

New Barnet Town Centre

Draft Framework Consultation

Introduction and purpose of the exhibition

New Barnet Town Centre is a small district centre, based around East Barnet Road. The centre is generally regarded to be in decline, despite being located in a relatively affluent area of North London. Work done by the Council has found that this trend of decline is due to a number of reasons, including the increasing attractiveness of other town centres, changing shopping habits, lack of investment in the town centre, and lack of planning certainty.

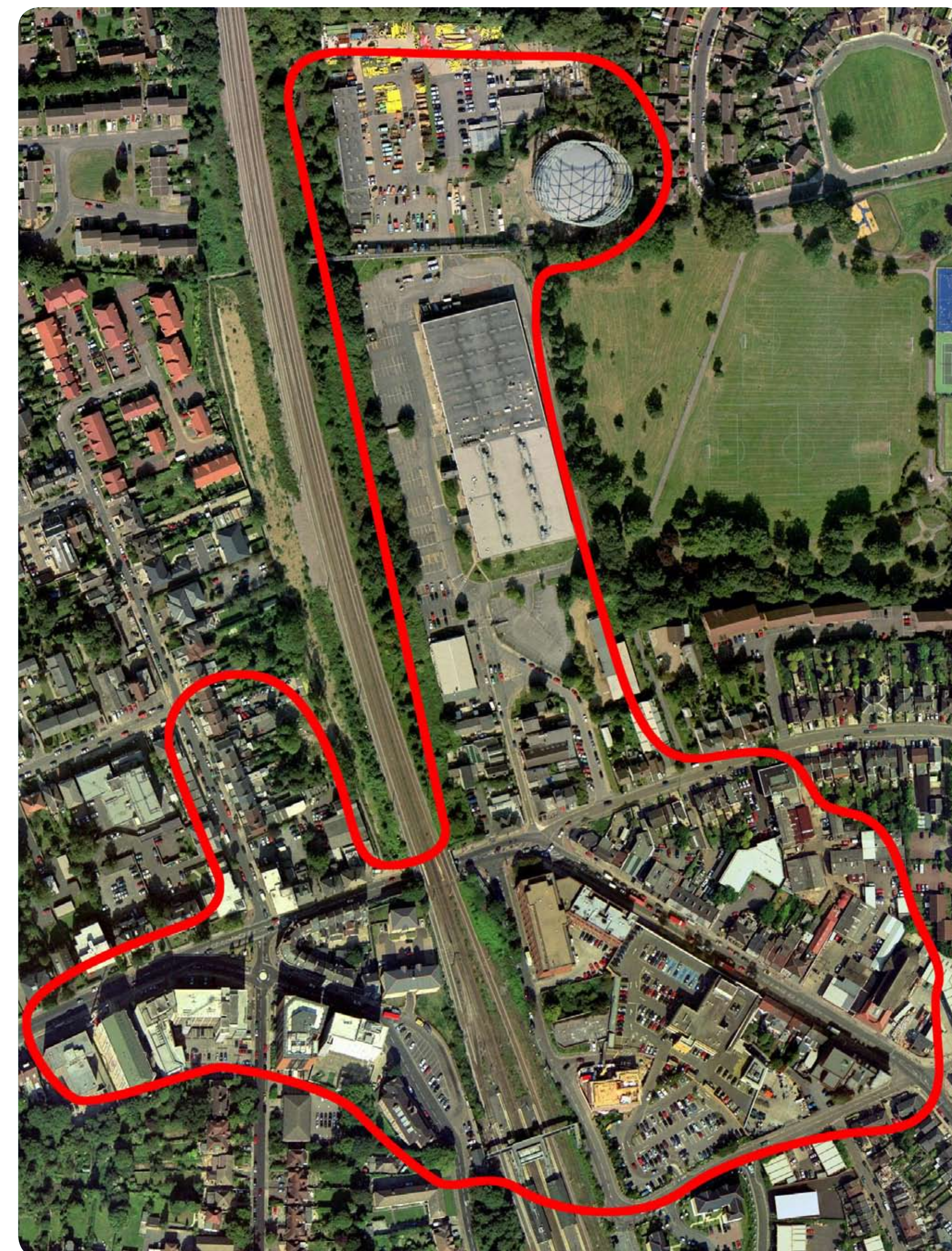
A number of significant development sites within, and on the edge of, the town centre have recently become available for redevelopment which has sparked interest in the centre.

