

at the heart of Pennine Lancashire

Accrington Town Centre
Final Masterplan Report
Executive Summary

July 2008





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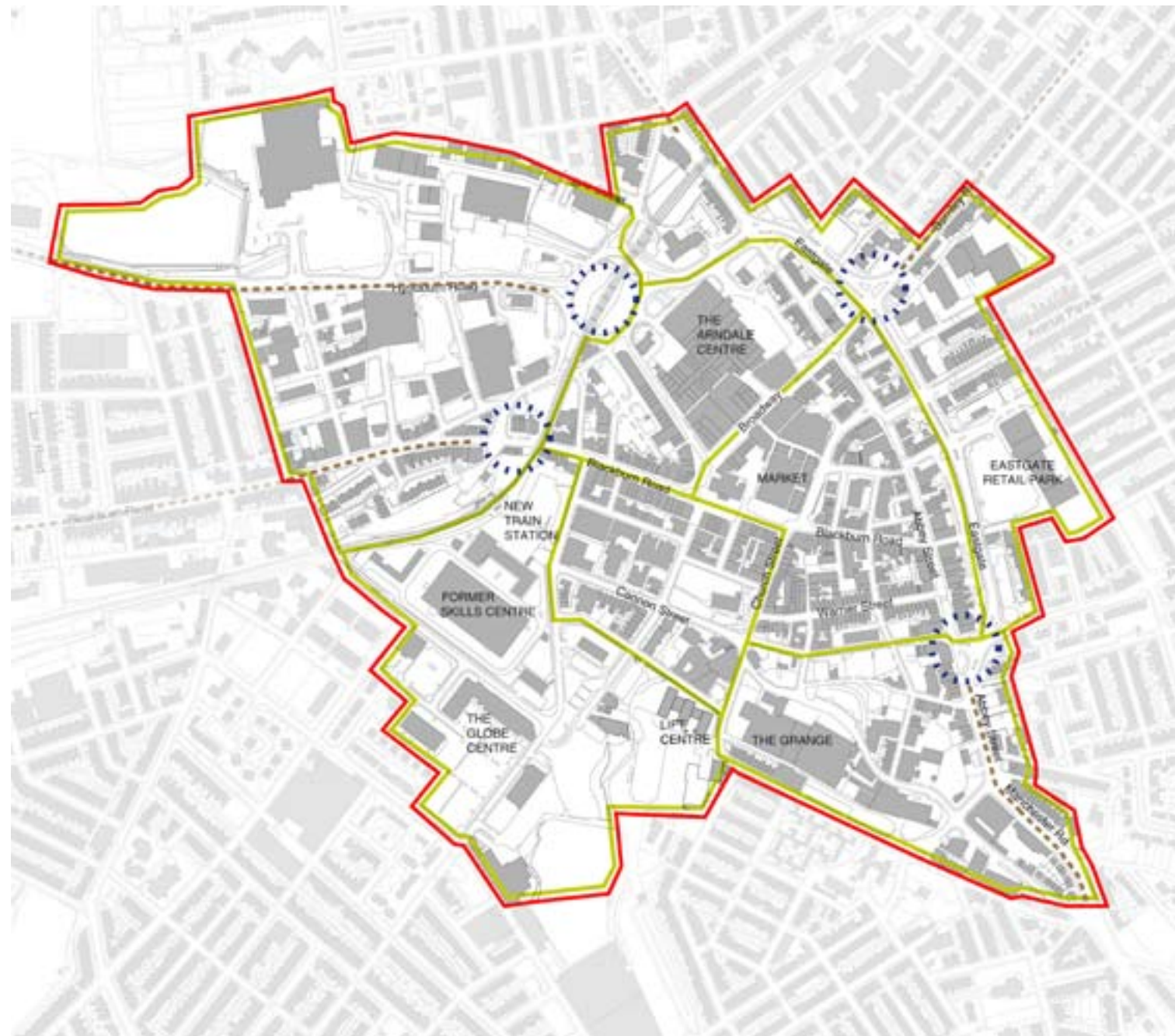


Figure 1 Masterplan Area & Quarters



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An aerial, black and white photograph of a suburban neighborhood. The houses are arranged in a grid-like pattern with some irregularities. There are many trees scattered throughout the landscape, particularly in the center and right side. The overall tone is quiet and established.

