

# High Street Central: relationship to the market

## EXISTING CONTEXT AND IDENTITY

Watford High Street is a central spine running through the town centre and consists of a mix of retail and food & beverage options. The northern end of the high street is pedestrianised but the High Street is shared by vehicles south of Clarendon Road, reducing the quality of the public space.

The Watford Market is an important part of the town centre, running since the 12th century, and adapting over the years. It currently occupies a space adjacent to the Exchange Road flyover. The Atria shopping Centre occupies a large portion of the northern side of the High Street and provides a mix of retail options internally, and with individual shops interfacing the High Street. Quality paving with seating, trees, greening and cafés spill out into the street and occupy the pavement outside the shopping centre.

## CHALLENGES

- A portion of the High Street is shared with vehicles, reducing its quality.
- The Exchange Road flyover reduces the quality of the High Street underneath it.
- The public space on Wellstones is compromised by service entrances and car parks.
- Connections over Beechen Grove are heavily compromised.
- The nature of Beechen Grove and Exchange Road creates a negative setting for buildings and their outlook

## ASPIRATIONS FOR THE AREA

There is potential to reinvigorate and increase the prominence of the Watford Market by improving its visibility and prominence. Way finding from the town centre towards the market should be enhanced. There is opportunity to improve the character of Wellstones by enhancing the public environment. A significant way to improve the street is through the redevelopment of the Good Value Parking lot. The dominance of Exchange Road should be reduced by transforming the nature of the street to be more active travel oriented, alongside vehicle use.

## POTENTIAL INTERVENTIONS

### Character & Townscape

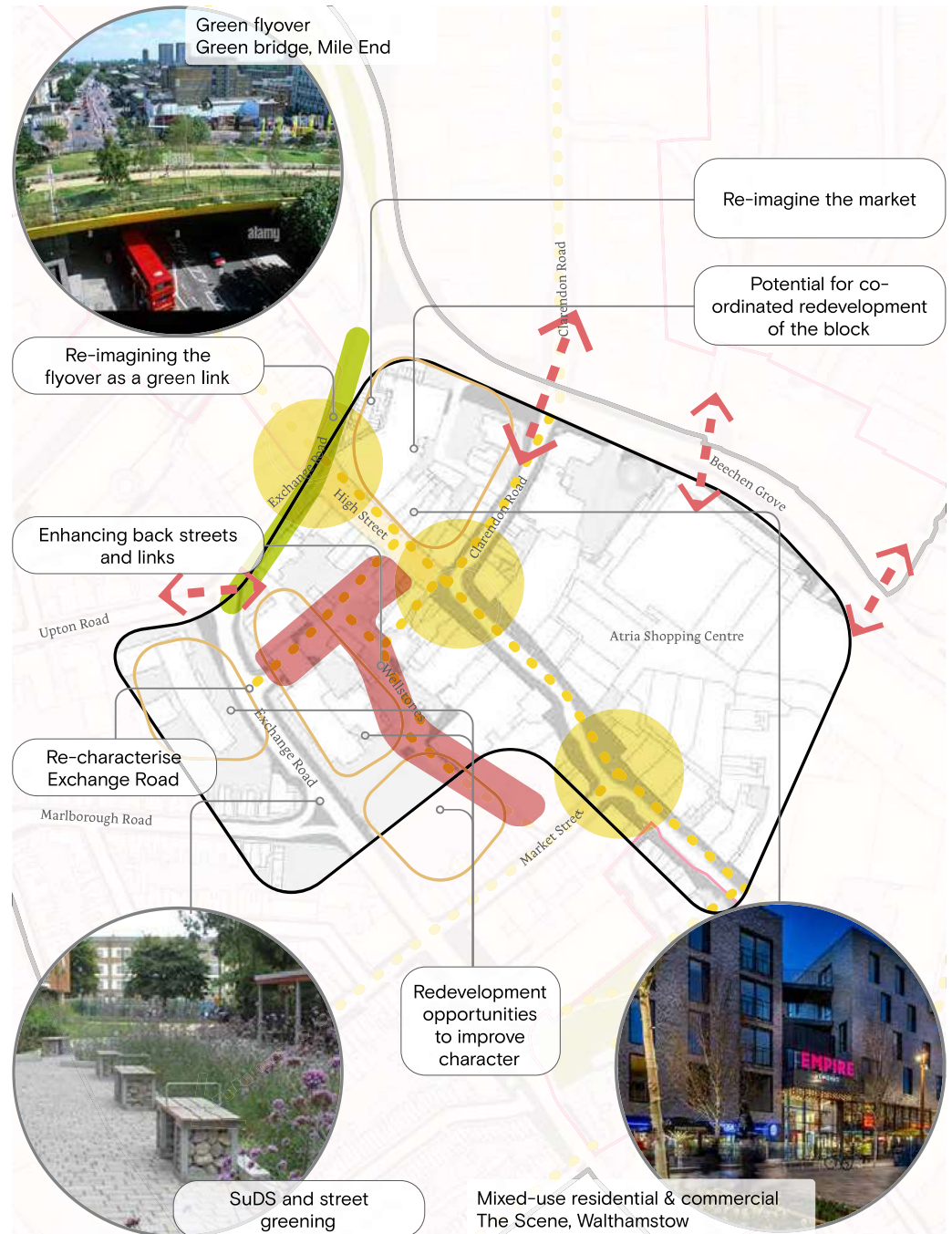
- The urban block around the market has the potential to be redeveloped and intensified, with the appropriate preservation of the historic buildings along the High Street. The Watford Market should be re-provided within this redevelopment and re-imagined with an improved setting, prominence and visibility within the town centre. Access into the block / the market from Beechen Grove should be more visible and less car dominated.
- Redefine the character of Wellstones with active uses.

