Baseline Movement Appraisal

HERTFORD TOWN CENTRE URBAN DESIGN STRATEGY

Final Report

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Report Record

Job No.	Report No.	Issue No.	Prepared	Verified	Approved	Status	Date
ST16010	1	4	WA	DW	PM	Final	August-2015

Contents Amendments Record

Issue No.	Revision description	Approved	Status	Date

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1 Introduction

GENERAL

1.1 JMP Consultants (JMP), with Tibbalds Planning and Urban Design (Tibbalds) has been commissioned by East Herts Council (EHC), working together with Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) and Hertford Town Council (HTC) to develop an Urban Design Strategy for Hertford Town centre (the 'Strategy').

1.2 JMP will be providing a 'Movement Strategy' to form a part of this Urban Design Strategy, which will evaluate the current transport system around the town centre and propose options to assist in achieving the key objectives of the Urban Design strategy outlined below:

- Prioritises the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport and reduce the conflicts with vehicles.
- Improve the pedestrian and cycle routes into the town centre, by investigating additional surface level connections across Gascoyne Way and improving the existing underpasses.
- Retain a Bus Station in the town centre to provide easy and convenient access.
- Ensure adequate car parking is provided and well advertised to support the viability of the town centre.
- Create a high quality network of routes and spaces that encourages people to move around the town centre and encourages people to stay.

1.3 In addition to these objectives the Movement Strategy will aim to support Hertford's current Urban Transport Plan by:

- Optimising the value of Hertford's heritage, open spaces and landscape assets, including the river areas;
- Providing a town centre that is safe, attractive and enjoyable as a place people will naturally favour to shop, work and spend their leisure time;
- Enhancing the user experience by the creation of a distinctive network of public paths, spaces and opportunities to hold public events;
- Designing a town that focuses on place and character of Hertford's historic environment while balancing the need for movement – managing the conflicts of vehicles and pedestrians, giving priority to accessibility and emphasising sustainable travel modes;
- Revitalising the commercial activity of the town centre and secure, in particular, the long term health of the primary shopping areas;
- Developing a coherent, high quality and cost effective approach to the treatment and maintenance of the public highway, footways and other public spaces in the town centre;
- Developing a sensitively designed strategy for car parking provision within and around the town centre.

1.4 This report is the Baseline Appraisal of the transport system in Hertford Town centre, which summarises the key baseline conditions as well as the issues and opportunities for the Strategy going forward.

1.5 The following sections of the Report are as follows;

- **Section 2- Policy and Planning Review:** A review of the County level Local Transport Plan and the local Urban Transport Plan for the current issues and schemes proposed.
- **Section 3- Baseline Conditions and Issues:** An appraisal of the current movement conditions and issues of the Town centre based on desktop study and site visits.
- **Section 4- Strategy Opportunities:** Identification of ways of solving issues and opportunities to improve transport conditions and meet objectives.
- **Section 5- Conclusion:** Initial recommendations for the strategy as a whole as well as establishing the scope for developing options and schemes for the strategy.

2 Policy and Planning Review

2.1 A review was undertaken of the current transport planning policy at the County and Town level in order to understand the existing issues and objectives in the area.

LOCAL ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP POLICY

Hertfordshire's Strategic Economic Plan, March 2014

2.2 The Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) seeks to work with East Hertfordshire District Council to advance plans for major schemes in the M11/A10 growth area, which is adjacent to Hertford, proposals include station access improvements to Herford East.

2.3 The SEP resolves that the transport infrastructure is chronically congested and is a major constraint to growth.

LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

Hertfordshire County Council Local Transport Plan 3, April 2011

2.4 The Local Transport Plan 3 ('LTP') objectives centre around 5 key goals:

- **Economic and Residential Development-** Efficiently manage the road network and minimise congestions impact on the economy by improving journey time, reliability and resilience.
- **Accessibility-** A transport system that provides access to facilities for all, achieve behavioural change away from car use and encourage walking, cycling and public transport. Improve public transport provision to provide a viable alternative for car users.
- **Quality of Life and Environment-** To encourage use of more sustainable modes of transport including active travel and to maintain and enhance environmental qualities, reducing the impact of transport including noise in residential areas.
- **Safety-** improving road safety and reducing crime and fear of crime
- **Climate Change-** To mitigate the transport system's effect on the environment via greenhouse gases and to develop transport networks that are resilient to severe weather.

2.5 The LTP also has daughter documents which address individual modes.

- **Bus Strategy-** Objectives include improving bus punctuality, developing accessibility to land uses, improving vehicles and infrastructure and improved marketing. There are also specified targets of punctuality and customer satisfaction.
- **Cycling Strategy-** The strategy notes Hertfordshire has the lowest levels of cycling to work in the East England region, despite 40% of work journeys being contained within a single town. The strategy sets out to develop cycling networks, and traffic calming and management measures amongst others.
- **Rail Strategy-** There is limited scope for change due to the responsibility for rail largely falling under Network Rail and Train Operating Companies, however the strategy will promote and support initiatives that ensure the rail network in the area is achieving local objectives
- **Road Safety Plan-** The Plan has a priority to reduce collisions and injuries occurring as a result of the transport network.

- **Speed Management Strategy-** Sets out the approach to speed management activities in the County.
- **Strategic Environmental Assessment-** The SEA assesses core LTP objectives against environmental criteria and recommends options.

Hertford and Ware Urban Transport Plan, November 2010

2.6 The Urban Transport Plan ('UTP') indentify Key Issues or 'local problems' that impact access within and to/from the town centre:

2.7 **Traffic Congestion-** The A414 is sensitive to congestion on the M25 due to its parallel routing and is therefore the main diversionary route when incidents involving road closure and delays occur. Congestion hotspots mainly occur on the A414 through Hertford and its connection with the A10, the Bluecoats and Mill Road junctions are identified as areas causing the most significant delays to traffic. Other hotspots include Castle Street/Parliament Square junction, Hale Road/Pegs Lane, Railway Street and Fore Street.

2.8 **Passenger Transport Access Issues-** There are passenger transport access issues including Parking capacity issues at both Hertford East and North Station. Improvements can be made to the passenger experience at the central Bus Station. Passenger transport accessibility to County Hall is also limited. Bus services between the north and south of town are relatively infrequent compared to east-west services, as well as there being limited bus priority measures due to the constrained road space within town.

2.9 **Cycle Accessibility Issues-** Cyclists have limited access due to the pattern of existing traffic routes, often with high vehicular traffic, including the A414 and other narrow and traffic dominated streets within the town. The Mill Road Bridge, Welwyn Road and Port Hill are identified as key routes that have issues for cyclists.

2.10 **Pedestrian Accessibility Issues-** The A414 is a major barrier to pedestrian movement with unattractive subway crossings, North Road has reported speeding issues and bus stop location issues.

2.11 **Issues around Employment and Retail Facilities in Town centre-**

- Minor conflicts and serious accidents between pedestrians and traffic have occurred at Old Cross and South Street in the last 3 years and minor accidents involving pedestrians have occurred on the western end of Fore Street, on Bull Plain and at The Wash.
- Maidenhead Street is pedestrianised but still has significant delivery and servicing vehicle movements.
- The Folly Island has narrow roads lined with parked cars and incidences of footway parking.
- There are some issues with the clarity of priority between pedestrians and vehicles such as at certain speed tables at Maidenhead Street/Bull Plain and Railway Street/Market Street.
- The Mill Bridge/Old Cross junction has an all-green phase for pedestrians where a serious accident has occurred.
- Footpath 84 linking St Andrew's Street to Castle Street has issues with lighting and perception of safety.
- There is a lack of controlled pedestrian crossings within the town centre.

2.12 A list of the short /medium term schemes identified as part of the Hertford and Ware Urban Transport Plan are shown in **Table 2.1**. The long term schemes are included in **Table 2.2**.

Table 2.1 Short / Medium Term Schemes

Scheme Reference	Scheme Description	Timescale	Cost	LTP Objective	Other Funding Potential
PED 21	Crossing improvements where Maidenhead Street crosses Bull Plain (part of CPM7)	Medium	£100,000	LTP14	
PED 24	Shared surface mixed priority treatment where Railway Street crosses Market Street (part of CPM7)	Short	£100,000	LTP14	
PED 25	Old Cross Junction Improvements to retain signalised junction and provide shared surface (minimal kerb upstand) to encourage pedestrian crossing/movement, slow traffic and follow DfT Mixed Priority route treatment to make part of town	Medium	£350,000	LTP14	S106
PED 32	Provide TOUCAN Crossing at Gascoyne Way adjacent to Bluecoats Roundabout	Medium	£350,000	LTP14	
CYC24	Cycle Storage Hertford East	Medium	£20,000	LTP13	
CYC27	Cycle Storage at Parliament Square	Short	£15,000	LTP13	
CYC30	Cycle Storage at Bluecoats	Short	£15,000	LTP13	
CYC31	Cycle Storage at Fore Street	Short	£15,000	LTP13	
CPM7	Hertford Town Centre	Short	£250,000	LTP13	S106
CPM8	Hertford Castle Footpath	Short	£250,000	LTP13	
CPM 10	Hertford North station - Hertford Town Centre – County Council Offices - Horns Mill Road - Brickenden Lane	Medium	£750,000	LTP13	Sustrans/S106
PTM1	Hertford Bus Station Improvements	Medium	£350,000	LTP8,9,10	S106
PTM19	Improved Bus Priority on Fore Street	Medium	£100,000	LTP8,9,10	
PTM25	Bus Priority at signalised junctions (inc Old Cross)	Medium	£200,000	LTP8,9,10	
HWY3	Closure of Hertford town centre streets to motorised traffic except buses, cycles, taxis, loading (at specific times) at Market Street/The Wash and Fore Street	Medium	£175,000	LTP16,17	S106
FRT4	Fore Street / Parliament Square loading restrictions amendments	Medium	£17,500	LTP16,17	
PED 24	Shared surface mixed priority treatment where Railway Street crosses Market Street (part of CPM7)	Short	£100,000	LTP14	

Table 2.2 Long Term Schemes

Scheme Reference	Scheme Description	Timescale	LTP Objective
HWY3	Close Hertford town centre streets to motorised traffic except buses, cycles, taxis, loading (at specific times) at Market Street/The Wash and Fore Street	Long	LTP16
HWY11	Traffic signals introduced at the roundabout of Parliament Square/ Gascoyne Way/ Hale Road (Pegs Lane) to allow regulation of traffic exiting Parliament Square and prevent excess queuing due to the predominant flow along A414 with signal bus priority to encourage mode shift	Long	LTP18
HWY21	Signalise to regulate traffic flows	Long	LTP21
HWY22	Signalise to regulate traffic flows	Long	LTP21
PTM2	Hertford East station Improvements/bus interchange (linked to Mead Lane)	Long	LTP16, LTP8, LTP9, LTP11,
PED33	Refurbishment of under passes at St Andrew Street to include better sight lines where possible	Long	LTP14

East Herts Draft District Plan

2.13 The East Herts District Plan has been compiled to allow the Council to:

i. Provide for local community needs;
ii. Provide a strong basis for securing benefits;
iii. Provide greater certainty to communities and business;
iv. Allow infrastructure providers to provide future provision more effectively;
v. Provide a firm basis on which to apply for infrastructure funding; and
vi. Will help attract investment to East Herts.

