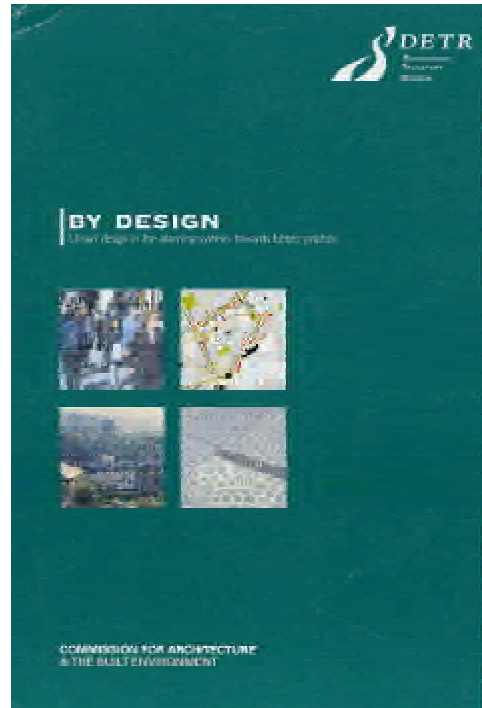


## 2. ANALYSIS

This section provides an analysis of the Old Town undertaken during 2001, based on the principles set out below. These principles are founded on the urban design objectives in the Government’s publication *By Design* (DETR, 2000), which have been adapted to the specific needs of this strategy and its challenge.

This chapter gives a brief synopsis of each principle, illustrating them through the respective strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that exist within the Old Town at present, and in terms of its future development. These are then used as the basis for developing the Strategy’s framework, building on the strengths, correcting the weaknesses, realising the opportunities, and addressing the threats.



*The CABE/DETR's Publication 'By Design'*

### **'By Design' Principles**

**Character and Context** - A place with its own identity

**Ease of Movement** - A place that is easy to get to and move through

**Diversity** - A place with variety and choice

**Built Form Quality** - A place where building styles relate to the established character

**Continuity and Enclosure** - A place where public and private spaces are clearly distinguished

**Public Realm Quality** - A place with attractive and successful outdoor areas

**Legibility** - A place that has a clear image and is easy to understand

**Adaptability** - A place that can continue to change easily

**Key Issues**

**Character and Context - A Place with its own identity**



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**Strengths**

- A distinct character area, adjacent to five others
- Lies within an area of Archaeological Importance with stratified archaeological deposits (up to 2m deep)
- Rich structural, artefactual, and written archival evidence of medieval Southampton, some properties having over 1000 years history
- Close to recent developments
- Historical associations
- Town Walls provide clear containment to northwest, west and south
- Distinct NS/EW grain
- Tight-knit, historic and intimate urban grain of 2-4 storeys in west
- A rich variety of building periods, quality materials, styles and architectural form
- Light colours with slate and red clay-tiled pitched roofs
- Strong perimeter block structure



*Unlike here in Rhodes, from the east of the Old Town there is no feeling of crossing through the line of the Town Walls and entering this area of historic and archaeological significance*

**Key**

- Town Walls
- Wall dominant
- Wall visible
- Well-defined entrance through Walls route
- - - Ill-defined entrance through the Walls' route

*Weaknesses*

- Eastern walls missing
- Fabric to south and east disrupted
- Disturbance to historic grain through traffic schemes (e.g. Castle Way), war damage, and poorly designed postwar redevelopment
- Tenuous links with original waterfront
- Overshadowed by recent developments e.g. WestQuay
- Loss of historic building styles through modern developments
- Poor public visual display of vaults on Lower High Street
- Presence of unsightly warehousing



*Many prestigious medieval buildings and the Town Walls, were constructed using stone from the Isle of Wight*

*Opportunities*

- A distinct quarter in Southampton including much of what is special about the city
- Close to waterfront, and maritime theme is still characteristic
- Future development at West Quay Phase 3 and Royal Pier Waterfront
- Route from precinct and parks to waterfront centred on North/South Spine
- The defensive context of the Old Town's past from medieval times to the twentieth century could be made more apparent
- High developer-interest in Southampton
- The maritime ambience could be built upon and enhanced
- The contemporary re-interpretation of the missing Town Walls
- Education and tourism resource



