

# Highcross Leicester

Threesixty  
Architecture



Design Statement  
DRAFT\_240920





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# Introduction

# Introduction

This Design Statement supports the planning submissions for a series of new entrances to the Highcross Leicester in Leicester, including the East Gates, High Street, Church Gate, and New Bond Street entrances. Although each entrance is the subject of an individual planning application, they form part of a comprehensive, interconnected improvement strategy.

Collectively, these enhancements aim to elevate the overall arrival experience, improve connectivity to Leicester's existing street network, and better link Highcross, Leicester with its urban surroundings. By creating more welcoming, accessible, and visually engaging arrival points, the proposals will inject energy and vibrancy into the heart of Leicester.

This document is structured into the following chapters to provide a clear and thorough explanation of the overall scheme:

## 1. Introduction

This section provides a contextual introduction to the project, outlining how the individual planning applications for the East Gates, High Street, Church Gate, and New Bond Street entrances are to be considered as part of a cohesive and interconnected improvement strategy.

## 2. Explanation of the Design Principles and Concepts

This chapter details the key design principles and concepts driving the proposals.

## 3. Context Appraisal

This section offers an assessment of the surrounding context, with reference to Conservation Area appraisals, townscape analysis, and relevant design guidance. A heritage statement is included to provide background information, ensuring the proposals are sensitive to the historical and urban context.

## 4. Policy Identification

Relevant adopted and emerging local planning policies are identified, with a policy table demonstrating compliance with the local authority's strategic objectives.

## 5. Design Development

This chapter provides an overview of the consultation process with the Local Planning Authority (LPA), detailing any specific issues raised and how they have been addressed in the final design proposals.

## 6. Final Design Proposals

A detailed commentary on the final design proposals, showing how the designs comply with relevant policies and design guidance.



## Background Information

### Highcross, Leicester

#### 1.1 Name of Scheme

Highcross Leicester

#### 1.2 Applicant / Client

Ellandi  
75 Wells Street,  
London  
W1T 3QH

#### 1.3 Description of client brief

The core aspiration of the project is to enhance the entrances of Highcross Leicester by improving their visibility and presence, thereby creating a more welcoming and engaging urban realm. The design aims to clearly define Highcross's identity within both the street and the broader urban context, injecting vibrancy into the area. These entrance interventions are intended to align with the asset management strategy and support a strategic approach to future tenant mix, ensuring that the centre remains a dynamic and central part of Leicester's commercial landscape.

#### 1.4 Date

This report was prepared September 2024.

#### 1.5 Project Team

Architect  
Threesixty Architecture

Project Manager  
Radcliffes Construction Consultants

Planning Consultant / Agent  
Williams Gallagher Town Planning Solutions

Structural Engineer  
Waterman Structures Ltd

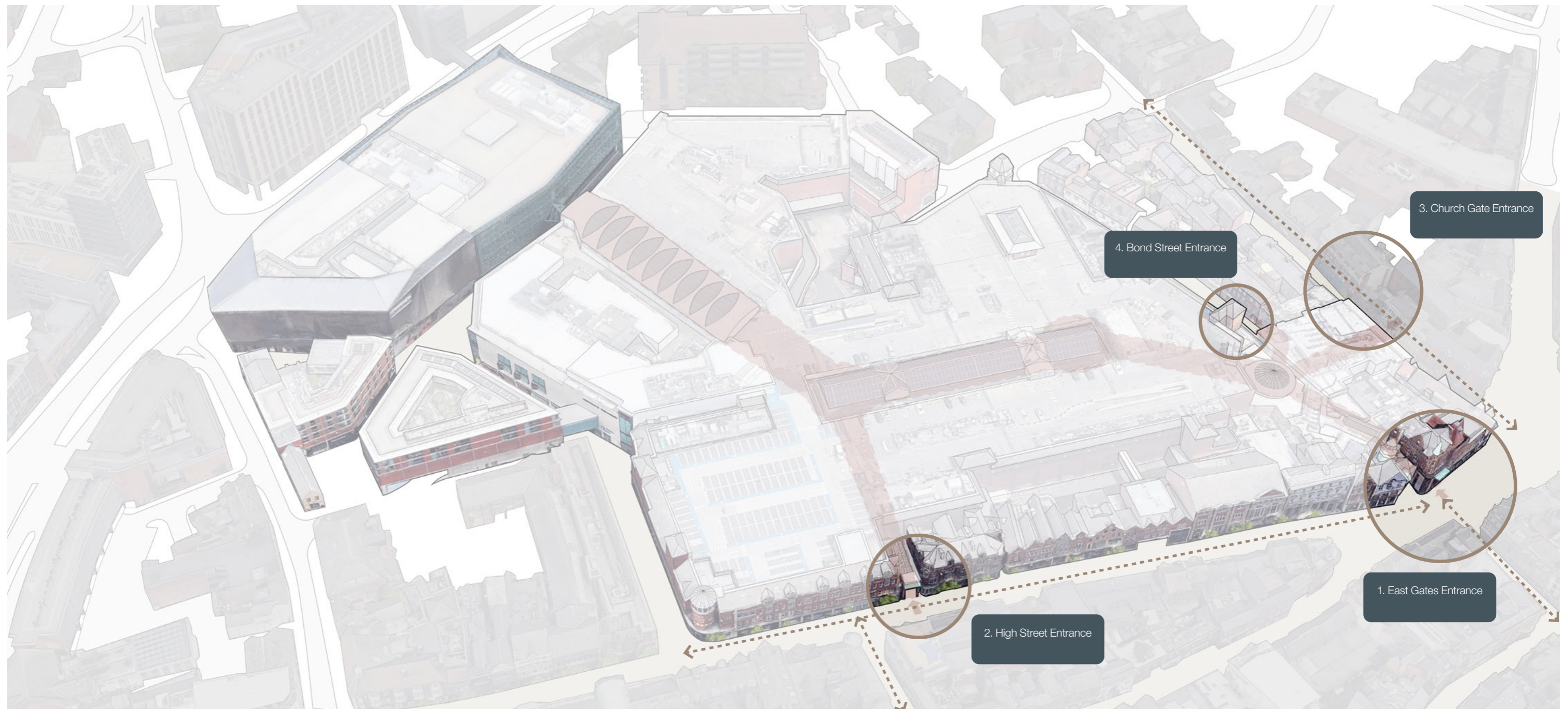
Quantity Surveyor  
Dreso



## Study Area Highcross, Leicester

### Entrances Location

This study focuses on enhancements to four key entrances of Highcross Leicester: East Gates, High Street, Church Gate, and New Bond Street. The project aims to boost the visibility and presence of these entrances, create a more inviting urban space, and strengthen Highcross's identity in the cityscape. Given the different levels of prominence, the study prioritises significant upgrades for the most visible locations, balancing impact with value.



# Study Area The Existing Entrances

## Existing Entrance Architecture

The existing entrances to Highcross Leicester present a mono-cultural approach that fails to resonate with Leicester's diverse urban fabric. The architecture of these entrances struggles to harmonise with the surrounding heritage, resulting in a visual competition rather than a cohesive integration.

The uniformity of the design across different contexts detracts from the unique character of each location, leading to a disjointed urban experience that does not reflect the varied character of its surroundings.



Existing High Street entrance at Highcross

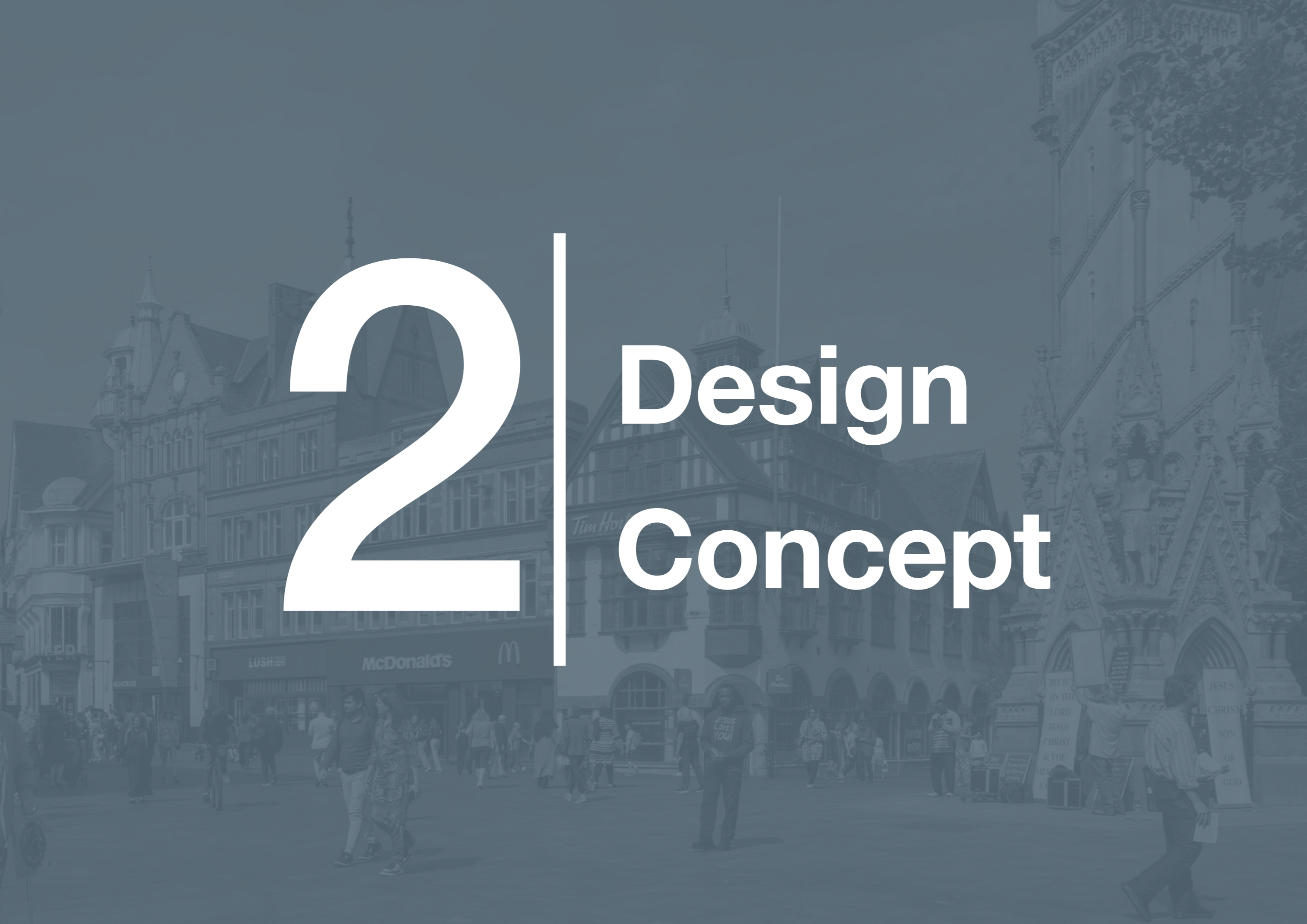
Existing Church Gate entrance at Highcross

Existing East Gates entrance at Highcross



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# Design Concept



# Concept Statement

The proposed architectural concept for Highcross seeks to revitalise the entrances and enhance their integration with the surrounding context and urban realm. By creating a series of distinct urban landmarks, the design aims to foster a sense of legibility and pride in both High Street and the wider cityscape.

Emphasising the interplay of form and fabric, the concept celebrates Leicester's rich heritage while allowing for unique, contextually responsive designs that align with a cohesive thematic vision. This approach ensures that each entrance respects its specific setting.

- The concept focuses on the interplay of form and fabric.
- The concept celebrates Leicester's rich legacy.
- The concept allows unique 'contextual' responses to sit within one unifying concept theme.

**Leicester clothes the world**

**Clothes are like buildings, they are created with form and fabric.**

**The re-imagined entrances at the Highcross create a series of urban landmarks inspired by fashion and Leicester's textile legacy.**

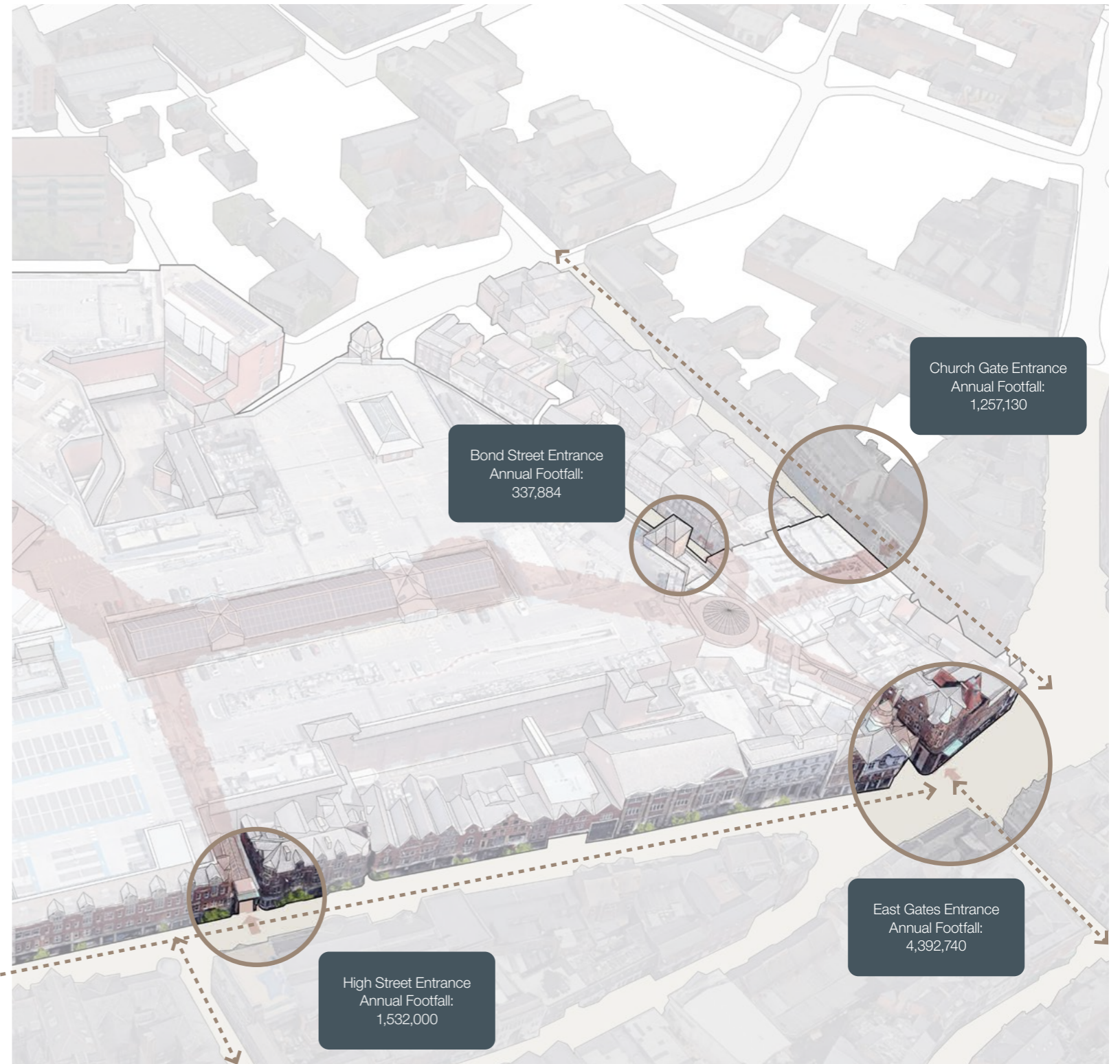


# Concept Approach Unique Responses To Context

The architectural proposals draw on Leicester's rich diversity and heritage, using pattern and texture to tell the city's unique stories. The design concept celebrates the city's vibrant character and cultural legacy.



