

Bradford City Centre Design Guide

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION



This draft design guide has been produced for Bradford Council and Bradford Centre Regeneration by URBED and Landscape Projects. It was initially published as a draft in April 2005 for core consultation partners. This version has been produced for general public consultation following which an amended version of the guidance will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document for the city centre.

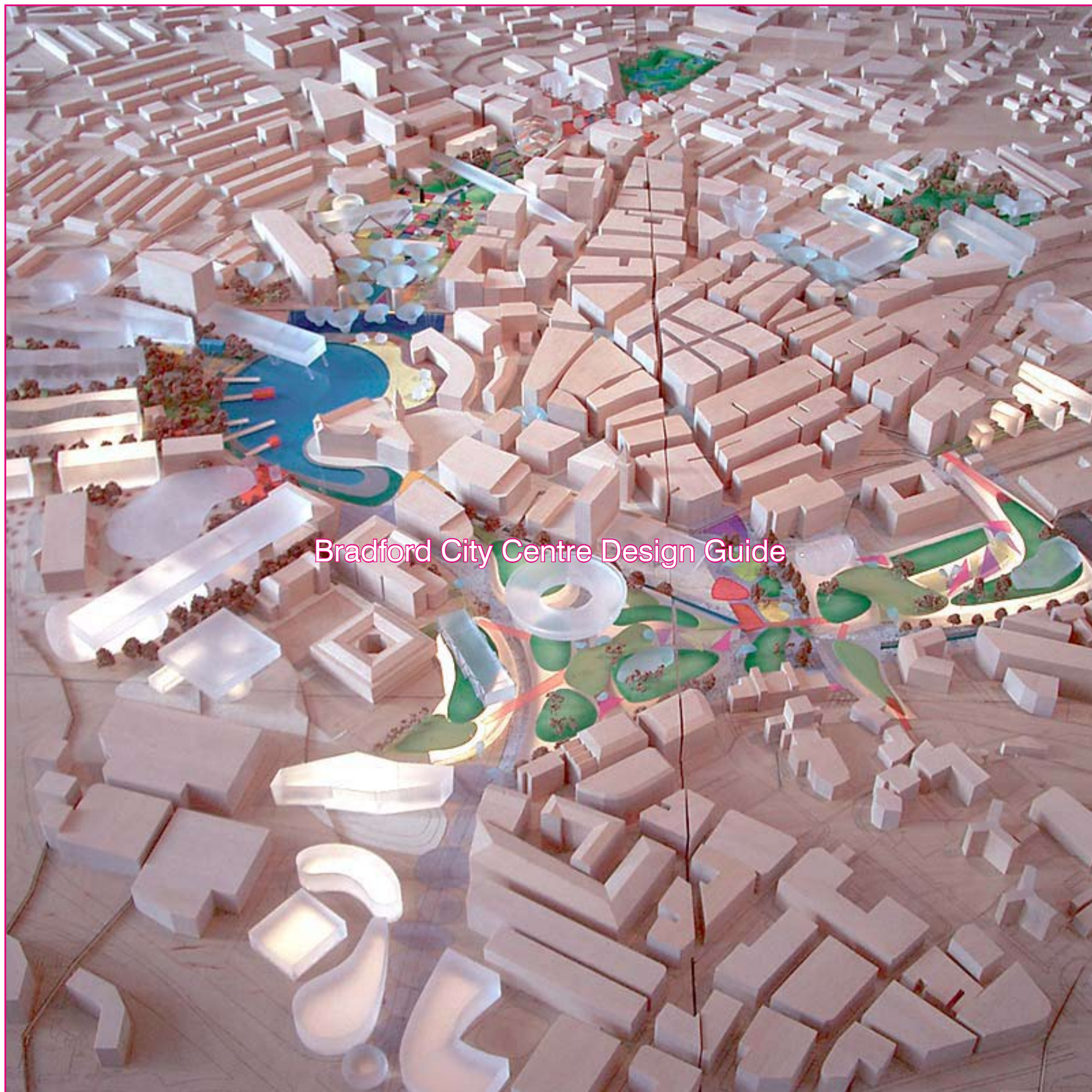
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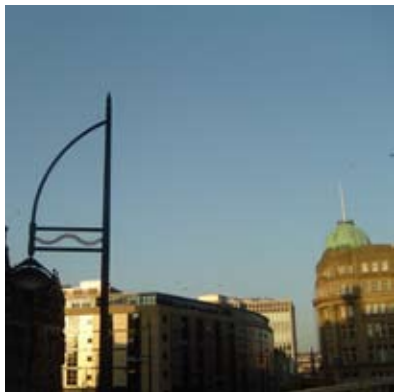
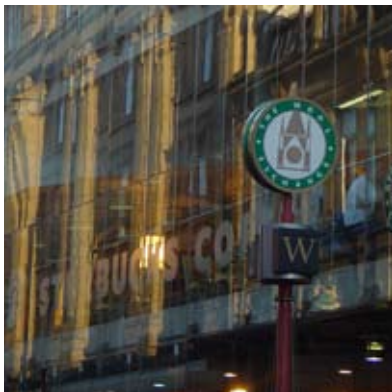
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Bradford City Centre Design Guide



Introduction	1	Urban Design Framework	27	Urban Design Code	41	Public Realm Guidance	57
Purpose of the guide	2	Repair and reinvention	28	The street network	42	Public realm principles	58
The City Centre Masterplan	4	2X2 Neighbourhoods	30	Animating the public realm	44	Bowl	60
		Stars and supporting cast	32	The enclosure of space	46	Channel	62
Bradford City Centre	6	Building Line	34	Massing and tall buildings	48	Market	64
The development of Bradford	8	Street hierarchy	36	Design quality	50	Valley	66
Built form	10	Tall buildings strategy	38	Street Character	52	Legibility and identity	68
Land use	12			Critical Mass	54	Public realm design: Parks	70
Built heritage	14					Materials	72
The street hierarchy	16						
Tall buildings and topography	18					Glossary	76
Public Realm	20					Photo credits	77
Open spaces	22						
Types of space	24						







Introduction

This document sets out urban design guidance for Bradford City Centre. The starting point for this has been the form and structure of the city centre and its wonderful historic legacy of fine streets and buildings. Over this has been laid the Bradford Centre Regeneration Masterplan by Alsop Architects that set out a long term vision for the transformation of the City Centre. This guide is in five parts:

- **Introduction:** In which we describe the background and purpose of the guide and the context provided by the Bradford Centre Regeneration Masterplan.
- **Bradford City Centre:** In which we analyse the form and structure of Bradford city centre looking at its historic development, built form, land use, streets and public spaces.
- **Urban design framework:** In which we set out a structure for the guidance. We define zones of 'repair' and 'reinvention', define four neighbourhoods, introduce the concept of 'star' and 'supporting cast' buildings, street hierarchy, building lines and tall buildings policy.
- **Urban design code:** In which we set out rules to guide development in the city centre covering the street network, the height and siting of buildings, design, uses and density.
- **Public realm design guide:** In which we describe a strategy for the public realm of the city centre and each of the neighbourhoods as a prelude to the development of a more detailed public realm handbook for the city centre.

