

# Building

# Bolton



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**Supplementary Planning Document**

**Bolton Council  
Physical Regeneration Unit  
Town Hall  
Bolton  
BL1 1RU**

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Keith Davies**

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This document is a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). It provides further details to policies in the adopted Unitary Development Plan (UDP), April 2005, which is the primary source of guidance on planning issues. The SPD is not part of the Statutory Development Plan. However, it forms part of the Local Development Framework and as such will be an important consideration in determining planning applications.

The document is intended to support pre application discussions about development proposals for Bolton Town Centre, although it is designed for use throughout the development control process. Applicants are advised to contact the Planning Section (see p.105) to discuss their proposals as early as possible. Additional guidance may also need to be consulted depending upon the nature and location of the application.



## Foreword

# Building Bolton



**Councillor Ebrahim Adia**  
Executive Member Development

Bolton has been built with a sense of the past and an instinct for the future. From the visionary schemes of Lord Leverhulme to the present day, Bolton has welcomed change and the opportunities it brings.

This document has been prepared against a background of rapid change in our region, and renewed interest in town centres. It expresses the Council's confidence in the development potential of Bolton Town Centre, emphasising aspects of our townscape which we would like to see protected and enhanced whilst welcoming modern and original design proposals.

It also complements Bolton's new brand, which reflects Bolton values of inclusivity, character and decency - values which will influence physical development in Bolton as well as the way we communicate with our residents and businesses. The Bolton brand also embodies our ambition and vision to join up everything we do to promote Bolton under a strong and unique identity.

We welcome development proposals, and offer Building Bolton as a first step in agreeing the way forward. It contains detailed analysis of the Town Centre environment, and reflects the results of consultation on the issue of local distinctiveness. This is the baseline for the design guidance, which draws attention to distinctive features of urban form, scale, massing and detail.

The document sets out the principles of good contextual design which we would like all developers to consider when assessing Town Centre sites. In exchange, the Council can provide comprehensive support through the forum of the Design Panel for all pre-application discussions, including providing advice on the content of Design and Access Statements.

Building Bolton has always been a collaborative process. We hope that this publication helps in bringing your development objectives and our aspirations together. I encourage all our existing and future partners to study its contents and join with us in setting a new design standard for Bolton Town Centre.



# Chapter 1

## **Introduction**

### Contents

- 01 Purpose of Building Bolton
- 02 Background to Building Bolton
- 03 How To Use Building Bolton



## Introduction

# Purpose of Building Bolton

The Building Bolton Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) offers guidance on how to design locally distinctive developments. Bolton Council wants to work with developers who share our vision of a prosperous, distinctive and diverse Town Centre, and has produced this publication as a starting point for design discussions and as a reference resource to be used during the Development Control process.

The guidance in Building Bolton provides more certainty for investors by setting out the Council's local distinctiveness agenda, explaining the evidence base for the approach and providing recommendations that will assist in the design process. The intention is to engage early with development partners and share design objectives, avoiding costly disagreement later on and ensuring that design issues are given prominence at the earliest possible stage.

The SPD complements the objective set out in Bolton's Community Plan, to confirm 'Bolton Town Centre as a leading regional centre, a place to be proud of, distinctive, appealing and popular with all'. The Town Centre Action Framework 2005 – 08 furthers the Community Plan objective by setting out how development design guidance will be prepared and published as an SPD.

The document has been prepared following two major consultation exercises carried out by the Council in 2005 / 6. The first, by urban design consultants Kevin Murray Associates investigated local perceptions of Bolton Town Centre.

The second study, by Hemisphere Marketing and Design Consultants, looked at the wider Borough, and the importance of local distinctiveness to Bolton's regional identity. Both studies concluded that Bolton has a rich and underused resource in its people and places, and that the town's regeneration and marketing strategy should seek to capitalise on existing assets.

The design recommendations in Building Bolton reflect the emphasis on local distinctiveness in both consultation exercises. They also embody best practice as recommended in 'By Design', the companion publication to PPS 1 (see list of Design Objectives on page 7). This draws attention to the importance of considering locally distinctive features such as land form and character when laying out new development, including whether the site is level or sloping, or contains a natural feature such as a river. Good design will respond to these features rather than hiding or ignoring them.



Victoria Square



Le Mans Crescent

## Introduction

# Purpose of Building Bolton

Local Distinctiveness also includes the layout of buildings, streets and spaces. Existing building patterns often reflect historic uses – narrow plot widths on a main street frontage, for instance – and contribute as much to local character as detailed building design. New development needs to reflect these patterns as far as possible, and maintain visual continuity with adjacent streetscape. The use of local materials, building methods and details is an important part of local distinctiveness, and the relationship between the scale, massing and height of proposed development and existing buildings in the surrounding area. Building scales need to reflect both the characteristic scale of the surroundings and also the variety of nearby buildings.

Building Bolton is not intended to limit discussion of design options for Bolton Town Centre – the Council will always welcome modern and innovative proposals. Rather, the document describes a starting point in terms of what is successful and valued in the existing townscape. This becomes the basis for the design guidance – developers are invited to build on success in a way that protects and adds to the diversity and distinctiveness of Bolton Town Centre, and enhances the value of their investment.



Building Bolton consultation event.



Building Bolton consultation event.

### List of Design Objectives, from 'By Design – Urban Design in the Planning System'.

#### **Character**

A place with its own identity. Bolton's special character will be promoted through responding to and reinforcing locally distinctive patterns of development, landscape and culture.

#### **Continuity and enclosure**

A place where private and public spaces are clearly distinguished. Bolton's streetscape will benefit from continuity of street frontages and the enclosure of space by development that clearly defines private and public areas.

#### **Quality of the public realm**

A place with attractive and successful outdoor areas. This means investment in Bolton's public spaces and the creation of routes that are attractive, safe, uncluttered and work effectively for all in society, including disabled and elderly people.

#### **Ease of movement**

A place that is easy to get to and move through. Bolton needs strategies that will promote accessibility and local permeability by making places that connect with each other and are easy to move through.

#### **Legibility**

A place that has a clear image and is easy to understand. Bolton will encourage development that provides recognizable routes, intersections and landmarks to help people find their way around.

#### **Adaptability**

A place that can change easily. Bolton will benefit from development that can respond to changing social, technological and economic conditions.

#### **Diversity**

A place with variety and choice. Bolton encourages development and uses that work together to create viable places, responsive to local needs.

## Introduction

# Background to Building Bolton

Bolton has never stopped building, or making plans to create lasting and attractive townscape. The area around Victoria Square, laid out in the 19th century, set the gold standard in terms of urban design, and the magnificent Town Hall, completed 1873, continues to provide one of the region's most memorable civic settings.

In the early 20th century Lord Leverhulme commissioned the first of Bolton's town centre masterplans from landscape architect Thomas Mawson. A series of boulevards was proposed, radiating out from the Town Hall to the inner suburbs and Queens Park, where a new art gallery was planned. It provided an opportunity to break through the encircling 'ring of fire' – the dense mass of mills, foundries and terrace housing which had grown around the perimeter of the town centre. The outbreak of the first world war prevented the scheme from being realised.

The Town Centre Map, commissioned by the Council from Shankland Cox Associates and approved in 1965, was more influential. The report recommended a network of peripheral access roads that would deliver traffic to the edges of a highly serviced pedestrian core, with the objective of supporting a retail and office economy. The Town Centre as it appears today is largely the result of the recommendations in this report.

In the past 15 years the emphasis in Town Centre redevelopment has been changing again, away from the specialised role envisaged in the 50s and 60s and towards a more diverse and sustainable future based

on communities and mixed economies. In 2005, two Planning Policy Statements (PPS) were published which reinforced the new approach. PPS 1: Delivering Sustainable Development states 'Good design should contribute positively to making places better for people. Design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, should not be accepted'. In addition, PPS 1 emphasises the importance of pre application discussions as a means to secure better quality design outcomes.

PPS 6: Planning for Town Centres describes a key policy objective: 'to enhance the architectural and historic heritage of centres, provide a sense of place, a focus for the community and for civic activity and ensure that town centres provide an attractive, accessible and safe environment for business, shoppers and residents'. In addition to the guidance, the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced a formal requirement for all relevant planning applications to be accompanied by a statement about the design and access principles that have informed the development.



Proposed art gallery in Queens Park (Mawson).



Proposed avenue from Victoria Square (Mawson).

The Building Bolton SPD is part of the Council's response to the regional and national challenge. It avoids the 'big idea' approach of earlier studies, concentrating on building an evidence base for change through consultation. This gives an important foothold for the community in the process, and enables locally valued characteristics to be taken into account.

The document is not reactive or anti modern in its intent; Bolton has always been receptive to change. Historically this process has tended to retain patterns of development whilst renewing the fabric of the townscape, which explains why so many fine Victorian buildings survive and continue to dominate the skyline. Ensuring this process of development continues is the main objective of Building Bolton; setting a design quality threshold which encourages development whilst resisting proposals likely to damage locally distinctive patterns of building form and streetscape.



Proposed pedestrianisation of Churchgate (Shankland Cox).



Proposed pedestrianisation of Victoria Square (Shankland Cox - Drawings by Gordon Cullen).

## Introduction

# How to Use Building Bolton

This publication is a Supplementary Planning Document, designed to facilitate discussions between developers and the Council. It supplements planning policy contained within the adopted Bolton Unitary Development Plan (UDP), April 2005, and will be used to assess planning applications and their accompanying design and access statements that come forward in the Town Centre. Such applications should primarily accord with the provisions of the UDP.

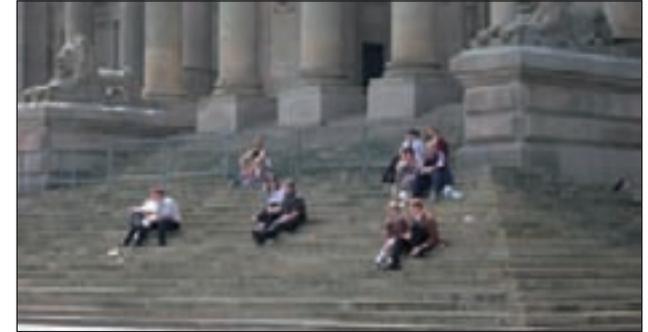
The document is available as a hard copy from Planning. Please use the contact address on page 105. The document may also be viewed and downloaded as a PDF from the Councils Planning website, accessible from the Council home page at [www.bolton.gov.uk](http://www.bolton.gov.uk). Copies of the consultation report prepared by Kevin Murray Associates can be viewed at the same web address.

Building Bolton is intended to be used primarily as a reference source by individuals and organisations with a particular development interest. To assist this, the design guidance chapter is organised into colour coded Character Areas (see page 11). It is recommended, however, that the urban analysis material and implementation plan in the other chapters is also consulted for information which supports the design guidance.

**Chapter One. Introduction.** This chapter provides background information on the SPD and the reasons for adopting a design guidance approach based on the promotion of local distinctiveness.

**Chapter Two. Town Centre Survey.** The survey assesses the urban form of Bolton Town Centre in terms of its regional and local context, its historic development, and a number of standard urban analysis criteria such as permeability and legibility. This chapter provides the evidence baseline for the guidance in Chapter Three, and should be consulted for the additional information it provides for the wider context and also for individual sites. The analysis is cross referred to the findings of the consultation exercise carried out by Kevin Murray Associates.

**Chapter Three. Design Guidance.** Use this chapter as the reference point for design guidance on specific areas in the Town Centre. It is subdivided into six colour coded Character Areas, which are the basis for the design guidance. The designation of these areas reflects the analysis in Chapter Two, and represents areas considered to have shared historical, topographical or architectural characteristics.



See the inset box on the next page for a summary of the chapter content.

**Chapter Four. Implementation Plan.** This chapter describes the framework through which the Building Bolton SPD will be implemented, describing in particular the work of the Town Centre Design Panel, the Developers Forum, and the proposals for a Design and Conservation Champion and Bolton Design Award.

## Introduction

# How to Use Building Bolton

### DESIGN GUIDANCE IN BUILDING BOLTON

The guidance in Chapter Three is based upon seven character areas, which represent focal points for locally distinctive townscape within the Town Centre. Use the map to identify the area relevant to your site, and the section which contains the relevant design guidance (each character area is colour coded on the page margin). The design guidance within each character area is prefaced by detailed analysis which explains the historical and townscape significance of the area, and identifies characteristics of built form and open space which contribute to its distinctiveness:

#### Introduction

A summary of issues accompanying an aerial photograph of the character area.

#### Historical Notes

Maps and photographs are used to illustrate historical events which have helped shape the appearance of the character area.

#### Character Area Appraisal

Each character area is illustrated with a Local Distinctiveness Map showing buildings with particular value in terms of their contribution to the distinctiveness of the townscape. The information on these maps complements the schedules of listed buildings and buildings of note in Conservation Area Appraisals.

The appraisal includes an axonometric illustration of typical urban structure and grain within the character area, for instance the pattern of urban blocks, distinctive street layouts, and any development patterns which are threatening the character of the area. It concludes with a section describing the height / massing and details / materials typical of the character area, using photographs and drawings.

#### Design Guidance

The guidance for each character area is subdivided into three categories which reflect the guidance in 'By Design' on the recommended aspects of development form: 1) Urban Structure and Grain 2) Height and Massing 3) Details and Materials. The guidance is illustrated using maps drawings and photographs which show best practice, either in principle or as examples of successful design completed elsewhere in the region.

The guidance in Building Bolton supplements more detailed information available elsewhere, which should also be consulted by the applicant. This is summarised on page 104.





# Chapter 2

## Town Centre Survey

### Contents

#### 01 Context

- Regional
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- Street Plan
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- Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings
- Transport Strategy

#### 02 Historical Analysis

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#### 03 Urban Analysis

- Town Structure
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- Set Pieces
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- Visual and Physical Permeability
- Street Frontages
- Open Space
- Traffic Impact
- Conclusions



## Town Centre Survey

### Context - Regional

Bolton Metropolitan Borough is one of the largest urban centres in England's North West region (pop. 264,800). The Borough covers an area of approximately 140 km<sup>2</sup> and includes several townships of which Bolton (pop 139,403) is the largest.

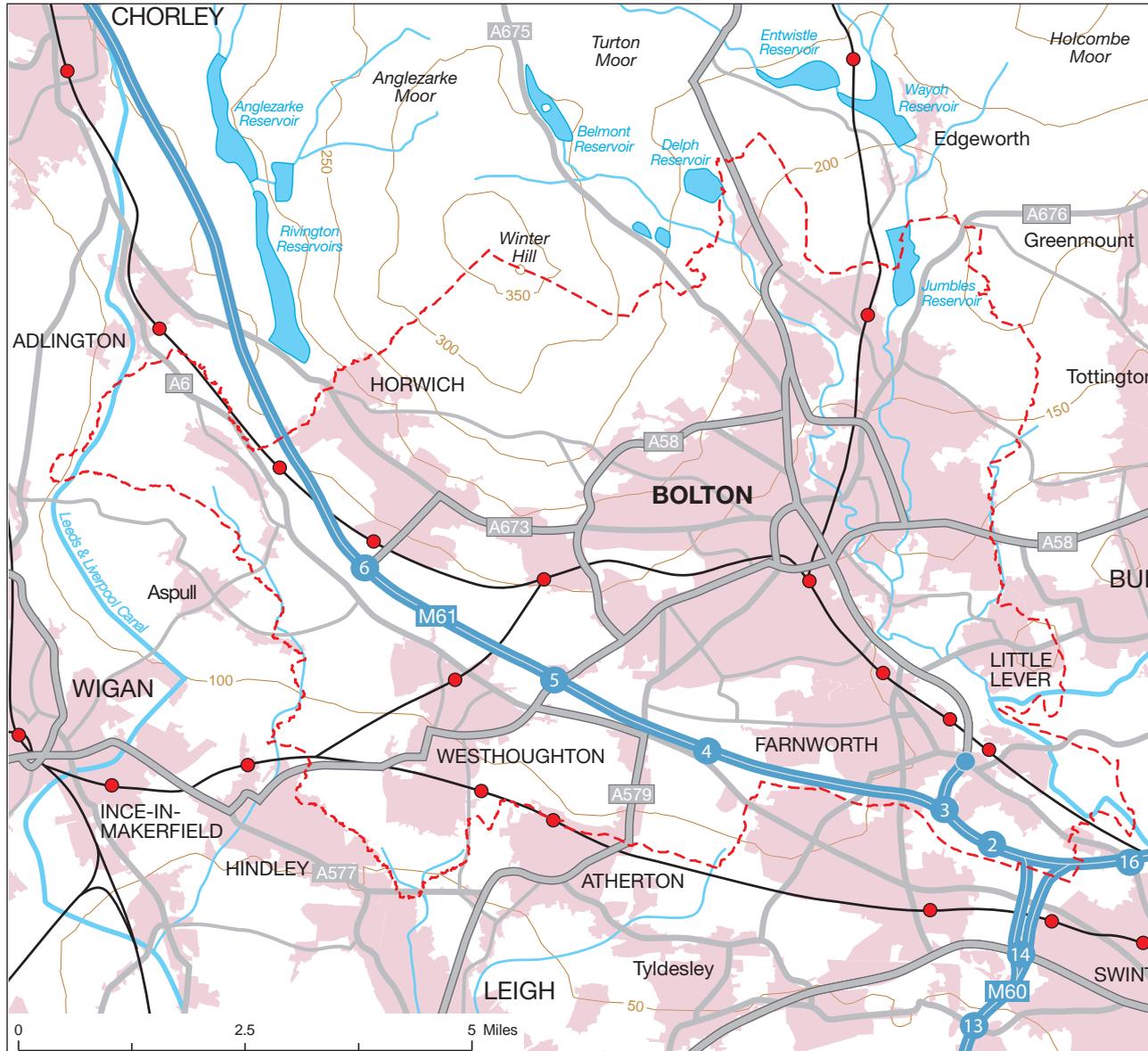


The Borough straddles the southern edge of the West Pennine Moors where a number of deeply cut river valleys open out into the broad basin of the Greater Manchester urban area. The town's character is a reflection of this larger regional identity, linked by history to the industry and enterprise of the region and the landscape of fast flowing streams and wool producing moorlands. The town's historic name is a clue – Bolton Le Moors – and Bolton today is still approached from the north and east across open upland countryside.

Bolton's location offers real advantages: easy access on a mainline rail link to the cultural and economic centres of Manchester and Liverpool, and within walking distance of moorland and reservoir scenery. Much of the region is readily accessible, from the coastal resorts to the Lake District.

# Town Centre Survey

## Context - Local



Bolton became a town of importance during the industrial era, but its people have been industrious over a much longer period. In 1540 John Leland wrote of the trading of 'cottons and coarse yarns' in the market (charter granted 1251) The connection between wool production on the uplands and the production and sale of textiles in the town was reinforced during the industrial period by innovation (Samuel Crompton invented the Spinning Mule in the town in 1775), the skills of the local workforce, and the availability of water power to drive mill machinery. Bolton Town Centre is the undoubted focus of this activity within the Borough; the place where landscape, industry and civic pride combine.

# Town Centre Survey

## Context - Street Plan

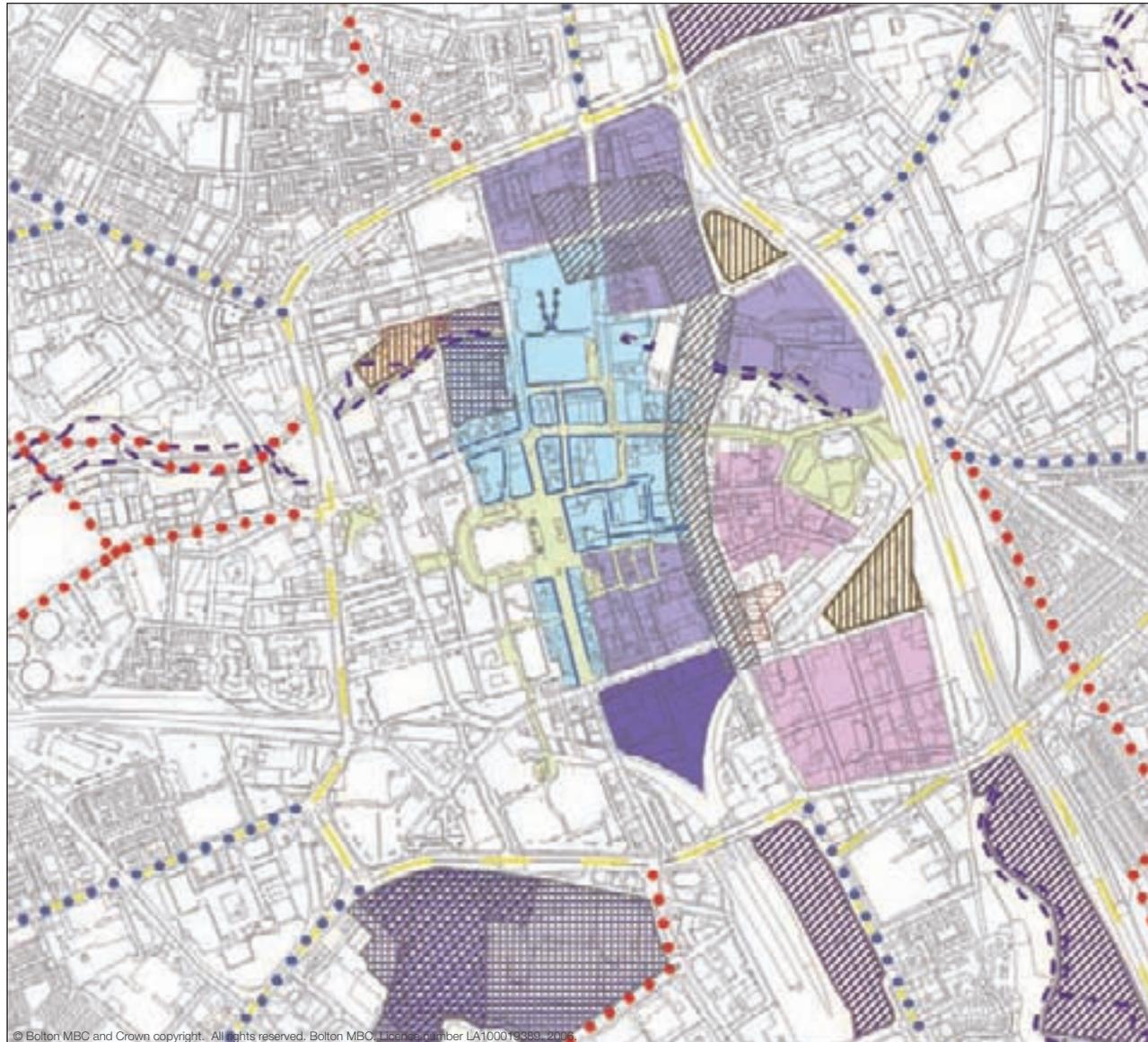


All Saints Street	D1, D2	Folds Road	D2, E1, E2, F1
Bank Street	C2,C3	Garside Road	A4, B4
Bark Street	B2,B3	High Street	B6
Bath Street	C2	Higher Bridge Street	C1, C2, D2
Black Horse Street	B3, B4, C4, C5, C6	Johnson Street	D4, D5
Bold Street	C4, D4	Kay Street	D2
Bow Street	D2	Knowsley Street	C2, C3
Bradford Street	F4, F5	Lower Bridgeman Street	E5
Bradshawgate	D3, D4,D5, E5	Manchester Road	E5, E6
Brightmet Street	D4, E4	Marsden Road	B3, B4
Bridge Street	D2, D3	Mill Street	E2, F2
Bridgeman Place	E5	Moor Lane	B3, B4, B5, B6
Brown Street	D2	Nelson Square	D4
Bury New Road	D2, E2, E3, F3	Ormrod Street	B5, C5
Carlton Street	E4, E5	Palace Street	C2
Chorley New Road	A2	Queen Street	C3, C4
Chorley Old Road	A1, A1, B2	River Street	E4, E5
Church Bank	E3	Salop Street	E4, E5
Churchgate	D3	Saville Street	E4, E5
Clarence Street	D2	Shiffhall Street	E4, E5
Clive Street	D4, E4	Silverwell Street	D3, D4, E3
College Way	A5, A6 B6	Spa Road	A4, A5, A6, B5
Corporation Street	C4	St Edmund Street	B3
Crown Street	D2, D3	St George Road	A2, B2, C2,
Deane Road	A5, A6, B5	St George's Street	D2
Deansgate	B3, C3, D3	St Peter's Way	D1, D2, E2, E3, E4, F4, F5, F6
Derby Street	B6	Topp Way	B2, C1, C2,D1
Duke Street	C2	Trinity Street	B5, B6, C5, D5, E5
Fletcher St	B6	Well Street	E2, E3
		Wood Street	D3



# Town Centre Survey

## Context - UDP



The Building Bolton SPD supplements planning policy contained within the adopted Bolton Unitary Development Plan (UDP), April 2005. In particular it supplements policies D1 and D2 on urban design and local distinctiveness. It also supplements policies D7 – D12 (Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings) and D13 (Historic Parks and Gardens). It conforms to policies for the Town Centre, in particular TC1 (enhancing the vitality and viability of the Town Centre) and reflects the principles of TC2 (Town Centre Living), TC3 (Evening Economy), TC4 (Core Shopping Area), TC9 (formal open spaces and visual links). It provides supplementary guidance to site specific policies TC5 – TC8. The SPD also conforms to the principles of a number of other policies; O2 (Protection of Recreational Open Space), O6 (Developments on riverside locations), O7 (Public Rights of Way), A1 (Integrating transport uses and achieving a modal shift in transport use) and A16 (pedestrian priorities).

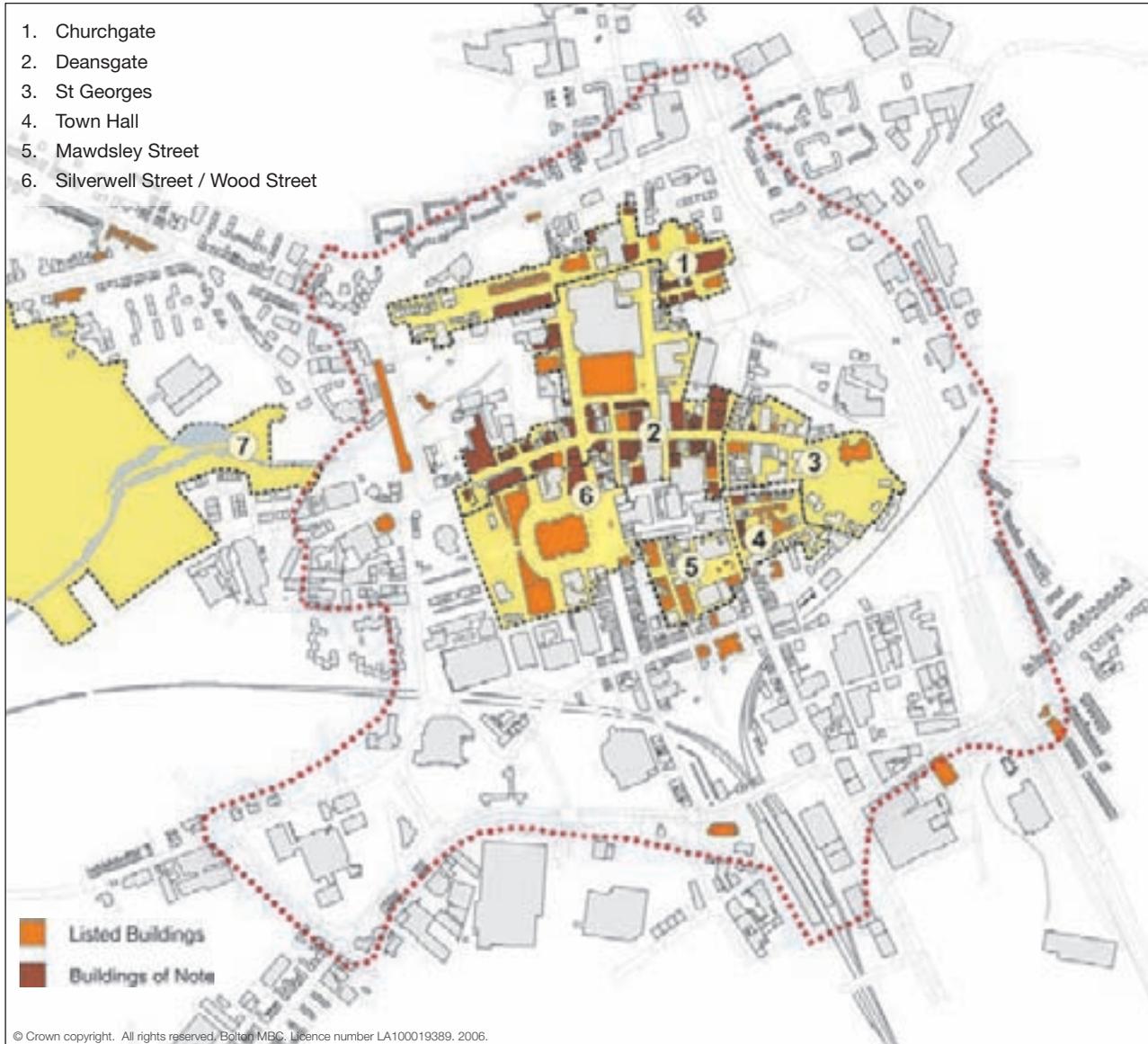
### Key

-----	1st Floor Primary Shopping Frontage		Housing Commitment
•••••	Cycle routes off road		Mixed Use Site
•••••	Cycle routes on road		Multi storey Car Park
—	Primary Shopping Frontage		Open Space Link
—	Strategic Route Network		Retail Allocation
	Business Use		Retail Warehouse Park
	Evening Economy Zone		Strategic Opportunity Site
	Floodplain		Core Shopping Area

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# Town Centre Survey

## Context - Conservation Areas & Listed Buildings



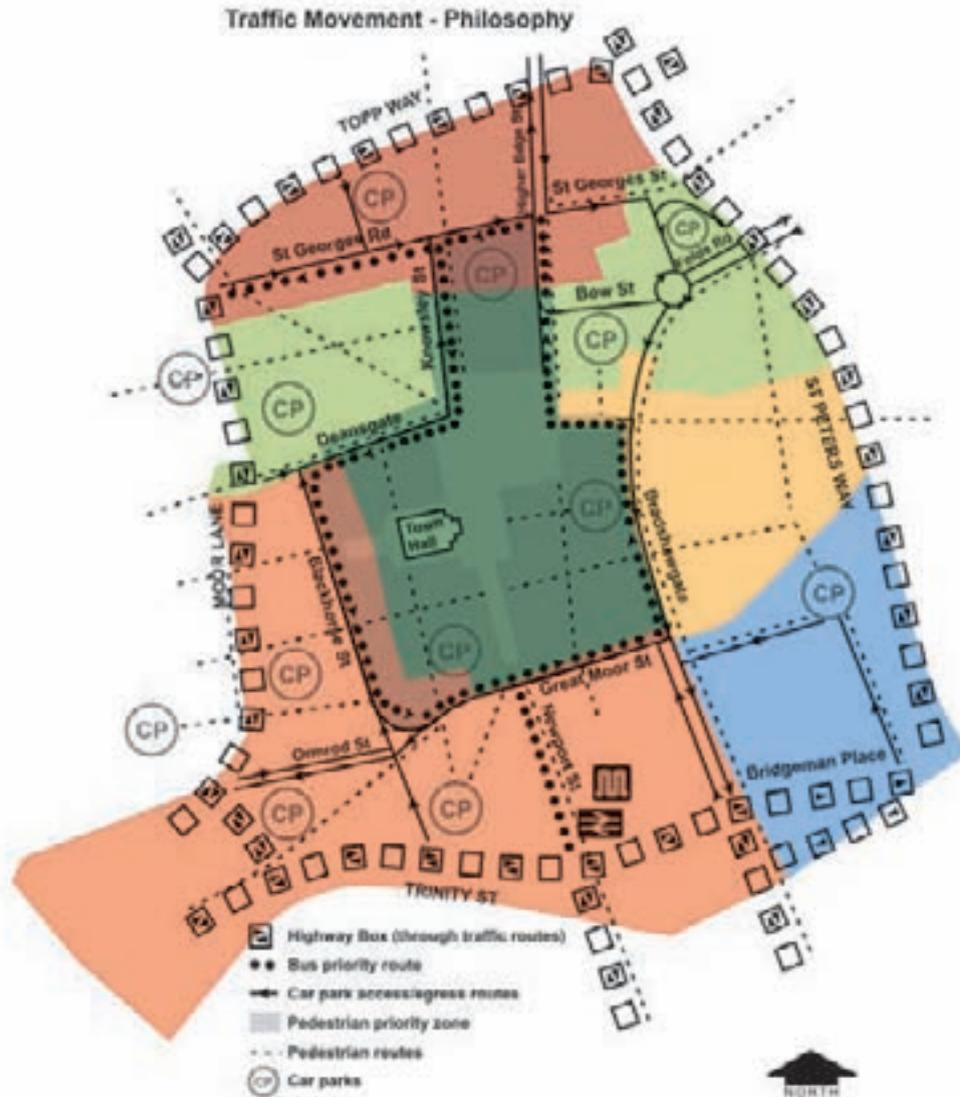
Conservation Area guidance covers seven areas in the Town Centre, including Queens Park. Each statement contains a map showing the extent of the area, the position of listed buildings and buildings of note and a detailed townscape character assessment including descriptions of individual buildings. UDP policies relating to design and conservation are summarised and development guidance provided, for instance for new development, street surfacing and furniture and advertisement control. Conservation Area guidance must be consulted for any development proposal falling within the CA boundaries identified on the UDP map. The full suite of design guidance documents available from Bolton Council is listed on page 104, and the design consultation process recommended by the Council is described in Chapter Four.



Market Hall, Corporation Street

## Town Centre Survey

# Context - Transport Strategy



The Transport Strategy was adopted by Bolton Council on the 26th April 2005. Its main recommendations are to:

- Provide good pedestrian links to the Town Centre pedestrian core from arrival points.
- Extend pedestrianised areas in the central core of the Town Centre.
- Reduce congestion by encouraging alternative modes of transport including a Bus Gyratory System.
- Integrate transport modes by building a new Bus/Rail Interchange north of Trinity Street Station.
- Discourage traffic by improving the Outer Highway Route to carry through traffic.
- Encourage good quality pedestrian and cycle routes which are well maintained, safe and direct.
- Remove surface car parking and replace with new multistory facilities next to the Outer Highway Route.
- Introduce intelligent transport systems.