“ Doing the right thing in one place does not mean doing the same thing in every place ”



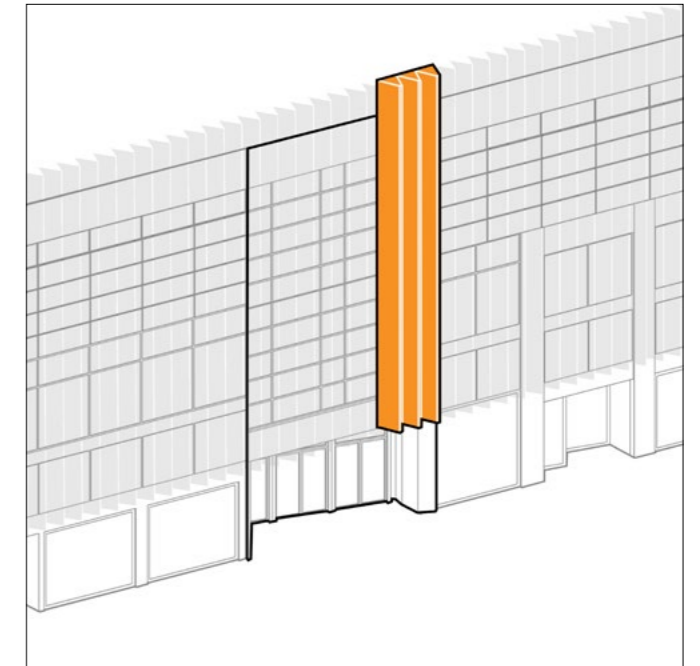
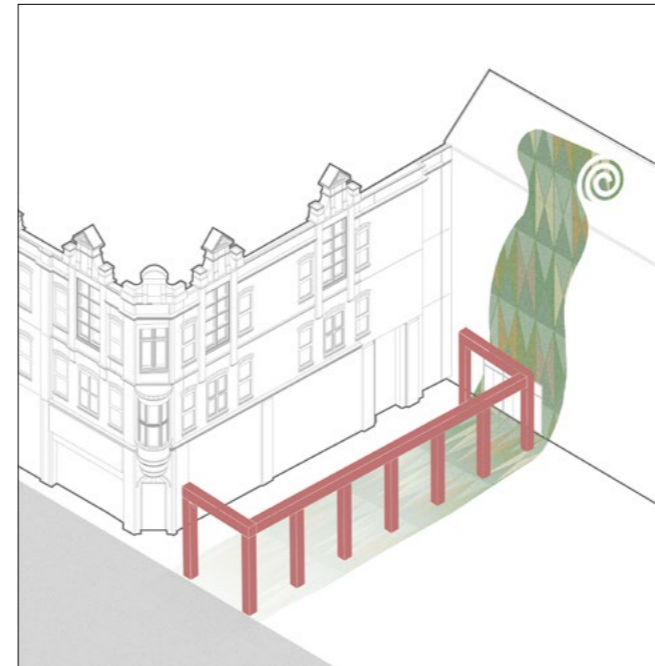
## Design Concept Applying the Concept

The redesigned entrances at Highcross aim to create a series of urban landmarks inspired by fashion and Leicester's textile heritage. While the overarching concept of textiles unifies all the entrances, each design celebrates Leicester's rich textile industry in a unique way.

By maintaining key design elements and aligning with the surrounding context, each entrance thoughtfully integrates with its specific setting, complimenting both the immediate and broader urban environment.

This design concept and subsequent design response has been considered within the framework of Leicester City's planning policy guidance and urban design objectives, specifically concerning the potential impact of the entrance design on the setting of listed buildings and citywide views. The design strategy aligns with LCC's policies and Strategic Criteria:

- Benefits to Leicester and its regeneration programme.
- Responds positively to context (including scale, mass, urban grain and streetscape).
- Appropriate impact on townscape and heritage views.
- Positively relates to public spaces and parks.
- Appropriate impact on local environment such as wind and daylight / sunlight.
- Exceptional architectural quality.
- Human scale design appropriate to context, townscape and heritage.
- Positive street level uses.



The Eastgates Entrance:  
The Curtain Reveal



The Highstreet Entrance:  
The Red Carpet



Church Gate and Newbond Street Entrances:  
The Twisted Pleat.





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# Site Analysis

# Context

This chapter focuses on site analysis to support the proposals. The appraisals include a review of the surrounding conservation areas, townscape analysis, and relevant design guidance, ensuring each entrance contributes positively to Leicester's built environment while respecting its historic and architectural significance.

Leicester's city centre has a varied street pattern. To the south of the High Street there is a network of narrow lanes, courtyards, and arcades that extend from the main streets, creating unique spaces of refuge. These areas, developed over centuries, have long supported the city's trade, commerce, and residential life.

The adjacent diagram illustrates the density and mix of uses of these spaces south of the site, contrasting with the areas north of High Street.

The project aims to enrich the city's character and the experience of its streets, while reinforcing the distinctive qualities of Leicester's historic centre.





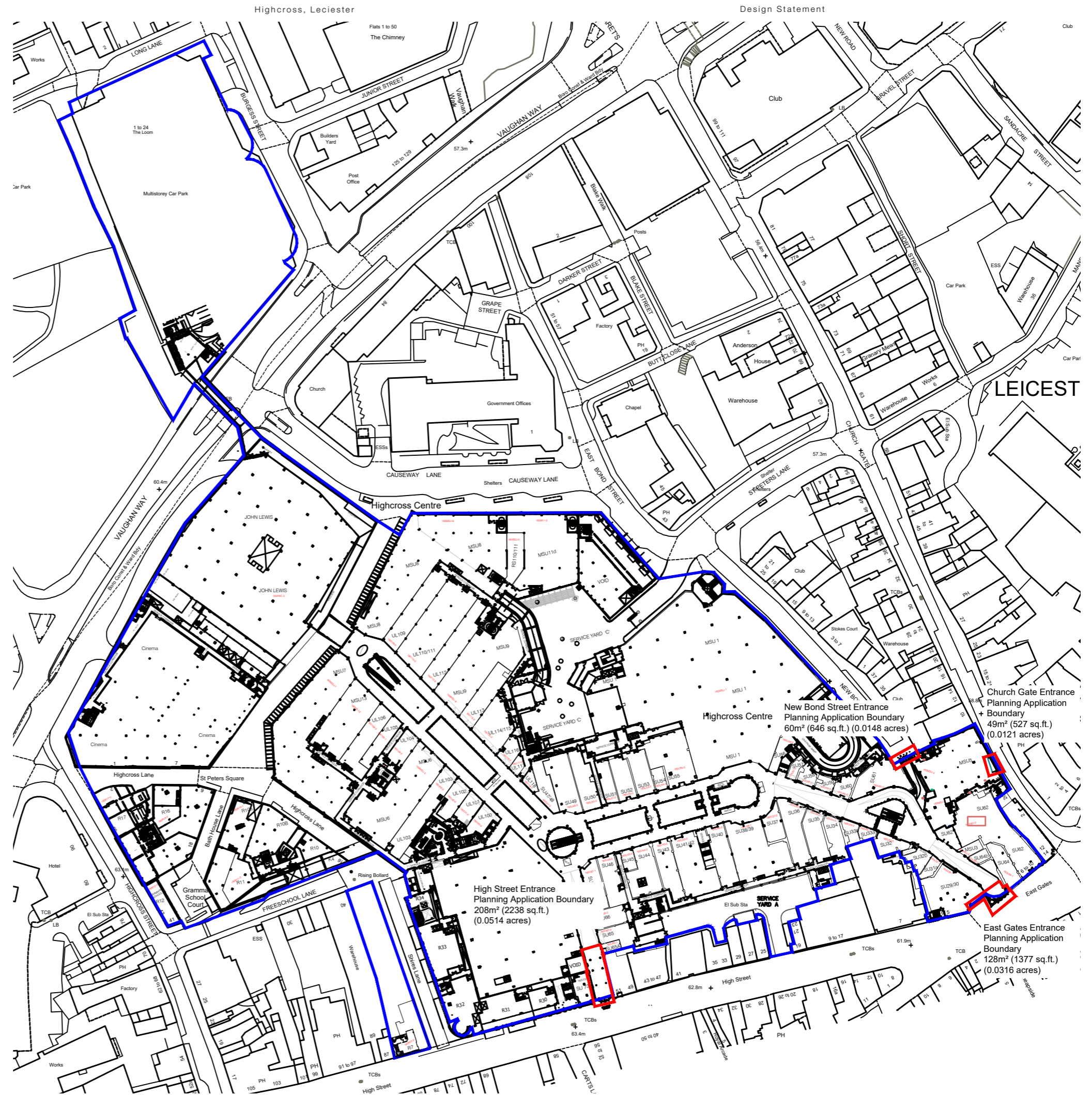
# Site Analysis

## Site Location

Highcross Leicester is a prominent shopping destination situated in the heart of Leicester's City Centre. It occupies a strategic position that makes it a focal point for both locals and visitors.

This study addresses enhancements to four primary entrances of the Highcross Leicester: East Gates, High Street, Church Gate, and New Bond Street. Each entrance serves as a gateway that connects the Highcross to its surrounding environment.

-  Ownership Boundary
-  Combined Planning Application Boundaries (N.b. Planning Strategy is to submit each redline as separate application. Drawing for information only.)



## Site Analysis Historic Development

Leicester's city centre, including the High Street and the Highcross area, reflects a rich historical evolution shaped by its manufacturing heritage.

The street pattern development in this area reveals a blend of historic routes and more recent expansions, reflecting the city's growth and economic shifts over centuries.

Originally, narrow lanes and alleys developed organically around key manufacturing centres, creating a dense, interconnected network that facilitated trade and industry.

The High Street, a primary commercial artery, emerged as a central thoroughfare, while the Highcross area evolved as a focal point for both market activity and urban expansion.



Figure 1: 1888, Ordnance Survey map

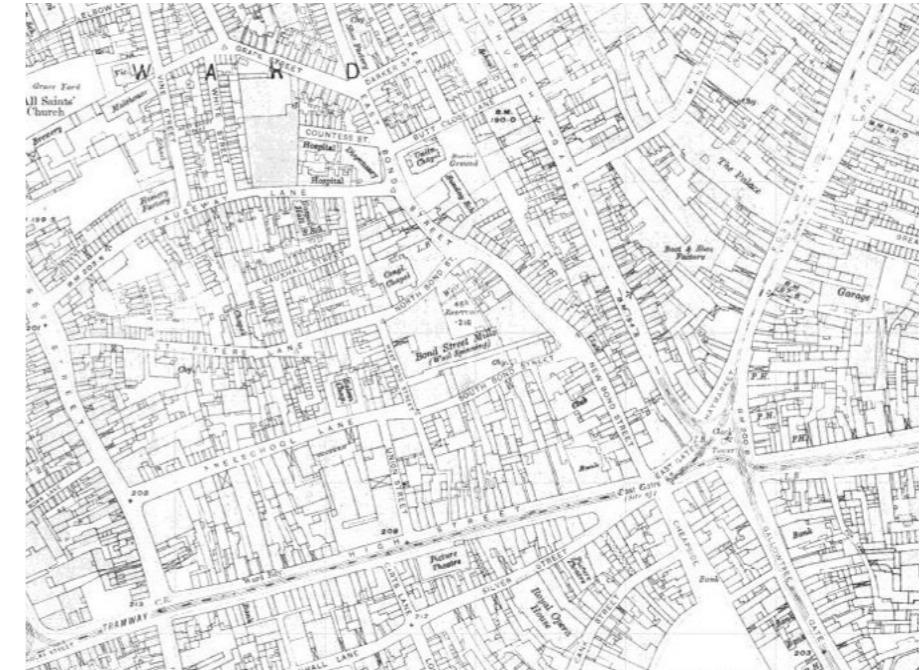


Figure 2: 1915, Ordnance Survey map

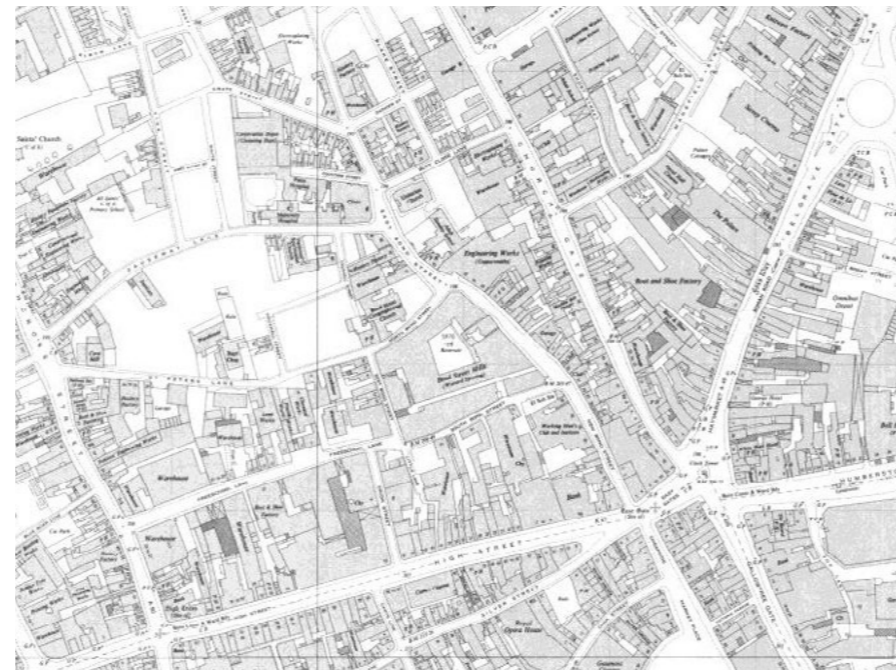


Figure 3: 1953, Ordnance Survey map

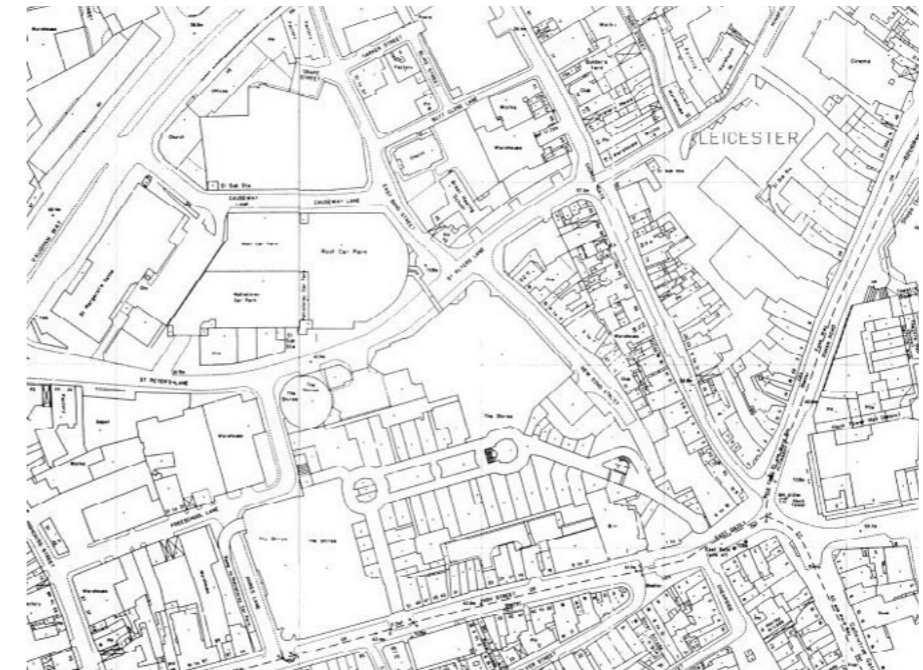


Figure 4: 1990-94, Ordnance Survey map

## Site Analysis

### Built Heritage

Leicester's architectural heritage encompasses a wide range of structures, including many industrial buildings and mills that were prevalent from the mid-1800s until the mid-1970s. These industrial edifices significantly shape the character of the city, complementing the more intricately designed early 20th-century buildings. They stand as a testament to Leicester's industrial and commercial prowess, reflecting the city's historical importance in local industry.



**Figure 2:** Historic Aerial View of Leicester City Centre



**Figure 1:** Historic Aerial View of Leicester City Centre - with East Gates in foreground

## Site Analysis

### Architectural Character

Leicester City Centre is renowned for its architectural diversity, characterised by the use of distinctive red brick complemented by buff-coloured stone coursings, architraves, and white-painted windows. This combination creates a rich visual texture across the cityscape. Buildings often feature strong horizontal coursing, with civic structures showcasing elaborate eaves, turrets, and roofscapes that highlight their prominence.

Early 20th-century commercial buildings in the area also embrace horizontal coursing, typically spanning two levels. While their roofscapes are less ornate, these buildings often display decorative terracotta mouldings and panels on the upper floors, complemented by extensive use of buff-coloured stone and brick.

Key landmarks such as the Grand Hotel and the Midland Auction Mart exemplify Leicester's status as the second wealthiest city in England during the early 20th century. These buildings are distinguished by their exuberant detailing at both roof and ground levels, contributing significantly to the city's architectural legacy and character.



## Site Analysis

### A Vibrant Heritage

Leicester city centre has a diverse array of styles and architectural character. The area is predominantly characterised by late Victorian and early 20th-century buildings, notable for their distinctive character and architectural achievement.