Purpose of the guide

This guide has been commissioned by Bradford Council in partnership with Bradford Centre Regeneration, the Urban Regeneration Company (URC) established to regenerate the city centre. It is the result of one of a series of studies commissioned following the completion of the Bradford Centre Regeneration Masterplan by Alsop Architects. The vision for Bradford Centre, set out by Alsop Architects, received widespread exposure and the aim of the subsequent work was to operationalise the strategy in a form that could be taken forward by the Council and the URC and embodied in planning policy.

This design guide was the first step in this process and it has been followed by four Neighbourhood Development Frameworks (NDFs) for each of the neighbourhoods identified in the City Centre masterplan. The NDFs explored the practical

implications of implementing proposal for each area. The draft guide provided a context for the NDFs and has also been prepared to be adopted as planning policy. It is proposed that it will initially be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document to the Unitary Development Plan (UDP). When the UDP is replaced under the Local Development Framework, the guide is intended to become part of an Area Action Plan for the city centre prepared by the Council. This guide therefore:

- ☐ develops the City Centre Masterplan by laying bare its constituent parts and explaining how it can be implemented.
- ☐ applies the rules and principles of urban design in the context of the unique character and heritage of central Bradford.

- ☐ sets out a strategy and guidance for the treatment of the public realm in the city centre to achieve design excellence and a consistency of approach in different areas and between public and private developments.

Who is the guide for?

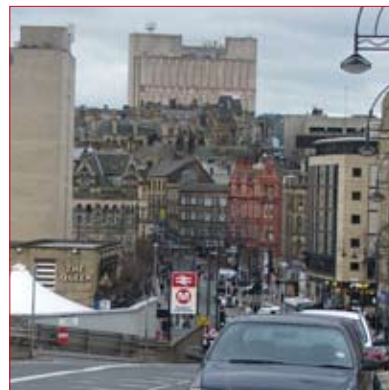
The guide is written for anyone interested in the future design and built heritage of the city. However it is aimed particularly at the following groups:

- ☐ The planning authority where it will help guide development control decisions and plan-making.
- ☐ Developers in the public and private sectors and their consultants working in Bradford. It describes

the way in which the masterplan is being interpreted and the quality of design that is being sought as well as giving practical guidance about what is expected of new buildings and public realm works in the city centre.

- ☐ Public sector agencies responsible for public realm improvements and other physical works in the city.
- ☐ Members of the public wishing to comment on the way the City Centre is being developed.

The guide concentrates on the urban design, architecture and heritage of the city centre. It does not supersede any existing policies relating to Bradford City centre and should be read in conjunction with the Bradford UDP.





Bradford city centre 2004

The City Centre Masterplan

Bradford Centre Regeneration was established in February 2003 and one of its first tasks was to set out a vision for the city centre. This was undertaken by Alsop Architects and was set out four principles:

- **Repositioning Bradford** – looking at the function of the city and defining a distinctive role in relation of surrounding centres;
- **Revealing Bradford** – exploring the hidden assets of the city;
- **Reshaping Bradford** – setting out a physical masterplan for the city centre and ...
- **Rebuilding Bradford** – delivering the masterplan over time.

The citywide context was set out as an 8x8km grid of 64 squares offering a 'new mental map of Bradford' as a polycentric borough with a wide range of attractions. This was focused on the city centre taking up four of these squares leading to a 2x2 vision of The Bowl, The Channel, The Market and

the Valley. The core of the strategy was to use public realm interventions in these areas to redefine the city centre and to changes people's perceptions of it as a place to live, work and play and, for developers, to invest. The four neighbourhoods identified in the masterplan were as follows:

The Bowl: The masterplan envisioned a pool created around City Hall symbolising its position as the natural meeting point so that it would become a showcase for the city. A *Pier* built into the pool accommodated screens for digital performances and the area was bounded to the south by a *Business Forest*.

The Channel: This proposed recreating the canal north of the city centre set within a new park, bounded by housing and live-work accommodation. The proposed Broadway shopping centre was reconfigured to allow the park to 'flow' up the valley to link to the *Bowl*.

The Market: The proposals for the market area involved strengthening the existing retail function. A *Garden of*

Tranquillity was proposed over Drewton Road to create a setting for the Mosque with a reinvigorated market, speciality retailing, cultural uses and housing overlooking the Channel.

The Valley: To the west of the centre the plan proposed that the Thornton Road valley be opened up as a linear park along the Beck, framed by the two towers of the Odeon. The park included ecology areas, an orchard and space for discovery, experimentation and learning. A *learning bridge* over the park linked the university and college to the city centre.

The evolution of the plan

The masterplan has raised the profile and aspirations of Bradford and the Council and URC are committed to its implementation. However circumstances change, and plans need to evolve - particularly a plan as challenging as the Bradford Centre Masterplan. However only by aiming so high can radical change be brought about. The following elements of the plan have therefore evolved:

Density of development: At the time of the plan demand for development was weak and land relatively cheap. Since then there has been far greater development pressure and there are greater opportunities for more development, particularly in the *Channel* and the *Valley*.

