

ACCRINGTON  
AT THE HEART OF PENNINE LANCASHIRE

HYNDBURN BOROUGH COUNCIL  
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

# ACCRINGTON

## AREA ACTION PLAN

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An aerial photograph of a town center in Accrington, Lancashire. The image shows a mix of historic stone buildings, modern commercial structures, and a busy street with several buses. A large green rectangular overlay is positioned in the center of the image, containing the word 'VISION' in large white capital letters, followed by a descriptive sentence in a smaller, italicized white font. The background shows a street intersection with a pedestrian crossing, a large white tent-like structure, and various parked and moving vehicles.

# VISION

*Accrington will become a vibrant floral market town with an excellent quality of place at the heart of Pennine Lancashire*



# FOREWORD

What sort of Town Centre do you want Accrington to be in the future? Accrington Town centre is the principle economic and cultural asset in the Borough and as with other centres we are facing major challenges and are at a crossroads.

Over the next 10-20 years we would like to see Accrington Town Centre become a distinctive, prosperous and vibrant centre recognised for the collective quality and attractiveness of its specialist retail offer, historic heritage and public realm. We would like to hear what you think about the way which we propose to realise this vision.

The Borough Council will work with public and private sector organisations and the people who live here to deliver the changes that are needed to achieve our vision. Some of the policy options that are proposed will mean difficult decisions have to be made and when considering these matters we will take into account the views of those most affected as well as addressing the needs of the Town Centre.

Accrington Town Centre has a proud heritage. The centre has fine examples of retail, civic and ecclesiastical buildings and features that were built within the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as the Lancashire cotton boom reached its peak. Much of the town centre core is contained within a conservation area that includes 300 buildings. Some of the buildings are listed and nationally important, whilst many of the others are local landmarks which together help make up Accrington's identity.

The Council is keen to encourage as many people as possible to become involved in the preparation of the Area Action Plan for the future development of Accrington Town Centre. If you think we should be taking a different approach or if you think our policy and proposals represent the right way forward we would like to know. If you are interested in being involved in planning for the future of the Borough please let us know and we will ensure that you are consulted and kept informed on what is happening in Hyndburn.

This is your opportunity to have your say on the Council's preferred strategy for shaping and managing development in Accrington Town Centre over the next 10-20 years. The Council values your views and opinions and would like to know what you think.

**BRIAN ROBERTS**

*Deputy Leader of the Council [Community Services]*







# PART A

## THE PLAN AND ITS CONTEXT



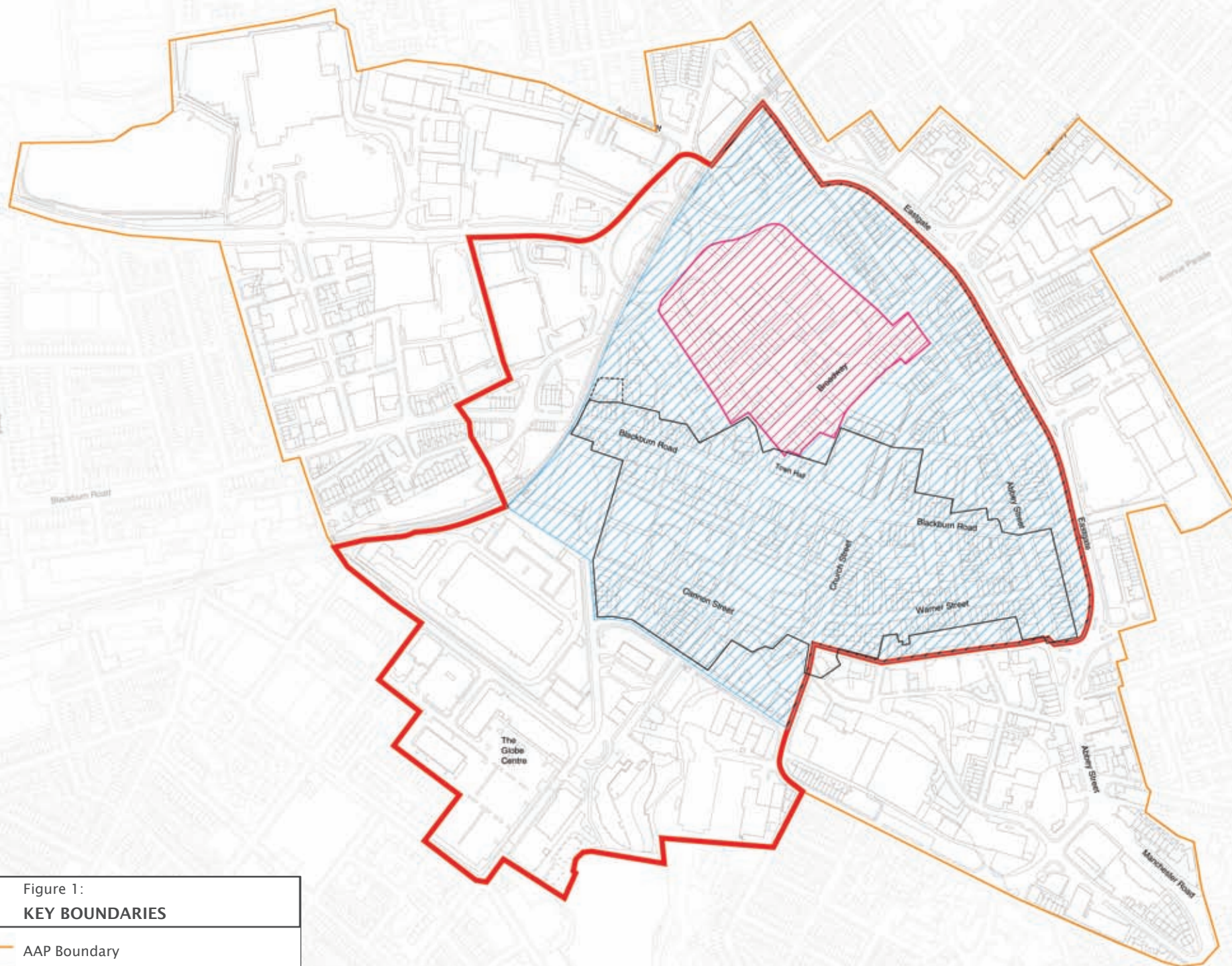


Figure 1:  
**KEY BOUNDARIES**

- AAP Boundary
- Town Centre Boundary
- ▨ Primary Retail
- ▨ Secondary Retail
- Town Centre Conservation Area
- - - Suggested extension to Conservation Area
- Leisure



PART A The Plan And Its Context

# 1.0 Introduction and Background

**What is the Accrington Area Action Plan?**

- 1.1

The Accrington Area Action Plan [AAP] forms part of the emerging Local Development Framework [a set of planning documents which will eventually replace the Local Plan] for Hyndburn Borough Council [HBC]. The AAP is a formal Development Plan Document [DPD] and sets out the statutory planning policy for how Accrington town centre will change over the next 10–20 years.
- 1.2

The AAP does not just focus upon setting the policy framework against which planning applications will be assessed, but it will consider how the regeneration of the town centre should be proactively delivered and co-ordinated by the public and private sectors in partnership.
- 1.3

The direction of the AAP has been shaped by the following factors:
  - The policy context [national, regional and local planning policies];
  - The Sustainable Community Strategy and other relevant Borough Strategies;
- 1.4

The AAP addresses key issues and provides the spatial framework to guide future development and improvement. It involves a pro-active approach to promoting and managing change to ensure that Accrington remains a thriving and sustainable town centre. Failure to take action and to plan for growth will result in stagnation and loss of investment, pressure for inappropriate development and out-of-town development. The AAP clearly identifies a Study Area Boundary, Town Centre Boundary, the Primary Retail Core and the Secondary Retail Core within the Town Centre. [Figure 1: AAP Boundaries Plan]
- The findings of specialist studies;
  - Stakeholder and community engagement;
  - Development pressures; &
  - Sustainability Appraisal of the likely social, economic and environmental effects of the Plan including the need for sustainable development, to protect the quality of life and ensure access for all.

**Development of the Area Action Plan**

- 1.5

The need to develop an AAP for the town centre stems from the Accrington Town Centre Strategy [2005 – 2008] and its six strategic objectives including:
  - Strengthening the Retail Position;
  - Becoming a Visitor Destination;
  - Enhancing the Quality of the Environment;
  - Improving Access, Movement and Transport;
  - Promoting Investment and Business Development;
  - Improving Educational and Training Opportunities.
- 1.6

The strategy highlighted that Accrington Town Centre was facing major challenges due to an increasingly competitive shopping environment with shopping patterns changing fundamentally. The increasing shift towards city regions and the impact of out-of-town shopping centres were also impacting on traditional shopping centres such as Accrington. It was felt that the Borough needed to do the necessary work to help reposition itself within the wider Northern Way and Central Lancashire City Region.
- 1.7

The strategy identified the need to develop a Master-plan for Accrington Town Centre which would provide a conceptual roadmap for its regeneration and provide a firm evidence base for future planning policy direction in order for the centre to continue to serve the changing needs of the local community, businesses and visitors alike.
- 1.8

The Council in March 2007 commissioned Urbed and specialist sub-consultants to work through a comprehensive conceptual master-planning exercise to establish future regeneration and development potential of Accrington Town Centre.







Evidence gathering  
– Baseline Report

1.9 A comprehensive Baseline Report was published for Accrington Town Centre in early January 2008. The report provided a starting point for the identification of key issues to be addressed and the development of options. The report also included detailed evidence and assessments of the key issues within the area, and contained other relevant plans and strategies that have informed the preparation of this AAP including, a Heritage Assessment Report, Transport Assessment, Economic analysis, Property Market Report and Public Realm Analysis.

Issues & Options Report

1.10 An Issues and Options report was produced that represented the culmination of work on the baseline report and along with the two stakeholder workshops that discussed issues and opportunities. A public consultation on the masterplan options for the town centre was held thereafter in late January 2008. The options included:

1.11 **Option 1: Do Minimal**  
The ‘Do Minimal’ option assumed that the town centre would be developed without the beneficial guidance of the masterplan. Current planning applications and proposed projects that are known to be definite developments [with or without the masterplan] included within this scenario.

1.12 **Option 2: Streets and Squares**  
This option assumes the implementation of the masterplan, building upon the ‘Do Minimal’ scenario with the incorporation of an additional number of proposals.

1.13 **Option 3: Fixing the Edge**  
This option also assumes the implementation of the masterplan, building upon the proposals set out in Option 2.

1.14 **Option 4: Weaving it back together**  
This option also assumes the implementation of the masterplan, building upon the proposals set out in Option 3.

1.15 **Preferred Option**  
The four options presented in the Issues and Options Report, were evaluated against the background of the consultation responses and which was appraised through a Sustainability Appraisal [SA]. The preferred option for the town centre that emerged following public consultation and assessment formed the masterplan which was approved and endorsed by the Council in July 2008.

1.16 The various stages leading up to the preparation of the AAP have involved community and stakeholder engagement throughout the process, including walkabouts, workshops with regular updates from the team producing the initial masterplan. The details of this are set out in the Consultation Statement document which will be produced and will accompany the AAP submission.

Area Action Plan  
Informal Consultation

1.17 Following completion of Urbed’s commission, HBC have utilised the conceptual masterplan and the

1.18 supporting baseline reports to produce a planning policy framework through an Area Action Plan [AAP] for Accrington Town Centre together with areas in Accrington that immediately adjoin it.

1.19 This process has involved carrying out a certain amount of re-organising of information and further stages of public consultation in accordance with DPD regulations. An informal consultation on the Draft AAP was held through June/ July 2009 and included public consultation events in the town centre and Accrington College. The responses to the consultation together with recommendations of a Sustainability Appraisal [SA] review have been incorporated into this Publication Edition of the AAP.

1.20 Full details of the various consultations will be set out a separate Consultation Statement that will form a background document to this AAP. The Council is satisfied that the preparation of the AAP accords with the requirements of its Statement of Community Involvement.



# 2.0 Strategic & Local Policy Context

2.1 The policy context for the AAP is provided by:

- National policy, as set out in Government Planning Policy Statements [PPS's], Planning Policy Guidance Notes [PPG's] and Circulars;
- Regional Planning Policy as set out North West of England Plan Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 together with Sub – Regional Strategies, Programmes and Agreements including the Regional Economic Strategy, Lancashire Economic Strategy, Elevate East Lancashire Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder, LEGL – Local Enterprise Growth Initiative;
- Local Plans, Strategies and emerging Local Development Framework Documents for the Borough, including the Hyndburn Borough

Council Local Plan 1996, the Publication Edition Core Strategy for Hyndburn, September 2009, Blackburn Road Corridor Study, East Accrington SPD and the Platts Lodge SPD.

2.2 This AAP accords with national planning policies and is in general conformity with the existing Hyndburn Local Plan 1996, Saved policies and the emerging Core Strategy for Hyndburn. Figure 2: Policy Document Structure identifies the plans and strategies which provide the context and supporting information that have underpinned the AAP preparation. The plan focuses on investment and regeneration of the town centre is consistent with the overall aims and priorities in those plans and strategies.

## National Planning Policy

2.3 PPS 4 – ‘Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth’ is the most relevant of the national policy statements to this AAP. The Government’s overarching objective is sustainable economic growth. To help achieve sustainable economic growth, the Government’s objectives for planning are to:

- build prosperous communities by improving the economic performance of cities, towns, regions, sub-regions and local areas, both urban and rural;
- reduce the gap in economic growth rates between regions, promoting regeneration and tackling deprivation;
- deliver more sustainable patterns of development, reduce the need to travel, especially by car and respond to climate change; &

- promote the vitality and viability of town and other centres as important places for communities. To do this, the Government wants:
  - new economic growth and development of main town centre uses to be focused in existing centres, with the aim of offering a wide range of services to communities in an attractive and safe environment and remedying deficiencies in provision in areas with poor access to facilities;
  - competition between retailers and enhanced consumer choice through the provision of innovative and ef-



- efficient shopping, leisure, tourism and local services in town centres, which allow genuine choice to meet the needs of the entire community [particularly socially excluded groups]; &
- the historic, archaeological and architectural heritage of centres to be conserved and, where appropriate, enhanced to provide a sense of place and a focus for the community and for civic activity.



Figure 2: Policy Document Structure



2.4 It goes further to state that Action Plans, alongside other initiatives, can be used to actively plan for growth and to manage change or conservation. Town centres should continue to meet community needs by consolidating and building on their strengths and addressing key issues. Plans should: provide for a range of shopping, leisure and local services; improve accessibility; and promote social inclusion, economic growth, tourism, the efficient use of land, high quality and inclusive design, improvements to the public realm, open spaces, and the protection of heritage.

