



Townscape Appraisal

A40 Over Roundabout




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Townscape

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 The purpose of this chapter is to identify the key constraints likely to have an influence on townscape as a result of the proposed scheme. The chapter also provides a qualitative assessment on the effects of the scheme on townscape.
- 1.1.2 A qualitative review of the Townscape and any alteration within the study area that may affect the physical characteristics. The appraisal methodology will be the most recent version of the (TAG Unit A3), issued in December 2015.

1.2 Methodology

- 1.2.1 The chapter has been prepared in line with Department for Transport TAG UNIT A3 Environmental Impact Appraisal guidance.
- 1.2.2 Information was obtained from a desk study using a 1.5km study area from the centreline of the proposed scheme.
- 1.2.3 A number of online resources and mapping tools were utilised throughout the desk study including;
- Natural England National Character Area Profile: 106 Severn and Avon Vales
 - Department of Food Environment and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) Map
 - Historic England Interactive Map
 - Gloucester City Centre Local development scheme 2015 -2017
 - Third edition of Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, (GLVIA3) published 17 April 2013
 - Gloucester Residents Planning and Building page evidence based, Online

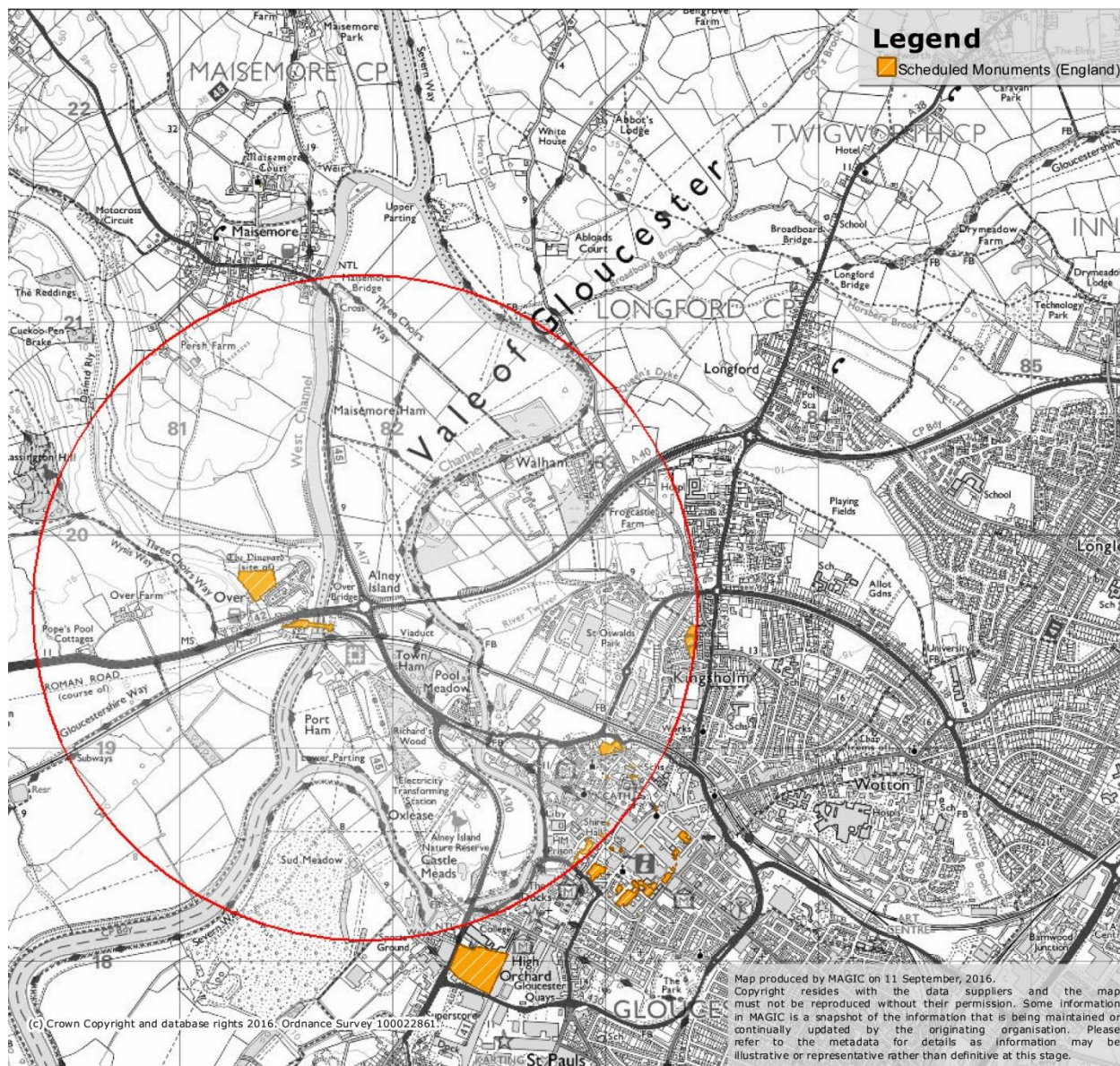


Figure 1: Gloucester City Plan Constraints

1.3 Evaluation and Assessment of Baseline Conditions

- 1.3.1 The study area lies northwest of Gloucester City Centre immediately adjacent to the Severn Way, connecting to the River Severn. The proposed scheme will take place within 500m from the edge of Gloucester city centre Docklands surrounding Westgate Retail Park and Royal Oak Rd. The following paragraphs outline the baseline conditions relevant to townscape.

