



Date: Monday, 8 March 2021

Time: 1.00 pm

Venue: THIS IS A VIRTUAL MEETING - PLEASE USE THE LINK ON THE AGENDA TO LISTEN TO THE MEETING

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CABINET

TO FOLLOW REPORT (S)

8 Strategic Development Framework (Pages 1 - 60)

Lead Member – Councillor Steve Charmley – Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Assets, Economic Growth and Regeneration

Report of Director of Place, attached (**Appendix A Attached**)

Contact: Mark Barrow 01743 258916

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Smithfield Riverside

Development Framework



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This document has been prepared and checked in accordance with ISO 9001:2015

Foreword

I am delighted to launch the Smithfield Riverside Strategic Development Framework, which stands as a true milestone in the delivery of an investible masterplan for the future of Shrewsbury.

Shrewsbury is a beautiful town, which is at the very heart of Shropshire. It is steeped in history, which is still alive today, coupled with a modern entertainment and social scene which truly makes it a fantastic place to be.

You can walk down historic winding streets lined with its unique mix of independent traders, vibrant bars and restaurants, admire the beauty of Shrewsbury Castle and the world-famous Quarry park and immerse yourself in a diverse mix of leisure and cultural activities.

This framework will ensure we foster exemplary and creative development within the town, sensitively building on its heritage and its wonderful sense of place, whilst embracing the challenges, and opportunities of climate change to shape a sustainable future for Shrewsbury.

Smithfield Riverside will strengthen our cultural offer and attract people to a unique and enviable setting that truly celebrates the River Severn.

As Shropshire Council owns much of the Riverside we are in the driving seat to lead on its redevelopment and ensure it provides an exemplar for developers wishing to invest in our very special county town.

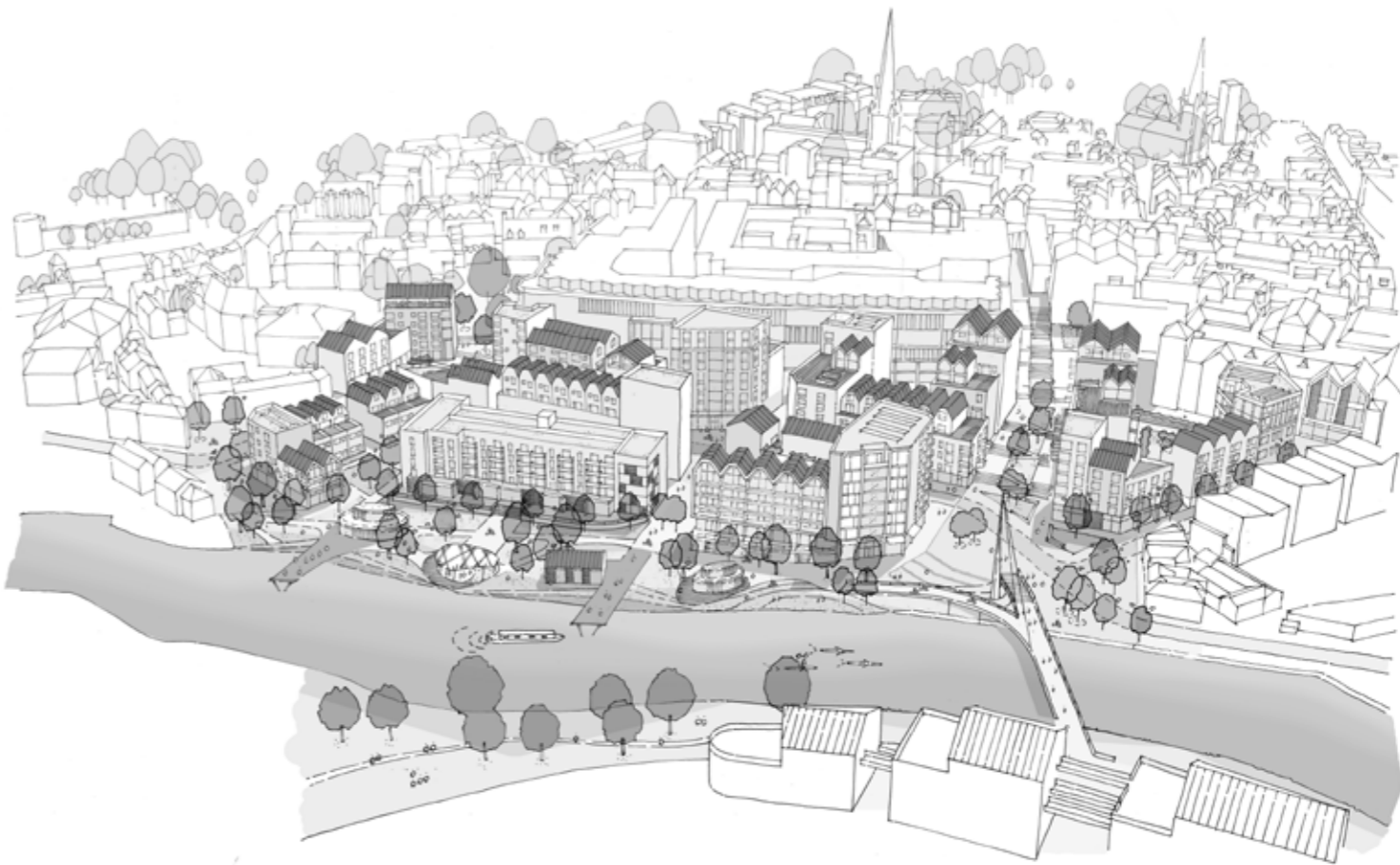
It will provide a step change in delivering the Big Town Plan's aspirations, in supporting economic growth across culture, leisure, tourism and business and place the local community at the heart of its future

This is one of the most significant opportunities for Shrewsbury in a generation and we cannot let it pass. It will make Shrewsbury a place for communities to flourish and businesses to grow.

I welcome the Smithfield Riverside strategic development framework and look forward to its delivery I look forward to hearing your views as we move forward.



*Councillor Steve Charmley,
Deputy Leader and Portfolio
Holder for Assets, Economic
Growth and Regeneration*





1.0 Introduction

Smithfield Riverside is an ambitious plan for the regeneration of the Smithfield Shopping Centre and surrounding area. The site has the potential to not only to transform this unloved site, but to act as a catalyst for regeneration and growth of the whole of Shrewsbury. Smithfield Riverside will truly capitalise on the strategic advantages afforded by its setting and its proximity to the railway station, to become a distinctive and vibrant mixed-use neighbourhood that will become a centre-piece of Shrewsbury's economic and residential growth.

LDA Design were appointed by Shropshire Council to develop a Development Framework to define a vision that will realise the significant potential the site provides. The Development Framework will form the basis for Shropshire Council to bring forward the transformational potential of Smithfield Riverside.

As well as setting out a bold vision for Smithfield Riverside, the Development Framework also outlines expected regeneration outcomes and establishes key placemaking and design principles for the site. Smithfield Riverside forms a key step in the delivery of the Shrewsbury Big Town Plan (BTP). The Development Framework is fully aligned with the BTP to ensure that strategic regeneration of the town continues to be planned holistically and maximises potential for delivery.

The site has the potential to not only to transform this unloved site, but to also act as a catalyst for regeneration and growth of the whole of the town centre.

right Castle Street and Castle Gate is filled with independent services, one of which is The Shrewsbury Coffeehouse.



below One of the town's key landmarks, historic Market Hall on Shrewsbury Square.



left Saint Alkmunds Church is another of the key landmarks of Shrewsbury, located at the fringe of the town centre.



left Dough & Oil is one of the most popular independent food&beverage located on the top of Castle Street.

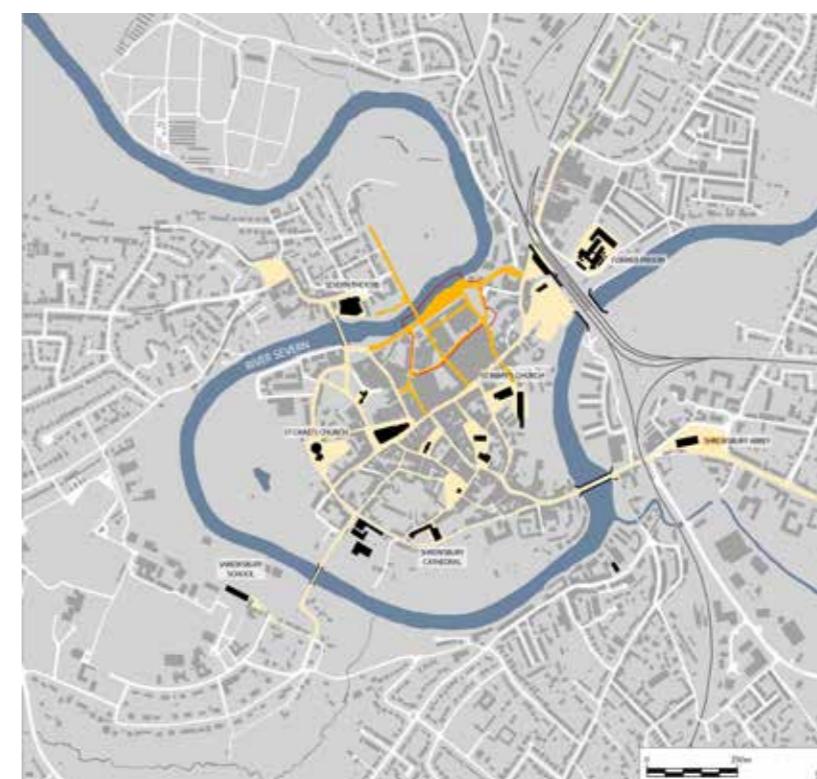


1.1 The Site

Smithfield Riverside lies within the River Severn loop to the north of Shrewsbury's retail core. The site is situated near to Shrewsbury's railway station and is home to the town's bus station. The site is bound by the River Severn to the north-west and the Darwin Shopping Centre and Pride Hill Shopping Centre to the south-east and is largely defined by Smithfield Road and Raven Meadows which run the perimeter of the site.

The 4 hectare (approx.) site is in the ownership of Shropshire Council and currently occupied by the Riverside Shopping Centre, a multi-storey car park, a bus station, a police station, a hotel (the Premier Inn) and a health centre. Whilst the site is largely occupied, there are several units within the Riverside Shopping Centre which are vacant, some of which have been re-purposed as arts studios, and many of the buildings are in poor condition. To maximise the potential of the

site and its waterfront setting the SDF encompasses the banks of the River Severn and the Smithfield Footbridge to the north of Smithfield Road. In addition, the work undertaken has had full consideration of the neighbouring areas including the Darwin Shopping Centre and Frankwell.



left Development of Smithfield Riverside will "complete" Shrewsbury's network of established landmark spaces and destinations.

It will providing improved links and connectivity and through high quality and pedestrian friendly public realm.



1.2 A Changing Place

Smithfield Riverside has evolved over the centuries, from a burial ground and a cattle market to the largely underused shopping centre that forms the site today. Prior to its use as a cattle market the site remained a functioning flood plain of the River Sever, outside of the historic town walls. The market was purpose built in 1850 to facilitate ever increasing trade of livestock during the mid-19th century when Shrewsbury sat at the heart of this industry.

The site, at this time, sat at the heart of the town as a place of trade, movement and activity. This energy has unfortunately since been lost as the site has been overcome by highways, underutilised retail, car parking and sub-standard buildings.

Over the years the site has struggled to capitalise on its enviable waterfront setting and proximity to the railway station and the town centre.

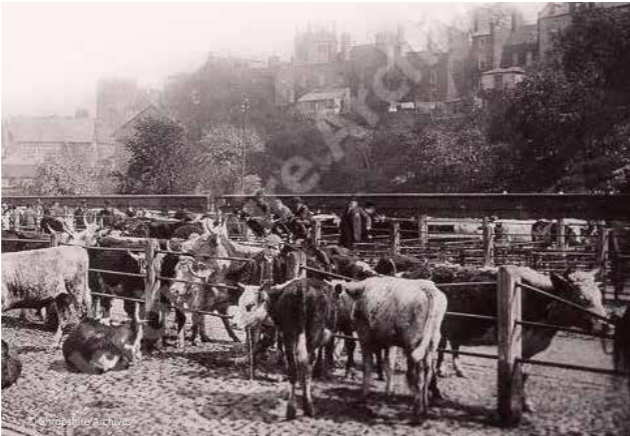
This framework sets out a vision which reconnects the area with the town and place a vibrant place at the heart.



View of Former Shrewsbury Smithfield Cattle Market, 1932



River Sever from Frankwell footbridge, 1993



Smithfield Cattle Market



1540s

The basic form and structure of the town centre has altered very little since medieval times. The street pattern remains largely intact and important and prominent buildings, spaces and landmarks such as historic churches, the castle and market hall continue to direct and orient visitors and residents alike.

Medieval



© National Library of Wales



1892 - 1914

In all of these historic plans it can be seen that Raven Meadows, Roushill and the area that we call Riverside has remained largely free of built development until the mid-19th Century when it was utilised for a cattle market.

This was presumably as a result of the marshy ground and regular flooding as well as the dramatic natural change in level behind Pride Hill. There are historic records of this area having been drained and levels raised in order to make it usable.



© Antiqua Print Gallery



1930s

1949 - 1968

Very little changed until the construction of the three shopping centres in the last decades of the 20th Century. From an aerial view it is clear that their bulk, massing and scale are at odds with the patterns and form of the medieval town centre.

Their large footprints that extend out from the back of Pride Hill have created bulky, over-scaled buildings that now dominate Raven Meadows and the Riverside as well as views across the River from the North.



© Google

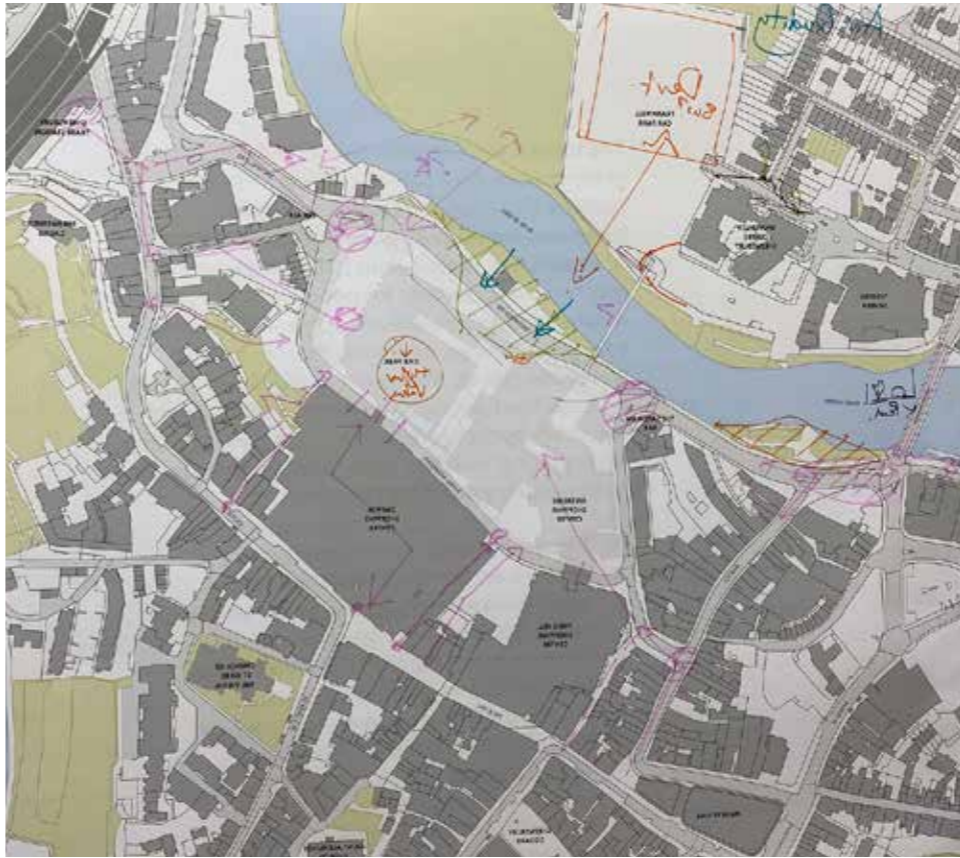
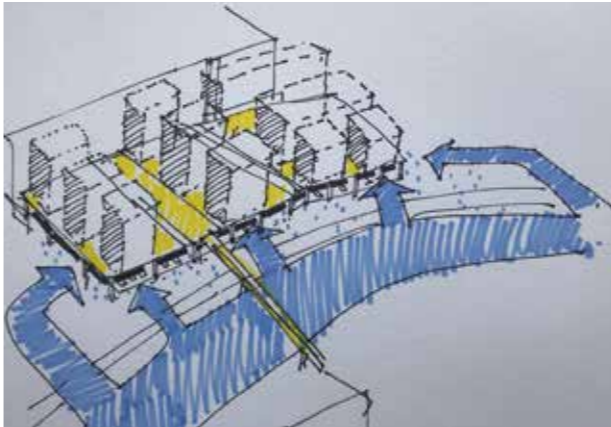
Present

1.3 Evolution of the Framework

This plan has been developed alongside key stakeholders and the community. Framed around the Big Draw, a two-day design workshop, stakeholders and the general public were invited to shape ideas for the site and create a working vision for the site.

Through this vision LDA Design and Shropshire Council have created a deliverable framework which reflects the needs and aspirations of Shrewsbury.

Further details of the engagement used to shape the masterplan outcomes are provided within the accompanying baseline assessment, which is provided separately to this report.



left and above A selection of images and sketches from the Shrewsbury Riverside "Big Draw" held in March 2020

1.4 Planning & Regeneration Context

The regeneration of Smithfield Riverside is supported by a robust planning context formed by the Core Strategy and SAMDev Plan. Policy CS2 of the Core Strategy outlines the site as a redevelopment priority for the county, outlining the development of the site must have full regard of flood impact across the site.

The site is framed by the wider town centre vision (the Big Town Plan) which supports the delivery of a mixed use waterfront destination. This SDF is also cognisant to the West Midlands Combined Authority Design Charter which aims to deliver characterful, connected, resilient and healthy places within the region.

The site has had several planning applications associated with it and in 2012 a proposal for the comprehensive redevelopment of the Riverside site as another shopping centre was approved. The proposal created significant amounts of retail, leisure and food & beverage on the site accessed via an elevated walkway which linked into the Darwin and Pride Hill Shopping Centres at level 3.

Ultimately, the anchor tenant withdrew which resulted in the development never being implemented.

Over the last three years Shrewsbury has been the focus of an ambitious plan for growth, driven forward by the Big Town Plan. This plan outlined a series of regeneration priorities for the town, which included the regeneration of Smithfield Riverside. The plan has since been progressed in 2020 to drive forward the aspirations of the original Big Town Plan. A key driver of both these plans has been to create balanced growth and enhance the place.