2.5 This complements the Governments wider planning objectives set out in other Planning Policy Statements and Guidance Notes such as PPS 1 and PPG13:

- to promote social inclusion, ensuring that communities have access to a range of main town centre uses, and that deficiencies in provision in areas with poor access to facilities are remedied;

- to encourage investment to regenerate deprived areas, creating additional employment opportunities and an improved physical environment;
- to promote economic growth of regional, sub-regional and local economies;
- to deliver more sustainable patterns of development, ensuring that locations are fully exploited through high-density, mixed-use development and promoting sustainable transport choices, including reducing the need to travel and providing alternatives to car use;
- and to promote high quality and inclusive design, improve the quality of the public realm;
- and open spaces, protect and enhance the architectural and historic heritage of centres; &
- provide a sense of place and a focus for the community and for civic activity and ensure that

town centres provide an attractive, accessible and safe environment for businesses, shoppers and residents.

2.6 The main town centre uses to which the planning policy statement applies are retail [including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres]; leisure, entertainment facilities, and the more intensive sport and recreation uses [including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, night-clubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres, and bingo halls]; offices, both commercial and those of public bodies; and arts, culture and tourism [theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels, and conference facilities].In addition, housing will be an important element in most mixed-use, multi-storey developments.

*[Note other key PPS's and PPG's have informed the detailed policy guidance of this AAP]*

REGIONAL

North West of England  
Plan Regional Spatial  
Strategy to 2021

- 2.7 The Joint Lancashire Structure Plan has now been replaced by the NW Regional Spatial Strategy [RSS] with the exception of policy guidance for gypsies and travellers. The RSS for the North West England provides a framework for development and investment in the region over the next fifteen to twenty years. It establishes a broad vision for the region and its sub-regions, priorities for growth and regeneration, and policies to achieve sustainable development across a wide range of topics – from jobs, housing and transport to climate change, waste and energy.
- 2.8 The Regional Spatial Strategy promotes an urban renaissance with new development concentrated in the regional towns and cities. In Lancashire these are Preston, Blackpool, Blackburn and Burnley. Rural regeneration will be supported by smaller scale development in the key towns serving the rural

areas. In Hyndburn the key town is Accrington which includes the townships of Oswaldtwistle, Church, Clayton-le-Moors, Baxenden and Huncoat. Overall there will be a focus on:

- Efficient integrated transport;
- Environmental excellence; &
- Enhanced facilities and service provision.

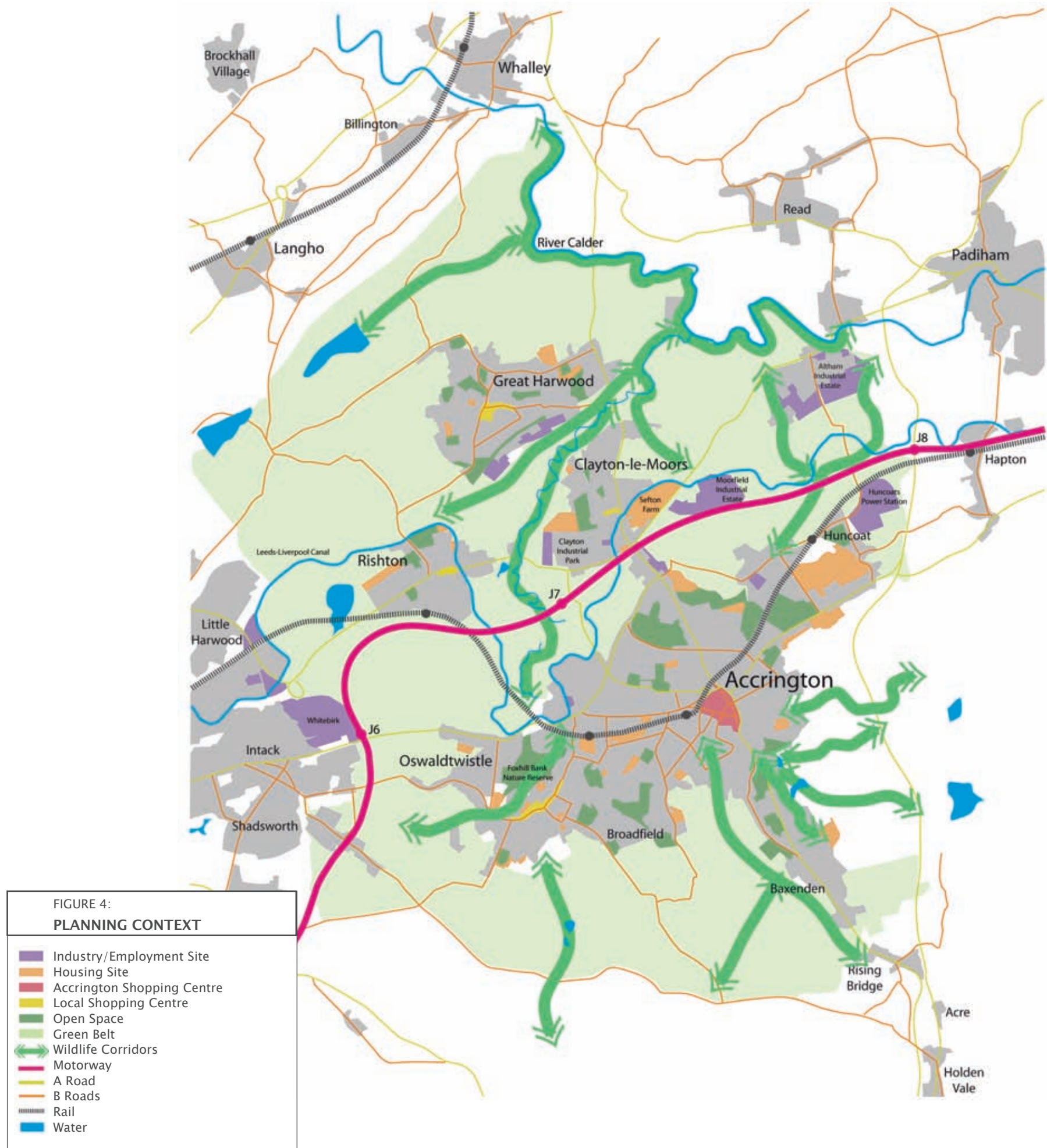
2.9 Policy W5 – Retail Development recommends that plans and strategies should promote retail investment where it assists in the regeneration and economic growth of the North West’s town and city centres. In considering proposals and schemes, any investment made should be consistent with the scale and function of the centre, should not undermine the vitality and viability of any other centre or result in the creation of unsustainable shopping patterns.

LOCAL POLICY

Hyndburn Sustainable  
Community Strategy

- 2.10 The Sustainable Community Strategy for Hyndburn provides a vision for the future and describes what Hyndburn will be like in 2018. As a member of the Hyndburn Local Strategic Partnership [LSP] the work of the Borough will align itself in a way that helps deliver the vision. Three principles underpin the work of the Partnership:
- Sustainable Growth – Development and regeneration that creates a viable self sustaining local economy where strategic decisions are made considering social, economic and environmental impacts;
  - “Narrowing the Gap” – Raising standards across the Borough in order to reduce disparities within Hyndburn and between Hyndburn and the rest of the country. This also ensures that vulnerable groups and equalities implications are written through everything done by the partnership; &
  - Assessing Impact – All partners will consider the impact of key decisions in relation to the seven key outcomes identified.
- 2.11 The Local Development Framework for Hyndburn represents a major platform for the achievement of some of the key outcomes for the Borough. Seven key outcomes are identified in the Sustainable Community Strategy and include:
- A place with a thriving local economy and sustainable market town;
  - A place with a balanced housing market;
  - A place with high levels of educational attainment;
  - A place where all people have the opportunity for a healthier and longer life;
  - A place where people are safe, confident and proud to live;
  - A place for everyone which values and embraces diversity; &
  - A place that safeguards the environment.
- 2.12 The over-riding principles and outcomes of the Sustainable Community Strategy for Hyndburn are reflected in the structure of the AAP.





Hyndburn Borough  
Council Local Plan 1996

2.13 Hyndburn’s Local Plan was adopted in 1996 and sets out land use policies for the area up to 2006. Local Plan policies shopping policies were saved in September 2007 [apart from policy R4] until progress has been made with the Local Development Framework.

Key Policies to be replaced  
by the AAP include:

- 2.14 • R1 – Primary Zone for Accrington
- R2 – Use Classes
- R3 – Non Major Retail Development
- R5 – Shops within Class A1 Serving a Local Community

- R6 – Sale of Hot Food
- R7 – External Appearance of Retail Premises
- R8 – Development of Ancillary Retail Facilities within Existing Non-Retail Premises

2.15 It is the intention that retail/shopping policies will be developed in part by the AAP that will specific to Accrington Town Centre and in part by the Development Management DPD and Site Allocations DPD that will be Hyndburn wide and will include Accrington Town Centre and Accrington as a whole. [Figure 4: Planning Context – Key Designations]

Hyndburn’s Local  
Development Framework  
– Core Strategy

2.16 A new plan called the Hyndburn Local Development Framework is being prepared for the Borough. This will eventually replace the Hyndburn Borough Local Plan adopted in November 1996. The Framework will be made up of a number of Development Plan Documents [DPDs] and the first to be produced is the Core Strategy followed closely by this Area Action Plan for Accrington.

2.17 The Core Strategy sets out the framework for planning decisions in the Borough for at least the next 15 years. The Core Strategy identifies the nature and scale of housing and employment provision and the broad locations for new development; the areas for regeneration and the areas for protection and enhancement. It identifies sites for development where these are strategic in nature and essential for the delivery of the strategy. Other sites will be identified in the Site Allocations DPD, work on

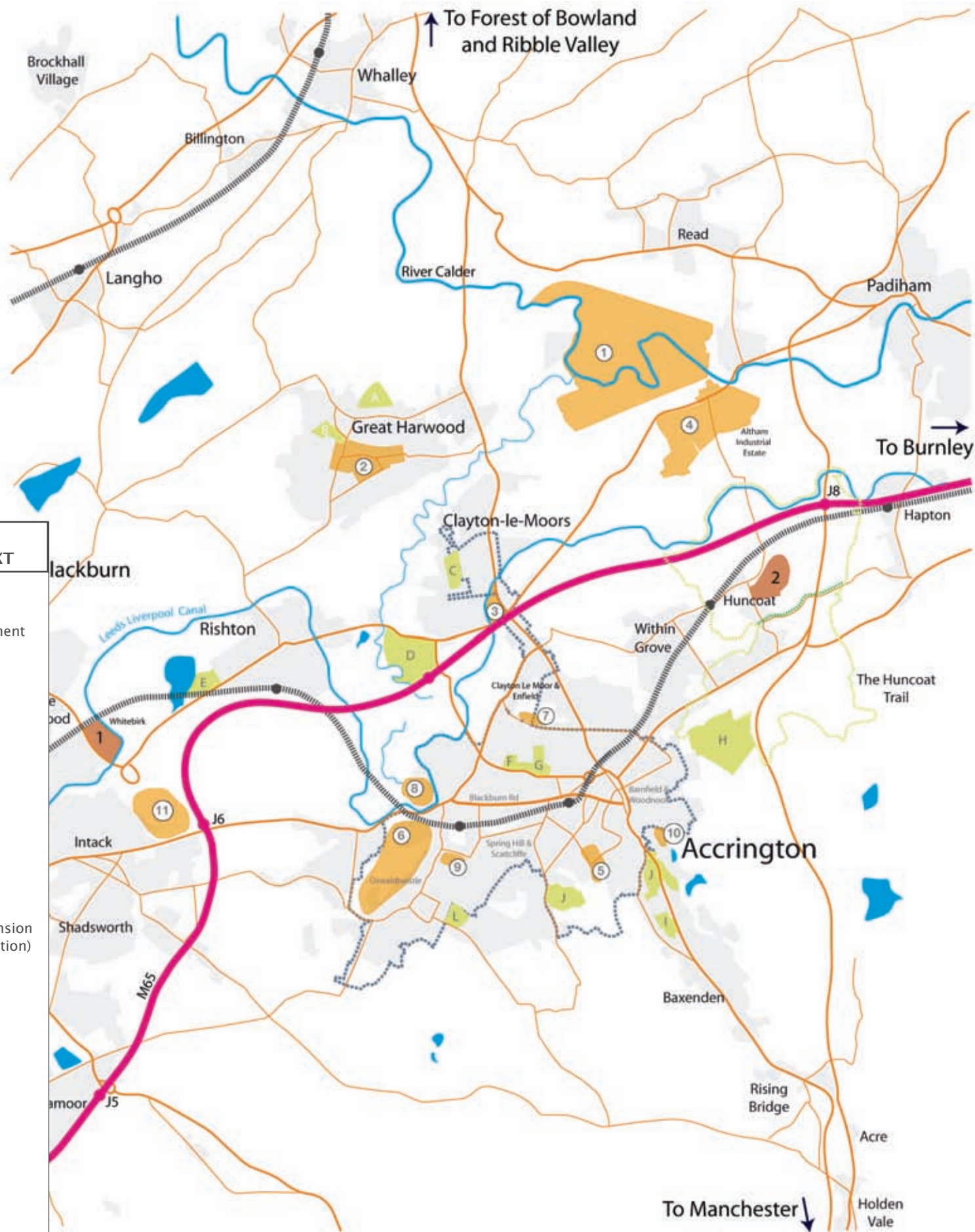
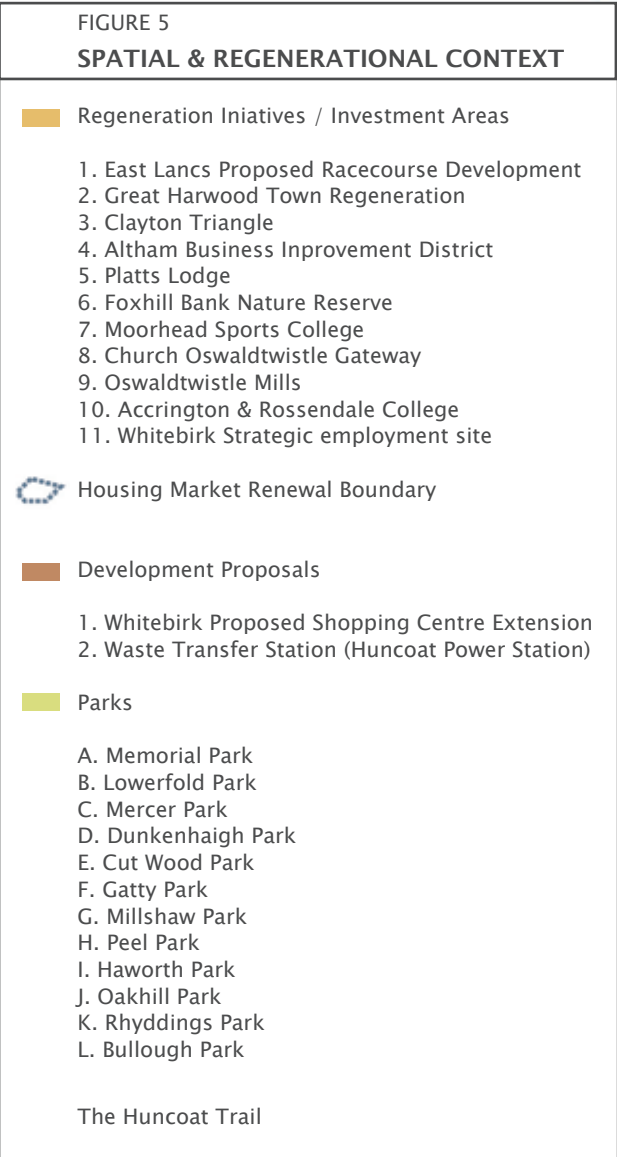
2.18 which began in November 2009. Strategic policies to guide delivery of the spatial strategy will be included in the Core Strategy, while more detailed guidance will be included in a separate Development Management DPD, also due to start before the end of 2010.

