



THE
PANTILES
The Jewel in the Town

A REJUVENATION STRATEGY FOR THE PANTILES
ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS



FOREWORD

Targetfollow, a leading commercial property investment and development company specialising in town and city centre sites, acquired the Upper Pantiles in January 2008 in order to extend and complement its existing ownership of the Lower Pantiles. The purchase included Tunbridge Wells and Rusthall Commons. Targetfollow's interest now extends over a significant area at the southern end of the town centre. It is the first time in 100 years that the majority of The Pantiles has been under one ownership. This provides an opportunity for a more holistic approach to the regeneration and future management of The Pantiles. Evidence of Targetfollow's long-term commitment to The Pantiles, and to Royal Tunbridge Wells is provided by its:

1. substantial investment to date in the Lower Pantiles;
2. recent acquisition of the Upper Pantiles;
3. work to deliver an independent cinema within The Pantiles;
4. engagement with the Council and other stakeholders to prepare a coordinated strategy for the effective long term management and enhancement of the area.

The Upper Pantiles area has suffered over recent years, in part through lack of investment and active management. It is currently failing to meet its full potential as a destination for tourism, leisure and retail and as a place to live. Single ownership of the majority of The Pantiles provides certainty for this historic area, enabling a more cohesive and focussed approach to its long term management and the proposed rejuvenation. Targetfollow's goals of enhancing the area and promoting rejuvenation by sensitive, positive management are shared by Royal Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.

Targetfollow and its consultants are grateful to the advice from the officers of the Council that have assisted the approach and content of the Rejuvenation Strategy.

Whilst the importance of The Pantiles to the town in historic, economic and social terms is recognised, it cannot be viewed in isolation. The Pantiles needs to be considered in the context of the whole town centre, of which it forms an important part. As a consequence this strategy considers wider issues to ensure that it will sit comfortably within the broader planning context, whilst promoting improvement within the target area of The Pantiles.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Rejuvenation Strategy for the historic Pantiles area of Royal Tunbridge Wells has been prepared by Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners (NLP) on behalf of Targetfollow, working closely with officers from Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (TWBC). The overall approach to the strategy has been presented to Members. Additional input has been provided by Fielden Clegg Bradley (architecture), Gooch Cunliffe Whale (retail agents) and Woodreed (marketing and branding).
- 1.2 This document has been prepared to inform the preparation of the Council's Local Development Framework (LDF) and it will also form a material consideration in the preparation and determination of planning applications. Such is its importance this document will be the subject of public consultation by Targetfollow the feedback from which will further influence the formulation of the strategy.
- 1.3 The ultimate aim of the strategy is to provide a comprehensive framework to guide the series of interrelated proposals and initiatives which seek to build on The Pantiles inherent strengths by:
 - the sensitive management of this important historic area;
 - maximising opportunities for enhancement through appropriate redevelopment;
 - changes of use; and
 - proposals to alter and upgrade the public realm.
- 1.4 The goal is to provide a co-ordinated management tool and action plan for all stakeholders involved in The Pantiles area including Targetfollow, TWBC, Kent County Council, other landowners and interested parties.
- 1.5 The Rejuvenation Strategy is based on an analysis of The Pantiles and the wider area. Accordingly the strategy has been framed to complement TWBC's objectives for regeneration and enhancement within the town and identifies the opportunities that exist, not only within Targetfollow's ownership, but also the wider area.
- 1.6 The Rejuvenation Strategy will form part of the evidence base informing the preparation of the LDF and in particular the Town Centre Area Action Plan (TCAAP). The embodiment of the strategy's key objectives within the TCAAP will strengthen the long term aspirations for the enhancement of The Pantiles and its wider, positive impact upon the town's economy.
- 1.7 The whole process will enable investment in this historic area to be made in the future with confidence that the vision can be delivered.



The Pantiles

The Vision for The Pantiles

- 1.8 Targetfollow's vision is to maximise the potential inherent in The Pantiles' unique buildings and very special sense of place and history. It will become a desirable place to shop, live, work and relax. The Rejuvenation Strategy provides the basis for delivering a high quality retail offer, with complementary leisure uses and events, places to eat, drink and stay. It will become a place where people will want to linger; to be indulged and relax; to spend time and enjoy a beautiful environment. Cultural activities, events, restaurants and residents will breath life into the evening economy.
- 1.9 The area will have a renewed sense of vitality, becoming a key focal point and destination, anchoring the southern end of the town centre. It will become an attractive location for local, independent and specialist retailers. A rejuvenated Pantiles, with strengthened connections to the rest of the town centre, will once again become the historic heart of Royal Tunbridge Wells, underlining its position as a desirable destination for residents and visitors alike.



The Rejuvenated Pantiles: A focus for Activity

Objectives of the Strategy

- 1.10 The strategy sets out a coherent, overarching rejuvenation agenda for The Pantiles area of Royal Tunbridge Wells; highlighting opportunities, making recommendations, identifying priorities and proposing an 'action plan' to advance the vision. The objectives of enhancing the appearance, character and viability of the area are shared with the local planning authority.



Bath Square

- 1.11 Working with TWBC, whose officers who have provided valuable guidance and background information, has provided the basis for a strategy that is ambitious, but deliverable, complementing the wider aims for the town centre and for Royal Tunbridge Wells. The key objectives are:

Objective 1:

To enhance the viability and vitality of The Pantiles to enable it to secure its long term future as an important part of the town centre

Objective 2:

To preserve and enhance an historic environment of significant value

Objective 3:

To ensure a comprehensive approach to the rejuvenation of The Pantiles and provide a framework within which proposals can be brought forward

Objective 4:

To promote The Pantiles as a high quality southern gateway to the town centre

Objective 5:

To promote improved connectivity of The Pantiles to the surrounding area

Objective 6:

To increase legibility and improve visitor interpretation of the history of the area

Objective 7:

To raise awareness of the issues surrounding the future of The Pantiles

Structure of the Study

- 1.12 The strategy is structured as follows: An introduction to the site is presented within Section 2, providing a concise history of both the town and The Pantiles. It also introduces the study area's key elements, highlighting important characteristics and how these relate to the immediate and wider locale.
- 1.13 The planning context for the study area is set out in Section 3, including relevant planning policy and guidance, set within the broader context of the national framework.
- 1.14 Key issues are introduced within Section 4, presenting the area's strengths and highlighting its weaknesses. It presents potential threats to its future and addresses the opportunities for rejuvenating The Pantiles area. It considers development opportunity sites and key action areas; connectivity and wider legibility; strengthening the economic and historic offer; and physical enhancement measures.
- 1.15 Section 5 provides more detailed information on the opportunities highlighted within the previous section, and sets the framework for their implementation through identifying briefs and further/subsequent work which will be required to carry the strategy forward.
- 1.16 Finally Section 6 addresses the 'next steps' – the process by which the completed strategy is to be initiated, anticipating timescales and highlighting the process and individuals who should be involved.

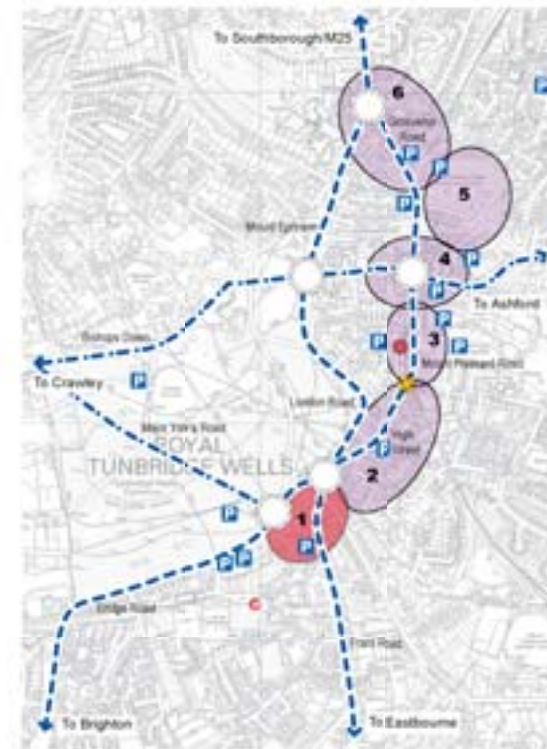
2.0 PHYSICAL CONTEXT

Tunbridge Wells and The Pantiles

- 2.1 Royal Tunbridge Wells, 30 miles to the south east of London, has good transport links to London, the south coast and the wider southern region including by rail and road. The A21, provides access to the M25 and onwards to the national motorway network.
- 2.2 The town centre is linear in nature with The Pantiles, the historic heart, being based to the southern end of the main commercial centre. As Figure 2 illustrates the town has developed along a north/south axis, with London Road accommodating through traffic. The parallel route between Grosvenor Road in the north and The Pantiles in the south provides the backbone of the town centre, along which are a series of six distinctive character areas or 'quarters':
- The Pantiles [1]
 - High Street [2]
 - Mount Pleasant [3]
 - Civic Quarter [4]
 - Retail Quarter [5]
 - St. Johns [6]
- 2.3 As the land rises northwards from The Pantiles along High Street the sense of enclosure and intricate characteristics of the streetscape diminishes with the widening streets. The junction of High Street and Mount Pleasant Road (where the road leads to Ashford) indicates a change in character areas. At this point the proliferation of independent traders, one of the town's unique selling points, reduces and an increased representation of national multiples becomes more apparent.
- 2.4 Continuing northwards Mount Pleasant Road provides a wide, retail boulevard leading up to its junction with Grosvenor Road, and is the arrival point for those travelling into the town by train. Beyond the 'Civic Quarter', centred around Grosvenor Road, are the more recent developments, with a retail offer geared more toward national multiple retailers to complement the boutiques and restaurants and cafes to the south of the town.

- 2.5 The limited opportunity for east/west movement has raised the importance of routes accessing the town centre, particularly from the west. A number of key nodes are in evidence at the intersections of these primary routes, two of which are immediately adjacent to The Pantiles, highlighting its significance as a principal gateway to the southern end of the town.
- 2.6 The Pantiles currently provides niche retailing and pavement cafes/restaurants catering for the town's population and visitors alike. It attracts tourists to the famous springs, and is served by the town's tourist information centre located in the former fish market. Residential and office accommodation form part of the mixed use character of the area.
- 2.7 The area comprises one of the most significant building groups within the Tunbridge Wells Conservation Area. Due to their historic importance and architectural character, a significant number of buildings within the area are listed, and even the paving has been singled out as being worthy of protection.
- 2.8 The area was established as a spa in the early 17th century and its subsequent development in the 18th century, resulted in an attractive pedestrianised area focussed upon public spaces laid out to the front of the Bath House. Today The Pantiles form a key element of the town's urban fabric, attracting visitors, and contributing to the wider tourist offer.
- 2.9 Adjacent to The Pantiles are the Tunbridge Wells and Rushhall Commons which complement the tightly-knit urban grain of the town, providing 250 acres of open space. Development on the Commons has been strictly controlled since the mid-eighteenth century, and they are covered by a number of planning designations.

Figure 2: Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Centre: A wider context



KEY

Key North/South Linkage		Town Quarters	
Key East/West Linkage		The Pantiles	
Key Node		High Street	
Railway Station		Mount Pleasant	
Coach Park		Civic Quarter	
Car Parks		Retail Quarter	
Junction marks key change in character areas		St. Johns	

Brief History of Tunbridge Wells

- 2.10 Tunbridge Wells grew up around Chalybeate Springs discovered in 1606 by Dudley Lord North at the lowest, southernmost end of what is now the town centre. The reputed health-giving properties of its iron-rich waters attracted affluent society to the area, however for many years few permanent buildings were constructed, with temporary stalls serving the increasing numbers of tourists.
- 2.1 The characteristic Upper and Lower Walks of The Pantiles were developed along a bank, constructed in 1638, to address the change in level across the site, and was planted with a double row of yees. After initial restrictions on development adjacent to the springs, due to the financial interests of those with nearby boarding houses, Thomas Neale bought the title of the Manor of Roothall and initiated the development of The Pantiles. This together with the building of the Church of King Charles the Martyr in 1678, provided a focus around which the town began to develop.
- 2.12 During the eighteenth century the town continued to flourish, with the development of the enclaves of Mount Epsraim, Mount Zion, Mount Pleasant and the Wells providing for the needs of both the visiting and local population.
- 2.3 Roothall and Tunbridge Wells Commons provided an attractive open space, and as new development grew up along its edge concerns over unrestricted expansion of the settlement resulted in the 1739 Tunbridge Wells Act which prohibited 'the erection of any buildings on the Common without the prior consent of the Lord and tenants of the Manor.'
- 2.4 By the end of the eighteenth century, changing fashions saw a shift away from the popularity of spa towns, with sea bathing becoming the latest trend. This resulted in a change from a transient to a more settled population within the town. Tunbridge Wells still appealed to the wealthy, with residents attracted by its proximity to London and the high quality of its environment. However such inhabitants demanded a wide range of services and required an increased working population to provide them. During this time there was a shift in emphasis away from The Pantiles and southern end of the town, with the development of the Colverley Estate to the north.

- 2.15 The arrival of the railway in 1845 led to the town's rapid expansion, with residential areas being laid out to accommodate its new inhabitants. By 1878 much of the structure which is recognisable today was already in place (see Figure 3). King Edward VII bestowed the town with its 'Royal' title in 1909 in recognition of its popularity with the aristocracy. In 1930 a new town hall and civic centre, designed by eminent architect, Percy Thomas, was developed at the northern end of the town centre.
- 2.16 Post war Royal Tunbridge Wells remained affluent and attractive, and a number of businesses set up their headquarters in the town. This resulted in the construction of a number of unsympathetic office developments during the 1960's which did little to enhance its historic character. Figure 4 illustrates the extensive development of the town to the south-east by 1974.
- 2.17 The development of Royal Tunbridge Wells is unlike other settlements. It is not based upon a concentric development growth, but rather is a series of linked districts strung along a linear route, with its historic heart to the south and newer town centre developments to the north. The Pantiles is therefore the 'genus loci' of Tunbridge Wells - an area that embodies the spirit of the place. It is the historic heart and raison d'être of the town.



Figure 3: Historic Plan (1878)



Figure 4: Historic Plan (1974)

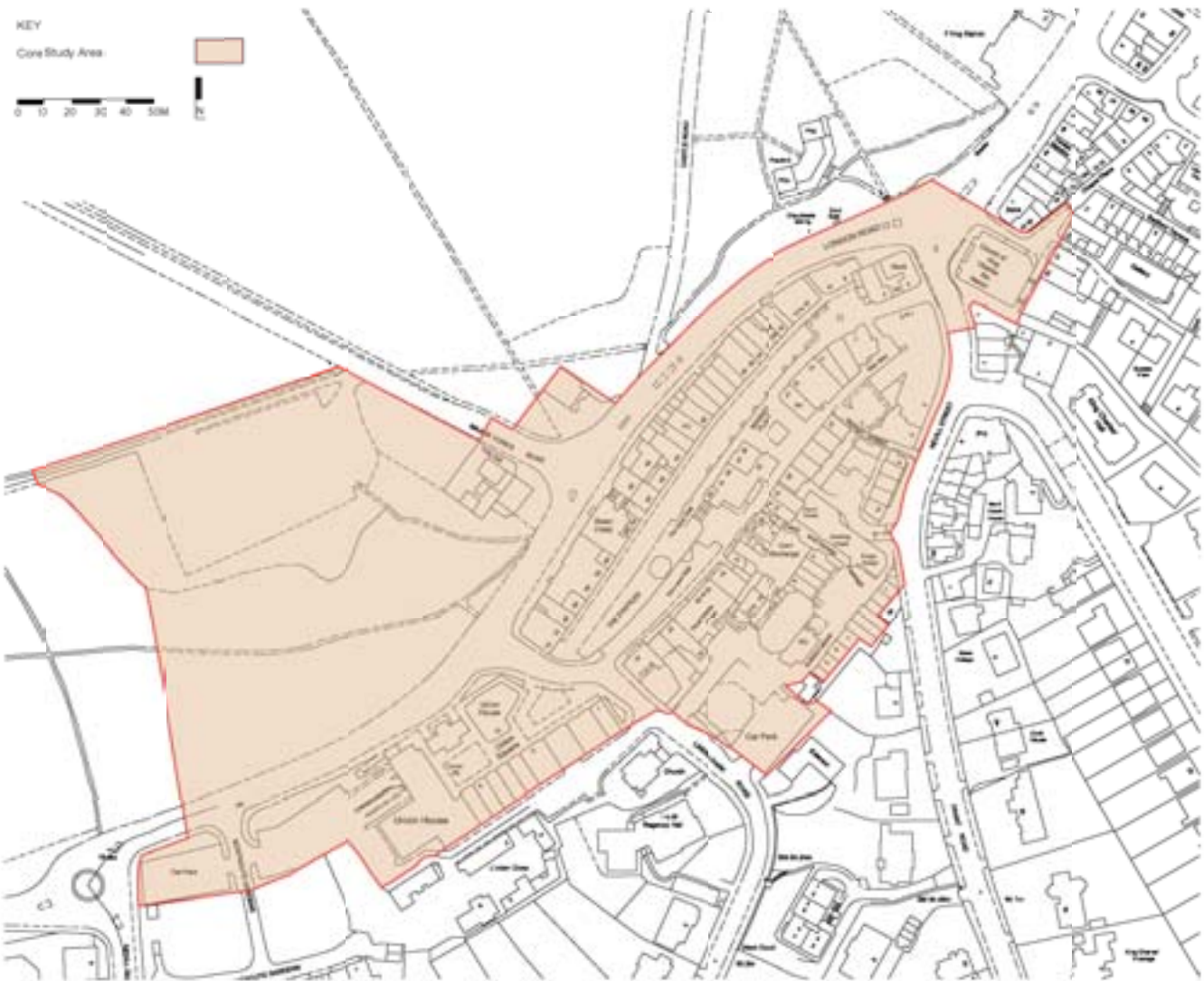


Figure 5: Plan highlighting study area (2008)

Description of the Study Area

- 2.18 Whilst Targetfollow’s ownership does not encompass all properties within the wider Pantiles area, the following analysis does not differentiate between ownerships, rather it considers the character area as a whole. This comprehensive approach has been taken to better understand the issues facing the area and to assist in delivering the objectives of the strategy.
- 2.19 The study area broadly accords with The Pantiles Character Area defined in the Royal Tunbridge Wells and Ruffhall Conservation Area Appraisal (November 2000).
- 2.20 The Pantiles is bounded to the west by the A26 London Road, beyond which is the expanse of Tunbridge Wells Common. The eastern boundary is formed by Nevill Street which climbs southwards to Frant Road. Properties on the western side of Frant Road encompass the study area’s south eastern boundary. To the south Linden Park Road calibrates the extent of The Pantiles and highlights the change between the historic core and more recent development of Union House. The study area also includes an area of the Common which currently provides around 170 unmarked parking spaces on the Fairground car park, these link via an informal footpath to Eridge Road, opposite the Swan Hotel.
- 2.21 The Pantiles, formerly known as ‘The Walks’ and ‘The Parade’, consist of a series of spaces linked by the Upper and Lower Walks. The northern entrance off Nevill Street is defined on both sides by three storey buildings, creating a strong sense of enclosure. This entrance opens up into Bath Square which is centred on the portico of the Bath House and the Chalybeate Spring. Steps rise from the western corner of Bath Square to the Upper Walk. The Upper Walk runs the length of The Pantiles and is bordered for much of its length by an attractively proportioned colonnade. This architectural feature, together with the regularly spaced lime trees located on the Upper Walk draws the eye along the gently curving north-eastern façade. Towards the south the Upper Walk widens to incorporate a plateau, the site of the bandstand and associated circulation space.



