South Woodham Ferrers
Neighbourhood Plan

Town centre ideas
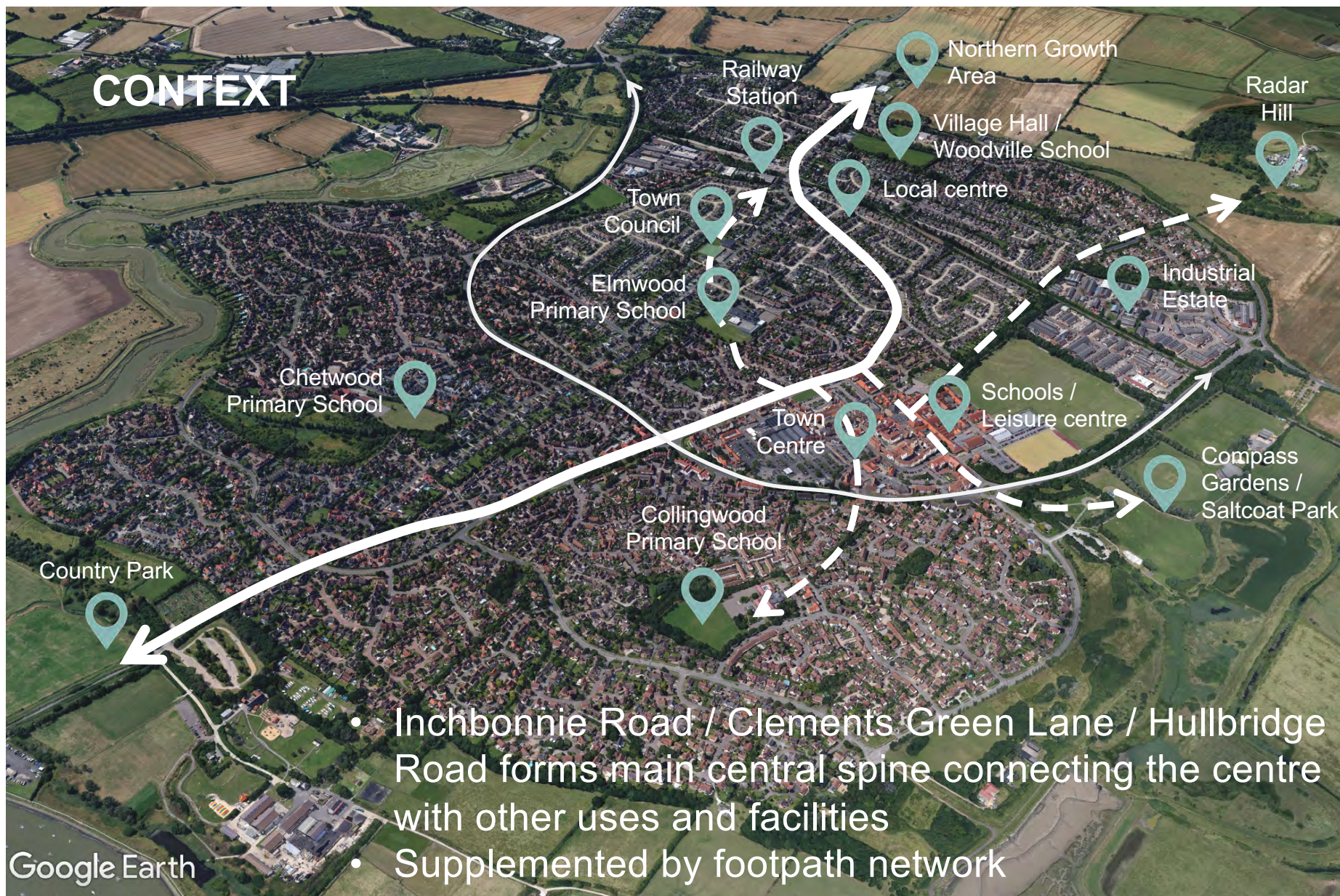
Troy Planning + Design

April 2019

Context and framework for change

CONTEXT

Country Park

Chetwood Primary School

Town Council

Elmwood Primary School

Railway Station

Northern Growth Area

Village Hall / Woodville School

Local centre

Radar Hill

Industrial Estate

Town Centre

Collingwood Primary School

Schools / Leisure centre

Compass Gardens / Saltcoat Park

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NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

- Inchbonnie Road / Clements Green Lane / Hullbridge Road forms main central spine connecting the centre with other uses and facilities
- Supplemented by footpath network

