



Horsham District Local Development Framework

# **Horsham Town Plan Supplementary Planning Document**

**September 2012**

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

- 1.1** As part of the overall background work to support the production of the Horsham District Planning Framework and the Council's overarching drive to proactively maintain and build on the strengths of Horsham town into the future, the Council initiated the Future Prosperity of Horsham Project.
- 1.2** The Future Prosperity of Horsham Project is an initiative devised by both Horsham District Council and West Sussex County Council to take a proactive approach to the future development and growth of Horsham town in relation to access enhancements, retail/commercial development and leisure opportunities. This future development and growth will include the regeneration of key areas within Horsham town to increase the vitality and vibrancy of the town. It is a cross cutting project led by the District Council's Strategic Planning Team, but which involves input from a wide range of Officer's and Council Member's across the Council and partnership work with the County Council and other interested parties and organisations.
- 1.3** The project aims to strike an appropriate balance within the town centre by steering the future development of the town to maximise its economic potential whilst sustaining and enhancing its attractive and historic environment for the optimum benefit of residents and visitors alike. To assist with this aim, planning consultants Urban Practitioners were commissioned in June 2010, to start the project and produce a 'Town Framework Report' to identify the existing strengths and areas for improvement within the town and formulate a vision and strategy for the future. The report has been used as a basis to formulate this Horsham Town Plan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which translates the report findings into planning guidance for future retail, commercial and leisure development in Horsham town centre.

### Scene Setting

- 1.4** Horsham town, located in the north of Horsham District, is a historic market town and is the largest town within the District. Horsham town centre has been identified as part of a network of towns in the south east and performs a sub-regional centre role, compared to the larger village centres within the District which are a focus for the local community and the wider community in a variety of ways, but perform at a different level in the network of centres than Horsham town centre. The Core Strategy 2007 defines Horsham town centre as 'a vital and viable town centre providing a good range of choice of facilities but with scope for continued improvement, particularly in terms of management to minimise the loss of trade to other destinations.'
- 1.5** Horsham town centre has a high quality historical core, most of which is designated as a Conservation Area and includes approximately 50 listed buildings, which has created a high quality shopping experience for residents and visitors alike. However, with the close proximity of larger competing centres such as Crawley, Guildford and Worthing, and the changing needs of modern retailers, it is essential that the Council continues to understand these changing needs and looks to strengthen the retail offer and promote a comprehensive plan that identifies and encourages future opportunities for further enhancement, without causing harm to the high quality historic environment.

- 1.6 In 2010, Horsham town centre was ranked 143 out of over 3,000 centres through the National Retail Centre Ranking and was identified as having prime zone retail rents of £75 per square foot. Recent independent research has shown though that within the South East, a town with Horsham's retail offer should be achieving prime zone retail rents of £115 per square foot. The research has shown that although Horsham is a strong and attractive town centre, it might not be capitalising on its full potential and are therefore opportunities for improvement to achieve higher rents and encourage further investment within the town centre. Suggested reasons to the town centres low retail rents include that Horsham is not on the radar for many retailers; the current offer may not cater for all people in the catchment area; the offer is not flexible enough in terms of rent values; Horsham may be losing out to larger centres such as Guildford, Crawley and Brighton; there is a lack of modern property stock and appropriate unit sizes; the town centre is held back by ownership structures; and it is under served by complementary uses such as restaurant and leisure uses.
- 1.7 Although it is recognised that Horsham town may not capitalising on its full potential and that competing centres may be larger and currently provide a wider range of retail and leisure choice, it is also recognised that Horsham town offers an alternative experience based on its high quality public realm, attractive cafés, restaurants and independent shops supported by key anchor stores that provide the basis for the existing high levels of consumer retention. It is this alternative experience that needs to be built on to increase and strengthen the performance of Horsham town centre to put the town in line with current competing centres.
- 1.8 Therefore, the aim for this SPD will be to seek to sustain and enhance the existing attractive historical character and nature of the town centre, whilst maximising the future opportunity areas for better quality access and linkages into and across the town and more flexible retail floor space. It also aims to encourage people to spend more time in the centre by building on the town's strong combined shopping and leisure experiences for both the day time and night time economies.
- 1.9 This Horsham Town Plan is the first SPD of a potential series that the Council will produce as part of the Future Prosperity of Horsham Project. Its primary aim is to translate the issues and opportunities identified in the Town Framework Report into clear planning principles to guide future development in the town centre in relation to economic uses, leisure uses and access arrangements. It focuses on key opportunity areas that form the foundation for the future success of the town centre, that when planned effectively will sustain and enhance the strong and attractive town centre experience that characterises Horsham.
- 1.10 The SPD will be published as a Supplementary Planning Document and form supplementary guidance to the Horsham District Planning Framework. The SPD has been subject to public and stakeholder consultation, the results of which have been incorporated into the final version accordingly.

## Chapter 2: Background and Scope

### Retail Study

- 2.1** In June 2010 the Council published an updated Retail Needs Study as part of the background work for the Horsham District Planning Framework. The study notes that Horsham town has a strong heritage and a historical core, and has generally kept pace with shoppers and retailers' needs through redevelopment and enhancement of shopping facilities, whilst maintaining and conserving an attractive, historic environment; therefore, ensuring that the town centre is functioning well against the majority of key retail health check indicators. The study also notes that the centre retains a large percentage of custom within the District despite the proximity of larger retail centres such as Crawley and Guildford. Despite this strong position the study recommends that there are clear opportunities to further strengthen the town centre's offer, particularly in terms of its evening economy, the specialist independent retail offer, Swan Walk Shopping Centre and the need to achieve larger retail units to satisfy modern retailer and shopper requirements. This would help to ensure the future retention of retailers and customers considering the potential major retail enhancements at the competing centres of Crawley and Guildford. It was also concluded that there is clearly potential to enhance the overall connectivity across the town centre and enhance linkages to other areas of strategic importance across the wider town. This conclusion links in with a specific Council priority to increase connectivity and the general awareness of the town centre from the railway station through signage and way finding.

### Town Framework Report

- 2.2** The recommendations from the Retail study, combined with guidance set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and increased development pressures across Horsham town provided the catalyst to plan proactively for the future prosperity of the town. The Town Framework Report set out to create an overarching vision for the future prosperity of Horsham town centre and a set of objectives to achieve it in relation to retail, commercial and leisure uses as well as overall connectivity and linkages. The study also looked at three specific target areas across the town which were previously identified as strategically significant for improvement and development. The three specific areas were as follows:
- The Town Centre
  - The Hurst Road area including the rail goods yard and railway station
  - The Broadbridge Heath Quadrant
- 2.3** The town centre is an important focal point for the town and although there are opportunities for redevelopment or enhancement within and on the edge of the centre, there are also clear opportunities in areas of strategic importance across the wider town.
- 2.4** The Hurst Road area, incorporating the railway station and wider goods yard, is a key commercial location in the town and there is increasing developer interest across various sites that could represent an opportunity for coordinated future redevelopment that enhances connectivity with the rest of the town, whilst boosting the commercial offer.

- 2.5** Another important area that sits outside of the town but has a great influence on the health of the town as a whole is the Broadbridge Heath Quadrant. The Broadbridge Heath Quadrant is formed of the existing Broadbridge Heath retail park and the area to the south east of Broadbridge Heath encompassing the West Sussex County Council depot, Tesco's superstore, the bowls club and the leisure centre, including the athletics track. The Quadrant sits adjacent to the recently allocated strategic development 'Land West of Horsham' and will therefore have an increasingly important relationship with this area, as the development progresses. The site has grown and developed sporadically over the years, which has led to piecemeal development and it is considered that the site could be used in a more efficient way, being a strategically important piece of land. The opportunity therefore, has arisen through the Future Prosperity of Horsham Project to consider the future of this area in clear and logical manner but separately from the Horsham Town Plan SPD. It is anticipated that the consideration of the future of this site will occur later in the year.
- 2.6** In order to form the basis of the future work on the three specific areas, as part of the Town Framework Report the consultants were required to provide site-specific overarching guidance for each of them in relation to design, layout, use and connectivity, and show them on a key diagram of the town that also highlights retail/commercial and leisure opportunities including linkages and connectivity.
- 2.7** Officers from across the District Council and West Sussex County Council met with the consultants to relay their priorities and aspirations for the Report. The initial findings, analysis and potential opportunities were then presented to a key stakeholder workshop held in August 2010 at the District Council offices. The stakeholders included Council Members, Officers from the District and County Councils, important organisations and groups in the town, and key business owners and representatives, were all invited to discuss and comment on the initial work. The comments were used to inform the development of the study and further meetings during the drafting process were undertaken with key officers and Members, as well as a formal presentation and discussion with Horsham Unlimited (Horsham town centre business partnership) in order to gain their views and input before finalising the study. The final study, titled the Town Framework Report, was completed in February 2011.

### Scope of the SPD

- 2.8** This SPD is the first of a series of documents that will be produced by the Council as part of the Future Prosperity of Horsham Project. The purpose of the SPD is to translate the work undertaken in the Town Framework Report into planning guidance specifically for the town centre and Hurst Road areas of the town. Consultation on a separate SPD for the Broadbridge Heath Quadrant is planned for later this year.
- 2.9** The guidance for the town centre is based on the Council's findings, aspirations and priorities for the area to maintain and enhance the area for the future in the most effective way. There is no specific timetable and no particular priority order for the proposals identified within the SPD, as the aim of the planning guidance is to act as the Council's starting point for more detailed discussions and proposals regarding development opportunities that arise in the town over future years. It will also help steer potential developers as to the overall aims, aspirations and priorities the Council has for the future of the town.



- 2.10** The key output of the overarching Future Prosperity of Horsham Project work, which will be enabled by the Horsham Town Plan SPD and any other subsequent SPD's, is the regeneration of key areas within Horsham town which will increase the vitality and vibrancy of the town. The key areas within Horsham town centre, which have been identified for regeneration, are Albion Way, Piries Place and East Street, the Bishopric, Hurst Road, The Forum, West Street and Swan Walk. These key areas are all addressed within this the Horsham Town Plan SPD. The key areas are set out in more detail in Section 6 of this SPD.



## Chapter 3: Vision

### Vision Statement

- 3.1** A vision statement for the town was published in the Town Framework Report and sets out the overarching aim of the Future Prosperity of Horsham Project. This was produced working in partnership with West Sussex County Council and various interested groups across the town including the town centre business partnership Horsham Unlimited.
- 3.2** Alongside the production of the vision statement the Town Framework report sets out key principles for the town centre and Hurst Road area. These principles have been used as a basis for the general development guidance and site specific guidance set out in Chapter 5: General Development Guidance and Chapter 6: Site Specific Guidance.

### Vision Statement

Horsham town will continue to be a distinctive destination of choice which is safe, easily accessible and enjoyable to visit.

In parallel with the protection and enhancement of the town's attractive historic townscape and pleasant green character, the Council, together with its public and private sector partners, wish to identify innovative opportunities to boost its performance as a sustainable and commercially vibrant location. This will be achieved through the promotion of a sensitive balance of independent boutique and niche shops, High Street brands and higher end retailers as well as opportunities to enhance the town centre's cultural, leisure and evening economy offer.

Through this SPD, the Council is seeking to promote a clear 'town-centre' first approach to retail development to ensure that piecemeal development opportunities in out-of town locations do not undermine the long-term vitality of Horsham town centre. This SPD also seeks to maintain HorshamTown as an excellent location for employment uses including commercial offices and civic administration.

The Council will continue to promote the town centre as a hub for culture and the creative arts, and will seek to protect and enhance the town centre's distinctive heritage as an ideal setting for these uses.



## Chapter 4: Development Plan Policy

- 4.1** The SPD is intended to provide more detail on adopted policies in the Core Strategy DPD (2007) and, in particular, aid in the interpretation of the maintenance of the 'vitality and viability' of the town as set out in Policy CP17. Therefore this SPD should be read alongside the adopted and emerging policies, as well as National Policies. Other key policies within the Core Strategy DPD that should be taken into account when proposing development across the town are listed below for convenience, as well as key policies from the General Development Control Policies DPD. Policy AL2 in the Site Specific Allocations of Land DPD sets out the development potential for land at Lifestyle Ford on the western side of the town centre and any development proposed at this location should also consider this Policy.
- 4.2** As the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) progresses, emerging policies from this document should also be taken into account when proposing development.

