



East Staffordshire Borough Council  
Local Development Framework

BURTON TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN

# Policy Statement



August 2010



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# 1 Background

## POLICY STATEMENT – BURTON UPON TRENT TOWN CENTRE

### Background

- 1.1** East Staffordshire Borough Council recognises the need to provide a strong lead in ensuring that Burton Town Centre is able to meet the challenges it faces over the next 15-20 years. The Town Centre has a strong retail core which has weathered the changes in the economy, and particularly the fortunes of the retail sector, reasonably well. Over the coming years, the Town Centre will face challenges from at least three directions:
- *firstly, the changing nature of retailing – its format, the growth of internet buying, customer expectations;*
  - *secondly, competition from nearby centres such as Derby, Lichfield and Swadlincote, where there are, or have been, significant increases in the amount of retail floorspace; and*
  - *thirdly, the increase in population in the Town Centre's catchment area as a result of Burton's current status as a Growth Point.*
- 1.2** The **first challenge** strikes to the very heart of the Town Centre's purpose. In the future, the Town Centre's shopping function will continue to be important, but the products, services and ways these are offered to customers will need to respond rapidly to changing customer demands. Also, the Town Centre needs to be perceived as more multi-functional, with leisure, residential, employment, educational and cultural uses featuring more prominently in the development mix. This will help to maintain the vitality of the town centre as a whole, and underpin the viability of the enterprises trading there.
- 1.3** The **second challenge** points to the need for additional floorspace in Burton in order to maintain the Centre's attractiveness. An extra amount of floorspace is required just for Burton to maintain shopper numbers and investment from traders. A do-nothing approach will lead to decline and a loss of market share to surrounding centres. Burton upon Trent is regarded as a strategic sub-regional centre in the former Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands. It is recognised that maintaining this position requires sufficient new floorspace to claw back trade lost to surrounding centres and to provide a better qualitative choice to town centre visitors.
- 1.4** The Council's own research commissioned from Roger Tym and Partners indicates that significant capacity requirements of 30,000m<sup>2</sup> of net comparison retail floorspace will be needed in Burton Town Centre between 2007 and 2026, with some 43,000 m<sup>2</sup> for the Borough as a whole. Convenience floorspace capacity is lower over this period, being some 5,700m<sup>2</sup> net retail floorspace in the town centre and 8000m<sup>2</sup> for the Borough as a whole.
- 1.5** Burton upon Trent Town Centre has not historically been recognised as a location for major office developments, the only one of significant size being the Molson Coors UK headquarters building in High Street. As far as small office suites are concerned there is currently a surplus of floorspace in Burton, mainly in secondary or tertiary level accommodation. There is certainly a need to plan for some additional new floorspace, to provide choice within the office market, but the amount must be realistic to avoid merely increasing the vacancy rate.
- 1.6** The Town Centre is also a destination for leisure, cultural and sports activities – cinema, Brewhouse Theatre, library, Meadowside Leisure Centre, sports and fitness clubs, cafes, restaurants, pubs, bars etc. The Retail and Leisure Study prepared by Roger Tym and Partners for the Council highlighted that the capacity for further leisure provision in the Town Centre lay mainly in the food and drink sector, particularly family-friendly eating places. This type of venue, if open into the evenings, could help to increase the numbers of people - and the variety of age and ethnic groups - visiting the town centre after most of the shops are shut, and would help increase the sense of security there (see also para 1.9 below). As Roger Tym and Partners point out in their report, predicting demand for different leisure activities anywhere in the country is less well developed than for retail demand. Particularly with a growing population there is likely to be as yet unidentified demand for new leisure or cultural development – possibly for one of an innovative nature.

- 1.7 An expressed demand for a non-sports leisure facility of this nature needs to be matched by an entrepreneur willing to develop such a facility. The Council is open to proposals from the private sector for new leisure or cultural development in the Town Centre. For example, it is aware that there is some latent demand for a Bowling Alley and would consider a proposal for such a facility in a suitable location if one were to come forward.
- 1.8 The Council will be undertaking Facility Planning Modelling in partnership with Sport England which will help to inform the Council about future demand for the core indoor sports activities.
- 1.9 With Burton College also located in the Town Centre, educational use features prominently in the Town Centre. The College has grown recently, and is seeking to grow further, with a consequent need for additional accommodation. The student population contributes significantly to the trading in the Town Centre, and the needs of this section of the community should be carefully integrated into development in the Town Centre.
- 1.10 The **third challenge** is a positive one, with a significant increase in population planned over the next 20 years. The Council is committed to bringing forward 11,000 new homes in and around Burton from 2006 over the next 20 years or so. Burton Town Centre must be sufficiently attractive to ensure the majority of this increased population's expenditure takes place there – rather than other centres. Whilst Burton might be the closest centre to these new homes, if other centres offer a better range and quality of shops and services, and are easier to get into and out of, then Burton will lose out. In addition, the town centre itself is an appropriate location for certain types of residential development, where, if carefully designed, it can lead to activity in the centre well into the evening, increasing a sense of security there.

