THE CITY CENTRE FRAMEWORK

Broadmead - character statement and place plan
1. The Bearpit
2. Primark store
3. Callowhill Court
4. Cabot Circus
5. Broadmead Arcade
6. The Hub
7. Quakers Friars
8. The Galleries
9. Eclipse Tower
Broadmead originated as a planned medieval suburb developed in the 12th century on a low lying meadow within the River Frome floodplain. The land was associated with St James’ Priory immediately to the north, and stood just outside Bristol’s town walls.

By the mid 19th century Broadmead had developed into a vibrant mixed use area containing shops, businesses and homes together as well as religious buildings, schools and cinemas.

Wartime destruction saw a significant loss of buildings to the south, on land now occupied by Castle Park, but had a relatively minor impact on the neighbouring Broadmead area. However decisions were made as early as 1940 to redevelop a shopping precinct on the land at Broadmead, with associated highway infrastructure aimed at improving access to the city centre for the motor car.

The plans drawn up by City Architect Nelson Meredith included some retention of historic buildings such as the Broadmead Arcade, John Wesley’s chapel and Quakers Friars, but saw wholesale redevelopment focused on the central junction, The Hub. The construction was delayed due to lack of funding, however the new buildings, including the prestigious Lewis’s and Debenhams department stores, began to emerge by the early 1950s.

Broadmead is typical of the shopping precincts built in the post-war period and comprises a grid of pedestrianised streets, open to the air, lined by three-storey buildings of a generally well-mannered architecture. Whilst the streets are vibrant and busy during the day, they are quiet and can be intimidating at night due to the lack of evening uses or through traffic, particularly the core of the area which was pedestrianised in the mid 1970s.

During the late 1980s the threat from out-of-town shopping, and in particular from the proposed Mall at Cribbs Causeway, was instrumental to the planning and realisation of the Galleries development. The first significant investment within Broadmead for over 30 years.

The building of Cribbs, however, led to greater efforts to improve and expand the city centre retail offer, with particular emphasis on achieving better weather protection and a more diverse mix of uses. This ultimately resulted in the construction of Cabot Circus which involved the moving of Bond Street to expand the shopping area, as well providing additional car parking and social housing. The retail scheme, which opened in September 2008, was based on covered streets rather than an internalised mall and also included a greater mix of leisure uses including a cinema and a focus for restaurants.

The evolution of shopping patterns mean there is continual need to re-evaluate and invest in the city centre shopping offer. Enhancements and further redevelopment within Broadmead will continue to provide a distinctive, vital, attractive, and integrated part of the broader city centre appeal.
3 Broadmead - Analysis

Challenges:
1. Conflicts between pedestrian, cyclists and vehicle through traffic.
2. Poor quality public realm and street clutter.
3. Highway dominated junction constraining pedestrian movement.
4. Negative visual impact of parking.
5. Poor connectivity across heavily trafficked roads.
6. Negative townscape impact of vacant sites or poor quality buildings.
7. Poor quality ground floor relationship with the street.
8. Poor legibility for pedestrians and cyclists.
10. Poor condition and underused heritage assets.
11. Compromised setting and lack of public interpretation of heritage assets.
12. Loss of historic setting.
Over the last 30 years inward investment has aimed to maintain the status of Broadmead as a regionally important shopping quarter, particularly in the context of the development of out-of-town developments such as Cribbs Causeway. Following on from the Galleries development in the early 1990s, and Cabot Circus, which resulted from the subsequent Broadmead expansion planning strategy, the current emphasis is on the potential for a major redevelopment of Callowhill Court and the land between Bond Street and Horsefair.

**Issues:**

- Accommodating significant intensification of the retail area to maintain significance as a regional retail centre.
- Managing traffic to reduce congestion at peak times and facilitate more sustainable patterns of movement.
- Improving the experience, convenience and reliability of public transport.
- Increasing diversity of land use to support increased vitality outside of shopping hours.
- Improving the public realm to maintain a high quality pedestrian priority zone.
- Increasing green infrastructure in order to meet wider environmental benefits.
- Improving pedestrian legibility around Quakers Friars to improve footfall and increase viability of units surrounding the historic asset.