In response to this, the Council has appointed consultants to prepare a planning framework for the centre – the New Barnet Town Centre Framework. The purpose of the Framework is to provide a vision for the town centre and planning guidance to ensure future development comes forward in a well planned and coordinated manner, and brings about wider enhancements to the centre as a whole.

This exhibition presents the draft proposals for New Barnet, which comprise 3 alternative scenarios (options) for the future of the town centre, which are supported by guidance on transport, urban design and sustainability.



Area covered by the town centre framework



We want to hear your views on the draft proposals and would be grateful if you could complete the accompanying consultation feedback form. Your comments will be used to help identify and refine a preferred scenario (option) which will form the basis of the final New Barnet Town Centre Framework.

Please put your completed forms in the box or if you would like more time they can be posted to:

Major Developments Team
London Borough of Barnet
North London Business Park
Oakleigh Road South
London
N11 1NP

The closing date for comments is 23rd March 2010.

For further information about this consultation you can email:

towncentreplanning@barnet.gov.uk

or call 020 8359 3138.

The current situation

Our starting point has been to analyse what is happening today in New Barnet.

What are its strengths?

- Sainsbury's foodstore acts as a key 'anchor store'
- Independent shops
- Good access by car and public transport
- Extensive car parking
- Some examples of good quality Victorian architecture
- No major crime or anti-social behaviour problems
- Good quality, relatively affluent suburban location
- Broad mix of town centre uses

What are its weaknesses?

- No obvious 'heart' to the centre – shops and services are spread over a wide area.
- Limited competition and choice in foodstores
- Limited non-food shops (which tend to be lower quality/ discount focussed)
- Limited evening economy (restaurants etc)
- High proportion of hot food takeaways
- No banks or building societies
- Lots of vacant shops
- Unattractive to most commercial investors
- Poor quality town centre environment – no sense of place and no consistent architectural style
- Poor quality footpaths, signage, street furniture and planting
- The railway line is a physical barrier
- Hostile pedestrian environment due to traffic
- No open space within the town centre
- Traffic congestion at peak periods
- Poor connections between railway station and town centre.

What are the opportunities?

- Large development sites in and on the edge of the town centre
- Interest from developers to invest in the centre for new foodstore-led proposals.
- A locally distinctive town centre with its own character
- Improve shopping choice and quality
- Develop a niche/specialist role
- Improve evening economy (restaurants etc)
- Establish a 'heart' for the town centre
- Improve accessibility for all
- Enhance the quality of the built environment
- Encourage more people to work and shop locally

What are the threats?

- Lack of planning certainty and investment
- Major development in competing town centres
- Major new development on the edge of the town centre could shift the focus away from the existing 'high street'
- Impact of the recession on consumer spending
- Growing number of hot food takeaways and charity shops

The opportunity

From our analysis we have identified the following vision for New Barnet Town Centre and a number of objectives for the town centre framework.

The Vision for New Barnet Town Centre

For New Barnet Town Centre to be a vital, viable, vibrant and sustainable centre that is recognised for its attractive, locally distinctive, safe, accessible, and welcoming environment; and strong range of quality shops, services and leisure offer that meet the day-to-day needs of the local community

The Objectives for the town centre framework

To protect the town centre from further decline

To improve accessibility to and within the town centre

To enhance the town centre environment

To take advantage of development opportunities on key sites

To minimise use of natural resources

To enhance consumer choice

To minimise increases in road traffic and deal with congestion

To improve and manage the evening economy

To ensure an appropriate scale of development

To achieve a more sustainable pattern of development

What are the options?

Scenario 1 – A consolidated high street

Overview

This scenario aims to maintain a small but focussed shopping area on East Barnet Road (based around the existing Sainsbury's store). Major new retail development would be resisted.

