

# THE SPACES HANDBOOK



# 4

# 4.1 Revealing the Spaces

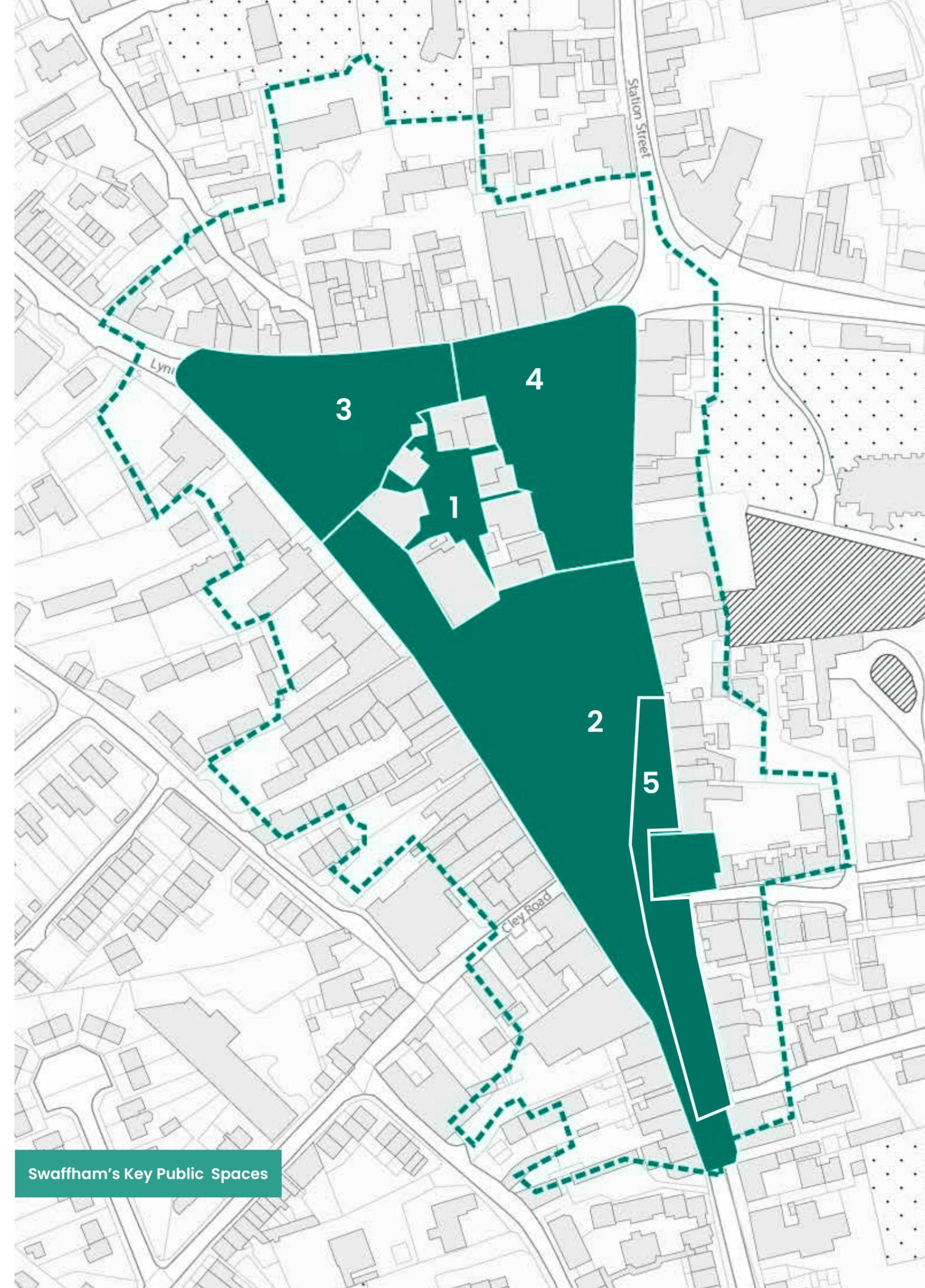
## 4.1.1 How To Use 'The Spaces Handbook'

This document outlines and describes the individual space improvements that once combined will realise the Town Centre Improvement Masterplan. This document should be used if you're interested in looking at how each physical space can be changed permanently to realise Swaffham's full and true potential. This handbook focusses on the physical change that can be inspired by its historic narrative. If you're interested in activating the space via temporary means, please read the 'activities handbook' instead, or alongside this.

The handbook will culminate in a list of projects. These projects can also be used to define and apply for funding streams that may become available to Swaffham.

### THE MASTERPLAN SPACES

- 1 The Shambles
- 2 The Assembly Hall and Buttercross
- 3 The Pedlar's Car Park- Mobility Hub
- 4 The Memorial and Corn Hall
- 5 The Greyhound, Auction and Town Pond



