

DROYLSDEN TOWN CENTRE

Masterplan and Implementation Strategy

MASTERPLAN REPORT | May 2025

This report was commissioned by Tameside Council.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

DROYLSDEN TODAY

Droylsden has the potential to create a renewed sense of place and town centre vibrancy. It can do this by realising transformational change across its town centre ensuring that it better serves its local community. By maximising it's strategic location in East Manchester, making the most of it's multi-modal connectivity, harnessing it's local entrepreneurial spirit and, capturing it's increasingly popular residential catchment, it can transform how it serves it local community.

Tameside's town centres are at the heart of it's communities but due to changing market conditions they have faced challenges, and Droylsden is no different. The Council (Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council TMBC) has an ambition to support, adapt and regenerate Droylsden by building on it's strengths and identifying opportunities to support the future vibrancy and sustainability of the town centre. We want it to become a high quality and people focused place. By creating a better quality town centre environment, it will encourage more people to use and visit their town centre, to spend more time in it, supporting local businesses and create a thriving, multi-functional and varied space.

A changing context

There have been significant changes and levels of investment across Tameside and wider Greater Manchester which means that Droylsden needs to evolve and diversify in order to respond and make the most of its changing context.

The Metrolink network continues to provide easy access between Manchester City Centre and Ashton and having the metrolink line running through the town centre is a significant opportunity. It also provides convenient access to the Etihad Campus and the recently delivered CO-OP Live Arena and with this area looking to realise ambitious growth and investment, Droylsden is well placed to benefit from its sustainable connections.

Guardsman Tony Downes House on Manchester Road, occupied by the Greater Manchester Pension Fund, is one of the newest office developments in the Borough and provides employment within the local centre as well as a modern community library space on the ground floor.

The historic Moravian Settlement, which sits just to the south west of the town centre and within walking distance, is a unique heritage attraction which has the potential to attract visitors and creative industries to the area.

Droylsden Marina to the south west of the town centre and offers boat hire as well as managed canal boat mooring facilities. The Marina provides walking and cycling access to the wider canal and sustainable travel network, with links to the Etihad Campus, City Centre, the Moravian Settlement, Ashton Town Centre and Peak Forest Canal network. It is also complimented by successful Watkin Jones housing development which provides a variety of town houses and apartments.

Lees Park and the Ashton Canal network provide access to a much wider network of outdoor spaces including the Medlock Valley, Clayton Vale, Daisy Nook Country Park and Debdale Park.

Droylsden has also seen a recent increase in high quality housing delivered just east of the town centre, with the redevelopment of the former Robertson's Jam Factory site (first built in 1891) to a variety of family homes delivered by Bellway and Taylor Wimpey.

Greenside Mill (within Greenside Trading Centre) is a fully let former Co-Operative Mill built in the 1900s. Its home to a wide variety of small, independent business and industries ranging from Gymnastics Club, Adventure Centre, bespoke fabrications, workshop space and Gym.

The town centre also has some successful retail and leisure offers including Tesco, locally owned Silly Country Craft Ale and Sparrows in the Snow Wine Bar, the Jam Works as well as some well established local restaurants (Giovanni's and Mumbai to London), some local cafés, small independent retailers and cultural amenities such as Droylsden Little Theatre.



















VISION FOR DROYLSDEN

" Create a thriving town centre with a renewed sense of place - one that restores purpose, empowers Droylsden's aspirational and entrepreneurial community, and builds on its strong residential offer to attract and retain people who want to live, work, and invest in the town. Create a town centre full of vitality, with multi-use spaces and opportunities that celebrate and reinforce local identity. "



PURPOSE AND APPROACH

Why Prepare A Masterplan

As town centres across the country continue to struggle with the current economic challenges and changes in behaviour, there is a need for regeneration in response to the changing demands of what a town centre should offer. Tameside's town centres are no different and all have struggled to grow and build on their current offer.

Droylsden Masterplan acts as a toolkit for shaping regeneration in the town. We have identified key projects based on an understanding of the town and its context, through talking to local people and through reviewing current research on town centres. Creating a masterplan for Droylsden will help the Council identify and prioritise the town's key needs, informed by residents, local businesses, and other stakeholders.

By outlining a clear strategy for future growth, the masterplan will allow the Council and its partners to:

- Coordinate efforts to attract investment;
- Secure funding for town centre regeneration
- Leverage Droylsden's proximity to the City Centre, East Manchester, and Ashton Town Centre
- Address critical needs such as affordable housing, healthcare, family friendly spaces, and a stronger evening economy; an
- Advance development and infrastructure projects to revitalise and make the town centre safer.

The masterplan will be used by key stakeholders including Elected Members and Council Officers to put forward viable projects which are supported by local people and can provide maximum benefits.

Our Approach To Developing The Masterplan

The masterplan has been prepared based on the following steps:

Building our understanding

An important step from the outset was to understand the views of local residents, school children, visitors and businesses towards Droylsden. Various discussions, conversations and dialogue was undertaken and the feedback gathered, which formed part of our understanding of the place.

Baseline review

A review of the physical environment, economic, commercial / market and movement conditions of Droylsden and identification of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

Vision and objectives

Based on our understanding from the previous stages an emerging vision and objectives were crafted, which looked to identify a positive direction of travel for the town centre and supported by deliverable objectives. An important element of the masterplan which underpins the masterplan strategy and projects.

Initial ideas and projects

Preparation of a draft masterplan and supporting projects which could deliver against the vision and objectives. These included area wide opportunities as well as focused projects, delivered over the short, medium and long term.

Community Engagement

Crucially, the community and other stakeholders were invited to view and influence the proposed projects through a public consultation exercise. This provided the opportunity to review the draft proposals and leave comments and feedback. The feedback was gathered and reviewed and used to inform the Masterplan.

The Masterplan

The masterplan presented in this document sets out a spatial strategy for the town centre's revitalisation and regeneration whilst also taking into consideration the feedback and comments from the Community Engagement exercises.

Structure Of The Masterplan

The masterplan framework document is comprised of the following chapters:

Introduction - provides an overview of Droylsden today, it's strategic location, and context within Tameside and Greater Manchester.

Strategic context - explores Droylsden's strategic position, the east Manchester context, the town centre influences, and policy background.

Understanding Droylsden - examines the factors shaping Droylsden, highlighting strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities to guide the masterplan.

Challenges and opportunities - presents a SWOT analysis which informed the masterplan's direction.

Initital fact finding - covers the fact-finding exercise with locals, businesses, and stakeholders that informed the masterplan.

Public feedback - outlines the public consultation held in 2024, gathering community feedback on the emerging masterplan.

Vision and objectives - presents the masterplan's vision and key objectives, outlining the goals that will guide the town centre's regeneration

Masterplan framework - sets out sets out the spatial design principles, the spatial, movement and public realm frameworks, and the illustrative masterplan.

Masterplan projects - outlines seven key projects to revitalise the town centre, assessed for their environmental, social, and economic impact

Delivery and next steps - covers the governance, funding, partnerships, and community engagement needed to implement the masterplan

EXTENT OF THE MASTERPLAN

The extent of the masterplan for Droylsden focuses on the area identified in Figure 1 adjacent.

This study considers the whole of the area within the red line boundary but also acknowledges important physical and economic assets beyond but within close proximity and within the Town. It is important that the principles of the Vision and Masterplan are not limited by rigidly defined boundaries, and as such consideration as to how the town interacts with the surrounding hinterland and wider spatial context.

The Droylsden Development Framework study area (shown opposite) covers approximately 24ha. To the south, the masterplan boundary is defined by the Ashton Canal locks and is predominantly surrounded by residential neighbourhoods.

The study area encompasses Droylsden's retail core, which includes a shopping centre, Tesco Superstore and a large number of retailers all along Market Street. One of the most prominent buildings within area is the Concord Suite building which currently has plans for redevelopment.

The masterplan also includes the Droylsden Marina, library, Droylsden football grounds, a nursery/primary school and local sports centres. The site and surrounding area also contains a number of historic assets, the most notable of which is the Moravian settlement located just south of Droylsden.

The study area also has a number of infrastructure assets and networks, the most significant of which are: Manchester Road arterial route, the Droylsden tram stop, as well as Market Street and the Ashton Canal. Further south of the study area lies Fairfield train station.

More recently both Bellway Homes and Taylor Wimpey are delivering 350 family homes on the former Robertson's Jam Factory site, located to the south east of the study area and under a 10minute walk to the centre of the town.

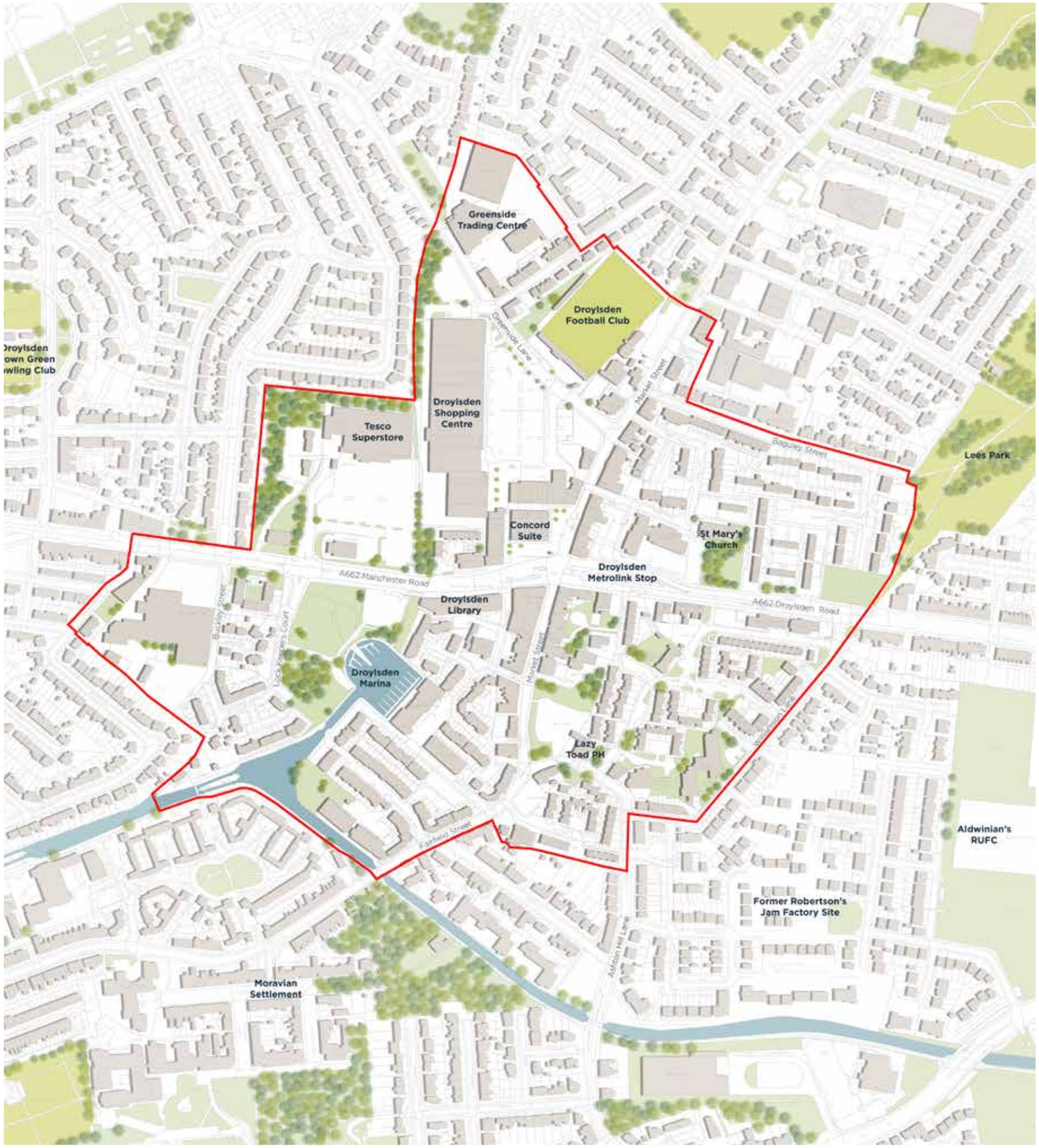


Figure 1. Masterplan study area

CHAPTER TWO

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

BETWEEN CITY AND COUNTRY

Droylsden is strategically positioned to take advantage of its proximity, and strong transport links, to the City Centre, East Manchester development area and Ashton town centre which is currently redeveloping the Market Square and outdoor market.

Droylsden is the only one of Tameside's constituent towns that lies to the west of the M60 orbital motorway and has direct links towards both Manchester City Centre and West Yorkshire. This proximity to emerging investment priority in East Manchester, focused around the Sports City area, provide Droylsden with an opportunity to harness the potential benefits of this investment.

The Town Centre sits on the Manchester Road/Droylsden Road corridor, which links the town with Ashton-under-Lyne, 2.2 miles to the east. Droylsden also has an opportunity to harness the secured investment in Ashton-under-lyne, Stalybridge, Hyde and Denton, ensuring that this cluster of tameside towns work to maximise the collective opportunity of being strategically located as the gateway between Manchester and the Peak District.

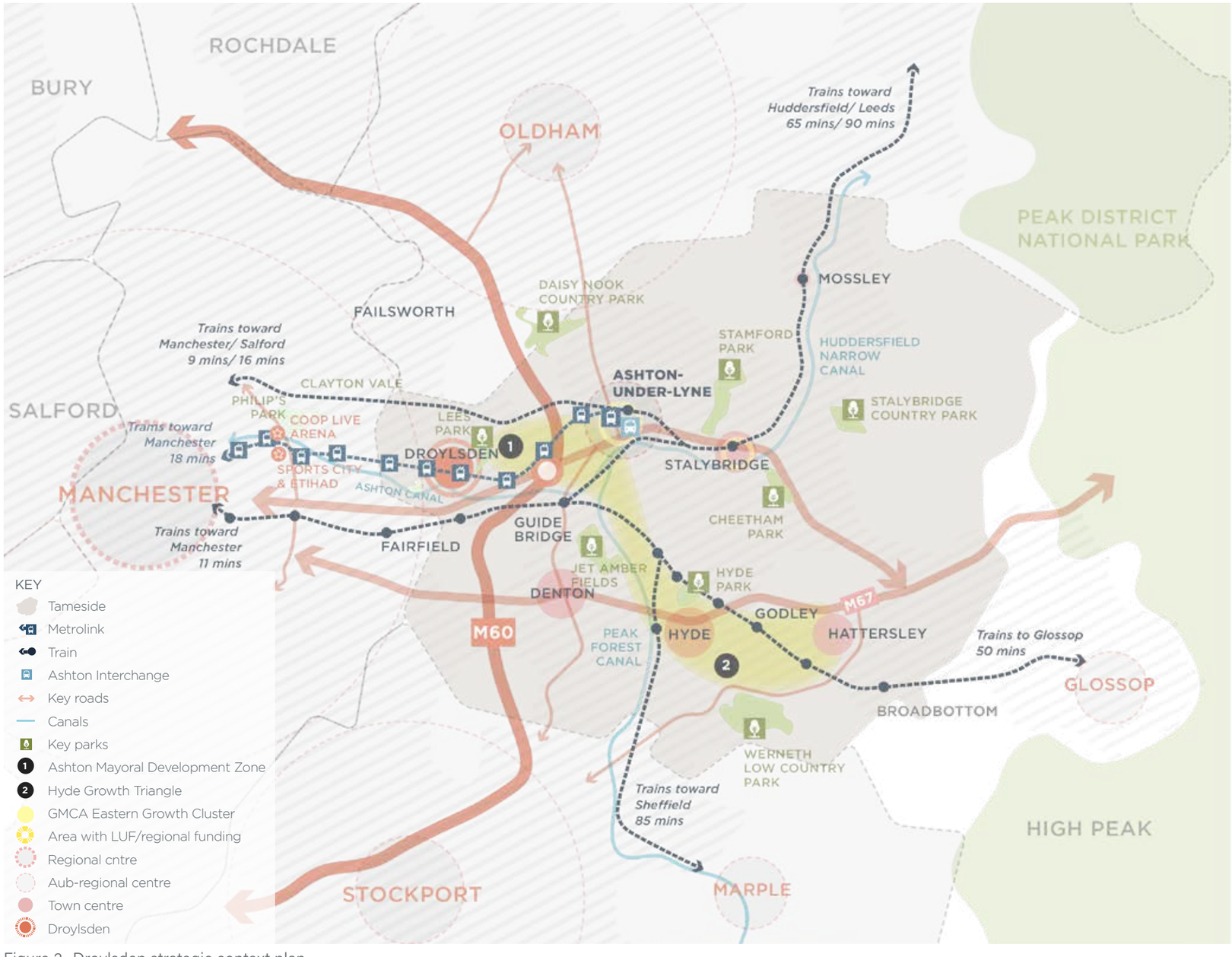


Figure 2. Droylsden strategic context plan

EAST MANCHESTER CONTEXT

Droylsden's connectivity to East Manchester is unrivalled to other Tameside towns through:

- The Manchester - Droylsden Road corridor
- Ashton-under-Lyne tram line
- Local bus services
- Ashton canal which provides cycle and walking routes
- National Cycle routes that connect canal towpath routes with recreational and commuter travel links
- Rail links accessed via Fairfield train station.

Given its location within Tameside and its variety of accessibility options, Droylsden is the gateway town between Manchester City Centre and Tameside. Droylsden is well located, only 13 minute tram ride journey away from world class leisure and events offer at the Sport City and Etihad Stadium and the Coop Live Arena.

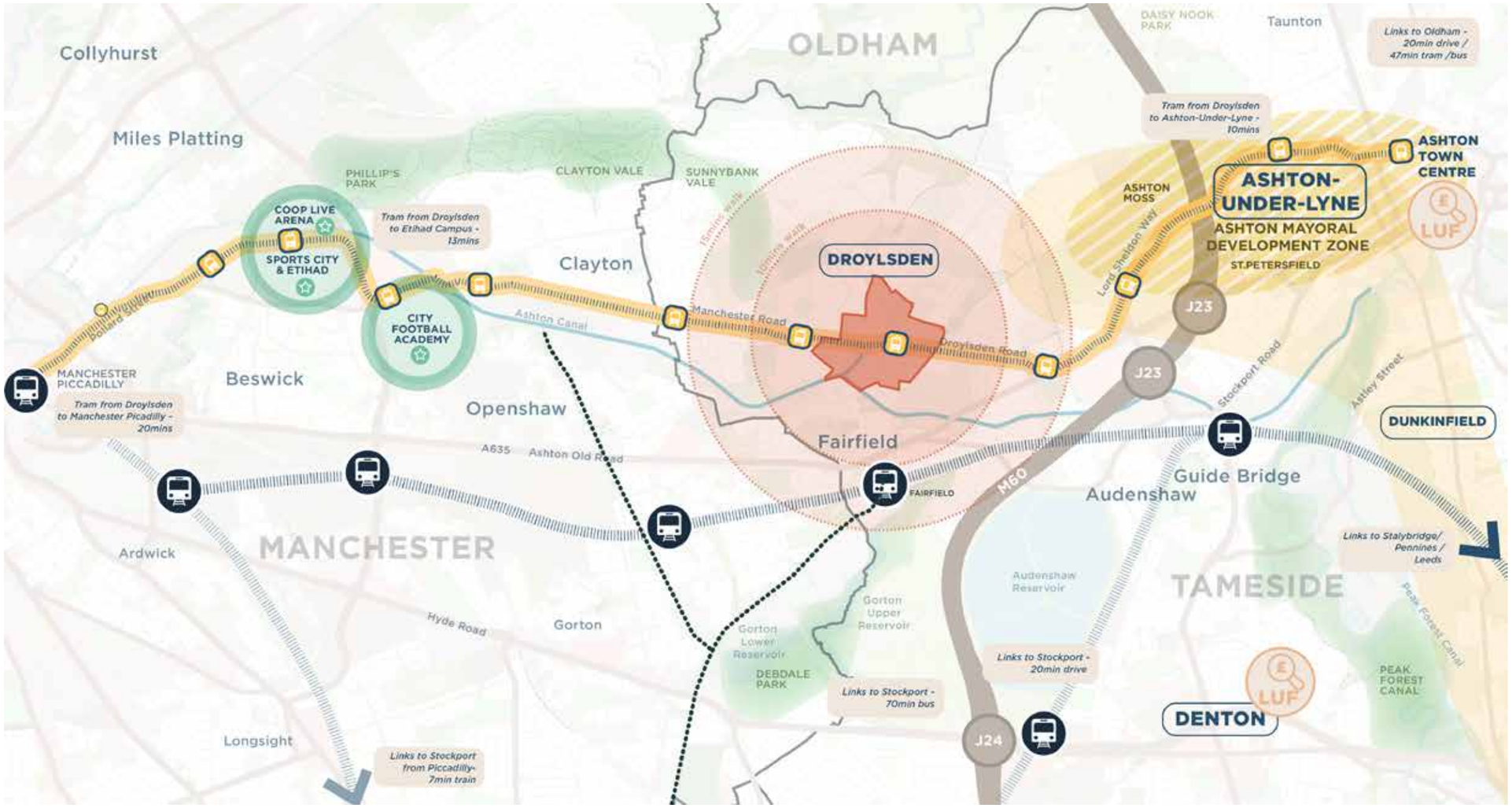


Figure 3. East Manchester context plan

TOWN CENTRE INFLUENCES

Droylsden has a number of local assets that sit within close proximity to the town centre and masterplan study area. Making more of surrounding assets by establishing stronger connections and attracting people into the town centre will help to support the town's future vitality and economic activity. Some of the main local assets within proximity to the town include:

- Droylsden Academy
- Aldwinians Rugby Union Football Club
- Ryecroft Hall
- Active Medlock Leisure Centre
- Droylsden Cricket Club
- Sunnybank Vale and Clayton Vale
- Copperasfield Park
- Fallowfield Loopline
- Snipe Retail Park
- Ashton Moss Leisure Park
- Fairfield Train Station
- M60 Junction 23

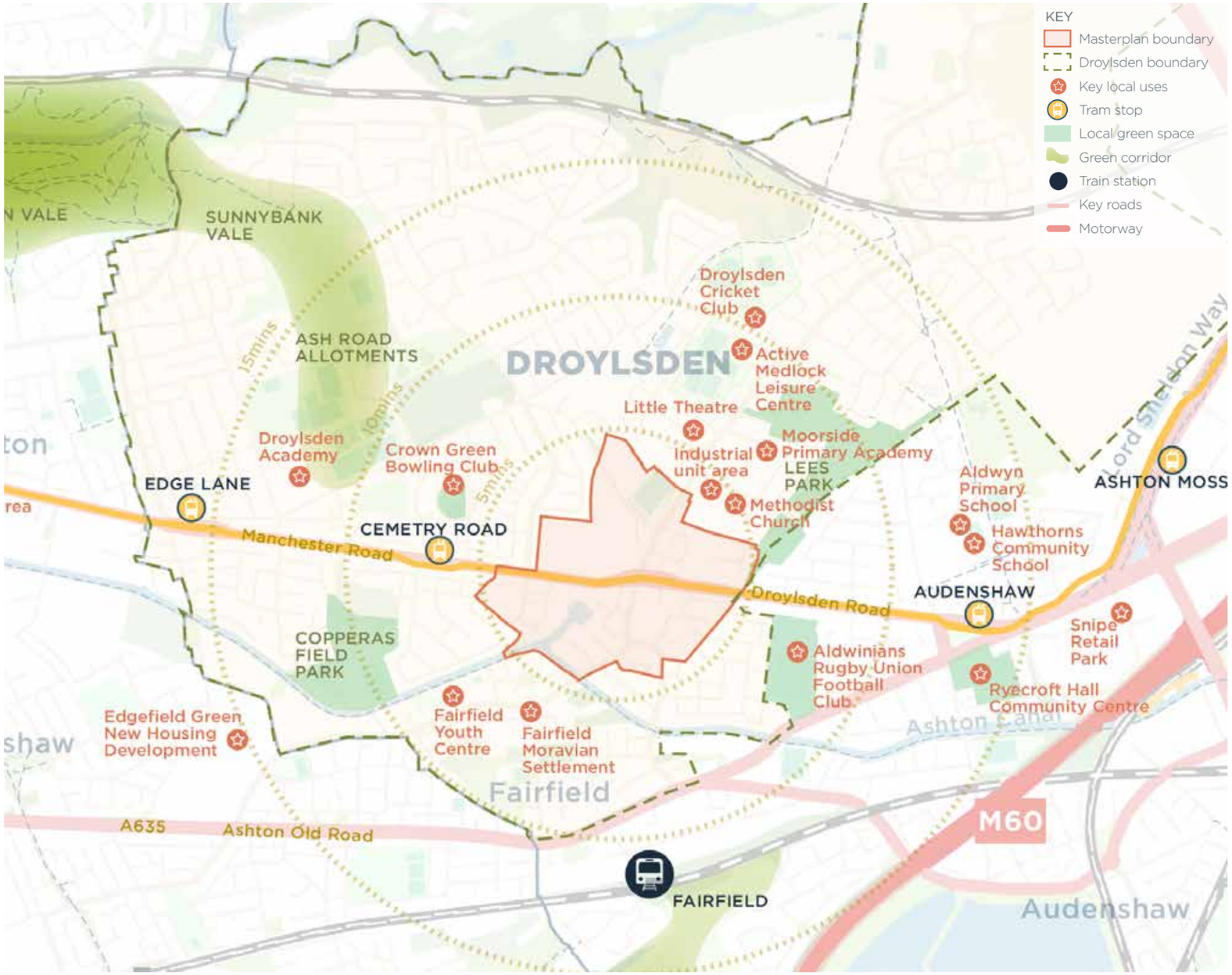


Figure 4. Droylsden Town Centre influences plan

POLICY BACKGROUND

Local Policy

Droylsden East and West Neighbourhood Plans

These plans, made by Jigsaw Homes Group, take on board feedback from employees and residents looking at key issues such as health and employment, crime and antisocial behaviour, money management and neighbourhood desirability. The plans found that although the area is a good place to live, with homes in good condition, low levels of rent arrears and evictions. However, there are some problems that affect people's quality of life, particularly relating to antisocial behaviour and neighbour nuisance cases.

