

# Macclesfield Town Centre

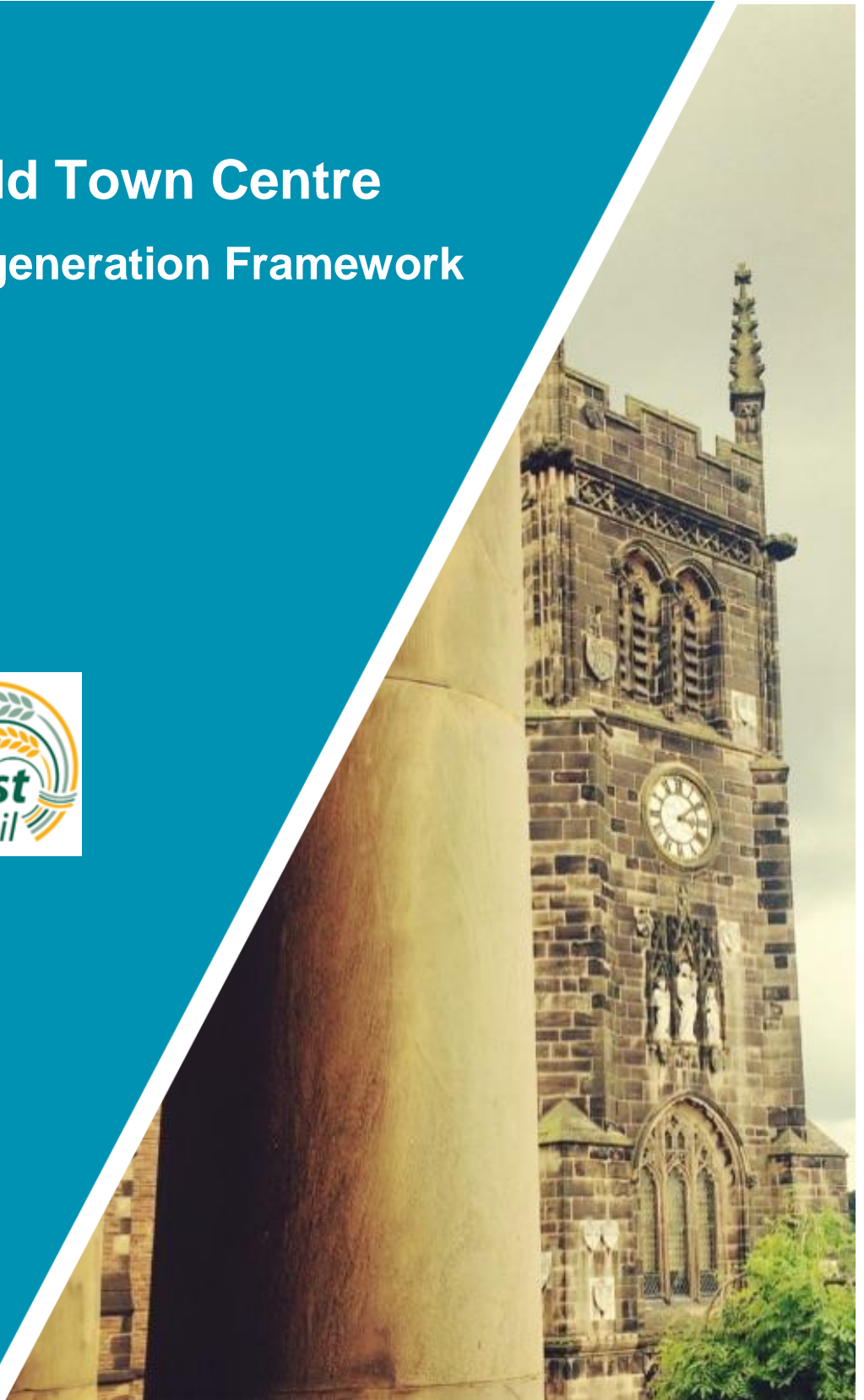
## Strategic Regeneration Framework

### Final Draft

Prepared for:



September 2019



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In light of the recent Referendum concerning the UK's membership of the EU, we are now in a period of uncertainty in relation to many factors that impact the property investment and letting markets. At this time organisations involved in the industry are reflecting on the potential implications of the UK leaving the EU. Since the Referendum date it has not been possible to gauge the effect of the impact on rental and capital values, along with other elements affecting property appraisal. Cushman & Wakefield continues to closely monitor market developments and trends in order that we can provide clients with the most up to date advice. The views contained in this document are provided in the context of this market uncertainty and as such our estimates and opinions are susceptible to change. Development appraisal results are particularly sensitive to changes in key variables such as cost and values. Accordingly we advise that clients have regard to this risk and may need to commission further advice before acting on the opinions expressed

## Executive Summary

The Macclesfield Town Centre Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) will guide the future sustainable success and regeneration of Macclesfield Town Centre. It sets out a clear vision, objectives and spatial framework for regeneration; provides a credible platform for engaging with local communities and stakeholders; and, in articulating the Council's long-term commitment to Macclesfield, provides the development sector with the confidence and certainty needed to bring forward investment, jobs and economic growth. The SRF focuses proposals for change on Macclesfield Town Centre but also considers how the town centre interacts with the surrounding hinterland and wider spatial context.

Analysis of the strategic and economic context of Macclesfield has revealed the town's core assets and highlighted constraints which need to be understood and overcome for the town centre to thrive:

- **Clear strategic priorities** are set out in principal planning documents
- **Engaged and passionate stakeholders**, both public and private sector, who share in the Council's commitment to the future regeneration of Macclesfield Town Centre
- **A growing catchment population, attractive labour market and a strong business base, as well as an affluent catchment.** Macclesfield has above average proportions of the working age population being economically active. Many of which are engaged in high value sectors
- Macclesfield's **favourable market dynamics and strategic competitive advantages** which appeal to a broad market mix of uses and includes the town's strategic accessibility, rich and attractive built heritage, distinctive retail and event offer and an affluent surrounding population
- **Current and future investment proposals** by the public and private sector will contribute to generating footfall and market confidence within the town centre
- The **spatial analysis and transport and movement assessment** of Macclesfield have identified the town's attractive historic buildings as well as its unique topographic setting which presents opportunities in the form of attractive rural vistas but also challenges to movement and development

Engagement with stakeholders has been fundamental to the preparation of the SRF. This included participation from organisational and community stakeholder groups as well as a 4 week public consultation period. The comments and responses received have led to direct changes and modifications to the SRF in its final form.

The **Vision** of the Strategic Regeneration Framework is as follows:

**Macclesfield - a town that celebrates its quirkiness<sup>1</sup>**

**Green, creative, connected and social. A home to innovators, entrepreneurs and independents**

**Thriving, diverse, distinctive and inclusive. Rich in heritage and culture, with outstanding employment opportunities and nestled in stunning countryside**

**Cherishing its past, striving for a sustainable future**

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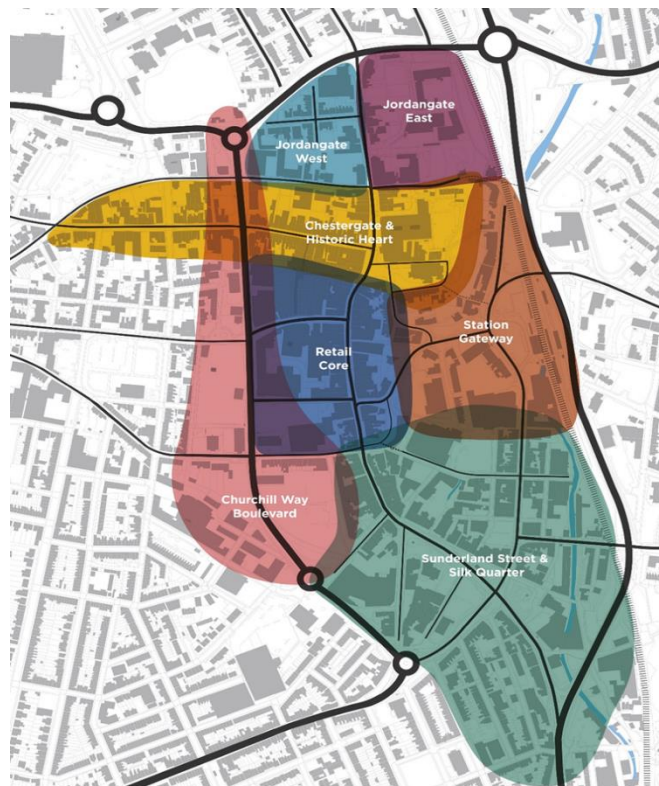
<sup>1</sup> Defined as *"unusual in an attractive and interesting way."*

This Vision will be supported by the following **objectives**:

- **Grow our town centre population**
- **Grow and diversify our leisure, cultural and evening economy**
- **Enhance our retail offer**
- **Make more of our connectivity**
- **Support businesses to create jobs and develop skills**
- **Harness our distinctiveness**
- **Cherish our historic buildings and repurpose our underutilised assets**
- **Enhance the town centre environment**
- **Raise aspirations and change perceptions**

A series of **character areas** have been identified across Macclesfield Town Centre with suggested aspirations for each:

- **Chestergate and Historic Heart** - characterised by a wealth of attractive and historic buildings and urban spaces and the focus of cultural events. The priority in this area is on enhancing what is already here through the refurbishment and repurposing of historic buildings to create new quality space for homes and jobs.
- **Jordangate** - the north-south axis of Jordangate forms an area of potential change with aspirations for the modernisation of Jordangate Car Park, public realm enhancements and infill development on Jordangate's frontage.
- **Station Gateway** - whilst Macclesfield's strategic rail linkages are a major asset to the town the area around the main line rail station does not currently create a good first impression. As such, the Station Gateway needs to be a key area of change with a leisure, business and residential focus.
- **Retail Core** - the main retail centre of Macclesfield should continue to function as the shopping core of the town but recognise that some retail consolidation and re-use of existing units and voids for alternative uses such as food and drink, and residential on the periphery will enhance the current offer.
- **Churchill Way Boulevard** - transforming this key route to create a greener 'boulevard' would enhance first impressions of the town, improve legibility and wayfinding, and reduce car dominance, resulting in pedestrian prioritisation at key junctions. New infill residential development would enhance the currently 'broken' frontage to Churchill Way whilst providing new homes that are well connected to the town centre. Consolidation and enhancement of car parking in this area will be a priority.



Source: OPEN

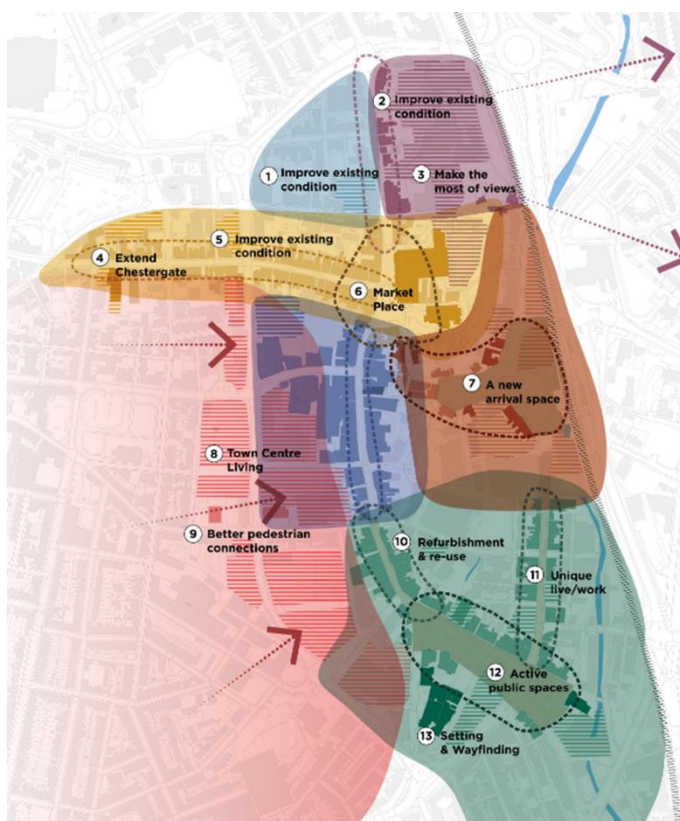


- **Sunderland Street and Silk Quarter** - the traditional historical character and buildings within this area has potential to become a vibrant urban mixed use area incorporating residential, boutique retail, employment, leisure and evening/night-time economy uses characterised by distinctive independent businesses.

The components of the **Spatial Framework** represent the aspiration for Macclesfield should the opportunity and resources arise. Implementation will require significant additional development, planning, feasibility and viability testing.

The numbered components of the Spatial Framework for Macclesfield Town Centre are as follows:

1. Improve existing condition for established businesses
2. Improve setting of historical buildings
3. Make the most of views
4. Extend Chestergate through improved pedestrian crossing over Churchill Way
5. Improve existing condition for established businesses
6. Enhance Market Place
7. Create a new arrival space and pursue rationalising parking to unlock development opportunities
8. Encourage more Town Centre living
9. Better pedestrian connections
10. Refurbishment and re-use of existing buildings
11. Support creation of live/work spaces
12. Enhance active public spaces
13. Improve setting and wayfinding





















In order to realise the aspirational vision for Macclesfield Town Centre a number of **strategic actions** have been devised to respond to the identified objectives. These actions have been consulted upon and ultimately seek to ensure that Macclesfield's Town Centre thrives. The actions are not a 'to do' list for Cheshire East Council but will require commitment and collaborative input from all Macclesfield's stakeholders to be successful - public, private, community and voluntary.

