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Leicester
City Council

Mansfield Street 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.

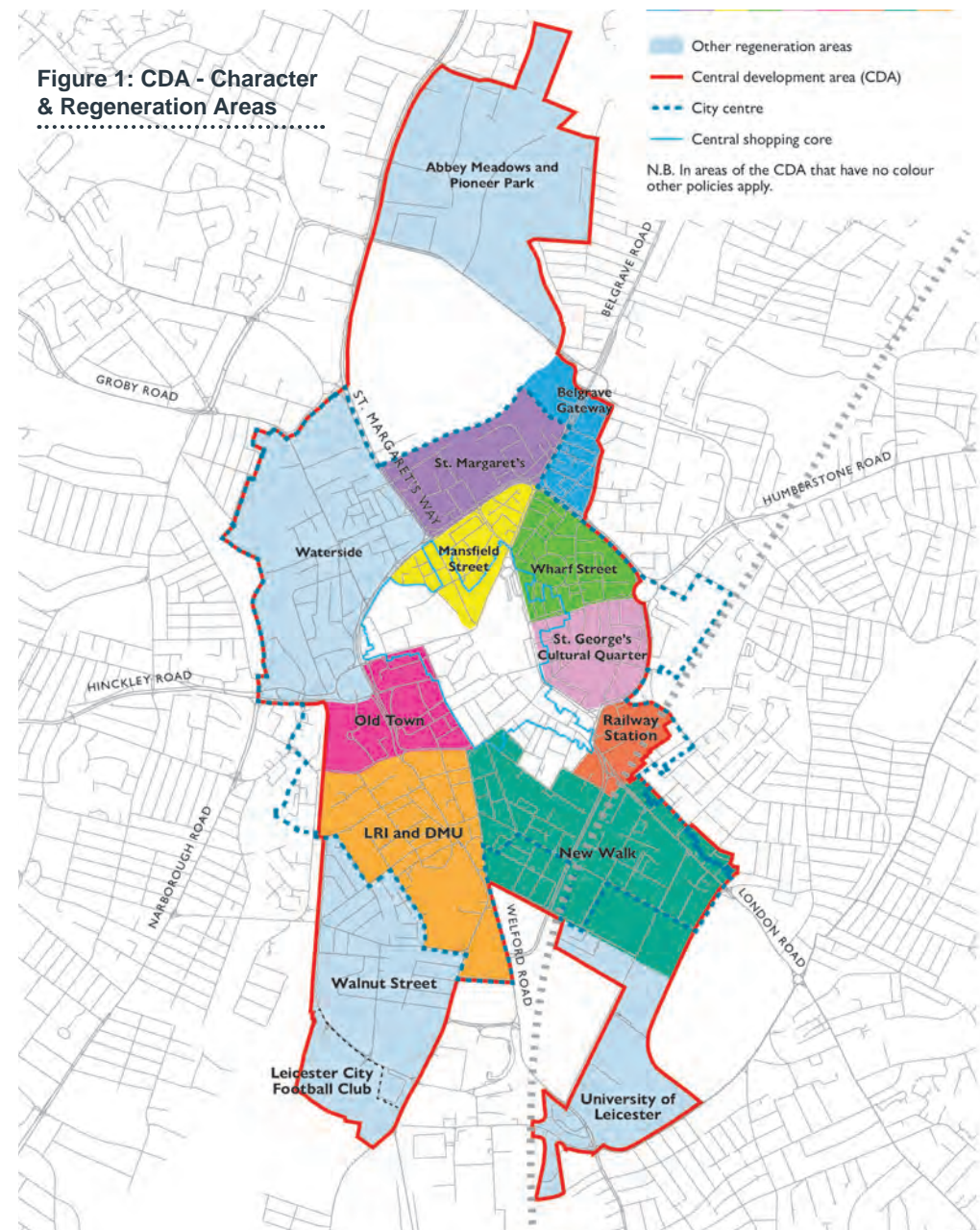
LCC has divided the CDA into 14 distinct areas, including 9 character areas and 5 other regeneration areas, to recognise the individual context of each area and for future policy to be based on the area's defining characteristics. These are:

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.



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

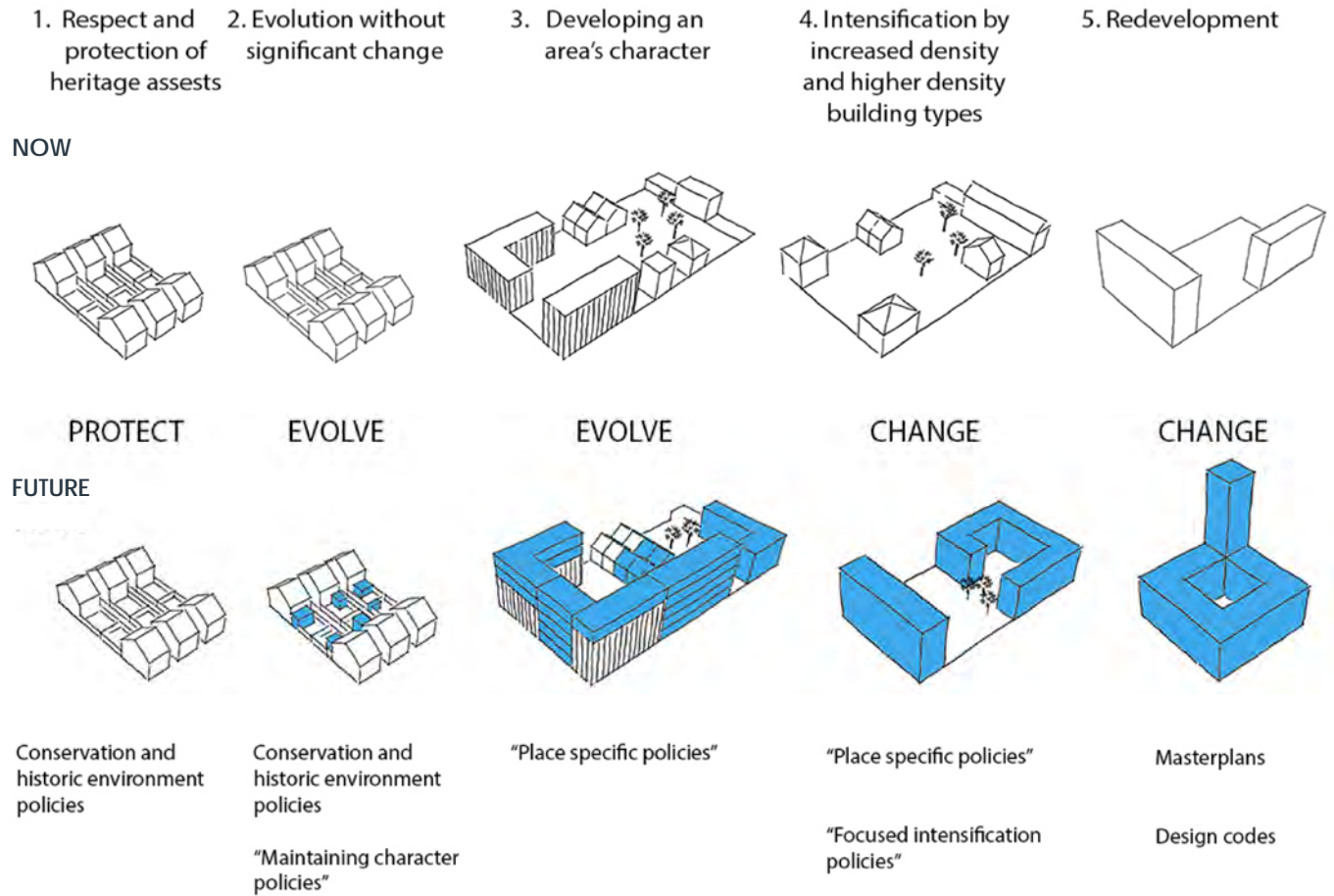
To inform and guide policy, it is helpful to understand the level and scope of change that the specified character areas are likely to undergo during the plan period and beyond. Some of the character areas will predominantly include heritage assets, with few development opportunities, requiring protection 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

