



Preston Station Quarter

Regeneration Framework 2022



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Preston Station Quarter

1

1.1 The Opportunity

Preston is a city full of potential. Recent major investment in and around the city centre includes Preston Markets, the Harris Quarter, bus station, Stoneygate, major public realm improvements and transformational development at the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) campus. Preston is at the centre of a modern and forward-looking Lancashire economy that includes national expertise in aerospace, advanced engineering and manufacturing, energy, and chemicals. The City of Preston enjoys an attractive and prosperous hinterland including easy access to several national parks and other areas of outstanding natural beauty. Preston is the engine for much of Lancashire's growth and development as a result of its excellent and improving national and regional connectivity and its central focus on public sector services, agencies, education, culture, and commerce in the city itself.

Preston sits on both a north-south and east-west axis of both transport infrastructure and economic activity. It has a cluster of activity anchored by the university, public and private sector companies and authorities; but also acts as a hub linking east-west and north-south across Enterprise Zones, strategic employment sites, universities and research assets. These assets are increasingly becoming interlinked, developing corridors of enterprise characterised by advanced manufacturing, engineering research and technology, health energy and nuclear assets. A key example of this being the Government's decision in 2021 to invest £5bn in the development of a new National Cyber Force campus in Samlesbury near Preston.

The Station Quarter, however, does not currently fulfil its potential as a key gateway to the city and the region. Whilst the listed station buildings are undeniably impressive and station facilities are earmarked for some improvement, the immediate surroundings of the station deliver a poor first impression of the city. The vision for the Station Quarter is to transform the area to create a fitting gateway to the city and the region.

Preston Railway Station is a key transport hub for the region. As Lancashire's largest and busiest railway station with excellent national connectivity, including future high speed rail

services, the station is a major asset that can serve to attract new city centre development and investment. In order to capitalise on this there is potentially land available within the vicinity of the station to develop new urban activities and built fabric. This could enhance the sense of arrival into Preston and contribute to improving its wider identity, and by association the identity of other partners, most notably UCLan.

UCLan is one of the UK's largest universities with a student and staff community approaching 38,000. Internationally, UCLan has academic partners in all regions of the globe and is a significant educational institution that drives the advancement of opportunity for individuals and the city at large. Underpinned by the presence of UCLan, a civic university and anchor institution for the city, there is enormous scope to generate additional activities related to education, innovation and enterprise.

Major development is nearing completion at UCLan's Preston campus guided by the UCLan Campus Masterplan which steers a £200m transformation programme for the Preston campus. At the heart of the masterplan proposals lies the new Student Centre, completed in 2021, linked with a public square that serves to draw the university and the city closer together. This in turn contributes to the

wider transformation of the city centre area.

Added to the mix of opportunities is the status of Preston as the sub-regional capital of Lancashire and the home of Lancashire County Council ('the county council') and Preston City Council ('the city council'). The County Hall complex adjacent to the station houses a considerable number of staff and whilst the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated a move to more flexible working arrangements, there remains a need for face to face contact and a physical base for people to come together and collaborate.

Indeed, whether it be the public sector, the traditional service industries already represented

in Preston, or incoming businesses attracted by UCLan's presence or the buzz of city life, there is an opportunity to provide Grade A office accommodation that is currently not represented in the city centre as well as the kind of workspace specifically designed to support interactions that cannot happen remotely.

It is also recognised that urban living and lifestyle choices are a key component for businesses seeking to attract and retain staff. City living is starting to establish itself in Preston and as the number of people living in the city increases, so will demand for leisure and retail facilities and for businesses to relocate there.



UCLan Student Centre



Preston Market



Preston Market



The Harris Quarter

1.2 Vision

The vision for the Station Quarter is premised on the four key drivers of Education, Health and Innovation; Government and Business; City Living and Culture; and Connectivity, underpinned by Preston Station – a hub of excellent regional and national transport networks.

Preston’s Station Quarter: Lancashire’s City Hub for education, innovation, health, government and business:

- A gateway to education, health and innovation, underpinned by UCLan;
- A focus for local and national government services and a destination for corporate and private sector business;
- Embracing city living with high quality homes offering new residents unrivalled access to city centre culture and amenities;
- Benefiting from excellent connectivity within and beyond the city.



Figure 1.2.1: Preston Station Quarter Strategy



Figure 1.2.2: Illustrative Vision for the Railway Station Welcome Square

The Purpose of the SQRF

2

2.1 The Purpose of the SQRF

The Preston Station Quarter Regeneration Framework (SQRF) has been prepared by BDP on behalf of Preston City Council (PCC), Lancashire County Council (LCC) and the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan).

The SQRF sets a vision for the development of the west end of Preston city centre, centred on Preston Station. This is a recognition of the strategic importance of Preston Station to the ongoing success of the city centre and of the potential for significant investment and development on several adjacent sites.

The SQRF has been informed by an evidence base, which underpinned the development of four strategic options for the regeneration of the area. Following a series of stakeholder workshops and evaluation of the options, a preferred option was developed and this forms the basis of the SQRF.

One purpose of the SQRF is to assist developers in the preparation and submission of planning applications in the Station Quarter, by providing a vision and general design principles to assist in the delivery of a co-ordinated and comprehensive development of the SQRF area (and the necessary infrastructure) as a mixed-use commercial quarter, as envisaged in Preston's City Investment Plan. The document sets out how LCC, PCC and UCLan would like to see the requirements of the City Centre Plan, as relevant to the SQRF area, implemented.



Figure 2.1.1: Preston SQRF Boundary. See Appendix 1 for a detailed boundary map

Objectives

The SQRF has the following specific objectives:

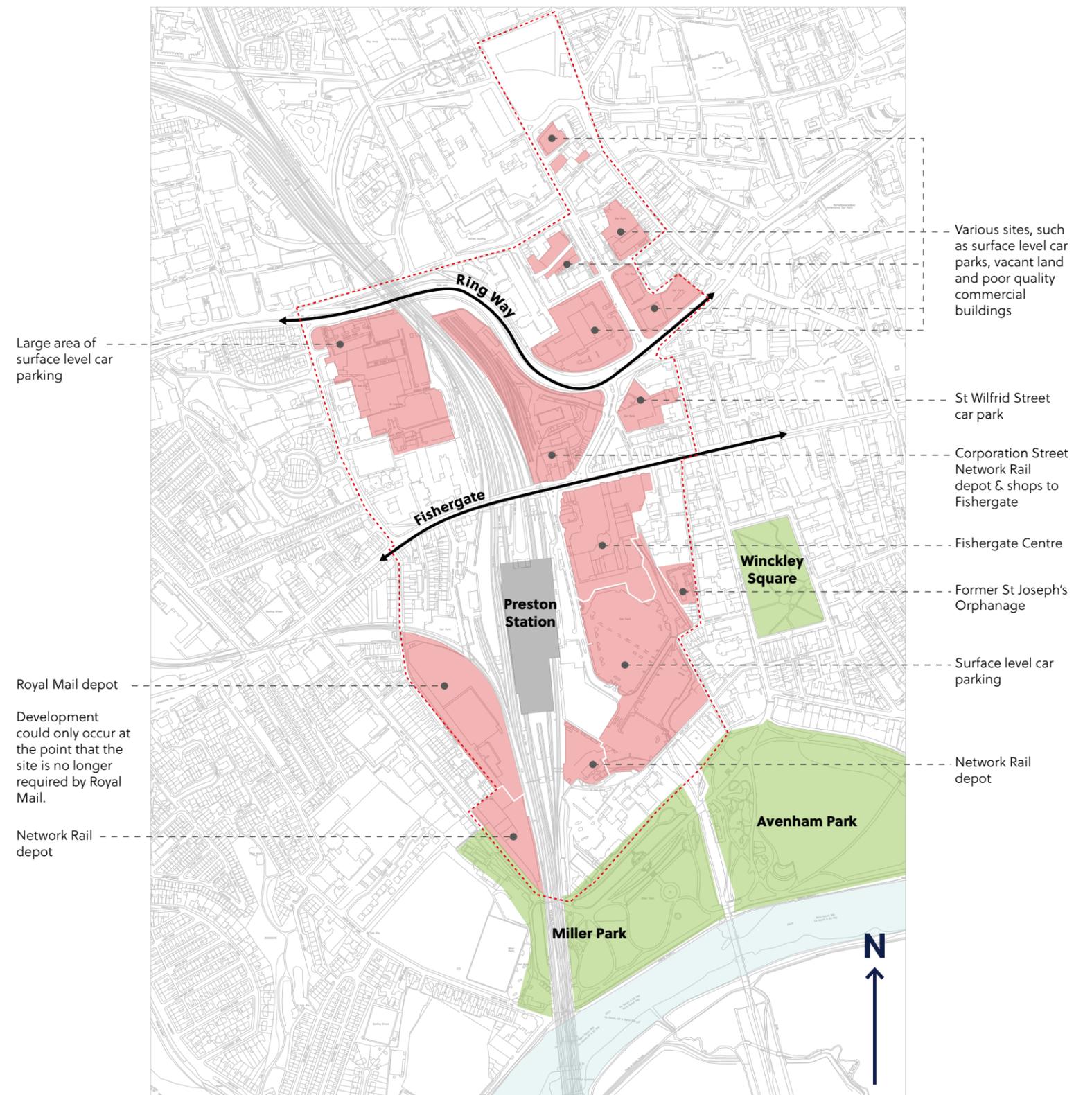
1. To set the strategic planning and regeneration context for Preston Station Quarter;
2. To exploit the significant opportunities of increased footfall at Preston Station arising from enhancements to regional, national and, in the future, HS2 related rail services;
3. To capitalise on the city centre location and linkages to other key assets such as the UCLan campus and the River Ribble;
4. To set a masterplanning vision for the Station Quarter that illustrates the scale and extent of the opportunity and highlights key development parameters and principles, including development opportunities, potential land uses and activities, and appropriate urban design principles, including the creation of new civic spaces and high quality public realm;
5. To deliver high quality offices and workspace to help realise the potential of the city as the focus of a substantial concentration of knowledge intensive industries, business clusters and innovation assets;
6. To anticipate city centre trends, including the changing nature of the retail, leisure and office market, the growth of urban living and the importance of 'liveability';

7. The attraction of regional, national and international businesses to the City;
8. To take a distinctive approach to urban design, reflecting Preston's distinctive heritage and character, raising public realm design standards in line with improvements already proposed around Ring Way and Friargate for example;
9. To promote an environmentally sustainable, low carbon development with new homes and businesses constructed to high environmental standards; and better integration of rail, bus, walking and cycling; and
10. To focus on active travel modes, place-making and city centre connectivity, and the opportunity to reduce the impacts of roads and vehicles on enjoyment of the city centre.

Station Quarter Sites

There are a number of strategic sites surrounding Preston Station that offer the potential for development to meet the objectives of the SQRF. These sites include public sector assets, underutilised surface car parks and large privately owned sites where existing buildings may not meet future requirements. Opportunities and proposals for development are expected to come forward for the majority of these sites over the next 10 years.

Figure 2.2.2: Preston Station Quarter Key Sites



2.2 Preston Station Quarter

The Station Quarter is located to the west of Preston City Centre, and is contained by Ring Way to the north, by the River Ribble to the south and the largely residential Fishergate Hill Conservation Area to the west. Preston Station is a fine listed building at the heart of the quarter and is a spectacular arrival point to the city, especially when travelling by train from the south, which involves an elevated approach above the River Ribble.

Preston Station, a major station on the West Coast Main Line, is a key interchange midway between London and Glasgow. The station is served by national, regional and local services, including overnight sleeper trains between London and Scotland, providing frequent, direct services to major conurbations including London, Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds, Glasgow and Edinburgh.



Figure 2.2.3: Location Plan



Most of the Station Quarter was first developed with the arrival of the railways and laid out as railway sidings and yards. As a result, much of the quarter is level, higher than the River Ribble and the waterside Avenham and Miller Parks but lower than Fishergate, the historic high street which traverses the city centre. The exception is County Hall which sits on the bluff at the high point of Fishergate Hill, overlooking the station area. Over the last 50 years the land used for rail operations has been pruned back and some redevelopment has taken place, for example for the Fishergate Shopping Centre, whilst other areas have been utilised for surface car parking.

In recent years, there has been minimal investment directed at the station itself and whilst the SQRf focusses on the land surrounding the station, LCC, PCC and UCLan are seeking to work collaboratively with rail industry partners to make the case for major investment in the station itself. This document contributes to this aim by demonstrating the potential for large-scale regeneration and development which will support any future business case.