## 2 The Local Development Framework and the Burton Town Centre Area Action Plan

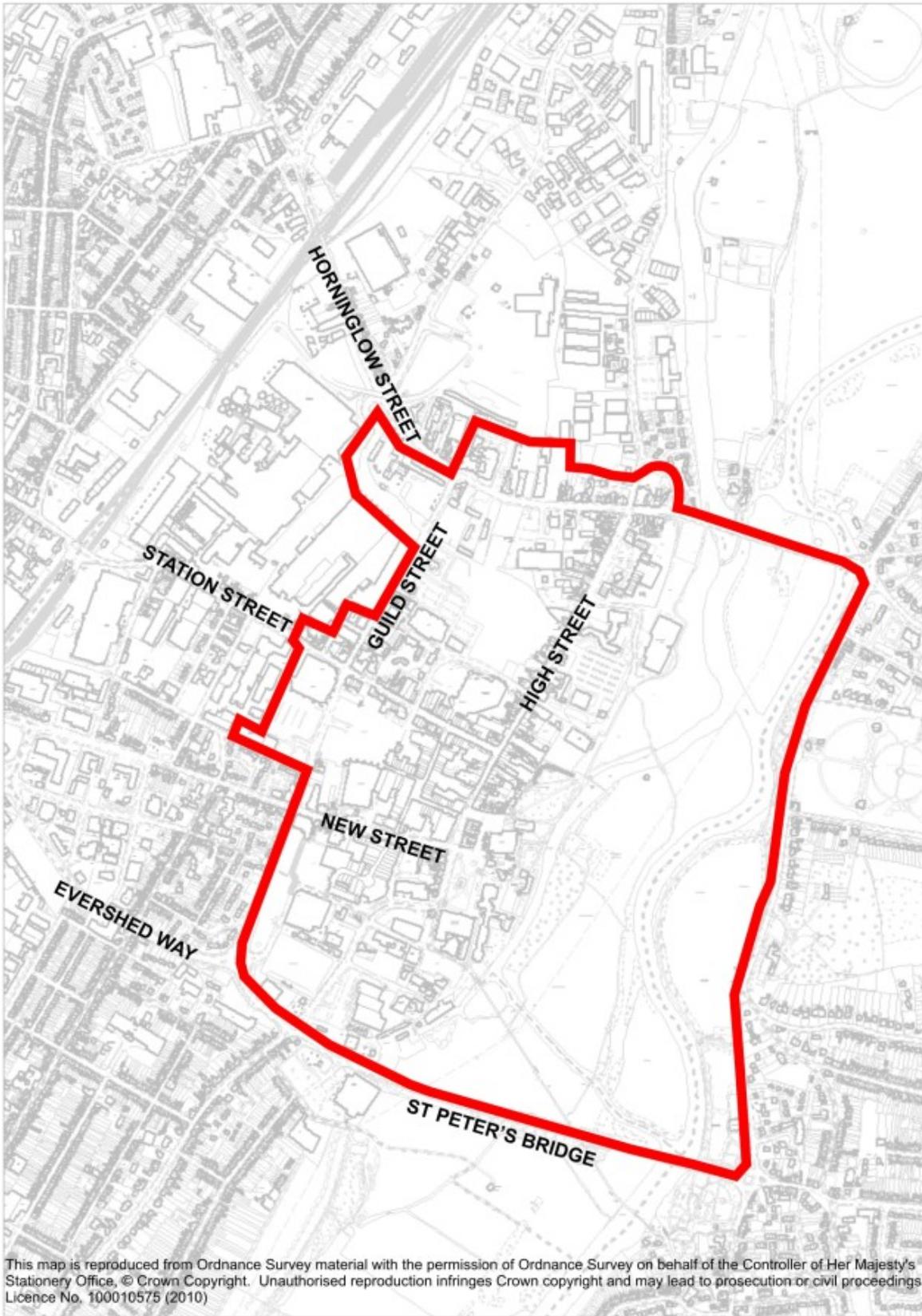
### The Local Development Framework and the Burton Town Centre Area Action Plan

- 2.1** Work has begun on the Core Strategy which will set out the strategic policies and land use proposals for the Borough. Work also began on a Burton Town Centre Area Action Plan (AAP). This Plan was, like the Core Strategy, a part of the Local Development Framework suite of documents. As such, the AAP would have to be in conformity with the Core Strategy and its preparation would need to be synchronized with it.
- 2.2** Following some delay to the Core Strategy, and thus consequently to the AAP, it was decided in January 2010 that preparing guidance for development in the Town Centre was an urgent matter, and that the length of the preparation process for the AAP up to its adoption would leave the Council without a policy base for too long a period. The danger would be that potential schemes might come forward in an ad hoc fashion, thus undermining the opportunity to develop the Town Centre in a coordinated way based on a coherent strategy.
- 2.3** In particular, the traffic impact of cumulative developments needs to be carefully assessed, taking into account present congestion levels and the likely growth in traffic in the future.
- 2.4** Cabinet in March 2010 agreed, to progress the framework for the Town Centre in the form of a Masterplan, which will be used to set out an overall framework for the town centre and suggest the uses that may be appropriate for different parts of the centre, in order that the objectives of this framework are met. In due course land allocations will be confirmed in the Core Strategy.

### **The Role and Status of a Policy Statement**

- 3.1** The timetable for preparing the Masterplan will result in Adoption by April/May 2011. In the meantime, there is a need for a document to provide policy guidance. This Policy Statement (PS) will set out the vision and broad objectives for the Centre, as well as the range of uses the Council would wish to see developed in different parts of the Centre.
- 3.2** The intention is that it should not be too prescriptive, in order not to stifle investment, but on the other hand, it sets out a broad vision for the Centre and Strategic Objectives that all new development should help to meet. It is also recognised that any significant development in the Town Centre is likely to have an effect on a traffic network that already suffers from congestion, and therefore the location of certain types of development may be critical if greater congestion levels are to be avoided. Work on a transport strategy for the Town Centre is underway, and will form an integral part of this PS. The PS is intended to be used both as a tool for initiating discussions with prospective investors, and as a guide for discussions with those applying for planning permission.
- 3.3** This PS will be the subject of internal and external consultation and will be approved by Council. . The status of the Masterplan as a material consideration in planning decisions is therefore significant. However, it does not have the status of a Local Development Document because only a Development Plan Document (such as the Core Strategy) can make allocations of land, and insofar as the Masterplan or PS does/do this they have less weight, until the allocations are confirmed in the Core Strategy in due course.