*Aerial photograph of the Old Town, illustrating the distinct tight-knit intimate urban grain of the western part of the character area around Bugle Street (courtesy and copyright of Mike Insall Photography)*

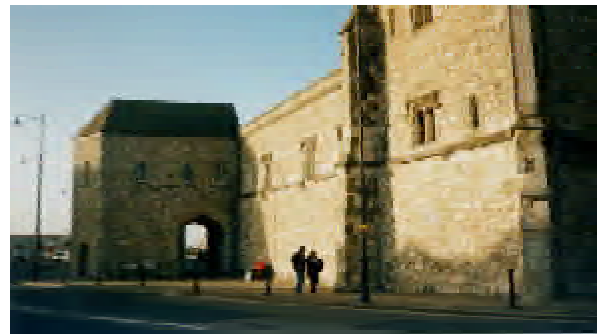
*Threats*

- Further loss of historic associations, fabric, and boundary in east
- Modern developments which do not respect the traditional building pattern or the walled town's character
- The loss of pitched roofs



*The vaults and historical structures are often hidden away from view and should be clearly exposed for all to see, as here in Greece*

**Ease of Movement - A place that is easy to get to and move through**



Free traffic circulation exists, without undue conflict to pedestrians in most places

**Key**

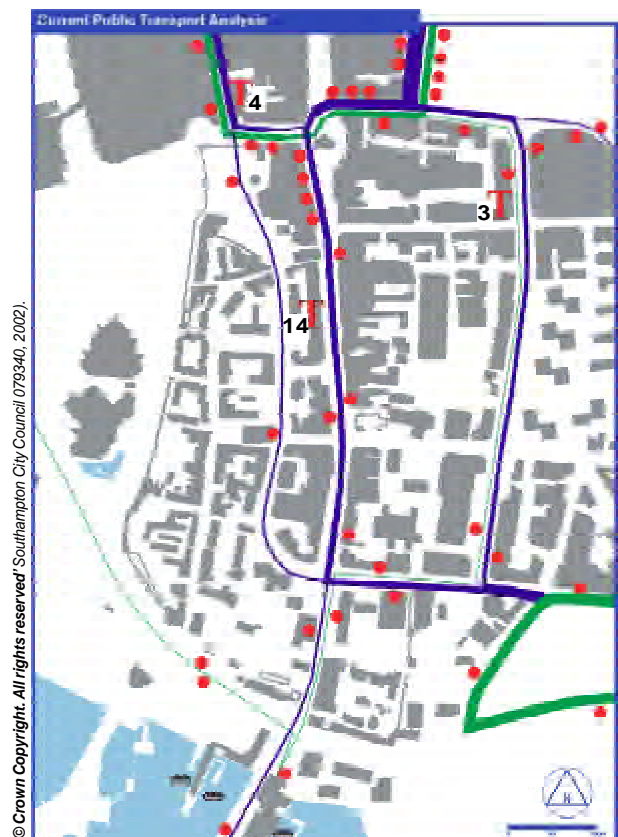
- X Pedestrian accessibility barrier
- █ Very heavy movement
- █ Heavy movement
- █ Medium movement
- █ Light movement



River ferries and hydrofoils could become an integral part of an integrated public transport network

**Key**

- █ Buses travelling both directions (thickness represents number of buses per hour)
- █ Buses travelling one direction only (thickness represents number of buses per hour)
- Bus stops
- T Taxi rank and capacity
- █ River ferries





- Ferry links to Hamble, Marchwood, Eling, Gosport and Portsmouth



*The heavy quantity of traffic on Town Quay contributes to divorcing the Old Town from the adjacent waterfront*

**Key**

- Low vehicle flow
- Medium vehicle flow
- High vehicle flow
- Major vehicle flow
- One-way street
- P Car park

*Strengths*

- Uninhibited traffic circulation and only a few conflicts with pedestrians
- Sufficient public car parking provision
- Gentle topography aids cycling and walking
- Public movement and permeability facilitated throughout most of the Old Town
- Free buses between train station, WestQuay, and Town Quay seven days a week, every 10 minutes (daytime) and every 30 minutes (evenings)