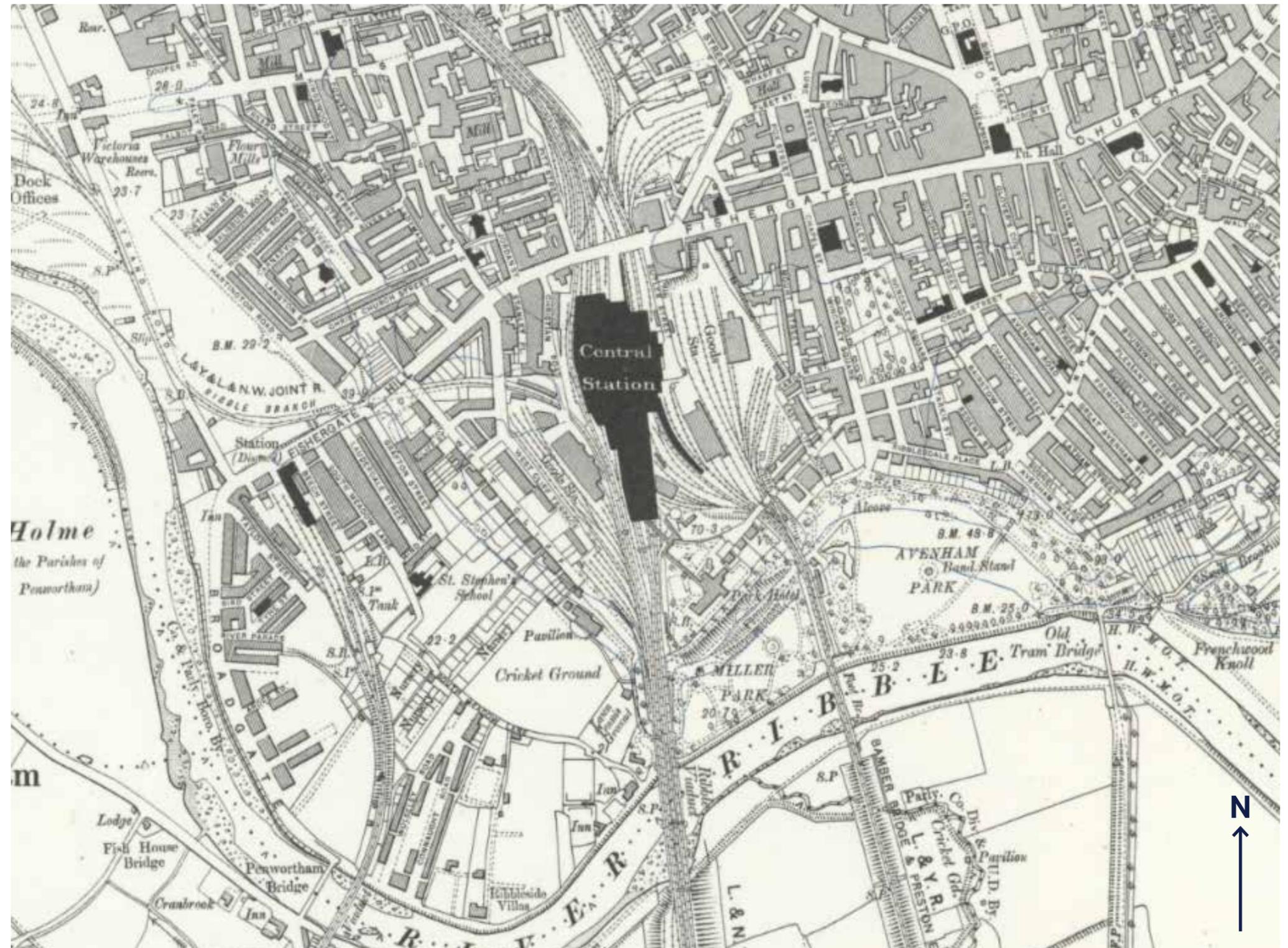


Figure 2.2.4: Preston OS Map, 1913

Station Quarter Quadrants

Preston Station sits at the centre of four distinct quadrants. The West Coast main line bisects the Station Quarter area east and west. And Fishergate, which continues onto Fishergate Hill, bisects the area north and south.

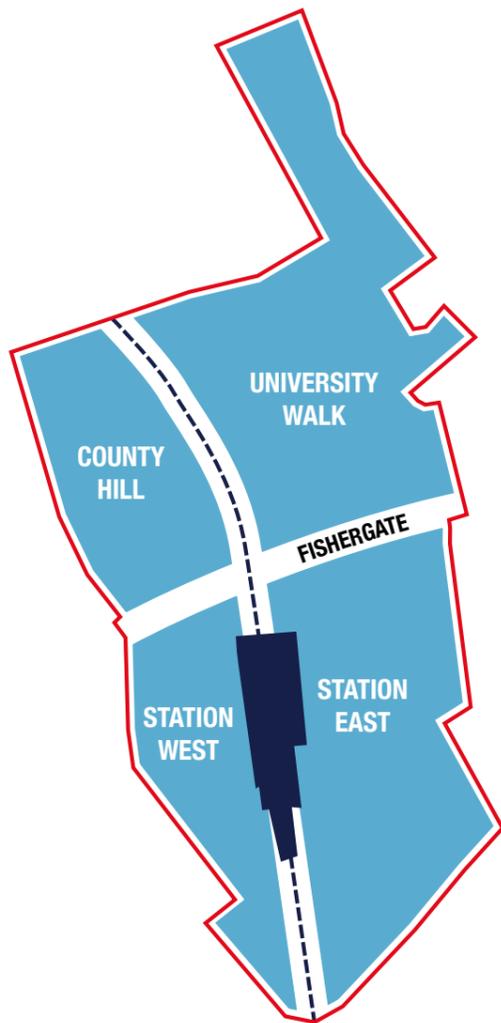


Figure 2.2.5: Station Quarter Quadrants

South East Quadrant – Station East

This area is dominated by the Fishergate Shopping Centre with surface and multi-storey car parks associated with the shopping centre and the station. Whilst the major formal entrance to the station is from Fishergate Bridge to the north, the Butler Street entrance is an important multi-modal access point with links to Fishergate and the main shopping and cultural destinations, Winckley Square and the parks.

North East Quadrant – University Walk

This quadrant links the station to the UCLan campus via Corporation Street, which is lined with a number of small businesses such as hot food takeaways that benefit from the footfall and road frontage. This stretch of Corporation Street also provides access to a Network Rail depot and to the Fishergate Centre car parks (via a link under Fishergate itself). The route to UCLan is compromised by the barrier effect of Ring Way and traffic on Corporation Street itself. Considerable investment has taken place within the UCLan campus and complementary work is being planned by LCC and PCC to improve connections across Ring Way. However, more work remains to fully integrate the university campus into the city centre.



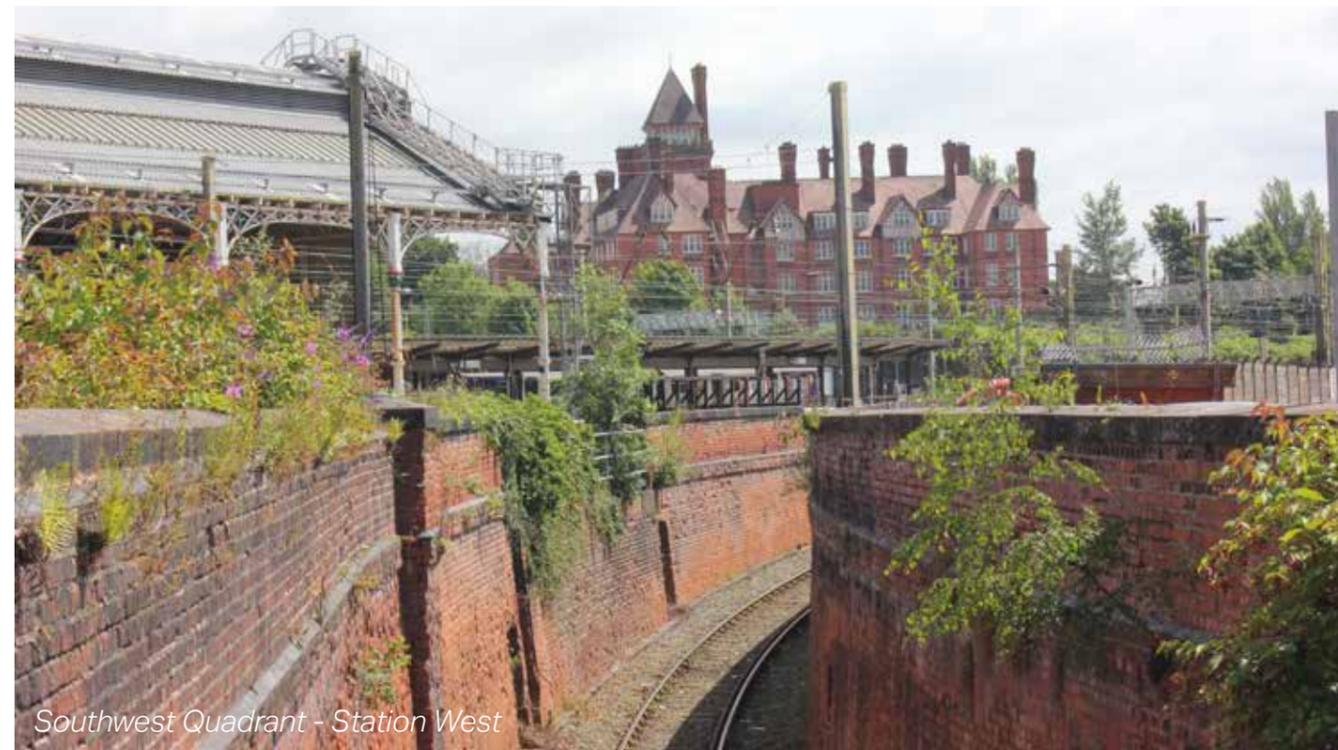
Northeast Quadrant - University Walk

North West Quadrant – County Hill

This area is dominated by County Hall which is a large, but unlisted building at the apex of Fishergate Hill. It is clearly visible from Fishergate as well as to rail passengers. LCC is the dominant landowner and occupier of an estate that includes other listed structures, archives, Victorian buildings and post-war office blocks. There are extensive surface car parks situated to the north of County Hall, on land which slopes down to Ring Way.

South West Quadrant – Station West

The former 'parcels platforms', rail maintenance sites and the Royal Mail Depot occupy land between the station and the established residential areas of West Cliff and the Fishergate Hill Conservation Area. The operational rail line to Preston Docks passes through the site in a cutting underneath Fishergate Hill.



Planning Policy Context

3

3.1 Policy Context

Introduction

As noted in Section 3, the SQRF is a planning tool to articulate PCC's ambitions for the Station Quarter and to inform the submission and determination of planning applications within the area. As such, it is important that proposals align with the existing development plan as well as respond to the vision for the Station Quarter.

This section of the document will outline the planning policy context and highlight key policies which have informed the development of the SQRF and which will be key to the determination of planning applications within the station quarter. This section also provides guidance to developers by establishing five key principles to apply to all applications for major development within the Station Quarter.

Strategic Context

In 2019, Lancashire's 12 districts, two unitary councils, the county council and the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP) agreed to develop a strategic vision and ambition for Lancashire now being developed as the Lancashire 2050 Plan. Alongside this, Lancashire authorities have begun to draft an Infrastructure Plan for Lancashire, which brings together known key assets, sites, proposals and aspirations with a view to understanding the significance of individual schemes and the relationship between them.

During 2020, the focus of activity was temporarily shifted from the longer term plan to recovery planning in light of the social, economic, and health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. In June 2020, Redefining Lancashire: Our Approach to Recovery was published, reconfirming the development of the longer-term strategic ambition for Lancashire and associated infrastructure and capital investment projects through the longer term plan. Following on from the completion of the Recovery Plan, and in developing an evidence base for the Lancashire 2050 Plan, an Independent Economic Review (IER) has commenced in collaboration with the Environment Commission to provide detailed economic and environmental analysis of key areas.

The SQRF and City Investment Plan will help to position the Station Quarter within the strategic prioritisation process of the Lancashire 2050 Plan, in turn assisting the delivery of the ambition by aligning it with emerging funding opportunities.

Planning Policy Context

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides the overarching guidance for local planning authorities and is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and preparation of Local Plans. The NPPF is premised on a presumption in favour of sustainable development which is carried through into Preston local planning policy.

The Preston SQRF area is located entirely within Preston City Centre which is guided by the Preston City Centre Plan (An Area Action Plan to 2026), adopted in June 2016. The Corporation Street and Winckley Square Opportunity Areas, identified in the plan, are both partially located in the SQRF area.

The Preston Local Plan adopted in July 2015 guides development in Preston as a whole, with policies applicable to the entire wider Preston area rather than the city centre in particular.

The Central Lancashire Core Strategy, adopted in 2012 by Preston City Council, Chorley Council and South Ribble Borough Council, recognises Central Preston as a 'strategic location' for major investment in retail and leisure and also emphasises its role as a transport gateway of more than sub regional significance.

In 2018, a review of the Core Strategy and individual Preston, Chorley and South Ribble local plans commenced with a view to delivering a single Central Lancashire Local Plan (CLLP) anticipated for submission in 2023. Once adopted, policies contained within the CLLP will be a material consideration in applications for development within the Station Quarter.

Key Policies

The Preston SQRF supplements the following key parent plan policies:

Preston City Centre Plan (An Area Action Plan to 2026), adopted June 2016:

EV1: Main Shopping and Other Main Town Centre Uses states that within the Primary Shopping Area, shopping development, including major redevelopment proposals, will be permitted. Other main town centre uses will be supported both within the Primary Shopping Area and elsewhere within the city centre.

