

MAKING CONNECTIONS LAND USE

The town centre has a strong core of active land uses around the junction of the High Street and Akeman/Frogmore Streets. The A1 shops in the Dolphin Court create a number of pedestrians movement through this area as well as along the High Street. The court just to the east of Dolphin Court appears to be surrounded by high-volume land uses (shops and pubs), suggesting that this adjacent courtyard might be worth considering as an active public space.

There are also a considerable number of financial and professional services in the town centre. The library, the most active civic institution presence in the town centre, is at the western end of the town centre on the High Street. There are no residential uses (ground floor) in the town centre. The land uses down Akeman Street tend to be more business-focused.



Dolphin Court opened up to evening economy uses.



KEY ISSUES MCI: LAND USE

MCIA
There is a strong active land uses which extend into Dolphin Court and up Frogmore Street from the key intersection of the High Street and Akeman/Frogmore Streets.

MCIB
The court adjacent to Dolphin Court is surrounded by high-volume land uses.



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MAKING CONNECTIONS CIRCULATION, DEMAND AND LINKAGES

The circulation diagram to the right represents an analysis of existing circulation conditions with contributions made by local residents at the consultation event. Heavier lines denote heavier usage and thinner lines signify less frequent use.

The High Street is the most heavily used road in the town, simultaneously used for through traffic, local shopping traffic, and local residential home-to-destination journeys. Other common driving routes include Dundale Road, Brook Street and Icknield Way. Nathaniel Walk and Silk Mill Way were used by drivers and cyclists alike. The road out to the rail station now has a cycle path part of the way there with an area to lock bicycles at the station. Pedestrian routes include along the High Street as well as a number of footpaths through the residential neighbourhoods and along Streamside Walk.

KEY ISSUES MC2: CIRCULATION DEMAND AND LINKAGES

MC2A
Dolphin Court draws pedestrian foot traffic.

MC2B
The perimeter streets of the town often are congested with traffic (Icknield Way in particular).

MC2C
The High Street continues to be used as a through route despite the proximity to the A41.



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MAKING CONNECTIONS PARKING

Car parking issues are significant in Tring given the narrowness of the High Street and many of the residential streets.

Residential Parking

There are areas of Tring where the street widths are not wide enough to accommodate on-street parking, particularly within the medieval or Victorian street patterns. Housing often lacks capacity for off-street parking, including new developments (top left). Some more recent developments do provide courtyards for parking.

Town Centre Parking

There are few places along the High Street with parking directly in front of the shops. There are three main car parks built within the town centre and in a few rare instances (bottom left), opportunities for on-street parking. Many consultation participants cited parking issues as a detriment to business. The design of these car parks detract from the character of the town centre.

Commuter Parking

The car parks in Tring offer some all-day parking spaces. Some of these spots may be used by commuters who are unable to park at the station. This practice creates two problems for the town centre - one being the loss of town centre land to commuter parking and the other being the loss of the parking space for a potential town centre shopper.



Housing often lacks capacity for off-street parking.



A modern housing development with designated off street car parking.

KEY ISSUES MC3: PARKING

MC3A

New residential developments must consider the existing street capacity for on-street parking.

MC3B

Town centre shops are affected by the lack of on-street parking in front of the shops.

MC3C

The existing car park design detracts from the town centre character.

MC3D

Commuter parking in the town centre negatively affects the town centre.



There are few opportunities for on street parking in the High Street.



An example of off-street parking in the town centre..

MAKING CONNECTIONS WAYFINDING SIGNAGE

Wayfinding signage is a critical aspect of navigating the urban landscape and can be significant in forming distinctive urban or rural character as well. Tring, with its many listed buildings and its location near the Chilterns, also has the opportunity to draw many visitors to the town. Three concerns are raised below with regard to Tring's wayfinding signage.

Distinctive signage

Wayfinding signage provides an opportunity to present a coherent vision of a place. There are select examples of distinctive signage (top near and far right) which provide a sense of Tring's significant history that should be encouraged.