Swaffham's Key Public Spaces

# 4.2 The Shambles

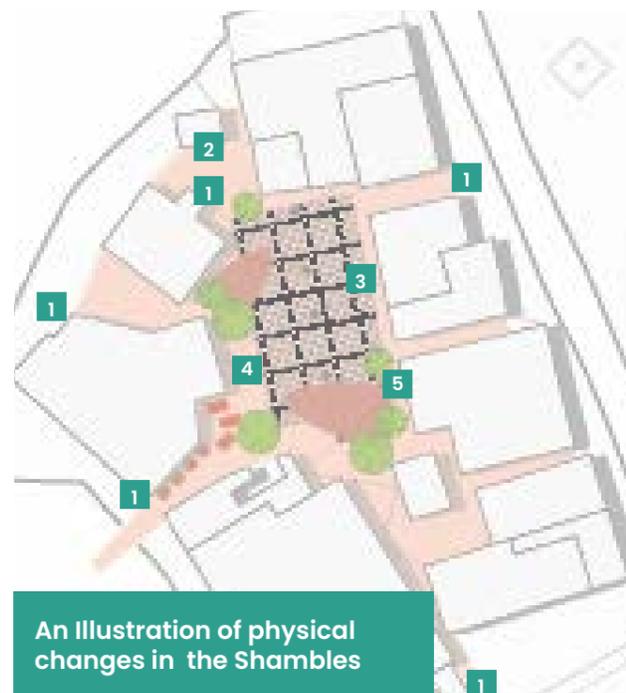
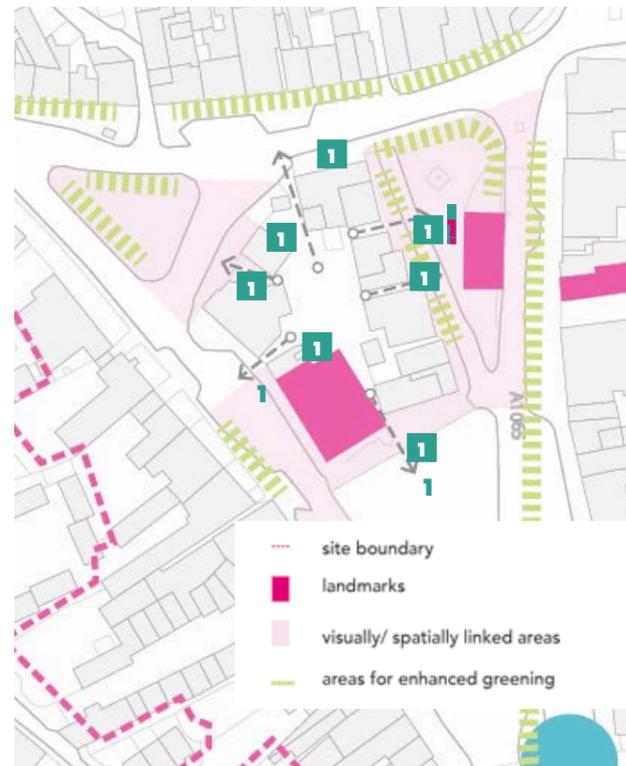
## 4.2.1 Historic interpretation & enhancement

As the historic heart of the market, this space is completely unique with its organic form and hidden open space as a natural 'theatre in the round' and alleyways radiating out to every part of the town.

Design interventions focus upon revealing its historic role as a bustling communal courtyard, by re-invigorating uses and creating an adaptable public resource which fully engages with the medieval narratives and existing built form. Realising its potential as a civic space is reliant upon safe, pedestrian access at all times. Therefore the interventions also look particularly at re-engaging with Pedlar's (current car park) space, Lynn Street, and the re-definition of view lines, crossings and public transport.

## 4.2.2 Design Interventions/ Ideas for enhancement

- 1 Reveal the existing permeability of the Shambles, with new lines of paving, to meet the Assembly Rooms, the Corn Hall, Lynn Street and both sides of the Market Place. Maximise potential for discovery and narratives with artistic and crafted materials, which lead people into the space. Design effective and beautiful lighting, to illuminate and at the same time match the narrative of the Shambles.
- 2 Permanently relocate the car parking and introduce bollards to prevent re-occurrence
- 3 Resurface with a single material to create a flexible, calming and tranquil environment
- 4 Introduce intimate street lighting designed to create atmosphere, delight and safety. Consider centrally strung and wall mounted fittings to avoid cluttering the ground plain, washing walls with light etc..
- 5 Consider reintroducing windows and doorways that have been previously bricked over to bring activity into the space (e.g. cafe tables, shop entrances etc..)
- 6 Investigate legalities to amend the parking



## Historic Use



An example of the previous buildings that occupied the Shambles



## Historic Interpretation & Space Enhancement



Adaptable spaces, for day-to-day uses and/or events



Changes to surface paving can indicate hidden paths and routes without the need for signposts. This could work well as a way to draw people into The Shambles without overstating