### 3 The Role and Status of a Policy Statement



**POLICY STATEMENT/MASTERPLAN – BOUNDARY OF AREA**

## The Vision

- 4.1** The Council and its consultants carried out a variety of events and workshops during the first stages of preparing the Area Action Plan. This work focused on what individuals, groups and businesses wanted to see in the future Town Centre. These aspirations have been distilled into the following Vision Statement:

***By 2026 Burton Town Centre will offer a high quality town centre experience for the growing population in its catchment area. In creating this experience, the town centre's key assets of a riverside setting, industrial heritage in brewing beer and its location at the centre of the National Forest will have been fully exploited. The town centre will be rich in its range of retail and leisure facilities in a variety of sizes of units. It will be a thriving centre for education and employment with an increasing town centre population providing a safe and enjoyable environment that is attractive to all age groups, and which promotes activity into the evening. A series of linked public spaces will provide vitality, quality and connection with the River Trent and its Washlands. The Town Centre will be easier to get to and from by a range of different means of transport.***

## 5 Strategic Objectives

### Strategic Objectives

**5.1** In order to deliver the aspirations of this Vision, each development, whether private sector or public sector-led, will be assessed against the following set of over-arching Strategic Objectives. Each scheme should contribute positively to meeting these Strategic Objectives:

- SO1: To ensure that new development in the town centre contributes to increasing the attractiveness of the centre as a whole by guiding where different types of development should in general be located.
- SO 2: To develop Burton town centre further as a multi-use centre – as a place to live, work, learn, exercise and relax as well as a place to shop – with this variety of activities being available over a greater number of hours and with improvements in the quality and range of shopping available in order to meet the needs of a growing population and to ensure Burton’s future viability and diversity as an important retail centre.
- SO 3: To ensure that all new developments demonstrate the highest quality of design, fitting in well with the existing scale, positioning, and design of the buildings around them.
- SO 4: To improve the attractiveness of the public realm in the town centre and to ensure that Burton remains a compact centre, easy to walk around, with efficient use made of the land available within it and to help increase connectivity between the town centre and the Washlands.
- SO 5: To ensure that new development does not add to the existing traffic congestion, but positively contributes to improving the flows of vehicles into and around the town centre and to car parking for the centre as a whole; and improve facilities for those arriving in the town centre by public transport and bicycle, to help increase the attractiveness of these modes of transport, as part of a wider transport strategy for the Town.
- SO6: To maximise the potential of the Market Place/Market Hall area.
- SO 7: To ensure that Burton’s position in the National Forest is reflected both in the shaping and greening of public space and in the construction and design of buildings. (Also see the Council's adopted Open Space Supplementary Planning Document and the Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document which is currently in preparation)
- SO8: To create buildings, and spaces surrounding buildings, that take account of the effects of climatic change, and are exemplars in low energy and natural resource usage, and in waste minimisation.

## Spatial Policies

### ***Establishing a Stronger Identity for the Town Centre through the Creation of “Quarters”***

**6.1** One of the assets of Burton Town Centre is that it remains compact, and it is a relatively short walk from one end to the other. With the development of Middleway Park the retail provision has been lengthened northwards, although the opportunity now arises to improve the links between this retail and leisure park and the rest of the town centre so that it is perceived more as an integral part of the town centre as a whole. To ensure that future shopping provision is retained in the compact core it is proposed to establish four “quarters”, as shown on the map below, into which it is intended that future development of the appropriate type should be directed. This will help visitors to the Town Centre to find their way about as stronger identities are established for activities in their “quarter” and it will be easier to recognise the variety of facilities available.

**6.2** The Council has also prepared a Supplementary Planning Document for the Bargates area of the town centre, in the proposed “Leisure and Commerce” Quarter. The objectives and proposals for Bargates correspond with those proposed for its Quarter, and its development will help to strengthen the identity of this part of the town centre.

#### **POLICY SP1 [FROM SO1 AND SO2, SO4, SO8]**

*In each of the four quarters new development should normally be of the types listed below within Table One. Other uses may be acceptable if the applicant can demonstrate satisfactorily to the local planning authority that the proposal:*

1. *Would complement the predominant uses listed below in Table One;*
2. *Would not prejudice any deliverable plans for development elsewhere in the centre; and*
3. *Would not create traffic flow or parking problems in the immediate vicinity or elsewhere in the town centre.*

*The design of new buildings and their orientation on site should contribute as much as possible to lowering energy consumption in the building (and if appropriate in surrounding buildings). New buildings should also be capable of withstanding the effects of climate change, particularly the effects of flooding. To this end, the feasibility of measures such as green roofs or other sustainable drainage systems should be investigated as a means of reducing the amount of surface water run-off to the area around. Section 106 contributions towards those parts of the flood defence not so far improved may also be appropriate.*