Figure 6: Aerial photo highlighting Targetfollow's ownership Image © Google

- 2.22 London Road and Eridge Road to the north form a busy, traffic-dominated boundary, which divides The Pantiles from the Common. A mix of frontages and backs of buildings address this key transport route.
- 2.23 The Lower Walk is of a less generous width, being confined by buildings to its south-eastern edge and by the stone wall of the Upper Walk to the north-west, it links the corner of Bath Square to the Fish Market. The Fish Market is a well proportioned square, at the centre sits the former fishmonger's 'stall' currently in use as a tourist information centre. An imposing four storey terrace provides an attractive backdrop to Fish Market whilst the Duke of York public house and facing building group provide enclosure to two of the other three sides. From the western-most corner of the Fish Market the pedestrian footway rises towards the striking 'Music Hall/ Gallery', a bow-fronted shop with an open air gallery to the first floor. It then links through to the upper bandstand plateau. Steps connect the Upper and Lower Walks adjacent to the 'Music Hall/ Gallery' and the former Gloster Tavern, landing at an open square opposite the entrance to the Corn Exchange. To the south-west a length of tarmaced road provides the only vehicular service access into the historic Pantiles, bounded on one side by the wall of the Upper Walk and on the other by an imposing terrace including the Royal Victoria House (formerly the Royal Sussex Hotel).
- 2.24 The area to the east of the Lower Walk, adjacent to Nevill Street provides servicing to the rear of the 1980's development on Coach and Horses Passage and 21-31 Lower Walk. Fronting onto Nevill Street is a 3 storey terrace, the line of which continues around to the entrance of The Pantiles opposite the Church of King Charles the Martyr (listed Grade I). Market Street, a narrow route between 4 and 6 Nevill Street provides access to the rear of the Lower Walk and a small parking area.

- 2.25 The Corn Exchange (formerly the Tunbridge Wells Theatre) was extensively re-constructed in 1989 and now houses an arcade of small shops clustered around a central internal courtyard which, in turn links through to the Auction House and Linden Park Road car park. To the east of the Corn Exchange is a sizeable square, accessed via Sussex Mews and the Coach and Horses Passage. This open space is overlooked at its north-eastern end by an office development; to the east by an attractive development of small craft units, and from the Sussex Arms Public House at the south-western corner. The rear of the Corn Exchange presents inactive frontages to this square.
- 2.26 The southern most area of the site was redeveloped as an Auction House above a decked car park, providing 56 spaces over two floors in the 1970s. Due to the topography access to the upper level of parking is via Linden Park Road, whilst the lower level is entered via an access road serving Sussex Mews. A coach drop off point is positioned on Linden Park Road, adjacent to the Auction House.
- 2.27 Immediately to the south of The Pantiles, on the opposite side of Linden Park Road, lies Union House and Square. This unattractive 1960's development relates poorly to its historic neighbour in terms of its architectural style and gives a low quality presentation to those travelling into Royal Tunbridge Wells from the south.
- 2.28 The introverted nature of The Pantiles results in buildings within the historic core fronting onto the pedestrianised area, and consequently turning their backs to the main London Road. The internal core area is one of the earliest examples of a true pedestrian precinct.



East side of Bath Square



The London Road frontage



View south along the Lower Walk towards the Corn Exchange



Looking south along Upper Walk towards the bandstand and Union House

Buildings and Layout

- 2.29 The study area is characterised by buildings of varying ages, styles, materials and details. There are many notable buildings and individual buildings groups, however (as highlighted by the Tisbury Wells and Routhall Conservation Area Appraisal) it is this variety of buildings in combination with the pedestrianised Walks that creates a distinctive townscape. There is a general consistency in scale and proportion of buildings and their immediate relationship to the public walk creates a harmonious townscape.
- 2.30 The richness that derives from the variety of styles, use of materials and types of detailing creates considerable visual interest. This is unified by the colonnaded frontage to the Upper Walk, which consists paving to the floorscape and colour palette of materials which act as unifying elements. Together the elements combine to create a townscape of a particularly special quality.
- 2.31 The majority of buildings and paved areas within The Pantiles are listed (see Figure 7), most are Grade II (buildings of special interest). Two are considered to be of 'more than special interest' and have been listed Grade II*. The Gloster Tavern (39-41), built in 1706, is cited as being an example of one of the first and grandest purpose built hotels in the town. Number 7 The Pantiles was constructed in 1660, an example of an early timber framed dwelling house which was later converted into a shop. The buildings mainly date from the 18th Century but have undergone various incremental changes. To the north of The Pantiles is the Grade I listed Church of King Charles the Martyr, which features in views looking north from Bath Square.



Figure 7: Listed buildings



2.32 Newer constructions have been less successful in creating an attractive streetscene. The octagonal Auction House to the southern end of the study area, together with the property fronting onto Pink Alley have been designed with little regard for the local context. Similarly the Union House complex, to the south of the study area, provides a large mass of building which lacks the scale and interest of the historic townscape and is therefore a jarring visual element at the southern gateway to the town.

2.33 The evolution of The Pantiles has resulted in a strong, enclosed building line running adjacent to London Road (see Figure 8). The introverted nature of the site is as a result of its original function as a pedestrianised promenade, however the increasing importance of London Road has resulted in The Pantiles' rear elevation becoming more prominent.

2.34 There is a significant variety and richness to the architectural fabric of The Pantiles, elements commonly found within the area include the following;

Height: Building heights range from two to four storeys, with three storeys the most common across The Pantiles. Some buildings have basements and others attic storeys, treated in a variety of ways.

Roof form: pitched roofs; gabled; hipped; half hipped gable; Dutch gabled; dormers; attics; mansards; parapets;

Materials: The use of a wide variety of materials provides a visual interest and warmth to the streetscape. Finishes include painted brick; stucco; weather boarding; plain clay tile hanging; painted timber to imitate masonry; red brick; yellow brick; sandstone;

Detailing: opening casements; sash windows; curved and canted bay windows moulded cornices; dentilled cornices; string courses; console brackets; flat hoods to doorways; cast iron spear railings; rustication; keystones; cambered sashes; fanlights;

Architectural features: columns; colonnades; pilasters; cast iron balconies; balconettes; glazed veranda;



Variety of materials and detail within The Pantiles

2.35 In addition there are a number of distinctive architectural features that further contribute to the interest of the area including the weather boarded clock tower and cupola on the Church of King Charles the Martyr, which acts as a significant focus for the wider area; the ragstone 'spalls' running along the length of much of the Upper Walk; Wall signage at the northern and southern ends of the Walks; and the pillar box on Upper Walk.

2.36 Given the historical, social and architectural significance of The Pantiles, the complex nature of the buildings and protection afforded to them, any future development of the area will need to be handled sensitively to maintain and enhance one of Royal Tunbridge Well's principal assets.



Figure 8: Diagram illustrating the development of the built environment (highlighted in black) emphasising the enclosure created by The Pantiles



Woods Passage



Swan Passage



Market Street



Pink Alley

Linkages

- 2.37 One of The Pantiles' key characteristics is the glimpsed views afforded by the narrow passageways linking into the heart of the site. To the western side of the site these routes are covered walkways, with buildings bridging across them: Swan Passage, Flat House Passage and Woods Passage link directly from The Pantiles through to London Road. To the eastern side of the site Coach & Horses Passage links the Lower Walk through to Nevill Street, as does Market Street slightly further to the north. Pink Alley provides a route from the rear of the Lower Walk into Bath Square.
- 2.38 The intimate nature of these linkages is shared by routes to the north of the study area. When approaching The Pantiles on foot from Chapel Place and Cumberland Walk views are focussed upon the Church Of King Charles the Martyr, with limited glimpses out into London Road. Union Square, to the south of The Pantiles, also attempted to include this element but to much less successful effect.
- 2.39 The amount of pedestrian space within the Upper and Lower Walks can be clearly seen within Figure 9, reflecting its importance as one of the town's key urban spaces. The lack of civic urban space contrasts sharply with the wealth of green open spaces within Tunbridge Wells.

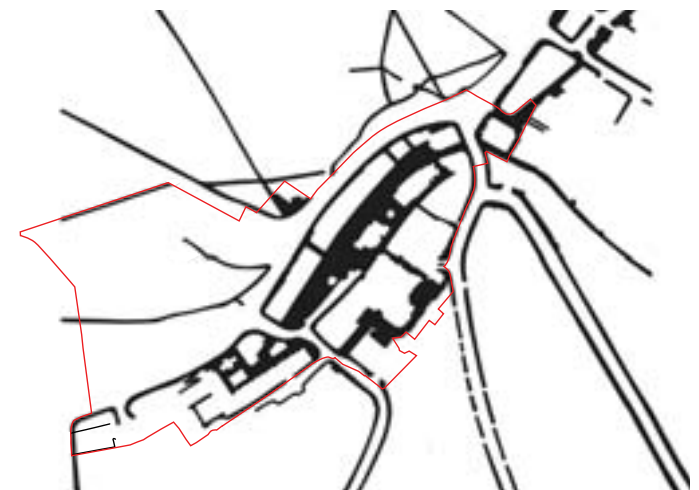


Figure 9: Diagram illustrating the significant area of public realm within The Pantiles (highlighted in black) and pedestrian linkages to the wider area

Public Realm and Landscape

2.40 The importance of the quality of the public realm to The Pantiles is heightened by the number and variety of types of public space in evidence within its boundaries:

- Bath Square
- The Fish Market
- Upper and Lower Walks
- Bandstand area
- Sussex Mews Square

2.41 The ‘pantiles’ from which the precinct takes its name - eight inch square, clay baked tiles - were laid in 1697. The surviving examples have been removed and are in Tunbridge Wells Museum. In 1792 the Upper Walk was repaved with Purbeck flagstones, and steps were incorporated into the Sussex sandstone walls which divide the two levels. Additions to this palette of materials have included the red and brindled brick, laid in stretcher bond to the Lower Walk, and sections of ragstone spalls (coarsely chipped limestone bedded in mortar) running in linear sections along the top of the wall which divides the two levels. Less considered interventions have included the current brick detailing to the foot of the lime trees along the Upper Walk.

2.42 Footpaths to London Road are poorly maintained, and subject to traffic movements, with service vehicles often mounting them to make deliveries. There has been a degradation of the public realm within this area, with no cohesive treatment of the floorscape and, as elsewhere within the study area, an inconsistent approach to service covers. The hoggin finish surrounding the bandstand is deteriorating and is in need of repair and there is a prevalence of ‘A’ boards throughout the Upper and Lower Walks.

2.43 The existing street furniture; benches, bins, bollards, lighting columns, railings etc. are of the standard ‘conservation’ range and are in need of some maintenance.

2.44 One of The Pantiles’ key characteristics is the row of trees running for much of its length. Originally a double avenue, the current trees provide an attractive softening of the urban environment, filtering views, creating shelter and providing a sense of enclosure within the study area that is experienced at few other places within the town.



Incidental seating



Public realm at the southern end of Upper Walk



Unsympathetic tree surrounds



The listed paving and change in levels



Offices to let



Gallery



The Corn Exchange



Alfresco dining



Tourist Information

Land Use and Activity

- 2.45 The Pantiles accommodates a mix of uses including shops, cafes and restaurants, offices and residential accommodation. Craft units in Sussex Mews provide premises for some creative businesses. In addition, attractions such as the Bath House, bandstand and tourist information centre provide a draw for tourists.
- 2.46 The specialist nature of the shops in the area is particularly notable. Many are occupied by local, independent traders and this contributes to the distinctive character of The Pantiles. There is a bias towards home decoration with a number of antique, kitchen and furniture shops. There are very few vacant units in The Upper and Lower Walks but higher levels of vacancy in the units within the Corn Exchange. Many of the retail units have historic shopfronts. Some have been combined to create larger shops but the size of units is generally small.
- 2.47 The Linden Park car park also lies within the study area as does the 'Fairground' car park on the Common to the west of The Pantiles. An auction house is situated to the southern most end of the study area, above the Linden Park car park.
- 2.48 Given the type of businesses and the pedestrianised 'open air' nature of The Pantiles, activity levels are at their highest in the summer, particularly at the weekends. Visitor levels also increase year round when there are events or other activities that encourage people to linger in the area.
- 2.49 There small number of public houses/wine bars and restaurants within the area, extending the period of activity into the evening. This is more noticeable towards weekends, whereas weekday evenings tend to be quiet. The residential accommodation within The Pantiles contributes to its character and also provides the opportunity for natural surveillance.

Access and Accessibility

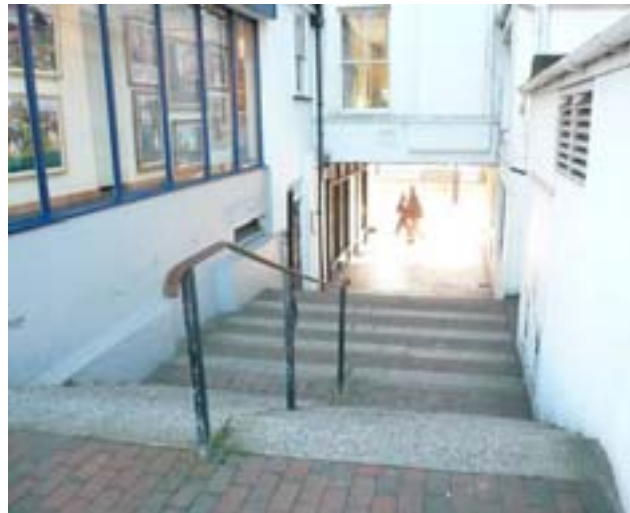
- 2.50 Access within the majority of the study area is restricted to pedestrian movement, with only a small length of road to the front of Royal Victoria House, and the entrance to the car park and Sussex Mews from Linden Park, being open to vehicular traffic. This vehicle-free environment plays a significant role in the attractiveness of the area.
- 2.51 Accessibility within the site is very much influenced by the area's topography and historic layout. The majority of changes in level are addressed by steps. The gradual rise between Bath Square and the bandstand provides the only ramped access between the Upper and Lower Walks. Whilst a level access from the northern end of The Pantiles to London Road is possible, changes in level from north to south on London Road result in a stepped access to The Pantiles via Swan Passage – presenting a barrier to the less able.
- 2.52 Narrow pavements along the London Road and Eridge Road frontages provide unattractive routes on the external boundaries of the site, whilst crossing points are limited. Accessing the 'Fairground' car park on Major Yorks Road is potentially dangerous given the busy nature of the junction with London Road and the lack of crossing facility. Whilst access from Nevill Street into Sussex Mews is confined both by the width of the footway and the change in level between the two.



Steps between Upper & Lower Walks



Steps from Bath Square



Steps between London Road & Upper Walk



Footpath from 'Fairground' car park leads onto dangerous crossing point

Parking and Servicing

- 2.53 Parking is currently limited within The Pantiles area. There are currently 3 no. blue badge bays, 3 no. ½ hour short stay bays and 1 no. taxi bay available on the Lower Walk. Linden Park Road car park provides 56 spaces over two floors, however its layout is very restricted as is access to the lower floor. There is also an element of parking to the rear of Nevill Street.
- 2.54 There is limited provision for the on-site servicing of properties within The Pantiles. The Lower Walk provides the closest drop off point for many service vehicles and, therefore gets busy. Deliveries are also taken via Sussex Mews, but as with the Lower Walk, this often involves them having to reverse off Linden Park Road. The Pantiles lie within the town's Central Parking Zone (commercial), where operational parking should be provided on site for development within use classes A, B and D and commercial sui-generis uses.
- 2.55 Vehicles stopping on London Road not only impact upon traffic flows but also damage pavements. Those unloading on Nevill Street cause congestion on a busy thoroughfare. Where direct access is not available to properties goods are carried or conveyed on trolleys through the site, often negotiating stepped changes in level along the way.



Servicing the site



Deliveries within The Pantiles



Deliveries from London Road



Parking at Linden Road

Signage & Interpretation

- 2.56 Whilst directional signage to The Pantiles does exist (it is included on the town’s fingerposts and there is a small overhead sign at the station) generally, there is insufficient waymarking to the site from key arrival points within the town. On arrival at The Pantiles signage is limited, and is difficult to locate. A prime example of this is the sign on the western side of the Nevill Street pedestrian crossing. Fixed to the pedestrian guardrails, it is small and can only be seen when there aren’t vehicles blocking it from view. This provides a key arrival point at the northern gateway to the area.
- 2.57 Given its position at the southern end of the town centre, gateway signage is poor. When travelling northwards along Eridge Road and, when travelling eastwards down Major York’s Road, there is no indication that this is an area of such historic importance.
- 2.58 There is a distinct lack of ‘orientation’ information available to those arriving at The Pantiles by bus, coach or private vehicle, or on foot. Whilst some interpretation material is available within The Pantiles, in particular around the Bath House, it is limited in both its content and quality. Information on the area is provided by the information points which are located throughout the town centre. No interpretation or directional signage is in evidence at the coach drop off point to the southern end of the site – an important entrance for many visitors to not only The Pantiles, but to the town centre generally.



Fingerpost - Cumberland Walk



Highway Signage - Linden Park



Directional signage – Railway Station



Tourist Information signage opposite station



Signage at northern entrance to The Pantiles

Interrelationship with the Wider Area

Pedestrian Linkages

- 2.59 Due to the way in which the town has evolved, linkages to The Pantiles are not easily apparent to a first time visitor arriving by rail or car. At the railway station, Vale Road creates a physical barrier between the station and the southern end of the town. The visitor has a choice of two routes. Either to walk along the heavily trafficked Vale Road/London Road or to take the more pleasant route down High Street and through Chapel Place.
- 2.60 At the southern end of Chapel Place there is a choice of routes to The Pantiles, both are poorly signposted. To the east of the Church of King Charles the Martyr there is a narrow, steeply stepped passage leading onto Cumberland Walk. To the west a narrow footpath clings to the front of the church. Both routes lead to the controlled pedestrian crossing on Nevill Street. Positioned somewhat off the natural desire line and flanked to both sides by guard rails the crossing provides a perceptual and physical barrier to accessing The Pantiles.
- 2.61 The closest car parks are Fairground, Auction House and Union House. As noted previously accessing The Pantiles from the 'Fairground' car park is difficult due to a lack of crossing facilities at this key node within the town's transport network. The linkages for pedestrians from Union House car park would also benefit from improved waymarking for visitors.



