

6.5 Improvements to the pedestrian environment on Lune Street are also important to the functionality of Fishergate. Lune Street has a number of functions – it is home to shops and services, it is the entrance to the St Georges Shopping Centre car park, and one of three pedestrian accesses to the St Georges Shopping Centre. Significantly, it is also an important pedestrian link from Fishergate to services and activities in the northern part of the city centre, such as the university, and an important vehicular link from Ringway to economic activities in the southern part of the city centre, in Winckley Square for example. Improvements on Lune Street will seek to enhance pedestrian permeability for shoppers and pedestrians passing through in addition to preserving its vehicular function.

6.6 The aspiration of both Councils is to continue the public realm improvements throughout the city centre. Funding has recently been confirmed for the next phase of Fishergate Central which will take the improvements eastwards from Lune Street towards the bus station. Ultimately the whole length of Fishergate and Church Street and streets throughout City Centre North will be completed as funding becomes available. The proposed public realm improvements (as defined on the Policies Map), have the potential to transform the journey along the full length of Fishergate making the journey between the two stations a much more attractive, pedestrian friendly experience. With increased pedestrian priority it will be seen as less of a 'through' space and more of a 'to' space which may encourage pedestrians to spend a bit more time on their journey. The implementation of **Policy SP2** will help to achieve this aspiration.



Ringway

6.7 Ringway is a key traffic corridor through the city centre and a major pedestrian barrier which separates the northern part of the city centre from the core of the PSA. It is essential that Ringway strikes a better balance between acting effectively as an important highway and facilitating pedestrian and cycling movement into the PSA.



6.8 Congestion occurs at peak times on key junctions on Ringway. Investment in traffic management technology will help minimise the impact which a potential future increase in traffic volumes may have on journey times. This is done by managing the flow of traffic more effectively which results in more reliable journey times.



6.9 Public realm improvements have already been completed at several crossings including the junctions of Ringway and Corporation Street, Friargate and Lawson Street. This is part of an ongoing aspiration which aims to see further pedestrian and cycling enhancements at junctions along Ringway. Utilising a contemporary palette of materials, realigning junctions and introducing toucan crossings at key junctions, these schemes will increase the pedestrian and cycling permeability of Ringway, thus encouraging pedestrian and cycling movement into the PSA.



Pedestrian & Cycling Movement

Walking

6.10 The public realm improvements identified on the Policies Map will revitalize the city centre putting a greater emphasis on pedestrian movement. It will enhance pedestrian accessibility through the heart of the PSA; between the train station and bus station; to the university and to Avenham and Miller Parks, via Winckley Square.

6.11 The improvement of Corporation Street is also important to the future success of the city. This is due to its location between two major gateways into the city centre (the railway station and the Fylde Road roundabout) and its role as the main corridor linking the railway station with the university. Improvements to the public realm and pedestrian environment will improve the physical linkage between the city centre and university. Corporation Street is identified as an Opportunity Area in the plan, and **Policy OP1** is relevant to delivering these improvements.

Cycling

6.12 The speed, flexibility and the ability to switch between off-road and on-road domains makes cycling an extremely efficient mode of transport in the city centre, particularly at peak times. The plan supports the expansion of cycle routes within the city centre. The expansion of quality cycle routes will encourage cycling and reduce car use in the city centre, also helping to realise the aspirations of a cycling friendly city centre. Improving and expanding cycle routes in the city centre however cannot be effective if consideration is not given to the safety, quality and availability of cycle routes from outside the city centre that feed into the city centre. The plan therefore supports and will give consideration to this as part of any proposals to improve cycle routes within the city centre. Improvements to, and the addition of, new routes and links to the city centre cycle network will be considered as part of the development of a City Deal Cycling Strategy as set out in the City Deal Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) 2015/18.



6.13 This in particular applies to the formation of links ('spokes') to the Preston Guild Wheel, which opened in 2012. The Guild Wheel is 21 miles long, and circumnavigates Preston forming a link between the city centre and key employment destinations such as Preston Docks, Red Scar and Preston North Industrial Estate, and areas of green space such as Avenham Park. Significantly, Avenham Park lies on the southern boundary of the city centre; the Guild Wheel therefore provides an accessible and sustainable transport route for commuters and for leisure use. The plan supports, through **Policy MA1**, the integration and improvements to the 'spokes' of the Guild Wheel which will greatly improve journeys for cyclists into and out of the city centre.

6.14 The plan, through **Policy MA1**, also supports the expansion of secure public cycle storage facilities, which are necessary to encourage commuters/visitors into the city centre from the Guild Wheel route, and capitalise on this passing trade, as there are currently no recognised secure cycle storage facilities for public use in the city centre. However, funding has been secured by Virgin Trains, with the support of the County Council, to deliver a Station Cycle Hub, with storage for a minimum of 200 cycles, at the railway station by summer 2016.

Wayfinding

6.15 The public realm improvements will be supplemented by a new wayfinding system for the city centre. The new system will consist of a range of signs, of a standard format and style that provide directional and map information. The aim is to enhance the experience of visiting, working or living in Preston by improving people's sense of orientation and providing a better understanding of what the city centre has to offer. The plan promotes rolling out the proposed wayfinding scheme across the city centre, as part of future schemes. The initial phase of the Wayfinding system will be implemented as part of the Fishergate Central Gateway Project.

Public Conveniences & Changing Facilities

6.16 As part of enhancing the experience of city centre users, the plan, through **Policy MA1**, also encourages further provision of public conveniences and changing facilities in appropriate locations across the city centre, subject to other policies in the plan. The Council aspires to the city centre having at least one facility delivered up to Changing Places¹⁷ standard. The provision of replacement public conveniences is a requirement of the new Market project and a site for the Changing Places facilities has been secured at the Mobility Centre Car Park at the junction of Friargate and Ringway.

Policy MA1 Pedestrian & Cycling Accessibility

The Council will support, and encourage, proposals which improve pedestrian and cyclist facilities and general accessibility across the city centre.

