



STANDISH VILLAGE MASTERPLAN

Revised July 2017

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locality
Communities ambitious for change

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Project Role	Name	Position	Actions Summary	Signature	Date
Researcher	Chris Cox	Graduate Landscape Architect			06.01.17
Project Manager/ Technical Specialist	Tom Jonson	Associate Landscape Architect			06.01.17
Director / QA	Simon Dowse	Technical Director			06.01.17
Qualifying Body	Standish Neighbourhood Forum	Member		Paul Ogden	06.01.17
Project Coordinator	Ben Castell	Technical Director		BC	06.01.17





INTRODUCTION

Through the Department of Communities and Local Government Neighbourhood Planning Programme AECOM has been commissioned to assist the Standish Neighbourhood Forum to undertake an analysis of the Standish Village Centre in order to prepare a masterplan of the village centre, assess the relationship of different land uses within the village as well as identifying improvements that would enhance the environment for people living and working in the area.

Standish is a large village in Greater Manchester which is centred around the crossroads where the High Street (A49), Market Street (B5239), School Lane (A5209) and Preston Road all converge. The A49 Road connects the much larger town of Wigan, which has a population of 97,000, with the M6 motorway at junction 27, to the North West. As a result the High Street and the streets which come together in the centre of Standish often cope with high volumes of vehicular traffic at certain times of the day.

The resident population of Standish is just over 15,000 and home ownership is high at over 80%. Furthermore 70% of the population are economically active and approximately 50% of the population own a motor vehicle.

The historic core of the village which is now a conservation area was originally based around Sir Wilfrid's Church as well as around Market Street and Market Place.

Market Place also contains a number of historic features including the stocks, the well and ancient cross. The latter is a scheduled ancient monument. Market Place and the village centre are dominated by St Wilfrids, a 16th century church which is a grade 1 listed building.

SITE ANALYSIS

An urban design site analysis exercise was undertaken for the main village centre. This included High Street area of the village from the main crossroads Southwards to where Church Street joins the High Street. Northwards it included Preston Road ending at the junction with James Square. Eastwards it included Market Street, Church Street and Cross Street and Westwards took in School Lane ending at the junction with Green Lane. The site analysis work assessed the following aspects of the village centre;

- Vehicular routes and nodes (those locations where routes come together)
- Pedestrian routes and nodes
- Land and building uses
- Potential gateways
- Vistas, views and landmarks
- Barriers to pedestrian movement



STANDISH MARKET PLACE

URBAN ANALYSIS

BUILDING USES:

- RETAIL
- RESIDENTIAL
- COMMERCIAL / SERVICES
- FOOD & DRINK
- GREEN SPACE
- DERELICT
- EDUCATION / RELIGION
- PARKING

- MAJOR VEHICULAR ROUTES
- MINOR VEHICULAR ROUTES
- KEY PEDESTRIAN ROUTES
- MAJOR VEHICULAR NODES
- MINOR VEHICULAR NODES
- PEDESTRIAN NODES
- POTENTIAL GATEWAY
- MAJOR BARRIERS / EDGES
- MINOR BARRIERS / EDGES
- KEY VISTAS / VIEWS
- BUS STOPS
- KEY CIVIC SPACES
- KEY BUILDINGS



OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

Opportunities and constraints of the village centre were also assessed in the analysis. These were as follows;

Constraints

- Lack of green space and street trees within the village centre, particularly along the High Street
- Poor quality of existing public realm within the village centre
- A number of unattractive buildings present around the village centre
- High volume of vehicular traffic along the High Street acts as a barrier to pedestrian movement and detracts from the public realm
- Poor connectivity between different parts of the village centre
- Lack of car parking within the village centre generally
- Barriers to pedestrian movement

Opportunities

- Some important historic buildings and monuments including St Wilfrid's Church
- Some independent retailers particularly along the High Street
- A number of potential development sites exist within the village centre
- Opportunities exist to improve facilities for walking and cycling
- A number of attractive buildings are present in the village centre
- Good access to areas of existing public open space



LACK OF PEDESTRIAN CROSSING POINTS



DERELICT, NEGLECTED PARCELS OF LAND AND BUILDINGS



GOOD ACCESS TO EXISTING OPEN GREEN SPACE



INDEPENDANT RETAIL WITH ATTRACTIVE FRONTAGES

MOVEMENT

Standish main centre is located around a crossroads where four busy roads converge. High Street (A49) is particularly busy at rush hour since it connects the town of Wigan with the nearby M6 motorway. High volumes of vehicular traffic during peak hours restrict pedestrian movement at the crossroads and as a result four controlled crossing points are required to facilitate pedestrian movement at this junction.