Droylsden Town Plan 2008-2011

This plan pulls together a number of themes and policies contained within several Council and partner organisation documents and surveys: The Tameside Community Strategy, Tameside Council Corporate Plan, The District Assembly's Business Plan, Environment Strategy The Market Research and Opinion Poll Data. The Town Plan seeks to address issues relating to items of public concern as identified through public consultation.

Tameside Unitary Development Plan

The Unitary Development Plan is a land use planning document that provides a framework for development and conservation over the whole of the Tameside area, to set out the main considerations on which planning applications in the Borough are determined, and to guide land use decisions by the Council and other agencies.

Tameside Local Plan 2023 (Integrated Assessment Scoping Paper)

'Homes, Spaces, Places' is intended to replace the Unitary Development Plan and compliment the Places for Everyone Plan. It will set out the vision, objectives, local planning policies and site allocations that will guide future development in the area. Improving services to young people and training opportunities was identified as a priority area for growth in Droylsden East and town centre improvements have been suggested for Droylsden town centre.

Tameside Inclusive Growth Strategy 2021-26

This strategy lays out how Tameside Council and partners will work to grow an economy that benefits all residents and local businesses, delivering on this vision: "Tameside will be a place where our residents can start well, live well and age well". It provides detail on how the Council and partners will work together to provide the right physical and digital infrastructure, development space, skills development, business support and investment to help businesses and workers to reach their potential.

Tameside Housing Strategy 2021-26

This strategy has the following vision: "Through sustainable growth a balanced housing market will be shaped that provides good quality and affordable housing to meet the needs of all its residents." A key element of the new Housing Strategy is to improve and accelerate the pace of housing development and improve the quality and choice of the local housing offer.

Tameside Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy

This Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy and Locality Plan for Tameside sets out the ambitions for improving the health of Tameside residents and reducing the inequalities many communities in Tameside experience. It also explains how these ambitions will be achieved by making commitments across the life course, including a focus on mental health & wellbeing and then building back fairer, stronger and together to achieve these.

Regional Policy

The Greater Manchester Housing Strategy 2019

This Strategy identifies safe, decent and affordable housing with homes to fit the needs of current and future citizens as its priority. The Mayor's Town Centre Challenge has focused attention and brought different stakeholders and communities together to plot a new future for town centres across Greater Manchester. Increased town centre living is a common theme – highlighting the imperative to make town and district centres attractive places to live.

The Greater Manchester Local Industrial Strategy

The Strategy states that the city region will take an integrated place based approach to bringing forward strategic regeneration proposals in town centres and strategic sites, which integrate investment in land remediation, housing transport and other infrastructure to create sustainable employment locations. The strategy identified that Tameside had low GVA growth from 1996-2016 (8%) and was 1 of 7 local authority areas with the worst healthy life expectancy in the UK.

GMCA Greater Manchester Strategy 2021-31

This Strategy is Greater Manchester's plan for all the communities, towns and cities which make up the city-region. It provides the plan for recovery and renewal following the pandemic. It provides a clear direction of travel, focused on those areas where all parts of the conurbation need to work together to achieve the vision of "Good Lives for All: that Greater Manchester is a great place to grow up, get on and grow old; a great place to invest, do business, visit and study."

The Greater Manchester Local Skills Improvement Plan 2023

The GM LSIP sets out the Strategic Priorities for GM. It highlights the priority areas and occupations for action and why it is important to tackle these for the GM economy and its residents. The strategy's Eastern Growth cluster will be centred around Tameside to take advantage of growth happening in advanced manufacturing and investment in digital infrastructure. The creation of a Mayoral Development Zone is said to build upon existing strengths in advanced manufacturing.

National Policy

Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040

The Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040 sets out GM's long-term ambition for transport. Their vision is for GM to have 'World-class connections that support long-term sustainable economic growth and access to opportunity for all" and sets out a strong commitment to provide a transport system which: supports sustainable economic growth, improves quality of life, is affordable and reliable; protects the environment and aims to be net zero carbon by 2038. Tameside was noted as a congestion hotspot, particularly in the Longdendale area.

Places For Everyone

Places for Everyone is the long-term plan of nine Greater Manchester districts (all Greater Manchester districts except Stockport) for jobs, new homes and sustainable growth. The plan sets out a strategic policy framework for the nine districts and helps these areas to meet their local housing and employment needs by identifying land and infrastructure. The plan outlines the role of the city centre as the most significant economic location in the country outside of London and the need for it to be strengthened.

Levelling Up White Paper 2022

The White Paper sets out the UK Government's main missions for levelling up the UK. This will be achieved through boosting productivity, securing private sector investment, increasing R&D, providing a secure path to home ownership, generating high skilled jobs, and ensuring people have access to gigabit-capable broadband, 4G and 5G to support business growth opportunities.

Build Back Better Our Plan for Growth 2021

The Build Back Better Plan sets out the government's plans to support economic growth through significant investment in infrastructure, skills and innovation. This will be achieved by building on three core pillars of growth: infrastructure, skills and innovation. In doing so, the achieved growth will level up the whole of the UK, support the transition to net zero, and support the Government's vision for Global Britain.

National Planning Policy Framework 2021

The Framework establishes the Government's economic, environmental and social objectives for achieving sustainable development, building a strong and competitive economy, promoting healthy and vibrant communities, and protecting our natural environment.

Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener 2021

The Strategy lays the foundation for a green economic recovery from Covid-19 through creating more green skilled jobs, increasing the share of journeys by public transport and investing in active travel infrastructure.

Skills White Paper 2021

The White Paper outlines how the Government proposes to support people to develop the skills they need to get good jobs. Focusing post-16 skills on this core mission will increase productivity, support growth industries, and give individuals opportunities to progress in their careers. This will involve making sure people can access training and learning flexibly throughout their lives and are well-informed about what is on offer through great careers support.

National Infrastructure Strategy 2020

The Strategy outlines the need to level up and achieve net zero, with priorities including improving road maintenance, digital connectivity, undertaking climate-oriented reforms of key industries including energy, construction and transport, and supporting private investment.

UK Wireless Infrastructure Strategy

The Policy Paper outlines the need to develop world-class digital infrastructure, in order to achieve the priorities, set out by the government to build a better, more secure, prosperous economy with better paid jobs. Advanced wireless connectivity will be the foundation on which to build industries, jobs, skills and services for the future. This strategy sets out the government's plan to harness its potential for the economy and society.

CHAPTER THREE

UNDERSTANDING DROYLSDEN

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores the key factors that have shaped Droylsden into the town it is today, examining its strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for change. By identifying the challenges the town faces, it highlights areas that require focus to shape a clear, forward-looking vision. These insights will guide the masterplan to deliver meaningful regeneration and inform strategies to create a more vibrant, connected, and resilient town centre — unlocking Droylsden's full potential.

The considerations include:

- Historical context
- Urban form
- Land use and facilities
- Market analysis
- Land ownership
- Socio economic factors
- Visual quality
- Public realm



DROYLSDEN HISTORY

Droylsden boasts a rich social and industrial history, emerging as a pioneering Cotton Mill Town. The town's development has been deeply influenced by key infrastructure and redevelopment milestones, including the introduction of the canal network, industrialisation, the Concord Suite development, and the establishment of the tram line infrastructure. These advancements have collectively shaped the fabric of the town that we know of today.

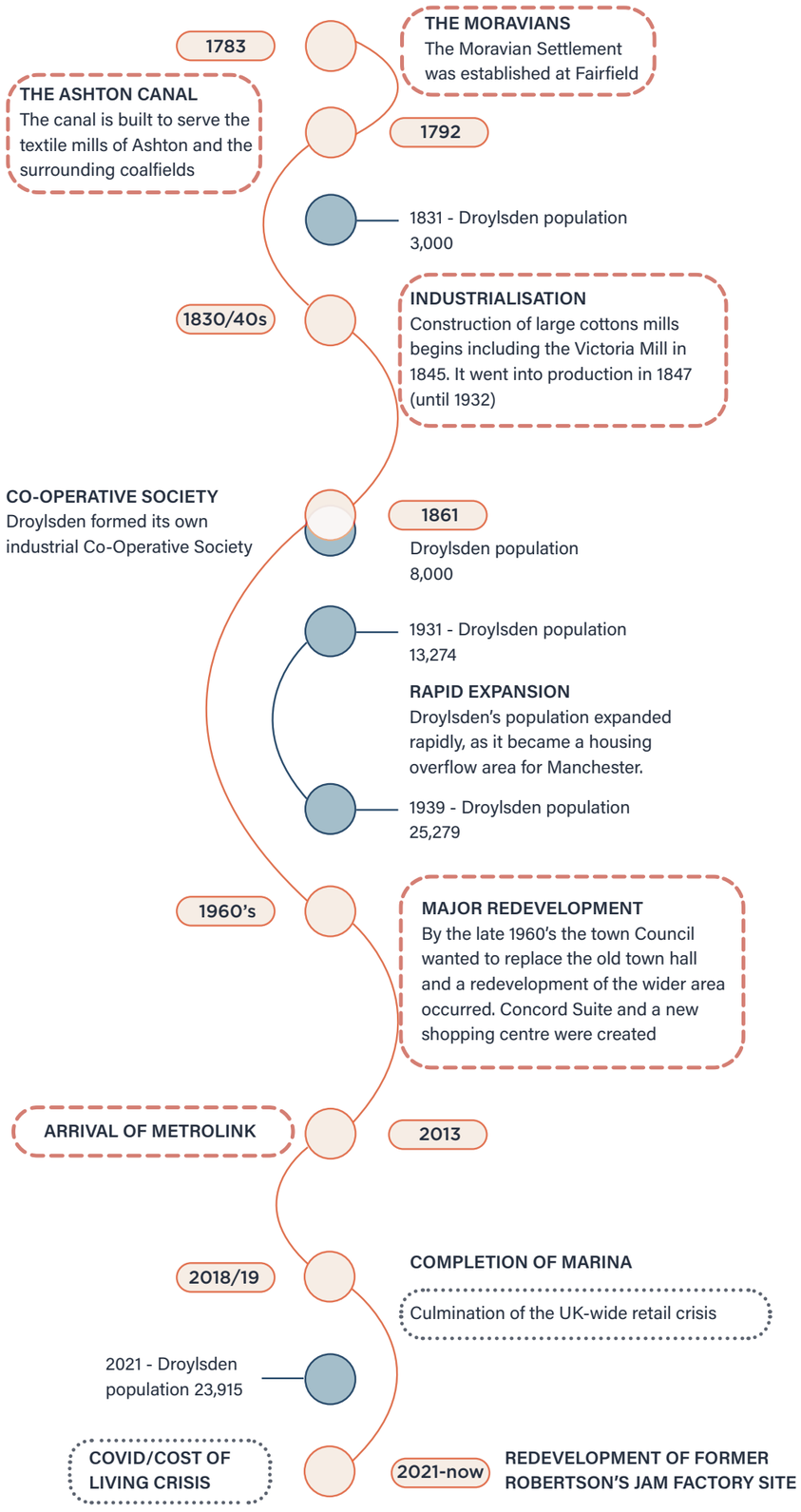




Figure 5.



Figure 6.



Figure 7.

The Moravians

Fairfield Moravian Church and its surrounding settlement was founded in 1785. It was planned and built by its own people, with its inn, shop, bakery, farm, laundry, fire-engine, night-watchman, inspector of weights and measures, an overseer of roads, and even its physician. There were community houses for sisters and brethren, who applied themselves to the varied work of the Settlement.

Industrialisation

During the 1830s and 1840s the construction of large factories and cotton mills began, and labour from the surrounding areas helped to increase the population. Schools were built, the parish church opened, recreation activities organised and local sport was in its heyday. By 1850 the local population was changing over from cottage and farm work to an industrial factory system. Five cotton mills were established by 1850. This number increased to eight by 1875.





The Concord Suite

In the late 1960's a redevelopment of the wider area occurred. The earlier Victorian, Gothic 'Institute' on Manchester Road, which had served as the Town Hall and was a landmark in it's own right; together with several residential properties on Queen's Street and further small, retail properties fronting Market Street were demolished. The canal north to the A road, was closed up. In it's place, a new shopping centre, Council offices, and public hall were created and the five storey Concord became a new landmark building. Originally, the new development was set back from the corner to allow for a pickup/drop off side road in front of the shopping centre. Once again, following a very logistical approach.

Some years later, Queen's Road was pedestrianised and a public square was created - Villemomble Square (as seen in the adjacent photos). In the 2009 photo, flower beds, benches, a number of healthy trees and open shops can be seen. This was a vibrant Droylsden, filled with people and activity - a time often reminisced about today.

Today, the Concord Suite is vacant and not in use, with the exception of the roof which accommodates telecommunication infrastructure on a lease basis.

The Concord Suite requires investment and will play an important role in the regeneration of the town centre.

Arrival Of The Metrolink

In 2013, a part of Villemomble Square was lost to road realignment to cope with the arrival of the Metrolink tram system and even though there were improvements made to the square, the tram construction brought about other issues. Particularly, the construction works posed severe disruption and made it difficult for people to get into the centre and it meant that it was easier for people to get into their cars and drive somewhere else. Infrastructure once again was the catalyst of change, whether negative or positive.





Shaping of Droylsden's Urban Form

1830's - Droylsden began expanding with mill infrastructure emerging along the Ashton Canal and labour housing concentrating along Market Street but the urban structure remained relatively loose, without a formal town plan.

Late 1800's - Large-scale cotton mills and warehouses were built along the canal and key roads. Rows of terraces accommodated mill workers, particularly near Market Street and Fairfield Road.

1920's - Main roads strengthen as spines and an urban core develops around the crossroads of Manchester Road, Ashton Road, and Market Street, featuring churches, shops, and public buildings, including a town hall. Previously open spaces between mills and housing were built up, creating a denser town centre and New residential areas extended outward.

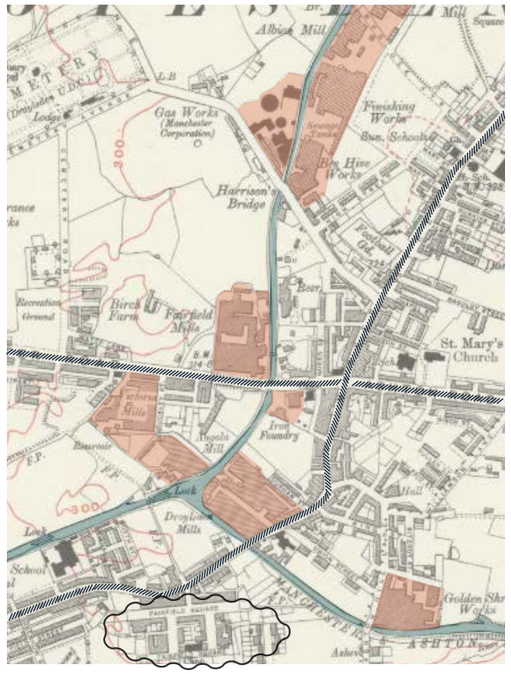


Figure 8.

Key

- Canal
- Mills and foundaries
- Housing concentration route
- Fairfield Morovian Settlement

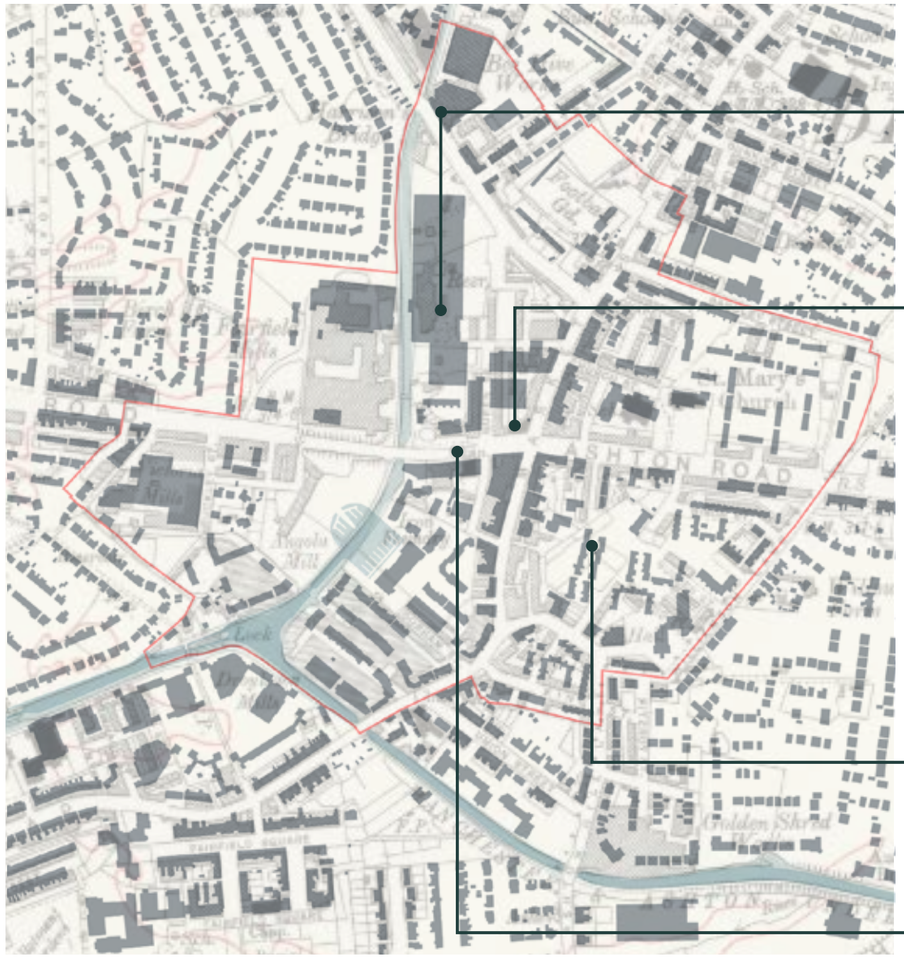


Figure 9.

Larger format concentration along the canal; previously mills and foundaries, now food store, retail centre and Greenside Mill (previously Bee Hive Works)

Villemoble Square was an attempt to create a focal point for the town but lacks integration with the urban fabric/ is detached from key pedestrian routes and traffic and lack of enclosure discourage engagement with the space

Housing estates have replaced mill-worker terraces, but their urban form present challenges, particularly in terms of pedestrian connectivity and overall town integration

Roads were eventually widened and traffic increased, creating a shift to car-centric planning

Droylsden's early rapid expansion created natural growth around the key roads and canal. At this point, there would have been little thought given to creating spaces and environments for any other reasons other than practical and logistical. As a result, today's town centre lacks a properly functioning town heart, is vehicle dominated, and suffers from severed pedestrian connections, leaving Droylsden's edges feeling disconnected. The masterplan must explore opportunities to improve links and create a more cohesive, accessible and people-focused town centre

DROYLSDEN TODAY

Land uses and facilities

The plan opposite illustrates the land uses for Droylsden. The buildings have been broadly grouped together into class category groups as defined by Town and Country Planning, listed below:-

Retail - shops, restaurants, cafés, pubs, financial and professional services, estate agents, post offices and health/medical uses etc..

Leisure and culture - sports centres, theatre and football stadium

Community and education - schools, youth centres and religious places

Industrial use - light industrial units, encompassing a range of businesses in services such as plumbing, vehicles and construction.

As depicted within the plan, retail dominates Droylsden's town centre, however, there are significant voids. Leisure and cultural uses are primarily located in Greenside Trading Mill, featuring sports, arts, and various shops but remain somewhat hidden.

Key facilities like schools, libraries, and churches are spread across the town but are not always easily accessible. The town centre is surrounded by residential areas, however, they are poorly connected to the centre.