#### Elevations & Facades: Key Observations

Leicester's architectural identity is marked by several key features:

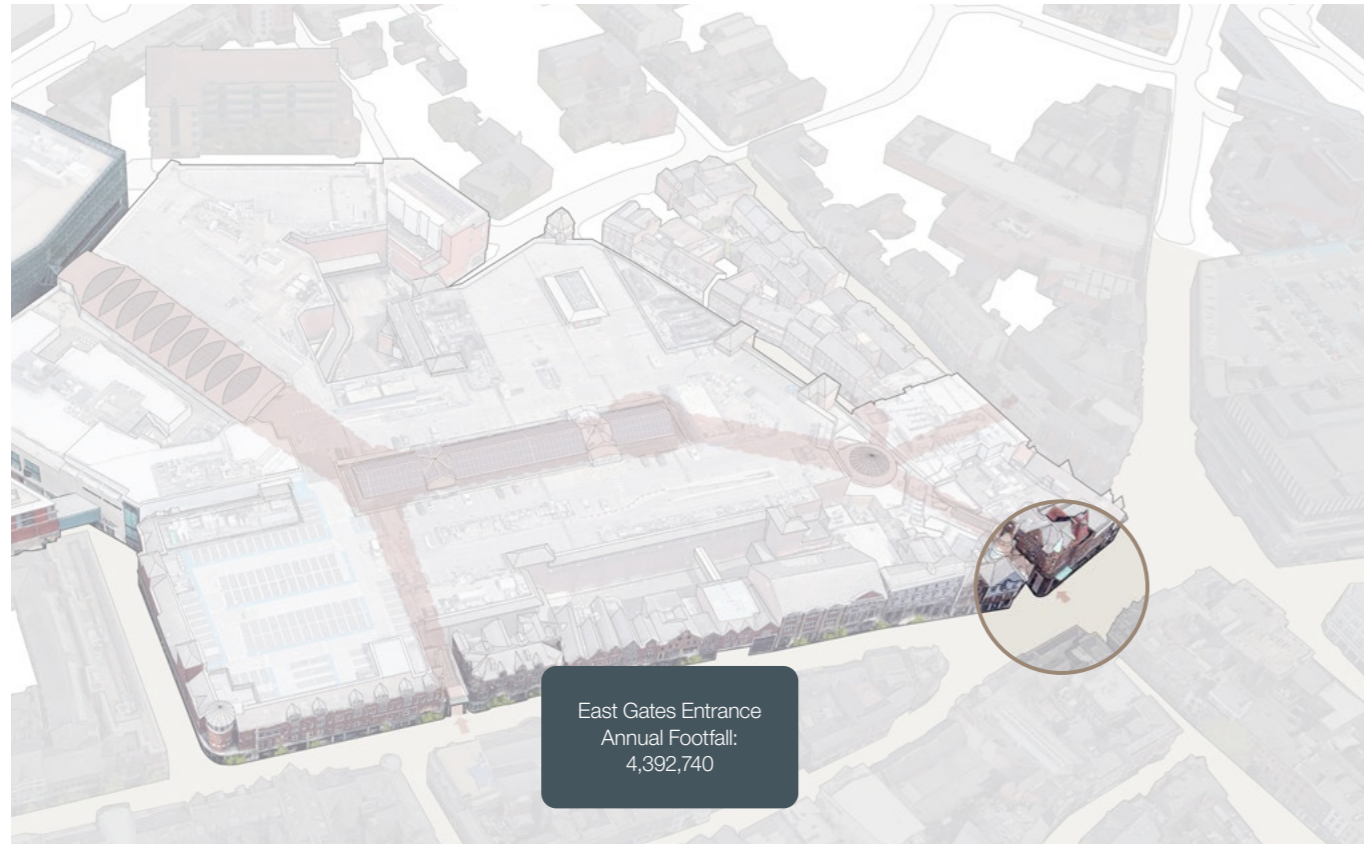
- **Material Palette:** A limited selection of materials and colours, including red and buff-coloured bricks, patterned brick coursing, and buff-coloured stone.
- **Window Styles:** Varied window styles and rhythmic fenestration contribute to the city's distinctive façade design.
- **Horizontal Banding:** The use of horizontal brick banding groups windows together and helps to scale elevations.
- **Roofscape Variation:** Roofscapes vary significantly, with less emphasis on vertical articulation and more elaborate treatments on notable civic and institutional buildings.

These elements combine to create Leicester's unique and varied architectural character, reflecting the city's rich history and development.



# East Gates Entrance Existing Townscape Analysis

The East Gate entrance at Highcross, which experiences the highest foot traffic, requires an upgrade to reflect the scale and quality of the centre. Currently, the canopy and signage are unclear and inadequate, making the entrance difficult to identify and navigate. The area appears cluttered and lacks visibility into the centre, indicating a need for improved transparency and integration of branding. By enlarging the entrance and utilising adjacent space, its prominence and sense of place can be enhanced. Given its location in proximity to a Conservation Area and near listed buildings, any redesign must be approached with sensitivity to the historical and architectural context.



# East Gates Entrance Existing Townscape Analysis

Prominent corner  
on approach from  
High Street (West)

Disconnect between  
heritage asset  
above and entrance  
canopy

Key approach  
/ visibility from  
Leicester City  
Market



Key approach / visibility  
from the Clock Tower /  
Gallowtreegate

## East Gates Entrance Heritage Analysis

### The relevant designated heritage assets concerning the East Gates Entrance are:

- The High Street Conservation Area;
- Lloyds Bank Limited – Grade II Listed Building;
- 8-10 High Street – Grade II Listed Building;
- Silver Arcade (section from Silver Street to Cank Street) – Grade II Listed Building;
- Clock Tower – Grade II Listed Building;
- 10 Cheapside – Grade II Listed Building;
- 12 Cheapside – Grade II Listed Building; and
- Former Eastgates Coffee House – Grade II Listed Building.

### High Street Conservation Area

The East Gates Entrance is located within the ‘High Street Conservation Area.’ There are many factors that combine to create the special interest of the High Street Conservation Area, most notably the high-quality townscape and architecture of the High Street, a product of the varied heights, designs, detailing and roofscapes of its buildings.

The conservation area features columns and pilasters that create strong vertical rhythms with triangular and half-round gables punctuating the skyline, while continuous lines of windows at first and second floor levels form subtle horizontal patterns. Decorative stonework, terracotta and other materials are used with confidence and there are balustrades, finials, domes, and spires to add further visual interest. This creates a strong sense of place, and the effect is enhanced by the intense contrasts of light and shade that arise because of High Street’s east-west orientation.

The High Street Conservation Area Character Appraisal was published in 2006, in the same year planning application ref: 20052347 was approved for development pertaining to “new entrances; East Gates, High Street, Church Gate; New Bond Street.” The Character Appraisals preparation and production is understood to have preceded the implementation and completion of the proposed works, with there being no reference within the Appraisal. However, the Character Appraisal does go on to state that alterations should be appropriate in scale and materials.

The current East Gates Entrance is considered to have a minor level of harm on the conservation area, with the minor harm existing because of the overhanging canopy that partially obscures views adjacent character building (6 to 10 East Gates). The proposed works to remove part of the existing entrance, including the canopy, will be of benefit to the conservation area, through better revealing the surrounding buildings.

Provision of a new entrance that confidently uses decorative perforated metal curtains to add visual interest, and precast concrete to match the surrounding terracotta tones, represents a high-quality modern integration to the conservation area.

### Surrounding Listed Buildings

Lloyds Bank Limited – Grade II Listed Building – a large classical building of three diminishing storeys and six windows. The ground floor is constructed of / façade comprises granite ashlar, tall round-arch windows in rusticated surrounds and giant ionic columns supporting entablature with modillion cornice and pediment over the right-hand doorway with semi-circular fanlight. The first floor features pedimented windows with attached Corinthian columns and balustered aprons, panelled pilasters between windows with moulded cornice at second floor window sill level. The second floor features moulded shouldered second floor windows with carvings in pilasters between and frieze above with carved swags and ribbons. The roof is obscured by a heavy modillion cornice and parapet but does feature chimneys with moulded cornices.

8-10 High Street – Grade II Listed Building – is a shop premises built in 1896 to the designs of Henry Langton Goddard and is a particularly good example of an exuberant late Victorian shop ornamented with finely worked terracotta and multiple tiers of decoration sweeping around the curved frontage of its rounded corner site, terminating in an eye-catching conical roof. The building contributes to the distinctive turn-of-the-century commercial character of the city centre and has strong group value with the classical Lloyd’s Bank and Silver Arcade.

Silver Arcade (section from Silver Street to Cank Street) – Grade II Listed Building – on side of the building that sits within the setting of Silver Street, the elevation (three storeys) is formed of ashlar and features a central large round-arch entrance with splayed and pilastered two storey bays to each side and splayed oriel above.

Clock Tower – Grade II Listed Building – The Haymarket Clock Tower designed by Joseph Goddard in Gothic Style and constructed of ashlar. The clock tower is square on plan with pointed-arch doorways at base with iron gates and piers at corners supporting statutes, with canopies over, of Simon de Montfort, William Wiggeston, Sir T. White and Alderman Newton all by Samuel Bardfield. The tower also features polished granite shafts with carved capitals and the spiral mouldings round the tower indicate the staircase inside. The Clock face additionally comprises flanking pinnacles and spire.

10 Cheapside – Grade II Listed Building – is an early C19, stuccoed, moulded eaves board, comprising four storeys. The building features a Victorian double-fronted shop with plate-glass window and entablature. There is a low-pitched slate roof with abutted gable ends and some remains of timber framing from probably C17.

12 Cheapside – Grade II Listed Building – is a stuccoed with modern applied sham timber framing and moulded stone cornice and blocking course. The building comprises four storeys and a slate roof with gable ends. The ground floor features C19 decorated flat pilasters with fascia over, at each end panelled wide double doors with rectangular fanlights, central modern window. To the rear are early C18 stuccoed brick, heavy modillion eaves cornice.

Former Eastgates Coffee House – Grade II Listed Building – is a Coffee House of 1885 by Edward Burgess that has later experienced C20 and C21 alterations. It is a good example of an uncommon building type that shares features with George and Peto’s Ossington Coffee Tavern in Newark which is considered to represent the architectural high-water mark of Temperance architecture. The building comprises the profusion of carved and moulded decorative detailing that creates an eye-catching building of considerable architectural ambition.

The proposed development sits within the setting of the above listed buildings and therefore the development will not alter the physical appearance or fabric of any of the listed buildings. The East Gate Entrance is not considered to form any special contribution to the setting of any of the above listed buildings. Further, accounting for the modest scale of the proposed works that are external elevational changes, the potential for impacts beyond the site itself is highly limited. The proposed development is therefore considered to have a minor beneficial impact on the setting of the above listed buildings. The refurbishment will enhance the setting of the listed building through provision of a better-quality entrance than what is currently in situ.

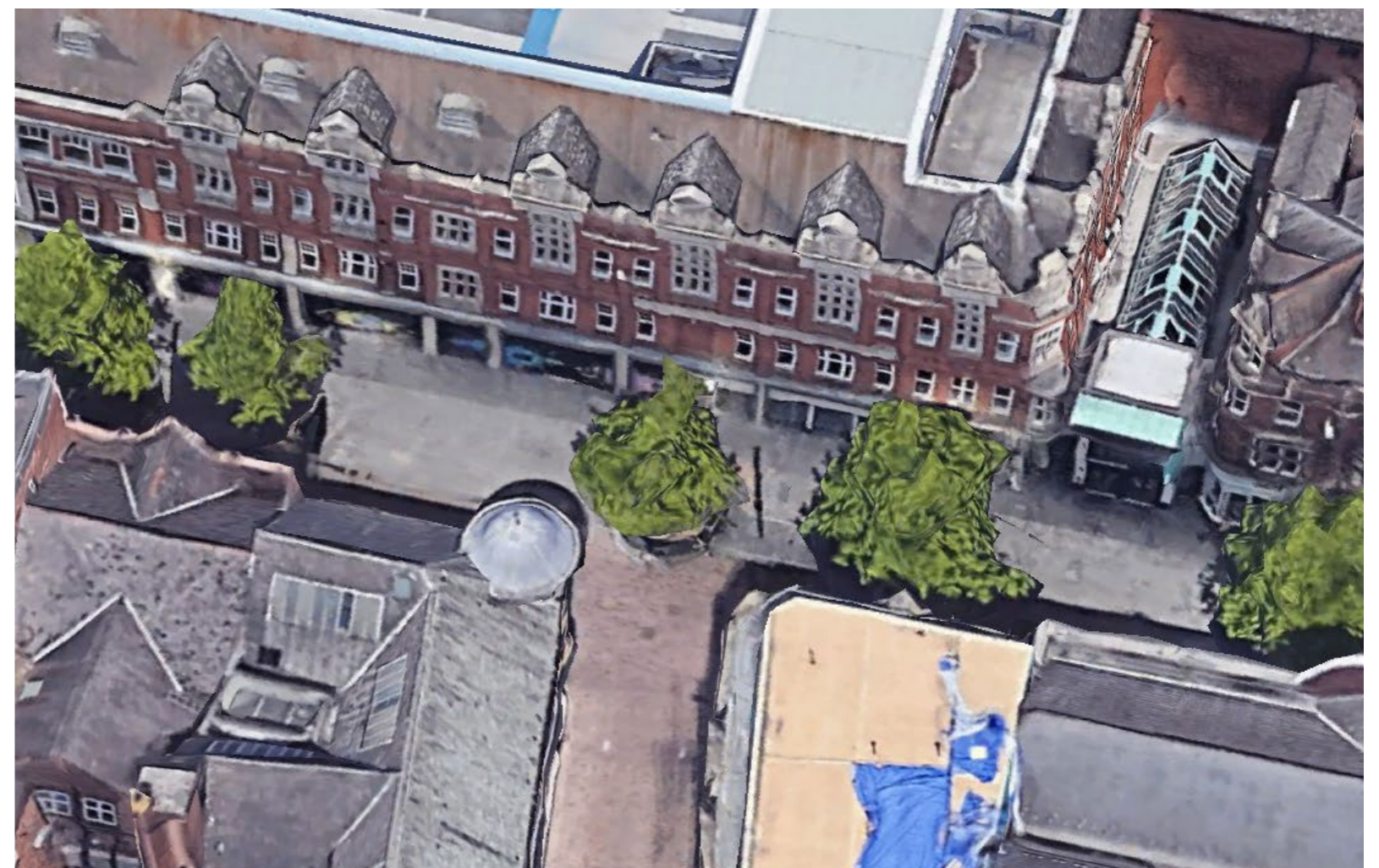
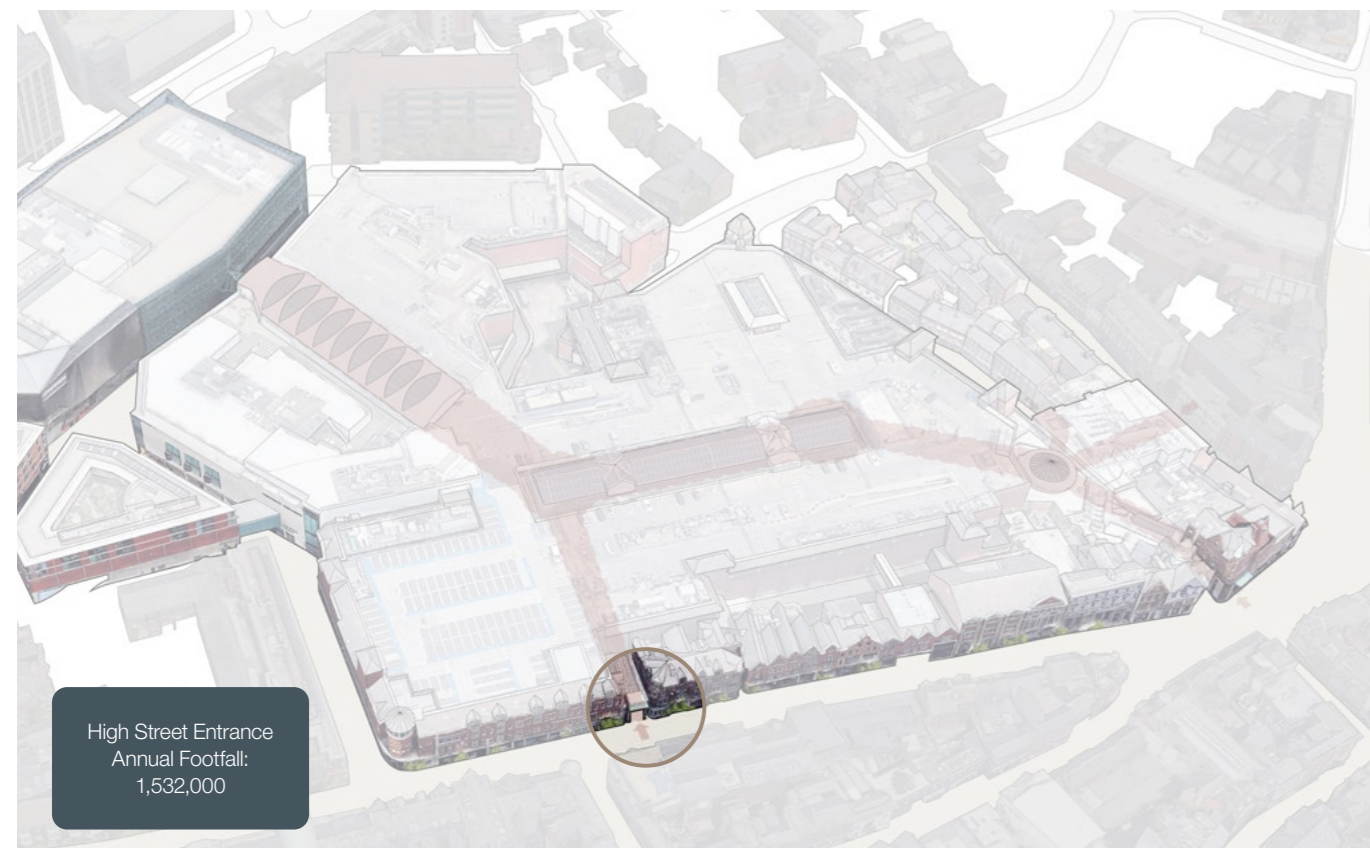


*High Street in the 1960s, seen from the corner of Silver Street. The timber and copper lantern forms a striking feature to 1-3 High Street.*

# High Street Entrance Existing Townscape Analysis

The High Street entrance at Highcross, has the second highest footfall.

