Conservation & Townscape Elements

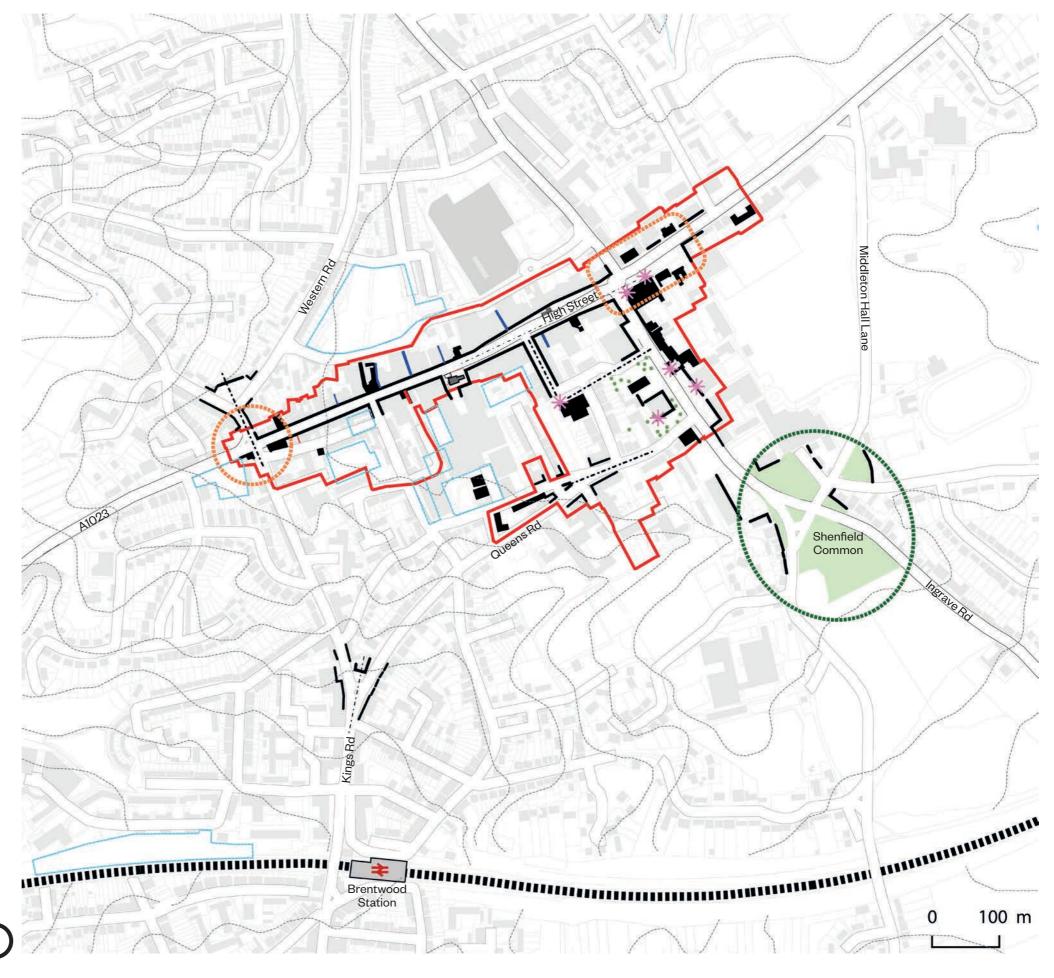
Despite being somewhat remote from the station the High Street remains the heart of the town and the Brentwood Town Conservation Area was designated in 2000 (amalgamated out of the Wilson's Corner, Chapel and Hart Street Conservation Areas).

Within and adjacent to the Conservation Area are a significant number of statutory listed buildings and protected trees. The local authority has identified a number of other buildings with significant townscape interest and which are being considered for local listing.

Key views have been identified in the Conservation Area Statement. The opportunity to improve and utilise these views for wayfinding and to improve the setting of the listed buildings and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, forms part of the design analysis.

Listed building Identified Conservation Area Protected trees Axial alignment Building fronts defining positive public space Vertical architectural features Alleyways Urban gateway Green gateway Green open space contributing to gateway space

18



Conservation & Townscape Elements

- Building acting as a focal element
 (axial alignment) where routes
 diverge or converge (e.g. Queens &
 Coptfold Roads)
- 2 Building mass and interfaces help to structure positive public spaces (e.g. High Street)
- 3-4 Street spaces perpendicular to the High Street are downscaled to accommodate and encourage pedestrian activity (e.g. Crown Street)
- 5 Chapel Ruins area (including the Scheduled Ancient Monument) is located at the heart of the High Street
- 6 Existing alleyways add to the townscape character of the historic core and allow for permeable pedestrian movement
- 7-8 Vertical architectural features of the historic buildings contribute to the character of the town; acting as orientation elements
- 9 Shenfield Common is a green gateway into the town, where a series of historic routes meet

Source:

Photo 1 - Google Street View Photos 2 - 8 taken by Levitt Bernstein on site visit to Brentwood (16 October 2016) Photo 9 - Bing Maps



















Open Space

Regionally, the landscape character of the area is characterised by a system of elevated undulating hills, mixture of arable and pasture farmlands, pockets of pasture and commons, blocks of mature mixed and deciduous woodlands, and tree-lined narrow lanes.

At the town scale, there are very few open green spaces within the Town Centre. The most notable spaces of strategic value are the park space forming part of the eastern gateway (no. 4) and the Shenfield Common in the south-east (no. 8). There are some pocket green areas within the Town Centre like St Thomas' cemetery which has a well used pedestrian path that connects the High Street with Coptfold Rd.

The majority of the larger green spaces are located towards the periphery of the Town Centre (i.e. Weald Wooded Farmland, Doddinghurst Wooded Farmland & Heybridge Wooded Farmland).

The school and sports grounds are privately owned and controlled (no.5 and 6).

