

THE WAVERTREE WAY

TIME TO RELOVE OUR HIGH STREET



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INTRODUCTION – The Heart of a Vibrant Community

Wavertree is a suburb of Liverpool and has been part of the city since 1895. Before that it was its own township with a town hall and local board – to some people it is still known as ‘the Village’. The centre of the suburb is the historic road Wavertree High Street which has been a major arterial route into Liverpool for hundreds of years.

As a place of considerable historic significance Wavertree High Street is a Conservation Area and has a number of prestigious listed buildings including the former Town Hall the landmark Picton Clock, iconic Wavertree Lock-Up and a rare Georgian bow-windowed shopfront. We have strong local participation such as the community-tended Rose Garden, the long-standing Wavertree Society and the energetic Love Wavertree organisations.

The historic evidence of the street shows that for centuries it has been the heart of a vibrant community combining retail trades, services and crafts, housing and leisure - a traditional High Street. However over the past twenty years there has been a significant decline and shift in the quality, fabric and character of the High Street. There has been an increase in anti-social carparking which not only endangers vulnerable road users but also cracks and damages paving flags, there has been an increase in pollution and the slow decline of footfall. The elements that made the street a High Street a living space have become secondary to the road as merely a vehicle path from Liverpool to the suburbs.

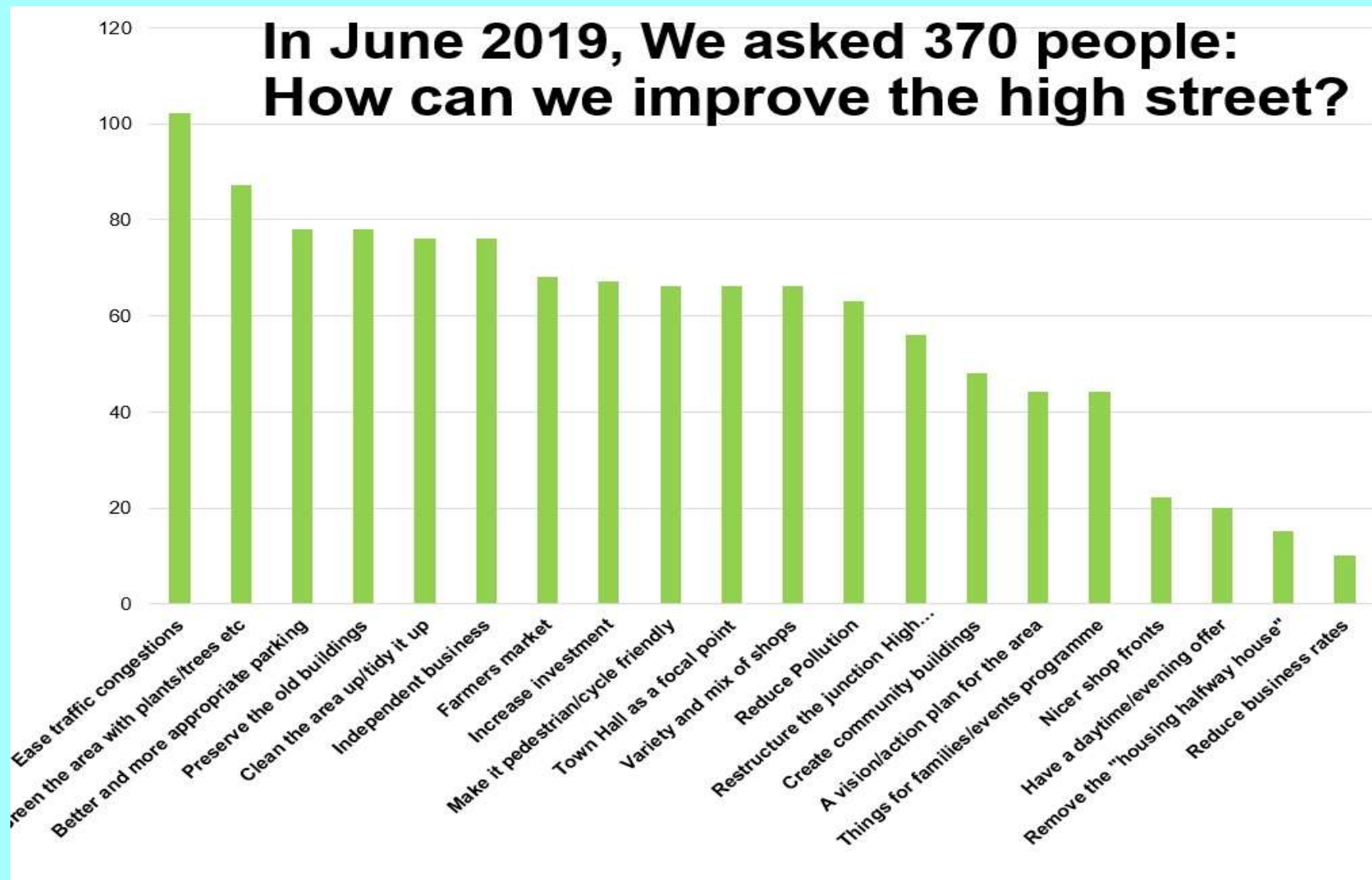
We feel that the time is right for the High Street to be reclaimed by those who live in its vicinity, by the people of Wavertree. We feel that our High Street should become a street for all, a place that feels safer, more welcoming, inclusive and sustainable.

We feel that key to those changes will be rediscovering the uses the street has had to accommodate to create a more equitable space for all, one that can address our current needs but also accommodate the needs of the future including things to help address our global climate crisis.

We will create opportunities for new uses such as pavement-cafes and informal public spaces, encourage new planting and greenery, make the space safer for walkers, cyclists and scooterers, we feel that through these changes we can make the street the heart of the community again.