Town Hall and Le Mans Crescent.

## Town Centre Survey

# Historical Analysis - 1793



Although already a manufacturing centre of some importance (the Manchester Bolton and Bury Canal was started in 1791), Bolton at this time retained a medieval market town layout. There was little depth of development behind the crowded street frontages, the narrow plots ending either against the river or open countryside. The River Croal and its banks would have been a conspicuous feature, creating steep and difficult access to Deansgate for travellers approaching from the east, north and west.

The towns growth to this point would have followed a typically medieval pattern, with little or no conscious planning beyond the need to accommodate important buildings and functions such as the parish church and market. The latter was served by a simple widening of the street at the junction of Deansgate and Churchgate, which also doubled as the towns main public space.



Bolton parish Church, 1866.

## Town Centre Survey

# Historical Analysis - 1824



Bolton's population expanded rapidly in the early industrial period, from 5,000 in 1774 to 60,000 in 1851. The unregulated nature of this growth is shown by contrasts in the townscape, for instance between the crowded slums north of Deansgate and the elegant new streets laid out for the managerial and professional classes in areas like Mawdsley Street. There is evidence of urban planning in the layout of spaces such as Nelson Square and the New Market Place, as well as the land assembly taking place on the southern side of the town for the railway (one of the world's first passenger services, the Bolton - Leigh line, opened in 1828). New public and religious buildings were going up at this time - for instance St George and Holy Trinity, set at the heart of new street layouts away from the crowded inner areas.



Nelson Square - 1900.





## Town Centre Survey

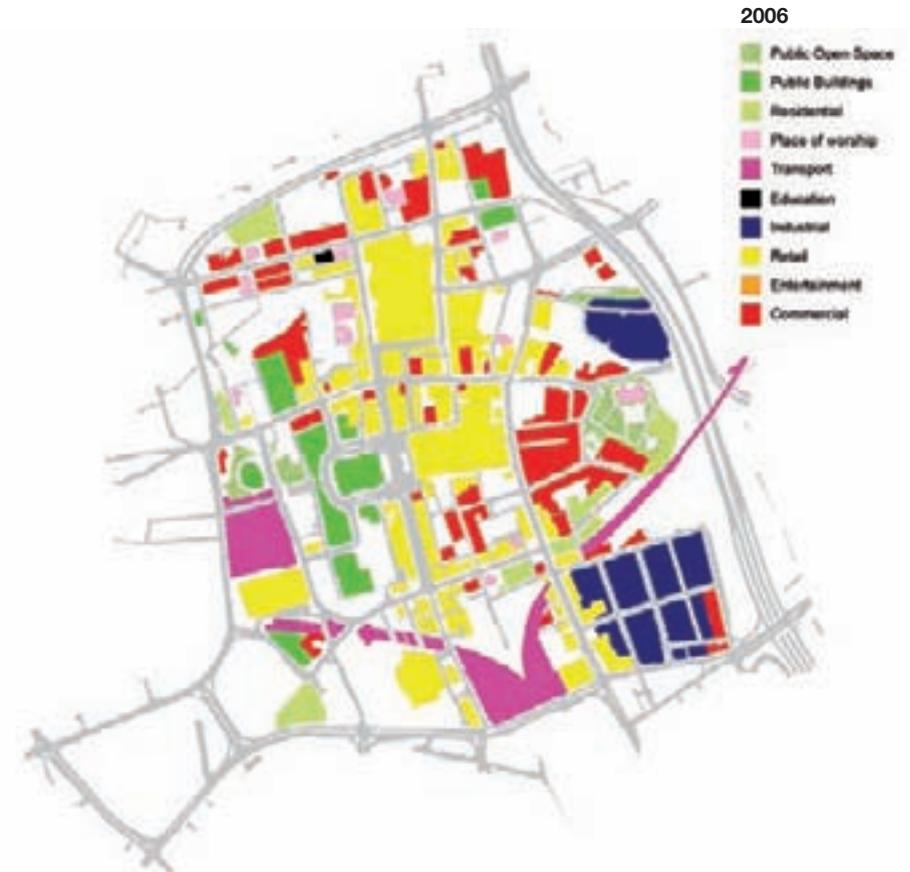
# Historical Analysis - Land Use

The extent to which the pattern of land use in the Town Centre has changed over 150 years is illustrated by these plans.



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In 1847, many Boltonians who worked in the Town Centre also lived in the immediate vicinity of the mills and foundries. The plan shows the close relationship between residential and industrial land uses, and the pattern of shops along the traditional thoroughfares which served this local population.



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By 2006, the decline of industry and the movement of residential populations to the suburbs had transformed the Town Centre's economic life and its appearance. In particular, retail provision has expanded to dominate the central area, along with the associated road and car park infrastructure which occupies much of the former industrial land around the perimeter.

## Town Centre Survey

# Historical Analysis - Land Use

The dispersal of residential populations from the Town Centre to the suburbs is the most significant change to take place in the past 150 years, fundamentally altering the pattern of dependence between industry, workforce and retail / entertainment activities. Environmental and living conditions improved dramatically as a result, but the Town Centre has lost much of its diversity, and townscape structure has been weakened.

The characteristic pattern of terraced streets and mills originally permeated the townscape: industry in particular formed a 'ring of fire' that surrounded the Civic Core. Early photographs show factory gates, pubs, churches and residential streets in close proximity; a legible and diverse townscape.

The vision of a highly serviced retail core promoted in the Shankland Cox report has since been realized, protecting much of the townscape quality in the central area, and creating a new economic foundation for the Town Centre based on an attractive and convenient retail environment. 20th century planning tended to zone the remaining land uses, in particular concentrating the new road infrastructure around the periphery of the core, on land originally occupied by industry and housing.



Back Spring Gardens - 1916



Industrial skyline - 1930's



Beehive Foundry, Bark Street - 1917



Churchgate Market (engraving) - 1829



Theatres and cinemas in Churchgate - 1940's



Canal Basin - 1940's

## Urban Analysis - Town Structure



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Bolton's modern townscape is the result of economic, social and political change over many years. This has involved periods of rapid change, for instance during the early 19th century, but only in the modern period has change involved wholesale replacement of earlier landscape patterns, for instance in the redevelopment of large areas of the Town Centre for retail malls. Elsewhere, traces of the past survive as part of a changing townscape, even if only in the layout and scale of a street pattern.



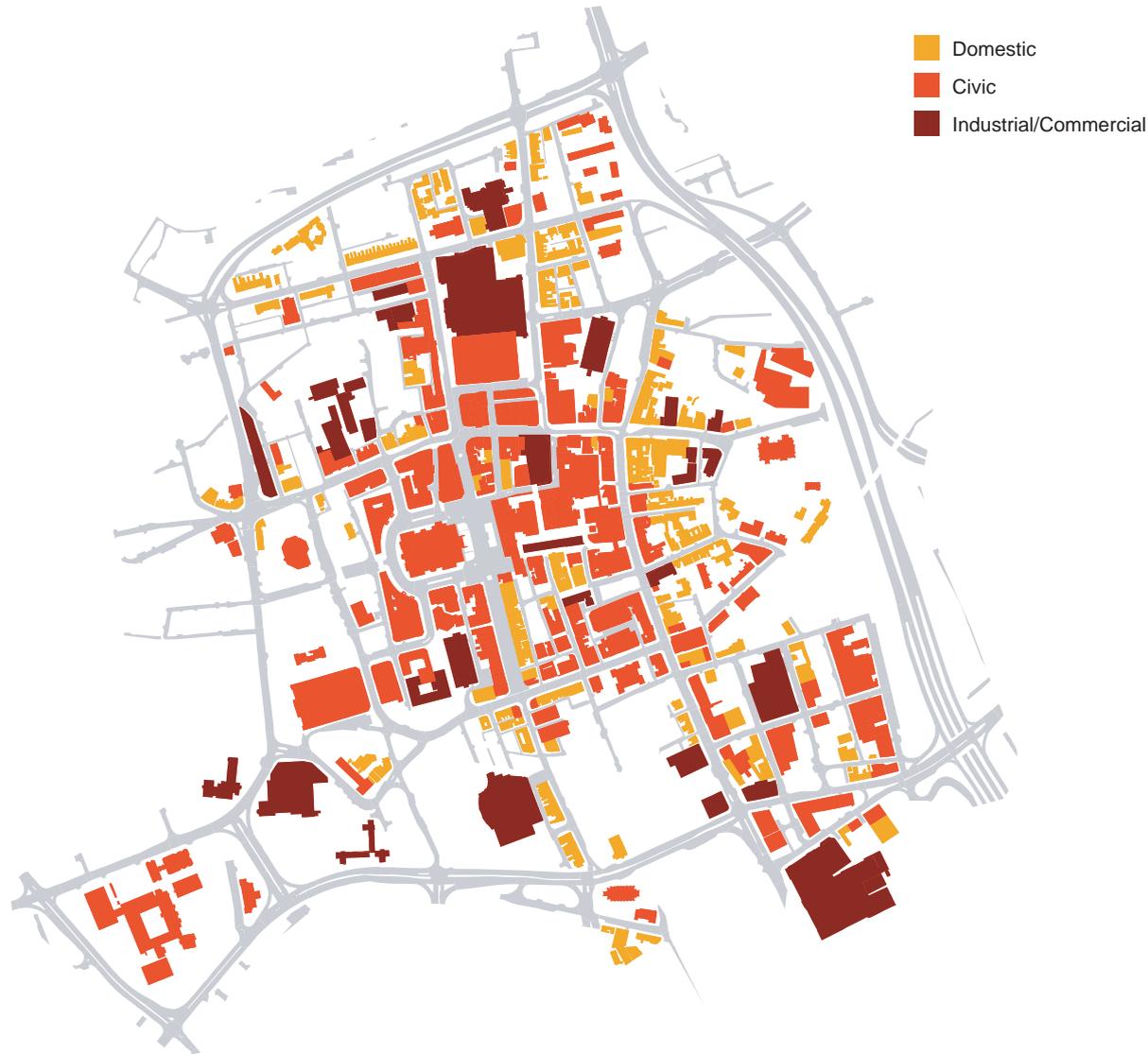
Top of Bank Street - 1891



Same view in 2006

## Town Centre Survey

# Urban Analysis - Building Scale



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Below the level of the landmark building (see page 28), the most characteristic scale types are 'domestic', typical of the first half of the 19th century, and the 'civic' scale which appeared in the later 1800s / early 1900s. The former are usually 2 or 3 storeys high, sometimes with basements, brick with pitched rooflines, and with the simple door and window openings typical of Georgian architecture. The latter tend to be between 3 and 5 storeys in height and have the more diverse architectural forms of the High Victorian period. The careful handling of scale in the towns civic core allows the two scale types to sit comfortably alongside each other - for instance along Mawdsley Street (see page 64).

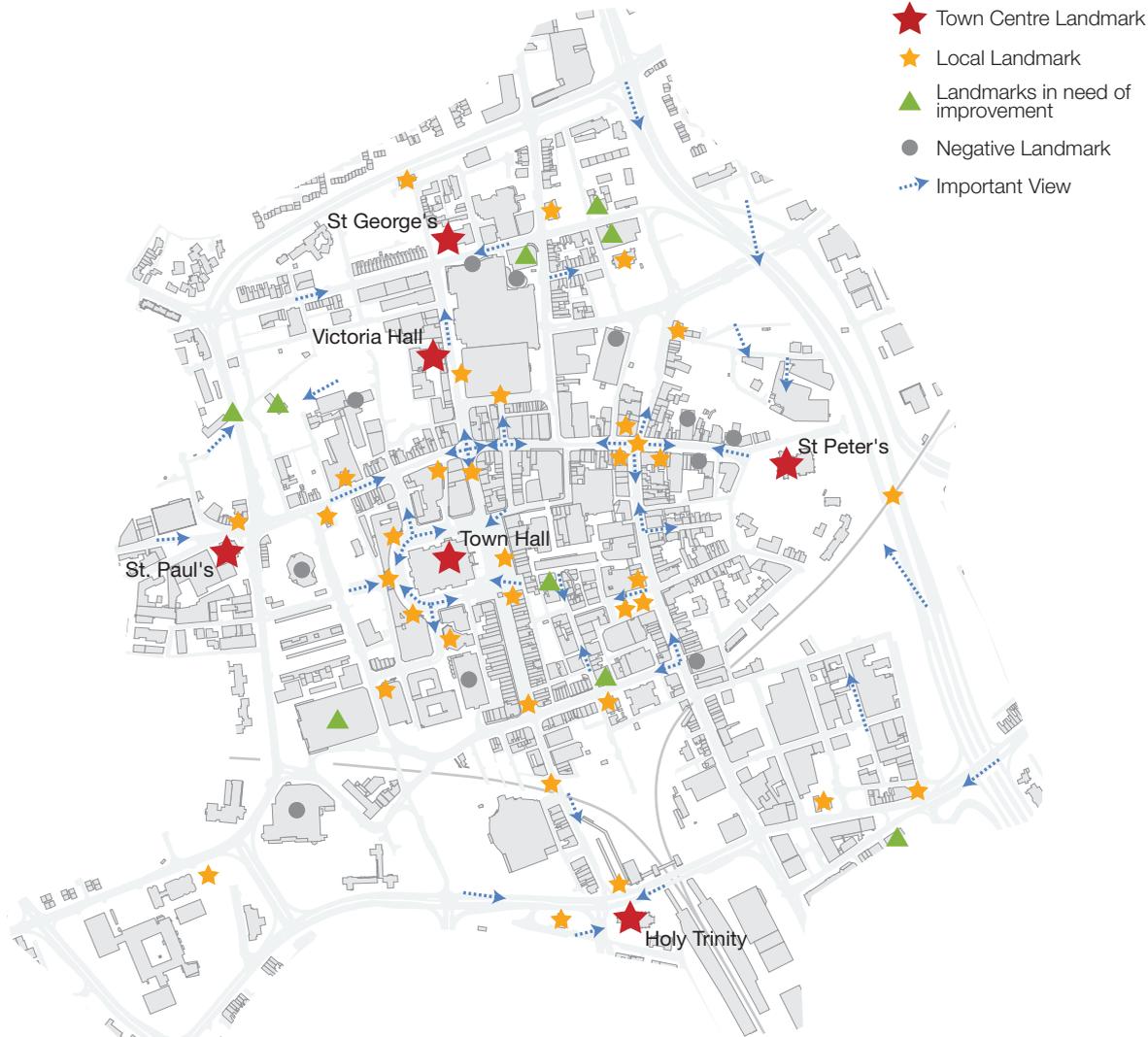
A third scale type can be identified - 'industrial / commercial' - which originally typified buildings throughout the 'Ring of Fire'. The best examples are in the Shiffnall Street area, where several 19th century mill buildings have a large floor area and reach 3 or 4 storeys (page 40). Many modern structures, including retail malls, commercial offices, hotels and educational buildings can be categorised under this scale heading.



Domestic and civic scale on Wood Street

# Town Centre Survey

## Urban Analysis - Landmarks & Views

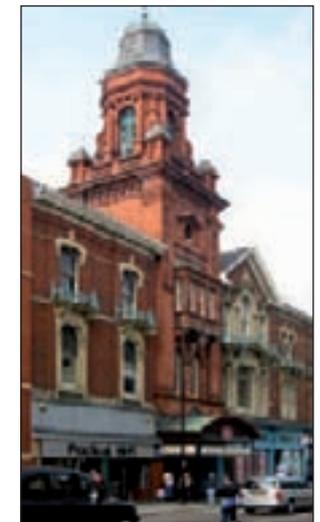


This map shows the distribution of landmarks and viewlines across the Town Centre, and the distinctive pattern of landmarks which has characterised Bolton for over 100 years – the Town Hall marking the central point, and 4 of the towns churches, St Peter, St Paul, St George and Holy Trinity defining the perimeter of the urban core. This pattern has become more apparent in modern times, with the disappearance of the 'Ring of Fire' and its forest of chimneys, which would have obscured earlier townscape views.

Bolton is distinguished by a formal townscape of landmark structures set within a grid of broad, open streets. Key buildings often close important views or are set at the corners of junctions, and a pattern of local landmarks – sculpture, memorials, archways and gardens - help make the townscape legible at street level.



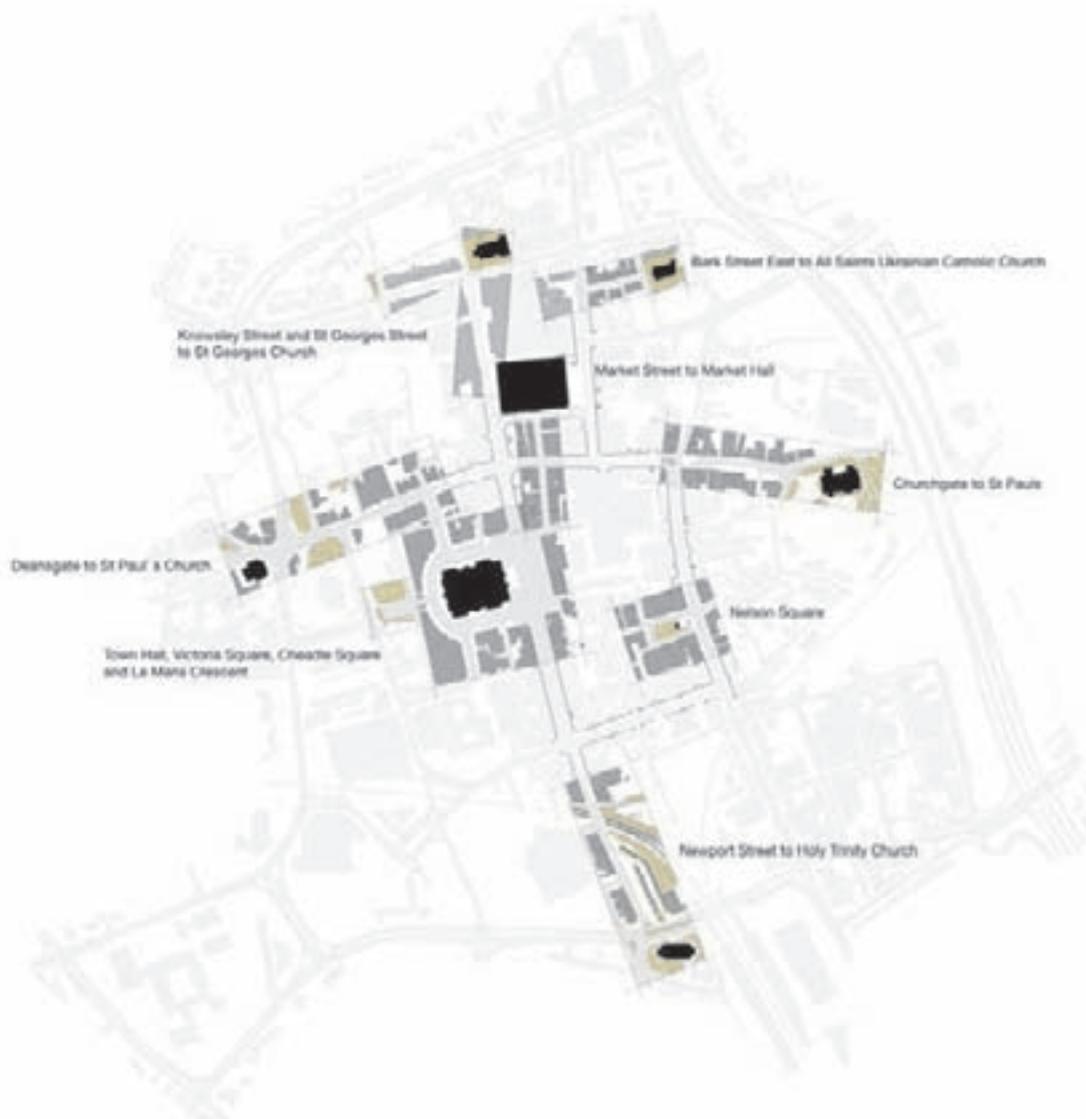
St Georges Church



Victoria Hall

## Town Centre Survey

# Urban Analysis - 'Set Pieces'



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This map illustrates the distinctive pattern of architectural 'set pieces' in the Town Centre. Important buildings are sited at the end of main streets, closing viewlines and creating memorable visual 'incidents' in the townscape.

The landmark buildings are supported in their role by a hierarchy of built forms, which frame the views and relate to the scale of the dominant structure. Although absolute symmetry is avoided in the townscape, a rule of architectural 'good manners' prevails which is as vital to the preservation of townscape character as the survival of the 'set piece' buildings themselves. The setting of St George, for instance, relies on the scale, style and material relationship between the adjacent terrace and the main body of the church.



Town Hall



Market Hall

## Town Centre Survey

# Urban Analysis - Middle & Long Distance Views



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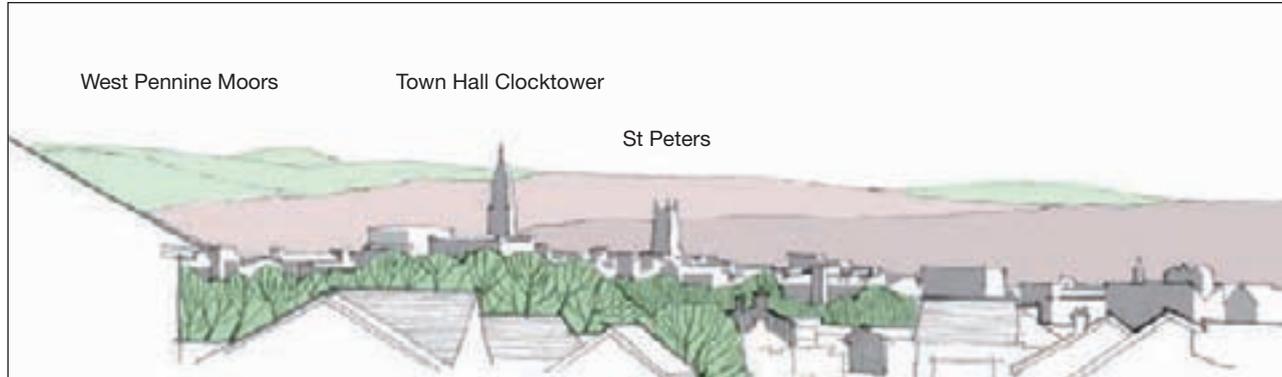
This map and sketch views on the opposite page show the distinctive Town Centre skyline when viewed from points within a radius of up to 2 kilometers. In these middle distance views a handful of spires and towers is visible, rising above a general building height of 4 – 5 storeys and set against moorland skylines. The relationship these views help establish between the urban environment and its rural context is an important distinguishing point – Bolton has historically been identified as much with its West Pennine setting as with the urban areas of Manchester to the south.

Viewpoints identified on the plan:

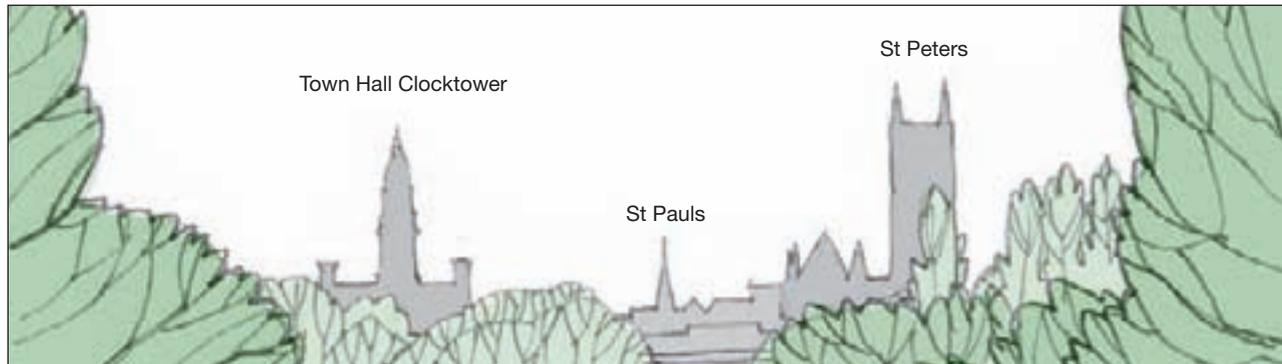
1. Chorley Old Road, near Mornington Road
2. Queens Park Terrace.
3. Deane Road, near Haslam Park.
4. Manchester Road, near former Burnden Park site
5. Orlando Street Bridge
6. Bradford Street Bridge
7. Bury New Road, near Mule Street
8. Bury Road, near Ainsworth Lane
9. Winchester Way, near Mobberley Road
10. Tonge Moor Road, near Thicketford Road
11. Tonge Moor Road
12. St Peters Way

# Town Centre Survey

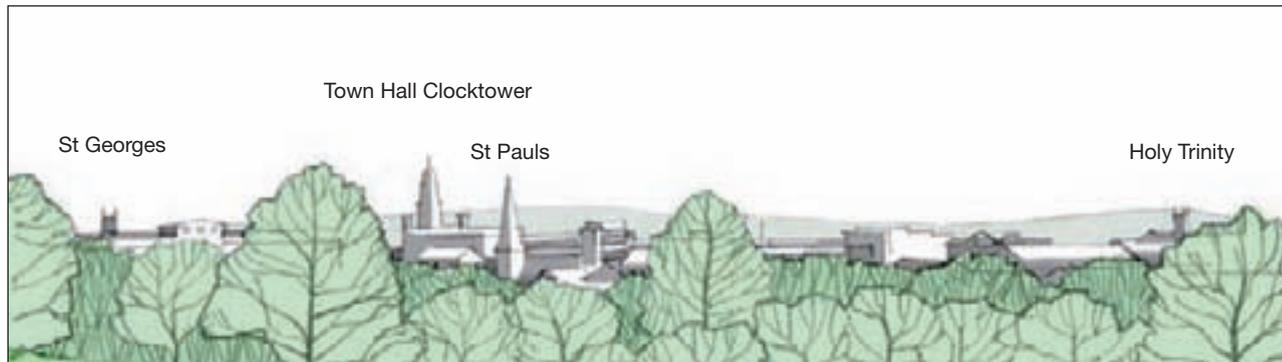
## Urban Analysis - Middle & Long Distance Views



**View 3.**  
Deane Road, near Haslam Park, looking east.



**View 8.**  
Bury Road, near Ainsworth Lane looking west.



**View 2.**  
Queens Park Terrace, looking east.

# Urban Analysis - Visual & Physical Permeability



This map shows the extent to which Bolton's network of streets and spaces connect up. It is presented from the pedestrians rather than the motorists point of view, and considers two levels of accessibility – physical and visual. Physical accessibility is concerned with the efficiency of routes and whether there are obstacles, for instance a busy road, in the way. Visual accessibility is the degree to which streetscape is comprehensible. Is it possible, for instance, to orientate yourself from a particular point by reference to streetscape, signage and landmarks, or does the layout give no clues as to direction or location?

The results show that Bolton's loose grid of streets, strong corner buildings and prominent landmarks provide a well connected pedestrian environment in the civic core, but that this breaks down at the edges of the central area, where major traffic infrastructure is encountered. This is particularly noticeable in the south west quarter, between the university and the central area (page 94), and in the two 'river valley' areas, which are visually isolated from the surrounding townscape (page 74).



St Georges Road

## Town Centre Survey

# Urban Analysis - Street Frontages



Bolton has retained much of the quality street frontage erected throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries. These buildings tend to be well proportioned in relation to the width of the street and to each other, and to have active uses at streetlevel – mostly shopfronts, but also a range of other uses such as pubs, banks and restaurants. Other areas have less diversity, but maintain consistent street frontages, for instance the early 19th century terraces in Little Bolton (page 86) and the late Victorian / early 20th century mills and warehouses around Shiffnall Street (page 43).



Market Hall, Knowsley Street

The quality of streetscape deteriorates where the diversity and density of uses declines, where active frontages are replaced by blank service walls or gap sites, and where large scale retail and industrial sheds retreat from the pavement edge behind perimeters of car parking.

## Town Centre Survey

# Urban Analysis - Open Space



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From the early 1800s it became clear the old market place was no longer fit for purpose, and a more diverse network of public spaces would be needed. Examples are the formal street layout around the Town Hall and Queens Park, the latter being a classical 'improving' landscape of ornamental ponds, terraces and rose gardens designed to provide a recreational setting for local people of all classes. In the late 1960s, pedestrianisation in the retail core provided attractive car free environments for shoppers and office workers. Victoria Square, a section of Deansgate and surrounding streets were paved and lined with street trees. The scheme has helped sustain the towns retail success ever since.

In spite of high quality individual schemes, the map shows a mixed legacy of public realm investment across the Town Centre. The park and urban core, for instance, have never been properly linked, in spite of recommendations in both the Mawson and Shankland Cox reports (page 8), and much of the green space in the urban periphery is verge planting to car parks, road networks and private property, rather than usable public space.



Victoria Square

## Urban Analysis - Traffic Impact



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Of the four major traffic systems implemented in the industrial era – canals, railways, trams and motor vehicles – it is the latter which has had the most enduring influence on Bolton's townscape, and arguably the most damaging impact on its distinctiveness.

The map is an assessment of environmental disruption caused by traffic and indicates the effects of vehicle noise, fumes and the visual impact of vehicles and the paraphernalia of traffic management, such as signage. The areas of tranquility or relative refuge from traffic are also mapped.

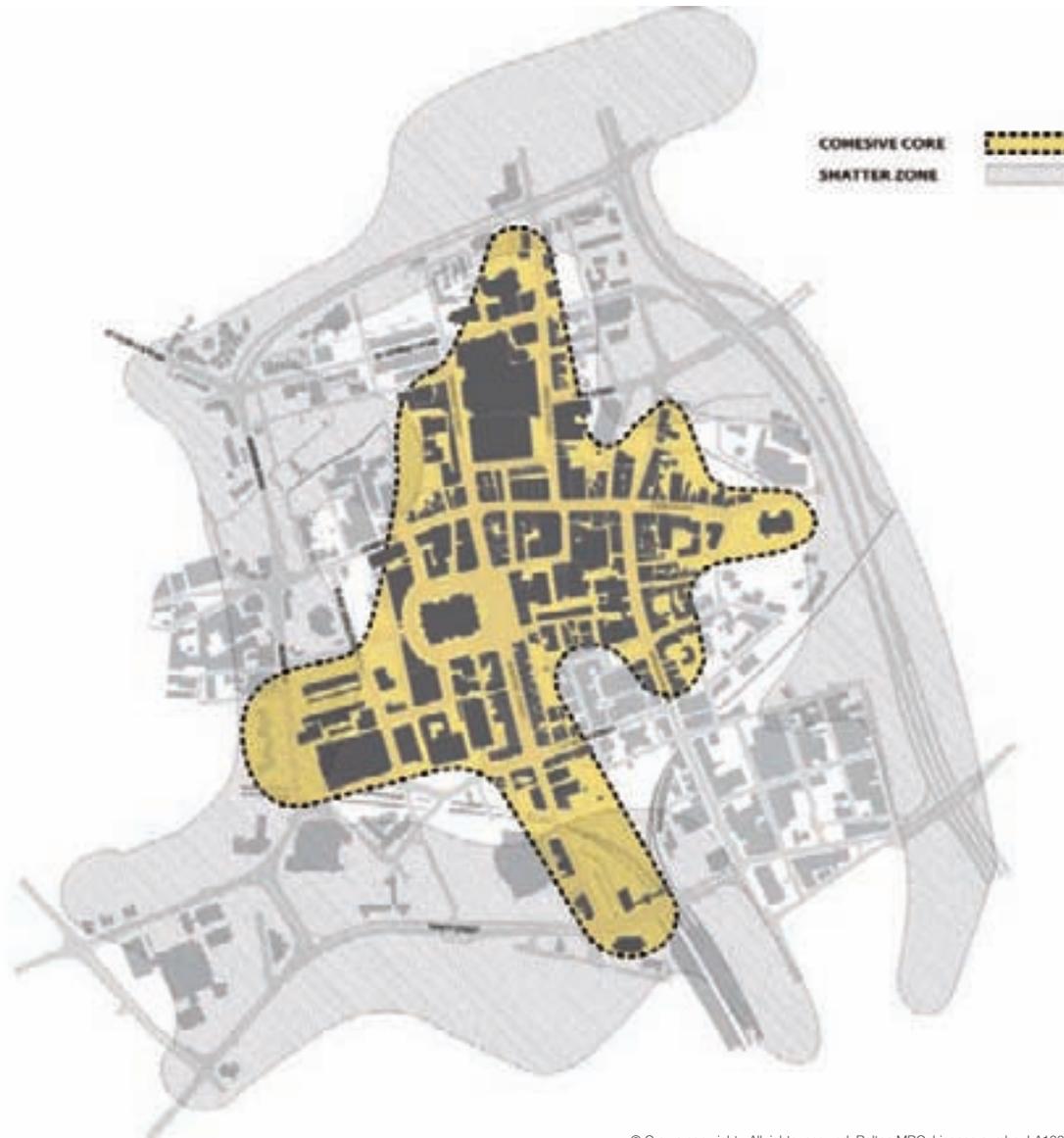
The central areas are segregated within a larger zone of traffic management which is difficult to cross on foot, reflecting the pattern of public realm fragmentation noted on page 34.

The current Transport Strategy, described on page 19, is addressing these issues through a variety of measures including improved bus, rail and cycle facilities. A new approach to streetscape design is also being developed through improvements to Nelson Square (completed 2004) and Churchgate (completed 2006).



Moor Lane Bus Station

## Urban Analysis - Conclusions



The preceding analysis bears out the findings of the consultation work carried out with local people in 2005 which revealed divided opinions about Bolton Town Centre. On the one hand it was felt to be a distinctive, welcoming place with fine landmark buildings, a successful retail offer and a strong sense of history and local identity. On the other hand, the public were concerned about loss of local distinctiveness and a deterioration of townscape quality, particularly in the gateway areas at the periphery of the retail core.

