

Quality Design - West Berkshire Supplementary Planning Document



Area Design Focus Salisbury Road / Atherton Road / Atherton Crescent / Church Way, Hungerford

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Andover Road, Newbury



Speen Lane, Newbury



Salisbury Road / Atherton Road / Crescent Way / Church Way, Hungerford



Halls Road / The Meadway / New Lane Hill, Tilehurst

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document comprises part of several publications which form the West Berkshire Council (WBC) design guide series "Quality Design - West Berkshire". Together the series forms a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which supports the policies in the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006 and the Berkshire Structure Plan 2001 – 2016. **As such, it is a material consideration in determining planning applications and if not followed, may lead to the refusal of planning permission.** It is intended that in the future this SPD series will also support relevant policies in West Berkshire Council's Development Plan Documents. It also complements other existing Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPGs) and SPDs, including any site specific development briefs which may be produced in the future.
- 1.2 This section, Area Design Focus - Salisbury Road / Atherton Road / Atherton Crescent / Church Way, Hungerford, is one of a series of Area Design Focus documents which aim to ensure that the cumulative effects of infill development do not harm the quality of residential neighbourhoods. To achieve this, the Council has identified the key elements that define the character of particular areas that could be susceptible to infill development. These include main arterial routes into towns, which make infill sites particularly attractive to developers or areas with particular characteristics that need to be preserved.
- 1.3 Key characteristics are included on the plans on the following pages and include important tree groups, landmark buildings and important frontages. In addition, the plans also identify sites where development schemes could enhance the character of the corridor or area.
- 1.4 The Area Design Focus documents examine in detail the key elements that define the character of these areas, such as;
- Important frontages, building line and set backs;
 - Gateways and landmarks;
 - Tree groups, landscaping, public open space, amenity space and garden characteristics;
 - Vehicular, pedestrian and cyclist movement and connections, parking and bus stops;
 - Materials, roof line, architectural detailing.
- 1.5 In addition, each Strategy provides an initial indication of what is important to protect or enhance in the consideration of new infill development.

- 1.6 The potential enhancements (*see text in italics*) are suggestions as to how the physical environment of the area **could** be improved. Therefore, they do not represent specific commitments of the Council and do not override any existing strategies or plans. If it is considered that the suggested improvements are desirable they could be secured and funded in a number of ways including direct involvement of the local councils, action by landowners and through developer contributions associated with developments. When development proposals are considered their possible contribution to securing potential enhancements should be assessed.



Bath Road, Thatcham

- 1.7 The Council will produce Area Design Focus Statements for other key areas requiring a more detailed approach, as appropriate.

2. Salisbury Road / Atherton Road / Atherton Crescent / Church Way Context

- 2.1 Salisbury Road is the main arterial route through Hungerford and as such, is an important gateway and approach to the town from the south west. The road links several neighbourhoods, each with its own distinctive characteristics and it is recent piecemeal infill development within parts of these neighbourhoods which has led to this area being an Area Design Focus document.
- 2.2 Salisbury Road is a main road, characterised by housing development from a number of different eras and in several styles. The only significant frontage development is at 1-10 Salisbury Row, a distinctive Victorian terrace, as well as the new semi detached property on the corner with Atherton Road. Much of the other development is either set back, defined by significant changes in level or turns its back on the road (Sarum Way). Inter-war semi detached and terraced properties on Atherton Crescent are set up at a higher level and overlook a small green space and Salisbury Road.
- 2.3 Atherton Road and Church Way, to the rear of Atherton Crescent is where infill development has become apparent. The western side of Church Way consists of a well defined frontage of two storey, post war, semi detached houses with small front gardens, front driveways, mature hedgerows, although few trees. It is unlikely that opportunities for infill development will arise in this location unless demolition occurs.