Furthermore pedestrian barriers are located at the edges of the footways on all four approaches to the crossroads. As a result pedestrian movement is further restricted at this location. These barriers also create a cluttered environment and create a negative visual impact on the village centre. Queuing traffic on all approaches to the cross roads also impede pedestrian movement and impact on the pedestrian environment during peak hours.

Pedestrian activity and movement is focused along the High Street and Preston Road where there are the greatest concentration of shops and services. Nevertheless Market Street, and Cross Street are also busy pedestrian routes, as are Pole Street and the Eastern end of School Lane adjacent to the Aldi Supermarket.

The A49 and A5206/B5239 routes through the main village are also identified as part of the Strategic Route Network in the Unitary Development plan.



HIGH VOLUMES OF TRAFFIC IMPEDING PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT AT POLE STREET



VEHICLE MOVEMENT ALONG THE HIGH STREET AND PRESTON ROAD



A NUMBER OF SNICKETS AID PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIVITY

LEGIBILITY AND SENSE OF PLACE

Standish developed as an early linear settlement that followed the transport route between Wigan and Preston and retained a very compact form until the 20th century where ribbon development and sub-urban housing engulfed the historic village centre. Its origins can be traced to the early 13th century and the form of the old village is contained within the triangular form created by Church Street, Market Street and the High Street. The old village centre and conservation area has remained at the heart of the village despite later development, and the basic street pattern of the centre that was established by the early 18th century remains largely intact.

It is likely that Church Street was the original route through the village and as a result St Wilfrid's Church and the former Market Place which lie adjacent to it, would once have been much more strategically located within the village centre. Standish was transformed from a rural village to mining settlement during the 19th century and many of the original cottages were replaced with red brick Victorian buildings during the industrial revolution. Many of these Victorian buildings remain today and help to create the character of the area. As a result there is a strong local building vernacular in the village that helps to create a distinct local identity and strong sense of place as well as providing a strong historic character.

The majority of the historic buildings lie within the conservation area boundary as identified on the adjacent Conservation Area diagram.

Nevertheless whilst there is strong uniformity amongst buildings located within the historic core, suburbanisation and new housing estate development mainly concentrated to the East and North of the village centre weaken this sense of identity.

Whilst there are a number of key entry points into the village centre there are few gateway features. One noticeable exception is Standish War Memorial which is located at the junction of the High Street and Church Street.



STRONG HISTORIC CHARACTER CREATED BY ST WILFRID'S CHURCH



THE PUBLIC REALM AND HISTORIC WELL



ST WILFRIDS CHURCH AND GATEWAY







LAND USE

The centre of Standish includes residential, social and commercial uses as well as areas of public open space, and as a result allows the village to act as a main service centre for the district.

RESIDENTIAL

The majority of buildings within the main centre are residential buildings. A large number of these are Victorian red brick terraces which line the narrow streets that are orientated approximately North – South. The density of this housing is often high with properties having small or no gardens to the front and small gardens or out buildings to the rear. The majority of these house types are also located within the conservation area along streets such as Heaton Street and Church Street. New estate developments which lie to the East and North of the village centre consist mainly of post war semi-detached red brick buildings which are less dense than the Victorian housing. These properties generally have larger gardens or on-plot parking. The majority of this new estate semi-detached housing is integrated into the historic street pattern where it abuts the traditional village core.

