FIGURE 22
COHERENT STREETS

— Coherent Street
— Medium Coherent Street
— Low Coherent Street
— Incoherent Street

FIGURE 23
LANDMARK VIEWS AND VISTAS

↖ External Views (to Peel Park Coppice
↗ Internal View within Town Centre
❖ Principal Landmarks
❖ Secondary or Pedestrian
  Landmarks

3.87 Due to the location of Accrington in its valley setting, there are many views across the town to landmarksand interesting skylines. This makes the town feel compact, and easy to orientate within.

3.88 Views in from the outside of Accrington town tend to converge on he civic buildings on Blackburn Road and the viaduct and general views of the lively roof–

3.89 space of the town. Note that recent buildings have not been designed with distant views in mind, for example the bulky landmark LIFT building which dominates the town centre.

3.90 Views out of Accrington frequently connect to the attractive hilltops, including Coppice and Peel Park to the west. [Figure 23 Landmarks, Views and Vistas]

Edges

3.91 Edges describes the barriers or edges found in the town, where one district is distinct form another and/or clearly cut off from one another. The distinct districts are often defined by edges such as major roads and, railway lines, rivers and steep slopes.

3.92 Whilst the walking routes within the town centre are uncomplicated and easy to follow, the major roads from

3.93 a barrier which makes it more difficult to walk to the town centre from the north and east of the town than form the south and west. This barrier is created by the wide roads, fast moving traffic, guardrails and myriad crossings. Therefore these routes are likely to be less frequented by pedestrians especially if the journey time is elongated by deviations to crossing points. [Figure 24: Edges and Barriers]

3.0

FIGURE 24
EDGES AND BARRIERS

Primary Routes
Walking Routes
Edges

FIGURE 25
SURFACE MATERIALS

Type 1
Type 2
Type 3
Type 4
Type 5
Type 6
Key Kerb
Wide Kerb
Type 7
Type 8
Type 9
Type 10

FIGURE 26
SIGNAGE AND PUBLIC

● Signage
● Public Art

FIGURE 27
STREET LIGHTING PLAN /MATERIALS

Standard Type 1
Standard Type 2
Decorative Type 1
Modern Type 1
Victoriana
Origional
Standard Type 3
Residential
Decorative Types 2 & 3

3.0

Surface Materials

3.94 Generally the surfaces are consistent but often the quality and type of mate-rial used does not enhance the built form or reflect its character. [Figure 25: Sur-face Materials] Insert Table

Wayfaring Signage and Public Art

3.95 Figure 26: Signage & Public Art illustrates their position within the town centre. All signage is to be found in the central area of the town centre and around the bus station. There is no signage around the railway station.

3.96 There is no consistent style of signage marker. Public art is limited to a paving pattern in front of the town hall.

Street Lighting

3.97 Historically it appears that the street lighting types were consistent until recent modern types have been chosen, often inconsistent with the character of the street. [Figure 27: Street Lighting Plan/Materials]

Socio-Economic and Property Market

Socio-Economic Issues

3.98 Accrington Town Centre has suffered from significant population loss over the last ten years and this is expected to continue in the future. Despite a fairly youthful population there has been a particular fall in the 15–29 age range which has implications in terms of workforce and a customer base in the town centre. The 0–4 age group is rising. Childcare and flexible employment will be important issues to address to enable parents to access employment.

3.99 Hyndburn was ranked the 40th most deprived Borough in the country in 2007. The Council is now working with the Government Office for the North West to analyse the extent to which this ranking is a product of Hyndburn's low wage economy. Accrington and the surrounding area suffer from acute deprivation, with Index of Multiple Deprivation indicators shown to have worsened from 2004 to 2007.

3.100 There is limited diversity in housing type, with the majority of accommodation shown to be terraced, or flats [90%]. In terms of households, 35% are single person house-

holds in the town centre area and 19% of households are privately rented.

Economic and Property Issues

3.101 Economic activity is higher in the rest of the Borough than in the town centre. In the town centre area, retired and sick/disabled individuals are also overly represented and contribute to the economic inactivity rate. Over 43% of the working age-population around the town centre has no formal qualifications.

3.102 Employment is much higher in manufacturing in Hyndburn than the North West as a whole. Other important employment sectors are retail, distribution, hotels and restaurants, public administration, education and health.

3.103 New firm starts are the primary indicator of economic change and in Hyndburn these are low. Indicating that more support is needed in new business formation. The profile of existing businesses comprise many low value added firms.

3.104 In terms of occupational patterns Hyndburn is under-represented in managers and senior officials, professionals, associate

professional and technical occupations and over-represented in skilled trades and process, plant and machine operatives compared to the North West as a whole. This shows that Hyndburn needs to move up the occupational chain if greater levels of discretionary income expenditure is to be supported.

3.105 Earnings also reflect patterns of consumer demand. Hyndburn lags behind all neighbouring areas in terms of resident earnings. Local residents are also earning less than local jobs are paying. This means residents from neighbouring areas are capturing net income and taking it away from the town. This leakage will have a negative affect on local demand.

Retail

3.106 In the town centre 500 firms were identified in 2006 with 37% retail and wholesale, 15% business services and 8% hospitality, leisure and toursim. The critical dependency is retail rising to 37% of all firms in the town centre. This dependency on retail for economic activity and employment means that the town must get the quantity and quality of the retail offer right to ensure its sustainability as an employment sector. In terms of

business services there is a relative strength in accounting and related activities in the town centre. Some of the weaker areas in retail provision in the town centre as indicated by a low representation of firms are;

- Fruit and vegetable;
- Bread, cakes and confectionary;
- Fashion retailing; &
- Books, newspapers and stationary.

3.107 These everyday services affect the propensity for people to visit a centre. The town centre is lacking hospitality services with an under-representation of restaurants, bars, hotels and creative venues. Establishments that do exist are not attractors in their own right but are serving the needs of people already in the town centre for a variety of reasons.

3.108 The three sectors of the town centre economy, retail, business services and hospitality and leisure services are weak and show narrow ranges of offer. There is more to do and attract people in other town centres in the region.

3.0

3.109 A retail study commissioned by Hyndburn Council in 2005 found that convenience retailing was under-represented in terms of units and floorspace with the ASDA on Hyndburn Road overtrading and considerable trade leaked out of the Borough and the Hyndburn economy. A need was identified for additional convenience floorspace.

3.110 A lack of larger units for comparison floorspace was also noted with retailer requirements haven fallen since 2004. Major retailers not in town include Topshop, H&M, Next and River Island. There are many discount retailers.

3.111 A business survey undertaken as part of the retail study found that the most quoted threats to town centre businesses were a poor quality environment and lack of day visitors to the town. The town centre will decline unless it ups its offer and remains competitive. If this is not provided, projected growth in expenditure will leak to other centres.

Office

3.112 The supply of office accommodation has been restricted to out of town locations on the M65 corridor. The Globe provides some office space, but there have been no schemes since akin to Blackburn where a number of incubator type business centres have been developed.

3.113 There is an existing long-standing office quarter around Cannon St, where growth is reflected in transactions and rental levels.

3.114 Change in planning policy now favors in town office/business parks, and as such there is a need to look at the town centre to modernise and diversify office accommodation.

3.115 The latest deal in the Old Tannery achieved rents of in excess of £10 per sq ft on large floor areas consistent with Blackburn & Burnley and supports further growth. Higher levels have been achieved in The Globe but in smaller suites. In the short term growth is supported by public sector agencies and expansions of existing firms and managed workspace.

Industrial

3.116 Industrial accommodation supply is mainly in secondary historic sites, mainly freeholds limited by access and overall amenity. There are a few bad neighbour uses where opportunities exist to relocate businesses to improve operations, access and improve the environment of the town.

Residential

3.117 There has been a steady rise in residential supply in the town centre with the completions of conversion schemes. Historically there have been a few upper floor rented flats are occupied along Blackburn Road. Between 2006 to 2008 new schemes around the centre have sold 2 to 3 bedrooms houses between £140,000 and £170,000 and apartments have sold for, £100– £120,000.

Summary

3.118 • Local catchment has low spending power, less than average incomes. This will create a brake on opportunities for town centre regeneration unless new business development is attracted

to the town and the economy is diversified;

• Improving the housing offer is part of this, increasing local spending power;

• Most critical objective is to promote investment and business development, key areas in town The Grange and Viaduct Gateway;

• Strengthening the retail position of the town will not deliver sustained growth in prosperity unless this is addressed;

1.8 • Reconfiguring outdated retail units and upgrading shopping environments will be critical to changing image and attracting new retailers into town; &

• Building on the town's unique qualities such as the Market and independent retailers should be a priority, providing a reason to visit the town.

PART A The Plan And Its Context

4.0 Vision, Objectives and Proposals

Vision

4.0

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

TOWN CENTRE VISION AND STRATEGY

Strategy Aims

4.1 Accrington is the largest town centre in the Borough but is currently under-performing. 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 should empha-sise its traditional charac-ter and appeal of the place and build on its strengths which are the Market and its independent retailers clustered around Warner Street and Abbey Street. The potential to attract mul-tiple retailers to the town rests on the redevelop-ment and modernisation of the Arndale Shopping Centre which has become outdated and unattractive.
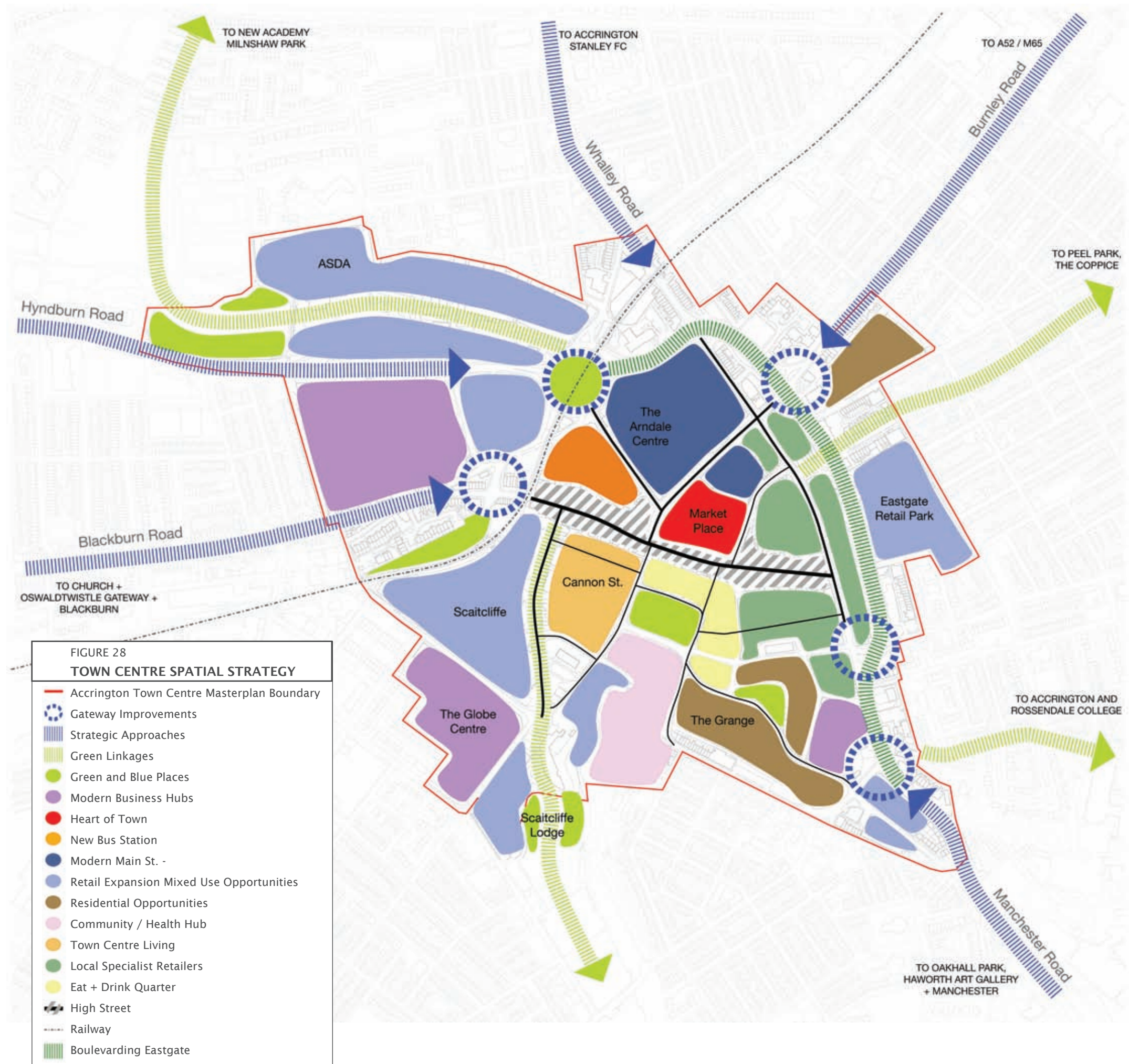
4.2 The town centre now needs to adopt a multi-stranded retail strategy that at-tracts in additional multiple retailers but also bolsters the traditional and inde-pendent retail sector.

