

**Report to** Norwich Highways Agency committee  
20 December 2018  
**Report of** Head of city development services  
**Subject** Tombland Transforming Cities Project

**Item**  
**6**

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## **Purpose**

This report is to seek approval to consult on the proposals for the improvement of Tombland.

## **Recommendation**

To approve for consultation the proposals for Tombland that improve facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users by better managing existing traffic movements and creating and improved the environment to boost the local economy as shown on the plan attached as Appendix 1 which have the following effects:

- (1) removing traffic from the northern arm of the 'Tombland Triangle', creating a two-way route to the Ethelbert Gate and improved pedestrian space;
- (2) replacing the pedestrian crossing where Upper King Street meets Tombland, narrowing the carriageway to make crossing easier and putting it on a table to reduce speeds and increase pedestrian safety;
- (3) moving the inbound bus stop CP from Tombland to Upper King Street and widening the pavement to provide improved waiting facilities, including a bus shelter;
- (4) moving the outbound bus stop CK from Upper King Street to Tombland and extending the kerb space available for bus stopping on the west side of Tombland to provide more coherent facilities for north bound bus services;
- (5) providing a new bay in Tombland that caters for loading (including coach drop-off and pick up), taxis and disabled parking;
- (6) formalising the motorcycle parking and increase the amount of bicycle parking;
- (7) implementing changes to the on street parking and loading restrictions.

## **Corporate and service priorities**

The report helps to meet the corporate priority a safe, clean and low carbon city.

## **Financial implications**

The scheme cost has been estimated at £1.3m. The Tombland project is part of the city centre infrastructure package identified in the successful shortlisting for the

Transforming Cities Fund application. The receipt of funding for schemes through the Transforming Cities programme is subject to presenting business cases to the Department for Transport for their approval and to do that support for the scheme needs to be demonstrated. Should the transforming cities funding not be forthcoming, this scheme will not progress unless alternative funding can be found

**Ward/s:** Thorpe Hamlet

**Cabinet member:** Councillor Stonard - Sustainable and inclusive growth

**Contact officers**

Jeremy Wiggin – Transport for Norwich Manager 01603 223117  
Norfolk county council

Zoe Tebbutt – Landscape Architect 01603 212424  
Norwich city council

**Background documents**

None

# Report

## Background

1. The Department for Transport has shortlisted Norwich as a city that is eligible to apply for capital funding from the Transforming Cities Fund. The county council's successful application is based on a vision to "Invest in clean transport creating a healthy environment, increasing social mobility and boosting productivity through enhanced access to employment and learning." There are three packages of infrastructure investment covering the bus network, the city centre and mobility hubs, which will "tackle congestion and connectivity, bolster rail links, support our key economic sectors and unlock brownfield regeneration potential". The city centre package is described as "transforming the city centre by connecting the train and bus stations, development sites and City College with good streets and spaces". The improvement of Tombland south eastern section of Tombland, which builds upon the recent improvements to the northern section, is named as a specific project in the city centre package and the project has synergy with the Prince of Wales and London Street proposals, enhancing accessibility between the City Centre and the railway station.
2. The strategic objectives for the Tombland project deliver this vision by:
  - (a) Making it easier to walk and cycle through Tombland on movement routes between the railway station, Magdalen Street and the Anglia Square development site and the Norwich Lanes.
  - (b) Providing more space for people to access buses and coaches.
  - (c) Reducing conflict and intimidation for pedestrians and cyclists from manoeuvring vehicles.
  - (d) Making it easier for people with mobility and sight problems to navigate around the city centre.
  - (e) Boosting the visitor economy by providing better conditions for sitting out, events and pavement cafes and making the space more attractive.
  - (f) Attracting inward investment in the key economic digital, creative and legal sectors based around the Norwich Lanes and Cathedral Quarter, which especially value the quality of the environment as a reason to invest.
  - (g) Making the space easier to maintain by providing smoother surfaces that can be cleaned and replacing derelict and damaged street furniture.
3. The northern part of Tombland between the Maids Head Hotel and Princes Street was improved as part of the cycling ambition programme in 2015/16, which saw the removal of the roundabout, the creation of much wider pavements and better crossings. This project also introduced a 20mph throughout the city centre.
4. The southern part of Tombland is bisected by the carriageway that carries significant amounts of traffic, including all of the bus services to and from the north of the city. In the longer term the Norwich Area Transportation Strategy seeks to reduce the amount of north-south through traffic but for the time being there will not be any strategic re-routing of traffic and any reduction of traffic

would be the result of the vigorous promotion of alternatives to car use through the implementation of Transport for Norwich projects.