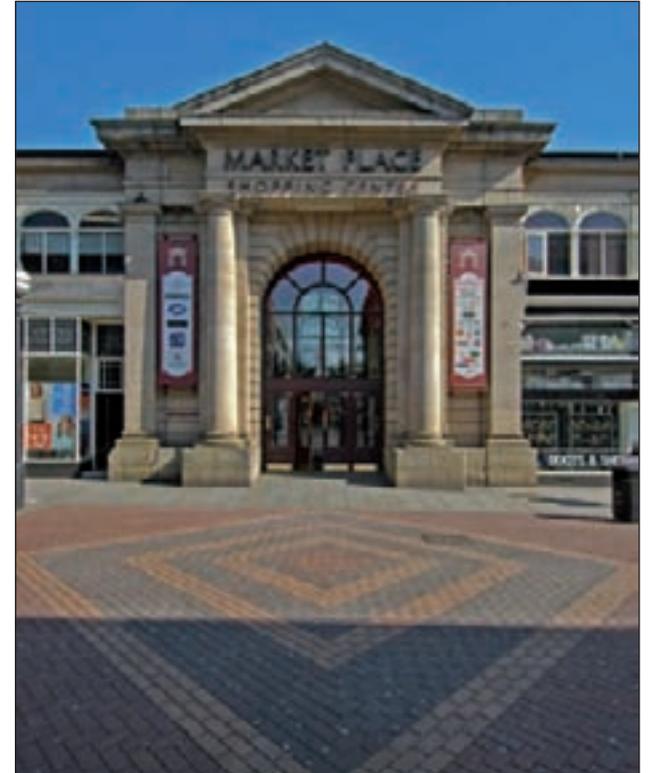
The urban analysis work in this chapter enables the public's perceptions to be mapped, confirming that Bolton has a high quality civic and retail core which retains much of its 19th century townscape, and has been enhanced further in recent decades by pedestrianisation and the construction of successful retail malls. This is surrounded by a 'Shatter Zone' of poorer quality townscape, corresponding roughly to the areas of former industry and housing which have been cleared for traffic infrastructure. Those parts of the town felt to be less successful by the public tend to fall within this peripheral area.

# Town Centre Survey

## Urban Analysis - Conclusions



St Georges Road



Market Hall



Nelson Square



Victoria Square



Octagon Theatre

**NERO**  
FFEE CO



ESPRESSO BAR

**Caffè Nero**  
THE ITALIAN CORNER



CAPPUCCINO LATTE MOCHA PANINI PASTA



# Chapter 3

## Design Guidance

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## Introduction

# Shiffnall Street / Bridgeman Place

This area is part of the industrial 'Ring of Fire' which originally surrounded the Town Centre. It still has a distinctive mix of light and heavy engineering, as well as new design and media based businesses. Its potential as a mixed use regeneration area is considerable, enhanced by a gateway location, good access and potential linkages with the nearby evening economy and retail core

The consistent and distinctive townscape character makes this part of the Town Centre suitable for strategic masterplanning, to identify areas for improvement and protect its unique qualities.



Globe Hosiery Works chimney.



Shiffnall Street / Bridgeman Place from the south.

## Historical Notes

# Shiffnall Street / Bridgeman Place

Early maps show how the area developed in the first decades of the 19th century, initially in response to local demand for agricultural produce. Industry soon replaced intensive farming, benefitting from the rail and canal links and a well planned street grid, an industrial equivalent of the town planning around Victoria Square.

The street grid allowed subdivision of the site into rectangular plots suitable for a range of industrial uses: from the late 18th century onwards these included a brewery, several foundries, textile mills and a tram and omnibus depot. Each use had a characteristic building plan, and this variety remains an important visual attribute of the area.

The street names reflect the local landowning interests of the Bridgeman family, Earls of Bradford, whose long involvement with Bolton included the development of the early railway system.



19th century warehouse, Salop Street.



Shiffnall Street looking west.

☞ **Shiffnall Street, looking west.** Saville Cotton mill on the right is typical of the larger industrial premises. Note the office and warehouse entrances opening directly off the street. The regular street layout assisted large vehicle movements around the mills and across the estate.

🕒 **1793.** The site was originally meadows, between the river and Bradshawgate.

**1845.** The site is defined by railway, roads and the canal. A grid of allotments has been marked out, some with glasshouses.

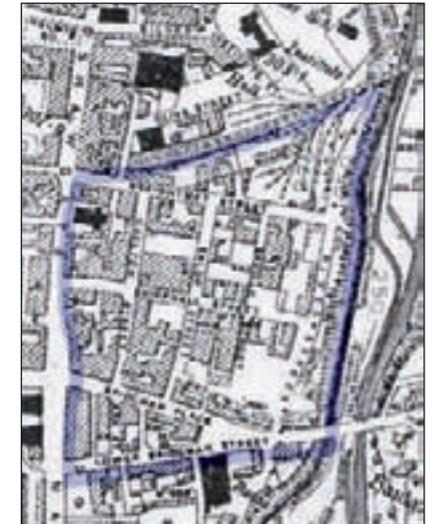
**1890.** Industrial uses have occupied the former agricultural land, and the grid of streets has been laid out.



1793



1845

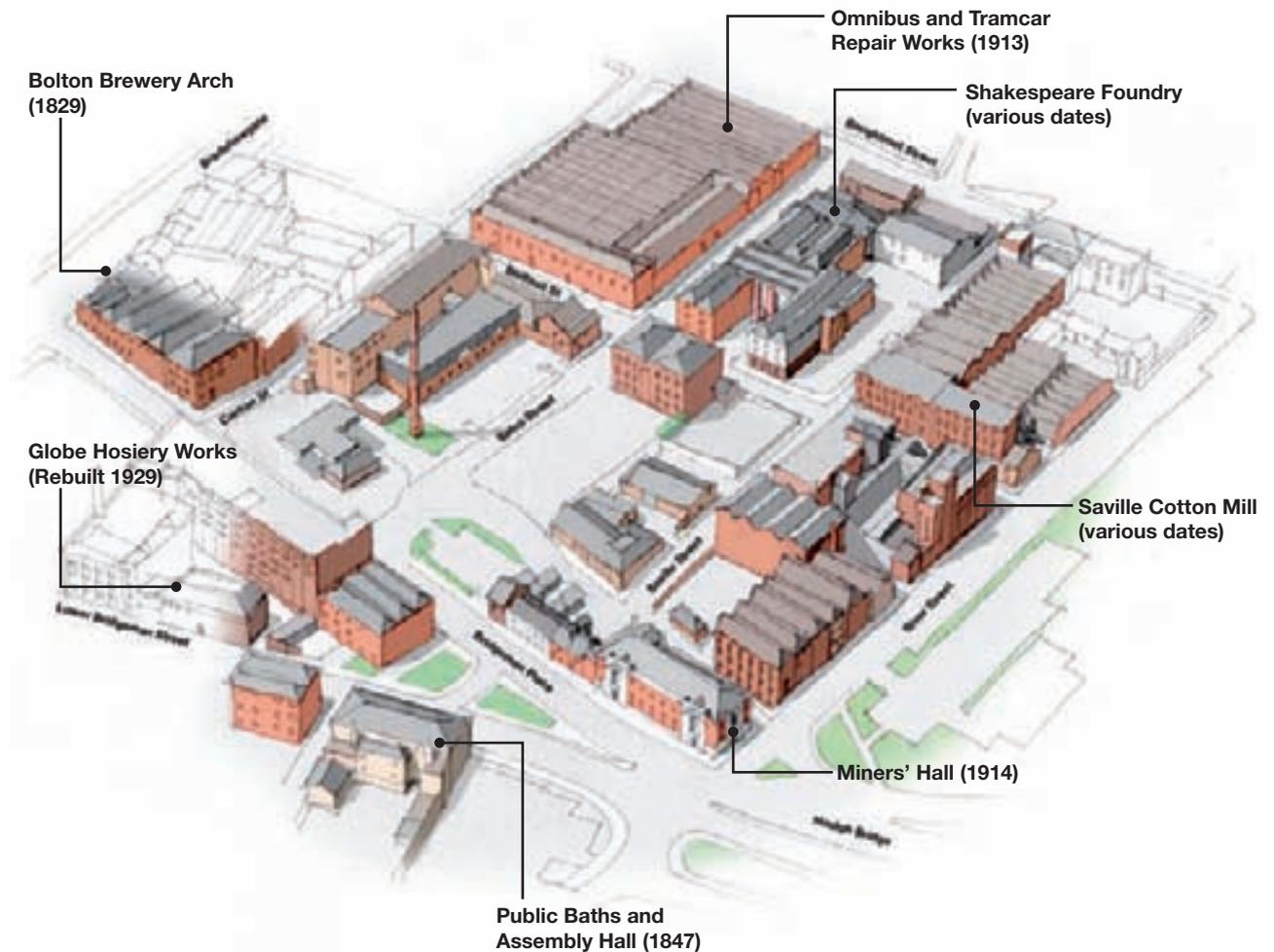


1890

## Character Area Appraisal

# Shiffnall Street / Bridgeman Place

- The internal street grid is logical, visually consistent and defined by continuous street frontages that have entrances and active uses directly onto the street. The corners are well expressed - not with focal structures but solid brick angles, usually unadorned.
- A variety of plan layouts reflects the mix of business types - contrast, for instance, the tramcar repair works with the foundry. Most building entrances and loading bay doors are set at the back of pavements. Yard spaces are often narrow and deep, opening up the interior of the sites without weakening the street frontages.
- More prestigious materials and detailing are used for the public buildings at the junction of Bridgeman Place and Lower Bridgeman Street - the baths are constructed wholly in local sandstone, the baroque details of the Miners' Hall finished with the same material. This group, together with the Globe Hosiery Works, creates a gateway feature on the town side of the Haulgh Bridge.
- Main road frontages are weakened by gap sites and lack of visual and functional diversity. In spite of strong internal viewlines, major access roads off Bradshawgate and Bridgeman Place do not command attention
- The legibility of the area is eroded along its northern and eastern margins by underdeveloped space and the barriers created by the railway and St. Peters Way. The maturing tree planting along River Street provides a green edge, but is a weak focus for the east - west viewlines from Bradshawgate. A pedestrian route to Churchwharf is neglected but could be developed into a linear park.



# Character Area Appraisal

## Shiffnall Street / Bridgeman Place

Building elevations are sparingly detailed; mostly regular bays of segmental arched windows, though office frontages are often elaborated with stone dressings. Decorative detailing increases according to the function of the building and its location on major street frontage, for instance the Miners' Hall.

Although modest compared to mill complexes elsewhere in the Borough, the architectural ambition of many of these buildings contributes to a legible urban streetscape.

Materials are typical of late 19th / early 20th century industrial design - red engineering brick, with tough iron furnishings. Stone dressings occur - both ashlar detailing, and rusticated stone plinths. Windows are important here: large, set in shallow reveals, with slim metal or wood glazing bars.

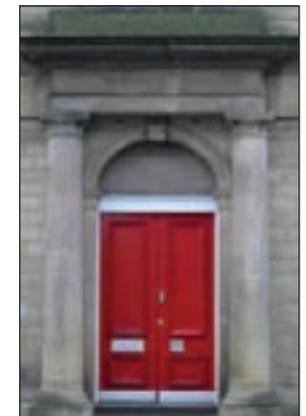


Industrial architecture contributes to the character of the area, and offers clues to the design of new development. Solid building corners, for instance, make the most of the multiple street intersections. Modern design could reinterpret the form, making use of complementary or contrasting materials.

Distinctiveness arises out of the regular ordering of functional elements - doors, window openings, loading bays - enlivened with ironwork, stone dressings to office doorways and cast iron rainwater goods.

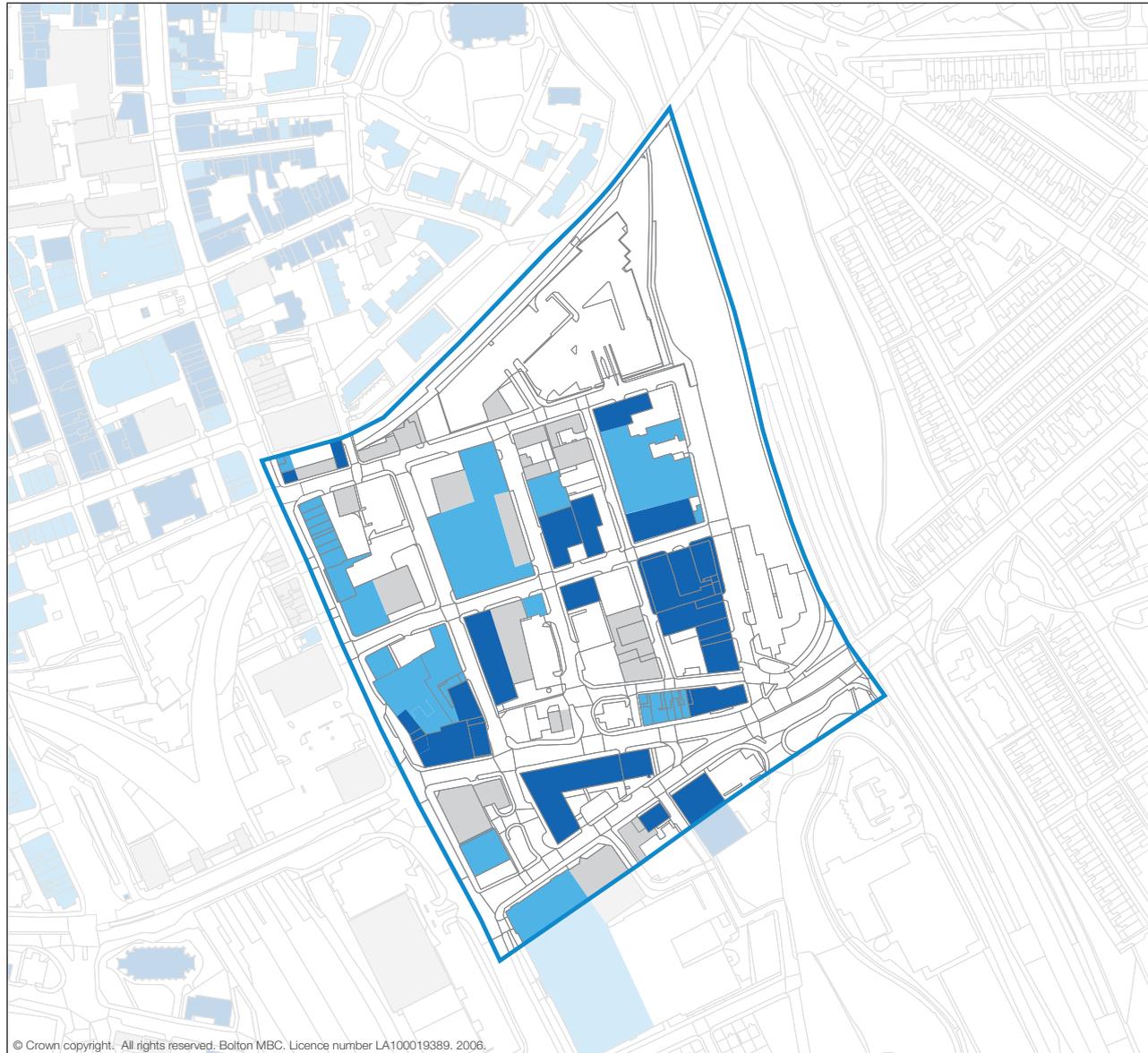
Architectural expression is focussed on window and door openings - the latter usually directly off the street.

The regular bay rhythm of mill and warehouse frontages are often articulated with shallow vertical window bay recesses, breaking up the long horizontals and emphasising the structural grid. Elsewhere, frontages are broken into by large openings - loading bay doors, courtyards and light wells. The balance of solid and void creates precedents for modern architectural design.



# Character Area Appraisal

## Shiffnall Street / Bridgeman Place



-  Buildings of high value in terms of their contribution to local distinctiveness. This may include architectural, cultural, historic or archaeological value. These buildings will characterise a particular area, or the whole town centre, and will provide precedents for adjacent redevelopment in terms of scale, materials and massing.
-  Building types characteristic of the area in terms of use, scale or materials choice, but with lesser architectural or symbolic value.

# Design Guidance

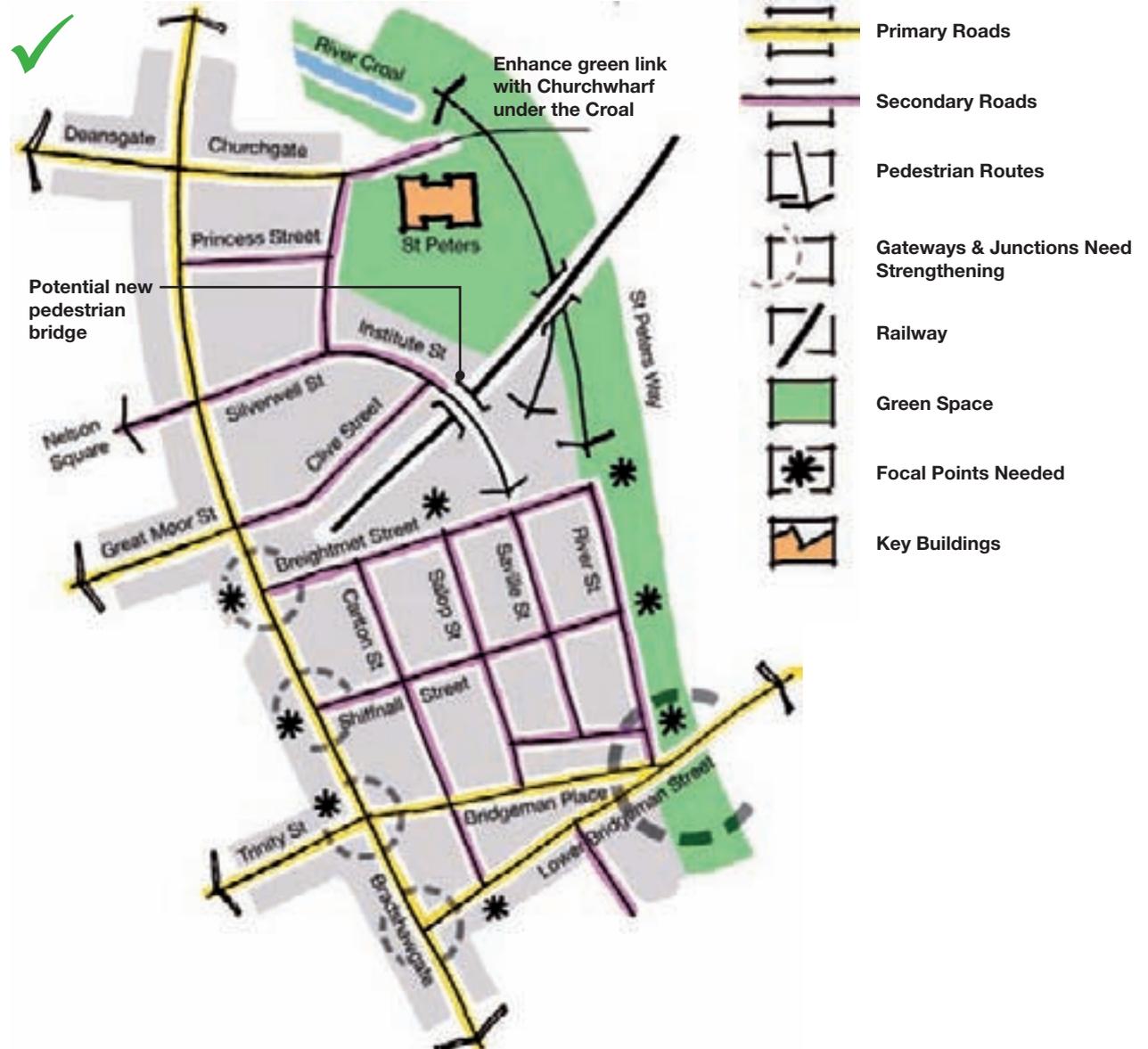
## Shiffnall Street / Bridgeman Place

### LAYOUT: URBAN STRUCTURE AND GRAIN

The existing urban grid can be given more focus through the creation of new public spaces, based on analysis of expected movement patterns. A hierarchy of semi private and private spaces within urban blocks should also be considered. Innovative public realm design, creative lighting and public art can be used to draw attention to specific buildings, uses or areas. Consider how tree planting can add to the streetscape, though keep viewlines open under canopies; avoid heavy foliage and large areas of shrub planting.



High quality public realm in regeneration areas.



## Design Guidance

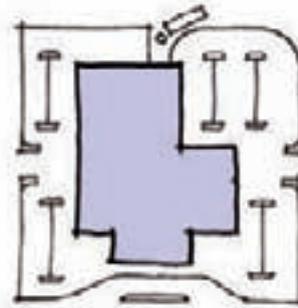
# Shiffnall Street / Bridgeman Place

Vehicle access should be planned in relation to the area as a whole rather than the access requirements of a single development. Consider how pedestrian usage can be improved, for instance through the use of shared surfaces. Avoid creating busy traffic corridors in order to enable traffic free zones elsewhere. Design for minimal signage, both traffic and pedestrian, as part of the wider public realm strategy. Avoid using pedestrian barriers.

Retain existing urban block boundaries – protecting the street grid is an essential component of contextual development in this area. Avoid merging sites or cutting block corners to enable vehicle access. Develop to the edge of plots – the building line rather than railings or planting should define the development boundary.

Keep active frontages and entrances onto the street, ideally to the back of pavement. Avoid long stretches of inactive frontage. Car parking should ideally be in courtyards or a basement / semi basement, rather than on the site perimeter.

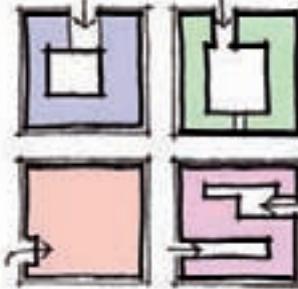
Retain existing buildings where possible. Selective retention within an existing block of buildings allows new development to be inserted alongside the most valued parts of the original structure. At the site planning stage, consideration should be given to the development of internal courtyard spaces, atria and other openings in the site boundary. Materials, massing and scale of new buildings and public realm should complement the retained structures.



Weak perimeter



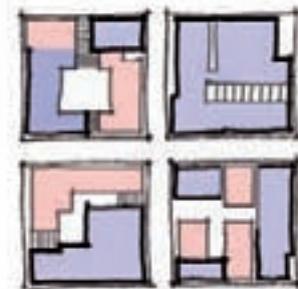
Existing buildings



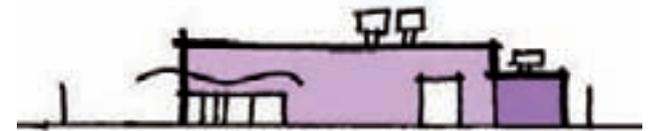
Perimeter Blocks



Selective redevelopment with modern additions



Selective retention of existing buildings alongside new build.



Inappropriate site redevelopment, using low density 'out of town' style units and perimeter car parking

## Design Guidance

# Shiffnall Street / Bridgeman Place

### SCALE: HEIGHT AND MASSING

Consider the scale of surrounding buildings, and the relationship of the proposal to adjacent public space – for instance the width of the street. An increase in scale would be appropriate, for instance, at a key junction or fronting a new public space. Variations in facade treatment, set backs and similar devices can be used to integrate larger structures.

The massing of existing blocks provides some useful precedents. In particular, note the arrangement of solids and voids on some sites, often dramatically juxtaposed. Modification of the building perimeter to express different uses, or accommodate courtyards or access can achieve a more visually stimulating effect.

### APPEARANCE: DETAILS AND MATERIALS

The design context is architecturally robust. Innovative responses to the industrial form of existing buildings are welcome. Materials choice should express structure and solid / transparency contrasts.



Consistency of space and facade rhythm.



Materials contrast.



Expression of structure.



Adaptation of existing structures.

## Design Guidance

# Shiffnall Street / Bridgeman Place

### BRIDGEMAN PLACE / LOWER BRIDGEMAN STREET AND BRADSHAWGATE

Development proposals should reflect the areas gateway role – see for instance the Miners’ Hall, the Globe Works and the former Baths and Assembly Hall p.42). The context is looser than the adjoining industrial area, and the scale of the traffic junction requires a strongly modelled response. The Miners’ Hall for instance, makes use of position and change of level to create a raised platform for its principle internal space, which is strongly expressed on the external elevation.

New development on Bradshawgate should aim to replace the existing low diversity of uses with a more varied streetscape, for instance taller, narrower blocks and building design that breaks up the horizontal emphasis. A more responsive street frontage, with focal points on corners, will allow attention to be drawn to the major access roads, Shiffnall and Brightmet Streets. The Bolton Brewery arch and adjacent buildings should be retained if possible as examples of early industrial development.

### RIVER STREET / BRIGHTMET STREET

A balance is required between development that will strengthen the site perimeter and provide focal points for the street grid, and also improve connections with the surrounding townscape. Existing surface car parking sites could be used more creatively – off River Street, for instance, where a gateway development could close viewlines along Glebe and Shiffnall Streets. The pedestrian link to Churchwharf should be retained and enhanced as a linear park, using the railway bridge as a landmark. The park design should be developed as part of a larger river valley strategy, including the Churchwharf site

Brightmet Street car park site. A strategic opportunity exists here to reinforce existing townscape along Brightmet Street (closing viewlines along cross streets), St Peters Way (linear park frontage and visual link to Croal Viaduct / St Peters Church) and the railway (possibility of footbridge to Institute Street). See page 45.



Robust modern design.



Use simple materials and finishes.

# Introduction

## St Peters

The area around the parish church of St Peters is the historic core of Bolton. It has the greatest concentration of archaeological interest in the Borough, and has produced evidence of occupation over at least 1000 years. Its character has changed over time, influenced as much by the growth of the town around it as by changes within the area itself. Since the 19th century, St Peters has been progressively marginalized from the centre of the town's social and economic life. At the same time the area has lost much of its diversity, architecturally and economically, and this is threatening many of its distinctive qualities. The character of St Peters is finely balanced, in contrast, for instance, to the robust character of the Civic Core. A specific pattern of investment is needed which will revitalise the area, and protect the diversity of the townscape.



# Historical Notes

## St Peters

The oldest part of St Peters predates the earliest maps. The 1793 plan of Bolton shows the dense settlement pattern typical of medieval layouts. There is no evidence of planning: the church is the anchor for the settlement and the shape of the market place evolved in response to use over time. The church and market cross were focal points and Churchgate provided a flexible public space for all the towns economic and social activities.

By the early 19th century, residential streets and gardens such as Wood Street had started to occupy the open land at the rear of the main street frontages, built speculatively for a middle class clientele with a more consistent architectural form than the surrounding commercial streets.

The construction of the railway helped isolate this part of the town from the adjacent industrial area in Shiffnall Street (see p.40), creating a small urban island around the churchyard and grammar school which today is occupied by professional and community organizations. They have been able to adapt existing buildings with minimal change to the external appearance, preserving much of the character of the earlier residential area.



**Churchgate, 1866.**  
Photograph taken just prior to the demolition of the medieval church. The Swan Hotel and Old Man and Scythe are visible in the foreground. Bolton Market, held in this area since 1251 had moved to Victoria Square some years earlier.



**Wood Street Socialists Club, 1949.**  
The garden to number 25 still exists, dating from the construction of Wood St in the late 18<sup>th</sup> Century.



**Bolton Grammar School, Undated.**  
The original school building near St Peters Church, shown here, dated from the mid 16<sup>th</sup> century and was demolished in the 1880s. The site is now occupied by the Parish Hall, completed 1883



**Churchgate, 1947.**  
The Capitol Cinema, Derby Arms Hotel and the Golden Lion are visible in the photograph. In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Churchgate was a major thoroughfare and focus of the towns evening economy, with 2 theatres, a cinema and seven public houses in the 1930s.



**Silverwell House.**  
This large late 18<sup>th</sup> century house is the best surviving example of domestic architecture in the St Peters area. Its garden originally extended to the edge of St Peters churchyard.



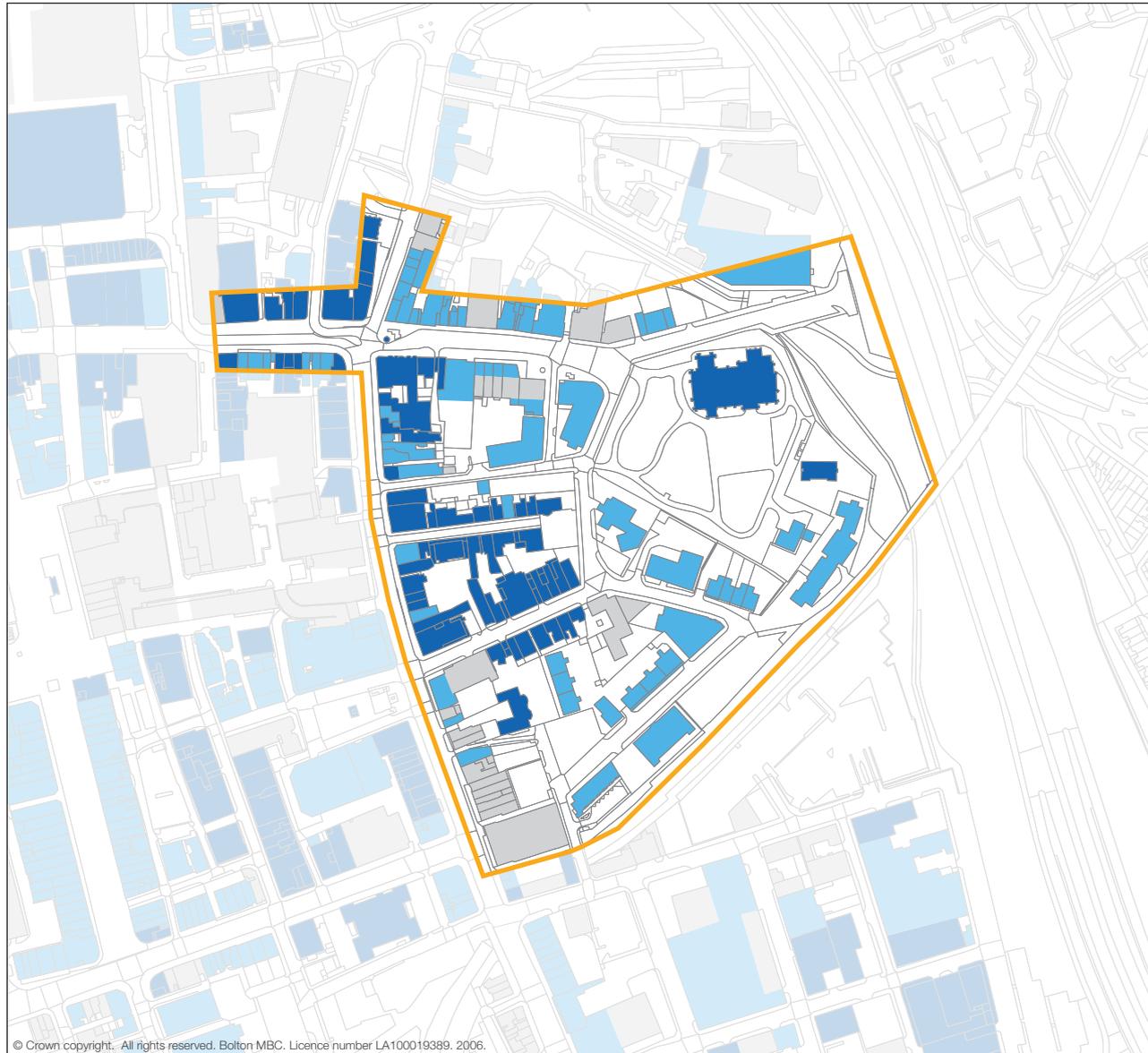
**Wood St.** The middle class domestic terrace established itself from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century as the characteristic urban type in St Peters away from the main commercial streets. The reuse of these buildings as offices has helped preserve some of their original character. Note the fine detailing round the doorways.



**Church Institute, Institute Street.**  
Built in 1855, demolished 1969. The building was the original home of Canon Slade Grammar School.

# Character Area Appraisal

## St Peters

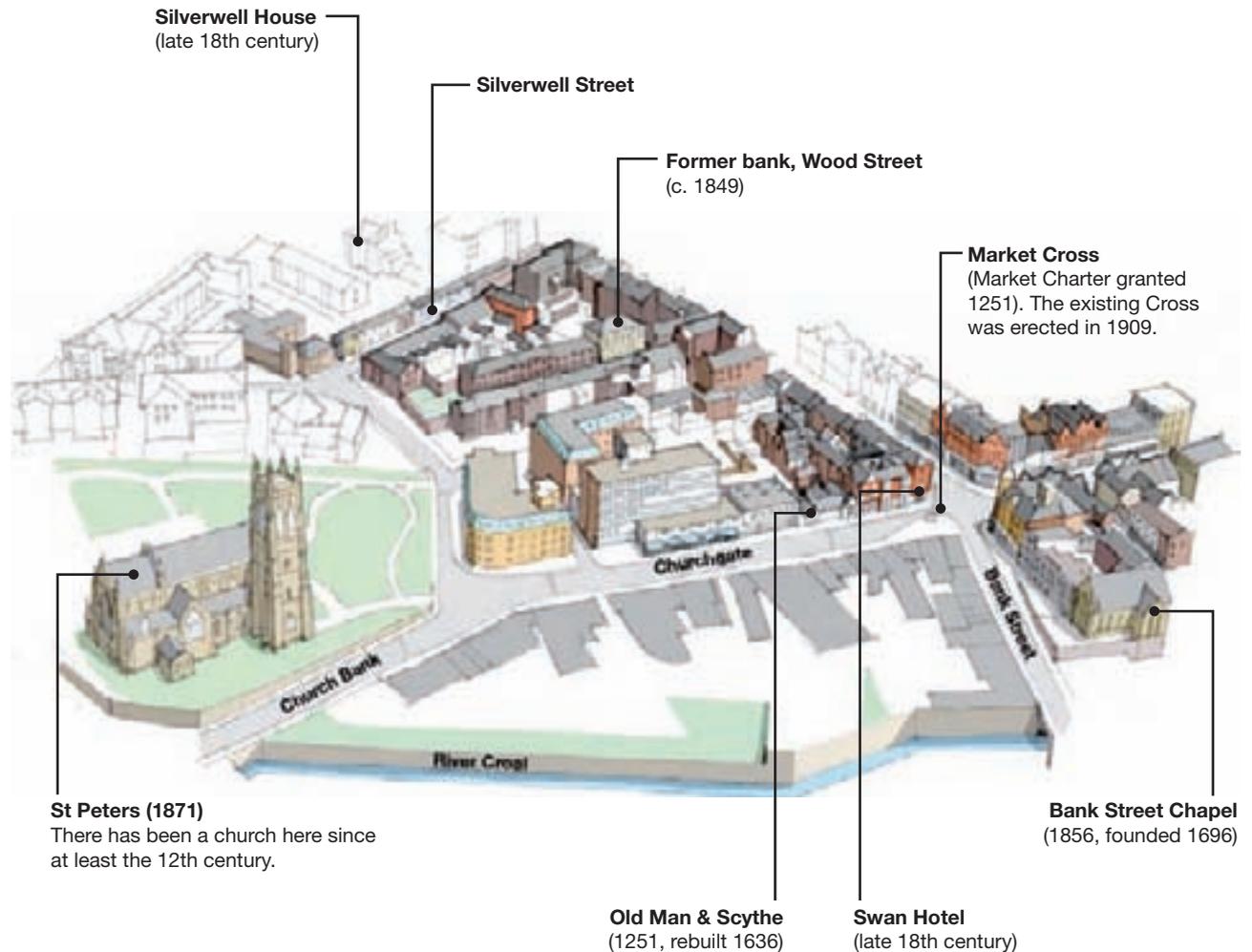


-  Buildings of high value in terms of their contribution to local distinctiveness. This may include architectural, cultural, historic or archaeological value. These buildings will characterise a particular area, or the whole town centre, and will provide precedents for adjacent redevelopment in terms of scale, materials and massing.
-  Building types characteristic of the area in terms of use, scale or materials choice, but with lesser architectural or symbolic value.

