02.4 Partnership working

The policy identifies methods other than the licensing regime to address the cumulative effect of licensed premises. This includes: town planning controls, partnership measures, CCTV, designated alcohol-free zones, enforcement of the law with regards to anti-social behaviour and licensing reviews.

## 02.5 Transport

The Council aim to report incidents of disorder to liaison meetings with transport operators with a view to promoting policies for safe dispersal of people.

## 02.6 Tourism and economic development

The licensing policy mentions the Council's commitment to maintaining the health and economic vitality of the Borough's town centres. This is to be considered when exercising licensing functions. The licensing committee will receive reports on the needs of the local tourist economy and the need for new investment when appropriate.



## 02.7 Bexleyheath Town Centre Cumulative Impact Policy

The Cumulative Impact Policy covers Bexleyheath, Welling and Bexley Village. In order to justify the Cumulative Impact Policy the police have provided data on crime and disorder in the evening. Between 2002 and 2006 Bexleyheath suffered



from 450 - 500 incidents of wounding, assault and public disorder between 19.00 and 02.00 each year. The most common type of incidents by far were general disorder, followed by wounding and then alcohol related disorder and criminal damage. There are 50 licensed premises (both on and off license) within Bexleyheath.

## 02.8 Management

The GLA document 'Best Practice Guidance on Managing the Night Time Economy' contains some useful statistics. Bexleyheath is identified as having a 1,500 sq.m cinema, theatre and concert space, 6100 sq.m of pub, bar and nightclub



- adverse effects on the amenities of residential occupiers by reason of emission of fumes, smell, noise or other disturbance emanating from the premises and its immediate vicinity and/or associated with the use of premises in the surrounding area
- the creation of traffic or parking problems
- the proposed use, including related alterations, plant and equipment, will detract from the character or visual amenities of the area
- the proposed use will harm, by the cumulative effect of the proposal added to an existing concentration of A3, 4 & 5 uses, upon matters such as parking and local residential amenity.

space, 2,800 sq.m of café and restaurant space and 1210 sq.m of takeaway space.

## 02.9 Town planning

The GLA London Plan (2008), the spatial development strategy for Greater London, identifies town centres as a key priority. They are identified as key locations for new development.

The London Plan also supports the national government policy of encouraging consumer activity within town centres, and recognises that many suburban centres in London, including Bexleyheath, lack cultural facilities (such as theatres) and encourages individual Boroughs to identify potential new cultural sites.

Finally, the London Plan identifies Bexleyheath Town centre as a major town centre that could be developed to provide sustainable and

attractive alternatives to other regional shopping centres outside London. Bexley's Unitary Development Plan, adopted in 2004, sets out current planning policy in town centres within the Borough, including Bexleyheath.

The policy in regards to non-retail uses in the core (e.g. town centres) states that the council will resist changes of use of shops (Use Class A1) at ground floor level to other uses that would not enhance the character, viability and vitality of the centre.

In addition, outlets that sell food and drink (Use Classes A3, A4 and A5) are asked to adhere to policy SH09, that is all proposals for A3, 4 & 5 Class uses, regardless of location, will be resisted where permission would result in any of the following adverse effects that cannot be overcome by the imposition of appropriate conditions:

Whilst the policy acknowledges that some uses within Class A3, 4 & 5, in particular well-presented cafés and fast food restaurants, can make a positive contribution to the vitality of town centres both inside and outside shopping hours, some other uses within A3, 4 & 5 may not offer the same positive contribution.

The policy also has a separate chapter relating to Bexleyheath town centre. Bexleyheath is identified as the strategic centre for the Borough. The policy states that restaurants, take-aways,



cafés and public houses can add vitality to pedestrianised streets, particularly outside normal shop trading hours.

Therefore it is the policy of the Council, in principal, to allow A3, 4 & 5 uses in core frontages on both Broadway and Market Place. This is a key point as it provides a policy platform on which the ideas developed later in this document can stand.



→→→ Bexleyheath has a distinctive character and charm when looking west on a late spring evening:  
(top) the sun dropping low over Trinity Chapel.  
(middle) the Broadway.  
(right) the cinema.



# 03 context

This section sets out the particular evening economy context of the town and the wider regional context

### 03.1 The Borough

The London Borough of Bexley (L.B.B.), of which Bexleyheath is the main town, had a population of 221,600 according to the 2006 data. Bexleyheath is in south east London, 12 miles from Charing Cross station.

### 03.2 The study area

For the purposes of this study, the Civic Trust team looked at the central area, focussed around the Broadway (see plan below).

### 03.3 Licensed premises

Licensed premises are mainly concentrated along the Broadway. Industry researchers CGA Strategy, engaged by the Civic Trust to analyse the licensed trade in Bexleyheath, identified two circuits. A smaller upper circuit at the top of the pedestrianised area consisting of:

- RSVP Bar (Laurel Pub)

- The Furze Wren (Wetherspoons)
- The Kings Arms (Globe Pub Co.)
- Frankie & Benny's
- Zizzi

And a larger 'lower circuit' on the non-pedestrianised portion of the Broadway. Consisting of:

- Ivory Lounge (TCG)
- Golden Lion (Laurel)
- The Wrong 'Un (Wetherspoons)
- The Rose
- The Drayman's Arms
- OHM
- Zero Bar (part of Zero Degrees)
- Affinity
- 42nd Street
- Pizza Express
- Al Dente
- Laughing Buddha
- Café Mojito
- Akash Tandoori

- Cyprus Village
- Golden Lion
- Royal China
- Memphis Inn

### 03.4 Trading hours

Compared to many town centres elsewhere, trading hours in Bexleyheath are relatively early. Four venues in Bexleyheath operate after midnight on Friday and Saturday with a maximum terminal hour of 01.00. The majority of these venues are modern bars that operate music or events (especially at weekends). Many venues in Bexleyheath only operate until 23.00.

### 03.5 Venue capacities

Many of the licensed venues in Bexleyheath are relatively small with 40% of venues in the study area having capacities of below 250. These venues are mainly branded restaurants, traditional-styled pubs or



food-led venues. The four largest venues are branded mainstream venues such as RSVP, Wetherspoons (Furze Wren) the Drayman's Arms and the Ivory Lounge.

### 03.6 Retail

Bexleyheath is a highly successful retail centre during the day. The pedestrianised area of the Broadway hosts the majority of the retail offer with major high street names such as Boots, Superdrug, Marks & Spencer, Sainsbury's, ASDA (24hrs) and Primark mixed with more specialist and independent shops. The lower end of the Broadway is less successful in this respect but has a thriving mix of local independent shops offering lower order goods.

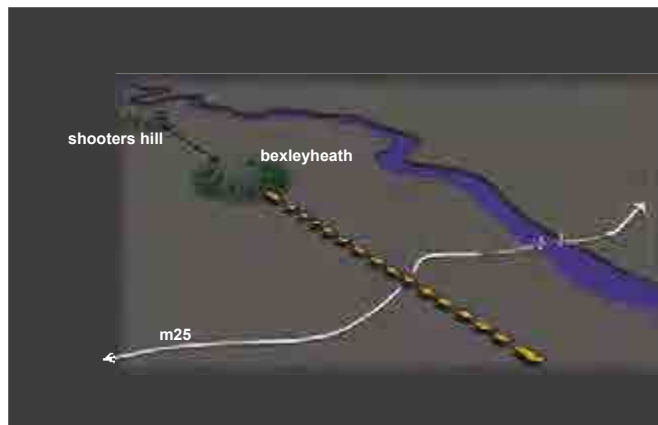
With a few small exceptions shops in Bexleyheath trade over a standard period of 09.00 – 17.30 hours, with shops open until 21.00 on Thursday's nights, the only dedicated late night shopping day.

### 03.7 Bus links

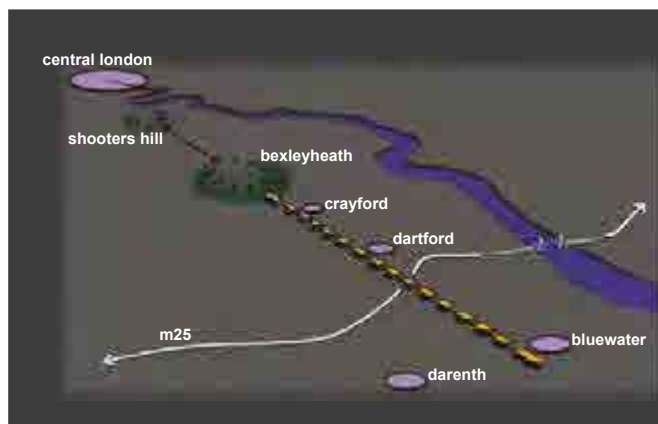
The area is served by regular and frequent bus services, all of which pass through bus stops located in Market Place.

### 03.8 Late night transport

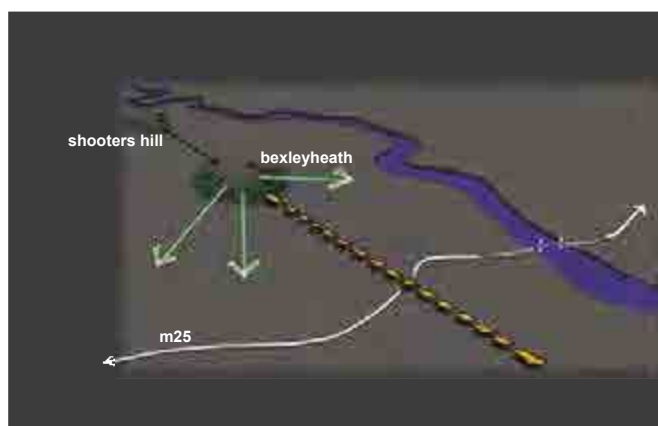
The last train from Bexleyheath to London leaves at 23.14 and to Dartford at 00.21. The area is served by one night bus, the N89 from Trafalgar Square to Erith. The primary mode of late night transport is private minicabs or private cars. Research has revealed that Hackney cabs do not serve the area at night.



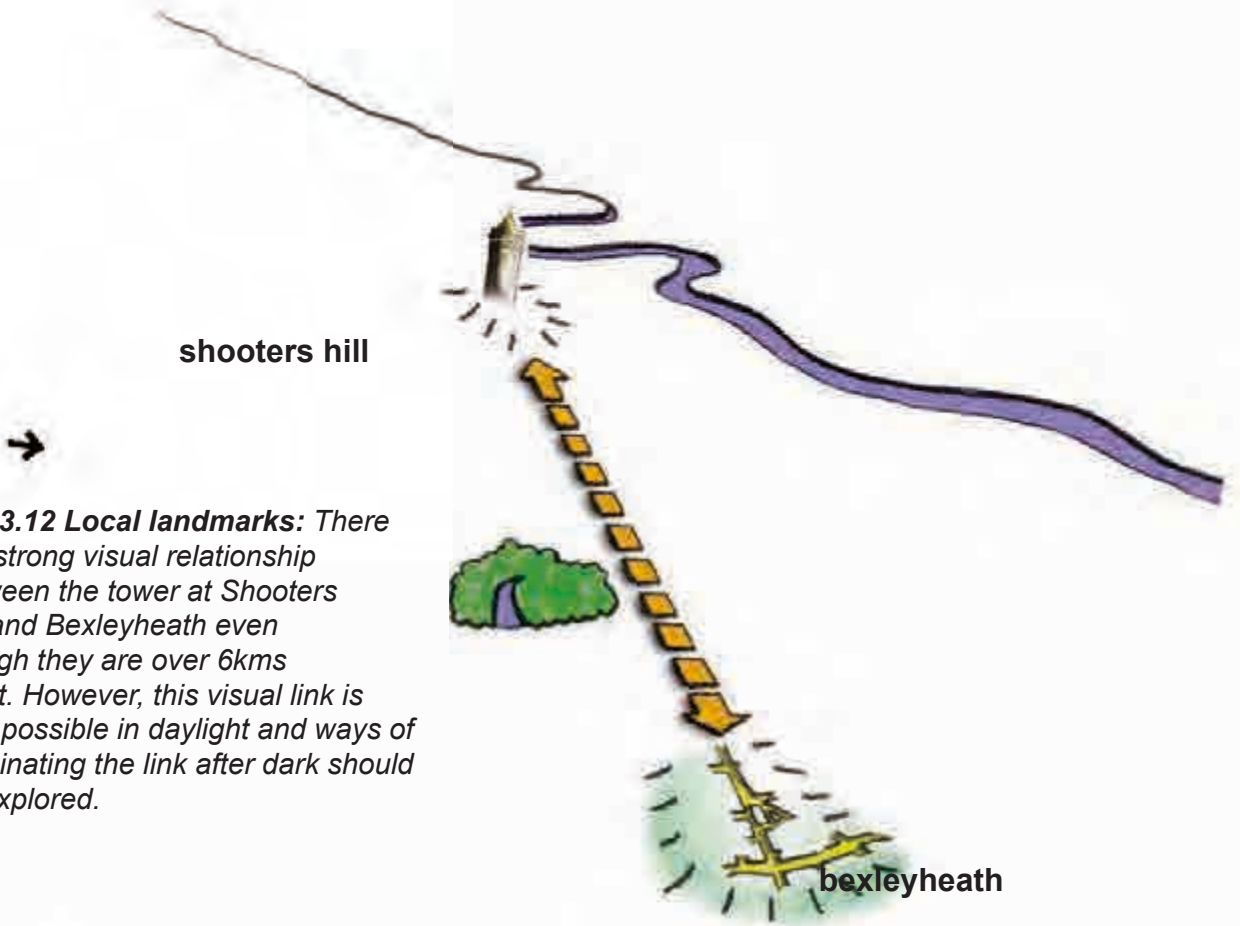
↑ **03.9 History:** The town lies on an historic route between London and Dover. This location is of strategic significance, with the town able to attract people from both west and east.



↑ **03.10 Competition:** Nearby towns and developments that are in direct competition with Bexleyheath's evening economy include Dartford, Crayford and Bluewater. For more on this aspect of the study see pages 12 — 15.



↑ **03.11 Topography:** The town enjoys a relatively elevated position in the area, affording glimpse views out to open countryside. New development and design interventions should look to exploit this opportunity further.

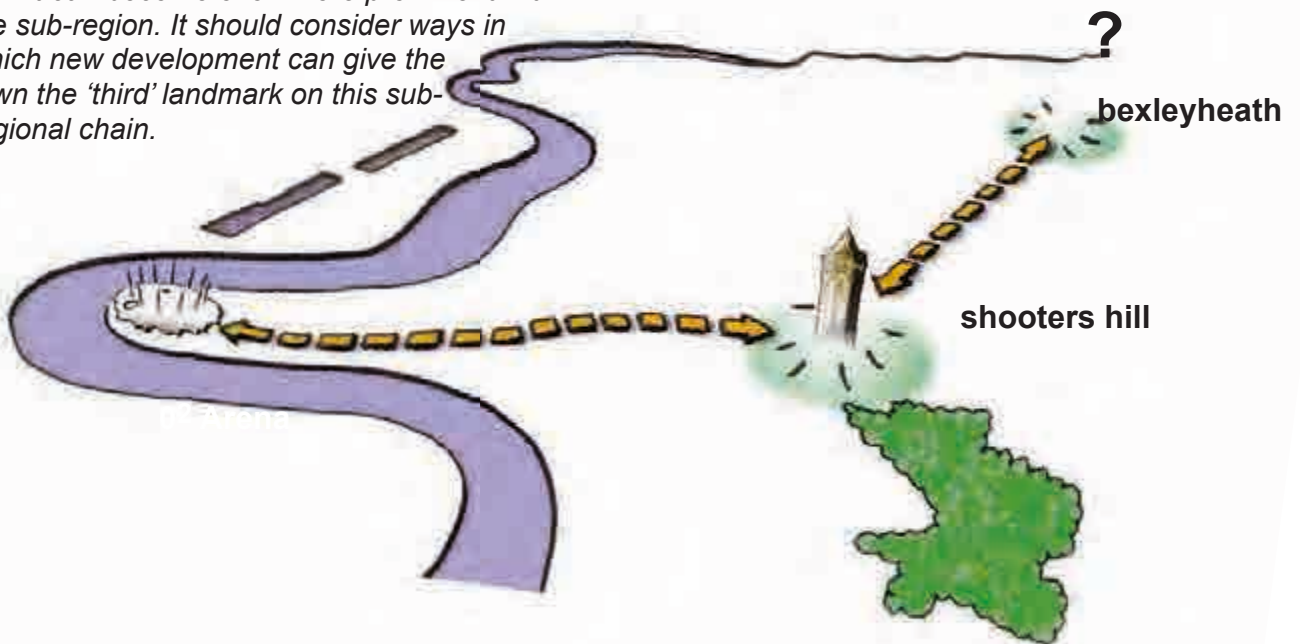


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**03.12 Local landmarks:** There is a strong visual relationship between the tower at Shooters Hill and Bexleyheath even though they are over 6kms apart. However, this visual link is only possible in daylight and ways of illuminating the link after dark should be explored.

↓

**03.13 Sub-regional landmarks:** Although the town already benefits from its relative proximity to distinctive national attractions, such as the O2 Arena, Bexleyheath needs to consider how it can become even more prominent within the sub-region. It should consider ways in which new development can give the town the 'third' landmark on this sub-regional chain.







← **Lang Sen Vietnamese restaurant:** One of the many independent restaurants that help support the successful lower circuit.



➔ **Traditional pub:** *The Kings Arms, at the extreme eastern end of the lower circuit.*



➔ **Music and performance bar:** *The Drayman, at the extreme western end of the lower circuit.*



➔ **Music and performance bar:** *The Ivory Lounge, at the midway point of the lower circuit.*



# 04 competitor analysis

This section looks at the other places nearby against which Bexleyheath competes after dark

## 04.1 Research

The competitor analysis research consisted of four strands:

- The first directly examined the night-time economy offer of Bexleyheath's competitor locations.
- The second element identified what potential leisure-retail investors thought of the town and if they had plans to invest in Bexleyheath and if not why not.
- The third element identified who lives in and nearby Bexleyheath to test the theory that Bexleyheath's evening economy is not taking enough of a share of what is a wealthy and mobile catchment (and which could be used to tempt in new businesses to the town).
- The final element of the research examined more generally what consumers will be looking for in the evening economy of the future and comparing this against what Bexleyheath is currently offering.

Research on the evening activities offer of Bexleyheath and nearby locations, (Gravesend, Dartford, Bromley, Bluewater, Old Bexley, Sidcup, Greenwich), as well as Central London, shows Bexleyheath falls



*Pizza Express: already present.*

between the 'lower-end mainstream' offer (McDonalds, Burger King, loud but popular young person's bars) and 'middle-mainstream' (Pizza Express, Zizzi's)

There is a good independent bar scene in Bexleyheath, but it lacks nightclubs to compete with other 'lower-end mainstream' locations such as Gravesend and Dartford, should this be the direction it wants to take.

Enhancing the current limited family orientated offer (bowling, cinema, handful of family restaurants) could be the best (and possibly only) future option for Bexleyheath. While it will never compete with unique 'middle mainstream' destinations like Bluewater and Greenwich, it could claw back local trade from these places by offering the possibility of a night out without a car or a public transport trip.

Once local people beyond the 18 - 30 crowd are using Bexleyheath town centre, it could also start to attract in other users from beyond the

town who do not currently see Bexleyheath as somewhere they would go for an evening out.

The emphasis for future venue development should therefore be on more aspirational restaurants and café-bars for families, to compliment the handful of existing quality chain and independent operators.

## 04.2 Operator analysis

Unfortunately, most 'middle mainstream' restaurateurs and commercial property agents who act for them, when interviewed, stated that Bexleyheath was not the type of place they would look to open venues. This was due



*Aspirational brand: Giraffe.*

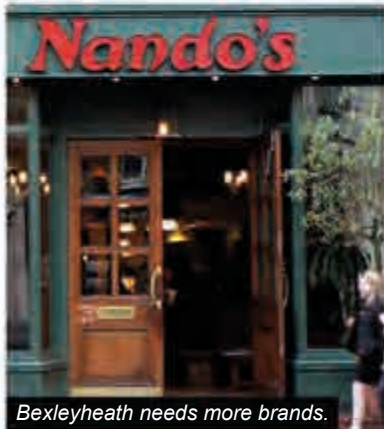


*Aspirational brand: Carluccio's.*



to their perceptions (and to a certain extent reality) of the 'wrong' demographics and lack of similar brands in the area.

Rowdy young people hanging around in large groups was



*Bexleyheath needs more brands.*

also a deterrent for most restaurateurs, and some felt the council should do more to 'police' the night-time crowds to help create a more 'positive' image of the town centre

A more proactive use of planning tools was highlighted as required by some commercial agents, e.g. a need for a better 'mixture' of places (i.e. less bars relative to every food/retail use).

#### 04.3 Demographics

Analysis of Bexleyheath's demographics and future population statistics highlighted a lower prevalence of the type of people who have medium and high spending habits on food, culture and experiences. From other research we know that those people who do fit these categories visit

Bluewater, Central London and Greenwich

However, the statistics suggest that if Bexleyheath could develop an offer (including addressing issues such as better public space, later and better retail) that this could attract wealthier and mobile people from the huge South London and North Kent catchment. Added to the retention of more local custom, the town centre does have potential.

#### 04.4 Futurecasting.



*Eating out will remain popular.*

Analysis of recent data by market research firms such as Mintel and Euromonitor shows that while drink based socialising is still important, the trend of eating out, trying different types of foods is continuing to grow in the UK.

This is particularly true of those in professional and management occupations and applies to people of most ages, except the very old and those with very young families. The market research also shows that the fun pub,



*Blackheath.*

nightclub and young persons venue market has reached a peak and is suffering hard times (not connected to the 'credit crunch')

Therefore, Bexleyheath might do more to better match its town centre offer with these food-oriented trends. For example, the fastest growing trend in this area is 'casual dining' where customers no longer 'go out for a meal' but either deliberately or on the spur of the moment, decide to have a meal as part of a wider evening's entertainment.

The kinds of formats that serve this market are pan-Asian food (e.g. noodles, sushi etc.) and tapas, but at present Bexleyheath is poorly served for this type of food.



*Bromley.*

→ Dartford.



→ Bromley.



→ Greenwich.





# 05 NightVision audit

This section contains the observations, findings and conclusions of the overnight audit undertaken in 2008 and relates them to the established criteria for successful evening economies

### 05.1 Audit methodology

The NightVision audit is an essential and invaluable way of understanding the issues but it cannot offer a comprehensive picture. It is simply a snapshot of personal observations on one particular night, compared against a checklist.

The process is designed by the Civic Trust to feed into the development of the Civic Trust Purple Flag Accreditation scheme. There are eight main topics, each with positive and negative indicators. These are as follows:

### 05.2 Crime and disorder

In order for town centres to attract a diverse audience at night actual levels and perceptions of crime and disorder need to be low, or at least be seen to be being addressed.