2.19 The Core Strategy focuses on the key issues affecting the Borough over the next fifteen years and beyond. It encourages appropriate change and deters harmful development in order to realise the vision. It addresses interlinked economic, social and environmental issues to produce effective policies and achieve sustained improvement. To do this there is close working with local communities and partners throughout the plan-making and delivery. Involvement in the subsequent monitoring will also give important feedback on the effectiveness of the strategy and its policies.



Figure 3: Making Hyndburn the Place to be [Source: The Sustainable Community Strategy for Hyndburn]





Statement of Community Involvement, [SCI], September 2006

2.20 This Statement sets out how the Council will involve interested parties in both making planning policy and decisions on planning applications. It aims to enable and encourage those with an interest in the future planning of Hyndburn to be actively involved. It is important that all involved understand how the process will work, when and how they may be involved, and have realistic expectations of the potential outcomes.

2.21 The development of this AAP has been in accordance with the SCI. [Note: The full Consultation Statement will be available with the final version of the AAP].

Pennine Lancashire Policy

2.22 In addition to the regional policy framework and the Lancashire policy framework there is an increasingly influential sub-regional policy agenda. This is being developed by the Pennine Lancashire authorities [Hyndburn, Blackburn with Darwen, Pendle, Burnley, Ribble Valley and Rossendale] in partnership with Regeneration Pennine Lancashire and

2.23 Lancashire County Council. As a result a variety of studies have been undertaken recently to help inform the development of policy across Pennine Lancashire, focusing principally on economic, housing and connectivity of the sub-region.

2.24 A Pennine Lancashire Multi-Area Agreement [MAA] has also been prepared by the Pennine Lancashire authorities alongside Lancashire County Council. The vision of the draft MAA is to provide

2.25 *“.....a confident, dynamic and growing economy, characterised by a thriving higher value business base, supported by a responsive education and training system. Attracting increased investment through the successful delivery of transformational projects and increased prosperity for all. An area with fast and reliable transport links to employment opportunities and a revitalised and diverse housing market.”*

2.26 In summary, the strategy embraces the following objectives:

- Encouraging enterprise, creating more new businesses and helping small, young business to grow;
- Working with companies to help them take up new opportunities, strengthen their long term competitiveness and develop their knowledge assets;
- Developing economic and business infrastructure to encourage innovation, re-investment and new investment;
- Promoting skills development at all levels – targeting those without level 2 qualifications; supporting those with intermediate qualifications in developing higher level skills; encouraging the recruitment and retention of graduate level workers;
- Tackling urban deprivation across Pennine Lancashire and promoting the high quality neighbourhood environments needed to attract and retain skilled labour;
- Tackling worklessness [through skills development and more targeted engagement as support activities] to ensure that all parts of Pennine Lancashire benefit from its economic growth;
- Addressing image and quality of place to make Pennine Lancashire a natural place for new investment and a desirable place to live;
- Promoting links with neighbouring economies [particularly Manchester and Preston] which can act as an additional employment destination for Pennine Lancashire residents, increasing their access to higher paid employment;
- Increasing the influence Pennine Lancashire wields with government and within the region; &
- Re-organising delivery to enable key projects to be implemented within a robust management regime and to give funding bodies increased confidence in the ability of the area to deliver.



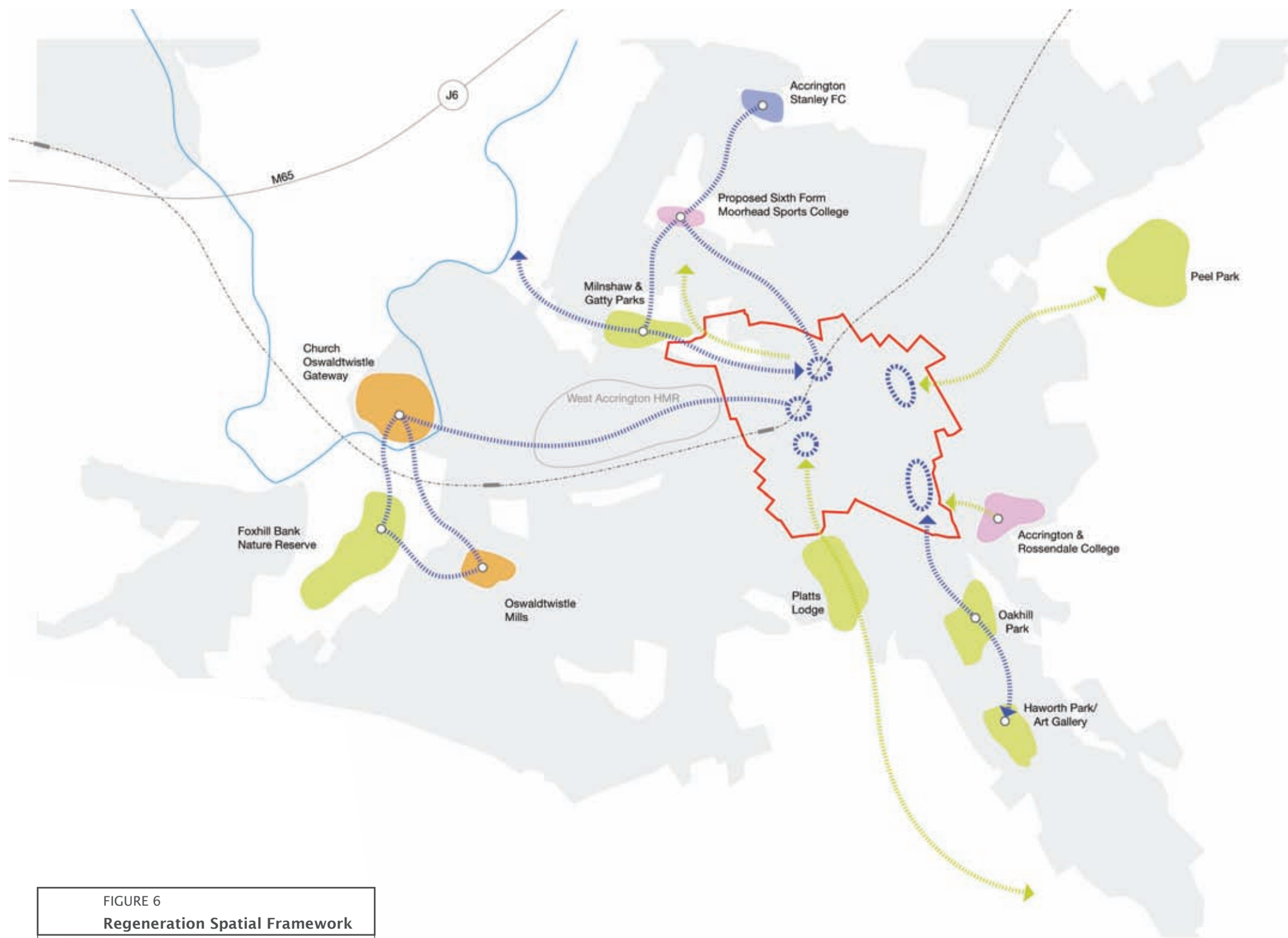













FIGURE 6

**Regeneration Spatial Framework**

-  Accrington AAP Boundary
-  Gateway
-  Improved Strategic Connection
-  Green Link
-  Railway Line
-  Leeds Liverpool Canal
-  Motorway
-  Mixed Use Destinations
-  Green Space
-  Sports Ground
-  College / Educational

Relevant Plans,  
Programmes and Strategies

- 2.27 The regeneration of the town centre has and will be informed by other policies, initiatives and strategies at a range of spatial scales including:
- Regional Economic Strategy;
  - Lancashire Economic Strategy;
  - Elevate East Lancashire Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder;
  - Integrated Economic Strategy for Penine Lancashire;
  - LEGI [Local Enterprise Growth Initiative]; &
  - Blackburn Road Corridor Improvements.
- 2.28 Over recent years there has been much public sector activity and investment in Hyndburn. Lancashire County Council and Lancashire County Developments Ltd are key partners in delivering economic, social and physical regeneration in the area and are involved in much partnership activity in the area. [Figure 5: Spatial and Regeneration Context]

Regional Economic Strategy

- 2.29 Produced by the North West Development Agency, The Regional Economic Strategy 2006 sets the vision for the North West of a “dynamic, sustainable, international economy which competes on the basis of knowledge, advanced technology and excellent quality of life”. This recognises that a priority will be the regeneration of the economy of East Lancashire. The RES sets out three key drivers to achieve this vision, based on the 5 themes around Business, Skills, Education, People and Jobs, Infrastructure and Quality of Life.

Lancashire Economic  
Strategy

- 2.30 Accrington is within the Central Lancashire City Region. The Lancashire Economy Strategy and Sub Regional Action Plan 2006–2009 has been published by the Lancashire Economic Partnership in order to shape the future of Lancashire based on a comprehensive evidence base.
- 2.31 The region is unique amongst contemporary city regions in the UK. The economy is a mix of advanced manufacturing firms [the largest concentration outside the south east], an emerging high value office economy and a firm tour-

ist offer. The region is truly ‘polycentric’ with a strong network of urban centres. The setting is one of outstanding natural beauty encompassing areas of attractive coastline, estuary and open countryside. One of the distinctive benefits of this is the compact nature of many towns which allows a high level of interaction between the countryside and urban settlements, strengthening quality of life. As such, the vision for Central Lancashire is the ‘City with Room to Breathe’. [Figure 6: Regeneration Spatial Framework]

- 2.32 This towns-in-countryside, nature is particularly pronounced in East Lancashire, where the hilly backdrop of moorland to the south and real upland in Bowland to the north is the setting for all the settlements. Unlike most of the Northern city-regions, but more like Tees Valley, Central Lancashire is therefore not dominated by a single or principal core city, and does not have the attributes of a major city – despite its weight of population. Each has its own distinct character: the West Pennine towns of East Lancashire with their heritage of textile mills and terraced streets often climbing the hillsides above the town centre.

Local Enterprise Growth  
Initiative [LEGI]

- 2.33 Hyndburn has benefited from a share of £22.3 million of “Great Goals” LEGI [Local Enterprise Growth Initiative] money from April 2007. This has provided an opportunity to address issues around enterprise and economic activity in the areas most deprived parts and complement the housing market renewal programme around the town. This joint bid with Blackburn with Darwen BC and other partners was a sports-led bid involving the 3 professional football clubs of Accrington Stanley FC, Burnley FC and Blackburn Rovers FC and other private sector agencies.
- 2.34 This initiative has helped unlock the known latent entrepreneurial culture inherent within deprived areas of East Lancashire, stimulating and capturing this entrepreneurial potential. In Accrington the Enterprise Haven premises are currently planned to be based on the upper floor of the Market Hall in Accrington Town Centre.



Elevate East Lancashire  
Housing Market  
Renewal Pathfinder

2.35 One of the key projects within the city region framework for economic growth revolves around the transformational agenda of Pennine Lancashire, transforming the economy and housing market in East Lancashire. Substantial investment has been made and future provisions planned through the Elevate East Lancashire Housing Market Renewal Programme.

2.36 The housing market renewal programme is based on 5 Area Development Framework Areas across Hyndburn. Three of these areas lie directly adjacent to the town centre, West Accrington and Church, Peel and Barnfield and Springhill and Scaitcliffe. The synergies and linkages between these neighbourhoods and the town centre should be maximised to assist in comprehensive renewal of these areas.

Blackburn Road Corridor

2.37 The role of the Blackburn Road Corridor [which runs north – south from Accrington Town Centre] in the surrounding housing market renewal area and

adjacent to the town centre has been explored in a recent study for the Council, Elevate and Keepmoat [the preferred developer partner for West Accrington]. The study recommends concentrating the retail offer through shop front improvements, reusing vacant units and upper floors, protecting and enhancing assets through environmental corridor improvements and marketing and diversifying the economic base through the key project of a business hub. This would provide new managed workspace to serve the whole of the Hyndburn area.

Platts Lodge

2.38 Another focus for physical regeneration, directly adjacent to the south east of the town centre, is the Platt’s Lodge area. The area comprises approximately 16 hectares and includes the major open space of Scaitcliffe Lodge and surrounding former textile mills site of the former Woodnook Mill, Victoria Mill and Royal Mill. The area is historically and culturally significant offering a wonderful opportunity for heritage-led waterfront

regeneration in a distinctive environment. The area is the largest remaining example of the town’s industrial past and as such should be imaginatively regenerated.

This area links the town centre with Woodnook Vale Country Park and has recently been invested in through the Hyndburn Greenway, a recreational cycling and walking route. To respond to developer interest in the area, a Supplementary Planning Document has been produced and is available on the Councils website.

East Accrington

2.39 A new SPD/Masterplan has been developed for East of Accrington focusing on two areas; Burnley Road and Woodnook. Part of the purpose of the work is to co-ordinate factors such as the local economy, private sector investment, funding and policy priorities within a single focused document that clearly describes and articulates the opportunities for radical change and investment within East Accrington over the next 15 years. The SPD will be informed by guidance, initiatives and strategies at a range of spatial scales.