The Council will seek opportunities (including through new development proposals) to deliver:

- New, improved and expanded cycle routes throughout the city centre, particularly where they form links to the Guild Wheel.
- Cycle storage facilities in appropriate locations to facilitate commuters and visitors.
- A new wayfinding system to enhance orientation across the city centre.
- New public conveniences and associated changing facilities in appropriate locations across the city centre.

¹⁷ Changing Places, <http://www.changing-places.org/>

Public Transport

Bus

6.17 Preston Bus Station is a regional, sub-regional and local transport hub serving a large number of bus routes accessing Preston, Lancashire and the rest of the UK. The number, and range, of bus routes catered for result in a large number of visitors into the city centre, although a significant proportion of passengers use bus stops around the city centre rather than just the bus station. Nonetheless, the level of service the bus station provides to passengers, the arrival experience and the connectivity to the rest of the city centre, including the railway station, are poor.

6.18 The bus station is a Grade II listed building constructed in the late 1960s. However by virtue of its layout, use of underpasses and the fact it does not meet current disability regulations, it does not function effectively as one of Lancashire's main transport hubs. Following a safety review in 2009, level pedestrian crossings into the bus station have been provided and measures to restrict access onto the apron were implemented. This has, to a degree, reduced safety concerns and improved pedestrian accessibility into the station for all users, but is visually detrimental to the building.



6.19 In April 2014, ownership of the bus station site transferred from Preston City Council to Lancashire County Council. The County Council is committed to improving the standard of the bus station and will invest significantly in upgrading facilities to bring it up to a level which is fitting for the largest centre in Lancashire. The County Council, with the support of the Council, and English Heritage, is currently developing proposals to improve and enhance bus station provision on the site, and are referenced further in Section 3 of the plan and Policy OP3.

6.20 Preston's comprehensive local bus routes are currently provided by two bus operators; Preston Bus and Stagecoach, with other operators serving areas outside Preston's boundaries. Bus stops within the city centre are located in four general locations. These include bus stops on Fishergate (for buses heading west to Penwortham and Leyland for example); Lancaster Road/Ringway/Friargate (for buses heading north via the university); Lancaster Road/North Road (for buses heading north to Fulwood), and; Church Street (for buses heading east and south to Ribblesdale and Bamber Bridge for example).

6.21 Government guidance recognises that bus stops form a key element of 'walkable' neighbourhoods. People must be able to access bus stops safely and within reasonable distance. It is therefore essential that bus stops in the city centre are located close to places where people travel from and to and are maintained and designed to a standard which will encourage use for all citizens, including those with impaired mobility. In line with this, a provision for new bus stops on the west side of the city centre, as close to the railway station as possible, is included in the Fishergate Central Gateway Project. These new stops, which are now operating, will provide an important function in providing a better interchange between bus and trains and establishing improved linkages between the railway station and the bus station.

Rail

6.22 Preston Railway Station functions as a strategic gateway to the whole of Lancashire from the rest of the UK, and a public transport hub for Central Lancashire. The railway station is Lancashire's largest and busiest – all passenger trains within Central Lancashire stop, or terminate, in Preston. Nearly 4.5 million passengers use the station each year, making it the busiest station in the North West outside of Manchester and Liverpool city centres; the station also sees more than one million interchanges, one of the highest volumes of interchange in the country outside the core cities.

6.23 The station is on the West Coast Main Line and has connecting services that run to the west, east and south. The city already benefits from fast and frequent train services to London, Birmingham, Manchester, Manchester Airport, Glasgow and Edinburgh. There are also rail services to Liverpool, Blackpool, Cumbria, East Lancashire and beyond. These are important links for commuters, business travellers, as well as for shopping and leisure trips.

6.24 North West Electrification, a rail industry committed scheme due for completion by December 2016, has the potential to increase passenger numbers passing through, or travelling to Preston. The scheme will deliver the electrification of railway lines between Blackpool North and Preston, and Preston and Manchester/ Liverpool, together with an associated increase in rolling stock capacity and quality.



6.25 North West Electrification will complement the Northern Hub project and electrification of the main Trans-Pennine route between Manchester and Leeds/ York. Together, these projects will deliver a significant improvement in connectivity between Central Lancashire and other major growth centres across the North of England, in particular Manchester city centre.

6.26 In addition, in January 2012 the Secretary of State for Transport announced the decision to go ahead with plans for a new high-speed rail network to connect to London, the West Midlands and the North of England. Known as 'HS2' this new infrastructure will release space on crowded railway lines for more passenger and freight services, including along the West Coast Main Line. As an economic centre in its own right, and identified by Government as being such, it is crucial that Preston has direct and frequent access to HS2 in fit and proper surroundings¹⁸.

6.27 The development of the railway station, to reflect its prominence as a strategic gateway to Lancashire and a public transport hub for Central Lancashire, is vital. Not only does the city need the station to be a state-of-the-art gateway, Lancashire as a whole will also benefit in having a modern, attractive facility as its key hub.

Improvements to the station would also take full advantage of the potential increase in passenger numbers brought about by North West Electrification.

6.28 Improvements to the public realm mentioned in paragraphs 6.2 to 6.4 will help define the railway station as a gateway to the city centre as a whole, which is a large net importer of labour both from within Lancashire and from outside the county, and to the university, one of the largest in the UK. This will greatly improve the arrival experience for workers, shoppers, visitors and students alike.

6.29 The Council is also an implementation partner in the Enter.hub project funded under the URBACT II programme, which is a European exchange and learning programme promoting sustainable urban development. The Enter.hub project seeks to promote railway stations in medium sized cities, such as Preston, as a means to encourage economic, social and cultural regeneration. The project will assist in helping Preston capitalise on the economic opportunities presented by the rail enhancements outlined in this section, such as electrification, and HS2 in the longer term.

¹⁸ Lancashire Strategic Economic Plan 2015 – 2025, Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (March 2014)

Roads

Traffic and Congestion

6.30 The car is the dominant travel choice for most people, and for most journeys. The most obvious effect of this choice on our roads is the amount of traffic those roads carry. Commuting currently places the biggest strain on our roads as most workers try to travel in a relatively short time period, in the morning and early evening peak hours. Traffic and congestion in the city centre is not just limited to Monday to Friday peak hours, however, nor is it limited to just commuters. Junctions also operate at, or are close to capacity, during Saturday peak times. Freight, taxis and buses also contribute to the traffic levels.