Google Earth

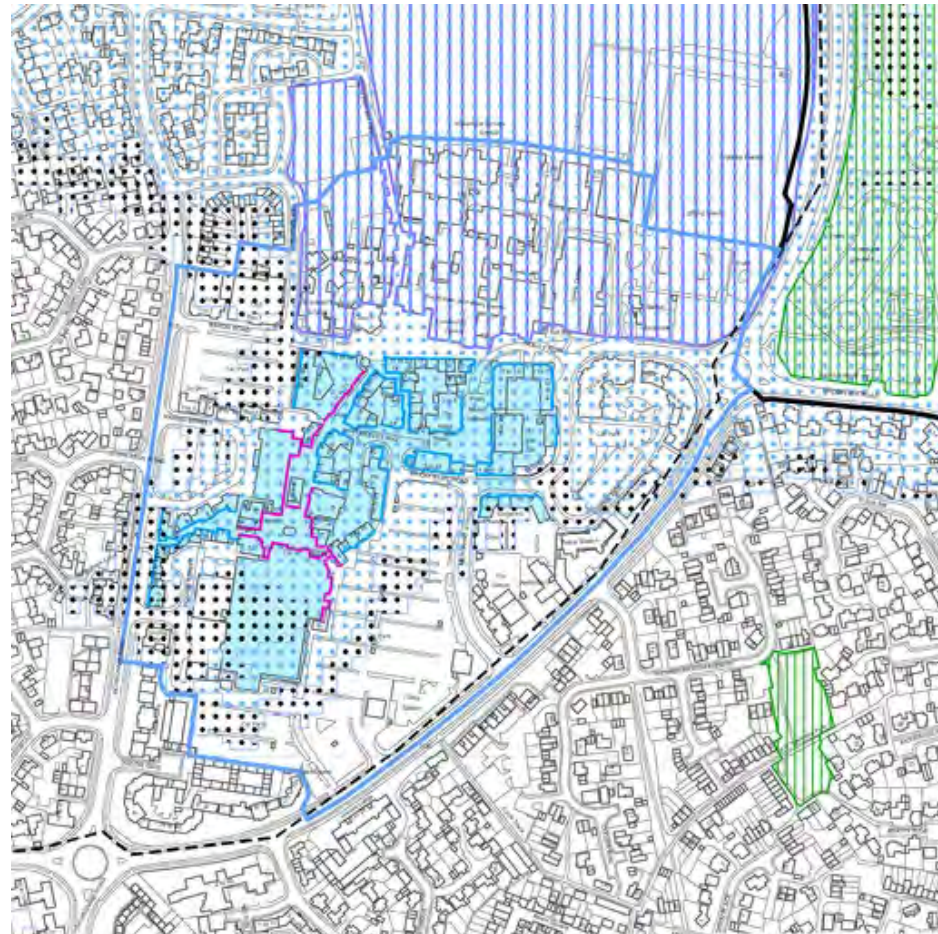# TOWN CENTRE CONCEPT IDEAS
ORIGINAL VISION AND OBJECTIVES

- To promote the highest standard of design and layout
- All the advantages of a small country town
- Mix land uses as much as possible
- Pedestrian spaces and squares will be carefully treated
- Planting will be introduced
- The smaller shopping units could be combined to suit the requirements of individual traders
- The centre itself is contained by the major road framework

Fig. 14
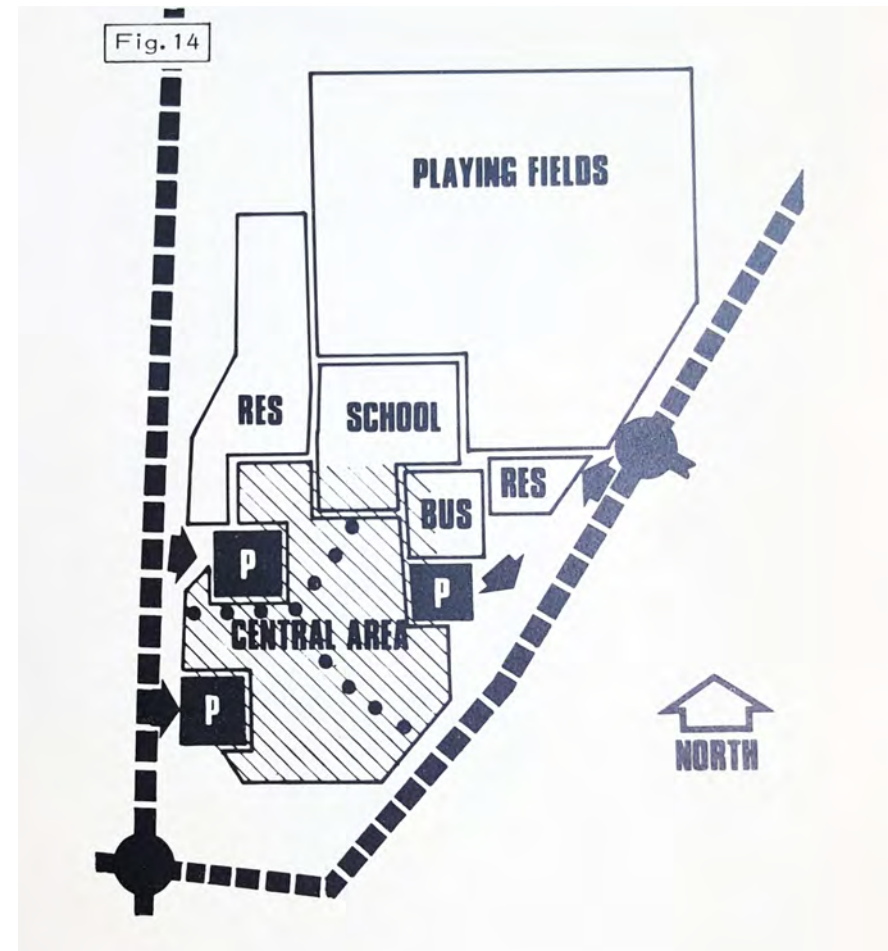
TOWN CENTRE CONCEPT IDEAS
CURRENT POLICY FRAMEWORK

- A focus on retail frontage

- Do we need to reconsider the role and future of the 'High Street'?

- Does the role of the High Street need to change so it can survive?