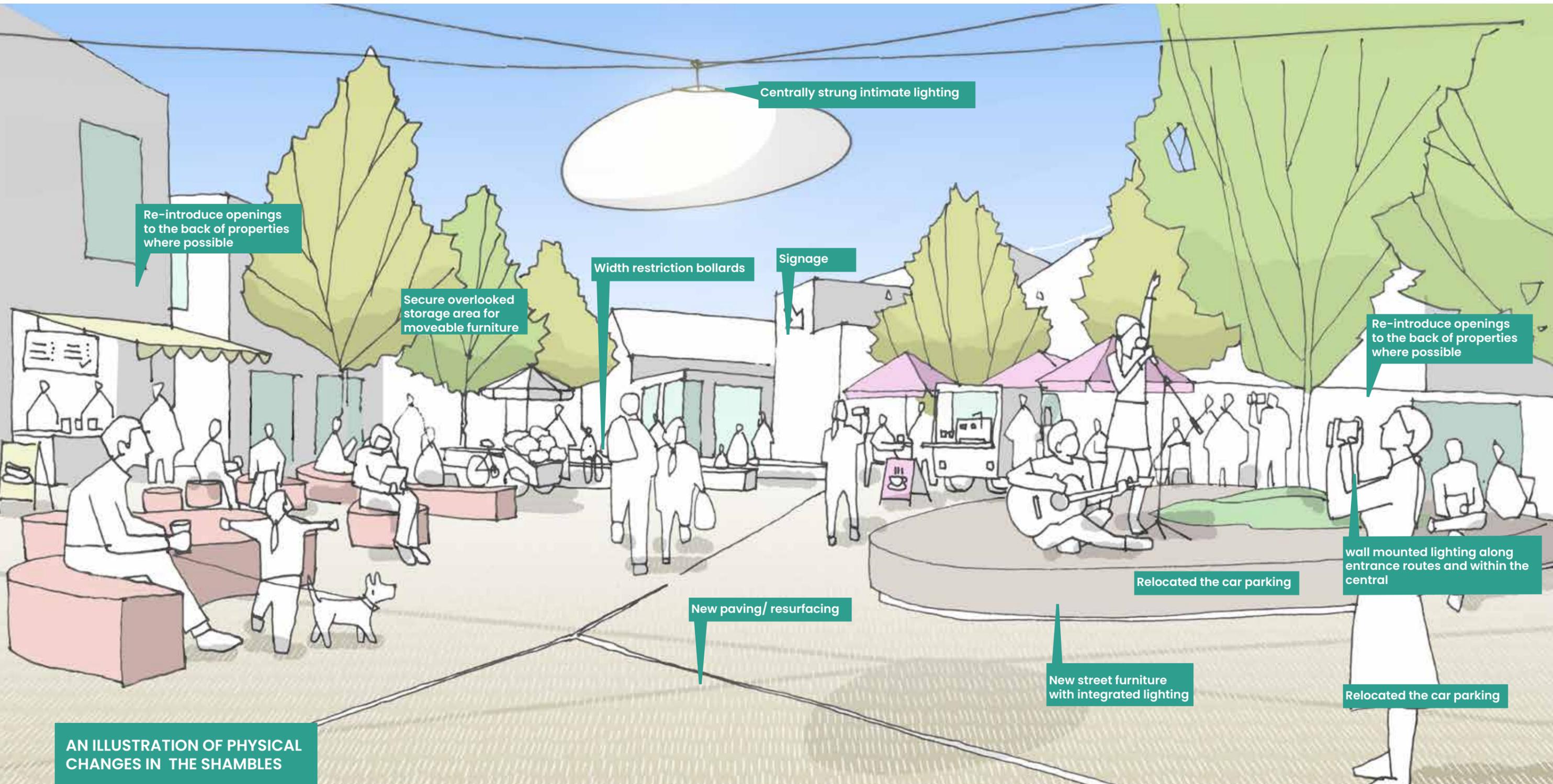


Discovering Swaffham's narratives, ideas and stories within surfaces - alleyways into The Shambles



Walking/cycling gateway - waiting / social space adjacent to bus stops, adjacent to The Shambles

### 4.2.3 The Shambles Illustrated



# 4.3 Market Place & the Buttercross

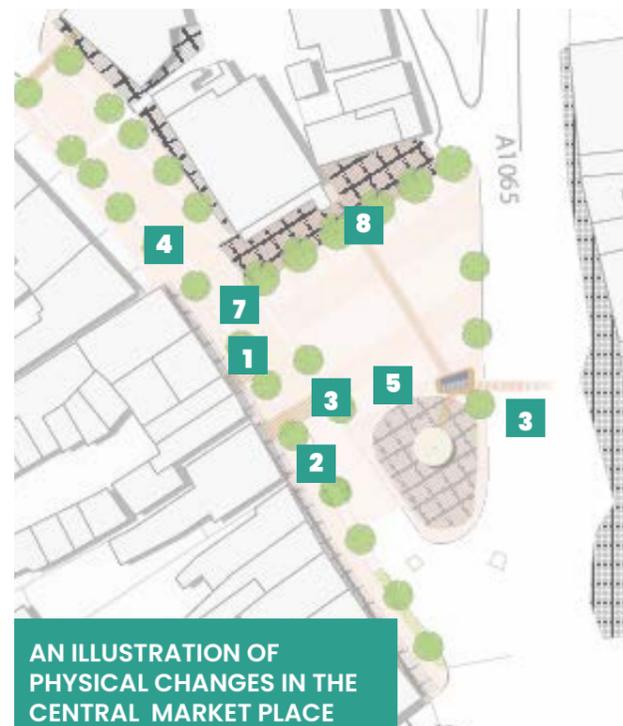
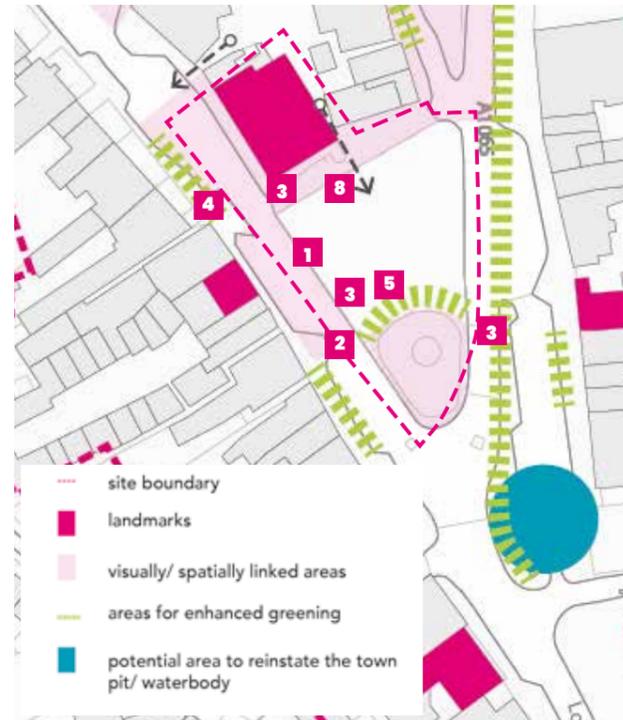
## 4.3.1 Historic interpretation & enhancement

The Buttercross is the centrepiece of the Market Place. The Assembly Rooms and the building frontages along the west of Market Place also have a direct relationship with the Market Place, as a single civic, commercial and cultural space.