Key



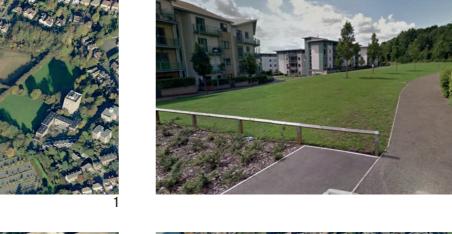
Open space



Open Space

- North-west green 'wedge' including
 St Faith's country park (part of
 the Weald Wooded Farmland)
- 2 Base Brentwood Green
- 3 Park space, North Road
- Park space forming part of the eastern gateway on approach to the eastern end of the High Street
- 5 Brentwood Ursuline Convent High School grounds
- 6 Brentwood School grounds and Club sports grounds dominant green space between Brentwood and Shenfield
- 7-8 Shenfield Common as green gateway space for the south-east (part of Little Warley Wooded Farmland landscape character)

















Source:

Photo 1, 4 - 7 - Bing Maps Photos 2 - 3 - Google Street View

Land Ownership

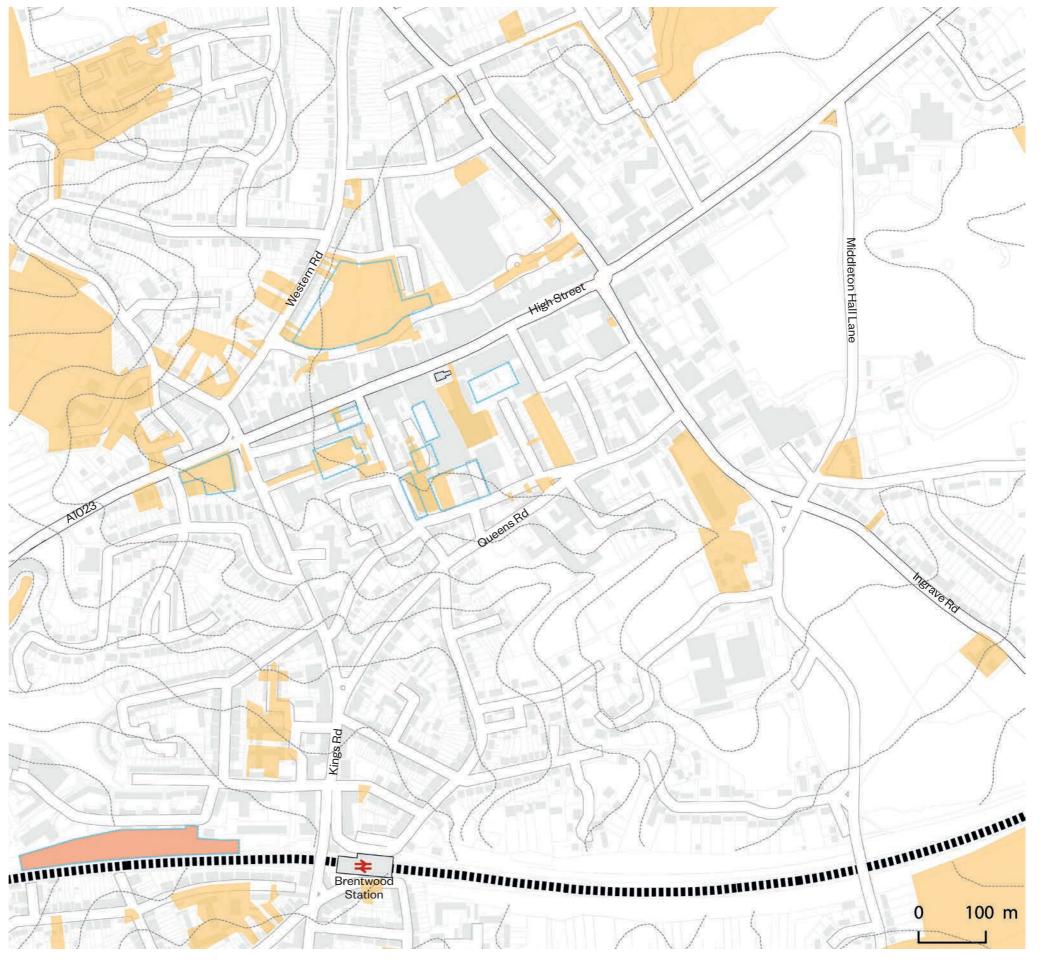
Some of the potential developable sites which have been identified are owned by Brentwood Council and fall close or within the Town Centre domain.

The most notable sites are the William Hunter Way parking site, the Westbury Way car park and the Chatham Way car park. The reasons are two-fold:

- Since they are council owned, they have the potential to be quick win projects.
- They can be spatially integrated into the existing Town Centre and contribute to the overall character of the Town Centre.

With the arrival of Crossrail in 2017, and the emergence of development and public realm improvement opportunities north of the railway station, it is worth exploring options for the Network Rail car park west of the station (near Kings Road).



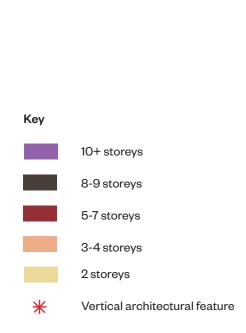


Heights

The building heights across the Town Centre are predominantly between 2,3 and 4 storeys, which is an appropriate scale for the historic High Street and surrounding areas.

Some of the historic buildings have vertical architectural features that act as orientation and legibility elements (as indicated on the Conservation & Townscape Elements diagram).

The tallest built structures are located around the Baytree Centre shopping area, along Kings Road (near the train station) and the modernist tower (telephone exchange building) block near the eastern gateway of the High Street.





Land Use

The diagram shows the variety of groundfloor uses in the Town Centre.

The majority of the non-residential uses are located along the High Street, Kings Road and Ongar Road.

Along Queens and Ingrave Road, institutions and public facilities dominate i.e. churches, schools and council offices.

Employment uses (B-class such as offices) and residential uses (C-class) are not shown as this map is predominantly identifying ground floor shop uses, such as retail, restaurant and other uses.

Key

A1 - Shops

A2 - Financial and professional services

A3 - Restaurants & cafés

A4 - Drinking establishments

A5 - Hot food & take away

C - Hotels

D1 - Non-residential institutions

D2 - Assembly & leisure

Sui Generis - A use on its own to which any change of use will require planning permission

Vacant

* The information used on this drawing is based on analysis received-2016. The areas indicated in grey were not specified.