### Core Strategy Policies 2007

- Policy CP1 - Landscape and Townscape Character
- Policy CP2 - Environmental Quality
- Policy CP3 - Improving the Quality of New Development
- Policy CP5 - Built-Up Areas and Previously Developed Land
- Policy CP10 - Employment Provision
- Policy CP11 - Employment Sites and Premises
- Policy CP13 - Infrastructure Requirements
- Policy CP14 - Protection and Enhancement of Community Facilities and Services
- Policy CP16 - Inclusive Communities
- Policy CP17 - Vitality and Viability of Existing Centres
- Policy CP18 - Tourism and Cultural Facilities
- Policy CP19 - Managing Travel Demand and Widening Choice of Transport

### General Development Control Policies 2007

- Policy DC2 - Landscape Character
- Policy DC6 - Woodland and Trees
- Policy DC8 - Renewable Energy and Climate Change
- Policy DC9 - Development Principles
- Policy DC10 – Archaeological Sites and Ancient Monuments
- Policy DC12 - Conservation Areas
- Policy DC13 - Listed Buildings
- Policy DC14 - Shop Fronts and Advertisements
- Policy DC19 - Employment Site / Land Protection
- Policy DC20 - New Employment Development
- Policy DC21 - Protection of Existing Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities
- Policy DC34 - New Retail Development within the Defined Town and Village Centres
- Policy DC36 - Change of Use within Defined Town and Village Centres

- Policy DC39 - Tourism
- Policy DC40 - Transport and Access
- Policy DC41 - Protection of Car Parks

**Site Specific Allocation of Land policies (2007)**

- Policy AL2 – Lifestyle Ford, Bishopric

## Chapter 5: General Development Guidance

- 5.1** This chapter sets out the Councils overarching development guidance for the town centre. This should not be seen as stand alone guidance and should be read alongside the existing and emerging planning policies, as set out above, as well as the Town Framework Report. The guidance has been set out for ease of use with a short summary of the issues followed by guidance points and relevant Council and national policies relating to that particular issue.

### Retail Uses

#### General Guidance 1

##### Retail Uses

**There is a need for a greater mix of large and small retail units to maintain the historic grain of the town whilst at the same time opening up greater opportunities for modern retailer requirements.**

- 1. New retail development, including larger retail units and more flexible retail units, are encouraged but should be concentrated in the key redevelopment opportunity areas: The Forum, SwanWalk and the Bishopric and Albion Way area.**
- 2. Outside of the redevelopment opportunity areas the maintenance, reuse and refurbishment of existing units is considered more appropriate than redevelopment so as to continue to meet the needs of smaller and independent retailers and to retain the attractive historical core and varied shopping environment and offer.**

Relevant Policies: NPPF, CP11, CP17, DC34, DC36

- 5.2** Horsham town centre has an attractive environment which provides the town with a competitive advantage over towns nearby. However, this is not always positive for modern retail needs as Horsham, and other historical towns, will find it increasingly difficult to provide suitable accommodation to meet retailers' future needs. This is due to a number of reasons including; previously available sites have been released for residential development; much of Horsham Town Centre is rightly designated as a conservation area due to the quality of the historic environment and; historical property patterns also have implications for those retailers operating within them as retail unit needs are becoming increasingly varied.
- 5.3** Nevertheless, the town centre has continued to develop and evolve over recent years and there is some scope for continued change and extension of the prime retail area, as many key retailers are not willing to take up units outside the prime retail area, particularly in the area to the west of Albion Way / south of The Bishopric, provided that the appropriate integration with the town centre can be achieved; in the area adjacent to Swan Walk; and the back of East Street and Denne Road. The focus of retail activity within the town centre has already shifted west in recent years,

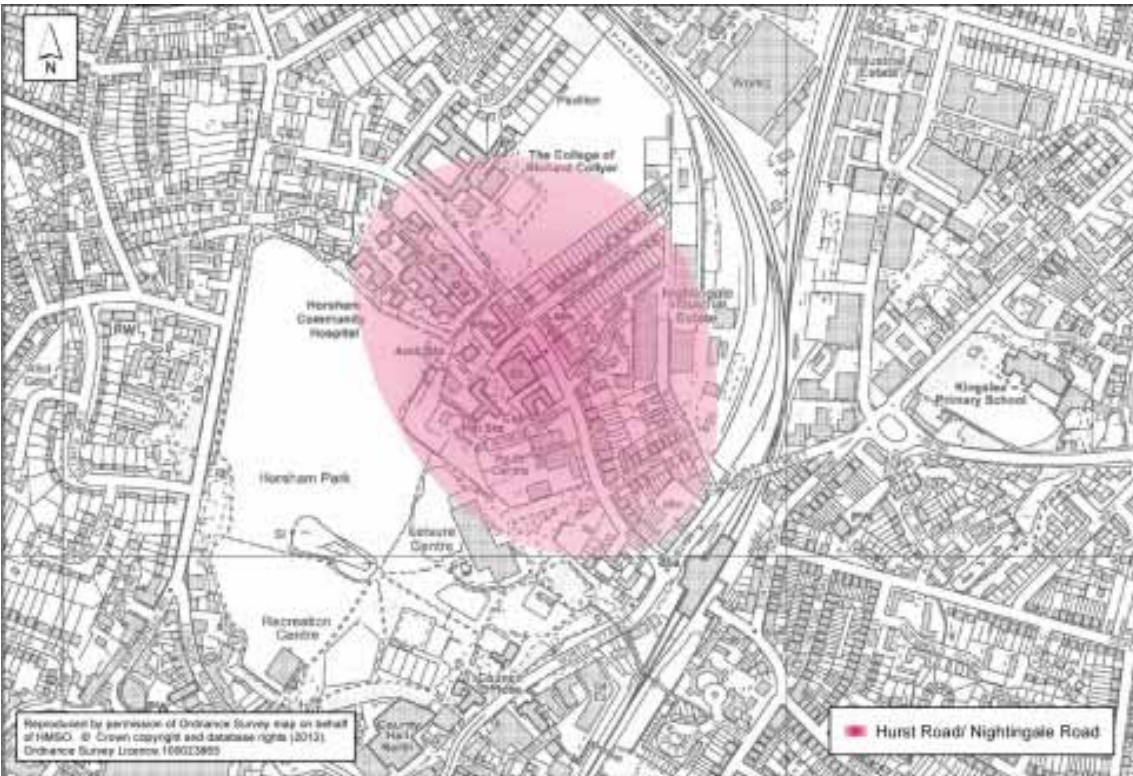
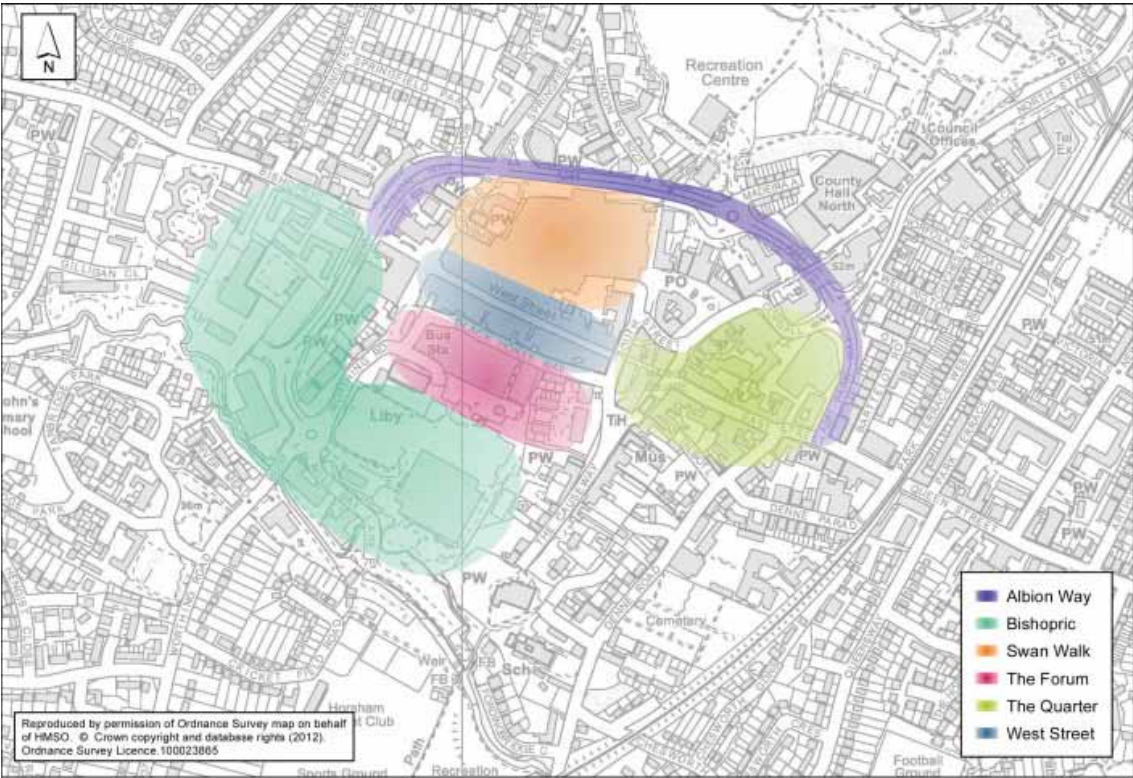
with the creation of Tanbridge Retail Park, which currently comprises of Currys and Staples, and there are now parts of the centre where the integration and connectivity, in terms of retailing, is less than might be considered desirable, with implications for the form of activity now taking place, e.g. the 'café culture' in the East Street area. This area has the potential to be enhanced as a leisure/visitor area – 'The Quarter', where the emphasis is on safeguarding the restaurants and independent shops and creating a cultural area. The Quarter is a collective name for the area encompassing Piries Place, East Street, Denne Road and Market Square.

- 5.4** It is important that Horsham retains the historical and attractive qualities that provide a unique shopping environment when compared to other competing centres. However, a balance must be struck between these qualities and the modern retailer needs of larger and more flexible retail units to ensure the vibrancy and viability of the town. Therefore there is a need for a greater mix of retail unit sizes in the town centre to attract both the modern larger retailers as well as to provide for the smaller independent retailers that already have a strong presence in Horsham town. This can be achieved by encouraging new, larger and more flexible retail development in specific strategically located redevelopment opportunity areas in the town. Outside of these areas the Council will encourage the maintenance, reuse and refurbishment of existing retail units to meet the needs of smaller and independent retailers.
- 5.5** There are many key opportunity areas for potential redevelopment within the town centre and these are shown in Figure 1. Key areas for comprehensive redevelopment, however, will be the western side of the town centre incorporating the length of the Bishopric retail area across Albion Way and Bishops Weald, thereby encouraging the extension of the town centre to the west. The Forum represents an opportunity area to expand on the already successful larger floorplate retail units that are already present. Swan Walk shopping centre has the potential to increase floorplate size in the short term and represents a prime opportunity for redevelopment in the longer term that could include adjacent land ownerships such as Springfield Court. Examples of potential redevelopment plans are included within the Town Framework Report and Chapter 6 of the SPD.

These redevelopment opportunity areas are strategically located and will encourage the circulation of pedestrians across a much wider area of the town with the ultimate aim of increasing footfall within the whole of the town centre and lengthening the 'dwell time' people spend in Horsham which would also potentially boost the café and restaurant uses.