### 05.3 Streetscape and designed environment

As well as reducing crime and disorder, well designed and maintained streetscapes can encourage people of all ages to use town centres and linger in the evening, so encouraging a 'continental café atmosphere'

### 05.4 Essential services

In order for town centres to run smoothly at night and be pleasant places to visit essential services have to function.

### 05.5 Arts and culture

A diversity of arts and cultural activities at night encourages wider groups of people to use town centres at night and provides an alternative activity to alcohol consumption (including for those groups that do not drink alcohol)

### 05.6 Family facilities

In many town centres families feel excluded. Truly diverse town centres will include families with children of all ages in the town's evening activities.

### 05.7 Bars and clubs

Many people are concerned that few pubs and clubs cater for their tastes. To attract a wide range of people to town centres there needs to be a range of venues for differing age groups and tastes.

### 05.8 Eating out

Restaurants attract all groups of society and therefore a truly diverse town centre should encourage a wide range of eating establishments open late into the night.

### 05.9 Shopping

Shopping is an activity enjoyed by all ages and backgrounds. Later opening of retail destinations can help create more diverse town centres and especially help to bridge the '5pm — 8pm' gap suffered by many centres.



*The active lower circuit, approx. 22.00.*

### 05.10 The Bexleyheath audit.

This audit took place between 18.00 on Saturday 8th March 2008 and 11.00 on Sunday 9th March 2008. The findings of the team are as follows.

### 05.11 Noise

Although parts of the town centre were lively, noise never reached excessive levels. Early in the evening (shortly after 18.00) the town centre was relatively quiet, especially in the pedestrianised Broadway area which was virtually

not clustered meant that Bexleyheath does not suffer from the concentration of people and venues that often makes many areas very noisy at night. The only other occasion when noise was excessive was between midnight and 01.30 when many of the bars and clubs were closing. Bars such as Zerobar, Affinity and the OHM club had crowds of people outside chatting and milling around whilst they waited for friends and decided how to get home.

No incidents of crime or disorder were witnessed and the atmosphere in the town

A long queue had formed outside the Ivory Lounge. This venue was by far the most popular place in the town and queues of people waiting to get in formed from about 20.00. The queue was large enough at times to snake down the street and beyond Pizza Express, the venue next door. As bars closed later on in the evening, there was some temporary pavement crowding outside bars such as Affinity and Zerobar.

The majority of venues were well managed. Door staff at most venues were clearly identifiable with hi-visibility arm bands. Staff were observed managing their queues and checking identification. The audit recorded one group being turned away from a venue as one member of their party was under age.

### 05.13 Cleanliness

In general, the standard of cleanliness of the town centre was not very high. The pedestrianised area of the Broadway in particular was covered in litter, even at the beginning of the evening. The litter was mainly plastic bags and fast food wrappers left by the daytime shopping crowds.

Other areas of the town centre were not as badly littered as the pedestrianised area but it was noted that bottles and glasses had been left outside some



*The NightVision team inspect the Broadway, approx. 21.20.*

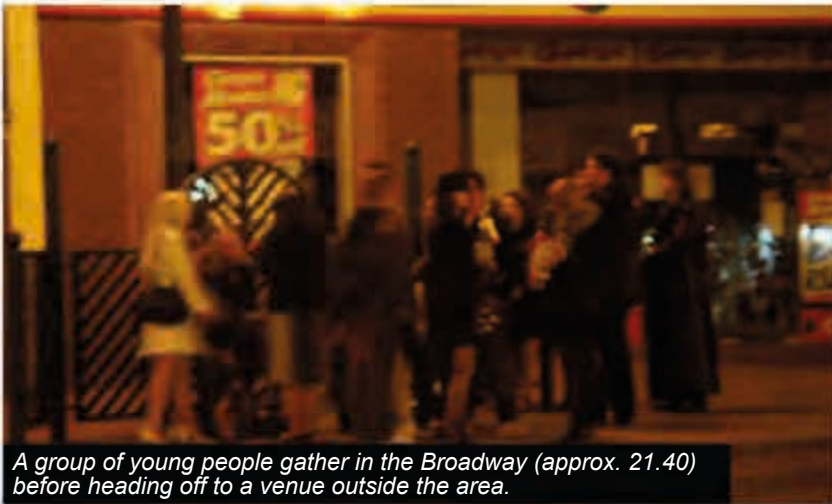
empty. As the evening progressed, and more people arrived in town, noise levels rose but not significantly and unlike many other town centres music was not often audible on the streets outside venues.

The fact that many of the bars and clubs are

centre was friendly although for more nervous and vulnerable groups of society a visible police presence might be reassuring.

### 05.12 Queues

The largest queues were in the non-pedestrianised section of the Broadway.



*A group of young people gather in the Broadway (approx. 21.40) before heading off to a venue outside the area.*

venues, including the Furze Wren at the top of the Broadway. On the morning of the audit, street cleansing was undertaken

at around 09.00 when the town was already quite busy with Sunday shoppers. the collected refuse was left in blue bags by the public bins.



*When The Mall locks its doors, a large part of the town centre becomes inaccessible after dark. Seen here at approx. 21.40.*

Public conveniences are not well placed for night time visitors. There are public lavatories near the bus stops on Arnsberg Way, not far from RSVP and the Furze Wren. However, they are relatively inaccessible, which means they are probably used very little after dark. The main public conveniences are on Townley Road, mid-way along the pedestrianised part of the Broadway and these are not open during the evening and the audit team did witness some limited public urination.

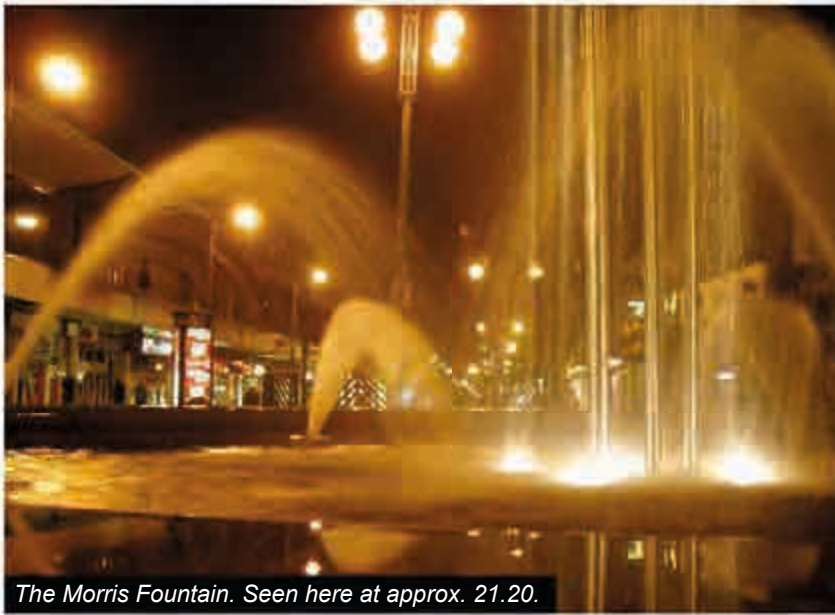
#### **05.14 Lighting**

In the main streets of Bexleyheath the lighting was adequate. However the quality of the light and light fittings was variable, especially within the pedestrianised area. The lighting was fairly consistent across the central area but also very constant, i.e. there was no real differentiation between the major routes and the minor routes. As such, the town had a rather uniform appearance after dark with no indication given by the lighting as to what were the important routes.

#### **05.15 Pedestrian experience**

In general, the streetscape of Bexleyheath was fairly unwelcoming and shabby. At the lower end of the Broadway poorly maintained





*The Morris Fountain. Seen here at approx. 21.20.*

pavements did little to enhance the area and the junction between the Broadway and Albion Road was particularly difficult to negotiate. Likewise, the junction at the eastern end of the Broadway (close to the cinema and bingo complex) was also an unpleasant environment with complex junctions that are difficult for pedestrians to negotiate.

The presence of traffic after dark on the Broadway (between Pickford Road and ASDA) does help keep this section of the town lively, certainly compared with the pedestrianised area. While the noise from traffic can be a nuisance, the activity the traffic provides is a welcome addition after dark.

### **05.16 Underage drinking**

Early in the evening the town centre was almost deserted apart from groups

of young people (aged 14 - 16) hanging around the bus stops. There certainly appeared to be some possibly underage people carrying and drinking from open cans.

However, in comparison to many locations, there does not appear to be a problem with underage drinking in the town, certainly in the central area where the audit was undertaken. Between 19.00 and 20.00 more people were venturing to bars and pubs but the majority of venues were still fairly empty. Groups of young people were also observed gathering in the town centre to take buses to other areas.

By 20.00 the town had started to 'buzz' and this was especially true of the Ivory Lounge that attracted a large queue of people. Customers here were young (under 30) well-dressed and predominantly female. By

contrast the venues such as the Furze Wren and the Rose attracted an older clientele. The Furze Wren in particular attracted small groups, couples and lone drinkers.

There was little visible police presence. On a visit to the police control room the audit team were informed that due to the recent improvements in behaviour after dark, there is now no need for police patrols in the town centre at night. Indeed, the only police presence witnessed all night was a pair of uniformed police stepping off a bus at around 20.00. The town centre and all the evening venues are also covered by CCTV.

### **05.17 Transport**

Compared with many other town centres, Bexleyheath has fairly good late night transport services. As the train station is around a 20 minute walk from the centre, the most convenient and most visible public transport is buses. Bexleyheath benefits from good bus services and there were regular local bus services until around midnight or slightly later. There was also one night bus that ran every half hour throughout the night.

From observation, many of these buses seemed quite empty. From what was observed, taxi services in Bexleyheath are far from



*Dramatic lighting on the Drayman pub. Seen here at approx. 03.10.*

adequate. The existing mini-cab rank on the side of the Broadway Shopping centre along Townley Road was hardly used, mainly because it was in a dark, quiet street far removed from the main area of night time activity. While this location works well for daytime, it is inappropriate after dark. After closing time, large groups of people were noticed waiting around on the street seemingly unable to find a cab home.

After midnight, an impromptu mini-cab rank had sprung up on Church Road, on the northern side of the non-pedestrianised section of the Broadway. Despite the fact Bexleyheath is a London Borough, we did not see any Hackney Cabs in the area. Church Street is central to the main area of evening economic activity and while this unofficial taxi-rank may be a nuisance for nearby

residents, it is convenient and popular with those out after dark. There were also two sightings of illegal mini-cabs on Broadway around 01.00.

### **05.18 Conclusions**

The tables that follow show the views reached by the audit team on the night.



*Queues outside the Ivory Lounge, approx. 22.00.*

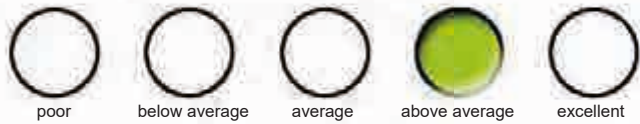
Bexleyheath performs very well on management and control. Despite public fears the recent efforts of Council and police to deal with crime and disorder have had good results.

Compared to many other centres, Bexleyheath performs extremely well on the indicators that deal with diversity and customer offer. However, issues around cleanliness, public conveniences and transport mean that there is still a lot of room for improvement.

Where Bexleyheath performs less well is on the categories relating to diversity and culture. The results are set out on pages 22 - 25 in 'traffic light' format on a scale from poor to excellent.

The Bexleyheath Town Centre Development and Improvement Framework identifies a need for improved cultural facilities as within the area.

## 05.19 Crime, disorder and management.



### Positive

Visible policing	N
Street Wardens	Y
CCTV	Y
A Pubwatch scheme (or similar)	Y
Low incidents of alcohol-related crime	Y
Local confidence in policing	Y

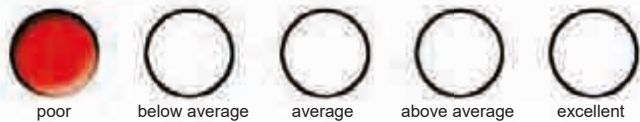
### Negative

High levels of alcohol-related crime	N
A negative local image	Y
'No go' areas at night	N
Problem licensed premises	N
High levels of nuisance noise	N



*There are relatively few incidences of violent crime*

## 05.20 Streetscape and environment.



### Positive

Bright lighting	Y
Areas for al fresco eating and drinking	N
Parks and open spaces safe after dark	N
Pleasant areas for pedestrians	N
Clean, well maintained streets	N

### Negative

Poor street lighting	N
Excess litter and street fouling	Y
Street heavily congested with traffic	Y
Poorly maintained public spaces	Y
Pedestrian congestion on certain streets	Y



*The paving and street furniture in the Broadway is tired and in need of renewal*





*There is need for additional street cleaning round in the hours between shopping ending and evening activities picking up*



*The Library could act as an after dark focus*

### 05.21 Essential services.



#### Positive

Easily accessible late night public transport	Y
Late night cleansing services	N
Open public toilets	Y
Visible authority figures such as wardens	Y
Litter bins	Y

#### Negative

Poor late night public transport	N
Closed public toilets	N
Lack of street cleansing	Y

### 05.22 Arts and culture.



#### Positive

A town centre cinema	Y
A theatre or similar performance venue	N
Festivals and other cultural events	N
Live music	Y
Creative use of libraries and museums at night	N
Good publicity about arts and cultural events	N

#### Negative

Out of town cinema	N
Lack of theatre or performance venues	Y
Inaccessible public buildings in the evening	Y
Poor public knowledge of festivals and events	Y
A poor range of cultural events	Y



### 05.23 Family facilities.



#### Positive

Venues that welcome families	Y/N
Activities aimed at children	N
A welcoming environment for young children	N
Non-alcohol based activities for young adults	N

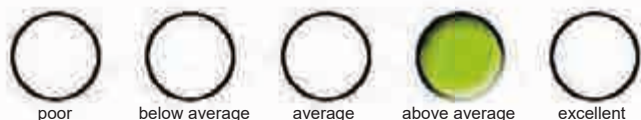
#### Negative

Mainly venues where children are discouraged	Y
A problem with underage drinking	N
Little or no provision for young adults	Y
A threatening or unsafe feel on the streets	N



*Despite having a high proportion of families in the area, there are few places that welcome them in the evenings.*

### 05.24 Bars and clubs.



#### Positive

A good selection of independent venues	Y
Multi use venues	N
Chill-out venues	N
Venues with a range of opening hours	N
Venues to cater for a wide range of lifestyles	N

#### Negative

A large amount of price discounting	N
Venues aimed at narrow lifestyle groups	Y
Venues purely concerned with selling alcohol	N
Mainly venues catering to 18 - 30s	Y



*There are a good choice of independent venues.*

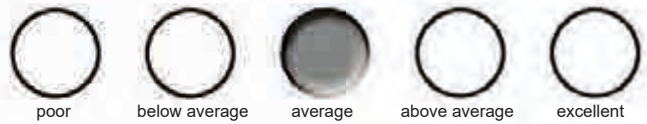


*Only some venues offer outdoor seating as the public realm in other areas is currently inadequate.*



*The Mall, the town's main shopping focus, is only open late one or two nights each week.*

### 05.25 Eating out.



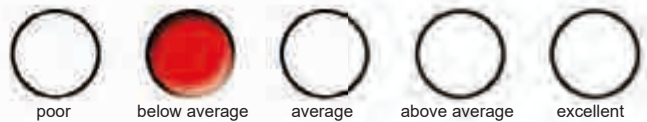
#### Positive

Cafes open late into the evening	N
Family friendly restaurants	Y/N
Affordable eating venues	Y
A good range of restaurant	Y
Pubs and bars that serve food	Y

#### Negative

A poor choice of restaurants	N
Only takeaways or fast food available late	N

### 05.26 Shopping after hours.



#### Positive

A wide range of shops open after 17.00	N
Services such as 'park and ride' available	N/A
Special events linked to late night shopping	N
Shopping centres include café uses	Y

#### Negative

Only essential shops open after 17.00	Y
---------------------------------------	---



← *The absence of traffic on this section of Broadway results in an intimidating place after dark.*



← *The pedestrianised area of the Broadway had a major litter problem.*



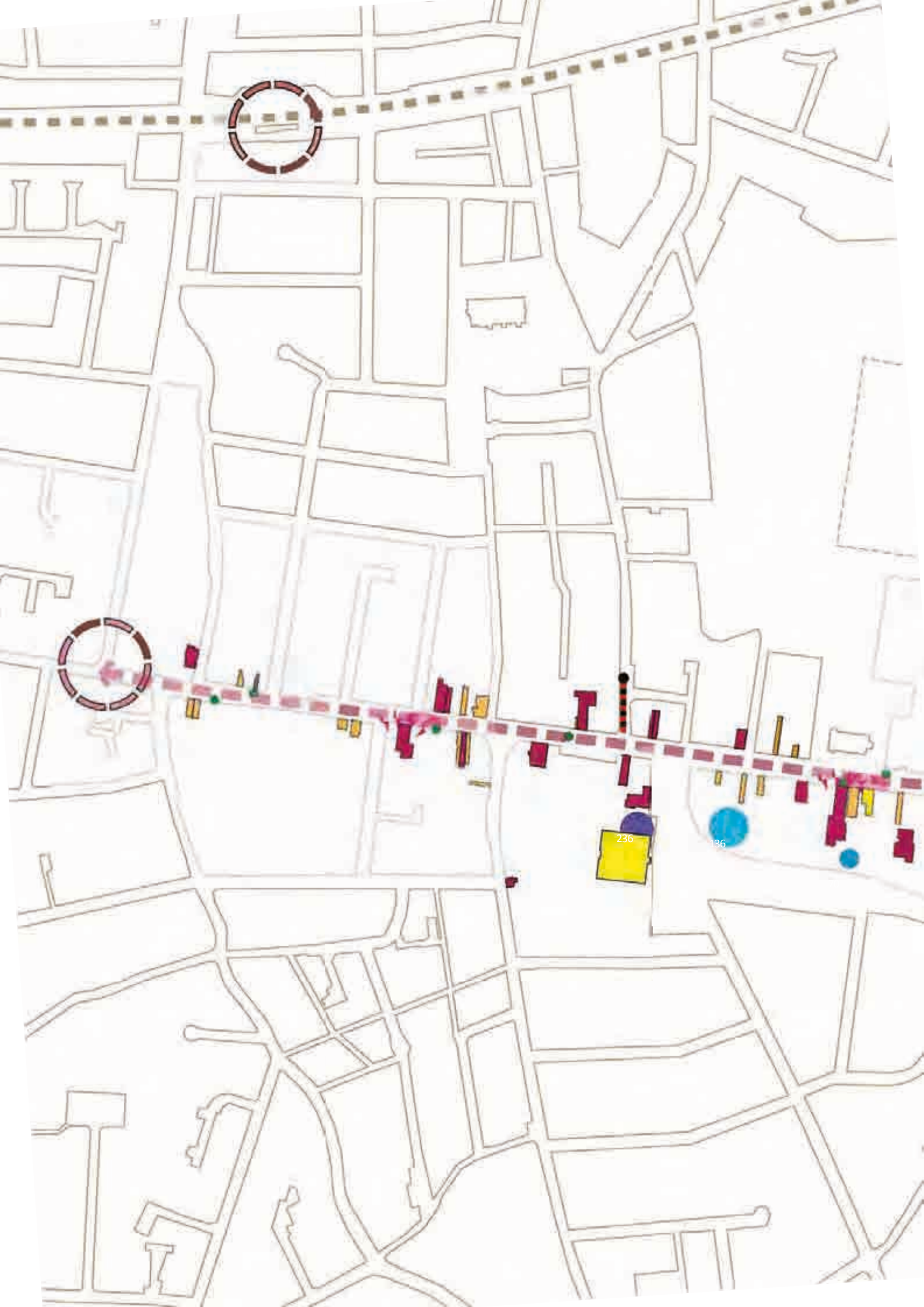
← *The RSVP bar, on the struggling Upper Circuit.*






















→→→→ A huge queue had formed outside the Ivory Lounge. This venue was by far the most popular place in the town centre and queues of people waiting to get in formed from about 20.00.

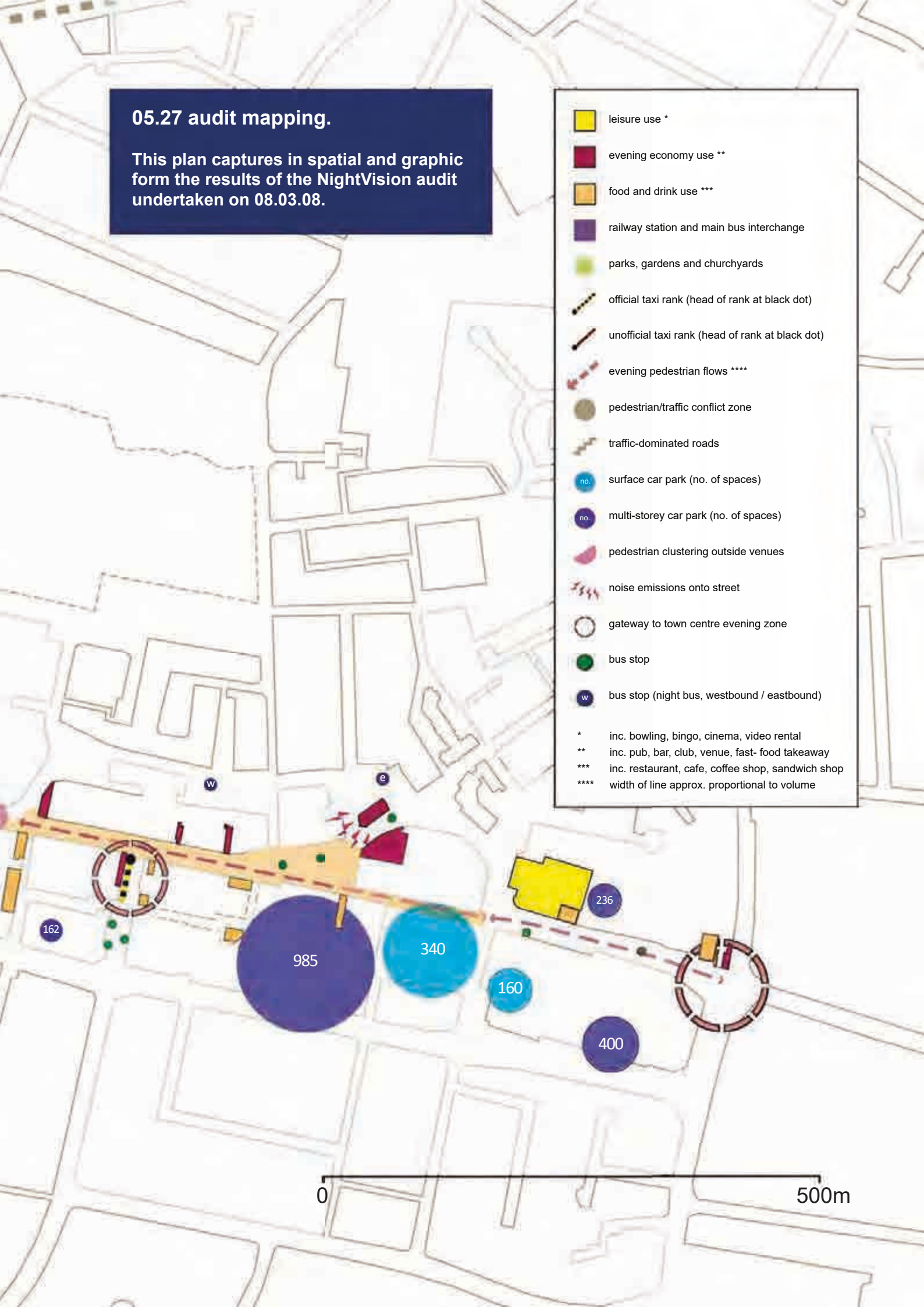




## 05.27 audit mapping.

This plan captures in spatial and graphic form the results of the NightVision audit undertaken on 08.03.08.

