

Kirkham Public Realm

Design, Access & Planning Statement
October 2021

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Introduction



Concept Masterplan

In early 2021 Fylde Council appointed a design team comprising of The Paul Hogarth Company (Lead Consultant, Landscape Architect, Urban Design, Lighting Design, Stakeholder Engagement), O'Connor Sutton Cronin (Civil & Structural Engineers, Mechanical & Electrical Engineers), Hasco Europe (Principal Designer) and esc construction consultants (Quantity Surveyors) to develop a public realm scheme for Kirkham Town Centre.

The appointment started with a wider analysis and review of the town. To help set the scene and understand the town's character a concept masterplan was developed, as shown above. The design development was then focused on Market Square and adjoining sections of Church Street, Poulton Street, Preston Street and Freckleton Street, as shown within the dark green line on the plan above. It is this area that is now being submitted for planning approval.

The following Design and Access Statement presents the process, sets the key elements of design and highlights the intended maintenance and future proofing initiatives to ensure what is proposed is not only an attractive and historically sensitive development, but is also sustainable and easy to maintain.

This report should be read in conjunction with the following drawings:

- 102 Masterplan
- 104 Street Sections
- 106 Heritage Statement

Guidance and Policy

The Statement has been prepared in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment) Order 2013 Article 4 of Statutory Instrument 2013/1238 and the Planning Practice Guidance Note (2014) on behalf of Fylde Borough Council.

It is in support of a Full Planning Application for Public Realm improvement works to include an enhanced Market Square civic space; upgrade of streetscape to include new high-quality surfacing, rationalisation of parking with defined parking/loading bays introduced; upgraded street furniture and new cycle stands, lighting and street tree planting on lands within Kirkham Town Centre to include part of the Town Centre Conservation Area (Poulton Street, Preston Street and the Market Square). An accompanying Heritage Statement has been prepared to provide the historic context.

This Design and Access Statement (DAS) details the positive contribution and enhancements to the significance of the Conservation Area and wider public realm in accordance and compliance with the overarching principles enshrined within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF); the adopted Fylde Local Plan 2032 (FLP32) and the Built Heritage Strategy for Fylde 2015 – 2032 which sets out how the Council will seek to protect, conserve and enhance its built heritage for the overall benefit of the community.

This proposal has evolved through the design process following continuous feedback from the Local Planning Authority, Town Council, stake holders and comments received following the public exhibition.



Kirkham - Existing site photos

Consultation

To ensure the Public Realm Scheme best reflected the needs of its users, a three stage, pre-planning consultation process took place. The first event was held online in May of this year, its objective was to gather local information and knowledge about Kirkham which helped set the scene for how the proposals would develop. In June the concept plan was presented both as an in-person and online event. Responses were collected from a range of individuals with a vested interest in Kirkham. This event found significant favour in the concept of developing Market Square as an event space for pedestrians, relocating the current parking provision elsewhere within the town centre. In addition it became clear that the Kirkham Public Realm Scheme has the potential to promote and enhance the function and aesthetics of the businesses and properties whose frontages animate these streets.

With confidence from the second consultation responses the design was developed and on the 22nd September 2021 a more detailed design was presented to the people of Kirkham, again both online and via an in person event in Market Square.

Again, the consultation results showed favour towards the design principles, further galvanising the design intent and enabling the scheme to be taken forward to planning with confidence of a public majority in support of the plans.

In addition to the public consultation event a series of ongoing conversations have taken place with many other stakeholders and statutory bodies to help clarify the design rationale presented.