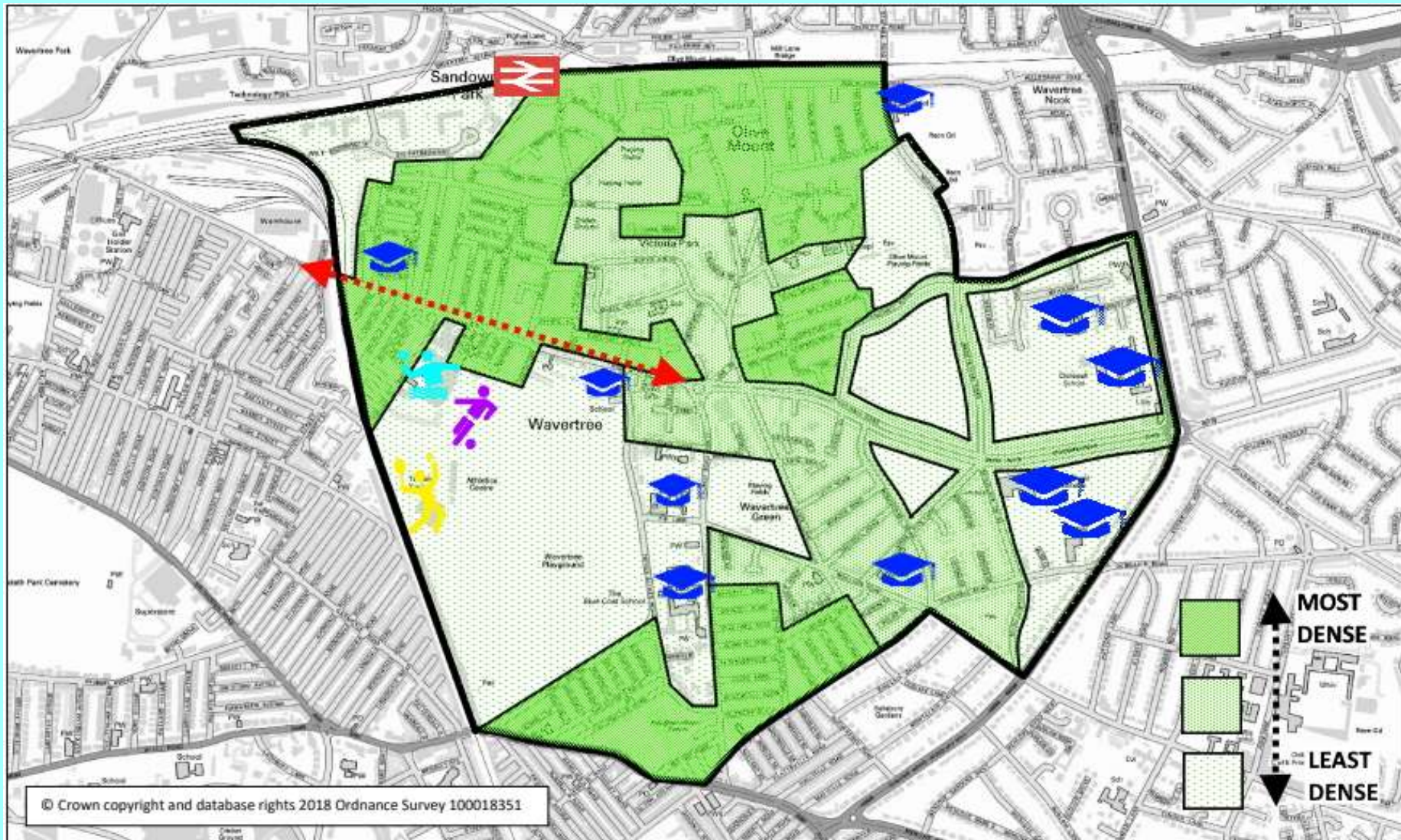
- **The Wavertree Society, 2021**





1 =- From Love Wavertree Questionnaire 2020

Wavertree Council Ward Map SHOWING HOUSING DENSITY, SCHOOLS, RAIL AND MAJOR SPORTS FACILITIES




GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Wavertree High Street must be a place for people to live, work and shop.
 - Wavertree High Street must work for every type of person including current and potential future users.
 - Wavertree High Street must accommodate public transport users.
 - No people, or groups of people should be privileged at the expense of others.
 - However we recognise that some people are more vulnerable and some people more able – we must respect that.
-
- Wavertree High Street needs to become diverse and inclusive in what it offers.
 - We must encourage new uses, including utilising public spaces to help facilitate businesses (tourist visits, pavement cafes etc..).
 - We must encourage 'linger' time through proper parking, more attractive environment and add things to encourage people to stop, shop and enjoy their time in Wavertree.
 - We must campaign for business amenities and other public services to help our street prosper and grow.
-
- Wavertree High Street is rich in built and natural assets – we must use them for the benefit and enjoyment of all.
 - We must find ways to ensure historic assets are responsibly adapted, reused and maintained.
 - We must ensure our natural assets such as parks, gardens and greenspaces are safe, enjoyable and well utilised.
 - We must encourage new greenery, planting and softer landscape features where we can.

All proposals are based on already implemented schemes elsewhere, we are not doing anything new – just taking the best from other places!

Street Design Standards – Current and Withdrawn



**Street Design Standards
Current and Withdrawn Practice**



**Briefing Sheet
2020**

This summary compares current best practice street design guidance including Manual for Streets (Department for Transport 2007), with withdrawn old-era street design guidance and standards, first developed from the 1930s including Design and Layout of Roads in Built-up Areas (1940), Roads in Urban Areas (1966) and the Initial Design Bulletin 33 Residential Roads and Footpaths, Layout Considerations published in 1977. Local authority street design and adoption standards based on the old guidance will not comply with current planning policies or statutory duties, and should not be used.

