

Wolverhampton City Council

**OPEN DECISION ITEM**

**LICENSING COMMITTEE**

Originating Service Group(s) **EDUCATION AND ENTERPRISE**

Date **12 DECEMBER 2012**

Contact Officer(s)/ **LYDIA BARNSTABLE**

Telephone Number(s) **EXT 5684**

Title **CONSULTATION DRAFT SCHEME FOR CITY CENTRE  
TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS**

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**RECOMMENDATION.**

That the Committee:

1. Considers and gives its views on the proposed draft scheme for City Centre Transportation and Public Realm Improvements as detailed in the report and plan attached as an appendix.

# **CONSULTATION DRAFT SCHEME FOR CITY CENTRE TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS.**

## **1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The report seeks the views of the Licensing Committee of the draft City Centre Transportation and Public Realm Improvements as approved by Cabinet on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2012 and detailed in the body of the report and attached plan.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Transportation and Public Realm Improvements have been developed to support and facilitate the wider regeneration activities in the City Centre and should be viewed as an integral component of the recently launched 'Prospectus' that has as its vision:

“A vibrant, walkable, attractive, family friendly city centre full of opportunity and potential. A city centre which is compact enough to be welcoming and accessible, but large enough to boast some of the UK’s best retail, leisure and cultural facilities. Wolverhampton will be a University City made for living, working and enjoyment with the best streets and public spaces, combined with excellent public transport. In short, a city centre to delight, achieve and thrive.”

- 2.2 The Prospectus sets out a framework to inform engagement with investors and other stakeholders to accelerate the regeneration and physical transformation of the City Centre. Improving the public realm is a major component of that transformation.
- 2.3 Within this wider regeneration context, the objective of the improvements are to reduce traffic congestion and conflicts with pedestrians at key locations including Lichfield Street and Queen Square. The works would significantly improve the pedestrian environment along key routes, particularly between the City Centre shops and the bus station, railway station and the Metro respectively. It aims to increase pedestrian space and to provide additional event space pleasant informal areas with trees and planting that can accommodate street cafes and general seating for people.
- 2.4 The scheme is intended to provide a step change in the general public realm through good design, reducing ‘street clutter’ and utilising high quality materials so creating an environment where businesses would wish to invest and people would be happy to visit and linger. The design of the improvements and traffic management arrangements has taken into account the known aspirations of the owners of the Mander and Wulfrun Centres and the University.
- 2.5 The scheme being proposed fits well with the City Centre Initiatives such as the Mary Portas Pilot to support businesses and tackling so-called ‘grot spots’, the BID proposals that include the use of CCTV to tackle low level crime and anti-social behaviour and the Corporate initiative to better manage City Centre activities, including improving the street trading offer and encouraging a ‘café culture’.
- 2.6 A complementary piece of work is also underway to establish some guiding principles to encourage a high quality of public realm (materials, street furniture, signage, hard and soft landscaping) in the City Centre that would inform developers and investors by way of a public realm guide. This work will be the subject of a separate report to Cabinet in due course.

2.7 Further details on the proposed changes and consultation process are set out below.

### **3. SUMMARY OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC REALM PROPOSALS**

3.1 A plan of the proposals is attached to this report. The consultation leaflet showing a plan of the proposals and highlighting the traffic management changes proposed will also be made available at the meeting.

3.2 In summary however, the key Transportation and Public Realm proposals include:

#### **Lichfield Street / Queen Sq**

- Traffic to be allowed one way only, westbound (down-hill)
- Carriageway narrowed to approximately 4m width to facilitate wider pavements on the southern side and opportunities created for planting of new street trees
- Bus Stops retained on the southern side of Lichfield Street
- Lich Gates to be for funerals and church business only and general car access to be prohibited
- Exchange St to be pedestrianised

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#### **Darlington St**

- Taxis and buses only uphill as existing but with improved enforcement of the bus gate to ensure Victoria St is kept free from general traffic
- Cyclists, buses and taxis to turn right from Darlington Street to Victoria Street.
- There is an option to direct taxis along Red Lion St / Corporation St / North St with a 'taxi gate' to allow taxis straight on movement to access Victoria St (General traffic would be right turn only). This option to be explored as part of the consultation process.