5. The part of Tombland to the east of the main carriageway is the focus of this project. It comprises the cobbled triangular area in the vicinity of the Ethelbert Gate, which contains a redundant public toilet, trade waste bins, pavement cafes, parking, loading and taxi ranks, cycle parking, motorcycle parking, a street trading pitch, telephone boxes and an obelisk. The project area extends into Upper King Street and the bus stop arrangement on the west side of the carriageway in Tombland.
6. The east part of Tombland has been selected as a higher priority for improvement than the west because it has the most problematic layout, is in the most degraded condition and has the most potential for transformational improvement.
7. A feasibility study has been produced that provides detailed analytical information about the functioning of the space, considers alternative design options, outlines officers' response to initial feedback from key stakeholder groups and presents a preferred design option with costings and an indicative programme for implementation. The proposals in this report are based upon it. (The feasibility study is available on the city council's website with the documents for this meeting; click [here](#) ).

### **Current problems**

8. The feasibility study has identified that this part of Tombland suffers due to the pressure of competing uses that take place in the space that have developed incrementally without any fundamental redesign to accommodate them. Specific problems that the project seeks to resolve are:
  - (a) Blocked pedestrian route along the front of the buildings on the east side of Tombland.
  - (b) Pedestrian crossing at the top of Upper King Street forcing pedestrians to deviate from their direct route to Queens Street with insufficient space on the east side of the crossing.
  - (c) Intrusion of traffic circulating around the disused public toilet and lack of footway adjacent to the traffic circulation route making pedestrians feel uncomfortable and unsafe.
  - (d) Conflict between motorists, pedestrians and cyclists passing through the Ethelbert Gate.
  - (e) Pinch points around the bus shelters obstructing pedestrian movement and offering a poor waiting environment for passengers.
  - (f) Lack of waiting space and a poor arrival experience for coach passengers.
  - (g) Addressing the needs of disabled and less mobile people
  - (h) Inconvenient gyratory arrangement for cyclists that prevents cycling directly from Queen Street towards the Cathedral Close via the Ethelbert Gate, obliging cyclists to make a difficult right turn from the main carriageway.
  - (i) Limited visibility for cyclists emerging from the eastern part of Tombland to cross main carriageway into Queen Street.

- (j) Impractical and hidden cycle parking.
- (k) Vehicle loading, taxi and disabled parking space that is off the main carriageway and associated with poor surfaces making them less useable.
- (l) Abuse of loading area for informal picking up and dropping off of passengers leading to delivery vehicles driving across paved areas.
- (m) Informal and undefined area for motorcycle parking.
- (n) Noise and fumes from adjacent bus stops and lack of space preventing the staging of outdoor public events and performances.
- (o) Disused public toilet taking up valuable space.
- (p) Rough surfaces that are difficult to walk on, and are hard to maintain.
- (q) Poor placement and dilapidated state of street furniture.
- (r) Trees that create trip-hazards by uplifting paving.
- (s) Historic obelisk and listed telephone boxes that are hidden by other structures.
- (t) Damage to the 14<sup>th</sup> century Ethelbert Gate scheduled monument from vehicles strikes resulting from the oblique alignment of approaching vehicles following the existing one way circuit road around the disused toilet.
- (u) Pavement cafes that do not function properly due to the rough surfaces and closeness to trade waste bins that are ugly and smelly.
- (v) Street trading pitch that is difficult to service.
- (w) Ineffective street lighting leading to feelings of insecurity and difficult navigation of the space.

## **Proposed design**

9. A design proposal has been produced that successfully tackles all the problems identified in paragraph 8. It is shown in appendix 1. The main features are explained under the subheadings below.

