



TRANSPORT ANALYSIS

Our baseline assessment of transportation in the study area reveals a town centre with many positive transport attributes, in particular:

- Relatively low levels of town centre congestion compared with other Lancashire towns.
- The town centre environment is, in many places, favourable for walking. In particular, traffic levels are relatively low, there are a number of pedestrianised streets, and the historic buildings within the town centre create a pleasant environment for the pedestrian in many areas
- Good levels of walking demonstrated by census data, particularly amongst those who work in the town centre.
- Good local bus connections.

However, a number of specific areas for improvement are identified, most particularly:

- **Significant pedestrian severance** caused by the major roads around the town centre. This is particularly the case with regard to Eastgate.
- **Parking.** There is a perception of a lack of parking opportunities close to the main town centre retail areas, in particular the traditional market hall. Issues of inconsistency of on-street parking restrictions have been identified. This has

now been addressed by the extension of parking times to 2 and 3 hours. A shortage of off-street long stay car parking has also been identified.

- **The bus station.** Despite its accessible location in the heart of the town centre, the bus station is seen as out of date, and a source of significant pedestrian severance. Relocation of the bus station should be a major factor in the creation of the town centre masterplan.
- Significant clusters of **road accidents** occur in a number of locations, particularly on Eastgate, Blackburn Road and the viaduct roundabout. In each of these three cases, it is also notable that pedestrians have frequently been involved in accidents.
- **Improvements in bus priority.** These have the potential to be provided through East Lancashire Rapid Transit, and will need to be well integrated with any new bus station which is provided
- **Lack of provision for cyclists** within the town centre. Levels of cycling in Accrington are currently very low, particularly when compared with the relatively large number of people who walk to work in the town centre. Our baseline work has revealed a lack of good quality provision for cyclists within the town centre area and Accrington as a whole. In the town centre there is particularly a lack of accessible, high quality cycle parking facilities in appropriate locations.

- **The rail station.** Current levels of rail use are well below the regional and national averages, which is very disappointing for a town centre location with a rail station. The proposed refurbishment of the rail station should assist in developing rail patronage and improving the accessibility of the town centre.

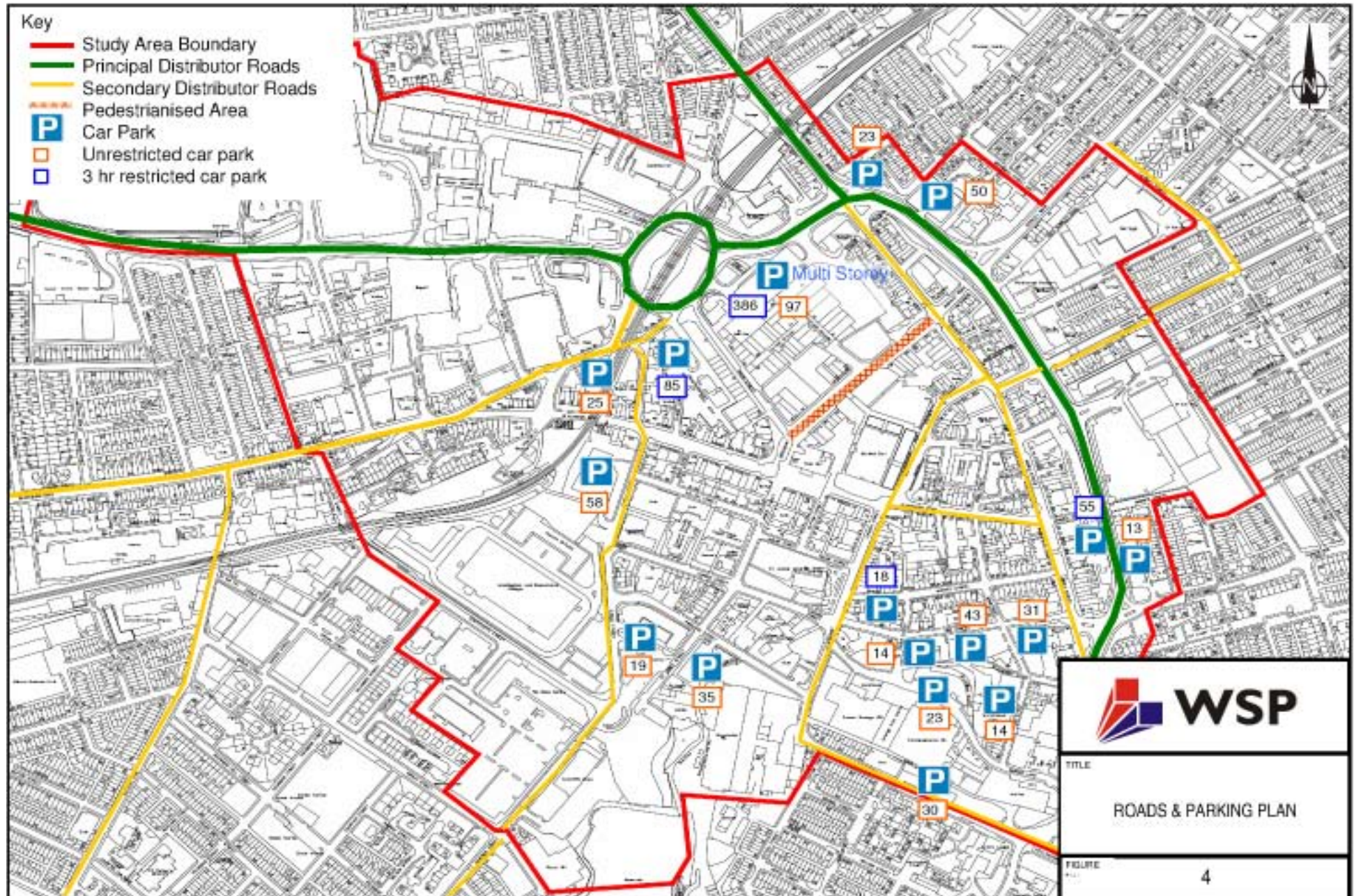


Figure 11 Roads and Parking



SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND PROPERTY MARKET

Socio-Economic Issues

Accrington Town Centre has suffered from significant population loss over the last ten years and this is expected to continue in the future.

Despite a fairly youthful population there has been a particular fall in the 15-29 age range which has implications in terms of workforce and a customer base in the town centre.

The 0-4 age group is rising. Childcare and flexible employment will be important issues to address to enable parents to access employment.