2.14 The key transport policies included within the plan are summarised below.

2.15 **TRA1 Sustainable Transport -** In order to achieve accessible improvements and promotion of sustainable transport developments should be located in locations which enable sustainable transport and provide a range of alternative transport options. They should also prioritise the provision of sustainable modes over the private car and allow for early implementation of sustainable travel.

2.16 **TRA2 Highway Safety and Trip Generation –** Development proposals should ensure that safe and suitable access can be achieved for all people and be acceptable in terms of highway safety without resulting in any residual cumulative impact or having a significant detrimental effect on the local environment.

2.17 **TRA3 Vehicle Parking Provision –** Vehicle parking provision associated with developments will be assessed on a site-specific basis and should be integrated as a key element of design. All new developments should also supply sufficient covered cycle parking provision. Car parks for non-domestic use will be assessed by the Council to determine whether it should be shared for the public.

2.18 EHC's six adopted parking policy principles are set out below:

i. We will seek to maintain car parking income at current levels in real terms;

ii. We will seek to ensure that users pay for the parking service rather than the council tax payer;

iii. We will promote existing and explore new technologies to improve the overall convenience of parking in East Herts;

iv. We will seek where possible and appropriate to match parking capacity with demand;

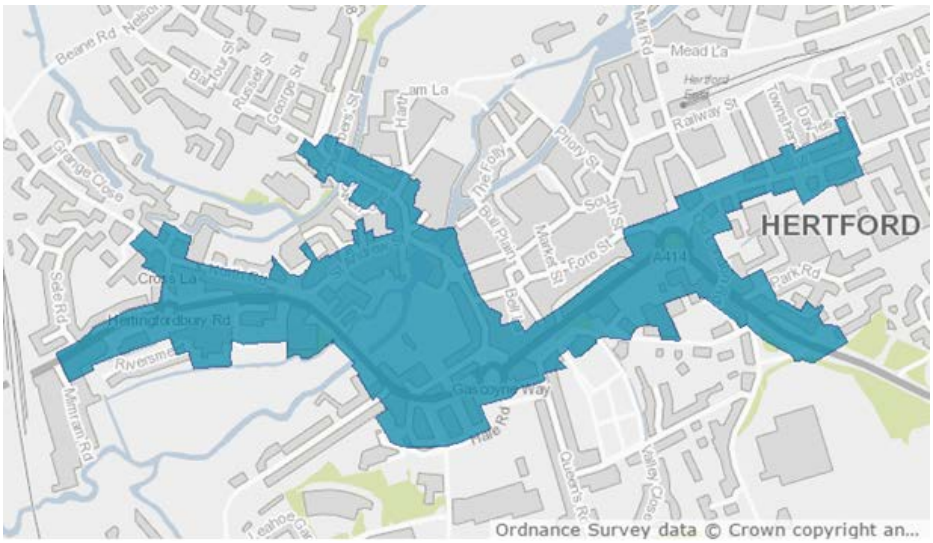
v. We will seek to develop and implement parking solutions that reflect local needs; and

vi. We will make the economic vitality of East Herts a core consideration when developing parking services.

Air Quality Management Plan

2.19 East Herts Council declared an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in 2012 in the area shown in **Figure 2.1**; it centres on the A414 corridor, which runs alongside the southern edge of the town centre. It also includes Castle grounds, St Andrew Street, part of North Road and the Wash.This AQMA is established to monitor and control Nitrogen Dioxide pollutants caused by road traffic in the area.

Figure 2.1 AQMA



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2.20 It is noted that Hertford Town are have commissioned Opus to undertake a feasibility study of Maidenhead Street with the objective of developing a new scheme for the street.

3 Baseline Conditions and Issues

GENERAL

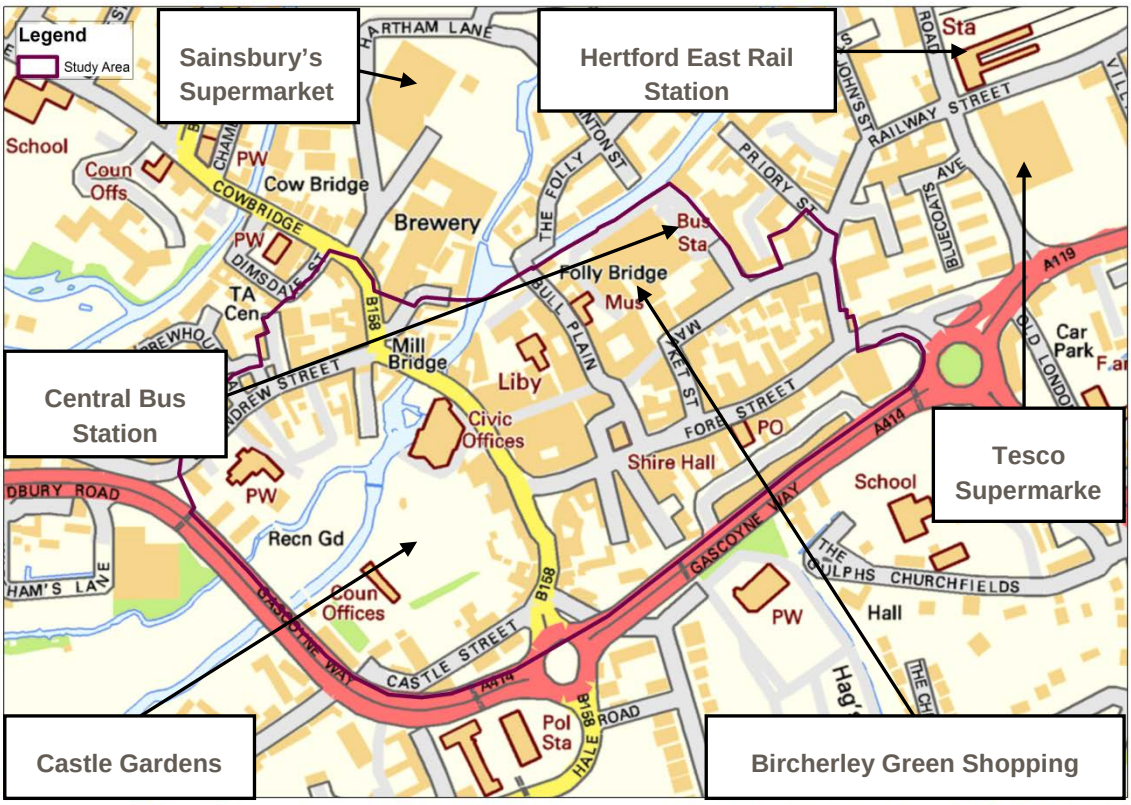
3.1 The Hertford town centre study area is shown in **Figure 3.1** below, it is around 1.5km^2, containing many core facilities and services including the main retail and employment areas, the central Bus Station and a National Rail station.

3.2 A site visit was conducted on the 9th March 2015 for a day to observe activity and record the transport conditions in the town centre. The observations and notes were made on a street by street basis.

3.3 The baseline conditions section is informed by this site visit as well as a desktop analysis undertaken with data supplied from East Herts Council and Hertfordshire County Council.

3.4 The town centre is generally comprised of tight and narrow streets combined with active ground floor land uses including retail, leisure and other employment uses; this creates a conflict between the differing users of the space.

Figure 3.1 Town Centre Study Area and key Trip Generators and Attractors



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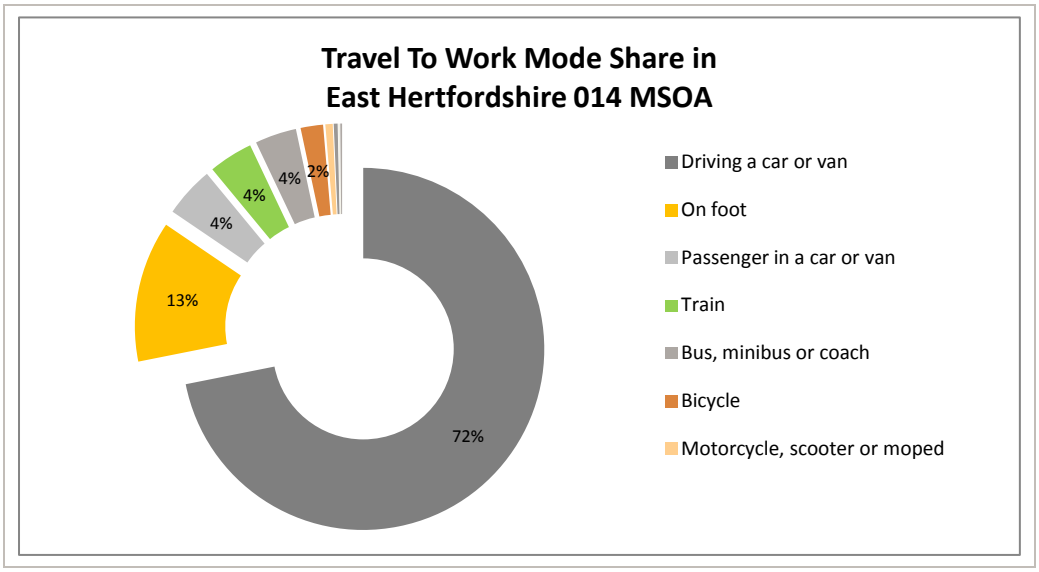
CENSUS 2011 DATA

3.5 Census 2011 data was queried to appreciate the travel and demographic patterns in and around the town centre. **Figure 3.2** and **Table 3.1** show the mode share for people travelling to work within the Hertford town centre area (designated here as Middle Super Output Areas East Hertfordshire 014).

Figure 3.2 Census 2011 Method of travel to work to Hertford Town Centre Area



**Census 2011 WU03EW - Location of usual residence and place of work by method of travel to work (MSOA level)*

**It is noted that Hertfordshire 017 includes Hertfordshire County Council's offices immediately south of the study area which could skew the mode split.*

3.6 The data shows that for the town centre, the majority of people (72%) drive to work by car or van, with an additional 4% arriving as car passengers; this is significantly above the England average of 57% and the East of England regional average of 64%. Overall 27% of people commute via public transport or by sustainable modes of transport. There is significant scope for mode shift away from private car usage, especially for residents living within Hertford (see **Table 3.1**).

3.7 This would suggest that there is the potential to reduce the number of people reliant on car trips if sustainable modes were promoted.

3.8 Specific targets for the Study Area will not be set as part of the Strategy, due to the difficulties with determining a definitive baseline and future monitoring. However, the general principals within the document will be designed to support sustainable transport mods, which will allow in turn provide a basis for site specific travel plan within the town centre.

