

# HODDESDON TOWN CENTRE STRATEGY



May 2010



# Contents

Introduction	4
Key issues	5
Hoddesdon town centre vision	7
Hoddesdon town centre objectives	8
Delivering the vision and objectives	9
Short term actions	11
Medium term actions	15
Long term actions	18
Conclusions	19
Table of actions	20
Monitoring and reviewing	22
Appendix 1: Supporting evidence	23
Appendix 2: Local plan policies	24
Appendix 3: Consultation	25
Appendix 4: Existing on-street and off-street parking spaces	26
Appendix 5: Bibliography	28

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# Introduction

1. Hoddesdon town centre is a popular destination with a good mix of shops, businesses and community facilities. It has several large food stores, a range of national retailers and an encouraging number of independent shops. These are complemented by a wide selection of cafés, restaurants, pubs and other eating places. It also offers a range of office premises for local businesses. The town centre has many attractive historic features, a popular market on Wednesdays and Fridays, good quality street furniture and shop fronts that are generally well maintained.



Outdoor café culture in Hoddesdon town centre

2. Hoddesdon town centre could provide a wider offer and would benefit from additional shops selling clothes, shoes, electronic goods, DIY items and other non-essential goods. The former pedestrianised High Street meant that shoppers were unable to make quick stops. The Tower Centre is unpopular with traders and has a high number of vacant units. The number of vacant units in the town centre itself is low in comparison. Some residents perceive the town as unsafe at night due to anti-social behaviour and the lack of CCTV. The centre will also continue to face competition from neighbouring town centres.
3. The purpose of this Strategy is to make sure that Hoddesdon town centre continues to be a popular destination for shoppers, visitors, traders and other businesses. It also provides an opportunity to consider the centre's tourism prospect in relation to the White Water Canoe Centre being constructed for the 2012 Olympic Games and associated opportunities for increased visitors to the Lee Valley Regional Park. The Strategy provides a framework for positive action in Hoddesdon town centre. The Council and partner agencies will work to implement the Strategy.
4. The Strategy does not contain specific policies. Local Plan policies will continue to be applied when assessing proposals for development in and around Hoddesdon, a list of the most relevant can be found in Appendix 2. They will be reviewed and where appropriate replaced by new policies as part of the Local Development Framework process. The Strategy itself provides the framework for a wider set of actions for Hoddesdon town centre which are expected to be implemented by the Council and other organisations/statutory bodies. Planning briefs will be developed where particular actions or sites require additional detail and guidance. The Strategy forms part of the evidence base for the Core Strategy and will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications in and around Hoddesdon town centre.
5. The Strategy has been developed in consultation with local residents and shop keepers. The Council thanks all those who have contributed to its development.

## Key issues

6. This section examines the key strengths and weaknesses of Hoddesdon town centre.

✓ Hoddesdon town centre is well located. It is easy to reach via the A10 and not too far from the M25. There are several car parks located around the centre with some short stay and disabled bays along the High Street. The nearest railway stations are Rye House, a 20 minute walk away, and Broxbourne.

✓ Hoddesdon town centre is generally well served by buses from surrounding residential areas. These take shoppers and visitors directly to the High Street within an easy walk of shops and services. The centre is also within walking and cycling distance for many Hoddesdon residents.

✓ Hoddesdon town centre is a traditional market town with an attractive shopping environment. The entire length of the High Street is designated as a Conservation Area. It contains a number of Listed Buildings and a pleasant focal point around the clock tower. Outdoor eating and drinking creates a vibrant street scene. There is not much litter or graffiti.

✓ Existing national retailers include Sainsbury's, Tesco Express, Aldi, Boots, New Look, Peacocks, Clinton Cards, Café Nero, HSBC, Barclays and Santander in the High Street and Superdrug and Argos in the Tower Centre.

There are also an encouraging number of independent stores including a book shop, jewellers, fishing tackle shop, furniture store and boutiques.

✓ Hoddesdon town centre hosts an outdoor market on Wednesdays and Fridays with about 50 stalls outside the Tower Centre and along the High Street. Telephone surveys reveal that the market attracts a significant number of repeat visitors. The town centre also provides opportunities for tourism, which will build upon the opportunity provided by the construction of the Olympic White Water Canoe Course in the Borough. This includes fine historical buildings, an attractive Conservation Area and a heritage trail.

✓ There are a number of community facilities and leisure opportunities within or close to Hoddesdon town centre. These include Hoddesdon library, Broxbourne Civic Hall, Lowewood museum and the Mayhem Theatre Arts Centre which provides dance, drama and fitness classes for young people. There are also leisure opportunities at Barclay Park and in the Lee Valley Regional Park.

✓ Hoddesdon town centre has over 600 parking spaces, some provided by the Council but most belonging to Sainsbury's and the Tower Centre. However, surveys suggest additional car parking spaces would be welcome, particularly if they are free.



Conservation Area and Listed Buildings create an attractive shopping environment

## Key issues (continued)

✘ Hoddesdon High Street was pedestrianised in the 1990s and traffic re-routed to surrounding roads. This created a safe and car-free environment but discouraged people from making quick trips. Shoppers were often required to find a parking space, pay for a parking ticket and walk to their destination. This was not necessarily a problem for people who intended to spend a few hours, but was inconvenient for those with young children or simply calling in on their way to and from work. It made supermarkets a more attractive alternative for short visits.

✘ The bypass effect caused by pedestrianisation has many other impacts. Pedestrian underpasses leading under busy roads and into the town centre are unpopular, particularly at night. Most buildings are focused inwards towards the town centre and this means that people arriving and driving past by car are greeted by blank rear walls. There are also a number of under-used spaces within the town centre, particularly around the clock tower and war memorial.

✘ The Tower Centre has the potential to offer a significant amount of retail space but currently suffers from under-use. Major refurbishment was carried out by the owners in early 2009 to improve circulation and create larger units that are more popular with national retailers. A new entrance canopy and better signage have also been installed. It now offers some 10,500 square metres of floorspace.

✘ The town centre has suffered from illegal taxi parking in Amwell Street and elsewhere, which can block routes and traffic flows.

✘ There is a lack of signage from some approaches to the town centre including the A10 junction.