Hyndburn was ranked the 40th most deprived Borough in the country in 2007. The Council is now working with the Government Office for the North West to analyse the extent to which this ranking is a product of Hyndburn's low wage economy. Accrington and the surrounding area suffer from acute deprivation, with Index of Multiple Deprivation indicators shown to have worsened over the last 3 years from 2004 to 2007.

There is limited diversity in housing type, with the majority of accommodation shown to be terraced, or flats (90%). In terms of households, 35% are single person households in the town centre area. 19% of households are privately rented.

Economic and Property Issues

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

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

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

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

Earnings also reflect patterns of consumer demand. Hyndburn lags behind all neighbouring areas in terms

of resident earnings. Local residents are also earning less than local jobs are paying. This means residents from neighbouring areas are capturing net income and taking it away from the town. This leakage will have a negative affect on local demand.

Retail

In the town centre 500 firms were identified in 2006 with 37% retail and wholesale, 15% business services and 8% hospitality, leisure and tourism. The critical dependency is retail rising to 37% of all firms in the town centre. This dependency on retail for economic activity and employment means that the town must get the quantity and quality of the retail offer right to ensure its sustainability as an employment sector. In terms of business services there is a relative strength in accounting and related activities in the town centre. Some of the weaker areas in retail provision in the town centre as indicated by a low representation of firms are;

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

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

Office

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

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

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

A business survey undertaken as part of the retail study found that the most quoted threats to town centre businesses were a poor quality environment and lack of day visitors to the town.

The town centre will decline unless it ups its offer and remains competitive. If this is not provided projected growth in expenditure will leak to other centres.

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

There is an existing longstanding office quarter around Cannon St, where growth is reflected in transactions and rental levels

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

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

Industrial

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

Residential

There is no significant residential supply in the town centre. A few upper floor rented flats are occupied along Blackburn Road. New schemes around the centre have sold 2 to 3 bedrooms houses between £140,000 and £170,000. Further out apartments built in Huncoat and Oswaldtwistle have sold for, £100-£120,000.

Conclusions

- Local catchment has low spending power, less than average incomes
- This will create a brake on opportunities for town centre regeneration unless new business development is attracted to the town and the economy is diversified
- Improving the housing offer is part of this, increasing local spending power
- Most critical objective is to promote investment and business development, key areas in town The Grange and Viaduct Gateway
- Strengthening the retail position of the town will not deliver sustained growth in prosperity unless this is addressed
- Reconfiguring outdated retail units and upgrading shopping environments will be critical to changing image and attracting retailers into town
- Building on the town's unique qualities such as the Market and independent retailers should be a priority, providing a reason to visit the town.



ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

On the 14th June 2007 a stakeholder workshop was held to discuss issues and opportunities within the town centre. This is outlined below. The masterplan area was divided into 7 quarters to inform more detailed area discussions.

