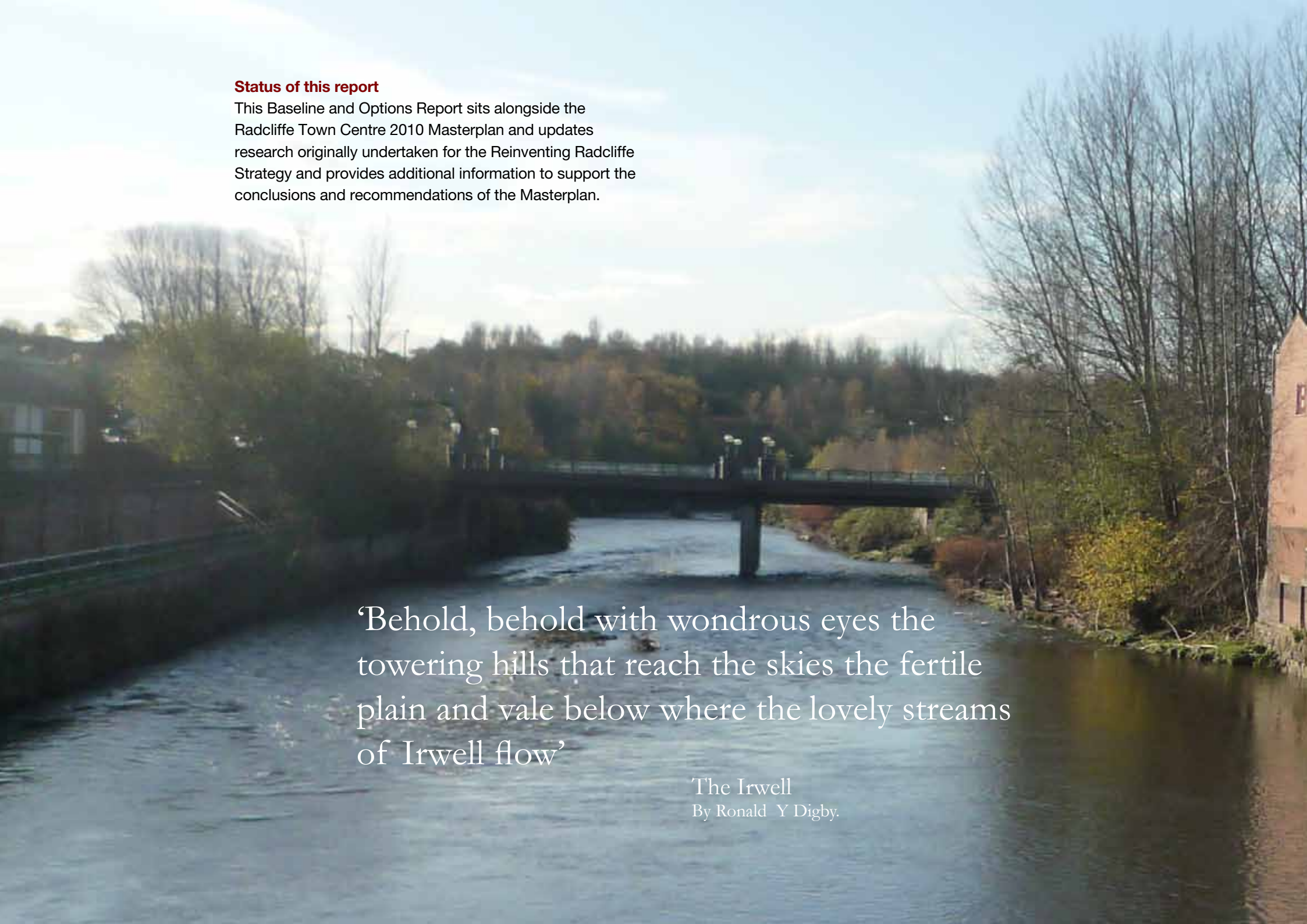


Radcliffe Town Centre 2010

Baseline and Options Report
Adopted March 2011

A scenic view of the River Irwell flowing through a landscape with trees and a bridge in the background. The river is in the foreground, with a bridge crossing it in the middle ground. The background features a line of trees and a clear sky.

Status of this report

This Baseline and Options Report sits alongside the Radcliffe Town Centre 2010 Masterplan and updates research originally undertaken for the Reinventing Radcliffe Strategy and provides additional information to support the conclusions and recommendations of the Masterplan.

‘Behold, behold with wondrous eyes the
towering hills that reach the skies the fertile
plain and vale below where the lovely streams
of Irwell flow’

The Irwell
By Ronald Y Digby.



Radcliffe Market Hall

For all matters regarding this project please contact
by calling: 0161 200 5500
or e-mailing: lavinia@urbed.coop
or posting: URBED, 10 Little Lever Street, Manchester, M1 1HR



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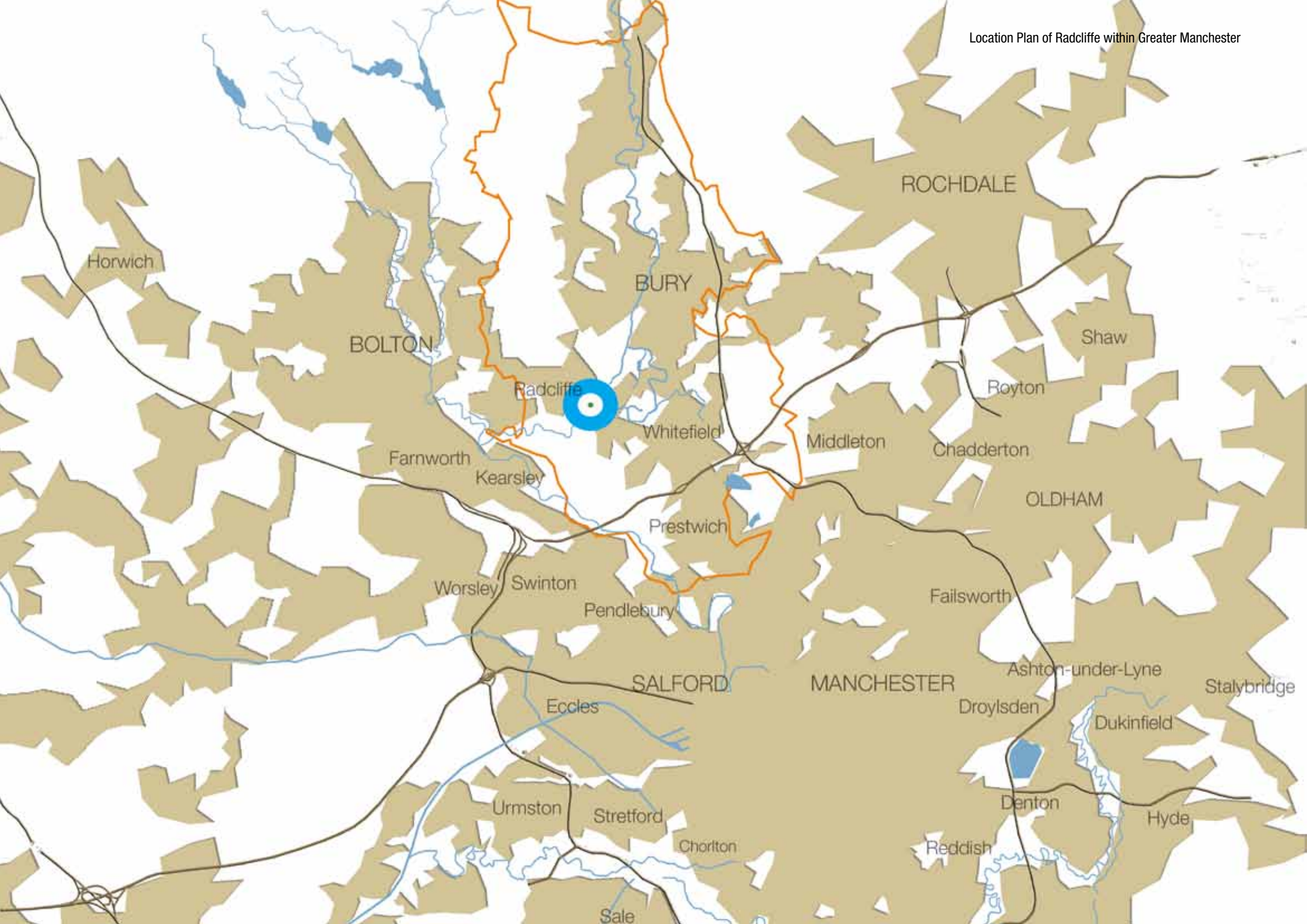
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Introduction

This baseline and options report provides important background information to support a study commissioned by Bury Council to prepare a new masterplan for Radcliffe Town Centre and sits alongside a low carbon energy framework for Radcliffe. The study has been undertaken by URBED (Urbanism, Environment and Design) with commercial advice from Gordon Hood Regeneration and energy advice from AECOM. The process has included a roundtable workshop, consultation on options and close working with the Radcliffe Local Area Partnership.