SP1: Public Realm Design Principles states that development proposals should support the enhancement of public realm within the city centre.

SP2: Public Realm Improvements states that general public realm improvements will be supported throughout the city centre and development which would have a negative impact on the ability of the Council to achieve these desired improvements will not be supported.

SP3: City Centre Gateways states that development proposals should seek to improve the public realm, cycling infrastructure, pedestrian facilities, and accessibility of the major gateways to the city centre, including Preston Station.

SP4: Housing Allocations lists the sites allocated for housing development within Preston City Centre. This includes the former St. Joseph's Orphanage Site in the Station Quarter.

OP1: Corporation Street states that in the area identified as Corporation Street on the Policies Map, proposals for new, high quality, mixed-use development will be permitted.

OP2: Winckley Square states that development proposals should conserve and enhance the general environment and appearance of the conservation area.

MA1: Pedestrian and Cycling Accessibility states the council will support and encourage proposals which improve pedestrian and cyclist facilities and general accessibility across the city centre.

Preston Local Plan 2012-26 (Site Allocations and Development Management Policies), adopted July 2015:

EN2: Protection and Enhancement of Green Infrastructure states that development proposals should seek to protect and enhance existing green infrastructure.

EN3: Future Provision of Green Infrastructure states that new development will provide appropriate landscape elements, conserve and enhance environmental assets, and provide access to well designed cycleways and footpaths.

EN8: Development and Heritage Assets provides guidance for proposals affecting heritage assets and their settings.

EN9: Design of New Development states that all new development should be designed with regard to the principles set out in the Central Lancashire Design Guide SPD.

Central Lancashire Core Strategy, adopted July 2012:

Policy 1: Locating Growth states that the Strategic Location of Central Preston should be a focus for growth and investment.

Policy 2: Infrastructure states that developer contributions should be secured to ensure that

new development meets the on and off-site infrastructure requirements necessary. It also states that the Council will set broad priorities on the provision of infrastructure ensuring that appropriate enabling infrastructure is delivered in line with growth.

Policy 3: Travel outlines the approach to planning for travel including: reducing the need for travel, improving pedestrian facilities, improving opportunities for cycling, improving public transport, enabling change of mode during trips, managing car use, and improving the road network.

Policy 16: Heritage Assets states that opportunities should be sought to protect and enhance the historic environment, heritage assets, and their settings.

For a full list of the range of policies applicable to development in the Station Quarter, refer to Appendix 2.

Planning Applications

The following overarching principles will apply to all major applications within the Station Quarter. This is not intended to take the place of formal pre-application consultation with the council, indeed schemes which are informed by these principles are more likely to benefit from a positive and constructive pre-application consultation response.

1. The Station Quarter is wholly within Preston city centre and proposals which will enhance the vitality of Preston city centre will be encouraged. Development for high quality office space, leisure uses compatible with the location, new retail provision and appropriately designed and sited residential development are all considered to have the potential to enhance the vitality of the city centre.
2. As a gateway to Preston, the Station Quarter is a highly sustainable location for means of access via public transport and is capable of supporting a wide range of uses without reliance on the private car. The Station Quarter also has the potential to provide a sense of arrival in Preston and all schemes will need to include appropriate public realm to make the most of this opportunity. Individual applications will also be expected to contribute on a proportional basis toward public realm improvements across the Station Quarter as a whole.
3. The Station Quarter contains a number of significant heritage assets and other historic buildings of high quality. All applications will need to consider the potential impact upon the fabric and setting of heritage assets in the Station Quarter. Where applications are to be in outline only, there will need to be an appropriate level of information on layout, scale and massing to adequately assess the

potential impact upon the setting of heritage assets. This impact may not necessarily be negative, as well designed proposals in the Station Quarter have the potential to enhance the setting of heritage assets.

4. Significant development within the Station Quarter will be visible across the wider Preston city centre. A number of sites within the Station Quarter are prominent within the wider context of Preston city centre. The SQRF also identifies key views that should be protected. The SQRF identifies the potential for significant development to come forward on a number of these sites and as such, major planning applications will need to consider the potential impact upon townscape and visual amenity. This impact may not necessarily be negative, as well-designed proposals in the Station Quarter have the potential to significantly enhance townscape and visual amenity.
5. Applications will need to provide an appropriate level of design detail to assess the proposals ability to meet the objectives of the SQRF in terms of connectivity (both to the public realm and local highway network and to other component parts of the Station Quarter), massing, scale and layout. The indicative 3D model which accompanies the SQRF illustrates a minimum level of detail on layout and massing across the whole of the Station Quarter. Planning applications will be expected to build upon these principles and in the case of outline applications provide appropriate indicative plans and parameter plans to inform robust assessments.

The SQRF sets out the opportunity areas, a range of acceptable uses and a starting point for plot layout and massing. A masterplan-led approach is needed to ensure that individual proposals do not prejudice the comprehensive delivery of the SQRF including wider public realm and movement infrastructure, requiring developers to place their proposals within a wider conceptual masterplan if necessary. Proposals which accord with the five key planning principles should enable the delivery of the SQRF objectives as a whole. However, a wider concept masterplan will provide greater certainty for developers as well as set the context for new public realm and transport infrastructure required to maximise the potential of the Station Quarter.

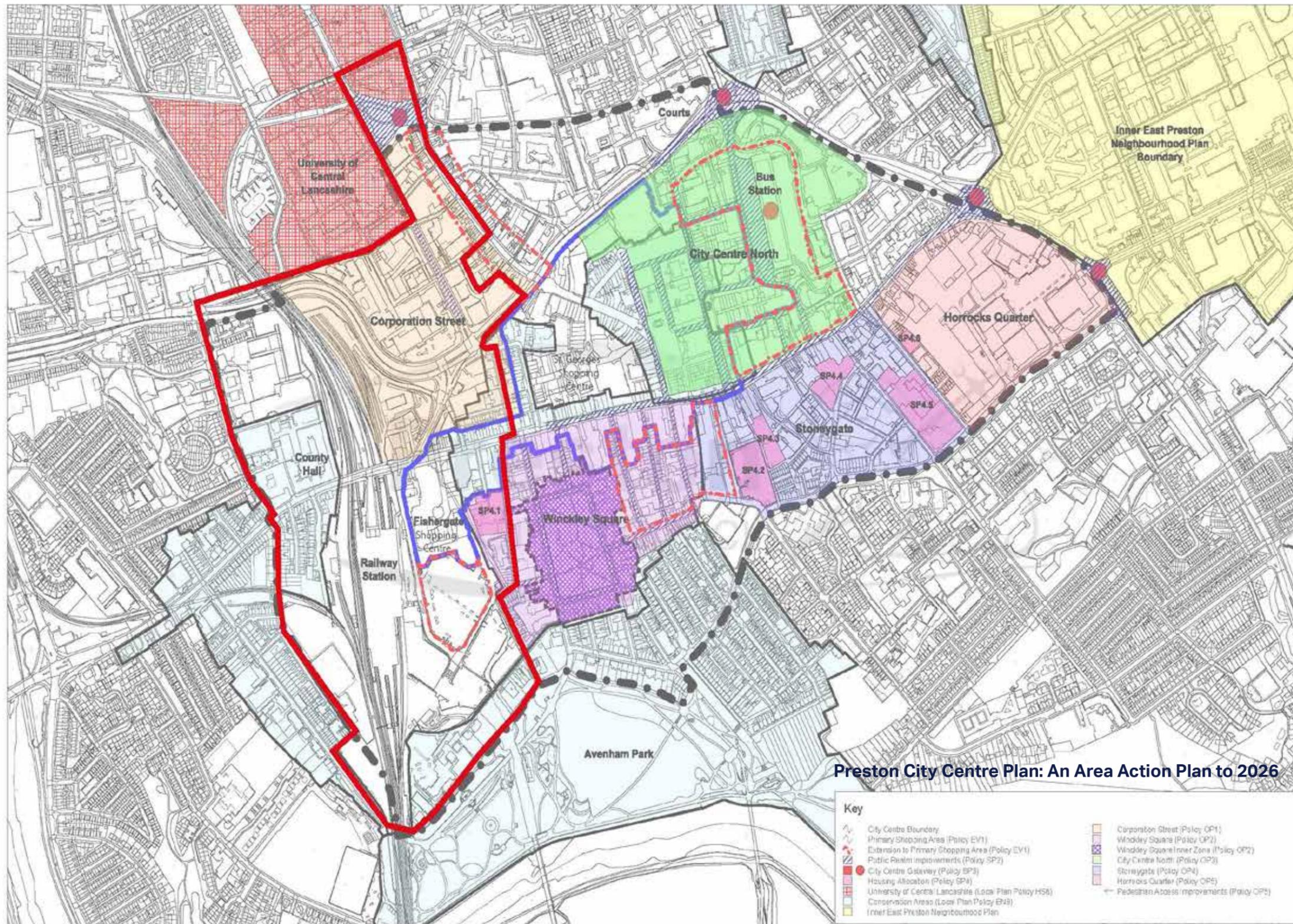
Developer Contributions

All applications for development in the SQRF area will be expected to demonstrate a wider commitment to the delivery of infrastructure improvements and public realm enhancements, in line with adopted planning policies MA1, SP2 and SP3 of the City Centre Plan and Policy 2 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy.

Preston City Council will seek planning obligations under S106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to assist in the delivery of infrastructure and other improvements in the area. This SQRF identifies a number of public realm, movement and access, and urban design-based improvements which require central co-ordination and therefore developer contributions. In addition, the SQRF identifies opportunity for a significant expansion in the provision of city centre housing, which would in turn generate need for affordable housing and education contributions. Planning obligations will be considered on a case by case basis and contributions will be assessed in the context of size, wider impact, and viability of the proposed development.

The Central Lancashire Core Strategy also introduced a levy approach to securing developer contributions for infrastructure in 2012. Preston City Council will seek Civil Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payments for certain types of development based on a per square metre of net additional floor space. CIL payments will apply to all applicable developments coming forward in the SQRF area and are non-negotiable. Further details are available on the city council's website at <https://www.preston.gov.uk/CIL>.

Figure 3.1.1: Preston City Centre Area Action Plan with SQRF boundary overlay



Character Area Appraisal

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4.1 Character Appraisal

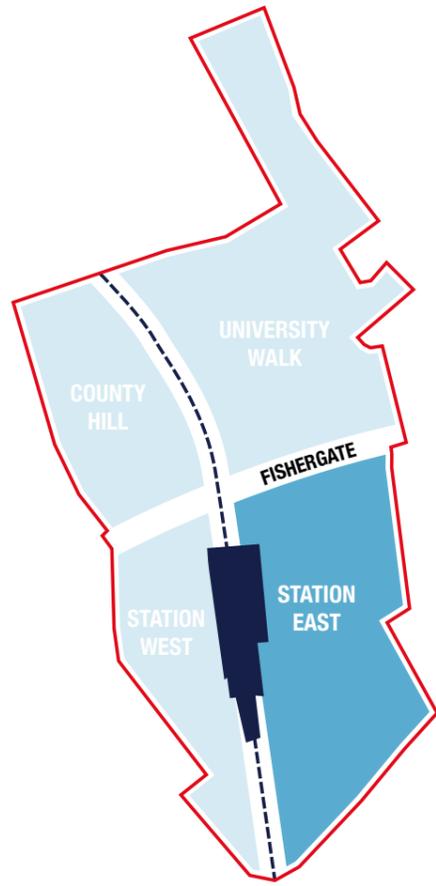


Figure 4.1.1: Station East Location Plan

Station East

For many people arriving at Preston by train and exiting the station via the footbridge or subway to the eastern entrances, the south east quadrant will be their first impression of the city. At present this area is dominated by the Fishergate Shopping Centre, the extensive surface car parks and the multi-storey rail user car park.

The Fishergate Shopping Centre was developed in the 1980s and is typical of its time being designed as an inward looking covered shopping centre. Whilst the centre responds to the historic scale of Fishergate, the building in modern red brick is unprepossessing. The overall scale and bulk of the centre clashes with the finer grain of the historic city and presents a blank unwelcoming frontage to the station's Butler Street entrance. The internalised layout of the centre also stymies the ability to integrate the rest of the area into the city centre.

The area around the Butler Street entrance to the station is one of the busiest, but dominated by car parking and vehicle movements, which compromises the pedestrian and cyclist experience. Despite the adjacency to Avenham and Miller Parks there is no direct link, and there isn't a clear route to the historic Winckley Square.