4.3 The towns offer also needs diversifying. Diversity is an essential attraction for the shopper and visitor. This relates to the diver-sity of the shopping offer and the environment and helps to create a destina-tion and linked and longer trips. Current deficiencies which need to be addressed include office, residential, leisure and cultural uses.

4.4 There is also a notable absence of restaurants with a weak evening economy. Opportunities to improve this offer exist around Can-non Street, Church Street and the Victorian Arcade.

4.5 Proposals for new business and workspace hubs will increase economic activity and business start up and entrepreneurialism in the town. A planned new sixth form and the recent invest-ment in Accrington and Ros-sendale College will improve educational and training opportunities in the town.

4.6 There is great potential to capitalise on Accrington's significant heritage value through the revitalisation of Blackburn Road the town's distinctive high street, and the restoration of some fine heritage buildings and their settings, such as the Town Hall, Market Hall and Victorian Arcade as well as buildings within the Can-non Street area. There is also much to celebrate and promote of the towns heritage and industrial pioneers which could take place in such buildings.

TO NEW ACADEMY
MILNSHAW PARK

TO ACCRINGTON
STANLEY FC

TO A52 / M65

Whalley Road

Burnley Road

TO PEEL PARK,
THE COPPICE

ASDA

Hyndburn Road

The
Arndale
Centre

Eastgate
Retail Park

Blackburn Road

Market
Place

TO CHURCH +
OSWALDTWISTLE GATEWAY +
BLACKBURN

Cannon St.

Scaitcliffe

TO ACCRINGTON AND
ROSSENDALE COLLEGE

The Globe
Centre

The Grange

Scaitcliffe
Lodge

Manchester Road

TO OAKHALL PARK,
HAWORTH ART GALLERY
+ MANCHESTER

FIGURE 28
TOWN CENTRE SPATIAL STRATEGY

— Accrington Town Centre Masterplan Boundary
○ Gateway Improvements
▦ Strategic Approaches
▦ Green Linkages
● Green and Blue Places
● Modern Business Hubs
● Heart of Town
● New Bus Station
● Modern Main St. -
● Retail Expansion Mixed Use Opportunities
● Residential Opportunities
● Community / Health Hub
● Town Centre Living
● Local Specialist Retailers
● Eat + Drink Quarter
�∎ High Street
∙∙∙ Railway
▦ Boulevarding Eastgate

4.7 Improvements to the public realm and green spaces of the town, creating new distinctive and exciting civic spaces will complement the investment in buildings. The new Pennine Squared project in the historic heart of Accrington Town Centre will act as an exemplar project creating special grey and green spaces for Accrington's residents, workers, shoppers and visitors and will provide a new focus for town centre events and activities. Other new public space opportunities can be harnessed in the Grange area of town around Broad Oak Water and around the new train station. In addition linking the town centre to environmental assets surrounding the town, such as Woodnook Vale, Peel Park, Oakhill Park and the Leeds-Liverpool Canal will increase the town's attractiveness as a destination.

4.8 The flagship project in terms of improving the town's accessibility is the proposed new bus station which will bolster the retail heart around the Arndale, Blackburn Road and Market and provide a new high quality gateway and arrival point to the town. Improvements to streets and gateways will also improve the image and perception of the town as well as support easier movement.

4.9 The Town Centre Spatial Strategy, Figure 28 identifies recommended land uses and spatial principles to guide more detailed development and design considerations.

Accrington Market

43-51 Blackburn Road

The Bus Station

4.0

Area Action Plan Aims and Objectives

4.10 To direct and guide the implementation of the vision for the town centre and define projects and local improvements a series of aims and objectives have been developed. The 6 key aims/objectives as originally set out in the Town Centre Regeneration Strategy are:

- Strengthening the Retail Provision in the Town Centre;

- 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;

4.11 Objectives and proposed 'tactics' to progress these aims for the town centre are set out as follows:

Strengthening the Retail Provision in the Town Centre

4.12 Preston is the key shopping destination in Lancashire, and that is set to improve further with the forthcoming retail led schemes. Blackburn, Bury and Rawtenstall are all implementing town centre shopping schemes. This will increase competition and attract trade away from Accrington if it does not start to improve its retail offer. Blackburn, Burnley and the Whitebirk Retail Park represent the strongest competition to Accrington.

4.13 Even as the town diversifies, retailing will remain central to its future. The competition is now not just from out-of-town retail parks but also other town centres improving and increasing the shopping offer providing better shopping experiences as shopping is now firmly established as a leisure activity. This places much more emphasis on the quality of the experience and environment and diversity of attractions on offer.

4.14 The town centre represents the largest cluster of retailing and services in the Borough. However is it

under-performing at present with a number of weaknesses in its retail offer and choice of shops that must be addressed. Convenience floorspace [food] is under-represented, there is a lack of choice of outlets and the comparison [non-food] offer is becoming dominated by discount retailers. There is a higher number of vacancies than competing centres particularly around the prime pitch along Broadway and in places a poor shopping environment. All of these factors affect the number of people visiting the centre and its vibrancy and vitality.

4.16 **To provide additional comparison retail in the town centre in larger units**

The redevelopment and growth of the Arndale Centre as the main shopping centre for multiple retailers in the town is a key priority of the AAP. This will ensure that retail development can play an active role in regenerating the town. The town is under-represented by major retailers, especially fashion retailers. At present a lack of larger retail units on offer is placing limitations on attracting larger format retailers to anchor the centre.

4.17 The absence of significant anchor stores is an issue to be addressed. Such stores with their reliable, extensive product range and quality service attract many shoppers due to the choice they provide. This heavy footfall in turn benefits smaller shops who benefit from the passing trade.

4.18 Unless larger units are created in an attractive shopping environment the town will not be able to attract the larger national high street multiples. A key priority therefore is to provide large retail units by the remodelling and extending of the Arndale Centre. This is identified in the spatial plan as 'modern main-street', extending from Union Street along Broadway to Whalley Road.

4.19 **To provide additional convenience retail in the town centre**

The convenience sector within the town centre is under-represented, limited to a small Marks and Spencers and Iceland. Edge of centre stores including an ASDA, Aldi and Netto, but the frequency of linked trips between these stores and

the town centre is low. [It should be noted that Tesco have secured a planning consent for a 80,000 sq ft store at the for Skills Centre site off Eagle Street but as yet has not been implemented]. As such a significant new convenience store in the town centre would assist in attracting trade and footfall into the centre benefiting other traders. This should be located as close to the main retail pitch around the Arndale as possible to ensure linked trips and efficient use of the multi-storey car park.

4.20 **To enhance the retail quality of the current offer**

People look for both choice and quality in visiting town centres. Improving the quality of the retail offer relates to both the Arndale Centre and the smaller retailers on the surrounding streets at the heart of the town. The lack of interest shown by national retailers regarding the Arndale, in part due to the small size of units, is also compounded by the low quality environment of the shopping centre. This

is a view also expressed by shoppers. The car park in particular is not an attractive environment and many of the frontages and spaces around the Arndale contribute nothing to the rest of the town. Accessibility by all modes of transport should also be improved. A significantly improved design which reinforces the town's character with high quality public space and street frontages should be at the core of the centre's remodelling.

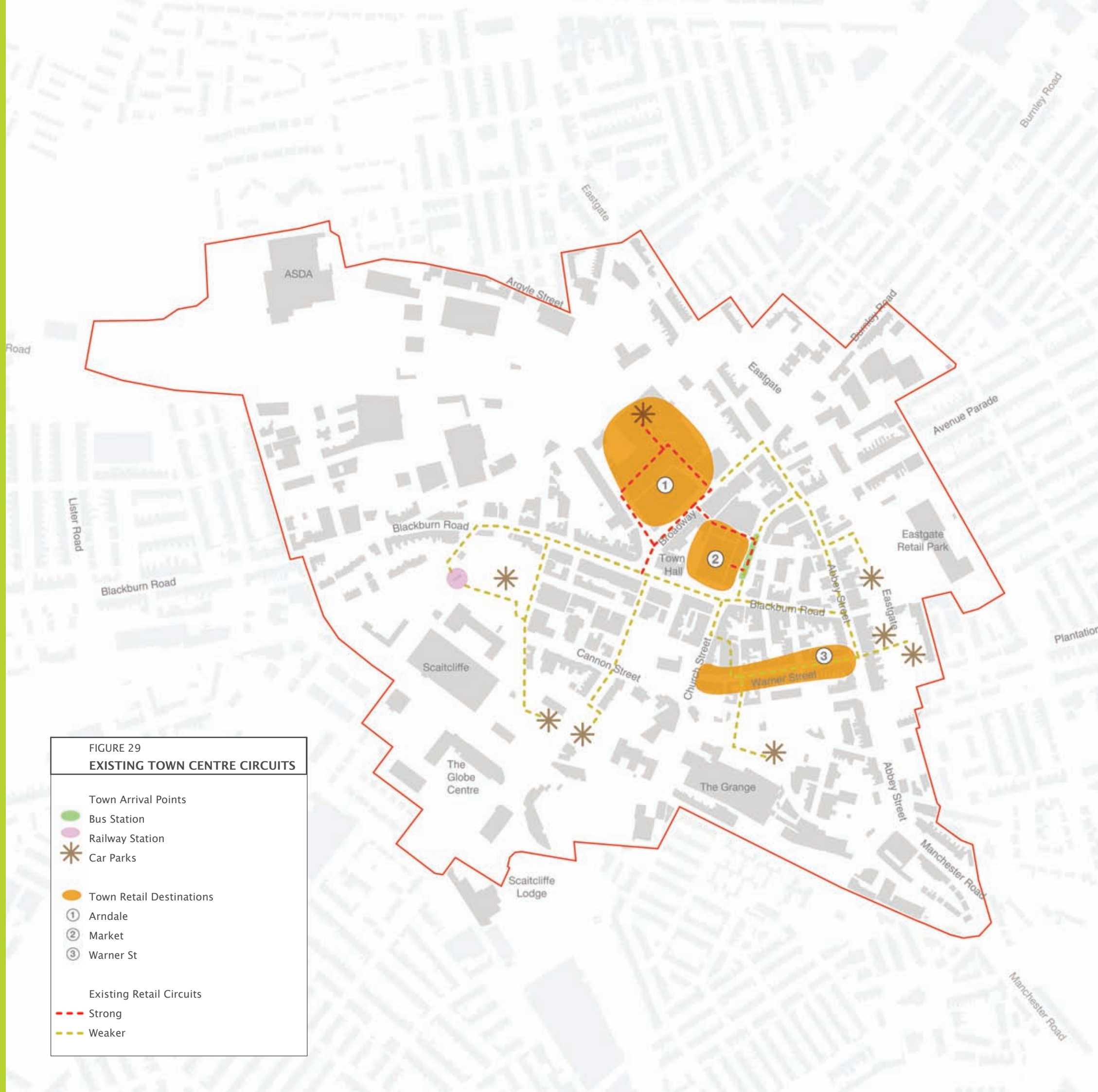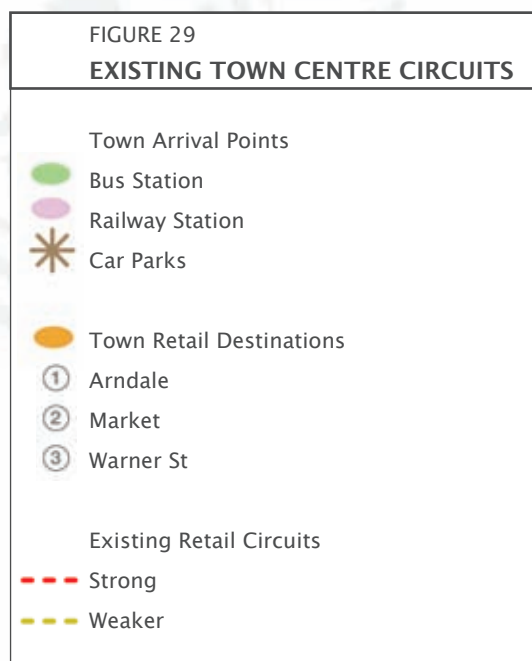4.21 **To support the improvement and refurbishment of the Market Hall and Pavillions**

The town's Market is a key attraction bringing a unique quality to the town centre. This should be the focus for further investment. It makes a valuable contribution to local retail choice, diversity and activity in the heart of the town and can act as a further draw for shoppers and visitors if the environment of both the buildings and spaces were improved.

4.22 The Market Hall has receive £1.6 million of public sector funding; part of this will help create a high quality retail environment within the Market Hall which is in great need of investment in the physical fabric and interior of the building.

4.23 **To support existing and future independent retailers**

The aspiration to become a high quality market town needs to involve supporting local retailers and local produce through events such as the Pennine Lancashire Festival of Food and Culture. Further investment should be targeted on linking the main streets where these services and products are available together through public realm treatments, shop front improvements, signage, marketing and promotion. On Street parking regulations have now been changed to better support these retailers. It is important that the character of these streets along Warner Street and Abbey Street is protected. The concentra-

tion of active frontages along these streets should be maintained and change of uses to professional and financial services and uses which do not tend to have shop fronts should be resisted and controlled through the planning system.