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#### **Victoria St (Darlington St to Skinner St)**

- Traffic to be restricted to one way southbound (downhill)
- Pavement to be widened to allow the creation of an informal 'square' with seating and opportunities for planting of new street trees
- Loading bay retained
- Taxi rank to be extended
- Disabled bays (3 spaces) relocated to Bell Street

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#### **Victoria St (Skinner to Cleveland St)**

- Traffic would remain as 2-way but there is an opportunity to reduce the carriageway to 2 lanes with a corresponding increase in space for pedestrians and opportunities for the planting of new trees
- New arrangements for parking, servicing and bus stops to be provided

#### **Cleveland St**

- Bus gate to be removed to allow access to Mander Centre for service vehicles and general access to car park
- Bus priority measures north of Summer Row to facilitate easier bus movements to Garrick Street / Bilston Street / Bus Station.
- Ring and Ride stop and Taxi 'drop-off' points to serve the 'Shopmobility' facility being considered.

#### **Bell St**

- Traffic flow will be reversed on the section of Bell Street to Victoria Street (westbound) to provide an additional exit option from the Mander Centre Car Park

- It is proposed to introduce new on-street disabled parking bays along the section of Bell Street that links with Victoria Street
- Traffic to be 2-way in 'bridge' section of Bell St to facilitate new access point to the Mander Car Park from Cleveland St (as well as egress)

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### **Bilston Street**

- General traffic to be removed from the section of Bilston Street between Market Street and Dudley Street whilst maintaining service vehicle access.
- Disabled person parking bays to be relocated to Market St
- Improved pedestrian access to Metro Stop including new crossing of Garrick Street and along Bilston Street to improve the pedestrian environment and reduce conflict with vehicles

### **Market Street**

- Traffic between Queen Street and Bilston Street to be one way southbound
- On-street parking bays to be provided, including disabled parking bays, bus stops and taxis / Ring and Ride facilities
- Pavement to be widened and opportunities for additional street trees and planting provided

### **Queen Street**

- Pavement to be widened on the north side of Queen Street between Pipers Row and Market Street to provide good pedestrian link to Dudley St from the Interchange
- All traffic to turn left only from Queen Street to Market Street.
- Parking and loading facilities retained on-street
- Bus stops to be relocated to Market Street
- Opportunities created for additional street trees as well as for pavement cafes, seating etc.

### **Princess St (Queen St to Berry St)**

- This would be pedestrianised with servicing allowed, as Dudley Street, outside the hours of 0930 – 1600 Monday to Saturday. Traffic also to be restricted to one way southbound, as Market Street.

### **Berry Street**

- Car park spaces to be removed

### **Princess St (Berry St to Lichfield St)**

- Traffic to be restricted to one way only northbound
- Parking, servicing and taxi bays to be provided

### **Pedestrian 'Finger Posts'**

- New pedestrian fingerpost signs will be installed to complement new infrastructure and new information signs ('totems') associated with the Interchange

## **4.0 KEY STAKEHOLDERS**

4.1 As stated previously the draft proposals will be subject to an extensive consultation process with key stakeholders and the general public.

4.2 **Buses and Taxis** - The proposed new traffic management arrangements will impact on bus movements through the City Centre and engagement and consultation with the bus operators and public transport users will be an important element of the consultation

process. However by removing conflict at junctions and facilitating a circulatory flow there is potential to reduce congestion and delays to public transport