Key Studies and  
Assessments

- 2.40 • Employment Land Study, February 2008;
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, March 2009;
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment, January 2009;
- Affordable Housing Viability Assessment, October 2009;
- Green Spaces Audit, September 2006; &
- Phase 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, March 2010.

Planning and  
Development Issues

2.41 Over time development in the borough has proceeded in largely peripheral locations to the town centre with both employment and housing sites being clustered towards the M65 corridor. These are largely bolted on to the existing urban area, do not include mixed use development and are lacking in good public transport links.

2.42 In addition the towns green spaces are also largely on the edge of the urban area. Retail parks have grown on the edge of centre at both



2.43 Hyndburn and Eastgate Re-tail Parks. Further pressure for out-of-town retail is evident at the Whitebirk Retail Park. All this has done little to regenerate the town centre and its neighbourhoods.

2.44 The opportunity exists in the new Local Development Framework to create more sustainable patterns of development, based on mixed uses, higher densities, excellent design and good public transport accessibility located in and around the town centre and neighbourhoods needing regeneration. This should enhance and unlock existing assets

such as the canal, parks and green corridors out to the countryside. There is also a clear need for Council intervention and urgent action to save many of the towns heritage buildings such as the Conservative Club.

2.45 A key issue in the future development of the Borough is the adjacency of the Blackburn urban area, as over time this is becoming closer to the Hyndburn area through new development.

Summary

2.46 On adoption, this AAP will become part of the Development Plan for the Borough. Once the Core Strategy is adopted, the strategic policy framework for this AAP will comprise national policy guidance, North West of England Plan Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 and the Core Strategy together with the Site Allocations DPD and Development Management DPD.



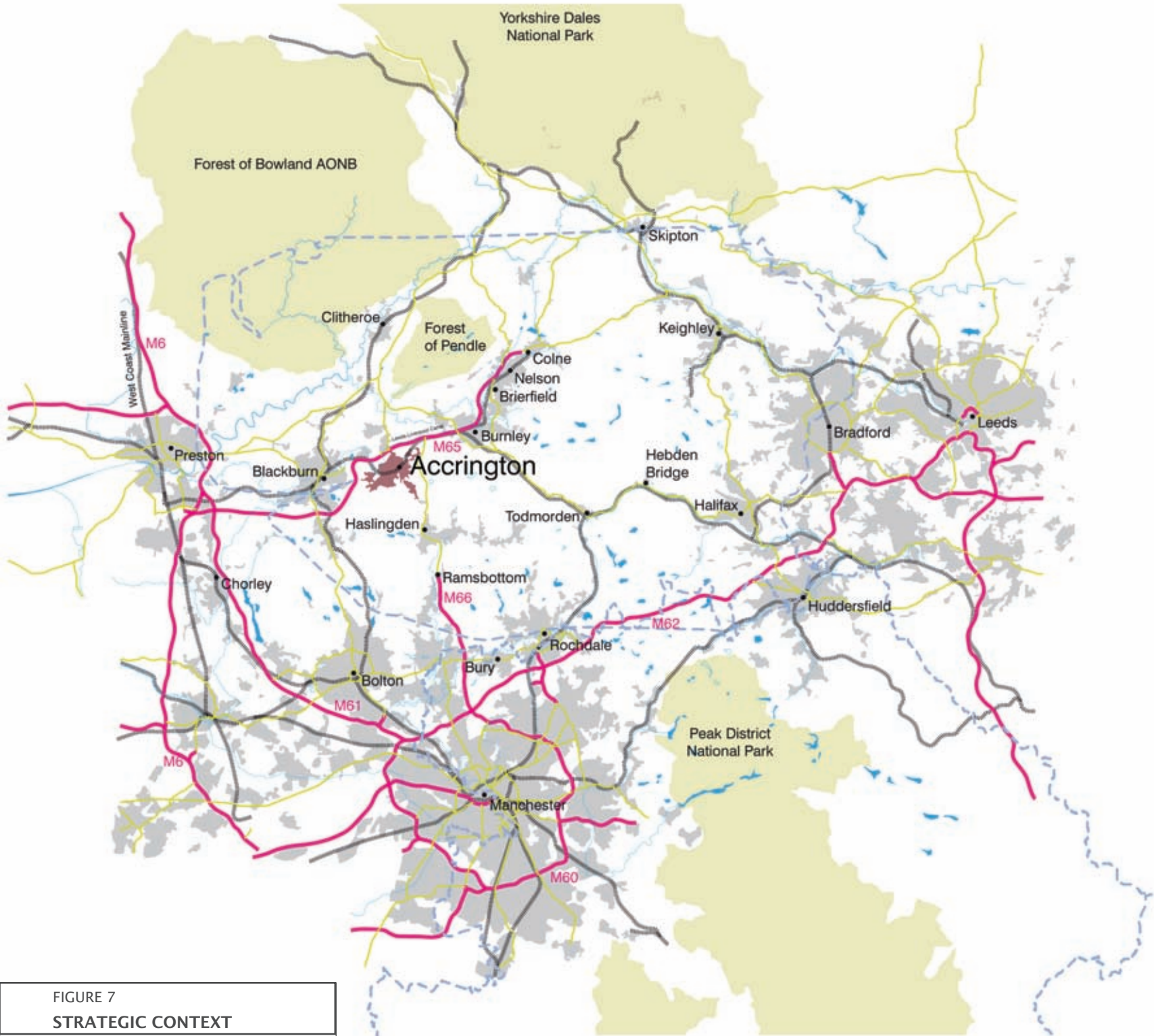


FIGURE 7  
STRATEGIC CONTEXT

- Motorway
- Primary Route
- Trainline
- Urban Settlement
- Key Landscape areas

PART A The Plan And Its Context

# 3.0 Characteristics and Key Issues

3.0

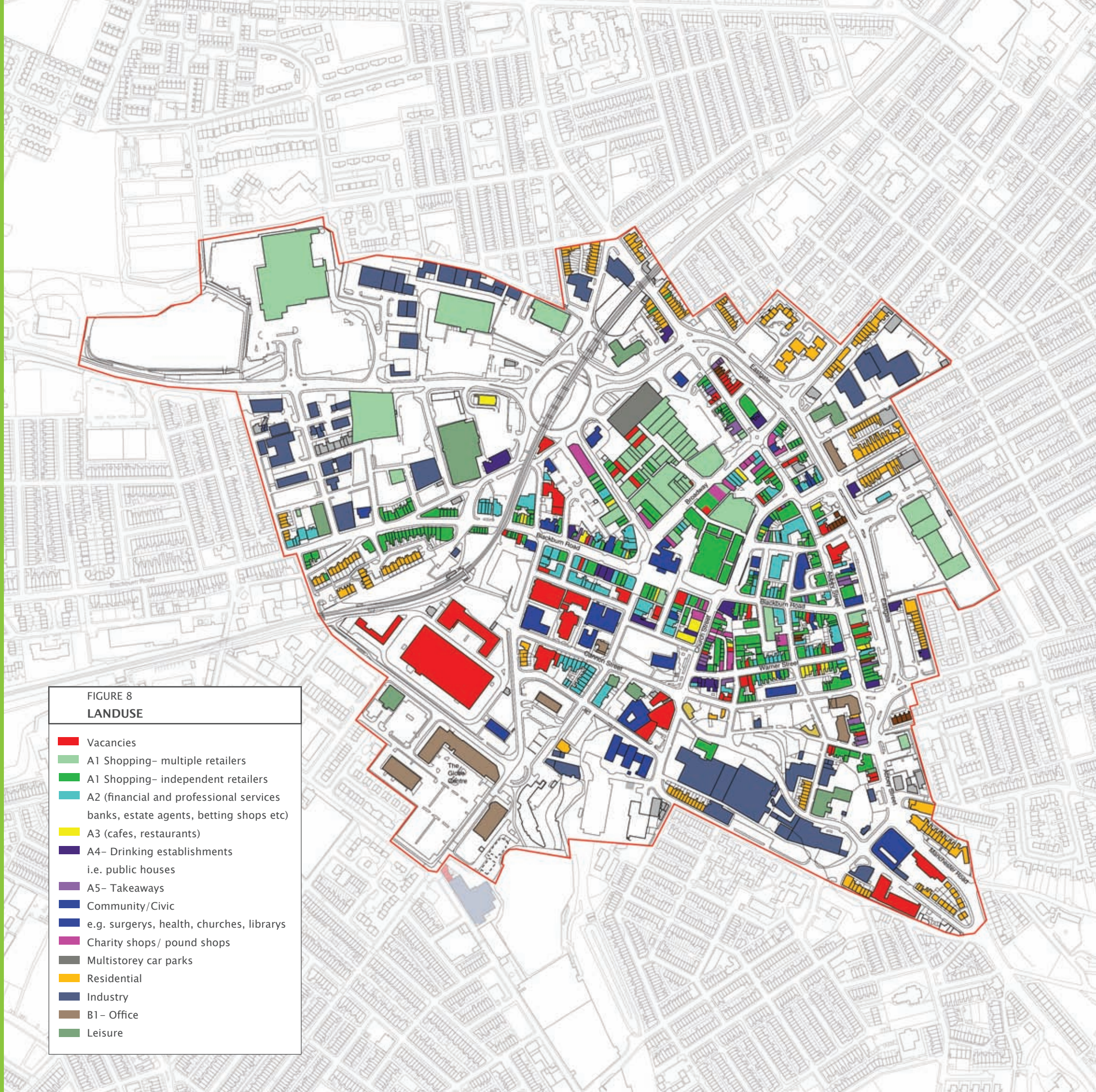
Where is Accrington?

- 3.1 Accrington is on the western edge of the Pennine Hills, one of a number of former industrial towns which contribute much to the local character of Pennine Lancashire [Figure 7 Strategic Context Plan]. The early town straddled a small watercourse known as the Hyndburn or Accrington Brook, the course of which has long been lost through canalisation and culverting. As the town grew, it spread across a relatively flat bottom to the foot of the hills, the highest local point being Great Hameldon to the east of Accrington.
- 3.2 The town is well located to both the cities of Preston and Manchester, to the west and south respectively, and to the Yorkshire Dales and Forest of Bowland/Ribble Valley. Skipton is 25 miles to the north east which is a 45 minute drive and Clitheroe, 9 miles to the north is a 25 minute drive. Preston is around 30 minutes on the train, where access to the west coast mainline is available.
- 3.3 Accrington is the largest town centre in the Borough. It has suffered from competition by competing centres and out of town retailing and subsequent retail leakage. Rather than try and compete with other out-of-town retail centres, by generic approaches to development and design, Accrington will emphasise its traditional character and appeal will build on its strengths, there being the Market and its independent retailers clustered around Warner Street and Abbey Street.



FIGURE 8  
LANDUSE

- Vacancies
- A1 Shopping– multiple retailers
- A1 Shopping– independent retailers
- A2 (financial and professional services  
banks, estate agents, betting shops etc)
- A3 (cafes, restaurants)
- A4– Drinking establishments  
i.e. public houses
- A5– Takeaways
- Community/Civic  
e.g. surgeries, health, churches, libraries
- Charity shops/ pound shops
- Multistorey car parks
- Residential
- Industry
- B1– Office
- Leisure





Land Use

- 3.4 Figure 8: Land Use illustrates the distribution and type of land uses across the town centre. To an extent this has been influenced by the historic street pattern and plot structure of the town, as well as its topography and watercourses, although most watercourses have unfortunately largely been culverted.
- 3.5 Given the size of the town centre it supports a broad variety of uses. Clear land use patterns are the finer grain of uses in the heart of town where smaller and narrower terraced properties line the historic streets. Towards the periphery of the town centre are the main concentrations of larger footprint retail developments. Pockets of terraced housing permeate the outer edge of the town centre, in some cases the start of long sloping and uninterrupted terraces extending outwards from the town.
- 3.6 In terms of retail the multiple retailers are mostly located in the two retail parks off Eastgate and Hyndburn Road and within and around Broadway and the Arndale Shopping Centre.
- 3.7 The Arndale Centre is a covered shopping mall built in the 1980s which takes a large area of the north of the centre together with its multi-storey car park. Other national retailers cluster on the streets around the Arndale such as Union Street and the pedestrianised Broadway. The latest addition to the national retailer representation in the town is the Market Place development which is anchored by a Wilkinsons. This development links Broadway with Peel Street and the Market. As well as the indoor Market Hall and outdoor Market on Peel Street independent retailing is mainly focused on the streets of Blackburn Road, Church Street, Whalley Road, Abbey Street and Warner Street.
- 3.8 Culture and leisure uses are limited to the edge of town style Vue Cinema, Superbowl and Mcdonalds next to the Viaduct Roundabout. With the exception of a couple of clubs in the Warner Street area such as The Attic, there are no significant music venues, theatre, art or cinemas in the town centre.
- 3.9 There are also no hotels in the centre, apart from the small offer in The Globe. Bars, cafes and restaurants form no distinct cluster but are focused around the streets of Blackburn Road, Abbey Street, Holme Street, Church Street and Abbey Street. Community uses in the town centre are limited to the New Era youth centre, St James Church and the Voluntary Resource Centre in the Cannon Street area.
- 3.10 The traditional office location is around Cannon Street, St James Street and Willow Street. Here many local firms can be found, such as solicitors and accountants. Commonly 2 terraces have been combined to form larger premises. More recent office additions are within the Globe Centre and The Tannery on Eastgate. There is very little purpose built modern office accommodation. Industrial uses comprise mainly long established manufacturing and engineering firms mainly in The Grange area and to the south of Hyndburn Road.
- 3.11 There is no significant residential use in the town centre, except rented flats above shops along Blackburn Road. A new residential apartment block has been completed in recent years at Scaitcliffe Lodge together with other more recent refurbishments of historic buildings into apartments within the town centre.
- 3.12 The vacancy rate in the centre at 2005 was around 15%. Clusters of commercial vacancies are within the top end of Broadway at the junction with Whalley Road, Whalley Road itself and Peel Street. Other notable vacant sites are the former skills centre site, the fire station complex on Manchester Road, the Conservative Club, former Sunday School and Barnes Furniture Store.







Urban Form

- 3.13 High land to the east and west is a dominant physical feature of the town. The town centre in the valley bottom provides the meeting place for railways and roads.

3.14 The plan at [Figure 9: Urban Design Analysis](#) highlights the buildings of the town, and nothing else. This shows the urban structure of the place, the pattern of development blocks, streets and buildings that make up the place.