Bury Council have appointed URBED to look again at Radcliffe Town Centre. This builds on the Sustainable Urban Neighbourhood (SUN) work done by URBED in 2003 and the subsequent work to secure a development partner for the town centre that was undermined by the recession. The question now is can we use development interest in the town centre from budget supermarkets to develop an alternative scheme or is it best to wait for the property market to recover.

Part Two of this report summarises the key points to arise from the baseline update conducted in late 2009/ early 2010. This includes a description of the historical and existing character of the town, existing transport facilities and local development market.

Part Three then outlines the options appraisal process by summarising the development opportunities available, describing each of the three options consulted on and appraising each of them, and concludes with a recommendation for a preferred option to form the basis of the Masterplan.



(top)Aerial photo of Radcliffe's Retail core and the River Irwell running alongside it



(Bottom) Radcliffe Bridge which allows Blackburn Street to pass through the town and over the River Irwell



The Reinventing Radcliffe wider masterplan 2004



Sun Quarter Development Brief Plan 2005



2 Aerial perspective of the SUN Quarter development by Countryside 2007



Perspective of the SUN Quarter development by Countryside 2007

Project background

URBED has been involved in masterplanning the regeneration of Radcliffe since 2003 when we were appointed by Bury Council to develop a vision and strategy for Inner Radcliffe. This was published as *Reinventing Radcliffe* and during 2004 this was developed into a series of more detailed masterplans. This included a masterplan for new development at the heart of the town known as the SUN Quarter Development Brief. This previous work has provided the foundation for this current study.



The SUN Quarter masterplan

Reinventing Radcliffe (adopted May 2004)

The 2003 study by URBED assessed the challenges facing Radcliffe. It concluded that many industrial towns in a similar position to Radcliffe have suffered and Radcliffe has in fact done better than many. However there is no prospect of the town recapturing past glories when it had its own paper manufacturing and town council. It is however ideally placed to “re-invent itself” as a sustainable urban neighbourhood. The study developed this into a series of themes including the promotion of new housing, the development of the town centre as a service, leisure and cultural hub for local people and the development of a unique identity of Radcliffe based on the visual arts. Projects included housing development around the centre, the reopening of Blackburn Street (recently completed) and the creation of a gallery to house the sculptures donated to the town by Ulrich Rückriem.

The SUN Quarter Development Brief (adopted April 2005)

The main opportunity in the town centre was the site of the Kwik Save store behind the market. This combined with the council owned car parks and the bus station created a significant site with the potential to transform the town centre and in particular to make a stronger link between the edge of centre ASDA store and the main part of the town centre. The plan included new retail space and cafes, a gallery and riverside garden for the Rückriem sculptures, a new bus station and market, with the main commercial value for the development provided by apartments. The SUN Quarter development opportunity was put to the market in October 2006 and the council selected Countryside Properties as preferred developer in April 2007. Unfortunately their proposals were caught up in the credit crunch and Countryside were forced to pull out early in 2008.

Next Steps

This raises the question of what now to do with the town centre in difficult economic circumstances. This study has therefore looked at the current state of Radcliffe and the potential demand from developers and occupiers to consider what types of development could be viable in current market conditions and what might be viable over the longer term when markets recover in order to develop a realistic and deliverable plan for the town centre.



Diagnosis

Radcliffe has suffered like all small industrial towns surrounded by stronger neighbours. However, despite how it feels to local people and traders, it has not done as badly as many similar places and there are reasons for optimism. There are more customers who can be attracted into the town and it wouldn't take much, even in the present economic climate to create a virtuous circle of improvement.

The analysis in the original Reinventing Radcliffe report remains relevant to the town today. There was a time when thousands of people lived and worked within a short walk of Radcliffe town centre. Car ownership was low and people travelled less than they do today so that the town centre virtually had a captive market. Despite being surrounded by larger towns Radcliffe was an independent town and prospered with its own town council, newspaper and a full range of local shops and services. There are scores of towns like this in Greater Manchester, places like Shaw and Royton in Oldham, Middleton in Rochdale and Eccles in Salford,

All of these towns have suffered in a similar way to Radcliffe. They have all lost their town councils and seen their shopping centres lose trade to the larger places like Bury and Bolton or into Manchester and the Trafford Centre. Furthermore most have seen their convenience shopping trade mopped up by large supermarkets. They all face the same question - what is the future for a small town in a large conurbation? What is its role and can it sustain a lively town centre?

Back in 2003 we benchmarked Radcliffe against a

range of similar towns and came to the conclusion that it had actually done better than many similar towns (even though this was not the way that local people necessarily saw it). Reviewing the town again in the last six months suggests that it continues to hold its position - there are relatively few vacant shops, the market is reasonably full (certainly doing better than it was seven years ago) and the piazza seems if anything more lively. So Radcliffe town centre is not in crisis - the trend of long term decline certainly slowed during the boom years of the early 2000s and it has not been as badly hit by the recession as some other towns.

There are probably a few reasons for this. One is the popularity of Radcliffe as a place to live. In the boom years it was probably the most affordable place to buy a house with a Metrolink service. The 2003 proposed new housing to increase the customers around the centre and while a number of the sites are yet to be developed this has been working. The other reason is that the ASDA store is very close to the centre. As we have suggested there are probably more people shopping in Radcliffe than there ever were, its just that 90% of them are in the ASDA store. However at least

its proximity means that some of these people come into the centre which would not have been the case with an out of town store.

Having said all of this the people and traders of Radcliffe are not happy with its current position. It is no consolation that it has declined less than other places, people compare it to how it used to be. While people and traders realise that it will never get back to what it was in its heyday they want much more and they are frustrated by the failure of recent schemes particularly as they have seen investment going into other towns.

In the current economic climate it is unlikely we will secure another apartment based mixed-use development. However the strengths that have sustained Radcliffe, particularly its attractions as a place to live and the success of the ASDA store do provide opportunities. If the attractions of the town centre can be increased then there are more customers who could be drawn into the centre. We have therefore been exploring ways of anchoring the town centre with something that can draw people living near by, or persuade people parked in the ASDA car park to cross Pilkington Way. If we can secure such a magnet then trade in the centre can be increased and all retailers will benefit creating a better town centre attracting even more people, and so on. This is possible and needs to be one of the aims of this masterplan.



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Baseline update



Radcliffe in the past

With the expansion of Radcliffe during the industrial revolution, the population living in the town grew rapidly from 2,500 people in 1801 to around 25,400 by 1901. The town became a thriving working town during this time with a high proportion of the population working and living within close proximity to the centre.