Today there are different and very serious challenges to address, such as obesity, air pollution, climate-change, and the promotion of equal opportunities. Updated planning policies, climate change targets, and new statutory duties make the use of these old standards unlawful. Statutory duties are to be balanced, one against the other. The network management duty, for example, is not a superior duty. Balanced decisions are necessary, and in Scotland, government policy (Designing Streets) specifically requires balanced decision-making.


Give greater weight to guidance that is science and evidence based, up-to-date, and has taken relevant matters properly into account, including current statutory duties, and national policies. Manual for Streets is evidence based – see TRL Report 661.

Withdrawn X

Objectives: priority for vehicles rather than people


The withdrawn guidance prioritises vehicle movement and vehicles of the largest size including bin lorries and removal lorries. They gave comprehensive information on vehicle dimensions, deceleration rates, and reaction times, but no equivalent information on children, elderly people, disabled people, or cyclists or their abilities and make they run.

Layout – Distributor roads and environmental areas – rather than walkable, compact towns



intended to keep traffic out of residential areas, the withdrawn guidance creates areas of housing ringed and isolated by main roads. These are car-based suburbs, rather than development in the style of traditional towns. indirect main roads increase travel distances and land-bike. The lack of direct routes hinders walking and cycling.

Distributor roads – rather than traditional streets



These are roads that are designed to provide uninterrupted movement for vehicles. Buildings that front the distributor road, and frontage access are prohibited. Connections may only be made with a road at the same or adjoining level in the hierarchy. Problems include:
Inefficient use of land - Up to 75 percent of the area of the highway may be taken up by distributor roads and their margins.
Low-density development - increases travel distances and costs (including waste collection costs).
Safety - increased risk of fatal collisions for pedestrians, especially elderly people and children owing to the higher traffic speeds.
Poor personal security - owing to the absence of natural surveillance from overlooking buildings.

Speed controlled solely by speed limits; road geometry enabling speeds greater than limits

Drivers drive according to the environment, including the width, and curvature of the road. Greater width, gentler curves, greater visibility lead to higher speeds, high-energy collisions and increased injury risk.

ME: The Design Manual for Roads and Bridges is a standard for motorways and trunk roads – not urban streets for people

Current ✓

Objectives: have due regard to policies and statutory duties, and guidance

Street design standards must discharge statutory duties and take into consideration national and local high-level policies, including those addressed to the council, such as climate change, public health, air quality, the Public Sector Equality duty and so on. Failure to do so may lead to challenge by judicial review.

Objectives: Duty of Care owed to all highway users


Councils have a duty of care to both careful and negligent road users. They must have regard to the limited ability of children to judge the speed of oncoming vehicles. They also need to consider the relationship between vehicle speed and accident causation, and the severity of injury.

Objectives: User Hierarchy – People first

Consider first – Pedestrians
 Cyclists
 Public transport users
 Special services vehicles (e.g. emergency services, waste, etc.)
 Other motor traffic

The Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010, places elderly and disabled people at the top of the list, and requires their needs to be given 'due regard' which under the Common Law, means a vigorous and open-minded inquiry before settling upon a course of action. The user hierarchy is paralleled in the National Planning Policy Framework and National Design Guidance.

Objectives: Create Quality Places



Buildings and street design should complement one another. Street width and building height can be adjusted to provide a sense of enclosure; streets can be aligned on landmarks; feature buildings can be located at junctions etc.

Objectives: cater for all the functions of a street

Manual for Streets lists five functions: place, movement, access, parking, and drainage, utilities, and street lighting. The functions must be balanced so no one function overrides the other.
Trees and Lighting should be designed together. Lighting is important for personal security, trees are important for climate change mitigation and adaptation and better mental wellbeing. Highway authorities have powers to plant trees within highways and carriageways. See Trees and Design Action Group guidance.
Sustainable Drainage Systems – see SuDS Manual (CIRIA) – SuDS can be incorporated within the highway or immediately next to it. Planning authorities are under a de facto statutory duty to have development plans that require SuDS in new development.
Utilities – traditional utilities including electricity, gas, water, sewerage, telephone and cable, and new utilities: district heating and cooling pipes, recycled water, underground waste management systems.

Layout – connected, permeable, traffic calmed, and inclusive

Create extensively connected, permeable street networks with direct routes to key destinations. Control vehicle traffic using traffic calming and features (eg road narrows or gates) that restrict traffic speeds to 20mph limits. Consider low traffic neighbourhoods.

Key Reading: Manual for Streets 1 and 2, Designing Streets, SCOTS National Roads Development Guide, LTN 1/20


Low priority for pedestrians and cyclists

The withdrawn guidance often leads to indirect pedestrian routes, dark pedestrian tunnels, and inconvenient over-bridges. Pedestrian railings are used, not to protect pedestrians from out of control traffic, but to stop people from entering the carriageway. Little consideration is given to cycling. The needs of stroller people are not addressed.

Minimum parking standards that lead to suburban density and car dependency

Provision of 2-3 parking spaces per house results in more space used for parking and lower housing densities of about 30 houses per hectare or less, making public transport unviable. A properly conducted sustainability assessment will condemn these standards. Today, it is recognised that parking provision should be tailored to location.

Space wasting DMRB "normal roundabouts" within urban areas




Difficulties for cyclists and pedestrians and especially disabled people, along with inefficient use of land, are reasons not to use "normal roundabouts" in an urban area intended for people.

Crossroads banned outright, or accepted only in exceptional circumstances

Some highway authorities ban crossroads, and insist on staggered junctions, yet crossroads are commonplace in traditional towns and cities. They are convenient for pedestrians, minimise deviation from desire lines and make it easier to create permeable and legible street networks. Safety can be assured by traffic calming and 20mph limits.

Junctions with large corner-radii

Large radii force pedestrians to make a longer, riskier crossing or to detour from desire lines. Vehicles also turn faster (20 mph – 30 mph).



