

Warwick Town Centre Plan – Preferred Options

Introduction

Warwick town centre has architectural and historic distinction, serves 30,000 residents, is the focus of a thriving economy and attracts visitors to the castle from all over the world. Whilst it is important that we recognise the role Warwick has to play as a historic town, attractive to residents, people who work here and visitors, we want it to develop and thrive in the future. We are therefore preparing a plan to ensure that any future changes to the town centre are an improvement.

This paper has been prepared by the Warwick Town Centre Partnership comprising Warwick District Council; Warwickshire County Council; Warwick Town Council; Warwick Chamber of Trade; Warwick Society

You may recall that in 2010, we asked you about the key issues facing the town centre of Warwick and you may have responded giving us your views. We are now asking you about *how* we should address the key issues identified during that consultation. The Key Issues are grouped under the following headings:

- Historic Buildings, Parks and Open Spaces
- Economy
- Traffic, Air Quality and Climate Change
- Development Opportunities
- Marketing the Town Centre

We have carefully examined all the issues raised in our previous consultation. We have not been able to provide a preferred option to address all of those issues, but we have suggested those that have been identified in the following pages and are seeking your views. Do you agree that the preferred option will address the key issues? Are there any options that we considered that you think would be better?

Please complete the appropriate section of the accompanying questionnaire, online (www.warwicktowncentreplan.org) or pick up a separate paper copy to complete.

Alternatively, email us (ldf@warwickdc.gov.uk) or write with your views and ideas to the following address: Warwick Town Centre Partnership, % Development Services, Warwick District Council, Riverside House, Milverton Hill, Royal Leamington Spa, Warwickshire CV32 5QH

We will explore further your views and develop them into a draft plan which will form the basis for change in the town centre over the next fifteen years

The Vision for Warwick Town Centre:

We have considered carefully what kind of town centre Warwick should have and propose the following vision:

"To achieve economic and social success by building on Warwick's distinctive architectural and cultural strengths"

We believe that we can fulfil that vision by addressing the Key Issues that you raised:



Historic Buildings, Parks and Open Spaces

What you told us at the last consultation

Protecting historic buildings and enhancing parks and open spaces were ranked as the most important issue for the plan to deal with

Also

- Historic buildings should be protected but also used
- Street scenes should be protected
- New buildings should be sympathetic to their historic environment
- Parks and open spaces are well maintained and their individual characters should be retained
- More shelters, seating and facilities should be provided in parks

- The town centre area contains over 300 listed buildings, including a number of Grade I listed buildings and scheduled monuments
- Most of the town centre is designated as a Conservation Area

One of the town centre's key strengths lies in its historic buildings, parks and open spaces. These attract many residents, visitors and employers to the town centre who in turn, support the local economy. It is vitally important to maintain and enhance these features to ensure they remain attractive.

Development here must enhance the historic environment. To do so however, needs careful consideration and an

understanding of good design. It is possible to mix old buildings and vistas with contemporary design, but this needs to be sensitively done.

What do we want to achieve through the Plan?

Our objectives are to:

- Protect, maintain and enhance historic buildings, parks and open spaces
- Ensure that historic views and street patterns are enhanced as part of any new development in the town centre. Views into and out of the town centre should be exploited and created where possible, with enclosure contrasting with openness
- Require new buildings to respect the scale and height of the historic buildings by using appropriate and sympathetic forms and materials to enhance the historic environment
- Ensure that the public realm, spaces between buildings in the town centre, parks and open spaces are well designed for all users
- Ensure that where historic buildings are restored and re-used, the original use is taken into account in deciding what new uses and changes in fabric are appropriate

- Improve, maintain and make accessible all our parks and open spaces

To help achieve the objectives, this is what we will be doing over the course of the Plan:

Actions

The following actions are proposed:

- Assess buildings, historic and modern, with a view to suggesting them as potential Listed Buildings with English Heritage or, in the appropriate circumstances, the de-listing of Listed Buildings which no longer fulfil the required criteria. We will request that English Heritage resurveys Warwick as this hasn't been carried out since 1971
- Produce a Conservation Management plan and design standards for future development
- Assess whether there are parks and open spaces which meet the criteria for Green Pennant or Green Heritage site accreditation and apply for such designation if they do so
- Ensure that developer contributions are directed toward environmental improvements that will assist

integration with the existing town centre

- Link existing open spaces and parks across the town. By linking streets, buildings and open spaces, legible pedestrian routes will be established giving easier access to, from and within the town centre and to buildings and public transport

Options

Going beyond these actions, should we:

1. Introduce greater control over changes property owners can make to their buildings in the Conservation Area to provide more protection to unlisted buildings which enhance its character by introducing an Article 4 direction
2. Assist residents to establish a trust to source funding streams for the renovation of historic buildings requiring work to bring them back into a suitable use and include renewable energy measures where appropriate, in such renovation projects
3. Prioritise resources for maintenance and improvements to our existing parks and open spaces, including church yards and burial grounds and to encourage use of parks and open spaces by residents and visitors. Ensure that the character of these spaces is preserved and historic

references retained

4. Do nothing else

Our Preferred Options

1, 2 and 3

We do not consider that option 4 is acceptable. The plan seeks to encourage progress and this option would not achieve this.

We do consider it possible to achieve options 1, 2 and 3 however.

Do you agree?

Each park has its own particular character, whether it is the family attractions of St Nicholas Park or the less structured and more natural setting of Priory Park. Warwick Castle Park is in private ownership and we will work with the new owner on the future use and management of the Park.

Economy



What you told us at the last consultation

- Warwick should not try to compete with Leamington Spa, but more shops are needed to provide every day provisions for local people
- Employment opportunities should be welcomed, but offices are not on their own, key to a successful economy; buildings in the town centre are suitable for some office uses. A variety of businesses is required
- The numbers of cafes and restaurants in the town centre was considered by a substantial majority to be sufficient and by over half of respondents to be excessive. Fewer than one in five thought that there

should be more

- Providing more visitor attractions and accommodation was given quite a low priority as an issue
- There are significant opportunities for mixed use developments
- The relationship between the castle and the town centre was ranked highly as a key issue for the plan
- The relationship between the racecourse and the town centre was ranked as a less significant issue
- Maintain a safe and sophisticated evening economy

Warwick has a strong economy: in the town centre, office, residential use, education and retail are all important, the last being predominantly independent businesses catering for the local catchment and the thousands of visitors who enjoy the town's castle and historic character every year. Previous planning policies have encouraged both residential use and an influx of cafes, pubs and restaurants contributing to a strong leisure offer and a busy evening economy, but weakening the daytime retail attractiveness of the town centre

In addition, high-value professional services are a vital part of Warwick's economy, attracted to the town centre by its architecture, skills base and transport links.

The county council is the town centres largest employer with 400 staff based in Shire Hall alone. The prestigious Warwick Schools Foundation occupies two large sites. Elsewhere in the town, major employers include Warwick Hospital, Volvo and National Grid.

These elements combine to create a vital and viable town centre but the current economic climate poses significant threats. The town's daytime retail offer is limited and both residents and visitors expect a greater range of shops. There are few ground floor vacancies but changes occur frequently and upper floor offices, particularly in historic buildings, are sometimes difficult to let. It is essential therefore that the Town Centre Plan helps to improve Warwick's economic resilience and its appeal to businesses, residents and visitors.

What do we want to achieve through the Plan?

Our objectives are to:

- Improve the mix of shops and services to meet local residents' needs and satisfy visitors' expectations
- Help ensure a range of premises are available to meet the needs of desirable businesses
- Improve the vitality and attractiveness of the town

centre to support existing businesses and encourage investment

- Strengthen the town centre's relationship with the castle, racecourse and the town's businesses and its attractions
- Ensure that there is sufficient high quality visitor accommodation available in the town centre

Options

Should we:

1. Increase the number of retail units through new developments to match retailer and customer demand
2. Target specific types of niche national retailers which can be accommodated within smaller retail units and complement the town's independents. Retailing which meets the needs of local people and visitors and that Warwick can become renowned and visited for
3. Focus on supporting and attracting independent businesses to differentiate Warwick from other towns
4. Increase the amount and range of visitor accommodation to give visitors more choice
5. a) Zone particular streets of the town centre for retail areas, café/restaurant areas etc. and control changes of

use of buildings within these areas to those specific uses, or b) Provide greater flexibility for buildings to change use to other commercial uses and allow market forces to dictate patterns of use

6. Promote the development of a small town centre cinema
7. Offer incentives to attract businesses e.g. business rate flexibility
8. Help deliver additional attractions to encourage more visitors to come into the town and satisfy their expectations
9. Encourage and support events and festivals that increase vitality
10. Do nothing else

Our Preferred Options

2, 3, 5, 5b, 7, 8, 9, 10

We do not consider that option 10 is acceptable. The plan seeks to encourage progress and this option would not achieve this.

We do not consider that option 1 will necessarily increase

the range of goods on offer in retail units or that new development is possible

We do not think that we are able to control the range of visitor accommodation through planning policy and therefore do not consider this a option 4 a viable option

We do not consider that option 5a is the best approach but that 5b is more realistic and therefore achievable

Do you agree?

Transport, Air Quality and Climate Change



What you told us at the last consultation

Reducing the impact of traffic on the town centre was ranked very highly by respondents as a key issue for the plan to deal with.

- Problem of traffic using town as a 'through' route
- Park and Ride scheme needed for school children and commuters
- One way system needed
- Deliveries cause problems
- More pedestrianisation needed
- Perception that there is a lack of appropriate quality parking
- Additional bus services needed
- We should be making Warwick a good example of a sustainable, low carbon town and promote it as such.

About 80% of the vehicles entering and leaving Warwick town centre are through traffic. This through traffic is the predominant source of air and noise pollution in the town centre streets and is the cause of peak hour congestion.

The levels of traffic passing through the town centre results in sections of the town experiencing severance, impacting the economy. Other modes of transport such as walking and cycling are under-utilised as people experience intimidation and safety risks due to the dominance of the vehicles.

Inextricably linked with this traffic issue is that of climate change. Climate change affects everyone. The final plan will comply with the policies contained in the Local Plan.

New development can provide a potential source of money to make improvements, along with bidding for funds from other sources. However we will still need to prioritise the options we take forward in the plan to deal with these issues.

What do we want to achieve through the Plan?

Our objectives are to:

- Reduce the amount of traffic passing through Warwick town centre
- Prioritise streets for walking and cycling on existing roads and improve access by sustainable modes to the town centre for all
- Improve air quality by reducing nitrogen dioxide levels to a safer level whereby the AQMA's could be

deleted

- Adapt the town to address the causes and impacts of climate change

To help achieve the objectives, this is what we will be doing over the course of the Plan:

Actions

The following actions are proposed

- Prepare guidance for property owners on how to fit renewable energy technologies and energy efficiency measures in Conservation Areas and on Listed Buildings
- Reduce the energy consumption of public buildings within the town centre.
- Support campaigns to encourage behavioural change and ensure buildings are made as energy efficient as possible
- Require all new development to meet the standards set out in the emerging Local Plan in relation to targets for renewable and low carbon energy technologies, energy efficiency and sustainable drainage
- Secure additional developer contributions to fund alternative schemes if renewable and low carbon energy requirements cannot be met on site
- Promote the construction of zero carbon buildings

Options

Beyond these actions, should we:

1. Adopt road user charging to reduce traffic volume, targeting through traffic
2. Introduce more pedestrianisation and/or specific loading times for deliveries
3. Invest in cycling, identify gaps in the existing cycle network and connect routes to the railway station
4. Invest in walking and identify gaps in the existing pedestrian routes to connect outlying parts of the town and the railway station with the town centre
5. Work with bus operators to increase service reliability, frequency and journey times for buses
6. Introduce 'virtual' park and ride
7. Work with taxi operators to improve access for taxis
8. Work with rail operators to increase the frequency of trains and improve the station and timetable information
9. Improve the quality of car parks and increase usage with safer access and consistent pricing
10. Work toward offering some town centre office car parking to the public during the week and erecting

appropriate signage

11. Require new development to produce and implement green travel plans
12. Improve information to advise of sustainable travel options
13. Fit renewable and low carbon technologies to existing public buildings providing an opportunity to sell back to the national grid, energy that is produced in excess of what is used
14. Reduce energy demand for existing buildings with grants utilising money obtained by selling energy back to the grid
15. Use income from 'Feed in Tariffs' and contributions from new developments, to finance renewable energy projects to serve the whole town
16. Shape the development of the town centre economy so that a higher proportion of everyday local needs are met by it, reducing the demand for transport; and by this local focus reducing dependence on visitors, thus also reducing transport demand.
17. Do nothing else

Our Preferred Option

3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16

We do not consider that option 17 is acceptable. The plan seeks to encourage progress and this option would not achieve this.