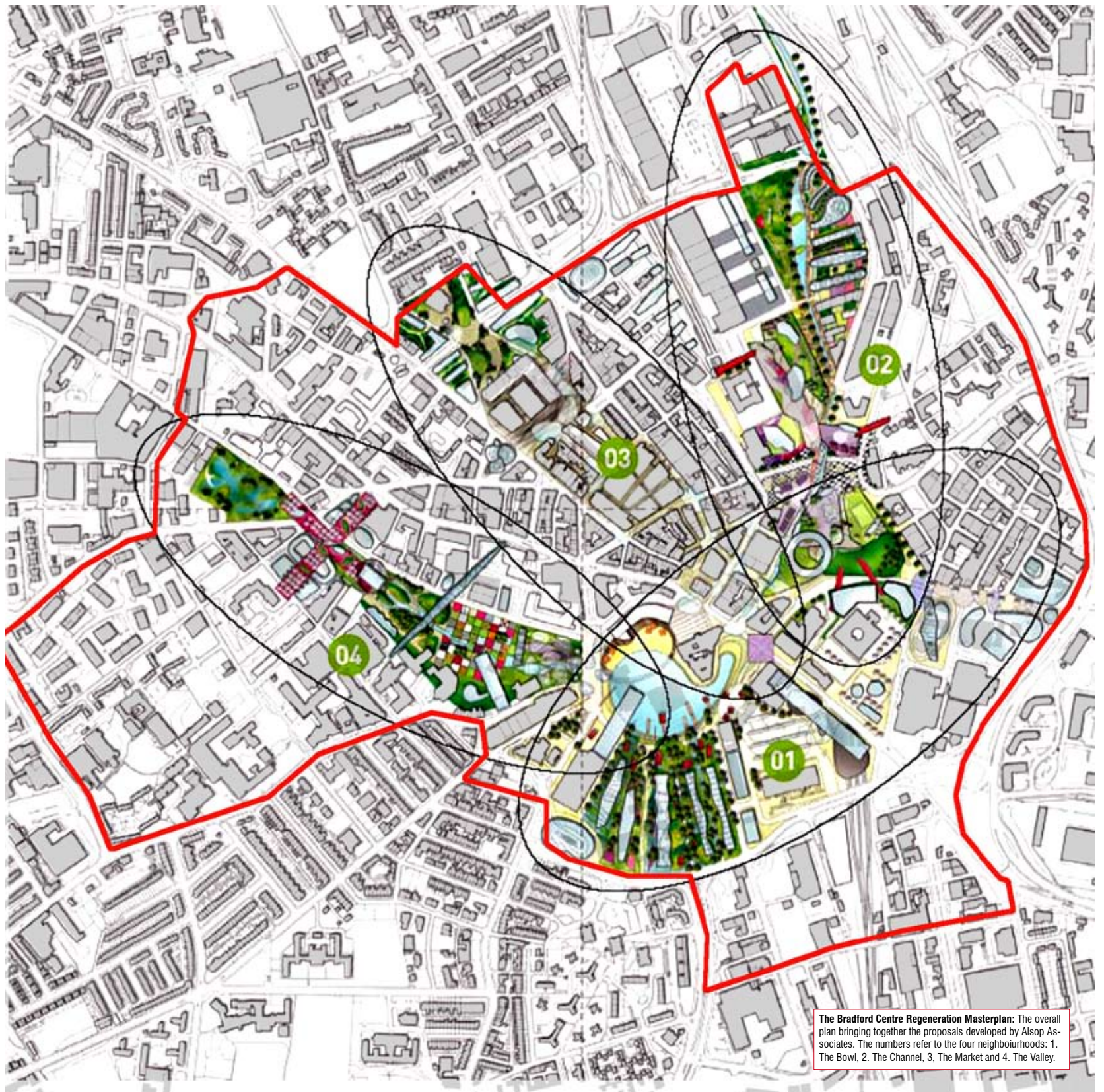
Housing development: The increased interest in city centre living in Bradford provides the opportunity for much more and varied housing development than assumed in the masterplan.

Water: A hydrological study has helped to give confidence in the practicality of proposals for the canal in the *Channel* and the pool in the *Bowl*.

Broadway Shopping Centre: The proposals for the new shopping centre which differ from the masterplan have now received planning permission.

These issues have evolved through the Neighbourhood Development Frameworks and this guide. However all of this work remains faithful to the principles of the masterplan.





The Bradford Centre Regeneration Masterplan: The overall plan bringing together the proposals developed by Alsop Associates. The numbers refer to the four neighbourhoods: 1. The Bowl, 2. The Channel, 3. The Market and 4. The Valley.

Bradford City Centre

Bradford City Centre is at the heart of a great European City with an immediate population of around 350,000 people. Once the world centre for the worsted trade it is now reclaiming its position as one of the UK's leading provincial cities. The City Centre masterplan and this design guidance that flows from it are crucial tools in creating a city centre fit for a city of Bradford's potential. In this section we explore the current structure and character of the City centre as the basis for the guidance in the later parts of this guide.

□ **The development of Bradford:**
In which we look at the history of the city and how it has shaped the form and appearance of the centre today.

□ **Built form:** In which we look at the urban structure of the centre, the density of development and the enclosure of space.

□ **Land use:** In which we describe the main activities that take place in the city centre and how this is changing.

□ **Built heritage:** In which we look at the four city centre conservation areas and the main listed buildings.

□ **The street hierarchy:** In which we describe the way that the traditional street network of the city developed and how it has been engineered for traffic.

□ **Tall buildings and topography:**
In which we describe the form of the valley in which Bradford sits, the prominent buildings in the city centre and how these combine to create views.

□ **Public realm:** In which we look at the character of the streets and spaces of each part of the city centre

□ **Open spaces:** In which we look at the public squares, parks and landscaped areas.

□ **Types of space:** In which we draw together the conclusions of the public realm work to suggest a series of types of space that characterise the city centre.



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The development of Bradford

'Broad Ford', later known as Bradford, was first a settlement in Saxon times and by the middle ages had become a small settlement centred on what are now Kirkgate, Westgate and Ivegate, at the junction of three valleys in the basin of the River Aire. The town developed as a centre for the woollen trade, first recorded in 1311. It was ideally suited for textiles with plentiful supplies of iron ore, coal and soft water. However poor connections limited its growth until the opening of the canal in 1776 and the railway in 1846.

This led to a century of growth that saw Bradford's population rise from 4,200 in 1781 to over 200,000 by 1891. In the middle years of the century Bradford was the fastest growing city in the country and became Britain's seventh largest city rivalling the other great textile city of the era, Manchester. In 1841 it was estimated that two-thirds of the country's wool production was processed in Bradford – ten years

later it was the undisputed wool capital of the world. The city exploded with life as thousands of people flooded in including German and East European Merchants who were central to the textile trade by the late 1800s.

The city became a focus for immigration starting with the Irish in the 1850s who, at one point, accounted for 1 in 10 of the population. Over the next century they were joined by Poles, Ukrainians, Latvians, Estonians, Hungarians, Yugoslavians, Byelorussians, Lithuanians, Austrians, Italians creating a lively multi-cultural population.

The Victorian buildings of Bradford City Centre (and the ornate monuments in Undercliffe Cemetery) stand as testament to the fortunes that were made in Bradford at this time. The boom years left an unrivalled architectural legacy. However Bradford was also known for its squalor. These two aspects were captured by Fredrick Engles writing in

1844; *'On a fine Sunday [the town] offers a superb picture when viewed from the surrounding heights. Yet within reigns filth and discomfort... in the lanes, alleys and courts lie filth and debris in heaps; the houses are ruinous, dirty and miserable'*.