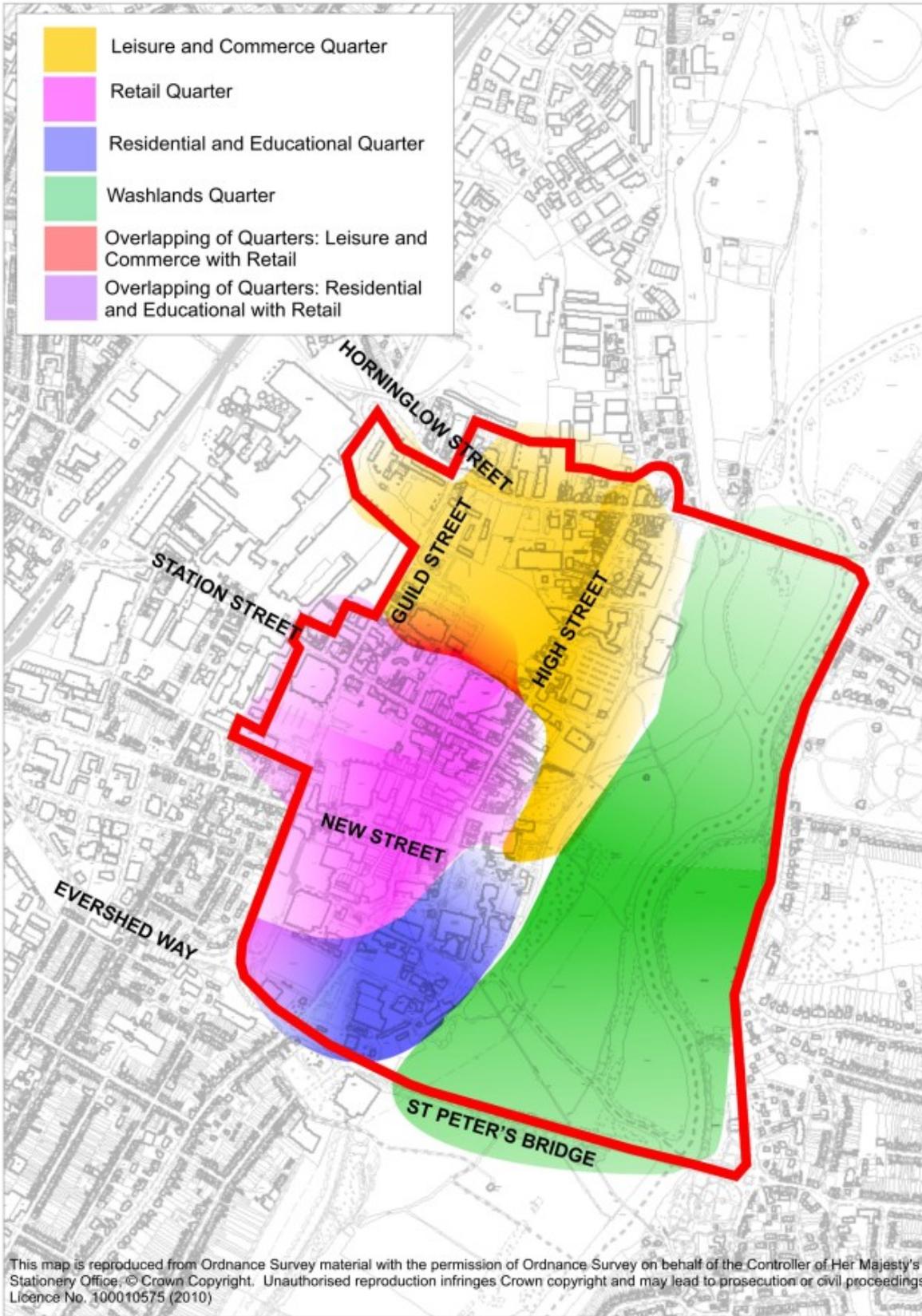
<b>SHOPPING QUARTER</b> <b>“THE SHOP &amp; RELAX QUARTER”</b>	<b>LEISURE &amp; COMMERCE QUARTER</b> <b>“THE WORK AND PLAY QUARTER”</b>	<b>EDUCATION &amp; RESIDENTIAL QUARTER</b> <b>“THE LEARNING &amp; LIVING QUARTER”</b>	<b>WASHLANDS QUARTER</b> <b>“BURTON’S HIDDEN JEWEL”</b>
Retail	Indoor Sports Facility, for example a Bowling Alley	Residential	<i>Strictly limited to essential small scale development ancillary to open air sport, nature conservation and recreational uses. Each proposal to be assessed on</i>
Cafes, Restaurants, Bars	Indoor or Outdoor Entertainment Facility	College Facility and Accommodation	
Offices (A2 Use Class)	Hotel	Hotel	
Offices (B1 Use Class) above ground floor only	Tourism Facility	Community Facility	
Open Space/Greenspace	Cafes, Restaurants, Bars	Open space/Greenspace	

## 6 Spatial Policies

SHOPPING QUARTER "THE SHOP & RELAX QUARTER"	LEISURE & COMMERCE QUARTER "THE WORK AND PLAY QUARTER"	EDUCATION & RESIDENTIAL QUARTER "THE LEARNING & LIVING QUARTER"	WASHLANDS QUARTER "BURTON'S HIDDEN JEWEL"
Residential above ground floor level only	Small, Specialist Shops		<i>basis of impact on this Site of Biological Importance.</i>
Hotel	Open space/Greenspace		
	Offices		

**Table One: Four quarter new development building types**

# Spatial Policies 6



## 6 Spatial Policies

### **Retail Floorspace Growth in the Town Centre**

- 6.3** For Burton to continue to be attractive as a destination for increasing discerning shoppers, it must continue to offer the chief advantages quoted by those the Council have surveyed: easy access from parking to shops and a compact, flat layout of streets and malls.

#### **POLICY SP2 (FROM SO2, SO3, SO4, SO7)**

*The Council considers that the retail growth of the town centre should mainly be met by the expansion of the three existing shopping centres (Cooper's Square, the Octagon Centre and Burton Place). This should be achieved by expansion onto their respective surface car parks. Replacement car parking should be through rooftop and/or multi-storey parking integrated with the shopping centre to create a high quality, undercover, route from car park to shops, subject to it being possible to locate parking at these locations without increasing local traffic congestion, queuing, etc once suitable traffic management measures have been put in place. The Council will seek the development of a department store within the Primary Shopping Area of the Town Centre.*

*The Council also considers that:*

*(i) it is important that development of the Burton Place Shopping Centre should assist in improving through pedestrian links to and from Middleway Park, so as to better integrate this retail and leisure park into the Town Centre;*

*(ii) although the southern side of the Town Centre is designated for predominantly residential and educational uses, some retail development may be appropriate immediately to the south of the Octagon Centre as long as this is well integrated with the Octagon Centre/Asda and the rest of the Town Centre, and creates a natural route for pedestrian shoppers from the rest of the Town Centre;*