Kirkham - Consultation event June 2021



Kirkham - Consultation event September 2021

Place Making and Highway Design



Proposed extent of public realm works

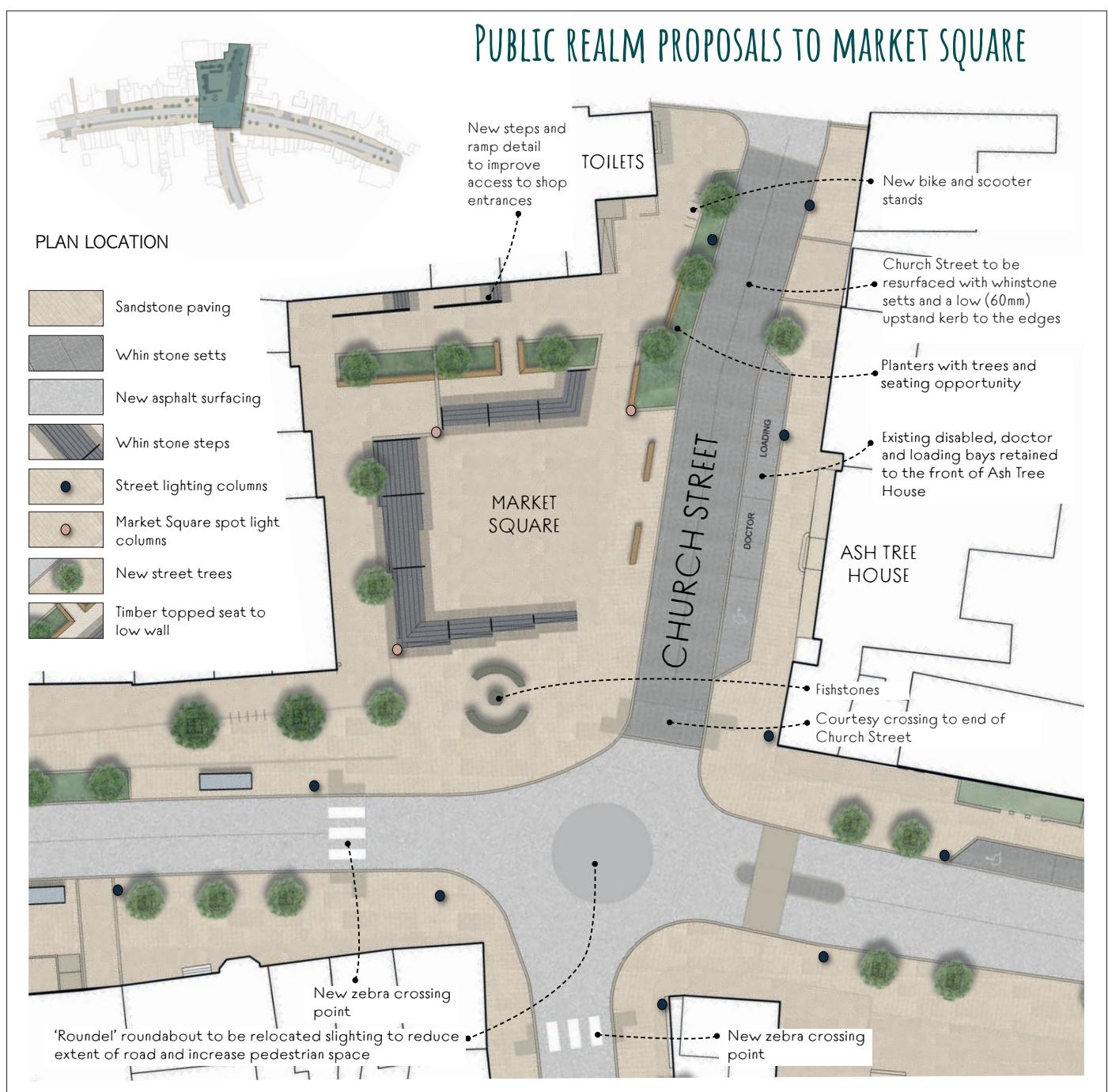
The above plans provides a closer look at the project area (the space within the greenline on page 1). The scheme seeks to enhance the experience of the town for all who visit it and live there. The focus for this is based on improving the town for pedestrians while at the same time considering the experience for road users too. The principle changes proposed to the road and paving are as follows:

- Reducing the road width to a minimum 6m will slow traffic speeds
- Introducing street trees to increase 'edge friction' to slow traffic and improve air quality

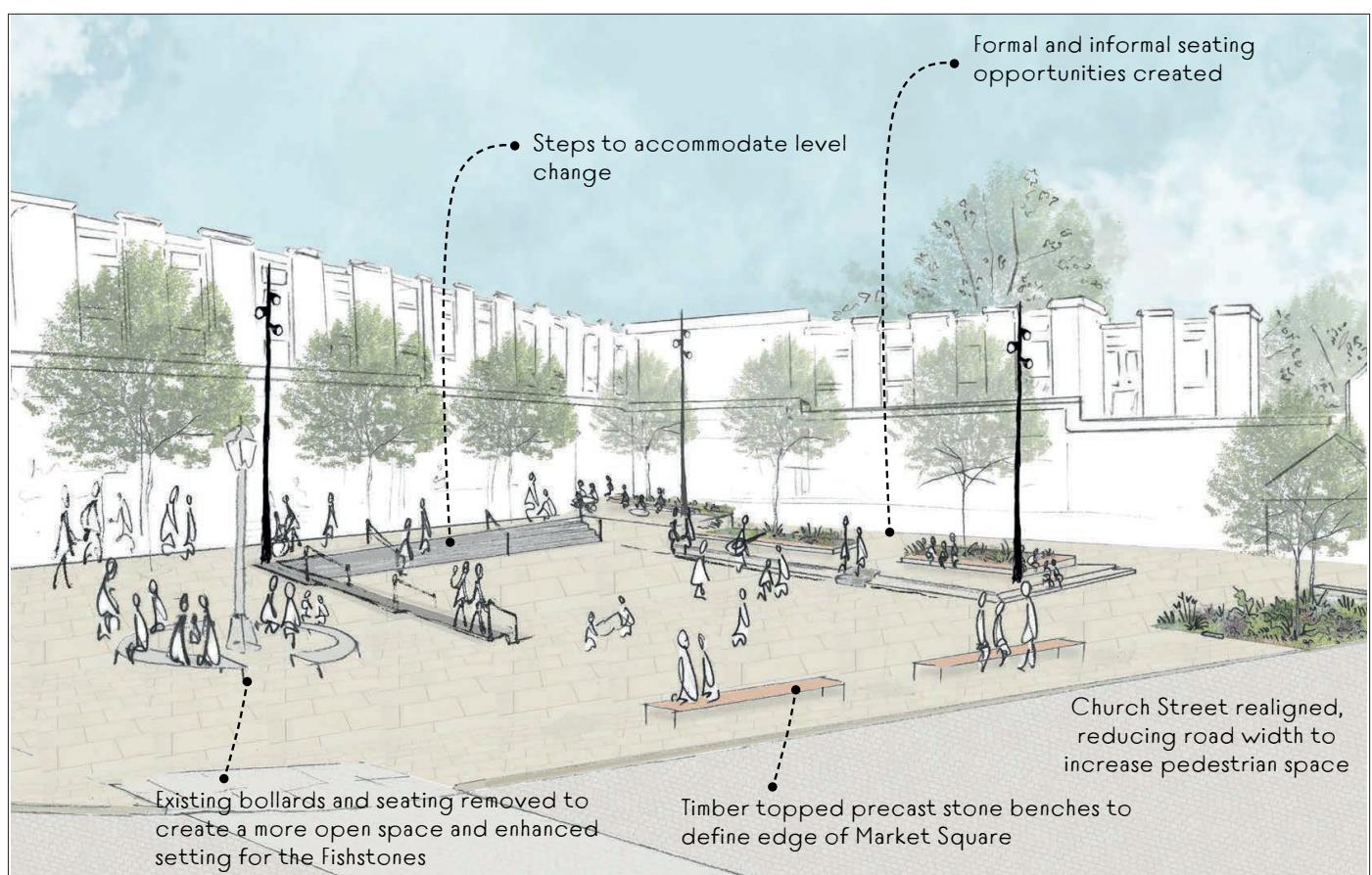
- Reduce the road uptake for the Roundel, giving more space to pedestrians and to deter large HGV vehicles from moving through the town
- Reduce all kerbs to have a 60mm show (expect for those at bus stops and where flush kerbs are needed for access)
- Rationalise signage and markings to a minimum and reducing street clutter where possible
- On-street parking provision will be formalised into designated bays demarcated by a change in surface