Table 3.1 Travel to Work Mode Share Comparison

Mode	England	East of England	London	South East	Hertford 014	Hertford 014 Count
Driving a Car or Van	57%	64%	28%	64%	**72%**	**6009**
On Foot	11%	11%	9%	11%	**13%**	**983**
Passenger in a Car or Van	5%	5%	2%	5%	**4%**	**373**
Train	5%	7%	13%	8%	**4%**	**337**
Bus, Minibus or Coach	7%	4%	14%	5%	**4%**	**323**
Bicycle	3%	4%	4%	3%	**2%**	**163**
Motorcycle, Scooter or Moped	1%	1%	1%	1%	**1%**	**45**
Underground/Metro/Light Rail/Tram	4%	1%	23%	0%	**0%**	**27**
Taxi	1%	0%	1%	0%	**0%**	**13**
Other Method of Travel to Work	1%	1%	1%	1%	**0%**	**13**
Work Mainly at or From Home	5%	6%	5%	7%	**0%**	**0**

Census 2011 WU03EW - Location of usual residence and place of work by method of travel to work (MSOA level)

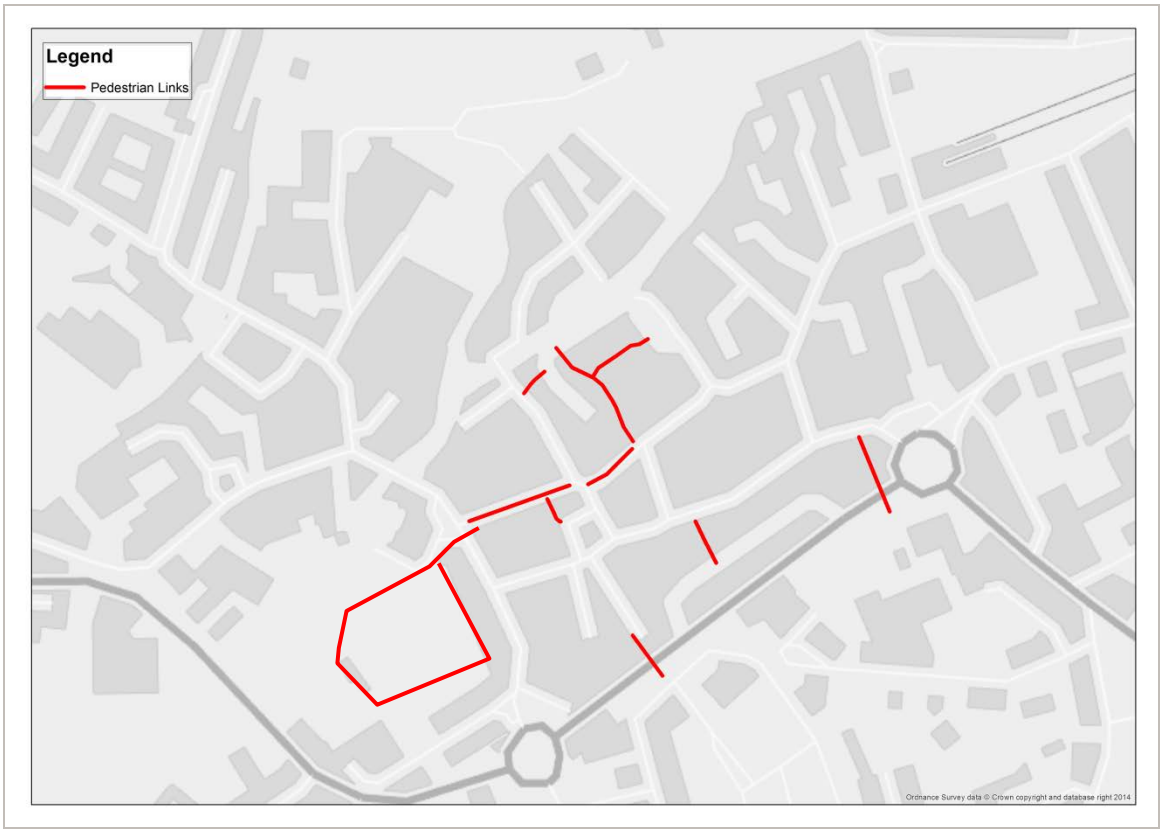
PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT

Conflicts

3.9 Some streets in the town centre are pedestrianised but have significant vehicle loading traffic. The vehicle loading creates conflicts with pedestrians as large vehicles parked up in pedestrianised areas block the walkways. Loading activity also results in the trundling of goods to / from the vehicle which can block pedestrian routes. See **Figure 3.3** for a map of pedestrian routes in the town centre.

3.10 Disabled users, the visually impaired and people pushing prams are likely to be most affected by obstructions in the footway.

Figure 3.3 Pedestrianised Streets and routes in Red



3.11 Street furniture clutter (including bollards and advertising boards) further restrict movement for pedestrians and create pinch points in the road which are exacerbated for people with prams or the disabled.

3.12 **Figure 3.4** shows loading activity on Maidenhead Street, with a large van parked up, this not only reduces visibility and road space but also has an impact on the quality of the environment for pedestrians.

3.13 **Figure 3.5** shows excessive A-boards directly blocking the footway and restricts through movement, this is perhaps deliberate and the cause should be investigated.

Figure 3.4 Loading on Maidenhead Street

Figure 3.5 A Boards blocking footway on Railway Street

Public Realm Design

3.14 The general design of the public realm favours vehicles, despite the pedestrian nature of the town centre. For example a number of the kerb radii at corners promote vehicle access / egress and restrict footway space. Maidenhead Street is a prominent example of a street which provides generous kerb radii at its junction with The Wash.

3.15 **Figure 3.6** shows a wide radius and very set back raised treatment at entrance to Maidenhead Street, making it easier for drivers to enter a pedestrianised street than for a person walking along The Wash to continue along the eastern footway in a direct movement.

Figure 3.6 Entrance to Maidenhead Street

3.16 Minor access roads and unnecessary material changes disrupt footway consistency which further impedes the free flow of pedestrians around the town centre.

3.17 A number of the Crossings are uncontrolled refuge islands with dropped kerbs of varying quality. **Figure 3.7** shows a non-standard crossing treatment, with a very narrow refuge space which would be unable to cater for someone in a wheelchair or a person pushing a pram.

3.18 General interaction between vehicles and pedestrians was observed during the site visit and it was noticed pedestrians tend to give way to oncoming traffic at uncontrolled crossings; this behaviour is perhaps reinforced by the design of the highways.

Figure 3.7 Narrow and non-standard crossing treatment

3.19 Roundabouts have the potential to create large circuitous routes for pedestrians with a number of crossing points. An example of a roundabout inhibiting pedestrian movement is in front of Hertford East Station where there is an uncontrolled roundabout (see **Figure 3.8**).

Figure 3.8 Large Roundabout in front of Hertford East

Wayfinding

3.20 The current wayfinding infrastructure consists of traditional wayfinding posts located at appropriate points (such as at the exit of the alley from the Gascoyne Way car park) across the town centre. It is noted these are relatively illegible and an example of the signage is shown in **Figure 3.9.**

3.21 There is also a lack of street name signage, which could be implemented on street corners.

3.22 Signage which is located at this height can be difficult for people who are visually impaired or wheelchair users to get close enough to read.

Figure 3.9 Wayfinding on Fore Street (also note HGV parked up)

Key Desire Lines

Bluecoats

3.23 There is a clear desire line between the Tesco bus stop and the town centre via the former Bluecoats School site, a number of people were observed to use the short cut (shown being used in **Figure 3.10 and 3.11**). The pedestrian route through the area is disjointed and involves many level changes and obstacles.

3.24 It is an informal pedestrian route and the site occupiers are known to be against the formalisation of any through route. While pedestrian through movement is tolerated there is signage to the effect that there is no public right of way.

Figure 3.10 Bluecoats desire line

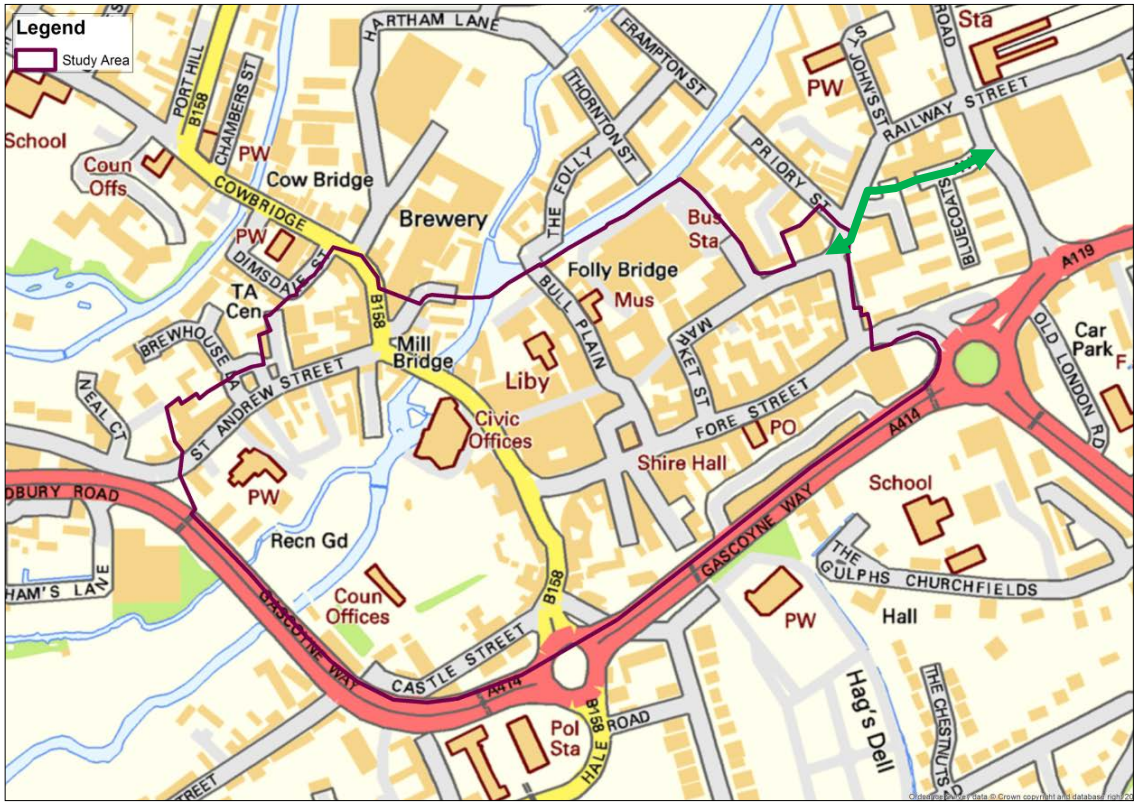


Figure 3.11 Bluecoats desire line obstacles

Subways

3.25 There are three subway accesses within the Study Area providing relief to the severance caused by the A414. These are listed below from east to west:

1 Connecting to Fore Street adjacent to the Marks & Spencer;

2 Connecting Queen's Road to Church Street; and

3 Connecting Hale Road to Castle Street.

3.26 The eastern access has lighting issues even in the daytime, all have poor quality surface paving (as seen in **Figure 3.12**).

Figure 3.12 Eastern Access

3.27 The entry and exits do not have any clear way-finding or signage indicating how to continue the journey on from the subway (as seen in **Figure 3.13**).

Figure 3.13 Western access subway entrance south of Gascoyne Way/A414

Town Centre Streets

3.28 The eastern end of Fore Street has an excessive entrance treatment that restricts pedestrian movement due to the use of large guardrails and unattractive speed limit signage (see **Figure 3.14**).

Figure 3.3 Entry Treatment on Fore Street

3.29 The Old Cross signalised junction is noted to have an ‘all-green’ pedestrian phase; however the lack of provision for crossing diagonally detracts from the usefulness of this phase. Considering the width of the crossings there are notably no pedestrian refuge islands, however a large articulated lorry was observed using this junction (**see Figure 3.15**). If these vehicles are to be accommodated there is little potential for any changes to the crossing as the current configuration barely accommodates this vehicle’s size.

