



Supplementary Planning Document 8

# Nelson Street Bristol Regeneration Framework

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Prepared for Bristol City Council by:

Colin Buchanan    Atisreal



## Rediscovering Nelson Street

# Foreword

The Council supports the continued regeneration of our city centre. Significant progress has already been made in the major regeneration areas at Harbourside, Temple Quay and major investment is now underway at Broadmead. Work to expand the Broadmead shopping area started in 2005 and retailers have now voted for a Business Improvement District, anticipating improvements to the rest of Broadmead.

The regeneration of other surrounding areas is also very important, particularly those that help to link the major regeneration schemes. One such area is Nelson Street. The area suffers from a poor physical environment but has huge potential for improvement in an appropriate way. Regeneration in this area would be welcome in its own right but it is also necessary to upgrade the quality of the pedestrian link between Broadmead, The Centre and Harbourside. Better links to the Old City and Christmas Steps can also be forged.

The production of this regeneration framework arises out of strong partnership working with the Broadmead Board. The Council and the Board have worked together to involve local property interests and other stakeholders in the preparation of this document.

The purpose of this supplementary planning document is to provide a planning, access and urban design framework that will help to co-ordinate investment in a number of key development sites over the coming years. We hope it will provide potential investors with increased confidence in the area by providing clarity about the Council's aspirations for the way the area will be transformed by new development and improved streets and spaces.

Councillor Dennis Brown

Transport and Development Control Executive

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# 01 Overview

There are a number of major redevelopment opportunities in Nelson Street which could transform the area in the near future





# 01 Overview

## 1.1 The Study Area

Nelson Street has been a part of the street scene of Bristol since Medieval times. It is potentially a very important strategic pedestrian link between Broadmead and Harbourside and also between Broad Street and Christmas Steps. It is, however, difficult to find and depressing to use. This is because the public realm is harsh and has low quality street level frontages, large concrete buildings and numerous buses using the street.

The area lies to the immediate west of Broadmead and currently accommodates a number of administrative institutions, including the Courts, commercial uses, retail units and some student accommodation. A number of bus routes pass along and stop in Nelson Street, on the way to Broadmead. Cars and taxis also pass through the area using the side streets that link with the wider city centre road network.

There is now a unique opportunity for regenerating the environment of Nelson Street. Broadmead, the shopping heart of the city, is to be expanded and reinvigorated, and a few major sites are coming forward for redevelopment. The Broadmead Business Improvement District will have secured improvement to street and spaces in existing Broadmead by 2009.

The overall aim is to transform Nelson Street so that it will become a successful urban quarter and also an important route of choice for people walking from Harbourside into the centre of the city and Broadmead. The street will also retain and enhance its functions as a public transport corridor for buses and for any future Rapid Transit System.

## Key objectives

### Objective 1

Promote and create opportunities for regeneration proposals, comprising new build and re-use of buildings, that provide mixed uses and support a balanced community.

### Objective 2

Provide enhancements to the public streets and spaces including the introduction of additional active street level uses.

### Objective 3

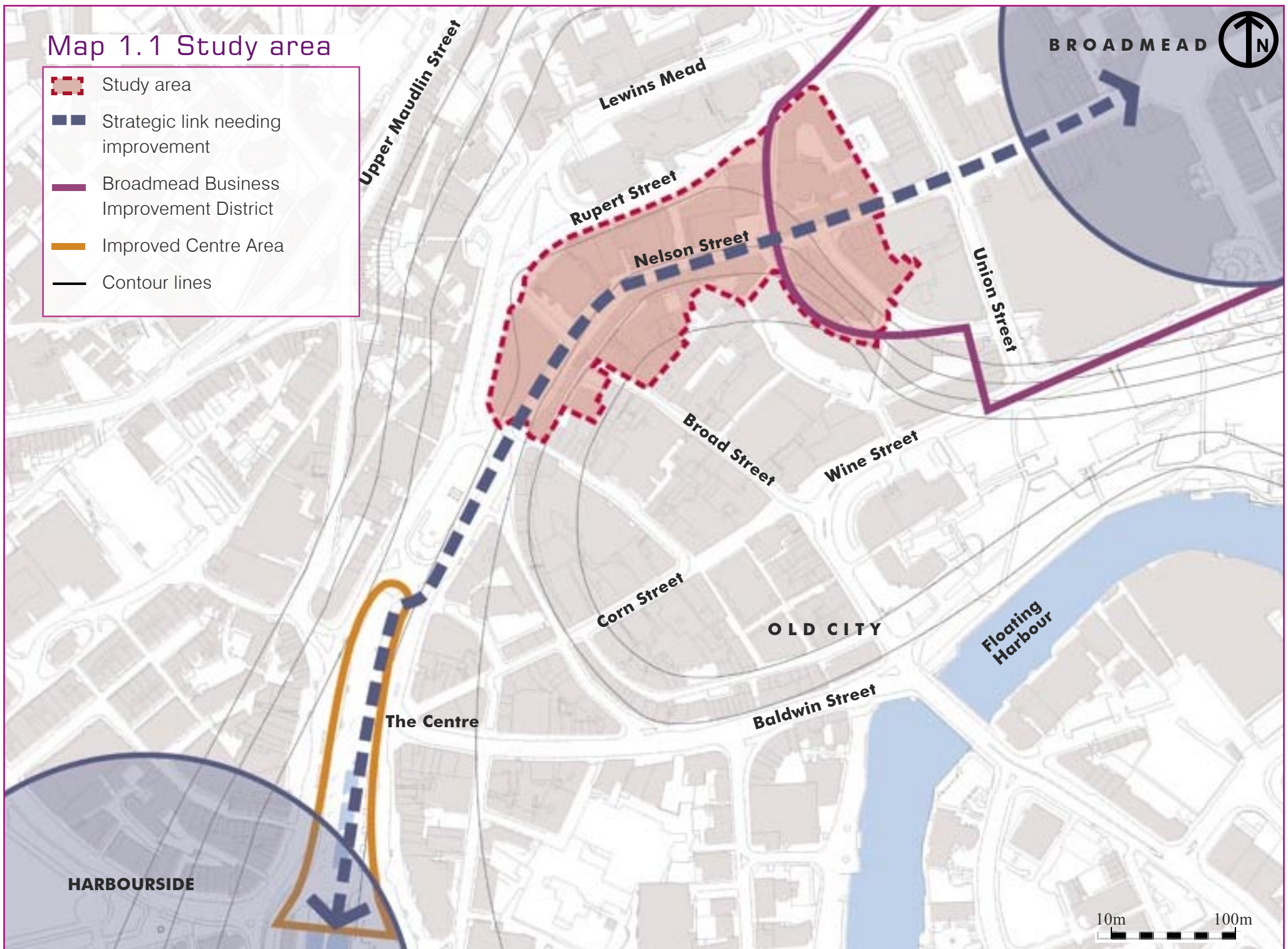
Promote design excellence in development proposals and ensure energy efficiency and biodiversity is an integral element.

### Objective 4

Create improvements for pedestrians and cyclists using Nelson Street.

## Map 1.1 Study area

-  Study area
-  Strategic link needing improvement
-  Broadmead Business Improvement District
-  Improved Centre Area
-  Contour lines



## 1.2 Scope and status

The Nelson Street Regeneration Framework is a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD 8).

It is in accordance with Regional Planning Policy the Joint Replacement Structure Plan (JRSP), the adopted Bristol Local Plan (1997) and Proposed Alterations to the Bristol Local Plan (First Deposit Draft, 2003). It also conforms with Planning Policy Statement 12 – Local Development Frameworks (2004) and the associated Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004.

SPD 8 is in conformity with the Development Plan and provides guidance supplementary in particular to the following policies:

Policy CC1 - Major Regeneration Areas  
Policy CC2 – Mixed Commercial Area  
Policy S5/S6 - Frontages, Primary/ Secondary  
Policy CC8 - Streets for People

It builds upon site specific studies by Colin Buchanan and Atisreal - Nelson Street Development Framework and Investment Strategy (Summer 2005), and Capita Symonds - Nelson Street Preliminary Transport Study (2004).

The planning and urban design briefs for the area and for individual sites contained in this document need to be considered in the context of the planning and transport policies of Bristol City Council. SPD 8 is a material consideration and will be given significant weight in the planning application process.

## Consultation

Thorough consultation has been undertaken prior to and during the preparation of SPD 8. This has included circulation of leaflets (including initial questionnaire) to the local community and key stakeholders, and consultation over options through a workshop event, stakeholder meetings and, finally, a presentation of the final draft SPD. Prior to this, extensive consultation was carried out on the transport options as part of the Preliminary Transport Study (2004). The long standing Nelson Street local stakeholders group has been involved throughout.

The approach to consultation complies with Planning Policy Statement 12. Details of the consultation process are included in a separate consultation statement.

## Sustainability

Sustainability has been a key consideration throughout the development of options and proposals for the regeneration of Nelson Street.

Detailed information is contained within the separate Sustainability Appraisal (SA) which accompanies this SPD. The SA has had due regard to current guidance including the ODPM consultation paper “Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks” (September 2004). The SA was used to refine the objectives of the SPD and to assist the assessment of options prior to the production of the draft SPD.

## 1.3 Planning policy context

The Council welcomes investment and development interest in the area and prospective developers should consider the guidance contained within this SPD as well as the key planning policies listed below. Other policies may be relevant depending on the nature of proposals.

### Bristol Community Strategy (2006)

This strategy has been prepared to guide all other major public strategies and plans in Bristol and to encourage a longer-term strategic view of the city's future ambitions, needs and priorities. It has a vision of Bristol that realises its full potential as a modern, cosmopolitan and ambitious city; is diverse, accessible and made up of vibrant and balanced communities; is a safe city that promotes health, learning and sustainable development and where no-one is disadvantaged. It identifies a number of important environmental goals that developers will need to consider. These include the objectives:

- tackling the causes of climate change (and reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and waste);
- a sustainable transport system;
- improve the quality of the built and natural environment;
- create sustainable communities and neighbourhoods;
- achieve individual and collective responsibility to invest in the environment

### Bristol Local Plan (1997)

Development proposals for the Nelson Street Area are in accordance with the relevant policies of the adopted Bristol Local Plan, which have been 'saved' until replaced by the Local Development Documents. Map 1.2 is an extract from the Local Plan Proposals Map which identifies the following policy areas:

#### Major Regeneration Area and Mixed Commercial Area

Part of Nelson Street, adjoining the Broadmead shopping area, is included within the 'Broadmead Major Regeneration Area' of the City Centre where development and regeneration is prioritised (Policy CC1) principally to strengthen shopping in Broadmead. The rest of the area is included within a 'Mixed Commercial Area' (Policy CC2) which encourages a broad range of uses.

These policies need to be read alongside the Broadmead Shopping Area: Expansion and Development Strategy 2001 that further promotes regeneration of Nelson Street for a range of uses that will complement the expansion of Broadmead at its eastern end and introduce ground floor activity.

#### Retail Frontages

Significant lengths of Nelson Street and adjoining streets are designated as primary or secondary retail frontages (Policies S5 and S6). Within these areas active ground floor frontages are sought.



## Streets For People

Nelson Street is also identified as a Street for People (Policy CC8): the benefits of major regeneration schemes should continue along the connecting routes identified as Street for People and enable new development, physical restoration and environmental improvements. The policy aims to strengthen the network of pedestrian routes and promote the following:

- the regeneration of unused/underused sites and buildings and the redevelopment of unattractive post-war buildings;
- provision of safe, secure and comfortable pedestrian movement, with reductions in the environmental impact of traffic;
- satisfactory access and facilities for people with disabilities;
- provision of public information, signing and facilities, including historic interpretation;
- provision of landscape works, street furniture, floodlighting and public art;
- provision of retailing and other public uses;
- provision of opportunities for street trading and entertainment;
- creation of public spaces, arcades, galleries, malls and courtyards;
- securing access for existing business.

## Heritage and archaeology

Parts of the study area fall within three separate Conservation Areas (City and Queen Square, St. Michael's Hill and Christmas Steps, and College Green). However, the major part of the study area is outside any of these three (see Map 1.3). The area also contains a number of listed buildings.