The current canopy and signage compete with the surrounding architectural heritage, making the entrance hard to identify and obscuring views of adjacent character buildings. Enhancing transparency and reintroducing the historic street pattern, could improve its prominence. Any redesign must be sensitive to the historical and architectural context.



## High Street Entrance Heritage Analysis

The relevant designated heritage assets concerning the High Street Entrance are:

The High Street Conservation Area;  
58 High Street – Grade II Listed Building; and  
Coronation Buildings – Grade II Listed.

The High Street Entrance is located within the ‘High Street Conservation Area.’ There are many factors that combine to create the special interest of the High Street Conservation Area, most notably the high-quality townscape and architecture of the High Street, a product of the varied heights, designs, detailing and roofscapes of its buildings.

The conservation area features Columns and pilasters create strong vertical rhythms with triangular and half-round gables punctuating the skyline, while continuous lines of windows at first and second floor levels form subtle horizontal patterns. Decorative stonework, terracotta and other materials are used with confidence and there are balustrades, finials, domes, and spires to add further visual interest. This creates a strong sense of place, and the effect is enhanced by the intense contrasts of light and shade that arise because of High Street’s east-west orientation.

The High Street Conservation Area Character Appraisal was published in 2006, in the same year planning application ref: 20052347 was approved for development pertaining to “new entrances; East Gates, High Street, Church Gate; New Bond Street.” The Character Appraisals preparation and production is understood to have preceded the implementation and completion of the proposed works, with there being no reference within the Appraisal. However, the Character Appraisal does go on to state that alterations should be appropriate in scale and materials.

The current High Street Entrance is considered to have a minor level of harm on the conservation area, with the minor harm existing because the entrance structure, roof and canopy obscures views adjacent character buildings.

The proposed works to remove the entrance structure, roof and canopy that form the High Street Entrance to provide a new area of open space will be of substantial benefit as it will better reveal the conservation area. Through creating an open area amenity space, the decorative architectural design features of the buildings that enclose the space will be promoted and can be enjoyed from the seating / recreational space. The polished precast concrete portal feature comprises a pink tone that is complementary to the facing materials that surround the Site. Further visual interest is provided through the introduction of a glazed ceramic tile feature fixed to the existing shopping centre wall.

### Surrounding Listed Buildings

58 High Street – Grade II Listed Building – is a shop premises formed of sandstone ashlar, with a slate roof and lead. The building is of a free classical style with art nouveau detailing and comprises 3 storeys. The High Street frontage features two panels of glazed tiling that depict firstly a medieval alchemist with pestle and mortar and carboys set in an arcade over floral plaques either side a central inscription.

Coronation Buildings – Grade II Listed – forms seven shop fronts mostly C20 with original faience tiled pilasters between, the central shop front and upper floor entrance slightly recessed with original wooden fascia board.

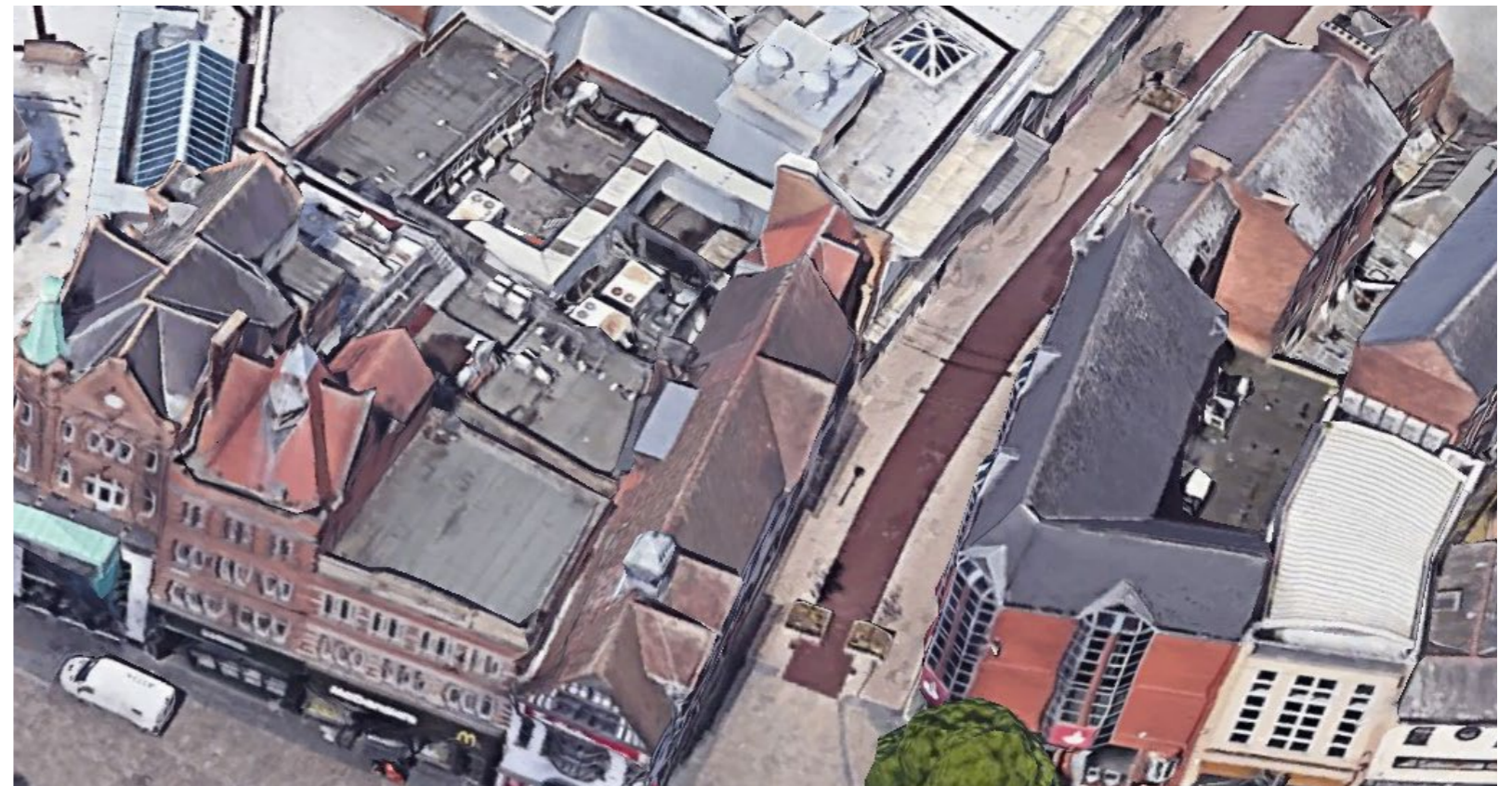
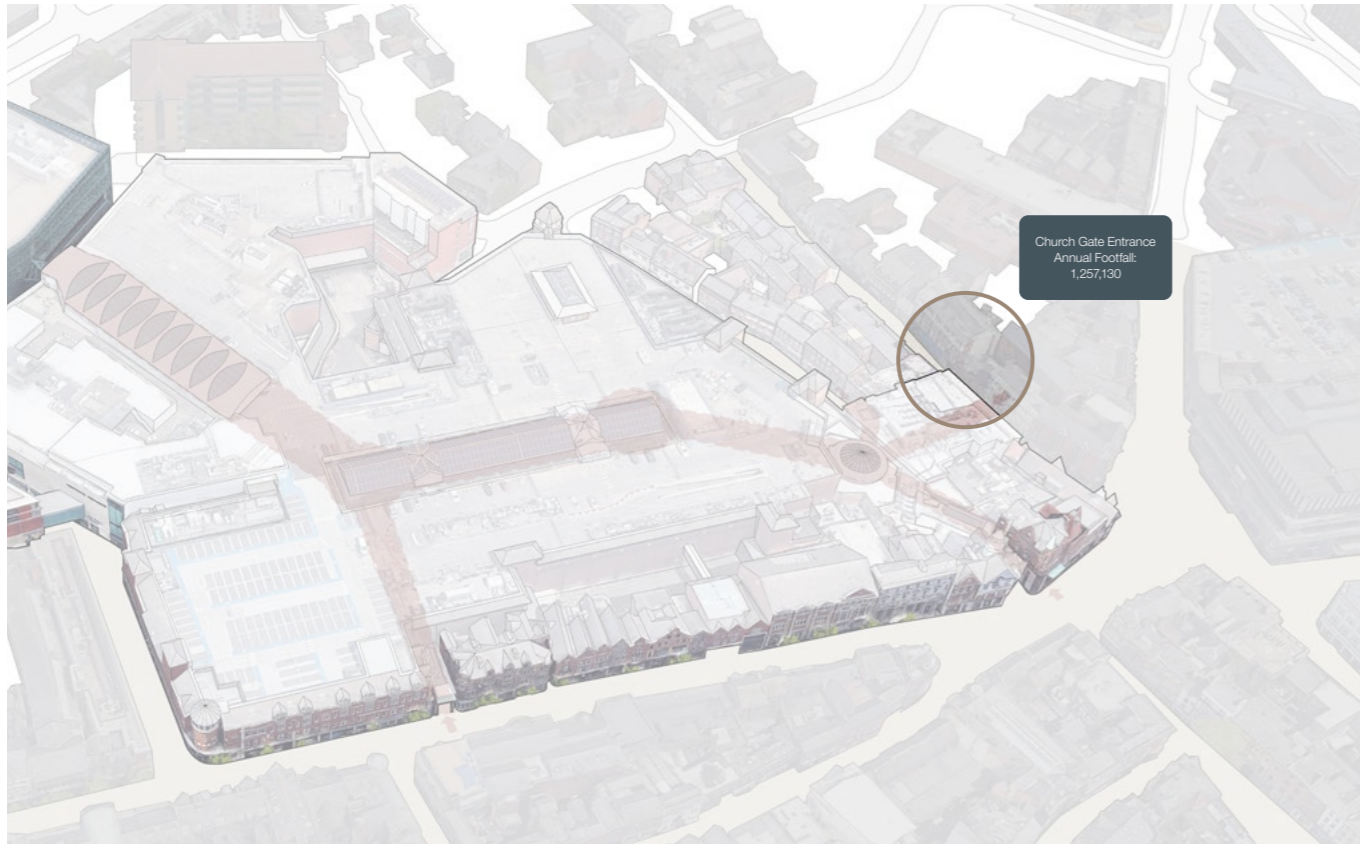
The proposed development sits within the setting of the above listed buildings and therefore the development will not alter the physical appearance or fabric of any of the listed buildings. The High Street Entrance is not considered to form any special contribution to the setting of any of the above listed buildings. The proposed works are considered to be of benefit to the setting of the listed buildings through removing a minorly harmful structure, that in turn will reveal an examples of high quality historic architectural detailing that is contained within the adjacent buildings, of which is currently obscured by the current entrance.



Looking east along High Street from the corner of Carts Lane, (c1985)

# Church Gate Entrance, Highcross Existing Townscape Analysis

The Church Gate entrance experiences lower footfall than the East Gate due to its location on a narrow side street. The main challenge is to improve its visibility and recognition from the city square. At present, the canopy and signage are unclear and difficult to spot, with the entrance appearing visually cluttered and lacking transparency. To address this, the branding should be clearer and the design simplified, integrating the canopy without the need for additional signage. Updating the facade by removing awkward canopies and improving the curtain wall would enhance its appearance. Although located in a conservation area, the adjacent newer buildings allow for sensitive yet impactful changes.



## Church Gate Entrance Heritage Analysis

The relevant designated heritage assets for the Church Gate Entrance are:

- The 'Church Gate Conservation Area,' (that it forms part of); and
- The Former Eastgates Coffee House – Grade II Listed Building.

### Church Gate Conservation Area

The Church Gate Conservation Area has a unique character within the city as it shows within its building stock, the development of part an important city thoroughfare from the Medieval Era to the present day. The building stock is less grand than many other city centre streets, demonstrating how previous generations adapted and modified existing buildings for contemporary purposes.

Along Church Gate and East Bond Street, the variety in the height and scale of the buildings creates strong visual interest and reflects the piecemeal development of the area over the past three centuries. Ranging between two and four-stories, the changes in roof lines and chimney heights create a varied, jumbled, skyline, with gable ends alternately visible. This is one of the area's strongest visual features.

The Site is located within the 'Commercial Zone' Character Zone which is identified to have undergone considerable redevelopment in line with contemporary city designs.

The Church Gate Entrance is identified as having a negative effect on the conservation area. The removal of the canopies and introduction / addition of a new lightweight 'folded' art banners and vinyl masking to streamline and modernise the building's façade is considered to improve the building's impact on the conservation from harmful to neutral.