*Opportunities*

- On and fed by main routes of vehicle circulation
- Low east-west traffic movement north of The Bargate
- Improve links with river ferries at Town Quay
- Reinforcing gateways to help distinguish the Old Town

*Weaknesses*

- Reliance on free buses for links to train station
- Traffic around the Bargate
- Level change either side of the northwestern Town Walls
- Ability to use the Old Town for rat-running, especially on Castle Way and Bugle Street
- Some conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles
- Links to waterfront are poor

*Threats*

- Heavy quantity of traffic on Town Quay and Queensway
- Lack of public access within new developments

**Diversity - A place with variety and choice**



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**Key**

- Shops and financial/professional services (A1/A2)
- Food & drink (A3)
  
- Business (B1)
- General industrial & storage or distribution (B2/B8)
  
- Hotels (C1)
- Residential institutions (C2)
- Dwelling houses (C3)
  
- Non-residential institutions (D1) (incl. education, museums, churches)
- Assembly and leisure (D2)
  
- Car parking/public toilets
- Vacant buildings



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*High-standard city living is being introduced into the city centre and Old Town*



*Since the survey, some of the upper floors of Hanover Buildings have become vacant and are being adapted for residential use*

*Strengths*

- Varied, but balanced, population age-sex structure and tenure
- Fairly segregated 18-hour mixed uses within a ten-minute walk-time
- Variety of character areas and built form e.g. East Street
- Introduction of high-standard city living
- Education facilities exist within the Old Town
- A low proportion of vacant properties

*Weaknesses*

- Lower quality retail shops
- Lack of general pull to west or south along High Street

*Opportunities*

- Enhancement of the Old Town’s evening offer e.g. cafés, restaurants
- Expansion of specialist/independent retail opportunities in real and temporal terms
- Studio apartments/live-work unit opportunities e.g. 144 -164 High Street, redevelopment of NCP Back of the Walls car park
- Unrealised planning permissions for ‘food & drink’ and residential uses
- Location for nationally renowned heritage visitor attraction
- Opportunities for greater mix of uses in south - health, education, mini-market/ delicatessan
- Sub-zones within the Old Town could sustain a comprehensive mix of uses

*Threats*

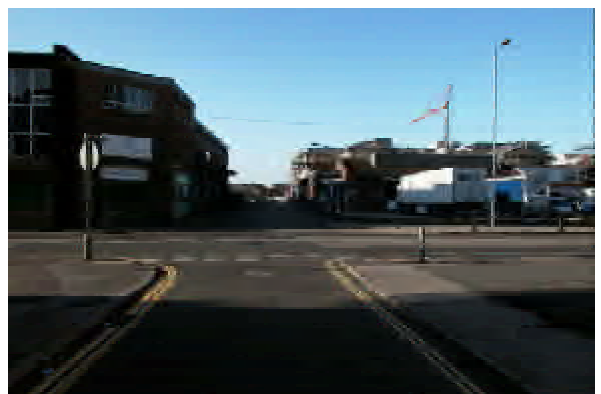
- Lack of facilities to support children/ families and the elderly
- Conflicts between uses if not handled carefully and sub-zones not considered
- Pedestrian movement and activity dies off to the south along High Street and is low in the west