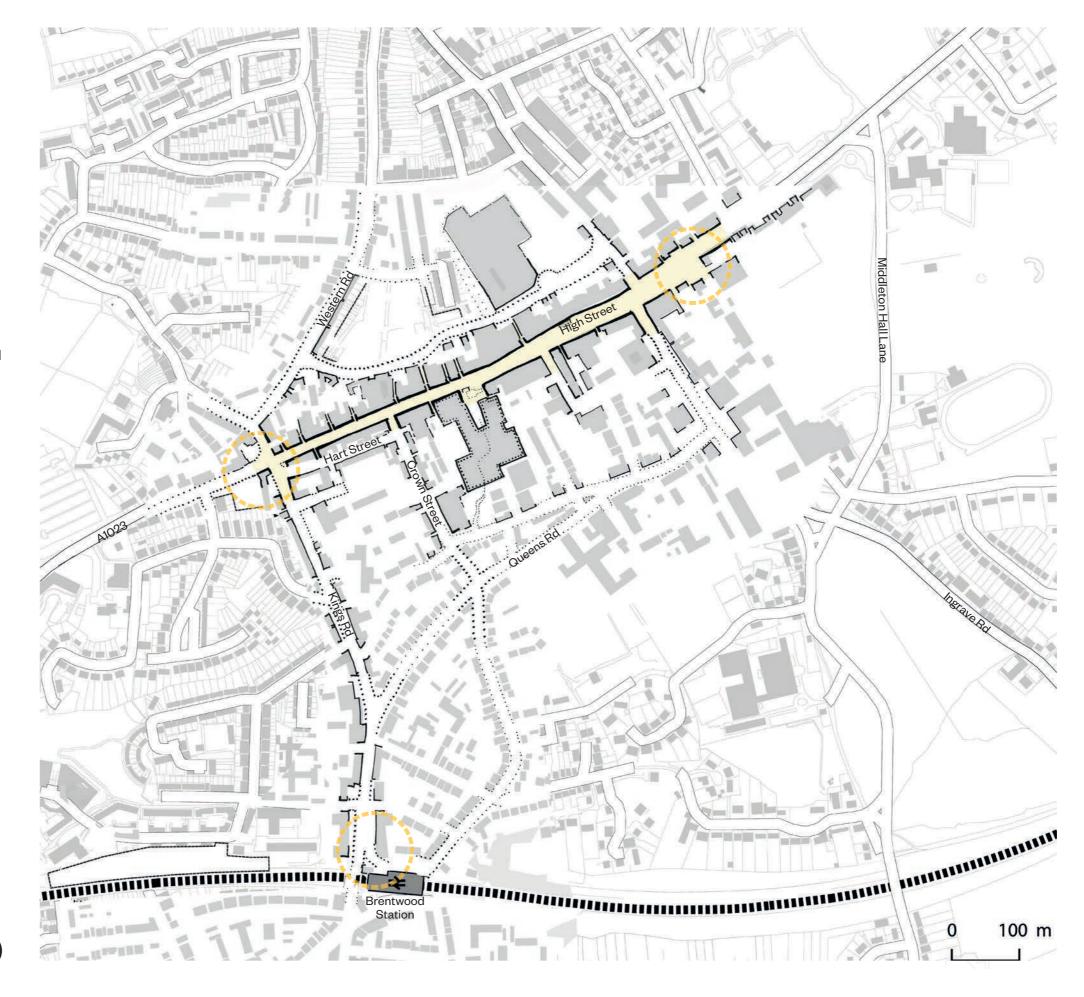
Public Realm Network

The dominant public realm feature is the High Street. Leading off this space are a series of alleyways that contribute to pedestrian movement on both sides of the High Street.

Kings Road plays an important role in connecting the train station with the High Street, however, it is currently lacking in spatial character in comparison to the High Street.

The downscaling of certain streets e.g. Crown and Hart Street, has contributed to them becoming secondary public realm elements that compliment the High Street.

The gateways to the High Street and entrance space north of the Brentwood train station are important but currently lack place-making, they are spatially poorly defined and car-dominated.





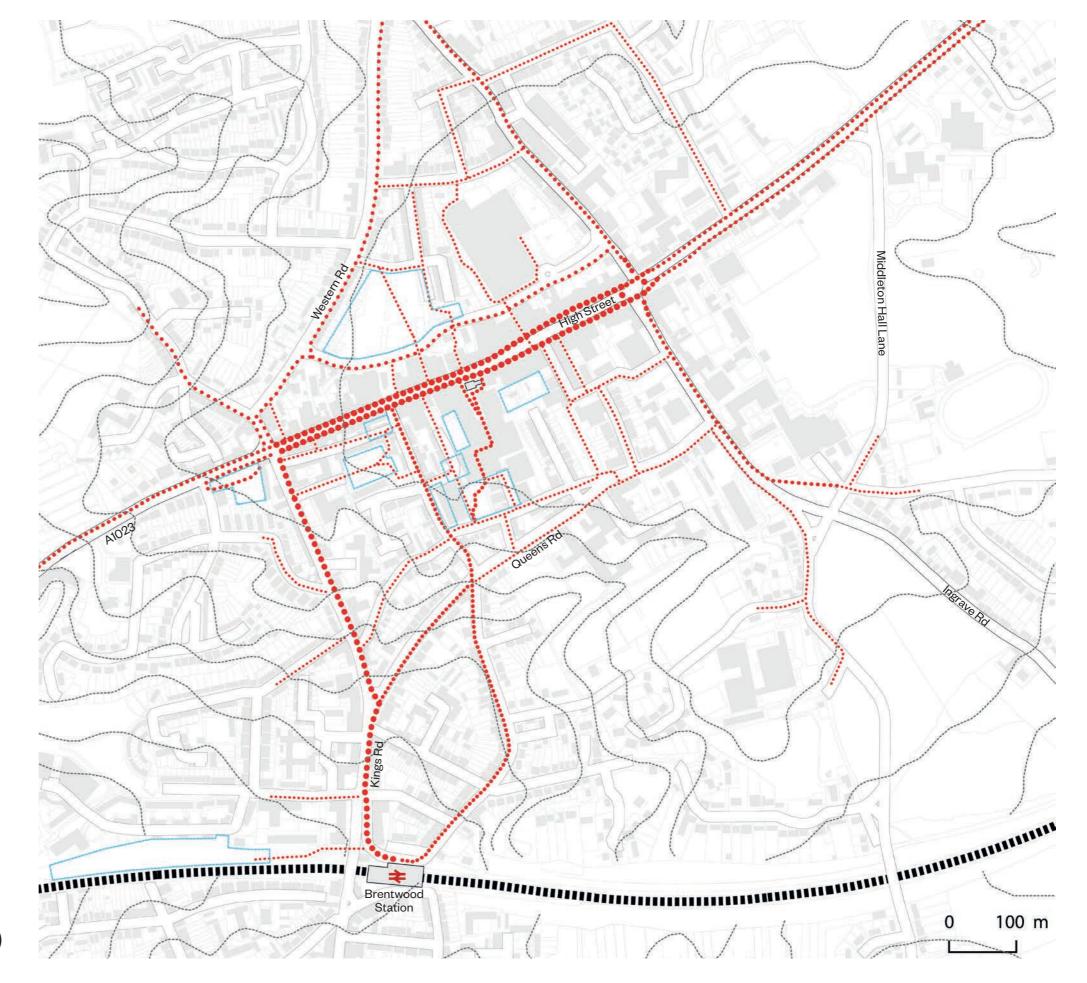


Pedestrian Movement

The dominant pedestrian routes are along the High Street and Kings Road, due to the movement between the Town Centre and the train station and also the range of activities that are located along the High Street.

