

Lichfield District Council

Public Realm Strategy

Executive Summary

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Introduction

The development of a consistent and coherent approach to the city’s public realm was a key action emerging from the 2020 Lichfield City Centre Masterplan. It was the public realm that was to bind together the other initiatives within the report to create a city centre that builds upon its strong historic core to become liveable, walkable, welcoming and thriving.

The Overarching Approach

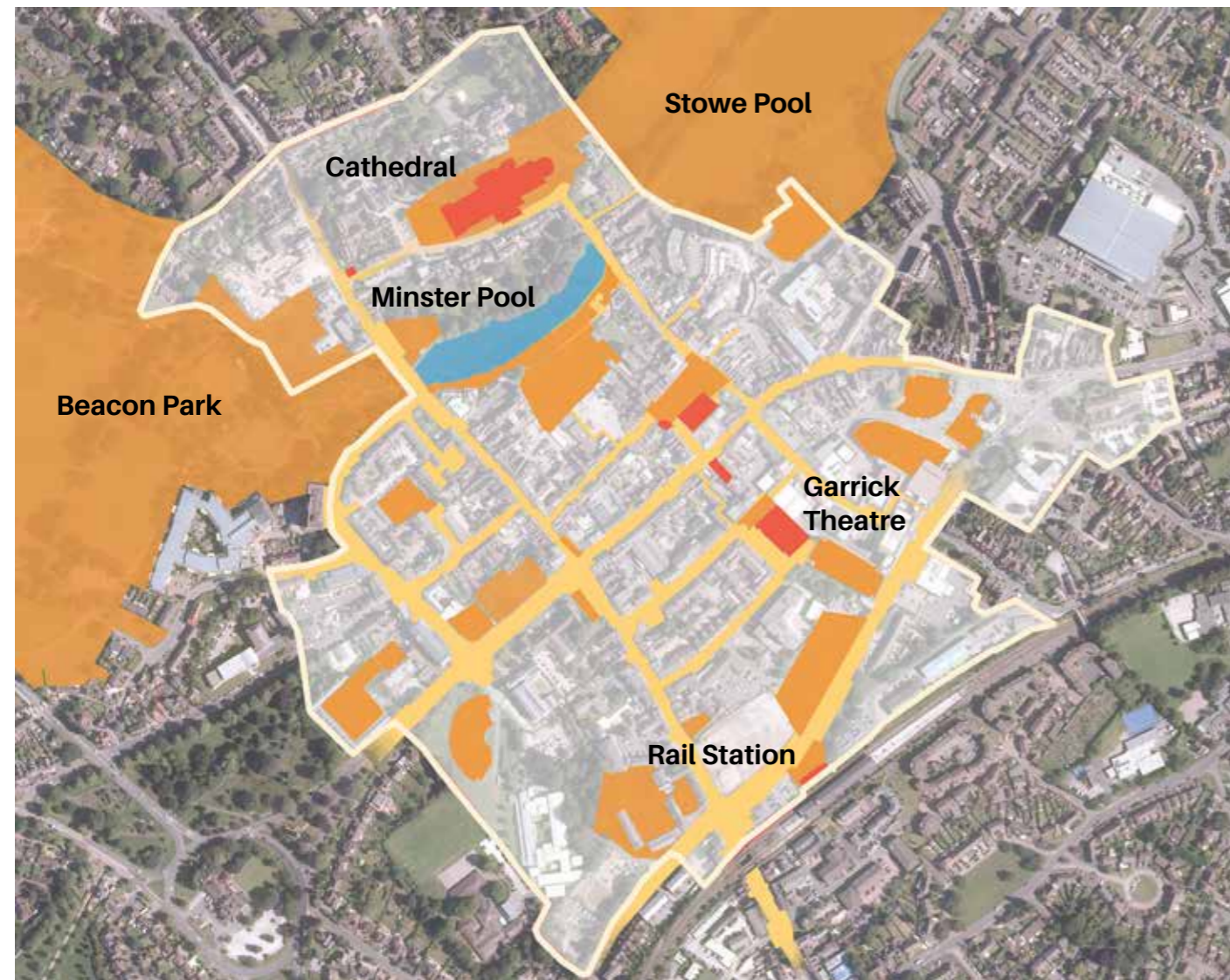
The Public Realm Strategy seeks to enhance the city’s inherent qualities, retaining and accentuating its unique characteristics. Through promoting a quality, simplifying approach, removing extraneous clutter and obstruction, the richness of the historic built environment is brought to the fore and ease of movement around the city centre is improved. An emphasis is placed on generating lively streets and space, where people are invited to walk, meet and spend time, extending the life and activity into the public realm.