Figure 1 Key Development Opportunities



## Commercial Uses

### General Guidance 2

#### Commercial Uses

**Future commercial development, B1, B2 and small scale B8 uses, should be focused on the Hur st Road and Nightingale Road area and the Council will consider the loss of office floor space in the town centre subject to conditions.**

- 1. The loss of office floor space within the town centre will be considered if it contributes to the Council's overarching vision for the future prosperity of Horsham as set out in the Town Framework Report and this SPD. This loss, however, needs to be qualitative.**
- 2. Future commercial development within the town should primarily focus on the Nightingale Road and the Sidings land / Former Goods Yard identified in the Town Framework Report and in Figure 2 below. Hurst Road is also seen as an important area for mixed use commercial development.**
- 3. Redevelopment should not take place on land occupied by public services and agencies in the Hurst Road area without pursuing the potential opportunities to consolidate facilities under the Government's Total Place Initiative.**

Relevant Policies: NPPF, CP10, CP11, CP17, DC19, DC20, DC36

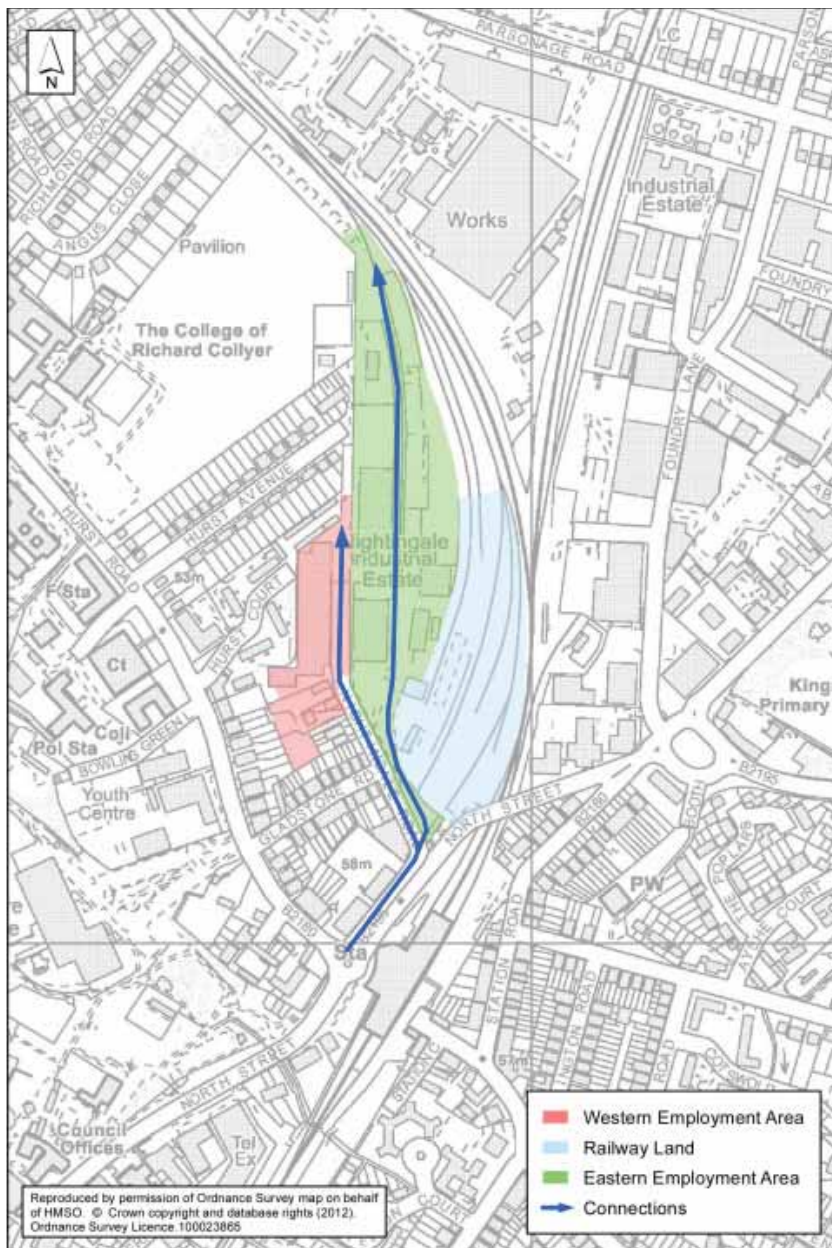
- 5.6** The Hurst Road area encompasses the road itself, the commercial area surrounding the road including the railway station goods yard, and the railway station itself. The aim for this area is to improve overall connectivity with the town centre and maximise the potential opportunity for a more joined-up and comprehensive redevelopment that will enhance the towns commercial offer and provide a more legible and attractive approach and access for visitors using the railway station.
- 5.7** Economic development is the Council's current top corporate priority as set out in the District Plan 2011-2015, and it is important, particularly at this time, that we have the land and facilities to enable employment growth in the town into the future. The Nightingale Road, Sidings land / Former Goods Yard and Hurst Road area is seen as a key area and strategic focus for future commercial development in the town with important links to the town centre and the railway station. Hurst Road has further potential for a mix of uses including residential due to its proximity to the Pavilions in the Park leisure facilities and park setting. The potential for the consolidation of public services and agencies, through the Total Place Initiative to lead to better services at a lesser cost, could also free up land for improved facilities and linkages.
- 5.8** The loss of commercial uses in the town centre will be resisted; however, it is clear that to achieve the aspirations, as set out in the Town Framework Report, there may be certain occasions when the loss of commercial floorspace is outweighed by the



benefit to the community and overall contribution to the future prosperity of Horsham. In this instance the loss of commercial uses, to uses such as residential, use may be acceptable.

- 5.9** As there are approximately 32, 516 square metres of vacant office floor space within the town centre, the Council will consider proposals which result in the loss office floor space, if it can be demonstrated this office floor space is low quality or obsolete and contributes to the Council's vision for the town centre. The loss of office floor space needs to be measured qualitatively so as to not impact on the high quality office space within the town centre. There should be the presumption against the loss of high quality office space within the town centre.

Figure 2 Nightingale Road and the Sidings land / Formers Goods Yard



## Leisure and Cultural Uses

### General Guidance 3

#### Leisure and Cultural Uses

**The enhancement and development of leisure and cultural facilities in the town are encouraged.**

- 1. As part of the overall vision for the future prosperity of the town the development of one or possibly two hotels would be considered favourably in the town centre or along Hurst Road.**
- 2. Proposals that will enhance the restaurant offer and night time economy are encouraged and should be concentrated on, but not limited to, the 'Quarter'.**
- 3. The Council will continue to support public art within the town and will also encourage proposals for the provision of new cultural facilities.**

Relevant Policies: CP17, CP18, DC34, DC39

- 5.10** When compared to other nearby centres, Horsham has a clear deficit in hotel provision, with only three in the town centre, particularly considering the town's close proximity to Gatwick airport and good rail links. The Council, therefore, is actively promoting the potential development of hotels in the town and any proposal will be considered favourably if it is within the Council's preferred locations of the town centre or along Hurst Road.
- 5.11** The restaurant and café culture that has grown in the town in recent years has significantly boosted the economy and attractiveness of the town to potential visitors. The main focus of this growth has been in the 'Quarter' where a number of restaurants, cafes and independent niche and boutique retail units have been established. Areas like the 'Quarter' have a positive impact on the historic character of the town and are found in the historic core of other Sussex and south eastern towns. Encouraging further restaurant uses and exploring the potential for an improved night time economy, by increasing restaurant opening hours for example, will build on and enhance the existing strengths of the area. The night time economy is an important aspect of the town's leisure offer and the 'Quarter' would be an ideal location to bring forward these improvements. The introduction of further restaurant uses to this area should be carefully monitored, however, to ensure an over-concentration of these uses does not occur, which can potentially lead to the generation of crime and anti-social behaviour.
- 5.12** Public art is already present within the town centre, namely the Forum, Piries Place, Swan Walk and West Street and, therefore, the Council will continue support of public art through development within key areas of the town centre. The Council will also encourage either the provision of new cultural facilities such as art galleries, on either a stand alone basis or within mixed use developments.

## Townscape Character and Design

### General Guidance 4

#### Townscape Character and Design

**Horsham should continue to be an attractive location through maintaining the town centres historical core and the delivery of a high quality environment.**

- 1. Proposals which protect and enhance the heritage assets of the town centre and work within the constraints of the historic core including the Horsham Town and London Road Conservation Areas, in a sensitive manner will be considered favourably.**
- 2. Development should respond positively to the existing character of the town centre through extension to the high quality pedestrian environment and delivery of high quality architectural and landscape design.**
- 3. Comprehensive proposals will be considered favourably in locations with a low townscape quality and poor relationship with adjacent sites, or is out of character with the town centre's historic environment.**

Relevant Policies: NPPF, CP1, CP3, DC2, DC9, DC12, DC13, DC14

- 5.13** Horsham is a thriving market town and its centre has a fine historic grain characterised by smaller retail units and historic development plots, which play a key role in defining the historic street layouts and public spaces. The historic character is a key factor which should be valued and continue to inform development proposals including the refurbishment of key historic assets. Therefore, the Council will seek to retain the character of the town as much as possible, as it is a key aspect of the town's competitive advantage and offers a suitable, attractive and individual environment for a wide range of retailers and evening economy.
- 5.14** Many of the buildings within the town centre are within the Horsham Town Conservation Area, which covers a large area of the town, including the Causeway, East Street, Denne Road, the Carfax and part of West Street. In addition, London Road is covered by a separate Conservation Area, the London Road Conservation Area. To assist in maintaining Horsham as an attractive location and to ensure delivery of a high quality environment, the Council will support any future opportunity to review the Horsham Town and London Road Conservation Areas.
- 5.15** Horsham provides the ideal setting for cultural uses and the creative arts and as these are a priority for the Council, support will be given to development proposals that enhance and maintain this distinctive environment, and that promote this life and vibrancy within the town centre but that also enhance the experience of visiting the town.
- 5.16** It is recognised that there are locations within Horsham town centre where buildings are out of character with the town centre's historic environment; in particular, there is disparity between the attractive historic core of the town centre and the collection

of larger buildings adjacent to Albion Way as shown in Figure 3 below, which contribute negatively to the character of the town centre. In these locations, logical comprehensive development will be considered, where it is shown to facilitate a positive contribution to the character of the town centre.

Figure 3 Poor quality spaces defined by Albion Way





## Sustainable Design

## General Guidance 5

## Sustainable Design

**Proposals for Horsham town need to embrace the highest standards of sustainable design in relation to national and local sustainability guidance and policy.**

- 1. Support will be given to proposals which show a development wide approach to energy generation and innovative sustainable design solutions, particularly Combined Heat and Power (CHP) district heating systems, within the Hurst Road and other areas.**
- 2. Proposals that enhance the existing green infrastructure within the town but that also provide opportunities for new green infrastructure, in accordance with the Council's emerging Green Infrastructure Strategy, will be supported.**

Relevant Policies: CP3, DC8, DC9, DC40

- 5.17** Providing a better environment for today and tomorrow is recognised as a priority in the District Plan 2011-2015, and it is important, that the Council incorporates high standards of sustainable design and construction and maximise opportunities for cost effective renewable or low carbon energy schemes.
- 5.18** Horsham town centre has been identified as a Heat Priority Area within the West Sussex Sustainable Energy Study 2009. To contribute towards achieving planned reductions in carbon emissions in Horsham District, the Hurst Road area in particular, including Pavilions in the Park, Horsham Hospital and potentially Collyers, has been identified as having sufficient heat demand to house a CHP district heating system if linked with any residential or commercial development in the Hurst Road area. The Council is in the early stages of considering its feasibility, as this could help the District meet its target of reducing its carbon emissions by 26% up to 2020 as per the Council's Climate Change Strategy. Such a land use, however, will require sensitive siting and landscaping, as to not impact on the overall townscape and also consideration of the impacts that any CHP use may have on air quality within Horsham town.
- 5.19** In addition to this, the Council will support high standards of sustainable construction, including site waste disposal, which should be integral to the design and build criteria for any development. Renewable or low carbon energy initiatives, as well as small district heating systems, should also be encouraged in other development areas in the towncentre e.g. the Bishopric area, as these can make an important contribution to a reduction in the Districts carbon emissions.
- 5.20** Green infrastructure within the urban context includes features such as trees, parks, road verges, allotments and cemeteries. The existing green infrastructure within Horsham town centre includes of parks, smaller open spaces and tree lined streets and it is important that these are conserved but also enhanced as part of any

development proposal. In addition to the conservation and enhancement of existing green infrastructure, opportunities for new green infrastructure should be considered favourably, and these could include features such as small accessible parks, green corridors, allotments, green roofs and green walls; as well as other important considerations such as maximising passive energy and natural ventilation. There may also be the potential to incorporate Sustainable urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) into development proposals, such as the use of swales, filter strips and rainwater gardens, therefore reducing the risk of flooding within and beyond the town.

## Public Spaces and Accessibility

### General Guidance 6

#### Public Spaces and Accessibility

**Horsham Town will benefit from the strengthening of legible connections in key areas such as between Hurst Road, Horsham Park and the town centre; and between Horsham station and the town centre. In addition to this, the town centre will also benefit from enhancing the boulevard qualities of Albion Way; and improving public spaces and pick up and drop off points within the town centre.**

- 1. As well as sustaining and enhancing the town centres historic layout, character and connections, proposals should contribute to better accessibility, safety and enhanced legible connections to the town centre, through key routes, gateways and thresholds.**
- 2. Opportunities that enhance Albion Way through boulevard qualities will be considered favourably.**
- 3. Proposals should seek to improve public spaces, pick up and drop off points and make the town centre more welcoming through specific public realm enhancements.**

Relevant Policy: CP19, DC9, DC40

**5.21** A series of interventions to improve the quality, safety and choice of legible connections for pedestrians, cycles and cars both into and within the town centre are promoted within the Town Framework Report with the aim of strengthening key retail circuits and providing opportunities to improve the quality of the retail offer and environment. The key areas of focus for these interventions are linking Hurst Road to the town centre, using links through the attractive Horsham park environment for pedestrians and cycles; and linkages between the train station and the town centre for all users.