- A mix of policy and project ideas required

TOWN CENTRE CONCEPT IDEAS
VISION FOR THE FUTURE

The town centre is <u>not just</u> a retail centre

It should be the **'centre for everything'**

retail + civic and community + employment + entertainment and activities + housing + green space + places to play + places to learn + a cultural centre + a market place + a meeting place + great streets and spaces

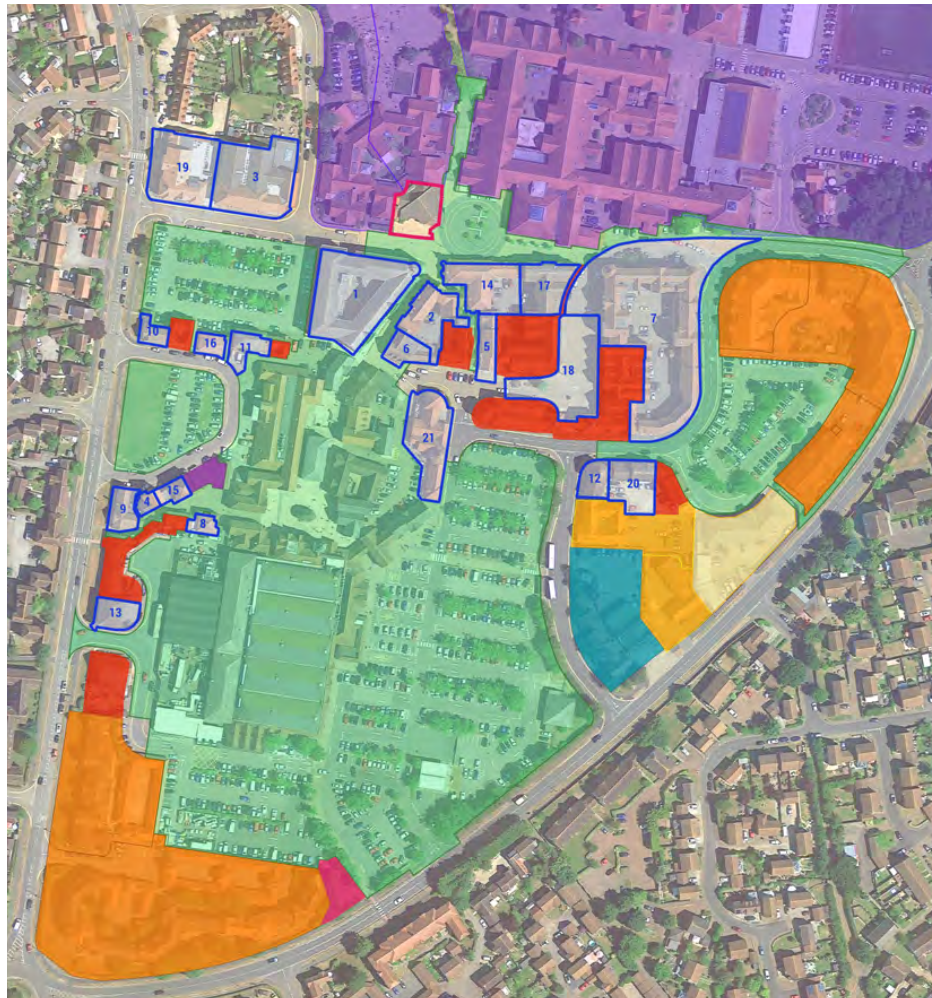The main square should be:

the town's 'living room'

TOWN CENTRE CONCEPT IDEAS
OWNERSHIP

- Single main land owner (Asda) with other smaller ownerships
- Scope for change should factor in ownership arrangements and potential for intervention

TOWN CENTRE CONCEPT IDEAS
POINTS TO NOTE

- Options retain main Asda store
- Not all ideas are mutually exclusive
- There is potential for a phased or hybrid approach to delivery
- This can allow for small-scale intervention in the short term
- Allows for impact of growth to be monitored
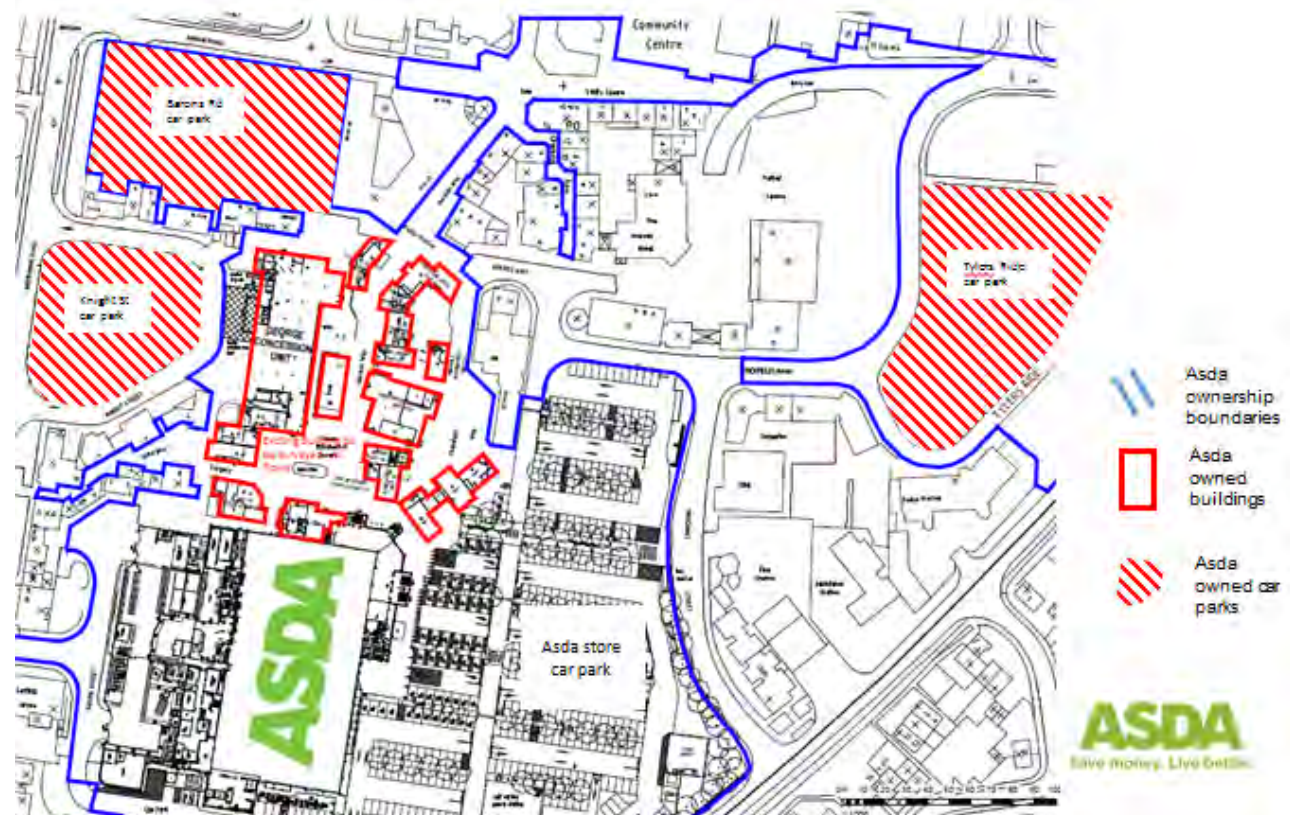
'What if...?' Town Centre concept ideas