- 4.3 Taxi operators and their associations will also be important consultees as some of the changes do alter taxi access and rank provision, although we believe this is an enhancement to existing provision.
- 4.4 The option to use CCTV enforcement of the 'bus gates' to ensure compliance and prevent general traffic from travelling through restricted streets will be considered as part of the development of this scheme.
- 4.5 **On-Street Parking and Parking for Disabled Persons** – On-street parking has been reviewed as part of the plans and it is proposed to relocate some spaces and reduce the overall number of on-street spaces. This has an impact on the number and distribution of spaces available on-street for people with a disability.
- 4.6 In order to mitigate against any adverse impact, it is proposed that blue badge holders should be allowed to park in designated disabled bays on the City Council's car parks free of charge. It is suggested that the free parking is limited to 3 hours on all car parks and that it would only apply in the nominated and marked area bays. If all the disabled bays are occupied blue badge holders would be required to pay. The exceptions to this free parking arrangement would have to be the Civic Centre and St Peter's Car Parks where there is a 'pay on exit' arrangement. All of the City Council's car parks will have the required 6% of the total spaces being for disabled persons by the end of December 2013. It should be noted that Blue Badge Holders can park free of charge in on-street car parking bays; and on yellow lines subject to certain limitations.
- 4.7 It is proposed therefore to consult on revising the existing parking arrangements based on the following principles:
- Allow Blue Badge Holders to use the City Council owned and managed City Centre car parks free of charge.
  - No reduction in the overall number of charge-free spaces for Blue Badge Holders within the City Centre
  - On and off street disabled parking spaces should be spread evenly across the City Centre
  - When considering the location of on-street disabled parking spaces attention should be given to proximity to key attractions (banks, main shopping area, Civic Centre).
- 4.8 This proposal would result in a total estimated loss of income from car parking of in the region of £60,000 per annum.
- 4.9 New lay by facilities specifically for the 'Ring and Ride' services are also proposed around the City Centre to allow good access to shops and other main attractions.
- 4.10 **Cycle Facilities** – Contraflow cycle lanes are being proposed on Cleveland Street, Market Street and Princess Street and cycle parking will be installed at key destinations around the City Centre. A contraflow lane for cyclists has not been provided on Lichfield Street due to concerns for pedestrian safety and the importance of reducing the volume of traffic (motor and non-motor vehicles) to provide a high quality pedestrian priority zone. Further work is being undertaken to explore other options to provide for west – east movement of cyclists through the City Centre and consultation responses on the suggested way forward will influence this process.

## **5.0 CONSULTATION.**

- 5.1 Extensive and detailed consultation will be a vital factor in the success of this project. The consultation period runs until January 24<sup>th</sup> 2013. It includes a leaflet for wide distribution to businesses and organisations within the City as well as to Local Neighbourhood Partnerships, residents and business associations.
- 5.2 An exhibition has been held in the City Centre and there will also be meetings with special interest groups such as taxi drivers and associations, public transport operators as well as Centro, WVOne, business champions and other business and commercial interests. In addition to the leaflet, materials to be produced for the consultation exercise will include mobile displays, a Powerpoint presentation, and details placed on the City Council Web Site. Press briefings and presentations including to Committees and Panels and the Equalities Project Board will form an important component of consultation.
- 5.3 Public transport users will be an important group to consult as the proposals will have an impact on bus access and movements across the City Centre, which is clearly still a live issue for some following the bus service review. Some work has already been undertaken with Centro and the views of National Express have been sought as the main bus operator in the area to better understand the impact on bus services. Survey work has also been undertaken to establish where buses would re-route to and the impact on accessibility into the City Centre, particularly the shopping core.
- 5.4 Consultation with people with disabilities will be a focus of attention and will be undertaken in collaboration with the Equalities Team and Access Officer for the Council. As noted in section 9 below, the scheme has been subject to an Equalities Analysis and this will continue through the planning and construction of the project to ensure that the Council has full regard to the legal Equalities obligations and duties.

## **6.0 OUTLINE IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMME**

- 6.1 The detailed phasing of the works and programme is still under development and would need to be informed by the consultation process and engagement with contractors and statutory undertakers. The full construction works are likely to take approximately 2 years to complete and, subject to the outcome of consultation, it is intended that works would commence in May / June 2013.

## **7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 A budget of £5.000m is included in the Council's Capital Programme for City Centre Transport and Movements Enhancements. This was approved by Cabinet (Resources) Panel 26<sup>th</sup> June 2012 and Council 11<sup>th</sup> July 2012.
- 7.2 The proposals to remove charges for disabled parking on City Council owned and managed car parks is estimated to result in a reduction of income of approximately £0.060M per annum as detailed in paragraphs 4.5 to 4.8 of this report. This position will be monitored and may be subject to a future growth bid to cover the loss of income.  
[ES/23102012/V]

## **8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. However any changes to traffic management and car parking across the City Centre will need to be subject to advertisement under the relevant sections of the Highways and Road Traffic Regulation Acts and in due course will be subject to specific prescribed consultation processes. [FD/23102012/N]