**5.22** Hurst Road would benefit from enhanced pedestrian and cycle connections to Horsham Park and also continued connections through to the town as this will potentially open up the park for further leisure uses. Any introduction of further leisure uses to this area must complement the existing offer and should not impact



on the existing HorshamPark environment. Further leisure uses, together with the potential of an increased commercial offer, will increase the vibrancy of this area and contribute towards providing a more attractive gateway into the town centre. In addition to the above, comprehensive development in the Hurst Road area should facilitate the creation of new routes which will contribute to providing a more welcoming environment to the town for all modes of transport.

- 5.23** The station and North Street are important points of arrival to Horsham town by foot, cycles and vehicles. North Street, in particular, plays an important role, not only as an office and civic corridor, but also as the most direct route into the town centre from the station. The route from the station towards the town centre is strong, however, this area would benefit from a smoother transition between these particular areas such as improved cycle lanes, which are, at present, inconsistent and improved signage for way finding. Therefore, development proposals should seek to improve this.
- 5.24** One of the main gateways into Horsham town is Albion Way. Albion Way and its associated car parks currently take up a wide area of the town centre and creates a poor quality environment surrounding the town centre. Therefore, opportunities are encouraged to improve the quality and integrity of Albion Way as a whole including the quality of townscape and spaces adjacent to the ring road. This could be achieved through the re-establishing of active frontages and the enclosure of spaces; enhancing the boulevard qualities of Albion Way such as the planting of trees on both sides and wide single lanes; and improving connections across the ring road by putting in place features that encourage pedestrians to cross. Any proposals which result in changes to the transport network in the town need to consider the impacts on air quality within Horsham town.
- 5.25** The vibrancy of the town centre can be improved by creating good, welcoming public spaces, through efficient use of space with clear distinctions between public and private areas but also a clear relationship between active built frontage, streets and landscape design. Improvements to town centre public spaces, which contribute towards improving the attractive, high quality town centre environment, are encouraged. The Council will also support appropriate shared surface streets similar to that in Ashford, Kent, which have proved successful. In addition, there is the potential, particularly in the Hurst Road and Nightingale Road area for the creation of Home Zones and community gardens, to create attractive and safe places which the community can take pride over.
- 5.26** In addition to the town centre benefiting from the improvement to public spaces within the town centre, the town centre will benefit from improvement to existing but also the creation of new, high quality and easily accessible pick up and drop off points within the town centre, as the town centre currently has a lack of these. Any existing pick up and drop points appear tired and are in need of improvement. Therefore, the Council will encourage development proposals to address this issue.

## Parking

### General Guidance 7

#### Parking

**To support the future enjoyment of Horsham town and enhance its retail and leisure offer, parking should be concentrated in a few key locations and should contribute to a positive experience of the town centre.**

- 1. Consideration will be given to the provision of additional parking at locations outside of the Albion Way ring Road that contribute to, and are linked with, any comprehensive proposals which meet the vision for the town centre.**
- 2. Opportunities to close smaller car parks within the town centre to open up areas for development, should only be considered where these car parks do not fill a specific local need; or the current or projected need can be provided in a suitable location as part of the development proposal.**

Relevant Policies: CP19, DC40, DC41

- 5.27** Although the Council is seeking to achieve a modal shift towards more sustainable means of transport, it recognises the importance in ensuring that the car continues to be a viable and popular means of access, as a significant proportion of customers will continue to use the car for their journey to the town centre to enjoy the proposed enhanced retail and leisure offer. Therefore, all development proposals should indicate appropriate parking provision to meet these needs. The advancement of car clubs and electric car charging points being two recent initiatives towards more sustainable car travel in the District, and both should be encouraged as part of any new development scheme. Notwithstanding the above, however, it is also a priority to enable the continued enjoyment of all aspects of the town centre as a pedestrian and cyclist and to consider all abilities and needs of these users.
- 5.28** To enable this, it is acknowledged that additional parking will be required to meet local town centre needs, but this additional parking should be focussed on a few key sites outside Albion Way which are less used or new sites such as the Bishopric area or existing and future park and ride sites. It is recognised that this shift could potentially reduce peak period pressure on existing car parking, but the closure of smaller car parks within the town centre, to open areas up for development, will be resisted unless these car parks do not fill a specific local need, such as parking for specific community facilities; or the need can be provided in a suitable location considering the need the existing car park provided, as part of a development proposal.
- 5.29** The Council supports investment to improve the environment of the town centre car parks to achieve Park Mark standards, including high quality signage and way-finding to promote Horsham, to ensure an enhanced experience is provided for arriving visitors, as the town centre car parks are a key point of entry.

- 5.30** In addition to the above, development proposals should indicate parking provision, in line with West Sussex County Council parking standards, to meet local identified parking needs within the town centre.

## Financial Viability

### General Guidance 8

#### Financial Viability and Deliverability

**In light of the current economic climate strong support will be given to schemes that represent a step towards the Council's aspirations and vision for the town centre as set out in the Town Framework Report and can prove financial viability and deliverability.**

- 1. Development proposals, particularly in the identified redevelopment opportunity areas, need to be able to demonstrate financial viability and deliverability within a reasonable timescale. The Council will be receptive to proposals provided they can demonstrate that they contribute to or facilitate the aspirations of as set out within the Town Framework Report.**

Relevant Policy: CP17

- 5.31** The Town Framework Report sets out the Council's ultimate aspirations for the future development of the town. It is however recognised that in the current economic climate some of the aspirations highlighted are unlikely to be viable options at this point in time. However, they are and should continue to be seen as longer term aims for the Council, as recognised in the District Plan 2011-2015, particularly during economic recovery. Therefore, this SPD allows for some flexibility in the planning guidance to enable more viable schemes to come forward in the short term. However, it is crucial that for any scheme to come forward the proposer demonstrates to the Council that the scheme is part of, contributes to, or is a stepping stone towards the ultimate aspirations of the Council set out in the Town Framework Report and the overarching vision and an open book approach would be expected.
- 5.32** Notwithstanding the above, viability and deliverability will be considered positively and the Council should be receptive to schemes that may not comply fully with this SPD but that will enable positive development to take place. In this situation, schemes must be able to prove a robust business case.
- 5.33** Progress with development projects is in many circumstances reliant upon achieving satisfactory land assembly. Should issues arise which hinder or prejudice such progress, the Council will consider the use of statutory powers to achieve appropriate land assembly in the interests of proper planning in accordance with the relevant sections of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Prior to considering the use of compulsory purchase powers, the Council will endeavour to facilitate and enable progress with development proposals through negotiation and agreement with relevant parties at the earliest opportunity.



## Chapter 6: Site Specific Development Guidance

- 6.1** This chapter builds on the General Development Guidance set out in Chapter 5. It adds further details and more site specific guidance for the key sites within Horsham town centre which have been identified for regeneration. The key sites as identified in Chapter 2 are: Albion Way, The Quarter, Hurst Road and Nightingale Road area, the Bishopric, The Forum, West Street and Swan Walk. Although there is no Site Specific Guidance on the Carfax and the Causeway, the priorities for the future of these areas are also set out in this chapter. of this SPD
- 6.2** As with Chapter 5, this should not be seen as stand alone guidance and should be read alongside existing and emerging planning policies, as well as the Town Framework Report. The guidance has been set out for ease of use with a summary of the site specific issues followed by guidance points and relevant Council and national policies relating to that particular issue.

### Albion Way

#### Site Specific Guidance 1

##### Albion Way

**Creation of a positive introduction to Horsham town centre through the establishment of an attractive boulevard environment with improved crossing lines, appropriate landscape design and the redevelopment of adjacent sites, to create a better environment for all users, will be supported.**

- 1. Development proposals which look to reconfigure traffic lanes and pavements along Albion Way will be supported by the Council, provided that an appropriate study is carried out.**
- 2. Simplification of connections across Albion Way as well as appropriate landscaping to soften the urban transition at this key gateway into the town centre will be encouraged.**
- 3. Proposals which seek to re-establish an active frontage and consistent building line along Albion Way through comprehensive redevelopment of adjacent underused sites to create flexible retail units will be considered favourably, as long as these units build on, and do not compete with, the town centre offer.**

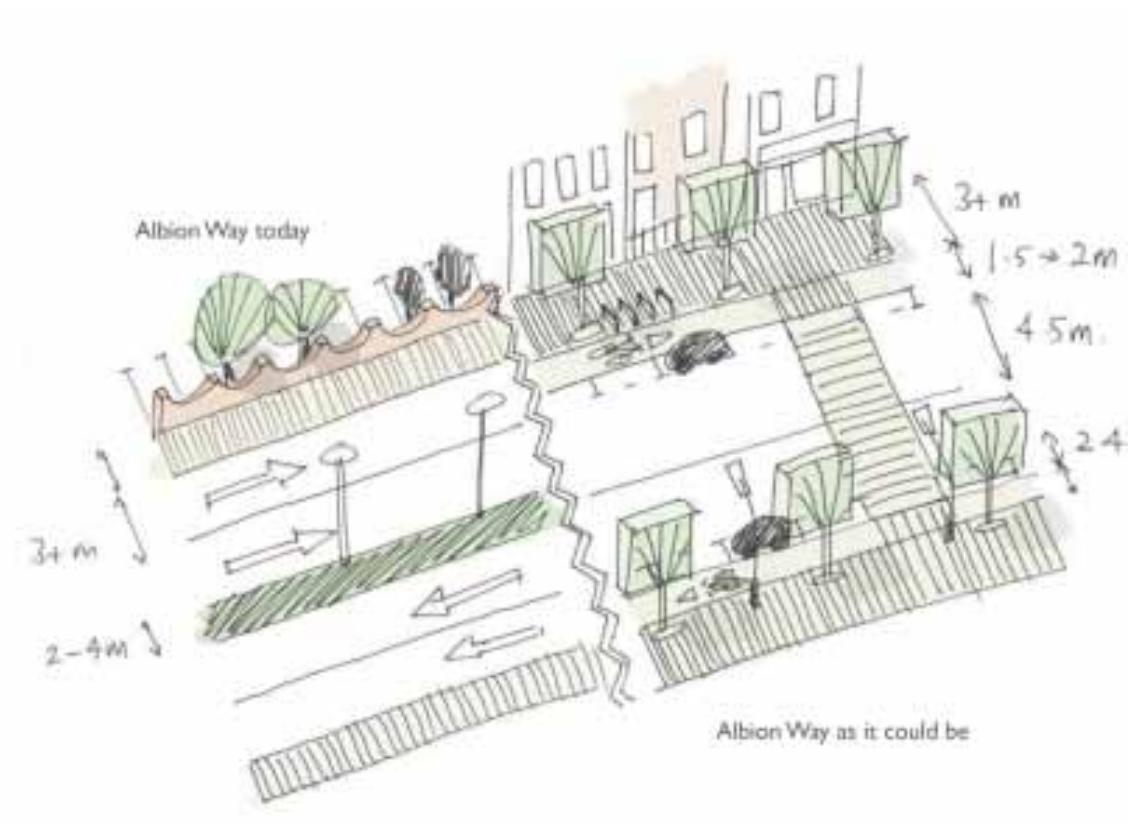
Relevant policies: NPPF, CP19, DC9, DC12, DC13, DC40

- 6.3** Albion Way is a wide dual carriage way which runs around town centre from Park Way in the east, to Worthing Road in the south and the junctions along Albion Way encourage short, fast bursts of traffic. The central reservation of Albion Way is unusable by pedestrians and the connections across Albion Way consist of underpasses and staggered crossings which are considered to hinder pedestrian's abilities to cross. Albion Way is not considered to create a positive introduction to Horsham town centre and therefore considered to present an opportunity to address

this issue through the creation of an attractive boulevard environment with improved crossing lines, appropriate landscaping and also the redevelopment of adjacent sites with a view to creating a positive frontage onto Albion Way.

- 6.4** As identified in the Town Framework Report, Albion Way has much in common with many European boulevards which have achieved the balance between functioning as high volume traffic arteries and being attractive, pedestrian and cycle friendly places that are easy to cross and pleasant to be in. The Council, therefore, feels that Horsham town would benefit significantly if this balance could be achieved with Albion Way.
- 6.5** Provided that an appropriate detailed study is carried out that would demonstrate how the road network would cope with any changes to the highway layout in the vicinity of Albion Way, opportunities will be taken to create an attractive boulevard environment, such as the example shown in Figure 4. This could include wide lanes; dedicated bus lanes; simplifying crossings and junctions, with the possibility of an additional crossing south of the Bishopric and West Street junction to connect with any future development in the Bishopric area; and introduction of formal tree planting, to give definition to the area and encourage more considerate driving at a more constant speed than at present. In addition to this, the creation of wider pavements and cycle lanes with the possibility of introducing on street parking would create a safer and more secure environment for people on foot and bicycle.
- 6.6** Albion Way has an inconsistent building line which creates a vast amount of adjacent underused sites. Boulevard environments, however, can create an attractive environment for buildings to face on to which encourages people to use and enjoy the space. Therefore, re-establishing an active frontage and consistent building along Albion Way through comprehensive redevelopment of adjacent underused sites to create flexible retail units is considered to be beneficial for the town as it could assist in populating the currently underused space along Albion Way and the creation of an attractive, useable environment for all, which could become a significant new public space and asset to the town at this key gateway. The town will also benefit from the opening up of sightlines from Albion Way through to the town centre, to encourage people to visit the centre.
- 6.7** Notwithstanding the above, any development of Albion Way and adjoining sites should respond positively to the setting, character and development pattern of both London Road Conservation Area and the Horsham Town Conservation Area, as well as enhance the setting of any listed buildings. In addition, development proposals need to consider the impacts that any changes to the transport network in the town may have on air quality within Horsham town.