3.15 A tight urban grain is the time-honoured way of achieving successful places and efficient connections. A loose or coarse grain is indicative of stand alone buildings in space, with dead frontages. This type of grain rarely creates attractive and legible streets and spaces.
- 3.16 In Accrington there are a series of grid-irons streets that radiate out from the edge of the town centre, the long terraced streets and alleys that make up most of Accrington's inner neighbourhoods. The steep topography and hilly nature of the towns surrounding neighbourhoods did not prevent the imposition of the Victorian 'grid' plan composed of terrace houses and a rectangular street pattern.

3.17 These grid forms are a fundamentally strong part of Accrington's urban fabric. Continuous frontages and coherent relationships of scale between building and street space create very well connected, 'permeable' environments, easy to navigate on foot.

3.18 Within the town centre, the pattern is different. In notable contrast to the tight grid-iron forms beyond the
- study area, large expanses of undefined space characterise the entire town centre edge, with the built form disappearing altogether in places, notably on the north side around Hyndburn Road.

3.19 Spatial definition is also weak along Eastgate and south of Paradise Street/Oak Street. What buildings there are tend to be large blocks set in wide spaces rather than defining street frontages.

3.20 To have such fragmented forms ringing the town centre is a weakness of the town's physical structure. Urban spaces not enclosed by clear building frontages tend to be uncomfortable places for people, lacking in the natural sense of security provided by active edges that offer 'eyes and ears to the street'. They also give poor definition to the street and create dead frontages.
- 3.21 Inside the fractured edge a third distinct pattern is visible, at the centre of the town where a fine grained urban structure exists. A triangular core of clearly delineated building blocks form a network of streets and spaces. The strong linear form of Blackburn Road can be seen bisecting this triangle, with the similarly clear line of Abbey Street on the eastern side. These two streets can be seen leading beyond the central core through the outer grid-iron, across the fractured town centre edge.

3.22 There is a fine urban grain within this core, the exception being the Arndale/Broadway shopping mall, which stands out as the largest building block in the central area. The 'readability' or legibility of Accrington's core town centre structure is fundamentally quite strong. One of the virtues of the town is its compactness and walkability.



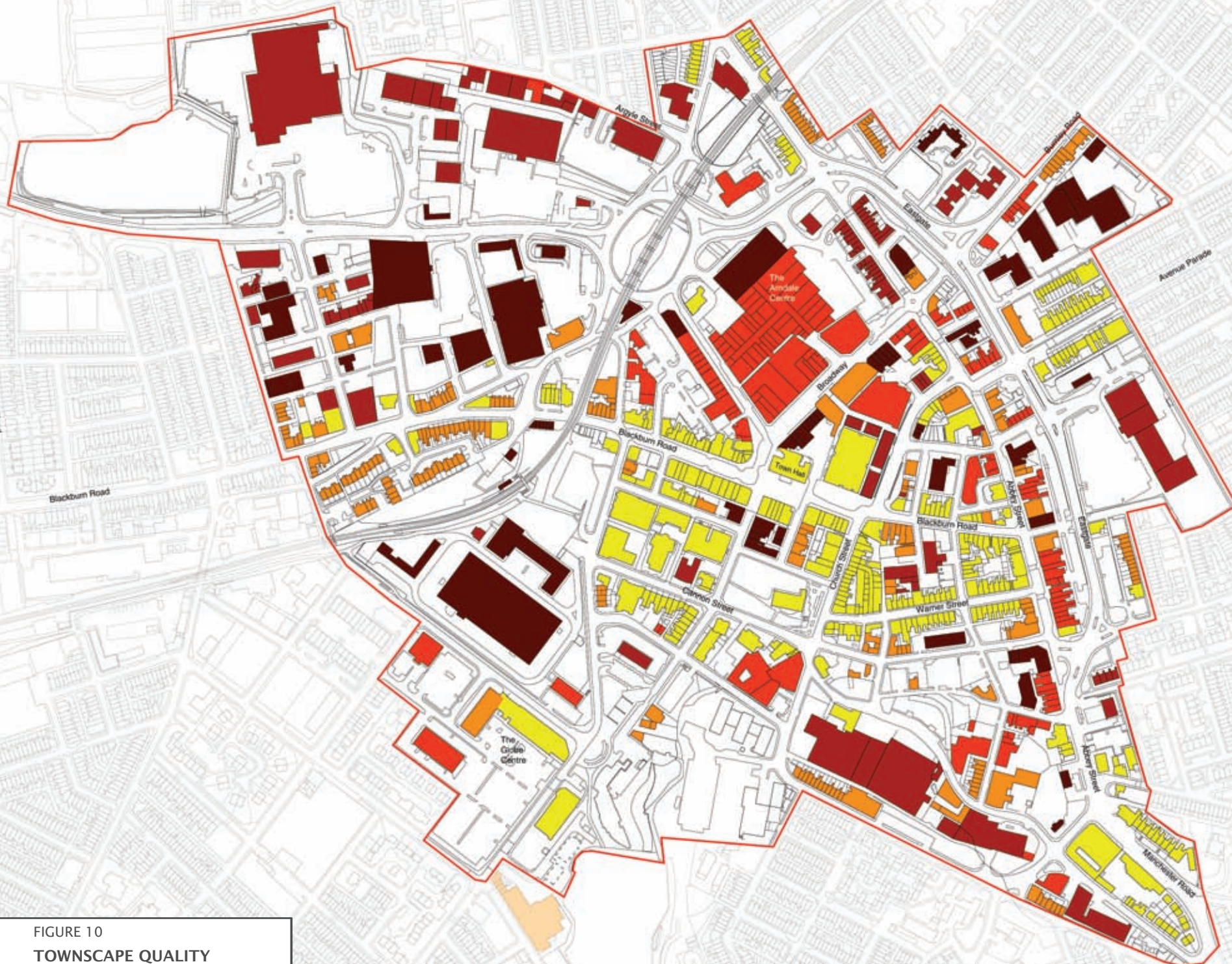


FIGURE 10  
TOWNSCAPE QUALITY

- Very positive contribution-
- Positive contribution
- Neutral
- Negative impact
- Very negative impact



Townscape Quality

3.33 Buildings within the town centre were reviewed to assess their contribution to townscape quality [Figure 10: Townscape Quality]. New development constructed with little regard to the scale, massing or form of existing buildings can have a significant impact on the visual and physical character of the area. In general there exists a strong townscape around Blackburn Road, Church Street, Warner Street and Cannon Street areas. Weaker areas of townscape are largely confined to the periphery of the town centre.

3.34 However a number of buildings within and immediately adjacent to the Accrington Town Centre Conservation Area do not possess sufficient architectural detailing/interest to be regarded as making a positive contribution to the character of the area.

3.35 For example, although located beyond the boundary, the Telephone Exchange between Bank, Bridge and Infant Streets is highly visible from the northern part of the Conservation Area and does little to enhance its character.

3.36 Constructed during the 1970s this three storey building, characterised by an unsympathetic concrete tiled and yellow façade, is located immediately adjacent to 32 Blackburn Road and within close proximity to the town's grade II listed Market Hall, both of which are considered to be of some architectural merit.

3.37 However, the Telephone Exchange appears to have been constructed within little or no regard to its historic or architectural context and as such is considered to have a serious negative impact upon the visual quality of the Blackburn Road/Peel Street/Church Street junction. Again located beyond the boundary, 2 – 16 Broadway also adversely affects the visual quality and character of Accrington Town Centre Conservation Area.

3.38 Constructed as an extension to the Town Hall during the 1960s, this three storey building is characterised by alternant white and blue horizontal banding. Whilst the juxtaposition of old and new can sometimes be positive, in this case the extension was seemingly

constructed with little regard to the scale, massing or form of the grade II\* building to which it is attached. The former Barnes furniture store, located at the junction of Church Street and Cannon Street immediately beyond the southern boundary, is considered to undermine the visual quality of this part of the conservation area. Constructed during the late twentieth century, again with seemingly little or no regard to its historic or architectural context, this building dominates the view of Church of St James' from Grange Lane.

Materials

3.39 Although Accrington is famed for the production of dense red bricks known as 'Accrington Bloods', the town is notable for its relative lack of brick-built structures. The majority of buildings within the conservation area were traditionally constructed from locally quarried Carboniferous gritstone, a sedimentary rock that is composed of coarse sand grains with inclusions of small stones.

3.40 The finish of gritstone varies with building function: public, civic and ecclesiastical buildings were typically constructed of ashlar masonry, whilst residential buildings were constructed using roughly hewn blocks.

3.41 A notable exception within the conservation area is the Warner Street entrance to the Arcade which was built in 1880 of red brick with white terracotta dressings, whilst beyond the boundary the Post Office on Abbey Street is constructed of red brick and detailed in sandstone.

3.42 Despite more than a century of industrial pollution the conservation area shows remarkably little sign of erosion. Indeed it was the gritstone's hard-wearing nature, its abundance and its versatility that originally made it the preferred choice for building construction within the town. Roofs within the town were, at least traditionally, covered in gritstone slabs; however the majority of buildings within the conservation area are roofed in blue-grey Welsh slate or lighter and less expensive substitutes.