Vale Road/High Street junction



Chapel St/Cumberland Walk link



Nevill Street crossing



Eridge Road/London Road junction

Land Uses in the Surrounding Area

- 2.62 The Pantiles, together with Union Square form the southern end of the town's primary shopping area. To the south of Union House (offices and car park) lies a small residential area, Montacute Gardens, beyond which there is a Sainsbury superstore, accessed via Nevill Terrace.
- 2.63 To the east of the site, as the land rises along Nevill Street, the land uses change from town centre to large residential dwellings, set in substantial plots. To the west the Commons provide an attractive green lung dominated by mature trees, adjacent to the town centre.
- 2.64 To the north of the site Chapel Place and High Street provide a mix of relatively small scale retail units accommodating a variety of independent traders and a few quality multiples. The residential district of Mount Sion lies to the east and is bordered by The Grove, ones of the town's many public parks. The top of High Street is severed from the rest of the retail centre by the busy Mount Pleasant Road/ Vale Road junction. Beyond this lies the town's railway station from where the land continues to rise and the number of national multiple retailers increases.
- 2.65 To the upper end of Mount Pleasant Road the town's civic buildings provide a focus for those travelling along this key route. Beyond the Public Library and Museum lies the town's most recent retail development, the Royal Victoria Place Shopping Centre centred upon the Five Ways junction, this marks the northern most end of the main retail core.
- 2.66 Residential districts and substantial areas of public open space lie to either side of the linear primary shopping area.



Union House



Mount Pleasant Road



Chapel Place



The Commons

Transport

- 2.67 The Pantiles sit at the southern gateway to Royal Tunbridge Wells, and is adjacent to two key nodes within the town’s highway system. The London Road/Eridge Road/Major York’s Road junction is an arrival point for those travelling into the town from both the south and west and therefore The Pantiles are often one of the first views that visitors will have.
- 2.68 The London Road/ Nevill Street junction, centred on the impressive Church of King Charles the Martyr, provides a key focus for those travelling through the town. The highway forming a clear division between the tightly knit historic urban fabric and the openness of the Commons to the west.
- 2.69 The site is reasonably well served by public transport with the town’s railway station 0.5km to the north and two bus stops on London Road adjacent to Flat House Passage. Tunbridge Wells has regular train services, with frequencies from every 10-60 minutes, running to; London Bridge, London Charing Cross, Rye or Hastings and Horsham via Gatwick. The main difficulty for pedestrians walking from The Pantiles to the station and other parts of the town centre is the change in levels and poor way finding.

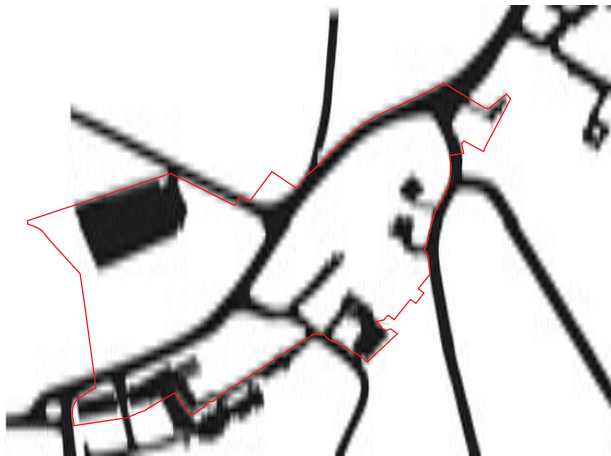


Figure 10: Diagram illustrating the area taken up by roads (highlighted in black) and emphasising the lack of vehicle intrusion within The Pantiles

- 2.70 The area is well connected in terms of bus services with 3 routes serving The Pantiles. The main town centre bus link, the “Shopper Hopper” (281), operates at 12 minute intervals throughout the day, Monday to Saturday and at 30 minute intervals during the evenings and on Sundays. Other buses, the 229 and 256, run to Crowborough and Wadhurst but are less frequent. The bus stops have limited information on timetables and destinations and no seating but have recently been provided with shelters.
- 2.71 A coach drop off point to the south of The Pantiles, on Linden Park Road allows for the setting down and picking up of passengers, however there is no form of shelter provided.
- 2.72 As Figure 10 shows, the highway network surrounds the northern, western and southern edges of The Pantiles. Vehicular intrusion into the area is limited, preserving the relative peacefulness of the area.
- 2.73 This lack of access impacts on both the servicing of properties and the provision of car parking for the area.
- 2.74 Currently public parking serving The Pantiles area includes:
 - limited on-street parking on the Lower Walk (see Parking & Servicing)
 - pay & display at Linden Road (56 short stay bays)
 - pay & display at Union House (115 long stay bays)
 - pay & display at the ‘Fairground’ car park (Major York’s Road)
- 2.75 The Fairground car park site is divorced from the southern end of the town centre by London Road, it provides a significant number of spaces serving The Pantiles and the lower end of High Street/Chapel Place.



The Pantiles coach stop



Tunbridge Wells railway station

3.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 For the rejuvenation of The Pantiles to be successful and deliverable, it needs to be based on an understanding of the relevant planning policy context. The statutory development plan which includes the saved policies of the Kent and Medway Structure Plan and the saved policies of the Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan 2006, until March 2009.
- 3.2 The draft South East Plan, the regional spatial strategy (RSS) is expected to be adopted by the end of 2008, when it will replace the Kent and Medway Structure Plan. TWBC has also commenced work on its Local Development Framework, which will replace the Local Plan, but the Core Strategy, Development Control Policies DPD and the Town Centre Area Action Plans are not expected to be adopted until after 2009. The strategy has therefore had regard to emerging policies which may eventually form part of the statutory development plan, non-statutory policies contained within Supplementary Planning Guidance as well as national guidance. Of particular relevance to the strategy are PPS1, PPS6, PPS12, PPG13 and PPG15.
- 3.3 The intention is for this document to become a material consideration, guiding the landowner in the preparation of projects and the local planning authority in the determination of applications. It will also inform those organisations involved in the preparation of public realm works.

Policy Framework

- 3.4 The Local Development Scheme (LDS) 2007 anticipates that the Town Centre Area Action Plan will be commenced in 2007/08 and be completed by the end of 2010. It is understood that the timescale for preparing this document has slipped by 12 months with an anticipated adoption date of 2011.

Location of Development

- 3.5 Tunbridge Wells is defined by Policy SS1 of the Structure Plan as a Principal Urban Area and by Policy EP4 of the Structure Plan as a sub-regional town centre. It is recognised as an appropriate location for the concentration of development (PPS1; RPG Q1; SP SS1 and EP4; emerging RSS CC8c). Its role as a regional hub, in conjunction with Tonbridge, is taken forward in the RSS, with a focus on creating accessible, attractive and vibrant town centres that provide the focal point for a mix of uses. This recognises the town's current social and economic role, and highlights the importance of its wider transport links, whilst acknowledging the sensitivities of such a historically and ecologically significant context. The designation strengthens the town's strategic role within the south east, offering a number of key opportunities:
- To focus development on economic and urban regeneration of Royal Tunbridge Wells town centre
 - To reinforce the role of Royal Tunbridge Wells as a commercial, retail, service, leisure and cultural centre
 - To bid for transport and other infrastructure improvements within the town and also for wider links to support the Hub status
- 3.6 Within the local context, development outside the limits of built development is generally opposed (LP LBD1 and EN25) and there is a strong recognition of the importance of conserving and enhancing the town's built and natural environment (RPG Q2; SP SP1; emerging RSS CC8c, BE1 and KTG3). Structure Plan Policy TW1 notes that protecting the setting of the town and its location within the Green Belt will be the 'prime consideration' in respect of the quantity and location of development in Tunbridge Wells.
- 3.7 The reuse of previously developed land and buildings is promoted as providing a basis for the sustainable location of development (RPG Q3; SP SS4 and NR1; Kent Design Guide; emerging RSS Policy H3, H5 and W2). This would contribute towards a reduction in the need to travel and the promotion of more sustainable modes of transport (PPS1; PPG13; RPG T1, T4 and T5; SP QL3, TP1, TP3 and TP11; LP TP2, TP3 and TP4; emerging RSS T1, T5 and T8).



The Pantiles

Heritage

- 3.8 PPG15 notes that conservation and sustainable economic growth are complementary objectives. The special architectural or historic interest of conservation areas should be clearly defined in order to provide a sound basis for planning policies and decisions. It notes the statutory duty on local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas and that these need to be subject of consultation including local residents and amenity societies, chambers of commerce and the highways authority.
- 3.9 All new development is to be well designed, responding positively to the local context. Existing high quality areas are to be protected and enhanced (PPS1; RPG Q2; SP QL1, QL2 and QL3; LP EN1). Of particular relevance to this strategy, the emerging RSS emphasises the active encouragement of conservation and appropriate enhancement of character, distinctiveness and the sense of place of settlements. The RSS notes that opportunities should be sought to create a high quality environment based on a shared vision where good design, innovation, sustainability and a good quality of life are emphasised (CC12).

- 3.10 The Pantiles form part of a Conservation Area and is subject to specific restrictions in respect of all new development which will be permitted where it preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the area (PPG15, SP QL6; LP EN4, EN5 and EN13). Development that would harm a Conservation Area would not be permitted. Full regard has been had to the Royal Tunbridge Wells and Rusthall Conservation Areas Appraisal which was prepared by the Council in partnership with the Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society and other local representatives.
- 3.11 The character of The Pantiles is rooted in the quality of the buildings, many of which are of considerable historic interest; a large number of these buildings are listed. Policy (PPG15; SP QL7, QL8, QL9; LP EN3, EN6; emerging RSS BE7) aims to protect sites of special historic and archaeological interest (including their setting) from harmful development. All development proposals that affect a listed building or its setting will be expected to demonstrate how it will protect or enhance the existing context and development that would adversely affect a Listed Building would not be permitted. Local Plan Policy EN2 states that development involving partial or total demolition of a Listed Building will also not be permitted unless an overriding case can be put forward.
- 3.12 Given its heritage importance, The Pantiles falls within an Area of Special Control for Advertisements (Local Plan Policy EN7). Functional requirements are to be balanced against the need to give special protection to local amenity. Advertisements are required to 'harmonise with the surrounding area and cause no harm to its character or appearance' through size, location, design, materials or siting.

Green Belt

- 3.13 The Common to the west of The Pantiles forms part of the Metropolitan Green Belt. There is a general policy presumption against inappropriate development within the Green Belt (PPG2; SP SS2, SS4; LP MGB1; emerging RSS CC10a, CC8c, SS10a and KTG11). Policy WK1 of the Structure Plan specifically states that no land is to be released from the Metropolitan Green Belt within Tunbridge Wells to meet strategic requirements or for residential or business development. The emerging RSS (CC10a) acknowledges that green belts will be retained and supported, noting that cases for small scale review should be pursued through the LDF process.

Important Landscape Approach

- 3.14 An Important Landscape Approach is located to the east of The Pantiles site. This is protected by Local Plan Policy EN23 which prohibits development which would cause significant harm to the appearance and character of the approach and its role within the wider locality.

Nature Conservation

- 3.15 Areas and species of special scientific and nature conservation interest are protected from harmful development, and trees are protected with encouragement of new planting where appropriate (PPS7; SP EN7, EN8 and EN9; LP EN15). This requirement is to be an important consideration in respect of any proposal.

Forms of Development

Town Centre

- 3.16 The Pantiles area is located within Tunbridge Well Town Centre. In accordance with the requirements of national policy guidance (Structure Plan Policy EP15 and Local Plan Policy CR2), retail and leisure developments should be established within existing centres. They would only be appropriate in edge-of-centre or out-of-centre locations if matters relating to need, impact and the sequential approach to site selection can be satisfactorily demonstrated.
- 3.17 Planning policy supports the development of retail, service and leisure uses within town centres as well as mixed use development in town centres if it aids its vitality and viability and is consistent with the scale and function of the town centre (PPS6; RPG Q5; SP S55, EP14, EP16 and QL5; emerging RSS TC1, TC2 and TC3).
- 3.18 Reflecting its town centre location, Local Plan Policy CR5 states that the 55% of the frontage of The Pantiles/Union Square (Character Area 10) should be preserved for Class A1 activities. The purpose of this policy is to avoid any significant interruption in the shopping frontage which might undermine the character, vitality and viability of the Character Area.
- 3.19 The emerging RSS notes that economic strength underpins successful settlements and that town centres play a key role in the fortunes of urban areas. Greater diversity is supported to achieve this. Policy BE1 in particular notes the opportunities to make the urban environment an attract places to live, work, shop, spend leisure time and invest noting that a key elements of establishing a shared vision are:
- "in partnership with other public agencies, the private sector and the local community, to establish innovative management arrangements for town centres
 - Promote and support design solutions relevant to context...
 - Support and identify opportunities for appropriate higher density and mixed-use development schemes...
 - Draw up development briefs and masterplans for key sites."

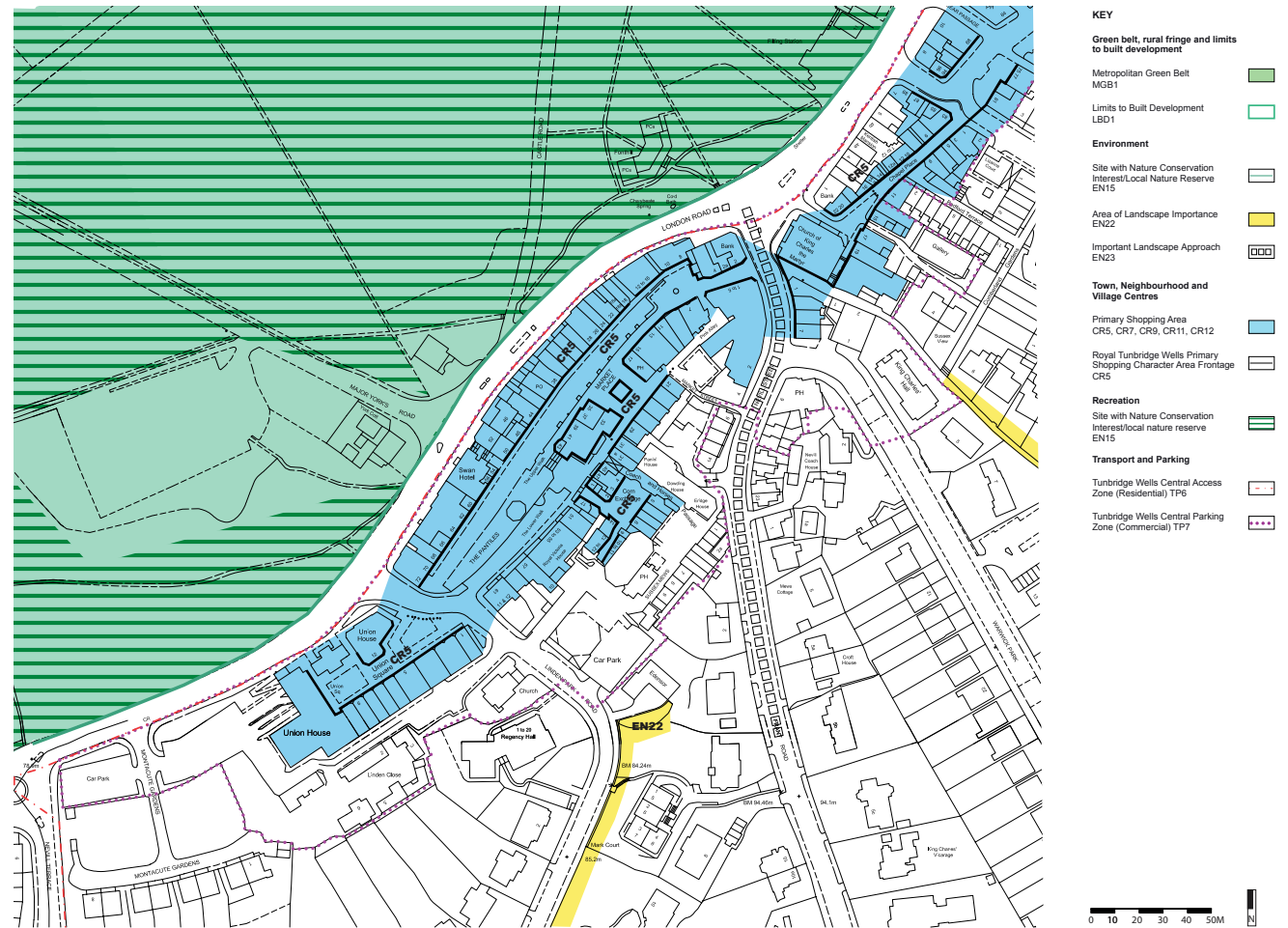


Figure 11: Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan — Adopted March 2006

Employment

- 3.20 Business premises are supported within or adjacent to town centres (SP WK1 and EP2; emerging RSS TC2 and KTG4). The emerging RSS notes (RE2) that “accessible and well-located industrial and commercial sites should be retained where there is a good prospect of employment use.”

Housing

- 3.21 Residential development which provides for a mix of dwelling types and sizes will be encouraged in town centres and on edge of centre sites (PPS3; RPG H4 and H5; SP SS5; LP H5; emerging RSS H3, H5 and H6). Structure Plan Policy HP3 aims for 90% of housing provision in Tunbridge Wells to be on previously developed land.
- 3.22 Infilling, the redevelopment of existing developed sites and the inclusion of an element of residential use within a mixed use development are generally considered to be appropriate types of residential development within Royal Tunbridge Wells (LP H5).
- 3.23 Structure Plan Policy HP4 and emerging RSS Policy H5 promotes higher housing densities particularly within central urban areas. The Structure Plan seeks to achieve a density of above 50 dwellings per hectare. The redevelopment of both low-density uses and areas of poor housing stock is encouraged especially within town centres (emerging RSS H7).
- 3.24 It is expected that all residential schemes that provide more than 15 dwellings will include an element of affordable housing; the Local Plan establishes a requirement for 30% affordable housing (SP HP7; LP H3; Tunbridge Well’s Affordable Housing SPD; emerging RSS H4 and KTG2). A mix of sizes of units should be provided on development over 15 bedspaces (LP H2).

Tourism, Arts and Culture

- 3.25 Tourism, arts and cultural uses are generally supported within town centre locations, so long as they accord with other policy requirements (Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism; RPG RE11; SP EP10, EP11, EP12 and QL13; emerging RSS TC2, TRS4 and TSR5). The loss of good quality tourism accommodation and the change of use of historic inns and pubs for tourism purposes is normally opposed (LP T2). Local Plan Policy T3 restricts the development of new tourist accommodation outside the limits of the built development.
- 3.26 The emerging RSS notes the potential increase in domestic tourism. It notes that upgrading existing visitor attractions should be encouraged (TSR4) and include in the LDF policies for new facilities. In terms of hotel accommodation (TSR5) the diversity of accommodation and need should be considered and reflected in planning policy.

Access and Parking

- 3.27 New developments are expected to comply with vehicle parking policies and maximum standards (SP TP19; LP TP6, TP7, TP8 and TP9; emerging RSS T7) and any development that is considered to cause highway safety concerns are not favoured.
- 3.28 The emerging RSS notes the need for management of the total parking stock within regional hubs and to ensure that sufficient cycle parking is provided.

Summary

- 3.29 Overall, the various policies and guidance create a framework for future development proposals and the determination of applications. The key objectives are to work with the important historic environment and heritage values in a way which create a mixed-use, accessible and vibrant location.

4.0 EVALUATION OF ISSUES

Introduction

- 4.1 To inform the Rejuvenation Strategy, a thorough analysis of the existing context has been undertaken to identify the area's key strengths and weaknesses. This information has informed the production of a series of opportunities to realise the rejuvenation of the area. Similarly a number of threats have been identified. These are aspects of the area and underlying trends which, if not remedied would have a detrimental effect upon the positive attributes of the area or the strategy's success.