1. FOCUS ON THE 'HIGH STREET'

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NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

- Focus retail activities on central spine
- Public realm and shop front improvements
- Encourage 'Pop-up' / 'meanwhile' uses in vacant units
- Allow contraction of retail activity elsewhere
- Encourage change of use to other supporting town centre uses
- Allow change of use and redevelopment for residential

2. OPEN UP THE CENTRE
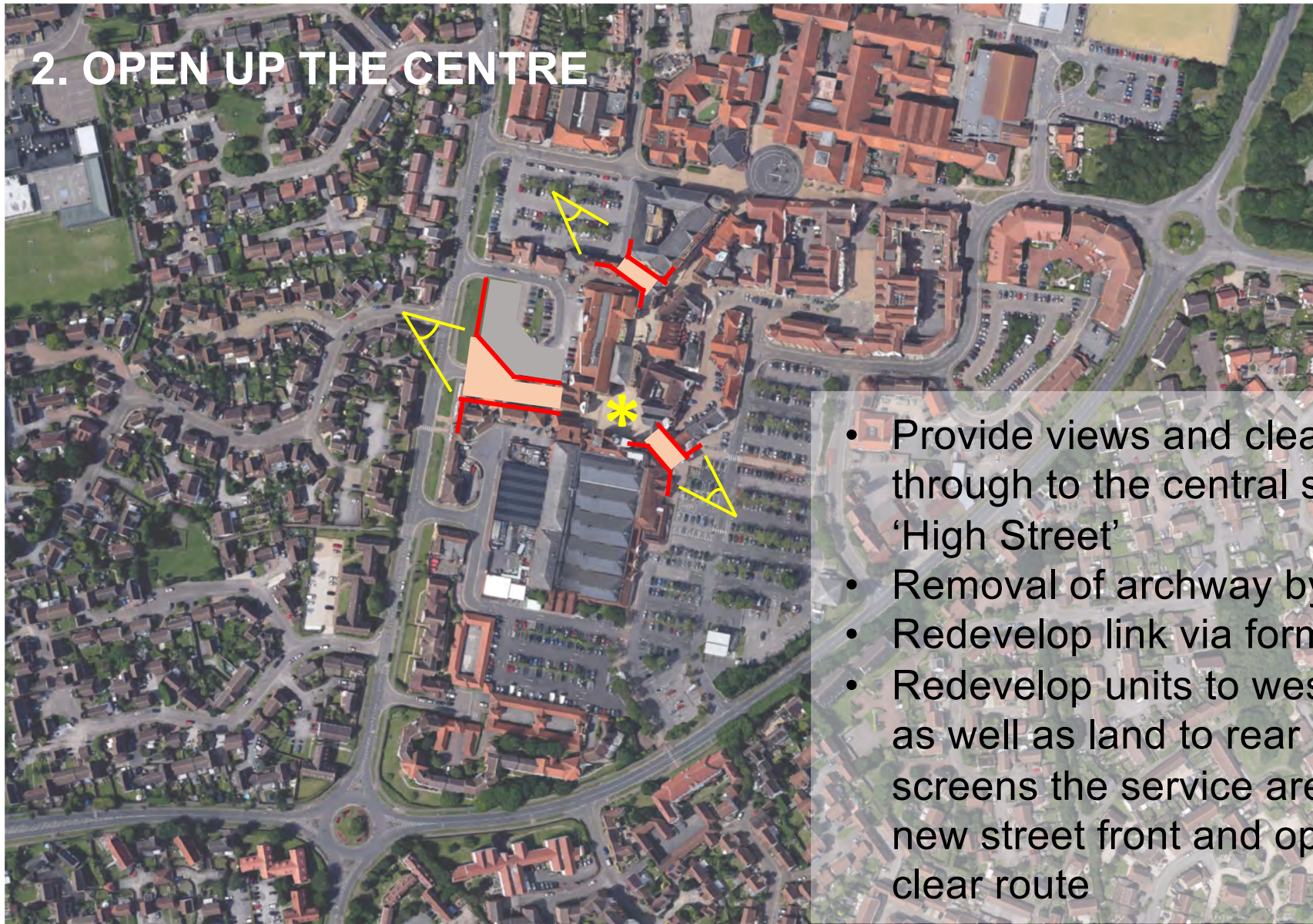
- Provide views and clear links through to the central square and 'High Street'
- Removal of archway by Asda
- Redevelop link via former Natwest
- Redevelop units to west of square as well as land to rear of George: screens the service area, creates a new street front and opens up a clear route