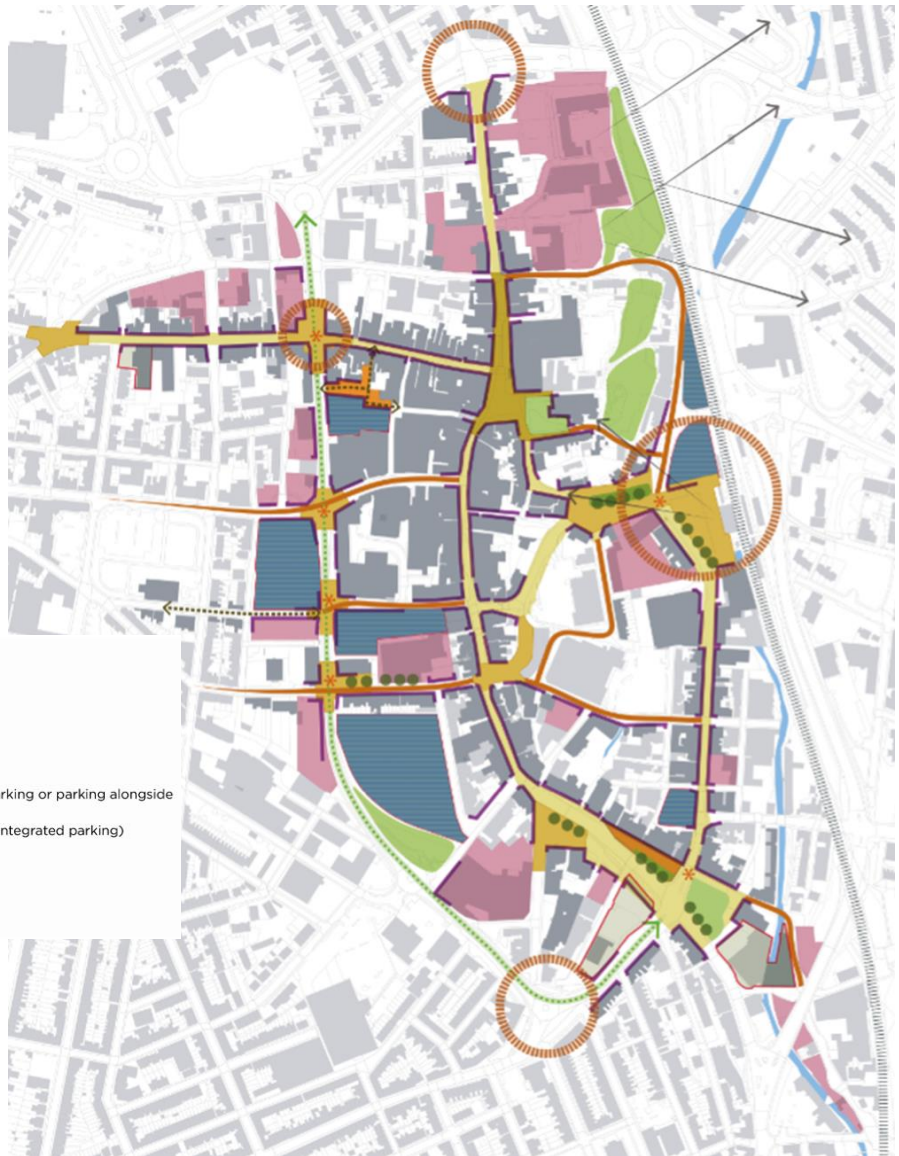
The **Illustrative Framework** for Macclesfield Town Centre demonstrates how this Strategic Regeneration Framework and the strategic actions will manifest physically. It focuses on physical environment enhancements as a very visual indication of the successful regeneration of the Town Centre.

This could include development/refurbishment of vacant or underutilised sites and buildings as well as softer actions to support the objective of 'enhancing the town centre environment'. This could include improved public realm, new green space and street planting to ensure that the whole town benefits from investment not just individual sites. There is also a focus on improving connectivity in and around the town centre; shifting the focus away from the current car dominance, integrating the town centre with the surrounding residential areas, enhancing existing linkages or creating new linkages, and tackling car parking issues in a sensitive way.

## The Illustrative Framework

### Key:

-  Existing buildings
-  Existing buildings along a key route
-  Approved planning application
-  Plots with potential for improvement
-  Potential site for intensified/modernised town centre parking or parking alongside development
-  Improved public realm (crossings/vehicular movement/integrated parking)
-  Improved public realm (pedestrian focused)
-  Pedestrian only public realm
-  Key gateways
-  Improved pedestrian crossing
-  New street planting
-  New green space and planting
-  Improved environment through planting
-  Improved links and wayfinding
-  Potential new pedestrian links
-  Strengthened frontages along key routes
-  Optimising the topography (views)
-  Existing green space



We will know that we have **met our objectives** through the following:

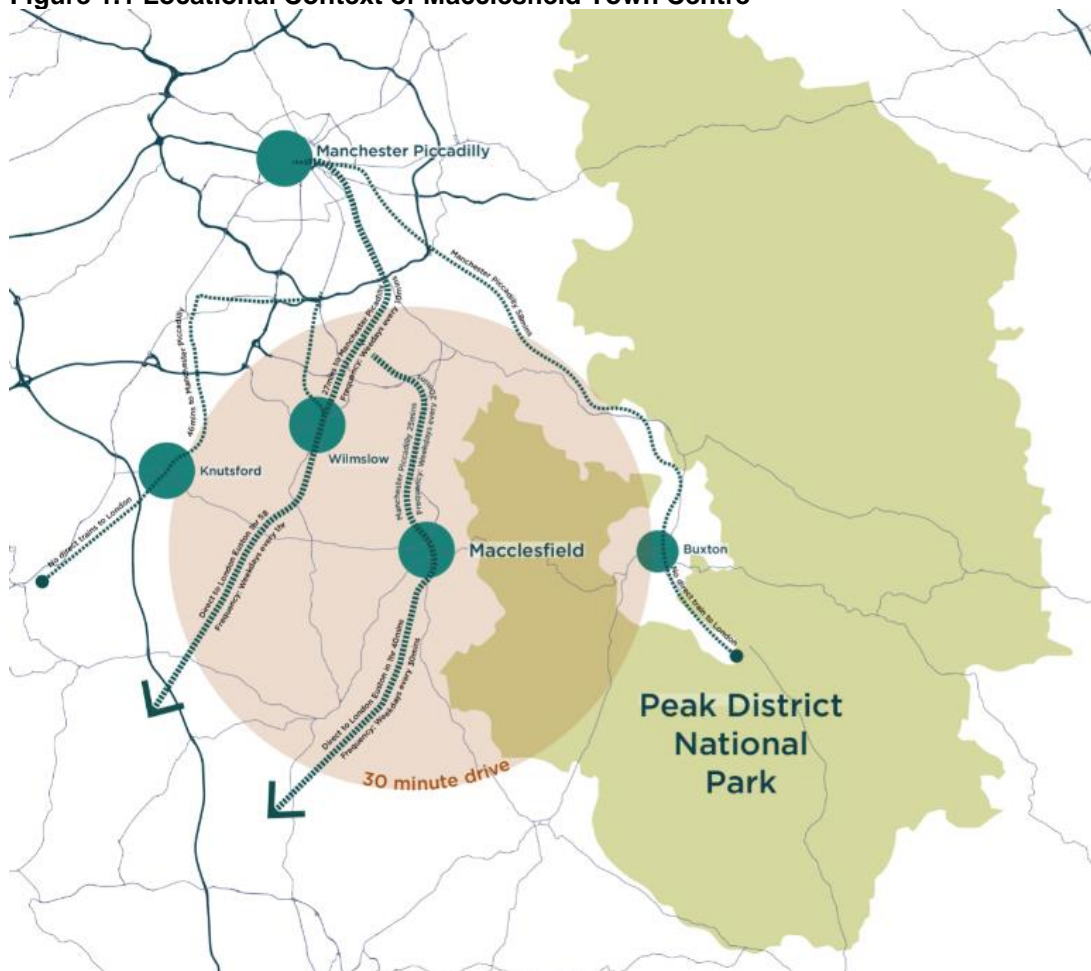
- More people living in the central wards
- More housing choices - in terms of unit types, tenures, prices
- Reduction in number of vacant units
- More places to eat, drink and enjoy leisure time including an enhanced family friendly offer and more “after-five” uses including leisure and residential
- More independents
- Increased footfall and spend
- Number of historic buildings and/or under-utilised sites brought back into use
- More trees and soft planting in the town centre
- Better sustainability credentials
- More public art and celebrations of creativity
- Increased private sector investment and business growth

## 1.0 Introduction

### Introducing Macclesfield Town Centre

- 1.1 Macclesfield town centre is a principal retail, commercial and administrative centre of the Cheshire East Borough. The market town has a large rural population of over 50,000, is the second largest town in Cheshire East and is surrounded by attractive rolling countryside. Macclesfield has strong links to the other nearby key towns and cities of Congleton (9 miles), Crewe (17 miles), Stockport (14 miles) and Manchester (21 miles), with Manchester Airport within 10 miles of the town centre. Macclesfield also has good connections to Sheffield, Derby and Nottingham across the Pennines via major A road routes (A537/A6/A623).
- 1.2 The town is located on the edge of the Peak District and nestles in the foothills of the southern Pennines on the eastern fringe of the Cheshire Plain. The historic heart of Macclesfield enjoys an elevated aspect with stunning views eastwards towards the Peak District National Park. Owing to the town's location, as well as falling within the Cheshire market, Macclesfield can also draw upon the South Manchester, Staffordshire and Peak District market catchments.
- 1.3 Despite its rural hinterland, Macclesfield benefits from direct rail linkages to key employment destinations including Manchester (22 mins), Birmingham (1h 5min) and London (1h 45 min), plus future potential for HS2 linkages; a rich heritage displayed by its built assets and links to the silk industry; distinctive retail offer owing to its independent retailers and vibrant festivals and events including the Barnaby Festival and monthly Treacle Market; and an affluent surrounding population.

**Figure 1.1 Locational Context of Macclesfield Town Centre**





- 1.4 Notwithstanding these strategic advantages, Macclesfield is facing some challenges due to the fundamental changes which have affected the role of town centres over the last decade owing to shifting socio-demographic and market trends including the growth of car based/out of town and online retailing, the rise of the discounters and increased leisure spend, and a resurgence of town centre living. As a result, Macclesfield is currently considered to be 'punching below its weight' as a town centre destination, particularly given its affluent surrounding catchment. The latest Town Centre Health Check (2016) identified a relatively weak leisure offer, rising retail voids and declining day visitors.

## Purpose of the Macclesfield Town Centre Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF)

- 1.5 In the face of the well documented market forces threatening the vitality and viability of town centres across the UK, Cheshire East Council is committed to securing the future regeneration and sustainable success of Macclesfield Town Centre.
- 1.6 Towards this aim, Cushman & Wakefield, supported by Optimised Environments (OPEN) in respect of urban design and WSP for transport and infrastructure, has been commissioned by Cheshire East Council to prepare a Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) to guide and co-ordinate the future regeneration of Macclesfield Town Centre.
- 1.7 The SRF sets out a clear vision, principles and key objectives for the future regeneration of the town centre, provides a credible platform for engaging with local communities and stakeholders and, in articulating the Council's long-term commitment to Macclesfield, provides the development sector with the confidence and certainty needed to bring forward investment, jobs and economic growth.
- 1.8 The SRF provides a holistic strategy and framework for the whole of Macclesfield Town Centre, bringing together the market, spatial and movement opportunities and constraints within the context of the planning framework rather than concentrating on individual sites as previous documents and proposals have done. This integrated town-wide approach should ensure greater prospects of delivery and success.

More specifically, the SRF:

- Sets out a fresh Vision for the town centre, focused on its key role in driving and underpinning 'Future Macclesfield' while not losing sight of the area's important heritage, sense of place and aspects of its individual character held in high regard by local stakeholders;
- Identifies high level objectives for the town centre;
- Identifies major opportunities for regenerating the town centre and provides a spatial vision which illustrates the opportunities for development and establishes the parameters and principles of good design;
- Articulates how development can capitalise on Macclesfield's unique character and locational advantages and support more sustainable communities;
- Considers the need for improved infrastructure as a means of facilitating regeneration, with a focus on achieving the right balance between streets where people can move about easily and safely, with spaces for events and activities, while maintaining good access for vehicles;
- Reflects the views of stakeholders;



- Provides a framework for delivery and an assessment of development options taking into account site constraints, requirements for delivery, land ownerships, and market demand, and having regard to the desire to unlock potential associated with a proposed HS2 link;
- Determines a viable, deliverable strategy, underpinned by sound market advice and consistent with the policy context such that it may be used as a material consideration in determining planning applications; and
- Advises on the best route to implementation, initial priorities and next steps to bring forward realisation of the vision set out.

## Geographical Extent of Study

- 1.9 The SRF focuses on Macclesfield Town Centre as defined within the emerging Draft Site Allocation and Development Policies Document (SADPD) as illustrated in Figure 1.2 below. It is essential however that the principles of the Framework are not limited by defined boundaries, and as such consideration as to how the town centre interacts with the surrounding hinterland and wider spatial context is given.

**Figure 1.2 Provisional Macclesfield Town Centre Boundary in Draft Site Allocations and Development Policies Document 2018**



Source: Cheshire East Council

## Structure of the Report

1.10 The remainder of this Report is structured as follows:

- Understanding Macclesfield Town Centre (Section 2)
- Analysis of constraints and opportunities (Section 3)
- Vision and objectives (Section 4)
- Spatial Framework (Section 5)
- Strategic Actions (Section 6)
- Delivering the SRF (Section 7)

## 2.0 Understanding Macclesfield Town Centre

- 2.1 An understanding of the strategic and economic context is important as it provides a clear indication of the key economic opportunities and strategic priorities at the regional, sub-regional and local level and will inform the emerging Vision and positioning in terms of the future role of Macclesfield Town Centre. However, this context must also be set within the realities of the market if the aspirations to regenerate Macclesfield Town Centre are to be deliverable.
- 2.2 This section brings together the document review, property market analysis, spatial and transport analysis to showcase Macclesfield's core assets whilst highlighting the constraints that it must overcome if the Town Centre is to thrive. It covers the following elements:
- Clear strategic priorities
  - Engaged and passionate stakeholders
  - A growing catchment population
  - An attractive labour market and strong business base
  - An affluent catchment
  - Tipping the balance in favour of market dynamics
  - Harnessing the potential of town centre living
  - Current and pipeline investment
  - Spatial analysis
  - Transport and movement
- 2.3 Key messages from the baseline review are summarised here alongside a summary of engagement and testing of the emerging messages with various stakeholder groups which has informed our understanding.

### Clear Strategic Priorities

- 2.4 Ensuring strategic fit will be an important consideration when appraising the emerging development opportunities within the town and is critical to ensuring that the SRF may be used as a material consideration in determining planning applications.
- 2.5 In planning terms, the adopted Cheshire East Local Plan (2010-2030) provides a clear strategy for the future of 'Central Macclesfield' (Policy LPS12). It reflects a town that is already successful but has yet to fully reach its potential. The Plan's overriding objective for Macclesfield is to create a *"quality of life and urban environment which is attractive to all."*
- 2.6 This aspiration for a vibrant and viable town centre will be achieved through maximising opportunities for regeneration; efficient use of brownfield land and underutilised buildings; and an increase in both the density and mix of central development including housing, retail, leisure, commercial and evening uses. Macclesfield has ambitions for growth that respects the past but reacts to the future, maximising on opportunities such as the role of HS2 in driving demand for more diverse development.
- 2.7 The Cheshire & Warrington Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) also recognises the important service and functional role that Macclesfield plays as a mid-sized market town within the sub-region.
- 2.8 In addition to the strong and supportive strategic planning context, Macclesfield has been the focus of numerous visioning, planning and design studies over recent years. These documents have been reviewed and interpreted, with the key messages incorporated into the vision and objectives for the SRF.

- 2.9 The SRF must integrate the strategic ambitions and objectives of the planning policy context with the messages emerging from the previous studies undertaken to date to prepare a unifying and holistic vision and action plan for Macclesfield Town Centre which is overarching rather than site specific and is built upon a pragmatic realism to ensure deliverability. It must be evidenced based and ensure flexibility to respond to market changes and emerging opportunities; but be set within strong development parameters. It will provide a cohesive long term framework for regeneration which can be used to inform decisions about the development and management of the town centre.