Figure 12: Townscape Appraisal Plan

Movement

- 4.2 To provide a thorough analysis of the existing conditions and issues affecting The Pantiles it became apparent that, due to its key position at the southern end of the town centre and proximity to London Road, a wider context would need to be considered when analysing movement patterns in and around the site.
- 4.3 Existing congestion issues and pedestrian/ vehicular conflicts affect The Pantiles, despite being outside its boundaries. Within the study area pedestrian movement is heavily influenced by the changes in level across the site.
- 4.4 Figure 13 illustrates the existing movement issues within and adjacent to the site. It also considers the existing situation at the railway station, an arrival point for many visitors to the town.



Figure 13: Movement Appraisal Plan



Intricate detailing



Attractive historic environment



The Chalybeate Spring

Strengths

4.5 The area's principal strengths are a direct result of its rich cultural and architectural heritage; its historical importance to the establishment of the town, and the variety and interest that has resulted from its subsequent evolution. The protection afforded to this environment through the listing of its buildings, conservation area designation, and green belt status has enabled The Pantiles and the Commons to remain a highly distinctive and attractive historic environment. Its key positive characteristics can be accredited to several issues considered below.

Gateway Location

4.6 The strategic position of Tunbridge Wells and gateway location of The Pantiles at the southern end of the town strengthens its importance within the wider transport network. The proximity of the railway station allows for relatively easy access to the site, which is also well served by bus and coach services.

Historic Association

4.7 The Chalybeate Spring provides a key historic attraction, drawing visitors who want to see where the town was founded and how it evolved. Whilst the Bath House does provide some (limited) interpretation for visitors to the area, the original baths, which still exist below 4 The Pantiles, are not accessible at present. An exhibition of the area's history was based in the southern Pantiles (A Day at the Wells) but has closed.

Richness of Townscape

- 4.8 Within The Pantiles there are a wide variety of architectural styles and types of open space providing a diverse and interesting townscape, accentuated by the changing building heights, detailing and use of materials, and tied together by key elements including the colonnades and floorscape.
- 4.9 The aesthetic richness which this brings to the area is complemented by a range of public spaces of differing function and size:
 - i) The Upper Walk has a spacious character defined by the slight curve of the building line and the central trees and is utilised as the main outdoor seating area for the various cafes and bars along its length, acting as a 'viewing platform' for its users, as was its original function.
 - ii) The Lower Walk is restricted to being a pedestrian thoroughfare due to its limited width but with opportunities for some 'incidental' seating along the walls separating the two levels, encouraging both activity and surveillance of the route.
 - iii) Bath Square creates a semi-formal setting to the front of the original Bath House and spring. The area is also utilised as an outdoor seating area for the adjacent café, and is a general 'milling about' space for those first entering The Pantiles.
 - iv) The former fish market building provides a central focus to the Fish Market square, with activity taking place around it, due to its use as a Tourist Information Centre.
 - v) The open square to the front of the Corn Exchange forms a key node in the pedestrian network, and acts as a gateway to The Pantiles, particularly for the servicing of the Upper and Lower Walks. As such it is busy with servicing activity throughout much of the working day.
 - vi) To the rear (east) of the Corn Exchange lies another enclosed public square which forms part of Sussex Mews. At present it is under-utilised but does provide an excellent opportunity for the future development of activity within the area. The area has a smaller scale and more mews-like character than The Pantiles. It currently provides pedestrian access to the Auction House and Linden Park car park.
 - vii) A series of narrow pedestrian links some of which are covered connect The Upper Pantiles to London Road and the surrounding area. These smaller narrower streets and passageways provide a contrast in scale and enclosure.



Variety of styles, materials and detailing - Upper Walk



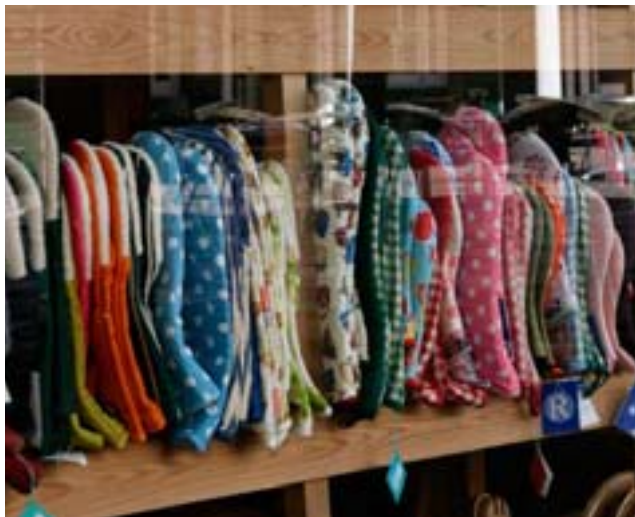
Attractive public realm - Upper Walk

Permeability

- 4.10 There are a variety of linkages to The Pantiles, providing a range of experiences for those visiting the area on foot. Enclosed historic linkages, such as the route from Chapel Place to Cumberland Walk, and beyond to Nevill Street provide experiences rich in architectural detail, texture of surfaces and attractive townscape.
- 4.11 Within The Pantiles the numerous passageways enhance the area's characteristic sense of enclosure, linking through to London Road and the Commons beyond. The permeability of the site ensures that although it appears to turn its back on the outside world it is in fact a well integrated element of the town's pedestrian network.
- 4.12 The pattern of narrow alleys is one of the defining features of the townscape. They are integral to the character of the place, contributing to a rich and varied experience evoking a sense of discovery and relating to a human scale.

Unique Quality of Public Realm

- 4.13 The orientation of buildings onto the Walks provides pleasant, sunny outdoor seating areas sheltered from the noise of London Road, allowing for the opportunity for alfresco dining and events spaces unaffected by passing traffic. The limited vehicular movement within The Pantiles provides for a more attractive and quieter pedestrian environment than can be experienced at most other locations within the town centre.
- 4.14 The traditional paving materials and details, combined with a lack of 'fixed' clutter within the public areas, results in a perception of a clean public realm, with the trees - a key feature - providing a welcome softening of the urban environment.



High quality independent retailers



Enhancement to an already attractive environment

Visibility

- 4.15 The topography of the town allows views to both The Pantiles from the higher land of the Commons and conversely out to the open spaces from within the tightly knit urban environment. The western edge of The Pantiles is a prominent frontage on one of the main routes through and into the town. Key views of the 'rear' of the study area are afforded to those travelling into the town from the west and south along London Road – however these views have the potential to be improved, given the poor quality of some of the frontages facing onto London Road.
- 4.16 Glimpsed views allow passers-by to see into The Pantiles, inviting further investigation. Similarly views out of the site provide glimpses of the Commons. Both imbue a sense of intimacy within both The Pantiles and their immediate context.

Diversity of Uses and Activity

- 4.17 The Pantiles currently supports a wide range of activities including retail, residential, commercial, tourism and leisure, providing the potential for high levels of activity both throughout the working day and on into the evening.
- 4.18 A variety of independent traders provide the base for an interesting, quality retail offer, with the popularity of the area being illustrated by the limited number of retail vacancies. This is a defining feature of The Pantiles and a strength to be exploited. It complements rather than competes with retail provision elsewhere within the town centre. It helps to define The Pantiles as a unique destination.
- 4.19 The bandstand and pedestrianised area of The Pantiles also provide a focus for events and activity such as markets, music performance and art fairs.

Accessibility to Green Open Space Network

- 4.20 The proximity of the Commons to The Pantiles provides residents and visitors alike the opportunity to enjoy the wide open spaces immediately adjacent to the hustle and bustle of modern town life. The Commons complement the tightly knit urban form and paved surfaces of The Pantiles, acting as a soft, green boundary to the western edge of the town centre.



Building decay on London Road



Southern entrance to The Corn Exchange



Unattractive elevation to Pink Alley



Style of Union House & Auction House unsympathetic to historic context



Maintenance issues - London Road

Weaknesses

4.21 The area's key weaknesses can be categorised into 6 main themes:

1. Townscape Issues

4.22 These relate primarily to the built environment within The Pantiles. Whilst the high quality of the historic environment is considered as a strength, the protection afforded to the majority of the buildings either through their listed status, or due to the conservation area designation may also be deemed a constraint to achieving the wider objectives of providing high quality accommodation, of a particular size and specification.

4.23 There are a number of visual detractors within and adjacent to The Pantiles that have a negative impact on the historic environment. The following buildings providing unattractive/inappropriate neighbours:

- Union House
- Building and car park on Pink Alley
- Auction House and car park
- Garage - corner of Major York's Road and London Road

4.24 The quality of the London Road frontage also raises some concern. Whilst it is the 'rear' of The Pantiles it is a prominent frontage at a key arrival point when travelling into the town from the south and west. There are a number of issues with regard to this elevation including; state of repair, decorative order, signage and servicing.

4.25 There are a number of blank building frontages in evidence within the heart of the site, resulting in areas which have poor natural surveillance. The area to the eastern side of The Corn Exchange is one such space. The treatment of the entrance to The Corn Exchange from Sussex Mews is dated and detracts from the visual interest provided by the rear of the Lower Walk properties.

4.26 Evidence of decay is apparent on some of the buildings within The Pantiles, with properties fronting onto London Road appearing to be the worst affected. Here there is evidence of damage to detailing, together with general wear and tear resulting from its proximity to a key transport route. This degradation highlights a need for ongoing maintenance of the area's historic building fabric.

2. Public Realm

- 4.27 Whilst the standard of the public realm is generally satisfactory there are some issues with regard to maintenance and management regimes within The Pantiles.
- 4.28 There is a degree of visual clutter within the site, with businesses setting out 'A' boards of various sizes and quality on the pavements. Servicing also raises an issue, with bin bags, refuse bins and stacked packaging all being evident within the Walks and along the London Road frontage.
- 4.29 The general suite of 'conservation' style street furniture requires some attention, as do the condition of the railings which run between the Upper and Lower Walks to the southern end of the site.
- 4.30 The quality of some areas of the floorscape is of concern for both visual and safety reasons. The loose hoggin surfacing surrounding the bandstand is in need of repair, providing a negative impact at the southern entrance to The Pantiles. Similarly the brick detailing of the tree surrounds along the length of The Walks is of a limited quality, given the listed status of much of the floorscape. The footpath adjacent to London Road has suffered from an un-coordinated approach with the forecourts of many the properties not being treated in the same way as the footpath.
- 4.31 The open square to the south east of The Corn Exchange is harsh and uninviting and, as consequence appears to be under-utilised as a public space. There is a distinct lack of street furniture ensuring that only those choosing to sit outside the Sussex Arms provide any form of natural surveillance of the space.



Pavement clutter on London Road



Under-utilised square adjacent to The Corn Exchange



Poor quality footpath on Market Street



Railings on the Upper Walk

3. Linkages to The Pantiles

- 4.32 Direct linkages to the site from the wider town centre are often frustrated by either a lack of pedestrian crossing facilities of busy transport links such as Vale Road and London Road, or pedestrians are 're-routed' from the natural desire line by highway guard rails.
- 4.33 The linear nature of the town, when combined with localised topography presents a number of issues with regard to pedestrian accessibility within the town. Most notably these include a lack of continuity of route and/ or the requirement to negotiate significant changes in level.
- 4.34 Immediate linkages to The Pantiles are provided by the historic lanes and passageways described within Section 2. Whilst these are attractive, and provide numerous opportunities for snatched glimpses both into and out of the site, stepped elements and poor lighting provision can present both a physical barrier and a perceived threat to prospective users.



Potential for ambush - Coach and Horses Passage



Guardrails blocking natural desire line - Nevill Street



Poor quality linkage from Cumberland Walk



Congestion on London Road

4. Wayfinding/Identity/Interpretation

- 4.35 Whilst the area is highlighted on the town plan, to be found on the information 'drums' outside the railway station, there is a lack of interpretation points at other key arrival points within the town.
- 4.36 Signage to The Pantiles in the immediate vicinity of the railway station is limited to an overhead hanging sign within the station building. This can be easily missed and once outside the station directional signage is, in the first instance, scarce.
- 4.37 Key entrance points into The Pantiles are poorly signed, and once within the pedestrianised area interpretation material for the historic spring is limited. Even less celebrated is the site of the spring and cold bath on the northern side of London Road, which are cordoned off by railings and introduced by a small plaque addressing the road.
- 4.38 The route from the bottom of High Street to Nevill Street and then beyond to The Pantiles is not obvious despite the existing signage. Whilst the Church of King Charles the Martyr provides a key landmark within the southern end of the town, it also acts as a barrier. Improved waymarking would provide certainty to those wanting to visit The Pantiles. On arrival at the Nevill Street crossing visible arrival signage for The Pantiles is limited to a small sign on the pedestrian guard rails, which can be easily obscured as traffic builds up.

5. Parking, Transport and Servicing

- 4.39 As discussed within Section 2 there is limited car parking provision to the southern end of the town centre. The current parking provision at the Fairground site within the Common is not laid out and therefore makes inefficient use of the space. It is also inadequately surfaced and heavily used by commuters.
- 4.40 Pedestrian access across London Road is limited, with the only controlled crossing being further to the north. Anyone wishing to cross directly to The Pantiles from the 'Fairground' car park has either to cross the busy Major York's Road to use the controlled crossing, or cross Eridge Road close to the London Road junction - which is busy and potentially dangerous. Conversely, the busy road limits the accessibility of the Common, which is a significant and under-utilised open space resource, to residents and visitors east of London Road. Owing to the tortuous route for pedestrians from the car park to London Road, a desire line from the north-east corner of the car park to the London Road junction is clearly evident. This more convenient pedestrian linkage is via an unlit footpath and meets London Road at a location at which it difficult to safely cross. Access to The Pantiles from the Union House car park is via a narrow footway to the edge of Eridge Road or through the Union House development.
- 4.41 There is some limited car parking provision within The Pantiles – the Linden Park car park and on-street provision on the Lower Pantiles. The layout of the Linden Park car park is constricted on both levels, and the on road parking bays in the Lower Walk are limited by both number and length of stay. There are some private parking spaces within the study area, but generally speaking, the provision is minimal.
- 4.42 The site is however accessible by both bus and coach, however neither have particularly good waiting facilities. The coach park lies some 0.25km to the south of the site. The bus stops have recently had shelters introduced but there is no integrated seating or live timetable/destination information.
- 4.43 There is currently little provision for cycle parking within The Pantiles, resulting in bikes being locked to railings and roads signs - this adds to the visual clutter. There is the opportunity to incorporate cycle stands within an improved suite of street furniture, raising both the quality of the public realm and the possibility of bringing bicycles to the area in the knowledge that there is secure parking provision.
- 4.44 Due to its pedestrianised layout, the majority of the servicing of The Pantiles takes place either from Lower Walk or directly off Linden Park, London Road or Neville Street. This does not allow for easy access to properties and businesses, and often adds to the existing congestion on key routes. Vehicles mounting pavements in order to unload, and hand-carts hauling loads up and down the steps have over time caused damage to the floorscape.



Southern entrance to The Pantiles



Parking restrictions at Linden Park

6. Land Uses and Activity

- 4.45 Whilst there are a numerous land uses within The Pantiles including; shops, cafés and bars, residential, office and tourist attractions, the amount of activity which they generate is limited to key periods of the day, mainly lunchtimes during the week and at weekends. The existing evening economy is limited to public houses and restaurants which are generally quiet other than at weekends. There are limited cultural activities extending into the early evenings to complement these uses.
- 4.46 Given its distance from the remainder of the town centre there are only a limited number of 'destination shops' - those which attract the visitor for a specific visit. Similarly there are few outlets providing for necessary items, and as such the retail offer would benefit from an increase in variety of outlets and anchor stores.
- 4.47 The full tourism potential of The Pantiles is not currently realised, with The Baths being inaccessible due to the retail requirements of the building above, the closure of the 'Day at the Wells' exhibition, and the limited interpretation of The Chalybeate Spring, particularly during the winter months. Similarly the opportunity to hold events within the public areas of The Pantiles is currently under exploited.
- 4.48 The Corn Exchange, a key building within the heart of The Pantiles appears to be underperforming, suffering a significant drop in footfall following the closure of the 'Day at the Wells' Museum. The collection of A boards which contribute to the clutter at the entrance are an indication that retailers perceive a lack of presence.
- 4.49 Partly as a result of this limited footfall, retail potential is not maximised, and the square to the west of the Corn Exchange is particularly inactive. There is a shortage of key destination shops and services to encourage shoppers to come to this end of the town centre.
- 4.50 Difficulties arise, as with many historic towns, due to the size of building footprints which cannot accommodate many modern day requirements of retail multiples, with the protected status of the buildings potentially limiting the possibility of extending into adjacent units in some locations.
- 4.51 There appears to be a lack of demand for office floorspace, evidenced by the lengthy vacancy of office premises at Eridge House (although now let).



The Corn Exchange - lacking vitality



The Bandstand, Upper Walk - under-utilised as a focus for activity



Entrances off London Road not being exploited to full potential



Evidence of office vacancies within The Pantiles

Threats

- 4.52 The rejuvenation of The Pantiles has the potential to be hampered if a number of issues are not addressed or courses of action not taken.
- 4.53 There is a significant opportunity presented by a large single ownership, which will be able to introduce appropriate management systems, have a positive influence on the quality of the built environment, support existing shops and businesses by enhancing the retail offer and promoting the area's townscape and ambience. If this opportunity is not taken, there is a risk of further gradual decline of this part of the town centre. Similarly, a failure to act on the opportunities outlined in this strategy to make best use of existing sites could be detrimental to the future vitality and viability of The Pantiles.
- 4.54 Notwithstanding the constraints due to the listed buildings, conservation area and green belt designations, and the need to provide appropriate protection, it is important to recognise the need for the positive and sensitive management of change within a historic town so that it can continue to function effectively. An inflexible approach and resistance to change that misses opportunities for enhancement could impact negatively on the area's retail and commercial function, with a risk of further decline.
- 4.55 In order to succeed as a key node within the retail core in particular, and as part of the wider attraction of the town, The Pantiles need to continue to evolve. Failure to adopt a positive approach to the conservation of The Pantiles, is likely to result in the area being unable to move forward in a significant way.
- 4.56 Further deterioration of the area's historic fabric could result in permanent loss of townscape features/details within The Pantiles. If left unchecked this could lead to the degradation of a key group of buildings within the town centre, and have a negative impact upon the image of both the immediate and wider area. A lessening of perceived environmental quality would result in the area becoming less attractive, and ultimately hastening its economic decline.
- 4.57 Failure to recognise and address weaknesses highlighted within the previous analysis, particularly regarding access and linkages, may result in a decline in footfall to and within The Pantiles. This would undoubtedly impact upon the popularity of the area and could result in it appearing increasingly divorced from the rest of the town centre, potentially resulting in a lowering of the quality of the retail provision and higher levels of vacancy.
- 4.58 A failure to achieve an appropriate balance and mix of uses within the area could result in insufficient levels of activity to sustain the businesses within the area and deliver the desired vitality.