*(iii) maintaining and enhancing a critical mass of retailing in the strong core centred around Coopers Square will be vital if the additional development mentioned above in (i) and (ii) is to be successful.*

*Above ground floor level, a mix of uses will be encouraged (see list under Policy SP1).*

*Retail developments should not contribute to exceeding the retail capacity of the town centre, as determined by the East Staffordshire Retail Capacity Study in its most recent form.*

*The Council will seek the inclusion of a variety of sizes of unit, whilst recognising that current retailer demand is for units slightly larger than the average store size in the Town Centre.*

*As well as new floorspace, the Council will encourage the more efficient use of upper floors of existing buildings for all appropriate uses, including retail.*

### **Improving the Public Realm**

- 6.4** Improving the perception visitors have of the Town Centre is not just about the range and types of shops and facilities offered, it is also about how easy it is to walk from one part to another, and whether or not the walk itself is a pleasant experience. Does the environment encourage people to linger at certain points – perhaps sit down and enjoy their surroundings? The term “public realm” covers everything that contributes to the experience of public space – the shape and pitching of new pedestrian ways, creation of open areas, street furniture, street trees and landscaping, etc. The quality and height of the buildings that enclose the public space are also crucial in how visitors will feel about their surroundings.

- 6.5** As part of the Growth Point status of East Staffordshire Borough, the Council is developing key themes which will overarch all new development in Burton. One of these will be the importance of green infrastructure within new development. In addition, the Core Strategy sets out the Council's ambition to be the Capital of the National Forest. It will be crucial that this aspiration is turned into reality to create a town centre worthy of the title. During the consultation that has already taken place on the Area Action Plan, it was frequently repeated by those responding that, although the Washlands form a large area of greenspace to the east of the

town centre, the centre itself has little in the way of planting and trees, leading to a relatively harsh streetscape. Development in the town centre will provide an important opportunity to add new greenspace which is linked to the existing green infrastructure of the Washlands.

- 6.6** Improved signage will be crucial, particularly to help visitors find their way around to the different Quarters. However, there are also locations in the Town Centre where the public realm would benefit from 'de-cluttering'. The rationalisation of signs, poles and sometimes other items of street furniture in certain places could improve both the ease with which visitors move about and the visual appearance of the street, without obscuring the information the signs seek to give out.

