

Tweed & Silk

A Public Realm Strategy for Berwick-upon-Tweed

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It is widely recognised that quality public spaces in towns and cities have a direct impact on people's positive experiences of place and enhance the economic vitality that is so important for historic towns like Berwick-upon-Tweed. People care about their historic environment but need it to harmonise with life in the 21st century.

In developing a sensitive Public Realm Strategy for Berwick-upon-Tweed, the town is symbolised by using the metaphor of a traditional tweed suit with a contemporary silk lining. This represents two distinct approaches of how the Strategy will achieve a simple and understated set of design principles for the historic main streets and formal areas (the tweed) and embrace a more innovative and individual direction for the hidden and often overlooked spaces within the town (the silk).



Tweed & Silk

A Public Realm Strategy for Berwick-upon-Tweed
Introduction & Statements

01



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BERWICK'S FUTURE

A — INTRODUCTION

This Public Realm Strategy for Berwick-upon-Tweed and the settlements of Tweedmouth and Spittal was commissioned in 2010 by The Berwick’s Future Partnership, and aims to set out a simple and achievable approach to achieving a high quality and coordinated public realm over the next 20 years.

Berwick’s Future is a partnership of local and regional organisations; Northumberland County Council, Berwick Community Trust, English Heritage, Government Office for the North East, Northumberland Strategic Partnership, One NorthEast, Area Partnerships and Town Council. It is dedicated to planning a successful future for the town and delivering the vision of Berwick as ‘a competitive, distinctive and well-connected border town that is enterprising, ambitious and inclusive.’

As part of Berwick’s Future’s Regeneration Strategy (2008) the need for a Public Realm Strategy was identified:

‘A broad public realm strategy is proposed which seeks to reinforce the traditional grid structure of the town, and develop a high quality promenade exploiting the riverside edges’

‘A Placemaking Strategy which focuses on the quality of the public realm, and ease of movement, and a ‘Place Animating’ Strategy which seeks to animate the public spaces created through a series of non spatial initiatives’

— THE BRIEF

The Plan should strengthen Berwick’s role as a market town and rural service centre and improve its economic competitiveness.



‘Fundamental to the Public Realm Strategy for Berwick and intrinsic to the quality of design is the driver of economic development with emphasis on tourism and improvement to the visitor offer. The Plan should strengthen Berwick’s role as a market town and rural service centre and improve its economic competitiveness. It should also improve its role as a tourist destination. It is not so much about increasing the quantum of development; rather it is about improving the quality of development and managing change sensitively. It should aim to build investor confidence in both the public and private sector to deliver sustainable and culture-led regeneration’:

- Clear responses to “The Vision” of Berwick’s Future
- An audit of the existing public realm; signage, street furniture, lighting, planting and unnecessary street clutter
- A Signage Design Plan that is sustainable, refreshable and electronic
- Recommendations and guidelines for the definition of key quarters
- Design approaches and principles and an intelligent palette of materials
- Indicative designs of the recommended key sites
- A phased delivery document with costs related to each priority site
- An inclusive consultation day that provides clear design options for the recommended key sites and approaches to the overall public realm in the study area

— WHAT IS PUBLIC REALM?

Good quality public realm, which is attractive, inviting, safe and well-maintained, should be the aim of any new development and should also be the aspiration for existing public realm.



CABE’s report ‘Urban Design in the Planning System’ identified seven ‘objectives’ of urban design:

Character	a place with its own identity
Continuity and enclosure	a place where public and private spaces are clearly distinguished
Quality of public realm	a place with attractive and successful outdoor areas
Ease of movement	a place that is easy to get to and move through
Legibility	a place that has a clear image and is easy to understand
Adaptability	a place that can adapt itself to new needs
Diversity	a place with variety and choice.

The public realm is made up of the streets, squares, parks, green spaces, and other outdoor places which are freely open to the public. Good quality public realm, which is attractive, inviting, safe and well-maintained, should be the aim of any new development and should also be the aspiration for existing public realm.

The scope of the study is limited to the three Conservation Areas: Berwick, Spittal and Tweedmouth.

B — EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

What is this public realm strategy about? This report is not a fully detailed design study for the whole study area. Rather, it recognises that development will occur at its own pace and by numerous organisations, subject to a multitude of factors such as the fragile economy and the needs of developers and their audience.

A flexible strategy is needed to map out a way forward for the next 20 years, providing an holistic view of Berwick encouraging a coordinated and appropriate design response from any developer considering any project within the study area, to produce designs which are future proof and rooted in local distinctiveness.

Many design guides end up gathering dust on a shelf. This Public Realm Strategy sets out to speak in plain English and lay out in a deliberately simple and accessible format the key design principles and the concepts which are most important to grasp and remember.

At an early stage in the process, key stakeholders told us which parts of the study area to focus on in detail, and we also studied earlier reports to appreciate wider factors such as the local economy, transport links and how Berwick compares to other market towns in Northumberland.

This process helped us to identify key spaces selected for sample design studies, and important pedestrian routes or pathways which connect the spaces and provide links.

Two overarching design themes are introduced: Tweed and Silk, for which we explore palettes of suitable furniture and paving.

The study area is then split into character areas, and then further sub divided by quality and open space.

Finally, design guidance is provided for all aspects of Public Realm, and is applied to sample sites within the study area.

Finally, a ‘toolkit’ of further documents is appended in pdf format setting out more detailed and technical information in an accessible format.



— OBJECTIVES

Successful places to which people are attracted to live, work and visit, tend to have successful public spaces. Research demonstrates how well designed public spaces can offer wide ranging economic, social, cultural and environmental benefits.

This Public Realm Strategy (PRS) aims to transform key parts of the Conservation Areas of Berwick, Tweedmouth and Spittal and enhance their unique identities through an attractive and high quality public realm. In turn the PRS will assist in promoting an improved quality of life for residents and visitors alike, and strengthen investor confidence in Berwick.

The Strategy responds to local distinctiveness and considers existing examples of local and national best practice and precedent.

— KEY OBJECTIVES

The key objectives of the strategy are to:



- Improve the town’s image by creating an attractive public realm that encourages greater use, sustains and enhances economic development.
- Identify and enhance the intrinsic qualities and characters of the town through a coherent design approach.
- Create a legible and accessible town centre by improving connectivity and visual order, complementary with a spatial hierarchy.
- Establish a timeless and complementary palette of materials and street furniture that is simple in design and is robust, with low maintenance, easily repaired / replaced, vandal resistant and affordable.
- Create a memorable town centre with high levels of legibility underpinning the town’s existing medieval grid.
- Create a vibrant and dynamic public realm that can be enjoyed by residents and visitors alike, that is celebratory of Berwick’s rich heritage, success and future.
- Provide public realm design options for sample sites across the study area.
- Provide an action plan with costings and priorities.

How to Use this Document

- Find which Character Area your site belongs in, and whether it is ‘Prestige’, ‘Quality’ or ‘Open Space’
- Note any *ACTION POINTS* for that area
- Follow the design guidance for your character area. Advice includes palettes of paving, furniture, lighting and planting and colour
- Note the *GOLDEN RULES* which apply to all sites

ACTION POINT

GOLDEN RULE

C — WHAT PEOPLE SAID

The steering group for this study was selected from a number of relevant groups in order to guide the project and provide on-going advice from an informed standpoint. Regular meetings were held from the inception and briefing through to development and conclusions. The groups represented on the steering group were:

- Inspire Northumberland (Lead)
- Northumberland County Council Highways and Grounds Maintenance
- Berwick Town Council
- Building Conservation Officer, Berwick THI
- Northumberland Tourism Market Towns Welcome
- Berwick Community Trust

At the mid-point of the project a consultation meeting was held with the Conservation Area Advisory Group (CAAG). The following groups were represented:

- Berwick Chamber of Trade
- Berwick Civic Society
- St Boisils Residents Association (Tweedmouth)
- Berwick Building Study Group
- The Greenses Residents Association (Berwick)
- Tweedmouth West End Residents Association
- Berwick Town Council
- Berwick Community Development Trust



However this technique does not give the full feedback. It is therefore recommended that the full transcripts are considered to get an accurate understanding of the comments received. see **05 APPENDIX**.

How we have responded to comments

The public consultation revealed particular strength of feeling regarding the following issues:

Traffic dominance on Marygate

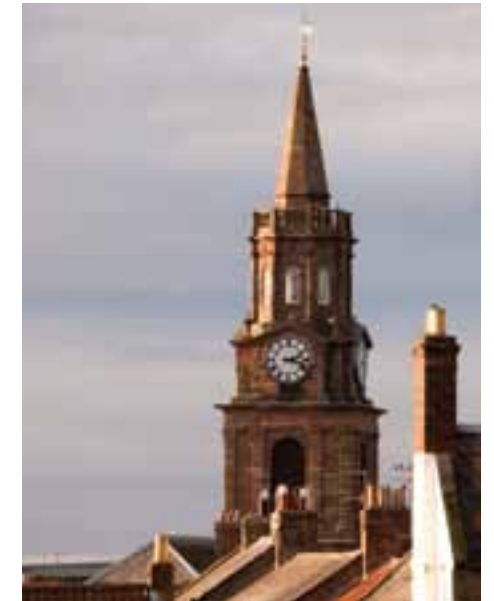
Our response has been to focus more closely on future design solutions for Marygate in a series of steps for implementation as funding permits.

Visual appearance of Marygate including shopfronts and clutter

Our response has been to make clear recommendations on clutter and visual improvements, and to make recommendations for a future Shop Front Improvement Scheme.

The Town Green at Tweedmouth

- several responders at the public consultation highlighted the Town Green status of the riverside open space in Tweedmouth and indicated resistance to any physical changes or enhancements, even the reduced proposals of cycle paths or planting.
- our response has been to withdraw suggested landscape enhancements which might obstruct any existing leisure functions, such as planting beds. Moveable furniture such as picnic tables would be acceptable in theory but should be placed on a grass-free surface to avoid maintenance problems. However our recommendation that this space could incorporate a multi use link for pedestrians and cyclists without restricting leisure current uses should be retained.



The Town Hall is much loved, and towers over a variety of spaces



D — WHAT WE FOUND *ISSUES & SOLUTIONS*

Berwick’s heritage has a complexity and richness that cannot be overemphasised nor adequately described within the confines of this document.



Berwick’s Heritage: Precious and Unique

The three study areas at the heart of this document are the Conservation Areas of Berwick-upon-Tweed, Tweedmouth and Spittal, therefore it is fundamental that the character and heritage of these areas are respected in any proposed scheme or visual change. The recent Conservation Area Character Appraisals of Berwick, Tweedmouth and Spittal are an excellent source of reference and have informed this study. They should be carefully considered in the light of any development within the Conservation Area boundaries, and for retailers there must be strict adherence to the Shopfront Design Guide for Conservation Areas in Berwick-upon-Tweed Borough, Supplementary Planning Guidance 1998.

GOLDEN RULE

ALWAYS CONSIDER THE HISTORIC SETTING

- LOOK AROUND YOU- WILL YOUR PROPOSAL AFFECT THE HISTORIC SETTING?
- WHAT ABOUT ARCHAEOLOGY?
- TALK TO THE CONSERVATION OFFICER BEFORE COMMENCING DESIGN OR WORKS
- ADHERE TO SHOPFRONT DESIGN GUIDE



Current



Partially de-cluttered



De-cluttered

These images illustrate the visual effects of clutter removal. Any changes will require detailed consideration and consultation

Coach visitors are a potential rich source of tourist income currently under exploited in Berwick. Tourist Information Office find that coach drivers frequently complain that they cannot park adequately. Drivers need a drop-off location close to good facilities, consequently many avoid Berwick at present. This problem is clearly a high priority which needs to be solved.

Car drivers are faced with confusing and inadequate signage which needs to be simplified and rationalised. There are two key signage groups:

- Highways Signage
- Non highways signs such as fingerposts, maps, monoliths and interpretation

Highways signage is controlled by the Highways Authority and must comply with national standards. In this document we have made basic suggestions for highways signage as follows:

- ACTION POINT
- IMPROVED DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE AT KEY POINTS OF ARRIVAL
 - INTUITIVE ROAD DESIGN SUCH AS MARYGATE / GOLDEN SQUARE TO REDUCE THE NEED FOR SIGNAGE

Non highways signage allows more flexibility for design. The section on signage and wayfinding (see 03 DESIGN GUIDANCE) provides indicative designs for a legible family of coordinated fingerposts and monoliths combined with a new bespoke Berwick Map to help visitors get the most out of Berwick.

- ACTION POINT
- COMMISSION A NEW WAYFINDING MAP FOR BERWICK
 - INSTALL A NEW SYSTEM OF MAP INFORMATION POINTS (MONOLITHS) AND FINGERPOSTS

- GOLDEN RULE
- DESIGN INTUITIVELY TO REDUCE NEED FOR SIGNAGE
 - PROVIDE SIGNAGE WHERE NEEDED

Problem & Solution

How the key arrival point of Scots Gate and Co-op could be improved:

A supermarket is situated close to Scots Gate, a key gateway through the town wall. The supermarket car park extends along the outer face of the town wall providing substantial numbers of spaces plus an overflow car park. The entry point to this car park by Scots Gate is one of the most dismal street scenes in Berwick, dominated by queuing cars, the poor architecture and signage of the supermarket and cluttered with signs and street furniture. Nevertheless it is a popular car park especially with new visitors since it is easy to find and close to the main shopping street. However the positioning of such extensive parking along the outer edge of the town wall is in conflict with the setting of the scheduled ancient monument in that the magnificent structure is viewed against a sea of cars. Conversely it could be argued that the walls are seen by an audience who might otherwise not take time to walk to locations where the walls and ramparts can be appreciated so clearly.

English Heritage has permitted the overflow car park as a temporary solution but there is no indication that a good alternative parking solution is available once this term is over. In terms of the organisation of the town the parking location is logical and well liked, indeed there is potential to span the town wall with a bridge structure to link the northern end of the linear overflow car park to Wallace Green, forging a useful pedestrian link into the town. However this is unlikely to be acceptable to English Heritage since it would require acceptance of the overflow car park as a more permanent solution.



Given the lack of alternatives it is the conclusion of this strategy that the best outcome in the future would be acceptance from English Heritage that the parking is likely to be needed for the foreseeable future. The following measures are recommended:

- Car park entry point at Scots Gate – this area should be a focus of public realm improvements including stripping away unnecessary clutter (signage and street furniture) to focus attention on the beauty of the Scots Gate and Town Walls.

ACTION POINT

REMOVE CLUTTER

- The supermarket architecture, signage and entry point is very poor quality and visually detracts from the surrounding built heritage. Since this is a key gateway to the town and the supermarket is benefitting from additional parking with the permission of English Heritage, it is recommended that the supermarket should be invited to engage in a process to invest in the visual quality of this arrival point by appointing an architect to propose a scheme for substantial improvements, working closely with the local conservation officer and English Heritage. This investment could perhaps be a ‘quid pro quo’ arrangement subject to English Heritage’s agreement to the on-going use of the overflow car park.

ACTION POINT

UPGRADE THE SUPERMARKET ENTRANCE

- As part of this investment, the provision of a bridging structure over the town walls should be explored and installed if an appropriate design can be agreed. This might be constructed from a range of materials including oak or steel subject to close negotiation with English Heritage and Scheduled Ancient Monument Approval. The precedent photo above shows an oak structure bridging the Town Walls in Newcastle, which forged a new pedestrian link between the town centre and the Quayside, while allowing people to appreciate the previously hidden qualities of the ancient monument.

ACTION POINT

PROVIDE A BRIDGE LINK OVER THE TOWN WALLS

- Further Interpretation of the walls and ramparts could be explored including ways to highlight the circular walk around the ramparts.

ACTION POINT

PROVIDE BETTER SIGNAGE AND INTERPRETATION



— PARKING & SHOPPING

Previous studies have identified certain key aspects about Berwick.



- Berwick’s economy is declining, and relies heavily on tourism
- In a survey, Berwick was poorly rated in comparison to other Northumberland market towns
- In a survey, traffic, road safety and illegal parking were the main problems cited with shopping in Berwick-upon-Tweed
- In a survey, satisfaction with Berwick’s public realm was found to be below average
- The younger population is reducing while the older population is increasing

The Market Town Welcome programme was established in 2008 in collaboration with One NorthEast, Northumberland County Council, Northumberland Tourism and the Development Trusts of Alnwick, Amble, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Haltwhistle, Hexham, Morpeth, Seahouses and Wooler.

The following extracts highlight how important it is to tackle problems in Berwick: *‘Of all respondents travelling by car, van or motorhome the vast majority found travelling into the town centre easy... Berwick respondents were the least likely to have found it very easy’*

‘The majority of all respondents also found it easy to park within the towns... Berwick and Morpeth respondents were the least likely to have found it very easy’

Satisfaction with public realm:

‘On a range of issues... (safety, public transport, parking, street furniture)... On each of these indices, Berwick-upon-Tweed scores lower than the average’



Enjoyment of Berwick is marred by vehicles and highways clutter

‘On balance, markets, shops, places to eat/drink and museums are rated positively by all respondents... Once again, Berwick-upon-Tweed scores consistently below average on all indices’

‘Ratings of the general state of town centres... graffiti, cleanliness, litter, state of buildings, street furniture and shop frontage. Berwick-upon-Tweed scores consistently below average on each item’

‘Overall ratings of each market town are positive (on balance). Differences between market towns tend only to emerge when comparing the ration of very positive to positive ratings. When this is performed, a prominent pattern that emerges is Berwick-upon-Tweed attracting the smallest proportion of very positive ratings’ Northumberland Market Town Visitor Surveys 2009: Comparison report For Northumberland Tourism March 2010

‘Traffic is cited as the main problem with the shopping experience in Berwick-upon-Tweed’. ‘When asking respondents in an open-ended question what additional facilities or services would have added to their enjoyment of their visit to Berwick-upon-Tweed, the most frequent, specific response was ‘more shops’ and ‘ease traffic’

‘The data suggests, however, that once in the town, traffic and road safety become an issue for some visitors’ Northumberland Market Town Visitor Surveys 2009: Berwick-upon-Tweed For Northumberland Tourism March 2010



Shopping on Marygate

In some ways Berwick has superb movement connections, for example the East Coast train service offers access to Newcastle and Edinburgh in less than 45 minutes, and Berwick connects to a range of strategic recreational paths. Yet it is clear from the evidence above that there is a significant conflict in the centre of Berwick between vehicles and people, plus there are signage problems for visitors approaching and parking in Berwick.

Berwick operates rather like a large village, with many people in the habit of driving in, and parking directly outside a shop to make purchases. This is convenient and useful for the population in and around Berwick, but is stifling any potential the town may have to function as a successful and well organised town centre with a hierarchy of streets and spaces.

In many similar sized towns such as York and Chester, stringent restrictions have been introduced over the years to reduce the dominance of cars and unlock the potential of the town centre to flourish as a place for people. This approach requires a combination of good alternative provision for cars, and a firm and clear approach to enforce the changes needed while being sensitive to the needs of those who oppose the change. For example in the case of Chester, traffic is controlled by time zoning, in other words traffic is excluded on selected streets between 10am and 4pm while essential deliveries continue outside these hours.

Berwick has a very large catchment area including widespread rural areas, so access to town via public transport is limited. Consultation responses indicate that there is a perception that parking in Berwick is difficult, yet Berwick has more parking spaces than any other Northumberland town except Hexham. At the time of writing a comprehensive new parking strategy for Northumberland is out for consultation, with the aim to standardise parking throughout the towns in a range of ways including pricing and residents' shopping permits.