-  leisure use \*
  -  evening economy use \*\*
  -  food and drink use \*\*\*
  -  railway station and main bus interchange
  -  parks, gardens and churchyards
  -  official taxi rank (head of rank at black dot)
  -  unofficial taxi rank (head of rank at black dot)
  -  evening pedestrian flows \*\*\*\*
  -  pedestrian/traffic conflict zone
  -  traffic-dominated roads
  -  surface car park (no. of spaces)
  -  multi-storey car park (no. of spaces)
  -  pedestrian clustering outside venues
  -  noise emissions onto street
  -  gateway to town centre evening zone
  -  bus stop
  -  bus stop (night bus, westbound / eastbound)
- \* inc. bowling, bingo, cinema, video rental  
\*\* inc. pub, bar, club, venue, fast-food takeaway  
\*\*\* inc. restaurant, cafe, coffee shop, sandwich shop  
\*\*\*\* width of line approx. proportional to volume



0 500m

# 06 business and consumer survey

This section sets out results of consultation undertaken with stakeholder groups



## 06.1 Methodology

As part of the NightVision process the Civic Trust believes that it is very important to engage with all stakeholders in the night time economy. In the course of the study, businesses were engaged through the



*A quiet Broadway in the evening.*

Bexley Business Forum, and through dedicated surveys. Surveys were also carried out on behalf of the Civic Trust by leading licensed trade specialists CGA Strategy Limited.

Potential consumers, especially those over 45 years old were engaged through a questionnaire using the London Borough of Bexley's 'Talkback' engagement initiative and also through focus groups.

Businesses and Councillors were also invited to take part in a consultation workshop on July 23rd 2008 when attendees were asked to respond to the work in progress.

## 06.2 Business

The CGA Strategy report focussed purely on licensed businesses and how they were trading, whereas the Civic Trust business survey also included retailers and other relevant businesses. As well as the trade, this survey aimed to find out business opinions on a range of issues such as plans to improve the Broadway, late night shopping and safety.

## 06.3 Future trends

Almost all businesses interviewed, licensing trade and retailers, were positive about business and the future. The licensed trade in particular reacted very positively toward the improvements made following the reduction in crime and anti-social behaviour. Many licensees interviewed felt very confident that Bexleyheath was ready to attract more customers and also people from a more diverse background. Retailers similarly claimed that business was going well.

## 06.4 Safety and crime

Many licensed venue managers interviewed acknowledged that alcohol related violence and other safety issues had, in the past, been a problem for Bexleyheath. This, they acknowledged, had



*Dedicated outdoor seating.*

damaged the reputation of the area. However, in the last eighteen months, since the crackdown on alcohol related crime and anti-social behaviour was begun by the Council and police, many venues had noticed many positive changes, including the re-establishment of the PubSafe scheme. By contrast, many retailers interviewed felt that crime and anti-social behaviour was still a problem in Bexleyheath and was actively discouraging people from using the town centre, especially in the evenings.

## 06.5 Trading

Four licensed venues in Bexleyheath open until 01.00 on a Friday and Saturday, with the remaining eight only open until 23.00. There is considerable demand amongst licensees to have later licenses as it is felt that current trading hours put them at a disadvantage compared to venues in areas such as Greenwich and Dartford where clubs and bars open much later. There is also significant



demand amongst customers — as highlighted in a Facebook [a social networking website] group called 'We want a Nightclub in Bexleyheath!' which has over 1,000 members — for a venue in Bexleyheath open later than 01.00. Retailers, with the exception



Variety and diversity.

of supermarkets, mainly operate traditional trading hours of 09.00 - 17.30. Late night shopping operates until 21.00 on a Thursday night. Whilst this is generally successful, some retailers have expressed concerns that the reputation of the area at night and large groups of young people 'hanging around' the Broadway was discouraging shoppers from using the shops for late night shopping.

### 06.6 Youth

Almost all businesses interviewed raised the issue of young people. Many businesses saw the number of young people in Bexleyheath as a big problem. One of the biggest

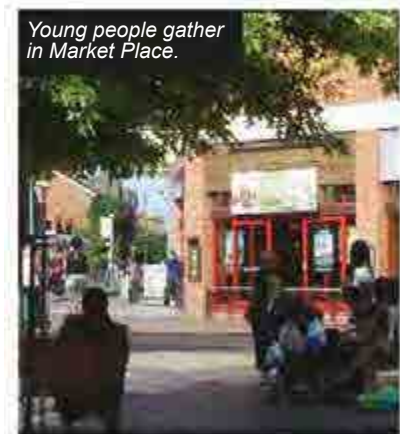
barriers preventing older people and families from using the town centre at night, in the opinion of those interviewed, is the large amount of teenagers and young people in the area. Many retailers listed intimidating groups of young people as one of their major concerns alongside crime and litter. By contrast, since the Council-led crack down on anti-social behaviour and wide spread introduction of over-21 policies, many licensees had seen a rise in older clientele and some had gone out of their way to attract older customers with special events, food and drink. However, there were still concerns about young people in the area at night, particularly in the pedestrianised area of the Broadway.

### 06.7 Diversification

All businesses interviewed expressed a strong desire to attract customers from a wider range of backgrounds. As mentioned previously, some licensees were already attempting to do this with an increased concentration on food, specialist events and age specific nights (e.g. over 30's nights). There was also strong support for an increase in non-alcohol related activities to bring in more families and older people such as outdoor cafés, family-centred events and late night shopping and temporary markets.

### 06.8 Consumers

As well as looking at the opinions of business, the experiences and opinions of consumers and potential consumers of the night time economy were also examined. In particular, the 'missing market' — that is, those over 45 years old and young families. Consumer views were sought through the London Borough of Bexley's 'Talkback' surveys. These are regularly used to engage borough residents on a wide variety of issues. Furthermore, in-depth focus groups and telephone interviews with small groups



Young people gather in Market Place.

of volunteers to explore consumer perceptions in more detail were also used.

### 06.9 Visiting patterns

Nearly half of all those questioned (45%) claimed that they never visited Bexleyheath town centre after 18.00. Only 18% of respondents used the town centre at night once a month or more.

There were a range of reasons given for not using Bexleyheath at night, with many respondents citing a fear of crime and rowdy and intimidating behaviour from young people. Other reasons included lack of adequate late night transport and poor facilities in the town centre. Some respondents commented that the reason they did not visit the town centre was that there was little for people of their age



or tastes to do, many people preferring to socialise in places such as Old Bexley, Greenwich, Bluewater or Central London where they felt their needs were better catered for.

### 06.10 Popular activities

Shopping, eating out and cinema visits were the most popular evening and night time activities for many people questioned. Relatively few people questioned used the bars, pubs and nightclubs in Bexleyheath.

Early to mid-evening was

also the most popular time for visits, with 53% of those saying that 22.00 was the latest they would stay.

### 06.11 Transport

The vast majority of people used cars to get to and from the town centre at night, with only 20% using buses or trains. This finding is unsurprising given that many of the complaints had been about poor public transport.

### 06.12 Concerns

Consumers had a wide range of concerns about going out in Bexleyheath. Crime and disorder was by far the biggest concern, with nearly 80% of respondents citing this reason. As mentioned previously, fear of crime and disorder is given as a reason for many people not to use the town centre at night at all. Other major concerns were lack of visible policing, litter, lack of public toilets and drug dealing.

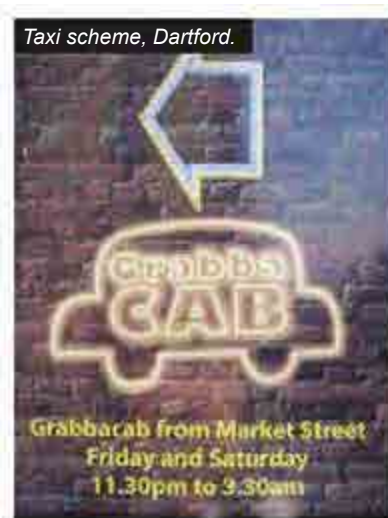
### 06.13 Aspirations

Many people interviewed complained that there simply was nothing in Bexleyheath to encourage them to visit after dark. Many people were keen to see more family-friendly venues and family-orientated activities. More cultural activities and events would also be popular. Indeed, some people were keen to see a theatre in Bexleyheath. More choices of places to

eat - with people asking for a better variety of restaurants and more informal eating opportunities such as cafés - were also high on the aspirations list.

### 06.14 Competition

Many people did not use Bexleyheath at night as they used other areas instead that they felt offered more variety and choice. The most popular areas for socialising at night were Bluewater,



Central London, Dartford, Blackheath and Old Bexley. Central London was popular for its variety, particularly for its cultural offer. Bluewater by contrast was very popular for late-night retail but also for its family provision including good facilities. Smaller areas such as Blackheath and Old Bexley particularly appealed to older consumers who were attracted to the quieter and high quality restaurants and bars offered by these towns.

# 07 urban design analysis

This section sets out the physical and spatial issues that affect the town and its potential after dark



## 07.1 history, landmarks and urban form



Bexleyheath, 1862.



Bexleyheath, 2008.



The windmill on Bexleyheath, mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century.





Bexleyheath was once just an area of heath containing only a few buildings. In 1814, the heathland to the north of Bexley that would become Bexleyheath became subject to an enclosure act. A windmill once stood at the corner of Erith Road and Mayplace Road, an indication of the relative elevation of the area.

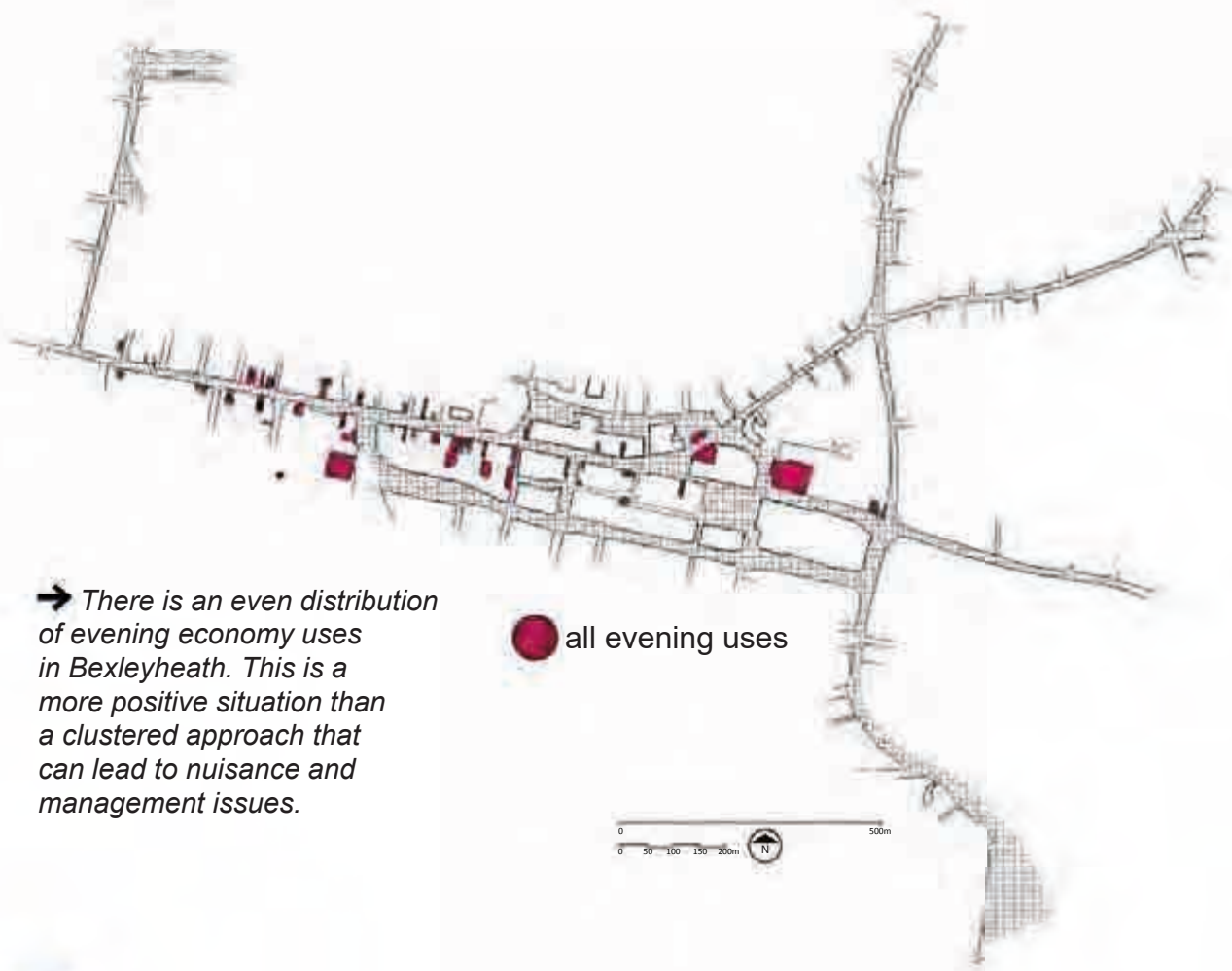
The heath bordered Watling Street, the ancient Roman road between London and Canterbury. This linear street structure remains intact today. Market Place, the principal space in the town, was formed by the junction of Mayplace Road and the Broadway and once had buildings within the central space.

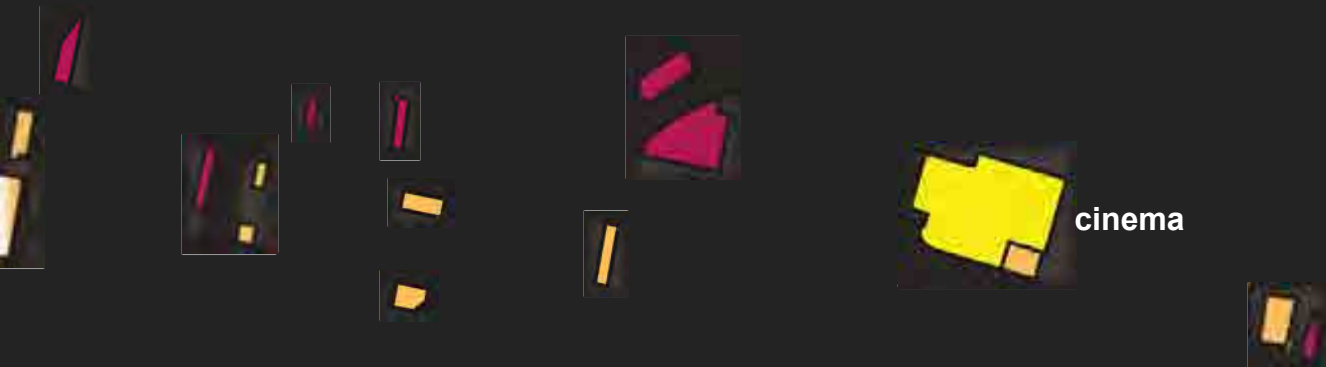
Bexleyheath grew as a London suburb once the railway line arrived in the 1880s supporting the growth of new housing estates around the town.



# the drayman

-  leisure uses
-  pubs and clubs
-  restaurants and cafés
-  taxi office





## 07.2 spatial distribution of evening economy land uses

The evening economy uses have been mapped and their distribution is scattered along the length of the Broadway.

While this lack of clustering prevents 'problem' spots developing it does make moving between venues on a night out difficult due to the distances involved. For example, it is nearly 1km between the cinema and the Drayman pub.

## 07.3 structure of the town: a series of events

As revealed in the historic analysis, the town is stretched along a linear street, comprising Crook Log and the Broadway.

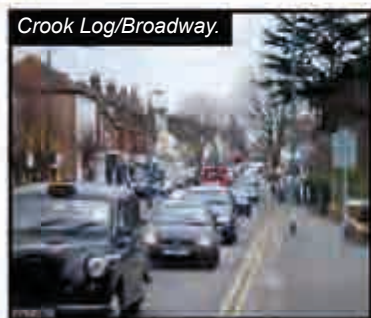
When arriving by rail and then walking to the Market Place and beyond to the cinema, one moves between a series of events - formed by landmarks, key buildings, spaces,



railway station.



The Golden Lion.



Crook Log/Broadway.



Christ Church.



Crook Log/Avenue Road.



Ten Pin.



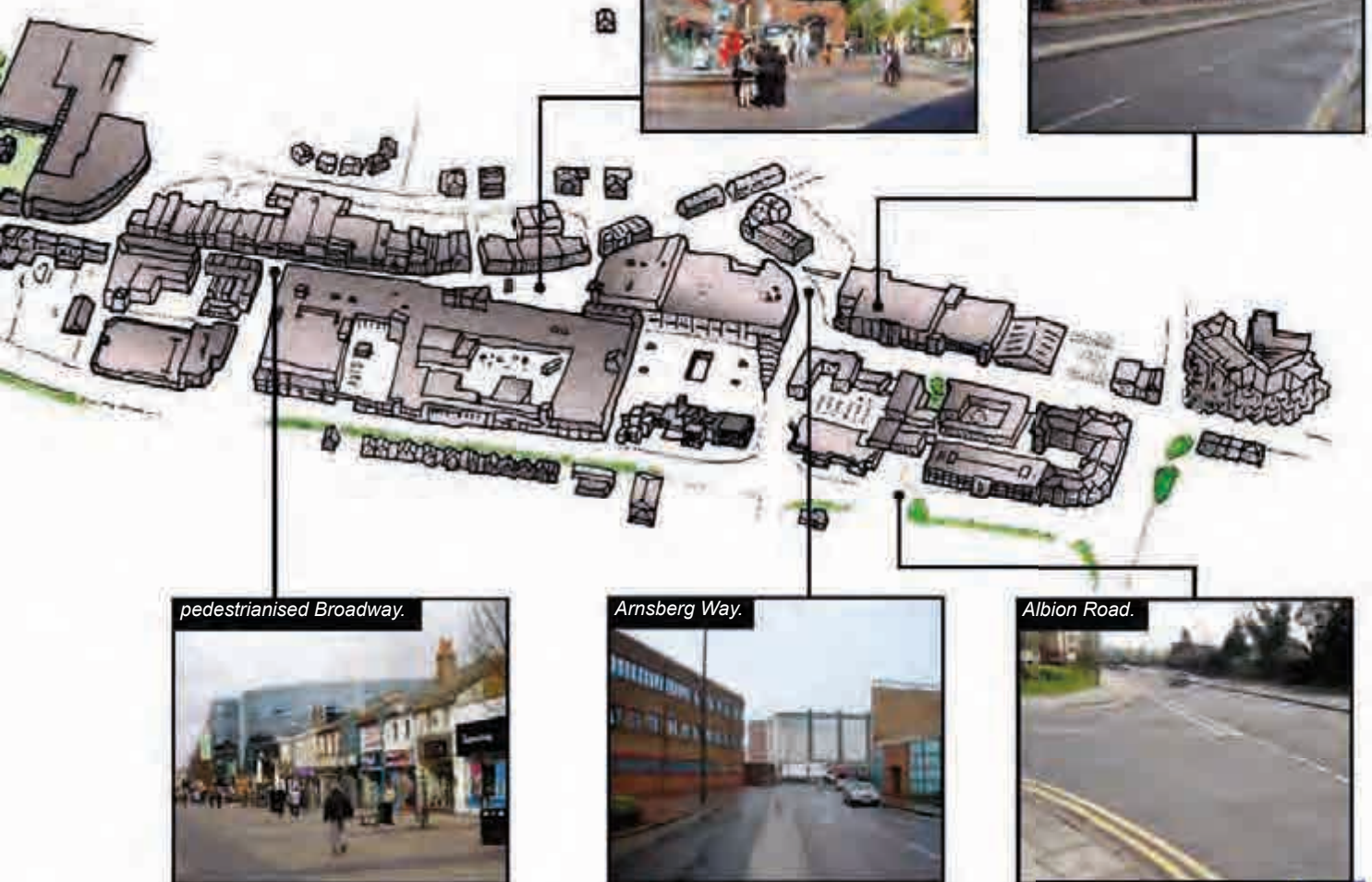
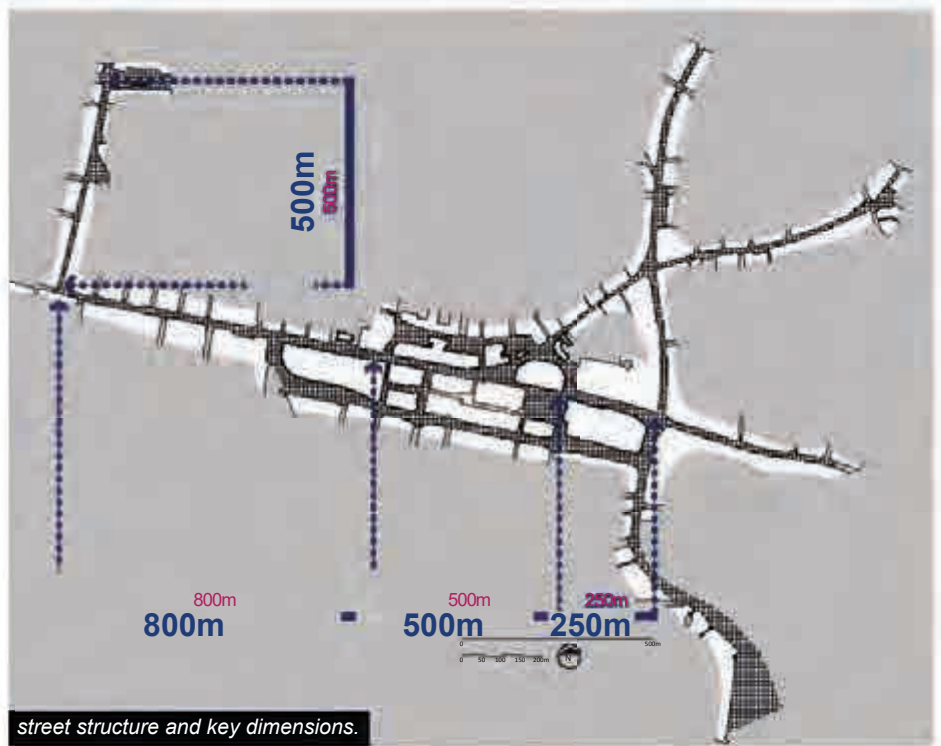
Trinity Chapel.



junctions, points of interest - without which the sense of distance and time would feel greater than it does.