Figure 4 Albion Way as it could be





## The Quarter

### Site Specific Guidance 2

#### The Quarter

**The Quarter would benefit from strengthening the quality of independent niche and boutique retail, high quality restaurant and night time economy offer through promoting the historic development pattern and character, to create a more prominent key location for the eastern side of the town centre.**

- 1. Use of the existing historic building pattern to improve and enhance definition between public and private spaces will be encouraged through proposals, provided proposals maintain the town centres historical core and deliver a high quality environment.**
- 2. Opportunities to create further active frontages in this area for independent niche and boutique retail, market based activities, high quality restaurant and night time economy offer; and the strengthening and creation of accessible and legible connections particularly between Queen Street, East Street, Piries Place, Stan's Way and the Carfax, will be considered favourably through development proposals.**

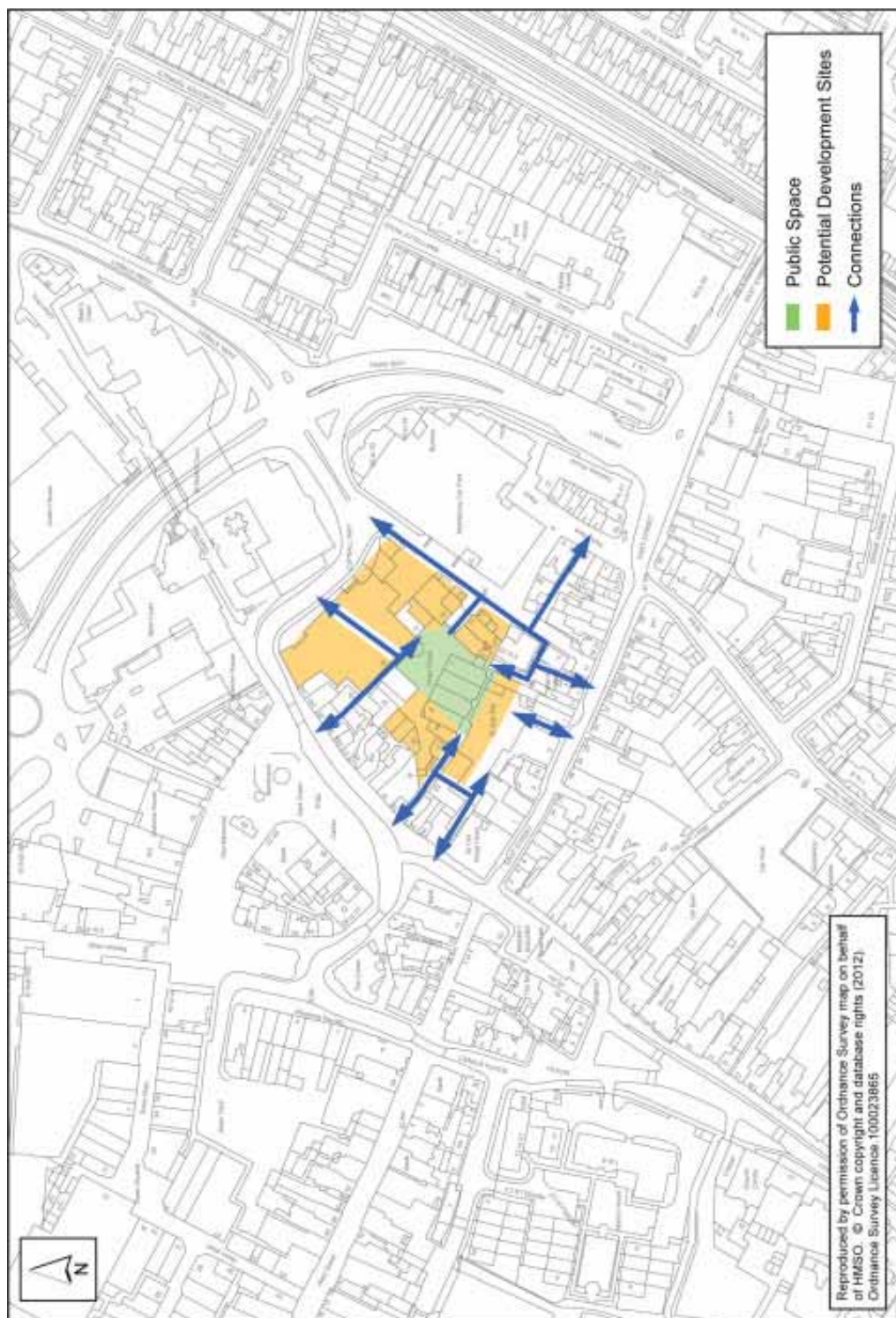
Relevant policies: NPPF, CP17, CP18, DC12, DC13, DC34, DC39

- 6.8** The Quarter consists of four key areas - East Street, Piries Place, Denne Road and Market Square. East Street consists of a variety of restaurants, as well as more specialist and independent retailers and is considered a successful part of the town. The area has recently been subject to significant improvements to create a shared surface environment which the Council will seek to retain, as the current mix of vehicles and people provide this area with activity and character. Piries Place benefits from attractive and historically sensitive unit frontages and has two alleyway entrances encouraging people through from the Carfax to a public space surrounded by small retail units, evening economy offers and a Waitrose anchor store, which is key to encouraging people into the area. Both areas are considered, by the Council, a major asset to the town centre which is why this area's role should continue but also be enhanced through redevelopment opportunities.
- 6.9** It is essential that the quality of the retail offer in this area is maintained. Depending on the requirements of an anchor store, there could be the opportunity to create a new link north; opening views to St. Mark's spire, linking the main pedestrian arrival route into the town centre from the station. Should units in this area come up for replacement this link could be extended through to East Street and opportunities could include the creation of a new public space surrounded by smaller retail units, some of which can be used to expand the evening economy offer and independent or boutique hotels.
- 6.10** Opportunities for the currently vacant parts of the Kings Head Hotel are already being progressed with the introduction of A3 uses, but there may be further, small scale, opportunities in this area including a further mix of independent niche and



boutique retail and restaurants at ground floor level with the possibility of small amounts of residential uses above, providing the introduction of residential use does not restrict development of the evening economy offer. It may also enable the improvement of existing, and creation of new, links from Piries Place to the Carfax, East Street and Stan's Way. The links between Piries Place and the Carfax are key so as to not detract from the current character and activity of the Carfax. An example of how this area could look is shown in Figure 5. In addition, there is the opportunity to consider the future of Piries Place car park and the garage site on Denne Road, Denne Road car park and environs present opportunities for further mixed use areas within the town centre.

Figure 5 Piries Place Opportunities



## Hurst Road and Nightingale Road area

### Site Specific Guidance 3

#### Hurst Road and Nightingale Road area

**The Hurst Road and Nightingale Road area should be enhanced as a mixed use area through the consolidation of existing uses and the introduction of additional uses. In addition, this area is key to strengthening and simplifying legible connections with the town centre.**

- 1. The introduction of additional uses including residential, leisure and commercial uses in particular, to enhance this area as a mixed use area will be encouraged; however, any development proposal must consider the wider aims for this area as set out in this SPD and the Horsham Town Framework Report.**
- 2. Development proposals should contribute to enabling opportunities to improve the connectivity of the area but also the connectivity of the area with the town centre, particularly through use of Horsham Park and along North Street from the station and beyond.**

Relevant policies: NPPF, CP10, CP11, CP17, CP19, DC9, DC19, DC20, DC40

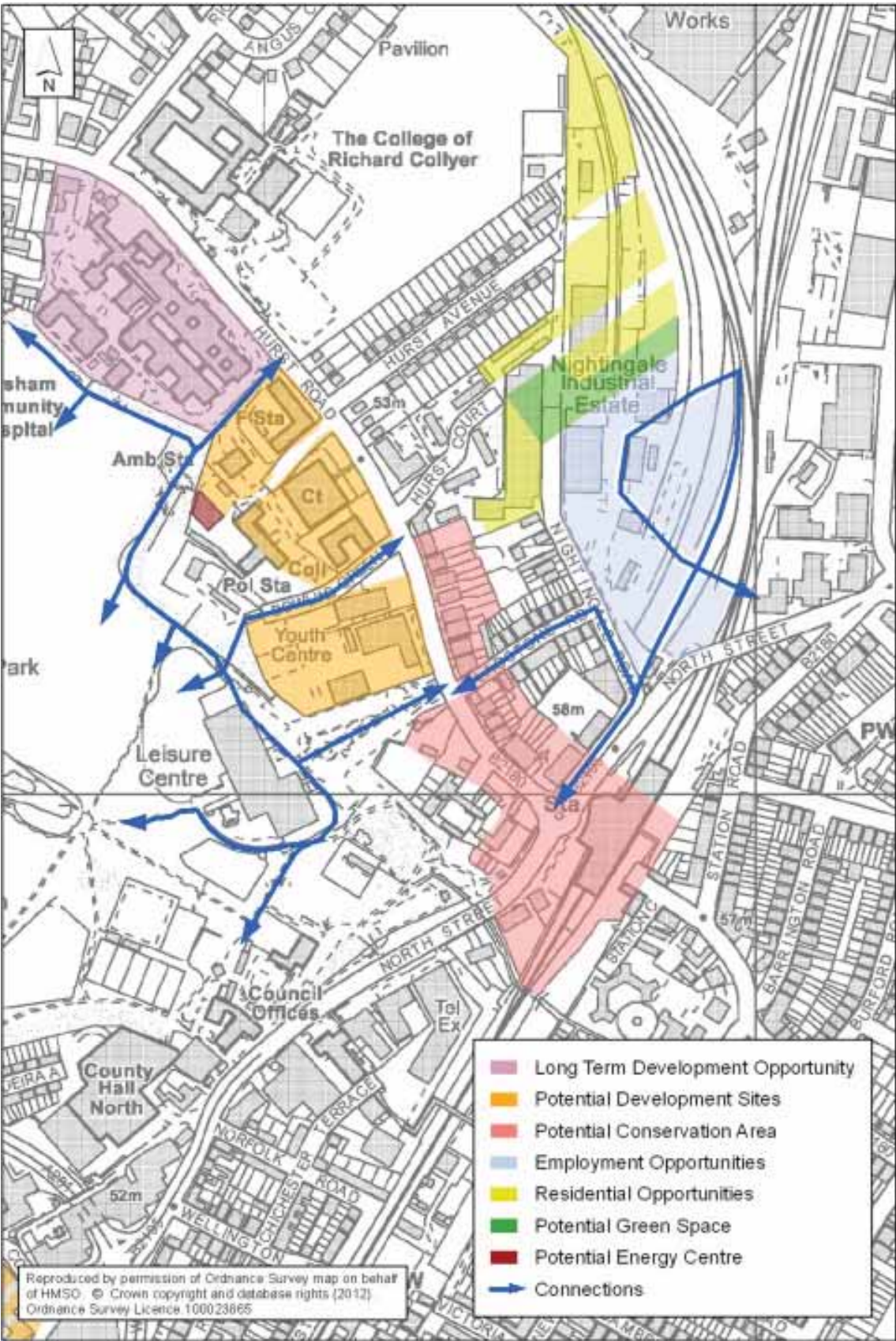
- 6.11** Hurst Road is a mixed use area comprising of larger family housing along with medium density flatted development and a variety of civic, educational and public sector uses, such as Horsham police station. The majority of the non-residential buildings along Hurst Road are relatively low density, poorly designed and contribute negatively to the character of the area. There is a lack of high quality connections in this area particularly through to the park and on to the town centre, but also, the junction of Hurst Road, the station and North Street is illegible and creates an access barrier.
- 6.12** Nightingale Industrial Estate is a successful industrial estate, however, suffers from a poor quality public realm and has an un-neighbourly relationship with the adjacent residential areas. The key route to access the estate involves a difficult left in / left out turn on to North Street and because Nightingale Road is narrow, this causes conflict between industrial traffic and traffic for other uses, such as the Premier Inn. The Council, therefore, sees the Hurst Road and Nightingale Road area as a major opportunity area, but realises the area is constrained by physical infrastructure and ownership issues.
- 6.13** Along the western edge of Hurst Road, the Council will take opportunities, where suitable, to consolidate and redevelop the various public sector sites, which could include the co-location of services as promoted through the Total Place Initiative. This could free up various sites along Hurst Road and on the edge of Horsham Park, in which new uses could be introduced. Due to the proximity to Horsham Park, the station and the town centre, this area could become attractive for small amounts of high quality residential led development and could open up a possible site for a new high end hotel operator with conference facilities. Additional pedestrian and

cycle links through to the park could then potentially be introduced to the south of the existing police station and to the south of Horsham Community Hospital, to link this area with the park and routes to the town centre. Any development in this area must be of high quality design and should look to innovative sustainable design solutions such as a Combined Heat and Power (CHP) district heating system and provide opportunities to introduce new green infrastructure.