## Engaged and Passionate Stakeholders

- 2.10 Cheshire East Council has evidenced its commitment to the future regeneration of Macclesfield Town Centre through its strategic planning policies, work undertaken to date and commissioning of this SRF. It is a commitment that is shared with numerous other public and private sector stakeholder groups including Macclesfield Town Council; Macclesfield Chamber of Commerce; Macclesfield Civic Society; Make it Macclesfield Community Interest Company (CIC); Enterprising Macclesfield CIC; Macclesfield Culture, Heritage and Arts Forum (MCHAF); Peaks and Plains Housing Trust; Macclesfield College; and Silk Heritage Trust to name but a few.
- 2.11 The scale and detail of consultation responses to the previous visioning and strategy work, and that of the formal public consultation in respect of the draft SRF; further demonstrates the passion and commitment of local people and businesses.
- 2.12 Engaged and passionate stakeholders are a real asset to Macclesfield, and whilst they may not always agree, the ability of the public and private sectors to work collaboratively together towards the shared objective of regenerating the town centre and realising Macclesfield's economic and physical growth potential will be instrumental to its success. The Vision, objectives and actions that have emerged from this SRF have been informed and revised through ongoing engagement and discussions with key stakeholders and through a public consultation exercise to create a sense of ownership and buy-in to its delivery and ensure that Macclesfield's social capital is utilised to its best potential.

## A Growing Catchment Population

- 2.13 The demographic and socio-economic profile of the town centre and its catchment population provides an important indicator as to the future potential, target market and role of the town centre. It informs likely drivers of demand for various uses including residential, employment, retail and leisure.
- 2.14 Macclesfield Town Centre currently has a resident population of c.9,300 people representing just 2.5% of Cheshire East's total figure (379,000 people)<sup>2</sup>. However, the Central Ward's rate of population growth (3% since 2011) has exceeded that of the wider Borough (2.4%). Cheshire East's Local Plan also anticipates further population growth of 15.7% over the plan period to 2030. These figures would suggest both rising demand for housing generally and potential for an increased residential population within Macclesfield Town Centre.
- 2.15 Thinking about how the resident population impacts upon the demand for housing, employment and retail, Cheshire East has an under-representation of working age residents but an over-representation of those of retirement age<sup>3</sup>. Aligned with well documented national trends, Cheshire East's population growth is projected to rise much faster within the over 65 population (up 65% 2010-2030). This is likely to suggest future demand for specialist or older person housing.

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<sup>2</sup> ONS 2017 Mid-Year Population Estimates - Macclesfield Central Ward

<sup>3</sup> ONS 2017 Mid-Year Population Estimates - Working age (16-64 years) 60% Cheshire East; 63% UK; Retirement (65+ years) 22.5% Cheshire East; 18% UK.



- 2.16 However, within Macclesfield Town centre itself, the converse is true with the working age population forming a relatively large share of the population and those aged 65 and over a lower proportion<sup>4</sup>. This suggests greater potential for Macclesfield to provide housing for families and young professionals, which in turn could support job creation, footfall and spend to underpin an enhanced town centre retail, leisure and employment offering.
- 2.17 Within the wider Macclesfield area significant new housebuilding is planned, including a 53 hectare urban extension known as the South Macclesfield Development Area (SMDA). The site is allocated within the Local Plan and gained outline planning consent in August 2017 for up to 950 new homes, green open space and supporting social infrastructure including local retail, primary school, employment space and a £19.5 million new link road. The scale of new development in relatively close proximity to the town centre has potential to increase the resident population and consequently catchment of Macclesfield.

## An Attractive Labour Market and Strong Business Base

- 2.18 Macclesfield town centre and the wider Cheshire East borough benefits from an attractive and engaged labour market with above average proportions of the working age population being economically active<sup>5</sup> and relatively low rates of unemployment<sup>6</sup>.
- 2.19 The true strength however, is the high value skills and occupations within which the local labour market is employed. Within the Macclesfield Central Ward which covers the SRF study area, the majority are in professional occupations (21%) with many working in science, research, engineering and technology professions (8%). Across Cheshire East 20% of the economically active population are in professional roles, above the national proportion of 17%.
- 2.20 The existing business base reflects the strengths of the local labour market, with Location Quotient (LQ) analysis demonstrating Cheshire East's specialism in high growth high value sectors including professional, scientific and technical activities (LQ 1.45); manufacturing (LQ 1.32); and financial and insurance activities (LQ 1.21)<sup>7</sup>. A LQ score of '1' represents the national average, so an LQ of 1.5 indicates that 50% more people are employed within a specific sector and place than at the national level, and a score of 0.5 would indicate half of that nationally.
- 2.21 The Borough is home to a plethora of international science and technology based businesses including AstraZeneca occupying the largest pharmaceutical manufacturing site in the UK (101 acres) and employing in the region of 2,000 people at Hurdsfield under 2km (1.2 miles) north of Macclesfield Town Centre. Slightly further afield, Alderley Park is a UK Centre of Excellence in life sciences R&D and is witnessing significant investment as it is transformed into a multi-let site; Sanofi in Holmes Chapel employs 900 people in one of Europe's largest aerosol drug manufacturers; Waters in Wilmslow is a world leader in mass spectrometry; and Siemens in Congleton specialising in electronic components. The existence of these major international companies is testament to the locational advantages of the area. However, it is important to avoid over-reliance on a small number of employers if the strength of the local economy is to remain resilient.
- 2.22 The town also has strong connections, historically and current, to the creative sector. This is a growth sector which can be harnessed by ensuring that there is an appropriate supply of interesting buildings to meet their occupation requirements such as incubator/co-working space.

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<sup>4</sup> Cheshire East Economic Profile (2018)

<sup>5</sup> ONS Census 2011 - 84% Macclesfield Central Ward; 79% Cheshire East; 77% England and Wales

<sup>6</sup> ONS Census 2011 - 5.2% Macclesfield Central Ward; 5.4% Cheshire East; 7.6% England and Wales

<sup>7</sup> ONS 2011 Business Sector LQ Workplace Analysis

- 2.23 From a business investment perspective, the prospects for Macclesfield are therefore strong in terms of both the established high value business base and the ability to draw from a skilled labour market. Further, commercial office occupiers are increasingly drawn to vibrant town centre locations that offer amenities and good accessibility to staff. Macclesfield Town Centre is likely to be of greatest appeal to smaller office occupiers with local connections to the area. However, existing rental levels in Macclesfield are likely to be insufficient (£8-£12 psf) to support financially viable new build office development. As such, the focus should be on refurbishing existing unused and underutilised built spaces to provide a higher quality offer to attract employment. This should be considered alongside a new town centre residential offer in recognition that if Cheshire East is to achieve its economic growth aspirations, housing growth will also be required.

## An Affluent Catchment

- 2.24 The relatively high proportions of skilled professional level employees in the local area is reflected in the above average earning power of local people. The most recent ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (2018) identifies median incomes in the Macclesfield parliamentary constituency to be £30,069 per annum, which is slightly above average earnings in Cheshire East (£29,916 per annum) and nationally (£29,706) and higher than the North West average of £27,492.
- 2.25 CACI Acorn classifications which provide precise information and an in-depth understanding of different consumer types by analysing significant social factors and consumer behaviour shows that Macclesfield's catchment area is dominated by 'Lavish Lifestyles', 'Executive Wealth' and 'Mature Money' consumer groups which indicates an affluent catchment. The majority of households in central Macclesfield are identified as lower level consumer groups such as 'Career Climbers', 'Starting Out' and 'Young Hardship'. Key characteristics of these lower level groups are younger residents as well as smaller household types and rented tenures which can be typical of central locations in urban areas.
- 2.26 The affluence of a catchment population is considered to be more closely correlated to the resilience of the high street than its catchment size<sup>8</sup>. As such, the prospects for Macclesfield Town Centre's future regeneration are positive, provided that the offer and functionality of the town is aligned with the demands and aspirations of the catchment in order to capture their footfall and spend.

## Tipping the Balance in Favour of Market Dynamics

- 2.27 The role of town centres has fundamentally changed over the last decade owing to shifting socio-demographic and market trends including the growth of car based/out of town and online retailing, the rise of the discounters and increased leisure spend. As a result, the success of town centre locations has become increasingly polarised between larger destinations with a critical mass of activity and the strategic accessibility capable of attracting and retaining retail, leisure, residential and office investment; and smaller secondary town centres lacking the profile, accessibility and local catchment capacity to drive footfall, dwell time and spend.
- 2.28 As the second largest town centre in Cheshire East, Macclesfield is at the cusp of this market polarisation trend. The town centre is of a scale and critical mass that is too small to compete successfully with the major regional destinations such as Manchester, Chester, Trafford Centre and Cheshire Oaks, and nor should it try. It does however benefit from many of the strategic competitive advantages required to be a successful and sustainable sub-regional town centre of the future which appeals to a broad market mix of uses including strategic accessibility, a rich and attractive built heritage, distinctive retail and event offer and an affluent surrounding population.

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<sup>8</sup> Knight Frank 'Retail News' Issue 4

- 2.29 Despite these advantages, market analysis indicates that Macclesfield is currently 'punching below its weight' as a town centre destination, particularly in respect of retail and leisure provision given its affluent catchment. The latest Town Centre Health Check identified a relatively weak leisure offer, rising retail voids and declining day visitors.
- 2.30 The town's anchor national multiple retailers including Boots, Marks & Spencer and a new TK Maxx are important to drive footfall but are trading from relatively small units compared to their usual requirements and other branches across the region. It is critical that the town performs to retain their presence but does not dilute the retail offer further with the introduction of additional comparison floorspace which is already considered to be in oversupply in terms of total floorspace and future spend projections<sup>9</sup> and is evidenced by above average retail voids (15% compared to 9% nationally at last count)<sup>10</sup>. The town centre convenience offer will also be well served once the new Lidl at Parsonage Street is completed and adds to the current anchor provision from Tesco Express, Food Hall within M&S Store and Aldi.
- 2.31 Whilst there is no desire for Macclesfield to become a 'clone town', these retail anchors are needed to support a strong and independent retail and leisure mix offering a distinct offer in the town and a reason for visitors to choose Macclesfield over other destinations in the sub region. Over recent years, a number of independent retailers and food and drink providers have emerged and helped to diversify and differentiate the local offer. This has been further underpinned by the hugely successful Treacle Market and Barnaby Festival and recently announced proposals for an 'Altrincham Market' style food hall at the former Picturedrome. There is a recognition that such leisure uses have gone some way to fill the voids left by traditional retailers and play an important role in extending dwell time as structural change on the high street places increasing importance on non-retail attractions and quality of experience not just convenience of access.
- 2.32 Despite this, leisure uses in Macclesfield (including food and drink) continue to be under-represented compared to national trends (18% of floorspace compared to 23% nationally<sup>3</sup>). Proposals by Ask Real Estate to deliver a leisure-led development of a cinema with restaurant, café and bar space on Churchill Way sought to fill this gap in the market but were subsequently abandoned owing to challenges within the food and beverage sector undermining viability. Whilst disappointing, strategically this may turn out to be a good decision for Macclesfield, as significant challenges can persist if the wrong product is delivered at the wrong place and time (as currently being evidenced by continued voids at Cheshire West's new Northwich Barons Quay scheme).
- 2.33 New leisure provision, including the potential for a new hotel and an enhanced food and drink offer to support the evening economy and extend dwell time and spend, should be encouraged in Macclesfield, but must have a strong relationship to the retail heart of the town and be aligned to local demand, in this case for distinctive and independent operators, and retain the flexibility to adapt to ensure future sustainability to changing trends.
- 2.34 Macclesfield should harness and build upon its market advantages and progress to date to continue to diversify and extend the independent retail and leisure offer and ensure that it successfully responds to market drivers to tip the balance towards being an attractive and sustainable sub-regional town centre.

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<sup>9</sup> Cheshire East Retail Study Update 2018

<sup>10</sup> Macclesfield Town Centre Health Check 2016 (latest available) as at August 2015

## Harnessing the Potential of Town Centre Living

- 2.35 Housing continues to be a hot topic nationally as we seek to deliver the volume of new homes required to meet demand and meet our economic growth aspirations. The challenges of increasing provision whilst protecting what is special and unique about our individual cities, towns and villages has been played out within the Planning arena. However, there is broad agreement that our urban centres, including Macclesfield, will need to play an ever greater role in answering the housing challenge.
- 2.36 The existing residential offer in Macclesfield Town Centre is predominantly made up of older terrace units typical of historic market towns together with apartments in converted period buildings. However, Macclesfield Town Centre benefits from many of the attributes that are attractive to town centre investors, developers and occupiers. It is well connected (particularly by rail to mainline stations including Manchester and London); home to high value businesses, skilled labour market and an affluent catchment suggesting good levels of affordability; offers outstanding and good rated schools<sup>11</sup> which are a key driver to growing families; a high quality of life through proximity to rural areas; and potential to appeal to those 'priced out' of the very high value areas within the surrounding catchment or in commutable locations such as Manchester City Centre.
- 2.37 From a viability and deliverability point of view, residential values in Macclesfield Town Centre are currently in the order of £160 per sq ft but are likely to be constrained by the current grade of the existing stock. Where new development or refurbishment has been delivered close to the town centre, such as at Waterways 1831 by Bellway on Gunco Lane and Hope Park by Elan Homes adjacent to Macclesfield Hospital, higher values in the order of £240 per sq ft have been achieved. At this level, development will be attractive to developers and investors alike. This can currently be evidenced at the former Kings School site on the edge of the town centre where Bellway and reputable Cheshire developer Hillcrest Homes are proposing to deliver up to 150 new high quality executive family homes through new build housing and conversion of the historic main school building.
- 2.38 Harnessing the potential of town centre living in Macclesfield through new build, infill and refurbishment of underutilised and vacant buildings will not only respond to emerging market trends for urban living and contribute to challenging housing delivery targets, but could also help to make the most efficient use of brownfield land, reduce the supply of vacant retail and underpin mixed-use development value. A growing residential population will enhance the vibrancy of the town centre; generate footfall and spend; and enliven streets and spaces beyond the working day. However, care must be taken to ensure it does not negatively impact on the operations of existing businesses. The new stock must cater for a new form of aspirational housing and lifestyle, appealing to young professionals and reflecting the generational shift towards ever-increasing demand for more urban forms of living. This is not to say that the focus should be entirely on providing accommodation for young professionals. Town centre living opportunities which cater for all ages, including older people, should be embraced if of appropriate quality and design. The repurposing of Macclesfield's characterful and Georgian buildings are well placed to respond to this.
- 2.39 As such, diversifying and expanding the residential offer in Macclesfield Town Centre will be an important contributor to the objectives and delivery of the SRF. Interest is already being seen for this opportunity in the form of planning applications for change of use to residential in the town centre as well as new residential development proposals. Further, Cheshire East Council has already taken steps to facilitate and encourage town centre living by progressing Local Development Orders (LDOs) for residential development and working with private property owners to facilitate conversion of space above shops.