Design interventions recognise the asset of historic fabric, whilst also placing an emphasis on realising the full potential of the space, as an accessible, bustling and highly versatile setting for the future activities of the town. This area symbolises the civic identity of Swaffham. It is important that the whole space is designed holistically, in order to fully realise its potential as an inclusive, active and sociable space which engages all the community.

## 4.3.2 Design Interventions

- 1 Re-instate pavement along the west side of the street, where pavement has been reduced in width to create perpendicular parking. Retain servicing to businesses, Assembly Rooms and the Market and consider the appropriate traffic management strategy (also see movement and connection strategy).
- 2 Replant street trees and resurface across the widened pavement, so that it 'belongs' visually with the Market Place, and to stimulate activated pavement spill-out uses facing the Market Place and Buttercross.
- 3 Make crossings safer and wider, with new materials, making pedestrian movement more inclusive and welcoming, (without parked cars obstructing views).
- 4 Integrate linear rain gardens with attractive seasonal planting alongside the trees, offering SuDS and enhancing pedestrian crossing points.
- 5 Plant additional landmark trees in appropriate areas within the Market Place, enhancing its importance as a venue and cultural focus and providing dappled shade to people in the square, including people using the space on non-market days for quieter socialising.
- 6 Provide more seating, grouped to encourage sociable interactions, and planting areas to improve the environmental qualities, visual character and allow full enjoyment of the space.
- 7 Consider resurfacing in line with current guidance on accessibility and shared space from the CIHT) in the long term to create a single surface across the space to reduce the visual dominance of the car park and enable more flexible arrangements of temporary uses
- 8 Improve the interface between the Assembly Rooms and cafe and the Market space. Remove the temporary additions and create a positive relationship between the entrances and the outdoor seating



## Historic Use



Queen Victoria's Jubilee, 1897. The Market Place extends across to buildings - welcoming the whole town

## Historic Interpretation & Space Enhancement



Improve the visual appeal of the market, and increase the space available for stalls, by requiring associated vehicles to park off-site during trading hours



Introduce planting and areas of softer surfacing to help absorb pollution and noise, create a variety of sensory experience and encourage people to stay longer in the space (Image source: Merchant Square twitter)



3. Design landscape interventions in and around the market to provide a soft separation between the road and event space.



4. Provide a palette of materials and colours for the market and alfresco areas that surround the market area.

### 4.3.3 The Market Place Illustrated



# 4.4 Pedlar's Car Park and Mobility Hub

## 4.4.1 Historic interpretation and enhancement

This triangular car park area to the north of The Shambles is home to the Pedlar of Swaffham sign and a historic founding stone. It is surrounded on all sides by wide roads. It is bordered by mature trees on the north and west sides which provide an attractive green backdrop on arrival into Swaffham.

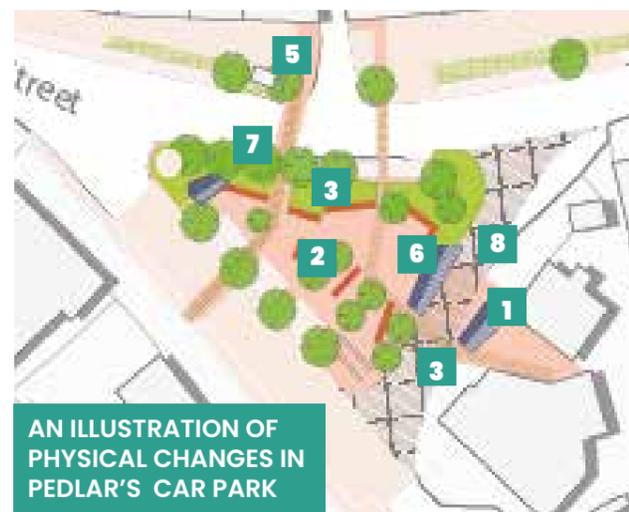
The south side of the space is cut off from the Shambles and wider market spaces by a three-lane tarmac street that accommodates bus stops, loading and general traffic. The street feels overly wide and out of scale with the market town.

A review of the traffic movements around this junction with a view to reconnecting the space via crossings or surface treatments would be welcome. Reduction in the amount of blacktop to reduce emphasis on the cars would help to reduce the severance and tie the space into the wider townscape.