- 6.14** On the eastern side of Hurst Road, the opportunity exists to enhance the Nightingale Road area by either refurbishment or redevelopment of the site for a mix of uses; however, any development should not compromise the success of the Nightingale Road Industrial Estate. Small amounts of employment land could be released to enable an extension to the existing residential areas of Hurst Avenue, Hurst Court and Nightingale Road, and there could be the opportunity to create an attractive Home Zone in Hurst Avenue, which could incorporate a shared surface space for residents to enjoy, as well as the possible introduction of a new allotment. Any development proposal on employment land in this area should include an assessment of contamination, due to the possible previous uses in this area, and should ensure that any necessary remediation is carried out.
- 6.15** It would be positive to retain the majority of this area in employment use, in the short term, but to consider a comprehensive scheme in the longer term which might include the release of further land to enable an extension to Hurst Court and the creation of a community space for the consolidated community. It could also allow for significant improvements to and the extension and connection of Nightingale Road to Hurst Court and improvement to the existing green strip so that there is a clear separation between the residential area and the industrial estate. Separation of employment traffic and the residential part of Nightingale Road and also improvement to the junction of Hurst Road, the station and North Street should be a priority for this area and this could be achieved through realignment of North Street and the delivery of a new bridge over the railway line, alongside a new access roundabout connecting directly to North Street. This area also provides the opportunity to provide much needed additional car parking for the station and residents of Hurst Road, who currently have to park on the road, narrowing Hurst Road and adding to the issues with the junction.
- 6.16** The route along North Street, located at the eastern end of Hurst Road, is the primary gateway between the station and the town centre. It is considered to have commercial potential and therefore should be retained for commercial and leisure purposes. Due to its advantageous location and accessibility, several sites exist, along this road, which offer significant redevelopment potential for commercial / leisure uses which include hotels, conference facilities and uses associated with the night time economy. Therefore, proposals which seek to introduce appropriate commercial and leisure uses to this area will be considered favourably by the Council.
- 6.17** In addition, any future development in this area must take into consideration the potential Conservation Area. An example of the opportunities for the Hurst Road and Nightingale Road area are shown in Figure 6.



Figure 6 Hurst Road and Nightingale Road area opportunities



**Bishopric****Site Specific Guidance 4****Bishopric**

**Creation of a high quality western extension to Horsham town, which seeks to refresh the town centres retail offer, through redevelopment of the Bishopric area will be supported, as long as it does not detract from the town centre and appropriate connections are made.**

- 1. Comprehensive development will be considered in this area to enable provision of flexible retail units and provision for a high quality anchor store, to build on the town centres current retail offer and create a key location for the western side of town.**
- 2. Any development must demonstrate that it will not have an adverse impact on the town centre primary shopping areas, by satisfying the sequential test and impact assessment requirements set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.**
- 3. Proposals must strengthen the existing pedestrian routes south and west of the town centre by providing safe and appropriate connections, routes and sightlines from the town centre to this area but also through to the wider area.**
- 4. Parking linked to comprehensive development will be considered in this area if it can be demonstrated that it meets the wider vision for the town centre.**

Relevant policies: NPPF, CP10, CP11, CP17, CP19, DC9, DC12, DC19, DC20, DC34, DC40, AL2

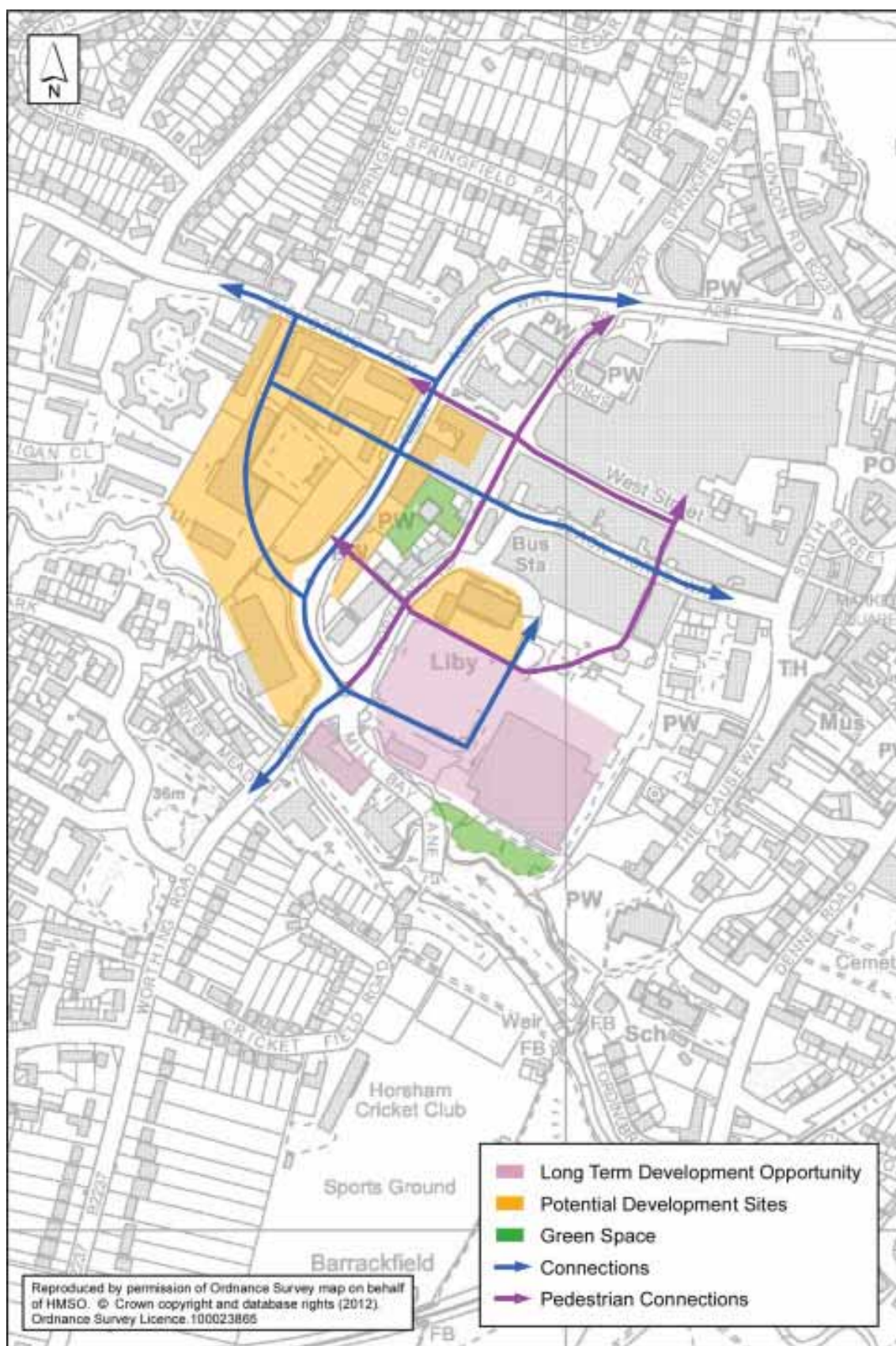
- 6.18** The Bishopric area consists of various sites south of the Bishopric and to the immediate east and west of Albion Way. It is located outside the town centre retail core; the majority of the area is separated by Albion Way and contributes negatively to this southern gateway to the town. The Bishops Weald site, which has recently been sold, is located to the east of Albion Way and is a poorly designed building which consists, currently of around 2,322 square metres of vacant office space and occupies a key sight line at the western end of West Street. There are many barriers to movement in this area including the roundabout of Albion Way and Worthing Road, which restricts east to west movement; the bus station, which restricts movement southwards from West Street to the Forum; and the junction of Albion Way, the Bishopric and West Street, which forms a major barrier to pedestrian movement.
- 6.19** The Council, therefore, considers the Bishopric area to offer an ideal opportunity for comprehensive redevelopment to address these issues and create a high quality western extension to the town centre, along with improving the gateway environment and enhancing the quality and safety of the connections across Albion Way, but

also out to the wider area such as Swan Walk. It is essential, however, that any development in this area does not detract from the current offer in the town centre, but complements it. In addition, it might be considered appropriate to introduce further uses in this area such as residential to create further mixed use town centre living but also the introduction of small district heating systems to contribute to a reduction in the Districts carbon emissions.

- 6.20** The creation of a new vehicular route or the major redesign of Albion Way in this area will be encouraged to make the environment more inviting to cycles, buses and pedestrians. A new vehicular route would enable the reduction of traffic on the old section of Albion Way and allow for better connections between this area and the town centre, in particular across Albion Way to West Street. Development sites to the east of Albion Way could then enable further connections south from West Street past the bus station to the forum, which could help reduce traffic on Worthing Road; the creation of a new public green space; and the possibility of downgrading of the roundabout to a cross road. As well as new connections, the restoration of historic routes will be encouraged and all development must respect the areas historic development pattern and character of the conservation area. There is also the potential for a new car park to the east of Albion Way which may be required in relation to the expansion of retail floorspace. However, this should only be considered if it meets the wider vision for the town centre and does not adversely impact on parking provision within the town.
- 6.21** The Council will support the redevelopment of the south side of the Bishopric as a high quality retail extension to the town. This could be in the form of either a number of larger retail units or a single anchor store, with development contributing to the improvement of access in this area, such as an extension of the river path between the river and the development opportunity areas, or the creation of an active frontage creating an attractive, tree-lined street that people would enjoy visiting. Prioritising pedestrian movement through simplifying junctions and routes in this area will be beneficial, as it would help to reinforce a pedestrian friendly environment. In the longer term, possible redevelopment of the Sainsbury's store could open up the opportunity of comprehensive development to incorporate a mix of uses with a strong anchor store. An example of the possible opportunities for this area is shown in Figure 7.



Figure 7 Bishopric Opportunities





## The Forum

### Site Specific Guidance 5

#### The Forum

**The Forum should continue as a mixed use area and opportunities to strengthen and expand the retail offer and improve the public space will be supported.**

- 1. Retail uses should be concentrated at ground floor level and the Council will support the use of the Forum for innovative retail solutions, such as high quality temporary pop up retail pods.**
- 2. The public space should be improved and the Council will consider the future use of the Forum for additional uses such as market uses and public art displays.**