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<sup>11</sup> Ofsted - Primary: Parkroyal Community School (Good, 2017), Bollinbrook CofE (Good, 2015). Secondary: All Hallows Catholic College (Outstanding, 2014), Fallibroome Academy (Outstanding, 2013)



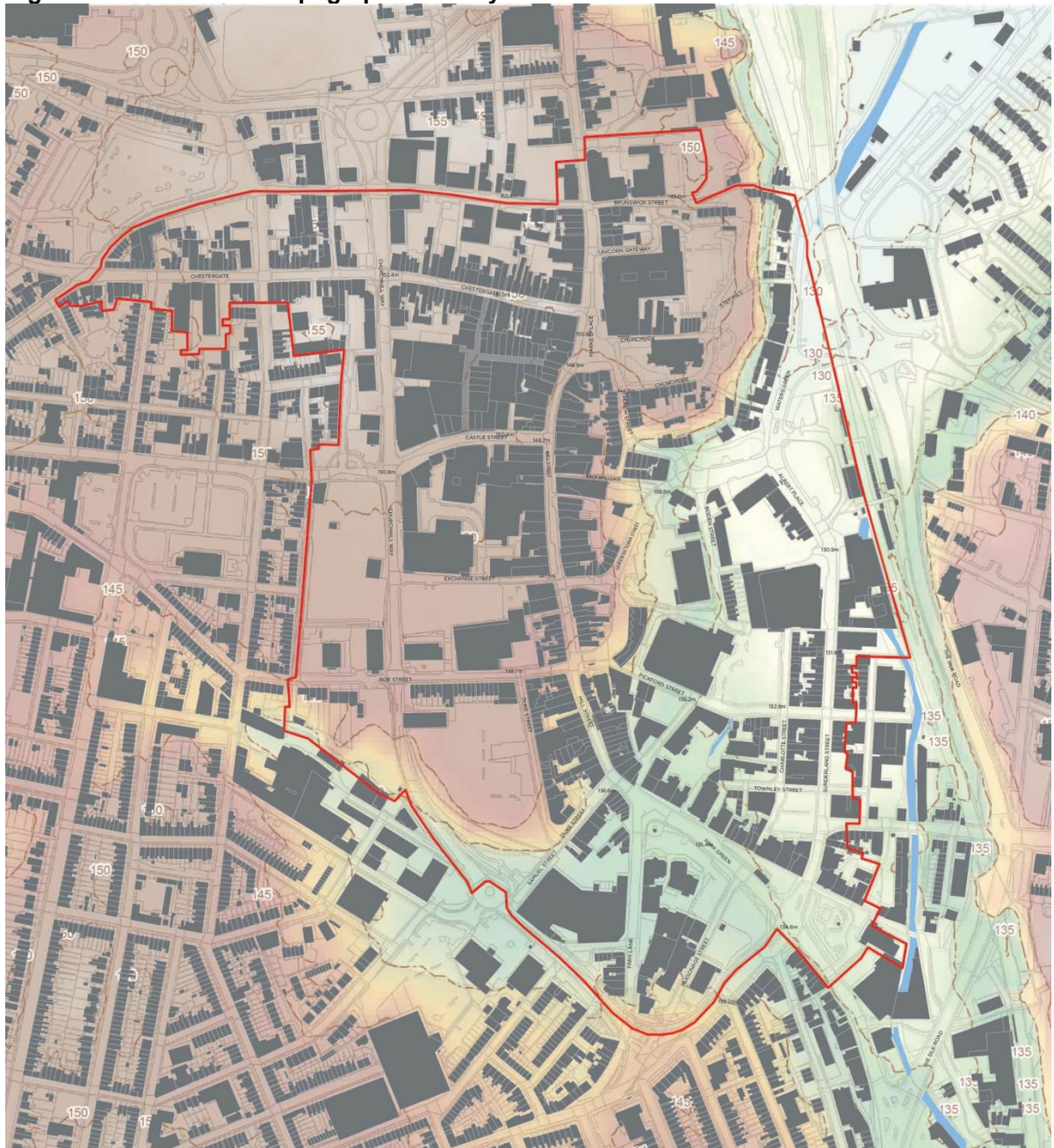
## Current and Pipeline Investment

- 2.40 Macclesfield Town Centre is already starting to witness public and private sector investment that will contribute to encouraging footfall and generating market confidence. For example:
- **Public Realm** - Cheshire East has delivered a series of public realm and environmental interventions at the Waters Green Underpass, Middlewood Way, and the historic Sparrow Park (2016-17) and are progressing a significant scheme of enhancements works for Castle Street
  - **Shop Front Improvements** - shop front improvement grants have enhanced the appearance of the units on Chestergate and Market Place (2015) with the second phase focused on Mill Street, Park Green and Park Lane.
  - **Grosvenor Shopping Centre Expansion** - Eskmuir Group completed the £11 million extension and refurbishment of the Grosvenor Centre in 2018 and has subsequently successfully secured TK Maxx as a new occupier for the town
  - **Georgian Mill** - Peaks and Plains Housing Trust secured planning consent in March 2018 to demolish the remaining fire damaged buildings on the Park Green site and deliver 67 new 1 and 2 bedroom apartments. The vision is to create a high density, vibrant and distinctive quarter that appeals to young professionals
  - **Lidl** - proposals to deliver a new 14,000 sq ft Lidl on Parsonage Street were granted permission in early 2018. The 1.4 acre site had been vacant for around a decade
  - **Macclesfield Picturedrome** - planning was approved in November 2018 for change of use of this iconic vacant building on Chestergate to create a communal food hall housing 8 independent restaurants and bars. The applicant, Market operations, currently operates in Altrincham and Mackie Mayor, Manchester
  - **Craven House** - Huntsmere Construction are seeking to convert this former office building with a prominent frontage to Churchill Way to residential use

## Spatial Analysis

- 2.41 Macclesfield has a unique topographic setting (see Figure 2.1) which presents opportunities in the form of attractive rural vistas to the Peak District to the east but also challenges to movement and development.
- 2.42 Macclesfield Town Centre is characterised by numerous attractive historic buildings, many of which are from the Georgian period. Conservation Areas serve to protect and enhance these important assets that make Macclesfield unique. Figure 2.2 identifies Macclesfield's Conservation Area and Listed buildings.
- 2.43 The key constraints and opportunities identified from the spatial analysis are provided in Section 3.

**Figure 2.1 Macclesfield Topographical Analysis**




Key:

 Contours - 5m Interval

Landform DTM

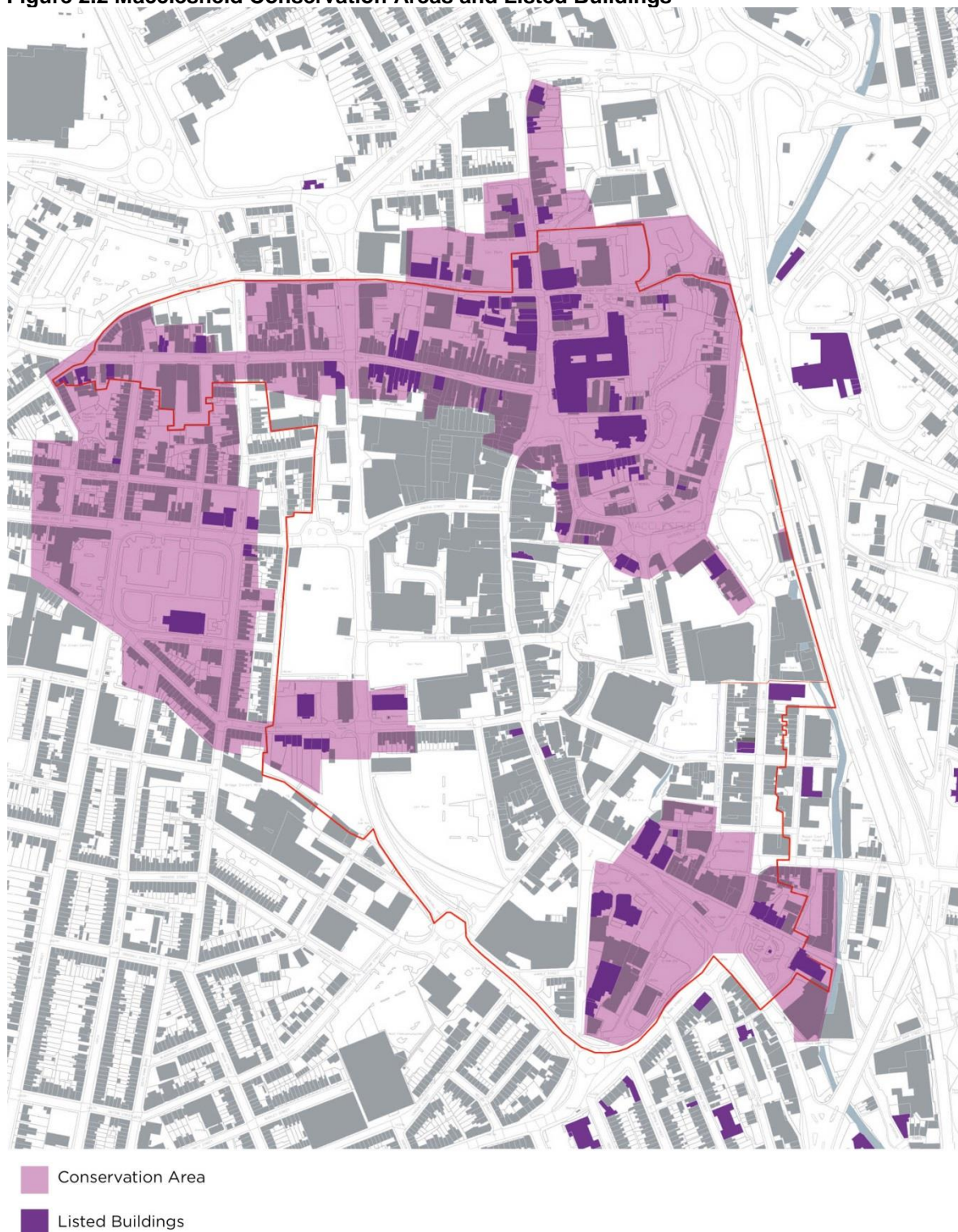
Elevation (m)

 High : 165.51  
Low : 126.64

Source: OPEN



**Figure 2.2 Macclesfield Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings**



Source: OPEN

## Transport and Movement

- 2.44 Macclesfield's transport facilities compare favourably with many sub-regional town centres of a similar size and status. The rail station provides excellent rail access via the West Coast Main Line to London Euston, Manchester Piccadilly and further afield directly to locations such as Bristol Temple Meads and Cardiff Central. Improved rail services and timetabling, particularly in the evenings and to locations within an hour journey time, would help to improve Macclesfield's connectivity and encourage more visitors to the town both during the day and night time.
- 2.45 A modern bus station, close to the retail heart of the town and at a high point relative to the local topography, provides further public transport linkages to surrounding villages. However, as with the train services, a greater range of services in terms of both destination and hours of operation would enhance accessibility to the town centre. Thought should also be given to better integrating linkages between the bus and rail stations in order to encourage interchange.
- 2.46 Existing highway links also provide good access from Macclesfield to Manchester Airport, Wilmslow and Prestbury to the west (A538), Congleton and Leek to the south (A536 and A523), Stockport and Manchester to the North (A523) and Buxton to the east (A537). Furthermore, the construction of the planned South Macclesfield link road would provide an alternative route for vehicles currently passing through Macclesfield town centre from the south and west and enhance improved road connections for the anticipated population growth in the area. However, accessibility to the major motorway network is more remote than comparative market towns such as Knutsford and Wilmslow. Figure 2.3 illustrates Macclesfield's current town centre road hierarchy.
- 2.47 Despite the above, future transport facilities within the town itself require improvement with an emphasis to encourage people to live and work in an attractive and sustainable town centre.
- 2.48 The major points of arrival, the rail station and other major parking facilities in the town (such as Jordangate and Churchill Way car parks) have been identified as areas that require improvement to support this objective. The area fronting onto the station approach could act as a major gateway for the town but does not currently provide a high-quality arrival point. Those who access the station by car or taxi are not currently encouraged to enjoy the space in front of the station and use the local shops and cafés other than the facilities within the station itself.
- 2.49 The town centre itself is characterised by lots of small scale surface parking which currently creates visual blight. Opportunities have therefore been identified to improve existing parking in the town by 'rationalising' parking facilities as part of a town centre strategy that seeks a high quality parking offer at key gateways and could include reconfiguring the existing facilities. The Local Plan<sup>12</sup> recognises the important regeneration opportunities that could be unlocked through such a rationalisation and consolidation strategy. Furthermore, in some cases it may even be beneficial to intensify parking at specific locations with the intention of improving parking legibility in the town for visitors and allowing development at those sites considered more appropriate for other uses.
- 2.50 As part of this process there is also an opportunity to determine where public and private non-residential parking is best suited and what car park opening times would best support retail and leisure facilities and events during both the day and night time.

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<sup>12</sup> Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (2017) Policy LPS12 Site Specific Principles states *"there are numerous opportunities to rationalise and consolidate existing car parks – in doing so unlocking important regeneration opportunities."*



- 2.51 However, in order to create a more sustainable sub-regional town centre, pedestrian and cycle journeys must be encouraged as an alternative to the private vehicle. There are a number of locations identified where the introduction of high quality walking and cycling facilities on traffic calmed routes would strengthen the lively street character in the town centre and support specific developments, specifically on Sunderland Street and on either side of Churchill Way. As part of this process it would be important to establish the preferred pedestrian and cycle routes bearing in mind the topography and existing quality of routes as well as the location of specific future developments.
- 2.52 Sections of the ring road such as Churchill Way have been identified as places where the introduction of building frontage and public realm/green space improvements could support better pedestrian and cycle links across and along the route. In particular, this intervention should improve cycle/walking permeability between the affluent neighbourhoods beyond the ring road to the town centre and allow the centre to develop into a more attractive destination for Macclesfield residents living within close proximity of the town.
- 2.53 To support any pedestrian and cycle route enhancement projects, a need has also been identified to improve the legibility of the streetscape within the town and introduce improved signage, possibility as part of a wayfinding strategy for the town centre. This would be especially beneficial for those routes between the major gateways identified and the main retail, civic and recreational locations, for both day and night time use, and help to support Macclesfield as a sustainable community within a unique character destination.