Figure 3.4 Articulated Lorry turning tight from Old Cross to St Andrew Street

3.30 There is also an aspiration for a key link between Maidenhead Street and the Castle Area. This would provide the link from the town centre to the surrounding green spaces.

CYCLING

3.31 There are no cycle lanes in the town centre and people on bicycles share the road with other users. Access to the town centre is generally via the highway network itself, paths parallel to the arterial roads and some cycle routes such as towpaths. It is noted that that these are generally more suitable for leisure use than those wishing to commute to / from the town centre.

3.32 The town centre has little room for dedicated cycle infrastructure; however it is not a significant through route for bicycle users (either as a result of this lack of infrastructure or general travel patterns). Furthermore, the town centre itself is relatively small and those cycling to a destination within the town centre will experience limited exposure to conflict.

3.33 The complex system of one way roads (such as within Fore Street) creates unfavourable conditions for cyclists. Those travelling in a west to east direction are forced to head north up Market Street before they can continue in an easterly direction.

3.34 The quality of the carriageway is poor with reinstatements and inconsistencies throughout creating hazards to cyclists.

3.35 The widths of the streets mean cyclists must take the ‘primary’ position to ride safely which requires them to ride in the middle of the road, which can create conflict with other road users.

3.36 Cycle parking is provided throughout the town centre; however spaces are limited with approximately 54 within the Study Area (and a further 42 in and around Hertford East Station) as shown on **Figure 3.16**.

Figure 3.16 Cycle Parking Locations

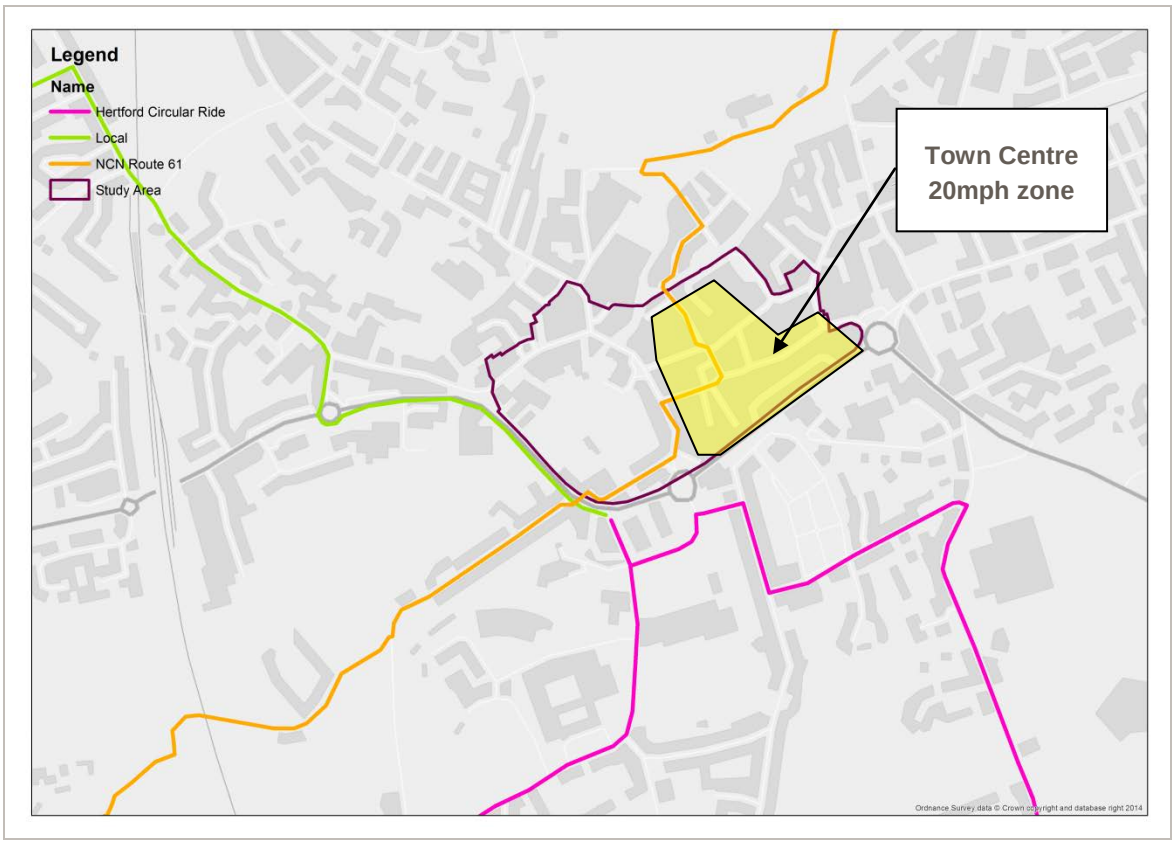
3.37 **Figure 3.17** shows an example of cycle parking in the town centre.

Figure 3.5 Cycle Parking on Fore Street

3.38 Sustrans National Cycle Route 61 runs through the town centre (see **Figure 3.18**).

3.39 Route 61 is approximately 34 miles long and runs from Maidenhead through to Hertford, before turning south into the Lee Valley.

Figure 3.6 Cycle Routes around Town Centre



3.40 Running through the centre of the town, the route passes over Folly Island, down Bull Plain and into Market Street; before turning right into Fore Street and heading west towards the Wash.

3.41 There is a conflict between cyclists entering Fore Street and vehicles emerging out onto Market Street. The cyclists are effectively turning into a one-way street (except for buses) and car drivers may not expect this movement which could result in head on collisions.

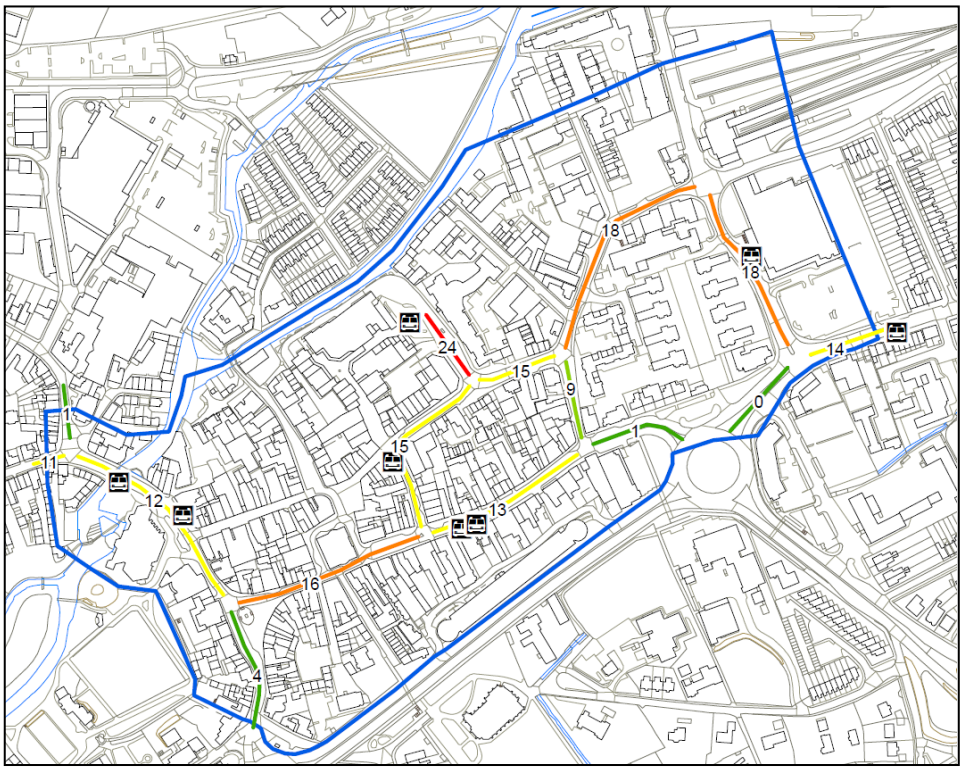
BUSES

General

3.42 There are a number of buses that run through the town centre in an east to west direction. The main interchange for buses in Hertford is at the Bus Station located within Bircherley Green Shopping Centre.

3.43 The approximate number of routes that run through the town centre are shown in **Figure 3.19.**

Figure 3.19 Hertford Bus Routes



NB There are variations in the routes depending on the time of day and week; the diagram displays the peak number of routes.

3.44 There are 3 higher frequency services that serve the town centre (see **Table 3.3**).

Table 3.3 Town Centre Frequent Bus Services

No.	Serves	Daytime frequency
333	Hertford town centre, Pinehurst Estate and Bengeo	Every 30 minutes
395/396	Hertford town centre, North Station and Sele Farm, Ware town centre and Fanhams Common.	Every 30 minutes
H3/H4	Town centre and Horns Mill. town centre and Campfield Road	Every 60 minutes

Bus Station

3.45 The town centre contains a central Bus Station which forms a terminus, bus stand and a through route for bus routes. It is located directly adjacent to the major shopping centre for the town.

3.46 The Bus Station provides footfall to the shopping centre which assists with passing trade. It also creates an interchange for the buses allowing a waiting area for people who are changing between routes.

3.47 The central Bus Station serves a number of bus routes, as shown in **Table 3.4.**

Table 3.4 Hertford Town Centre Bus Station services

Bus Services to Bircherley Green Shopping Centre		
H1	384	312
H3	388	331
H4	390	333
M3	395	341
M4	396	351
308	524	379
310	641	380
311	724	383

http://www.intalink.org.uk/timetables/

3.48 During the site visit, the Bus Station was observed to be operating with no issues and bus stand capacity was adequate. However there are some issues with the design and layout of the Bus Station in terms of passenger experience:

- The passenger information consisted of small timetables stuck to various parts of the shopping centre facade and pillars, with no real time passenger information;
- An electronic kiosk was available but is located quite far from the stop and is of a relatively out dated design;
- Waiting capacity is limited, with hard steel benches, some exposed to the weather and some sheltered but poorly lit. There is some indoor waiting capacity in a cafe that faces the Bus Station, however this is only available during the opening hours of the cafe;
- Passengers have to cross the carriageway in order to get to a bus stop; and

3.49 The Bus Station is currently the only area within the town centre with the capability of being a bus stand, a bus stop and an interchange waiting area, whilst also being located directly beside the key retail centre of Hertford.

3.50 From a disabled users aspect, passengers have to step up onto buses due to inadequate level access. The future Strategy should look to ensure that designs for the Bus Station take this into account and cater for disabled users.

3.51 It is noted that from meeting with HCC it was confirmed that the Bus Station was observed to be at its busiest in the AM peak due to school buses picking up children. During the AM peak, queues have been observed to back up onto Railway Street.

3.52 It is also noted that from the meeting with HCC, it was disclosed that the lease at Bircherley Green Shopping Centre has ceased and therefore the future Strategy will have to consider whether there is an alternative location for the Bus Station.

3.53 **Figure 3.20** shows the Bus Station during the late morning on a weekday.

Figure 3.7 Bus Station

Bus Station Usage

3.54 The Bus Station is currently well utilised with approximately 29 services using the station in the AM peak (08:00-09:00). A number of these services are required to dwell in the station whilst they await their departure time and there is a 10 minute period between 08:45 and 08:55 when 5 to 6 of the stands are in continuous use.