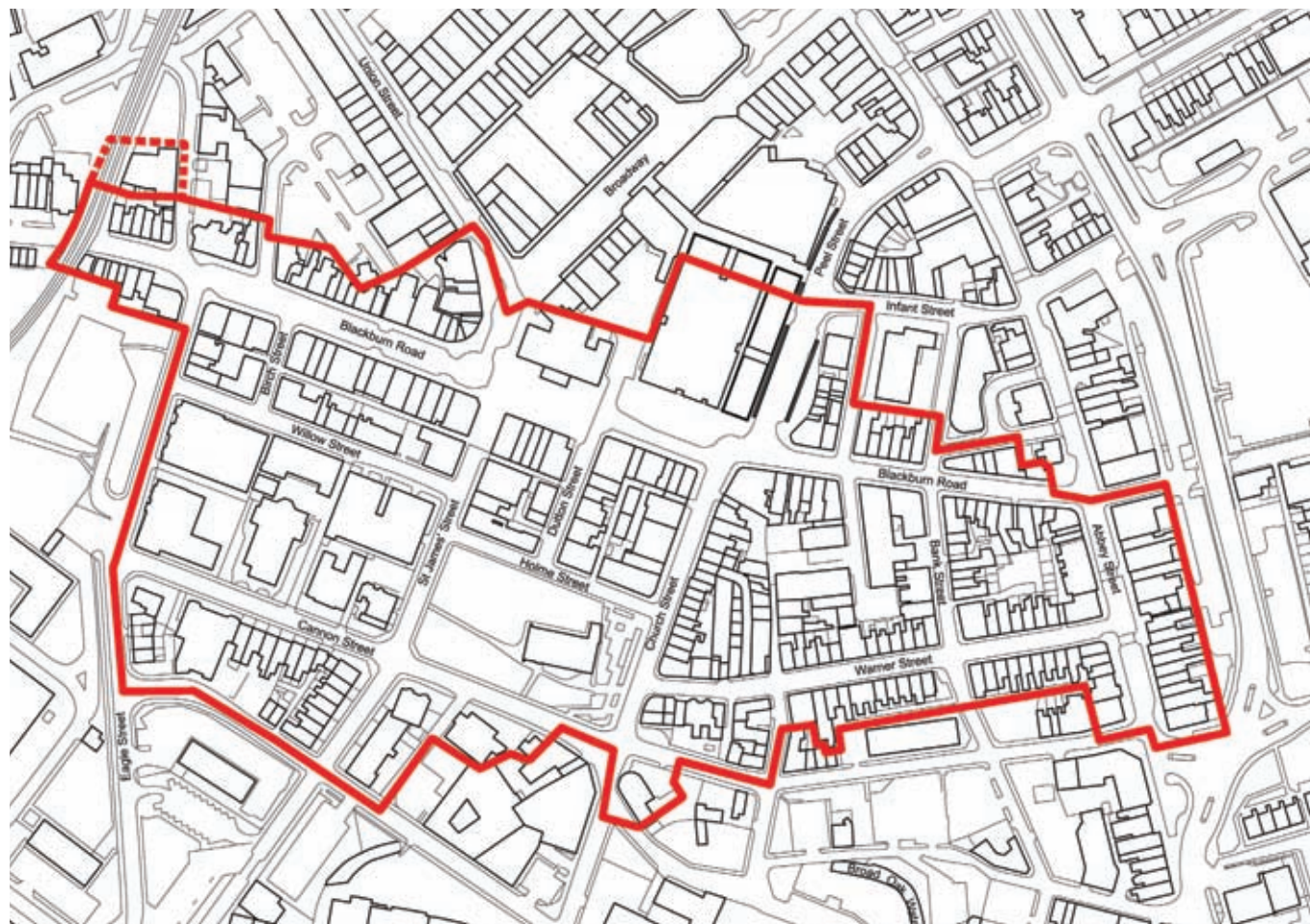


FIGURE 11

### Accrington Town Centre Conservation Area

- Town Centre Conservation Area
- - - Conservation Area Boundary extension

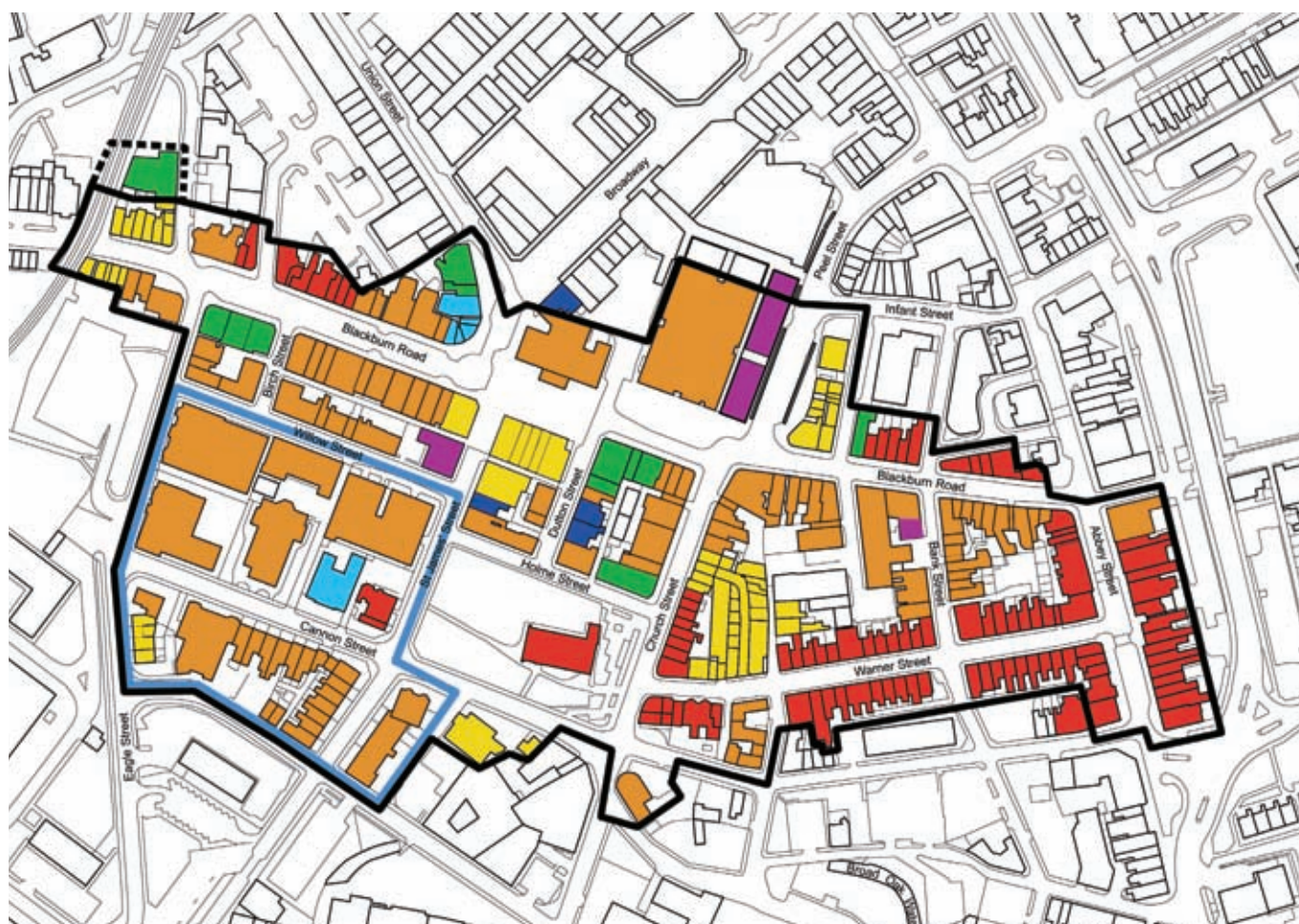


FIGURE 12

### The Growth of Accrington Town Centre Conservation Area

- Town Centre Conservation Area
- - - Conservation Area Boundary extension
- Character Area 1 – Cannon Street
- Character Area 2 – Warner Street
- Pre 1848
- 18–49–1893
- 1894–1911
- 1912–1931
- 1932–1958
- 1959–1965
- 1966–2007



Heritage value

3.43 There are two conservation areas within the town’s urban area. Accrington Town Centre Conservation Area lies within the centre of the defined masterplan study area, whilst Christ Church Conservation Area is located to the southeast of the town centre and as such only its most northern section falls within the study area boundary. [Figure 11: Accrington Town Centre Conservation Area]

Accrington Town Centre Conservation Area

3.44 Accrington Town Centre Conservation Area was designated in 1976 and extended in 1979 and now incorporates much of Accrington’s civic centre. The Conservation Area is generally linear in form and is arranged around the east-west axes of Blackburn Road and Cannon and Warner Street.

3.45 The eastern boundary of the conservation area is formed by the railway viaduct that carries the East Lancashire Line between Preston and Colne and by Eagle Street, whilst the northern boundary is formed by the rear of properties on the northern side of Blackburn Road.

[Figure 12: The Growth of Accrington Town Centre Conservation Area]

3.46 The western boundary follows the rear plots of buildings fronting the western side of Abbey Street, whilst the southern boundary is formed by the rear of properties on the southern side of Warner Street and Cannon Street and by the junction of Paradise Street with Eagle Street. Varied topography is evident within the conservation area, for example Abbey Street located to the east of the area sits on slightly elevated ground and therefore permits sloping views down Warner Street towards Church Street which follows the line of the valley bottom.

3.47 There are approximately three hundred buildings within the Conservation Area. Blackburn Road is dominated by service and municipal uses, including numerous banks and Accrington town and market halls, whilst the Cannon Street area includes a number of major civic and ecclesiastical buildings, including Carnegie Public Library, St James’ Church, the Baptist church

on Cannon Street and the former Liberal Club on Eagle Street, a number of which are grade II listed. [Figure 13: Heritage Assets within Accrington own Centre]

3.48 Terraced housing and small independent retail and commercial properties form Warner Street and Abbey Street to the southeast of the Conservation Area, whilst the grade II listed Victorian Arcade and Warner Public House are located at the western end of Warner Street, near its junction with Church Street. In addition to the listed buildings, a number of buildings within the conservation area are unlisted, yet are historically and/or architecturally significant. [Figure 14: Townscape Analysis of Accrington Town Centre Conservation Area]

Christ Church Conservation Area

3.49 Christ Church Conservation Area was designated in 1976 and extended in 1979. The Conservation Area is principally comprised of pre-1850 urban development with some later nineteenth century villa development. A comparison with Accrington Town Centre Conserva-

tion Area reveals that this Conservation Area is far less developed, a feature that can be attributed to the location of two large open spaces within its boundaries.

3.50 Within the masterplan study area there are total of eighteen statutory listed buildings, of which fourteen are within the Accrington Town Centre Conservation Area, two are located within the northern tip of the Christ Church Conservation Area, whilst an additional two are located immediately beyond their boundaries. In parallel with the masterplan a Conservation Area Character Appraisal, Conservation Management Plan and Heritage Assessment and Future Strategy have been produced. These studies have informed the masterplan. The character appraisal identifies those buildings and features that contribute towards the area’s special architectural and historic interest, and hence also to the central section of the masterplan study area. [Figure 15: Growth of Accrington Town Centre]



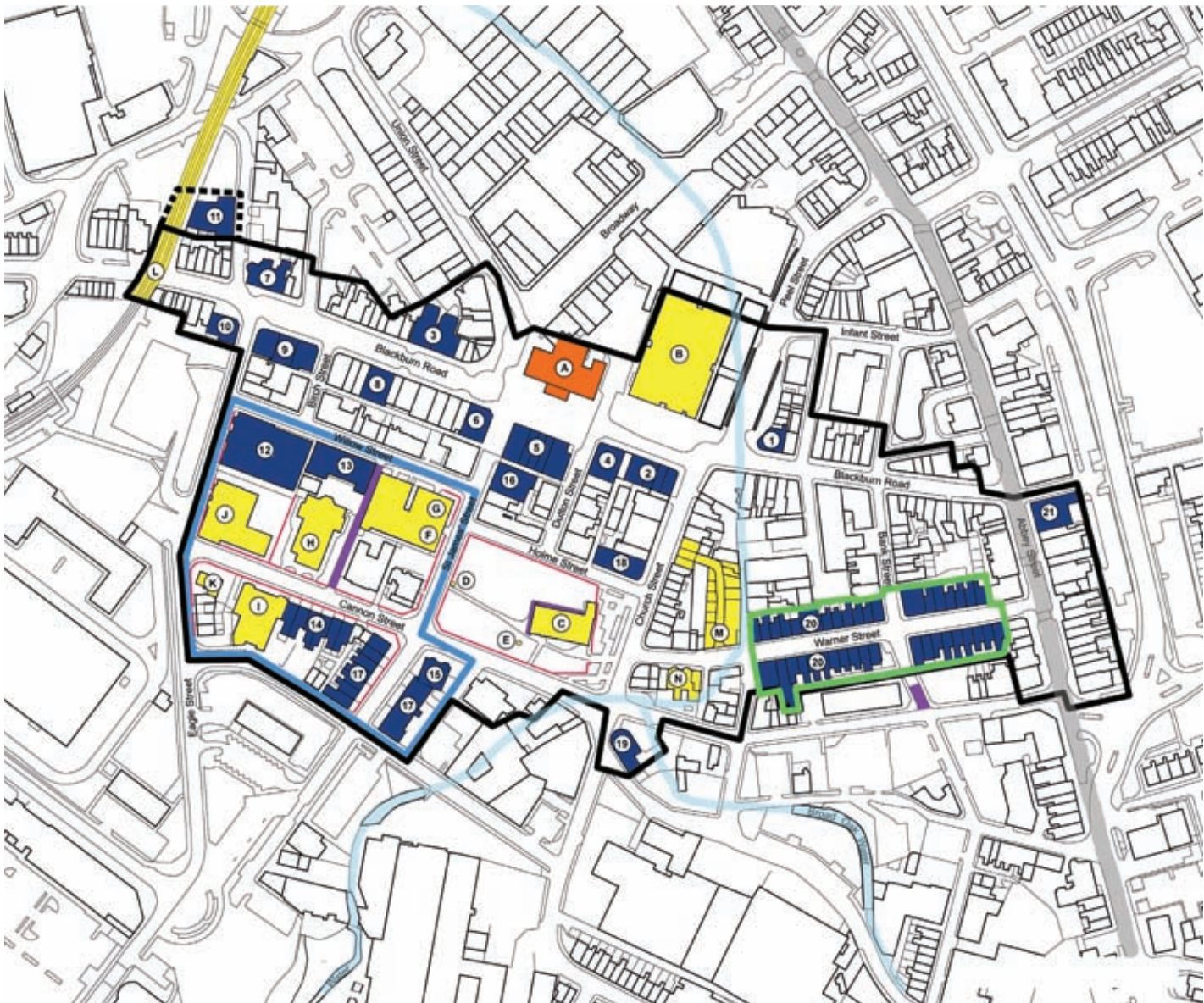


FIGURE 13  
HERITAGE ASSETS WITHIN ACCRINGTON  
TOWN CENTRE CONSERVATION AREA

- Town Centre Conservation Area
- - Conservation Area Boundary Extension
- Character Area 1: Cannon Street
- Character Area 2: Warner Street
- Statutory Listed Building/Feature (Grade I)
- Statutory Listed Building/Feature (Grade II\*)
- Statutory Listed Building/Feature (Grade II)
- Notable Unlisted Building/Feature
- Surviving Historic Surface
- Surviving Historic Means of Enclosure
- Course of culverted & canalised watercourse
- Course of turnpike road

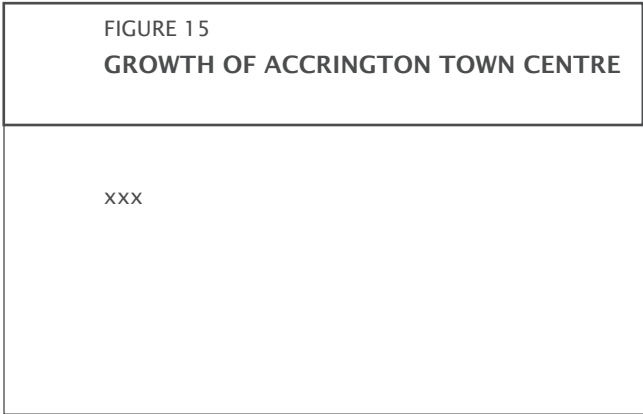
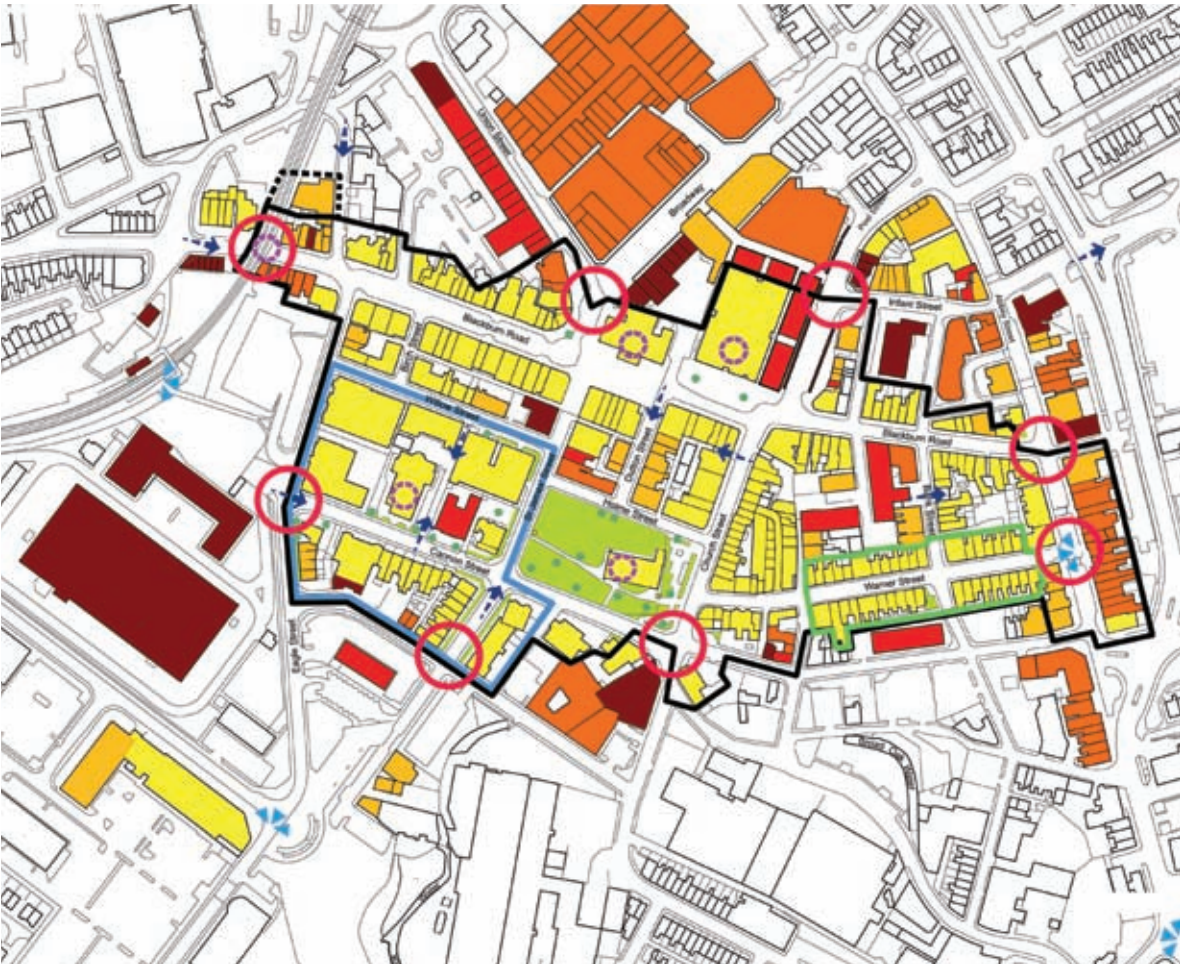
Listed Buildings/Features