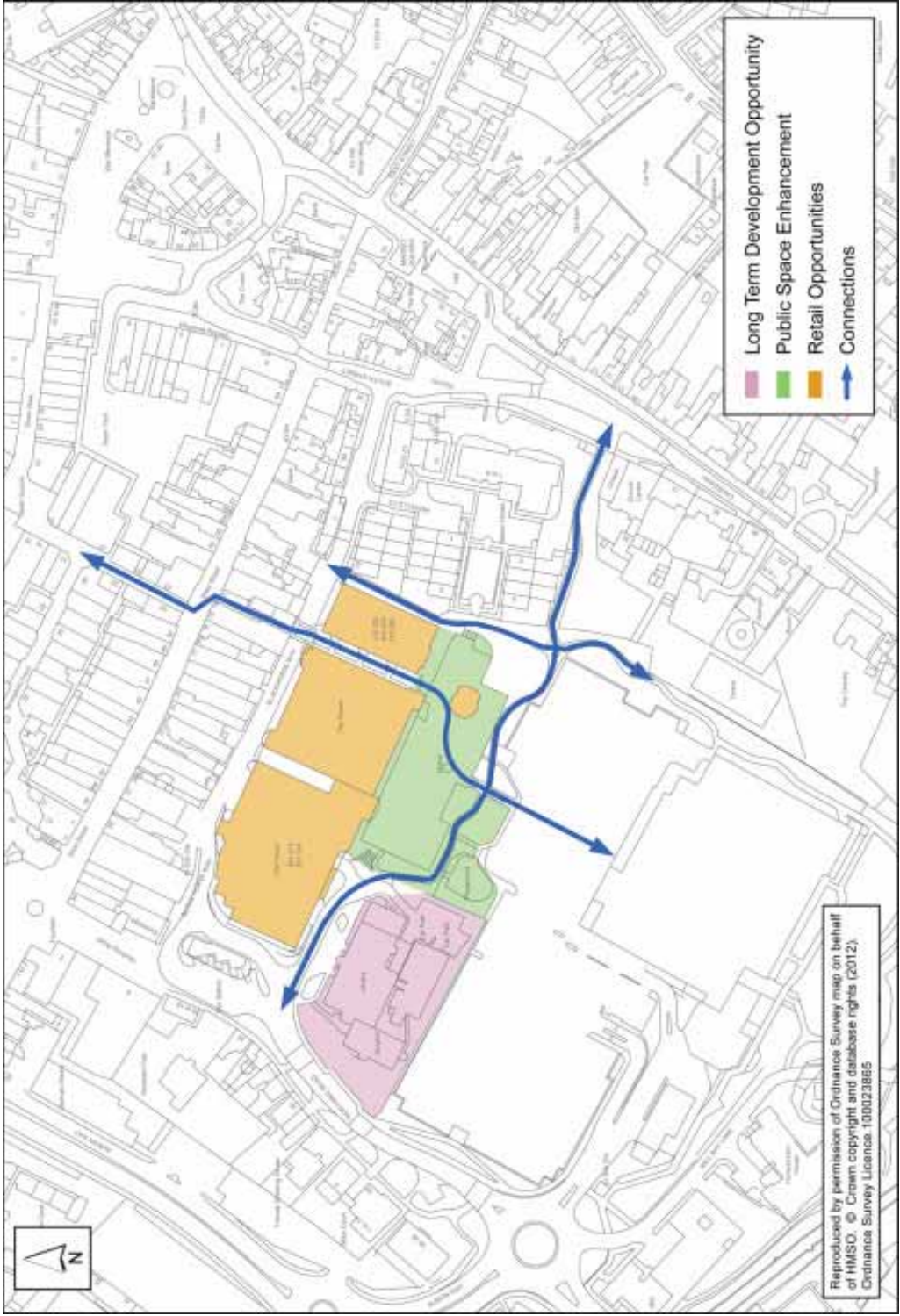
Relevant policies: NPPF, CP17, CP18, CP19, DC9, DC34, DC39, DC40

- 6.22** The Forum is Horsham's most recent significant mixed use development comprising Cargo, Blacks, Beales department store and TK Maxx at ground floor level, residential development above, a significant amount of public space, café and a multi-storey car park. The Forum feels fairly detached from the town centre and the public space feels exposed to the elements, however, it has been a successful addition to the town with the retail units, particularly the café, understood to be trading satisfactorily. Part of the reason for this is that the development benefits from being in close proximity to the town's major food store, Sainsbury's, which provides free parking, for its customers for up to 2 hours, and assists with pedestrian flow through the development.
- 6.23** Notwithstanding the above, however, there are opportunities to strengthen and expand the retail offer, to complement the existing offer in the town; also to improve the use of the public space and improve the links to and from the site to other areas of the town. Opportunities to enhance and complement the retail offer will be supported in principle and these could include short term innovative solutions, such as high quality temporary pop up retail pods. Pop up retail pods are small temporary retail / community use spaces and are used by occupiers who prefer a short, flexible hire term to a traditional long lease. It is therefore, expected that they will be occupied by several occupiers over their lifetime. Other opportunities to improve the use of the public space could include the introduction of additional uses such as market uses, public art displays and outdoor leisure activities such as large scale chess and table tennis.
- 6.24** Opportunities should be taken to improve the signage to and from the Forum, to and from other areas of the town, to increase the public's awareness of the space and to attract people into it. Although the Carfax is the town's main space for events, use of the Forum for a secondary events space should be considered. There is also the possible long-term opportunity to redevelop the library facility and adjacent surgery, to create a more mixed use area, which would provide the opportunity to

address the exposed public space, thus increasing footfall in this area. Any development in this area must respect the character and appearance of Horsham Town Conservation Area.

- 6.25** The Forum car park generally has a lower usage rate than other car parks within the town and has a difficult access arrangement, so therefore there may be the opportunity to consider the future of the Forum car park through any future development proposals. In addition to this, proposals to enhance the overall environment of the car park will be supported. An example of the possible opportunities for this area is shown in Figure 8.

Figure 8 The Forum Opportunities



**West Street****Site Specific Guidance 6****West Street**

**West Street will continue to be promoted as a primary shopping area within the town centre and the Council will support appropriate enhancements to its public realm and the improvement of connections to the wider area.**

- 1. Support will be given for the continued promotion of West Street as a primary shopping area within the town centre.**
- 2. Opportunities to enhance West Street's public realm such as the rationalisation of street furniture, improvements to paving and street level lighting, appropriate improvement of shop fronts and signage and the introduction of additional activity will be supported in principle.**
- 3. Proposals to enable a safer, wider and more attractive route from Sainsbury's through to Swan Walk via the Forum, Blackhorse Way, West Walk and West Street will be encouraged.**

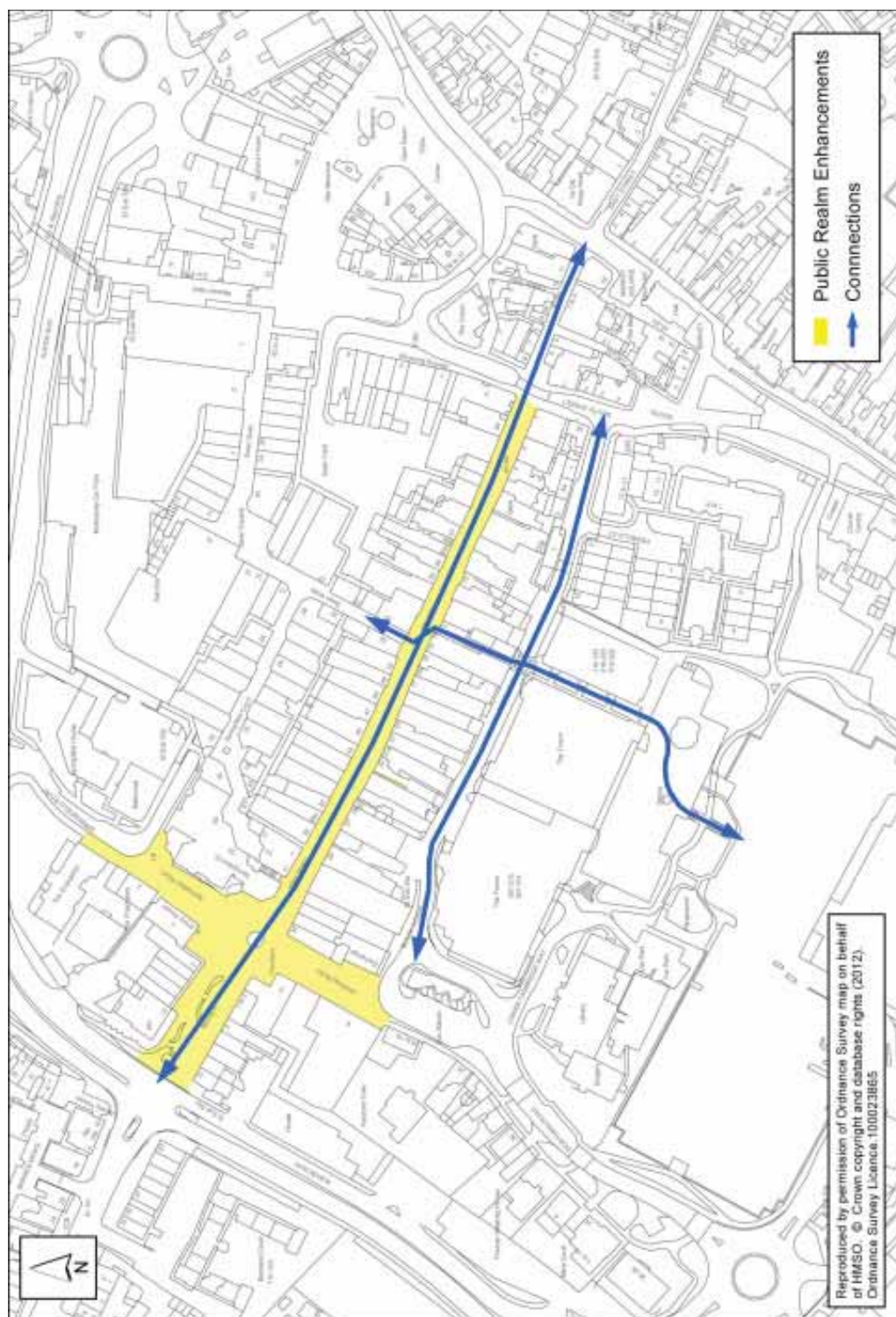
Relevant policies: NPPF, CP1, CP17, CP19, DC9, DC12, DC13, DC14, DC34, DC39, DC40

- 6.26** West Street is a traditional linear retail area, which includes a number of national brands and multiples, and performs a key role as Horsham's primary external shopping street. West Street is pedestrianised and there are a number of attractive and historic buildings, the majority of which are located within Horsham Town Conservation Area. Notwithstanding the above, however, the overall environment of West Street, compared to other areas of the town, is relatively poor, particularly the western end, suffering from a cluttered and tired public realm with poor sightlines along its length.
- 6.27** The units along West Street are generally small in size, due to being in keeping with the character of the Horsham Town Conservation Area, which results in a number of major occupiers trading from undersized units, such as Next and Topshop, which trade from significantly smaller units than their usual retail format dictates. Although the recent development of a Travelodge at the western end of West Street has potentially increased the footfall in this area, and the town's most significant piece of public art is located here; West Street lacks an anchor store at the western end of the street to add to the future viability of West Street and other areas of the town. In addition to this, the pedestrian route from Sainsbury's through to Swan Walk via the Forum, Blackhorse Way, West Walk (the alleyway through from West Street to Blackhorse Way) and West Street is poorly identified and too narrow for the volume of use and significance of its connection, and therefore its improvement should be considered.

- 6.28** The Town Framework Report identifies that the Council should continue to focus on the promotion of West Street as a prime location for retail trading and that the area will benefit from enhancements to the public realm such as better lighting and planting, the rationalisation of street furniture and the improvement of shop fronts. The verticality of the buildings along West Street contribute to the positive historic character of West Street and Horsham Town Conservation Area and also have the effect of reducing the apparent distance along West Street; thereby lengthening the amount of time people spend in the area. These qualities should remain.
- 6.29** The vitality of West Street could be enhanced by the proposals for the Bishopric which offer the possibility of a new western anchor; however it will be important, for both areas, to enhance the quality of safe and attractive pedestrian crossings from any such new development to West Street across what is currently Albion Way. It will also be important to improve the pedestrian link from Sainsbury's through to Swan Walk via the Forum, Blackhorse Way, West Walk and West Street, and vice versa, as this is a key south-north route within the town. West Walk, in particular, could be improved significantly by the introduction of some active frontage.
- 6.30** West Street is currently an east-west cycle link but only outside shopping hours, therefore there may be the opportunity to upgrade Blackhorse Way to provide a consistent alternative east-west route. In addition to this, there is the opportunity to improve the rear accesses of the shops backing onto Blackhorse Way, as, in their current form, they create an unwelcoming and unsightly approach to the town. The safety of the crossing point on Blackhorse Way between West Walk and the Forum also needs improving.
- 6.31** The bus station at the western end of Blackhorse Way is considered to operate successfully albeit close to capacity, however, the constraints of the site offer little opportunity for expansion of the services in the future. Consideration should, therefore, be given to the provision of further capacity either in the vicinity of the existing bus station or in other areas of the town, such as the Carfax. Consideration also needs to be given to improving the flow, and journey times, of buses around the town, as these are currently slow due to the one-way bus routes around the town.
- 6.32** In the absence of any evening functions, West Street can become uninviting and lack activity in the evenings after trading finishes, particularly during the winter months. Activity in high streets is recognised to increase the feeling of safety and therefore use. There may, therefore, be the opportunity to introduce additional activity to West Street, to increase the feeling of safety, by further encouragement of residential uses above existing retail units, for example. Any development needs to be sympathetic to the character and appearance of Horsham Town Conservation Area and the various listed buildings along West Street, which help to give the eastern part of West Street its character. An example of the possible opportunities for this area is shown in Figure 9.



