

1 Partial pedestrianisation of Bath Street / David Place

The partial pedestrianisation of Bath Street and David Place is dependent on Minden Place car parking being relocated to Ann Court. The reduction of cars entering the centre of town will enable these environmental improvements works to happen.

By reducing Bath Street and David Place to a single lane for northbound traffic only, the pavements can be widened, trees introduced and shared space principles adopted in the design of the public realm and road surface. The character of this historically important road will be reinstated to its earlier grandeur. The existing buildings, once set in the context of the new public realm, will regain past elegance, and regeneration will be encouraged.

The Royal Hotel along with the many professional, commercial and retail occupants of properties along Bath Street and David Place, will benefit from the improved pedestrian connection to the town centre. Any disadvantages arising from the single direction traffic will be outweighed by the regenerative benefits of the improved public realm.



Current view up David Place



A route better suited for pedestrians, cyclists and buildings...

As part of the detailed development of the scheme, consideration will be given to the provision of unloading and short-term shopper's lay-by. In addition the public realm should not be cluttered with unnecessary street furniture. The scheme should not impede emergency services in meeting their response times and the use of road edge bollards and similar street furniture should be avoided.

Pedestrian safety will be greatly improved through the widened pavements and reduced traffic volumes. The introduction of designated cycle routes will be possible, with the increased width available after a road lane is lost. The volume of traffic will reduce by almost 50% due to the removal of southbound traffic.



Current view of congested Bath Street



Proposed view of improved Bath Street

2 Bath Street to Halkett Place link

The masterplan proposes that a route is created which connects Bath Street with Halkett Place, to provide a much needed east west connection in this area. This link will require development of private land to the west of the car park site.

Connecting through to the top of Halkett Place will ensure that both the top of Halkett Place and Bath Street are busy and well trafficked by pedestrians. The Odeon, designated as a development site, seeking a suitable cultural, community or leisure use, will benefit from improved pedestrian access from the west, as will Nelson Street car park site, through which this route will pass.

Nelson Street car park is identified as a development site.

Proposals for any development on this site must ensure that the front of the Old Fire Station building is set within an appropriate urban setting with suitable public space (Old Fire Station Square) of approx 0.22 verges (400 sq.m.), which relates to the new link through to Halkett Place.