## **9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The Equalities Act 2010 sets out clear principles for the way in which public services should meet the needs of their customers, including disabled people. The design of the public realm is a vital part of this process to provide opportunities for people to move around safely and independently. In accordance with these principles and duty an Equalities Analysis has been undertaken at an early stage to inform the design of the scheme and will be reviewed as the scheme progresses through design, planning and construction in accordance with the agreed Council protocol for Transportation Schemes. The aim is to ensure that all reasonable measures have been taken to understand and accommodate the requirements of people with disabilities fairly and inclusively to ensure that the Council has full regard to the legal Equalities obligations and duties.

## **10.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 The proposed scheme seeks to make significant improvements to the public realm in the City Centre to create a high quality built environment that encourages further investment and regeneration. Its detailed design will also include consideration of local air quality issues.

## **11.0 SCHEDULE OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- Cabinet Report 20 February 2012 – City Centre Regeneration – Delivery Business Plan/City Centre Prospectus
- Cabinet Report 7 December 2011 – Taking Forward the Regeneration of the City Centre – City Centre Prospectus/Strategic Parking Review
- Cabinet Report 15 November 2011 – Taking Forward the Regeneration of the City Centre – City Centre Prospectus/Progress Update
- Cabinet Report 7 September 2011 - Taking Forward the Regeneration of the City Centre
- Cabinet Report 25 May 2011 - Taking Forward the Regeneration of the City Centre
- Cabinet Report 24 October 2012 - Consultation on the draft scheme for City Centre Transportation and Public Realm Improvements.

# Wolverhampton City Centre

A chance to have your say on  
proposals for improving the public realm

**Wolverhampton**  
City Council





# Introduction

In the Summer the City Council launched the city centre prospectus and set out its vision for the city centre which is to:

*“create a vibrant, walkable, attractive, family friendly city centre, full of opportunity and potential. A city centre which is compact enough to be welcoming and accessible but large enough to boast some of the UK’s best retail, leisure and cultural facilities.*

*Wolverhampton will be a University city made for living, working and enjoyment with the best streets, public spaces, combined with excellent public transport. In short a city centre to delight, achieve and thrive”*

To help achieve this vision it’s important to enhance the sense of connection across the city centre by good signposting, high quality public spaces and less conflict with traffic in key areas.



[www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/citycentreprospectus](http://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/citycentreprospectus)

The council wants to hear the views of residents, businesses and other stakeholders on the plans to reduce the impact on traffic in the city centre and for improving the public realm, presented in this leaflet.

To have your say, please consider the plans set out in this leaflet and respond to our short questionnaire on pages 8 and 9.

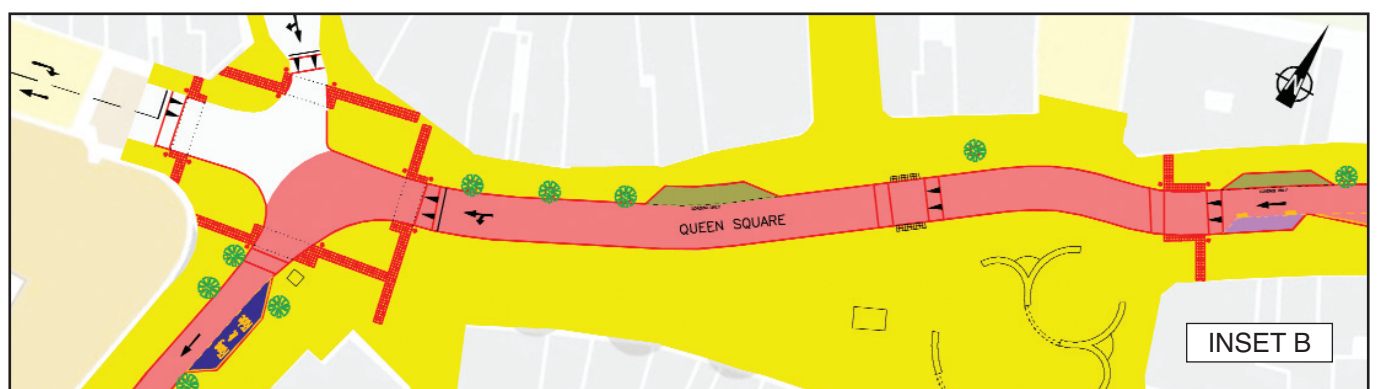
# The proposals

The plan on pages 5 & 6 highlights the proposals which include:

- One way traffic (buses, taxis and cycles only, as existing) on **Lichfield Street/Queen Square** and wider pavements outside the shops along Lichfield Street - see inset B below.