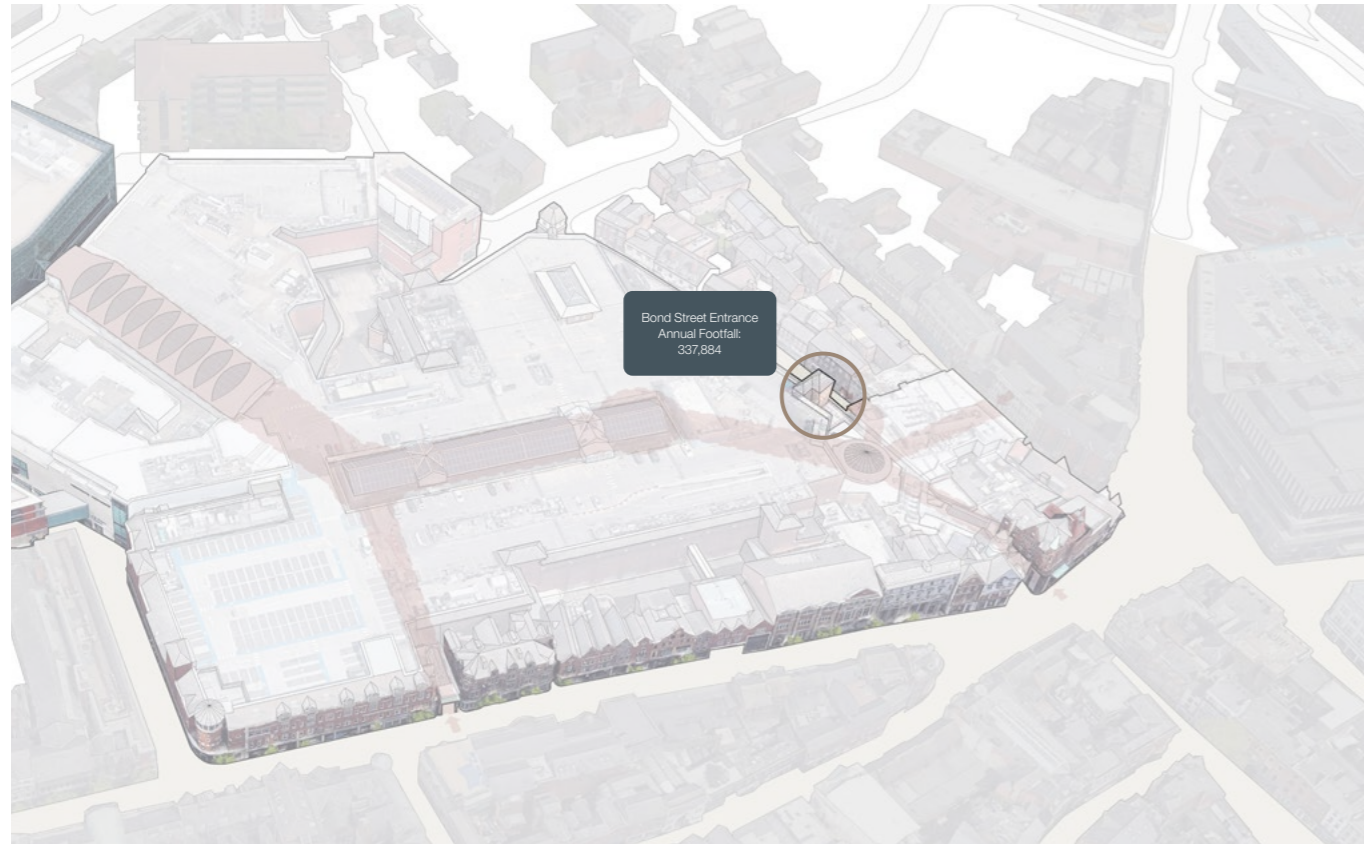
### Surrounding Listed Buildings

Former Eastgates Coffee House – Grade II Listed Building – is a Coffee House of 1885 by Edward Burgess that has later experienced C20 and C21 alterations. It is a good example of an uncommon building type that shares features with George and Peto's Ossington Coffee Tavern in Newark which is considered to represent the architectural high-water mark of Temperance architecture. The building comprises the profusion of carved and moulded decorative detailing that creates an eye-catching building of considerable architectural ambition.

Clock Tower – Grade II Listed Building – The Haymarket Clock Tower designed by Joseph Goddard in Gothic Style and constructed of ashlar. The clock tower is square on plan with pointed-arch doorways at base with iron gates and piers at corners supporting statutes, with canopies over, of Simon de Montfort, William Wiggeston, Sir T. White and Alderman Newton all by Samuel Bardfield. The tower also features polished granite shafts with carved capitals and the spiral mouldings round the tower indicate the staircase inside. The Clock face additionally comprises flanking pinnacles and spire.

The proposed development sits within the setting of the above listed buildings and therefore the development will not result in any changes to the physical appearance or fabric of any of the listed building. The Church Gate entrance at present is of detriment to the setting of the listed buildings, and the proposed development that is modest in scale and concerns external elevational changes is considered to have a neutral impact at worst, if not beneficial through the improvement and added visual interest that the proposed design offers.

# New Bond Street Entrance Existing Townscape Analysis



## New Bond Street Entrance Heritage Analysis

The relevant designated heritage asset for the New Bond Street Entrance is the 'Church Gate Conservation Area' that it forms part of

The Church Gate Conservation Area has a unique character within the city as it shows within its building stock, the development of part an important city thoroughfare from the Medieval Era to the present day. The building stock is less grand than many other city centre streets, demonstrating how previous generations adapted and modified existing buildings for contemporary purposes.

Along Church Gate and East Bond Street, the variety in the height and scale of the buildings creates strong visual interest and reflects the piecemeal development of the area over the past three centuries. Ranging between two and four-stories, the changes in roof lines and chimney heights create a varied, jumbled, skyline, with gable ends alternately visible. This is one of the area's strongest visual features.

The Site is located within the 'Commercial Zone' Character Zone which is identified to have undergone considerable redevelopment in line with contemporary city designs.

The long blank facades along New Bond Street, as well as the vehicular and service entrances, lead to a lack of activity and a prevalence of heavy goods vehicles manoeuvring can unsettle pedestrians and detract from the area.

The New Bond Street Entrance is considered to present a neutral / minor level of harm on the conservation area. The proposed development is considered to improve the entrances contribution to the conservation to neutral / minorly beneficial through creating visual interest with the introduction of new lightweight art banners and vinyl masking film to streamline and modernise the building's façade.

Online map link for reference [https://maps.leicester.gov.uk/map/Aurora.svc/run?script=\Aurora\w3\PLANNING\w3HnC.AuroraScript%24&show\\_layers=CA&nocache=66636fef-0883-6b9c-9084-3f30cfd4bb76&resize=always](https://maps.leicester.gov.uk/map/Aurora.svc/run?script=\Aurora\w3\PLANNING\w3HnC.AuroraScript%24&show_layers=CA&nocache=66636fef-0883-6b9c-9084-3f30cfd4bb76&resize=always)

Heritage England Listed Building Map Link  
<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/map-search>

4

Planning  
Policy



# Introduction

S38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires an application be determined in accordance with a development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. A development plan is a collection of planning documents that will guide future growth and development for housing, employment, leisure and retail for a specified time period. The development plan for Leicester is comprised of the following documents:

- Core Strategy (2014); and the
- City of Leicester Local Plan – Saved Policies Version (2006).



## Planning Policy

### Policy Identification and Consideration

The adopted Policies Map for Highcross identifies that the shopping centre is located within the 'Central Shopping Core' and 'Central Commercial Zone.'

Whilst there are no relevant policies for the determination of the applications within the City of Leicester Local Plan – Saved Policies (2006), the Core Strategy (CS) includes CS Policy 11 (Retail Hierarchy) and CS Policy 12 (City Centre) which both seek to promote the growth of the city centre as a sub-regional shopping and leisure location. New retail, leisure, and commercial uses will be directed and prioritised within the city centre, in and around Highcross. The Central Shopping Core will be the focus for retail development.

It is therefore imperative that Highcross, a prominent retail destination, reflects the highest standards across all areas of the shopping centre, to sustain and further develop the city's sub-regional shopping status.

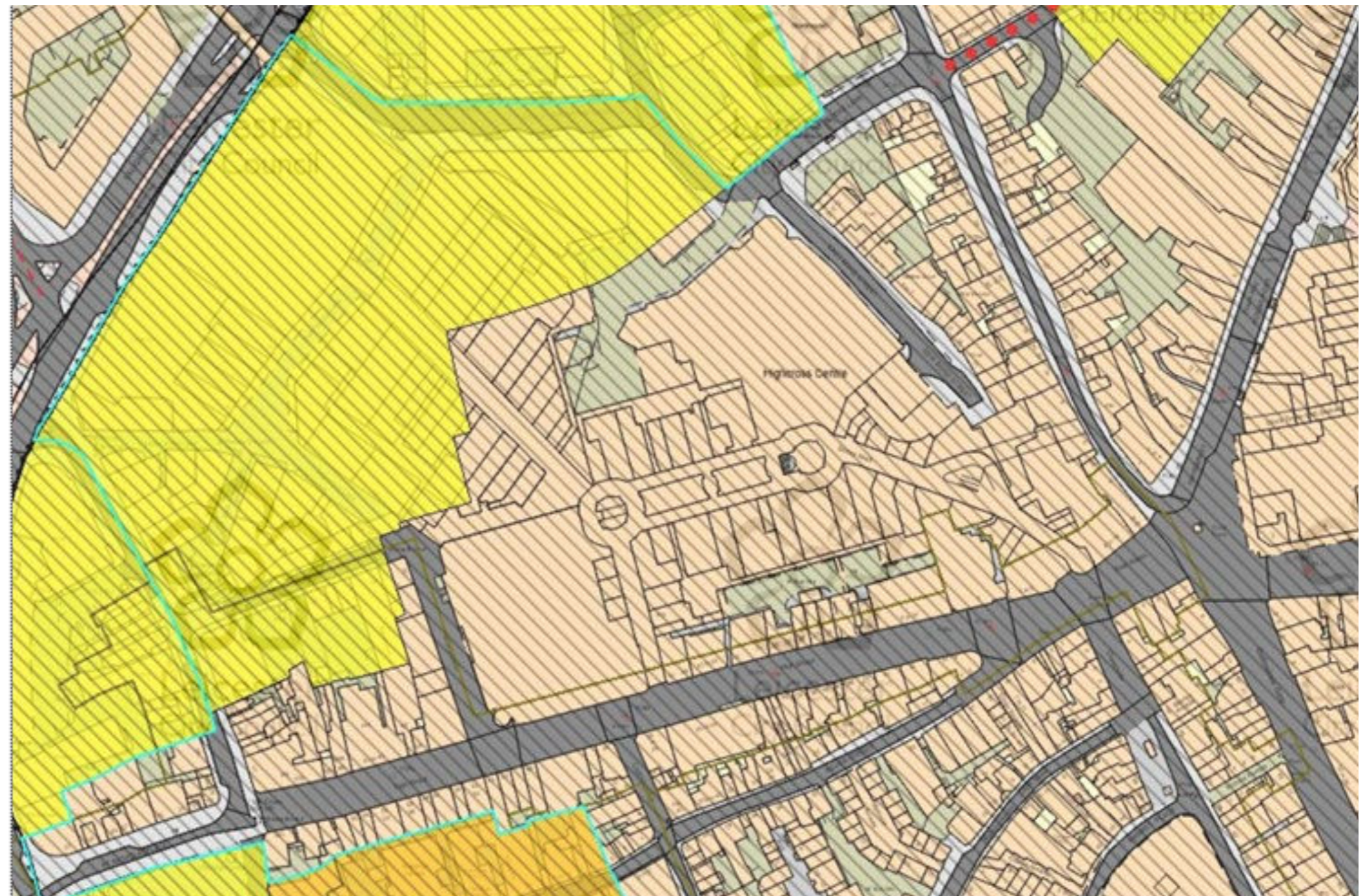
The proposed improvement of the entrances will contribute to achieving the above policy objectives by improving the presence of the routes into and out of the shopping centre. This legibility is currently lacking. This will help improve crucial footfall within the city centre to support its vitality and viability.

Furthermore, the investment at Highcross will support the objectives of the Heart of Leicester strategy to market the city centre to attract new retailers, leisure providers and professional service businesses.

In addition to the above, CS Policy 3 (Designing Quality Places) requires development to be high-quality, well designed and contribute positively to the character and appearance of the built environment. The proposed revisions to the key entrances are considered to be in accordance with CS Policy 3. The designs for each entrance have been developed following significant work to understand local context and appropriate design themes. The "thread" of textiles ties together each of the new entrances and provides for individual contextual response while ensuring a cohesive response. Each entrance will be immediately identifiable as being the Highcross Leicester. The use of high-quality durable materials and balanced proportions, whilst introducing vibrant contemporary designs that demonstrate Leicester's evolution, strengthen the sense of place and ensure a harmonious integration into the street scape.

Finally, the entrances currently represent a poor level of design that detracts from the surrounding street scenes including designated and undesignated heritage assets. Indeed, they present a less than substantial (and at the very bottom end of minor harm) to the relative individual conservation areas that they are contained within (High Street and Church Gate) and wider setting of heritage assets.

The new entrances to East Gate, High Street and Church Gate will secure a minor beneficial enhancement of the character and setting of the High Street and Church Gate Conservations supporting the development of an attractive city centre in accordance with CS Policy 18 (Historic Environment).



## Planning Policy Material Considerations

### Emerging Local Plan

In accordance with Paragraph 48 of the NPPF (2023), an important material consideration in the determination of applications in the city centre will be the emerging Local Plan which was submitted for examination in September 2023.

Like the adopted CS (which the emerging Plan will eventually replace), the policies of this emerging plan are supportive of proposals that positively contribute to the city centre's sub-regional status. This includes Draft Policy TCR01 (Hierarchy of Town Centres), Draft Policy TCR03 (City Centre) and Draft Policy TCR04 (Central Shopping Core (Primary Shopping Area)).

The supporting text to Draft Policy TCR03 (City Centre) (Para 13.20) also states that the Council will support new development that makes a positive contribution to improving the vitality of the city centre and the overall mix of uses to provide a high-quality visitor experience.

### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The current version of the NPPF is also an important material consideration and is wholly supportive of the proposed development. Of particular note is:

- Paragraph 85 which states that planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt;
- Paragraph 90 which states that planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation;
- Paragraph 135 which states, inter alia, that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;  
are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping; and  
are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change.

## Planning Policy Designated Heritage Assets - Conservation Areas / Statutorily and Locally Listed Buildings

### Conservation Areas

Leicester City Council designate certain places as 'conservation areas' due to their special historic and architectural interest. The designation of a conservation area recognises the unique quality of an area as a whole and character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. It includes all features within the area, such as topography, urban layout, street furniture, open spaces, hard and soft landscaping, through recognising the integral parts that collectively contribute to its character and distinctiveness. In these areas, the preservation and enhancement of the existing townscape, alongside individual buildings, is of particular importance.

Both national legislation and local planning policy requires the protection and/or preservation of the conservation areas.

### Statutorily Listed Buildings

Listed buildings are buildings, objects or structures that have been judged to be of national importance in terms of their architectural or historic interest. Listed buildings are added to a national list which is compiled by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media, and Sport. There are three grades of listed building (Grade I, Grade II\*, and Grade II), whereby Grade I Listings are awarded the most protection due to their 'exceptional interest' and, Grade II to a lesser extent being of 'special interest.'

Whilst none of the entrances form part of a listed building, the East Gates, High Street and Church Gates Entrances are surrounded by, and are within the view of several listed buildings, therefore forming part of their 'setting.' As listed buildings are understood, experienced, and appreciated in conjunction with its relationship to the surrounding environment, Highcross's Entrances contribute to the significance of such historic assets. Great consideration has therefore been given to ensure the proposed development is not of detriment to the surrounding listed buildings to enhance and preserve their settings.



5

Design

Development

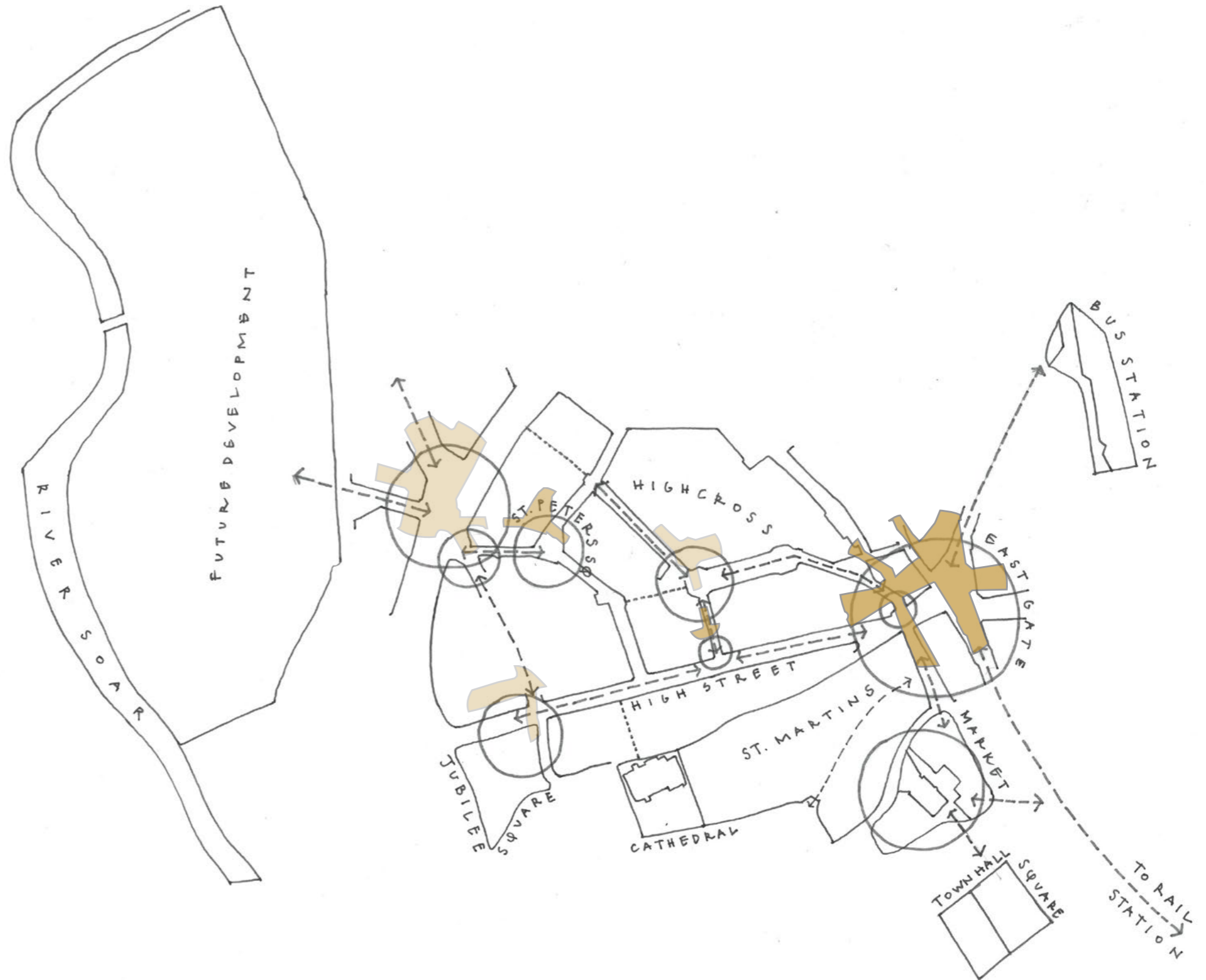
# Design Development

The Design Development chapter outlines the consultation process with Leicester City Council's planning authority, during which specific issues were identified and addressed.