Conflict between vehicle and pedestrian environment

Problem & Solution

How movement conflicts in Golden Square and Marygate could be resolved

The medieval grid of streets and gateways through the town wall forms natural restrictions on traffic flow. There is a bottleneck at the mini roundabout at the intersection of Marygate and Golden Square. At peak hours and in the height of the tourist season, traffic queues back through Golden Square and onto the Royal Tweed Bridge. The key destinations for parking are Co-op car park, Walkergate and Parade, which all require a left turn at this junction, but some drivers turn right into Marygate and travel down the main shopping street. Signage is not clear and some drivers are travelling needlessly around the town centre in search of parking. *HIGHWAYS SIGNAGE REQUIRES CLARITY AT KEY ARRIVAL POINTS*

ACTION POINT

The consultation questionnaire invited responders to comment on any place or street within the three conservation areas, while specific questions were asked relating to the main street of Marygate. The majority of verbal and written feedback related to the subject of cars in Marygate with over 60% of questionnaire responses showing that in Marygate there were 'too many cars' or it was 'hard to cross the road'.

Clearly it will be of benefit to everyone if most cars are at least encouraged to instinctively turn left on arrival, away from Marygate. *THE JUNCTION AND SIGNAGE NEEDS TO BE RE-DESIGNED*

ACTION POINT

The strength of feeling at the consultation showed the need to explore techniques to significantly reduce volume and speed of traffic on Marygate over the next 20 years. *TRAFFIC VOLUME SHOULD BE SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCED OVER A PERIOD OF YEARS TO PROVIDE A TRANSITION PHASE AND THE PUBLIC REALM DESIGN SHOULD ENCOURAGE SHOPPERS TOWARDS BRIDGE STREET/HIDE HILL*
Refer to further detail in the 'sample designs' study on Marygate.

ACTION POINT



ACTION POINT

Cultural events are one way to unlock further potential for Berwick’s economy. Well designed and publicised events can bring in thousands of visitors and can help extend the tourist season into the quieter months, for example the Lumiere festival in Durham which attracted 75,000 visitors over the course of four days in November 2009. *MAINTAIN A PROGRAMME OF CULTURAL EVENTS AND PROVIDE A RANGE OF FLEXIBLE SPACES FOR EVENTS*

ACTION POINT

Berwick’s population inflates dramatically in summer months largely due to the extensive caravan parks and holiday parks north and south of the town. However the caravan and holiday park seasons are strictly a warm one, leaving Berwick contrastingly empty in colder months. Initiatives are being considered to enhance Berwick’s ‘year-round’ tourism offer to help balance out these massive fluctuations in population. If tourists can be encouraged to stay overnight in short stay accommodation they will increase spending significantly, so alternative uses for the Barracks are being considered currently (such as a ‘Varsity’ Hotel) to help fulfil this ambition. *IMPROVE THE SETTING TO THE BARRACKS BY RE-CONNECTING THE PARADE GROUND*



Parade Ground, Berwick-upon-Tweed

Problem & Solution

How a new design for the Parade Ground could be a potential boost to tourism

Currently there is a surface car park on the old Parade Ground near the barracks, along with substantial on-street parking throughout Wallace Green and leading down Church Street towards the Guild Hall at the east end of Marygate.

The Parade Ground has been identified by Northumberland County Council Highways department as the only realistic location for coach parking in Berwick. It is vital to Berwick’s tourism economy to offer an accessible and well signed location close to the town centre to enable coach drivers to enjoy the town centre facilities while they wait for their passengers. If this is not provided, drivers will simply choose other destinations.

The drawback is obvious – coach parking is going to be visually detrimental in most locations since the town is so small and is almost entirely designated as Conservation Area. However, the economy is declining and Berwick cannot afford to miss out on this revenue stream, therefore the design of the coach parking and how it fits into the street scene is crucial to get right, with careful positioning and screening using tree planting.

ACTION POINT

A SENSITIVE DESIGN FOR THE COACH PARK IS NEEDED

The size and shape of the Parade Ground has been compromised over the years and currently bears no relation to its original form and function, so there is an opportunity to remove the existing trappings of a modern ‘car park’ and re-invent the styling of a distinctly military parade ground as a flexible space for market, events and parking. This is explored in further detail in the ‘sample designs’ study for the Parade Ground.

GOLDEN RULE

DESIGNS SHOULD BE MULTIFUNCTIONAL AND FUTURE PROOF



Cycling holds potential for improvement, both for tourism and to ease congestion. Berwick already has links to strategic walking and cycle routes such as the ‘Coast and Castles’ route which brings cyclists in to the town offering a boost to shops, cafes and hotels. Cyclists must be encouraged and made welcome with good signage, good connections and convenient cycle parking.

Local cyclists should also be encouraged to cycle as much as possible to help ease the bottlenecks in Berwick. Caravan park residents on the vast sites to the north of the town could also be encouraged to cycle in to town. A simple cycle rental scheme on the caravan sites coupled with good signage and plentiful cycle parking in town could offer a great boost to cycle usage while easing congestion.

ACTION POINTS

- ENHANCE CONNECTIONS TO THE STRATEGIC CYCLE & WALKING ROUTES
- PROVIDE CONVENIENT CYCLE PARKING LINKED TO THE STRATEGIC ROUTES
- PROVIDE CYCLE SIGNAGE AND CYCLE PARKING FROM CARAVAN SITES
- ENCOURAGE A CYCLE RENTAL SCHEME AT THE CARAVAN PARKS

GOLDEN RULE

DESIGN FOR CYCLISTS



Difficulty crossing Marygate

Accessibility for all is vital in Berwick especially since it has an aging population, and many coach visitors valuable to the tourism economy are from older age groups.

‘Just as our homes have not been built with an ageing population in mind, neither have our neighbourhoods, streets and public spaces. Seemingly trivial problems, such as poor paving and street clutter, or lack of benches and toilets, can become significant barriers to moving around the neighbourhood, especially as we grow older. This can make a trip outside the home a daunting prospect.’ Lifetime Neighbourhoods Strategy, 2008

Many attendees at the public realm consultation were keen for the cobbles hidden beneath Berwick’s tarmac streets to be revealed and re-used. Clearly this would restore tremendous character to the streets however rough cobbles would preclude many residents and visitors from using the streets without difficulty. *SALVAGED COBBLES SHOULD BE USED IN ONLY LIMITED AREAS SUCH AS RUMBLE STRIPS AND FOR HIGHLIGHTING PARKING BAYS. SMOOTH TOPPED SETTS SHOULD BE USED FOR PEDESTRIAN SURFACES*

ACTION POINT

DESIGN THE STREETScape FOR EASE AND INCLUSIVITY

GOLDEN RULE

Berwick is presently disfigured with an excess of street clutter including mismatched furniture, outdated signs, and oversized black plastic tower planters. As part of this study an audit was carried out to map locations and types of street furniture (see **05 APPENDIX**). The public realm consultation exercise revealed widespread dislike of the clutter, and the tower planters were singled out for criticism by 11% of responders; ‘Grotesque planters’ ‘The present black containers are ugly’.

The furniture audit (see **05 APPENDIX**) illustrates clutter ‘hotspots’ and also provides a database which can be used to action changes. Key problem areas are identified and a solution for change is proposed. This relates closely to the section on character areas and palette, in which coordinated ranges of furniture are proposed. This functional document can be used whenever money becomes available to quickly find appropriate locations where rationalisation is needed.



Marygate, dominated by clutter

ACTION POINT

Key recommendations on street clutter:

- REMOVE THE BLACK TOWER PLANTERS
- REDUCE SIGNAGE TO MINIMUM AND REMOVE OUT-DATED SIGNS (WITH THE EXCEPTION OF SOME OLD SIGNS WHICH ADD RICHNESS TO BERWICK’S CHARACTER, AND ARE CLEARLY ‘ANTIQUE’ – SEE EXAMPLE IN PHOTO BELOW)
- REMOVE ANY FURNITURE WHICH IS NOT STRICTLY NECESSARY
- GRADUALLY INTRODUCE NEW COORDINATED RANGE OF FURNITURE ACCORDING TO CHARACTER AREA PALETTE (SEE **SECTION 03**)
- WHERE NEW FURNITURE IS NOT AFFORDABLE AND EXISTING FURNITURE IS IN GOOD CONDITION, RE-PAINT IN LINKING COLOUR ANTHRACITE GREY RAL 7016
- LIGHTING SHOULD BE WALL MOUNTED WHERE POSSIBLE
- ESSENTIAL LIGHTING COLUMNS AND OTHER VERTICAL POSTS SHOULD BE USED TO HOST SIGNS OR CARRY BINS WHERE POSSIBLE – COMBINE FUNCTIONS WHEREVER POSSIBLE TO REDUCE NUMBER OF ELEMENTS

GOLDEN RULE

DE-CLUTTERING

- REMOVE ALL REDUNDANT ITEMS
- REMOVE TEMPORARY ITEMS ASAP
- REPLACE POORLY DESIGNED ESSENTIAL ITEMS
- RELOCATE BADLY PLACED ESSENTIAL ITEMS

— STREET SCENE: SHOP FRONTS

Shop fronts were a key point for discussion among members of the public at the consultation. Many expressed their disappointment that Berwick’s streetscene was not ‘more like York’ or other successful heritage towns.

The streetscene on Marygate was singled out for heavy criticism by the public in terms of clutter and also the shopfronts which were felt to be garish, out of keeping and often generic high street brands.

A shopfront design guide already exists which lays out design guidelines including colour palettes and architectural guidance. *Shopfront Design Guide for Conservation Areas in Berwick-upon-Tweed Borough, Supplementary Planning Guidance 1998.*

However, retailers often take possession of premises quickly and rapidly install branded signage, before seeking planning permission retrospectively, so the planning design guidance becomes a issue of enforcement rather than a constructive discussion at the start. Nevertheless it is vital that this enforcement is carried out rigorously to establish a culture of expectation of high standards.

Many towns across the UK have benefitted from Shop Front Grant schemes, such as Darlington, Wolsingham and currently Durham City. Typically, grant funding of around 50% is offered to retailers subject to strict adherence to a design code focussed on traditional architecture and colour palettes. In schemes such as this it has been shown that once the first few shops have been completed, the visual improvement acts as a strong catalyst to spark neighbouring properties to follow suit, and pressure builds on retailers to participate as the scheme gathers momentum.



There are drawbacks such as funding staff time to manage the scheme, and setting out the guide itself which will include deciding which architectural era is appropriate to restore or replicate. This in itself raises questions of whether introduction of ‘pastiche’ architecture is appropriate, however high quality contemporary shop fronts can also work well in such schemes particularly if sympathetic materials palettes are selected.

The current fragile economy means that such a scheme for Berwick may be years in the future, however it is clearly needed and should be set down as a goal for the future.

ACTION POINT

A SHOP FRONT GRANT SCHEME IS NEEDED

GOLDEN RULE

RETAILERS MUST: FOLLOW THE CURRENT SHOPFRONT DESIGN GUIDELINES

In the next section (Our Vision) we explore a vision for Berwick and apply this to a series of sample design sites



Tweed & Silk

A Public Realm Strategy for Berwick-upon-Tweed
Our Vision

02



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This Public Realm Strategy is split into 5 sections –
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A VISION FOR BERWICK

In this study we have likened the Berwick streetscape to a tweed suit with a silk lining. The traditional conservation areas are the outer ‘tweed’ fabric, while more hidden or quirky areas are represented by the vibrant colourful ‘silk’ lining.



Tweed and Silk

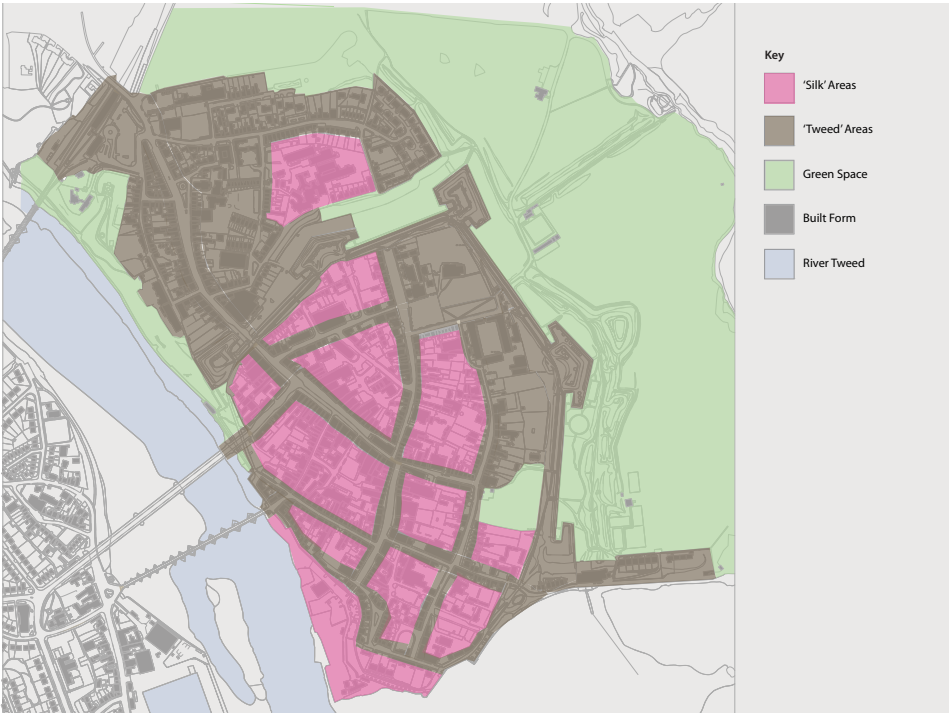
A key problem is that currently the traditional streets are often spoiled by clutter such as signs, painted lines and inappropriate furniture, much like a lovely old tweed jacket covered in stains and badges. Meanwhile, the vibrant hidden silk lining is presently rather faded and ordinary.

In this document we illustrate how to strip away the clutter and let the ‘tweed’ areas express their innate architectural qualities, while allowing the quirky ‘silk’ areas to become vibrant, colourful and more youthful in delightful contrast.

The Grid of Streets

Berwick’s medieval street pattern is a distinctive grid. This grid has produced a distinctive matrix of streets with the highest quality architecture facing outwards onto the streets, and generally lower quality ‘back of house’ architecture facing inwards to the rear ‘backlands’ and courtyards. Years ago these ‘backlands’ used to be more densely developed but many buildings have been removed over time, generally to allow rear service access to shops and dwellings. The resulting spaces, such as those around the Granary building and Maltings theatre, often have a ‘left over space’ feeling to them, dominated by car parking and bin storage. These spaces hold the potential to contribute far more to Berwick’s public realm, offering space not only for parking but also for strolling, sheltered sitting, and useful sized spaces for events.

Berwick Character Area Palette



‘Tweed’ Areas

The Challenges
Often rich in heritage and architectural quality / Uniqueness of atmosphere / Need to be cherished and preserved

The Solutions
Respect unique Berwick character – do not make radical changes / Strip away clutter / Conserve and protect / Cherish individual features / Combine rules with incentives e.g. Shop Front Strategy



‘Silk’ Areas

The Challenges
Parking pressures on ‘backlands’ / Lack of sheltered spaces to sit in Berwick / Lack of provision for younger people / Backlands architecture is of mixed quality / Hidden, under exploited areas / Functional issues (access/service)

The Solutions
Youthful, colourful and quirky atmosphere / Make some rules – design guide / colour palette / Combine parking with pedestrian uses and sitting areas / Provide sheltered sitting spaces to help extend Berwick’s outdoor season / Allow farmer’s market and other markets to use space / Flexible design for one-off events / Encourage greening (planting and trees)



The conservation areas of Tweedmouth and Spittal have their own distinctive characters, and do not share many of Berwick's characteristics. For this reason they are treated as distinct character areas with their own issues, solutions and materials palettes. While they are conservation areas and therefore deserving of careful, high quality design, it is recognised that there are key areas deserving of a 'Prestige' palette of materials, while remaining townscape in the conservation area is designated a 'Quality' palette, and the final category is 'Open Space'.



Colour Palettes
A colour palette is a useful tool to assist people to make appropriate choices and to harmonise the street scene. The existing shopfront design guide *Shopfront Design Guide for Conservation Areas in Berwick-upon-Tweed Borough, Supplementary Planning Guidance 1998* contains guidance on palettes aimed at architectural interiors and exteriors. These are generally muted conservation colours from ranges such as Farrow and Ball and The National Trust.

New colour palettes have been developed as part of this PRS to reinforce the various character areas. The colour palettes have been selected to reflect the natural environment of each character area, for example the ‘Tweed’ palette includes muted whinstone, granite and stone colours.

For the ‘Silk’ palette the inspiration was the rich spectrum of warm colours to be found in local pink Doddington Stone. Eroded and acid washed Doddington stones to be found in abundance around the town revealing a range of muted and vibrant colours including orange, pink and terracotta.

A linking colour is needed to help harmonise any new railings or furniture with existing re-painted furniture. This colour is a dark anthracite grey.

Recommended palettes for Tweedmouth and Spittal have also been identified including a green / grey palette for Tweedmouth and marine inspired range for Spittal. See **03 DESIGN GUIDANCE**.



Interior and ‘Backlands’ spaces can make use of warm, vibrant colour palette to create welcoming, youthful and quirky spaces like hidden jewels.

Main streets and spaces should use a restrained conservation colour palette such as sage and stone colours.

PALETTES BY CHARACTER AREA

Some colours have been selected to coincide with the conservation colours in the Farrow and Ball range for ease of availability, while additional RAL colours have also been added for steelwork and to extend the range into more vibrant colours for the ‘Silk’ areas.

Grey



Colour 1
F&B Railings 31

or



Colour 2
RAL CLASSIC 7016 Anthracite Grey

These ‘linking’ colours are intended for re-painting of steelwork such as railings, bollards and lighting columns and also for any new steelwork or furniture

Stone



Colour 1
RAL CLASSIC 1014 Ivory
No exact match in F&B
Closest F&B Cord 16

‘F&B’ refers to Farrow & Ball conservation colours, while ‘RAL’ refers to the European colour matching system commonly used for external works. The ‘RAL Classic’ range is widely available but has a slightly restricted colour range, while the ‘RAL Design’ range has a wider choice of shades.