We do not consider that options 1 and 2 are suitable for Warwick or that we can improve taxi access in option 7 over and above measures for other vehicles and therefore we have not promoted these.

We do not consider that, due to the change in government policy, option 15 is viable any longer and have not pursued it for this reason

Do you agree?

time by the District Council in its own car parks and this, together with on the ground surveys of private car parks, has been utilised to build up a comprehensive picture of car park use throughout the town centre on a day by day basis for a period of one year. The following table gives a summary of this information and dispels the myth that there is insufficient parking in the town centre as the majority of car parks are under used for the majority of the day, every day of the year.

The car parks most in demand are at Westgate and New Street. The most under used car park, but also one of the most central, is at Linen Street.

The data collected and survey information obtained during this study will be assessed for its appropriateness as the basis for a Parking Strategy.

Parking:

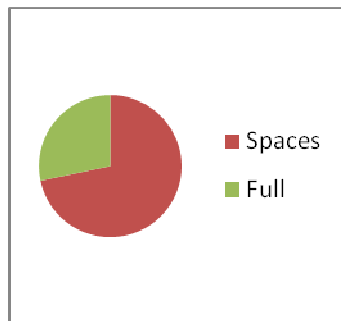
One issue to emerge from the Issues consultation was that of parking both in car parks and on-street. The perception is that there is insufficient parking in the town centre and that it is inferior in quality. A parking survey has therefore been carried out to ascertain the position and discover any shortfall and potential. Data has been collected for some

Warwick Car Parks 2011

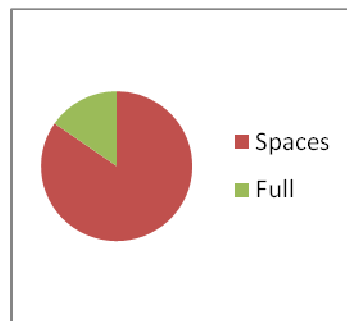
Utilisation

(% of charging hours paid for)

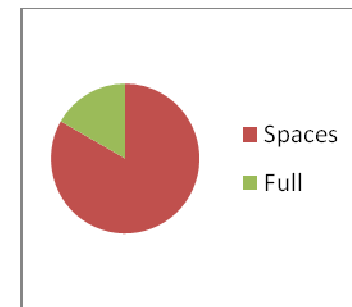
St Mary's Land 4, Birmingham Road



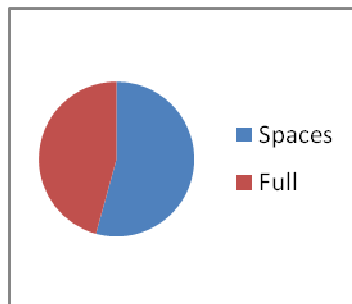
St Mary's Land 3, Bread & Meat Close



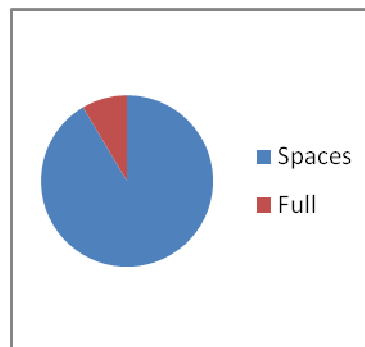
St Mary's Land 2, Hampton Road



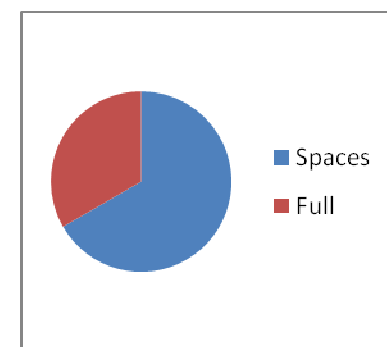
West Rock



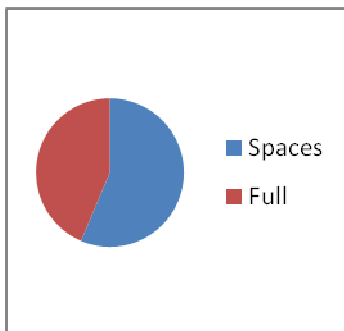
Linen Street



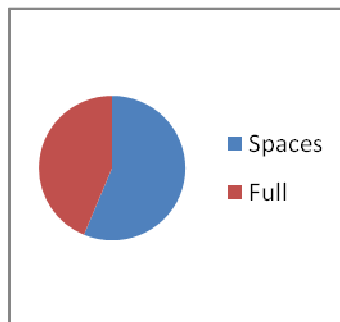
New Street



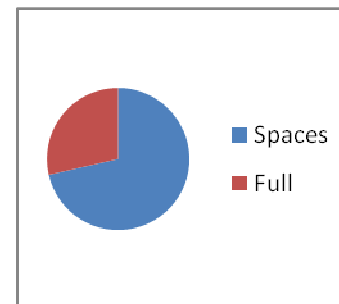
Westgate



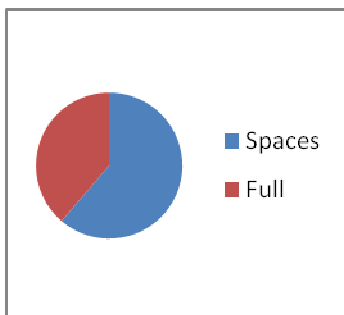
Castle Lane



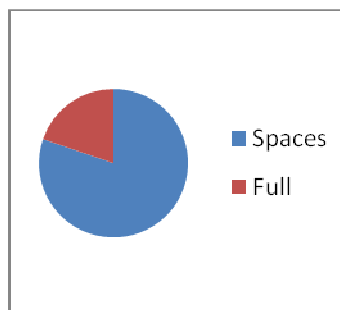
Priory Road



The Butts



St Nicholas Park



Development Opportunities:

When we consulted you on the issues, we suggested that there may be some opportunities to develop some of the land and/or buildings which are largely publically owned. We have identified a number of opportunities that could come forward as a result of changes to the way in which the public bodies work and where their services are located. As there are a wide range of possible alternative uses, we have assessed these opportunities to ascertain what uses could be viable for each.

It is important that we look at the town and the potential opportunities holistically so that we rationalise the uses in the town centre yet ensure future economic success and a pleasant environment for all those living or working here and for visitors. The town is a living place and therefore needs to work efficiently as well as attract people to visit and use the local businesses and facilities.

These opportunity sites, were therefore considered holistically with a view to identifying suitable uses/new uses for them; many without the demolition of buildings, but by finding a suitable new use to which they could be put. In order to find a preferred option for each, it was considered that an economic strategy should be developed. This was informed by the feedback from the consultation. The rationale for that strategy identified that:

- the historic environment is the greatest strength in the town centre but that it has high costs
- the worst weakness is the dominance of through traffic
- the economic prosperity of the catchment area is the best opportunity (already in the top 20% nationally)
- there is a perceived lack of focus and purpose and this is a major self-imposed threat

Within the National and Local Policy Framework:

- sustainability above all reducing the demand for transport and buildings energy use is the fundamental need
- air quality improvement is the second basic requirement
- economic growth enabled, not constrained by policy objectives

Economic and social success and these policy goals all require a place which is lively, attractive, a well-funded and locally distinctive.

The Draft Economic Strategy:

- High value uses to fund high cost buildings and public spaces
- Provide a mix of housing types to suit all pockets and a broad spectrum of households
- Increase employment in the 'knowledge economy', professional services, creative industries, education, culture, public administration etc.
- Meet a higher proportion of 'local' needs through the daytime economy, reducing the demand for transport and making the town centre busy
- Strengthen the daytime economy to rebalance it with the evening economy
- Segment the visitor economy to develop specific opportunities rather than rely on a market in general decline
- Develop the 'sense of place' to add value

Alongside residential and office employment, focus should be on:

- Mixed use for liveliness all day
- Meeting local everyday requirements to gain footfall

- Developing overlapping market-based high quality retail niches including food, based on Market Hall and Market Place
- Enabling the range of independent shops to be strengthened rather than vainly seeking to attract multiples
- Strengthening the range and scope of cultural activities

Conservation and enhancement of the historic buildings and the public spaces for which they form the backdrop are the foundations of this economic strategy.

Proposals for conservation and enhancement:
Traffic:

Air quality, street and buildings require;

- Reduction of the 80% of traffic entering and leaving which is just passing through
- A street-by-street and junction-by-junction rebalancing from vehicles to people on foot

Access:

- Walk, cycle, public transport – especially, small, frequent shuttling buses
- Encourage developers to provide parking beneath town centre spaces and buildings with high quality walking routes from and to surface car parks
- Provide a high quality walking route from and to the railway station and connecting buses

Public Spaces:

- Make them lively from morning to evening
- Retain essential parking for unloading, very short stay and the disabled and reduce the amount of surface parking
- Improve permeability and footfall
- Review the effect of provision for the Mop Fair

Historic Buildings:

- Vistas which make the buildings a fine backdrop to the public spaces
- Uses which respect character and enable conservation
- Green spaces to be connected with streets and with each other

New Development:

- Enhance character
- Architectural and public space design standards
- Correct weakness of past changes
- Infill to improve continuity and permeability, not demolish and rebuild comprehensive redevelopment

Tell us what you think about the Draft Economic Strategy. Does it address the key issues you raised? Would any of the preferred options be inconsistent with the strategy?

Using these development objectives to guide site options, the following represents the options considered and the preferred options for sites that are currently available for re-use or redevelopment, are surplus to the current requirements of public bodies and some that may come forward during the life of this plan. Do you agree that these are the best uses?

Site Opportunities

There are a number of sites within the town centre that are either likely or may come forward as a result of local authorities rationalising their estates in response to the current economic climate. There are also some privately owned sites that could function more successfully or provide the catalyst for a general improvement to the streetscape and appearance of the town centre making it more appealing for both local people and visitors.

These sites have been considered for a variety of different uses or treatments that would improve and enhance the site and its surroundings. For each opportunity to reuse a site or building, we have considered the following options; residential, retail, offices, leisure, hotel, visitor attraction, car parking, community facility, health facility and service provision. In each case we have decided on a preferred option and these are what we are asking you to consider in the following table. Please tell us what you think. Have we

made the best choice? Is there an option that you think would be better and why? Have we missed an option that you would like us to consider?

