

Name of meeting: Cabinet
Date: 16th October 2018
Title of report: Huddersfield Town Centre Design Framework

Purpose of report

To inform Cabinet of the Huddersfield Town Centre Design Framework document



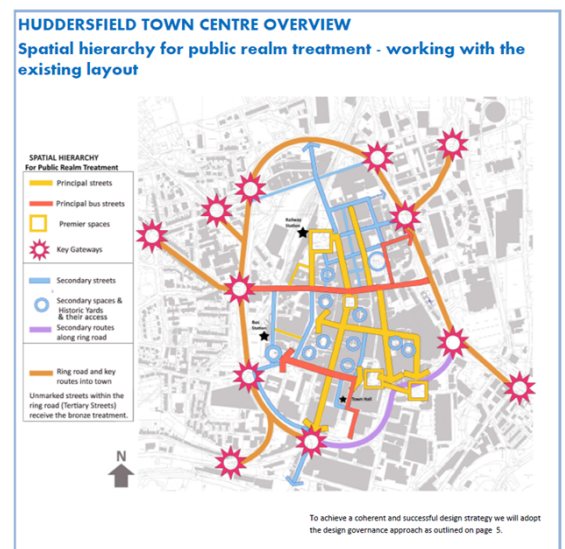
Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	Yes Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more
Key Decision - Is it in the Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports?)	Yes – 10th Sept 2018?
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Yes
Date signed off by Strategic Director and name	Karl Battersby - 3.10.18
Is it also signed off by Service Director - Finance.	Eamonn Croston - 5.10.18
Is it also signed off by the Service Director - Legal Governance and Commissioning?	Julie Muscroft - 5.10.18
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr Naheed Mather – Communities and Environment Cllr Peter McBride – Economy

Electoral wards affected: Newsome Ward councillors consulted: 1.10.18

Public or private: Public

1. Summary

- 1.1 Cabinet are requested to consider the adoption of a Huddersfield Town Centre Design Framework (HTCDF) Appendix A and B.
- 1.2 The aim of this document is to create a more consistent approach to Huddersfield Town Centre with quality, environment and future condition at the fore. This document is intended to provide a strong framework and guidance for use by all council departments and external organisations to ensure all town centre public realm and infrastructure projects are implemented and maintained to the appropriate quality.
- 1.3 This document will provide an overview of the vision, strategies to be addressed, design principles to be met and basic guidance on do's and don'ts for new design or works to the public realm in the town centre by providing greater clarity for landowners, developers, investors, operators, the Council and other public sector agencies.
- 1.4 A gold, silver and bronze standard approach has been developed which will identify key streets and key routes through the town. It will aim to protect and enhance the urban fabric of heritage value and the settings of Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings by setting out minimum standards, but also incorporate constraints such as bus routes and those with heavy vehicular use. It will ensure that condition liabilities will be considered to ensure long term practical solutions whilst keeping the high quality of the public realm at the core.
- 1.5 If approved this document will form the template for future Design Frameworks adopted by the Council for our town centres, including any refresh of the existing Dewsbury suite of documents.



2. Information required to take a decision

- 2.1 A copy of the Huddersfield Town Centre Design Framework (and the Appendices) is attached.
- 2.2 Huddersfield Town Centre is an important asset for Kirklees. In order to be able to meet future needs and encourage ambitious new development and growth, as supported by the new Local Plan and Corporate Plan, we need to ensure a high quality public realm. This will, in turn, create a vibrant town centre for the 21st century and improve the Huddersfield offer as a destination for retail, leisure and education. We require a comprehensive approach to place-making in the town centre, to set out an ambition, increase standards and lead by example.

2.3 At present there is no real mechanism for ensuring quality and consistency of approach across the town with some recent projects attracting mixed reviews for their appearance and impact on the public realm. The development of the Green Streets® strategy for Kirklees, identified the need for a more cohesive approach within the town centre. The variety of styles, materials, colours and furniture types further compromise the attractiveness of the town. There is currently no guidance or framework setting out the principles or specification for materials or quality and this is key in order to support the public realm associated with delivery of key highway refurbishment schemes and regeneration/ development such as sites like the Piazza and the rail station.



Lit street trees – Potential



Green Wall Birmingham –Potential

2.4 It has been recognised that we need to ensure standards are increased generally throughout the town. The preparation of the Huddersfield Town Centre Design Framework is the result of collaboration between many departments and a successful multi-disciplinary approach. This document aims to ensure any proposed development of the public realm would meet the agreed underlying principles to support strategic objectives, including those of community safety, for the town, provide a consistent approach, ensure safe designs and that materials specified for the public realm will be of sufficient quality and consider long term condition. Lighting principles and the improvement of the

evening experience of the town centre environment and night time economy are also considered, together with sustainable drainage opportunities. Of particular focus was the utilisation of street furniture and greening of the town centre.