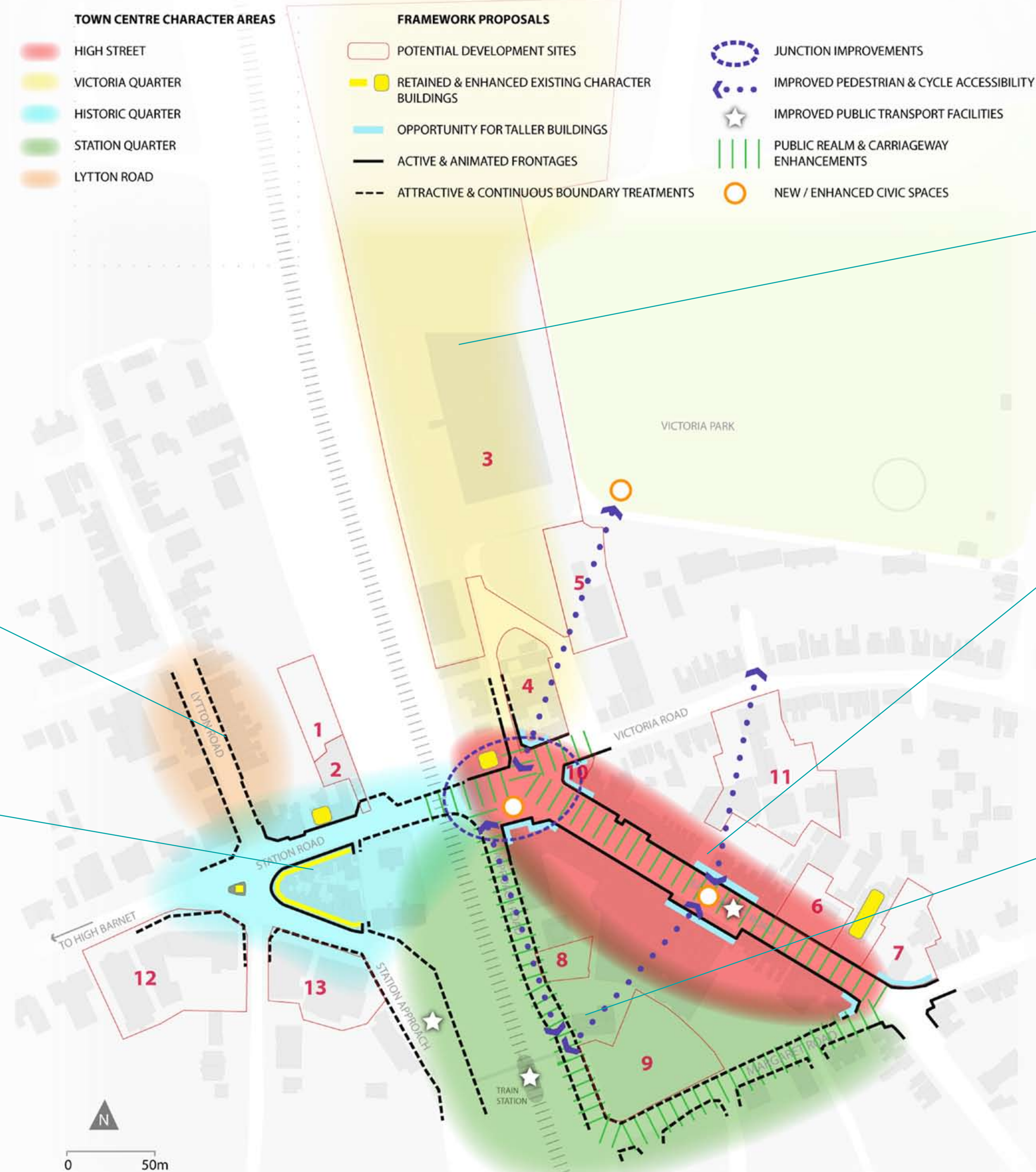
A programme of environmental enhancements would aim to prevent further decline of the town centre – however in the absence of significant commercial development this would require substantial public sector investment to ensure delivery.

Lytton Road

- Gradual change towards a more residential focussed area

Historic Quarter

- Existing business and food/drink uses will be supported but no specific enhancements/development proposed
- Longer term opportunity for the redevelopment of the large office blocks on Station Approach/Station Road (Sites 12 and 13)



Victoria Quarter

- A new high quality residential 'quarter' for New Barnet on sites 3/4/5.
- New homes would be supplemented by ancillary (small scale) shopping, community facilities, and employment uses in the southern part of this area to complement the main shopping area.