Further information on the design proposals to the highway can be found in the supporting Transport Statement

Market Square



Market Square



Market Square - Artists Impression

The Market Square, is the jewel in the crown of Kirkham. It is the hub of town life and a key meeting point. The proposals aim to celebrate the value of this space, offering increased flexibility and usability for all people and for a variety of occasions.

This would be achieved through the relocation of the current parking, both within Market Square and on Church Street. Along with a reduction in the width of Church Street, significant space can be given over to the pedestrian. Existing disabled, doctor and loading bays will be retained to the front of Ash Tree House, and Church Street will be resurfaced with whinstone setts.

Levelling out the square will provide an open flat space that can more easily accommodate market stalls, marquees, circus tents, etc. increasing the opportunity for new events to take place.

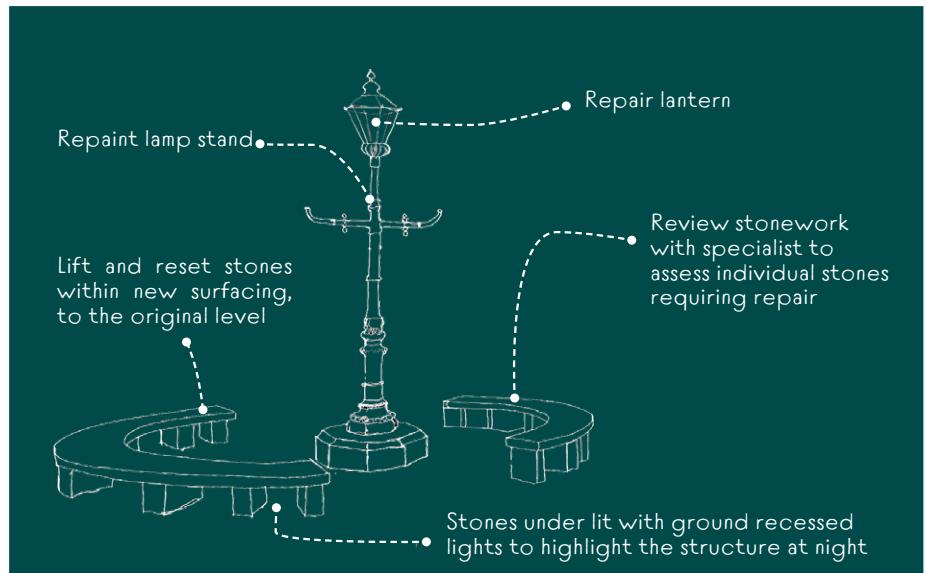
A mixture of formal and informal seating with planters and trees will offer flexible everyday use for visitors of the town to sit and enjoy watching life pass by.

The 'Roundel' roundabout will be relocated slightly to reduce extent of road and increase pedestrian space, and new zebra crossing will be introduced.

Market Square



Examples of events on Market Squares



Proposed restoration works to Fishstones

Creating an Event Space

The design proposals work hard to make Market Square a versatile space which can easily accommodate a whole host of activities and events. With these physical changes to the space, new opportunity will exist to increase Kirkham's event calendar.

Above are just a few examples of the types of events that could be on offer, bringing a mixture of fun for all ages, attracting use during the day and into the evening.