2.5 To compliment this internal framework to how the town centres public realm should meet increased standards, a Masterplan is being prepared for the town centre and the development of the new Area Action Plan (AAP) for the Town Centre will follow adoption of the Local Plan and be incorporated into planning policy. The AAPs provide a framework to resolve conflicting pressures and set out a strategy for managing change and development over the long term.

2.6 The aim for the improvements are based on the underlying objectives to create a cohesive range of permeable, bespoke, safe and attractive greener places and community spaces throughout the whole of the town centre.

2.7 The HTCDF will ensure long-term sustainable green infrastructure management to improve landscape quality across Huddersfield so that bio-diversity, economy, communities and health and well-being can thrive by linking beyond the ring road, by, for example, exploring opportunities to provide green links up to Greenhead Park and down to the river corridor. This will, in turn encourage an increase in active travel, cycling and walking through greener and more attractive, routes, for example; from the railway station at St Georges Square through to the main commercial zone in the town centre, the Civic Centre, and the University.



Bus Station –Potential

2.8 The aim is to encourage more outdoor activity and reduce car travel for short journeys thereby reduce emissions and improve health and well-being through healthy streets.



Macaulay Street – Existing and Potential

2.9 Hostile Vehicle Mitigation (HVM) measures also form part of the HTCDF. Protective security measures for crowded places are considered as part of the design process and features in Highways new build or refurbishment projects. Counter-terrorism measures and increased safety features such as HVM planters also enable dual functionality such as enhancing and greening the street environment. Trees in such planters, together with structural artwork/framework, could potentially also support Christmas lights in winter for example. They also allow for available in our Town Centre.



HVM compliant planters- Potential

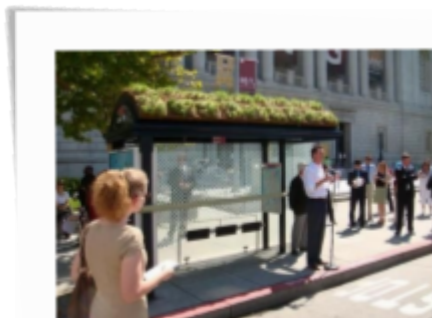


HVM compliant planters- Potential

2.10 Dedicated or safer cycle routes can benefit from green infrastructure by being separated and screened from traffic, where possible, with vegetation. Street tree planting or green barriers/ screens, together with linking existing cycle schemes, can make Huddersfield town centre more safely accessible to cyclists.



Cross Church St- Existing & Potential



Green Bus stops in Manchester Piccadilly- Potential

2.11 The HTCDG is also a document to provide guidance for developers to ensure any future proposed developments be designed to a high standard, consider the setting and public realm and knit together green infrastructure, incorporating the best sustainable technology, green walls, sustainable drainage options, quality permeable paving, solar panels and light reflective roofs etc.

2.12 The HTCDF, once approved, will be supplemented by a pallet of materials that will form, in detail, the backbone of all future works in the town centre. The type of paving, for example, and its colour range, dependant on the GSB rating (granular sub base rating), the type and style of street lights, pedestrian barriers, bollards and their colours, bus shelters, planters and waste collection bins will all give a coherent identity to Huddersfield, whilst enhancing the Town Centre offer towards “We’re Kirklees”.

2.13 Once approved this document will also go on to inform and direct the future operational delivery in the town centre, meaning that the aspirations of the standards set in this document will be overlaid on our current response levels. In practise this means our future street cleansing, greenspaces, and maintenance regimes will have a much more coherent and cohesive Place based working approach to our valued asset.

3. Implications for the Council

3.1 Early Intervention and Prevention (EIP)

Green spaces and green streets can support the removal of air pollution and make health cost savings. The HTCDF aims to create and maintain high quality green infrastructure throughout the town centre. This will support workplace wellbeing through enhancing green spaces, improving the public realm, and incorporating street tree planting within the town centre which will help remove pollution.



Existing Trees in Macaulay St

Trees in particular provide a wide range of services and account for most of the volume of air pollutants absorbed by natural vegetation in the UK.

Huddersfield Town Centre is currently identified in the Councils Air Quality Action (AQA) plan, where its residents are subject to poor air quality, and the current total pollution removed by vegetation in here is approximately 137kg. This is very low compared to the UK average of 5619kg (as per Office for National Statistics, Centre for Ecology and Hydrology – [Click here to look at the figures for postcodes around the town centre UK air pollution removal how much pollution does vegetation remove in your area /2018-07-30](#)).