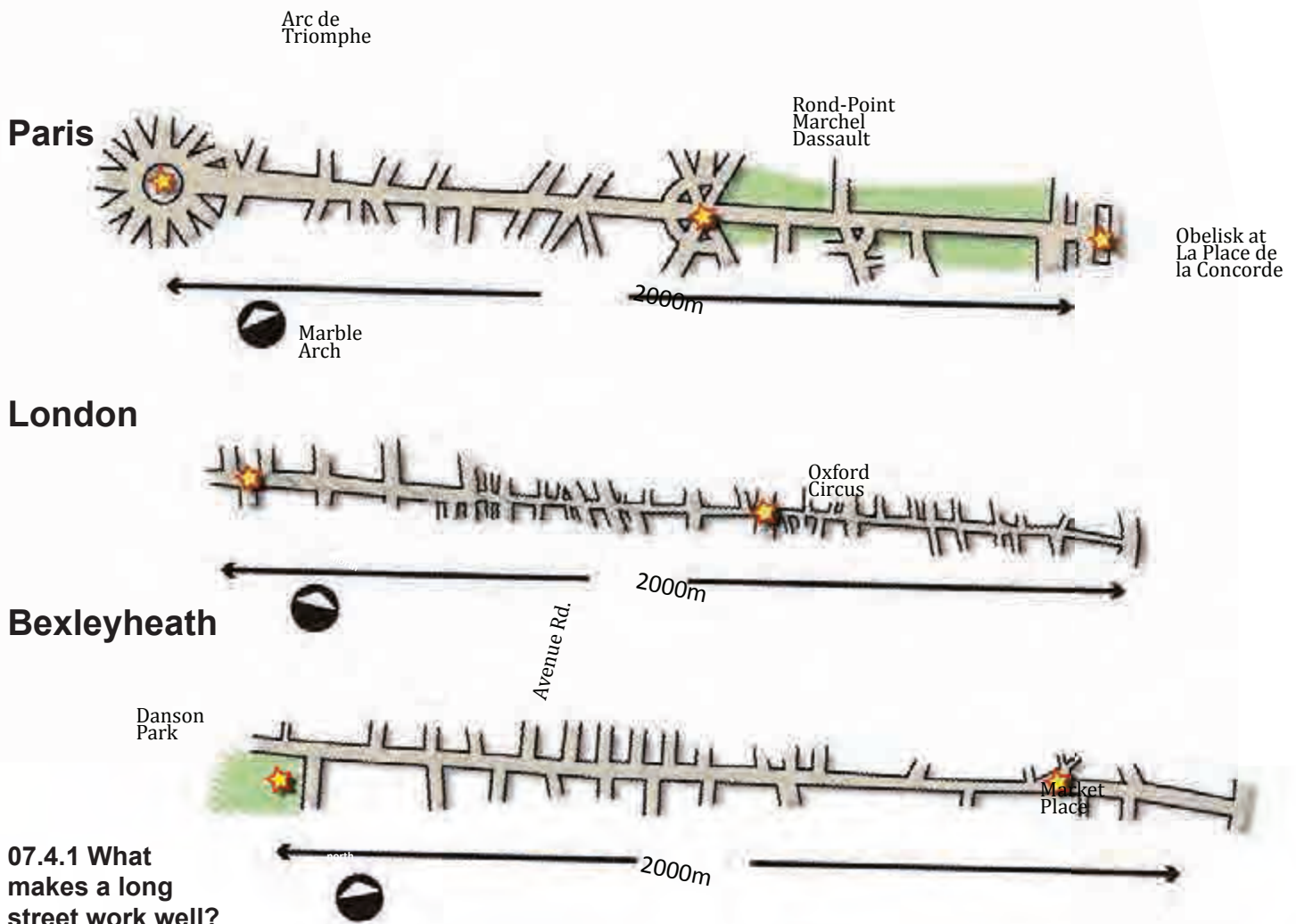
The quality of these events is variable and many present opportunities for significant improvement. For example, the central east-west 500m (see diagram right) formed by the pedestrianised area is successful in daytime but is deserted and hostile after dark.

This concept of a series of events is the basis for the urban design response set out later in this report and in the Development and Improvement Framework.





## 07.4 long straight streets: comparison studies



### 07.4.1 What makes a long street work well?

In Bexleyheath, the town is formed around a 2km spine as measured from the gates of Danson Park in the west to the junction of Erith Road and Gravel Hill in the east.

This is exactly the same length as both the Avenue des Champs-Élysées in Paris, France and Oxford Street in central London.

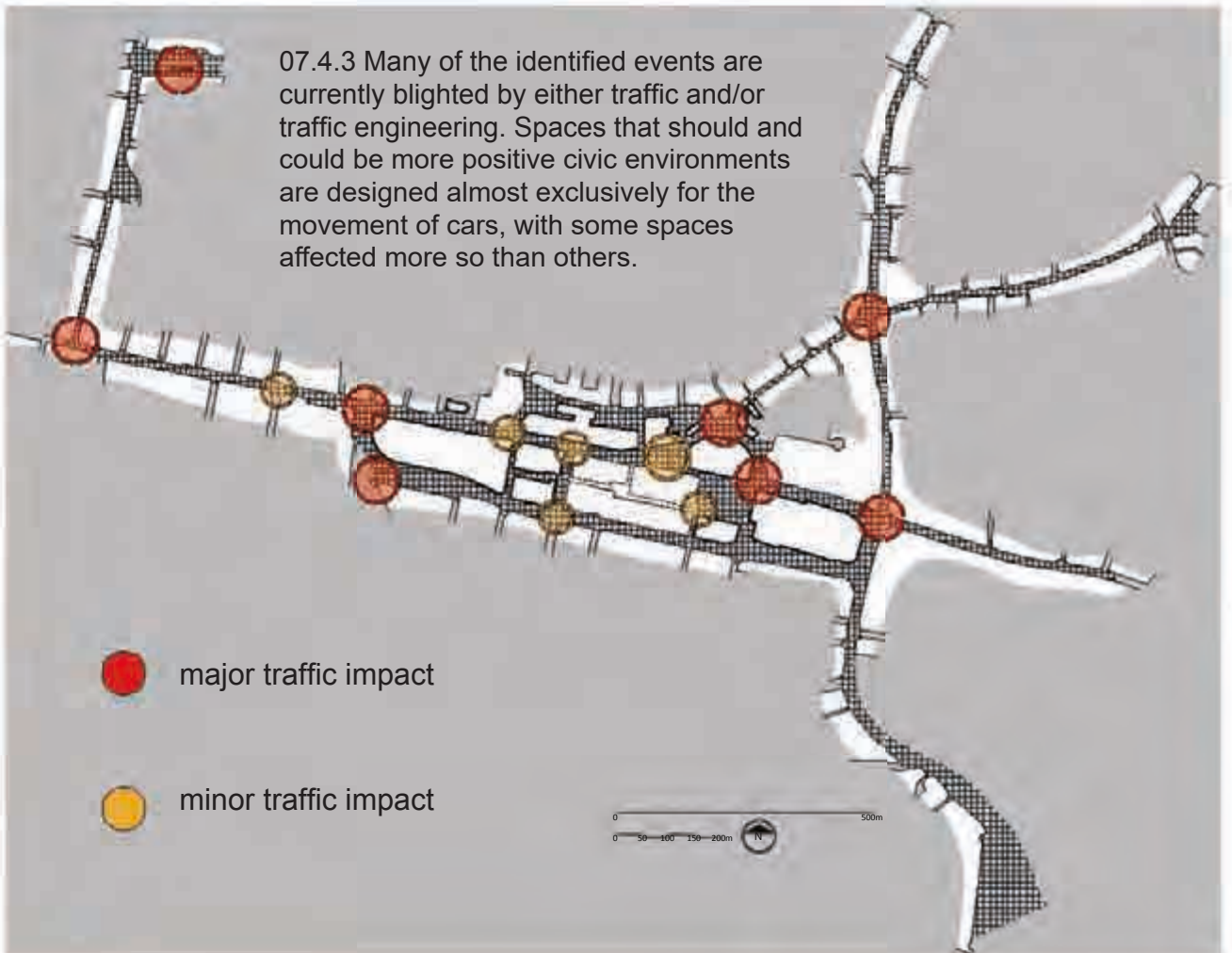
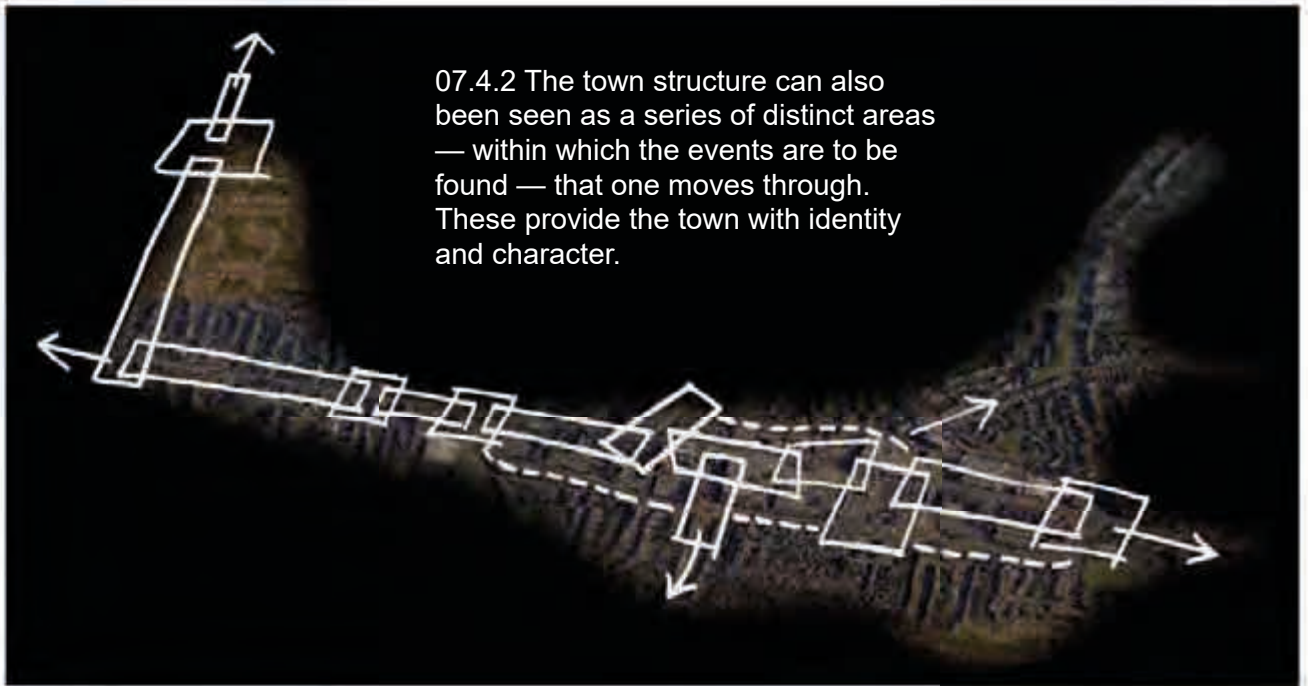
While both these streets are to be found in distinctly different cultural, economic and geographical contexts than that of Bexleyheath

there are certain aspects worth comparison. For instance, the number of side road connections on Oxford Street ensure it is well-connected with the rest of town making it a superior shopping street while the width of the Champs-Élysées allows for the easy introduction of outdoor seating.

The Broadway has many side roads at its western end but has relatively few in the east, cutting it off somewhat from its immediate surroundings.

Both London and Paris have key events around the 1.3km mark along the 2km length - Oxford Circus in London and the Rond-Point Marcel Dassault in Paris - helping break up the length.

At this same point in Bexleyheath, there is a traffic junction in front of Trinity Chapel and this presents a key intervention opportunity (see page 56 and 76 - 79).



## 07.5 greening the town

This image shows how the town centre needs to reach out to the area immediately beyond and connect to existing areas of green space.

There is relatively little green space within the town centre and given that the centre is heavily constrained by engineered relief roads both north and south of the centre, space is at a premium and should be used efficiently for built form development.

Tree-lining just three or four key streets - turning them into boulevards or avenues - will help identify the routes out from the centre to green space, making the town more legible and bring fingers of landscape into the centre. Additional greening within the town centre will also help to soften and frame buildings and public spaces.









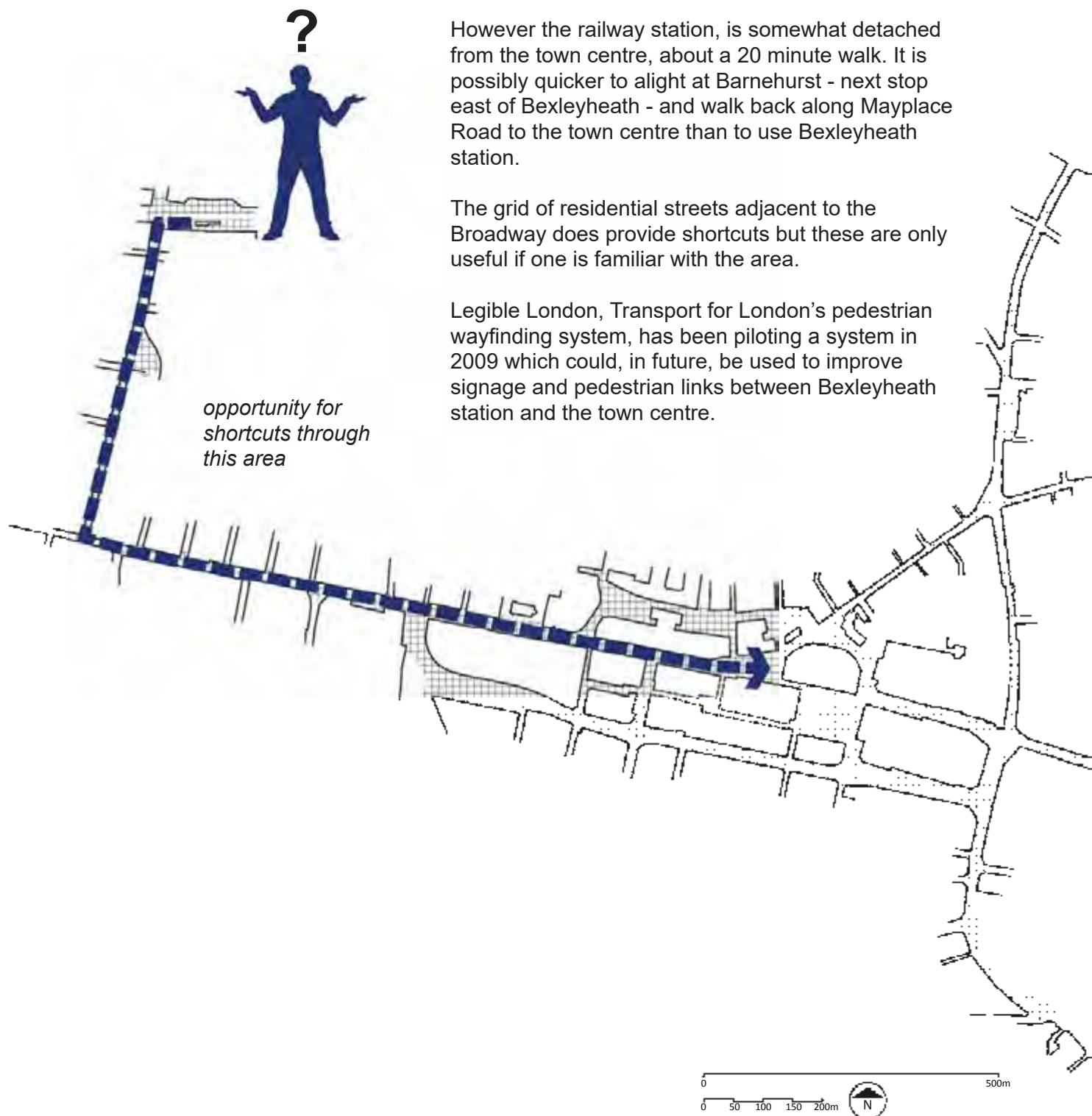
## 07.6 town centre and railway station

Bexleyheath is served by frequent rail connections to Central London, South East London and Kent.

However the railway station, is somewhat detached from the town centre, about a 20 minute walk. It is possibly quicker to alight at Barnehurst - next stop east of Bexleyheath - and walk back along Mayplace Road to the town centre than to use Bexleyheath station.

The grid of residential streets adjacent to the Broadway does provide shortcuts but these are only useful if one is familiar with the area.

Legible London, Transport for London's pedestrian wayfinding system, has been piloting a system in 2009 which could, in future, be used to improve signage and pedestrian links between Bexleyheath station and the town centre.





welcome to Bexleyheath.



signage is essential for the visitor.



one of the residential streets that provide a short cut to the town centre — but only if you know the place well.



←←← *Examples of the residential areas that surround the town centre.*

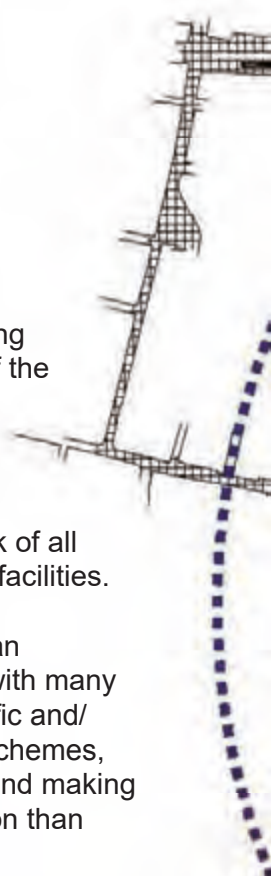


Immediately surrounding the commercial core of the town centre is a substantial residential catchment, the majority of which are within a 12 minute walk of all the main services and facilities.

However, the pedestrian experience is lacking with many streets blighted by traffic and/or traffic engineering schemes, discouraging walking and making it a less attractive option than driving.

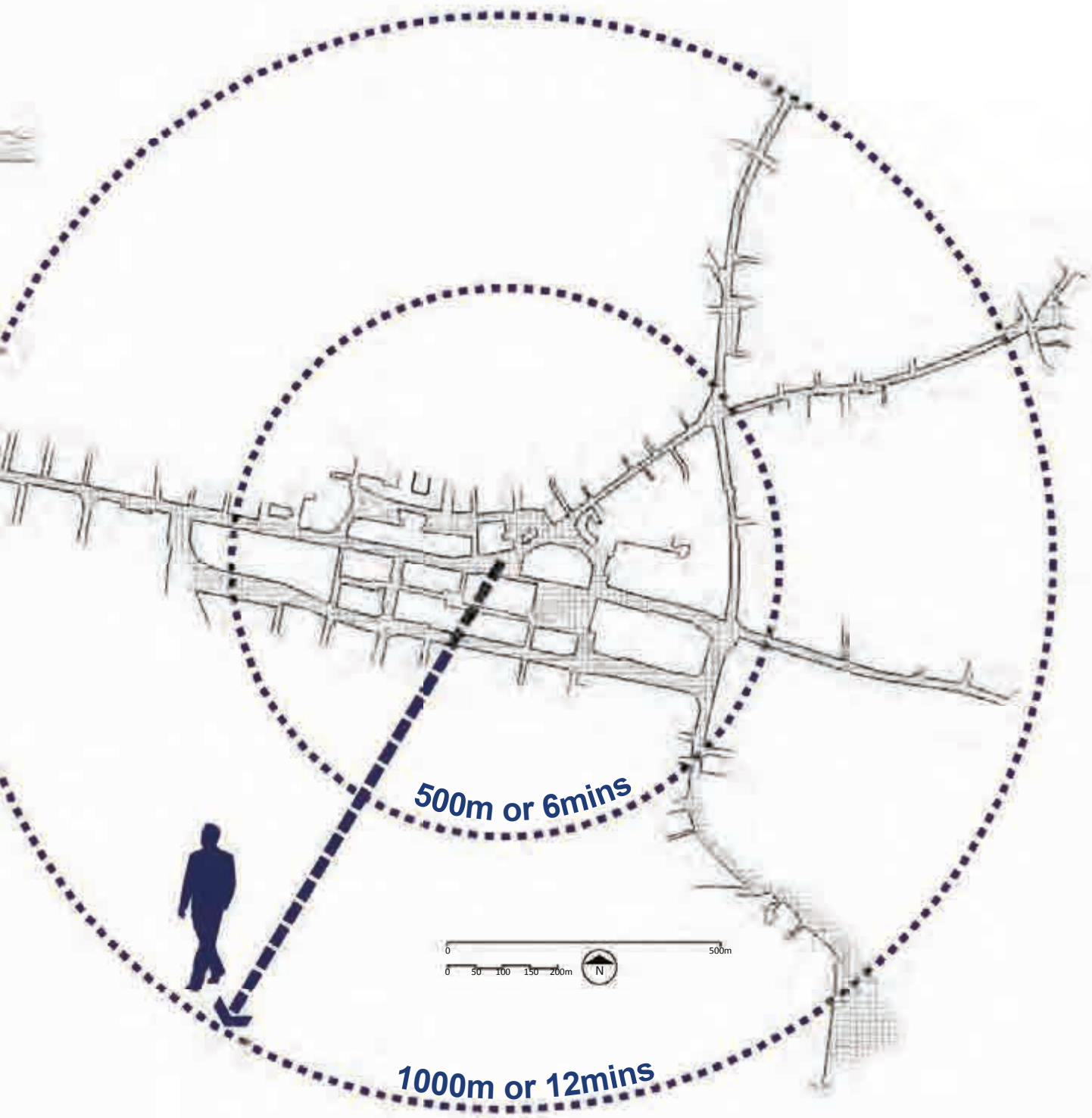


This is a significant problem as once a potential Bexleyheath customer has got into a car, they often decide to travel to a competitor town or venue (e.g. Bluewater) further afield. The town needs to reconnect with its immediate hinterland and work to serve its own residents better as well as attracting in visitors from elsewhere.