3.55 The preceding hour (07:00-08:00), has a similar number of services, with approximately 21 services using the Bus Station across the hour.

3.56 Further interrogation of the timetable suggests that approximately 4/5 stands are required in typical off-peak hour.

Future Growth

3.57 The corridor to the east of the town centre development has a proposed 550 dwellings in the draft East Herts District plan. Whilst this is unlikely generate a stand-alone new bus route, it is likely to require an increase in frequency on the main town route (the 310) which is currently every 10mins.

3.58 The increase in demand would require a 7.5-8 minute frequency which implies 2 additional departures from the Bus Station every hour. As the 310 runs every 10mins with a 9 minute turnaround this could also trigger the need for an additional stand.

Bus Stands

3.59 There are two bus stops on the south side of Fore Street which are served by 13 different bus routes. Buses are the only vehicles allowed to drive through (the western section of) Fore Street in a westbound direction onto The Wash. This movement creates a conflict with cars and has the potential to conflict with cyclists.

3.60 During the site visit the Fore Street bus stop was observed to have limited footway space for waiting passengers, and issues with parked up vehicles caused buses to move slowly down the street.

3.61 Tesco has a bus stop on Mill Road, which also acts as the local bus stop for Hertford East Rail Station.

3.62 During the site visit the bus stop directly beside the Tesco was observed to have real time passenger information and a good amount of waiting space, however there is very little natural surveillance as the Tesco facade is blank on this side.

3.63 There are further bus stops on the Wash, with the stop adjacent to the junction with Maidenhead Street observed to have narrow footways and no bus shelter (as depicted in **Figure 3.21**).

Figure 3.8 Bus Stop at pinch point of footway at The Wash

RAIL ACCESS

Hertford East Station

3.64 Hertford East railway station is directly on the edge of the town centre area, it is the terminus of the Hertford Branch line of the West Anglia Main Line. Most services from this station terminate at London Liverpool Street and Stratford. The Office of Rail Regulation Station Usage data for 2013-2014 estimates 794,857 annual passenger movements (entry and exit) for this station, equating to around an average of 2,170 passenger movements a day.

3.65 The station suffers from a poor ambience with a run down appearance and issues with pigeons. There is also a lack of public toilet facilities.

3.66 There are only 18 car parking spaces at the station, with the UTP stating there are issues with over spilling parking demand for the station.

3.67 The mini roundabout is recognised by the UTP to be wide, with excessive road space considering the traffic movements.

3.68 The Mead Land Urban Design Framework offers suggestions for improving this space in conjunction with new development in this area, this includes:

- Provision of a new link road and passenger interchange north of the station
- Provision of a secondary point of access for emergency vehicle use by the frontage of the station

- Provision of public space within an enhanced setting of the station, including improved pedestrian access from the station towards the town centre
- A pedestrian/cycle link between Hartham Common and the station including a new landmark crossing of the River Lea.

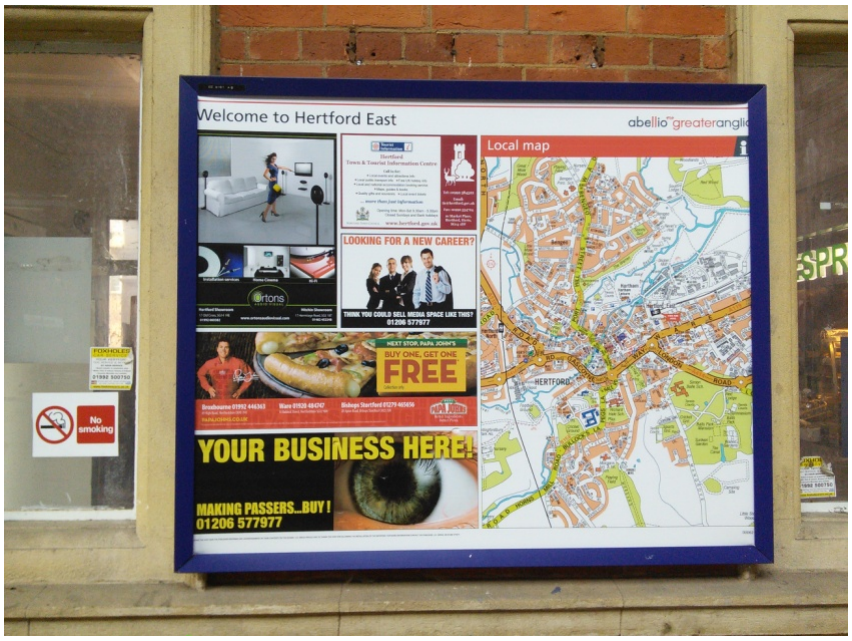
3.69 As shown in **Figure 3.22** the taxis were observed to be parked in a way that blocked pedestrian access and visibility.

3.70 The layout of the station is designed with several entrances, however it is restricted to a single pedestrian route in.

Figure 3.9 Taxis blocking station entrance

3.71 There was very little information available for onward journeys, with only a poor quality road focused map of Hertford on the wall (see **Figure 3.23**). The ticket office had no bus timetables or maps available.

Figure 3.10 Passenger Information at Hertford East station



Hertford North Station and access to the town centre via North Road

3.72 Hertford North railway station is around ten minutes walk from the town centre via North Road, and is served by through trains on the Hertford Loop line. These trains normally terminate at London Moorgate in the south and go north towards Stevenage, except in weekends when they terminate at King's Cross. There are an estimated 1,373,316 annual passenger movements (entry and exit) for this station, equating to around an average of 3,760 passenger movements a day.

3.73 The station has a 119 space car park but also has issues with over-spilling of parking as stated in the UTP.

3.74 The cycle park shown in **Figure 3.24** at the station is double stacked and high quality and was observed to be well used at the time of the site visit.

Figure 3.11 Cycle parking at Hertford North

3.75 The route to the station via North Road is constrained with limited carriageway, footway and advisory on-street cycle lanes. The vehicle speeds on this road are excessive and drivers regularly encroach on the cycle lanes when following their natural driving line. The kerb heights and gullies also reduce the effective width of the cycle lanes. **Figure 3.25** for demonstrated the lack of cycle provision and broken footway on the eastern portion of North Road.

Figure 3.12 North Road Issues with footway continuity

3.76 Hertford North Rail Station has a bus stop (shown in **Figure 3.26**) with good quality real time passenger information displays, furthermore bus information in the form of maps and leaflets are available inside the station.

Figure 3.13 Hertford North- Northbound bus stop

DELIVERY AND SERVICING

3.77 The town centre roads contain many land uses that require delivery and servicing to operate, it also however is comprised of streets that are very narrow and there are only a limited amount of rear serviced properties.

3.78 The width of many streets creates conflict when delivery and servicing vehicles stop, they often restrict pedestrian and vehicular flow, as well as reduce visibility and the general quality of experience of the town centre.

3.79 During the site visit loading activity was observed to occur at many points around the town centre, with vehicles such as large lorries parked up on Fore Street, this caused difficulties for vehicles such as buses to negotiate the street (**see Figure 3.27**).

Figure 3.14 Fore Street conflicts with Loading vehicles (around 10am on a Monday)

3.80 Maidenhead Street was observed to have had at least 1 or 2 delivery vehicles (large vans and medium sized Lorries) parked up at any one time during the site visit.

3.81 **Appendix A** contains the Traffic Regulation Order map, which specifies the loading restrictions throughout the town centre.

PARKING

On-Street Parking

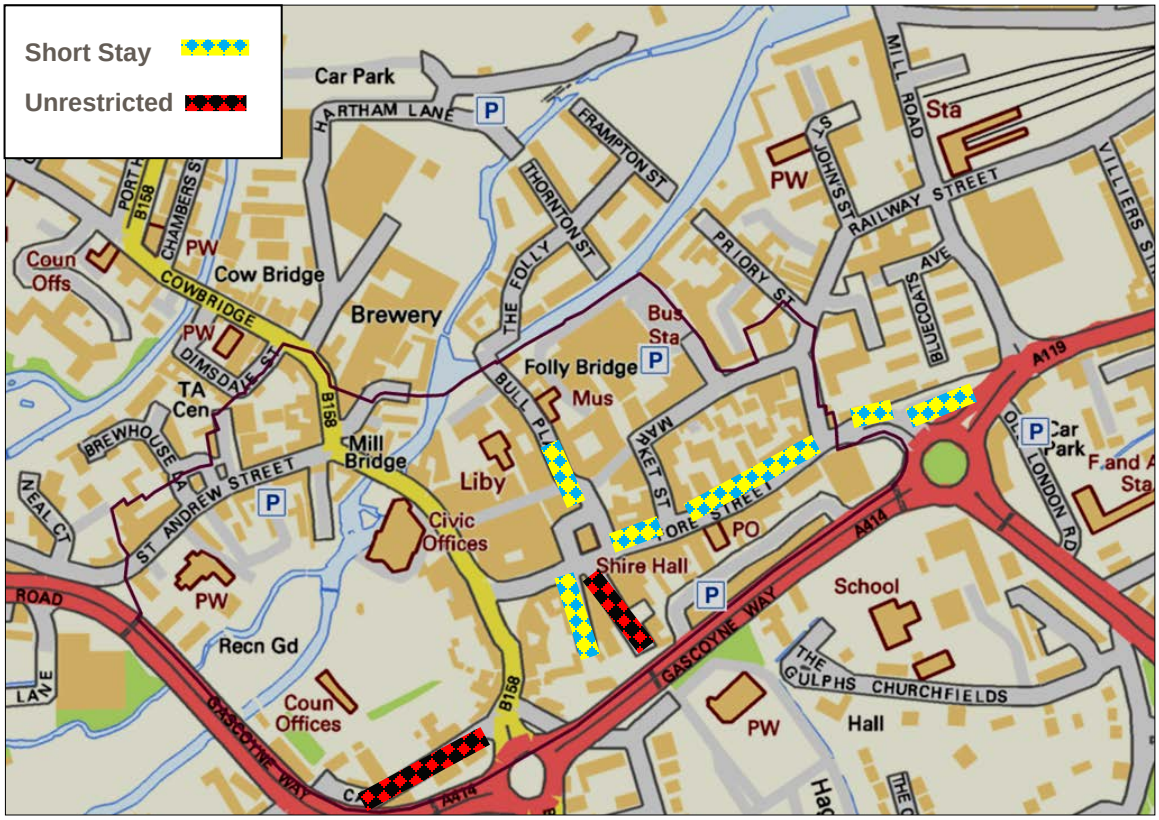
3.82 Parking has capacity constraints due to the limited width of town centre streets, with the only significant on street parking occurring within the town centre located along the north side of Fore Street. These are short stay spaces with a 30 minute limit on Mondays-Saturdays between 8am and 6pm.

3.83 Further short stay spaces are also located at the southern end of Bull Plain (15 spaces including 3 disabled spaces), Bell Lane (approximately 8 spaces), and a small parking area at the junction of Fore Street / Gascoyne Way (7 spaces).

3.84 There is also unrestricted parking along Castle Street and Church Street.

3.85 **Figure 3.28** shows the location of on-street parking within the town centre.

Figure 3.15 On-Street Parking



3.86 Through discussions with EHC, it was noted that the recent emphasis at EHC has been to increase the availability of on-street ‘stop and shop’ limited waiting bays and last year the Council increased the supply by removing redundant single yellow lines (SYL) and double yellow lines (DYL).