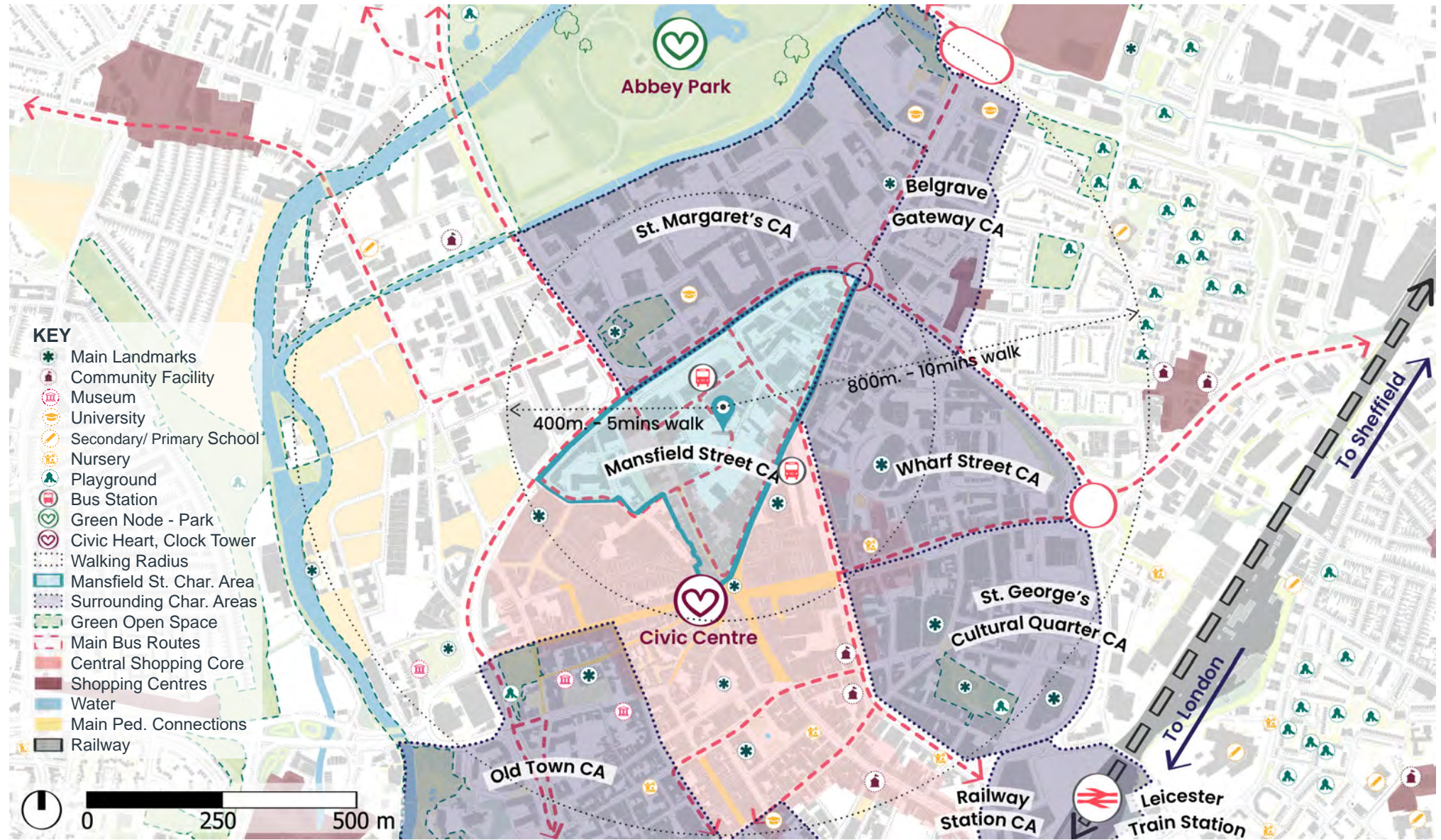


Figure 3: Mansfield Street Character Area within the Greater Context

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The Mansfield Street character area is located within the CDA, being part of Leicester's city centre (located at its north-west edge). It's prime location connects Leicester's city centre with the surrounding, mainly residential, neighbourhoods, acting as transition zone of facilities and services between them. Surrounded by Wharf Street, St. Margaret's, Belgrave Gateway and St. Margaret's character areas, it is an area of industrial heritage, hidden gems and potential waiting to be unlocked.

The Clock Tower, Leicester's civic heart, can be found at the southern corner of the character area, whereas Abbey Park, Leicester's biggest central green open space, is reachable within less than a 10 minutes walk. Likewise the Railway Station can be reached within less than a 15 minutes walk. The two bus stations are for the city are very accessible, with one located within the character area itself (St. Margaret's bus station) and the other at its eastern border (Haymarket bus station).

Mansfield Street character area is bordered by Belgrave Gate (east), Burleys Way/ Vaughan Way (west and north-west) and New Bond Street/ St. Peters Lane/ Causeway Lane (south and south-west). Although surrounded and permeated by public transport routes, it is a highly car dominated area, with streets of weak enclosure and problematic pedestrian connections.

Today, notwithstanding the mix of industry, retail and leisure uses, residential uses are coming forward and being established in the character area. Mainly these are at a smaller scale, with flats above shops and conversions within the Church Gate Conservation Area.

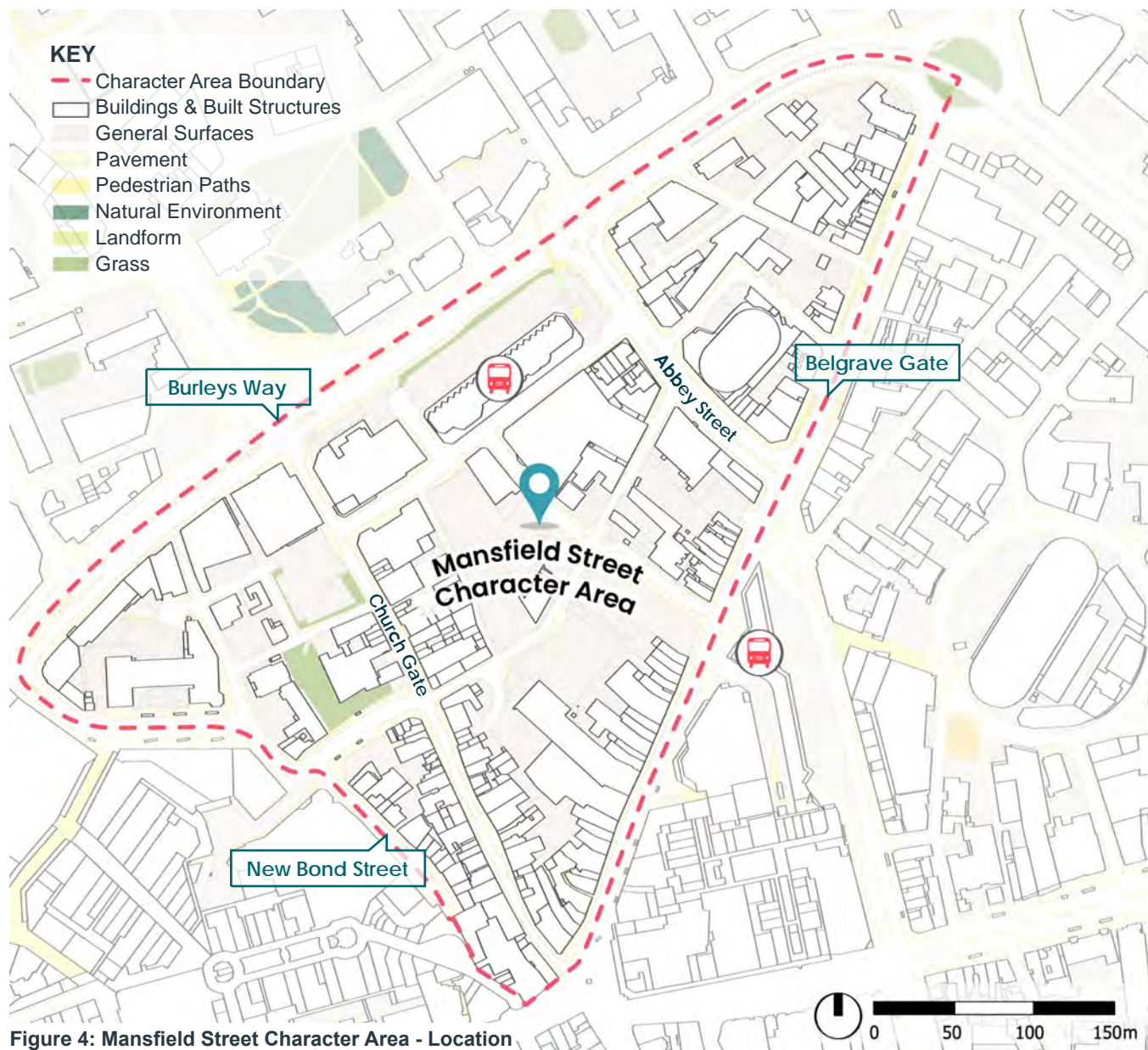


Figure 4: Mansfield Street Character Area - Location

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2.2. History & Evolution of Mansfield Street

The Church Gate Conservation Area is a distinctive part of the Mansfield Street character area and falls wholly within the Archaeological Alert Area. It comprises Church Gate itself and is bounded by East Bond Street (to the west), Darker Street, Butt Close Lane and Gravel Street (to the north) and by Short Street / Mansfield Street (to the east).