Fishergate Centre



Fishergate Car Parks



East Cliff



Butler Street looking towards Fishergate



Butler Street entrances to Preston Station



Butler Street entrances to Preston Station

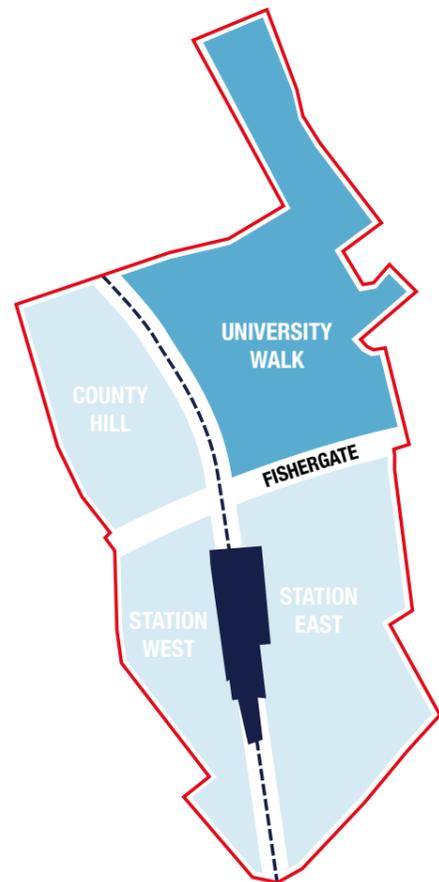


Figure 4.1.2: University Walk Location Plan

University Walk

The north east quadrant is the link between the station and UCLan and is focused on Corporation Street, but this quadrant suffers from poor connections due to a physical and psychological barrier formed by Ring Way, a large six-lane ring road which carves through the site. The crossing at the junction of Corporation Street and Ring Way is awkward, severing this key link.

Poor commercial offerings, vacant sites and surface car parks undermine the potential of this area as a vibrant gateway between the city core and university campus. Large areas of surface car parking form gaps in the urban fabric and many buildings are poor quality, failing to enclose and animate the public realm, which itself is compromised by the scale of vehicular infrastructure over pedestrian space.

The lower end of Corporation Street benefits from high quality paving materials, lighting and street trees and the new university square to the north has created a significant public space. However, the public realm is generally very poor and limited to narrow pavements and standard / degraded paving materials.



Ring Way



Corporation St, looking south to Fishergate Centre



Network Rail depot



Commercial premises on Corporation St



UCLan Student Centre and University Square



Retail warehouses on Ring Way

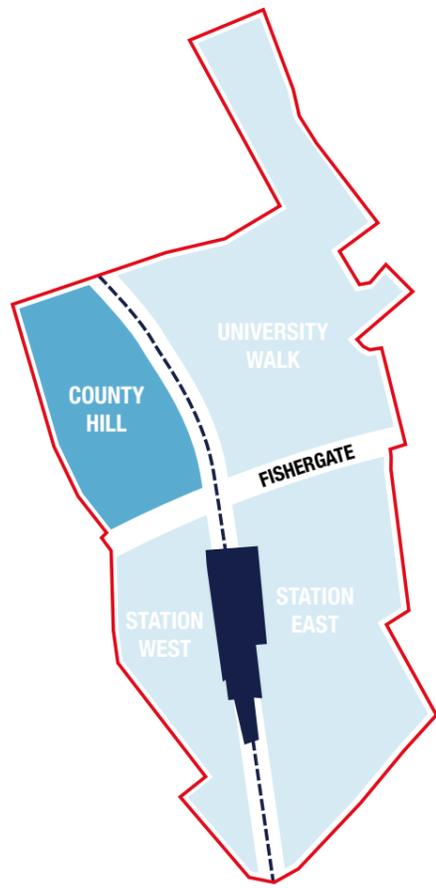


Figure 4.1.3: County Hill Location Plan

County Hill

The north west quadrant is entirely occupied by the county council. The County Hall complex includes the main offices and Council Chamber as well as the Registration Office and County Archives.

County Hall comprises a range of buildings built between the early 1880s and post-war period. The main cluster of buildings located at the brow of Fishergate Hill is very imposing and dominates the local skyline due to its expansive massing in relation to adjacent buildings as well as a cavernous area of railway track that it overlooks to the east. The complex is clearly of historic and architectural merit, and a prominent city centre landmark, but there are no formal areas of open space and landscape features are also lacking.

The rest of the site (accounting for approximately 50% of the area) is used for surface car parking.



Fishergate Bridge



County Hall



Bow Lane visitor car park



County Archives



LCC car park



Arthur Street

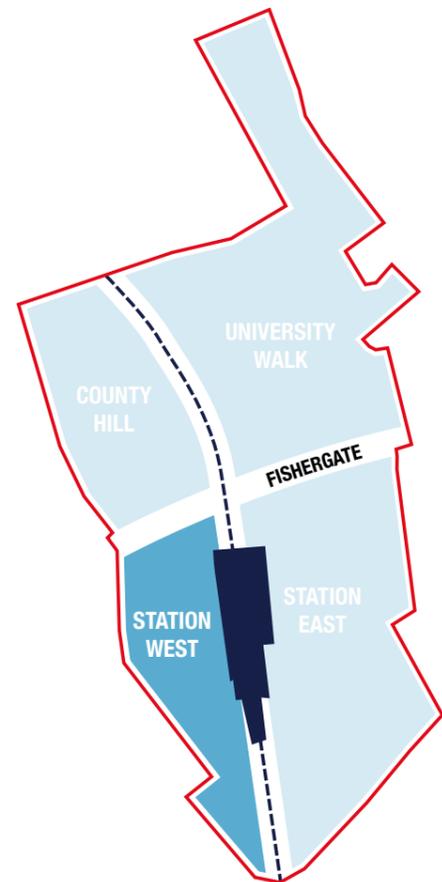


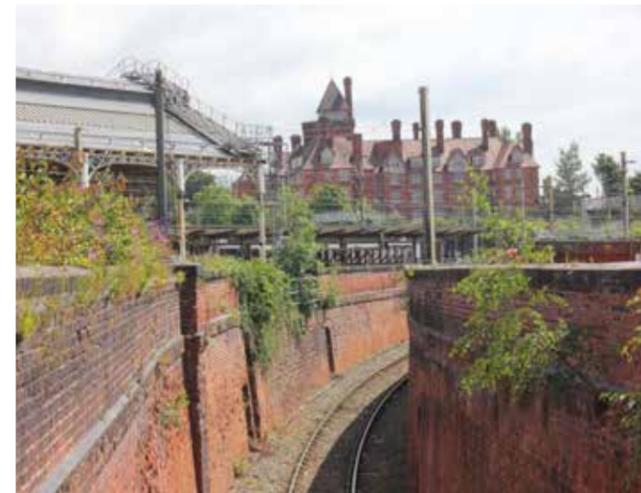
Figure 4.1.4: Station West Location Plan

Station West

The south west quadrant is dominated by rail-related uses, including Network Rail depots and the operational railway line to Preston Docks. This area includes the Royal Mail sorting office, though there is no longer any link to the station as mail is no longer transported by rail. The former 'parcels platforms' to the west of the station may be brought back into use as part of plans to enhance regional rail services and also to enable longer term plans to accommodate HS2 rail services at the station.

The Royal Mail sorting office is a functional industrial shed contained from public view by a boundary wall and surrounding townscape. The rest of the area is dominated by yards and service areas. The wider setting of the Fishergate Hill Conservation Area includes a range of traditional house types from two-storey back of footway Victorian terraced housing to detached Georgian townhouses.

As largely a service area, the area has just one access in via Christian Road, which is not a permeable street. West Cliff provides a link between Fishergate Hill and Avenham and Miller Parks.



Rail link to Preston Docks



Royal Mail sorting office



West Cliff leading to Miller Park



West Cliff



Walton's Parade



Christian Road

Summary

Together the four quadrants currently fail to capitalise on the asset that is Preston Station. Much land is underused and the quality of the urban realm is poor. There is excellent potential for development and new placemaking.

Station East can provide the catalyst for the area's regeneration. By redeveloping the dated Fishergate Centre and areas of surface car parking there is significant scope to introduce new city centre uses and create a transformational area of the city.

University Walk should also be a much stronger part of the city, linking the key assets of the station and UCLan. There are opportunities to enhance connections and public realm, but also to bring in new uses that would suit an intense urban area.

County Hill is a dominant landmark but is isolated in a sea of surface car parking. Again there is scope to introduce new uses and urban realm.

Station West provides scope for HS2 to come to Preston. Over the longer term there may also be opportunities to redevelop yard areas and, as a theoretical / illustrative possibility, the Royal Mail site for new uses, subject to Royal Mail being in a position in the long-term where this could be considered.

The station itself is also in need of significant investment in order to contribute to, and capitalise upon, the regeneration potential of the Station Quarter as a whole.

Figure 4.1.5: Quadrant Appraisal Plan

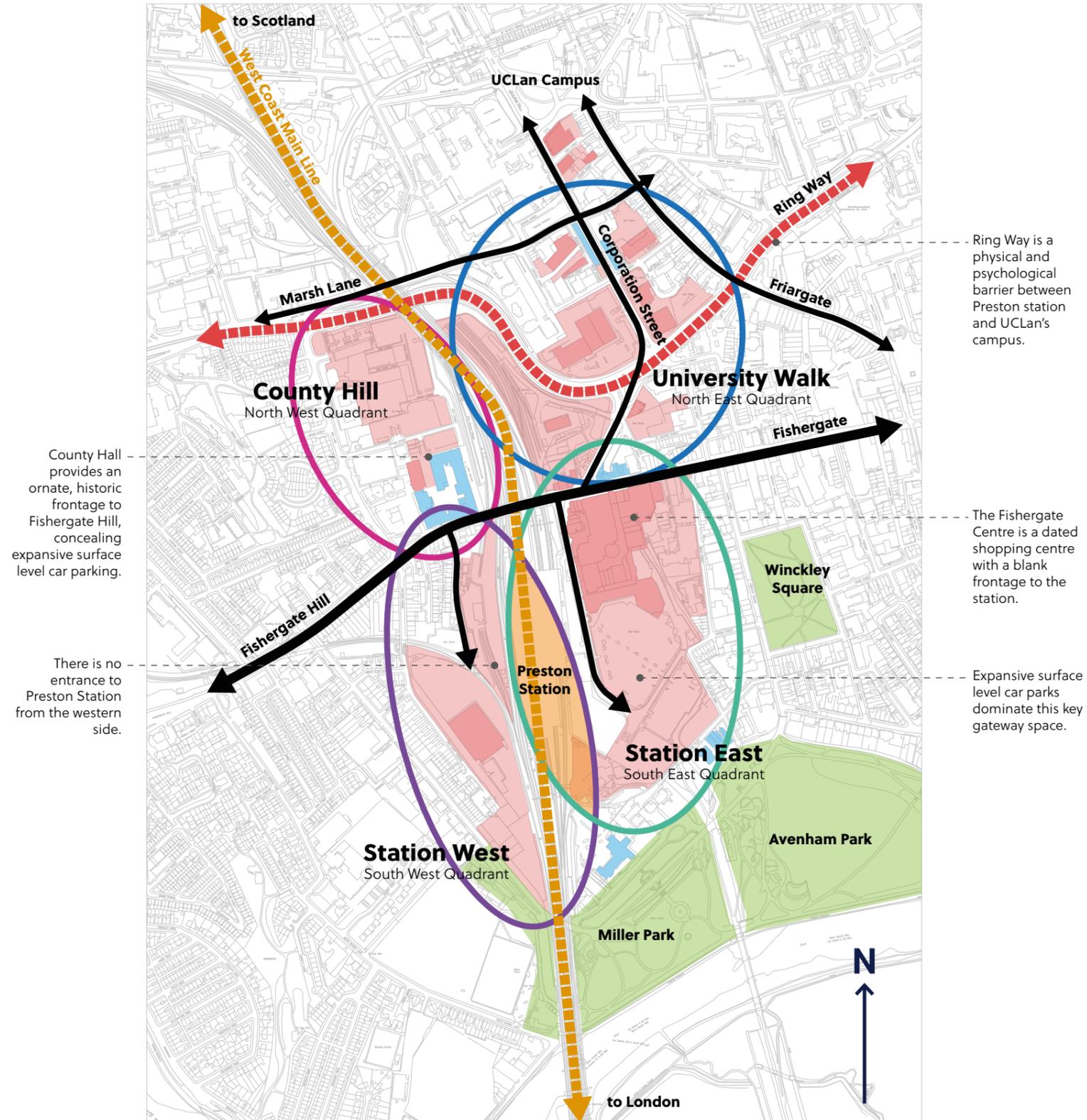


Figure 4.1.6: Existing Aerial View of Preston Masterplan Area



Land Use Requirements

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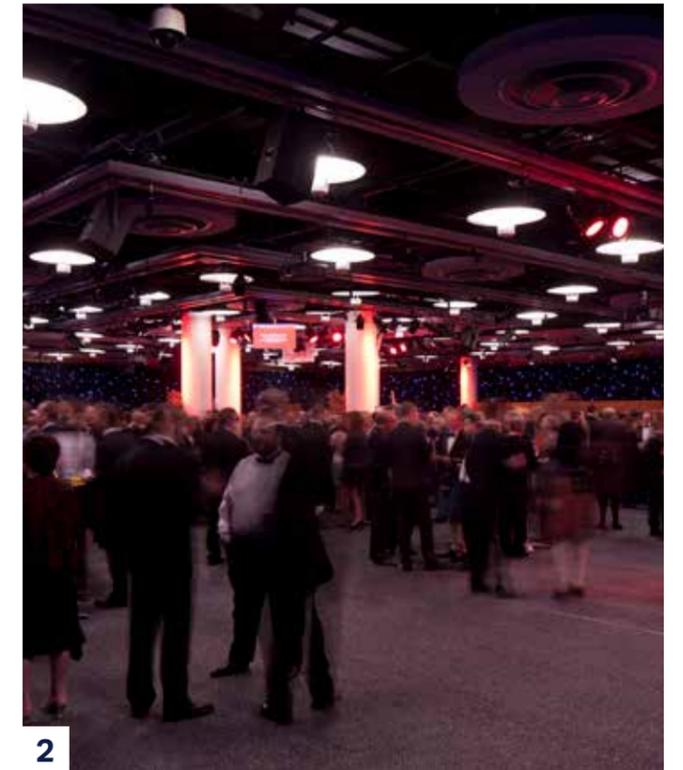
5.1 A City Centre Opportunity

Preston Station Quarter is well positioned to attract a wide range of city centre uses, from offices and other forms of workspace to leisure, conferencing, retail, food & drink and urban living. With Preston Station at its heart, the Station Quarter is a particularly good location for activities that are attracted by excellent connectivity and the footfall that a major transport interchange generates.