Layout

- 1.3.2 The study area is characterised by a sporadic mix of large industrial, commercial, residential properties and travellers residential park area all of which lie on flat land immediately adjacent to the River Severn and the Severn Way. Gloucester Quays retail area and Sharpness Canal lie to the south of the proposed scheme. The three roads are linked at numerous points by small side streets which are set out in a grid pattern. The built environment acts as a constraint to development.

Density and mix

- 1.3.3 The density of buildings within the study area ranges from low to medium. The majority of structures are large and are subsequently set on large plots of land. Travelling southeast along the A417 Over Causeway, there are a number of large warehouses, mixed retail parks and residential property apartments and industrial yards. As a result, the density of buildings along this route is medium.
- 1.3.4 To the Northeast of A417, Over Causeway the density of structures remains low due to the presence of high-rise apartment buildings, large sprawling commercial properties, and car parks.
- 1.3.5 To the southwest of the scheme, along Castle Meads Way the density of structures decreases, particularly surrounding Llanthony Rd where a small number of commercial properties are found.

Scale

- 1.3.6 The majority of buildings are medium in height with the Quay area containing a mix of 8-storey residential buildings and commercial properties restricting views outwards to the surrounding environment and give a sense of enclosure in the area.
- 1.3.7 Westgate Retail Park lies between Westgate Street and St Oswald's Road within close proximity to the proposed improvements. The property is set on large plots of land and is separated by a large car park. The scale of the properties ties in with the surrounding townscape.

Appearance

- 1.3.8 The corridor has a rural character north of the Over Causeway junction, arising from the wide verges, remnant hedgerows and mature trees which were sympathetically retained within the existing road layout. However, this length of the highway corridor appears more urban, with a harder appearance, and more associated with a major roadway into the city.
- 1.3.9 The buildings are a mix of old and modern structures. Along Westgate Street and St Oswald's Road leading from Over Causeway, there are a number of large, old warehouses and historical buildings with a mix of commercial properties constructed from red and sandstone brick.
- 1.3.10 Many residential properties within the area are converted within the Gloucester Docks and along Royal Oak Road and Quay Street are warehouses and/or subsequently constructed from similar materials and appearance; this is particularly evident at Gloucester Dock area.
- 1.3.11 In contrast to this, properties located along Westgate Street, Quay Street and St Oswald's Road are a mixture of buildings with Historical character to high rise modern structures constructed largely from materials such as glass, metal and brick.
- 1.3.12 The commercial properties surrounding Westgate Street, Quay Street and St Oswald's Road and the surrounding area within the study area of the proposed improvements have been aesthetically designed and constructed from materials in keeping with the surrounding city features and buildings.

Human Interaction

- 1.3.13 Land use within the area is a mix of industrial, commercial residential properties. As a result, human interaction is deemed to be low due to the schemes location in context to the properties. Footways run along the majority of streets close to where the proposed scheme is expected to take place. A large retail park lies southeast of A417 Westgate Street immediately north of Royal Oak Road.
- 1.3.14 To the northwest of the proposed scheme along the A40 there is a small cluster of residential, commercial and office properties. It is likely that residents within the study area utilise the footways provided to access both areas. National Cycle Network 45 lies within the study area and this begins on Llanthony Road.

Cultural

- 1.3.15 Gloucester was founded during the Roman occupation of Britain, in AD 48. A Roman fortress, probably manned by the Second Legion, was built at Kingsholm, north of the present city centre. Gloucester is a historical city with a number of listed buildings on Westgate Road and the Gloucester Docks within the study area.
- 1.3.16 Westgate Street was the most important street in the commercial centre. It contained the market, the Guildhall and several churches, many of which still exist today. Southgate Street contained the fish and corn markets, and was the main route to Bristol.
- 1.3.17 The majority of Listed Buildings are stone constructed structures which link to the area's industrial and shipbuilding past. From about 1840 to the end of the nineteenth century Gloucester enjoyed almost uninterrupted growth, which was stimulated – and largely paid for – by the remarkable success of the Docks.