4.0

FIGURE 29
EXISTING TOWN CENTRE CIRCUITS

Town Arrival Points
- Bus Station
- Railway Station
- Car Parks

Town Retail Destinations
1. Arndale
2. Market
3. Warner St

Existing Retail Circuits
- - - Strong
- - - Weaker

4.24 **To create clearer pedestrian retail circuits**

Whatever way people arrive to the town, we all become pedestrians. Pedestrian footfall and passing trade is very important from a retail perspective. Strong pedestrian circuits improve the attractiveness and competitiveness of a town centre linking arrival points with the main retail areas along continuous [i.e. with no backtracking] and active frontages. Active frontages between destinations are very important. Even a small number of empty/low value shops or banks, travel agents financial services can deter shoppers from continuing along a street. Therefore it is important for traditional centres to manage pedestrian flows to benefit local retailers.

4.25 Linkages between key areas in the retail sector of Accrington need to be enhanced. As Figure 29: Existing Town Centre Retail Circuits demonstrates the current retail circuit of any significance is limited to the loop that is created within the Arndale Centre from the multi-storey car park along Cornhill Arcade, Union Street, Broadway and Cornhill. A second circuit exists from the bus sta-

tion on Peel Street into the Market. On market days this extends to meet up with the Arndale/Broadway circuit through Market Way. On non-market days however with a largely dead frontage along this route footfall is less. Warner Street and Abbey Street are connected by much weaker pedestrian linkages in part due to the poor environment, vacancies and discount retailers between the Market around Peel Street which acts as a block to movement.

4.26 Figure 30: Proposed Town Centre Retail Circuits shows the proposed pedestrian circuits to support movement between key retail destina-

tions. This includes the re-location of key arrival points such as the railway station and bus station closer to the retail core to support pedestrian movement and takes account of a new retail destination on the former skills site. The relocation of the Bus Station will assist with strengthening the pedestrian linkages to the Warner Street area by the improvement of Peel Street's environment.

4.27 The route defines primary links between the 4 key retail destinations of the Arndale Centre, Market, Warner Street area and Former Skills Site through streets that should largely be retail

or have active frontages. Signage, public realm treatments and shop front improvements should be targeted within these areas to create a clear and legible retail circuit around the town.

4.28 Figure 31: Proposed Destinations and Arrivals shows how the 4 retail destinations, town centre gateways and primary arrival points overlap and significantly are connected together by the spine of Blackburn Road and the proposed public transport hub of the Bus Station and Train Station and multistorey car park.
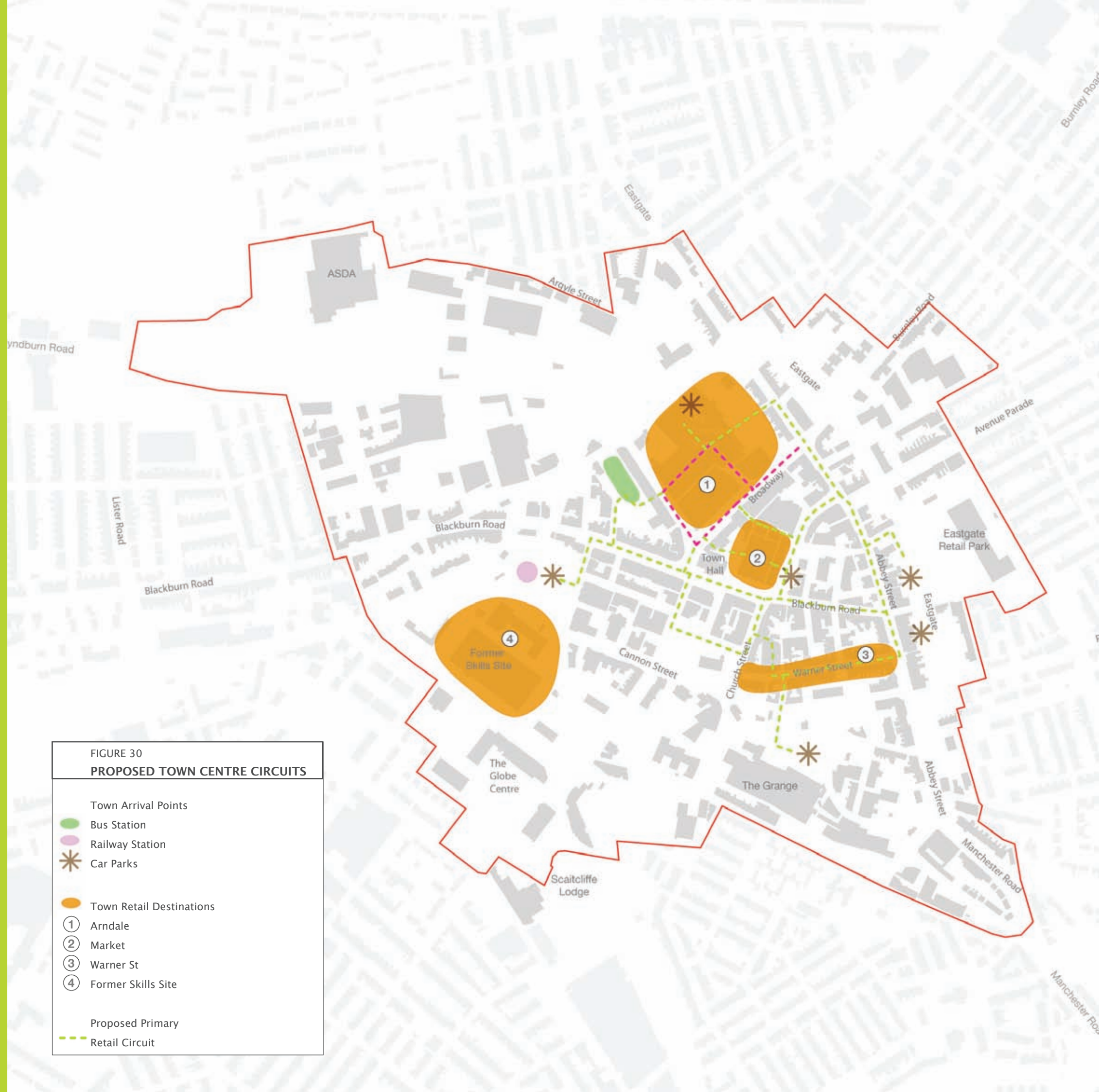
4.0

FIGURE 30
PROPOSED TOWN CENTRE CIRCUITS

Town Arrival Points
🟢 Bus Station
🟣 Railway Station
✳ Car Parks

🟠 Town Retail Destinations
① Arndale
② Market
③ Warner St
④ Former Skills Site

Proposed Primary
--- Retail Circuit

Becoming a Visitor Destination

4.29 **To provide better connections to other borough attractions such as Oswaldtwistle Mills and Haworth Art Gallery**

A key strand in increasing the role of the town centre as a tourist destination is to link in with existing destinations around the town that pull people into the area. Selling the town's tourist destinations in a joint marketing and branding strategy will support visits to the town centre. Equally building on the very successful marketing strategy of Oswaldtwistle Mills and working with the company to extend the frequent coach trips that visit the complex to stop off at the town centre and other assets such as the Haworth Art Gallery and its impressive Tiffany Glass collection should be a top priority.

4.30 **To create more diverse uses in the town centre**

To support the town centre becoming more of a visitor destination, it needs to offer a patchwork quilt of diverse experiences, this includes shopping, eating and drinking. Opportunities for these latter uses can be tapped within the Cannon Street area as part of the quarter's redevelopment. This would complement the employment hub around the Globe and Health Centre as well as the expanding residential population. Such uses tend to exist on streets with good footfall, in compact clusters and prosper where a village type and more distinctive and intimate environment can be created. The area around St James Church, Blackburn Road and Warner Street, anchored by the unique Victorian Arcade, have the potential for such a cluster to serve town centre users. The town is also poorly served by cultural venues for the arts and music. Opportunities to integrate such uses in the redevelopment of key buildings should be explored to create a cultural heart within Accrington Town Centre.

4.31 A clear gap in the leisure and business tourism offer at present is a good quality hotel. The opportunities provided by many underused distinctive buildings, such as the Town Hall and buildings in the Cannon Street area should be fully explored for such a use.

4.32 Maintaining the range of public and community services within the town also help to keep it busy and this should be considered when new locations are sought for such uses. The new Health Centre completed some two years ago will support this function.

4.33 **To make better use of the Town Hall as a visitor destination**

The Town Hall is a prominent building of great cultural and historic resonance to the town. It is greatly underused having lost its original function. The large dance hall inside the building is used for some weddings, conferences and events and there is a small Tourist Information Centre on the ground floor. The Tourist Information Centre does not have a prominent shop frontage and appears quite hidden away. Re-locating this use to somewhere more prominent and adjacent to a key arrival point may be worth considering.

4.34 The Town Hall's location at the heart of the town and its distinctiveness offer considerable scope for creating a destination, although any single stand-alone use would be difficult to sustain. A new and reinvigorated role is required. Potential uses to be explored include a greater use as a wedding, events and conference facility, cultural and recreational uses and a museum and exhibition space of Accrington's heritage. Additional specialist retailing could also work in the building.

4.35 **To promote the heritage interest and value of the town**

Accrington has much to promote in terms of heritage and local distinctiveness. It has an interesting story to tell about its evolution and development. This ranges from its industrious pioneers and inventors, to its buildings to specific events. These various strands need to be interpreted and celebrated in a modern high quality environment at the heart of the town. Specific proposals are outlined in more detail in the Heritage Strategy.

4.0

Enhancing the Quality of the Environment

4.36 **To restore interesting and characterful buildings for active uses and enhance their settings**

The town clearly has a historical resource of some interest and value. Of concern is the dilution of this character by the lack of investment in historic buildings and their deterioration, in some cases at significant risk, and the cumulative impact of insensitive alterations. The Heritage Strategy explores the proposals to be taken to address this situation including better enforcement of changes through the planning system and the use of grants to restore, reuse and refurbish historic buildings and structures.

4.37 **To link the town centre to its surrounding parks and green spaces**

The Council is focusing investment on its Parks through a major capital investment. There are aspirations to develop additional local nature reserves [such as Peel Park and Woodnook Vale], and improve the recreational role and access to the Coppice area and Peel Park. Linkages, both functional and visual, to these

environmental assets should be enhanced. This will promote the diversity on offer in the town centre, so after a shop, or something to eat or drink, walking out to these green spaces is an interesting and attractive option. Other towns promote such walks through maps and directional signage boards around the town. These help promote the walking and cycling routes available and can point out features of interest along the way.

4.38 **To enhance and create a network of civic and green spaces within the town centre linking quarters to the high street**

The creation of a high quality public realm in the town centre is a regeneration priority for the Council. The Floral Market Towns Initiative is intended to create a sense of civic pride and more attractive public spaces through hanging baskets and flower towers. The Public Realm Strategy sets out the proposed approach to public realm and landscape improvements within the town centre to ensure that the individual quarters within the town are

linked by attractive streets and spaces to support the pedestrian environment, footfall to the key retail areas and create an attractive and distinctive place.

4.39 **To introduce landscape buffering to sites and properties that create visual blight [e.g. backs of properties, courtyards etc.]**

There are a number of areas around and within the town centre that present poor frontages onto the public realm. Cumulatively the poor visual quality of these areas can create negative perceptions of the town. A targeted and co-ordinated approach should be implemented to screen and soften these areas through appropriate landscaping. The backs of properties that face onto Eastgate would benefit from structural tree planting which would complement the aspiration to create more of a boulevard along this road, creating a street of a more civic scale. Other sites within the town which would benefit from screening include the south service yard at the back of 2–16 Broadway which supports those retailers and the Market Hall.

To develop a continuous, linked green infrastructure network of greenspace, connecting neighbourhoods with the town centre and integrated into the public realm and streetscape.

4.40 Green infrastructure has been defined by Natural England as a 'network of protected sites, nature reserves, green spaces and greenways' that is intended to 'provide for multifunctional uses including habitats and wildlife, recreational and cultural experience, as well as delivering ecological services, such as flood protection and microclimate control'.

4.41 It is proposed that a hierarchy of green spaces along environmental corridors and watercourses will inform the landscaping for the new developments, forming a green infrastructure that creates opportunities for biodiversity through reference to the surrounding natural habitats and landscape character. This could be achieved by the development of public realm guidance that incorporates a palette of native flora and habitat types that should be used.

4.42 **To maximise the contribution that habitats and greenspace can make to the control of run off and flood alleviation.**

Given the issue of potential flooding in the town centre there will be a need for alleviation measures. Greenspace can form a key component of flood management. Streetscape and public realm should be designed to minimise the area of sealed surfaces and incorporate large trees.