Church Gate and its surrounding area has been close to the heart of the historic city since the Roman times. From forming part of a route along the old city walls to its current role as a bustling shopping street, it has been in continuous occupation.


Church Gate is one of the few thoroughfares into the city which was not substantially redeveloped in the Victorian era or twentieth century and as such gives a rare snapshot into the historic development of the city. Most of Church Gate's streets have medieval origins, but the majority of its buildings date from the 19th century onwards.

Early Origins

The earliest history of the area can be traced back to the Roman times when the layout of the town's defences were first established, laying just to the west of the present day Church Gate. The name Church Gate likely dates back to Danelaw. The 'Gate' in 'Church Gate' derives from the Danish word 'gata' for 'road'. The road itself originated as a lane that ran just outside Leicester's eastern boundary walls, linking St. Margaret's Church with the town's East Gate.



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 Mansfield Street character area has been marked for further clarity. 

Medieval Era

There has been a church on the site of St. Margaret's Church since AD 679, which may have had a small community attached to it, and was connected to the markets by a lane.

Some suburbs began to develop centred on the market that had sprung up outside the town's eastern gate. A period of steady growth took place as the town defences fell into disrepair and were removed during the late 15th century. In 1478 the first written reference to the name 'Church Gate' is found, when it was recorded as a lane leading onto Sanvey Gate, which ran east-west just outside the north wall.



Figure 5: Medieval Leicester Plan - Current Extent of Church Gate Conservation Area

16th - 18th Centuries

In the 16th Century Queen Elizabeth I had donated an area of open land to the freemen of Leicester for archery practice. On these 'butts' shooting marks were erected and the activity is recorded in the name Butt Close Lane.

By the 18th century Sanvey Gate and Church Gate had become the main coach route into the town from the north. By the time the East Gate was removed in 1773 the centre of the town had gravitated from Highcross towards East Gates and Church Gate. The improvement of the Harborough Turnpike route to London, which ran via Gallowtree Gate, had also encouraged development at the southern end of Church Gate. The site of the present Clock Tower became a major junction.

Although the main street pattern has been established with Church Gate, Belgrave Gate and Archdeacon Lane clearly visible on Prior's map of 1779 there was still only a limited amount of development in the area at the beginning of the 19th century. By the time of Fowler's map of 1828 Mansfield Street and Abbey Street have been established.

Church Gate was now a more established thoroughfare but it did not extend directly out of the city, instead connecting to the North Gate a river crossing via Sanvey Gate. Belgrave Gate becomes a main thoroughfare north-east from the junction with Gallowtree Gate.

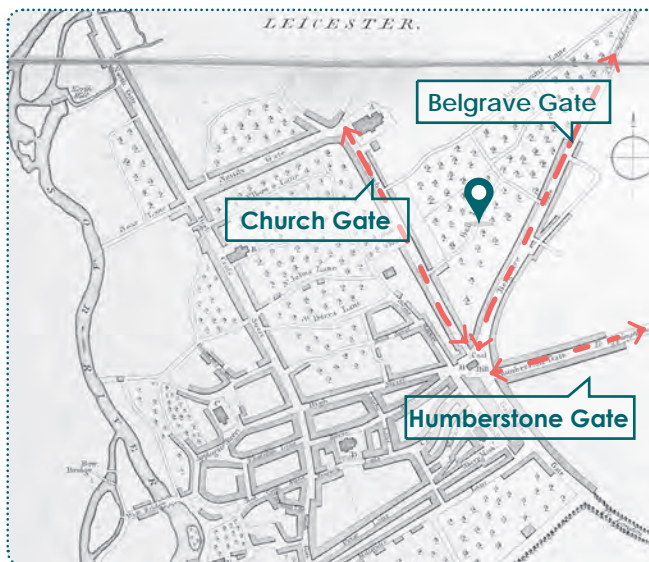


Figure 6: 1779 (Prior)

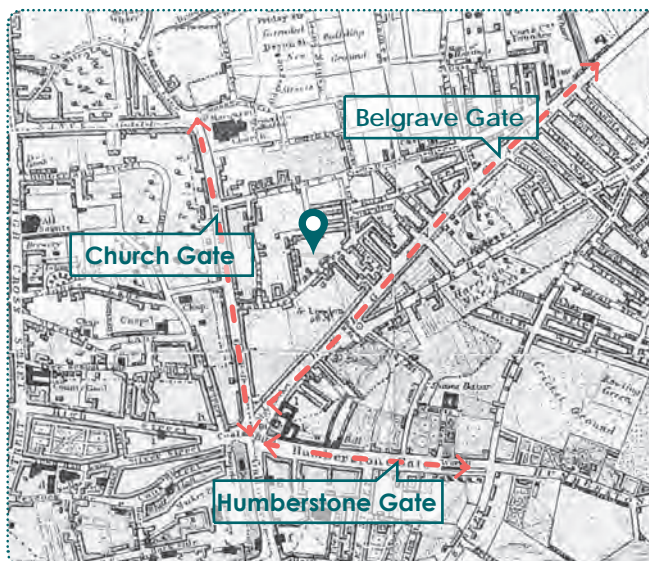


Figure 7: 1828 (Ellis & Ellis)



Figure 8: St. Margaret's Church

Victorian Era

The growth of the boot and shoe and hosiery industries from the 1830s onwards led to the expansion of Leicester and widespread development and change within the city. Small-scale industry dominated the town until it was gradually out-competed by larger factories. The 1886 Ordnance Survey Map shows that larger scale industrial uses had become established alongside smaller scale industry. These included hosiery and footwear, and industries complementing them. There are timber yards, saw mills, foundries and also agricultural and horticultural works, some of which survive in the Church Gate Conservation Area. The industrial uses were located predominantly to the south with terraced and courtyard housing. A church and Sunday school, hall, school, coffee house, public house, skating rink and hotel served the community at this time. Many of these original buildings have survived and are nationally or locally listed.

In 1902, a scheme to widen and upgrade High Street was completed whereby it was substantially rebuilt as a grand shopping street incorporating new electric trams. Alongside the rapid expansions of the Victorian era and trade along arterial routes, Church Gate, in particular, gradually lost its importance as a city thoroughfare, but remained an important shopping street.