The Action Plan

The Public Realm Strategy has been prepared by Lichfield District Council in consultation with the major landowners, stakeholders and the local community. As the strategy is to present an holistic approach to the public streets and spaces, a multi-agency perspective is essential, and consultations with both the County Council and City Council have also been undertaken. The Strategy was based upon a thorough appraisal of the existing townscape - its condition and characteristics, to present a clear vision, supported by design and development principles to guide future investment in

Lichfield’s Public Realm Key

- Landmark** Buildings
- Places** and spaces across the city centre
- Network** of streets and alleys that connect them



the public realm over the next 20 year period. A costed Action Plan has been prepared that captures the key projects and presents them on a potential timeline by priority and as influenced by the wider regeneration and development programme. It is acknowledged, for example, that the public realm of certain streets and spaces within the city centre would progress as part of, or in tandem with, identified areas for development.

Materials and Finishes

Although a unified palette of materials, furniture and signage is proposed, their application and subtle variation in detail and finish, enables the public realm to respond to and complement the four quarters of the city centre identified in the Masterplan. The more recent public realm improvements completed within Market Square, Conduit Street, Bore Street and Breadmarket Street were taken as the model. Here, natural materials - predominantly yorkstone and granite - have been used for the paving surfaces, with complementary concrete setts used for the vehicular road surfaces. Detail has been included in the treatment of channels and kerbs, which helps to define and reinforce the intended use zones within the street.

Gateways and Active Travel



The proposals for the city centre streets assumed that the proposition to extend the area and level of restrictions to vehicles within the core area would be adopted. This places an added importance on improving the attraction and access on foot from the public transport hubs and perimeter car parks into the centre. Proposals were brought forward, therefore, with respect to improving wayfinding and access from the rail station, Lombard Street Car Park and The Friary Car Park. Another key aspect of reducing traffic within the city centre and promoting health and well-being, is the need to provide a network of active travel routes, with safe and connected cycle lanes and footpaths making car-free access to, and movement around the city more attractive.

Green Infrastructure

Resilience with respect to climate change is essential and where possible space has been found for the planting

of trees and incorporation of stormwater attenuation measures through raingardens and permeable paving, to assist with such issues as urban heating, air pollution and flood risk. Urban tree planting has many benefits, but needs planning well to be successful and advice is given within the strategy on plant selection and achieving the right space and conditions for trees to thrive.

Wayfinding and Signage

There is a simplicity to the street layout within the city centre, imparted by the grid of the medieval ladder pattern, with the two rails running north south from Birmingham Road to the Cathedral and the numerous cross streets connecting the two. However, whilst this can be readily understood, it takes some getting used to, as north south movements are restricted to the edge of centre. Wayfinding is therefore an important component of enhancing the experience of visiting the town and a key element of the wayfinding strategy is the identification and enhancement of a ‘central route’ that links many of the main urban spaces and buildings of interest. A comprehensive system of visitor information is also proposed, from initial online interest, exploration and enquiry to a flexible system of signage within the public realm. A separate family of information posts, plaques and panels is proposed to tell the story of the heritage and points of interest across the city. With all signs and elements of furniture, the approach is to minimise columns and therefore potential obstructions or visual clutter, and arrive at a design that is identifiable and informative, but sits comfortably within the urban setting.

Lighting and Public Art

Lighting can play a significant role in enhancing the cityscape, particularly when there are such wonderful buildings, streets and spaces to illuminate. Light can set or change the mood after dark, leading to safer streets, bolstering the evening economy and enliven the many events and festivals. Lichfield is already fortunate to have the majority of the city centre street lights building mounted, which reduces columns within the public realm, avoiding obstruction and clutter and retaining the scale of the historic streets. These could be improved in terms of lighting and environmental performance and complemented with feature lighting to key buildings and spaces. A Lighting Strategy for the city centre is, therefore, a primary goal. Similarly, public art is a manifestation of the community’s pride in the city, celebrating and telling of events and people important to the city, and should be promoted. However, it needs to be addressed sympathetically and carefully considered in terms of scale, appearance and message. The potential for meanwhile installations and temporary arts events is a great opportunity to keep public art central to the culture of the city, promoting discussions, whilst trying out new ideas.

