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Leicester
City Council

St. George's Cultural Quarter Character Area

Townscape Analysis & Design Guidance

Evidence Document



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1

Introduction

1. Introduction

1.1. Development Context

The regeneration of Leicester is a key theme of Leicester's development plan. In considering the central area of Leicester, areas have been identified which have distinctive characters and context, identity, opportunities and challenges and therefore different development objectives. These areas will also make a very important contribution to addressing the city's future housing needs.

Much of the development activity needed to enable restructuring of the economy will occur in the area within and around the city centre, within the Central Development Area (CDA). Leicester's future economic prosperity will depend on making sure that it has the right appeal to a skilled and mobile workforce as well as being an attractive place to live and work. The quality of life, environment, housing, jobs and the cultural, leisure and retail offer of the city and central area in particular, will play a major role in this. The aim of the CDA is to enable Leicester City Council (LCC) to direct, optimise and encourage investment, whilst managing development appropriately within a local context, so that high quality

development is delivered, which in turn creates certainty and developer confidence.

LCC has divided the CDA into 14 distinct areas, including 9 character areas and 5 other regeneration areas, to recognise the individual context of each area and for future policy to be based on the area's defining characteristics. These are:

Nine (9) Character Areas:

1. Wharf Street,
2. Mansfield Street,
3. St. Margaret's,
4. St. Georges Cultural Quarter,
5. Belgrave Gateway,
6. LRI & DMU,
7. Railway Station,
8. Old Town and
9. New Walk.

Five (5) Other Regeneration Areas:

1. Abbey Meadows and Pioneer Park,
2. Waterside,
3. Leicester City Football Club,
4. University of Leicester and
5. Walnut Street.

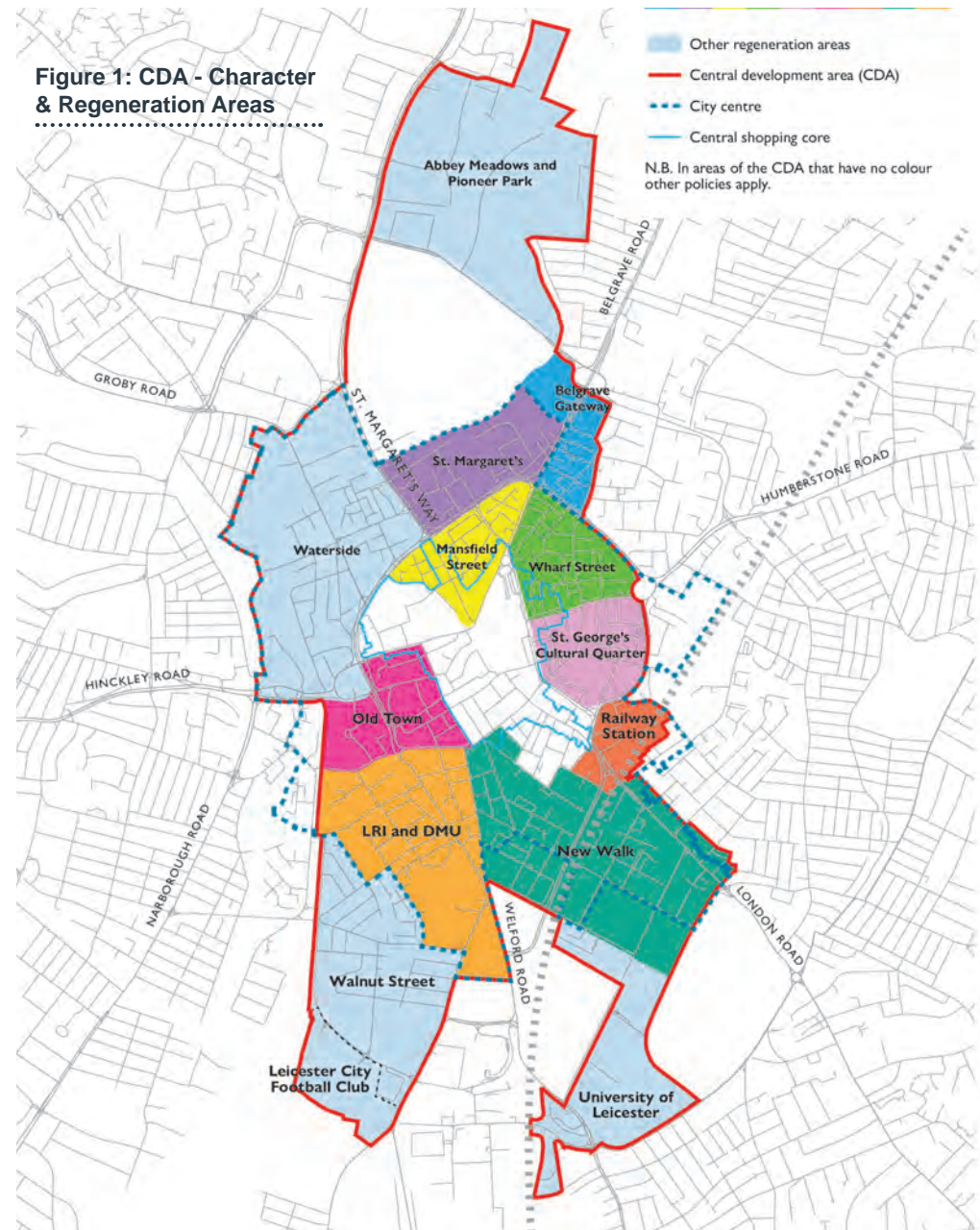


Figure 1: CDA - Character & Regeneration Areas

1.2. Townscape Appraisal & Character

What is Character?

Character is what defines a place. It's the main factors that help us distinguish one area from another based on its uniqueness and distinctiveness.

The report of CABE 'By Design' (2000) describes 'Character' as "A place with its own identity". Its objective as a key urban design principle in regeneration and the built environment is to "promote character in townscape and landscape by responding to and reinforcing locally distinctive patterns of development, landscape and culture" (By Design: Urban Design in the Planning System Towards Better Practice, CABE, 2000).

What is a Character Area?

"An area with a distinct character, identified so much so that it can be protected or enhanced by planning policy" (The Dictionary of Urbanism, 2005).

The nine character areas identified by LCC (see page 4) can be categorised by the following layers:

- History & Heritage
- Urban Grain & Built Form
- Scale, Height & Massing
- Socio-economic Characteristics
- Land Uses
- Open Spaces
- Access & Movement
- Frontages & Legibility
- Architecture, Materiality & Details

What is the Townscape?

The term 'townscape' is used to describe a town's overall character and structure. It can encompass the variety and quality of buildings in a given area, as well as the relationships between those buildings and the different types of space between and around them. It refers to the interaction between individuals and a place, as well as to the role it plays in shaping the environment for our daily lives. It is the consequence of how people connect with, understand, and experience the various components of our environment, both natural and cultural (Natural England, 2014).

As the vast majority of UK residents now live in urban areas, the nature and quality of the urban environment have a significant impact on people's life and well-being. Threats to local identity and distinctiveness are frequently a source of public concern.

Change is an inevitable aspect of a living, dynamic built environment. However, in order to achieve sustainable outcomes, change must be comprehended in context. Proper and detailed information on the nature of the environment that may be changed, as well as the implications or impacts that change will have on it, will be critical to achieving beneficial and generally supported change.

What is Townscape Appraisal?

A townscape appraisal forms the basis for managing change effectively. It can help to inform development strategies so that new development contributes positively to the townscape's character, supports local identity, and generates built-up areas that are appealing to live, work and visit. The appraisal, which is accompanied by maps, illustrations and pictures, explains how a place has changed over time in response to natural, social and economic forces and how this is represented in its streets, architecture and used materials.

The location, design, scale, massing and type of development that can be accommodated within an area can all be guided by the understanding of the area's intrinsic character and attributes. A townscape appraisal is a well-established technique for assessing the effects of change, informing decision-making and demonstrating the government's commitment to protecting and improving the character of our cities and towns.

Trends and drivers of change, including urban sprawl and regeneration, climate change, increasing use of electric vehicles and commuting patterns, can all be taken into account when appraising a townscape. These data can be utilised to create mechanisms that will guide positive decisions, activities and actions in the future to conserve, manage and promote distinctive townscape character. The results of a townscape character appraisal can be used to guide other processes such as judging and evaluating townscape quality or value, or deciding the appropriateness of specific development.

1.3. Overarching Policy

The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) July 2021 in paragraphs 126 – 128 under Section 12, Achieving Well-designed Places, states the importance of plans creating a clear design vision and expectations, at an early stage, tailored to the context and an area's defining characteristics. This will support the creation of high-quality buildings and spaces and give applicants some certainty on what is likely to be acceptable.

To support the NPPF objectives and further comply with Local Plan policy, additional evidence data and clarifications towards the appropriateness of future development will be outlined within appropriate Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) that will follow. Such an example is the Waterside SPD adopted in 2015, which successfully promotes and encourages regeneration, creating certainty and developer confidence.

The Townscape Analysis and Design Guidance evidence base document, one for each character area, intends to provide a framework to meet the NPPF objectives. Furthermore, a 'Quality Design Framework' for Leicester will be produced by the Council to provide extra clarifications and expand upon aspects of design policies within the Local Plan.

NPPF paragraph 130 states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- will function well and add to the quality of the overall area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development,
- are visually attractive because of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping,
- are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities),
- establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming, and distinctive places to live, work and visit,
- optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public spaces) and support local facilities and transport networks, and
- create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

12. Achieving Well-Designed Places

126. The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.

127. Plans should, at the most appropriate level, set out a clear design vision and expectations, so that applicants have as much certainty as possible about what is likely to be acceptable. Design policies should be developed with local communities so they reflect local aspirations, and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area's defining characteristics. Neighbourhood plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development, both through their own plans and by engaging in the production of design policy, guidance and codes by local planning authorities and developers.

128. To provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage, local planning authorities should prepare design guides or codes consistent with the principles set out in the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code, and which reflect local character and design preferences. Design Guides and codes provide a local framework for creating beautiful and distinctive places with a consistent and high level of design. Their geographic coverage, level of detail and degree of prescription should be tailored to the circumstances and scale of change in each place, and should allow a suitable degree of variety.

NPPF Extract (July 2021): Paragraphs 126 - 128

1.4. Townscape Character Management

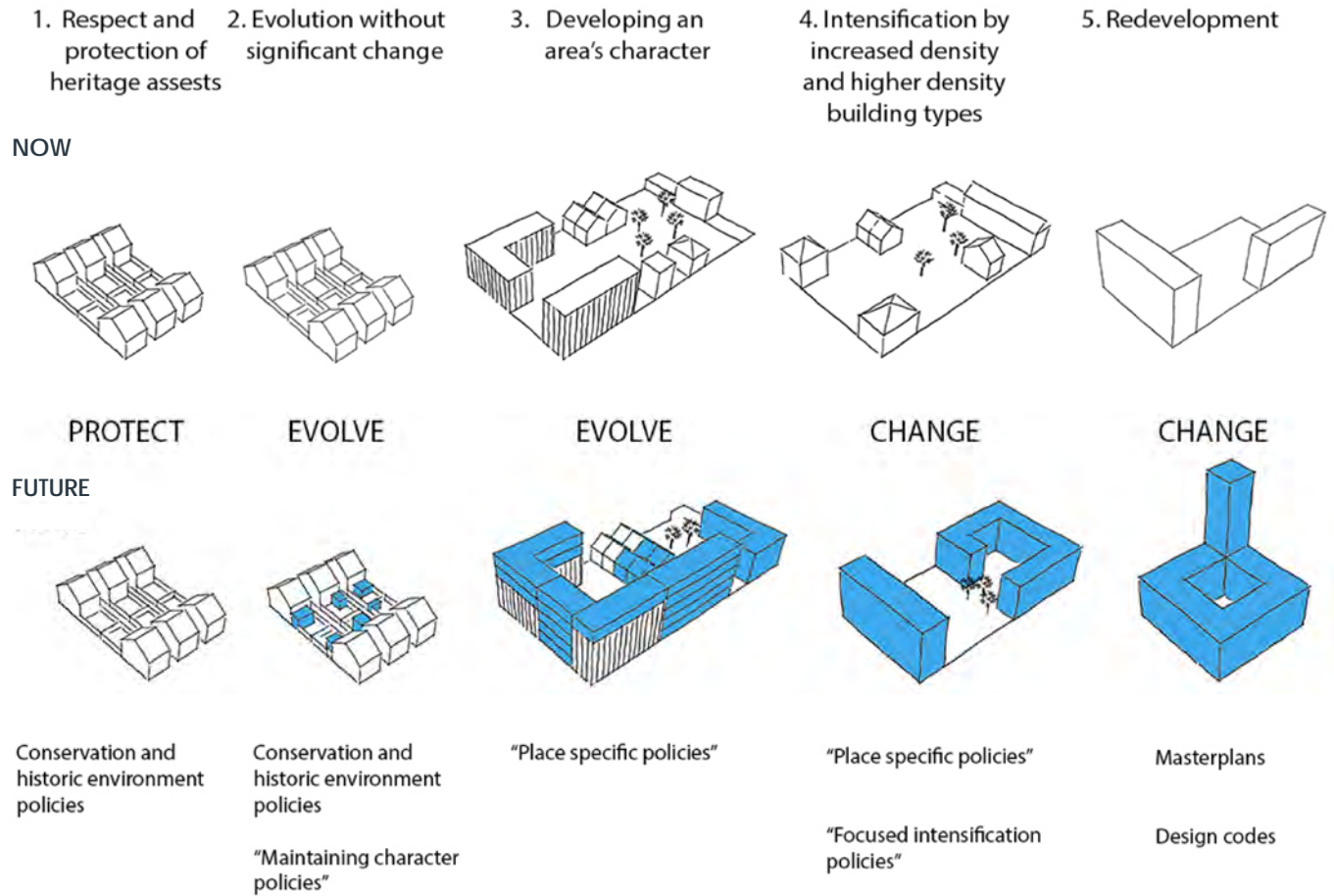
To inform and guide policy, it is helpful to understand the level and scope of change that the specified character areas are likely to undergo during the plan period and beyond. Some of the character areas will predominantly include heritage assets, with few development opportunities, requiring protection to conserve their very distinct character. Others may undergo significant residential growth and intensification and will require guidance to manage this growth cohesively and comprehensively, also considering the need for new infrastructure as residential neighbourhoods grow.

The Townscape Management Options used by the London Borough of Croydon in their Local Plan 2018 used a methodology to simplify growth, which is relevant to the Leicester context. They outline five options to categorise and understand this level of change and how it will be managed through planning policy. These options are:

1. Respect and protection of heritage assets
2. Evolution without significant change
3. Developing an area's character
4. Intensification by increased density and higher density building types
5. Redevelopment

The Townscape Analysis and Design Guidance for each character area will establish the relevant Townscape Management Option(s) attributed to that area to develop policies and clear guidance for development that is tailored to the circumstances and context of each character area.

Figure 2: Character Areas Townscape Management



© London Borough of Croydon, Croydon Local Plan 2018 (Feb 2018).

1.5. The Scope

Leicester is an important and spatially unique place, recognised for its heritage, vibrancy and multiculturalism. However, Leicester's city centre and the greater CDA is not without its challenges. The growth agenda, widespread regeneration and the value of the urban fabric are of particular importance. Furthermore, to support the review of its Local Plan, LCC is required to ensure that the Local Plan is based on sound, up-to-date and relevant evidence about the spatial, economic, social and environmental characteristics and prospects of the area (Paragraphs 31, 32, 33 NPPF). The Council is therefore revisiting and revising its existing evidence base to ensure it is robust and relevant for today and tomorrow.

A detailed 'Townscape Analysis and Design Guidance' evidence document has been prepared for each character area to identify, explain and illustrate the diverse identity, components and peculiarities that can be found within them. Through desktop and site analysis, various characteristics that inform local distinctiveness have been recognised.

Each evidence document focuses on one character area, providing the base of guiding future development, identifying opportunities for improvements, addressing urban design or spatial weaknesses and highlighting development opportunities and even intensification potentials. It responds to the requirements of the NPPF, building on the success of the Waterside SPD, while supporting policies and development guidance that is tailored to the circumstances and context of each character area.

Main objectives:

- Thorough understanding of the character, components and identity of each character area, providing the analytical basis for further decision-making.
- Identify potential development constraints, together with aspects that could present future development opportunities.
- Identify growth potential within each character area, developing a coherent vision and objectives for the area's development.

Delivering change may require amendments to current planning policy or difficult decisions to be made regarding the current urban grain and layout and land use development. It is not the purpose of each document to make detailed recommendations about the future of these areas but rather to identify areas where change could be positive for local neighbourhoods and where the existing character makes a particular (negative or positive) contribution to its context. Each document forms the evidence base to inform future planning policies and any relevant supporting guidance. It provides a strategic assessment and analysis of the character, distinctiveness and qualities found within the CDA.

It is expected that in time this guidance will be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance, which will also focus on directing and prioritising pro-active interventions which may include public realm, transport, heritage, streetscapes etc. and objectives and townscape guidance specific to each character area.

1.6. The Structure

The document is structured as follows:

Chapter 1 – Introduction

Defines the development context, providing vital definitions for the comprehensive understanding and further usage of the present document. Furthermore, chapter 1 defines the document's scope and structure, while presenting the townscape character management framework through which every character area is evaluated and further developed.

Chapter 2 – Townscape Analysis

Sets out a detailed analysis of the elements that form the current character of the studied area, focussing on its components, unique characteristics, defining attributes and existing connections and relations between the built environment and the open spaces that will influence, impact and later define the area's development potential.

Chapter 3 – Townscape Diagnosis

Having critically evaluated all analytical outcomes, chapter 3 presents the main constraints and development opportunities that can be found within each character area.

Chapter 4 – Guiding the Future

Establishes a high-level vision for the area's future development, setting the main objectives and parameters through which development will take place.



2

Townscape Analysis

2. Townscape Analysis

2.1. Location & Context

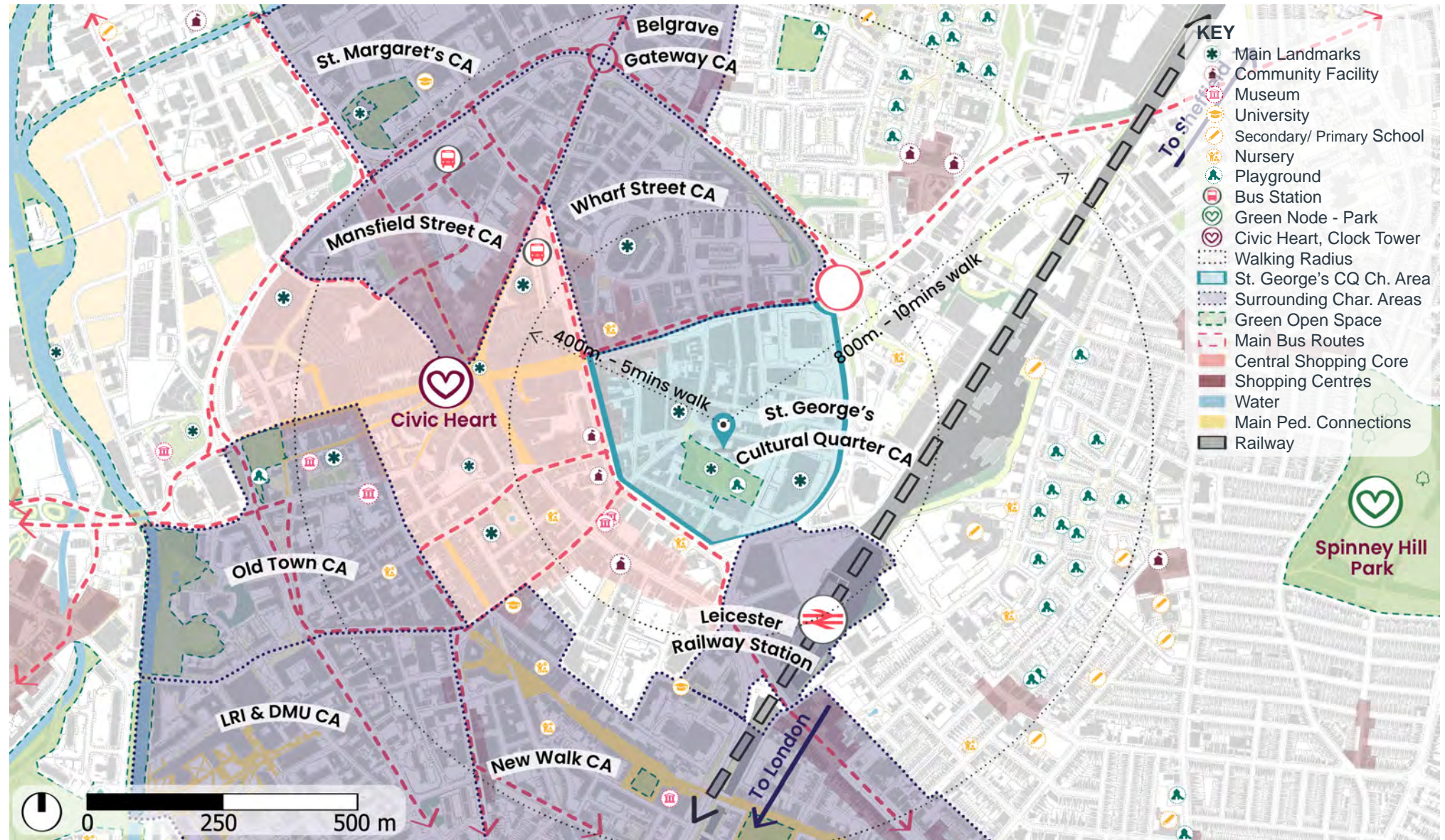


Figure 3: St George's Cultural Quarter Character Area within the Greater Context
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The St. George's Cultural Quarter character area is located within the CDA, being part of Leicester's city centre (located at its east edge). Its prime location connects Leicester's city centre with the surrounding residential neighbourhoods to the east. Surrounded by Wharf Street and the Railway Station character areas, it is an area of heritage, creativity and culture.

The Clock Tower, Leicester's civic heart, can be reached within a 5 minutes walk, together with the Haymarket bus station and the Railway Station. St. Margaret's bus station is reachable within less than a 10 minutes walk and Abbey and Victoria parks within less than a 15 minutes walk.