Berwick – ‘Tweed’ Palette

Suggested Primary Palette



Colour 1
F&B Smoked Trout 60
No match in RAL CLASSIC
RAL CLASSIC 1001 Beige the closest
RAL DESIGN much better match
RAL DESIGN 060 70 10

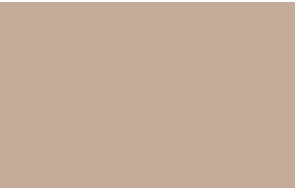


Colour 2
F&B Lichen 19
RAL CLASSIC 6013 Reed Green
Darker than F&B but similar tonally
RAL DESIGN a better match
RAL DESIGN 120 70 10



Colour 3
F&B Oval Room Blue 85
No perfect match in RAL CLASSIC
RAL 7000 Squirrel Grey closest
RAL DESIGN better
RAL DESIGN 210 60 10

Suggested Secondary Palette



Colour 4
F&B Dead Salmon 28
No match in RAL CLASSIC
RAL CLASSIC 1001 Beige the closest
RAL DESIGN much better match
RAL DESIGN 060 70 10



Colour 5
F&B Ball Green 75
No match in RAL CLASSIC
RAL CLASSIC 1000 Green Beige the closest
RAL DESIGN much better match
RAL DESIGN 100 70 20



Colour 6
F&B Olive 13
RAL CLASSIC 7002 Olive Grey
Darker, less green than F&B
RAL DESIGN better match
RAL DESIGN 100 60 20








Colour 7
F&B Dix Blue 82
No match in RAL CLASSIC

Berwick – ‘Silk’ Palette

Suggested Primary Palette

		
Colour 1	Colour 2	Colour 3
No match in F&B	No match in F&B	F&B Fowler Pink 39
RAL 2012 CLASSIC Salmon Orange	RAL CLASSIC 3014 Antique Pink	No match in RAL Classic RAL CLASSIC 3012 Beige Red the closest

Suggested Secondary Palette




		
Colour 4	Colour 5	Colour 6
F&B Rectory Red 217	F&B Blazer 212	F&B Red Earth 64
Closest Match in RAL Classic RAL CLASSIC 3011 Brown Red RAL DESIGN 020 40 40	No match in RAL Classic RAL CLASSIC 3017 Rose closest - much brighter RAL DESIGN much better match RAL DESIGN 030 50 40	RAL CLASSIC 3012 Beige Red - good match RAL DESIGN slightly closer match RAL DESIGN 040 60 30
		
Colour 7	Colour 8	Colour 9
F&B closest match Orangery 70	F&B Orangery 70	No match in F&B
RAL CLASSIC 1034 Pastel Yellow	RAL CLASSIC 1034 Pastel Yellow closest	RAL CLASSIC 3015 Light Pink

Spittal Palette

Suggested Primary Palette

		
Colour 1	Colour 2	Colour 2
F&B Chinese Blue 90	F&B Parma Grey 27	F&B Pavilion Grey 242
RAL CLASSIC 5024 Pastel Blue good match RAL DESIGN as good RAL DESIGN 230 60 15	No match in RAL CLASSIC RAL CLASSIC 7040 Window Grey - much greyer than F&B RAL DESIGN much better match RAL DESIGN 230 70 10	RAL CLASSIC 7044 Silk Grey - reasonable match Or RAL 9018 RAL DESIGN is closer match RAL DESIGN 000 80 00

Suggested Secondary Palette

		
Colour 4	Colour 5	Colour 5
F&B Cook's Blue 237	F&B String 8	F&B Elephant's Breath 229
No match in RAL CLASSIC RAL CLASSIC 5007 Brilliant Blue the closest - darker RAL DESIGN much better match RAL DESIGN 250 60 20	No match in RAL CLASSIC RAL CLASSIC 1013, 1014 and 1015 closest Not matched to RAL DESIGN	No match in RAL CLASSIC RAL CLASSIC 1013 Oyster White closest RAL DESIGN much better match RAL DESIGN 060 80 05

Tweedmouth Palette

Suggested Primary Palette

		
Colour 1	Colour 2	Colour 3
F&B Calke Green 34	F&B Folly Green 76	F&B Green Ground
RAL CLASSIC 6011 Reseda Green good match	RAL CLASSIC 6021 Pale Green Good match	No match in RAL CLASSIC
RAL DESIGN reasonable match	RAL DESIGN good match	RAL CLASSIC 1000 Green Beige
RAL DESIGN 130 60 20	RAL DESIGN 130 70 20 Lighter than F&B	the closest
		RAL DESIGN much better
		RAL DESIGN 100 80 20
		Lighter than F&B

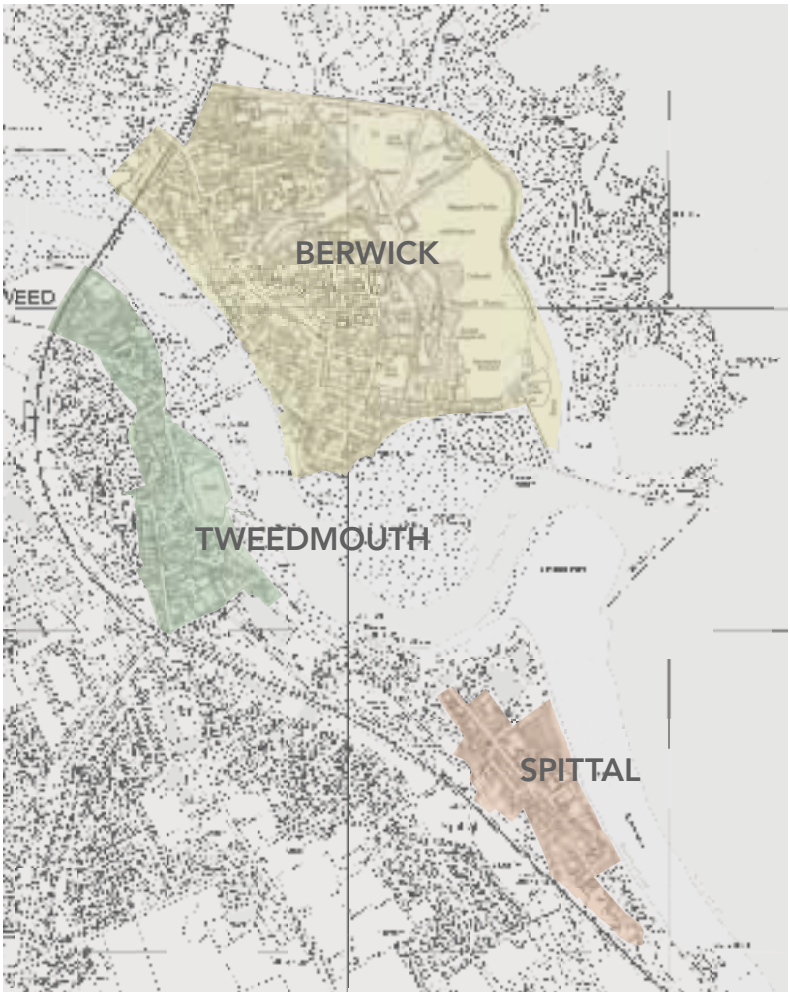
Suggested Secondary Palette

		
Colour 4	Colour 5	Colour 6
F&B Churlish Green 251	F&B Lighty Blue 22	F&B Pigeon 25
RAL CLASSIC 1000 Green Beige the closest	No match in RAL CLASSIC	No match in RAL CLASSIC
RAL DESIGN slightly better match	RAL Classic 7038 Agate Grey	RAL CLASSIC 7033 Cement Grey
RAL DESIGN 095 70 30	the closest - less blue	the closest
	RAL DESIGN a little better	RAL DESIGN better match
	RAL DESIGN 160 70 05 darker	RAL DESIGN 120 60 10



A 2 — CHARACTER AREAS

We have discussed the ‘Tweed’ and ‘Silk’ character areas in Berwick in order to establish a memorable and simple approach. However in some cases this is overly simplistic and there are many exceptions, not least the settlements of Tweedmouth and Spittal which have their own distinctive character areas.



In this document we recommend design approaches and furniture palettes for the various character areas which we have identified as follows:

- 1 Berwick (Tweed and Silk)
- 2 Tweedmouth
- 3 Spittal

And three broad grades within each character area:

- Prestige
- Quality
- Open space

Please refer to **03 DESIGN GUIDANCE, p12** for materials palettes and furniture for the character areas.

In this document we recommend design approaches and furniture palettes for the various character areas which we have identified as follows:

The palette for Berwick is to comprise Prestige and Quality Townscape and Open Space. The Prestige will be sub-divided into ‘Tweed’ and ‘Silk’ and will include predominantly natural materials locally sourced where possible. Inspiration is the local landscape. The Open Space Palette is to include the Town Walls.

Berwick Materials & Furniture Palette

Prestige Townscape – ‘Tweed’



Doddington Stone



Caithness Paving



Granite Setts



Doddington Stone Bollards



Timber & Doddington Stone Bench



Contemporary bespoke double sided oak seating



Whinstone / basalt kerbs

1 Berwick (Tweed and Silk)



Integrated art features



Natural setts & flags in mixed textures



Green Walls

2 Tweedmouth



Conservation Kerbs in textured silver grey



Plain bollard and litter bin in RAL 7016 Anthracite Grey



Simple contemporary seating in chunky oak

3 Spittal



Resin Bonded Gravel



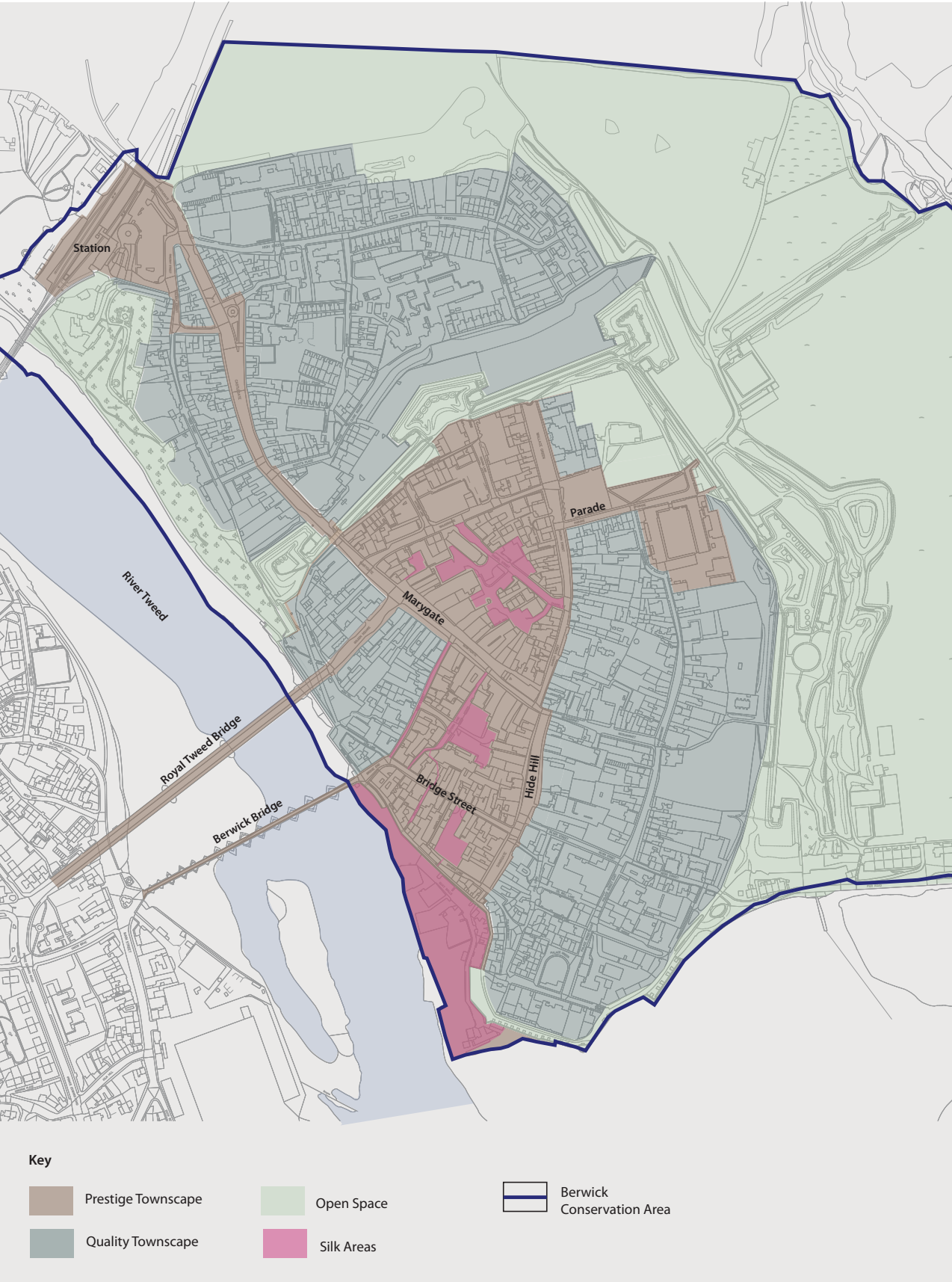
Serpent Seats



Conservation Kerbs in textured silver grey



Natural stone or granite setts as feature/trim



The Tweedmouth Palette will include warmer tones and a simple range of materials to reflect the essential character of the area.

Tweedmouth Materials & Furniture Palette

Prestige Townscape



Doddington Stone



Warm Sandstone



Granite Setts



Doddington Stone Bollards



Conservation Kerbs in textured silver grey



Quality Townscape



Conservation Kerbs in textured silver grey



Simple contemporary seating in chunky oak

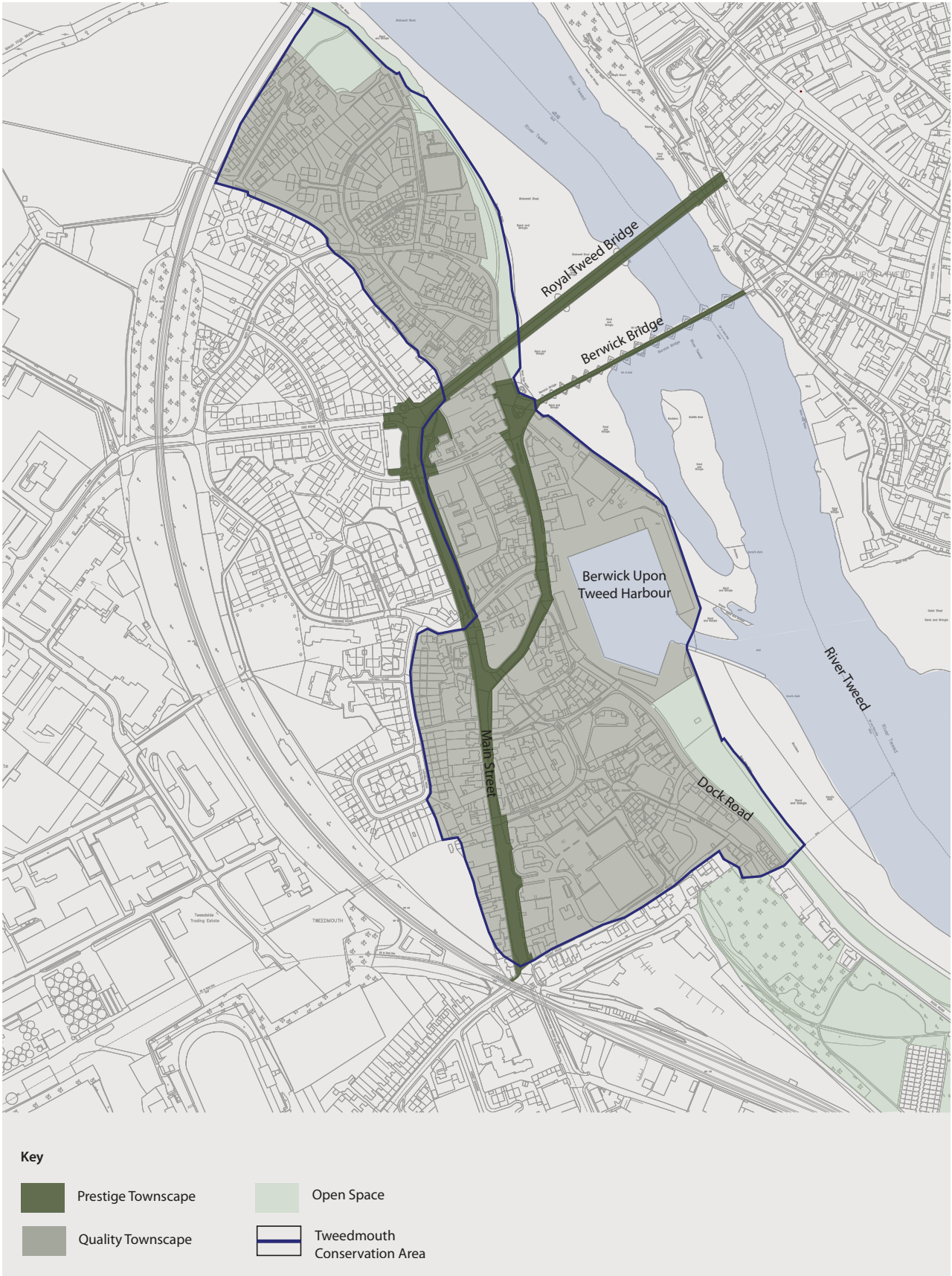
Open Space



Resin Bonded Gravel



Serpent Seats



The 'Prestige' Palette in Spittal combines reclaimed and reused whinstone kerbs with sandstone paving. Use of bespoke Doddington edging should replace existing concrete planters on Main Street.

Spittal Materials & Furniture Palette

Prestige Townscape



Doddington Stone



Sandstone Paving



Granite Setts



Doddington Stone Bollards



Whinstone / basalt kerbing



Quality Townscape



Conservation Kerbs in textured silver grey



Steel Bollards
Painted RAL 7016
Anthracite Grey



Simple contemporary
seating in chunky oak

Open Space



Promenade Seating painted to
match colour palette



Resin Bonded Gravel



Timber Bollards

- Non bespoke items illustrated:
- Timber seats and bollard by Woodscape
 - Kerbs by Marshalls
 - Green wall by Greenwood
 - Litter bin by Logic

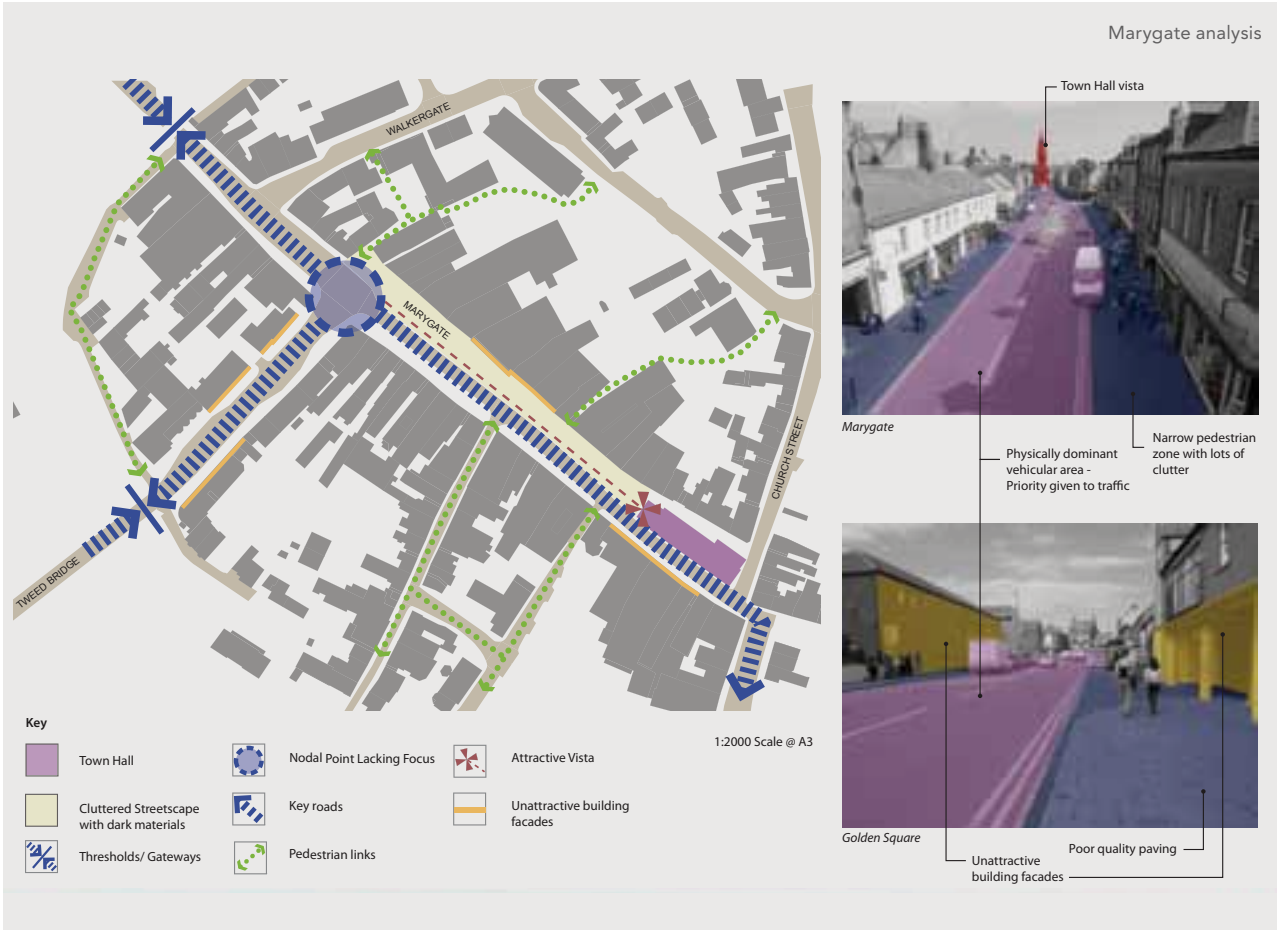


B — SAMPLE DESIGN SITES

A number of sample design sites have been selected to illustrate how problems can be tackled, and how the palettes can be applied.