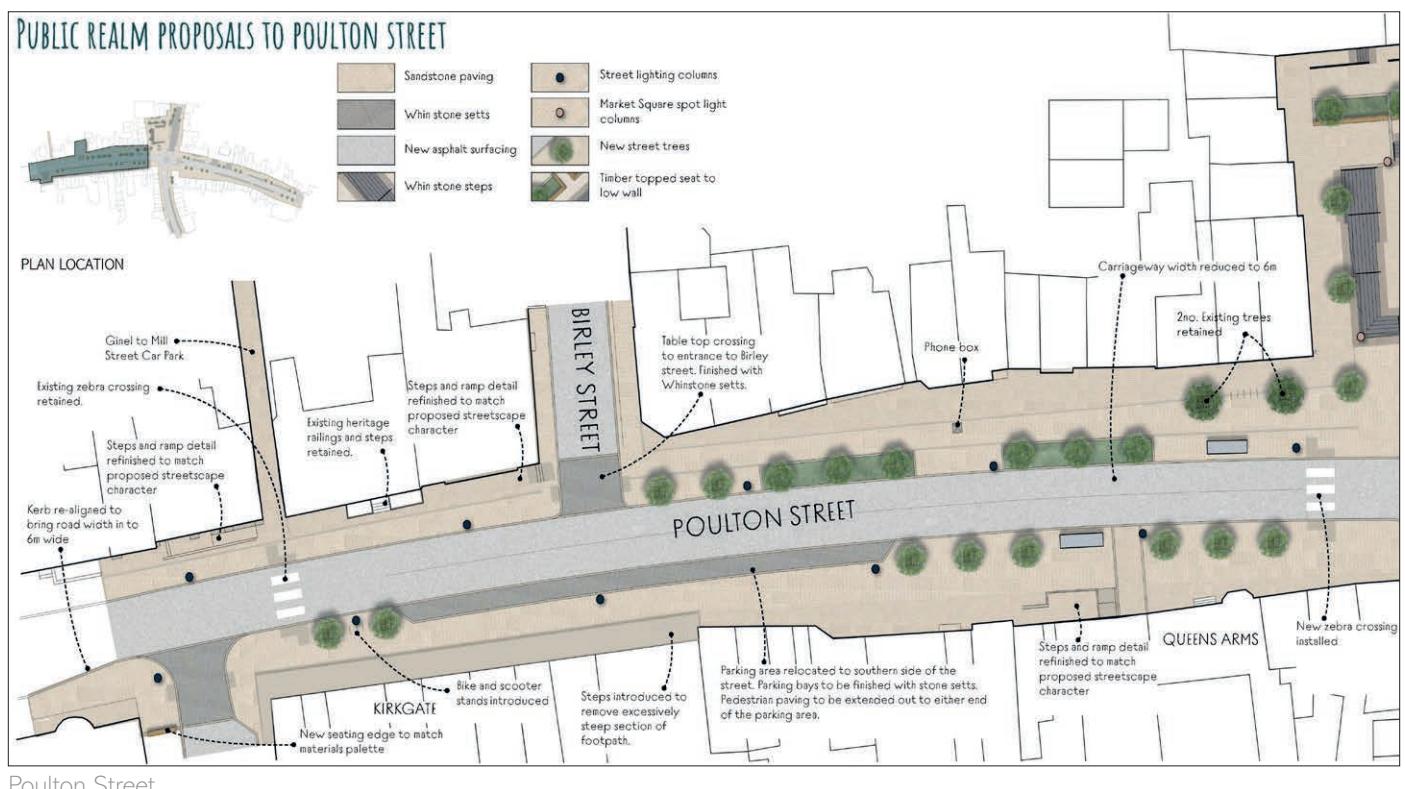
Fishstones

Dating back to 1829, the Fishstones are an important listed structure, recognised as the celebrated centre of Kirkham. However, they would also benefit from reconditioning and re-setting to restore them to their original height above the ground.

The proposed restoration works are noted above. These works would be undertaken through consultation with specialists and approval from Historic England to ensure their integrity as a heritage item is not only retained but also elevated as a key asset of the town.

Due to the proposed changes to Market Square a slight relocation of the Fishstones is proposed. This is to allow this feature to sit more comfortably with the topography and to give the Fishstones the space and setting they deserve.

Streetscape - Poulton Street



Poulton Street

Poulton Street links Town End with the brow of the hill and Market Square. There are some good quality independent shops, however the sense of linkages to other areas of the town, especially to car parks, could be greatly improved.

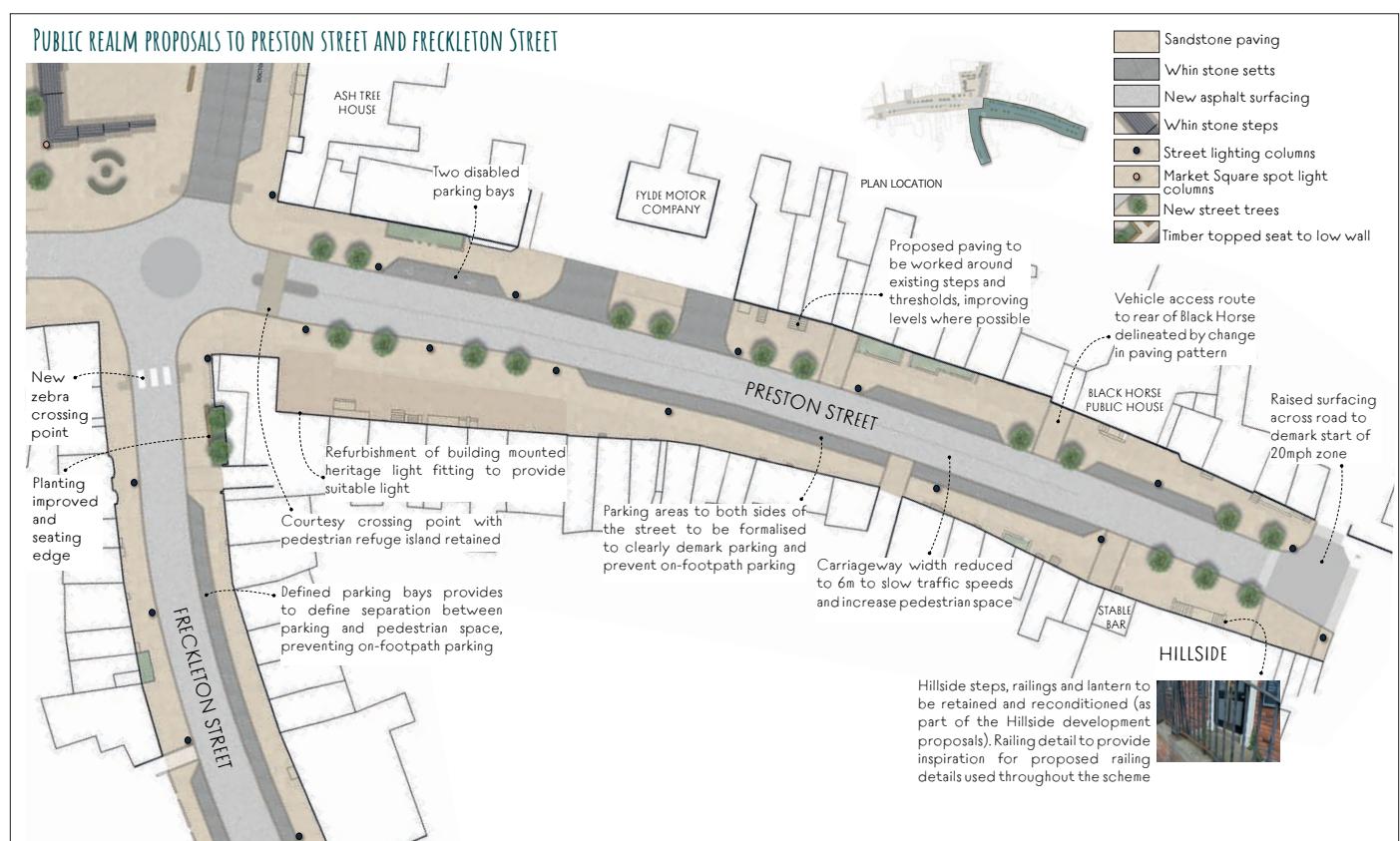
Parking areas along Poulton Street will be relocated to the south side of the street, maximising the available space for pedestrians on the 'sunny side', and reducing heat gain in the summer, as part of the project's climate action response. Parking bays will be finished with whinstone setts and pedestrian paving will extend to either end of the parking bays. Sandstone paving will be applied to footpaths and bike and scooter parking stands will be introduced.