4.43 This should try and use Sustainable Drainage Systems wherever possible, with features such as permeable surfaces, swales, ponds, and soakaways to increase retention times. Measures to control and reduce run-off should include measures to create opportunities for naturalised vegetation and for the establishment of wetland habitats in line with Environment Agency initiatives existing culverts could also be removed and naturalised in order to reduce the flow rate and create wetland habitats in places.

The River Hyndburn

The Globe Centre.

4.0

Existing Bus Station - Peel Street, has a poor interface with the street

Indicative image of proposed bus station

Guard-railing along Eastgate

Existing Conditions at the Rail Station

Improving Access, Movement, and Transport

4.44 To restore the role of Blackburn Road as the town's High Street

Blackburn Road is the town's original High Street where public transport [through the tram] and commercial and retail activities were once concentrated and the street thrived. Over time footfall has reduced and it no longer feels the same hub of activity. Blackburn Road is important in that it links all the quarters within the town together, so if you get people onto Blackburn Road you are more likely to get them to these quarters. To revive the prominence of Blackburn Road as a town centre destination will require focusing active and mixed uses around it. Providing an active street frontage and ensuring it is accessible by all modes of transport to support businesses and this activity.

4.45 To create a route and parking strategy based on strengthening the High Street

The routes to and through the town centre should support access by all modes of transport. Movement from the town's gateways and arrival points to the retail streets should be easy and convenient whether by car, bus, foot or cycle. Parking locations should support this network, strengthening ease of access to the heart of the town and high street. Better access to the town centre can improve its economic and retail performance which will in turn have a positive impact on the town's vitality and viability. This requires integrating land uses and transport and creating attractive and recognisable routes and arrival points.

4.46 To identify a new site for a bus station that supports the wider regeneration of the town

A new bus station is required for the town centre. The location of this needs to support wider regeneration in the town by being closely located to the primary retail area, being convenient for bus users, minimising environmental impact and providing good access to the wider road network. This site has been identified at Crawshaw Street.

4.47 To rationalise surface car parking to free up strategic sites and improve the quality of the environment

Large amounts of surface level parking in and around the town currently detract from the towns overall appearance and are not maximising the regeneration opportunity. Redevelopment of such sites for development should reduce the visual impact and land take of parking by exploring well-designed multi-storey and undercroft parking solutions to meet the needs of town centre users.

4.48 To create quality gateways at key arrival points to the town and provide clear direction

Gateways announce the quality and identity of town centres. The experience of arrival and departure is an important component of a visit to a town centre and should be subject to specific design and planning initiatives. At present Accrington's town centre gateways are confusing and unattractive and do not enhance the visitor experience to the town centre. Town Centre gateways should announce positive arrival points to the town with high quality public realm, good quality pedestrian crossings and environment and clear directional signage to the town.

4.0

Promoting Investment and Business Development

4.49 An employment land study [February 2008] has been carried out for Hyndburn Borough Council to inform future requirements and a portfolio of sites for employment and the development of planning policy with the Local Development Framework.

4.50 **To create new modern office workspace and assemble high quality employment sites**

The employment land study found that there is a need across Hyndburn for new modern, employment facilities. The existing stock provides a significant amount of low quality employment space that is attractive only to low end occupiers to whom rent is the main factor when deciding on location.

4.51 There is a need for further office space in the town centre to replace old and outdated stock, provide for modern business needs and support the diversification of the economy. Creating the right physical infrastructure and environment for new

business is a key objective guiding the town centre's regeneration. Historically office space has been provided in business park locations near the M65 corridor. New modern office accommodation with larger floorplates should be provided in the town centre to help support its role and function and also provide service sector jobs for people living in surrounding neighbourhoods. There is a demand for flexible easy in and easy out office accommodation in the town centre and move on accommodation for some of the businesses within the Cannon Street area which need to modernise and expand.

4.52 The Hyndburn Road and Eastgate quarters provide suitable locations for such uses. New managed workspace is planned in a new business hub in the Blackburn Road area. Opportunities for creating additional managed workspace, incubator units and small office spaces and workshops should be explored in the Blackburn Road area.

Refurbishment opportunities for office development should be targeted within the upper floors of properties on Blackburn Road for smaller businesses.

4.53 **To consolidate existing industrial uses through relocation and release sites for new modern employment and housing development.**

As there are few vacant sites available in the town centre, site assembly and redevelopment will be needed to provide for new office accommodation. This will require the consolidation and relocation of uses, such as manufacturing and industrial uses, that would be better located elsewhere in the Borough. This would allow for their better operation and also expansion if required. The Grange area of the town centre offers the greatest opportunity to assemble new sites for development.

4.54 **To develop local enterprise, start up businesses and skills**

A key initiative to help implement his objective is the joint LEGI [Local Enterprise Growth Initiative] "Great Goals". Hyndburn has been benefiting from a share of the £23.4 million of funding from April 2007. A key project related to the town centre is the establishment of an "enterprise haven" within the Market Hall. This will support the establishment of small businesses and address the barriers holding back enterprise. It will provide targeted support, financial assistance and business expansion and also hot desk facilities and modern incubator space.

4.55 **To encourage new residential living in the town centre**

One of the roles increasingly played by town centres is as a location for residential development. This helps to sustain activity and anima-

**Improving
Educational
and Training
Opportunities**

tion within the town centre into the evenings and weekends, supports the redevelopment of upper floors of buildings and the increased spending power supports local businesses and the evening economy. The greatest scope for new residential development is within the Grange area. The integration of this quite underutilised part of town would have a significant regeneration impact, increasing the population and demographic mix of the town and providing greater spending power could encourage new retail and economic growth. Opportunities for new residential development through refurbishment are within the upper floors of the Victorian Arcade and within various historic buildings in the Cannon Street area. These would provide mainly flatted accommodation which would be aimed at younger, single person or couple households. Nearby cafes, restaurants and bars would complement the lifestyle offer that could be achieved in these areas.

4.56 **To promote areas of the town for new mixed use development**

A process of land use restructuring will be appropriate in parts of the town over time, as existing uses become unviable and new uses become more attractive commercially. Areas of mixed use have been identified along the town centres edge, along Eastgate and Hyndburn Road. Retail, residential, leisure and employment uses will all be appropriate here. A key physical objective is to ensure that the redevelopment of these areas creates better integration of such sites with the surrounding neighbourhoods and town centres through good urban design that creates strong frontages and a series of attractive spaces, buildings and streets.

4.57 **To provide a level provision in the Borough offering children the opportunity for further education without leaving the Borough**

This is being progressed through proposals to develop Moorhead High School as a sixth form academy. The academy which would offer academic and vocational courses and will provide a critical educational resource in the Borough improving educational opportunities for young people in Hyndburn, retaining and attracting new families to the area, supporting the renewal of the housing market and improving skills and business in the town.

4.58 **To improve vocational training and qualifications through the further investment and development of Accrington and Rossendale College**

The College has invested £16 million in the new Broad Oak Campus which opened in September 2007, marking the biggest change in the College's 50 year history. This is a massive commitment by the College, ensuring that learners and residents have some of the most advanced facilities in the UK. It also reinforces the College's national reputation for its Centre of Vocational Excellence [COVE] status for construction related skills.

4.59 The College is also playing an important partner role in the Constructing the Future [CTF] project, launched by Elevate through the Housing Market Renewal programme. Through investment in Housing Market Renewal, the Elevate programme will have a significant impact on the construction industry in Pennine Lancashire with increased demand for skilled local labour, qualified contractors and suppliers.

4.60 To ensure that these demands are met to the benefit of local residents and businesses, Constructing The Future offers residents the opportunity to improve

4.0

skills, gain qualifications, improve employability and access employment. CTF provides an integrated approach linking in with all of the key Pennine Lancashire Colleges through themes including construction, regeneration skills, customer service management and business skills.

4.61 Reinforcing the fact that Hyndburn takes its workforce seriously, significant investment is being made in apprenticeship programmes and the College is working closely with Hyndburn Borough Council and other Local Strategic Partnership partners to address the issue of NEETs [young people Not in Employment, Education or Training]. The College is teaming up with some of Hyndburn's biggest employers to give young people the chance to work alongside well respected companies.

4.62 **To enhance educational facilities in the Borough through the Building Schools for the Future Programme**

This will be delivered by the Building Schools for the Future programme 2008–2010 and the Primary Capital Programme which commenced in April 2009.

4.63 **To improve access to jobs for local people**

Improving educational attainment is essential to ensure that Hyndburn residents can benefit from local job opportunities. Hyndburn Borough Council is providing the infrastructure to promote inward investment and economic growth to provide local job opportunities.

4.64 The proposed employment site at Huncoat will provide expansion space for existing companies in the Borough, and relocation space for Inward Investors creating approximately 1000 jobs.

4.65 Even more importantly, the proposed Knowledge Park at Whitebirk will generate opportunities for approximately 2000 jobs. This site has been designated as a Strategic Employment Site by the NWDA and it is anticipated that higher value technology and manufacturing companies will be based here.

4.66 Not only will skilled local residents mean that local people will benefit from local job opportunities, but also having a well educated and skilled workforce in the Borough will assist in attracting the desired types of business in the first place.

4.67 It will be important to discuss with employers their current and projected skills needs in order that we can plan for their requirements. In addition it will be necessary to work with Colleges, the LSC and the NWDA to have the structures in place to provide a rapid response to train and up-skill in specific sectors and disciplines.

The Town Centre and Place- Making

4.68 Hyndburn is within a period of significant transformation with the impact of regeneration programmes, such as housing market renewal, expected to have significant positive impacts on the Borough's environment, community and economy.

4.69 Sustainable change within these neighbourhoods can be further strengthened by a more vibrant and competitive town centre. The strong relationship of the town centre and its residential hinterland is essential to the success and regeneration of both.

4.70 Hyndburn Borough Council has an overriding vision to make Hyndburn "the place to be". The role of the town centre has an important role to play in improving the quality of life in the wider Borough through providing jobs, services and amenities for local residents, workers and visitors in an attractive safe and distinctive environment.

4.71 Accrington town centre should be the main focus for shopping, culture and employment in the Borough and meet the needs of its diverse and cosmopolitan community. The environmental assets of the Borough should be capitalised on and successfully connected to neighbourhoods and the town centre.

4.72 Figure 6: Regeneration Spatial Framework shows the place-making and image building opportunity across the Accrington area with the wider region. The better linking and promotion of these assets, as well as offering economic, social and environmental benefits to residents, also provides a fantastic opportunity for promoting the area as an interesting place to live, work and play. This is not just important in terms of 'place-marketing' but also in terms of local identity and cohesion.

4.73 On a strategic scale the town centre needs to make the most of its proximity to key spatial and environmental assets that complement and support the role and function of the town centre.

4.74 This ranges from ensuring local students in the new Sixth Form and Accrington and Rossendale College frequently use and visit the town centre, to capturing the trade that currently Oswaldtwistle Mills enjoys in the town centre, to extending the visitor offer of the town centre to the canal, adjacent parks and Art Gallery. These attractions comprise key green spaces and parks:

- Leeds-Liverpool Canal;
- Foxhill Bank Nature Reserve;
- Milnshaw Park;
- Peel Park;
- Oakhill Park ;

4.75 and other destinations for employment, education and culture:

- Accrington & Rossendale College;
- Oswaldtwistle Mills;
- Church/Oswaldtwistle Gateway;
- Haworth Art Gallery;
- Planned New Sixth Form College; &
- Accrington Stanley Football Club.

4.76 This place making opportunity for the wider Accrington area involves defining and improving the functional and physical connections between these areas in the Borough's regeneration, so a sequence of attractions and destinations are created. At present the impacts and benefits of these areas are not fully harnessed due to lack of marketing, barriers to movement, fragmented development and poor environmental quality.

4.77 The value of the Borough's parks could be further spread into adjacent neighbourhoods and the town centre by creating 'landscape fingers' [creation of green links/corridors along routes of culverted watercourses] using tree planting, landscape and high quality public realm treatments to help make these connections. Directional signage and public art of a consistent and locally distinctive treatment can also help strengthen these connections.

4.0

PART B
Policies

Figure 43 and Appendix 2 presents the Accrington Town Centre Area Action Plan Proposals Map and its Quarters. Set out in this Part B of this AAP are key policies relating to the Range of uses within the Town Centre, Employment Development and Housing; Urban Design and Environmental Quality; The Historic Environment; Transport and Access; Town Centre Management; Infrastructure Provision and Flood Risk. Planning Policies of Part B of this AAP should be read alongside Quarter Base Policies of Part C of this AAP.

5.0 Range of Uses, Employment Development and Housing

Key Objectives:

5.1 • Strengthening the Retail Provision in the Town Centre

• Promoting Investment and Business Development

• Improving Educational and Training

• Becoming a Visitor Destination

5.2 Accrington Town Centre has the largest range of shops and services and is the most accessible centre within the Borough. It has great potential to develop its historic market town role with a greater range and quality of retail businesses. The future prosperity of the centre is central to the revitalisation of Accrington and the Borough as a whole.