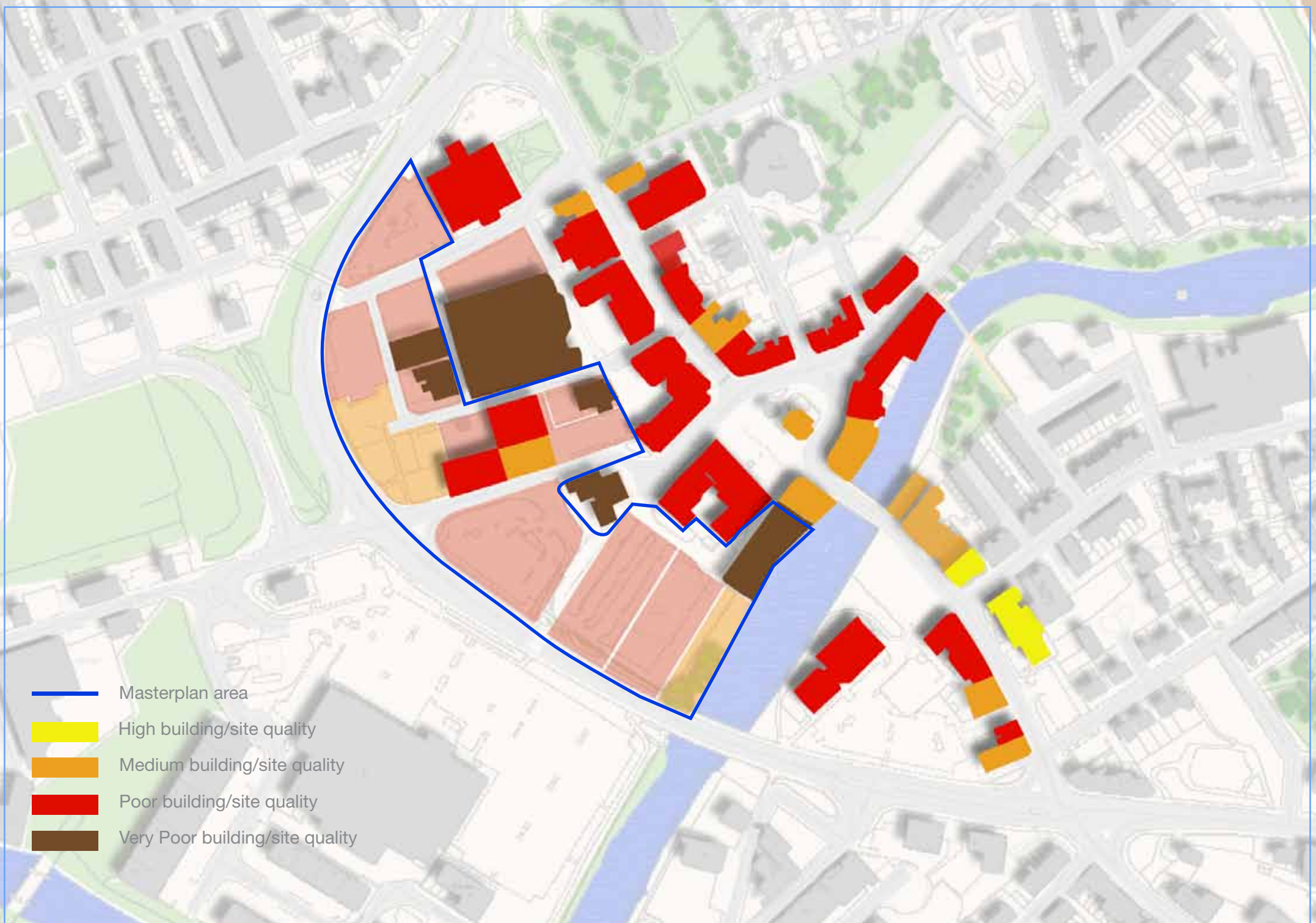
Blackburn Street during the 1830's



Radcliffe Town Centre as we see today was originally called Radcliffe Bridge and developed around the road crossing over the River Irwell which allowed the Manchester to Blackburn packhorse trail to pass through Radcliffe Bridge along the route now called Blackburn Street. Radcliffe Bridge contained a small number of cottage industries amongst agricultural farmland until the early part of the industrial revolution but by the late-19th century, Radcliffe had emerged as a substantial working mill town. The plan from 1893

opposite shows the extent of the town and the tight network of streets on either side of Blackburn Street. The masterplan area is illustrated by the red line on the plan opposite and gives some indication of the urban form and types of uses at the peak of the industrial revolution. The southern section of the masterplan area outlined in red is dominated by Irwell Mill alongside the River Irwell while the areas north of Zion Street are predominantly residential.

The diverse range of different industries allowed Radcliffe to attract an increasing number of workers. The town became a thriving centre for a community where the majority worked and lived within walking distance of the town centre. Additional neighbourhoods were gradually introduced into the town along with a significant number of public use buildings to help support the local working community. If the town is to become a successful sustainable town then it is important that it retains a similar community base that it had during the 19th century.



Radcliffe's character

Radcliffe contains a number of good quality buildings and structures developed during Victorian times that have provided a lasting quality to the town. Any new development close to the town centre should respect the quality of these historical buildings.



The plan opposite shows the current structure of Radcliffe. The line of Blackburn Street, so clear on the historic plan above, survives in the current plan with strong building frontages that spatially define and animate the street. However the masterplan area between Pilkington Way and Blackburn Street contains a largely fragmented, incoherent and mixed character of anonymous building frontages. Many

buildings are offset at different angles and form poorly defined irregular open spaces often dominated by car parking and surrounded by heavily trafficked streets and junctions. The southern section of the masterplan area alongside the river has lost much of its original character since the demolition of the old cinema building (which most recently was home to a Kwik Save supermarket). This area is connected to the town's piazza by a narrow passageway that runs alongside the market hall but both are in need of refurbishment.

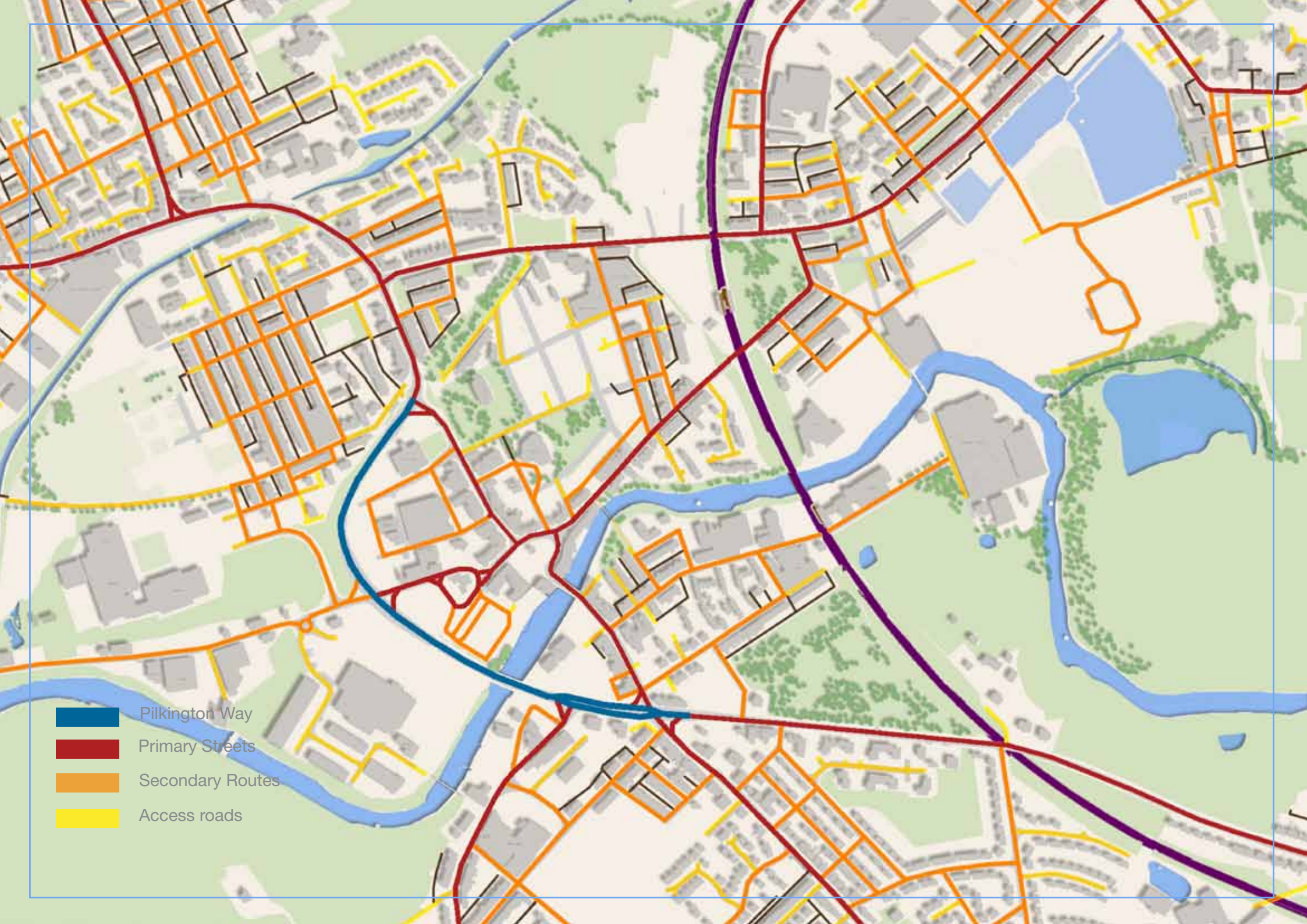
Radcliffe Piazza is the most prominent public open space in the town and provides a focal point for the main retail precinct. Any new development within the masterplan area will need to allow good connections to this space and strengthen the role that the piazza plays in supporting the shopping core of the town.