MARYGATE / GOLDEN SQUARE

Marygate is the commercial and logistical centre of Berwick, located at the intersection of the main vehicular access routes.



Marygate Issues

- High traffic volumes and dominated by vehicles
- Visually cluttered
- Illogical street furniture arrangements
- Intrusive plastic planters
- Road layout and orientation is confusing and counter intuitive
- Shop fronts are poor
- Golden square provides poor sense of arrival
- Recent scheme has divided the street-making it awkward for vehicles and pedestrians alike
- Market is squeezed into an overly small space
- Poor building facades in Golden Square particularly

Marygate Solutions

- Reduce traffic domination through a reduction in road width/increase in pavement widths
- Rationalise street furniture

- Remove plastic planters and introduce higher quality Doddington Stone planters
- Realign carriageway to introduce left turn priority heading North from Golden Square
- Introduce shop front design guide-implement palette of conservation colours in Marygate
- Remove bollards which currently divide the street to create one large usable space which can be used for markets/events on occasion
- Remove tarmac carriageway and kerb separation, reintroduce cobbles as shared surface which still allows vehicular access to lower part of town
- Investigate ways to improve building facades on Golden Square
- Introduce vertical elements such as trees or banners which take emphasis away from buildings and continue the processional feel from crossing the Royal Tweed Bridge into Golden Square and Marygate

Berwick Public Consultation 2nd October 2010 –
Marygate Market Day Time Lapse Photography



9.30 am



10.00 am



11.30 am



12.00 pm



13.30 pm



14.00 pm



15.30 pm



16.00 pm



10.30 am



11.00 am



12.30 pm



13.00 pm

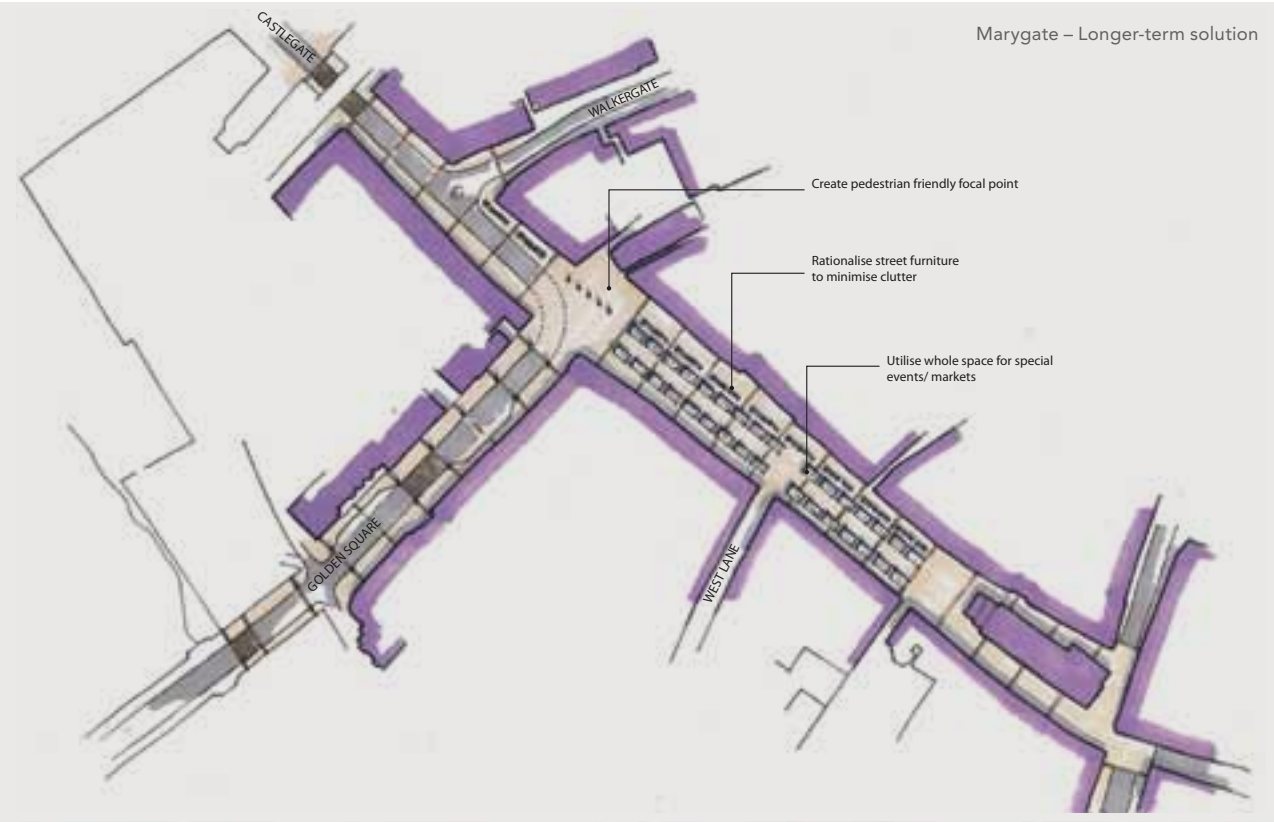
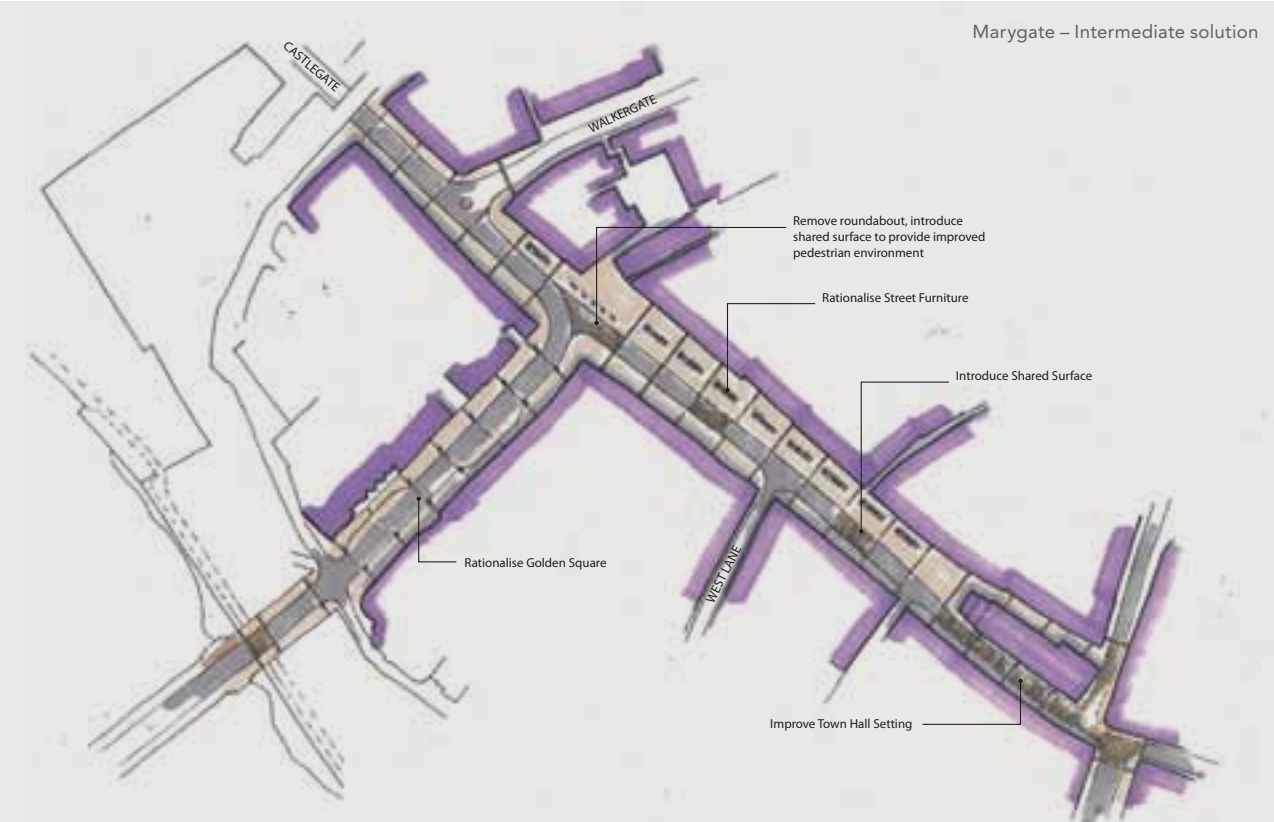


14.30 pm



15.00 pm

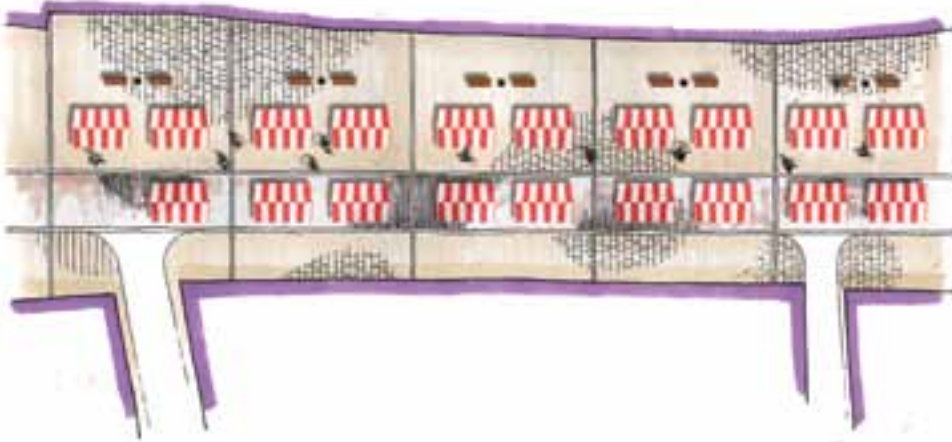
This time lapse photography exercise illustrates the issues Marygate experiences with regard to excessive volumes of traffic and the difficulties this creates for pedestrians attempting to get across the road. The market is squeezed into an overly small area and spills across pedestrian circulation routes, making Marygate difficult to navigate on market days.



Marygate / Golden Square

How Marygate could function on market day

Marygate as a shared space



Golden Square: Before



Enhancement to arrival at Golden Square



B — SAMPLE DESIGN SITES — THE MALTINGS

A backlands space in close proximity to the heart of the town centre, this space has been created by the gradual removal of buildings over time.

This space is a typical ‘silk’ area with potential to unlock new vibrant functions such as outdoor theatre and events, while retaining useful service and parking functionality.

Issues

- Backland area, most of buildings are rear facades with associated delivery/servicing paraphernalia so very unattractive
- Complex vehicular access arrangements
- Tarmac and vehicle dominated
- Poor quality soft landscape
- Maltings Theatre fronts on to the space but the building and landscape surrounds are inappropriate

Solutions

- Implement flexible design solution which allows some parking but creates a focal space with easy links to Marygate
- Space appropriate for occasional events such as farmers markets etc
- Accommodate service access to the Maltings and other buildings
- Design should relate strongly to the Maltings Theatre
- Design solution should minimise impact of ugly facades through creative painting and planting scheme using silk palette. Investigate the possibility of utilising green walls



Vehicle dominated landscape



Harsh building facades



Cluttered entrance to Maltings Theatre



The Maltings Analysis

B — Sample Design Sites

Maltings – Plan showing everyday scenario



Maltings – Plan showing how space can accommodate special events



The silk palette of warm colours and rich planting captures and enhances the spirit of Berwick's hidden spaces and courtyards

B — SAMPLE DESIGN SITES — *BRIDGE STREET / THE GRANARY*

Bridge Street is an historically important route leading to the original Bridge crossing the River Tweed.

Bridge Street functions as a secondary retail sector to Marygate with an emphasis on independent, specialist niche shops. A number of these shops have adopted muted conservation colour schemes for shop fronts with sympathetic signage (much like the proposed ‘Tweed’ palette), and this has started to work well. There is a feeling that this street has turned the corner and is successfully reinventing itself through the voluntary adoption of appropriate shop front schemes by individual owners.

It would be beneficial if the paved surfacing materials could be upgraded to complement the architecture and provide an appropriate setting. A shared surface environment would be appropriate to enhance the pedestrian experience for users of Bridge Street and those crossing Bridge Street to access the Granary / Quayside areas from the centre of town. This could be achieved without unduly disrupting vehicular traffic flow or access.

The Granary building is in the final stages of its refurbishment programme and due to open around March 2011. Whilst the building will provide a considerable improvement to the built environment, the surrounding public realm, particularly the Bridge Street car park does not provide an appropriate setting. The area to the front of the Granary needs to accommodate parking but it needs to be provided in a manner which is not visually intrusive, and much like the Maltings, holds potential for design as a flexible vibrant space using the ‘Silk’ palette along with rich contemporary planting.



Issues

- Parking is intrusive
- Lacks focal point
- Need to maintain a level of parking and service access to rear of buildings
- Too much tarmac surfacing
- Visually intrusive building facades
- Building erosion over time has led to a lack of ‘structure’
- Potential for enhanced links to Quayside Area

Solutions

- Create new public square in Bridge Street Car Park which relates to the Granary frontage
- This should be modest in scale and constructed from high quality granite setts and Caithness paving
- Maintain vehicular access through square
- Shared surface approach to space
- Introduce appropriate trees and herbaceous planting to provide structure to the space and to soften and screen unattractive facades
- Signage to Quayside



Bridge Street: Before



Bridge Street: Enhanced using the 'Tweed' palette



Granary Sketch Design



The Granary: Before



The Granary: After
An example of a 'Silk' treatment

The key arrival point at Scots Gate is letting down the town with its cluttered streetscape.



Issues

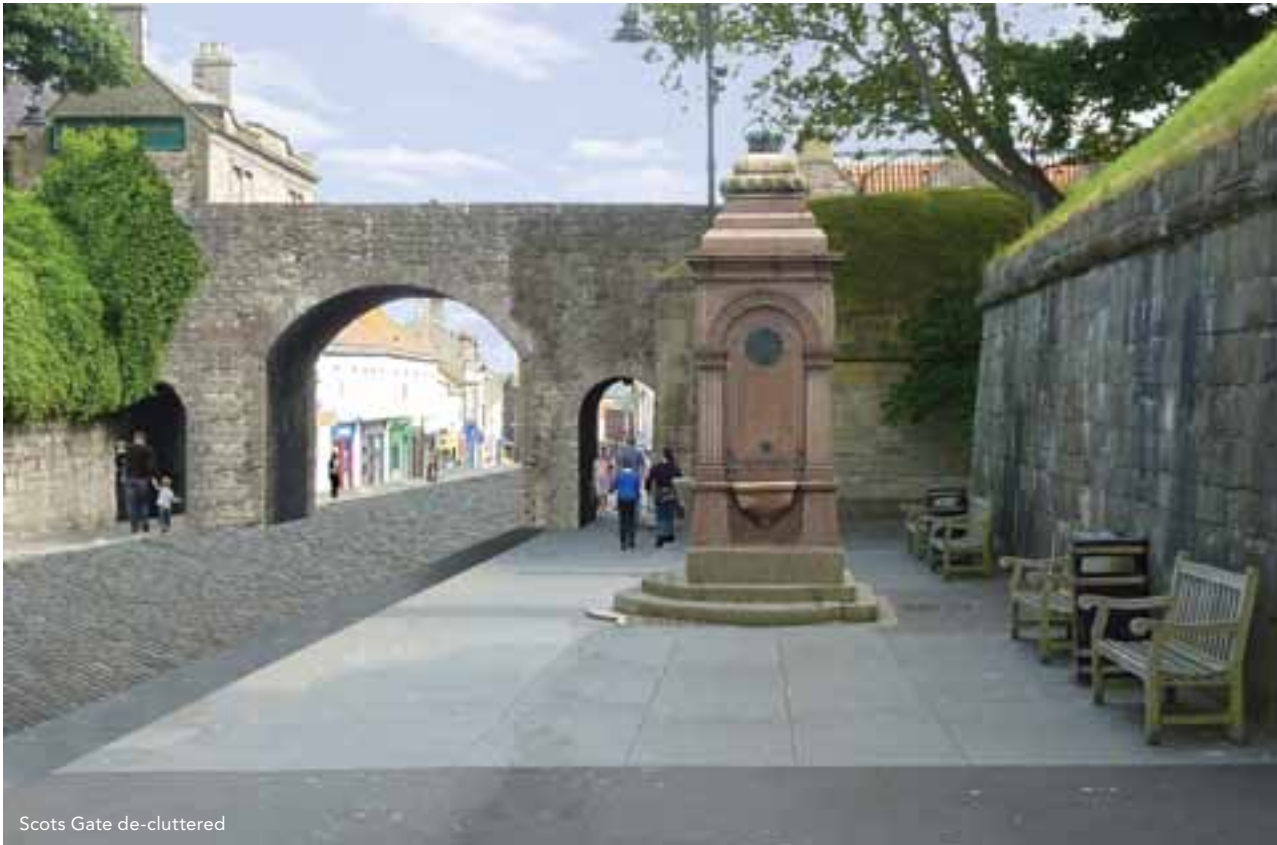
This junction is a classic example of how clutter is despoiling the character and heritage of Berwick. The tower planter adds little greenery at the expense of blocking views to the fountain. The highway signage attempts to convey a lot of information using symbols, but it is questionable how useful this is to car drivers. The sign itself adds clutter and blocks out the stonework of the arched gateway through The Ramparts.

Solutions

- Removal of excessive signage
- Removal of unnecessary furniture
- Architectural and signage improvements to the supermarket entrance and car park
- Improved interpretation relating to ramparts



Scots Gate existing



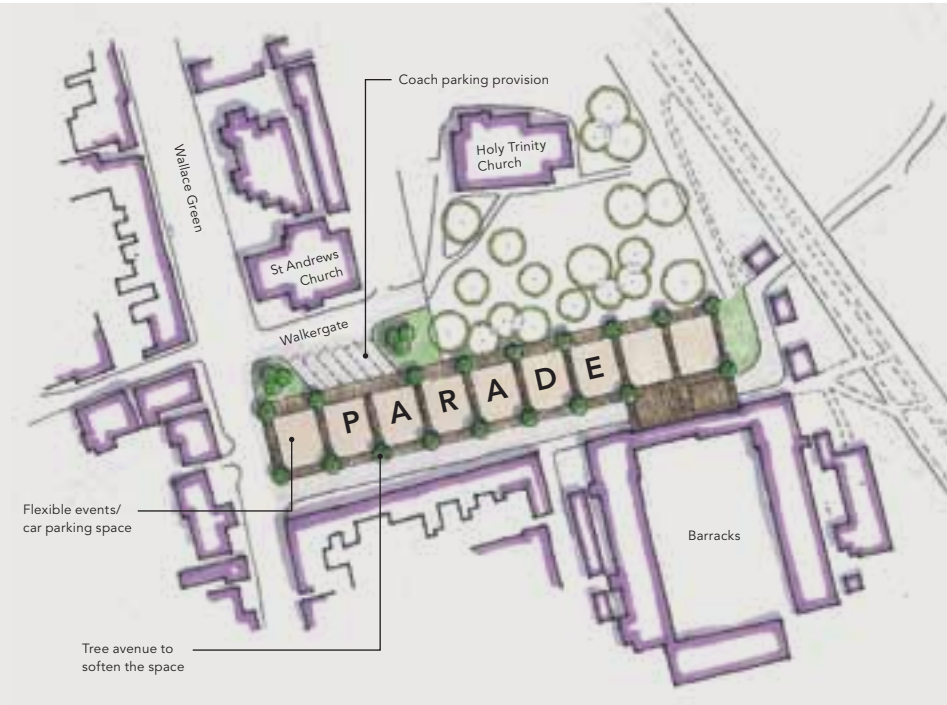
Scots Gate de-cluttered

B — SAMPLE DESIGN SITES — THE PARADE GROUND

An historically significant space which pre-dates the construction of the Barracks. A study of historic maps and images shows the space to be a large simply laid out space.