COMMERCIAL

The village centre contains a wide variety of commercial and retail uses ranging from large well know companies such as Aldi, Lidl and the CO-OP which operate small supermarkets within the village to smaller independent retailers such as Bumbles Gift shop on Preston Road. It is a healthy and busy centre with low vacancy levels and contains a number of independent shops and businesses. The majority of existing retail is located along the High Street, Preston Road and Market Street. Whilst food and drink uses are scattered around the main village core and within the conservation area, there is a small concentration of food and drink uses located along the West side of the High Street approaching the crossroads. Other commercial uses such as estate agents, hairdressers etc. are located predominantly along the High Street.

The quality of the village centre’s commercial and retail uses varies in terms of the contribution they make to the overall appearance of the village. This can range from providing a positive, neutral or negative contribution. The adjacent Frontage Quality diagram identifies the contribution provided by these buildings.

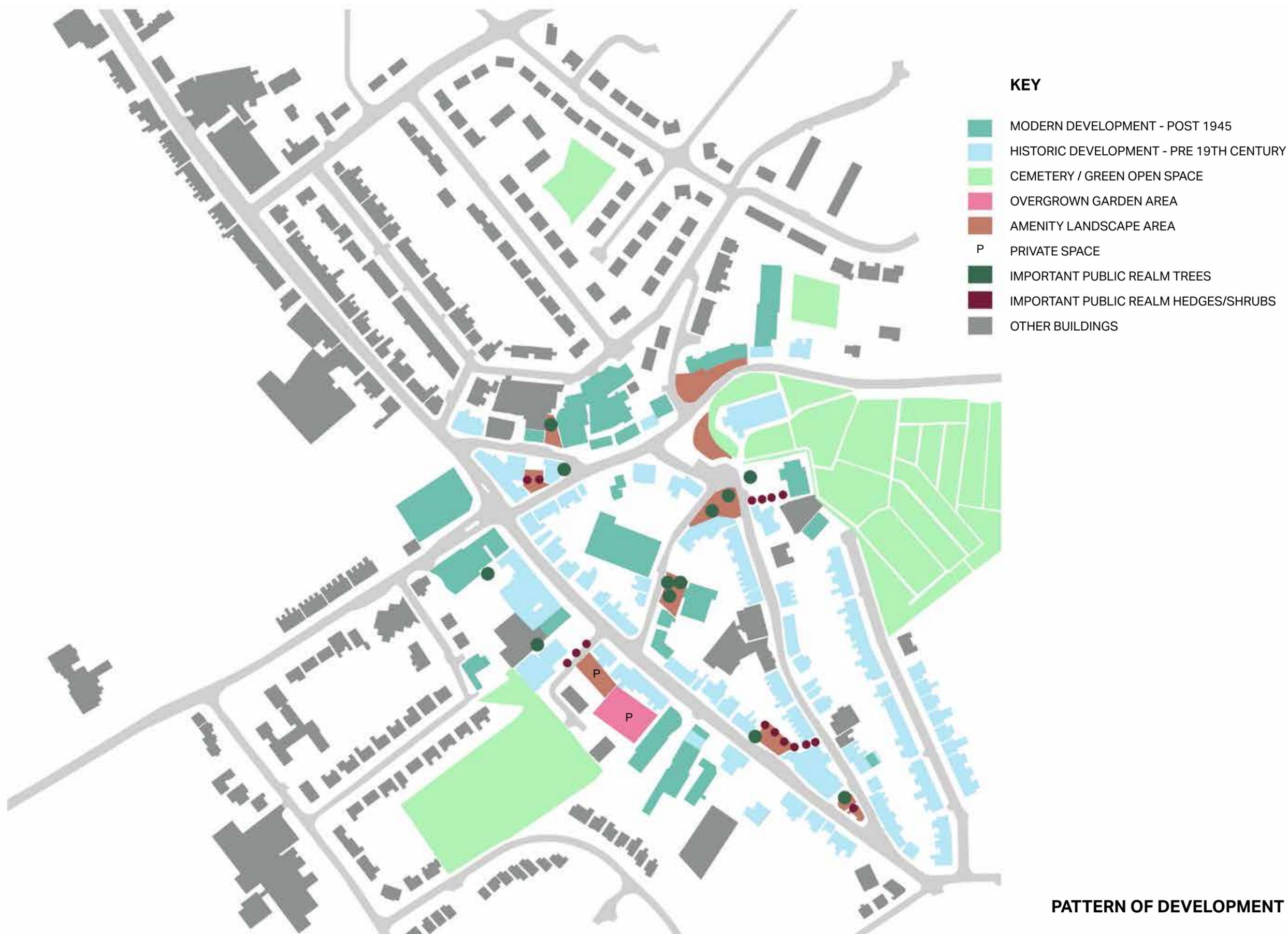
Whilst it is acknowledged that some stores such as Lidl are trading above expected levels, some stores such as the existing CO-OP store are underperforming. Competition from other retail destinations in Wigan or out of town supermarkets mean that there is not any immediate capacity for substantial new retail floor space in Standish. Nevertheless as a result of new housing that has been planned for the village, Standish will strengthen its role as a local centre and this will necessitate the requirement for further services and the provision of a more diverse retail offer.