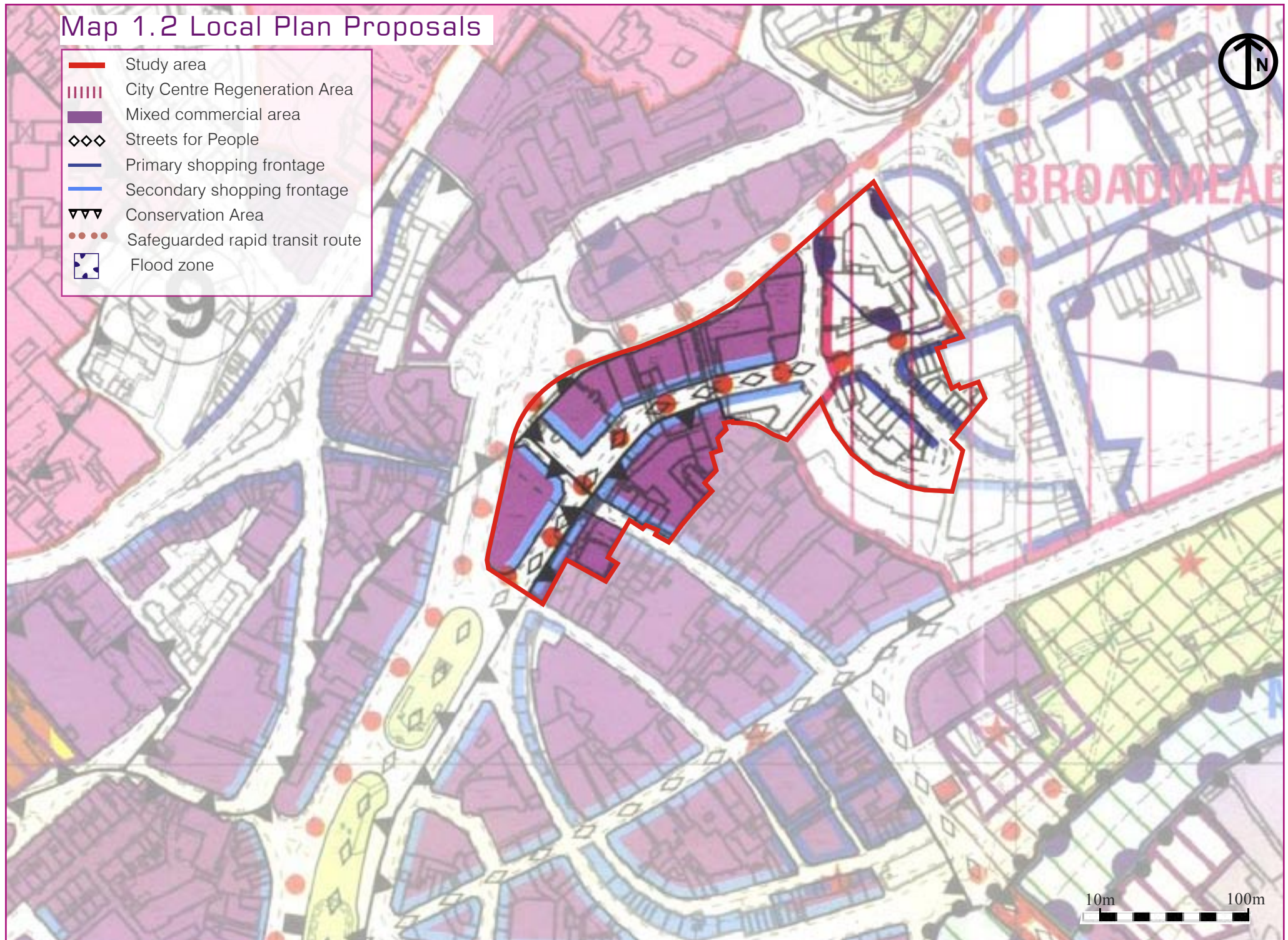
Development should preserve the character and settings of listed buildings as well as preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area (Policies B13 – B18).

The study area straddles the 12th and 13th Century city walls and is likely to have a wealth of archaeological artefacts and features. There will therefore be a presumption in favour of preserving any archaeological features or sites of national importance, whether scheduled or not (Policy B22). Development which could adversely affect sites, structures, landscapes or buildings of archaeological interest and their settings will require an assessment of the archaeology through a desk-top study at the outset of the design process, and where appropriate a field evaluation. Consideration of Policy B22 and SPD 7 'Archaeology' 2006 is to be undertaken.

The archaeological value of the area has been documented by the Bristol and Regional Archaeological Service (May 1996) and requires appropriate

## Map 1.2 Local Plan Proposals

- Study area
- ||||| City Centre Regeneration Area
- Mixed commercial area
- ◇◇◇ Streets for People
- Primary shopping frontage
- Secondary shopping frontage
- ▼▼▼ Conservation Area
- Safeguarded rapid transit route
- Flood zone





consideration. For example, both courses of the town wall, where they survive, must be preserved (see Map 1.4) and there will be an aspiration to enhance their setting and secure a scheme for their better interpretation.

There is a presumption against the construction of new basements, unless it can be demonstrated that archaeological preservation has already been compromised by earlier disturbance.

### Flooding

Part of Nelson Street is identified as an area that is subject to flood risk (Policy ME9). There will be specific requirements for appropriate defence and drainage infrastructure which will need to be included in development proposals coming forward.

### Transport

Nelson Street is identified to be safeguarded as a rapid transit route (Policy M13).

### Supplementary Guidance

Bristol City Council has prepared a number of documents that supplement the Bristol Local Plan. These are 'saved documents' until replaced by the Local Development Documents. In addition, as part of the Council's LDF a number of Supplementary Planning Documents will be

prepared over the coming years. These are identified within the Council's Local Development Scheme ([www.bristol-city.gov.uk/planningpolicy](http://www.bristol-city.gov.uk/planningpolicy) for the latest version). All relevant documents should be suitably addressed throughout the process of preparing development proposals and applications. Particular reference is made to Draft SPD 4 (achieving positive planning through the use of planning obligations), SPD 5 (sustainable construction), SPD 6 (economic contributions from new developments) and to PAN12 on affordable housing and SPD 7 Archaeology.

### Broadmead Shopping Area Expansion and Development Strategy - SPG (July 2001)

The aim of the strategy is to plan for the requirements for major redevelopment proposals and the regeneration of other parts of the Broadmead Major Regeneration Area. To promote better linkages and development between Harbourside and Broadmead, the Broadmead Major Regeneration Area has been extended westwards along Nelson Street within this strategy.

The regeneration of Nelson Street should not be led by retail developments of significant size, but by a range of other uses including small scale A1 retail, offices (Use Class B1), residential, leisure and institutional, along with Use Classes A2, A3, A4 and A5. Schemes should incorporate an element of retail as the primary ground floor use and larger schemes will be expected to incorporate significant residential development.

Existing above-ground walkways are expected to be removed in order to return to ground level pedestrian movement and active frontages onto the public realm.

A key objective of the strategy is the enhancement of the quality of public access and the improvement of pedestrian links between Broadmead, the Centre, Harbourside and Christmas Steps through Nelson Street.

### Proposed Alterations to the Bristol Local Plan, First Deposit Draft (2003)

The draft alterations to the adopted Local Plan demonstrate the Council's commitment to providing a continued regeneration emphasis in the Nelson Street area and are likely to be included within a future Local Development Document.

A significant change affecting the study area is the extension of the Broadmead Major Regeneration Area to include the rest of Nelson Street. Mixed use development including retail uses (Policy CC1) is supported within the extended area.

Schemes for redevelopment and/or renewal are encouraged to reinforce the vitality and viability of the shopping area. Larger schemes, involving redevelopment or changes of use, will need to incorporate a significant element of residential accommodation. The overall emphasis of this policy position is to maximise the mix of uses and hours of activity within the area.

The thrust of relevant policies as identified within the Adopted Local Plan (1997) remains broadly the same. Within Mixed Commercial Areas, such as part of Nelson Street and Quay Street, Policy CC2 has been revised to ensure no one single land use, other than commercial, dominates within a specific location. Policy S2 promotes and protects the vitality and viability of the Broadmead Shopping Area and has been revised to allow a greater mix of uses within retail centres.

Policies S5 and S6 continue to identify the importance of active ground floor frontages along Nelson Street. The contribution of Nelson Street towards the wider policy objectives of Streets for People (Policy CC8) is continued. The parcel of land identified within the flood zone remains and associated Policy ME9 has been strengthened to reflect PPG25 - Development and Flood Risk (2002). The safeguarding of Nelson Street as a light rapid transit route is also continued.





## Map 1.3 Conservation Areas and listed buildings

-  Conservation Areas
-  Listed buildings
-  Grade I listed buildings :  
1. Church of St. John the Baptist
-  Grade II listed building :  
2. Magistrates Court Petty Sessions  
3. Old Bridewell Police and Fire Station  
4. Employment Exchange  
5. Electricity House

**St. Michael's Hill  
& Christmas Steps  
Conservation Area**

**City and Queen Square  
Conservation Area**

**College Green  
Conservation Area**



## City Centre Strategy and Area Action Plan

The City Centre Strategy first produced in 1998 is complementary to the Bristol Local Plan (1997) and promotes an holistic view of the city centre. The strategy goes beyond Local Plan considerations and outlines further strategies and proposals.

The strategy identifies a range of significant changes that are likely to emerge within the Nelson Street area. These included the remodelling and redevelopment of various sites along Nelson Street.

Importantly, the strategy provides a clear indication of the key role of Nelson Street as a pedestrian link connecting Broadmead and the Centre, Harbourside and the West End (see Fig. 1.1).

In November 2005 a revised draft Strategy and Area Action Plan was published that updated the Strategy. It will become part of the Local Development Framework.

## Bristol Sustainable Development Guide for Construction (July 2002)

This guide has been produced by the Council to encourage developers to adopt more sustainable practices for design and construction. It recommends the completion of a 'Sustainable Development Profile'; to be submitted with major planning applications including those coming forward in the Nelson Street Area. Developers are also required to have regard to SPD 5 'Sustainable Building Design and Construction'.

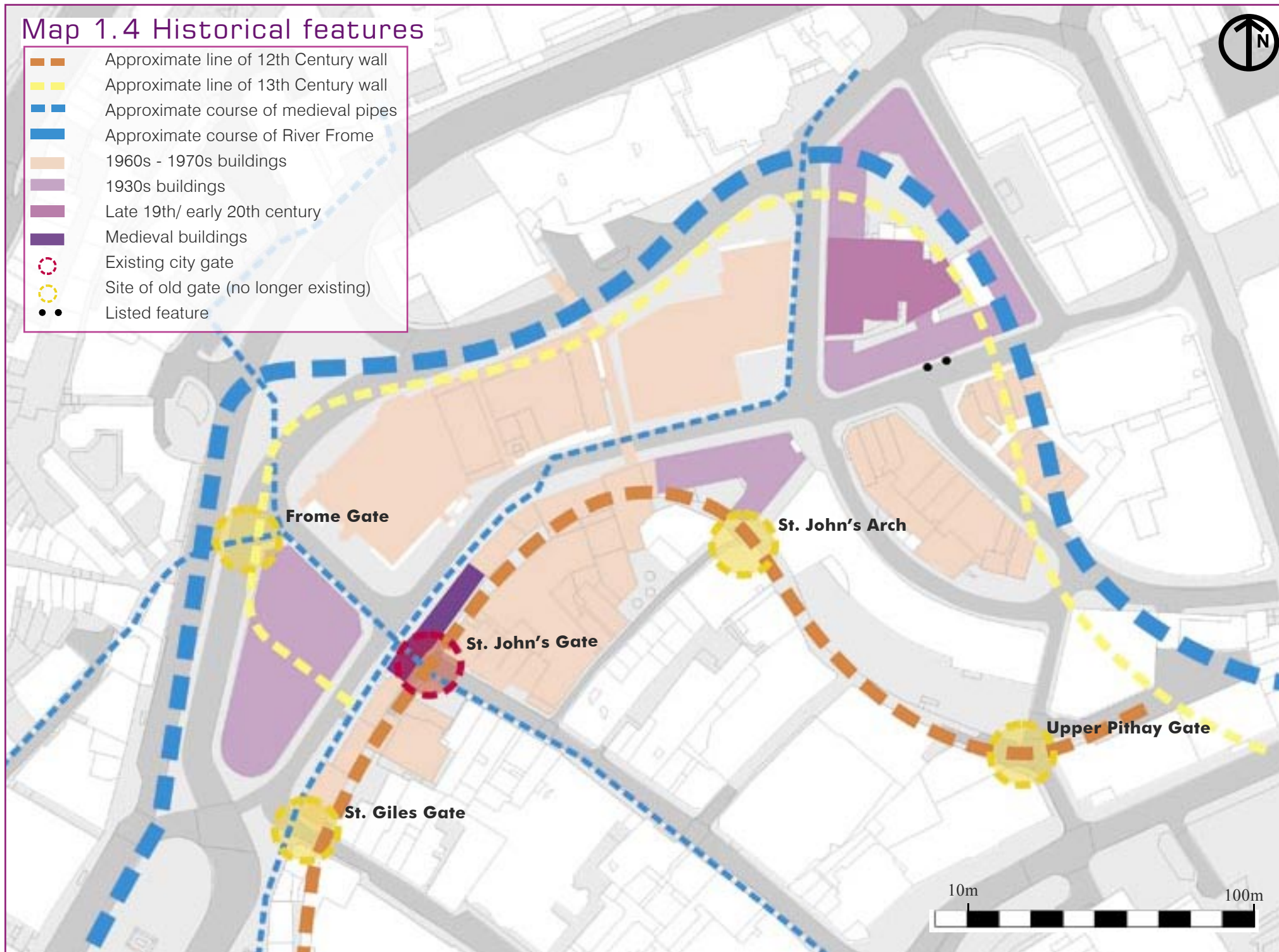
## The New Development Plan System

Following the commencement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) Bristol City Council resolved in September 2004 to move from the existing local plan system to a Local Development Framework. The Council's Local Development Scheme outlines the timescale for preparing the associated documents ([www.bristol-city.gov.uk/planningpolicy](http://www.bristol-city.gov.uk/planningpolicy) for the latest version).