Site 1 Market Street/Theatre Street	<p>Preferred Option: Residential on Theatre Street and above Market Street. Retain retail to Market Street frontage to include some visual improvements to buildings and streetscape and reduce excessive bulk of Theatre Street.</p> <p>Reason: It was considered important to retain the retail element on this site as it links the Market Place with the bus station and with the retail offer at Westgate House. An extant planning permission for residential use at the former print works on Theatre Street, means that the principle is established. To include the remaining land on this site to improve the residential potential and provide parking within the site, appears to be the best option therefore.</p>
Site 2 Linen St/Lammas Ct	<p>Preferred Option: Redevelop for residential with car park beneath.</p> <p>Reason: Whilst the existing car park is not well used, it is very central and serves the town centre well in terms of location. It is the layout and entrance that is unpopular. An improved, redesigned car park is therefore considered to be a good use of this land, but it also has potential for another use above. Surrounded by other residential uses, it is logical that building additional housing above a lower level car park area would increase use of the car park and provide much needed housing which is close to public transport and town centre facilities. Other town centre uses are not considered to be suitable as this area is beyond the retail core in a largely residential area.</p>
Site 3 Barrack St	<p>Preferred Option: Car park beneath mixed use development.</p> <p>Reason: The offices and car park currently on this site accommodate some of Warwickshire County Council's operation. There has been pressure by local people for some time to make the car park available for their use and that of visitors throughout the week when it is currently exclusively reserved for staff. If this building, which is not attractive and blocks views of St Mary's church from the Saltisford approach, were to be demolished and a new more pleasing and sensitive development replaced it, a mixed use development would give the opportunity to provide a wide range of uses in a convenient and central location. This could incorporate a public car park and include any of the alternative uses from the list above.</p>
Site 4 Northgate St	<p>Preferred Option: Restoration of town houses with inclusion of archaeology store and former court offices to rear for residential use, as well as the fine public space between Northgate Street Houses and The Old Shire Hall and access to/from Cape Road Car Park</p> <p>Reason: The majority of the buildings on this site are listed. As such, they should, wherever possible, be returned to their original use. In the case of 2-22 Northgate Street, this is as fine townhouses, within a historic area. To make this a viable proposition for the present day, the removal of 20th century additions to provide gardens and parking areas is seen as a sensible approach. Additional residential use behind this would provide a small community on the edge of the town centre which is close to all amenities and public transport. To use this site for any other uses is not seen as a desirable option.</p>
Site 5 Police Station	<p>Preferred Option: Health facility</p> <p>Reason: Current leases on the Cape Road health facilities is due for renewal shortly. It is important to maintain a town centre base for such facilities since these are the only ones serving a high number of residential properties. Combining health facilities whilst making use of a vacant site and freeing up the current Cape Road site for housing is considered a prudent use of land and an opportunity to improve the facilities offered.</p>

Site 6 Cape Rd	Preferred Option: Residential and car park. Density to be maximised by parking beneath. Reason: See Site 5 above.
Site 7 Gas Wks/Fire station	Preferred Option: Residential and possibly part commercial Reason: These buildings are vacant and in the case of the former gas works, has been for many years. The gas works is a listed building and therefore conversion must be sensitively done. Planning permission for residential conversion has been granted in the past and as the principle has been established, this would seem to be the best use. The former fire station to the rear offers the chance to provide much needed affordable housing in the area with possibly some commercial element included. A landscaped area/courtyard would provide a pleasant green space within the development.
Site 8 St Michael's Chapel and The Master's House (Leper Hospital)	Preferred Option: Renovate for use as heritage centre but possibly residential if not viable Reason: These important but fragile listed buildings have been vacant and subject to neglect and vandalism over a long period of time. As one of the few remaining leper hospital sites in the country, this is an excellent opportunity to acquire the site and restore the buildings for heritage use, to extend the offer to visitors, improve the area for local people and create a circular route through the town visiting historic sites. For this reason, other uses have not been considered suitable, however, planning permission has been granted for residential use in the past and as this principle has been established then this may provide an alternative if the heritage use proves not to be viable.
Site 9 St John's	Preferred Option: Redevelopment with commercial at ground floor, residential above and parking at rear. Environmental improvements (if demolition viable/commercially acceptable) Reason: This site consists of a number of retail units with residential above. The retail element is very popular with local people, but the appearance of the buildings in a 'gateway' location is considered to be below average. A brook currently runs through a culvert under current parking area. It is acknowledged that this site is in a number of private ownerships and as such, cannot be redeveloped without the consent and co-operation of all owners, however, if redeveloped for the same uses it would provide the opportunity to redesign the buildings and layout and excavate the brook to make the centrepiece for an attractively landscaped frontage, hiding parking to the rear and opening up this important approach to the town.
Site 10 St John's House	Preferred Option: Retain and add other museum collections. Utilise and extend pathway from St Nicholas car park to Smith Street Reason: St John's House works well as a museum and other uses would not be as suitable, however, museum collections are spread throughout the town and it is considered that a central 'museum quarter' based at this location would provide a better offer for visitors and make better use of the site.
Site 11 Court House	Preferred Option: Finance is in place for work therefore no change proposed
Site 12 The Butts	Preferred Option: Retain parking but improve streetscape and highlight existence of footpath to St Mary's. Reason: This narrow roadside strip of land is not considered to be suitable to be developed for another use and is popular with both local people and visitors as a parking area close to homes, St Mary's church and other town centre

	uses.
Site 13a and b small car parks	<p>Preferred Option: Possible development of 13a but remove car parking at 13b and improve public realm and provide 'gateway' to town via Castle Street.</p> <p>Reason: There are few uses that site 13a lends itself too, being too small for most. It may be possible to add another dwelling to the end of the current block of housing, as before, but the landscaping is established and attractive and the opening up of the corner close to the Town Gate in the castle wall is seen as a benefit. It is therefore unlikely that this will change.</p> <p>Site 13b however, could be improved by removing the small number of parking spaces and opening up a landscaped area to invite visitors out of the castle, through an obvious gateway into the town. Other uses are not considered suitable in this sensitive site in its historic setting.</p>
Site 14 New St CP	Suggestion include retain as car park, retail, market, employment and mixed use. No preference has been given for the site at this stage.
Site 15 Adj. Bus station	<p>Preferred Option: No change, therefore excluded from further consideration</p> <p>Reason: The bus station was relocated to this site a few years ago and is working well. Popular with local people, it is not considered suitable for another use.</p>
Site 16 West Rock CP	<p>Preferred Option: Low level parking beneath residential development with possible synergy with Sainsburys.</p> <p>Reason: The site provides a development opportunity afforded by its location and the gradient of the land which could be utilised to give another layer or two of parking with residential above, in close proximity to other housing but with the supermarket, public transport and town centre facilities close at hand.</p>
Site 17 Priory Rd/Chapel Row CP	<p>Preferred Option: Potential for development enhancing the area and retaining car parking below new residential</p> <p>Reason: The site is currently underused but could provide off road parking for Smith Street, freeing up the highway to provide better pedestrian access to the shops. Local people use the car park and the garages are well used. There is potential however to optimise the value. It is therefore considered that housing could be developed above to take advantage of a central location and improving the security with 24 hour surveillance behind businesses and on a currently blank frontage. Other uses may be suitable however, such as extending education facilities here or other commercial uses.</p>
Site 21 Castle Stables	<p>Preferred Option: Residential or hotel development above two levels of underground car parking, accessed from Castle Hill</p> <p>Reason: The current use as a car park for the castle, is not optimising the use of the space at an important approach to the town centre. Car parking could be incorporated into a larger scheme whereby residential or a hotel could be built over. It is important to consider the historic location here however and any such scheme would need to be sensitive to its location and designed accordingly. The proposal of a hotel in this location is not a new idea and has been considered in the past due to its close locational relationship with the castle.</p>

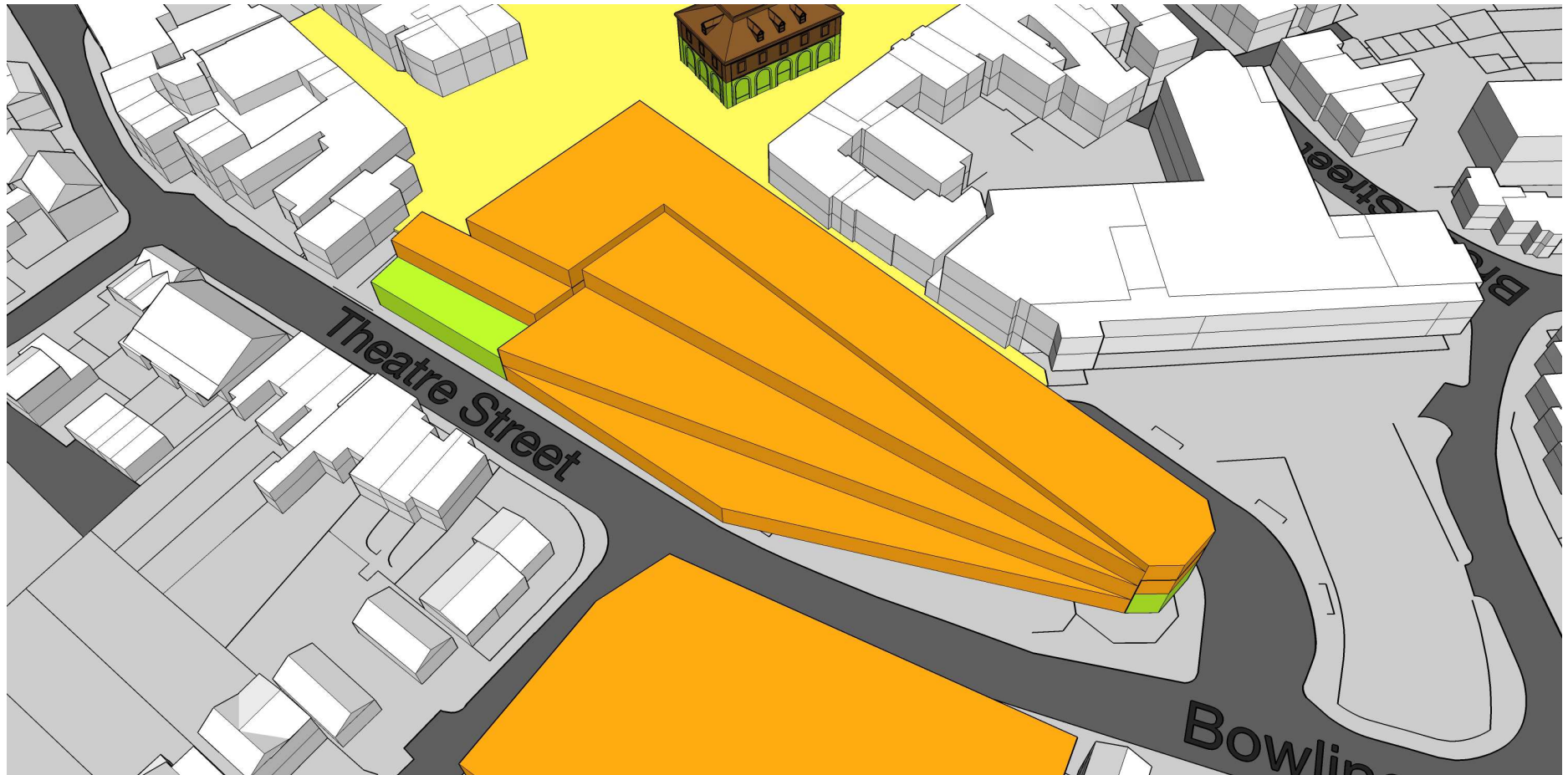
Site 26 Market Hall	<p>Preferred Option: Covered market forming commercial centrepiece of improved market place. Through vehicle routes closed and on-street parking limited to very short stay, loading and disabled.</p> <p>Reason: The centre of Warwick lacks a sense of arrival. The Market Place and Market Hall should be the point at which visitors feel that they are in the town centre. To achieve this, it is considered that removing as much of the traffic and parking as possible would promote a café culture, give the opportunity to provide a greener and more pleasing visual environment and encourage niche retailers to locate around and close to the Market Place. Opening up the Market Hall for its original use would provide the catalyst for other improvements to take place. Other uses could be considered, but it is important that the Market Hall becomes an inclusive part of the Market Place and the town centre as a whole.</p>
Site 29 Eastgate	<p>Preferred Option: Rebalancing space between vehicles and pedestrians, reducing clutter and improving the setting of Eastgate and Landor House, replacing the barrier of excessive traffic with opening between Smith Street and the rest of the Town Centre.</p> <p>Reason: this is not a development opportunity as such, but does offer the opportunity to improve the public realm and reduce the impact of traffic at this very busy junction.</p>
Site 30 Pedestrian route	<p>Preferred Option: Pedestrian route from Warwick Castle into the town centre.</p> <p>Reason: This work is already underway and therefore other alternatives have not been considered</p>