EXAMPLE OF INDEPENDANT RETAIL



POOR QUALITY FRONTAGES AT THE STANDISH CENTRE



PUBLIC REALM

The old Market Place which lies at the heart of the conservation area is one of the main areas of public space within the main centre. The area contains a historic well, cross and stocks within an existing paved area in stone setts and slabs. The majority of the space however is asphalt paving which is used either for parking or forms part of the highway. Despite its prominent location fronting the grade 1 listed St Wilfrid's Church the space is currently not being utilised to its full potential. Furthermore the site of demolished cottages at the corner of Church Street and Cross Street which is now grassed has also the potential to greatly enhance this location.

Due to the high volume of vehicle traffic along the A49 the retail experience along the High Street is often dominated by the traffic and the noise associated with it. The public realm along the High Street is of poor quality and whilst there are generous pavement widths in certain locations the retail experience could be greatly enhanced. Pedestrian guard rails, along the High Street also create visual clutter which detracts from the street scene. Tall lights columns, prominent road signage and some unattractive shop frontages also detract from the quality of the public realm. Furthermore Jubilee Gardens and the landscaped area adjacent to the Globe Inn provide the only green elements along the High Street. Other areas of public open space that require enhancement include the old railway line which is in places over grown with trees and shrubs, and the recreation ground which lies to the South of the Methodist Church. The recreation ground acts as an informal football ground however this is underused and greatly in need of enhancement. There is potential to greatly enhance existing public open space and public realm space within the centre as well as create new civic space and provide improved routes between these spaces in order to create a series of well-connected recreational and civic spaces.