## 4.4.2 Design interventions

- 1 Reveal the existing permeability of the Shambles, with new lines of paving, to meet Lynn Street.
- 2 Reconfigure parking in the Pedlar's car park to also provide usable public space, where it serves the bus-stop and gateway for arrivals and departures, welcoming people into the town that includes informal seating, planting and cycle storage.
- 3 Re-configure paving to define safe crossings from the bus-stops and across to the adjacent streets. Provide surfaces which support active frontage uses, taking consideration of existing cafe and shop frontages. Also consider traffic noise mitigating surfaces.
- 4 Develop opportunities for informal recreation, public art and seating in the triangle space, through the co-design process.
- 5 Plant new street trees along the north of Lynn Street to emphasise this important arrival threshold into Swaffham and improve pedestrian comfort and visual character.
- 6 Improve connectivity to and through the car park with designated crossing points, particularly across Lynn Road to Ash Close and across Market Place
- 7 Making more of the site's historic significance - enhance views to the Pedlar sign, explain the significance of the founding stone, use lighting and paving to mark out the features as an important entrance to Swaffham

- 8 Review the road between the Shambles and the triangle to reduce its width and improve pedestrian comfort
- 9 Consider creating a green transport hub that capitalises on proximity to bus stops and the rapid charging points already there. Introduce secure cycle parking, bike and scooter hire, car club spaces, maps and information on walking and cycling routes, solar panels etc..



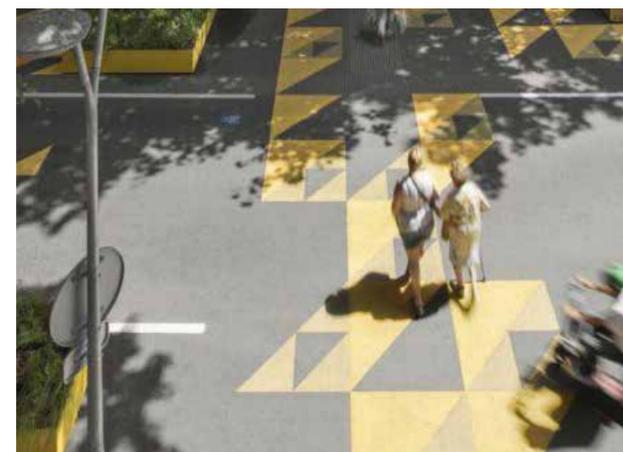
## Historic Use



## Historic Interpretation and Space Enhancement



Introduce the town's heritage at the entry to the town and encourage people to explore while their car is charging.

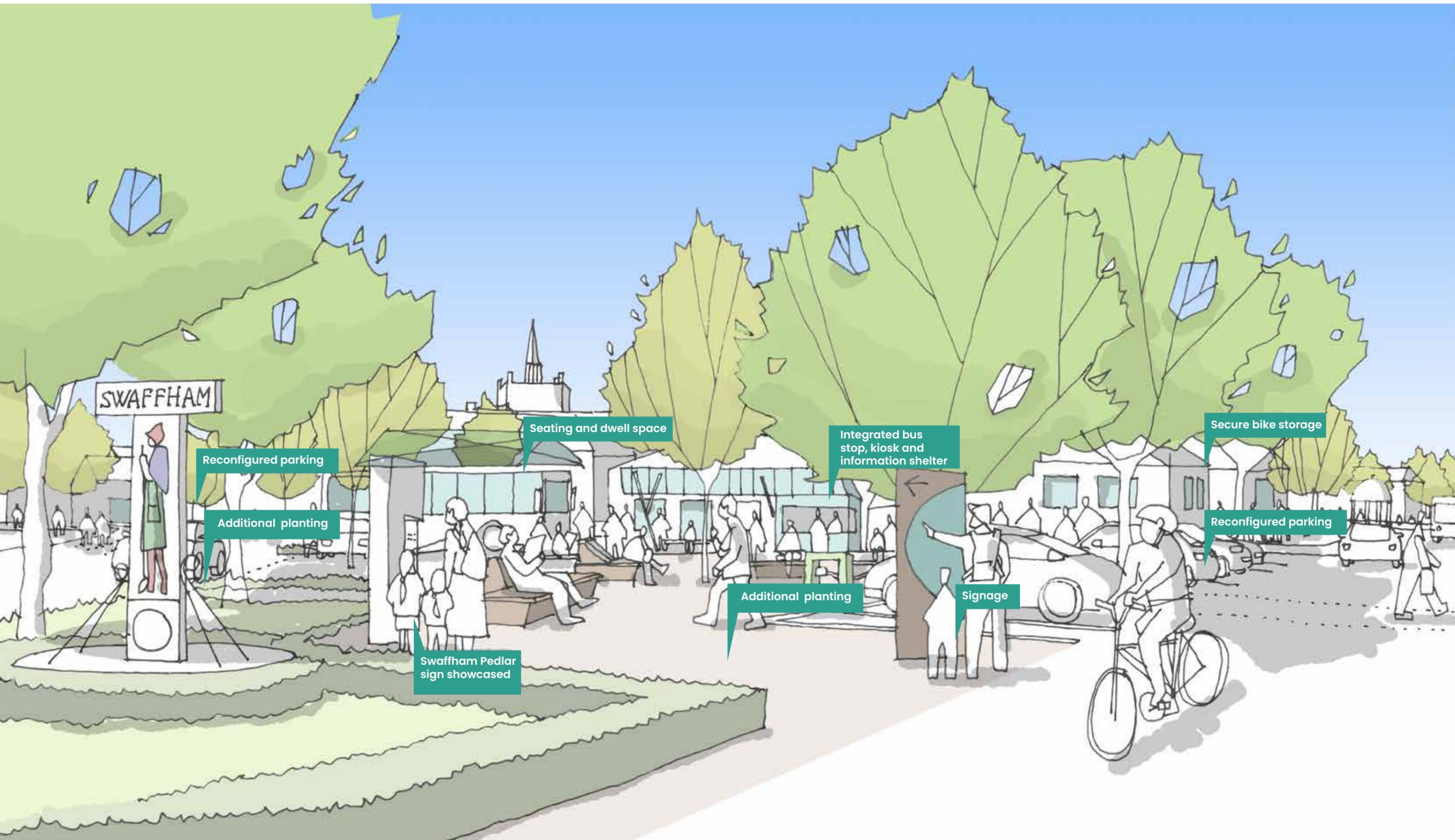


Connect the Pedlar's car park to The Shambles by reducing the visual dominance of the tarmac, introducing pedestrian priority and insert more urban green space