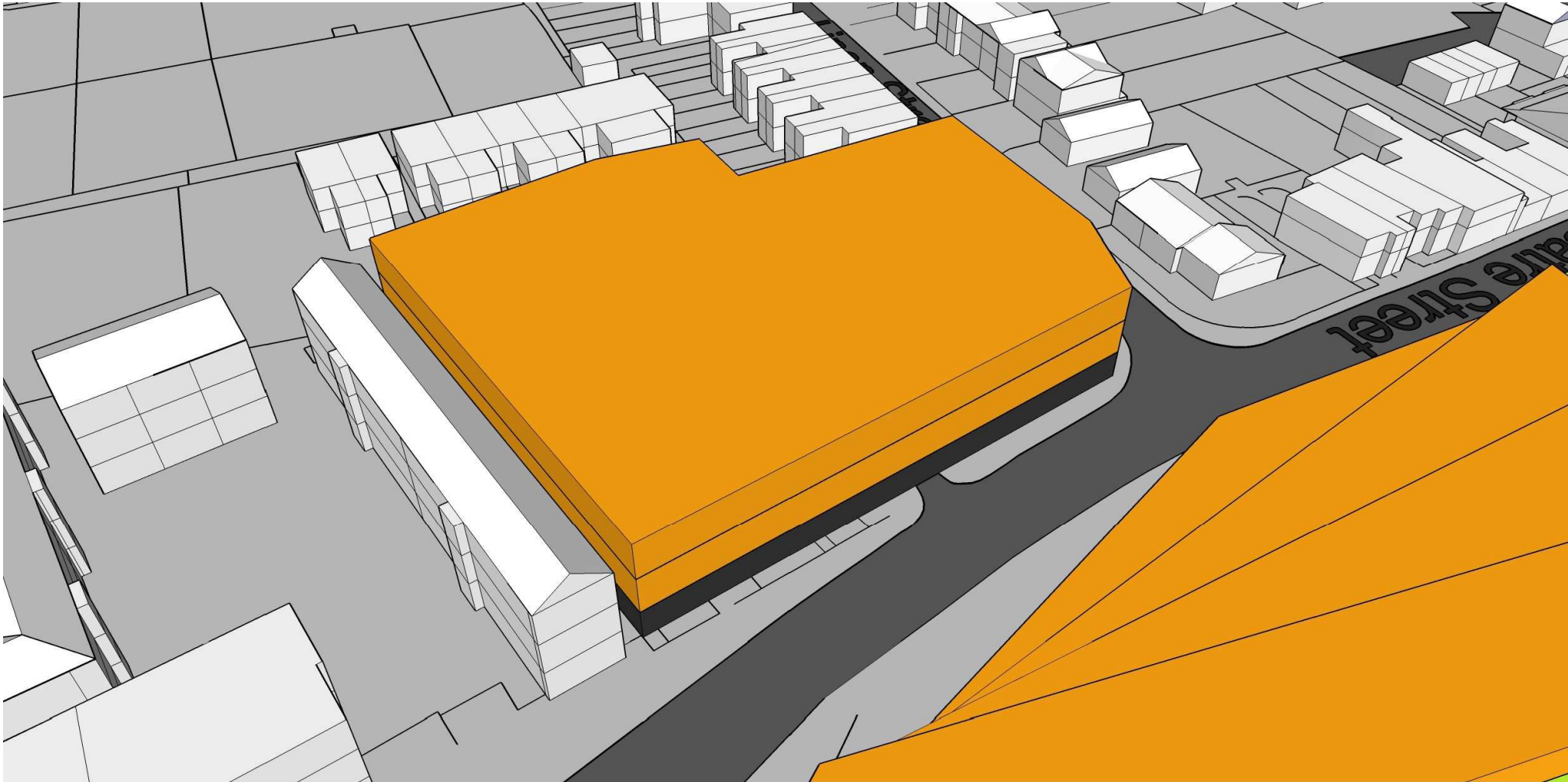
- 1 Market Street / Theatre Street
- 2 Linen Street / Lammas Court
- 3 Barrack Street
- 4 Northgate Street
- 5 Police Station
- 6 Cape Road
- 7 Former Gas Works and former Fire Station

- 8 St. Michael's Chapel and The Master's House
- 9 St. John's
- 10 St. John's House
- 11 Court House
- 12 The Butts
- 13a Castle Street
- 13b Castle Street

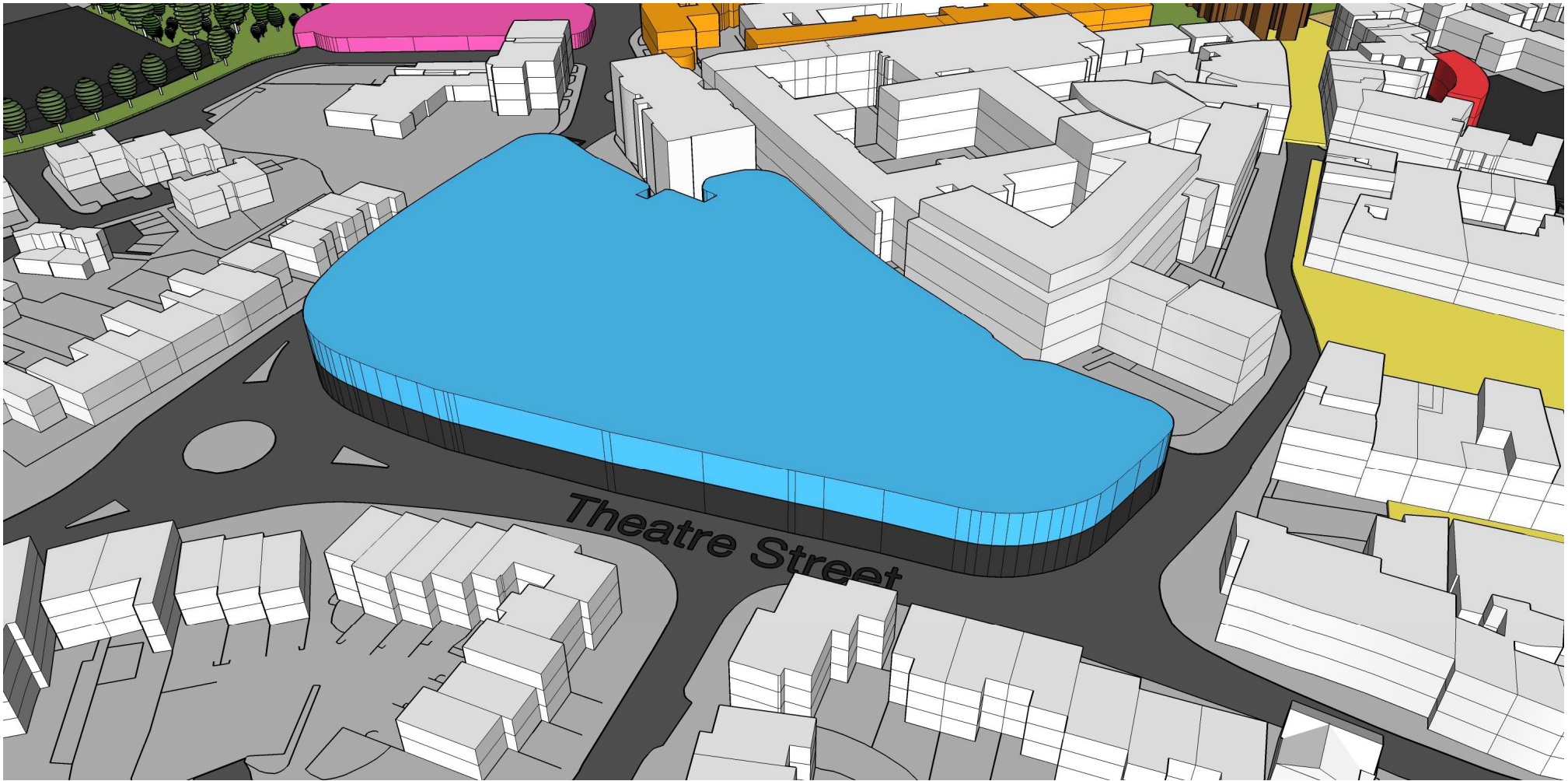
- 14 New Street Car Park
- 16 West Rock Car Park
- 17 Priors Road / Chapel Row Car Park
- 21 Castle Stables Car Park
- 26 Market Hall
- 29 Eastgate
- 30 Pedestrian route