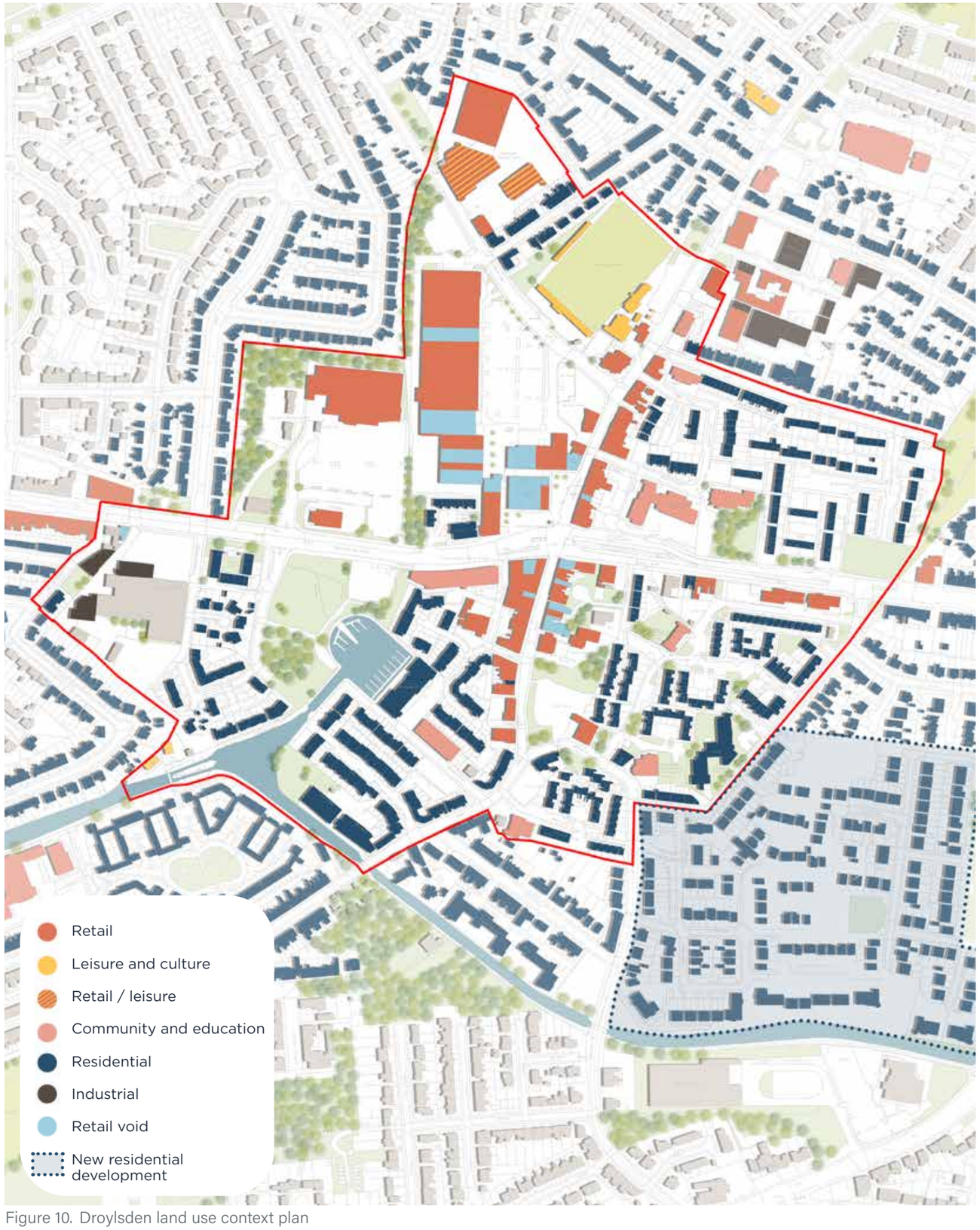


Figure 10. Droylsden land use context plan

Market Baseline Summary

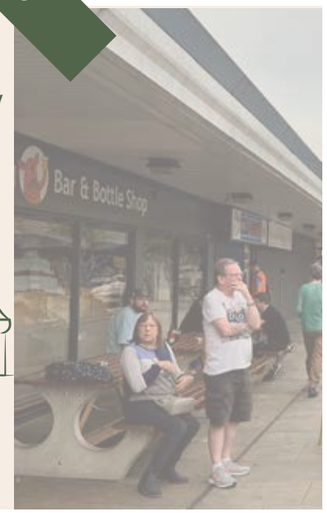
In addition to the landuses and facilities desktop study, Cushman & Wakefield prepared a Property Market Baseline Report, providing a baseline review of the residential, retail, leisure and employment property markets within Droylsden.

Key facts and figures have been illustrated on this page, however, for further details and masterplan considerations, please refer to the Cushman & Wakefield's Property Market Baseline Report.

Retail and leisure make up the biggest portion of the Droylsden's town centre, home to several national retailers alongside a large number of smaller units, many of which are occupied by **independents** like Silly Country Bar & Bottle Shop

However, the centre has **27.2%** vacancy in retail units, a **limited evening economy**, and faces **competition from large retail centres**

Activating vacant units, improving connectivity, encouraging mix-use developments, and supporting independents could help foster a unique, local character that sets Droylsden apart from nearby retail centres



Poor links and permeability between different parts of the retail offer within the centre discourage visitors from making multiple journeys.

Improving these connections will help encourage movement and activity throughout the centre

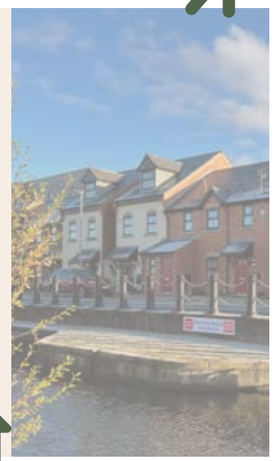
The overall appearance of the town centre does little to draw people in encourage exploration. Enhancing the centre's appeal by improving public spaces and creating engaging environments could draw in more visitors

Concord Suite and the land that it occupies has the potential to bring employment and new activities into the centre



Over 500 modern new homes within the masterplan area and **350** at the Jam Factory site have transformed Droylsden's housing offer. However, they are not connected into the centre. Improving these links will encourage more visits and create a more connected community

Sites such as the Victoria Mill and former Droylsden Library offer additional development opportunities to enhance the town's vibrancy and create a more sustainable and diverse town centre

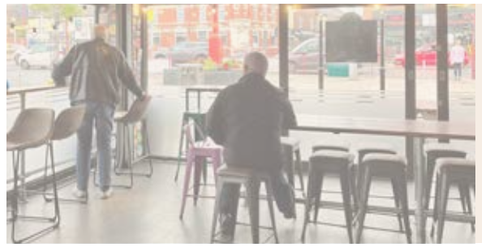


High vacancy rates, outdated buildings, and poor connections and accessibility contribute to the town's sense of decline. The masterplan should explore ways to create a more vibrant town centre - a destination that attracts visitors through redevelopment and new development opportunities, ensuring offer better responds to both the existing and growing population.

Socio-Economic Baseline Summary

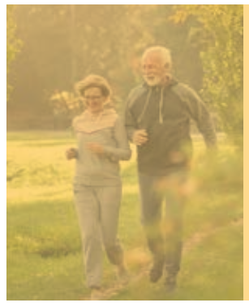
Ekosgen carried out a socio-economic baseline study, examining Droylsden's economy, business and employment ecosystems, the job market and the people who live and work there.

Key facts and figures have been illustrated on this page, however, for further details and masterplan considerations, please refer to the Ekosgen Droylsden Town Centre Masterplan Evidence Base.



Tameside has **low rates of business survival** for start up businesses **start up businesses** in their first year of operation compared to Greater Manchester and the national average

Introducing affordable, flexible pop-up spaces, as well as, **town centre improvements** that draw **footfall**, and regular markets and events could support start-up businesses and improve their survival rates



Droylsden illustrates **deprivation** challenges particularly around **health and crime**

Exploring opportunities to mitigate these issues could both improve resident health and wellbeing and drive pride in place, retain and attract people to live and invest in the town



The town is well positioned for future growth given it's strategic location. Appropriate housing and visitor economy offer could maximise it's position to capture future growth

Growing business base of 7% and employment in Droylsden has increased significantly - **18.7%** in the last 5 years

This growth along with growth in population, presents opportunity to capture footfall and spend within the town centre through an attractive and diverse offer spanning **retail, arts and culture, food and drink**



Residents earn below the Greater Manchester average and over **1/4 of employees earn less than the living wage**

Ensuring demand for affordable housing and services can be met will support quality of life

Despite challenges like deprivation and economic inactivity, Droylsden's strategic location, along with a growing population and employment base, presents a major opportunity for regeneration. The masterplan should leverage this position by exploring ways to improve housing and visitor economy offer, boost footfall and spending in the town centre, and address issues such as antisocial behaviour to foster pride in place, and retain and attract people to live and invest in the town.

Building Quality Assessment

The building quality assessment looks at the architectural value of buildings and their impact on the surrounding environment.

Listed Buildings
There are three listed buildings within the masterplan boundary, Lockside house, the former Tollhouse and St.Marys Church. These heritage assets add character and historical significance to the area.

Buildings of architectural interest
A number of buildings have historical or architectural significance, but many have been heavily altered—particularly at ground level. The high street lacks visual cohesion, with retail units competing for attention through excessive signage, imagery, and inconsistent design.

Modern architectural interventions
Moderate quality 21st century housing can be found around the Marina, however, no examples of exemplary or high quality modern architecture have been found within the masterplan area.

Poor quality buildings
A mix of recent low-quality developments and deteriorating historic buildings negatively impacts the town centre's appearance and legibility. Many of these buildings suffer from poor maintenance and lack a strong architectural identity, detracting from the overall quality of place.

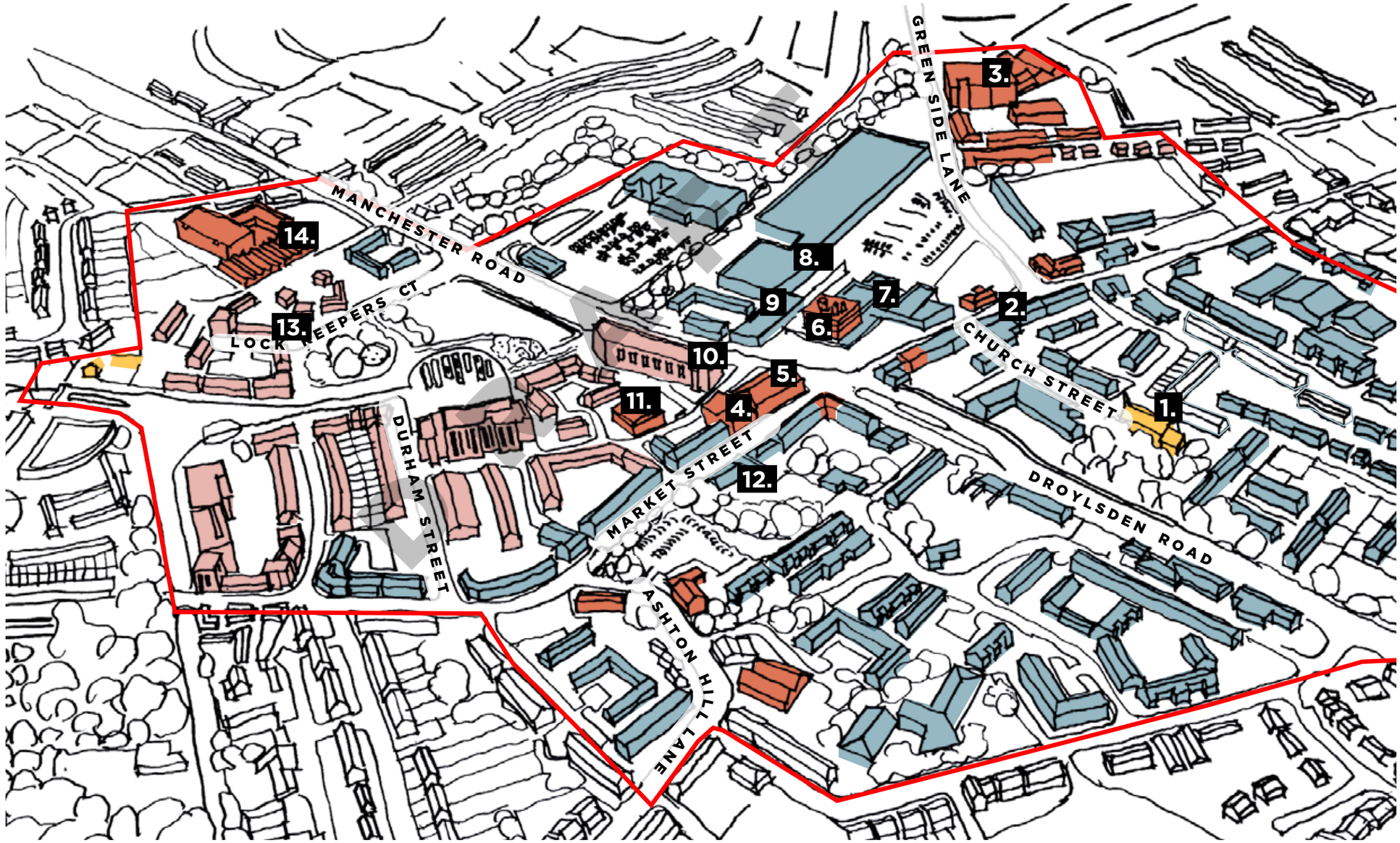


Figure 11. Droylsden building quality assessment axonometric sketch


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14.

Droylsden benefits from a variety of building types and uses. However, strategic interventions are needed to address poor-quality architecture and underutilised spaces. There are opportunities for building improvements, shop-front upgrades, and new developments that can strengthen Droylsden's identity, enhancing the town centre's cohesion and appeal.

The Concord Suite

The Concord Suite occupies a prominent position at the heart of Droylsden, sitting at the historic crossroads of Market Street and Droylsden Road. As one of the tallest buildings in the town centre, it has the potential to serve as a defining landmark. However, its long-term vacancy combined with its deteriorating condition, has come to symbolise decline within Droylsden.

The building is accessed off Villemomble Square via the entrance lobby, which is surrounded by a parade of single-storey retail units at ground floor level. The first floor accommodates a large, double-height circulation space, a games room, and ballroom, which spans over the underpass and precinct shops. A back of house kitchen, bathrooms and cellular office rooms are located on the mezzanine floor. The remaining two floors consist of open-plan office space, access off a central core.

A review of previous building surveys has identified several structural and regulatory challenges:

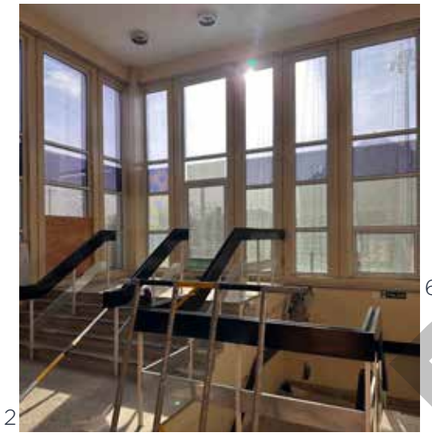
- **Deteriorating primary structure,** unlikely to be suitable for re-use to contemporary standards without significant upgrade;
- **Deteriorating facade cladding panels;**
- **Insufficient insulation,** failing to meet current standards;
- **Outdated fire safety measures,** failing to meet current regulations;
- **Outdated mechanical and electrical systems,** require full replacement
- **Roof and windows in poor condition,** likely require complete renewal

In recognition of the impact the vacant Concord Suite is having on the confidence in the Centre, following on from the masterplan, the Council has commissioned feasibility work to assess the potential options for the its future.

The masterplan identifies the Concord Suite and its prominent location as a key opportunity site to unlock the potential of the town centre and strengthen its identity. However, the building is currently in poor condition and would require extensive remedial works to be brought into use. Further feasibility studies are required to investigate the full potential of this site.



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7



Figure 12. The Droylsden Centre

Figure 13. Inefficient circulation space. First floor landing and stairs that lead to nowhere;

Figure 14. Hole through existing concrete waffle slab;

Figure 15. Unique facade of the concord - precast white concrete panels against the surrounding red brick context;

Figure 16. Retro signage and lighting;

Figure 17. Exposed waffle slab and low ceiling height;

Figure 18. Concrete 'cancer' in concrete structural columns;

Figure 19. Expressive mid-century style dance floor and seating booths.

Public Realm Audit

Low quality spaces lack cohesion, with a patchwork of materials, poor lighting, and a lack of animation. Low-quality spaces lack cohesion, with a patchwork of materials, poor lighting, and little to no activity. These areas often sit at key street interfaces but feel unwelcoming, dominated by hard surfaces, defensive boundary treatments, and often a purely functional design.

Better quality spaces benefit from some consistency in materials, lighting, and street furniture, but still have room for improvement to enhance their character and usability. Local businesses, such as the Silly Country Craft Ale bar on Villemomble Square, have introduced both seating and planters, contributing to a more inviting streetscape and enhancing both the setting and atmosphere.

Poor quality pedestrian links create disjointed connections between key spaces. Many routes feel unsafe, are difficult to navigate, or suffer from a lack of active frontages, making them uninviting and underused.

Surface car parks dominate the town centre and create large urban voids and hard, uninviting spaces that weaken the sense of place. There is an opportunity to soften its visual impact through improved landscaping, better integration with surrounding areas, and the introduction of public realm features that enhance usability.

Droylsden's public realms feel fragmented, uninviting, disconnected or underutilised. This highlights a need for consistent, high-quality public spaces that improve connectivity, safety, and placemaking. This means upgrading key areas, softening hard urban spaces, improving pedestrian connections, and enhancing wayfinding to create a more welcoming, dynamic, and more enjoyable place to live, work, and visit.

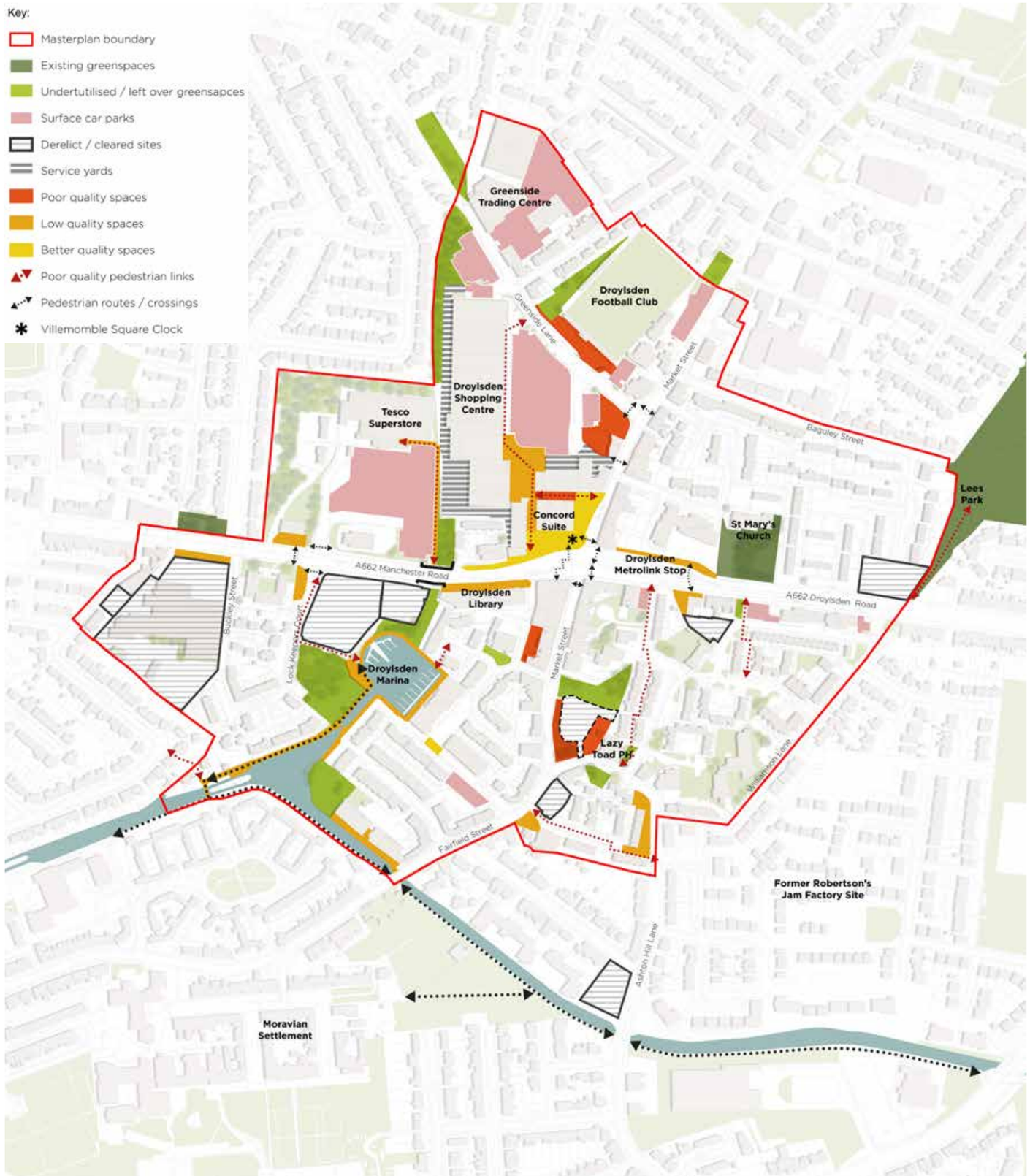


Figure 20. Droylsden public realm audit plan

STREET FURNITURE & LACK OF ENCLOSURE



Figure 21. Villemomble Square

Though it is one of the better quality spaces, Villemomble Square feels very exposed to the traffic due to a lack of enclosure, it suffers from physical and visual clutter, including an uncurated array of metal barriers, lamp posts, benches, signage and other street furniture, creating a fragmented and tired appearance

CARRIAGEWAYS AND CROSSINGS



Figure 22. Manchester Road

Poor pedestrian crossings isolate pedestrian movement on Manchester Road and Market Street. Opportunity to improve the pedestrian crossing experience by improving junctions and narrowing carriageways, as well as create a proper arrival experience to the centre

CAR PARKING



Figure 23. Droylsden Centre car park

Extensive surface car parking in the centre of town, create urban voids and hard surfaces create an uninviting environment. Potential to soften the visual impact of the car park and create a more dynamic and inviting place to dwell

PUBLIC REALM SURFACES



Figure 24. Queen's Walk

Queen's Walk is a low quality public space, with inconsistent materiality, dominated by macadam and concrete pavers, and steps down to the car park restrict accessibility. Tree planters and benches offer some amenity value, but the quality of these is low. Inactive frontages contribute to a sense of decline

WAYFINDING



Figure 25. Droylsden Marina

Droylsden Marina has high potential to become a key high quality environment, however, a lack of wayfinding signage, overgrown vegetation and broken/poor-quality boundary treatments make navigating through the space a challenge. Opportunity to improve legibility and create and engaging environment, through wayfinding, improved materiality, lighting and street furniture

PEDESTRIAN LINKS AND STREETS



Figure 26. Pedestrian link to Tesco

Opportunity to improve the quality of existing pedestrian links across the masterplan, to create a more walkable and accessible town centre

Urban Legibility

Legibility is crucial in urban design, ensuring that people can easily navigate and understand a place. A well-designed, legible environment helps people feel safe and oriented. It ensures that streets, spaces, and buildings are logically arranged with a clear hierarchy of streets, spaces, use and scale. Good layout avoids complexity, promoting intuitive movement through defined neighbourhoods and connections. The urban legibility plan opposite highlights strengths and areas for improvement across Droylsden's urban design, including:

Frontages

Active ground floor frontages help define streets and promote safety. However, key routes in Droylsden, such as Market Street and Manchester Road, suffer from large inactive frontages and vacant sites, making the streets feel empty and disconnected. Strengthening these frontages through improved use of space, shop-front improvements, and mixed-use development could inject more life, vibrancy, and cohesion into the town centre.