St. George's Cultural Quarter character area is bordered by St. George's Way (east), Humberstone Road (north) and Charles Street (south-west). Currently Rutland Street permeates the area from north to south, whereas Orton square and St. George's Church are key landmarks within the area.

Leicester City Council identified St. George's area as the location for the city's cultural quarter. Launched in 2000 and followed by the development of the LCB Depot and the Curve theatre, were completed in 2008. Much has been achieved in the development of St. George's Cultural Quarter in recent years, making the character area home to a number of cultural and creative businesses as well as many bars, cafés, restaurants and residential accommodation.

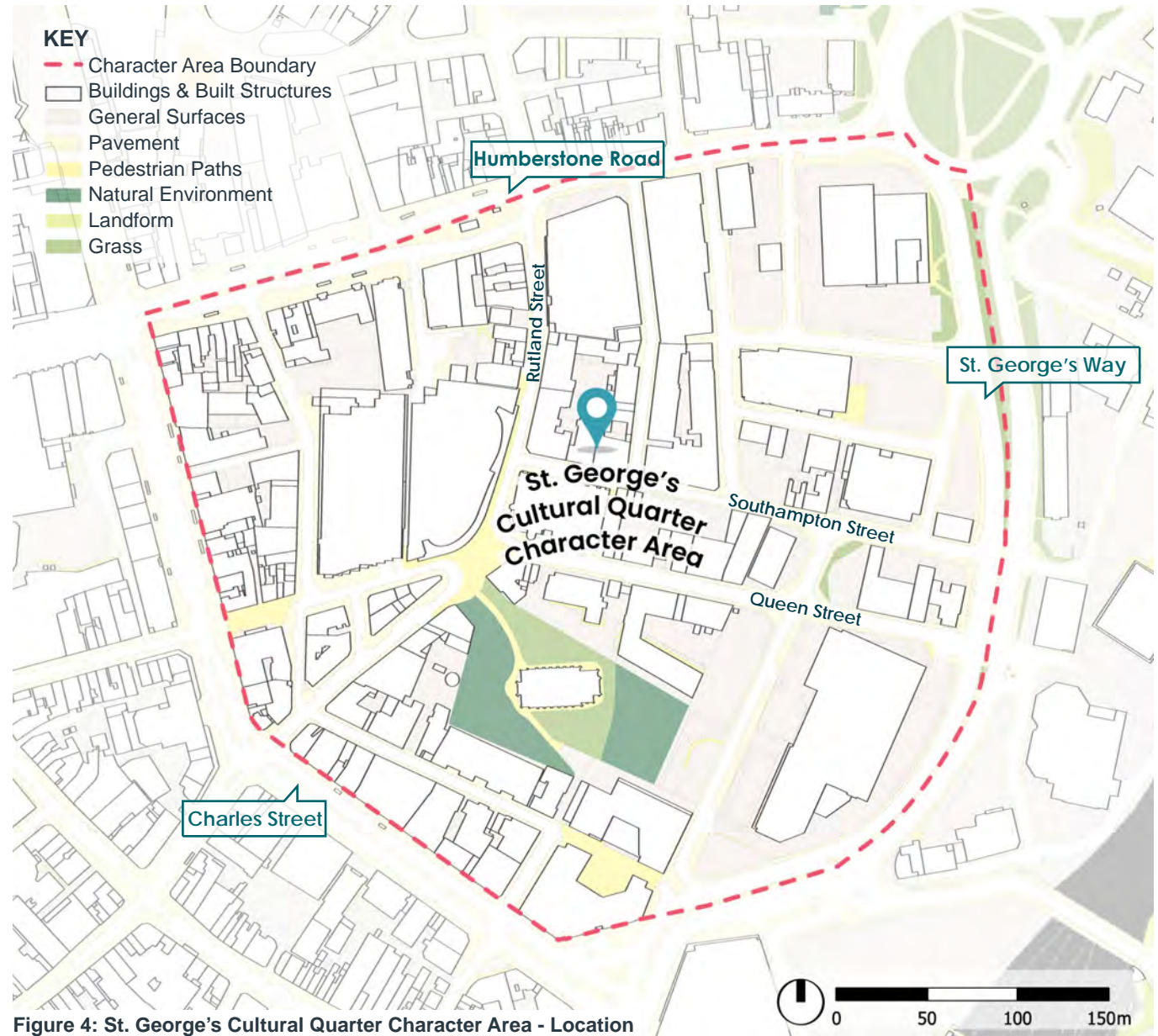


Figure 4: St. George's Cultural Quarter Character Area - Location

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2.2. History & Evolution of St. George's Cultural Quarter

The St. Georges character area is enclosed by Humberstone Gate to the north, Charles Street to the south-west and the ring road to the east. Humberstone Gate is one of the earliest streets in Leicester and there is evidence of Charles Street dating back to 1802.



Historic maps are used to illustrate the figure ground from the present day. Heritage assets are highlighted showing their relationship to the historic plans and emphasising their importance in this character area at particular times in the past.

The location of the St George's Cultural Quarter character area has been marked for further clarity.



1828

Two of the defining features of the character area today are St. Georges Church, completed in 1827 and the first church built in Leicester since the Reformation, and Rutland Street; both can be seen in the Ellis & Ellis map 1828.

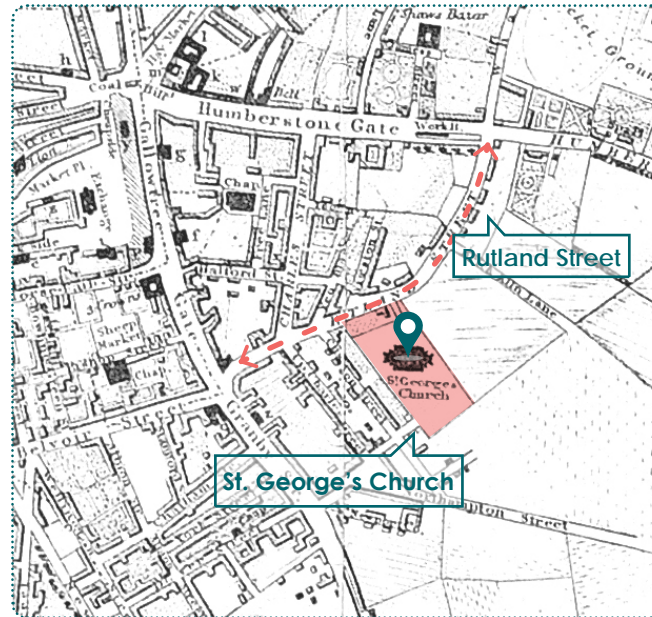


Figure 5: 1828

1851

The character area is mostly recognisable as we know it today with regard to street layout, with the exception of the ring road constructed in the 60s and 70s.

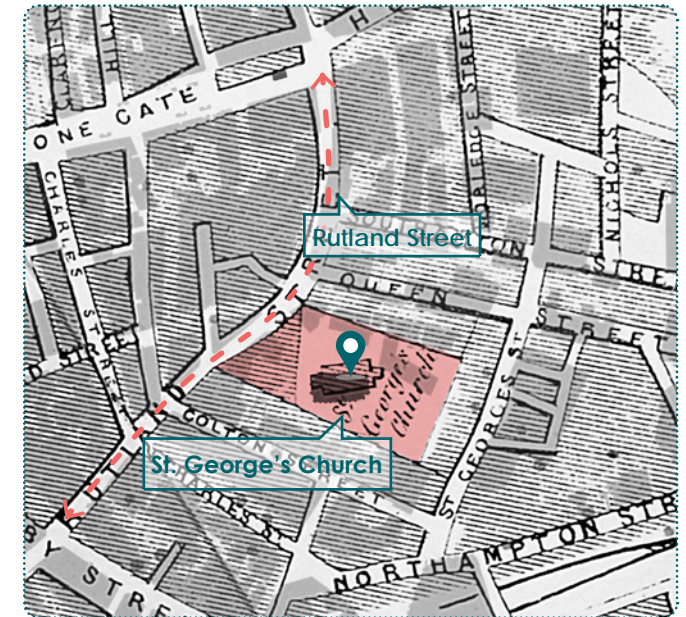


Figure 6: 1851

1880s

Many of the blocks are built out, with a mix of uses in the area, primarily houses, small cottages and 'courts,' but with many industrial and commercial buildings. A number of existing factory buildings are identifiable at 29 Rutland Street and the two buildings flanking the southern end of Wimbledon Street.

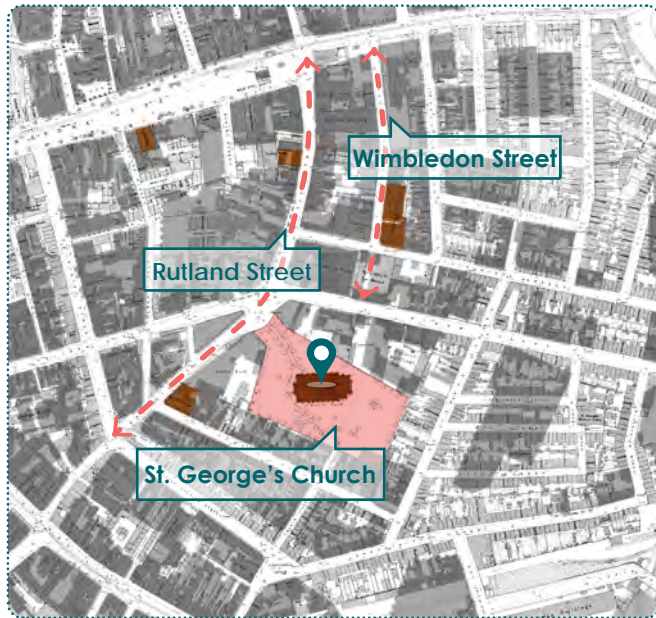


Figure 7: 1886-87

1914-16

Larger commercial and industrial uses have replaced smaller factories and houses. The Faire Brothers' factory, built 1898, can be seen at the corner of Rutland and Southampton Street.

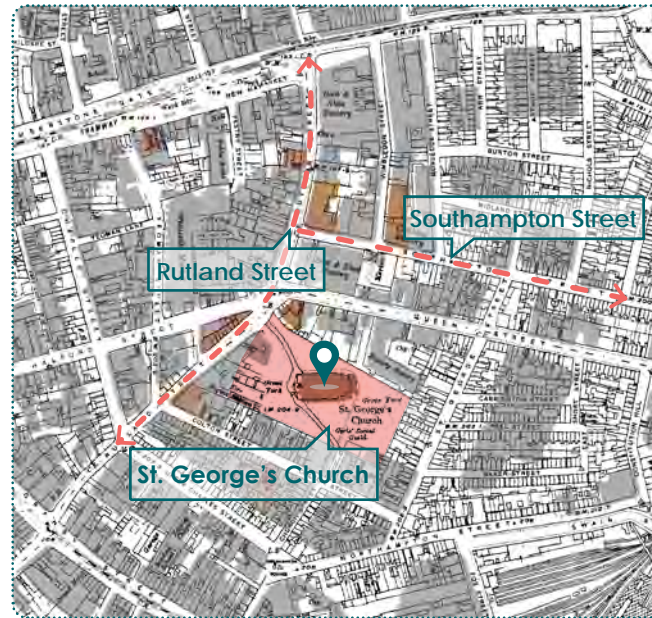


Figure 8: 1914-16

1930s - 70s

Between 1932 and 1976 around 16,000 slum houses were cleared across the city. This included parts of the St. Georges character area.

In the 1930s Charles Street was widened, which required the demolition of housing on the south side of Colton Street. The Odeon cinema was built in 1938 to replace the 19th century boot, shoe and hosiery works to the corner of Queen Street.

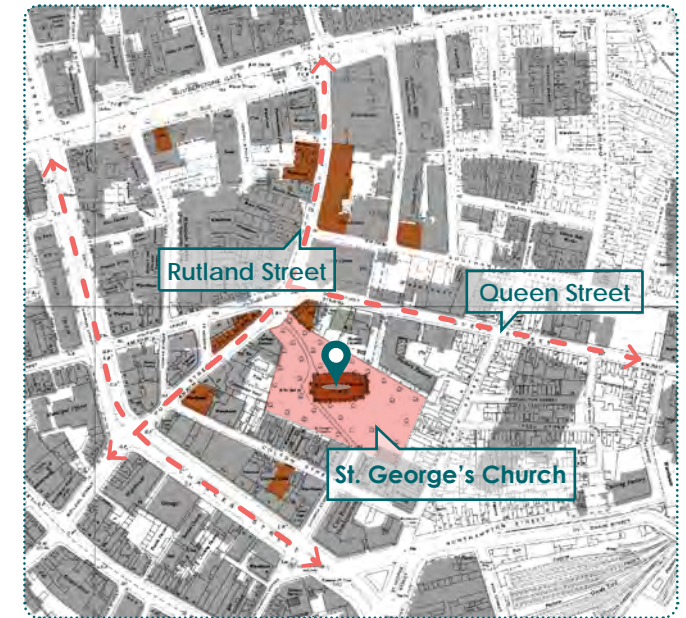


Figure 9: 1952



Figure 10: Slum Clearance Plan from LCC Planning Office Archives (June 1974). By 1974 most of the slum clearance illustrated in the plan had already taken place, or if not, had been cancelled and improvements undertaken instead.

1987/88

St. Georges Way, part of the new central ring road, was completed around 1988. This severed the character area along the eastern side running through a number of car parks and factory buildings that existed at the time, disconnecting the area from the railway station.

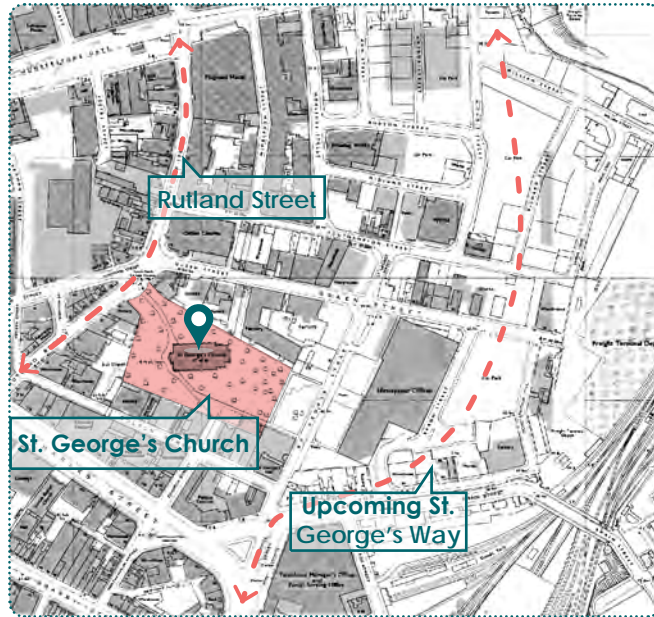


Figure 11: 1980s

1990

This map closely resembles the St. Georges character area as it exists today with the new central ring road, although some of the more recent developments are omitted, most notably the Curve Theatre.

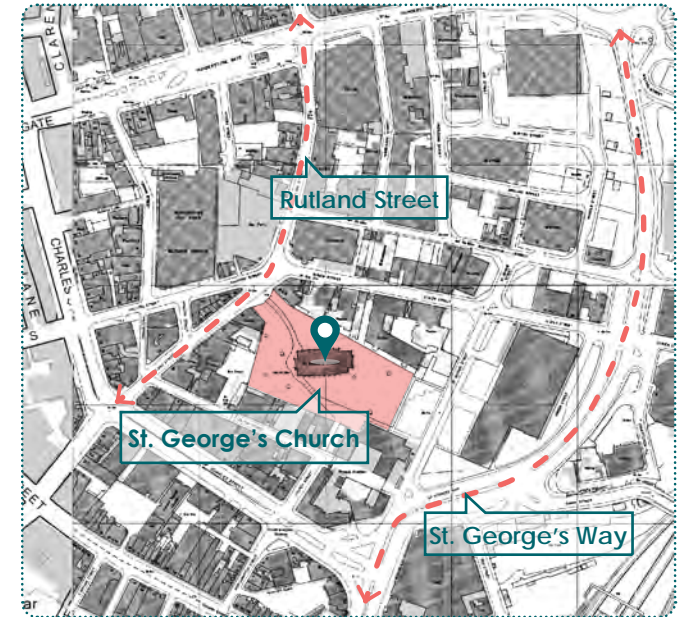


Figure 12: 1990

2.3. Heritage & Townscape Assets

After reviewing the history and evolution of the St. George's Cultural Quarter character area, this sub-chapter presents the main heritage and townscape assets of the area (figure 13). However, it should be noted that it does not seek to reproduce the Conservation Area Appraisal (CCA), relevant to this area, although the CCA has informed the present content. For further details the Conservation Area Appraisal and the Conservation Area Management Plans should be referred to and considered.

The significant heritage value of St. George's character area is reflected by the numerous nationally designated and locally listed heritage assets in the area. Much of the character area, particularly to the west, falls within the St. George's Conservation Area, designated in 1989. Additional buildings which make a positive contribution are identified. They are buildings which are not listed, locally listed or within Conservation Areas, however, this classification reflects their importance as part of the townscape of the character area. As such there is a general presumption against the demolition of these buildings.

There is a concentration of distinct buildings of architectural and heritage value creating a cohesive heritage setting (figure 13). The remaining former factory buildings, include Alexandra House (5), completed in 1898 as a bootlace warehouse for the Faire Brothers, 29 Rutland Street built as a shoe warehouse for Tyler Brothers in 1875 and the less ornate 96 Rutland Street and the former St. George's Mills. The former warehouse for Pfister and Vogel, an American based leather company at 78-80 Rutland Street (1) is very unusual and eclectic in style with clear American influences. Several of these buildings stand on key corner sites and show the importance of the boot and shoe industry in Leicester in the late nineteenth century.

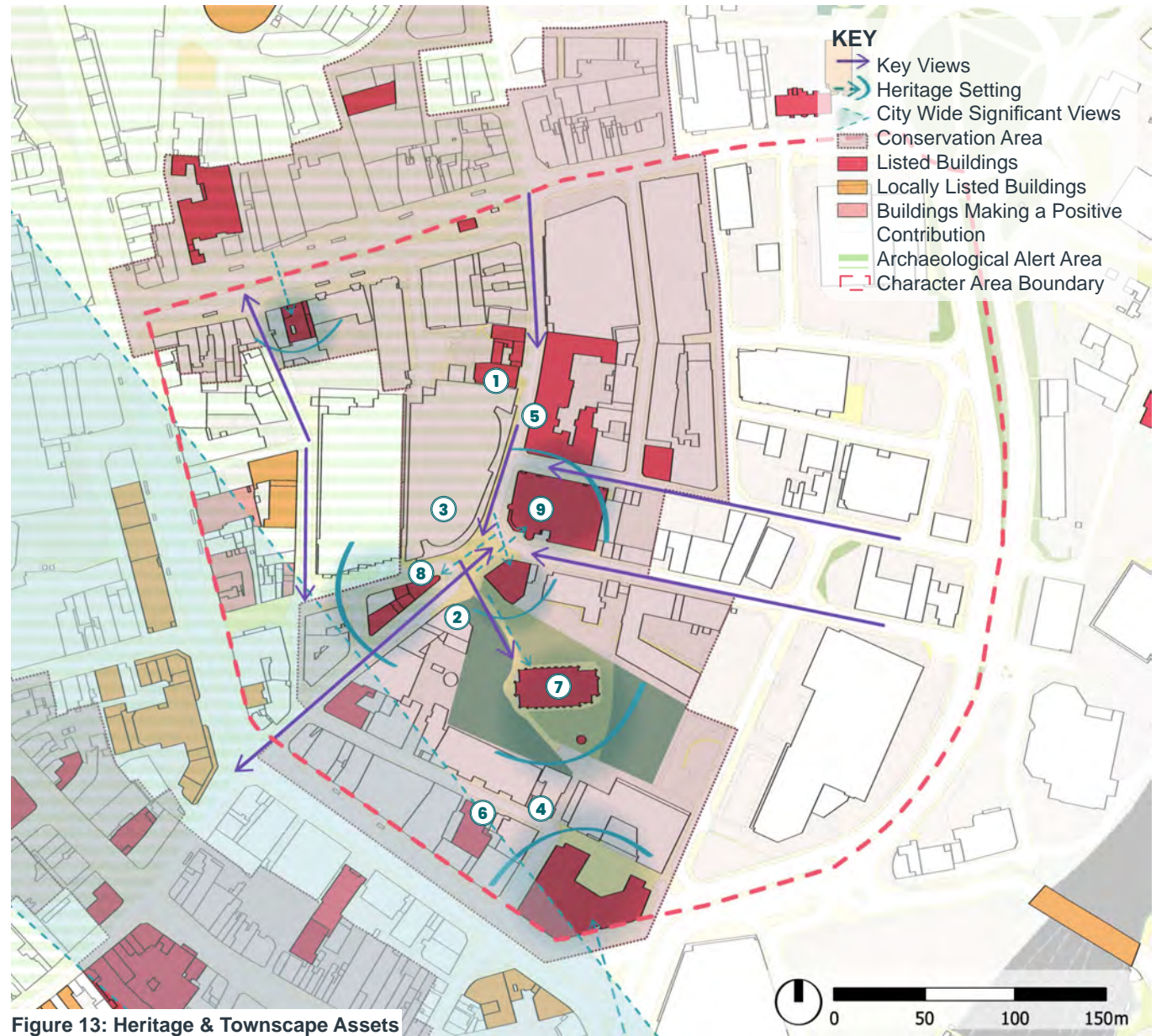


Figure 13: Heritage & Townscape Assets

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Other buildings of note include the Secular Hall on Humberstone Gate, opened in 1881, providing at the time, a purpose-built meeting place at the heart of the city's commercial district for Leicester's nineteenth century Freethinkers. An ornate building with five terracotta busts representing Socrates, Voltaire, Thomas Paine, Robert Owen and Jesus. The Guild of the Disabled Building on Colton Street (6) has distinctive Arts and Crafts elements and the Exchange Buildings at 34-50 Rutland Street (8) with an almost intact set of original shopfronts and distinctive 'flat iron' end (figure 13). The Odeon Cinema (9) was built in 1938, designed by Robert Bullivant in a 1930's Moderne style, replacing a boot, shoe and hosiery works.