- A. Accrington Town Hall, Blackburn Road
- B. Market Hall, Blackburn Road
- C. Church of St James, St James' Street
- D. Monument to Adam Westwell, West of Church of St James
- E. Sundial, Southwest of Church of St James
- F. Carnegie Public Library, St James' Street
- G. Mechanics Institution, Willow Street
- H. Baptist Church, Cannon Street
- I. Accrington Conservative Club, Cannon Street
- J. Former Manchester & Liverpool Bank  
20 Cannon Street
- K. 21 Cannon Street
- L. Railway Viaduct, Blackburn Road
- M. The Post Office Arcade, Warner Street
- N. Warner Arms, 53–57 Warner Street

Notable Unlisted Buildings/Features

- 1. Accrington Town Hall, Blackburn Road
- 2. Market Hall, Blackburn Road
- 3. Church of St James, St James' Street
- 4. Monument to Adam Westwell, West of Church of St James
- 5. Church of St James
- 6. Sundial, Southwest of Church of St James
- 7. Carnegie Public Library, St James' Street
- 8. Mechanics Institution, Willow Street
- 9. Baptist Church, Cannon Street
- 10. Accrington Conservative Club, Cannon Street
- 11. Former Manchester & Liverpool Bank, 20 Cannon Street
- 12. 21 Cannon Street
- 13. Railway Viaduct, Blackburn Road
- 14. The Post Office Arcade, Warner Street
- 15. Warner Arms, 53–57 Warner Street







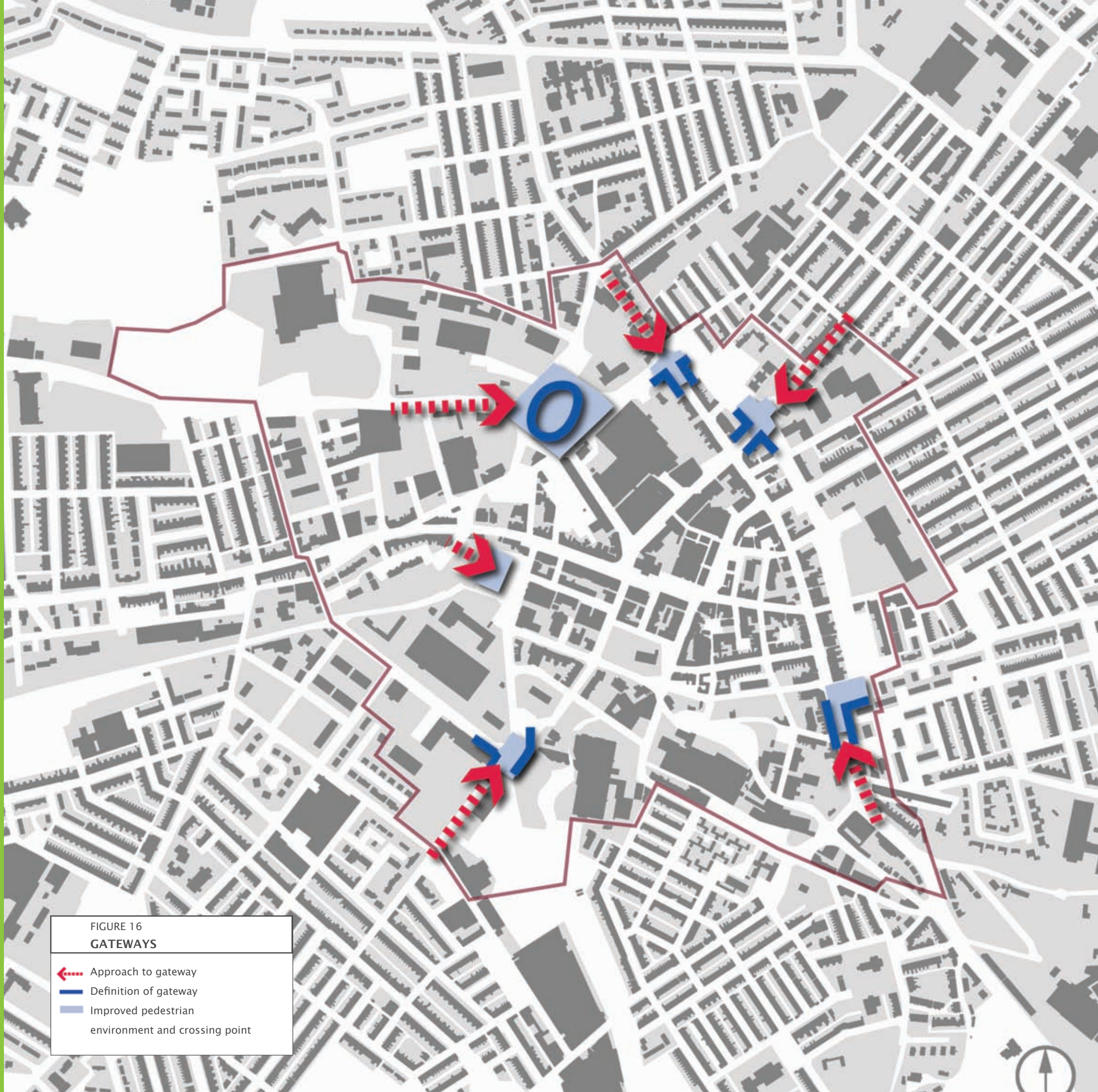


FIGURE 16  
GATEWAYS

- Approach to gateway
- Definition of gateway
- Improved pedestrian environment and crossing point



Gateways and Approaches

- 3.51 The quality of approaches and ‘gateways’ or arrival points to Accrington varies, according to the route taken. In summary, the main approach corridors, with the exception of Hyndburn Road, have a strong underlying townscape, although condition is a concern along Blackburn Road. However, each of the gateways as these corridors reach the town centre are in need of improvement.

3.52 From the south, the Manchester Road route is fundamentally a high quality approach. This well composed space is ‘closed’ by the architecturally unified collection of elegant 1930s Council houses and stream-lined civic buildings on the triangular site formed by the junction, the whole ensemble punctuated by the tower of the Fire Station.

3.53 However, its worst aspect is at the point of arrival itself, the gateway to the town centre at Spring Gardens. The effect of the triangular space and civic site collapses at the next junction, where the prominent site of the old Church and School has been left underused and unsightly, undermining the superb quality of the Bank Terrace and
- Fire-Station/Police Station/Magistrates complex, and providing a very poor front door to the town centre.

3.54 From the west, along Blackburn Road, the impression given is gradually improving. Regeneration along this characterful but run-down corridor is underway.

3.55 On reaching the town centre, the Blackburn Road approach offers good views of the Viaduct and, for traffic continuing into the heart, a lively view along the central tree lined shopping section into the Town Hall and Market area.

3.56 Unfortunately, for traffic staying on the main through route, this urban quality is shattered by the poorly configured environment around the roundabout, blighted by heavy traffic infrastructure and characterless ‘big shed’ development forms, including the ugly back of the Arndale car-park and the fragmented Eastgate corridor.

3.57 From the north-west, the Hyndburn Road beyond the fine viaduct, eye-sores like the Multi-storey, the former Kwik Save and the back of Eastgate are the first elements presented to the visitor, making this a
- disappointing and confusing gateway. Despite culminating in the viaduct, this is probably the worst approach to Accrington, at the same time as being its busiest.

3.58 From the north, the Whalley Road, historically a continuation of the Manchester Road, is almost equally splendid. The ground of the town’s famous football club, Accrington Stanley, is adjacent to this route, and just visible from it.

3.59 The gateway to the centre is preceded by some fine views and then marked by the arches of the viaduct, which the road runs beneath, lined each side at this point by well-proportioned stone terraces. It is only at the final interface with the town centre that the urban form breaks down and the impression becomes negative, at junction with the poorly configured ring road. Here, visitors are encouraged to by-pass the town centre of Accrington, rather than invited into experience its offer.

3.60 From the east, Burnley Road is the last of the three turnpike roads, opened in 1835. The route is clear and well-defined by development until the junction with East-
- gate – the town’s main retail area around Broadway is visible, but the traffic infrastructure bars access to the town centre, sending visitors around and away instead.

3.61 By rail, the approach to the town from the east is through fine Pennine countryside, the line arriving in Accrington in a dramatic curved sweep that takes it above the roof tops across the high viaduct. This offers superlative views across the town to the hills beyond. There is an excellent vista of the civic and retail core of the town from the viaduct looking east along Blackburn Road to the Town Hall area. [Figure 16: Gateways]

3.62 The station is a shadow of its former self, the crude waiting and ticketing facilities providing the most rudimentary of gateways. Significantly there are plans for a better quality replacement; this should aim to complement the array of quality buildings in the Conservation Area along the east side of Eagle Street. From the west, the approach by rail is much poorer. The town presents only a clutter of back-land sites, low rise industrial sheds and unsightly rear elevations.





FIGURE 17  
GREEN SPACES

- Recreation Ground
- Green Corridor
- Road/Railside Verge
- Churchyard / Gardens
- Water
- Civic / Market



Green Space  
Analysis

3.63

An audit was taken of the existing open space and illustrated in Figure 17: Green Spaces. The existing open space is largely disconnected. Platts Lodge manages some connectivity and is more coherent as the water flow planting and footpaths are linked. There are many underused green spaces, especially in the Grange Area of the town whilst in Scaitcliffe the dedicated footpath and cycle route takes full advantage of the resource. The waterways are generally hidden from view or underused.

3.64

The tree planting shown at Figure 18: Street Trees is in context of open spaces to show how the two are connected. Connectivity can enhance biodiversity. The tree and screen planting does little to connect the dispersed open spaces.

3.65

Few streets are characterized by any street tree planting except Avenue Parade where the tree planting along the avenue connects the viewer, of the street, with the vista and the trees beyond the Coppice. This feature strengthens the already strong visual nature of the street, being a long avenue leading the eye up the slope of the hill to the distant Coppice at the crest. In most areas the trees have been planted as screen.



Churchyard / Gar-



Civic / Market



Green Corridor, Water, Hyndburn Road





FIGURE 18  
STREET TREES

- Screen Planting
- Street Tree Planting



Key Public Realm Issues

3.66

General

- increase permeability of town centre by creating linkages across edges and barriers;
- improve legibility for vehicles and pedestrians;
- define gateways at Abbey Street / Eastgate junction, Whalley Road / Eastgate junction;
- encourage drivers to access the town centre by making clear, well signed routes;
- make Accrington more distinctive by making better use of its fine waterside, views and heritage assets;
- increase distinctiveness of streetscape by ensuring materials are used which respect the character of its surrounding district
- increase perception of Accrington as a “green town” by opening views to hillsides and increasing tree planting in the terrace districts;
- develop strategy for introduction of public art to increase distinctiveness and legibility;

- develop signage strategy to increase legibility, improve wayfinding, and reveal Accrington’s fine assets;

3.67 Hyndburn Road

- greater focus on viaduct as gateway and landmark;
- greater use of water, as landmark and for recreation;
- exploit opportunity for linear green space along waterways;
- increase permeability to town centre by improving pedestrian crossing over Hyndburn Road and across roundabout Eastgate;
- create attractive approach ‘boulevard’ emphasising the arrival into Accrington;

3.68 Arndale

- improve frontage of Arndale car park facing viaduct;
- improve quality and consistency of materials in streets around Arndale;

3.69 Market/ Abbey Street

- make a place at the heart of Accrington associated with the Market and Town Hall;
- improve quality and consistency of streetscape materials especially in heritage areas;
- improve role and function of Blackburn Road as high street;

3.70 Town Centre

- improve linkage of Avenue Parade to Peel Park and Coppice by improving pedestrian crossings;
- make new “gateway” squares at Abbey Street and Burnley Road;

3.71 The Grange

- create a distinctive “green” quarter which links with Scaitcliffe Lodge;
- make greater use of water, as landmark and for recreation;
- exploit opportunity for green space along waterways;
- improve quality of materials, and consistency;

- encourage restoration of landmark buildings to form a gateway from the west;

3.72 Cannon Street

- improve quality and consistency of materials especially in heritage areas;
- make St James Churchyard a special green space at the heart of Accrington, and improve access;
- improve pedestrian linkages along St James Street and Church Street with Blackburn Road, Warner Street and Victorian Arcade ;

3.73 Scaitcliffe

- make a new square to define gateway/ arrival point at the train station;
- improve pedestrian links from Platts Lodge to town centre and Hyndburn greenway;
- make greater use of water, as landmark and for recreation; &
- improve pedestrian and cyclist environment along Eagle Street.