The High Street

- Promoted as the main shopping area
- Environmental enhancements to include better quality footpaths, street furniture (benches, bins etc), and tree planting
- Carriageway improvements to East Barnet Road
- Promotion of a 'food and drink' cluster at the northern end of the High Street
- A new high quality residential development on the former Optex site (Site 11)

Station Quarter

- Improved public transport 'gateway' to the town centre
- Better pedestrian links between station and main shopping area.
- New development (housing, offices, community uses) on Sites 8 and 9.

Scenario 2 – A compact and intensive high street

Overview

This scenario proposes to create a compact and intensive High Street with shops, services and food/drink outlets concentrated into a core area on East Barnet Road. Major new retail development is encouraged within this core area through the redevelopment of existing buildings in order to bring about significant improvements to the town centre as a whole.

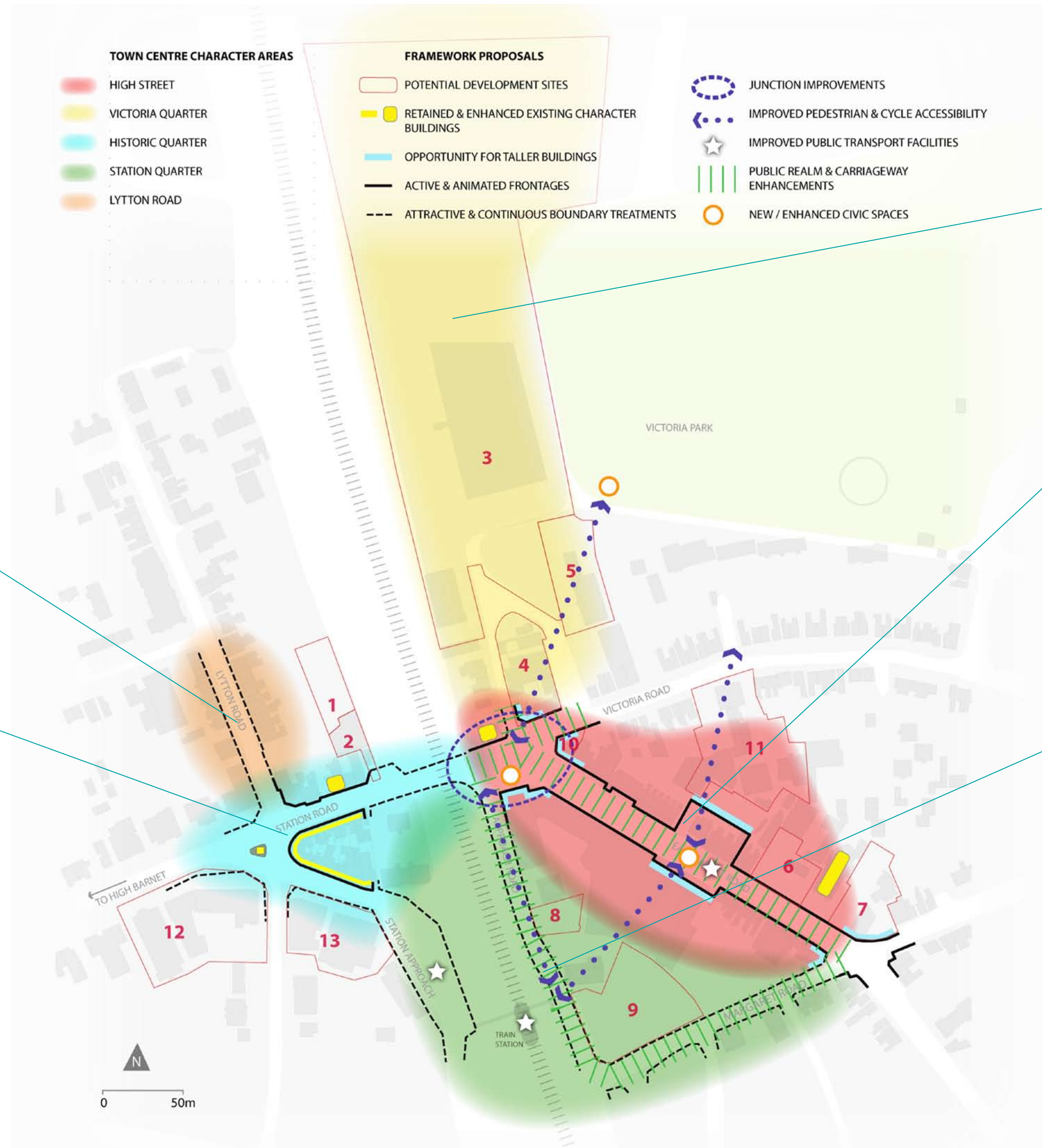
A secondary/complementary retail and restaurant offer would be promoted outside of this core area to the west of the railway bridge.