Spatial definition is strong within the residential areas to the north, east and south of the town centre where the residential stock is dominated by traditional terraced

housing. The traditional form of terraces is retained through most of the residential areas immediately to the north of the town centre with semi detached housing areas to the south. However, some of these neighbourhoods are separated from the town centre by an area of poor urban quality created by the construction of Pilkington Way.



(This page left) Radcliffe in 1893
(above) The old Radcliffe and Pilkington Cooperative Building now a bathroom and kitchen showroom



-  Pilkington Way
-  Primary Streets
-  Secondary Routes
-  Access roads

Radcliffe's connections

The existing highway network, bus station and many car parks within the centre all combine to allow good vehicular access into the town centre but they also contribute to a poor town centre environment close to the shopping area. If Radcliffe is to attract more people to shop and work in the town the visual impact of

Pilkington Way

Pilkington Way is the busiest road close to the town centre with around 23,000 vehicles a day using the route to bypass the town centre. It has reduced journey times for people wishing to pass through the area by car but causes significant physical severance for pedestrians between the west of Radcliffe, including the existing ASDA store, and the town centre.

Pedestrian crossing facilities have been introduced as an alternative to the existing underpass which crosses underneath the route at this point. It has helped to improve the pedestrian link between the ASDA store and the town centre but Pilkington Way in general provides a poor environment for pedestrians. If the town as a whole is to attract more shoppers then this link will need to be improved. This is achievable if signal times at the existing crossing are improved for pedestrians but this should be combined with more legible pedestrian links between the town centre and the crossing and improvements to make the public realm alongside Pilkington Way more attractive for pedestrians.

Blackburn Street

The recent reopening of the pedestrianised part of Blackburn Street to traffic will help to revitalise the main high street through the town centre and allow it to once again fully contribute to the future success of the shopping centre.

The reduction in vehicles through the town centre resulting from the partial closure of Blackburn Street greatly reduced the potential for town centre shops to attract passing trade. This negated the fundamental reason why many shops originally located on main thoroughfares within the town centre - to position themselves alongside busy routes and attract passing customers. The reopening of Blackburn Street has also helped the movement of buses to and from the existing bus station.

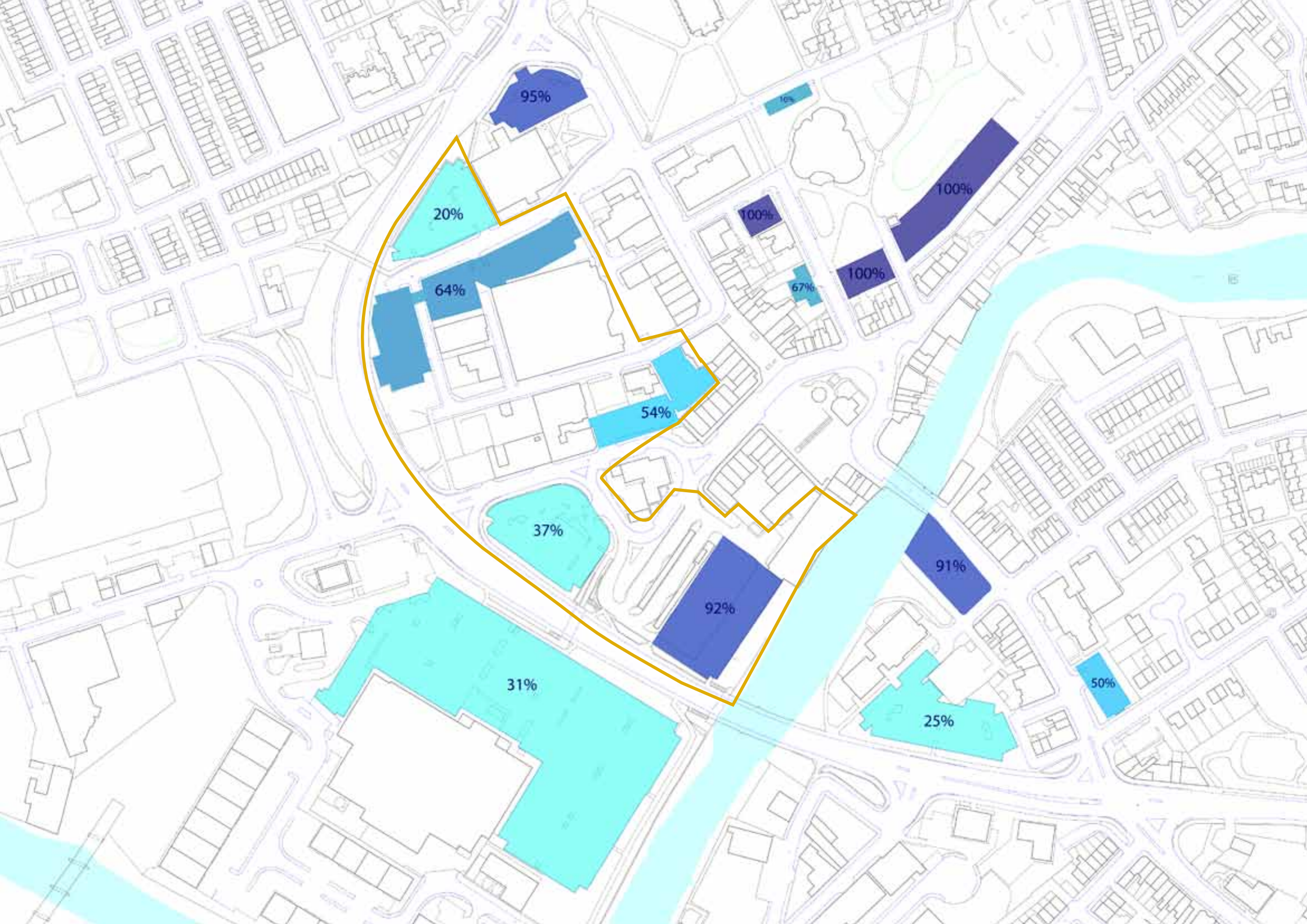
Public Transport

Any future transport strategy should take full advantage of the existing public transport links and reduce the ratio of people travelling into the town by car. A good level of bus services can be accessed from Radcliffe bus station which is well positioned within the town

centre but it is in need of modernisation. GMPTE has reviewed the possible development of a new bus station in the town centre as part of this masterplan and concluded that any proposed facility will need to accommodate larger stands but will not need to increase the number of stands from the 2 double and 2 single stands contained in the existing bus station. If a new bus station was proposed then this should be achieved in a way that avoids any adverse changes to the movement of buses through the town centre.

Pedestrian and cycle routes

Major roads in the town centre such as Spring Lane, Church Street West and Dale Street have narrow carriageways and provide good access for pedestrians in the town centre but the masterplan area lacks a cohesive network of legible pedestrian routes. The section of the masterplan south of Dale Street contains two car parks and a bus station, all with no obvious pedestrian link through to Radcliffe Market and, as stated earlier, there is a lack of connectivity over Pilkington Way to the ASDA store. The northern section of the masterplan area is connected by a footbridge over Pilkington Way to Hindle Street in the west but the link lacks legibility in its current state. There is a network of streets in this part of the masterplan area that with development could provide a series of coherent pedestrian links but the area presently has no good connections down to the southern part of the masterplan area. National Cycle Route 6 passes through the masterplan area and so this potential development provides the opportunity to improve this strategic cycle link as it passes across Pilkington Way along Dale Street and through the rest of the town centre.



Parking facilities

Much of the masterplan area is made up of car parking facilities. They allow people from outside the town centre the opportunity to access the town centre but they detract from the urban form of the centre.