The historic cityscape enhances the character and identity of the area. Recent public realm improvements have elevated the strength of many heritage assets as 'markers' and strong frontages, aiding in the legibility of the area. There is now a clear centre to the character area with a number

* Please see Heritage & Townscape Assets Plan (figure 13) for the location of the following key building frontages.



1

78-80 Rutland Street



2

35 Rutland Street



3

The Curve Theatre



4

The Cherub Building



5

Alexandra House



6

Leicester Guild for the Disabled



7

St George's Church



8

Exchange Buildings



9

Former Odeon Cinema

of valuable townscape assets forming a cluster around Orton Square. Maintaining the integrity of this space and grouping is particularly important and the key views reflect this areas importance.

Much of the historic industrial uses have since been lost, although many of the remaining former industrial buildings have recently been converted to residential apartments and creative industries. Today the character area is the city's cultural quarter with a cluster of cultural uses and public art programmes giving the area a unique identity. New buildings have reinforced this identity.

Completed in 2008, the Curve Theatre designed by Rafael Vinoly is a bold design on a difficult site. Ash Sakula remodelled the former Leicester City Bus Depot on Rutland Street to create the LCB Depot, which at the time was a centre for Leicester's creative businesses. The Leicester Print Workshop reopened in 2015 in a 1970's factory unit redesigned by Takero Shimazaki architects.

From a city wide perspective, the view from London Road of Bradgate Park which is a view and vista of city wide significance has a viewing cone that effects the south west of the area.

There is a clear distinction between the east and west parts of the character area with regard to heritage contribution. Whilst the west side has greater heritage and townscape value, carefully managing development in the east side is vital to protecting and enhancing the setting of the conservation area and nearby heritage and townscape assets. This can be achieved by extending the character of the west side to future development in the east.

Archaeological Alert Area

Leicester has a clearly defined historic core. The historic core formed part of the town's defences, first established in the Roman era and re-adopted in the medieval period. The historic core of the city centre is defined as an archaeological alert area and indicates, to developers, where development is most likely to have an impact upon archaeological remains.



Figure 15: Charles Street, St George's Church & The City, Leicester, 1937 (Britain From Above)



Figure 14: One Up One Down Houses Formerly Located Next to St. George's Churchyard, Thought to Date From the 1820s (Leicester a Pictorial History, Malcolm Elliott).



Figure 16: Faire Brothers & Co. Bootlace Warehouse on the Corner of Rutland Street & Southampton Street 1901 (Historic England Image Archive).

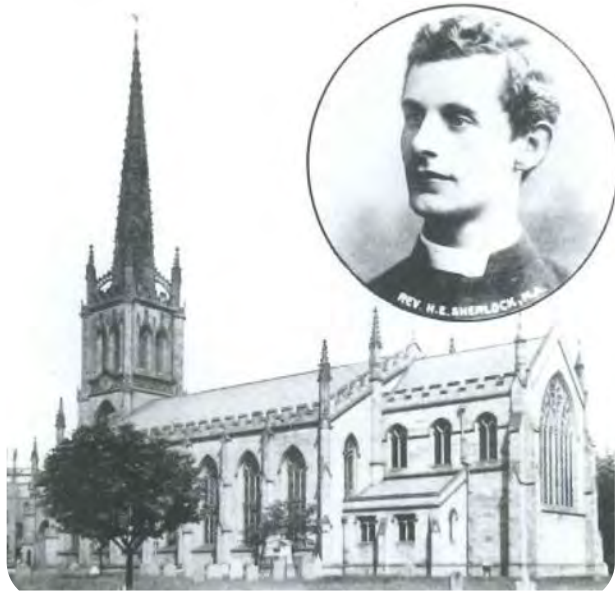


Figure 17: St. Georges Church ND (Leicester a Pictorial History, Malcolm Elliott, 1999)



Figure 18: Rutland Street, 1965 (University of Leicester Special Collection).



Figure 19: Halford Street in 1971, Showing the Former Odeon Cinema (Story of Leicester)

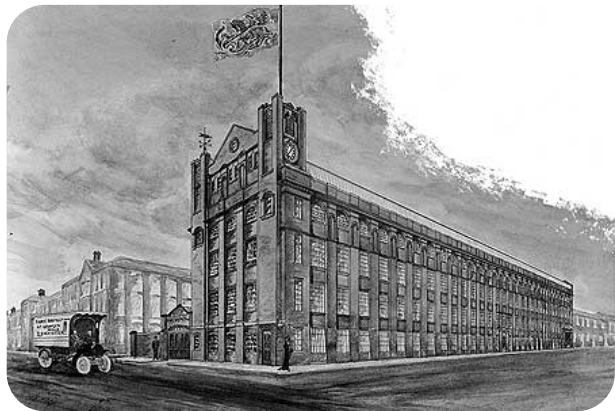


Figure 20: St. Georges Mill, Wimbledon Street, 1909 (Historic England Image Archive).

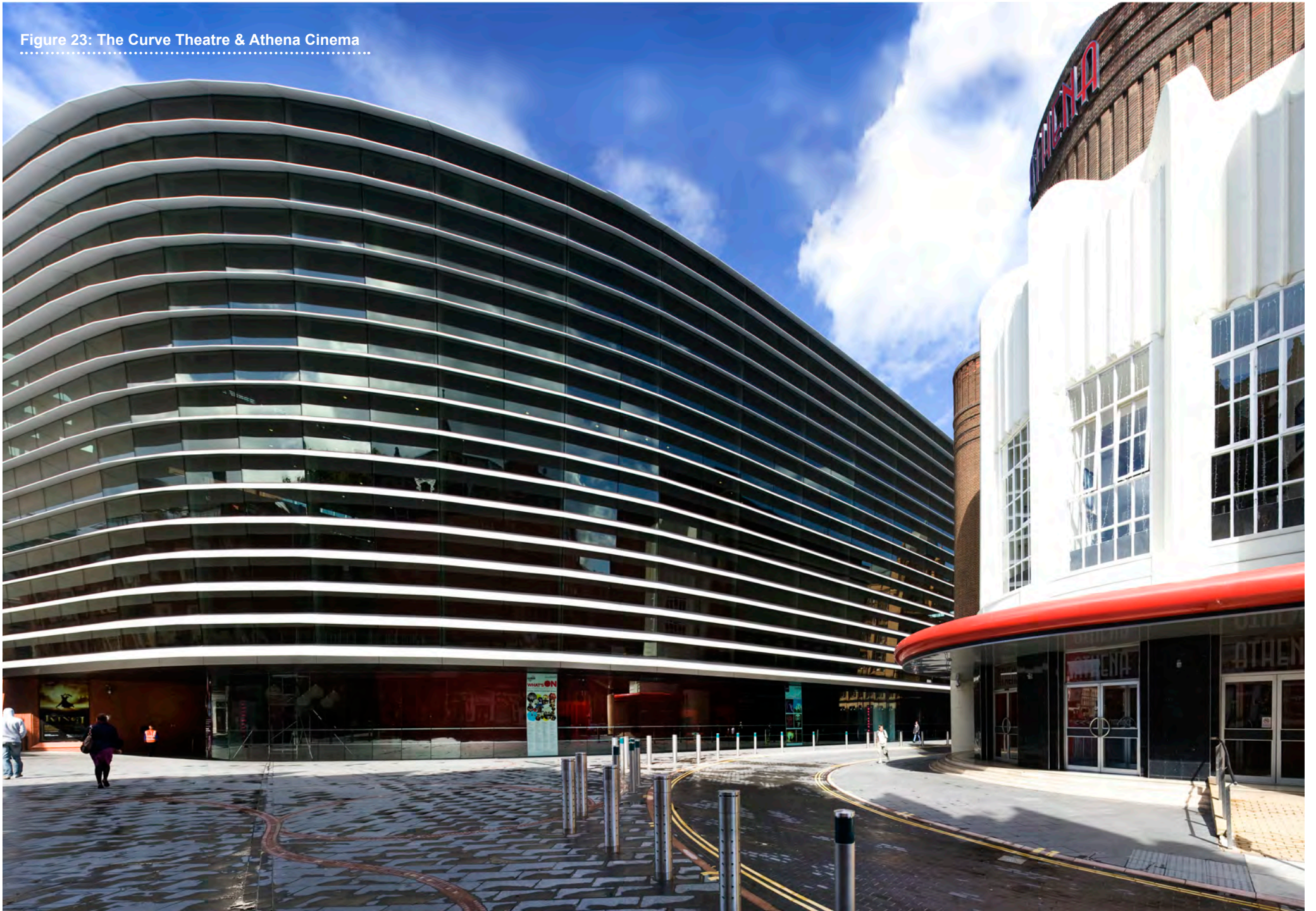


Figure 21: Leicester City Transport Operating Centre 1969. (Leicester Transport Heritage Trust, Rob Haywood and Keith Wood)



Figure 22: Exchange Buildings (LCC)

Figure 23: The Curve Theatre & Athena Cinema



2.4. Urban Grain & Enclosure

Urban grain is usually defined as the pattern of streets and plots/ blocks of an urban area. When the pattern is composed of several small blocks in close proximity it is usually described as fine urban grain, a common characteristic of historic urban centres or areas that have not been car dominated.

Clarity of layout is crucial and is usually achieved through careful arrangement of buildings and spaces, taking priority over roads and car parking. Perimeter blocks are commonly used to achieve successful development through connected streets and well-defined frontages. Fragmented urban grain identifies locations where perimeter blocks have been lost over time to the detriment of the townscape.

To the west well-defined perimeter blocks and a finer urban grain is evident. The street pattern is permeable and frontages generally are well-defined. Buildings with large footprints, such as the Curve theatre, and former factories are also well-integrated into the historic grain of the area. Although some perimeter blocks are disproportionately large, there are pedestrian routes through St. George's churchyard, this is not a detriment to the townscape or connectivity of the area.

To the east, whilst the street and block pattern suggest a built form similar to the west, the urban grain is much more fragmented. Heritage assets of the past have been lost and new development does not form perimeter plots around the street layout. There are pockets of fine urban grain but primarily individual buildings are located in large plots surrounded by car parking and are set back from the street.

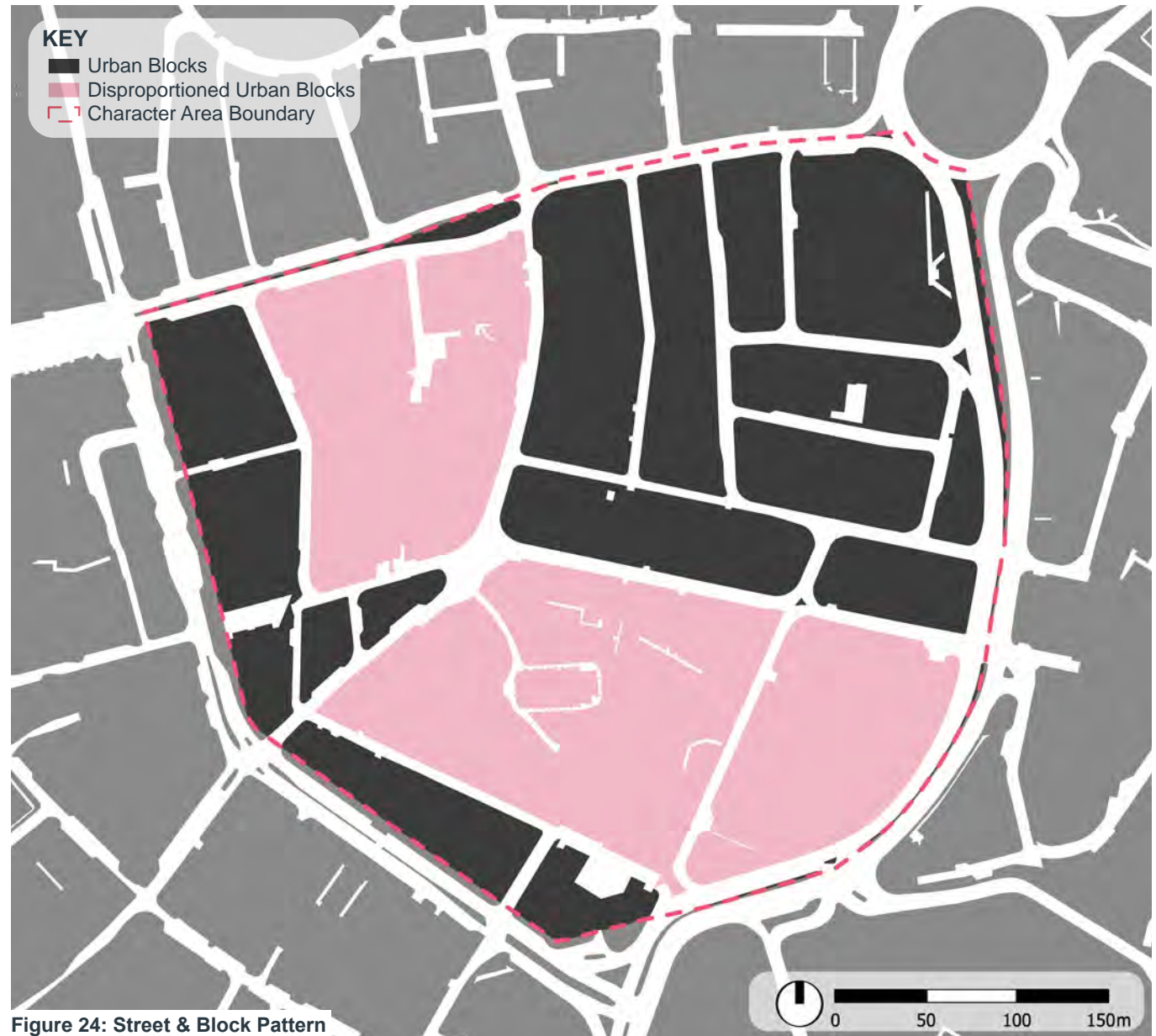


Figure 24: Street & Block Pattern

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Successful places incorporate a good sense of enclosure and definition, enabling places to be experienced as structured. They usually have a strong building line in combination with well-defined, well-connected and well-designed perimeter blocks, boundaries, streets and public spaces. Strong frontages, local markers and gateways are further elements of the townscape, contributing to the familiarity of a place, its story, character and distinctiveness, which forge a sense of belonging and pride.

The sense of enclosure is, again, clear to the west of the area where most of the streets and public spaces are well defined and well enclosed. Whilst they vary in character and height to width ratio they are consistently well defined with strong building lines. Additionally, some streets have a very clear and consistent eaves lines and an ambient height created by the larger former factories.

To the east, enclosure is generally poor, building lines vary and many buildings are set back from the street. Parking and large open areas in front of buildings contribute little to the townscape.

Southampton Street and Queen Street are two streets that connect the very different characters of the east and west of the area. The good enclosure to the west of these streets should be continued eastwards.

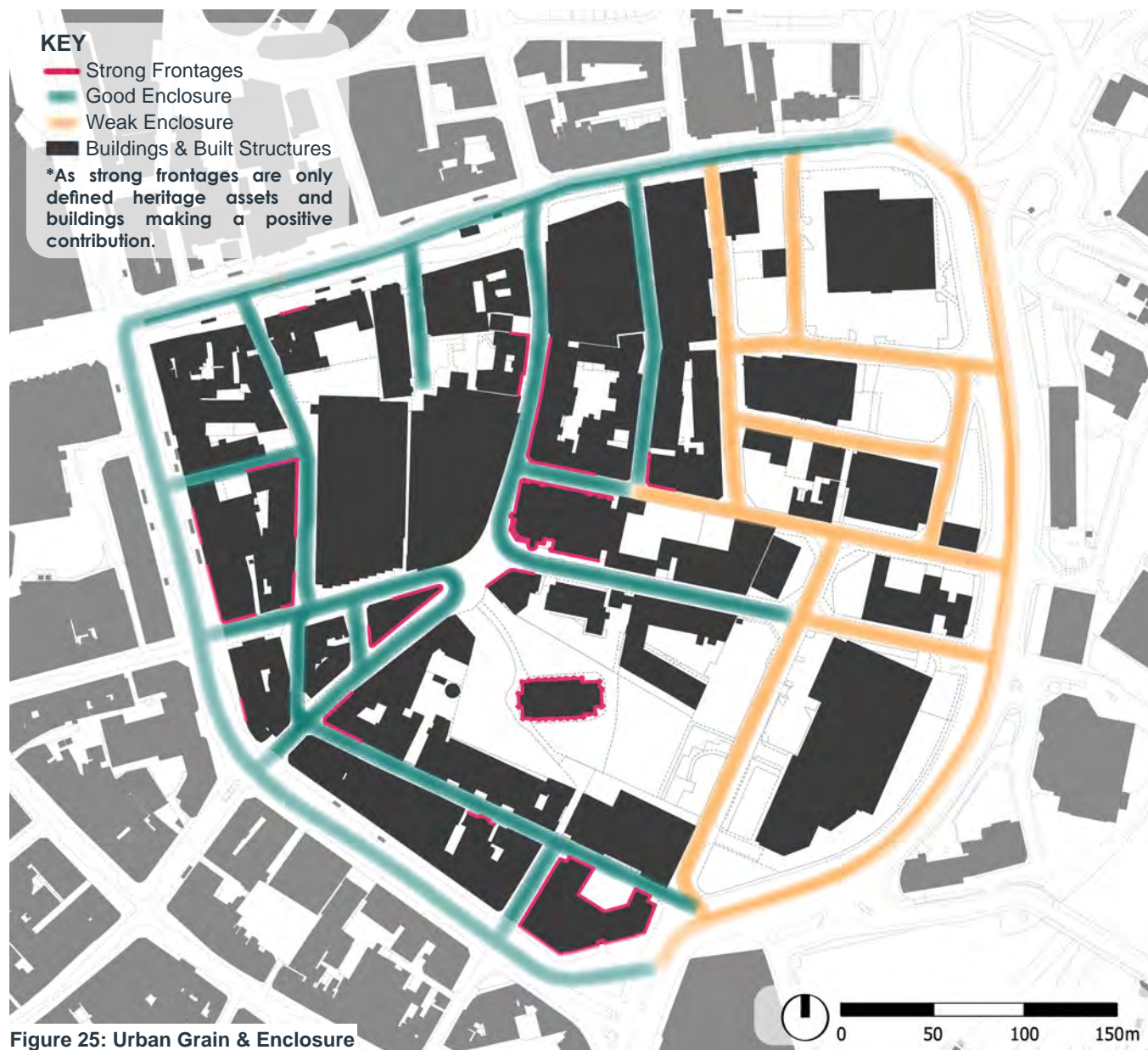


Figure 25: Urban Grain & Enclosure

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2.5. Height & Massing

Context

Five main height categories have been defined, in accordance with the 'Tall Development in Leicester' evidence base document, where any building/ built structure above 24 metres is considered as 'tall' and any above 45 metres as 'super tall'. Buildings/ built structures between 21 and 24 metres, although not perceived as tall, fall within a transition zone between what is and is not tall. Such buildings will need to be considered with care. Furthermore, another category that has been identified is the 'tall in context' buildings/ built structures, including buildings/ built structures of any height that are relatively taller than those within their surroundings. To note 3m is broadly equivalent to one residential storey.

The existing character area building heights are quite consistent, particularly within the area covered by the conservation area. Most buildings fall between 9 - 21m in height, with the lowest buildings along Humberstone Gate and in the east of the character area near the central ring road. Much of the height is determined by the previous industrial use of the area with many former factories and warehouses being around 18 - 21m in height. There are a number of townscape and heritage assets around Orton square which create a well-defined and enclosed space, all of a similar height. The Curve Theatre is the most recent building within that cluster and is 21 - 24m but it is well integrated within the townscape and is prominent but not out of character.

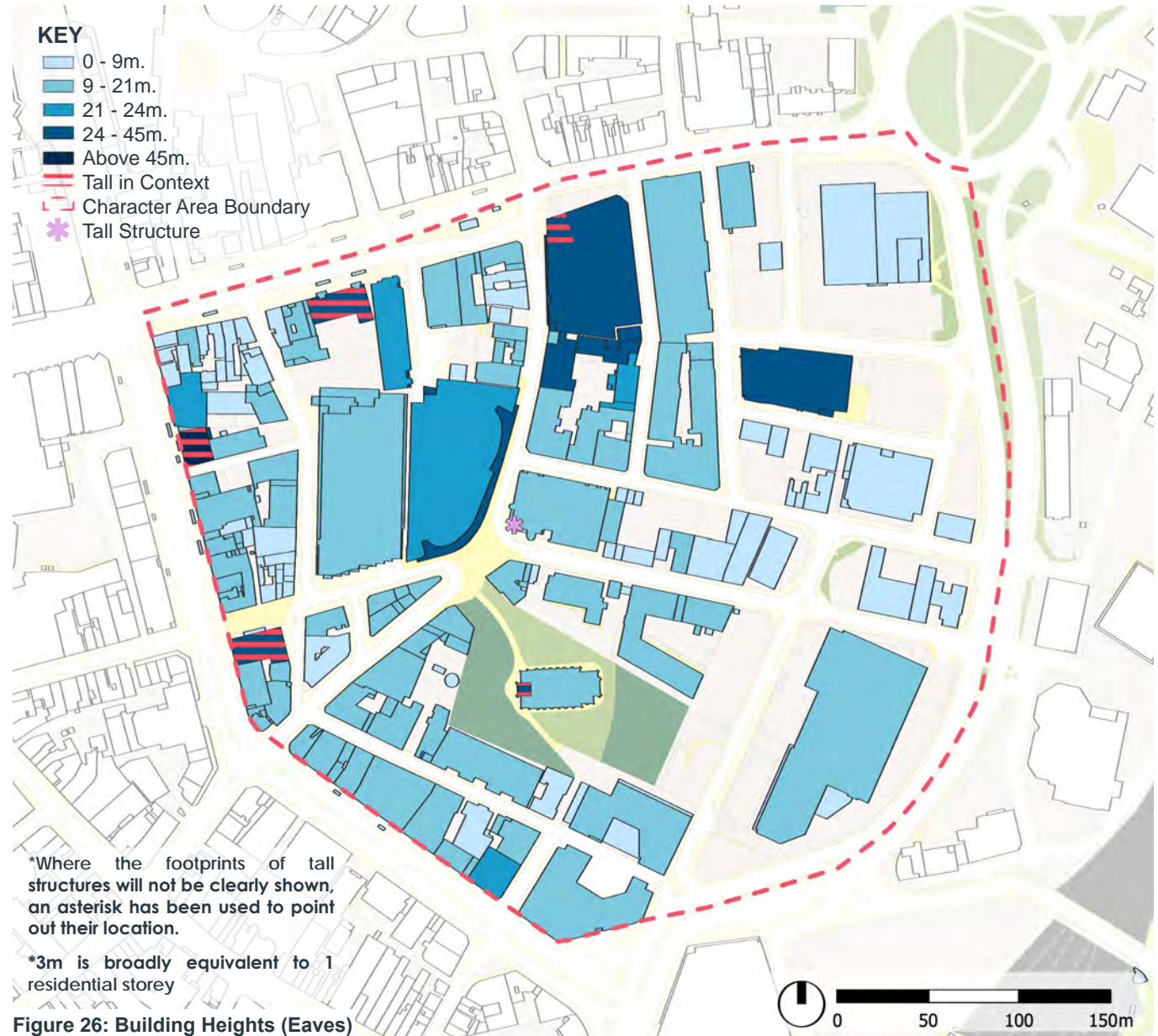


Figure 26: Building Heights (Eaves)

There are two tall buildings or structures in the area above 45m; Midland House on Charles Street and the tower to the International Hotel on Humberstone Road. Additionally, there are buildings between 24- 45m, some are considered tall in context whilst others even at this height they are well integrated and are not prominent tall structures given their design and location and the higher ambient height immediately adjacent.