Landmark buildings and views

Landmarks like the Concord Suite and Greenside Trading Centre serve as visual anchors, helping orient people and reinforce the town's identity. The masterplan should enhance these landmarks by framing views with new development, improving the public realm, and enhancing wayfinding to strengthen their role as focal points and improve connectivity with the wider town centre.

Street hierarchy

The street hierarchy and pedestrian routes shape how people move through and experience Droylsden. Fragmented routes and disconnected links undermine legibility and hinder navigation. The plan opposite highlights key opportunities to create a more intuitive, walkable, and cohesive environment.

Disconnected neighbourhoods

Some residential areas are isolated from the town centre, reducing interaction and accessibility. Improving connectivity between these neighbourhoods will create stronger links and foster a more integrated town.

Droylsden's town centre lacks legibility, with vacant sites and inactive frontages, fragmented routes, and disconnected neighbourhoods limiting accessibility and cohesion. Reinforcing key landmarks and views, strengthening frontages, improving streets and wayfinding, and enhancing connections between key streets, public spaces, and neighbourhoods, will create a more engaging streetscape, and a vibrant, welcoming town centre.

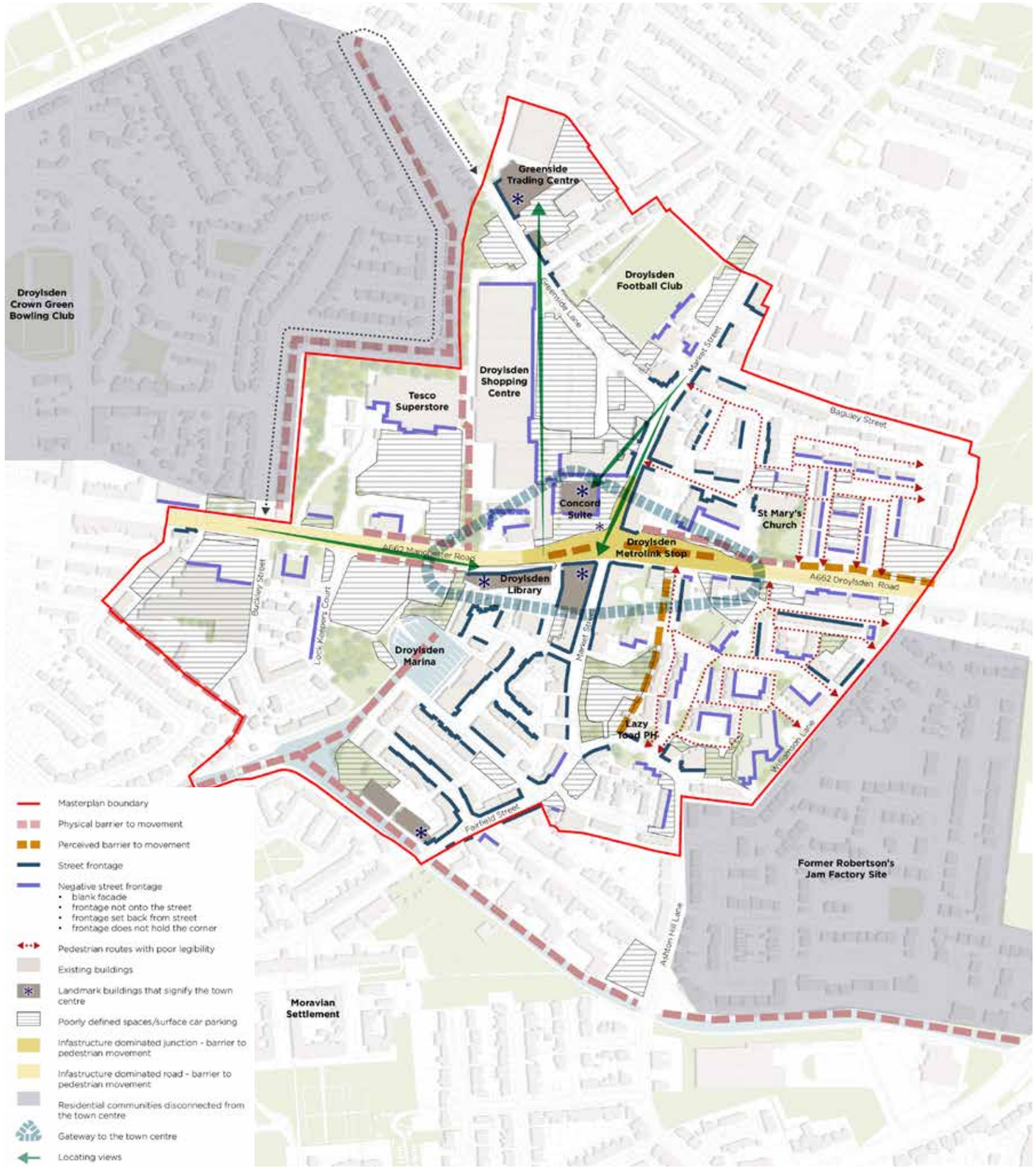


Figure 27. Droylsden urban legibility plan

GATEWAYS & SENSE OF ARRIVAL



Figure 28. Manchester Road

Droylsden's town centre lacks clear gateways and a strong sense of arrival. Vacant sites along key route such as Manchester Road and Market Street and inconsistent streetscapes weaken the town's identity. Vehicle-dominated entry points prioritise traffic, reducing a sense of welcome. Opportunity to improve gateways to strengthen first impressions and reinforce Droylsden's identity as a vibrant, connected town centre

DISCONNECTED NEIGHBOURHOODS



Figure 33. In the background, The Orangery housing development

Key neighbourhoods within Droylsden such as the Orangery development, at the old Robertson's Jam Factory site, feel disconnected from the town centre due to physical barriers, unclear and convoluted routes, and poor legibility, discouraging movement. Strengthening connections through better routes, improved wayfinding, and welcoming public spaces would encourage engagement and strengthen links to the town centre

VOIDS & UNDERUTILISED DEVELOPMENT SITES

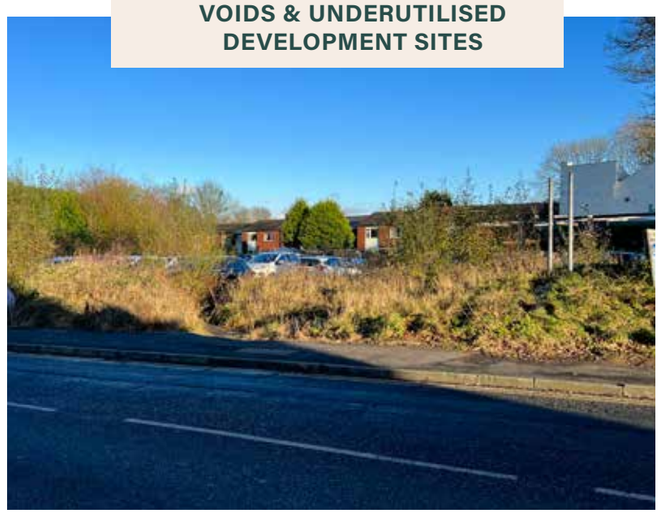


Figure 29. New Street car park, off Market Street

Voids and underutilised development sites offer a chance to revitalise the town centre. By introducing new housing, retail, or community spaces, these sites can enhance the streetscape and create a vibrant, mixed-use environment. Thoughtful development can improve connectivity, attract new residents and businesses, and strengthen Droylsden's character

LANDMARK BUILDINGS & KEY VIEWS



Figure 30. Queen's Walk

Protecting and framing key views is essential for maintaining the town's identity. Enhancing these landmarks through thoughtful public realm improvements, better wayfinding, and strategic development will preserve and strengthen the unique character of Droylsden's town centre

POORLY DEFINED SPACES



Figure 31. Market Street

Poorly defined spaces, especially in prominent areas, can feel disconnected and underwhelming. There's an opportunity to transform them into vibrant, engaging spaces by establishing clear boundaries, active frontages, and giving each space purpose, making them integral to the town's urban fabric

PEDESTRIAN ROUTE LEGIBILITY & STREET FRONTAGE



Figure 32. Housing estate off Ashton Hill Lane

Opportunity to improve the quality of existing neighbourhood streets and pedestrian links across the masterplan. Neighbourhood community spaces could provide opportunities for socialising and play to support residents

CHAPTER FOUR

INITIAL FACT FINDING

IDEAS ROOTED IN LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

The people of Droylsden and the businesses that call the town centre home, have played a vital role in shaping the masterplan. Starting with the fact-finding exercise, their insights and experiences helped to build a deeper understanding of Droylsden - it's challenges, strenghts and future potential. This collaborative approach ensured that the masterplan is firmly rooted in local knowledge, laying the foundation for a successful town centre.

Stage 1: Fact Finding

Between December 2023 and February 2024, Social engaged with local people, businesses and key stakeholders to gather feedback as part of an initial fact finding exercise. Social carried out the following fact-finding activities:



Talking to residents at the Christmas lights switch on



Carrying out an online survey, generating 1,093 responses



Offering paper surveys through the local library, generated 34 responses



Conducting a focus group with businessesat the Hideout Cafe



Conducting a focus group with young people at Droylsden Academy



Meeting with elected Council members



Further discussions with a range of key stakeholders including the post office, library, Angela Rayner MP, businesses, the owner of Droylsden FC, marina residents, The Nicholson Academy, New Era properties and GPs at the local medical practice

Through the online survey, paper survey, focus groups and interviews Social gathered extensive feedback from locals and key stakeholders on the challenges facing Droylsden town centre and where opportunities lie.

This showed a clear consensus around some emerging themes:

- Empty shops and a town haemorrhaging confidence
- Giving younger people a stronger stake in the town
- Prioritising community
- More events, a stronger night time economy and more reasons to come to Droylsden
- Making better use of key assets

Once complete, the feedback was gathered and reviewed, which informed initial masterplan ideas, for the community to provide feedback on at Stage 2 - the Public Consultation (for further information refer to pages 36-39).

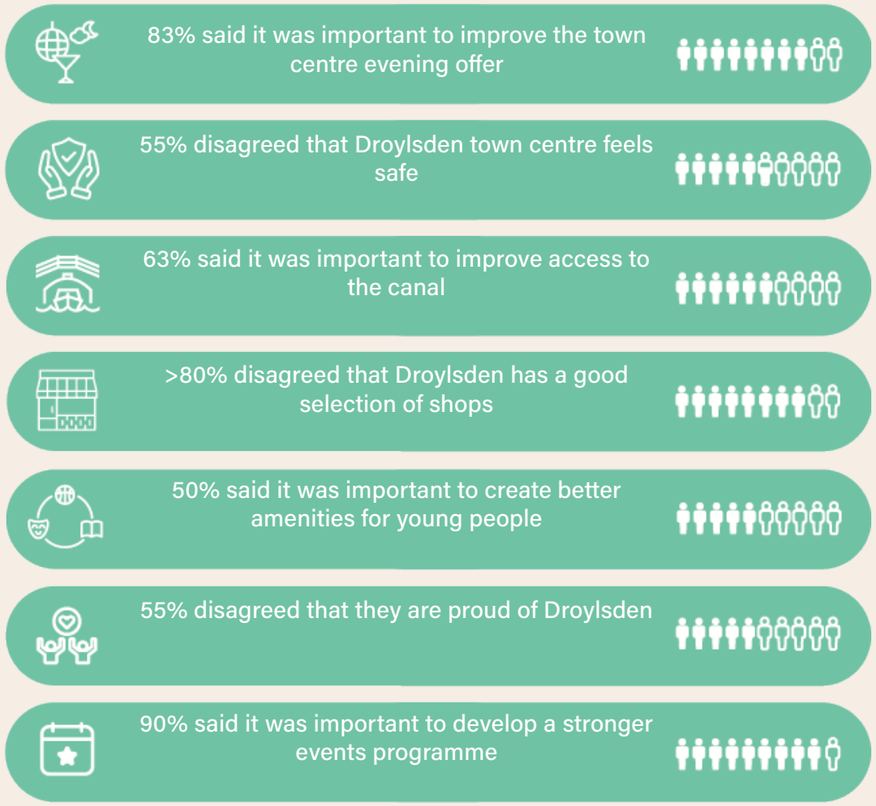


Figure 34. Fact finding survey results

CHAPTER FIVE

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

SWOT ANALYSIS

A summary of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints has been listed on this page, ordered under the following categories:

- Economy
- Business and employment
- People and labour market
- Market and property
- Place
- Public realm
- Transport and movement

For further details and masterplan considerations, please refer to the Ekosgen Droylsden Town Centre Masterplan Evidence Base.

STRENGHTHS

Economy
A diverse economy with a high output in both foundational sectors and in high value sectors such as manufacturing

Business and employment
Business base has grown in the last 5 years and employment has increased significantly

People and the labour market
Droylsden's population has grown faster than Greater Manchester and nationally

Market and property
House prices remain relatively affordable and attractive, and a mix of retail unit sizes and some active independents with growth aspirations

Place
Villemomble Square, activated by businesses like The Silly Country, is a valuable asset hosting regular and yearly events. Rich industrial and cultural heritage, including the Moravian Settlement, and strong grassroots culture with assets like Droylsden Little Theatre

Public realm
Droylsden has parks, green spaces, and strong canal links to Manchester and Stalybridge. Some town centre spaces have quality features worth retaining, like street trees

Transport and movement
Droylsden is well connected both strategically with direct routes to Strategic Road network and more locally with the Metrolink and bus services

WEAKNESSES

Economy
Low rates of economic growth and productivity in Tameside is low. Over 28% of employees earning below the living wage.

Business and employment
Tameside has lower rates of business survival for start up businesses in their first year of operation

People and the labour market
Tameside has significant rates of economic inactivity, with rates remaining unchanged, indicating persistent challenges

Market and property
The town centre feels outdated, with an uninviting layout and a retail offer that fails to meet growing demand, and the evening economy remains weak.

Place
Vacant retail units and surface car parks create inactive spaces, reinforcing a sense of decline. Poor legibility and hidden architectural assets weaken the town's character, while multiple thresholds to key sites disrupt connectivity

Public realm
Droylsden lacks a distinct sense of place, with no clear arrival experience or identity. Spaces feelr fragmented, uninviting, or underutilised.

Transport and movement
A662 and Market Street create barriers to pedestrians, separating key areas

OPPORTUNITIES

Economy
A low productivity base provides opportunities for improvement, especially by focusing on higher-value sectors

Business and employment
Capitalise on growing business count and employment rates in the Droylsden arts, entertainment and creative sector.

People and the labour market
With unemployment rates now on par with the national average, the area offers a growing pool of workers and increased local prosperity, boosting potential for local businesses

Market and property
Ensure that retail and housing offer responds to existing and growing population. Aligning with East Manchester investment (Co-op Live etc..), especially F&B offer will enhance the area's appeal.

Place
Revitalise underutilised spaces and historic assets and strengthen pedestrian connections

Public realm
Create consistent, high-quality public spaces that improve connectivity, safety, and placemaking

Transport and movement
Proximity to Etihad/Co-op Live offers potential for Park & Ride and pre-event destination . Improve pedestrian routes for better connectivity, leverage central tram stop and retain and grow the local catchment

THREATS

Economy
Poor productivity growth will continue to limit growth and earnings potential.

Business and employment
Droylsden's employment is concentrated in sectors vulnerable to automation, such as retail, public admin, and construction

People and the labour market
Low unemployment is good, but businesses may struggle to find workers as labour supply tightens. Tameside has fewer people with higher qualifications compared to Greater Manchester and England, which could limit its ability to compete in the future economy.

Market and property
National brands are leaving the centre due to ongoing retail restructuring. Nearby retail hubs like Ashton and Manchester, along with out-of-town shopping options like Snipe, create strong competition for Droylsden.

Place
Negative perception of place and community frustration. Lack of cohesion and voids

Public realm
Limited project and maintenance budgets constrain proposals, while potential for street greening and trees is restricted by unassessed below-ground services

Transport and movement
Poor permeability between retail areas, while vehicle dominance on A662 and Market Street hinders pedestrian flow

CHAPTER SIX

PUBLIC FEEDBACK

WHAT DO LOCAL PEOPLE THINK?

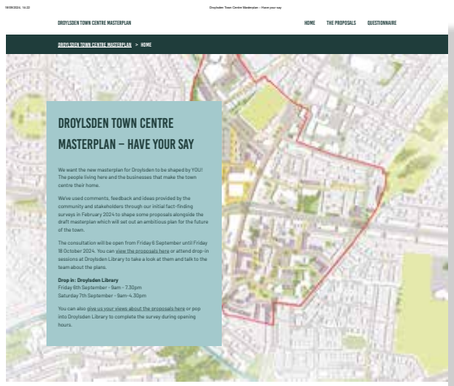
Stage 2: Public Consultation

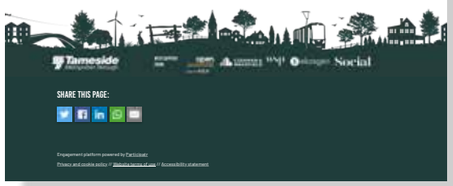
A public consultation was carried out between the 6th September and 18th October 2024, inviting members of the community to share their views on the emerging masterplan proposals.

The draft masterplan proposals were shared online and displayed at Droylsden Library for the 6 week consultation period.

Proposal boards were prepared to visualise and explain the extent of the masterplan study, the emerging vision and objectives of the masterplan as well as a suite of potential projects that could combined to help realise the masterplan vision.

The content for the website and the exhibition boards are shown adjacent.





DROYLSDEN TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN

A local business owner

A stakeholder e.g. community group leader / a local councilor / someone who works in the town centre

A visitor to the town or interested party

2. WHAT IS YOUR AGE GROUP?

17 or under

18 to 24

25 to 34

35 to 44

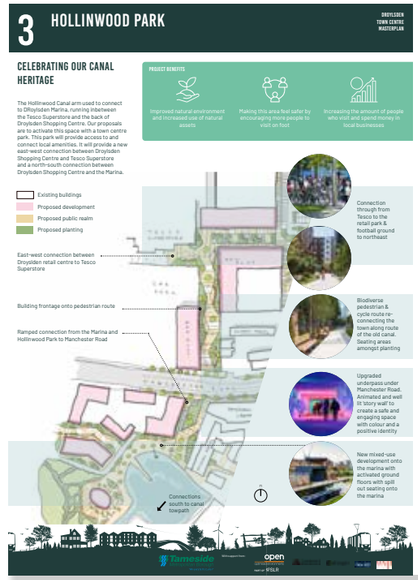
45 to 54

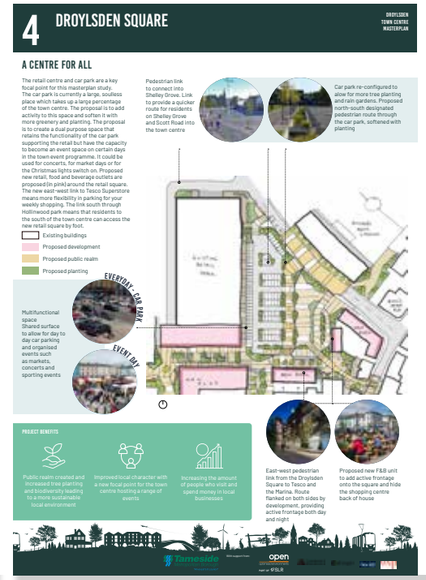
55 to 64

65 or over

Figure 35. Online public consultation questionnaire







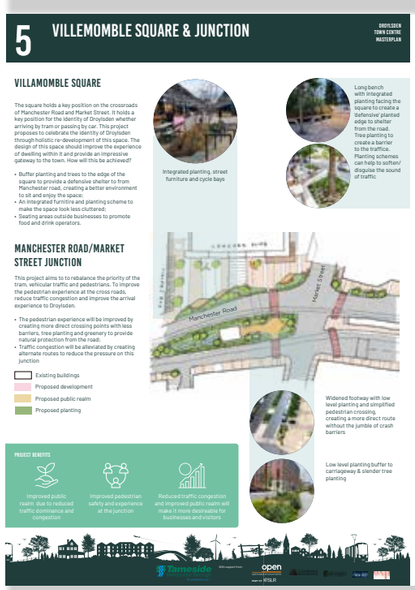






Figure 36. Public consultation boards

The in person public drop in sessions where held at Droylsden Library on:

- Friday 6th September (0830-1930)
- Saturday 7th September (0900-1630)

The exhibition boards where printed as double sided and displayed on the ground floor windows of Droylsden Library, meaning that by-passers on the street could view the boards as well as dropping into the 2 in person drop in sessions on Friday and Saturday.

After the two drop in sessions had ended, members of the public could continue to leave comments through the online website (via QR codes on the exhibition boards) or by completing a paper copy questionnaire from the Library reception.

66 people attended the Friday drop in session

67 people attended the Friday drop in session

21 questionnaires completed on the Friday drop in session

12 questionnaires completed on the Saturday drop in session



Figure 37. Photos above taken during public drop-in session at the Droyslden Library

Summary of Public Consultation Findings

91% of the participants were a local resident

The age group with the highest percentage of respondents was 35-44 year old at **24%**

95% of the participants agree that Droylsden Town Centre would benefit from investment

34% of the participants visit Droylsden Town Centre because they live in/near the masterplan area, **24%** for shopping, and **20%** for food and drink

44% of respondents visit Droylsden Town Centre several times a week. **26%** of the respondents visit the Centre daily

62% of the participants said that "A new town heart - creating a multi-functional space for events, markets and leisure" was most important to them

Only **14%** of the participants disagreed that the masterplan vision supported their view for the future potential of the Town. The main reservation being the Baguley Street proposal

Car dominance within town seen as a major issue: traffic congestion and parking

The participants expressed a general feeling of frustration and of being forgotten about - a desire for more concrete plans

"Will it ever happen?"