The triangle could become a focus for green transport and accessibly incorporating secure cycle and scooter parking, solar electric charging points and future car club spaces

#### 4.4.3 The Pedlar's Car Park and Mobility Hub Illustrated



# 4.5 The Corn Hall & Memorial

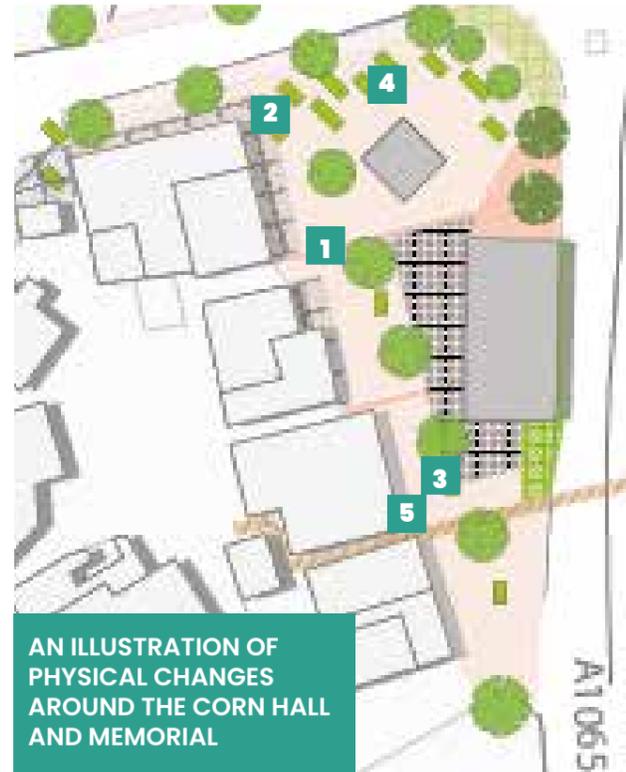
## Urban setting

### 4.5.1 Historic interpretation and enhancement

The space surrounding the Corn Hall and the War Memorial could be better designed to create a feeling of continuity and enable the area to read as a single, unified space with the landmark building sitting comfortably in its setting.

A proliferation of signage, various paving units, bollards, railings and other items serve to cut the Corn Hall off from the wider market space making it feel disconnected from its setting and hemmed in by roads and parking.

The groundscape is paved to delineate an access road leading to two parking spaces at the far end and a turning head next to the cafe. A single surface with low-key delineation would work much better here, allowing occasional access and parking without creating visual clutter.



AN ILLUSTRATION OF PHYSICAL CHANGES AROUND THE CORN HALL AND MEMORIAL

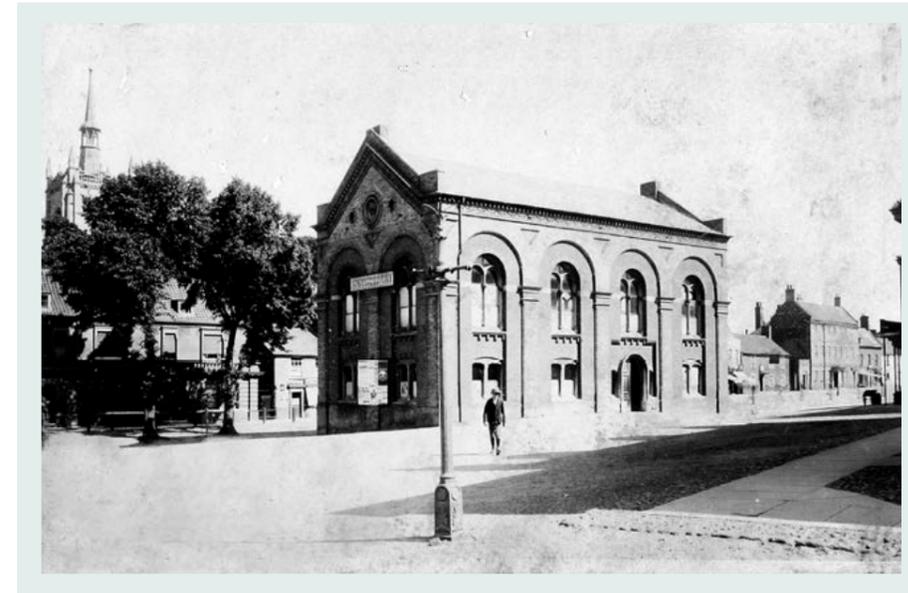
### 4.5.2 Ideas for enhancement

- Consider resurfacing the space in the long term to remove rigid delineations for parking and access to enable more flexible use of the space
- Improve pedestrian connections, including across the space linking to the churchyard, the shambles, the main market place and Lynn street
- Rationalise the street furniture - a single style and colour for lighting columns and signage across the whole market area would unify the spaces
- Incorporate seating and shade, reposition benches and provide opportunities to pause and reflect on the war memorial
- Consider how the building meets the ground - a surface treatment that anchors the building to its setting is preferred
- Ensure lighting is an integral part of the spatial design. Light the trees and structures to add drama and atmosphere to the space