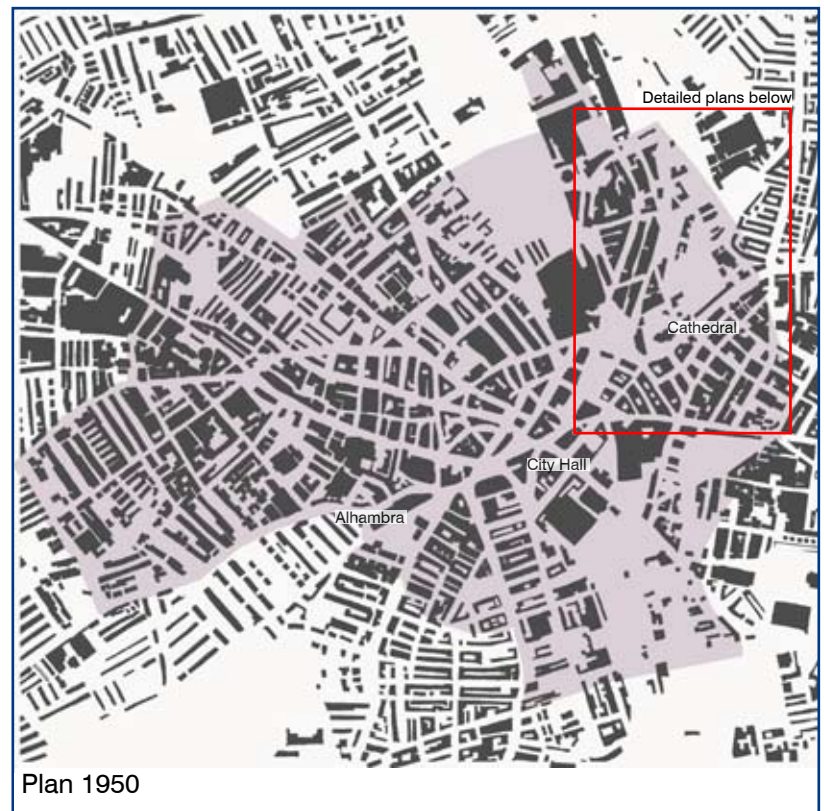
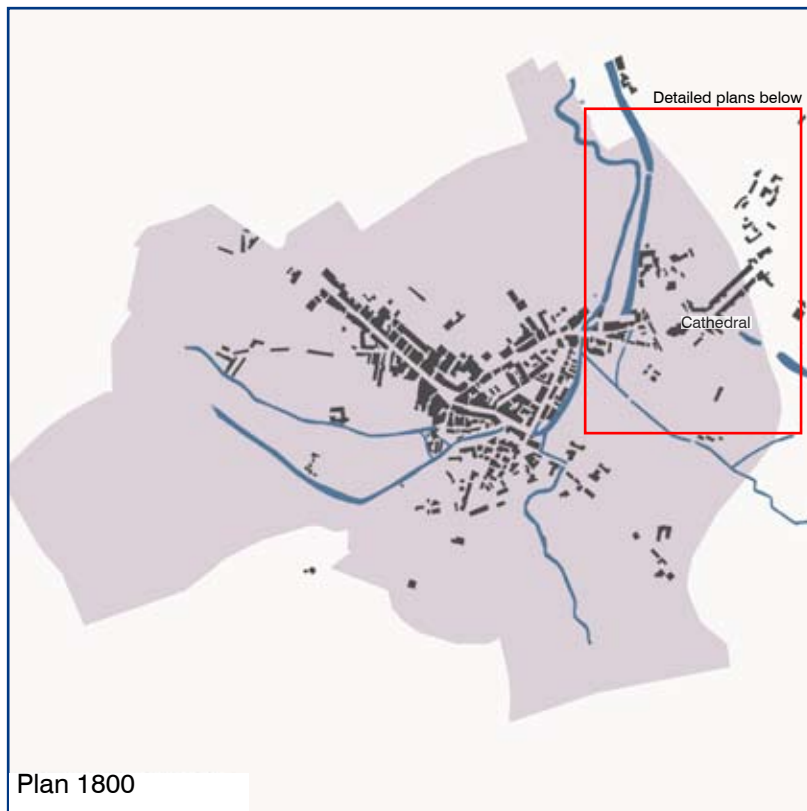
Bradford's prosperity started to wane in the 20th century as import tariffs robbed it of its international markets. Decline was long and protracted but there was still enough employment to attract Commonwealth immigration in the 1950s and 60s to work in the mills. The confidence of the 1960s saw large parts of the centre rebuilt and the city went through a further period of growth in the late 1980s and early 90s securing investment including the 'National Museum of Photography, Film and

Television and the refurbishment of the Alhambra Theatre. However this progress was not maintained and the city went through a difficult period in the late 1990s.

Since that time Bradford has reinvented itself, recently under the banner 'One Landscape – Many Views'. The Bradford Centre Regeneration Masterplan and the launch of the Urban Regeneration Company are an important part of this renaissance. So too is the market confidence that has returned to the city centre. However as the 1960s illustrated, periods of growth can do damage as well as good. This time it is vital that this growth is harnessed to preserve and enhance the architectural legacy we have inherited and to create an equally strong legacy for the future.

An important role for the guide is to preserve Bradford's heritage while harnessing current confidence and growth to repair and enhance the city centre.







The plan to the right is a diagram called a 'figure ground plan'. It lays bare the structure of a place by showing only the buildings. If this plan is compared to the historic figure ground plans on the previous pages we can see the extent to which the city centre has changed. Historic Bradford had its problems; the poor quality housing around the centre and the polluting industry. But it was also a city of fine streets, bustling with life, of civic spaces defined by buildings developed with pride and confidence. The figure ground plan shows that whilst part of this has been lost, much remains intact.

The plan allows the integrity of the build fabric of the city to be explored. In some areas such as above Market Street and Little Germany the urban fabric remains much as it

was on the historic plans. However elsewhere the fabric has become frayed. This is partly through economic decline and the loss of buildings to be replaced with surface parking – for example along the Thornton Road and up Canal Road to the rear of the Cathedral. Elsewhere it is because of some of the unsympathetic developments and road schemes from the 1960s. This is true of areas to the south of the city centre from Manchester Road around to Leeds Road. Together these two factors have created a 'shatter zone' around much of the city centre that is dominated by roads, surface parking and large unsympathetic buildings.

Development interests in the city centre mean that there is now the possibility of repairing the damaged fabric in the areas of decline.

This however must be done without repeating the mistakes of the past – which is the role of this guide.

In doing this, one of the most important issues is the treatment of the public realm. The streets and squares of a city are the places that shape its character, personality and its appearance. Good quality public spaces are enclosed by well-proportioned buildings that spill their life onto the street. The Figure ground

plan tells us nothing of scale and proportion but it does show where spaces are contained by buildings. Where streets and spaces stand out clearly on the plan they are likely to be well enclosed on the ground – see for example Westgate and Kirkgate. Where they cannot be seen it is likely that they are poorly enclosed and feel like traffic routes rather than urban streets. This is the case with most of the major roads in the centre and the public spaces.

An important role for the guide is to set in place rules to preserve the urban form of the areas that retain their character and to repair and reinstate the urban fabric in the shatter zones.





Figure ground plan

Traditionally the city centre was a dense mix of commercial and industrial development alongside workers housing, administrative functions, cultural uses and shopping. In the last 50 or so years the housing and industrial uses have all but disappeared while the retailing, commerce and administrative uses have broadly held their own and uses such as the university and cultural facilities have expanded.

Retailing: The retail core runs from Well Street between Cheapside and Westgate to St. John's market. This area has declined in recent years and there are advanced proposals to redevelop the entire eastern part of the area as the Broadway Shopping Centre. There is also some unsympathetic 'big box' retailing stretching up Valley Road to the north.

