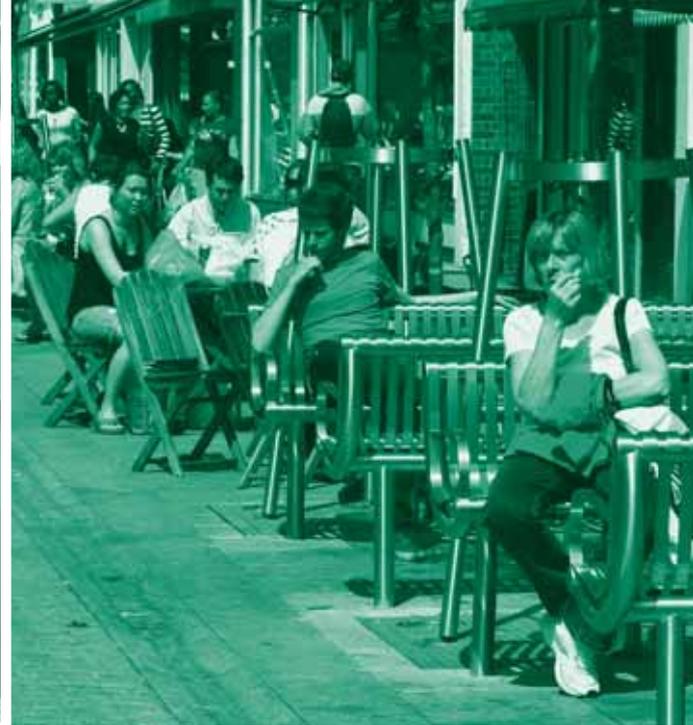


chapter

6

urban design and environmental quality





KEY OBJECTIVE 3:

To provide a high quality environment with well designed buildings and spaces

6.1 Overall, the town centre has an attractive character, defined by its historic core around the Market Place, its riverside setting and Clarence Street, its 'pedestrianised' main shopping street. There are some areas of poor

environmental quality, especially in the southeast part of the town centre, which is generally of undistinguished character, despite some interesting buildings of historic interest.

POLICY CONTEXT FOR CHAPTER 6	URBAN DESIGN AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
London Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4B.1 – 4B.9 Design Policies • 4A.1 – Tackling Climate Change • 4A.2 – Mitigating Climate Change • 4A.3 – Sustainable Design and Construction • 4A.6 – Decentralised Energy: Heating, Cooling and Power
The Community Plan	<p>Vision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An environmentally conscious community and a sustainable borough • The safest borough in Greater London <p>Environment</p> <p>Priority 3 – Local Environment – To safeguard and enhance the local environment, enabling development to meet the needs of residents without undermining the value of the natural environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure sustainable development principles in all developments • Clean and safe streets, parks and communal spaces
UDP	<p>STR6 Conserving and Enhancing the Built Environment</p> <p>STR10 Sustainable Energy, Minerals and Waste</p> <p>Policies MW3 and MW4 – Energy Efficiency and Renewables</p>
Other Sources	<p>RBK SPD: Designing Inclusive Buildings Access for All 2005</p> <p>RBK SPA: Design, Access and Sustainability Statements 2006</p> <p>RBK SPG: Sustainable Construction 2004</p> <p>RBK Shopfront Design Guidance 2005</p> <p>RBK Townscape Analysis</p> <p>Old Town Conservation Area Studies 2003-2005</p>

- 6.2 The Council recognises the need to capitalise on the physical assets of the town centre, including its historic environment and riverside location, and to encourage the high quality redevelopment of poor quality, vacant and underused sites to improve the environment.
- 6.3 Strategic policy supports the need for attention to be paid to high quality and inclusive design to provide attractive, usable, durable and adaptable places and help achieve sustainable development. Design should be appropriate to its context and should improve the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.
- 6.4 Early community and stakeholder engagement identified Kingston's attractive character, historic buildings, variety of architecture and streets as key strengths, in particular the riverside and riverside developments and the Market Place. Poor streetscape, with mixed styles and uncoordinated street furniture and 'clutter' were identified as weaknesses. Improvements were sought to the quality of the streets and to parts of the town centre, including Kingston Station, Old London Road, Vicarage Road and the riverside.
- 6.5 At Issues stage a cleaner tidier environment with more green areas, trees and places to sit, were high priorities for environmental improvements. At Preferred Options, there was a very high level of support for environmental improvements to streets, public spaces and the riverside.
- 6.6 The quality of buildings, spaces and routes has been assessed and features such as views and landmarks that are worthy of protection have been identified. This analysis, which is set out in Part C of this AAP, together with the policy context and feedback from community and stakeholder engagement have informed the drafting of two design policies for the town centre (K9 Design Quality and K10 Public Realm) and proposals for improvements to achieve the key objective.