*Residential areas with pubs predominate in the west of the Old Town*

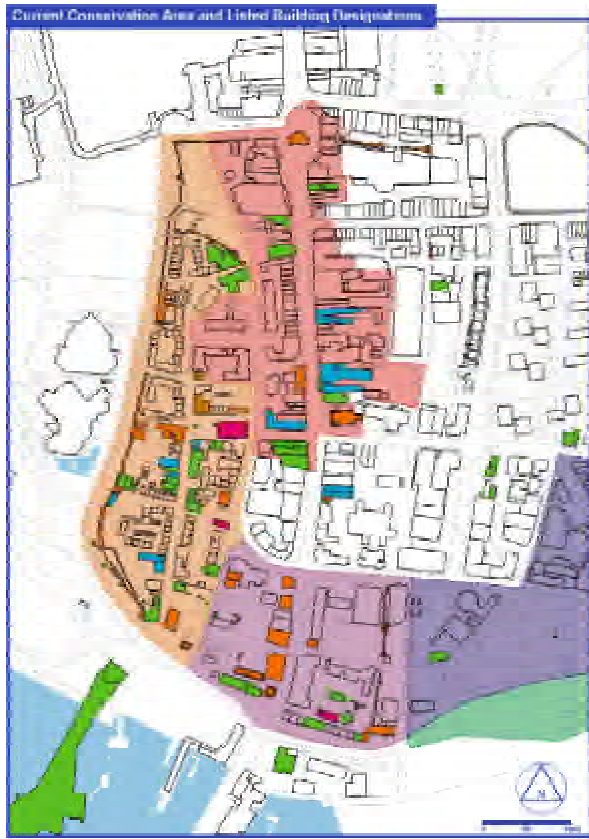


*East Street speciality shopping sub-area*



*Fruit and vegetable wholesalers and warehousing still dominates much of the south of the Old Town*

**Built Form Quality - A place where building styles relate to the established character**

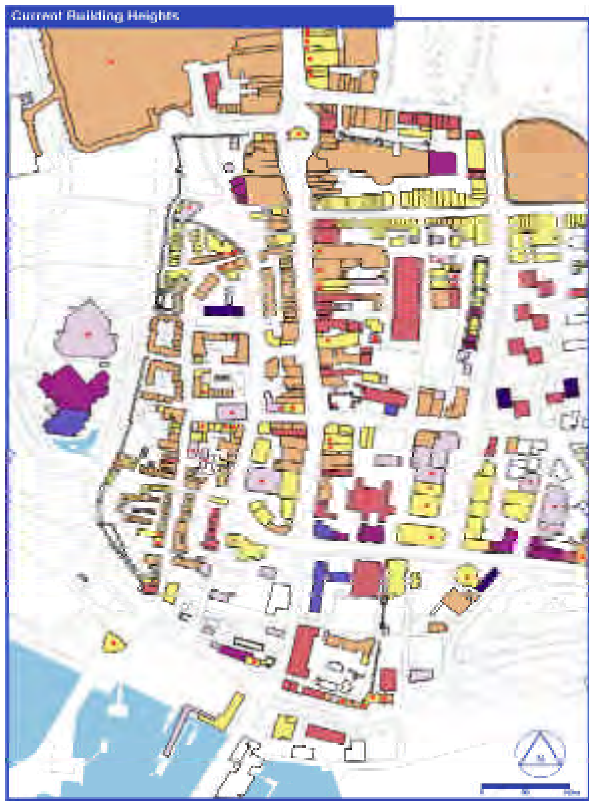


*The timber-framed Scheduled Ancient Monument of Tudor House Museum (15th Century)*



**Key**

- Old Town North Conservation Area
- Old Town West Conservation Area
- Old Town South Conservation Area
- Oxford Street Conservation Area
- Canute Road Conservation Area
- Scheduled ancient monument
- Listed scheduled ancient monument
- Listed building - Grade I
- Listed building - Grade II\*
- Listed building - Grade II



*The 20th Century Castle House, composed of prefabricated concrete, is out of scale with the rest of the Old Town*



**Key**

- 1 storey
- 2 storeys
- 3 storeys
- 4 storeys
- 5-6 storeys
- 7-8 storeys
- 9+ storeys
- High floor-to-ceiling heights



*Strengths*

- Strong, varied built form quality along High Street, in the west, and along Town Quay, with scale suitably reinforcing the historic character
- Conservation designations offer protection
- Ambience of working port still survives to the south
- Variety of building eras, architectural form, scale and materials

*Weaknesses*

- Occasional scale, massing and façade problems
- Castle House, flats surrounding 58 French Street, and St Cross House
- Cohesion to townscape lacking in places