The SQRF is not prescriptive regarding the mix of uses that should be accommodated, but in the more detailed character area guidance that follows in Section 7, there is clear guidance on the optimal uses for each quadrant of the Station Quarter.



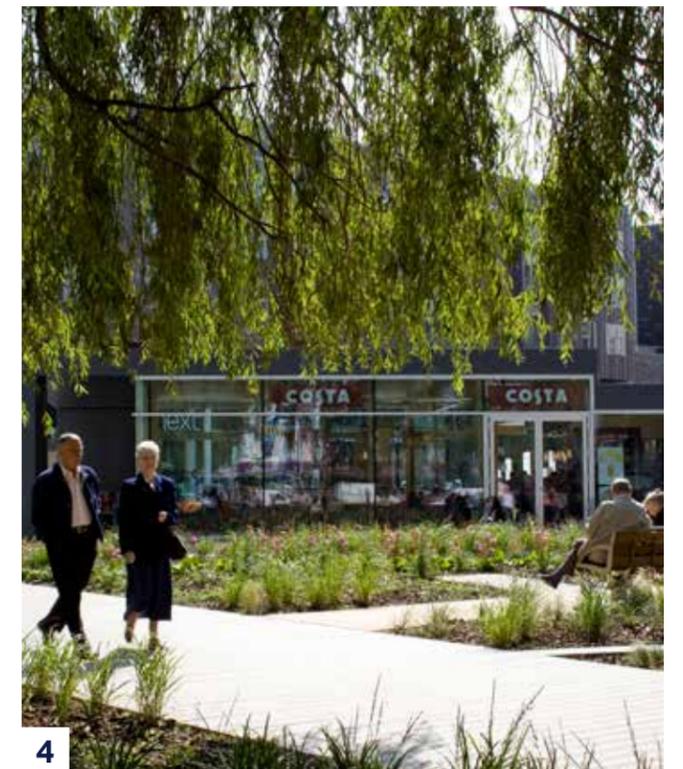
1 One Angel, © Hufton & Crow



2 Atria, Edinburgh © David Barbour



3 Technology and Innovation Centre, University of Strathclyde © David Barbour



4 The Rock, Bury © Sanna Fisher-Payne

- 1 Northamptonshire County Council, One Angel Square
- 2 Atria Conference Centre
- 3 TIC, University of Strathclyde
- 4 The Rock, Bury
- 5 The Rock, Bury



5

5.2 Office and Workspace

Public Sector and Corporate

Preston, as the administrative centre of Lancashire, already has a large presence of public sector offices including PCC, LCC, the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC). Other major office-based employers in the area include the NHS, Land Registry, BAE Systems, University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) and Places for People. In addition to this, like all major regional cities, Preston is the home of several employers in the Professional Services sector.

New, more flexible ways of working will benefit hugely from the accessibility that Preston Station Quarter provides, as well as the availability of high quality working environments that offer potential for collaboration, combined with excellent amenities to attract and retain employees. Businesses are already gravitating towards 'Grade A' offices that are more user-centric, reduce environmental impact and support corporate ambitions on requirements around ESG (Environment, Social and Governance); which utilise technology and the data it generates to measure, manage and curate what will be a more dynamic workplace environment and experience.

Providing such space will be key to creating a distinctive and transformational commercial offer, which will attract and retain business whilst also strengthening the knowledge based economy linked to the UCLan and other world-class innovation assets such as the Advanced Manufacturing and Research Centre at Samlesbury Enterprise Zone.

Innovation and Enterprise

UCLan continues to grow significantly having already invested over £200m in a new Student Centre, the Engineering Innovation Centre, student social spaces, Oasis Faith and Spirituality Centre, and extensive new public realm. With student numbers expected to grow further, future investment is forecast to continue.

The growth of UCLan is both stimulating new business formation and attracting business aligned with the university's strengths. In December 2021, UCLan was celebrated as top in the north for start-up business, assisting 851 graduate start-ups in six years.

Collaboration between UCLan and business will see courses curated with the end user in mind, producing sector-specific talent to assist growth. This creates the conditions for Research and Development and new business formation, in turn driving a market for different types of city centre workspace, including managed and collaborative workspaces such as Innovation Centres and Business Incubators, which would fit well with the Station Quarter aspirations. The demand for innovation space has been identified in recent research undertaken by the university.

Space requirements

Office space needs to meet the demand profile of the city and cater for larger requirements arising from relocations or inward investment:

- The dominant size range of local demand is from 2,500 – 5,000 sq ft (25 – 50 people), growing to approximately 10,000 - 15,000 sq ft;
- There are several larger corporate occupiers based in the City and the wider region that could occupy space ranging from 25,000 - 50,000 sq ft;
- A major inward investment or relocation would drive demand for larger scale development. The Government Property Agency (GPA) programme for example has generated requirements for office 'hubs' ranging from 100,000 - 300,000 sq ft.

Overall the Station Quarter provides a fantastic opportunity to provide highly accessible employment space, configured to meet post-pandemic working patterns and satisfying a number of potential business requirements, from R&D to major corporate or government occupiers.



1

© David Millington



2



3

- 1 *Blackburn Cathedral Quarter*
- 2 *Central Riverside, Sheffield*
- 3 *Bright Building, Manchester Science Park*

5.3 Urban Living

City centre living is enjoying a renaissance, across a range of age groups and household types, driven by accessibility, proximity to city centre amenities particularly leisure and culture, and the prospect of spending less time commuting or at least being able to use public transport to access a wider jobs market.

Preston enjoys the benefits of being a compact and walkable city centre with a full range of facilities and amenities, whilst offering excellent access to other urban centres across the north west and beyond. Outdoor leisure pursuits are well provided for by the nearby Lake District and Yorkshire Dales National Parks and various Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, all within easy reach.

The city centre already offers traditional housing, much of which has a distinctive local character recognised by Conservation Area designations for Fishergate Hill, Winckley Square and Avenham. The Station Quarter offers an excellent opportunity to widen provision with complementary and modern urban housing typologies including apartments and townhouses.

The presence of UCLan also supports a student housing market in the city. Whilst the need for further student accommodation will need to be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the city council and will need engagement with UCLan, a high-end premium student living offering could help attract overseas students to the city, in support of UCLan's growth plans.

Figure 5.3.1: Travel Distances from Preston



- 1 Tollgate Gardens, London
- 2 Abito Greengate, Salford
- 3 The Rock, Bury

5.3 Retail and Leisure

The development of new office and workspace across the Station Quarter will also drive demand for retail, leisure, health and fitness, and food & beverage outlets, further supported by footfall arising from increasing rail and bus services. Surplus accommodation within the station itself could also be better used to meet this demand, catering to passengers who interchange at Preston in particular.

Students, staff and visitors to UCLan, many of whom use Preston station, will also generate footfall along Fishergate and Corporation Street which could be better served by a range of outlets en-route to the university campus.

The expansion of the retail and leisure offering is encouraged within ground floor units below residential and / or commercial developments, as a means of delivering the required activation of these frontages and the adjacent streetscapes.

'Experiential' retail and leisure destinations, whether delivered as 'meanwhile uses' within the public realm or taking advantage of vacant sites or buildings, or as bespoke developments, are increasingly popular and could form part of the attraction of the Station Quarter. Successful developments, like Box Park in London or Hatch in Manchester, have also been key factors in transforming perceptions and attracting new occupiers and business to take space nearby. The instigation of an events strategy within these areas will be another differentiator for the city compared to surrounding locations and the need to ensure new public realm is fully equipped services wise to accommodate these will be important.

Hotel development will help support an active and animated city centre, further fuelling the city centre evening economy. Several recent hotel developments and proposals such as those on Ring Way, Mount Street and East Cliff evidence the demand for additional visitor accommodation driven by business and leisure markets. Further and complementary hotel provision will be encouraged at the Station Quarter to meet expected demand and to take advantage of the excellent connectivity that a location next to Preston Station can provide. Conferencing facilities, which tend to fair better viability wise when included as part of a hotel development, rather than stand alone, would also be supported.



- 1 *Boxpark, Croydon*
- 2 *Hotel, Union Square, Glasgow*
- 3 *Mayfair and Belgravia*

5.4 In Summary - A Rare Opportunity

A major national transport hub is allied here to strategic site availability. There are several opportunities for major development and densification of activity, based in part on better utilisation of public sector land ownerships and in part on an ambition, shared with key stakeholders including the University and private land owners, to transform the Station Quarter and to create a new gateway to the City of Preston and to Lancashire.



1



2



3



4



5



6

- 1 Construction of new UCLan Student Centre
- 2 Avenham and Miller Park
- 3 Preston Railway Station
- 4 Winckley Square
- 5 Preston Fishergate
- 6 Preston County Hall

Spatial Framework and Design Principles

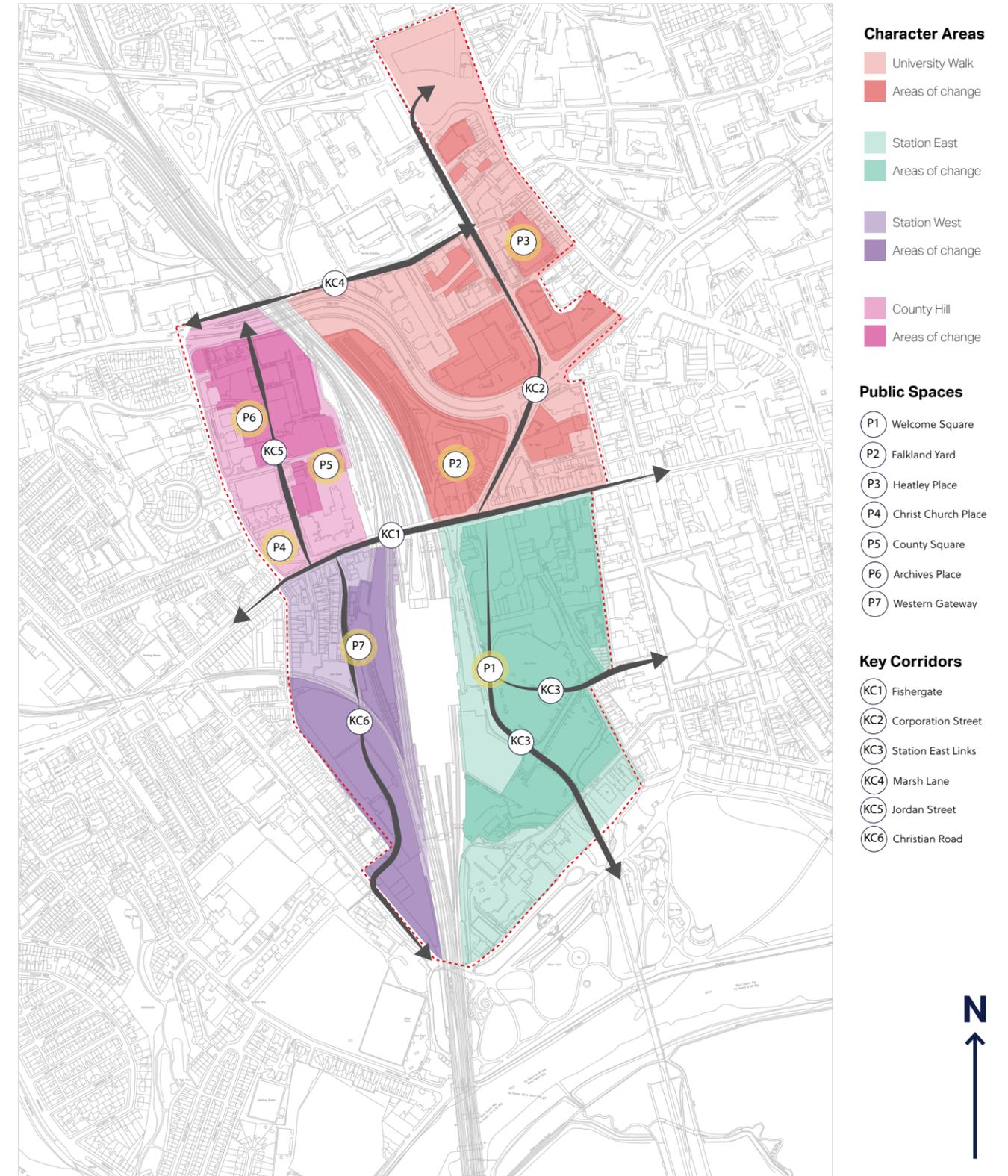
6

6.1 Design Principles

The following design principles will apply to the Station Quarter:

- Create an improved arrival to the city centre through station entrances and into public realm that gives a strong sense of arrival and place.
- To bring the best out of a much-loved Grade II listed building and bring passenger facilities up to modern day standards while retaining the character of a traditional British railway station.
- Deliver new well-designed development that is appropriate to the scale, massing and form of the city centre.
- Protect and enhance existing heritage assets that positively contribute to local character and distinctiveness.
- Create a legible structure of high quality streets and public spaces with good provisions of green infrastructure.
- Form an attractive, safe and well connected public realm that prioritises pedestrians and cyclists and breaks down the barrier of Ring Way.
- Provide active ground floor frontages and overlooking on key routes.
- Maintain appropriate vehicle access and movement but reduce the impact of vehicles and associated infrastructure.
- Form an enhanced hub of different transport modes with improved interchange between them.
- Ensure that development proposals set a high benchmark for sustainable design and the move towards a low carbon future.