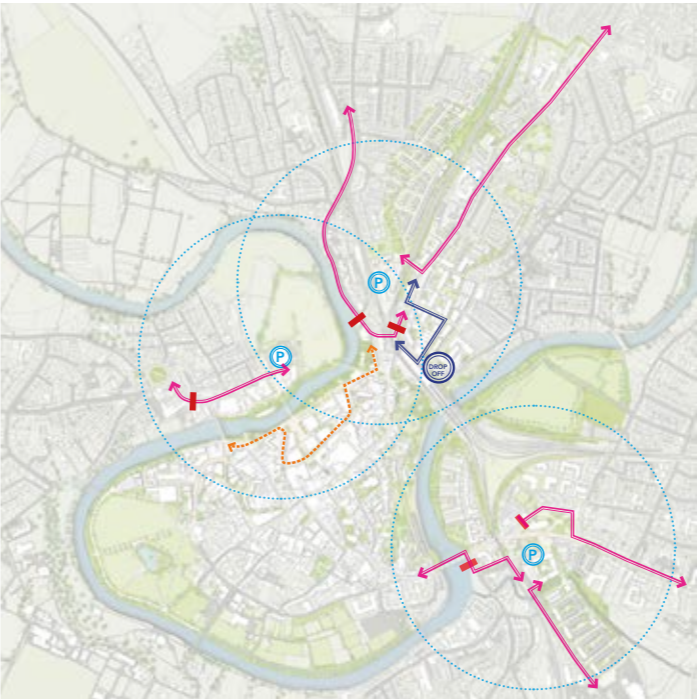
Smithfield Riverside remains part of a town wide approach to growth which divides the town into six character areas.

The plan outlines that, alongside Frankwell, Smithfield Riverside is key to unlocking some of the significant improvements in Shrewsbury, whilst overcoming the challenging topographical and flooding issues in the area.

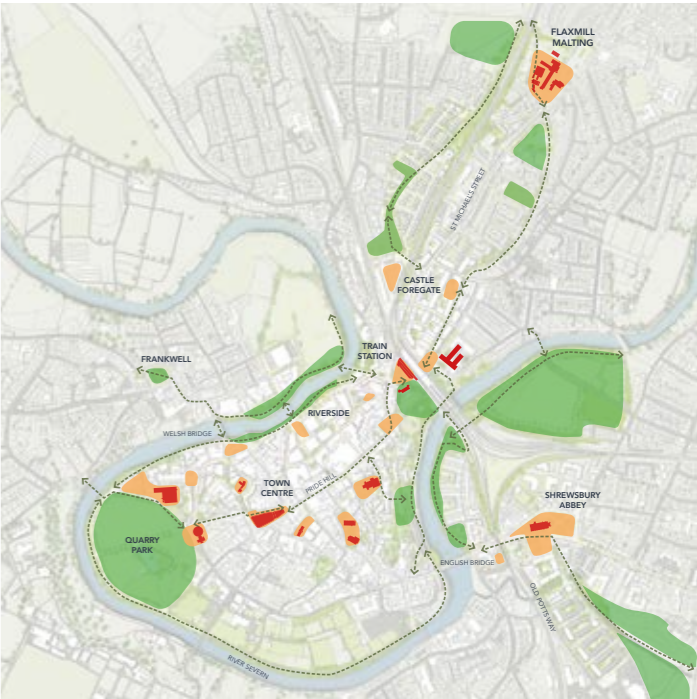
The plan outlines a set of aspirations for the site which have been aligned with the work undertaken by LDA Design:

- Vibrant new living, leisure and work destination with a riverside setting, which is connected to the historic town centre, Station Square and Quarry Park.
- Riverside Park and new public spaces which put the river at the heart of the masterplan.
- Re-routing of traffic from Smithfield Road to enable safer, quality pedestrian and cycle routes along a riverside green park.
- Regenerating north riverbank car park site to sensitive high-quality mix used developments
- Improve Frankwell roundabout green setting.

Opposite The "Big Moves" as taken from from the Big Town Plan Masterplan Vision 2020

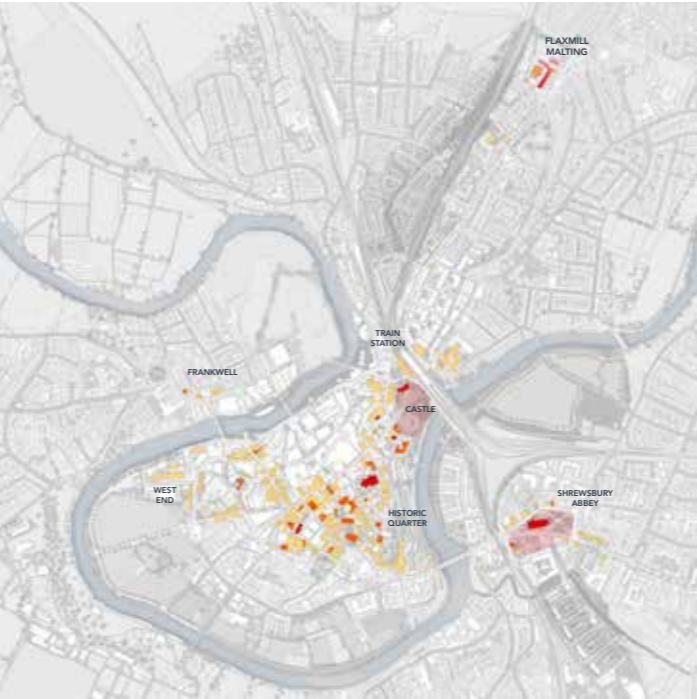


above Big Move #1 Connecting Communities. Creating connections between existing and new communities /neighbourhood throughout the town with quality streets and green/blue corridors for both pedestrian and cyclists.



above Big Move #2 Quality & Characterful Public Spaces. Revitalising the existing spaces and natural assets, while adding new characterful spaces to ensure connectivity and linkages between local landmarks.

below Big Move #3 Celebrating Heritage. Enhancing the setting, creating new vistas of the town's unique heritage assets and embracing local character, whilst ensuring buildings with historic value are protected regardless listed or not.



below Big Move #4 Creating Opportunities & Growth. Creating viable and sustainable development opportunities, bringing further mix, life and vitality into the town centre. The balanced growth should be carried out throughout the six study areas.





1.5 Challenges & Opportunities

Smithfield Riverside poses many challenges and opportunities when it comes to the design and delivery of the site. A detailed baseline analysis, which provides a full appreciation of key facets of the site which have driven the outcomes of this framework, is appended to this document.

This section outlines the key challenges and opportunities that have shaped this framework and must be considered when driving forward this huge opportunity for Shrewsbury.

The site faces a number of challenges which this SDF seeks to respond to and confront through a considered and responsive masterplan outcome:

Flooding and Drainage

The site is susceptible to flooding and issues of a high water table means that hydrology of the site causes regular flooding issues on site. A hydrology report has been undertaken and forms part of the appendix to this report.

Dominated by Highways

There are significant amounts of busy and congested highways traversing the site which cause issues of permeability and create negative environments throughout the area, as well as dissecting the river front completely.

Service Routes

The Darwin and Pride Hill Shopping Centres require high levels of service access which creates negative and unsafe pedestrian areas along Raven Meadows, as well as bringing traffic through the site.

Impermeable Built Form

The Darwin Shopping Centre and Pride Hill create impenetrable built form which completely dissects the site from the rest of the town centre, save for very poorly designed and maintained pedestrian bridge and the 70 steps, an underused and unsafe set of steps meandering through the Darwin.

Topography

The site has significant level changes from Pride Hill which, in conjunction with the impermeable building line, creates a significant disconnect with the town centre.

Skyline Sensitivity and Heritage

The site is surrounded by several sensitive buildings and views which have been poorly treated by the current development on the site.

Ecology and Landscape

Apart from an inaccessible and small riverside park the site is completely devoid of any public open space and lacks any connection to the surrounding

beauty of the river and Frankwell beyond.

Existing Built Form

The site is dominated by 1960s concrete-built developments with a large imposing form offering little active frontage and permeability. The sites architecture and use are completely disconnected with the town centre and bring little to the vitality to the area.

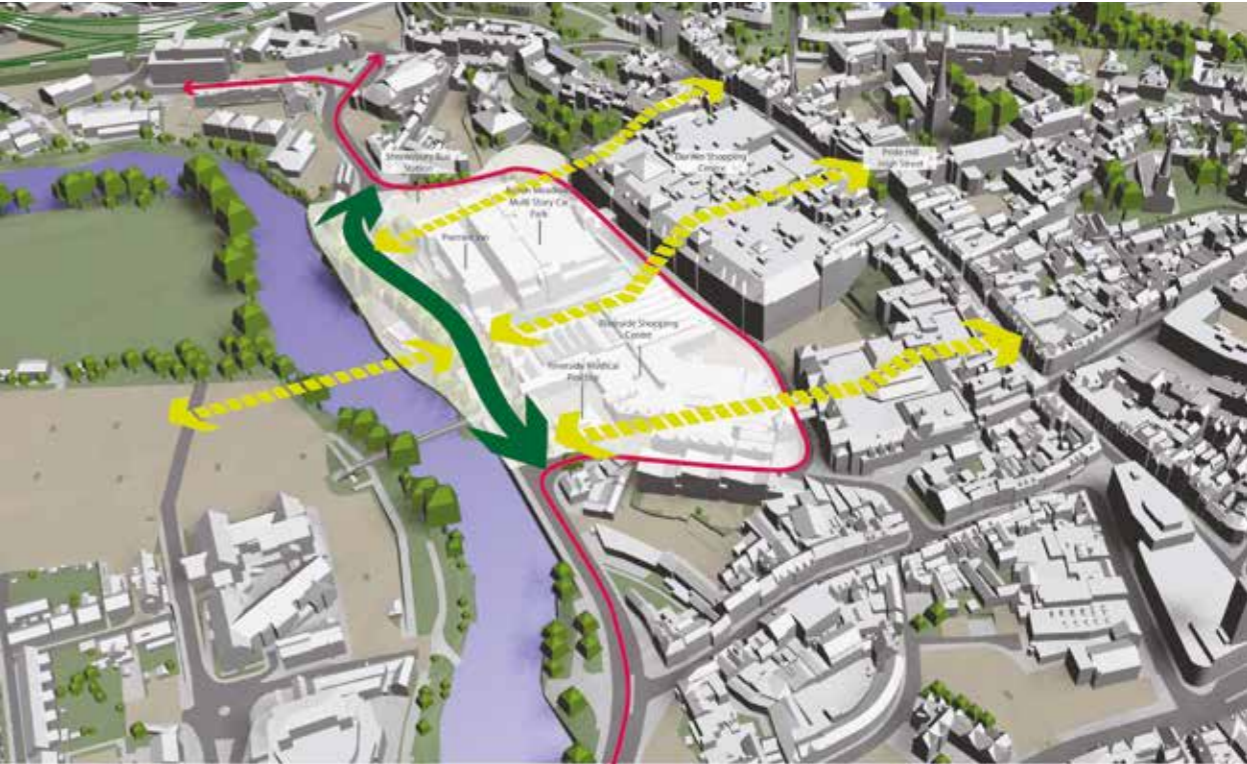
The Pedestrian Bridge

The existing footbridge bridge linking Riverside and Frankwell is not currently DDA compliant, being very narrow and elevated above the site. The current alignment and design misses key opportunities to create a distinctive and attractive pedestrian/ cycle access point into the town.

Viability & Delivery

The constraints present on site mean that viability and delivery need to be carefully considered for the site to ensure the future success of the site.

The pages overleaf present a series of site and contextual photographs demonstrating some of the challenges. The SDF, however, provides an opportunity to address these challenges head on, turning them into enabling constraints for the site.



above there are opportunities to improve connectivity and the environment of Smithfield Riverside by re-thinking movement



above the challenging topography of Smithfield Riverside presents a disconnection from Shrewsbury town centre



top View in north-east edge of the site from Smithfield Road towards south.



top right View of Raven Meadows facing north-east with the link between the parking and Darwin Shopping Centre above.



left Raven Meadows car park and original medieval town wall and Pride Hill retail units behind



right Entrance from Raven Meadows to the 70 steps link to Pride Hill.

right Back of Premier Inn hotel with service access and part of existing Riverside Shopping Centre.



right Frankwell footbridge facing Shrewsbury.



right River Sever towards east seen from Frankwell Footbridge with Riverside to the right.



below Smithfield Road facing east with Riverside Thai restaurant and tree alley alongside the road.

below View over the river towards River Thai restaurant with Premier Inn and Riverside Shopping Centre behind the trees.



below Back facade of Darwin Shopping Centre facing towards Raven Meadows with multi-storey car park to the left and exit staircase from Riverside Shopping Centre.



2.0 The Vision for Smithfield Riverside

2.1 The Vision

The key purpose of the SDF is to achieve a design and place-led approach for the site, which is underpinned by delivery. The vision for Smithfield Riverside is therefore ambitious, but ultimately deliverable.

This SDF outlines a flexible framework for the design and delivery of development on the site. It has been shaped through an engaged and iterative design process which has tested the capacity for change across the it. On the following pages we outline the framework for Smithfield Riverside, which includes:

- **A vision statement**, outlining the aspiration for the future of the site and its function as a place and as part of Shrewsbury
- **Regeneration objectives**, which together with the vision should drive forward all change associated with the site;
- **Core design principles** which all proposals should adopt when approaching the design and delivery of the site, and any associated work;

The design and delivery of Smithfield Riverside is ultimately guided by the Big Town Plan which sets a bold vision for the future growth of Shrewsbury.

This delivery of this site, therefore, must clearly respond to the objectives and goals set out within the Plan. The Big Town Plan outlines the key priorities for the town.

These priorities and objectives have acted as a golden thread through this SDF to inform the vision and strategic objectives for Smithfield Riverside set out on the following pages.

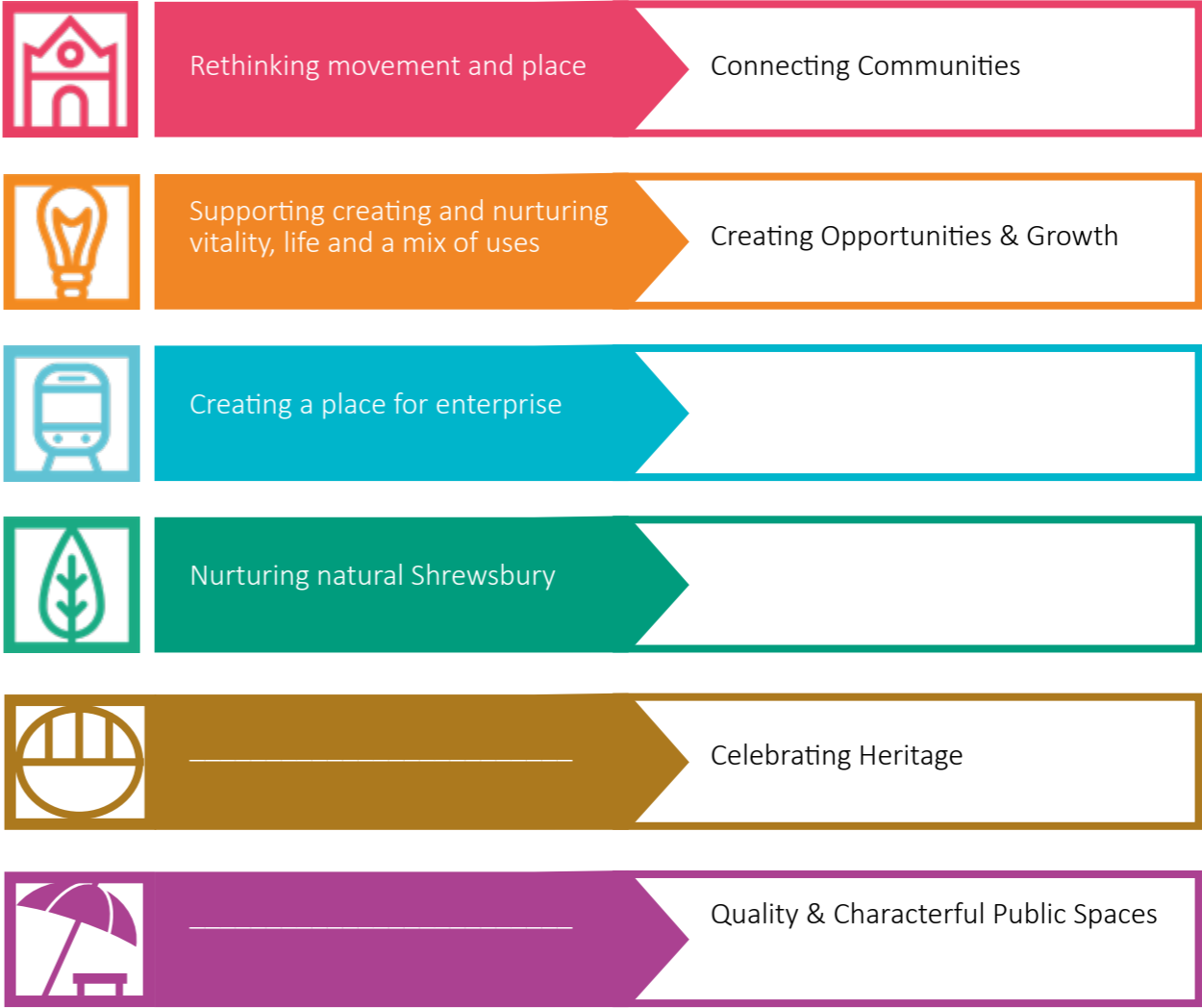
The SDF concludes with an illustrative masterplan to demonstrate how these principles can be achieved on the site as it progresses through the planning and delivery stages.

Whilst this masterplan is not a fixed proposal it sets out a distinctive, place-led approach which should be considered as a benchmark as the delivery of the site is taken forward.

*"HIGH the vanes of Shrewsbury gleam
Islanded in Severn stream;
The bridges from the steeped crest;
Cross the water east and west." ¹*

BTP 2018

BTP 2020



above the Big Town Plan goals, 2018 and 2020 are directly reflected in the regeneration objectives for Smithfield Riverside

Celebrating the jewel in the Severn stream: the evolution of Smithfield Riverside



Page 16

For more than a thousand years the dramatic loop of the River Severn has inscribed Shrewsbury's historic centre. As Shrewsbury grows over the next few decades, it must adapt to the climate emergency and to the rapidly evolving patterns of living, working and leisure. The town centre will grow too, possibly beyond the loop of the river, and over time, it will evolve. Its attractions are manifest, everything set within a short walk or cycle, marked by wonderful buildings, streets and public spaces, increasingly traffic-free, and every part framed by river. It is the picture of an extra-ordinary **zero-carbon place**.


In our vision for Smithfield Riverside this part of town **dramatically changes its role**. A part of the town, that has largely been forgotten about for centuries, suddenly takes centre stage, becoming a **unique destination** within this wonderful historic town. **The river is the destination, where Smithfield Gardens replaces a busy road**, where what was the back of the town, now becomes the routen to a dramatic new bridge over the river to Frankwell. An area that has always been vulnerable to flooding is now designed to be more **resilient and adaptable** such events.


It will be distinctive but **deeply rooted in Shrewsbury**, reflecting its character and knitting into its everyday life. It will be a pleasure to walk or cycle in Riverside, whether you are just passing through or, more likely, you are dwelling in its many **high quality public spaces** or dipping your toes in the River Severn. Riverside will be a place where **visitors and residents will be drawn to**, making the most of its fantastic river setting and its **many cafés bars and restaurants**. A place for **businesses** to lay down roots and grow, as well as for **communities** to flourish in a vibrant town centre setting.

What better opportunity will there be to live and work and spend your leisure time in an entirely new part of the town centre, with everything you need.


2.2 Regeneration Objectives


CELEBRATE THE RIVER SEVERN, making the most of the fantastic natural waterfront setting providing opportunities for biodiversity through the site and ensuring the site responds to and is resilient to flooding.