INTRODUCING
ACCRINGTON



This section sets out the context, brief and masterplan process.



STUDY CONTEXT

The Accrington Town Centre Regeneration Board produced the Accrington Town Centre Strategy in 2005. This set out a programme for improvement and investment to 2008. The vision within this report is to “*achieve a town centre with a broad and sustainable economic base which is a desirable place to visit and which can be the focus of community activity and pride*”. Underpinning this vision were six Strategic Objectives set out below, these have also informed the masterplan study.

- Strengthen Retail Position
- Become a Visitor Destination
- Enhance Quality of Environment
- Improve Access, Movement and Transport
- Promote Investment and Business Development
- Improve Educational and Training Opportunities

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY.

The masterplan for Accrington town centre was commissioned by Hyndburn Borough Council in April 2007. The study brief highlighted the need for the Borough to reposition itself within the wider Northern Way and Central Lancashire City Region Vision, completing the tapestry of towns that constitute East Lancashire and to breathe life into the unique vision for Pennine Lancashire.

The aims as set out in the brief were to provide:

- A vision and image for the town centre to deliver future prosperity and make a statement of expectations
- A detailed masterplan for the town centre and immediate surroundings based on an assessment of options

- Solutions to the long standing issues including road system improvements and a site for the new bus station
- An action plan of key projects and site development opportunities which will act as drivers with immediate action priorities
- Early wins to stimulate investment and provide a platform for long term sustainability
- Proposals for enhancing the quality of the environment/design
- A schedule of costings for each proposal within the masterplan and recommendations for funding
- Proposals for effective delivery of the masterplan with timescales.



KEY STAGES OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the masterplan is to set out a sustainable and deliverable vision for the town centre to guide planning policy and set the context for individual projects and developments to come forward. This will also provide a framework for potential funding bids and Lancashire County Council and Hyndburn Borough Council capital programmes as well as informing the spend from Section 106 planning funds. Hyndburn Council intend to take the masterplan forward as an Area Action Plan which will form a Development Plan Document in the Local Development Framework,

MASTERPLAN PROCESS.

URBED have led the masterplan process supported by a range of sub consultants. Throughout the commission analysis, ideas and proposals have been tested and explored with the Accrington Town Centre Regeneration Board and other stakeholders. This group has acted as the stakeholder group and sounding board for the study. This group has included local traders, council officers, elected members and community representatives. The key stages of the study are set out below starting in April 2007:

April-June 2007	Baseline Analysis
7th June	Town Centre Walkabout with Stakeholder Group Members
14th June	Stakeholder Group Issues & Opportunities Workshop
9th August	Presentation to the Stakeholder Group on the Baseline Findings
July-September	Option Development
20th September	Option Appraisal Workshop with Stakeholder Group
October-November	Preferred Option Development
November	Preferred Option Presentation and Discussion with Stakeholder Group
December-January	Preparation for Public Consultation
January 25th and 26th	Public Consultation on Options and Preferred Option/Draft Masterplan.
February-April	Preparation of Final Masterplan.
May-June	Approval of Final Masterplan by Hyndburn Borough Council.
July 2008	Endorsement of Masterplan by Council

There are a number of supporting reports to this Masterplan Report based on the above stages. These are set out below and available online at www.hyndburnbc.gov.uk and www.urbed.coop.

SUPPORTING REPORTS

Stakeholder Workshop Report	July 2007.
Baseline Report	January 2008.
Issues and Options Report.	January 2008.
Draft Masterplan Consultation	January 2008.
Public Consultation Feedback Report	March 2008.



REDEFINING
ACCRINGTON



This section describes the vision and strategy which will drive and direct the masterplan and regeneration of the town centre.

TOWN CENTRE VISION AND STRATEGY

Vision



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

Strategy Aims

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 emphasise its **traditional character 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 multiple retailers to the town rests on the redevelopment and modernisation of the Arndale Shopping Centre which has become outdated and unattractive.

The town centre now needs to adopt a **multi-stranded retail strategy** that attracts in additional multiple retailers but also bolsters the traditional and independent retail sector.