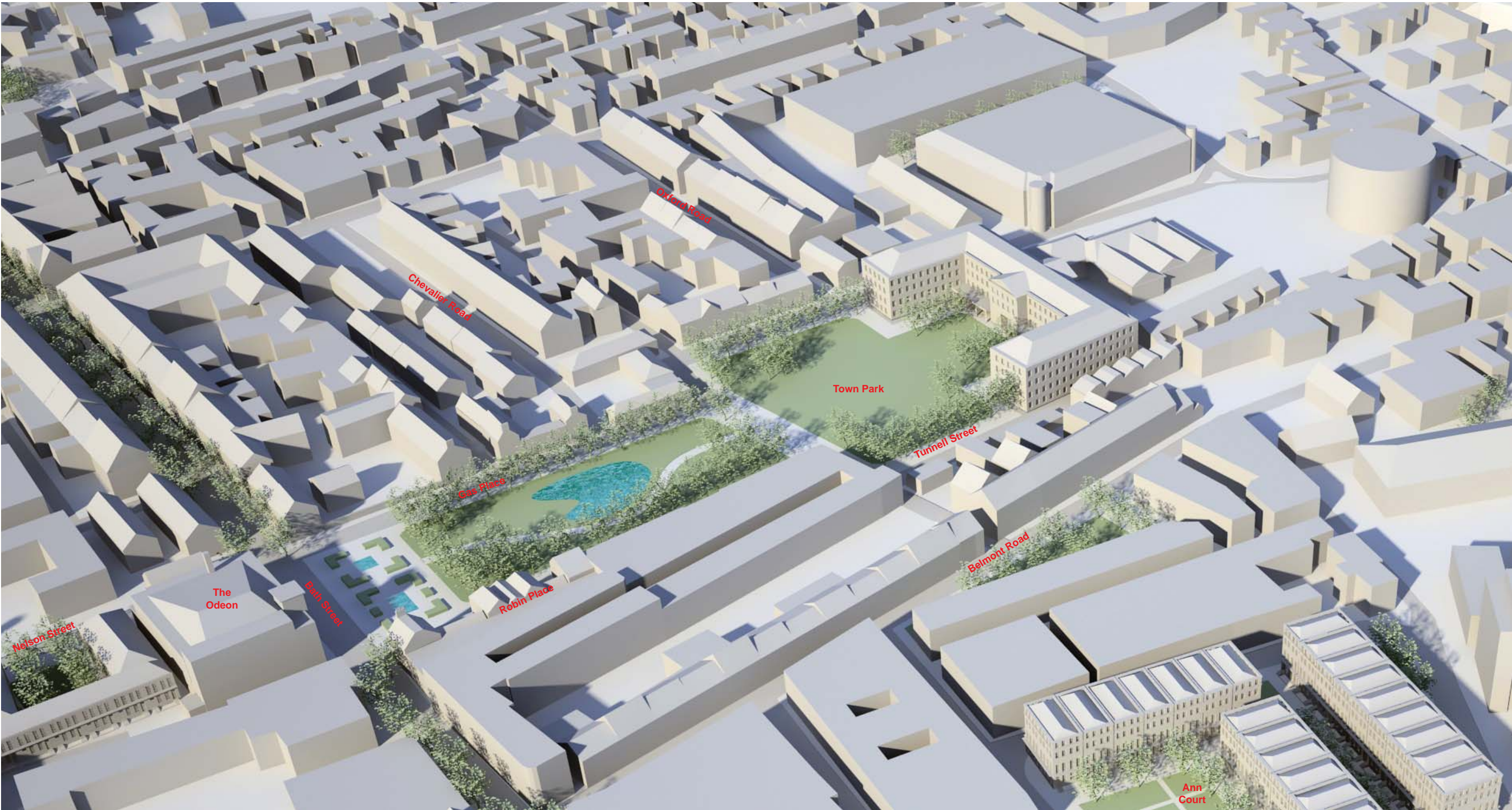


Photo of the existing Fire Station



View of the Old Fire Station Square looking eastwards (with possible future development shown)

3 Gas Place and Talman sites



Aerial view of the proposed Town Park

Town Park

The Gas Place and Talman car parks as a combined site were identified as the future site of the new, 7 vergee (12,800 sq.m.) town park for the north town area as long ago as 1991. As part of the masterplan, we assessed the location of the park and concluded that it was well sited in the centre of the north of town area, but that the immediate surrounding buildings were unsuitable in their current form to provide a successful enclosure to the park. For an urban public space to be a success, it requires a good natural surveillance and sense of enclosure, as studied and illustrated in the appendix section of the North of St Helier Masterplan consultation document - ‘Parks and squares’.

However, as these sites were already States owned and set aside for a town park, it was not sensible to choose an alternative site. This assumption was, however, revisited as part of the development of the masterplan.

Instead the masterplan proposes to incorporate limited perimeter residential development along the eastern side of the Gas Place site to provide a formal enclosure to the park, whilst encouraging redevelopment of the remaining unsatisfactory perimeter buildings on Robin Place.

Perimeter residential development will inevitably reduce the area available for the Town Park to just below 6 verges, however the masterplan proposes the creation of additional public spaces in the north of town area, ensuring that the overall area of new public open space is approx 8 verges.

Approximate areas of new public open space

Town Park	= 6.0 verges (10,900 sq.m.)
Belmont Gardens	= 0.3 verges (550 sq.m.)
Ann Court	= 1.36 verges (2480 sq.m.)
Little Portugal (Minden Pl)	= 0.14 verges (260 sq.m.)
Old Fire Station Square	= 0.22 verges (400 sq.m.)
Total	= 8 verges (14,590 sq.m.)

Consultation with local stakeholders, and in particular the local Deputies, the Crime Reduction Officer, the headmaster of the local primary school and the local Residents Association, garnered support for the principle that smaller and more intimate local public squares would be more successful than larger parks.