### Design Interventions

- 1 Develop this area to fully realise its potential as a spacious and elegant square, with improved pedestrian prioritised public realm, seating and planting with the ability to still host the stalls from the Saturday market..
- 2 Relocate accessible parking spaces and reinstate kerb-free hard surfaces across this area.
- 3 Plant street trees integrated within paving, offering dappled shade, seasonal colour, micro-climate cooling and biodiversity. Include flowering species with winter colour, such as small-leaved limes *Tilia cordata* 'Winter Orange' and a resilient approach to selection. Incorporate tree cells and SuDS to benefit tree establishment and health.
- 4 Layout including new planting to offer a formal setting to the Memorial, and improvement to the existing seating by providing visual and sensory interest and respite from the road.
- 5 Design to integrate and reveal the pattern of lanes through to the Shambles, so that the whole square functions and opens up to businesses both along the outside of the Shambles and to the east alongside the Church.

## Historic Use



## Historic Interpretation and Space Enhancement



Street furniture in a convivial arrangement with a bench and two individual chairs arranged on a cobblestone "rug". A tree anchors them in their setting



Moveable planters can be located to provide a buffer to the busy road, shade, visual interest and a sense of fun. They can be moved by palette trucks if necessary when the memorial parade happens needed (Image source: Iota Gardens)



Light up the Corn Hall façades to emphasise its landmark status and showcase the attractive architectural composition



Linear planting beds, to enhance the Memorial, offering seasonal variety and separation from roads

### 4.5.3 The Corn Hall Illustrated



# 4.6 Town Auction

## 4.6.1 HISTORIC INTERPRETATION AND ENHANCEMENT

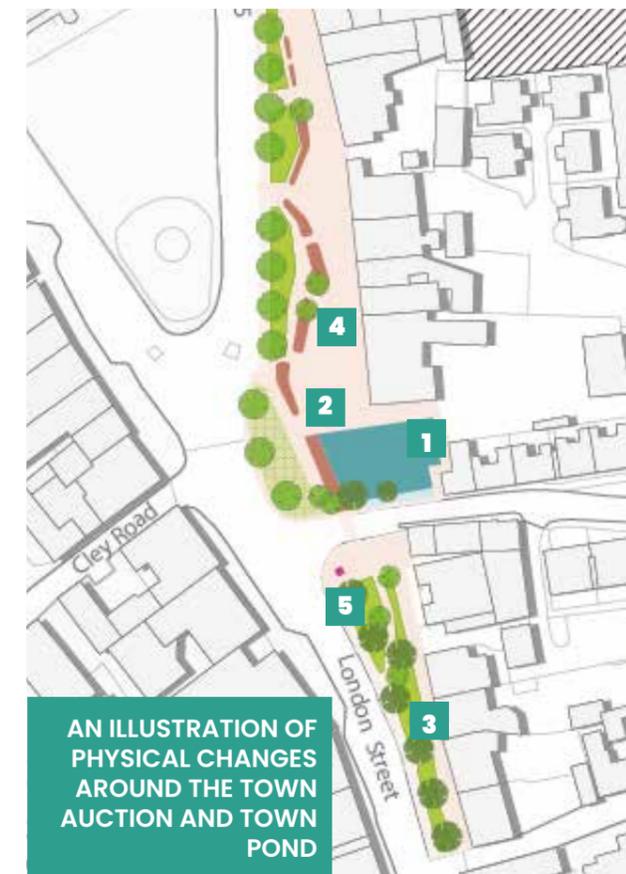
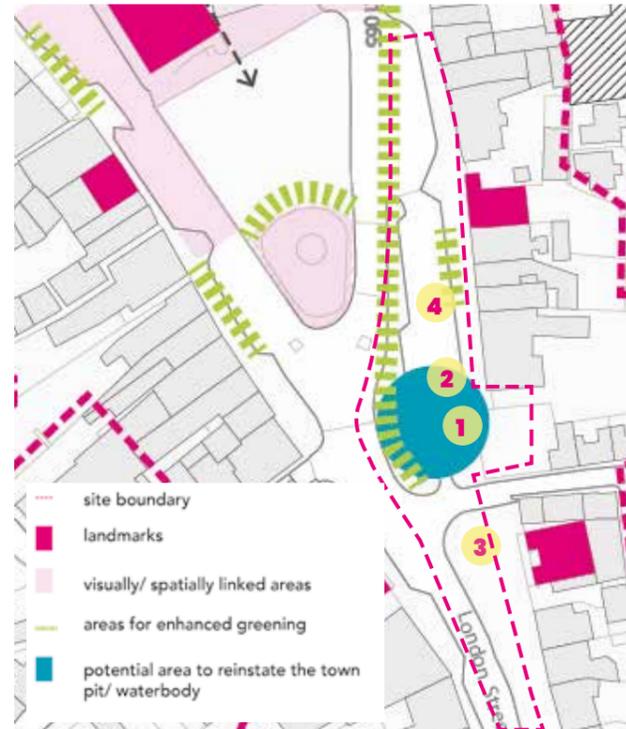
The role of the Auction is integral to the life of the town and a significant source of community pride, through its continued vibrancy since the origins of Swaffham and also the wide audience of visitors arriving for its unique live auction and atmosphere.

The pond as a watering hole was known as the Town Pit and later formalised and was a noticeably long-lived feature in the historic townscape.

The design interventions place importance upon the Auction, including its practical requirements for gathering, milling areas and servicing. The potential for improvements to circulation and public realm character are therefore linked with ideas for new planting and walkways, and a pond, forming part of a new linear park, as a green gateway into the town centre from the south.