Rising vacancy levels



Deterioration of the public realm

- 4.59 Inadequate action with regard to the current limited provision of interpretation for tourists will further increase the existing failure to maximise the potential of the area as a visitor attraction. The Baths building at the entrance to The Pantiles is no longer open to the public and with the closure of the Day at the Wells, information regarding the historic and cultural significance of the area is very limited. The location of the local Tourist Information Centre (TIC) within The Pantiles, has the potential to redress this to some extent. It provides a focus not only for information regarding the wells but also for the wider area. It is a key attractor for visitors to the area and well-situated, given the historic significance of this southern end of the town.
- 4.60 Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and Targetfollow have been working together and Targetfollow will seek to ensure that the Rejuvenation Strategy is supported by key stakeholders, in order that it objectives can be promoted in a comprehensive manner. The support of key stakeholders, including the local community is important to the effective delivery of the strategy. Lack of such a joint working approach could result in an aspirational document with limited support and little authority. A failure to continue to work in a co-operative manner with TWBC would also limit the effectiveness of the strategy.
- 4.61 The strategy has been developed in accordance with existing and emerging policy in order that it complements the aspirations for Tunbridge Wells at both local and regional levels. Non alignment of strategy with emerging policy would result in its failure to address key concerns and objectives, pertinent to the future development of not only The Pantiles, but also the town. Similarly, the objectives of the strategy need, in particular, to inform the preparation of the Town Centre Action Area Plan in order to give certainty about the medium to long term future for the area and to ensure that this complements the strategy for the wider town centre.
- 4.62 The final threat involves a lack of buy-in or support of the general principles of the strategy from non-Targetfollow property owners. Whilst the strategy considers The Pantiles as a whole, Targetfollow is not the sole owner and consequently has only limited influence over its neighbours. The comprehensive approach taken by the strategy to the rejuvenation of the area would serve to enhance the whole area, however a lack of support from other owners could undermine this comprehensive approach.



Figure 14: Opportunities Plan

Opportunities

- 4.63 As described previously, The Pantiles has numerous key strengths. It is important that the inherent potential in these assets is explored and maximised to delivering the long term rejuvenation of the area.
- 4.64 Seven key areas of opportunity exist.

1. Enhance 'Gateway' Buildings

- 4.65 The town centre's southern gateway, The Pantiles area has a number of townscape detractors that have a significant impact the quality of the townscape in this key location, primarily;
- Union House at the site's south western extent;
 - Auction House and Linden Park Road car park to the south;
 - the rear elevation of The Swan Hotel and
 - the buildings either side of Major York's Road.

There is scope to improve each of these key arrival points either through physical enhancement works, redevelopment or refurbishment.

- 4.66 Whilst enhancement and improved signage of 72 The Pantiles, at the junction of Linden Park and Eridge Road would, undoubtedly improve this entrance into The Pantiles, a comprehensive approach, including the potential for the refurbishment or redevelopment of Union House, would provide an attractive new focus to the southern end of the town, strengthening links to the adjacent parking provision and providing a sympathetic neighbour to the historic Pantiles, with a complementary retail offer. Whilst such changes have the potential to bring about significant benefit in townscape and retail terms, delivering improvements on the Union House site will only be possible in conjunction with its owners.
- 4.67 The Swan Hotel currently presents both a front and rear aspect to London Road. Swan Passage provides one of the key pedestrian linkages into the heart of The Pantiles from the west, and the elevation above it provides a key focal point for those travelling down Major York's Road. Due to alteration and extension over many years the hotel has suffered from a lack of a consistent approach to its extension, signage and maintenance regime. A comprehensive approach should be taken to the enhancement of this key building, to create an attractive focus from both outside and within The Pantiles.
- 4.68 The Swan Hotel Garage site and the building on the opposite side of Major York's Road both have the potential to be redeveloped or enhanced to provide a more attractive focus to this key gateway.

- 4.69 Barclays Bank currently provides the focus for those travelling towards the site from the north. Unfortunately it and adjacent properties 2a, 4 and 8 The Pantiles are in need of some attention in terms of maintenance and decoration. A comprehensive approach to the enhancement of this key corner would provide not only an attractive corner to the edge of The Pantiles but would also serve to raise the quality of an area which provides the setting for the Church of King Charles the Martyr. If undertaken in association with highway improvement works based upon the Nevill Street pedestrian crossing and London Road junction there is the potential to raise the quality of the entire area highlighting its importance as a key node and diminishing the negative impact currently resulting from local congestion and the dominance of highway.
- 4.70 The Auction House and car park on Linden Park currently provide a poor focus to those arriving in the town by coach and car, and do little to enhance the low levels of activity at this end of The Pantiles. They present an unattractive blank façade to both Linden Park and Sussex Mews, offering significant potential for enhancement. There is potential to provide an attractive new development which contributes to both the visual richness and vitality of the area. It would provide containment to the south of the Corn Exchange and create a high quality landmark building. Development would provide the opportunity to accommodate retail units of a scale which is not currently available within The Pantiles due to restrictions imposed by its historic footprint, thus complementing the existing offer, and providing activity at ground floor. Upper floors could accommodate contemporary residential accommodation to supplement the existing flats over shops which currently exist throughout The Pantiles. Consideration would need to be given to the impact on parking at this end of town.
- 4.71 The Fairground car park currently provides approximately 170 parking spaces for those visiting the southern end of the town. These figures could be significantly increased through rationalising and formalising the parking layout and extending the existing provision without impacting on existing trees.
- 4.72 The Commons are a significant, but under-utilised resource and there may be the potential to increase their use and attractiveness through creative solutions in the longer term. Allied with this, the Fairground site car park may have the potential to unlock issues related to parking and accessibility which are a key issue for the southern end of the town centre. More radical solutions to improve parking provision could be investigated. Any solution would need to be viable and recognise the significant planning and other constraints which apply to this site. As such, any form of proposal would be a longer term option and undergo rigorous evaluation to demonstrate the need and substantial wider community benefits.

2. Enhance Connections and Accessibility

- 4.73 Given the introverted nature of the site, its tightly packed building layout and subsequent lack of 'on-site' car parking, the majority of visitors to The Pantiles arrive by foot. Those travelling from the north, down High Street, first have to negotiate the Church of King Charles the Martyr which provides an obstacle to those travelling south, particularly those who cannot negotiate steps. Beyond this lies the Nevill Street pedestrian crossing which is slightly off alignment with The Pantiles entrance, its guardrails force the natural desire line to deviate southwards, acting as both a physical and visual barrier to The Pantiles. The opportunity to realign this crossing, in conjunction with wider improvements to the London Road junction, would serve to simplify the pedestrian journey to and from The Pantiles. Better use could be made of the public realm, reducing the dominance of the highway and improving the setting of the Church. Linking The Pantiles back into the town centre would bring significant regenerative benefits to the area.
- 4.74 The 'Fairground' car park, set within the Commons to the western side of London Road provides a large number of spaces for those wishing to visit The Pantiles. However the pedestrian paths, poorly signed and lit, only provides a link to Eridge Road. There is no pedestrian crossing at this point. The opportunity to provide a crossing would not only greatly enhance linkages between the southern end of the town and the car park, but would also provide safer pedestrian links to the wider Commons as a whole.
- 4.75 Connections from Union House car park are difficult, with either changes in level or the narrow pavement of Eridge Road to negotiate in order to reach The Pantiles from Union House car park. Improvements to both the signage and quality of these routes would enhance the pedestrian experience and strengthen the perception of easier access to the southern end of the town's retail centre. This strategy will provide the opportunity to encourage a phased approach to improved accessibility in line with potential future developments at Union House.

3. Improve Legibility

- 4.76 Whilst existing waymarking signage to The Pantiles is provided by the town's existing fingerposts, orientation information at key arrival points is limited and, where available, is of insufficient quality. The Pantiles as a 'destination' is poorly served, with few gateway signs of any significance.
- 4.77 The strategy provides the area the opportunity to present a strong identity for The Pantiles, highlighting the unique quality of its architecture, public realm and visitor offer. Opportunities include the potential for waymarking. This could be incorporated as public art either within the floorscape, or as part of the street furniture.

4. Enhancing the Historic Townscape

- 4.78 The Pantiles' unique collection of buildings has been given prominence through the listed status of a many properties. The areas continued existence, and interest, has also been as a result of its capacity for change, with alterations to structures accommodating diverse requirements from their users over the years.
- 4.79 The continued ability to be able to adapt to the ever changing needs of building users, whilst still protecting an individual structure's key characteristics is integral to the success of the ongoing viability of an area such as The Pantiles. The potential to increase the floor area of some premises by the expansion into adjacent properties should be investigated in conjunction with the TWBC's Conservation Team.
- 4.80 A number of buildings, particularly within The Upper Pantiles, would benefit from redecoration and repair. Key sites to be highlighted for maintenance work include Barclays Bank and its immediate neighbours to the north eastern corner of the site, together with much of the London Road frontage. The reduction of unnecessary visual clutter on building facades, and minimising external servicing could be encouraged. The reinstatement of original features, such as fenestration patterns should be incorporated where possible and appropriate.
- 4.81 The exceptional quality of the townscape within The Pantiles is complemented by the public realm within which it sits - the perfect setting for this key group of buildings. Whilst it is in need of some attention, the general appearance is of good quality. The introduction of a regular maintenance regime, together with the replacement of standard street fittings with high quality furniture and attention to detail will enable the public areas to continue to act as a draw in their own right, as well as providing ample opportunities for outdoor dining, display and performance.



5. Improve Attractions and Activity

- 4.82 Whilst The Pantiles currently accommodate a variety of uses, there remains the opportunity to enhance its offer, providing a consolidated 'destination' at the southern most end of the retail core.
- 4.83 The greatest potential to enhance the existing retail offer is considered to lie in attracting specialist, destination retailers to complement and support the existing range of independent shops and restaurants/cafes. Key stores could occupy the double fronted properties of the Upper Walk, providing attractive frontages to both The Pantiles and London Road. The quality of the existing building stock, combined with increased activity fostered by an improved offer and greater footfall through a programme of events will enhance the attractiveness of the area to such retailers.
- 4.84 Increasing the quality and amount of residential accommodation within The Pantiles presents an opportunity to further reinforce vitality into the evenings and at weekends and to support local businesses and facilities. The upgrading of existing accommodation, together with potential for new build residential units on the Linden Park site (see below) would provide for these requirements.
- 4.85 Activities which encourage more people to stay/visit the area over a longer period, or at times that are currently quieter, should be encouraged to improve both the areas vitality and viability. Focal spaces such as the bandstand, Bath Square and the Fish Market should be targeted to host events and boost activity.
- 4.86 The potential for improved leisure facilities within The Pantiles should be exploited in order to extend its current hours of activity. The scope to incorporate an independent cinema within the Corn Exchange is currently being investigated, as a means of extending both the area's attraction and increase the number of people visiting the southern end of The Pantiles. A high quality 'boutique' hotel is also an aspiration, potentially in conjunction with a 'signature' restaurant, which would act as a draw not only for The Pantiles but for the town centre as a whole.
- 4.87 Action should be taken to remedy the current underperformance of the Corn Exchange, perhaps looking at alternative uses within the building, to generate increased footfall. Similarly an approach needs to be taken to other under-utilised and vacant properties within the study area.
- 4.88 Retaining and enhancing the existing TIC as an attraction for tourists is of primary importance to the continuing promotion of The Pantiles as a destination, providing site interpretation, together with information on Tunbridge Wells and the wider area.
- 4.89 An increase in vitality together with an improved offer across a range of uses will provide a more attractive environment for those wishing to live in the town centre, strengthening the area's attraction as a place to live, work and visit.

6. Develop Co-Ordinated and Holistic Approach

- 4.90 The significant landownership and partnership working with the Council and other stakeholders offers considerable opportunities to enhance the area in terms of its buildings, management, public
- 4.91 It is considered that this document provides a framework for delivering positive benefits to The Pantiles and the wider area.

7. Enhance Sustainability

- 4.92 The options for increasing the sustainability of the existing building fabric are perhaps limited to measures that can be integrated without impacting on the historic building fabric. Greater opportunities are presented by new development and the refurbishment of more recent, unlisted buildings.
- 4.93 There is an opportunity to encouraging sustainable transport choices by co-ordinated improvements to bus services (frequency, seating, information on services), and increasing cycle parking provision (potentially with secure provision in any new development) and encouraging enhanced pedestrian access.



Key Conclusions of SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
The key strengths of The Pantiles include:	Key weaknesses of the Pantiles include:	Key opportunities to secure rejuvenation of the Pantiles area include:	Potential threats to the rejuvenation of the Pantiles area include:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic and highly accessible location • Gateway to southern end of Tunbridge Wells • Attractive pedestrian linkages to much of the town centre • High quality built and natural environment • Numerous building styles employing a wide variety of detailing and incorporating various materials • Protection afforded to site through a range of designations • Range of open spaces of varying size and function • Generally of clean and tidy appearance • High levels of occupancy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor quality arrival points • Major visual detractors within and adjacent to site • Lack of identity as a destination at key arrival points within the town • Limited range of facilities • Poor wayfinding, interpretation and signage • Negative impact of topography and design upon accessibility • Inadequate pedestrian crossing facilities • Underutilised public spaces and facilities • Limited footfall within key central areas • Visual clutter resulting from signage and servicing • Poor quality of key London Road frontage • Limited opportunity for evening activity • Lack of strong ‘anchor’ within The Pantiles • Lack of demand for type of office space available • Limited parking within close proximity of site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the image of The Pantiles as a gateway to the town • Enhance connections and accessibility • Improve wayfinding, interpretation and signage • Capitalise on exceptional quality of historic townscape • Investigate potential redevelopment opportunities with site • Highlight potential redevelopment opportunities adjacent to site • Initiate public realm enhancements • Improve tourist facilities • Attract and promote additional retail and leisure facilities • Encourage enhanced sustainability • Develop co-ordinated coherent strategy in conjunction with key stakeholders • Use strategy as a basis for policy formation for the town centre • Support evening economy to create vitality • Facilitate the provision of high quality town centre living to support activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to seize opportunity presented by majority ownership to revitalise The Pantiles • Constraints imposed by existing designations • Deterioration of historic fabric • Inadequate action to maximise upon draw as a tourist destination • Failure to encourage continued evolution of the area • Failure to recognise and address key weaknesses • Lack of agreement on joint working approach to Rejuvenation Strategy between Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, Targetfollow and other third parties • Failure to engage with and obtain support of key stakeholders • Strategy not aligned with emerging policy and vice versa

5.0 STRATEGY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Introduction

- 5.1 The strategy for rejuvenating The Pantiles relies on a number of interrelated proposals and initiatives that seek to build on the area's inherent potential. These individual components have evolved from a careful analysis of the issues affecting The Pantiles area and have had regard to both the current and emerging planning policy context. The various threads of the strategy include measures that are tailored to deliver, in combination, the overall objectives set out in Section 1.
- 5.2 To ensure that the strategy is compatible with the Council's overall objectives for Tunbridge Wells, it has been prepared in close consultation with officers.
- 5.3 It is important to recognise that the delivery of some aspects of the strategy rely on other town centre stakeholders including Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, Kent County Council, the Commons Conservators, other landowners, occupiers, local businesses and residents. It is therefore intended that this strategy will evolve in consultation with these key partners to build support for its overall objectives and proposals. This partnership approach recognises the roles that the respective stakeholders will play in its successful delivery.
- 5.4 The identified opportunities for proposals to reinvigorate the area are set out in general terms. Photographs of other towns and cities have been used to prompt discussion and present ideas of approaches that have worked successfully elsewhere.
- 5.5 The various components of the strategy are discussed under the following headings:
- Commercial/Retail Strategy
 - Marketing and Branding Strategy
 - Public Realm Strategy
 - Movement and Linkages
 - Building Refurbishment and re-use
 - Development and Management Guidance



Vision for the rejuvenated Pantiles

Commercial/Retail Strategy

5.6 One of the key issues facing The Pantiles is its location at the southernmost end of the town centre, some distance from the core of recognised ‘High Street’ names and the deterrent that the topography and inadequacy of parking may play in people making linked trips. In retail terms, the strategy therefore aspires to build on the current strengths of the retail offer within The Pantiles - its specialist and independent retailers - with the aim of encouraging a mix of shops and complementary facilities that will generate greater number of specific shopping trips to the area.

5.7 The strategy therefore aims to:

- 1) Establish a small number of additional specialist, high quality destination shops that will help to create the critical mass of niche retailers to generate specific and regular visits and therefore increase the footfall in The Pantiles as a whole. The aim will be that these retailers will complement the current range of independent shops and support existing local businesses. Specialist retailers are more likely to value the special character of the buildings as this will reinforce their brand and enhance trading.
- 2) Identify premises suitable for these key ‘anchors’ that can be configured within the confines of the mainly listed buildings in locations that have the necessary servicing and access to suit their business requirements.
- 3) Encourage a range of services that will complement the shopping experience whilst ensuring an appropriate balance with retail uses consistent with planning policy
- 4) Investigate the potential for the following complementary commercial and community uses to be located in The Pantiles to support existing businesses, complement historic environment, enhance viability and encourage greater vitality of the area during quiet periods of the day/week, into the evenings and at quieter times of the year:
 - i) Destination restaurant (national reputation for quality)
 - ii) Boutique hotel
 - iii) Beauty/spa treatments
 - iv) Independent cinema
 - v) Wine/champagne bar and/or fine wine merchants
 - vi) Delicatessen/specialist food retailer/greengrocer
 - vii) Crèche
 - viii) Leisure/play

- 5) Review the potential of the Linden Park Road car park and Auction House site to provide additional retail floorspace that could act as a draw and create footfall through the Corn Exchange and Sussex Mews.
- 6) Provide destination uses and activities within the Corn Exchange that will increase footfall in this area, including uses that may complement the cinema.
- 7) Explore the potential of the units/ground floor frontage on the east side of the Corn Exchange to create a more lively and visually attractive environment within Sussex Mews/Coach and Horses Passage by creating new retail frontages to the space. The opportunity is explored further in the Concept Statement for the Corn Exchange.
- 8) Maintain the recently introduced rolling programme of events that will bring people into The Pantiles (see extract from leaflet).
- 9) Review the potential of the vacant offices on Coach and Horses Passage/Sussex Mews for alternative uses that would be consistent with the aims of enhancing the vitality of the area. Appropriate uses could include residential.

5.8 Other aspects of the strategy that will be important to the successful delivery of the retail strategy are:

- Enhanced levels of activity/footfall
- The provision of a suitable range of complementary services
- Enhanced parking
- Better linkages
- Improved signage and profile
- Marketing and branding
- Developments compatible with the character and appearance of the area
- Understanding of areas of particular sensitivity to change and the need for sympathetic and appropriate change in those areas.



