The following illustrations present a flavour of what could be achieved in the medium to longer term within some of the key public spaces ('beads') within the town centre. All those identified are seen as key spaces within the matrix of ‘threads and beads’ that is to link the town centre together. Several of the proposals entail the removal or reduction in the extent of car parking in order to deliver more economically, socially and environmentally sustainable spaces that local people can reclaim and enjoy. The ultimate schemes will also, of course, have to fulfil a host of standard requirements including those of the Highways Authority.

1. Park Green
2. Waters Green
3. Brocklehurst Park
4. Great King Street
5. Christchurch
1. Park Green

Park Green is an important urban space of unrealised potential within the town centre. It is surrounded by a mix of buildings, some of which, such as the Registry Office, are particularly distinctive. The space, however, is severely compromised by the realigned Park Green road that divides it diagonally. If reconfigured, Park Green could become an attractive town square: the dominance of the road and traffic could be reduced; a series of usable but connected spaces created; attractive settings for key buildings delivered; a greener environment achieved and a new focal point for activities and gatherings created. If carefully conceived the new space could also aid the integration of the town centre redevelopment scheme into the existing town fabric. The western end of Park Green will have a crucial relationship with the new development which will need to respond sensitively to this corner of Park Green and in a manner that contributes positively to defining the space and enhancing the public realm. Presently undeveloped land at the junction of Park Green and Park Street could become the site for a new building of merit. The new development would redefine this corner of Park Green, help restore the urban fabric and financially contribute to the enhancement of the area.

1. New coursed natural stone paving
2. Proposed fountain on axis of registry office
3. Low sit-wall
4. Stand of feature trees
5. Road realigned to deliver Park Green public space
6. Proposed new civic square
7. New information kiosk/art work/‘eyecatcher’
8. Proposed new development to define Park Green
9. Reconfigured carpark
10. Feature tree
11. New grass/hard space as setting for feature buildings
2. Waters Green

Waters Green is arguably Macclesfield’s most important public space. It is the first point of arrival for those arriving by train and, effectively, by bus. It is visible from the main line railway and it is the setting to the stunning composition that is the old town, the 108 steps and the church of St Michael and All Angels. Yet it presently remains given over to traffic and car parking.

Ultimately, through the public realm strategy, this key space should be retrieved for the pedestrian. Difficult land ownership issues may need to be resolved and some development alongside the railway line might assist in facilitating improvements to the area. As this is a key vehicular route providing access to the railway and bus stations it is accepted that any proposed reorganisation of the space needs to accommodate these arrangements. An option for developing the space is illustrated in the attached sketch. This treats the whole of Waters Green as two separate spaces, one relating to the historic collection of buildings that ascend the hill, the other directly associated with the railway station. The proposal aims to reduce the extent of carriageway through reconfiguring junction arrangements and removing some of the car parking that presently dominates the whole area. A new crisp urban square focused upon a strip of green could be delivered. With the longer term animation of the space this could become an attractive hub and key arrival space into the heart of the historic town.

1. New central space following removal of cars. Design could incorporate water and/or grass (Waters Green) or hard materials
2. Narrowed and realigned access to Queen Victoria Street
3. Feature tree
4. Line of trees to define edge of Waters Green
5. New tall ‘eyecatcher’ artwork
6. Area of feature surface treatment extends across Waters Green to unite the space
7. Line of trees, broken to frame views of St Michael and All Angels Church from Waters Green
8. Upgraded hard area
9. Junction arrangement to Gas Road reconfigured
10. Possible site for redevelopment to repair town fabric
11. Station building
12. Retained station car park kept behind swept line of trees
13. Re-configured arrival and exit arrangement to Macclesfield Station to give greater cohesiveness to the space
14. Improved pavement width to Sunderland Street
15. Access to Boden Street retained
3. Brocklehurst Park

The existing Sparrow Park and the pedestrian route behind the council offices are inconsequential and offer little to the public in their present form. Both areas occupy an attractive position overlooking the Bollin Valley towards the Peak District fringe but much more could be made of their prospect and their link with the three historic stepped routes up from Waters Green. If the extent of parking were rationalised an area could be released and developed into a more meaningful park that would extend the existing Sparrow Park. A line of attractive trees could offset the building, define the extent of the park and orientate the space eastwards across the valley. The edge could be made more of and a series of attractive sheltered spaces delivered. By linking the two remnant areas together a more substantial and “greener” pocket park would be created. Instead of this being a “back edge” to the town centre the area would be opened up and the glorious views to the east be made a feature.

1. Reconfigured and smaller carpark
2. “Eyecatcher” sentinels
3. Informally grouped specimen trees
4. Strengthened parapet walls to Brocklehurst Park
5. Upgraded natural stone paving
6. Enlarged park to deliver a meaningful green space overlooking the Peak District fringe
7. Viewing terrace
8. Informal sheltered green space
9. Formal line of feature trees
4. Great King Street Square

The area around the junction of Great King Street and Churchill Way is ill defined and of questionable quality. Significantly, it adjoins the northernmost edge of the proposed major town centre development. Building upon the theme of delivering a series of ‘threads and Beads’ within the town centre this area has the potential to be a new small urban square. Its development would also enable the better integration of the proposed Wilson Bowden scheme with the surrounding areas. Subject to land ownership issues new development could occur on both sides of Great King Street. The new development could help finance the creation of the new square which would, in turn, deliver a more attractive arrival point to the retail hub, repair the damaged townscape, better animate the street and deliver a more attractive street façade than the proposed car park.

1. Formal grid of trees to straddle road and announce arrival
2. Proposed new buildings to define Great King Street ‘Square’
3. New natural stone paved urban square
4. “Eyecatcher”
5. Reconfigured road junction
6. Reconfigured edge to major development opportunity to conceal carpark
5. Christchurch

Christchurch is a landmark building within the town centre. It is fortunate to have a significant area of undeveloped space around it although this has been compromised by the car park area in the north west corner. Along with Brocklehurst Park this is one of the few areas within the town centre where there is the opportunity to create an attractive area of green space – one of the ‘beads’ within the town centre. With relative ease a new small, green pocket park could be created in this area. The park could act as a focus to the surrounding area and could be created as a more traditional park with horticultural interest. Car parking could be retained here but confined to the westernmost edge and separated from the new park by a line of trees that would, in turn, act as a backdrop to the church.

1. Reconfigured car park
2. Enhanced axis footpath onto Christchurch
3. New formal line of trees
4. New natural stone footpath
5. New ‘green pocket park’
6. New gravel footpath
7. Restored paved setting
8. Refreshed perimeter shrub planting
9. Informal planted perimeter as backdrop to Christchurch
10. Feature ornamental planting displays
11. Tree and shrub planting to break up scale of car park
12. New ‘pocket green’ with ornamental planting
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