*Making Hoddesdon a safe and pleasant place to visit*

## Hoddesdon town centre vision

7. The Council's vision for Hoddesdon town centre is:

**Hoddesdon town centre will build on its current offer to become an increasingly attractive place to live, work in and visit with an exciting range of local shops and services.**

**It will provide a safe, leisurely and enjoyable atmosphere for shopping, eating, drinking and relaxing whilst preserving and enhancing its fine historic setting.**

**New housing and employment development in and around the town centre will increase the number of people living and working in the area.**

**Community events and leisure facilities will increase the number of people visiting the town centre.**

**Community engagement between residents, traders, visitors and the Council will help contribute to the town's future vitality.**



*Hoddesdon town centre will become an increasingly attractive place to live, work, visit and enjoy*

8. The vision reflects the views of local residents, visitors, traders and other businesses. It also takes account of evidence gathered by the Council and seeks to be realistic and achievable. Hoddesdon is an attractive centre with a range of shops but would benefit from a wider comparison goods offer. The recently reconfigured Tower Centre units offer space to support this opportunity. The Strategy seeks to expand the mix of uses that makes Hoddesdon distinct from other towns.

9. The Strategy aims to create the conditions which draw people naturally towards the town centre for day-to-day shops and services and to establish an environment that encourages people to visit the town centre when they might not otherwise do so. The vision therefore seeks to develop a vibrant town centre which is attractive and easily accessible and which supports shopping, local services and an eating and drinking café culture. This does not include additional take-aways.

# Hoddesdon Town Centre objectives

10. The key objectives of the Hoddesdon Town Centre Strategy are:

- To improve the quality and viability of the town centre and its services
- To maintain a high quality environment for shoppers, visitors, residents, traders and those working in the town centre
- To make it easier for people to access the town centre by all means of transport
- To encourage attractive eating and drinking places for all members of the community
- To increase natural footfall by supporting new homes and employment development above shops and in locations close to the town centre
- To create more attractive gateways into the town centre
- To improve links with nearby green space such as Barclay Park and the Lee Valley Regional Park
- To encourage events and leisure opportunities that appeal to all sections of the community
- To protect and enhance attractive and historic buildings and other features
- To maintain a clean, green, safe and attractive street scene
- To maintain and enhance an attractive and uncluttered range of street furniture
- To ensure that everyone feels safe using the town centre during the day and at night
- To make better use of under-used spaces around the clock tower and war memorial
- Over time improve the range of services and facilities in the town centre
- To encourage the redevelopment of the Tower Centre



*Barclay Park, Hoddesdon*

# Delivering the vision and objectives

11. This section examines how the Council and its partners will seek to deliver the vision and objectives for Hoddesdon town centre.



*Key objectives include making better use of space, creating attractive gateways and connecting the centre to green spaces*

## Planning policies

12. Planning policies are an important way of delivering actions. They can be used to direct appropriate development to preferred locations, to prevent development from occurring in particular locations and to improve the way that development contributes to its surroundings.
13. National planning policy statements focus on encouraging development in existing town centres where it is accessible and most likely to reduce car journeys. PPS4 (Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth) states that the Government's key objective for town centres is to promote their vitality and viability as important places for communities. This means that town centres should be popular, successful and lively and capable of remaining so in the future. Councils should plan for the growth and development of existing centres by encouraging a wide range of shops, leisure facilities and local services for all members of the community, including socially-excluded groups. Practice guidance also promotes the development of positive strategies to underpin the development of town centres. National planning statements and guidance notes are available to view at: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planning/planningpolicyguidance/planningpolicystatements/>
14. Regional policies set out in the East of England Plan establish a hierarchy of town centres and state that development should not take a centre into a higher tier. Policy R5 states that Councils should establish a network for local town, district and neighbourhood centres in their areas. The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS14) for the East of England is available to view at [http://www.go-east.gov.uk/goeast/planning/regional\\_planning/?a=42496](http://www.go-east.gov.uk/goeast/planning/regional_planning/?a=42496)
15. The Broxbourne Local Plan states that the Council will prepare a framework to maintain and improve Hoddesdon town centre. The most relevant Local Plan policies are detailed in the Retail and Town Centre chapter. Relevant policies can also be found in the Transport chapter and the Heritage and Design chapter (see Appendix 2). These will continue to be used as a basis for determining planning applications. The Broxbourne Local Plan is available to view at: [http://www.broxbourne.gov.uk/environment\\_and\\_planning/planning\\_policy/local\\_plan.aspx](http://www.broxbourne.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/planning_policy/local_plan.aspx)
16. The Council is currently replacing the Local Plan with a Local Development Framework. This presents an opportunity to establish new planning policies that better reflect the vision and objectives of this strategy. The Council's Core Strategy will highlight the significance of Hoddesdon in Broxbourne's retail hierarchy. It will recognise the importance of the Hoddesdon Town Centre Strategy and its proposed actions.

## Broxbourne Sustainable Community

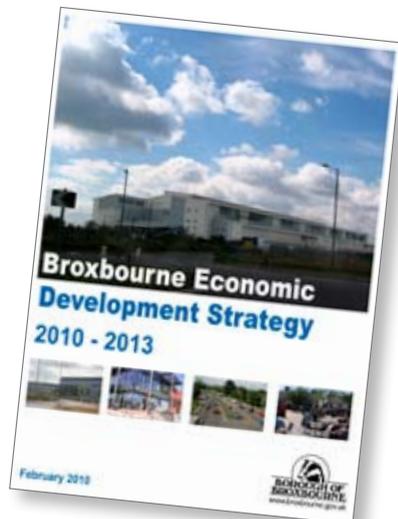
### Strategy

17. The Sustainable Community Strategy for Broxbourne has been prepared by a wide range of partners including the Council, Hertfordshire County Council, Hertfordshire Police and the NHS Primary Care Trust. It sets out priorities for promoting and supporting town centres, improving safety, involving local businesses, improving car parking and facilitating a broad programme of events and festivals. The Broxbourne Sustainable Community Strategy is available to view at [http://www.broxbourne.gov.uk/community\\_and\\_living/lsp\\_and\\_the\\_community\\_plan.aspx](http://www.broxbourne.gov.uk/community_and_living/lsp_and_the_community_plan.aspx)