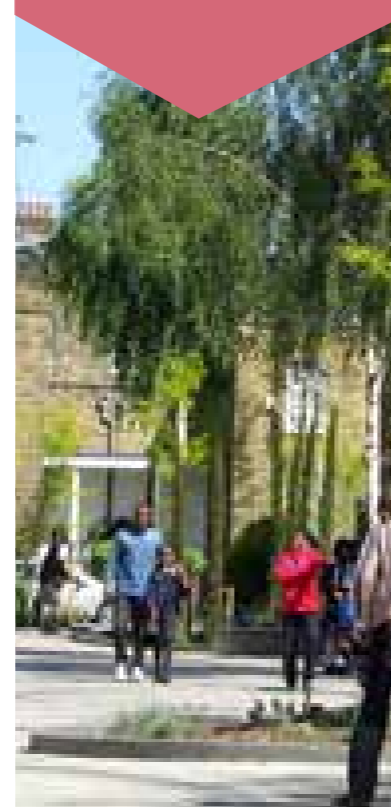



INNOVATIVE & SUSTAINABLE, a design which embraces new technology and contemporary design to deliver sustainability and distinctiveness, representing a positive future and spearheading innovation in Shrewsbury.







MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS, a highly connected site which knits seamlessly into the town centre and the surround urban context







RESILIENT TO CHANGE, delivering an adaptable plan which can respond is resilient to economic and environmental change







CHARACTERFUL & DISTINCTIVE, achieving distinctive modern design which responds to the unique character of Shrewsbury







PEDESTRIAN-LED, a place which is designed for and prioritises pedestrians and cyclists over vehicles





A HIGHLY LIVEABLE TOWN CENTRE, contribute towards a town centre with a vibrant mixed use community and delivers an excellent quality of life within a beautiful urban setting.







3.0 Core Design Principles



Development on Smithfield Riverside will be underpinned by the design principles in the following pages. These principles set out how the site should be designed and delivered in the future and provide the framework for how the our masterplan has been shaped.

Above all the overarching aim of the principles is to deliver a place which is forward thinking, sustainable, future proof and distinctively Shrewsbury. The accompanying images suggest ways of responding to the principles which are grouped into categories that intend to address the following:

- **Built form and layout** - establish a contextual approach to the urban grain and architectural character.
- **Movement and access** - prioritise pedestrian connectivity, active travel and public transport.
- **Use and activity** - create a liveable place with life and vitality.
- **Spaces and streets** - form spaces which are high quality, landscaped and convivial.
- **Environment and climate** - respond to local and global changing climate conditions.



above 17th Century view of Shrewsbury

3.1 Built Form and Layout

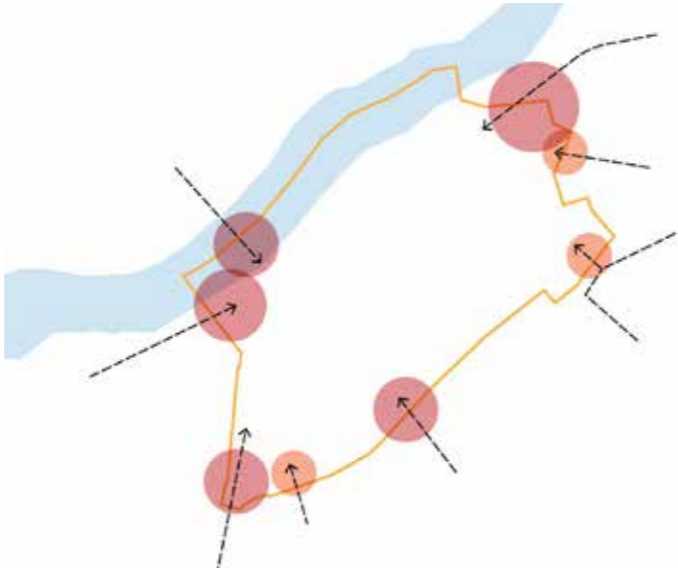
The form and layout of any emerging masterplan must respond to the specific characteristics of the site and its surrounding context. The following sets out key principles related to the architectural form and layout of Smithfield Riverside.

Page 20
Layout and Streetscape

The layout of the site will be critical in how the site is accessed and people's experience of the place. The architecture and form of the place should encourage positive pedestrian movement, with key obstacles movement mitigated through the plan. The layout of Smithfield Riverside must be reflective of the surrounding townscape in order to knit the site seamlessly into the town centre, whilst delivering a network of vibrant streets and spaces which are positively framed by the built form.

- The street layout should continue the historic urban grain of the surrounding area, offering an offset grid pattern which is responsive to the medieval form.

- Development proposals should establish permeable perimeter blocks which are framed by well-defined and activated pedestrian and vehicular corridors through the site.
- The layout of the street pattern should take full account of long-distance views of the town centre, including views of the Castle, St Marys and St Alkmunds.
- Key existing and potential gateways into the site should be well defined by public spaces and high-quality built form to create a positive sense of arrival



above key arrival points and routes to Smithfield Riverside

- A distinctive hierarchy of arrival points should be defined and well-framed:
 - Frankwell Bridge
 - Darwin/ Pride Hill
 - Roushill
 - Smithfield Road/Railway Station
 - Smithfield Road/ Mardol
 - Castle Quarter (Castle Court & Castle Street via the Shropshire Archives)
- A mixture of active frontages should be provided throughout the site, responding to key spaces throughout the site.



above adapting a rigid street grid towards a more traditional street pattern to reflect historic form and vibrant street scene



Scale and Massing

The built form of the site should provide an attractive blend of scale arranged around a massing approach that knits into the wider town centre. The resultant fine urban grain achieved through sensitive scale and massing will reflect the experience of the rest of the town, where tight medieval streets frame views of key corners and give way to attractive views of key landmarks.

The following principles should be adopted when considering scale, density and massing on Smithfield Riverside.

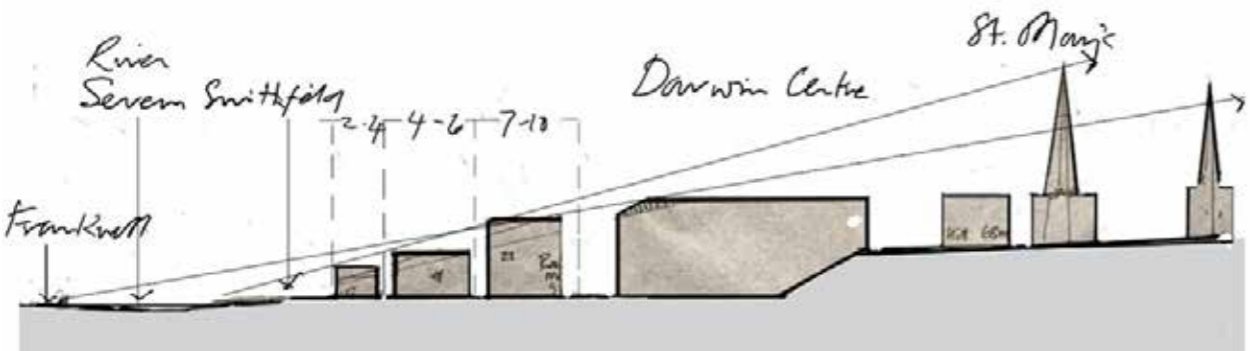
- Masterplans should deliver outcomes which is reflective of the dense medieval urban grain of the rest of Shrewsbury
- Density around the waterfront should provide relief to open up views and create open space to enjoy the river setting
- Development should respect the scale, proportions and style of adjacent buildings and ensure that proposals respond appropriately.
- Building height should directly respond to surrounding built form to ensure development is responsive to the immediate and wider townscape, however scope for buildings of scale is encouraged where design quality is achieved in a sensitive manner.
- Tall buildings should be located on key arrival points and corners within the site to enhance legibility and mirror

the roofscape of the surround Medieval roofscape.

- The massing of the site should avoid large, impermeable blocks
- Scale should generally be located to the centre and rear of the site, where it meets the Darwin Shopping Centre, with scale largely stepping down towards the river edge and the key arrival points at Roushill and Meadow Place/Raven Meadow.
- Buildings should address streets positively to encourage pedestrian and cycle movement. Design should ensure that they do not overly dominate the street scene, so as not to compromise quality in terms of daylight, sunlight or overshadowing. For example, the street width to building height ratio should be

no more than 1:1.5 to ensure that buildings are of a human scale.

- Developers should undertake daylight-sunlight studies to gain a comprehensive understanding of the issues of overshadowing and ensure that adjacent occupiers are not adversely affected.
- Introduce gaps in the massing at all levels as appropriate to avoid relentless datum and create articulated and varied massing.
- Use a mix of scale and massing to create a legible built form and varied townscape. Proposals should provide scale at key areas including market/ landmark buildings, wayfinding corners and gateways.
- Where perimeter blocks are proposed, designs should ensure that the development addresses and responds to the scale of the street.
- Tall buildings should consider active ground floor uses and an appropriate set back or gap at the fourth floor to deliver a human scale.
- Proposals should tackle changes in level positively by accommodating scale at appropriate locations and subsequently opening views of the River throughout the site.



above change in level and views informing massing and scale strategy

below delivering sensitive and place responsive scale in an urban environment



Building Composition and Articulation

The built form and the public realm should work harmoniously within Smithfield Riverside, delivering an inviting and logical place for all. The standard architectural convention of a base, middle, top should be applied to buildings proposed across the site.

Base:

- The buildings should be grounded, creating a sense of permanence and presence. Articulated through a regular, repeating bay rhythm or through a more solid elevations with emphasised openings and activation

- Any inactive frontage (including ventilation and extraction grilles) must be treated with high quality detailing and materials.
- Ensure any car and cycle parking is well designed and integrated into the development.

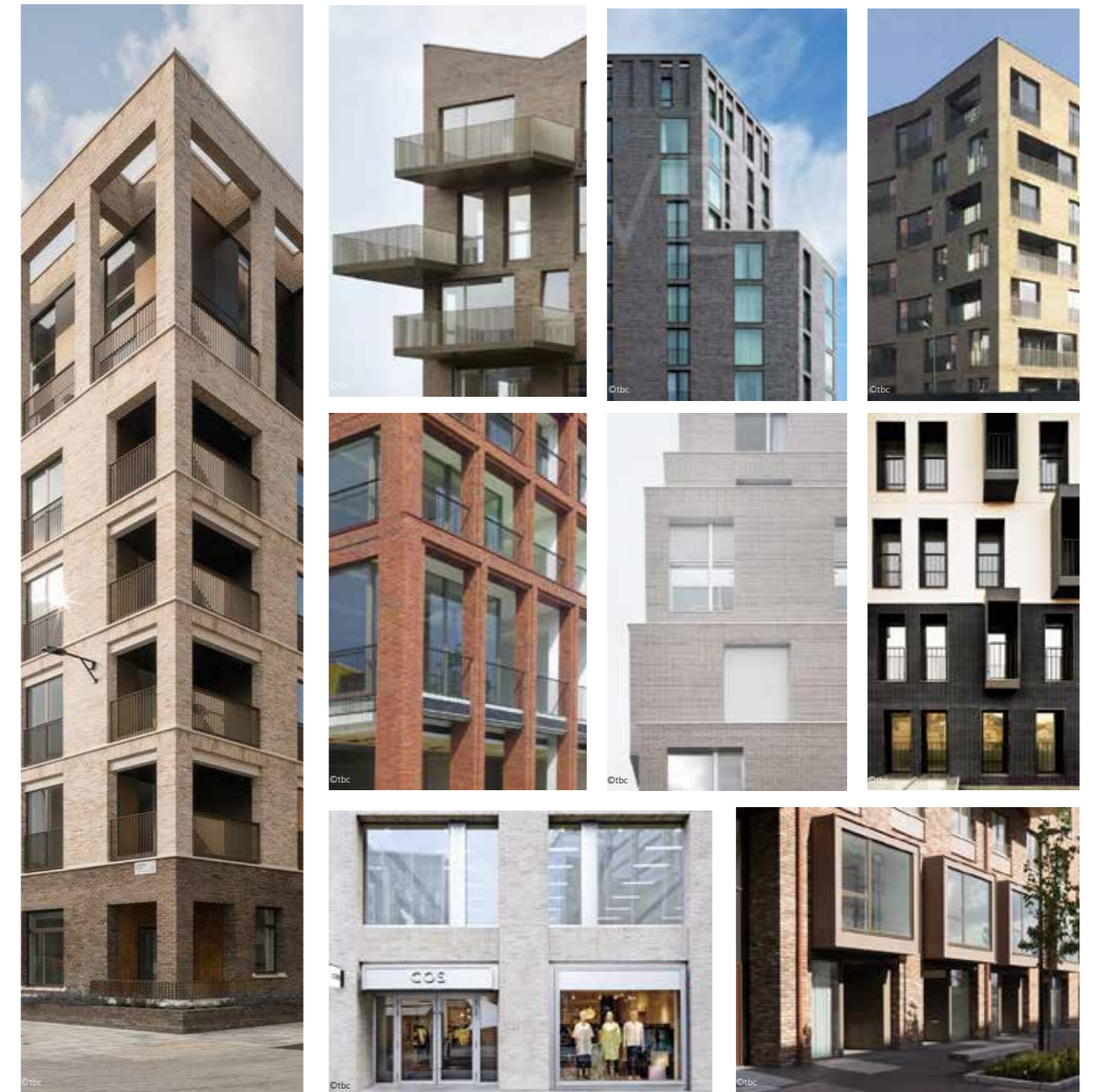
Middle:

- The middle section of the buildings should use of an elevational grid to respond to either residential or commercial uses, expressed as simple repetition or express bays.

Top:

- Options to terminate the buildings to the sky should include elevation rhythm change, crown, hipped corners, or decorative cap.

- Modern reinterpretations of the traditional pitched roof house is encouraged in order to retain the existing character of the town centre.
- Use recessed upper floors of terraces, where appropriate, to create a more articulated roofscape and reduce the impact of the building on the street.
- Any rooftop plant must be screened or more actively integrated into the architecture.



above well proportioned and legible built form

Roofscape

The roofscape of Shrewsbury is one its key defining features and offers an excellent example of Medieval townscape. Design proposals for the site should directly respond to this through the design of its roofscape.

The development should offer an articulated and varied roofscape. Its new skyline should be in-keeping with Shrewsbury’s unique character and avoid relentless and extensive horizontal datum.

The composition of the Riverside development roofscapes may include:

- Modern interpretation of the traditional pitched roofs
- Flat roofs if carefully considered and with integrated accessible landscaped terraces
- Saw tooth roof
- Articulated set back
- Recessed amenity space



above Shrewsbury's distinctive roofscape



above visually interesting and contextual roofscape approach

Materials

Materiality should be the common thread between the buildings, but the variety and the architectural interest should be delivered through a distinctive materials palette, whilst also being in keeping with adjacent buildings and the character and appearance of the town centre and its conservation area. Importantly this should not limit itself to replication of historic architectural style or material and, instead, seek to take inspiration from its characterful surroundings.

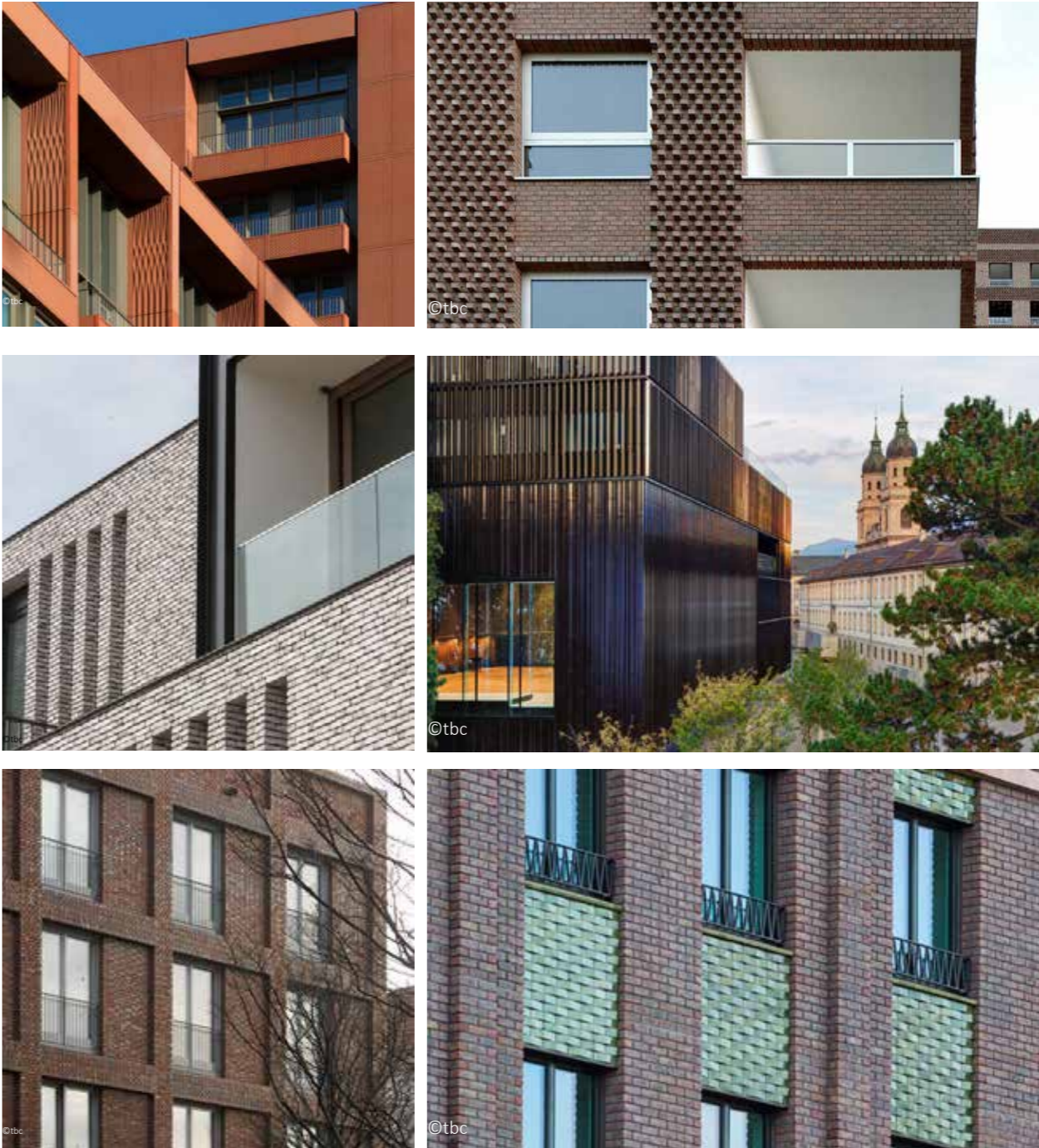
The overall impression should instil a sense of permanence and longevity.

- A simple and restrained palette of primary materials should be employed, taking inspiration from the local materials predominately formed from red brick or sandstone.