Parking Survey

The masterplan area contains five car parking areas that provide good parking facilities within walking distance of the town centre but form a unattractive environment close to the retail core. By conducting a parking survey within the centre it has been possible to determine which of these existing parking facilities are well used and which could be reduced in capacity

should the final masterplan proposal require it. The plan opposite shows the results of a parking survey conducted on a Tuesday as an example of a typical weekday with Radcliffe Market open. It shows that within the masterplan area itself the largest car park close to the market is the most popular with 92% of spaces full. Dale Street car park occupancy is low at 37% and the carpark immediately west of the pool and fitness centre has an occupancy of only 20%. Overall there are approximately 477 parking spaces within the masterplan area and 266 (57%) were occupied between 10am and 3pm on the day of the survey.

The survey shows that the parking facilities behind the market are well used and it is easy to see that the parking here directly supports the retail core of the town by providing parking close to the Piazza. Dale Street car park is considerably less well used and could be seen as a potential site for development. To

the north of Dale Street the car parking facilities close to the Dunelm store are popular but occupancy is very low in the parking areas along the edge of Pilkington Way. These areas could be generally perceived to be less secure than other facilities within the town so it may be more appropriate to develop these sites and increase natural surveillance in the area as a whole.



(This page left) Car parking dominates in the retail centre
(above) The car park at ASDA



There are few shop vacancies in the town centre



Radcliffe Piazza in the centre of the retail core



A Housing Association property in the heart of the centre



The new NHS centre

Radcliffe's economy

The banking crisis has placed significant pressure on developers in the residential, retail and office development markets and many small towns in the country have struggled to retain their existing shopping and employment developments as the economic downturn has taken hold. There is a strong feeling within Radcliffe though that if the town is to be successful then the retail centre needs to be strengthened.

A key conclusion of the Reinventing Radcliffe strategy was that the closure of Radcliffe Paper Mill and the East Lancashire Paper Mill undermined the retail strength of Radcliffe Town Centre. For the town centre the original SUN Quarter Development Brief was largely based on using the strong residential market that existed in the mid 2000's to underpin the development and allowing the development of less profitable uses like new shops, the new market and the gallery. Since that time the residential market has collapsed, particularly for the town centre apartments that dominated the previous scheme. Gordon Hood Regeneration have therefore reassessed the property market in Radcliffe in the light of current economic conditions.

Retail

The town centre contains a range of small independent retailers alongside larger national retailers such as Boots, Blockbuster, Ethel Austin, a successful Dunelm store and an ASDA store on the edge of the town centre. In the centre of the retail area stands Radcliffe Market which struggles to compete with the much larger Bury Market but has the potential to become

an attractive local shopping destination. The quality and mix of the retail offer in the retail core has been in need of development for some time as other shopping centres have had retail improvements over the last ten years. The reality is also that the ASDA store is successful and has diverted a lot of the trade out of the existing town centre. The ASDA store is however very close to the centre and there is an opportunity to attract some of the ASDA trade back into the town.

A review, undertaken by Gordon Hood Regeneration, of retailer requirements for Radcliffe suggests that the town is still attractive to independent retailers as there are few unit vacancies in the town centre but there is very little demand from national highstreet retailers. However we are aware that a number of budget food stores such as Aldi, Netto and Lidl are potentially interested in a new store in Radcliffe of around 1,000sq m. A store such as this could anchor a slightly larger development and may make it possible to attract a Wilkinson's, Argos or one of the Bargain stores. If such a retail development was appropriately located it could help to bolster Radcliffe Market by attracting more shoppers into the town centre as a whole.

Housing

A review of the residential market by GHR suggests that developers have no interest in building private apartments in the masterplan area, at least not in the short to medium term. GHR's view is that more urban town houses or terraces may be possible within around five years, although this will depend on the availability of other housing sites in and around centre the town. There may be potential demand for affordable housing from local housing associations in the short to medium term.

Office Space

There is no demand for office space in Radcliffe at present and any new office development within the borough is likely to favour other, better-located sites, such as those in and around Bury Town Centre. However, despite the lack of an established office market there may be some potential to upgrade some of existing office/workshop space within existing buildings or use vacant floor space for business start ups, small businesses, creative industries, etc. Beyond 2015 tighter legislation concerning the sustainable and accessible location of offices may force new offices into locations such as Radcliffe Town Centre where there are good public transport links.

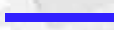
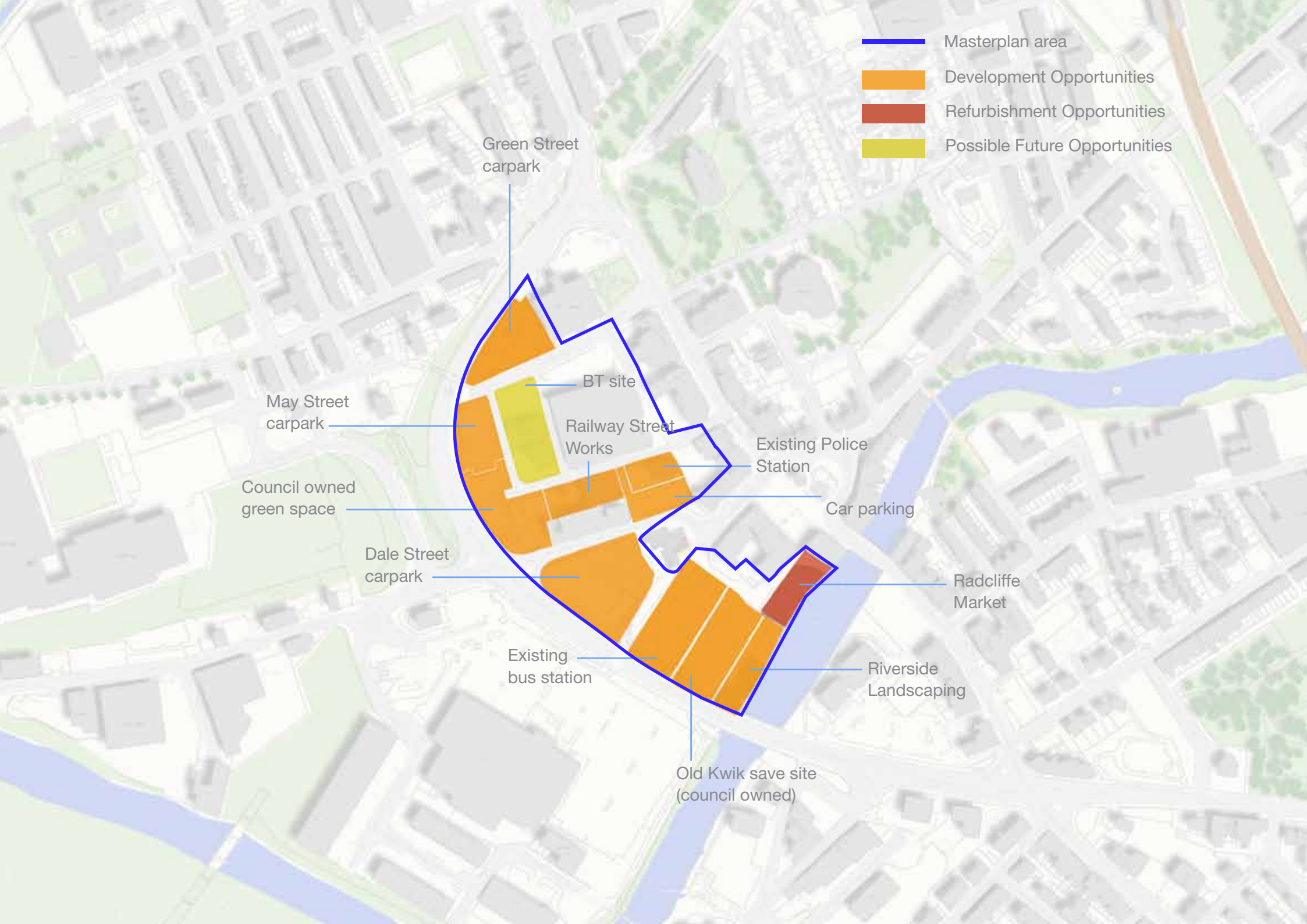
Leisure facilities and other services

The town centre contains a good range of leisure facilities and has managed to hold on to much of its supporting services. Leisure facilities such as Radcliffe Library, the Civic Centre and the swimming pool are all publicly run. Other important non-retail services in the town include the NHS centre, the adjacent pharmacy and the Post Office.