Historic plan of original layout



Parade Ground restored to its original size



Restored Parade Ground – A new flexible space

There is potential to remove the current trappings of a modern car park and restore the original parade ground in a simple, distinctively military style. This will not only enhance the entrance to the Barracks but will open up the potential to accomodate much needed coach parking to boost the local economy.

Issues

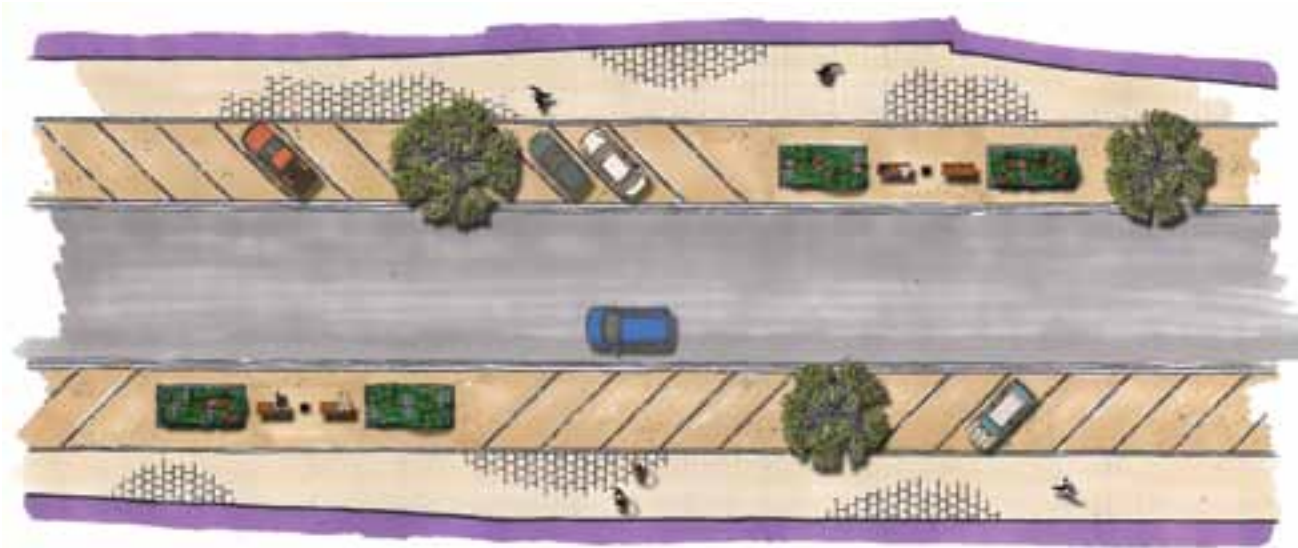
- The space has become fragmented; part tarmac car park and part open space
- The car park element is unattractive
- Green space is pleasant and used for occasional events
- Identified as site for coach parking by local authority
- Linking space between Barracks and town centre

Solutions

- Use original layout as starting point for a contemporary design solution which respects the significant heritage aspects of the site
- Use simple, high quality but restricted palette of materials
- Accommodate coach parking in landscape strip between Parade ground and church
- Create flexible space which allows parking but does not feel like a car park-not tarmac, no white lines etc
- Create linking space with town centre and high quality entrance to Barracks
- Consider using a bound gravel with locally sourced aggregate
- Subtle delineation with granite/whin setts
- Incorporate some large scale trees such as Lime to soften and provide structure
- Retain some green space at Eastern end because of awkward levels

B — SAMPLE DESIGN SITES — SPITTAL MAIN STREET

This generously proportioned street forms the main focal point of Spittal. It is lined with a mixed variety of mature trees which add considerably to the structure and character of the street.



Proposed enhancements include new paving and parking

Spittal is a delightful village with its wide main street and seaside promenade. Proposals for Spittal shown seek to retain its existing structure while upgrading finishes to a higher standard appropriate to a Conservation Area.

Issues

- Most street elements-surfaces/kerbs/planters/street furniture are in a poor state of repair although more high quality materials exist
- The general arrangement of the street seems to work quite well
- Some trees are in decline
- Planting in the various planters is of mixed quality and does not contribute greatly to the streetscene

Solutions

- Implement resurfacing scheme-bitmac road/bound gravel intermediate strip and high quality flag paving
- Replace concrete edging to planting areas with Doddington stone edging
- Reset loose granite whinstone kerbs



Spittal has a good basic structure but many areas require upgrading

B — SAMPLE DESIGN SITES — *TWEEDMOUTH – GOODY PATCHY / VIADUCT*

Improvements to Tweedmouth should be simple and robust to reflect its character.

The Riverside ‘park’ is a grassy spce which is designated as a Town Green, meaning that the space may not be developed with buildings or any structures which could obstruct enjoyment of the space by residents.

Potential simple improvements could include seating, minor parking and a pedestrian/cycle link.

The Goody Patchy is a valuable open space which would benefit from enhancements to paths, signage and maintenance. This should be carried out in a sensitive manner to improve openness and pedestrian safety while avoiding damage to existing flora and fauna such as orchids.

There is a magnificent viewpoint from the viaduct. This location would benefit from enhanced signage and seating.



Viewpoint from viaduct



Potential link for cyclists and pedestrians



Berwick-upon-Tweed viewed from Tweedmouth



Spittal & Tweedmouth

Tweed & Silk

A Public Realm Strategy for Berwick-upon-Tweed
Design Guidance

03



CONTENTS

This Public Realm Strategy is split into 5 sections –
01 Introduction / 02 Our Vision / 03 Design Guidance
04 Artist’s Response / 05 Appendices

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A — DESIGN GUIDANCE — WAYFINDING & STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS

Arrival and wayfinding is key to the enjoyment of Berwick by visitors.



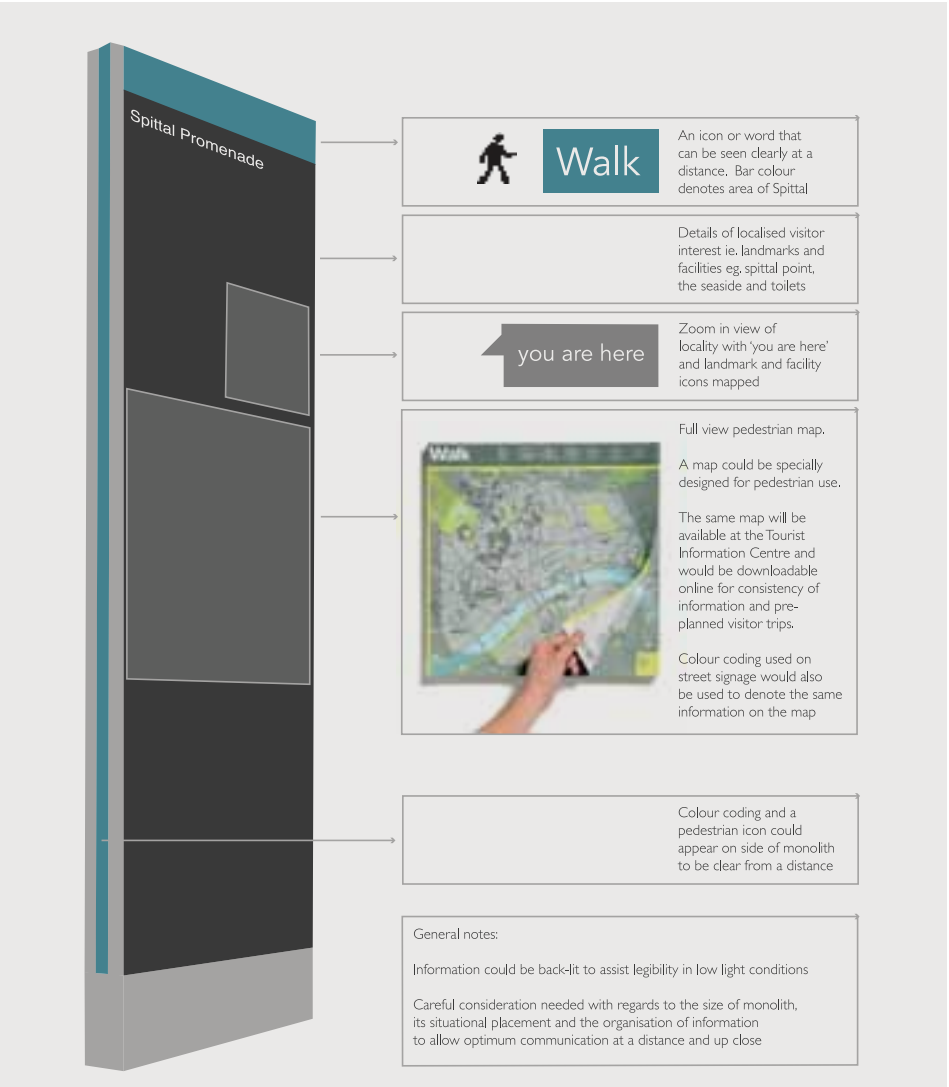
As visitors approach by vehicle, highways signage improvements are needed at key road junctions which have been identified, (see local signage plan on p6).

ACTION POINT BETTER HIGHWAYS SIGNAGE NEEDED

For pedestrians, a series of information points (monoliths) in key orientation locations will guide visitors and indicate useful information such as walking times and transport interchanges.

A new map should be commissioned aimed at the needs of pedestrians, giving approximate walking times and encompassing Tweedmouth and Spittal.

In addition to monoliths, sleek new fingerpost signage is needed to provide invaluable directional information at key locations.



Car drivers are faced with confusing and inadequate signage which needs to be simplified and rationalised. There are two key signage groups:

- Highways Signage
- Non highways signs such as fingerposts, maps, monoliths and interpretation

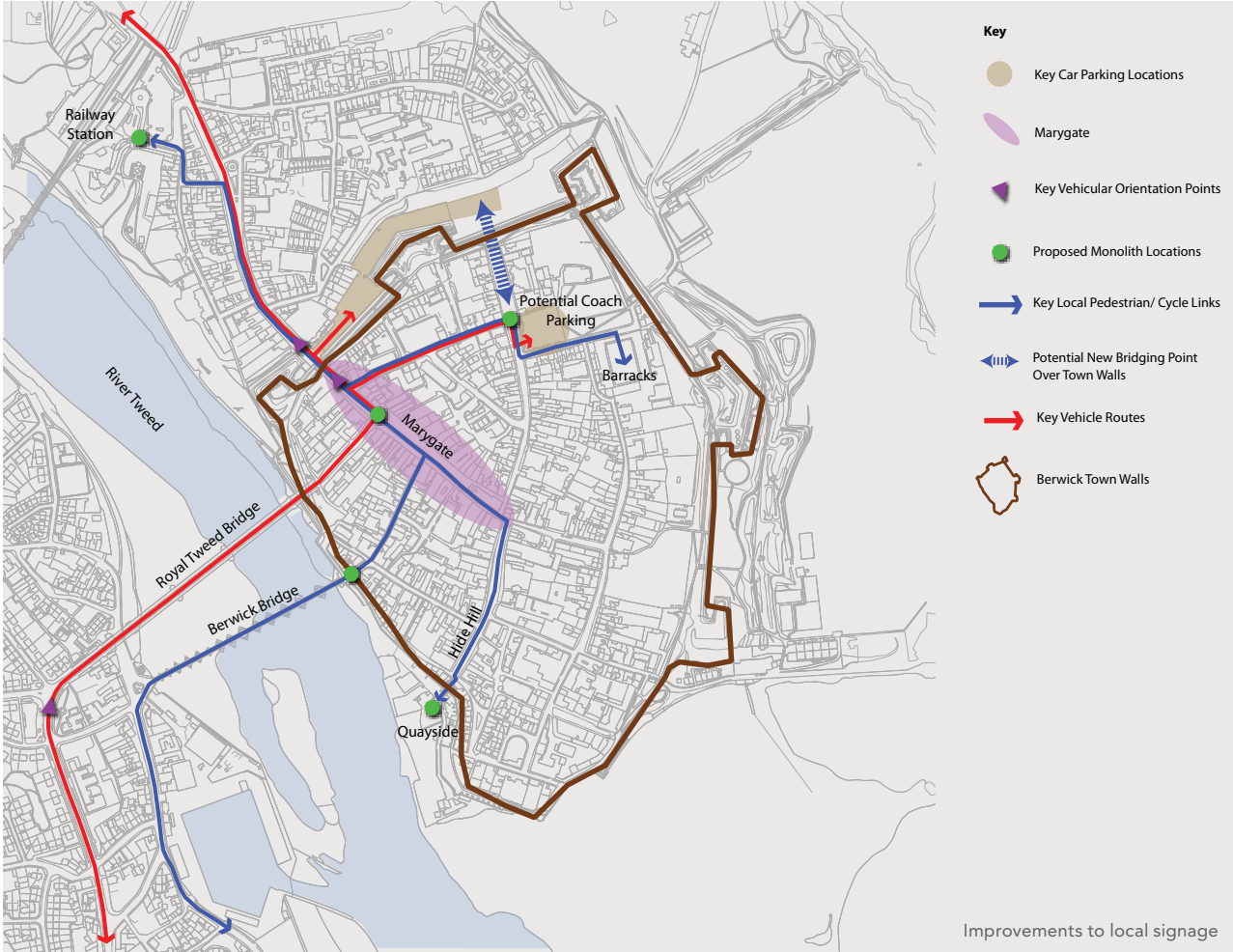
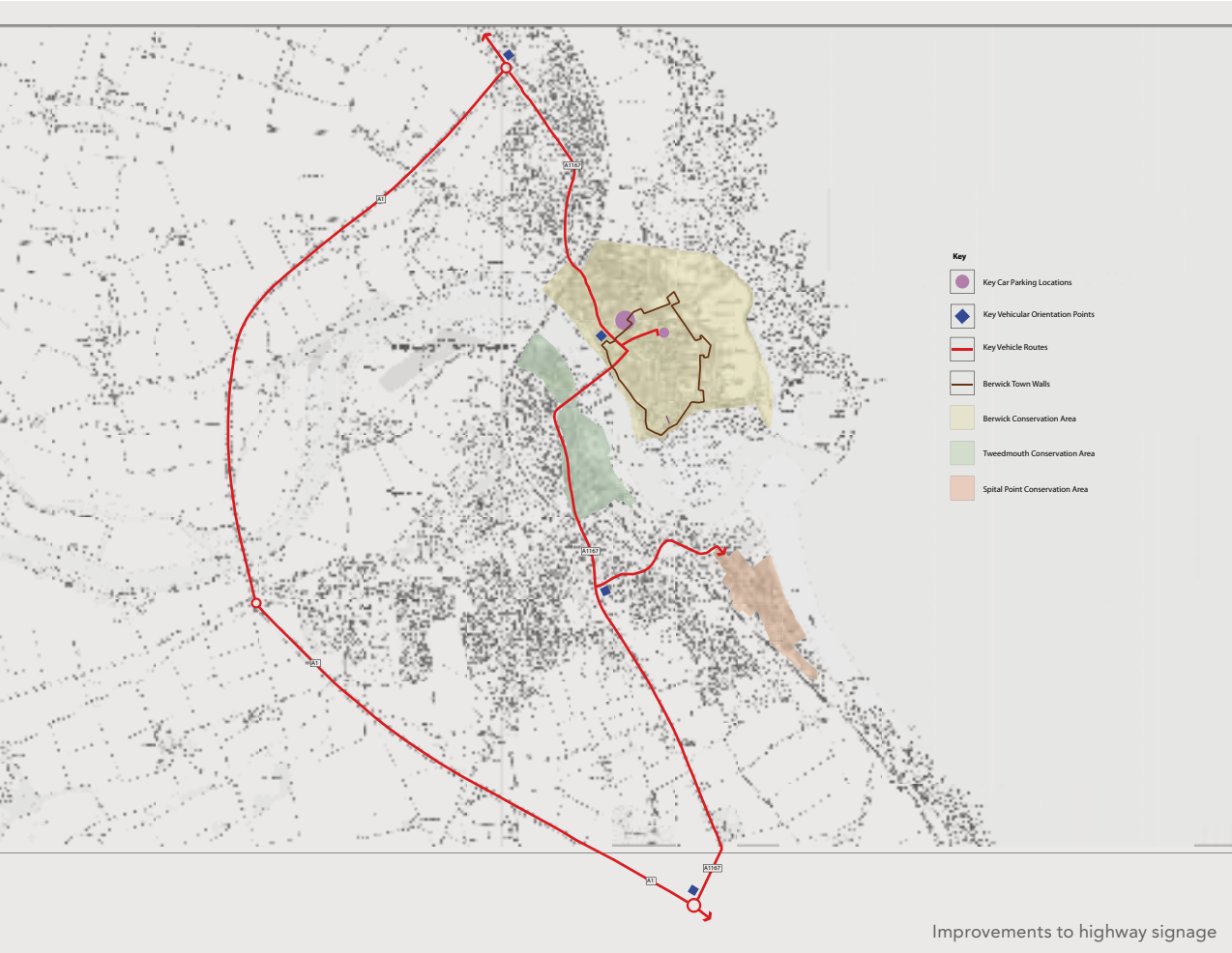
Highways signage is controlled by the Highways Authority and must comply with national standards. In this document we have made basic suggestions for highways signage as follows:

- ACTION POINT
- IMPROVED DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE AT KEY POINTS OF ARRIVAL
 - INTUITIVE ROAD DESIGN SUCH AS MARYGATE / GOLDEN SQUARE TO REDUCE THE NEED FOR SIGNAGE

Non highways signage allows more flexibility for design.

- ACTION POINT
- COMMISSION A NEW WAYFINDING MAP FOR BERWICK
 - INSTALL A NEW SYSTEM OF MAP INFORMATION POINTS (MONOLITHS) AND FINGERPOSTS

- GOLDEN RULE
- DESIGN INTUITIVELY TO REDUCE NEED FOR SIGNAGE
 - PROVIDE SIGNAGE WHERE NEEDED





A — DESIGN GUIDANCE — **PAVING & STONEWORK**

Shared Surfaces

A shared surface is a highway where the distinction between pedestrian and vehicle areas has been blurred to send a strong signal that the whole of the highway space is open equally to all users thus reducing car dominance.

Coloured and textural surface contrasts should be used to break up the impression of a dedicated highway for motoring. Many successful schemes around the country have demonstrated successfully that measures such as removed kerblines can further reinforce the message that no part of the space is the preserve of the motorist. Avoidance of painted lines and familiar ‘highway’ signs and paraphernalia will reduce clutter and reinforce the sense of a pedestrian space, help to create uncertainty in the car driver, encouraging slow speeds and heightened awareness of pedestrians around them.

A service strip should be incorporated and attention should be paid to drainage design to ensure an integrated and effective solution that minimises block cutting and awkward falls, especially where a formal paving pattern is proposed.

Surfaces should be sett paved with a smooth but anti-slip surface suitable for pedestrians (such as ‘fine picked’) in locally sourced materials where possible such as whinstone, Doddington stone or granite. Use of several mixed subtle colour shades will lessen the appearance of oil stains, algae and other inevitable discolouration over time.



Brighton New Road by Landscape Projects



Brighton New Road by Jim Mayor, Brighton & Hove City Council



Brighton New Road by Graham Smith

Shared surface at Brighton New Road

Materials and Maintenance

Hard landscaping materials need to be appropriate to the relevant Conservation Area and particular character area in question, aesthetically pleasing, structurally robust, have good weathering characteristics and be tolerant of typical expected use such as litter on market days and oil stains from cars.