POLICY K9: DESIGN QUALITY IN THE TOWN CENTRE

The Council will require the highest standard of design in all new development and proposals should:

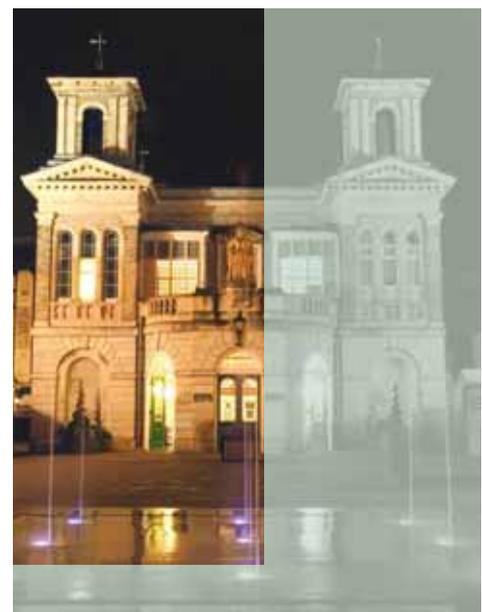
- Respect and enhance the town centre's distinctive character and historic environment
- Respond to local context, scale and character, in terms of historic street patterns, siting, density, massing, height, appearance, plot widths, building lines and materials
- Safeguard the panorama and key views (Plan 6)
- Make best use of redevelopment opportunities
- Be accessible and inclusive
- Provide active and attractive frontages to adjoining streets and spaces
- Create high quality landscaped spaces and connections to surrounding streets
- Incorporate best environmental practice in design and layout, use sustainable construction techniques and renewable technology, appropriate to the type and scale of development
- Reduce opportunities for crime and achieve Metropolitan Police 'Secured by Design' (or subsequent) accreditation

The Council will promote the redevelopment and improvement of areas of lesser quality, including vacant and underused sites and the provision of distinctive exemplary quality contemporary architecture in key locations on the following Proposal Sites to provide new landmarks to reinforce identity and improve legibility:

1. Eden Quarter area (P2 and P3)
2. Kingston Station (P10)
3. Town House Site, Kingston University (P16)

K9 replaces UDP Policies: KTC 13 Design Standards; KTC 14 Implementation of townscape strategy. It supplements saved Policies on the Built Environment in Chapter 4 of the UDP (or subsequent DPD policies)

- 6.7 Kingston's distinctive character and historic environment are key assets, which need to be safeguarded and enhanced. This was reflected at all stages of community/stakeholder engagement. The Council is committed to better design and the creation of an attractive, exciting and sustainable town centre. It will implement this policy through: pro-active work with land and property owners and developers, especially in relation to the 20 Proposal Sites identified in this AAP; the determination of planning applications and the implementation of environmental improvement schemes.



Plan 6
PROTECTION
OF KEY VIEWS



- 6.8 Key views to landmarks and wider panoramas (Plan 6), together with local views, (Chapter 7 and Part C of this AAP) contribute variety and interest to Kingston’s townscape, they reinforce its sense of place and are a valuable part of its built heritage.
- 6.9 Making best use of redevelopment opportunities will provide new attractions and uses, to help meet housing, retail and other needs and achieve sustainable development. Active frontages add interest and vitality, blank frontages can be very unattractive.