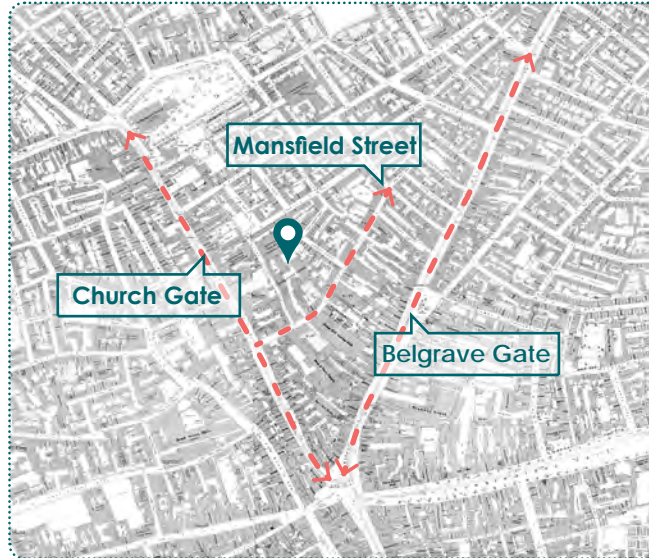


Figure 9: 1886

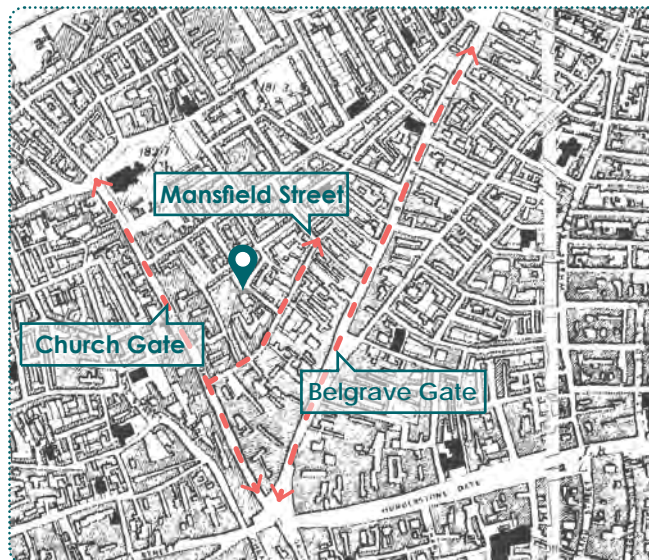


Figure 10: 1903

20th - Early 21st Centuries

The main impact on this area and the city in the 20th century was the increasing influence of motorised transport with the most drastic changes taking place in the post-war era. Construction started on the central ring road system in the 1950s with the widening of Burley's Lane into Burley's Way, which terminated in a new roundabout at the end of Church Gate. In the 1960s Vaughan Way was created to link this new roundabout to St. Nicholas Circle. The intent of this road was to allow traffic to bypass the congested Clock Tower. In doing this, much of the historic street pattern was swept away and the end of Church Gate was severed from St. Margaret's Church and the long standing historic route between the East and North Gates, along Church Gate and Sanvey Gate, was lost.

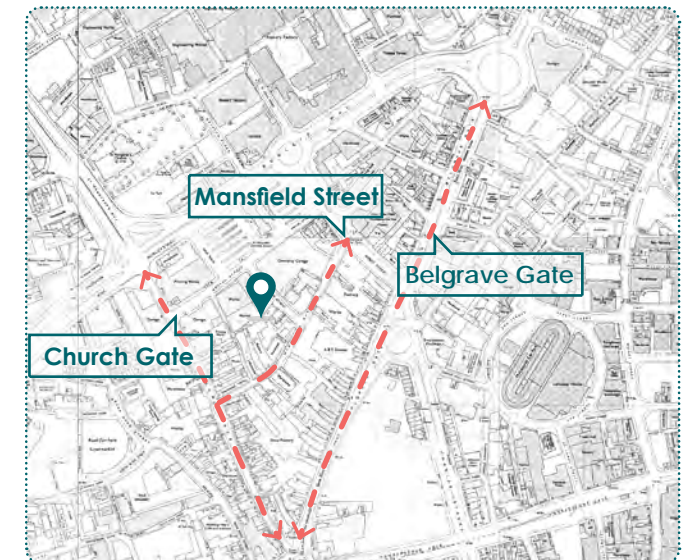


Figure 11: 1962-1969

Additionally, the Abbey Motor Hotel and car park (with capacity for 915 cars) was built and a number of garages were located along Church Gate. St. Margaret's bus station was constructed in its present day location, although it has undergone many changes since.

In the 1970s St. Peter's Lane was extended to connect the ring road to Mansfield Street. The road was built significantly wider than adjacent streets and caused a significant visual separation between the north and south elements of Church Gate and East Bond Street.

Also in the post war era the clearance of 'slum' housing was taking place. By the early 1960s most of the narrow streets and small houses, characteristic of the area, had been cleared. The area around Church Gate shifted from being a mix of residential, commercial and industrial to one which was solely commercial in character. The larger Mansfield Street area retained a mix of commercial properties and industries to the south, but much of the residential stock to the north was replaced by industrial uses, although some of the community uses still remain.

Coming up to date, the Connecting Leicester programme has brought significant change to the area, improving the public realm in Church Gate and Belgrave Gate by reconfiguring the street layout and creating a new bus link. Improvements to Abbey Street are also proposed.



Figure 12: Leicester Viewed From the Air in 1937 Looking North East (Historic England)
.....



Figure 13: Leicester Viewed From the Air in 1947 Showing St. Margaret's Bus Station
.....



Figure 14: Leicester Viewed From the Air in 1937 Looking North (Historic England)
.....



Figure 15: Leicester Viewed From the Air in 1947 Showing Abbey Street (Historic England)
.....

2.3. Heritage & Townscape Assets

After reviewing the history and evolution of the Mansfield Street character area, this sub-chapter presents the main heritage and townscape assets of the area (figure 16). 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.

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 are a number of views and vistas of city wide significance that affect this area. The sequence of views from Church Gate terminating in St. Margaret's Church are particularly important from a heritage and townscape perspective and the identity of Leicester, as are views looking south from the north. Likewise, the view from the Clock Tower to Belgrave Gate terminating in St. Mark's Church. Views from Gallowtree Gate protecting the setting of the Clock Tower are also shown. Views important to the setting of the cluster of listed buildings including the Great Meeting House are also highlighted.

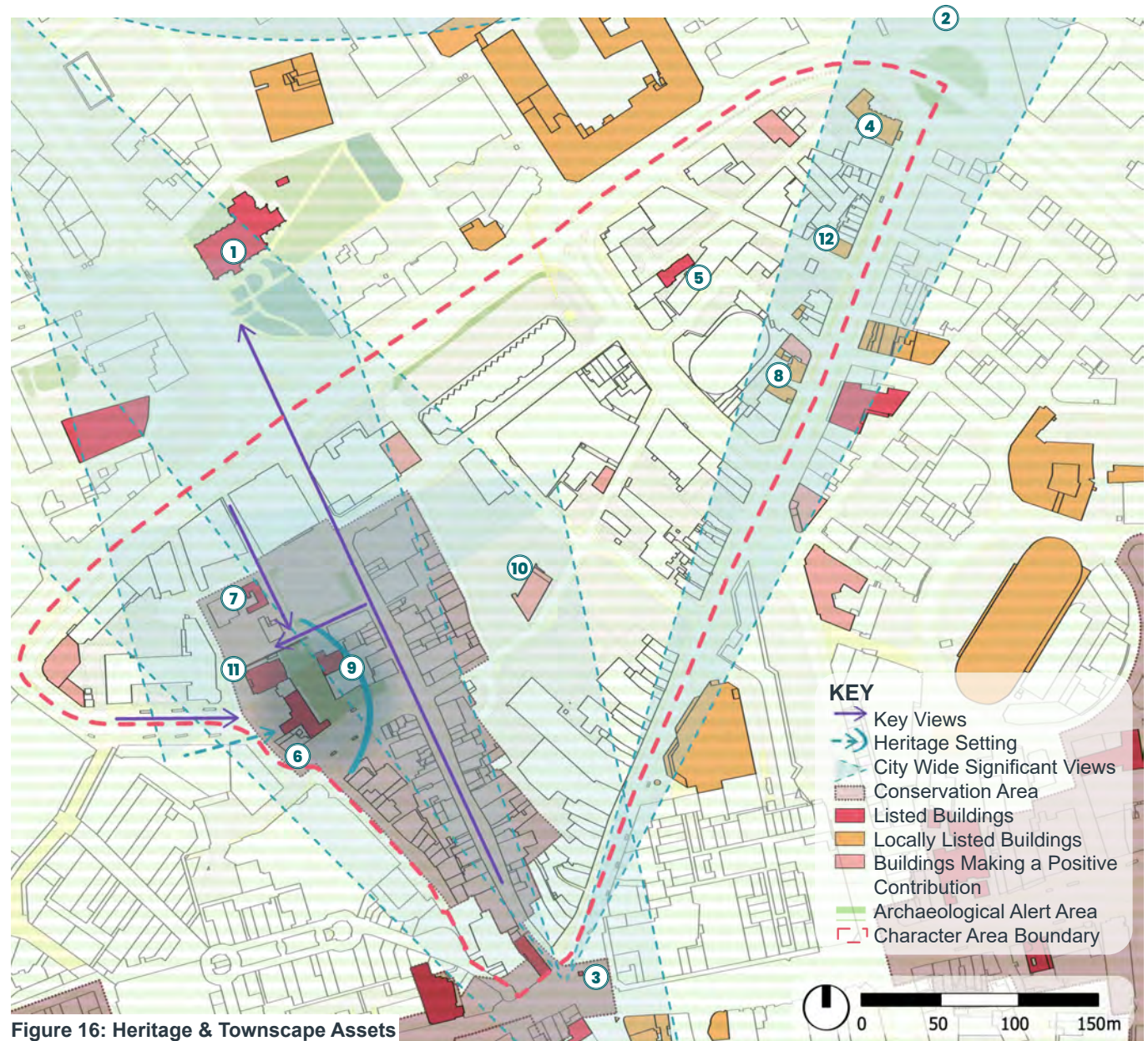


Figure 16: Heritage & Townscape Assets

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Conservation Area

The Church Gate Conservation Area is a distinctive part of the area and was first designated in 2006, although changes have been made to the area it covers since that time. The Conservation Area comprises Church Gate itself and is bounded on the west side by East Bond Street, to the north by Darker Street, Butt Close Lane and Gravel Street and by Short Street / Mansfield Street to the east.