THE OLD MARKET PLACE - DETRACTED BY POOR QUALITY SURFACING



EXAMPLE PUBLIC REALM - GARDENS ADJACENT TO THE GLOBE PUB



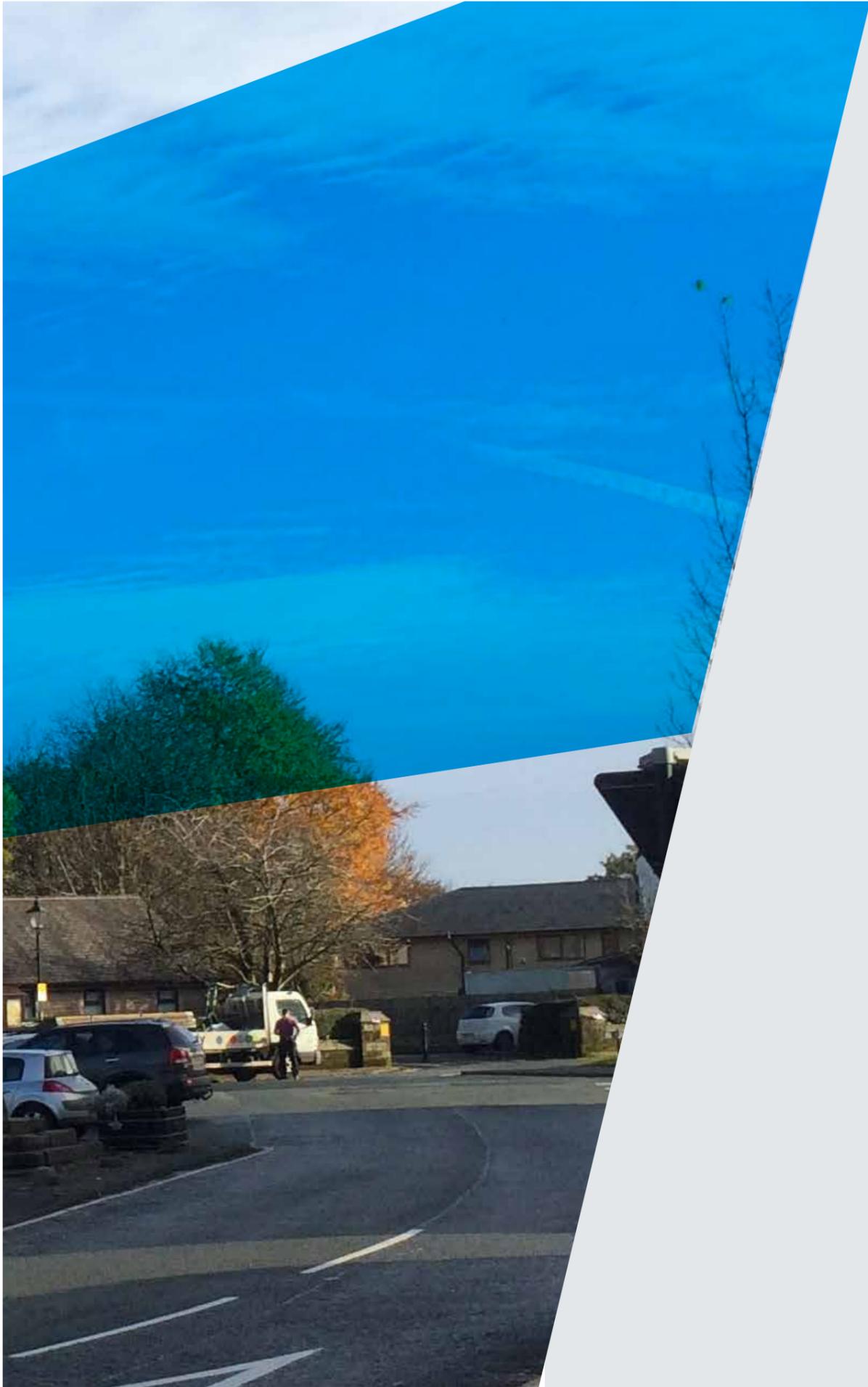
UNDERUSED RECREATION GROUND



DISTINCTIVE LOCAL CHARACTER - HISTORIC CROSS AND WELL HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO CREATE A HIGH QUALITY PUBLIC REALM



STANDISH MASTERPLAN



MASTERPLAN AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The masterplan proposals seek to enhance the main village centre in order to create a vibrant local shopping centre for the wider district. The proposals aim to maximise the historic assets of the village centre and greatly improve the pedestrian experience for local people as well as visitors to Standish. Key aims and objectives include;

- Re-establishing links between the historic core of the Market Place and St Wilfrid's Church with the High Street
- Creating new civic space within the village centre as well as enhancing the existing public realm
- Creating development opportunities on sites that currently contain incompatible uses or uses that are currently performing poorly
- Greatly enhancing the visitor experience within the main village centre.
- Conserving and enhancing the historic character of the area by improving the setting of historic buildings and monuments.
- Resolving conflict between vehicles and non-vehicle users.
- Enhancing the sense of arrival when entering the main village centre.