Salisbury Road gateway looking north



Salisbury Row cottages



Infill development has started to occur on Church Way



Atherton Road deterioration

- 2.4 However, the eastern side of Church Way and Atherton Road is characterised by the rear gardens of the two storey houses fronting Atherton Crescent, vacant land and garages, all of which show some deterioration. There is also a strong mature tree belt along this boundary. Development has occurred in parts of this area in a somewhat piecemeal way.
- 2.5 On the north side of Atherton Road, there is a small area consisting of a rear access to garages, vacant land and the ends of rear gardens which have suffered from some deterioration.
- 2.6 The southerly section of Salisbury Road, **Area 3**, is characterised by lower density, detached, two storey properties set within their own distinctive plots, with mature front and rear gardens and private driveways.
- 2.7 The southerly section of Salisbury Road, **Area 3**, forms the gateway to this area. The lower density development forms a gentle transition along this route, from the urban area of Hungerford, to the semi rural outskirts of the town. However, the change in level between Salisbury Road and Church Way, the presence of mature landscaping at the corner with Church Way and the fences of the Sarum Way rear gardens, set on a steep grassed embankment, create a feeling of being in a cutting, with little surveillance or overlooking on either side. There is a distinctive pedestrian desire line on the steep embankment between Church Way and Salisbury Road, which has eroded the grass, leaving a muddy track.
- 2.8 There is a small area of linear open space, within **Area 2**, located between Atherton Crescent and Salisbury Road, which slopes down towards Salisbury Road. It is mainly grassland, with several very mature oak trees which dominate the street scene. Several footpaths cross the space and there is a bench at its northern end. The space's topography may restrict its use to some degree.
- 2.9 The only commercial development in this area is the now vacant Post Office, located on the corner of Salisbury Row. A pedestrian crossing crosses Salisbury Road at this point.
- 2.10 On the southern part of Church Way, there is no footpath until the road meets Salisbury Road.

3. Protecting established neighbourhoods

- 3.1 New development within **Area 1** on the plan should reflect the existing characteristics of Church Way, whilst also respecting the properties of Atherton Crescent it will back on to. Development should front the road and preserve the mature landscaping whilst being appropriately set back with parking and small front gardens.
- 3.2 Development here should preserve the character of the long rear gardens of Atherton Crescent whilst achieving appropriate back to back distances with minimal over looking. Rear gardens should therefore have appropriate lengths.



Rear garden fences of Sarum Way properties facing Salisbury Road

4. Protecting key frontages

- 4.1 **Area 2** is located on Salisbury Road, incorporating the small green space between Salisbury Road and Atherton Crescent. The Salisbury Row terrace frontage should be preserved and any new development along the main route should reflect this frontage composition. Recent development along this stretch has not followed the frontage pattern by creating flats with main entrances at the rear (St. John's Court).
- 4.2 Properties of Atherton Crescent form a distinctive frontage, albeit at a higher level than Salisbury Road. Any infill development in this location should reflect this composition, with a distinctive, set back building line and long, well established front gardens.



Open space with mature landscaping between Salisbury Road and Atherton Crescent

5. Reinforcing the southern gateway

- 5.1 **Area 3** currently provides a poor pedestrian and driver experience. However, it is likely that the area is used by pedestrians due to the nearby bus stops and proximity to Church Way and the route is the main gateway into Hungerford from the south west. *Environmental improvements could make it more pedestrian friendly, particularly around the bus stops (benches, lighting, organisation of street clutter and signage) and steps could be put in place of the pedestrian desire line. On the southern side of Salisbury Road, better lighting could improve this route, for both pedestrians and drivers.*



Vacant unit on Salisbury Road



Properties fronting Church Way with small front gardens, driveways and mature landscaping



Undefined building line of Atherton Road



Salisbury Road frontage development



Properties fronting Atherton Crescent



Church Way would benefit from extension to footpath if development increases within the area

6. Open Space Enhancement

- 6.1 *Environmental enhancements to the green space between Atherton Crescent and Salisbury Road could make it a more usable space and enhance the pedestrian experience along this route. Improvements could include the installation of levelled seating areas, an area specifically designated for dog use, plus associated bins. Seating near to the bus stops could also be an improvement.*

7. Pedestrian and Cyclist Environment Enhancement

- 7.1 *If development was to occur along the eastern side of Church Way, the southern part of this road would benefit from an extension to the footpath. The road narrows on this corner, so this option would need to be carefully planned as part of any comprehensive enhancement to Church Way.*
- 7.2 *A well defined cycle path could benefit users of this road, particularly as Priory Road provides the main access route to the Secondary School from the western side of the town.*



Open space would benefit from environmental enhancement



Pedestrian desire line between Church Way and Salisbury Road

Salisbury Road / Atherton Road / Atherton Crescent / Church Way - Area Design Focus Summary

Set out below are the key design objectives for this area



Create frontage development which addresses the road and provides surveillance and safety