1. Blackburn Road
2. Arndale
3. Cannon Street
4. The Grange
5. Scaitcliffe
6. Hyndburn Road
7. Eastgate



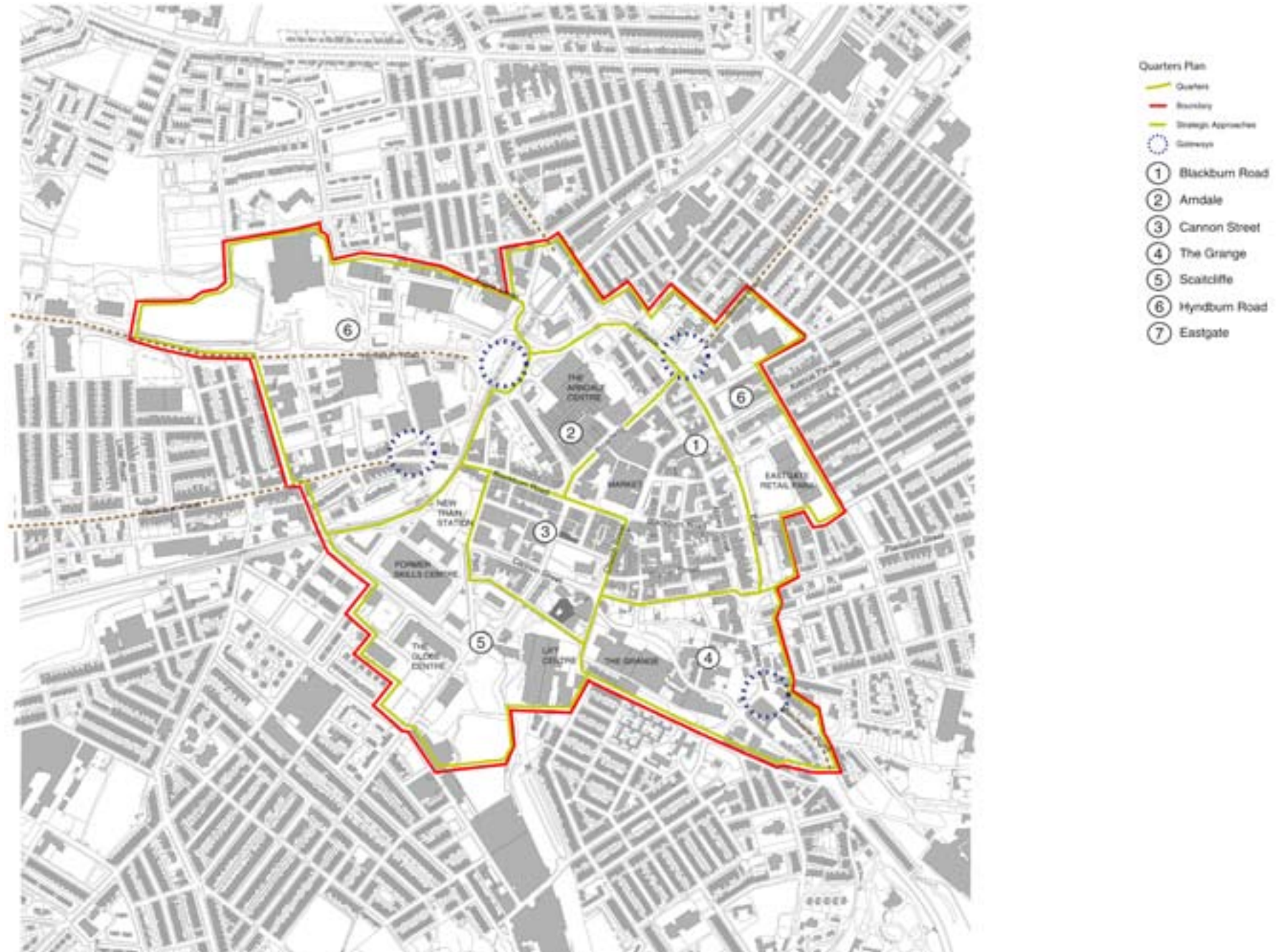


Figure 12 Town Centre Quarters

1. Blackburn Road

Good

- Fine historic buildings such as the Town Hall and Market Hall.
- Certain specialist shops are very successful, and people come out of town (e.g. Ribble Valley) to visit some of them.
- Market is still busy and the shops around Warner Street have enjoyed a revival. Both have active 'business communities'.
- Free parking helps shops attract business.
- The area has kept its heritage - Shop front improvements on Warner Street are in keeping with the local character, and tight development control has helped conserve the historic quality.
- The Arcade is beautiful and unique to Accrington.
- Local Lancashire produce in the market is important, butchers, bakeries etc. This should be further supported.

Bad

- There are some lovely buildings along Abbey Street but their condition and more recent additions such as the Telephone Exchange which let the place down.
- Concern that Tesco will take the heart out of the town.
- Warner Street is cut off - Blackburn Road east and Warner Street is harder to reach than it

should be thanks to the Bus Station – retail round here has to endure lower footfall than it should.

- Lack of inspectors means buses stop over at stands for longer than they should, causing congestion and pollution.
- The Bus Station is ugly and dirty, making access across difficult and visually intruding on the market surroundings.
- Outdoor stalls are too small and they block the view of a beautiful building, spoils footfall from one side of the town to the other
- Need to address traffic issues especially on market days.
- Very little green space in this area.

Possible Opportunities

- The York Stone cobbled setts remain under the tarmac surface – these could be exposed again to reinforce the character of this area.
- Shopfront improvements to Abbey Street to make a more consistent and quality appearance.
- Clean and green the area round the Market and Town Hall to create new public spaces and open air stalls
- The feel and 'independent' function of this area could be pushed further south into the Grange, where there are lots of empty sites.
- Make more of the Market's 'unifying' role.
- Plans for refurbishment of the indoor market
- Interesting type of shopping can be a real draw to a town centre

Right, the Telephone Exchange. Below right, Abbey Street



Below, the Victorian Arcade.





Above, the Market Hall and surrounding space onto Blackburn Road. Below inside the Market Hall



Above Outdoor Market



Above, Town Hall, Below, Yorkshire Bank building on Blackburn Road



Above, Warner Street

- Convert some of the empty shop units back to housing to create a good mix of retail and residential, this would help to contribute to the evening economy
- Pavement cafes would be favoured in the pedestrianised area in front of the Town Hall if the bus access could be stopped up
- Refurbish the back of the Town Hall and market area.
- The Arcade has so much potential and character, could be ideal for restaurant use.
- The Bus Station is a top priority and a better location is needed, the former Kwik Save site was thought a good spot.



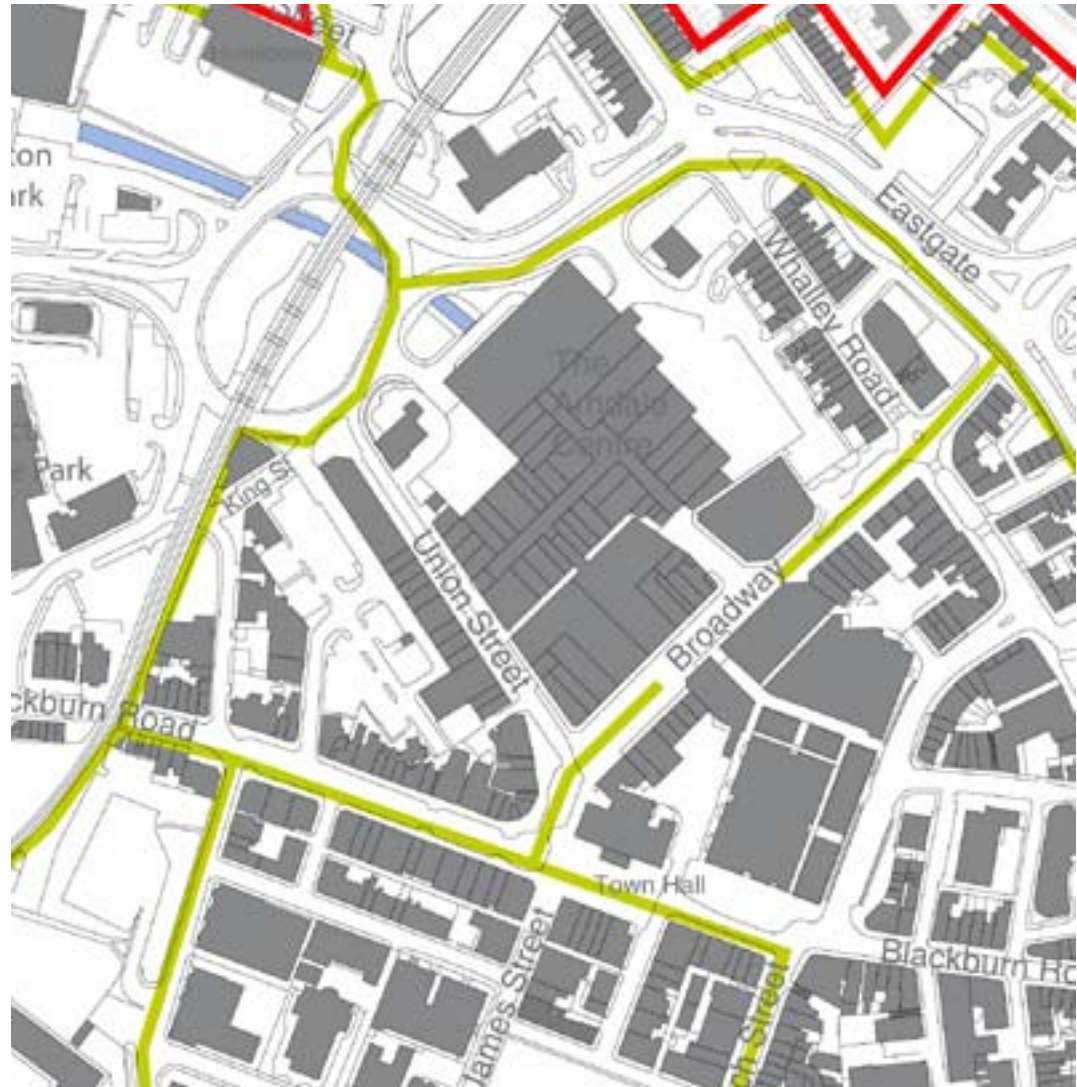
2. Arndale

Good

- M&S is a good asset in the town. M&S use the store for training graduates, it is good for this purpose due to its small size and number of departments.