## Map 1.4 Historical features

- Approximate line of 12th Century wall
- Approximate line of 13th Century wall
- Approximate course of medieval pipes
- Approximate course of River Frome
- 1960s - 1970s buildings
- 1930s buildings
- Late 19th/ early 20th century
- Medieval buildings
- Existing city gate
- Site of old gate (no longer existing)
- Listed feature





## 1.5 Character of the area

### Historical Development

The street became known as Nelson Street in 1799 in honour of the great naval hero, Admiral Lord Horatio Nelson (1758 – 1805).

It has been part of the Bristol urban fabric since at least the 13th century when it was identified in the first reliable plan of Bristol, prepared by Jacobus Millerd. The area lies between the 12th and 13th century defensive walls, whose alignment was strongly influenced by the topography and the River Frome (see Map 1.4). The first set of walls and the gates were at the origin of the street pattern that can still be seen today. Water conduits and pipes were built in the area in medieval times to bring water to a number of monastic houses. Of these, St. John's Conduit on Nelson Street still remains.

The building pattern of the street remained unchanged until the mid 19th century, when the River Frome was culverted and deepened to prevent its regular flooding and allow for development over it. A subsequent programme of slum clearance replaced the old properties with commercial developments.

The historic character was further eroded by the Lewins Mead development which dominates the area today. Map 1.4 shows how the majority of the buildings on Nelson Street date from the post-war period. These are 1960-1970s buildings with limited architectural or townscape merit.

However, a small number of buildings of note remain from the various periods of the street development. These suffer from inappropriate setting and some are neglected. They are all listed, and constitute the foundation of the design principles of this framework. They are:

- the Neo-Georgian Old Bridewell Police and Fire Station at the Eastern entrance to Nelson Street. This is a 1928 complex in need of both internal and external renovations (Fig 1.2).
- part of the Bridewell Police and Fire Station complex, the 1879, Italianate Magistrates Court with baroque details (Fig 1.3).
- the Labour Exchange at the corner of All Saints Street, a 1930s red brick building well laid out in an oddly shaped site, with good stone detailing and in good condition (Fig 1.4).
- St. John's Church, at the junction with Broad Street and the last survivor of the four churches that sat astride the city walls. The present building dates from C1350 and is the only medieval building remaining within the area. The tower sits over the arched city gate. Side arches for pedestrians were added in 1828. The church is Grade I listed and is currently undergoing restoration (Fig 1.5).
- the 1930s white Portland stone Electricity House, at the entrance to Quay Street from Colston Avenue (Fig 1.7).





Fig 1.2 Grade II listed Old Bridewell police station



Fig 1.5 Grade I listed Church of St. John the Baptist



Fig 1.3 Grade II listed Magistrates Court Petty Sessions



Fig 1.6 Grade II listed St John's Gate



Fig 1.4 Grade II listed Employment Exchange



Fig 1.7 Grade II listed Electricity House

- At the NE corner of Broad Street, early 19th century facades attached to the 1970s National Westminster Court development: the intensely decorative Edward's Printing Works, and a three story remodelling of a 17th timber framed house.

The history of the area and results from previous archaeological work suggest that the underlying ground may contain significant archaeological artefacts and features.

## Built Form

Notwithstanding the historical origins of the street and the remaining features, the predominant built form in Nelson Street is that of the post war development. Key characteristics are shown on Map 1.5 and include:

- a very large street block on the northern side of the street, impenetrable at the street level, dominated by large institutional buildings with austere facades and limited openings onto the public realm (Police and Magistrate Courts).
- a long medium height block on the southern side, which corresponds to the most ancient set of city walls and of the surviving St. John's Church. This block is characterised by the harsh concrete panelling and crude detailing.

- buildings of very poor quality, set amongst listed and historical buildings (such as the NCP car park).
- a few tall buildings (over 10 storeys), which dominate the street scene, with generally a poor interface at the street level.
- a partial high level circulation with concrete footbridges and stairways leading to a high podium level that is dark and lifeless.
- a large proportion of ground floor level car parking that is exposed, creates dead frontages or has noisy ventilation systems.
- long stretches of passive facades, boarded up retail units or garish shop fronts.

Nelson Street has poor gateways and it does not have obvious links and visual presence from the main street network. In particular, the link between Broadmead and Broad Street to Christmas Steps is badly affected by the severance of Rupert street and Lewins Mead.

## Public realm

The relationship between the tall buildings and the narrow and curving street creates a canyon effect, contributing to an environment which is unattractive as a pedestrian route. There is limited activity along the street and very few places to stop or sit. Recesses and blind corners add to the poor quality of the street.

The lighting is predominantly vehicle orientated and utilitarian, with high level floodlighting, which further compromises the perception of the human scale. The footways are narrow at certain points, with the stairways to the building podiums obstructing movement even further. There are a limited number of trees to soften the harsh concrete environment.

## Landmarks and features

The curving nature of the street offers the opportunity to create interesting forward views that are gradually revealed and the hilly topography of the wider area creates interesting relationships with adjacent streets and the possibility of creating attractive views.

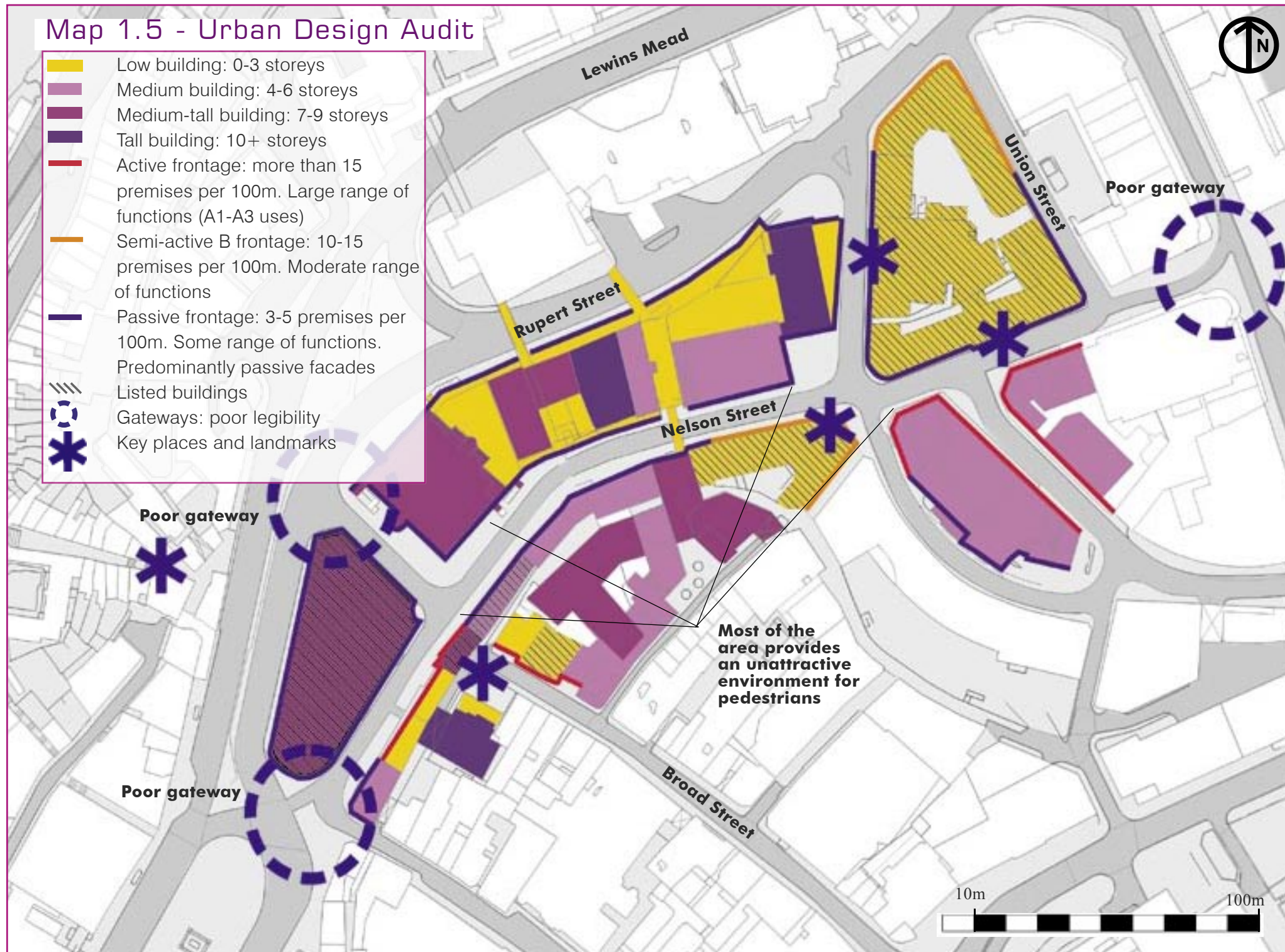
There are a number of listed buildings and historic features, along Nelson Street. Through good design to make them more visible on the street and from surrounding street network they have the potential to become prominent landmarks.

There is a river and water theme that runs from Harbourside through the fountain in 'The Centre', to the head of the conduit at St. John's Gate in Nelson Street. Art installations form an art trail from Harbourside to 'The Centre', that continues in the monuments and statues on Colston Avenue. Historic character, fine urban grain, human proportions and the use of historical materials for the public realm are present in many of the routes crossing the framework area.



## Map 1.5 - Urban Design Audit

- Low building: 0-3 storeys
- Medium building: 4-6 storeys
- Medium-tall building: 7-9 storeys
- Tall building: 10+ storeys
- Active frontage: more than 15 premises per 100m. Large range of functions (A1-A3 uses)
- Semi-active B frontage: 10-15 premises per 100m. Moderate range of functions
- Passive frontage: 3-5 premises per 100m. Some range of functions. Predominantly passive facades
- Listed buildings
- Gateways: poor legibility
- Key places and landmarks



## 02 Development principles



Nelson Street will become an attractive quarter of the city centre, where the historic urban fabric is part of a lively pedestrian environment framed by exemplar new buildings



# 02 Development principles

## 2.1 The Vision

Nelson Street will become an attractive quarter of the city centre, where the historical fabric is part of a lively pedestrian environment framed by exemplar new buildings. It will be an improved pedestrian route of choice linking Broadmead, Harbourside and Christmas Steps.

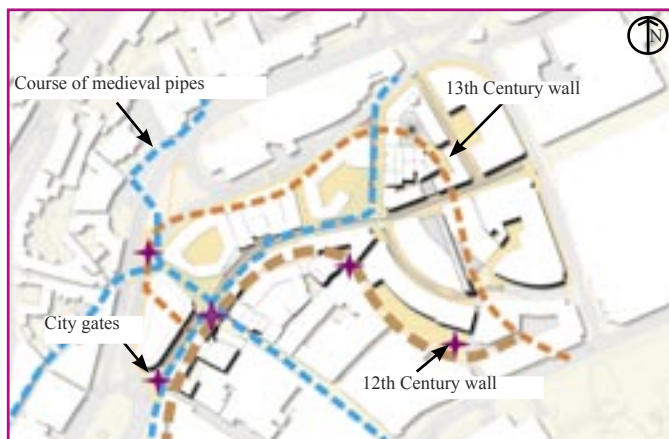
## 2.2 Sustainability and Development Principles

Improving the overall sustainability of the Nelson Street area is a core principle underpinning the framework. At the heart of sustainable development is the simple idea of ensuring a better quality of life for everyone, now and for future generations. Four aspects of sustainability are covered by Planning Policy Statement 1 (2005):

- sustainable economic development;
- social cohesion and inclusion;
- protection and enhancement of the environment;
- prudent use of natural resources.

The improvement of sustainability in the Nelson Street area will require that the following principles are carefully addressed:

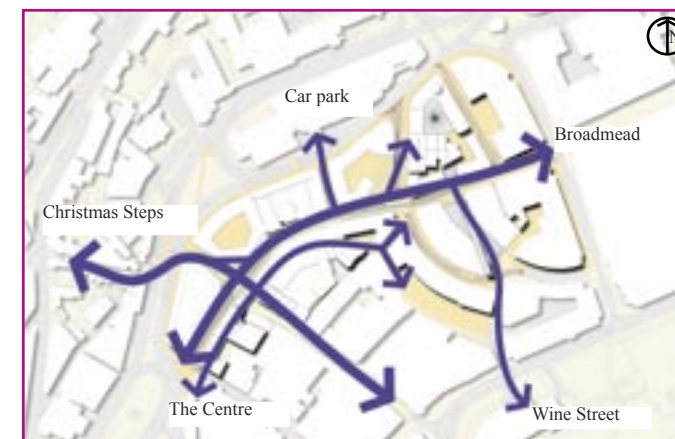
- creation of a street layout that provides 'access for all' on foot, by bicycle and by public transport, for example by reducing the block sizes to a scale that allows direct and efficient movement and by improving sustainable transport facilities.
- improvement of the street functions and street safety, by enhancing the interface between buildings and public realm, a good balance between pedestrian and vehicle needs, streetscape improvements, traffic calming and better street lighting.
- improved legibility and permeability should drive the main layout of the street, with the building lines creating footprints to enhance movement desire lines and views to landmarks and key destinations, such as Christmas Steps and the Old Bridewell Courts.
- foster street life and social interaction by creating an appropriate public realm.
- design buildings for long life and, thus, adaptability to future market changes.
- maximisation of use of natural resources and achievement of excellent BREEAM rating for all new buildings, by achieving savings through natural



Map 2.1 A street that has its foundation in history



Map 2.2 A green environment



Map 2.3 A linked place

ventilation, conservation of energy, water efficiency measures, integration of photovoltaics, and reduction of building outputs such as noise, smells or waste.