*Opportunities*

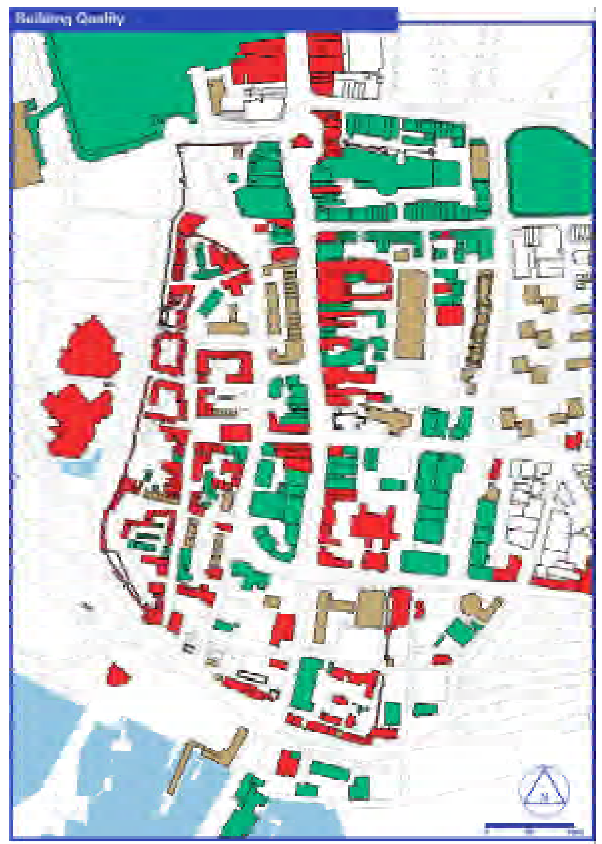
- Potential for redevelopment of many plots
- Potential to proactively use listed status and conservation area designations

*Threats*

- Not all of the Old Town lies within a Conservation Area
- Lack of protection to several key buildings that are outside conservation areas and/or unlisted
- Development not inkeeping with historic context



One of the many ornate banks within the Old Town, this example built using ashlar stone



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**Key**

- Buildings which make a positive contribution. These are very important to the quarter's identity and are often landmarks of high quality in aesthetic/historic terms and should be retained. This also includes the background architecture which contributes to pleasant streets and provides a foil for the landmarks.
- Buildings which make a neutral contribution. These provide no particular benefit to the aesthetic quality of the quarter, being neither positive nor negative.
- Buildings which make a negative contribution. These have little value historically or aesthetically, and may require a facelift in the immediate future, but ultimately need to be replaced.

*Geddes Warehouse - a positive contribution due to its imposing nature on the area's boundary with the waterfront, and its maritime influences*



**Continuity and Enclosure - A place where public and private spaces are clearly distinguished**



**Key**

- Blank frontages
- - - Broken frontages



*Blank walls around Castle House and disjointed/misaligned building edges should be mitigated or redeveloped to aid the continuity and enclosure of the streetscape. Murals could be used in the short-term to enliven the walls.*

- Strengths*
- Hard built edges along the back of footpath predominate in most places
  - A range of well-defined public spaces at varying scale

- Weaknesses*
- Buildings fronting High Street often possess poor rear facades
  - Built frontages often lacking in south and along Queensway
  - Blank frontages around Albion Place and Castle House
  - Width of modern roads reduces the Old Town’s characteristic feeling of enclosure

- Opportunities*
- Employ social uses, such as pavement cafés, to blend public and private space
  - Redevelopment of blocks at the back of footpath will lead to strong built edges
  - Use of public art to enliven blank frontages

- Threats*
- Misaligned and disjointed building edges in current blocks where little possibility of redevelopment exists



*The use of pavement cafés softens the boundary between public and private space*

**Public Realm Quality - A place with attractive and successful outdoor areas**



**Key**

Green open spaces	Hedgerows
Hard open spaces	Significant tree
High quality	Poor quality

**Notes**

- 1 Lack of life
- 2 Too much clutter and traffic arbitrarily dissecting the space with not enough emphasis paid to The Bargate
- 3 Space locked to public
- 4 Ok when seating is in place
- 5 Views to vaults could be improved
- 6 Presentation of excavations could be enhanced
- 7 Lack of life



*Westgate Square provides an ideal example of where the potential to make more use of some of the current open spaces of intrinsic special charm and character within the Old Town, exists*

**Strengths**

- St Michael’s Square high quality & central
- The Old Town is surrounded by green open spaces
- The traditional Purbeck paving and kerbing, and some York stone, still survives in places
- New Purbeck paving laid in several locations improves the setting of the Town Walls
- Pleasant waterfront viewing platform from high level park at southwestern extremity