## 4.6.2 DESIGN INTERVENTIONS

- 1 Re-instate a Town Pond, developing the design to fully engage with the potential for inclusive design in the public realm, and the role of water for well-being, environmental and ecological value. Integrate a sculptural bridge, bringing nature into view and directly linked to the footpath network. Provide guardrails and native flowering marginal planting to optimise seasonality and habitat value.
- 2 Create an active interface between the Town Pond and the Auction Place, giving an attractive setting and seating with trees for the audience. Consider uses for recreation, relaxation and socialising, at times other than market days, when this area can play a role as a tranquil linear park with beautiful planting.
- 3 Extend the green space to form a new landscaped area, reaching The Pigtle. This provides a new walk and green gateway to/from the centre and significantly improves views from Buttercross and Cley Road. It also provides a barrier away from the traffic and air pollution of idling traffic. Re-configuring car parking to provide trees and an attractive footpath through planted rain gardens. Relocate benches away from the road edge into the greened landscape area. Retain servicing/drop-off to the Chapel and parallel parking. Signage will be encouraged to access Theatre street car park via the southern footpath or via Cley road.
- 4 Re-configure the public realm in front of The Greyhound Inn, integrating landmark trees, rain gardens and seating grouped for sociable/communal uses.
- 5 Provide a setting for the Carter Pyramid as a gateway sculpture into the town



## Historic Use



## Historic Interpretation and Space Enhancement



Footpath bridges over the water, bringing nature into view, offering tranquillity and enriching the public realm.



Civic space, adaptable for large events and day to day use, enhanced with trees, seating and water.



Linear park, offering SuDS within an enriched public realm, integrated practical needs such as servicing.



# 4.7 Town Pit / Pond

## 4.7.1 Historic interpretation and enhancement

The town pit was a man-made, rectangular watering hole created for the welfare of livestock brought to market on the east side of the market square. It is currently paved over and used as a car park, but the buildings that edged it are still there, defining its former shape.

Restoring the water feature as part of the HSHAZ improvements would be a wonderful thing to achieve because it both recalls Swaffham's heritage as a prosperous agricultural market town and also introduces environmental benefits to address our 21st century concerns.

Water is an excellent element to have in the public realm. It attracts and engages people of all ages and can be playful and active, or reflective and tranquil, or both, depending on the design, the season and the time of day. A town pond could provide urban cooling, flood attenuation and SUDS as well as a place to enjoy as part of a trip to the town.



Existing situation showing approximate location of the Town Pit (solid line) and potential associated public space (aerial from Google Earth)

## 4.7.2 Ideas for enhancement

- 1 Reinststate the town pit as a contemporary interpretation of the historic livestock watering place
- Invest in a duck management strategy alongside the plans to restore the pond
- 2 Ensure the design enables the saturday auction to continue unimpeded, or that the auction can take advantage of the new setting
- 3 Incorporate elements that can engage and delight the senses - movement, tranquility, sound, aromatic planting etc.
- 4 Incorporate seating and shade, provide opportunities to pause and reflect
- 5 Incorporate stepped edges where wildlife can drink
- Provide opportunities to interact with the water
- Ensure lighting is an integral part of the pond design



AN ILLUSTRATION OF PHYSICAL CHANGES AROUND THE TOWN POND



An urban reflecting pond, a chance to pause, rest, contemplate and recharge



Play fountains at Granary Square - free fun and a chance to cool off in the summer (source: TimeOut)



Contemporary urban pond and plantings



Traditional village pond at Manningtree in Essex (source: The Telegraph)

### 4.7.3 The Town Pond and Greyhound Inn Setting Illustrated



TOWN POND

Re instate trees

new footpath

new street furniture and dwell space

alfresco zone

A re-instated town pond

# 4.8 The Spaces Project List

## 4.8.1 Recommended Project List

The list below is a key non-exhaustive list of projects connected with improving Swaffham's spaces which directly aligns with the key Masterplan principles, strategies and objectives.

| SPACES                             | PROJECTS THAT WILL CREATE SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENTS TO THE FUNCTION OF SPACES IN THE TOWN CENTRE BOTH INDIVIDUALLY AND COLLECTIVELY   |
|------------------------------------|--|
| <b>LINEAR GREENED PUBLIC REALM</b> | A new green space along the eastern side of the town centre providing an attractive a comfortable place to walk into town.   |
| <b>VILLAGE POND</b>                | Reinstate the historic village pond (Town Pit) as a place for contemplation and relaxation within the bustle of the marketplace.   |
| <b>THE SHAMBLES</b>                | Reclaim the Shambles from cars to create a pedestrian space that can be used for a range of activities in the daytime and evenings. (similar concept to Plowright Place)   |
| <b>PEDLAR'S CAR PARK</b>           | Create a more welcoming space to wait for buses. Seating, shade, lighting, public wifi.  |
| <b>MEMORIAL PLACE</b>              | Improve the setting of the memorial by removing clutter, restoring the street strees, adding planters and bespoke lighting.  |
| <b>MARKETPLACE</b>                 | Reduce the visual clutter and rationalise equipment related to pay and display. (sympathetic colour and materials, sensible placement etc..)   |
| <b>GATEWAYS</b>                    | Improvements to the key gateway locations based on the individual context and physical aspects of each space. Could include: gateway signage, resurfacing, new planting, special lighting, bespoke public art such as roundels in the paving, gateway features, seating and wayfinding posts etc.. |