ST WILFRIDS CHURCH - KEY LANDMARK

CONCEPT DIAGRAM



KEY

IMPROVED CONNECTIVITY / LINKAGES



KEY CIVIC SPACES



VILLAGE CORE / CENTRE



DEVELOPED CONCEPT DIAGRAM



KEY

PUBLIC REALM / STREET
SCENE IMPROVEMENTS



NEW CIVIC SPACE



NEW SHARED SURFACE



NEW GATEWAY FEATURE



VILLAGE CORE



OTHER ROUTE IMPROVEMENTS



OPPORTUNITIES FOR
REDEVELOPMENT



CAR PARK IMPROVEMENTS



PUBLIC OPEN SPACE
IMPROVEMENTS



GATEWAY SIGNAGE

Gateway signage would help create a better sense of arrival by marking key entrances into Standish. There is currently no signage to visually and physically mark arrival and departure from Standish centre. Proposed signage could incorporate iconic imagery of Standish and help reinforce the identity of the area. As identified these gateway signs could be located at key routes into Standish centre and each sign unique to marking the street name such as 'Market Street' and 'High Street', this would also aid legibility and wayfinding around the area.

There are stone markers that currently identify the borders of Standish, and the new gateway signage would be placed to identify the arrival at the village centre rather than the village itself.

The proposals seek to use laser etched imagery / silhouettes in weathering steel to provide a robust and contemporary style that is still in keeping with the local character of the area.



EXAMPLE OF PROPOSED GATEWAY FEATURE - EXACT LOCATION TO BE CONFIRMED

MASTERPLAN PROPOSALS

POLE STREET

The proposals seek to greatly enhance the physical environment around Pole Street. The public realm fronting the CO-OP building is currently an unattractive poor quality public environment that is dominated by car parking. Pole Street nevertheless is well placed to provide a good strategic link between the historic core around St Wilfrid's Church and the High Street area of the village. The proposals include raising the quality of the public realm, improving the retail offer, creating new civic space and improving links to other parts of the village centre. Key proposals at this location include;

- Creating a new one way shared surface for both pedestrians and vehicular use
- Creating a new civic square immediately adjacent to the new shared surface and supermarket
- Providing new short stay echelon parking spaces off Pole Street that can be easily accessed
- Introducing new public realm including footpath surfaces and street furniture
- Introducing street trees to create a more human scale environment
- Creating new retail opportunities to the South side of Pole Street
- Improving pedestrian routes between Smalley Street and Pole Street in order to link residential areas to the village centre.



EXISTING CO-OP FOOD OUTLET



RUN DOWN LABOUR CLUB



UNATTRACTIVE CLUTTERED CAR PARK



POOR PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIVITY TO VILLAGE CENTRE

POLE STREET AND MARKET STREET PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS



- 1 Downgrade carriageway and improve pedestrian experience with better materials and design
- 2 Define a public space through the use of materials which ties together the buildings, traffic movement would not be altered, but materials would be used to uplift the and describe the space
- 3 Remove street clutter and create space to open up corner of the Co-op store to make better visual connections from Pole Street and then on to the junction with Market Street. A simple space designed to help the street 'read' better, there is no intention to encourage public use or seating
- 4 Parking area upgraded, change of materials to reduce the impact of hard standing and the introduction of trees to soften the space. Pedestrians allowed to walk through the space as informal cut through to shops
- 5 Improved pedestrian environment, wider pavements, upgraded materials tied into a design for the whole area and opportunities to have seating
- 6 Change in material on the carriageway to signify entering a special area in the town centre
- 7 Incorporate elements such as street trees which are appropriate to the townscape and link the streets and space together
- 8 Consciously link the public realm improvements to potential upgraded Market Place

THE MARKET PLACE

The proposals seek to enhance the setting of St Wilfrid's Church and those other elements within the historic Market Place such as the well and cross. They also seek to re-establish this location as one of the village's key civic spaces as well as creating a new Market Place area that can be used for a variety of civic uses. Key proposals at this location include;

- Replacing the existing tarmac surface with new natural stone sett paving which is in keeping with the conservation area
- Introducing street trees and street furniture at the market place along Market Street and also within the Market Place
- Introduction of a new 10mph speed limit for vehicles passing through the Market Place
- Introduction of improvements to the landscaped area at the corner of Cross Street and Church Street
- Replacing existing asphalt and concrete paving along Market Street with high quality natural stone paving
- Introducing further on street parking for visitors to the village centre and particularly the Market Place
- Introducing new way finding and signage to assist connectivity with the High Street area
- Introducing new gateway features at the Eastern end of Market Street.