## Broxbourne Economic Development Strategy

18. The Economic Development Strategy for Broxbourne sets out a framework for developing the local economy. It aims to attract local businesses and provide new facilities for the local workforce. It also supports town centres by funding programmes and local events. The Broxbourne Economic Development Strategy is available to view at: [http://www.broxbourne.gov.uk/business\\_in\\_broxbourne/economic\\_development\\_strategy.aspx](http://www.broxbourne.gov.uk/business_in_broxbourne/economic_development_strategy.aspx)



## Financial investment

19. Delivering change usually requires significant financial investment. The Council's budget is under significant pressure and this position is likely to get worse in coming years. Actions will therefore need to be funded from a range of sources, such as the Council's capital and revenue programmes, Hertfordshire County Council's capital programme for highway works, Section 106 contributions from new developments, grants via the Broxbourne Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and Hertfordshire Forward<sup>1</sup>, specific Government grants and private sector investment.
20. It is anticipated that many improvements and enhancements will be delivered by the private sector in association with the implementation of planning permissions for new development. The Council will work with developers to facilitate new development which helps to deliver the Strategy's vision and objectives.
21. It is also likely that assistance, co-operation and support will be needed from local traders for some actions to proceed. The Council will continually monitor actions set out in this Strategy and the funding mechanisms required to deliver those actions. Planning is an important element in the successful delivery of the Strategy. It is not however, the only vehicle for delivering change.

<sup>1</sup>County-wide Local Strategic Partnership

## Short term actions

22. This section sets out short term actions that the Council and others will implement to improve Hoddesdon town centre. Short term actions are things that can be done immediately or in the next few years.

- The Council **re-opened the High Street to cars and taxis for parking purposes on 2 December 2009**. This created additional free parking within a one-way system from Conduit Lane through the High Street to Amwell Street. This has made shops more accessible and easier to visit. 23 new free parking spaces along this section of the High Street have enabled short stay stops. Re-opening the High Street will not impact significantly upon the centre's wide paved areas which create the conditions in which an outdoor eating and drinking café culture could thrive. It should be noted that rising bollards may continue to be used to close the High Street to traffic on market days and during other community events. As a result of the proposals the Council will look to make better use of pedestrian space to help create attractive pathways, community areas and space for other events and markets.

- At the time of writing the Strategy, a number of **planning applications for retail, leisure and residential development** in Hoddesdon town centre are being considered and approved. The most significant of these include renovation and redevelopment of the Conservative Club and its surrounding area to form a new bar and restaurant and 40 residential units. The Council will continue to monitor applications for retail and other uses in the centre and where appropriate apply policies to restrict certain uses. This will ensure the town centre remains diverse and attractive to all sections of the community.
- There are a number of vacant units in the town centre, the vast majority of which are located in the Tower Centre. To help address this, the Council is working with the property owners to **use vacant shop units** for a range of non-commercial uses related to community information, arts and promotions. Rental levels are set by individual private landlords and the Council is therefore unable to control this process in order to attract new retailers.



*The Strategy aims to create the conditions for a café culture and use vacant shop units for other uses*

● The Council has established a programme of improvements to preserve and enhance the physical environment of the town centre. The Council has or will:

- enhance shrub beds and provide new or replacement planters which complement the town centre
- clear litter and remove graffiti
- repair cracked and broken paving slabs
- repair street furniture such as seating, lighting columns and rubbish bins
- approve a planting scheme each August for the following spring / summer months
- look at options to highlight key buildings and architectural features
- introduced a Hoddesdon Hotline to allow traders and residents to report problems
- worked alongside architectural consultants to create a long term programme of environmental actions



- The Council will develop a **programme of events to entice people into the town centre**. Events will help to make better use of under-used civic spaces around the clock tower and war memorial. A number of events are under consideration including farmers markets, musical events, carnival processions, fairground rides, family fun runs, books and craft markets and food and drink festivals. Farmers have been approached to establish whether they would be interested in holding a market in the centre as has the Carnival Committee for proposals to revive the carnival procession. Discussions continue to be had. A list of events will be incorporated into a separate Hoddesdon "What's On" guide, which is to be updated twice a year. This is in addition to the existing Borough wide "What's On" guide.
- The markets are an important asset in attracting visitors to the town centre and the Council will make every effort to ensure that they continue to thrive. The Council performs a review of Broxbourne's markets on average once a year. The review is benchmarked against 11 other authorities and examines several criteria including payment and charging methods, pitch sizes, costs per pitch and fees, annual increases and methods by which new traders are recruited. Future decisions will be made based on these findings. This will include a review of charges. The Council will continue to make efforts in **promoting existing markets**, as well as the **introduction of any new markets**, through various advertising initiatives. The Council will also consult with traders and market stall holders on any proposals that may impact upon the market.
- To address taxi parking problems, the Council **extended the existing taxi rank on Amwell Street in November 2009**. The Council will issue Parking Contravention Notices to any taxis which are observed to be illegally parked. Communication with taxi drivers and cab companies will continue.
- The Council will be reviewing current parking provision to help make the town centre more attractive to visitors and shoppers and to ensure consistency with charging and parking periods. The **Council provided free car parking on Saturdays throughout December 2009** and may do the same in future years to encourage more shoppers and visitors during the Christmas period. The Council will also review existing on-street and off-street parking arrangements to make sure they are appropriate. Appendix 4 outlines existing on-street and off-street car parking in and around the town centre. The implementation of new parking procedures and the creation of new car parking spaces will be updated in the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR, see Monitoring Section).
- The Council will also be **improving shelters and racks for cycle parking** in the short term, helping to encourage and support sustainable modes of transport. Traffic studies reveal that some cycle parking facilities are inadequate with cyclists forced to lock bicycles to nearby street furniture
- The Council has **appointed an officer with specific responsibilities for town centres and major projects** in order to strengthen partnerships and communication with local traders, the public, property owners and potential investors. This will help attract new businesses and retailers into the centre and help deliver actions in the Strategy. Recent research by consultants employed by the Council revealed a lack of awareness of the town centre and the Borough of Broxbourne by potential retailers. In response the Council will promote opportunities within the town centre and Borough to potential investors. This will be supported by up-to-date information on the Borough's demographic profile and business and leisure offer.
- The Council has been involved in local and county-wide **"shop local" campaigns** which help to promote the Hertfordshire retail offer. The Vibrant Towns Task Group, established by Hertfordshire Forward, will help deliver various actions to achieve this. The Council will be supporting and promoting this campaign in Hoddesdon. The development of a town centre guide which would promote Hoddesdon shopping, other services and facilities as well as the centre's historical heritage will also help to encourage residents to shop locally.