# Character Area Appraisal

## St Peters

- St Peters has the most distinctive combination of open space in the Town Centre; historic streets, the churchyard, the unused public space along the river corridor, private gardens and courtyards.
- Churchgate is still recognisable as a historic public space: original buildings such as the Old Man and Scythe and Swan Hotel survive near the Market Cross and it is likely earlier structures exist elsewhere behind later facades.
- Frontages to Bradshawgate, Deansgate and Churchgate reflect the areas long history. Pre-industrial, Victorian and modern elements form a distinctive and diverse mix.
- Several streets enclose courtyard areas, including the areas between Churchgate and the river, accessible through arches and narrow passageways. The scale and character of these areas should be retained and enhanced where possible.
- The historic link between St Peters and the adjacent river valley site (Church Wharf) is underexploited: regeneration planning should maximise the public realm potential in this area and avoid reinforcing separation between the sites.
- The smaller streets off Bradshawgate retain a domestic scale and character which contrasts with the larger commercial streets.
- The rectangular volumes of some modern office buildings, with their repetitive detailing, do not complement the varied character of the main street frontages.



# Character Area Appraisal

## St Peters

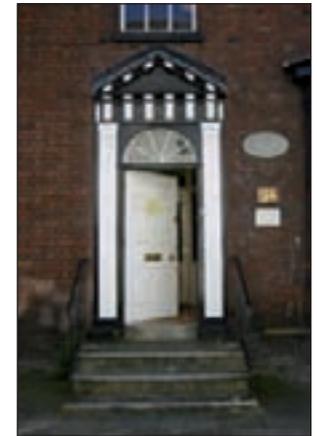
There is a marked contrast in the St Peters area between built form that has developed over time, such as Churchgate and Deansgate, and streets that have been built in a single campaign – typically the residential streets off Bradshawgate such as Wood St and Silverwell St. This distinctive pattern creates both opportunities and constraints for modern development.

Churchgate (left: visible structures 16 – 19th century) and Silverwell St (right: 19th century). Note contrasting scale and materials on the older street frontage; evidence of construction at different periods over a lengthy time scale. The domestic terrace, probably built by a 19th century developer, has a more consistent scale and massing. 🕒

The eclectic mix of building materials in the older parts of St Peters is evidence of building patterns and uses over many centuries. There is no dominant construction type, although traditional materials such as brick and timber framed construction are used. 🕒

The domestic terrace uses a more restricted materials palette, though with variety in the design detailing.

Typically, this is red brick with stone dressings on arches, doorways or windows. Slate roofing materials. 🕒



# Design Guidance

## St Peters

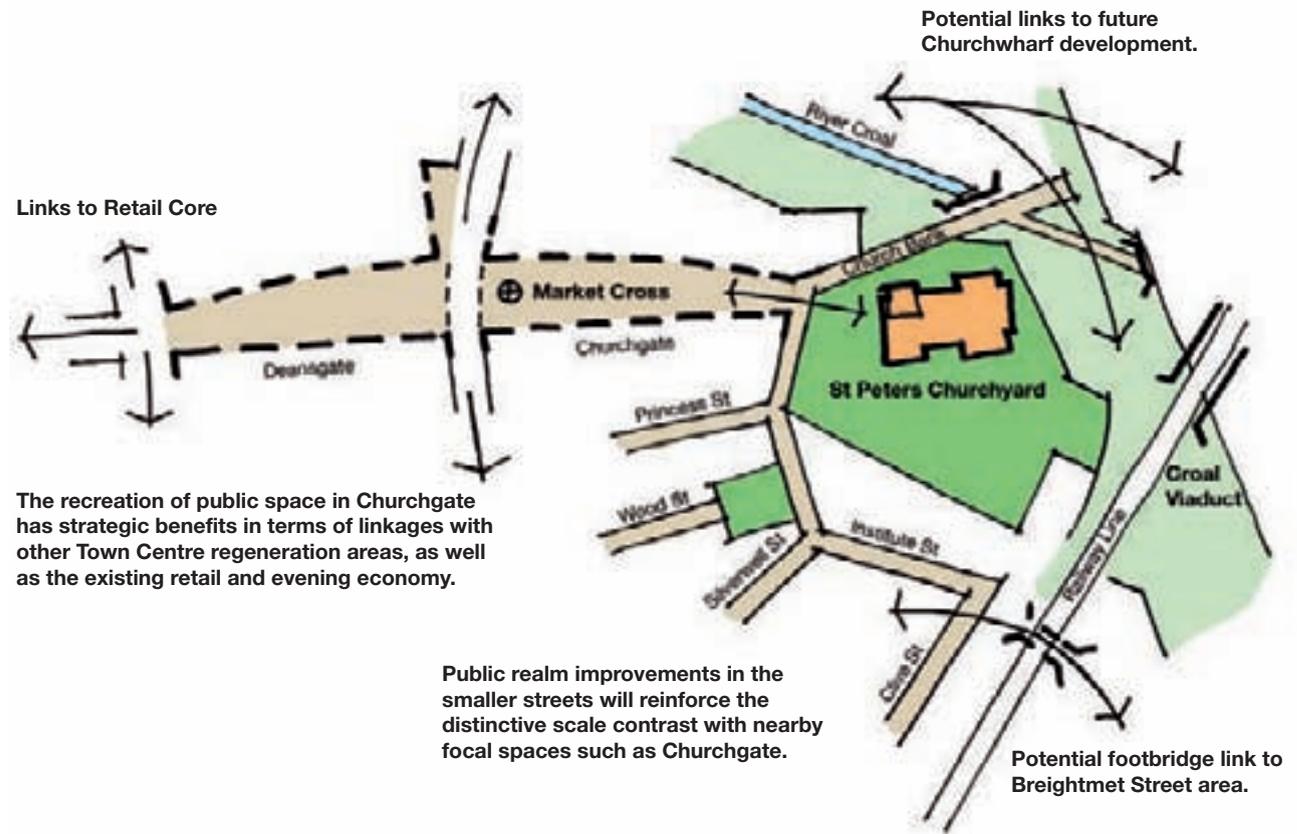
### LAYOUT: URBAN STRUCTURE AND GRAIN

The strategic value of the old Market Place – approximately the area of Churchgate and Deansgate between St Peters and Marks and Spencers – should be maximised through investment in hard and soft landscaping. Use high quality materials – sandstone slabs and granite setts. Reuse existing setts and other paving materials where possible. Design the space for flexibility in use, so that the area can be managed for public events such as markets.

Consider a 'shared surface' treatment for Silverwell St, Clive St and Institute St. Resist the tendency for the streets to be used as vehicle corridors for the surrounding retail streets and car parks. The access here is awkward at best: street widths and corners were never intended to accommodate through traffic. Do not create additional car parking which does not serve the area, and avoid restricting pavement widths or cutting into the pavement / building line to fit vehicle turning circles.



Shared surface paving.



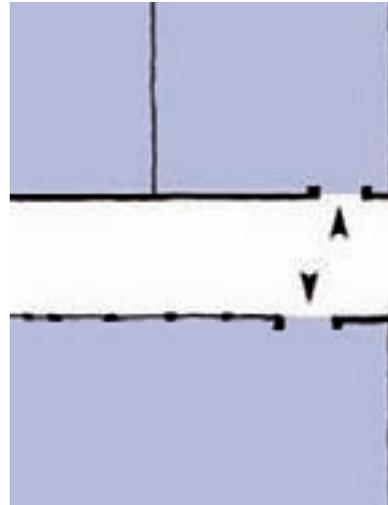
# Design Guidance

## St Peters

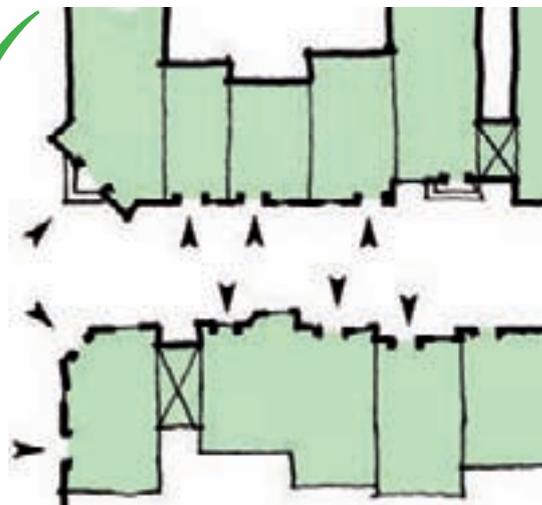
St Peters churchyard and the private garden closing Wood Street are unique areas of open space and mature tree planting. Existing access and means of enclosure should be protected – for instance the riven slabs around the garden, and the grave slabs set upright around the perimeter of the churchyard.

The tree planted area adjacent to St Peters Way should be managed strategically, as an integral part of open space in the Town Centre (as suggested in the Shankland Cox report) taking into account linkages with Church Wharf and Brightmet Street as well as St Peters. In particular, security issues should be addressed through tree clearance, particularly towards St Peters Way, the widening of footpaths and installation of lighting. Sightlines to the Croal Viaduct should be cleared on both sides, and the viaduct restored and lit as a landmark

The historic plot type off Churchgate is narrow, at 90 degrees to the main street frontage and running back some distance from it, with a passageway giving vehicle access to the long rear yard. The arrangement has advantages that should be considered in a modern context – a diverse, active frontage, with architectural variety. A larger (ie wider) development could be accommodated, provided its design was sympathetic to the bay rhythm of the adjacent frontages, and the maximum number of entrances and uses was provided at ground floor level. ➡



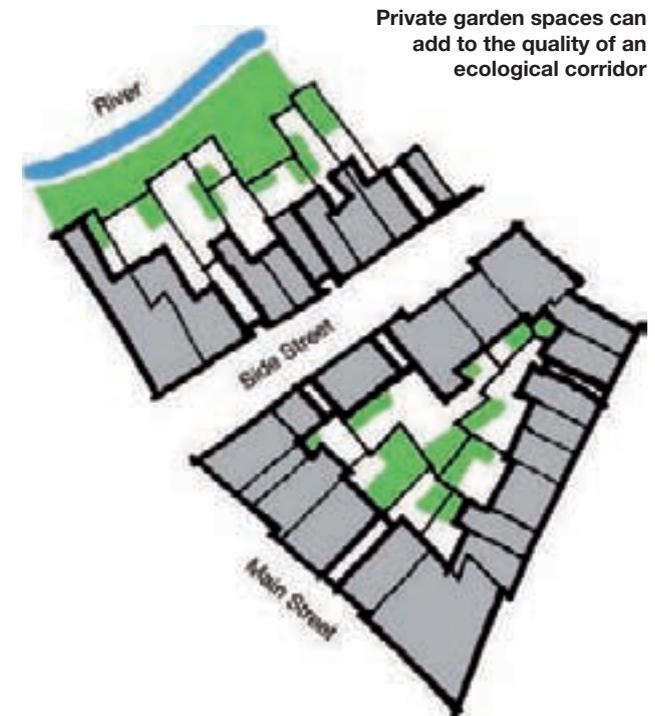
Single uses reduce diversity.



Diverse frontage with multiple entrances.

### Rear Yards

Many properties still give access to long narrow plots to the rear of main street frontages, through passages and ginnels. These features should be retained as far as possible. The use of the yard areas should be maximised in a way that protects their historic grain – small pub and office gardens, for instance.



Private garden spaces can add to the quality of an ecological corridor

Courtyard spaces can be enhanced with additional greenery & managed for private or public amenity as well as parking or other utilitarian uses.

# Design Guidance

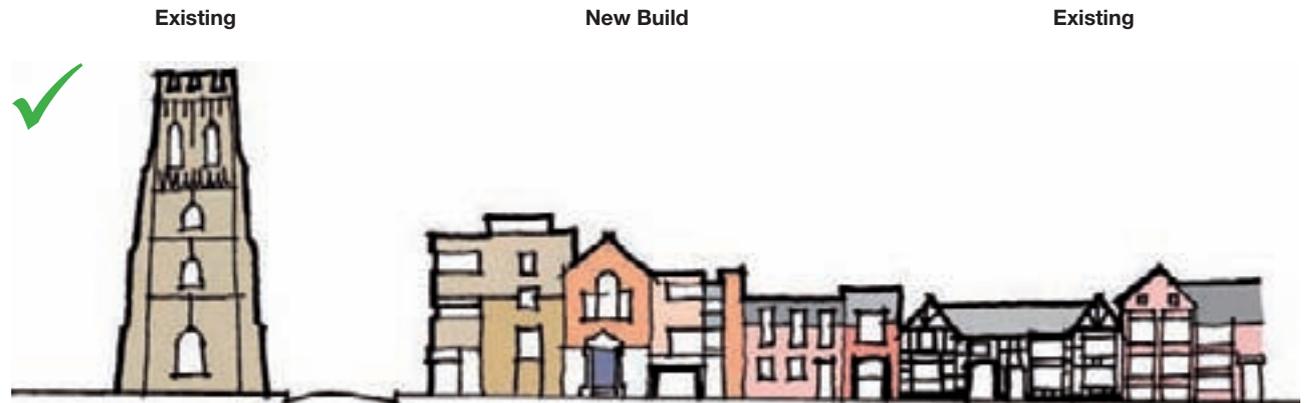
## St Peters

### SCALE: HEIGHT AND MASSING

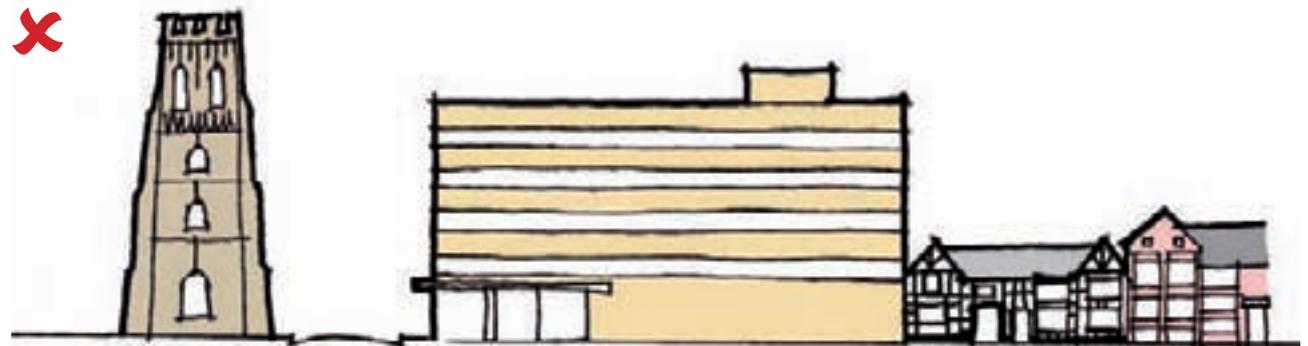
Development proposals for Churchgate, Bradshawgate and Deansgate should reflect the diverse style of existing buildings. The watchword here is variety – modern buildings have added to the stylistic mix, but detract from the area because they are too large, repetitive in detailing, and do not create active frontages to the street. Modern design is appropriate in this area, but needs to consider the precedents set by older buildings in terms of scale, vertical rhythm of facade treatment, and relationship to the street. ➔

Historical precedent suggests four storeys is the maximum building height, although taller buildings could be considered dependant on design detailing. Existing building heights and the design of rooflines are fairly freely mixed, and this provides more design flexibility than in the adjoining terraced streets. Avoid large or sudden scale changes, and long monotonous rooflines.

Existing windows and doorways in older buildings tend to follow a loosely asymmetrical arrangement, and are proportionate in size to the building mass – the largest openings are usually passageways to the rear of properties. Modern proposals should reproduce the variety, and ensure entrances are given a prominent treatment.



**Elevation and massing: Retain the existing facade rhythm, and make incremental scale changes.**



**Avoid monotonous elevation treatments and sudden scale changes.**

# Design Guidance

## St Peters

### APPEARANCE: DETAILS AND MATERIALS

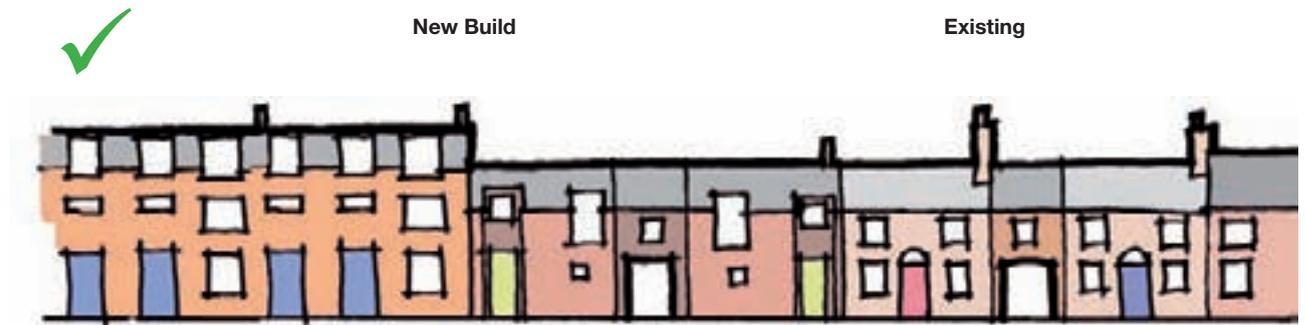
The historic materials palette is mixed – wood, handmade brick, terracotta. Avoid industrial materials that would contrast harshly with this – exposed steel or concrete, for instance.

### PRINCESS ST / WOOD ST / SILVERWELL ST / INSTITUTE ST / CLIVE ST

New development should reflect the characteristic building type, which is the domestic terrace, 2 or 3 storey, set at the back of the pavement, with in some cases passageway access to a yard area at the rear. More visual consistency needs to be maintained here than in Churchgate or Bradshawgate. Modern or traditional interpretations of the terrace would work; regular plot widths, spacing of windows and doors and minimal variations in building heights. Note that the streetscape is composed of horizontals, contrasting with the irregular rhythm of verticals characteristic of Churchgate and Bradshawgate. ➔



Manage scale and contrast carefully.



Urban grain and elevation treatment: retain domestic terrace scale and rhythm.



Avoid gaps in frontage, perimeter car parking, excessive scale changes.

The case for more prominent buildings, or buildings that deliberately contrast with their setting – the modern equivalents of Silverwell House and the former bank on Wood Street, for instance - need to be made in terms of impact on the surrounding townscape.

Ginnels and passageways are a significant feature of the area: they should be retained, enhanced and added to where possible in new developments. Preserve original features – sett surfaces, for instance, and arch details, and ensure access routes are properly lit. Where possible, do not use for waste container storage or service machinery. Security gates should use simple vertical bar designs.

# Design Guidance

## St Peters

### CAR PARKING

This should be managed carefully to avoid overwhelming the character of the area – some on street parking, but preferably set within the courtyard areas. Basement or ground floor car parking might be appropriate, although avoid blank street level frontages. Avoid gaps in the street frontage for car parking or access – passageways are better.

### MATERIALS

Consistency and a domestic range of materials should be considered. Brick in a range of reddish hues, painted render in pastel colours and slate roofs are the stating point; other materials could be considered eg wood cladding, terracotta panels. Avoid large areas of any kind of material, particularly if not relieved by window openings or other architectural features.



Material and scale contrasts.



Complimentary materials.



Incremental scale change.



Modern interpretation of historic style.

## Introduction

# Civic Core

Boltons Civic Core is a monument to 19<sup>th</sup> century enterprise and vision. The classical design of buildings and spaces reflect ambitions for the town which remain relevant nearly 200 years later, and have proved enduring and flexible under pressure of change. Victorian shops, pubs, banks, and the magnificent Town and Market Halls continue their original uses, and the wide streets have adapted readily to pedestrianisation and the requirements of modern retailers.

Success brings its own challenges, however, and the investment expected over the next few years needs to be managed in a way that retains the distinctive townscape qualities recognised in earlier urban studies by Thomas Mawson and Shankland Cox (page 8).



# Historic Notes

## Civic Core

At the start of Boltons period of rapid growth in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, much of the area occupied by the present Civic Core was open ground, orchards and pasture in the large rectangular space enclosed by Deansgate and Bradshawgate.

Development in this area, and the civic character of Bolton Town Centre, is associated with two periods of growth in the 19<sup>th</sup> century; the first off Bradshawgate and Nelson Square, which developed post 1800 as a professional and residential area, and the second on a larger scale around Victoria Square and the Market Hall on Knowsley Street (page 27). This was later, more Victorian in character and from the start adopted a grander architectural style. Most of the key buildings from both periods survive, including the Town and Market Halls, the Exchange and several 19<sup>th</sup> century banks.

There is evidence of planning in the rectilinear layout of the Civic Core which is distinguished by broad, straight streets, well framed classical elevations and good corner buildings. The smaller scale of buildings and streets around Nelson Square remains as a distinctive 'enclave' within the core.



**Newport Street, 1900.** Both Newport Street and Mawdsley Street had clearly defined roles as gateways to the Town Centre from the south.



**Town Hall, 1902.** Decorated for the coronation of Edward VII. Built in 1873 to the designs of Leeds architect William Hill, the Town Hall remains Bolton's most distinctive landmark. It was extended in the 1930s.



**Exchange Building, Victoria Square, 1907.** Built in the 1820s as a news room, it was later adapted as a public library. The building was influential in its use of classical design, and helped set the architectural tone for the development of the Civic Core.



**Market Hall, 1900.** Opened in 1855. The portico to Knowsley Street was originally the main entrance; the shops were created around the building perimeter at a later date.



**Market Hall interior, 1938.** The iron roof structure is a fine example of 19<sup>th</sup> century engineering.



**Market Street, 1948.** The Market Hall was created as part of a layout of broad straight streets in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (page 21).



**Bowker Row, undated.** Secondary streets often retained the line of an older street layout. Bowker Row has since been replaced by the site of Crompton Place.



**Eagle and Child public house, Manchester Court, Spring Gardens.** Early 19<sup>th</sup> century housing areas like this crowded in around the new streets and buildings in the Civic Core. The site is now occupied by Le Mans Crescent (page 21).



**Nelson Square, 1864.** The engraving shows the original paved space, laid out as an occasional cattle market, with the Infirmary (opened 1827) on its western side.



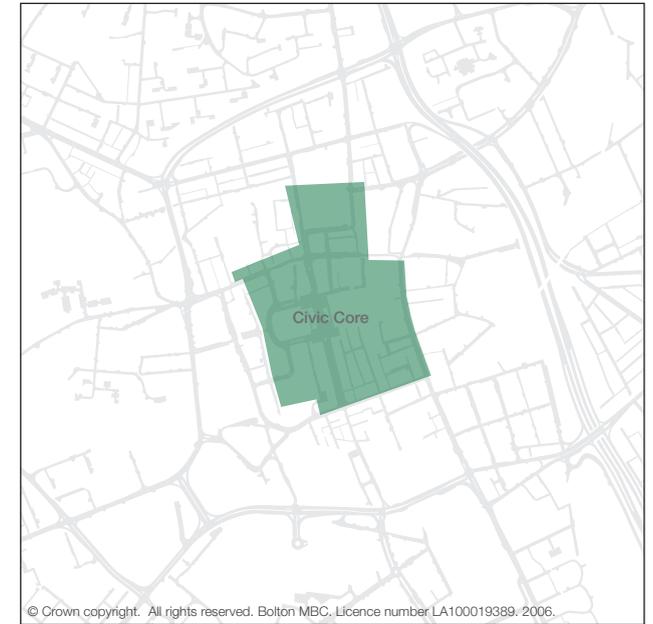
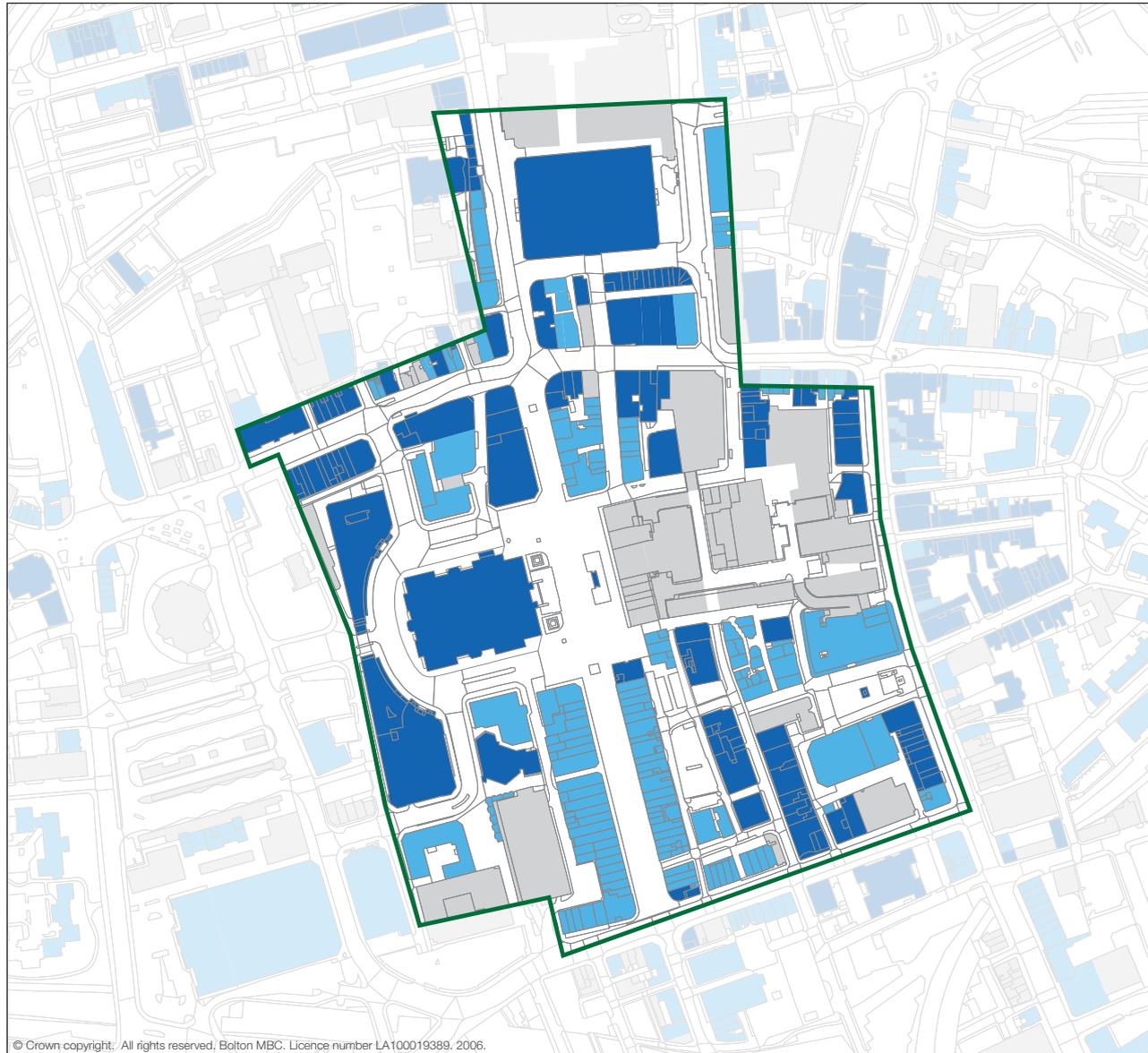
**Nelson Square, 1910.** The statue to Samuel Crompton was installed in 1862, and the gardens opened in 1893. By this date Bradshawgate had become an entertainment and promenading area in the Town Centre.



**Mawdsley St, 1962.** Many of the 19<sup>th</sup> century houses, clubs and offices which line this street survive.

# Character Area Appraisal

## Civic Core

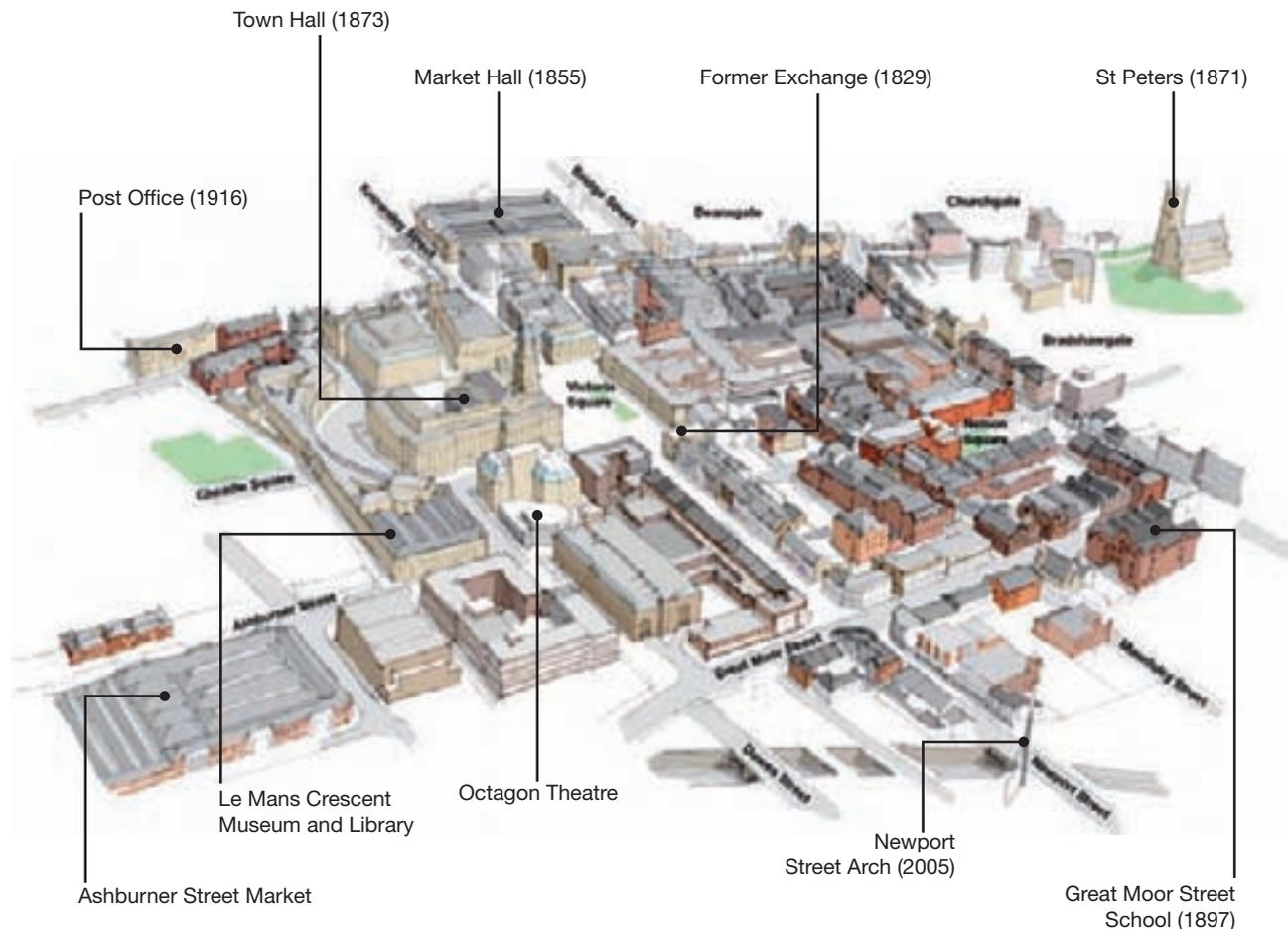


-  Buildings of high value in terms of their contribution to local distinctiveness. This may include architectural, cultural, historic or archaeological value. These buildings will characterise a particular area, or the whole town centre, and will provide precedents for adjacent redevelopment in terms of scale, materials and massing.
-  Building types characteristic of the area in terms of use, scale or materials choice, but with lesser architectural or symbolic value.

# Character Area Appraisal

## Civic Core

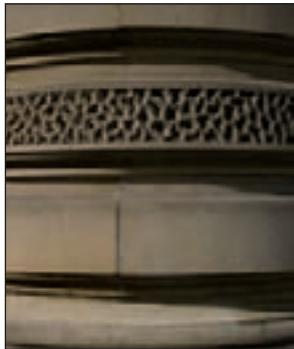
- The townscape around Victoria Square is characterised by architectural ‘set pieces’, rectangular urban blocks, good corner buildings and broad, classically proportioned streets and squares. Le Mans Crescent forms a clear urban edge to the area (page 29).
- Deansgate and Bradshawgate are the principle retail and evening economy streets. They define Bolton’s urban grid and have many examples of fine commercial architecture. Townscape quality is not consistent along their length, however, and strategies for future public realm and building development need to consider how this can be addressed.
- The 19th century Market Hall is an urban block in its own right. Its 3 visible facades define a variety of street frontages, and the cruciform internal aisle arrangement is a continuation of the surrounding street grid.
- East - west pedestrian links are poor compared to the well established pattern of north south routes. Transport and development plans should consider how Great Moor Street, Ashburner Street and linkages between Victoria Square and Bradshawgate can be improved
- Proposals to extend the Civic Core west of Le Mans Crescent have never been realised and the area lack urban structure. See page 91 for recommendations on the masterplanning of the area, and the improvement of the Cheadle Square and Ashburner Street links.