Huddersfield Town Centre has air pollution levels above National Objectives and European Directive limits/target values and is one of the Councils soon to be 10 AQMA areas (Air Quality Management Areas), within the ring road and down to Aspley, affecting upwards of 1400 residential properties. The framework will aim to focus on landscape design opportunities and street tree planting to maximise air quality improvements and help underpin and meet the requirements of the overall Kirklees plan.

Equality Impact Assessments are currently being progressed.



A greener landscape provides a strong sense of place to enhance our natural and cultural heritage in Huddersfield town centre.



Existing Trees in Macaulay St and Byram St

**3.2
Economic
Resilience
(ER)**



High Street/Ramsden Street – Existing & Potential

The aim is to create a safe and vibrant town centre to unlock potential, attract and retain businesses and investment in the town, boost the local economy and transform the public realm to provide high quality, versatile settings in which they can flourish. Attractive, superior urban environments attract inward investment and distinctive greening in the town centre will attract shoppers and visitors, improving pedestrian footfall and volume of public, customers and workforce.



Edgware Road green wall
Transport for London



Halifax town centre –
fastigate trees

This town centre greening - through strategic tree planting, public realm enhancement - through inventive landscape design such as innovative use of furniture, and green walls; improve the appearance and attractiveness of the town centre, have a consistent link from these approaches and will also look to reduce maintenance liabilities.

Developing a 'spine' of culture and night time economy running through the town, linking the

Railway and University could be achieved by using a combination of similar surfacing materials & street furniture, impressive street tree planting, good lighting and ensuring the presence of a variety of premises for entertainment.

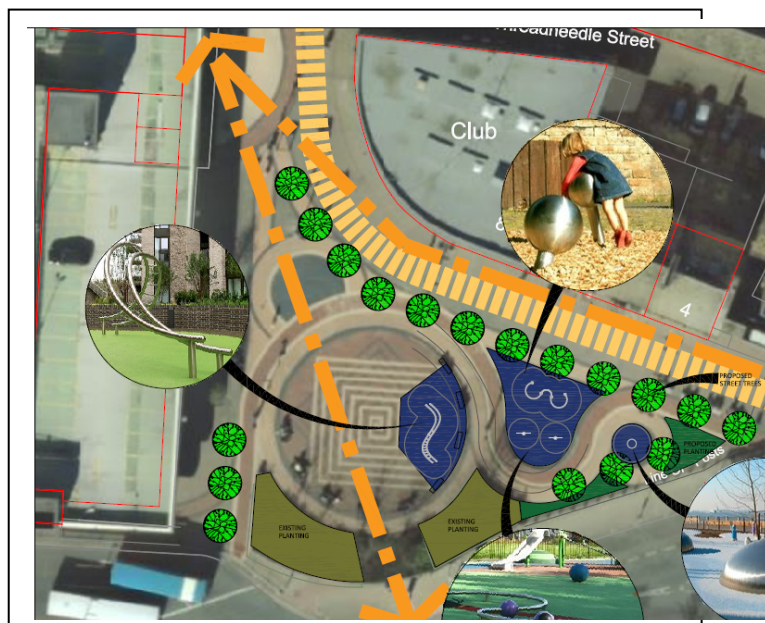
3.3 Improving Outcomes for Children

Town centres should be suitable for all sectors of our community and the guidance aims to ensure our public realm and public places are safe and attractive for children and families.

Our town centre should provide opportunities to increase the number of people of all ages who are out on the streets, by making public spaces seem more welcoming and providing opportunities for social interaction.

The guidance considers ways to enhance accessibility, attractiveness and appeal of the public realm to users, especially to enrich them as green spaces, increase their use, and incorporate street tree planting, to provide shelter and shade. Public art will enhance the urban design programme within the town centre and can create a positive image, increasing accessibility, drawing and welcoming families and youngsters.

One potential option for a playable space within the town centre is shown below. * Note this is an indicative opportunity, not a scheme.



Inventive opportunities *(see indicative image) can keep Huddersfield alive with colour and creativity set against a backdrop of green infrastructure to public spaces. There have been initial early investigations looking at opportunities within the town centre for provision of facilities for youngsters, such as a series of playable spaces that help people of all cultures and backgrounds to feel safe and welcome to play. These can be linked to healthy active green routes of green infrastructure throughout the town centre.

3.4 Reducing demand of services

The framework is a collaboration of many departments including Planners, Highways Engineers, Construction, Maintenance, Landscape Architects and Public Health, thereby identifying consistent and appropriate design and specification of materials and ensuring long term sustainable maintenance. There will be a consistency of approach with a hierarchy of streets and standards to be met.