During school terms, in the morning and afternoon peak times, there are higher levels of pedestrian movement to and from schools located in the south-eastern and north-eastern parts of the town.

This information is based on the transport and movement analysis, undertaken during the design process.



Key

• • • High levels of pedestrian movement

Mid levels of pedestrian movement

Low levels of pedestrian movement



Vehicular Movement, Parking & Public Transport

The current system of main routes provides a permeable condition with choice to move around or through the town with ease.

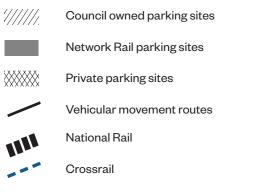
The majority of the council parking areas are strategically located in relation to the Town Centre, making walking an attractive option.

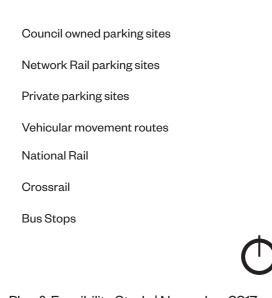
The majority of the bus stops are located along the main routes and are well connected to and from Brentwood station.

The arrival of Crossrail will potentially increase demands and improvements to the local bus services for the borough itself.

Parking Bay Numbers

- 1. William Hunter Way Car Park 372 (29 disabled)
- 2. Coptfold Road Multi Storey 559 (18 disabled)
- 3. Chatham Way 113 (3 disbaled)
- 4. Westbury Road 95
- 5. Brentwood Station Car Park 398 (16 disabled) Source: Brentwood Parking Strategy, 2016 (JMP) Key







Parking Site Assessment

A series of existing parking sites are identified and assessed according to how they contribute to future parking demands in Brentwood Town Centre.

The criteria are two-fold:

First, it is based on the suitability of sites based on distance that has been calculated using the Institution of Highways and Transportation (2000) 'Providing for Journeys on Foot', which outlines firstly that parking should desirably be within 200m of a Town Centre, but that 400m should be acceptable. 800m is defined as the desired maximum, but this is considered too far for the majority of users.

Secondly, to outline that acceptable maximum walking distances for car-borne shoppers are dependent on the amount of time spent shopping. Under this approach:

30mins – 100m 1 hour – 200m

2 hours - 400m 4 hours - 800m

8 hours - 1000m

It is assumed that shoppers will stay in Brentwood between 30mins and 2 hours regularly, and that car parks less than 400m away are suitable for shoppers. Car parks further away than this but still on semi-direct routes may still be suitable for mixed use or longer-term parking for commuters or Town Centre employees.

Sites no. 1 – 2 were recommended for further investigation. Despite the large size of site no. 4, the railway car park is too far from the Town Centre to be used significantly by shoppers without a supporting transport system (e.g. Park and Ride).



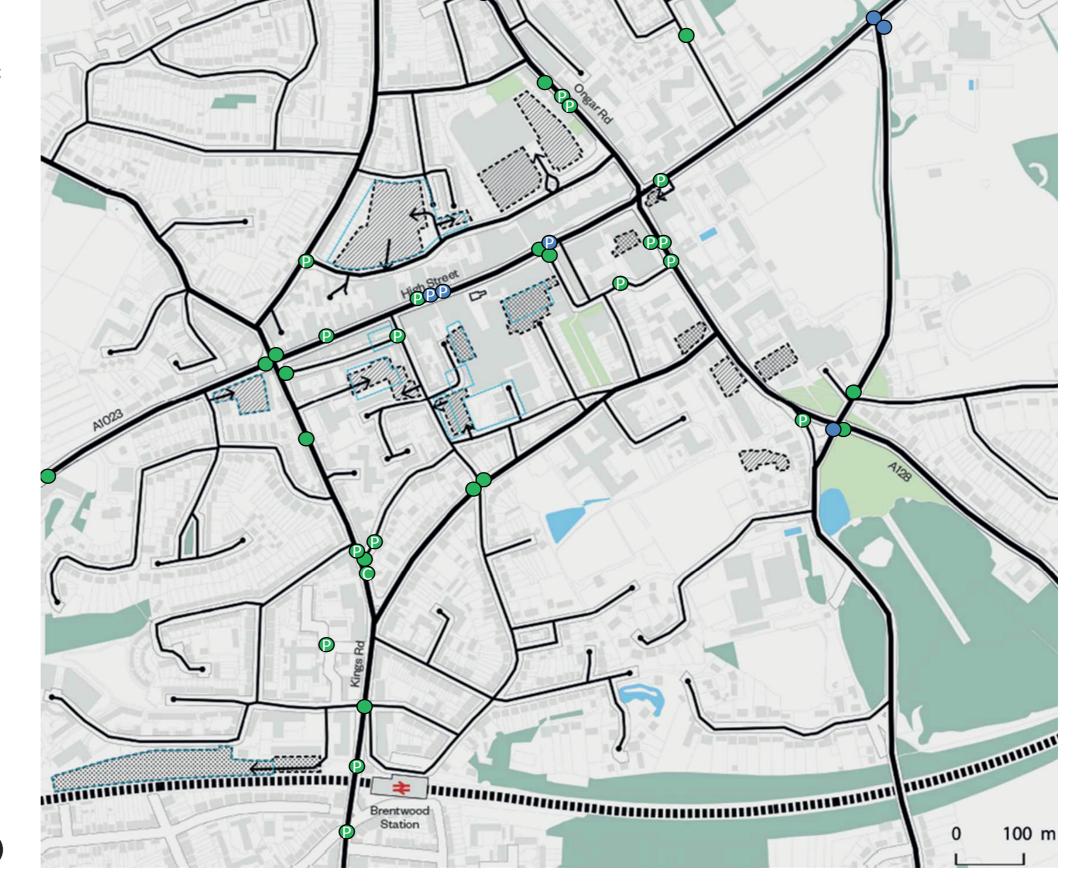
Road Accidents

Road accident clusters have been identified using Essex County Council data from August 2013 – August 2016. These indicate a number of locations where vehicles, and/or vehicles and vulnerable users, including 'Vehicle' Conflict Locations:

- High Street (A1023) / Kings Road / Weald Road junction
- The Queen's Road (B186) / Crown Street roundabout
- 'Vehicle / Vulnerable User' Conflict Locations
- The Kings Road / Primrose Hill junction
- The High Street (A1023) near Barclays Bank
- Ingrave Road (A128)
- Ongar Road

Redevelopment to promote safety in these locations will be critical to eliminating these hotspots for conflict and for promoting safe movement by all users.







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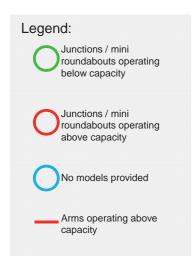
Traffic Modelling Diagrams

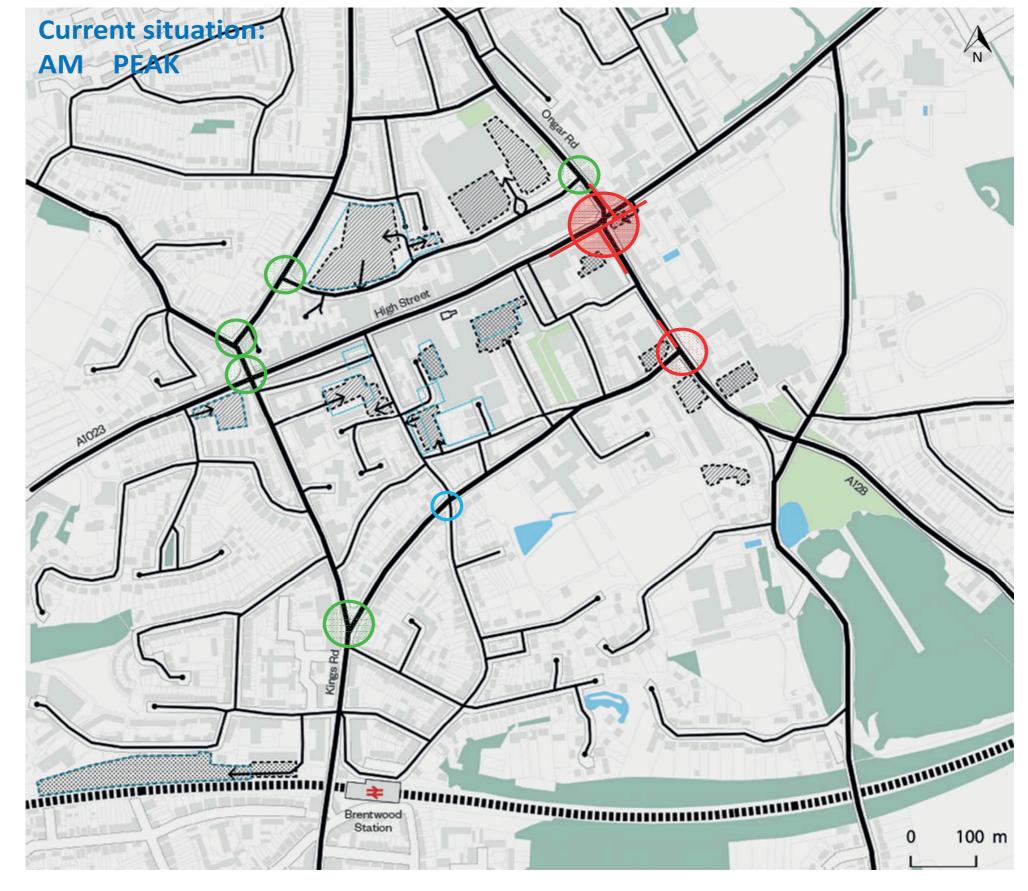
Current Situation- AM (peak time)

The LinSig / Arcady models has revealed that most of the junctions / mini roundabouts operate below capacity with the exception of the Ongar Road / Shenfield Road / High Street / Ingrave Road double mini-roundabout, the Kings Road / Queen's Road and Ingrave Road / Queen's Road mini-roundabouts.

The base model results suggest that all four approaching lanes of the Ongar Road / Shenfield Road / High Street / Ingrave Road two miniroundabouts are currently operating above the RFC threshold of 0.85 during the AM peak period.

Similarly the northbound Ingrave Road arm of the Ingrave Road / Queen's Road mini-roundabout is currently operating above capacity during the AM peak period.