Vehicle crossovers that interrupt the footway

This is a practice dating from the age of horse drawn carriages. Footways should be level and unbroken.

Don't use withdrawn guidance and standards

Law could be held unreasonable and irrational through judicial review owing to failure to discharge statutory duties, including the Public Sector Equality Duty, climate change mitigation, public health etc. and contradiction or obstruction of government planning policy and guidance. Some design practices may be negligent under the common law.

In addition, use is likely to be in breach of professional codes of conduct, likely to invalidate indemnity insurance, and may also invalidate statutory immunity for councillors and officers.

Traditional Main Streets – not distributor roads

Main streets in the style of the main streets and high streets of traditional towns provide direct routes and make efficient use of land. The buildings that face on to the main street, create a more interesting and attractive environment, with much better surveillance and personal security. Frontage access can also be provided: research undertaken for Manual for Streets found that very few accidents occurred at driveways, even on heavily-trafficked roads. Tree-lined boulevards can be an effective and attractive option for busy but civilised urban streets.

Speed – set a design speed of 20mph or below

Younger children cannot judge oncoming traffic travelling at more than 20mph. TRL Report 661 shows that drivers adjust their speed according to the environment. Speed can be controlled by reducing forward visibility, physical and optical narrowing including narrower carriageways; different surfacing materials, and on-street car parking.

Parking standards – tailor to location

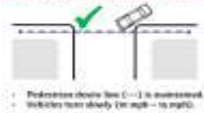
The planning system has been updated since the publication of Manual for Streets. More recent research and publications such as "Space to Park", advise tailoring parking provision to the location of the development and the availability of alternatives to car use. Housing built in or close to town centres may need little or no car parking spaces.

Junctions: use a broader range within a 20mph environment

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Locate buildings and footways to define junctions. Vehicle movement geometry and tracking, should come second. Don't ban crossroads.

Junctions with small corner radii



Help blind and elderly pedestrians by enabling crossing between parallel kerbs. For added convenience and safety, raise the carriageway to footway level across the mouths of side streets, or a full raised speed-table at T junctions and crossroads.

Vehicle crossovers – keep the footway level

Vehicle access to private property must not interrupt the footway. Ensure at least a minimum 900mm width at all normal footway crossings (2.5% max). The cheapest and most satisfactory solution may be to form the crossovers with ramped kerbs that allow the footway to continue uninterrupted.

Provide for cyclists from 8 to 80 years of age

Use the latest guidance: Local Transport Note 1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design. Standards 7.36 metre (24ft) carriageways should not be used.

Use Current Guidance and Standards

Don't use withdrawn standards

If you feel you must or are asked to, take legal advice and advice from professional engineers, or similarly competent professionals, who have confirmed that they are fully competent in current street design practice and are working in compliance with their code of professional conduct.

2 - Street Design Standards, Current and Withdrawn published by the Institution of Civil Engineers and the Urban Design Group

RESEARCH & POLICIES

National Policies & Guidance

Manual for Streets (2007) - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/manual-for-streets>

Street Design Standards (Current and Withdrawn Practice) 2020 - <https://www.udg.org.uk/publications/manuals/street-design-standards>

Building for a Healthy Life (2020) - https://www.udg.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/files/14.JULY20%20BFL%202020%20Brochure_3.pdf

Local Policies & Guidance

Revitalising Wavertree – The Lost Village in the Heart of Liverpool (2005) - http://www.liverpool.ndo.co.uk/wavsoc/news06/LivingStreetsWavertreeAudit_6227.pdf

City Plan for Liverpool (2020) - <https://cityplanliverpool.co.uk/>

Liverpool Street Charter (2017-2020) - <https://liverpool.gov.uk/media/1357552/street-charter.pdf>

Parking Enforcement Policy (2019) - <https://liverpool.gov.uk/media/1358135/parking-enforcement-policy-v45-02-aug-2019.doc>

Highways Asset Management Policy and Strategy 2019/20-2022/23 - <https://liverpool.gov.uk/media/1358226/highway-asset-infrastructure-management-policy-strategy-2019.pdf>

Local Transport Plan for Liverpool City Region - <https://www.liverpoollep.org/economic-strategy/local-transport-plan/>

Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2014-2019 - <https://liverpool.gov.uk/media/9138/health-and-wellbeing-strategy-final.pdf>

Liverpool Cycling Strategy 2014-2026 - <https://liverpool.gov.uk/media/9013/cyclingstrategy.pdf>

Our Proposals

We have identified four areas where we think we can make a big difference to the street, they are:

The Wellington Road Junction - a dangerous crossing made safer for all

Creating a High Street for All – reducing car-speeds and dominance, adding proper parking spaces to reduce on-pavement parking

Pedestrian Safety – introducing clearways and continuous footpaths over side roads

Awakening the Village Heart – reimagining the Picton Clock, Lockup and park as a better village centre

WELLINGTON ROAD JUNCTION

The junction of Wellington, Rathbone and Picton Roads is an historic and natural crossroads for all forms of traffic. It is a key node serving the east-west flow of people to and from the High Street but is also a key north-south route linking residential hubs of Rathbone Road and Smithdown Road. It is also the primary route for people utilising Wavertree Technology Park Railway Station who may want to use the facilities of Wavertree Sports Centre and Tennis Centre.

The junction is heavily trafficked with very tight corners resulting in restricted views by drivers from all directions. This is especially true when approaching the junction from Wellington Road which is also on a significant slope. The junction is entirely designed around prioritising motor vehicle users and provides little benefit for anyone else.

There are no formal pedestrian crossings at this junction resulting in a space that places motor vehicles and pedestrians into conflict. This current junction is dangerous for even the most able pedestrian, let alone those less confident or with reduced mobility.

We propose: -

- A resequencing of traffic lights to include a pedestrian phase.
- Bus stops moved away from junction and staggered to avoid two buses next to each other (will also even out space between bus stops).
- A six-way crossing utilising not only standard road crossing paths but also diagonal 'X' crossing paths to reflect pedestrian desire lines.