1.4 Townscape Appraisal

- 1.4.1 As shown in the worksheet associated with this appraisal (Appendix A) the majority of townscape features within the study area are deemed to be of low importance. Features such as layout, density, land use and human interaction are considered to be common to the area and could be substituted. Cultural elements however are deemed to be of high importance due to the proximity of Westgate Road and Gloucester City Docks and its historical connections. A number of buildings and structures within the study area are listed and will not be affected by the proposal.
- 1.4.2 It is determined that the scheme will have a neutral effect on the local townscape. The proposed improvements will likely have no impact on the layout, scale and appearance of the surrounding built environment.
- 1.4.3 There will be no requirement to affect commercial, residential or retail buildings within the study area.

1.5 Conclusions

- 1.5.1 Constraints from townscape are limited. The proximity of the Westgate Road and Gloucester Docks is a minor constraint for the proposed scheme. The area is of high importance within the study area, although the proposed scheme should have no effect on buildings and commercial properties of cultural and historical significance. This area contains a number of listed buildings which should not be affected.

- 1.5.2 The city has a historical and architectural buildings townscape, the over bridge connected to the city from the A417 is an open space containing mature trees which create a green gateway and sense of arrival, which helps to reduce the dominance and scale of hard materials, traffic and urban character of the highway corridor.
- 1.5.3 The proposal is to widen the carriageway and to reduce congestion pressure on the city centre during peak hours. The urban texture and framework of the city will not be impacted from the scheme.

Appendix A TAG Worksheet: Townscape summary

Feature	Description	Scale it matters	Rarity	Importance	Substitutability	Changes in without scheme case	Impact
Layout	<p>Study area contains a mix of industrial, residential and commercial properties.</p> <p>The built environment is constrained by Westgate Rd and Gloucester Docks associated with Royal Oak Rd and The Quays</p>	Local	Common to the area- no distinctive character to the layout of the townscape.	Low	High potential for substitution	No change. The layout of the built environment would likely remain the same without the proposed scheme.	Neutral The proposed scheme will have no effect on the City or Commercial retail layouts.
Density and mix	<p>The study area contains a mix of commercial, industrial and residential properties.</p> <p>The density of structures ranges from low to medium.</p>	Local	Common to the area- no distinctive character to the density of the townscape.	Low	High potential for substitution	No change. The density and mix of buildings within the area would likely remain the same without the proposed scheme.	<p>Neutral effect. The proposed road alterations will require no change to the density of buildings, commercial or residential.</p> <p>The road will remain the same with a minor widening of the exit roads to assist congestion.</p>
Scale	Buildings are predominantly large, high rise structures.	Local	The scale of some buildings is unique to the docklands and Westgate area.	Medium	Medium potential for substitution.	No change. The scale of the townscape would likely remain the same without the proposed scheme.	Neutral effect. No adverse impact on the size of buildings within the surrounding built environment.

Feature	Description	Scale it matters	Rarity	Importance	Substitutability	Changes in without scheme case	Impact
Appearance	Buildings are a mix of old and modern structures. High number of warehouses which link to the area's industrial/shipping past.	Local	A unique mix of old and modern structures	Medium	High potential for substitution	The appearance of the townscape will have no change with the proposed scheme. Buildings will remain unaffected.	Neutral effect. No impact on the appearance of buildings within the study area.
Human interaction	Human interaction within the study area is high due to the mix of land uses present.	Local	Common- no distinctive character to human interaction.	Low	High potential for substitution	No change. Human interaction will likely remain the same without the proposed scheme.	Neutral effect.
Cultural	Westgate St, Gloucester Docks and The Quay contain a number of listed buildings and structures.	Local and Regional	Historical and heritage links to Westgate and The Docks buildings.	High	Limited potential for substitution resulting from the rarity of the resource and the difficulty involved in replacing such a resource.	No change. Cultural links will likely remain the same without the proposed scheme.	Neutral effect. No impact on the setting of buildings within the study area.
Summary of character	The townscape is characterised by a mix of old and modern structures as well as by a variety of land uses; industrial, commercial and residential.	Local	Common	Low	Substitution possible	The townscape is likely to remain the same without the proposed scheme. There will be no change, and the townscape will likely remain the same without the proposed scheme	Neutral effect. The proposed improvements will likely have little impact on the surrounding built environment.

References:

- Department for Transport TAG Unit A3 Environmental Impact Appraisal (December 2015)
- Google Maps
- Natural England National Character Area Profile: 106 Severn and Avon Vales
- Department of Food Environment and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC)
- Historic England Interactive Map
- Gloucester City Centre Local development scheme 2011 -2014
- Gloucester Residents Planning and Building page evidence based, Online, Available:
<http://www.gloucester.gov.uk/resident/planning-and-building-control>
- Third edition of Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, (GLVIA3) published 17 April 2013

Summary Assessment Score:

Neutral

Qualitative Comment:

It is determined that the scheme will have a neutral effect on the local townscape. The proposed improvements will likely have no impact on the surrounding built environment. Westgate Street, Gloucester Docks and The Quay characteristics of the townscape will not be affected.