- The Council has already developed its **website to promote existing shopping facilities** and provided a link to [www.hoddesdononline.co.uk](http://www.hoddesdononline.co.uk).
- The Council will **use existing planning policies** to support the objectives of this Strategy.
- The Council is currently seeking funding to **refurbish the Tower Centre toilets** and will also be identifying whether retailers are prepared to open up their own toilets for members of the public. This will provide facilities for visitors and residents and help draw them into shops where they may not have previously done so. The Council will assess the successfulness of this by contacting other town centres already implementing such a scheme.
- Based on consultation responses the Council considers signage to be an important short term factor. To help shoppers and visitors successfully walk, cycle or drive into the town centre, to find particular destinations once within it and to access nearby green spaces such as Barclay Park and the Lee Valley Regional Park, the Council will **upgrade existing signage or introduce new signage**. Existing services such as the one stop shop and health facilities will be well signposted as will the town centre from train stations such as Broxbourne and Rye House. The use of electronic boards to help advertise specific facilities and parking areas is currently being explored. The

boards will need to be sympathetic to the town conservation area. Designs for 'you are here' signs are also being developed.

- The Council will be implementing proposals for new **"Welcome to Hoddesdon"** signs at either end of the High Street. Designs may incorporate elements of the town's historic and heritage features such as the original bull sign or other photographic material. This will help give the town centre a better sense of identity and a selling point for promotional material, something which it is currently lacking. At present the Council is bidding for grant money to help implement these actions in the short term.
- In conjunction with the Broxbourne Community Safety Partnership, the Council will **consider safety initiatives to encourage more visitors into the town centre**. Crime statistics demonstrate that there are low levels of crime at present, but more can always be done to reduce anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime. This includes looking at the potential for CCTV in the High Street with the help of retailer investment, upgrading street lighting within the town centre and the development of a shopwatch scheme between traders and police. With the support of the Broxbourne Community Safety Partnership funding will be secured for the **appointment of an additional Police Community Support Officer** for The Hoddesdon Town Safer Neighbourhood Team for a three year period.



*Southern entrance to the High Street and possible "Welcome to Hoddesdon" gateway signs (courtesy of Saunders Architects)*

## Medium term actions

23. This section sets out medium term actions that the Council and others will implement to improve Hoddesdon town centre. Medium term actions are things that the Council and others will seek to bring forward in the next five to 10 years, if feasible.

- In the short term, the Tower Centre owners indicate they are willing to assist, where possible, with the re-use of vacant units for short term flexible uses. They also state they are able to be competitive and flexible (within commercial reason) on the rental and terms of any transaction. However, a more radical medium term solution is required which looks at a **redevelopment of the Tower Centre with the intention to attract shoppers and traders to the town centre**. The Council's objectives are to deliver:

- a high quality redevelopment that incorporates a mix of uses with an emphasis on retail but with scope to include residential, commercial and leisure with additional parking and open space;
- a retail store which would act as a significant 'draw' into the town;
- a comprehensive development that, where possible, involves the redevelopment of the existing residential units;
- a development which is integrated with the rest of the High Street and which helps improve accessibility from residential areas to the north and the A10;
- a well designed and sustainable development which complements and enhances the Conservation Area and the centre's historical heritage;
- a development that provides a mix of day time and night time uses which are safe and attractive to use;
- a development that complements the Strategy's other actions and objectives.



*An aspirational vision for the Tower Centre (courtesy of Saunders Architects)*

The Council's aim is to bring forward a redevelopment of the Tower Centre as soon as feasibly possible by actively encouraging and approaching developers and by using necessary Council powers. The plan on the previous page shows a possible redevelopment and vision for the site.

- The Council will work with the County Council to seek to provide a **right hand turn facility from Charlton Way into the southern end of the High Street**. This is to help visitors travelling from the north to enter the town centre. At present, right turn movements are banned and access from the north is reliant upon the use of the Cock Lane Roundabout.
- In addition to the redevelopment of the Tower Centre, the Council will be looking to facilitate the **redevelopment of the former squash club on Conduit Lane** to help attract visitors into the centre. The Council will seek to promote a redevelopment which provides both retail and residential units. Any development must be well integrated with the main High Street area.
- The Council will seek to deliver improvements for **better public transport, walking and other cycling facilities**. Ideas include safer routes into the

town centre from surrounding residential areas, improved footpath links and cycling facilities, working with Hertfordshire County Council to deliver better bus services and a Sunday service if possible. A Hoddesdon and Broxbourne Urban Transport Plan is to be developed, in partnership with the County Council, to investigate issues such as accessibility, improved bus services and cycle facilities. It will also consider the location and re-design of bus stop layouts in the town centre.

- If the actions taken to date do not address current taxi parking problems, the Council will consider **additional taxi rank space** to increase taxi capacity. One option is to create additional spaces at Burford Street.
- In both the short and medium term, the Council will **support and actively encourage new housing and employment developments in and around Hoddesdon town centre**. One example of a distinctive residential redevelopment is Esdaile Hall, just outside the town centre. Housing development has three benefits. Firstly, new residents are likely to use town centre shops and services. Secondly, it encourages natural surveillance of surrounding streets which can help to reduce anti-social behaviour and fear of crime.



*The Hoddesdon and Broxbourne Urban Transport Plan will examine bus stop layouts in the centre*

Thirdly, it can help to regenerate areas of decline. Employment development creates much needed new jobs and brings more workers into the area. This will help make the town centre much livelier throughout the day.

- Redevelopment or development opportunities should **consider visual impact to both the front and rear of properties** in order to improve views from surrounding roads.
- The Council is exploring the potential for traders to **introduce incentive schemes for shoppers and 'retailer of the year' awards**. Trader involvement in these schemes is essential for their success, which is why this is listed as a medium term action.
- Existing local planning policies control the use of cafés, restaurants, pubs/bars and take-aways in the town centre as they can create litter, noise disturbance and impact on local amenity. The Council is keen to support such uses where they make use of vacant units, enhance the evening economy and attract new visitors. In the medium term there is potential for new planning policies to restrict the number of certain uses within the town centre to **ensure a suitable balance of day and evening activities**. The Council will therefore monitor planning permissions to ensure that the town centre is not dominated by evening uses at the expense of day time activities (or vice versa). The Council will also look to encourage more street café licenses where it is appropriate and safe to do so. This is to promote an eating and drinking café culture.
- The Council will look to **implement facilities for young children** in the town centre, demand and space permitting. This will depend on the location of market stalls and other factors.
- The Council will publicise the town centre and attract residents to shop in Hoddesdon by providing **improved signage at major approach roads**. This includes signage at the A10. This is considered a medium term action due to extensive discussions required with the County Council and the Highways Agency.