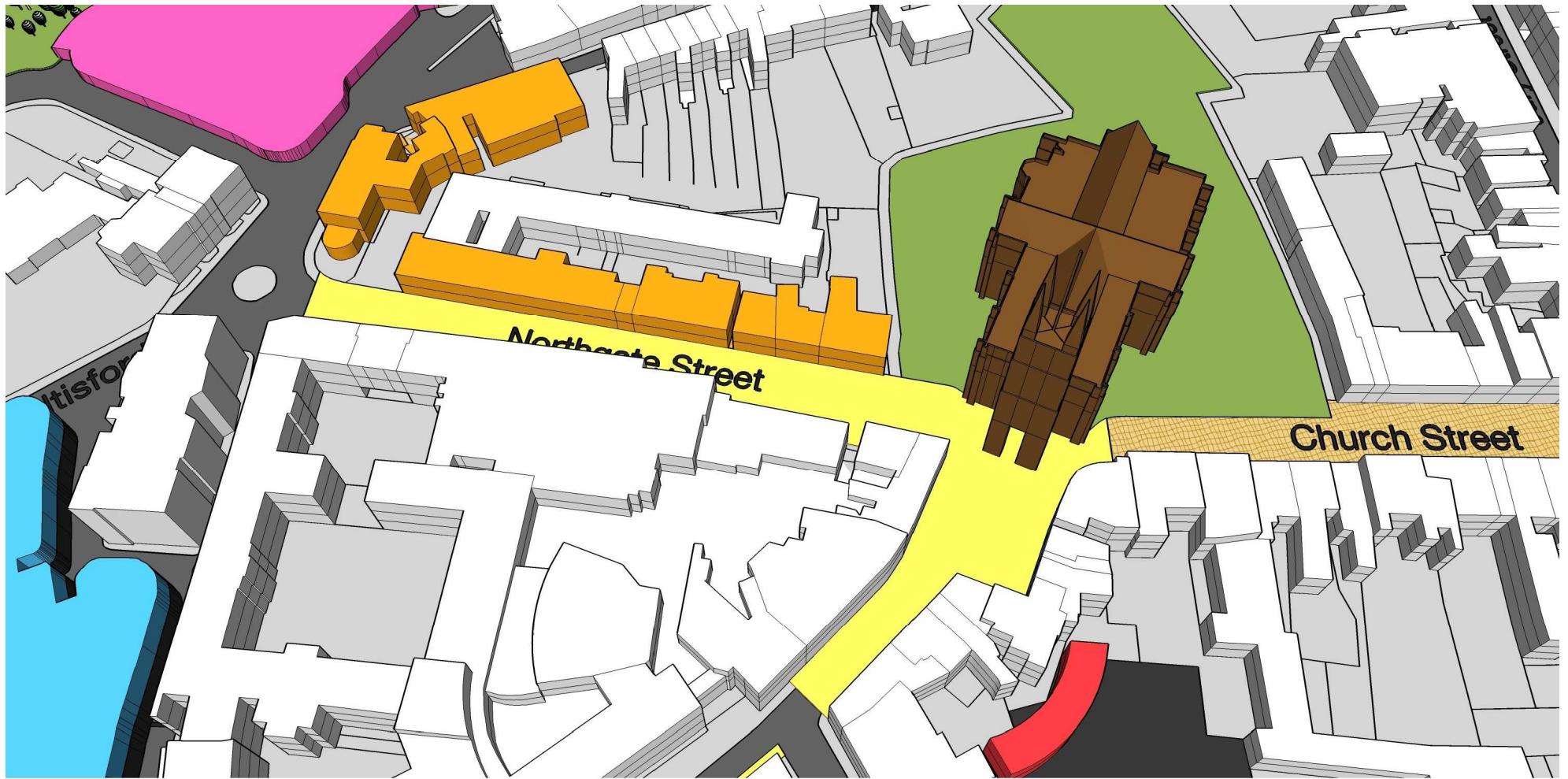
1. Market Street/Theatre Street



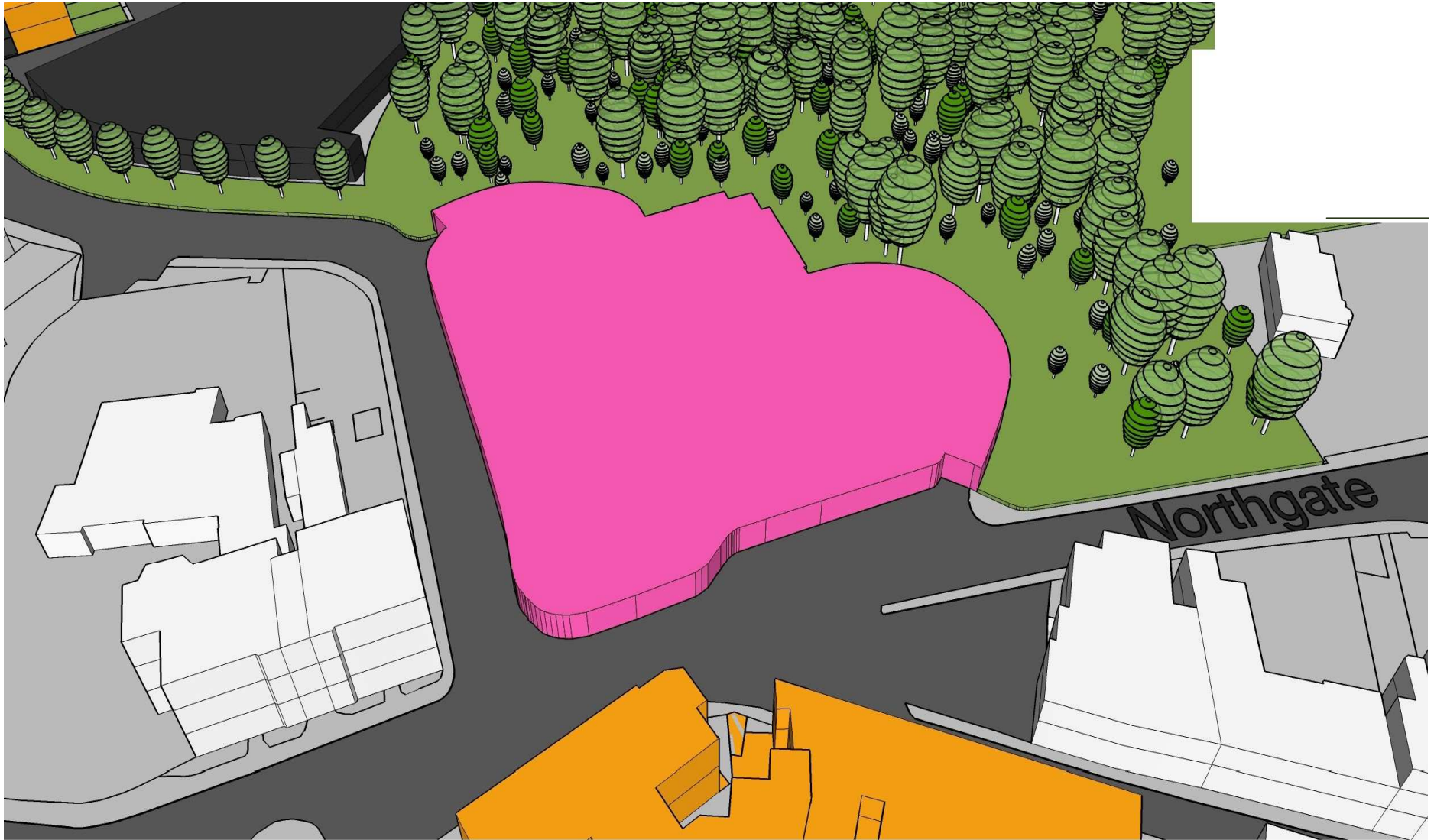
2. Linen Street/Lammas Court



3. Barrack Street



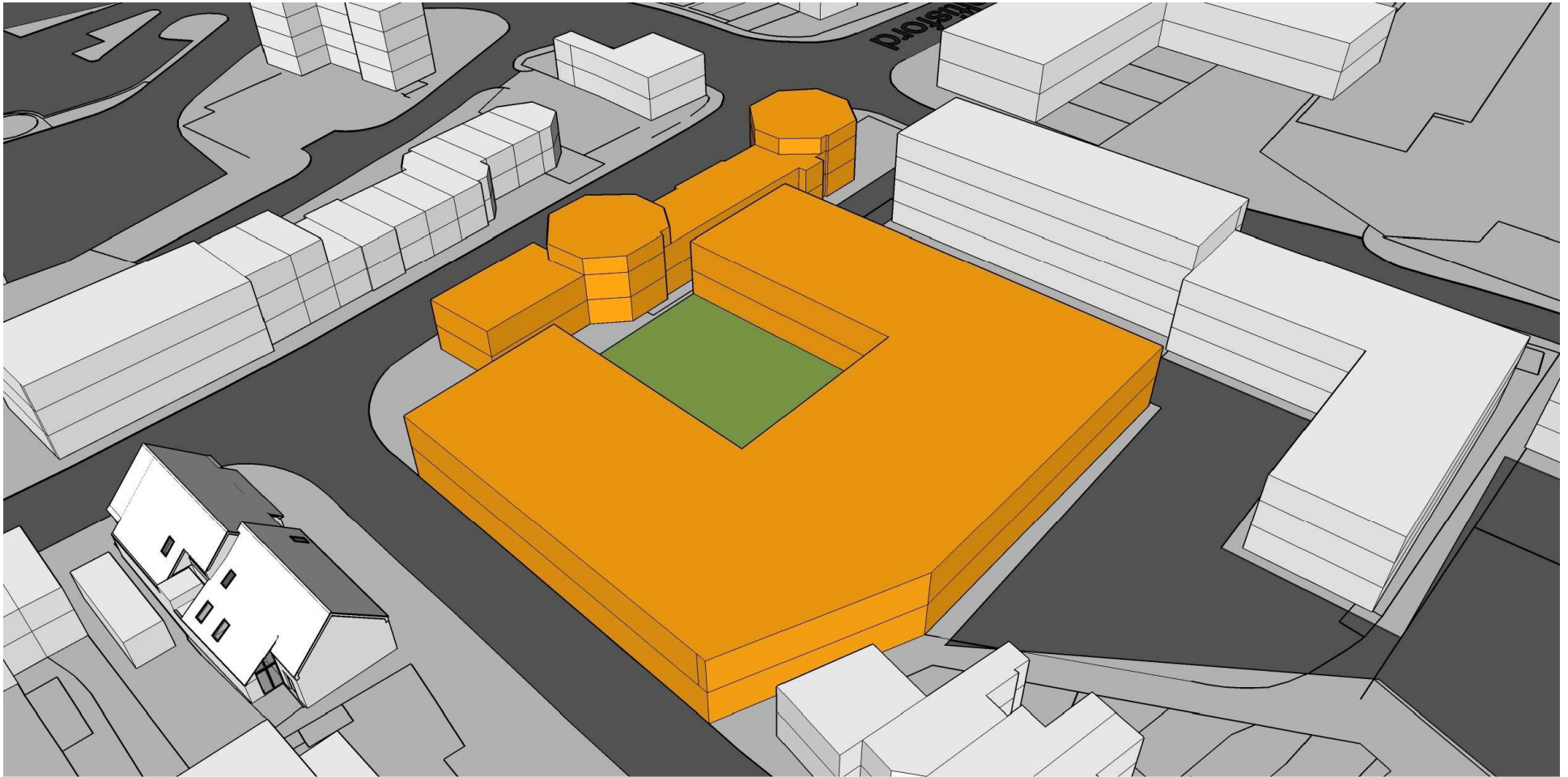
4. Northgate Street