Key concerns included the durability of materials, particularly in areas of public interaction, where robust, high-quality finishes have been incorporated to ensure long-term resilience.

The connectivity of the High Street entrance was also a focus, with the design re-integrating this entrance into the existing street network of The Lanes, improving pedestrian flow.

Furthermore, heritage considerations were addressed by selecting materials with tonal qualities that harmonise with the surrounding historic context, ensuring a sensitive response to Leicester's architectural character.



## Design Development Consultation

### Introduction

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### Engagement with Leicester City Council and its Officers

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### Engagement with Historic England

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### Engagement with Leicester's Conservation Advisory Panel

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### Engagement with the Mayor and Ward Members

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### Wider Public Consultation

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### Results

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# Placeholder

Placeholder in the DAS - following the meeting the LPA WG will issue table / text covering the dates of the meetings, key points raised and a section for design commentary from 360.

## Design Development The East Gates Entrance

The East Gate Entrance at Highcross Leicester re-imagines the act of arrival as a dramatic unveiling, where a folded 'fabric' curtain is pulled back to reveal the new entrance.

The folded 'fabric' at the corner is a deliberate tool to help the elevation define the corner presence and better tie in to the column structure that sits above.

This architectural gesture celebrates the site's rich heritage, blending the old with the new. Through its materiality and design, the entrance conveys a sense of permanence, anchoring Highcross within Leicester's historic urban landscape.

“ The curtain is pulled back to reveal a new re-imagined entrance to the Highcross. Celebrating the heritage that surrounds it. ”

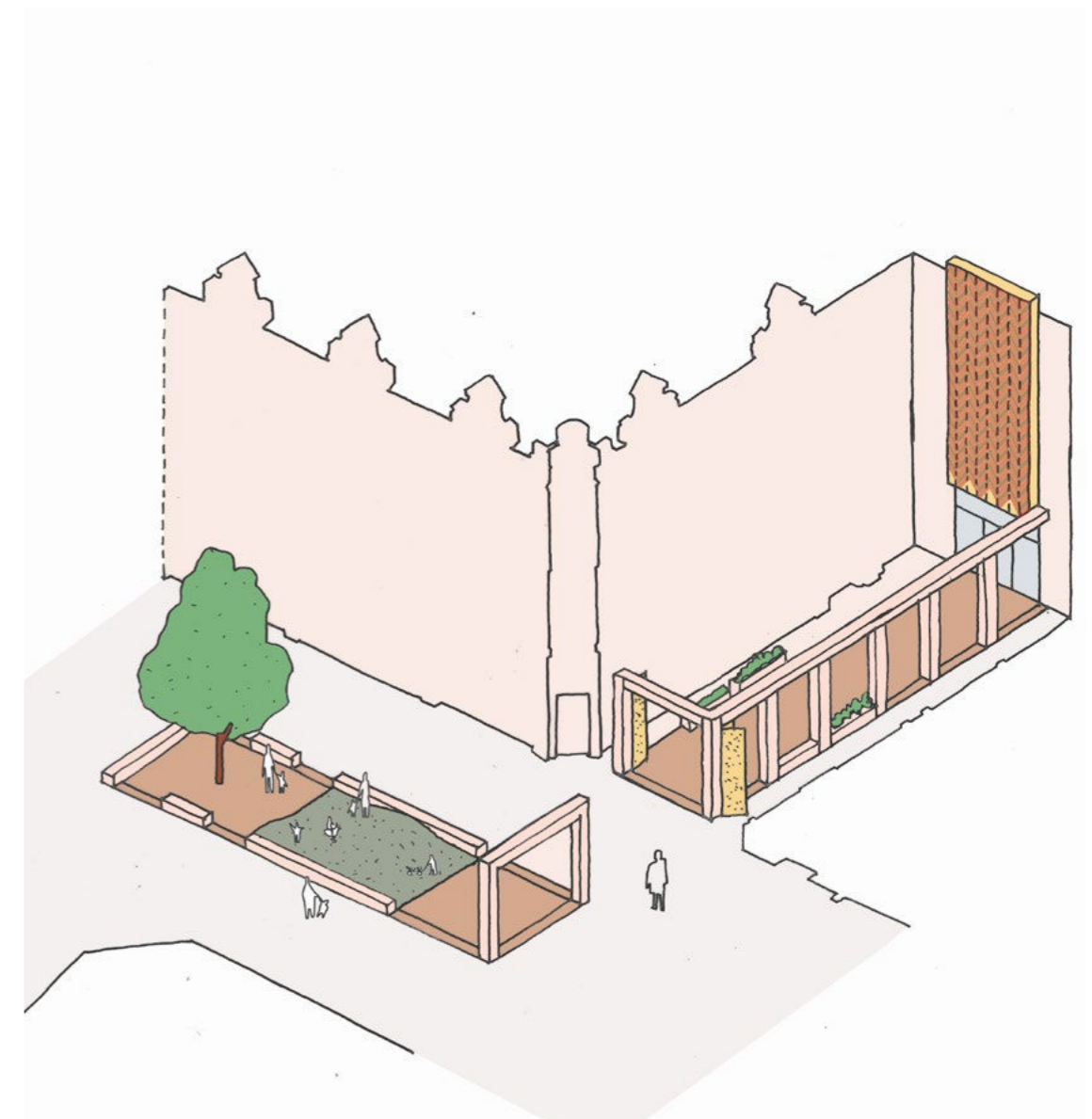
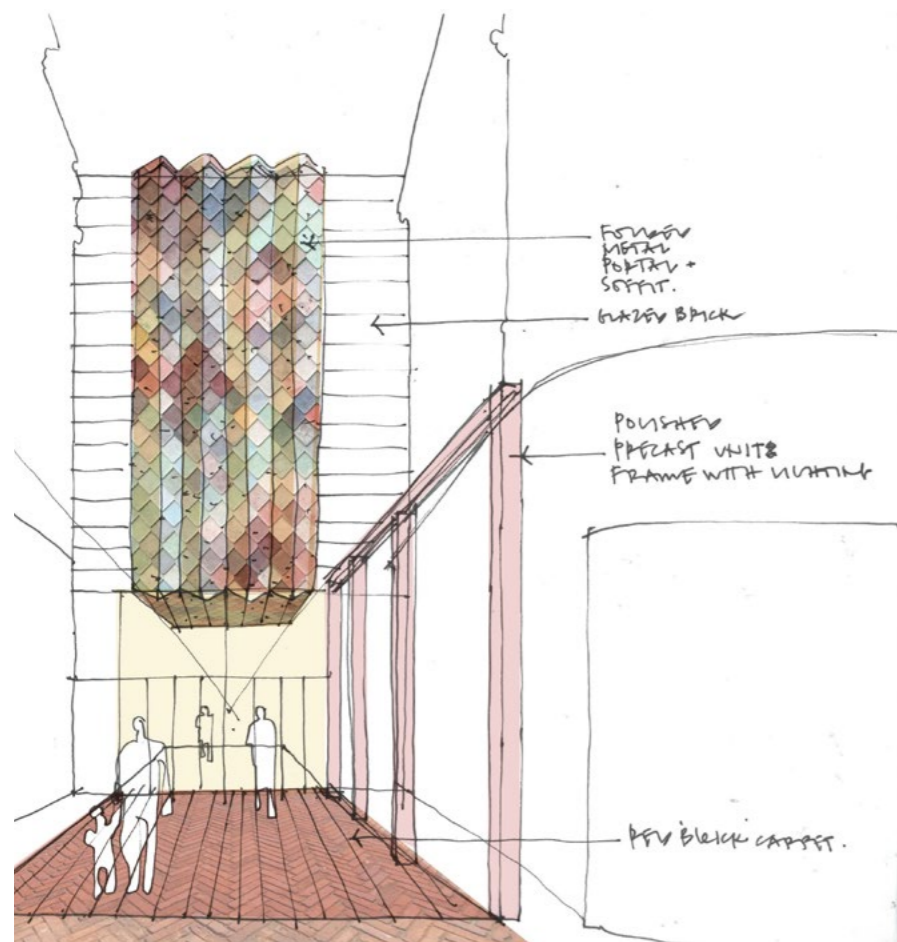


## Design Development The High Street Entrance

The High Street Entrance at Highcross Leicester acts as a welcoming urban tapestry, folding seamlessly from the building's elevation to the ground.

This bold gesture not only seeks to reconnect the historic street pattern but provides a vibrant gathering point for the community. The tapestry-like form unravels into a patterned "urban carpet," a new, legible, and welcoming public realm.

“ A patterned tapestry unravels into a ground carpet, transforming the High Street into a vibrant park for the community of Leicester. ”



## Design Development The Church Gate Entrance

The Church Gate Entrance at Highcross Leicester is designed to catch attention and create intrigue from a distance, particularly when viewed from the High Street and Clocktower. Inspired by folded fabric, the entrance features a series of twisted fins that reveal stories of Leicester as people move past. Acting as both a totem and a marker, the design emphasises movement, legibility, and dynamic interaction with its surroundings.



“ A series of twisted fins reveal stories of Leicester as you pass by. ”

## Design Development The Bond Street Entrance

The New Bond Street Entrance at Highcross Leicester is designed to draw attention and create intrigue from afar. Taking inspiration from folded fabric, the entrance is a series of folded fins that generate a dynamic play of light and shadow. The fins serve both as a totem and a marker, guiding pedestrians and creating a strong visual identity for the space.

The entrance also forms part of a dialogue with the Church Gate Entrance, establishing a sense of duality between the two points. Together, they act as gateways to the Highcross Leicester, contributing to a cohesive yet varied architectural experience.

“ A series of twisted fins reveal stories of Leicester as you pass by.

”





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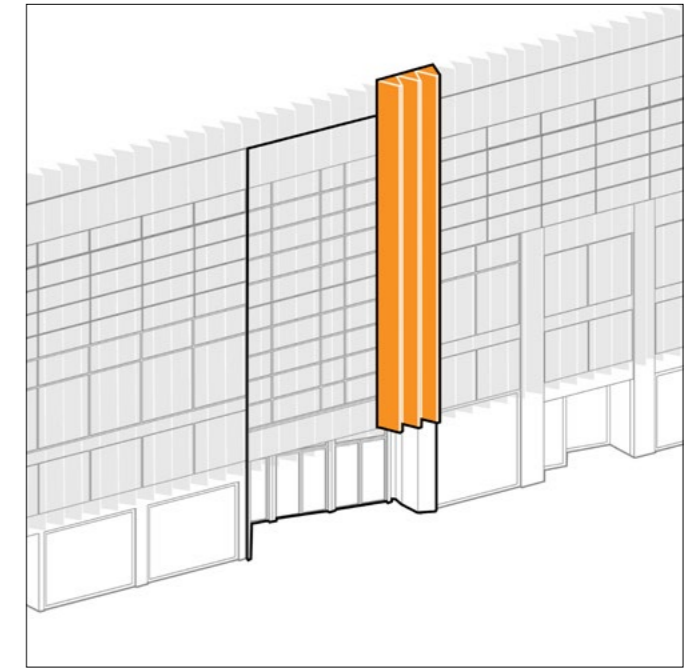
# Final Design Proposal



# Introduction

This chapter details the final design proposals, focusing on how they respond to the context and adhere to relevant policies.

A series of architectural visualisations are included to demonstrate how the proposals fit within their surroundings. These visuals offer a clearer understanding of the spatial and contextual relationships, demonstrating how the designs integrate with and impact the existing environment.



The Eastgates Entrance:  
The Curtain Reveal



The Highstreet Entrance:  
The Red Carpet



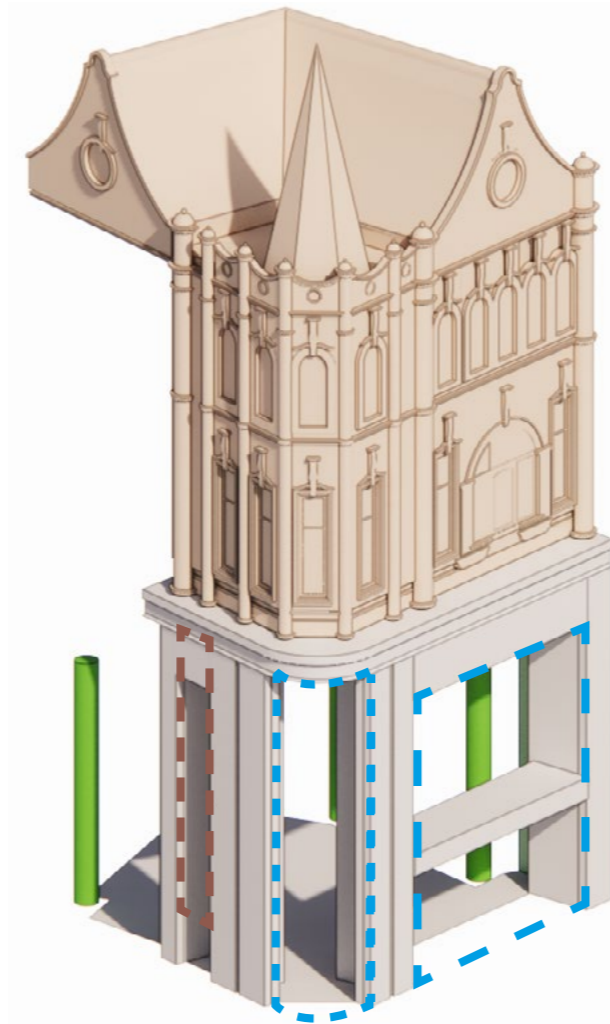
Church Gate and Newbond Street Entrances:  
The Twisted Pleat.



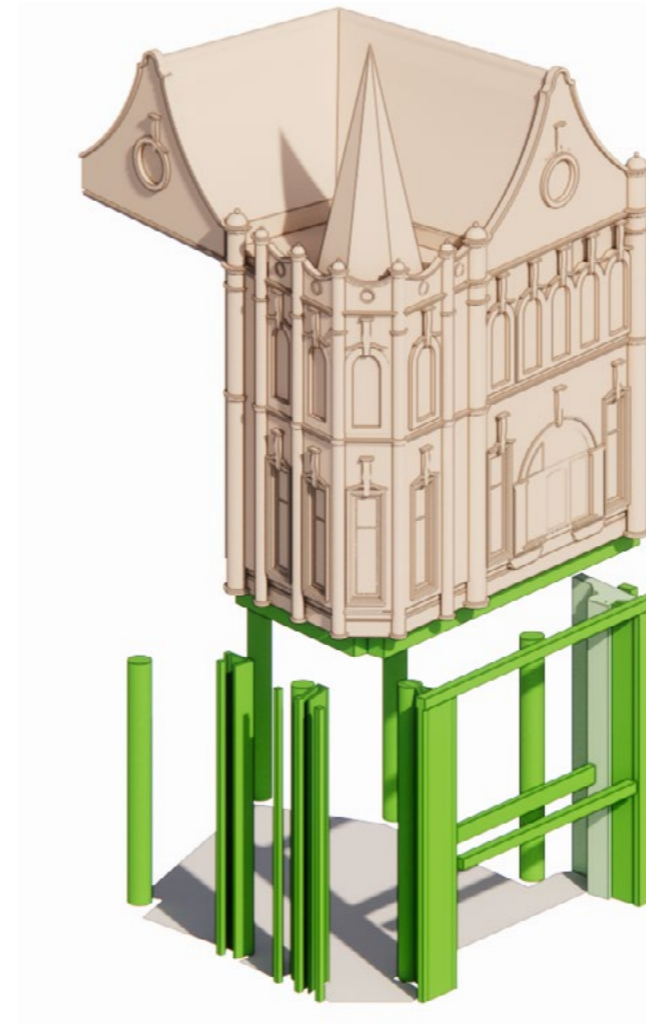
## East Gates Entrance Concept and Design Principles

The East Gate Entrance at Highcross Leicester reimagines the arrival experience as a dramatic unveiling, where a folded 'fabric' curtain is drawn back to reveal a new gateway into the Highcross. The folds are intentionally used to define the corner presence and align with the column structure above. This architectural gesture celebrates the site's rich heritage, blending the old with the new. The folded curtain represents prestige and ensures clarity, guiding visitors into the entrance. Its materiality and design convey a sense of permanence, anchoring Highcross within Leicester's historic urban landscape.