Within the Church Gate Conservation Area Appraisal 2017 the area's special interest is defined as follows;

- Historic and archaeological importance relating to Leicester's early suburbs and the Roman and medieval town. It contains the best surviving fabric of the historic route from North to East Gates running along the city wall;
- Surviving and rare elements of the City's medieval character with narrow burgage plots set at the back of the footpath as well as the narrow and sinuous character of the streets. The historic view of the tower of St. Margaret's Church still defines Church Gate looking north;
- The area includes several listed buildings, including one of the town's earliest brick buildings (the Great Meeting Chapel). An unusual timber warehouse (66 Church Gate) and Master Hosier's House are rare survivals in the development of the hosiery industry which once defined the city; and
- It has historically interesting and important open spaces including one of only a few surviving churchyards in the city centre and the site of the former archery butts.

The Conservation Area Appraisal identifies two distinct zones which are characteristic of their areas. The 'commercial zone' of Church Gate and Bond Street and the 'quiet zone' around the Great Meeting House and Butt Close Lane.

To the rear of 39 Church Gate, given its setting, is a substantial three storey factory building. Historic maps indicate it was formerly surrounded by buildings. Wrights directory of 1899 suggests this was in use as an animal preserver and skin dresser and this building may have been used in connection with this business. The building is currently empty and in need of repair and re-use.

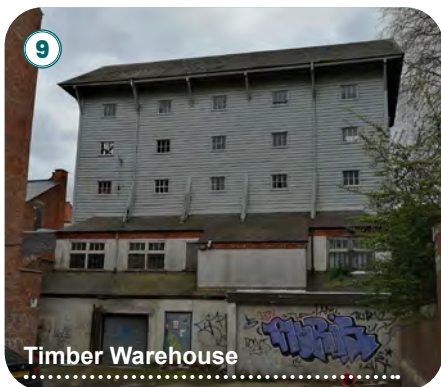
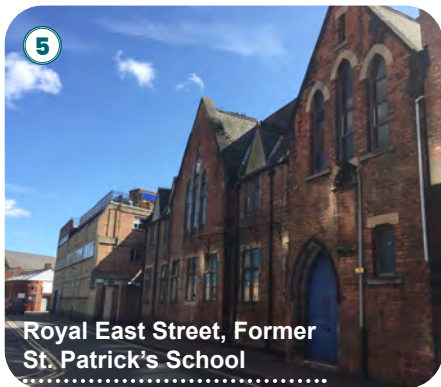
81 Church Gate (currently Langtons) was built as a garage for Castle's Motors in the 1930s. It is in the Art Deco style and the elegant fin like tower acts as a local landmark.

Listed Buildings

The buildings of most influence to the Mansfield Street character area are not within it, but are important to the area's wider setting. Grade I St. Margaret's Church and Grade II* St. Marks Church both terminate city wide significant views. The area also forms a backdrop to the view of the Grade II listed Clock Tower from Gallowtree Gate.

St. Margaret's Church is one of the most highly valued heritage assets in the city. A church on this site dates back to AD 679, and parts of the present building dates back to c. 1200. St. Marks Church was first built in 1870. It was surrounded by large industrial buildings and became one of the main working class churches in Leicester.

The Great Meeting House, built in 1707, is one of the earliest brick buildings of any importance in the city and is Grade II Listed. In the 18th and 19th centuries, non-conformist chapels were commonplace within the city. Relatively few survive to the present day and only three retain their historic use (the other two being the Baptist Chapel on Charles Street and the Methodist Chapel on Bishop Street). It is possible that East Bond Street (or 'Goldsmith's Grave' as it is shown on Roberts' map of 1741) was chosen because non-Conformists, with their radical political and religious views, had to maintain a discreet presence in the town. At the time of construction the 'backland' site where it is located would have been ideal. It became a Unitarian Chapel in the 19th century and the elegant front porch dates from that period.



* Please see Heritage & Townscape Assets Plan (figure 16) for the location of the following key building frontages.

Adjacent to the meeting house is the former schoolrooms which date from 1859 and is also listed at Grade II. On the east gable is a plaque dating the foundation of the school to 1708 which has most likely been reused from an earlier building.

On the south side of Butt Close Lane is the northern boundary wall to the Great Meeting House with parts dating from the 17th and 18th centuries. The wall is Grade II listed in its own right.

At the other end of Blake Street, 3 Darker Street is Grade II listed and is a rare example of a hosiery master's house and workshop and represents a building type that would have been commonplace within the city. It was built around 1850 and predates the large-scale industrialisation that was to occur within a few years. The Conservation Area appraisal identifies the need for a sympathetic new use for this building and a better physical and visual connection to Church Gate .

Adjoining 66 Church Gate is an unusual five storey timber-framed warehouse that was originally used for drying timber as part of the timber production process. It is of considerable interest due to its rarity, aesthetic appeal and as a local landmark. It is Grade II listed and can be glimpsed from various places within the Conservation Area.

Outside the Conservation Area is the Grade II listed former St. Patrick's School on Royal East Street. It was built as a school and chapel in 1854. At the end of a cul-de-sac this building is often not seen or known about and its setting is currently poor.

Locally Listed Buildings

Within the Mansfield Street character area there are four locally listed buildings to the northern end of Belgrave Gate. Located on a prominent corner site, 170 Belgrave Gate, is a good example of a late 19th century Primitive Methodist chapel and adjoining Sunday school, built circa 1882 to the designs of the nationally recognised Victorian architect Edward Burgess (also architect of the former school on Royal East Street). The building was remodelled in the 1930s with a distinctive Art Deco frontage, possibly when it was converted to a hall.

On Garden Street are two houses which remain from a block of court houses believed to have been constructed circa 1828-1832. They are a rare example of the typical one up – one down single aspect properties typical of many of Leicester's early 19th century slum houses that escaped demolition during slum clearance programmes, possibly as they were in use as part of the retail units to Belgrave Gate.

No. 106 - 108 Belgrave Gate is the former Albert Coffee House, a late 19th century coffee house designed, again, by Edward Burgess for the Leicester Coffee and Cocoa House Company. The company was founded in 1877 as part of the temperance movement to provide a better place for the people of Leicester to buy refreshments away from the beer shop or public house. The building is one of several purpose-built coffee houses that still remain, all representing the important historic significance of the coffee-house movement.

On a prominent corner plot along Belgrave Gate, No 1 Orchard Street was originally called the Red Cow Hotel and is a former Victorian public house. The current building dates from circa 1875 and despite the closure of the public house, the building remains a physical reminder of the importance of public houses to their local community.

Archaeological Alert Area

Leicester has a clearly defined historic core. The historic core encompasses the town's defences, first established in the Roman era and with the Roman and Medieval suburbs outside the walls. 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.