**Figure 2.3 Macclesfield Town Centre Road Hierarchy**



Source: WSP

## Stakeholder Engagement

### Consultation on 5 Year Vision, Strategy and Action Plan

- 2.54 In 2017, Cheshire East drafted “There’s no place like Macclesfield”, a 5 year Vision, Strategy and Action Plan for the revitalisation of Macclesfield Town Centre with the purpose of refreshing and replacing the Macclesfield Town Centre Vision of January 2014. The document was tested through extensive consultation with both organisational and community stakeholder groups and the general public in late 2017 and received substantial feedback.
- 2.55 A number of recurring ‘themes’ from the comments have been incorporated into the analysis and consideration of opportunities and constraints for Macclesfield Town Centre, the consultation on the 5 year strategy also revealed the following requirements:
- **Vision** - need a clear, ambitious and distinctive/unique vision for Macclesfield.
  - **Timescales** - a 5 year strategy was considered too short. The strategy should look ahead over the next 20 years and be ‘future proofed’ to respond to future trends
  - **Outputs and milestones** - should be identified and measurable in order to provide clear goals and a plan for delivery
  - **Actions** - should be clearly prioritised and limited resources and investment clearly targeted
  - **Governance** - a clearer governance structure should be put in place that includes stakeholders beyond those linked to major financial investment or property development schemes e.g. culture, heritage, events, faith, local business representatives
  - **Communication Strategy** - setting out how stakeholders will continue to engage with the wide range of interested parties
  - **Branding and marketing** - the approach to branding and marketing needs to be determined

### Macclesfield Town Centre Workshops

- 2.56 Workshops and briefings were held during November and December 2018 with key stakeholder groups to support the preparation of the SRF including gleaning local views on the current perceived positives and negatives of the town centre, considering high level objectives and identifying areas of spatial focus. The workshops were supported by The Institute of Place Management.
- 2.57 The initial findings of these workshops have been incorporated into our understanding and can be summarised as follows:
- **The ‘Good’** - A distinctive town centre characterised by attractive urban spaces; independent retailers, pubs, cafes and events; and a rich cultural and built heritage. Great strategic connectivity access to surrounding rural hinterland. ‘Quirky’ place with committed local people.
  - **The ‘Bad’** - A town dominated by cars and surface parking, and challenged by congestion, poor wayfinding and legibility, impacting on first impressions, particularly from key gateways. Poor quality physical environment combined with under-utilised and vacant buildings creating blight. A limited offer in terms of evening economy, aspirational retail, leisure and residential. A lack of public transport options to surrounding catchment.
- 2.58 The latter workshop and briefing sought to test the emerging vision, objectives and spatial priorities that were developed in response to the initial session, each of which were subsequently refined as a result.

## Public Consultation

- 2.59 Between 13th February and 13th March 2019 Cheshire East Council, supported by the consultancy team led by Cushman & Wakefield, OPEN and WSP, formally consulted on its newly drafted “Strategic Regeneration Framework” (SRF) for Macclesfield Town Centre. The 4 week consultation gathered feedback on the Consultation Draft SRF, to see whether consultees felt it was fit for purpose, and to identify how it could be refined and improved. The comments and responses received have led to direct changes and modifications to the SRF in its final form.
- 2.60 The consultation was supported by a drop-in consultation event at the Grosvenor Shopping Centre on Saturday 16th February 2019 attended by the Council and its consultants. The event raised awareness of the Draft SRF, summarised its content via engaging consultation boards, and facilitated the opportunity for people to ask questions and raise concerns directly with the SRF team. In the order of 130 people attended the event.
- 2.61 Responses to the Draft SRF were requested via an on-line consultation questionnaire, which asked structured quantitative and qualitative responses to each element of the document including Vision, objectives, character areas, illustrative framework and actions, together with views on the overall document as a whole.
- 2.62 A separate Report on Consultation provides a summary of all consultation survey responses received and identifies the ways in which the SRF document has been revised in response ensuring that local views have been taken into account and had a material consideration and impact on the final document.



## 3.0 Constraints and Opportunities

- 3.1 Bringing together the findings of the initial review work, the following SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis starts to identify the emerging implications and potential future role of Macclesfield Town Centre.

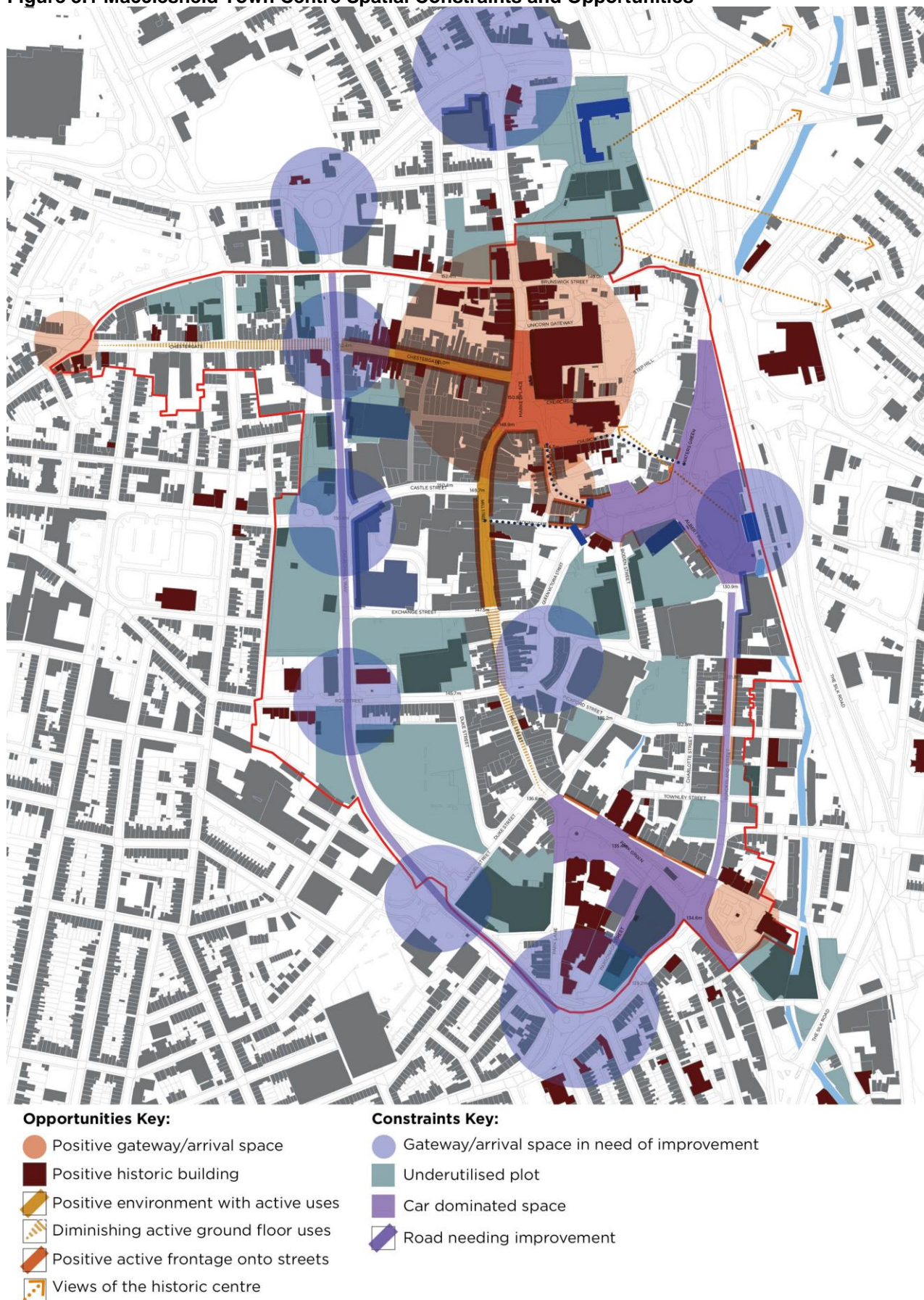
**Table 3.1 Macclesfield Town Centre SWOT Analysis**

Strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Strategic connections</b> - by rail to Manchester, London, Birmingham and Stoke</li> <li>▪ <b>Rural hinterland</b> - attractive setting and views to the countryside, alongside easy access to the Peak District and activities it supports</li> <li>▪ <b>Clear strategic priorities</b> - for the Town Centre established within the adopted Local Plan provides an opportunity to prepare a regeneration framework which can be used to inform decision making</li> <li>▪ <b>Engaged and committed stakeholders</b> - potential to harness the passion, skills and knowledge of numerous town centre stakeholder groups to inform and deliver the SRF</li> <li>▪ <b>Attractive labour market and strong business base</b> - in high value sectors including internationally recognised science based businesses and highly skilled workers</li> <li>▪ <b>Emerging independent offer</b> - especially in respect of cafés, restaurants, pubs and shops helping to diversify and differentiate the local offer</li> <li>▪ <b>Relative affordability</b> - making Macclesfield well positioned to accommodate new residents and businesses</li> <li>▪ <b>Successful culture and events</b> - Barnaby Festival and Treacle Market alongside rich cultural and music heritage that encourage visitors from a wide catchment</li> <li>▪ <b>Active creative scene</b> - including street art galleries, independent cinema, studios etc. and the Macclesfield Culture Heritage and Arts Forum (MCHAF) seeking to coordinate heritage and culture regeneration</li> <li>▪ <b>Built heritage and urban spaces</b> - including quality and architecture of historic buildings and links to silk trade. Need to take advantage of prominent landmarks such as Arighi Bianchi</li> </ul>
Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Relatively weak retail and leisure offer</b> - relative to affluent catchment including voids and under-represented leisure including food and drink</li> <li>▪ <b>Low commercial property values</b> - limiting the ability to viably deliver new office space within the town centre</li> <li>▪ <b>Poor image and first impressions</b> - both generally and in respect of key gateways into the town</li> <li>▪ <b>Car dominance</b> - acting as a barrier to pedestrian movement and resulting in congestion</li> <li>▪ <b>Car parking</b> - surface parking dominates the town particularly around the station. Management and maintenance of town centre car parks and charges including directional signage required</li> <li>▪ <b>Poor way finding and legibility</b> - especially in terms of walking routes from the rail station and vehicular routes through town to car parks. Locational signage would improve</li> <li>▪ <b>Under-utilised and vacant buildings</b> - number of voids blighting the town centre</li> <li>▪ <b>Topography</b> - creating challenges to movement, connectivity and development scope</li> <li>▪ <b>Current residential offer</b> - limited to older and smaller properties within the town centre</li> <li>▪ <b>Mismatch</b> - between affluent town centre catchment and retail and leisure offer</li> <li>▪ <b>Poor interchange</b> - between bus and rail services</li> <li>▪ <b>Limited greenspace</b> - within which to "dwell" in the centre</li> </ul>

Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Growing working age population</b> - creating opportunities for housing, employment footfall and spend to underpin an enhanced town centre retail, leisure and employment offering</li> <li>▪ <b>Growth in town centre living</b> - could make efficient use of brownfield land and underutilised premises, contribute to housing targets, and enhance the leisure and evening economy through increased footfall and spend. Opportunity to deliver a step change in housing choice</li> <li>▪ <b>Significant Residential Allocations</b> – including, but not limited to, the South Macclesfield Development Area (SMDA) urban extension just 2 miles south of the town centre will expand the market catchment</li> <li>▪ <b>An affluent catchment</b> - can support a resilient town centre through footfall and spend, provided the offer and functionality of the town is aligned with their demands and aspirations</li> <li>▪ <b>Rise of the evening economy</b> - can extend dwell time and spend, and re-purpose retail voids but must be aligned to local demand, in this case for distinctive and independent operators</li> <li>▪ <b>Commutability</b> - providing residential market appeal to young professionals priced out of large employment centres or those who want better access to green spaces</li> <li>▪ <b>Market appeal</b> - to families and individuals seeking attractive life balance through great connectivity, proximity to the Peak District, affordability, good amenities etc.</li> <li>▪ <b>Current and pipeline investment</b> - including public realm, Grosvenor Centre, Georgian Mill and Picturedrome will encourage footfall and generate market confidence</li> <li>▪ <b>Facilitate organic growth</b> - create the right conditions to flourish, stimulate and nurture independence</li> <li>▪ <b>Enhanced linkages</b> - including cycling and walking links to facilitate both pedestrians and cyclists travelling into and through the town centre</li> <li>▪ <b>Quality and character</b> - opportunity to re-use and refurbish attractive underutilised buildings including upper floors</li> <li>▪ <b>Opportunity sites</b> - potential to consolidate existing surface car park sites and redevelop other underused sites and premises</li> <li>▪ <b>Marketing and promotion</b> - to raise the profile and enhance perceptions of Macclesfield</li> <li>▪ <b>Stakeholders</b> – want change but worried about disruption. Frustration over number of studies but lack of delivered development and changes. Scope to harness this passion</li> </ul>
Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Declining retail trends</b> - socio-economic and market shifts are resulting in polarised town centres and a requirement for a critical mass of non-retail attractions and experiences</li> <li>▪ <b>Negative perceptions</b> - gives out wrong message. Social media could help change perceptions</li> <li>▪ <b>Inward looking town</b> - need to get messages out to the development community that Macclesfield is open for business and development will happen!</li> </ul>

3.2 Figure 3.1 brings together the spatial constraints and opportunities for Macclesfield Town Centre:

**Figure 3.1 Macclesfield Town Centre Spatial Constraints and Opportunities**



Source: OPEN



## 4.0 Vision and Objectives

- 4.1 This section sets out the Vision and Objectives for Macclesfield Town Centre which have been tested and refined through stakeholder engagement and public consultation.

### Vision for Macclesfield Town Centre

- 4.2 The vision for Macclesfield Town Centre provides an aspirational description of what the Strategic Regeneration Framework and the actions that support it are seeking to achieve in the medium to long-term future. It is intended to inspire all stakeholders and serve as a clear ‘destination’ ensuring all actions align to this aspiration which will remain unique to Macclesfield.
- 4.3 The Vision of the Strategic Regeneration Framework is as follows:

**Macclesfield - a town that celebrates its quirkiness<sup>13</sup>**  
**Green, creative, connected and social. A home to innovators, entrepreneurs and independents**  
**Thriving, diverse, distinctive and inclusive. Rich in heritage and culture, with outstanding employment opportunities and nestled in stunning countryside**  
**Cherishing its past, striving for a sustainable future**

### Objectives

- 4.4 The starting point must be that the basics are done well in Macclesfield. Such things as ensuring that the town centre is clean and safe for all users falls into this definition and are not therefore included as specific objectives. This does not mean that they are not important. Each of the objectives recognise that whilst retail needs to continue to play a key role in the town centre, fundamental changes to the sector means less retail floor space is needed going forward. The purpose of this SRF is to create a town centre where social, cultural, leisure, business and other uses and experiences not only support the retail function but are seen as important in their own right.
- 4.5 The Macclesfield Town Centre SRF will be supported by the following objectives:

- **Grow our town centre population** - building the right mix of high quality residential accommodation of appropriate design to attract and sustain a diverse community
- **Grow and diversify our leisure, cultural and evening economy** - to balance the existing retail dominated central offer and attract a wider audience and support new resident desires. Encouraging people to spend more time and money in the town through new leisure uses including food and drink. Building upon our existing impressive events calendar and proximity and views to the Peak District
- **Enhance the retail offer** – striving for an uplift in quality, independents and diversity, supporting existing retailers and encouraging new
- **Make more of our connectivity** - to attract residents, workers and visitors who want a base from which to access our local world class businesses as well as those who want access to the Peak District, London and Manchester. Capitalise on strategic opportunities such as HS2 to unlock and accelerate growth

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<sup>13</sup> Defined as “unusual in an attractive and interesting way.”