Marking critical paths

Tring's many historical sites include places located off of the High Street. High-quality signage and maps in the appropriate location could play an important role in both wayfinding and place-making.

Creating gateways

It can be valuable to combine gateway signs with landmark buildings or places. Currently the locations of major information boards and gateway signs (the bottom far right image is located by the library) do not coordinate with key landmarks.



Sign for the Zoological Museum providing a sense of Tring's history.



Distinctive signage attracting visitors to St. Paul's church



High quality signage in appropriate locations assists both wayfinding and place-making.



The gateway signs and information boards are not located in co-ordination with key landmarks.

KEY ISSUES

MC4: WAYFINDING SIGNAGE

MC4A

Distinctive wayfinding signage is valuable for place-making as well as orientation and should be protected and developed.

MC4B

Tring requires strong wayfinding and mapping to locate its many historical sites.

MC4C

Gateways signs and information kiosks should be linked with key landmarks.

QUALITY OF THE PUBLIC REALM STREETSCAPE ELEMENTS

Tring's streetscape elements can perform several roles, including affirmation of the town's distinctiveness, to facilitating improved High Street vitality and retail success, segregation of traffic and pedestrians on the narrow High Street.

The shopfront signs on the High Street are of mixed quality, with a number of signs adding character to the High Street with several others providing little character or even detracting from the street's identity. There were no consistent elements to the successful signs - some were hung perpendicular to the facade and others were on the building wall, some reference the town's historical character and others were simply artful - other than quality of materials and design.

As mentioned earlier, the paving in the Tring town centre has added considerably to the town's character. Equally important are some of the railings which both add character and protect pedestrians from traffic on the town centre's narrow roads.

There are a few places where the pavement widens enough to permit pavement cafes (bottom far right). These kinds of 'temporal' additions to the street add vitality to the town centre. There are opportunities in the courtyards to create additional outdoor cafe spaces.

Consultation participants also noted a lack of greenery and planting in the town centre.



An artful and distinctive sign which adds character to the High Street and makes reference to the town's history.



Some shopfront signs on the High Street add little character or even detract from the street's identity.

KEY ISSUES QPRI: STREETSCAPE ELEMENTS

QPRI A
Successful shopfront signage emphasises quality, originality and diversity rather than uniformity.

QPRI B
Shops signs in the conservation area are not regulated.

QPRI C
Traffic calming and pedestrian safety streetscape elements can also add character to the town centre.

QPRI D
Outdoor cafes add vitality to the town centre.



The railings both add to the town's character and protect pedestrians from traffic on the town's busy roads.



Outdoor cafe spaces, where the road is wide enough, add vitality to the town centre.

QUALITY OF THE PUBLIC REALM NATURAL ELEMENTS

Tring rests at the edge of the Chilterns, providing the town with easy access to scenic walking areas. According to the Urban Nature Conservation Study, Tring is 'almost entirely enclosed within the Tring gap Foothills Character Area... Undulating land is present immediately surrounding the town, especially in Tring Park where there is an intimate network of small dry valleys'.

Tring has no Local Nature Reserves and only 4.0 hectares of Wildlife Sites within the town (according to the averages published in the draft Dacorum Borough Council Urban Nature Conservation Study, Tring should have 11.6 hectares) although the surrounding area more than makes up for this deficiency. Within Tring itself, there are also a few noteworthy open spaces which tend to be concentrated on the edges of town. The western part of Tring is particularly lacking in wildlife sites, having only the playing fields adjacent to the schools. The Brook Street wildlife link ('Streamside Walk'), running from near the town centre to the Grand Union Canal north of the town, forms both an important link for wildlife and an important natural footpath for people.

The open spaces adjacent to the town centre are small but significant, including the Tring Church Cemetery and the Memorial Gardens. In general, the town centre does not have much greenery in terms of street trees or planters.



A footbridge crosses the brook - Streamside Walk



Streamside Walk provides an important link for wildlife and an important natural footpath for people.