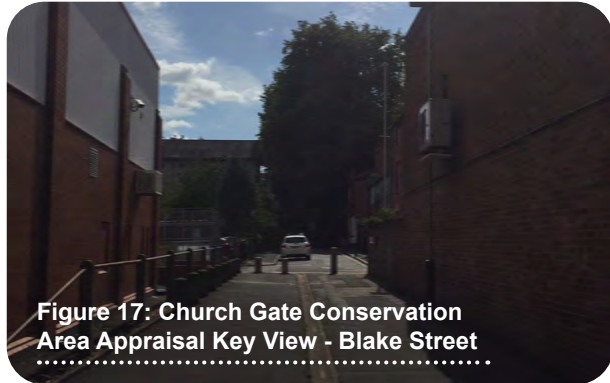


Figure 17: Church Gate Conservation Area Appraisal Key View - Blake Street



Figure 18: Church Gate Conservation Area Appraisal Key View - Butt Close Lane towards Great Meeting House

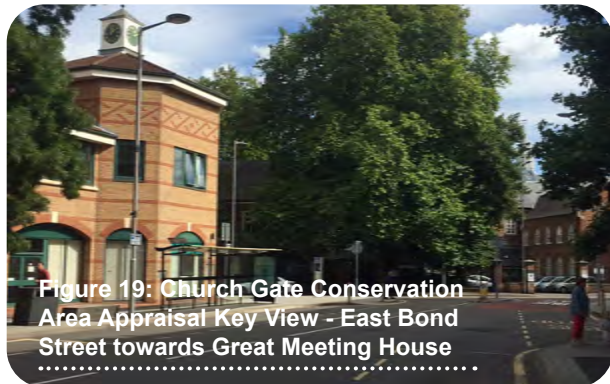


Figure 19: Church Gate Conservation Area Appraisal Key View - East Bond Street towards Great Meeting House



Figure 20: City Wide Significant View - Church Gate Terminating with St. Margaret's Church



Figure 22: City Wide Significant View - Church Gate Terminating with St. Mark's Church



Figure 21: City Wide Significant View - St. Margaret's Way Looking South Towards St. Margaret's Church



Figure 23: City Wide Significant View - Gallowtree Gate Towards the Clock Tower



Figure 24: View Down Church Gate Towards St. Margaret's Church Prior to the Construction of Burley's Way (Leicester City Council)



Figure 25: St. Margaret's Bus Station in the Early 1970's (Transport Memories of Leicestershire, Leicester Mercury)



Figure 26: Belgrave Gate with the Former Palace Theatre, Opened in 1901, on the Site of the Former Floral Hall (Leicester Mercury)



Figure 27: Burley's Way 1946 (Leicester City Council)

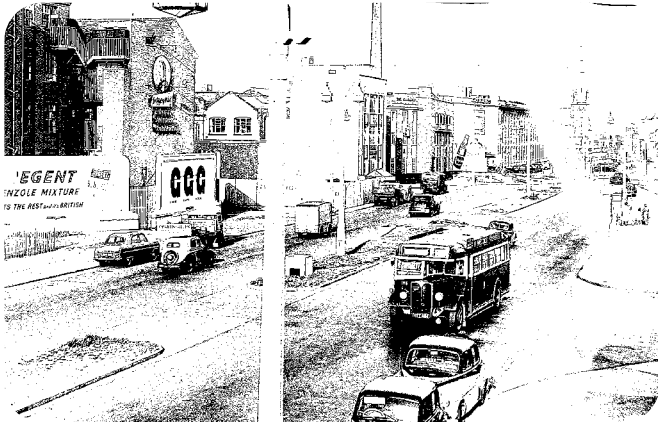


Figure 28: Burley's Way 1952 (Transport Memories of Leicestershire, Leicester Mercury)

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.

There is a much finer urban grain to Church Gate and the perimeter blocks adjacent to it where the historic street pattern and smaller urban blocks are more evident. To the southern end of Church Gate the development of Highcross Shopping Centre severed New Bond Street creating a larger urban block, despite the street's fine grain. The continuous frontage to Church Gate and Belgrave Gate is welcomed, however, the north and east of this block is fragmented due to accommodating service access to the rear of the retail units.

Savoy Street has provided a valuable connection, breaking up a previously large urban block along Belgrave Gate.

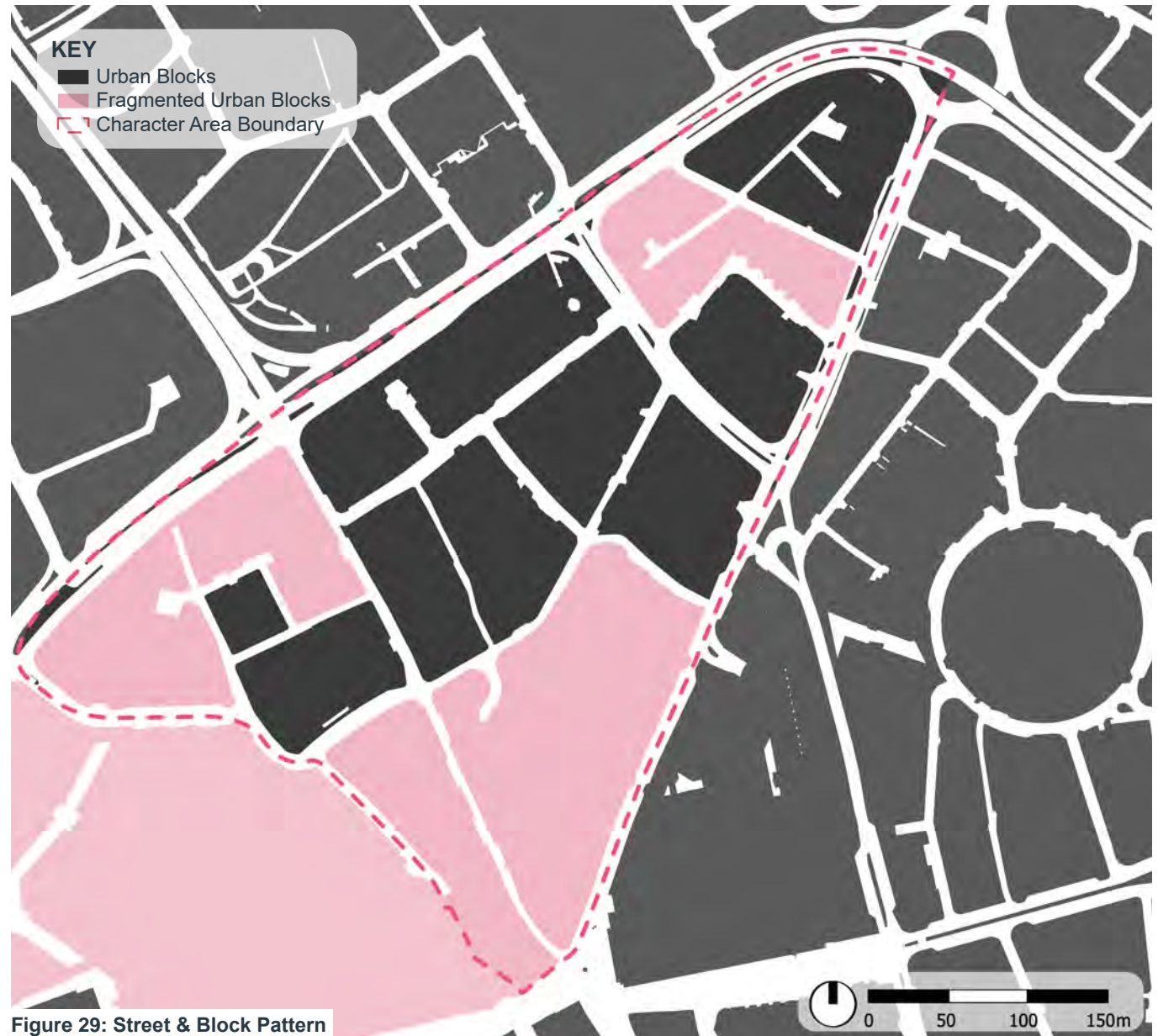


Figure 29: Street & Block Pattern

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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.

As expected, Church Gate and Belgrave Gate are well defined streets providing strong enclosure. The number of plots along these streets provide a very fine urban grain which is particularly distinctive along Church Gate. Abbey Street, New Bond Street and Orchard Street are also well enclosed.

Within the area itself, most streets are not well defined and enclosure is weak characterised by large undeveloped plots, surface car parks and large pavilion buildings located within plots. This can be experienced most clearly on Mansfield Street which is an important east-west connection.

Church Gate is a well defined street, however, it does reinforce a separation between the very different characters of the townscape to its east and west. Gravel Street does not continue beyond Church Gate and the weak enclosure of Mansfield Street is continued along St. Peter's Lane. They both also terminate at Abbey Street. Both of these streets provide an opportunity to better integrate the area as a whole.