Traffic Modelling Diagrams

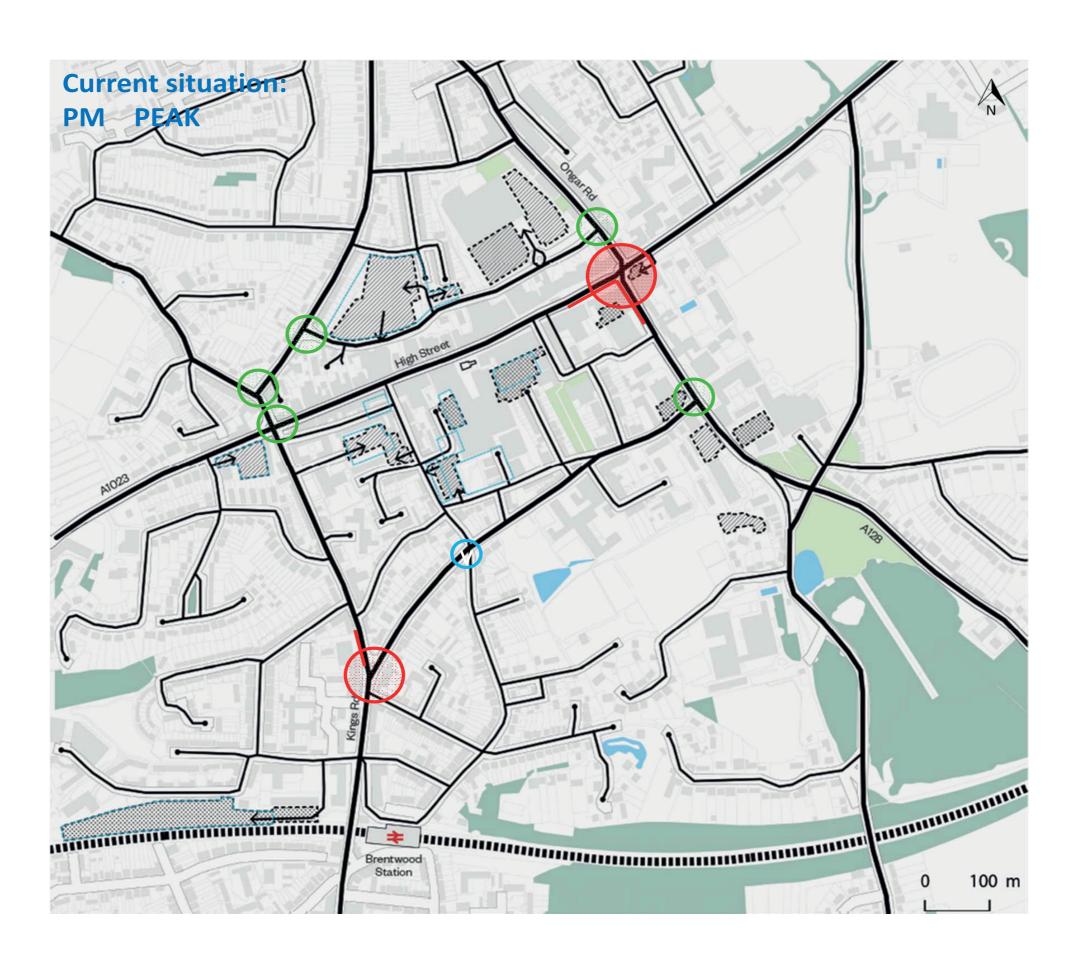
Current Situation-PM (peak time)

The base model suggests Ingrave Road and High Street are operating above capacity in the PM peak.

The southbound Kings Road approach to the Kings Road / Queen's Road mini-roundabout experiences delays during the PM peak periods.







2 - Market Demand & Analysis

Town Centre Activity

The commercial offer of the Town Centre is principally concentrated along the High Street and the immediate 'feeder' routes.

Retail activity is largely oriented along the High Street and within the Baytree Centre, with the core offer and main 'circuit' focused in the area immediately surrounding the square and then east along the High Street as far as the Ongar Road junction. To the west of the square towards the King Street junction the strength of retail fades and is dominated by lower order shops, food and beverage and takeaways.

The retail offer serves two distinct markets with the Town Centre accommodating retailers at both the 'budget' end of the retail spectrum (such as Wilko) and the high value boutique end. This reflects the nature of the catchment which is similarly polarised. The retail offer is a mix of both local independent activities and national chains and focused on comparison goods, with only Sainsbury's and Iceland providing a food store offer alongside an M&S Foodhall.

Health and beauty activities are well represented within the Town Centre mix, with a particularly high level of beauty salons as well as nail bars and hair salons. This cluster is further enhanced by the presence of a number of fashion boutiques.

The food and beverage and wider commercial leisure offer is relatively limited, focused on generally mid-range dining (Prezzo, Chimichanga, Nando's) and a range of bars and pubs. There is little other provision beyond a Better Gym.

Office employment and activity has tended to locate around the periphery of the Town Centre with clusters located close to Ongar Road and Brentwood Station. Much of the larger stock on King Road is subject to redevelopment proposals.

Competitive Position

The Town Centre currently provides a mixed offer that is broadly in line with the scale and nature of its catchment. The offer is also significantly influenced by the town's location and the scale of the retail offer in other, larger locations.

There are two major shopping destinations within close proximity to Brentwood, both of which are accessible by car within 30 minutes of Brentwood.

To the south lies the major regional retail centre at Lakeside in Thurrock, which provides one of the largest concentrations of retail floorspace in the country and is a destination for the majority of comparison goods retail spend in Essex. To the north lies Chelmsford, whose City Centre continues to attract a large number of major retailers.

Both locations also provide a range of dining and leisure activities which, alongside Festival Park in Basildon, draws further activity from Brentwood in terms of cinema, bowling and a wider range of dining, nightclubs and performance venues.

The scale and accessibility of this provision will be a key influence on the potential for Brentwood to attract new retail and leisure activities at scale. However, as the retail sector evolves in light of increased online shopping, increasing demand for smaller, more dispersed stores, and a new, smaller, higher quality range of leisure operators are growing their market share, there remain opportunities for Brentwood to expand its offer.

Drivers of Change

The current Town Centre offer is relatively successful, functioning well and meeting a range of needs from its catchment. There remains demand for further space, however there are limited opportunities to accommodate this and the potential new occupiers interested in the town tend to repeat the current offer, rather than expand or upgrade it.

However, beyond general trends in the retail and leisure sector, there are a range of factors which will support the ongoing evolution of the Town Centre.

Growth will be driven in part by new development opportunities which will increase the resident catchment within the immediate Town Centre area, providing new footfall for Town Centre retailers. Demand for residential space will in turn be driven by the introduction of Crossrail (which will provide a greater choice for commuters) and

also ongoing housing pressures and costs in London, which is causing a range of professional and non-professional workers to live outside the city.

Changes to the population will also support a growth and diversification of the offer, as the population ages there will be a new demand for a range of different leisure and other services. The increasing young professional residents will also underpin demand for existing and new offers. Both audiences have increasing levels of disposable income which can be captured within the Town Centre.

Whilst opportunities exist to grow the Brentwood offer it will need to be carefully managed to ensure it complements the existing activity, providing new uses and unit types capable of attracting different occupiers.