07.7 the local residential catchment







← *Pickford Road, one of a sequence of side roads that effectively connects western Broadway with its immediate surroundings.*

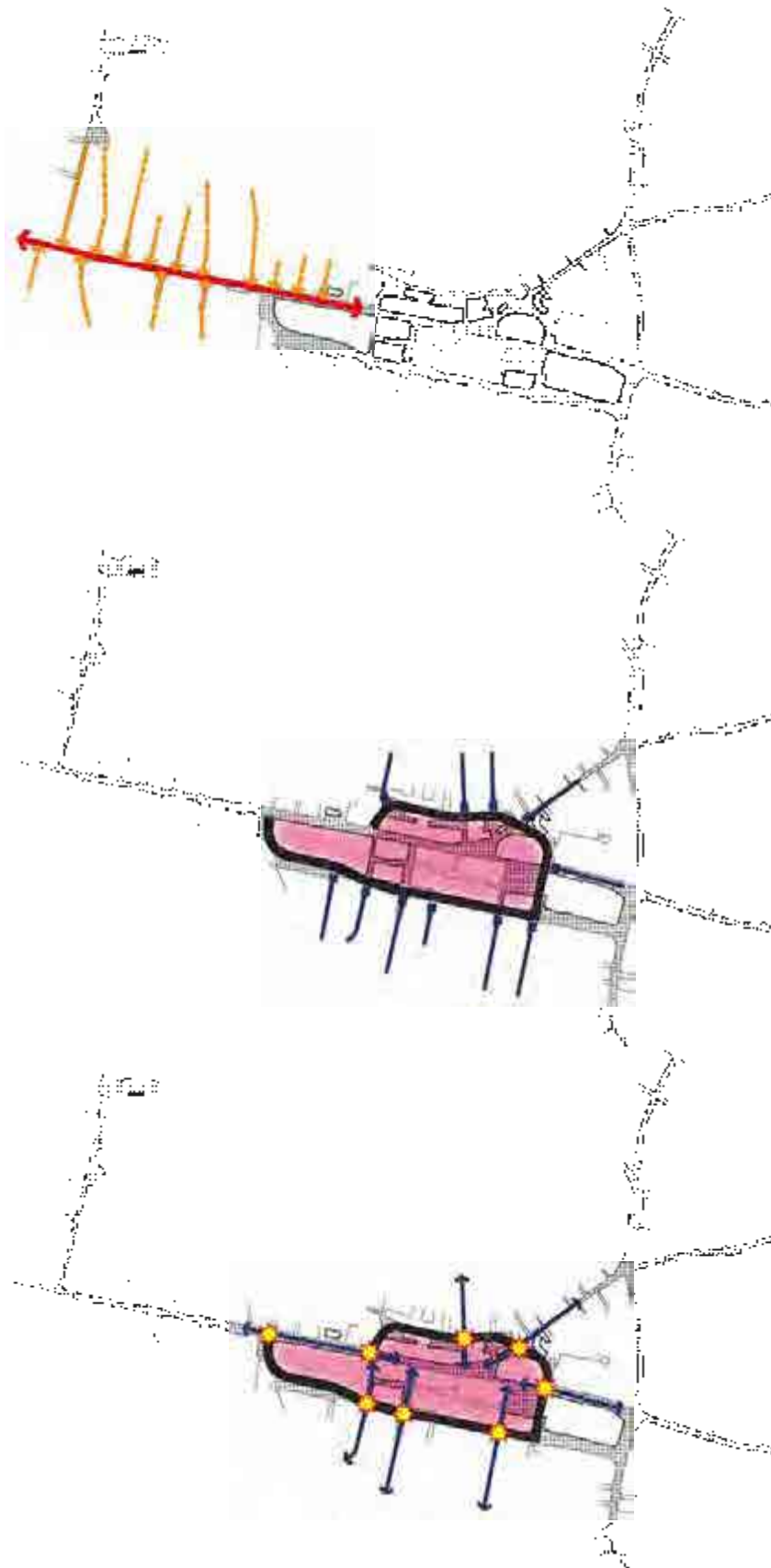


← *Townley Road is a key link south from the commercial core to an adjacent residential neighbourhood yet the wide road and roundabout are difficult to negotiate on foot. When faced with this sort of environment, driving can become a more attractive option.*



← *Norwich Place (foreground) is completely severed from the nearby Pincott Road (background) by traffic-engineering schemes. These two streets are only metres apart but it is impossible to move between them in a direct manner.*

## 07.8 increasing accessibility



← 07.8.1 The western end of Broadway (red line) is characterised by a series of side roads (orange lines) that connect it to its surroundings. While this part of Broadway may not be the most economically successful part of town — with low order retail and some void units — it is active both day and night, certainly a result of these good connections.

← 07.8.2 The commercial core of the town (pink shading) is contained by Arnsberg Way and Albion Road, both wide roads with limited crossing points for pedestrians. This makes the central area highly accessible by car but not by foot, with many side roads in this part of town (blue lines) failing to connect fully with the centre.

← 07.8.3 Physical interventions (yellow stars) are required to reconnect the commercial core with its immediate surroundings — lessons from the western end of Broadway are applicable here. More direct and more convenient pedestrian access and a reduction in the level and severity of the severance caused by the traffic engineering solutions of the recent past.





## 07.9 removing barriers

←←← Many junctions in Bexleyheath are cluttered with guard rails, frustrating pedestrian movement.

*This is significant problem for the evening economy as many people would like to leave the car at home in order to enjoy a drink. The cost of an evening can be increased substantially through taxi fares and public transport is perceived as poor (see survey data pages 30 — 33).*

*Therefore, given the latent customer base in the form of an immediate residential catchment (see page 46 — 47) it is vital that the quality of the public realm is improved to enable the town to maximise the economic opportunities presented by local residents walking into town in the evenings.*



→→→ Simple cost-effective interventions, such as the re-modeling of crossing points to work without railings (shown opposite in central London) can make a huge contribution to both pedestrian safety and the quality and attractiveness of streets and spaces. It is recognised that high-end food and drink investors require a high quality public realm.

++

**10 November, 2008  
15:14 (GMT +00:00)**

Mayor Boris Johnson is set to order the removal of hundreds of roadside safety barriers from London's busy streets - to improve safety.

A trial in the West End debunked the theory that metal railings made pedestrians and motorists safer after 600 yards of the cage like fencing was removed - with incidents falling nearly 44% in the three years after September 2003.

Often described as ugly by motorists, the railings are a common irritant for pedestrians who are herded towards the snaking railings.

Johnson will also order Transport for London to remove signposts and utilities from the edge of roads - the moves are seen as another part of the Mayor's 'Quality of Life' agenda.

Mr. Johnson said the 'pavements have become an obstacle course of pointless street furniture and sheep-dip-style railings.'

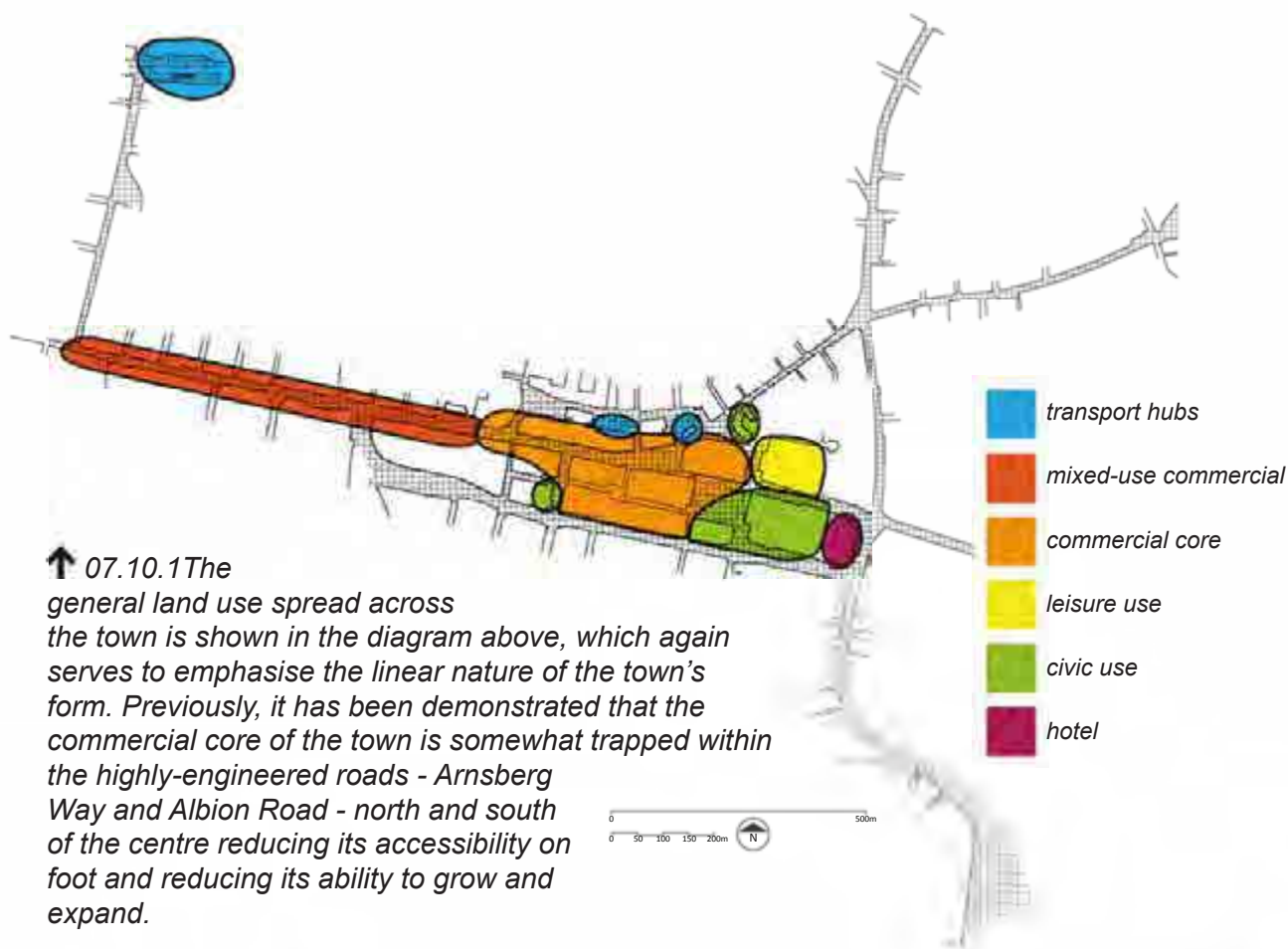
The concept of a 'shared space' is common on the roads of the Netherlands, where signs, lines and traffic lights are removed from many roads.

The idea being that cars, cyclists and pedestrians coexist more safely when the boundaries between them are blurred - all becoming more aware of each other.

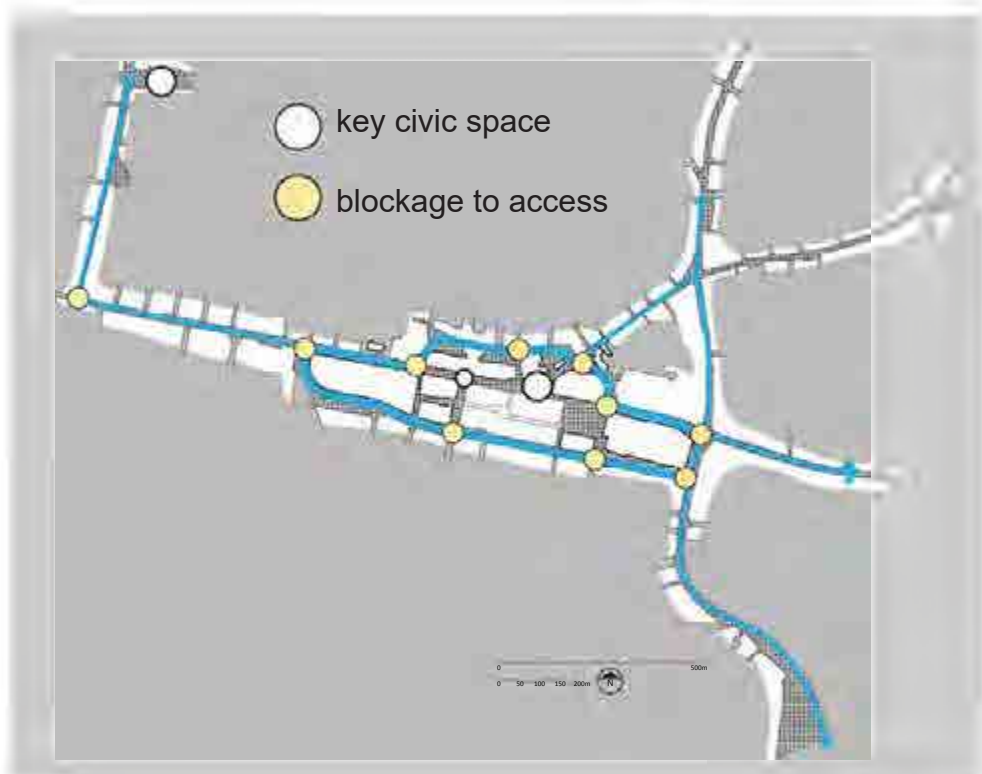




## 07.10 spread of uses

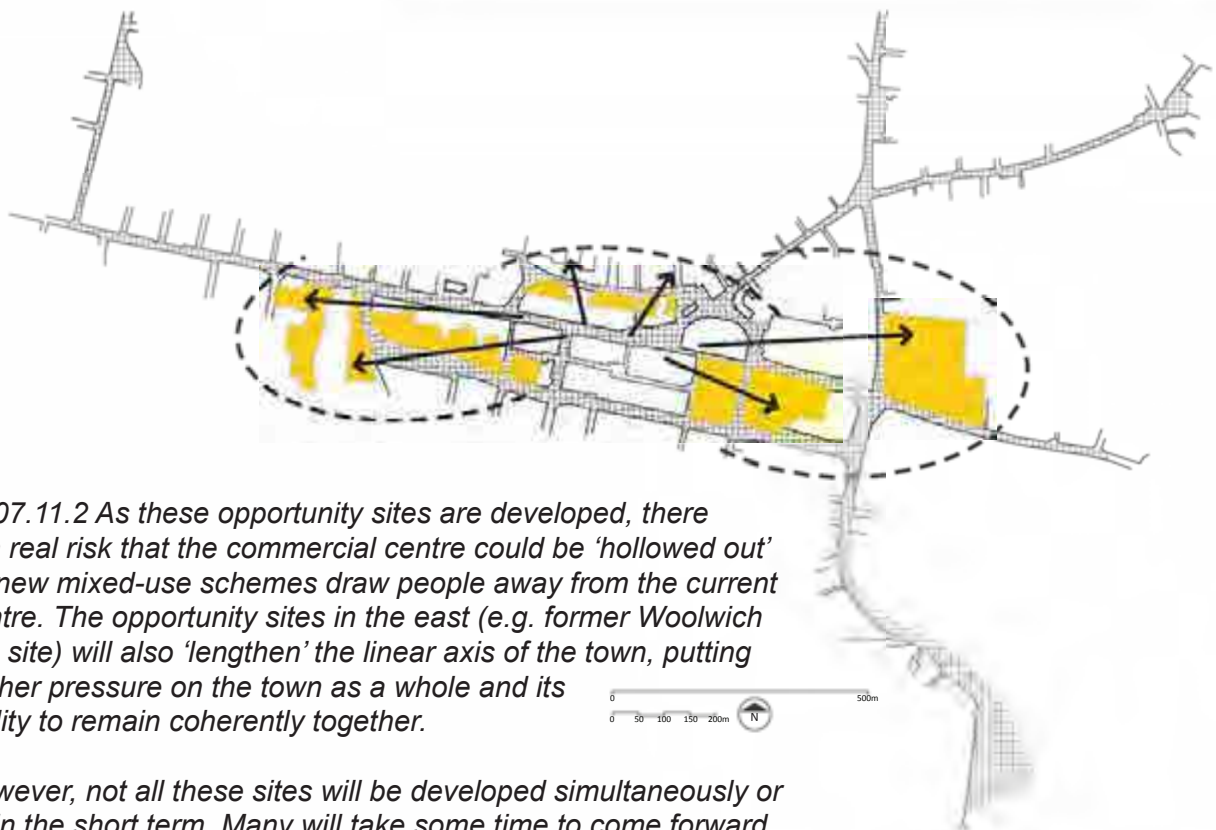


→ 07.10.2 The key spaces in the centre, including Market Place (white dots) are within the central core with limited access. For these spaces to fulfil their role - both day and night - the barriers to access in the form of wide roads (blue lines) and difficult junctions (yellow dots) need to be overcome.



## 07.11 development opportunities

→ 07.11.1 In and around the town centre are areas of under-utilised land, redevelopment opportunities and gap sites, some of which are shown in yellow, diagram right. These have the potential to be developed to strengthen the economic and social base of the town, as well as providing the urban environment with new bits of high-quality townscape. The potential of these sites is considered in more detail in the Bexleyheath Development and Improvement Framework.



↑ 07.11.2 As these opportunity sites are developed, there is a real risk that the commercial centre could be 'hollowed out' as new mixed-use schemes draw people away from the current centre. The opportunity sites in the east (e.g. former Woolwich HQ site) will also 'lengthen' the linear axis of the town, putting further pressure on the town as a whole and its ability to remain coherently together.

However, not all these sites will be developed simultaneously or all in the short term. Many will take some time to come forward to market giving the town centre time to meet this challenge, to improve its accessibility and to reinvent its balance of day time and night time activities. The Broadway Development and Improvement Framework sets out a mix of uses for these sites, which will help to ensure the viability and vitality of the town in the long term.

# 08 design response

This section shows how design interventions can help shape and change to town after dark. The interventions are in direct response to the analysis undertaken in the previous section

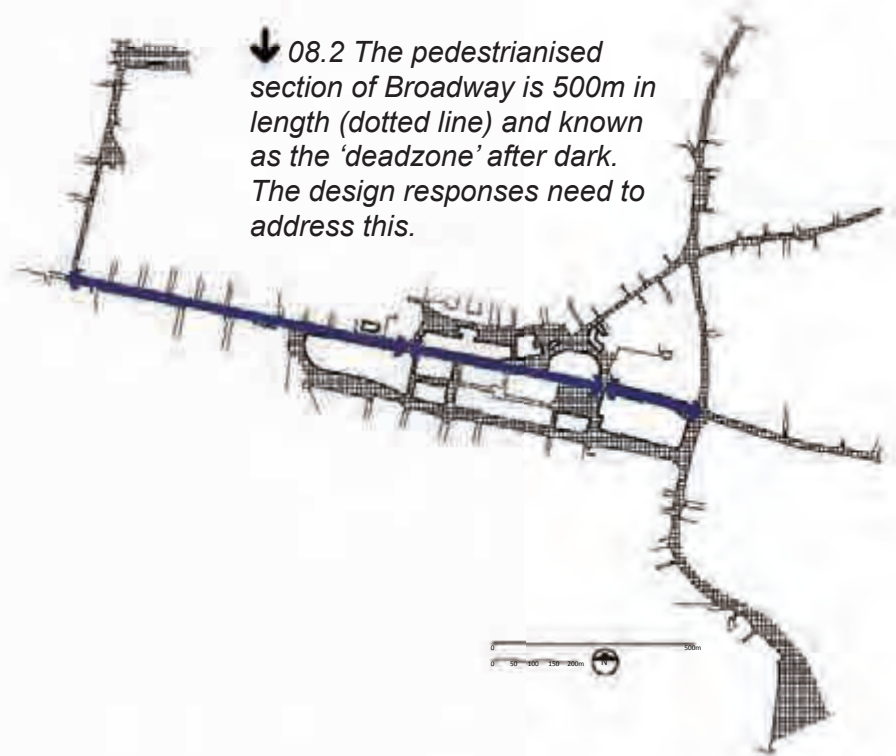


## 08.1 issues to address

The urban design analysis on preceding pages has identified several key themes that present challenges to the night time economy. These are as follows and need to be addressed through an appropriate design response:

- the lack of activity after dark on the pedestrianised section of the Broadway
- the lack of accessibility on foot to the eastern end of town
- the challenging linear form of the town
- the generally poor quality of the public realm
- the disruption to pedestrian flows caused by recent traffic-engineering schemes.

↓ 08.2 The pedestrianised section of Broadway is 500m in length (dotted line) and known as the 'deadzone' after dark. The design responses need to address this.



*the Broadway at night: very low activity levels.*



*the Broadway during the day: a busy shopping street.*





## 08.3 places from spaces strategy



To overcome the challenge of the linear form of the town, to improve the public realm — and so encourage people to spend time in the town — and encourage new investment, it is recommended that a series of new civic places are created from existing spaces. The aim is to ensure nobody in and around the town centre is further than 200m from a quality civic place.

### KEY

Four basic types of space have been identified. Additional work is required to refine and define these ideas further. Some of these spaces are further refined and defined in the Development and Improvement Framework.

-  **Focal:** Young, dynamic and energetic.
-  **Supportive:** Classic in style and often heritage-led.
-  **Movement:** A radical rethink on traffic priorities.
-  **Arrival:** Transit-orientated spaces.



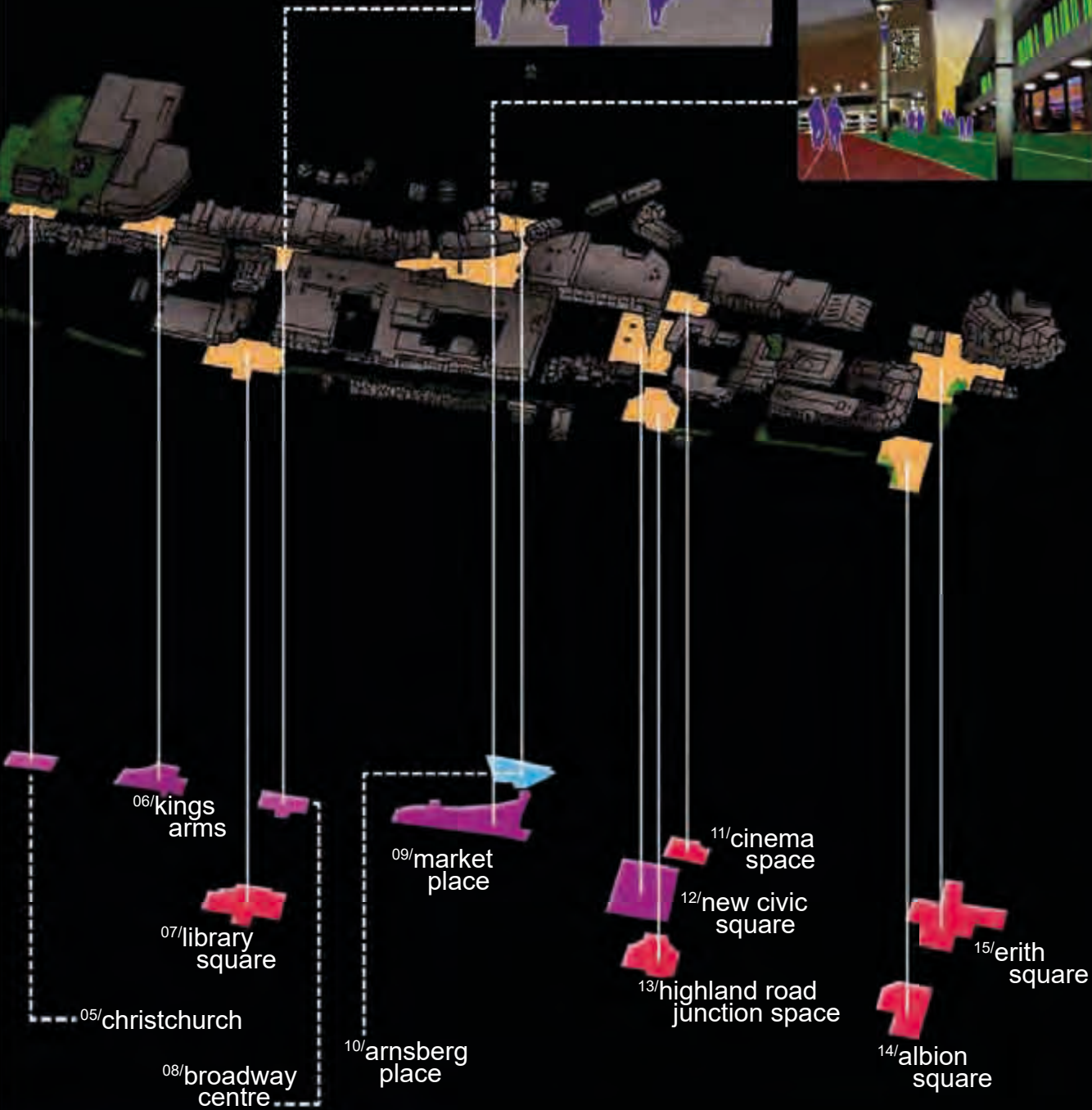
A further advantage of this strategy stems from the relatively compact size of each space allowing works to be phased and funded from smaller finance streams than if long lengths of street were to be refurbished.