# Character Area Appraisal

## Civic Core

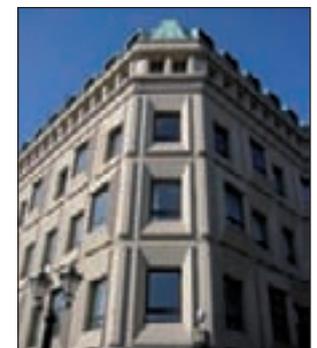
The Civic Core contains Boltons signature townscape – broad streets, solid civic blocks, classical proportions, good corner buildings – and is the only part of the Town Centre enhanced by modern development, particularly the pedestrianisation schemes of the 70s and 80s, and a handful of successful modern buildings such as the Octagon Theatre. The pattern of townscape is not consistent, however, particularly at the edge of the area, and includes the ‘sub area’ around Nelson Square and Mawdsley Street, which is described separately in these notes. ➔



Bolton's civic style is a solid English baroque, enlivened at key points such as the French detailing of the Town Hall clocktower. Modern office and commercial developments have tended to adopt the solidity of the historic style, whilst missing opportunities for more playful detailing, for instance at building entrances. Ashlar cladding is widely used: windows and doorways are clearly expressed and the regular street grid creates opportunities for symmetrically placed architectural features.



The typical urban block is rectangular, often with more than one main street frontage. Large civic and commercial organizations often occupy the entire length of a block frontage, making a more unified architectural expression possible. Landmark buildings such as the Town and Market Halls set the design standard for this area, which has been adopted in different ways by a range of organizations from banks to department stores.



# Character Area Appraisal

## Civic Core

### NELSON SQUARE / MAWDSLEY STREET

The area off Nelson Square is detached from the main civic area partly by Crompton Place which internalizes much of the commercial activity in this part of the town. It retains its distinctive character as a professional district, with a linear streetscape focussed mainly on Mawdsley Street, but with commercial frontage on Newport Street and Nelson Square.

Mawdsley Street is exceptional even within the Civic Core for the quality of its individual buildings and overall streetscape. The west elevation, illustrated below, has a characteristic mix of earlier domestic frontages (late 18th / early 19th century) and later 19th century commercial and civic blocks. Although varying in detail and function, a consistency of streetscape has been maintained through complementary scale and elevational subdivision.

Although later buildings adopted a more civic style, for instance using ashlar cladding, the detailing tends to reflect the terrace arrangement: regularly subdivided elevations, with a 'piano nobile' often expressed on the exterior, avoidance of pediments or porticoes (in contrast to other parts of the Civic Core) and elegantly detailed entrances directly off the pavement. Red brick is the predominant building material.



Former Mechanics Institute (1870)

Former Poor Law Office (mid 19th century).

Warehouse (mid 19th century)

Former residential (late Georgian)

Former County Court (1869)



# Design Guidance

## Civic Core

### TOWN HALL / DEANSGATE / MARKET HALL – URBAN STRUCTURE AND GRAIN (See Map Overleaf)

The Civic Core requires a comprehensive public realm strategy so that the benefits of the original pedestrianisation scheme (constructed in the 1970s) can be extended. In particular, the clarity of the original street layout should be recreated through a coordinated design approach focussing on the hierarchy and visual unity of streets and spaces and the connections with areas surrounding the Civic Core.

- **Primary Routes.** The design approach needs to address current and potential uses, including bus and car access, and coordinate the choice and arrangement of materials and street furniture, including lighting. This will eliminate the visual fragmentation encountered, for instance, along the length of Deansgate, and the isolation of the pedestrianised sections from the surrounding townscape.
- **Secondary Routes.** Contrasting materials should be considered for the network of smaller streets which lie largely within the Civic Core and are mostly pedestrianised. Note that some of these – for instance Mawdsley Street, Ashburner Street and Howell Croft South – have potential as linking routes to the areas surrounding the Core.

- **Tertiary Routes – alleys and ginnels.** These are the most neglected spaces in the Civic Core: a fresh approach should reconsider their current status as service routes, locations for bin stores and air conditioning units. An appropriate paving material choice should make clear the separate identity of these routes, and a design and management approach should aim, where possible, to make the alleys and ‘backs’ a functional part of the surrounding townscape.
- **Paving materials choice** should follow the precedent already set in Victoria square – natural stone materials in a combination of slabs and setts. Avoid smaller unit block paving and paving patterns. Material contrasts should be functional, for instance to show separation between carriageways and pavements, and to create drainage channels and kerbs. Reuse setts where possible.



Primary route.



Secondary route.



Tertiary route - alleys and ginnels.

# Design Guidance

## Civic Core



# Design Guidance

## Civic Core

Urban blocks in this part of the Civic Core tend to be rectangular rather than linear and are often surrounded by important streets with no obvious back or service frontage. New development that runs the full depth of a block should seek to maximise active frontage and minimise blank walls and service access (which is preferably managed from the centre of the block, accessed by a passageway). ↻

Some blocks are subdivided by narrow alleys. These routes form part of the public realm hierarchy of the Town Centre and help break up the external massing of the larger urban blocks. They should be retained wherever possible, or as internal atria or retained external spaces. ↻



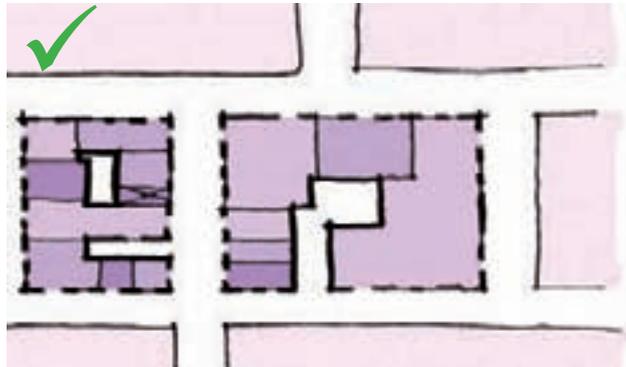
Complementary facade rhythm.



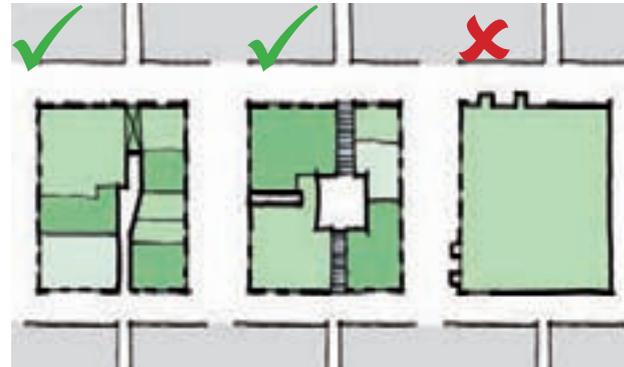
Active street frontages.



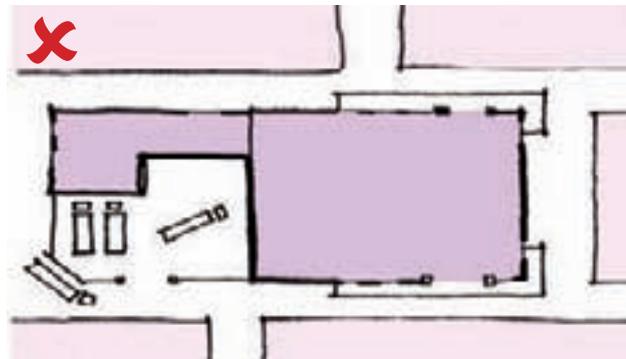
Complement and contrast.



**Layout:** Multiple uses with courtyard access, protects urban block structure.



**Layout:** Retain Courts and passageways.

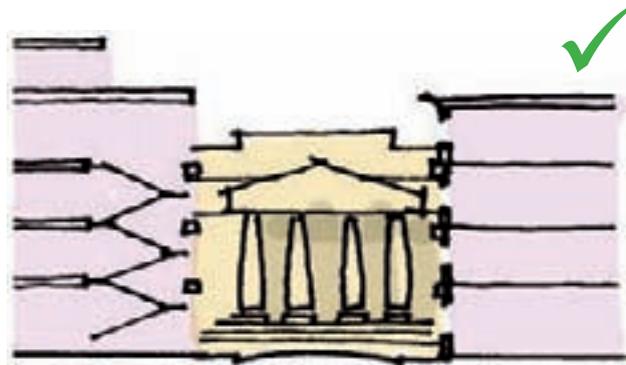


**Layout:** Single uses and service yard access erodes block structure.

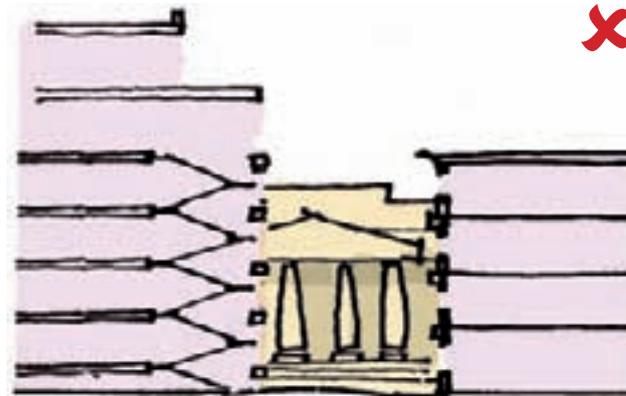
# Design Guidance

## Civic Core

The distinctive pattern of 'set piece' views which characterise the Core area needs to be taken into account, particularly when larger scale proposals are being considered. Buildings which are out of scale with their setting, or intrude into views with a clear existing hierarchy will be resisted (p. 29).



**Layout:** Set piece views should be protected.



### TOWN HALL / DEANSGATE / MARKET HALL – SCALE: HEIGHT AND MASSING

A typical hierarchy of scale in the Civic Core comprises landmark buildings with subsidiary landmarks at block corners, and occasionally in the middle of blocks. Larger building masses should be designed with care into this environment – different materials and set backs can help manage the incorporation of larger buildings. Assess tall features in relation to their immediate surroundings, and also the Town Centre skyline. Modern buildings which are intended to feature as new landmarks are welcome but need to be considered in relation to existing buildings (p. 28).

A wide variety of styles are managed in the Civic Core within a generally 'classicising' context – that is, a proportionate balancing of height and width. It is not necessary for modern designs to imitate traditional classical detailing, but development proposals should take into account the scale and massing of existing buildings. Design which reinterprets the characteristics of Civic Core architecture in an innovative way are welcome, but proposals which wilfully ignore their context without a clear rationale will be resisted.



New landmarks can be mid block...



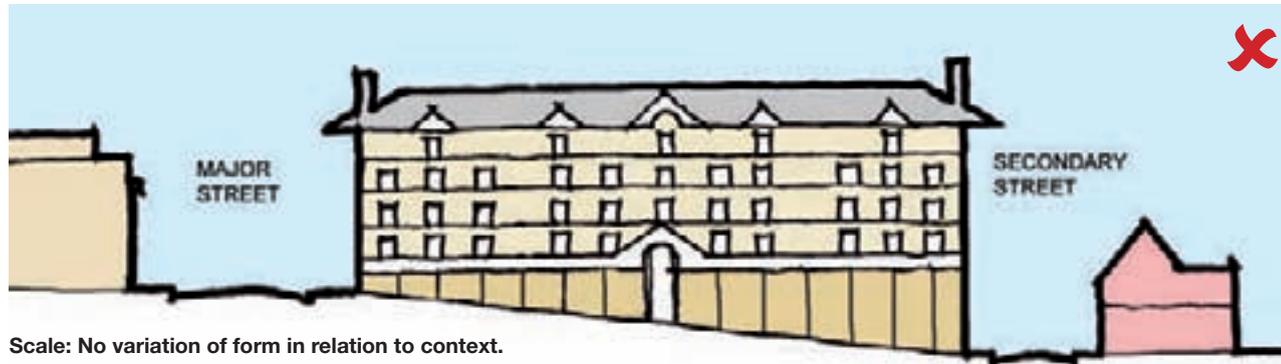
on corners...



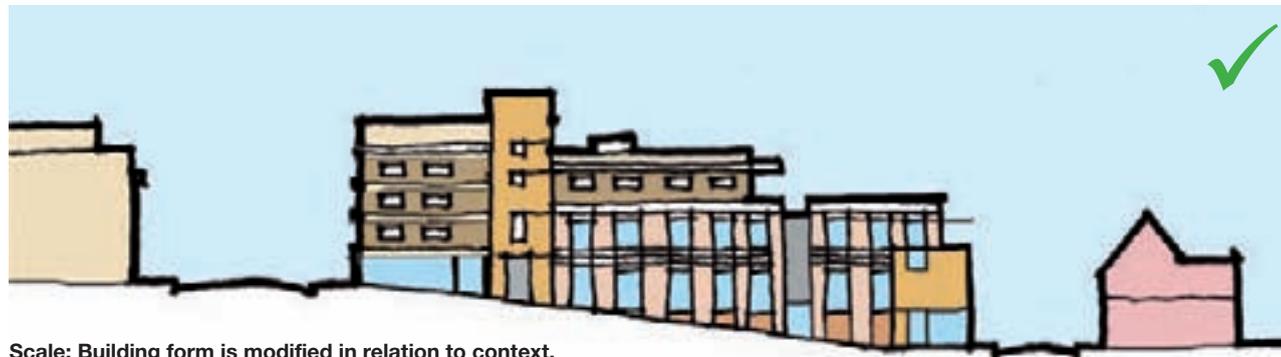
at focal points.

# Design Guidance

## Civic Core



Scale: No variation of form in relation to context.



Scale: Building form is modified in relation to context.

The management of scale across the depth of a block should be considered between streets of differing size or importance. This also applies where there is a change of level across the site. Proposals which impose an inappropriately rigid form should be resisted in favour of designs which successfully 'step down' between scales.

### TOWN HALL / DEANSGATE / MARKET HALL – DETAILS AND MATERIALS

Sandstone ashlar and cladding is used around Victoria Square, and modern proposals should reflect this. Avoid flat or dull detailing - the baroque precedents set by the Town Hall and Le Mans Crescent demonstrate stone is a material that can be used in innovative ways, within the scale constraints set by the overall architectural grouping.



Modern interpretation of classical detail and mass.



Contrast using materials and facade depth.

Red brick and stone dressings are also typical, and can be complemented with a range of modern cladding materials. Strong material contrasts are the exception in this area, though where used successfully they contribute to the streetscape – see Whittakers 'half timbered' frontage on Deansgate, for instance. Modern equivalents will be judged on their merits and in their context.

# Design Guidance

## Civic Core

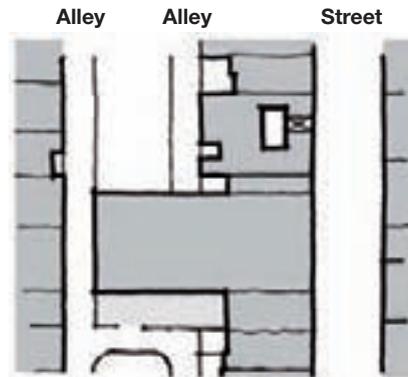
### NELSON SQUARE / NEWPORT STREET / MAWDSLEY STREET- URBAN STRUCTURE AND GRAIN

Poor permeability between this area and the rest of the Civic Core has discouraged investment, and Mawdsley Street and Newport Street do not fulfill their potential as gateways to the retail core. Public realm planning should take the strategic value of the area into account, and plan for high quality paving finishes and street furniture along the major streets. The possibility of new east-west routes should be designed to enhance the permeability of the area without destroying its scale and character, for instance between Victoria Square and Bradshawgate, and Ashburner Street and Silverwell Street.

Bradshawgate and Great Moor Street would benefit from pavement widening, and should be developed as public spaces rather than vehicle thoroughfares – Bradshawgate in connection with the evening economy, Great Moor Street as part of the Transport Interchange enhancements (p.101). The opportunities for outdoor seating in Nelson Square should be maximised, whilst retaining its distinctive garden and tree planting.

The distinctive building type in this area is the 3 storey terrace, for instance along Mawdsley Street and Newport Street (p.27). To the rear of these properties, narrow alleys run parallel with the main streets. This domestic layout needs to be considered when developing proposals for the area.

The existing areas behind the main frontages have a visually diverse mix of materials and shapes, and this creates an interesting setting for new build. Design here could be more adventurous than on the main street frontages, and should aim to create new townscape and new public realm. 🕒



**Impermeable Block:** Wrong scale and no public realm enhancement.



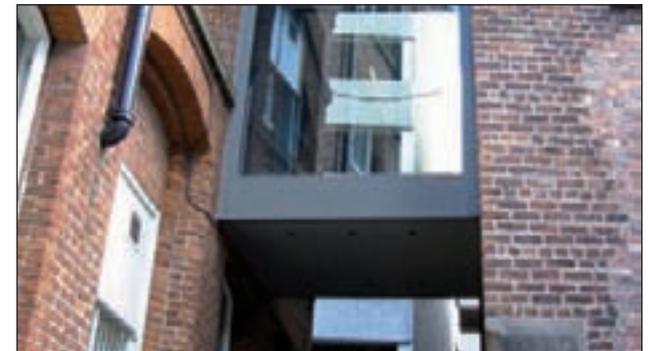
A more flexible layout complements the surrounding building scale and makes better use of the public realm.



Consistent street frontage.



Complementary materials and massing.



Creative use of modern design in rear courtyard area.

## Introduction

# St Helena and Church Wharf

The River Croal flows through both of these Town Centre sites and in the past has helped support large scale industrial infrastructure. Much of this has now been cleared, leaving two sites with good access to the Civic Core, some remaining industrial buildings of historic interest and the River Croal itself, which remains in an engineered channel. A more organic design approach is needed which will ensure that new development in the area avoids standardised solutions and takes into account issues such as river frontage, level changes, historic street frontages, and examples of industrial heritage such as St Helena mill and the arch of Marsden Road bridge.



St Helena



Church Wharf

## Historical Notes

# St Helena and Church Wharf

Prior to the creation of Bolton Corporation in 1837, the River Croal formed the boundary between Greater and Little Bolton. On the Greater Bolton side, between Deansgate and the river, narrow plots occupied the steeply sloping site, having both a street and river frontage. The pattern of land ownership is evidence of well established settlement on this side of the river, possibly associated from an early date with the origins of Boltons textile industry. Both St Helena Mill (the oldest surviving industrial building in the Town Centre) and the Bolton – Bury – Manchester canal are shown on the 1793 map.

The prominence of the river has been obscured by subsequent development. The river was channelised in the 19th century, and new bridges isolated the valley areas from the surrounding townscape. Development density was particularly high, and the living conditions amongst the worst in the Town Centre.

The partial culverting of the river in the 1980s under the Market Hall extension split the visible sections of the Croal into two, identified in this study as the Church Wharf and St Helena character areas. Clearance of much of the industrial and all the residential buildings has removed most of the urban structure in these areas, though both sites retain historic street frontage, as well as surviving industrial buildings and possibly areas of archaeological value.



**Undated. View of tannery from St Georges Road.**

The high density of housing and industrial development was a feature of the river valley sites.



**Velvet Walks, 1927.**

Back to back housing. These properties, often in multiple occupation, were crowded into the narrow medieval plots in the river valley sites and formed some of the worst housing in the town.



**Wharf Foundry 1890 / 1900.**



**Walkers Tannery, Bark Street. 1920 / 1930.**



**The Grapes Hotel, Water Street 1937.**

The sloping valley side is visible in this photograph. The site is now occupied by St Peters Way.



**Bank Street / Manor Street, 1950.**

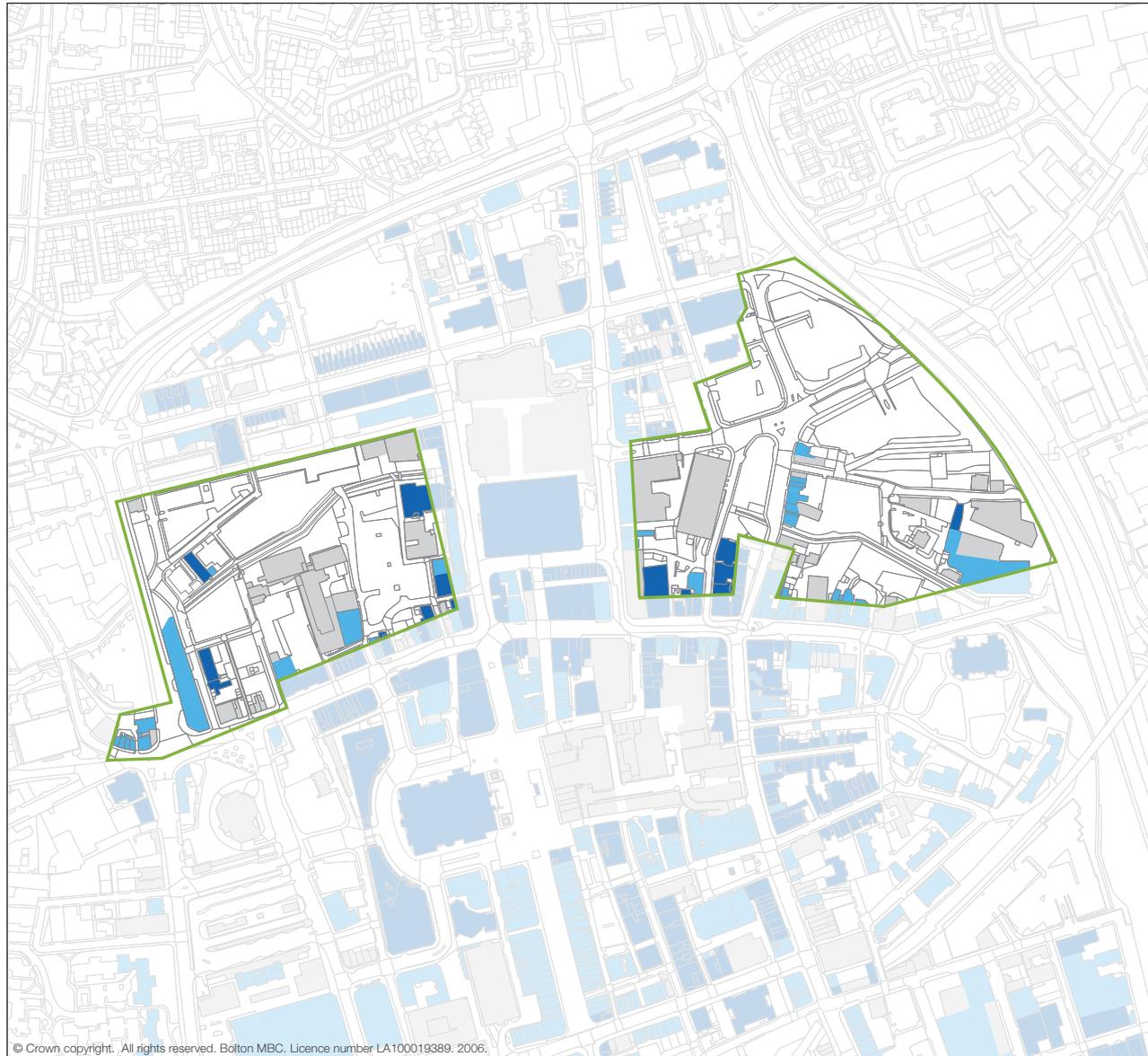
Originally called Windy Bank; the steep approach from the river crossing is typical of the routes into the Town Centre from the north.



Back to back housing north of the Croal near the Wharf Foundry, shown on a mid 19th century OS map. The narrow streets and courts are typical of housing development in the river valleys, which reflected conditions in the earlier industrial period. After 1850, the Bolton Improvement Act introduced minimum spacing and construction standards, and the worst slums started to disappear.

# Character Area Appraisal

## St Helena and Church Wharf



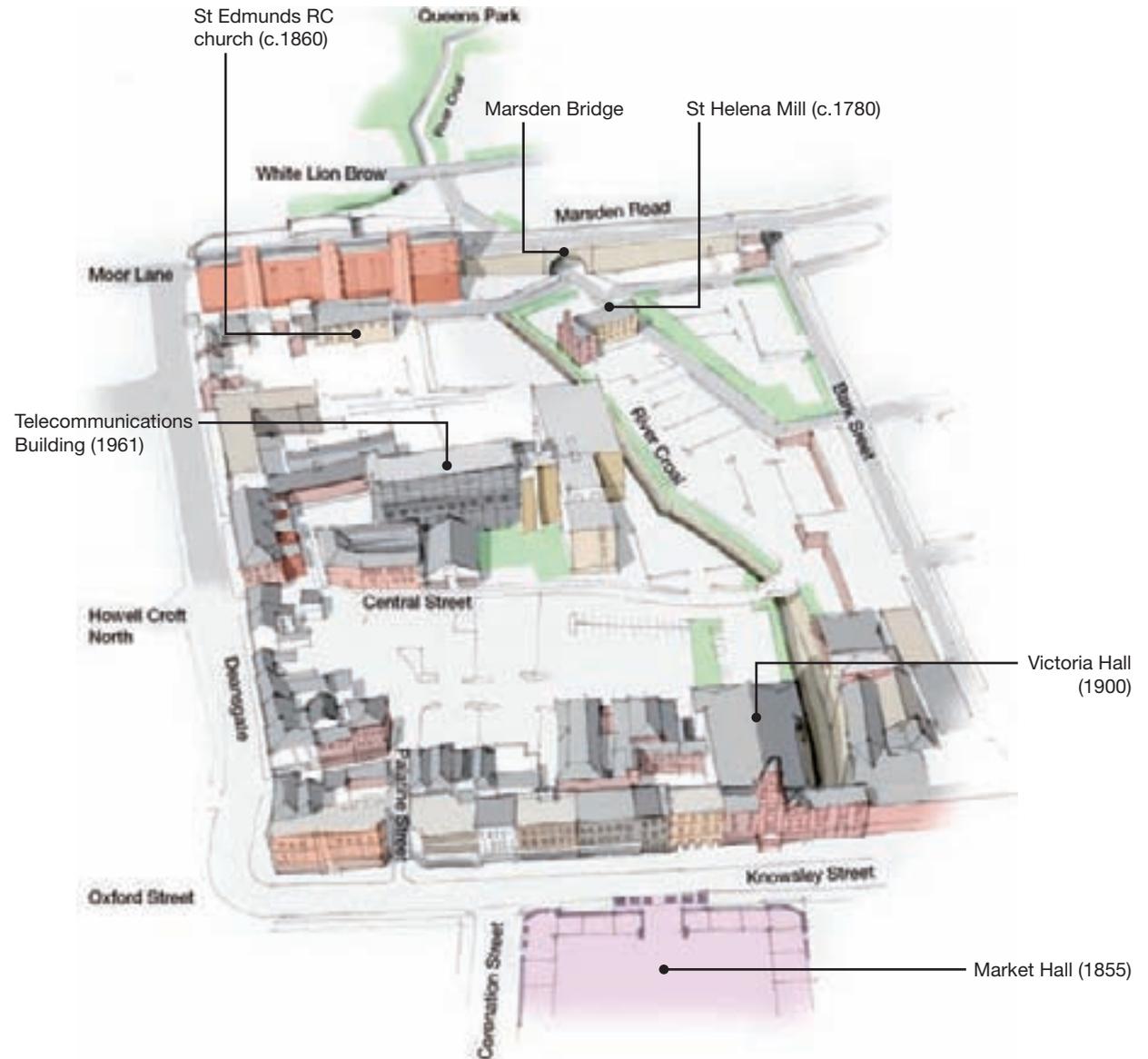
-  Buildings of high value in terms of their contribution to local distinctiveness. This may include architectural, cultural, historic or archaeological value. These buildings will characterise a particular area, or the whole town centre, and will provide precedents for adjacent redevelopment in terms of scale, materials and massing.
-  Building types characteristic of the area in terms of use, scale or materials choice, but with lesser architectural or symbolic value.

# Character Area Appraisal

## St Helena and Church Wharf

### ST HELENA

- Development proposals should incorporate the river as part of the public realm strategy, maintaining public access and exploiting the historic and architectural context, including St Helena Mill and the skewed arch of Marsden Road bridge.
- The River Croal, although channelised, has potential as an environmental corridor between the Civic Core and Queens Park.
- Elevations to Knowsley Street and Deansgate should be retained and enhanced. New access through the frontage should support uses within the site and in surrounding streets. Avoid larger openings which break the continuity of the street frontage.
- Site clearance has removed urban structure from within the site and along its northern edge. New development proposals should plan for active new street frontage, for instance along Bark Street, and continuity between public realm within the St Helena site and adjacent areas, such as Little Bolton.
- The ground level between the perimeter of the site and the river channel edge differs by up to 8 metres. Development proposals should consider how this can be exploited, for instance for underground car parking, and also as a context for site responsive design.

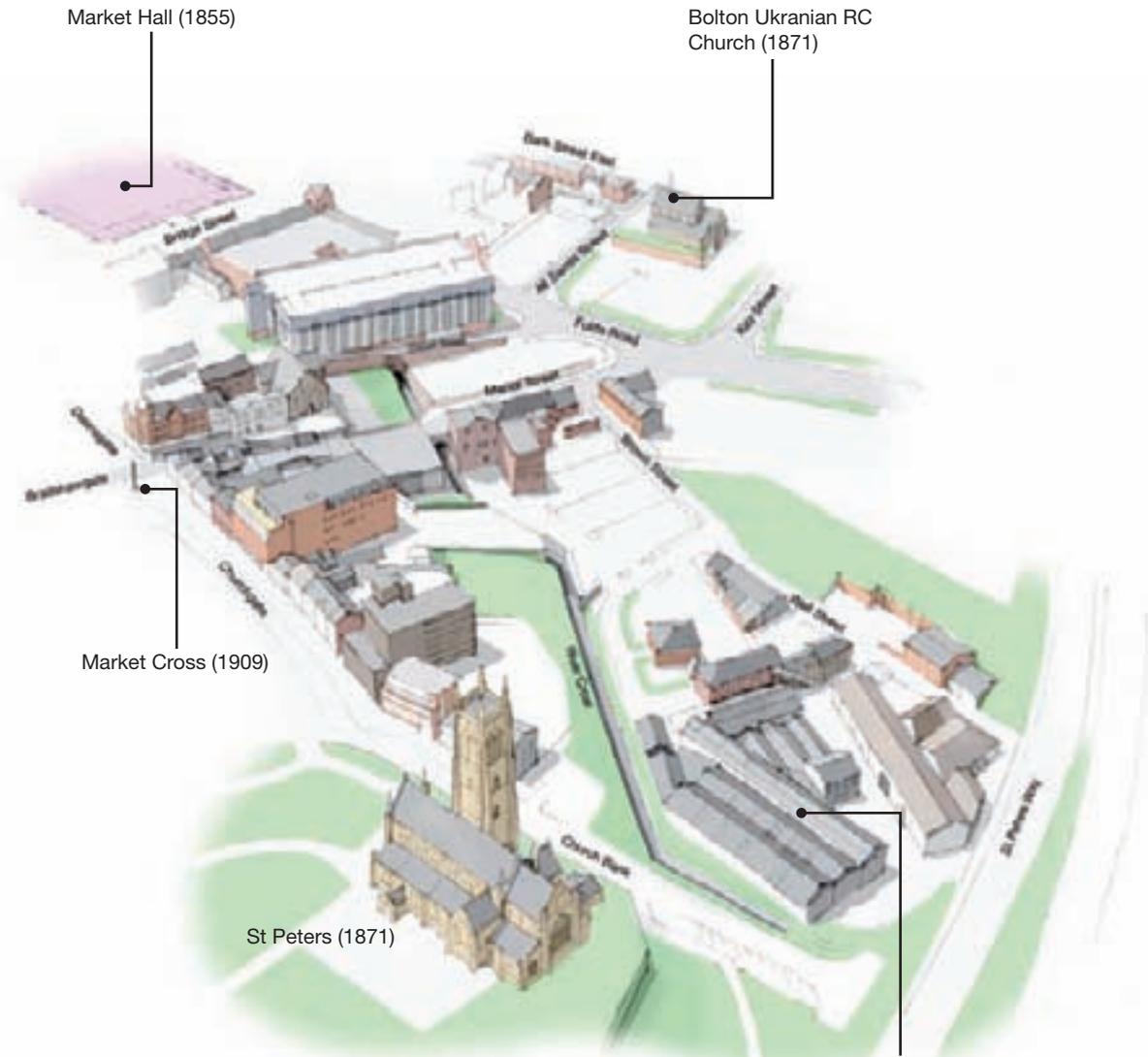


# Character Area Appraisal

## St Helena and Church Wharf

### CHURCH WHARF

- The river currently has no townscape presence. The potential to create an environmental corridor with good public access and links to Church Bank and the pedestrian access under St Peters Way should be at the heart of any development proposals.
- Site clearance and the construction of St Peters Way has removed much of the existing urban structure within the site, although significant street frontages survive at its perimeter, for instance facing Churchgate.
- Changes of level across the site, for instance north of Well Street, should be expressed in the layout and design of buildings and exploited for underground car parking or other services.
- The yards and courts to the rear of properties on Churchgate are part of the town's historic fabric, and contains areas of archaeological interest.
- The potential for gateway townscape off Folds Road and its adjoining streets (eg Kay Street, Manor Street, All Saints Street) should be taken into account when considering new development in this area. Higher density patterns of development which can recreate street frontage and urban structure would be appropriate.
- Crown Street car park has a significant detrimental effect on the townscape quality of the Church Wharf gateway area.



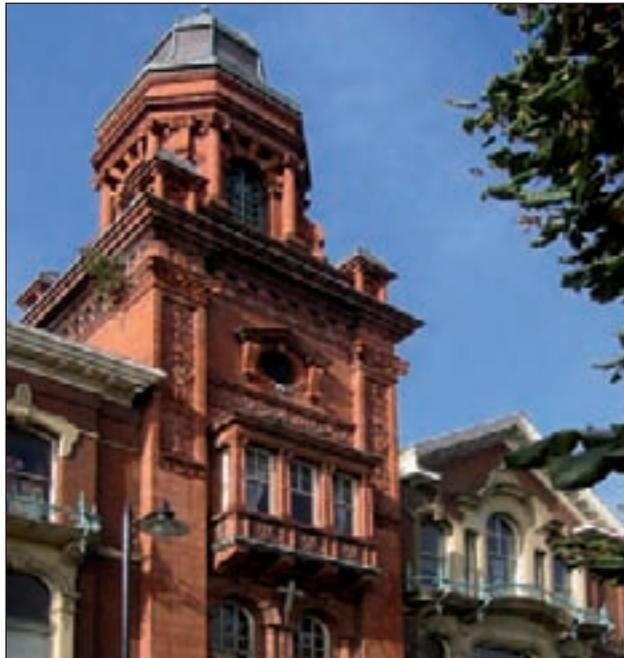
Wharf Foundry - mostly 19th and 20th century structures, although the foundry site has been in use since the 18th century.