Administrative and cultural uses: These are concentrated in the southern part of the city centre. The City Hall



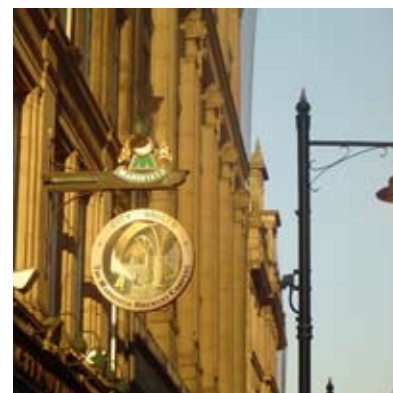
stands in the heart of the administrative quarter together with the police station and Magistrates Courts (both of which are to be relocated as part of the City Centre masterplan). The main Council Offices are in Jacob's Well, Britania House and on Nelson Street. Cultural facilities are grouped around City Hall including the Alhambra Theatre, St. Georges Hall, the National Museum of Photography Film and Television and the Central Library.

Commercial uses: This is perhaps where the greatest change has taken place. The city's commercial trade was dominated by the worsted industry including the 'Stuff' warehouses of Thornton Road where textiles were stored and processed and the 'Piece' warehouses of Little Germany where the textiles were traded. Textiles have



now been replaced by sectors such as banking, financial services and mail order mostly located in new offices around the edge of the centre and outside the town with plentiful parking. This has left vacant office space in the centre that could be used for other uses such as housing. The 'Stuff' warehousing has tended to remain in low rent occupation while in Little Germany there has been some success in letting space to small and creative businesses.

Housing: The last of the slum housing was cleared in the 1960s and for



years the only city centre housing was on Church Bank and Chain Street. A city centre housing market has been late developing in Bradford however schemes have been successful in areas like Little Germany and the market is expanding rapidly as residential developers explore both new build and refurbishment schemes in centre.

Education: The University and College are based on a campus to the west of the city centre. Both institutions have promoted masterplans to reassess their relationship with the centre.

An important role for the guide is to provide guidance for new residential development and to make the most of the centre's mix of uses to enliven public spaces.





Built heritage



The built form of the centre is predominantly Victorian and dates from Bradford's boom years in the second half of the 19th century. At its best Bradford's Victorian townscape rivals any of the great cities in the UK. The city centre includes four conservation areas and around 100 listed buildings:

The City Centre: This is the largest conservation area covering the heart of the city. The area has medieval roots, still seen in the pattern of streets and names such as Ivegate and Kirkgate. It was however rebuilt in the late 19th century when Bradford was the rapidly growing international centre of the wool trade. Fortunes were made in 19th century Bradford and the merchants invested some of this wealth into warehouses,

banks, commercial buildings and public institutions such as the Wool Exchange, City Hall and St. Georges Hall. These buildings were designed in the honey-coloured local sandstone by local architects. They create an exuberant, confident city centre which while much altered retains its character.

Little Germany: To the east of the centre lies Little Germany, built on sloping land by worsted merchants (many originally from Germany and Eastern Europe). This too is a result of Bradford's late heyday and the buildings are ornate 'piece' warehouses creating, arguably the finest merchant's quarter in the country. 55 of the area's 85 buildings are listed and its character is based on sloping streets with the



warehouses getting higher lower down the hill to create a dramatic townscape.

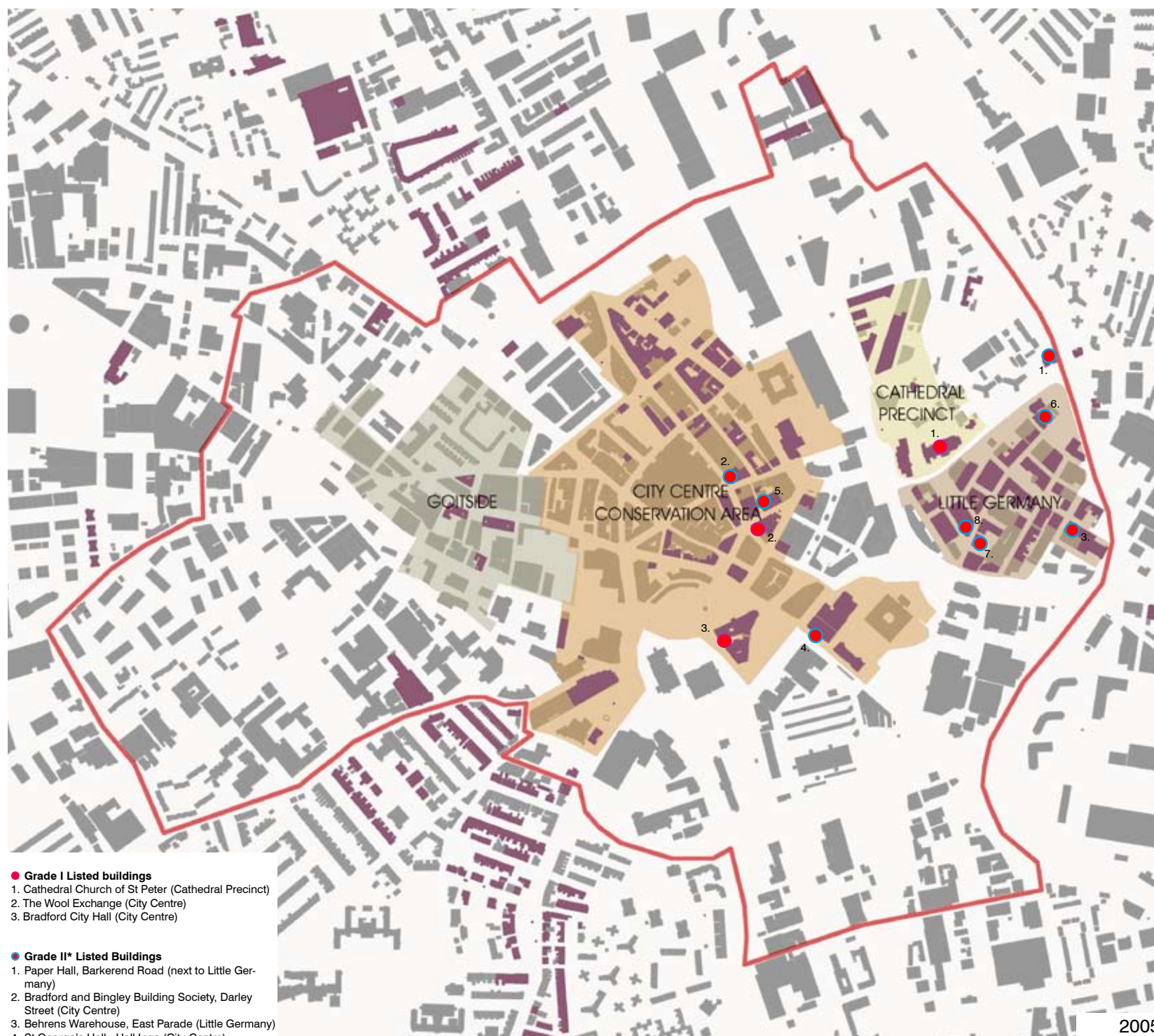
Cathedral Precinct: This is one of the oldest parts of Bradford and the Cathedral is perhaps the most important building. The area was one of the first parts of the city to industrialise with the arrival of the canal in the 1770s. The lower part includes some important commercial buildings while the slopes west of this were once housing and are now surface parking. There are 16 listed buildings in the area.



