

A man with a beard, wearing a black jacket over a yellow shirt, black trousers, and a black helmet, is riding a black bicycle on a paved path. He is looking towards the camera. In the background is a modern building with a glass facade and vertical wooden slats. The text 'Oldham Town Centre' is overlaid in large white letters.

Oldham Town Centre

Development
Framework
2024

MUSE



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Appendices



Appendix A.

Planning Policy Context and Evidence Base

National Policy



National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2023)

The NPPF sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these should be applied. The following summarises relevant policy to the Oldham Development Framework.

Chapter 2
Achieving sustainable development

Sustainable development is at the heart of the NPPF. There are 3 overarching objectives to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental (para. 8).

Chapter 5
Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

To support the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where needed (para. 60).

The type, size and tenure of housing needed for different groups within the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies. These groups should include those who require affordable housing, older people, people with disabilities, those who rent their homes and students, for example (para. 63).

Chapter 7
Ensuring the vitality of town centres

Planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities. Planning policies should recognise that residential development often plays an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres and encourage residential development on appropriate sites (para. 90).

Local Authorities are required to take a positive approach to the growth, management and adaptation of town centres, ensuring planning policies allow centres to grow and diversify in a way which can respond to rapid changes in retail and leisure industries and allow a suitable mix of uses, including housing (para. 90).

Chapter 8
Promoting healthy and safe communities

Planning policies should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places and beautiful buildings, which promote social interaction; are safe and accessible; and enable and support healthy lifestyles (para. 96).

Chapter 11
Making effective use of land

Planning policies should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses (para. 123).

Local planning authorities are required to take a proactive role in identifying and bringing forward land that may be suitable for meeting development needs, including suitable sites held in public ownership (para. 125).

In line with paragraph 129, area-based character assessments and masterplans can be used to help ensure that land is used efficiently whilst also creating beautiful and sustainable places. This includes setting a minimum density standard for town centres, which will seek a significant uplift in the average density of residential development (para. 129).

Chapter 14
Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.

Other relevant sections of the NPPF include:

- Chapter 9: Promoting sustainable transport
- Chapter 12: Achieving well-designed & beautiful places
- Chapter 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- Chapter 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG, 2014 and as amended)

PPG provides additional, detailed guidance on the planning system and areas of national policy.

In relation to Town Centres, PPG states states that the local planning authorities can take a leading role in promoting a positive vision for centres, bringing stakeholders together and supporting sustainable economic growth. Residential development can play an important role in ensuring the vitality of town centres.

A town centre strategy should be based on evidence of the current state of the centre and opportunities that exist to accommodate a range of suitable development, thus supporting their vitality and viability.

PPG also supports a more effective use of land. When considering the prospect of development for a site, it will be important to consider the extent to which evidence suggests an alternative use would address an unmet need, as well as the implications for the wider planning strategy for the area and other development plan policies.

PPG also provides design guidance, including that planning policies should set out the design outcomes that development should pursue.

Sub-Regional Policy



Places For Everyone (PfE, 2024)

Nine authorities of Greater Manchester, including Oldham, have prepared Places for Everyone, a joint development plan for jobs, new homes and sustainable growth. The following summarises the key policies which are relevant to Oldham Town Centre.

Policy JP-Strat-6 Northern Areas

PfE seeks a significant increase in the competitiveness of the northern areas of Greater Manchester (GM). There is a strong focus on making as much use as possible of suitable brownfield land through urban regeneration, enhancing the role of town centres and diversifying the residential offer.

Policy JP-Strat-12 Main Town Centres

Main town centres are recognised as local economic drivers which will continue to be developed, providing the primary focus for a range of uses.

Opportunities will be taken to significantly increase the resident population of main town centres by providing a mix of type and size of dwellings. Development will be carefully managed to ensure that the local distinctiveness of each centre is retained and enhanced.

Policy JP-S1 Sustainable development

Development should maximise its economic, social and environmental benefits whilst minimising its adverse impacts, actively seeking opportunities to secure net gains. Preference will be given to using as much suitable brownfield land and vacant buildings as possible to meet development needs.

Policy JP-J1 Supporting long-term economic growth

This policy strives to develop a thriving, inclusive and productive economy across the boroughs. This includes an emphasis on providing high-quality, sustainable living environments to help attract and retain skilled workers.

Policy JP-H1 Scale, distribution and phasing of new housing development

A minimum of 175,185 net additional dwellings will be delivered over the period 2022-39, of which 11,560 will be delivered in Oldham.

Policy JP-H2 Affordability of new housing

Affordability will be improved through significantly increasing housing supply and maximising the delivery of affordable homes.

Policy JP-H4 Density of new housing

Developments within designated town centres should achieve a minimum net residential density of 120 dwellings per hectare.

Developments of this density will primarily be apartments, incorporating houses or ground floor duplexes where practicable.

Policy JP-G6 Urban green space

To ensure an appropriate scale, type, quality and distribution of accessible urban green space, the GM authorities will work with developers and other stakeholders to deliver new high quality urban green spaces.

Policy JP-G9 A net enhancement of biodiversity and geodiversity

A net enhancement of biodiversity resources will be sought. This includes through facilitating greater access to nature, particularly within urban areas.

Policy JP-P1 Sustainable places

Development should be distinctive with a clear identity; visually stimulating; inclusive and accessible; resilient, adaptable and durable; resource-efficient; safe; functional; legible; well-connected; and high quality.

Policy JP-P2 Heritage

The historic environment and heritage assets will be positively conserved, sustained and enhanced, improving understanding and interpretation and reinforcing GM's distinct sense of place.

Policy JP-P4 New retail and leisure uses in town centres

The city centre and main town centres (including Oldham) will be maintained and enhanced in their role for retail and leisure provision.

Policy JP-C1 An integrated network

This policy seeks to deliver an accessible, low carbon GM with world class connectivity. This includes delivering a pattern of development that minimises the need to travel and the distance travelled. New developments should deliver a significant increase in the proportion of trips that can be made via sustainable modes.

Policy JP-C4 Streets for all

Streets will be designed and managed to make a significant positive contribution to the quality of place and support sustainable transport, following the Streets for All approach.

Local Policy



Joint Core Strategy & Development Management Policies Development Plan (2011)

This document forms the statutory development plan in Oldham and covers the plan period 2011-2026. The relevant policies are summarised as follows:

Policy 1
Climate change and sustainable development

Development should adapt to and mitigate against climate change, address the low carbon agenda, contribute towards sustainable development, create a sense of place, improve quality of life and enhance the borough's image. Housing led development should contribute towards a balanced and sustainable housing market.

Policy 3
An address of choice

The Council will promote the borough as an address of choice. The housing market will be balanced and sustainable to meet the needs and demands of urban and rural communities. The use of previously developed land and vacant or underused buildings is the Council's first preference for residential development. Major residential development should have access to at least three key services, which could include Oldham town centre.

Policy 5
Promoting accessibility and sustainable transport choices

Development will be guided to the most accessible locations and the use of public transport and active travel modes will be promoted and encouraged. All major developments should achieve 'High' or 'Very High' accessibility, unless it is neither practicable or desirable or the development provides exceptional benefits to the surrounding environment and community.

Policy 9
Local environment

The Council will promote safe neighbourhoods and clean, green spaces for all to enjoy. The Council will protect and improve local environmental quality and amenity and promote community safety.

Policy 10
Affordable housing

The Council will work with partners and developers to ensure that affordable housing need is met. Residential development of 15 dwellings and above will be required to provide 7.5% of the total development sales value to go towards the delivery of affordable housing, unless this cannot be achieved for viability reasons.

The Council will have regard to the type and size of the affordable housing proposed and how this meets local housing need.

Policy 11
Housing

Residential development must deliver a mix of appropriate housing types, sizes and tenures that meet the needs and demands of the borough's urban and rural communities. A mix of housing should be provided within Oldham town centre to encourage people to live within these areas.

Key considerations include the location and characteristics of the site; public transport accessibility; access to key services; shape, topography, landscape, historic environment and biodiversity features; and surrounding uses and characteristics.

Policy 15
Centres

Oldham town centre is recognised as a focal point for its commercial, shopping, social, civic, community and cultural activities. The town centre should at least maintain and, if possible enhance, its existing role by improving the quality and quantity of its retail offer.

Policy 17
Gateways and Corridors

Developments at key gateways and along transport corridors should be high quality uses and contribute towards making the routes greener and more attractive.

Developments should respond to the importance of the gateway route in terms of its height, scale and quality.

Policy 20
Design

High quality design is recognised as having the potential to bring economic, social and environmental benefits, adding to the quality of life; attracting investment; and reinforcing civic pride. Designs should reinforce local identity.

Development should ensure safety and inclusion, diversity, ease of movement, adaptability, sustainability, good streets and spaces and well designed buildings.

Policy 21
Protecting natural environmental assets

The Council will value, protect, conserve and enhance the local natural environment and its functions and provide new and enhanced Green Infrastructure.

Policy 24
Historic Environment

The Council will protect, conserve and enhance heritage assets and their settings, which add to the borough's sense of place and identity. Development affecting the setting of a conservation area must serve to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area.

Local Policy



Supplementary Planning Documents

The following Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are relevant to the Oldham town centre Development Framework:

Vibrant Centres SPD (2012)

A key aim for the borough is to promote and enhance the vitality and viability of all the borough's centres. The potential for Oldham town centre is recognised as being substantial. The objectives of the SPD include providing clear and consistent guidance for promoting and maintaining vitality and viability; managing the impact on the local environment and amenity; ensuring development contributes positively to the visual appearance of the area; managing traffic impacts; and contributing to community safety.

Oldham town centre conservation area appraisal and management plan SPD (2019)

The SPD provides guidance on how to root regeneration in the conservation area, preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area and introducing good quality, contemporary design alongside protecting and improving existing buildings and townscape features. The three objectives of the SPD are: Enhancement; Regeneration; and Community Engagement.

Evidence Base



Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2023)

The following elements of the Council's evidence base are of relevance to the Oldham town centre Development Framework.

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2023)

Several of the core sites and other opportunity sites are identified in the SHLAA as potential housing sites, with the majority of housing being deliverable in either 2028-2033, 2033-2039 or 2039+.

- Civic Centre (SHA2000): 682 units
- Former Leisure Centre (SHA1759): 215 units
- Former Magistrates' Court & Manchester Chambers (SHA2001): 240 units
- Bradshaw Street Car Park (SHA2002): 120 units
- North Mumps, Wallshaw Street (SHA2147): 48 units
- Southgate Street & Waterloo Street (SHA2148): 190 units
- Princes Gate (SHA0021): 300 units
- Henshaw House (SHA2155): 45 units

Local Housing Needs Assessment (2019)

This document is currently being updated to inform the emerging Local Plan.

This document will be used to support the future planning and housing policies of the borough. Key findings include:

- The population of Oldham is projected to increase by 5.8% to 252,300 by 2037.
- Over the next few decades there will be a marked increase in the number and proportion of older residents.
- The population of people aged 65+ years is expected to increase by 35.7% between 2016 and 2037.
- The overall annual dwelling need for Oldham is 715 units per year.
- In terms of affordable housing, it is recommended that affordable tenure is 50% social/affordable rented and 50% intermediate tenure.
- There is a need for a broader housing offer for older people across the borough.
- All new dwellings must be built to accessible and adaptable standard in accordance with Building Regulations, unless specific site conditions make this impracticable.

Emerging Local Policy



Draft Local Plan (2023)

The Draft Local Plan will guide development in the borough up to 2039. Upon adoption it will replace the Joint Core Strategy & Development Management DPD and any saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan. It will be read alongside PfE.

Policy H1 Delivering a diverse housing offer

The Council will promote a diverse housing offer to meet differing needs of Oldham's residents. Brownfield sites will be considered favourably where they comply with national planning policy and guidance, PfE and Local Plan policies.

All residential development should be sustainably located, with public transport, local services and facilities accessible to the development by active travel.

Policy H2 Housing mix

Within Oldham town centre the housing mix shall predominantly be apartments, although in some circumstances an alternative mix may be suitable, including considerations relating to funding, the provision of specialist housing and the characteristics of the area.

Emerging Local Policy



Draft Local Plan (2023) Continued

Policy H3 Density of new housing

For sites within the town centre the minimum density will be 120 dwellings per hectare.

In line with PfE, new residential units will be required to, as a minimum, meet the nationally described space standards.

Policy H13 Housing and Mixed Use Allocations

The Council will allocate sufficient land for housing to assist in meeting the borough's requirements. Oldham town centre is identified as a highly sustainable and accessible location and, as part of the Creating a Better Place regeneration programme, has an opportunity to support significant residential development.

Allocations within Oldham town centre include:

- Former Magistrates Court & Chambers: 225 units;
- Henshaw House: 45 units;
- Tommyfield Market & Former Leisure Centre: 250 units;
- Civic Centre: 600 units;
- Bradshaw Street car park: 150 units;
- Land at Mumps and Wallshaw Street: 100 units
- Land at Waterloo Street: 250 units; and
- Princes Gate: 300 units.

Policy TM1 Tourism

The Council will support new tourism related development and proposals should protect and enhance the functions of key tourism locations of Oldham. For Oldham town centre this includes diversifying the town centre offer, supporting development to drive footfall into the centre, making the most of the town's rich heritage and providing a new linear park to create new space to exercise, play or socialise.

Policy C1 Our Centres

The Local Plan seeks to promote and enhance the vitality and viability of the borough's centres, to ensure their long-term success. This policy recognises that there will be a range of town centre uses provided, including housing.

Policy C4 Changes of use and redevelopment within the borough's centres

Changes of use and redevelopments within centres will be managed to ensure that they support, rather than detract from the successful functioning of the centres.

Policy OTC1 Oldham Town Centre

Proposals for the continued enhancement, redevelopment and regeneration of the town centre will be supported where it aligns with the broad principles of the Creating a Better Place strategic framework.