# Character Area Appraisal

## St Helena and Church Wharf

The river valley sites will be recognisable to most people from landmarks on the main street frontages, such as the Post Office on Deansgate, and Victoria Hall on Knowsley Street. The potential for locally distinctive townscape lies as much behind the frontages, however: on the river valley slopes and at the edges of the River Croal itself. Much of this area is currently cleared land, but there are important design cues in the buildings that remain, the character of the river corridor and the distinctive topography.

Both sites have high quality street frontage, with scale and architectural qualities characteristic of the Civic Core in places. 📍

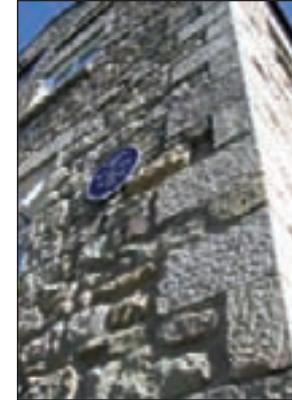


Victoria Hall, Knowsley Street.



Where buildings remain within the valley areas, they tend to express the degree of slope through the stepping up of façade elements, for instance on St Edmunds Street. 📍

The River Croal runs in a stone lined channel. Much of the original industrial infrastructure has since disappeared; the area feels isolated, though only a few metres from major shopping streets. 📍



Surviving historic structures within the river valley sites have a robust, sculptural quality. 📍



The materials palette within the sites tend to reflect former industrial uses: Accrington brick, unfinished stone. The river and self seeded tree and shrub growth in some areas suggests a more organic association of design elements, with an ecological emphasis. 📍

## Design Guidance

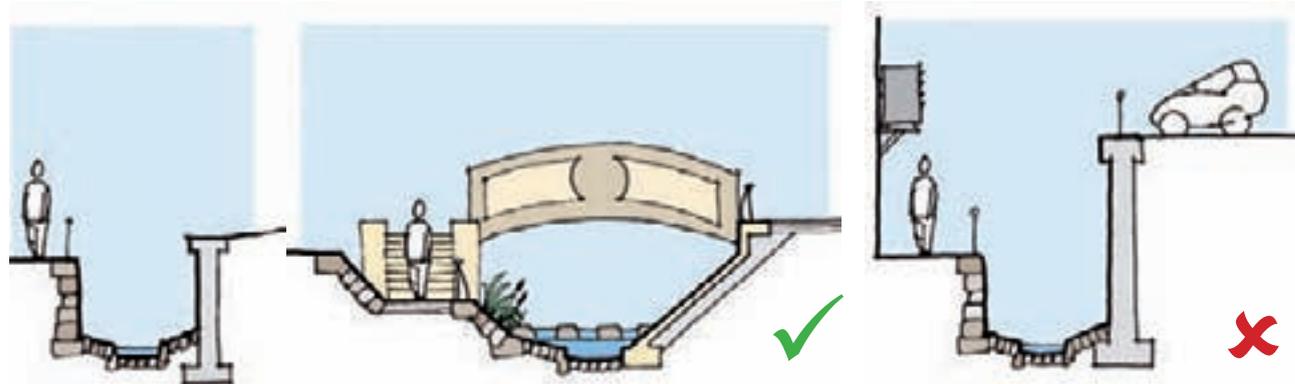
# St Helena and Church Wharf

### URBAN STRUCTURE AND GRAIN - GENERAL

The river corridor and public access should be treated as an integral part of overall site design, developed from the earliest stages of site planning. Note that consultation will be required with the Environment Agency on any development which affects the river corridor.

Proposals for modifications to the river channel which improve accessibility, aesthetic appearance and ecological potential will be welcomed. This could include widening, modification of the stream bed to alter the flow, and creation of areas of standing water. A minimal treatment, retaining much of the existing layout and reinforcing its 19th century character with repairs and refacing of concrete retaining walls could also be acceptable.

Depending on the depth of the site and the route network, proposals should take into account how public, semi public and private spaces can be developed across the site 'gradient', from street frontage to riverside. Car parking, where possible, should be set into basements or courtyard spaces. In all cases, the river area should be treated as viable public realm – safe, well lit, overlooked where possible. Proposals which relegate the river to the rear of a service wall, edge of a car park or similar environment will not be acceptable.



Existing river environment: stone lined channel and modern concrete retaining structures.

Improvements to the channel could include modifying the flow of the river to improve its appearance and encourage habitat, as well as altering or recladding the retaining walls. Public art could contribute to the setting of the river.

Reducing the amenity value of the river through additional retaining wall structures and other unsympathetic additions will not be acceptable.

### URBAN STRUCTURE AND GRAIN ST HELENA.

It is still possible to trace a link on foot between Queens Park, the skewed arch under Marsden Road Bridge, the river channel, St Helena Mill and Victoria Hall. The potential to enhance these links into a functioning environmental gateway to the Town Centre should be integral to masterplanning. ➔



# Design Guidance

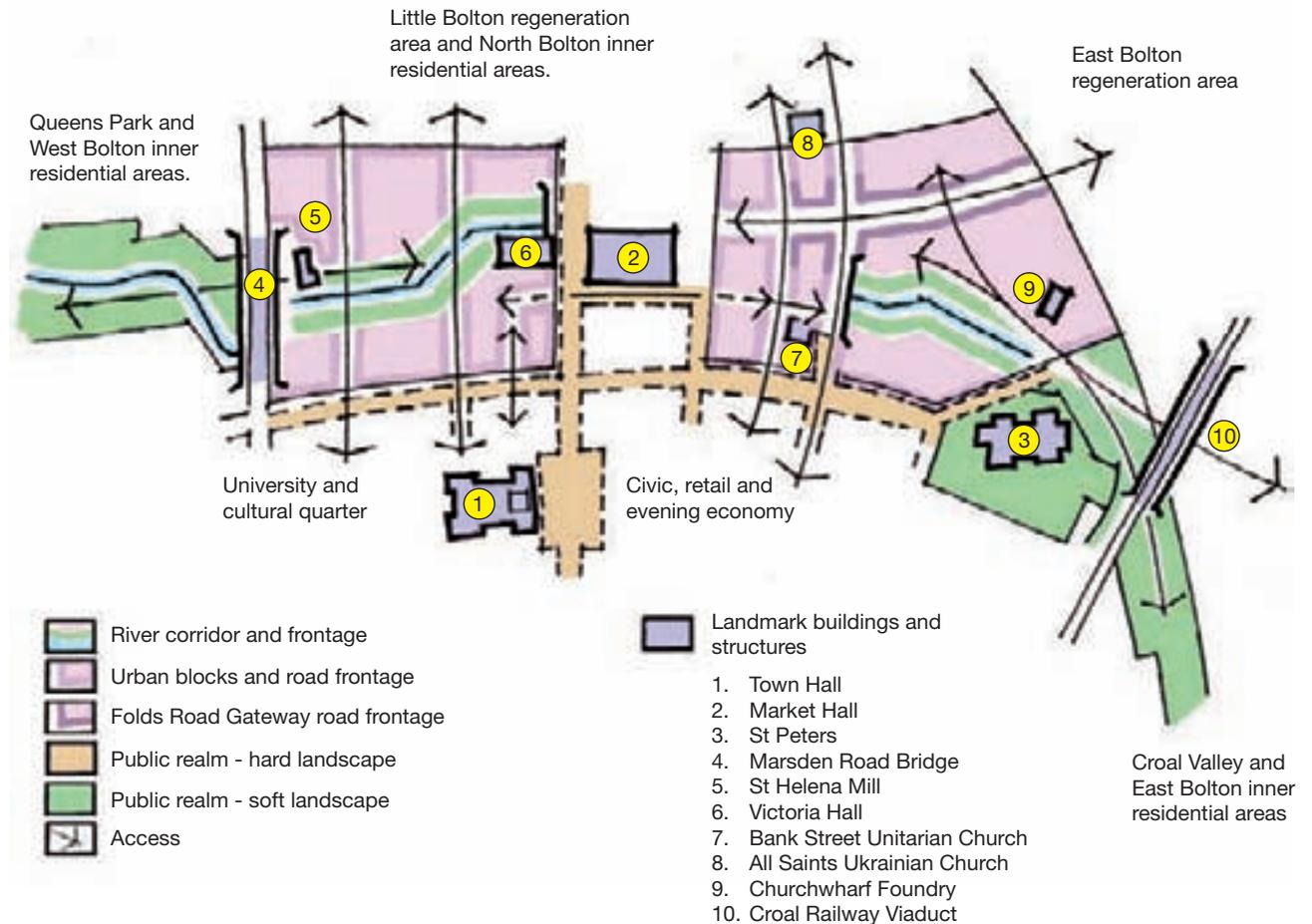
## St Helena and Church Wharf

### URBAN STRUCTURE AND GRAIN CHURCHWHARF

The relationship between townscape and river has a 1000 year precedent in this area and needs to be reinforced from as many angles as possible. At present the lack of permeability around the edges of the site is limiting the scope of proposals. From the gateway location at the foot of Churchbank, for instance, there is a lack of visual or physical permeability in any direction.

### URBAN STRUCTURE AND GRAIN FOLDS ROAD / BOW STREET

This is the only major street lying wholly within a river valley site (Church Wharf). It should be thought of in design terms as an important gateway location and focus for a number of subsidiary streets. Design proposals along the 'gateway' frontage on Folds Road should reflect the significance of the location through bold massing and elevational treatments. There are opportunities for new landmark buildings in this area. The access roads to north and south off Folds Road – Crown Street, Bank Street, All Saints Street and Kay Street – run up the slope to the St Peters and Little Bolton character areas. Design proposals will need to take the change of scale into account between the gateway frontage and adjacent character areas.

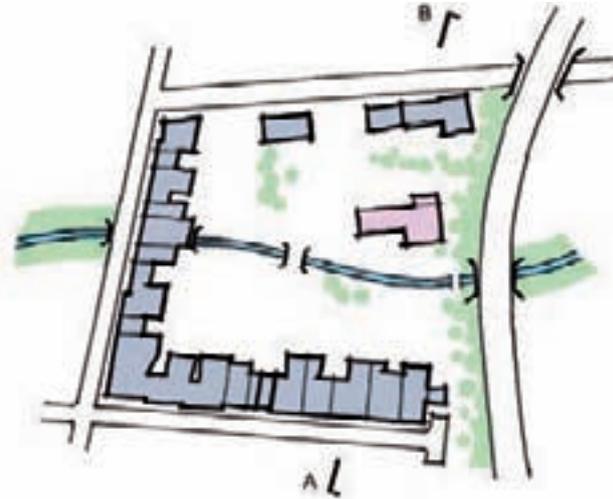


# Design Guidance

## St Helena and Church Wharf

### URBAN STRUCTURE AND GRAIN

The schematic plan and cross section shows distinctive features typical of both river valley sites which should be taken into account when developing design proposals. Churchwharf and St Helena have closed urban 'edges' on two sides, a less densely developed northern edge, and a road structure closing the fourth side (Marsden Road bridge and St Peters Way). Proposals should consider how development can be planned between these edges and the river, taking into account the change in level and the different design emphasis required between the valley setting and the urban frontage. Consider as a precedent the historic contrast between the street frontage with its urban scale and mix of uses, and the industrial structures in the river valley area (elements of which survive on both sites and should be selectively retained in development schemes). Proposals which attempt to impose a standardised solution across the site will be resisted.



Schematic drawing of river valley site showing typical features: river corridor, outward facing street frontage on two sides, weaker edges elsewhere. Cleared internal area, mainly used for surface car parking, with surviving industrial buildings, some of historic interest. (See overleaf for cross sections)



Preferred development pattern, using high density blocks which relate to both the main street frontages and the river valley area. Existing frontages are complemented with new build sympathetic to the existing scale and facade rhythm, whilst weaker urban edges are strengthened. A good public realm framework will include the river corridor, maximise the environmental potential of the area, and create a hierarchy of internal spaces which relate to the surrounding street pattern. Retain and enhance buildings of interest.



Reuse of existing buildings.



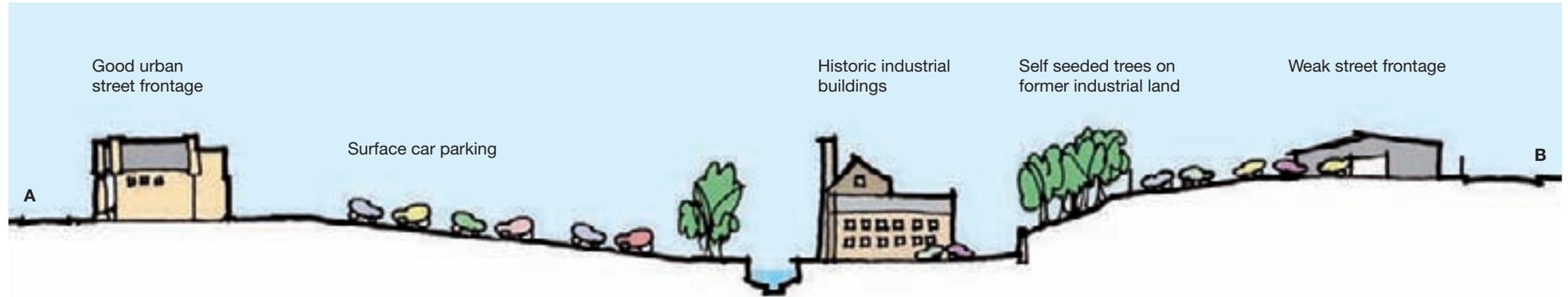
Sculptural architectural forms.



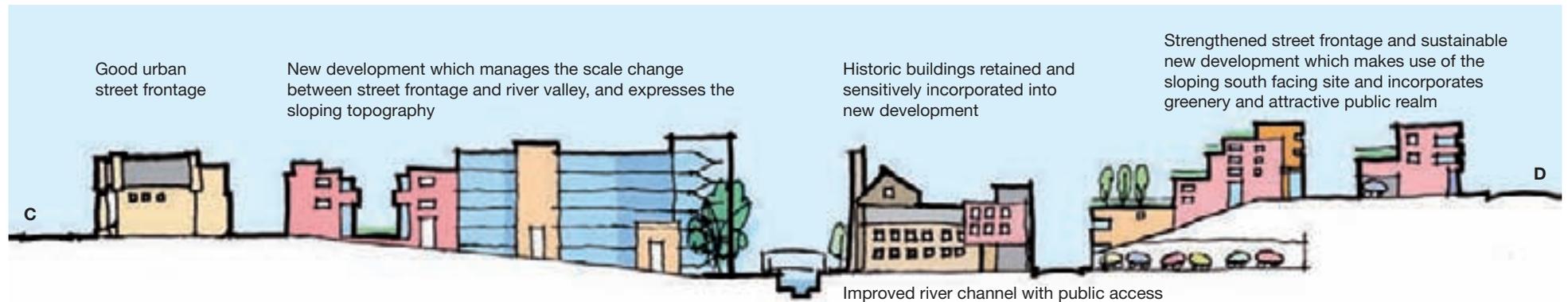
Robust detailing.

# Design Guidance

## St Helena and Church Wharf



Existing features typical of the river valley sites.



Preferred pattern of development which responds to the ecology, topography and history of the valley sites.

## Design Guidance

# St Helena and Church Wharf

### SCALE: HEIGHT AND MASSING

- Development proposals for site perimeters facing surrounding streets will be assessed in relation to the existing scale and massing of adjacent buildings. The Deansgate frontages in particular have characteristics of both the Civic Core (good corner buildings, 19th century ashlar bank facades). The distinctive rhythm and scale of these elevations should be taken into account when developing new proposals. In order to improve permeability and accessibility in the river valley areas, existing openings in the street elevations should be retained and enhanced where possible. New access can also be created, though avoid large openings and splays which can break up the visual continuity of the street frontage.
- Steeply sloping street frontages - Bank Street and St Edmunds Street, for instance – are a distinctive feature of the area. Typically, the angle of the slope is expressed by the stepping up of rooflines and façade features. This should be reflected as far as possible in the development of modern proposals, preferably using the existing plot sizes to define individual façade elements. Large buildings should use subdivision of façade and massing to express the slope.

### DETAILS AND MATERIALS

- Guidance on materials choice differs between the main street frontages, where the existing palette is the reference point, and the river corridor areas where there is more flexibility in both materials choice and massing.
- Existing street frontages reflect both the Victorian and mixed characters of the Civic Core and St Peters, and the design guidance in the relevant sections of Building Bolton for these character areas should be consulted. A range of precedents exists: sandstone ashlar, terracotta, brick, Portland stone. No single material predominates, although landmark buildings tend to have an ashlar finish (the red terracotta detailing on Victoria Hall is a notable exception).
- Buildings on lower ground within the river corridor areas are perceived as 3 dimensional objects from a range of viewpoints, often at a higher level, rather than flat façade elements. Overall massing and roofscape are as important as materials choice; more flexibility is available as a result to enable proposals to make the most of the distinctive character of the valley areas. The robust form and materials of former industrial buildings are a useful design guide – stone, slate and glass, for instance. Natural materials generally would be welcome: wood cladding for instance. Avoid modern ‘shed’ type construction and profiled cladding materials.

Although sustainability is encouraged across the Town Centre, there are specific opportunities for environmental design in the river valley areas, partly because of the extra flexibility allowable in the external appearance of buildings: wind driven ventilation, for instance, and strongly directional façade treatments for passive solar gain collection and retention. Green roof installations would also work well in this area.



Innovative, sustainable architectural design.

## Introduction

# Little Bolton



Little Bolton is the only part of the Town Centre which evolved an identity out of a separate civic administration, conducted from its own town hall until 1839. Much of the development was completed within a few decades, starting with St Georges Church (1796) which set the architectural theme for the area – red brick and stone dressings, simple details and a reliance on proportion rather than decorative elaboration to achieve an overall effect. Unlike other residential areas from the period, Little Bolton was not disturbed by the construction of the railway, and many of the original buildings survive.

As in the Civic Core, the historic townscape is capable of absorbing change to a point, but the distinctiveness of its streets (Little Bolton has no focal public spaces) is increasingly threatened by an inappropriate scale and style of development, and the traffic infrastructure associated with the Inner Ring Road.



# Historical Notes

## Little Bolton

Little Bolton became significant during the industrial period; prior to this the area north of the River Croal was a rural district. Development followed the pattern established elsewhere, namely enclosure and subdivision of common land by Improvement Trusts set up after 1792, creating a regular grid of streets and development blocks. In Little Bolton the layout of St Georges Road and Bark Street (neither of which are shown on the 1793 plan) provides evidence of this settlement pattern.

Speculative development in the area was mostly middle class residential, similar to Wood Street in Greater Bolton. Availability of land enabled a more expansive scale of development, with two and three storey terraces ranged either side of both St. Georges Road and Bark Street. The construction of churches and houses within a relatively short period created a visually consistent streetscape which has survived largely intact, though the residential population has been replaced by professional offices.



**View of St. Georges church, 1939.** Although surrounded by industrial development, Little Bolton remained mostly a middle class residential and professional area.



**St. Georges Road, 1948.** The distinctive townscape of Little Bolton - terraces and landmark buildings – is clear in this photograph, though several buildings have disappeared, including the St Georges Methodists Church in the foreground.



**View of St. Georges Church from Knowsley Street, c. 1900.** In spite of losing its administrative independence in 1839, the area retained a distinctive architectural character.



**Little Bolton Town Hall.** Built 1826. Little Bolton was administered as a separate township from this building.



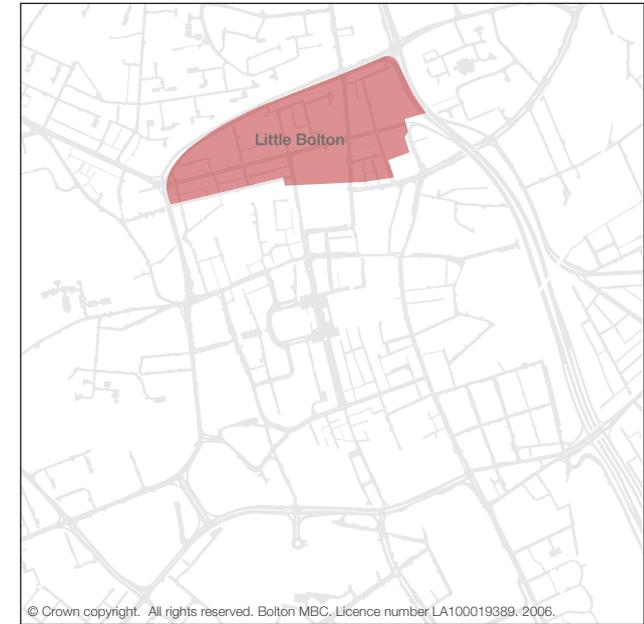
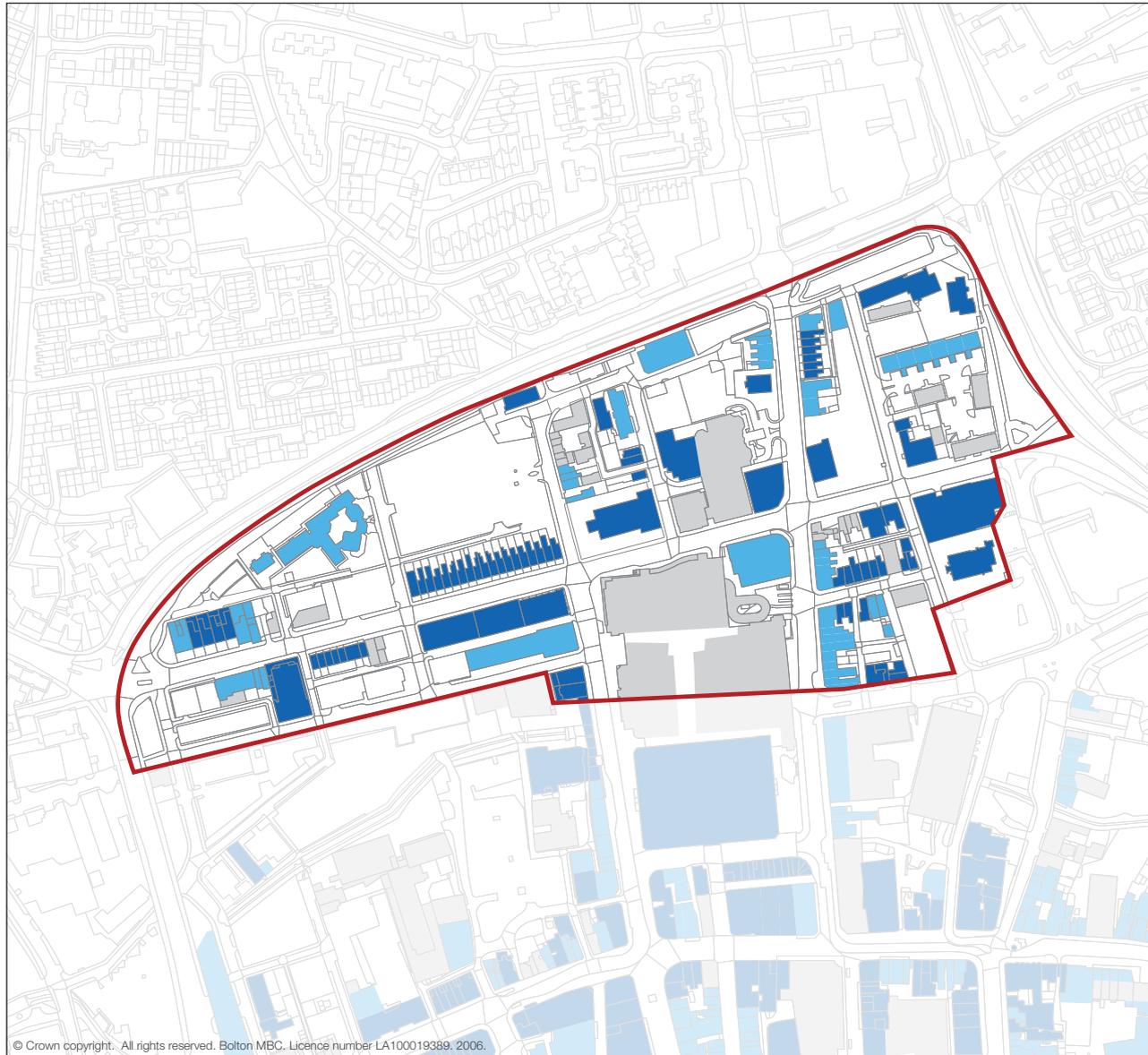
**St. Georges Road, 1916.** These red brick terraces are now used for offices, but in this photograph the residential character of the area is still clear.



**Churches in Little Bolton.** Several chapels and schools existed in the area, the churches typically having a pedimented street elevation.

# Character Area Appraisal

## Little Bolton



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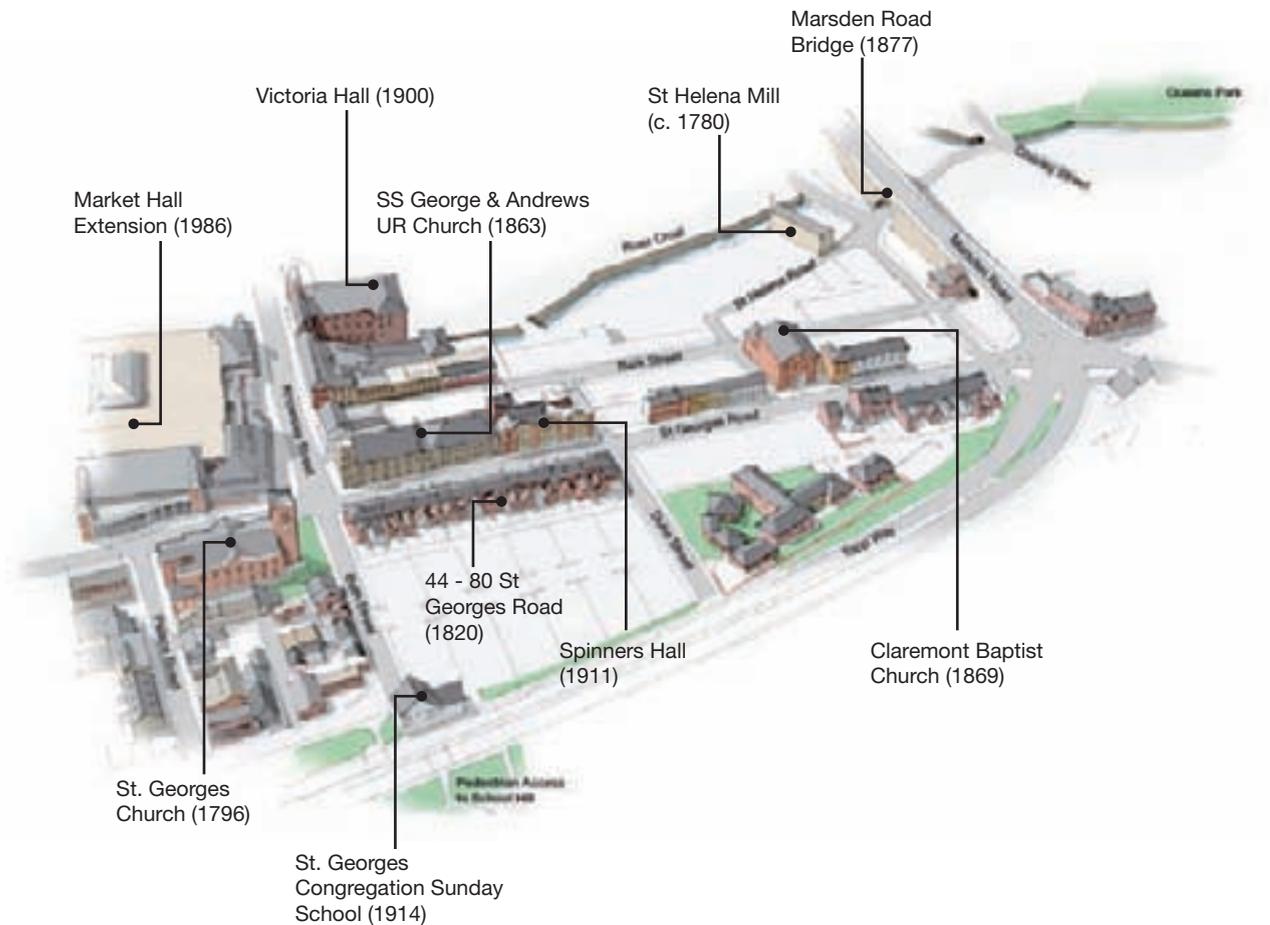
-  Buildings of high value in terms of their contribution to local distinctiveness. This may include architectural, cultural, historic or archaeological value. These buildings will characterise a particular area, or the whole town centre, and will provide precedents for adjacent redevelopment in terms of scale, materials and massing.
-  Building types characteristic of the area in terms of use, scale or materials choice, but with lesser architectural or symbolic value.

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# Character Area Appraisal

## Little Bolton

- The distinctive character of Little Bolton depends upon the continuing prominence of landmark buildings along St Georges Road such as St. Georges Church (1796), the former Methodist Church (1803) and Little Bolton Town Hall (1826). New development proposals should reflect as far as possible the established hierarchy of scale.
- The St. Georges Road frontage is characterised by horizontal facades and vertical accents. Avoid strongly modelled 'baroque' features such as the curved colonnade on the north side of the Market Hall extension.
- Little Bolton lacks focal spaces: the public realm is restricted to the streetscape and private and semi private spaces such as churchyards fronting onto the street. Development proposals affecting the public realm should aim to retain this distinctive pattern.
- Building elevations visible from St. Georges Road should preferably be parallel with that street, even if set back from the edge of the road.
- Empty plots between Topp Way and St Georges Road undermine townscape quality. The existing urban block between Palace Street and Bath Street is a potential template for development.
- Although a route network exists, lack of urban structure along Bark Street weakens the link between Little Bolton and the valley site. A similar situation exists between Little Bolton and Church Wharf.

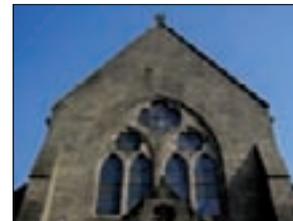


# Character Area Appraisal

## Little Bolton

In spite of site clearance and some unsympathetic redevelopment, Little Bolton remains the most visually consistent of the character areas in Bolton Town Centre. The single main street – St. Georges Road – has a landmark building (St Georges church) at its focal point and a distinctive hierarchy of domestic terrace development and smaller landmarks along its length. Loss of townscape context, at either end of the main street, and to north and south of the main frontages, has eroded some of the visual integrity and diversity of the character area.

St. Georges Church and residential terrace, St. Georges Road. Although some houses have been modified with bay windows, many retain their original appearance; all still have a raised front garden area and evidence of a basement. The church has a pedimented south elevation, more domestic than religious in appearance. The careful proportioning of terrace and landmark building relies upon horizontal continuity of materials, facade rhythm and height, with the square vertical of the tower forming the landmark.



Smaller landmark buildings include a number of non conformist chapels: typically rectangular blocks under a slate monopitch roof, with a pedimented façade set parallel with the street, either at the back of the pavement or set back and above it. 📍

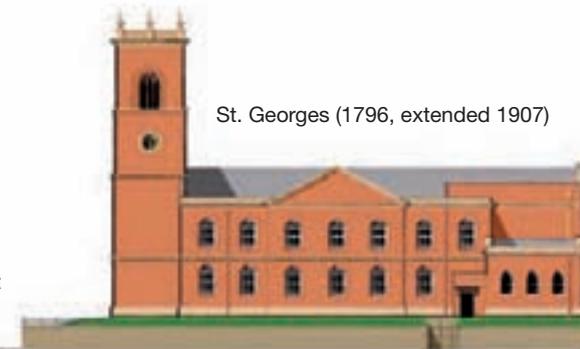
Simplicity of architectural form is carried through into the palette of materials, which is generally a combination of red brick (handmade on the older buildings) and sandstone, either as dressing or ashlar cladding.

Window and door openings maintain a domestic scale and simplicity throughout. Most window and door reveals are shallow and rely on simple proportions rather than strong modelling of the façade. Contrast these examples of classical proportion with the baroque detailing of the Civic Core (p.63). 📍

44-80, St. Georges Road. Originally built as houses around 1820. Some original door and window details remain.