The adjacent diagrams explain the key design moves.



**Removal and Replacement of Existing Glazing:**  
The existing glazing is removed and replaced to improve energy efficiency and aesthetics.



**Retention and Utilisation of Existing Structure for New Cladding:**  
The existing structure is retained and used as a base for a new 'stone effect' cladding, which blends tonally with the surrounding environment.



**Addition of Feature Elements:**  
New architectural features, such as 'curtain' or 'folded fabric' components, are added to accentuate the entrance and corners of the building. These elements create a striking visual impact and draw attention to key areas.

## East Gates Entrance Approach from the Clock Tower



## East Gates Entrance Approach from the Clock Tower

“ The curtain is pulled back to reveal a new re-imagined entrance to the Highcross. Celebrating the heritage that surrounds it. ”



## East Gates Entrance Approach from Cheapside



## East Gates Entrance Approach from Cheapside

“ The curtain is pulled back to reveal a new re-imagined entrance to the Highcross. Celebrating the heritage that surrounds it. ”



# East Gates Entrance Material Inspiration

## Materials Section

The material palette for the development is thoughtfully inspired by the rich heritage of the High Street and Leicester city centre. By incorporating key visual cues and drawing on the historical character of the area, the design achieves a contemporary yet respectful appearance.

## Material Selection and Detailing

To ensure durability and ease of maintenance, the design features simple, robust detailing. The choice of materials considers their suitability for high foot traffic and varying weather conditions, balancing practicality with aesthetic appeal.

A distinctive feature of the design is the golden/bronze folded metal curtain, which adds pattern / texture while being complemented by the enduring quality of the stone effect cladding. The recessed entrance further emphasises this approach, framing views and adding depth to the facade.

## Material Arrangement

Materials are carefully layered to create dynamic visual effects. Accent colours and contrasting textures are used strategically to highlight key features, such as the entrance doors and the corner.

## Inspired Palette

### Pattern



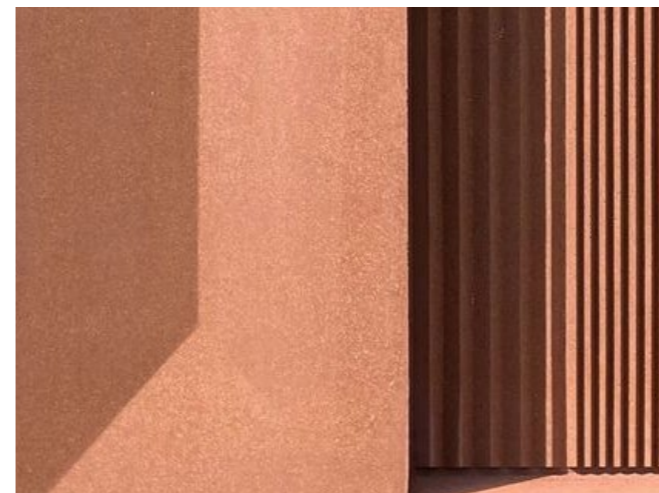
### Permanence



### Gateway



## Proposed Palette



### The Perforated Curtain

Metal folds are folded to give the impression of a curtain being pulled back

### Stone effect cladding

Giving permanence to the entrance and allowing the architecture to tonally match the surrounding context

### A Recessed Entrance

Providing depth and intrigue especially when viewed obliquely. This design move helps extend the High Street into the Highcross

## Highcross East Gates Design Proposal Aligning To Policy

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## Placeholder

Following discussion with LPA WG to provide table for each entrance that identifies key policy and confirms how the proposal meet these

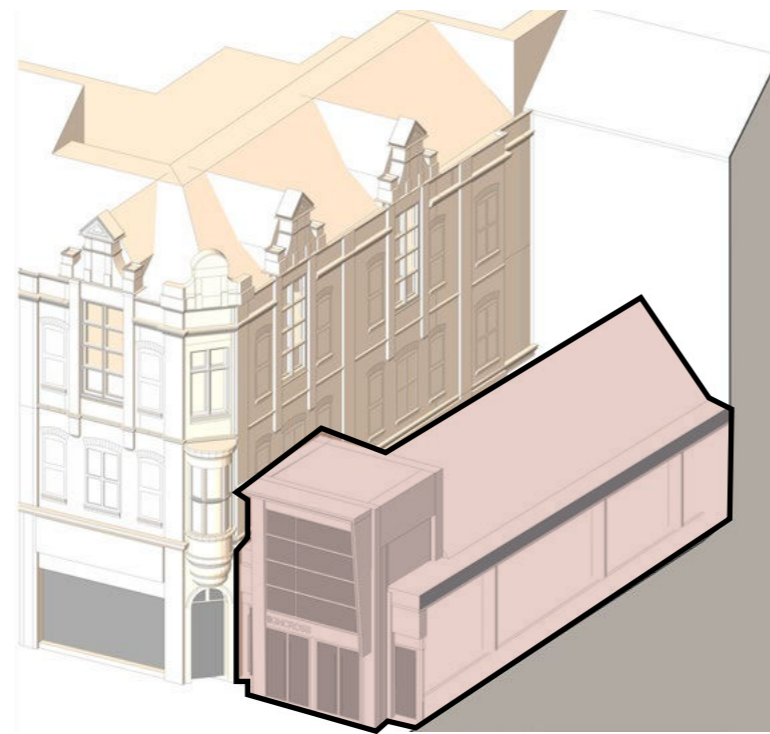


## High Street Entrance Concept and Design Principles

The High Street Entrance at Highcross Leicester is designed to better integrate with its urban surroundings, heritage context and the historic street pattern. The proposal establishes a lively and welcoming public space, re-imagining the entrance as a vibrant urban tapestry that flows seamlessly from the building's façade to the street.

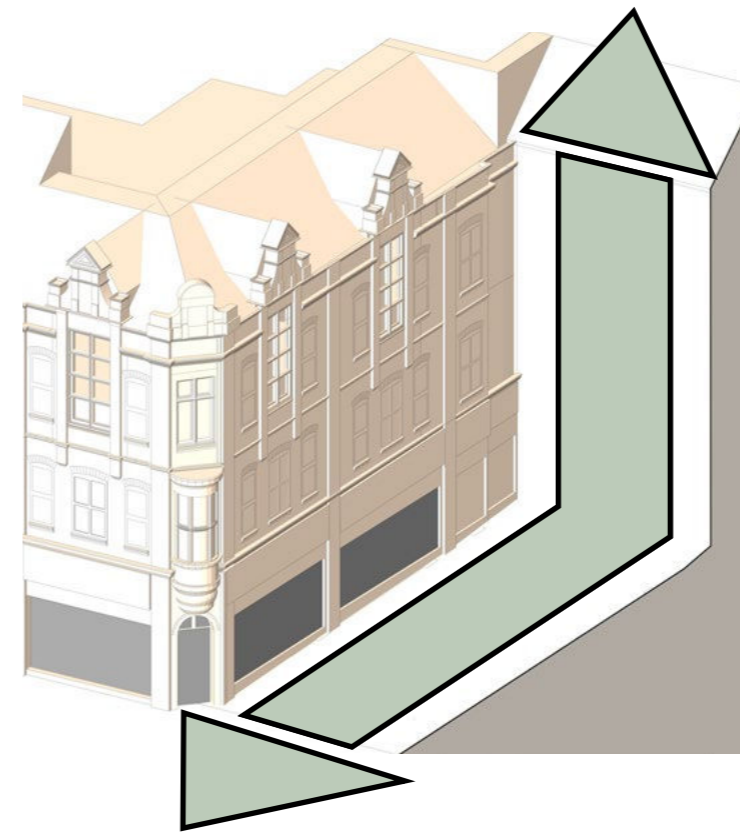
Key design principles include:

1. Removing the existing mall foyer, restoring the shopfronts, and reinstating the historic street pattern.
2. Designing an urban park that creates a communal area within the city centre and along the High Street.
3. Extending a patterned "urban carpet" from the building's elevation to the ground plane, guiding visitors from the High Street into Highcross.



### **An current architectural clash:**

Current entrance / mall foyer provides disconnect between the mall environment and the High Street



### **A new urban realm:**

A vibrant courtyard space - knitting the Highcross back into the High Street



### **The Texture of Leicester**

Patterning and structured space to create a new sense of humanscale and vibrancy

## High Street Entrance Approach from High Street



## High Street Entrance Approach from High Street

“ A patterned tapestry unravels into a ground carpet, transforming the High Street into a vibrant park for the community of Leicester. ”



# High Street Entrance Reconnecting the Highcross to the High Street

“ A patterned tapestry unravels into a ground carpet, transforming the High Street into a vibrant park for the community of Leicester. ”

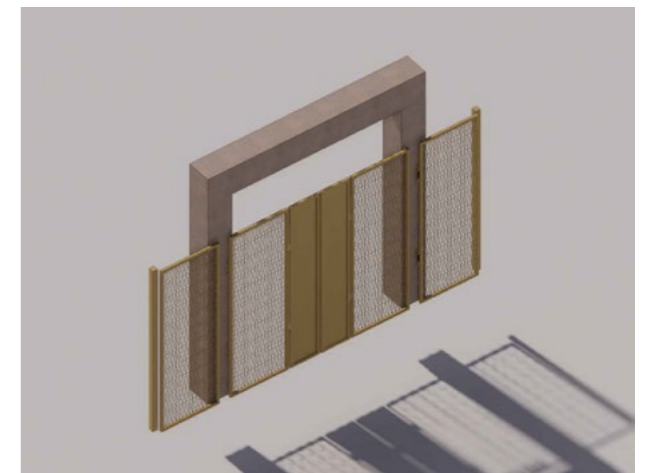
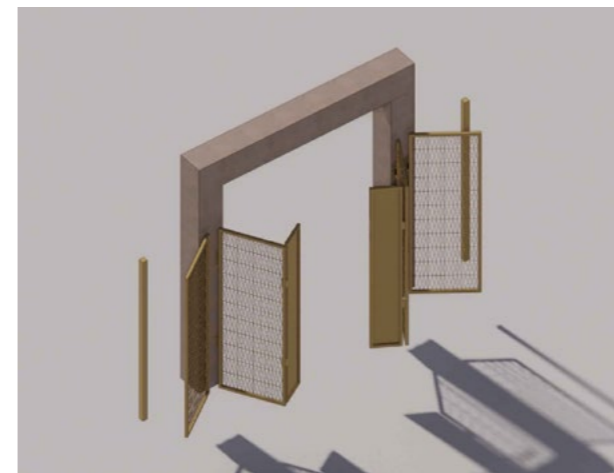
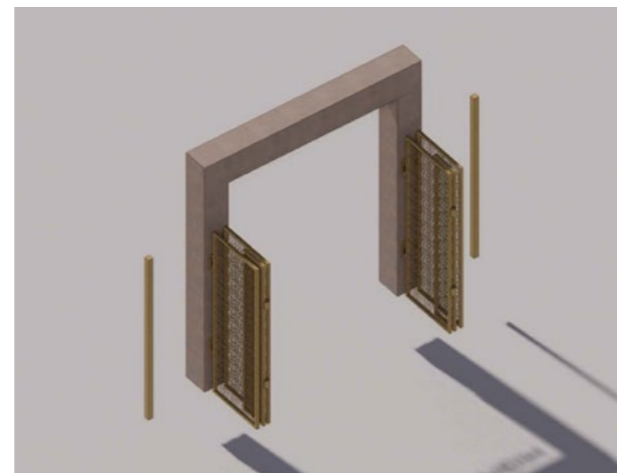
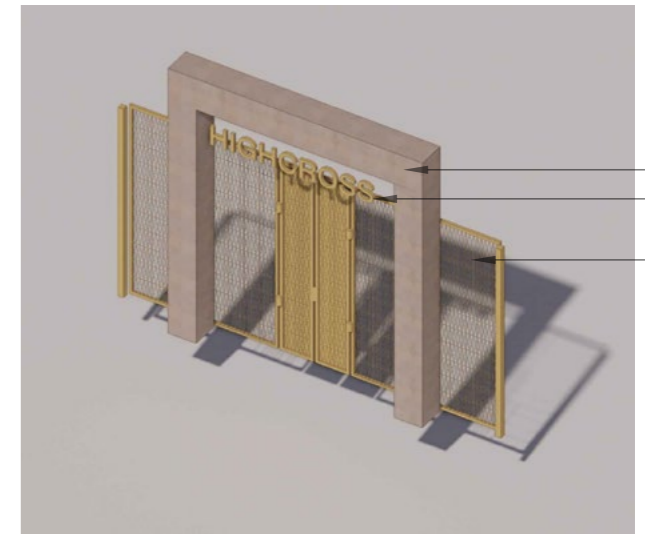
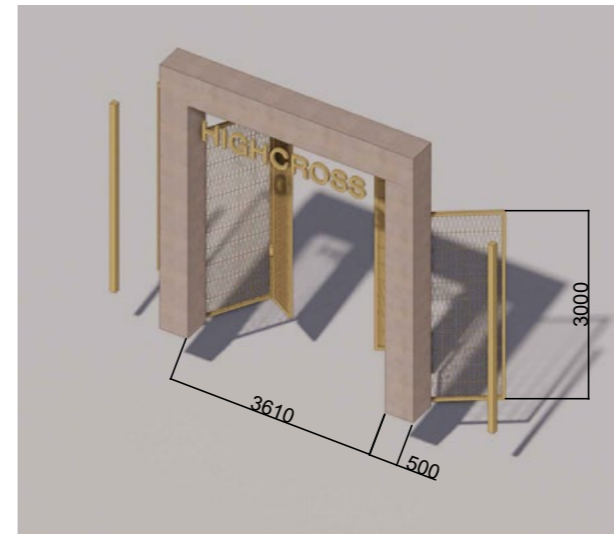
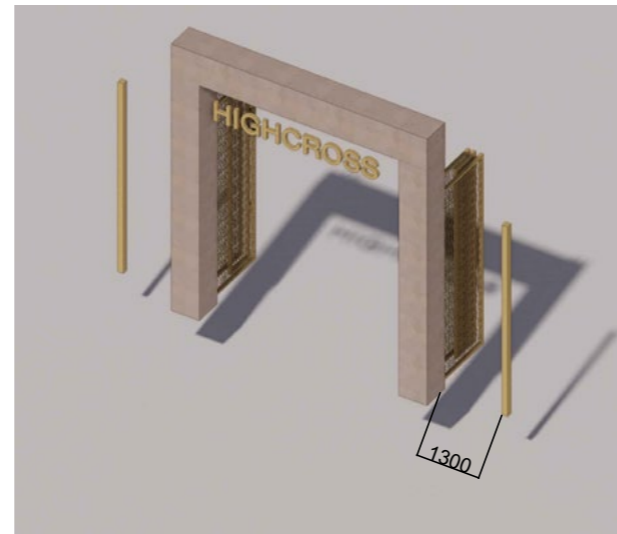