The policy provides guidance for different areas of the town centre, including the Civic and Residential Quarter, which will be the focus for the centre's residential offer, centred around the redevelopment of the Civic Centre and Queen Elizabeth Hall, Manchester Chambers, former Magistrates' Court and former Leisure Centre site.

The policy also establishes key development principles for the town centre, including enhancing the conservation area, ensuring an active streetscene and ensuring an inclusive and accessible Oldham town centre. High density, high quality and sustainable development is to be promoted, including exemplary design at strategically important or other prominent locations.

Policy OTC2 Protecting and enhancing Oldham town centre conservation area

Proposals affecting the setting and character of the conservation area must take into consideration the conservation area SPD.

Developments will be supported where they meet a range of criteria, including securing the viable reuse of vacant assets, protecting established and valued views, improving active uses at ground floor level and improving wayfinding.

Policy OTC3 Creating a better public realm for Oldham town centre

Major new development will be required to make a positive contribution to the public realm of the town centre, by virtue of its siting, design and materials. Trees and landscaping should be introduced in appropriate locations to create a greener, cooler and biodiverse town centre.

Policy OTC4 Green infrastructure within and around Oldham town centre

Proposals will be supported that protect, create and enhance green infrastructure within and around the town centre.

Policy D6 Creating a better public realm in Oldham

All development proposals that create new public realm should ensure that this is well-designed, safe, accessible, inclusive, legible, well-connected and related to the local and historic context. There are several design criteria for new public realm, including that the area encourages active travel modes.

In addition, following on from the adoption of PfE, two SPDs are being prepared:

- South Pennine Moors to support implementation of PfE Policy JP-G5; and the
- Holcroft Moss Planning Obligations SPD, which sets out how the nine PfE Plan authorities will seek to secure contributions from developers to mitigate the impacts of development proposals on Holcroft Moss and supports PfE Policy JP-C8: Transport Requirements of New Development

Appendix B.

Town Centre Baseline Analysis

Baseline Analysis: A Context for Change

The development principle and illustrative proposals presented in this Development Framework have been informed by a comprehensive understanding of the Town Centre and how it currently functions. This Appendix presents the supporting baseline analysis undertaken including:

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Socio-Economics

→ 02

Residential Market
and Demand

→ 03

Historic Environment
and Heritage

→ 04

Urban Form and Use

→ 05

Scale and Massing

→ 06

Green Infrastructure
and Public Realm

→ 07

Access, Transport
and Movement



Socio-Economics



This section provides an analysis of Oldham Town Centre, with comparisons to the local authority of Oldham, the North West and England as a whole.

Oldham Town Centre (defined by the Oldham Local Plan Proposals Maps) comprises a number of Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs). The majority of data used within this baseline utilises Census 2021 data (which is the latest available), however, where data is not available via the Census alternative data sets have been sourced to build a full baseline.

This socio-economic baseline considers a range of themes including demographics; the labour force; education; health and the environment. Where possible, this baseline considers data at the local level, however for some variables it is not possible to include a local level analysis and therefore data is presented at the local authority level, with appropriate comparisons made at the regional and national level.



Local Area Demographics

At the time of Census 2021, the population of the local area stood at 19,238 people. At the scale of the borough of Oldham, the population totalled c.242,100. This follows a recent period of modest population growth across Oldham with the population rising from c. 224,900 in 2011; a growth of c.8%. This represents a lower growth rate in comparison to the 22% recorded at the scale of the local area, thus indicating that the population around the town centre has increased substantially over the decade between the census points (2011-2021).

The age of the population within the local area tends to be younger than across the Oldham Borough, the North West and England with 30% of the population within the local area aged 15 and under and only 7% of the population aged 65 and over. In total, 61% of the population are aged 34 and under.

The largest proportion of households in the local area are one person households. All other household sizes are relatively evenly split, with 16% of households composed of six or more people.

Approximately 47% of households are social rented which is substantially higher than the corresponding proportions within the wider geographies with a significantly smaller proportion of homes that are owned (only 28%).

Approximately 47% of housing in the local area is terraced, potentially a result of the Oldham 016A and 019A LSOA's which do capture some of houses outside the Town Centre area defined by the Council. The proportion of flats (32%) is substantially higher the proportion across the wider geographies.

Socio-economic Analysis

Deprivation

The Index of Multiple Deprivation revealed that Oldham is ranked as the 19th most deprived local authority out of 317 local authorities. All nine of the LSOA's identified within the local area ranked within top 10% of most deprived LSOAs within England, thus suggesting that overall, there is a very high level of deprivation within the surrounding area of Oldham Town Centre.

Oldham appears to have a high degree of deprivation relating to income, employment, education, health, crime and the living environment. All nine of the LSOAs identified within the local area ranked exhibited signs of deprivation relating to income, employment, education and health.

Labour Force

The economic activity rate and employment rate is lower within Oldham than across the North West and England. However, the unemployment rate is lower within Oldham than across the wider geographies.

Both the median resident and workplace wages are substantially lower within the borough of Oldham than within the North West and England, reflecting the high level of income deprivation across the borough.

The highest represented occupations in the local area are those working in elementary occupations (25%), process, plant and machine occupations (14%) and caring, leisure and other service occupations (12%), all of which are higher than the proportions across Oldham and the North West as a whole.

In terms of industries, public administration and defence accounts for 13% of jobs within the Local Area which is substantially higher than the corresponding proportions for the borough of Oldham and the North West as a whole. The retail sector occupies a higher proportion of total jobs in the Local Area in comparison to the wider geographies which is not surprising given the Town Centre location of the local area.

Socio-Economics

→ Socio-economic Analysis

Education

- A higher proportion of residents within the local area have no qualifications (37%) in comparison to Oldham and a substantially lower proportion of residents achieved Level 4 and above in comparison to Oldham as a whole. This suggests that residents within the local area are less educated than those within Oldham.
- A higher proportion of residents aged 16-17 are not in employment, education or training in Oldham in comparison to the North West and England as a whole.
- Attainment at both Key Stage 2 and 4 Level is lower within Oldham than the North West and England as a whole, supporting the conclusions from the IMD which suggests that across the local authority, education is an area of deprivation.
- Per 100,000 people, Oldham has a higher number of people participating in further education and skills, education and training and community learning in comparison to the North West and England. This suggests that the residents of Oldham are continuing to develop their skills, indicating a potentially higher skilled labour force in the future and the need to provide opportunities to retain skilled and economically active people in the borough.
- The proportion of primary and secondary school students receiving free school meals (FSM) is higher within Oldham than the North West and England.

Health

- A lower proportion of the local areas residents self-scored their general health as 'Very good health' or 'Good health' and a higher proportion self-scored as being in 'bad' or 'very bad' health.
- OHID data suggests that life expectancy is lower within Oldham than the North West and England. The prevalence of both adult and child obesity is higher within Oldham than these geographies and a lower percentage of adults are classified as physically active.

Climate Change

- Only 2.5% of households within Oldham have any renewable energy systems.
- The Green Space Index score revealed that there is less than the minimum required standard of green space within the Town Centre. Across Oldham, the area does not meet the minimum standards of green space provision which is anticipated to be exacerbated given the Town Centre location.



Residential Market and Demand

Research by Savills has informed the Development Framework and complements work undertaken to date by the Council, identifying the opportunity presented to create a new residential market in the town centre specifically and address requirements in relation to house type and tenure.



Key Considerations

- The population of Oldham is anticipated to increase by 5.8% to 252,300, by 2037. This includes an increase in the number and proportion of older residents.
- Within Oldham town centre specifically, the Local Housing Needs Assessment (currently being updated) noted there is a growing shortage of quality private rented sector housing and a shortage of affordable housing.
- The Housing Topic Paper also notes that there is a trend of outward migration of young people in the borough and therefore there is a need to ensure an attractive housing offer is available to retain and attract young people.
- The Local Housing Needs Assessment has identified dissatisfaction amongst residents of the private rented sector in relation to housing quality. The Housing Topic Paper identifies a need for a range of high quality housing that meets local housing needs, creating mixed, balanced and sustainable communities.



Key Opportunities

Research by Savills has shown that the local housing market is currently dominated by owner occupied properties which are predominantly traditional terraced housing. There has been limited new residential development within the town centre itself. This has created an imbalance within the market and created a demand for a different type of housing product. The redevelopment of the town centre provides an opportunity to introduce a new product to the area, such as apartments and townhouses and properties which are for rent.

In line with demographics and a local market overview, Savills have recommended that a mix of residential development is brought forwards in the town centre, comprising open market sale to attract first time buyers; built to rent as a new product to the market; affordable housing; and residential development which will appeal to the senior living sector (rather than age specific developments).

In terms of housing land supply, a significant proportion of the future supply falls within St Mary's and Coldhurst wards, which includes the town centre. The majority of this is due to the amount of residential development proposed in the town centre.

The provision of housing in Oldham town centre will be modest in the context of the wider Oldham Borough, but has the potential to be a catalyst for regeneration.



→ FIG. B1 - SUSTAINABLY DESIGNED HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS

Overview of Heritage Significance

Oldham is a characteristic industrial town in this region, its early development largely overlaid by the physical manifestation of rapid industrialisation. The principal defining feature of Oldham, however, which sets it apart from other former mill-towns near Manchester, is the hilly topography of the town centre.

This affords striking views of the surrounding area and contributes both to Oldham's historic context (with a number of mills visible) and to its setting with the hills in the distance, capturing an entire cross-section of Oldham and its surroundings in a single frame.

The town centre is located near the summit of the hill. As the town's historic expansion generally followed a pattern of ribbon development, the conservation area's main arteries comprise High Street and Yorkshire Street to the north and Union Street to the south, which eventually intersect before continuing eastward on to Mumps.

While the shopfronts of High Street and Yorkshire Street maintain a sense of lively commerce, Union Street retains much of its original air of formality, a lasting result of its mid-late 19th century grand civic architecture. The smaller north-south streets connecting the two thoroughfares generally offer a more intimate, domestic scale, and comprise a good deal of quaint, 19th century terraced cottages now converted for office and retail use. When viewed collectively, such elements exude a rich and diverse historic character representative of a thriving Victorian industrial town. There is a high density of listed buildings and numerous non-listed buildings that also make a positive contribution to the character of the area.

Green space has been allocated by way of the broad expanse of the Church of St. Mary and St Peter's churchyard in the north of the town centre and (although currently closed) via the verdant library garden south of Union Street. Otherwise, the streetscape largely reflects its industrial history, and with the exception of small garden spaces and local efforts to provide container plantings, greenery is somewhat scarce. Instead, a diverse mix of mid-19th century to early-21st century building stock nestled within a 19th-century streetscape is what defines the immediate setting of the town centre and generates the most heritage interest.

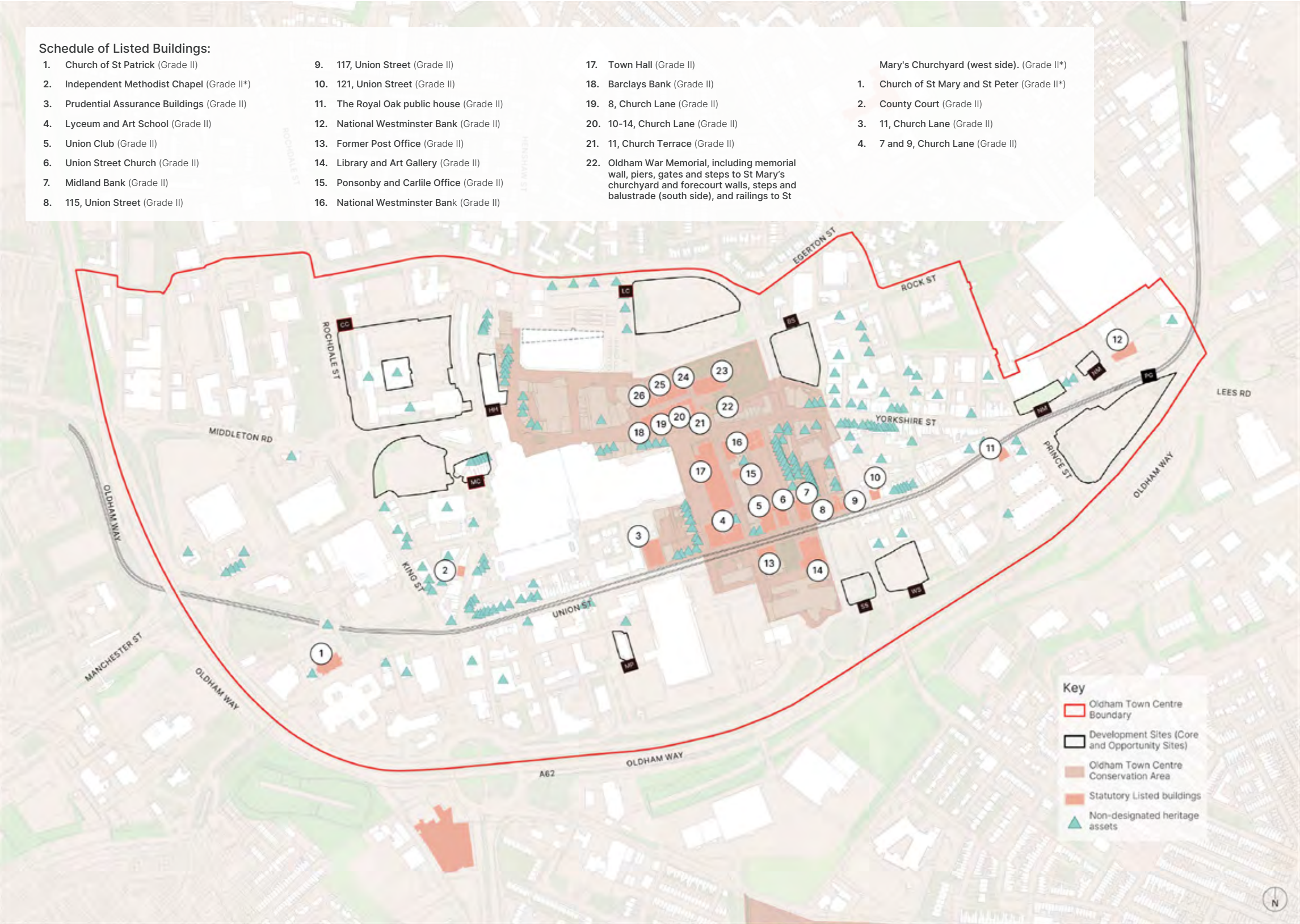
Combined, these different elements of the town centre cumulatively provide a sense of Oldham's dramatic history; a modest hill-top wool town (not unlike those of the Cotswolds) transformed in the space of half a century to become the world's greatest producer of cotton yarn and the global leader in the manufacturing of machinery. This character is focused in and immediately around the retail core, with the most extensive modern redevelopment concentrated (with some exceptions) around its perimeter, to the south of Union Street and the west of Middleton Road and at the former sites of the Royal Infirmary and the Mumps Railway Station and sidings.