Figure 6.1.1: Design Principles



6.2 Land Use Character Areas

Areas of change are identified in figure 6.2.1. The overall vision for each character area in terms of land use is set out below.

Station East

The area east of the station is identified for a mix of uses anchored by a new office quarter, which along with complementary retail, conferencing, leisure and residential uses would aim to extend the urban realm of the city centre towards the station and parks.

University Walk

Scope for significant change and development with new uses that capitalise on the physical connection to UCLan. Appropriate uses include new spaces for education, innovation, health and enterprise uses as well as complementary retail, conferencing, leisure and residential development.

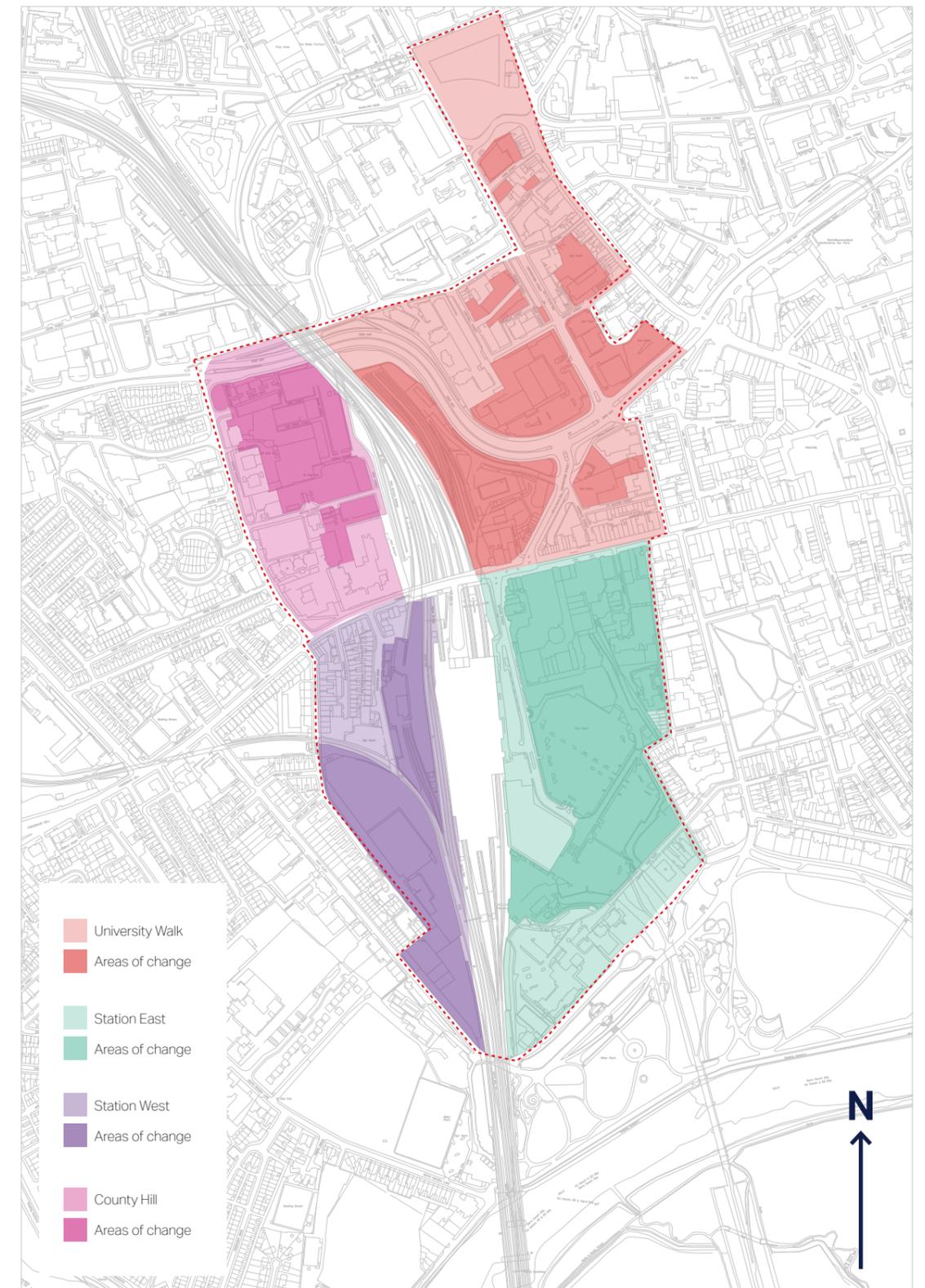
County Hill

The land north of County Hall has scope for comprehensive development to deliver a new city centre residential-led neighbourhood, whilst there is also potential to consolidate the County Hall estate to create new collaborative workspace for existing and new public sector occupiers.

Station West

The approach to this area will require a degree of flexibility to allow for the future expansion of Preston Station, whilst also noting the longer-term potential for new housing development on any land that may become surplus in the future if no longer required to meet Royal Mail or Network Rail requirements. In considering future development potential, care must be taken not to prejudice the statutory duty obligations of Royal Mail, or its operational requirements.

Figure 6.2.1: Land Use Character Areas



6.3 Key Corridors

Key Corridors are identified in figure 6.3.1. The significant improvement of the environmental quality and vibrancy of these corridors through traffic management, public realm improvements, the enhancement and re-use of significant buildings and the development of key sites, will be central to delivering the vision.

KC 1 Fishergate

The main east / west spine through the city centre and very much the heart of the city centre with a particular emphasis on active ground floor uses and high quality public realm.

KC 2 Corporation Street

The principal link between the station and the heart of UCLan’s campus, requiring action to create a consistent, safe and attractive environment within a strong urban townscape from Fishergate to University Square.

KC 3 Station East Links

The station’s eastern entrances are likely to remain important and busy gateways to the city. New development should create a cityscape that frames key links from a new ‘arrival square’ to Fishergate, Winckley Square and the parks to the south.

KC 4 Marsh Lane

The route between the Jordan Street and University Walk character areas with the need for improved pedestrian linkages.

KC 5 Jordan Street

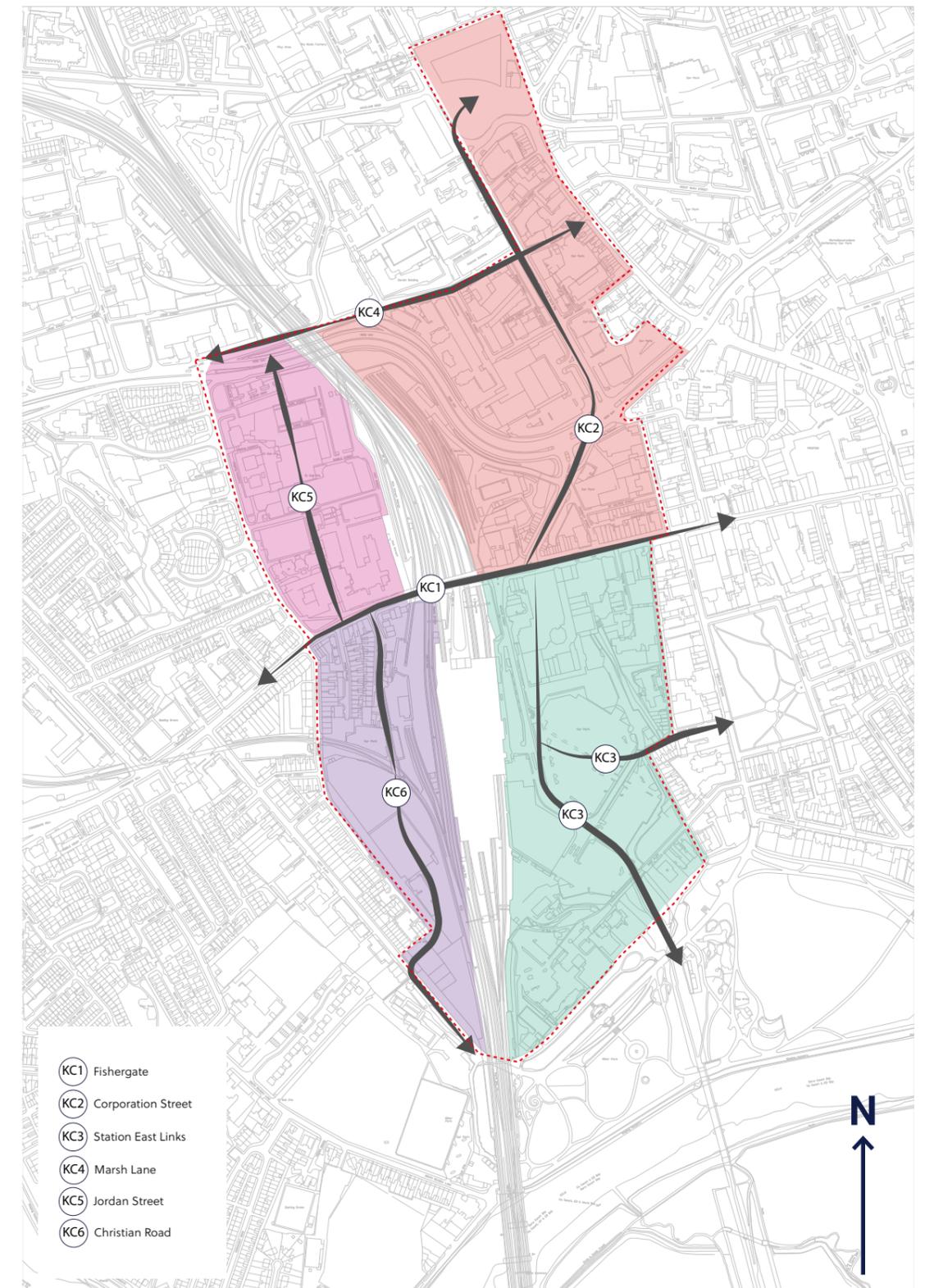
Extending the historic street from Fishergate Hill through this area to create an attractive pedestrian spine.

KC 6 Christian Road Corridor

The main route through the Station West area with a need for good pedestrian connections to Fishergate and the potential for links south to West Cliff and the parks and east through Preston Station.

The development of the Royal Mail site is a theoretical/ illustrative possibility, so that the part of Christian Road Corridor within the Royal Mail site could only be delivered if in the long term, the site becomes surplus to Royal Mail requirements.

Figure 6.3.1: Key Corridors



6.4 Public Spaces

Opportunities for new public spaces are highlighted in figure 6.4.1.

P1 Welcome Square

A significant public square that will create a sense of arrival from Preston Station and an orientation point between new and improved links to Fishergate, Winckley Square and the parks.

P2 Falkland Yard

An intimate public space providing setting for new development around it.

P3 Heatley Place

A small, intimate courtyard on the site of the former St Mary's Church (now car park) offering active frontages and amenity spaces to the new development which surrounds it.

P4 Christ Church Place

Transforming a surface car park into a neighbourhood pocket park to enhance the setting of heritage assets and provide amenity for the wider conservation area.

P5 County Square

Turning a surface car park into a new public space, marking the transition from the imposing County Hall and new residential development.