*Esdale Hall - residential development encourages natural surveillance*



*Actions will look to incorporate trader involvement*

## Long term actions

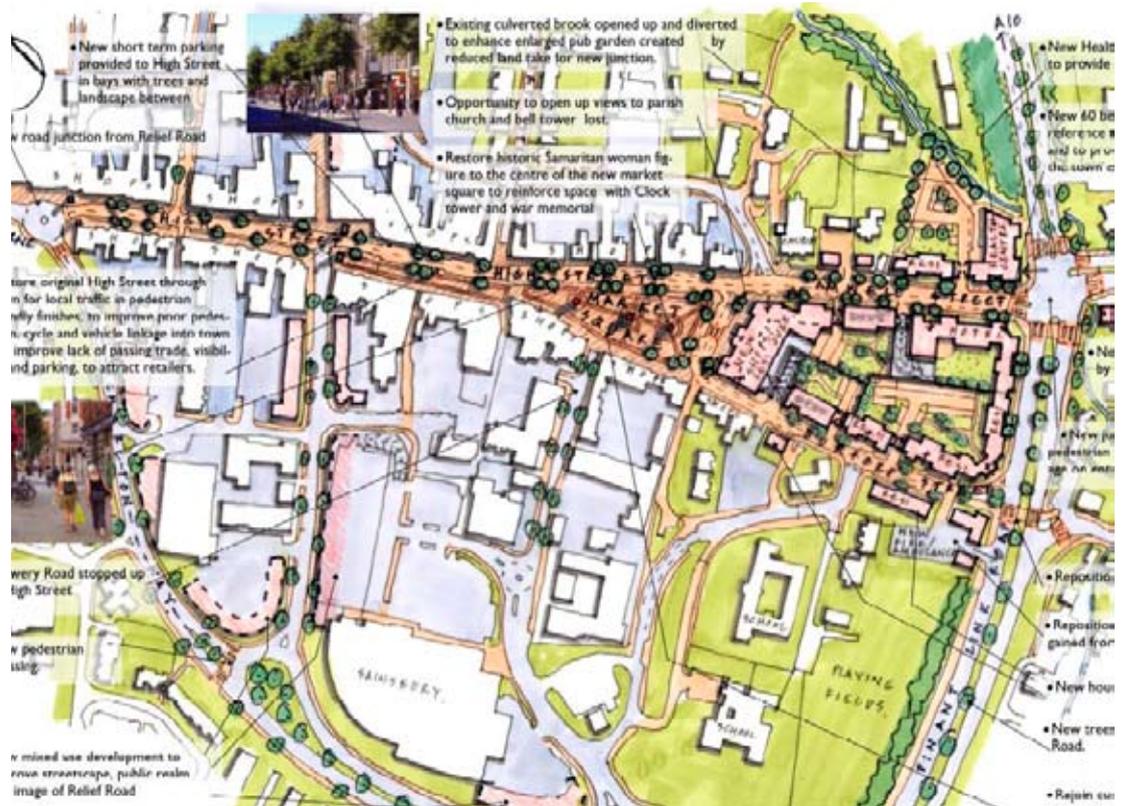
24. This section sets out long term actions that the Council and others will implement to improve Hoddesdon town centre. Long term actions are things that the Council will do or will encourage others to do after about 2015. It is obviously difficult to allocate these actions to particular organisations or to identify funding sources. They will need to respond to the success or failure of actions in the short and medium term, as well as new national and regional planning policies and changing economic circumstances.

- The provision of new signage in the medium term will be complemented by efforts to either **replace existing underpasses with or introduce additional ground level zebra or pelican crossings**. This will depend on the resources available to the highway authority, traffic safety issues and costing feasibility.

- The Council is aware that one possible long term option for improving vehicle, walking and cycling movement in the town centre is to return the **High Street to its original alignment**. This would create a continuous pedestrian area linking the market place, clock tower and war memorial. It would improve links between the High Street, Amwell Street and the Tower Centre (see plan below). One suggestion by Saunders architectural consultants is that The Samaritan Woman Statue, which is currently outside the Lowewood museum, could be replicated and located at the junction of Lord Street. This is to help create a new focal point in the town centre.



Possible Samaritan water feature (courtesy of Saunders Architects)



Opening the High Street will improve links and under-used spaces (courtesy of Saunders Architects)

# Conclusions

- 25. The purpose of the Hoddesdon Town Centre Strategy is to make sure that the town centre remains a popular destination for shoppers, visitors, traders, workers and other businesses. It also aims to provide the services that local residents want. The vision is for Hoddesdon to offer an exciting range of shops and services, an attractive environment for eating, drinking, relaxing and shopping and an interesting range of community events and leisure facilities. The vision also supports community engagement between the Council, residents, traders and visitors. This Strategy sets out a number of short, medium and long term actions to achieve this vision.
- 26. In the short term, efforts will focus on the benefits of the re-opened High Street to traffic for parking purposes. This will make shops and services far more accessible. This will be complemented by a range of actions to re-use vacant shop units, to create a high quality environment and promotional initiatives to make the town centre a more attractive place to visit and spend time.
- 27. Medium term actions focus on the ambition to see the Tower Centre redeveloped, making the town centre more accessible and easier to navigate by providing routes for walkers and cyclists and better signage. The development of new housing and employment opportunities will increase the number of people living and working in the area. Planning policies will be used to achieve a suitable balance of day and evening activities.
- 28. In the long term, actions and improvements for improving vehicle, walking and cycling movement will be pursued. Investigations will be undertaken on replacement ground level crossings of surrounding main roads and the opening up of the entire High Street for traffic.
- 29. Delivery mechanisms include planning policies and partnership work co-ordinated through various Council documents and strategies. Direct investment by private sector developers will present a valuable opportunity to deliver many objectives, as will a range of local, regional and national grant opportunities. The Council will also encourage local contributions, where appropriate and practicable, to help deliver actions and proposals.