→ FIG. B2 - OLDHAM FROM GLODWICK, 1831 BY J.H. CARSE (GALLERY OLDHAM)

Historic Environment and Heritage

→ FIG. B3 - HERITAGE ASSETS. FIGURE CREDIT: PLANIT



Oldham is a characteristic industrial town in this region, its early development largely overlaid by the physical manifestation of rapid industrialisation. The principal defining feature of Oldham, however, which sets it apart from other former mill-towns near Manchester, is the hilly topography of the town centre. This affords striking views of the surrounding area and contributes both to Oldham's historic context (with a number of mills visible) and to its setting with the hills in the distance, capturing an entire cross-section of Oldham and its surroundings in a single frame.

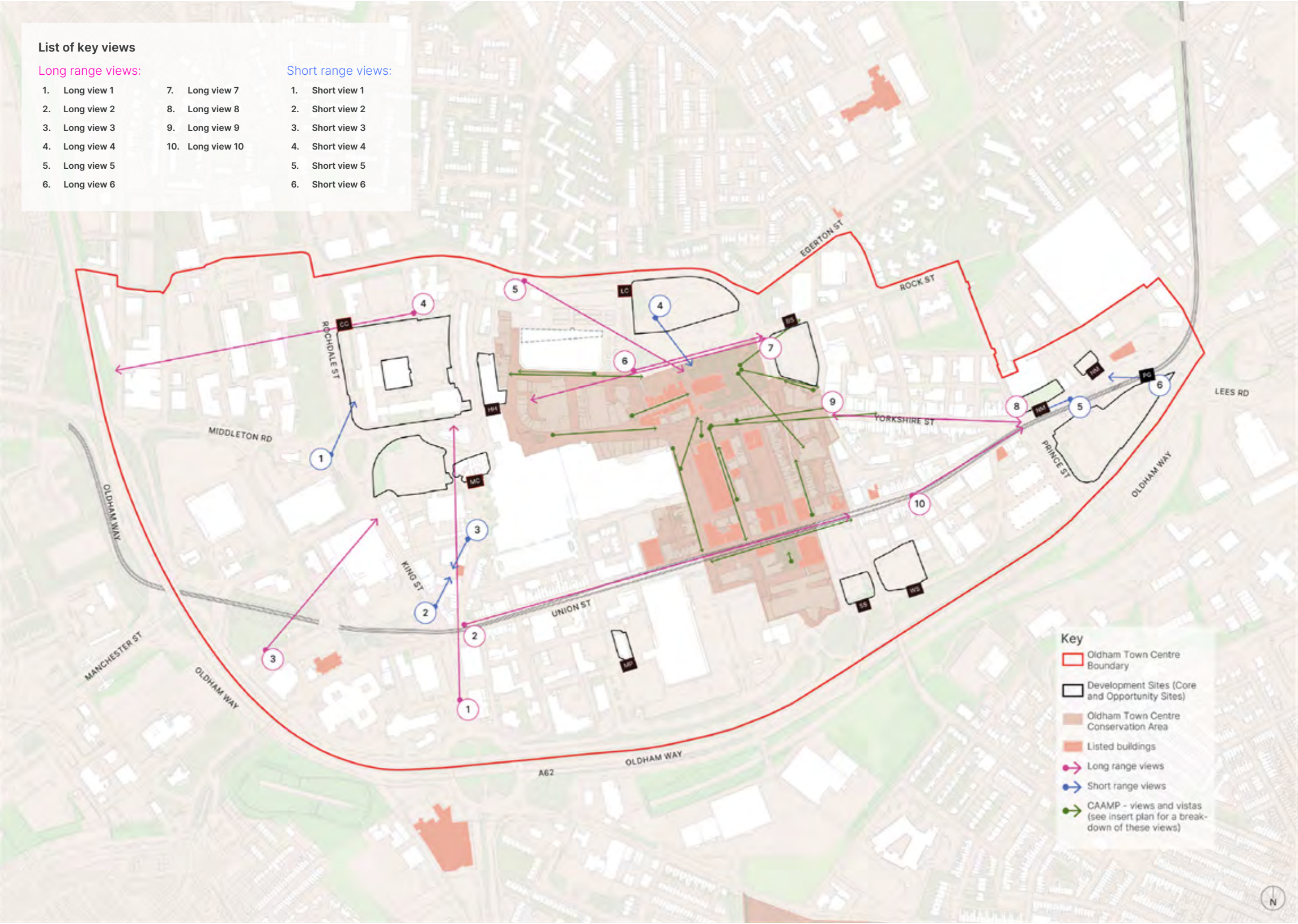
Designated Heritage Assets

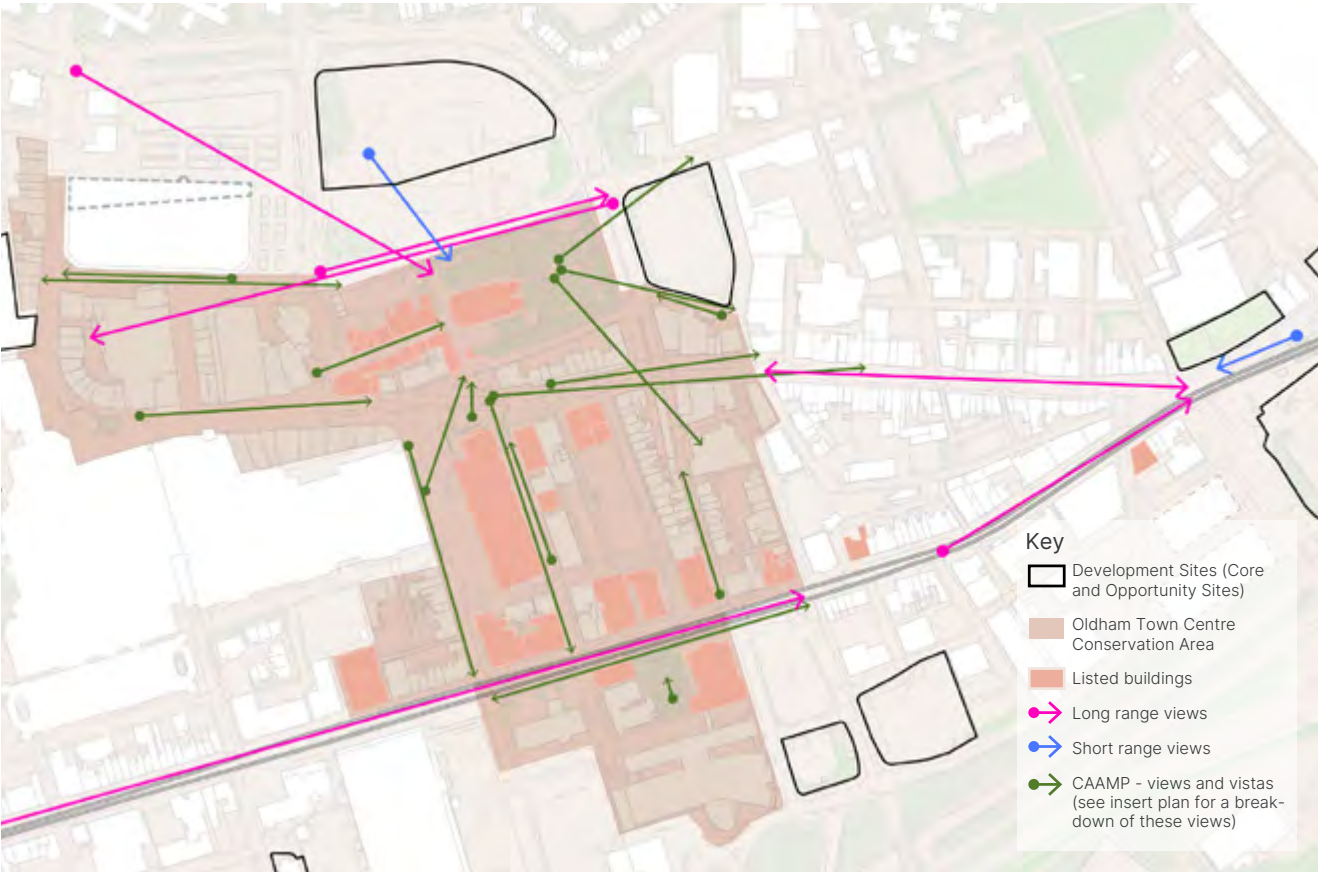
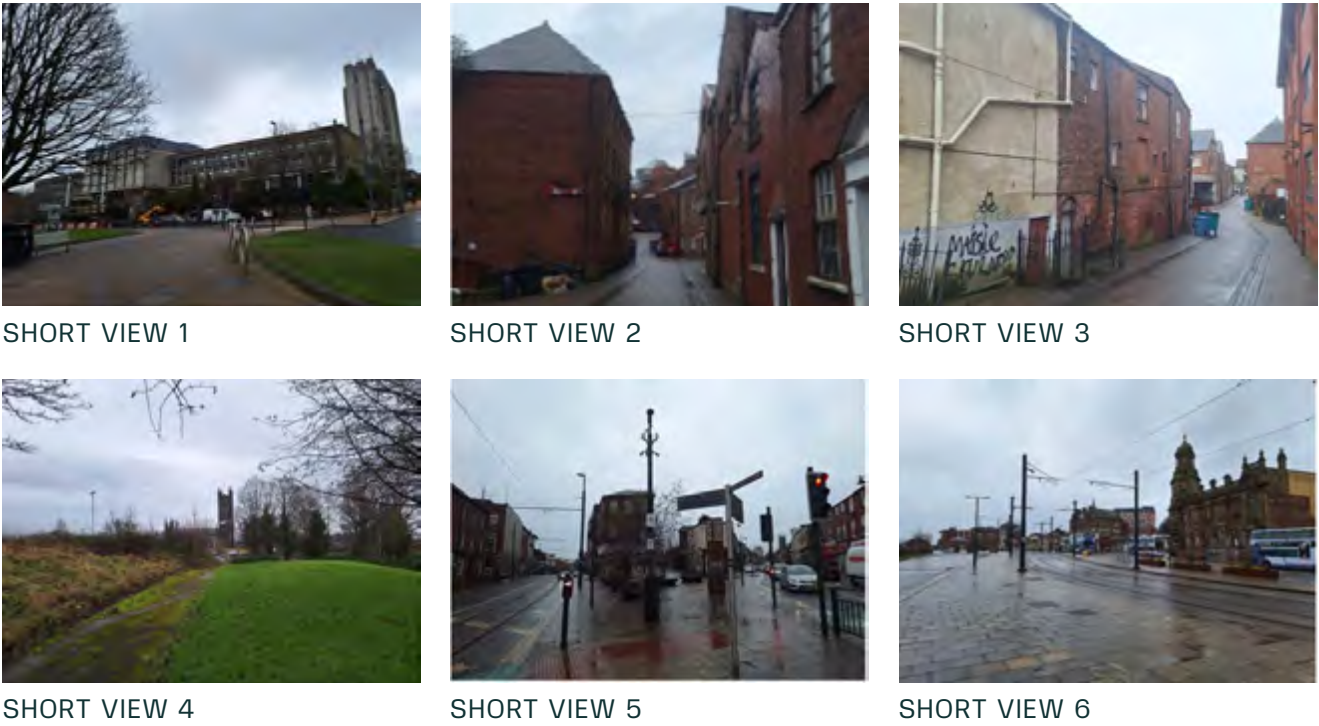
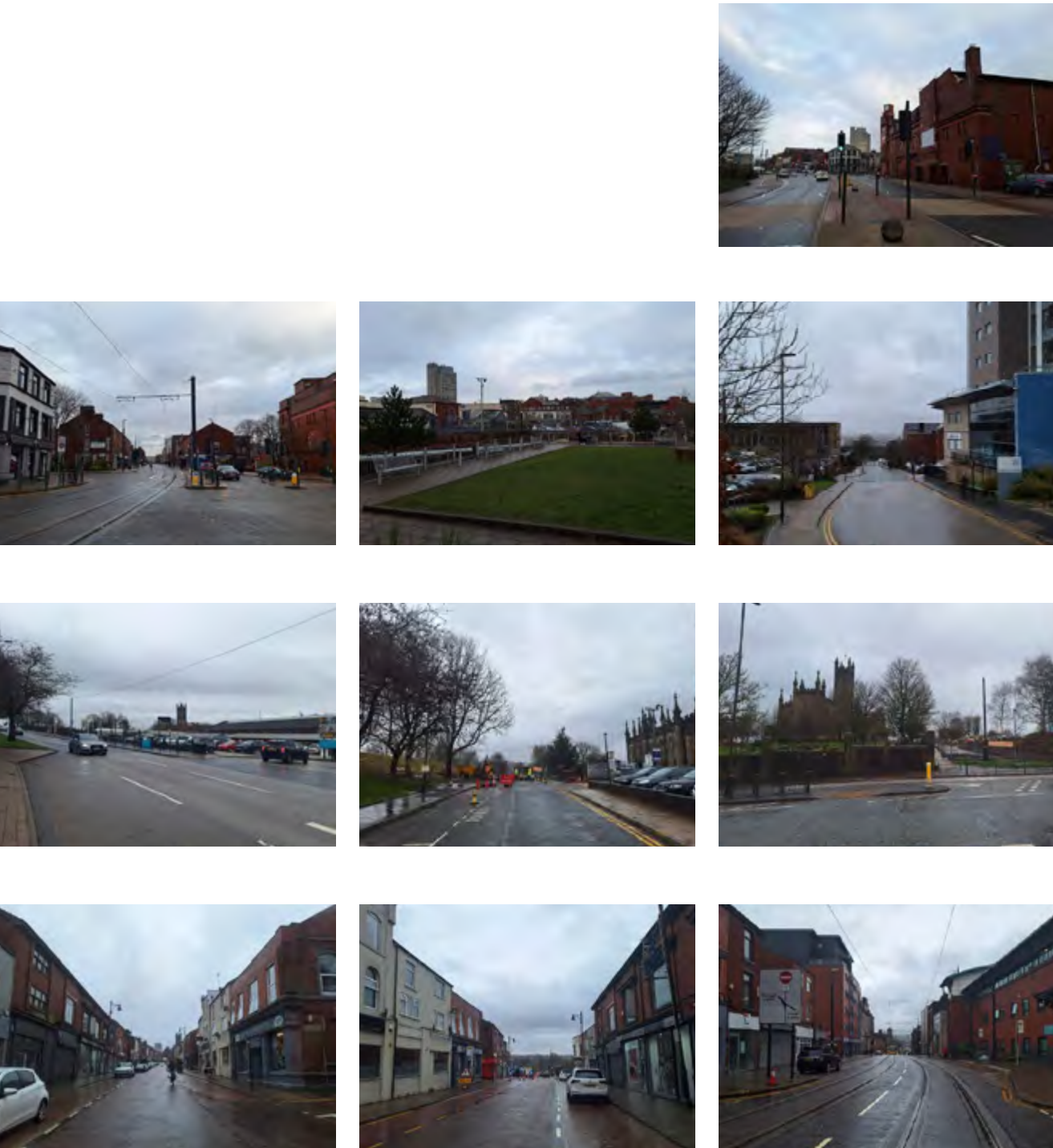
Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area

The Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area is located at the heart of the town, concentrated around Oldham's highest point crowned by the Church of St. Mary and St. Peter. From this apex a conglomeration of major thoroughfares and close-knit streets fall away to Mumps in the east and Union Street in the south, offering sloping, long-range views of the surrounding industrial and natural landscape.

Designated and Non-Designated Heritage Assets

The town centre contains a number of designated and non-designated heritage assets. Figure B3 adjacent shows the statutory and non-statutory, given the figure shows non-designated heritage assets heritage assets within the town.

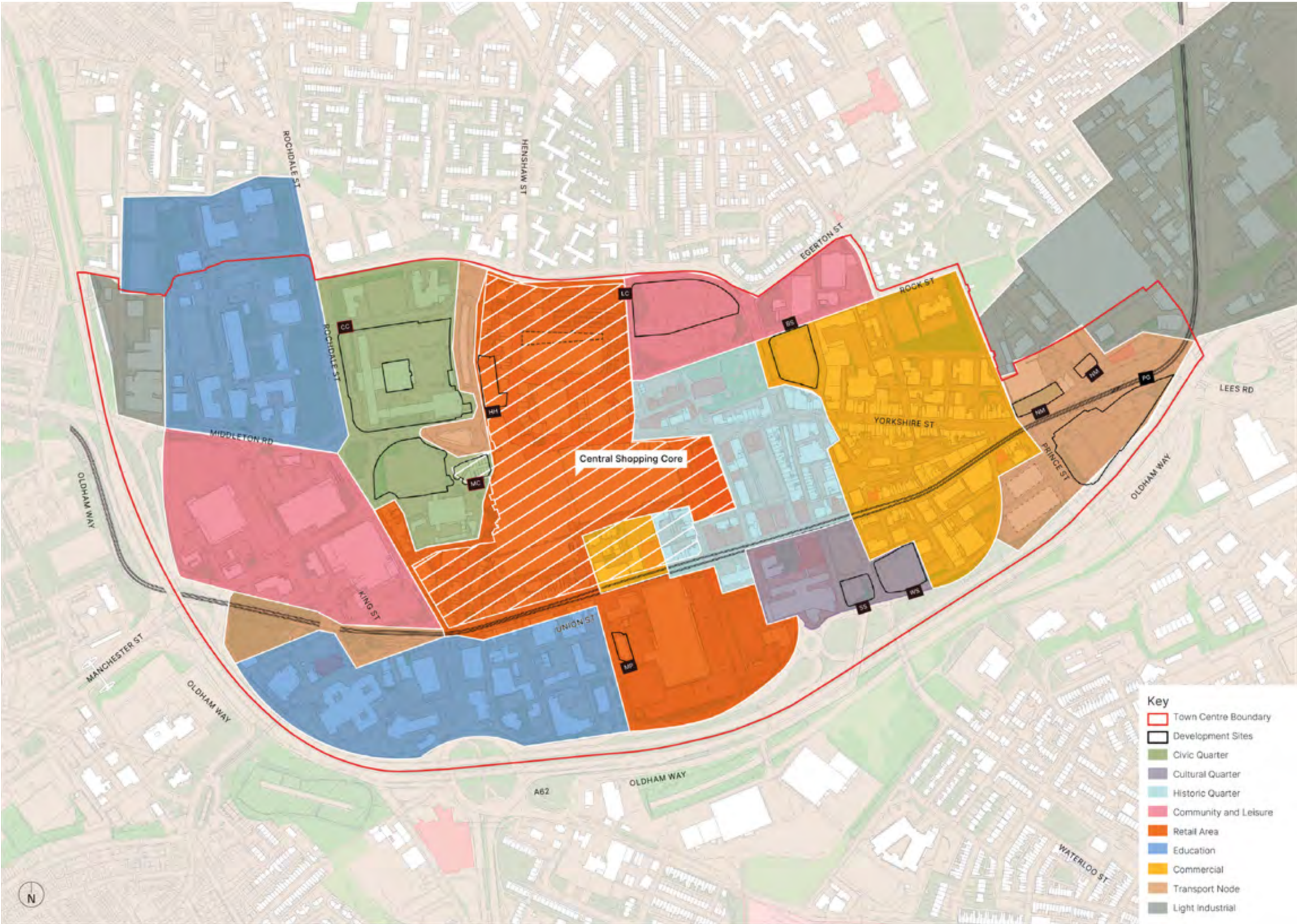




→ FIG. B5 - KEY HERITAGE VIEWS (EXCLUDING CONSERVATION AREA). FIGURE CREDIT: PLANIT

Urban Form and Use

→ FIG. B5 – URBAN FORM AND USE. FIGURE CREDIT: PLANIT



Oldham town centre offers a range of amenities which you would expect from a local town centre. Retail area constitutes a large area of the town centre, formed mainly of large footprint buildings accompanied by large surface car parking. Vacancy has increased since 2009 (Stantec report 2020) across the town centre due to changing consumer and visitor behaviours.

Key Considerations include:

- Move away from large retail units;
- Integration of development within traditional town centre character; and
- Improving active frontages on linking streets.

Opportunities include:

- Higher density mix-used led development contributing positively to the town centre offer;
- Residential and employment;
- Ground Floor uses to support night-time economy, convenience store to offer alternatives on day-to-day ; and
- Ensuring diversity; mix of independents shops, community facilities and key services, etc.

Scale and Massing

Oldham town centre remains overall fairly low rise between 1 to 4 storeys high. Market Place frontage varies from an average of 2 to 3 storeys. However, there are a number of prominent buildings over 8 storeys, including the Civic Centre Tower, which act as key landmarks within the townscape exaggerated by topography.

Key Considerations:

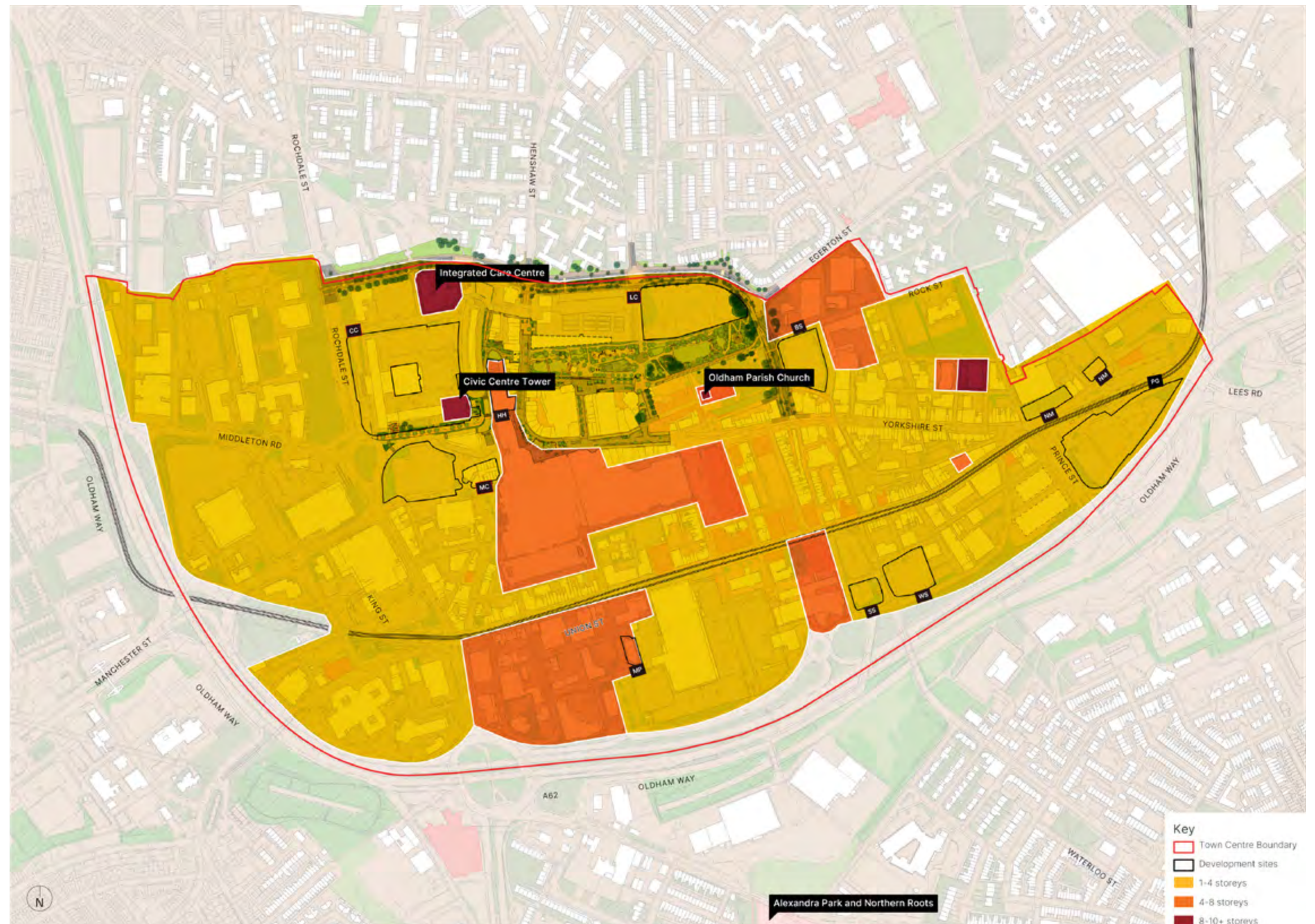
The overall lower rise town centre which has fewer elements raising up.

- Oldham town centre is on a hill, consideration to topography and adopting an approach to height which emphasises existing topography (i.e. taller element on top of hill to accentuate ascension rather than bottom which would flatten-out topography)
- Attention to day-light and sun-light for new development as well as overshadowing surroundings
- Consideration to wind effect when introducing taller elements

Key Opportunities:

- Density and height can be brought forward responding positively to surroundings
- Accentuate Oldham's distinctive topography as well as making the most of available views