The carriageway width will be reduced to 6m, and steps and ramp details will be refinished to match the proposed streetscape character.

Street trees and planting will be introduced where feasible to align with the bus stops and vehicle access routes to properties, bringing seasonal colour and separation from the traffic along Poulton Street.

Ginell improvement works will enhance pedestrian access to Mill Street car park and Kirkham Community Centre. This will include resurfacing, lighting, signage and artwork to the walls.

Streetscape - Preston and Freckleton Street



Preston and Freckleton Street

Through the consultation process it has been identified that there are a number of instances where cars are parking on the footpath and blocking pedestrian flow. To move away from this, the public realm proposals introduce designated parking bays where possible on the streets, giving clear definition for both car drivers and pedestrians.

It is proposed that Preston Street and Freckleton Street will have defined parking bays to separate parking and pedestrian spaces, preventing on-footpath parking.

The carriageway width will be reduced to 6m on Preston Street to slow traffic speeds and increase pedestrian space. A raised surface across the road to the east of the street will demarcate the start of the proposed 20mph zone.

New street trees will be introduced where feasible, and historic details such as steps, railings and lanterns will be retained and reconditioned to preserve the heritage character.

Materials

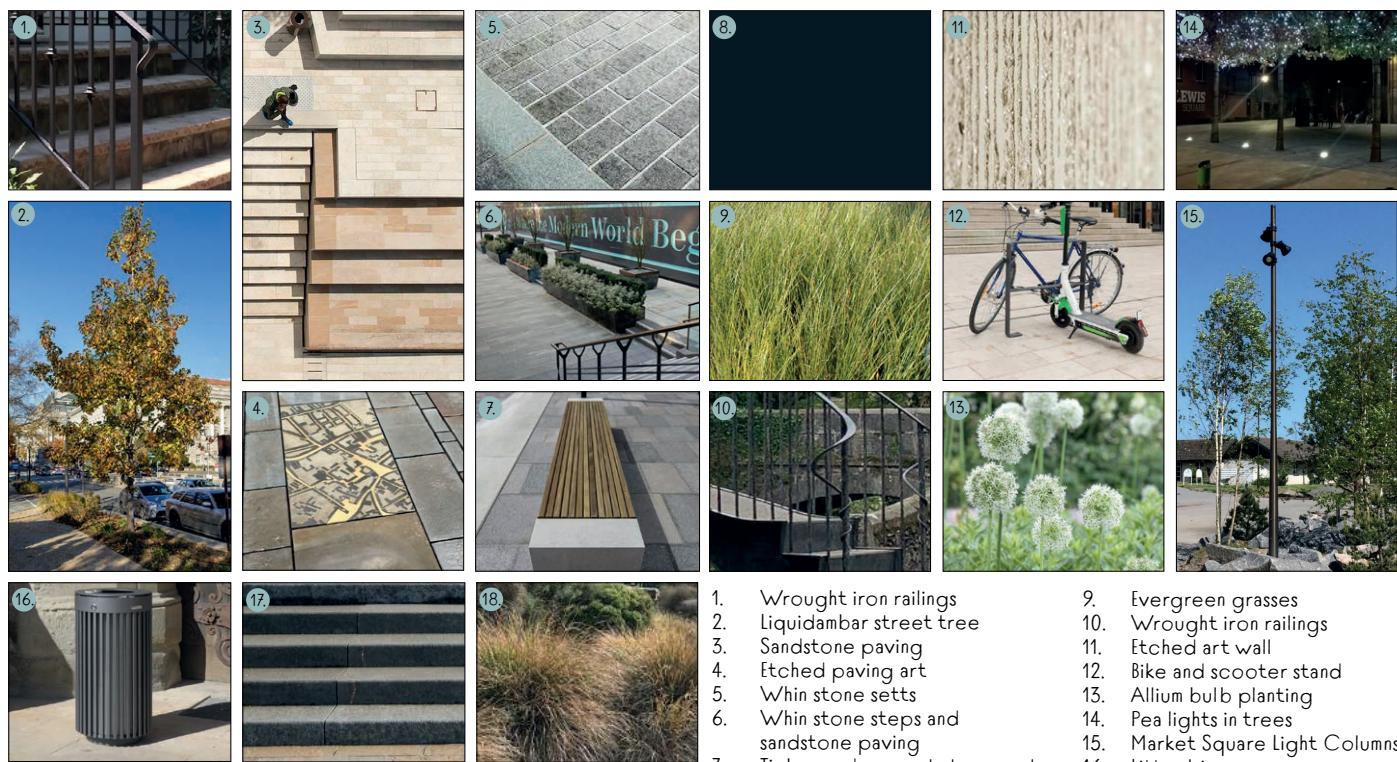
The materials proposed have been selected for their robust and long-life qualities, ideal for an urban setting while at the same time taking reference to the sensitivities of the heritage setting. Consideration has also been given to how they work as a collective palette, making sure each element complements the next. In doing so this ensures an overall quality is achieved elevating the sense of identify and character of the public realm.

