

Silver Hill

the evolution of the city



Winchester
City Council



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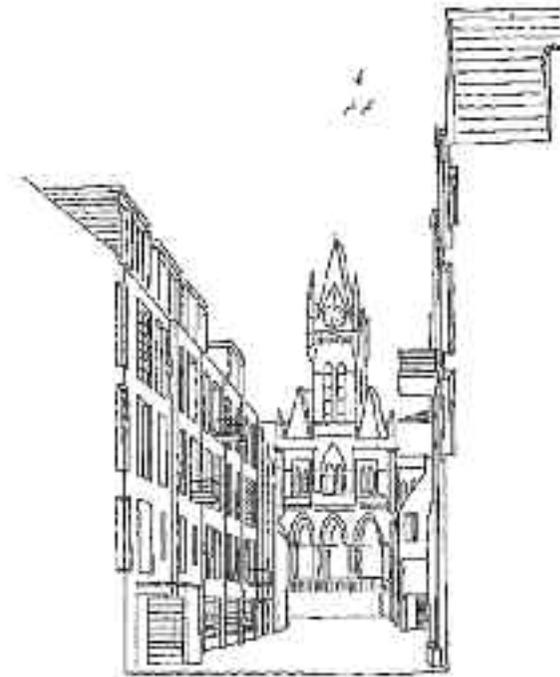
Prepared by Winchester City Council

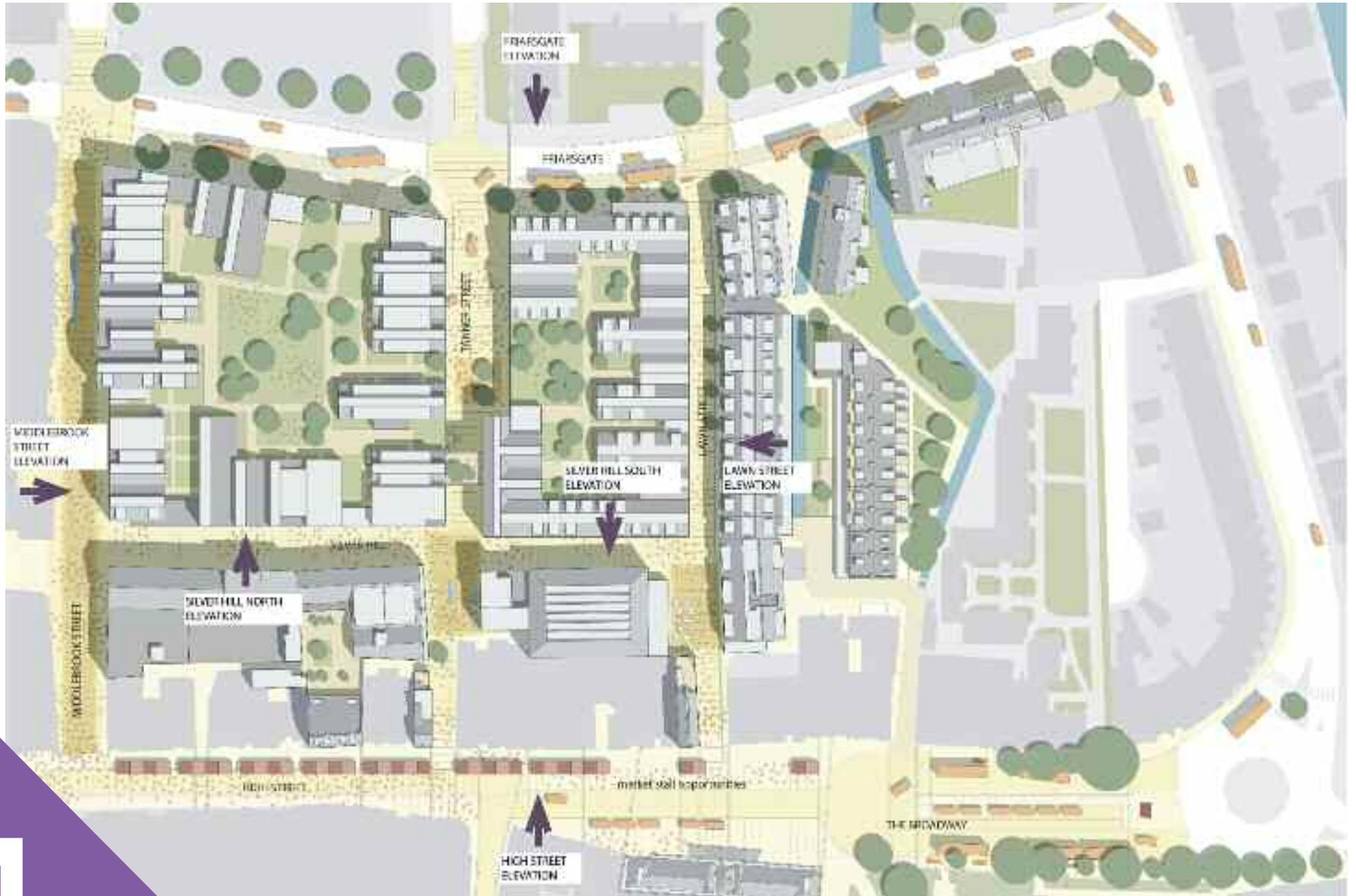
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Aerial view of new development shows roof gardens

Evolution

while respecting the past

“We can’t encourage high street shopping if we don’t offer shops people want to go to.”