### **Traffic circulation and cycle movement**

10. Traffic currently circulates clockwise on a one-way loop road. This restricts people's ability to walk across the space, prevents cyclists riding towards the Ethelbert Gate and St Faiths Lane from Queen Street, introduces noise and poor air quality, creates confusing traffic movements outside the Ethelbert Gate and results in damage to the scheduled monument from large vehicles approaching at an oblique angle.
11. The northern arm of the loop road will be removed and the southern arm will be made two-way. This will allow cyclists to cross the Tombland carriageway directly from Queen Street into the east part of the space. Cyclists travelling in the opposite direction towards Queen Street will benefit from the greater inter-visibility between themselves and vehicles on the Tombland carriageway as the wider footway on the east side of the carriageway will allow them to be positioned further out.

### **Pedestrian movement**

12. It is currently impossible to walk along the front of the buildings on the east side of Tombland because of the pavement cafes, trade waste bins and rough surfaces. Pedestrians are forced share the road cars circulating around the

disused toilet. A generous 3m wide smooth path would be created in front of the buildings.

13. The footways on the south side of Tombland and around the pedestrian crossing at the top of Upper King Street are especially busy and will be widened to cope with the greater demand arising from this scheme. The pedestrian crossing distance would be shortened, the area of the crossing widened and put on a raised table to make the connection across the Tombland carriageway safer and more convenient.

### **Bus and coach stops**

14. The layby on the east side of the main Tombland carriageway accommodates two buses at the inbound stop CP. It is a popular place for people to disembark after travelling into Norwich but far fewer people board services here compared to outbound stops on the west side of Tombland. Stop CP would be moved into Upper King Street and the footway on the east side of Upper King Street would be widened to 3m in order to accommodate a bus shelter. The buses would no longer be in a layby so they would have no difficulty re-joining the stream of traffic when they pull away.
15. Bus stop CK on the west side of Upper King Street mainly caters for boarding passengers due to it being an outbound service. The pavement is narrow and becomes congested. The split arrangement of outbound stops between Tombland and Upper King Street is also confusing for passengers. The outbound stops would be consolidated in Tombland by moving bus stop CK into Tombland and extending the area of kerb available for buses on the west side of Tombland.
16. The Cathedral is the most important destination for visitors. Coaches currently stop on the east side of Upper King Street. Visitors should have an impressive arrival experience and space to gather in large numbers to get on and off coaches but this is not available in Upper King Street. In order to provide this a 18m coach stop would be created in the layby on the east side of Tombland that is vacated by bus stop CP. This will help our goal of achieving coach-friendly status.

### **Parking for delivery vehicles, pay and display and taxis**

17. The loop road around the public toilet is lined with a loading bay, short stay pay and display car parking, a disabled parking space and a hackney carriage stand. These would be relocated to the space on the east side of the carriageway formerly occupied by bus stop CP, with the exception of the short stay pay and display car parking which would not be replaced. The proposed change in the amount of spaces available for these parking functions is summarised in the table below and their current and proposed locations are shown in appendix 2 and 3. Disabled motorists currently have to exit their cars onto the carriageway of the loop road whereas the proposed arrangement allows them to exit onto the footway. The current loading bay is inadequate and will be expected to cater for coach pick up and drop off as well as deliveries.

No. Of Spaces)	Timing	No. of Spaces	Timing
<b>Current</b>		<b>Proposed</b>	
<b>Taxis</b>			
1	Anytime	1	Anytime
6	18:30-05:00	5	18:30-05:00
6	23:30-05:00	8	23:30-05:00
<b>Short stay P&amp;D</b>			
6	Mon-Sat 07:30-18:30	0	
<b>Disabled parking</b>			
1	Anytime	1	Anytime
<b>Loading bay</b>			
11 metres	Anytime	18 metres	05:00-18:30 (Shared with coaches)

18. The loop road around the disused toilet block is a popular place for Norwich School parents to pick up and drop off children. This manoeuvring of vehicles in a tight space near the Ethelbert Gate makes it feel uncomfortable and unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists, particularly schoolchildren. Removing the loop road would ease this. Some other schools work with the city council to use tokens for pay and display parking. There is potential for this system to be used by the Norwich School at nearby P&D locations such as Bishop's Gate and Cathedral Street and the council has been discussing this with the School as a complementary measure to the Tombland proposals

#### **Motorcycle parking and bicycle parking**

19. It has become customary to park motorcycles next to the disused toilet block although there is no traffic regulation order underpinning this activity. The motorcycle parking is not formalised or delineated and encroaches on other uses of the space. The proposed design includes a planted area at the back of the main space, behind which motorcycle parking would be located. Bicycle parking would also be provided there, increasing the overall amount of parking in response to the growing popularity of cycling in the city as a result investment over recent years.