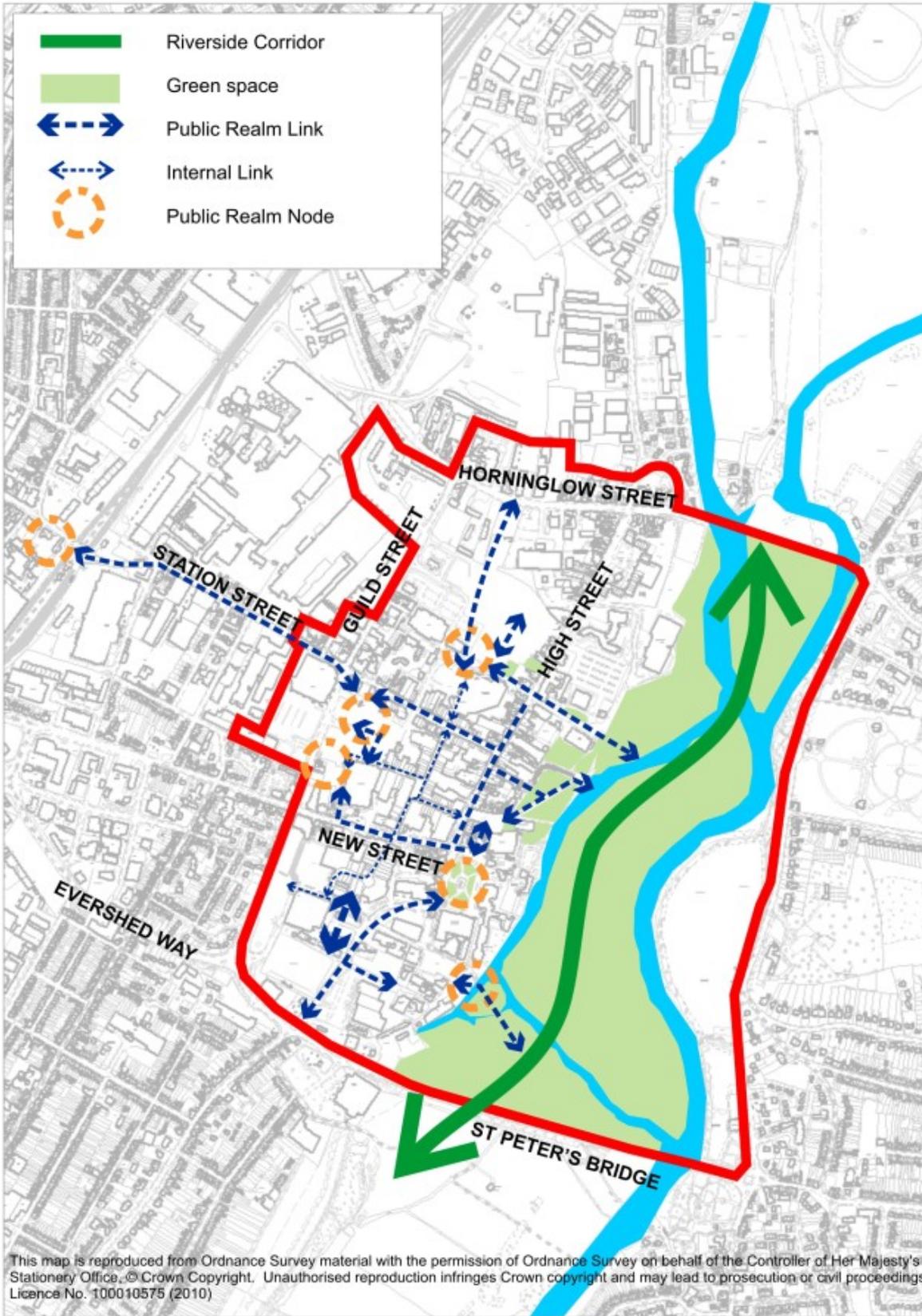
**POLICY SP3 (FROM SO4, SO7)**

*In designing new developments, the Council will expect applicants to take account of the need to establish new pedestrian links and public open space, including greenspace, within the Town Centre. Applicants will be required to enter into a section 106 agreement to provide public realm improvements adjacent to the site, and, in appropriate circumstances, within the site. These should complement the Council's own proposals for public realm improvements. Buildings should be designed to enclose public areas in a sympathetic way, paying due regard to the height, massing, scale, materials used and design. Where improvements to the public realm are not feasible or desirable, contributions will be required towards improvements on the Washlands.*

*The plan below shows the main pedestrian routes and necessary new routes for which improvements to the public realm are required.*

*All developments should follow the principles set out in the Council's Design Guide, and the more detailed Town Centre Design Principles set out below in section 7. The Council's Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on Open Space should also be taken into account, particularly with regard to developer contributions. The Council is also preparing a Green Infrastructure SPD which will also be relevant to development in the Town Centre.*

# 6 Spatial Policies



## **Traffic Flow and Management**

- 6.7** A Centre that has a wide range of shops and facilities, and is a pleasant place to walk around will not be successful if it is difficult to get there in the first place. Traffic congestion is a current problem in and around the Town Centre, as through traffic mixes with vehicles heading to and from destinations within the Centre. As further development occurs, and with an increasing population, there is a potential for the situation to become very much worse. One major development is likely to have effects on the flow of traffic throughout the Centre. It is therefore critical that development takes place in accordance with this Policy Statement and that appropriate traffic management measures are put in place as set out in the Council's traffic management strategy for Burton Town Centre.
- 6.8** The Highways Authority (Staffordshire County Council) and East Staffordshire Borough Council are preparing the East Staffordshire Growth Options Study Transport Strategy for the Borough as a whole. This will inform a strategy for managing traffic in the Town Centre and it will be linked to this Masterplan. It will set out what measures will be required for the Town Centre to function with higher flows of traffic in the future, and therefore will need to consider whether or not radical solutions to accommodate these flows will be required. Part of this Strategy will be to increase the number of visitors arriving by public transport and bicycle. This could include further pedestrianisation to remove through traffic from the heart of the Town Centre whilst balancing the need to offer well located parking for shoppers.

### **POLICY SP4 (FROM SO5)**

*The Council will require that a Transport Assessment be prepared for all development proposals likely to have a significant impact on the traffic flows in the immediate vicinity of the site and/or the wider Town Centre. For all developments, the Council will require that the developer provides traffic management measures, sufficient to mitigate the development's immediate impact. Where appropriate, the developer will also be required to provide an appropriate contribution towards the measures set out in the Masterplan's transport management strategy which will help to reduce the wider impact of traffic on Town Centre flows. This may include contributions towards the improvement of signage to redirect through traffic away from the Town Centre heart.*

*As part of the transport management strategy the Council will incorporate measures to make the use of public transport and cycling into the Town Centre more attractive. Part of the transport management strategy contribution will be for the improvement of New Street as a bus interchange. The Council will investigate ways of marketing the bus services that run down Station Street as a 'Town Centre-Railway Station Shuttle' or similar. Part of the transport management strategy contribution will also be for better cycle parking and safety measures. The Council and the Highways Authority are also investigating further routes from the Town Centre across the Trent to Winshill and Stapenhill for pedestrians and cyclists.*

## **The Market Place/Market Hall**

- 6.9** The Market in Burton upon Trent continues to offer an important type of shopping that complements the shops and stores in the streets around it. Whilst markets in general have declined in viability in recent years, Burton Market trades reasonably well. It is an asset that the Council will seek to revitalise so that the number of people visiting it and the amount of money they spend increases. There are two distinct elements – the covered Market Hall and the open cobbled Market Place which forms a setting for St. Modwen's Church when viewed from the High Street. On market days the forecourt to the Market Hall is occupied by open stalls as well as a significant portion – but not all – of the Market Place.
- 6.10** The Market is situated in a strategic location where the shopping quarter meets the education & residential quarter, in a position that overlooks the Washlands (part of the leisure & culture quarter). Access to the Washlands is, however, via a pathway from the north-eastern corner of the Market Place, and it is not immediately apparent to the visitor that the Washlands lie beyond.
- 6.11** The Market Place itself is an underused space – used only on market days, and then only in part, there is much scope for imaginative plans to attract more people to this area, and to maximise its key location at the overlap of the 3 different quarters. In partnership with the market

## 6 Spatial Policies

and local shop traders, and the Market Management, an action plan of coordinated and deliverable projects will be implemented. There are many ideas for the Market Place – regular events, farmers markets or special themed markets, café culture in and around the square, etc right through to more ambitious schemes involving structures to cover the site and suit the site for a variety of all-weather uses. The practicality and desirability of these ideas need to be assessed, together with the functioning of the open market and integration of the Market Hall.