- **Support businesses to create jobs and develop skills** - Maximise Macclesfield's strategic location and create the right business environment for small and medium sized businesses to co-locate and collaborate with each other and the world class organisations in our hinterland
- **Harness our distinctiveness** - make better use of our unique and special assets - such as town and country, rivers and canals, Georgian architecture. Provide reasons, services and experiences that can only be found in Macclesfield
- **Cherish our historic buildings and repurpose our underutilised assets** - to diversify our offer, celebrate our distinctiveness and attract a wider range of occupiers to the town
- **Enhance the town centre environment** - making it greener, more distinctive and a celebration of local creativity through our high quality and sustainable blue and green infrastructure, green spaces and public realm
- **Raise aspirations and change perceptions** - get better at promoting all that the town has to offer and encourage new entrants to invest

## Signs of Success

4.6 We will know that we have met our objectives through the following:

- More people living in the central wards
- More housing choices - in terms of unit types, tenures, prices
- Reduction in number of vacant units
- More places to eat, drink and enjoy leisure time including an enhanced family friendly offer and more "after-five" uses including leisure and residential
- More independents
- Increased footfall and spend
- Number of historic buildings and/or under-utilised sites brought back into use
- More trees and soft planting in the town centre
- Better sustainability credentials
- More public art and celebrations of creativity
- Increased private sector investment and business growth

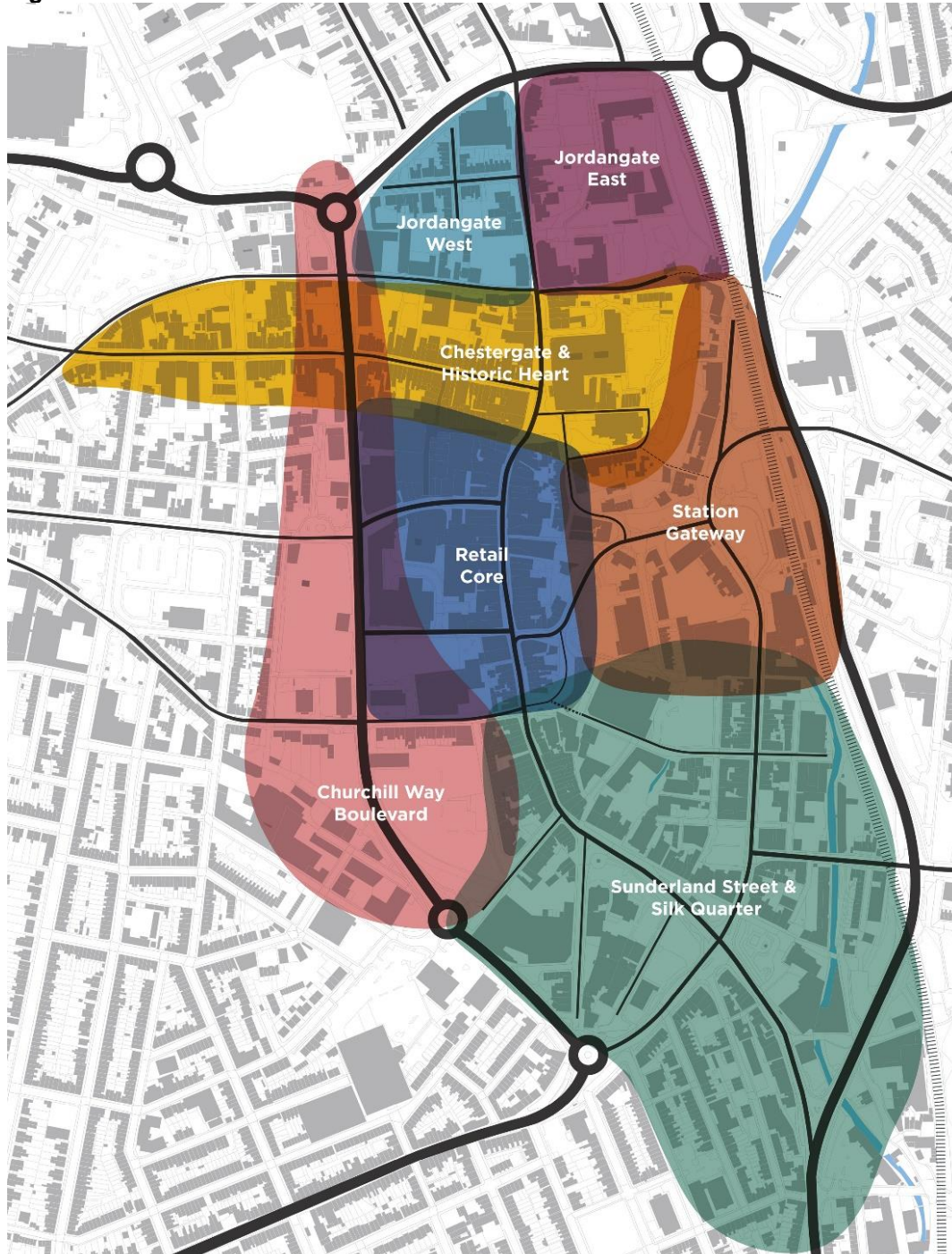


## 5.0 Spatial Framework

### Character Areas

- 5.1 A series of character areas can be identified across Macclesfield Town Centre and surrounding locality. These are illustrated in Figure 5.1. Each character area has its own unique assets and characteristics which have been considered and interpreted through the Spatial Framework to identify areas of **potential aspirational change**<sup>14</sup>.

**Figure 5.1 Macclesfield Town Centre Character Areas**

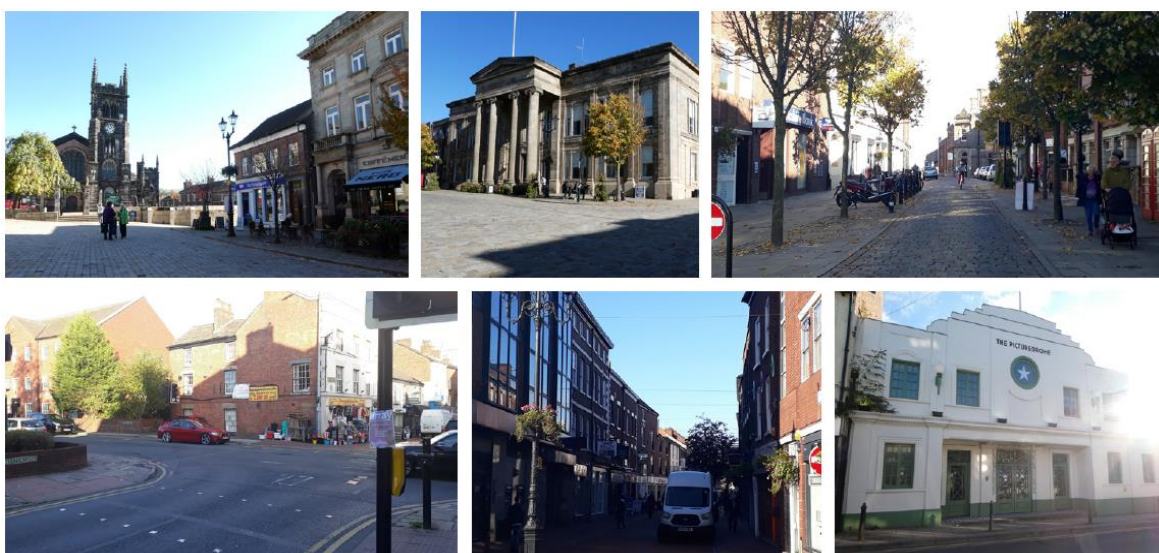


Source: OPEN

<sup>14</sup> Not in order of priority

## Chestergate and Historic Heart

- 5.2 Chestergate and Market Place form the historic heart of the town centre. The area is characterised by a wealth of attractive and historic buildings and urban spaces and is the focus of cultural events such as the Treacle Market.
- 5.3 The focus in this area should be on enhancing what is already here through public realm improvements and the refurbishment and re-use of historic buildings including the conversion and reutilisation of upper floors to provide characterful apartments. The area is home to independent retail and café businesses that make Macclesfield distinctive. These uses should be promoted and supported to encourage further investment and start-ups from other independent businesses, particularly those that can contribute to extending the evening and cultural economy, helping to extend dwell time and spend. Market Place should continue to be the 'heart' of the town. Its events should be celebrated and new opportunities for culture and event activities explored.



## Jordangate West and East

- 5.4 The north-south axis of Jordangate forms an area of potential change within the Town Centre. Starting with the modernisation of Jordangate Car Park into a convenient, light and inviting car park at an important gateway to the town, public realm enhancements and infill development to mend gaps in the frontage along Jordangate itself should, together with an enhanced public realm and signage, draw people into the town centre.
- 5.5 The area to the west of Jordangate forms a local employment area within an attractive historic setting and this should continue to be the predominant use, alongside existing residential. Refurbishment of existing buildings, and if viable in the future, new development for business uses should be the focus. The priority being to create an appropriate supply of employment space which attracts local occupiers who recognise the benefits of a town location whilst also having great rail connections and links to major employers in the wider area. New workspaces should be of high quality and should consider opportunities for small companies, flexible working and clustering.
- 5.6 To the east of Jordangate in the area between Jordongate and the rail line a number of large employment uses dominate including BT, a Royal Mail Delivery Office and the Police Station. Should any of these buildings become surplus to requirements, this area would make an attractive 'town and country' residential area, benefiting from its historic setting and elevated position providing rural views.





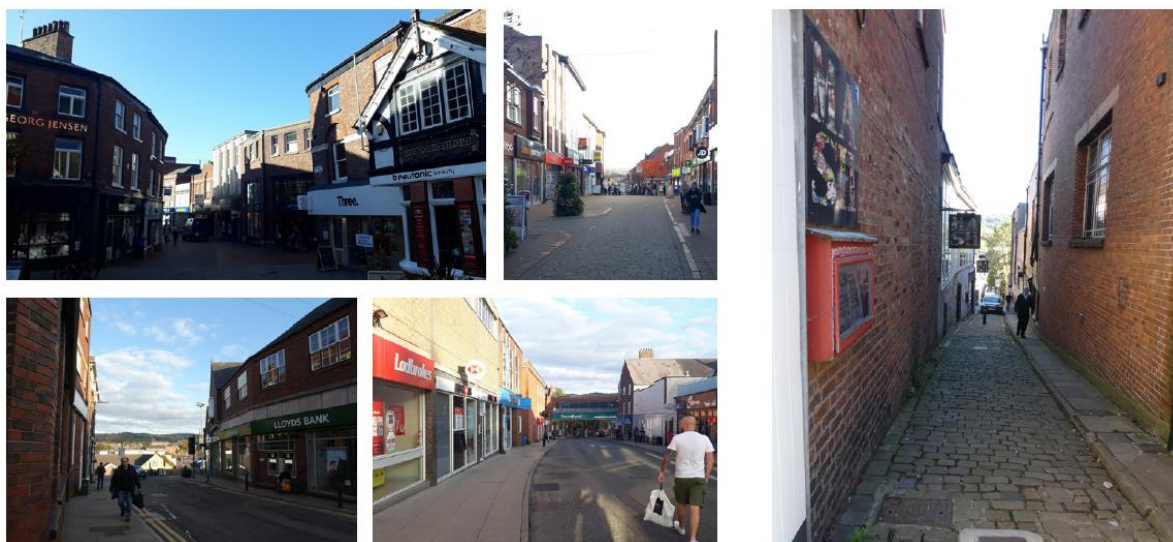
## Station Gateway

- 5.7 Whilst Macclesfield's strategic rail linkages are a major asset to the town, the area around the main line rail station does not currently create a good first impression of the town to either those disembarking or passing through on their journey. The area is surrounded by a sea of surface car parking and pedestrian routes to the centre are not clear. As such, the Station Gateway is proposed as a key area of change.
- 5.8 The Local Plan Strategy (LPS 12) references the significant opportunity in this location to create a "hub of activity built around the station with commercial, residential and leisure development." Benefitting from its strong connectivity, the Station Gateway has the potential to be an attractive and accessible destination for those seeking to live, work or visit Macclesfield. New development must be of high quality given its visual prominence to the railway.
- 5.9 Improvements to car parking provision will be a critical consideration. Parking for the station will need to be retained, but the potential to do this more efficiently through decked or multi-storey provision will be explored. This would then enable opportunities for new build business space, live/work or co-working facilities, residential and/or leisure development to be unlocked and the area in front of the station to be opened up to provide a more pedestrian friendly and welcoming sense of arrival to the town taking into consideration the current change in levels. Any proposals for multi-storey car parking will be sensitive to the views and character of the area and consider options for screening such as green walls, or even alternative parking locations within the locality.
- 5.10 The historic Waters Green has the potential to form an attractive plaza that draws people in and up into the town centre through enhanced legibility and signage. Reinstating this public green space could even be used for public events or to support the evening economy. However, vehicular access to key services including the bus station and Waters Green Medical Centre must be maintained.



## Retail Core

- 5.11 The main retail centre of Macclesfield along Mill Street, Castle Street and Exchange Street should continue to function as the primary shopping area of the town with a 'town centre first' approach taken in respect of new retail uses, but recognising that some retail consolidation and re-use of existing units and voids for alternative uses such as food and drink, as well as residential on upper floors and through conversion of existing buildings on the periphery will enhance rather than detract from the offer as high streets continue to respond to shifting socio-economic and market trends. However, caution must be taken to ensure no conflicts with the operations of existing businesses within the Retail Core.
- 5.12 It is critical to reconnect people to the town centre. To this end, legibility along key routes should be enhanced such as from Churchill Way through the Grosvenor Shopping Centre and from the rail and bus stations. This can be achieved through improved way finding and signage, reducing car dominance and enhancing pedestrian and cycle movement.
- 5.13 There is a need to enhance the physical environment of the Retail Core in order to better appeal to all town centre users. Interventions to support this could include attractive public realm, greening-including tree planting, and shop front improvements to transform the look and feel of the town. Investment in enhancing the indoor market and Grosvenor Centre Car Park would also improve the look and feel of the Retail Core.
- 5.14 One area of change could include Exchange Street Car Park which could provide a more attractive frontage to the Heritage Centre, enhancing this important focal point and asset through enhancement, refurbishment and repositioning from a long to a short stay car park. This is in recognition of the role this car park plays in supporting local convenience shops and town centre footfall, particularly to those requiring disabled spaces or likely to have numerous or heavy shopping bags and requiring proximity by car (e.g. Tesco, B&M, Iceland).



## Churchill Way Boulevard

- 5.15 Churchill Way forms a primary route through the town centre but currently acts as a barrier between the heart of the town and the residential and business areas to the west. Transforming this key route to create a greener 'boulevard' will enhance first impressions of the town, improve legibility and wayfinding, and reduce car dominance, resulting in pedestrian prioritisation at key junctions and safer pedestrian and cycle routes.