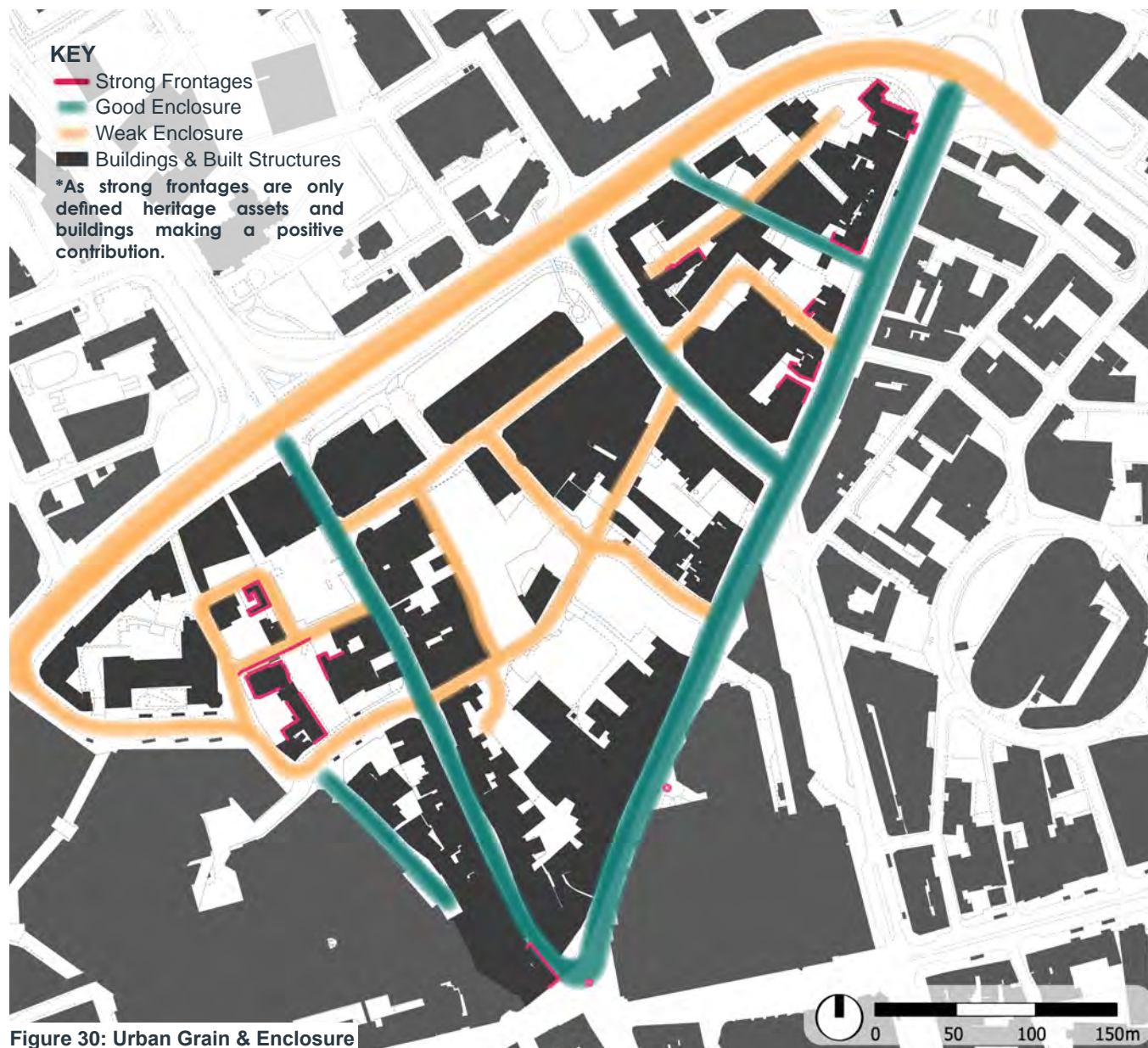


Figure 30: Urban Grain & Enclosure

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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.

Generally the area can be characterised by heights of up to 9m provided by buildings within the Church Gate Conservation Area and the low scale of retail and leisure uses. There are a handful of buildings up to 21m.

There are 5 buildings above 24m which are considered tall buildings in the context of the area. Abbey Street car park offers limited townscape contribution given its current condition, although it is visually prominent and terminates views from Charles Street. The buildings on the corner of Abbey Street and Burleys Way and along Gravel Street are both of a proportion and built form which works well in the context of the general height of the area, although their appearance could be improved. Any increase in height to the surrounding context of these buildings would have an impact on how they sit in the townscape which is considered to be positive.

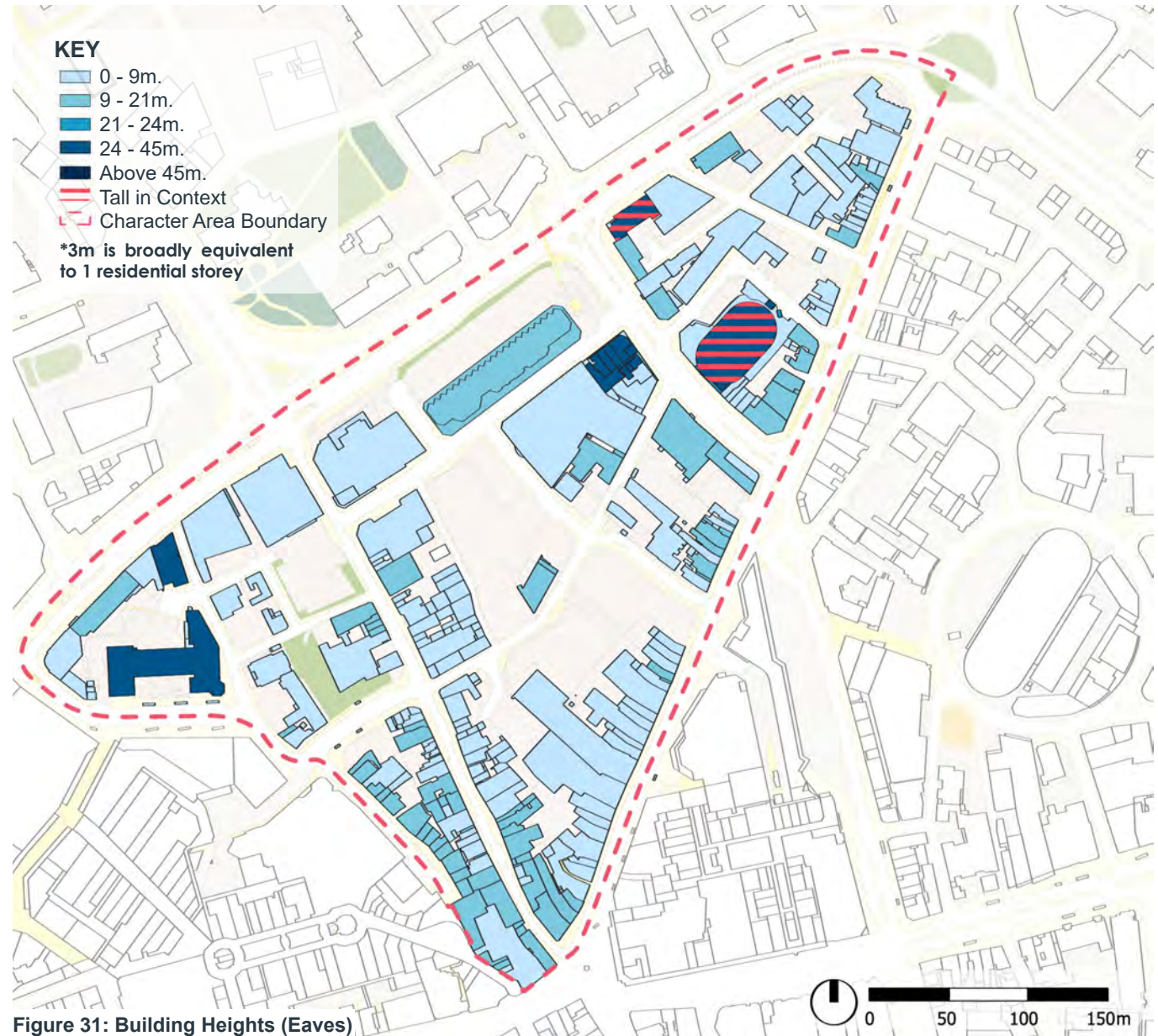


Figure 31: Building Heights (Eaves)

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Notwithstanding the existing low ambient heights in this area, there are opportunities for increasing the general height of the area in specific locations as can be evidenced in recent planning approvals.



Figure 32: Corner of Abbey Street & Burleys Way



Figure 33: Corner of Abbey & Gravel Street

Planning History

Recent planning history is indicative of the future change to the townscape and mix of uses in this area.