Radcliffe Primary Care Centre
Bury

Options Appraisal



Masterplan area



Development Opportunities



Refurbishment Opportunities



Possible Future Opportunities

Green Street
carpark

May Street
carpark

Council owned
green space

Dale Street
carpark

Existing
bus station

Old Kwik save site
(council owned)

BT site

Railway Street
Works

Existing Police
Station

Car parking

Radcliffe
Market

Riverside
Landscaping

Opportunities

There remains a large area of land around Radcliffe Town Centre that is underused and potentially available for development. Each of these sites has been assessed to understand whether and when they might come forward for development. These sites have been matched with opportunities to attract new development into the area.

The starting point for the options development was to look at opportunities for change in the town centre. This was based on a review of land ownership, consultations with owners and a review of development schemes. A site that has not been included in the masterplan but was part of the original SUN Quarter masterplan is the Royal Mail Delivery Office. Bury Council have held intensive talks with Royal Mail in the past to relocate the facility to an alternative site but there were viability issues concerning the cost and time of the Delivery Office relocation. This is still the case so the site has not been included in this masterplan. The main opportunities are as follows:

The former Kwik Save site: The land between the bus station and the river was bought by The Council when Kwik Save closed its town centre store in 2004 in order to implement the SUN Quarter. This is used for car parking but is available as a development opportunity.

The Dale Street car park: The car park to the rear of the Post Office is a council owned facility that has been laid out as a public car park. This is not well used and there is the potential to transfer parking to other sites and to bring this site forward for development.

The bus station: The bus station is an asset to Radcliffe and its proximity to the retail core of the town generates customers. It currently lies in a strategic part of the masterplan area and is in need of modernisation. However, if the bus station is to be relocated the GMPTE will require very specific requirements for its infrastructure and will need a partner to fund the scheme.

Riverside landscaping : The green space along the edge of the River Irwell is not appropriate for development as it is part of the Environment Agency's flood strategy but it could be retained as a landscaped park next to the refurbished market.

The market hall: Radcliffe Market is an important facility for the town which allows new retailers to start their business in an affordable but central location. The number of market traders has increased since 2003 although there remain some vacancies. However the physical structure of the market hall needs improvement in terms of its appearance and accessibility.

Council owned greenspace/May Street car park/ Green Street car park:

The large proportion of the sloping land bounded by Dale Street and Pilkington Way provides an opportunity for development. The landscaped area shown on the plan is in public ownership as are the car parks around the police station, the Green Street car park and part of the car park next to the BT Exchange on May Street. Neither the May Street or Green Street car parks are well used and could be packaged together with the other development areas to form a large site.

Police station/car park: The existing police station is located on Railway Street. The police building is relatively new but they have indicated that it could be accommodated in a ground floor unit as part of a new development.

BT Site: BT have indicated that the exchange uses only a small part of this building and while there are currently no plans to relocate this could happen in the future. There is also little demand for its adjacent car park.

Options

A set of three masterplan options were produced for Radcliffe Town Centre as part of the process to produce a regeneration strategy for Radcliffe Town Centre. The three options are described here.



Option1 Exemplar: Middlesbrough, the Aldi store forms part of an urban block



Option 2 Exemplar: Donnybrook Quarter, London



Option 3 exemplar: Mixed-used scheme, Didsbury

The first option was based around the concept of strengthening the existing retail offer by introducing a small supermarket and a number of smaller retail units into the retail core. By placing the new retail development on the existing bus station it is possible to make the market the main centrepiece of the retail hub.

Option 1 - Short term retail

This scheme is based around uses that are viable in current economic conditions, namely, a budget supermarket and a number of additional retail units that would be attracted to a location alongside the supermarket. The bus station is shown on Dale Street, based on a central island configuration to the rear of the post office and generally addresses GMPTE's operational and spatial requirements. A supermarket developer is likely to want to maximise frontage onto Pilkington Way, to be visible from the road, but this needs to be achieved without the store turning its back on the town centre. An initial scheme by a supermarket operator looked at backing the scheme onto the river but this again seems like a lost opportunity. The scheme therefore angles the store to channel people towards the market. The market could be improved with a glazed arcade over the route through to the Piazza. This proposal came out of the meeting with the market traders when they suggested that their best days trade was when road works channelled pedestrian traffic through the market.



Option 1a

Option 1b

The second option looks to support the existing retail core by placing residential development as close to the centre as possible. Market analysis has shown that it is possible to develop high quality townhouses in this location in 5-10 years time.

Option 2 - Town centre living

Option 2 is predominantly a residential option with a new road passing through the scheme and a number of small retail units (including a bus station kiosk) located alongside a new bus station. The new residential properties include perimeter block townhouses (3 storeys) and a number of apartments (3 - 5 storeys) located along the edge of Pilkington Way and the new road through the masterplan. All townhouse properties include internal gardens and residential parking is contained within each courtyard. The indoor market improvements are suggested here as in option 1 with a small public space formed outside the indoor market. The new bus station is shown wrapped around a purpose built kiosk and a number of small retail units, however GMPTE has indicated that this layout is unlikely to meet their operational and spatial requirements. Service access to these retail units is shared with the existing access to the sorting office. #



Option 2

The third option is a long term scheme that is only likely to be possible after the market for apartments has returned in the long term. The development comprises a mixed-use retail/apartments development to the south of Dale Street, a new bus station and a neighbourhood of townhouses to the north.

Option 3 - Long-term mixed-use option

Option 3 explores a comprehensive set of improvements to Radcliffe Town Centre over the long term. The proposals look to expand the retail offer in the town centre and introduce a large number of residential units within the town centre. This option has the potential to reposition the townhouses proposed in option 2 to the north of Dale Street and around 100 apartments throughout the centre. The new retail units form an extension to the existing shops on the piazza, thus creating a perimeter block. This allows the service access for the existing retail units to be retained. Other retail units are located at ground floor level on either side of the new road alignment through to Pilkington Way. The bus station is wrapped around the development block between Dale Street and Pilkington Way but again this layout is unlikely to address GMPTE's operational and spatial requirements; the indoor market has been extended as in the other options.



Option 3



Options Consultation

In order to gauge opinion and help finalise a preferred masterplan option, residents and business owners in Radcliffe were asked to state their priorities for the future of the town centre and comment on each of the three options.

The consultation period was held between the 17th February and the 12th March 2010 with a consultation day held on the 19th February in Radcliffe Town Centre on URBED's 'Big Red Bus'. During the consultation period a set of exhibition boards were displayed in Radcliffe Library, enabling those that were unable to attend the consultation day to view the boards and fill in a questionnaire.

During the bus consultation itself facilitators were on hand from URBED and The Council to inform people of the process used to generate each of the options. The bus consultation provided an opportunity to involve local people in the process, explain how their input would form part of the decision making process and describe what will happen to the preferred masterplan option once it has been finalised.

The consultation material comprised exhibition boards that explained how the three options for the town centre were developed, with a summary of the key proposals. Alongside these public exhibitions, questionnaires were made available. People also had the opportunity to fill in an online questionnaire on the Bury Council website if they were unable to attend.

A total of 85 people completed a questionnaire either in Radcliffe Library, online using the Regenerating Radcliffe website or on the URBED bus when it arrived on the piazza.



The URBED bus arrives on Radcliffe Piazza

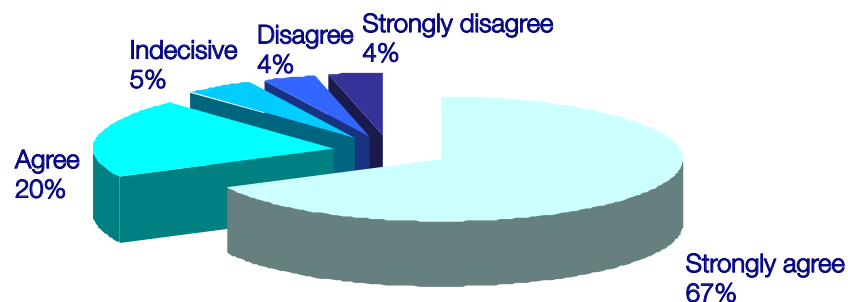


Option Results

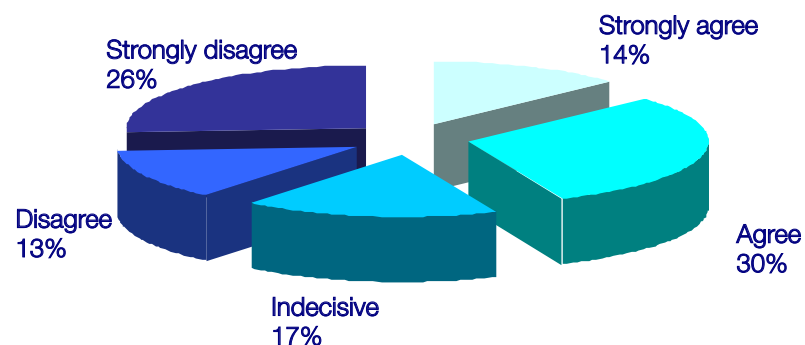
Respondents were asked which of the three options they supported and in particular whether they preferred a short term option, a medium term residential option or to wait for the long term option when economic conditions are likely to have improved.