6.31 While some traffic on roads entering the city centre are a crucial part of the economy (such as freight delivery in the centre, shoppers, buses and essential car users employed in the city centre), efforts must be made to reduce non-essential traffic.

6.32 In reality however, like most city centres, a degree of congestion particularly at peak times is unavoidable. As growth and development will continue to be focused on the city centre, it is inevitable that there will be added strain on city centre roads. It is essential the highway network can manage this additional strain to produce reliable journey times.

6.33 Ringway is a key traffic corridor through the city centre. Consequently, congestion occurs particularly at peak times at the following junctions:

- Ringway/North Road
- Ringway/Corporation Street
- A6 London Road/Queen Street/A6 Stanley Street/New Hall Lane
- A6 Stanley Street/Church Street/Church Road

The completion of the first phase of the Fishergate Central Project will help address congestion at the junction of Ringway and Corporation Street.



6.34 The level of traffic and congestion in these areas is evidenced by the Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) that have been designated within the vicinity of some of the congestion spots identified in paragraph

6.33 One such AQMA is within the city centre boundary, at the junction of Church Street and Ringway. Two further AQMAs, whilst outside the city centre are located on key routes into the city centre – New Hall Lane and London Road. Congestion, and therefore air quality issues, in these areas will be improved through the implementation of Policy SP3 and wider initiatives to help promote improved accessibility to, and within, the city centre, to reduce the amount of vehicle movements at these key points.

6.35 Within the core of the city centre a main area of concern is the conflict between vehicles and pedestrians on Fishergate. The Fishergate Central Gateway Project reallocates space to pedestrians and removes unnecessary guard-railing which restricts pedestrian movement. This shift in focus to pedestrian movement will reduce this conflict.

6.36 Investment in traffic management technology on Ringway, as mentioned in paragraph 6.8, will be used to modernise network management techniques to improve journey times and reduce congestion.

6.37 In order to maintain a reliable transport network and minimise congestion at key junctions it is important to maintain an open and flexible approach that looks beyond a purely highway focussed approach. Public realm improvements, increased public transport patronage and prioritising other sustainable modes of transport (walking and cycling) will all be vital, as well as encouraging through traffic to use alternative routes. The Central Lancashire Highways and Transport Masterplan seeks to increase the use of sustainable modes of transport in the wider area and this will have a positive impact on reducing city centre congestion, particularly on Ringway.

6.38 Finally, the new River Ribble crossing proposed in the Central Lancashire Highways and Transport Masterplan, although outside the boundary of this plan, and beyond the timeframe of the current Highways and Transport Masterplan, will not only reduce the pressure on existing crossings, but also reduce the volume of traffic interacting with city centre traffic, specifically the non-essential traffic.

Freight

6.39 Whilst the delivery and collection of goods is essential for city centre businesses, an effort has to be made to remove freight traffic not destined for the city centre and minimise conflict between essential freight and other forms of transport. Lancashire's first Freight Quality Partnership (FQP) resulted in the production of a Preston Freight Map, which was printed and distributed to businesses in the Preston area. Freight Zones were defined and mapped, and signs installed on key routes to reinforce attempts to remove unnecessary freight traffic from the city centre. Weight restrictions exist, and it is up to the police to enforce breaches of these restrictions. The city centre has no time restrictions on freight delivery; however, they are required to abide by any traffic regulation orders on that road. These orders may stipulate no loading at certain hours.

6.40 Current route management strategy will be reviewed by Lancashire County Council to divert freight from Fishergate, which will see less space afforded to vehicles due to the Fishergate Central Project. As part of the review, it may be necessary to apply time restrictions for freight, particularly on Fishergate, in order to minimise conflict with pedestrians, cyclists and buses.

Taxis: Hackney Carriages & Private Hire Vehicles (PHV's)

6.41 Taxis and private hire vehicles are a vital part of the transport system in Preston. They are most commonly used by younger people, those on lower incomes without access to motor vehicles, people with mobility difficulties and women between the age of 16 and 20.

6.42 Hackney carriages in particular provide a valuable link between the bus station and railway station. They may also be the only viable option in the late evening when public transport is not available. Consequently, they are particularly popular with young adults and the student population following an evening's entertainment in the city centre.

6.43 The plan therefore supports the need for hackney carriages to be given priority over cars and PHV's, with access afforded to areas which would otherwise be restricted, particularly in the evening when it may be the only form of public transport available.

Electric Vehicle Charging Points

6.44 In order to realise an environmentally friendly city centre, the use of electric cars must be supported. A key barrier in the uptake of electric vehicles is the lack of suitably located electric vehicle charging points. Consequently, the plan must look to address this concern and support the delivery of suitable infrastructure in convenient locations. The Office for Low Emission Vehicles has made several grant schemes available to fund this. The plan will look to support private companies, and Lancashire County Council, if a bid for these grants were to be made.

6.45 There are currently only two locations in the city centre where electric vehicles can charge; the St George's Shopping Centre Car Park, and the Council's Avenham multi-storey car park, equating to four car parking bays in total. The plan supports the installation of charging points in accessible and viable locations across the city centre, in particularly car parks used by commuters, such as the railway station. The plan also acknowledges that to be effective in the city centre, charging points must be promoted in private housing schemes elsewhere in Preston; this is referenced in the Local Plan.

6.46 Various grants are available, to private companies, residents and the public sector which provide 75% of the installation costs of charging points. The Council will support Lancashire County Council in any future application for grants for this purpose.



Car Parking

6.47 The availability of attractive and secure car parking for shoppers and visitors is vital for the economic vitality of Preston. However, there is a clear need to strike a balance between making car parking plentiful and attractive and the additional congestion it brings to our city centre roads.

6.48 Park and ride should be promoted as a means of reducing congestion within the city centre. The price of park and ride, and parking and travelling into the city centre by a rapid, direct bus service should make it a more attractive option when compared to city centre car parks, particularly for long stay customers.