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

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

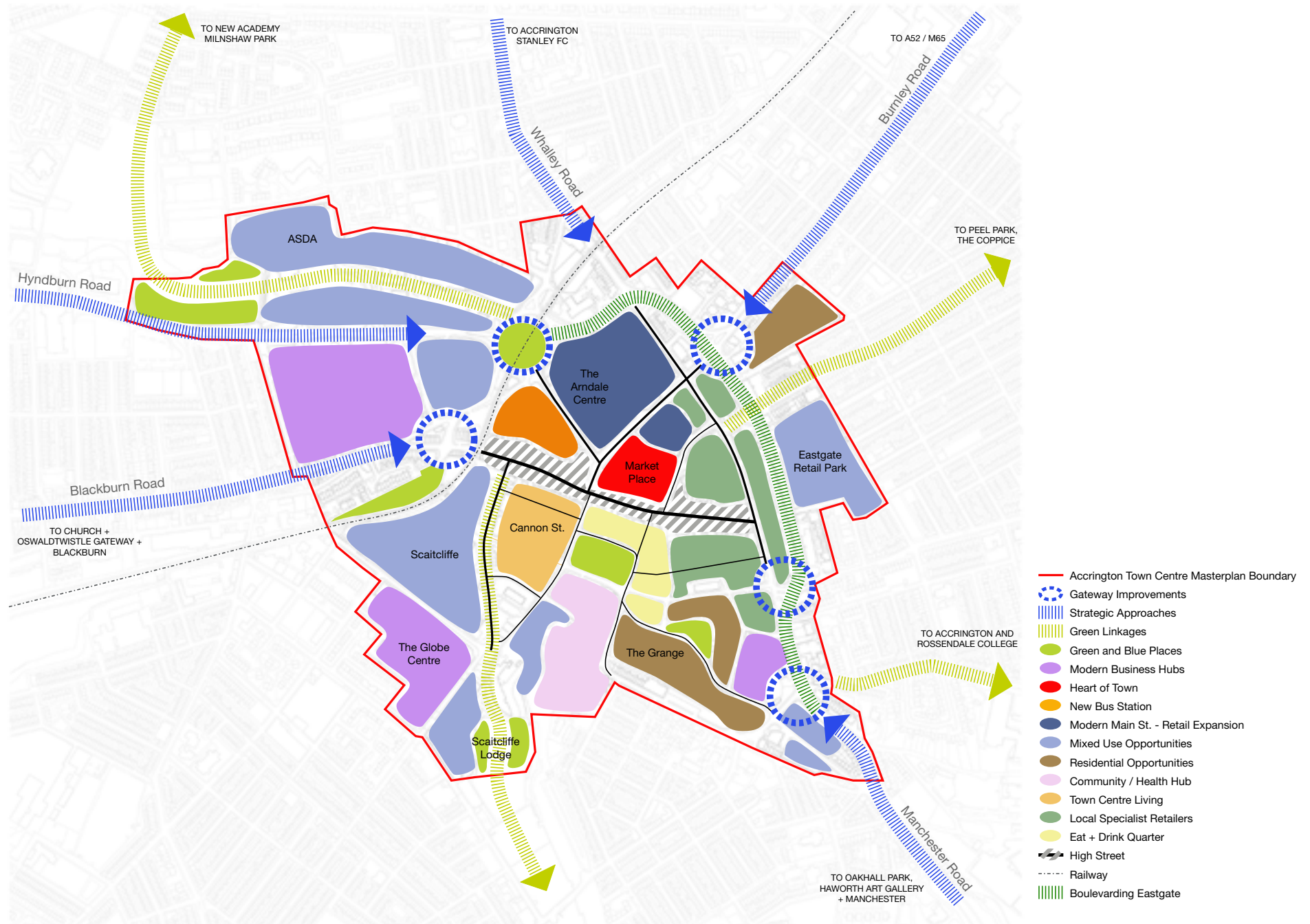
Proposals for new business and workspace hubs will **increase economic activity** and business start up and entrepreneurialism in the town. A planned new sixth form and the recent investment in Accrington and Rossendale College will improve educational and training opportunities in the town.

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 Cannon Street area. There is also much to celebrate and promote of the towns heritage and industrial pioneers which could take place in such buildings.