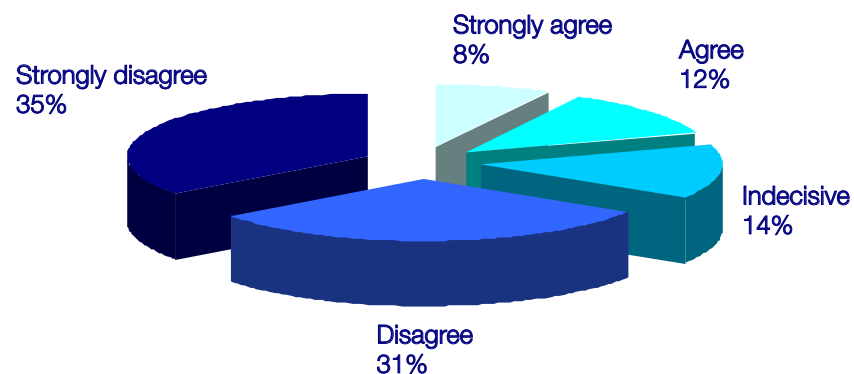
Option 1 looks to test how Radcliffe Town Centre can be developed in the short term by strengthening its retail offer with a new supermarket and a number of smaller stores. 87% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with this option.



Option 2 looks to introduce residential development into the town centre by developing townhouses and apartments and a number of small retail units located alongside a new bus station. This option received mixed reviews in the consultation with 44% strongly agreeing or agreeing, 39% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing and 17% indecisive.



Option 3 explores a comprehensive set of improvements to Radcliffe Town Centre over the long term. The proposals look to expand the retail offer and introduce a large number of residential units within the town centre. This option was found to be the most unpopular with 66% of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed with this option.

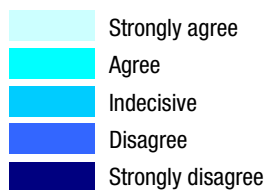


Development Preferences

Respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statements opposite in order to determine their development preferences for the future of Radcliffe Town Centre. The development questions were centred around five specific issues relevant to the three options:

New retail development in the town
The Market Hall
Housing in the Town Centre
The Royal Mail Delivery Office
A new bus station

Each respondent was asked to gauge their opinion of each of the statements opposite based on the grading below:

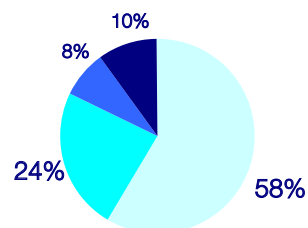


The answers to these questions give us a better understanding of peoples priorities for the town centre and will help to decide about a preferred option.

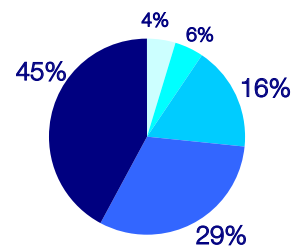


Retail opportunities

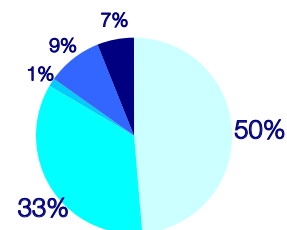
It would be beneficial for the town centre to build another smaller supermarket to widen and strengthen Radcliffe's retail offer.



More retail development on the site would cause an oversupply in Radcliffe. Housing development should be preferred.

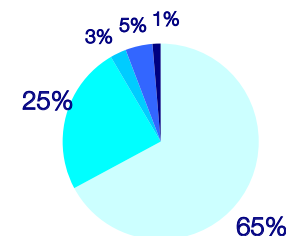


A link, made up of a supermarket and a number of small-scale shops, between the town centre and the Asda would be beneficial to the town centre.

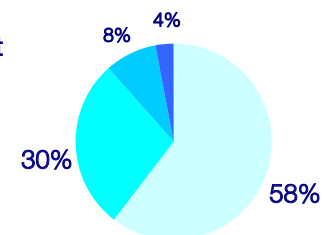


The Market Hall

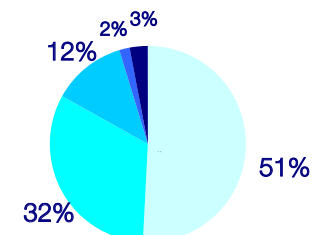
The market hall needs to be better integrated into the town centre. Currently it is too inward-looking



It would be good if the market hall had a transparent façade and if the passage along the hall was glazed over



Some permanent market stalls (open 6 days/week) along the parade would help to make the town centre livelier and more attractive.





Housing

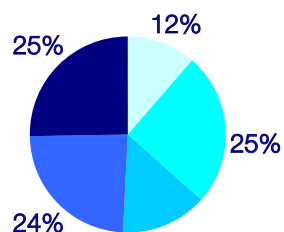


Royal Mail Delivery Office

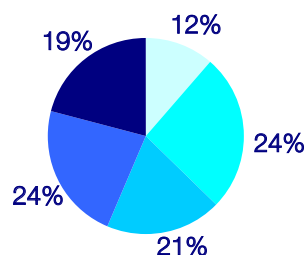


A new bus station

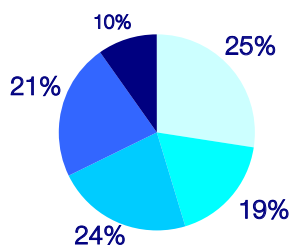
More housing should be introduced close to the town centre as in option 3 to increase the number of people living in/near the town centre.



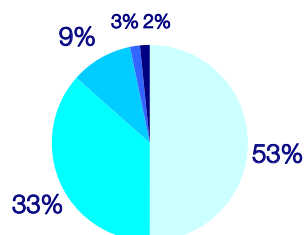
The modern townhouses in option 3 look interesting. It would be good to see something similar built near the town centre.



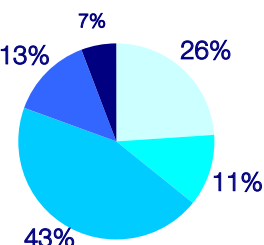
I do not think that the townhouses in option 3 would be suitable for this location.



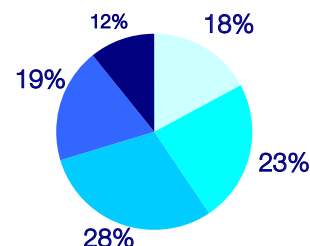
The space available for development in the town centre should be used for more shops to strengthen Radcliffe's retail offer.



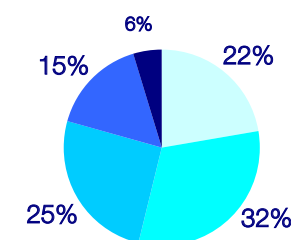
The delivery office should stay in its current location.



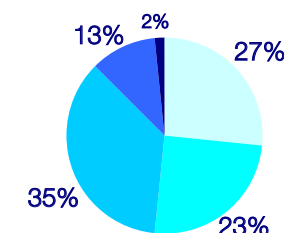
The delivery office should be relocated to a nearby town centre location so that better use can be made of the site.



The bus station should be arranged as a self-contained facility as shown in option 1.



The bus station should form part of a block as shown in options 2 and 3.



Conclusions

When asked about the future development of Radcliffe it is easy to see from these results that many people saw Radcliffe primarily as a shopping centre. 82% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the town would benefit from a small supermarket and 74% either disagreed or strongly disagreed that more retail development in the centre would cause an over supply. There was also a large majority of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed that Radcliffe Market should be improved in some way to strengthen its appeal. 88% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that a transparent façade and glazing over the passage along the market hall would improve the Market as a whole.

There were generally more mixed views concerning the introduction of housing in the town centre with 86% of respondents feeling that space available for development in the town centre should be used for more shops rather than housing.