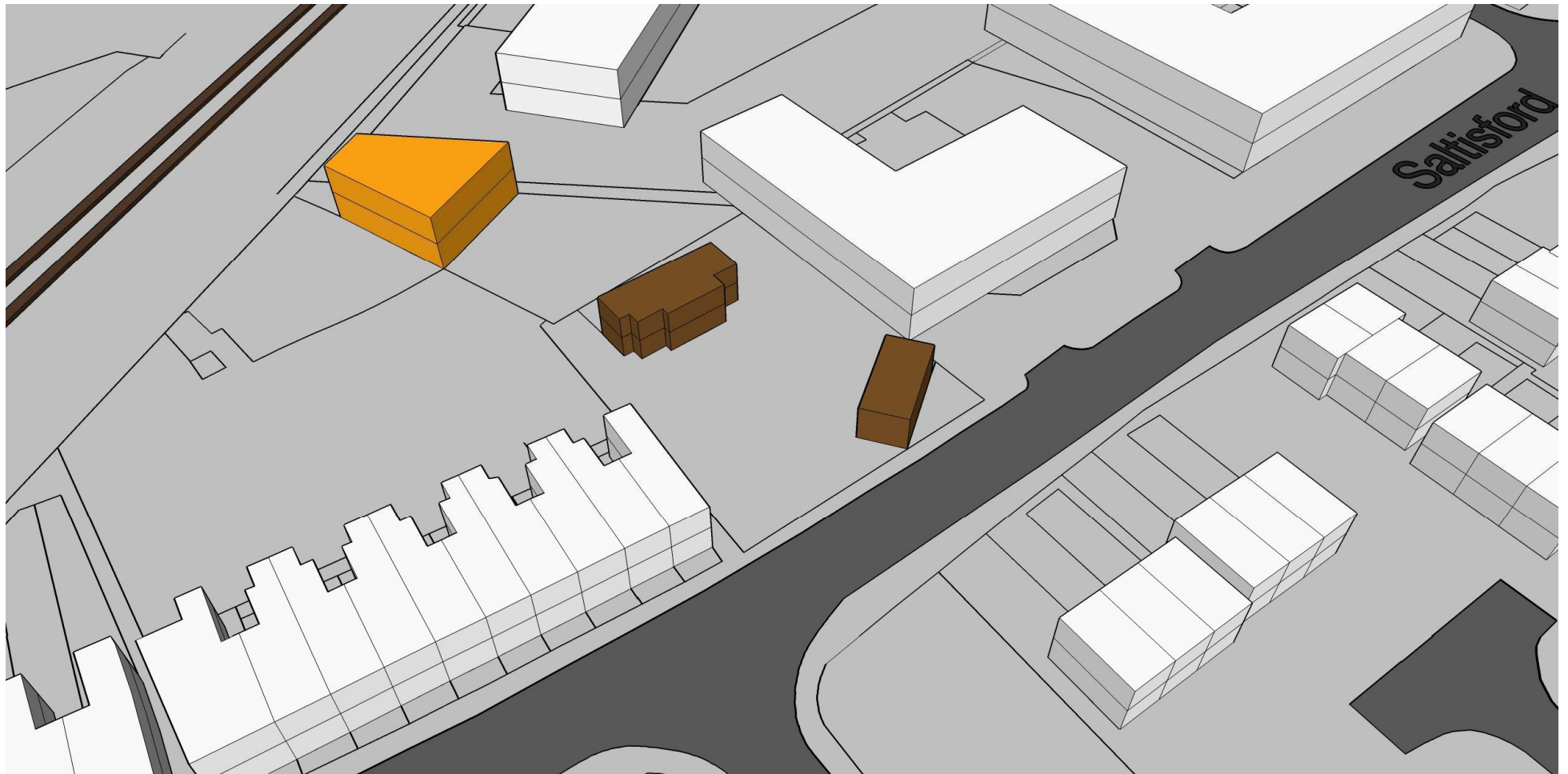
5. Former Police Station



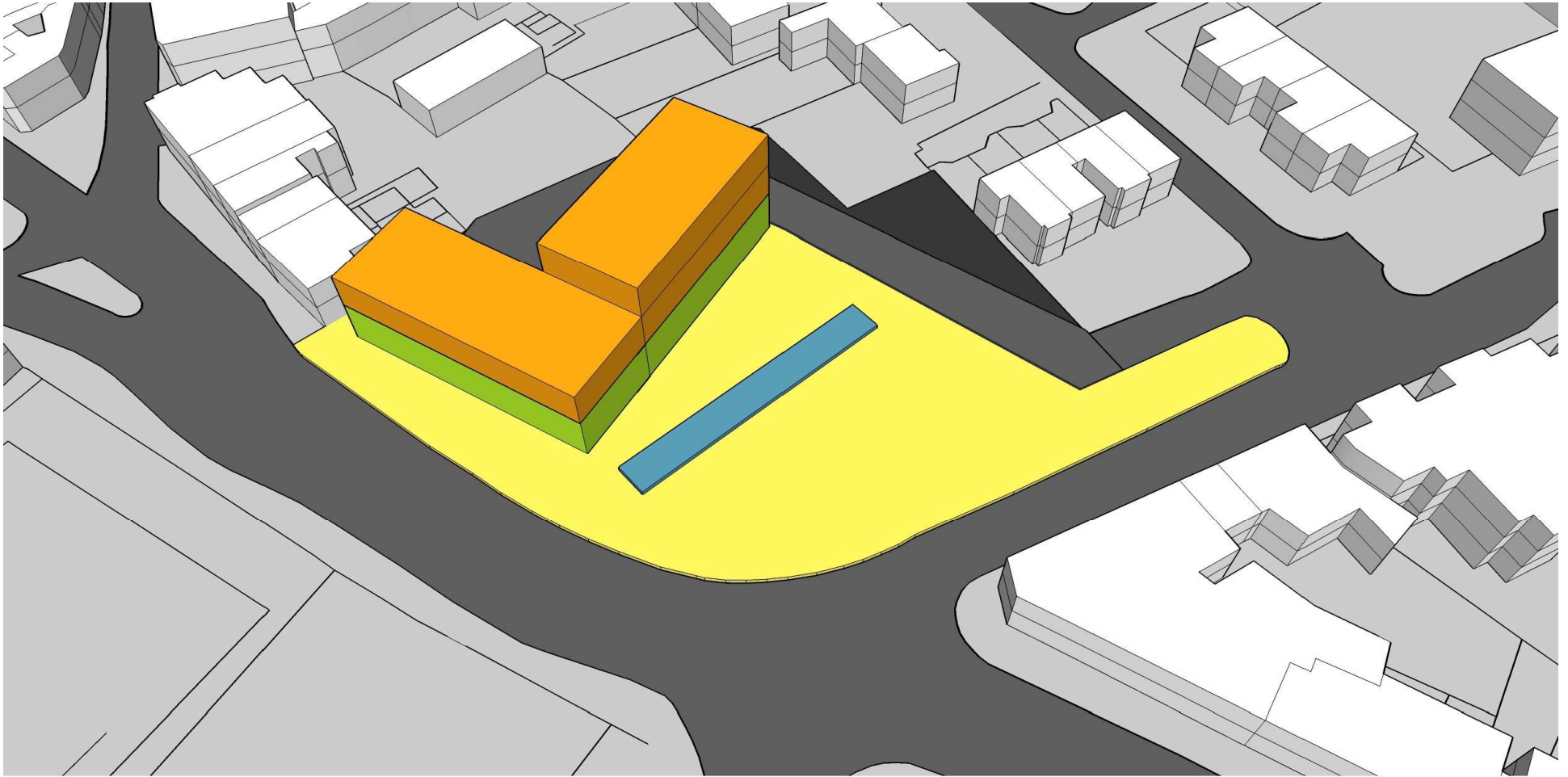
6. Cape Road



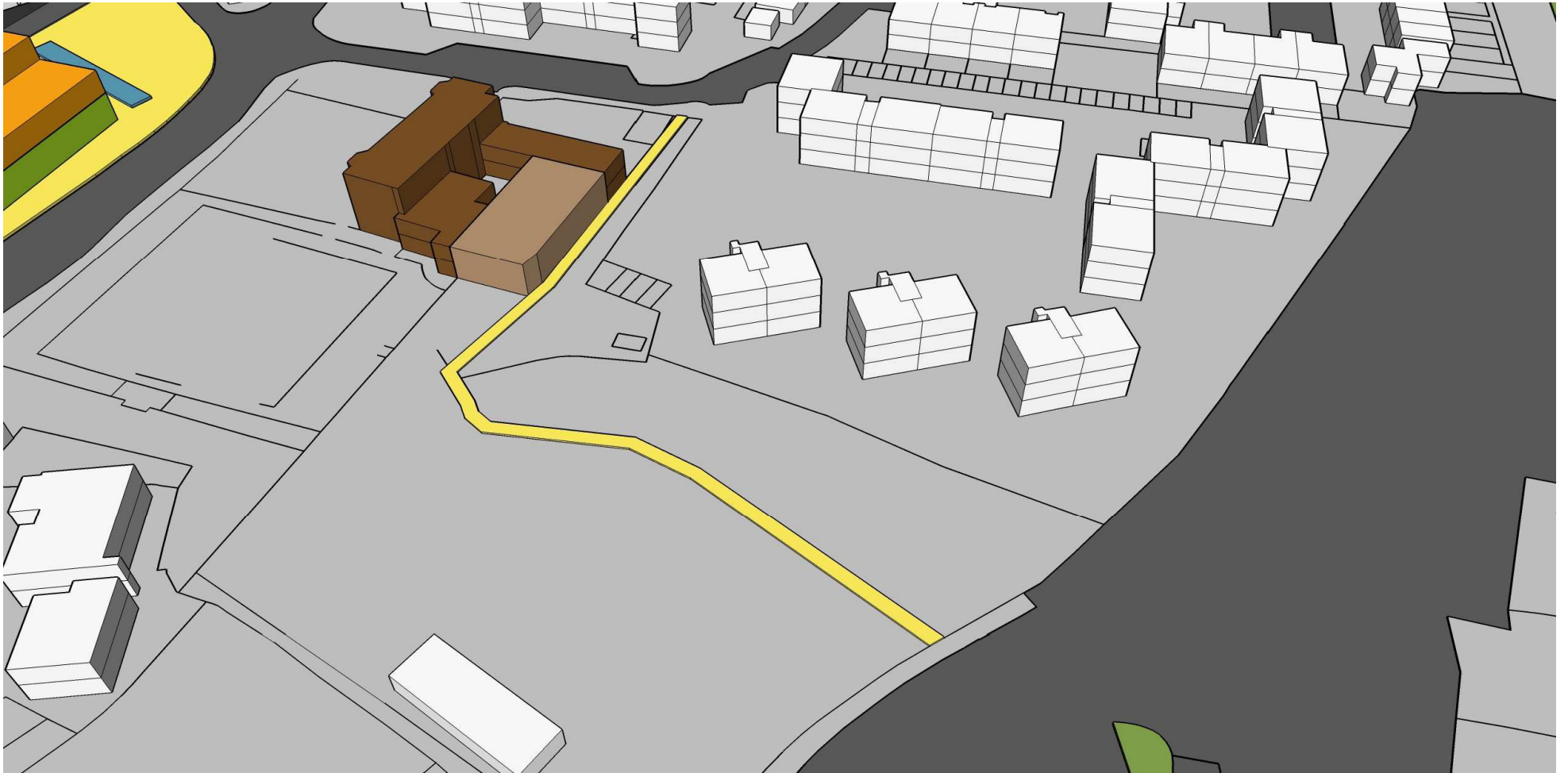
7. Former Gasworks and former Fire Station