Bad

- The Arndale is deteriorating and needs a facelift and the multi storey car park needs attention.
- The Arndale car park is an eyesore on the main road and is not well utilised.
- Lots of grotty shops along Whalley Road.
- Need bigger units.
- Sense of being quite down-market, with second-hand/pound shops and empty units.
- Comes across as a “Cheap Clone Town”– some eyesore buildings on Broadway.
- Area north of the Arndale seen as an eyesore, as is the multi-storey car-park and the ring road approach.
- There isn’t enough for younger people in the way of fashion stores etc. “Accrington needs a Next and a Top Shop”.
- Some people were disappointed with the new paving and public realm along Broadway, with the benches felt to be uncomfortable for older people
- The access from Burnley Road was cited as problematic, with the bypass cutting people off and sending traffic away round the centre rather than enticing it to visit.
- Broadway is bare and lacks foliage.



Possible Opportunities

- Broadway needs softening and could be covered.
- Broadway is quite wide and there is potential to introduce stalls, public art, a band stand etc in the area.
- Potential to put a second floor on the Arndale for retail uses.
- Need to attract a big name, high profile retailer
- A complete reconfiguration of the Arndale/ Broadway including the Kwik Save area would be desirable, to include possible expansion northwards to Whalley Road.
- Create new pedestrian links through the area and to other parts of the town.
- Build another storey on top of existing buildings on Broadway, cover with a clear canopy, creating a large all-weather large shopping area
- Relocation of the bus stops to ease congestion and create a more pedestrian feel to the area and allowing the opening up of a new public square/ space around the Market and Town Hall.
- Need some entertainment in the area to create more of an atmosphere.
- Broadway needs more greenery.

Below, Market Square on Broadway



Broadway looking towards Blackburn Road with flowers towers and hanging baskets



Above the former Kwik Save on Union Street, below the Arndale multi-storey car park and servicing area



Above Broadway with Arndale Centre to the left and 2-16 Broadway on the right.



To the left, empty and poor condition buildings on Whalley Road

3. Cannon Street

Good

- Attractive Georgian terraces.
- Superb architecture and heritage – the “grandest” area of the town.
- Nice position between the retail area, station and council offices.
- The green area around St. James church is one of the only such ‘oasis’ spots in the centre
- Commercially sustainable.
- There are only a few vacancies.

Bad

- Grounds surrounding St James Church are one of the few green spaces in the town, but can get untidy and people gather to drink alcohol.
- Now the area has many derelict buildings in poor repair, La-de-das, the Liberal Club, Conservative Club, Cannon St Church which threaten this heritage value.
- The approach to the railway station and the facility itself is very poor.
- Church Street, parking problems cause congestion.
- A lack of thriving night life.



Possible Opportunities

- The area deserves an overarching vision, a learning and cultural quarter.
- St James Church needs to discover wider use that makes more of its position as a centre piece.
- Cannon Street Church needs to be saved before it is too late.
- Introduce more quality residential and specialist shops.
- Improve the link to the Victorian Arcade
- More mixed use development can create a more lively town centre.
- The cobbled streets under the tarmac would really suit the feel of the place if uncovered.
- People working at the Globe and Scaitcliffe House should be attracted to Cannon Street via cafes, galleries etc. – it could then be a bridge to the retail area rather than a barrier to it.
- More entertainment and activity in the green ‘square’ and other buildings.
- The Conservative Club has a ball room which should be used for shows and plays.
- Barnes Furniture shop could be a possible theatre and/ or conference centre.
- Further development of flats above businesses
- Green walkway could be nice through this area
- Could be used for European markets, exhibitions etc.
- Public Art in the area if it is tasteful.
- Open air events, theatre, cinema.