2 - Market Demand & Analysis

Town Centre Activities

1	Retail activity along the High Street
2	Entrance forecourt of Baytree

Centre shopping centre

3 Claire's, Baytree Centre

4 Wilko, Baytree Centre

5 Sainsbury's

6 Chloe's Beauty Bar, High Street

7 Lucy's Boutique, Ongar Road

8 Chimichanga, High Street

9 Nando's, High Street

Source:

Photo 1 - taken by Levitt Bernstein on site visit to Brentwood (16 October 2016)

Photo 2 - http://www.cortexpartners.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Baytree-Centre-for-website.jpg

Photo 3 - https://www.yell.com/biz/claire-s-brentwood-5366857/

Photo 4 - http://www.bmstores.co.uk/images/dmlmage/ Standardlmage/20%20Brentwood%20Store%20 Opening%20Front.jpg

Photo 5 - http://www.propertymall.com/press/images/34225pk.jpg

Photo 6 - http://scarlettlondon.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/article-2066227-0EF0AFAC00000578-596_468x362.jpg

Photo 7 - http://s3.amazonaws.com/ldc/large/2288/22883132.jpg

Photo 8 - http://www.chimichanga.co.uk/globalassets/images/restaurants/brentwood/chimichanga.brentwood-380-by-380-1.jpg

Photo 9 - http://statics.192.com/estreet/original/large/2253/22532535.jpg



















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The Setting

Although the quality of the Town Centre has eroded in certain parts, Brentwood offers unique conditions, making it a potential place for revitalisation and improvements:

- The Town Centre is located at a higher altitude to its surrounding setting. The buildings and streets create a comfortable experience at human scale.
- Despite the distance and topography, the location of the station and railway line alignment has done minimal infrastructural damage to the Town Centre.
- · There is no risk of flooding.
- There are many schools in close proximity to the Town Centre. A vibrant Town Centre can only benefit from the large school population on foot.
- The existing permeable system of vehicular movement routes provide choice for the town with quick access to the existing parking areas.
- With the arrival of Crossrail at Brentwood and Shenfield, the impact it might have is uncertain, but creates an exciting prospect for the town to grow and add value.

Current Conditions

Gateways:

- Favours the car rather than pedestrian.
- Little activity and signage to indicate you are entering the Town Centre.
- The route to the station is poor; the shops in Kings Road could benefit from public realm improvements.
- The gateways to the town are currently relatively inactive, providing little animation and signalling that visitors are entering a vibrant High Street. Future uses should seek to create active frontages at these junctions.
- Many of the junctions are vehicle oriented and inhibit pedestrian movement.

Problem Statement

A Delicate Mix of Activity:

- The physical form of the town allows it to meet the needs of a reasonably polarised catchment without a detrimental impact on the overall perception of the town.
- However, the retail circuit is reduced by the quality of place in some locations and lack of anchors to the west.
- Core retail activity should continue to be concentrated on the High Street and Baytree Centre, new development should provide complementary not competing space.
- The Baytree Centre is critical to the Town Centre. It accommodates many of the large retail units which are difficult to locate along the High Street frontage.
- The leisure offer caters to a limited audience, a key issue given the scale and growth in older residents.

Potential to:

- Create a framework supporting appropriate development to enhance the environment and encourage pedestrian movement.
- Improve Town Centre connectivity with the Station.
- Address the current 'drop off' experienced by pedestrians reaching each end of the High Street.

Looking Forward:

- Inform the vision and incorporate the opportunities to the Town Centre Design Plan.
- Movement needs to be addressed; Improving the High Street pedestrian experience.
- Attract and support independent retailers.
 Improve east-west gateways and north-south routes.
- Improve links and routes with the station.
- Opportunity to expand the commercial offer to meet the needs of a wider range of residents – particularly older and younger residents.
- Public realm, transport and uses need to work together to create and enhance quality of environment and shopping/leisure experience to increase circulation and dwell time.
- An approach that builds on the unique 'aspirational' health and beauty offer already within the town provides opportunities to raise quality and attract new leisure operators.
- The High Street and Baytree Centre should be the focus to grow the mix of independent and multiple retail occupiers, but will require effective promotion and management.
- Key Council-owned sites could be the focus of early delivery. If developed appropriately they could set a precedent for future developments.

Feasibility Assessment & Strategy

The Town Centre functions well given the wider competitive context, with identified requirements from new retail and leisure activities seeking to come to the town and new drivers of residential demand being delivered. It therefore has the fundamentals in place to evolve and grow.

However, to achieve the quality and mix of development and activity that truly enhances the offer will require ongoing coordination, intervention and investment from the Council and its partners.

The key to Brentwood realising its full potential will be to demonstrate the potential. The Council should start by focusing on locations where it has most direct control and influence. This will establish the market opportunity and provide a best practice example to private landowners.

In bringing forward new opportunities it is vital to work with 'new' drivers for the Town Centre which will underpin additional demand. A critical element will be the ability to increase the immediate Town Centre catchment by accommodating new residential development, which will itself be supported by the arrival of Crossrail.

Early public realm improvements should be a pre-cursor to development, better integrating the station into the town through a range of enhancements on key walking and cycling routes. Critically this should seek to provide route choice, encouraging walking and cycling by separating it from busy traffic on King Road. Key arrival points and gateways should also be enhanced and animated.

Where development comes forward it should complement not compete with the High Street by providing high quality residential and mixed use development that enhance the leisure offer. Given the limited opportunity for larger footprint retail units these developments could provide new locations for an urban food store, however comparison retail should be encouraged onto the High Street.

Integrating new developments and enhancing existing parts of the Town Centre will require interventions that enhance the retail circuit, of particular focus should be the western end of the High Street, where the pedestrian and, in turn, trading environment is weaker and fewer anchor tenants are located.

Some Positives

- 1-2 The human scale of the buildings in High Street is defined by a diverse range of activities (the 'heart' of the town)
- 1-2 Surface treatment implemented to eastern part of the High Street enhances the historic feel of the Town Centre
- 3 Chapel Ruins is located at the heart of the High Street
- 4-6 Street spaces perpendicular to the High Street are downscaled to accommodate and encourage pedestrian activities
- 7 Existing alleyways contribute to the townscape character of the historic core and allow for permeable pedestrian movement
- 8-9 Vertical architectural features of the historic buildings contribute to the character of the town; acting as orientation elements



















Source:

Photos 1 - 9 taken by Levitt Bernstein on site visit to Brentwood (16 October 2016)

Some Negatives

10 Service yards are embedded within the historic core

11 Certain existing alleyways have poor street interfaces

12-13 Clutter of landscape features on strategic land parcels, create spaces with poor legibility, obstruct pedestrian movement, and lead to a lack of human surveillance of streets and public spaces

William Hunter Way site forms a barrier between the historic core and the northern parts of Brentwood Town Centre. The emphasis is on mobility with poor pedestrian crossings

Buildings and parking zones have poor street interfaces and relationships with their immediate surroundings

Poorly defined gateways into the High Street; clutter of traffic elements, restricted pedestrian movement at these critical intersections

Source:

14-15

16-17

18

Photos 10 - 18 taken by Levitt Bernstein on site visit to Brentwood (16 October 2016)



















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Transport Opportunities

Barriers to access and movement across the Town Centre, from the railway station and the surrounding area have been identified as part of this commission.