Maintain set back to allow for small front gardens and private driveways



Enhance the pedestrian and cyclist experience along Salisbury Road through environmental improvements



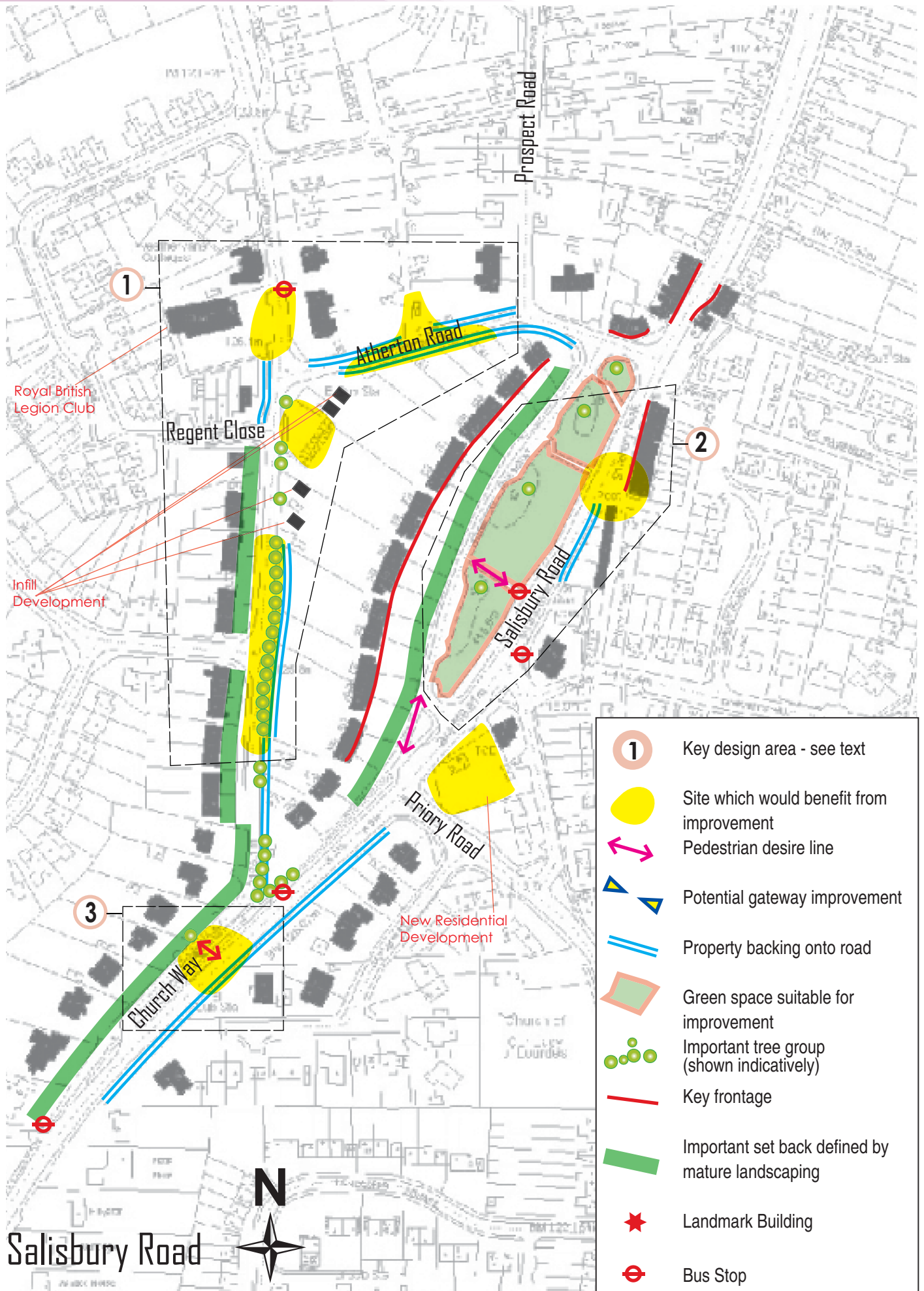
Enhance the southern gateway and to improve the pedestrian experience



Protect mature landscaping, particularly along Church Way



Enhance open space to provide a more usable, enjoyable place



Local
Development
Framework



Prepared by Halcrow on behalf of West Berkshire Council