St James Church and surrounding green space



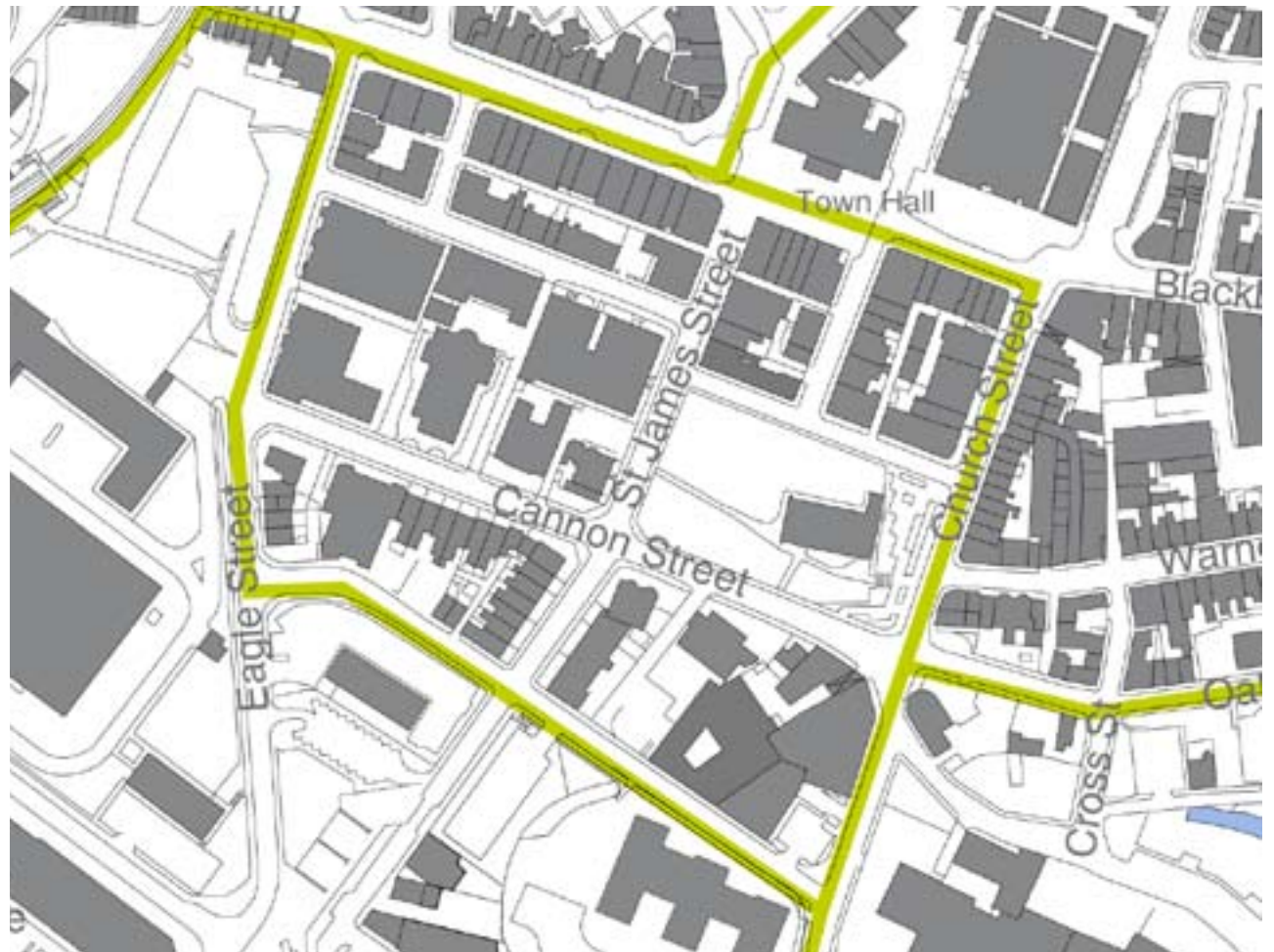
Solicitors offices on Cannon Street



Above, Cannon St with Baptist Church . Below, Community and Voluntary Resource Centre,



To left, Carnegie Library building St James Street.
To right, Conservative Club, Cannon Street



4. The Grange

Good

- The Fire and Police Station buildings are a real feature of Accrington.
- The area has character and history and wildlife thanks to the river.
- Eastgate now takes traffic out of the town, rather than along Abbey St into the town
- The river in the Grange area is attractive and should be enhanced.
- Its only a few seconds easy walk to Warner Street and the specialist shops.
- Proximity to parks and Conservation Area.

Bad

- Businesses here are struggling and the area is very run down.
- There is lots of land doing nothing for the town's image and prosperity.
- Nothing is made of the history or of the river.
- Very little residential but Manchester Road is a key gateway into Accrington.
- This area is underutilised, many surface car parks which are used by office workers in the town.





To the left Magistrates Court Complex. To the right, businesses off Black Abbey St



Possible Opportunities

- The area is perfect to host farmers markets, Christmas markets and music events
- Maybe a new green area/park could be designed in The Grange.
- Accrington & Rossendale College are relocating a campus from Rawtenstall, investing in Accrington, this will relocate 250 students and 50 extra staff into the town.
- At present college students go into Blackburn, need to retain them in Accrington.
- Improve entertainment offer.
- The new V1th form could help provide a pool of potential activity and generate ideas for a new role for the Grange.
- There is plenty of scope for site assembly and imaginative redevelopment and re-use of the old mills and houses.
- Residential, office, 'live-work' and leisure uses would be ideal.
- This area could be the location for Tony Wilson's 'fashion tower'
- The river could be opened up as a lively

centrepiece, allowing waterfront development to take place.

- Areas like this are ideal for 'marketing to Manchester'. From the Grange, the city is only 30 mins away along Manchester Road.
- The Globe has been a success at providing incubator space for small businesses – this could be repeated here.
- Potential for employment area which would support the town centre on the Abbey Grange site.
- Landmark building to be developed opposite fire station.
- Conversion of the fire station to mixed uses.

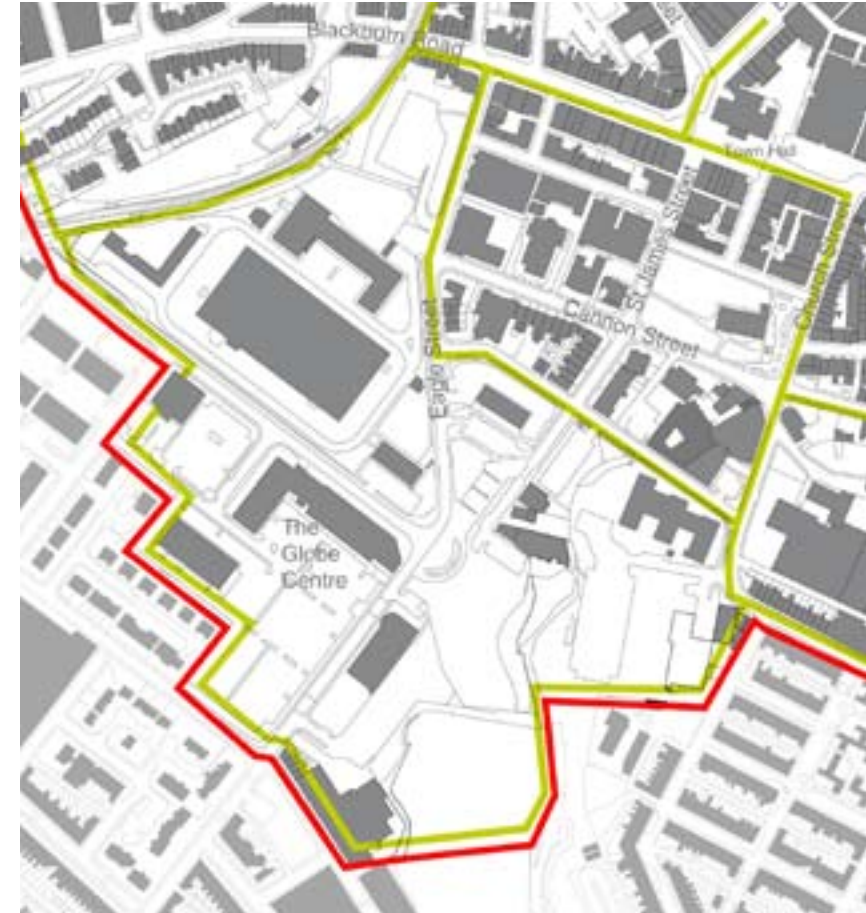
To the right, the Abbey pub and below car parking and Broad Oak Water under-used space.