Planning History

The planning activity for new residential development in the area has mostly focussed on locations outside the Conservation Area where development sites are available.

Proposals for development on Queen Street and Yeoman Street have been approved at 15m and 18m respectively. Both are yet to be constructed. Other smaller approvals within the Conservation Area, in Rutland Street have been approved at 12m.

The former International Hotel on Humberstone Gate has been subject to many applications including a refusal in 2016 for a building of maximum height 65m, and 35m, 32m, 29m elements. It was refused on unit size, layout and scale. The most recent approved application is for the conversion of the existing building to student accommodation.

In 2015, an application for residential, in Morledge Street, was approved at a maximum building height of 24m. There are elements of this approval that reflect former planning objectives and should not be viewed as a model for future development of the character area.

These diagrams show the storey heights of buildings on Queen Street and Southampton Street with the green buildings showing buildings within the conservation area and listed buildings identified with a red outline. The western ends

of each street show an ambient height of around 15m (broadly equivalent to 5 residential storeys) determined by the heritage assets. These streets are important as they connect the west and east of the area.

KEY

- Listed Buildings In Conservation Areas
- Buildings In Conservation Area
- Buildings Outside Conservation Area
- Approved Schemes (Not Built)

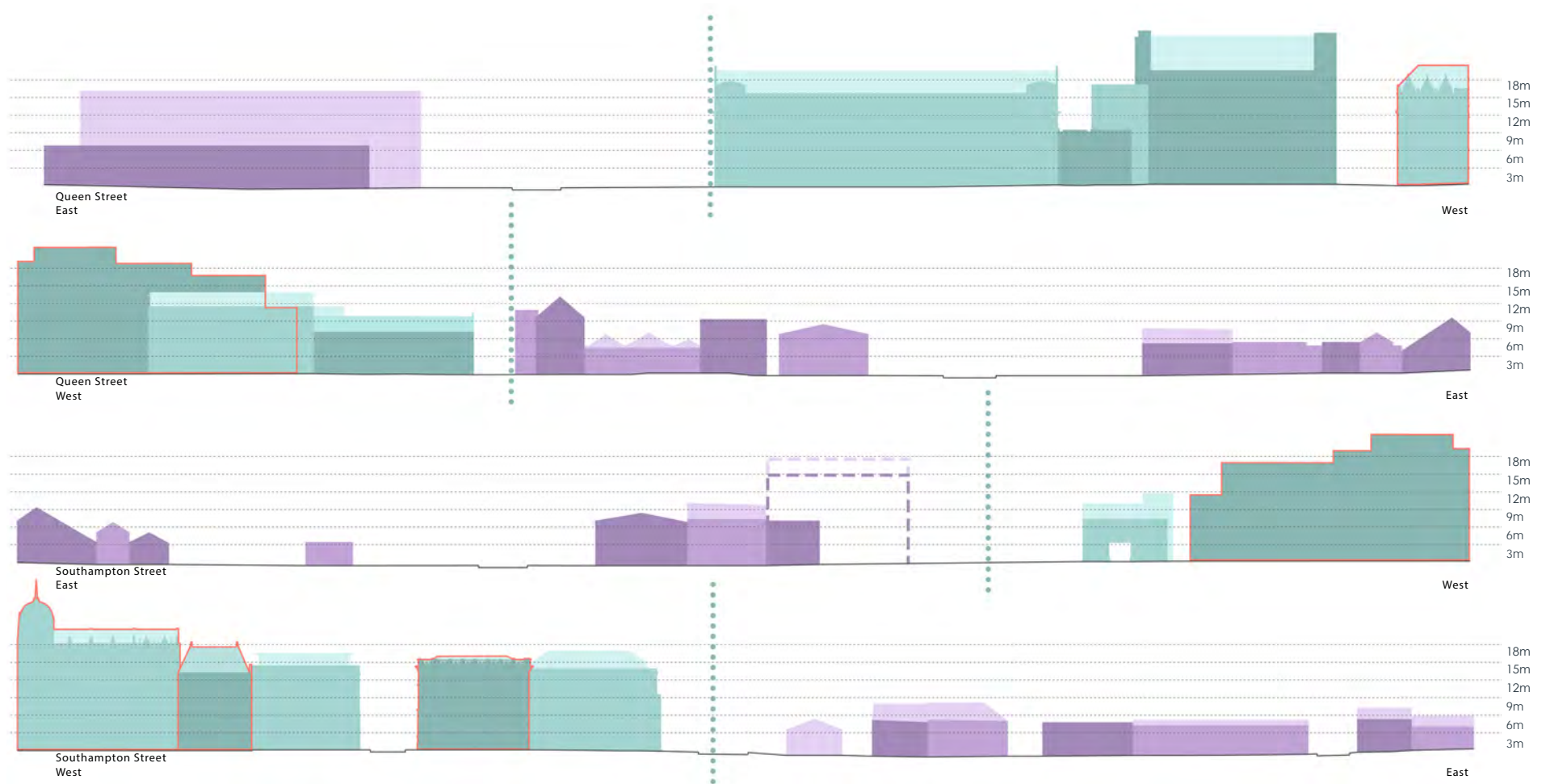


Figure 27: Southampton Street & Queen Street Elevations

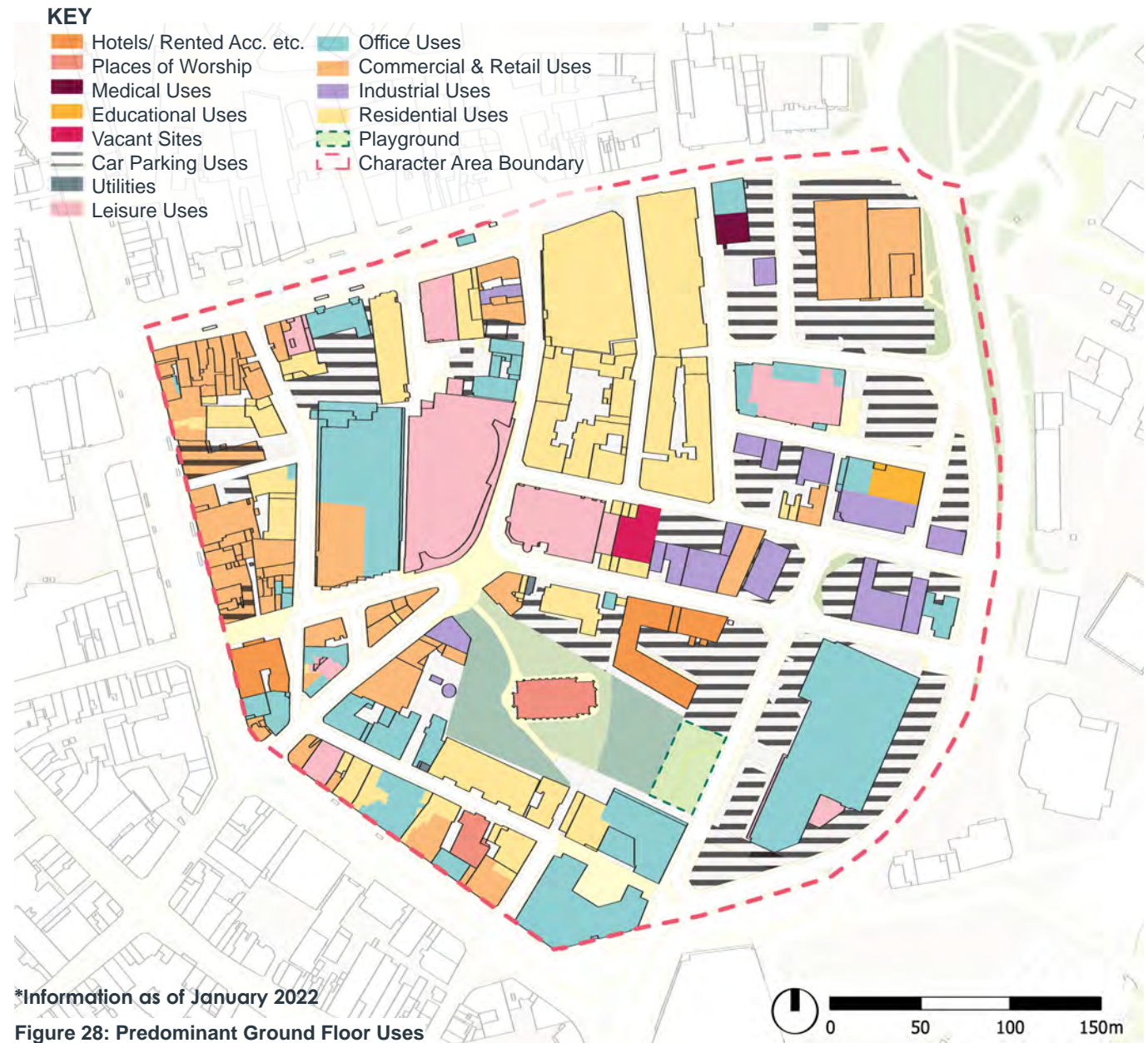
Shades of colour are illustrative differentiating between adjacent plots and buildings.

2.6. Land Uses

There is a mix of uses within the St. George's Cultural Quarter character area, although there are three dominant uses. Retail is the predominant ground floor use to the west of the area, with the addition of residential and leisure uses throughout. There is also a good coverage of office and industrial uses, the former being most concentrated to the west and south of the area and the latter to the eastern side towards St. George's Way. The predominant above ground use is domestic/residential, showing that St. Georges is a growing residential community.

Having been identified as the city's cultural quarter, a significant and important use in the area is the arts and cultural workspaces and venues which are located here. There are a considerable number of arts venues including a theatre, music venue, cinema, the creative enterprise start-up incubator and artist workshops and galleries. These form an important part of the identity of the area. An extension to the Phoenix cinema is currently under construction.

Diversifying the mix of uses and creating high quality offices in the east of St. George's, given its proximity to the railway station, is currently in development by the Council. There are also opportunities to support a growing residential community with further residential uses.





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Figure 29: Residential Uses



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Figure 32: Office Uses



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Figure 30: Industrial Uses



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Figure 33: Commercial & Retail Uses



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Figure 31: Leisure Uses



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Figure 34: Miscellaneous Uses

- Hotels/ Motels etc.
- Places of Worship
- Medical Uses
- Educational Uses
- Vacant Sites
- Car Parking Uses
- Utilities
- Playground

2.7. Community Infrastructure & Influence

As the name suggests, the St. George's Cultural Quarter character area can be characterised by the large number of arts venues including the Curve Theatre, The Athena venue and the Phoenix Cinema. These are destinations for city residents, and also visitors to the city. The area itself, is a destination.

There are also a number of arts and cultural workspaces including creative enterprise start-up incubator and artist workshops and galleries which includes the LCB Depot, Leicester Print Workshop and Makers Yard.

Many of these arts and cultural venues provide community facilities and art based programmes and classes for the residents serving the neighbourhood as well as the city as a whole.

In considering facilities within the area that may serve the existing community, there are a number of cafés, pubs and restaurants. There are also a couple of places of worship, including the Shirdi Sai Baba Temple Leicester located on Colton Street and St. George's Church. There is also the Secular Hall on Humberstone Gate. The play area on St. George Street is one of very few play areas in the city centre.

Outside the area, the bus stations and railway station are within 5 minutes walk as is the Clock Tower. The large parks of Abbey Park and Victoria Park are further away, approximately a 15 to 20 minute walk. There are supermarkets on Humberstone Gate and St. George's Retail Park.

The area is well located to benefit from city centre facilities and services.

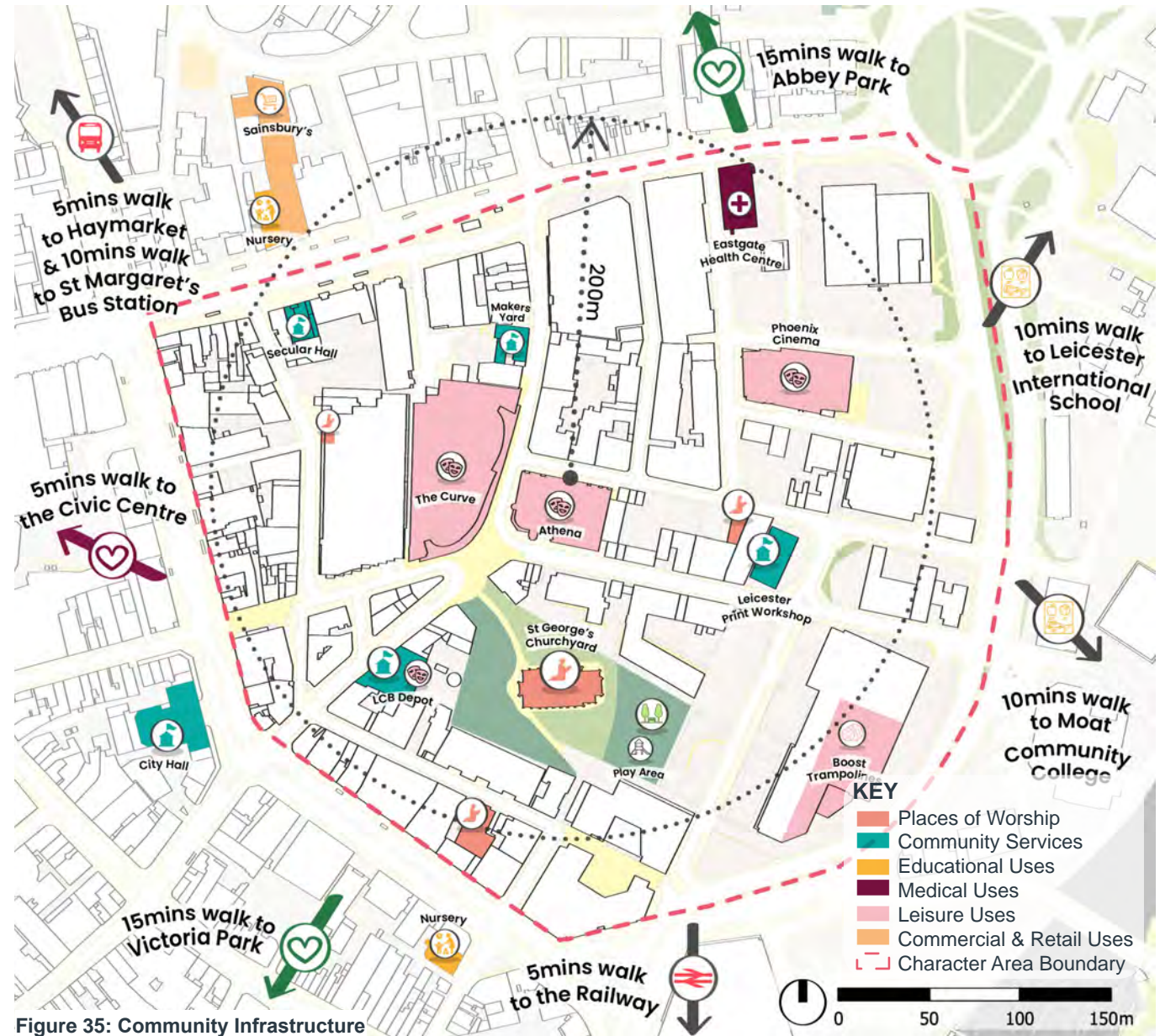


Figure 35: Community Infrastructure
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2.8. Housing & Tenure

Looking at the St. George's Cultural Quarter character area, its residential coverage is high compared to other uses with an even distribution to the west and middle of the area. There is no residential to the east, adjacent to St. George's Way.

The residential offer mainly consists of flats and whilst this area is a well established residential neighbourhood there are only a few houses on Southampton Street, from the Victorian era, making the lack of family homes evident. There is a small pocket of duplex homes along Queen Street.

The apartment buildings vary in scale from larger managed accommodation within heritage buildings and purpose built blocks to smaller scale accommodation within smaller heritage buildings and above shops. A wide range of rental markets is available in the area and some of the larger blocks also have owner occupiers.

There are a few supportive residential uses.

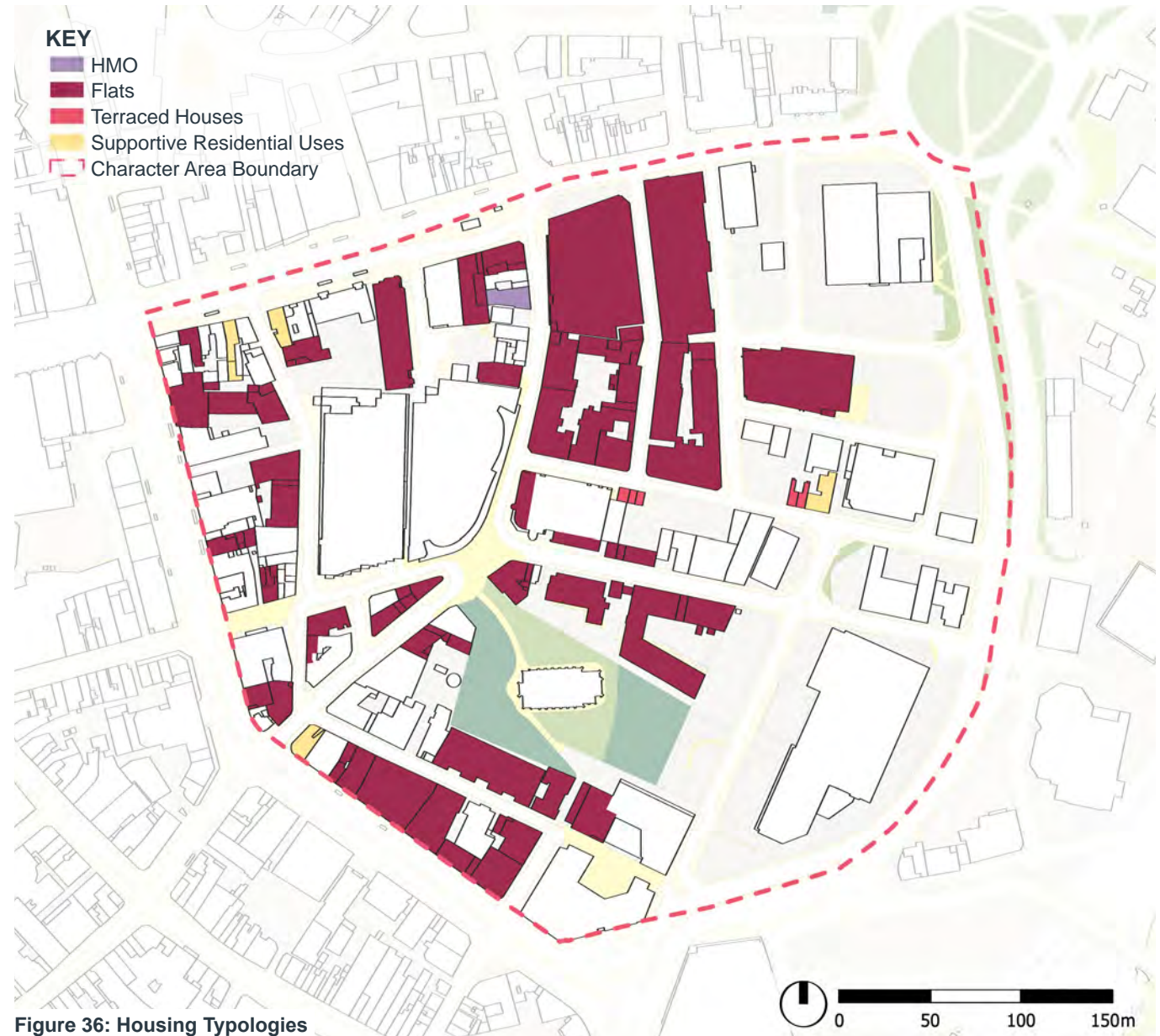


Figure 36: Housing Typologies

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2.9. Open Spaces & Public Realm

There are a few key public spaces within the area itself and their use varies. St. George's Churchyard is the most landscaped and quiet and provides the best setting for relaxation and sanctuary. Orton Square is a hard landscaped urban space at a key junction in the centre of the area, which could be described as its heart. It would be a place to dwell and given its location it is often used for outdoor events and festivals.

To the east of St. George's Churchyard is a well designed play area that is one of very few play areas within the city centre. Improvements to St. George Street are planned to reallocate highway space for vehicles to create a more pedestrian and cycle friendly public space.

Outside the area, there are three large city parks within 20 minutes walking distance providing most facilities. They are Abbey Park, Victoria Park and Spinney Hill Park. Given the walking distances, these parks would not be considered neighbourhood assets and whilst the walk to Victoria Park is through the pleasant and distinctive New Walk, the walk to Abbey Park, through adjacent character areas is much more challenging.

The area is well located to access a variety of public spaces within the city centre. Also, within 10 minutes walking distance are Town Hall Square, Green Dragon Square and New Walk. Cathedral Gardens and Castle Gardens are much quieter and greener.