Action Plan

The following Action Plan lists the identified projects from the Public Realm Strategy by order of priority. The rationale behind the priority is described, as is the reason the project would achieve the aim or realise the benefit. These priorities must remain flexible, however, as circumstances and opportunities to progress certain projects would be influenced or determined by other projects and developments being brought forward under the broad umbrella of the City Centre Masterplan.

The order of cost reflects the quality and standards proposed within the Strategy, but should be understood to be preliminary estimates at this early stage of project development, with no intrusive investigation of underground services and infrastructure or detailed traffic modelling.

Lichfield District Council
Public Realm Strategy
Priority and Order of Cost Summary



Priority 1	Proj Ref	Comments	Project Rationale	Area m2	All in Rate £	Order of Cost £
Timescale		3 years				
Aims/Benefits		Improve the night-time economy Unify, enhance and consolidate the core historic public streets and spaces around Market Square Address aging and failing public realm Embrace and present heritage Encourage footfall/dwell time Signpost move to active travel principles and create key public transport gateway				
Projects	1	Market Square/Breadmarket Street/Bore Street/Conduit Street/Tamworth Street	Retain the quality existing paving within the historic city core area, but for consistency, implement the lighting, signage, and street furniture in line with the strategy.	6,900	£31.59	£218,000
	3	Market Street	A busy retail street, connecting Market Square with the main food and drink offer along Bird Street. Also the point of connection to an improved Bird Street Walk and onto Minster Pool, Market Street is a key component of the proposed central wayfinding route and is therefore, a high priority for improvement.	1,495	£294.31	£440,000
	4	Bird Street Gateway	This is a priority project as it addresses a number of movement issues around the Swan Road/Bird Street junction - extending the green corridor from Beacon Park diagonally to Minster Pool; from Minster Pool to The Close and into the Cathedral Precinct; and connecting the café and restaurant offer on Bird Street to both the park and the Cathedral.	3,785	£321.53	£1,217,000
	5	Bird Street/Sandford Street/Car Park entrance	Bird Street, with its many restaurants, pubs and bars is a significant part of the night time economy in Lichfield, and a key attraction for residents, visitors and potential investors. We obviously wish to build on this and want to ensure that the area is as welcoming and visually pleasing as possible. The current paving in the area is suffering significant degradation, detracting from the attractiveness of the area. Bird Street is identified, therefore, as a top priority, as its delivery will meet the aims and objectives for Priority 1 projects	3,712	£306.30	£1,141,000
	2	Bore Street (east)	The poor quality of the existing materials in this short stretch of the historic core, is highlighted by, and detracts from the high quality of the surrounding paving. For completeness, address this area as a high priority.	598	£324.41	£194,000

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Priority and Order of Cost Summary



Priority 1	Proj Ref		Comments	Project Rationale	Area m2	All in Rate £	Order of Cost £
Projects	6	Dam Street		A high priority project that would involve repairing the eastern rail of the historic ladder street pattern running north from Market Square and the main connection to the Cathedral (until such time as the Bird Street Car Park works are realised). The project also addresses the connections from Minster Pool to Reeve Lane and onto Stowe Pool and National Cycle Route, and in conjunction with the improvements to Bird Street would complete the revised Minster Pool Loop into the Cathedral precinct.	1,644	£341.85	£562,000
	13	Station Square		The importance of this key gateway space in front of the station as a welcome to the visitor and traveller is fundamental to what we are trying to achieve within the city. The message of a fresh focus on urban quality, active travel and public transport, must start here, so a quality public realm, ease of movement and clear wayfinding is critical. Although removed from the city core, the importance of the area merits a Priority 1 status.	2,906	£532.35	£2,171,000
			City wide Lighting Strategy		1	item	£80,000
			City wide Public Art Strategy		1	item	£25,000
			City Wide Signage and Wayfinding Strategy		1	item	£30,000
Priority 2	Proj Ref		Comments	Project Rationale	Area m2	All in Rate £	Order of Cost £
Timescale		5 years					
Aims/Benefits		Begin to define distinct Quarter character Improve key connectivity and links to city centre Promote active travel Increase Green Infrastructure					
Projects	15	The Friary		In a similar vein to Lloyd's Walk, the proposals to enhance The Friary for pedestrians and cyclists would be determined as a Priority 2 project, improving connections to the underused Friary Car Park, thereby encouraging its use and allowing traffic to be removed or restricted within the city centre areas. The creation of a tree boulevard character would also accord with the spirit of the Business and Learning Quarter.	6,616	£781.29	£5,129,000
	7	Lloyd's Walk		With the move to restrict car and vehicular movements around the city centre and encourage walking and cycling, the proposals seek to improve the active travel network and encouraging the use of the edge of centre car parks. Pedestrian access to these car parks is, therefore, critical and addressing the perceptions of poor personal security and improving the sense of welcome along Lloyd's Walk would further the aims of a Priority 2 project.	137	£525.55	£72,000
	9	Reeve Lane		Reeve Lane would extend the green corridor running west/east through the city from Beacon Park across Minster Pool Walk to Stowe Pool. Connecting the open space of Stowe Pool to the city and cathedral precinct would achieve the connectivity aims and objectives for Priority 2 projects.	1,832	£390.28	£255,000