→ FIG. B6 – SCALE AND MASSING. FIGURE CREDIT: PLANIT

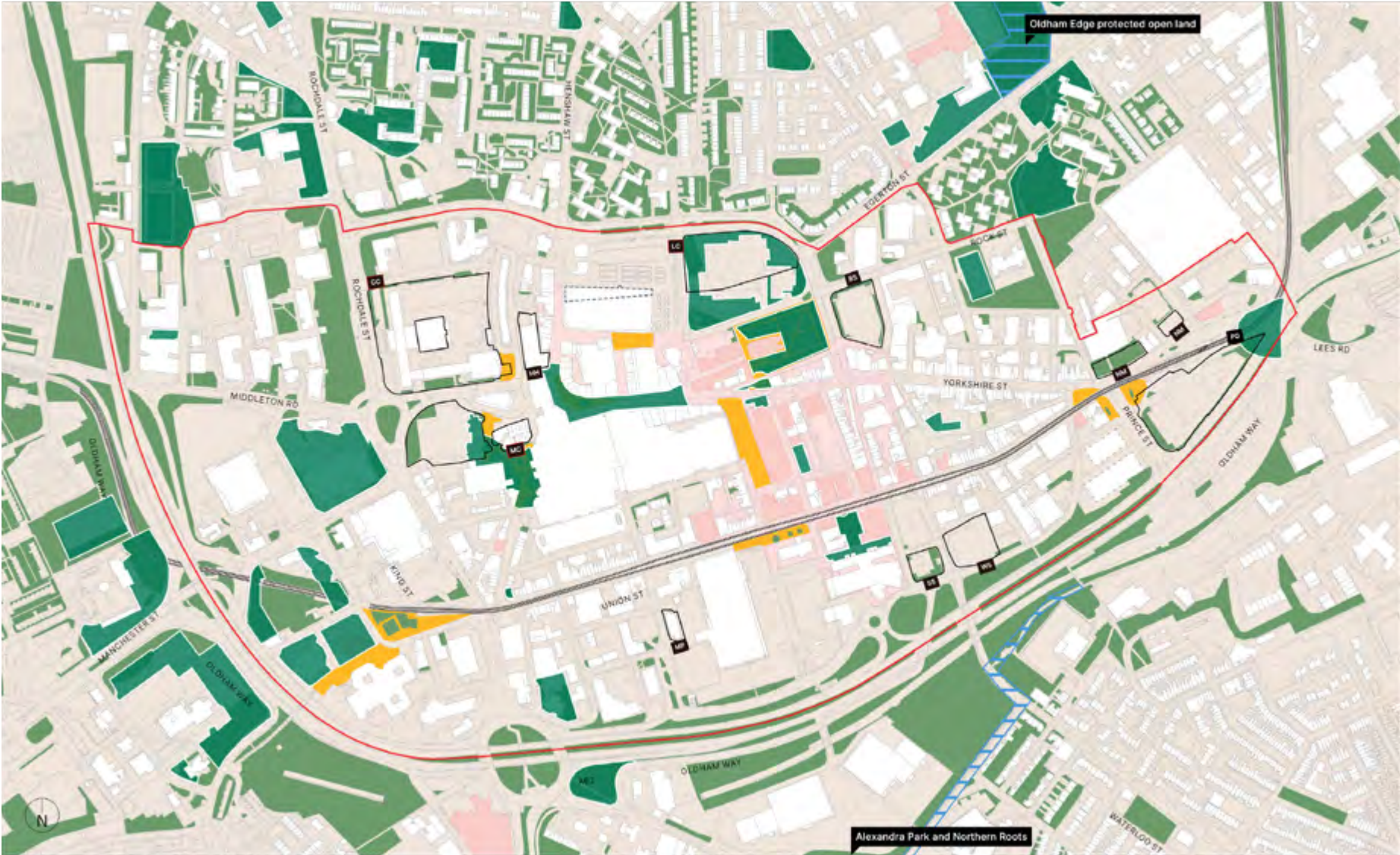


Green Infrastructure and Public Realm

Oldham town centre green infrastructure is largely made up of amenity grassland and verges. Three key green open spaces are located within close proximity to the town centre.

- 20min walk from Spindle Shopping Centre to Alexandra Park to the South and
- 15 min walk to Oldham Edge to the north

→ FIG. B7 – GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC REALM. FIGURE CREDIT: PLANIT



Key Considerations:

- Currently there is limited access to green open spaces within the town centre however, there is a vast amount of land, mainly grassland verges, which could potentially contribute more positively to local ecology biodiversity.
- Other considerations include the accessibility of open space and whether clear pedestrian/ cycle connections could be made to major open space to the north and south of the town centre.
- Within the town centre the public realm is currently dominated by hardstanding, of varying quality, with limited tree planting.

Key Opportunities:

- Linking green corridor through town centre
- Increasing publicly accessible green spaces within the town centre
- Creating clear and coherent connections to/from public spaces (soft/hard)
- Enhancing amenity grassland and verges through the town centre to increase local biodiversity and habitat mosaic
- Creation of wildlife corridors including low light corridors
- Development of a town centre land management strategy
- Softening streets where possible to incorporate SUDs and rain gardens

Key

- Town Centre Boundary
- Development sites
- Open Spaces as per Oldham Policy Map 2022
- Existing green infrastructure
- Public (hard) spaces
- Green Corridors as per Oldham Policy Map 2022

Access, Transport and Movement Overview

Oldham town centre is well connected and has excellent public transport access with high frequency bus and Metrolink services across the town, as well as to neighbouring towns of Middleton, Rochdale, and Tameside, and Manchester city centre.

→ FIG. B8 – STRATEGIC ROAD NETWORK. FIGURE CREDIT: PLANIT



Oldham Central bus station is a large station with 12 stands located on Cheapside and West Street. The town centre is also served by three Metrolink stops: Oldham King Street, Oldham Central and Oldham Mumps, which provide direct connection to Manchester city centre as well as Rochdale.

There are also good road connections to the strategic road network via the A627(M) and the M60. However, at a local town centre level there are some movement challenges.

Walking and cycling accessibility can be impeded by the local topography and gradient. Uphill movements for cyclists in particular are challenging particularly on busy roads and there are limited off-road cycle routes across the town centre.

Historically, road space has been allocated to vehicles at the detriment of direct pedestrian and cycle connectivity, with large junctions around the town centre particularly those along the A62 Oldham Way to the south and St Mary's Way to the north, require people on foot and bicycles to wait for traffic signals to either cross in separate stages and not along the desired line, or else take a more direct route that is potentially unsafe. Other junctions have no crossing facilities at all.

Some routes through the town centre are also impeded by the built form, with buildings and highway infrastructure, such as guardrailings intercepting key routes, including the route through the bus station. There is a general lack of wayfinding for pedestrians and cyclists, whilst there is some signage it is often lost in the cluttered street scene and routes are not intuitive for new visitors to the town.

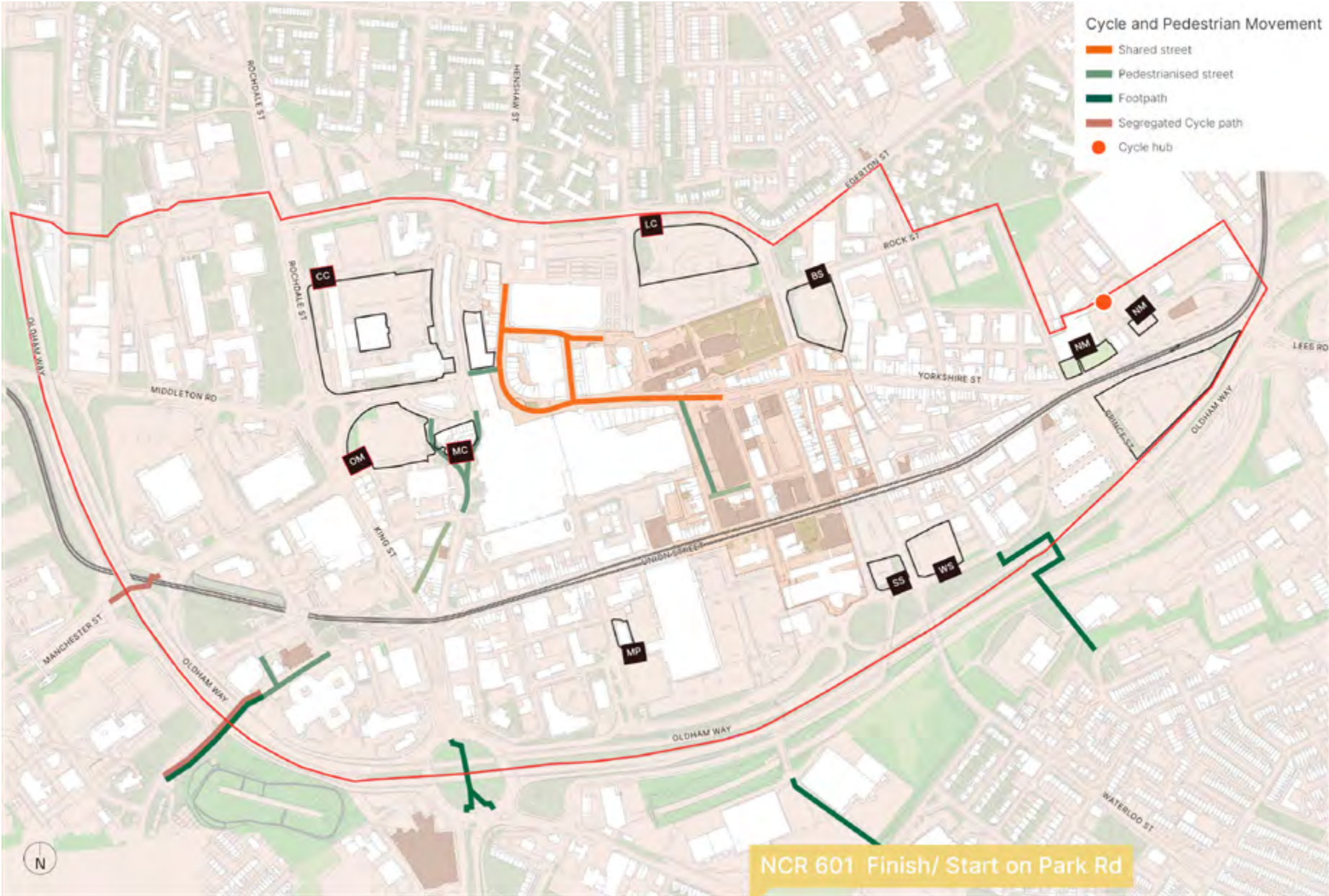
There is also a lack of green open space in the central core and where there is space between buildings it has been allocated to car parking. Whilst there are pedestrian and cycle-friendly streets with no or low traffic, the space is uninviting and lacks interesting public realm features so are not places to sit and dwell.

Walking and Cycling

Local topography and gradient can impede pedestrian and cycling connectivity in the town centre.

Pedestrians coming from the south and west of the town centre have limited routes to cross the A62 Oldham Way, which is a significant barrier. The large junctions with Manchester Street, King Street and Prince Street prioritise traffic movements and can result in long wait times between traffic signals.

→ FIG. B9 – WALKING AND CYCLING BASELINE. FIGURE CREDIT: PLANIT



St. Mary's Way to the north of the town centre is a busy road, combining with the lack of pedestrian crossing facilities at some locations, it separates the town centre from the residential area to the north. The road is uphill from Yorkshire Street to Lord Street and downhill to Rochdale Road, which impedes the accessibility for pedestrians with mobility issues and cyclists.

The key routes from the east are along Yorkshire Street and Union Street where parking/loading bays and bus stops dominate the street scene.

The main high street of the town centre along Market Place is pedestrianised between 10am to 5pm. The Spindles Town Square Shopping Centre is located to the south and provides routes north-south and east-west, but outside the standard opening hours acts as a blockade.

Gradient changes, narrow roads and busy traffic can be a deterrent to cycling in the town centre and there is a lack of dedicated cycling infrastructure around the town centre.

There are several pedestrian and cycle improvement schemes currently underway in the town centre to enhance walking and cycling connections, including:

- Oldham's first CYCLOPS junction at Egerton Street/St Mary's Way and improvement to off-road cycle lane on St. Mary's Way.
- Re-routing buses away from West Street to create a traffic-free zone.
- Improvements to footpaths and roads on Fountain Street, re-locating the taxi rank to the nearby car park.
- Improvements to support the creation of cycle routes in Market Place and Curzon Street.
- Pedestrianisation of the lower end of Lord Street and High Street and public open space improvements.
- A new access into the Southlink development site with pedestrian and cycle crossings at the Oldham Way/Prince Street junction.

Public Transport

Car Parking

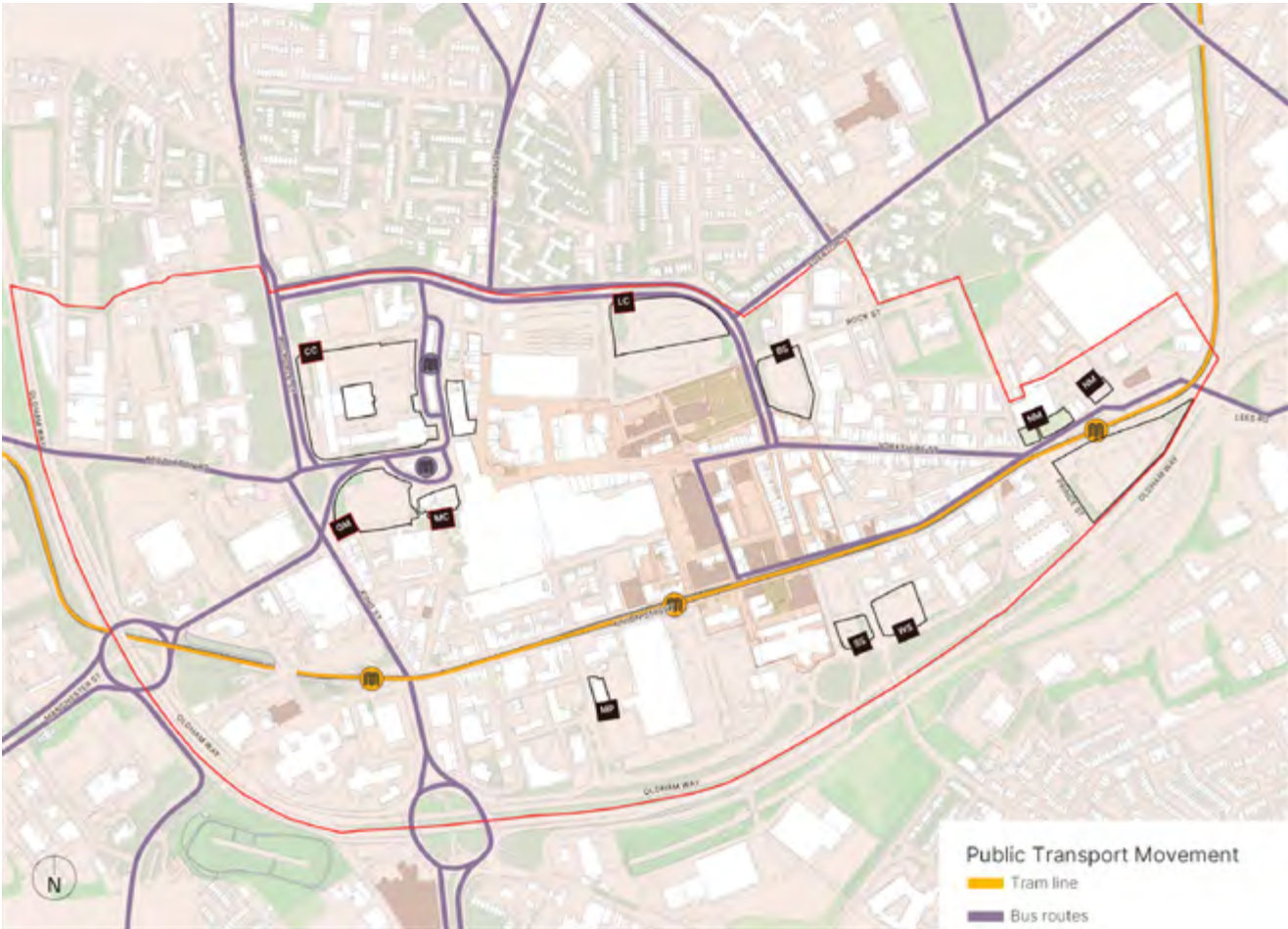
The parking stock within the town centre comprises multiple surface car parks, under council or private ownership, and the Spindles Town Square multi-storey car park.