5.3 In Accrington Town Centre 500 firms were identified in 2006 with 37% retail and wholesale, 15% business services and 8% hospitality, leisure and tourism. The critical dependency is retail rising to 37% of all firms in the town centre. This dependency on retail for economic activity and employment means that the town must get the quantity and quality of the retail offer right to ensure its sustain-

5.4 ability as an employment sector. In terms of business services there is a relative strength in accounting and related activities in the town centre. Some of the weaker areas in retail provision in the town centre as indicated by a low representation of firms are:

• Fruit and vegetable;

• Bread, cakes and confectionary;

• Fashion retailing; &

• Books, newspapers and stationary.

5.5 These everyday services affect the propensity for people to visit a centre. The town centre is lack-

Policy Context for Chapter 5	
National Policy	PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development PPS3: Housing PPS4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth PPS12: Local Spatial Planning PPS23: Planning ad Pollution Control
Regional Spatial Strategy September 2008	Policy DP1 – Spatial Principles Policy DP2 – Promote Sustainable Communities Policy DP3 – Promote Sustain- able Economic Development Policy W5 – Retail Development Policy W6 – Tourism and the Visitor Economy Policy W7 – Principles of Tourism Development Policy L1 – Health, Sport, Recreation, and Education Service Provision Policy L4 – Regional Housing Markets Policy L5 – Affordable Housing
Saved Policies Hyndburn Local Plan 1996	R1 – Accrington Primary Shopping Zone R2 – Use Classes R3 – Non Major Retail Development R5 – Shops within Class A1 Serv- ing a Local Community R6 – Sale of Hot Food R7 – External Appearance of Retail Premises R8 – Development of Ancillary Retail Fa- cilities within Non–Retail Premises
Publication Draft Core Strategy	Policy A2 – Accrington Town Centre Policy E1 – Future Employment Provision Policy ED1 – New and Improved Education Policy H1 – Housing Mix Policy H2 – Affordable Housing Topic Paper: Employment & Economy Topic Paper: Housing
Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 - 2018	A place with a thriving economy and sus- tainable market towns – *'create attractive,* *clean and safe towns that are easily acces-* *sible with a wide variety of shops where* *people choose to spend their leisure time'*.
Other Sources	White, Young, Green Retail Study, 2005 Employment Land Study, February 2008 Strategic Housing Land Availabil- ity Assessment, March 2009 Strategic Housing Market As- sessment, January 2009 Affordable Housing Viability As- sessment, October 2009 TRB Economics Baseline – Accring- ton Town Centre, June 2009

5.0

ing hospitality services with an under–representation of restaurants, bars, hotels and creative venues. Establishments that do exist are not attractors in their own right but are serving the needs of people already in the town centre for a variety of reasons.

5.6 The White, Young, Green Retail Study commissioned by Hyndburn Council in 2005 found that convenience retailing was under–represented in terms of units and floorspace with the ASDA on Hyndburn Road overtrading and considerable trade leaked out of the Borough and the Hyndburn economy. A need was identified for additional convenience floorspace. A lack of larger units for comparison floorspace was also noted with retailer requirements having fallen since 2004.

5.7 A business survey undertaken as part of the retail study found that the most quoted threats to town centre businesses were a poor quality environment and lack of day visitors to the town. The implementation of this AAP is critical for Accrington Town Centre to remain competitive and to prevent major leakages of spend in other local centres.

POLICY ATC1 NEW AND ENHANCED SHOPPING FACILITIES

The Council will work with private sector land and property owners and support the following subject to assessment criteria and guidance of PPS4:

- The provision of additional comparison retail floorspace in larger floor plates within the Primary Shopping Area of the town centre, specifically the Arndale and Broadway; [Proposal Sites 4, 23, 30 & 33]

- The provision of additional convenience retail in the town centre; [Proposal Sites 1a, 4 & 30]

- The enhancement of the retail offer/quality and improve the vitality and viability, meeting the needs of retailers and catchment area shoppers to maintain Accrington Town Centre's role and status as a key centre in Pennine Lancashire;

- The support for existing and future independent retailers;

- The retention of a mix of floor plates with the Primary Shopping Area and require a mix of floor plates within significant new retail development;

- The maintenance and enhancement of the character of shopping streets; &

- The creation of clearer pedestrian retail circuits.

5.8 The town is under-represented by major retailers, especially fashion retailers. At present a lack of larger retail units on offer is placing limitations on attracting larger format retailers to anchor the centre. The redevelopment and growth of the Arndale Centre as the main shopping centre for multiple retailers in the town is a key priority developed as part of the AAP. This will ensure that retail development can play an active role in regenerating the town.

5.9 People look for both choice and quality in visiting town centres. Improving the quality of the retail offer relates to both the Arndale Centre and the smaller retailers on the surrounding streets at the heart of the town. The lack of interest shown by national retailers regarding the Arndale, in part due to the small size of units, is also compounded by the low quality environment of the shopping centre. The car park in particular is not an attractive environment and many of the frontages and spaces around the Arndale contribute nothing to the rest of the town. Accessibility by all modes of transport should also be improved. A significantly improved design which reinforces the town's character with high quality public space and street frontages should be at the core of the centre's re-modelling.

5.10 Unless larger units are created in an attractive shopping environment the town will not be able to attract the larger national high street multiples. A key priority therefore is to provide large retail units by the re-modelling and extending of the Arndale Centre.

5.11 The convenience sector within the town centre is under-represented, limited to a small Marks and Spencers and Iceland. Edge of centre stores include: ASDA, Aldi and Netto, but the frequency of linked trips between these stores and the town centre is low. As such a significant new convenience store in the town centre would assist in attracting trade and footfall into the centre benefiting other traders. This should be located as close to the main retail pitch around the Arndale as possible to ensure linked trips and efficient use of the multi-storey car park.

5.12 Planning consent has been granted for a new retail store [8599 square metres] with car parking and landscaping on the former skills centre site on Eagle Street which is defined as edge of centre.

POLICY ATC2 SHOPPING FRONTAGES AND THE USE OF FLOORS ABOVE SHOPS

The Council will control the use of ground floor premises in shopping streets through the exercise of its planning powers to safeguard and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre:

- Primary Frontages: proposals for a change of use, including through redevelopment, from retail [Class A1] to other uses at ground floor level will not be permitted if non–A1 uses would cumulatively amount to more than 20% of the length of the primary frontage within any one of the defined sections;

- Secondary Frontages: proposals for a change of use, including through redevelopment, from retail [Class A1] to financial and professional services [Class A2] or restaurants and cafes [Class A3] at ground floor level will be permitted, provided that the proposal would not result in a concentration of non–A1 uses would cumulatively amount to more than 40% of the length of the secondary frontage within any one of the defined sections and the amalgamation of floor plates does not exceed 400m²; &

- Other Frontages: changes of use, including through redevelopment, of existing shops [Class A1] to other uses appropriate to a shopping frontage, such as: drinking establishments [Class A4], hot food take–away [Class A5], community service offices and meeting places, surgeries and consulting rooms, entertainment and recreation uses, police use and facilities for public administration will be considered on their merits.

Applications will be considered against the policy and the policy will be rigorously applied. The Council will use its planning powers through the Development Management DPD to manage general aspects of development and Supplementary Planning Documents to provide detailed guidance to improve the design of shopfronts and the enhancement of the overall quality of the streetscene.

The change of use of upper floors above shops to residential, offices or other appropriate service or community uses, which maintain or enhance the character and vitality of the centre and broaden the range of services will be considered on their merits.

Note: Policy ATC2 must be read in conjunction with Appendix 3: Active Shopping Frontages. Where a shopping frontage crosses a road/street the road should not be counted in the calculation of the percentage of frontage occupied by non-shopping uses.

5.0

5.13 The character and attractiveness of Accrington's shopping streets are attributes which the Council and the community seek to maintain. The control of changes of use from A1 retail is necessary to protect the vitality and viability of the Primary Shopping Area.

5.14 Primary frontages are focused on Broadway and Union Street. New retail facilities proposed will extend the Primary Shopping Area and provide additional primary frontages.

5.15 Secondary frontages complement the main retail core and are appropriate locations for a range of services ancillary to retail uses, such as banks and building societies [A2 uses], restaurants and cafes [A3 uses], which meet customer needs, add to the centre's diversity and vitality and provide activity outside shopping hours. However, the cumulative impact of non–retail uses in a shopping street can adversely affect customer footfall and overall attraction by creating inactive frontages and a change in character.

5.16 Space above shops, if not required for storage, is often underused or vacant and can provide useful office accommodation, consulting rooms for small businesses and employment, or relatively cheap residential accommodation, suitable for students.

5.17 Additionally, the provision of larger shop units, as part of the significant retail development planned on Proposal Sites 4, 23, 30 & 33 as part of the future redevelopment of the Arndale Quarter and adjoining Quarters could lead to a relocation of retailers to the new units and the need for a strategy to manage the change.

5.18 Where there are occasions where buildings have been vacant for some time and a proposed use would not accord with policy applicants will need to provide details of marketing activity at planning application stage. The Council will unlikely consider favourably a planning proposal that conflicts with policy in instances where a property has been vacant/disused for less than 3 years.
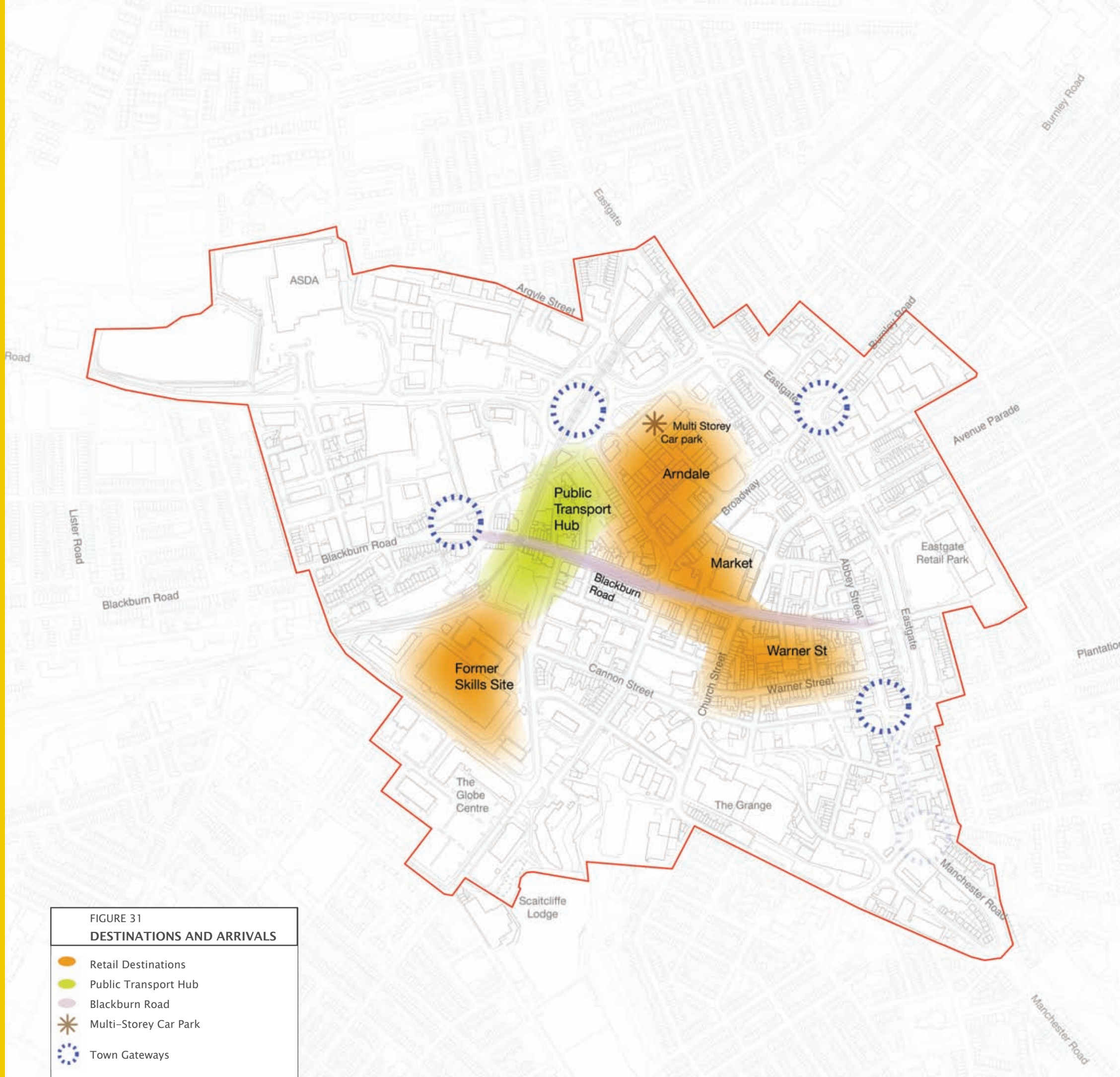
ASDA

Argyle Street

Eastgate

Burnley Road

Burnley Road

Avenue Parade

Multi Storey
Car park

Arndale

Broadway

Eastgate
Retail Park

Public
Transport
Hub

Market

Blackburn Road

Abbey Street

Eastgate

Blackburn
Road

Lister Road

Blackburn Road

Plantation

Cannon Street

Warner St

Church Street

Former
Skills Site

Warner Street

The
Globe
Centre

The Grange

Manchester Road

Scaitcliffe
Lodge

Manchester Road

Road

FIGURE 31
DESTINATIONS AND ARRIVALS

Retail Destinations
Public Transport Hub
Blackburn Road
Multi–Storey Car Park
Town Gateways

Retail Circuits

5.19 The aspiration to become a high quality market town needs to involve supporting local retailers and local produce through events such as the Pennine Lancashire Festival of Food and Culture. Further investment should be targeted on linking the main streets where these services and products are available together through public realm treatments, shop front improvements, signage, marketing and promotion. It is important that the character of these streets along Warner Street and Abbey Street is protected. The concentration of active frontages along these streets should be maintained and change of uses to professional and financial services and uses which do not tend to have shop fronts should be resisted and controlled through the planning system.