Silver Hill is an unattractive and failing part of our city. Most of the buildings date from the 1960’s or 1970’s and are in poor condition. It is a hidden area of Winchester which is desperately in need of redevelopment.

The Silver Hill regeneration scheme already has planning consent. It was granted in 2009. Development was delayed by the recession and the scheme is now being updated. This is not a new proposal, it has been considered and discussed on many previous occasions.

Retail led development in town centres is not ‘out of date’. It has not been ‘killed off’ by the internet. Retailing is changing and adapting. Winchester is currently thriving but it needs to join in that process or lose its enviable position.

The amount of additional retail space in Silver Hill is modest – about half the

amount of similar schemes recently built in places like Newbury, Bury St Edmunds and Hereford. Winchester has very few shops in certain sectors. We can’t encourage high street shopping if we don’t offer shops people want to go to.

We strongly support Winchester town centre. We have defended it from developers who want to put up out of town retail schemes which would attack our high street shops and businesses. The Council has discussed every part of the updated proposals at great length with our development partners Henderson. They have listened to everything the Council has said and amended the scheme in many ways to reflect that. The Council has excellent professional advisors and a strong understanding of the commercial prospects of the scheme.



The Reality

how the site looks today

“Today, the Silver Hill area is unattractive and does little for the economy of the city.”

Today, the Silver Hill area is unattractive and does little for the economy of the city. Buildings like Friarsgate and Kings Walk are badly designed and in poor condition. Friarsgate car park is now largely closed. There are derelict offices, and a medical centre which will soon be completely redundant. Coitbury House looks alright on the outside but is completely out-dated inside. The St Clements surgery building is tired and will still be inadequate even if money is spent on it. There are no public spaces or attractive features. The Woolstaplers Hall is a good building which is being retained – but it needs repairs and maintenance. Not even the street pattern is part of Winchester’s heritage. A comprehensive redevelopment is the only way to put all of this right. The existing bus station is out-dated

and run down. If Stagecoach wanted to replace it then this could have been done. It was planned for in the 2009 planning consent. But Stagecoach has now decided for operational and commercial reasons that it does not want a replacement. It does want good quality facilities for buses and passengers because it wants to maintain successful services in and out of Winchester. The Council wants excellent bus services as well. But the Council would not be able to spend taxpayers money on a new bus station unless there were operators who would pay enough to cover the cost – which there aren’t. Instead there will be a new bus interchange on Friarsgate within a short walk for new shops and cafes, supported by a ticket office, public toilets and electronic timetables.



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Woolstaple Hall from the bus station will become Silver Hill Square

Where Words Fail...

how the site looks today



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The new Cross Keys Square from Cross Keys Passage



Silver Hill

what will it provide?

“Newer shops, newer facilities, newer public spaces.”

- Between 25 and 30 new shops and places to eat, including one unit large enough for a department store. Some of these will replace existing shops so the main increase is in quality not quantity.
- Around 180 new flats and houses in a highly sustainable town centre living space which will support the local economy. Each one will have one car parking space.
- A completely new public realm with squares, water elements, and high quality hard landscaping. A refurbishment of the Broadway paid for by the development.
- Retention and refurbishment of the Woolstaplers Hall.
- 279 new public parking spaces. These replace the existing Friarsgate car park the majority of which is now closed because it is structurally unsound.
- A cash contribution to affordable housing built in Winchester providing the scheme is profitable enough – which we expect it to be.
- A replacement of the existing tired and dilapidated bus station with new bus facilities mainly on Friarsgate, including a ticket office and public toilets.

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Enlarged Cross Keys Passage seen from the Broadway

Developing Appeal

how the site will look

“A picture speaks a thousand words.”



Major new development in town centres often raises strong feelings and concerns. When the place is as special as Winchester that's not surprising. The Council has thought long and hard about the regeneration of Silver Hill for many years.

Planning consent for redevelopment of Silver Hill was granted in 2009. All of the issues about design, the environment and the impact on the town were fully discussed and scrutinised by the professional consultees, local organisations and members of the public, as well the Council.