## **Pavement cafes and trade waste**

20. The restaurants are licensed to have pavement cafes. These are less popular than they could be because the space is constrained and the quality of the surroundings undermined by the loop road and associated parking activity. The uneven gravel surface also causes problems. The proposed design would create larger and more attractive areas for pavement café activity, boosting the local economy. The surface would be smooth.
21. The restaurants have also adopted an unauthorised practice of leaving trade waste in a group of large bins on the highway because they lack space within their building to store more than one day of waste. This practice needs to cease. Furthermore it is incompatible with the high quality public space that would be created through this project. The businesses will need to increase the frequency of their collections so waste is not stored on the highway in line with the way other businesses in the area operate.

## **Disused toilet block**

19. The space is dominated by a partially subterranean and disused building containing toilets. They have been closed since 2013 and there is no prospect of them reopening due to the cost of maintenance and the inaccessible design. Alternative provision is available in nearby restaurants, and at the Rose Lane car park. Demolishing the toilets will create much needed space for pedestrians, street trading, outdoor performances and events. Planning permission will be required for the demolition.

## **Trees**

20. The trees in Tombland are mature and provide a range of environmental and aesthetic benefits. However, two or three trees would need to be removed to facilitate the scheme because they are planted too close together, follow the line of the removed roadway or are located uncomfortably close to a building. These would be replaced by around five new trees that would follow the alignment of the new footway on the east side of Tombland.

## **Historic features**

21. Tombland is one of the most historic public spaces in Norwich, having been the market place before the Norman Conquest. It is surrounded by fine buildings, almost all of which are listed for their special architectural and historic importance and it lies within the city centre conservation area.
22. The removal of the disused toilet block and adjacent road will enable better use to be made of this public space and improve the setting of numerous listed buildings. The changed traffic approach to the Ethelbert Gate will also reduce the damage to the monument. New lighting and tree planting will be designed to complement the buildings.
23. There is a granite obelisk next to the disused toilet block, which was installed in 1860 to commemorate the location of machinery that stood on the site between 1700 and 1850 and supplied drinking water to the city. Most people are unaware this because it is hidden from many viewpoints by the toilet and items



of street furniture. The obelisk would be restored and moved to form the central feature of the space.

24. The cobbles are an attractive feature of the space. However, they make the ground difficult to maintain or walk on leaving it dirty and unusable. The proposal is therefore to remove cobbles in all the areas where people would walk and relay some of them in more limited areas to form an “apron” to the buildings and frame building entrances and the main footway alongside the eastern range of buildings.

### **Lighting**

25. Tombland is a popular area at night but the lighting is very poor. It is focused on the main carriageway and the rest of the space is dark and uninviting. It can feel unsafe and the lack of light makes the CCTV camera less effective. A new lighting scheme would be designed to complement the way the space would work.

### **North Tombland**

26. Some minor amendments to the northern part of Tombland are proposed as part of these changes. These include introducing bollards between the main carriageway and cycle track to prevent unauthorised parking as was originally proposed, but was not done at the time in the hope that the area would function effectively without them. The cycle track would be adjusted so that it re-joins the carriageway just south of the Princes Street traffic lights to co-ordinate with the proposals for south Tombland presented here.

### **Consultation**

27. These proposals have been informed by gathering information from the following organisations and individuals: Norwich Access Group, Norfolk and Norwich Association for the Blind, Royal National Institute for the Blind, businesses (Zizzi, Giggling Squid), bus operators (konectbus, First, Sanders Coaches), local members representing Thorpe Hamlet, Norwich Cathedral, Norwich School, Norwich BID, Norwich Cycling Campaign and the Norwich Society.
28. A three-week consultation on the design of the scheme is planned for January 2019 and would include a staffed exhibition promoted through a news release and letters to local residents and business.

### **Timetable**

29. Following the consultation in January the scheme will be amended as necessary and approval will then be sought to advertise the necessary statutory traffic regulation orders (TROs). The TROs will not be advertised until it is confirmed that there is funding available through the Transforming Cities Fund, an announcement on which is expected late-Summer/Autumn 2019. Construction will commence once all approvals in place. That is currently estimated to be in 2020/21.