### **POLICY SP5 (FROM SO6)**

*The Council will produce and implement a development brief for the Market Place/Market Hall. The brief will set out the actions it will undertake with its partners to regenerate this area, together with how each action will be delivered. In determining planning applications for properties surrounding the area, the Council will pay due regard to whether or not the proposed development would increase the vitality of the area and complement future development plans for the area.*

### **Linking the Town Centre and the Washlands**

- 6.12** A comment frequently made at public consultations is that the Town Centre “turns its back” on the Washlands, so that the visitor is scarcely aware of this recreational and ecological jewel that lies adjacent to the shopping centre. The reasons why the built form creates a near impenetrable wall, blocking both access and viewlines to the River, is an historical one. There is no way to the River through the buildings which lie on the east side of the High Street, from its junction with Worthington Way right down to the Market Place, apart from Andressey Passage, a narrow alley way. Since these buildings are within a Conservation Area, the scope for demolition to create a new way through is very limited, but any opportunities for improvement through demolition of non-critical parts of buildings will be investigated carefully. The access to the River from the Market Place does not give a direct view of the Washlands. Further south again, the private grounds of the Abbey and Burton College prevent access to the riverside. The first potential vista and access point which could be improved is that along Fleet Street to the Stapenhill Viaduct.
- 6.13** North of the High Street/Worthington Way junction there are more obvious opportunities to access the River: down past the Library; and further north again, the redevelopment of the Bargates site will incorporate direct sight lines from High Street to the Washlands.

### **POLICY SP6 (FROM SO4)**

- 6.14** *The Council will seek to open up access and views to the Washlands from the Town Centre as opportunities arise when planning applications for suitable redevelopment works are submitted. As part of the development brief (see Policy SP5) the Council will consider the most appropriate way to improve the prominence of the Washlands access from the Market Place, including signage, and the creation of high quality spaces, given the sensitivity of the conservation area / listed building setting. For existing clear routes from the Town Centre to the Washlands (Fleet Street and access to library), section 106 agreement funding from Town Centre developments or other sources may be used to improve signage and the appearance of these routes.*

## Town Centre Design Principles

### Character & Appearance

**7.1** Places should have their own identity; Burton Town Centre has a character based upon its setting and its historical growth as a brewing town. The buildings in the Town Centre include mid to late 19th and early 20th century buildings, buildings dating from the 1930's and more modern developments such as large-scale retail developments like Middleway Retail Park, The buildings are generally two to three storeys in height. New development needs to build upon the past, but this should not stifle innovative modern design. The Borough Council would wish to retain a flexible approach to future developments but will assess new development against the following criteria:

- A high quality design will be sought using form, scale, massing and materials in the design of buildings and external spaces appropriate to the character of the area;
- Development should be primarily two to four storey development set often but not exclusively at the back edge of pavements
- Solid security shutters and blank boundary walls and fences, facing the public highway and other open spaces are not acceptable;
- Ventilation and cooling systems and other service equipment should be designed to fit within the building envelope and minimise visual and noise intrusion (Details should be submitted with planning applications);
- Materials used for new development need to be of high quality and the detailed design needs to pay attention to such features as the roof, walls, entrances, windows etc.
- In general a continuity of street frontages will be provided, with active edges to ensure good natural visual surveillance and a good sense of enclosure to streets;
- Any new retail development should be designed in such a way that it complements the surrounding buildings and streetscape. Buildings and space about them designed in an out-of-town retail format - warehouse style buildings surrounded by large areas devoted to surface parking and servicing - will not be acceptable;
- Inactive edges of large retail development should be disguised with other uses that wrap around these buildings.

**7.2** In addition, the Council will expect that the Design Principles for the National Forest, part of the National Forest Design Charter, will also be applied as appropriate.

### Continuity & Enclosure

**7.3** Buildings are generally developed along clearly defined building lines which should be retained and reinforce the definition of streets and public spaces.

- Development should be in the form of secure perimeter blocks, which clearly distinguish between public and private areas;
- Where potential exists to create new pedestrian routes, development should provide positive frontages (i.e. building entrances and windows to active rooms) which overlook these routes in order to maximise natural visual surveillance of the street; routes through to the east of High Street and towards the Washlands will be positively promoted in the public realm strategy
- The primary access to the building should be directly from the street or from public areas;
- Development should seek to enhance safety, security and surveillance and minimise the opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour; and
- Private yards or rear servicing areas should be enclosed as far as possible by the rear of other properties; otherwise the extent of private ownership should be clearly defined by the detailed design of walls, railing, gates, entrance arches, signage and paving. Storage areas for refuse and recycling should be an integral part of a development.

## 7 Town Centre design Principles

### Quality of Public Realm

- 7.4** Places should have attractive and successful outdoor areas. The public spaces in Burton Town Centre are in need of improvement and require better linkages. In particular consideration needs to be given to the existing pedestrianised area of Station Street (and the street uses that include licensed traders) as well as the Market Place and the existing Washlands area. These spaces need to be linked as part of a wide public realm strategy and they need to be designed and laid out with flexibility in mind, in order to accommodate this broad range of potential uses.,
- 7.5** Seven key guiding principles are put forward to assist in achieving high quality public realm throughout the Town Centre in order to complement and assist in the assimilation of future development within the Town Centre. The key principles are:
- Re-address balance towards pedestrian movements across town centre (rather than expanses of car parks);
  - Create interconnected network of pedestrian and cycle routes and connections, both internally within the town centre and externally to the areas around the town centre and, in the case of cycle routes, to the wider cycle route network);
  - Create key open space nodes at axis points of pedestrian network;
  - Create linear directional pedestrian route based on the river corridor and edge of town area;
  - Apply common theming to public realm through similar treatments and quality standards; and
  - Integrate the public realm and open space system with public art and sustainable transport systems to create clear sense of space at a human scale within the existing town centre framework;
  - Reflect the theme of Burton as the Capital of The National Forest

### Ease of Movement

- 7.6** Places should be easy to get to and move through. Burton is dominated by surface level car parks with little priority given over to pedestrians and cyclists. Proposals for the public realm and new development will need to improve this situation. A choice of well connected pedestrian routes should be provided as part of the development of large sites.
- New routes should connect with existing routes and movement patterns;
  - Public transport facilities should be designed as an integral part of the street layout, and public transport stops should be located within minimal walking distance from the town's major land uses; and
  - New development should contribute to the existing fine grain network of pedestrian routes, in order to increase pedestrian convenience and encourage cycling and walking.