6.49 The plan fully supports the proposed park and ride facilities in the Central Lancashire Highways and Transport Masterplan. These sites are located outside the city centre boundary and would achieve the fundamental objective of reducing car-based traffic in the city centre. Unlike some previous park and ride sites, which have not always been supported by effective infrastructure, these sites will only be opened where it can be ensured that journeys using park and ride will be quicker and/or easier than driving into the city centre.

6.50 Park and ride schemes within the Central Lancashire Highways and Transport Masterplan include schemes along the proposed public transport priority corridors of Hutton – Higher Penwortham – Preston city centre, and Broughton – Fulwood – Preston city centre. Additionally, a new ‘parkway’ railway station in the Cottam area will provide rail based park and ride opportunities to Preston.

6.51 Whilst the plan supports the provision of the park and ride schemes identified in the Central Lancashire Highways and Transport Masterplan, many people do still choose to travel into the city centre by car. Therefore, it is crucially important to ensure that sufficient attractive, safe and affordable off-street parking is available to visitors approaching from all directions into the city centre. This will minimise the number of vehicular movements across the city centre in search for adequate car parking. In further support of this, the public realm and pedestrian improvements identified in the plan will help to create a city centre environment whereby visitors are happy to park and walk, rather than park on the closest car park to their final destination.

6.52 The current scale and distribution of car parking within the city centre more than meets demand. Whilst car parking supply is not constrained in the city centre, the Car Parking Strategy¹⁹ does identify quality as a clear issue at many Council controlled facilities, especially the multi-storey car parks, with ageing payment machines, poor levels of lighting and cleanliness, and a clear difference in quality when compared to the privately owned stock.

6.53 There are three City or County Council controlled multi-storey car parks in the city centre, two of which – the bus station and market car parks - are included within the City Centre North Opportunity Area in Section 3 of the plan. The plan promotes improved and enhanced car parking facilities on both sites to create the high-quality car parking offer required in the city centre. Given the findings of the Car Parking Strategy, and the investment proposed in park & ride facilities in the Central Lancashire Highways and Transport Masterplan, it is unlikely that any net additional off-street car parking (above the current level) will be required in the plan period.

6.54 The plan however encourages improvements to the quality of all existing car parks in the city centre, especially those in Council control. This may include for example, introducing payment systems that don't require users to have the correct change, allowing additional parking time to be purchased by phone, or by text and by booking spaces online using smart phones. Embracing new technology must however be accompanied by improvements to lighting, cleanliness and appearance.

6.55 In order to stimulate growth in the city centre, short-stay parking must be closely monitored. The majority of people parking choose a spot due to its proximity to their destination, followed by cost and ease of finding a space. As a result, short trip shoppers or people on essential business in the city centre choose on-street parking rather than off-street short stay parking. The County Council will monitor and regularly review on-street parking to ensure a balance is struck between the additional congestion it brings and the need to stimulate economic activity.

¹⁹ Preston Parking Strategy (Stage 1), AECOM (January 2013)

Equality & Safety

Evening Economy

6.56 The night time economy plays a key role in the prosperity of the city centre. In order to achieve an ambience which is conducive to a vibrant night time economy, good lighting is essential. It contributes to a sense of identity and place and makes for a safer, friendlier environment.

6.57 All aspects of safety must be looked at in order to achieve an inclusive night time economy. This includes access to hackney carriages, which is often the only public transport option in the late evening (see paragraph 6.42), emergency contact points to the police, CCTV cameras and a collaborative design and maintenance of public realm which enables traffic movement for cars in areas which would otherwise be largely uninhabited in the evening. Maintenance of these contributes to a socially inclusive city centre which encourages people to take part in evening activities.

Equality and Diversity

6.58 For people with mobility impairment, moving or travelling around can be difficult. This can lead to people being excluded from essential goods and services and other opportunities that are open to able-bodied people. Restricted mobility includes both physical and mental disabilities, including those which can come about as a result of age. Mobility may also be temporarily restricted due to injury, illness or simply having young children who require a pushchair.

6.59 The design of the Fishergate Central Gateway Project took into account the views of disability groups in relation to the materials used and the layout of the scheme. The introduction of shared usage space, high-quality improvements to the public realm, widening of footpaths and careful consideration of design and materials will enhance accessibility and will benefit all groups, including blind and partially sighted people. Improving the environment and accessibility to enable an integrated approach for cycling, walking and public transport will help overcome barriers to employment for those socio-economic groups on lower incomes. The improvements delivered by the project will aim to provide improved access for all users.

6.60 In addition, and as stated in paragraph 6.16, through Policy MA1 the plan encourages further provision of public conveniences and changing facilities in appropriate locations across the city centre in order to enhance the experience for all city centre users.