8. St Michael's Chapel and The Master's House



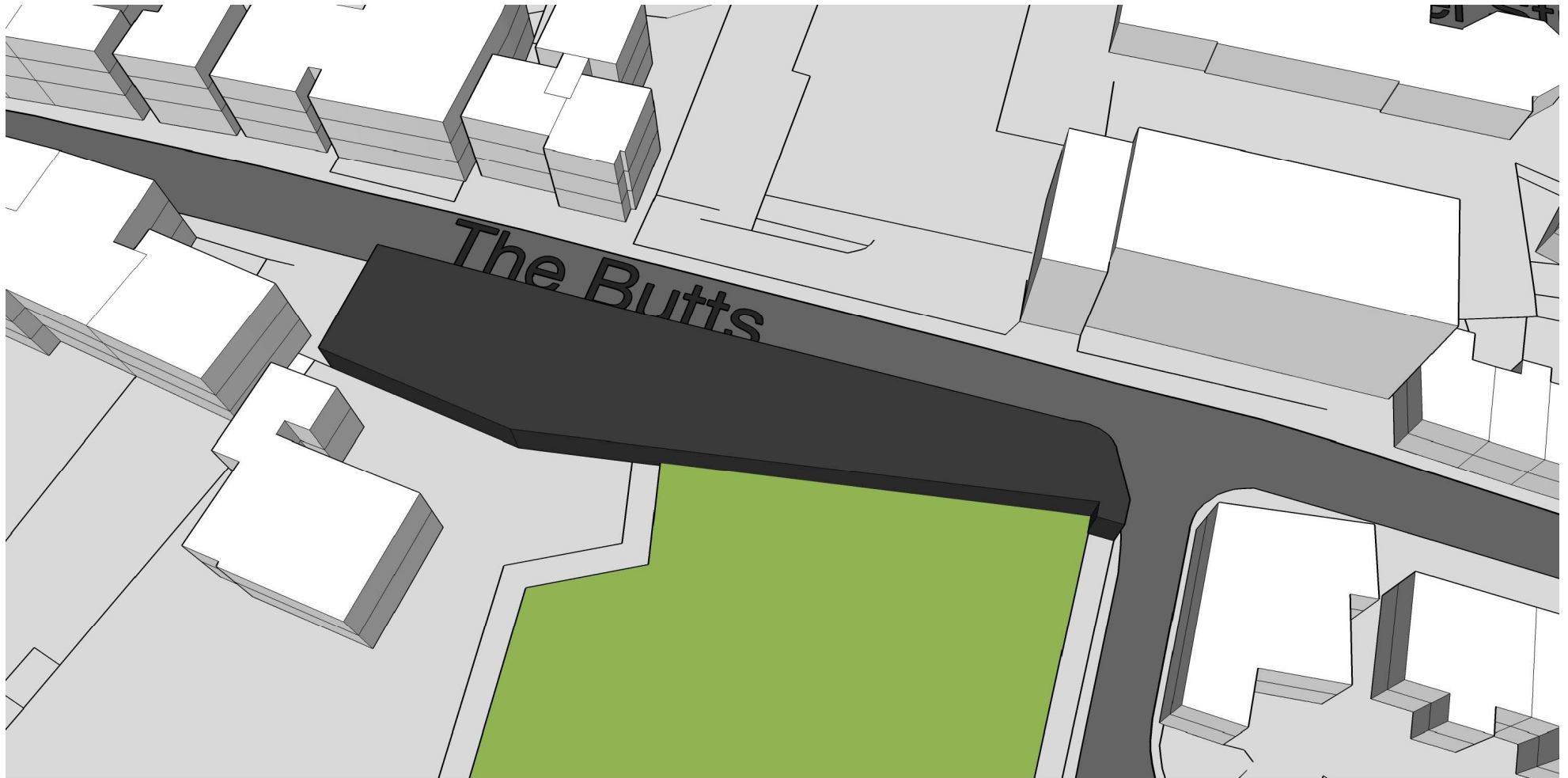
9. St John's



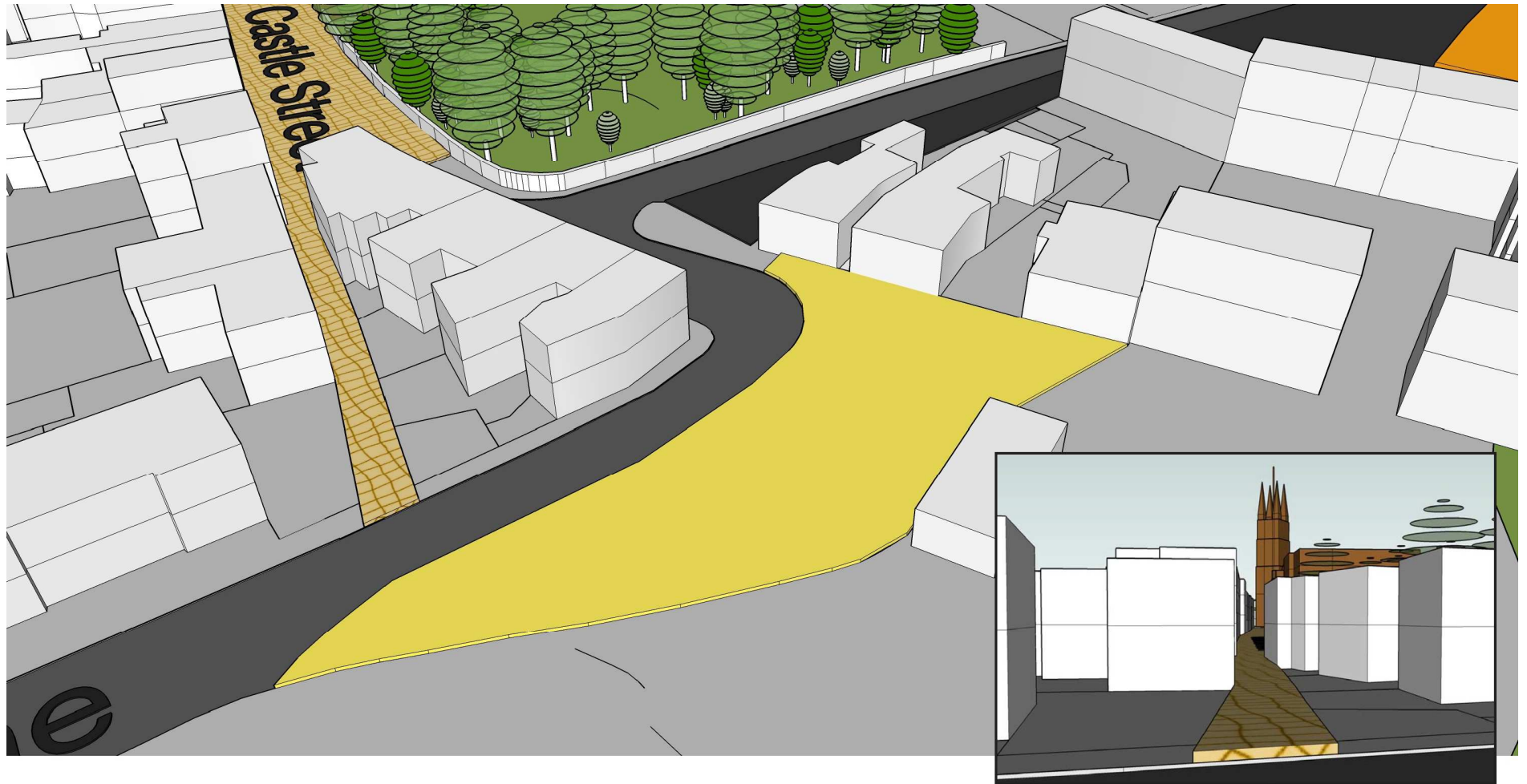
10. St John's House



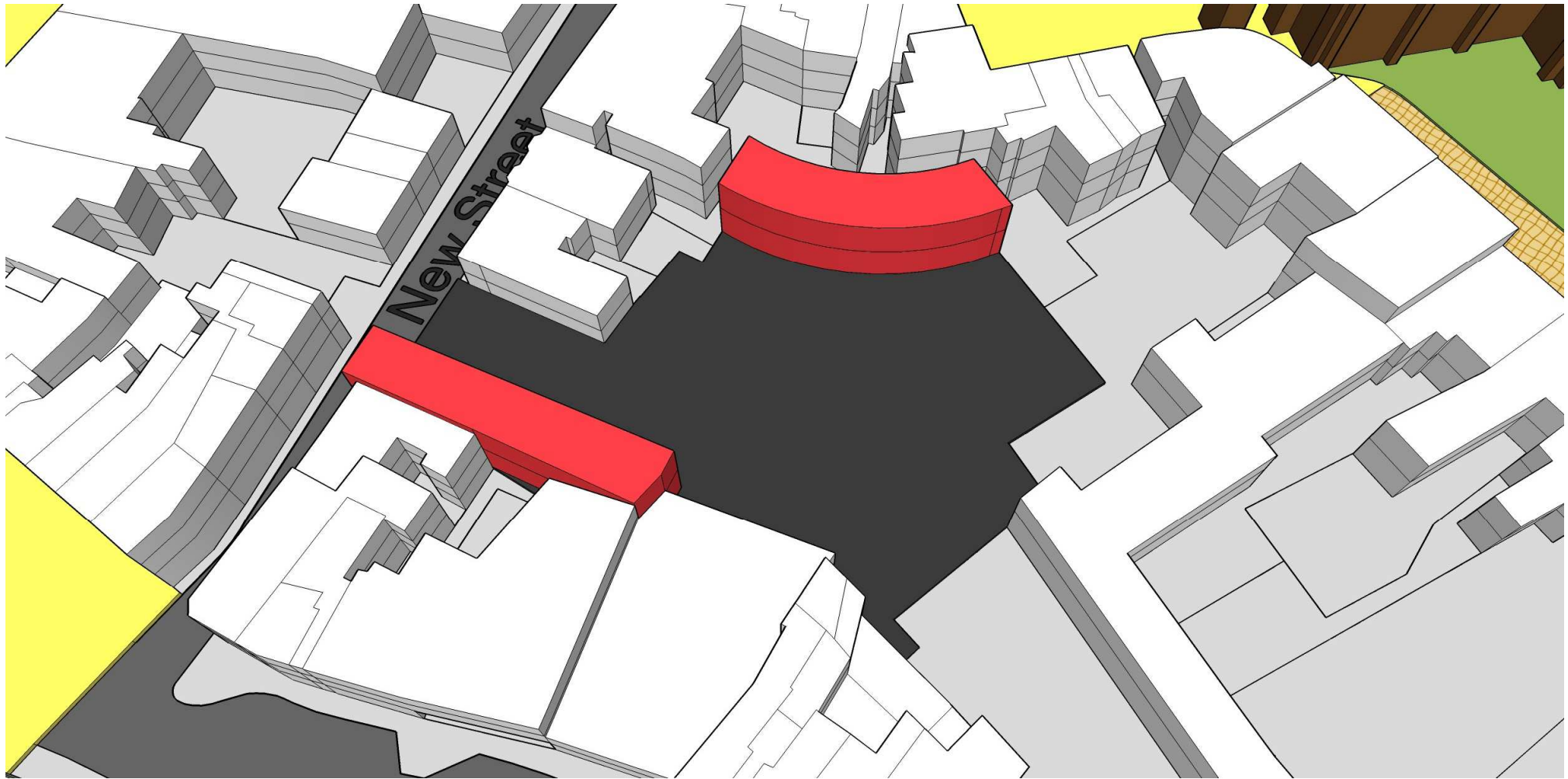
11. Court House



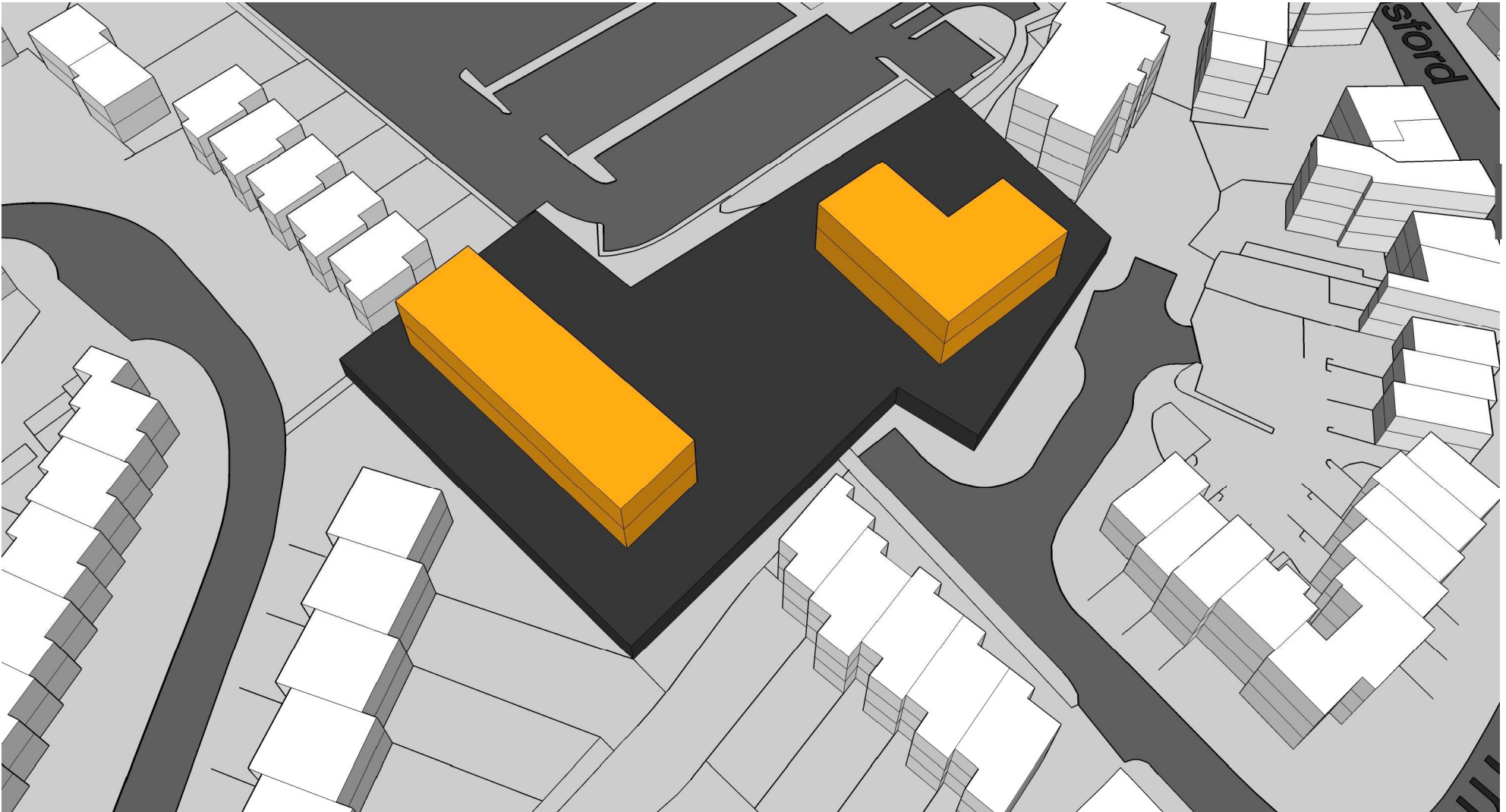
12. The Butts



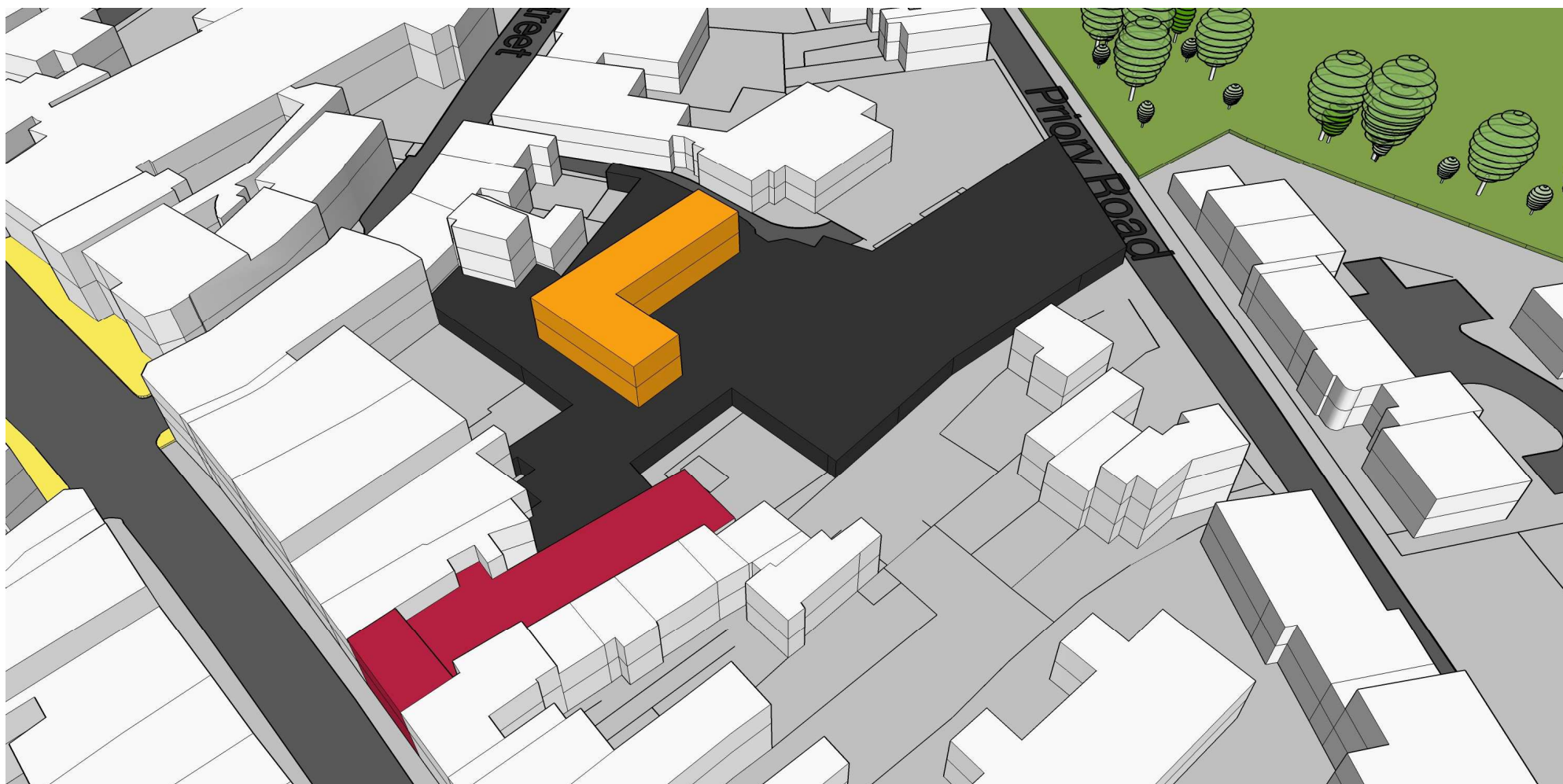
13a and 13b Small car parks (Castle Lane)



13. New Street Car Park



16. West Rock Car Park



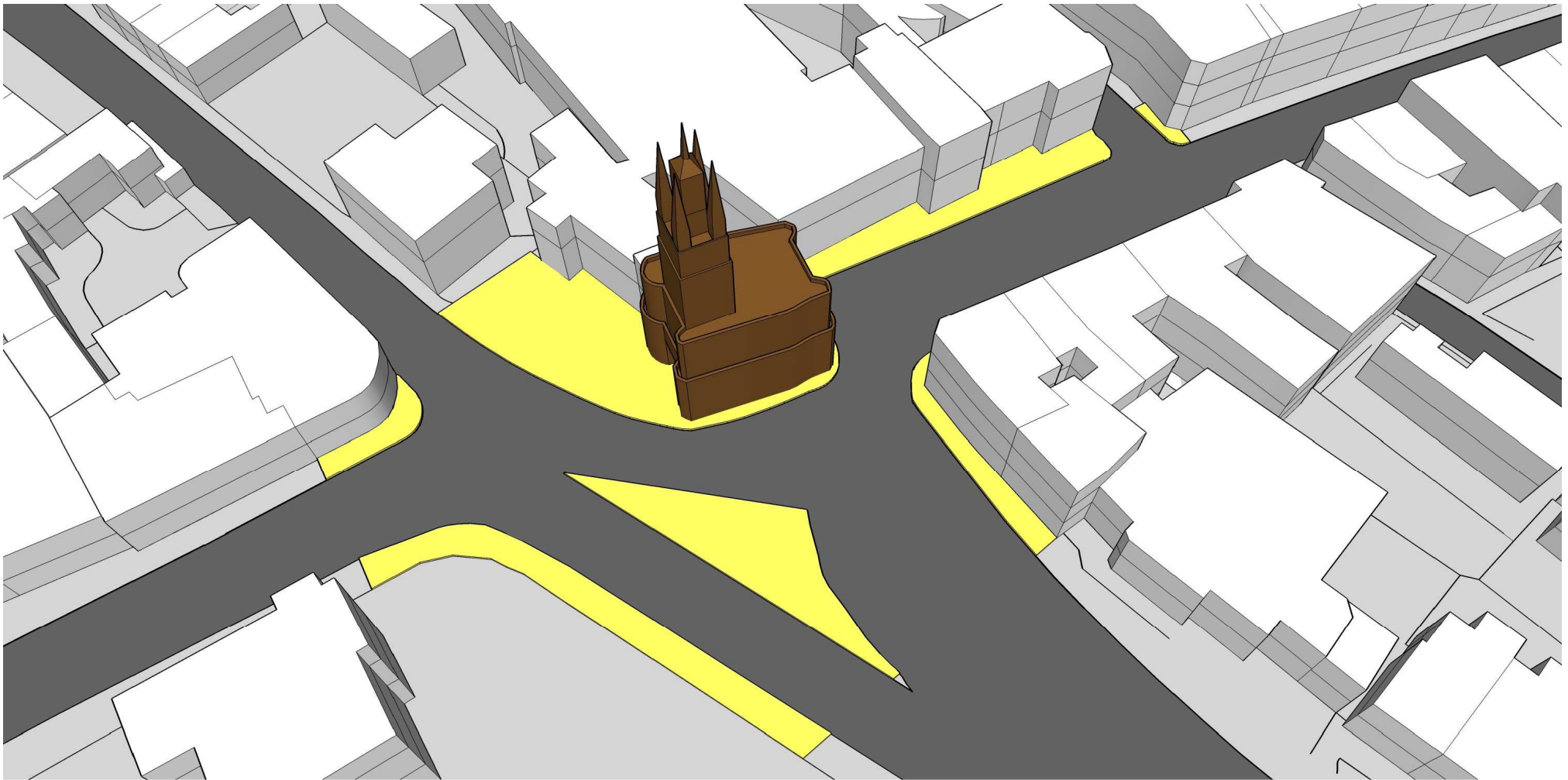
17. Priory Road/Chapel Row Car Park



21. Castle Stables



26. Market Hall



29. Eastgate



30. Pedestrian route from Castle into town centre

Other Suggestions and Potential Sites:

Whilst discussing these sites, others have also been identified and potential solutions proposed. These are outlined below:

Westgate House	Long term opportunity to increase plot value and enhance the character of the Conservation Area by reworking the building, extending its footprint over the car park with parking beneath, but reducing its unbroken mass
Market Street, east side	The 'dead' frontage is a severe negative, giving no retail activity on a key walking route. Could retail uses be introduced?
Railway station and adjacent offices/industrial premises	Station needs improving as a gateway to the county town. If the adjacent site became available as a windfall development opportunity it could accommodate a mixed use development including car parking
Alderson House, private car park	Opportunity for sub-surface car park with residential over – restricted in height by standing behind Castle Orangery

Public spaces: It is assumed that all the main streets and key junctions will benefit from the W:RiT programme of street-by-street measures to slow vehicles and improve the pedestrian environment. The following proposals go beyond that to improve public spaces as an adjunct to development raising the value of it and funded by it.

Market Street	On street parking could be removed and pavements widened to increase footfall and dwell time and give value to retail frontages
Route between centre and edge of centre at Sainsbury's supermarket	The potential for synergy between the supermarket and the town centre is damaged by the steep slope of the route between them and its poor quality, crossing a car park, using poor footpaths and crossing Theatre Street. A better pedestrian connection could be provided as part of the West Rock car park development (see site 16 above)
Northgate Street and Church Street	On street parking could be reduced allowing much fuller use of the street space to encourage visitors, walking and appreciation of the townscape

Other ideas include:

- Create a 'historic trail' though the town with some easily achieved/relatively inexpensive improvements to the public realm:
- Close Market Place to all but delivery vehicles giving a larger pedestrian area and space to plant and landscape with interesting features which will make more of the Market Square.
- Relocate the taxi rank (5 spaces) and use planters etc to improve the area and provide a sitting out area for the cafes in the better weather.
- Improve the WC's in the Market Square.
- Landscape and improve the area on Brook Street behind the shops to improve the walk from Lord Leycester hospital into the town.
- Improve open space around St Mary's church and make feature of the area to improve the setting.
- Provide access though the Shire Hall courtyards and back into the Market Square.
- Improve the roundabout and provide safer pedestrian access at Northgate where Barrack Street and Northgate meet.