Small local parks or squares are more readily felt to be ‘owned’ by the immediate neighbourhood and their smaller size promotes the self-policing that overlooking and natural surveillance affords.

The new town houses will face directly onto the new town park separated only by small front gardens and railings. A public path will allow pedestrian and cycle access through the park and to the houses. The houses will have rear vehicular access from the perimeter roads.

The park will be designed to provide an informal, green oasis within the immediate formal enclosure of the new residential development, and the wider urban surrounding that is the north of town area.

Residential development

The residential development will provide the necessary formal enclosure to the town park, whilst generating funds to pay for the remediation of the contaminated site; the construction of the underground car park; and creation of the town park over.

The masterplan proposes a 4 storey residential development to enclose the north eastern end of the Gas Place car park site providing an important backdrop to the end of the park.

The development will not fully enclose the site to ensure the right balance is achieved between enclosure and the perception of openness of the public park. The development stops short of Oxford Road to allow good connections across the park for pedestrians and cyclists, to the proposed new link at the end of Tunnell Street through to Belmont Road. The Talman site, as the western extension of the site, is proposed to be a simple public open space with no buildings or underground parking.

The masterplan encourages the redevelopment of Britannia Place to residential with Robin Place, eventually becoming closed to vehicular traffic and incorporated into the park.

The mix of individual town houses to smaller apartments, which will be subdivisions of the larger town house unit, will be set by the States. It is expected that the

housing provided on this site will be predominantly family accommodation, be it affordable or top end of the market.

Underground car parking

The masterplan recommendation is to locate parking below ground. This is an appropriate approach widely used in Europe to provide underground car parks in dense urban settings, avoiding the use of valuable land above ground for multi-storey or surface car parking.

The issue of the contamination on this site has meant that there are additional ethical and public health reasons for choosing to excavate and remediate the site to provide underground parking. This has been discussed in section 2.3; Environment and landscape appraisal and section 4.0; Traffic and car parking of the Masterplan document issued on the 8th October 2009. Building an underground car park on contaminated ground with high ground water is challenging, but the advantages of releasing areas above ground for the town park and residential development, outweigh the disadvantages.

The new Town Park will be located above the underground car park. There have been many precedents of successful urban parks over car parks.

Careful coordination of structure and services will be required to ensure mature trees can be accommodated in adequate tree pits.

The masterplan proposes to accommodate 200 parking spaces in total in a single level basement car park below the Gas Place site. The 200 spaces are split as follows:

- 80 spaces have been allocated for residents.
- 120 spaces are proposed for public parking to include a proportion with increased headroom to allow for vans on short-stop daily business. If the Belmont Road Parish owned site is redeveloped the 27 parking bays for market traders would also be relocated here.

Between the public spaces below the Town Park and the Ann Court car park, provision will be made for overnight and weekend parking.



Possible park expansion



A view of the Town Park looking to the east

4 Ann Court

This site is suitable for residential development of up to 4½ storeys, a new public square of approximately 1/3 vergee (1,700 sq.m.) and underground parking for short stay, providing 285 spaces out of a total of 400 underground spaces.

The original proposals for Ann Court involved the siting of a multi-storey car park on the site with limited residential development circling it. The residents association (TRRA) mounted a vociferous objection to the scheme in terms of the physical scale of the proposed car park, potential oversupply of parking in the area, its location in a residential area and resulting road safety, pollution and noise issues. Deputy Martin led a successful campaign which overturned the multi-storey car park proposal in favour of the proposal outlined in this plan (P/2002/2009).

The masterplan proposes a short term 'shoppers' car park below the Ann Court site to replace Minden Place car park.

Looking east down Phillips Street, Ann Court is a highly visible site located on an axis at the end of busy Minden Place with its shopping and market access. In the distance, Victoria College and the wooded escarpments surrounding St Helier make an attractive long vista marred only by De Quetteville Court which should be removed as and when possible. The site is an ideal location for an urban public square, both visible and accessible from the town centre shopping area, but also firmly located within the residential area. The Jersey Arts Centre would benefit from the adjacency to the new public square. People working in, and visiting the town centre, will be able to use the square at lunchtimes while it becomes more of a local, residential square outside the working day and at weekends.