3.87 The East Herts parking policy does however suggest that in implementing parking solutions these should reflect local needs and therefore removal of parking spaces is a possibility if the need can be justified.

Car Parks

3.88 There are 8 publically accessible car parks located around the town centre’s edge totalling 1009 spaces (see **Table 3.5**). There are a further 283 spaces at Tesco and 229 spaces at Sainsburys.

3.89 Census 2011 data indicates over 6,000 car drivers commuting into the town centre area (however a large portion of this is towards the County Council offices which is directly south of the town centre proper), while private and staff parking spaces may accommodate some of this, overall there appears to be excessive demand on parking space in the town centre.

3.90 **Figure 3.29** displays the main public car park locations in and around the town centre area.

Figure 3.16 Car Park Locations

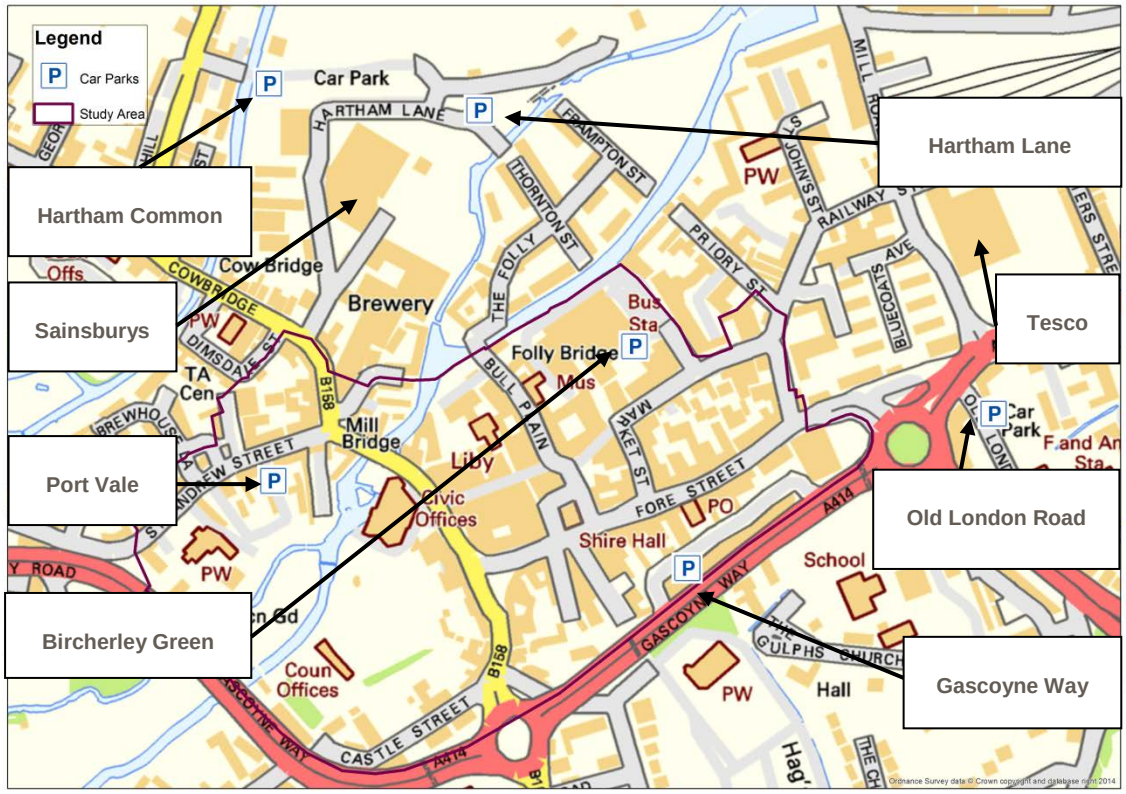


Table 3.2 Town Centre Adjacent Car Parks

Address	Operator	Spaces	2hr Price (AM Peak)
Gascoyne Way (short and long stay)	EHC	340	£2.00
Bircherley Green - Bircherley Street (short stay)	Bircherley Green	173	£0.80
Hartham Common (short and long stay)	EHC	120	£2.00
Old London Road (long stay)	EHC	104	£3.60 up to 5 hours
St. Andrew Street (short stay)	EHC	103	£2.00
Hartham Lane (short and long stay)	EHC	86	£2.00
Hertford East Station - Mill Road	NCP	18	£4.10
Port Vale	EHC	39	£2.00
Wallfields (County Council Offices)*	EHC	32	£0.80
Sovereign House - Hale Road*	RCP	65	£1.60

**Outside of Study Area*

3.91 The car parking bay on Fore Street is 30 minutes maximum waiting time, however the spaces are also free to use so the spaces are almost fully used throughout the day.

3.92 The Sainsburys (229 spaces) and Tesco (283) on the edge of the Town Centre (see Figure 3.29) offer car parking spaces for supermarket users who may also then visit the Town Centre itself as part of a linked trip.

3.93 **Figure 3.30** shows the Gascoyne Way car park access; this has some issues with the quality of paving and unnecessary obstacles in the way.

Figure 3.17 Gascoyne way Car Park link to Fore Street

HIGHWAYS OPERATION

3.94 The highways system in the town centre is complex and while it maintains direct vehicular access to all frontages it also includes some complex arrangements (see **Figure 3.31** for a road operation direction map).

3.95 **Appendix A** displays the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) Map for the town centre area.

Figure 3.18 Direction of Road Operation

3.96 **Table 3.6** shows the vehicle flows on the key roads within the town centre.

Table 3.6 Vehicle Flows

Road	Direction	AM	PM
Fore Street (West End)	WB	318	717
Fore Street (West End)	EB	10	20
Fore Street East End	WB	55	124
Railway Street	WB	338	928
Railway Street	EB	54	90
The Wash	NB	393	1082
The Wash	SB	647	856
Gascoyne Way	WB	2017	3702
Gascoyne Way	EB	1866	3472
St Andrew's Street	WB	340	345
St Andrew's Street	EB	239	534

HCC Paramics Model

3.97 The afternoon peak has a significant number of additional vehicles compared to the morning peak.

3.98 From observations of the model, it appears that the traffic in the AM peak is held back at congested junctions downstream of the town centre, resulting in less congestion in the town centre.

A414 Gascoyne Way

3.99 The A414 is a major road that bounds the southern edge of the town centre and creates severance for non-motorised users. It is classified as an A-road, defined by the Department for Transport (DfT) as: 'a road which will generally be among the widest, most direct roads in an area, and will be of the greatest significance to through traffic '.

3.100 Typically Gascoyne Way (between the junctions of Fore Street and the Wash) has approximately 3,883 two-way vehicle movements in the AM peak (08:00-09:00) and 7,174 two-way vehicle movements in the PM peak (17:00-18:00).

3.101 Recent modelling undertaken by HCC shows the road to be at capacity during the network peaks. As a result any changes to the highway network could have a detrimental impact on traffic flows on the A414.

3.102 This is consistent with the UTP which identified key congestion hotspots on this stretch of the highway network (5.2.1).

3.103 Further modelling conducted as part of this Study corroborates the modelling results undertaken by HCC with key junctions (notably Gascoyne Way / The Wash) very sensitive to alterations to the network.

3.104 There are potential opportunities for additional at grade crossing points however they would require further justification as they could further impede the flow of traffic on the A414.

The Wash

3.105 The Wash is the main route from Hertford North Station down into the town centre as forms part of the B158. The DfT describes a B road as one that 'will be of significance to traffic (including through traffic) but less so than an A road'.

3.106 Typically The Wash has approximately 1,040 two-way vehicle movements in the AM peak and 1,938 two-way vehicle movements in the PM peak.

3.107 The roundabout connecting the B158 with the A414 has high entry speeds into the B158 and it is noted that a town centre entry treatment could be beneficial in reducing these speeds.

3.108 Through discussions with HCC it has been noted that there have been considerations of stopping traffic coming in from North Road (west of St Andrew Street), which would take the pressure off Old Cross and Millbridge/The Wash. Although, this has never fully been investigated, recent roadworks resulted in a similar highways arrangement with no significant noticeable local issues (however the wider impact still need to be considered).

3.109 However, this would have access implications for those living in Bengeo and would create more circuitous routes for the residents, which would ultimately increase vehicle mileage in the area.

3.110 Further pressure would be placed on the Beane Road junction and the network's resilience would be reduced as there are fewer route choices into Benego.

3.111 It is also noted that building a full coherent pedestrian link across from Maidenhead St. into the Castle grounds area is a key aspiration and would provide a key link through the town centre.

3.112 It is noted that from discussions with HCC, a 20 mph zone is being considered for the road, however this also needs to be designed in (via traffic calming for example) to be effective. This would require interventions such road narrowing, removal of centre lines and build outs along the stretch of road.

Fore Street

3.113 Fore Street is a key road which runs through the town centre, the section to the east of the junction with Market Street operates as a one-way westbound route. Whilst the section to the west of the junction with Market Street acts as a mainly one-way eastbound route.

3.114 The western end of Fore Street is two-way for buses but not wide enough to allow two vehicles to pass without either mounting the kerb or using the designated give way areas (**see Figure 3.32**), which are often ignored by motorists**.** The result is damage to the footways which are costly to repair.

Figure 3.19 Fore Street 2-Way system for buses

3.115 Fore Street acts as a ‘eastbound relief road’ for the A414 (Gascoyne Way), which creates a conflict between pedestrians and vehicles, as vehicles rat run through the town centre via Fore Street.

3.116 Approximately 233 vehicles appear to make this movement in the AM peak and 313 vehicles in the PM peak.

3.117 Any options to close Fore Street to general through traffic could impact upon other junctions in the vicinity due to the sensitive nature of the road network. Consideration will need to be given not only to the potential benefits of changes but also to the number of vehicles making this movement prior to implementation of any significant changes.

Bull Plain

3.118 Bull Plain provides the sole vehicular access to Folly Island and therefore has a number of vehicle trips associated with residents of the Island. There are also a number of on-street parking spaces which attract people looking for short term parking.

3.119 Bull Plain Road could be closed to vehicles to improve the pedestrian environment and remove any conflicts with cyclists on the National Cycle Route. However, Closing Bull Plain to traffic would not be possible unless an alternative route into Folly Island was found. There is the potential to create a new northern access on Folly Island, however it is acknowledged that this would be contentious and there are issues with both servicing and land ownership.

Maidenhead Street

3.120 Although the street is pedestrianised, there is widespread loading throughout the day. Large pallets can be observed outside some of the retail units which impede the flow of pedestrians and reduce the visual appeal of the street.

3.121 The TRO for the street is complicated and allows use by disabled users, residents and market retailers. This results in a complicated highways sign and the design of the road fails to deter traffic.

TAXIS AND PRIVATE HIRE

3.122 There are two main taxi ranks in the town centre, located on the south side of Fore Street and on the north side of Railway Street; the rank on Fore Street has no waiting Monday to Saturday from 6pm-8am except taxis.

3.123 There are additional drop off spaces at Hertford East station which were observed to block off pedestrian access to the station.

Figure 3.20 Taxi ranks in the Town Centre

ACCIDENT DATA

3.124 Accident Data recorded by HCC from the three years between 01/11/2011 and 31/10/2014 was analysed for the town centre area to assess any significant patterns or accidents. The map of accidents is shown in **Appendix B**.