Placeholder Image

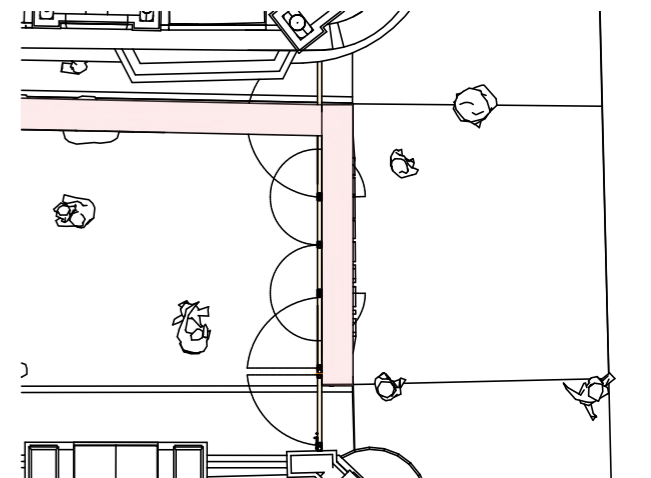
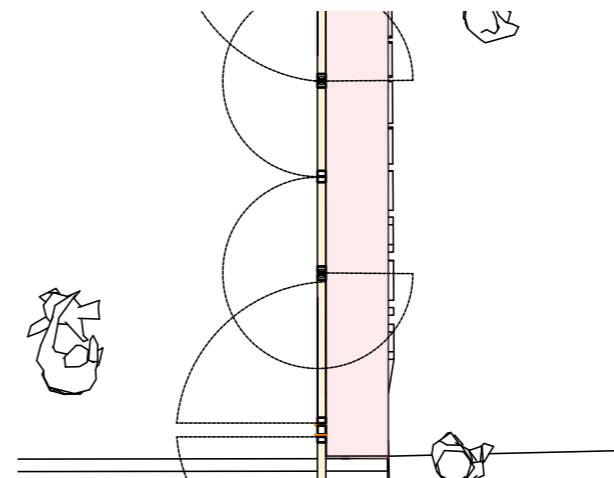
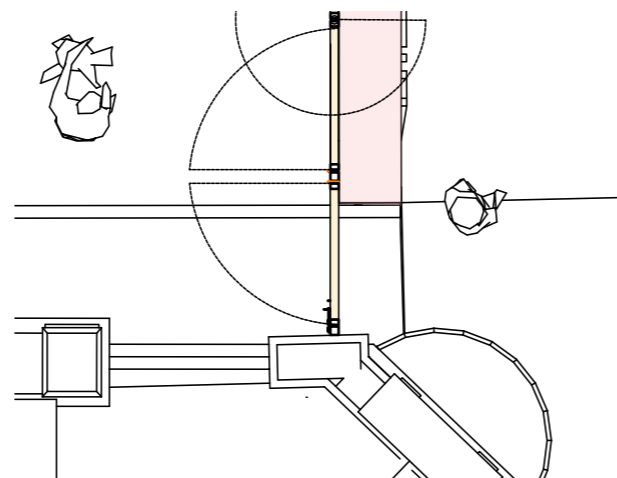
# High Street Entrance Gate Design

The intention of the High Street entrance is to create a welcoming and accessible urban gathering space within the city. However, the centre recognises the need to secure this area, particularly during the night when the centre is closed.

The gate design will be discreetly integrated behind the entrance portal, ensuring robustness and security when necessary.



Placeholder Image



## High Street Entrance Approach from Cart Lane



## High Street Entrance Approach from Cart Lane



Placeholder Image

# High Street Entrance Material Inspiration

## Materials Section

The materials palette for the High Street entrance is inspired by the rich heritage of High Street and Leicester city centre. By incorporating key visual cues and drawing on the historical character of the area, the design achieves a contemporary yet respectful appearance.

## Material Selection and Detailing

To durability and ease of maintenance, the design features simple, robust detailing. The choice of materials considers their suitability for high foot traffic and varying weather conditions, balancing practicality with aesthetic appeal.

A distinctive feature of the design is the feature tiled tapestry that folds down from the existing blank brick gable into the ground plane.

## Material Arrangement

Materials are carefully layered and framed to create a dynamic visual effects.

## Inspired Palette

### Pattern



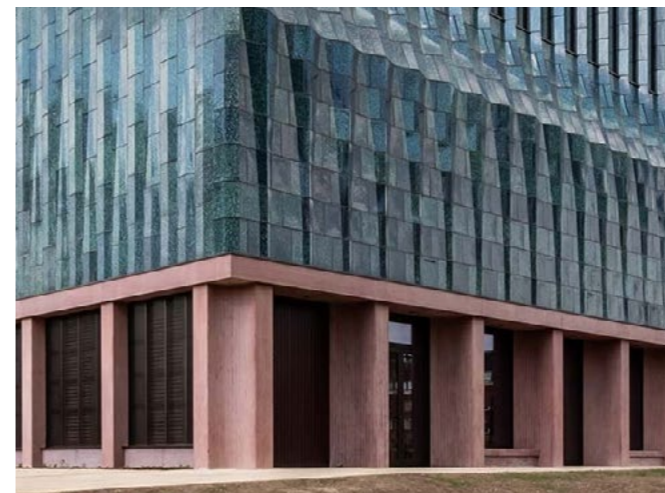
### Permanence



### Gateway



## Proposed Palette



### The Tapestry

Vibrant and brightly colour feature tiled tapestry. Celebrating the diversity and stories of Leicester.

### Stone effect / Precast Concrete

Giving permanence to the entrance and allowing the architecture to tonally match the surrounding context

### The Entrance Portal

A portal is introduced to define the new courtyard space, it provides a physical gateway and threshold between the High Street and the Highcross.

## High Street Entrance Design Proposal Aligning To Policy

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# Placeholder

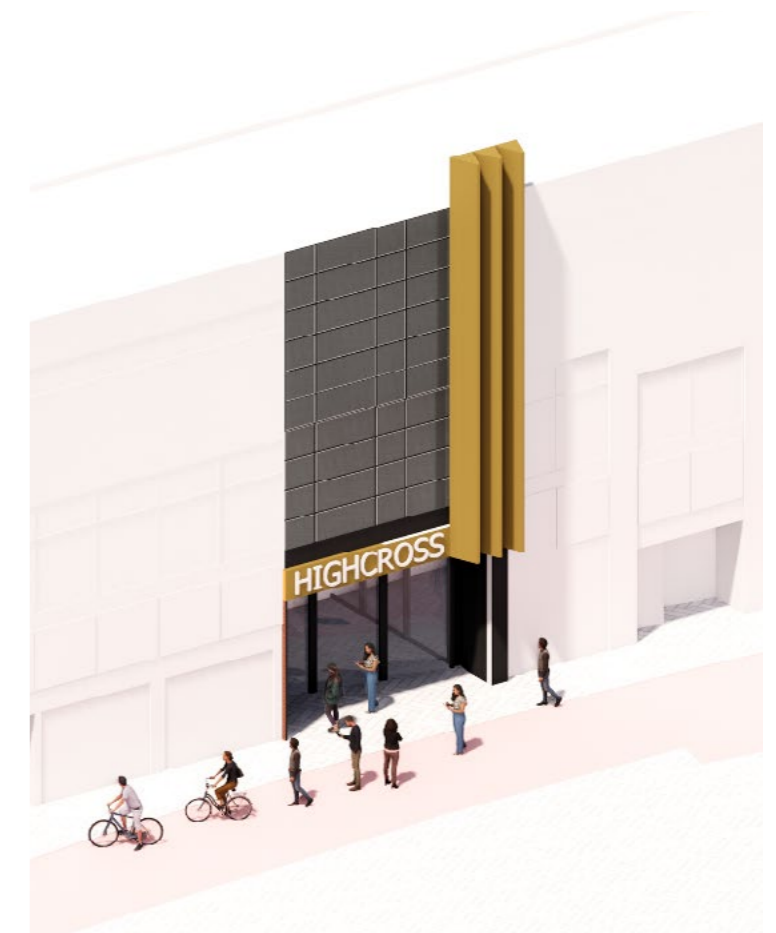
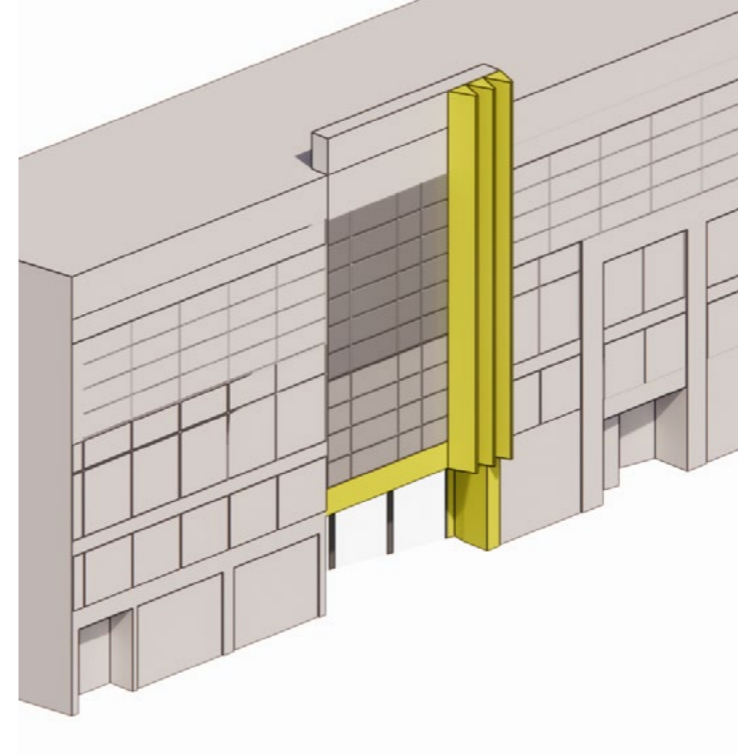
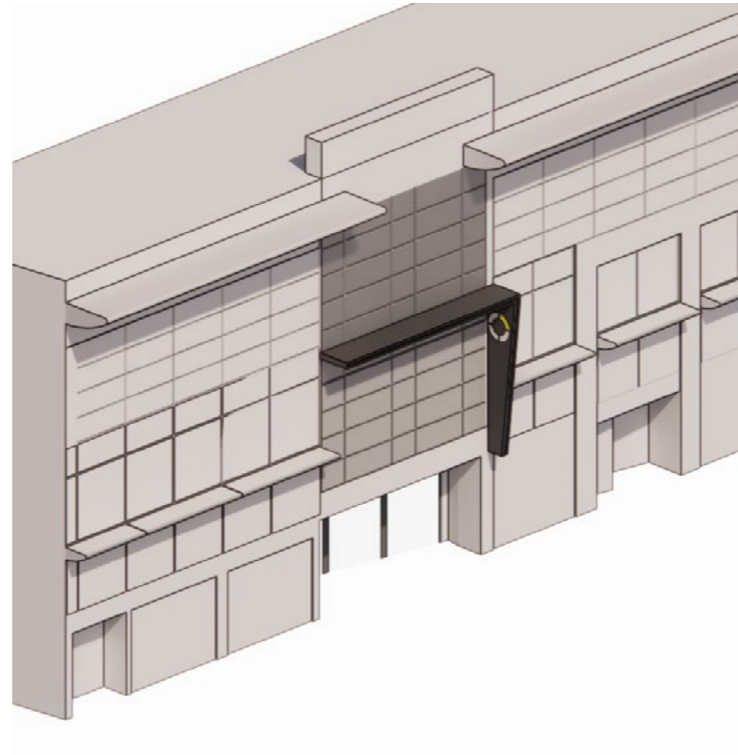
Following discussion with LPA WG to provide table for each entrance that identifies key policy and confirms how the proposal meet these



## Church Gate Entrance Concept and Design Principles

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## Church Gate Entrance Approach from Church Gate / Clock Tower



## Church Gate Entrance Approach from Church Gate / Clock Tower

“ A series of folded fins reveal stories of Leicester as you pass by. ”



# Church Gate Entrance Material Inspiration

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## Inspired Palette

Pattern



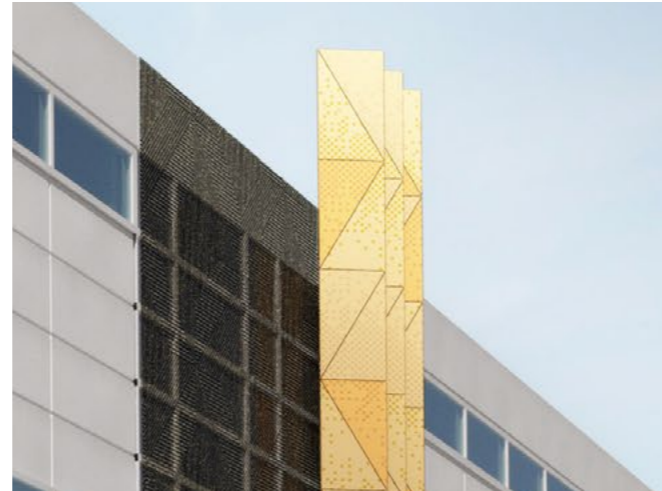
Permanence



Gateway



## Proposed Palette



The Folds



The Totem



Focused Attention To Entrance

## Highcross Church Gate Design Proposal Aligning To Policy

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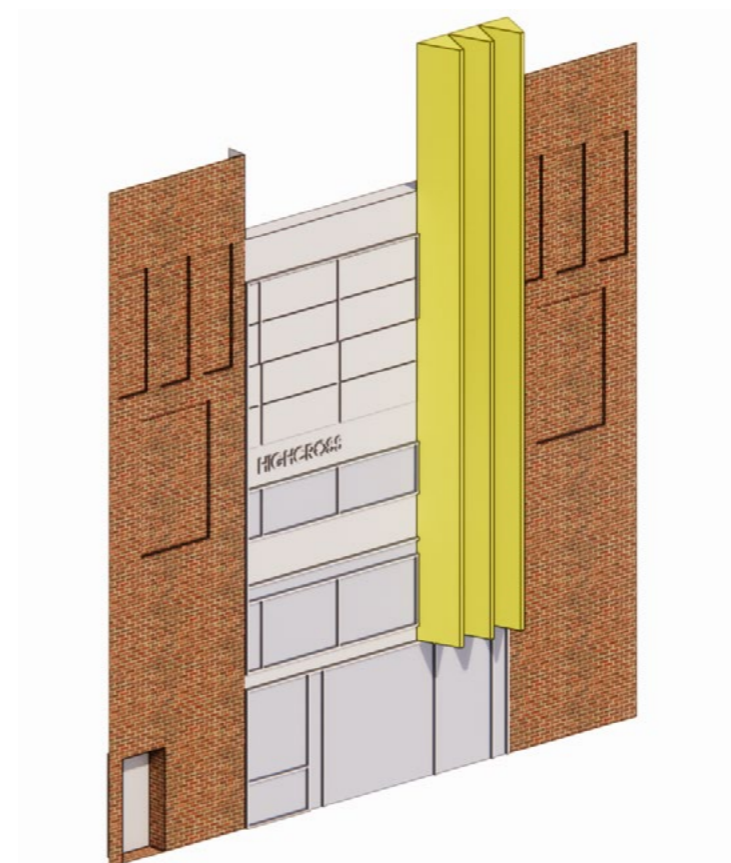
# Placeholder

Following discussion with LPA WG to provide table for each entrance that identifies key policy and confirms how the proposal meet these

# New Bond Street Entrance Concept and Design Principles

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## New Bond Street Entrance Key Concept and Principles



## New Bond Street Entrance Key Concept and Principles



# New Bond Street Entrance Material Inspiration

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## Inspired Palette

Pattern



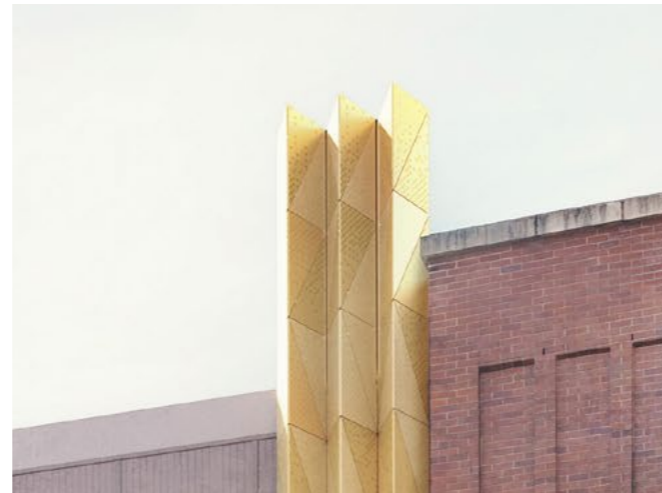
Permanence



Gateway



## Proposed Palette



The Folds



The Totem



Focused Attention To Entrance

## New Bond Street Entrance Design Proposal Aligning To Policy

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# Placeholder

WG to provide a table for each intervention that identifies key policy and confirms how we meet this (these will be design / access policies while wider principle and technical policies will be addressed in the planning statement)

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