Proposed improvements at Queen Square



- **Exchange Street** to be pedestrianised.
- One way traffic (buses, taxis and cycles, as existing) on **Victoria Street**.
- Wider pavement on **Victoria Street** so creating an informal square with opportunities for new seating.
- Extended taxi signage and new taxi rank on **Victoria Street**.
- New bus stops and bus lanes on **Cleveland Street**.
- Revised entrance and exit routes to and from **Mander Centre car park**.
- Pedestrianise **Bilston Street**, between Market Street and Dudley Street between 9.30 am and 4 pm. Blue Badge parking bays to be relocated to Market Street.
- New pedestrian crossing facilities from the Metro stop across **Garrick Street**.
- In **Market Street**, one-way traffic - see inset C below. Pavement to be widened and new taxi, parking and bus stops to be provided.



Proposed improvements at Victoria Street



Proposed improvements at Market Street



Proposed improvements at Princess Street

- In **Queen Street**, pavement to be widened to provide good pedestrian link to Dudley Street from the Interchange - see inset D below.



- **Princess Street** one-way southbound (between Berry Street and Queen Street) to be a pedestrian zone 9.30am to 4pm. Outside of this time, access for loading.
- **Princess Street** one-way northbound (between Berry Street and Lichfield Street.) Parking and taxi bays will be provided.
- Parking bays on **Berry Street** to be removed.
- **Blue Badge** holders to be allowed to use the City Council owned and managed City Centre car parks free of charge (on dedicated bays only).
- New **pedestrian signage** to be installed.
- New 'contraflow' **cycle lanes** to be installed on Cleveland Street, Market Street and Princess Street.

# Improving the environment

The Council wants to create a city centre that people want to visit, do business in and enjoy life. Improving the environment is key to this and these proposals are the start of that process. To ensure that high quality, well maintained public spaces and thoroughfares are delivered throughout the city centre, the Council will produce a Public Realm Design Guide which will include a set of principles to influence and guide works in the city centre.

Street furniture, lighting, soft landscaping and the materials used for pavements and roads, all contribute to making an attractive destination and a place that is accessible to all. This has been considered in these proposals for improving the public realm.

Street furniture will be high quality and robust. Improved lighting will create a safe and secure environment and will be used to define routes and accentuate landmark buildings. Historic areas will be enhanced with traditional paving materials and details. All of which will be robust and durable and easy to maintain.

Throughout the scheme the planting and green spaces will provide an enhanced experience for the visitor as they provide shade, bring wildlife into the city centre and define routes and enclose spaces.