## Table of actions

Category	Short Term Actions (2009/12)	Medium Term Actions (2011/14)	Long Term Actions (2014 +)
Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Re-open High Street to traffic to provide parking spaces to make shops and services more accessible</li> <li>■ Re-aligning space to create attractive pedestrian and community spaces</li> <li>■ A cycle route from the western side of Barclay Park to Lee Valley Regional Park</li> <li>■ Completion of Hoddesdon and Broxbourne Urban Transport Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Better public transport, walking and cycling opportunities</li> <li>■ Provide a passenger transport system to Hoddesdon Town from the Rye Park area</li> <li>■ Improve access to the southern end of the High Street including possibility of right turn access from Charlton Way</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Replace underpasses with ground level crossings</li> <li>■ Restore original High Street route</li> </ul>
Car Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ New parking spaces on High Street</li> <li>■ Free parking on Saturday in December 2009</li> <li>■ Review existing parking restrictions</li> <li>■ Additional cycle shelters/ racks where required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Continuous review of parking restrictions</li> </ul>	
Taxis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Extension to Amwell Street taxi rank</li> <li>■ Issue fines to illegally parked taxis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Additional taxi rank space provided if required</li> </ul>	
Environmental Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Programme of improvements</li> <li>■ "Hoddesdon Hotline" established to report environmental problems</li> <li>■ Improvements to public toilets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Continue to monitor environmental improvements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Redevelop rear elevations</li> <li>■ Samaritan statue on Lord Street</li> </ul>

Category	Short Term Actions (2009/12)	Medium Term Actions (2011/14)	Long Term Actions (2014 +)
Promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Town centre development and major projects officer recruited</li> <li>■ Programme of town centre events established</li> <li>■ Re-establish Carnival procession</li> <li>■ Website to promote town centre</li> <li>■ Town Guide introduced to promote shops and facilities</li> <li>■ Review of markets and promotion of existing and new markets</li> <li>■ Local and county wide shop local campaigns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Incentive schemes for shoppers</li> <li>■ Retailer of the Year awards</li> <li>■ Facilities for young children</li> </ul>	
Redevelopment Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Produce development brief for the Tower Centre and continue discussions with potential developers and occupiers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Redevelopment of the Tower Centre including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ - A high quality development that incorporates a mix of day time and night time uses</li> <li>■ - An integrated development which improves accessibility</li> <li>■ - A well designed development that enhances the Conservation Area</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
Planning Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Use existing planning policies to support strategy objectives</li> <li>■ Bring forward existing and approved planning applications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Support housing and employment above shops and near town centre</li> <li>■ Ensure suitable balance of day and evening uses, including restaurants and take-aways</li> <li>■ Review of policies through the LDF process</li> </ul>	

Category	Short Term Actions (2009/12)	Medium Term Actions (2011/14)	Long Term Actions (2014 +)
Vacant Units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek opportunities to bid for grant funding to facilitate temporary use of vacant units for other uses</li> <li>Discussions with landlords will continue</li> </ul>		
Signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Signage to nearby green spaces and from Rye House and Broxbourne train stations.</li> <li>"You are here" signs and upgrading existing signage in the centre itself</li> <li>"Welcome to Hoddesdon" signs and electronic boards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure all signage remains clear and well placed through internal audits</li> <li>Signage at A10 junction and other major approach roads</li> </ul>	
Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safety initiatives including shopwatch scheme, CCTV and Police Community Support Officer</li> </ul>		

## Monitoring and Reviewing

30. It is important that the Hoddesdon Town Centre Strategy is regularly monitored to check whether actions have been achieved. Actions that have not been achieved will be examined closely to decide whether the Council can do anything to aid progress.
31. This Strategy forms an important element of both the Local Development Framework and the Sustainable Community Strategy for Broxbourne. It will therefore be monitored through both processes.
32. The Strategy will be monitored regularly through the Council's Town Centres Sub-Committee. This is a formal decision-making committee that is open to the public. The Council will also work with partner agencies to prepare an implementation plan detailing costs, milestones, target dates and feasibility of each action which will be monitored and co-ordinated through the Committee. The membership, dates, agendas and minutes of all Town Centres Sub-Committee meetings are available on the Council's website.
33. The Strategy will also be monitored annually through the LDF Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) which is published in December-. It is expected that this will monitor the successes (or otherwise) of the Strategy and the vitality of Hoddesdon town centre. Its vitality will be measured and monitored by local indicators including the number of vacant units and total floorspace of vacant units in the town centre and any gains or losses of retail floorspace. Retail and residential development built in and around the town centre will also be noted.
34. The Council will work with and consult local businesses and residents on the implementation of specific proposals and projects.

## APPENDIX 1: Supporting evidence

### 35. Broxbourne Retail Study – GVA Grimley 2008

The study reveals that the town centre has 35,600 square metres of retail floorspace which generates a turnover of more than £17 million per year. It is ranked as the 663rd most successful town centre in the UK (out of the 2,248 retail venues that are measured). The centre lacks comparison shops. The health check recommends that efforts should focus on convenience shops complemented by eating and drinking opportunities and local services as spending in these sectors is expected to grow.

### 36. Broxbourne Market Towns Future Retail Study – Javelin 2009

The report recommends that new anchor stores could be encouraged to locate in the High Street. This would raise the image of the town centre, make other aspirational fashion retailers and restaurants see it in a more positive light and therefore attract new shops and shoppers.

### 37. Urban Strategy for Hoddesdon – Saunders 2009

The strategy describes Hoddesdon as a picturesque market town with many fine buildings and green spaces. It recommends that efforts should be made to create pleasant “gateways” into the town centre and a better “sense of place” once shoppers arrive. New signs could direct people to nearby green spaces such as Barclay Park and Lee Valley Park and leisure facilities such as John Warner Sports Centre.

### 38. Hoddesdon Town Centre Traffic Impact Assessment – Camden Consultancy 2009

The document assesses the impact of the proposals to re-open the High Street to vehicles for parking purposes. It also examines residents’ views regarding vehicle and cycle parking and the amount of times they visit.

### 39. Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment – Internal document

The Council will be completing a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) to identify sites in urban areas that are suitable for development and are likely to be delivered. A draft version proposes 21 sites in Hoddesdon capable of delivering up to 630 dwellings.