### Legibility

- 7.7** Places should have a clear image, should be easy to understand, and easy for the visitor to find their way around. At present the legibility of the Town Centre is fragmented. The first time visitor may not find it obvious where the Town Centre is located as the larger car parks feed straight into undercover shopping centres.
- New development at entrance points to the area should be distinctive and memorable emphasising a 'sense of arrival' and assisting people to orientate themselves;
  - The main entrances to public and other major buildings should be emphasised through carefully designed streets, lighting, signage and paving;
  - Existing important views and vistas should not be blocked or compromised by new development;
  - Development at strategic corners should emphasise their importance through the use of building height, turrets or other architectural features; and
  - Close attention to the detailing and quality of materials should be provided especially at ground floor and building entrances that are very visible to pedestrians.

## Adaptability

**7.8** Places and buildings should be robust and capable of being adapted to meet social and technological changes.

- New development should incorporate adaptable buildings with flexible layouts which can sustain a variety of uses and help buildings to change over time;
- Residential development should provide homes that can adapt to people's changing circumstances. The opportunity to extend and create additional bedrooms should be considered as an integral part of the initial design.

## Diversity of Uses

**7.9** Places should have variety and choice. The variety of uses within a building or a street will determine how well a place is used. People should have easy access to facilities such as shops, leisure, schools and work opportunities. In Burton, close to the Town Centre higher densities will be sought.

- Consideration should be given as to how a mix of uses in all new developments might contribute to the economic and social health of the Centre.
- Large development proposals should provide a mix of housing type, form and tenure;
- Residential development close to the Town Centre will be expected to have a density of between 50-100 dwellings to the hectare, unless there are exceptional circumstances which would result in a development in this range creating traffic problems or a poor quality environment.

## Sustainability

**7.10** Developments should promote sustainable design solutions that reduce the demand for energy consumption, and reduce the demand on non-renewable resources should be promoted

- New development should maximise beneficial passive solar gain where possible and meet the highest practicable standards in relation to renewable sources of energy in construction;
- New buildings should demonstrate good practice in energy efficiency and water conservation. Residential development should achieve a National Home Energy Rating of 10 or above;
- New residential developments should consider the lifetime needs of their residents by offering flexibility in the potential to alter and adapt the buildings to meet changing requirements
- Consideration should be given to the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs);
- Careful regard should be paid to the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) Indicators of Sustainable Design in all new development;
- All new developments must be designed to adapt to the effects of climate change, particularly resistance to flooding.
- Where possible the economically viable use of locally sourced materials in constructing buildings and urban spaces should be used, including, where appropriate, wood or wood products sourced from within the National Forest; and
- Consideration should be given to encouraging modal shift from vehicles to public transport, walking and cycling.

## 7 Town Centre design Principles

### Sustainability Appraisal

A Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report was undertaken for the Burton Town Centre AAP. The Scoping Report identified the key issues that need to be taken into account in the preparation of the Masterplan. This Interim Policy Statement and the Masterplan takes the key issues identified in the sustainability scoping report into account in the following ways.

- The Masterplan boundary includes an area of the Washlands identified as an existing Fen Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Habitat to the east of the main town centre. The Masterplan proposals will ensure that the biodiversity value will be protected for the long term.
- All town centre proposals and Masterplan site need to be developed in accordance with the East Staffordshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. The existing flood defences in Burton have recently been improved and the majority of the Town Centre now falls within the protected flood plain, which reduces the risks of flooding within the Masterplan boundary. However, new development should be constructed in such a way as to offer an appropriate level of flood resilience.
- The main impact on air quality within the Town Centre is traffic flow. Two Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) are located within the Masterplan boundary. One adjoins the main roads through Burton Town Centre whilst the second is smaller and focuses on the St Peters Bridge Island area in Stapenhill. One of the overarching aims of the Masterplan is to manage traffic within the Town Centre and encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport through improvements to public transport provision/ attractiveness and pedestrian and cycle provision.
- A significant part of the Masterplan boundary falls within the Town Centre Conservation Area boundaries. The Masterplan incorporates policies/proposals which seek to preserve and enhance the towns architectural heritage

### Access and Movement

**7.11** These principles reflect the findings of the Baseline Assessment of the AAP, the outcomes of the Issues and Options consultation, and National and Local Transport Policy. The key principles are:

- Create a pleasant pedestrian and cycle environment and improve links between the Town Centre and surrounding residential areas;
- Promote the use of rail and encourage links between the Town Centre and railway station;
- Improve access to the Town Centre by sustainable modes of travel;
- Improve traffic flow around and within the Town Centre, especially for buses; and
- Maintain a level of car parking to support the economic growth of the Town Centre whilst preventing congestion.

### Heritage General Principles

**7.12** Six key heritage principles have been developed in order to guide future development within Burton Town Centre which fully respects, conserves and, where possible, enhances the existing built heritage, character and setting of the town centre. The key principles are:

- Retain and re-use historic buildings within the Town Centre, wherever possible;
- Encourage the sympathetic treatment of historic buildings, in particular those that are Listed, or lie wholly or partly within Conservation Areas;
- Ensure applications for new development or alterations to existing developments to respect the scale and character of the town centre;
- Upgrade or replace poor quality/ inappropriate developments which detract from the character of the Town Centre; and
- Develop public realm which minimises clutter, retains traditional elements such as paving, and considers theming of public realm designs to enhance historic character areas within the Town Centre.

The assistance of Atkins Limited is acknowledged in the preparation of this document, in that it draws on the evidence base and the first draft of the Area Action Plan, prepared by them.