30. Planning consent is required for the demolition of the toilet block. Subject to funding being available this process could start ahead of any decision on the Transforming Cities Fund, as removing the block would improve the environment in Tombland, regardless of the scheme outlined in this report.

## Integrated impact assessment



**NORWICH**  
City Council

### Report author to complete

<b>Committee:</b>	Norwich Highways Agency Committee
<b>Committee date:</b>	20 December 2018
<b>Director / Head of service</b>	Andy Watt
<b>Report subject:</b>	Tombland Transforming Cities project
<b>Date assessed:</b>	November 2018

	Impact			
<b>Economic</b> (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Finance (value for money)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The scheme would be externally funded through the Transforming Cities Fund and is subject to appropriate business case development and sign off.
<b>Other departments and services</b> e.g. office facilities, customer contact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	None anticipated.
<b>ICT services</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	None anticipated.
<b>Economic development</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The scheme boosts the visitor economy and inward investment in the digital, creative and legal sectors. Connections to Magdalen Street, the Anglia Square development site, the train station and the Norwich Lanes would be strengthened.
<b>Financial inclusion</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	It will become easier to move around the city without needing to own or run a car.
<b>Social</b> (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Safeguarding children and adults</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No specific comment.
<b><u>S17 crime and disorder act 1998</u></b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The scheme will provide more easily managed space and the potential for improved CCTV coverage. The police will be consulted as part of the consultation and throughout any subsequent detailed design to ensure any particular concerns / issues around crime and disorder are noted and addressed where appropriate.

	Impact			
<b>Human Rights Act 1998</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No specific comment.
<b>Health and well being</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	This scheme supports increased levels of walking, cycling and public transport and the resulting health and well-being benefits of these activities. It will also create the opportunity to enjoy being outside in a beautiful and historically significant part of the city. It will foster civic pride by dealing with a neglected area.
<b>Equality and diversity (please add an 'x' as appropriate)</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Relations between groups (cohesion)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	It will provide a place for people to meet and enjoy being together.
<b>Eliminating discrimination &amp; harassment</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No specific comments.
<b>Advancing equality of opportunity</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The scheme will improve the accessibility of the area for disabled people by providing footways, smooth surfaces, tactile delineation, and safer crossings. Groups representing disabled people have been consulted in the development of the design.
<b>Environmental (please add an 'x' as appropriate)</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Transportation</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The scheme provides improved pedestrian and cycling environments and better access to public transport.
<b>Natural and built environment</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The scheme will result in a big improvement to the aesthetic quality of one of the most historically significant open spaces in the country.

	Impact			
<b>Waste minimisation &amp; resource use</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Materials will be reused where possible e.g. cobbles.
<b>Pollution</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Making it easier for people to walk, cycle and use public transport reduces car use, congestion and consequently pollution.
<b>Sustainable procurement</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	This scheme is likely to be provided under a long term contract.
<b>Energy and climate change</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The scheme will promote more sustainable forms of transport that use less energy and mitigate climate change.
<b>(Please add an 'x' as appropriate)</b>				
	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Risk management</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Risk assessments are routinely carried out on contracts such as this. There is a Transport for Norwich communications plan in place to minimise any risk to reputation.

## Recommendations from impact assessment

### Positive

Positive impacts are expected in relation to economic development, financial inclusion, crime and disorder, health and wellbeing, relationships between groups, equality of opportunity, transportation, natural and built environment, waste minimisation, pollution, energy and climate change.