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Priority 3	Proj Ref		Comments	Project Rationale	Area m2	All in Rate £	Order of Cost £
Timescale		10 years					
Aims/Benefits		Complete active travel network Integrate new development Consolidate city-wide public realm Establish Quarter identities					
Projects	10	Wade Street/Castle Dyke/ Frog Lane	*St Johns Street and Birmingham Road may be undertaken in conjunction with the delivery of the Southern Gateway development.	This predominantly residential area also provides access to commercial and business properties, a role that would increase with the development of the Southern Gateway scheme. Castle Dyke would also become a shared surface creating a much more generous frontage to the Garrick Theatre and incident of public realm along the central wayfinding route.	4,156	£302.21	£1,989,000
	14	Tamworth Street/Greenhill		An important vehicular route into the city from Birmingham Road providing access to Lombard Car Park. The historic street is narrow, with restricted pavements and extensive highway infrastructure around car parks and junctions. The proposal to narrow carriageways whilst retaining useful short-term, on-street parking would free up space for the pedestrian. A rationalisation of highway furniture and infrastructure would also maintain the scale of the street and remove clutter. The project aligns with the aims and benefits of a Priority 3 project to improve connectivity and wayfinding.	2,319	£310.05	£719,000
	12	St Johns Street*		Narrow pavements and heavy traffic epitomise this route into the city centre. The street also provides the setting for the listed Hospital of Saint John the Baptist and the Council Offices buildings and garden. With the development of the Southern Gateway site, links to the station and promotion of active travel routes, space for the pedestrian and cyclist must be found. The project is designated as Priority 3, improving connectivity around the city, but options are tabled to restrict traffic along this street to essential users only and it may be that the proposals for St Johns Street are progressed along with the adjacent Southern Gateway development area.	5,258	£336.44	£1,769,000
	11	Birmingham Road/Greenhill Junction/St Johns Street Junction*		Containing two junctions that form major gateways into the city centre and separating the station from the new Southern Gateway site and onto into the city, addressing the highway infrastructure and traffic-dominance of this corridor is major consideration. Space would be found for the pedestrian, cyclist and green infrastructure along a new boulevard. This project could conceivably be developed alongside the Southern Gateway to ensure a holistic, cohesive design.	15,675	£581.24	£8,659,000
Non-Scheduled			Comments	Project Rationale	Area m2	All in Rate £	Order of Cost £
Projects	8	Minster Pool Walk and Gardens		The public realm improvements within this area would be realised in conjunction with the completion of the Bird Street Car Park major development area.	4,688	£299.49	£1,181,000
		Floating Stage Provisional Sum					£540,000
Total (excluding VAT and other listed items)							£26,391,000

Success Criteria

Key

-  Little / No Impact
-  Low Impact
-  Medium Impact
-  High Impact

Projects

1. Market Square /Breadmarket Street /Bore Street /Conduit Street/ Tamworth Street
2. Bore Street (East)
3. Market Street
4. Bird Street Gateway
5. Bird Street/Sandford Street/ Car Park entrance
6. Dam Street
7. Lloyd's Walk
8. Minster Pool Walk and Gardens
9. Reeve Lane
10. Wade Street/Castle Dyke/Frog Lane
11. Birmingham Road/Greenhill Junction/St Johns Street Junction
12. St Johns Street
13. Station Square
14. Tamworth Street/Lombard St/ George Ln (parts)
15. The Friary