- 6.10 Design and Access Statements are required for certain types of planning applications to ensure that proposals deliver inclusive design, meet access and sustainability requirements. It is important that the town centre is permeable and well connected so that people can access attractions and spaces easily on foot. Developments should create spaces and routes which are accessible and open at all times. Implementing best environmental practice will help to achieve sustainable development. The creation of high quality landscaped spaces, including green spaces, is important as they can enhance biodiversity and the natural environment, as well as improving the townscape and contributing to a better quality of life and sense of well-being.
- 6.11 Key historic and civic buildings including All Saints’ Church, the Market House and the Guildhall are positive landmarks which contribute to townscape quality and legibility. Promoting three new sites for ‘landmarks’ in key locations on Proposal Sites P2, P10 and P16 (Plan 7 and Proposals Map) will provide identity and reinforce legibility. Details are set out in Part C of this AAP. “Landmark” status does not imply tall buildings, as can be seen from Kingston’s existing landmarks, which are all of modest scale. In some circumstances, buildings which are taller than their surroundings can provide identity, improve legibility and emphasise the hierarchy of a place.



POLICY K10: TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC REALM (Plan 7)

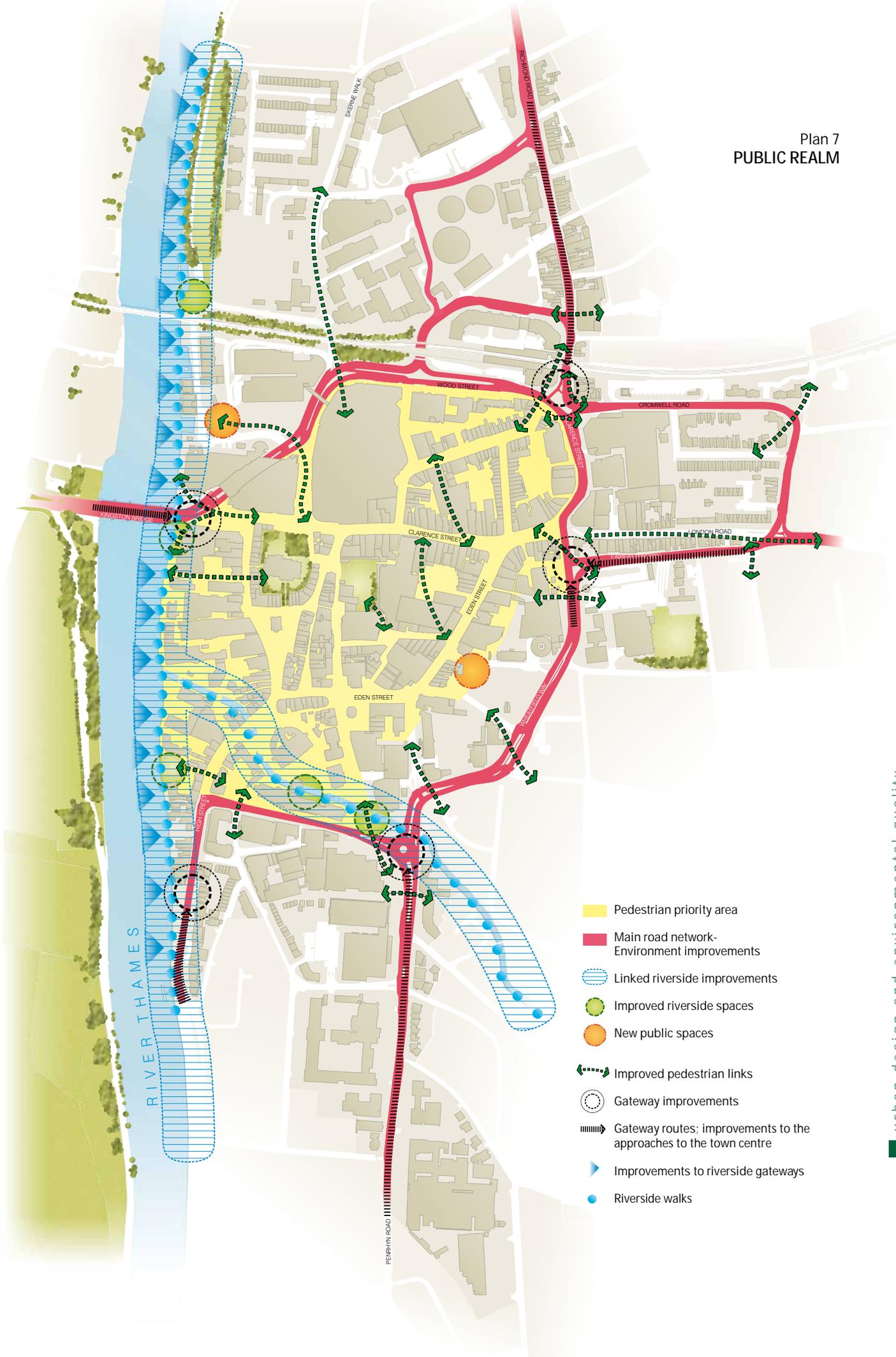
The Council will pursue a high quality, well designed and well connected public realm, to improve the appearance and attractiveness of the town centre. Through the design of public realm improvement schemes; the development of Proposal Sites; the determination of planning applications and partnership working with land and property owners and developers the Council will:

