



TOP AWARD FOR MARKET PLACE



By Clive Whittingham

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THE £2.2m redevelopment of Kettering's Market Place has beaten projects from across the country to scoop a major national award.

The Market Place beat 40 similar schemes to take first prize in the pedestrian environment category of the Local Government News' Street Design competition.

Former winners of the prestigious competition include the redevelopment of the Old Bailey in London.

Kettering Council's project manager, Paul Thomas, said: "It's great that a national body has recognised the success of the market place. The project was a triumph of partnership working, resilience and vision. With the next phase of works starting soon, and the new Market Place restaurants already under way, this whole area will be transformed into something the

town can be proud of."

Laura Potts, who was out enjoying the sunshine with children from the All Saints Play Group yesterday, said the new development is a real asset to the town.

Mrs Potts, of Kettering, said: "It was a waste of space before, so it's nice to see it utilised better. We came down because the weather is so nice and the children can play in the water.

"There have been loads of children down here in the warm weather. It's a shame there can't be more facilities like this."

Laura Sharman, editor of Local Government News, which runs the awards, said: "The judges were very impressed by the improvements and the role that this scheme will play in rejuvenating the local area.

"The use of high quality materials and well-thought out design has helped transform the space into a more attractive and accessible environment, while reinforcing the historic identity of the town."