Bath Street



St. Georges (1796, extended 1907)

# Design Guidance

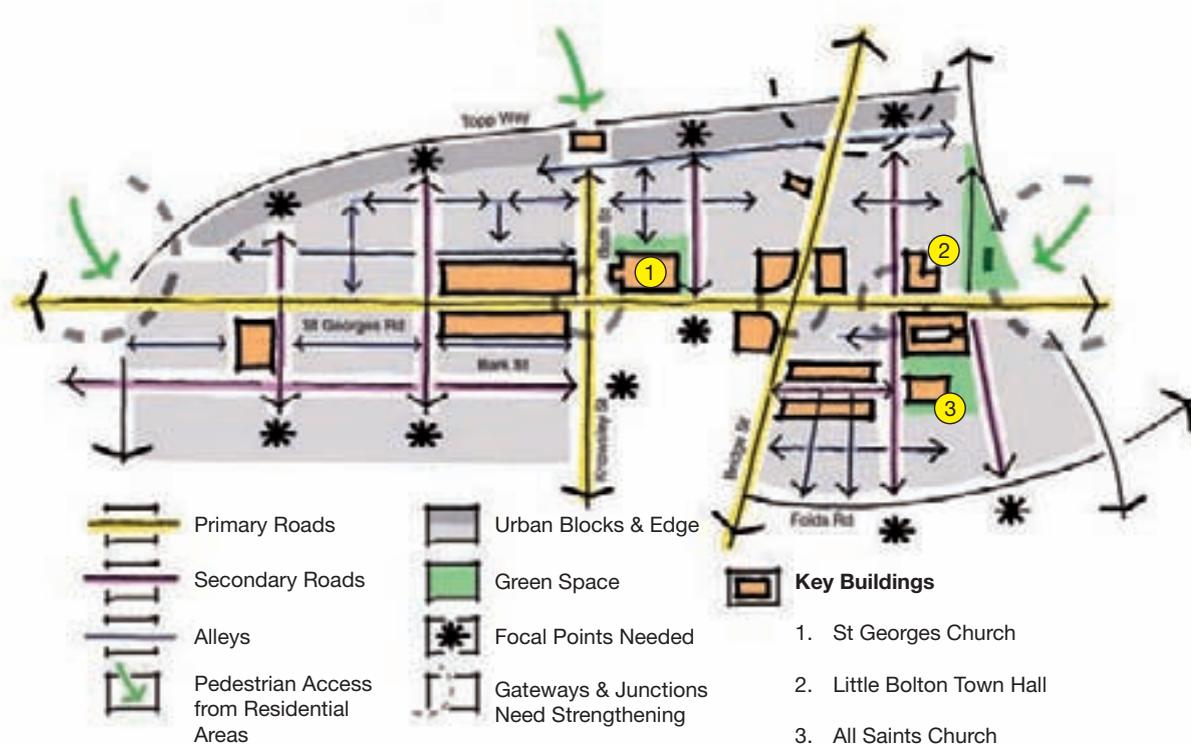
## Little Bolton

### URBAN STRUCTURE AND GRAIN

Successful townscape in this area depends on the reintegration of St. Georges Road and the urban blocks which form its hinterland. Much of the urban structure has been eroded, to the north by the ring road, to the south by the intrusion of the Market Hall extension and site clearance. Enough survives, however, particularly to either side of Bark Street East and between Bath and Palace Streets, to provide a precedent for high density courtyard type arrangements with good street frontage and public realm extending into the heart of developments. Each development plot needs to be considered in terms of these wider strategic issues if further fragmentation is to be avoided. Of particular importance is the hierarchy of streetscape:

#### ST GEORGES ROAD.

The most important road is also the most characteristic: the street is the public space, lacking equivalents to Nelson Square or Victoria Square, but with private and semi private gardens and paved areas set at the back of pavements and often at a different level. This pattern needs to be reinforced through restoration and new development. Pavement widening along the length of St. Georges Road, and a consistent and simple materials and street furniture choice will reinforce visual continuity. The major traffic junctions at either end of St. Georges Road, and at 3 points along its length are currently missed opportunities in design terms: new development and public realm enhancements are needed to create visual closure at the gateways, and a greater sense of focus at the junctions.



# Design Guidance

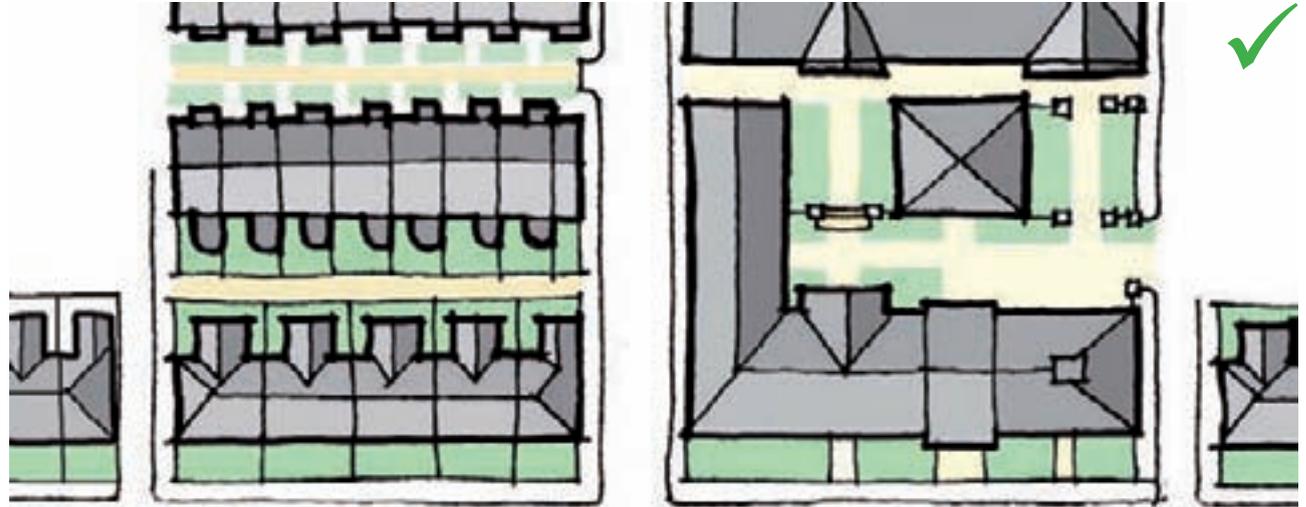
## Little Bolton

### SECONDARY ROADS

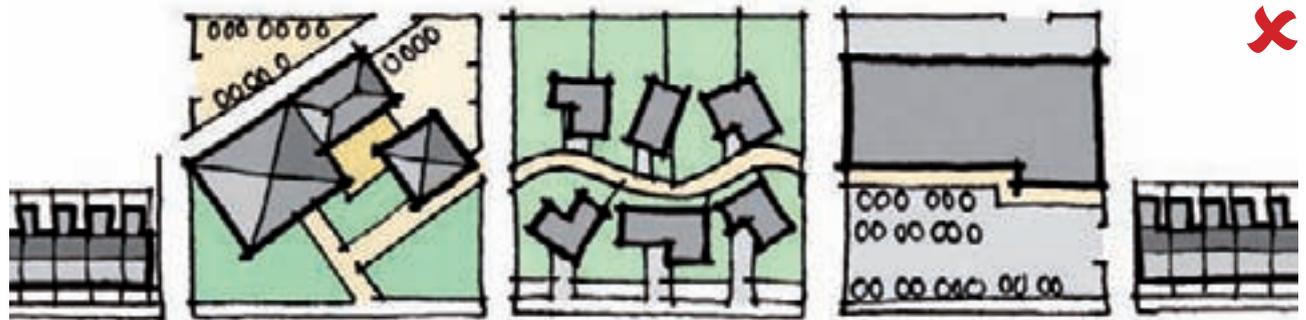
Clearance of urban blocks for surface car parking has undermined the status of these streets. Visual definition and sightline closure is particularly important: at present only Bath Street and Bark Steet East have focal buildings. The precedent needs to be adopted elsewhere, along with consideration of additional pedestrian areas, particularly on streets that terminate against Topp Way and provide priority pedestrian access. The enhancement of Bath Street and All Saints Street could be coordinated with the junction improvements off St. Georges Road.

### COURTYARDS AND ALLEYWAYS

The most threatened part of the public realm hierarchy are the narrow alleys and passages set within urban blocks. Retention of these may not be possible in all cases, but is desirable and in all cases should be taken into account in redevelopment proposals. Designs will be welcomed which establish a good perimeter block structure, and either retain existing access or create an equivalent pattern of internal block permeability for instance through courtyards, atria or other openings in the block structure. Proposals will be resisted which create a weak or impermeable block perimeter, for instance through edge car parking.



Examples of block layouts which maintain consistent street frontage and appropriate block density and public space layout to the rear of the main frontage.



Poor block layout: development at an angle to the main street line, no effective frontage, set back from the street line behind perimeter car parking.

# Design Guidance

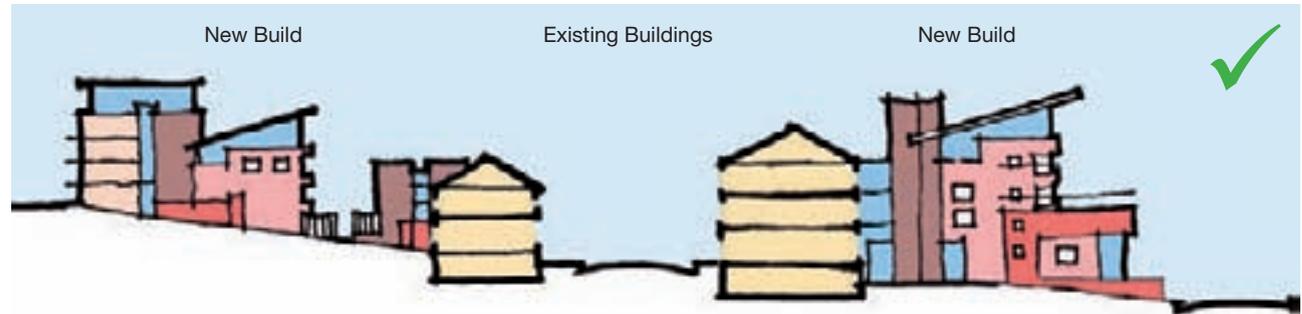
## Little Bolton

### HEIGHT AND MASSING

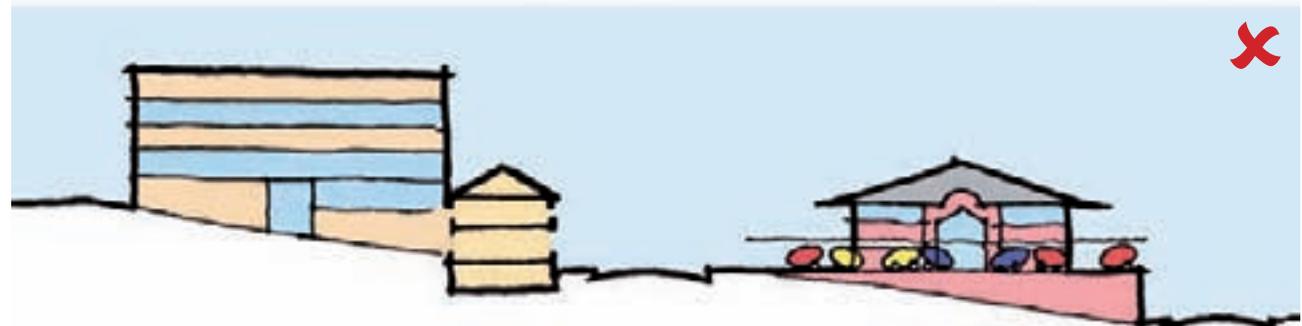
Many of the original buildings in Little Bolton still stand, and it is expected that development proposals will seek to retain and enhance structures through reuse and adaptation. New build will be encouraged which responds to the specific townscape character of St. Georges Road and does not aim to repeat, without modification, the scale of commercial development seen elsewhere, for instance in the Civic Core.

New development needs to take into account the scale relationships along St. Georges Road. Development will be encouraged which reflects the contrast between the domestic terraces on the north side (2 – 3 storey, often with front garden and basement) and the south side (3 – 4 storey, generally to back of pavement, with basement level set into the slope and accessible from the rear).

The form of developments on land to the rear of blocks facing the main street needs to be considered in terms of its visual relationship with St. Georges Road. Proposals for larger blocks will be welcomed which successfully manage the increase in scale back from the street frontage. This could be achieved either through separate blocks, or a single building which steps up in scale away from the main frontage. Avoid solutions which impose a single scale across the site, or reduce the street frontage to a plinth for a much larger block to the rear.



**Appropriate scale and massing of new build in relation to existing properties on the main road. The design also expresses the change in level across the site.**



**Inappropriate design proposals: on the left the new build is out of scale with the existing building, and would be clearly visible from the main road, on the right the new development has no effective frontage onto the main road, or to the valley site.**



High quality streetscape.



Domestic scale.

# Design Guidance

## Little Bolton

### DETAILS AND MATERIALS

New design proposals should complement the horizontal emphasis of the domestic terrace, terminating at clearly expressed vertical features. Street frontages on St. Georges Road tend to be composed as related architectural elements rather than individual components, and modern proposals should consider how this can be interpreted. The residential terrace also adds variety to the streetscape through multiple entrances onto the street and variation in colour schemes between properties. This domestic arrangement, often set back behind small front gardens, takes the place of active commercial frontage typical elsewhere in the Town Centre. Avoid areas of blank frontage and unrelieved repetition of design elements.

The undemonstrative architectural character of Little Bolton is most visible in the detailing of existing buildings, which use a consistent palette of materials – generally red / orange hand made brick and sandstone dressings – and a restrained use of mouldings and decoration. Modern proposals should complement this, making use of equivalent modern or traditional construction and cladding materials. Strong material contrasts and asymmetry will be considered only if they add focal features without detracting from the overall composition of the streetscape. Generally, avoid sculptural or curved architectural surfaces, strong expression of structure and use of materials with no clear precedents in the area.



Complementary scale.



Modern terrace type housing.



High quality streetscape.



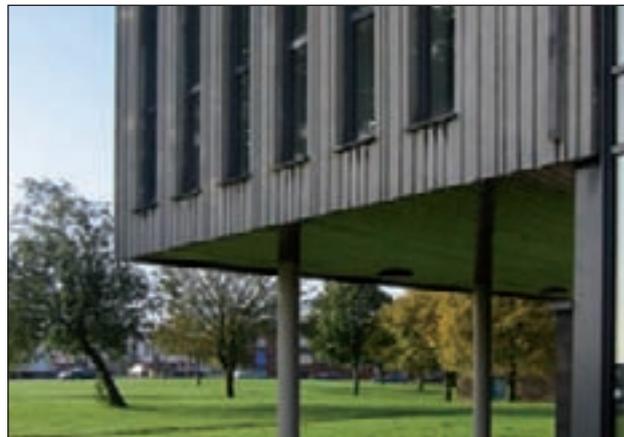
Modern terrace type housing.

## Introduction

# Cultural, University & Transport Quarter



Evidence of economic change is clear in this area of former heavy industry and railway sidings. There is also opportunity and flexibility, provided by the large, well serviced plots and good transport connections. It has important uses – Bolton Market, the University and railway station, and two landmark 19th century church buildings. Provided the pattern of isolated plot development can be overcome, there is exceptional potential for the creation of new townscape, drawing on the context provided by the adjoining Civic Core and the opportunities for original architecture and public realm design. Masterplanning is essential to maximize design and development opportunities.



## Historical Notes

# Cultural, University & Transport Quarter

The construction of the railway from 1828 onwards disrupted the pattern of development in this part of the Town Centre. In place of the projected residential developments, for instance around Holy Trinity church (built 1825), an industrial townscape of foundries and terraced housing grew alongside the railway sidings and cuttings. Partly as a result of this, the area never developed a clear urban focus, and today lacks any significant public open spaces (p.21).

The completion of Le Mans Crescent in the 1930s isolated the area from the Civic Core, and postwar clearance of the industrial and residential developments opened up large areas which have been used for out of town style developments and road infrastructure, further reducing its townscape quality.

The development of a modern college (now university) campus during the 1960's created the beginnings of a post industrial townscape structure in the area.



**Deane Road 1963.** Cotton waste being moved by cart.



**Railway and Tram Station, Trinity Street, 1936.** The clock tower, shortened and repositioned to the north of Trinity Street in the 1980s, dates from the early 20th century rebuilding.



**Cleared industrial land west of the Town Hall, looking west. 1930.** Moor Lane bus station now occupies the site. The pattern of wholesale clearance and lack of urban structure is typical of the area.



**Undated Town Centre skyline view from Queens Park.** The 'Ring of Fire' between the Civic Core and the Park is clear in this photo. The opportunity to create an urban corridor through this area, in spite of clearance of much of the industry, has never been exploited.



**Industrial Housing.** By the middle of the 19th century, the railway cutting had been overlain by a network of back to back terraces.



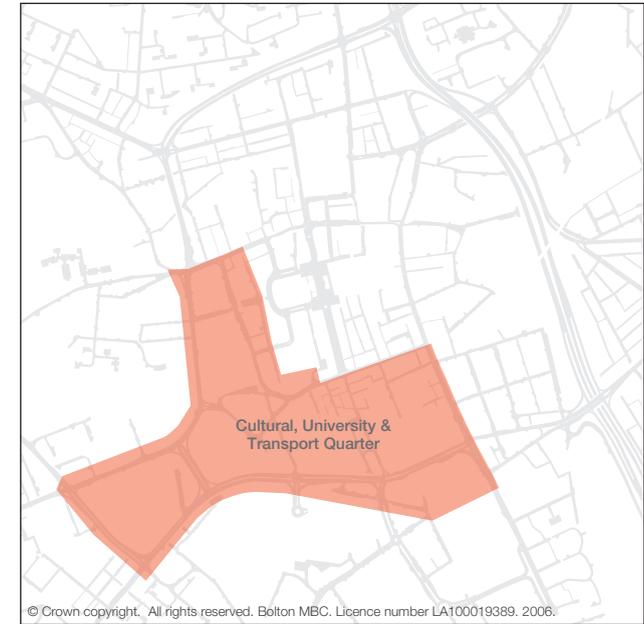
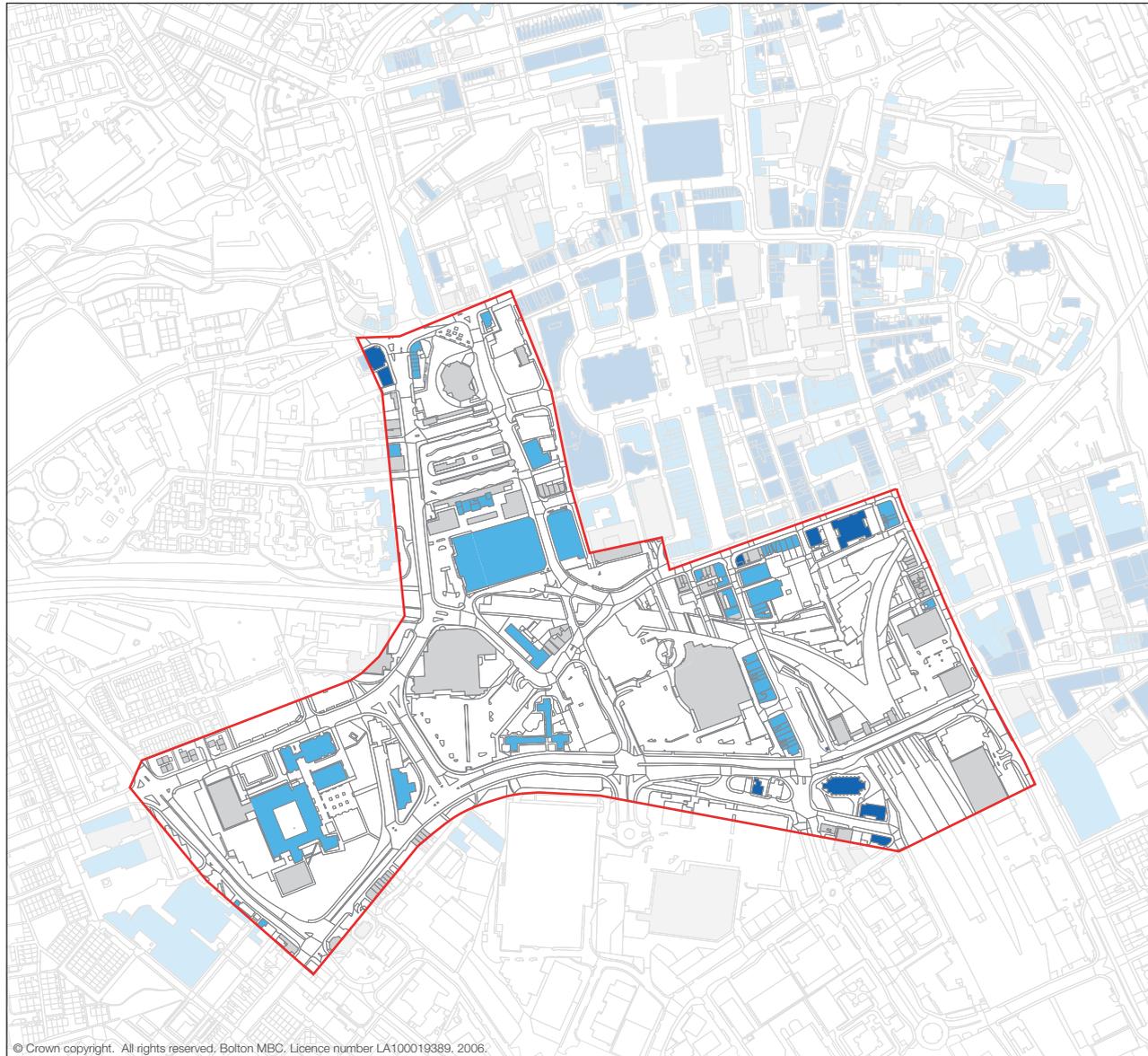
**Back Dawes Street.** The housing has long gone, but the redundant bridges survive.



**Crook Street.** This early 19th century terrace is a fragment of Bradford Square, which can be identified on Baines 1824 map. The construction of the railway ended the growth of this residential area.

# Character Appraisal

## Cultural, University & Transport Quarter

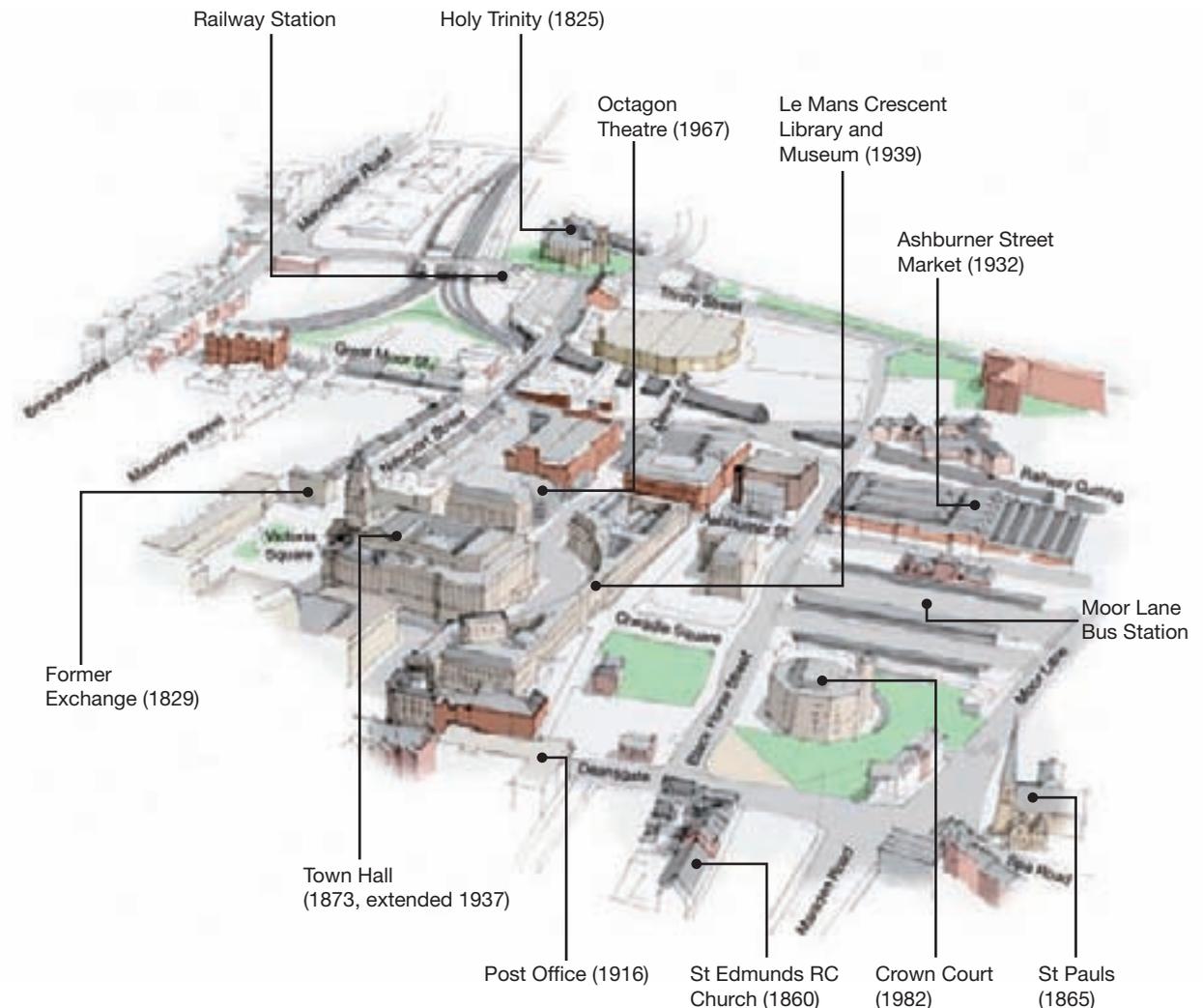


-  Buildings of high value in terms of their contribution to local distinctiveness. This may include architectural, cultural, historic or archaeological value. These buildings will characterise a particular area, or the whole town centre, and will provide precedents for adjacent redevelopment in terms of scale, materials and massing.
-  Building types characteristic of the area in terms of use, scale or materials choice, but with lesser architectural or symbolic value.

## Character Appraisal

# Cultural, University & Transport Quarter

- Le Mans Crescent marks a line of separation between the civic townscape of the core area, and the post industrial townscape west of the Crescent. Development proposals must address this through masterplanning which either builds on the contrast, creates complementary civic townscape, or achieves a combination of both.
- North-south routes usable by pedestrians are well established: Mawdsley Street, Newport Street, Dawes Street and Black Horse Street. East-west routes are weaker, for instance between the railway station and university. Masterplanning proposals will need to anticipate pedestrian movements as a central part of any new public realm framework (p.32).
- Two Town centre landmarks - Holy Trinity and St. Pauls - are isolated by traffic infrastructure. Development proposals, public realm and transport planning should seek to enhance the setting of these buildings and reintegrate them into the townscape.
- Structures with a large footprint, only one active frontage and perimeter car parks are typical of this area. The area has the highest percentage of land surface given over to either road infrastructure or car parking in the Town Centre.
- Although there is more green space in this area, the public realm structure is weak: typically 'space left over after planning', with little or no active frontage at its edges (p.34).



# Character Appraisal

## Cultural, University & Transport Quarter

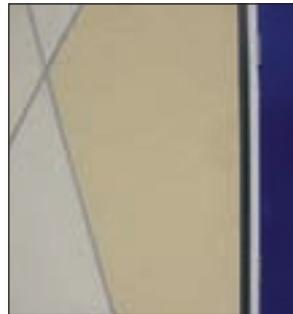
In design terms, the Cultural, University and Transport Quarter is a space occupied by uses, rather than townscape. Where landmark buildings exist, such as Ashburner Street market, or the Post Office on Deansgate, the lack of urban context robs them of significance (p.33). 📍



The typical building mass is large, with either blank frontage or a high proportion of wall to window space, and weak entrances. There is no clear architectural theme, partly because few buildings have effective street frontage. 📍



Building materials are varied. These include modern cladding panels as well as traditional stone and brick finishes. Where it is designed into the environment, tree planting and lawns add to the visual texture of the area. 📍



## Design Guidance

# Cultural, University & Transport Quarter

### SUMMARY OF DESIGN ISSUES

**Public Realm.** The lack of existing urban structure creates a number of opportunities for new townscape. Currently the major activity hubs (the Cultural Quarter, Transport Hub and University Campus) are poorly served by pedestrian routes and feel detached from the adjacent Civic Core. This is in spite of excellent architectural gateways – Le Mans Crescent and Mawdsley Street – and a pattern of major streets which could be enhanced to create a more logical route network.

**The Cultural Quarter** will build on existing facilities around Le Mans Crescent (The Library and Museum) and the Octagon Theatre. Between this group and Moor Lane it is expected townscape design will take its cue from the adjacent Civic Core.

**Transport Hub.** Transport facilities are likely to be rationalised in this area. A strong gateway statement is sought, creating regeneration opportunities and a focal point for the south side of the Town Centre.

**The University and College Campus.** Expansion of education facilities in this area is expected in the next few years. Whilst an increase in building density is likely, the characteristic campus landscape (good public realm and a high proportion of greenery and street trees) will be a third design element alongside the Civic Core areas.

### PUBLIC REALM

Fig. A

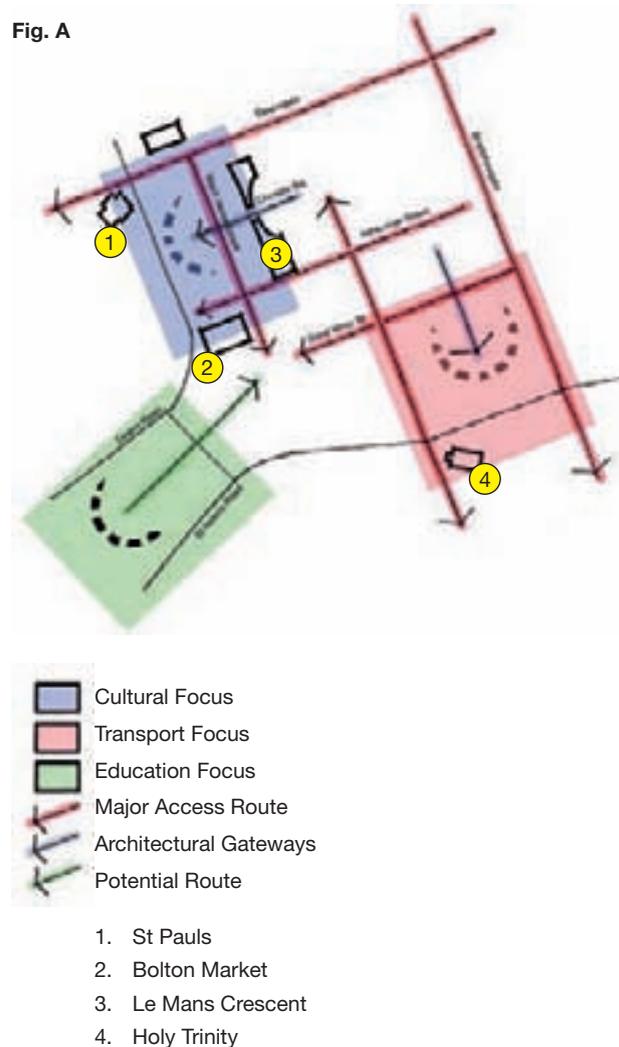


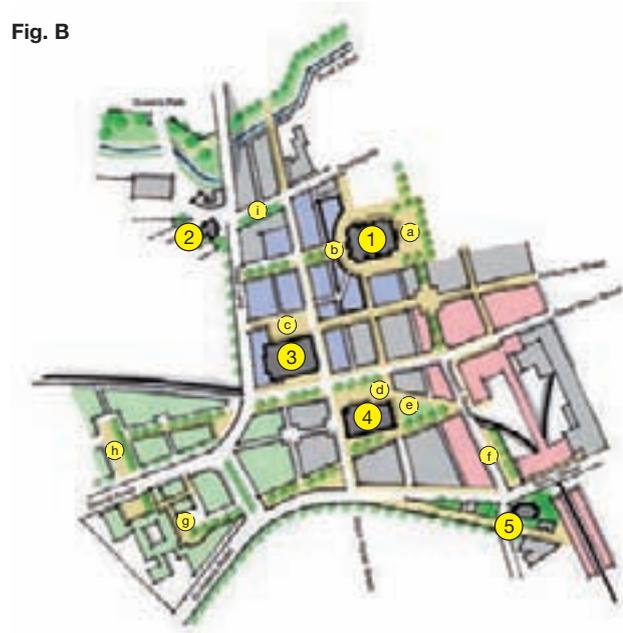
Fig A is a simplified illustration of access patterns. The area is well served by major traffic routes, but there is little or no discernible hierarchy of public realm below the level of the major thoroughfare. There is also a lack of pedestrian routes, both between the three focal areas, and linking back to the Civic Core.

Public realm planning should concentrate on the existing routes which can be enhanced with a hierarchy of connecting streets and public spaces. Several major streets retain the urban qualities of the Bolton street grid: Deansgate and Bradshawgate, Black Horse Street and Great Moor Street, Ashburner Street and Newport Street. In addition the Cultural and Transport activity hubs have distinctive architectural gateways – along Mawdsley Street and through the arch of Le Mans Crescent – which could be developed as pedestrian access from the Civic Core. No clear pedestrian route exists from the University area.



# Cultural, University & Transport Quarter

Fig. B



- Cultural Focus
- Transport Focus
- Education Focus

- 1. Town Hall
- 2. St Pauls Church
- 3. Bolton Market
- 4. Proposed Magistrates Court
- 5. Holy Trinity Church
  
- a. Victoria Square
- b. Cheadle Square
- c. Market Square
- d. Court Square
- e. Court Garden
- f. Trinity Square
- g. University Square
- h. College Square
- i. St Pauls Garden

Fig B is an illustration of the potential for public realm creation in the area. It is not a masterplan: this work remains to be commissioned and may reach different conclusions depending on technical, financial and land ownership constraints. In developing a public realm strategy, however, developers are asked to consider the following issues:

- **Victoria Square / Cheadle Square.** An important architectural gateway to the Cultural Quarter. Cheadle Square should be retained as a focal public space.
- **Market Square / Ashburner Street.** Both the market and future retail users would benefit from public space creation alongside the market facility. Ashburner Street has the potential for development as an east – west route across the Civic Core, creating a new retail focus within the Town Centre.
- **Great Moor Street / Black Horse Street.** These vehicle traffic routes are underused in townscape terms: both should be retained and enhanced with new street furniture and improved pedestrian access. The creation of the Bus Gyratory System should make a more coordinated design approach to both streets possible.
- **Newport Street / Mawdsley Street.** The importance of these north south routes is identified in the Civic Core section. Mawdsley Street has exceptional architectural value and its distinctive qualities should be retained in any development scheme. A strategic approach to the development of the transport interchange should focus on the potential of both streets as gateways to the Town Centre.

## Design Guidance

# Cultural, University & Transport Quarter

- Holy Trinity church / Crook Street / Trinity Street. The church and its grounds are an underexploited landmark on the south edge of the Town Centre. New development should aim to retain the 19th century grouping of church, grounds and nearby 19th century properties and create new public space around the churchyard and surviving sections of Crook Street. This could form part of a larger landscape treatment of the major traffic and pedestrian route along Trinity Street / St. Helens Road, involving improved pedestrian paving, new street lighting and boulevard street tree planting.
- Deansgate / St. Pauls Church / Moor Lane. The creation of street frontage along the south side of Deansgate up to the junction with Moor Lane is an important masterplanning objective: modification of the existing public open space near the court building may in the long term be possible to frame the view of St. Pauls church more effectively. Moor Lane / Deane Road, like Trinity Street, will remain a major traffic thoroughfare; a boulevard landscape treatment that visually unifies the streetscape with quality paving, street furniture and avenue tree planting would be appropriate here.
- Magistrates Court. The creation of an effective east – west pedestrian route between the Interchange and University, away from the traffic corridors of Trinity Street and Moor Lane, will be assisted by the construction of the Magistrates Court. Public space is already planned to the north of the building and site layout decisions to the east and west of the Court, if coordinated on a sufficient scale with highways infrastructure, could achieve a more permeable and urban townscape structure.