What we are now doing is updating the scheme to take account of Stagecoach's decision not to replace the bus station and to improve the design even further.





Silver Hill Square currently the Bus Station

Belief in our Vision

an opportunity for the town

“Silver Hill will be turning a wasted part of town into yet another attractive and welcoming part of the town centre.”

There have been suggestions that the proposed redevelopment is out of date and that the increase in retail space will just create empty shops.

All the best professional advice sees things rather differently, and here's why: Winchester is a thriving county town, but it has far less retail space than places like Salisbury. Expert advice tells us there is a widening gap between the amount people have to spend and the opportunity to shop in Winchester. People have to go to other towns to do shopping they should be able to do locally.

If new retail space is provided it won't undermine existing shops. Silver Hill will take up the growth over the next few years but not divert any existing spending. In a few years time all of Winchester should be growing equally. Without Silver Hill there will be pressure from developers for out of town retail

parks which would have a very negative impact on the town centre. The internet won't kill off high street retailing, but it has made retailers change the way they do business.

They are more choosy about where and how they operate. Historic Winchester with a mainly affluent population, overseas visitors and lots of events is a prime spot. But many important retailers are not here. They'd like to be, but the premises that are offered to them are unsuitable. Silver Hill will give us the opportunity to bring them into town.

That won't make our independent retailers less attractive or important. It won't make us the same as everywhere else. Silver Hill will become another attractive and welcoming part of the town centre. And we believe that is good for the town as a whole.

Friarsgate looking East



Carefully Planned

by award winning architects

“The choice of construction materials will emphasise local, high quality products.”

Like every new development people have different views about the design. But when making a judgement, it is important to be aware of the facts as well as opinions.

Silver Hill will not dominate or overwhelm the High Street, the Cathedral or the Guildhall. That simply isn't possible because they are too far apart, and Silver Hill just isn't large enough. In fact, it will be hard to see Silver Hill from many parts of town unless you know very specifically what you're looking for. Great care was taken about this at the planning stage.

The height of Silver Hill is large in places because there is a lot to fit in. But the elevations are broken up so that there is variation in height and in the way buildings are set back. Winchester has many tall buildings on its commercial streets. Silver Hill's streets will be wide enough to feel comfortable.

The design is by an award winning firm

of international respected architects recognised as understanding historic environments. They have completed several projects for Oxford and Cambridge colleges for example.

The design is contemporary but not confrontational. The choice of construction materials will emphasise local, high quality products.

Modern shop fronts do have standard dimensions but they will be treated differently and there will be requirements to ensure that signage and displays are of high quality.

Most large towns have areas with different architecture or design, some old, some new. They live alongside each other. There is no reason why a new built part of the town should interfere with the character of the old. Think about the situation now – do the old and ugly buildings like Kings Walk stop you enjoying the Square or the Outer Close?



Recreating Patterns

fitting into the surroundings

“For the first time in many years people will be able to enjoy the brook.”

Recreating a street pattern and improved public realm has been at the heart of the scheme from the outset. It is based on the simplest possible model for a town centre.

Shops and places to eat fronting onto a pedestrian only street with parking and residential development above.

That’s a model that you see everywhere in Winchester and it’s been like that for decades.

Silver Hill is not a shopping centre or enclosed private space, it’s using tried and tested principles to add to what we already have.

The area will be fully pedestrianized so its streets and squares can be used in many different ways during events such as Hat Fair, as well as providing the opportunity for café seating.

Winchester does not have wide public plazas and Silver Hill reflects this rather than creating civic amenity spaces of a wholly different pattern. Think of the Square, which everyone loves, or the area around the Buttercross – that’s the scale we’re aiming for.

For the first time in many years people will be able to enjoy the brook running behind the St Johns Almshouses as a public place for recreation and enjoyment.

We will provide other evocations of the water currently running under the ground through the streets, using ‘rills’ which are shallow channels carrying water along the street.



Refurbished Woolstaplers Hall with view along Silver Hill and through Silver Hill Square to the Guildhall



South side of Silver Hill - outline in background is the Cathedral drawn to scale