Lytton Road

- Promote role as an independent restaurant destination

Historic Quarter

- Secondary shopping area – opportunity for 'niche' retailers supported by a weekend market on Station Approach
- Longer term opportunity for the redevelopment of the large office blocks on Station Approach/Station Road (Sites 12 and 13)



Victoria Quarter

- A new high quality residential 'quarter' for New Barnet on sites 3/4/5.
- New homes would be supplemented by ancillary (small scale) shopping, community facilities, and employment uses in the southern part of this area to complement the main shopping area.

The High Street

- Promoted as the main shopping area
- A new high quality retail-led mixed use development on the former Optex site (Site 11) (involving the redevelopment of existing buildings fronting East Barnet Road) to create a new 'heart' for the town centre.
- Environmental enhancements to include better quality footpaths, street furniture (benches, bins etc), and tree planting
- Carriageway improvements to East Barnet Road
- Promotion of a 'food and drink' cluster at the northern end of the High Street

Station Quarter

- Improved public transport 'gateway' to the town centre
- Improved bus interchange facilities on Station Approach (which would be used as a market square at weekends).
- Better pedestrian links between station and main shopping area.
- New development (housing, offices, community uses) on Site 8 and 9.

Scenario 3 – An extended high street

Overview

This scenario proposes to create an extended yet more intensive High Street, where retail and leisure uses would be concentrated in an area extending along East Barnet Road northwards into the former East Barnet Gas Works site, where significant new retail development would be encouraged, taking advantage of the one-off opportunity to significantly extend the High Street.

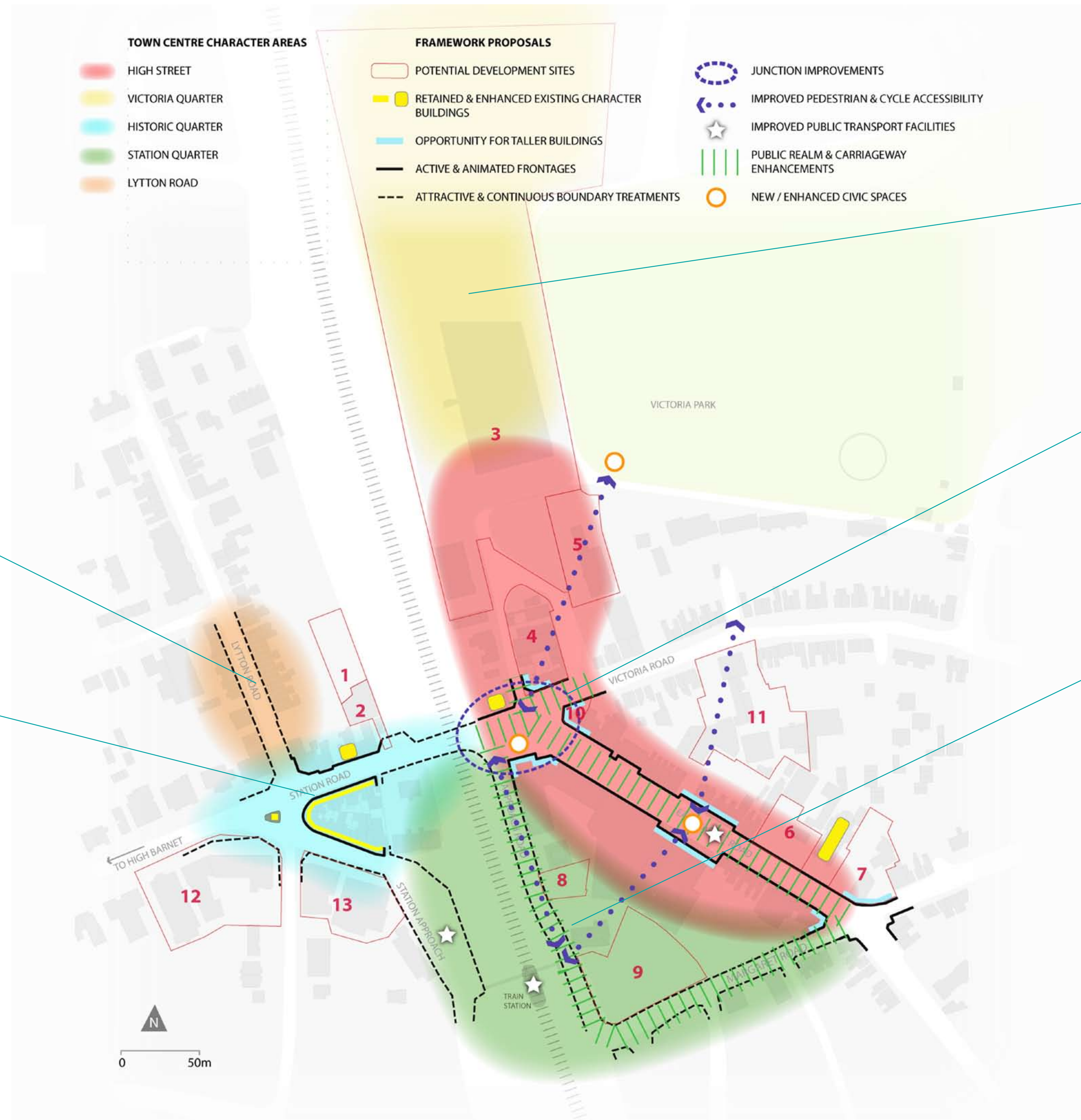
A secondary/complementary retail and restaurant offer would be promoted outside of this core area to the west of the railway bridge.