Attract high quality specialist retailers



Increased activity

Marketing and Branding Strategy

- 5.9 In recent years The Pantiles has not enjoyed the profile and levels of activity that its town centre location, historic ambience and the high quality built environment might suggest.
- 5.10 A considerable amount of work has been undertaken already by Woodreed, a Pantiles-based marketing communications agency working alongside Targetfollow, to develop The Pantiles brand. They have confirmed that the area benefits from a strong and widely-recognised local identity, which is closely tied to the identity of Turbridge Wells itself. This has formed the inspiration for the creation of a Pantiles logo and identity which reflects its defining architectural heritage, the elegant lines and black and white palette of its buildings and the springs that lead to its genesis.
- 5.11 The marketing and branding strategy has provided:
 - 1) An understanding of the target audience
 - 2) The establishment of an appropriate high quality, consistent brand for The Pantiles
 - 3) Communication through various media with the target audience to project the lifestyle and ethos of The Pantiles brand
 - 4) Promotion of an image consistent with the vision for the area providing high quality, specialist shops with a range of complementary uses
 - 5) Encouragement of greater levels of activity through a consistent marketing campaign for various events designed to draw people into the area (see example of a flyer and leaflet)
 - 6) The development of a Pantiles website that evokes The Pantiles brand and provides a convenient source of information on its shops, services and events



What better place to enjoy the finest food and drink than The Pantiles, Turbridge Wells with its beautiful views of sandstone, limestone and red brick buildings.

Send the world a love, from France to Mexico, from Italy to nearly every other country, you'll find it here in well-stocked cupboards. Or maybe you just want to sit down and contemplate your shopping list, and why it might include: chicken, beef, a delicious local meat alternative. Whatever your taste, The Pantiles will cater for you.

PANTILES
The Jewel in the Town



Pantiles events

Summer Jazz on The Pantiles Bandstand
Thursday 17th July 7.30pm - Free to see
Get into the swing of one of Kent's best 'big bands'. Prepare for a real live 'happy' 'sway' factor!

World Party on The Pantiles
Saturday 19th July 12pm to 4pm
A global celebration of music and dance from English folk singer Kate Clark, world acts and dance troupes from Canada de Clara Bradford Capriccio, and music and dance from Spanish troupe Flamenco Alambra.

The Pantiles Farmers' Market
Saturday 19th July 10am to 4pm

The Pantiles Craft Market
Sunday 20th July 10am to 4pm

Summer Jazz on The Pantiles Bandstand
Thursday 24th July 7.30pm - Free to see
See the market stars and other excellent delight musicians across the country. With a live and live quartet bring their magic to The Pantiles Bandstand!

Folk on The Pantiles
Saturday 24th - Sunday 27th July 12pm to 4pm
Be entertained by Irish dance on Saturday and English and American folk music on Sunday. Or why not give a full dance workshop in The Green Exchange?

PANTILES
The Jewel in the Town



Public Realm Strategy

- 5.12 The public realm strategy for The Pantiles comprises two main elements:
- 1) Environmental enhancements in the vicinity of The Pantiles area.
 - 2) The enhancement of the connections to/from the wider area to The Pantiles, including their legibility.
- 5.13 In developing detailed proposals for enhancing and managing the public realm the aim of the strategy has been to set a framework for:
- Maintenance and repair works that maintain the integrity of the historic fabric of The Pantiles itself.
 - Environmental enhancements that are sympathetic to the quality of the built environment and locally distinctive characteristics.
 - Considering new, non-standard approaches to traffic management that are more sensitive to the quality of the built environment.
- 5.14 To this end, individual proposals have regard to:
- 1) The sensitivity of the floorscape - in particular the listed paving.
 - 2) The public realm’s role in the setting of surrounding listed buildings and the character and appearance of the conservation area together with the interest provided by historic details and features.
 - 3) Guidance provided on these matters in various publications including English Heritage Guidance Streets for All, The English Historic Town Forum’s recent Manual for Historic Streets.
 - 4) The need for a simple approach to the provision of signage, lighting and street furniture to maintain visual order and avoid unnecessary clutter.
 - 5) The potential for innovative approaches to highway signage/road markings and traffic calming measures that are sensitive to the area’s environmental quality (in discussion with KCC and TWBC).
 - 6) The need for a consistent and high quality design approach to the provision of signage and street furniture, together with opportunities for the integration of public art and updating the current information points.
 - 7) The need for a simple, high quality palette of paving materials with detailing and construction appropriate to a place’s function/use.
 - 8) Careful positioning and selection of street furniture, appropriate to the location and for its intended purpose.
 - 9) The need for inclusive access: removing, where possible, barriers to the movement of people including those who are less mobile (e.g. people using wheelchairs, parents with pushchairs) or providing convenient alternatives.

Environmental Enhancements of the Public Realm

- 5.15 A number of potential projects and proposals have been identified that will enhance the appearance of the immediate Pantiles area and are identified on Figure 15:
- 1) Environmental enhancements within The Pantiles including:
 - Refurbishment of surfacing around the bandstand
 - Upgrading of street furniture and boundary railings
 - Refurbishment or replacement of the bandstand
 - Removal of brick surrounds to trees and reinstatement of ragstone spalls
 - 2) Environmental improvements to the Lower Pantiles (junction with Linden Park Road to the Corn Exchange) which may include:
 - A high quality, paved surface to adoptable standards with parking and pedestrian areas subtly identified,
 - Review/replacement of road markings, lighting and signage with a view to limiting their prominence/ impact and introducing elements of a more sympathetic design,
 - Review of parking provision and
 - Consideration of the potential to integrate further cycle stands
 - 3) Environmental improvements to The Pantiles frontage to London Road including:
 - Review of highway signage to minimise restriction of pavements and limit visual clutter
 - Investigation of the potential to introduce signage/branding for The Pantiles, evident in views approaching along Major York Road and travelling north along London Road
 - Review of potential to reinstate, repair or resurface key property boundaries and frontages
 - Review of opportunity to enhance public realm at key corners - (No. 2; Barclays Bank and No 72)
 - Enhanced crossing of London Road (see paragraph 5.18)
 - 4) Environmental enhancements to Linden Park Road between Union Square and The Pantiles, and on the frontage to The Pantiles including:
 - Removal of unnecessary bollards
 - Enhancement of pedestrian crossing
 - Enhancement of surfacing of pavements
 - Potential for landscape and public realm enhancements within Union Square to improve the frontage to The Pantiles and the connection to the car park
 - 5) Enhancement of pedestrian link from Frant Road:
 - Review of signage
 - Improved lighting and sightlines
 - Enhancement of surfacing
 - 6) Enhancement of Sussex Mews
 - Review of surfacing/street furniture
 - Consider restriction of vehicular access to certain times of day
 - 7) Enhancement of Union Square
 - Review of surfacing/street furniture
 - Consider restriction of vehicular access to certain times of day



Figure 15: Public Realm Enhancements

Wayfinding and Directional Signage

5.16 To assist visitors there is a need to review the effectiveness of wayfinding both approaching The Pantiles and within wider Tunbridge Wells. The following is being explored to improve the visitor experience:

- i) High quality directional signage to provide orientation relating to The Pantiles at key arrival points (e.g. station, car parks)
- ii) Sufficient interpretation to enable the visitor to identify The Pantiles as a town centre destination both in terms of the historic environment and shops and services available. An update of the current information points could be considered
- iii) Wayfinding at key intersections along the route. This could be complementary to or update the current finger posts within the town centre. In other town centres, public art has been used as a means of integrating wayfinding into the public realm.



Wayfinding as public art



Information point: high quality/public art integrated

Movement and Linkages

5.17 The strategy has identified a number of proposals within the surrounding area that will need to be considered as part of the wider review of transport and movement within the town centre. Improvement of transport and access is critical to enabling the rejuvenation of The Pantiles. It is imperative that linkages to/from The Pantiles to the town centre and to the Commons are reinforced for pedestrians. This will benefit not only The Pantiles but the wider area. In doing this, there is a particular need to address the significant barrier to pedestrian movement that adjoining roads, traffic movement on them and the nature and location of pedestrian crossings create.

5.18 The following junction improvements will therefore be discussed with KCC in conjunction with TWBC:

- 1) Works to improve Nevill Street (A267)/London Road (A26) (including the pedestrian crossing to The Pantiles) (see Figure 16)
 - a) Replacement of the current roundabout with a signalised junction to reduce the amount of land required for the road
 - b) Reconfiguration of the junction to enable the location of the crossing to The Pantiles be moved to the north-west so that it aligns with the entrance to The Pantiles and provides a more conveniently located crossing from Chapel Place both via the steps and the London Road frontage
 - c) Removal of the barriers to enable pedestrian movement along the desire line
 - d) Provision of crossing points to the Commons
 - e) Fully consider the potential of the scheme to improve accessibility for all
 - f) The provision of an enhanced setting of the King Charles the Martyr Church and the frontage of The Pantiles by creating an attractive appropriately design public space utilising land currently used as road, with potential opportunities for introducing cycle parking and seating. The scheme will need to be sympathetically designed to minimise visual clutter at the junction

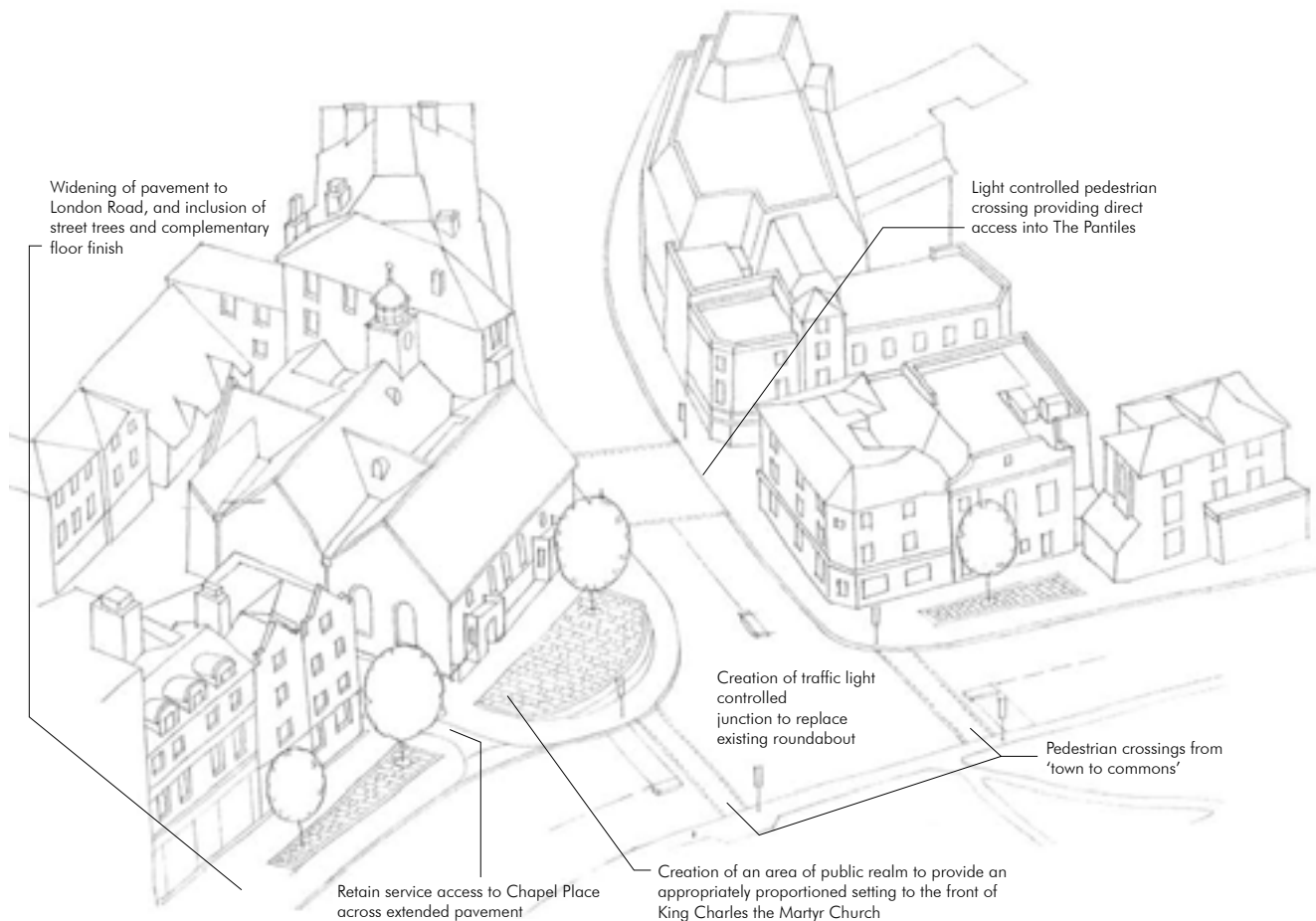


Figure 16: Improvements to London Road/Nevill Street junction

- 2) London Road/Major York's Way
- Review of the current roundabout and investigation of the potential for a signalised junction
 - Formation of convenient crossing points between The Pantiles and the Commons and related to footpath linkages to the Fairground car park
 - Review potential for rationalised servicing/loading/lighting
 - Works to this junction may be pursued in conjunction with the enhancement of the Fairground car park

5.19 The delivery of changes to these junctions will require the commitment of both the KCC and the TWBC to investigate alternative solutions to traffic management. Creative solutions and new approaches should be explored to resolve these issues. Solutions for these junctions may need to be reviewed in the context of movement within and through the wider town centre on the highway network.















5.20 Effective public transport connections are also necessary for The Pantiles. Frequent, convenient bus services linking The Pantiles to the rest of the town centre and wider area, including the railway station will be particularly important. Bus stops should have up-to-date, clear information on services, frequency and destinations, be well designed, provide shelter and where possible seating.

5.21 The availability of suitable town centre parking will also be a significant factor in the success of The Pantiles. There will be a need to review provision across the town centre and in particular in the southern part of the town centre. This will need to consider both the amount of parking required, its accessibility from The Pantiles, its quality and cost.

5.22 The delivery of these aspects of the strategy fall mainly outside Targetfollow's control. They are considered fundamental to the reintegration of The Pantiles, an objective that consultation with TWBC officers has confirmed is consistent with the Council's aspirations for the town centre. The mechanism for delivering such initiatives/proposals may therefore be as part of the wider exercise of developing an Area Action Plan for the town centre as part of the Local Development Framework and through discussion with the KCC.



KEY

Existing retail	
Existing restaurant/ cafe/ bar	
Existing office/ business use	
Existing bank	
Residential	
Potential leisure and tourist attractions / anchors	
Potential and existing destination retail units	
Potential change of use to residential	
Possible change of use to retail	
Potential for residential or mixed use development sites	
Potential development site outside Targetfollow ownership	
Potential to enhance retail frontage to London Road	
Non retail/ non A3 A4 frontage to London Road	
Relocate TIC or lower walk (location to be agreed)	

Building Refurbishment and Reuse Strategy

5.2- The aims of the Building Refurbishment and Use Strategy are to maximise the potential of the existing buildings whilst having due regard to the special architectural and historic interest of the listed buildings. This will be achieved by:

- 1) Identifying the most appropriate locations for providing slightly larger shop units suitable for attracting further anchor/destination retailers to the area (that are compatible with the independent character of the existing retail offer and support existing businesses) who otherwise might not locate here
- 2) Upgrading the existing interiors of the residential accommodation within The Pantiles to create high quality living accommodation
- 3) Maintaining and repairing facades as required to safeguard the historic building fabric and 'advertising' through the building fabric a high quality place along the London Road frontage
- 4) Re-use existing vacant/under-let office space for residential purposes where it can be demonstrated that there is no demand for office accommodation of that type
- 5) Refurbishing the Swan Hotel as a key attraction destination for the area. Explore it's potential for a boutique hotel, destination restaurant or high quality retail and residential use
- 6) Reviewing the potential of the Corn Exchange, in particular its potential to house an independent cinema, associated evening uses (e.g. restaurant/specialist ice cream parlour/coffee shop and consolidate destination uses e.g. beauty treatment)

5.25 Key projects for enhancing the built environment will be :

- 1) Refurbishment and upgrading of the Swan Hotel
- 2) Proposals for the Corn Exchange
- 3) Enhancing the junction of Eridge Road/Linden Park Road
- 4) Environmental enhancements of London Road
- 5) Enhancement of Royal Victoria House
- 6) Redevelopment of the Linden Road car park and Auction House

Figure 17: Existing and Potential Building Uses and Opportunities (Ground Level)

5.26 The following sets out key principles for the refurbishment of these buildings and areas.

Refurbishment of the Swan Hotel

5.27 Sensitive refurbishment/redecoration/maintenance of the external fabric of the building including the reduction of clutter and the use of subtle and appropriate signage

- Investigate potential for small scale extensions
- Improve presence of entrance on the London Road frontage
- Explore the potential for subtle and appropriate integration of The Pantiles branding
- In refurbishing the Swan Hotel particular consideration should be given to the potential to:
 - Enhance Swan Passage, which connects to The Pantiles (including lighting, surfacing (of non listed elements), hand rails, decoration, potential for natural surveillance)
 - Create a high quality ambience within The Pantiles through the interaction of the use with the public realm e.g. alfresco dining
 - Maintaining the integrity of the special interest of the building

5.28 It is noted that listed building consent will be necessary for works that will affect the special architectural or historic interest of the building. Planning permission will be required for any change of use.

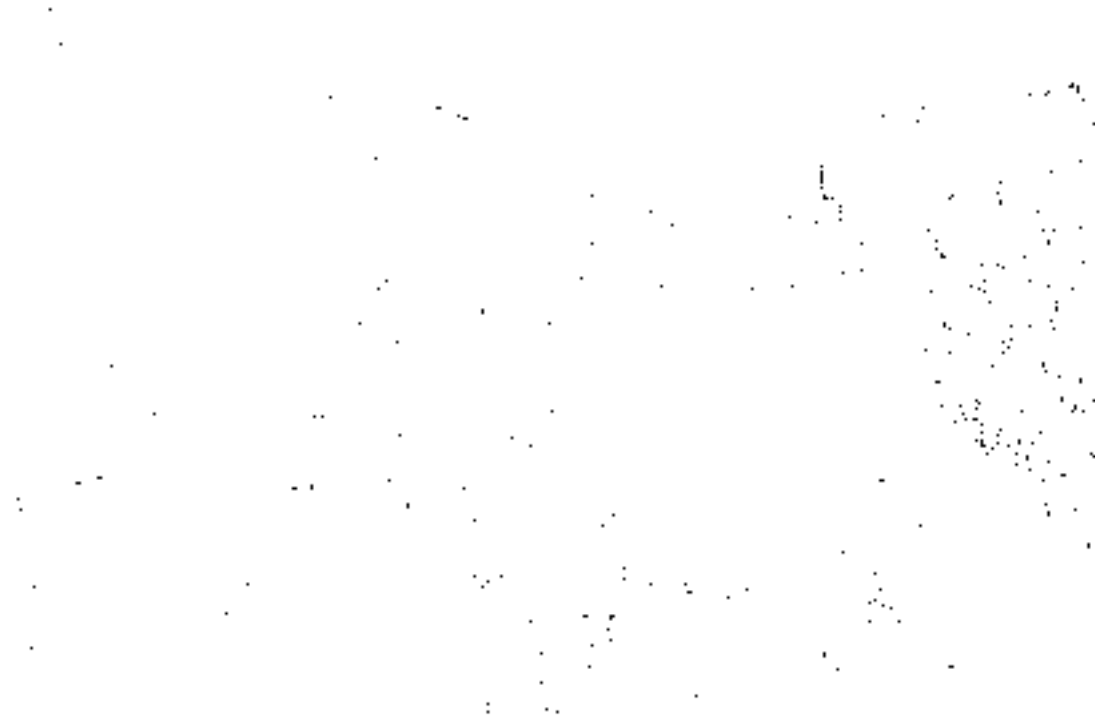


Figure 18: Improvements to the Swan Hotel

Proposals for the Corn Exchange

- 5.29 The Corn Exchange is an area within The Pantiles where the lack of footfall is readily apparent, with a number of vacant units. The closure of the 'Day of the Wells' Museum has led to a significant reduction in the visitors to this area and trade for retailers has suffered as a consequence. The perceived lack of presence by the occupiers of units in the Corn Exchange is particularly evidenced by the huddle of 'A' boards at the entrance. In order to address this a new destination is required that will draw people into/through this part of The Pantiles. Sussex Mews is also a quieter retail area that would benefit from greater footfall.
- 5.30 The following should be considered in exploring the potential to increase the profile of the Corn Exchange (and the units within Sussex Mews):
- 1) Continue to work towards the introduction of an independent cinema into the former Day at the Wells Museum to generate a destination that will generate activity in the evenings and at weekends.
 - 2) Investigate the potential to introduce complementary destination uses to the cinema.
 - 3) Investigate the potential for destination retail within or beyond the Corn Exchange that will increase footfall in this area.
 - 4) Consider the potential to orientate ground floor units to face onto Sussex Mews to enliven the space and create greater activity and overlooking.
 - 5) Reduce the hours of servicing to units on Sussex Mews so that the area can become a more active pedestrian space during the day.
 - 6) Promote regular events within the covered space of the Corn Exchange and review the potential to link this directly to the space within Sussex Mews.
 - 7) Consider through the Retail Strategy and Marketing and Branding Strategy the potential to create a distinct area based on a concentration of comparison shops/complementary services/uses.