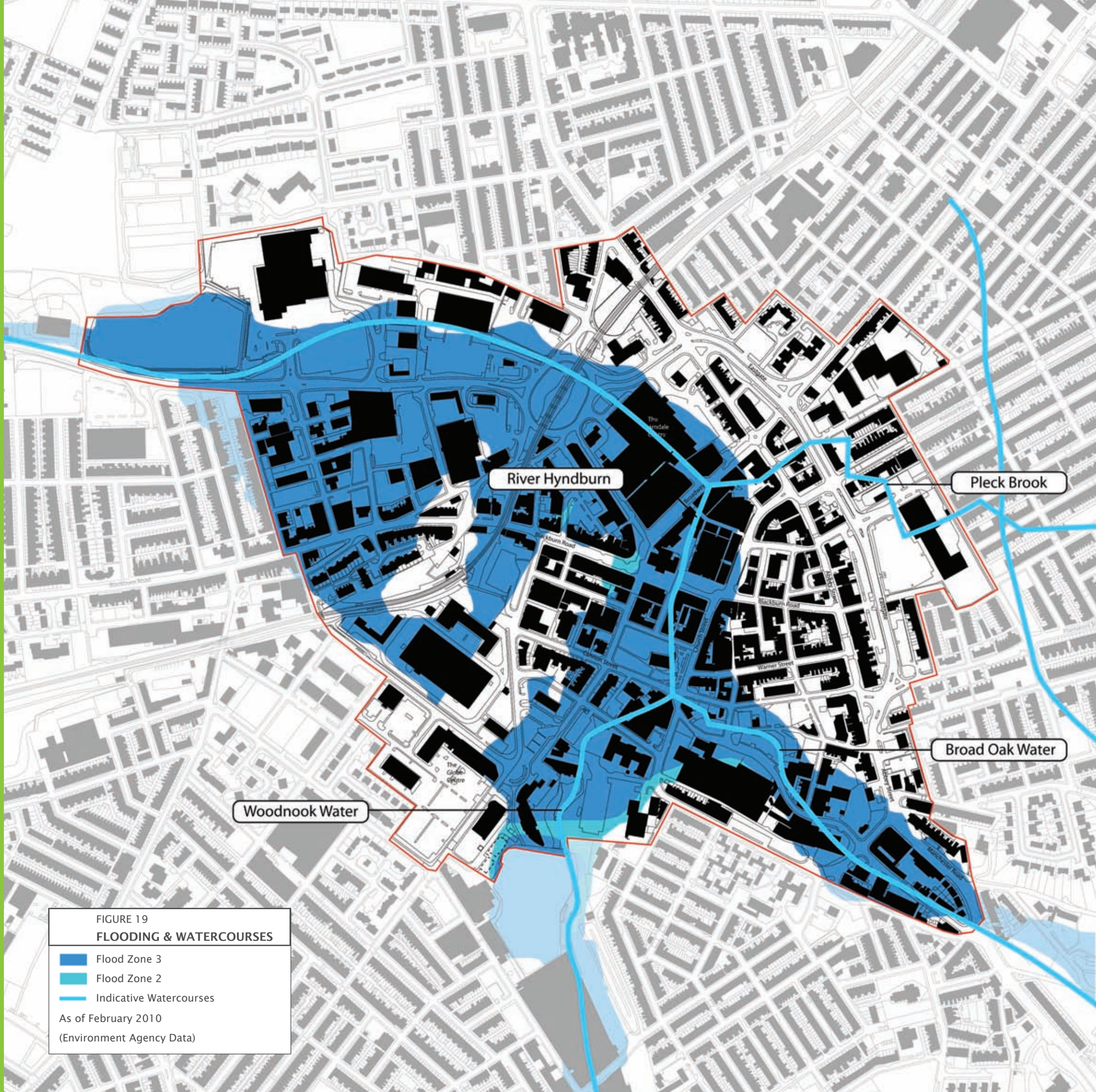


FIGURE 19  
FLOODING & WATERCOURSES

- Flood Zone 3
- Flood Zone 2
- Indicative Watercourses

As of February 2010  
(Environment Agency Data)



Flooding

- 3.74

New development will need to avoid increasing flood risk. Parts of the town centre are within flood Zone 3 and Flood Zone 2 on the Environment Agency floodmap. Flood risk is an issue within the town centre. There are no formal flood defences maintained by the Environment Agency within the masterplan area. [Figure 19: Flooding and Watercourses]
- 3.75




Several culverted watercourses are within the town centre including the River Hyndburn, Woodnook Water, Pleck Brook and Broad Oak Water. These are all designated as main river watercourses, whereby written consent is required by the Environment Agency for any proposed works or structures in, under over or within 8 metres of the top of the bank/edge of the retaining wall of a main river watercourse.
- 3.76

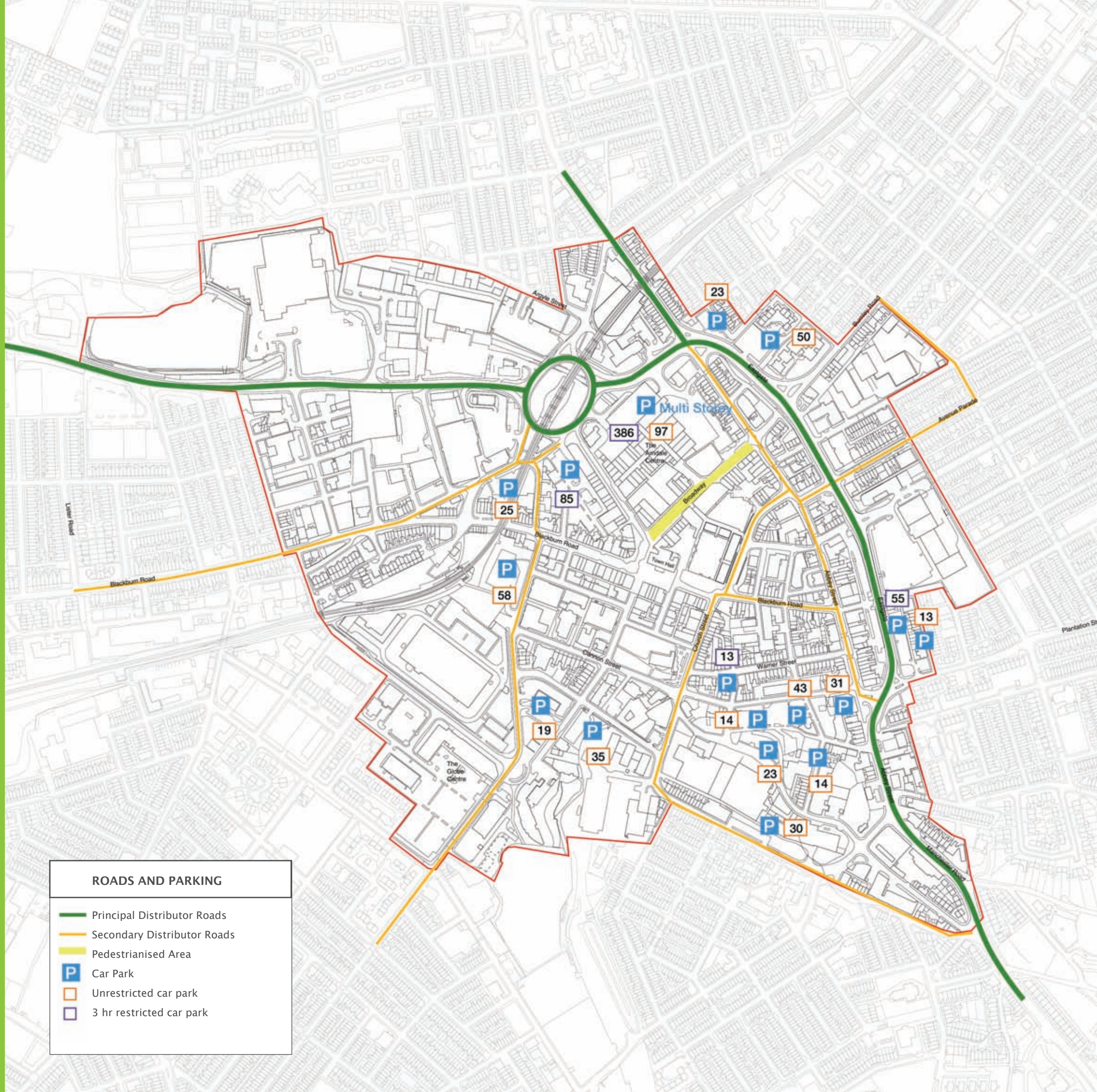
Further flood modelling will be required to identify the likely frequency and impact of flooding within the town centre. Following the guidance in PPS 25, Development & Flood Risk, the planning authority will endeavour to direct development to areas of least risk by applying the sequential approach.
- 3.77

Hyndburn Borough Council has undertaken a Phase 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment [SFRA] and are due to commission Consultants as and when required to complete further investigatory work.



## ROADS AND PARKING

- Principal Distributor Roads
- Secondary Distributor Roads
- Pedestrianised Area
-  Car Park
-  Unrestricted car park
-  3 hr restricted car park





Transport Analysis

- 3.78 The baseline assessment of transportation in the study area identifies Accrington town centre with many positive transport attributes, in particular:

  - Relatively low levels of town centre congestion compared with other Lancashire towns;
  - The town centre environment is, in many places, favourable for walking. In particular, traffic levels are relatively low, there are a number of pedestrianised streets, and the historic buildings within the town centre create a pleasant environment for the pedestrian in many areas;
  - Good levels of walking demonstrated by census data, particularly amongst those who work in the town centre; &
  - Good local bus connections.
- 3.79 However, a number of specific areas for improvement are identified, most particularly:

  - Significant pedestrian severance caused by the major roads around the town centre. This is particularly the case with regard to Eastgate;
  - Parking – there is a perception of a lack of parking opportunities close to the main town centre retail areas, in particular the traditional market hall. Issues of inconsistency of on-street parking restrictions have been identified. This has now been addressed by the extension of parking times to 2 and 3 hours. A shortage of off-street long stay car parking has also been identified;
  - The bus station – despite its accessible location in the heart of the town centre is seen as out of date, and a source of significant pedestrian severance. Relocation of the bus station should be a major factor in the creation of the town centre masterplan;
  - Significant clusters of road accidents occur in a number of locations, particularly on Eastgate, Blackburn Road and the viaduct roundabout. In each of these three cases, it is also notable that pedestrians have frequently been involved in accidents;
  - Improvements in bus priority – these have the potential to be provided through East Lancashire Rapid Transit, and will need to be well integrated with any new bus station which is provided;
  - Lack of provision for cyclists within the town centre – levels of cycling in Accrington are currently very low, particularly when compared with the relatively large number of people who walk to work in the town centre. The baseline work has revealed a lack of good quality provision for cyclists within the town centre area and Accrington as a whole. In the town centre there is particularly a lack of accessible, high quality cycle parking facilities in appropriate locations; &
  - The railway station – current levels of rail use are well below the regional and national averages, which is very disappointing for a town centre location with a rail station. The proposed refurbishment of the railway station should assist in developing rail patronage and improving the accessibility of the town centre. [Figure 20: Roads and Parking]



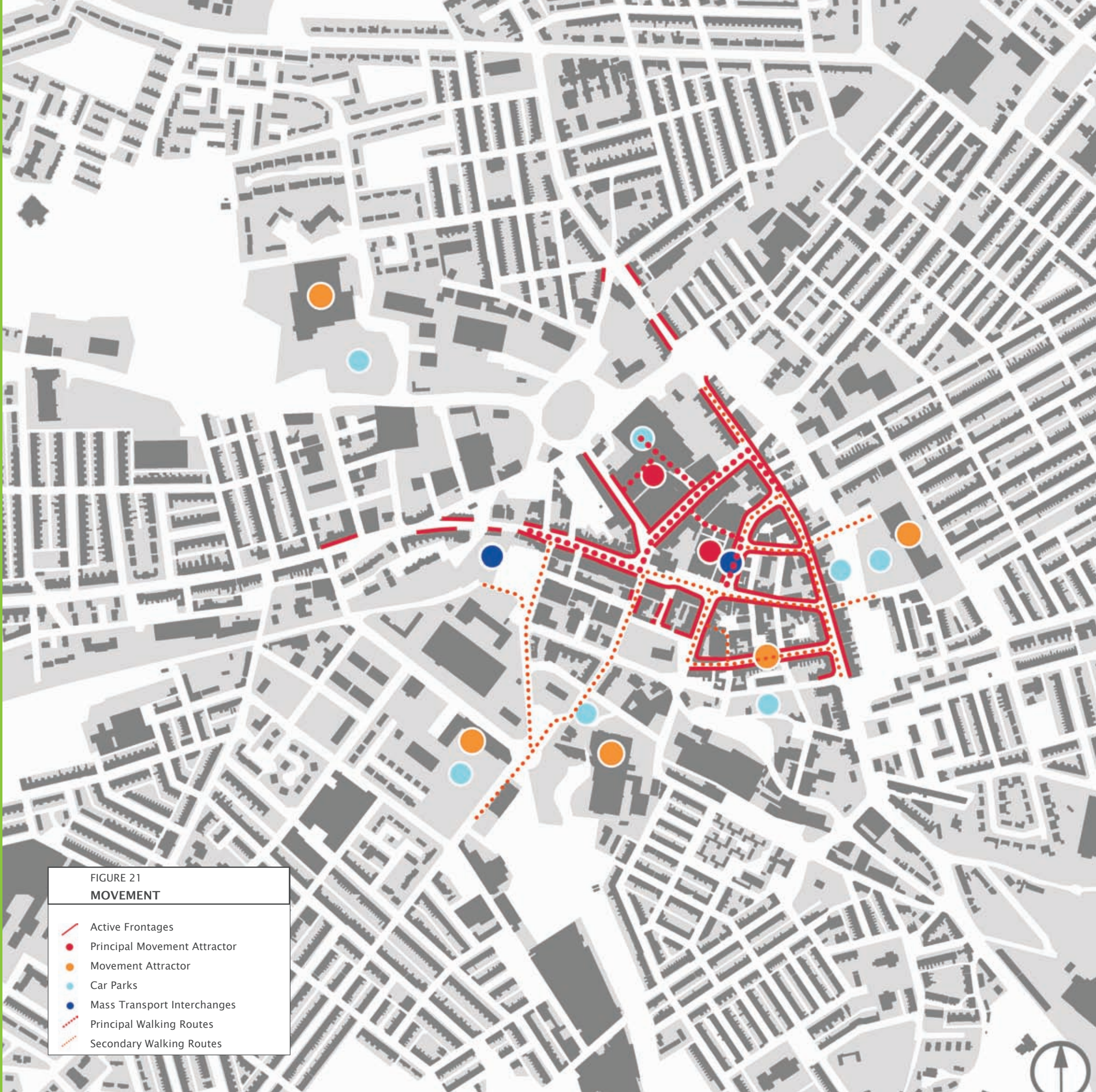


FIGURE 21  
MOVEMENT

- Active Frontages
- Principal Movement Attractor
- Movement Attractor
- Car Parks
- Mass Transport Interchanges
- Principal Walking Routes
- Secondary Walking Routes



**Movement  
– Generators/  
Attractors/  
Pedestrian Routes**

3.80 The main movement routes are a reflection of the locations of the movement attractors, mainly shops, and the movement generators, mainly car parks, public transport interchanges, and large employment centres. Other movement attractors are the active frontages, these are groundfloor building facades which bring the activity of the building out on to the street. This can be in the form of shop windows, pavement cafes or visible reception/ticket areas. [Figure 21: Movement]

**Coherent Streets**

- 3.81 The most coherent streets are found to be those in the areas adjacent to the church, and lying next to the main shopping centre, and the stone terrace avenues to the peripheries of the town centre.
- 3.82 The majority of streets found in the shopping centre and core of the town centre are mostly medium coherence. Many of the streets have coherent lengths but may contain distinctive larger buildings and open spaces.

- 3.83 Areas mostly of low coherence are found in the south and south west of the town centre. This is largely due to the presence of a variety of buildings and sizes and gaps.
- 3.84 The incoherent streets are found in the periphery of the town centre, where large gaps have been created to make way for the ring road or a single large building and car parking dominates the street. [Figure 22: Coherent Streets]

**Landmarks**

- 3.85 Landmarks are those significant structures which stand out from the background streetscape, and which we use as visual cues for navigation.
- 3.86 Accrington is surrounded by hills, whose summits, crags and woodlands form distinctive elements visible from the town centre. Within the town there are significant landmarks, including the viaduct and several prominent mini-towers.



View up Avenue Parade.



Viaduct Roundabout