Figure 37: St. George's Churchyard



Figure 38: Orton Square



Figure 39: Current Public Realm in St. George's Cultural Quarter

2.10. Movement & Connectivity

Street Hierarchy

The street typologies or street character types are taken from the Leicester Street Design Guide (2019) and are representative of the street types found within the city centre. It is useful to understand where priority has been given to vehicle movement, through the higher order streets (arterial road, centre connector) and those which are lower order streets (neighbourhood streets, pedestrian priority zones etc.), which prioritise their place-function, while meeting the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users. 'Streets make up the greatest part of the public realm' (Manual for Streets (DfT 2007)) and better designed streets therefore contribute significantly to the quality of the built environment and play a key role in the creation of sustainable, inclusive, mixed communities. They are also important for place making as different street character types enable people to find their way around and easily understand a place.

The ring road to the east of the character area has the highest traffic volume and is the highest order street as a main arterial. Charles Street and Humberstone Gate to the west and north, respectively, are both central connectors. All pedestrian and vehicle access into St. George's is via these three streets.

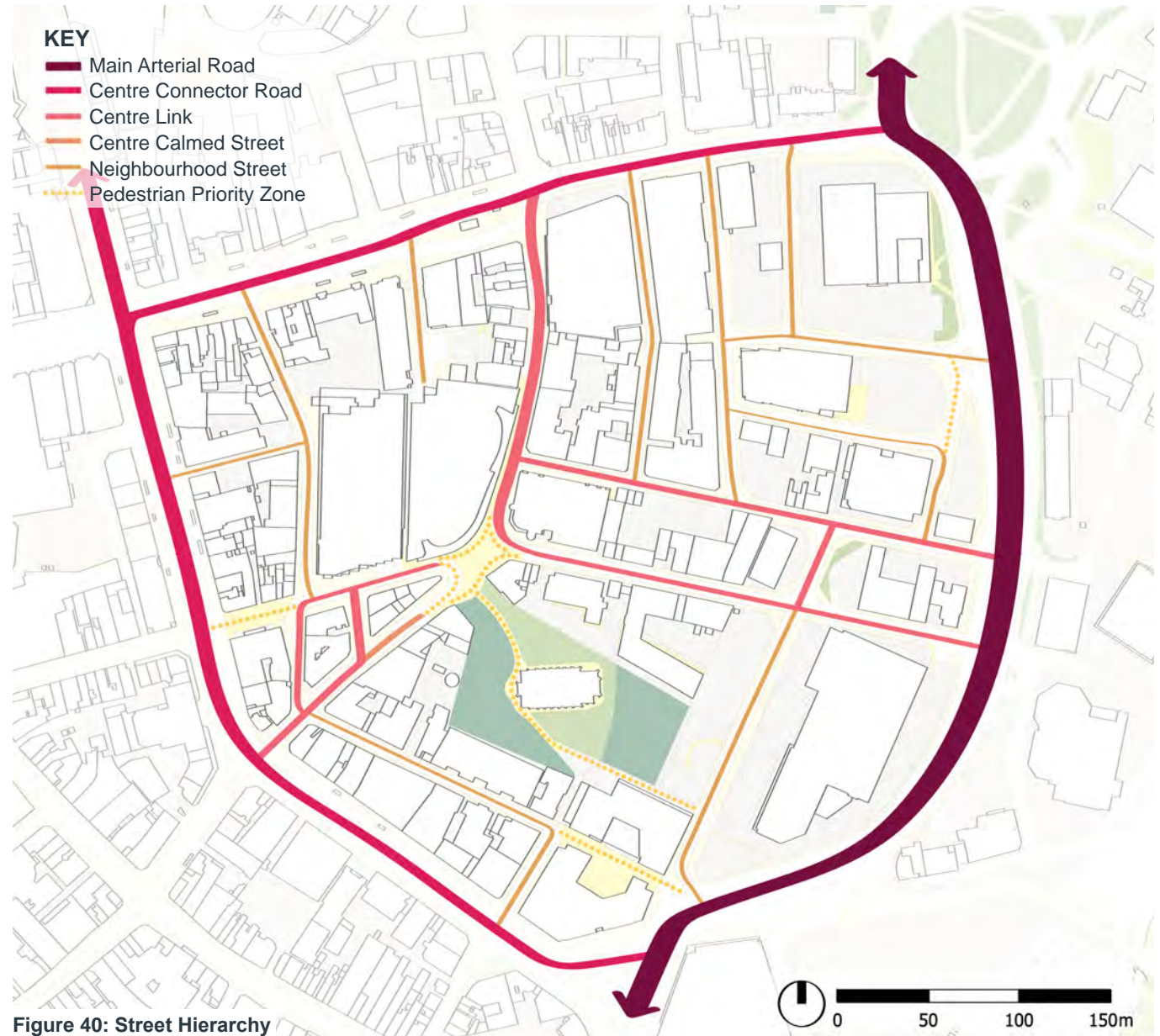


Figure 40: Street Hierarchy

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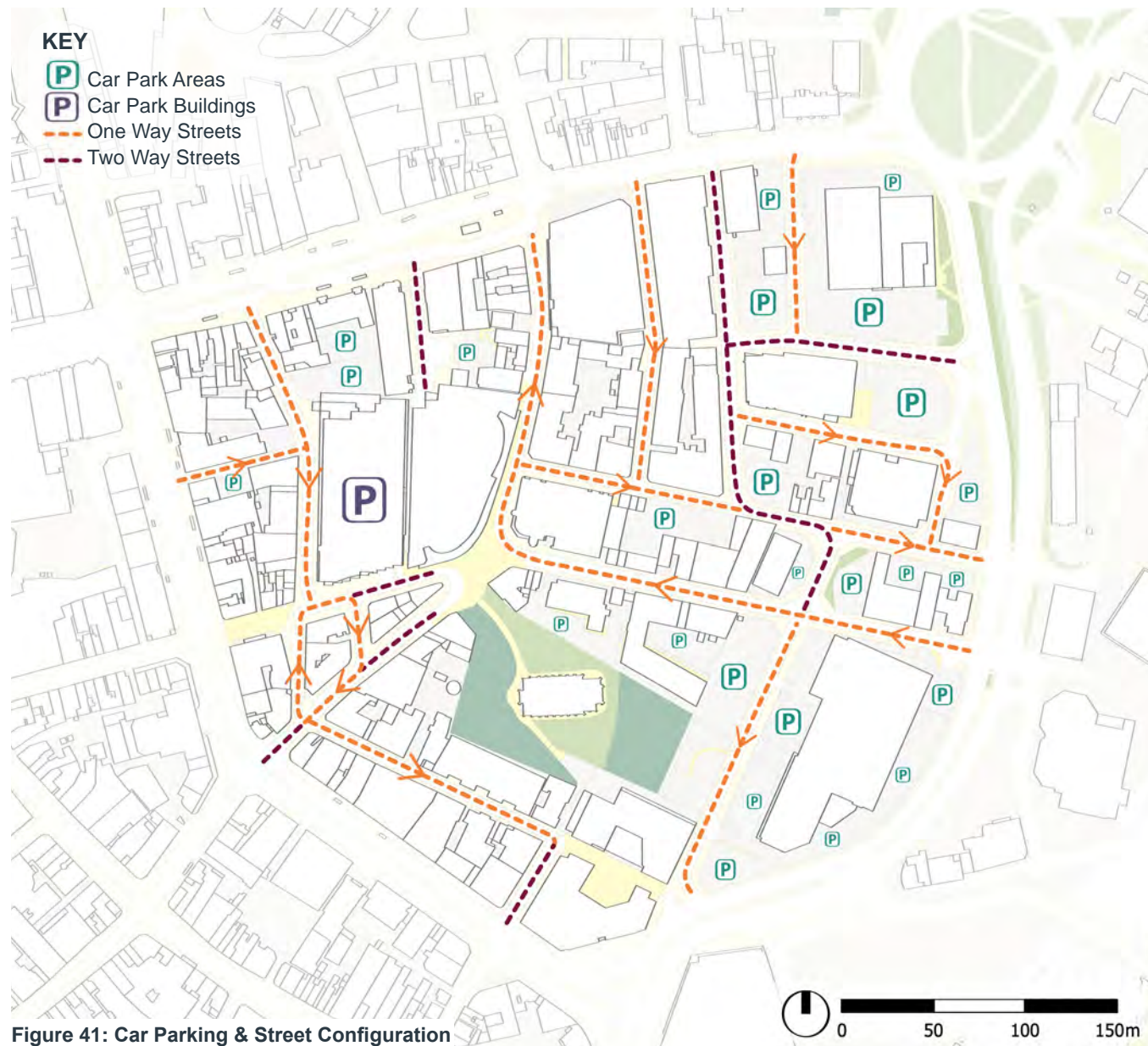
The streets that provide vehicle connections through the character area are the north and west sections of Rutland Street, Queen Street, Southampton Street, Wigston Street and parts of Yeoman Street and Halford Street. All other streets with vehicle access have very little vehicle flow and are mostly centre calmed-streets. Within the character area there are relatively low levels of vehicle movement and the pedestrianisation of Orton Square and the most westerly part of Halford Street have limited vehicle movement and create a better pedestrian environment. Many of the streets in St. Georges have more emphasis on place than movement, particularly to the west of the area.

Parking Areas & Streets Configuration

In the past Rutland Street would have been the main vehicle connection through the character area. Since the pedestrianisation of Orton Square, it's predominant use is as a pedestrian and cycle connection through St. Georges. The pedestrianisation of Orton Square and part of Halford Street has limited any east to west vehicle routes to the periphery of the character area. This has made the area, for the most part, particularly pedestrian and cycle friendly. Whilst many of the roads in St. Georges allow for cars, given the lack of connections through the area there is a very light flow of traffic.

Given the uses and the fragmented grain of the area, the main areas of surface car parking are to the east and the visual impact is much more acute.

Improvements to St. George Street are proposed which will limit motor vehicle movements along this street.



Public Transport

Bus lanes and bus routes are taken from bus operators information in Leicester. The area is well served. The main bus routes in the area are to the periphery, mostly along Humberstone Gate and Charles Street, connecting to the Haymarket Bus Station which is a 5 minutes walk away. St. Margaret's Bus Station is 10 minutes walk away.

The Railway Station is very close and within 5 minutes walk, making the area very attractive for office use.



Figure 42: Public Transport

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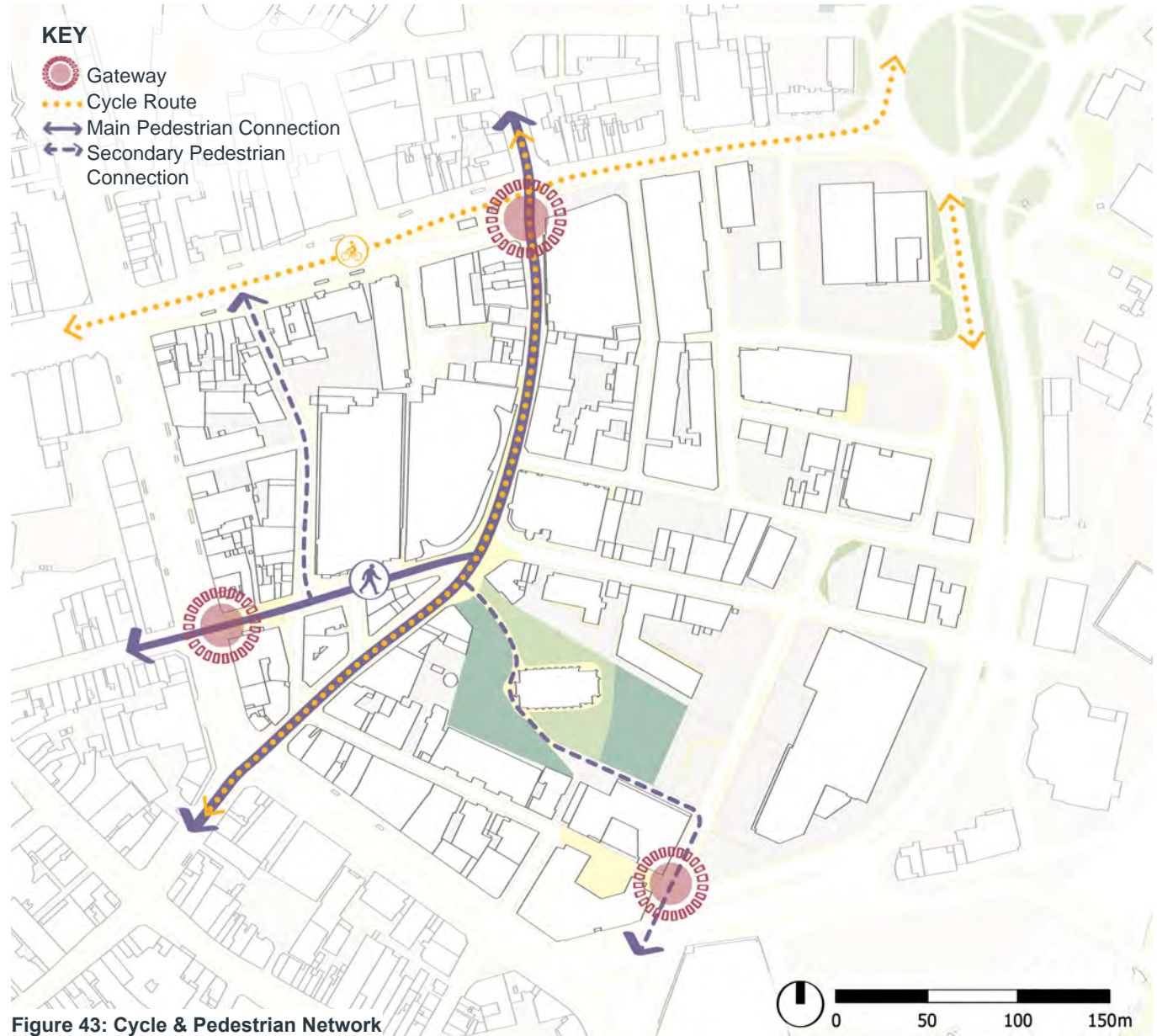
Cycle & Pedestrian Movement

Cycling routes are taken from the Leicester Cycling Map, including cycling infrastructure relevant to the city centre, on road cycle lanes, off road routes, bus lanes where cycling is permitted, pedestrian streets and recommended on road routes. Future cycling infrastructure that is guaranteed to be delivered is also identified. The main pedestrian connections are identified through a combination of local knowledge, observation, previous research undertaken by Leicester City Council and Space Syntax™ online information.

The central ring road severed a number of connections into and out of the character area and creates a barrier around its eastern part. Therefore, east-west movement is primarily from the city centre via Halford Street and Queen and Southampton Street to destinations within the area. The ring road also severs pedestrian connectivity with the station and St. George Street is the main gateway from railway station. The connection through the churchyard is also used although it is poorly overlooked. Footways along the ring road are very narrow.

Rutland Street is the main north-south pedestrian and cycle connection. The pedestrianisation of Orton Square and part of Halford Street has limited any east to west vehicle routes to the periphery of the character area supporting pedestrian and cycle movement. Additional cycle routes are along Humberstone Gate and along the ring road north of Burton Street.

A new cycle route will be created along St. George Street once improvements have been completed.



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2.11. Connecting Leicester Improvements

Connecting Leicester is a vision to create and provide a connected, accessible, safe and family friendly city centre. The City Mayor is committed to creating a thriving heart of the city that takes away barriers and greatly improves the connections between key places within the city, including the 'hidden gems' as part of Leicester's story, and shopping, leisure, heritage, housing and transport facilities. Connecting Leicester is a series of key projects bringing together special buildings and places, reducing the dominance of roads and helping to create an attractive, pedestrian friendly environment.

Completed Connecting Leicester projects within the character area are located on Humberstone Gate, Orton Square and the area around Rutland Street and Halford Street. There are proposed works to St. George's churchyard which will aim to improve connections to Orton Square, in particular from the railway station.

Connecting Leicester improvements have been very influential to the character of Orton Square and connections into the character area from the city centre. It has made significant public realm improvements which support its identity as the cultural quarter for Leicester. Orton square now hosts a number of cultural events, for example the St. George's Festival. It has also enhanced the prominence and significance of a number of heritage and townscape assets surrounding the square by improving their setting.



Figure 44: Connecting Leicester

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Improvements to St. George Street are currently being undertaken to provide a more pedestrian and cycle friendly connection between the railway station and the Pheonix Cinema and Art Centre.

Figure 45 shows the area outside the Athena cinema in 2005 before the Connecting Leicester works. It is highway dominated with poor public realm.

Figures 46 to 50 show the improvements as they can be seen today. A thriving pedestrian environment that enhances the setting of the nearby heritage and townscape assets.

Figures 51 to 53 show the proposed improvements to St. George Street.



Figure 45: Athena in 2005



Figure 46: Rutland Street



Figure 47: Halford Street



Figure 48: Orton Square



Figure 49: Orton Square



Figure 50: Rutland Street



Figure 51: St. George Street



Figure 52: St. George Street



Figure 53: St. George Street

2.12. Active Frontages

Active frontages are important to create successful places. They are street frontages where there is an active visual engagement between those in the street and those on the ground floor of buildings. This quality is enhanced where the front façade of buildings, including the main entrance faces and opens towards the street. They are important to create activity and vitality within an area and a sense of safety with well overlooked streets. Blank frontages provide no active visual engagement between those in the street and those on the ground floor of buildings. Frontages of existing buildings could have blocked up or screened windows and doors for various reasons.

St. Georges character area has mixed levels of activity to the street. The parts of the character area that provide the most activity to the street are along Charles Street, Halford Street and the southern part of Rutland Street leading from the city centre to Orton Square. Retail on the ground floor of buildings have large windows and cafés in the area spill onto the street animating those streets. The entire ground floor of the Curve is glazed and the main circulation and cafe and bar facilities within the building front the street providing a very active frontage to Orton Square, in both the day and evenings. Other Arts based venues, such as LCB depot and Makers Yard embrace the importance of active frontages and provide views in and out, often from well used communal areas.

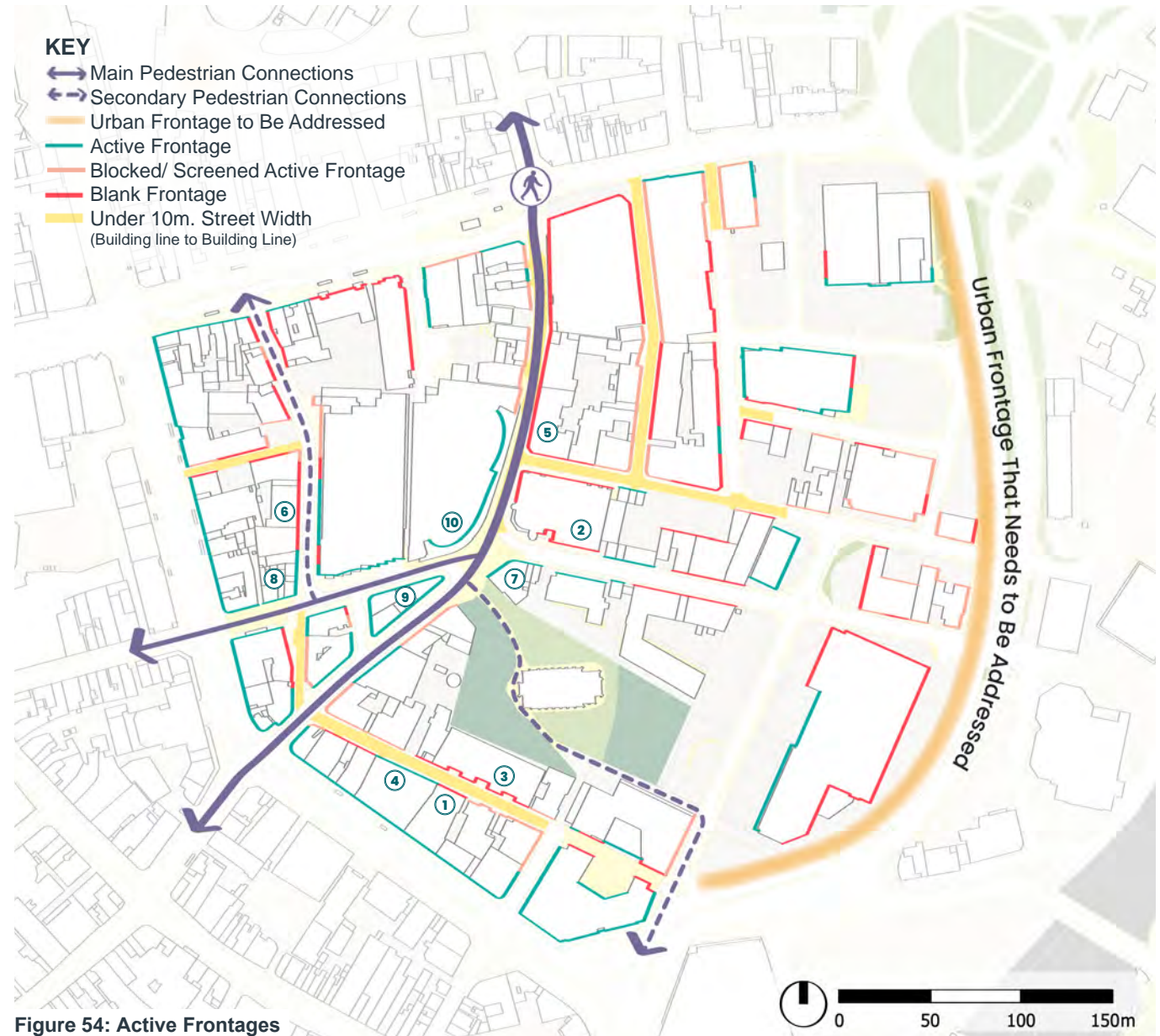


Figure 54: Active Frontages

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There is less activity in the east side of the character area. This is a result of fewer retail uses and a more fragmented urban grain. Some of the lower order streets have particularly low levels of activity, some a result of the raised ground floor levels of some of the former industrial buildings.

There are interesting interventions where windows have been lowered to provide full height glazing to the ground floor as can be seen in Figure 55 image 4. This has obvious benefits to the street environment. There are also a number of newer developments which provide no activity to the street at the ground floor. There are some parts of the façades of existing buildings which could be opened up through very simple interventions.

Some of the streets in St. Georges are also very narrow and enclosed, and relief could be alleviated by creating more active frontages.