Figure 19: Increased activity adjacent to the Corn Exchange



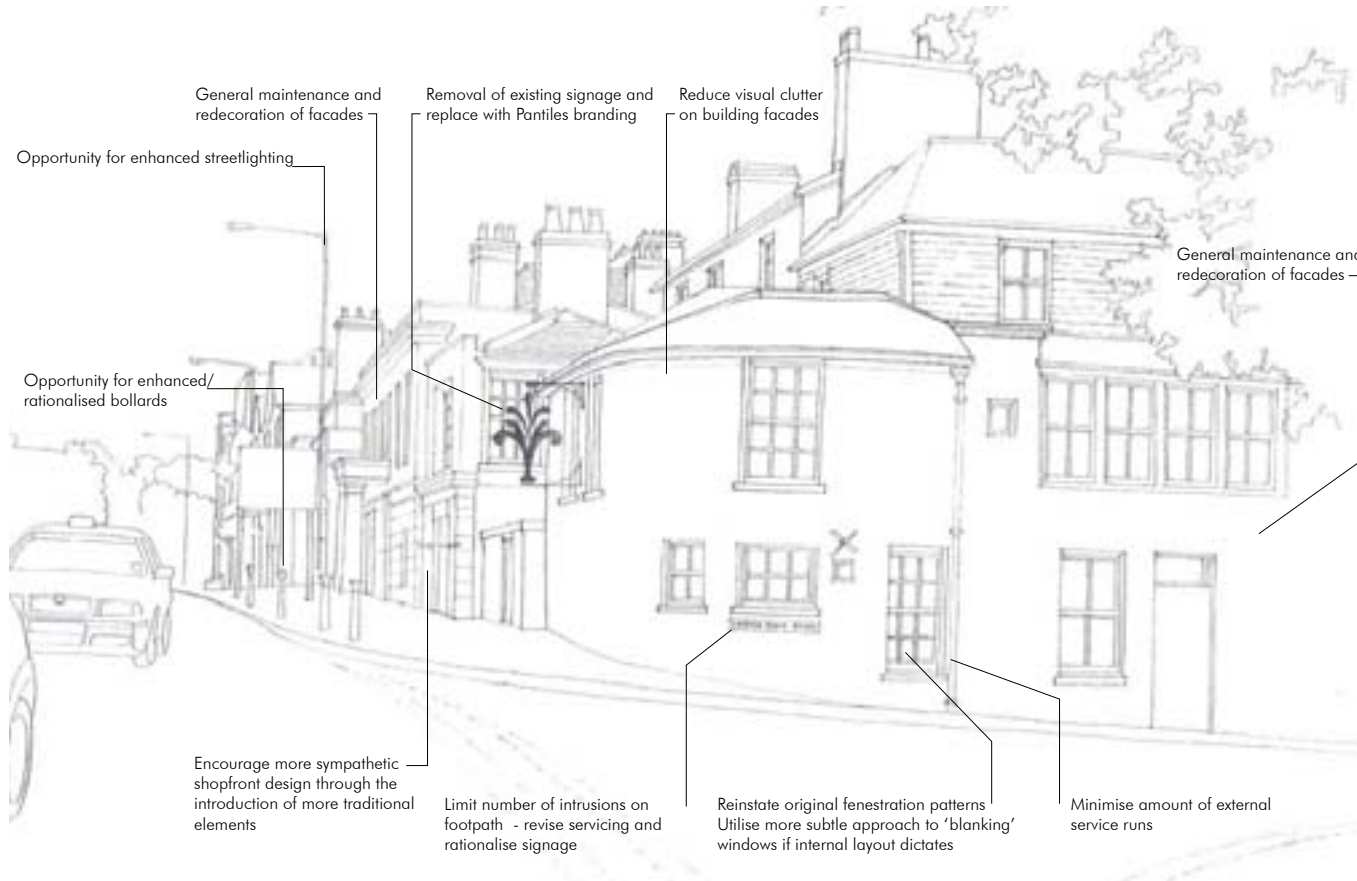


Figure 20: Improving Eridge Road/Linden Park Road Junction

Enhancing the junction of Eridge Road/Linden Park Road



5.31 The junction of Linden Park Road with Eridge Road marks the southern gateway into The Pantiles but has a range of detracting elements within the buildings and public realm. This key location could be improved as follows:

- Refurbishment of the building frontage including removal of existing signage and its replacement with a suitable alternative; rationalisation of downpipes on elevation.
- Review potential for extension to create screened storage of palladin bins to rear of 70-72 The Pantiles.
- Enhancements to paving and lighting.
- Removal of clutter from the public realm.
- Enhancement of the road junction (to address if possible surfacing, geometry and width).
- Investigate the potential for the subtle inclusion of The Pantiles signage/branding.
- Improved streetlighting and street furniture

Environmental Enhancement of London Road Frontage

5.32 The buildings on the west side of The Pantiles have always had a dual frontage both to The Pantiles and to London Road. The London Road side is to some extent secondary and although the premises have an attractive aspect towards the Commons, they also face the busy main through the town. Many of the buildings on this prominent frontage are in need of refurbishment and redecoration. Their enhancement would serve to advertise the investment in the wider Pantiles area. The frontage would benefit from the following works:

- Repair, maintenance, redecoration and refurbishment of building frontages and roofs.
- Enhanced signage and repair of shopfronts/refurbishment of fire escape steps.
- Investigation of the potential for discrete bin storage.
- More appropriate definition of property curtilages.

5.33 In terms of the public realm the following would enhance the street scene:

- More attractive and suitable street lighting.
- Repair and reinstatement of brick paved surfacing where it has been removed by utilities companies or been subject of wear and tear.
- Reduction in clutter by addressing directional signage, removal of unnecessary bollards, review of servicing arrangements.
- Removal of pedestrian barriers.
- Enhancement of paving around the Bank. Consider the potential for tree planting and seating.

Development Guidance

5.34 Sensitive change will be fundamental to the successful delivery of the strategy, whether that change relates to the refurbishment of existing buildings or the integration of new development into the area. Two forms of guidance are envisaged to ensure that the change associated with the rejuvenation of The Pantiles area has in its design development had regard to:

- The special architectural and historic interest of buildings
- The character or appearance of the conservation area
- Existing and emerging policy context
- The physical context of the site and its surroundings

5.35 These are:

- Topic Specific Design Guidelines which aim to assist Targetfollow (tenants and other landowners) in undertaking ongoing maintenance and management of the buildings within The Pantiles.
- Concept Statements which provide an analysis of a site and its constraints, and set general parameters/aspirations for future development proposals.

Topic Specific Guidance

5.36 Guidance is available on various matters on TWBC website. Of particular note are:

- Shopfronts
- Advertisement design
- Inclusive design

5.37 More specific guidance, tailored to the particular requirements of The Pantiles could be prepared by Targetfollow to cover these issues (i.e. appropriate size, location, colour and lettering for signage within The Pantiles) as well as requirements relating to maintenance and redecoration.

Concept Statements

5.38 Concept Statements have been prepared for the following sites:

- 1) Linden Park car park/Auction House
- 2) Fairground Car park

These are set out on the following pages and have been prepared so that they can be extracted as stand alone documents. Additional concept statements could be prepared for other development opportunities.

5.38 These sites have been selected because they are important ‘gateways’ to The Pantiles. The sites/buildings are in relatively poor condition and the improvement schemes can be delivered promptly. The implementation of schemes for these sites will demonstrate commitment to enhancing The Pantiles and surroundings. The Linden car park/Auction House site may present an opportunity to draw people through The Pantiles.



Traditional Pantiles signage



Pantiles shopfront

CONCEPT STATEMENT: LINDEN PARK DEVELOPMENT SITE

Introduction

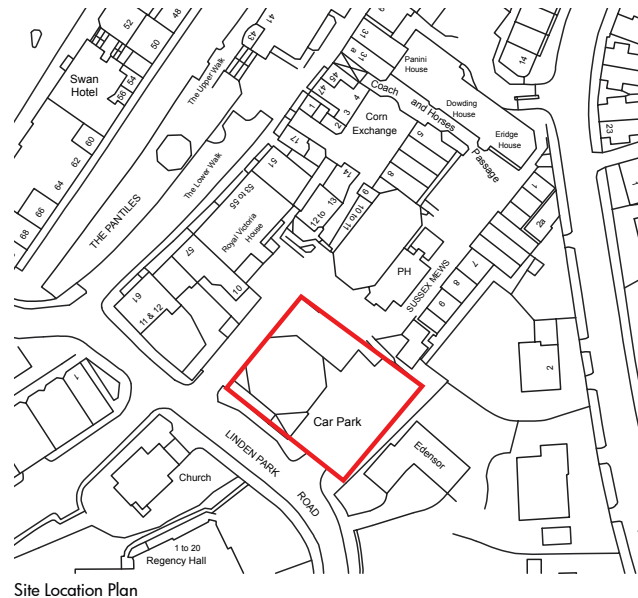
- 1.1 An opportunity exists for the current car park and Auction House site on Linden Park Road to make a significant contribution to the rejuvenation of The Pantiles. The development of this site provides an opportunity to:
 - i) Provide a quality development at a key gateway to The Pantiles, complementing its historic setting;
 - ii) Enhance the area’s vitality;
 - iii) Consolidate and improve town centre uses, including retail;
 - iv) Provide high quality, town centre residential accommodation;
 - v) Create a more attractive and sustainable edge to The Pantiles;
 - vi) Provide a safe and vibrant environment;
 - vii) Utilise the site to its full potential; and,
 - viii) Provide town centre parking.
- 1.2 This statement sets out the key principles that should inform future development proposals.

Site Location

- 1.3 The Linden Park car park and Auction House site (‘the site’) is situated at the south eastern end of The Pantiles, and is approximately 0.1 hectare in area. It lies within The Pantiles Character Area, part of the wider Conservation Area which covers much of Royal Tunbridge Wells and Rusthall.
- 1.4 There are currently two points of access to the site; via Sussex Mews and directly off Linden Park Road. Due to rising land levels to the southern end of the site the existing car park is laid out over two levels.
- 1.5 Adjacent to the site’s south eastern boundary is a large residential property, partly screened by well established trees. To the north east the site fronts onto the Sussex Arms Public House and proposed cinema, whilst the north western elevation addresses the rear of Royal Victoria House and properties 10-12 Sussex Mews. The site fronts onto Linden Park Road and is adjacent to the existing coach ‘drop off’ point.

Policy Context

- 1.6 The site lies just outside the Primary Shopping Area. The location is suitable for retail or other commercial development. Emphasis is placed on making best use of previously developed land within urban areas. The need for housing is noted. Policy H2 requires a mix of dwelling sizes in developments of over 15 bedspaces. A proportion of affordable housing will be sought on developments over 15 units with a maximum of 30%.
- 1.7 The site’s location in a conservation area requires that development will, at least preserve its character or appearance (PPG15). Regard should be given to the setting of nearby listed buildings. New development should be compatible with the amenity and character of its neighbours, appropriate to its context, safe, inclusive, accessible and sustainable (EN1).
- 1.8 The development must be capable of being safely accessed from the existing network (TP4). Transport Assessments and Travel Plans are required for developments of a particular scale (TP1/TP3) to consider the adequacy of transport infrastructure. The site is in the Central Access Zone (TP6) and Central Parking Zone (TP7) where restrictive car parking policies apply (max. 1 space per dwelling for residential uses). Cycle parking would be required for new flats (TP9).



The Auction House from Linden Park Road



Existing Linden Park car park

PANTILES REJUVENATION STRATEGY: CONCEPT STATEMENT LINDEN PARK DEVELOPMENT SITE

Site Appraisal

- 1.9 The site currently provides a limited focus within this historically important area, providing little containment and no visual delight. At present the site contains 56 pay and display parking spaces, split over two floors, together with an octagonal Auction House, which is used on a weekly basis.
- 1.10 Sussex Mews provides access to the Corn Exchange, the mews properties and to the rear of Royal Victoria House. At present this route is open to all vehicles, including those accessing the lower floor of the car park. Sussex Mews also forms part of the pedestrian route between Linden Road and the Corn Exchange, and is used by those arriving at the coach drop off point adjacent to the Auction House, as a means of accessing The Pantiles.
- 1.11 The buildings surrounding the site are of varying heights and scales and, collectively, serve to provide strong physical containment to the southern end of The Pantiles. Conversely the Auction House and car park do little to enhance the area, or draw people into the area. It provides a rather unattractive 'pavilion' as a focus.
- 1.12 The inactive frontages created by the blank walls of the Auction House serve to deaden the area, creating alienating pedestrian routes at less busy times of the day. Interconnecting routes from Sussex Square, to the east of the Corn Exchange suffer from similar perceptions, with a distinct lack of activity and overlooking limiting the potential for these areas at present.
- 1.13 The site's southerly aspect provides the potential for the area to become an attractive new 'hub' for the southern end of The Pantiles - creating a new gateway to the area for those arriving from the south.
- 1.14 The redevelopment of this site would serve to reinvigorate an otherwise 'dead' and under-utilised town centre site.



KEY

Site boundary		Private Garden Area	
Listed buildings		Key views	
Sensitive edge (residential uses)		Coach parking/drop off	
Existing vehicular access		Pedestrian route	
Existing trees		Unattractive frontage	

Site Constraints Plan



- 1.15 Development of this site will be subject to successfully addressing a number of key constraints, which include:

- 1) conservation area status;
- 2) proximity to listed buildings;
- 3) accommodating both existing and proposed access/ servicing requirements (including emergency access);
- 4) potential impact upon residential properties 10-12 Sussex Mews;
- 5) potential impact on other adjacent development - overshadowing;
- 6) restricted opening hours of the Corn Exchange pedestrian route;
- 7) change in level along Linden Park Road;
- 8) proximity of 'Edensor' residential property to eastern site boundary;
- 9) challenge of addressing 3 active frontages; and
- 10) retaining existing trees on the boundary.



Site Opportunities

- 1.16 There are a number of key development opportunities including to:
- 1) provide a south westerly aspect of Linden Park Road;
 - 2) enhance the existing coach drop off point;
 - 3) create increased activity at southern entrance to Corn Exchange;
 - 4) enhance pedestrian linkages to Corn Exchange/Sussex Mews;
 - 5) provide enclosure at south eastern corner of The Pantiles;
 - 6) create an active frontage at a key arrival point - increasing activity and natural surveillance of Linden Park Road;
 - 7) enable more efficient use of land within town centre
 - 8) introduce development of a suitable scale and quality to provide an appropriate gateway;
 - 9) investigate potential to enhance existing retail offer and enhance footfall through the Corn Exchange;
 - 10) consider whether there is potential for a high quality mixed use development comprising shops or leisure uses as well as new homes



KEY

Site boundary		Positive termination of view	
Enhanced public realm to Linden Park Road		Potential for new focus for activity	
Enhanced public realm to Sussex Mews (including restricting vehicle access)		Potential for enhanced footfall through Corn Exchange / Sussex Mews	
Create active frontage to public routes		Access to basement parking	
Opportunities Plan		Opportunity for signage / wayfinding	

Development Principles

- 1.17 The development of this site will form the next phase of the evolution of The Pantiles. To be successful it will need to incorporate high quality contemporary design whilst respecting the distinct character of its setting.
- 1.18 To ensure that the redevelopment of the site capitalises on all of the opportunities highlighted previously, and makes a positive contribution to the rejuvenation of the The Pantiles, proposals should strive to achieve a number of key development principles, to include:

1.19 Uses

- Complementary uses to strengthen existing mix - retail and residential
- Encourage extended periods of activity consistent with amenity consideration
- Promote improved natural surveillance
- Incorporate an 'arrival' point for coach passengers
- Provide parking facilities for the proposed uses and The Pantiles.