EXISTING TARMAC SURFACING FRONTING THE HISTORIC SQUARE



FRONTAGES DETRACT FROM ICONIC ARCHITECTURE



UNDERWHELMING SENSE OF ARRIVAL AT THE GATEWAY



FRONTAGES COMPLEMENTING THE HISTORIC CHARACTER OF THE AREA



EXISTING VIEW OF MARKETPLACE



VISUALISATION SHOWING THE PROPOSED PAVING UPLIFT AROUND THE MARKETPLACE

THE CROSS STREET AREA

The proposals seek to enhance the prominence of Cross Street as a key route in the village centre thus providing a strategic link between the Market Place and the High Street. They also seek to greatly enhance the physical environment along Cross Street. The proposals also seek to improve the setting for the library giving this civic building more prominence in the village as well as upgrading all footpaths with natural stone paving which is more in keeping with the conservation area status of the village. Key proposals at this location include:

- Creating a new civic space in front of the existing library building. This will allow groups to congregate prior to entering or leaving the library as well as providing outdoor recreation space.
- Providing a step change in the quality of the public realm including replacing existing concrete and asphalt paving with natural stone.
- Providing improved on-street parking bays as well as upgrading existing on-street parking.
- Introducing new way finding and signage to assist connectivity with the Market Place and High Street.



STANDISH LIBRARY



EXISTING UNITY CLUB



POOR QUALITY ON STREET PARKING



NO WAYFINDING OR SIGNAGE TO THE MARKETPLACE

HIGH STREET, PRESTON ROAD AND SCHOOL LANE

The proposals at this location seek to enhance the central retail area focussing mainly on the High Street areas, but also involving parts of Preston Road and School Lane. The objectives of the proposals are to enhance the retail experience and reduce the dominance of the motor vehicle on the High Street, Preston Road and School Lane. They also seek to create a more civilised street scene in the centre, create a more human scale and friendly pedestrian environment and enhance the historic identity of the village centre.

The proposals seek to create a vibrant unique retail destination that is able to draw people from the local district and beyond. This will involve capitalising on the historic character of the village centre and encouraging more independent retailers to the village. Key interventions at this location include;

- Enhancing shop frontages to create a consistent and a strong identity for the High Street
- Removing pedestrian guards and unnecessary street signage to declutter the street scene.
- Introducing bespoke street furniture at key locations on the High Street
- Introducing street trees and greening an otherwise very urban environment and to provide some visual segregation between pedestrians and vehicles.
- Introducing a step change in the quality of the public realm by replacing existing concrete and asphalt paving with natural stone.
- Introducing new way finding and signage to assist connectivity with the Market Place.
- Introducing new gateway features at the Southern end of the High Street, on Preston Road and the Eastern end of School Lane.
- Improving the existing car park on School Lane to provide short stay parking for the village centre.
- Improving links and pedestrian foot paths from the High Street to residential areas and areas of public open space.
- Improve the existing car park on School Lane



EXISTING VIEW OF HIGH STREET



VISUALISATION INDICATING PAVING UPLIFT AND ADDITION OF STREET TREES TO HIGH STREET PUBLIC REALM.

-  SELF BINDING GRAVEL PATH
-  CLOSE MOWN GRASS PATH
-  CLOSE MOWN GRASS
-  PLANTING BEDS
-  PERMEABLE PAVING CAR PARK

- 1 - ORCHARDS
- 2 - COMMUNITY GARDEN
- 3 - BEE & BUTTERFLY GARDEN
- 4 - FRUIT GARDEN
- 5 - SCULPTURE GARDEN
- 6 - SENSORY GARDEN
- 7 - VEGETABLE GARDEN
- 8 - RAIN GARDEN