Foremost amongst these barriers are oversized junctions and mini-roundabouts which strongly favour vehicular access. Several of these have been identified for potential modification with focus on removing existing barriers, altering traffic flows and providing clearer pedestrian and cycle routes to facilitate this movement.

Legend:





Wayfinding improvements are also a key issue for this masterplan, particularly between the Town Centre and the station, so as to create a sense of place, increase streetscape legibility and encourage pedestrian flow.

New public realm opportunities and possible locations for gateways to these spaces have also been identified and tied into this strategy, highlighting where pedestrian movement could take priority and generate new destinations. Specific locations to focus on include:

Connections between William Hunter Way and High Street;

Crown Street adjacent to the Bay Tree Centre car park. Car flow in this location could be reduced by closing the existing Coptfold Road car park exit.

A focus on servicing is also essential given the existing functions of William Hunter Way, Hart Street and Alfred Road. In particular, service vehicle access issues pertaining to the Iceland car park on Alfred Road must be considered in order to ensure safe access and prevent damage to the streetscape.

Constraints

The identified constraints are located within the core of the Town Centre.

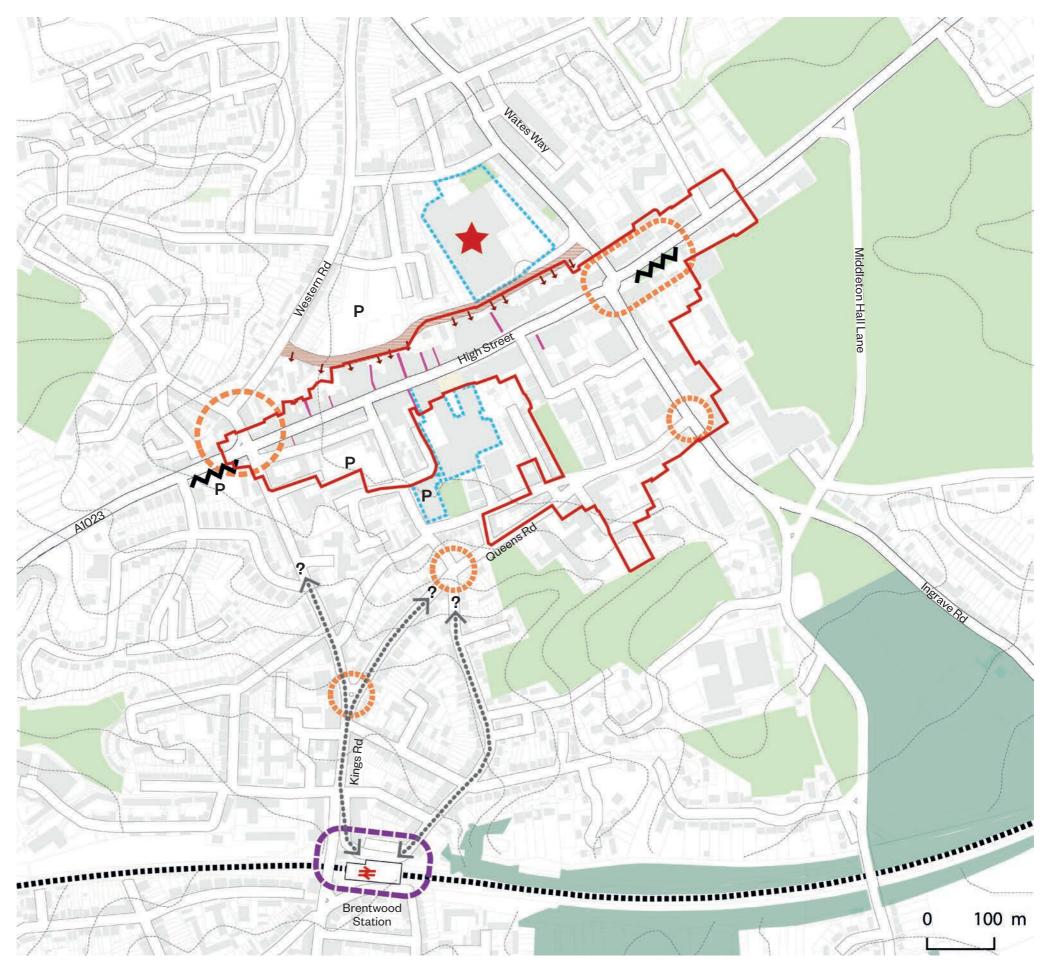
There is an obvious lack of north-south permeability across the High Street and this is exacerbated by the car dominated routes (i.e. William Hunter Way)

Poor way-finding between the station and the Town Centre, combined with car-dominated junctions places greater emphasis on the car user and less on pedestrian movement.

Key

- Buildings/areas with poor relationship to its surroundings
- Car dominated junctions
- Poor sense of arrival at Brentwood Station
- Car dominated route with emphasis on servicing and mobility
- Poor interface with the High Street
- Existing alleyways need to improve the experience and interfaces
- P Car parks with potential to redevelop but important to re-provide the number of places
- ★ Sainsbury's site makes poor spatial and urban contributions to the Town Centre
- Conservation area
 - Lack of way-finding between Town Centre and the station





Opportunities

The identified opportunity areas implies a condition to explore more north-south desire links to integrate the Town Centre with the surrounding schools and the train station. Car-dominated junctions and roads can be explored to be more pedestrian oriented and less car-dominant.

Key

- Identified areas of potential development
- Heart of the Town Centre potential to improve the public realm
- Improve the alleyway experience between
 William Hunter Way and High Street
- Improve the permeability of the Town Centre to and from the High street towards north and south
- Potential to change the character of William
 Hunter Way into a more pedestrian friendly
 street
- Key areas with potential public realm improvements
 - Gateway to the Town Centre from the station.

 Opportunity to improve way-finding and public
- Need to create a sense of arrival in the Brentwood Station
- Spatial integration between the Town Centre and the station
- Crossra
- Existing schools