A vibrant town centre requires infrastructure to support that, but unfortunately investment in our town centre infrastructure has declined over recent years and

the public realm has been affected by that decline. Without any coherent plan, utilities companies and developers have been left to repair and replace our roads and footpaths ad hoc, which has resulted in a variety of finishes, furniture and surfacing which creates an untidy / unkempt appearance in some areas of our Town Centre. The HTCDF aims to reverse that trend and the Council is to lead by example as it embarks on a programme of works that will redress the balance, replacing concrete kerbs and blacktop footways with high quality materials that meet the aspirations of the Framework, and reduce future maintenance liabilities.

The framework also considers the assets within our conservation area and by using the range of gold, silver and bronze standards, compliments the listed buildings, but allows additional variations to accommodate and deal appropriately with heavily trafficked streets and bus routes.



Investment in our Town Centre will give our citizens a sense of identity and alongside that restore pride in our town centre with the aim that they themselves will take care of the environment around them. The aim is that, by the provision of this high quality environment, there will be less littering, fly tipping and anti-social behaviour, reducing the need for Council intervention.

3.5 Legal/Financial or Human Resources

To ensure quality places are created, ensure current condition issues within the town centre are addressed to the appropriate standard which meet the ideals set out in the framework, and the desired Gold, Silver and Bronze principles are created and then maintained, town-wide, there is a need for allocations to be drawn down from the Capital Plan.

This funding will allow the upgrading of some of the key areas in our town centre, and in particular those areas of high footfall and of historic importance. In order to demonstrate the commitment to the town centre and this Framework an initial investment amount of £2.5m is required. This figure includes the £250k that has already been committed to Huddersfield Town Centre for maintenance (Appendix C identifies some of these key areas). This funding will ensure that work to invest in our Town Centre can start as soon as possible, and the standards set for future developments and public realm enhancements.

In addition, in order to maintain the improved standards moving forward it is proposed to reinstate town centre mason teams to pro-actively find and fix issues. This will require revenue funding of £200k, proposed to be sourced from existing Highways planned savings.

4. Consultees and their opinions

4.1 The development of the HTCDF has had collaboration at its core. Planning and design, landscape architects, parks, public health, creative economy, Green Streets®, highways engineers, construction, maintenance and cleansing teams have either been directly involved or consulted on the draft of the proposed

‘Huddersfield Town Centre Design Framework’. Further consultation is required with stakeholders and members, and as this collaboration approach continues, keeping together the key disciplines is essential.

The HTCDF has been, and will continue to be, useful to the multidisciplinary teams working on individual projects across the town centre from paint colour specification for streetlights and traffic lights, to the specification of cycle stands and paving materials in the Conservation Area.

For town centre improvements works and developments of a larger scale it is important to bring together the disciplines in a design team, with reference to stakeholders and incorporating Greenstreets® principles (multi-disciplinary approach) at each stage. It is intended that a steering group, consisting of senior officers and a Cabinet Member, will have the responsibility for ensuring that quality and consistency of approach is achieved. This group would be responsible for signing off funding and quality of individual projects or initiatives also for wider engagement, stakeholders will be included in this process, which will be dynamic and shaped to suit individual projects.

5. **Next steps**

- Approval of the HTCDF for adoption as a policy which council departments can use for steering or implementation of new designs or repairs and maintenance of the public realm in the town centre.
- Consider the need to engage further with stakeholders and members
- Set up the framework to provide guidance for new development proposals and the associated public realm in context to their setting.
- Develop a palette of materials to sit alongside the framework to offer additional guidance and provide clear guidance for the future.
- Set up mechanisms for a steering group to oversee and sign off town centre projects and initiatives.

6. **Officer recommendations and reasons**

6.1 That Cabinet members:

- Approve the attached HTCDF.
- Approve £2.5m capital funding for the Town Centre public realm enhancements that will set the standards for the future of our Town Centre.
- Endorse formation of steering group to oversee and ratify town centre public realm and infrastructure projects.
- Approve reinstatement of town centre mason teams.

7. **Cabinet portfolio holder’s recommendations** Naheed Mather – Communities and Environment Peter McBride – Economy



The Portfolio Holders (at Portfolio Briefings on 01.10.18) welcomed the document which was scheduled for consideration at Cabinet on 16th October 2018. Discussion took place with regards to the positive benefits it could deliver in terms of improving accessibility and public safety, and the wider benefits it would bring to the town. It was agreed that the Ward Members for Newsome ward should be consulted on the content of the report*.

*The report was circulated to the Ward Members for Newsome on 01.10.18.

8. **Contact officers**

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9. **Background Papers and History of Decisions**

SLT 2017

10. **Service Director responsible**

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