5.20 Whatever way people arrive to the town, we all become pedestrians. Pedestrian footfall and passing trade is very important from a retail perspective. Strong pedestrian circuits improve

5.21 the attractiveness and competitiveness of a town centre linking arrival points with the main retail areas along continuous [i.e. with no backtracking] and active frontages. Active frontages between destinations are very important. Even a small number of empty/low value shops or banks, travel agents financial services can deter shoppers from continuing along a street. Therefore it is important for traditional centres to manage pedestrian flows to benefit local retailers.

5.22 Linkages between key areas in the retail sector of Accrington need to be enhanced. As Figure 29: Existing Town Centre Retail Curcuits demonstrates the current retail circuit of any significance is limited to the loop that is created within the Arndale Centre from the multi-storey car park along Cornhill Arcade, Union Street, Broadway and Cornhill. A second circuit exists from the bus station on Peel Street into the Market. On market days this extends to meet up with the

5.23 Arndale/Broadway circuit through Market Way. On non-market days however with a largely dead frontage along this route footfall is less. Warner Street and Abbey Street are connected by much weaker pedestrian linkages in part due to the poor environment, vacancies and discount retailers between the Market around Peel Street which acts as a block to movement.

5.24 Figure 30: Proposed Town Centre Retail Curcuits shows the proposed pedestrian circuits to support movement between key retail destinations. This includes the relocation of key arrival points such as the railway station and bus station closer to the retail core to support pedestrian movement and takes account of a new retail destination on the former skills site. The relocation of the Bus Station will assist with strengthening the pedestrian linkages to the Warner Street area by the improvement of Peel Street's environment.

5.25 The route defines primary links between the 4 key retail destinations of the Arndale Centre, Market, Warner Street area and Former Skills Site through streets that should largely be retail or have active frontages. Signage, public realm treatments and shop front improvements should be targeted within these areas to create a clear and legible retail circuit around the town.

5.26 Figure 31: Destinations and Arrivals shows how the 4 retail destinations, town centre gateways and primary arrival points overlap and significantly are connected together by the spine of Blackburn Road and the proposed public transport hub of the Bus Station and Train Station and multi-storey car park.

5.0

POLICY ATC3 MARKETS AND STREET STALLS

The Council will:

- Retain and enhance the Victorian Market Hall and associated Pavilions through its role in managing and licensing of the markets;

- Work with partners to achieve the heritage led regeneration plans for the Market Hall; [Proposal Site 3] &

- Encourage the use of temporary well designed and well sited market stalls to add diversity to the town centre.

The Markets

5.27 The Victorian Market makes a major contribution to local choice, diversity and adds viability to Accrington's shopping attraction.

5.28 The Council needs to continue to promote and invest in the Markets to improve the facilities and ensure that it remains attractive and competitive to shoppers. It will continue to attract specialist markets to the town to encourage more visitors and trade and will keep under review improvements to arrangements for servicing, refuse collection, litter control, storage and the design of the market stalls.

Refurbishment of the Market Hall and Pavilions

5.29 The Market Hall is a Grade II Listed building and holds great importance within the heart of the town. It makes a valuable contribution to local retail choice, diversity and activity in the centre of town.

5.30 In recognising its importance and its future potential as retail and business attraction, the Council has secured £1.6 million to restore the historic character of the building, provide a distinctive shopping destination and to realise the potential of the Market Hall for heritage led regeneration.

1.7

5.0

Employment Development

5.31 Recognising the town's role as a centre for economic development and revitalising it as a business location as well as a retail centre is vital in order to achieve a balanced approach to sustainable economic growth.

5.32 The supply of office accommodation has been restricted to out of town locations on the M65 corridor. The Globe provides some office space, but there have been no significant schemes in recent years where a number of incubator type business centres have been developed. There is an existing longstanding office quarter around Cannon St, where growth is reflected in transactions and rental levels.

5.33 Change in planning policy now favours in town office/business parks, and as such there is a need to look at the town centre to modernise and diversify office accommodation.

1.4

POLICY ATC4 EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE TOWN CENTRE

The Council will promote Accrington Town Centre as a primary location for office and business centre and improve the quality and range of office and business accommodation by encouraging and supporting:

- The redevelopment and improvement of the existing office floorspace;
- Developments that incorporate high specification B1 office space, in a range of unit sizes; [Proposal Sites 13, 21, 26, 27] &
- The provision of workshop, studio, exhibition space and offices to the needs of the 'creative industries' sector. [Proposal sites 3 & 20]

Development proposals resulting in a net loss of B1 office floorspace will only be acceptable if office floorspace is re-provided as part of mixed-use development of the site, or the loss of the office floorspace is outweighed by the achievement of other AAP objectives through the proposed development.[1.8]

The Council will achieve these policy aims through promoting the development of the Proposal Sites identified in Part C of this Plan, and through the consideration of planning applications for the development of these and other sites in the town centre.

The Council will play an active role with partner organisations to increase the number of jobs and maintain a wide range of employment opportunities and to identify and address skill and training needs for town centre businesses.

POLICY ATC5 PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, POLICE AND HER MAJES-TY'S COURTS SERVICE

The Council will work with partner organisations, including local and central government agencies, the Lancashire Police Constabulary and Her Majesty's Courts Service [HMCS] to maintain and enhance facilities to meet changing service and accommodation needs and provide alternative sites within the town centre for relocation.

1.5

5.34 Accrington Town Centre is an appropriate, accessible location for a range of central and local government, Police and Court services. They provide a range of employment opportunities and a significant number of jobs, both of which are important in maintaining the diversity of the local economy.

5.35 The town centre plays an important judicial role with the Magistrates' Courts, plus associated support services, including legal practices. Engagement with HMCS and the Police has identified requirements for improved facilities to meet a range of changing needs.

5.36 Further enhancement and diversification of the range of arts, cultural, entertain-ment, leisure and recreation attractions was supported by a large proportion of respondents at Preferred Options stage of master-planning, especially evening attractions to appeal to a wider range of residents and visitors.

5.37 Tourism can be a key driver of Accrington's economy in terms of employment and wealth creation. It includes visitor accommodation, attractions, events, festivals, restaurants and sporting facilities. The town centre is well placed to promote tourism and attract more visitors to support its facilities, as well as heritage and shopping attractions.

5.38 The identification for a hotel at the masterplan-

POLICY ATC6 PROVISION OF FACILITIES FOR ARTS, CULTURE, TOURISM ENTERTAINMENT, LEI-SURE, RECREATION, THE COMMU-NITY, FAITH AND VOLUNTARY SEC-TORS AND HOTEL ACCOMMODATION

The Council will:

- Support proposals which enhance or diversify the range of arts, culture, entertainment, leisure and recreational facilities, subject to an assessment of the scale, character, location and impact of the proposal on existing facilities and residential uses;

- Proposals involving the loss of such uses will not be supported unless replacement facilities are provided;

- Support the development of new leisure facilities on [proposal sites 10, 11, & 14];

- Support proposals for a hotel with conference and banqueting facilities on [Proposal Site 9], subject to satisfactory access and parking provision, and assess other hotel proposals on their merits against relevant policies; &

- Work in partnership with faith, community and voluntary sector organisations to maintain and enhance their facilities and resist proposals which involve a net loss of such facilities.

ning stage confirms that Accrington requires additional quality hotel provision in the town centre to provide accommodation for business and leisure visitors, including a large format events facility, to add to the range of attractions and increase tourism.

5.39 Faith [religious] and community facilities provide accommodation for a wide range of activities and services, including worship, meetings, advice and events, which play an important role in the social infrastructure of the town centre and add to its diversity and interest.

5.0

POLICY ATC7 HOUSING

The Council will:

• Support development of residential schemes which address the re-structuring of the housing market in accordance with the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and subsequent identified Proposal Sites. [Refer to Part C of the AAP for details of Proposal Sites]; &

• Support apartment development within or in proximity to Accrington Town Centre where this would be returning existing buildings into use or where the regeneration benefits of apartment development can be demonstrated;

Housing

5.60 Town Centre living is a major opportunity for the Borough. This includes new development and conversions. A residential population within the town centres can contribute to safer and more vibrant town centres. Issues of neighbourliness and noise will need to be considered.

5.61 CABE [Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment] recommends that separating retail and residential components into separate design approaches should be avoided.

5.62 A number of residential schemes have been implemented close to, or within, the town centre. Recommendations taken from the masterplan highlight key areas for new residential development in predominantly in the Grange Quarter. The quantity and range of housing in the area needs to be given further consideration as part of the Housing Needs Assessment.

5.63 There has been a steady rise in residential supply in the town centre with the completions of conversion schemes. Historically there have been a few upper floor rented flats are occupied along Blackburn Road. Between 2006 to 2009 new schemes around the centre have sold 2 to 3 bedrooms houses between £140,000 and £170,000 and apartments have sold for, £100– £120,000.

5.64 New housing should meet required design standards, incorporate renewable energy and sustainable construction techniques and at least 10% of new housing should be designed to be wheelchair accessible or easily adaptable for residents who are wheelchair users.

POLICY ATC8 HIGHER AND FURTHER EDUCATION

The Council will work with Accrington and Rossendale College to support in principle, the provision of improve links form the Town Centre to the existing Sandy Lane Complex together with assisting the College to raise its profile within Accrington Town Centre through the development of new educational facilities. Proposals should be of a high standard of design, relate well to their surroundings and safeguard visual and residential amenity.

5.65 For over 50 years, Accrington & Rossendale College has been providing award-winning education and training to the people of Hyndburn. In recent years the college has invested over £16 million in the Accrington-based Broad Oak Campus, building a campus truly worthy of the 21st century.

5.66 In addition it has a diverse curriculum of further education and boasts a highly respected higher education programme which offers the community the option of a university education on their doorstep. The College also run a very successful workforce training subsidiary, accross Business Solutions.

5.67 In the latest Government inspection the College received a grade one [outstanding] in all areas. This is the best possible grading that any College can achieve, putting Accrington & Rossendale College in the top 10% of Colleges in the UK.

Community and Voluntary Resource Centre,

6.0 Urban Design and Environmental Quality

Public Realm Design Framework

6.1 **Key Objectives:**

- Enhancing the Quality of the Environment
- Becoming a Visitor Destination
- Strengthening the Retail Provision in the Town Centre
- Improving Access, Movement and Transport
-

Principles

6.2 The public realm is made up of streets and spaces. In Accrington Town Centre this should comprise a network of well-connected streets, linking arrival points, public spaces, squares and parks with places where people live, shop, work and relax. A successful town centre should have a public realm which promotes lively, bustling street activity, while at the same time providing access to the places for relaxation and recreation which make a town a pleasant place to live in and visit.

6.3 Well – designed streets can enhance pedestrian movement and footfall, helping to extend activity across a town centre. Active public places like squares and courts provide a setting for positive social interaction which is at the heart of an enjoyable visit to the town centre. A good public realm is also a vital part of the identity of a town. It will enhance the setting of the town's architectural heritage and is a major contributor to a sense of place and civic pride.

Purpose

6.4 The purpose of the frame–work is to define the role and function of these streets and spaces and integrate them within a network which will connect and enhance the key development and transport proposals in the masterplan. The public realm framework will inform a more detailed public realm strategy, design briefs and guidance for these streets and spaces. The quarter proposals in Part C provide some illustrative ideas of how the public realm in the town could be improved.

6.5 Future interventions and in–vestment in the town centre should seek to improve the existing public realm as well as create new public places. The masterplan consultation showed that there is a desire among many local people to see a greener town centre. The public realm strategy at Figure 32: Public Realm Strategy describes a network of public places organised at three spatial levels.