- The campus landscape to the west of Moor Lane is a template for new public realm design in this part of the Town Centre. The tree lined boulevard could become the most characteristic feature of public space in the area: proposals should consider how this can be incorporated into a high density, more urban context.



## Design Guidance

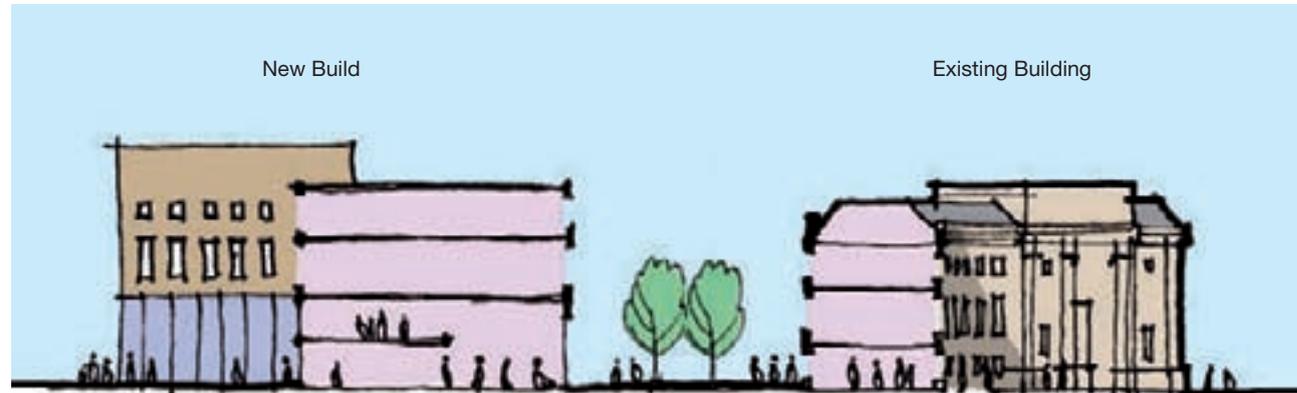
# Cultural, University & Transport Quarter

### CULTURAL QUARTER: URBAN STRUCTURE AND GRAIN

The design precedent for this area is set by the civic townscape to the east of the Crescent, which has adopted an informal code of scale, proportion and materials. (P.63) Development proposals for the Cultural Quarter area need not duplicate the architectural language of the Civic Core, but they must address the lack of townscape structure which currently exists. Masterplanning is a necessary part of this process and proposals for individual site development must include an analysis of context, and explanation of the wider townscape benefits of the design.

The structure of public realm in the area must resolve the strong east – west alignment of the Town Hall, the Crescent arch and Cheadle Square, and the direction of traffic flow which is mostly north–south between Deansgate and the Market / University area. East of the Town Hall, the same issue is managed through the large urban space of Victoria Square and the formal north south axis of Newport Street. A solution of similar vision and quality is required in the Cultural Quarter area. The existing urban grid could be the template, although equally a more organic arrangement of spaces could be developed which allows diagonal movements between activity areas. This suggests a solution based upon urban squares as much as streets.

There is potential for contrast and variety in the treatment of spaces between blocks, and the penetration of blocks using atria, galleries or courtyard spaces.



The architectural relationship between La Mans Crescent and new development is likely to characterise the design approach to the cultural quarter as a whole. The illustration above shows a formal massing and scale arrangement.



A more innovative approach which makes use of contrast in form or materials choice, or has a direct link with the existing buildings, will also be considered.

The relationship between existing listed buildings and new build creates similar opportunities, in particular the long west frontage of Le Mans Crescent. The creation of new internal and external spaces through innovative architectural interventions will be encouraged, and could form the defining design statement for the area.

## Design Guidance

# Cultural, University & Transport Quarter

### CULTURAL QUARTER: HEIGHT AND MASSING

The Council would like to encourage a distinctive and innovative new urban quarter and will consider a range of proposals, including designs which reflect the urban typology of the nearby Civic Core, and others which create deliberate contrast. The key to successful design will be the degree to which proposals are integrated within an urban framework which includes existing buildings and spaces.

Although the area lacks urban structure, it has existing landmarks at its perimeter which should be taken into account when developing proposals (p.28). These include:

- i) The triumphal arch entrance through the Crescent and its alignment with the Town Hall clock tower.
- ii) The west elevation of Le Mans Crescent. This is the single most distinctive architectural feature in the area. Design decisions taken in relation to the building – its reuse, adaptation and the development of extensions or buildings adjacent to the Crescent – are likely to characterise much of the Cultural Quarter area. The Council will not accept proposals which restrict the potential for development of the Crescent and do not relate to it in design terms.
- iii) Ashburner Street Market. It is Council policy to enhance the Market as an integral part of the Cultural Quarter. Proposals should take this into account at the masterplanning stage and consider how built form and public space can be used to integrate the Market. This could include adaptation

or reuse of the market building and outdoor market spaces on the present site or nearby. The Council will not accept proposals which restrict access to or visibility of the Market facility.

- iv) Deansgate – the Post Office and St. Pauls Church. Proposals within the Cultural Quarter area should create new street frontage along Deansgate. The rectangular urban blocks characteristic of the Civic Core should be retained as far as possible. Avoid perimeter car parking treatments, or use of the Deansgate frontage for service access. Only active frontage will be considered facing onto Deansgate, and proposals should plan for a diversity of uses which complement the streets busy commercial character.

### CULTURAL QUARTER: DETAILS AND MATERIALS

As with other aspects of design in the Cultural Quarter, the council will consider both complement and contrast in the detailing of proposals. A traditional choice of materials would reflect the traditional palette of the Town Hall area, ie structural or cladding materials in sandstone or approved equivalents. Materials contrast can also be considered, particularly between solid and transparency if presented as part of the development of internal and external spaces.

The 'subversion' of the civic style could also extend into more adventurous material choices and architectural forms, but these will be considered on a case by case basis, and deliberate contrasts will only be considered in relation to a masterplanned hierarchy of spaces and buildings.



Contrast - solid and transparency.



Contrast - new landmark buildings.



Contrast - texture and massing.

## Design Guidance

# Cultural, University & Transport Quarter

### TRANSPORT HUB: URBAN STRUCTURE AND GRAIN

In contrast to the Cultural Quarter which shares the urban block pattern of the Civic Core, the Transport Hub is characterized by a north – south street pattern and 3–4 storey terraces. It is similar to the Nelson Square area identified within the Civic Core, and the following recommendations should be read in conjunction with the description of that area on page 70.

Retaining active street frontage in this area is important: proposals for both the Transport Interchange and other uses should consider how existing frontage can be enhanced and new building lines to the back of pavement can be created. Infrastructure such as bus and car parking bays should be managed behind these frontages as far as possible.

### TRANSPORT HUB: HEIGHT AND MASSING

The Council will consider proposals which support the recreation of an urban gateway in the vicinity of the station. At present, the main north – south and east – west routes from the railway station lack urban context, particularly south of Great Moor Street, where the main landmark (Holy Trinity Church) is isolated by road infrastructure, gap sites and low density retail shed developments.

Proposals will be welcomed which respond to the potential of the site: this could include taller structures or buildings with a distinctive architectural form. Note,

though, that the recreation of active street frontage is a key objective in this area; developments should face onto streets with car parking managed away from the street.

New landmark buildings are possible, particularly if they are designed into a hierarchy of scale and support a permeable route network. This is likely to involve a focus of scale and massing along the main street frontages eg Great Moor Street, and around key buildings such as the station and proposed Magistrates Court.

### TRANSPORT HUB: DETAILS AND MATERIALS

The ambition to create an urban gateway suggests more flexibility in design and choice of materials. The Council will consider proposals which project an appropriate first and last impression of the Town Centre; that is, designs which are distinctive in their own right and relate well to the surrounding townscape. The Victorian layout provides some useful precedents, in particular the alignment of station platforms with the main north – south access routes. The clarity of this arrangement has never been expressed architecturally: the challenge of connecting transport infrastructure with Bolton's straight, open streetscape is a good brief for innovative modern design.



Innovative transport facility design.



Clear signage.



High quality detailing.

## Design Guidance

# Cultural, University & Transport Quarter

### UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE QUARTER: URBAN STRUCTURE AND GRAIN

The University is the only part of the Building Bolton study which is completely detached from the historic core of the Town Centre. The clearest precedent for new design in the area is the campus itself, developed since the 1960s between Deane Road and St Helens Road. The low density combination of modern blocks and open tree planted areas forms a distinctive feature at the south west gateway to the Town Centre, and has strengths and weaknesses as a template for new development:

- i) The campus landscape is the only large scale intervention in Bolton Town Centre which provides open space as an integral part of its layout. Buildings and spaces create a humane environment which is also a precedent for future expansion of the campus, particularly eastwards towards the Transport Hub and northwards towards the Cultural Quarter / river corridor / Queens Park (p.35).
- ii) The main weakness of the present layout is the inward facing character of the building group; most external facades are set well back from the street frontage, reducing the University's prominence as a gateway feature, weakening street frontages and lowering the status of the surrounding green spaces. Current proposals to create surface car parking in these areas will reinforce the isolation of the campus (p.33).

Developers are recommended to examine the successful and less attractive aspects of the campus landscape as a precedent for new design. The planning of public spaces and movement patterns is important, and should reflect a sustainable agenda in the generosity of spaces and use of urban greenery such as street trees.

Greater density and more consistent townscape form and street frontage are also important aspects of planning: active frontage at the site perimeter as far as possible, good corner buildings, hierarchy of built form and clearly expressed entrances. The layout of buildings should assist site permeability. Use multistorey car parking combined with other uses where possible. Where surface car parking is necessary, contain it within building basements or internal courts.

### UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE QUARTER: HEIGHT AND MASSING

This is a major gateway opportunity and the scale of buildings should reflect this. It is expected that active street frontage will be used even on the larger structures, and it is recommended building heights be assessed in relation to key views of Town Centre landmarks (p.28).

It is important that new development creates visual legibility: in design terms this means a hierarchy of massing, clear sightlines and placing of landmarks to assist orientation. Avoid the development of building blocks which lack any clear relationship to their wider landscape surroundings, for instance isolated towers on island sites.

### UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE QUARTER: DETAILS AND MATERIALS

Specification will depend upon location and use. The gateway location demands distinctive architecture and new landmark buildings. Proposals from developers will be assessed on a case by case basis, but it will assist negotiations if the case for design choices can be made in relation to the wider landscape context.



New landmark buildings at junctions.



Green campus setting for new buildings.

# Chapter 4

## Implementation

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Acknowledgements

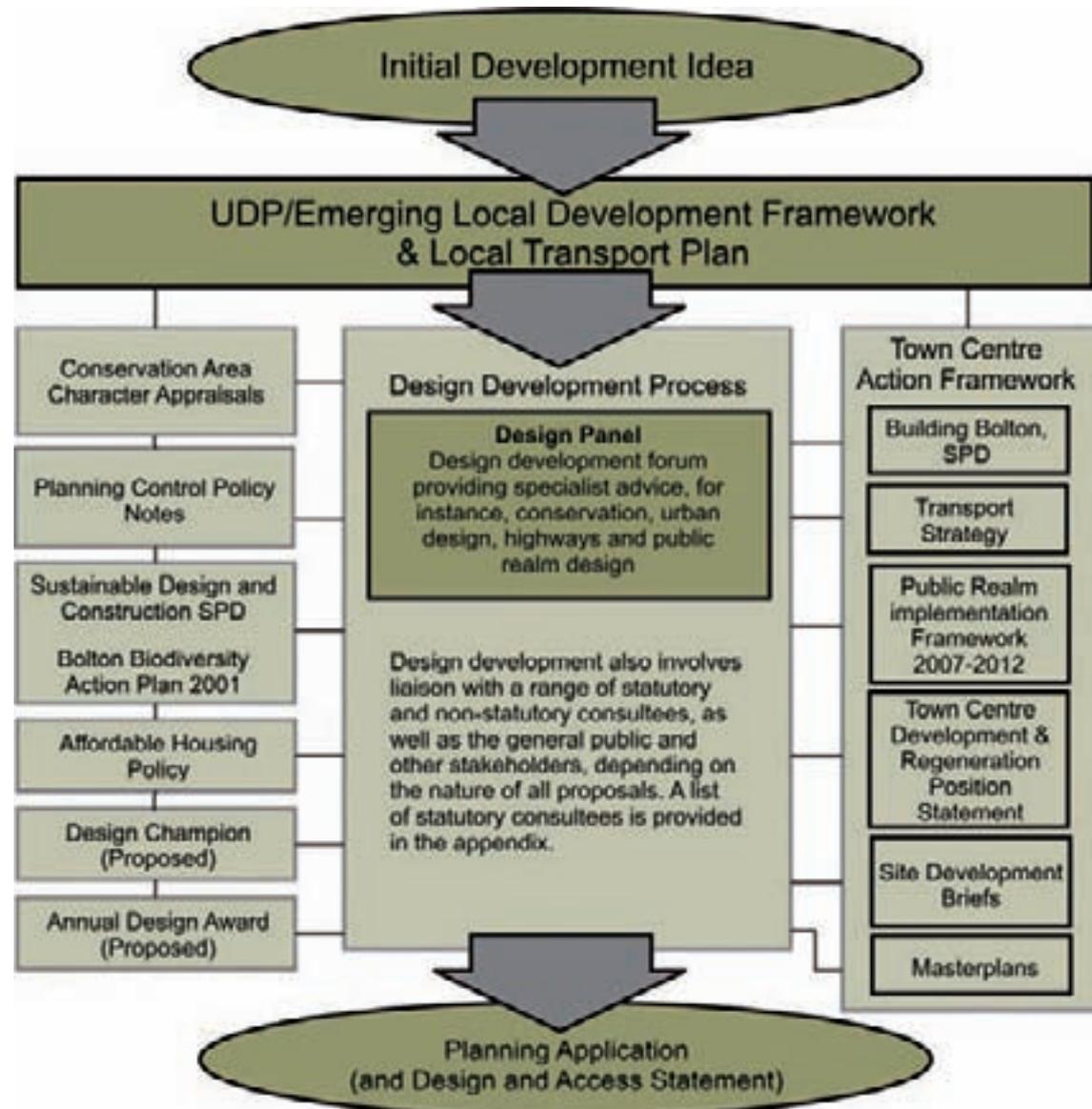


## Implementation

# Town Centre Design Panel

The Building Bolton SPD is part of a development enabling process Bolton Council has put in place to raise the standard of new development in Bolton Town Centre and borough wide, and deliver the Community Plan objective to 'make Bolton a first class centre for shopping, leisure, culture and living'. The framework within which the SPD will be implemented is described in this chapter, including structures already in place, in course of development, or projected for the near future.

The diagram illustrates the process Bolton Council has created to ensure design issues are addressed at an appropriate level, at the earliest possible stage. The key components of the process are the adopted UDP / Emerging Local Development Framework, which is the source document for all design policy, and the Town Centre Design Panel, which is the forum for design discussions. The Panel is supported in its work by a series of policy documents, including Building Bolton, all of which are elaborations of the policy in the UDP / LDF.



## Implementation

# Town Centre Design Panel

The Panel is the main forum for pre-application discussions of design issues. It comprises Development Control, Regeneration, Highways and Environmental Design expertise within the Council and is able to offer advice on a range of issues to developers at the earlier stages of their project development process. The main aim is to improve the quality of design for applications in the Town Centre and ensure they fit with the strategic aims of the department, including the Town Centre Action Framework as well as giving normal pre-application advice on conformity with the UDP generally.

The Panel's work is in line with the recommendations of the Government's Planning Green Paper 'Planning: Delivering a Fundamental Change (December 2001)' which emphasizes the role of pre-application discussions in achieving consensus on design issues at an early stage, and providing greater certainty for applicants once their application is being processed. The Building Bolton SPD will support the work of the Panel by providing a design reference point alongside existing Conservation Area guidance and other supplementary planning documents.

Developers wishing to arrange a Design Panel meeting to discuss their proposals should contact either the Group Planning Officer (Town Centre) or the Town Centre Coordinator using the contact details below. It is important that the applicant describes the background to their project, the site if one has been identified, and any issues which may need specialist input, so that key officers can be notified. Please refer to the relevant sections in Building Bolton, and check if the site falls within a Conservation Area boundary. If it does, the relevant Conservation Area Character Appraisal (available from Planning Control), should also be consulted.

### DESIGN PANEL CONTACTS

#### Contact Address

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#### Group Planning Officer

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#### Urban Design Officer (Development and Regeneration)

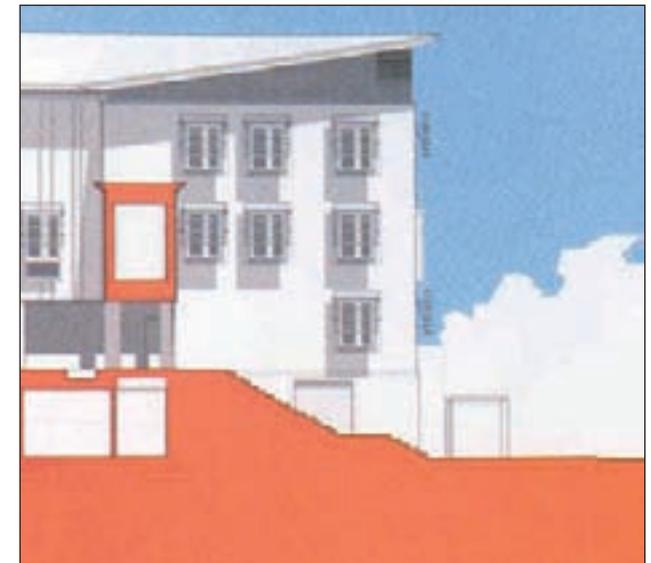
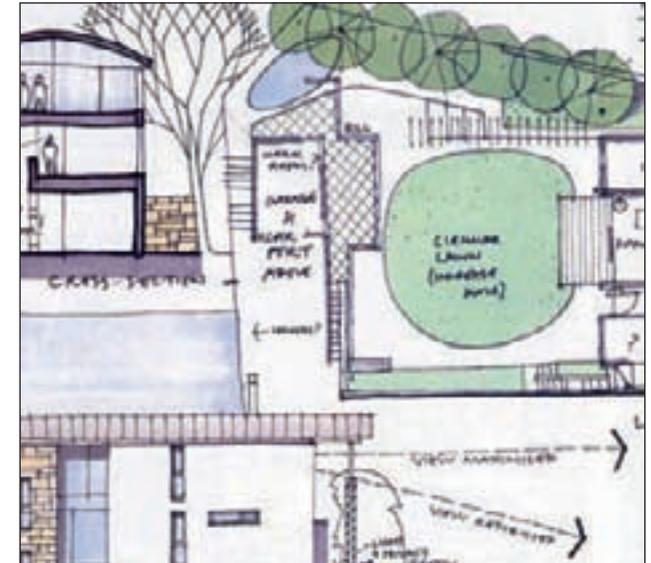
Mike Taylor

#### Sustainable Development Team

Barry Simons

#### Town Centre Developers Forum and other Initiatives

The council will coordinate and promote development across the range of development opportunities in the Town Centre in conjunction with the private sector. An ongoing development engagement process will include a Developers' Forum. The Forum will provide the primary point of contact between the Council and the various interests representing the property development industry. Its objective is to promote Bolton as an investment destination, and provide a flexible mechanism for exchange of ideas between the Council and its partners.



# Implementation

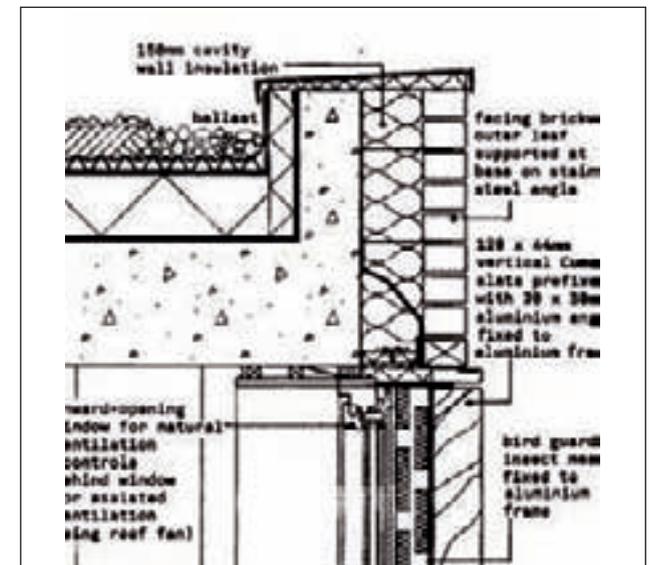
## Town Centre Design Panel

The main interest groups are: Developers, Builders, Funding Bodies, Development Professionals (eg Architects) and Landowners. It is expected meetings will be held with particular interest groups or individuals on specific topics. Development promotion will be resourced on the Council side by the Town Centre Development Coordinator and other Council officers to ensure the full range of development issues are addressed including the design agenda set out in Building Bolton and other SPD.

The Council intends to continue developing a design agenda for Bolton Town Centre. At the time of publication (November 2006), proposals are being developed for a Design and Heritage Champion role, which will provide active advocacy and conservation issues at Elected Member level. The key objectives of the Design and Historic Environment Champion will be to ensure that both design and heritage issues are taken into account at each stage of the decision making process within the local authority. The Champion will be expected to promote the value of good quality urban design, architectural design and the historic environment as a catalyst for urban regeneration and neighbourhood renewal.

A Bolton Design Award is also proposed, to be run annually. The Award would be open to projects and developments that had been completed in the proceeding year. Entries for the design award will not be limited to new developments in the Town Centre, but will include; new urban and rural developments, refurbishment and conversion of historical buildings, community projects and environmental improvement projects.

There will be two awards; the Council Design Award and a Bolton News Design Award. The Council Award will be run by the Town Centre Design Panel, local Design Champions and the Council's Design and Historic Environment Champion. Developers and architectural practices will be invited to submit schemes and projects that have been completed in the proceeding year and that promote good architectural and urban design practice. The Bolton News Award, in partnership with the Bolton News, will promote all the short listed schemes from the Council Award and invite the people of Bolton through the Evening News to select their favorite building or project.



# Appendix A

## Glossary

**Accessibility.** The ability of people to move round an area and to reach places and facilities, including elderly and disabled people, those with young children and those encumbered with luggage or shopping.

**Adaptability.** The capacity of a building or space to be changed so as to respond to changing social, technological and economic conditions.

**Brief.** This guide refers to site-specific briefs as development briefs. Site-specific briefs are also called a variety of other names, including design briefs, planning briefs and development frameworks.

**Building elements.** Doors, windows, cornices and other features which contribute to the overall design of a building.

**Context.** The setting of a site or area, including factors such as traffic, activities and land uses as well as landscape and built form.

**Context (or site and area) appraisal.** A detailed analysis of the features of a site or area (including land uses, built and natural environment, and social and physical characteristics) which serves as the basis for an urban design framework, development brief, design guide or other policy or guidance.

**Density.** The floorspace of a building or buildings or some other unit measure in relation to a given area of land. Built density can be expressed in terms of plot ratio (for commercial development); number of units or habitable rooms per hectare (for residential

development); site coverage plus the number of floors or a maximum building height; or a combination of these.

**Design principle.** An expression of one of the basic design ideas at the heart of an urban design framework, design guide, development brief or a development.

**Desire line.** An imaginary line linking facilities or places which people would find it convenient to travel between easily.

**Development brief.** A document, prepared by a local planning authority, a developer, or jointly, providing guidance on how a site of significant size or sensitivity should be developed. Site-specific briefs are sometimes known as planning briefs, design briefs and development frameworks.

**Elevation.** The facade of a building, or the drawing of a facade.

**Enclosure.** The use of buildings to create a sense of defined space.

**Fenestration.** The arrangement of windows on a facade.

**Form.** The layout (structure and urban grain), density, scale (height and massing), appearance (materials and details) and landscape of development.

**Grain.** The pattern of the arrangement and size of buildings and their plots in a settlement; and the

degree to which an area's pattern of street-blocks and street junctions is respectively small and frequent, or large and infrequent.

**Height.** The height of a building can be expressed in terms of a maximum number of floors; a maximum height of parapet or ridge; a maximum overall height; any of these maximum heights in combination with a maximum number of floors; a ratio of building height to street or space width; height relative to particular landmarks or background buildings; or strategic views.

**Landmark.** A building or structure that stands out from its background by virtue of height, size or some other aspect of design.

**Landscape.** The character and appearance of land, including its shape, form, ecology, natural features, colours and elements and the way these components combine. Landscape character can be expressed through landscape appraisal, and maps or plans. In towns 'townscape' describes the same concept.

**Layout.** The way buildings, routes and open spaces are placed in relation to each other.

**Legibility.** The degree to which a place can be easily understood and traversed.

**Local distinctiveness.** The positive features of a place and its communities which contribute to its special character and sense of place.

# Appendix A

## Glossary

**Massing.** The combined effect of the height, bulk and silhouette of a building or group of buildings.

**Mixed uses.** A mix of uses within a building, on a site or within a particular area. 'Horizontal' mixed uses are side by side, usually in different buildings. 'Vertical' mixed uses are on different floors of the same building.

**Movement.** People and vehicles going to and passing through buildings, places and spaces. The movement network can be shown on plans, by space syntax analysis, by highway designations, by figure and ground diagrams, through data on origins and destinations or pedestrian flows, by desire lines, by details of public transport services, by walk bands or by details of cycle routes.

**Permeability.** The degree to which an area has a variety of pleasant, convenient and safe routes through it.

**Planning brief.** This guide refers to site-specific briefs as development briefs. Other names, including planning briefs, design briefs and development frameworks are also used.

**Proactive development control.** Any process by which a local authority works with potential planning applicants to improve the quality of development proposals as early as possible before a planning application is submitted.

**Public art.** Permanent or temporary physical works of art visible to the general public, whether part of the building or free-standing: can include sculpture, lighting

effects, street furniture, paving, railings and signs.

**Public realm.** The parts of a village, town or city (whether publicly or privately owned) that are available, without charge, for everyone to use or see, including streets, squares and parks.

**Scale.** The impression of a building when seen in relation to its surroundings, or the size of parts of a building or its details, particularly as experienced in relation to the size of a person. Sometimes it is the total dimensions of a building which give it its sense of scale: at other times it is the size of the elements and the way they are combined. The concept is a difficult and ambiguous one: often the word is used simply as a synonym for 'size'. See 'Human scale'.

**Section.** Drawing showing a slice through a building or site.

**Settlement pattern.** The distinctive way that the roads, paths and buildings are laid out in a particular place.

**Street furniture.** Structures in and adjacent to the highway which contribute to the street scene, such as bus shelters, litter bins, seating, lighting, railings and signs.

**Sustainable development.** Development which meets present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to achieve their own needs and aspirations.

**Topography.** A description or representation of artificial or natural features on or of the ground.

**Urban design.** The art of making places. Urban design involves the design of buildings, groups of buildings, spaces and landscapes, in villages, towns and cities, and the establishment of frameworks and processes which facilitate successful development.

**Vernacular.** The way in which ordinary buildings were built in a particular place, making use of local styles, techniques and materials and responding to local economic and social conditions.

**View.** What is visible from a particular point. Compare 'Vista'.

**Vista.** An enclosed view, usually a long and narrow one.

**Visual clutter.** The uncoordinated arrangement of street furniture, signs and other features.

## Appendix B

# Further Reading

Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development

Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas EH

Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning for Town Centres

Design Champions CABE 2006

Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning and the Historic Environment

A Guidance Note on Historic Environment Champions EH 2004

By Design - Urban Design in the Planning System: Towards Better Practice. DETR

Online advice about contextual design is available at <http://www.building-in-context.org/>

Building in Context: New Development in Historic Areas CABE / English Heritage 2002

These documents are available to download free of charge at the following websites:

Making Design Policy Work: How to Deliver Good design Through Your Local Development Framework. CABE 2005

Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE): <http://www.cabe.org.uk/>

Heritage Works: The Use of Historic Buildings in Regeneration English Heritage

English Heritage (EH): <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/>

Protecting Design Quality in Planning CABE 2003

Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG): <http://www.communities.gov.uk/>

The Councillors Guide to Urban Design CABE 2003

Design at a Glance: a Quick Reference to National Design Policy CABE 2006

Design and Access Statements: How to Write, Read and Use Them CABE 2006

The Cost of Bad Design CABE 2006

# Appendix C

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**Historic Images:** (Bury and Bolton Treasures in Trust - [www.ourtreasures.org](http://www.ourtreasures.org)) Perry Bonewell, Louise Window (Bolton News - [www.theboltonnews.co.uk](http://www.theboltonnews.co.uk)) Richard Rollon

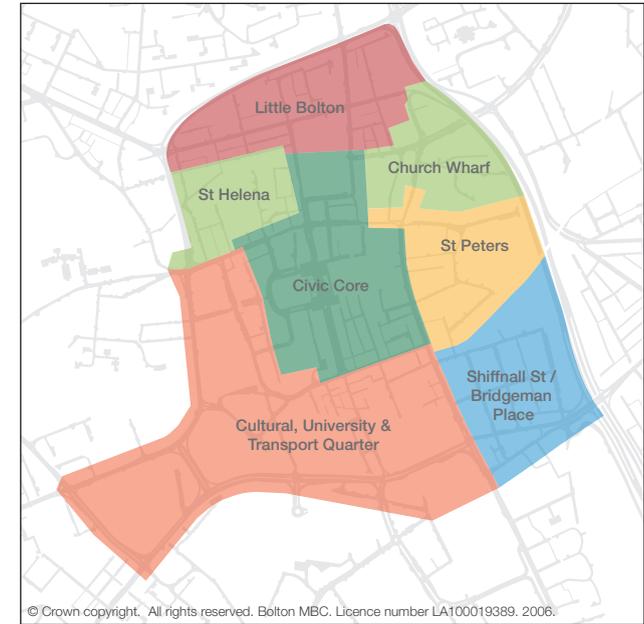
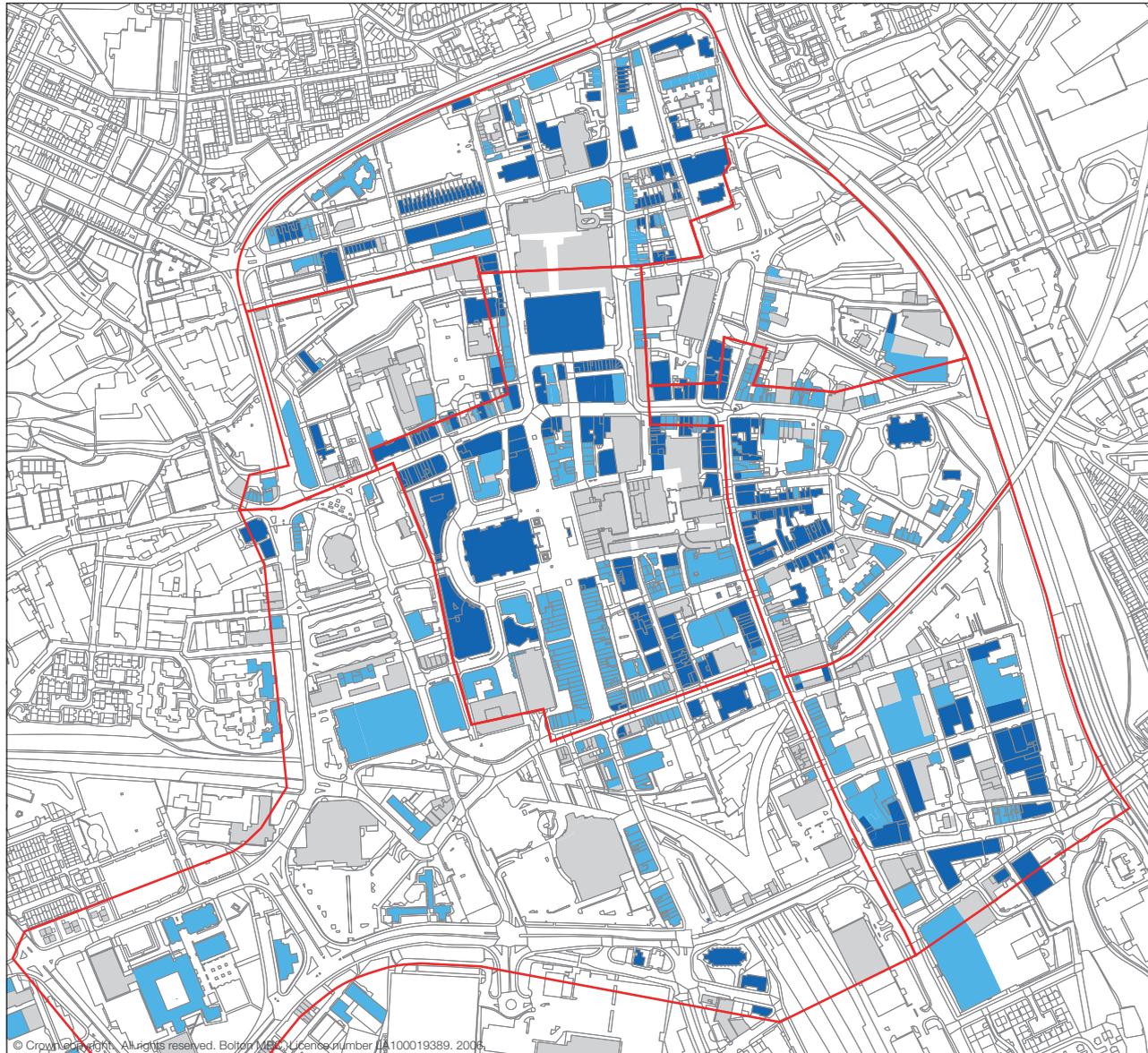
**Aerial Photography:** Image Aviation

**Illustrations:** Mike Taylor

**Consultation Credits:** Special thanks are due to the many individuals who took part in the consultation exercise and provided commentary on the draft text and additional material, photographs and other information about Bolton Town Centre.

# Building Bolton

## Local Distinctiveness



- Buildings of high value in terms of their contribution to local distinctiveness. This may include architectural, cultural, historic or archaeological value. These buildings will characterise a particular area, or the whole town centre, and will provide precedents for adjacent redevelopment in terms of scale, materials and massing.
  
- Building types characteristic of the area in terms of use, scale or materials choice, but with lesser architectural or symbolic value.



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