Streets should be designed to form functional and sustainable spaces attractive to residents and visitors. It is essential that the material choice is the appropriate material for the location, in terms of long-term durability, maintenance, and sourcing, whilst also contributing to and enhancing the street scene.

Availability

The contractor should ensure that the selected supplier for paving materials has sufficient resource to supply in excess of the quantities or stone required and is able to meet colour, quality and delivery requirements in a consistent way across the phases of the scheme, leaving a quantity of spare materials with the adopting authority to be used as spares for repair.



A — DESIGN GUIDANCE — PAVING & STONework

Carriageway Materials: Natural setts

If the use of natural stone setts is being considered for a road surface advice should be sought from Northumberland Council’s Highways Engineering Section. It will be essential to specify an exceptionally strong and substantial sub-base possibly including reinforced concrete to eliminate sinking and settling.

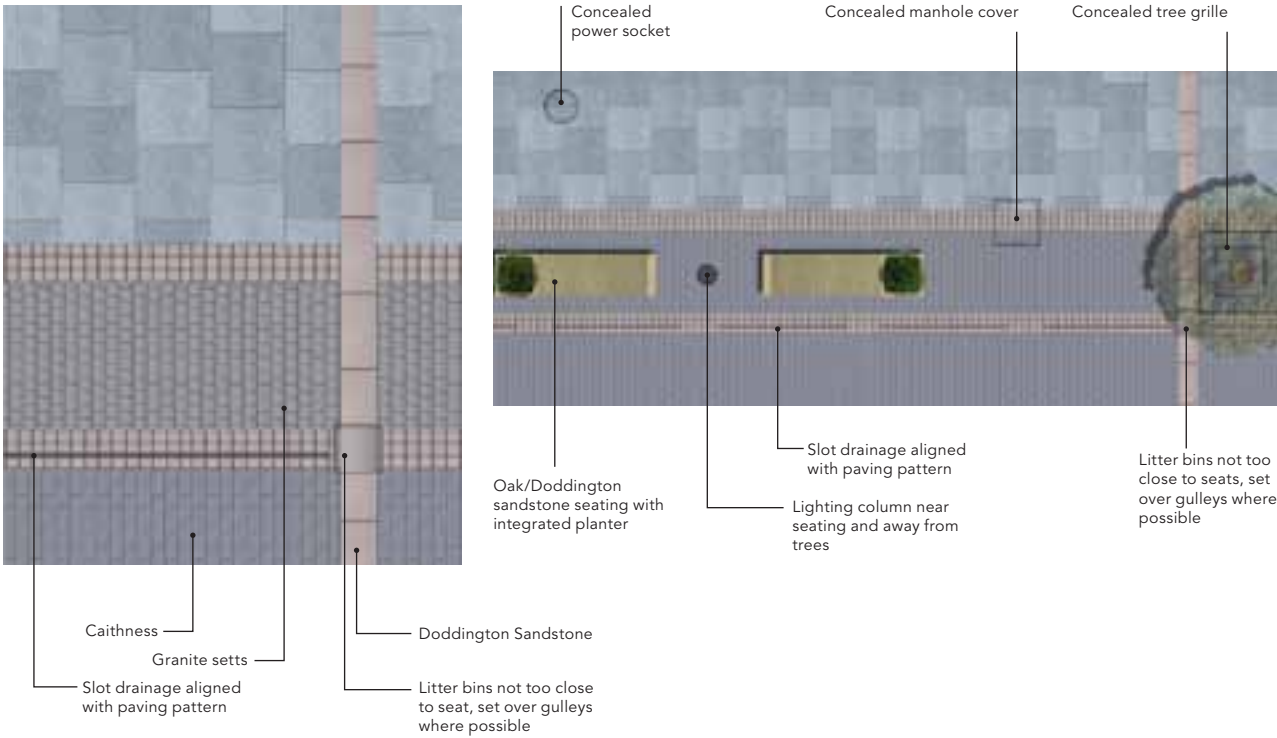
Joint specification will also be key to the success of the scheme, but in any scheme of natural setts it should be expected that a programme of maintenance will be required to maintain the surface and jointing to a high standard. This should not be an excuse to disregard such materials, since the benefits of high quality shared and pedestrian surfaces are vital to the appearance and success of the public realm. Tarmac is not appropriate for any ‘Prestige’ parts of the character areas.

Kerbs

Standard concrete road kerbs are not appropriate in a conservation area.

Granite or Whinstone Kerbs

Kerb style and dimensions should match existing nearby whinstone or granite kerbs. Kerbs should be close jointed, with a 5mm to 10mm mortar joint. Generally existing natural kerbs in the town are low and wide so new kerbs should reflect this. Once size and shape details are known the compiler should prepare scheme specific drawings including bespoke details for achieving quadrant corners, specific radii and ramped slopes for each individual kerb junction.



Marygate: Street paving and furniture:

Typical Arrangement

Paving

For any development in the public realm there will need to be a careful selection process using the character area palettes to consider a range of natural materials such as Caithness, Doddington Sandstone, granite or stone from several suppliers. If granite is used it is likely to be required in a range of subtle colour shades to be mixed together.

Setts may be specified with particular finishes such as tumbled or sawn, with pedestrian surfaces in slip resistant finishes such as picked or flamed. Construction detailing and specification will emerge over future detailed design processes therefore paving sizes are not yet known, though it is anticipated that trafficked areas will be paved in setts e.g. max 200 x 400mm, and there may be pedestrian areas of flags up to 1000 x 600mm.

It is likely that the paving units will need to be very thick in order to provide a robust surface for traffic use or overrun in certain areas, possibly 150mm thick. Where larger flag units are proposed the contractor may need to utilise mechanical lifting processes in order to handle the weight.

The paving construction, laying and jointing will need to be agreed in detail with the conservation officer and adopting authority and the contractor should anticipate the need to meet or exceed the highest standards of construction for example the SCOTS Report (Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland: ‘Natural Stone Surfacing: Good Practice Guide’ and Interim Advice Note IAN 73/06 ‘Design Guidance for Road Pavement Foundations’)



Stone Steps and Seats

Heavy solid steps and perch seats should be made from natural granite or Doddington sandstone, precision cut to complex curves and radii and laid to exacting requirements. Decorative lighting and artworks such as carved text or patterns may be integrated into the steps, seats or paving. The designer will need to allow for mechanical lifting processes using suction or integrated lugs in order to handle the weight. Visibility strips will need to be integrated into the leading edges of steps or perch seats either as recessed strips in a contrasting colour or carved lines in granite.

Upgrading Existing Natural Paving

The detailed design process will identify which areas are to be cleaned and repaired. This is likely to consist of jet blasting, pointing, and lifting and re-laying or replacing loose or broken slabs using natural stone flags and setts to match existing in shape, size, colour and texture. In some areas existing surfaces are in very poor condition and will require full replacement with paving and steps. The paving and steps construction, laying and jointing will need to be agreed in detail with the conservation officer and adopting authority. The works may also include cutting back of overgrown planting, spraying with algae retardant and pointing or repairs to walls.

Quality of Works

Developers should be aware that proposed schemes should be of a very high quality, both aesthetically and also in terms of robust construction for longevity. A design life of at least 50 years should be assumed.

Workmanship

A full specification of works will be required for any scheme and the developer should be aware that workmanship of a very high quality that will be rigorously inspected will be required in order to meet the high standards required in Berwick’s public realm.



Sample Panels

It is expected that several sample panels will be required by the conservation officer to help in the selection of materials and jointing, and also to agree quality benchmarks.

Drainage

For any development in the public realm the design team should assume that comprehensive surface water drainage works are likely to be required and designed to minimise cutting or disruption of paving patterns. Choice of gulleys, channels and slot drains and their locations will be carefully considered in liaison with the conservation officer for quality, durability and also fit in with the aesthetics of the scheme and to minimise visual obtrusion. Where possible all inspection covers and the like will be recessed and fitted with paving cut to match surrounding patterns.

Provision for Markets and Events

Design schemes for spaces likely to be used for markets and events should include provision of an integrated power supply (including 3 phase supply). This might include ground fixed power sockets such as ‘pop up power’ or similar, and possibly an integrated sound system. Ground fixings may also be required to provide secure fixing locations for market stalls and events banners, such as post holes or flush steel rings. For Marygate new market stalls should also be considered to improve the look of the town on Market day and also to improve the experience for both stallholders and customers.

Archaeology

The developers should be aware that any excavations may have an impact on archaeology. This must be considered at an early stage in accordance with advice from Northumberland County Council.

Street furniture, such as litter bins, seating, and lighting, should be robust and integrated into the overall appearance of the street.



Robust local materials
– Oak
– Doddington Sandstone

Range of styles
– Double width
– With backrests
– With arms
– Integrated planters

GOLDEN RULE

NEW FURNITURE

- USE COORDINATED APPROPRIATE STYLES- SEE PALETTES
- RATIONALISE AND MINIMISE TO AVOID CLUTTER
- COMBINE FUNCTIONS WHERE POSSIBLE

Street furniture, such as litter bins, seating, and lighting, should be robust and integrated into the overall appearance of the street.

The main considerations for street furniture are:

- Choose street furniture to relate to its location and local distinctiveness, and reinforce a sense of place
- Different items of street furniture should relate to each other in terms of design, siting and colour
- Avoid clutter and obstructions to pedestrians
- Avoid over-use of ‘defensive’ street furniture such as guard railings and bollards
- Retain and refurbish distinctive historic elements of street furniture, such as telephone boxes, corner stones (glinters) and milestones

Furniture palette

Street furniture is generally specified from manufacturers’ catalogues, with leading suppliers currently based in the UK, Germany and Spain. Since this strategy is setting out a pathway for the next 20 years, a decision was taken to avoid, where possible, specification of catalogue products for the following reasons:

Locally made furniture with robust materials

- Berwick is a unique place not necessarily suited to standard ‘off the peg’ furniture
- Catalogue furniture may become unavailable if the firm goes out of business or changes its range
- Supply of generic furniture from overseas seems inappropriate and unsustainable if an alternative can be found
- Berwick already has a number of ‘serpent’ seats which were found through consultations to be generally, though not universally liked

Instead, we recommend that a range of furniture be designed specifically for Berwick, which would give the following benefits:

- Simple designs suitable manufacturer by a number local suppliers tendered competitively to give excellent value, low carbon footprint and work for local companies
- Robust, easily available materials to enhance local distinctiveness, such as local Doddington stone, natural solid oak, steel.
- A hierarchy of designs to create a flexible family of styles to suit a range of purposes yet within a coordinated overall design style
- Combination elements in some cases such as seating combined with planters to reduce clutter
- A range of seat styles to include casual perch seats, ‘longer stay’ seats with back rests, armrests to assist with standing up, and some with wooden seats for warmth
- Design compatible with existing street furniture to be retained, assuming that funds will not permit an immediate and widescale change to a new range of furniture, rather it will be introduced gradually over time.
- Detailed product design or liaison with a manufacturer will be needed to finalise details





Serpent Seats

These traditionally styled seats can be found in numerous locations in and around Berwick such as along the ramparts where the ironwork is painted in gloss black, and along the promenade in Spittal where the paintwork is bright blue and white. It was suggested that the 'serpent' design might in fact be a swan since Berwick is famous for its swan population, however on investigation it was found that similar seats can be found across the UK and Europe, for example in Harrogate and Prague. It was concluded that the seat design was unlikely to have been designed specifically for Berwick and should not be treated as an essential part of the street scene in all locations. Nevertheless, the seat is well liked by many and there is a place for it in Berwick, for example in very traditional locations.

Clearly the serpent seat should remain in some areas but be upgraded over time as part of the Berwick palette, and new furniture should be designed to be visually compatible. Linking material and colour elements between old and new furniture should include natural timber (Berwick seats fitted with new oak plank seats) and paint colour to the ironwork (dark anthracite grey to harmonise with proposed new and more contemporary furniture). Given the traditional styling and comfort of the seats, suitable locations for the serpent seat would be historic areas where people may wish to sit and spend time, for example to take in views or eat a picnic. It was concluded that the key location for the serpent seats would be along the ramparts and in historic public open spaces such as Castle Vale and Coronation Park.

SERPENT SEATING SHOULD BE USED ON THE RAMPARTS AND IN OPEN SPACES

ACTION POINT

Serpent seats can be found all over Europe such as here at Hunstanton, Norfolk



Bins

Bins are an unavoidable element on the street, so it is important to choose a design which functions properly and sits well in the streetscene.

Specification requirements as follows:

- Covered top to avoid weather issues and seagulls taking leftovers
- Wide enough to take a pizza box
- Versions in free standing and column / wall mounted to reduce clutter
- Incorporating cigarette stubber plate
- Easy access to empty
- Easy to clean
- Situated above or near drainage gully with dark paving below such as Caithness, Whinstone or basalt block detail
- Column mounted in sloping areas or adjusted to slope
- Compatible design to palette e.g. simple unfussy design, planed oak or steel in dark anthracite grey
- Avoid generic 'institutional' styles such as black and gold

Bollards and guardrails have been heavily over-used on British streets for many years



Bollards

Bollards are sometimes needed to control vehicle movements or prevent pavement parking, so they cannot be entirely removed, but in some cases they have been added without thought or even as purely decorative items. Berwick does have some very old bollards including milestones and ‘glinters’ which are old fashioned corner stones often found at the entrance to alleyways. These help to form Berwick’s distinctive character, are part of its architectural history and should be retained.

If bollards are needed they should be well designed and part of coordinated range of furniture to help integrate them with the streetscape. A plain style painted RAL 7016 anthracite grey would be appropriate, or a simple block of Doddington Sandstone

Guardrails

There is a perception that pedestrian guardrails are essential for safety. This is true in certain circumstances such as pedestrian reserves on high speed dual carriageways, but in town centres they can have the effect of giving car drivers ‘permission’ to drive quickly in the secure knowledge they have little need to worry about pedestrians. If guardrails and even kerbs are removed, the distinction between road and pavement is blurred and car drivers feel less certain. This causes heightened awareness of pedestrians and driving speeds tend to reduce. An excellent case study where guardrails have been removed is Kensington High Street on the CABI website www.cabi.org.uk/case-studies/kensington-high-street

GOLDEN RULE AVOID OVER-USE OF GUARDRAILS AND BOLLARDS



Kensington High Street where guard rails have been removed to liberate the street for pedestrians. Photographs by CABI and Urban Exposure



Handrails

If handrails and balustrades are required they should be handmade to a bespoke design, either in natural finished metal, smooth wood or painted steel in the RAL 7016 anthracite grey ‘linking colour’.

Water Features

Water features, if carefully designed, can animate public spaces and provide delight for onlookers especially children.

Any water features should be considered carefully to ensure they are appropriate for the space, and that when they are switched off, wintered or under repair they do not leave an unsightly empty pool. To avoid this consider discreet water bubble jets set in either a suspended paving rack or bespoke metal grilles.

Provision will be required for underground chambers to house water tanks, control kit and filtration / cleaning kit which may conflict with archaeology so checks should be made at an early stage. A water supply will be required and a control panel will need to be placed in an accessible location. The developer will be required to employ a specialist water feature sub-contractor to design, supply, fit and maintain a robust and appropriate water feature. Concealed LED lighting may be integrated into the feature.



Lighting

- Lighting has two key functions in a town centre:
- functional lighting to ensure adequate safe levels of light
 - decorative including lighting to highlight landmarks and architectural features

There is potential to combine these in a skilful way to create a warm and welcoming atmosphere during hours of darkness, encouraging evening strolls through the town with Berwick’s myriad of quirky architectural features providing endless potential for highlighting with clever lighting.

The darkness itself is valuable in providing visual contrast in an ancient town, so not every corner should be flooded with light. Warm white light is ideal for architectural lighting and also for ambient lighting since it provides excellent contrasts and allows the perception of colour to remain. Light pollution and energy consumption must be minimised in any lighting scheme.

The lighting of the surroundings or particular architectural features should be the focus, rather than the light fitting itself. Therefore, selective use of discreet and appropriate light fittings including sleek contemporary styles can work well even in sensitive heritage locations. Clumsy pastiche styles can appear overly heavy, self conscious and draw unwanted attention.



Rootstein Hopkins Parade Ground lighting by Planet Earth

The Northumberland Lantern is a street light which has been designed for use in the Northumberland heritage towns. The lantern style is halfway between heritage and modern, and suits its purpose in many ways, however lighting is a complex subject to which there are many solutions so discreet, contemporary fittings would also be appropriate in some cases, as would restored ongoing fittings. When funds permit in future, a lighting strategy for Berwick Town centre would be a valuable way forward to fully unlock the potential to highlight Berwick’s spaces and architectural riches.

COMMISSION A LIGHTING STRATEGY FOR BERWICK WHEN FUNDS ALLOW

ACTION POINT

GOLDEN RULE

LIGHTING

- USE WARM WHITE LIGHT
- ARCHITECTURAL LIGHTING TO HIGHLIGHT FEATURES
- DISCREET, SLEEK FITTINGS
- MINIMISE LIGHT POLLUTION AND ENERGY CONSUMPTION

Art and Artists

It has been recognised widely that the collaboration of artists on design teams adds a unique and site-responsive approach to the design process that has the potential to add value to quality public realm schemes. Artists can provide an innovative approach to design, respond to the historical and social context of a location and add narrative. Often artists can work in such a collaborative way with the design team that there is a creative blurring of where the art begins and the design ends. The integration of art into the overall design provides a seamless and co-ordinated scheme that adds another layer of meaning to the individuality of place.

This Public Realm Strategy identifies key areas, provides a clear palette of materials and guidance on approaches for an appointed lead artist to utilise. The “Silk” areas have enormous potential to provide an exciting dimension and bring a personal addition to each site. Lighting, text, colour, planting and pattern are initial headings to be explored. Possible locations for interventions should be identified when key sites enter detailed design.

As part of the commissioning process and development of ideas through research, consultation is important. This consultation could be a series of temporary arts events that would start to explore new ways of activating and revitalising spaces that could lead to new future uses of places for cultural events and festivals within the context of this Public Realm Strategy. Temporary projects can be used to introduce a community to new artforms and engage people in the process of change and development.

The Maltings Arts Centre, The Gymnasium Gallery, The Berwick Film & Media Arts Festival and The new gallery in The Granary are some of the key cultural organisations in Berwick that should be involved. Northumberland County Council is the strategic partner and is best placed to provide curatorial advice and advocacy related to Northumberland’s Cultural Strategy Stronger Together through Inspirational Culture 2010-2015.

Berwick has a wealth of rich material for artists to respond to, its unique history, maritime environment, architecture and the romance and character of the town. This section lays out a set of foundation headings that should be considered as and when each key site is entering the detailed design process to act as an overarching guide in the development of arts interventions.



Patrick Le Blanc



Laura Harrington

Accessibility – ‘A number of design features can help make a place more inclusive. These include manageable slopes, drop down kerbs, plenty of seating, accessible public toilets, wide foot paths, good lighting, safe crossing places, spaces that are easy for visually impaired people to navigate, clear signposting and well maintained paving.’ CABE, 2008, Inclusion by Design

Tactile Paving

Tactile paving such as modified blister paving or corduroy hazard paving will be either required in matching natural granite or stone to the adjacent paving or steps, or drilled into the paving as stainless steel or brass studs or brass or stainless steel rods.

Sustainability

New development should aim to be as sustainable as possible and incorporate environmentally sustainable design features.

To design sustainable developments requires consideration of a number of issues from very early on in the planning and inception stage such re-uses of existing materials to avoid waste, specification of appropriate and durable new materials so they last a long time, flexible design so site are adaptable for future uses .

Biodiversity

Conserve and enhance the natural environment in relation to biodiversity.

Sustainable Materials

Maximise use of materials from sustainable sources and minimise waste during construction. Consideration should be given to the long-term maintenance of development.