Goitside: To the west of the city centre the Goitside conservation area takes in many of the 'Stuff' warehouses. The Goit is a medieval water channel built to power a corn mill and the area was already industrialised at the start of the 19th century. It was completely redeveloped in the late 19th century since when it has remained largely untouched. It contains only 6 listed buildings, however the group value of the buildings is far greater because it remains a largely complete urban landscape, typical of 19th century Bradford.

An important role for the guide is to ensure that new development respects Bradford's Victorian past without becoming a pastiche of historical styles.





All other listed buildings are Grade II

Listed buildings and conservation areas

The street hierarchy

Urban areas are shaped by their streets. They not only allow for movement, they create the shape and character of a place and they make up the majority of the public realm where the life of a city takes place. The map to the right shows the Victorian street network of Bradford and the map on the facing page shows the situation today. This has developed over time in the following stages:

The original roads into Bradford were on the high ground (red on the plan). Westgate / Wakefield Road was originally a Roman Road and crossed the river at the 'Broad Ford' from which Bradford takes its name. Later in the Victorian era the valley bottom was developed and new roads were built (dark orange on the plan). These together with the dense network of minor roads created the shape of the city - a huge spider's web of connected streets tying the city together. This street layout is very permeable and there is also a strong hierarchy of routes – the red and dark orange streets are high streets, lined with taller buildings and at ground level with shops. The plan on the facing page shows the situation today. This has been shaped in the following ways:

The Central Ring Road: This was built in the 1960s diverting traffic around the city centre but cutting the central area off from its surroundings. The eastern part of the central ring road has been closed as part of the Broadway development.

The City Ring: This has been developed more recently to take through traffic out of the centre altogether. The western leg of this has not been completed although there are plans to extend it to Thornton Road.

Traffic measures: On many of the major roads access has been limited. This is shown by the number of dead end streets - on today's map compared to the Victorian map to the right.

Pedestrianisation: The central area has been pedestrianised, soon to be extended to Forster Square. However heavy traffic on Hall Ings and Princes Way is intrusive in the city centre.

The result of these changes is that Bradford's traffic may flow more easily, which is important for the success of the city centre - however



the city has become more difficult to move around by other means and many of the most important streets are no longer attractive urban spaces.

Discussions are being held about a comprehensive traffic scheme to remove through traffic from the centre and to create strategic car parks.

An important role for the guide is to aid the reconnection of the road hierarchy and to ensure that the scale of development relates to the importance of the street.





This plan shows the street network of Bradford today based on the origins of the road. The colours show when each street was first established:

Red The original roads that came into historic Bradford generally stuck to the higher ground

Orange The Victorian roads came in along the valley bottom

Yellow The rest of the Victorian street network (see plan above left) was a dense network of streets linking together all parts of the city.

Green The Central Ring road built in the late 1960s cut through this network creating a barrier around part of the town centre (hatched areas are being closed or downgraded)

Blue The City Ring road has further severed the street network (the hatched line shows the proposed extension).

Yellow Dead end streets - as a result of this there are now a large number of streets that do not connect to the rest of the network.

Brown Barriers - this, together with topography, creates a series of barriers to movement around the town.

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Street network

Tall buildings and topography

One of the most important factors in understanding the form of Bradford is topography. The city was built at the confluence of four streams flowing northwards into the Bradford Beck. These streams create a natural bowl in a valley that flows down from the west to a relatively flat area around the City Hall before flowing onwards down the valley to the north.

The market area of the city centre is built on a spur of land jutting onto the valley. The market is almost at the top of the hill and the land falls away steeply towards Thornton Road and beyond Manor Row. To the east of the centre the land rises again up Church Bank and Little Germany. There is a similar hill to the south west rising up to the University and a further hill to the south east.

As described in the previous section, the oldest roads into Bradford come over these four hills. However the roads built in the Victorian era travel along the valley bottoms, notably Manchester Road, Leeds Road, Valley Road to the north and Thornton Road to the east. Because of the topography of the city, most of these arrival routes do not provide good views of the centre. By contrast the high roads provide commanding views on arrival to the city centre. The most important of these is the view from the Wakefield Road across the city centre to Manningham Mills, Lister Park and onwards to Baildon Moor.

The plan also shows the main tall buildings in the city centre. The most important of these is the City Hall which stands in the centre of the



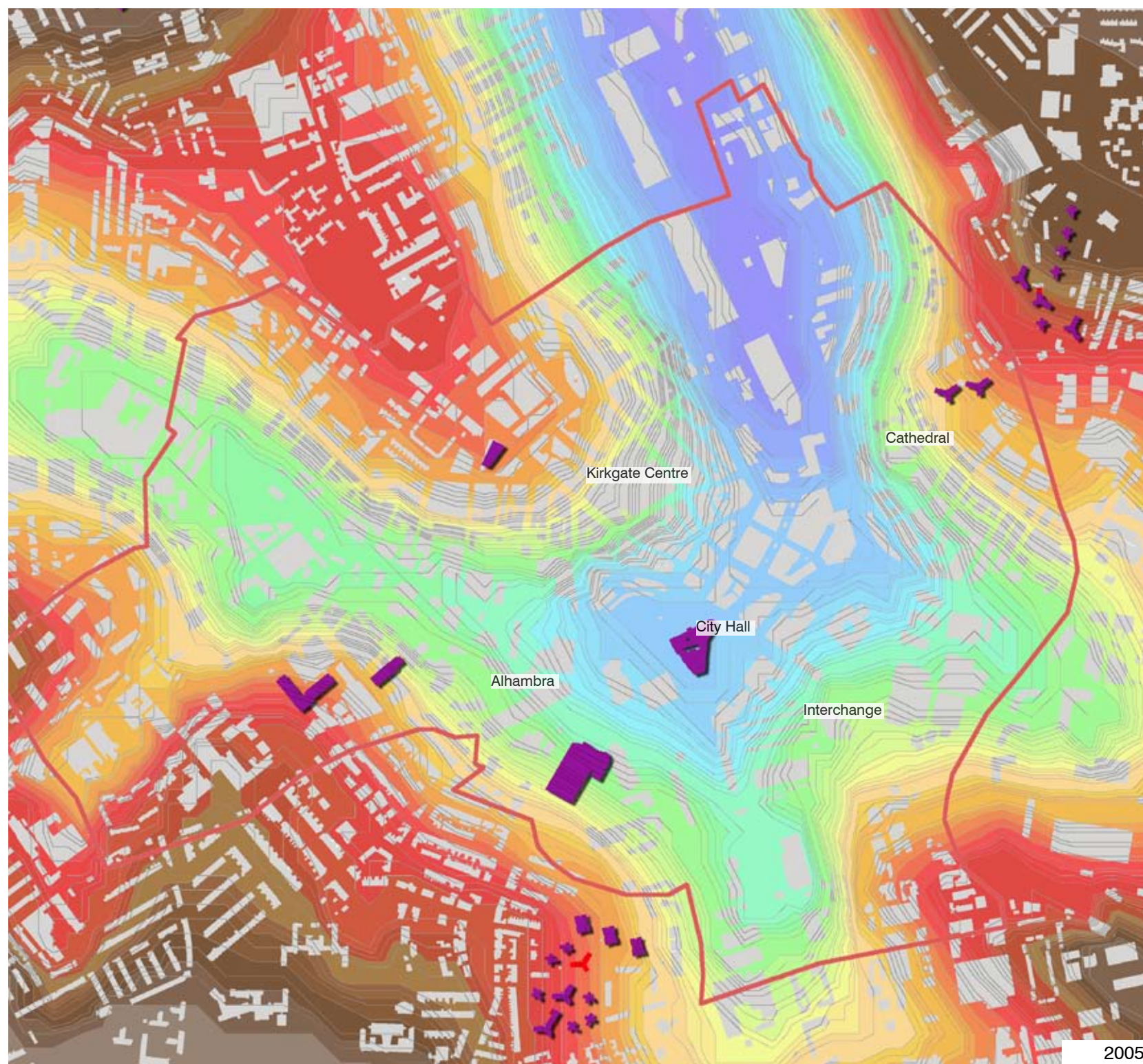
bowl. The tower of the City Hall rises from the lowest part of the city centre – somewhat like an upturned drawing pin. This is important because the city hall is generally seen against a backdrop of the city, rather than the sky. Most of the other tall buildings keep clear of the view of the City Hall, the main exception being Arndale House, which is out of scale with its surroundings. Other tall buildings include the tower over the Ice Rink and parts of the original Broadway (since demolished). Most of the social housing tower blocks are out of the