**Opportunities:**

1. Intensification and diversification of land use through the efficient remodelling of Callowhill Court and the introduction of a multi-layer shopping development.
2. Increase the attractiveness and convenience of public transport serving the retail centre through the MetroBus project.
3. Improve the pedestrian environment to increase connectivity with adjacent areas such as Lewins Mead, Old City, City Gateway and St Pauls.
4. Improve accessibility for cyclists through the introduction of improved cycle routes along Horsefair and Penn Street, and the addition of secure cycle parking facilities.
5. Increase green infrastructure and street trees within the Horsefair and Penn Street, and promote the enhancement and protection of existing trees as part of proposals to redevelop Callowhill Court.
6. Improve the setting of listed buildings and historic assets including Quakers Friars and John Wesley’s chapel through public realm enhancement and sensitive redevelopment.
7. Improve the public realm at the Hub and promote consistent palette of materials to improve legibility along the Broadmead central spine.
3 Broadmead Place Plan

Vision
A successful shopping quarter that contributes to the wider attractiveness and economic viability of the city centre. Investment in Broadmead will update and enhance the quality of the retail environment and associated public realm. New development will help to increase the mix of land uses in order to improve vitality outside of shopping hours, focusing on the intensification of leisure uses and adding further homes in suitable locations.

Objectives
1. Maintain the status of Broadmead as a shopping centre to serve Bristol and its wider region through the redevelopment of Callowhill Court.
2. Increase accessibility through improvements to public transport and cycle facilities.
3. Provide adequate and sustainable levels of car parking to support the shopping activity.
4. Improve the setting of Quakers Friars and encourage greater pedestrian legibility.
5. Enhance The Hub and its surrounding buildings as a focal public space.
6. Continue to enhance and improve access to and around St James Barton (The Bearpit).
7. Improve the connections and associations with Castle Park.
8. Develop opportunities for providing heat and power networks and ultrafast broadband connectivity.

Supporting transport measures
The current arrangements for both public transport and through traffic will be affected by the proposed redevelopment at Callowhill Court and the completion of the MetroBus project. The rerouting of buses away from Horsefair and Penn Street will allow for significant improvements to the pedestrian environment and provide an opportunity to improve cycle routes. New stops and improved bus passenger facilities along Bond Street, Union Street and Broad Weir will help to make public transport more attractive and efficient.

Key public realm and movement projects
Broadmead East and West - the main public realm spine will continue to contribute to the identity and character of the shopping quarter. Inward investment will be expected to maintain and strengthen the scale and identity of the space including providing an enhanced space at The Hub with increased potential for events.
Penn Street - The removal of public transport offers an opportunity to improve the pedestrian environment but also to establish a stronger cycle route between Bond Street and Castle Park.
Broad Weir - The location is identified as an enhanced public transport focus with better pedestrian connections to Castle Park.

Key development projects
BM01 Callowhill Court and Quakers Friars
The comprehensive redevelopment of Callowhill Court will increase both the quality and intensity of retail uses in order to reinforce the shopping quarter in line with BCAP36. The redevelopment provides an opportunity to rationalise public transport serving Broadmead and bring forward a balanced solution for shoppers parking aimed at easing congestion.

BM02 Galleries
The intensification and redevelopment of blocks to the east as well as changes to retailing raises the need to further consider the role and design of the Galleries. Recent investment has maintained occupation of the existing units, however, there may be opportunities to increase the diversity of use within the block that add to the viability of the shopping mall in the future and improves aspects such as the outlook to Castle Park.

BM02 Merchant Street North
The north-west quarter of Broadmead has had relatively little investment since it was remodelled in the early 1950s. The block is unique in that it integrates a number of historic buildings including John Wesley’s Chapel and the Lower Arcade, and as the earliest phase of the post war development is acknowledged to contain some of the better buildings, most notably the Marks and Spencer store constructed in 1952, and the Broadmead Baptist Church opening in 1969 containing 19th century stained glass recovered from the earlier chapel.

It is likely that this block will come forward as the final part of the current regeneration of the shopping quarter, improving the retail units and consolidating outdated service yards. Any redevelopment should retain and enhance the setting of the listed buildings and begin with a full evaluation the contribution of the post war buildings and their fabric.
City Centre Framework
Consultation Draft
March 2018
City Design Group

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Proposed development: restore
Proposed development: reinvent
New public spaces and improvements to existing public spaces
Active ground floor uses (cafes, restaurants, shops)
Active building frontage (regular doors and windows, balconies etc.)
Existing and potential new focal building
Key public space enhancement
Public realm improvement corridor
Pedestrian routes (primary and local)
Cycle routes
Enhanced existing Bus Stop
MetroBus Location

Broadmead Place Plan
Key Diagram

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