08 / broadway centre.



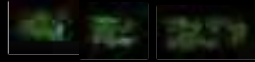
For further details of spaces 04, 08 and 09, see pages 74 — 91).

09 / market place.





# 08.4 building floodlight strategy






To support the 'places from spaces' strategy explained in 08.2 — and so further encourage people to spend time in the town — a series of key buildings have been identified suitable for specific lighting treatment by virtue of architectural merit, historic significance or strategic

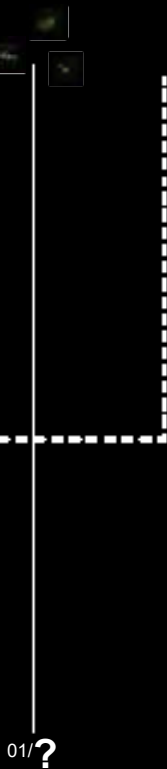


*The Drayman — one of the few buildings at present with a dramatic lighting scheme.*

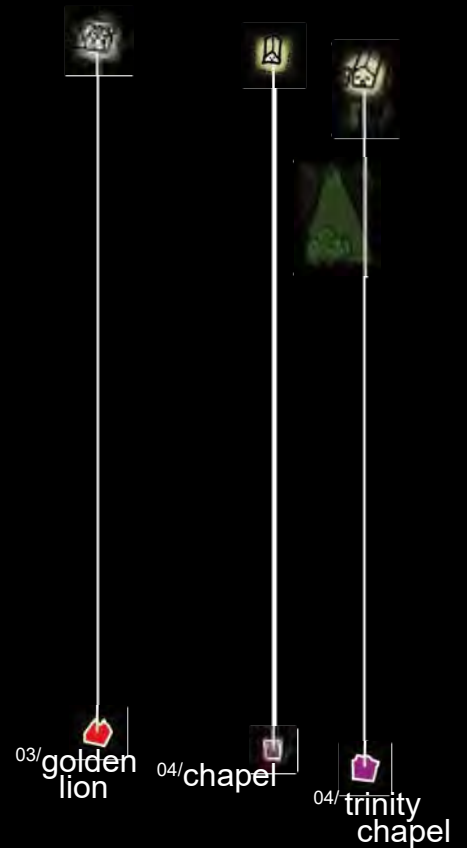
## KEY

Three basic types of buildings suitable for floodlighting have been identified. Additional work is required to refine and define these ideas further:

-  **Ecclesiastical:** Respect yet opportunity to be bold.
-  **Historic/Pub:** Welcoming to all and positive.
-  **Modern:** Opportunity to add flair and excitement.



02/?



05/christ church -----

location. The concept is to limit the number of buildings treated in this way to ensure they remain special and distinctive.

These buildings should be picked out from their neighbours and surroundings with clear bespoke lights. The aim

is to produce variety and interest by creating lighting 'spikes' that avoid uniformity in lighting that can 'flatten' a town after dark.

Design assessment has revealed that there are eight buildings suitable for specific floodlight treatment in the central area of the town. This leaves significant gaps at either end of the linear axis.

Future new development proposals in and around locations 01, 02, 10 and 11 in the diagram below should aim to be of a standard high enough to be suitable for floodlighting.








## 08.5 street lighting strategy

To support the places from spaces and floodlighting strategies, a street lighting strategy has been developed. As with the building lighting strategy, the aim of this design response is to produce variety and interest by creating a differentiated lighting pattern, avoiding the uniformity that currently exists in Bexleyheath.

Different streets serve different functions and their lighting schemes should reflect this. Lighting is a key mechanism that encourages people into the places where they are welcome and wanted and discourages them from other parts of town — people tend to want to be in the brighter busier areas. Therefore, in certain circumstances, it may be appropriate to leave some areas unlit.

### KEY

Five basic types of streets have been identified for specific lighting treatments. Additional work is required to refine and define these ideas further:

-  **Dwell areas:** Places where people should be encouraged to go.
-  **Key connectors:** Essential streets linking the dwell areas.
-  **Traffic routes:** Connections to residential areas to the north and east.
-  **Access route:** Providing a clear and obvious link from the station.
-  **Boulevard lights:** Bespoke lighting for tree-lined streets.



Please note that the colours shown here are diagrammatic only and are used simply to depict the different areas under consideration. They should not be interpreted as the actual lighting colours intended.



## 08.6 introduce activity into the dead zone after dark

The differences in activity levels identified between the western end and the central section of the Broadway after dark can be partly explained by the absence or presence of traffic.

Traffic is present in the west - where activity levels are higher and the street feels safer and more enjoyable to be in - but is absent in the

central area where activity levels are low and the street feels desolate and hostile.

It is recommended that a study be undertaken to assess the best way of raising activity levels in the central area.

The introduction of traffic and/or kiosk-type structures into the existing

pedestrianised area should be given particular consideration.

Traffic access will also encourage food and drink operators into the area, the clientele for which often arrive by car (either self-drive or drop-off) or by taxi.

There are significant issues that any future study must



address. These areas of investigation are beyond the scope of this report but include amongst others:

- the precise direction of travel and safe mixing with pedestrians
- the exact timings of entry and exit e.g. after 18.00 until 02.00.
- the type of vehicle -

private car, taxi, or bus?

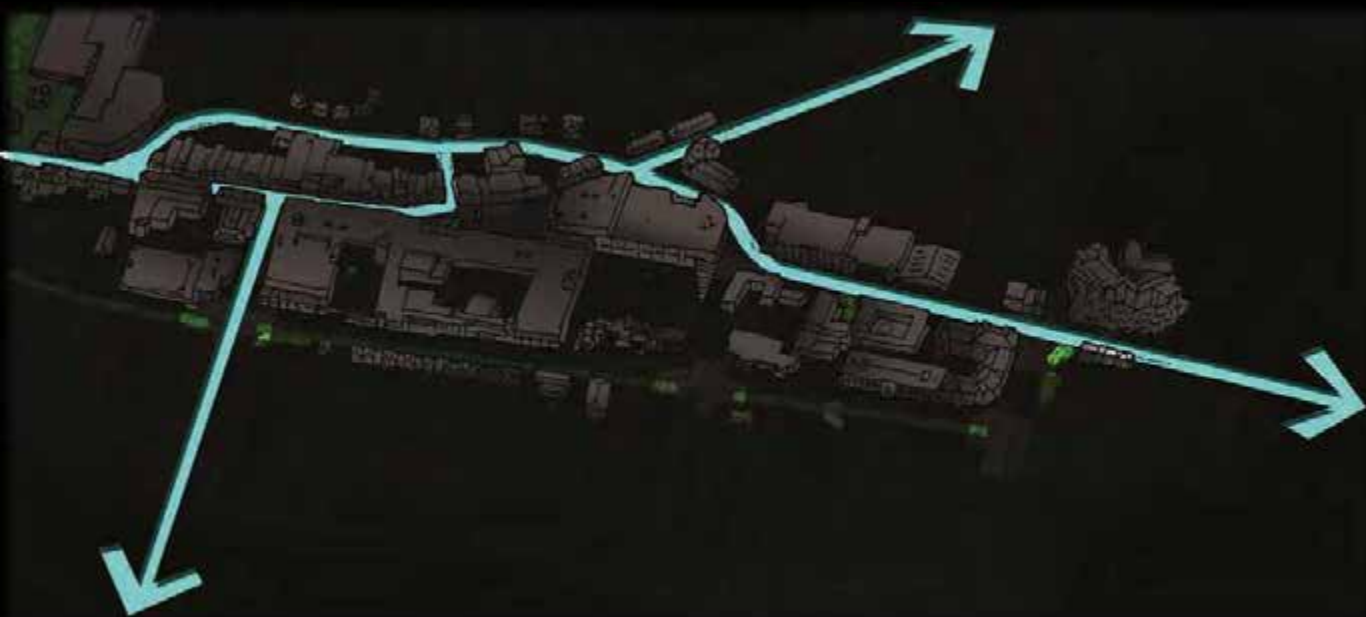
- mechanisms for restricting access to non-permitted vehicles e.g. smart bollards
- street widths, services and utilities and fire corridors
- new surface materials robust enough to accommodate vehicle

tracking

- the potential issues related to the erection of kiosk structures on the highway

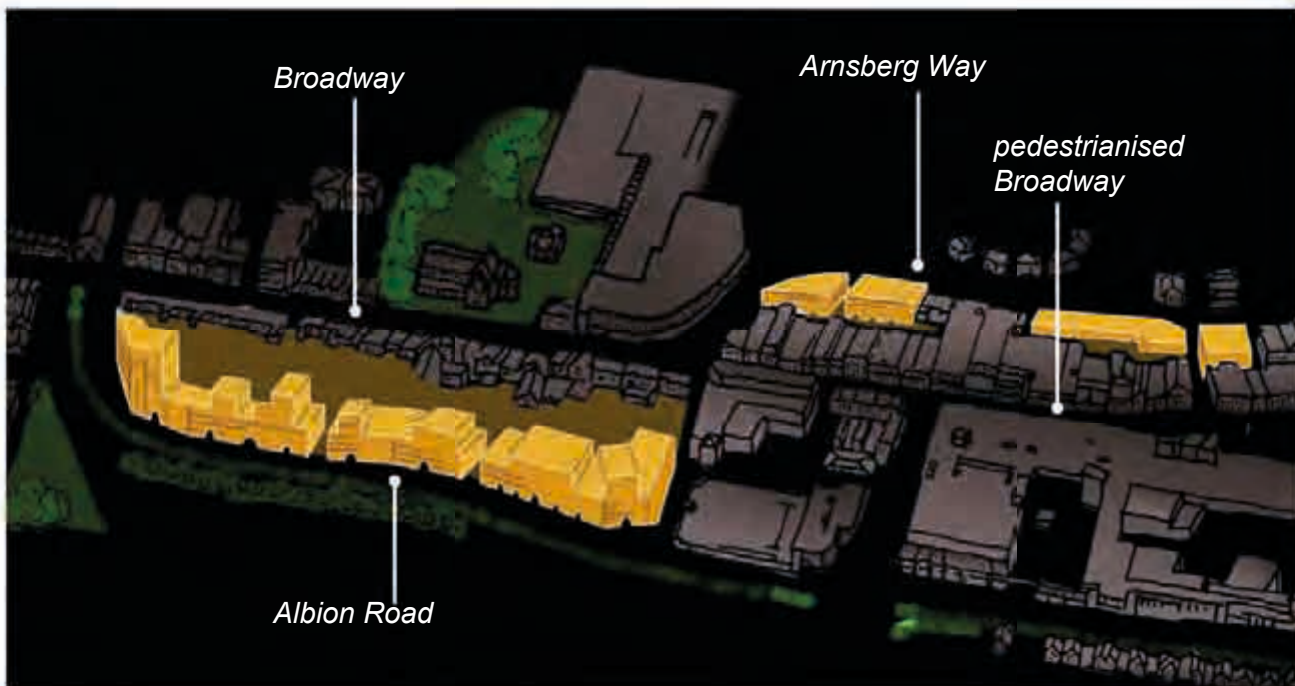
↓ 08.6.1 A potential after dark vehicle route that penetrates Broadway via Townley Road and Friswell Place is shown here, in light blue arrows.

*Illustrative only - other options may be more suitable subject to traffic study*





## 08.7 new development to support the commercial core



↑ 08.7.1 Central gaps sites were identified in the urban design analysis (see pages 53). This design response suggests new development, shown here in illustrative 'cartoon' form to indicate basic massing, height and orientation principles only. Additional design work beyond the scope of this study is required to refine these ideas further. Potential development sites including their extent and land use are considered in more detail in the Bexleyheath Development and Improvement Framework.

**Albion Road** could accommodate a degree of active, commercial, ground floors - particularly at either end with residential above. Care is needed to maintain service access behind. **Arnsberg Way** can accommodate a finer grain frontage, with active ground floors. Development proposals would need to consider replacement of any car parking, servicing or access, lost as a result of development.



← **Arnsberg Way:** Blank walls, lack of active frontage and very limited natural surveillance. Can new development on gaps sites help correct this?

→ **Albion Road:** Lacking any sense of enclosure, activity or built form - designed purely to move vehicles and very pedestrian hostile. Can it be reinvented and a new 'address street' for the town?

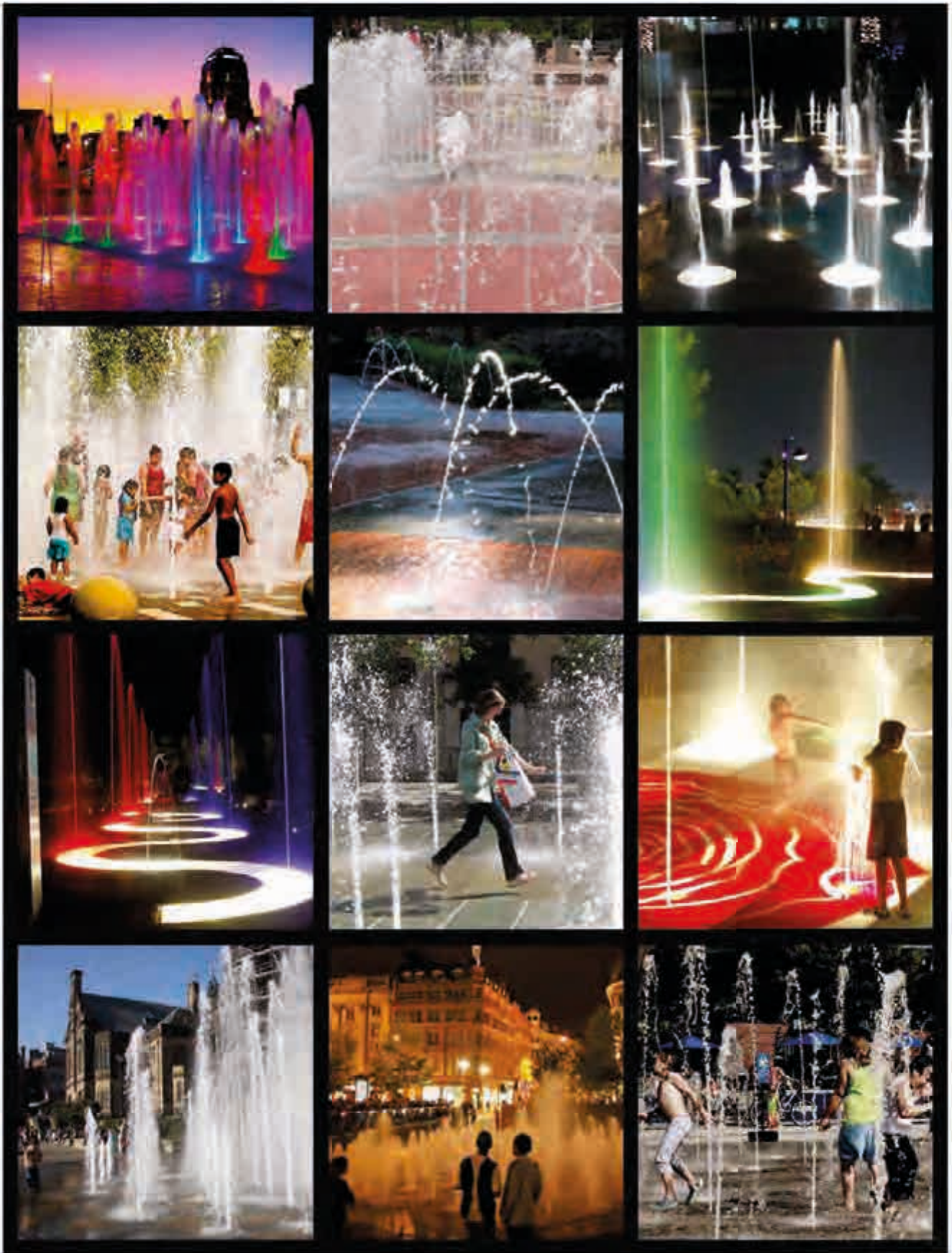


→ **Arnsberg Way:** Suffers from the same problems as Albion Road but also offers the town great opportunities.



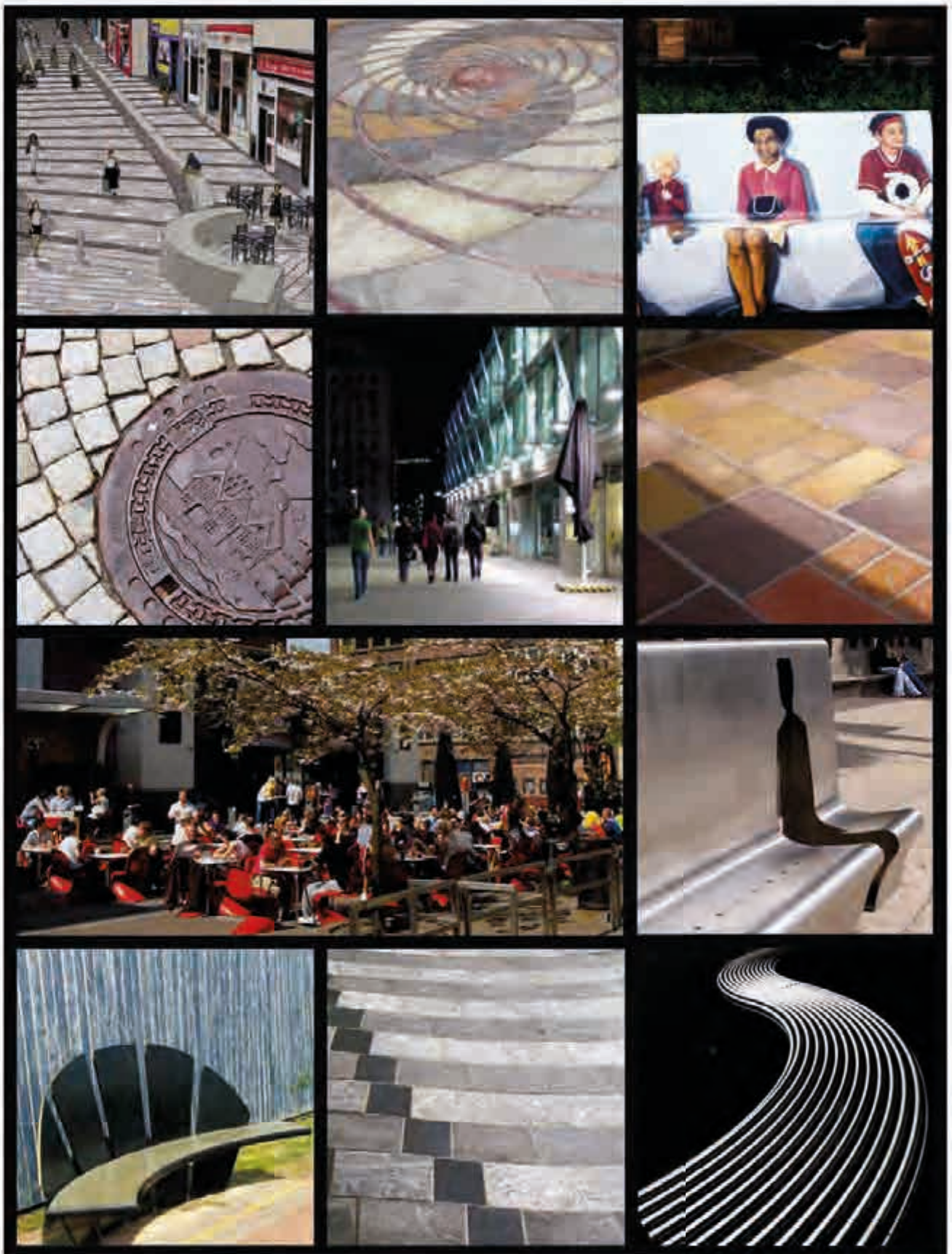
*To support the design responses 08.1 through to 08.7 there follows a series of 'image banks' on pages 66 - 72 containing ideas on different key themes to inspire and inform.*





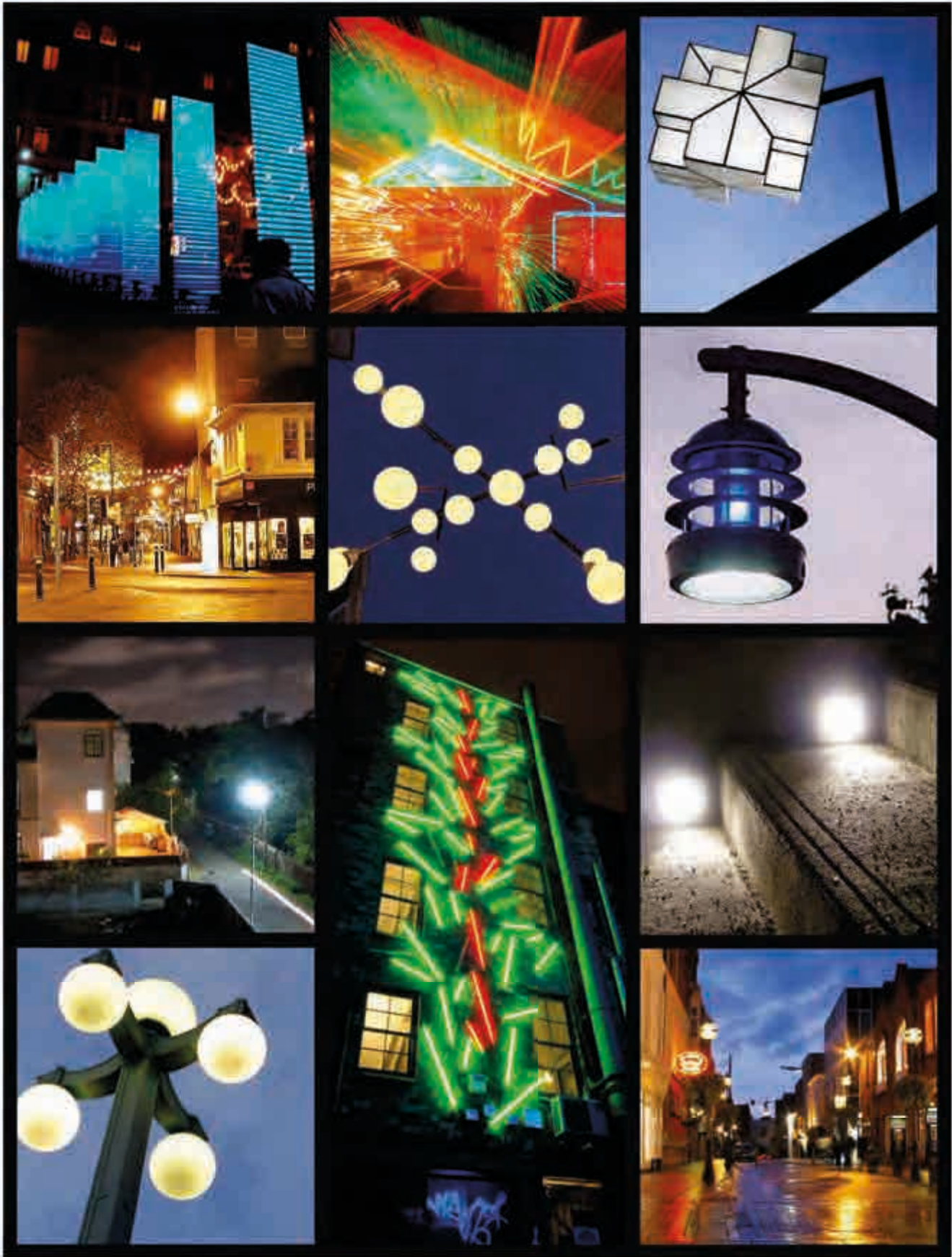
08.8 image bank: ideas for new water feature





08.9 image bank: public realm enhancements





08.10 image bank: ideas for new street lighting





08.11 image bank: ideas for new building floodlighting





← **Laser graffiti:** A Dutch project using theatrical projection equipment that allows writing and drawings to be temporarily applied to building facades using laser technology. The facade of the Broadway Square shopping development could provide a suitable 'canvas'.