- Contemporary language can be acceptable where derived from contextual analysis, resulting in a scheme of good design.
- The detailing of interfaces between materials must be considered to create sense of quality.
- Masonry should be used as the primary facing material for new development, other materials can also be considered if there is a strong justification.
- Lightweight composite systems and low-quality materials should be avoided
- Secondary elements such as windows, metalwork, balconies, signage and screens should be considered as an opportunity to introduce craft and refined ornament in the design of the buildings, celebrating the unique character of Shrewsbury.



above prevelant materials in Shrewsbury town centre



above articulation of brickwork and contemporary materials

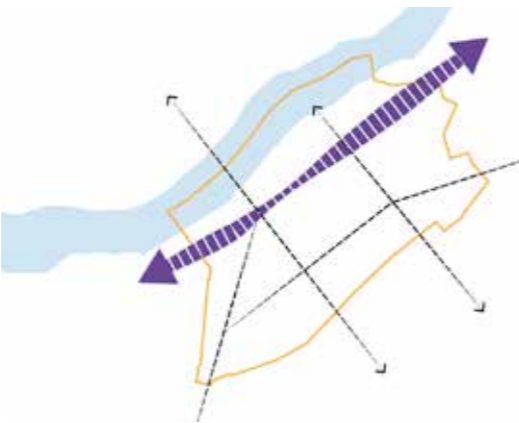
3.2 Movement and Access

Smithfield Riverside will become a highly connected, low traffic quarter within Shrewsbury, with a primary focus on pedestrians, cyclists and public transport.

The development of Smithfield Riverside will significantly enhance movement through the area for pedestrians, as well as increase access into the site from the surrounding areas of Frankwell and the town centre. Servicing and vehicle access through the site will be integrated to allow sustainable movement through the town centre.

- Proposals should consider the role of Smithfield Road and Raven Meadows strategically to reduce the amount of movement which currently permeates across the site and reduce the severance that these routes cause.
- Change the alignment of Smithfield Road to improve public access to the River Severn and beyond to Frankwell, as well as into the site at its perimeter.

right strong east-west connection supported by town centre links and cut through



- Enhance access into the site for pedestrians and cyclists at the key arrival points outlined previously.
- Tackle changes of level to ensure people of all abilities are able to access the site with ease
- Create clearly defined, safe walk and cycle routes into and through the site with primary corridors into the site from Frankwell and along the river front.
- Improve the existing river crossing experience from Frankwell on foot and cycle.
- Provide high quality bus stops within the development, well-integrated with key walking routes. Bus interchange and layover is accommodated elsewhere in the town.
- Ensure site is fully accessible for servicing, including servicing of adjacent properties including the two shopping centres and third-party land on Raven Meadows, and emergency vehicles
- Remove on-street parking throughout the site and create accessible options for parking with the ultimate long-term aim for phased reduction or removal of car parking across the site.
- Maintain vehicular and cycle access along Roushill
- The site should be designed to accommodate and facilitate public transport movement through the area, with provision for a limited amount of stops to provide easy access into the site.



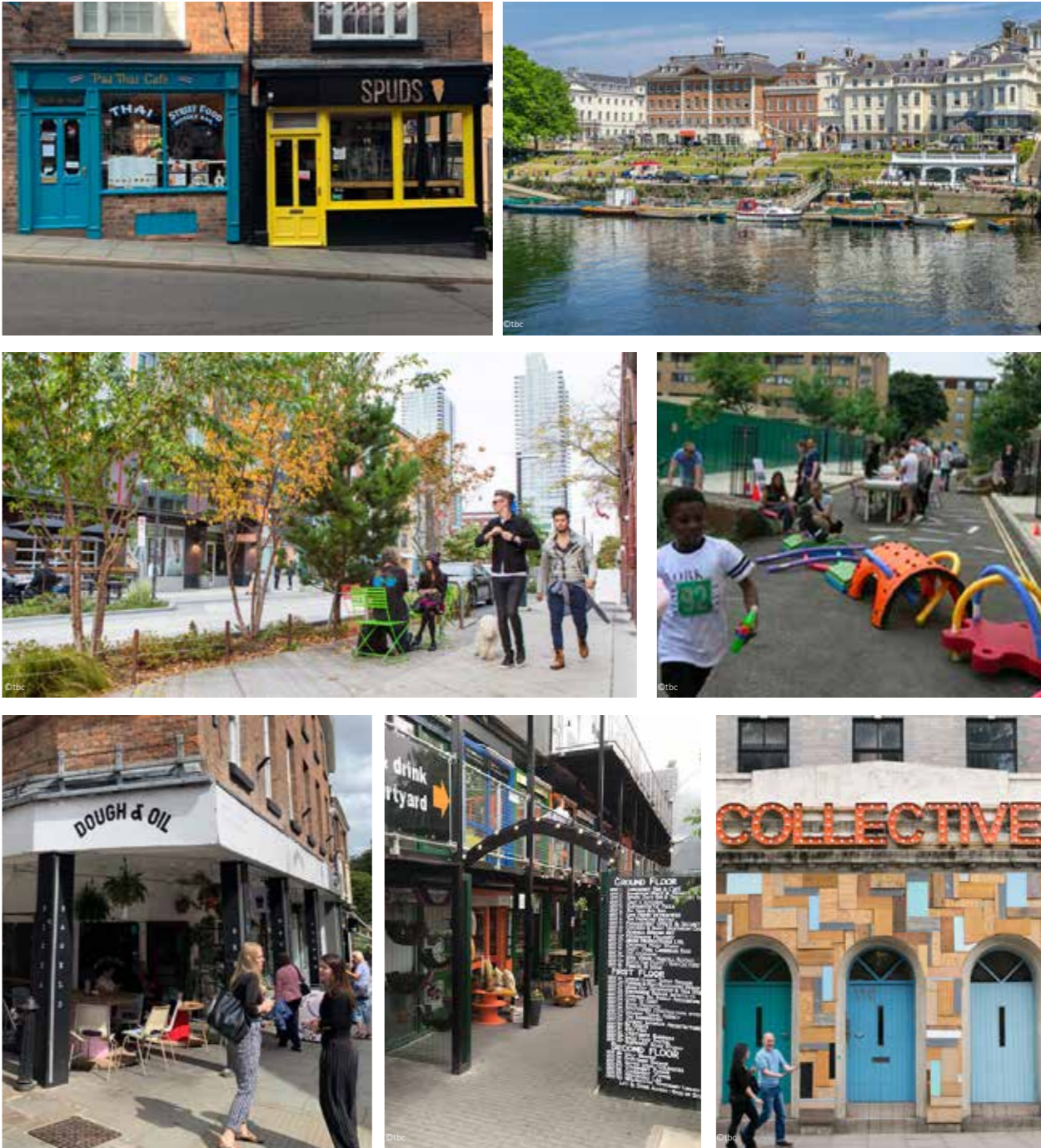
above pedestrian and cycle priority streets and spaces

3.3 Use and Activity

Smithfield Riverside will be a vibrant mixed-use destination within Shrewsbury offering a liveable and distinctive quarter for life to flourish in the town.

The success of Smithfield Riverside will be determined by the uses and activity that take place throughout the site. It will drive how people experience the place and the liveability of the town centre. The uses must make the most of their riverside location and compliment the rest of the town centre. The land use approach for the site should consider the following principles;

- Appropriate active land uses should frame key arrival points and pedestrian corridors into and through the site.
- The river front should be the focus of activity with primary leisure and commercial uses occupying this area.
- Land uses should consider adjacent and town-wide land use offers to ensure they compliment rather than compete.
- Phasing proposals should unlock opportunities for meanwhile/ temporary uses within the site.
- Uses should be compatible with the urban setting and form of the site, focussed around creating activity, footfall, and passive surveillance through the day.
- Ensure proposals respond to flood risk by elevating vulnerable land uses (e.g. residential) off the ground floor and accommodating less-vulnerable land uses below, ensuring active frontages are achieved where possible.



above vibrant mix of land uses creating a distinct commercial and residential character

3.4 Spaces and Streets

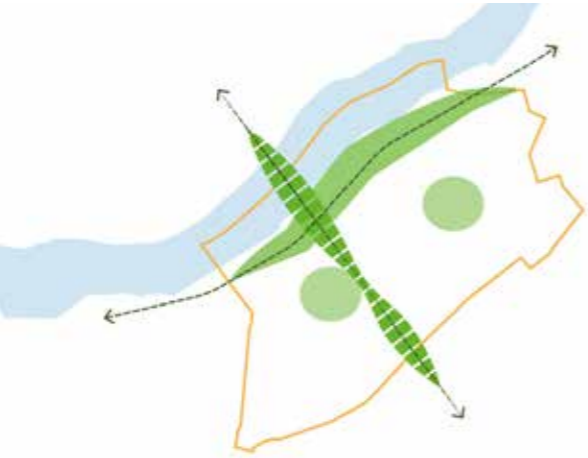
Smithfield Riverside will be a green and convivial place which connects to nature and the river via its streets.

The streets and spaces within Smithfield Riverside will attract people into and through the site to maximise street activity and guide people towards the river front. The place will become much more accessible and create a destination for pedestrians in the town.

The following principles should be considered for any development;

- A comprehensive hierarchy of high-quality public spaces should be provided throughout the site to reinforce pedestrian movement through the site
- The public realm should clearly link to surrounding public realm and green spaces to form part of a wider network
- Create a destination space at the river edge by re-routing Smithfield Road, which reflects the natural spaces at this location

- Create key public spaces at the defined arrival points within and at the edge of the site
- Create a balanced public realm across the site with a mix of high quality natural, landscaped, and urban public spaces
- Ensure high quality and robust materials throughout with local natural stone utilised
- Proposals should consider the provision of communal amenity space such as semi-private courtyards, ensuring communal amenity spaces are secure and well overlooked
- Provide private amenity space to all new residential units, including balconies which carefully considers the residential typology and orientation of the buildings
- Provide areas of defensible space or private front gardens, between the home and the street
- The design and implementation of street furniture should limit street clutter, rationalising signage.
- Lighting, access control and seating to create legible and accessible spaces



above green axis connecting to the town centre and along the river, supported by central public realm to serve site

below distinctive riverside spaces, movement corridors, intimate courtyards and civic spaces

- Seating will be provided throughout the streets and arranged to encourage and provide a variety of social interactions.
- A refined palette of street furniture should be used, which creates further cohesion in the space, encouraging people to dwell and socialise.
- Street furniture and public art should be used to reinforce the character and identity of the area
- All street furniture should be robust and easy to maintain and replace
- Public realm should encourage children and adults to explore the town's public spaces and create an intuitive and playful environment.
- All lighting should be robust and fit for purpose, and easy replaced
- Planting should be distinctive, providing visual interest and intrigue.



3.5 Environment and Climate

Smithfield Riverside will be recognisably sustainable and responsive to the environmental sensitivities of the site, as well as responding to the climate emergency and its impacts in Shrewsbury.

The following principles should be considered for the site;

The site must be designed and planned to mitigate against the impacts of flooding across the site, as well as being resilient to the effects of climate change

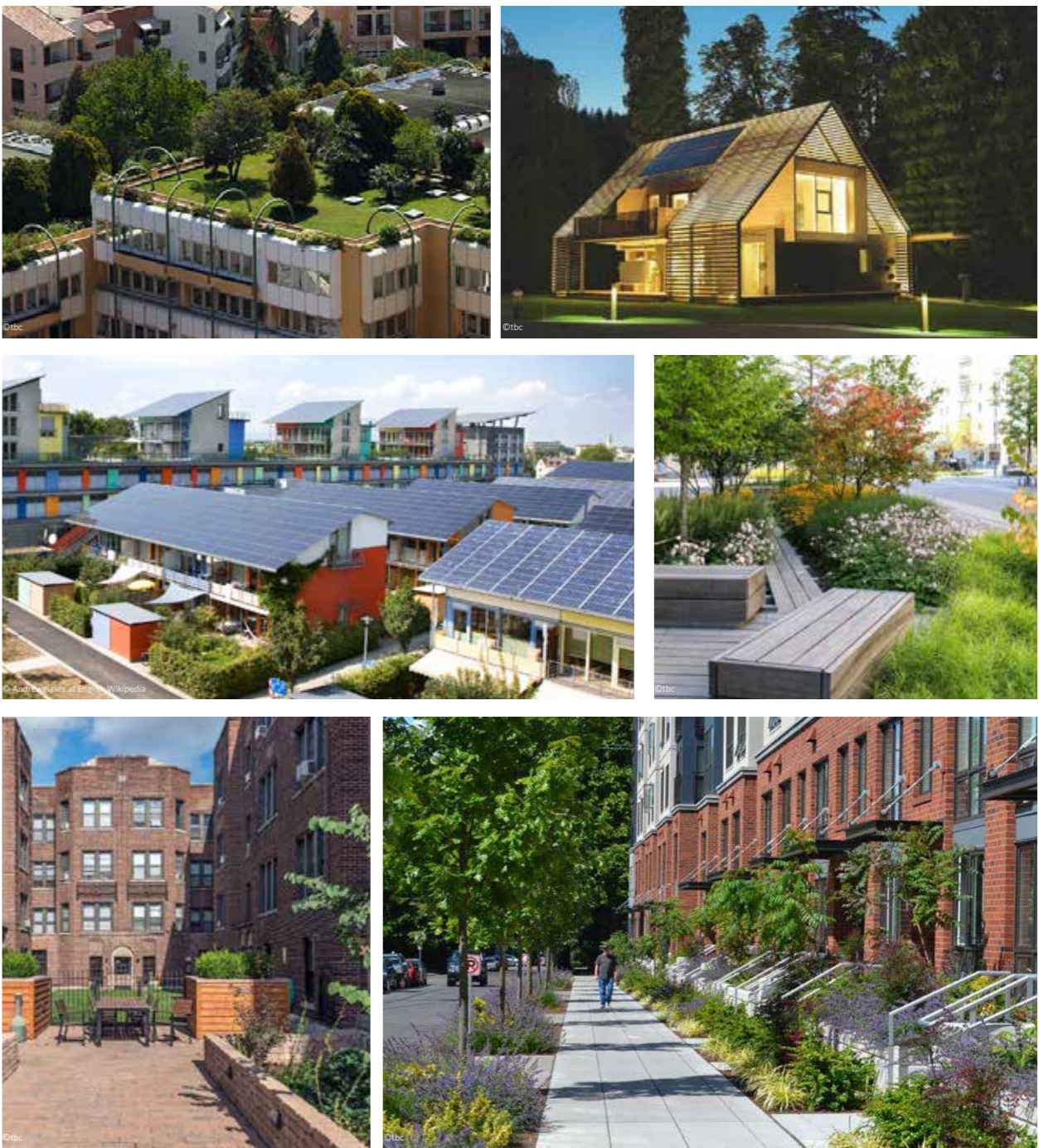
- Any development or alteration to the flood plain must not impact upstream or downstream flooding and mitigation
- Development proposals must provide safe means of access in the event of flooding for all, however development which would activate ground floors can be considered if necessary mitigation measures are put in place

- Development must maximise access to light through prioritising south and western facing façades on key streets and upper floors, maximising sunlight exposure to key public spaces must be a priority
- A more natural, larger river front part should seek to mitigate against flooding where possible
- The impact of wind through the site must be fully assessed to ensure wind-funnelling does not create uncomfortable public spaces and street environments, wind mitigation may need to be considered on taller buildings within the site
- Public realm should seek to incorporate green and blue infrastructure where possible to provide resilience against the effects of climate change



above maximising environmental opportunities and responding to its challenges

below incorporating sustainability and resilience into the built form, including passive design, flood protection, SUDs and solar



4.0 Smithfield Riverside

4.1 The Masterplan

Building on the core design principles and regeneration objectives we have defined an illustrative masterplan for Smithfield Riverside. This plan sets out the aspirational opportunity for the regeneration of the site and the area.

The proposed masterplan outlines a vision for a new neighbourhood delivered through a residential-led development and formed with high quality public realm and architecture in a vibrant river side setting. It brings life to the river and the town centre by providing a mix of new homes whilst also offering spaces for leisure, office, culture and retail, bringing life and jobs to the town and complementing the offer the town already has.

Pedestrians have priority, with private motor vehicles discouraged or banned from most of its streets and spaces. Where they do go, they go at a slow pace with minimal disruption. High levels of permeability ensure an open and accessible environment for all to enjoy and, most importantly, find time and space to reconnect with the River Severn.



above A vision of Smithfield Riverside

4.2 Design Evolution

Our vision for Smithfield Riverside has evolved through an iterative and collaborative design process. The masterplan has been informed by a number of key drivers;

- Related planning policy and guidance, included Adopted Local Plan and associated WMCA Design Charter
- Both the 2018 and 2020 Big Town Plan

Our baseline analysis

The Big Draw, a focussed design consultation in Februar7 2020

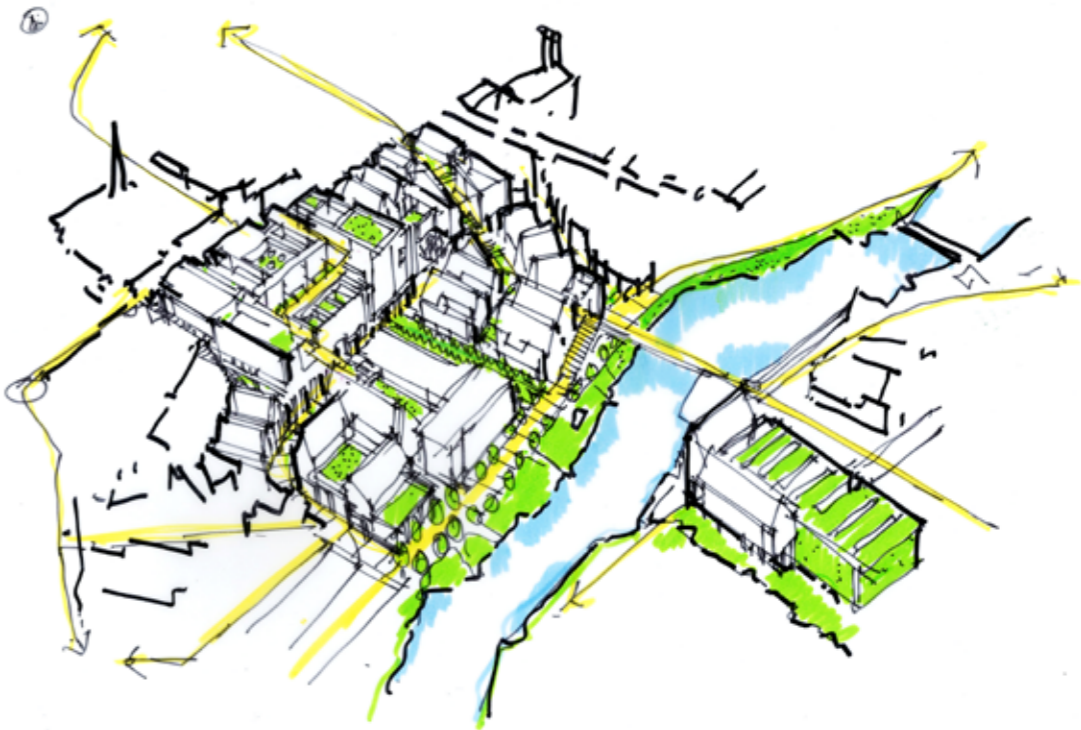
Three early spatial concepts were developed following the Big Draw and were presented to stakeholders as part of this work.

The concepts explored by the options included:

- The routing of Smithfield Road - should the road be retained in its current alignment or be re-routed through the site?;
- The urban grain - ranging from a formal urban grid pattern to a more organic layout;
- The qualities of the public spaces - should there be a singular public space or a series of smaller intimate spaces?;

- The relationship with the Darwin Shopping Centre - where and how does Smithfield Riverside connect into and through it?;
- Pedestrian connections across the site - where should they direct foot traffic and where should activity be concentrated?;
- The form and massing - how are the new buildings articulated; and
- The development quantum and land-uses - how much viable development can the site realistically support?
- Flooding and drainage- how can the site respond to and mitigate flooding on site and strategically?