6.0

Policy Context for Chapter 6	Urban Design and Environmental Quality
National Policy	PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development Supplement to PPS1 – Plan–ning & Climate Change PPS3: Housing PPS4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation PPS12: Local Spatial Planning PPS22: Renewable Energy 1.7
Regional Spatial Strategy September 2008	Policy DP1 – Spatial Principles Policy DP2 – Promote Sustainable Communities Policy DP7 – Promote Environmental Quality Policy EM3 – Green Infrastructure Policy EM16 – Energy Conservation & Efficiency Policy EM17 – Renewable Energy Policy EM18 – Decentralised Energy Supply Policy L1 – Health, Sport, Recreation, Cul–tural and Educational Services Provision
Saved Policies Hyndburn Lo–cal Plan 1996	Policy E3 – Townscape and Land–scape Considerations Policy R7 – External Appear–ance of Retail Premises Policy E10 – Design Considerations Policy E11 – Advertisements Policy E15 – Public Art Policy L1 Leisure & Recreation
Publication Edi–tion Core Strategy, March 2010	Policy A2 Accrington Town Centre Policy ENV1 – Green Infrastructure 1.8 Policy ENV2 – Sustainable Develop–ment and Climate Change Policy ENV3 – High Quality Design Policy ENV4 – Environmental Amenity Policy HC1 – Green Space and Facili–ties for Walking and Cycling Policy HC2 – Leisure and Health Policy HC3 – The Design of Residential Roads Topic Paper: Design and Conservation
Sustainable Com–munity Strategy 2008 - 2018	A place with a thriving economy and sus–tainable market towns – *'create attractive, clean and safe towns that are easily acces–sible with a wide variety of shops where people choose to spend their leisure time'.*
Other Sources	Green Infrastructure Strategy Design Guidance form a variety of sources including Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment [CABE] & Department of Communities & Local Government [DCLG] Baseline Masterplan Reports

POLICY ATC9 DESIGN OF THE PUBLIC REALM

The Council will pursue a high quality, well designed and well connected public realm, to improve the appearance and attractiveness of the town centre. Through the design of public realm improvement schemes; the development of Proposal Sites; the determination of planning applications and partnership working with land and property owners and developers the Council will:

- Implement a rolling programme of improvements to streets and public spaces, using high quality co-ordinated materials which are durable and easy to maintain. Further guidance on streetscape design will be produced alongside detailed briefs;

- Improve signage and street furniture within the town centre and reduce streetscape clutter with the removal of inappropriate street furniture and unnecessary signage;

- Improve the quality of public spaces and require the provision of new public spaces, including destination spaces [PL2 Squared Project] as part of major development proposals;

- Improve the quality of the pedestrian environment, ensuring that routes are clear, legible, safe and convenient;

- Improve the environment of the road network and crossings as identified through the Quarters;

- Create attractive 'gateways' to mark and enhance the main approaches to the town centre to achieve a sense of arrival and identity;

- Require environmental improvements and landscaping in association with new development;

- Enhance the quality of public spaces, streets and passageways into the Town Centre Conservation Area;

- Prepare and implement a creative Lighting Strategy; &

- Prepare a Public Art Strategy identifying opportunities for public art and seek the provision of public art or contributions towards it in association with major development.

The Green Network

6.6 At a strategic, cross-town level, Accrington should make the most of its proximity to wider environmental assets such as the Leeds Liverpool Canal, Hyndburn Lodge, Woodnook Vale Country Park along the Hyndburn Greenway and Platts Lodge, Peel Park and Oakhill Park, by making attractive walking and cycle ways along green routes.

6.7 A continuous network of tree-lined corridors and green routes will transform perceptions of the town as a green and attractive place to live, while delivering important environmental functions such as flood protection and micro-climate control. These green links should provide for multi-functional uses such as access to nature and wildlife, recreational facilities to promote better health and meeting places to improve social cohesion. By connecting the wide range of cultural experiences and events which take place throughout the Borough, the Green Network will become a considerable opportunity for marketing and place-making, with the Town Centre at its heart.

6.8 The principle green spaces and corridors for enhancement identified through the masterplanning stage include; St James Churchyard, Broadway, Pennine Squared site, the Viaduct area, Eastgate Boulevard, Avenue Parade, and the Grange Lane area. Existing green corridors for improved connections are Platts Lodge and Woodnook Vale, Broad Oak and Warmden Clough areas, Tag Clough and Plantation Woods, Peel Park and the Coppice, the railway line, and the Hyndburn road/Hagg reservoir area connecting to the canal corridor.

POLICY ATC10 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE – PUBLIC SPACES/GREEN

The following elements should be included wherever possible:

- Increase the amount of green space overall, particularly in locations that enhance linkages to existing and potential green corridors;

- Increase the number of trees and the area of shrub and floral planting in all green space, street and site landscape improvements, giving preference to native species that contribute to the Lancashire Biodiversity Action Plan;

- The encouragement of strong links to the town centre to its surrounding parks, watercourses and green spaces;

- Encourage the development of a continuous, linked green infrastructure network of greenspace, connecting neighbourhoods with the town centre and integrated into the public realm and streetscape;

- Enhance physical and visual linkages between green spaces and corridors within and adjacent to the town centre, to encourage people to benefit from these high quality attractive natural resources and enhance habitat and wildlife connectivity;

- Enhancement and creation of a network of civic and green spaces within the town centre linking quarters to the high street;

- Improve opportunities for walking and cycling between the town centre, bus station and railway station, residential areas and workplaces and these green spaces and corridors

- Create new opportunities for incidental green space within the heart of the town centre, at ground level, on walls and at roof level;

- Mitigate and adapt to climate change by providing shade, shelter and cooling for buildings and outdoor spaces, Sustainable Drainage Systems including porous surfaces, wetland areas, rainwater harvesting for outdoor space irrigation and flood management and opportunities to open river culverts;

- Introduce landscape buffering to sites within the town centre to improve frontages onto the public realm in order to cumulatively raise the visual quality of the town centre and encourage positive perceptions;

- Incorporate living roofs [Green roofs with planting and brown roofs with other habitat measures];

- Incorporate habitat niches such as roosting and nesting provisions;

- Protect and enhance any existing habitat value and protected species that may be present on or near a site; &

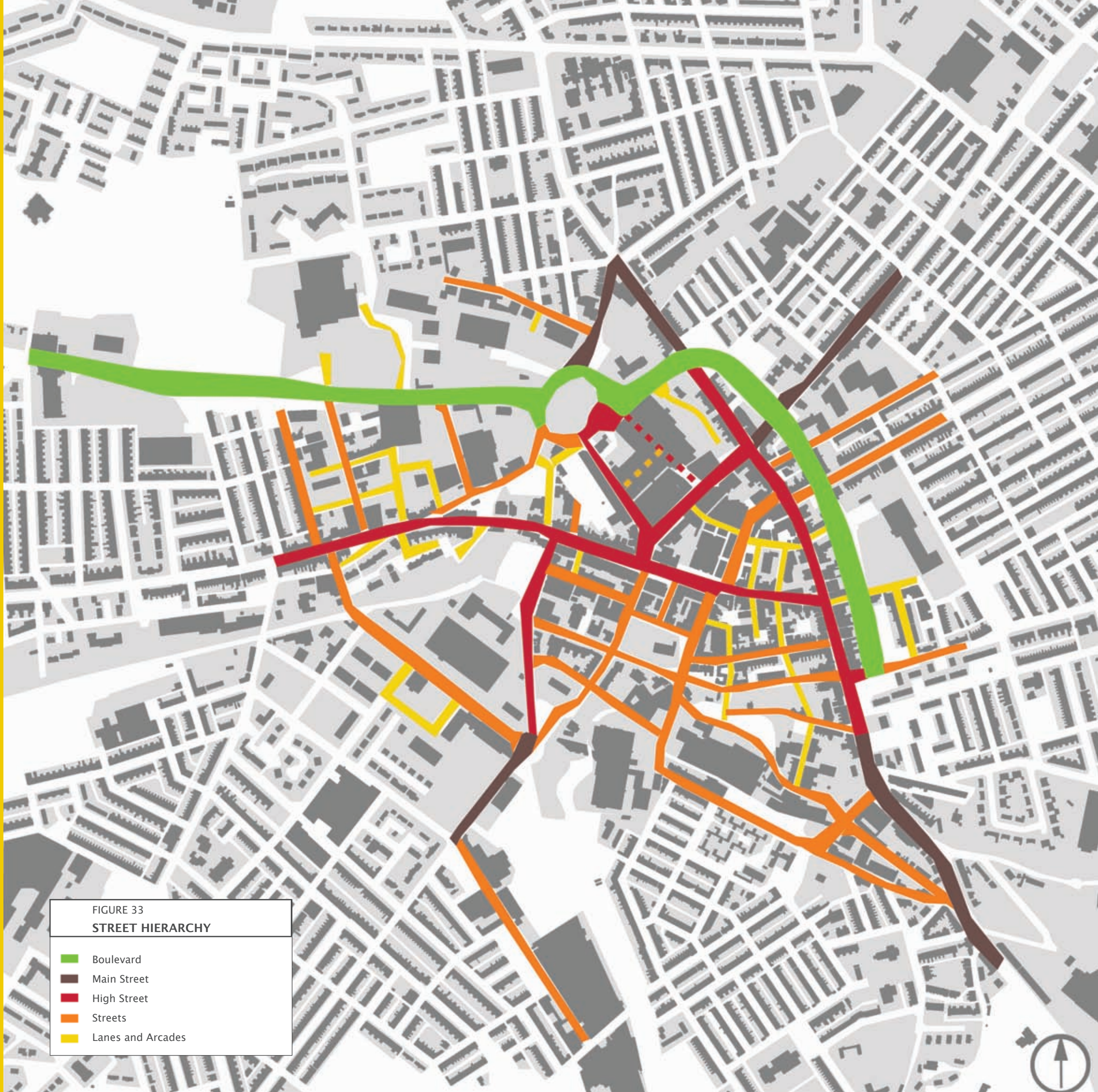- Incorporate signage and information.

6.0

FIGURE 33
STREET HIERARCHY

- Boulevard
- Main Street
- High Street
- Streets
- Lanes and Arcades

**The Town Centre
Streets Network**

6.9 The street network within and around the town centre is confusing and inconsistent. A number of busy roads need to be navigated to get into the core of the town centre. Patterned surfaces and a mixture of materials, and street clutter result in a complicated streetscape and restrict the ability to understand and move around the town. Many of the public realm treatments also do not enhance or reflect the character of the buildings in the town.

6.10 The street network should be the connecting links between the towns quarters, its attractions, destinations, and places of arrival. The street network is the primary means by which people access the town, and from it gain their first impression of the place. The network should therefore be easily navigable and pres-

ent a coherent and attractive setting for the town. The strategy identifies the importance of making a well-connected, pedestrian friendly environment in which vehicle and cyclist access is balanced with the requirements of people for comfortable, stimulating and enjoyable surroundings.

6.11 The street network should make it easy to find ones way around the town, and organised as a hierarchy, in which boulevards and main streets which cross and surround the town centre are complemented by active high streets, quiet streets and intimate lanes to create a distinctive town centre. These typologies should be consistent so the character of the street does not change dramatically, thereby creating confusion for drivers and

pedestrians. This street hierarchy is outlined in Figure 33: Street Hierarchy. The hierarchy comprises:

- Boulevards;
- Main Streets;
- High Streets;
- Streets; &
- Lanes.

6.12 These typologies are derived from those identified in the Design Manual for Streets.

6.0

Main Streets

6.13 Main Streets provide the primary cross-town connections and through routes taken by most of the vehicular traffic into and through Accrington. In the past these were streets typically lined with shops and businesses, because these were normally highly active and visible frontages. More recently, road widening and traffic geometries have combined to obliterate many of these attractive frontages and now are traffic dominated. The public realm strategy envisages these streets being improved by the introduction of new developments which will front onto these streets, or by the improvement of the pedestrian environment.

Boulevards

6.14 These are a special type of main-street that should be lined with trees to make an attractive environment for pedestrians, as well as improving perceptions for drivers and passengers. The green setting for the boulevard will connect with nearby avenue and tree planting to reinforce the impression of Accrington as a green town.

High Streets

6.15 High Streets are the busy, bustling streets where pedestrians come and go, where shop and business frontages of buildings open directly onto the street and where people should enjoy the cheerful welcoming character of a market town like Accrington. Abbey Street, Broadway and Blackburn Road are all streets which should fulfill this role by supporting a diverse range of shops, cafes and other facilities, be being uncluttered and promote frequent and comfortable pedestrian movement and lined with continuous and active building frontages where the activity and life within a building is visible through windows and doors onto the street.

6.16 The design of high streets should encourage defensive driving behaviour, footways should be barrier free and surface materials should be chosen for their robustness and ease of movement for pedestrians. Materials should be consistent and emphasise the continu-

ity of the street, thereby increasing legibility. Wide kerbs and carefully integrated drop kerbs should be designed in conjunction with tactile paving at crossings to ensure safety for all.

Streets

6.17 Streets are the network elements which connect parts of the town centre together. In Accrington they should be organised to support the local walking network, connecting pedestrians from local housing and business areas.

Lanes

6.18 Lanes and arcades are normally short and connect between streets and into the inner areas of building groups. They provide convenient connections and short cuts between streets and in the case of arcades, covered streets for shopping and other activities. Streetscape materials should be used to reinforce the perception of continuous streets which encourage pedestrian circuits through the town centre.