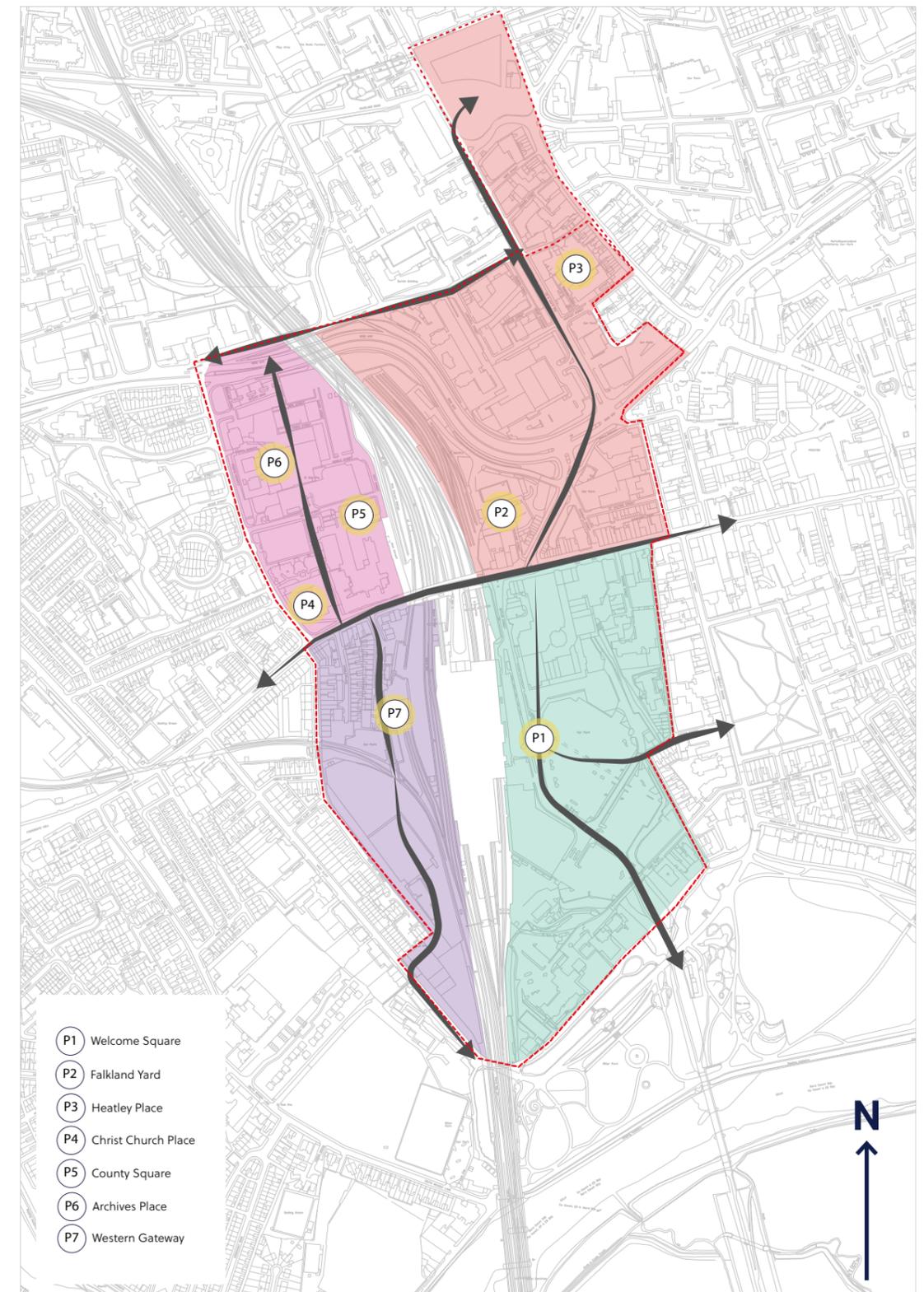
P6 Archives Place

Creating a new green space alongside the county archives building, providing setting and amenity for neighbouring uses.

P7 Western Gateway

In the event of any opportunity to remodel Preston Station to include a new Western entrance, then consideration should be given to a new public arrival space.

Figure 6.4.1: Public Spaces



6.5 Views, Landmarks and Building Heights

Sited on a low ridge, Preston has the advantage of occupying a prominent position above the River Ribble and lower lying land to the south. This gives important views of Preston's skyline when approaching from that direction. Equally there are important views from Avenham and Miller Parks where the steep escarpment offers dramatic views across the Ribble estuary.

County Hall sits at a high point on Fishergate Hill and is a prominent landmark. As well as County Hall, the spire of St Walburge's church and East Cliff are major landmarks for any visitors arriving in Preston by train. Other important views are those experienced within the adjacent conservation areas, particularly Winckley Square.

Layout and building heights will need to be given detailed consideration at the planning stage, considering the impact on existing views and opportunities to frame new views and townscape. New buildings should define gateways, key nodal points and frontages. Particular opportunities include the environs of the station and its interface with Winckley Square and the parks, as well as the interface of Corporation Street and Ring Way.

Guidance on building heights is also illustrated in figure 6.5.1. These are provided only as a guide, noting that the measured height of buildings will vary depending on topography, the use proposed and layout.

Figure 6.5.2 identifies existing views that should be considered when laying out and scaling new buildings, as well as opportunities to form new views and vistas. These are illustrated on the following page.

Figure 6.5.1: Guidance on Building Heights

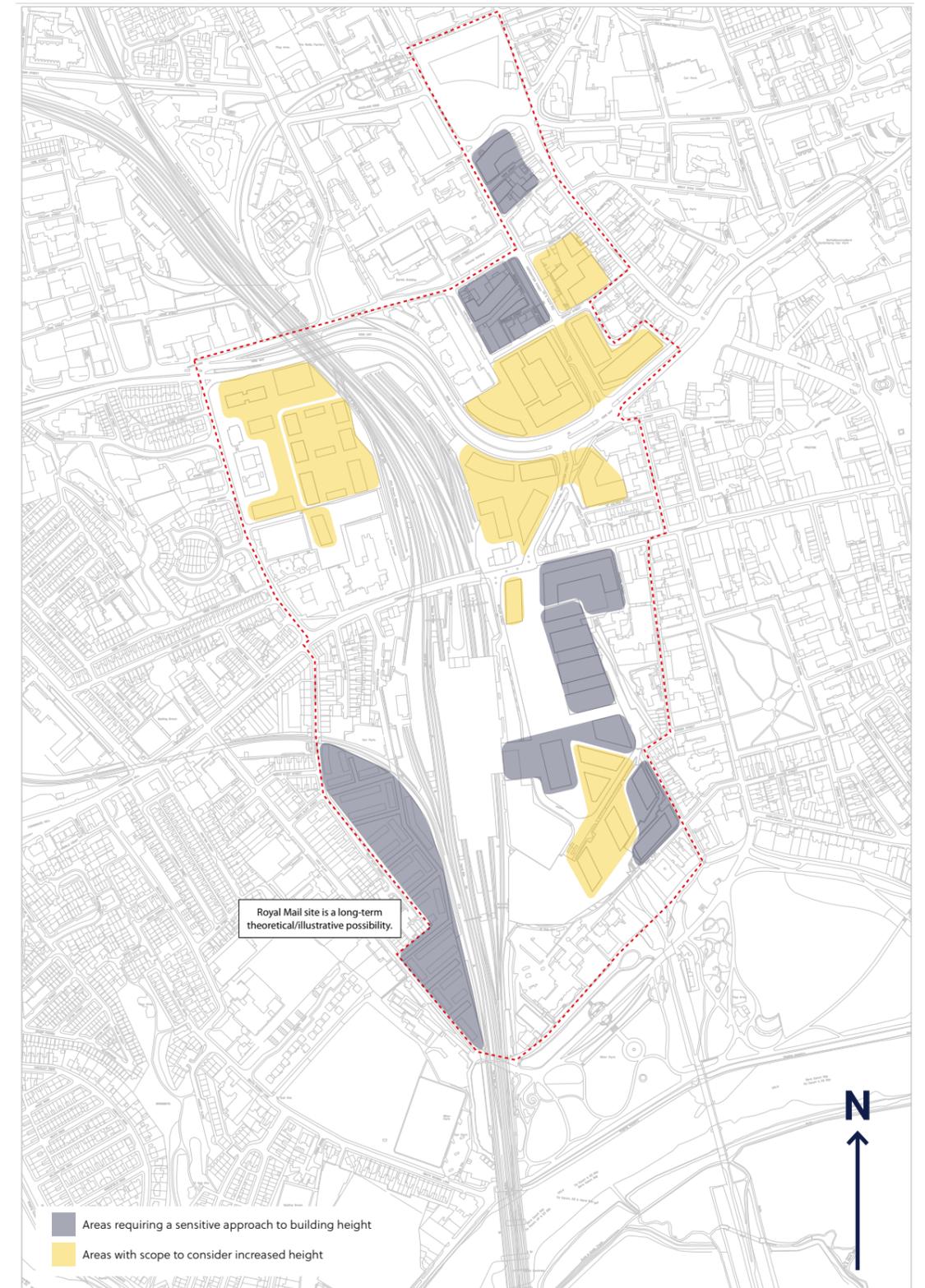
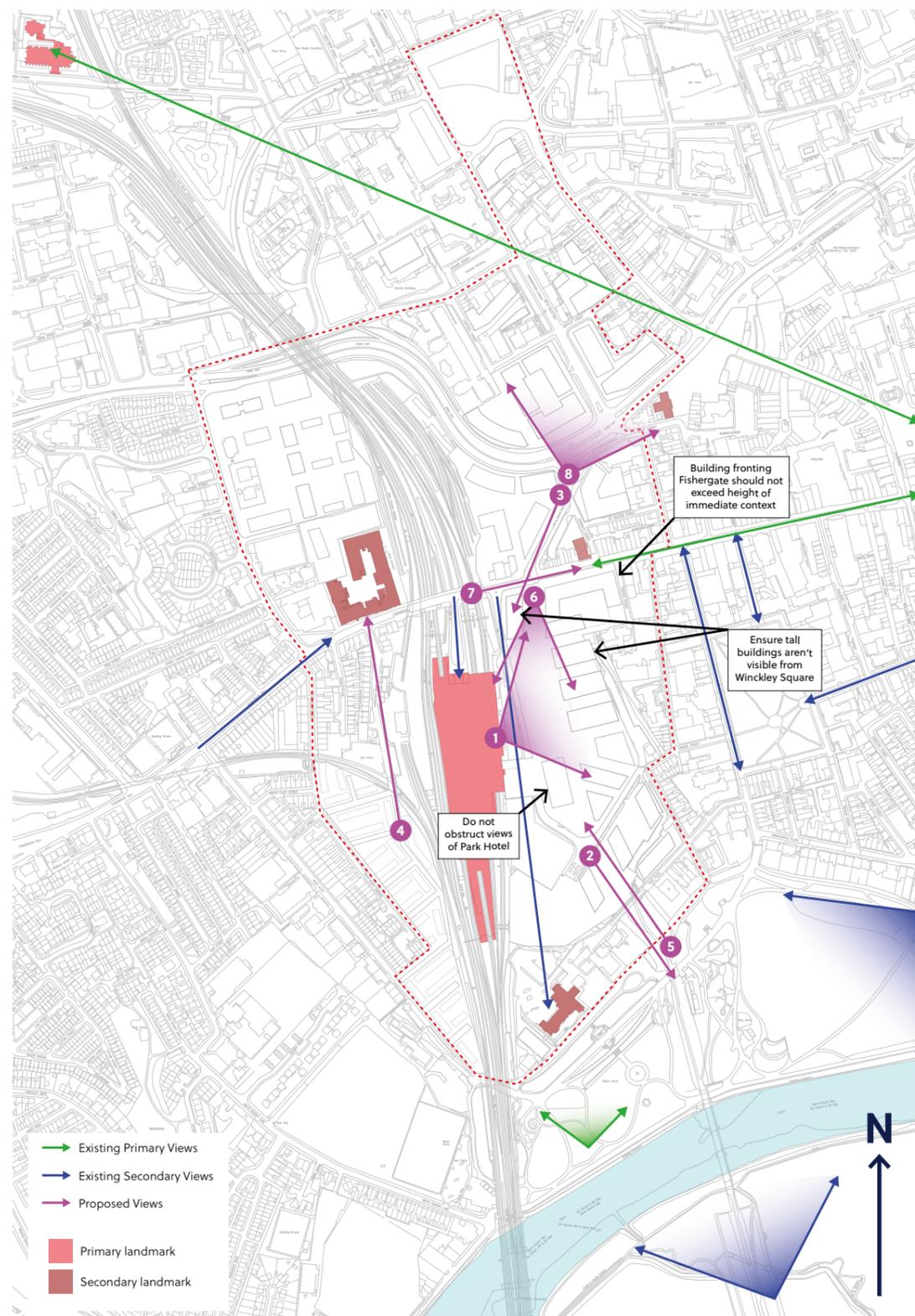


Figure 6.5.2: Views and Landmark



1
View from Preston Station upon arrival



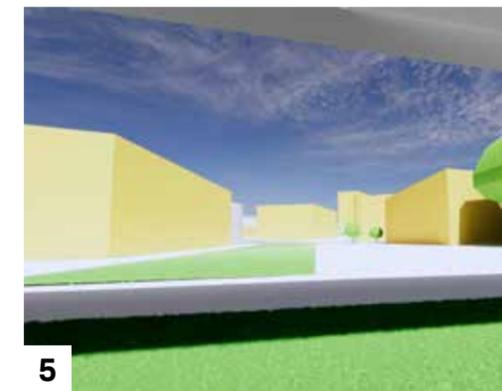
2
View of Avenham Park from Welcome Square



3
View from Corporation Street looking south



4
View of County Hall from Christian Road



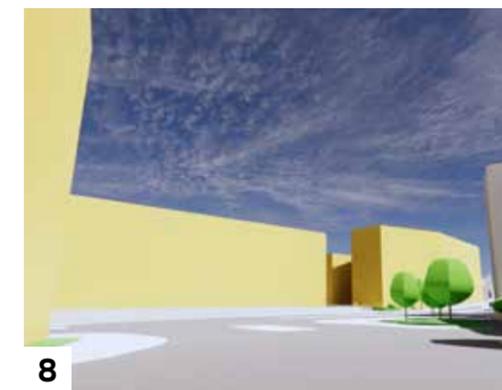
5
View of Welcome Square from Avenham Park



6
View of Welcome Square from Fishergate



7
View of Fishergate



8
View of new UCLan buildings to Ring Way

6.6 Green Infrastructure

The term 'green infrastructure' describes the network of natural spaces and corridors in a given area. It applies to parks and gardens, playing fields and woodland as well as streets and footpaths with good amounts of trees and landscape. These assets provide areas for recreation and leisure, habitat for wildlife and a range of environmental, social and economic benefits.