### 40. Open Space Study – PMP Consultants 2008

The study considers how far people must travel to access open spaces, playing fields, play areas and other types of recreational facilities. It reveals that Hoddesdon town centre is within an acceptable walking distance of most types of open space. Key facilities include Barclay Park and John Warner leisure centre.

### 41. Other town centre strategies

The Council will be preparing strategies for Waltham Cross town centre, Cheshunt Old Pond district centre and other neighbourhood centres and parades to ensure they also remain successful and popular places to visit, shop and locate businesses.

Completed studies and strategies are available to view at: [http://www.broxbourne.gov.uk/environment\\_and\\_planning/planning\\_policy/local\\_development\\_framework/studies.aspx](http://www.broxbourne.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/planning_policy/local_development_framework/studies.aspx)

## APPENDIX 2: Local plan policies (2001-2011)

### 42. The Broxbourne Local Plan states that the Council will prepare a framework to maintain and improve Hoddesdon town centre. The most important Local Plan policies are:

- Policy RTC1 which supports retail development in town centres where it is compatible with their function and position in the retail hierarchy. Hoddesdon and Waltham Cross are classified as “town centres” and Cheshunt Old Pond as a “district centre”.
- Policy RTC2 which seeks to prepare a town centre framework for Hoddesdon.
- Policy RTC3 which seeks appropriate developer contributions for environmental enhancements, community safety schemes and other measures to improve sustainable transport, infrastructure and service provision in town centres.
- Policy RTC4 which states that the Council will have regard to the physical appearance, public transport arrangements, service access arrangements and car parking standards of town centre retail proposals.
- Policy RTC5 which seeks to ensure that at least 60% of town centre frontages are retail premises and to avoid an over-concentration of other premises.
- Policy RTC7 which opposes proposals for food and drink and entertainment uses that would lead to substantial traffic, excessive parking demand or other adverse effects.
- Policies RTC8 and RTC9 which establish design guidelines for shop fronts and fascias.
- Policy RTC10 which supports residential use above ground level in town centres.
- Policies in Chapter 8 (Heritage and Design) seek to guide and control the alteration and extension of Listed Buildings and buildings in

Conservation Areas. Policy HD22 expects all proposals to incorporate crime prevention measures and reduce the opportunity for crime or anti-social behaviour.

- Policies in Chapter 9 (Transport) take account of general transport issues, pedestrian needs, cycling provision and car parking standards.

## APPENDIX 3: Consultation

### 43. Consultation leaflet

The Council initially prepared a consultation leaflet for Hoddesdon town centre towards the spring of 2009. It was placed in shops and other premises. It received over 70 responses from members of the public, traders and other consultees. The responses expressed overwhelming support for opening up the High Street to create additional parking spaces.

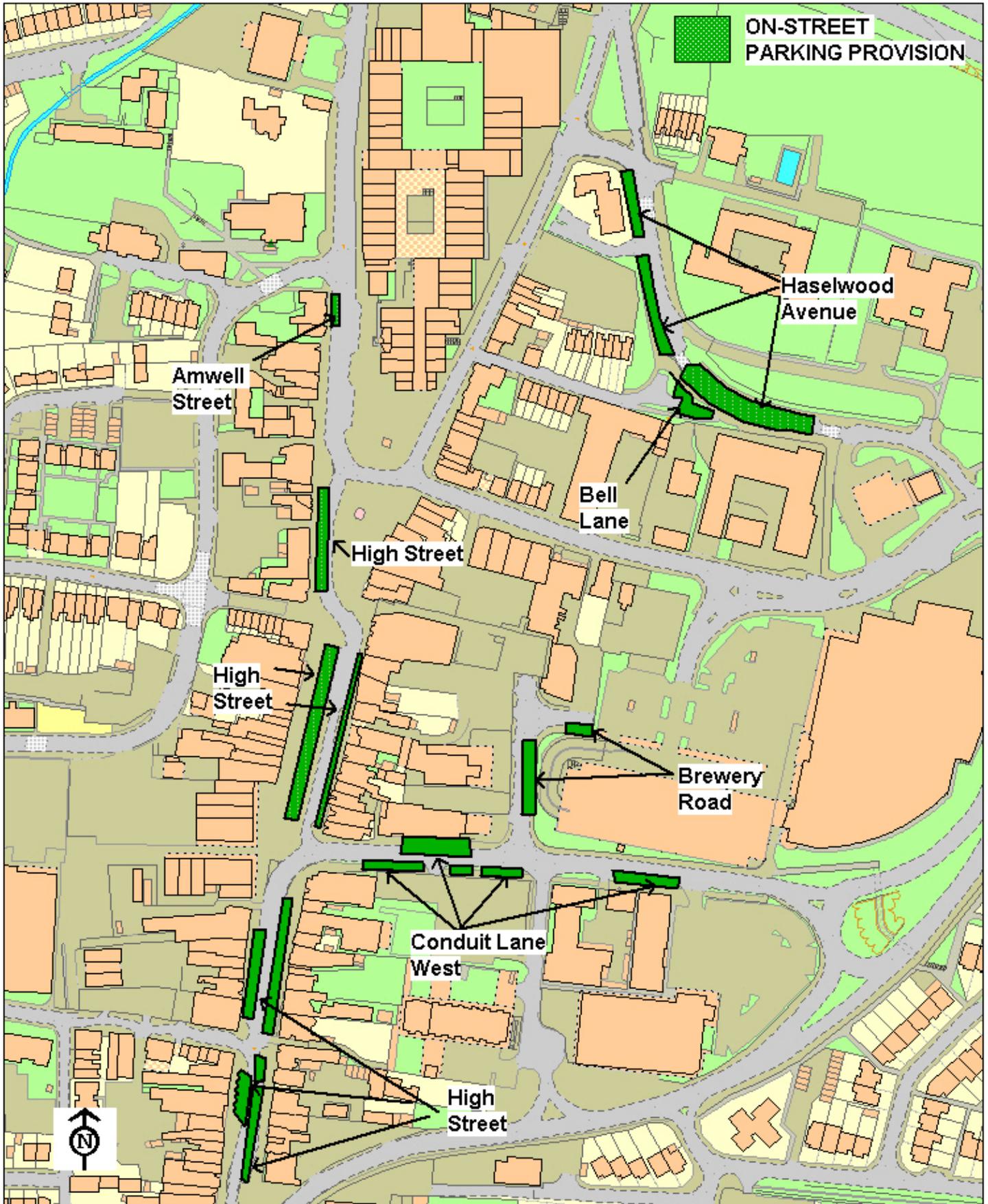
### 44. Consultation on the draft document

In September and October 2009 a draft version of the strategy was released for consultation. Various promotional tools were used to advertise its release. To coincide with the consultation release date, Action4Hoddesdon, an independent community group, released the 'Peoples Plan' for consultation. This was promoted through its public exhibition called 'Hoddesdon Tomorrow'. The 'Peoples Plan' consisted of ideas and proposals as well as background information on the town centre. A signed petition endorsing the 'Hoddesdon Tomorrow' proposals, signed by 335 people, was also submitted.

