

Draft Streetscape Design Manual

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1. The purpose of this manual

The purpose of this manual is to support the effective and coordinated delivery of improvements to the public realm, primarily to enhance the quality of Three River's settlements, and shopping centres. The manual provides practical, local guidance for those responsible for the different parts of the public realm.

Improvements to these areas enhance local civic pride and can attract new customers and new businesses into these centres, improving the overall vitality of the centre.

What the manual will achieve

Many different stakeholders manage or influence Three Rivers town, village and neighbourhood shopping centres but no clear guidance exists which focuses on the public realm within commercial centres across the District.

Three Rivers planning department's jurisdiction over the improvement of the town and district centres, through its Local Plan and emerging Local Development Framework is limited to regulating development which requires planning permission or advertisement consent.

The Local Transport Plan prepared by Hertfordshire County Council and its child documents do not always cover the whole District, and are more focussed on transport provision and short, medium and long-term strategies to shape travel patterns. Design is typically addressed by *Roads in Hertfordshire 2011*, which provides a framework of technical advice and standards within which alterations and additions to the highway should be constructed.

Local streetscape guidance must reflect the Council's aspirations for its shopping centres and must can be taken into account when town centre development, improvement and regeneration schemes and associated funding opportunities come forward.

Who is expected to refer to this manual

This manual should be read by anyone who has an interest in improving the District's town and village centres. In particular this manual should be read by:

- Agencies that undertake works to any part of the streetscape, including Three Rivers District Council, Hertfordshire County Council and various statutory undertakers.
- Developers and others involved in the planning process or who are party to S106 and S278 agreements or a future Community Infrastructure Levy involving improvements to the public realm.
- Three Rivers town and parish councils.
- Local residents who want to shape the way the streetscape looks by reporting unnecessary clutter and making suggestions that would enhance the streetscape.
- Three Rivers local associations and other community groups who have a valuable contribution to make by promoting and supporting streetscape improvements.

3.2.3 Bollards

Bollards are sometimes a hindrance to pedestrian movement and can also be visually intrusive in the streetscene, particularly when there are large numbers of them. They are often installed where there is a concern that vehicles will encroach onto pedestrian areas, but they have been over-used as they are considered to provide an 'easy' design solution. Bollards are often necessary to prevent parking on footways

Where bollards are used, they should be placed in a neat and orderly fashion, taking into account the shape of the road, footway, buildings and existing street furniture in order to avoid a messy, visually illegible streetscape.

- A light coloured band should be added around the top to help the visually impaired identify dark coloured bollards.
- In conservation areas bollards should be of a design and finishing that is appropriate to the area in which they are situated. Note should be taken of existing historical bollards.
- In any other areas, simple bollards that are a neutral addition to the street scene will be encouraged.
- Superfluous bollards should be removed and the paving made good.

8. Careful thought is needed when placing bollards close to existing street furniture so as not to result in a messy streetscape as shown here (Station Road, Rickmansworth).



9. A good example of orderly bollard placement (Baldwins Lane, Croxley Green).



Guardrails

Guardrails are visually intrusive in the street scene and should only be used where areas are considered to be particularly unsafe (i.e. in areas where traffic speeds are excessive). Guardrails can encourage pedestrians to make unsafe crossings by obstructing desire lines. The presence of guardrails can also encourage vehicles to increase speeds due to the segregation of pedestrian and vehicle.

Where guardrail is considered necessary, they should contribute to the streetscape through careful choice of the rail design and material.

- Where guardrail is proposed, they should be kept to a minimum length.
- In conservation areas or areas adjacent to conservation areas, special care should be taken over the detailing, colour and materials of guardrail so as to enhance or preserve the conservation area.
- Where a guardrail is no longer considered to be needed, they should be removed.

10. A good example of where guardrail could be considered for removal (Gallows Hill Lane, Abbots Langley).



11. Long guardrail here adds to the overall street clutter (Delta Gain, Carpenders Park).



Litter Bins

Bins are an important facility aiding in maintaining a cleaner environment. Litter bins, however, should be placed near high flows of pedestrian traffic and near to seating areas, such as bench areas and bus stops. When placing bins within the public realm, care should be taken to note the existing placement of street furniture.

- Where bins are more than **1 metre** away from existing street furniture such as benches and bus shelters, they should be moved.
- Worn bins should be replaced or in cases and where the bin merits retention such as in the cases below in , repainted.
- A brief audit of Three Rivers town and village centres has shown that there are many different bin types within each town centre. It is preferable for the same type of bin to be present throughout each town centre. Black is preferable within the District's conservation areas.
- Where new bins are to be introduced, the Council's Environmental Protection department should be consulted to identify if there is a need for bins with separate compartments for recycling.
- Takeaway outlets should take responsibility for waste generated by their customers by paying for or sponsoring a litter bin outside their premises, if there is no existing bin immediately nearby. Where necessary a planning condition will be used to secure the provision of a new bin where a new takeaway requires planning permission.

12. An example of different bin types within the same area leads to an uncoordinated streetscape (Church Lane, Mill End).



13. An example of good litter bin placement (New Road, Croxley Green).



Benches

Appropriately placed and designed street benches add to the character and appearance of a street scene. In fact, careful placement of benches can help define particular areas within the streetscape. Street benches are utilised by a wide variety of people, including older people or those with young children in accessing the town or district centre and its facilities.

Guidance is available on the most appropriate materials and form of benches to ensure that they meet legal requirements, support access on key routes and make a positive contribution to the street scene in terms of visual effect and siting.

- Benches should not be placed where they would obstruct pedestrian flow. Where this is proposed, a request will be made to move the bench to a more appropriate position. Dual uses of street furniture are encouraged in order to reduce street clutter such as the integration of planters with benches, where feasible.

- Benches should be positioned so as not to cause a hazard by stopping drivers and pedestrians seeing each other

- Regular maintenance of benches should be continued, particularly where benches are timber and at risk of decay.

14. Benches and other street furniture in regular placement as a neat orderly row (High Street, Abbots Langley).



15. Could additional seating here make better use of the public space? (Main Parade, Chorleywood).



Cycle Stands

Cycle stands are an important and functional part of the street scene. The presence of cycle racks encourages cyclists to access the town or district centre with a greater degree of confidence that they can legally and safely park and lock their bicycles.

Although cycle racks are encouraged within the town and district town centre, poor placement can disrupt pedestrian flow and contribute to a cluttered appearance of the street scene.

- Sheffield style cycle stands are the preferred option within Three Rivers town and village centres.

- The placement of Sheffield style cycle stands should not disrupt pedestrian flow.

- The placement of Sheffield style cycle stands should be positioned to allow sufficient space for a cyclist to stand on either side.

- Cycle stands should be finished in either stainless steel or painted to match the colour scheme within each town centre.

The County Council also have guidance on cycle parking provision that can be used for designing and implementing new cycle stands,

16. Good cycle rack placement in line with existing furniture (Moneyhill Parade, Rickmansworth)



17. Cycle racks in need of re-painting, also note the damaged guardrail (High Street, Rickmansworth).