5. Scaitcliffe

Good

- The Globe and Scaitcliffe House are good examples of regeneration “the Globe is the best thing to happen to Accrington for 10 years”.
- Good access to nature and green route along the old railway (Hyndburn Greenway).
- This is a large area of regeneration and good transformation, Scaitcliffe Lodge, new LIFT centre, acting as a catalyst for the town.
- There is a good business, retail and housing mix.
- Lots of employment in this area and further increases projected which can bring more people into the town centre.



Top right Hyndburn Greenway, above and below Scaitcliffe Lodge Regeneration. Below left, The Globe Centre.



Bad

- The proposed Tesco will have a significant impact on traffic movements and the local roads which are narrow, with tight junctions.
- This includes the approach along Scaitcliffe Street under the railway line and the junction of Blackburn Road and Eagle Street, where there are some historic bank buildings on each side of the junction.
- The site is not easily accessible from surrounding roads.
- The Railway Station is too far out of town.
- The new Health Centre is poorly located and not easy to access– the main bus corridors are from Blackburn Road and Whalley Road.
- Church Street is semi-blocked by parked cars parking should be better managed.
- Traffic flows need sorting.
- Greenery, much more needed.



Above, distanced railway station and poor link to the town



Above, Former Skills Centre site.

Above right, car park off Eagle Street.

Opposite right, junction of Scaitcliffe St and Eagle Street



Possible Opportunities

- Tesco should offer free parking for town centre users.
- Would make sense to encourage professional accommodation given the proximity to both Manchester Road and the Station.
- There could be a circular shuttle bus to help access the LIFT, perhaps assisted by Section 106 money and capital receipts from the Supermarket.
- Tesco, if developed can be made into a conservation type development.
- Develop the proposed Tesco on the former council site.
- Create new cycleways and walkways and link to the greenway.
- Better crossing points over Eagle Street from the Globe/Scaitcliffe to the town.



Above top, junction of Blackburn Road and Eagle St, above, parking pressures by local office workers



6. Hyndburn Road

Good

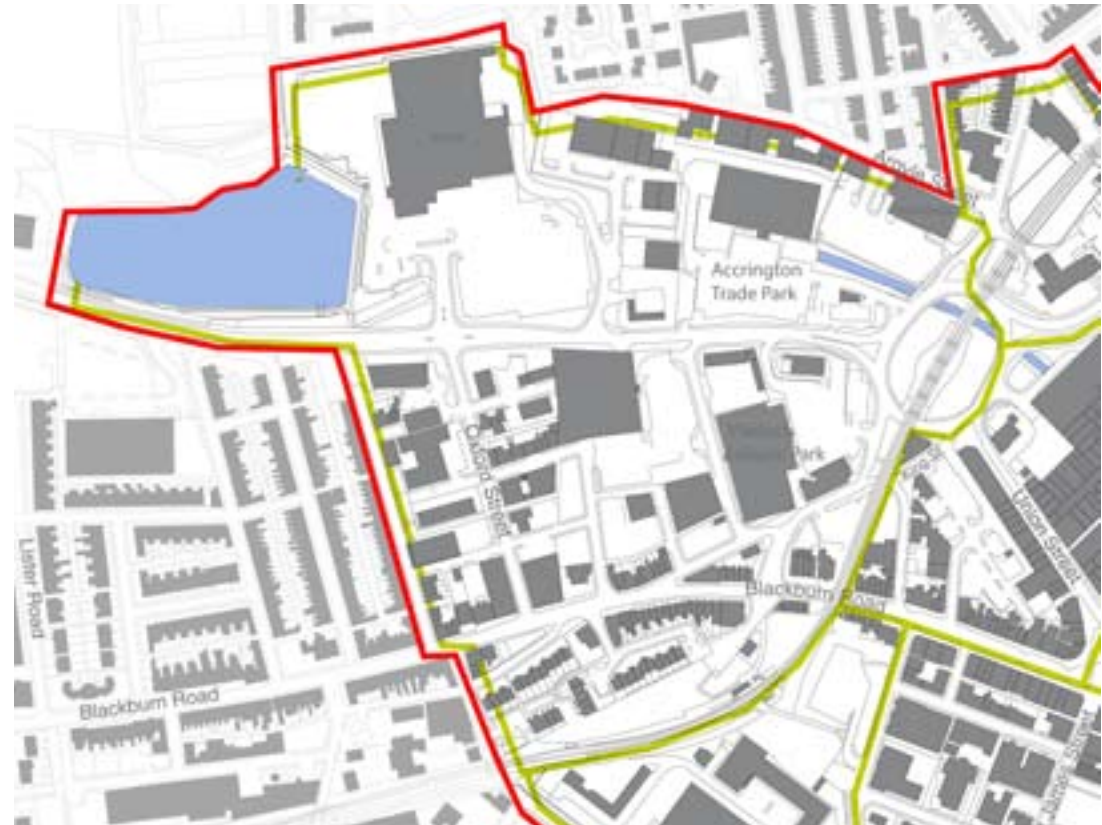
- Some landmark buildings surviving like the one housing the Bingo Hall, on Blackburn Road and of course the Viaduct itself.
- Convenience of the area to the station, motorway and town centre is a potential attractor for investors.
- Hyndburn Road is a key entrance, signs of development activity.
- Good fishing in the reservoir near ASDA.



Top left, River Hyndburn, Top right, Viaduct

Bad

- Access to the area was seen as very poor, both on foot and by bus.
- Congestion problems from motorway traffic
- 'Sparse' character, with considerable dereliction and grot around King Street.
- New buildings seen as bland and featureless.
- Some older buildings are too far gone to save and should be cleared.
- View from train of the rear of Blackburn Road/ adjacent sheds and warehouses seen as a poor gateway.
- There is no sense of the water features, the lake and the River. The viaduct is 'land-locked' by the roundabout.
- Anti-social behaviour around the viaduct leisure area is causing a problem and limits those who feel safe frequenting the area.
- Homebase is poorly located and has too much car parking.





Above, Viaduct Leisure Centre (The Vue), below Jewsons, Hyndburn Road



Above right, Blackburn Road, King Street junction. Above lack of pedestrian crossings at Viaduct roundabout



To left buildings and boundaries on Fort Street



Below, Hyndburn Lodge



- High levels of traffic here
- The Vue Centre is underused
- Does not feel connected to the town centre

Possible Opportunities

- Shuttle bus from the centre to the shop sites to improve access for non-car users.
- Better pedestrian links to the centre, perhaps by reconfiguring the roundabout and building a landscaped 'linear water park' along the river.
- Improve appearance and traffic management to support businesses along Blackburn Road.
- Improve the parking enforcement rules to prevent workers being able to park here all day.
- Water area adjacent to ASDA has the potential to be opened up for leisure opportunities.
- The viaduct should be properly floodlit and the space underneath utilised.