Using key performance indicators to assess the concepts, a preferred option was selected and refined into the final illustrative vision. Whilst not detailed in design it demonstrates an achievable outcome with preferable features including its appearance, the nature of its streets and public spaces and relationship with its context.



right An early concept sketch for the site



left "Central Park" option with high line park. Smithfield Road traffic is re-routed along Raven Meadows, freeing up the river side. An elevated park provides a connection with the Darwin Shopping Centre.

middle "The long terrace" option. Smithfield road is redirected through the site providing a new street environment, while opening up the river side.

right "Diagonal" option further developing the long terrace with a new central axis and street grid which provides views to some of Shrewsbury's landmarks beyond.



4.3 Key Moves

Four key moves underpin our design approach which directly address the the Vision for Smithfield Riverside. These key moves form the cornerstones of our masterplan and have been used to shape the final output proposed in this section.

The following pages describe the core design concepts of our masterplan in more detail. The framework sets out the proposed form, scale, massing, layout, proposed public realm and landscape, the environmental response and movement framework for the site.

Alongside the vision and core design principles, this plan should be used to shape future, more detailed, plans for the site.



Unlock the Site

The site is cleared through clear and strategic demolition programme, which removes redundant structures and uses which are no longer compatible with the town-wide vision.

Re-imagine Smithfield Road

Smithfield road is no longer a wide busy road, it is a street where pedestrian have priority and vehicle movements are low volume and slow.



A Waterfront Destination

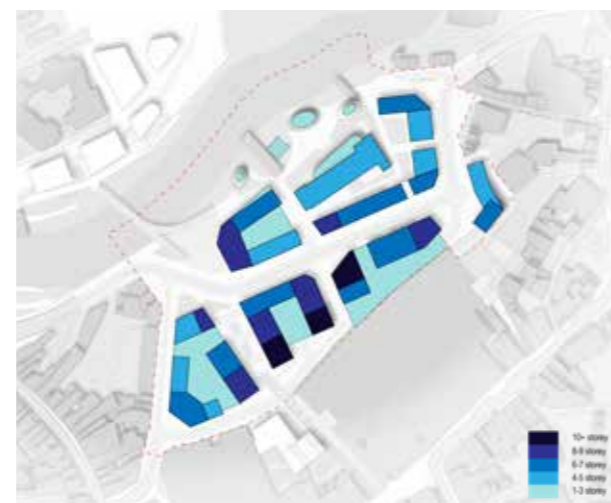
Create a fantastic river setting through the creation of a destination public space next to the River Sever, activated by buildings and commercial leisure uses which bring life to the space.

Forge Links

Connections are made with the surroundings through a clearly defined network of streets and spaces. Linking Smithfield with Frankwell, the town centre and Shrewsbury Station.

4.4 The Framework

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Layout and Form

The layout of the plan is driven by the creation of an urban grain which complements the Shrewsbury's historic street pattern, provides visual connections to the town and provides land parcels suitable for efficient development.

A new boulevard divides the site laterally, connecting its edges and providing a corridor for movement while a series of cross routes create permeability between the River Severn and the town centre.

The form of the plan is driven by visual corridors to surrounding landmarks, including the Castle and surrounding church spires, as well as desire lines and existing pedestrian access points.

Scale and massing

A variety of building heights are proposed with a broad stepping of scale down from the Darwin and Pride Hill Shopping Centres to the river, providing a visual continuity to the skyline and a transition between the historic scale and the exaggerated height of the shopping centres.

Large urban blocks are broken up by stepping heights, providing a varied roof line reducing dominance of individual buildings and encouraging a vertical proportion to the taller elements.

Buildings and structures on the river front are generally smaller and integrated with the landscape to maintain the openness on the river bank. However, key arrival spaces and corners are afforded height to deliver a logical and well defined space. Building elements at key corner locations are locally elevated to terminate views and assist wayfinding.



Public Realm and Place

The River Severn serves as the primary focus for the creation of public realm, faced by a new public garden and square. The square also serves as a landing point for a new pedestrian and cycle bridge, which then directs foot traffic toward the town centre via a terraced landscape bridging across to the town centre via a new street cut through the Darwin Shopping Centre.

Other routes to the town centre are enhanced by removing internalised access where possible and consolidating existing pedestrian routes to better define them and concentrate pedestrian footfall.

The streetscapes are pedestrian focussed with the central boulevard serving as a high-street environment, while widening of the streets at key arrival locations and junctions provides transition spaces for pedestrians to orient and dwell.

Greening and Landscape

High quality landscaping and planting permeates throughout the site, bringing the natural elements associated with the river bank into the urban setting and giving the spaces a higher amenity value.

Trees on the river bank are managed and removed as necessary to provide an optimal environment for users of the space, while replacement and new trees line the primary streets to create an attractive setting and bring a human scale to the environment.

Soft landscaped areas provide enhanced public realm while also capturing and filtering surface water run-off. Landscaped podiums provide a semi private sanctuary for residents.



Environment and Microclimate

Larger building masses are oriented on a north-south axis and sufficiently spaced apart to maximise sun penetration to the open spaces. Other taller building elements throughout the site are limited in footprint to minimise their local overshadowing effect. Single aspect buildings facing north or facing directly towards the shopping centres are avoided

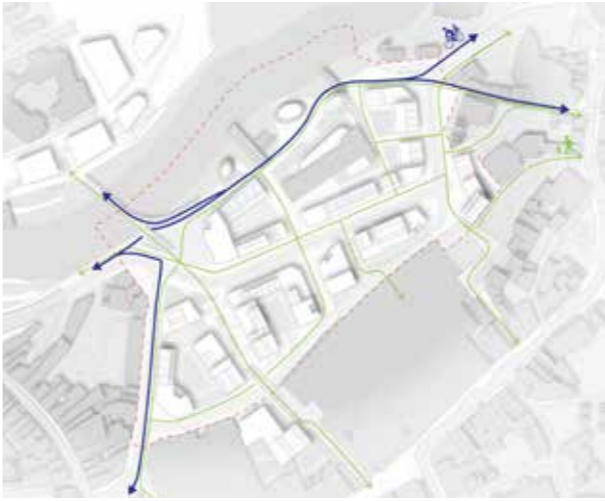
The primary public square is positioned to receive maximum sun exposure with tall buildings directly to its south avoided. Trees provide localised shading to public areas, with generous landscaping also providing a cooling effect.



Flooding

Where possible buildings are raised above the required design flood level through the use of podium structures. Active ground floor frontages are maintained through localised ground level changes, active flood defences and flood resistant building fabric. Those uses located within high flood risk areas will be limited to food & beverage and other active uses such as gyms and retail. They will be afforded flood mitigation and resilience measures, including safe egress, to ensure their viable use.

Land take-up through the new development is balanced to avoid removing further area from the floodplain with displaced storage compensated for within the site. A permeable block arrangement allows water to be naturally released from the site in the event that it does flood with landscaped areas providing filtration of surface water.



Pedestrian and Cycle Movement

A high level of pedestrian permeability is offered with a variety of routes created across the site connecting to Shrewsbury Town Centre, Shrewsbury Train Station, Frankwell and Victoria Quay via new and existing links.

Converging routes coincide with public squares consolidating and re-orientating pedestrians in these key locations, which should be focal points for activity.

The key pedestrian movement corridors between Frankwell and the Town Centre and along the river edge should be emphasised through landscaping and remain as predominantly pedestrian only routes.

Cycle movement into and through the site is well-designed and segregated from pedestrian footpaths and vehicle traffic where possible and connects the key destinations along level or gently sloping routes.



Vehicle Movement and Parking

Vehicle movement is rationalised and consolidated onto a primary central boulevard. The area will be subject to a 20 mph speed limit. Strategic highway and movement management will reduce traffic through Smithfield Riverside and the wider town centre to facilitate the re-routing of Smithfield Road through the site. Raven Meadows will be removed from the general highway network with the street utilised as through route to public transport and service vehicles only, as well as access to residential blocks and car parking.

Simple service routes to all blocks are created by short arms from the primary road network with service entry points located away from public spaces.

A reduced amount of on site car parking will lower traffic volumes in the site, while the site will remain well served by public transport, being in close proximity to the Shrewsbury Train Station and well served by buses passing through the site.

4.5 The Plan

Our illustrative plan provides a unique response to the context and setting at Smithfield Riverside. It is designed as a series of interlinking public spaces which connect to the surroundings and offer high levels of pedestrian permeability.

The plan adjacent is an illustrative approach to the site and is purely outlined to highlight the potential place making potential and development capacity of the site. A detailed proposal would be required to finalise the vision for the site before its delivery.

Key elements include:

- Smithfield Square (1), a major riverside square bringing together various connecting routes and providing a focal civic space.
- Smithfield Gardens (2), a destination public space, making use of the space released by Smithfield Road, the gardens provide a beautiful natural river space to spend time and for walking and cycling.
- New Smithfield Road (5), passes through the middle of the site enabling excellent access to the quarter by public transport, creating a vibrant high street with active frontages and newly found long views toward the Castle
- Darwin Street and the Shrewsbury Steps (7 & 10) provide a direct link to Pride Hill through the Darwin Centre creating spectacular views across the site, towards the River Severn.



- 1. Smithfield Square
- 2. Smithfield Gardens
- 3. Garewald's Square
- 4. Castle Square and the shuts
- 5. New Smithfield Road
- 6. Podium park
- 7. The Spanish Steps
- 8. Roushill
- 9. Smithfield bridge
- 10. The Darwin Shopping Centre
- 11. Raven Meadows
- 12. Active ground plane
- 13. Neighbourhood blocks
- 14. Frankwell Quay

above Illustrative masterplan for Smithfield Riverside



1. Smithfield Square

Smithfield Square is a new landmark public space for Shrewsbury, providing a place to take in the atmosphere of the riverside, activated by a series of active uses, businesses and a growing community surrounding it. It provides a new space to complement Shrewsbury's existing network of civic spaces, offering an exciting and unique location for performances, gatherings and events.

Sitting at the landing area for a new landmark bridge for the town, Smithfield Square is also a place of arrival, providing a welcoming setting for orientation and meeting. At once a way point for those passing through and a place to pause while you plan your ongoing journey: perhaps stopping for a coffee as you start your exploration of Shrewsbury or stopping for an evening's refreshment by the river on your journey home.

Its design offers up moments of interaction with the setting through sculptural landscape elements and high quality materials and planting.



above artists impression of Smithfield Square and Darwin Street and precedents for delivery



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2. *Smithfield Gardens*

In contrast to Smithfield Square, Smithfield Gardens offers a more tranquil, natural setting to promenade and explore while taking in the majesty of the River Severn. The space is transformed from a busy road into Shrewsbury's garden by the river.

A place for the local community and visitors alike, it offers a range of opportunities for interaction and activity: with secluded spots to take in the river; pathways for a morning jog or walk; and pavilion cafés and restaurants offering food and drink in this unique setting.

There are plenty of opportunities to sit and chat with family and friends or quietly contemplate on your own, with a choice of pathways for those looking to kill some time waiting for a train or those in a hurry to get home.

The space will be framed by highly active frontages along the route of the former Smithfield Road, as well as well-designed pavilion style structure occupied by bars and restaurants offering a unique dining or leisure experience for the town.



above artists impression of a re-imagined riverside at Smithfield Riverside



3. Garewalds Square

Garewalds Square takes its name from Garewalds Tower, the medieval watchtower which once stood in this part of the site.

As the tower would have once stood, the square provides a waymarker, announcing arrival into Smithfield Riverside from the east and providing a orienting space to either head into the heart of the neighbourhood or towards Smithfield Gardens. It will be key arrival point from the station.

The space has an idiosyncratic quality brought about by the eclectic arrangement of buildings which frame it: historic town houses on one side provide an informal edge in which spaces bleed into the surrounding streets, while new buildings provide a modern foil, defining the street edge and enclosing the space.



above precedents of public arrival into Smithfield Riverside



4. Castle Square and the Shuts

Castle Square provides an interim space along New Smithfield Road and an informal arrival space for pedestrians entering the site from Castle Court and Castle Street.

The square will facilitate movement into the Darwin Shopping Centre for servicing and, therefore, will need to carefully manage vehicle and pedestrian movement.

Like the rest of New Smithfield Road priority is given to pedestrians, who are arriving from multiple access points including the two existing and unattractive stepped "shuts" leading down from Castle Street.

The stepped routes are consolidated and upgraded to form a series of terraces leading up the bank until they split and rejoin their existing paths.



above precedents for Castle Square



5. New Smithfield Road

Representing a key move in the masterplan, and critical to the success of creating attractive and pedestrian friendly spaces, is the reduction and management of vehicle movement across the site. New Smithfield Road provides this function, by firstly providing a replacement route to the existing Smithfield Road and taking cars away from the prime river frontage, but also significantly changing driver behaviour through its design.

Narrowed single lanes of traffic and widened footpaths suggest that pedestrian has priority, while high quality surface materials and landscaping soften the visual impact of the road and regular demarcated crossing points for pedestrians encourages drivers to behave more cautiously.

New Smithfield Road is a friendly street, lined with building entrances and active ground floor uses which encourage footfall and enliven the streetscape. Roof terraces and integrated balconies over look the street from buildings providing a further layer of vitality to the space.

The orientation of New Smithfield Road offers up long views towards the town's unique skyline, with Shrewsbury Castle and Shrewsbury School at the eastern end. At its western end it leads into Smithfield Square, with views of the river and Frankwell. Crucially it connects the new and the old, providing a clear corridor for activity and movement.

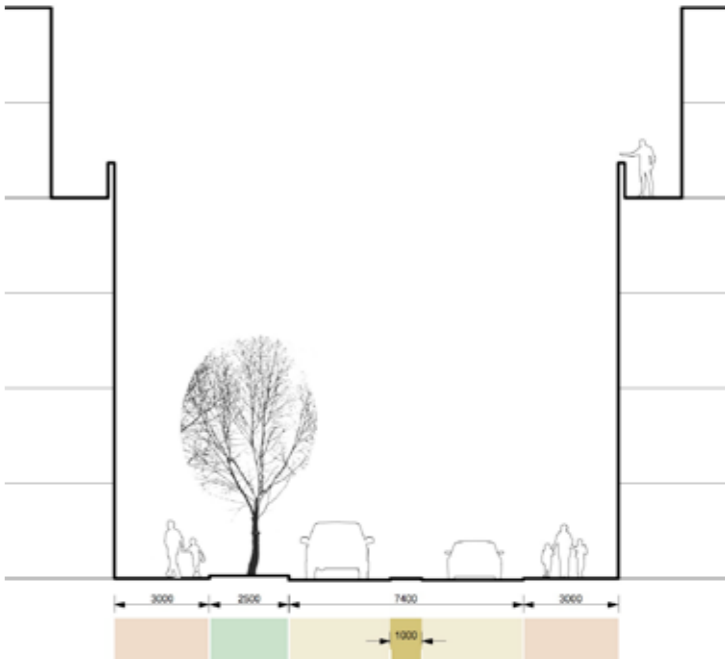
Shrewsbury Castle



above artists impression of New Smithfield Road



above precedents for New Smithfield Road



above proposed street section for New Smithfield Road



6. Podium Park

Sitting in the heart of the site is a new mixed use building. It provides high grade commercial office space, bringing a mix of uses into the development. Situated strategically, it frames a new pedestrian approach to the Darwin Shopping Centre.

The block is deliberately permeable, with the ground floors providing entrances to the offices, with potential for public facing activities and a pedestrian thoroughfare created through

the block which rises up over Raven Meadows to meet the elevated entrance to the Darwin Centre.

On this route pedestrians pass through a landscaped podium park, providing a breakout space for office workers and transitional space when entering or exiting the shopping centre. It provides a celebration of the entrance, rather than feeling like a rear exit.



above envisioned section through Smithfield Riverside from the river to the Darwin Shopping Centre



7. The Spanish Steps

Shrewsbury's "Stairway to Severn". The steps at once provide a critical piece of pedestrian connectivity as well as a space to celebrate in their own right. Rising up from Smithfield Riverside into the town centre they follow the desire line from Smithfield Bridge towards Pride Hill, replacing the undesirable Seventy Steps as a new and open public route.

Envisioned as a sculptured landscape the steps rise out of the ground providing views back towards Smithfield Square before bridging across Raven Meadows towards the town centre beyond.



above artists impression of The Spanish Steps bridging the gap between the site and Pride Hill, as well as dealing with topography



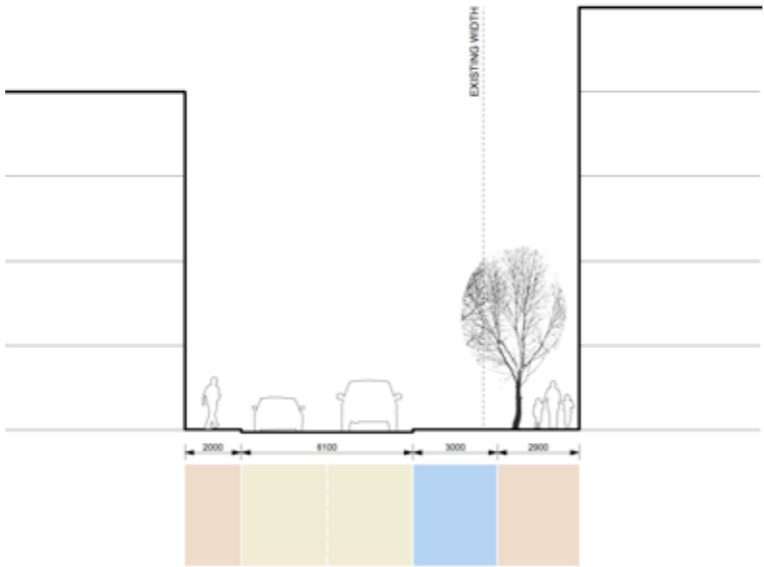
8. Roushill

Providing a level route into the town centre, Roushill is a strategic link for pedestrians and cyclists crossing the town. The key design objective is to provide a good, active pedestrian and cycle connection to the new bridge and into the site.

While functional, the streetscape still offers a pleasant experience for pedestrians and cyclists: the street is widened to provide additional space for a dedicated two-way cycle lane and an increased width footpath creating more space for pedestrians and planting.

The existing road is maintained with two traffic lanes to allow for flexibility to respond to the town centre movement strategy, with a view that over time additional space may be reclaimed from the highway.

The junction between Roushill and Raven Meadows offers a small gateway space which frames access to the newly formed Pride Hill Shopping Centre and active frontages on this corner.

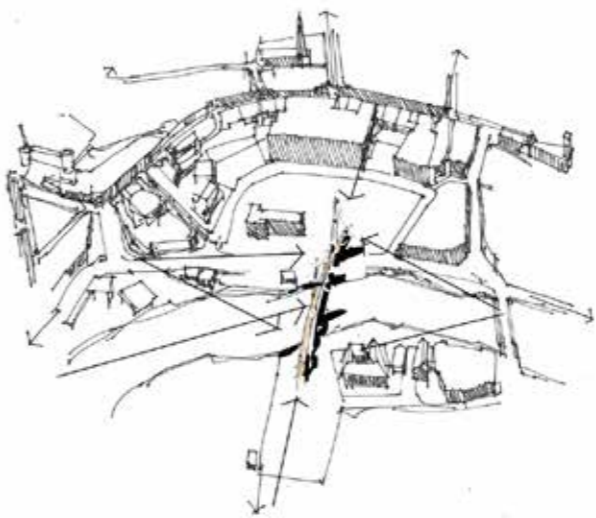


9. Smithfield Bridge

Replacing the outdated and under performing Frankwell footbridge, Smithfield Bridge provides a visually striking new bridge over the River Severn.