Examples of finishes which will be seen in Silver Hill



Improved Design

the most important updates

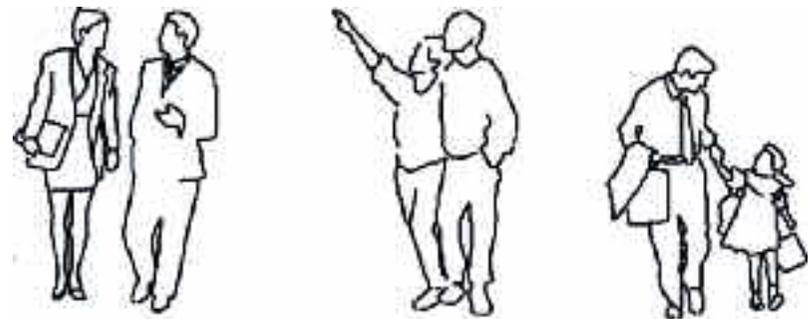
- The design of buildings has been made more varied and diverse
- The choice of materials has been changed to make more use of local brick and flint.
- The buildings heights are more varied. They are still tall in places where this will be acceptable.
- The buildings along Friarsgate have more going on at ground level to create activity and interest.
- The layout of the streets and public spaces has been improved with more use of water, high quality materials and opportunities for public art to be integrated with the fabric;
- In place of the bus station there is a large shop unit to create suitable space for a major retailer.
- There will be fewer but larger flats/houses to reflect what people are looking to buy in Winchester
- The balance between private and public car parking spaces has been altered. Every private dwelling now has a parking space.



East End of Friarsgate



The Future Our vision





of a brighter Winchester

Restoring Pride

regenerating the city



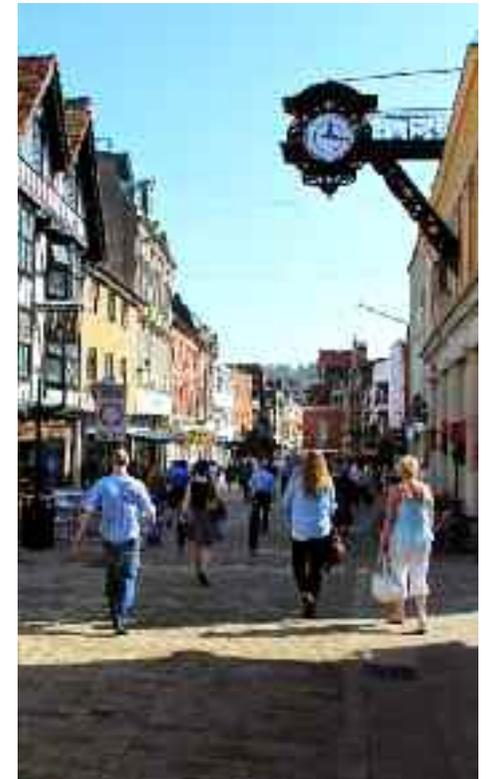
“This has been led by a cross party group of leading councillors which has worked closely with the scheme architects.”

The Council has worked closely with Henderson to update and improve the scheme. This has been led by a cross party group of leading councillors which has worked closely with the scheme architects, developer and external, independent advisors.

Cllrs Keith Wood, Kim Gottlieb, Rob Humby and Stephen Godfrey were the Cabinet representatives on the group.

Cllr Kelsie Learney and Cllr Chris Pines represented the two other leading parties.

The Council has been advised throughout by experts including an independent architect, one of the top London property law firms, experts in property valuation and finance and has taken advice from the best and most experienced barristers in the country.



Summary

renewing of our town centre

“The Silver Hill scheme will regenerate the part of our town centre which needs renewing.”

The Silver Hill scheme will regenerate the part of our town centre which needs renewing. It is not rushed or hurried – it has been carefully worked on for several years.

There is a planning consent for Silver Hill, granted in 2009 after two years of discussion and debate. We are now considering updates not a new scheme.

It is not out of date – shops, restaurants and cafes on attractive streets have been the best model for retailing in this country for generations. We need to move with the changing face of retailing which is exactly what Silver Hill enables us to do.

Winchester needs the extra retail space to maintain its enviable position as a thriving county town. It will not detract from what we have, it will add

something we don't have.

We must protect the viability of our town centre. Developers and landowners are always keen to promote out of town retail schemes which would be very damaging to the existing town centre. To defend against this, we need to provide more retail accommodation where it works best – in the town centre.

180 new homes will be provided bringing extra trade into Winchester's shops and the evening economy. It will help achieve a brand new surgery for a city centre GP practice which is currently in poor quality accommodation.

The scheme has excellent design and careful consideration has been given to the supporting infrastructure. It is ambitious and it is deliverable.



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Next Steps

so what happens next?

“Subject to all the necessary approvals, work could start on site in early 2015.”

Henderson need to submit a planning application to make the changes outlined in this booklet. The Council’s Cabinet need to approve this, and all Members will have the opportunity to debate the revised scheme at a meeting of Full Council. If it is supported, then the proposals will go to the Planning Committee in the autumn of 2014. Subject to all the necessary approvals, work could start on site in early 2015. There will be a public exhibition in the Guildhall starting on the weekend of 12/13 July, watch for details in the local press or on our website www.winchester.gov.uk We’ll also arrange a more permanent display. If you want to know more visit the City Council’s website and follow the link on the home page. That will tell you when key meetings are being held, and give more detail of public exhibitions.





www.winchester.gov.uk/silverhill