Current view down Phillips Street towards Ann Court and Victoria College



View down Phillips Street to the new Ann Court development (De Quetteville Court removed)

Underground car park

The public realm improvements and reduction in traffic congestion to Bath Street, David Place and Minden Place rely upon the relocation of the Minden Place short term car park to Ann Court. This is discussed in greater detail when describing the changes to Minden Place.

The short term parking currently located in the Minden Place car park will be replaced within the proposed underground car park below Ann Court. Ann Court is less than 300m from the Central Market entrance and hence is considered close enough to the shopping district to provide a suitable location for short term and shoppers parking. Entry to the car park will be from the public square above with good lighting and natural surveillance of the public square by surrounding residential properties, and the Arts Centre and this will mean public safety is ensured.

285 out of the 400 spaces in this car park are proposed for short term parking with the remaining 15 spaces allocated to the residents living in the development above.

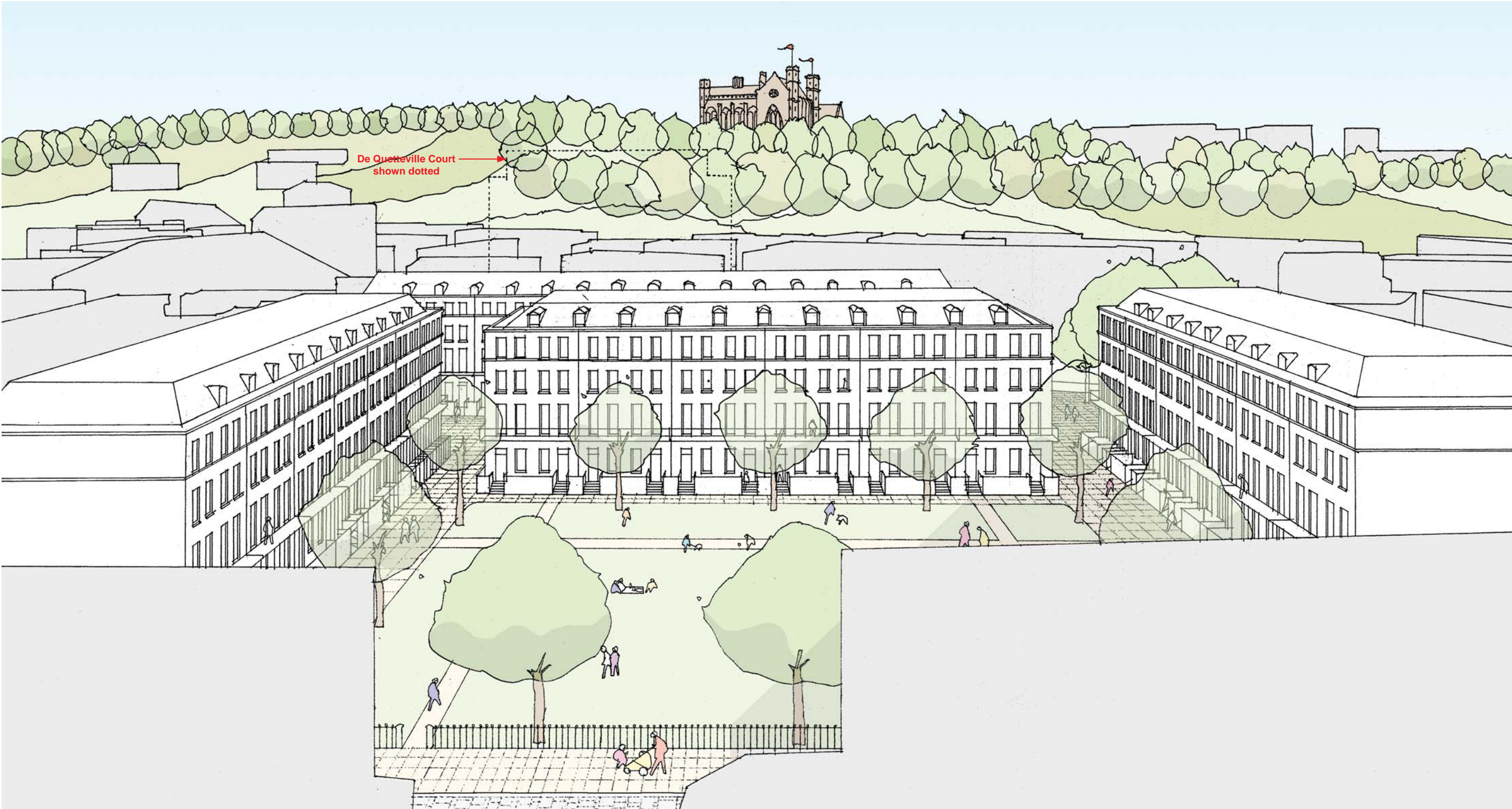
Initial thoughts on quantum of residential parking suggest that each town house will be allocated a single bay and each 2 and 3 bedroom apartment will be allocated the equivalent of 0.5 of a bay. It is expected that many residents will not own a car living as they will do in the centre of St Helier. Car clubs will be encouraged and parking spaces dedicated.