- Improved town centre linkage to bowling and cinema area.
- The area should be seen as a major employment area.
- Seek land assembly to bring the 'Viaduct Gateway' higher end employment uses closer to reality.

7. Eastgate

Good

- The Tannery has been restored and redeveloped for business.
- Handful of character buildings like the old pubs.
- The view up the Avenue and the design of the surrounding terraces is great.
- People do park here and walk across Eastgate into the town and it is not so much of a barrier.



Tree Planting along Avenue Parade



The Tannery, Eastgate

Bad

- The dual carriageway is subject to the worst congestion in Accrington.
- The road should never have been built like that, it should have been screened by development – motorists are presented with sheds, a multi-storey car park and the backs of run down buildings as their primary impression of the town centre.
- The links to important arteries like Avenue Parade and Burnley Road have been partially cut off.
- Surrounding neighbourhoods are exceptionally impoverished.
- The Retail Park is just a few sheds and a car-wash, business there is struggling.
- There has been a high turnover of multiple retailers on the Retail Park, Halfords has been lost.
- Main barrier to movement across into town centre
- Not a priority for the town centre.
- People do not use the Retail Park as it is difficult to get to.





To left view down Avenue Parade to the town. To right, view up Avenue Parade.



Below left, Peel Park (The Coppice).
Below, Eastgate Retail Park



Possible Opportunities

- The big, bold move would be to acquire adjacent sites including the mediocre retail park and redevelop for other uses.
- The ring road should be redesigned as a 'boulevard'.
- The traffic lights need co-ordinating to ease congestion.
- Open up the bottom of Stanley Street to give easy access to the town centre.
- Investment needs to be pumped into the retail park to create an area that people want to shop in and it must be easily accessible by public transport and cars alike.
- Improve pedestrian route across Eastgate up Avenue Parade to Peel Park and the Coppice.



Above Gateway to town at Eastgate/Abbey St junction. To right, Eastgate





CONCLUSIONS

Participants at the workshop had a very detailed knowledge and understanding of the town with many **ideas for improvement**.

With increasing competition, including the advent of internet shopping, to remain competitive retail destinations need to differentiate the offer through creating **distinctive, interesting environments** that are well designed and accessible. A key part of this strategy will be to support the Market and independent sector.

A comprehensive approach to town centre regeneration has to be taken, which looks at the accessibility of the town, its connections with surrounding neighbourhoods and diversity of retail formats and uses, including housing, employment, leisure and recreational. The quantity, quality and location of attractive public space is also vital to creating successful retail environments and establishing towns where people are happy to spend time.

The town has many **good assets** on which to develop a regeneration strategy. These include a distinctive townscape, some architectural gems, a sense of history, committed local retailers, and access to surrounding countryside.

Despite there being several good characteristics raised about the different areas, there were also a number of **negative factors** frequently cited, especially in the Arndale and Hyndburn Road areas. Lessons should be learnt from past planning mistakes in the future regeneration of the town.

Three key issues most frequently raised comprise improving the leisure and evening economy of the area which is currently poor, improving the retail offer in the area and traffic access and circulation and road layout issues.

The **Cannon Street** area should be restored and refurbished for new sustainable uses which will animate this area through new activity in the day and the evening, providing a distinctive heritage quarter within the town.

The **Market Hall** is the central focal point within the heart of the town centre and is the barometer for the **health of the town centre**.

Despite recent work and investment, it still feels “hidden away” and lacks the visual prominence and attractive setting the building deserves. Further investment needs to focus on improving the internal market as an attractive and cohesive space and reconfiguring the **outdoor market space** to encourage market activity and interest to “spill” out on to the street and pull people into the Indoor Market area. An improved market public space will be possible after the bus station is relocated. This will allow the Market/Warner Street area to be better integrated with the rest of the town and create better pedestrian circuits between town quarters.

The **landmark Town Hall building** could also be enhanced and used more by the community and visitors alike. The role of Blackburn Road as the town’s original high street needs to be clearly defined and reinforced. This should include bringing people





in and out and creating a quality central “promenade” through the town linking key areas together.

The **Arndale** is largely inward looking and presents a poor elevation/gateway to the town. The retail units are also small and cannot meet larger retailer requirements. This area needs to be better configured and connected to rest of the town, provide more retail floorspace in larger units.

The key objective for Eastgate is providing an **attractive route** along Eastgate deserving of its gateway status and ensuring that it channels people into the town rather than around it.

The **Hyndburn Road area** functions more as a channel for traffic than an urban neighbourhood. The viaduct is landlocked by the roundabout and its magnificent presence and interest diluted by the roads and development around it. There is also no sense of the water in the area. The environmental quality of the area needs improving to create an attractive gateway and arrival point to the town centre.

The Grange, the oldest area of Accrington was generally viewed as an under-utilised and run down part of town which offers potential to create new areas of green space around Broad Oak Water. Opportunities for new sustainable uses in this area, including employment and housing were also discussed. The proximity of Warner Street’s independent shops would complement these uses. The Manchester Road gateway, including the police station and fire station provides real potential to create an attractive arrival point to the town. Creating better linkages with Accrington and Rossendale College to encourage students and staff to walk the short distance into town is a further opportunity.



TOWN CENTRE OPTIONS

An options workshop was held with the stakeholder group on the 20th September 2007. This workshop explored 4 different options for the town centre building upon the issues identified in the June 2007 workshop and the consultants analysis.

The 4 options were:

Option 1: Do Minimum. This illustrated what might happen in a no masterplan world, i.e. what the market might deliver.

Option 2: Streets and Squares. This incorporated additional development and projects based around the town's key streets and squares. This would focus attention in refurbishment of existing central buildings and sites, including new retail development in the Arndale, new residential development in the Grange and the development of the Former Skills Site for mixed uses.

Option 3: Fixing The Edge. This built on the approach in Option 2 plus additional developments and projects along the edge of the town centre to better address the towns key gateways.

Option 4: Weaving it Back Together. This was the most transformational option which comprised option 3 projects plus additional development in the out-of-town locations around the town centre to fully integrate these areas back into the town centre and surrounding neighbourhoods. This option looked to try and absorb the big box retail and commercial areas, by wrapping them with active uses and frontages and creating stronger connections.