3. DEFINE THE SQUARES

Formal landscaped square

Green walls

'Green street'

'High street'

'London square'
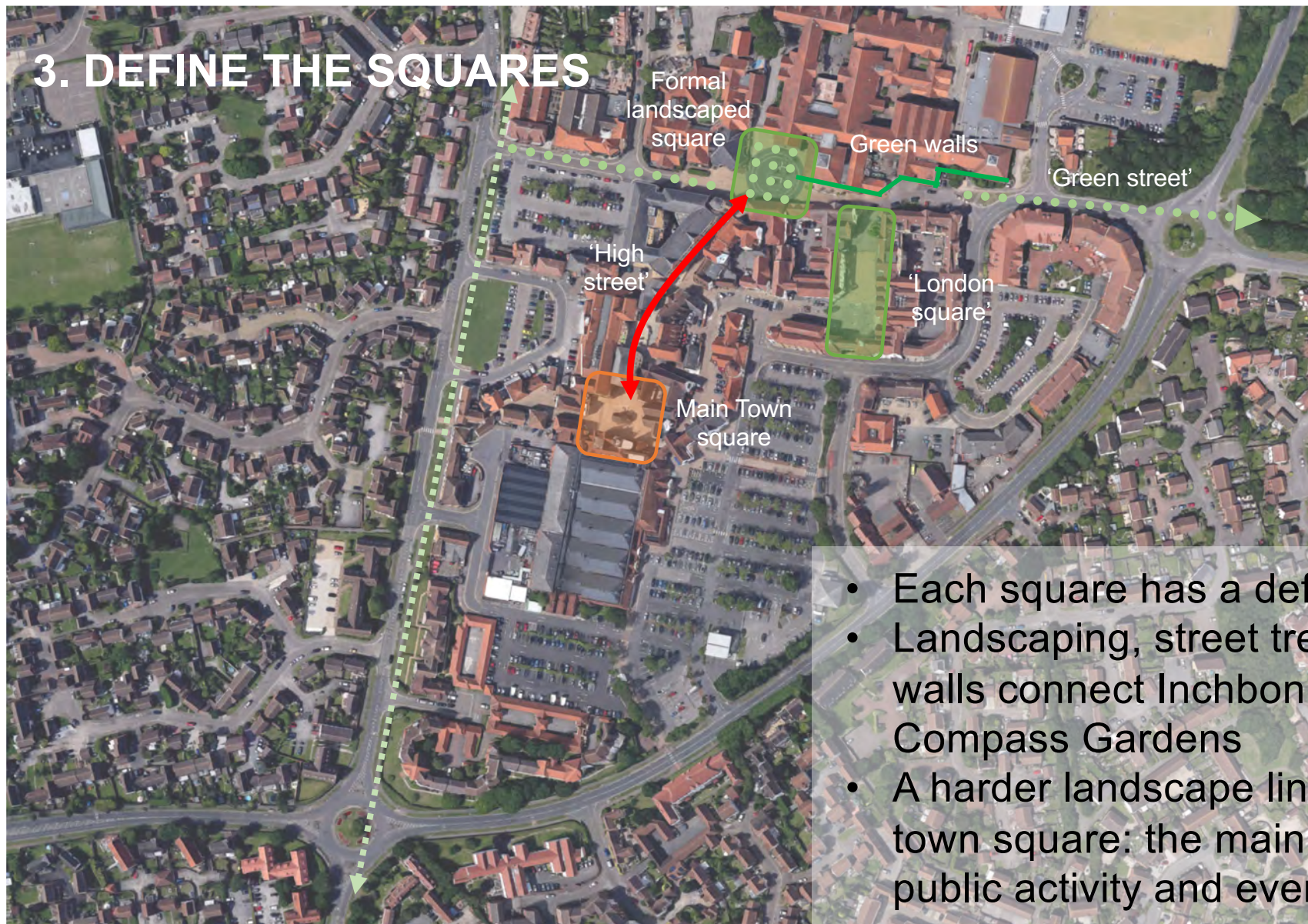
Main Town square

- Each square has a defined function
- Landscaping, street trees and green walls connect Inchbonnie Road with Compass Gardens
- A harder landscape links to the main town square: the main location for public activity and events

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NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