centre and relatively unobtrusive.

The remainder of the buildings vary from three to six storeys. While it is difficult to generalise, there is a tendency for the higher buildings to be in the valleys. This tends to smooth out the effects of topography so that the buildings appear to fill up the valley areas. In Little Germany and Goitside the buildings stack up the hill creating dramatic long views. By contrast to the east of Manor Row the slope is too steep and the buildings on the ridge create a dramatic cliff-like edge.

An important role for the guide is provide guidance for the height and massing of new buildings and a strategy for tall buildings in the city centre.





This plan shows the topography of the City Centre,
The deep blue areas are the lowest and the dark red
the highest.

■ Buildings that are prominent because of their
height

Just as important as the buildings of Bradford are the spaces between. These make up the 'public realm' of the city centre, the streets, squares and public spaces where the life of the city is played out. The quality of the public realm, more than anything else, is what makes a great city.

Some of the characteristics of good public realm have already been covered; the level of enclosure (page 12), active frontages and a mix of uses (Page 14) and a connected network of streets (Page 18). In addition to this the public realm needs to create spaces that are comfortable to use rather than either cramped and overcrowded or too open and windswept. It should be easy and pleasant to move around by a variety of means. It should not be dominated by traffic nor cluttered with street furniture and its detailed design should be simple and practical but also beautiful. We have assessed the public realm of Bradford City Centre against these criteria.

Historic core: The centre of the city, around the Wool Exchange is made up of a dense network of lively streets with a coherent civic character. The streets in this area are narrow with tall Victorian buildings and form small spaces where they meet - such as the junction of Hustlergate and Bank Street.

Market area: An irregular grid of streets runs up the hill with a series of small spaces such as Rawson Square which is dominated by traffic. However this area is generally lively and attractive with plenty of activity. This breaks down by the time it reaches Drewton Road which is dominated by surface car parking.

Historic warehouse districts: Goitside and Little Germany have a distinctive public realm characterised by tall stone buildings and steep, sometimes cobbled, streets with courtyards. There is however very little activity due to

the lack of a mix of uses and active frontages.

University and college: To the west the public realm character is of Victorian suburbs and civic buildings on Great Horton Road and by a campus-style environment in the heart of the university to the north. The public realm is attractive and active because of the students.

Cathedral Precinct: The Cathedral once stood in a green at the heart of a dense working-class district. The green remains a tranquil oasis of space but the surrounding area is now dominated by vacant sites and parking.

Civic core: The valley between the Cathedral and the Alhambra was once

characterised by a grand Victorian streets and squares. Parts of Hall Ings retain this Victorian character however the environment created in recent decades has is of buildings in a landscape including the Police Headquarters, the Magistrates Courts the Abbey Buildings and Jacob's Well. The area was also transformed by the central ring road and the public realm was pushed into subways that cut the city centre off from its surroundings.

Industrial valleys: The picture is completed by the public realm of the valleys running up Valley Road and along Thornton Road. These are now characterised by retailing sheds, showrooms and residual industry. The public realm is car dominated and not friendly to pedestrians.

The guide needs to preserve the unique character of the historic core of the city while overcoming the weaknesses of the public realm in the valley bottom.





- 1: Blaise Square next to Forster Square station with the Fibles public art commission.
- 2: Surface parking in the Cathedral precinct
- 3: Exchange Court – a new space in front of the county courts
- 4: Formal landscaping along Hall Ings
- 5: Landscaping along the City Ring Road
- 6: The campus environment of the university
- 7: Hall Ings dominates the environment in the centre of the city



Open spaces



Open spaces form an important part of the public realm of a city centre – particularly squares, parks gardens and landscaped areas. These spaces are important to the appearance and functioning of the city. They create places of public assembly and entertainment as well as informal spaces to meet and relax, to sit out on a street café or to sunbathe in the summer contributing to a full and satisfying city lifestyle. Open spaces are also important in creating a sense of space, allowing planting to soften the urban environment, to provide colour, shelter and shade as well as reducing many forms of pollution.

The plan opposite shows that Bradford has relatively few open spaces in the city centre. Unlike many valley towns such as Edinburgh or Bath, where the valley sides become parkland, the industrialisation of Bradford left little scope for open space. The fine Victorian parks such as Listers Park, Bowling Park and Peel Park provide relief from the industrial city but are well outside the city centre leaving no significant open spaces within the centre of Bradford. We have therefore analysed the open spaces of the city centre under the following headings:

Public squares: The historic plans show that the most important public open spaces were Town Hall Square to the west of City Hall and Forster Square. Today the main public square is Centenary Square to the north of City Hall. Other public squares are small and insignificant such as Rawson Square (dominated by traffic), Festival Square in Little Germany (used as a car park) and the Exchange Court in front of the Crown Courts. However the new Broadway Shopping centre is proposing to recreate Forster Square along with two further public spaces.

Formal landscaping: There are a number of areas of formal landscaping around the city centre. This includes the gardens to the south

of City Hall, the spaces around the Police Station and Magistrates Court and the more recent landscaping around the County Court. One of the best landscaped spaces is the green around the Cathedral.