*These projects are often promoted as part of lighting festivals and deliver great interaction and engagement with children and hard to reach youth groups.*



*This concept is ideally suited for after dark urban environments and uses portable equipment that is easy to install on-site.*



## 08.12 image bank: youth lighting project in Rotterdam



↑ **New kiosk development in the centre of Market Place:** This space is at present open and undeveloped, providing a clear-span for events and festivals even if it is currently cluttered with street furniture. However, it did once contain built form at its centre (see plan page 35). Could a small-scale modern new development go back into the centre of Market Place to complement the kiosk type development proposed in the pedestrian area? A detailed Development and Design Brief could be considered to assess this.

→ **Service issues:** The Bournemouth Square pavilion café has an attractive front but the rear service area blights the space behind. This type of problem must be overcome through the Development and Design Brief process.



## 08.13 image bank: new pavilion building for Market Place

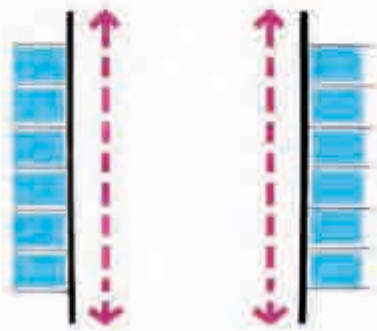




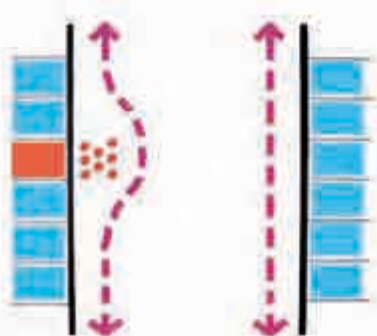
08.14 image bank: outdoor seating in northern Europe



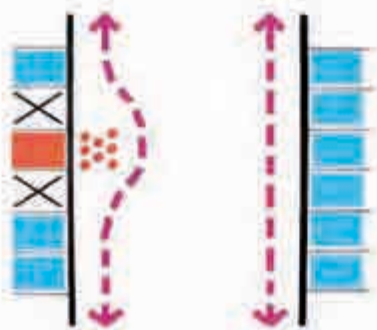
## 08.15 ways to accommodate outdoor seating in retail areas



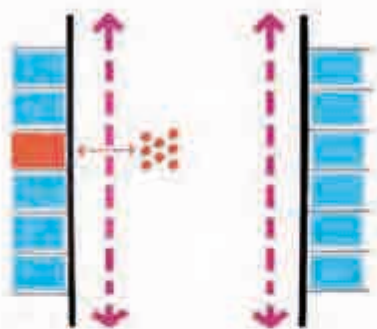
← 08.15.1 When a street is retail-only (shops shown in blue in this plan view diagram) pedestrians can stroll and window shop uninterrupted (dotted pink lines).



← 08.15.2 When a café/bar is introduced (shown in red) with seating immediately outside, pedestrians must deviate around the tables and chairs (dotted pink lines).



← 08.15.3 The pedestrian flow (dotted pink lines) is interrupted and the two retail units either side of the café/bar do not receive the window shoppers they need to survive and can fail (shown by crosses).



← 08.15.4 The solution is to place the tables and chairs further out and serviced by waiters (dotted red lines). The Broadway is wide enough to accommodate this approach. This allows pedestrians to flow uninterrupted (dotted pink lines) along the edge of the street.

Service could also be from new kiosk-type structures located within the pedestrianised area.



# 09

## 3-D visualisations

This section explores the potential of four key spaces within the town through the use of photomontage techniques Adobe Photoshop<sup>®</sup>. The images are visionary with the sole aim of showing an exciting way in which the spaces could change. More detailed design work is required to test, check and refine these ideas.

→ **09.1 The junction of the Broadway and Albion Road** is the first key space for improvement. This will provide a new place at a strategic location along the 2km street (see page 40) making the town more connected. The place needs to be more pedestrian-friendly in form and layout and aim to boldly celebrate the Trinity Chapel, one of the most attractive buildings in the town.



→ **09.2 The junction of the Broadway and Townley Road** is the second key space for change. It lies midway along the 'dead-zone' and is accessible from the residential areas south of the town centre. It is therefore suitable for high quality food/drink operators but requires a better public realm to deliver a more classic and restrained style.



→ **09.3 The Market Place** must remain one of the most important public spaces in the town and should contrast and complement any new space created at Broadway Square. The absence of any notable historic buildings or predominant architectural styles will allow for striking modern buildings to juxtapose with the old clock tower. The feel, look and style should be dynamic and exciting, reflecting interchange, interaction and trade, particularly during the day and early evening.



→ **09.4 The fountain** currently lies just outside Market Place. It appears opinion is divided on the current design - while many feel it is important to keep the fountain as a feature they also feel the current form is either unsuitable or could be improved. An alternative design is explored here.





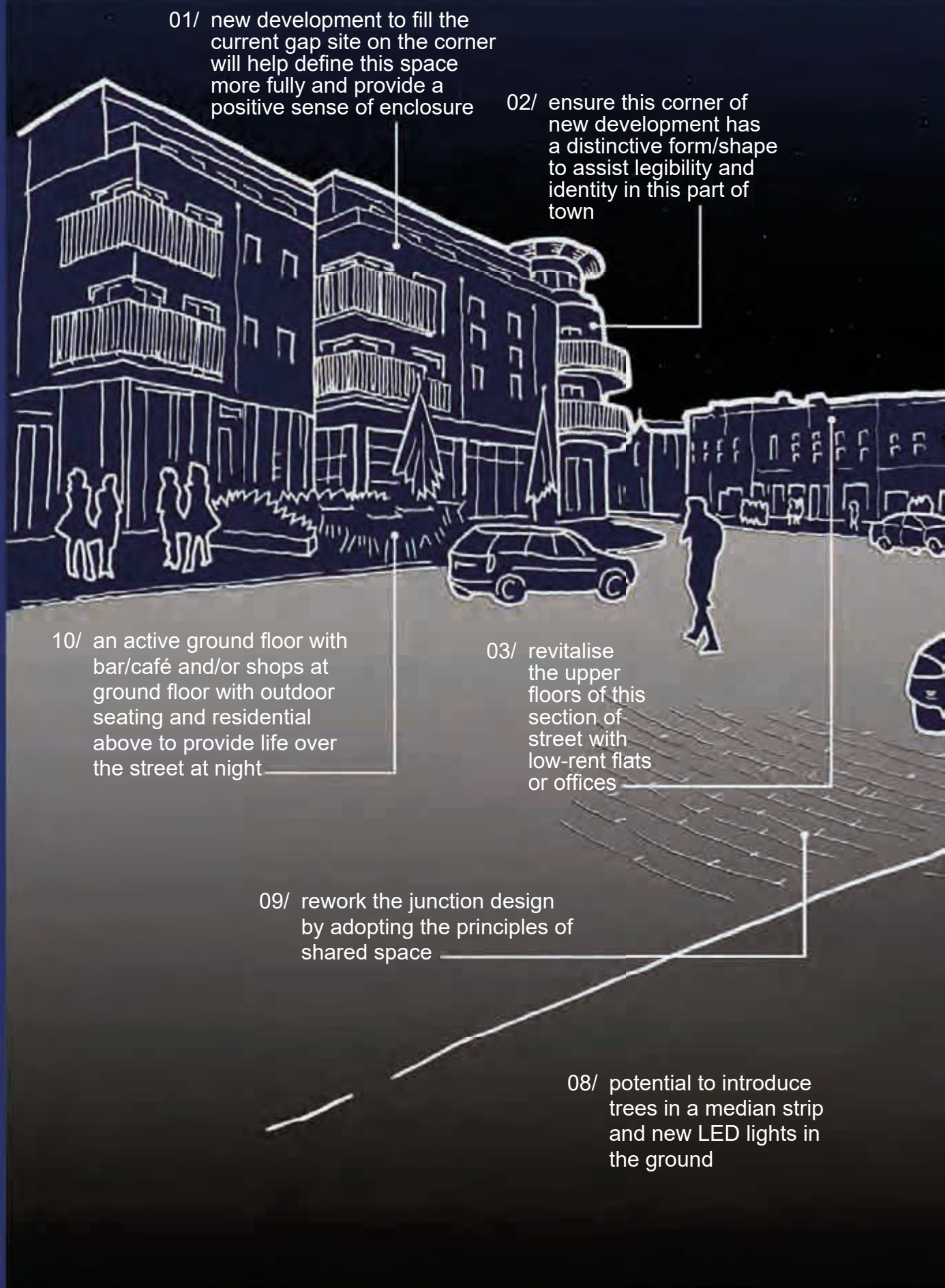
09.5 the potential of the Broadway/Albion Road junction: photomontage







## 09.6 the potential of the Broadway/Albion Road junction: details and notes



01/ new development to fill the current gap site on the corner will help define this space more fully and provide a positive sense of enclosure

02/ ensure this corner of new development has a distinctive form/shape to assist legibility and identity in this part of town

10/ an active ground floor with bar/café and/or shops at ground floor with outdoor seating and residential above to provide life over the street at night

03/ revitalise the upper floors of this section of street with low-rent flats or offices

09/ rework the junction design by adopting the principles of shared space

08/ potential to introduce trees in a median strip and new LED lights in the ground

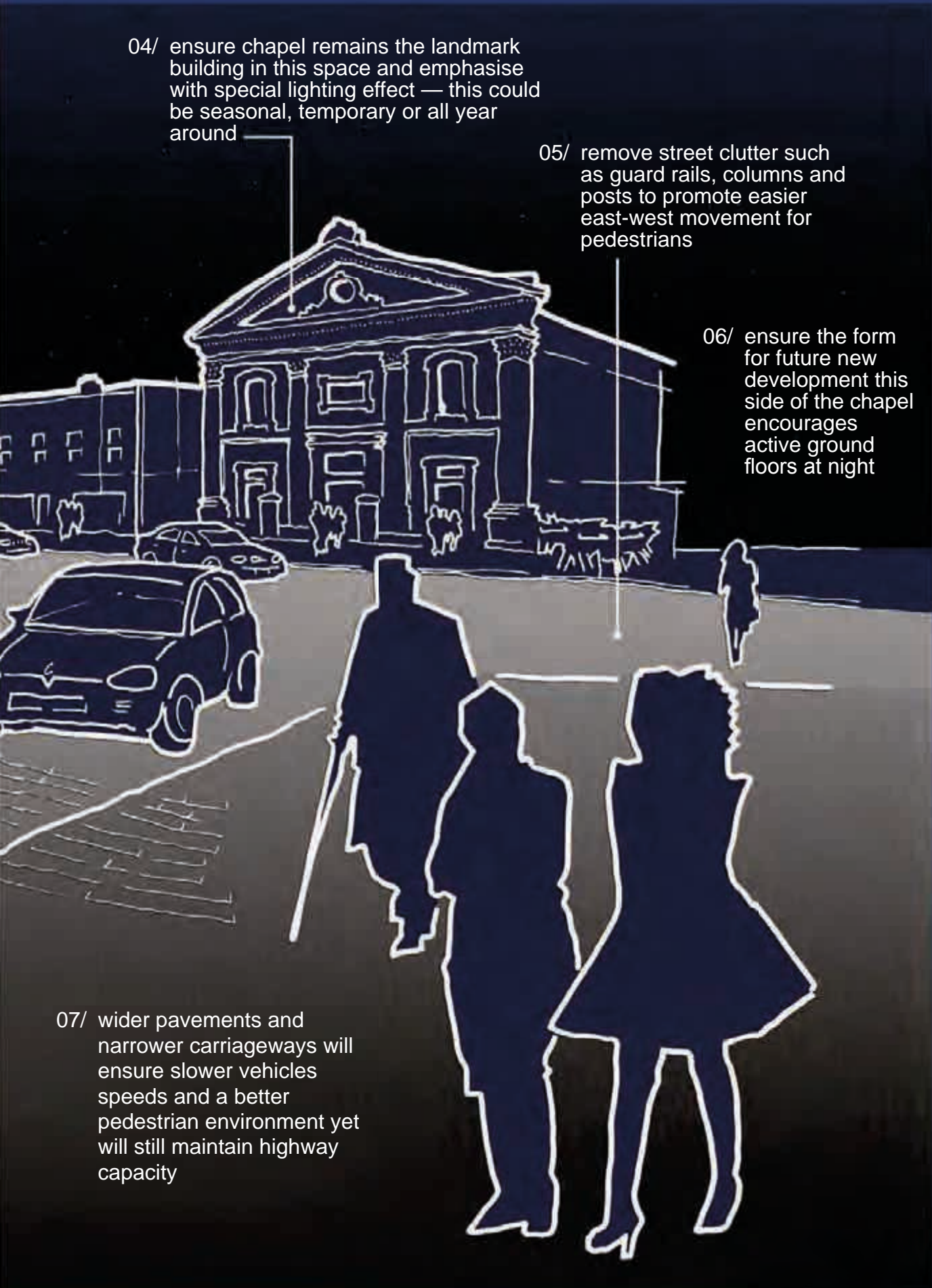


04/ ensure chapel remains the landmark building in this space and emphasise with special lighting effect — this could be seasonal, temporary or all year around

05/ remove street clutter such as guard rails, columns and posts to promote easier east-west movement for pedestrians

06/ ensure the form for future new development this side of the chapel encourages active ground floors at night

07/ wider pavements and narrower carriageways will ensure slower vehicles speeds and a better pedestrian environment yet will still maintain highway capacity



## 09.7 the potential of the Broadway: photomontage







the mall

BEX L3Y



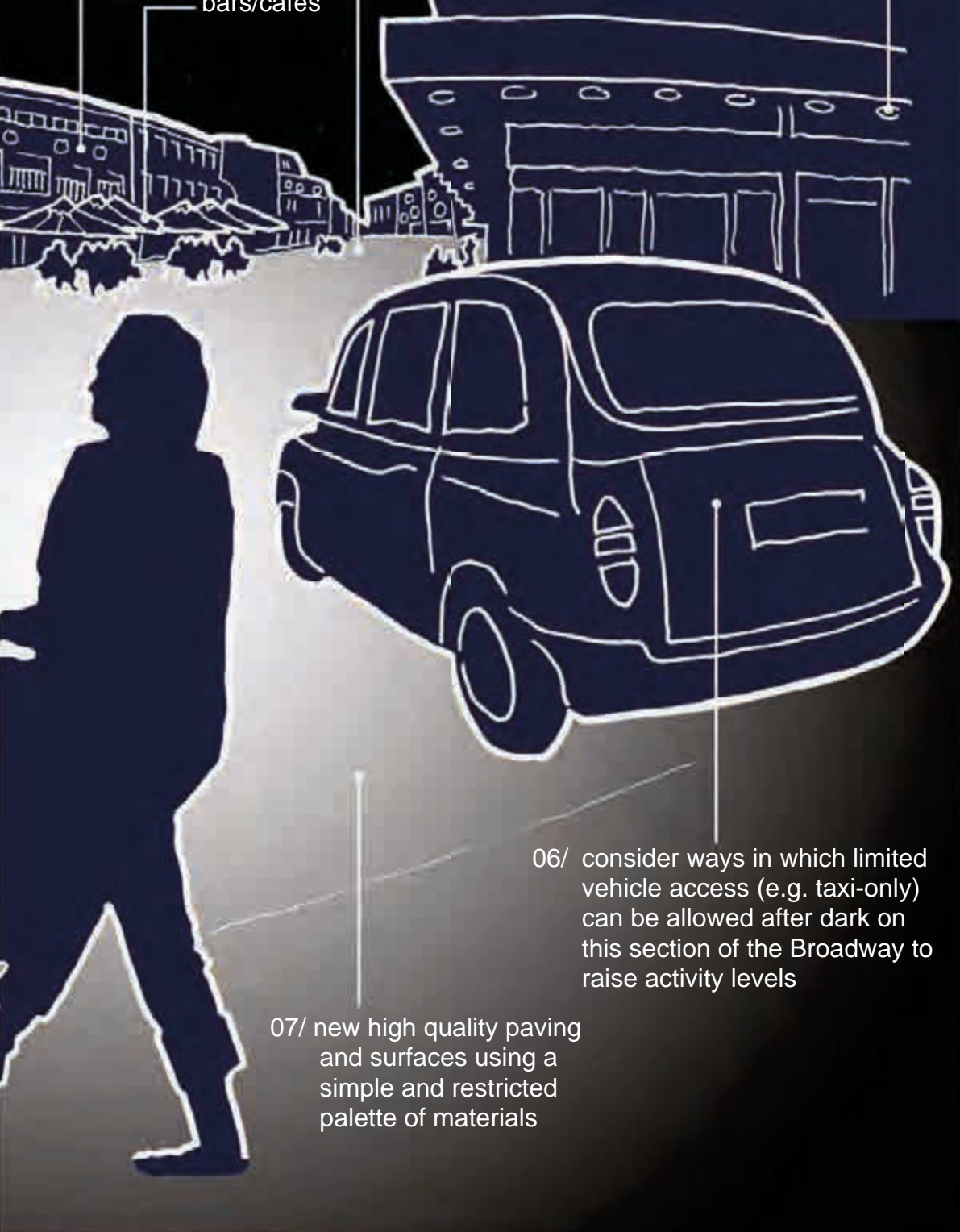
## 09.8 the potential of the Broadway: details and notes



03/ de-clutter the street to allow the breadth of Broadway to be exploited with blocks of outdoor seating established in association with adjacent bars/cafés

04/ the exciting new lighting scheme and fountain at Market Place should be seen from this location to ensure a strong visual connection

05/ spot lights on buildings rather than lamp columns to keep the street clear of clutter



06/ consider ways in which limited vehicle access (e.g. taxi-only) can be allowed after dark on this section of the Broadway to raise activity levels

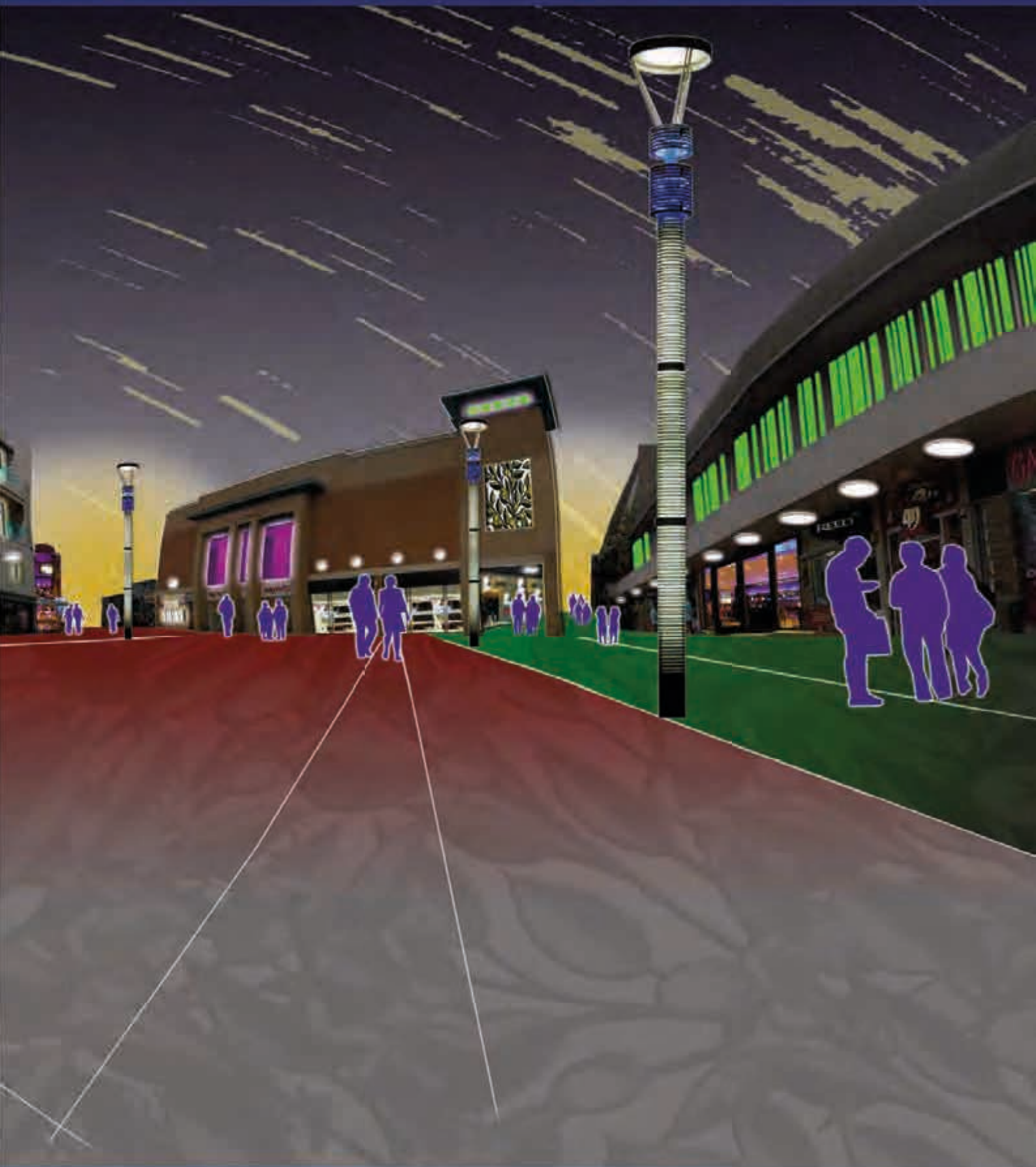
07/ new high quality paving and surfaces using a simple and restricted palette of materials