- Implement a rolling programme of improvements to streets and public spaces, using high quality co-ordinated materials which are durable and easy to maintain (Figure 3)
- Improve the quality of public spaces and require the provision of new public spaces, including two destination spaces, as part of major development proposals, on the riverside within the Northern Riverside area (Proposal Site P12) and within the Eden Quarter (Proposal Sites P2 and P3)
- Improve the quality of the pedestrian environment, ensuring that routes are clear, legible, safe and convenient
- Improve the environment of the relief road and crossings (Figures 4 and 5)
- Create attractive 'gateways' to mark and enhance the five main approaches to the town centre and the approach from the river to achieve a sense of arrival and identity (Plan 7 and Figure 6)
- Require environmental improvements and landscaping in association with new development
- Enhance the quality of public spaces, streets and passageways in the Old Town Conservation Area
- Promote riverside improvements to the Thames and the Hogsmill, linking open spaces and improved links to the riverside from the rest of the centre
- Prepare and implement a creative Lighting Strategy
- Prepare a Public Art Strategy identifying opportunities for public art and seek the provision of public art or contributions towards it in association with major development

K10 replaces UDP Policies: KTC11 Open Space in Kingston Town Centre; KTC14 Implementation of Townscape Strategy; KTC24 Pedestrian Network. It supplements Policies on the Built Environment in Chapter 4 of the UDP (or subsequent LDD policies)



Plan 7
PUBLIC REALM



- Pedestrian priority area
- Main road network-
Environment improvements
- Linked riverside improvements
- Improved riverside spaces
- New public spaces
- Improved pedestrian links
- Gateway improvements
- Gateway routes; improvements to the approaches to the town centre
- Improvements to riverside gateways
- Riverside walks

6.12 Early consultation on K+20 highlighted the need for significant improvements to the quality of the public realm to provide a co-ordinated, high quality environment. This policy aims to create a network of places from its key public space the Market Place, to new destination spaces by the riverside,

revitalised streetscapes, refurbished green spaces and small areas of incidental seating and planting. The townscape analysis and character area guidelines in Part C identify proposed improvements, which are listed in Appendix 2.

Figure 3
PUBLIC REALM PALETTE - ILLUSTRATIONS

Seating



Stainless steel seating various options
Location: Urban streets and squares

Timber seating
Location: Riverside and green spaces



Granite benches
Location: Formal urban schemes



Seating specials one off commissions
Location: Conservation areas and key improvement schemes



Bollards



Bollard specials: Granite or york stone individual commissions
Location: Conservation areas and key improvement schemes



Stainless steel bollard
Location: General use throughout



Special traditional commissions
Location: Conservation areas and key improvement schemes

Signage



Stainless steel fingerposts
Location: General use throughout



Cast iron finger post
Location: Conservation Areas

Cycle Stands



Stainless steel cycle stands
Location: General use throughout

Tree Guards



Stainless steel tree guards
Location: General use throughout



Tree Grilles



Stainless steel:
Options available, square, round, inset uplighters
Location: General use throughout



Materials



Smooth ground yorkstone aggregate paving
Colour: Natural
Location: General use throughout the town centre for pavements and other pedestrian areas