Section 3

City Centre

Opportunity Areas

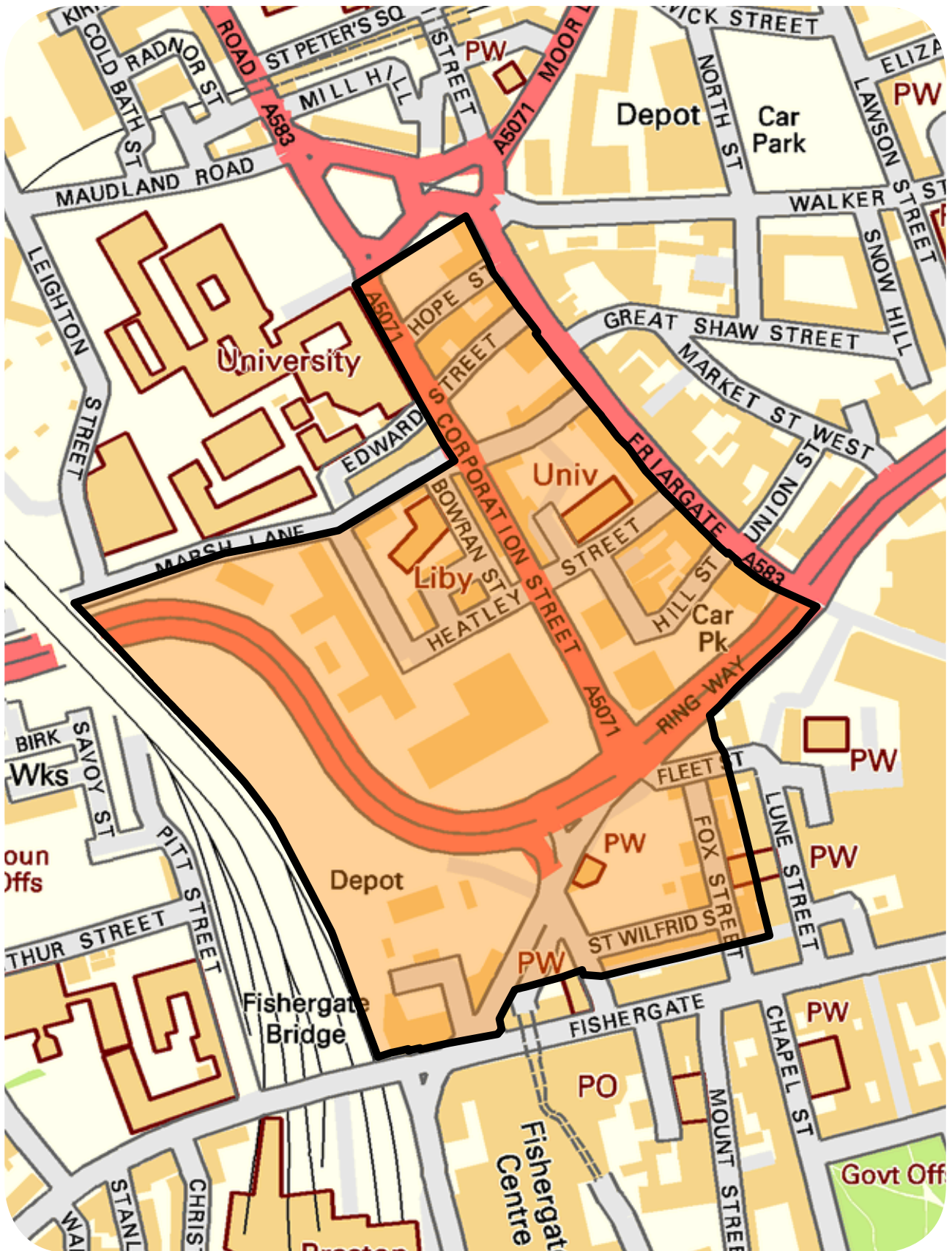
Introduction

7.1 In order to realise the ambitions for Preston, physical change needs to take place within the city centre. The plan will manage this change and ensure it is appropriate in scale to reflect the role of the city centre within the region, and at the top of the retail hierarchy in Central Lancashire.

7.2 The Council's policies to help improve the economy, the character of, and movement around and through, the city centre are set out in earlier sections of the plan. Central to delivering on each of these themes are 'Opportunity Areas'. These areas provide excellent prospects for both redevelopment and conservation, and are critical to the delivery of the plan.

7.3 The Opportunity Areas allocated in this plan have strong links to the Preston City Centre Investment Prospectus, first launched in 2012. It is important to stress that, whilst the plan is a citywide plan which seeks to deal with the city centre as one defined area of economic activity, there are definite spaces and areas that will play a crucial role in delivering the plan's aspirations. These areas should not be seen as separate entities; it is clear that transformation in the city centre will require these areas to be flexible and to work together rather than in isolation from each other.

Corporation Street Opportunity Area



Description of the Area

7.4 The area contains a contrasting mix of patterns of development reflected in a mixed urban form. Corporation Street is the spine of the area, and provides a direct link between two major gateways to the city centre - the railway station and the Fylde Road roundabout (which hosts the main campus of the university). Corporation Street is therefore a key pedestrian and vehicular thoroughfare.

7.5 The northern part of the area is characterised by Corporation Street and Friargate Brow which run broadly north-south and create a series of clearly defined blocks between them. These blocks have a fine grain of narrow plots to the Friargate Brow frontage reflecting its historic medieval development, with larger plots to Corporation Street, a later 19th Century development. The blocks contain a mix of small-scale retail and business uses together with areas of surface car parking which fracture the built form. There are various infill buildings and extensions of inappropriate scale and materials.



7.6 Whilst this section of Corporation Street retains some sense of enclosure, it lacks the level of active street frontage of Friargate Brow. Combined with higher levels of traffic, it results in a poor environment for pedestrians. The proximity of this area to the university has led to the development of student accommodation, including new build and the conversion of existing buildings.

7.7 The pattern of development becomes more fragmented around the junction of Corporation Street and Ringway. Here the blocks become irregular, due partly to the way in which Ringway has cut across the historic grain of the city. The predominant land use here is retail warehousing with areas of surface car parks.

7.8 Highway works have recently been completed on improving the public realm and pedestrian environment at the Ringway/Corporation Street junction, as part of the Fishergate Central Gateway Project, referenced earlier in the plan.

7.9 South of Ringway is occupied by a zone of mixed use up to the boundary of the Primary Shopping Area (PSA) on Fishergate. Fronting Ringway and Corporation Street is the city centre's newest hotel, the Premier Inn Central Preston, an eight storey, 140-room hotel which opened in early 2011. To the rear of this building are Fox Street and St Wilfrid Street, the former containing a variety of commercial uses but a significant amount of inactive frontage, such as the rear of the Central Methodist Church, which fronts onto Lune Street to the east. The north side of St Wilfrid Street contains a surface car park; the south side consists of a row of terraced properties, mostly used for small-scale offices and businesses. Much of this area sits within the Winckley Square Conservation Area.

7.10 Network Rail owns an important area of land within the Corporation Street site, fronting Ringway and bounded by Corporation Street and the West Coast Main Line. This land is currently in operational use by Network Rail.