### 45. A summary of all responses received is

**available to view at:** [http://www.broxbourne.gov.uk/environment\\_and\\_planning/planning\\_policy/local\\_development\\_framework/studies.aspx](http://www.broxbourne.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/planning_policy/local_development_framework/studies.aspx)

# APPENDIX 4: Existing on-street parking spaces



BROXBORNE BOROUGH COUNCIL  
 BOROUGH OFFICES  
 CHURCHGATE  
 CHESHUNT  
 WALTHAM CROSS  
 EN8 9QX TEL: 01932 788885



Title LOCATION OF ON STREET PARKING

Location

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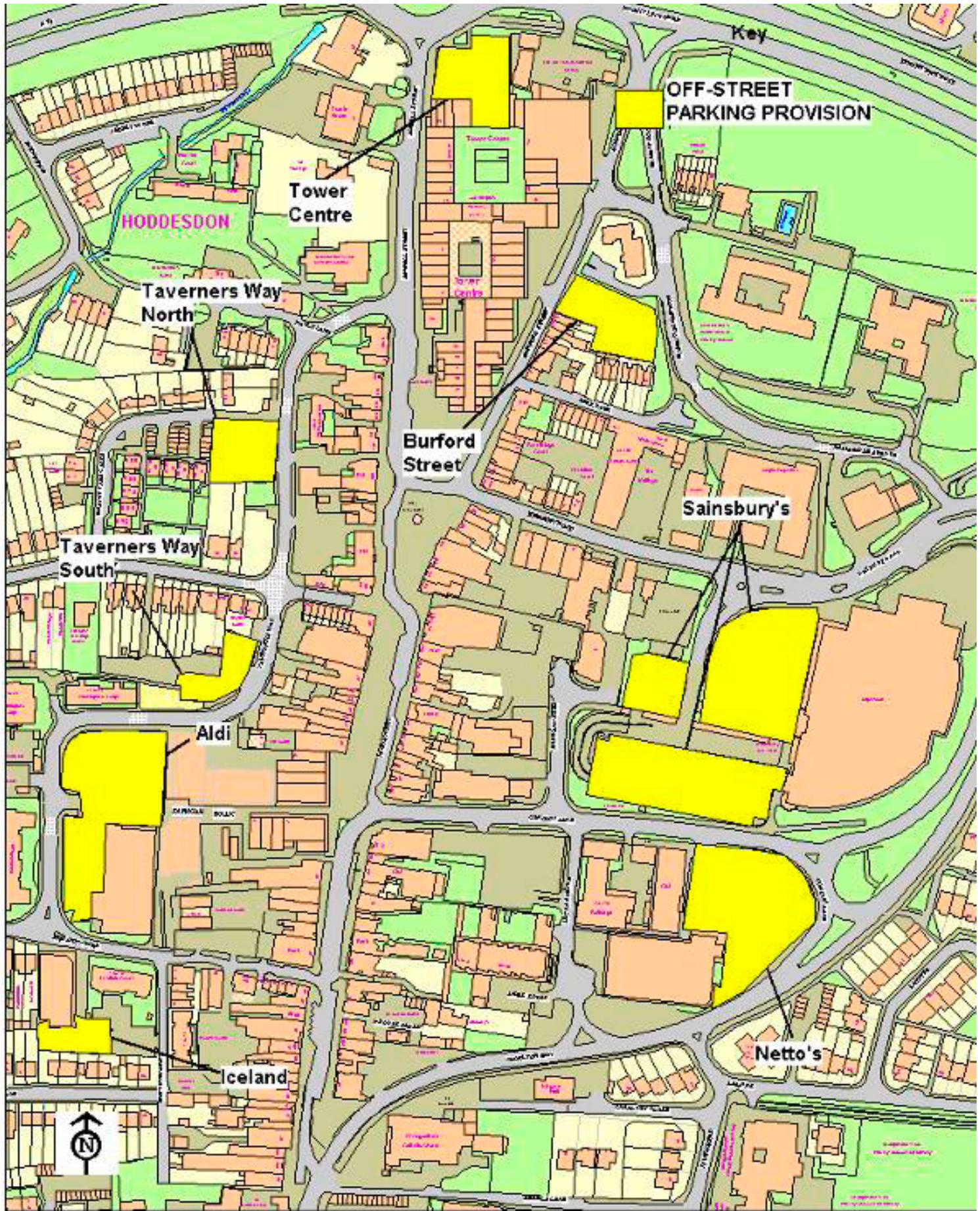
Centre: 537389.01 , 208797.69

User

Scale: 1:2150

Date: 29/4/2010

# APPENDIX 4: Existing off-street parking spaces



BROXBORNE BOROUGH COUNCIL  
 BOROUGH OFFICES  
 CHURCHGATE  
 CHESHUNT  
 WALTHAM CROSS  
 EN9 5QX TEL: 01992 705005



Title LOCATION OF OFF STREET PARKING

Location

## APPENDIX 5: Bibliography

- Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) – Reported every year
- Broxbourne’s Core Strategy Preferred Options - 2008
- Broxbourne Market Towns Future Retail Study – Javelin 2009
- Broxbourne Retail Study – GVA Grimley 2008
- Community Safety Plan - 2009
- Consultation Response Table - 2010
- East of England Regional Spatial Strategy - 2008
- Economic Development Strategy - 2009
- Hoddesdon Town Centre Traffic Impact Assessment - Camden Consultancy 2009
- Local Plan Second Review - 2001-2011
- Open Space Study – PMP Consultants 2008
- Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth
- Sustainable Community Strategy - 2010
- Town Centre’s Sub-Committee
- Urban Strategy for Hoddesdon – Saunders 2009