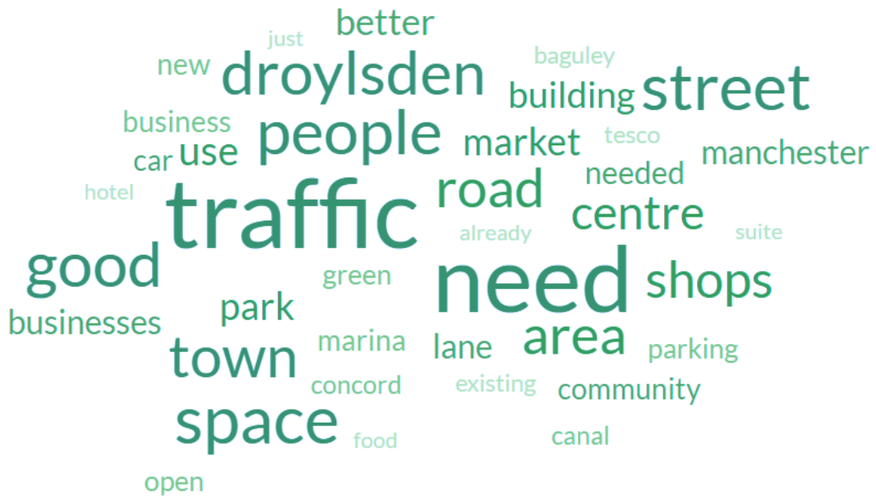


Figure 38. A word cloud created from the public consultation feedback



Figure 39. Droylsden Road traffic



Figure 40. Market Street shop fronts



Figure 41. Droylsden Christmas light switch on



Figure 42. Ashton Canal

Summary of Public Consultation Findings

Project 1 - Hollinwood Canal & E-W Link

84% Supportive

- An improved pedestrian N-S connection between the Marina and Tesco
- Opportunity for a marina cafe/community hub and/ or commercial space and improvement to overall area around the marina
- Opportunity for more green space
- A new E-W pedestrian route which could potentially reduce traffic, improve footfall and make the retail centre a more attractive location

- Underpass safety and cleanliness
- A big project, other more urgent/smaller projects need priority

Project 2 - Droylsden Square

84% Supportive

Would like to see:

- More community activities, events (big and small), markets, and an outdoor cinema
- Activities for younger children and young people/ youth club
- Improved retail offer esp. Artisan, independent
- Arts and crafts, galleries

- Loss of parking
- Funding and timescales
- Disruption during construction
- Security and cleanliness of the square

Project 3 - Villemomble Square & Junction

74% Supportive

- Trees and greening of Square
- A space to gather and encourage more use
- Potential to attract more visitors
- Improved junction safety
- Improved access into Town Centre

- Maintenance
- Cost
- Potential increase of traffic and congestion/ impact on other routes

Project 4 - Greenside Mill & Sustainable Neighbourhoods

84% Supportive

- Brings attention and awareness to the businesses within Greenside Mill
- An improved historical asset
- Opportunity for more affordable homes

- Discussions need to be had with existing businesses
- Existing tenants could be priced/forced out
- Parking
- Not a priority
- Private owners within the proposed residential area supportive but require more information (impact/ implementation)

Project 5 - Concord Suite

27% Option 1 - Retained & refurbished

17% Option 2 - Partially demolished & refurbished

57% Option 3 - Fully demolished & redeveloped

Potential uses:

- A community hub
- Doctors, dentist, mental health services
- Indoor food hall/market
- Hybrid working space
- Activities for younger people: youth club, cinema, theatre, live music venue
- Gym facilities
- Hotel
- Offices
- Retail, cafe
- Apartments

- Implications for existing businesses
- In respective of whichever option, a desire to see something done ASAP
- Further clarity/information wanted

Signage & Wayfinding

94% Supportive

- Signposted pedestrian routes
- Signposted events and event boards

CHAPTER SEVEN

VISION AND OBJECTIVES

" Create a thriving town centre with a renewed sense of place, to bring back purpose and to support its aspirational and entrepreneurial community to do more in their town centre. To create a town centre full of vitality, multi-use spaces and opportunities that reinforce local identity. "

VISION

The Masterplan sets out a clear Vision and Objectives for the future of Droylsden Town Centre - providing direction for positive change and a framework to guide decision-making and future development.



OBJECTIVES



CELEBRATING OUR CANALS - both here and gone - bringing activity and life to Droylsden's Marina and bringing back to use lost remnants of the Hollinwood Branch



MAKING MORE OF OUR HERITAGE - bringing vacant, historic and culturally significant buildings back into life, giving them purpose and reinforcing local identity



CREATING A CENTRE FOR ALL - making more of the space within Droylsden to support community events, such as the Christmas light switch on and match day, creating animation and activity at the heart of the town



UNLOCK TOWN CENTRE EDGES - Reconnecting the town centre with its residential neighbourhoods, both existing and new, by creating new safe and legible streets and by forging new desire lines to the heart of the town the surrounding residential neighbourhoods with better connections to the town centre



A PEOPLE FOCUSED TOWN - reducing the negative impact of highway infrastructure, promoting comfortable and safe pedestrian journeys across the town and onto wider open spaces and leisure destinations



ANIMATED AND COLOURFUL - celebrating and amplifying local identity through art, by supporting and attracting local businesses and entrepreneurs, encouraging programmes of events and activities and promoting spaces for community gathering and agency across the town



SUSTAINABLE AND GREEN - A place that is ambitious and innovative in its response to the climate and biodiversity crisis. Droylsden will deliver sustainability through a holistic approach to achieve net zero commitments, reverse nature's decline, and combat social inequality. It should encourage new innovative technologies to reduce carbon emissions. Re-use of existing buildings where possible, enhancing biodiversity, social value










CHAPTER EIGHT

MASTERPLAN FRAMEWORK

INTRODUCTION

The Masterplan Framework organises our place based priorities for change across the town centre.

The components which make up the spatial framework are detailed below:

Spatial design principles

The spatial principles guide the arrangement and organization of spaces to achieve the projects objectives.





The spatial framework

This plan sets out our recommended interventions across different locations in the town. It shows how interventions relate to each other, based on the location of the retail core, key assets around the town centre such as parks and schools, key features such as historic buildings or waterways and key roads and routes into and around the town.



The movement framework

This plan focuses on movement around the town and sets out our recommended interventions for improving access and enhancing the experience of arriving and travelling into the town by different modes of transport.



The public realm framework

This plan sets out our recommended interventions across different locations in the town. It shows how interventions relate to each other, based on the location of the retail core, key assets around the town centre such as parks and schools, key features such as historic buildings or waterways and key roads and routes into and around the town.



The illustrative masterplan

This plan shows how the town could look if the spatial framework is delivered. It is our vision for the town and we have drawn housing and public realm interventions on various sites. This is by no means a final plan, but its intention is to provide a flavour of what change could look like.



Projects

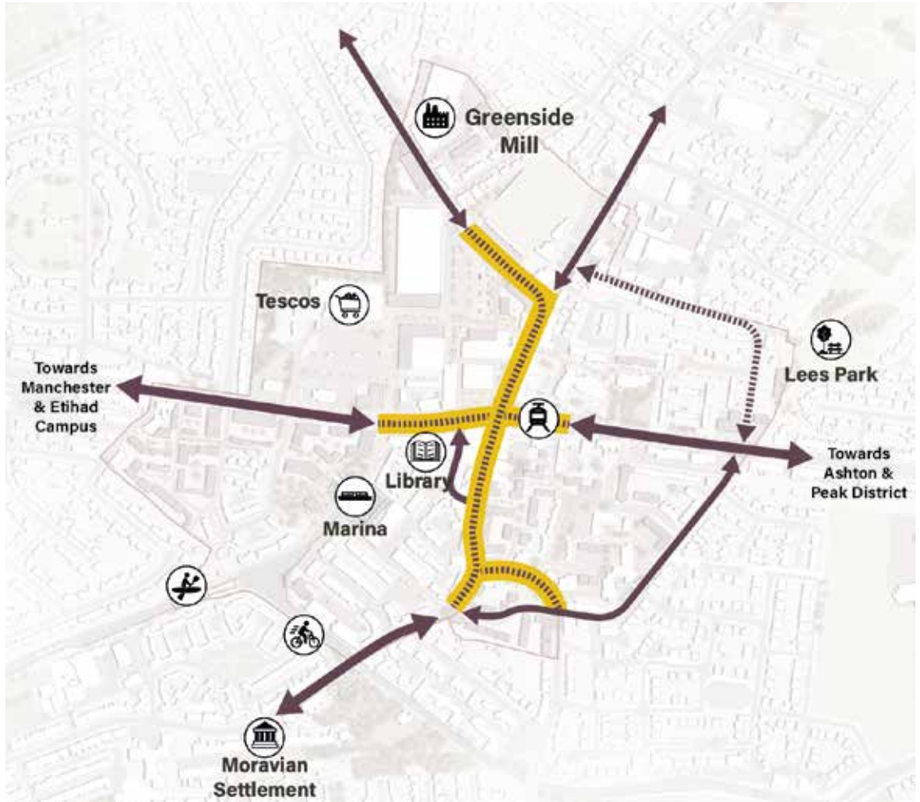
This plan identifies the opportunity sites we have selected through the masterplan process, to prioritise for redevelopment/ refurbishment/change of use. Development on these sites would be subject to further testing and viability, but we believe these are key to delivering the spatial framework.

SPATIAL DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The spatial principles guide the arrangement and organization of spaces to achieve the project objectives.

There are four overarching spatial principles that tie the masterplan together. There are:

- Softening the impact of infrastructure
- Connecting to our green and blue spaces;
- Cross stitching to create a new town focus;
- Celebrating arrivals and gateways



SOFTENING THE IMPACT OF INFRASTRUCTURE

- Reducing the barriers to pedestrian movement caused by Droylsden Road / Ashton Road and Greenside Lane
- Reducing the both visual impact of underutilised space and scale of road infrastructure
- Improving and creating new links that help to relieve pressure on the town centre's vehicle movements



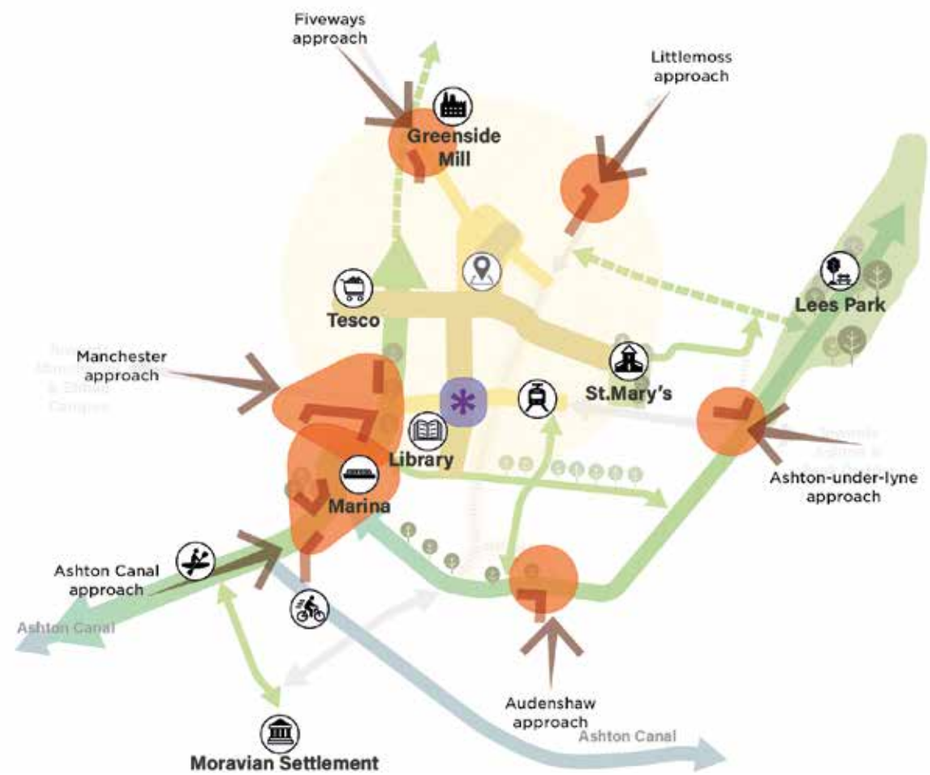
CONNECTING TO OUR GREEN AND BLUE SPACES

- Improving pedestrian and cyclist connections to existing green and blue spaces, like the marina, Ashton Canal and Lees Park
- Re-establishing the old Hollinwood Canal arm as a active transit route, connecting the town centre to the marina and canal
- Creating a 'green network' of routes that better connect existing residential communities to the town centre and green/blue amenity space



CROSS STITCHING TO CREATE A NEW TOWN FOCUS

- Connecting existing daily public amenities such as schools, GP's, weekly shop, sports facilities etc. through public realm improvements and new pedestrian routes
- Creating a new animated town square in the heart of the town centre that sits in the middle of this 'cross stitch' - the square becomes a destination for a day out
- Making it easier and more appealing to access these amenities in the town centre



CELEBRATING ARRIVALS AND GATEWAYS

- Signposting the arrival into Droylsden with new development at key points around the edge of the town centre
- Capturing the many different form of arrival into the town - tram, car, bus, walking etc.
- Better wayfinding and signage at these gateways to put Droylsden and its many assets on the map

MASTERPLAN FRAMEWORK

The Masterplan Framework sets out a number of spatial priorities across the masterplan study area which combine to deliver holistic and transformational regeneration and which look to respond to wider opportunities.

It establishes principles for regeneration whilst also allowing for flexibility, as part of a long term framework, aimed at supporting growth and evolution as well as celebrating what is unique about Droylsden.

The framework is flexible to allow opportunity sites/projects to come forward as early as practicable. As these come forward, either through private sector delivery, public -private partnership or other funding means, projects should adhere with and support the spatial priorities set out in the Masterplan Framework.

The priorities focus on both repair and retro-fit of existing urban features as well as opening up new opportunities for development-led regeneration, creating better walking and cycling routes along with new and enhanced public spaces.

The main component parts of the framework include:

- Creating a series of positive, bespoke celebratory arrival gateways to the town from all directions
- Identification of a series of opportunity sites across the town, including development on existing cleared sites as well as opportunity to re-develop / regenerate urban areas
- Improvements to the town centre shopping area including selective demolition and reconfiguration to improve pedestrian movement and create a better quality environment
- A holistic network of public realm improvements including creating a new, flexible town centre square.
- Improvements to the materiality and appearance of the street carriageway
- Selection of junction improvements for better pedestrian connections
- Enhancing the frontages of retail units along Market Street
- Creating a dedicated active travel link that connects people from the Marina to the Town Centre
- Upgrading Williamson Lane and its connections with Droylsden Road and Market Street
- Improvements to existing affordable housing stock to create more sustainable, modern dwellings.

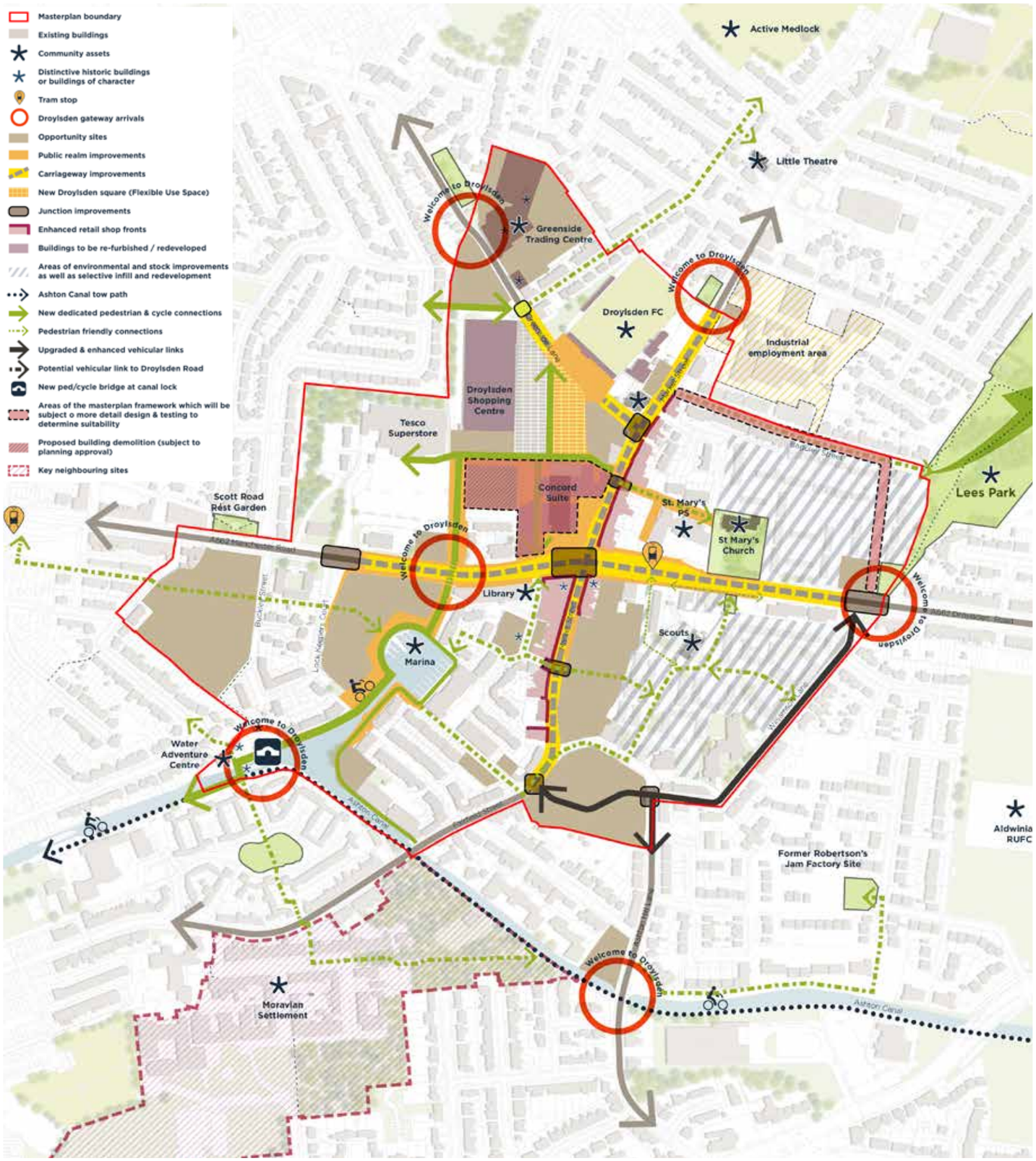


Figure 43. Droylsden masterplan framework plan

ILLUSTRATIVE MASTERPLAN

The illustrative masterplan shown opposite demonstrates how areas of redevelopment and public realm intervention could come together as a holistic strategy.

The illustrative masterplan responds to the key objectives and spatial design principles (set out on pages 40-48). These objectives and principles have been developed alongside the client and stakeholders, the design stages of the masterplan process and the results from public consultation showing how these areas could change in the future.

This masterplan is illustrative only and is just one way that the design principles and objectives could be applied. Future design work will follow the masterplan framework drawings which are set out on the following pages. These include:

- Masterplan framework;
- Movement framework;
- Urban design framework;
- Public Realm Framework.

- Masterplan boundary
- Existing buildings
- Proposed buildings
- Proposed public realm improvements
- Improved pedestrian crossing
- Improved pedestrian links
- Proposed tree planting & soft landscape
- Visual narrowing of road
- Road



The masterplan looks to make more of the heritage in Droylsden. **Greenside Mill** is a hub of employment and independent businesses. The masterplan supports these uses within existing historic buildings through branding, wayfinding and refurbishment Making more of our heritage. Greenside Mill is already a hub

A people focused town - Creating a pedestrian friendly town centre by implementing a north/south and east/ west connection via the old canal branch route - **Hollinwood Park**





Creating a centre for all - **Droylsden Square** will be a new town heart creating multi-functional spaces for markets, community events and leisure activities



Unlocking town centre edges. Creating improved pedestrian links that connect existing residential communities to local amenities, services and green spaces



Celebrating our canals - both here and gone - bringing activity and life to **Droylsden's Marina** and bringing back to use lost remnants of the **Hollinwood Canal**. A new bridge is proposed over the Ashton Canal next to the listed lock gates.



The masterplan looks to make more of the heritage in Droylsden. The Moravian Settlement is a historic asset for the town. The masterplan looks to raise awareness of this asset through better linking it to the town centre via wayfinding from the canal



A new **Sustainable Neighbourhood** around Ellen Street. Refurbish to exemplar standards, new carbon efficient homes, pedestrian friendly neighbourhood. Providing new amenity space with a neighbourhood green on Ashton Hill Lane



A people focused town - Improvements to key movement routes to make a more pedestrian friendly town centre. Improvements to the Market Street/ Manchester Road junction will create a more connected and accessible town centre.

Figure 44. Droylsden illustrative masterplan

MOVEMENT FRAMEWORK

Sustainable and interconnected movement networks are fundamental to the Droylsden Masterplan. The strategy leverages the area's proximity to key regional transport networks, such as the Metrolink, the Ashton Canal Cycleway, and the M60, while also prioritising the enhancement of local walking, wheeling, and cycling routes within the town centre and its surrounding areas.

A central aspect of the town centre's future vibrancy and functionality is ensuring that people can visit, experience, and navigate the area safely and comfortably. This vision seeks to minimise the negative impacts of strategic through-traffic, providing Droylsden with the space to thrive as both a place and a community.

The movement framework has been developed in parallel with the ongoing TfGM corridor study, which focuses on improving the A662 Droylsden Road as a key arterial route into the city centre. This work aims to enhance tram priority and efficiency, ensuring a reliable and frequent service for local residents, ultimately encouraging greater use of the tram system.

The movement framework consists of two primary components:

- Enhancing Existing Streets: Improving the quality of current community streets to support multi-modal functionality, ensuring more equitable space allocation for all forms of movement. This includes creating new pedestrian links that capitalise on the area's existing green spaces and canals, thereby increasing permeability and walkability across the town.
- Upgrading the A662/Ashton Road: Manchester Road Corridor: Key opportunities for improvement along this route include consolidating traffic lanes and reviewing junctions to enhance their efficiency. This will reduce the corridor's severance while maintaining its vital strategic role.



Figure 45. Droylsden movement framework plan

URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

The urban design framework plan sets out proposed urban design elements that make for a more cohesive built environment. The plan illustrates the following:

Strong building frontage along key routes/streets

Buildings should front onto streets. Activation of frontages such as doors, windows, entrances and shop fronts will add to safer feeling streets with a stronger identity. Street frontages have been identified on the plan opposite as primary, secondary and tertiary.

Hidden services

Back of house/servicing/parking to be hidden from view or strategically places away from key through routes or long range views.

Termination of views

Termination of views with key landmark buildings - long range views should be terminated.