- 5.16 New infill residential development will enhance the currently 'broken' frontage to Churchill Way whilst providing new homes that are well connected to the town centre, but must not impact on the operation of existing businesses. This is already starting to appear with proposals to convert the visually prominent former office building Craven House on the corner of Castle Street into apartments.
- 5.17 Consolidation of car parking in this area will be a priority. In the longer term this could include a possible decked car park on Duke Street to increase provision with improved access and partial redevelopment/ enhancement of Churchill Way car park and the redevelopment or upgrading of the poor grade Grosvenor Centre Car Park.



### Sunderland Street and Silk Quarter

- 5.18 This southern gateway area to the town has the potential to become a vibrant urban mixed use area incorporating residential, boutique retail, employment, leisure and evening/night-time economy uses and characterised by distinctive independent businesses. The traditional historical character and buildings within this area, linked to the heritage of the Silk Trade, lends itself well to such an approach. References to this rich past should be incorporated into modern uses and through the reutilisation of heritage assets as the area seeks to strengthen this distinctive identity. There is an opportunity to open up and enhance the appearance of the River Bollin in this area to provide a waterside aspect to new residential development and conversions, and to enhance the area for the benefit of the general public.
- 5.19 Cars continue to dominate on Sunderland Street. Whilst vehicular access should be maintained, where possible, the volume of traffic on Sunderland Street should be reduced by redirecting unnecessary traffic back out onto the ring road and consideration given to enhancing the public realm.

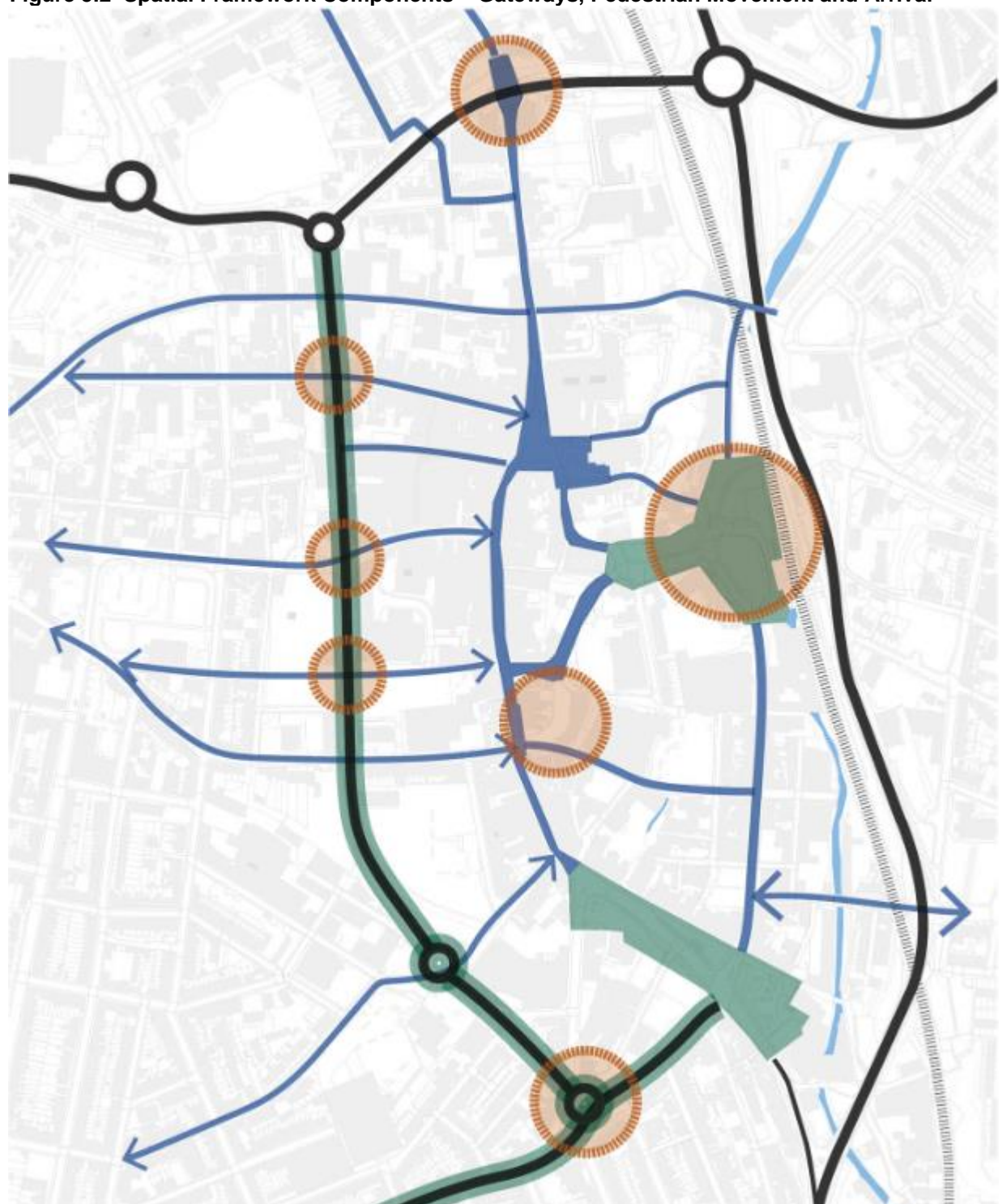









## Spatial Framework

- 5.20 Figures 5.2 to 5.4 set out the components of the Spatial Framework for Macclesfield Town Centre including:
- Improved gateways, pedestrian movement and sense of arrival;
  - Strengthened frontages and revitalising empty plots;
  - A sensitive, contextual response to existing buildings and uses; and
  - Enhanced public realm.
- 5.21 The components of the Spatial Framework represent the aspiration for Macclesfield should the opportunity and resources arise. Implementation would require significant additional development, planning, feasibility and viability testing.

**Figure 5.2 Spatial Framework Components – Gateways, Pedestrian Movement and Arrival**



**Improved gateways, pedestrian links and sense of arrival**




-  Improved gateways/junctions
-  Improved pedestrian links
-  Improved public realm quality/frontage onto vehicular routes
-  Existing vehicular routes
-  Existing train line

Source: OPEN

**Figure 5.3 Spatial Framework Components – Strengthened Frontages and Empty Plots**



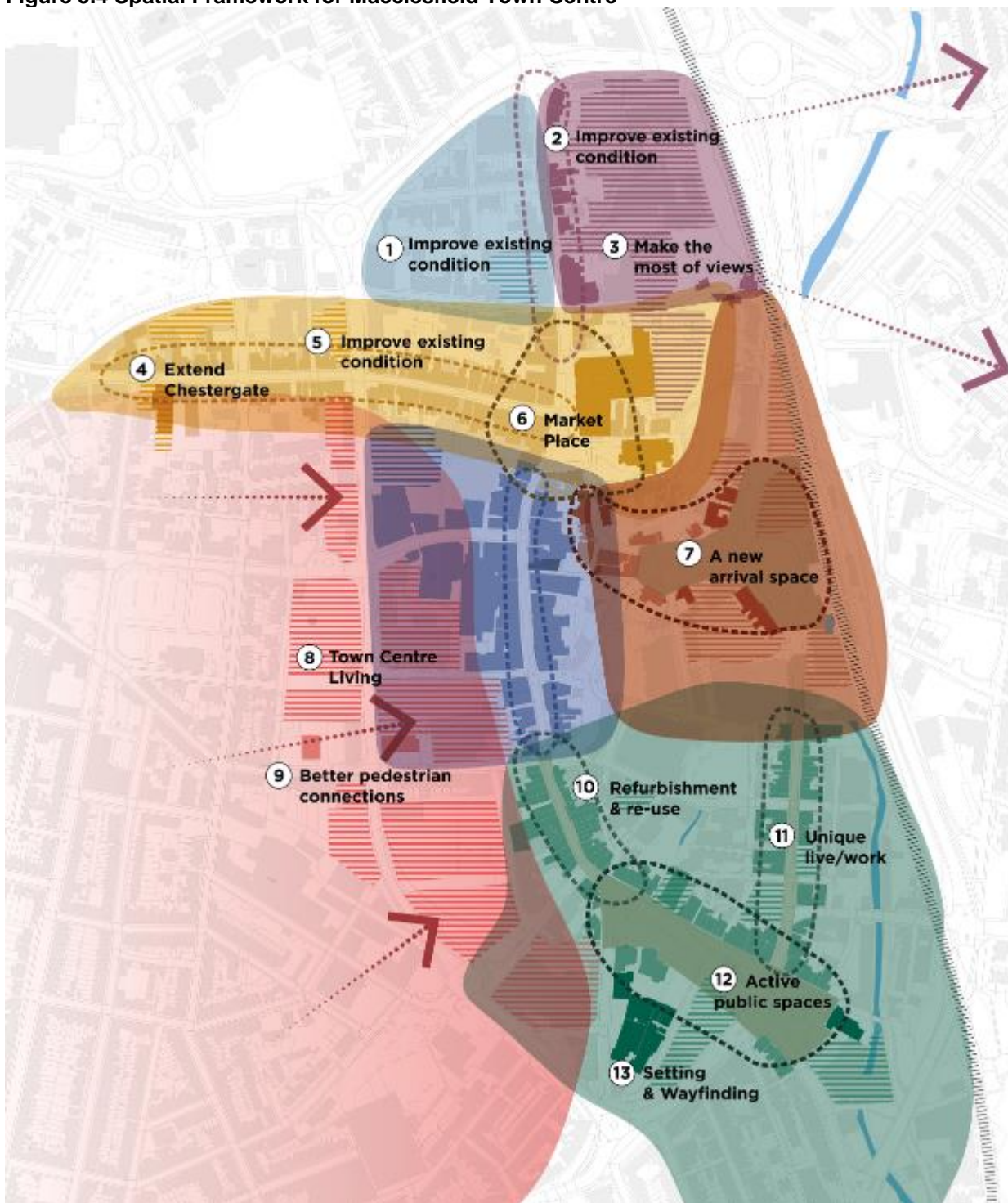
**Strengthened frontages and plots with potential for improvement**

-  Plots with potential for improvement
-  Active/strengthened frontages
-  Improved routes

Source: OPEN



Figure 5.4 Spatial Framework for Macclesfield Town Centre



**Key:**

-  Buildings of architectural/cultural interest
-  Opportunity sites
-  Existing buildings along a key route
-  Intensification of uses

Source: OPEN



5.22 The numbered components of the Spatial Framework for Macclesfield Town Centre identified in Figure 5.4 are described in more detail as follows:

1. **Improve existing condition:** Improving the setting of already well established businesses to promote an identity for the area
2. **Improve existing condition:** Improving the setting of existing historical buildings through sensitive infill development
3. **Make the most of views:** The topography here means excellent views over the valley to the Peak District
4. **Extend Chestergate:** Improve the pedestrian crossing over Churchill Way to better connect it to the heart of the town
5. **Improve existing condition:** Improving the setting of already well established businesses to promote an identity for the area
6. **Enhance Market Place:** The market place is a strong anchor point for the town. New initiatives can benefit from the strong existing setting and promote alfresco/community/leisure uses including events
7. **Station Gateway:** Existing group of traditional pubs, independent bars and cafes. Potential to rationalise parking in order to create a new green public plaza and opportunities for new development to generate a better arrival experience from the station
8. **Town Centre Living:** The residential community to the west of Churchill Way is currently somewhat separated from the town centre. There is an opportunity for a much more mixed-use approach to bring residential into the town centre
9. **Better pedestrian and cycling connections:** Pedestrian and cycling links to surrounding residential communities can be improved to better connect the residents of Macclesfield to the amenities in the town centre. Better lighting along pedestrian routes at night will also help the local evening and night-time economy
10. **Refurbishment and re-use of existing buildings:** To provide ground floors living space & studio office space
11. **Unique live/work:** Warehouse living and live-work spaces. Views onto the River to be capitalised
12. **Active public spaces:** Consolidation of car parking to the north of Park Green would make space for higher quality public realm outside the bars and restaurants to the north and improve the setting of the buildings around Park Green in general
13. **Setting and wayfinding:** Improve the setting and enhance wayfinding to the Silk Museum as part of a wider wayfinding package

## 6.0 Strategic Actions

- 6.1 With the aim of realising the aspirational vision for Macclesfield Town Centre, the following potential strategic actions have been devised to respond to the identified objectives. All of these actions **ultimately seek to ensure that Macclesfield's town centre thrives as the local centre of choice for all uses and users.**
- 6.2 These actions have been consulted upon and worked up into more detail to set out who needs to drive specific actions forward, how and when (immediately or in the short, medium or long term). It is important to note that the strategic actions do not represent a 'to do' list for Cheshire East Council but will require commitment and collaborative input from all of Macclesfield's stakeholders to be successful – public, private, community and voluntary.

**Table 6.1 Strategic Actions**

Objective	Draft Actions
<b>Grow our town centre population</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Engaging with the private sector and social housing providers to deliver new high quality homes within the town centre through new build, infill development and refurbishment of underutilised and vacant buildings</li> <li>▪ Improve housing choice in terms of type and tenure to attract and sustain a more diverse community of occupiers attracted to town centre living – employees (particularly young professionals) from the highly skilled businesses in the local catchment (e.g. Alderley Park) first homes, singles, young families, downsizers, retired and older people etc.</li> <li>▪ Ensure appropriate provision of affordable homes within the town centre</li> <li>▪ Consider the delivery of specialist housing for older people given accessible and well served location</li> <li>▪ Ensure town centre meets 'everyday' needs of a resident population including local services, amenities, health care and education provision and a quality of place which is attractive as a residential location.</li> <li>▪ Ensure new housing provision within the town centre does not negatively impact upon the operations of existing businesses and maintains good levels of amenity for existing as well as new residents</li> <li>▪ Exploit the opportunities presented by an enlarged catchment through large scale housing and population growth at South Macclesfield Development Area (SMDA) and other housing allocations by ensuring Macclesfield becomes their local shopping destination of choice</li> </ul>
<b>Grow and diversify our leisure and evening economy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Following the recent announcement for a food hall in the former Picturedrome, grow the food and drink offer to support existing retail and create a café culture/evening economy that encourages increased spend and dwell time and appeals to the town's affluent catchment population</li> <li>▪ An extended events strategy that builds upon existing success and the Town's distinctive and cultural assets</li> <li>▪ Work with event organisers to develop an information pack and resources list to inform others seeking to create new events</li> <li>▪ Consider the potential for a new and accessible multi-functional space around the station gateway which could be used for events to complement Market Place</li> <li>▪ Explore scope to provide new leisure destination within the town centre but with flexibility to adapt to future changing trends</li> <li>▪ Work with the private sector to determine the appetite for delivering a new hotel offer</li> <li>▪ Seek to attract walkers and cyclists visiting the surrounding countryside/ Bollin Valley/Canal Network to stop and explore Macclesfield</li> <li>▪ All new provision must have a strong relationship with the retail core</li> </ul>