- integration of Travel Plans for all new developments and reduction of the need to travel by car by all future occupants.

Every opportunity must be taken to maximise the green content of new developments and public realm proposals (See Map 2.2). New street trees should be planted and existing trees retained where possible, green or brown roofs, green facades and podium gardens above car parking should be introduced. Biodiversity will be enhanced through the introduction of native species or those which will attract wildlife.

Development should conserve and highlight the cultural and historical artefacts of the area. It will be important to reinforce the historical building pattern: a continuous “wall” of medium scale development on the southern side of the street in correspondence with the 12th century

walls, gateways and features at the location of the old city gates (and today’s main crossroads) and smaller, and more permeable block sizes on the northern side, where also activity nodes and large scale buildings can be located (see Map 2.1). The potential of water features, highlighting the historic conduits should be assessed as part of the development of a public art, building and landscape design strategy for the area.

It is important that a range of uses locate in Nelson Street to create a lively and diverse quarter. It will thus become a destination in its own right and is well used at all times of the day. Within the area the following uses will be supported, in principle:

- residential
- small scale retail uses
- office
- leisure
- institutional
- community services
- research and development.

It is important that no single land use dominates the area or results in an over concentration within specific locations. If all early schemes are predominantly residential the Council will be seeking other uses on upper floors for later schemes. Shops, cafés, restaurants and cultural or leisure destinations will be expected, particularly at the activity nodes (see Map 3.1) at the corner of Christmas Street and Bridewell Street. Active / lively ground floor uses or partially active frontages are sought throughout the area.

Independent and small local traders are important for adding character to the area and developments should include smaller ground floor units to ensure this. Contributions towards business support will also be sought to ensure the success of retail in the area. The Council's proposed Retail Strategy and Action Plan will identify more strategic initiatives to complement local initiatives secured from this SPD and SPD 6, Economic Contribution from New Development. In combination, these principles applied to Nelson Street offer an exciting opportunity to bring the street to life so it will become a route and destination of choice for people.



Fig 2.1 Green facades



Fig2.2 Street life and social interaction fostered by creating an appropriate public realm



Fig 2.3 Residential development with active ground floor uses

## 03 Development framework

A new public realm needs to be developed in Nelson Street as part of the redevelopment process.





# 03 Development framework

SPD 8 provides an overall framework for development within this section, and more detailed briefing for individual sites in Section 4. This section provides urban design and development guidance for the whole study area, describing how individual sites can be developed in a coordinated manner, and how public realm and movement issues are to be addressed in the street.

The framework is subdivided into 3 sections but an holistic approach to design must be achieved involving urban design, architectural, landscape design, artistic and engineering skills etc., working as a team.

3.1 Urban form and design quality

3.2 Public realm

3.3. Movement

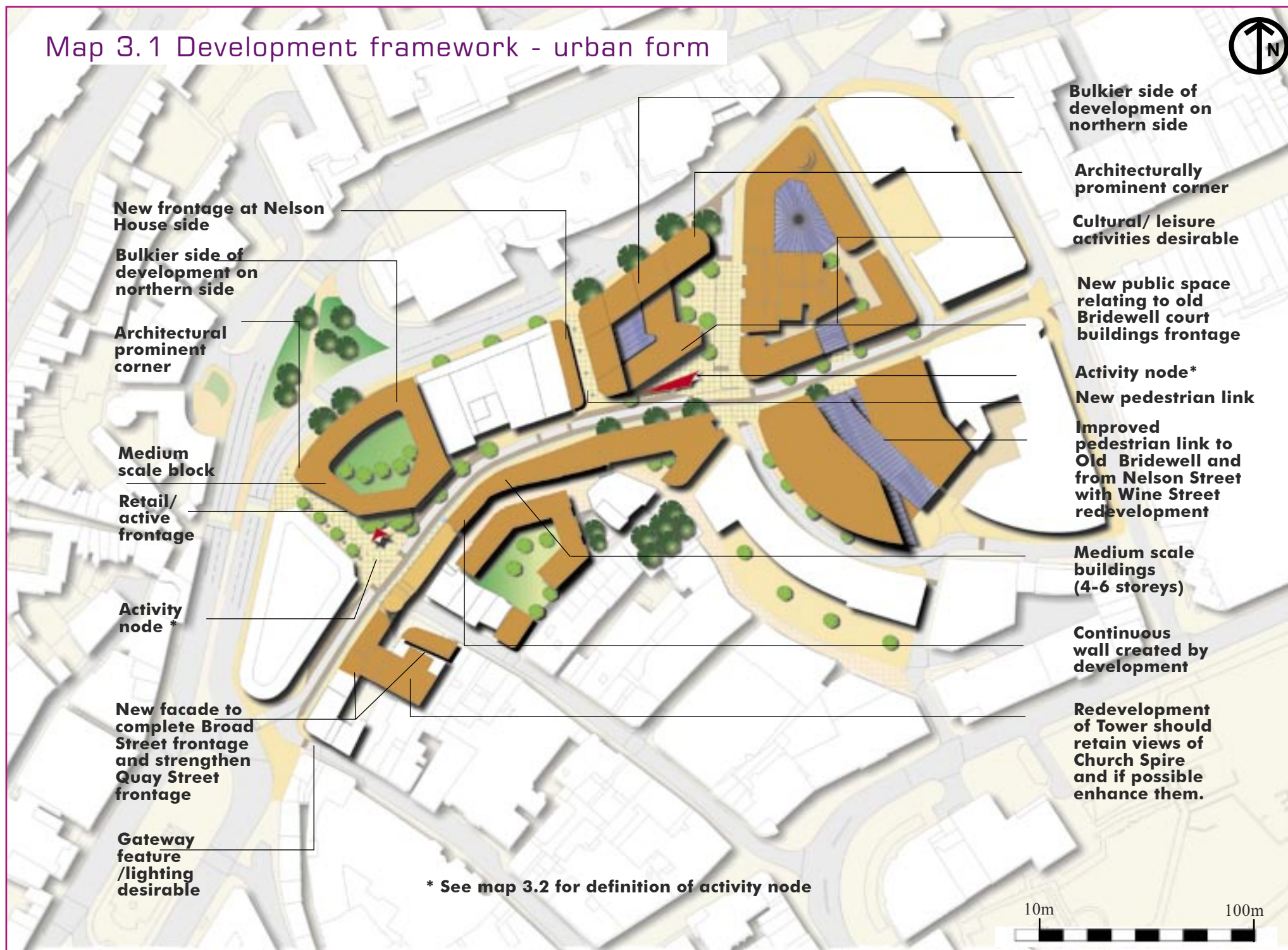
Section 3.4 addresses development and implementation.

## 3.1 Urban form

New buildings in the area should respond to the overall framework, described below and illustrated in Map 2.1:

- enhancement and reinforcement of the 12th century wall alignment through a continuous “wall” of medium scale development on the southern side of Nelson Street.
- enhancement of the visual dominance of St. John’s church, spire and gate within the context of the wall, and consequent dampening of the visual presence of other developments, such as St. Lawrence House tower and in new development.
- plot sizes that encourage walking and increase permeability on the northern side, with new ground level links and road crossings created.
- building on the northern side of Nelson Street to have lower scale at the Nelson Street side, to relate to the listed buildings, and higher scale at the Rupert Street side, with bulk, and visual interest concentrated at the corners of Christmas Street and Bridewell Street with Rupert Street.
- creation of two ‘activity nodes’ at Christmas Street, to improve the connection with Christmas Steps; at Bridewell Street, to enhance the view and enjoyment of the Old Bridewell Courts. It is critical to the success of the framework that these places come to life in a way that is appropriate for the scale of the spaces, and in relation to ground floor active uses in the buildings. Animation will be achieved with uses that ‘spill out’ onto the space, such as cafes or, if appropriate, through the careful integration of a pavilion kiosk. The quality of architectural elevations which edge each space should contribute to the sense of place.
- creation of a third area of interest in front of the Old Bridewell Police Station entrance, in correspondence of a future high quality pedestrian link/ gallery to Wine Street and development at St. Mary-Le-Port. This area should have high quality frontages, lighting and public realm.
- creation of focal points and features at the key gateways into the area (roughly corresponding to the old city gates and shown on Map 3.1) to entice people to use Nelson Street and improve legibility; features should be part of the fabric or layout of the building and support the public art strategy.
- the perimeter blocks illustrated will provide successful high density developments with well defined street frontages, and are particularly suitable for mixed use and residential development. Variations to the illustrated buildings footprint on Map 3.1 - 3.4 will be considered but they should incorporate the guidance in this SPD.

## Map 3.1 Development framework - urban form



## Detail quality

All buildings will be required to demonstrate high quality in composition, detail and accommodation. The following should be considered:

- the design should be appropriate to the historic context. The scale and massing of listed buildings must be respected, and change in scale must be done in a sensitive manner. The materials of the frontages of listed buildings (Portland stone, brick, limestone ashlar, and rubble) could be carefully employed in new developments. The choice of materials and their detailing should be particularly sensitive when adjoining historic buildings.
- the facades should be designed to create an attractive public realm. Particular attention should be given to human scale. High quality materials and attractive detailing should be provided, particularly on the ground floors.
- the design of the facades of the buildings should reflect variation in use. Balconies, collonades and terraces should be considered to provide outdoor spaces and enrich the depth and detailing of the frontages, also on the more bulkier frontages on Rupert Street.
- landscape and public art should be integral to the project from the start of the design process.
- innovative solutions for dealing with the steep topography of the site, particularly on the south side of Nelson Street will be welcome when they provide active or semi-active frontages and usable outdoor spaces.
- the existence of archeological remains in the framework area could mean that developments will need to provide car parking and servicing at ground level. Innovative solutions that do not compromise the street frontage, and do not result in loss of public space will be required.
- the design should show an understanding of sustainability issues and a commitment to sustainability throughout the life of the project. Buildings should be built to last, be flexible and adaptable to new needs in the future.
- the layout should take account of solar orientation, and innovative solutions to passive and active solar design should be considered. A solar and daylight study should be undertaken for new developments.
- the potential landmark pavilions should be small durable buildings with unusual features and offering viable space for small businesses (cafe, florist, etc.). It will be expected that an artist will be involved in the design, which will have a theme consistent with the overall public art strategy.





Fig 3.1 Development with ground floor retail



Fig 3.7 Mixed frontage



Fig 3.8 Balconies



Fig 3.2 - 3.3 Landmark corners



Fig 3.4 Example of glazed roof



Fig 3.9 Variations in 'wall of development'



Fig 3.10 Articulated frontage



Fig 3.12 - 3.13 Landmark pavilions



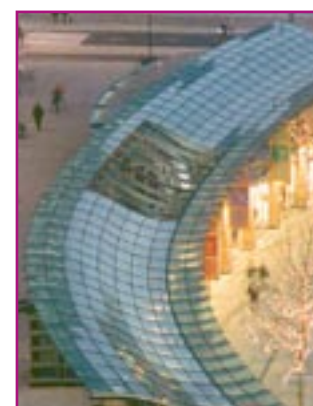
Fig 3.5 - 3.6 Articulated and nicely detailed frontages



Fig 3.11 Varied small scale frontage



Fig 3.14 - 3.15 Canopies (bus stop)



## 3.2 Public realm

A new public realm needs to be created in Nelson Street as part of the redevelopment process. It will be sympathetic to the historic location and yet incorporate contemporary features. The detailed design and choice of materials must facilitate good 'access for all'. To assist this there should be consultation with disabled people such as through the Bristol Physical Access Chain. The main proposals are illustrated in Map 3.2 and described below:

- there should be simplicity and consistency in the use of materials with a limited palette used throughout the area;
- the demarcation of street space for different users (general traffic, public transport, cycleway, footway, parking) will need to be well defined, but very important that they are usually harmonious to create the overall impression of a unified high quality, primarily pedestrian space;
- Pennant Stone will be the main paving material of the activity nodes and crossover tables; low and flush granite kerbs should delineate the road space with drainage channels in granite. The detailing should match the design proposed for Broadmead (see Fig. 3.16);
- generally, materials of high quality, such as stone or reconstituted stone should be used for all footways;
- the lay-bys and cycleways will be paved in stone or reconstituted stone setts. The carriageway will have a high quality poured surface or smooth setts, delineated with flush granite channel and kerb as described above (see Fig. 3.21 and 3.23);
- road markings should be minimal;
- Christmas Street should be designed as a low speed shared surface. Furniture, tree planting and studs, or a subtle level change should help delineate the roadspace (see Fig. 3.22);
- An holistic approach to lighting design should be proposed in relation to the entire study area, to ensure a co-ordinated response. Whilst this should integrate appropriate levels of lighting for movement routes and public areas, as far as is possible columns should not be used to avoid clutter. Specific lighting design responses will be appropriate where significant buildings or prominent high quality architectural corners require emphasis.
- street furniture (benches, bollards, etc.) should be incorporated into the activity nodes, waiting areas and shared surface streets. The design should be contemporary and timeless: steel, stone, wood would be appropriate. Images on page 30 are illustrative only. Durable designs and low maintenance will be required. The use of Broadmead bespoke street furniture would be appropriate;

- public art should be context specific incorporated into the study area, in particular at the activity nodes, gateways and shared surfaces. Features should be incorporated in the design of the public realm or in the building frontages from the outset; the Council's Public Art Strategy sets out the approach to be adopted;
- there is an aspiration to create a water rill/ luminous feature to indicate the ancient water route from St. John's Conduit through the historic water pipes. This could be used to demarcate the separation of footway/ cycleway (see Fig. 3.24). Appropriate crossing points should be included at the crossover tables/ entrances, etc.; this aspiration and any other water features need to have integrity and sit comfortably with the overall strategy for public art
- the Legible City signage strategy should be adopted and used at gateway locations;
- the scope for planting Nelson Street with new trees is limited due to the narrowness of the street and the existing utilities. Certain existing trees should be protected and retained as indicated on Map 3.2 and new trees should be planted to meet good technical standards for urban streets. This will be particularly important to frame on-street car parking, along Christmas Street, Rupert Street and at the activity node of Bridewell Street (see Map 3.2). New trees should be large, semi- mature specimen (min 6m tall) appropriate to an urban setting.