Many of the buildings in St. Georges have ground floor windows that are raised higher than standard ground floor windows. In these cases it is considered ground floor windows raised above head height offer a blank ground floor frontage to the street.

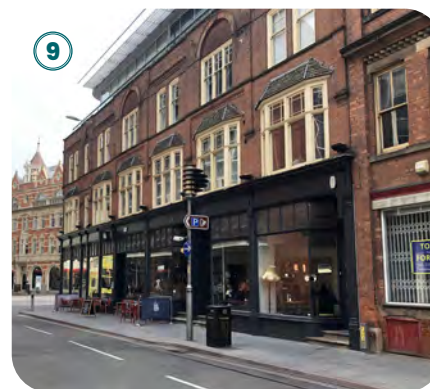
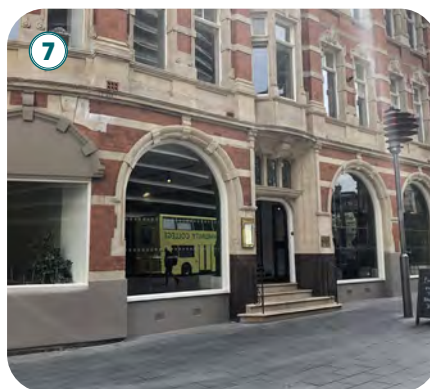
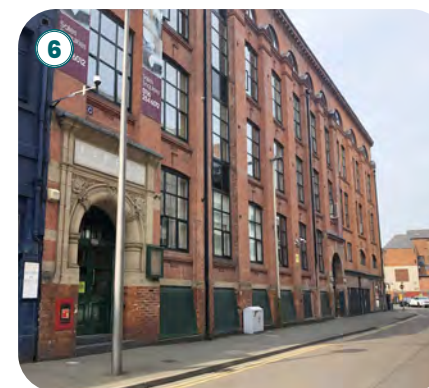
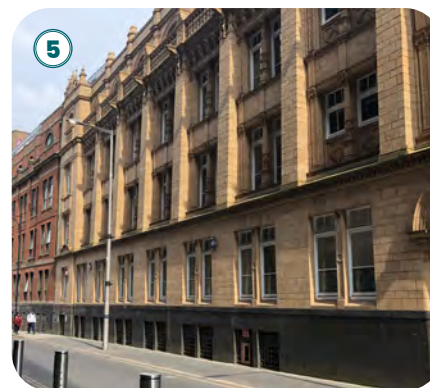
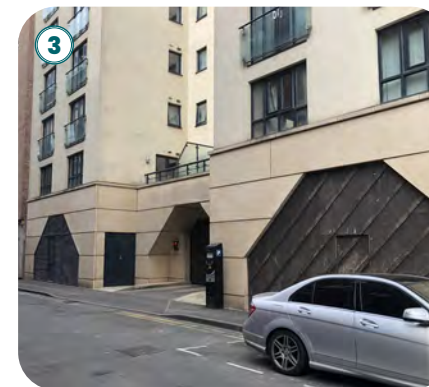


Figure 55:
Frontages
Examples
.....

2.13. Key Views & Legibility

The west of the area, as approached from the north and west, is very legible with distinctive buildings and public spaces making a significant contribution to townscape. Many views within the area and at gateways into the area are well terminated and expressed. The cohesiveness and consistency of the buildings within the Conservation Area is evident. The cluster of landmark buildings of various ages and architectural styles enclosing Orton Square makes it one of the most unique and delightful places within the city centre, significant to both the identity of the area and the city. Rutland Street is a very legible street with landmarks and clearly identifiable buildings along it.

From the Railway Station Colton Square and the former Police Headquarters buildings provide landmarks to the south, although the connection through to St. George's Churchyard isn't as legible as it could be and where it leads to is unclear when first experienced. Connections to the Phoenix Cinema and Art Centre are also uncertain from both the south and west.

Along Humberstone Gate, the former International Hotel is a local landmark, due to its scale and prominence but doesn't detract from the high quality heritage character of the area.

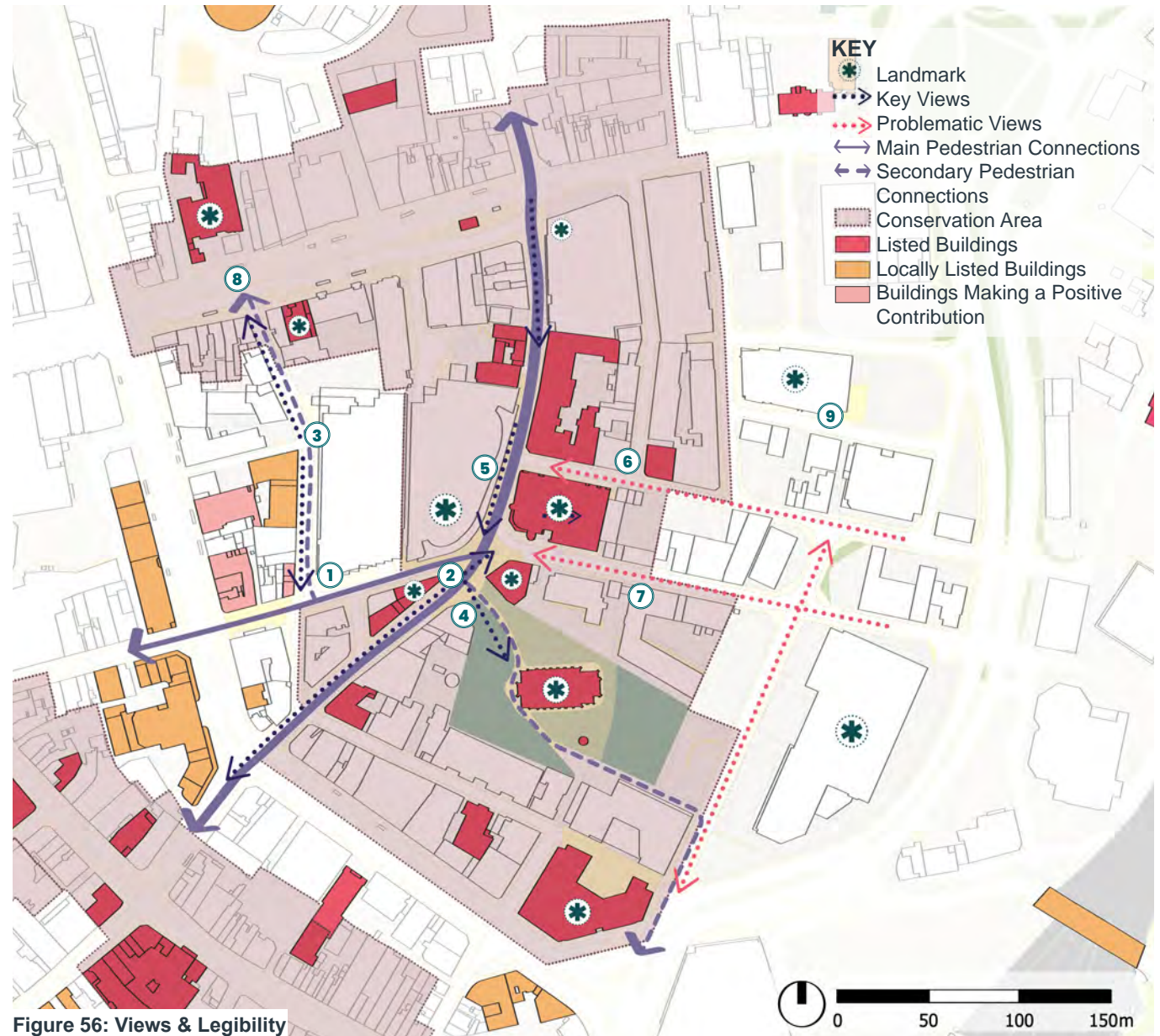
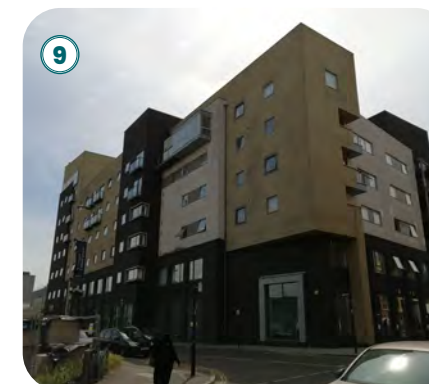
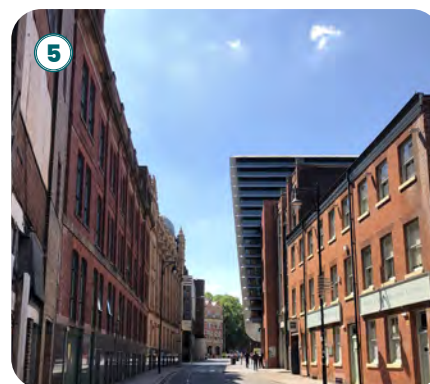
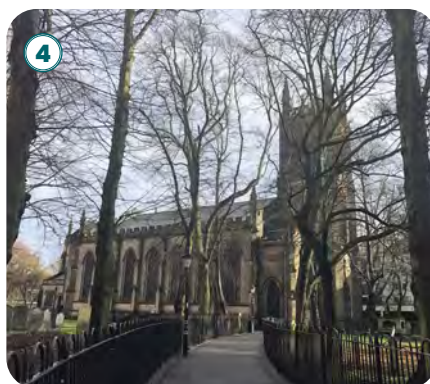
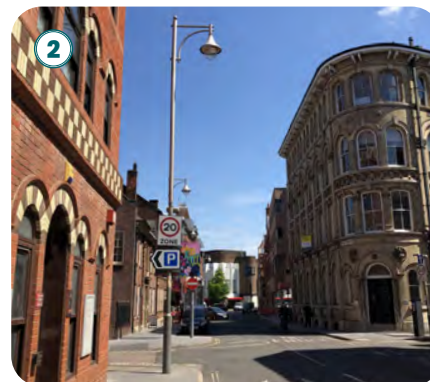
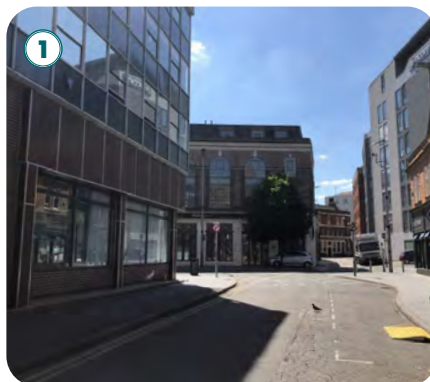


Figure 56: Views & Legibility

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The east of the area is much less legible. There are distinctive landmark buildings such as the Phoenix Cinema and Art Centre and the Leicester Mercury building, but they stand out due to their scale and footprint, in an area which is characterised by buildings of a much lower scale and size. However, the Phoenix Cinema and Art Centre is a destination and opportunities to improve connectivity to it are important. The proposed improvements to St. George street will contribute to this objective.

The distinctive design and elevations of the Curve Theatre terminates views down Queen Street and Southampton Street.



2.14. Architecture, Materiality, Details

Architecture

There are a large number of contextual references in the St. George's Cultural Quarter character area with a richness and quality evident in both the buildings of heritage significance and more recent buildings. Many of the buildings are outstanding works of architecture in their own right. There is a wide range of styles and textures with architectural influences including Baroque, Italianate, Flemish, American, Gothic, 1930's Moderne and Late Victorian. Many of the former factories are highly decorated.

More recent cultural venues, such as the Curve Theatre, LCB Depot, Phoenix Cinema, and Print Makers Workshop integrate well in to the townscape to contribute to the area's independent creative identity and culture, particularly to the west of the area.

Materiality

The materials in the area are wide ranging, from expensive granites, sandstone and bricks to modern day glazed curtain walling and terracotta cladding. Textures, tones and colours are varied and yet there remains a tangible cohesiveness across the area.

Brick Type Variety



Glazing & Panels



Opening & Detailing Simplicity



Bricks are predominantly red, but can be burnt and glazed and both orange and red. Newer buildings introduce other brick types including grey, buff and brown.

Details

The identity of St. George's as the 'Cultural Quarter' can be seen in the public art that is common place and the use of graphics and signage. There is a distinctive St. George's 'feel' and identity' that is beyond the townscape and buildings.

Across the area most of the newer buildings are contextually responsive and on a smaller scale there are many simply detailed and sensitive additions and insertions to the historic fabric to ensure the older buildings can meet modern functional requirements. The harmony of the 'old and 'new' at various scales adds layers and richness.

To the newer buildings, there is a simplicity of elevational design and detailing that is a counterpoint to the richly decorated and detailed façades of the historic environment. This is also of high quality.

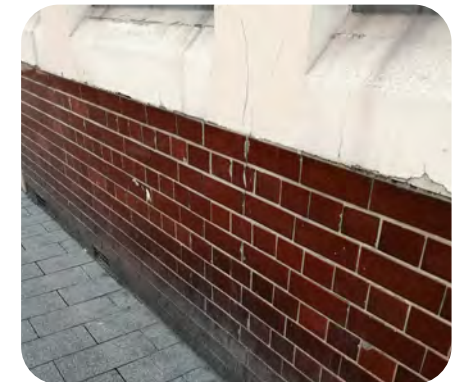
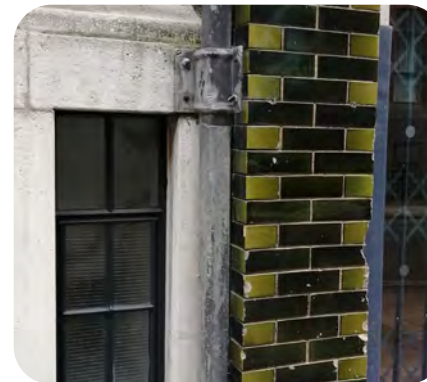
Old & New



Public Art & Graphics



Glazed Brick Plinths



2.15. Planning Activity

It is essential to understand the growth and development potential of the character area and the likely rate and scale of change for the plan period, assisting in establishing priorities and the required level of townscape management. As a result, the area's planning activity, the amount of large plots under one or few ownerships and sites with possible redevelopment potential, also referred to as 'soft sites', have been considered. Moreover, sites in LCC ownership are identified, although their inclusion does not necessarily suggest development/ redevelopment potential.

The St. George's Cultural Quarter character area could make a contribution to new city housing and neighbourhoods. Whilst opportunities are limited to the west of the area there are a cluster of potential development sites in the east of the area, some of which have previously received planning permission for residential. Interest in further residential in the area remains. On the largest site a council led mixed use development is planned to include offices, residential, a new public space and car parking.

Given the development potential to the east of the area it will be important to guide development to ensure the townscape and place making qualities of the west of the area are continued into the east.

Additionally, there is an established residential community, including a market for owner occupiers, and opportunities for increasing family homes should be considered. As there are other development opportunities closer to Leicester's Universities should student accommodation be managed?

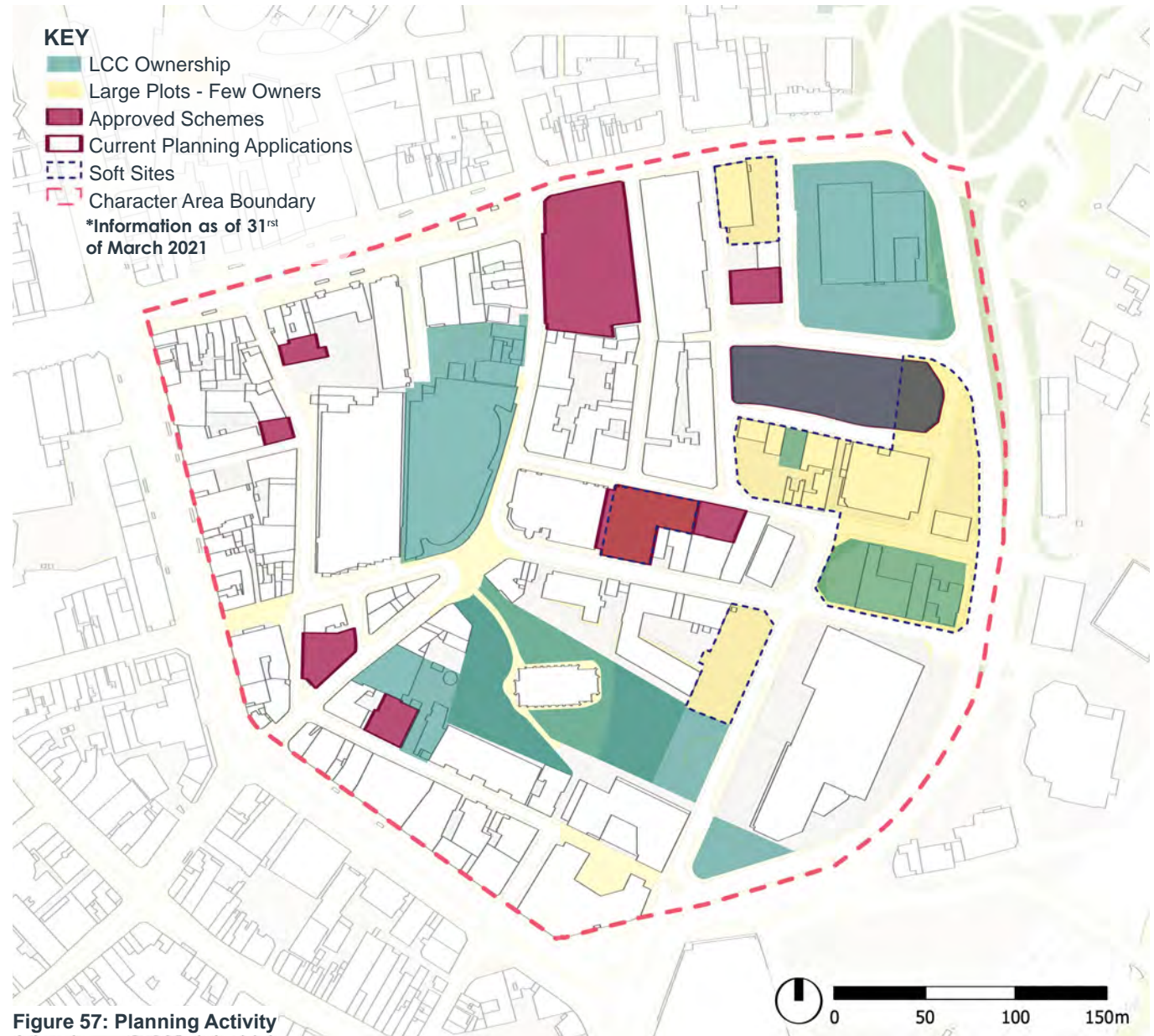


Figure 57: Planning Activity

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3



Townscape Diagnosis

3. Townscape Diagnosis

3.1. Constraints & Opportunities

The detailed townscape analysis of the St. George's Cultural Quarter character area, set out above, considers all of its composing elements, peculiarities and unique characteristics. This chapter critically evaluates this analysis, defining the main existing development constraints and future opportunities presented within the area.

At this point it should be stated that much has already been achieved in the development of St. George's Cultural Quarter in the recent years with several key projects successfully delivered. Now the area is home to a number of cultural, creative and food and beverage businesses, together with residential accommodation. Acknowledging what has already been achieved and recognising current challenges and opportunities will lead to cohesive and successful growth and future development. Thus, moving forward and in accordance with both the NPPF and the National Design Guide, it has to be understood that any potential growth and future development requires a coordinated and comprehensive approach to respect and protect the area's current assets, together with the enhancement and further evolution of an attractive, successful and sustainable place with a distinctive identity.

It is recognised that the area has a few challenges to overcome, but at the same time assets to preserve and enhance and further potential to explore.

Constraints

In creating a holistic, comprehensive and coordinated approach to the area's future growth the following constraints (figure 58) should be taken into account:

- St. George's Cultural Quarter character area is an area with heritage and townscape assets that should be cherished and preserved within any future development. The area's significant heritage value is reflected by the numerous nationally designated and locally listed heritage assets, whereas almost half of the area, particularly to the west, falls within the St. Georges Conservation Area. Furthermore, additional buildings that make a positive contribution to the townscape have been identified, which should also be retained.
- There is a strong contrast between the high heritage value of the western and central parts of the character area and the more commercial low-rise nature of the eastern side adjacent to the ring road, further reflected in the area's urban grain and street enclosure. As a result, the urban grain is quite fragmented to the east, with new development not forming perimeter blocks around the street layout. There are pockets of fine urban grain but primarily individual buildings are located in large plots surrounded by car parking. Similarly, enclosure is poor to the east of the character area, where building lines vary and many buildings are set back from the street.
- The differences in structure, appearance and experience between the west and east part of the character area is evident with its eastern part being much less legible.
- Extensive, large surface car parking and poorly defined open space without purpose in front of buildings, are dominant elements of the eastern part of the character area, contributing to poor enclosure and the fragmentation of the urban grain, while having an acute visual impact to the overall townscape.
- Blank façades can be found to the east of the character area, emphasising the lack of activity, vibrancy and surveillance at the street level due to fewer uses and a more fragmented urban grain. Aim to retain existing active frontages.
- The residential offer mainly consists of flats and whilst this area is a well-established residential neighbourhood there are only a few houses on Southampton Street, making the lack of family homes quite evident.
- The east edge of St. George's Cultural Quarter, along St. George's Way, needs to be properly identified and addressed, providing appropriate enclosure and definition for any future and existing development and recognising the amenity requirements and accommodation quality that is needed.
- The ring road to the east of the character area, St. George's Way, severs a number of connections into and out of the area, creating a barrier around its eastern part. Furthermore, footways along the ring road are very narrow.