Between the public spaces in the Town Park and the Ann Court car parks, provision will be made for overnight and weekend parking.

The proposals assume the purchase and demolition of the existing public house and demolition of all existing housing upon the site with the redevelopment of the site for up to 4½ storey residential.



Aerial view of Ann Court showing the new public square



Aerial view looking east towards the new public square for Ann Court

5 Belmont Gardens

Once the white vans which park on this market traders Parish car park have been properly relocated to the new underground car park below the Town Park to the north, this small triangular Parish owned site becomes available for a small local park linking the pedestrian/cycle route from Ann Court to the Town Park.

Directly opposite the site is the proposed new pedestrian and cycle route link connecting through to the Town Park site. Negotiations with Jersey Gas for this right of way are already in progress.

Traffic control measures will be required on Belmont Road to ensure a safe crossing is provided for pedestrians and cyclists as they cross the busy Belmont Road on their journey between the 'North of Town' and the town centre.



View of Belmont Road and Belmont Gardens



Belmont Gardens as a 'Pocket Park' between Ann Court and the new Town Park

6 Minden Place

6.0 The masterplan

The existing car park may have a further 10 -15 years of life before it requires replacement and it currently provides compact, centrally located shoppers parking.

Initially these factors favoured retaining the car park, but the following considerations finally resulted in the masterplan proposal to redevelop the site:

Traffic

Minden Place car park is located in the centre of town, which would mean continued traffic congestion associated with the need to draw traffic right into the very centre of town through congested streets. Relocating the car park to Ann Court allows the car park to be approached via the ring road to the east avoiding dragging cars through the very centre of town.

The proposed traffic measures then become possible:

- Reduction of Minden Place to a single lane with greatly enlarged pavements and a pedestrian friendly crossing at the Bath Street junction;
- The reduction of Bath Street and David Place to a single lane heading north, allowing the enlargement of pavements and the substantial reduction of traffic volumes. This becomes feasible when the shoppers' car park access is no longer from Bath Street.



Proposed pavement widening and traffic measures for Minden Place

Improved public realm

The implementation of the traffic measures described above will allow the redesign of the public realm following the principles of shared space. Cars will no longer have priority and both the pavement and road surfaces encourage pedestrians to have priority. It has been shown that vehicle users in this situation behave with caution, driving more carefully and slowly.

A new small public square will add to the existing 'Little Portugal' that is Minden Street. Minden Street could be blocked up and paved over on its western leg to provide the small square.

New development

Redevelopment of the unattractive car park and replacement with a new commercial/residential development with retail on the ground floor opening onto the paved public realm of Minden Place and Minden Street. A small underground car park serving the new development is proposed.

Historically the site was once the old Cattle Market and as such, was an important and vibrant hub for the town. Its redevelopment will provide an opportunity to once again reinvigorate this central site.



The old Cattle Market located in Minden Place



Proposed development at Minden Place