Kensington High Street
Photograph by CABE
and Urban Exposure



Water Conservation and Management

Schemes should be designed so they do not contribute to flood risk and improve the quality of both, landscaping and biodiversity. Planting should be designed to minimise water requirement as soon as it is established, so planting in permanent ground level beds should be favoured to avoid need for irrigation. Planting in raised beds or hanging baskets should favour Mediterranean planting or grasses to reduce water demand.

Sustainable Drainage

Medium to large-scale developments should incorporate the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). These enable water run-off to be controlled and treated, at or near to source, using natural processes of filtration, sedimentation, absorption and biological degradation. Sustainable drainage can be achieved by:

- Introduce areas of permeable hard surfacing with a permeable fill below
- Providing tanks and ponds with capacity to store rainwater run-off
- Providing engineered drainage solutions such as soakaways, infiltration tanks and filter drains or,
- By providing swales or filter strips where appropriate (vegetated surfaces to soak up run-off from adjacent hard surfaces)

Berwick is predominantly a conservation town where the emphasis is on architecture and hard landscape. However, greening can be achieved in many ways especially in more sheltered spaces, and is appreciated both consciously and sub consciously. Berwick is broadly a maritime environment however there are sheltered courtyards where more tender species will thrive.

- Planting can be used to create:
- Definition between communal and private spaces
 - Continuity and biodiversity;
 - Functional and aesthetically pleasing communal spaces.

New Planting in Berwick’s Public Realm

The introduction of street trees may be desirable in some parts of the study area, though it will not be appropriate everywhere. Important views such as historic artillery viewpoints should be respected to maintain a sense of why Berwick became such a pivotal location in the changing border history of England and Scotland. The town centre is a bold medieval grid pattern and the essence of Berwick’s character is rooted in its architecture and historic monuments. It would be wrong therefore to arbitrarily clothe the town in trees and planting with no thought to these issues.

Nevertheless there are some areas that would benefit from thoughtful planting, and this was supported by feedback from the public consultation with many wanting more ‘greenery’ in the town. Equally there was clear frustration from many responders that the current black plastic ‘tower’ planters are unattractive and visually dominating with bedding plants barely visible from side views.

Silk Areas

The hidden courtyards and ‘backlands’ such as the Maltings are in some ways well suited to planting since they offer the potential for sheltered leafy spaces with perhaps fewer conflicts with architecture and historic monuments, though constraints such as turning circles and underground services may be complex and reduce space for trees.



There are some ‘hidden gem’ green spaces in Berwick such as Coronation Park and Castle Vale situated on the sunny slopes below the Railway Station and Castle Ruins. These parks have a magical ‘secret garden’ quality, however they are also overgrown and sadly neglected. At the rail gateway to the town and visible from the train, they hold enormous potential for enhancement or restoration to their former glory.

ACTION POINT

IMPROVEMENT WORKS TO CASTLE VALE AND CORONATION PARK

Tweed Areas

The streets in the historic and conservation areas require careful consideration in relation to planting. Historic plans and viewpoints should be analysed prior to forming any conclusions. Several areas have been identified in this study for street tree planting including Castlegate and Parade. Castlegate has precedent of avenue tree planting and it seems appropriate to re-introduce this again.

The Parade is a less obvious choice for tree planting, however the potential re-creation of the former linear form of the old parade ground would result in the removal of a grassy area. Historically it seems unlikely that there would be any obvious justification for trees here, however in order to compensate for this loss of green, a double avenue of trees would add a bold structure and soften the space to give the feel of a leafy ‘allee’, while emphasising the linearity of the parade ground.

Trees

Trees can have a major influence on the character of the streetscene. Trees enhance the local environment and provide numerous benefits including:

- Adding colour and richness to the urban environment
- Helping to absorb carbon dioxide and to lower dust and noise levels
- Reducing pollutant gases such as carbon monoxide and nitrogen dioxide
- Providing habitats for a range of wildlife
- Providing a sense of wellbeing

Existing Trees and Hedgerows

Existing trees and hedgerows are valuable landscape and conservation features and they may be subject to protection under a Tree Preservation Order, Conservation Area control or Hedgerow Regulations. This public realm strategy applies to the three conservation areas of Berwick, Spittal and Tweedmouth, all trees are automatically protected (check planning guidance for full details). Their retention and incorporation into a scheme may not only be desirable but enforceable. Trees may also be important habitats for protected species such as bats and birds, and developers also need to be aware of nesting and roosting seasons and relevant protected species legislation.

A tree survey showing the exact location, species, height and health, girth and crown spread of existing trees should be shown on a plan with an accompanying schedule with information as to their proposed treatment or removal (a qualified tree surgeon should be employed to provide this information). Trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order or within the Conservation Areas should be identified and retained. Should a protected tree be removed, a replacement tree should be provided (requirement of Town and County Planning Act 1990) and shown on the plan, together with details of species and location. Tree removal may however be justified in certain instances such as self seeded trees in Castle Vale to restore spaces and open views to the Town Wall, but this would be subject to Conservation Area Consent.



General Principles

- Choose native species where appropriate
- Character – consider the character of the area when selecting tree species (e.g. in an avenue single tree species may be appropriate)
- Size – consider the appropriate size of tree for the area. Large forest species are often unpopular with residents for reasons of shade or leaf-fall, but it is often forest trees which contribute most to the character of the townscape, and opportunities should be taken to plant such trees in suitable locations
- Tree surround/guard – Water permeable resin bound gravel is a good option for a tree surround to avoid weed and gravel problems with cast iron grilles. Trees should be planted into a minimum of 5m³ of soil based planting medium preferably with proprietary anti compression measures and watering points to ensure oxygen and moisture reaches the roots ensuring healthy growth over many years.

Location

Consideration will also need to be given to obstructions below ground such as statutory undertakers’ equipment. Every opportunity should be explored to overcome obstacles such as resistance to planting due to arbitrary rules concerning service routes. It may be possible to overcome problems by negotiation on a case by case basis, taking advantage of recent advances in technical products such as root barriers.

When choosing the type/species of trees consideration needs to be given to CCTV cameras, future maintenance and driver/pedestrian visibility as well as the effects on street lighting levels.

The wider the road or space the larger the tree should be.
The presumption should be for the largest tree appropriate for the location to be planted.



Choice of Species

It is generally accepted that the wider the road or space the larger the tree should be. The presumption should be for the largest tree appropriate for the location to be planted, using forest scale species where appropriate.

In selecting trees consideration should also be given to planting native BAP compliant species where possible.

Small trees – height unlikely to exceed 10m within 25 years

- Acer campestre ‘Streetwise’
- Malus species:
 - Malus hupehensis
 - Malus trilobata
 - Malus tschonoskii – An excellent upright street tree

Prunus species – Flowering Cherry

- Prunus padus ‘Albertii’ – Free flowering, strong upright growth
- Prunus padus
- Prunus ‘Pandoro’
- Prunus sargentii ‘Rancho’
- Prunus x schmittii

Pyrus – Ornamental Pear

- Pyrus ‘Beech Hill’
- Pyrus ‘Chanticleer’

Sorbus species – Rowan & Whitebeam

- Sorbus aria ‘Majestica’
- Sorbus aucuparia ‘Cardinal Royal’
- Sorbus commixta ‘Embley’
- Swedish Whitebeam,
- Sorbus intermedia
- Sorbus x thuringiaca ‘Fastigiata’

Medium trees – height unlikely to exceed 15m within 25 years

- Acer platanoides ‘Columnare’
- Alnus cordata
- Betula pendula ‘Tristis’ Silver Birch
- Corylus collurna
- Fraxinus angustifolia ‘Raywood’
- Prunus avium ‘Plena’
- Quercus robur ‘Fastigiata’
- Tilia cordata ‘Greenspire’

Large – height likely to exceed 15m within 25 years, with a spread of 6m+

- Acer platanoides ‘Emerald Queen’
- Acer platanoides ‘Deborah’
- Fagus sylvatica
- Fagus sylvatica ‘Dawyck’
- Liquidambar styraciflua
- Liriodendron tulipifera
- Quercus palustris

Recent developments in design and technology mean that green or living walls are now a realistic tool for the greening of streets.

Planting

Thought should be given to the suitability of living materials to the environment in which they will be placed. The developer should provide a suitable planting scheme which demonstrates that the chosen trees and/or soft landscaping will be able to grow in that environment and that any new trees shall not cause problems in the future in relation to surrounding buildings, traffic sight lines, services and/or members of the public. The scheme should also be carefully selected to ensure that it is low maintenance wherever possible; this will prevent it becoming unkempt and unsightly in the future.

Street Greening – Green Walls

Recent developments in design and technology mean that green or living walls are now a realistic tool for the greening of streets. Some systems are formed from a suspended ‘blanket’ while others consist of a series of rigid plastic cell structures holding individual plants with integrated irrigation. Vertical greening can look dramatic, providing a rich vertical texture of planting in seasonal colours. Daily maintenance is not required in that automatic watering and feeding is provided by the irrigation system, however there are still requirements for regular checking to ensure there is no interruption to the irrigation, plus occasional pruning or replanting.

The drawbacks are cost, ownership and maintenance therefore such systems are likely to be used in very limited areas, however they should be encouraged since they are an excellent way to screen unsightly facades and introduce greening without clutter.

Hanging Baskets and Planters

Hanging basket tend to be well liked by the public and can be used successfully to introduce greening to the streets without cluttering the floorscape, plus they tend to be an important part of Britain in Bloom entries, providing a means for individuals or local businesses to contribute to the greening of the town.

Green wall by Greenwood Nursery



However there are drawbacks in that wall mounted baskets can damage the fabric of listed buildings, require daily watering often at height, and can appear cluttered and dated. Baskets work best as part of a coordinated scheme of colour and are often at their best in the late summer when the baskets themselves are concealed by the planting.

If the will is there to coordinate action in terms of maintenance, colour scheme and removal of dead baskets then on balance they should be encouraged, especially as part of a coordinated scheme such as a Britain in Bloom entry, however, if unwanted neglected baskets are left around they can quickly become a negative feature in the townscape and should be removed.

Consideration should be given to use of contemporary permanent planting in baskets and planters to reduce use of annual bedding. Drought tolerant plants such as grasses and lavender can work well, and even herbs could thrive for scent and flavour. Edible plants should be encouraged such as espalier apples which can substitute for trellis, and strawberries which can be used as ground cover.

Landscape Maintenance and Management Plans

Where future maintenance of the landscaping scheme remains the responsibility of the developer or is to be transferred to a private management company or trust, the developer should be required to submit for approval a management plan for the long-term maintenance of the public spaces or landscaped areas and open space as part of the planning process.

A comprehensive Management Plan should be sought for all developer proposals. Management Plans for privately owned sites should demonstrate that maintenance and management of the landscaping on the site would exist in perpetuity. The Council may seek to ensure this by attaching conditions to the planning application or by entering into a Section 106 agreement with the developer/landowner. A management plan should include preparation, establishment and future maintenance of any new landscaping scheme.

B — GOLDEN RULES AND MAP OF ACTION POINTS

These ‘rules’ provide general guidance which will apply to any proposed scheme or design changes in the conservation areas of Berwick-upon-Tweed, Spittal and Tweedmouth.

<i>GOLDEN RULES</i>	<i>ALWAYS CONSIDER THE HISTORIC SETTING:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– LOOK AROUND YOU – WILL THE PROPOSAL AFFECT AN HISTORIC SETTING?– WHAT ABOUT ARCHAEOLOGY? MILITARY VIEWLINES?– TALK TO THE CONSERVATION OFFICER BEFORE COMMENCING DESIGN OR WORKS <i>DESIGN THE STREETScape FOR EASE AND INCLUSIVITY</i> <i>DESIGN FOR CYCLISTS</i> <i>DESIGNS SHOULD BE MULTIFUNCTIONAL AND FUTUREPROOF</i> <i>DE-CLUTTERING:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– REMOVE ALL REDUNDANT ITEMS– REMOVE TEMPORARY ITEMS ASAP– REPLACE POORLY DESIGNED ESSENTIAL ITEMS– RELOCATE BADLY PLACED ESSENTIAL ITEMS <i>NEW FURNITURE:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– USE COORDINATED APPROPRIATE STYLES- SEE PALETTES– RATIONALISE AND MINIMISE TO AVOID CLUTTER– COMBINE FUNCTIONS WHERE POSSIBLE <i>SHOPFRONTS: FOLLOW THE CONSERVATION AREA DESIGN GUIDELINES</i> <i>LIGHTING:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– WARM WHITE LIGHT– ARCHITECTURAL LIGHTING TO HIGHLIGHT FEATURES– DISCREET, SLEEK FITTINGS– MINIMISE LIGHT POLLUTION AND ENERGY CONSUMPTION– ENCOURAGE LIGHT BASED EVENTS AND FESTIVALS
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B — GOLDEN RULES & MAP OF ACTION POINTS

These points are specific to particular locations throughout Berwick-upon-Tweed, Spittal and Tweedmouth, and have been highlighted as a prompt for future action.

1.

Marygate / Golden Square junction and signage to be redesigned
2.

Cars to be phased out at Marygate over a period of years
3.

Marygate / Scots Gate and other clutter hot spots – clutter to be removed
4.

Shop front grant scheme is needed
5.

Entrance to Co-op to be upgraded
6.

New bridge link over town walls to be provided
7.

Serpent seating should be used on ramparts and in open spaces
8.

Encourage cycle rental schemes and provide cycle parking and signage at caravan parks
9.

Provide better signage and interpretation for ramparts walk
10.

Provide a range of flexible spaces for events
11.

Improve the setting of barracks by re-connecting with the parade ground
12.

Well signed sensitively designed coach parking is needed
13.

Convenient cycle parking provision linked to strategic circulation and national cycle routes
14.

Highway signage improvements including directional signage at key arrival points, removal of clutter where possible to avoid confusion and intuitive road design to reduce the need for signage
15.

Non highway signage improvements including new wayfinding map for Berwick, new system of information points and fingerposts and removal of black tower planters and clutter
16.

Improvement to footpath network and pedestrian circulation routes
17.

Upgrade hard surfacing and car parking provision
18.

Upgrade and enhance Goody Patchy landscape
19.

Enhance circulation routes to viaduct viewpoint





C — BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Tweed & Silk

A Public Realm Strategy for Berwick-upon-Tweed
An Artist's Response

04

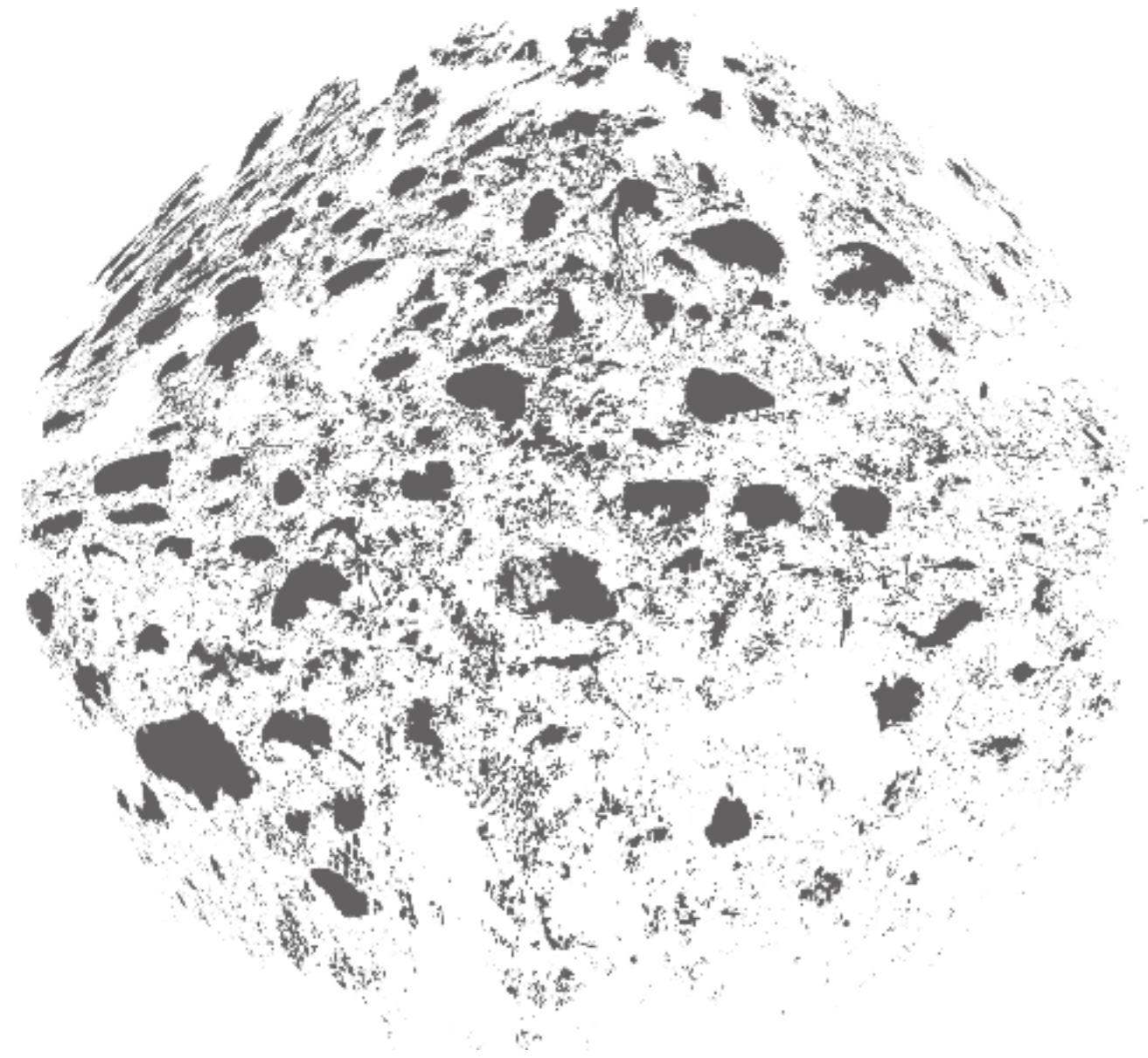


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01 Introduction / 02 Our Vision / 03 Design Guidance
04 Artist's Response / 05 Appendices

Section 4





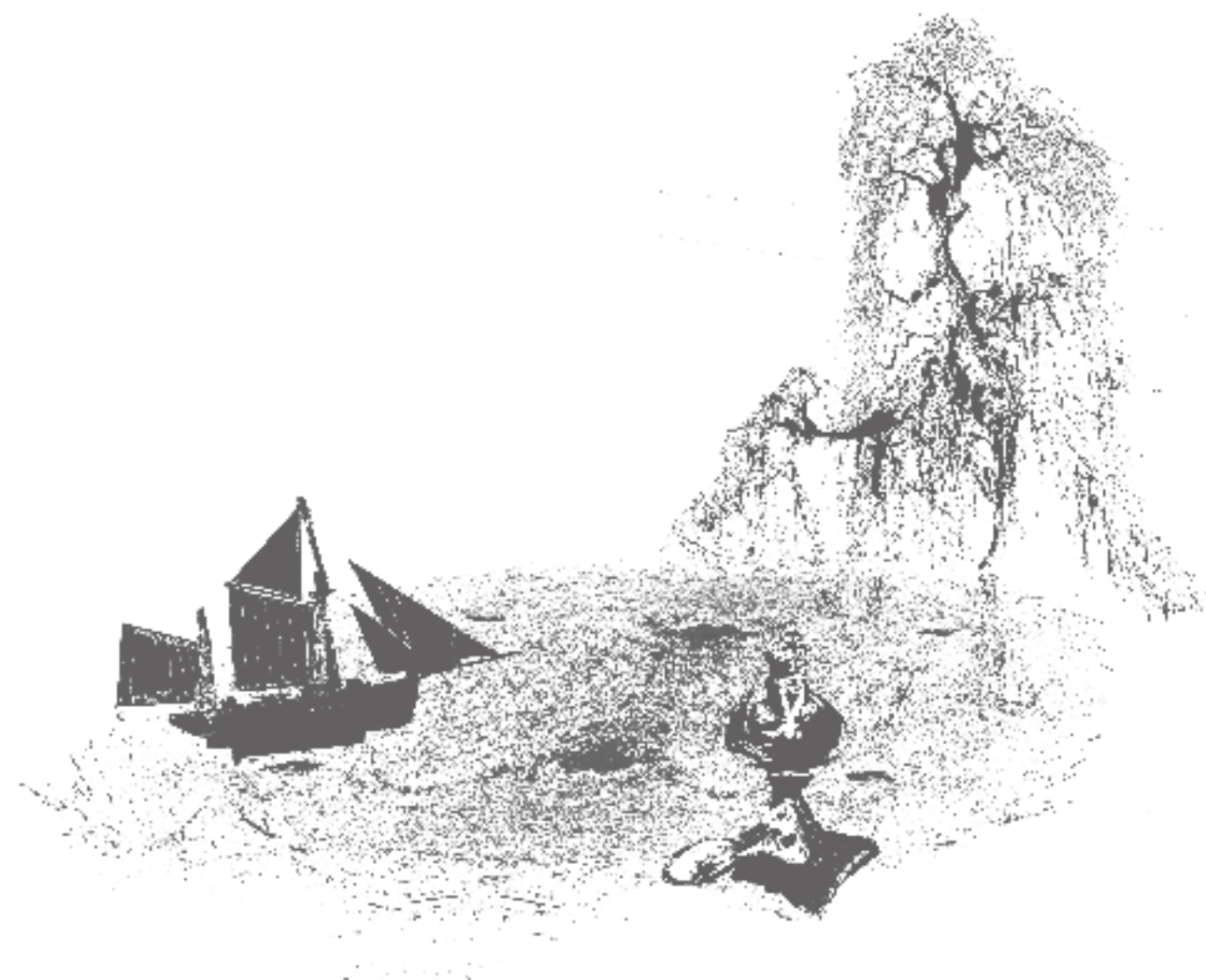
An Artist's Response

Kathryn Hodgkinson has been working as an artist in the public realm for the last ten years. In 2009 she was commissioned to work in Berwick responding to the town and creating a drawing as a result of her explorations. Kathryn says of her time in Berwick...