Lytton Road

- Promote role as an independent restaurant destination

Historic Quarter

- Secondary shopping area – opportunity for 'niche' retailers supported by a weekend market on Station Approach
- Longer term opportunity for the redevelopment of the large office blocks on Station Approach/Station Road (Sites 12 and 13)



Victoria Quarter

- A new high quality residential 'quarter' for New Barnet on the northern part of Site 3.
- New homes would be supplemented by ancillary (small scale) shopping, community facilities, and employment uses in the southern part of this area to complement the main shopping area.

The High Street

- Promoted as the main shopping area
- A new high quality retail-led mixed use development on Sites 4, 5, and southern part of Site 3
- Environmental enhancements to include better quality footpaths, street furniture (benches, bins etc), and tree planting
- Carriageway improvements to East Barnet Road
- Promotion of a 'food and drink' cluster at the northern end of the High Street
- A new high quality residential development on the former Optex site (Site 11)

Station Quarter

- Improved public transport 'gateway' to the town centre
- Improved bus interchange facilities on Station Approach (which would be used as a market square at weekends).
- Better pedestrian links between station and main shopping area.
- New development (housing, offices, community uses) on Site 8 and 9.

Supporting strategies

In order to deliver the Vision and Objectives for New Barnet, the scenarios are supported by more detailed guidance on urban design, transport and movement, and sustainability.

Urban design

Existing buildings and structures

- Redevelopment of poor quality buildings
- Existing buildings of architectural interest to be preserved

Building heights and scale

- Taller buildings encouraged within the town centre
- Densities to have regard to the suburban context

Architectural style

- New development should reflect the existing architectural context
- No 'warehouse' style development

Edges

- Improved shop fronts
- Promotion of pavement activity (al-fresco dining etc)

Streets

- 'Streetscaping' enhancements to include better paving, new high quality street furniture, lighting, signage and planting.

Public spaces

- New civic spaces (public squares etc) to be incorporated into new major development proposals.

Sustainability

The future town centre should be:

Lean

- Use less energy - by requiring the highest standards of sustainable design and construction in new developments.

Green

- Use renewable energy.

Clean

- Supply energy more efficiently - by requiring decentralised energy generation technologies to be incorporated into new developments (such as combined heat and power).

Adaptable

- Adaptable to the effects of a changing climate.