The Oldham Parking Strategy (produced by AECOM in 2022) concluded that the existing town centre car parks have significant spare capacity, which enables the existing parking stock to be consolidated and repurposed to better serve the town. Future-proofing parking facilities will be

explored in future studies to meet future parking requirements with consideration of sustainable travel options.

In particular, ensuring accessibility for people with mobility issues will be critical to the success of the new town centre developments, but also maintaining access for existing visitors to the town. The level of disabled parking spaces will be provided to support current and future demand.

→ FIG. B10 – TRANSPORT AND CAR PARKING BASELINE. FIGURE CREDIT: PLANIT



Metrolink

There are three Metrolink stops in Oldham Town Centre, including Oldham Mumps, Oldham Central and Oldham King Street providing access across the wider area. Oldham Mumps in particular benefits from a bus interchange which strengthens the sustainable transport offer, providing onward bus connections. There is also a cycle hub with a capacity of 40 cycle parking spaces.

Oldham Central Metrolink stop acts as a key gateway to the town centre, although it can be difficult for pedestrian and cyclists to navigate through the narrow Union Street with buildings on both sides and the Metrolink stop platform dividing the street space.

Oldham King Street stop is accessed by pedestrian via Union Street West and King Street. There are strong pedestrian connections between the Metrolink station, bus stops, Oldham Sixth Form College and the residential area via the A62 footbridge.

Existing links to the Metrolink stops need to be enhanced to ensure new residents and visitors can benefit from these sustainable travel options.

Bus Access

Bus services in Oldham Town Centre are provided at Oldham Bus Station on Cheapside, Oldham Mumps Interchange and bus stops throughout the town centre.

Oldham Bus Station is in the heart of the town centre to the north of the Spindles Town Square Shopping Centre. The bus station consists of eight stands located on Cheapside and four stands located on West Street. All the stands are sheltered and have raised kerbs for accessibility. However, guard rails surround the bus station, and whilst they prevent pedestrians from walking out into traffic, they also act as barriers to key routes between the bus station and Market Place. The routes around and to the bus station need to be enhanced to ensure bus travel is taken up by new residents.

Wayfinding

Wayfinding within the town centre is poor and whilst there are some signs and street maps, they are often lost in the cluttered street scene, or are in the wrong locations.

This is exacerbated by some convoluted routes around the town centre resulting in a general lack of orientation for visitors to the town. An improved signage strategy needs to be considered to support future residents and visitors and should provide links with key sustainable transport infrastructure.

Safety and Security

There are a number of routes within the town centre that lack activity outside of the main shopping hours. Combined with the convoluted streets and the lack of wayfinding, it can result in a negative perception of safety for visitors to the town.

Notably, Lord Street is close to main retail area, but with the recent removal of buses, the street lacks activity and natural surveillance, even though it is a direct route towards the residential areas in the north. Development within the town centre will bring more people to the town centre outside of the standard shopping hours and will help contribute to providing natural surveillance. This will need to be supported by a public realm strategy that considers lighting, seating, green spaces to provide an active street scene where people can sit and dwell.

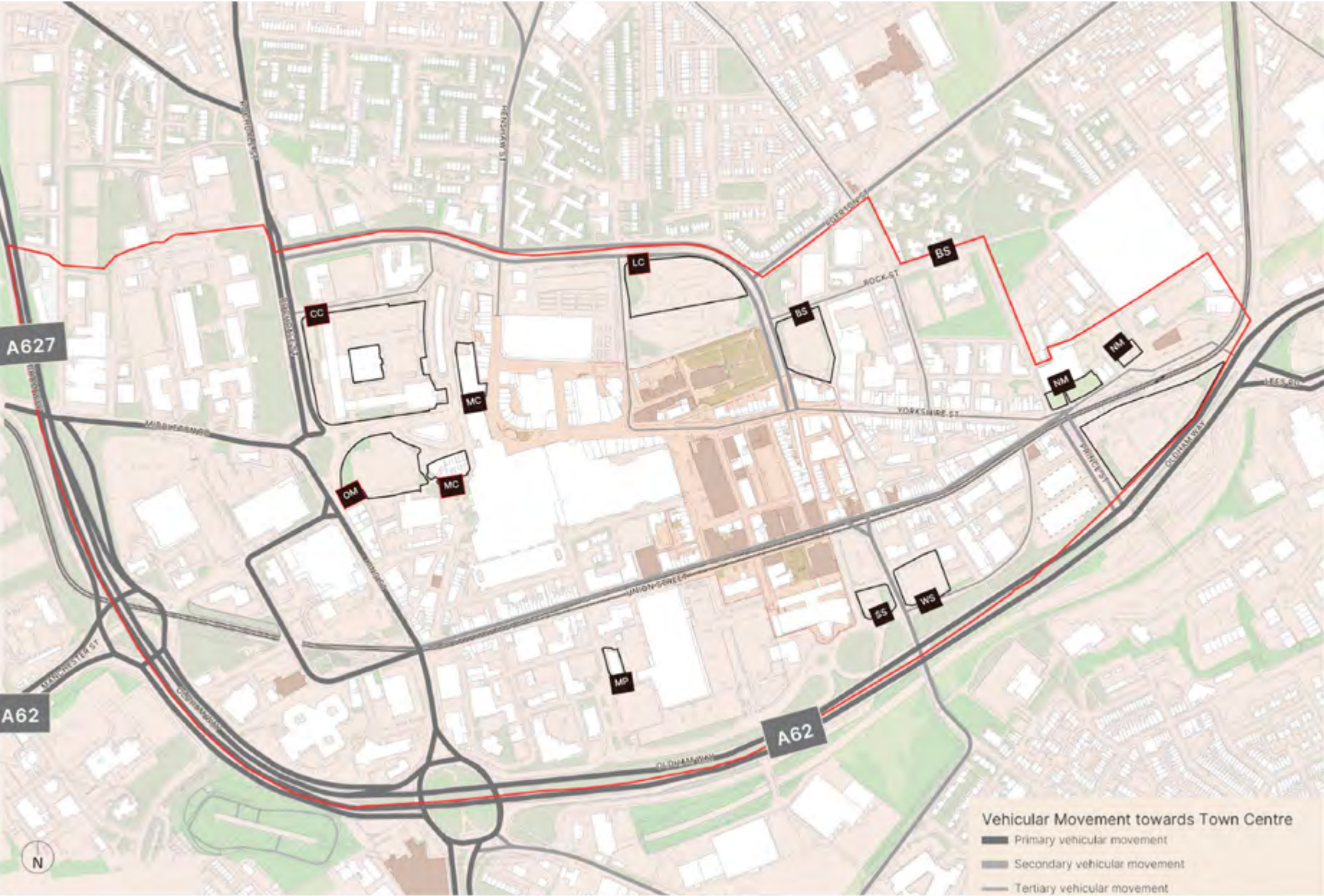


→ FIG. B11 - EXISTING SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING. FIGURE CREDIT: PLANIT

Town Centre Wide Strategies – Movement Strategy

In summary, Oldham town centre can be viewed as three distinct spatial zones - the retail core, the inner core and the town centre periphery.

→ FIG. B12 – SUMMARY OF MOVEMENT STRATEGY BASELINE. FIGURE CREDIT: PLANIT



St. Marys' Way and Yorkshire Street are dominated by vehicle traffic with vehicles accessing the town centre car parks on the old Leisure Centre site and Tommyfield Market. There are also competing demands at the signalised junctions along St Mary's Way with buses and other vehicles circulating the town centre, and pedestrians and cyclists from the nearby residential areas to the north and east trying to access the town centre. As a result there are limited controlled crossings for pedestrians to maximise capacity for vehicle traffic.

Yorkshire Street is also an example of where vehicles have been prioritised, with pedestrians and cyclists faced with roadside parking and bus laybys, as well as limited public realm, all of which result in low footfall, despite this being a main route into the retail core from the east.

The town centre periphery area is effectively separated from the inner core by King Street, Rochdale Road and Union Street as there are few crossing facilities for pedestrians and cyclists and these streets are heavily dominated by vehicle traffic. The area is also severed from the inner core by the tram line to the north and from the surrounding residential areas to the south and west by the A62 Oldham Way.

The A62 Oldham Way is a significant barrier to movement, it is a wide dual carriageway with large multi-lane junctions. Whilst it is beneficial for moving traffic out of the town centre core, it causes severance for pedestrian and cyclists wishing to cross the carriageway and access the town centre.

The south and west of the town centre is a maze of narrow streets with one-way traffic movements aimed at providing connectivity for vehicles, but also resulting in circulating traffic. The built up form can be difficult to navigate for new visitors to the town, particularly pedestrians and cyclists.

By reprioritising the hierarchy of some of the streets, it will create a better environment for people to travel by these modes and will assist in creating a liveable Oldham.

The south and west of the town centre is a maze of narrow streets with one-way traffic movements aimed at providing connectivity for vehicles, but also resulting in circulating traffic. The built-up form can also be difficult to navigate for new visitors to the town, particularly pedestrians and cyclists.

Appendix C.

Core Sites Baseline Analysis

Core and Opportunity Site Baseline Analysis

This section provides an overview of the baseline analysis undertaken for each of the core and opportunity sites which have informed the draft development principles.

→ Core Sites

- 1 Civic Centre and Queen Elizabeth Hall
- 2 Former Magistrates' Court and Manchester Chambers
- 3 Former Leisure Centre

→ Opportunity Sites

- 1 Bradshaw Street
- 2 Southgate Street and Waterloo Street
- 3 Henshaw House
- 4 Metropolitan Place
- 5 Prince's Gate, Mumps and Wallshaw Street

→ FIG. C1 – CORE SITES. FIGURE CREDIT: PLANIT



Civic Centre and Queen Elizabeth Hall

The Oldham Civic Centre comprises a substantial municipal building which is home to OMBC and various related facilities including the Oldham Youth Council, The Centre for Professional Development, and The Queen Elizabeth Hall. The site also comprises the surface level Oldham Civic Centre Car Park together with landscaped areas, including soft landscaping.

The existing buildings were constructed in the 1960s/70s and include a low-level podium building and a 15-storey office plot in the south east corner, with the Queen Elizabeth Hall located in the centre of the site.

The Civic Centre will be vacated once the Council offices have completed their move to the redeveloped Spindles Shopping Centre. Following this, redevelopment of the site is envisioned to provide high quality, new build residential-led development ranging from 5-13 storeys. Buildings would be set above ground level structures that work with the significant topographical level changes, to incorporate discreet parking, active ground floor uses, including a local convenience retail and a primary healthcare facility.

It is anticipated that these amenities will serve the new incoming community as well as existing footfall from the town centre and Oldham College.



Statutory and Non-Statutory Designations

Sections of the north-eastern corner and the southern and western boundaries of the site sit within the Oldham Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).

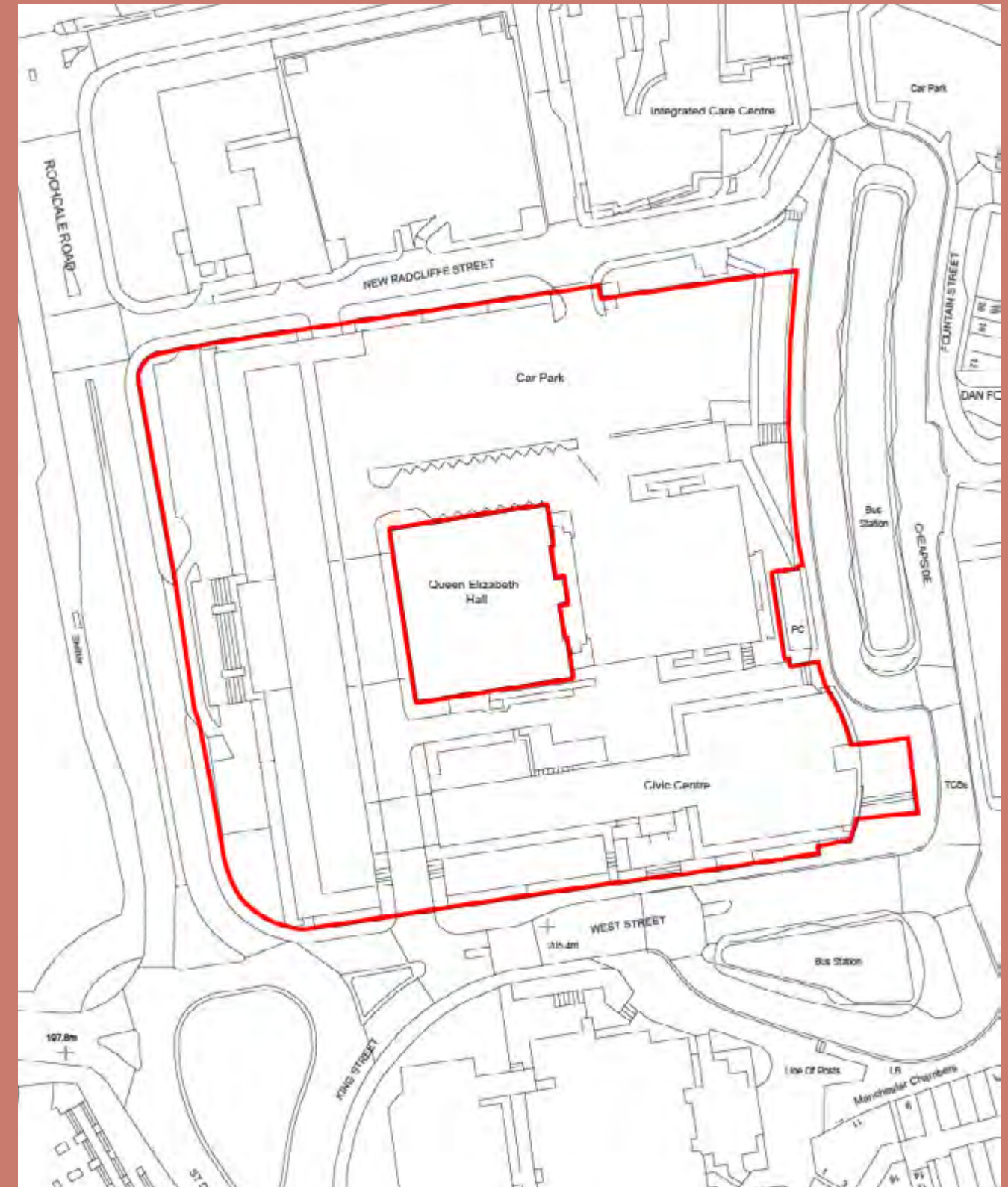
The site is not subject to any other statutory or non-statutory nature conservation or landscape designations. The site is situated in flood zone 1 (low probability).