**Weaknesses**





- Poor setting for Walls to south, southeast, northeast, and to the Castle Bailey Wall
- Lack of public open spaces to east of Old Town
- Setting to many important buildings not as prestigious as deserved
- Mixed and mainly poor palette of public realm materials
- Poor provision of seating, formal and informal
- Use of Albion Place/Castle Way as car park/bus stop/bus park
- Heavy traffic disturbs the public realm
- Lack of a comprehensive public realm strategy, development briefs, or a Section 106 Policy, to guide a development’s contribution to enhancing the public realm
- Street clutter

**Opportunities**

- A network of hard spaces already exists to improve and promote
- Bargate, Albion Place, Westgate Square and Watergate could be promoted as quality gateway spaces
- Ability to capture the best of what survives
- Planting of street trees to ‘green’ the Old Town

**Legibility - A place that has a clear image and is easy to understand**



-  Landmark buildings
-  Marker buildings
-  Views in need of enhancement
-  Views of water



*The Bargate, standing isolated and disjointed from the Walls, is more a sculpture on a roundabout than a gateway, with most passing around it rather than through it*



*The remains of Holy Rood Church forms a distinctive landmark in the centre of the Old Town*

*Strengths*

- Bargate – superb medieval gateway
- Several prominent marker buildings/features
- Both spines contain many landmarks and strong built form
- Holy Rood Church & St Michael’s Church are legibility foci in the heart of Old Town
- Views of water possible
- Glimpsed views from Bugle Street e.g. towards The Quays
- The Town Walls’ height aids understanding of layout and improves legibility, especially along Western Esplanade where they stand about 20ft high
- Original castle site marked by one tall single block

*Weaknesses*

- Lack of many quality gateway features
- Poor signage inhibits legibility and interpretation
- Much of historic waterfront has been lost
- Fabric less cohesive in east, and lacks landmarks and strong views
- The Bargate is disjointed from the surviving Town Walls

*Opportunities*

- East/west spine along Bernard Street-St Michael’s Square-Blue Anchor Lane
- Existing landmarks could be used to aid Old Town imagery
- Key views should be improved
- Bargate, Westgate Square and Watergate could be promoted as gateway marker buildings and landmarks

*Threats*

- Too much bland, poor quality development
- Further loss of waterfront connections

***Adaptability - A place that can continue to change easily***

*Strengths*

- A variety of unit sizes assists the adaptability of buildings in the Old Town
- Past adaptability of buildings in the Old Town sets an example, e.g. Tudor House

*Weaknesses*

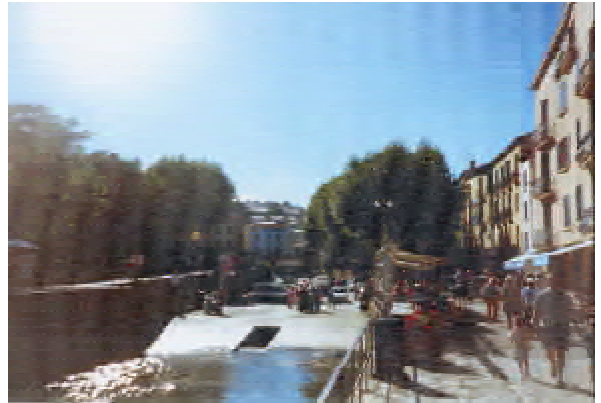
- Older buildings, particularly listed buildings need to be adapted with great sensitivity, this may preclude certain uses

*Opportunities*

- Certain routes are wider than now necessary, and could be redesigned
- The Town Walls, Bargate, Vaults, and other historical/archaeological features could be exploited in new ways
- The missing walls could be reinterpreted in a contemporary manner
- Changes in demand for certain uses
- Funds available from English Heritage’s ‘Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme’
- Adapting old buildings for new uses

*Threats*

- Cheaper new-build alternatives
- Recent buildings are more use-specific
- Changes in demand for certain uses
- Tax laws encourage demolition rather than refurbishment



*Modern methods to illustrate connections to the water could be used, as in Collioure, where a river has been culverted but its basin is still clearly delimited and used during floods. Otherwise it provides a space for markets and festivals.*



*Tudor House (15th Century) - separate buildings amalgamated in the early twentieth century, including houses, small shops and businesses; now a museum*



*The missing Town Walls should be cleverly reinterpreted*



*Many buildings, especially banks, are now being taken over by public houses in the original commercial heart of the city along High Street*