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 around Peel Street and the Market Hall will act as an exemplar project creating a special space 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 Woodhook Vale, Peel Park, Oakhill Park and the Leeds-Liverpool Canal will increase the town's attractiveness as a destination.

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.

The Town Spatial Framework at Figure 2 identifies recommended land uses and spatial principles to guide more detailed development and design considerations.





MASTERPLAN AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Strengthening the Retail Provision in the Town Centre

To direct and guide the implementation of the vision for the town and define projects and local improvements a series of aims and objectives have been developed. The 6 key aims 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

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

Preston is the key shopping destination in Lancashire, and that is set to improve further with the forthcoming Grosvenor scheme. 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.

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.

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.



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 masterplan. 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.

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.

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.

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 include an 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.

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.

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.

The Market Hall is to 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.





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 & 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 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.

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.

Linkages between key areas in the retail sector of Accrington need to be enhanced. As Figure 3 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 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.

Figure 4 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.

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.

Figure 5 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.

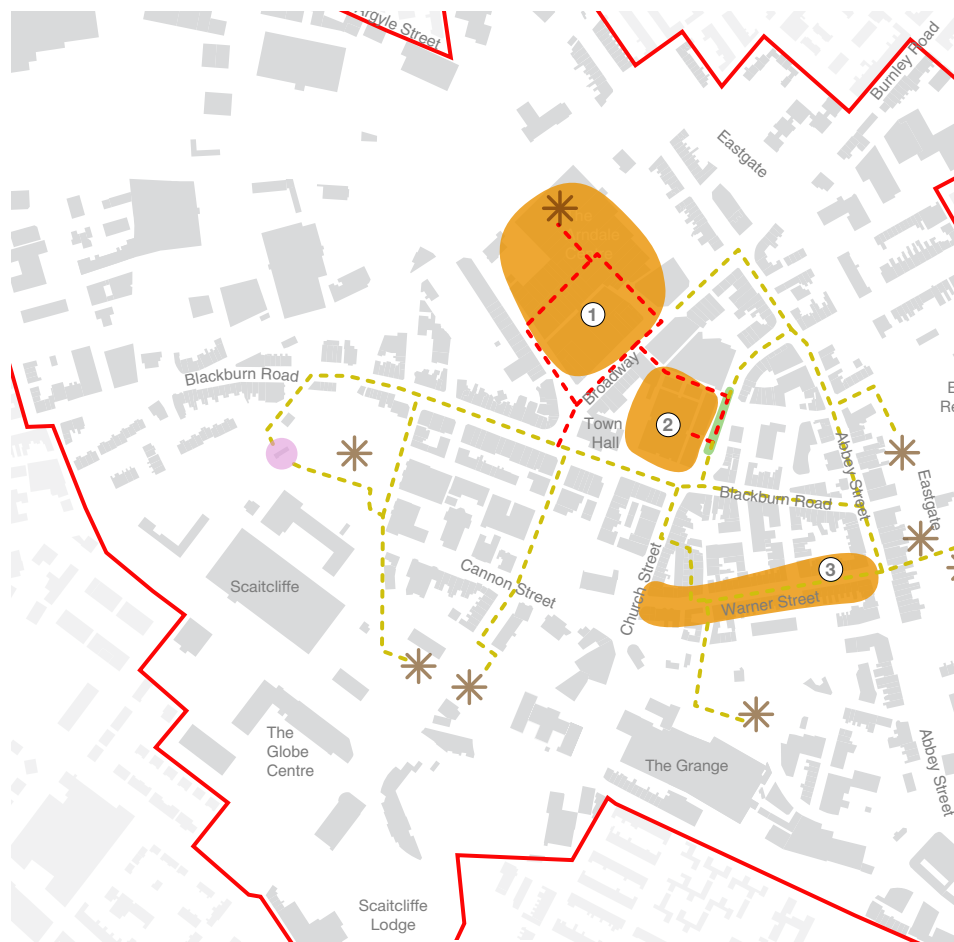


Figure 3 Existing Retail Circuits

Town Arrival Points

- Bus Station
- Railway Station
- ★ Car Parks

Town Retail Destinations

- ① Arndale
- ② Market
- ③ Warner St

Existing Retail Circuits

- Strong
- Weaker

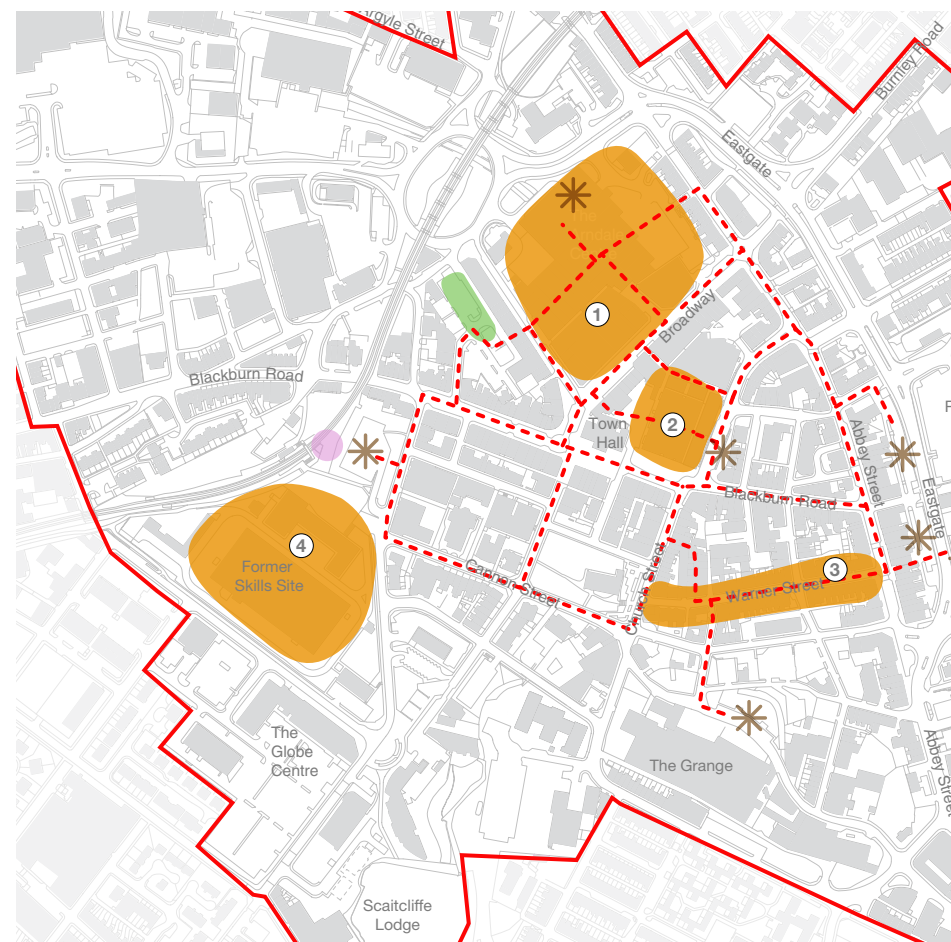


Figure 4 Proposed Retail Circuits

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 Circuits



Becoming a Visitor Destination

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 in to 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.

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 in the Cannon Street area as part of the quarter's redevelopment. This would complement the employment hub around the Globe and new 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.

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.

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 recent new Health Centre will support this function.

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.

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.

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.







Enhancing the Quality of the Environment

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.

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 Woodhook 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 of 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.

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.

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.

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 multi-functional uses including habitats and wildlife, recreational and cultural experience, as well as delivering ecological services, such as flood protection and microclimate control'.

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





Improving Access, Movement, and Transport

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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 town's 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.





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.

Promoting Investment and Business Development

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.

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.

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.

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.





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.

To develop local enterprise, start up businesses and skills

A key initiative to help implement this objective is the joint LEGI (Local Enterprise Growth Initiative) “Great Goals”. Hyndburn is benefiting from a share of the £23.4 million of funding as of 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.

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 animation 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.

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 and should be further tested on a site by site basis. 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 centre through good urban design that creates strong frontages and a series of attractive spaces, buildings and streets.





Improving Educational and Training Opportunities

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, 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.

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.

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

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.

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 commences in April 2009.

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. 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.

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.

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.

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.