Granite Location: Shared surface areas in key improvement schemes



Yorkstone Location: Pavements and other pedestrian areas in conservation areas and riverside. Shared surface carriageways in conservation area



Bonded gravel Location: Riverside and parks and gardens



Timber deck Location: Limited adjacent to riverside

6.13 Pedestrian approaches to the town centre, links to the riverside and from arrival points, including bus stops, Kingston Station and car parks are generally of poor environmental quality and need to be improved. There are opportunities to improve the environment of the relief road and its crossings, as illustrated in Figures 4 and 5, as part of the Council's ongoing programme of highway and public realm improvements. Where appropriate, financial contributions will be sought towards these improvements, (by means of legal agreement) from development proposals adjacent to the relief road.

Figure 4
RELIEF ROAD CROSSING IMPROVEMENTS

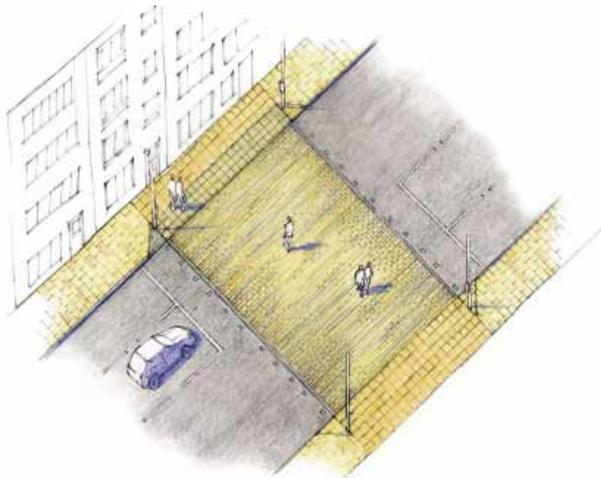
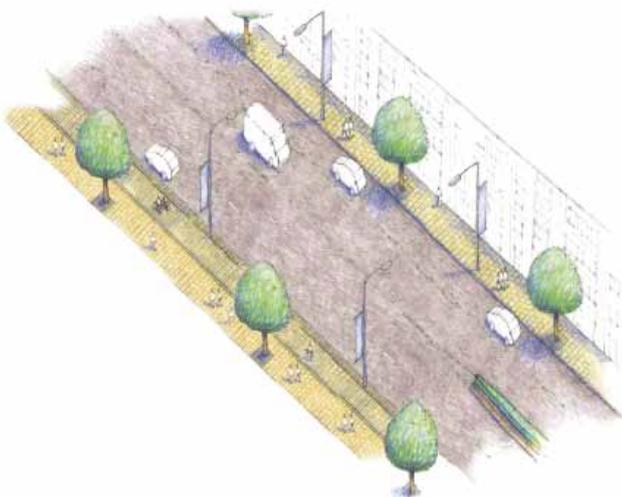