KEY ISSUES QPR2: NATURAL ELEMENTS

QPR2A
While surrounded by the Green Belt, the town, particularly the western part of Tring, is lacking in Wildlife Sites and natural open spaces.

QPR2B
The town centre, partly due to its narrowness, does not integrate much greenery.



The Church cemetery is a small but significant open space adjacent to the town centre



The town centre lacks greenery in terms of street trees and planters.

QUALITY OF THE PUBLIC REALM SAFETY/SECURITY

Many of the footpaths in Tring are heavily used and are significant features in the town landscape.

Narrow pavements

Consultation participants identified multiple instances where street pavements were narrow and represented a perceived safety concern. These sites included the High Street, Brook Street close to the junction of Mill Gardens, and areas along Dundale Road.

Participants noted that there is tremendous school traffic in the mornings and afternoons, caused partly due to fears over children walking along heavily-trafficked streets.

Dangerous paths

There were a number of places cited by participants as difficult places to walk and drive. These areas included Pond Close, perceived as a steep slope; Silk Mill Way, lacking in a footpath; and the bridge to the household refuse site, perceived as too narrow.

Security features

There are a number of places where both streetlighting and CCTV cameras have been installed to improve a sense of safety. It should be noted that in a few particular instances the CCTV cameras have been installed in such a way that they detract from the quality of the public realm.



CCTV cameras have been installed to improve security, however dominate and detract from the quality of the public realm.



Pavements in the High Street are perceived to be narrow, representing a safety concern.

KEY ISSUES

QPR3: SAFETY AND SECURITY

QPR3A

Security CCTV cameras often detract from place-making as currently located.

QPR3B

Several pavement areas were noted to be too narrow representing a safety concern.

LEGIBILITY VIEWS, VISTAS, GATEWAYS

Due to its undulating nature, there are a great number of views within Tring, from the edges of the settlement out to the surrounding hills, and from the edges of Tring into the town.

Views within Tring

The church spire can be seen from many different places. The rolling nature of the High Street also creates dynamic view corridors.

Views out to the countryside

Because of the clear definition of the settlement boundaries at Icknield Way and Park Road/ Aylesbury Road, there are significant views out into the Green Belt.

Views from the countryside into Tring

The western part of Tring ranges from 20-30 metres higher than the town centre, facilitating views from the northwest corner of the town into Tring.