Selected material will be to the highest performance specification to withstand general use and exceptional circumstances such as vandalism and antisocial behaviour.

All existing heritage elements within the streetscape have been noted and identified to be retained and restored where possible, this includes areas of heritage paving, steps, railings and the listed telephone box, Fishstones and lamp.

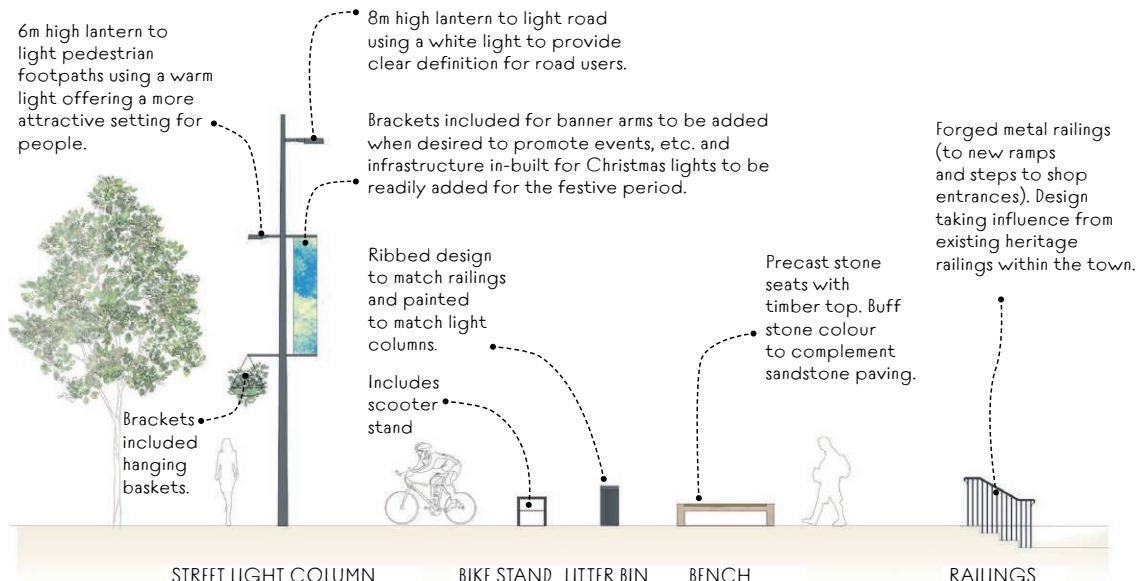
The design proposals for the street furniture align with Historic Englands 'Streets for All' publication which notes that street furniture should be elegant, simple, yet functional and easy to maintain. Litter bins, bollards and other street furniture will be simple and robust.

The following page provides a series of diagrams showing the principles of the furniture design, paving, level changes and proposed character.

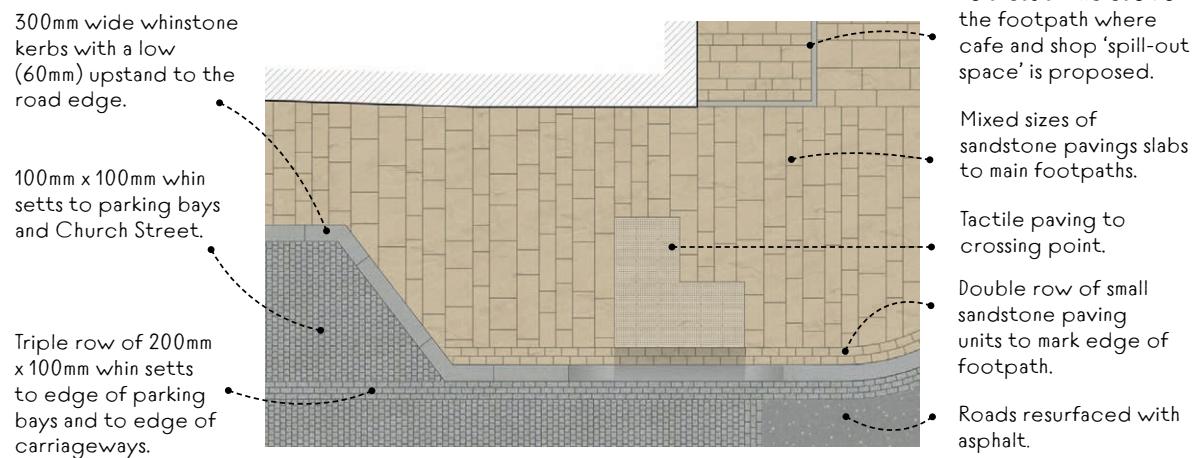


1. Wrought iron railings
2. Liquidambar street tree
3. Sandstone paving
4. Etched paving art
5. Whin stone setts
6. Whin stone steps and sandstone paving
7. Timber and precast stone seat
8. Heritage blue colour for street furniture
9. Evergreen grasses
10. Wrought iron railings
11. Etched art wall
12. Bike and scooter stand
13. Allium bulb planting
14. Pea lights in trees
15. Market Square Light Columns
16. Litter bin
17. Whin steps
18. Evergreen grasses