Measures of Success

	Hotel bed nights	City centre vacancy numbers	Footfall	Retail Spend/turnover/sales	Nighttime economy	Gross Value Added (GVA)	Retail diversity	Place attractiveness	Events and Festival days	Resident numbers within city centre	Customer/visitor/resident satisfaction	Ease of movement	Cycle and walking usage	Air Quality	Green Infrastructure (tree cover)
1. Market Square /Breadmarket Street /Bore Street /Conduit Street/ Tamworth Street	High Impact	Medium Impact	Medium Impact	Medium Impact	Low Impact	High Impact	Medium Impact	High Impact	High Impact	Low Impact	High Impact	Medium Impact	Low Impact	Little / No Impact	Little / No Impact
2. Bore Street (East)	Medium Impact	Medium Impact	Low Impact	Medium Impact	Medium Impact	Medium Impact	Low Impact	High Impact	High Impact	Low Impact	Medium Impact	Low Impact	Low Impact	Little / No Impact	Little / No Impact
3. Market Street	Medium Impact	High Impact	High Impact	High Impact		High Impact	Medium Impact	High Impact	Medium Impact	Low Impact	High Impact	Medium Impact	Low Impact	Little / No Impact	Little / No Impact
4. Bird Street Gateway	Low Impact	Little / No Impact	Little / No Impact	Little / No Impact	Low Impact	Low Impact	Little / No Impact	Low Impact	Low Impact	Low Impact	Low Impact	High Impact	Medium Impact	Medium Impact	Little / No Impact
5. Bird Street/Sandford Street/ Car Park entrance	High Impact	High Impact	High Impact	Little / No Impact	High Impact	High Impact	Low Impact	High Impact	High Impact	Medium Impact	High Impact	Medium Impact	Low Impact	Low Impact	Little / No Impact
6. Dam Street	Medium Impact	Medium Impact	High Impact	Medium Impact	Low Impact	Medium Impact	Medium Impact	Medium Impact	High Impact	Low Impact	High Impact	Low Impact	Low Impact	Little / No Impact	Little / No Impact
7. Lloyd's Walk	Little / No Impact	Little / No Impact	High Impact	Low Impact	Medium Impact	Medium Impact	Little / No Impact	Medium Impact	Little / No Impact	Little / No Impact	High Impact	High Impact	Medium Impact	Low Impact	Medium Impact
8. Minster Pool Walk and Gardens	High Impact	Low Impact	Low Impact	Low Impact	Medium Impact	Medium Impact	Little / No Impact	High Impact	High Impact	Medium Impact	High Impact	Medium Impact	Medium Impact	Little / No Impact	Medium Impact
9. Reeve Lane	Little / No Impact	Little / No Impact	Little / No Impact	Little / No Impact	Little / No Impact	Low Impact	Little / No Impact	Low Impact	Medium Impact	Little / No Impact	Low Impact	Medium Impact	Medium Impact	Little / No Impact	Low Impact
10. Wade Street/Castle Dyke/Frog Lane	Little / No Impact	Little / No Impact	Low Impact	Little / No Impact	Low Impact	Low Impact	Little / No Impact	Medium Impact	Medium Impact	Low Impact	Medium Impact	Low Impact	Low Impact	Low Impact	Medium Impact
11. Birmingham Road/Greenhill Junction/St Johns Street Junction	Little / No Impact	Little / No Impact	Low Impact	Little / No Impact	Little / No Impact	Low Impact	Little / No Impact	High Impact	Little / No Impact	Little / No Impact	Medium Impact	High Impact	High Impact	High Impact	High Impact
12. St Johns Street	Low Impact	Medium Impact	Low Impact	Low Impact	Low Impact	Medium Impact	Medium Impact	High Impact	Low Impact	Low Impact	Medium Impact	Medium Impact	Medium Impact	High Impact	Low Impact
13. Station Square	Medium Impact	Low Impact	Medium Impact	Low Impact	High Impact	High Impact	Little / No Impact	High Impact	Medium Impact	Medium Impact	High Impact	High Impact	High Impact	High Impact	Low Impact
14. Tamworth Street/Lombard St/ George Ln (parts)	Little / No Impact	Low Impact	Medium Impact	Low Impact	Low Impact	Medium Impact	Medium Impact	Medium Impact	Low Impact	Low Impact	Low Impact	Medium Impact	Medium Impact	Medium Impact	Low Impact
15. The Friary	Low Impact	Low Impact	Medium Impact	Low Impact	Medium Impact	Medium Impact	Little / No Impact	High Impact	Medium Impact	Low Impact	Medium Impact	High Impact	High Impact	Medium Impact	High Impact

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