This will: -

- Create a safer junction that can be used all road users.
- Help facilitate pedestrian linkages between key amenities such as the Railway Station and Sports Centre
- Encourage active travel
- Use the existing road widths and corner radius.







Where it's been done before



Precedent 1 - Victoria Street, Liverpool



Precedent 2 - Victoria Street, Liverpool

CREATING A HIGH STREET FOR ALL

Wavertree High Street (and the easternmost part of Picton Road) is the traditional high-street of the original Wavertree Village. Although suffering through the general decline affecting most high-streets it still remains the main location of economic activity due to its multitude of shops, cafes, public houses and commercial properties as well as being the location of amenities such as the city council One Stop Shop and Wavertree Public Library. The street is also the location of two educational establishments in Wavertree C of E Primary School and Assess Education.

Although still an active street there is general sense that the street is not as busy as it used to be and that there are too many vacant shops and a general sense of decline. This sense is enhanced by the low quality, old, poorly maintained and neglected public realm and the domination of the street by motor traffic, including pavement parking.

The high-street is very wide, at some points being four lanes wide (including bus-stop). Whilst these are heavily used during rush-hours for the majority of the time they are not used and provide an inefficient use of space as well as being pedestrian hostile.

We propose: -

Repurpose the redundant bus-lane for general westbound traffic use, enabling the existing eastbound lane to be used for parking bays, landscaping and potential street-cafes.

Traffic calming without reducing speed-limit though passive control measures such as varied road surfaces and narrowed lanes.

Additional informal zebra crossings to aid pedestrian use and increase driver awareness.

Introducing formal car-parking bays into the street to reduce pavement-parking.

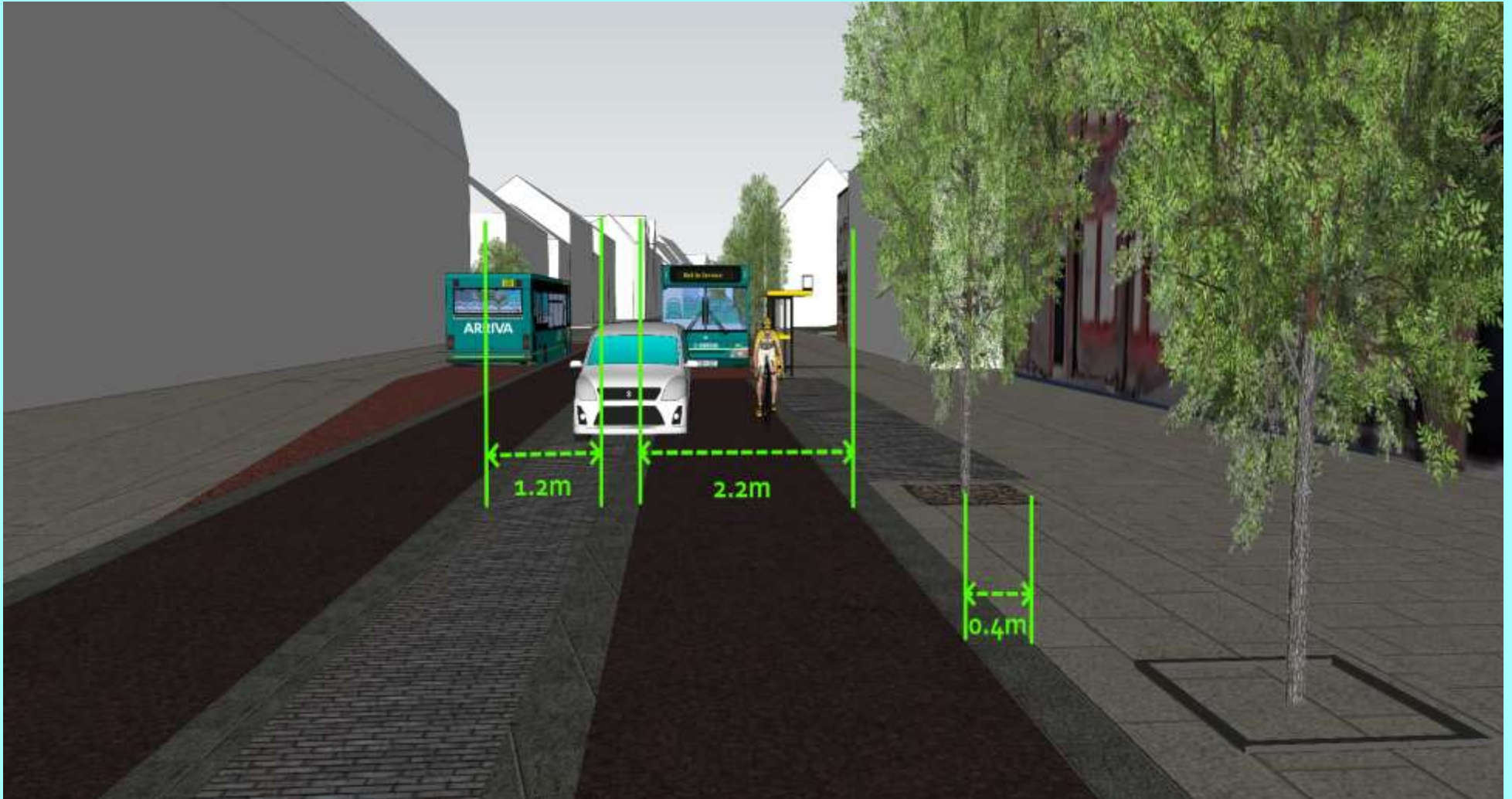
Introducing planters and benches to introduce green-elements and also places for people to rest.