Transport and movement

Walking

- Improved conditions for pedestrians - better crossing facilities, reduced vehicle speeds, new pedestrian routes

Cycling

- Improved cycle facilities at station and on High Street

Public transport

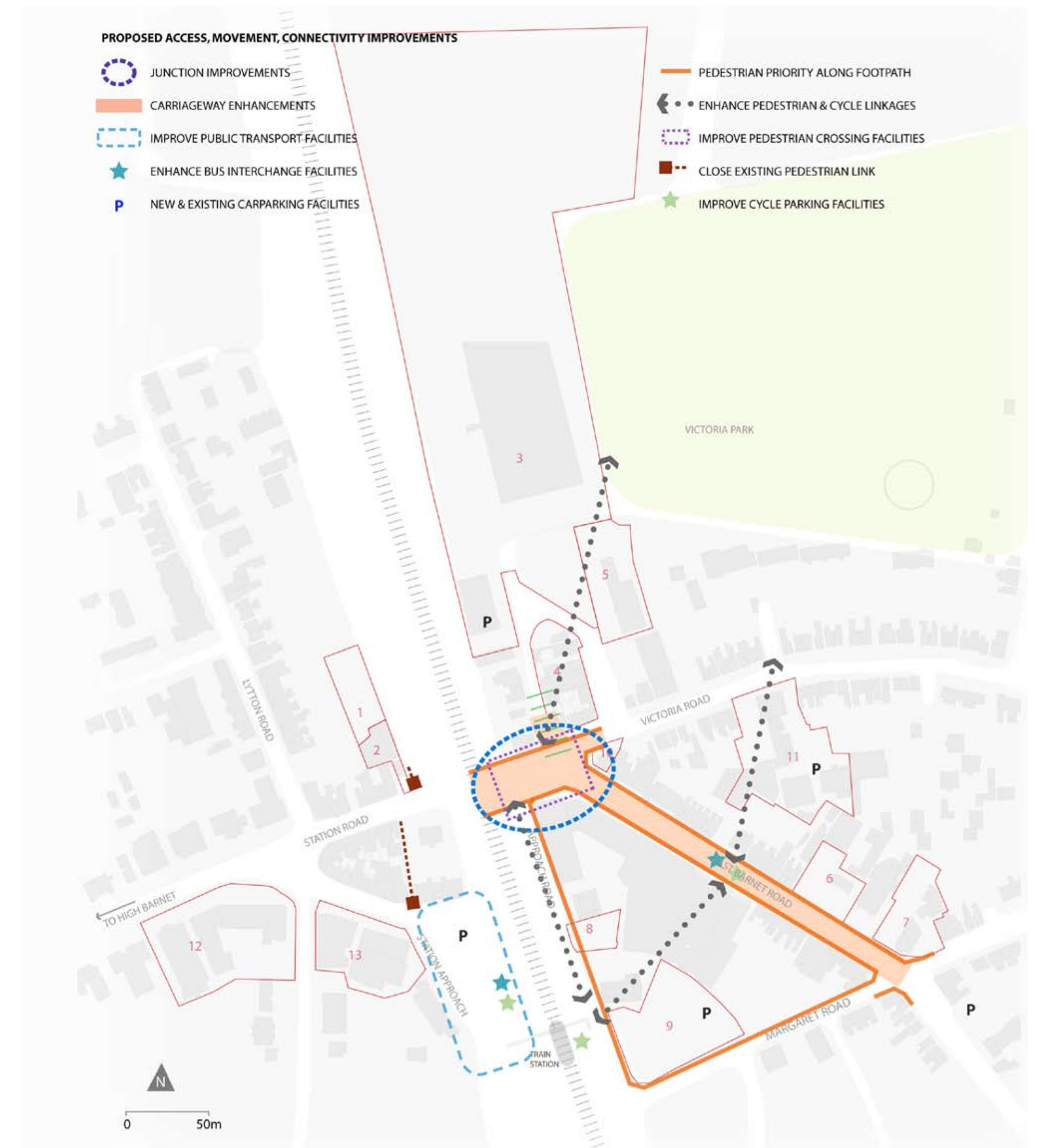
- Improved bus stop facilities
- Improvements to train station
- Re-routing of buses into Site 3

Car

- Stricter car parking controls
- Facilities for electric vehicles

Highway improvements

- Improvements to East Barnet Road/ Victoria Road/Albert Road junction
- Carriageway improvements to East Barnet Road



Thank you for taking the time to visit the exhibition - please don't forget to complete a consultation feedback form.

The closing date for comments is 23rd March 2010.