

Town Hall Forecourt Improvement Scheme

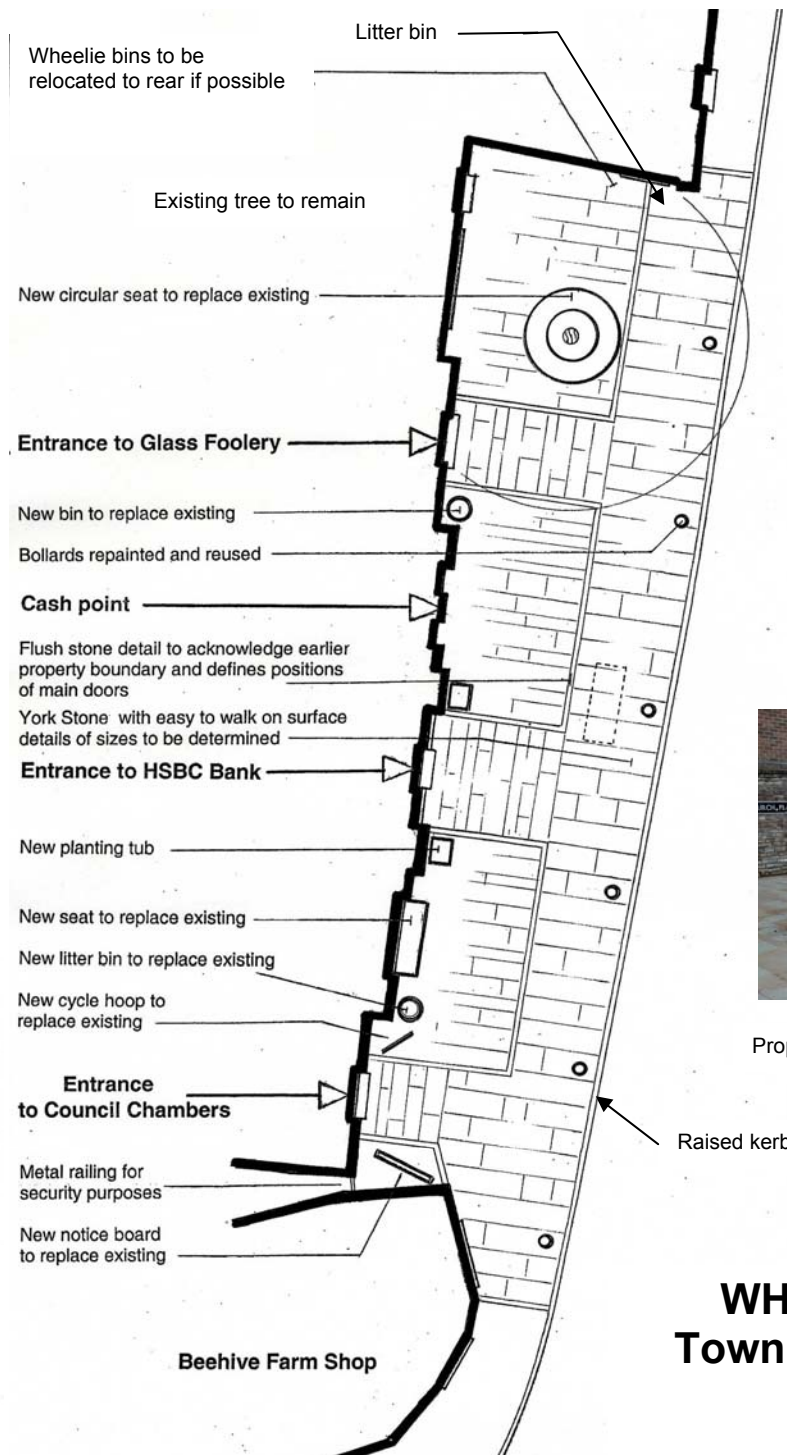
The forecourt is the setting to the Town Hall - one of the town's most historic buildings. It is an important public space but it has problems which we intend to resolve:

- The rough, stone surface needs to be replaced and raised to make it safer to walk on and easier for wheelchair users to access the Town Hall, HSBC and Glass Foolery.
- The seats, cycle racks and bins need replacing.
- The notice board needs more display space.
- The passage next to the Town Hall should be made secure.
- The existing tree needs some minor pruning.
- The existing wheelie bins need to be kept out of sight.

Our Approach to Designing the Improvements

The project team has thought very carefully about how the scheme should be tackled.

- **Works will be simple, dignified and modest** – not detracting from the Town Hall or competing for attention. They should reinforcing the uniqueness of the place. We propose using a single surfacing material – stone - relying on varying slab sizes and simple details to define routes.
- **All materials will be high quality**, long lasting and fit for purpose. The proposed surfacing is natural York stone - easy to walk on and non slip. It will be diamond sawn, attractive and robust and has been used successfully elsewhere.
- **We will avoid a cluttered appearance** - the forecourt is not large. We will ensure at least 2 – 2.5 metres clear width for pedestrians alongside the road and in front of entrances. The amount of street furniture etc will be kept to a minimum.
- **Seats and street furniture will be robust** and easily repaired or replaced if damaged. We propose using seats designed and built locally in Hampshire, modified to a special design and matching with the proposed planters.
- **Traffic or parking on the forecourt** must be prevented by keeping and renovating the existing bollards. The surface will be designed to allow only for essential maintenance vehicles.
- **We must avoid underground services** – particularly under the footway alongside the road. This limits what and where we can build and precludes kerbside structures.
- **There is not enough space for plant beds** - and very little public money for vital maintenance. Small, attractive planters beside the HSBC entrance are proposed – these will be maintained by the Bank.
- **Discussion with adjoining land owners is vital** – recognising their day to day needs. Discussions for relocating the wheelie bins out of sight are already in hand.
- **Where possible we will recycle materials** – the existing stone surfacing will be lifted and taken to store for future use. Any salvageable seating or other street furniture will be offered up for use elsewhere in Whitchurch.



Avoid cluttering this historic facade

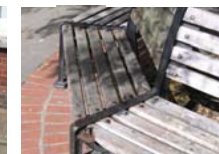


Limited space – must avoid clutter

NEWBURY STREET



Matching furniture proposed



Replace existing seat



Repaint bollard



Proposed new seat



Proposed planter



Example of seat and paving



Proposed tree seat



Proposed litter bin



Proposed cycle stand



Proposed style of larger notice board

WHITCHURCH TOWN CENTRE Town Hall Forecourt Improvements Draft Proposals (plans subject to change)