Figure 9 West Street Opportunities



**Swan Walk****Site Specific Guidance 7****Swan Walk**

**Swan Walk should continue as a key retail area within the town centre and the creation of additional and larger scale retail units will be supported.**

- 1. Appropriate high quality development proposals which allow the reconfiguration and/or redevelopment of Swan Walk and adjacent land to provide some larger and more flexible retail units, increasing the existing provision of retail, will be supported in principle.**

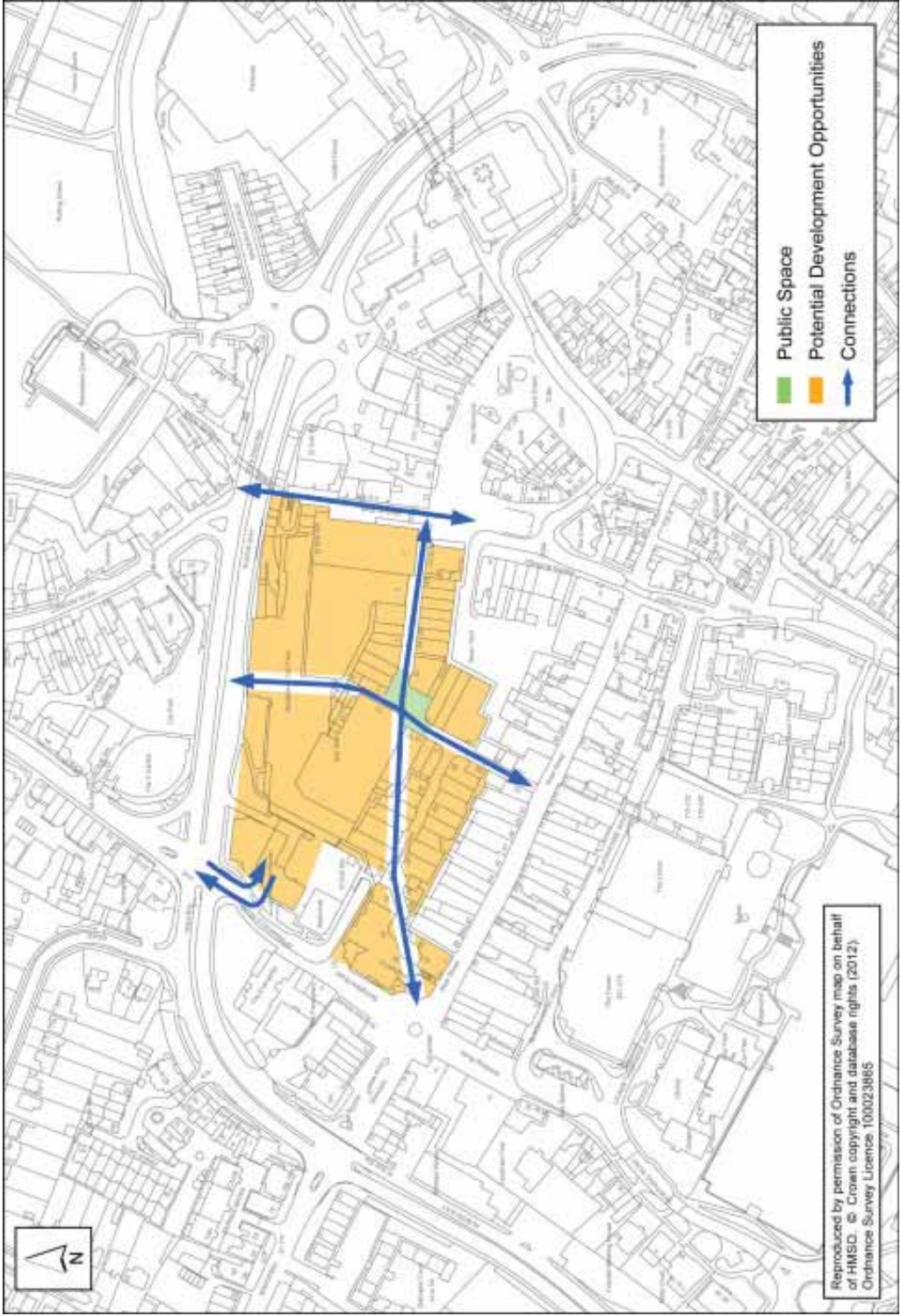
Relevant policies: NPPF, CP3, CP17, DC34

- 6.33** Swan Walk, which opened in 1975 and was extended in 1989, currently provides around 23,225 square metres of floorspace and is the only covered shopping environment in Horsham town. Swan Walk contains a variety of high street occupiers in varying unit sizes and provides a complementary offer to that of West Street. The centre, however, lacks a supply of larger units and there have been a number of ongoing proposals within Swan Walk to create larger units to reflect retailer's current requirements for example the reconfiguration of the former British Bookshop store located at the entrance to Swan Walk, off the Carfax to accommodate Fat Face's needs.
- 6.34** There are, however, considered to be potential sites adjacent to Swan Walk, which could assist in providing opportunities for the enhancement and expansion of Swan Walk, in both the shorter and longer term, thus increasing the vitality and viability of the town centre. In the shorter term, opportunities for the reconfiguration of Swan Walk to create larger retail units will be supported. In the medium term, there may be opportunities to redevelop some adjacent land and buildings to Swan Walk. The current access to Swan Walk from the western end of town is via an underused narrow staircase, which was intended for a fire escape not an entrance. Therefore, the reconfiguration of the western end of Swan Walk could create a major new access to that end of Swan Walk, which currently has little pedestrian footfall, and could be the start of a legible route through the centre.
- 6.35** In the longer term it may become possible to redevelop the multi-storey car park, as well as the shops below it, by either extending or rebuilding the car park. The new car park could be accessed from Springfield Road and could incorporate active frontage onto Albion Way, such as commercial units on the ground floor. Below the car park, a new legible pedestrian route could be created leading to a public space at the centre of the development. Removal of the north-east part of the car park could allow for mixed use buildings fronting onto Albion Way and the space could be enhanced with on street parking, wider pavements and planting. These approaches should not necessarily be seen as independent from one another, as one approach could be delivered in the shorter term without preventing another approach from being delivered in the longer term.



- 6.36** Swan Walk and the cost to include any adjacent land and buildings in any future development proposals. In addition, Swan Walk multi-storey car park is a large revenue generator for the Council and comprehensive development could result in significant disruption to the town centre and a loss of income. It is however recognised that the Swan Walk car park environment is in need of investment. An example of the possible opportunities for this area is shown in Figure 10.

Figure 10 Swan Walk Opportunities



**Other areas for consideration**

The Horsham Town Plan SPD does not provide Site Specific Guidance for all areas of the town as, due to the success of some areas, they have not been identified for any potential redevelopment or regeneration. The priorities for these areas have, however, been set out below.

**The Carfax**

The Carfax is the historic heart of Horsham town centre and is the main focus for retail services such as banks, as well as retailers, restaurants and cafés. The Carfax is a largely pedestrianised area, aside from one-way bus and vehicle traffic, which is successful in creating activity and movement through the space. The Carfax is an extremely successful location and due to the size and quality of its public realm, it is used as the town's main space for events, including the French Market.

The priority for the Carfax is to maintain and enhance its role and setting as the historic heart of the town centre as well as maintaining the focus on retail services and continuing its promotion as the focus for Horsham's thriving events programme.

**The Causeway**

The Causeway, which sits within the Horsham Town Conservation Area, is a heritage asset of major significance, and has a reputation as one of the finest historic streets in the country. The majority of buildings in the Causeway are listed and many of them date back more than 600 years. The Causeway, which is home to the Horsham Museum, is primarily residential but with a number of local businesses.

The main priority for the Causeway is to retain the historic integrity of the Causeway and to promote the area as a heritage tourism destination in relation to the museum and town heritage walks; however it may be beneficial in the future to enhance the quality of the open space at the north of the Causeway, in terms of paving, planting and lighting.

## Chapter 7: Conclusion

- 7.1** This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been produced to build on Policy CP17 of the Core Strategy 2007 following the production of the Town Framework Report, February 2011. The Town Framework Report looked into the future prosperity of Horsham in relation to economic uses, leisure uses and connectivity across strategically significant areas of the town.
- 7.2** The aim of the Horsham Town Plan SPD is to provide planning guidance for the town centre based on the Council's findings, aspirations, priorities for the area and to sustain and enhance the area for the future in the most effective way. The guidance will help to steer potential developers and will act as the Council's starting point for more detailed discussions and proposals that arise in the town over future years.
- 7.3** The Horsham Town Plan SPD has been subject to two rounds of public and stakeholder consultation, which have both included stakeholder workshops with a range of stakeholders including Members, Neighbourhood Council's and representatives from local organisations and businesses.
- 7.4** For any queries on this document, please contact a member of the Strategic Planning Team on 01403 215398, email: [strategic.planning@horsham.gov.uk](mailto:strategic.planning@horsham.gov.uk).



## Glossary

### **Combined Heat and Power District Heating System (CHP):**

A system for distributing heat and power that is generated in a central location for residential and commercial heating requirements.

### **Core Strategy:**

The Core Strategy sets out the key elements of the planning framework for the area. It is comprised of a spatial vision and strategic objectives; a spatial strategy, core policies and a monitoring and implementation framework with clear objectives for achieving delivery. Once adopted, all other Development Plan Documents must conform to it.

### **Development Plan Documents (DPD):**

The Local Development Framework is partly comprised of Local Development Documents. This includes Local Development Framework Development Plan Documents, which in turn comprise the Core Strategy, Site Allocations, Area Action Plans Proposals Map, General Development Control Policies.

### **District Plan 2011-2015:**

The District Plan has been adopted by the Council for the four year period 2011-15. This document gives a clear direction and focus on where the Council's priorities lie and replaces the previous Corporate Plan 2008-11.

### **General Development Control Policies:**

These are policies which set out criteria against which planning applications for development and use of land and buildings will be considered. Such policies will ensure that development accords with the spatial vision and objectives set out in the Core Strategy.

### **Green Infrastructure Strategy:**

The Green Infrastructure Strategy is a Local Development Framework evidence base document which provides a broad strategic overview of the District's existing situation in relation to the provision and accessibility of green space.

### **Home Zone:**

A street or group of streets designed primarily to meet the interests of pedestrians and cyclists rather than motorists, opening up the street for social use.

### **Local Development Framework (LDF):**

The Local Development Framework is not a statutory term. However, it sets out the Local Development Documents in the form of a 'portfolio/folder' which collectively deliver the spatial planning strategy for the local planning authority's area. The Local Development Framework will be comprised of Local Development Documents, and Supplementary Planning Documents. The Local Development Framework will also include the Statement of Community Involvement, the Local Development Scheme and the Annual Monitoring Report.

### **Park Mark:**

The Park Mark Safer Parking Scheme is an initiative of the Associations of Chief Police Officers and is aimed at reducing both crime and the fear of crime in parking facilities. Safer Parking status, Park Mark, is awarded to parking facilities that have met the requirements of a risk assessment conducted by the police.

**Planning Policy Statement (PPS):**

Central Government produces national Planning Policy Statements which direct planning in the country.

**Retail Health Check Indicators:**

Retail health check indicators are set out in Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for sustainable Economic Growth.

**Retail Needs Study:**

The Retail Needs Study was undertaken by GVA Grimley to inform retail planning in the District. It provides a robust and sound evidence base to assist in reaching conclusions on shorter term proposals for retail and leisure development.

**Site Specific Allocations of Land (SSAL):**

This document is a Development Plan Document which forms part of the Local Development Framework. It sets out a number of sites that are allocated for development.

**Supplementary Planning Document (SPD):**

Supplementary Planning Documents are included within the Local Development Framework and will form part of the planning framework for the area. Supplementary Planning Documents may cover a range of issues, both topic and site specific, which may expand policy or provide further detail to policies in a Development Plan Document.

**Sustainability Appraisal (SA):**

It is a legal requirement that certain documents (e.g. Local Development Documents) are assessed to ensure that they maximise their contribution to sustainable development. This is achieved by carrying out the Sustainability Appraisal process. The process measures the effect a document will have on a range of social, environmental and economic issues, and suggests measures that would help improve the sustainability of a plan.

**Total Place Initiative:**

Total Place is an initiative that looks at how a 'whole area' approach to public services can lead to better services at less cost. It seeks to identify and avoid overlap and duplication between organisations, delivering a step change in both service improvement and efficiency.

**Vitality and Viability:**

In terms of retailing, vitality is the capacity of a centre to grow or to develop its level of commercial activity. Viability is the capacity of a centre to achieve the commercial success necessary to sustain the existence of the centre.

**West Sussex Sustainable Energy Study:**

A study undertaken by Centre for Sustainable Energy on behalf of five local authorities in West Sussex that would help them develop Local Development Framework policies which would lead to lower energy consumption from buildings, and more sustainable energy generation.