Landmarks

Prominent physical features or symbols that help people orient themselves and create a sense of place.

Strong corners

Corners of joining streets or routes should be held with a corner turner building.

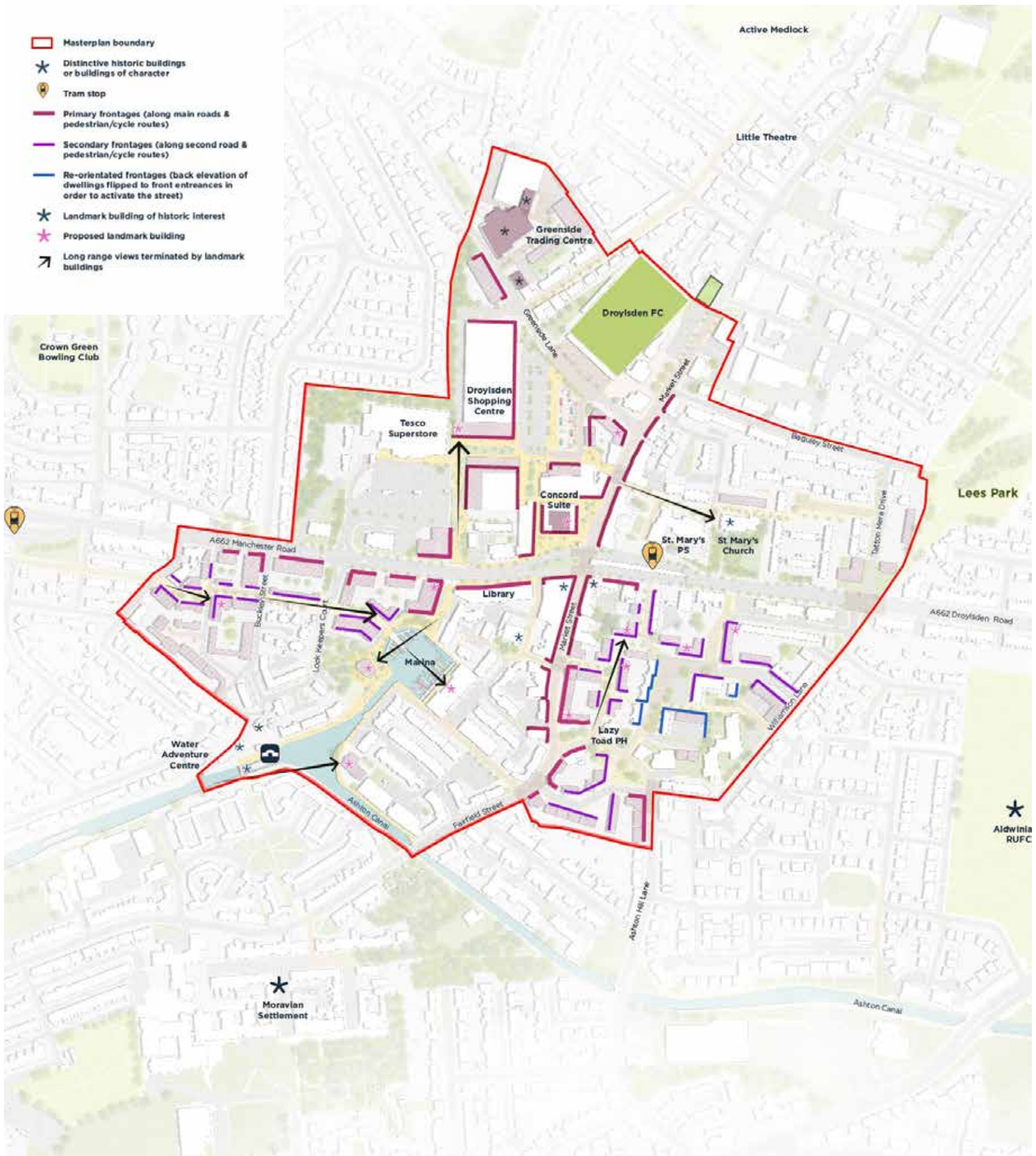


Figure 46. Droylsden urban design framework plan

PUBLIC REALM FRAMEWORK

The public realm framework for Droylsden Town centre seeks to rejuvenate existing public spaces whilst establishing a network of verdant, pedestrian-friendly routes that enhance the town's liveability and connectivity.

The most important routes identified were;

- A north-south connection between Droylsden Marina & Tesco
- An east-west link from Tesco across to St Mary's Church
- A processional route from the football club south to the library

These linkages have been prioritised as they offer the most compelling potential to reunify the disparate feel of the town centre's public spaces. The framework should prioritise accessibility, promoting a pedestrian-centric urban environment that encourages sustainable modes of transportation and healthier lifestyles.

Whilst the adjacent framework looks at the wider picture, the following pages focus on these routes and spaces in more detail; illustrating how this approach could be transformational for a better connected Droylsden.

These project ideas would, however, require further detailed design to be fully realised.

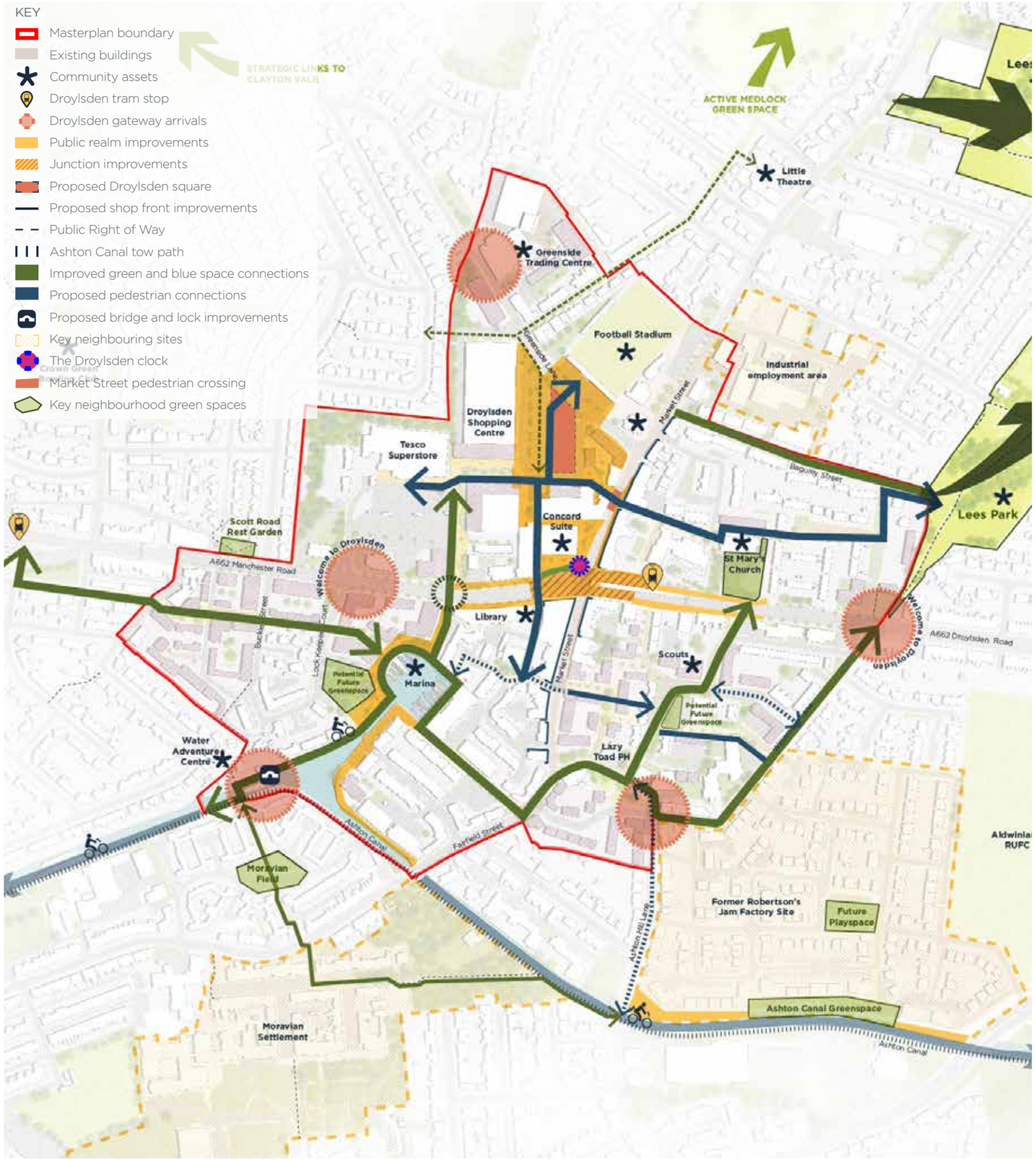


Figure 47. Droylsden public realm framework plan

CHAPTER NINE

MASTERPLAN PROJECTS

TRANSFORMATIONAL PROJECTS

The masterplan process has identified 7 transformational projects within the masterplan boundary. These projects will help to revitalise the town centre and attract people to use it more sustainably, more often and for longer.

Each project is location focused and can be realised at different times, depending on their complexity and available funding.

The projects combine ambitions for quick transformative wins as well as longer term change.

Project Benefits

Each project responds to the placemaking objectives and vision.

The impact that each project will have on the wider town centre has been measured under the following headings:

PROJECT BENEFITS

Environmental

Sets out how the project could have a positive impact on the environment

Social

Sets out how the project could have a positive impact on local people

Economic

Sets out how the project could have a positive impact on the local economy



Figure 48. Droylsden transformational projects plan

TRANSFORMATIONAL PROJECTS - VIEWS



1 Hollinwood Park



3 Droylsden Square





2 Hollinwood Park East-West Link



4 Manchester Road/Droylsden Road

HOLLINWOOD CANAL PARK

The Hollinwood Canal arm used to connect to Droylsden Marina, running in between the Tesco Superstore and the back of Droylsden Shopping Centre. Our draft proposals are to re-activate this space, creating a new town centre park and active travel route along the old alignment of the canal. This will provide access between local amenities and create a people focused, safe route. It will also provide a new east-west connection between Droylsden Shopping Centre and the Tesco Superstore and a north-south connection between Droylsden Shopping Centre and the Marina, improving the pedestrian experience across the town centre.

PROJECT BENEFITS

Making this area feel safer by encouraging more people to visit on foot

Increased engagement in outdoor activities

Increasing the amount of people who visit and spend money in local businesses

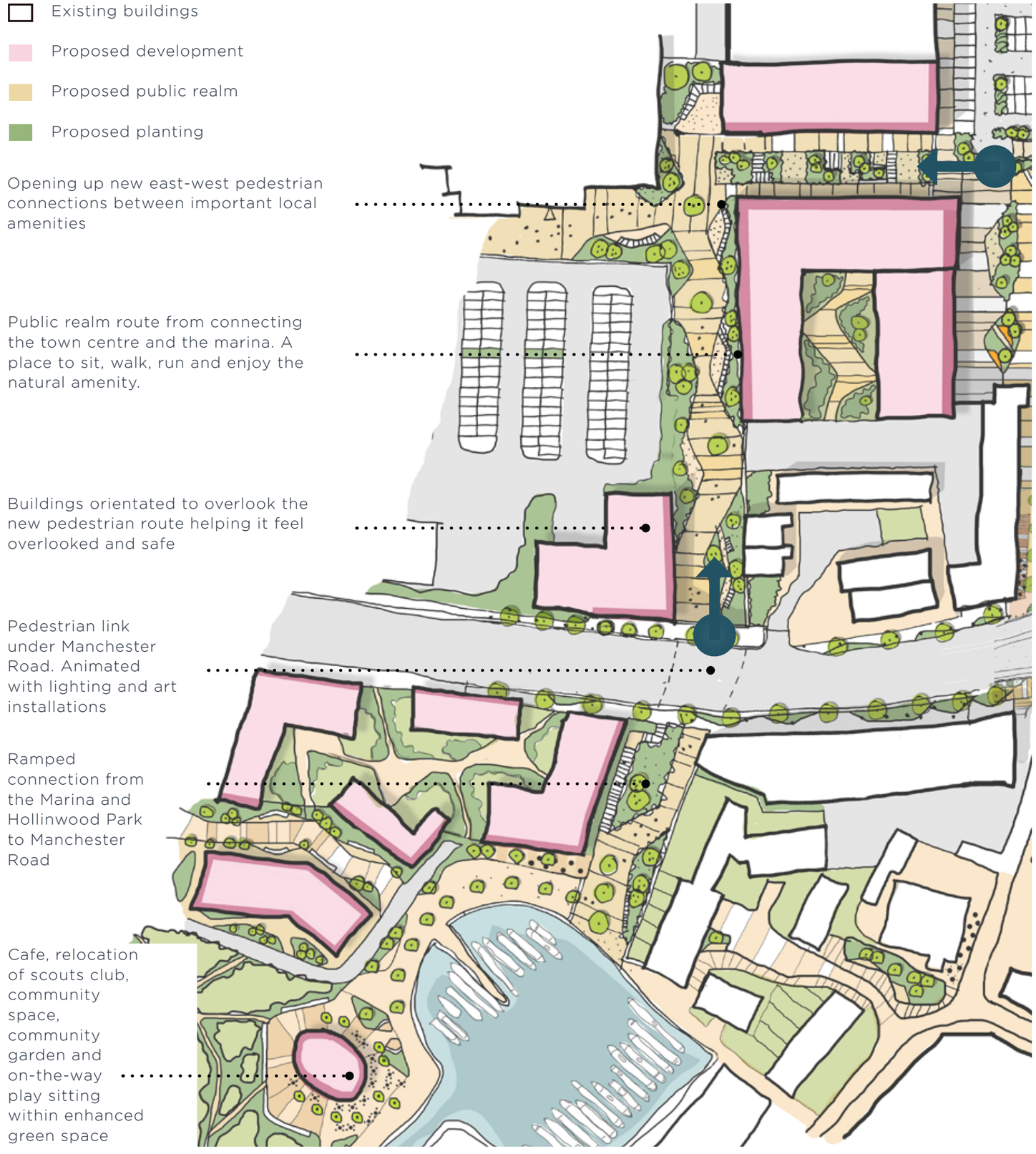


Figure 49. Proposed indicative Hollinwood Canal Park sketch plan

HOLLINWOOD CANAL PARK



Opportunity to create a high quality destination park beside the marina, adding to local biodiversity and amenity in the area



There is opportunity for the pedestrian link from the marina to the town centre to have informal opportunities to play and engage in the natural environment



Interactive artwork and light displays can be used to animate the space under Manchester Road and make it a more inviting and safe space to pass through, day and night



Grey to Green project in Sheffield have pedestrianised and planted up large areas of the city centre, promoting active travel



Making the most of our waterways. There is opportunity for Droylsden marina to be a place to relax, eat, drink and enjoy the outdoors



High quality, purposefully designed landscape furniture and signage

HOLLINWOOD CANAL PARK (NORTH-SOUTH)



Artist’s impression of hollinwood park

a new north south route from the marina, under manchester road bridge, looking north towards tesco. The new park will create a new way to access droylsden retail centre from the south and provide space for nature and play.

HOLLINWOOD CANAL PARK (EAST-WEST)



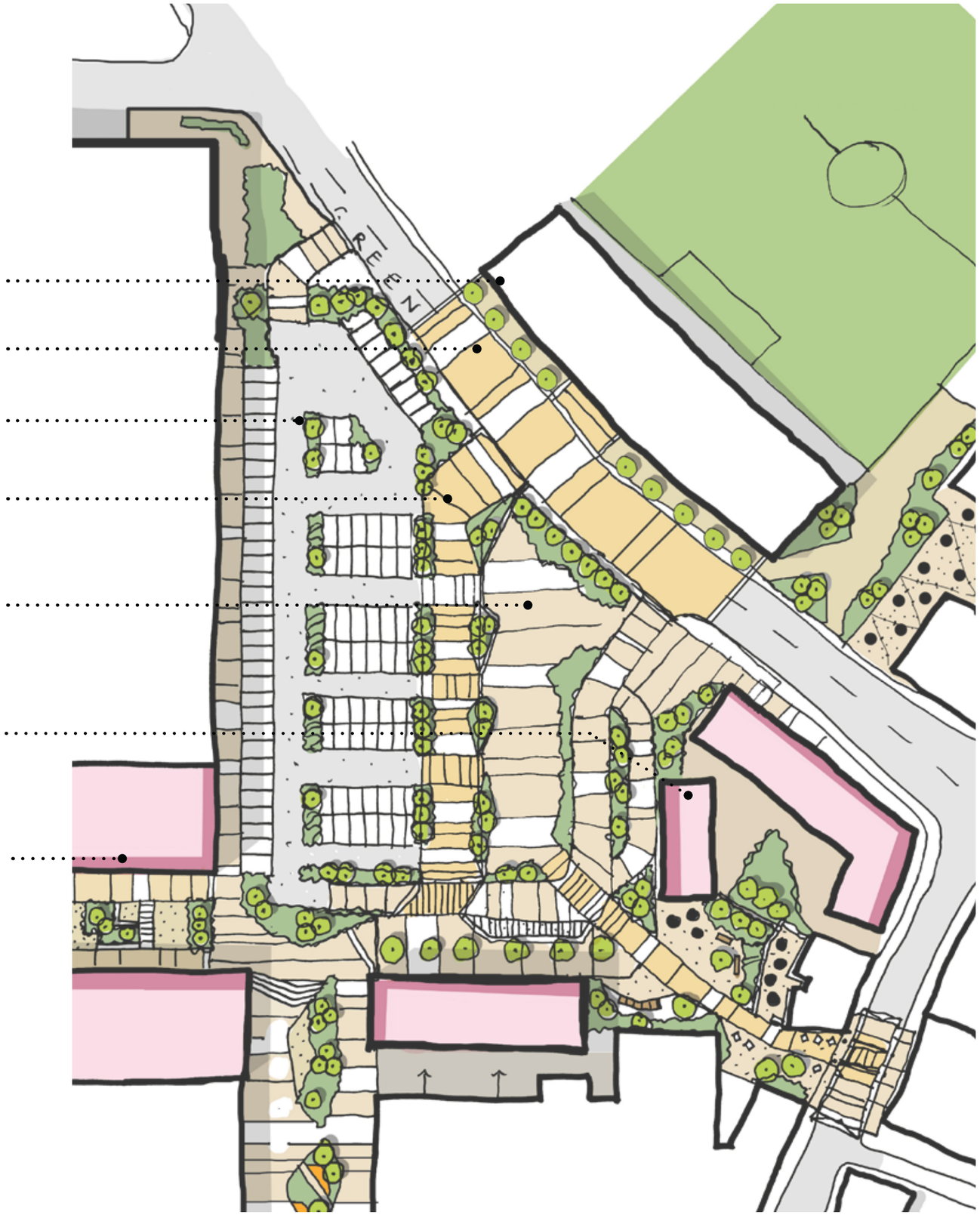
Artist's impression of the east-west link from droylsden square

A new east-west connection from Droylsden square to tesco and car parking. High quality public realm in the centre of droylsden improving pedestrian routes to key retailers. New development on either side of the east west link provide ground floor animation in the form of cafes, health & wellness and new town centre apartments above.

DROYLSDEN SQUARE

Re-purposing the large car park and retail environment are an important proposal for the masterplan. The car park is currently a large, low quality space which takes up a large percentage of the town centre. The draft proposal is to add activity to this space and soften it with landscape features and planting. Car parking is still needed to serve local businesses so the masterplan proposes to create a dual purpose space that retains the functionality of the car park but has the capacity to become an event space on certain days in the town event programme. It could be used for concerts, for market days or for the Christmas lights switch on. New retail, food and beverage outlets are proposed (in pink) around the retail square to bring activity. This project links with the Hollinwood Canal project and would increase spaces for people to enjoy and relax.

- Existing buildings
- Proposed development
- Proposed public realm
- Proposed planting



Potential to improve south facing facade of the stands in order to close off the square

Improved landscape and tree planting onto Greenside Lane

Car park re-configured to allow for more tree planting and rain gardens

North-south pedestrian route through the car park flanked on either side with trees and planting to make it feel like a more people friendly space

Car park re-surfaced with the same material as pedestrian spaces. This area can double up as a event space on event days or used as an over-spill car park

Potential for a new mixed-use development with ground floor activation onto the square. This could be a cafe or restaurant on the ground floor with residential accommodation above.

East-west link flanked on either side by active ground frontage

PROJECT BENEFITS

Public realm created, increased tree planting, biodiverse planting leading to a more sustainable environment

Improved local character with a new distinct focal point for the town hosting a range of events. Contributing to the identity of the area

Increasing the amount of people who visit and spend money in local businesses

Figure 50. Proposed indicative Droylsden Square sketch plan

DROYLSDEN SQUARE



Purpose built mixed-use building with ground floor activation, community amenity such as a cafe , restaurant or shop with apartments above



Considered landscape design, planting and bicycle parking can greatly improve the user experience whilst shopping



Grattan Square, Dungarvan, Ireland - On a normal week day the square is used as a car park for the town centre



Grattan Square, Dungarvan, Ireland - Seating areas and footpath separated from car park and road by tall planters creating a visual screen



A rain garden softens and adds interest to a car park, also increasing the biodiversity of the area



Grattan Square, Dungarvan, Ireland - The square transforms into an event space for markets at the weekend, music festivals and other large events which bring lots of visitors into the town

DROYLSDEN SQUARE



Artist's impression of Droylsden Square

A new public square at the heart of droylsden with high quality public realm, places to site, eat, drink and relax. Flexible car park can double up as a market squareView looks north towards Greenside mill and droylsden fc. A new beer garden and residential development behind the Beehive Inn.

VILLEMOMBLE SQUARE

Villemomble Square holds a key position on the crossroads of Manchester Road and Market Street and it signifies the arrival into the town centre whether arriving by tram or passing by car. This project proposes to celebrate the identity of Droylsden through landscape improvements to this space and reducing the negative impact of cars and traffic.

The design of this space should improve the experience of dwelling within it and provide a positive gateway to the town by:

- Buffer planting and trees to the southern edge of the square to provide a defensive shelter from Manchester Road, creating a better environment to sit and enjoy the space;
- An integrated furniture, lighting, signage and planting scheme and reducing visual clutter;
- Seating areas and spill out space / activity for people to enjoy and to support local businesses.

Designated and designed space for businesses to spill out with outdoor seating. Spill out space to be designed so that each business looks cohesive, reducing the sense of clutter

Custom designed signage and lighting as part of the overall wayfinding strategy for the town centre

Flexible space for everyday, gatherings, events

Raised planters, trees and seating creates a physical barrier between pedestrian space and the road. This makes the space feel safer and more enjoyable to be in.