Figure 5
RELIEF ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

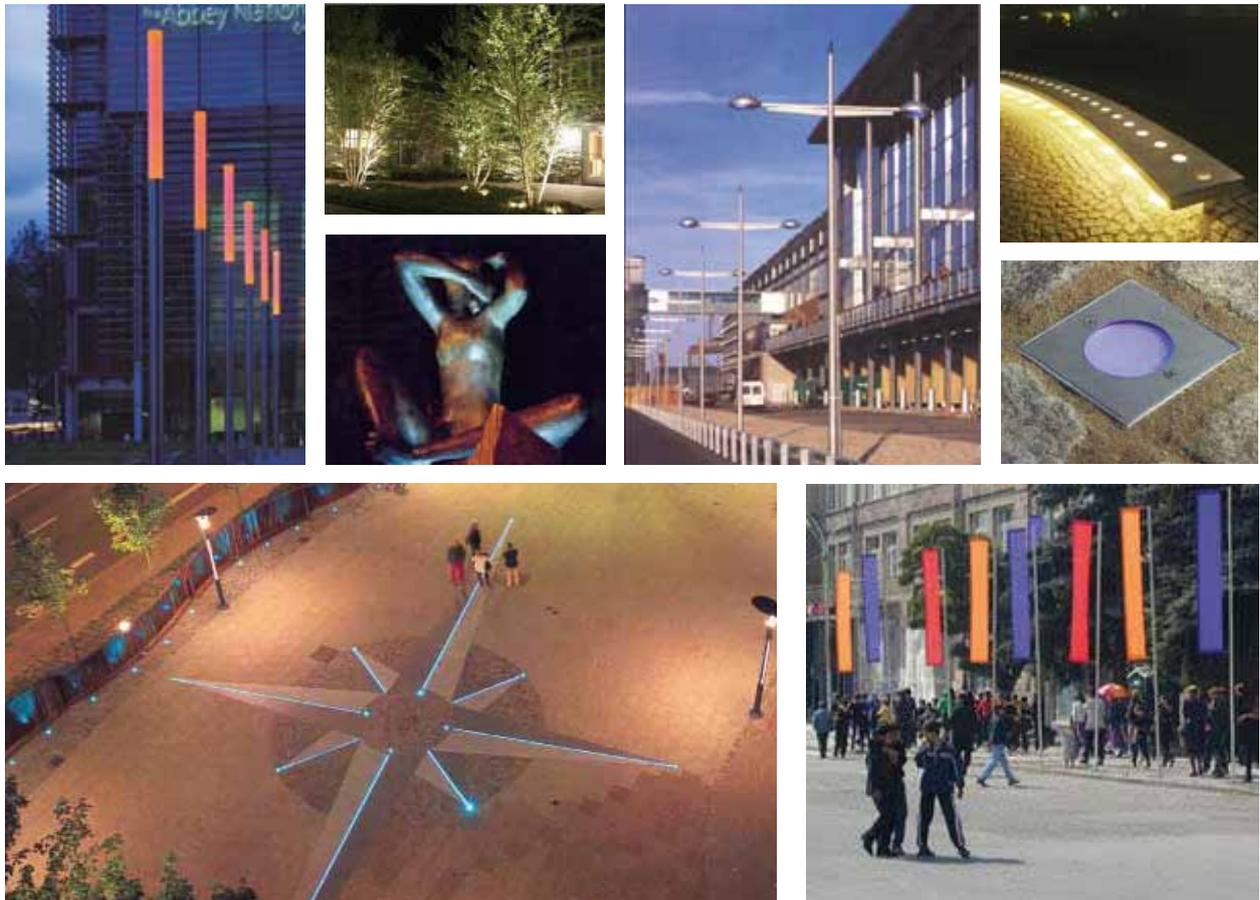


6.14 Environmental enhancements are required to the main approaches to the town centre (Plan 7) to improve their appearance and create attractive gateways to achieve a sense of arrival and identity, as illustrated in Figure 6. Improvements including: signage, landscaping, high quality buildings, lighting, public art, public realm and highway improvements, will be implemented as part of the Council's ongoing programme and through the implementation of development proposals along the approach routes to the town centre. Details are included in Part C of this AAP. Where appropriate, financial contributions will be sought towards these improvements, (by means of legal agreement) from development proposals in gateway locations. The approaches from the river will be enhanced by improved mooring facilities, signage and pedestrian links to the rest of the centre.

Figure 6
GATEWAY IMPROVEMENTS



Figure 7
PUBLIC ART AND LIGHTING



6.15 Functional and creative lighting schemes would visually enrich the town centre at night, enhance the pedestrian environment and create interest, identity and distinctiveness. Statues and other public art, as well as attractive historic or contemporary landmark buildings are suitable for creative lighting. A Lighting Strategy will ensure a high quality co-ordinated approach to creative lighting.

6.16 It is appropriate for major development proposals to incorporate an element of public art as an integral part of the design process or provide a financial contribution towards the cost of artistic features. Public art, including sculpture, murals, land works, unusual street furniture, lighting and architectural design can enrich new development (either as part of the detailed design of a building or incorporated into public space within or around it), enhance the townscape, create interest and identity, reinforce local distinctiveness and contribute to the creation of a sense of place. A public art strategy will identify opportunities and provide guidance on the provision of public art. Locations for freestanding pieces of public art are identified in Part C of this AAP.