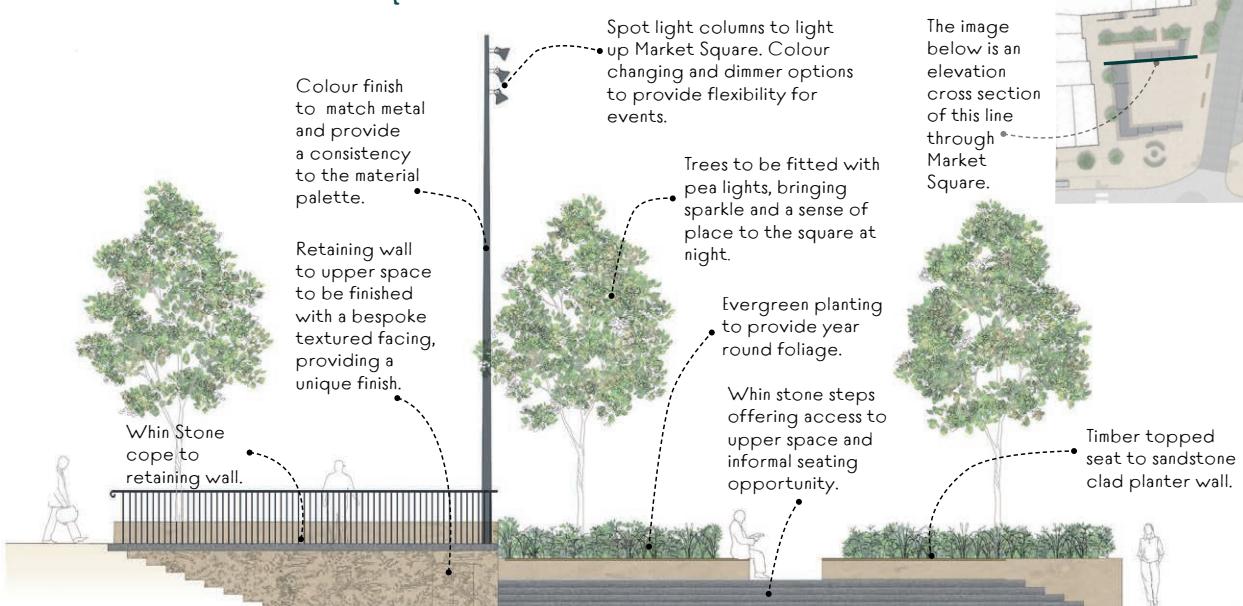
STREET FURNITURE



TYPICAL PAVING DESIGN



MARKET SQUARE LEVEL CHANGES, PLANTERS AND SEATING



Principles of furniture design, paving, level changes and proposed character

Lighting and Power

The proposed public realm works include the introduction of a new enhanced lighting scheme for the town. The benefits of the proposals are noted below:

Streetscape

It is proposed that new columns will be included on the streets. The column height will be reduced from existing to be more in keeping with the scale of the street. Fitted with both a lantern for the road and one for the footpath, the lighting colour and intensity will be design to best suit the character of the space they it is lighting respectively,

The columns will also include bracket arms for banners, Christmas lights and hanging baskets.

A more modern, yet simple column is proposed to maintain a elegant and classic design style which doesn't conflict or compete with the heritage building facades, this is in consistent with Historic England's Streets for All guidance note.

Market Square

It is proposed that the lighting to Market Square will be enhanced to offer an improved evening environment and flexibility this will be achieved with intervention as shown on the plan below and in the exemplar images.