Public Realm Preferences

Each respondent was asked their opinion about three main issues that can help to improve the public realm. They were:

The River
Pilkington Way
The public realm as a whole

Again, each respondent was asked to gauge their opinion of each of the statements opposite based on the grading below:

Strongly agree
Agree
Indecisive
Disagree
Strongly disagree

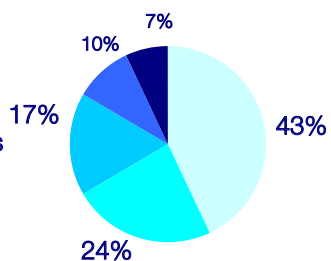


Radcliffe Town Centre Piazza

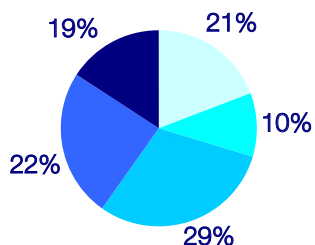


The River Irwell

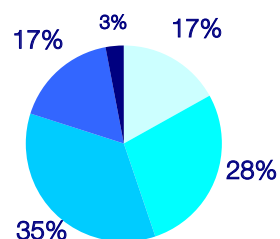
The river is an asset to the town centre and no development on the site should obstruct views towards it.



The river does not play a big role in the town centre itself. It would be acceptable to build right by the riverside.

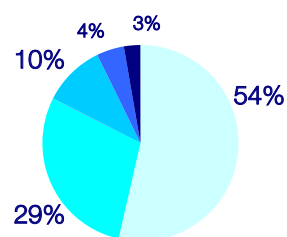


The riverbank should be kept clear of buildings.

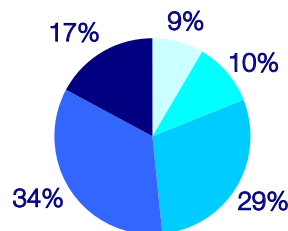


Pilkington Way

Pilkington Way is too dominant and forms a barrier between Asda and the town centre. Make it more pedestrian-friendly with more crossings, trees and slower traffic.

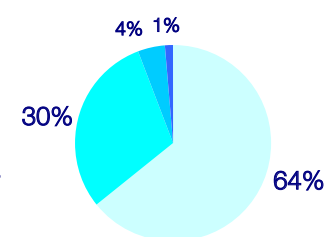


Pilkington Way is the main vehicular route through Radcliffe town centre and should remain as it is.

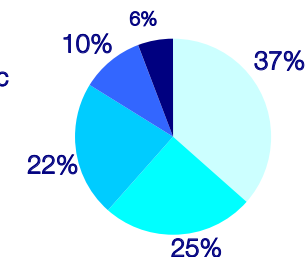


The public realm

More should be done to improve the quality of the public realm (improvement to pavements, better signage, planters, more trees, benches etc.).



It would be a good idea to incorporate some of the public art/ Rückriem sculptures as originally planned for the SUN Quarter.



Conclusions

67% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that the river was an asset to Radcliffe Town Centre but there was not a great deal of consensus when respondents were asked whether the river should be kept clear of buildings or continue to be built alongside.

There was little support for Pilkington Way in terms its relationship to the town centre or its use as the main vehicular route around the town centre. Instead there was a great deal of support (83% agree or strongly agree) to make Pilkington Way more pedestrian-friendly with more crossings, trees and slower traffic.

There was also considerable support for public realm improvements in the town centre as a whole. 94% of respondents felt more should be done to improve the quality of the public realm and 62% agreed or strongly agreed that the Rückriem sculptures would be a good addition to the town.

Options Appraisal

The options have been appraised below on the basis on the viability of the scheme, developer interest, barriers to development, the regeneration impact and views of local people.

Option 1

There is already developer interest expressed for Option 1 which looks to test how Radcliffe Town Centre can be developed over the relatively short term (up to approximately 5 years). The increased footfall generated by the small supermarket would attract other retail operators to set up adjacent to the budget supermarket and would also increase passing trade to the refurbished market. This would revitalise Radcliffe as a shopping destination and safeguard the future of existing retail businesses in the town by attracting more shoppers.

The combination of the receipt for the land sold to the supermarket and Section 106 monies should be used to fund the new bus station, any refurbishment of the market and the public realm works linking the store to the Radcliffe Piazza. Our assessment is that it is likely that some improvement in the retail property market over current (2010) conditions will be needed to generate sufficient development value to achieve this.

The land required to develop option 1 is mostly in the ownership of the Local Authority and ground conditions are known. Subject to sufficient development value being generated, and subject to reaching detailed agreement with the GMPTE on the design and delivery

of the bus station, a relatively quick start could be made on this development.

Option 2

Option 2 looks to introduce residential development into the town centre by developing townhouses and a number of small retail units located alongside the new bus station. There is, at present, only potential interest from housing associations for affordable housing in the town centre and there is unlikely to be any interest for apartment development in the short to medium term. Consequently, given the low developer interest for residential uses, this scheme would only be viable in the medium/long term. There would also be little chance to attract public sector funding into the scheme. However, option 2 is likely to integrate successfully with the uses already in the town centre and the growth in the number of people living close to the centre potentially will increase patronage of local shops.

The new townhouse properties are focused around a public square close to the riverside within the same area of the town as Option 1. The land required is therefore, as for Option 1, mostly in ownership of the Bury Council.

Option 3

Option 3 explores a comprehensive set of improvements to Radcliffe Town Centre over the long term. The proposals look to expand the retail offer and introduce a large number of residential units (both apartments and town houses) within the town centre that would greatly help to secure the success of retail in the town.

The considerable increase in residential property close to the town centre would support existing local shops by increasing patronage but there is unlikely to be developer interest in Option 3 in the short/medium term due to the reliance of apartment based development to generate value. This option is, therefore, very much dependent on the economic conditions in the long term future and the apartment based mixed use blocks in particular are highly unlikely to be possible in the next 5 - 10 years.

Most of the land to the south of the Bus Station is in Council ownership and there would be no major impediments to development. However most of the land identified for residential development north of Dale Street is in private ownership and land assembly/CPO would be required.



Preferred Option

Radcliffe should have a town centre that is able to support a large number of homes and have a lively mixture of shops and services. It should be a place where people work and indeed where activities are supported as well as a place to live. The Market should be an integral part of the retail core and provide stall owners the chance to grow their business in an affordable and attractive environment.

The preferred option approach

The preferred option is based on a phased approach incorporating the retail elements of option 1 and some of the residential elements of option 3. There was considerable support for the development of a small supermarket as suggested in option 1 from town centre traders and from the general public who attended the consultation and there was considerable support for increasing the retail offer in the town centre. New homes will bring new residents to the town who will help to support these local shops. There was consistent support for some form of housing close to the town centre but not within the retail centre itself.

The land within the masterplan area south of Dale Street is predominantly in council ownership but the land to the north currently contains a complex number of different ownerships. The preferred option has therefore been split into two phases.

The first phase consists of a new small supermarket with a strong legible route passed a new covered walkway alongside a refurbished Market area. A 75 space treelined car park is situated at the entrance to the supermarket and three smaller retail units stand alongside the supermarket and help to define a clear route between the ASDA supermarket, Radcliffe Market and Radcliffe Piazza. The new bus station is proposed to be located between the proposed store and Dale Street and a clear pedestrian route should be provided linking the bus station with the retail development and with Dale Street. Detailed proposals for the bus station will need to be agreed with GMPTE.

The second phase is based on the town house based residential scheme to the north of Dale Street contained in Option 3 to create a modern neighbourhood within short walking distance of the retail centre and is likely to be developed in the medium/long term.

Comments & Feedback

This baseline provides supporting information for a Masterplan for key regeneration sites in Radcliffe Town Centre. It has been prepared by URBED working with Gordon Hood Regeneration in collaboration the community, stakeholders, the Local Area Partnership and Bury Council. We welcome feedback so please send comments to Bury Council:

Website: www.bury.gov.uk/RadcliffeRegeneration

Email: RadcliffeRegeneration@bury.gov.uk

Telephone: 0161 253 5270

Available on www.bury.gov.uk/RadcliffeRegeneration

Other documents available:

Radcliffe Town Centre Masterplan

Inner Radcliffe & Town Centre energy framework

URBED

(urbanism : environment : design)

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