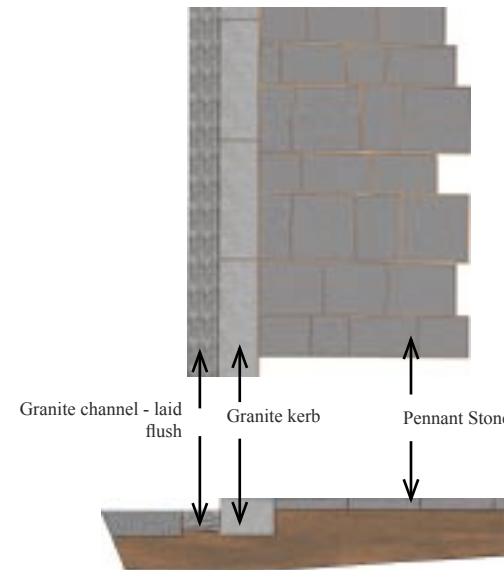


Fig 3.16 Broadmead streetscape detail to be adopted in Nelson Street



Fig 3.17 Legible City to be extended to the Nelson Street area



Fig 3.18 Broadmead lighting model to be matched in Nelson Street





Fig 3.19 - 3.20 Well designed high volume road such as Rupert Street



Fig 3.21 Fine detailing of road, cycleway and footway



Fig 3.22 Example of shared surface though furniture and planting for Christmas Street



Fig 3.23 Differentiation between street space allocated to different users



Fig 3.24 Example of pedestrian space



Fig 3.27 Narrow linear water feature



3.25 Example of informal seating



3.26 Bespoke furniture



3.28 Public art

## Map 3.2 Development framework - public realm



Retained trees



New trees

**Potential water/ lighting feature as memory of medieval pipes linked to St. John's Conduit**  
New, large mature trees

**Shared surface on Christmas Street, demarcated with street trees and furniture**

**New pedestrian crossing providing better link between Christmas Street and Christmas Steps**

**Activity node with high quality public realm \***

**St. John's Church spire floodlit**

**Gateway feature/ public art on/ or in front of building**

**New pedestrian link with high quality public realm**

**Activity node/ potential pavilion with high quality public realm\* Potential light feature to link with water feature**

\* The creation of activity nodes is identified for two locations, one at the junction of Nelson Street with Christmas Street, and the other at the junction of Nelson Street with Bridewell and All Saints Street. Their surface treatments should be clean, simple, legible and uncluttered by unnecessary furniture. They should be spatially defined by buildings in conjunction with trees. Buildings shall be of architectural quality that brings inherent distinctiveness and a memorable sense of place. Subject to the scale of a space, it may for instance be appropriate to consider a single large scale tree with seating around.





Nelson Street should become an environment where pedestrians can be confident of safety, have easy access to local destinations and be encouraged to pass through freely and directly. Pedestrian comfort and low vehicle speeds are the guiding principles of the movement framework. There is, however, need to ensure that premises are readily serviced, congestion avoided, and safety ensured for all. It will therefore be important that the details of public realm packages are fully considered prior to implementation, and agreed with the Council.

This SPD promotes changes to the public highway to support objectives of the planning policy. The final form of these measures will be determined by the Council as Traffic and Highway Authority following appropriate consultation.

### Walking

It is important to maximise the space available to pedestrians. It is expected that where possible additional footway space will be reclaimed from the carriageway on Nelson Street, Bridewell Street and Silver Street and an uncluttered pedestrian route will be maintained at a width of at least three metres, wherever possible.

Street design should encourage low vehicle speeds to ensure that pedestrians will be more confident of crossing the road in safety. 'Courtesy' crossing points indicated by shallow ramps in the carriageway and appropriate paving should be implemented at key crossing locations.

It is proposed that Christmas Street will become a shared surface, predominantly pedestrian, still allowing some low speed vehicle use but subject to further assessment to ensure a safe design based on expected traffic use. Initially as a trial the northern end of Fairfax Street would be closed to traffic in order to facilitate the joint redevelopment of the adjoining sites.

The existing footbridges and upper level walkways will be removed. A signal controlled pedestrian crossing on Rupert Street and a pedestrian route through the redeveloped New Bridewell block would be necessary to provide a safer and more attractive alternative route. The new crossing would link into the existing Rupert Street Car Park forecourt, the improvement of which would also be expected to meet the needs of pedestrians.

It is important that a clear pedestrian link from the Christmas Steps area to St. John's Gate and Nelson Street/ Broadmead is achieved. The detail of this alignment will be determined by a separate technical study associated with implementation of public realm package 3 so that existing bus priority, servicing, safety and other factors are satisfactorily accommodated.



## Cycling

The redevelopment of the Nelson Street corridor provides an opportunity to provide a high quality two way cycle link between Broadmead and The Centre which is currently lacking. Cyclists travelling towards Broadmead will use the carriageway with slow moving traffic. A contra-flow cycle facility will be available for the south-west direction at carriageway level. Materials can be chosen to minimise the apparent width of carriageway.

On-street cycle parking should be provided along Nelson Street at the activity nodes. New office and residential developments should provide convenient, secure cycle parking facilities to promote the use of cycling as an alternative to the car.

## Public Transport

Nelson Street will remain a key bus corridor. It is important that bus users can easily access buses on Nelson Street and that bus traffic can move freely and safely through Nelson Street without significant delay. However bus and general traffic will be calmed so that speeds are low.

Nelson Street provides important bus stop facilities for The Centre. Given capacity constraints in The Centre, an increase in the number of stops on Nelson Street is desirable to meet future increases in bus demand.

Existing bus stops will be lengthened if possible, subject to consideration of other users of the street and good landscape design. Bus layby materials can be chosen to minimise the apparent width of the carriageway.

Congestion at the northern end of Nelson Street may be eased by linking the operation of the traffic signals that control the junction of Union Street and Rupert Street and the pedestrian crossing on The Horsefair, although this will need to be considered in the light of the predominant vehicle movement along Rupert Street. The relocation of some street furniture on Union Street would also allow buses a greater degree of kerb overhang, and enable easier positioning for pick up and drop off. A further detailed study may be required.

The existing taxi rank near Fairfax Street will be relocated to the opposite side of the carriageway but may also be used for servicing, short stay parking and motorcycles, where space permits.

The proposed Light Rapid Transit route that passes through Nelson Street should be safeguarded.

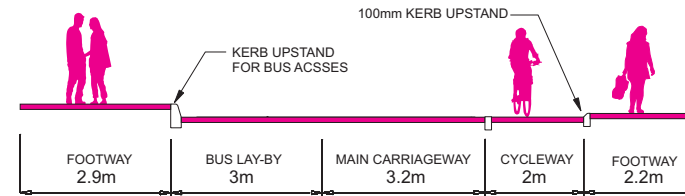
## Streets and Traffic

It will be expected that under the proposed framework, traffic arriving at the Nelson Street corridor, either through the existing bus gate at the western end, from Small Street or from Bridewell Street, will be entering a calmed traffic environment. This will be achieved by:

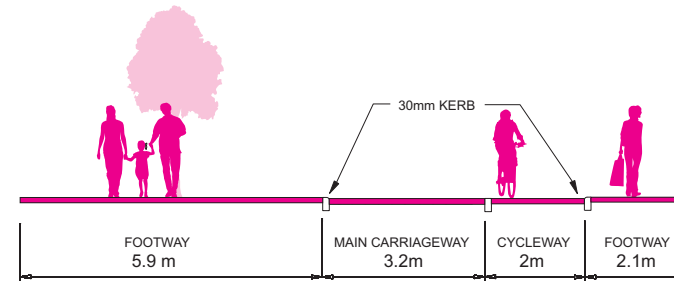
- shallow ramps that raise the carriageway on entry to Nelson Street to create a reduced kerb height. Ramp gradients of 1:15 would be considered appropriate to ensure limited impact on bus passengers;
- the main carriageway narrowed to a width of 3.2m to encourage drivers to control their speed;
- choice of surface materials and minimal road markings, to provide a more pedestrian look.
- additional pedestrian activity along and across the street
- bays for servicing, short stay parking, motorcycles and taxis where space permits.

Under the existing arrangement, vehicular movements from Bridewell Street into Fairfax Street and from the Pithay into Wine Street constitute a hazard to pedestrians. These movements can be eliminated by the closure of the Pithay to southbound traffic and the closure of Fairfax Street at its northern end to vehicular traffic except for emergency access subject to satisfactory local servicing access to shops and businesses and NCP car park being provided. All Saints Street would then become one-way southbound taking the existing Bridewell Street to Fairfax Street traffic on a more direct route.

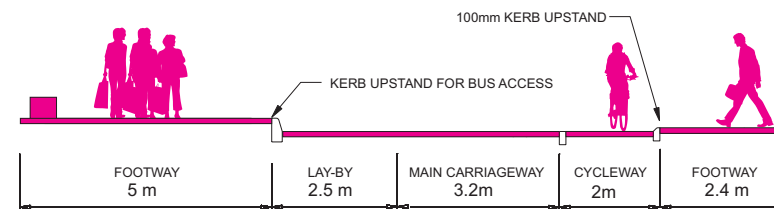
Fig 3.29 Typical proposed sections (see Map 3.3)



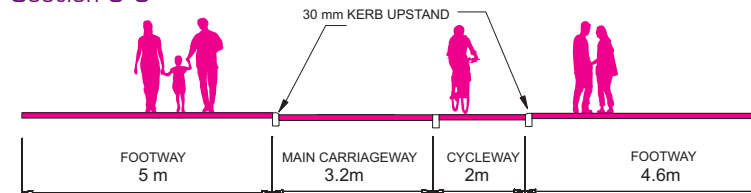
Section 1-1



Section 2-2



Section 3-3



Section 4-4

## Map 3.3 Development framework - movement / access



**Contra-flow cycle lane at carriageway level**

**Maximise length of north side layby for servicing, short stay parking, motorcycles and taxis**

**Shared surface**

**As direct as possible crossing to Christmas Steps: crossing positions are illustrative**

**Widened footways**

**Low gradient speed table**

**Introduce speed ramp**

**Maximise length of double bus stop**

**Bus gate with speed ramp**

**Bridewell Street and Rupert Street crossing to become 'puffins'**

**New puffin crossing (position is illustrative)**

**Carriageway narrowed to 3.2 m  
Maximise length of bus lay by with shelter incorporated in building**

**Bus gate realigned and Union Street crossing widened**

**North side lay bys for servicing, short stay parking, motorcycles and taxis**

**Low gradient speed table**

**Fairfax Street closed to through traffic (initially as a trial)**

**One way southbound (initially as a trial)**

**Two way working retained in Bridewell Street**

**Pithay one way northbound**

10m

100m



The new traffic scheme would provide a safer crossing solution at All Saints Street and remove potential conflict at Fairfax Street. The width of the crossing point would be reduced and traffic would be calmed. Visibility to traffic exiting Bridewell Street would be better than for traffic currently exiting All Saints Street. The turning radius from Nelson Street into All Saints Street should be relatively small, forcing drivers making that movement to slow down considerably.