It is a landmark structure providing an opportunity to enjoy the river and appreciate both Frankwell and Smithfield Riverside, with space to stop and take in views and with easy-to-navigate transitions into its landing spaces at either end.

The bridge will be fully accessible bridge, including cyclists, forming an attractive link between Smithfield Riverside, Frankwell and the western suburbs of Shrewsbury. The route will help to promote active travel as a preferable choice to private vehicles.



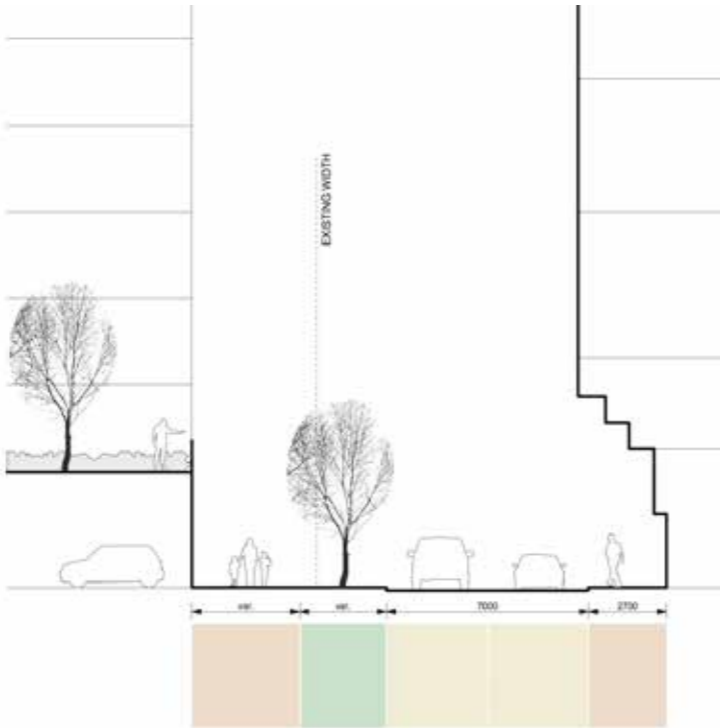


11. Raven Meadows

Raven Meadows remains as a trafficked route, however through-access is restricted allowing only public transport and service vehicles to travel its full length. As a result the road operates in two-directions utilising the alignment of the existing highway, although with much reduced vehicle traffic.

The positioning of the new blocks allows space suitable for landscaping along the street edge while new buildings are turned to present their short elevations to the street with breaks between buildings to avoid a canyon effect and promote daylight penetration and views out.

Following the design principles the street provides a pedestrian friendly environment, although it does not form part of the primary pedestrian network.



above proposed street section for Raven Meadows



above precedent of sense of place provided by proposed Raven Meadows



12. Active Streets

The plan brings together a variety of functions to create a mixed-use and active neighbourhood.

Ground floor active uses are concentrated along New Smithfield Road and Smithfield Park enlivening the pedestrian experience, while residences overlook from the levels above providing a sense of community and ownership of the spaces.

The ground plane is elevated to make connections with existing uses, providing continuity between different levels. A mixture of active uses are proposed with passive uses, such as gyms, offices and art/dance studios, creating activation where fully commercial frontages are not feasible.



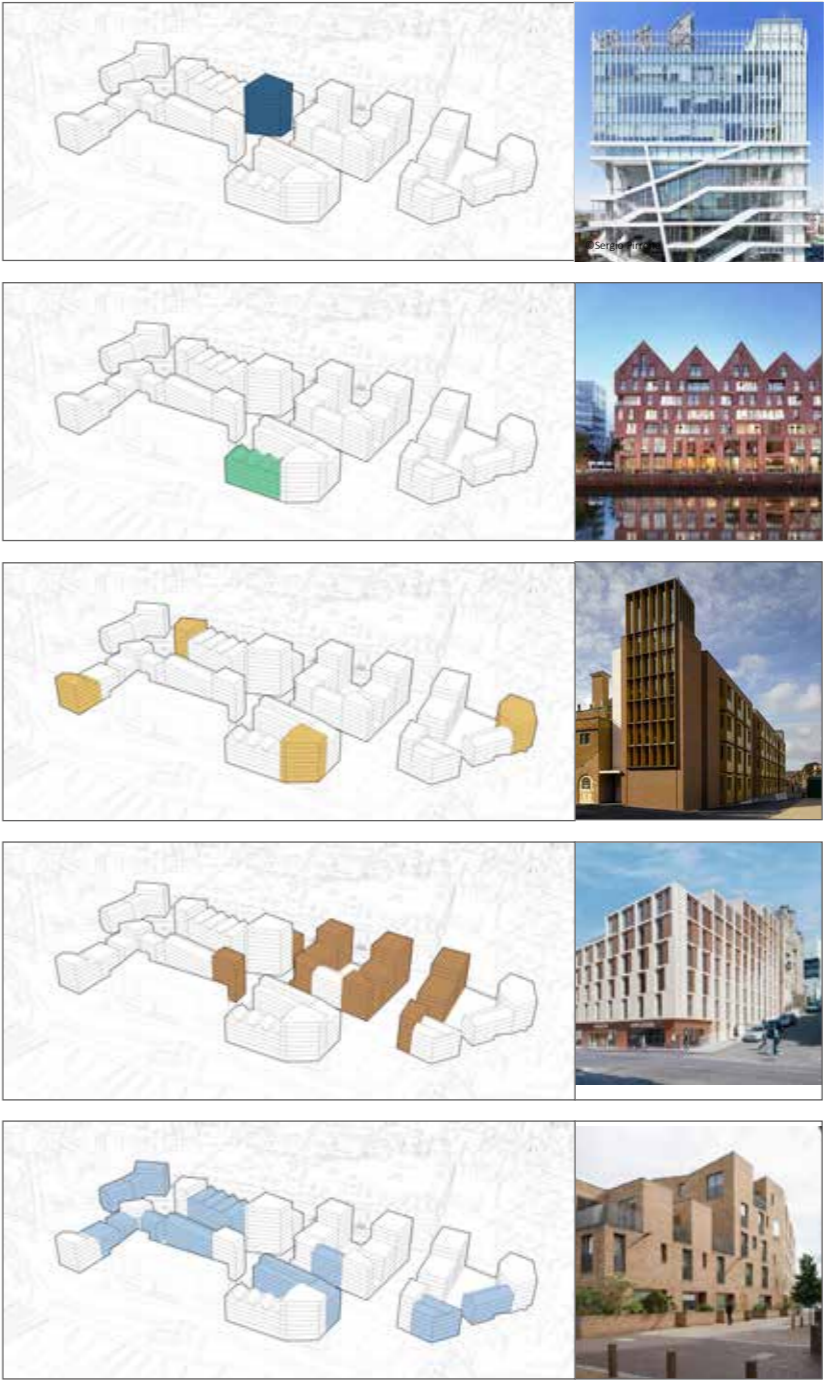
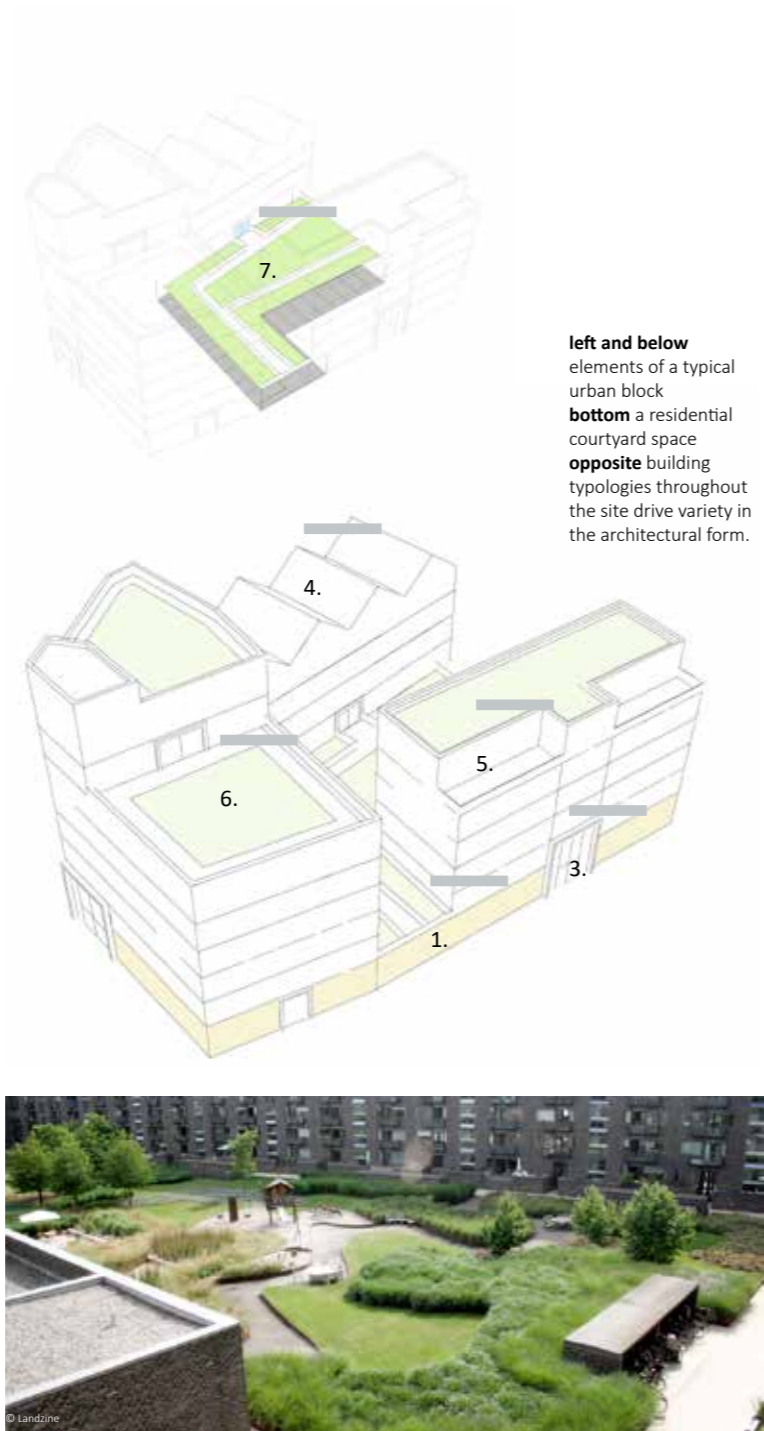
above proposed site section through Smithfield Riverside creating multi-layered active streets with primary activation concentrated at the waterfront and key routes dissecting the site (Darwin Street, New Smithfield Road)

13. Neighbourhood Blocks

Each parcel of development is formed as a cluster of buildings and follows the described design principles to form distinct blocks within the plan. Common features include:

- Page 43
- Active ground floor frontages facing primary streets;
 - Podium levels to conceal car parking and ancillary spaces;
 - Residential cores positioned on primary frontages;
 - A variety of roof forms;
 - Building set backs and steps in height;
 - The use of green and brown roofs as well as roof terraces; and courtyard gardens, providing semi-private amenity space for residents.

Variety across the blocks is created by manipulating elements according to their setting and their function as part of the urban infrastructure. The aim is to utilise the form and details of the blocks to provide a coherent architectural language which provides a legibility to the development and uses the buildings to activate and entice people to explore its spaces.



Focal Building
A large building in the heart of the plan, the building provides an interesting profile drawing gaze along New Smithfield Road.

Riverside Buildings
Riverside buildings present a responsive form to the riverbank emphasising the changing character of the setting through articulate forms.

Wayfinding Buildings
Buildings at key corners celebrate arrival in Smithfield Riverside, with increased height and presence through detailed articulation.

Directing Buildings
Orienting people towards the town centre directing buildings step up to and provide a backdrop, framing to the views of Shrewsbury beyond.

Spine Buildings
The core buildings along the primary movement corridor offer a variety in form, with set backs and terraces, creating a human scaled environment.

4.6 Land Use

Our vision presents a residential-led mixed use development.

This is based on the principle that a mixed use approach is key to achieving a successful, viable and liveable place. It is important that the new development at Smithfield Riverside is not to the detriment of the existing compact town centre by competing with the existing offer or simply relocating current uses. Therefore a sensitive blend of residential, leisure, commercial and office space is proposed, based on market analysis.

There are three principal proposed land uses:

- Residential accommodation - building on Shrewsbury's established pattern of town centre dwellings and increasing the vitality of the town centre. A mix of 1, 2 and 3 bed apartments is proposed;
- Ground floor commercial and leisure space- providing space for a variety of uses including food and beverage flexible workspace, convenience stores and spaces for community use; and

- Offices - providing an anchor to the plan in a key location and bringing activity throughout the day. A possible location for council offices.
- Alternative land uses - the plan is flexible and has been designed to accommodate alternative uses within the built form. A hotel, for example, could easily be accommodated within the proposed residential blocks and the ground floor units could easily be adapted to house cultural or creative spaces, such as dance or art studios which may activate the street scene very positively.

It is important that this plan is flexible. The option presented are indicative and should be subject to further testing a detailed proposal emerges.

The proposed allocation of uses and the block arrangements allow for a variety of functions. The mix should be reviewed through further respond to changes in market conditions and potential funding streams.

The commercial spaces are distributed around the site, in a variety of forms. Offering a location for food and beverage outlets along Smithfield Gardens and Smithfield Square. Other areas within the heart of the site are suited to flexible and co-working offices as well as independent outlets, small businesses and workshops.

Ancillary functions including car parking is concealed within podiums where possible, to ensure active frontages are offer to all primary and secondary public spaces.

Riverside will be highly active and become a destination for commercial and leisure activity in the town centre. These uses will include restaurants, cafés and bars, but also include flexible workspace, studio space and gymnasiums to provide alternative uses to activate the space throughout the day. Smithfield Gardens and Smithfield Square will become the focus for these uses, as well as Darwin Street and New Smithfield Road to a lesser extent.



Ground Floor Plan



- commercial/leisure
- public/community space
- office
- residential
- car parking and ancillary space
- potential location for hotel

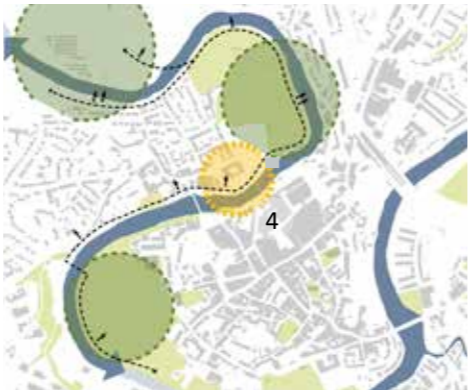


5.0 Inspiring Change: Neighbouring Opportunities

5.1 Inspiring Change

Smithfield Riverside sites sit at a key location along Shrewsbury's riverside, at a gateway to a major open space and as important stepping stone between Frankwell and Shrewsbury Town Centre. The site has the potential to unlock various strategic opportunities on neighbouring land, including Frankwell, the Darwin Shopping Centre and Pride Hill Shopping Centre. These sites have the potential to further regenerate the town by:

- 1) *Creating a cultural destination*
Working with the Theatre Severn and Guildhall to establish a new cultural quarter for the town providing a destination for residents and visitors
- 2) *Better connecting Shrewsbury*
Creating a strategic link that better integrates Frankwell, Shrewsbury and the train station.
- 3) *Unlocking and improving a major open space*
Providing a new green gateway from Frankwell and Shrewsbury town centres to the open space at Frankwell and Poplar Island
- 4) *Celebrating the riverside*
Better connecting and celebrating Shrewsbury' Riverside and creating a moment along a series of open spaces that run along the River Severn.



above Strategic opportunities enabled by proposals at Smithfield Riverside

This section outlines the key regenerative opportunities for Frankwell Riverside and the Darwin Shopping Centre.

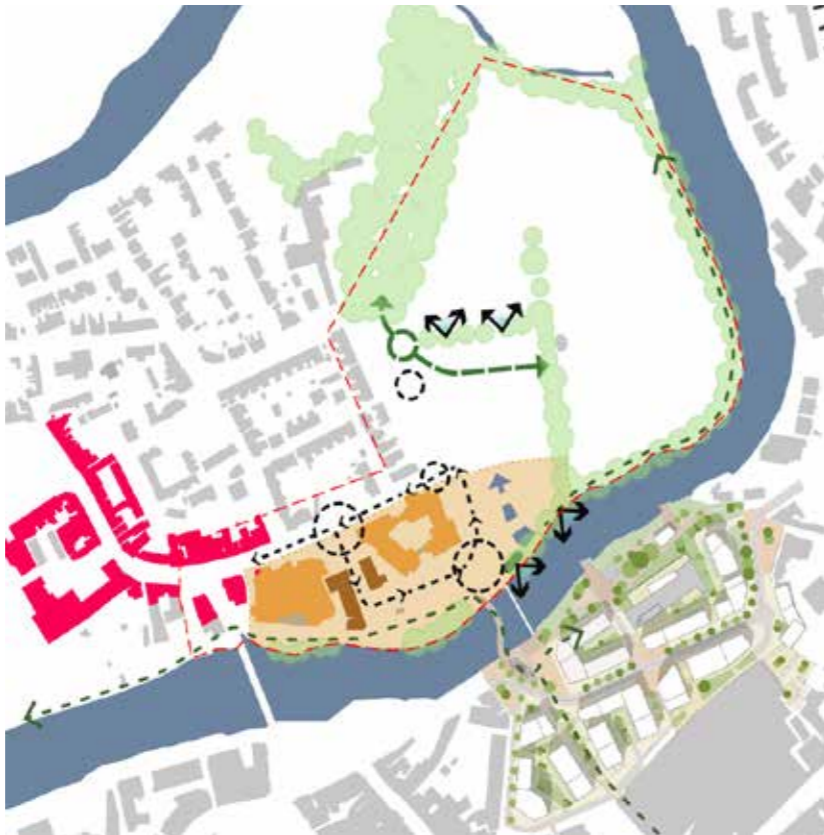
Below Neighbouring opportunities enabled by the Smithfield Riverside Proposals including 1) improved connections to Pride Hill 2/3) Reconsidering large areas of surface parking and celebrating the riverside 4) improving pedestrian and cycling links across the river 5) improving and better integrating with the Darwin Centre 6) Better connecting and reconsidering the character of open space at Frankwell and Poplar Island.