KEY

-  Car Park Areas
-  Problematic Legibility View
-  Noise & Traffic Disruption
-  Weak & Unidentified Frontage
-  Streets of Weak Enclosure
-  Blank Façades
-  Frontages to Be Retained
-  Weak Pedestrian/ Cycle Connections
-  Significant Views
-  Under 10m. Street Width (Building line to Building Line)
-  Fragmented Urban Blocks
-  Listed Buildings
-  Locally Listed Buildings
-  Buildings with Positive Contribution to the Townscape
-  Conservation Area

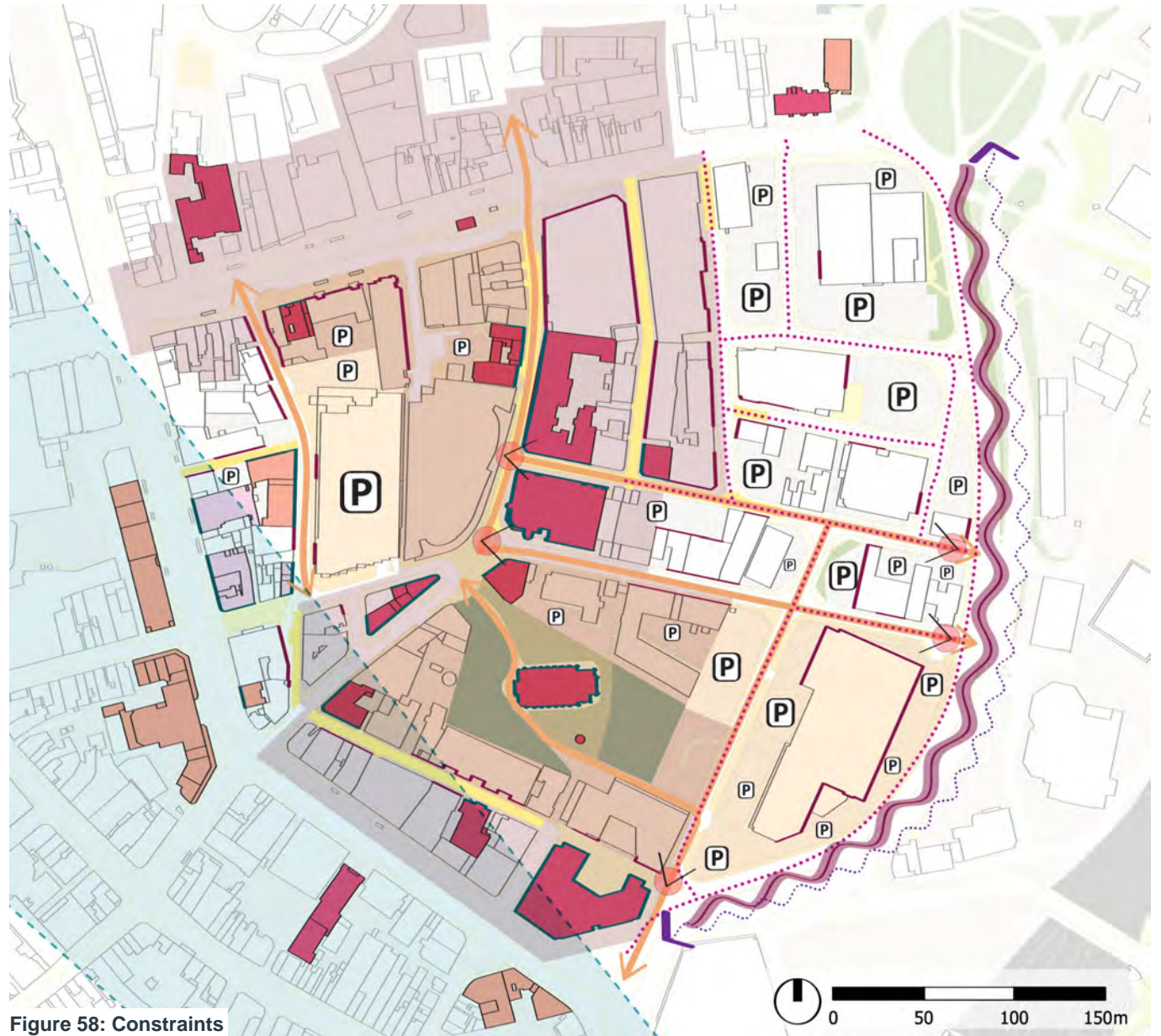


Figure 58: Constraints

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- Although St. George's Cultural Quarter could be generally described as pedestrian and cycle friendly, there are still a few weak pedestrian connections (figure 58) to be addressed where both infrastructure and active frontages for overlooking are needed. East-west connectivity could and should be improved, together with the pedestrian connection from St. George's Street to the Railway Station, the city's main gateway. The connection through St. George's churchyard isn't as legible as it could be, being poorly overlooked and quite unclear where it leads to (especially when first experienced). Moreover, connections to the Phoenix Cinema & Art Centre are also uncertain.
- The south-west of the area is within the viewing corridor of a city-wide significance view.
- Other issues that should be taken into account are the noise and traffic disruption mainly coming from the peripheral road network (main arterial and central connector roads).

Opportunities

The following points present development opportunities and assets that if properly utilised will enhance, upgrade and contribute to the area's current success and further aspiring regeneration:

- Main characteristic of St. George's Cultural Quarter is its prime location, within and at the east edge of the city centre, a link between the city centre and the residential neighbourhoods to the east. Located within a 5 minute walking distance from both the Clock Tower and the Railway Station, makes it an ideal place to work, live and visit. Identified as the city's cultural and creative quarter the area accommodates several, successful projects. Culture, creativity, workspaces, diversity, small businesses, city's pride, city-centre living and arts are elements of its identity that support an environment with heritage and townscape richness.
- The St. George's Cultural Quarter is a destination for city residents and for visitors much further afield. The cultural and creative offer, with nationally significant venues such as the Curve Theatre and the Phoenix Cinema and Art Centre, contribute significantly to the city's identity.
- Within St. George's Cultural Quarter character area there is potential for a new, secondary neighbourhood heart and civic space in front of Phoenix theatre, which can positively contribute to the character of the area's eastern place.
- The area has undergone considerable public realm improvements improving streets and spaces for pedestrians and cyclists. However, east-west and a few north-south pedestrian connections could be enhanced, linking to the current gateways, arrival points, at the edges of St. George's Cultural Quarter. A critical connection to be strengthened and better defined would be the route from Phoenix theatre to the Railway Station, through improvements to St. George's Street. Furthermore, the existing gateways could be also further enhanced, leading and guiding pedestrians through the area and upgrading the area's legibility and permeability.
- Figure 59 identifies existing active frontages that are understood as development assets, but also locations which present active frontages or pedestrian-friendly façade-treatment opportunity areas. Screens and obscured glazing removal, together with development that properly addresses and engages with the street-level would enhance the overall streetscape. At the same time, areas have been identified where the urban blocks could be redefined and better enclosure and definition could be achieved through future, well-designed, well-structured, well-connected future development.

KEY

-  Existing Landmarks
-  Gateways
-  Bus Stops
-  Place-Making Development Opportunities
-  New Neighbourhood's Heart
-  Potential to Redefine Development Frontage & Ring Road
-  Improved Pedestrian/ Cycle Connections (Connecting Leicester Delivered & Planned)
-  Opportunities for Better Enclosure
-  Active Frontage Opportunities
-  Existing Active Frontages
-  Opportunity to Redefine Urban Blocks
-  Listed Buildings
-  Locally Listed Buildings
-  Buildings with Positive Contribution to the Townscape

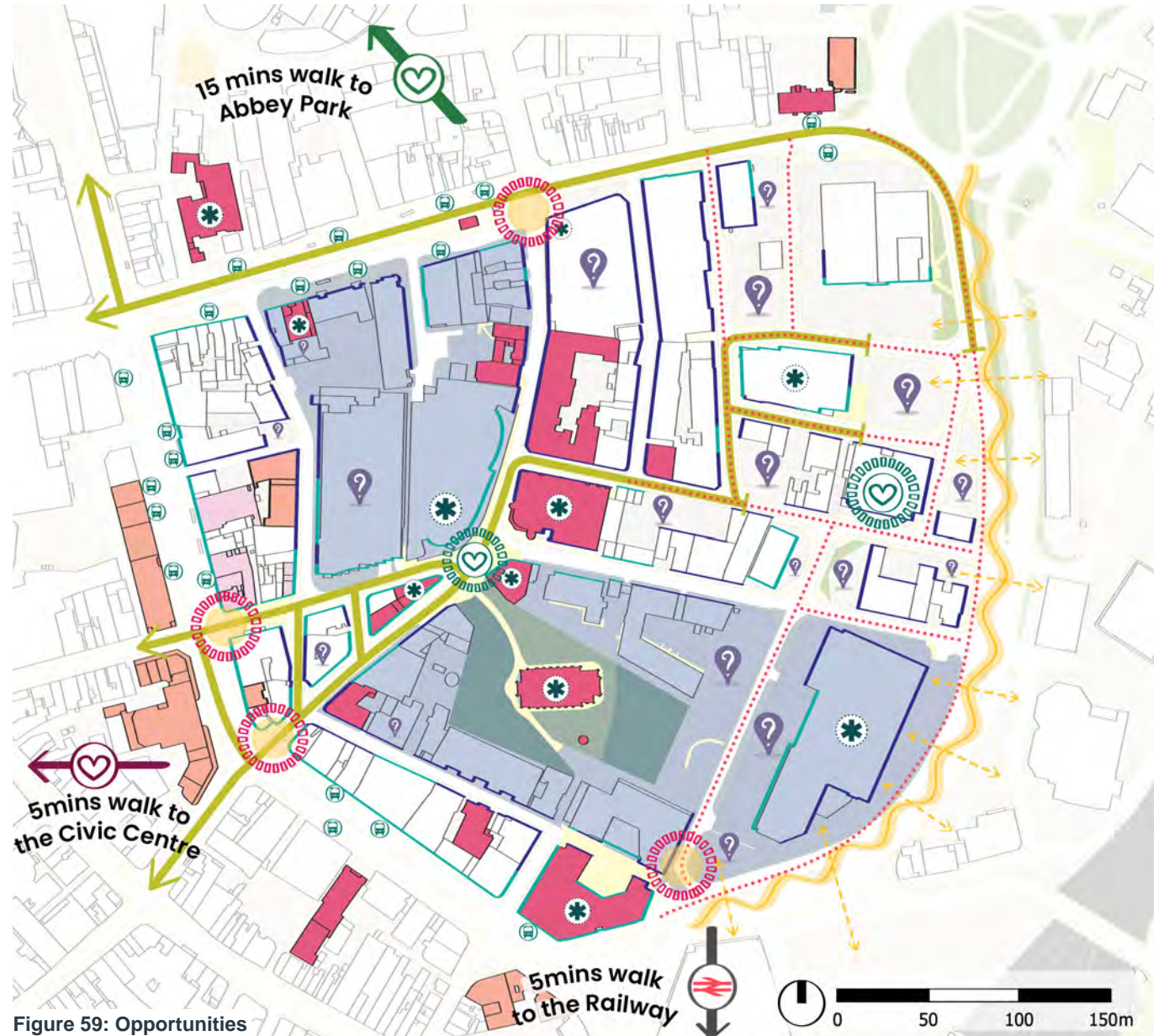


Figure 59: Opportunities

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- Figure 59 illustrates the sites that could present future development, transforming and place-making opportunities for the overall area's regeneration. Heritage assets and existing landmarks highlight the area's value and heritage.
- The mix of uses in the area work well together and are an essential part of the area's richness. Future development should protect and enhance the mix of uses, allowing them to continue to successfully co-exist. Given the proximity to the railway station office uses could be increased.
- The St. George's Cultural Quarter character area could make a contribution to the city's housing supply. Given the development potential to the east of the area it will be important to guide development to ensure the townscape and place-making qualities of the west of the area are continued into the east. Thus, any future development doesn't become detrimental to the existing overall character and townscape, but rather to positively reinforce and enhance it.

Character Area Townscape Management

The western side of St. George's Cultural Quarter character area falls within 1. *Respect and Protection of Heritage Assets* and 2. *Evolution without Significant Change*, where conservation and historic environment policies will be used to guide future development (see page 7 - Townscape Character Management).

The eastern side of St. George's Cultural Quarter character area falls within 3. *Developing an Area's Character* where place specific policies will be used to guide future development (see page 7 - Townscape Character Management).

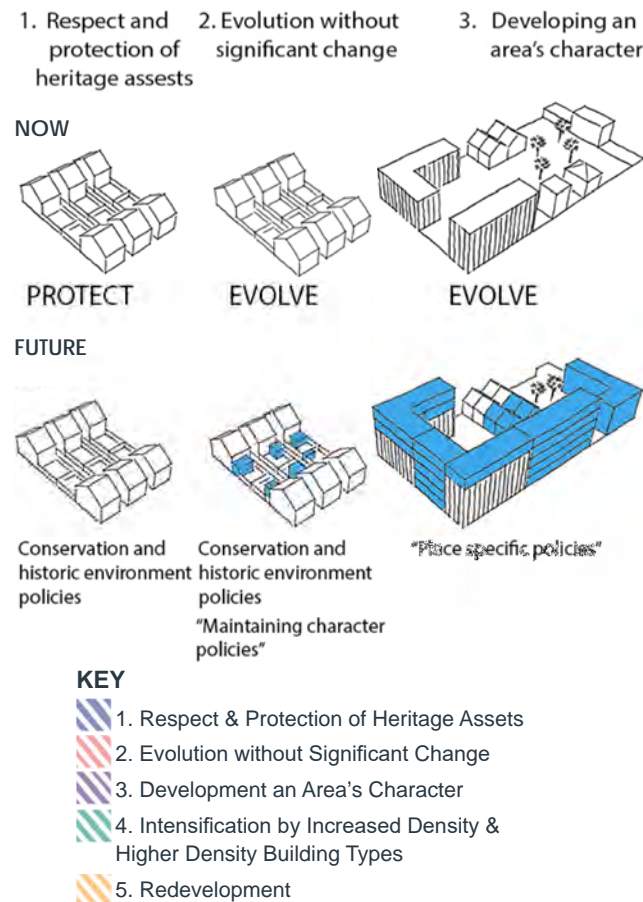


Figure 60: Character Areas Development & Management Plan

4



Guiding the Future

4. Guiding the Future

4.1. Establishing a Vision

Chapter 4 establishes a holistic vision for the character area's future development, setting the main future development objectives and parameters through which development will take place, be structured and come to life.

Taking into account the aforementioned elements of townscape analysis and diagnosis (townscape appraisal), St. George's Cultural Quarter character area is envisaged as:

A unique and distinctive **identity of culture and creativity**, supporting a **welcoming and vibrant neighbourhood**.

A much-cherished city destination, with a **heritage and townscape richness** and a new mixed-use, workspace development, **enhancing connections** to the Railway Station and the Phoenix Theatre, consolidating the **mix of owner occupiers** and encouraging the for sale/private **residential market**.

Figure 61 illustrates St. George Cultural Quarter character area's vision for its future growth and development, where the area's place-making and character development are placed at the centre of the process.

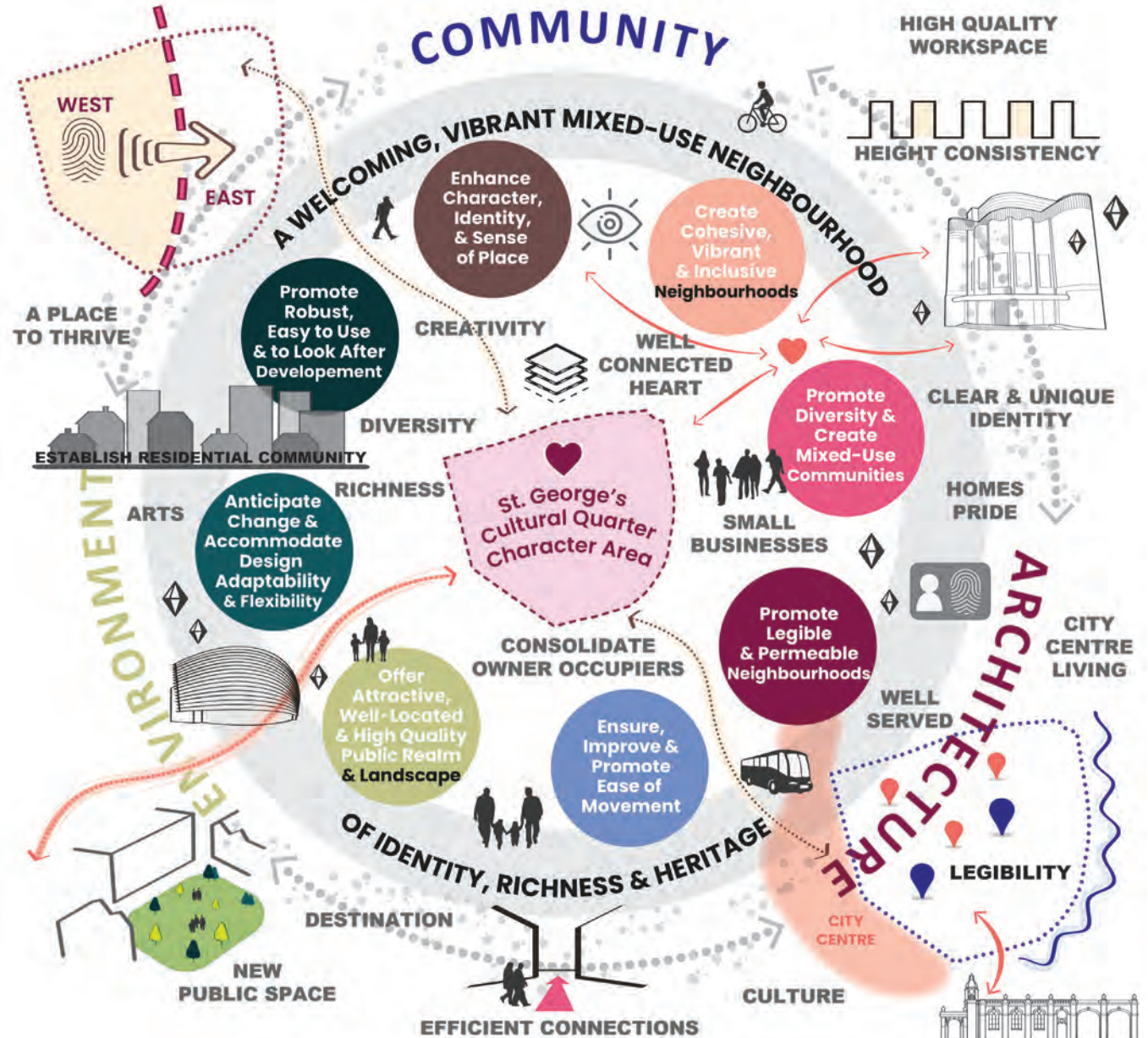


Figure 61: St. George Cultural Quarter Character Area Vision

4.2. Main Future Development Objectives

1 Character & Identity



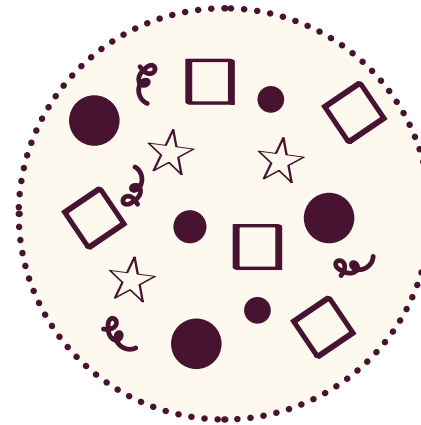
Development should enhance the character, identity and sense of place by considering the built, natural and historic context, responding to it ecologically, socially and aesthetically. All development should contribute to the unique character of the area by protecting and enhancing existing heritage assets, achieving creative re-use, while ensuring that they will continue to make a significant contribution to the area as it undergoes change. All development should celebrate the Character Area's local distinctiveness and create memorable places that are visually attractive and offer a unique experience to its users.

2 Cohesive, Vibrant & Inclusive Neighbourhoods



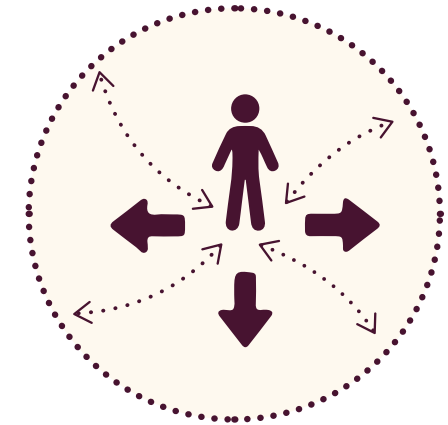
Ensure everyone's health, safety and quality of life creating buildings, streets and spaces that encourage people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to meet and mix. All development should use the appropriate built form, layout, scale and mixture of uses and tenures to create a welcoming and attractive place for people to live work and visit. There should not be any differentiation between the quality of market and affordable housing.

3 Diversity



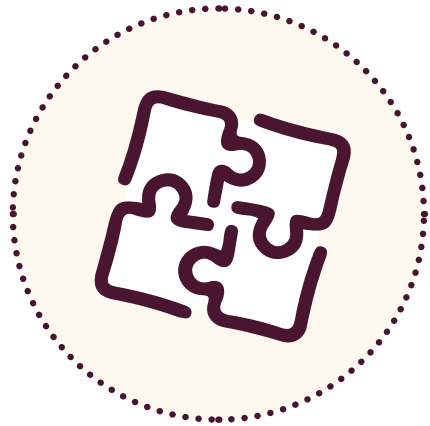
Within each Character Area variety, choice and design sensory richness should be provided in keeping with local distinctiveness. Development should promote and create mixed-use communities through providing a diverse range of facilities, activities and residential typologies with good access to public transport.

4 Ease of Movement



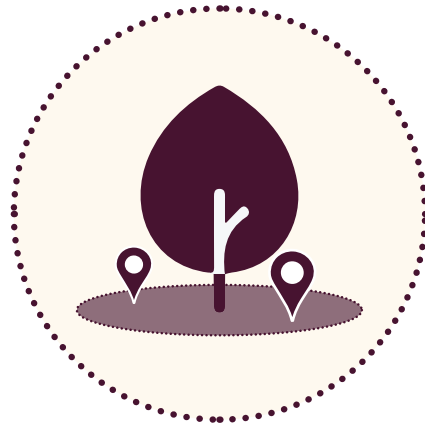
Ensure, improve and promote ease of movement, accessibility and connectivity within the Character Area and to the surrounding neighbourhoods. The use of creative and innovative solutions for reducing car-dominated streetscapes should be considered to promote safe and welcoming pedestrian and cycle movement. This is to allow direct and convenient access to existing and new local services, facilities and open spaces. Active frontages and doors on streets, especially along main and secondary pedestrian connections will maximise natural surveillance over the public realm.