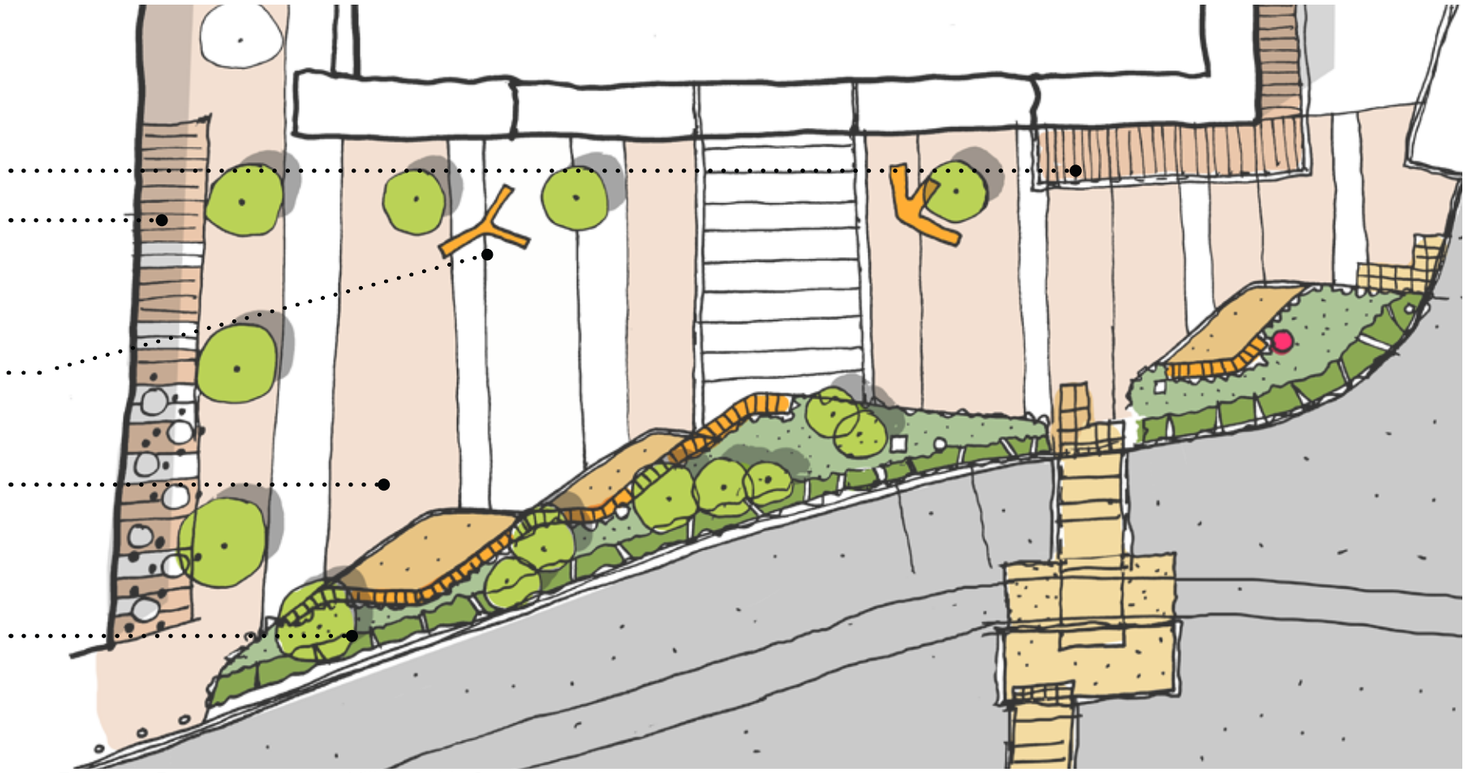


Figure 51. Proposed indicative Villemomble Square sketch plan

PROJECT BENEFITS

Improved public realm due to reduced traffic dominance. Including of trees and plants to offset carbon emissions

Improved pedestrian safety and experience at the junction, promoting walking and cycling

Improved public realm will make a more desirable environment for businesses and visitors



Integrated seating and raised planters behind to create a physical barrier from the road and traffic



Planting between the road and pedestrian areas create a more enjoyable place to dwell



Simple material palette and considered placement of trees and street furniture

MANCHESTER ROAD LANE REDUCTION AND NARROWING

The carriageway east of Williamson Lane is currently limited to two lanes. However, outside the town centre and main retail district, Manchester Road features its widest section, where the demand to cross is greatest. This stretch includes tram lanes, making it over 25 metres wide—equivalent to the size of an Olympic swimming pool.

The excessive width of this section of Manchester Road creates several challenges:

- Increased safety risks for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Longer crossing times, leading to inefficiencies for pedestrians.
- Traffic congestion and volume at the heart of Droylsden.
- A sense of division between the northern and southern parts of the area, disconnecting the community.

To address these issues, several changes are proposed:

Consolidating traffic lanes and reducing road width: Narrowing the carriageway will reduce vehicle speeds and create a safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists.

Improving crossings and the street layout: Enhancing crossings and redesigning the layout will improve connectivity and provide a more intuitive experience for both pedestrians and drivers, fostering stronger links across Droylsden.

Re-purposing reclaimed space: The space freed up by reducing the road width can be used for landscaping, public seating, and other amenities, transforming the public realm into a more vibrant and attractive area.

These changes aim to revitalise the heart of Droylsden, transforming the area into a more cohesive, accessible part of the town centre, rather than leaving it as an over-engineered junction.

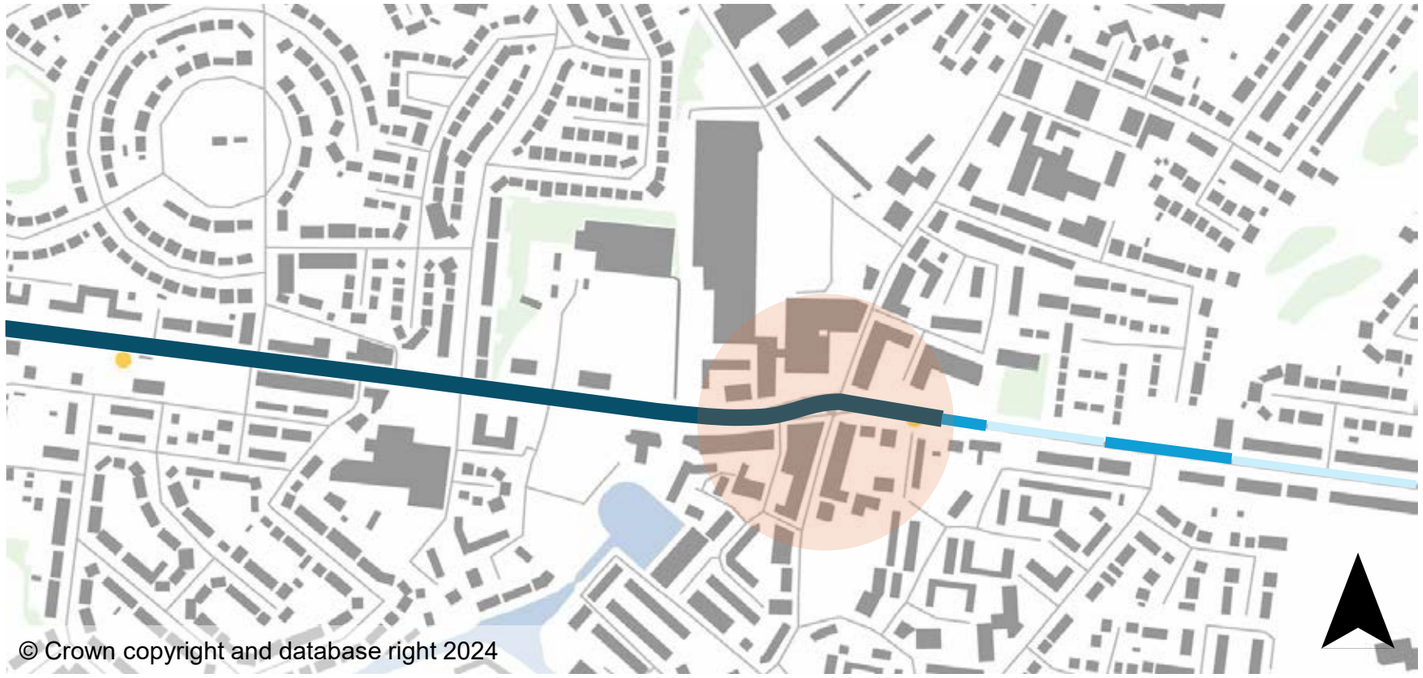
The masterplan identifies this as a principle requiring detailed assessment, testing and engagement before any proposal would be agreed.

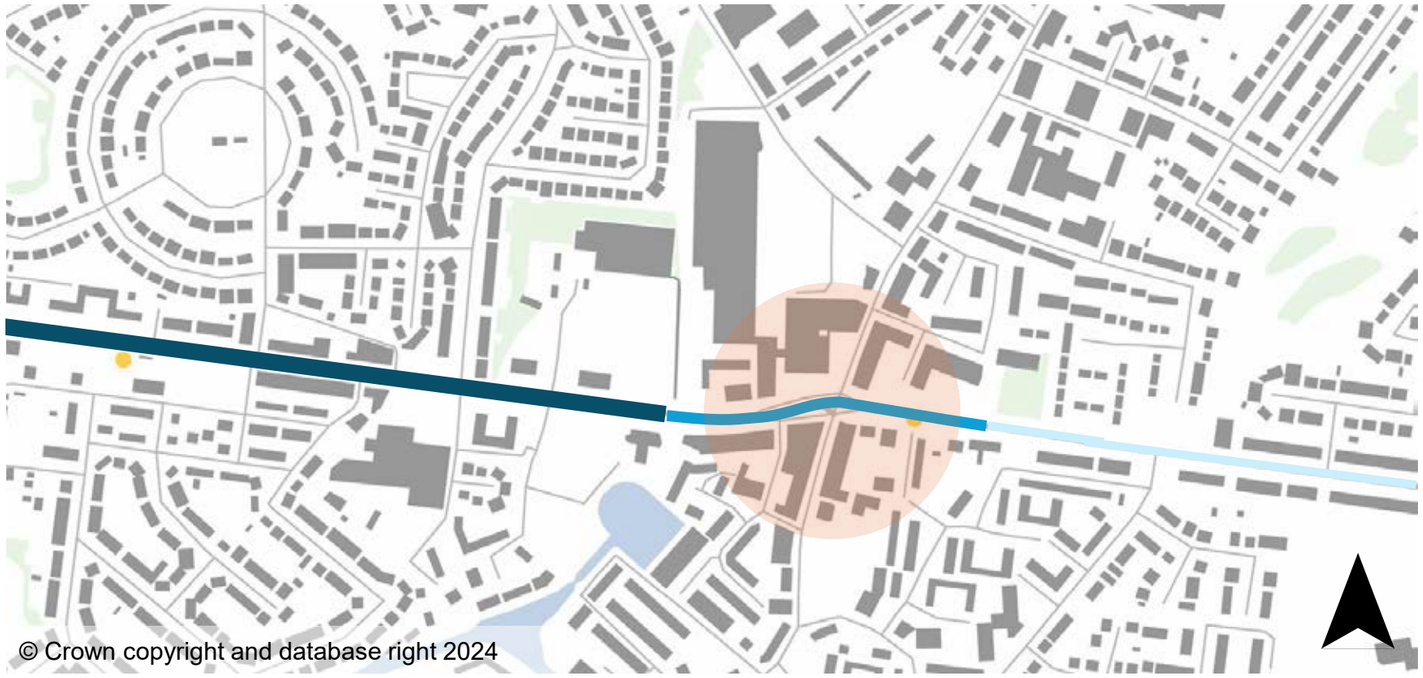


At it's widest point pedestrians must cross 25m to reach the opposite side of the street.



Wide carriageway separate two sides of the





MANCHESTER ROAD LANE REDUCTION AND NARROWING



Artist's impression of Manchester Road looking east

The visual shows the imporvements to Manchester Road including lane narrowing, boundary edge planting with trees and greenery to separate vehicles and pedestrians, new development on either side of the road with active frontages onto the street, access to Holinwood Canal Park via ramp from Manchester Road

DROYLSDEN CROSS ROADS & MARKET STREET

A662 & Market Street Junction

A proposed scheme to redistribute some of the highway space to public realm and tram priority. This includes greening interventions and the narrowing of the eastbound A662 carriageway to create a more pedestrian-friendly and visually appealing space. This unified scheme aims to balance the operational needs of the junction with a transformation of the area into a safer, greener, and more inviting public space that feels more like a town centre.

- Greening and expansion of hatched areas and pedestrian islands on Manchester Road to soften the visual impact of the extensive infrastructure.
- Planting around the tram stop to minimise the dominance of tarmac and reduce the perceived scale of the built environment.
- Reducing the eastbound A662 to a single traffic lane before the junction, consistent with the narrower sections of Droylsden Road, to provide more public realm space and wider footways.
- Retaining existing bus stop provisions while enabling additional stops and improved passenger waiting areas.
- Shortening of pedestrian crossing distances and times, which also reduces vehicle waiting times.
- Increased priority and presence of the tram.
- Enhancement to the area's usability for pedestrians and public transport users while retaining current traffic movements.

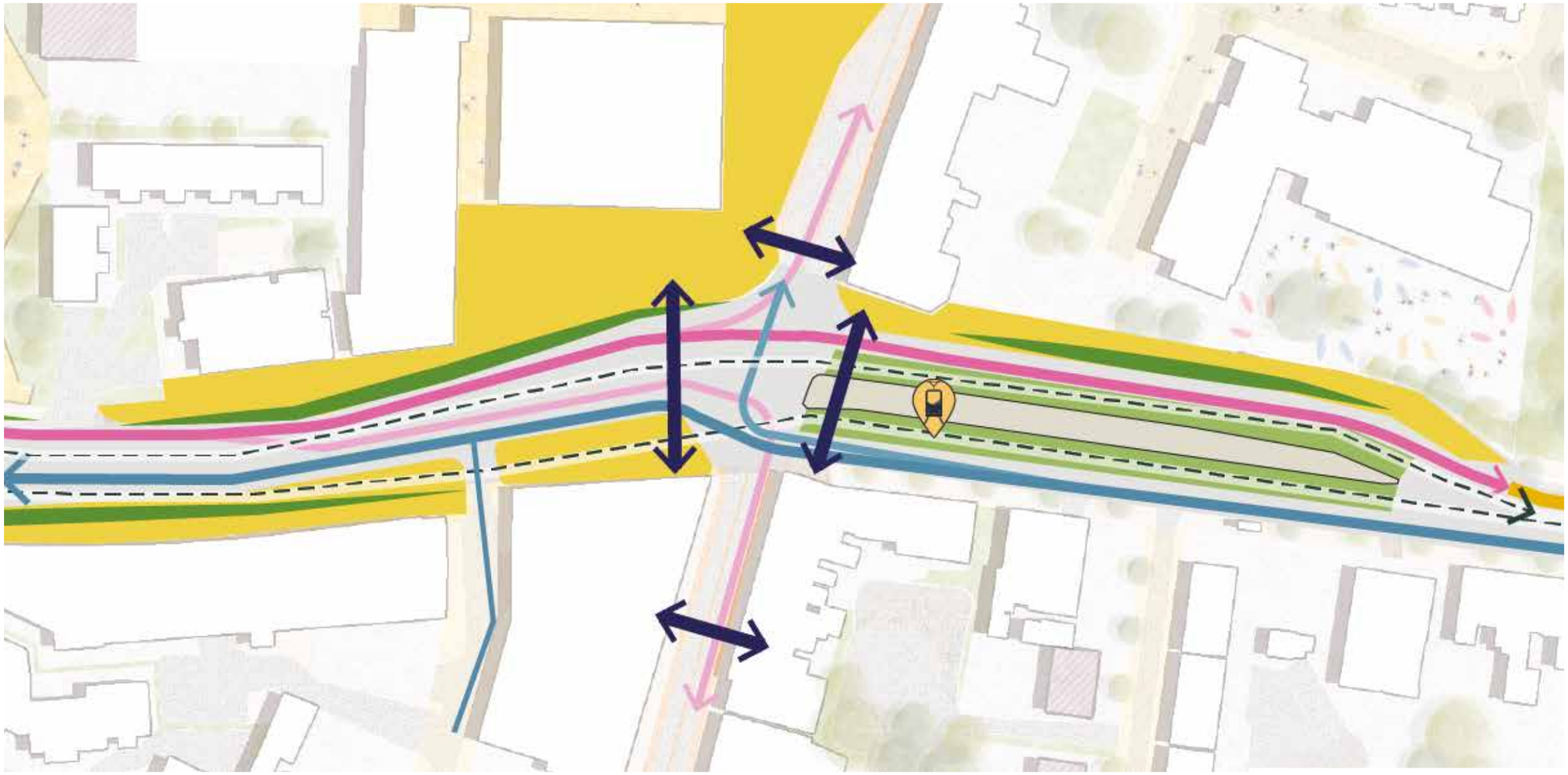


Figure 52. A662 & Market Street junction improvement plan

A662 & Market Street Junction

This project aims to reduce the impact of vehicle movements and congestion at the heart of the town centre, improving pedestrian crossing opportunities. The proposed changes will make crossings safer and more convenient for pedestrians while continuing to accommodate tram and car movements. Enhancing the pedestrian experience and footways by rebalancing the space allocated to vehicles and the visual impact of hard landscaping. This includes maintaining multi-directional turns at the junction but reducing the space given to vehicles to improve pedestrian links.

The project will bring several key improvements to both the pedestrian environment and the streetscape:

- Introduction of green infrastructure: New tree planting and potential sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) to improve environmental quality.
- Creation of more direct pedestrian routes: Reducing the distance pedestrians need to travel to cross the street safely.
- Improved hard landscaping: Visually connecting Villemomble Square with the southern side of the A662, enhancing the town's cohesiveness.
- Improvement of bus stop provisions: Retaining current bus stops while introducing additional stops and improving waiting areas for passengers.
- Shortened pedestrian crossing distances: This will reduce vehicle waiting times and improve traffic flow.
- Enhanced pedestrian crossings: Making it easier and safer for pedestrians to cross the roads, thus improving the overall pedestrian experience.

To achieve these improvements, several changes will be made to the street layout and traffic flow:

- Reduction of carriageway width: Implementing two-to-one lane filtering to the west of the junction, reducing space for cars and creating more direct pedestrian crossing points.
- Narrowing the eastbound A662: Reducing it to a single traffic lane before the junction, in line with the narrower sections of Droylsden Road, to free up more space for the public realm and wider footways.
- Tram priority: Ensuring continued tram and vehicle movements while increasing the priority of trams across the area, improving accessibility for pedestrians and public transport users.

The masterplan identifies this as a principle requiring detailed assessment, testing and engagement before any proposal would be agreed.

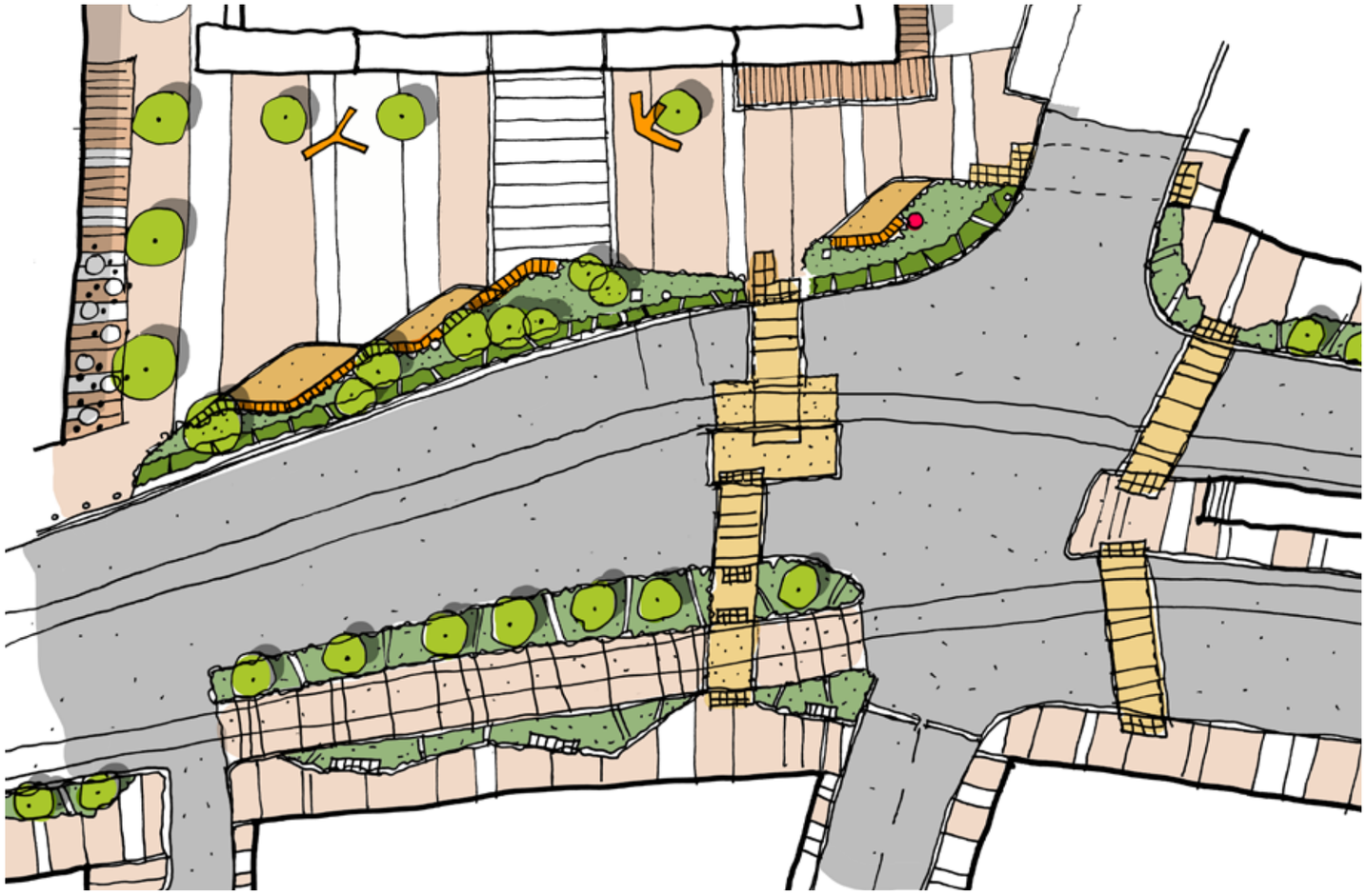


Figure 53. A662 & Market Street junction, and Villemomble Square improvement sketch plan







Image credit: Green Blue Urban

Williamson Road/ A662 Junction

A more formalised junction at the Cavendish Walk and A662 intersection could be introduced to provide safer and more efficient movement for all users. This area has been identified as having safety concerns for all modes of transport. Pedestrian crossings are complex, and there have been incidents involving both trams and vehicles in the area.