4. DEFINE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE REALM
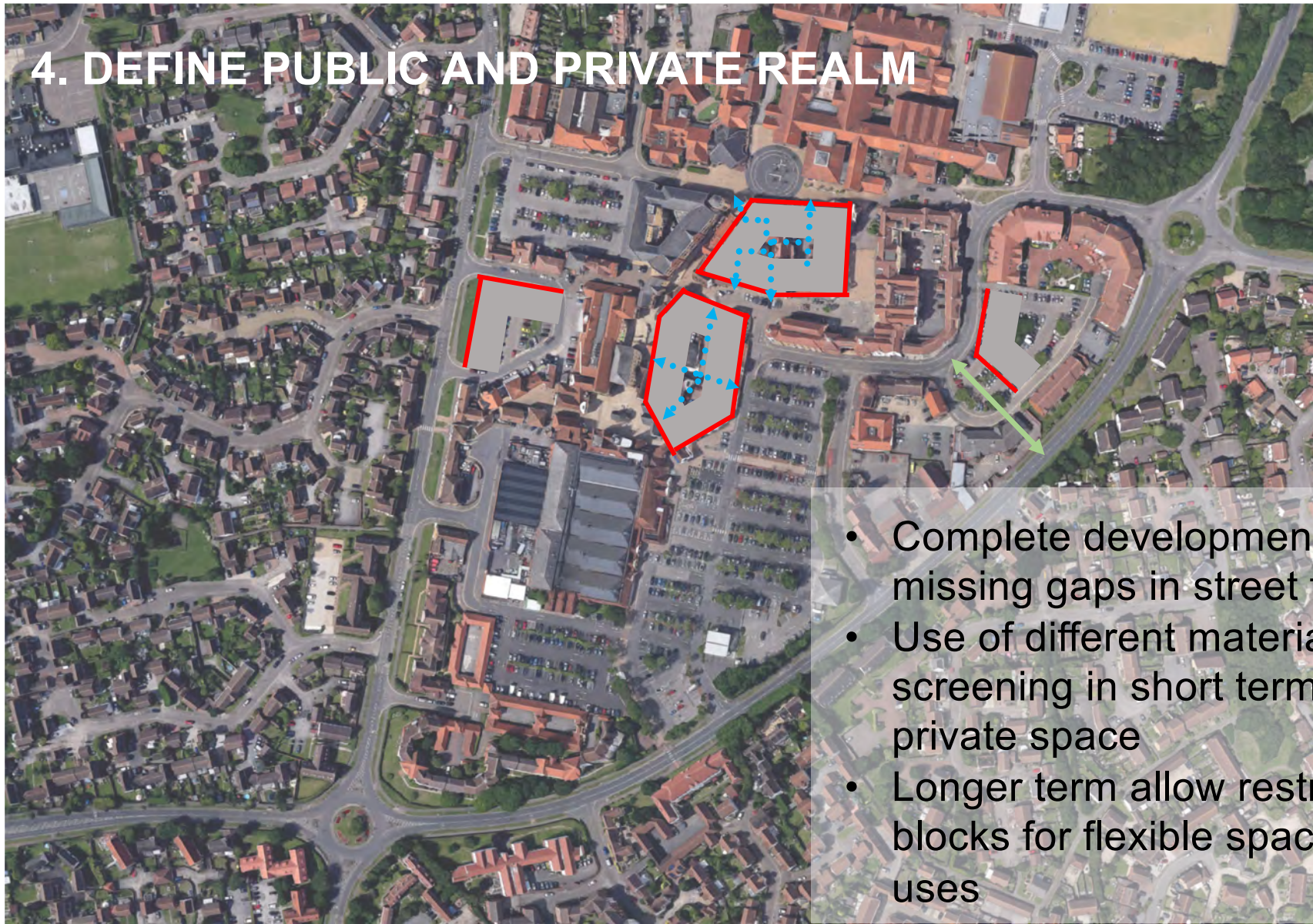
- Complete development blocks and missing gaps in street frontage
- Use of different materials or screening in short term defines private space
- Longer term allow restructuring of blocks for flexible space for a mix of uses

5. FILL THE GAP

A new link integrating with street and footpath network

Active street frontages to town centre and Ferrers Road

- A new mixed use block with a civic and social function replacing health facilities and emergency services
- Relocate the Town Council back to the centre – a new 'attractor'
- Incorporate employment space / a location for 'start-ups'

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NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

6. TURN THE TOWN AROUND

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NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Main Town square
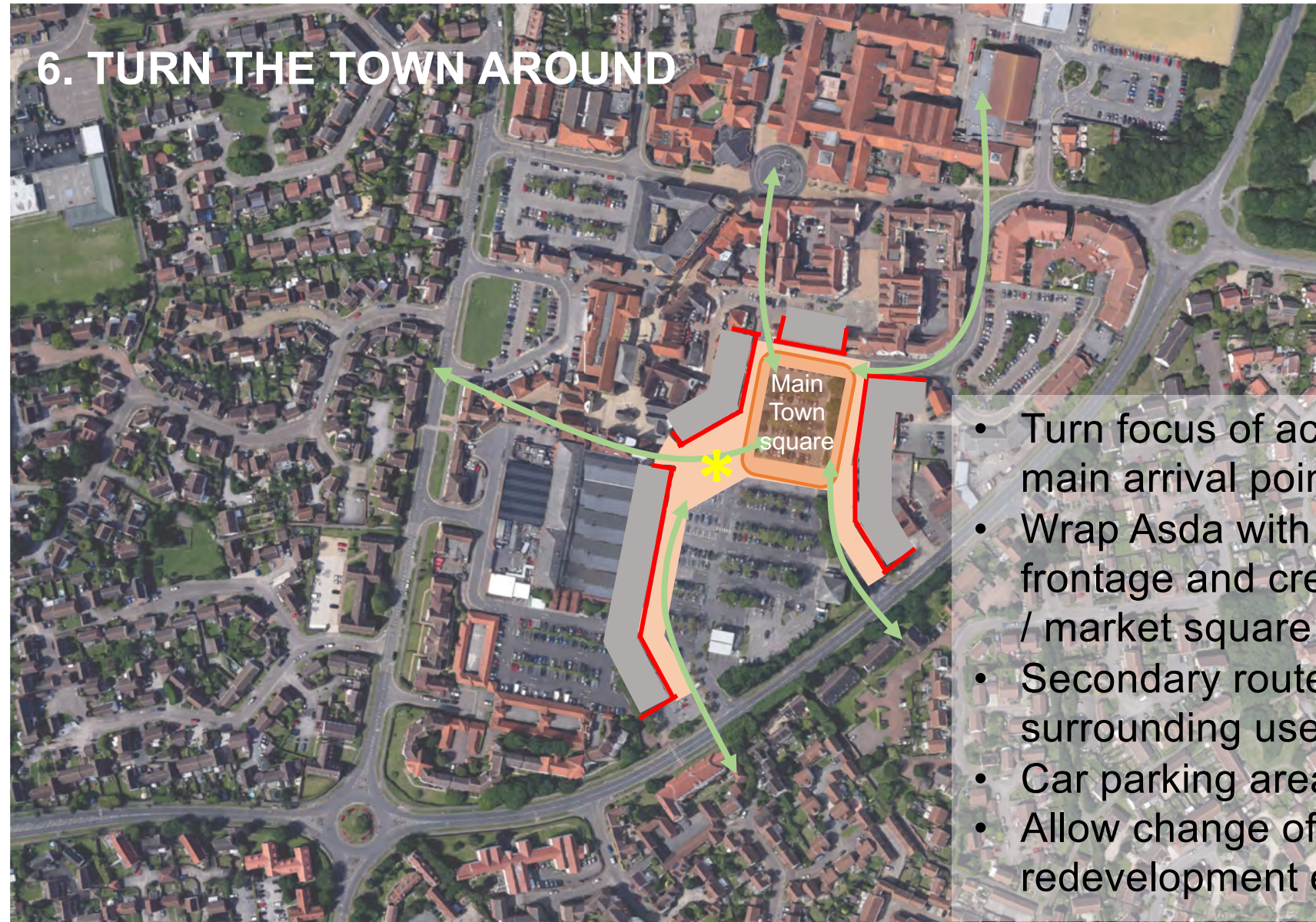
- Turn focus of activity onto main arrival point
- Wrap Asda with active frontage and create new town / market square
- Secondary routes link to surrounding uses
- Car parking area rationalised
- Allow change of use and redevelopment elsewhere