### Negative

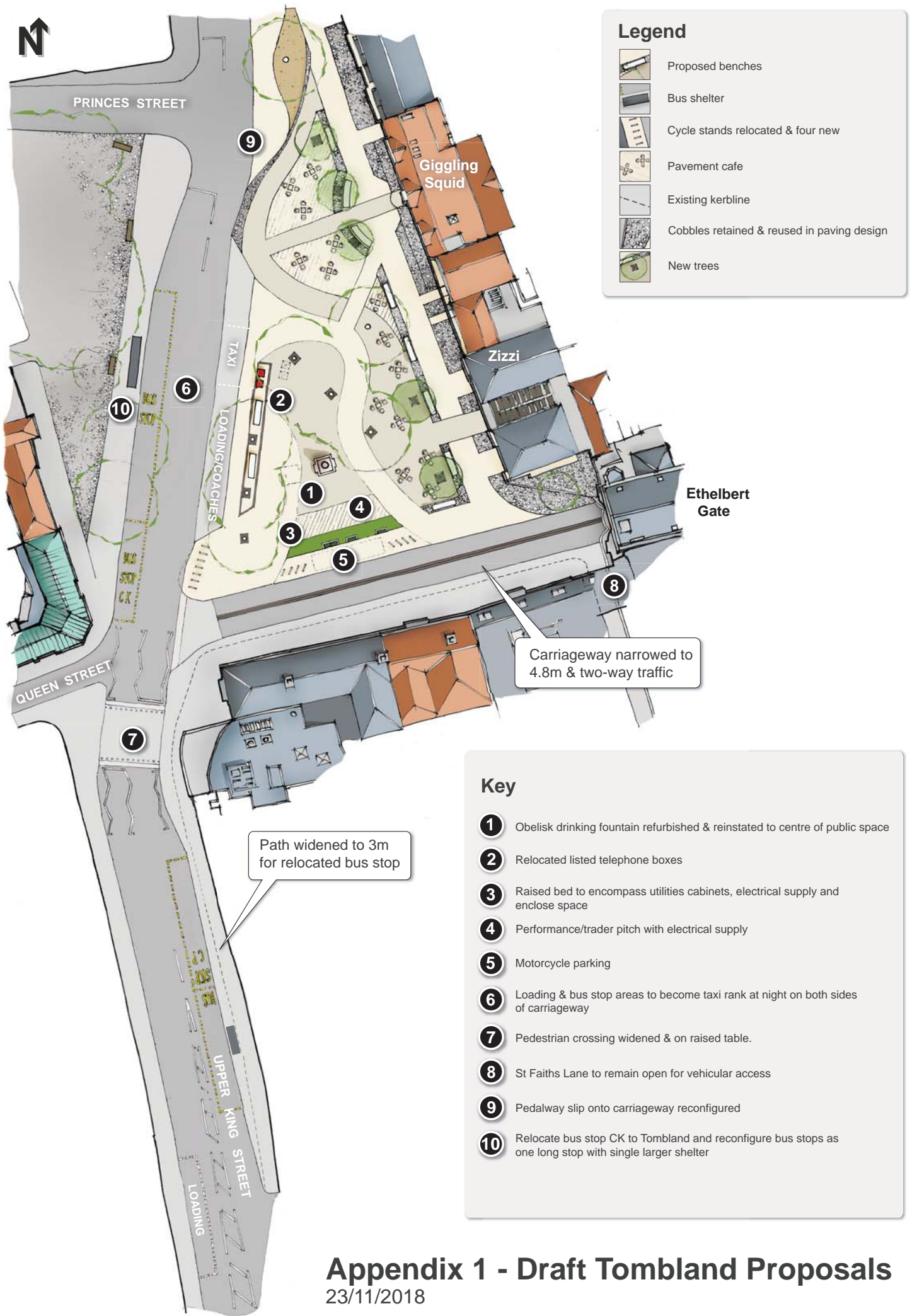
There are no negative impacts to resolve.

**Neutral**








No action is required.

**Issues**

Any issues raised through the consultation will be fully considered and reported as appropriate to NHAC.



**Legend**

-  Proposed benches
-  Bus shelter
-  Cycle stands relocated & four new
-  Pavement cafe
-  Existing kerblines
-  Cobbles retained & reused in paving design
-  New trees