KEY ISSUES

LE1: VIEWS, VISTAS AND GATEWAYS

LE1A

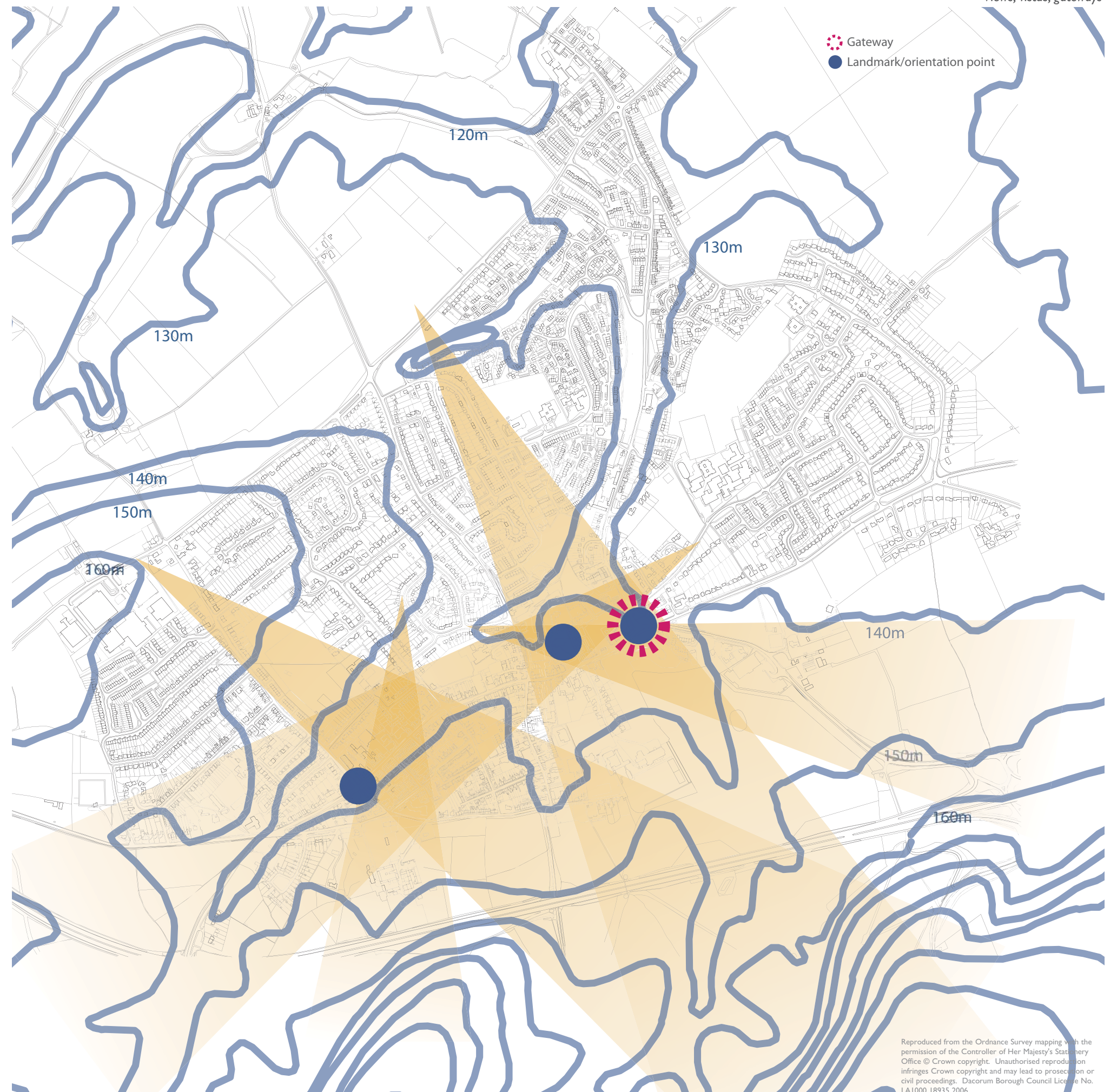
There are several interesting views of the church spire and the High Street.

LE1B

Many views into the countryside are created by the strong town boundaries.

LE1C

Due to the topographical changes there are good views into Tring from the surrounding countryside.



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LEGIBILITY EDGES, PATHS, LANDMARKS AND CHARACTER AREAS

Town centre

The town centre character area maintains a prominent presence through its cohesive building line and strong listed buildings. The High Street gateways at both the eastern and western ends are represented by critical junctions but do not function strongly as gateways. Neither gateway is marked by a landmark building nor does it have strong gateway signage. Both gateways are followed by car parks. Frogmore Street has retail and commercial units along it but quickly loses its town centre qualities. There is no distinct gateway into the town centre from Frogmore Street.

Open space

There are small significant open spaces adjacent to the town centre. While very historical in character, the Tring Church cemetery is adjacent to a car park and lacks clear boundaries or signage.

Connectivity

Congestion along Brook Street and the High Street was seen as a deterrent for vehicular travel along these routes. The connections to and from the High Street are relatively clear by both foot and vehicle. Connections to Tring Park and the significant listed buildings on Park Street are not as well marked as they could be. There are often problems crossing the Streamside Walk.

KEY ISSUES

LE2: EDGES, PATHS, LANDMARKS AND CHARACTER AREAS

LE2A

There is no gateway to the town centre approaching from Frogmore Street,

LE2B

The gateways at both ends of the High Street are weak (although development on the former cattle market site may change the eastern gateway).

LE2C

Connections to the significant listed buildings on Park Street and open space beyond Park Street are not well-signed.



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