The introduction of a three-arm signalised junction would provide the following benefits:

- Dedicated Pedestrian and Cyclist Crossings: These crossings would reduce the severance caused by the A662, making it easier and safer for pedestrians to cross the busy road and enabling cyclists to safely access Lees Park.
- Signalised Junction: A typical signalised junction is proposed to control the movements of vehicles, trams, and pedestrians in a more coordinated way. This would help support safer movements and enhance tram priority.
- Clearer Tram Priority: Dedicated signals for trams would ensure that tram movements are prioritised and that vehicles cross tram tracks in a controlled manner, reducing the potential for conflict between traffic and trams.
- Connections to Green Space: New pedestrian crossings would enable more direct and safer access to Lees Park, improving connections between the town and its green spaces.
- Green Space Entrance: Proposed improvements to the entrance of Lees Park would make it more welcoming and accessible for all, including those with cycles, prams, and wheelchairs. This would enhance the overall quality of the gateway to the park.
- Additional Access to South Droylsden: The formalisation of this junction, alongside wider improvements in the area, would provide an additional route for north-south movement, alleviating pressure on the Market Street and A662 junction. This would improve network resilience and distribution of movement across Droylsden, reducing congestion in the town centre.

The masterplan identifies this as a principle requiring detailed assessment, testing and engagement before any proposal would be agreed.



Figure 54. A662 & Williamson Road junction improvement plan



Baguley Street & Tatton Mere Drive

Traffic and congestion across the town centre have been raised as a major issue affecting the town centre and opportunities to reduce the impact have been explored across the masterplan study area as well as considering interventions beyond the study area more widely.

A significant volume of traffic passes through the large junction at Manchester Road and Market Street due to the number of homes accessible from this area. With no convenient alternative route, most traffic attempting to reach this area is funnelled through the town's busiest and most congested junction.

Draft proposals were shared at public consultation to explore the potential to connect Baguley Street/Tatton Mere drive with Droylsden Road, via a new signalised junction, with the intention to provide congestion relief at the main town centre junction. Converting Tatton Mere Drive, currently a cul-de-sac, into a one-way through-route. This would help relieve pressure on the junction while maintaining the character of the street as a residential area. This was explored in the context of limited other solutions within the study area due to the layout and structure of the town.

Through the consultation process, a number of local residents raised concerns around the potential increase in vehicle numbers travelling along Baguley Street and Tattton Mere Drive if a vehicular connection was made and also raised concerns around carriageway widths to the west of Baguley Street.

As a result of the feedback and within the context of the wider ambitions and issues impacting the town centre, the masterplan recommendation for this intervention, is to undertake more detailed testing to understand the technical feasibility and delivery of a new connection before confirming the suitability of the intervention; the impact and any benefit of traffic congestion relief and; the impact on existing properties and street design, in order to determine the effectiveness of the intervention. This will require more detailed survey, modelling and design work before determining its suitability. Any future work should also be closely consulted on with local residents and stakeholders as and when further work is undertaken.

As part of this intervention there could be the opportunity to introduce additional improvements including:

- Keeping traffic volumes slow and low
- Retaining the residential character of the street
- Dedicated, allocated on-street resident parking
- Additional dedicated resident parking along Tatton Mere Drive
- Introducing traffic calming
- Measures to reduce speeds and improve safety
- Aligning the proposal with a neighbourhood-focused intervention

The masterplan identifies this as a principle requiring detailed assessment, testing and engagement before any proposal would be agreed.



Dedicated residential parking & street planting with one-way traffic



Traffic calming of residential streets by narrowing entrances, change in surface material and signage

Market Street

Market Street, south of the A662, is a locally significant road that connects much of the southern area of Droylsden to the town centre, while also linking to the wider strategic transport network. However, it is more than just a through-route; the street also serves as an important community space, characterised by its smaller scale, heritage buildings, and local businesses. It has been identified as a key location for improvement to mitigate the impact of traffic, transforming it from a thoroughfare into a more community-focused, local street.

Public realm improvements are proposed for the street that maintain its current vehicle function but aim to reduce traffic speed and the overall car-dominated atmosphere. The key feature of these improvements are;

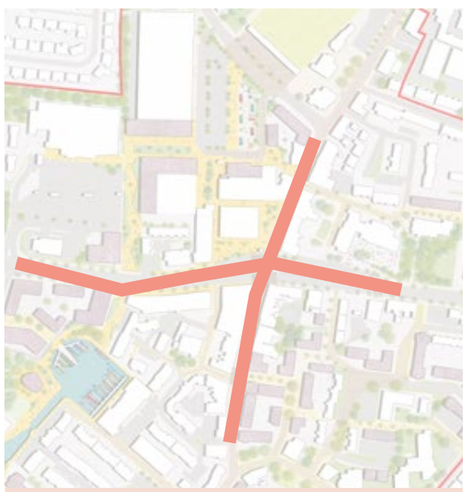
- Visual Narrowing of the Carriageway* This will reduce the perceived width of the road and help slow traffic by altering drivers' perception of the street's dimensions.
- Planting and Greening: Introducing more planting and greenery will soften the street environment, improving the pedestrian experience and enhancing the overall street-scape.
- Additional Crossings: Installing more pedestrian crossings (both signalised and non-signalised) will further support the street's function, making it safer and easier for pedestrians to navigate, while also helping to slow traffic.

The masterplan identifies this as a principle requiring detailed assessment, testing and engagement before any proposal would be agreed.



Figure 55. Sketch of Market Street visual narrowing

Visual Narrowing involves using a band of materials along the edges and centre of the carriageway to make the street appear narrower. This creates the dual benefit of reducing the visual width of the road, which in turn slows drivers as they perceive the street to be narrower. Additionally, this intervention will make Market Street feel more pedestrian-friendly, enhancing its sense of place as a community-focused area rather than a traffic corridor.



Visual narrowing to Market Street and Manchester Road/Droylsden Road



A change in texture and colour can visually narrow the carriageway and slow down traffic



Subtle changes in materiality visually differentiate the carriageway from footways

GREENSIDE MILL

Greenside Mill is an important historic asset for Droylsden. Formerly known as the Beehive Works, it was built in the 1900s by the Co-operative.

Greenside Mill is currently a hive of activity, with a large number of independent traders leasing the premises. Mill buildings are inherently flexible spaces, allowing for a wide range of uses. In November 2024, Greenside Trading Centre was bought by Up North Developments.

Greenside Mill could benefit from a branding and wayfinding strategy in order to market it to a wider audience and make it more of a destination workspace for the borough.

The masterplan encourages future business support and engagement with the building owners and occupiers.

PROJECT BENEFITS

Future of historic assets preserved and maintained

Existing businesses retained and new businesses attracted

New workspace/ employment space delivered and increased visitor numbers attracted



Public realm with 'shop fronts' to showcase businesses with the public



Graphic branding for historic buildings



Wayfinding to independent businesses



Graphic branding to showcase the building to a wider audience and create a destination

SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBOURHOOD

An ambition of the masterplan is to create an environmentally sustainable neighbourhood that is well connected to the town centre. To the east of Market Street there are two 1960's estates with urban design challenges such as:

- Poor natural connections
- Non-accessible homes
- Poor street hierarchy
- Unsafe alleyways
- Back of houses fronting onto the street

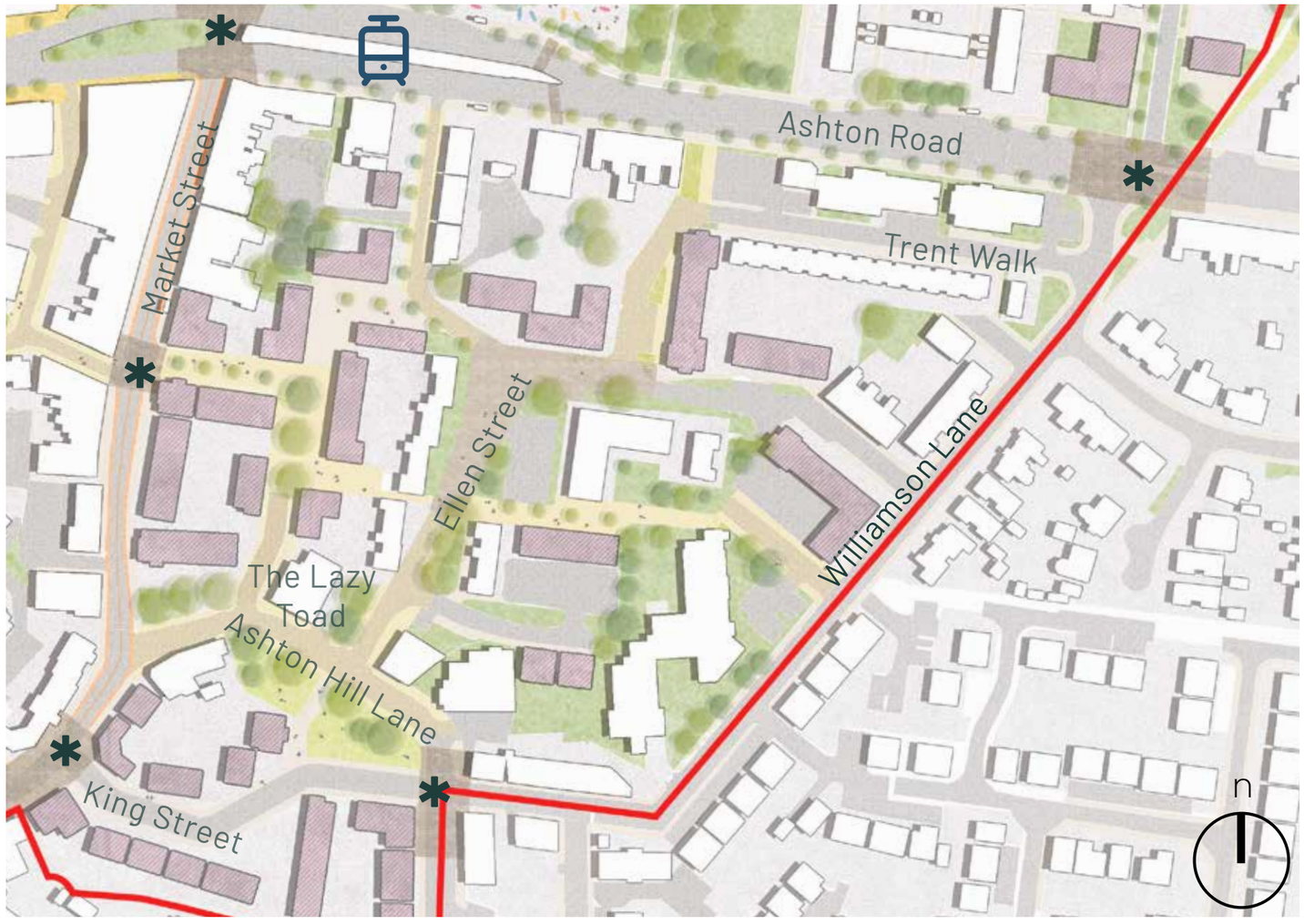
This neighbourhood redevelopment would tackle these issues by following Building for Healthy Life principles such as:

- Integrated neighbourhoods - natural connections, facilities and services, homes for everyone;
- Distinctive places - a memorable character, well defined streets and spaces, easy to find our way around
- Streets for all - cycle and car parking, green and blue infrastructure, back of pavement front of home

This could include energy efficient housing, better designed streets that encourage people to walk to and from the town centre along desire lines, creating safer spaces and streets for the young and old to use and providing communal space for growing food.

By implementing medium and longer term changes in these locations, south of Ashton Road, the relationship of the town centre to its surrounding residential neighbourhoods will be improved.

At the time of writing, Market Street Medical Practice is looking to expand its premises to the north of the existing site, providing patient and staff car parking and a wellness community garden for horticultural therapy. The masterplan supports this through creating better accessibility and visibility to the medical practice.



PROJECT BENEFITS

Purposeful public space created and improved perception of place

Enhanced health and wellbeing of residents

Inclusive house types

Improved environment for residents with better access to amenities







CONCORD SUITE

The Concord Suite sits at the centre of Droylsden and is a well known feature of the town centre. This corner site plays a key role in the image of the town as it is seen from the main junction and from the tram. As such, this location will play an important role in the regeneration of the town centre in the medium to long term.

There are a number of potential approaches that could be taken to help achieve the vision and objectives of the masterplan. These options were consulted on with the public and feedback has been recorded.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION OPTIONS

The options on the right were consulted on during the public consultation. We had lots of great feedback from you as to what the Concord Suite means to the local community.

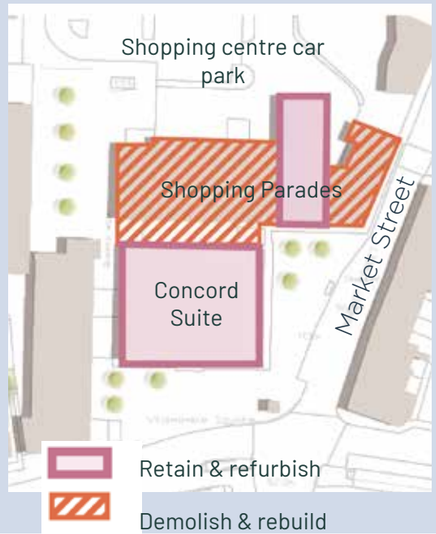
OPTION 1

Refurbish, repair and retain the existing Concord Suite building, improve its appearance and bring it into use whilst also improving the surrounding ground floor shopping parades (area shown in pink)



OPTION 2

Refurbish and retain the existing Concord Suite building as per Option 1 (area shown in pink) but demolish the surrounding shopping parades including the buildings onto the car park (area shown in red stripes), to allow for new modern development.



OPTION 3

Demolish both the Concord Suite building and surrounding shopping parades (area shown in red stripes) to make way for new modern development.



WHAT YOU SAID

27% OPTION 1 - RETAINED & REFURBISHED

17% OPTION 2 - PARTIALLY DEMOLISHED & REFURBISHED

57% OPTION 3 - FULLY DEMOLISHED & DEVELOPED

NEXT STEPS

The Council has commenced feasibility work to determine the best option for the future of the Concord Suite. This includes consideration of the condition of the buildings, costs associated with delivery of the 3 options, demand for the space and potential delivery options. The options are being tested against key criteria including meeting the objectives of the masterplan, the findings of the public consultation and deliverability to determine the optimum option for the future of the Suite.

WORTHWHILE PROJECTS

Meanwhile Use / Immediate projects

0-2 years

Project	Purpose	Lead & partner
Window dressing vacant buildings	Enhancement of place, promotion for local artists/ creatives	Public/private/local artists
Street and space greening, around junction and Droylsden Road - temporary planters	To show the impact that plants can have on making an environment more enjoyable to be in	Public
Greenside Mill	Refurbishment and re-branding exercise to promote the buildings for commercial use	Private/business support
Community shutter art projects	Enhancement of place, promotion for local artists/ creatives, involving local people and artists, colour and identity	Public/private/local community
Pop-up shops	Tackling voids, temporary use of vacant buildings, promotion of small independent businesses	Private - once approach is agreed
Community grow spaces / allotments	Supporting people through the cost of living crisis, addressing mental health and wellbeing	Local community
Sculpture gateways and trails - using local artists	Interactive wayfinding to create interest in the local area	Public but supported local artists
'Visit Droylsden' media type campaign	To showcase events and create a place for residents, stakeholders and others to be kept up to date on related neighbourhood activity.	Public initial but roll out will include all sectors
Local business network / business improvement team	To create community and cooperation between businesses, signpost businesses to support and grants, highlight challenges that business faces in the local area and encourage them to play an active role in its transformation	Private with some support in setting up from public sector
Incubator spaces	Some vacant floor space could be used for incubator spaces for small start up businesses	Public - aligned to Ashton Old Baths?
On-the-way play street interventions	Introduce local community especially kids to the opportunities of kid friendly towns	Public
Droylsden Shopping centre car park activation - food trucks, weekend market, pop up shop, 'Foodie Friday'	Start conversations around how this space could be used differently, bring people into the town centre	Private
Marina pop-up cafe/food truck	Weekend cafe/food-truck to be a destination for walkers, cyclists, canal boats	Private
Villemomble Square	Upgrading to public realm including soft landscaping and boundary treatments	Public







MEDIUM TO LONGER TERM PROJECTS

Medium term projects

3-5 years

Project	Purpose	Lead & partner
Market Street shop front improvements	Frontage and signage improvements. Strategy to unify street front through similar signage, shop fronts, colours, lighting etc..	Private
Sustainable neighbourhoods estate renewal	Estate renewal, selective reconfiguration and consolidation, residential led with new neighbourhood square and environmental	RPs
Concord suite and adjacent retail units	Options currently being investigated for refurbishment, partial demolition or re-development.	Public/private

Long term

5+ years

Project	Purpose	
Droylsden Square	Multifunctional new Public square. Reconfigured car parking provision, material improvements, increase in green infrastructure, signage and pedestrian path networks. Introduce community functional space / events space, power supply, lighting, outdoor secure storage	Public
Hollinwood canal arm	Public realm walking and cycle route with seating, signage, new planting and re-profiled levels. Route needed to better connect town centre amenities	Public
New bridge and lock improvements	To create an accessible crossing point over the lock to improve safety and use	Public/Canals & Rivers Trust

CHAPTER TEN

DELIVERY AND NEXT STEPS



DELIVERY AND NEXT STEPS

Whilst the Council has commissioned this masterplan and will need to take a lead role in its delivery, the realisation of the vision will require collaboration with the private sector (developers, local businesses and potential investors) and other local partners (including the local community) to determine detailed action plans for each of the proposed projects.

Governance

It will be important to ensure that appropriate governance is put in place to oversee and steer the delivery of the masterplan. Wherever possible, the agreed structure should align with existing governance structures to avoid creating additional, potentially unsustainable layers in the longer term. In addition to the current focus by the Council on Droylsden, work is also underway to unlock investment in a number of other towns across the Borough. It is therefore worth considering whether governance should be established specifically for Droylsden or across multiple town centres, to provide economies of scale - particularly if a developer is involved in more than one location.

More intensive support will be required in launching the masterplan, determine priority actions (including identifying/accessing funding) and commencing quick wins/worthwhile projects but should become less onerous in the medium term as identified partners drive specific projects forward.

Consideration could be given to identifying an officer or member who can be identified as the "go to person" for Droylsden aligned to the launch of the masterplan to demonstrate that there is a single point of contact with oversight of the Town and able to ensure any barriers to transformation can be removed as efficiently as possible.

Delivery

It is anticipated that responsibility for driving the delivery of the masterplan will sit with the Council but that individual projects will be led by an identified partners including existing local businesses, Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM), GMCA, Registered Providers, Droylsden Football Club and local landowners as well as technical support from wider partners such as Environment Agency.

Working groups could be established around the following areas. Specific task groups could then be established to drive specific projects forward such as:-

- The Concord Suite/Shopping Centre
- Development Projects
- Transport Improvements
- Public Realm

The action focused working groups will be responsible for:

- Agreeing the priority actions projects within their theme
- Defining the details of the proposed action
- Seeking funding - this might require support from other partners
- Determining the timetable for intervention
- Monitoring and evaluating progress against key performance indicators and refining actions if agreed outcomes are not being met

The working/task groups will include officers from the Council but could include other partners including TfGM or Homes England and where appropriate private sector partners (land owners and/or local business representatives.

The makeup of the working groups will vary depending on the specific actions being addressed. It is important to ensure that the same people are not tasked with getting involved in all the working groups as this will impact on progress. As such the number of working groups and pace of delivery will depend on the number of stakeholder partners that can be engaged with and encouraged to get involved. The Working Groups will report progress into the agreed governance structure within the Council. Where issues regarding progress/delivery are identified discussions will need to be held to determine the required refinements to get progress back on track.

Alongside these proposed working groups, other aspects of the masterplan are likely to need to be covered through existing working groups overseeing aspects such as marketing, energy etc.. In recognition of the work that the Council is also driving in other centres including Ashton, Hyde and Stalybridge consideration should be given as to whether any existing structures could be extended to cover a number of towns. This could include determining public realm schemes but could also extend to the procurement of development partners who may be able to unlock development in a number of sites in different towns.



Funding Opportunity

Potential sources of funding to support delivery of the masterplan could include:

- Private sector – working with local landowners to encourage them to bring their sites forward or local developers with a track record of working in similar areas. Working with local businesses to encourage them to invest in their premises. Larger businesses in the wider area (such as Tesco) should also be encouraged to consider where their social value commitments could be delivered in Droylsden. Local specialist should also be encouraged to use their skills to add value for example around marketing.
- Tameside Council - the Council could provide a mic of capital and revenue (officer support) to unlock the masterplan, capital projects will be required to make a robust case for funding. There is a current allocation of UKSPF funding (for capital and feasibility work) to support public realm in the centre.
- Other public sector partners – opportunities in Droylsden should be presented to TfGM and GMCA to identify potential sources of funding to realise the vision for the area. Consideration should be given as to how national organisations (such as Environment Agency, Arts Council, Heritage Fund) could support. Consideration should also be given to working with organisations such as Groundwork and Canal and River Trust to realise the vision
- S106 monies from new developments – any existing monies from recent investment as well as future monies
- Community Funds – there are a number of funding pots available that community groups can apply for such as United Utilities
- Homes England – to access existing sources of funding such as Brownfield Infrastructure and Land Fund but also to be ready to respond to new opportunities which might emerge specially to support investment in existing homes and to improve energy efficiency to meet climate commitments
- New funding streams – the Masterplan has been prepared to be flexible so that projects can be adapted to respond to new funding sources

New Partnerships

Importantly this Masterplan will provide the platform to for partners to come together to unlock new development in the Centre and improve the place. This will include public sector partners working together, as well as the private and the public sector. In some cases the private sector (housebuilders and/or local landowners) will lead and in others the public sector might lead. The aim being to grow and strengthen the partners who are passionate about delivering change in Droylsden. The masterplan will support funding bids by public partners and community groups establishing the strategic framework to demonstrate the need for intervention and its wider support.

It must be recognised that in the current period of public sector spending cuts, the Council cannot be expected to lead and fund all the projects identified in the masterplan. Future investment in Droylsden will be maximised where public and private partners come together with the local community to access available funding and harness local talent and resources.

Engagement

Building upon the engagement undertaken to prepare the masterplan, an engagement plan will be prepared and delivered which ensures that the local community and local partners are aware of the masterplan and its priority actions and how their delivery is progressing. Initially this is likely to be driven through the Council's website but overtime a dedicated page could be created to showcase what's happening in the area. Given the lack of investment in the Town Centre in recent years and the new residents that have come to the area in recent years it will be really important to change perceptions and create a more positive attitude to the future of the Centre. Identification of local ambassadors who can promote positive messages about the centre and progress on delivery of the masterplan could also support this.

Following the endorsement of the Masterplan, an update should be provided to the public to demonstrate that their views were taken into account in preparing the masterplan. The ongoing dialogue should continue with key local businesses and landowners such as New Era, Monktondean Properties (owners of Greenside Mill) and Tesco.