



## CABINET REPORT

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Designation of Eastgate</b>
---------------------	--------------------------------

**AGENDA STATUS**

**PUBLIC**

<b>Cabinet Meeting Date:</b>	9 July 2014
<b>Key Decision:</b>	NO
<b>Within Policy:</b>	NO
<b>Policy Document:</b>	NO
<b>Directorate:</b>	Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning
<b>Accountable Cabinet Member:</b>	Cllr Tim Hadland
<b>Ward(s)</b>	St Crispin Ward

### **1. Purpose**

---

- 1.1 This report seeks Cabinet authority to designate the east end of Abington Street as Eastgate, due to its historic associations with the location of East Gate in the former town wall.

### **2. Recommendations**

---

- 2.1 That Cabinet approve the formal designation of Eastgate as an area of historical significance subject to no substantial comments from the list of consultees
- 2.2 That powers are delegated to the Director of Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning to consider and resolve any issues arising from the consultations above and subject to this to take whatever action necessary to implement the designation .

### **3. Issues and Choices**

---

#### **3.1 Report Background**

- 3.1.1 Promoting the heritage of Northampton's historic town centre is considered to be a key strand for the town's regeneration. The Heritage Gateway Project is currently focussing on the town's history around the former Castle site adjacent to the railway station and it is recognised that there is scope to extend this project to also focus on the town's historic wall and associated gates that defined the entrance points into Northampton.
- 3.1.2 Eastgate has been identified as the next area of focus as part of a widening remit of the Heritage Gateway Project. A key aim of the project will therefore be to provide physical interpretation features. It is proposed that the area of the town around the old East Gate be formally recognised and designated as Eastgate. Authorisation is required to carry out a consultation exercise to obtain opinion on such a designation. This report therefore seeks authorisation to undertake any consultation and for the Director and Cabinet Member to make any final designation subject to any comments received.
- 3.1.3 The significance of the area stems from the 1610 John Speed Map of Northampton. The walls of the town are clearly depicted with a number of 'Gateways' into the town centre. Northampton's defensive wall existed from medieval times until 1669 and NBC plan to mark its five gateways to celebrate the town's heritage. As well as Northgate and Derngate, Eastgate was one of these gateways into the town proving its importance in Northampton's history.
- 3.1.4 This report aims to create the designated area of Eastgate within the town centre. The scope of the area, to be formed as part of the consultation, will see signs being placed within the relevant area identifying the boundaries of Eastgate, residents and business owners having the opportunity, although not an obligation, to include Eastgate in their address (for example XX Abington Street, Eastgate, Northampton) and formal recognition of this newly designated area.
- 3.1.5 If the area is designated, the businesses / properties within Eastgate will have the opportunity to include Eastgate in their address if they so wish.

#### **3.2 Issues**

- 3.2.1 Legal advice has been sought about how an area of the town can be designated as Eastgate (outline map of proposed area attached to this paper). There is no formal legal process identified as locality areas are either created at the point of construction (in the case of new housing estates/developments) or through custom/historical ties. However it is important that the views and opinions of the public are taken into account and that there is public acceptance of the new name. Therefore advice has been provided that the Borough Council should undertake consultation to the businesses within the suggested locality and any related relevant groups in making such a designation and to define an appropriate boundary of an area that can be

designated as Eastgate. The businesses within the locality and any relevant related organisations / groups will be formally written to as part of the consultation.

- 3.2.2 Formal Consultation would be necessary with a number of organisations including Northamptonshire County Council, Royal Mail, the emergency services, neighbouring business and residents associations (as identified) and with the general public at large. It is proposed that such a process will take place over a 6 week time period with consultations commencing in July 2014.
- 3.2.3 The proposal does not intend to replace any existing street names or building names or numbers. It simply seeks to provide a historically relevant identity to this area related to the original siting of an “East Gate” in the former castle wall. As such the proposed change will not place an obligation on occupants to update property addresses. It provides them with the option to use Eastgate in their address and for this area to be formally recognised by local residents and the local authorities. .

### **3.3 Choices (Options)**

- 3.3.1 Do nothing – this option would mean that whilst the Heritage Gateway Project would identify the towns’ historic wall and relevant gates such identification would go unnoticed by visitors to the town and would fail to formally recognise our towns interesting history.
- 3.3.2 Create a street called Eastgate – consideration has been given to identifying the location of the “East Gate” through the establishment of a street in this area. This has not proved possible as the area around the “East Gate” is well established with historic roads and established buildings. To change the name of any of the roads in the “East Gate” area would be costly to both the Borough Council and to local residents (as it will be necessary for them to change their addresses as well as new street signs being created and maps of the town being changed. In addition, it is not clear from historical records the exact location of the “East Gate” although records do indicate an area.

## **4. Implications (including financial implications)**

---

### **4.1 Policy**

- 4.1.1 This designation supports the Borough Council’s objectives to promote heritage and is an activity that is aimed to promote and regenerate the town centre alongside other programme streams.
- 4.1.2 Eastgate is one of the 44 Northampton Alive projects which show development and regeneration in the town as well as promoting Northampton as a place to invest.

## **4.2 Resources and Risk**

- 4.2.1 Implications are limited to staff resources required to carry out the consultation process. This should be good value given the benefits. Identification of a designated area will support physical proposals to provide interpretation features as part of an enlarged Heritage Gateway Initiative.
- 4.2.2 There is a risk that this proposal will generate some negative publicity due to the town centre being an established area within the town with much public interest. This can be mitigated through the inclusion of the public in the consultation process and the identification of the importance of this with the Heritage Gateway Initiative. The costs to be incurred in such process will be minimal with officer time being the main expense.
- 4.2.3 There will be some funding needed to bring forward signage and interpretation boards in the area.

## **4.3 Legal**

- 4.3.1 The legal implications in respect to carrying out such a consultation have been carefully considered as have all options available to identify the “East Gate” area. Further legal advice will be provided following the outcome of the public consultation

## **4.4 Equality and Health**

None.

## **4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)**

- 4.5.1 NBC have been speaking with some of the building owners and retailers in the area who support the scheme
- 4.5.2 Legal have been consulted on the content of this Cabinet paper
- 4.5.3 The consultation on the designation will be undertaken following approval from Cabinet

## **4.6 How the Proposals deliver Priority Outcomes**

- 4.6.1 As mentioned above this project is part of the Northampton Alive initiative which are key projects to help to regenerate the town and encourage investment
- 4.6.2 There is currently a major focus on promoting the rich heritage of Northampton. Projects such as North Gate Bus Station has included artwork which helps to bring the past to life with bespoke installations. There are also long-term proposals to develop the area around Marefair as a historic gateway to Northampton town centre. Its aim is to inform those living in and visiting Northampton of the town’s rich medieval heritage. Eastgate will make up part

of this heritage promotion and interpretation boards will help people to learn about its history.

#### **4.7 Other Implications**

4.7.1 None

#### **5. Background Papers**

---

5.1 Map of proposed Eastgate area attached.

**Steve Boyes**  
**Director of Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning**  
**0300 330 7000**