SQUIRES HEY GARDENS - SCHEMATIC MASTERPLAN

THE RECREATION GROUND

The proposals seek to enhance the existing underused recreation ground in Standish and modify it to achieve a collection of varied and high quality gardens and open spaces available to the public, and renamed as 'Squires Hey Gardens'. The proposals seek to maximise biodiversity as well as local food production. The objective is to enhance the green open recreation space opportunities available to Standish residents by introducing a selection of varied garden settings and themes including a community garden, fruit and vegetable gardens, as well as wildlife and rain gardens. The proposal also seeks to provide accessible parking along with formal and informal paths through the gardens. Key proposals at this location include;

- Improving the quality and variation of local greenspace within Standish.
- Encouraging community based activities by providing a Community Garden, Vegetable and Fruit Gardens and Orchards.
- Improving the local environment for wildlife with a Bee & Butterfly garden along with naturally occurring wildlife opportunities throughout the rest of the park.
- Introducing a Sensory Garden to improve the experience for all garden users.
- Introductions of rain gardens and permeable paving to help deal with surface water run-off and drainage within Standish.
- Improving parking within Standish by including a car park paved with permeable paving as part of a sustainable urban drainage scheme.
- Providing both formal and informal paths improving accessibility within the space.

SUMMARY OF KEY MASTERPLAN PROPOSALS

- Creation of new shared pedestrian/vehicular space, new civic space and parking on Pole Street
- Creation of a new Market Place with new shared pedestrian / vehicular surface to enhance the setting of St Wilfrid's Church
- Enhancing the retail experience along the High Street, School Lane and Preston Road
- Improving connectivity and the physical environment within the village centre
- Improving parking facilities and creation of a new urban park within the village centre



EXISTING SIGNAGE TO THE RECREATION GROUND FROM HIGH STREET



EXISTING VIEW OF PATH CONNECTING TO THE HIGH STREET



EXISTING VIEW OF THE RECREATION GROUND





RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

This report includes a number of ideas to improve the Standish Village Centre generally and more specifically the village core which is focussed around the High Street, Market Street, Pole Street and Cross Street and the old Market Place. The proposals aim to make this central core more attractive for local people and visitors using the village centre. The focus has generally been on design interventions to improve the physical environment and create development opportunities on those sites that are currently underused, underperforming or detract from the historic village centre environment. These should be considered alongside other non-design interventions, such as exploring opportunities for supporting or restricting certain types of uses through use classes.

The Standish Neighbourhood Forum would need to work closely with other organisations to see plans developed further and realised. Key here will be the local authority but also the local businesses and organisations where changes are proposed to existing business premises.

Other things to consider include;

- A shopfront improvement scheme could be linked to a shopfront design guide or policy within the Plan. Usually this means the local authority provides a small grant which is then match funded by the individual business. This would probably need to be managed by the Neighbourhood Forum to ensure buy-in from enough retailers to enable a positive and inclusive approach.
- Public realm improvements could be incorporated within Standish Village Centre although there may be a reliance on local authority funding to implement them. Other funding sources that could be explored include the Heritage Lottery Fund's Townscape Heritage Initiative, which is a grant giving provisions for the repair and regeneration of the historic built environment within towns and cities.
- Another further way to see public realm improvement opportunities implemented would be to seek to link them directly to development proposals. The principle of securing contributions or obligations from developers is to make acceptable developments which would otherwise be unacceptable, by offsetting the impact making location improvements. In this case, it could be to fund or assist in funding off-site works and infrastructure of benefit to the whole community. These contributions are known as Section 106 agreements. More information on this could come from discussions with the local authority.
- Private development including residential proposals on the site of the Standish Unity Club has the potential to help fund social and retail developments as part of the wider scheme.
- In terms of further work, it is recommended that a more detailed feasibility study and masterplan and implementation strategy focusing on the village centre is undertaken.

- It is also recommended that a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening assessment is undertaken to support the Neighbourhood Plan. This assessment is made to determine whether the plan is likely to have significant environmental effects.

The next stage would also involve a more detailed feasibility study and masterplan and implementation strategy focussing on the village centre.



Office information
AECOM
4th Floor, Bridgewater House
Whitworth Street
Manchester M1 6LT, United Kingdom
T +44-161-907-3500

www.aecom.com

AECOM