Some drivers will be forced to take an alternative route than they would take under the current system. Drivers from the Pithay and Pithay Court areas will no longer be able to directly access Nelson Street and will have to follow Fairfax Street to its junction with Newgate to leave the area. Traffic heading west towards The Centre will reroute along Wine Street and Baldwin Street or Union Street. Traffic heading north and east can access the inner ring road at the Old Market roundabout or use Union Street to access Rupert Street and Lewins Mead. The number of vehicles making these movements is likely to be very small and therefore the benefits of the proposed traffic scheme would be greater than the disbenefits to a small number of drivers.

The increased pedestrian priority and activity along and across Nelson Street Corridor should result in drivers taking more care than they may under existing conditions. Provided new development is accessed more from the Rupert St frontage, the area will be less attractive as a through route for general traffic.

## Parking and servicing

Opportunities for bays to accommodate servicing, short stay parking, motorcycles and taxis are identified on Map 3.3. This would be consistent with a low speed environment with street activity. Parking bays will be clearly marked by a change in road surface (setts, for example) and flush granite kerb delineation.

There would be a requirement to provide vehicular access to the existing buildings on Nelson Street. The provision of vehicular access to new buildings, however, should be from Rupert Street wherever possible. A resident permit scheme would not be available and residential and office developments should provide any car parking required on their site subject to local plan policy.

The closure of Fairfax Street at its northern end and the alteration of the operation of All Saints Street to one-way southbound will allow service access to the Galleries via Bridewell Street, All Saints Street and the eastern end of Fairfax Street.

## Utilities and infrastructure

Development and redevelopment of buildings, highways and the public realm must take the requirements of the existing statutory services and utilities into account and plan to minimize disturbance in the future by, for example, providing spare ducting.

## 3.4 Development and implementation

### Phasing

Development proposals will not all be delivered at the same time. The development framework has been devised to ensure that the order of development is not critical to the gradual regeneration of the area and improvement of the public realm.

There are a number of sites that are likely to come forward in the short / medium term (2-5 years). These include St. Lawrence House and the Old Bridewell Police Station for which development proposals are being prepared. In addition, both the New Bridewell Police Station and the Magistrates Courts are likely to be relocated within the next few years.

Therefore a large part of the Nelson Street area could change within the next five years. This will provide the opportunity to improve the public realm and give a head start to the creation of a vibrant city centre quarter.

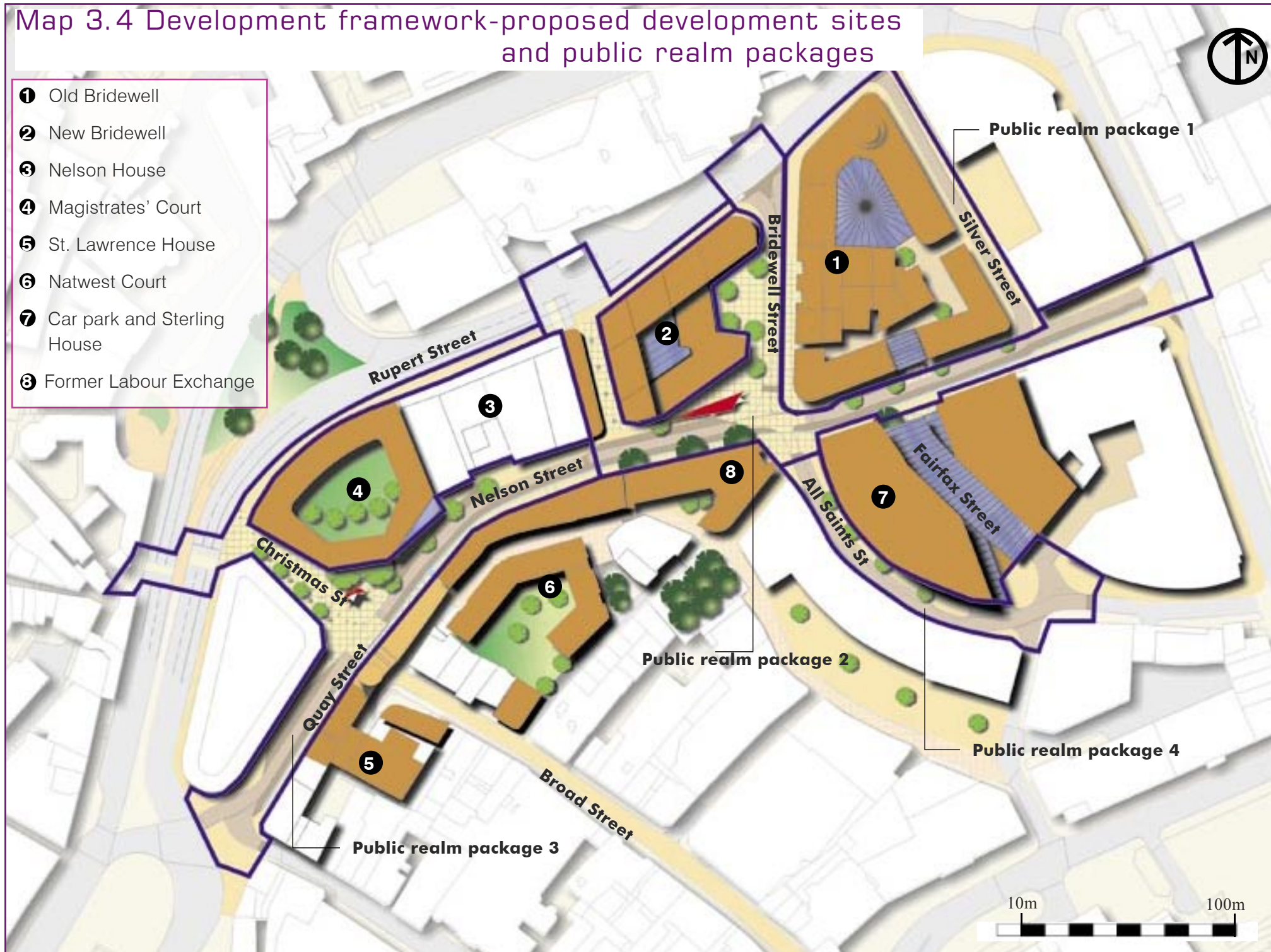
It is expected that major street and public realm improvements will be carried out as part of the development of St. Lawrence House, New Bridewell and the Magistrates Courts, given their relationship to the street frontage. This approach is capable of achieving significant change within the likely first phase of redevelopment.

Longer term proposals (over 5 years) include a number of buildings that are mainly subject to long or extended leases. These include:

- the Fairfax Street car park and the nightclub complex on Broadmead, which may be redeveloped either jointly or as separate sites in conjunction with the closure of Fairfax Street. They would then provide enhanced activity and a range of facilities for the community.
- Nelson House, currently providing student accommodation and ground floor uses; the ground floor properties are either vacant or under-performing. The redevelopment of the adjacent sites is, however, likely to encourage frontage improvements and possibly early enhancement of the whole property.
- the NatWest Court building, where the potential for redevelopment is stifled due to a long term lease. Short term improvements to suit the new urban environment should include a new system of ventilation for the car park that is more respectful of public amenity. Improvements to the frontage of the building facing onto Nelson Street would also enhance the street scene and the setting of St. John's Church. In the longer term, the building represents a major redevelopment opportunity that would positively contribute towards the general improvement of the area.

# Map 3.4 Development framework-proposed development sites and public realm packages

- ❶ Old Bridewell
- ❷ New Bridewell
- ❸ Nelson House
- ❹ Magistrates' Court
- ❺ St. Lawrence House
- ❻ Natwest Court
- ❼ Car park and Sterling House
- ❽ Former Labour Exchange





Individual site briefs (see Section 4) have been prepared to identify the various site-specific issues to ensure delivery of schemes that are beneficial to the comprehensive regeneration of the area.

In order to ensure that the appropriate quality of development is achieved, the developer should demonstrate:

- commitment to excellence as an integral part of the scheme: there should be clear measures to ensure its delivery, and that excellence is built into budget projections;
- commitment to best value and analysis of whole life cost rather than simple assessment of the most convenient short term solution;
- that the project has a realistic programme;
- that the professional team has the appropriate level of skills for the demands of the project, including architects, landscape architects and artists as required;
- that the management structure for the project is able to support a commitment to excellence;
- that building procurement routes ensure high quality building design and that design intentions are carried through to the finished project;

- that the needs of all users are taken into account.

The design of key buildings and open spaces (such as activity nodes) may benefit from the appointment of designers through design competition.

Due reference should be made to the following CABE publications:

- Design Review, Guidance on How CABE Evaluates Quality in Architecture and Urban Design, CABE 2002
- Creating Excellent Buildings, A Guide for Clients, CABE 2003

## Developers' contributions

Supplementary Planning Document No.4 'Achieving Positive Planning through the use of Planning Obligations' (adopted in October 2005) provides guidance in relation to the type, level and delivery of contributions.

Planning obligations are the mechanism by which measures are secured to ensure that developments comply with policy and mitigate any adverse impacts, thus enhancing the quality of both the development and the wider area. They are meant to ensure that the development makes a positive contribution to sustainable development providing social, economic and environmental benefits to the community as a whole.

Within the Nelson Street area there will be an emphasis placed upon improvements to the public realm, particularly during the first phases of development. This will include street and public realm improvements. Public art, for example in the form of the potential landmark pavilions and water features will be an integral element of this work and building design.

To ensure the success of the retail element, economic contributions and general business support measures will be required. SPD 6 provides further information on this and other economic benefits from development.

Contributions related to other planning priority areas will be sought by the Council. This will include affordable housing and other obligations justified by the detail of proposals coming forward.

## Public realm packages

Public realm improvements agreed by the Council will be delivered as distinct packages in association with the redevelopment of the various sites rather than financial contributions to the Council. The packages are illustrated in Map 3.4 but the Council will consider the benefits of developers offering to do works beyond these packages on a case by case basis.

It is important that the developers of the first scheme (whichever it may be) provide and agree with Bristol City Council an acceptable design strategy and palette of materials and furniture that would be acceptable for the whole area. Lighting and a public art strategy would also be required as an integral part of the design strategy. The material and furniture palette should be of appropriate materials of high quality, as described in Section 3.2: Pennant Stone at activity nodes to match Broadmead detail, smooth setts or other high quality finish for the carriageway, smooth setts for footways and cycleway, delineated with a flush granite kerb, granite kerbs, granite channels and light fittings providing high quality colour rendering to match Broadmead detail. Street furniture of contemporary and durable design, street trees should be large semi-mature specimens (at least 6m tall) of a species appropriate to an urban setting.

## Public realm package 1 (associated with site 1: Old Bridewell)

Scope:

- footways improvements to perimeter of Old Bridewell;
- tree planting along frontages where possible;
- Silver Street footway widening and resurfacing;
- Silver Street lighting; improved crossing at Rupert Street junctions.

## Public realm package 2 (associated with site 2: New Bridewell)

Scope:

- Nelson Street improvements from eastern corner of Nelson House to Union Street junction;

- realignment of Nelson Street carriageway to 3.2m wide,
- provision of cycleway (2m wide);
- realignment of kerbs and provision of crossing table at Bridewell Street/ Nelson Street/ All Saints junction;
- provision of Puffin crossings at Rupert Street/ Bridewell Street junction;
- minimum 10m wide pedestrian link at-grade between Nelson House and New Bridewell and crossing of Rupert Street, including changes to car park forecourt as appropriate;
- removal of over bridge;
- traffic management measures in All Saints Street (turned into one way southbound) and interim works at north end of Fairfax Street (closed to traffic subject to assessment of traffic management implications and provision of satisfactory servicing arrangements);
- footway improvements and improved bus shelters on Rupert Street; improved cycle parking and lighting;
- Legible City signage at gateway locations; single aspect development fronting side on Nelson House (see individual site briefing, Section 4);

maximise length of bus lay by and provision of shelter integral to new building;

- realign bus gate and widen Union Street pedestrian crossing. Provide lay by for servicing and parking in Nelson Street.

## Public realm package 3 (associated with site 4: Magistrates' Court)

Scope:

- Quay Street and Nelson Street improvements from bus gate at Colston Avenue to speed ramp at Nelson House;

- realignment of Nelson Street carriageway to 3.2m wide, provision of cycleway (2m wide), removal of footway stair opposite Nelson House;

- creation of shared surface on Christmas Street and provision of crossing to Christmas Steps (including local footway improvements) subject to further technical assessment.

- improvement to Rupert Street footways up to New Bridewell site frontage, including tree planting.

- improve bus shelters and new bus shelters integrated with building design, cycle parking and lighting;

- Legible City signage at; maximise provision of Nelson Street lay by for servicing and parking.

## Public realm package 4 (associated with site 7: Car Park and Sterling House)

Scope:

- All Saints Street streetscape improvements, footway widening and any necessary carriageway widening and Fairfax Street (closed to through traffic).

- Legible City signage.

- Fairfax Street could be either an arcaded link of generous width (11m minimum), or a pedestrianised street.