- Join up the open spaces and common land along Saltisford to provide a circular walk which takes in the Leper Hospital if used as a heritage centre/garden and link that with the Saltisford Canal Trust land which then links to the racecourse and back into town.

What do you think about these ideas for sites and for environmental improvements in the town?

Do you agree with our preferred option or do you consider one of the other options to be more acceptable?

Do these ideas work together to make the town more efficient yet increase its attractiveness?

Have we missed out any opportunities that you are aware of?

Do you have any other suggestions?

Marketing the Town Centre

There are a number of marketing issues that the Warwick Town Centre Management Group will be dealing with. They are included here for completeness and to give a flavour of what is happening on a day-to-day basis in the town centre to ensure that Warwick is promoted to local people and visitors in a positive way, encouraging everyone to use its facilities and recognising what it has to offer.

- Provide better and more co-ordinated promotion of the town's businesses and attractions
- Strengthen the relationship between the town centre and the castle and racecourse
- Support markets and events that increase vitality, footfall and trade
- Positively promote the town centre to potential businesses and investors

GLOSSARY

Article 4 Direction – greater control is gained by issuing an article 4 direction over the changes that owners can make to their buildings to provide more protection to the character of a Conservation Area and its unlisted buildings e.g. in Leamington, buildings in the town centre are restricted in the paint colour used on external walls.

AQMA – Air Quality Management Area. Where air quality does not meet health standards, local authorities are required to develop action plans to try to meet the objectives. In Warwick the main source of air pollution is road traffic emissions resulting in certain areas having high levels of oxides of nitrogen (NO_x/NO₂).

Feed in tariff – a scheme whereby people receive payment for generating their own 'green' electricity.

Green Pennant - The award is part of the Green Flag Award scheme, and recognises high quality green spaces managed by voluntary and community groups.

Green Heritage - Accreditation is given in recognition of achieving the required standard in the management and interpretation of a site with local or national historic importance.

Green travel plans – employers encourage the use of public transport, cycling and walking or introduce benefits to car sharers.

Renewable energy – energy flows that occur naturally and continuously in the environment, such as energy from the sun, wind, water, waves or tides.

Sustainable drainage - an approach to managing rainfall in developments that replicates natural drainage. Runoff is collected and stored to allow natural cleaning to occur prior to infiltration or controlled release to watercourses, reducing flood risk.

'Virtual' park and ride – bus services increase in frequency and more specifically, serve existing car parks on the periphery of the town

Warwick Town Centre Management Group – comprises representatives from Warwick District Council, Warwick Town Council, Warwickshire County Council, Warwick Chamber of Trade, Smith Street Traders Association, Warwick Castle, Warwick Racecourse, St Mary's Church, Warwickshire Police

Zero carbon buildings - achieved by ensuring an energy efficient approach to building design, reducing CO₂ emissions on-site through low and zero carbon technologies and connected heat networks.