- Turn George around 90º and incorporate other active uses
- Create new square and visible arrival point from Inchbonnie Road into Town Centre
- New square connects with main north south routes through town
- Restructure car park to provide direct link between centre and residential footpath network
- Allow new development along this for a mix of uses
- Reconfigure, landscape and rationalise car parking

8. FOCUS ON THE 'CIVIC EDGE'

Formal landscaped square

Main Town square

'Green street'
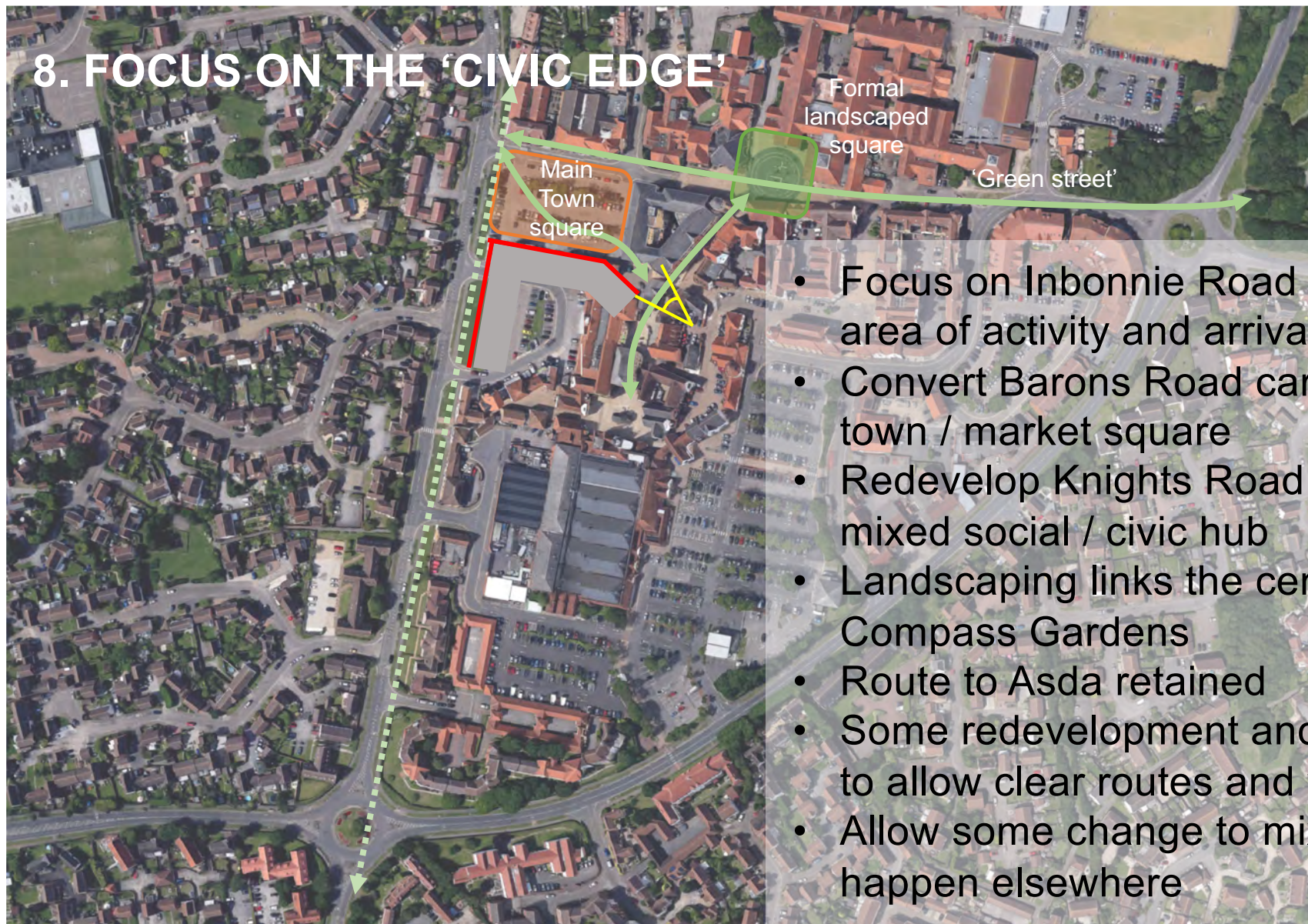
- Focus on Inbonnie Road as the main area of activity and arrival point
- Convert Barons Road car park to new town / market square
- Redevelop Knights Road car park as mixed social / civic hub
- Landscaping links the centre with Compass Gardens
- Route to Asda retained
- Some redevelopment and restructuring to allow clear routes and views through
- Allow some change to mixed use to happen elsewhere