'In this day and age there are not many places that feel undiscovered and unexplored.

Yet Berwick invites one to wander through its streets, around the walls and down to the water soaking up the atmosphere and enjoying a sense of discovery that is hard to parallel in many other places. It has the feel of a secret, a hidden gem that could reveal layers of history and interest.

It has the feel of a place a little forgotten by time and untouched by unthoughtful and vacuous development. It is something precious to be cherished and cared for with thought and sensitivity; to be understood and responded to, and not to be 'done unto'.



Berwick’s unique atmosphere and other worldly feeling are easy to engage with and harder to understand. What are the qualities that create such an intriguing and engaging town? Having spent some time creating work in Berwick I have come to see that there are many diverse qualities woven together in Berwick that come together to create a rich and varied tapestry. During my time creatively responding to Berwick I have tried to identify and capture some of these qualities and themes;

Openness

Expanses — Vistas — Views — Exposed — Dramatic — The contrast and juxtaposition of a closed town next to open views and massive expanses

From Another Time

Echoes of the past — Resisted development — Intriguing — Enduring and endearing
Historical references and suggestions at every turn — Traces — Suggestions
Independent status — Independent trade — Preserved — Historical respect

Traces and Preservation

A tapestry of physical historical clues — Varied architectural eras quietly co-existing
Respect for these historical references/oddities — Some grand statements, some subtle

Architectural Relationships

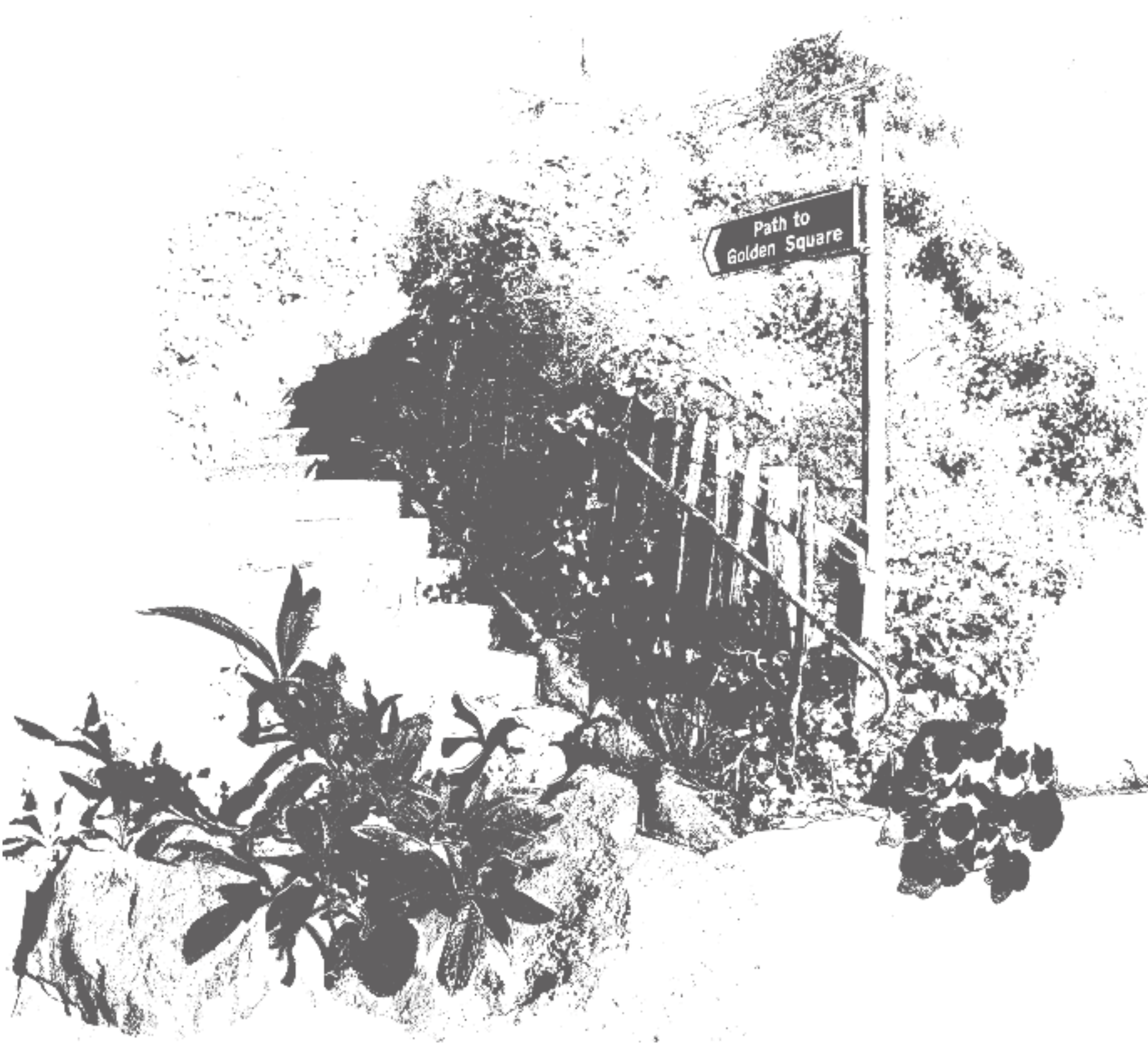
Proximity and configuration of differing buildings — Narrow spaces, joined buildings
Skylines and rooflines — Dynamic relationships (spaces cutting through each other)
Topography — Human scale — Variety of styles — Personalisation

Entrances and Apertures

From light to dark and dark to light — Entrances — Arrivals — Leaving
Journeys — The framing of nature

Architectural Decoration

Grandeur — Pattern — Individuality — Historical references — Variety
Wide palette of textures — Forms and styles — Decoration
Gratuitous architectural frivolity — Wealth, grander



THREE LEFT FEET

Dancing Classes

For beginners and novices

Mondays

7pm to 9pm

Starts 22nd February

**Berwick Community Centre
Palace Street East**

£4.00 per person

BRING A PARTNER

**For Information Telephone
01289 307953**

Salsa Tango Mambo Jive Bossa Nova Rumba Waltz Cha Cha

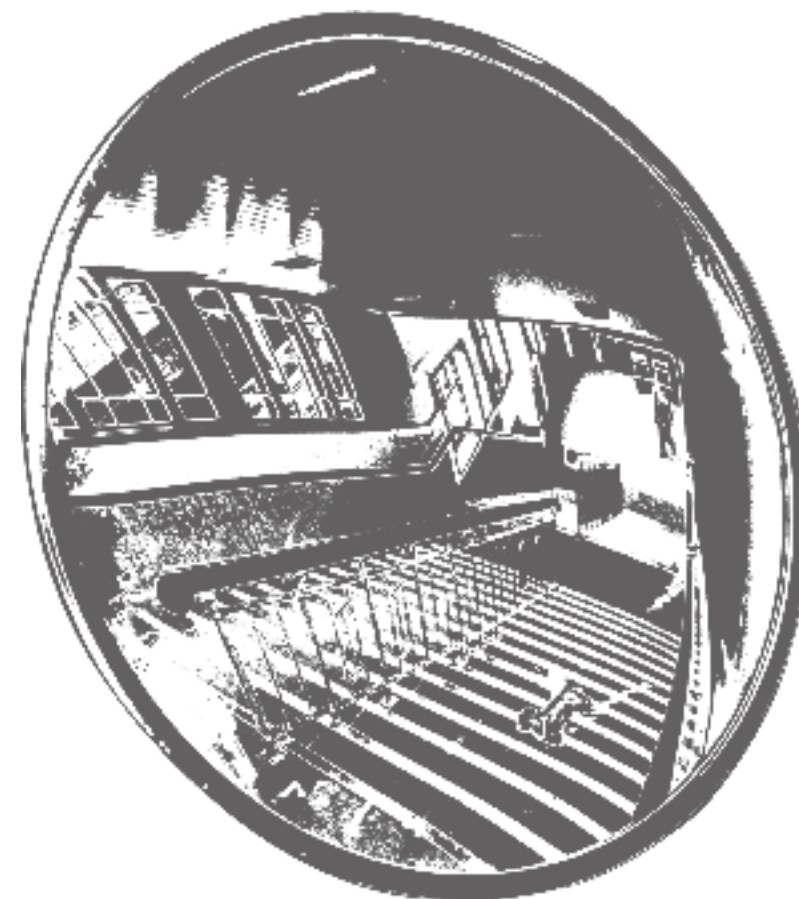
TO SEA,
BATHING PONDS,
GOLF COURSE,
PUTTING GREEN,
BEACH & CLIFFS, ETC.

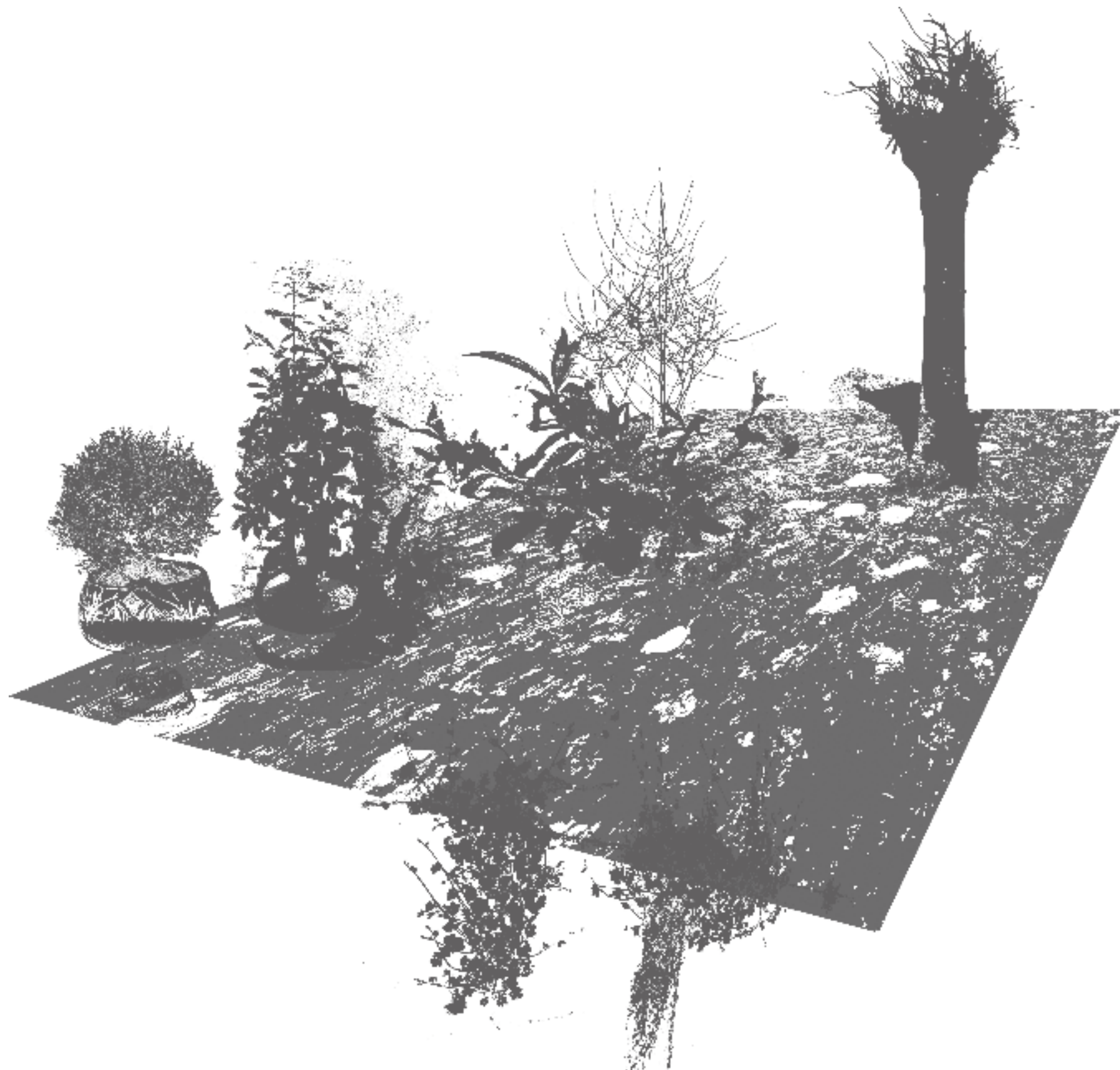
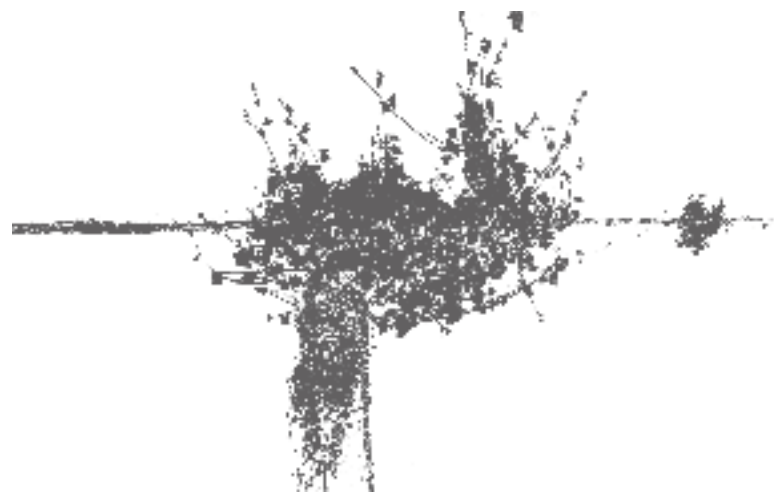
MARYGATE

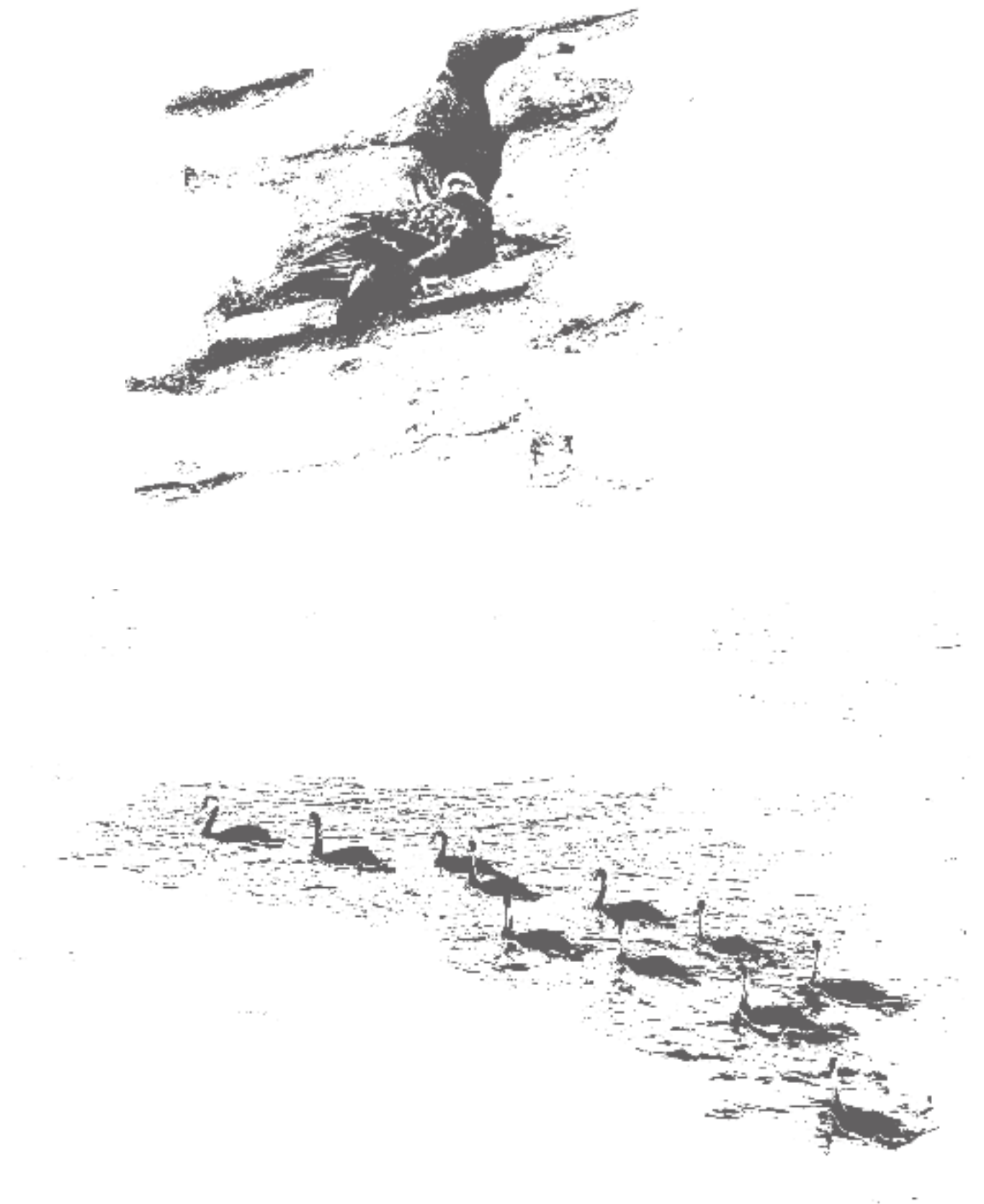
WALKERGATE

STREET









Tweed & Silk

A Public Realm Strategy for Berwick-upon-Tweed
Appendices

05



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Section 5

- A **Report on Consultations** *Exhibition boards and feedback*
- B **20 Year Costed Delivery Plan to include**
 - Map of target sites for improvement
 - A ‘street by street’ audit identifying locations of street furniture and a range of costed mini projects ready for action over the next 20 years
 - Outline Costs for Selected Sample Sites