All lighting will adhere to current lighting standards, British Standard BS5489

Power

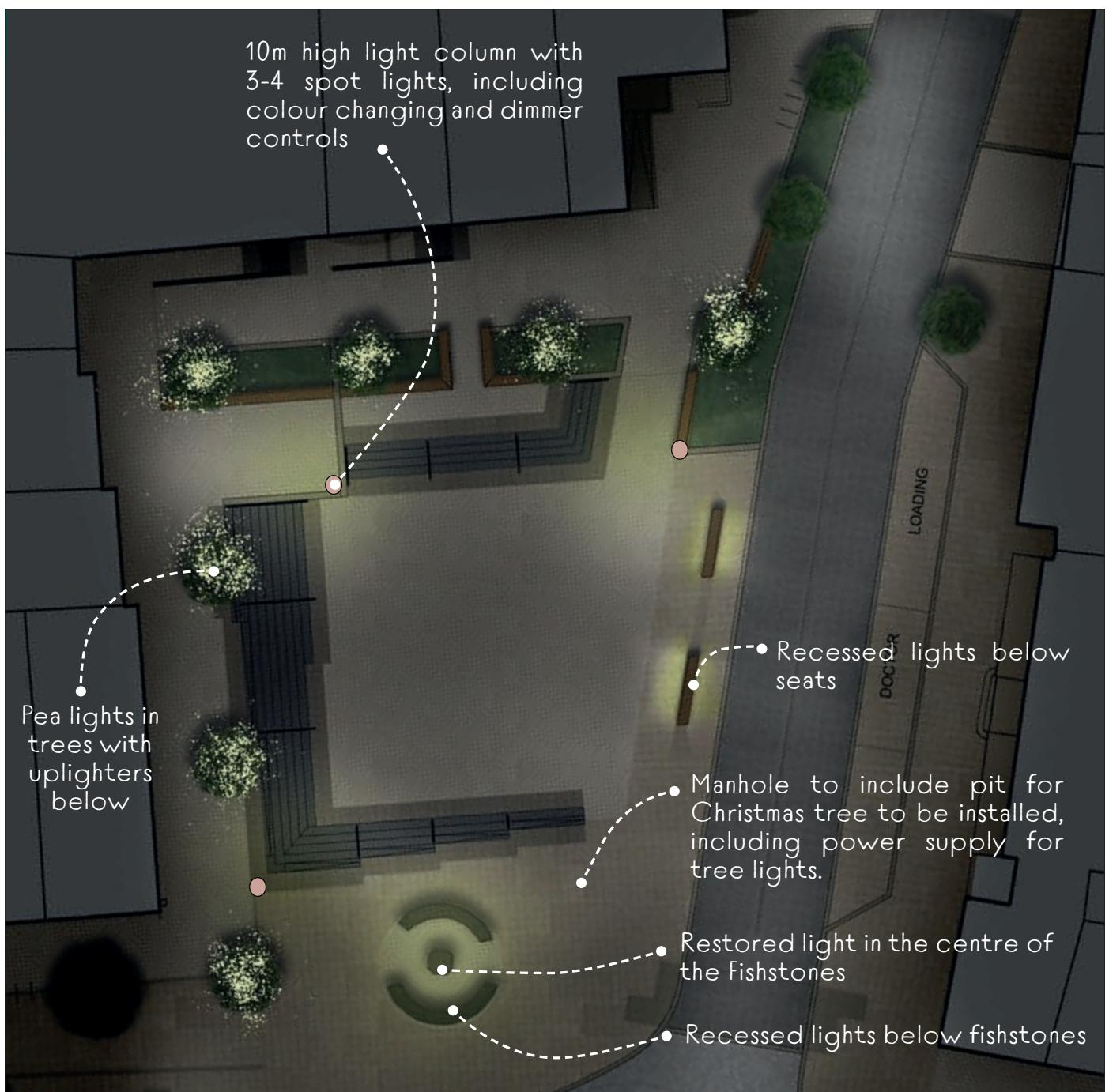
Easy access to power and water within the public space increases the type and quality of events that can take place. It is proposed that power supplies will be incorporated into the scheme both in Market Square but also on Poulton Street. These power supplies will include water and electricity. Wifi within the square is also proposed to be made available through the scheme.



Lighting exemplars



Lighting and Power



Lighting plan for Market Square

Artwork

Public Realm is a wonderful space for introducing art, this can be purposeful to express a site's history or playful to engage users to delight in their experience of a space. Here in Kirkham the following elements have been identified for artistic intervention:

1. Ginel to Mill Street Car Park

To encourage use of the narrow ginel it is proposed that the gable end and fencing is painted as an attractive mural, offering colour and interest to this otherwise 'low key' space.

2. The Listed Red Telephone Box

The Grade II listed Telephone Kiosk on Poulton Street is an important feature. Following restoration works (location identified on drawing 102 Masterplan) it is proposed that this structure could house temporary art installations. Any such works will be by agreement with Fylde Borough Council.

3. Railings and Metal Work

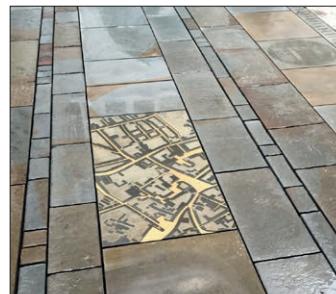
Where new handrails (to steps and ramps) are proposed there is scope to introduced a finesse and quality to what would otherwise be a standard piece of street infrastructure. Looking to a local metal worker the handrails could take reference from the existing heritage railings in the town, with a new twist added, offering a creative, authentic and consistent character.

Examples of how this detailing could be developed are shown on the images below.

4. Etching work in the paving and retained edges

At select points throughout the streetscape etched art can be incorporated into the floor-plane to explore local stories and historic events.

One such location where this is proposed is to mark the missing leg from the Fishstones. An etched paving unit can be used to mark the location and an inscription included to give clues to the pieces importance.



Examples of railings, metalwork and etchings

Accessibility

This scheme seeks to enhance the public realm experience for all users. This is achieved through the following proposed interventions:

Market Square

- Market square levels will be altered to take out the existing cross fall. The flat event space will be more versatile for events and more comfortable a space for wheelchair users to use (when perusing around market stalls for example).
- A level route to the shops around Market Square will be achieved in all possible scenarios, acknowledge that the northern side of the square has relatively steep levels between shop doorways. In this instance we are proposing the introduction of landings to provide resting points between the existing steep sections.
- Elevated spaces to the north side of the event space will provide viewing areas for disabled users to avail of when events (ie outdoor cinema) take place.
- A mixture of seating types will be included to suit different users.
- The existing ‘uneven’ cobbles will be lifted and reused elsewhere in the scheme. To be replaced with a sandstone surface, more suitable for wheelchairs and those with mobility issues.

Streetscape

- Existing footpath levels at thresholds will be enhanced where possible to minimise the number of steps and ramps required and to ‘loosen’ any excessive cross falls within the footpath.
- 2no. new zebra crossing points are proposed to improve access across the road
- Seating will be strategically positioned throughout the space to offer resting points.
- Where possible all new steps and ramps to shops will be designed to current British Standards for accessibility.
- Contrasting materials will be used to demarcate the edge of the footpath and roads.
- An expanded space between the tactile paving and road edge will be introduced where the carriageway has been narrowed so visually impaired users waiting to cross the road are not left standing too close to the passing vehicles.
- The lighting will be updated to meet standards relating to uniformity and lux levels, providing a safer environment for all after dusk.

the paul hogarth company