Heritage

Although not listed, the Civic Centre has some heritage interest as an example of post-war municipal Brutalist Modernism and for its association with R. Seifert & Partners and Cecil Howitt & Partners. Phase 1 is of lesser interest and the complex's main significance lies in Phase 2, primarily in the Queen Elizabeth Hall entrance to Rochdale Road and the tower, designed to be visible from the retail core and forming a local landmark. The Cold War nuclear bunker at the base of the tower is more of a shelter, devoid of characteristic features, and is of no particular interest.

The Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area is situated directly to the east beyond Cheapside and the adjacent bus station.

→ FIG. C2 – CIVIC CENTRE RED LINE BOUNDARY



Civic Centre and Queen Elizabeth Hall

→ Planning History

A review of Oldham Council's planning records reveals that there have been several applications made in relation to the site over the years for minor works, including applications for additional plant, advertisements and gates/fencing, fire exit doors etc.

There are no planning applications considered to be of notable relevance to the future development of the site.

Other relevant applications within the surrounding area are as below. These applications relate to the former County Court building, located to the north of the site, beyond New Radcliffe Street.

Of note, there have been several applications in relation to the installation of antennas, transmission dishes and associated infrastructure for the roof of the tower element of the Civic Centre.

Reference	Address	Description	Status	Decision
FUL/346666/21	County Court 122A Rochdale Road Oldham OL1 1NT	Change of use from the former County Court building to a residential building of 42no. apartments and alterations to external elevations, including insertion of new windows (Revision to PA/344948/20)	Approved	10/06/2021
PA/344948/20	Oldham County Court 122A Rochdale Road Oldham OL1 1NT	Change of use from the former County Court building (D1 Use) to a residential building (C3(a) Use) of 43 no. apartments and alterations to external elevations including insertion of new windows.	Approved	21/01/2021
PA/343007/19	Former County Court New Radcliffe Street Oldham OL1 1NL	Change of use of former Oldham County Court with ancillary offices (Class D1) to offices (Class B1)	Approved	23/04/2019

→ Planning Policy

A schedule of relevant adopted Core Strategy and Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan policies is included within Appendix A.

Emerging Local Plan

The emerging Local Plan is of specific relevance to the Development Framework that is being prepared for the Town Centre. Under draft Local Plan policy H13 'Housing and Mixed-Use Allocations' of the Council's emerging Local Plan the site is currently allocated as follows:

Site name	Ward	Site area (ha)	Potential to deliver up to (homes)	Minimum appropriate density (dph) as per Policy H3
Civic Centre, West Street	Coldhurst	2.17	600	120

→ Heritage Overview

The Civic Centre was built in two phases, the first, in the south (opened in 1962) designed by R. Seifert & Partners as the headquarters of Oldham's Regional Healthy Authority and also housing two council departments.

The second was completed in 1977, designed by Cecil Howitt & Partners to replace the council offices in the Town Hall, and included the tower and the Queen Elizabeth Hall (its name commemorating Queen Elizabeth II's Silver Jubilee). Situated at the summit of Oldham's hilly topography, and some 61 metres high, only the Church of St Mary with St Peter rivals its 15-storey tower in height.

Underneath the 1977 building, accessed from the underground car park, is the Cold War 'bunker' (now used for document storage and IT and telecomms equipment). Although comparatively unchanged, this has few features of historic interest beyond a small amount of sanitaryware and loose and electronic signage, having evidently been constructed more as a basement-level shelter than a bunker proper. The Queen Elizabeth events venue is of more interest, retaining much of its original internal fit out intact.

Civic Centre and Queen Elizabeth Hall

→
Key Considerations

→ FIG. C3 – AERIAL VIEW OF THE CIVIC CENTRE AND QUEEN ELIZABETH HALL



Topography/level changes

- Significant level change from Cheapside to Rochdale Road.
- Opportunity to work with the level change to integrate parking.
- Careful planning required for FFL and considering locations of entrances and interfaces with surrounding streets.

Heritage sensitivity

- No listed buildings or Conservation areas.
- Elements of the site may be considered to be non-designated heritage assets.
- Oldham Council Civic Centre Tower, key height marker with the Town Centre which is visible across the town providing a positive contribution to the townscape.

Movement/ proposed infrastructure

- The existing buildings push pedestrian movement along the edges of the site, not allowing any fluid movement from Cheapside to Rochdale Road.
- Pedestrian links to Market Place to the southern and northern edges of the site.
- The bus station interchange is located along Cheapside, providing good connectivity to the site.

Flood Risk

- The site sits within Flood Zone 1 which means that the land has been assessed as having a less than 1 in 1000 annual probability of river or sea flooding in any year.
- The flood map shows that the site generally is at very low risk of flooding from surface water, with an area at medium and high risk along the northern and western boundaries, along with an area within the site demise that is shown to be at medium risk of surface water flooding.

Landscape

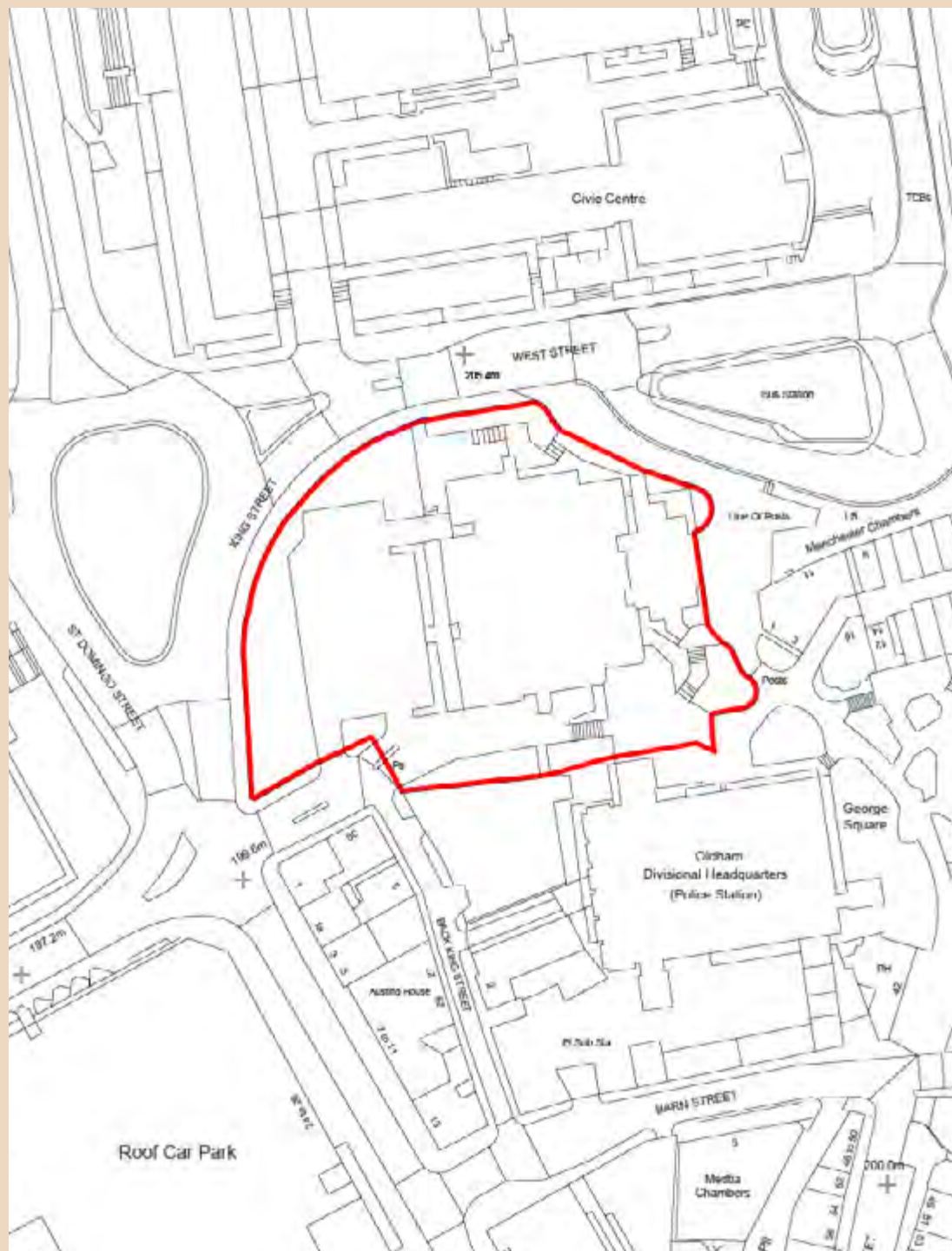
- Site limited in landscaping, with existing trees and hedges located on edges of the site along Rochdale Road, West Street and Cheapside.

→
Key Opportunities

- New development at the Civic Centre has the opportunity to.
- Preserve and enhance the architectural character of Oldham by retaining and upgrading the Civic Tower as a high-quality landmark building acting as a key gateway into the town centre and entrance to Linear Park which considers surrounding building heights and preserves key views.
- Mixed use development providing complimentary uses to town centre.
- Supporting the creation of key public realm at the West Street and Market Place by retaining and upgrading Civic Tower, providing active frontage at ground floor. Opportunity to create a positive interface between the bus interchange and Market Place as a key route into the Town Centre.
- Opportunity to improve connections and movement from Rochdale Road to Cheapside right through to the Town Centre.
- The site benefits from long ranging views towards Manchester City Centre.
- Opportunity to connect into the Minewater District Heat Network.
- Recognition of the original designed permeability, accessibility and visibility from Market Place (now obscured by the Spindles Shopping Centre).

Former Magistrates' Court and Manchester Chambers

→ FIG. C4 – FORMER MAGISTRATES' COURT SITE



→ FIG. C5 – MANCHESTER CHAMBERS SITE



The former Magistrates' Court and Manchester Chambers are located adjacent to each other to the south of West Street. Oldham bus station is situated to the north-east.

The Manchester Chambers site comprises various uses such as office, commercial/retail, a café and a pharmacy, whilst the former Magistrates' Court site is currently in use as a construction compound and car park following its closure in 2016 and subsequent demolition in 2019.

It is proposed to refurbish and extend the historic Manchester Chambers building, removing some parts of built fabric of lesser significance to allow for a new build extension. The historic building and extension will provide high quality sustainable workspace with active ground floor uses (such as F&B and retail) to compliment the redevelopment occurring adjacent at the Spindles Town Square Shopping Centre and improve the public realm to the entrance of the Spindles and George Square.

The site of the former Magistrates' Court is envisioned to be redeveloped into Build-to-Rent residential blocks with generous shared external amenity at their heart. Buildings would be set above a ground level podium which is activated with F&B, retail and residential amenity uses. Car parking would be located discreetly underneath, utilising the topographical level changes and the space that this zone provides.

Former Magistrates' Court and Manchester Chambers

→ Statutory and Non-Statutory Designations

The site is not subject to any statutory or non-statutory nature conservation, heritage or landscape designations. The western and northern boundaries of the Former Magistrates' Court site lie within the Oldham Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).

The site is also in proximity to the Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area situated approximately 50m to the east beyond The Spindles Shopping Centre, and the Grade II* listed Independent Methodist Chapel is approximately 110m to the south. Although not listed, the Manchester Chambers building does contain a blue plaque, highlighting the ancient route of Water Street.

The site is situated within flood zone 1 (low probability).

→ Planning History

The following planning history is of relevance to the site:

Reference	Address	Description	Status	Decision
Former Magistrates' Court				
DM/342600/18	Former Oldham Magistrates Court St Domingo Place West Street Oldham OL1 1QE	Prior notification of the demolition of Oldham Magistrates Court building.	Prior Approval Required and Granted	18/12/2018
DM/342517/18	Oldham Magistrates Court St Domingo Place West Street Oldham	Prior notification of the demolition of Oldham Magistrates Court building.	Application Withdrawn	20/11/2018
Manchester Chambers				
CEA/347244/21	3 Manchester Chambers West Street Oldham OL1 1LF	Certificate of Lawfulness for proposed shop (Class E)	Approved	07/09/2021
PA/342998/19	1 Manchester Chambers Oldham OL1 1LF	Change of use from shop (A1) to restaurant/cafe (A3)	Approved	14/05/2019
PA/338914/16	1-3 Manchester Street Oldham OL1 1LE	Change of use of building from public house (use class A4) to food bank (use class D1)	Approved	22/09/2016
PRCU/337924/15	2 Manchester Chambers Oldham OL1 1LF	Change of use from A1 to A3	Prior Approval Required and Granted	26/04/2016

→ Planning Policy

A schedule of relevant adopted Core Strategy and Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan policies is included within Appendix A.