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NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

TOWN CENTRE CONCEPT IDEAS
SCALE OF POTENTIAL INTERVENTION

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
S	M	S	L	S	L	XL	M

- Different scales of intervention implied by different options
- This could allow for a phased approach to change
- Combinations of options can work together to deliver larger transformation over the longer-term
- A focus on public realm, appearance and other 'non land-use' projects in the short-term could act as a catalyst for change

TOWN CENTRE CONCEPT IDEAS
A COMBINATION OF OPTIONS CAN WORK TOGETHER

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	⬜	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🔴	🟠
2	🟢	⬜	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟠	🟠	🟠
3	🟢	🟢	⬜	🟢	🟢	🔴	🔴	🟠
4	🟢	🟢	🟢	⬜	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢
5	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	⬜	🟢	🟠	🟠
6	🔴	🟠	🔴	🟢	🟢	⬜	🔴	🔴
7	🔴	🟠	🔴	🟢	🟠	🔴	⬜	🟠
8	🟠	🟠	🟠	🟢	🟠	🔴	🟠	⬜

Non land-use ideas

PLACE BRANDING
STRENGTHEN IDENTITY, ECONOMY, SENSE OF PLACE

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NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

- Identify what defines the town
- Use this to raise profile, drive investment and capture retail spend
- Maximise relationship with landscape
- Maximise legacy as the 'modern birthplace' of residential 'place-making'
- Reflect this in growth area: an 'expo' for the 21st Century 'new garden town'
- A centre of excellence for design and green infrastructure
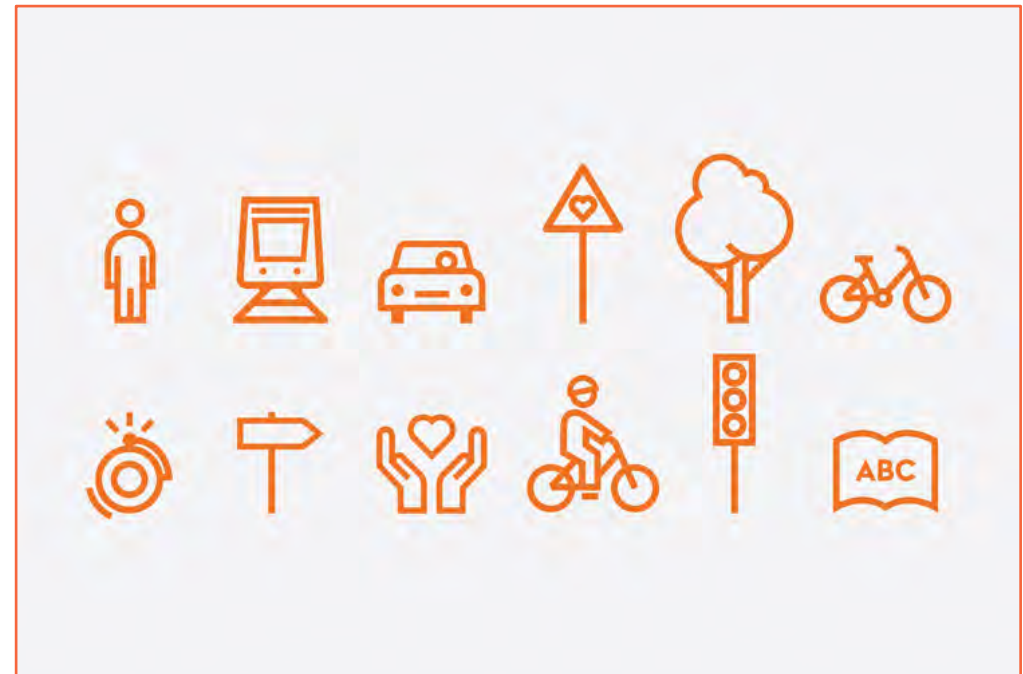
above: images from Stockholm City branding

COMMUNITY EVENTS
THE 'SW-FESTIVAL'

alamy stock photo

alamy stock photo

- Return of and expansion of festival?
- Annual programme of events, linked to place and identity, e.g.:

  - Housing and town design
  - River-based events
  - Local food and drink produce (eg.: Crouch Ridge and Clayhill Vineyards)
  - Maximise use of the Bandstand
  - Open clocktower as a viewing platform

- Located in the town centre and around town
- Make use of empty properties to activate town centre space (pop-ups and meanwhile uses)

COMMUNITY CURRENCY
THE 'SWF' POUND

- A Town Currency
- Exchange rate of 1:1
- Spend in and support local businesses
- Retains retail spend in SWF
- Fosters community pride and identity
- Implemented in Bristol, Brixton, Cardiff, Cornwall, Exeter, Kingston, Lewes, Stroud, Totnes etc

Next steps

TOWN CENTRE CONCEPT IDEAS
NEXT STEPS

- Explore ideas with town centre business community / landowners
- Refine ideas / combination of ideas
- Visualise the opportunities
- Explore ideas with wider community
- Town Council to consider potential for 'non land-use' ideas

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