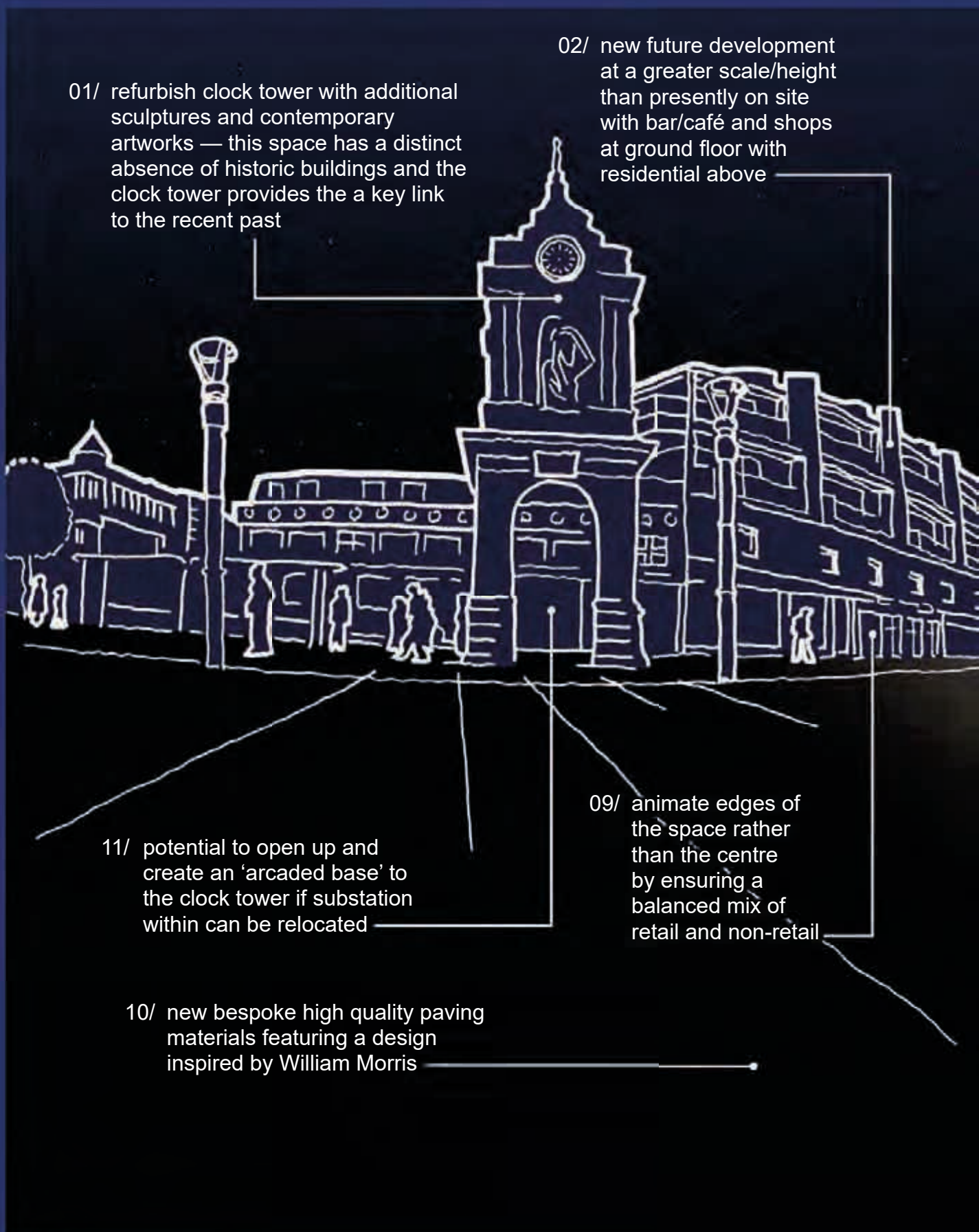
## 09.9 the potential of Market Place: photomontage







## 09.10 the potential of Market Place: details and notes



01/ refurbish clock tower with additional sculptures and contemporary artworks — this space has a distinct absence of historic buildings and the clock tower provides the a key link to the recent past

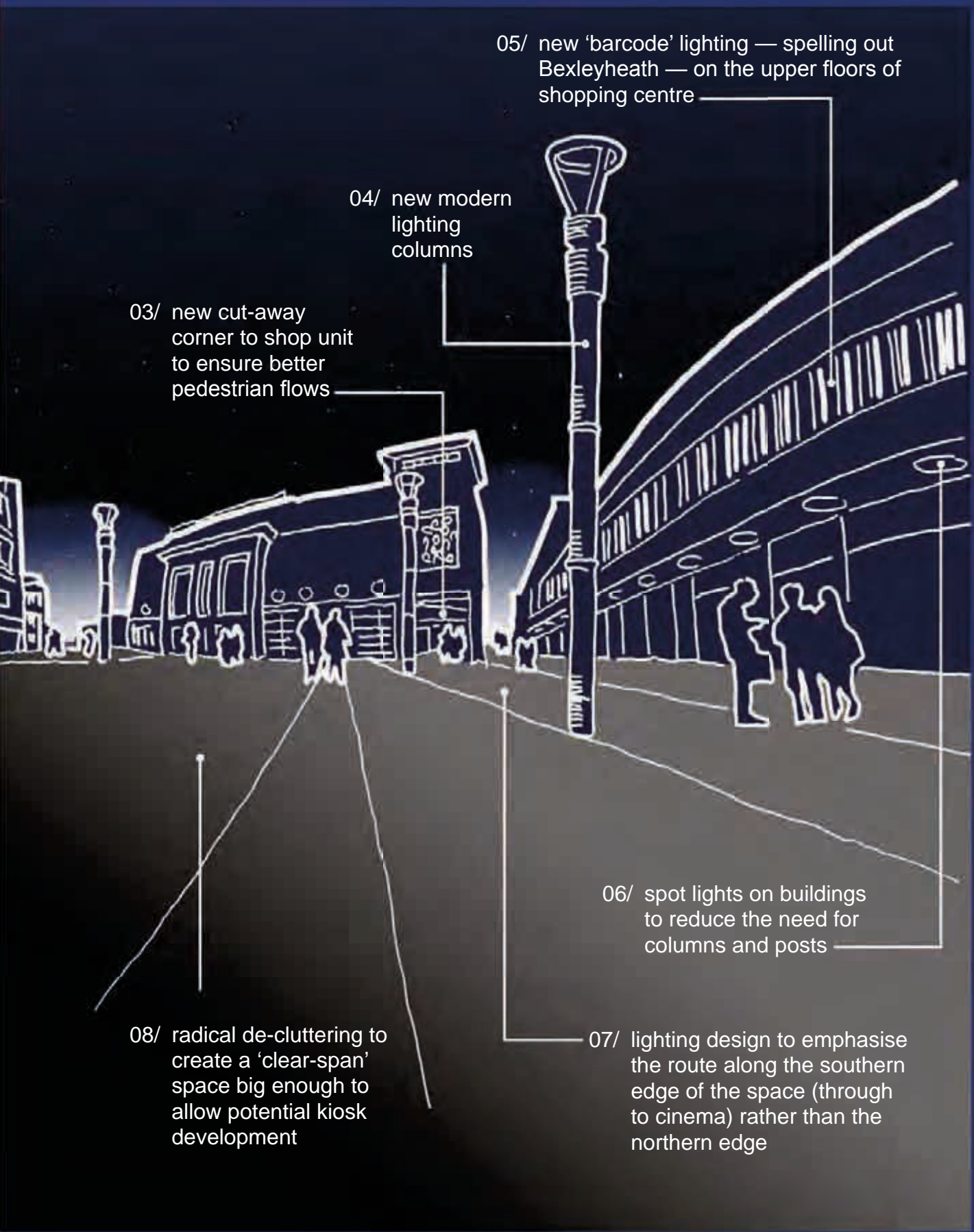
02/ new future development at a greater scale/height than presently on site with bar/café and shops at ground floor with residential above

11/ potential to open up and create an 'arcaded base' to the clock tower if substation within can be relocated

09/ animate edges of the space rather than the centre by ensuring a balanced mix of retail and non-retail

10/ new bespoke high quality paving materials featuring a design inspired by William Morris





05/ new 'barcode' lighting — spelling out Bexleyheath — on the upper floors of shopping centre

04/ new modern lighting columns

03/ new cut-away corner to shop unit to ensure better pedestrian flows

06/ spot lights on buildings to reduce the need for columns and posts

07/ lighting design to emphasise the route along the southern edge of the space (through to cinema) rather than the northern edge

08/ radical de-cluttering to create a 'clear-span' space big enough to allow potential kiosk development



## 09.11 the potential of Market Place: details and notes



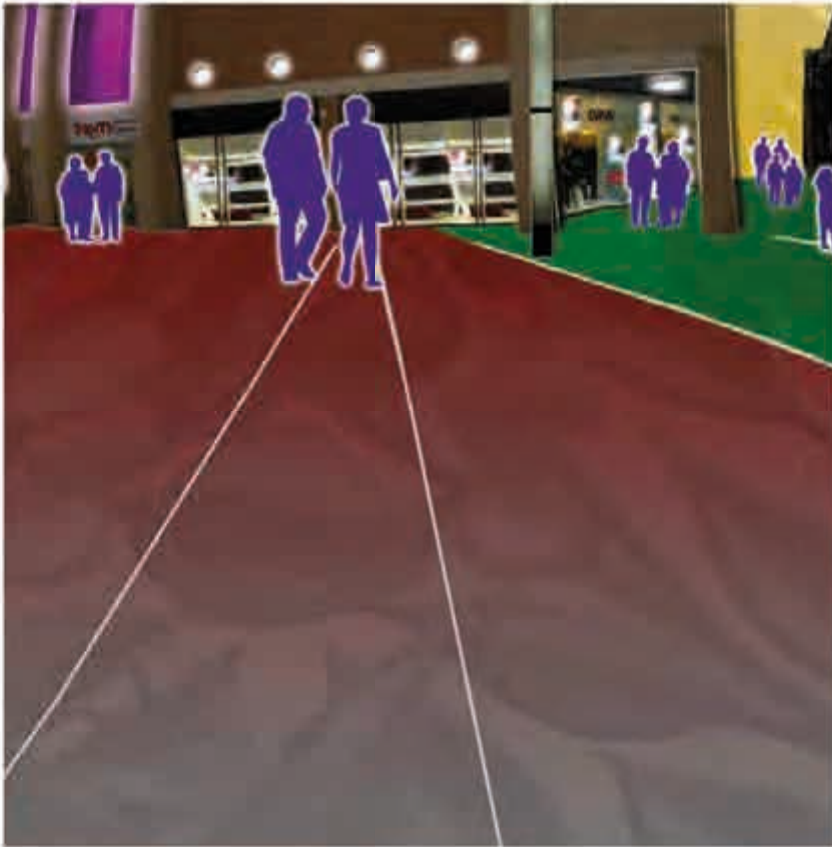
← 02/ **new development:**  
*The Market Place area lacks any significant historic buildings and there is therefore good opportunity for new modern buildings without the risk of harming the setting of more established buildings. New infill works should be striking in style and greater in scale to provide a better sense of enclosure to the space. Uses should be mixed and include residential above and active ground floors, such as places to eat.*



← ↓ 03/ **cut away to shop unit:** *This measure will widen the entrance to the passageway that currently connects Market Place with the eastern section of Broadway (alongside cinema and hotel). This connection is narrow and often congested and not generous enough for the pedestrian flows that use this essential link. While the cut away will not widen the whole of the connection, it will help emphasise the importance of this route.*



the current narrow access.



← **10/ reflect local artistic styles:** The town rightly recognises the contribution to the world made by William Morris, an architect, furniture and textile designer, artist, writer associated with the English Arts and Crafts Movement. This recognition is currently in the form of a statue on the clock tower and the fountain. But perhaps a quality bespoke paving material, based on a Morris design, would be more fitting?

↓ **fountain:** The current water feature in Market Place is shown below. An illustrative option for a replacement is explored on pages 90 - 91, based on the same view as seen here.



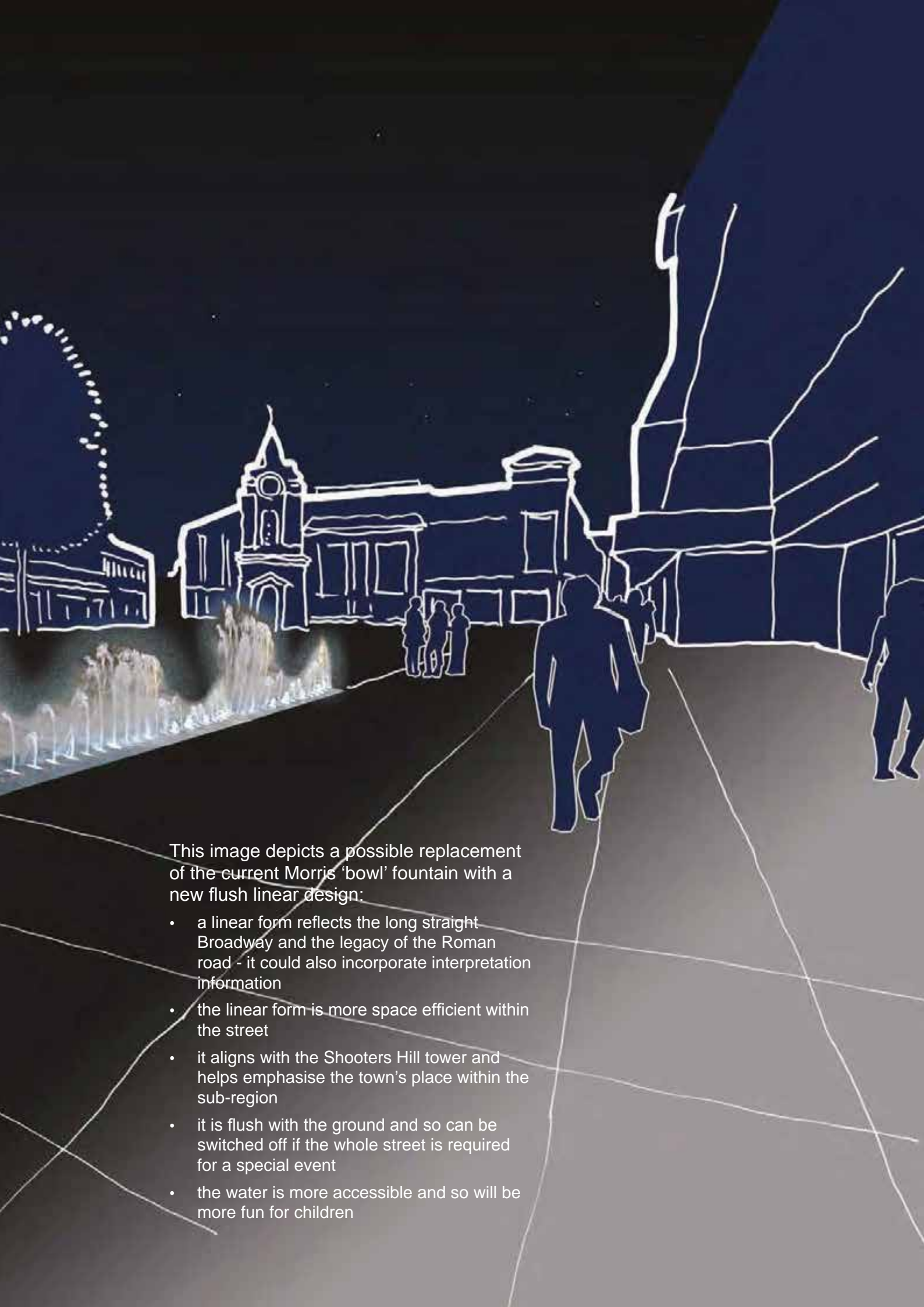


09.12 the potential for an improved fountain: photomontage and notes



Illustrative design only





This image depicts a possible replacement of the current Morris 'bowl' fountain with a new flush linear design:

- a linear form reflects the long straight Broadway and the legacy of the Roman road - it could also incorporate interpretation information
- the linear form is more space efficient within the street
- it aligns with the Shooters Hill tower and helps emphasise the town's place within the sub-region
- it is flush with the ground and so can be switched off if the whole street is required for a special event
- the water is more accessible and so will be more fun for children

# 10 action plan

The key tasks and actions required to take the ideas in this report towards implementation are set out here. Indicative timescales are:

- **short**      now until October 2010
- **medium**    2010 - 2011
- **long**        2012 - 2015

<b>Task</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>LB Bexley officer lead</b>
Overall coordination of Bexleyheath NightVision Strategy Action Plan.	Ongoing	Deputy Director, Development and Public Protection
Embed the NightVision work into the Bexleyheath Development and Improvement Framework.	Short	Head of Strategic Planning and Development
Progress study by Transport for London (TfL) to fund an area-based review of traffic, pedestrian and associated public realm arrangements for Bexleyheath. Study to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• redesign of the Trinity Chapel junction with enhanced pedestrian environment including creation of a new public space focal point</li> <li>• reduction of the 'barrier' effect of the ring roads by creating designs for both new and enhanced pedestrian friendly crossings, to improve pedestrian links between surrounding residential areas and the commercial core</li> <li>• introduction of shared space concept into suitable areas of town centre</li> <li>• improvement of pedestrian access to Bexleyheath station</li> <li>• review of options for partial opening of sections of the Broadway to some vehicles and the erection of galleria or kiosk-type structures</li> <li>• review of bus stop locations and parking provision</li> </ul>	Short	Head of Transport and Traffic Services
Review options to address current concentration of young people in the Market Place in certain school run periods.	Short	Head of Transport and Traffic Services Youth Service
Work with Transport for London to re-introduce buses into the Market Place area in the early evening period.	Short	Head of Transport and Traffic Services
Work with businesses engaged with the night-time economy to encourage an increased diversity of provision for all sections of the community.	Short	Town Centres Manager (or work allocated through Bexleyheath Improvement District (BID) proposals). Licensing Manager



<b>Task</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>LB Bexley officer lead</b>
Formulate area-wide travel plan for the town centre	Short	Work allocated through the Bexleyheath BID
Review taxi rank provision. Identify new night time taxi rank location and provision for private hire cars and investigate options for introducing a taxi-marshalling scheme.	Short	Head of Transport and Traffic Services
Prepare design guidance and criteria for businesses wanting outside seating areas.	Short	Head of Strategic Planning and Development Head of Development Control
Encourage outdoor seating for café premises in the pedestrianised area of the Broadway, subject to compliance with adopted guidance and criteria	Short	Deputy Director, Highways and Amenities Head of Transport and Traffic Services Head of Strategic Planning and Development
Investigate the necessity for and, if appropriate, prepare a development and design brief for the future of Market Place.	Short	Head of Strategic Planning and Development Head of Development Control
Review enhancement opportunities for street cleaning in evening period with new contractor, within existing resources.	Short	Central Area Team Manager, Highways and Amenities
Investigate the need for public conveniences relating to the night time economy, and review the provision that may be required, if appropriate.	Short	Central Area Team Manager, Highways and Amenities
Consider introducing a scheme for businesses to allow people to use their toilet facilities.	Short	Town Centres Manager (or work allocated through BID proposals) Central Area Team Manager, Highways and Amenities
Prepare a town centre marketing strategy, covering day and night time economy, to attract new businesses	Short	Town Centres Manager (or work allocated through BID proposals) Head of Strategic Planning and Development
Consider dedicated space for street entertainment for both daytime and early evening use, as part of future public realm improvements	Short/ medium	Head of Strategic Planning and Development

<b>Task</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>LB Bexley officer lead</b>
Ensure integration of night-time venues into proposals for a Bexleyheath Business Improvement District (BID).	Short/ medium	Principal Economic Development Officer Town Centres Manager (or work allocated through BID proposals)
Review planning policy with regard to A3, A4 and A5 uses within the Broadway area of Bexleyheath, as part of the Local Development Framework, with a view to encouraging an appropriate mix of such uses alongside the retail function.	Short/ medium	Head of Strategic Planning and Development
Draw up a list of 'target' restaurants to be approached to open in Bexleyheath centre.	Short/ medium	Principal Economic Development Officer Town Centres Manager (or work allocated through BID proposals)
Consider granting later hours to selected, well-run premises, particularly where extended late use promotes a reduction in crime and disorder (e.g. coffee and soft drinks/snacks during extended use after standard alcohol licensing times).	Short/ medium	Applications subject to consideration by Licensing and Planning Committees, to be considered on a individual case basis
Work with businesses towards further late night shopping on Friday or Saturday nights.	Short/ medium	Principal Economic Development Officer Town Centres Manager (or work allocated through BID proposals)
Seek business sponsorship for potential multi-media screen provision in Bexleyheath, linked to new development opportunities.	Short/ medium	Principal Economic Development Officer Town Centres Manager (or work allocated through BID proposals)
Ensure planning and highway agreements entered into for major developments to help secure traffic, pedestrian and public realm improvements identified following completion of Bexleyheath traffic and pedestrian study.	Medium	Head of Development Control Head of Transport and Traffic Services
Implement provision of a new night time taxi rank and facility for private hire cars.	Medium	Head of Transport and Traffic Services
Look at options for improved lighting in the Broadway and surrounding areas.	Medium	Principal Economic Development Officer Town Centres Manager (or work allocated through BID proposals)

<b>Task</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>LB Bexley officer lead</b>
Explore the possibility of more creative installations, including projections on to building facades for seasonal events.	Medium	Deputy Director, Cultural Services
Implement comprehensive range of traffic, pedestrian, cycle, public transport and public realm improvements, using funding secured from TfL, supported by additional funding from other sources, including planning and highway agreements from new major developments.	Long	Head of Transport and Traffic Services
Ensure redevelopment principles for gap and opportunity sites can support the evening economy strategy.	Long	Head of Strategic Planning and Development
Use new development to turn Albion Road and Arnsberg Way from traffic-only bypass roads into more active walkable streets.	Long	Head of Development Control Head of Strategic Planning and Development







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