### Public Realm

- Create a positive public realm landmark node on the High Street at the transition to the High Street North character area and with Market Street.
- Transform the flyover on Exchange Road across the High Street into a green bridge and active travel connection, potentially forming part of a re-imagined market.
- Re-characterise Wellstones with new surfaces and treatments to promote active travel.
- Potential for all streets to accommodate SuDS as part of a wider network strategy, and to introduce greening throughout.

### Movement

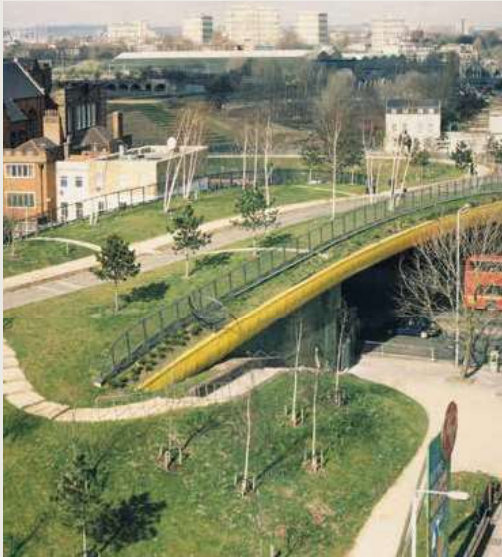
- Enhance active travel crossing between High Street and Clarendon Road to support the transition in character and use.
- Enhance pedestrian way finding across the area, especially in relation to showcasing the market.
- Create new cycleways across the area such as along the High Street, and integrate with the emerging wider active travel network





## Case Studies

### GREEN BRIDGE, MILE END BY CZWG



© CZWG

#### Green flyover

The Green Bridge was invented by us to overcome the conflict between Mile End Park and the traffic of the Mile End Road. Our idea of joining the two halves of Mile End Park with a piece of landscape is the major gesture in the redevelopment as a whole, highlighting the presence of the park at a major access point and establishing it as a true linear park.

The neighbouring fragmented façades are reunited by the establishment of the new retail frontages, which help to contain and revitalise the intensity of a major road intersection previously lost in the under-used open spaces on either side.

### HEYGATE STREET, ELEPHANT & CASTLE, LONDON MACCREANOR LAVINGTON



© Maccreanor Lavington

#### SuDS and street greening

Walworth Road is an existing road located on the edge of the Heygate Estate and formed part of the masterplan for the wider regeneration of the estate. A section of the foot way to one side of the existing road has been remodelled to include wide areas of planting under retained mature trees, incorporating SuDS requirements. The section through the street integrates wide foot ways with planting, seating, cycle parking and informal play elements to improve the environment for pedestrians. The road is a key transport route and the foot way layout includes bus infrastructure elements.

### TURING WAY & EDDINGTON AVENUE, NORTHWEST CAMBRIDGE



©

#### Cycling along major roads

Turing Way and Eddington Avenue form the primary street structure through the Northwest Cambridge development area. The streets are designed to accommodate bus routes, cycle paths and wide pedestrian foot ways alongside areas for car parking, street trees and SuDS elements. Segregated cycle paths are provided to each side of the street and are clearly marked to give priority to pedestrian movement. The streetscape design integrates seating at key locations, cycle parking and raised tables at key junctions.

### HARPER ROAD, LONDON HAWORTH TOMPKINS ARCHITECTS



© Fred Howarth, Grant Frazer

#### New residential within historic character

Located on a side street in a formerly industrial part of London, the design creates a series of differing buildings facing the street. With a rich visual variety and mixed grain, the buildings contribute to defining an attractive street of commercial and residential ground floors and a diverse townscape of differing heights and material treatments.