1.20 Access

- Retain existing vehicular/service access
- Introduce restricted hours of service access
- Provide private residential access off Linden Park Road
- Strengthen/enhance pedestrian link between the Corn Exchange and Linden Park Road.
- Strengthen pedestrian movement/footfall within Sussex Mews

1.21 Site layout

- Provide strong building line to Linden Park Road
- Create a sense of enclosure to southern end of site
- Encourage active frontages to Sussex Mews and the Corn Exchange
- Exploit existing change in level to incorporate split level parking
- Enhance adjacent spaces



PANTILES REJUVENATION STRATEGY: CONCEPT STATEMENT LINDEN PARK DEVELOPMENT SITE

1.22 Height

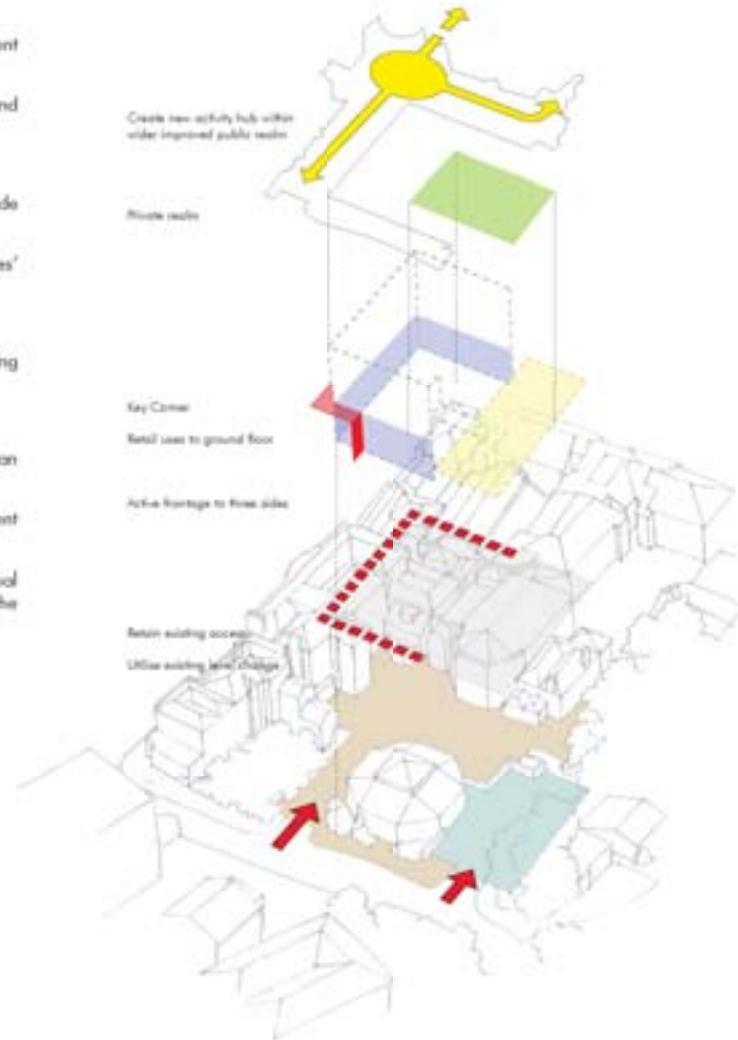
- Building heights to be of appropriate storey height to complement the surrounding development
- Ground floor to provide strong base to base of development and therefore be of a greater height than residential storeys above

1.23 Massing

- Development to consist of blocks of an appropriate scale to provide a sense of enclosure to Sussex Mews
- Take into consideration existing massing and emulate The Pantiles' characteristic strong building line

1.24 Articulation of blocks

- Encourage vertical emphasis through methods such as; projecting bays, appropriate proportioning of openings
- Create visual interest to complement wider context
- Set up a rhythm for the building facades – avoid too rigid an approach
- Potential for ground floor to incorporate a more unifying element – particularly addressing Sussex Mews
- Potential to incorporate set back of upper storey to reduce visual impact and provide visual interest at roof level to complement the intricacy of the existing roofscape



Development Principles

1.25 Materials and Detailing

- Use of materials and level/ intricacy of detailing should be complementary to the surrounding context

1.26 Sustainable development

- Robust construction
- Investigate efficiency and resource conservation measures
- Flexibility - adaptability for future changes
- Incorporate green technologies where appropriate
- Design for minimum energy consumption by optimising insulation and glazing, making the best use of daylight and passive solar energy

CONCEPT STATEMENT: FAIRGROUND CAR PARK SITE

Introduction

- 1.1 The Fairground car park (the 'site') lies to the west of The Pantiles, at the southern end of Tunbridge Wells town centre. The car park currently provides 170 parking spaces and is accessed off Major York's Road. It serves as a key arrival point for those travelling into the town from the south.
- 1.2 There are a number of footpaths which link the site to other areas of the Common and beyond. Those linking to Major York's Road and Eridge Road currently have no formal crossing provision.
- 1.3 The site comprises a 0.6ha clearing within the woodland, approximately two-thirds of which is occupied by hard standing for parking, the remainder is grassed. It is screened from the surrounding area by dense, mature woodland.
- 1.4 To the south east of the car park there are a collection of buildings clustered around the junction of Major York's Road and Eridge Road. Facing onto Eridge Road is the Swan Hotel's garage, whilst York Cottage, a Grade II weather-boarded double fronted dwelling addresses Major York's Road.
- 1.5 This statement sets out the key principles that should inform future development proposals for this site.

Planning Policy Context

- 1.6 There are a number of key policies which will need to be taken into account when considering the future of this site, including:
 - Lies within Metropolitan Green Belt (MGB1)
 - Outside of the limits to Built Development (BD1)
 - Within the Tunbridge Wells Common and Mount Ephraim Conservation Area (Env4 & Env5) - appraisal document highlights that 'open space is of very great significance in Tunbridge Wells. The open spaces of the town provide the basis of its green setting, in both formal and natural environments'.
 - Surrounded by 'site with nature conservation interest' (Env15)
- 1.7 A review of planning policy designations should be undertaken in the context of the requirements of the town centre, Royal Tunbridge Wells and the areas as a whole as part of the preparation of the Local Development Framework in order that any opportunities can be fully explored and fully consulted upon.



Widely permeable		View impact from road	
Long range views		Tree of landscape significance	
Steep relief		Potentially threatening route (after dark)	
Foot path		Negative heritage	
Tree		Poor illumination of key view	
Existing vehicular access		Potential for pedestrian/vehicle conflict	
Key site gateway		Steps	
Landmark building		Sensitive edge	
Key building heritage		Listed building	
Key corner			

Site Constraints Plan



Site Appraisal

- 1.8 The car park currently serves as a key arrival point for those wishing to park at the southern end of the town. It is roughly laid out with a gravel surface and provides affordable all day parking provision. It is poorly signed for pedestrians and there is no interpretation/information for visitors to the town.
- 1.9 A single point of vehicular access from Major York's Road results in traffic having to travel through the London Road/Eridge Road/Major York's Road junction, exacerbating congestion at this key node. The busy Eridge Road/London Road route creates a significant barrier to pedestrian movement between the car park (and the Commons in general) and the southern end of the town centre.
- 1.10 The footpath between the car park and Eridge Road is poorly signed and lit. There is no pedestrian crossing at this point, resulting in potential conflict between pedestrians and vehicle.
- 1.11 The Swan Hotel's garage on the corner of Major York's Road and Eridge Road, provides a weak focus for the junction. It is of poor visual quality, providing limited parking provision for the hotel's staff and customers, and is accessed directly off the main road, adjacent to the junction.
- 1.12 A footpath runs along the site's northern boundary, providing a route through the Commons and linking to Cabbage Stalk Lane at its western end. There is a footpath on the opposite side of Major York's Road, which links through to London Road and to the Commons to the north and east. There is no pedestrian crossing from the Fairground to these routes.
- 1.13 Due to its position on higher ground, views of The Pantiles and wider perspectives are possible during the autumn/winter months. However the dense woodland screens the majority of these views at other times.
- 1.14 Enhancement or development will be subject to successfully addressing a number of constraints which include:
 - Green belt designation
 - Conservation area status
 - Location beyond current development limits
 - Proximity to listed buildings
 - Barrier created by Eridge Road
- 1.15 Other positive factors to consider are the potential to enhance the poor quality gateway created by Swan Hotel's garage and the physical/visual containment created by existing trees

Site Opportunities

1.16 The car park site and its extended context, including the pedestrian link to Eridge Road and the Swan Hotel's garage site, provide a number of opportunities to create an improved gateway/ arrival point at the southern end of the town. Given existing constraints, a phased approach is suggested in order that better use can be made of the existing car park area as car parking, pending a review of the site's longer term potential to benefit the town through the Development Plan Process:

Phase 1

- Improved parking provision through the more efficient layout of spaces
- Enhancement of surfacing (appropriate to the nature of the area)
- Further enhancement of pedestrian link to Eridge Road to include lighting and signage
- Potential to create formal crossing provision on Eridge Road
- Strengthen linkages between The Pantiles and the Commons

Phase 2

- Increase parking provision through the extension of surface car parking without impacting on important existing trees and habitats
- Explore possibilities for the re-use of Swan Hotel's garage site
- Potential to provide more attractive gateway
- Integration with wider aspirations for the Commons

Phase 3

- Potential to substantially increase parking provision for the southern end of the town centre through basement multi-level parking as part of a transport strategy
- Investigate alternative site access options
- The development of the car park site - with the introduction of enabling development to complement original concept of the Commons as a place for exercise and relaxation
- A mixed-use scheme may be appropriate



Development Principles - Phases 1 and 2

Development Principles

1.17 In order to capitalise on parking at this key area of the town, whilst making a positive contribution to the character of the Commons, proposals should strive to achieve a number of key development principles, including:

- 1) Retain and enhance existing access
- 2) Rationalise the existing parking layout and extend area to provide additional parking - confined by extent of the existing clearing
- 3) Incorporate an appropriate easement to protect tree roots
- 4) Retain porous surface to the majority of the car park, to aid drainage
- 5) Create an area of hard standing for 'blue badge' holders adjacent to pedestrian access point
- 6) Delineate between rows of parking (low level timber rails) and to edge of car park to prevent vehicles over running onto grassed areas
- 7) Strengthen and enhance pedestrian linkages into the car park - providing attractive, safe and accessible routes into the site
- 8) Formalise pedestrian crossing at Eridge Road - enhancing links between the southern end of the town and the Commons
- 9) Provide information point at key location within car park
- 10) Given the wooded setting of the site introduce 'softer' materials such as timber for posts, rails, bollards etc.
- 11) Actively seek an alternative use for the Swan Hotel garage site to enhance this key corner
- 12) Retain capacity of landscape or provide mitigation.

6.0 THE NEXT STEPS

Consultation and Engagement

- 6.1 The strategy has been prepared in discussion with officers of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council to ensure that the objectives and proposals are broadly consistent with relevant planning policy context and with the Council’s objectives for the town centre. The issues affecting The Pantiles and opportunities set out in the strategy have also been presented to Councillors.
- 6.2 Owing to the range of stakeholders with an interest in The Pantiles area, their involvement in and inputs to the strategy are important. It is envisaged that consultation on the strategy will comprise two main elements: stakeholder meetings and a public exhibition. These will be undertaken to obtain inputs and feedback from key stakeholders with an interest in the rejuvenation of the area. The role of engagement as part of the production of the strategy is set out at Figure 21. The scope and nature of the consultation will be discussed and agreed with TWBC.
- 6.3 It is envisaged that the stakeholder meetings will involve in particular those organisations and groups with a role in the effective delivery of the strategy. The meetings will explore the issues, discuss the key opportunities, including whether there are others that should be considered, and agree matters relating to delivery and how specific proposals can be taken forward effectively. The range of key organisations to be consulted will be agreed with the Council but are envisaged to include:
- Other landowners and occupiers in The Pantiles area
 - Civic Society
 - Commons Conservators
 - English Heritage
 - Kent County Council
 - Local Chamber of Commerce/Business Groups
 - Town Forum
 - Other Local amenity societies
- 6.4 To provide the opportunity for wider community engagement, it is expected that a public exhibition will be held. The scope of the exhibition will be agreed with the Council. It is, however, anticipated that this will explain the issues facing The Pantiles, identify the key opportunities envisaged in the Rejuvenation Strategy and explore how these could be delivered. An opportunity to provide comments and feedback on the Rejuvenation Strategy and the issues and opportunities for the area will be given and those responses will be considered and discussed with the Council.

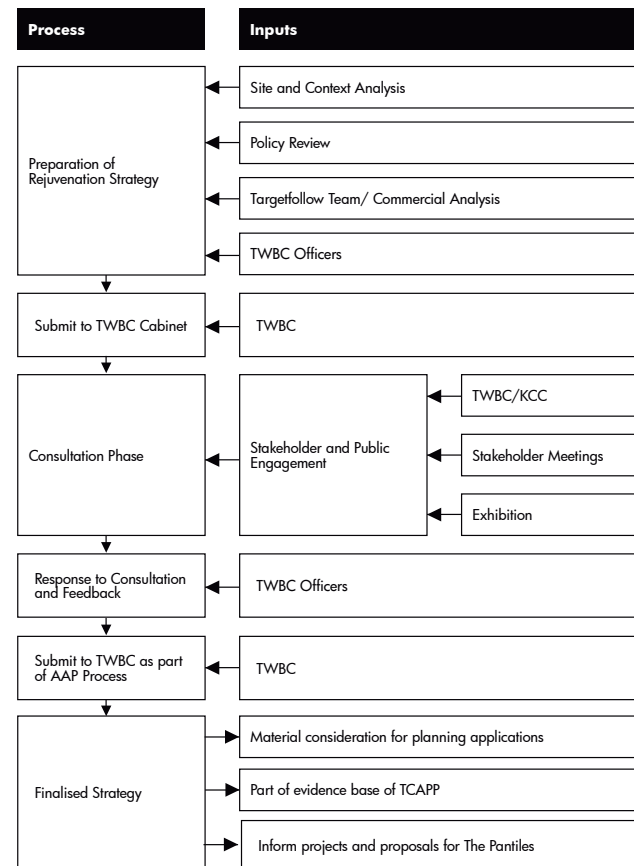


Figure 21: Process and Inputs to the Rejuvenation Strategy

Delivering the Vision

- 6.5 The vision set out in the strategy will take time to deliver. Whilst some elements are capable of being implemented in the short to medium term (from 2008-2012), others are less certain and will require further evaluation and consideration in the context of:
- Wider town centre issues (particularly in relation to parking, accessibility, movement) through the preparation of the Town Centre Area Action Plan
 - The regional policy context following the adoption of the South East Plan, and
 - Consultation and sustainability appraisal through the Local Development Framework Process.
- These aspects of the strategy are likely to be delivered in the longer term (post 2012). It is envisaged that the Town Centre Area Action Plan (TCAAP) will provide a key vehicle for the delivery of the longer term objectives and proposals. This document has therefore been prepared with reference to the national planning policy guidance, emerging Regional Spatial Strategy and Core Strategy with the intention of informing the preparation of the TCAAP and forming part of the evidence base for it.
- 6.6 Table 1 summarises the interrelationships between the various threads of the strategy. It reflects the objectives of the strategy, the proposals and initiatives described in the preceding sections that are envisaged to fulfil those objectives, the timescales for delivery and the stakeholders involved.
- 6.7 Targetfollow will scope the extent and level of engagement with local organisations and interest groups during the public consultation on this document. These will then be added to the list of key stakeholders in Table 1 as appropriate.

Objectives	Measures	Proposals/ Initiatives	Key Stakeholders	Timescale	Delivery Mechanism
1. Enhance vitality and increase viability	Attract more people to The Pantiles	Improved branding and more effective marketing	TF	Ongoing	TF Pantiles Management Team
		Events	TF/TWBC/local businesses	Ongoing	TF Pantiles Management Team
	Enhance the quality/nature of retail offer	Retail/Commercial strategy	TF	Ongoing	TF Pantiles management team
		Redevelopment of Linden Park car park	TF/TWBC/local residents	Short	Inclusion in SHLAA/Planning application TCAAP
	Enhance the mix of uses	Site specific development guidance/ refurbishment proposals	TF/TWBC	Short-medium	TF/TWBC Planning other applications TCAAP
		Site specific development guidance/ refurbishment proposals	TF/CC	Long term	Local Development Framework/RSS
	Improve parking provision at southern gateway	Town centre parking strategy	TWBC/KCC	Medium-Long term	TCAAP
		Enhancement of Fairground car park	TF/CC/TWBC/KCC	Short	TF Pantiles Management Team Planning application
		Enhancement of Union House car park	Landowner/TWBC	Medium to Long	Third Party landowner
	Investigate opportunity to provide high quality mixed use facility within Commons in combination with increased parking provision	Site specific development guidance	TF/CC/TWBC/KCC/SEERA	Long-term	Local Development Framework (Core Strategy/ TCAAP)/ Regional Spatial Strategy
2. To preserve and enhance the historic environment	Appropriate maintenance and refurbishment works to listed buildings	Site specific development guidance/ refurbishment strategy	TF/TWBC/EH/TWCC	Short-medium term	TF in consultation with TWBC/EH as appropriate Planning and listed building consent applications
		Topic specific guidance	TBWC/TF/local businesses/residents	Short term	TF Management Team/Applications as required
	Enhancement of detracting elements	Redevelopment of Linden Park car park	TF/TWBC/ TWCC/local residents	Short term	Inclusion in SHLAA/Planning application TCAAP
		Redevelopment of Swan Hotel garage	TF/TWBC/ KCC/CC	Medium-long term	TCAAP
	Enhancement of Nevill Street/London Road junction	Public realm strategy	KCC/TWBC/ EH/TF	Medium term	Transport Strategy/Core Strategy TCAAP
	Enhancement of streets	Public realm strategy	TF/TWBC/ KCC/local businesses/ residents	Short to medium term	Various TF management S106 contributions and LPA investment as part of wider town centre initiative Other landowners TWBC Public realm /transport/ urban design strategy

Table 1: Delivery of Key Objectives - Measures, Initiatives and Mechanisms**Abbreviations**

TF	Targetfollow
TWBC	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
KCC	Kent County Council
SEERA	South East England Regional Assembly
EH	English Heritage
SHLAA	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
TCAAP	Town Centre Area Action Plan
LPA	Local Planning Authority
HA	Highways Agency

Objectives	Measures	Proposals/ Initiatives	Key Stakeholders	Timescale	Delivery Mechanism
3 To promote improved connectivity, accessibility and legibility of The Pantiles	Enhancement of connections to the adjoining areas	Public realm strategy	TF/TWBC/KCC/local businesses/residents	Short to medium term	Various TF management S106 contributions and LPA investment as part of wider town centre initiative Other landowners TWBC Public realm /transport/urban design strategy
		Junction enhancement (King Charles the Martyr)	TWBC/KCC/HA/TF and other town centre landowners	Medium term	Transport Strategy TWBC/KCC/Government funding
		Junction enhancement (Swan Hotel) and London Road crossings	TWBC/KCC/HA	Crossings – short term junction enhancements medium to long term	Transport Strategy Planning applications
	Improved signage and wayfinding	Signage for The Pantiles	TF/TWBC	Short term	Planning/other applications
		Wayfinding strategy	TF/TWBC/TWCC	Short-medium term	TWBC Transport/tourism strategy Town centre management
	Enhanced accessibility for all	Public realm strategy	TF/TWBC/KCC	Short-medium term	Various TF management S106 contributions and LPA investment as part of wider town centre initiative Other landowners TWBC Public realm/transport/urban design strategy
	Junction enhancement (King Charles the Martyr)	TWBC/KCC/ HA/TF and other town centre landowners	Medium term	Transport Strategy TWBC/KCC/Government funding	
4. To improve visitor interpretation of the area's history	Enhance tourism offer around the springs	Tourism Strategy (name of document TBC – assumed to be LPA led)	TWBC/TF	Medium term	Tourism Strategy
	Include interpretation with signage/ wayfinding	Wayfinding Strategy	TWBC/TF/KCC	Short-medium term	TWBC Transport/tourism strategy Town centre management
5 To promote The Pantiles as a high quality southern gateway to the town centre	Improve appearance of London Road frontage	Public Realm Strategy	TF/TWBC/KCC	Short-medium term	Various TF management S106 contributions and LPA investment as part of wider town centre initiative Other landowners TWBC Public realm/transport/urban design strategy
	Improved signage	Public Realm Strategy	TWBC/KCC/ TF/local businesses	Short-medium term	Application TCAAP/Town centre management
	Redevelopment/refurbishment of Union House and Union Square	Site specific guidance	TWBC/landowner	Medium-long term	TCAAP Landowner/developer
6 To ensure a co-ordinated approach to rejuvenation	Consultation	Engagement of key stakeholders in preparation	TF/TWBC	Short term	Exhibition/publicity/questionnaire
	Agreement of way forward	Formal agreement of document principles by TWBC/KCC	TF/TWBC/KCC	Short term	Committee resolution
	Deliver rejuvenation strategy in a coordinated manner	Involvement of relevant stakeholders in delivery	All	Ongoing	Regular meetings/project steering group

Table 1: Delivery of Key Objectives - Measures, Initiatives and Mechanisms (cont)