**Paving outside Molineux Hotel  
Wolverhampton**



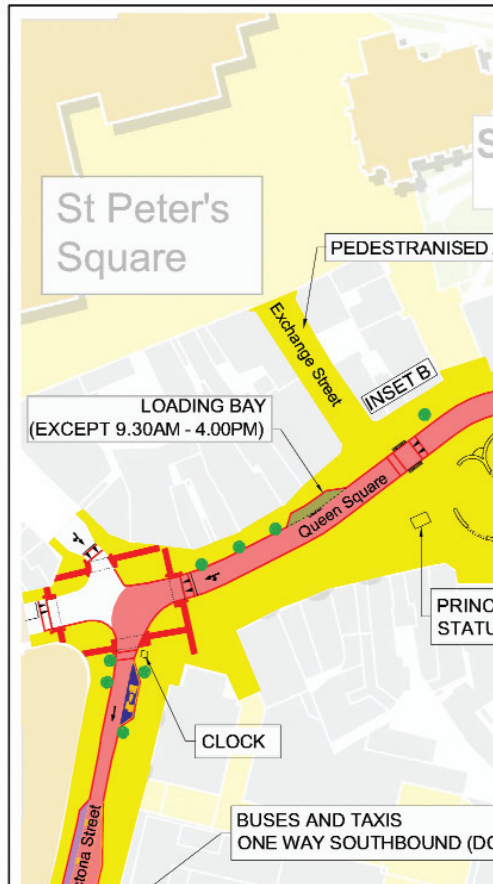
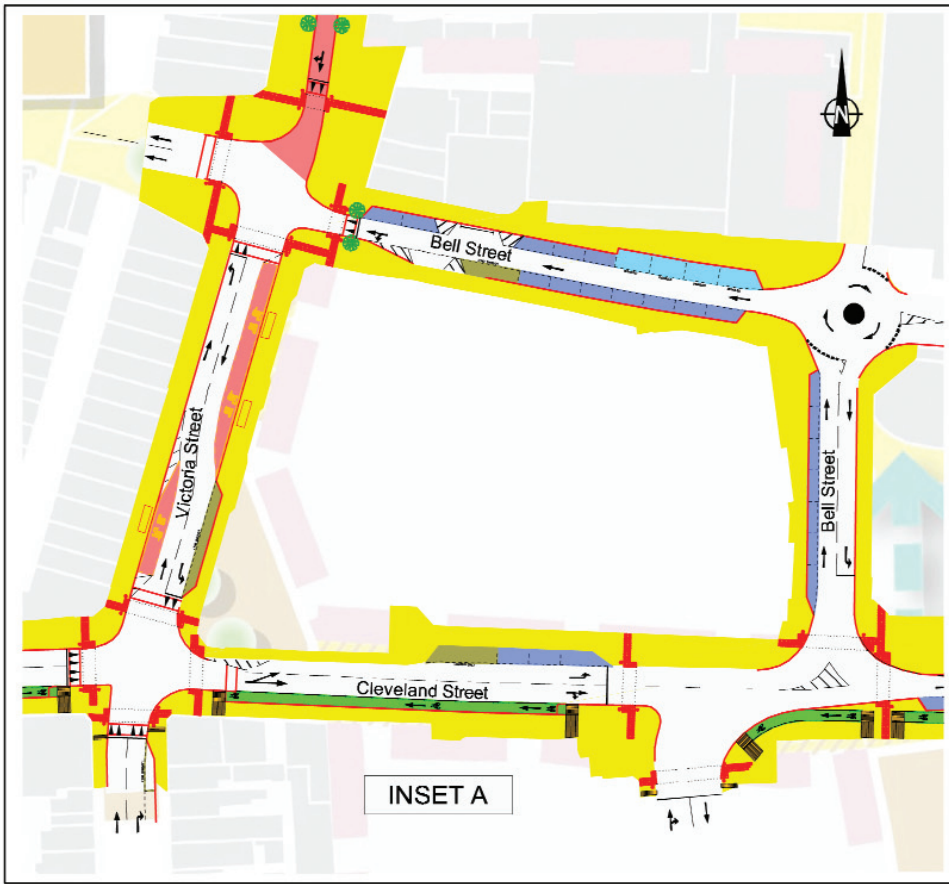
**Lighting and paving outside  
Wolverhampton bus station**



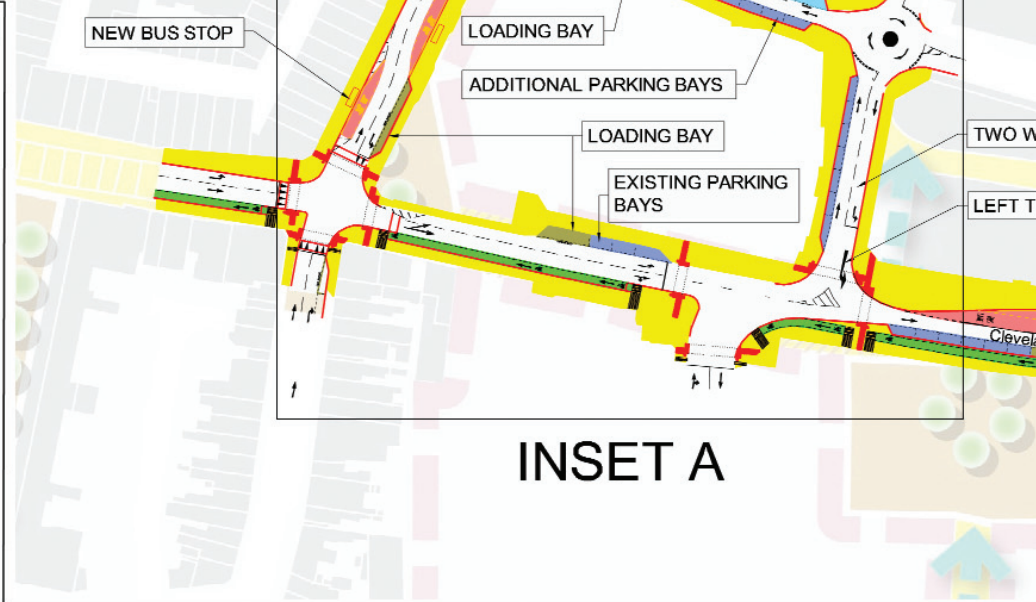
**Illuminated fountain  
Queen Square, Wolverhampton**