Vision for the Area

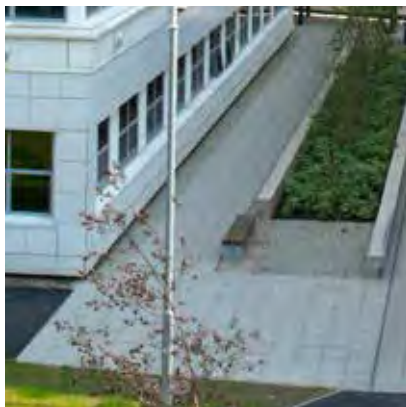
7.11 The Council believes that redevelopment of the Corporation Street area is an important part of the future success of the city. There are numerous reasons for this – its location between two major gateways to the city centre; its proximity to the university main campus, and the important role Corporation Street plays, as a pedestrian corridor linking the railway station with the university.

7.12 The overall vision for this area is to optimise the use of unused and underused land, delivering high quality, modern developments, harnessing the university's innovation and entrepreneurship whilst also greatly improving the public realm and pedestrian environment. The creation of high quality frontages at ground floor level to Ringway and Corporation Street will also provide a strong identity to the area. Active frontages facing areas of public realm should be comprised of uses which invite high levels of activity, such as shops and cafes, and should have regard to the principles of space and enclosure set out in the Central Lancashire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document.

7.13 The Council envisages this area to be strongly affiliated with the university and is best placed to create the opportunity to integrate the university with the city centre, both in terms of physical linkages and appropriate, complementary land uses. Whilst the university's main campus is concentrated, and will continue to be consolidated, on the fringe of the city centre, it is important that the plan facilitates the integration of the university's function with that of the city centre.

7.14 The Core Strategy acknowledges that this part of the city centre is well placed to deliver high quality, sustainable office accommodation, including specialist knowledge-based industries as introduced by the New Central Business District SPD, adopted by the Council in April 2011. The plan, which will supersede the SPD, carries this aspiration forward, albeit in a slightly modified manner.

7.15 The area focuses on the corridor created by Corporation Street and the developable opportunities off it, harnessing the improved connectivity created by the Fishergate Central Gateway Project in this area to create jobs. Policy OP1 aims to deliver a range of complementary uses and associated environmental improvements to help achieve the vision for the area.



Policy OP1 Corporation Street

Within the area identified as Corporation Street on the Policies Map, proposals for new, high-quality, mixed-use development will be permitted.

Proposals containing any one, or mixture, of the following primary uses will be encouraged:

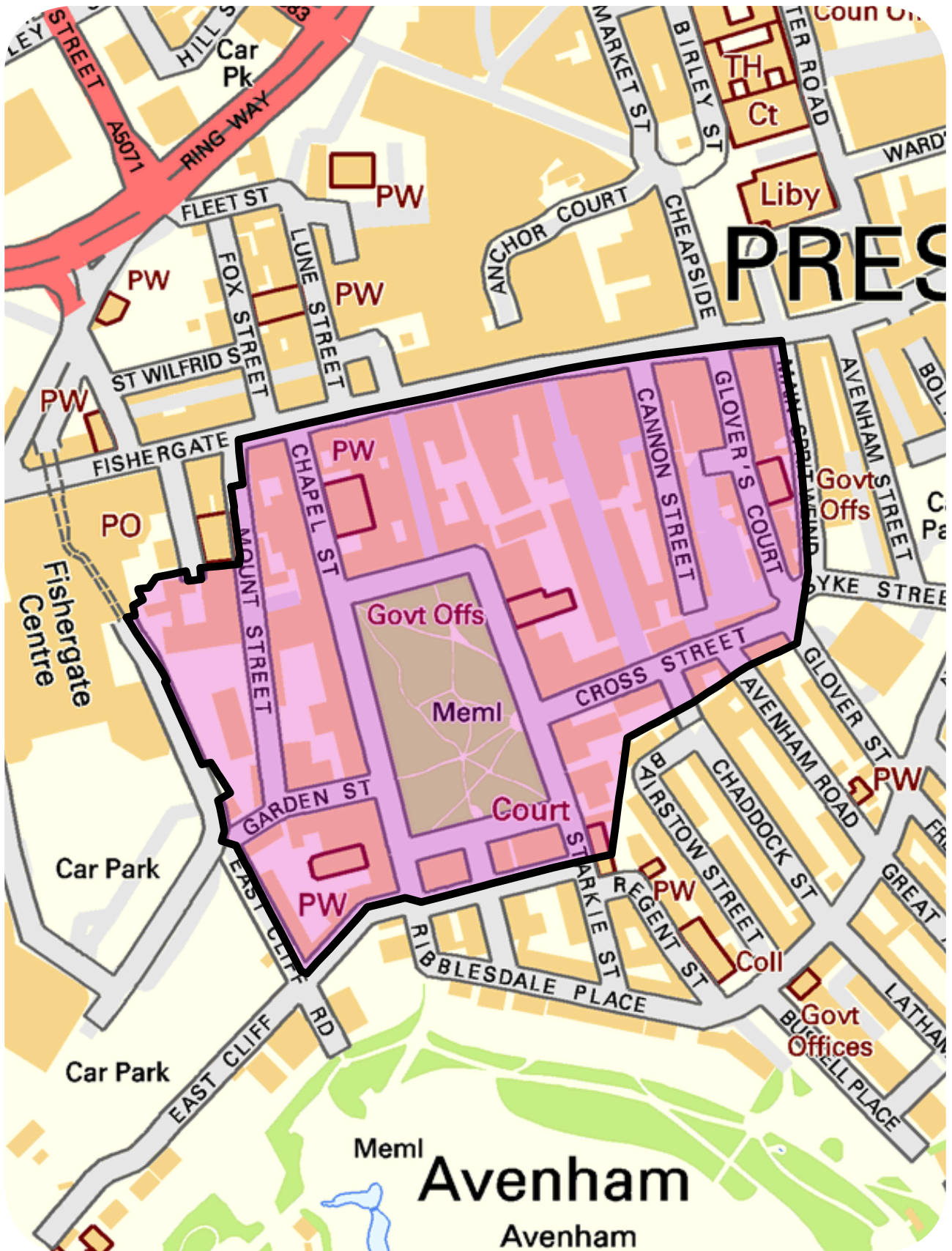
- Business: Offices B1(a)
- Business: Research & Development B1(b)
- Hotels (C1)
- Educational (D1 & D2))
- Shops (A1): Within the Primary Shopping Area only
- Student Accommodation (subject to the criteria in Policy HS6 in the Local Plan 2015)

Mixed-use proposals will be encouraged where they contain at least one of the primary uses listed above, and any of the following secondary (ancillary) uses:

- Convenience Shops (A1)
- Financial & Professional Services (A2)
- Restaurants & Café's (A3)
- Drinking Establishments (A4)
- Hot Food Takeaways (A5)
- Dwelling Houses (C3)

In order to enhance the pedestrian environment and provide a strong identity to the area all proposals must accommodate enhancements to public spaces, and all proposals fronting Ringway, Corporation Street and Friargate Brow must contain active ground floor frontages.