3.125 The accidents are relatively spread out within the town centre area, with some small clusters around Railway Street and Bull Plain.

3.126 The serious accidents are summarised in **Table 3.6** below.

Table 3.7 Serious Accident Summary

Type	Location	Collision/Reason
Serious	Cowbridge	Alcoholically impaired driver crashing into kerb and buildings
Serious	The Wash/Maidenhead St	Pedestrian running onto street and being hit by car
Serious	Railway Street West	Pedestrian walking onto street away from crossing dark
Serious	Railway Street/St Johns Street	Car turning into side street and hitting pedestrian already crossing
Serious	Bluecoats Roundabout	Rear-ending caused by rear vehicle not braking at red light
Serious	Mill Road/Ware Road	Person on bicycle stopped for an emergency vehicle to cross in front, then rear-ended by the car behind

3.127 The summary suggests that the serious accidents are generally caused by significant errors or misjudgements by those involved, and not by any inherent issues in the design and operation of the highways.

3.128 However incidences of pedestrians walking out on to the street were observed to occur often and this may be symptomatic of poor crossing provision and a lack of visibility due to street furniture or parked vehicles.

SUMMARY

3.129 The road network around the town centre is fairly constrained and there is limited opportunity to re-designate road space without affecting vehicle movements. The Baseline Study has identified some areas whereby road space can be re-allocated away from cars. However, the modelling results and the UTP have clearly shown that there is congestion on what appears to be a relatively sensitive network and changes could have a detrimental effect on journey times. However, overtime this could result in a modal shift away from the cars and on to more sustainable transport solutions.

3.130 It is also noted that the recent emphasis of the EHC has been to increase the availability of on-street ‘stop and shop’ limited waiting bays which encourage drivers. Whilst on-street parking could be removed in favour of other modes, this may not be popular with retailers. Whilst this may provide some short term loss of trade, over time people will be encouraged to change their travel habits which could result in less vehicle trips to the area.

3.131 The future Strategy should therefore not necessarily discount any interventions purely based upon their impact upon car journeys.

4 Strategy Opportunities

GENERAL

4.1 While addressing each individual type of user is useful, it is necessary to approach the movement strategy not as a means to itself but in terms of underpinning the main goals of the Urban Design Strategy, transport plan and general goals for Hertford and its residents.

4.2 It is clear that the main transport challenge for the town centre is in accommodating the various users of space within narrow streets, and that the scope for developing movement strategies will involve rebalancing incongruous uses to better achieves the goals for Hertford.

4.3 The goals of the Local Transport Plan and the Urban Transport Plan already establish a strong desire to increase use of sustainable modes for their benefits to the environment including air quality, carbon emissions and noise.

4.4 In general, the main goals of an Urban Design Strategy implicate the modification of traffic movement and infrastructure in the town centre.

4.5 There is a significant scope for increasing the use of sustainable modes, as private car usage and ownership in Hertford (72%) is significantly higher than the national average of 57% despite the relatively compact size of Hertford itself.

4.6 Goals can be met in varying configurations of transport systems and land uses and an underlying vision for the type of place the town centre should be needs to be understood from consultation with the public. For example reduced vehicular access scenarios would have impacts on vehicular access and may increase business and delivery costs directly, but may overall create an increase in footfall and patronage that creates a long term benefit to those impacted.

PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT

Wayfinding

4.7 Wayfinding is generally considered to be limited throughout the town centre. High quality wayfinding could be located on key routes such as from the two rail stations into the town centre. These routes require both pavement and lighting improvements to better signpost them.

4.8 The subways should have wayfinding signage as they act as key access points for pedestrians south of the town centre area.

Public Realm Design

4.9 The pavements are generally too narrow and there is scope for increasing width in places, especially where there are wide median strip crossings and markings along roads (such as along The Wash or on Railway Street). A number of junctions could have the radii of their kerblines reduced and the footway widened.

4.10 Where access roads disrupt a footway, a speed table or continuation of the footway may be appropriate.

4.11 The use of guardrails and bollards to prevent kerb parking or encroachment undermines the visual impression of the town centre; and where possible these should be removed and replaced with street furniture such as benches, cycle parking or planting boxes. Similarly there are lighting columns and other signage which may work better if they are attached directly to buildings or at least combined onto

one post to reduce footway clutter. Furthermore a coherent pallet of materials would help unify the town centre and make maintenance easier.

4.12 The speed tables within the town centre create confusion concerning the priority for pedestrians (the 'CMP7' scheme in the UTP states this shall be addressed). It is recommended that a zebra speed table with suitable tactile paving (to support the visually impaired) on each side would make the priority clear while also ensuring visually impaired people are able to use these crossings safely.

4.13 Key entrances into the town centre can be designed to create a traffic calming effect by design, making it clear to drivers they are entering a pedestrian oriented zone.

Key Desire Lines

4.14 The subways are in disrepair and the eastern subway has lighting issues which reduce the perception of safety. As a key entry point into the town centre from the south, these should both be enhanced for use by pedestrians accessing the town centre.

4.15 The riverside by Bircherley Green has limited pedestrian access and poor footway quality, which could be improved with the redevelopment of Bircherley Green shopping centre.

4.16 The eastern end of Fore Street has an excessive entrance treatment that restricts pedestrian movement; this should be redesigned to make pedestrian movement easier while creating a well designed indication to drivers that they are entering the town centre area.

4.17 The Bluecoats estate forms a clear desire line from the Tesco bus stop to the town centre proper which people were observed to be following and if this was designed as an official pedestrian and cycle through route it would offer a safe and more direct alternative to Railway Street. However, it is noted that there is 'No Public Right of Way' through the Blue Coats estate and therefore negotiations would need to be sought with the landowners.

4.18 It is noted that HCC have an aspiration to create a strong pedestrian link between Maidenhead Street and the Castle area.

CYCLING

4.19 The inner town centre has limited carriageway space for cycle lanes or cycle parking. Around the edges of the town centre (on the wider roads), there is space for cycle parking, particularly at points where the town's cycle routes cross into the town centre area.

4.20 Some one way streets in the Town Centre, such as Fore Street, discourage cycling and any cycle lanes should be bi-directional where possible.

4.21 The encouragement of slower traffic speeds (sub 20 mph) and better lighting will aid the safety and visibility of bicycle users. Carriageway quality is variable and resurfacing can improve the comfort and control of bicycle users.

4.22 North Road has two-way advisory cycle lanes linking to Hertford North, both of which are poorly maintained and of insufficient width. There are sections of North Road where light segregation or widening of the lane could be explored (including using angled kerbs to increase the effective width). Continuation of the route into the town centre and beyond the junction with Cross Lane should also be considered.

4.23 Where cycle route 61 passes through Hertford town centre, efforts should be made to reduce the speed of cyclists. The route should have subtle infrastructure that promotes cycling, without creating severance or conflict through the town centre.

4.1 There is a conflict between cyclists entering Fore Street and vehicles emerging out onto Market Street. The cyclists are effectively turning into a one-way street (except for buses) and car drivers may not expect this movement which could result in head on collisions.

BUSES

4.2 The central Bus Station generally feels tired and is due a refurbishment or reconfiguration. The waiting area should be improved with better seating provision and sheltering. Real time passenger information and more seating could be installed along with better timetable display.

4.3 Consideration should also be given to level access for those boarding the buses, for instance a saw tooth arrangement can be used whereby buses pull up to a stop level with their entrance and then reverse out back onto the carriageway to leave the bus stop.

4.4 The bus stops on The Wash are positioned awkwardly on the footway and could be relocated. The bus stops on Fore Street and Market Street are very constrained by their location on a narrow footway against a building; waiting passengers can block the pavement and conflict with pedestrians trying to get through.

RAIL

Hertford East

4.5 Hertford East station has a large roundabout junction with no controlled pedestrian crossings. The UTP recognises this issue and suggests there is scope for re-profiling this junction to create clear and safe signalised pedestrian crossings to and from the station, other crossing types could be explored for the best balance for users such as pedestrian priority (Zebra) crossings.

4.6 In addition to this the current footway and kiss and ride facilities at the station could be rearranged to complement an improved junction by reducing the impedance of parked up taxis and improve visibility and direct access from the station, by possibly reducing the capacity or ability for taxis to stop around the station entrances. Taxis can be encouraged to use the Railway Street rank instead.

4.7 There is a considerable amount of low quality scrubland surrounding the station which may be partially cleared to add amenity space to the station such as increased car and cycle parking or bus infrastructure; this is also suggested as a medium term scheme in the UTP as part of Mead Lane developments.

4.8 Information dissemination at the station can be improved by including a walking-oriented map and the provision of bus information.

4.9 The land to the north of the station is being re-developed in order to facilitate a new bus waiting / turnaround area.

Hertford North

4.10 Hertford North's main access route into the town centre can be improved for pedestrians and especially cyclists (see previous points about North Road in the Cycling section).

DELIVERY AND SERVICING

4.11 Loading activity is widespread after 9am and restricts traffic flow and pedestrian movement. This was most prevalent on Maidenhead Street and Fore Street.

4.12 Narrowing of loading windows and other restrictions could be explored. However, it is noted that from discussions with HCC the nature of the businesses makes restrictions on loading times an unpopular intervention.

PRIVATE CAR, HIGHWAYS AND PARKING

Parking

4.13 There are around 1000 car park spaces in total located around the edge of the town centre, with two on-street parking areas located on Bull Plain and Fore Street which are heavily used; there is a limited ability to expand this capacity and this would encourage additional car use which is contrary to local and national transport policy.

4.14 There is a limited need to park on Fore Street unless someone is disabled or loading, however there is no such restriction to inhibit parking and as such a number of people have been observed parking here for convenience. Policies to reduce convenience parking may reduce the impact on space that parked vehicles create as well as discourage car use, furthermore, this can reduce traffic generated by vehicles circulating the town centre waiting or searching for a free 30 minute parking bay to be available.

4.15 It is acknowledged that parking is seen as necessary for the function of Fore Street; however its removal could allow either the expansion of footway or the addition of cycle lanes.

Highways Operation

4.16 The two-way system on the western end of the Fore Street is complex, as it cannot allow two vehicles to pass at certain points and requires drivers to negotiate with each other, however retaining the two-way movement for buses is essential. It is noted that there is limited potential for improvement due to constraints from historic buildings.

4.17 Allowing one-way operation for vehicles retains access to the town centre for vehicles from the west. If this movement was restricted, then vehicles would have to use Gascoyne Way to drive around to the other end of Fore Street, which would create a significant detour and possibly exacerbate congestion.

4.18 From discussions with HCC, it is understood that rat running occurs with drivers who are heading east into Fore Street, then turning up into Market Street before rejoining Gascoyne Way. The current need for western access to Folly Island and Bull Plain means this cannot be prevented without significant intervention.

4.19 The use of road marking medians to create space for pedestrian refuge islands may be better given over to road space; this can then in turn allow the widening of the footway or the addition of a cycle lane.

4.20 Crossings could be converted to a single stage zebra which would offer a better level of safety and convenience compared to the current uncontrolled 2 stage crossings throughout the town centre, they also allow pedestrians and traffic to flow better than signalised crossings.