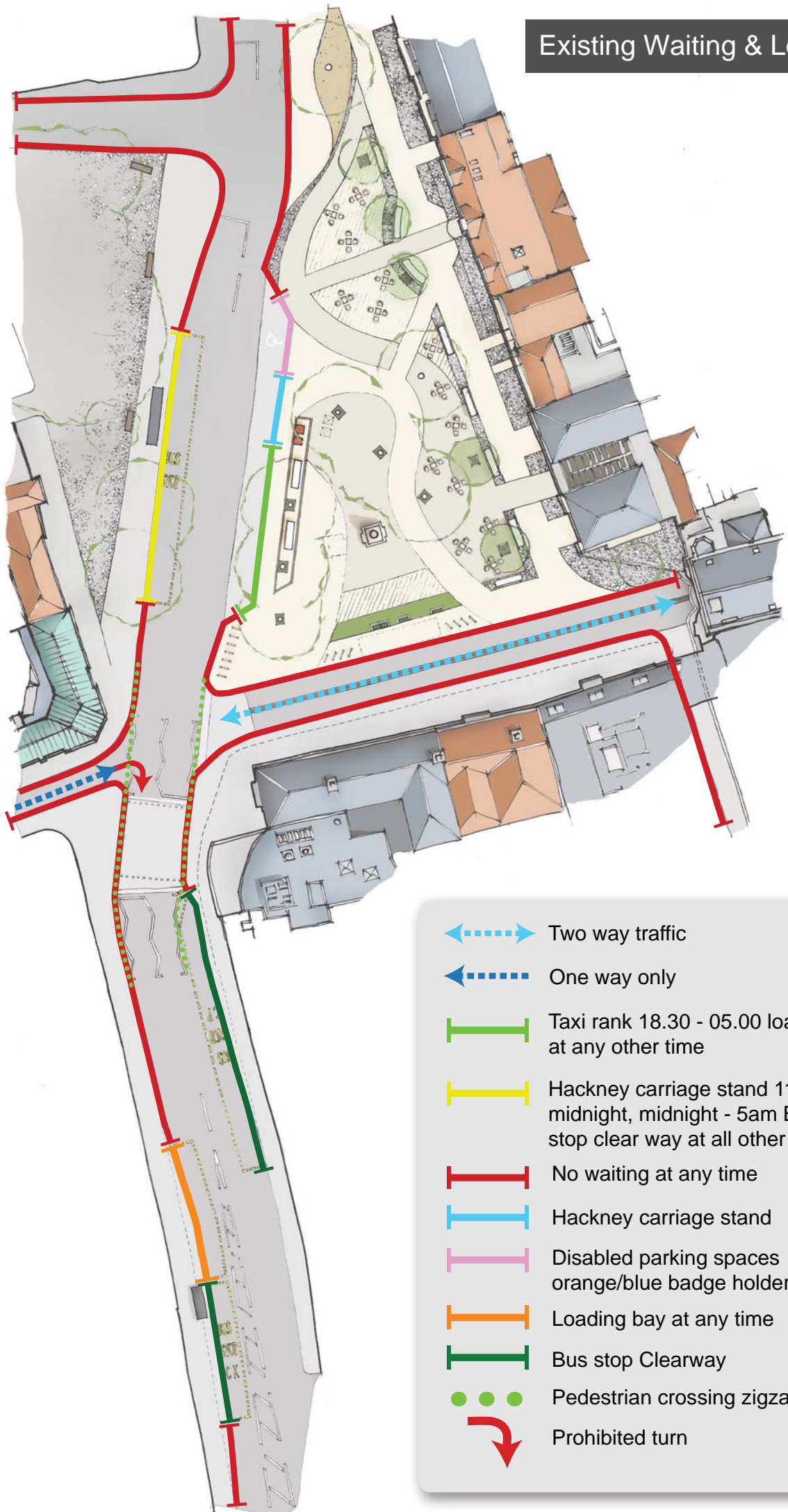
**Key**

- 1** Obelisk drinking fountain refurbished & reinstated to centre of public space
- 2** Relocated listed telephone boxes
- 3** Raised bed to encompass utilities cabinets, electrical supply and enclose space
- 4** Performance/trader pitch with electrical supply
- 5** Motorcycle parking
- 6** Loading & bus stop areas to become taxi rank at night on both sides of carriageway
- 7** Pedestrian crossing widened & on raised table.
- 8** St Faiths Lane to remain open for vehicular access
- 9** Pedalway slip onto carriageway reconfigured
- 10** Relocate bus stop CK to Tombland and reconfigure bus stops as one long stop with single larger shelter