Winckley Square Opportunity Area



Description of the Area

7.16 The Winckley Square Opportunity Area has two character areas. To the north the building layouts took their shape and form from medieval burgage plots but now consist of a mix of historic and modern building designs now fulfilling commercial and retail uses along Fishergate.

7.17 The larger, southern area incorporates Winckley Square itself which is a fine example of a privately planned Georgian residential development modelled on the fashionable London squares of the period. Winckley Square was designated a conservation area in 1974 and contains a high concentration of listed buildings. The townscape quality and character of the Square is established by the largely three storey, red brick townhouses that front onto the Square's garden. The properties are now predominantly used as offices on ground floor level whilst upper floors lend themselves to further office space or flats. The area also offers a small number of higher-class restaurants and wine bars. There are significant levels of vacant floor space much of which needs to be upgraded and adapted for 21st century use in order to attract new occupiers and businesses into the area.

7.18 The focal point of Winckley Square, the gardens, are another potential visitor magnet, however underinvestment detracts from their quality. There is a recognised need for investment to tackle long standing issues such as accessibility and drainage to make the space more attractive for the public and to support investment into the area.

7.19 The former St Joseph's Orphanage to the west of the Square is a significant complex of buildings at the heart of the city centre. Listed Grade II, this landmark Victorian structure is currently vacant and in urgent need of refurbishment. The largest vacant property on the Square itself is College House (28 Winckley Square) which occupies a prominent position on its western side. This has the potential to deliver a mixed use office/residential or leisure scheme including the potential for a hotel.





Vision for the Area

7.20 The overall vision for the area is to encourage maximum usage of all floorspace fronting the gardens, and restore the public realm and the gardens. The regeneration of the area is identified as a priority in the Council's Heritage Investment Strategy. This is based on the view that from a growth perspective a high quality and economically active historic environment helps to project a positive image, create investor confidence, attract high value jobs and improve competitiveness in accordance with the evidence in the Historic England (HE) document "Heritage and the Economy (2015)".

7.21 In this case this would support the retention of high skill, high wage jobs within the City Centre and provide opportunities for enhancing the night time economy of the area. This would be achieved by encouraging the establishment of high-class restaurants and bars and, in parallel, supporting its independent retail offer.

7.22 By seeking to invest in the public realm, increase floorspace usage by financial and legal services sectors and enhance the night-time economy through encouraging the establishment of high-class restaurants and bars, there will be increased footfall of day visitors and tourists supporting inward investment. Residential accommodation uptake would be encouraged in premises surrounding the Square, however Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) would detract from the character and amenity of the Square, and, by virtue of their intensity of use, would serve to undermine the plan's aspirations to conserve and enhance the appearance and economic potential of the area. In addition, revitalised gardens would encourage local footfall and further support the local economy.

7.23 The Council has secured an 'in principle' offer of funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to support the refurbishment of key buildings around the Square and adjacent streets to restore their historic character and support their adaptation to accommodate new uses. This funding is due to be approved in September 2014. The Winckley Square Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) is a £1.3 million heritage led regeneration project to stimulate economic activity, maximise usage of properties and provide space for new commercial and residential use. A further £1 million bid to the HLF, through a partnership of the Council and the Winckley Square Community Investment Company (CIC) proposes to refurbish the Winckley Square Gardens. This bid has had a Stage 1 approval and a detailed Stage 2 submission is due to be made in January 2015. If successful restoration works would commence in mid-2015.

7.24 In addition to the planned investment a Regulation 7 Direction has been approved by the Secretary of State to provide additional planning controls on the use of estate agents signs. This is in order to reduce their visual impact on the character and appearance of the Square. In addition to taking appropriate enforcement action where necessary the City Council will work with property owners, agents and the CIC to develop a coordinated identity for such signs in the Square as part of a wider branding/promotional strategy for the area.

7.25 Securing the refurbishment of the former St Joseph's Orphanage buildings will be important to provide additional high quality residential uses in the city centre to support the local economy. The Council will look to work with the owner of the buildings to achieve this. The Market Place Conservation Area includes much of the Markets Quarter, Bishopgate, and Harris Quarter spaces.

Policy OP2

Winckley Square

The Council will work with the Winckley Square CIC and other partners to encourage development proposals that conserve and enhance the general environment and appearance of the conservation area, improve public realm and pedestrian permeability and ensure the appropriate modernisation of accommodation, supporting the Winckley

Square Townscape Heritage Initiative to sustain the area as a prestigious place to work, live and spend leisure time.

Proposals, including mixed-use schemes, within the Winckley Square 'Inner Zone', as shown on the Policies Map, will only be permitted where they fall into any of the following uses:

- Restaurants and Cafés (A3)
- Business: Offices B1(a)
- Hotels (C1)
- Dwelling Houses (C3)
- Non-Residential Institutions (D1)

Proposals for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) will be resisted within the 'Inner Zone'.