Emerging Local Plan

The emerging Local Plan is of specific relevance to the Development Framework that is being prepared for the Town Centre. Under draft Local Plan policy H13 'Housing and Mixed-Use Allocations' of the Council's emerging Local Plan the site is currently allocated as follows:

Site name	Ward	Site area (ha)	Potential to deliver up to (homes)	Minimum appropriate density (dph) as per Policy H3
Former Magistrates Court and Chambers	Coldhurst	0.6	225	120

→ Heritage Overview

This pre-1860 building(s) and late Victorian/Edwardian commercial building adjacent were constructed as part of a long line of buildings running along Manchester Street towards Market Place.

This block retained its historic character into the post-war period with only isolated areas of change. Its surroundings were then transformed from the 1960s onwards, the block itself undergoing large-scale clearance in 1974. This left only a small group of buildings surviving in the northeast, a section of which was subsequently demolished and replaced by a new arcade (1989), with a matching addition later constructed around the One and Three building.

This formed part of a triangular block bound by George Street, King Street and Manchester Street, wrapping around the ancient Water Street (part of Oldham's historic 'Old Lane'), short rows of terraced housing enclosed behind the commercial outer roads (where there were five public houses by the 1910s).

Former Magistrates' Court and Manchester Chambers

→

Key Considerations

→

Topography/level changes

- Level changes across the site, opportunity to include lower ground parking. Careful planning required in relation to entrances and interfaces with surrounding streets.

Landscaping

- Existing trees and mature vegetation around north-western corner of the site, following the line of King Street / West Street.

Movement

- Interface with bus station and requirement to maintain servicing route through to Manchester Chambers. Pedestrian movements to Market Place to the southern and northern edges of the site.

Flood Risk

- The site sits within Flood Zone 1 which means that the land has been assessed as having a less than 1 in 1000 annual probability of river or sea flooding in any year.
- The flood map shows that the site generally is at very low risk of flooding from surface water, with an area at medium and high risk along the northern and western boundaries

Heritage

- Manchester Chambers is a non designated heritage asset. The historic portion of One and Three is of local historic interest but it has been significantly compromised through extensions and refronting.

- The 1990s extension to One and Three is detracting and to the front could be replaced by modern additions that maintain the cellular urban grain and variety in roofscape whilst introducing high-quality contemporary design.
- A network of small side streets originally ran within the interior of the block, in part observing the historic route of Water Street, with the resultant grid and urban grain suggesting a potential model for the redivision of the block. Where possible, the route of Water Street should be maintained or at least made legible.
- The rears of both buildings are of less heritage interest, whilst both are obscured by the later additions. Here the buildings historically faced onto narrow residential side streets, potentially creating opportunities to build up the rear of the block, reinstating a greater sense of mass to counteract the effects of the open expanse of the bus station and gardens surrounding.

- The townscape block was historically enclosed between roads to the north and south, with frontages to each. This is maintained by the present-day arcade but pedestrianisation, the retrenchment of the high street and the loss of local residents have all affected footfall, requiring consideration of the uses best suited to providing an active frontage. A reduction of the multiple entries into the block, and the simplification of the rear range, could potentially reinstate this historic sense of an enclosed block.

→

Key Opportunities

- 01
- Retain and enhance the architectural character of Oldham by upgrading Manchester Chambers as a high-quality commercial building contributing to the key gateway node connecting to the town centre and entrance to Linear Park which considers surrounding building heights and preserves key views.
- 02
- Opportunities to demolish/ rationalise modern additions to the Chamber.
- 03
- Mixed use development providing complimentary uses to town centre.

- 04
- Providing active frontage at ground floor along West Street and King Street. Opportunity to create a positive interface between the bus interchange and Market Place as a key route into the Town Centre.
- 05
- Opportunity to connect both sites with considered public realm and ground floor active uses.
- 06
- The site benefits from long ranging views towards Manchester City Centre.

Former Leisure Centre

Oldham Leisure Centre closed in 2015 and was demolished in 2016. The site, located to the south of St Mary's Way and to the east of Lord Street, now comprises a pay and display Council car park on split levels together with landscaped areas.

The site has potential to accommodate two residential L-shaped blocks, oriented to maximise views and optimise sunlight and daylight whilst working with the topography of the site, affording fantastic views across the Linear Park and towards the Peak District. The layout and massing also looks to reinforce key routes and enhance townscape views to Oldham Parish Church (Grade II* listed).

Active uses are proposed at ground floor, potentially comprising commercial, food and drink/retail units and a nursery to support new residents on this site and other nearby residential development.

→

Statutory and Non-Statutory Designations

The Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area and Grade II* Listed Oldham Parish Church are situated directly to the south. The site is situated in flood zone 1 (low probability). A small area of the northern portion of the site falls within the Oldham AQMA.

→

Planning Policy

A schedule of relevant adopted Core Strategy and Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan policies is included within Appendix A.

Emerging Local Plan

The emerging Local Plan is of specific relevance to the Development Framework that is being prepared for the Town Centre. Under draft Local Plan policy H13 'Housing and Mixed-Use Allocations' of the Council's emerging Local Plan the site is currently allocated as follows:

→ FIG. C6 – FORMER LEISURE CENTRE SITE



Site name	Ward	Site area (ha)	Potential to deliver up to (homes)	Minimum appropriate density (dph) as per Policy H3
Tommyfield Market, Former Leisure Centre and Linear Park	Coldhurst	3.52	250	120

Former Leisure Centre

→

Planning History

The following planning history is of relevance to the site:

Reference	Address	Description	Status	Decision
DM/337993/16	Oldham Sports Centre Lord Street Oldham OL1 3HA	Demolition of single storey Sports Centre and Swimming Baths	Prior Approval Required and Refused	3 February 2016
DM/338339/16	Oldham Sports Centre Lord Street Oldham OL1 3HA	Demolition of leisure centre	Prior Approval Required and Granted	16 May 2016
PA/339572/17	Land At The Former Oldham Sports Centre Lord Street Oldham OL1 3HA	Extension to existing car park to provide an additional 172 spaces including formation of new access off Rock Street and provision of associated parking machines, lighting, safety barriers, landscaping and footpaths	Approved	20 April 2017

Other relevant applications to the site relate to the proposed Jubilee Park to the south:

Reference	Address	Description	Status	Decision
FUL/351243/23	South East Part Of Rock Street Car Park Junction Of Rock Street And St Mary's Way Oldham	Change of use and associated development to create a new public open space	Approved	22 September 2023
CND/351801/23	South East Part Of Rock Street Car Park Junction Of Rock Street And St Mary's Way Oldham	Discharge of condition no. 4 (Contamination) relating to app no. FUL/351243/23	Pending Determination	N/A

Information relating to the ground conditions across the entire FLC site was provided with planning applications FUL/351243/23 and CND/351801/23.



→ FIG. C7 – OLDHAM TOWN CENTRE

→

Heritage Overview

Oldham Swimming Stadium was built in 1972-75 to replace the Central Baths on Union Street, which were of Victorian origin.

It was constructed on a newly vacant site formerly occupied by regular rows of Victorian terraces, seemingly as part the extensive clearances that preceded the creation of St Mary's Way.

The Sports Centre then followed in 1982-85, the site remaining in use until a new leisure centre was built on Middleton Road. [Photograph – Leisure Centre, 2016 (Jeff Smith)].

It was demolished in 2016 and has remained vacant subsequently, currently in use for parking.

Former Leisure Centre

→ Key Considerations

Topography

- Significant level changes across the site along St Mary's Way, Lord Street and new proposed park.
- Careful planning required for FFL and considering locations of entrances and interfaces with surrounding streets and new Linear Park will have updated landscaping levels to work in coherence with.

Landscape

- Existing mature trees are located to the east end of the site along St Mary's Way.

Heritage

- Grade II* Listed Church of St Mary and St Peter (Oldham Parish Church) is located to the south of the site, within the town centre conservation area.

Movement

- St Mary's Way is the primary movement corridor, which includes active travel proposals and pedestrian movement.

Flood Risk

- The site sits within Flood Zone 1 which means that the land has been assessed as having a less than 1 in 1000 annual probability of river or sea flooding in any year.
- The flood map shows that the site generally is at very low risk of flooding from surface water flooding.

→ Key Opportunities

01

The site benefits from long ranging views across The Pennines, Oldham Town Centre and Oldham Edge.

02

Preserve and enhance the architectural character of Oldham by ensuring design sensitivity to Oldham Parish Church. Potential to provide spilt level buildings due to topography of the site and responding to the surrounding context of low-density housing on St Mary's Way.

03

The southern end of the site will benefit from frontage facing Linear Park and being south facing towards the Pennines and Oldham Parish Church.

04

Some non-residential uses should be provided at ground floor to activate the edge between the development and the Linear Park and Lord Street.

05

Potential to reinstate a residential character and use, which survived consistently from its first recorded development until clearance for the construction of the Swimming Stadium.

Appendix D.

Existing Building Options Analysis

This Appendix relates to the following Core Sites, as detailed in the Oldham Town Centre Development Framework:

- Civic Centre site; and
- Manchester Chambers.

Civic Centre Site

The first stage in developing the future development proposals for the above core sites was to understand the reuse potential of the existing buildings on site.

This section summarises the analysis undertaken to date, in order to develop the options which have been presented in this development framework.

Future planning applications relating to these sites which propose demolition of existing buildings should be mindful of the options analysis contained within this Appendix and ensure that reuse or retention has been sufficiently considered and shown to be unachievable, based on the criteria identified.

→ FIG. D1 – BLOCKS WITHIN THE CIVIC CENTRE AND QUEEN ELIZABETH HALL



CC1

Civic Centre Tower

Date built	1975-1977
Floor No.	14 + Plant
Current use	Office

CC5

Rochdale Road Low Rise South Block (B)

Date built	1975-1977
Floor No.	3
Current use	Office

CC2

West Street Low Rise Block

Date built	1960-1962
Floor No.	3
Current use	Office

CC6

Council Chamber Block

Date built	1975-1977
Floor No.	3
Current use	Office

CC3

The Link

Date built	1960-1962
Floor No.	2
Current use	Office

CC7

Rochdale Road Low Rise South Block (A)

Date built	1975-1977
Floor No.	3
Current use	Office

CC4

Rochdale Road Low Rise South Block (A)

Date built	1960-1962
Floor No.	3
Current use	Office

CCB

Basement

Date built	1975-1977
Floor No.	1
Current use	Plant / Parking

QEH

Queen Elizabeth Hall

Date built	1975-1977
Floor No.	3 + Plant
Current use	Events

Civic Centre Site

		Heritage & Townscape	Built Fabric Condition		Structure		Sustainability / Whole Life Carbon					Consideration for retention?
Building Name / Element		Heritage value / significance loss due to removal / adaptation	Building condition	Hazardous and any deleterious materials (inc RAAC)	Condition of existing structure	Ability for extensions	Opportunity for re-use of existing structure as retained	Opportunity for re-use of existing facade	Opportunity for re-use of existing structure (circular economy)	Suitable for re-use?	Regeneration benefit	
Civic Centre and Queen Elizabeth Hall												
CC1	Civic Centre Tower	 Non-designated heritage asset		 Possible RAAC (Roof)				 Evidence of water ingress	 Steel			
CC2	West Street Low Rise Block				 Beam & block	 Beam & block	 Beam & block			 Shallow gauge		
CC3	The Link									 Shallow gauge		
CC4	Rochdale Road Low Rise South Block (A)				 Beam & block	 Beam & block	 Beam & block			 Shallow gauge		
CC5	Rochdale Road Low Rise South Block (B)									 Shallow gauge		
CC6	Council Chamber Block			 RAAC		 Long spans				 Specialist large volume space		
CC7	Rochdale Road Low Rise North Block									 Shallow gauge		
QEH	Queen Elizabeth Hall	 TBC		 RAAC		 Long spans			 Steel	 Specialist large volume space		
CCB	Basement				 Local spelling			 All facades likely to require thermal upgrade required		 Anticipate car parking only, potential fire compartmentation issues		

Key

 Negative / Unsuitable

 Fair / Satisfactory

 Positive / Beneficial

Manchester Chambers

→ FIG. D2 – BLOCKS WITHIN THE MANCHESTER CHAMBERS



MC1

Manchester Chambers

Date built	c. 1900
Floor No.	3
Current use	Retail / Office

MC2

Three Crowns pub

Date built	Pre- 1891 (significantly altered, extended and refronted)
Floor No.	2
Current use	F&B (Pub)

MC3

Modern flat roofed wing extension

Date built	1991-2000
Floor No.	1
Current use	F&B (Pub)

MC4

Modern flat roofed block with associated glazed arcade

Date built	1987-1991
Floor No.	2
Current use	F&B / Retail

Manchester Chambers

		Heritage & Townscape	Built Fabric Condition		Structure		Sustainability / Whole Life Carbon			Use / regeneration	Consideration for retention?
Building Name / Element		Heritage value / significance	Building condition	Hazardous and any deleterious materials (inc RAAC)	Condition of existing structure	Ability for extensions	Opportunity for re-use of existing structure as retained	Opportunity for re-use of existing facade	Opportunity for re-use of existing structure (circular economy)	Suitable for re-use?	Regeneration benefit
Manchester Chambers											
MC1	Manchester Chambers	 Non-designated heritage asset								 TBC	 TBC
MC2	Three Crowns pub	 Significantly altered, extended and refronted			No Access into MC2 and MC3						
MC3	Modern flat roofed wing extension										
MC4	Modern flat roofed block with associated glazed arcade		 Arcade okay, MC4 building poor condition (water ingress)		 Arcade okay, MC4 building poor condition (water ingress)				 Reuse of arcade trusses possible	 TBC	 TBC
Sustainability/Whole life Carbon input from structural engineer											

Key

 Negative / Unsuitable

 Fair / Satisfactory

 Positive / Beneficial