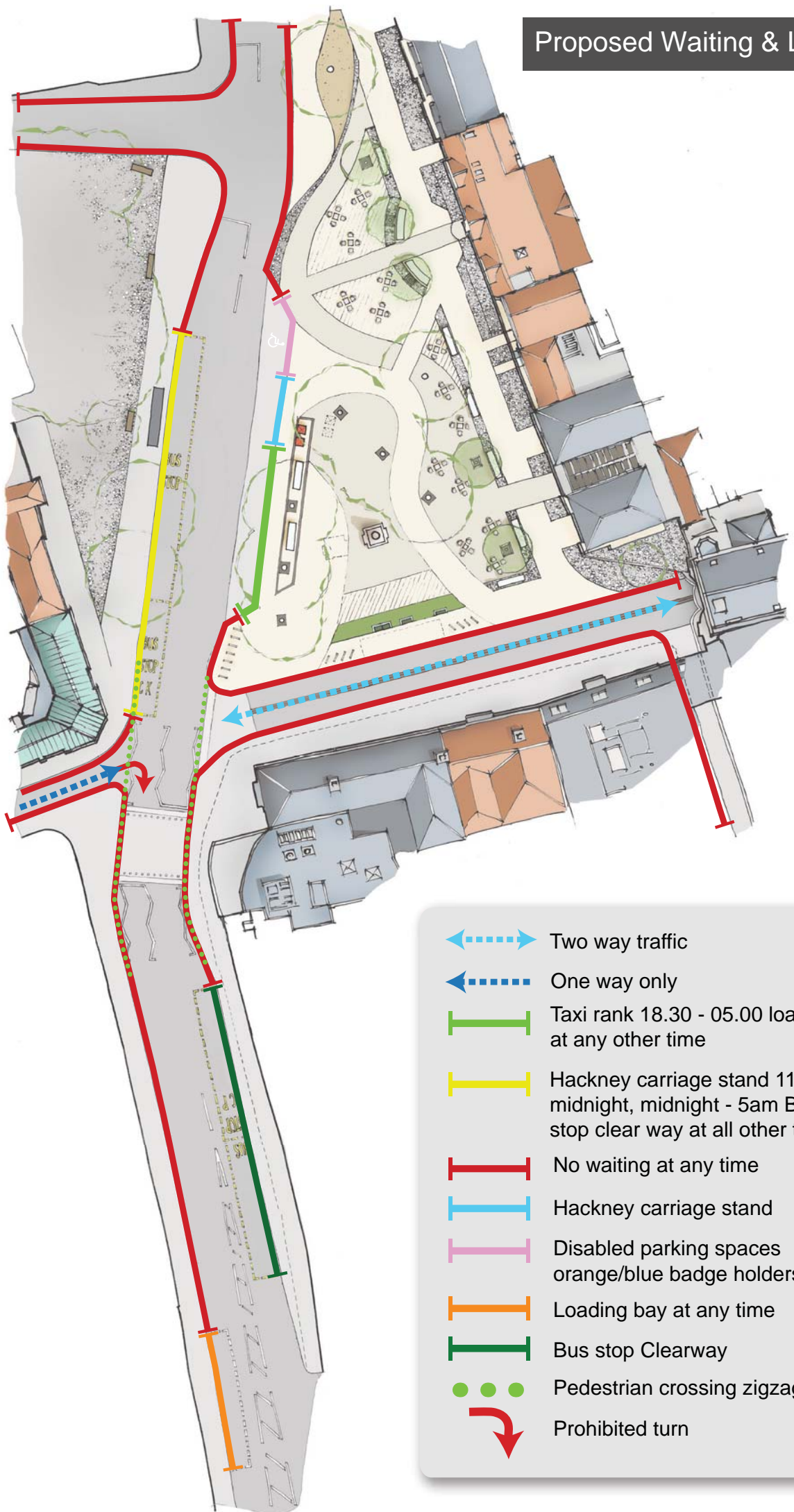



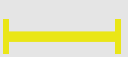
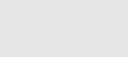


# Existing Waiting & Loading



- Two way traffic
- One way only
- Taxi rank 18.30 - 05.00 loading at any other time
- Hackney carriage stand 11.30 - midnight, midnight - 5am Bus stop clear way at all other times
- No waiting at any time
- Hackney carriage stand
- Disabled parking spaces orange/blue badge holders
- Loading bay at any time
- Bus stop Clearway
- Pedestrian crossing zigzags
- Prohibited turn

# Proposed Waiting & Loading



-  Two way traffic
-  One way only
-  Taxi rank 18.30 - 05.00 loading at any other time
-  Hackney carriage stand 11.30 - midnight, midnight - 5am Bus stop clear way at all other times
-  No waiting at any time
-  Hackney carriage stand
-  Disabled parking spaces orange/blue badge holders
-  Loading bay at any time
-  Bus stop Clearway
-  Pedestrian crossing zigzags
-  Prohibited turn