**Example of purpose designed seating**



KEY	
	PEDESTRIAN AREAS
	PUBLIC HIGHWAY
	BUS LANES & BUS STOPS
	PEDESTRIAN ZONE / RESTRICTED ACCESS
	CONTRAFLOW CYCLE ROUTE
	PARKING BAYS
	BLUE BADGE PARKING BAYS
	LOADING BAYS
	RING & RIDE STOPS
	TAXI RANKS
	PRINCIPAL WALKING ROUTE
	TREE



# Proposals map



# Your views

Your views on the proposals to improve the public realm in the city centre are important to us. Please complete and return the questionnaire and let us have your comments and ideas **before 25 January 2013**. Please send the questionnaire to the address below:

Transportation Service  
Wolverhampton City Council  
Civic Centre  
St Peter's Square  
Wolverhampton  
WV1 1RP  
Tel 01902 551155

Or email your comments to  
**[transport.strategy@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:transport.strategy@wolverhampton.gov.uk)**

Alternatively you can hand your questionnaire in at the main reception desk at Wolverhampton City Council, Civic Centre, St Peter's Square or at Wolverhampton Art Gallery, Lichfield Street.



Proposed improvements at Queen Square

# Improving the public realm in the city centre

## Questionnaire



1. Do you think that the proposed plans described in this leaflet will improve the public realm in the city centre?

Yes  No  Don't know

If your answer is No, please comment below

2. Do you support the principle of improving the environment for pedestrians by reducing the levels of traffic in some key streets?

Yes  No  Don't know

If your answer is No, please comment below

3. Do you support the plans to introduce wider pavements?

Yes  No  Don't know

4. As a pedestrian what would improve your walking experience within the city centre?  
Please tick your top **three** priorities

- Less conflict with vehicles
- Wider pavements
- Improved and increased seating areas
- New public spaces and squares
- Improved signage





5. The proposals include creating some new one way traffic movement. Please indicate if you are happy with the proposals.

Yes  No  Don't know

If your answer is No, please comment below



6. Do you support the relocation of some disabled parking bays from on-street locations to existing car parks?

Yes  No  Don't know

If your answer is No, please explain your reasons for this below

7. Please let us know if you have any further comments on the proposals shown on the plan.

8. Do you live in Wolverhampton?

Yes  No

Please let us know your postcode

Please return this questionnaire to: Transportation Service, Wolverhampton City Council, Civic Centre, St Peter's Square, Wolverhampton, WV1 1RP.

Or hand it in at the reception desk at Wolverhampton City Council, Civic Centre, St Peter's Square or at Wolverhampton Art Gallery, Lichfield Street.

**Or email your comments to [transport.strategy@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:transport.strategy@wolverhampton.gov.uk)**

**Before 25 January 2013**



**Thank you for your time in completing the questionnaire.**

Remember to return it before **25 January 2013** to:

Transportation Service, Wolverhampton City Council, Civic Centre, St Peter's Square, Wolverhampton, WV1 1RP.

**Or** hand it in at the reception desk at Wolverhampton City Council, Civic Centre, St Peter's Square or at Wolverhampton Art Gallery, Lichfield Street.

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