Elsewhere within the area, proposals will be permitted where they fall into any of the uses appropriate within the 'Inner Zone' and any of the following uses:

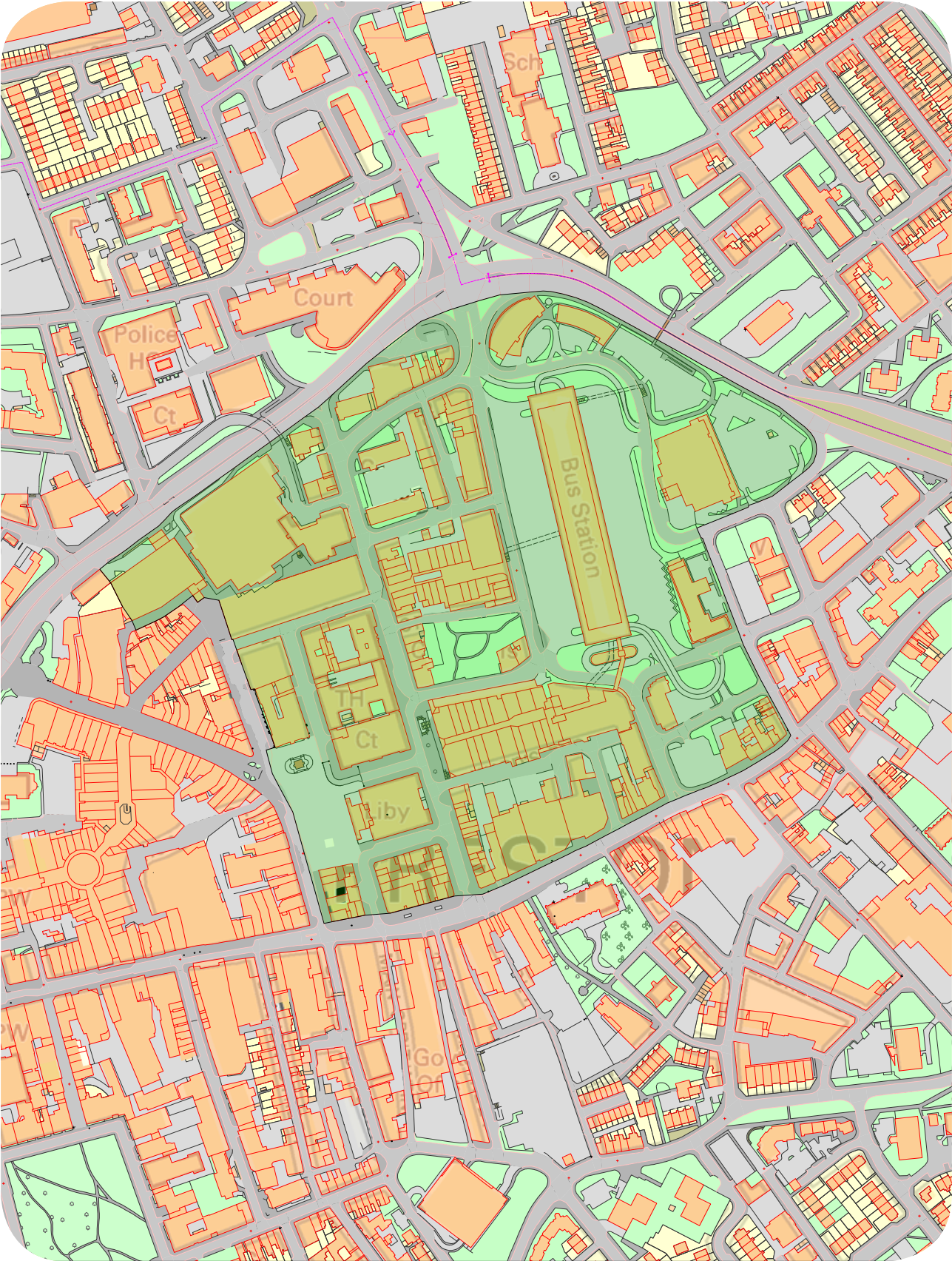
- Shops (A1): Within the Primary Shopping Area only
- Financial & Professional Services (A2)
- Drinking Establishments (A4)
- Hot Food Takeaways (A5)
- Assembly & Leisure (D2)

Where necessary, the Council will use its statutory powers to secure the refurbishment and repair of designated heritage assets, particularly where those assets are identified as being 'at risk', in order to deliver the objectives of the plan.

The Council will actively pursue the refurbishment and conversion of the former St Joseph's Orphanage and College House (28 Winckley Square), both Grade II listed, to bring them back into active use.

Where necessary the Council will serve Discontinuance Notices against existing estate agent signs which would have previously had deemed consent to enable their removal in line with the objectives of the Regulation 7 Direction.

City Centre North Opportunity Area



Description of the Area

7.26 City Centre North is the largest area identified within the plan, covering approximately 13 hectares. The area contains a mix of land uses, with significantly contrasting characteristics and built form. The area approximates to that previously referred to as the 'Heart of the Tithebarn Regeneration Area', and contains a number of locations where the Council foresees significant interventions during the plan period, such as the Markets Quarter and Bus Station site.

7.27 The City Centre North area should be considered as one cohesive area of sensitive development-led regeneration, but for the purposes of description and policy it lends itself to being considered as six interlinked spaces that could be brought forward incrementally for development:

- Markets Quarter
- Bishopgate
- Bus Station
- Ringway
- Church Street
- Harris Quarter

Of the six interlinked spaces 3 – The Markets Quarter, Bus Station and Harris Quarter are identified as priorities in the Council's Heritage Investment Strategy. This highlights the potential of the City Centre North to deliver a distinctive and sustainable approach to regeneration based on the reuse and integration of its heritage assets with high quality new development and public realm improvements. The Market Place Conservation Area includes much of the Markets Quarter, Bishopgate and Harris Quarter spaces.

Markets Quarter

7.28 The area is dominated by Preston Market, which comprises the indoor Market Hall and associated multi-storey car park – which has capacity for 508 vehicles – and the two listed outdoor Market Canopies (the larger 1875 Canopy and the smaller 1920's Fish Market). The Market Hall is bounded on both sides by office accommodation, immediately to the west is a purpose built, vacant, office block called Lowthian House or Lime House (which incorporates retail at ground floor level and a nightclub at basement level) whose upper floors are currently being converted to residential and immediately to the east is the City Council occupied Lancaster House building (incorporating a restaurant at ground floor level).

7.29 At the southern end of the site sits the vacant Grade II Listed Amounderness House, which fronts on to Lancaster Road and is adjacent to the Town Hall. This is a key asset, and along with all the key structures and spaces described in the previous paragraph is within the ownership of the Council, with the exception of Lowthian House.