5.2 Frankwell Riverside

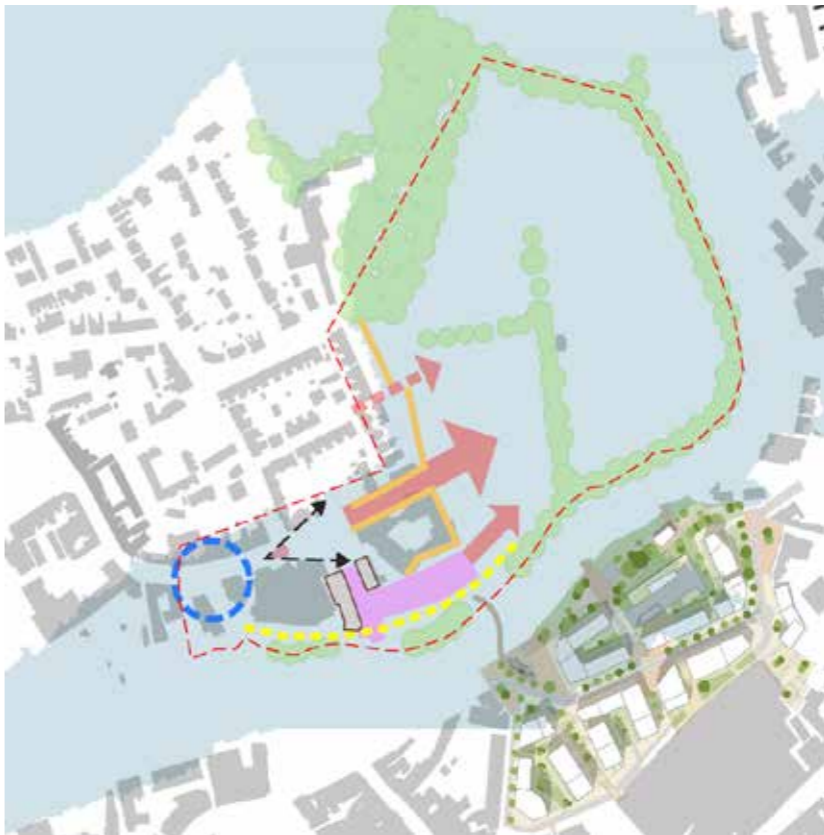
Frankwell Riverside offers an opportunity for a south facing extension of Smithfield Riverside. Providing a destination around the existing assets of the Severn Theatre and the University, this section outlines the potential opportunities for growth in this area.

This adjacent plans outline challenges and opportunities that have shaped this vision and must be considered when proposing a high level vision for Frankwell.



Opportunities

- Potential to create a cultural destination that integrates with the Guildhall, Theatre Severn and Stew and Maltings buildings
- Providing a high quality public realm that creates a destination along the wider riverside walk
- Creating a pedestrian friendly journey from Frankwell high street and Smithfield Riverside to an improved Frankwell riverside.
- Creating green links that provide greater access to open space at Frankwell and Poplar Island.
- Reinforcing and better integrating with existing ecological corridors



Constraints

- A large proportion of the site is within flood zone 3 (functional flood plain) and the hydrology of the site mean that it regularly experiences flood events
- Much of the existing access to the site is either restricted or is constrained by the dimensions of local roads.
- Lack of a relationship between buildings and the spaces that surround them.
- The Stew and Maltings buildings are currently derelict but could be a central component of any place making strategy
- Weak views and first impression of the site from Frankwell.

The Vision

The vision looks to celebrate the riverside by creating an exciting, pedestrian friendly, mixed-use hub that integrates with surrounding cultural venues, residential areas and open spaces. Proposed public realm extending to the rivers edge, will provide an attractive space where people can stop and enjoy the river throughout the year.

1) Smithfield Bridge

Smithfield Bridge provides a visually striking new accessible bridge over the River Severn, connecting directly into the new Frankwell offer.

2) Severn Square

High quality public realm as a focal point for this cultural hub where people can stop and enjoy the rivers edge, activated by cafés and restaurants. The area will continue to offer access to water sports and river boats from this point, creating a real energy for the area.

3) The Guildhall and Surrounds

Potential to develop in front of the Guildhall and enhance its setting to create a river front commercial and residential development.

4) Car Park

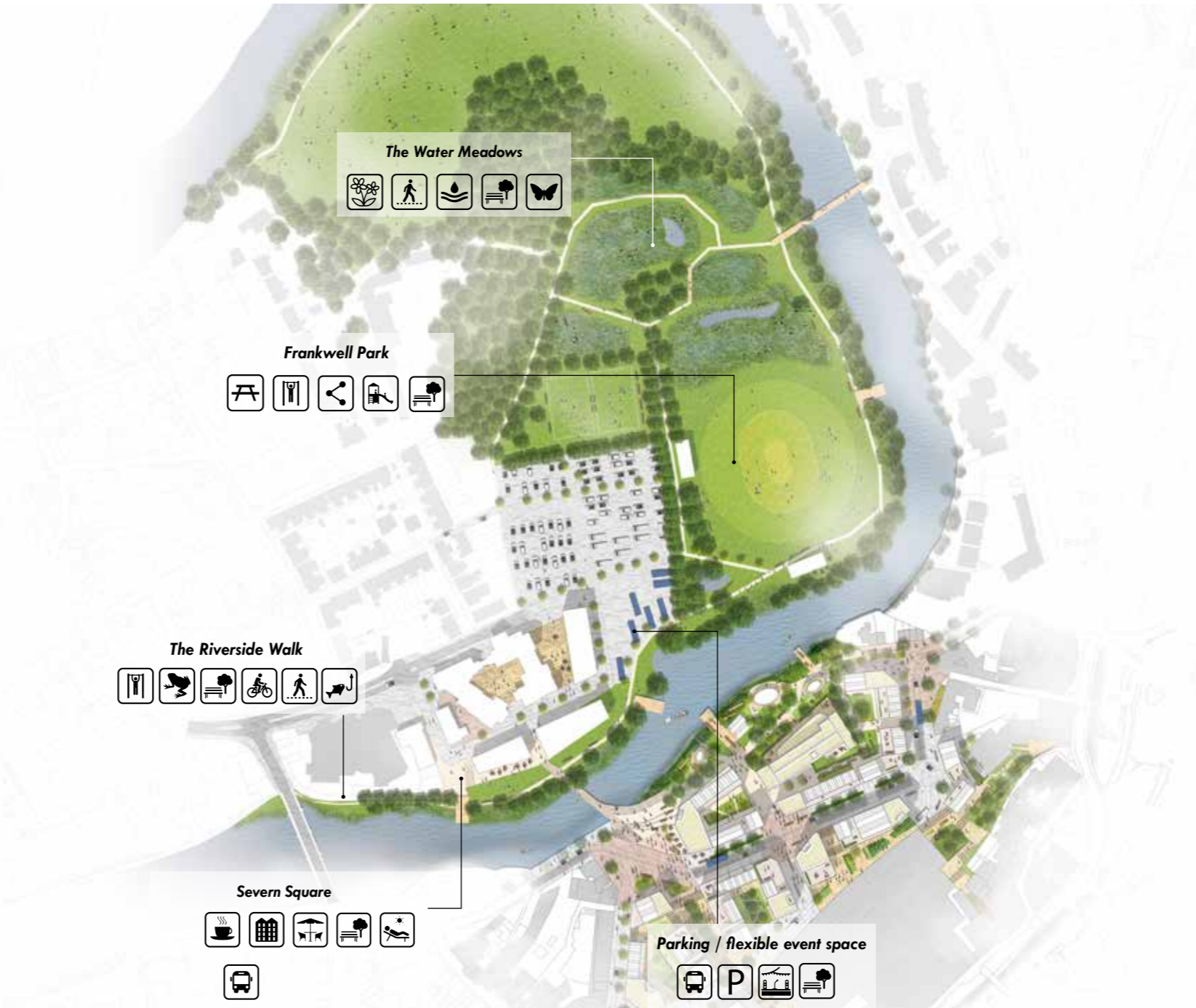
Potential to retain and soften the existing car park whilst also providing the potential for use of this space for temporary events.

5) The River Corridor

A destination that adds to the diversity of types of open space along Shrewsbury's wider riverside. This could include contrasting environments including both harder civic space to the front of the Guildhall and more natural meadow land as part of Frankwell Park.

6) Frankwell Park and Chester Road Link

The potential to regenerate Frankwell Park as an open space destination in Shrewsbury. Create diversity of uses and character areas within Frankwell Park and improve links to this major open space via the proposed Smithfield bridge and a potential pedestrian bridge connecting with Chester Road and the north/ east of Shrewsbury into the site.



Below Urban beach, temporary event space and meadow land





above illustrative vision of new waterfront at Frankwell and development to front of Guildhall, linked directly to Riverside via a new footbridge



Liveable and characterful streets drawing people through the site



Vibrant public spaces sitting at the heart of the site, celebrating the theatre and river setting



Natural landscape destination for the town centre

Land Use and Urban Design

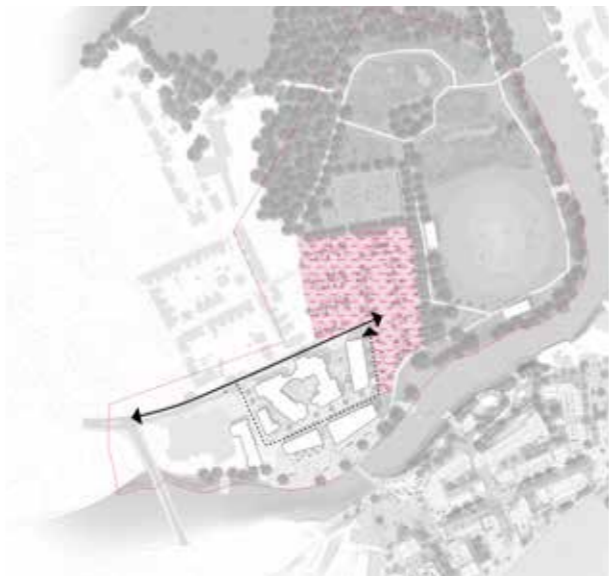
A gateway square that incorporates the refurbished Stew and Maltings buildings creates a stronger sense of arrival and is central to establishing a locally specific sense of place.

The Stew provides an opportunity for a mixed use development with cafe/ restaurant facilities at ground floor. Directly opposite, the Maltings offers an opportunity to provide uses associated with the adjacent theatre. Rehearsal space, food & beverage and offices could be accommodated.

Residential flats with commercial/ F&B on the ground floor, to the south and east of the Guildhall would create stronger frontage onto the riverside and address existing blank elevations.

As suggested, proposed buildings could incorporate non-residential uses at ground floor that complement surrounding cultural venues and which, with a high quality public realm, would create an exciting place where people can play, relax and enjoy themselves.

- Commercial/leisure/office
- Education
- Entertainment
- Residential
- Residential with commercial /leisure at ground floor



Vehicle Movement and Parking

Vehicles currently access Frankwell car park from the northern side of the Guildhall and exit from the south. Proposals for Frankwell Riverside could make the northern street exit and entry for cars with vehicular movement to the front of the Guildhall limited to public transport or pedestrian only. This would allow a high quality, pedestrian and bicycle friendly public realm between the Stew and Maltings buildings and along the riverside.

Whilst a large proportion of the site could be retained as surface parking, much of it could also be flexible space that could be used as space for temporary events throughout the year.



Public Realm and Pedestrian Movement

Proposals look to create a high quality public realm oriented toward pedestrians and cyclists. Importantly proposals should provide space to the front of the Guildhall where people can enjoy south facing views of the riverside.

A high level of pedestrian permeability integrates the site with the wider riverside walk and better connects open space at Frankwell and Poplar Island.

A new footbridge crossing to replace the existing Frankwell bridge will also create a stronger relationship with Smithfield Riverside, Shrewsbury Town Centre, the train station. A further bridge is proposed to the east, at Chester Road, to enhance connections to rest of the town and create pedestrian loops/ circuits for residents and visitors to the town.

5.3 The Darwin Shopping Centre

The Darwin Shopping Centre, currently under council ownership, offers a vital opportunity to achieve this through transformations which improve its relationship with its surroundings, its permeability and pedestrian experience.

The shopping centre currently represents a significant barrier to Smithfield Riverside achieving its full potential: its northern facade overshadows and overbears the site, offering little in the way of activation or interaction. It is also an actual barrier, presenting an impenetrable wall to Smithfield with the available routes difficult or unpleasant to navigate or closed through part of the day.

Whilst the development of Smithfield Riverside will address some of these issues by better responding to the scale of the shopping centre and reducing its visual impact this will only achieve part success.

Through a study of the shopping centre and its surroundings we have proposed a strategy which would help to transform the building to achieve a better integration with Smithfield and the wider town centre.

The key items we have tried to address are:

Access and approach
Improving the attractiveness and obviousness of the approaches towards the shopping centre and the town centre beyond;

Permeability
Upgrading the routes through and around the shopping centre providing multiple connecting routes;

The user experience
Enhancing the experience for patrons the shopping centre to closer meet the demands of today's town centre visitors and offering reason to dwell;

Appearance
Providing the shopping centre with a facelift to refresh the outdated pastiche exterior

Visual connection
Introducing visual connections between the shopping centre and Smithfield and utilising the building's scale to provide elevated views.

We have proposed a series of interventions as recommendations which will achieve the desired outcomes. It is critical that any adaptations to the building and layout have regard to the commercial performance of the shopping centre and offer a high value to cost ratio.

Detailed proposals and a feasibility assessment should be carried out as a next stage of work to fully assess the viability and practicalities of any alterations to the building.



right photos showing the negative qualities of the shopping centre and its environs

below existing plans of the principal levels of the shopping centre showing distribution of public areas, service areas and commercial space



level three



level four



level five

retail units
circulation spaces
service areas

The Existing Layout

The site topography, surrounding historic development and age of the Darwin Shopping Centre has resulted in a complex, and by today's, standards a compromised layout:

The structure has been "plugged into" the historic high street, which has provided little in the way of a frontage. Subsequently the entrance to the shopping centre entrance could very easily be missed and those more familiar with the layout may often choose to enter through one of the shops, rather than the main entrance, Although bringing footfall to the individual store(s) it is to the detriment of other stores and the vitality of the communal spaces.

The dramatic change in ground level between the front and the back of the building has been used to some advantage in the layout by separating the service

elements - which enter at the rear and below, from the public areas - which principally face toward the town centre occupying the upper levels. While this serves does the town centre well it leaves Smithfield faced with the rear of the building comprising of a largely blank facade and service yard for the building's full length at ground level.

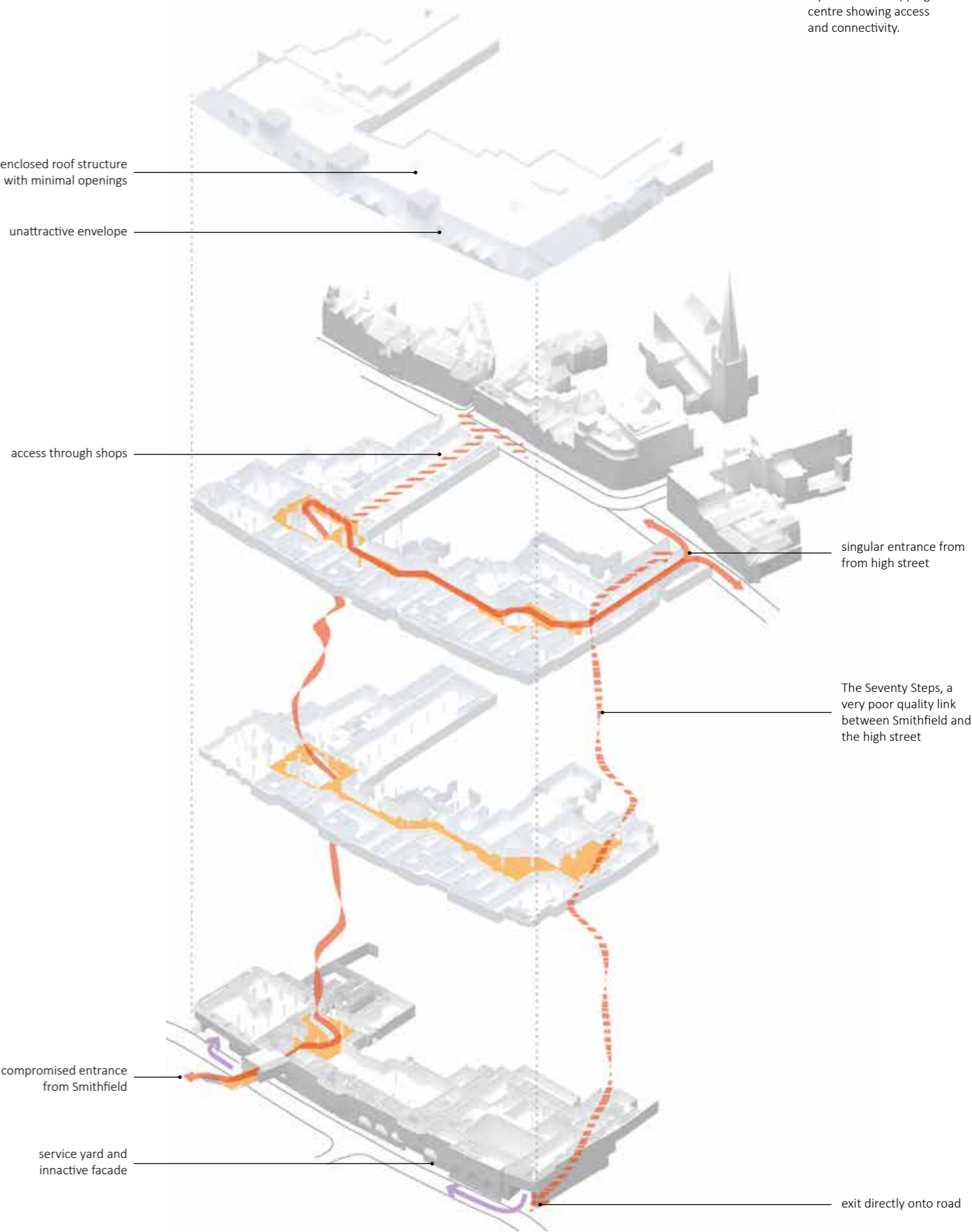
The expansive footprint of the building and the stacking of service yard results in a complex series of risers and service corridors. Retail units are typically over two levels creating inefficiencies in the layouts and service corridors wrap the rear of the retail units on the Smithfield side, in part contributing to the blank facade and limiting opportunities for providing natural daylight or outlook over Smithfield.