This will: -

- Encourage a more diverse uses of the street.
 - Reduce dominance of motor traffic.
 - Reduce the risk of pavement parking.
 - Revive the street and improve street furniture, remove bollards and revitalise paving.
- Make the road safer for vulnerable users.
 - Help regulate traffic flow through more consistent speeds.
 - Introduce softer green elements to the street.









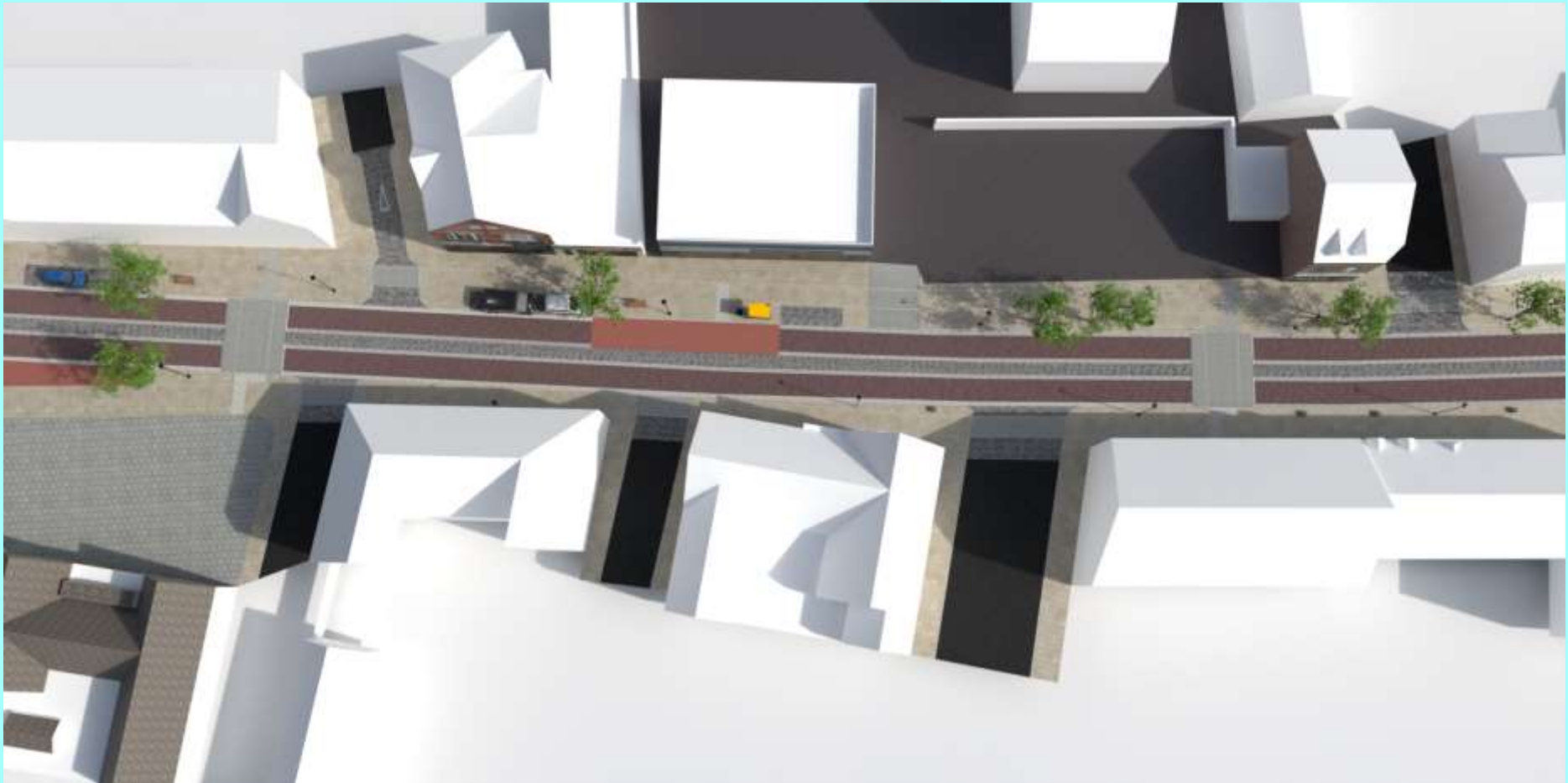






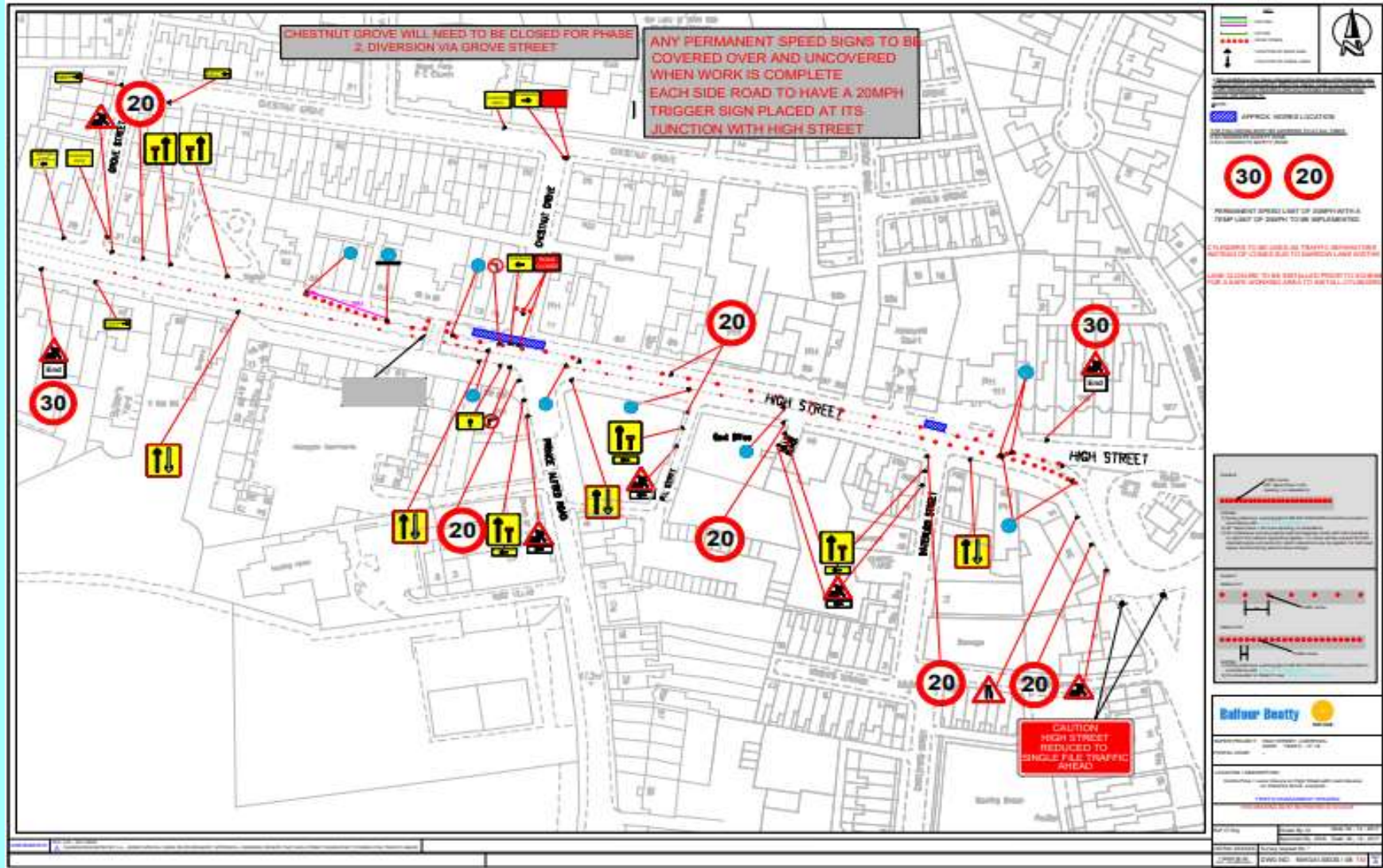












Example 3 - Temporary Traffic Restrictions to two lanes as designed by Balfour Beatty for Cadent Gas, First Quarter 2021

Where it's been done before



Precedent 3 - Hope Street, Liverpool



Precedent 4 - Bridge Road North, Birkenhead



Precedent 5 - Park Road, Poynton



Precedent 6 - Park Road, Poynton

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Picton Road and Wavertree High Street border an area of dense residential properties and a catchment area of people who will be within 15 minute walk of the high street. It is also an area that attracts young families due to its proximity to good schools and its relatively low house prices compared to nearby Childwall and Allerton. This means that there is a likelihood for large numbers of prams and buggies.

The tight 19th Century grid-pattern means that there are thirteen side streets that feed into Picton Road/High Street. Each of these, apart from one, requires the user to navigate a kerb down and up into the carriageway. This gives motor-vehicles a sense of priority and precedence when entering the High Street and makes walkability much harder.

These side-streets are nominally 20mph streets and vehicles should not be leaving/entering them at speed as they are residential streets, however driver behaviour does not always reflect that especially at less-busy times on the main road. Conflict also arises from inconsiderate parking which sometimes covers corners.