People at the workshop mostly supported a mix of option 3 and 4. A detailed options report has been produced which outlines the options in more detail and the workshop feedback.

Following the workshop the consultancy team then developed a preferred option taking on board the consultation feedback to date and their own analysis. The 4 workshop options and the preferred option were then subject to a formal options appraisal study.

This further assessed the options in terms of strategic, economic and planning contribution, financial assessment, local acceptability, deliverability, quality, regenerative benefits and sustainability.

Photos from the stakeholder option workshop held on 20th September 2007 in Scaitcliffe House, Accrington



OPTION 1 - DO MINIMUM



Figure 13 Option 1

OPTION 2 - STREETS & SQUARES



Figure 14 Option 2

OPTION 3 - FIXING THE EDGE



Figure 15 Option 2

OPTION 4 - WEAVING IT BACK TOGETHER



Figure 16 Option 3



Preferred Option Plan

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 10 Former Skills Centre | 20 Victorian Arcade |
| 11 Train Station | 21 Oak Street |
| 12 Scookills Lodge | 22 Broad Oak |
| 13 New Health Centre | 23 Spring Gardens |
| 14 Market Hall | 24 Jacob Street |
| 15 Arcade | 25 Charles Browne |
| 16 Former Sunday school | 26 Water Street |
| 17 Fire Station | 27 2-16 Broadway |
| 18 Baptist Church | 28 Barnes Street |
| 19 La-der-da | 29 Wellington Street |
| 20 Conservative Club | 30 Parkin Street |
| 21 Barnes Furniture Store | 31 Stanley Street |
| 22 Town Hall | 32 Hindburn Road/ |
| 23 Cranshaw Street bus station | 33 Victoria Gateway |
| 24 Blackburn Road/Blair Street | 34 Derby Street |
| 25 Bridge Street | 35 Whalley Road |
| 26 Thompson Court | 36 Orange Lane |
| | 37 Cross Street |
| | 38 Union Street |
| Environmental Improvements | |
| 39 Eagle Street | 40 Canals |
| 41 Cannon Street | 42 Peel Street Square |
| 43 Paradise/Cayle St junction | 44 Wellington Square |
| 45 Scookills/Cranshaw St junction | 46 Toll House Square |
| 47 Market Square | 48 Blackburn Road / |
| 49 Blake Square | 49 St James Street |
| 50 Cross Street | 51 Hindburn Road |
| 52 Orange Park | 53 Blackburn Road Gateway |
| 54 Abbey Square | 55 Avenue Parade |
| 56 Broadside Canopy | 57 Hindburn Lodge |
| 58 Victoria Square | 59 Whalley Road |
| 59 Bunsley Road | 60 St James Churchyard |

Key

- Public space
- Street improvements and crossings
- Green space
- Water
- Refurbishment building
- New building
- Crossings

Figure 17 Preferred Option

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Public consultation on the masterplan and options for the town centre was held on Friday 25th January in Accrington Market Hall from 10-4pm and Saturday 26th January in the Arndale Centre from 10-4 pm.

A separate report presenting the response and outlining analysis of the feedback has been produced.



Accrington Town Centre Masterplan

What is this event about?

On behalf of the Council, urban designers **URBED** have over the past 5 months been developing a town centre masterplan to guide planning, design and investment in the town.

The various proposals in this exhibition have been produced in consultation with local people who have an interest in the town centre, including retailers and town centre businesses.

Included on the following boards are 5 different visions for the town centre, and a preferred option with more detailed proposals

Please let us know your views on the different proposals and ideas in this exhibition.



What we have done so far ?



Initial Consultation

As part of the initial baseline analysis a workshop was held with local people who have an interest in the town centre on the 14th June 2007 to discuss key issues facing the town. A report summarising this event has been produced.

Key issues raised were the need to:

- improve to remain **competitive**
- Expand and reconfigure the **retail offer** in the town to attract larger retailers
- Support the **market** as a key asset in the town and the independent retail sector
- Improve retail environments and create **attractive public spaces**
- Improve the leisure and **evening economy**, provide more cafes, restaurants etc
- Improve **traffic** access, road layouts and circulation in and around the town
- Provide a better **bus station facility** and improve public transport
- Restore and improve the many **heritage** buildings in the town
- Restore **Blackburn Road** as the town's high street, by improving its environment and improving accessibility
- Modernise and provide better retail space and environments in and around the **Arndale Centre**
- Reduce the barrier effects of **Eastgate** and provide a more attractive route
- Create better **quality routes and gateways** to the town centre
- Create new sustainable uses and a better environment in **The Grange** area of town
- Provide new **high quality commercial and residential** uses in the town to sustain its viability and vibrancy
- Remove or improve eyesore buildings and replace with high quality **attractive buildings** and environment
- Improve and increase quality and quantity of **open space** in the town

What Next?

After the consultation has finished the feedback will be analysed and the plan amended to take account of responses. The final masterplan will then be prepared and approved by the Council in the Spring.

The masterplan will then be further progressed by Hyndburn Borough Council and submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination before its final adoption as an Area Action Plan.

Please look at the boards and complete a comments sheet so that your views can be taken on board and influence the plan.

This exhibition and questionnaires will be available to view for 6 weeks at the following venues:

Town Hall: Monday 28th January- Friday 8th February;

Library: Monday 11th February- Saturday 23rd February;

Accrington Pals Health Centre: Monday 25th February- Friday 7th March

Respondants

92 people completed a questionnaire

64% female and 36% male

99% white british

23% had disability

65% between 45-64

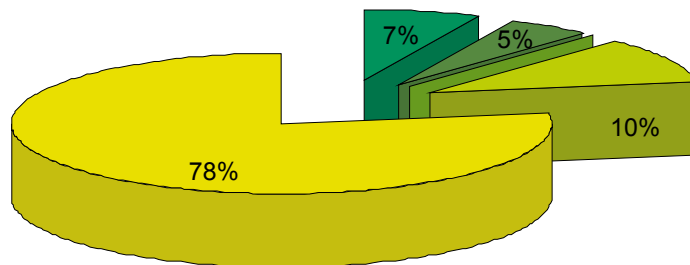
18% over 65

78% favoured the preferred option the most

88% supported the preferred option



Results



- Option1- Do minimum
- Option 2- Streets and Squares
- Option 3- Transforming the Edge
- Option 4- Weaving it Back Together
- Option 5- Preferred Option