Green infrastructure can provide significant reductions in temperatures within urban environments, through shading and evaporation. It can also potentially mitigate the risks of climate change-induced reductions in air and water quality and flood risk. Views, smells and sounds of nature make a positive contribution to health and well-being and can encourage outdoor activity such as walking and cycling. Quality green infrastructure also positively impacts on local economic regeneration.

Within the wider context of the Station Gateway there are some good examples of investment in green infrastructure. Avenham and Miller Parks created in the 1860s are today Grade II* listed and much loved assets. Winckley Square is a fantastic 'set piece' townscape and the heart of the Winckley Square Conservation Area. The recently completed Adelphi Square forms a new focal point for UCLan and a quality benchmark for public realm and green infrastructure design.

Development within the Station Quarter will need to contribute to a cohesive network of green infrastructure as shown in figure 6.6.1. This will include a mix of new green spaces, greening of streets and, where appropriate, incorporation of green infrastructure in building design.

Green Spaces

New public and private open spaces provide opportunities for larger concentrations of green infrastructure forming nodal points between green corridors.

Tree-lined Streets

Well thought out street tree and other forms of planting within streetscapes establish green corridors, providing connections for wildlife, enhanced legibility and the overall uplift of the area.

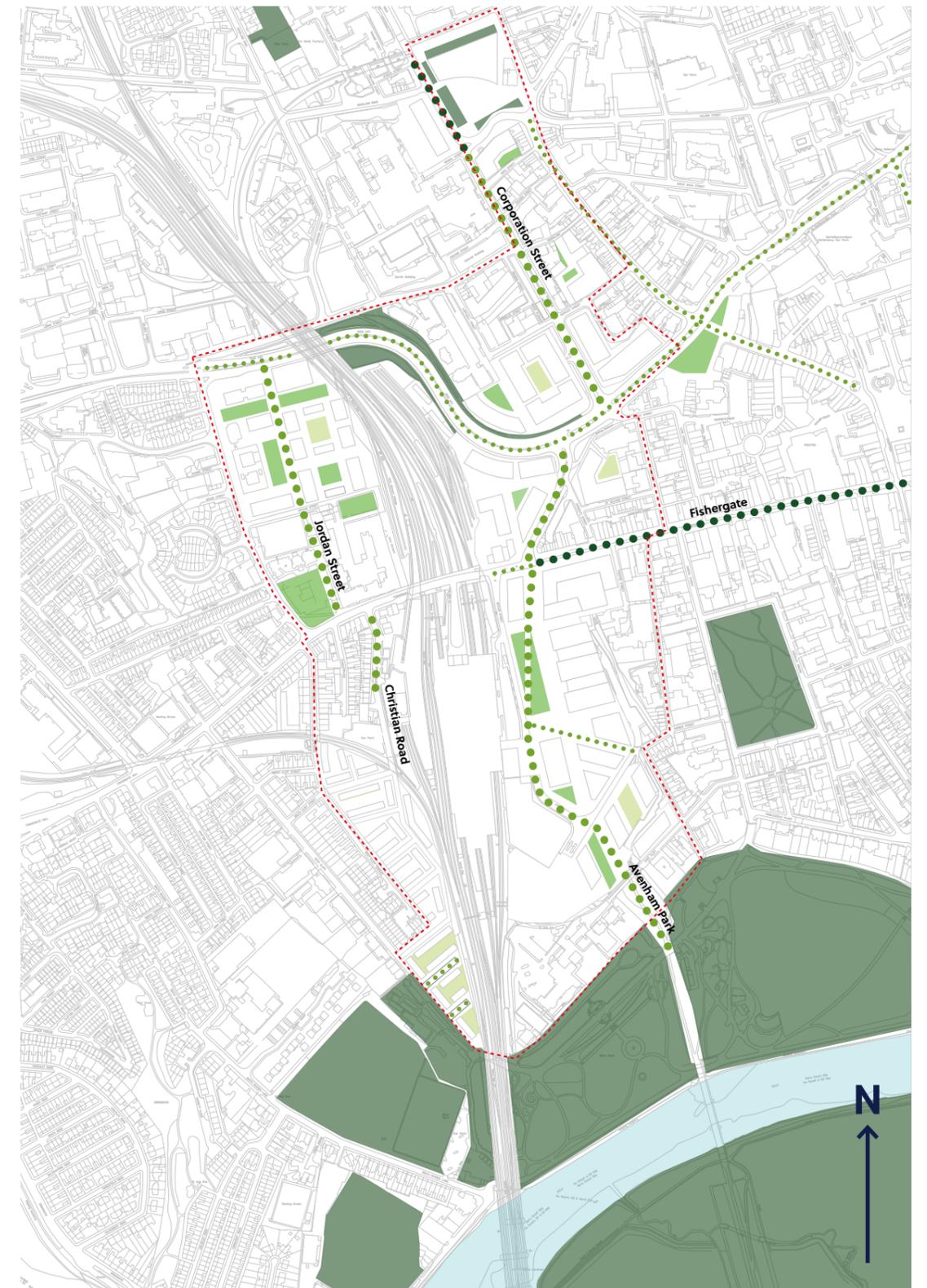
Buildings

Buildings themselves can contribute to enhanced green infrastructure through the provision of green roofs and walls.



'Green Wall' Waitrose, Bracknell

Figure 6.6.1: Proposed green infrastructure network



6.7 Sustainability

The city council declared a climate emergency in April 2019. Tackling climate change is a cross cutting theme of the Core Strategy and it includes policies to encourage energy efficiency in new developments and promote renewable and low carbon energy generation in the city, which will help to reduce carbon emissions.

Planning for climate change involves seeking to limit the impact of new developments by reducing or minimising their carbon emissions and ensuring new development can adapt to future climate change and more extremes of weather locally such as higher winds, rising sea levels, higher rainfall and also longer droughts.

Sustainability is about changing mind-sets and behaviours. It requires an integrated and collaborative approach to design, operation and management. Development proposals will be expected to incorporate sustainable approaches, embracing the following topics:

Adaptive Re-use

Development proposals must consider the retention and reuse of existing buildings that could make a positive contribution to the regeneration of the area, prioritising the sensitive retrofitting and reuse of heritage assets. In designing new buildings, how they can adapt to meet both anticipated and projected changes in the future should also be considered, including shifts in market dynamics, demographics, new ways of living and working and responding to a changing and more unpredictable climate.

Energy Efficiency

The Core Strategy requires all new developments to be designed and built in a sustainable way. New buildings must be constructed to reach energy efficiency standards set out in the Code for Sustainable Homes and BREEAM.

Micro Generation

Micro generation typically refers to renewable energy systems that can be integrated into buildings to primarily serve the on-site demand. They are applicable to both domestic and non-domestic buildings and can be connected to the grid. Micro generation technologies cover the full range of renewable energy categories: wind, solar, biomass and heat pumps.

District Heating

District heating networks can provide higher efficiencies and better pollution control. The scale of development that can be comprehensively delivered within the Station Quarter could provide the critical mass that makes district heating infrastructure more viable.

Ecology

Opportunities to support ecology and improve the natural environment through biodiversity net-gain include the incorporation of features that are beneficial to wildlife such as bat roost or bird boxes to green and blue infrastructure from green walls and roofs to new open spaces. Existing trees should be retained wherever possible and the area enhanced with new tree planting (see Green Infrastructure).

Transport

Proposals must support and encourage active and sustainable travel through the provision of well-designed streets that prioritise pedestrians, cyclists and public transport over the private car (see Transport, Movement and Connectivity).

Water

New developments are encouraged to deploy sustainable drainage systems for surface water. Innovative ways to manage rainwater within an urban environment include swales, green roofs and permeable surfaces.

Health and Well-being

New development should support healthy lives and the formation of sustainable habits beginning with the internal design and siting of individual buildings through to the overall pattern of development, including easy access to open green space, places that encourage active play and social interaction and good access to local services and facilities, all of which should be accessible by walking, cycling and public transport.

6.8 Transport, Movement and Connectivity

The Station Quarter centres on Preston Station, with a key driver being to better integrate the station into the city centre with its commercial district and University nearby. Plans are already afoot to significantly increase patronage levels at the station, with the Preston City Transport Plan (2019) seeking to increase the number of local destinations accessible by rail and HS2 being introduced to serve regional and national destinations.

The SQRF seeks to enhance the station as a gateway to Preston, removing barriers to allow interchange between modes of travel and to promote active travel across the city centre. It also provides an opportunity to reduce the need to travel, with people being able to live, work and study within the city centre and in a highly accessible location close to the railway station. Any reductions need to be subject to analysis in terms of impact on the immediate and wider network. An evidence base agreed with the Highways Authority should support each proposal as it comes forward.

Challenges

Whilst the station is well placed to serve the city, its potential is currently hindered by a number of barriers to movement and infrastructure that encourages the dominance of the private car over other modes of transport.

The layout of the station itself is unclear with there being uncertainty about whether the northern or eastern entrance is the primary access to the station and where facilities for onward travel are to be found.

Whilst vehicular access to the station is currently restricted to certain routes, namely via Ring Way and Corporation Street when travelling to the station and via Fishergate and Fishergate Hill or Bow Lane when exiting the station, there remains a feeling that the car dominates over other modes of transport, particularly along the Ring Way corridor which creates a barrier to movement within the Station Quarter.

Further barriers to movement exist in close proximity to the station, including the lack of a western access to the station from Christian Road, the location of the Fishergate Centre and associated car parks to the east and East Cliff and Vicar's Bridge to the south, which currently restrict access to Avenham Park and important cycle routes such as the Guild Wheel.

Whilst bus services serve the railway station and operate along Fishergate, the focus of bus travel in the city centre is away from the railway station, instead focusing on the bus station 900 metres to the east.

Another challenge which encourages the use of cars within the city centre is the over-provision of car parking, particularly surface level car parking which is both an inefficient use of land as well as a barrier to through-movement and active travel.

Core Principles

Movement, with a focus on sustainable modes of transport, is a key aspiration for the Station Quarter as there are opportunities to better link together the station, UCLan and commercial elements of the city centre.

LCC, PCC, and their partners have already developed a forward thinking strategy, underpinned by their Preston City Transport Plan. This plan seeks significant improvements to transport infrastructure, with much having already been implemented. As a result, a step-change in accessibility away from the car is already underway, and a key focus of the Station Quarter will be to ensure that development coming forward makes the best use of, links into and extends the benefits of the existing schemes proposed.

A key piece of the jigsaw is of the Transforming Friargate North and Ring Way project. Public engagement was undertaken in March 2021 and feedback is being used to inform the design of the scheme. The final designs were revealed in October 2021, with the scheme aiming to reduce the severance caused by Ring Way, by creating elements of shared surfaces and introducing additional opportunities for pedestrians and cyclists to cross. The construction of this infrastructure is scheduled for completion by Spring 2023.

As proposals for this additional RF area develop it is important that an area-wide movement review capable of satisfying external scrutiny is undertaken to understand and accommodate all impacts for all modes. The existing Transport, Movement and Connectivity Strategy has been developed following discussions with officers at LCC, PCC, UCLan, the rail industry and other public transport providers. A core part of this strategy assumes significant growth in patronage at Preston Station, created by

improvements to local rail services and the arrival of HS2. These service improvements will alter the catchment of Preston and it is essential that this new catchment can make use of sustainable modes of travel either when travelling to the station or the wider city centre.

Following these discussions five clear principles have guided the transport, movement and connectivity strategy. These are:

- Ensure that the strategy is underpinned by an agreed area wide movement review;
- Ensure that Preston Station forms an inspirational gateway to the city;
- Provide further opportunities for reduced travel, with people being able to live, work and study in Preston City Centre;
- Create an exemplar mobility hub that facilitates active travel across the city, including better links to transport hubs at Preston Bus Station and UCLan via a city centre bus or selected bus services better interchange with rail services and promotes alternative modes to the private car;
- Form safe and direct routes for pedestrians and cyclists with priority over car drivers, making use of segregated and green routes where appropriate; and
- Provide a balanced car parking strategy that makes use of interceptor car parks on the approach to the station, reduces the dominance of at-grade car parking in the area whilst maintaining accessibility for the mobility impaired.