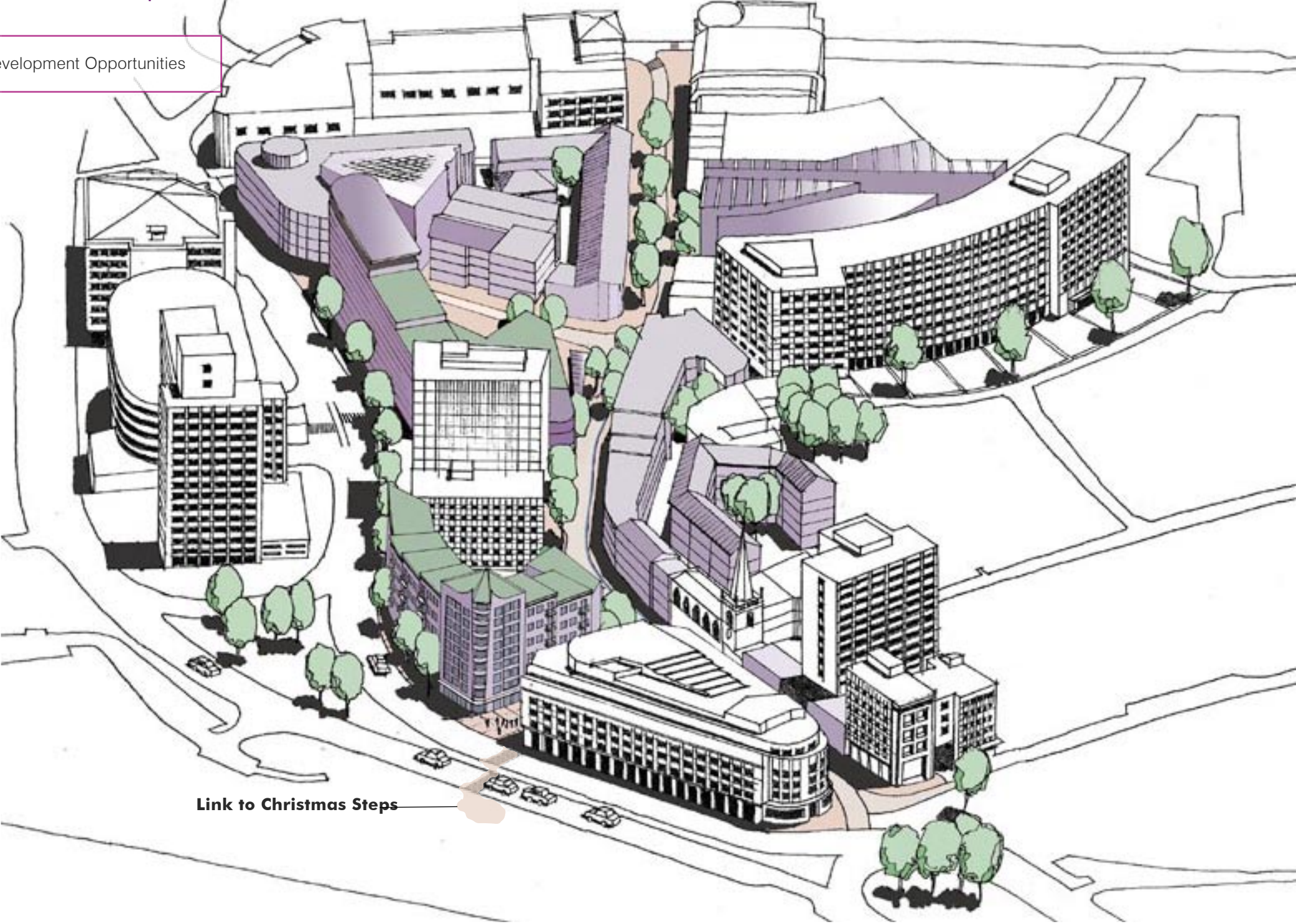
In either case, high quality materials, lighting and furniture should be employed as described above and in Section 3.2.

Further public realm improvements may be sought and associated with redevelopment of sites 3, 6, 8 and Electricity House as deemed necessary by the Council.



Map 3.5 Development framework- illustrative aerial view

Development Opportunities



Link to Christmas Steps

## 04 Site briefings

There will be an emphasis upon improvements to the public realm, to provide improved settings for new high quality buildings and mixed uses

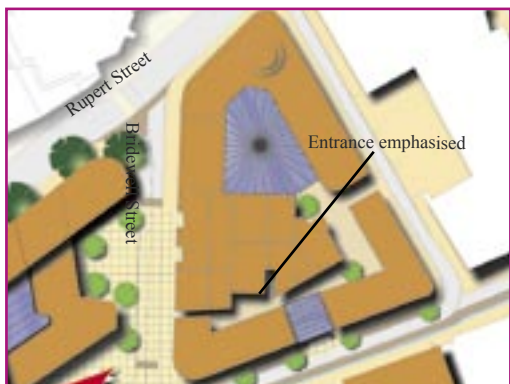




# 04 Individual site briefings



Bridewell Island - Nelson Street frontage



Bridewell Island - proposed plan



Bridewell Island - 3D massing

## 4.1 Site 1 - Old Bridewell

**Current use:** Former Police Station, Fire station and court, club (vacant)

**Landowner:** Bristol City Council and Avon and Somerset Police

**Tenure:** Freehold, partially vacant

Complex of historic listed buildings of various designs with stone frontages on the street and brick frontages facing the courtyard. Parts of the building are in poor condition. A number of additions and ancillary buildings have been added in the courtyard.

### Development briefing

**Potential gross floor area:** 9,500 to 13,000 sqm

**Appropriate land use:** residential, hotel, cultural/ leisure facilities, office accommodation, retail and catering

**Constraints:** complex of historic buildings, Grade II listed, registered as buildings At Risk. Foundations on the site of the 13th century city wall and the culverted River Frome, with a potential high risk of flooding and of uncovering

archaeological remains. Minimal fenestration in parts of the building.

**Opportunities:** it is expected that the buildings will be the centrepiece of the regenerated Nelson Street and comprise some activity that will allow public access, particularly from Nelson Street. The courtyard could be covered by a glazed roof. The buildings have good quality frontages .

### Design brief

The development should be intended as restoration and reuse of the historic structures, be of the highest architectural merit and appropriate to their listed status.

- the frontages should highlight the historic stone features. Floodlighting will be required to give emphasis to particular features.
- the doorway on Nelson Street and the link to the potentially pedestrianised Fairfax Street should be emphasised and lead into facilities for the public (culture or leisure in preference).



## Transport

Due to the central location and nature of the buildings, a minimal provision of dedicated parking on site is expected. No off-site parking should be considered except Park and Ride. Access for servicing through the courtyard, via Silver Street.

## Sustainability targets

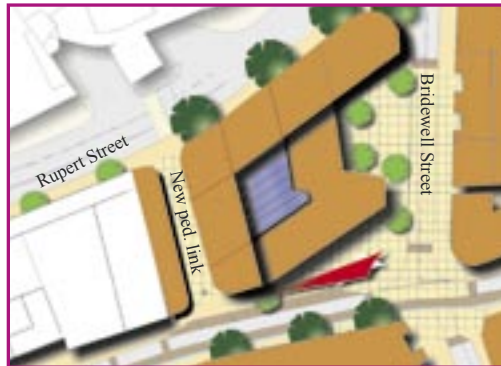
- exemplar re-use of historic and cultural resources.
- best practice standards in maximisation of natural lighting and ventilation, reduction of noise, waste and water consumption.
- travel plan and submission of Access Statement.

## Planning obligations

Implementation of Public Realm Package 1; inclusion of cultural/ leisure/ community facilities on Nelson Street frontage; design of street in front of Nelson Street entrance to allow level access from both directions; business support contributions and other obligations justified by Local Plan policies.



New Bridewell - Nelson Street frontage



New Bridewell - proposed plan



New Bridewell - 3D massing

## 4.2 Site 2 - New Bridewell

**Current use:** Police Station, Juvenile and Domestic Courts

**Landowner:** Avon and Somerset Police and Courts Services

**Tenure:** Freehold, occupied pending relocation

Purpose built 1960-70s concrete office development, comprising a tower block and a medium rise block with partial basement and ground floor car parking and a concrete footbridge link across Nelson Street and Rupert Street.

## Development briefing

**Potential gross floor area/ floors:** 12,000 to 14,000 sqm/ 4-12 floors, subject to tall buildings assessment.

**Appropriate land use:** residential, hotel, office accommodation on upper floors, retail (including cafés and restaurants) on the ground floor on Nelson Street, to new activity node

and within the new pedestrian link to the south.

**Constraints:** foundations on the site of the 13th century city wall and the culverted River Frome, with a potential risk of flooding and of uncovering archaeological remains.

**Opportunities:** it is expected that the development will create an “activity node” with a gain in public realm provision and a possible landmark pavilion at the corner of Nelson Street and Bridewell Street: this new space would highlight the façade of the Old Bridewell Court. It is also required that the footbridge is replaced by an attractive at grade pedestrian link, with active frontages on both sides (“wraparound” frontage attached to Nelson House) and puffin pedestrian crossing on Rupert Street.

### Design brief

- the development should be of exemplar architectural quality.
- it will be articulated in height, 4-5 storeys on Nelson Street to be in keeping with the adjacent listed buildings, and up to 12 storeys to

form a landmark corner on Rupert Street and Bridewell Street. The frontages should be well animated with fenestration, collonades, balconies, etc.

- active or semi-active frontages to be provided along all sides of the building and within the new pedestrian link. Small scale retail uses should be provided along Nelson Street. This new frontage should be of high quality to match the new building.
- car parking could be provided in the basement or ground floor (subject to archaeological assessment) and accessed from Rupert Street. It could be in either a landscaped courtyard or in a podium structure covered by a roof garden. It should never generate blank or unsightly frontages onto the public areas.
- roofs should be designed as a fifth façade. Green or brown roofs should be incorporated. The introduction of green facades should be considered.
- a landmark pavilion could be provided as an integral part of the development; it should be durable, sculptural and usable for small scale activities but not clutter

the new space. An architectural floodlighting scheme for the space and associated buildings should be incorporated.

### Transport

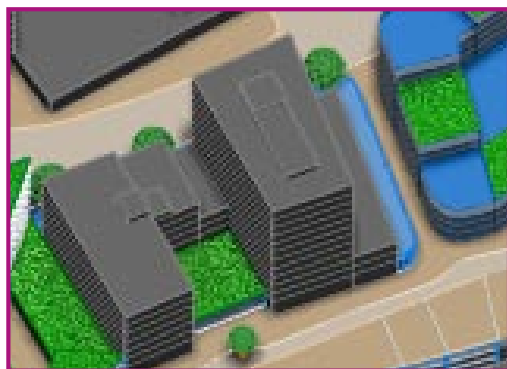
- car parking ratios should reflect up-to-date planning guidance including PPG13, the Local Plan and emerging LDF. No off site parking should be considered except park and ride.
- access for servicing via Rupert Street.
- pedestrian crossings on Bridewell St. and Rupert St. should be redesigned as puffin crossings.

### Sustainability targets

- designed for long life and adaptable to future change of use and market demands.
- excellent BREEAM rating.
- Lifetime Homes Standards for the residential component of the development.
- biodiversity encouraged with green roof and courtyard.
- travel plan and submission of Access Statement.

## Planning obligations

Implementation of Public Realm Package 2 and traffic management measures on All Saints Street and Fairfax Street; provision of potential landmark pavilion on Nelson Street activity node and other obligations, including affordable housing. Other obligations justified by Local Plan Policy.



Nelson House - 3D massing

## 4.3 Site 3 – Nelson House

**Current use:** student accommodation, ground floor retail (shell only).

**Landowner:** Unite

Purpose built 1960-70s concrete office development converted to small housing units for students, comprising a tower block and a medium rise block with ground floor car parking.

### Development briefing

**Opportunities:** It is expected that the active frontages on Nelson Street and Rupert Street will be enhanced. A new active frontage to be added along new pedestrian link to be incorporated as part of adjoining development.

### Design brief

- the new and improved frontages should be of good architectural standard.
- buildings materials should be of appropriate to context and durable.

### Planning Obligations

- If changes of use or redevelopment proposals unexpectedly come forward, obligations as justified by Local Plan Policy

## Site 4 – Magistrates' Courts

**Current use:** Magistrates Courts

**Landowner:** Courts Services

**Tenure:** Freehold, occupied pending relocation

Purpose built courts of the late 1960-70s, comprising a large floorplate block of concrete construction and a semi basement car parking accessed from Nelson Street.

### Development briefing

**Potential gross floor area/ floors:**

7,000 to 8,000 sqm/ 4-9 floors

**Appropriate land use:** residential, hotel, office accommodation on upper floors, retail (including cafés and restaurants) on the ground floor on Nelson Street and Christmas Street.

**Constraints:** foundations on the site of the 13th century city wall, with a potential high risk of uncovering archaeological remains.

**Opportunities:** it is expected that the redevelopment will create an “activity node”





Magistrates Courts - Nelson Street frontage



Magistrates Courts - proposed plan



Magistrates Courts - 3D massing

and a potential landmark pavilion at the corner of Nelson Street and Christmas Street: the activity node would take the form of a space encouraging connections with Christmas Steps, with a shared surface and raised table at the southern end of Christmas Street, culminating in a signalled pedestrian crossing on Rupert Street and Lewins Mead.