The Town Centre Spaces

6.19 At a local level, the town centre needs to create a range of high quality public places which provide a setting for public events and activities and gives identity and clarity to arrival points. The strategy identifies two types of public space:

- Public Green Spaces; &

- Public Places.

Public Green Spaces

6.20 Public Green Spaces are passive tranquil spaces for relaxation. In Accrington, these places are often associated with the watercourses and the strategy identifies the need for enhanced and new green spaces around Hyndburn Lodge, St James Church, the Grange and Platts Lodge. New tree planting could be introduced to these surrounding streets to reinforce the perception of the town as a green and pleasant place.

Public Places

6.21 Public Places are more active, where people meet and activities animate the public realm. These spaces announce ones arrival in the town centre, and they are prominent and criss-crossed by pedestrians. These spaces are animated by surrounding buildings frontages, and are normally mostly hard surfaces with carefully placed trees and other features such as artwork, lighting, fountains and statuary. The strategy identifies new public places around the Magistrates Court complex, the Viaduct Gateway [Accrington's most distinctive and memorable feature] and the new bus station and around the town centre gateways at Whalley Road, Burnley Road, Abbey Street and the Railway Station.

6.22 The strategy recognises the importance of the Town Hall and Market Hall as two of the most important buildings in the town centre and the need to enhance the setting of these distinctive local landmarks as a priority. The relocation of the bus station provides the opportunity to transform Peel Street adjacent to the Market Hall, and the Pennine Squared strategy recommends the creation of two world class public spaces to host a range of activities such as outdoor markets and major public events.

6.23 The creation and enhancement of new public spaces and streets should build on Accrington's local heritage and distinctiveness and creatively use the sense of place, historic townscape and local landmarks in future design, landscape and public art. This can help to build positive associations of the area to attract visitors and build community pride and market demand.

Square outside Market

St James Church and surrounding green space

6.0

Urban Design Framework

Delivering the Design Agenda

6.24 The ambition for the town centre set out in this AAP and the delivery of design quality depends on a strong design process. The Design and Access Statement is central to this. Applicants will need to show how their scheme has evolved in response to a series of key influences:

The need for the involvement of stakeholders and local people

6.25 Stakeholder involvement will be integral in helping to shape the comprehensive design of the town centre, typically through design workshops, public surgeries and exhibitions. The approach to be adopted will need to be agreed with the Borough Council on large or complex sites a tailored design workshop is likely to be required to help generate quality design solutions.

The need for an integrated design approach

6.26 It will be important to bring together the various design disciplines involved in creating well designed buildings, set alongside high quality public spaces. Proposed developments will need to show how this relationship is achieved and will need to make available the funding necessary to deliver public realm to meet the quality standards set in the Council's emerging Public Realm Strategy.

The need to include proposals for public art

6.27 Artists need to be a key part of integrated design teams, all Proposal Sites will be required to come forward with specific proposals, helping to contribute to a future Public Art Strategy.

The need for agreed site/design briefs on complex sites

6.28 Where here are multiple ownerships, these are needed to show how development can come forward in part or on a phased basis, taking account of the wider design context and without prejudicing overall quality or deliverability. The need for such an approach is set out in Quarter policies in this AAP – although, exceptionally, site/design briefs may also be needed for other sites should circumstances dictate.

The need to respond to advice received from an independent Design Review Panel

6.29 All major schemes will be referred to the Panel at key stages in the design process. Applicants will be expected to prepare suitable material for such reviews and will need to show how the scheme has been re-evaluated, and where necessary amended, to take account of comments the Panel makes.

The need to deliver sustainable design and building construction

6.30 Whilst policies in the Core Strategy will have a bearing on design issues, this is especially true of the Council's sustainable energy and materials objectives. Further guidance on meeting this policy will be provided in the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD as part of wider suite of LDF documents.

The need to respond to national quality standards, such as 'Building for Life', that are used by the Borough Council

6.31 To help meet the design objectives set in this AAP the Council may use nationally developed standards. Tools of this sort will help in the evaluation of proposals.

6.32 The urban design objectives are concerned with all elements of physical development which come together to create a place. All new development should build these principles into their design, following a detailed site and character analysis.

Character - To enhance identity and sense of place

6.33 It is important to appreciate the character of the area whilst encouraging the communities living in Accrington to create a place with a strong identity through the building style and public realm treatment. The use of local building materials and the restoration of lost traditional architectural detailing, boundary treatments and streetscape details [such as gritstone setts] should be encouraged to enhance Accrington's character.

6.34 Although Accrington is famed for the production of dense red bricks known as 'Accrington Bloods', the town is notable for its lack of brick built structures. The majority of buildings have been traditionally constructed from locally quarried Carboniferous gritstone composed of course sand grains.

6.35 A Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan produced by Paul Butler Associates forms part of the supporting documentation to this AAP. These reports evaluate the buildings and features that contribute to the character of the town centre conservation area and set out proposals to protect and secure the heritage assets.

POLICY ATC11 DESIGN QUALITY IN THE TOWN CENTRE

The Council will require the highest standard of design in all new development within the town centre and proposals should:

- Achieve a high standard of design, with appropriate scale, height, density, massing, appearance, plot widths and materials, which relate well to surrounding buildings and building lines;

- Where appropriate, enhance the town centre's character and historic environment ;

- Be accessible and inclusive;

- Create high quality landscaped spaces and connections to surrounding streets;

- Make best use of redevelopment opportunities;

- Reduce opportunities for crime and achieve Secured by Design principles;

- Provide active and well designed frontages to adjoining streets and spaces; &

- Incorporate best environmental practice in design and layout, use sustainable construction techniques and renewable technology, appropriate to the scale of development.

The Council will promote the redevelopment and improvement of areas of lesser quality, including vacant and underused sites and the provision of distinctive exemplary quality contemporary architecture in key locations on the identified Proposal Sites to provide new landmarks to reinforce identity and improve legibility.

The Council's adopted shop front, shop front security and advertisements design guides will be actively applied. Enforcement action will be taken to remove any unauthorised works which do not accord with the objectives of these guides and the design policies of this AAP.

6.0

6.36 These includes identifying buildings and features which could be added to the Council's emerging local list, identifying key views and vistas to be protected such as the views of the Coppice from Abbey Street and Avenue Parade, and recommending development proposals to replace buildings which have a seriously negative impact upon the visual quality of the area.

Safety and Inclusion - Ensuring places are safe, secure and welcoming for all

6.37 Safety and inclusion is at the heart of the sustainable communities. This can be achieved through the building form ensuring that all routes and spaces are overlooked and ensuring that buildings are secure by design and accessible

for all. The cohesion and inclusion of the local community in the regeneration of their neighbourhood is also key to promoting an area that people feel a sense of ownership and belonging.

Diversity – Providing variety and choice

6.38 Diversity is an important principle of urban design, making places appeal to the widest possible range of users, providing choice and richness to the urban environment. Developments should:

- Provide a variety of functions and uses;

- A mix of uses within streets and individual buildings;

- Create a range of streets, spaces and routes;

- Create diversity in unit sizes and rents;

- Reflect the diversity and heritage of the area in the design of the public realm and public art;

- Provide opportunities for a variety of people to live in the area in a range of housing types and tenures; and

- Demonstrate how a broad cross section of the community will be involved in overall regeneration proposals.

Ease of Movement – Ensuring places that are easy to get to and move through

6.39 This is key to developing a more sustainable town centre. The life-blood of any place is circulated by its network of streets and spaces, which should be permeable on foot and express a clear hierarchy. New development should ensure:

- The creation of a clear hierarchy and permeable network of roads, footpaths and public spaces;

- A clear way-marking signage system linking key destinations and arrival points

- Prioritising the movement of pedestrians and cyclists; and

- Recognising the need to maintain car access without allowing cars to dominate the environment.

Legibility – Ensuring places that can be easily understood

6.40 The sustainable development of Accrington will create a place that is easily understood with a distinctive, memorable and attractive environment.

6.41 To enhance the legibility of the area new development can improve the image and identity of a place and should incorporate:

- Easily understood buildings with clear well placed entrances;

- Existing and new landmarks and focal points;

- Strong relationships to existing and new vistas, views and view corridors;

- Clear and easily navigable routes;

- Gateways to particular areas;

- Appropriate materials and lighting;

- Public art; and

- Signage and way-markers.

6.42 With its undulating topography Accrington has excellent and distinctive views to surrounding countryside, as well as some notable landmark buildings. The impact of these should be maximised and development form shaped to respond to these townscape assets, for instance by opening up or framing key view corridors and building focal points around interesting buildings.

Adaptability – Anticipating the Need for Change

6.43 An area which is adaptable to change is a place where buildings can be used for a variety of uses without the need for large scale clearance. New public buildings should be flexible enough to adapt to changes in economic trends and lifestyles to reflect the needs of the community. A town centre which can adapt will:

- Have a development layout with a block shape and size that allows for future flexibility [grid pattern and perimeter block];

- Encourage the flexible use of space;

- Create buildings that are adaptable to a variety of present and future uses;

- Reuse and enhance historic buildings and spaces; and

- Simple, uncluttered useable public spaces.

6.44 These principles should be adopted in new development.

POLICY ATC12 ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND SUS-TAINABILITY IN NEW DEVELOPMENT

The Council will encourage the reduction of energy consumption in new development through:

- The maximised use of recycled materials;
- Energy recovery facilities;
- Energy efficient designs;
- Waste and water conservation measures; &
- Other energy efficient technologies.

Good Streets and Spaces – Creating places with attractive outdoor places

6.45 Streets and spaces should ideally be overlooked with continuous and active street frontage. Public realm should be enclosed by well proportioned buildings and should be designed imaginatively with high quality materials. Good development will:

- Demonstrate how public spaces and routes will be distinctive, lively and pleasant to use;
- Recognise the importance of a feeling of safety and security;
- Create an environment that is uncluttered and easily maintained;
- Make use of public art;
- Make use of well-designed lighting and street furniture;
- Recognise the importance of creating spaces that are accessible to everyone; and
- Showing how attractive and robust planting to encourage biodiversity will be incorporated into new development.

Sustainability – Minimise the impact on our environment

6.46 National planning policy guidance requires planning authorities, developers and other partners in the provision of new development to encourage the delivery of sustainable buildings. Accordingly planning policies should support innovation and investment in sustainable buildings. All developments in Accrington need to be designed in a way that minimise impacts on the environment through reducing demands on energy, conserving water, reducing and managing waste and greening the environment. The Code for Sustainable Homes and Lifetime Home standards should inform new residential development design.

6.47 Key principles to inform new development are:

- Reduce energy demands on new development;
- Incorporate renewable energy measures;
- Incorporate water conservation and sustainable urban drainage where appropriate;
- Create provision for the sustainable management and discharge of waste; and
- Make a positive contribution to the greening of the urban environment.

6.48 The Government is committed to reducing carbon dioxide emissions through encouraging renewable forms of energy. Scope exists to increase the opportunities available for encouraging the use of renewable energy as part of the wider development of the area. This

can be achieved through the encouragement of high quality design, layout of new development to exploit passive solar gain, and the incorporation of renewable energy in new development.

6.49 Local targets for sustainable construction and decentralised energy supply may be set in the Core Strategy. Until this is adopted, policy EM18 of the adopted RSS will apply to development in the AAP area. This expects that new non-residential developments above a threshold of 1000 sq.m and all residential developments comprising 10 or more units should secure at least 10% of their predicted energy requirements from decentralised and renewable or low-carbon sources, unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant, having regard to the type of development involved and its design, that this is not feasible or viable.

6.0

7.0 The Historic Environment

Key Objectives:

7.1
- Enhancing the Quality of the Environment
- Becoming a Visitor Destination
- Promoting Investment and Business Development
- Improving Access, Movement and Transport
-
-

Policy Context for Chapter 7	The Historic Environment
National Policy	PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environ– ment – Supplementary Impact Assessment PPS12 Local Spatial Planning
Regional Spatial Strat– egy September 2008	Policy DP1 Spatial Principles Policy DP2 Promote Sustainable Communities Policy EM1 Integrated Enhancement and Protec– tion of the Region's Environmental Assets Policy W6 – Tourism and Visitor Economy Policy W7 – Principles for Tourism Development
Saved Policies Hynd– burn Local Plan 1996	Policy E6 – Built Conservation Policy E10 – English Heritage Best Practice Guidance CABE Guidance Accrington Town Centre Conserva– tion Area Management Plan Masterplan Baseline Studies Development in Conservation Areas Policy E10 – Design Considerations
Publication Draft Core Strategy March 2010	Policy A2 Accrington Town Centre Policy ENV1 – Green Infrastructure Policy ENV2 – Sustainable Develop– ment and Climate Change Policy ENV3 – High Quality Design Policy ENV4 – Environmental Amenity Policy RA2 – Historic Character & Identity Policy RA3 – Landscape Character Topic Paper: Design and Conservation Topic Paper: Historic Environment
Other Sources	English Heritage Best Practice Guidance CABE Guidance Accrington Town Centre Conserva– tion Area Management Plan Masterplan Baseline Studies