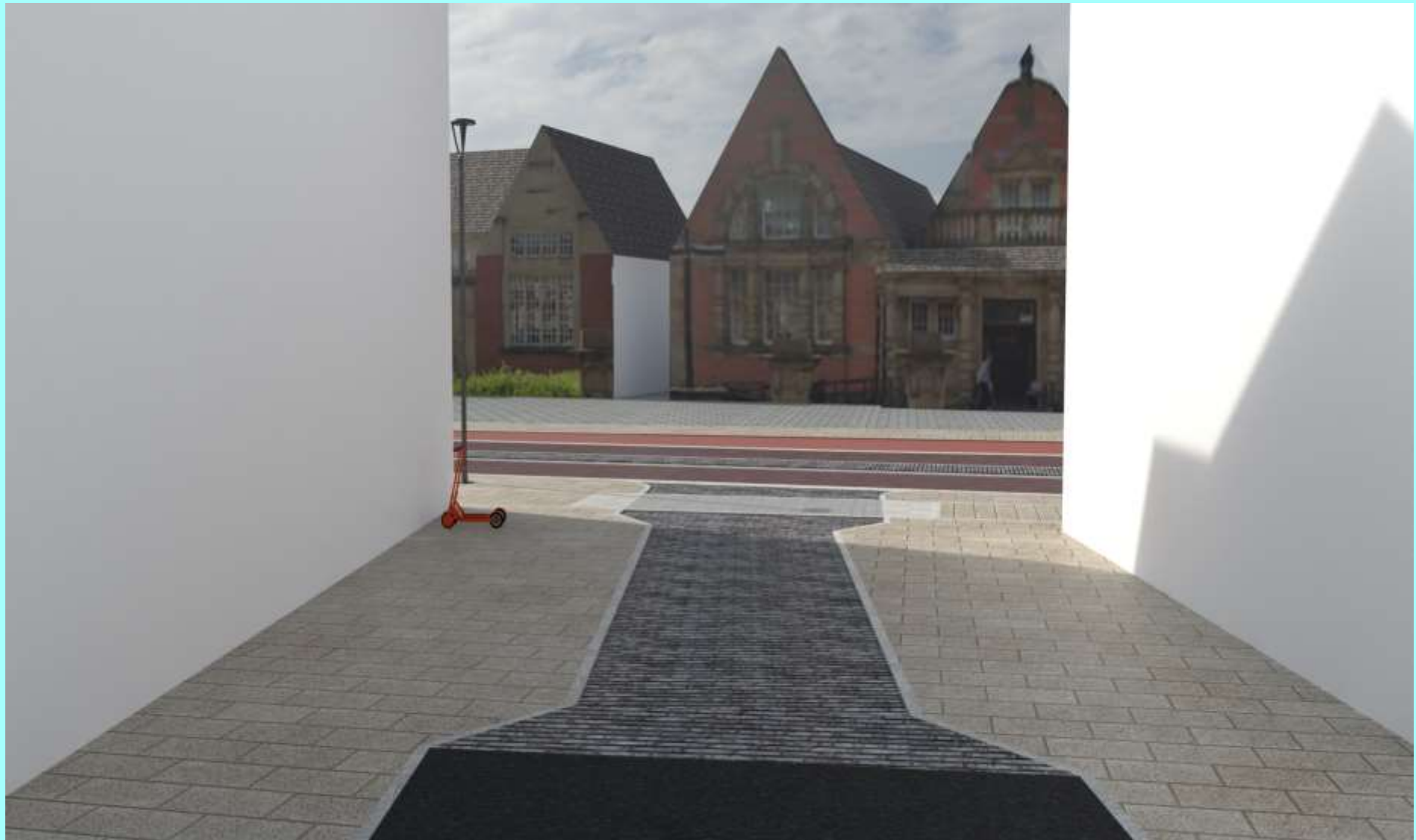
We propose: -

- A continuous footway over junctions.
- Tighter corners to help manage traffic speeds.
- Introduce planters and greenery.
- A 2m 'clearway' - free from bollards, lampposts and other obstructions.

This will: -

- Encourage drivers to slow their speeds and consider other road users.
- Make a more pleasant, less polluted pedestrian environment especially for buggies, mobility scooters and other users.
- Encourage active travel for children to walk to schools, for pleasure and for health and wellbeing.









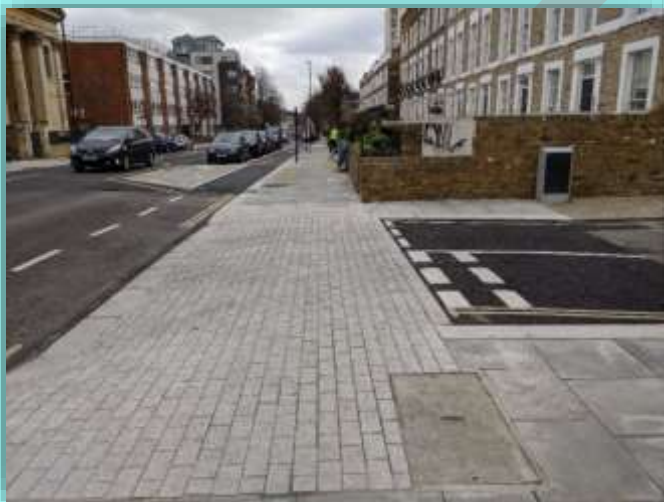




Where it's been done before



Precedent 7 - Amsterdam



Precedent 8 - Craddock Street, Camden



Precedent 9 - Park Road Clearway, Birkenhead



Precedent 10 - Glasgow

AWAKENING THE VILLAGE HEART

The traditional heart of Wavertree Village is the crossroads at the old village green. The importance of this site cannot be overstated, the location of the famous Picton Clocktower, imposing Abbey Cinema and two of the area's oldest pubs (The Coffee House and former pub, The Lamb) as well as the Wavertree Lock-up and the only remaining part of common-land in the city.

Being a traditional crossroads this area has always been very heavily trafficked, indeed the Picton Clock and shelter in the middle of the roundabout was the former tram waiting shelter and the entire road-layout based upon the turning radius of the old trams. Whilst the Picton Clock is an important visual landmark for people passing through Wavertree few people can actually get close to it and appreciate its detail due to the speed and volume of traffic.

We propose:-

- To narrow the carriageway to effectively create the feel of circular one-way road rather than a roundabout.
- Introducing tighter corner radii to better regulate traffic speed.
- Introduce informal pedestrian crossings to the centre-island to accommodate pedestrian desire lines.
- Enlarge the centre island to introduce greenery, shrubbery and improve viability of reusing existing building.
- Removal of motor traffic along Lake Road and incorporate park into common-land/lock-up for multi-use space
- To replace Lake Road traffic, introduce a second roundabout at junction of Mill Lane/Lance Lane.

This will:-

- Make historic assets more accessible and increase public space.
- Restore life to a traffic-dominated junction.
- Encourage active movement in the area, reduce motor vehicle priority.















Where it's been done before



Precedent 2 - Poynton Roundabout



Precedent 12 - Britannia Roundabout, Adelaide (before)



Precedent 13 - Britannia Roundabout, Adelaide (after)

CONCLUSION

We are at a crossroads.

The pressing climate crisis, the changing face of retail, the unsustainability of car-led development and not least the impacts of the Covid 19 pandemic have brought us to a point where there is a unifying cry – change is needed.

The twelve months between March 2020 and 2021 have taught us all a lesson in how valuable the amenities in our local area are.

We are fortunate in Wavertree. We live in an area with huge potential. We have our history and heritage, the clocktower, the lock-up, the Abbey, George Harrison and John Lennon. We have our beloved park, the Mystery. We have our top-class sports facilities, running-track, tennis centre, football pitches and swimming pool. We have our beautiful library, our much-admired Rose Garden and our play-area. We have all this... but our greatest asset is our people, our community and these are the people the High Street must serve.

Even now, after years of decline the High Street still has a good range of shops, restaurants and pubs... but without action, without changing the way our High Street works, without allowing the street to become usable by all we risk losing what we have and more importantly, we risk our future.

Together we must make our High Street work for everyone and it is time we loved High Street again.

'SUB UMBRA FLORESCO'

Produced by Craig Forward and Richard MacDonald

with thanks to

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