### Design brief

- the development should be of exemplar architectural quality.
- it will be articulated in height, 4-5 storeys on Nelson Street to be in keeping with the adjacent buildings and St. John's Church (Grade I listed), and up to 9 storeys to form a landmark corner on Rupert Street. The frontages should be well animated with fenestration, balconies, possible collanade and recesses.
- active or semi-active frontages to be provided along all sides of the building. Small scale retail uses

should be provided along Christmas Street and at the activity node.

- building materials should be of high quality and durable to ensure a long life span for the building.
- car parking could be provided on the partial basement/ ground floor and accessed from Rupert Street. Either a landscaped courtyard or a podium structure covered by a roof garden will be appropriate. Car parking should never generate blank or unsightly frontages onto the public areas.
- roofs should be designed as a fifth façade. Green or brown roofs should be incorporated. Green facades should be considered.
- a potential landmark pavilion should be provided as an integral part of the development; it should be durable, sculptural and usable for small scale activities (commercial or community). Architectural floodlighting and an integral water feature would be desirable.

## Transport

- car parking ratios should reflect up to date planning guidance including PPG13, the Local Plan and emerging LDF. No off site parking should be considered except park and ride.
- access for servicing via Rupert Street.

## Sustainability targets

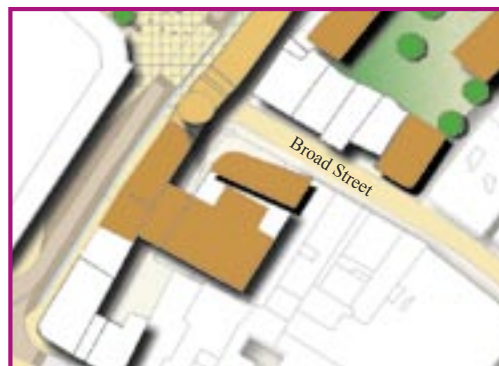
- designed for long life and adaptable to future change of use and market demands.
- excellent BREEAM rating.
- Lifetime Homes Standards for the residential component of the development.
- high biodiversity encouraged with green roof and courtyard.
- travel plan and submission of Access Statement.

## Planning obligations

Implementation of Public Realm Package 3; provision of potential landmark pavilion on Nelson Street activity node and affordable housing. Business support and other obligations justified by Local Plan Policies.



St. Lawrence House - Nelson Street frontage adjoining St. John's gate



St. Lawrence House - proposed plan



Magistrates Courts - 3D massing

## Site 5 – St. Lawrence House

**Current use:** offices, retail, residential  
**Landowner:** Verve

Purpose built office development of the late 1960-70s, comprising a tower and low scale block of concrete construction and underground car parking.

## Development briefing

Refurbishment of existing development and localised infill to complete historic street frontages.

Appropriate land use: residential, hotel, office accommodation on upper floors, retail (including cafés and restaurants) on the ground floor on Nelson Street and Broad Street.

**Constraints:** Foundations on the site of the 12th century city wall, with a potential high risk of uncovering archaeological remains. Adjacent to Grade I listed St John's Gate.

**Opportunities:** it is expected that the buildings will contribute to the improvement of Nelson Street /Quay St. and Broad Street by providing street level activity and an improved setting for the adjacent listed buildings.

### Design Brief

- the refurbishment should be of exemplar architectural quality. The treatment of the facades should be simple and unobtrusive to provide an appropriate background setting for St. John's Gate and Church.
- any changes to the tower should be done so as to not have adverse effects on the views of the church, and if possible should improve these views.
- active or semi-active frontages to be provided along Nelson Street, Quay Street and Broad Street. The frontage on Broad Street should be brought forward to the street building line.
- the non historic pedestrian thoroughfare to Broad Street should be filled.
- particular care should be devoted to the improvement of the join between the building and the medieval gate.

- buildings materials should be of high quality and durable to ensure a long life span for the building.

### Transport

- car parking ratios should reflect up to date planning guidance including PPG13, the Local Plan and emerging LDF. No off site parking should be considered.
- access for servicing via Bell Lane.

### Sustainability targets

- best practice standards in maximisation of natural lighting and ventilation, reduction of noise, waste and water consumption.
- Lifetime Homes Standards for the residential component of the development.
- travel plan and submission of Access Statement.

### Planning obligations

Public realm improvements to Bell Lane and other obligations justified by Local Plan policies.

## Site 6 - Natwest Court

**Current use:** offices for Natwest

**Landowner:** European and Israeli Investments

**Tenure:** Let for 60 years from 1974, fully occupied

Purpose built offices from the early 1970s of concrete construction with brick cladding. It comprise a number of medium to high rise blocks, upper level walkways and courtyards and a ground floor car parking accessed from Nelson Street.

### Development briefing

**Potential gross floor area/ floors:**  
11,000 to 16,000 sqm/ 4-6 floors

Appropriate land use: residential, office, research and development, institutional on upper floors, retail (including cafés and restaurants) on the ground floor on Nelson Street.

**Constraints:** foundations on the site of the 12th century city wall, with a potentially high risk of uncovering archaeological remains. Large difference in ground levels across the site.

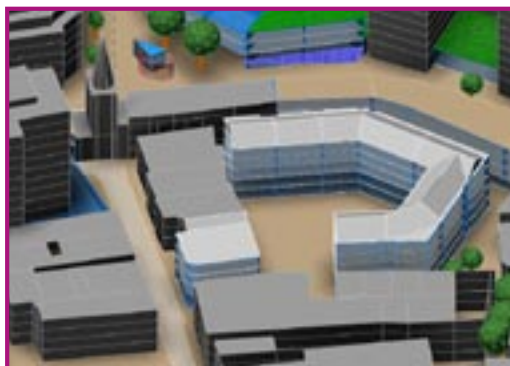




NatWest Court - Nelson Street frontage



NatWest Court - proposed plan



NatWest Court - 3D massing

**Opportunities:** this is a long term development opportunity. It is expected that redevelopment would increase the legibility of the route of the medieval wall and provide attractive semi public spaces off Tower Lane and attractive frontage on Nelson Street. Improved setting of St. John's church will be required.

### Design brief – short term

- it will be desirable in the short term that the ground floor car parking frontage on Nelson Street is dramatically improved by a better ventilation system and enhanced cladding.

### Design brief – longer term

- the development should be of exemplar architectural quality.
- it will be articulated in height, 4-6 storeys to be in keeping with the adjacent buildings and St. John's Church (Grade I listed ). The frontages should be articulated with fenestration and other architectural features.

- active frontages along Nelson Street.
- building materials should be of high quality and durable to ensure a long life span for the building.
- car parking could be provided on the ground floor and preferably accessed from Tower Lane. Car parking should never generate blank or unsightly frontages onto the public realm.
- roofs should be designed as a fifth façade.

### Transport

- car parking ratios should reflect up to date planning guidance including PPG13, the Local Plan and emerging LDF. No off site parking should be considered except Park and Ride.
- servicing via Nelson Street and John Street.

## Sustainability targets

- designed for long life and adaptable to future change of use and market demands.
- excellent BREEAM rating.
- Lifetime Homes Standards for the residential component of the development.
- high biodiversity encouraged with green roofs and courtyard.
- travel plan and submission of Access Statement.

## Planning obligations

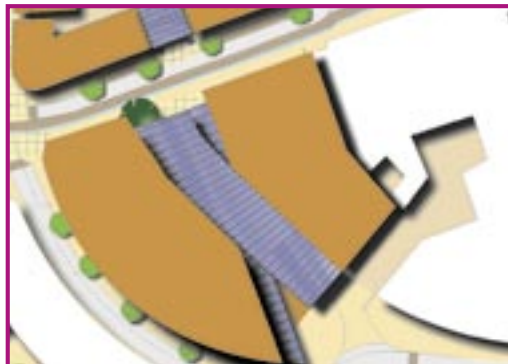
Implementation of public realm improvements to Tower Lane, cemetery and other local spaces, affordable housing and other obligations justified by Local Plan policies.



Sterling House- Corner of Nelson Street and Fairfax Street



Car Park - Corner of Nelson Street and All Saints Street



Car Park and Sterling House - proposed plan

## Site 7 – Carpark and Sterling House

**Current use:** Car park, retail, club

**Landowner:** Isagel Nagel, British Land

**Tenure:** Long term leasehold to NCP

**Car Park:** purpose built 1970s car park, with concrete frame and brick cladding and ground floor shops. Sterling House: 1970s concrete panelled retail building with no windows above ground level.

## Development briefing

**Potential gross floor area/ floors:**

18,000 to 22,000 sqm + 6,000 covered atrium/ 4-8 floors

Appropriate land use: residential, hotel, office accommodation on upper floors, retail (including cafés and restaurants) on the ground floors.

**Constraints:** foundations on the site of the 13th century city wall and the culverted River Frome, with a potential high risk of flooding and of uncovering archaeological remains. Utilities along Fairfax Street

**Opportunities:** The current public car park is not ideally located for access purposes but redevelopment would be expected to provide short stay public car parking to ensure the needs of the area. This SPD promotes the redevelopment of both sides of Fairfax Street in a comprehensive scheme that retains a pedestrian link from Wine Street to Nelson Street.

### Design brief

- the development should be of exemplar architectural quality.
- heights should be articulated and in keeping with the adjacent buildings. The frontages should be well articulated.
- should the buildings be redeveloped as a single site, a publicly accessible atrium could provide the link from Wine Street to the entrance to the Old Bridewell former police station, and create a small public space on Nelson Street.
- active or semi-active frontages to be provided along all sides of the building.
- building materials should be of high quality and durable to ensure a long life span for the building.

- car parking could be provided on the ground floor and accessed from All Saints Street. It should never generate blank or unsightly frontages onto the public realm.
- roofs should be designed as a fifth façade. Green roofs would be desirable.

### Transport

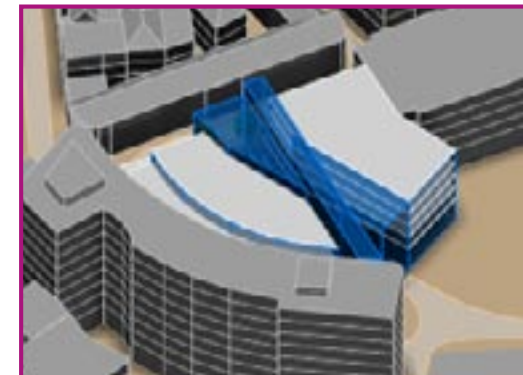
- car parking ratios should reflect up to date planning guidance including PPG13, the Local Plan and emerging LDF. No off site parking should be considered except Park and Ride.
- access for servicing via All Saints Street.

### Sustainability targets

- designed for long life and adaptable to future change of use and market demands.
- excellent BREEAM rating.
- Lifetime Homes Standards for the residential component of the development.
- high biodiversity with green roof and courtyard.
- travel plan and submission of Access Statement.

### Planning obligations

Implementation of Public Realm Package 4 and implementation of permanent changes to Fairfax Street; affordable housing and other obligations justified by Local Plan policies.



Car Park and Sterling House - 3D massing



## Site 8 – Former Labour Exchange

**Current use:** Vacant labour exchange

**Landowner:** Land Securities Trillium

**Tenure:** Freehold, vacant

Purpose built listed labour exchange. Ground floor public area with office accommodation above. 1930's red brick building with good stone detailing and in good condition

### Development briefing

**Potential gross floor area:**

Approximately 3500 sqm.

**Appropriate land use:** Residential, hotel, cultural/leisure facilities, retail and catering

**Constraints:** Grade II listed building, rear of site abuts 12 century wall and St Johns Arch.

**Opportunities:** Quality design and materials to main elevations. Prominent location. Taller ground floor public area. Pedestrian access also to rear.

## Design Brief

- development should restore and reuse the building appropriate to the listing.
- active ground floor uses to be introduced to help animate the street and the new activity node opposite with linked or separate uses at upper floors.
- floodlighting to highlight the building and to animate the street



Fig 1.4 Grade II listed Employment Exchange

## Transport

Due to the location of the site and listed status there is no potential for on site parking or servicing.

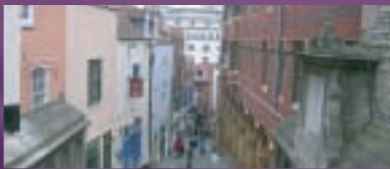
### Sustainability targets

- maximise reuse of existing building
- best practice standards in maximisation of natural lighting and ventilation, reduction of noise, waste and water consumption
- travel plan and submission of Access Statement

### Planning obligations

Public realm improvements to St Johns Steep and rear footpath route: contribution towards public realm package 2 relating to the building frontages. Other obligations justified by Local Plan policy.





Colin Buchanan   Newminster House   27-29 Baldwin Street   Bristol   BS1 1LT   T 0117 917 0800  
[www.cbuchanan.co.uk](http://www.cbuchanan.co.uk)

AtisReal UK   One Redcliff Street   Bristol   BS1 6NP   T 0117 984 8400   E [bristol@cbuchanan.co.uk](mailto:bristol@cbuchanan.co.uk)  
[www.atisreal.co.uk](http://www.atisreal.co.uk)