Informal landscaping: Most of the open space in the city centre is less attractive and useful. This includes the grassed areas around the major junctions as well as the grass surrounding the social housing blocks

on the estates around the city centre. This can be attractive, however it covers large areas and generally has little function.

Surface parking: The other main element of the public realm in the city centre is surface car parking. The plan shows that surface parking takes up a significant part of the public realm much of which creates a poor quality environment.

The city centre lacks open spaces and the guide needs to create a framework for a network of new spaces in line with the city centre masterplan





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|---|---|
| ■ Squares | ■ Surface car parks |
| ■ Formal public open space | ■ Vacant land |
| ■ Informal public open space | ■ Private realm |

Types of space



In order to understand how the public realm and public spaces described on previous pages shape the character of the city centre, we have divided the public realm into a series of types. These vary from intense, small scale and highly active, to large, extensive and low intensity. The extent of each typology is described on the plan opposite.

Active Urban: These are well-connected, accessible, paved pedestrianised spaces, enclosed by attractive building frontages and surrounded by active, variable uses with strong visual connections to nearby spaces. This is the characteristic typology of the historic heart of the city and can be found throughout the market area and the shopping core.

Inactive Urban: These areas are often similar in character to the active urban spaces in that they are paved and enclosed by well-proportioned buildings. They are less likely to be pedestrianised but, at the same time are less intensely used. This is because of the use and design of the buildings in these areas, typically Victorian warehouses.

This inactive urban realm includes some areas that should be much more active such as Exchange Court and the entrance to Forster Square Station and, until recently, Centenary Square. These squares lack active frontages and sometimes lacks enclosure so that the public realm lacks liveliness despite striking artwork that is employed to create a sense of identity that would otherwise come from public use. The recently completed leisure development on Centenary Square has addressed this problem.

Public garden: These are landscaped garden areas, usually enclosed, with feeling of tranquillity and separateness from the city. These spaces support a limited range of primarily passive activities. They include the gardens adjacent to both of the courts,



Cathedral Green and Norfolk Gardens by City Hall.

Courtyard: These are paved spaces embedded inside the city blocks, typically in the Goitside and Little Germany districts. They would have originally provided yards for the industrial and residential activities nearby, but now support a growing range of public activities which relate closely to the active uses within neighbouring buildings.

Roadside: These are landscaped strips along streets and roads. These do not support public activity and can often



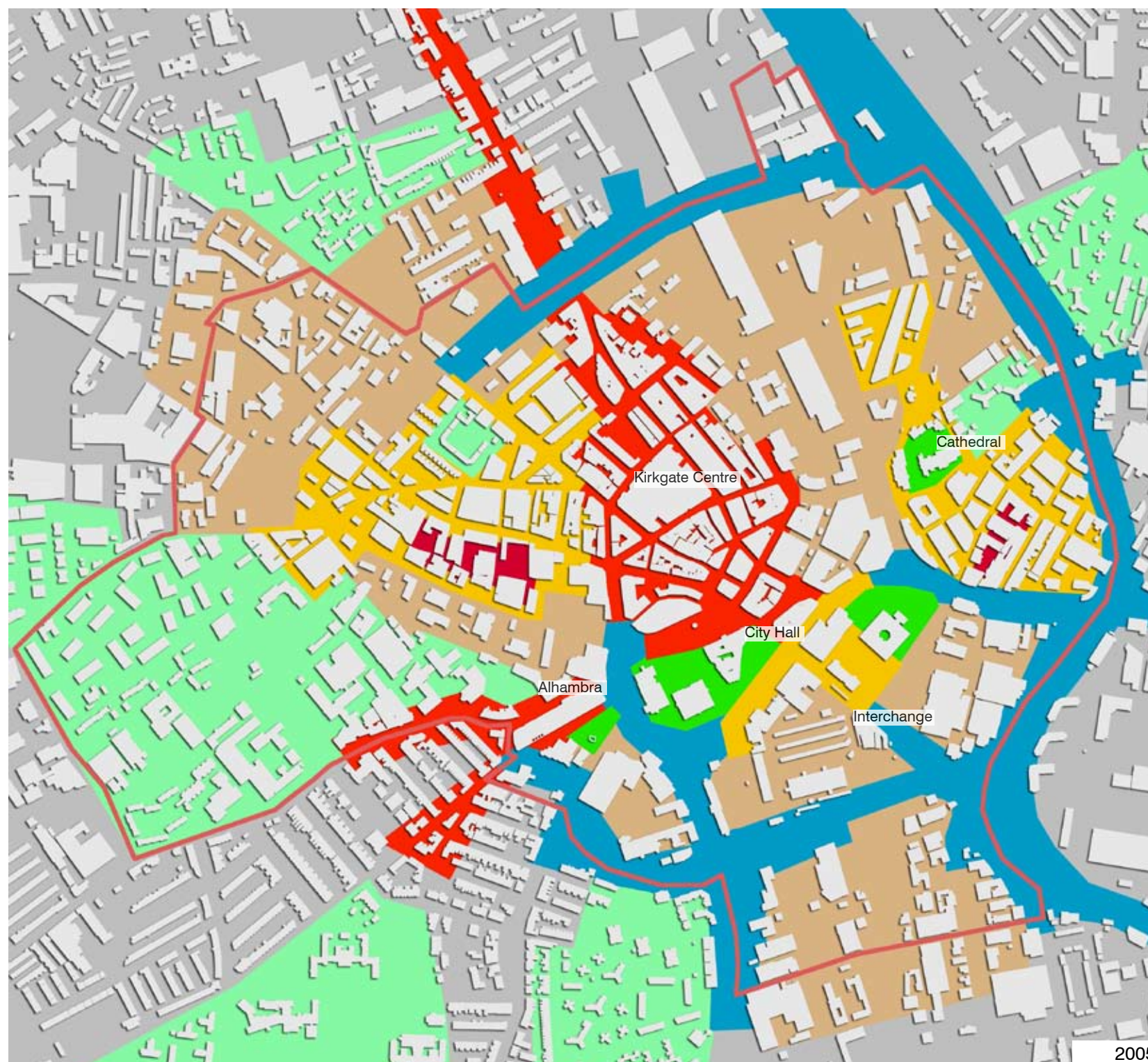
form a barrier to pedestrian movement.

Field: These are large expanses of paved surface used for car park or left empty. This typology lacks a sense of enclosure, and buildings are seen from these spaces as objects. The public realm activities are low intensity.

Campus Park: Mostly landscaped areas of streets with avenues and interlinked courtyards. These are often publicly accessible but semi-private enclosed spaces, which are generally tranquil and moderately active.

The public realm design guide needs to recognise the distinctive character of different parts of the city centre.





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|----------------|-----------|-------------|
| Active urban | Courtyard | Field |
| Inactive urban | Roadside | Campus park |
| Public gardens | | |

Types of space