Objective	Draft Actions
<b>Enhance the retail offer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support proposals to enhance the range and quality of town centre retail uses with a focus on independents</li> <li>▪ Prioritise the retail core for any new retail provision</li> <li>▪ Ensure proposals for residential and alternative uses in the retail core do not negatively impact upon the operation of existing retailers</li> <li>▪ Consider options for 'meanwhile' uses and pop ups within retail voids</li> <li>▪ Lobby centrally for reduced town centre business rates</li> </ul>
<b>Make more of our connectivity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Redevelopment of station gateway to enhance first perceptions of arrival and provide clear routes into the town centre as well as providing new opportunities for residential, business and leisure uses which would benefit from the rail line connectivity.</li> <li>▪ Promote strategic rail access to world class businesses and labour markets to inward investors</li> <li>▪ Promote access to surrounding countryside (Peak District and Bollin Valley) including increased utilisation of cycle and foot links such as the river and canal network</li> <li>▪ Maximize opportunities presented by HS2 proposals to drive future growth and regeneration</li> <li>▪ Undertake a comprehensive parking strategy which considers the utilization, location, quality and cost of parking across the town to inform rationalization and redevelopment potential of sites whilst maintaining appropriate parking provision for residents, workers and visitors</li> <li>▪ Undertake a Movement Strategy that considers all modes of transport and seeks to enhance linkages, connectivity and way finding and facilitates and supports people to travel into and across the town centre by walking, cycling and other sustainable modes of transport</li> <li>▪ Consider implementation of residential permits, disabled parking, pay on exit and clear signage to guide visitors to the best place to park relative to their arrival point and purpose of visit</li> <li>▪ Ensure good legibility into and around the town centre through improved signage and wayfinding both on foot and by road from the motorway</li> <li>▪ Enhance ease of connectivity to/from surrounding residential areas and to points of interest on the periphery e.g. Christ Church, Victoria Park and West Park</li> <li>▪ Lobby public transport operators to expand scope of destinations and timetable for bus and rail users</li> <li>▪ Encourage greater pedestrian and cycle movement through enhanced routes with improved infrastructure to make walking and cycling a safer and more attractive transport choice</li> <li>▪ Ensure all proposals are future proofed for emerging connectivity trends including EV charging points and autonomous vehicles</li> </ul>
<b>Support businesses to create jobs and develop skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Work with existing major occupiers to understand their requirements and role they could play in supporting new investment</li> <li>▪ Target small and medium sized-enterprises in sectors of strength including science, finance, creative and digital and promote opportunities for collaboration and clustering</li> <li>▪ Provide refurbished quality workspaces with appeal to flexible working and smaller local occupiers across a mix of sectors within existing buildings recognizing the viability challenges associated with new build</li> <li>▪ Support and promote the high quality of life and housing offer demanded by high value growth sector employers</li> <li>▪ Promote the excellent skills and labour market credentials of Macclesfield to inward investors</li> <li>▪ Support establishment of creative and digital start up – potentially by supporting reuse of heritage buildings potentially on a temporary basis</li> </ul>

Objective	Draft Actions
<b>Harness our distinctiveness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Promote services and events that are unique to Macclesfield</li> <li>▪ Support a wide range of independent, distinctive businesses to set up and thrive</li> <li>▪ Build on and promote cultural, arts and heritage assets to encourage local tourism including the Silk Museum, Heritage Centre and the proposed Picturedrome.</li> <li>▪ Explore the potential to work alongside the Weave and Silk Trust</li> <li>▪ Promote Macclesfield's positioning at the 'Gateway to the Peaks' and the western end of The Silk Road</li> </ul>
<b>Cherish our historic buildings and repurpose underutilised assets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Protect and maintain distinctive heritage buildings including but not limited to Town Hall, Police Station, Buttermarket and Christ Church and consider future potential of poor quality buildings such as the former Three Pigeons Public House on a case by case basis</li> <li>▪ Explore options for opening up the Town Hall to greater community use</li> <li>▪ Enforce Listed Building and Conservation Area status requirements</li> <li>▪ Engage with land/property owners to encourage underutilised buildings and sites to be repurposed to attract new investment and occupiers into the town including residential, employment and cultural uses</li> <li>▪ Reduce the negative impact of retail voids through creative or temporary re-use</li> <li>▪ Working with stakeholders, research potential to access funding streams focused on restoring and heritage assets and bringing back into active and viable uses</li> <li>▪ Harnessing interest in local markets support the revitalisation of the existing indoor market to attract a wider range of shoppers</li> </ul>
<b>Enhance the town centre environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensure basics are delivered well - streets are clean and tidy and basic needs of visitors are catered for and improved where possible, for example through the provision of EV charging points</li> <li>▪ Build on public realm and shop front improvements undertaken to date</li> <li>▪ Act on and enforce action by land owners on derelict and/or dangerous buildings which create an eyesore.</li> <li>▪ Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO) should be a last resort, but can provide a useful tool for persistent problem sites and premises</li> <li>▪ Prioritise the physical enhancement of key gateways and corridors including the station and major car parks</li> <li>▪ Rationalisation of surface car parking which currently creates visual blight, subject to a comprehensive car parking strategy for the town</li> <li>▪ Ensure any new decked or multi-storey car parking provision is well screened and visual impact minimised</li> <li>▪ Support the 'greening' of the town centre through increased tree planting and soft landscaping and if possible through the introduction of new green open space</li> <li>▪ Ensure all development proposals conform to high quality design principles</li> <li>▪ Consider the preparation of a 'green plan' to bring each of these elements together across the town but recognizing the financial implications of delivery and maintenance</li> <li>▪ Investigate support for creating a Business Improvement District (BID)</li> </ul>
<b>Raise aspirations and change perceptions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop a comprehensive marketing and communication strategy which raises awareness of the existing offer and promotes the town centre</li> <li>▪ Identification of Macclesfield 'Ambassadors' to utilise existing social capital and informally promote the town</li> <li>▪ Utilise key gateways to change perceptions for those who usually 'pass through' Macclesfield, for example through enhanced signage and physical environment at station and along key road corridors</li> <li>▪ Consider the potential to generate income through advertising of local businesses at highly visual locations such as the station</li> <li>▪ Continue to engage and work collaboratively with key local stakeholder groups to support delivery of actions</li> </ul>



## The Illustrative Framework

- 6.3 Figure 6.1 sets out the Illustrative Framework for Macclesfield Town Centre which seeks to demonstrate how this SRF and the proposed actions could manifest physically.

### Enhancements to the Physical Environment

- 6.4 Enhancing the physical environment would be a very visual indication of the successful transformation of the Town Centre. New development on vacant sites and the refurbishment or redevelopment of underutilised or vacant buildings will be fundamental to bringing new investment and uses into the town. Softer actions to support the objective of 'enhancing the town centre environment' should also be progressed as resources and opportunities allow. This could include improved public realm, new green space and street planting to ensure that the whole town benefits from investment not just individual sites.
- 6.5 The Illustrative Framework spatially prioritises these interventions as follows:

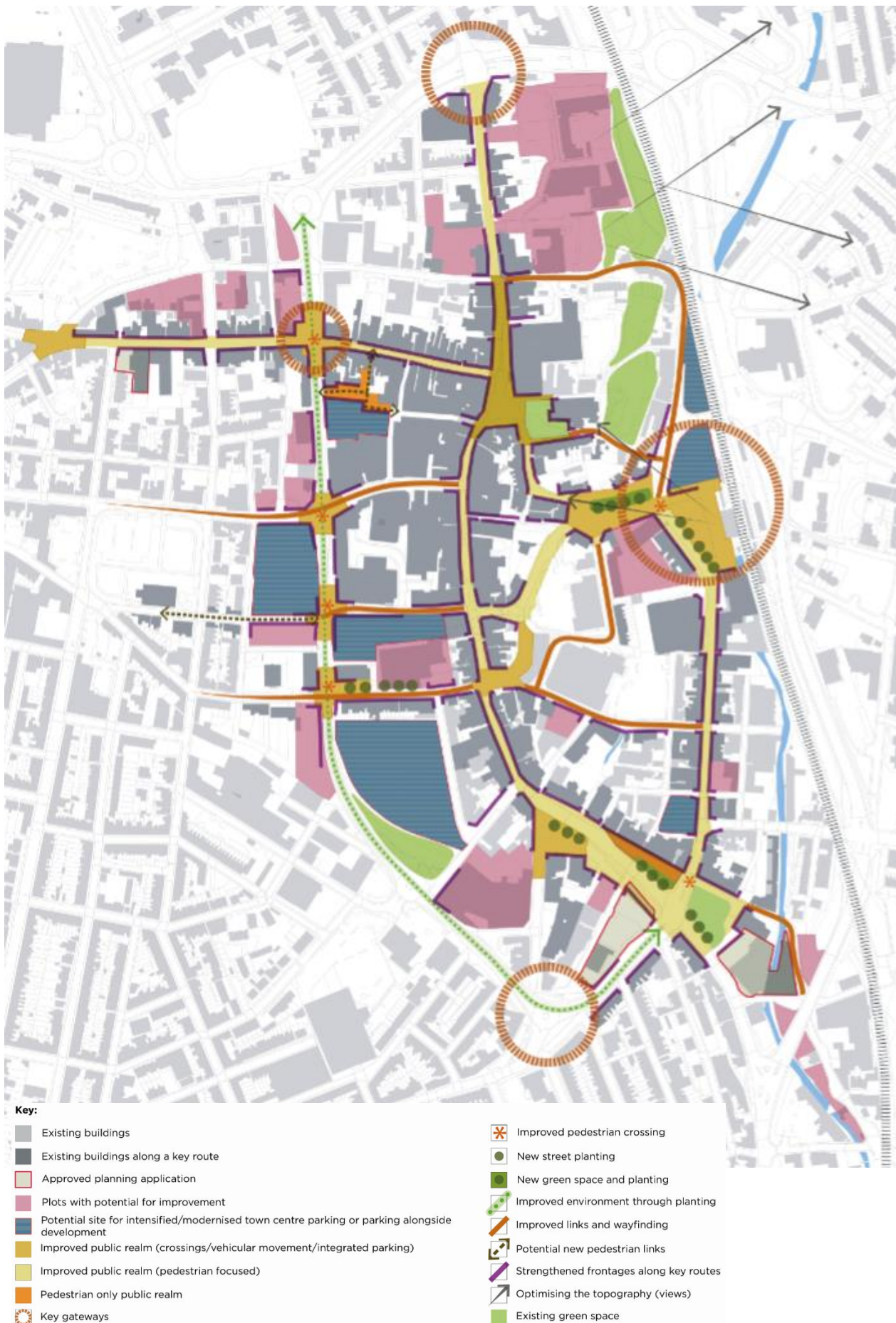
- **Public realm** – Beyond the improvements already being progressed for Castle Street, pedestrian focused public realm enhancements should be prioritised around routes with greatest footfall including Chestergate, Mill Street, Park Green, Jordangate, Station Gateway and Sunderland Street. There will be some areas that will need to consider integrated vehicular movements, in particular Market Place, Waters Green and at key crossing points on Churchill Way. Focus will also be given to ensuring critical gateways provide a quality initial welcome to the town centre and that where proposals are developed the ambition to make cycling into and through the town centre a safer and more attractive transport choice is included as a key objective.
- **Green space and planting** - Churchill Way currently presents a poor quality environment dominated by car use but has the potential to become an attractive 'boulevard' through the town through strategic tree planting. Other areas with potential to create attractive green spaces where people can dwell include Park Green, Waters Green and Roe Street as are other key areas for potential new tree planting.
- **Optimising the topography** - The Illustrative Framework identifies key views out to the surrounding countryside to the east and up to St Michaels Church from the Rail Station that should be optimised and protected in response to any development proposals

### Improved Connectivity

- 6.6 Shifting the focus away from the current car dominance within the town centre, actions seeking to enhance pedestrian connectivity and wayfinding, and integrate the town centre with the surrounding residential areas include:
- **Enhanced existing linkages** - focused on east-west connections to the residential areas to the west of the town centre along Great King Street/Castle Street; Waterloo Street West/Exchange Street; and Roe Street. Improved links south along Waterside; from the station into the town centre core via Churchside, Brunswick Street and Boden Street; and to the parks on the periphery including West Park, Victoria Park and South Park, making use of existing green linkages. Enhanced connectivity along these routes also incorporates improved wayfinding through signage, sight lines and consistent public realm

- **Potential new linkages** - are identified in respect of the potential opportunity sites at Jordangate East, Churchill Way, and for a potential new frontage and pedestrian access to the shopping centre off Churchill Way and Chestergate around the current Grosvenor Car Park site creating an intimate new square
- **Improved pedestrian crossings** - are suggested at Waters Green to enhance pedestrian movement from the rail station into the town centre core and across key junctions on Churchill Way and Sunderland Street. Each seeks to enhance pedestrian priority in areas currently dominated by traffic barriers
- **Car Parking** - car parking was an issue raised in a number of the consultations and needs to be tackled to ensure that there is an appropriate supply of car parking serving key destinations in the town whilst protecting adequate provision for residents. Consideration needs to be given to the amount, location and pricing of parking in the town
- **Cycling** – ensuring that as proposals for public realm and highways schemes are developed they look to include interventions to make cycling safer and a more attractive transport choice, thus improving walking and cycling infrastructure wherever possible

**Figure 6.1 Macclesfield Town Centre Illustrative Framework**



## 7.0 Delivering the SRF

- 7.1 The preparation, consultation and publication of the Macclesfield Town Centre SRF establishes a clear vision and strategy for change; which together with the adopted policy framework provides strategic guidelines which consider the future potential and aspirations of the town as a whole. The approach taken to develop this SRF has included significant engagement with key local stakeholder groups and formal statutory consultation with residents and businesses. The outcome is a demonstration of the Council's commitment to the future of Macclesfield Town Centre, buy-in from local stakeholders and enhanced business and investor confidence.
- 7.2 However, whilst delivery of the strategic actions will rely upon strong strategic leadership, the Council will not be able to deliver transformational change in isolation but will require the support of numerous stakeholders from across the public, private and voluntary sectors.
- 7.3 A separate Delivery Plan has been put forward to advise those looking to push forward initiatives and projects which will see the vision and objectives delivered. The Delivery Plan identifies recommendations for who needs to do what and when to start to move towards the aspirations set out in the vision and objectives of this SRF. It provides a 'route map' to delivery and will require the support and buy-in of all stakeholders if the town centre is to thrive. The Delivery Plan should be treated as a working document, not a definitive action list.

### The Outcomes

- 7.4 The objectives/themes and proposed actions have been developed to support the delivery of the vision for Macclesfield Town Centre, but will also help attain the following outcomes:
- Delivery of a wider choice of homes in the central wards
  - Attract and sustain a growing and diverse business community
  - Increased footfall, spend and vibrancy within the town centre
  - Attract a wider audience to Macclesfield including residents, workers and visitors
  - Reduced vacant/underutilised sites and premises
  - Support increased economic growth and employment
  - Increased demand for town centre facilities
  - Diversified range of services, facilities and events
  - Increased functionality of the town centre
  - Enhanced physical environment and 'quality of place' including investment in public realm, art, tree planting and soft landscaping
  - Appropriate supply of car parking that serves key destinations
  - Improved first impressions and aspirations
  - Raised Macclesfield profile within the wider area
  - Increased market confidence and attraction of new private sector investment
  - Improved sustainability and improvements in air quality