5 **Legibility & Permeability**



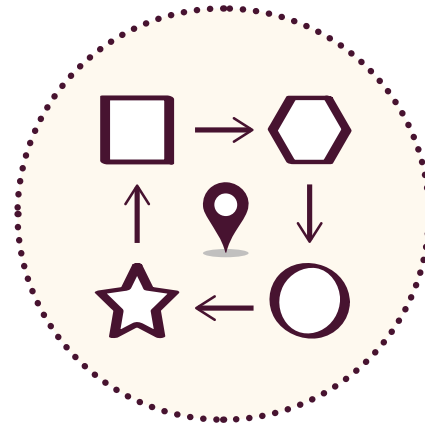
Ensure that each Character Area can be properly understood and easily navigated. There should be a positive relationship between the fronts and backs of buildings and structures, together with clearly defined public and private spaces, well-defined block and street pattern and distinctive townscape markers. Future development should enhance and create a clear and permeable hierarchy of streets, routes and spaces to provide safe and convenient ease of movement by all users.

6 **Public Realm & Landscape**



Create a high-quality public realm with well-managed and maintained areas that incorporate natural features and new green infrastructure. Development and future changes within the Character Area should deliver attractive and well-located public realm and landscape features that contribute to a greater cohesion of the streetscape. Places for people to rest, meet and gather, together with the insertion of trees, landscaping and planting will encourage inclusivity and social integration, enhancing people's quality of life and a place's perception.

7 **Adaptability & Flexibility**



Anticipate the need for change to buildings and outdoor spaces so that they function well today, last for the future and can adapt to changing needs. This includes accommodating the changing dynamics of family life, the needs of older people, the ways residential and workspaces are used, environmental changes and future expansion of the development.

8 **Lifespan**



Development should be robust, easy to use and to look after. Materials should be chosen in accordance with their function and context, with the ability to be maintained over time and age well.

4.3. Future Development

St. George's Cultural Quarter character area growth will shape the city centre's dynamics, which needs to be in accordance with the aforementioned vision and main development objectives. Specifically:

KEY

-  Existing Landmarks
-  Proposed Landmarks
-  Gateways
-  Bus Stops
-  Create a 'Healthy Street'
-  Redefine the Development Frontage in Relation to the Ring Road, Minimising the Edge Barrier
-  Proposed Improvements to Main Network
-  Main and Enhanced Pedestrian/ Cycle Connections
-  Secondary and Enhanced Pedestrian Connections
-  Potential Streetscape Improvements - Materials & Layout
-  Active Frontages Priority Areas/ Façade Animation
-  Built Continuous Frontage - Repair Urban Grain
-  Enhanced/ Proposed Civic Public Space - Neighbourhood's Heart
-  Enhanced/ Proposed Green Space/ Public Realm
-  Create Enclosure & Increase Surveillance to St. George's Churchyard
-  Screen Car Park Area
-  Redefined Urban Blocks
-  Potential Development Sites
-  Larger Sites & Areas That Would Benefit from Redevelopment
-  Listed, Locally Listed & Positive Contribution Buildings



Figure 62: Development Proposal & Potentials

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- St. Georges character area will undergo evolution without significant change guided by national and local heritage policies. However, outside of the conservation area growth needs to be managed in developing the area's character. Heritage and townscape assets (listed, locally listed, landmark and positive contribution buildings (buildings not nationally/ locally listed or within conservation areas, but with a positive contribution to the townscape)) will be retained and enhanced, continuing to make a significant contribution to the area's ongoing identity of heritage and townscape richness, variety and diversity, while enhancing the area's legibility as dominant 'markers' and frontages.
- Specific area policies and a coordinated and comprehensive approach to steer development will ensure that St. George's Cultural Quarter will preserve and enhance existing assets, while addressing current challenges and utilising present development opportunities. Potential development sites should not be considered in isolation to the area's main, wider objectives.
- Given the development potential to the east of the area it will be important to guide development to ensure that the area's west townscape and place-making qualities are continued into the east. Thus, any future development doesn't become detrimental to the existing overall character and townscape, but rather to positively reinforce and enhance it. Larger sites and areas that would benefit from redevelopment have also been identified, enhancing place-making in the area (figure 62).
- St. George's Street is envisaged as the new, 'healthy street' with pedestrian and cycle priority, establishing it as the main connection between the Railway Station, the Phoenix Cinema & Art Centre and the new office-led mixed-use area. Such an intervention/ transformation will also include areas to 'dwell', trees, public realm improvements, vegetation, screening of car parking areas, active frontages and an improved highway configuration. Moreover, the legibility and connectivity between the St. George's Cultural Quarter and the Railway Station will be further improved through new improved connections (proposed new crossing at St. George's Way, linking St. George's Street and Fox Street) across the ring road, road improvements and the reconfiguration of building lines.



Healthy Street

A 'healthy street' is a street defined by its response to 10 evidence-based indicators that create a human-centred framework, embedding public health in transport, public realm and planning. These 10 must be prioritised and balanced to improve social, economic and environmental sustainability through how streets are designed and managed. Thus, 'healthy' is a street:

1. where everyone feels welcome,
2. that is easy to cross,
3. that offers shade and shelter,
4. that provides places to stop and rest,
5. that is not too noisy,
6. where people choose to walk and cycle,
7. where people feel safe,
8. that offers things to see and do,
9. where people feel extra relaxed and
10. with clean air (good air quality).

Healthy Streets Approach was developed by Lucy Saunders, adopted by Transport for London (TfL).

- East-west pedestrian and cycle links, of various hierarchy levels, are proposed to be enhanced and strengthened improving both infrastructure and overlooking so they are safe, as illustrated at figure 62. All proposed main and secondary connections are linking the existing and proposed gateways, which are to provide a welcoming, vibrant and pleasant experience. Other areas have also been identified in need of streetscape improvements (figure 62).
- Supplementary to Orton Square, the new public space proposed in front of the Phoenix Cinema & Art Centre's extension, will be a secondary 'neighbourhood heart'. Terminating St. George's Street to the north and providing a public, civic space for people to meet and socialise. Development around the new civic space is expected to be delivered through perimeter blocks with embedded active frontages to animate the space.
- Opportunities for enclosure and increased surveillance around St. George's churchyard, will be encouraged to improve and enhance the pedestrian experience.
- Proposed development will be expected to present active frontages, especially along established pedestrian connections (according to figure 62) to maximise natural surveillance over the public realm. It is expected that particular attention will need to be given to ground floors, where there is a need to balance privacy with surveillance and provide appropriate design solutions. Areas have been specified where new active frontages and façade animation are needed. The frequency of doors will also assist in establishing the appropriate level of activity and interaction within a street.
- New development will be expected, in design terms, to repair fragmented urban grain and the street-level status of the area, reinstating perimeter blocks and recreating well-defined and well-enclosed streets (figure 62).
- The playground between St. George's Church and St. George's Street is one of the very few within the city centre. As a result is to be preserved and enhanced, creating a permeable and welcoming environment to its surroundings.
- Development should allow for and support the ongoing provision of a mix of uses, including the creative businesses, arts, culture and residential uses, that will co-exist as an essential part of the area's character and identity and contribution to the city centre. A place to live, work and visit is aspired.
- The delivery of an office-led, mixed-use development to the east of the area will be supported, providing additional office space, residential uses, a new public space and car parking within close proximity to the Railway Station.
- New development will be expected to improve connectivity, accessibility and ease of movement both within and outside the character area, reducing car usage, opening new and enhancing existing connections, providing hierarchy of streets, routes and spaces and improving the streetscape.
- Consolidate the area as a well-balanced residential neighbourhood by managing the mix and type of homes by encouraging family friendly and owner occupier typologies, discouraging student accommodation.
- Ensure any future development along the ring road, St. George's Way, is well-designed and well-defined, addressing the need for activity and surveillance and providing a quality living environment, while minimising the effect of the ring road as a barrier.
- Provision of new green infrastructure will be expected, which makes a significant contribution to the character of a place and how it feels. This is needed particularly in building dominated urban environments, where the relief of trees, landscaping and planting provision is important.

4.4. Proposed Heights

The proposed building heights are based on the townscape appraisal and development guidance undertaken in the previous chapters, followed, where required, by more detailed site testing. All heights shown are defined in metres. To note 3m is broadly equivalent to 1 residential storey. Notwithstanding the proposed heights, each proposal will need to be considered in relation to its context.

Where there is an existing tall building within the character area it should not be assumed that a replacement tall building on that site would be acceptable. The proposed building heights reflect the Council's up to date view. Taller buildings will only be permitted where exceptional design quality can be demonstrated including a positive ground floor relationship to the street and the surrounding context, including the setting of heritage assets. They should comply with the Local Plan Tall Development Policy and Tall Development SPD.

It is proposed that most of the west of the area will be 15 metres and below. This respects the scale of the existing buildings and heritage assets within the Conservation Area and the uniformity of height evident across the Conservation Area itself. Excessive height along narrow streets, which are prevalent in the area, is also to be avoided.










There are opportunities for buildings of up to 21 metres along Charles Street and Humberstone Gate, reflecting the ambient height of the frontages to the main streets of the area. Small 'pockets' of up to 21 metres are considered appropriate to provide enclosure to streets and spaces such as Orton Square and St. George's Churchyard whilst respecting adjacent heritage assets.

To the east of the area where there is greatest development potential there are opportunities for buildings of up to 21 metres, however, the uniformity of scale that contributes to the identity and character of the west must be extended into the east of the area. The existing heights of the St. Georges Conservation Area are very consistent with important heritage buildings of similar eaves lines fronting the streets. Queen Street and Southampton Street are the only legible and direct connections between the west and the east sides of the character area and therefore set a precedence for appropriate heights for any potential development sites in the east.

As outlined in the previous analysis, the western ends of each street show an ambient height of around 15 metres, broadly equivalent to 5 residential storeys, determined by the heritage buildings. This datum should be continued east along these streets, extending to the ring road, to retain and reinforce a consistent height and street enclosure. This will also contribute to a uniformity of scale across the area as a whole, unifying the east and west.

There are townscape markers, gateways and buildings in the area that already make a significant contribution to the legibility of the area which will be enhanced through retention and improved setting. Consequently, there is no townscape justification for new tall development to provide local landmarks and improve legibility to the area. The ring road is not considered an appropriate justification for increased height.

KEY

-  Important Views
-  Avoid the Canyon Effect
-  Narrow Streets
-  Street Enclosure - Keep Heights Consistent
-  0 - 15m.
-  15 - 21m.
-  Existing Tall Buildings
-  Listed & Locally Listed Buildings
-  Character Area Boundary

*3m is broadly equivalent to 1 residential storey



Figure 63: Proposed Heights

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Glossary

- **Accessibility:** The ease of reaching destinations. In a highly accessible location, a person, regardless of age, ability, or income, can reach many activities or destinations quickly, whereas people in places with low accessibility can reach fewer places in the same amount of time. The accessibility of an area can be a measure of travel speed and travel distance to the number of places to be reached prioritising walking, cycling and public transport.
- **Active frontage:** The interface between buildings and streets, where there is an active visual engagement and interaction between the public realm/ those on the street and the premises facing the street (ground and upper floors of the buildings), usually characterised by multiple entrances and windows. This quality is assisted where the front facade of buildings, including the main entrance, faces and opens towards the street. Ground floors may accommodate uses such as cafes, shops or restaurants. However, for a frontage to be active, it does not necessarily need to be a retail use, nor have continuous windows. A building's upper floor windows and balconies may also contribute to the level of active frontage.
- **Adaptability:** The capacity of a building or space to respond to changing social, technological, economic and market conditions and accommodate new or changed uses.
- **Ambient height:** The predominant height of an area is referred to as the 'ambient' or 'prevailing' building height.
- **Blank frontage/ wall:** A wall which has very few or no windows/ doors, providing no visual interaction with the public realm.
- **Boundary treatment:** The elements that define the extent of plots and differentiate between public and private space. Soft boundary treatments can be hedgerows and planting, whereas hard boundary treatments can include fences and walls.
- **Brick plinth:** A special shaped brick, which is used for aesthetic detail, allowing change in depth to brickwork, normally at the base of the building. Typically used for window cills, corbelling details, capping and kerbs.
- **Building cluster:** When several elements with similar characteristics are grouped in an area, making a distinct or prominent contribution to the townscape. For example, a cluster of tall buildings is formed when multiple tall buildings are grouped and placed together within a specific city area.
- **Building massing:** Refers to the overall configuration of a building in three dimensions. The height, volume and overall shape of a building as well as its surface appearance.
- **Building scale:** The size of a building in relation to its surroundings, or the size of parts or details of the building, particularly in relation to the scale of a person. Scale refers to the apparent size, not the actual size.
- **Built form:** Refers to the function, shape and configuration of buildings as well as their relationship to streets and open spaces.
- **Character:** It is what defines a place. It represents a variety of physical and non-physical features and qualities factors that help us distinguish the identity of one area from another based on its uniqueness and distinctiveness.
- **Comprehensive development:** Development delivered on several interrelated sites over varying timescales that is guided by a long-term plan for the whole area and describes how the land is expected to be developed and how land uses may change over time. It incorporates the identification and creation of a shared vision, usually planned by local leadership/ government in partnership.
- **Connectivity:** The number of connecting routes within a particular area, often measured by counting the number of intersection equivalents per unit of area. An area may be measured for its 'connectivity' for different travel modes – vehicle, cyclist or pedestrian. An area with high connectivity has an open street network that provides multiple routes to and from destinations.
- **Cul-de-sac:** A street with only one inlet/outlet connected to the wider street network. A closed cul-de-sac provides no possible passage except through the single road entry. An open cul-de-sac allows cyclists, pedestrians or other non-automotive traffic to pass through connecting paths at the cul-de-sac head.

- **Definition:** Ensure that the height and width of buildings or landscape features and the gaps between them relate to the width of the street and space in front of them and those on the other side.
- **Enclosure:** Enclosure refers to the extent to which buildings, walls, trees and other vertical items frame streets and public spaces. The way public spaces are framed by vertical elements in relative proportion to the width of the space can vary providing different character and sense of enclosure a person can experience.
- **Façade:** The external face of a building or group of buildings that face the public realm. Usually refers to the principal wall of a building that is facing the street and is visible from the public realm. It is the face of the building and helps inform passers-by about the building and the activities within.
- **Façade's animation:** The support of sustained activity on the street through visual details, engaging uses and amenities.
- **Figure ground plan:** A plan which shows only building footprints, rendered in black, with the ground plane left white, providing an abstract representation of the development density and the extent that buildings define public spaces. A figure-ground plan is a two-dimensional map of an urban space that shows the relationship between built and unbuilt space. It is used in analysis of urban design and planning.
- **Fine grain:** Grain refers to the pattern of property lines, plots, streets and lanes. It is the general shape and direction of building footprints. Fine grain refers to the higher intensity of smaller plots or streets.
- **Fragmentation:** In the urban context, it refers to the process or state where the urban fabric is broken into fragments, being visually and physically disconnected.
- **Gateway:** A signature building, landscape or space to mark an entrance or arrival to an area. The gathering point or place which acts a transition between different areas and/ or spaces.
- **Groundscraper:** A large building of both significant mass and scale which extends horizontally. It sprawls along the ground, rather than soaring into the sky.
- **Height transition:** the gradual change in height between buildings within a community.
- **Healthy street:** A street defined by its response to 10 evidence-based indicators that create a human-centred framework, embedding public health in transport, public realm and planning. These 10 indicators must be prioritised and balanced to improve social, economic and environmental sustainability through how streets are designed and managed. Thus, 'healthy' is a street where everyone feels welcome, that is easy to cross, that offers shade and shelter, that provides places to stop and rest, that is not too noisy, where people choose to walk and cycle, where people feel safe, that offers things to see and do, where people feel extra relaxed and with clean air (good air quality), (Lucy Saunders, adopted by TfL).
- **Heritage asset:** A building, monument, site, place area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest.
- **Human scale:** Elements and features with a scale that relate well in size to an individual human being and makes people feel comfortable rather than overwhelmed.
- **Inclusive (neighbourhood):** A neighbourhood where all buildings and their surrounding spaces can be accessed and used by everyone (all ages, backgrounds and abilities).
- **Landmark:** An 'object' that provides 'external points of orientation, usually an easily identifiable physical object in the urban landscape' (Lynch, 1960). Usually refers to a tall or taller structure/ built element with great visibility and a significant impact on its surroundings but can also be a building or structure that stands out from the surrounding buildings. It offers distinctiveness to locations within the urban fabric, contributing to an area's character and making it memorable. Highly distinctive buildings, structures or landscapes that provide a sense of place and orientation.
- **Layout:** The arrangement of buildings, streets, uses and spaces in a development.
- **Left over space:** A space with no clear use, character and/ or purpose, usually formed by the residues between various plots. 'Left over' spaces are usually at risk of being neglected/ abandoned and it is best for them to be incorporated within a design.

- **Legibility:** The ease with which a person is able to see, understand and find their way around an area, building or development, reflecting the possibility of organizing an place/ environment within an imageable and coherent pattern. A 'legible' place is one that people find easy to navigate and move through.
- **Local distinctiveness:** The combination of features of a building or a place that give it a distinctive identity, features that define an area or development.
- **Landscape openness:** Landscape openness is determined by the number of elements above eye level, as slopes, tall vegetation such as woods, groves and wooded banks, buildings in towns and villages, houses and commercial buildings.
- **Local (character area) view:** A view identified in the detailed townscape analysis of each Character Area as significant to the urban fabric, contributing to the area's distinctiveness.
- **Marker:** A prominent feature or area of interest that can serve as a visual marker (focal point) and help a person to navigate through a place.
- **Mobile workforce:** A workforce comprising individuals who work outside of a physical office location. These professional workers are not limited to employees who work from home.
- **Overlooking:** Having a view from above into other people's private space. For example, a balcony on the rear extension of a house could easily look into the neighbour's garden.
- **Obscure glazing:** An umbrella term for any type of glass that obscures or distorts the view through the glass. There is not a single type of glass known as obscure glass, rather, obscure glass can be thought of as a category name for various other types of glass. There are different levels of obscurity in glass.
- **Outskirts:** The outer part of the city.
- **Perimeter block:** Development blocks where buildings front onto streets and spaces and back onto rear gardens. It is commonly used to achieve successful development through connected streets and well-defined frontages. It can work at a range of scales but should be large enough to fit adequate amenity space, parking, natural ventilation, use of the block for other purposes and to accommodate the site's topography; and small enough to allow a permeable and walkable street pattern. It enables a clear distinction to be made between public and private realms, as defined by the exterior and interior of blocks respectively and increases natural surveillance of the street.
- **Permeability:** The extent to which the urban structure permits, or restricts, movement of people or vehicles through an area, and the capacity of the area network to carry people or vehicles.
- **Place-making:** A term for the design of public spaces and the greater urban fabric, to create the physical conditions that residents find attractive, safe, neighbourly and legible. It is usually done in close consultation with the residents of a city or neighbourhood, resulting in places that have popular features for recreation, hobbies, socializing, interaction and personal reflection.
- **Positive contribution building:** Buildings that are not listed, locally listed or within Conservation Areas, however, they are important as part of the townscape of each Character Area. As such there is a general presumption against the demolition of these buildings.
- **Problematic view:** A view which is poorly terminated or defined and could be improved to make a better contribution to the townscape and place-making.
- **Rus in urbe:** An illusion of countryside created by a building or garden within a city. The phrase, which is Latin and means literally 'country in the city', was coined originally by the Spanish-born Latin epigrammatist Martial.
- **Sensory richness:** The human experience of the urban environment comes from different sensory channels i.e., sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. The depth and breadth of these sensory experiences can be investigated under the general term, sensory "richness."

- **Screened frontage:** A frontage that is blocked by planting or physical objects, interrupting or making difficult the interaction between the public realm/ those on the street and the building premises facing the street (ground and upper floors of the buildings).
- **Sense of place:** A place with strong identity and character that is memorable and deeply felt by local residents and visitors. Sense of place is determined by personal experiences, social interactions, and identities.
- **Skyline:** The outline of land and buildings defined against the sky, the shape viewed near the horizon. It can be created by a city's overall structure, or by human intervention in a rural setting, or in nature that is formed where the sky meets buildings or the land.
- **Slender building:** A building, most notably a tall building, where its proportions of height to width creates a narrow or 'slender' built form.
- **Slum clearance:** Urban slums are regions accommodating people who lack the necessities to sustain a healthy and safe livelihood. Slum clearance refers to the removal for rehousing, by the state, of those people who previously lived in slum areas, to prepare the area for demolition and rebuilding.
- **Soft site:** A site with possible redevelopment potential.
- **Strategic vista:** A view of city-wide significance.
- **Street block/ Urban block:** The space within the street pattern of a city that is subdivided into land, usually containing several buildings.
- **Streetscape:** The visual character of a street space that results from the combination of street width, curvature, paving, street furniture, plantings and the surrounding built form and detail. The people and activities present in the street also contribute to the streetscape.
- **Street pattern:** Refers to the shape and distribution of streets which ultimately determines the shape of the city.
- **Strong frontage:** A frontage of heritage assets and/ or buildings making a positive contribution (as presented within each Character Area Evidence Base document). The building lines, characteristics and heights of these frontages are to inform the streetscape and for them to be retained as 'dominant features' in any street.
- **Tall development:** A building/ development which is significantly higher than the buildings/ developments in the surrounding area.
- **Three-dimensional, urban design framework:** An urban design vision for an area presented in three dimensions (length, width, height) with the use of 3D modelling.
- **Townscape elements:** The visual composition of buildings, spaces, views and features within a town that determine its distinctive character.
- **Urban grain:** The pattern of development in a settlement, the balance between open spaces and built forms, and the nature and extent of subdividing an area into smaller parcels or blocks.
- **View/ Vista of city-wide significance:** A view/ vista of city-wide significance meets a large number of important criteria, significant to the history, identity and place of Leicester.
- **View termination point:** A building or other feature which is placed at the end of a view down a street or square, to aid enclosure or provide a landmark.
- **Vista:** Direct and continuous views along straight streets or open spaces.
- **Visual impact:** The changes to the scenic attributes of the landscape/ townscape brought about by the introduction of visual contrasts (e.g., development) and the associated changes in the human visual experience of the landscape/ townscape.
- **Wayfinding:** All the ways in which people orient themselves in physical space, navigate from place to place and interpret their surroundings. It is a holistic concept with a focus on making all parts of the urban landscape easy to read and understand.



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