4.21 The Startegy should seek to design for sub 20mph throughout the town centre to ensure vehicle speeds remain low.

TAXIS AND PRIVATE HIRE

4.22 There is designated taxi rank capacity in the town centre and no indication that this capacity is an issue.

4.23 However there are issues with taxis parking at the entrance to the pedestrianised area of Bircherley Green, which causes conflict with pedestrian traffic.

4.24 As previously mentioned Hertford East has a poorly configured kiss and ride layout, with vehicles parked up blocking the station entrances.

5 Conclusion

5.1 To conclude this baseline appraisal of movement, the findings and opportunities are summarised by the general Urban Design Strategy objectives.

Revitalising the town centre and making it into a retail focus where people can shop and spend their leisure time;

5.2 There are some transport factors which detract from the town centre's ability to be a retail and leisure destination. The overall dominance of highways and the prevalence of poor quality uncontrolled crossings and narrow footways inhibit pedestrian movement. Street furniture such as guard railings and bollards, as well as A-boards, also detract from the flow and useable space for pedestrians.

Responding to the heritage and historic environment of Hertford;

5.3 The design and prominence of highways, especially away from the pedestrianised core highly influence the character of the environment. The roads are designed in a late 20th century style, focusing on vehicular capacity and ease of vehicular movement, this design approach conflicts with the relatively small town character of the centre.

Providing a safe and secure environment;

5.4 There are a few areas in the town centre with limited natural surveillance, such as the blank Tesco facade on Mill Road. The subway accesses at the south side of the site are also in disrepair and lighting is considered an issue; surface crossings may provide a safer and more pleasant alternative.

Improving movement and travel around the town centre; and

5.5 The town centre needs to have a general rebalancing towards pedestrians and bicycle users, by creating a becalmed environment with more controlled or priority crossings for pedestrians and improving the pedestrian facilities.

Accomodating car parking

5.6 The town centre has around 1000 spaces located in various locations around its edge; there would be no logical reason to increase this in the context of an objective of encouraging sustainable modes. Some general use bays such as in Fore Street could become disabled only or charged in order to control use.

Appendix A

TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER MAP

Hertford Town Centre (Map EAS3444)

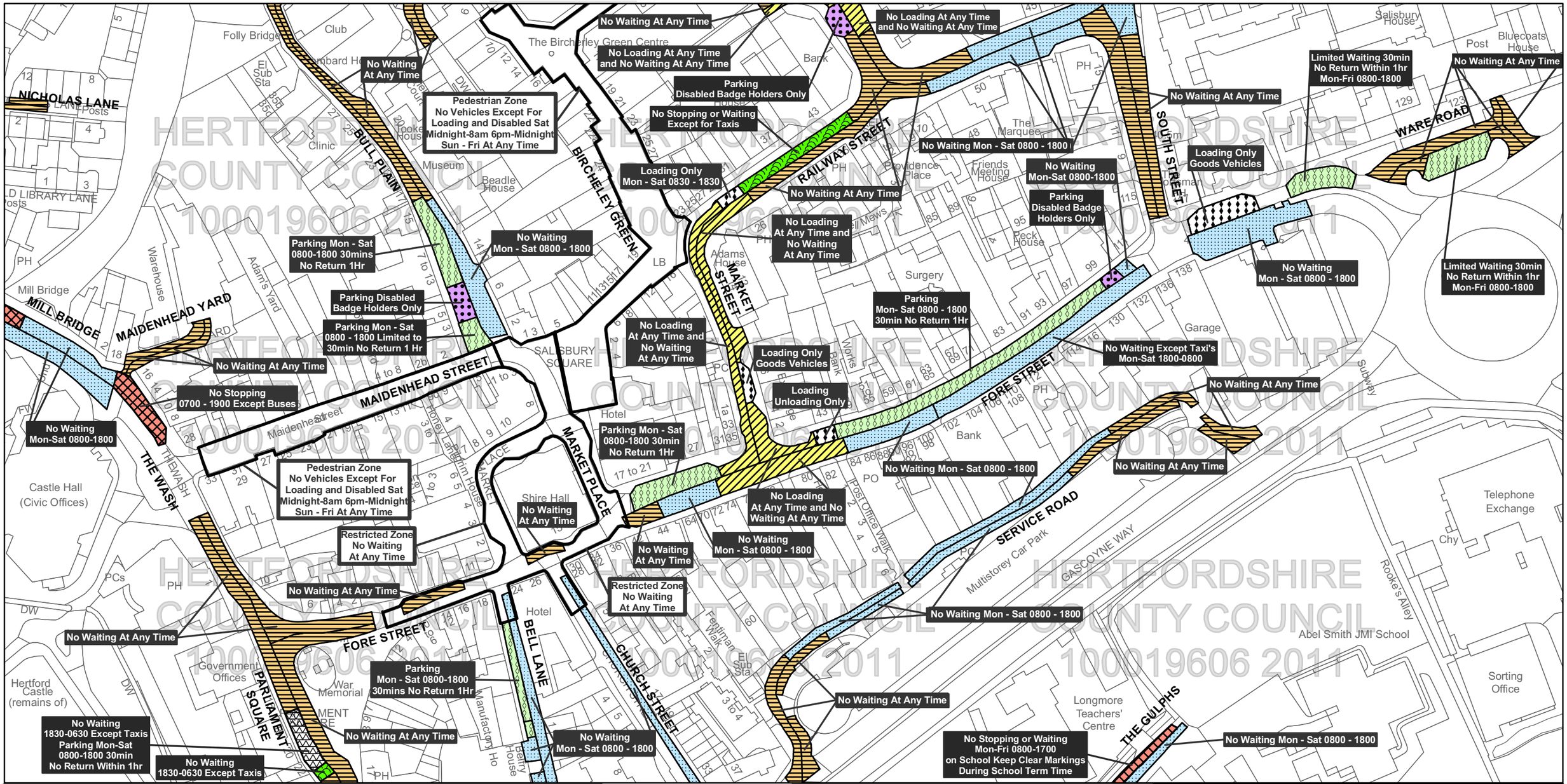
Plan No: EAS3444 Hertford

Sheet Revision Number: 1

Sheet Active From: 23/08/2011

Hertfordshire County Council,
County Hall, Pegs Lane,
Hertford SG13 8DQ

The Causeway
Bishop's Stortford
Hertfordshire
CM23 2EN



Legend

Parking prohibitions and Restrictions

- No Stopping and No Loading/Unloading and No Waiting
- No Loading/Unloading and No Waiting
- No Waiting at Any Time
- Restricted Waiting

Designated Parking Places

- Paid Parking
- Voucher and Permit Holders
- Free Parking
- Disabled Parking
- Loading Unloading

Other Prohibitions Restrictions or Parking

- Taxi Bays
- Multiple Restriction
- Other Restrictions
- Total Restriction Zone (Can Occur in Conjunction with Other Restrictions)

Other Information

- Controlled Parking Zone Boundary

50 25 0 50 Meters

At original drawing size this line represents 100mm

Title: East Hertfordshire District Council
Control of Parking Consolidation Order

SCALE: 1:1,250

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Hertfordshire County Council 100019606, 2011

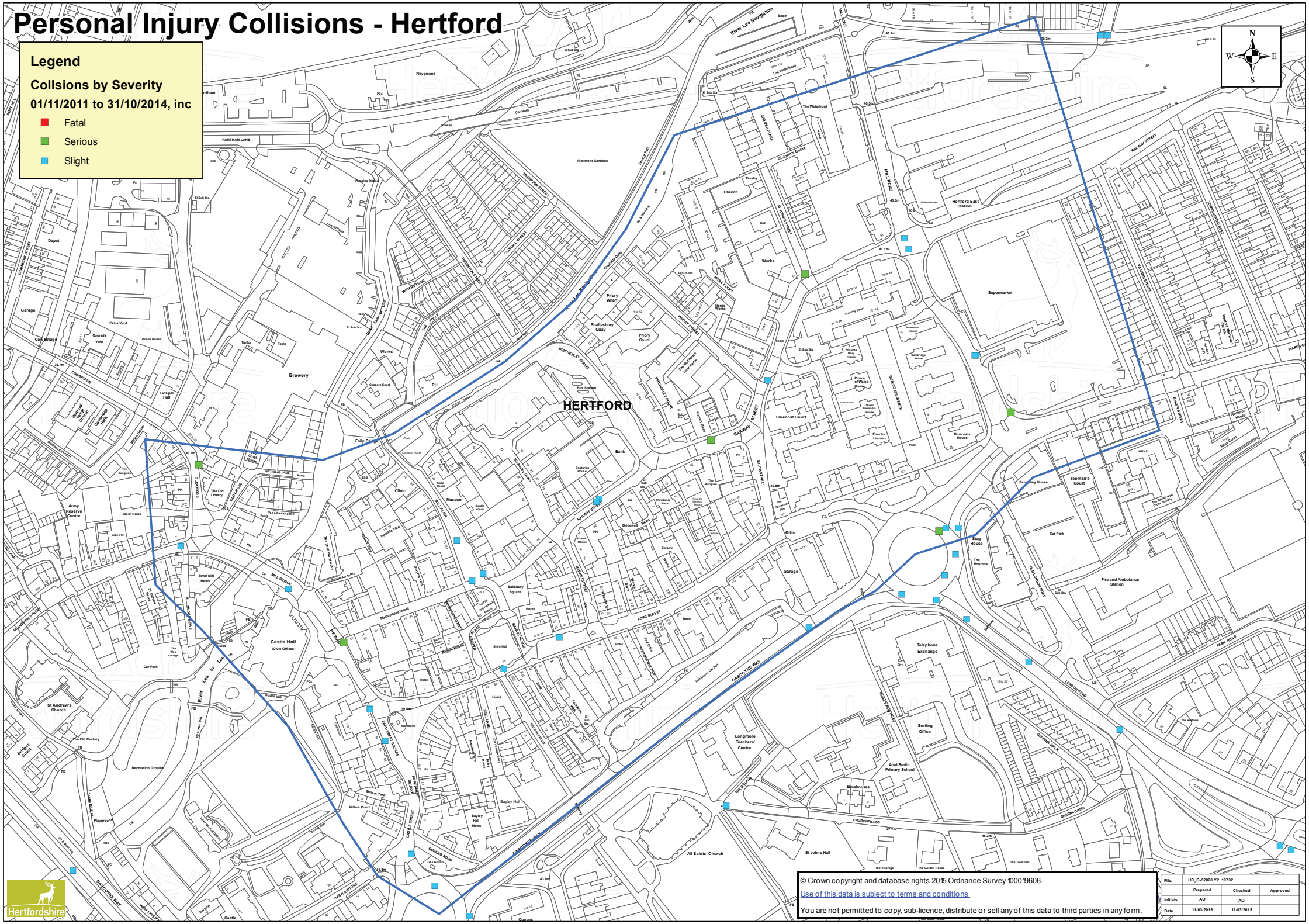
All areas over which the provisions of the orders apply are defined by the shaded areas as shown on the following plans plus a contiguous area not indicated on the plans of verge and/or footway between the carriageway edge and the highway boundary. At all times current legislation applies to all areas. The plans in this schedule are basedupon grid references of the Ordnance Survey National Grid defined by the OSGB36 triangulation.

Appendix B

ACCIDENT DATA

Hertford Town centre

Personal Injury Collisions - Hertford



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File.	HC_G-52028.Y2 19732		
	Prepared	Checked	Approved
Initials	AO	AO	
Date	11/03/2015	11/03/2015	