Within the building the arrangement of internal levels also contradicts a natural desire

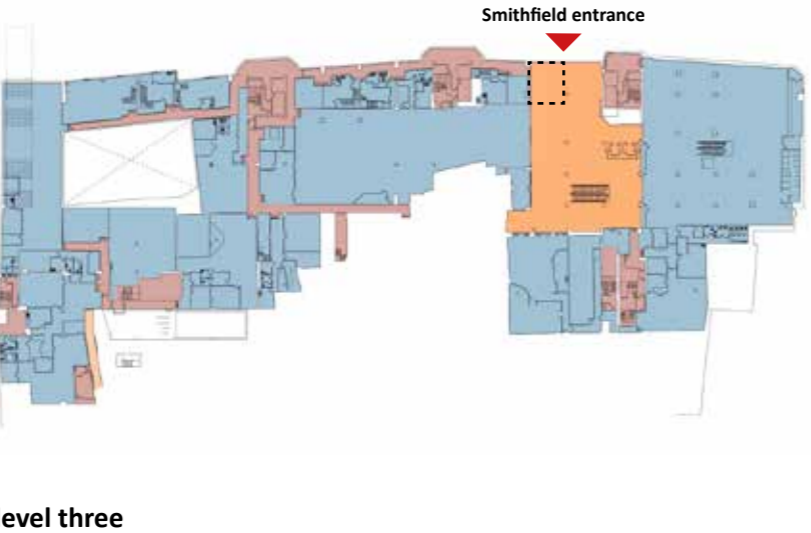
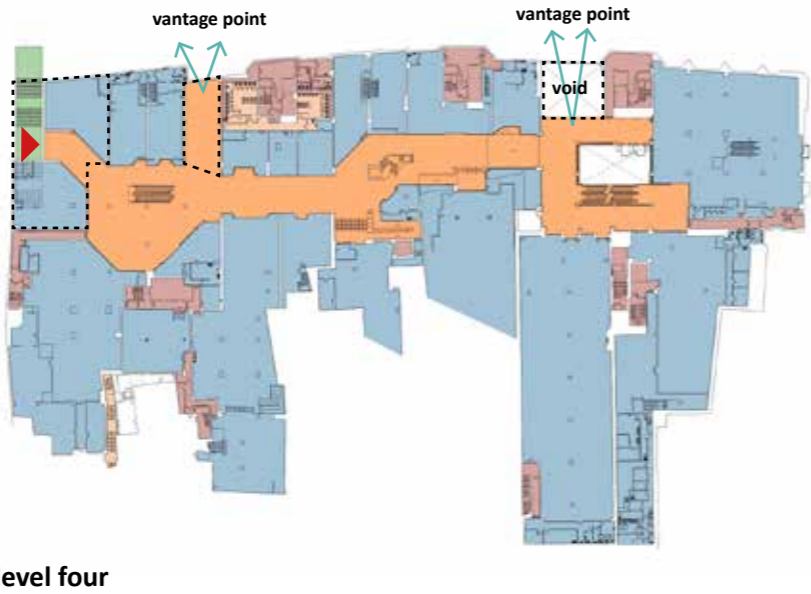
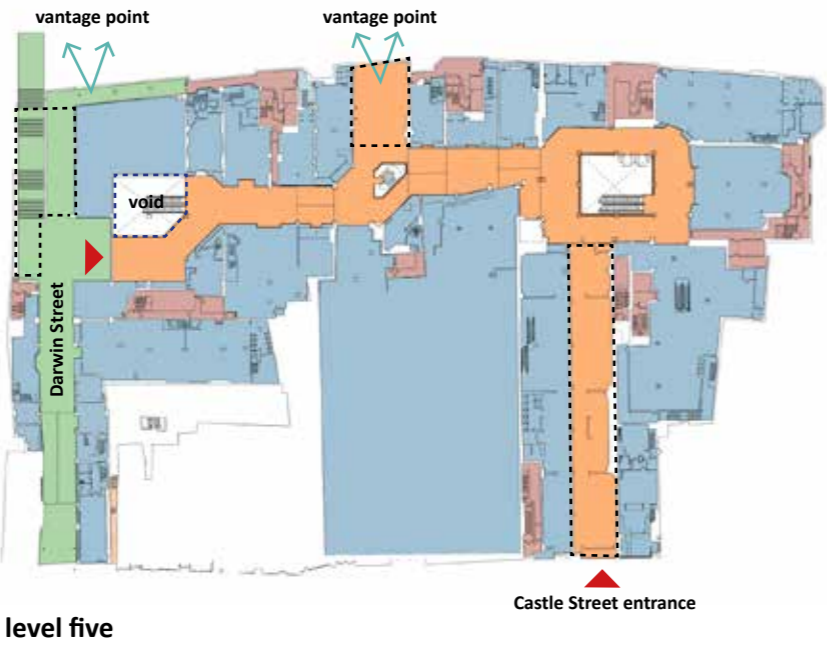
to go up into additional storeys, rather, the additional shopping levels are below taking patrons further away from natural light sources and a sense of connection with the street. Added to this is an enclosed roof with limited openings reducing daylight and providing a less desirable shopping experience.

The plan is also inward facing meaning that there is limited connection with the surroundings and in particular with Smithfield to which there is no visual connection and access is limited to an entrance at second floor level, which requires navigation through a multi-storey car park and enclosed walkway to reach. The result is an inferior and at times difficult to navigate approach. Added to this the only other link from Smithfield to the town centre, The Seventy Steps, is also highly unattractive and unsafe.

this page the existing layout of the shopping centre showing access and connectivity.



this page proposed plans of the principal levels of the shopping centre showing potential interventions



- retail units
- circulation spaces
- service areas
- Darwin Street
- unit removed or altered



above sketch views along Darwin Street looking towards Riverside and the new shopping centre entrance.
right examples of external arcaded streets.



Proposed interventions

Following are a series of proposed interventions and adaptations which will help transform and better integrate The Darwin Shopping Centre with Smithfield as it develops:

Darwin Street

Darwin Street is a new public route through the shopping centre connecting Pride Hill with Smithfield and the riverside.

The existing internal arcaded entrance from Pride Hill is re-imagined as a street environment, which is continued to create a direct link to Smithfield by removing the retail unit at the rear corner of the building. A stepped bridge then takes pedestrians over Raven Meadows and lands in Smithfield, from where you are drawn towards the river via the Spanish Steps (see page 77) and across to Frankwell.

Darwin Street will provide 24 hour pedestrian access between Smithfield and Shrewsbury town centre in a key location and without the need to travel through the shopping centre or make use of the unattractive Seventy Steps. It creates a key public route, contributing not just to improved access to Smithfield, the River Severn and Frankwell, but to the wider connectivity of the town as a whole, offering a further link to its network of cultural and historical destinations.

Castle Street Entrance

Currently with only one primary entrance in the corner of its plan, the internal layout of the shopping centre reads as a cul-de-sac. By providing another formal entrance at the end of the cul-de-sac an internal access loop can be created, encouraging footfall through the shopping centre by offering alternative routes to ongoing destinations.

The entrance is formed, following an established desire line through the retail unit facing onto Castle Street and will create smaller units with potential for independent retailers to line and create an arcade type environment to mirror Darwin Street.

The entrance will also provide an increased presence for The Darwin Shopping Centre on the high street.

Smithfield Entrance

The existing entrance above Raven Meadows is re-addressed and provided with improved access by elevating the ground plane to meet it as part of the the podium park (see page 76).

In addition the doorway is widened and heightened, improving its prominence and celebrating it as a front door and not just a rear entrance.



left examples of roof terraces and vantage points providing a unique experience and connection with the surroundings.

right examples of elegant and interesting facade treatments even when active frontage is minimal



left examples of internal shopping environments with well day-lit spaces and connection between floor levels.

Creating vantage points

Making advantage of the elevated position of the shopping centre above Smithfield, a series of vantage points can be created by removing selected retail units on the rear side and transforming them into publicly accessible areas. Not only forming unique viewpoints, but also animating the facade.

The vantage points also provide an opportunity to encourage dwell time by providing complementary uses such as cafes or restaurants in the adjacent retained retail units.

Roof Terraces

Similar to the vantage points, there is an opportunity to make use of the roof of the shopping centre, opening it up to the public as a roof terrace or sky garden with unique views of Shrewsbury and its skyline.

The roof terraces have the potential to become an attraction in their own right, drawing people to the shopping centre and offering views over Smithfield and the river, creating a dialogue between them and inviting exploration.

The roof terraces could be complemented by commercial uses at roof level, such as food and beverage outlets.

Upgrading the Envelope

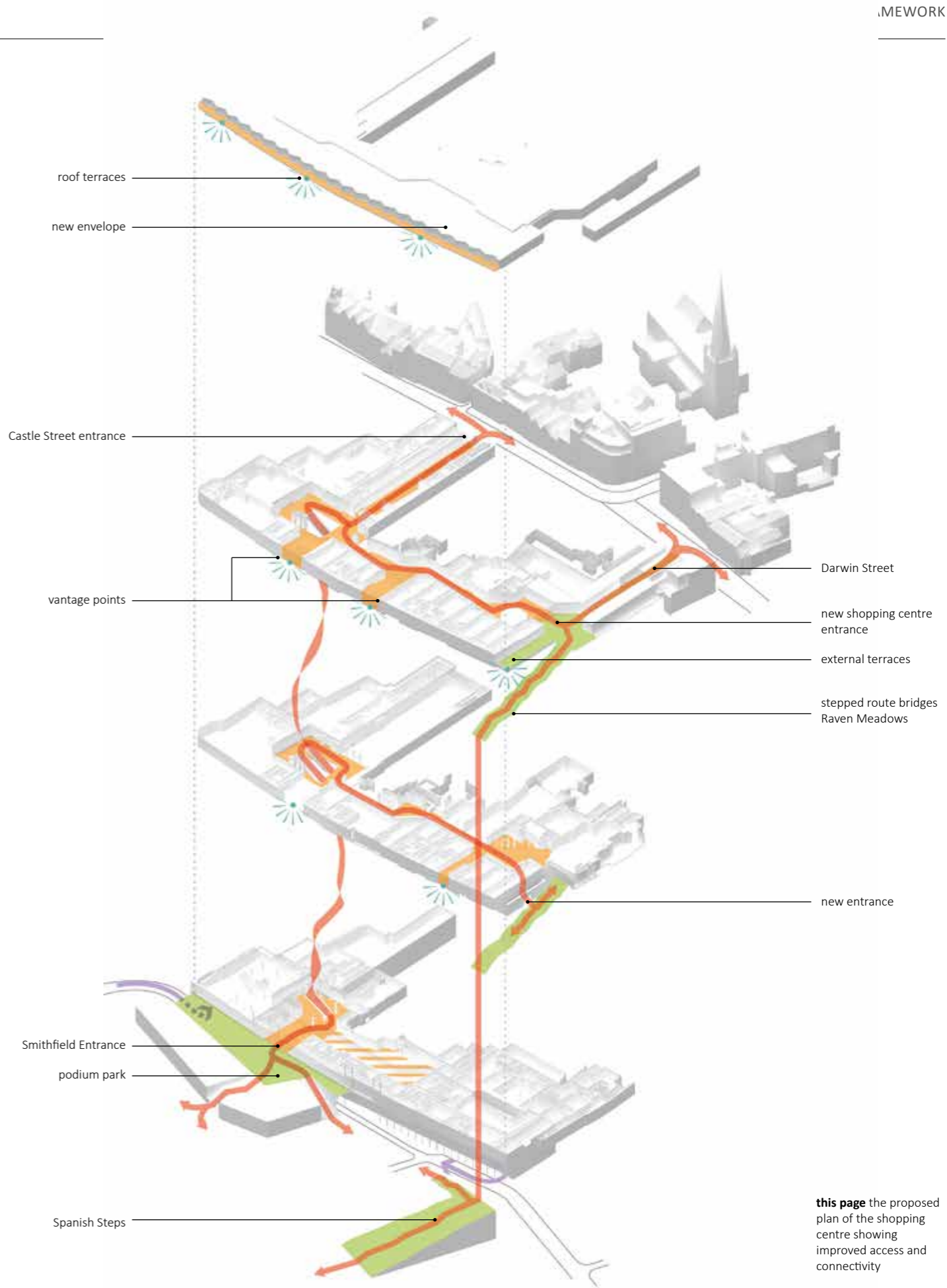
While a number of the preceding recommended interventions will help re-shape and activate the facade of the building, this should go in hand with a wider upgrade of the envelope of the building which is of poor design quality and outdated.

This provides an opportunity to better integrate the building with its surroundings by following the same design principles as for Smithfield Riverside.

Bringing light in

Additional envelope improvements can occur at roof level by fully glazing over the communal circulation areas, bringing in daylight and enhancing the experience for patrons, encouraging greater time to be spent in the shopping centre.

Where possible additional floor penetrations should be made to bring light to lower levels.



this page the proposed plan of the shopping centre showing improved access and connectivity

6.0 Delivery and Next Steps



6.1 Delivery Options

The redevelopment of Smithfield Riverside is a once in a generation opportunity to deliver genuine place-making through mixed-use development, in a comprehensive manner and at scale. Choosing the right delivery and procurement routes is vital in ensuring that this opportunity is grasped and The Vision is realised.

positive catalyst in the the attractiveness Riverside as a development opportunity is seen in the council's wider plan to relocate in the town centre. With the right level of integration it has the potential to drive the success of Smithrfield Riverside as It shows a committment to the future of the town and would bring significant footfall to the centre driving retail and leisure spend.

The redevelopment of the site also presents an opportunity for council activities to be located in or integrated alongside other public sector services, such as the NHS, under a One Public Estate model. This would help establish Smithfield Riverside through early occupation, providing a catalyst for future development phases while also bringing potential for additional public sector funding.

Delivery Mechanisms

There are several routes that could be taken for delivery and the these must be considered to establish the most logical for a site of this scale and nature. Below is a summary of common delivery routes which could be applicable to the redevelopment of Riverside each with pros and cons that should be thoroughly explored:

- **Disposal following planning.** The council dispose of their land following securing appropriate planning permission(s), leaving delivery to a subsequent purchaser(s) to bring forward proposals within the framework set by the planning consent.
- **Development management (Direct Delivery by the Council).** The council funds the development which is delivered on their behalf by a development manager. Shropshire would contract direct with the professional team and the building contractor(s), whilst the development manager would manage the contracts on Shropshire’s behalf.

- **Contractual Agreement (Development Agreement).** The council procures a development partner with delivery arrangements governed by a development agreement (DA) between the parties. This contractual mechanism would be the method by which the project objectives are pursued, with no separate entity being created.
- **Contractual Partnership (Master Development Agreement).** The council procures a development partner with delivery arrangements governed by a master development agreement (MDA) between the parties. This contractual mechanism would be the method by which the project objectives are pursued, with no separate entity being created.
- **Joint venture partnership (JVCo).** The council procures a development partner and together establish a common enterprise (JVCo) in which they participate together and share the same approach, aims, risks and rewards.

- **Investment Partner (InvestCo).** The council procures an investment partner to co-invest in the development sharing the same approach, aims, risks and rewards.

The scale of opportunity in Riverside will make it attractive to a range of developers operating at a national level, however in order to successfully impart the necessary obligations to deliver The Vision some form of joint venture with the council is recommended.

With this in mind we also consider that there is a greater value and opportunity to deliver the regeneration objectives in releasing the whole site for comprehensive development with a principal developer partner. The sale of individual plots or parcelling of the land should be avoided for its risk to the quality of the offer and ability to meet the council's objectives.

Procurement

There are a number of procurement procedures which could be utilised for a public works contract of this nature. The key processes are listed below:

- Open Procedure
- Restricted Procedure
- Competitive Procedure with Negotiation; and
- Competitive Dialogue

At this stage we consider that a competitive diaogue is more likely to provide an optimal soluition for the opportunity at Smithfield Riverside. The ability to maintain a negotiation is seen as a key requisite to a successful delivery outcome.

The options and conclusions presented in this framework should be fully explored and considered as part of a Procurement and Delivery Strategy under the next steps.

6.2 Phasing

While comprehensive development of the site is recommended, consideration of the phasing of work must be given in relation to: its impact on the access and functioning of the town centre from a commercial standpoint; the timing of other strategic developments across the town; the need to maintain a positive image for the site; and early place making opportunities through meanwhile uses and the site.

The key challenges to consider are:

- maintaining vehicular movement and service access during and after construction
- maintaining adequate car parking and access to the Darwin Shopping Centre;
- maintaining access to the town centre from Frankwell;
- relocation of the bus station;
- demolition phasing and the desire to not leave an empty site for a prolonged period;
- the remaining safe service life of structures on the site; and
- the redirection of vehicular traffic;

We have proposed the development is staged in three broad phases with specific actions required to deliver our vision for the site which are set out below. It may ultimately be delivered as one development, however the actions and their order are a key consideration for the successful development of the site:

Phase 1

Demolition of the Riverside Shopping Centre allows early development of the western land parcels, where a variety of land uses are suitable with larger, more simple block forms bringing density to the site. Raven Meadows Multi Storey Car Park and the bus station remain to continue to serve the town centre, until their relocation.

The demolition of Riverside Shopping Centre also allows the creation of temporary public space and meanwhile uses on the river front. This should be considered in order to generate public interest, engaging with the community and visitors of Shrewsbury. It will also serve mark the changing face of Smithfield Riverside, setting out the council's intentions clearly from the outset. Remaining space could be used for temporary surface car parking.

Phase 2

Demolition of Raven Meadows Multi Storey Car Park and the bus station will allow construction of New Smithfield Road and development of the land parcels behind The Darwin Shopping Centre. This will set up the new connections between Smithfield Riverside and the shopping centre, critical for the success and vitality of both.

Phase 3

The redirection of traffic onto New Smithfield Road will make the riverside area available for redevelopment and the infilling of remaining land parcels.

It is anticipated that through traffic management measures generated by the Big Town Plan and strategic infrastructure work such as the North West Relief Road that traffic will be reduced at this time to allow New Smithfield Road to function in its desired capacity.

Maintaining a serviceable link with Frankwell is also an important factor throughout the phases: the continued use of Frankwell footbridge must occur until a new link can be constructed following redirection of Smithfield Road.



phase 1 demolition of Riverside Shopping Centre enables early construction of western blocks, with new link to the town centre.



phase 2 demolition of Raven Meadows car park enables construction of New Smithfield Road and further blocks.



phase 3 redirection of traffic onto New Smithfield Road enables construction of Smithfield Gardens and remaining blocks.

6.3 Summary and Next Steps

Smithfield Riverside is a key regeneration opportunity in Shrewsbury with the potential to not only revive an ailing piece of the town centre but to drive the growth and regeneration of Shrewsbury as a whole, becoming a benchmark for sensitive and sustainable regeneration of historic town centres in England.

This development framework has explored the potential for Riverside through a concept masterplan and imagery. While the plans may change as more detailed work is undertaken the requirement for a high standard of urban design, architecture and public space is established by this report.

The core design principles established in this framework ensure delivery of a place of quality, that intergates with its setting and is underpinned by a sustainable approach.

Procurement and delivery

Critical to the successful redevelopment of Riverside is establishing a robust Procurement and Delivery Strategy which considers the merits of each approach against the development objectives.

Assuming a public procurement route a critical understanding of developer interest will be

established through soft market testing and the posting of a Prior Information Notice to the Find a Tender Service. The outcomes and findings will shape the Procurement and Delivery Strategy without committing the council to any obligations.

Funding and due diligence

Further detailed exploration of funding options is required with financial due diligence. This will include identification of potential sources of investment funding as well as further site investigation work in order to gain greater certainty over costs.

Governance

Given the scale and complexity of the project the establishing of a project board will provide consistency to the process and should include a project sponsor to lead the board and ideally along with key representatives from other disciplines, be involved in the project right up to completion. Key team members should include:

- Regeneration/Place Directorate
- Property – Internal and External advisor
- Planning
- Finance
- Legal – Internal and External advisor
- Council Member

Site clearance

The physical clearance of the site through demolition of existing buildings and structures must be carefully planned to secure the most economic and sustainable approach, but also to consider public perception of the area. Work should be programmed to complement the programme of activities and where possible be informed by development partners.

Planning and consultation

Obtaining consent to build represents a key milestone and must occur at the right stage and include engagement with key consultees. This includes the public not only a statutory sense but in order to secure buy-in and support for the proposed redevelopment during its design and construction stages.

Early public engagement is recommended, following a detailed baseline understanding of the technical constraints.

The Vision for Smithfield Riverside is ambitious but rightly so. In order for our town and city centres to thrive into the future people and place must be positioned at the fore underpinned by quality design and construction and considered programming of work.



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