With the demand and current market preference for higher density private rented sector housing in the city centre, planning applications have been approved for proposals that are in excess of the 12m -15m ambient height.

The scale of proposals have been informed by assessing specific townscape and heritage considerations. Principally:

- The views of St. Margaret's Church from Church Gate and St. Margaret's Way and the view of St. Mark's and the Clock Tower along Belgrave Gate are of city wide significance,
- Church Gate Conservation Area and it's setting,
- Listed and locally listed heritage assets,
- Avoiding a 'canyon' of tall development reinforcing the separation of the ring road,
- Maintaining the townscape value of the existing cluster of tall buildings adjacent to Abbey Street and
- Creating new markers and improved enclosure to streets.

Recently approved heights for new development has been in the range of 15m to 41m. The balancing of townscape and heritage with market demands and developer viability has been challenging. Exceptional design quality has been required with scale and architectural quality considered in combination.

Approvals include, but not yet constructed:

- 20171254 Sandacre Street Car Park. Approval given for 267 residential flats.
- 20182183 97 Church Gate. Approval given for 171 bed hotel and 142 residential flats.
- 20191390 Former ABC cinema site Savoy Street. Approval given for 126 residential flats.

2.6. Land Uses

As expected the main shopping streets of Church Gate and Belgrave Gate are primarily commercial and retail. There is a mix of smaller independent shops and café's and larger high street stores with larger footprints.

Industrial uses, at a small scale, prevalent in the Victorian era, are also still apparent in the area but there is limited office use, with a small cluster of larger office buildings to the west of the area. A small number of leisure uses are also present.

Small-scale residential above shops and building conversions are clearly identifiable and contribute to the mix of uses in the area but these are generally isolated pockets.

The dominance of car parking, contributing to the currently poor townscape, is very clear.

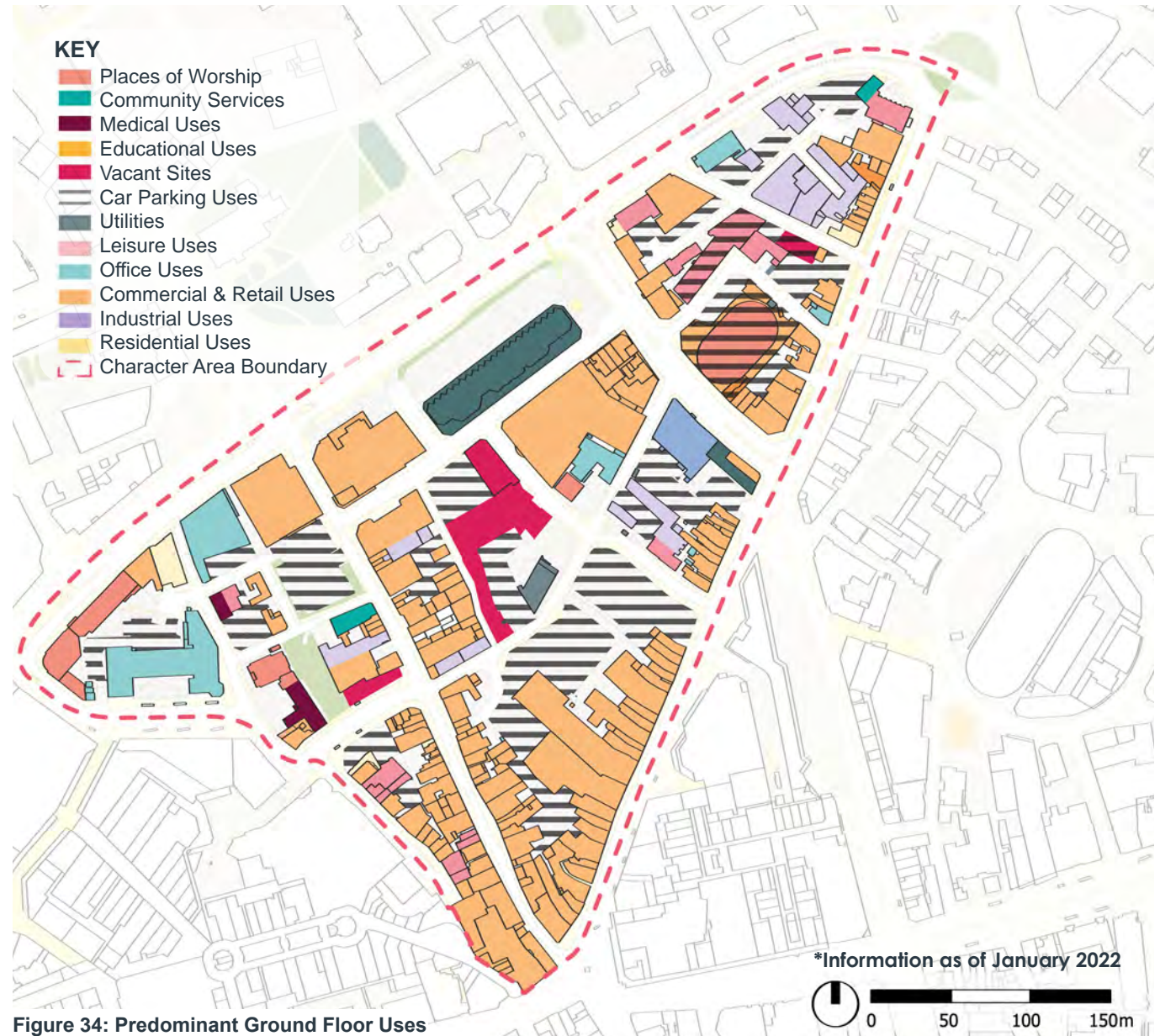


Figure 34: Predominant Ground Floor Uses

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Figure 35: Residential Uses

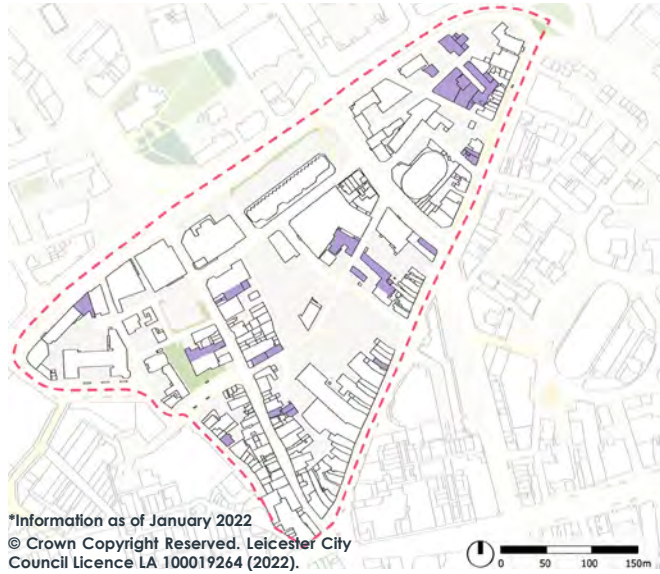


Figure 36: Industrial Uses

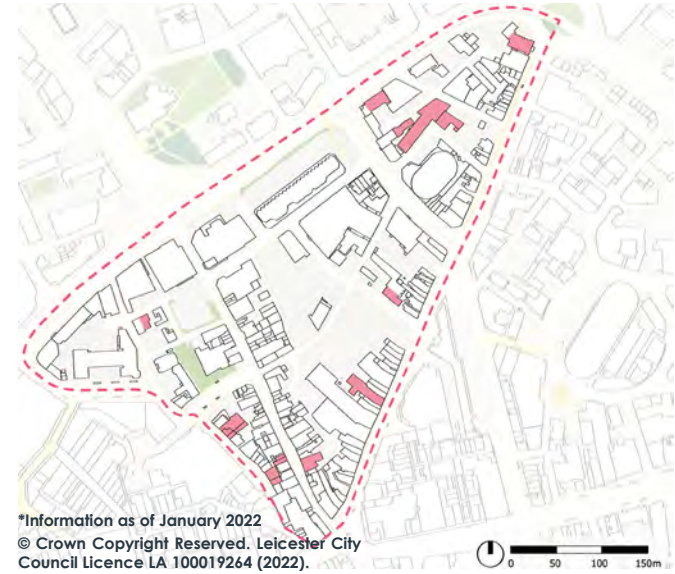


Figure 37: Leisure Uses

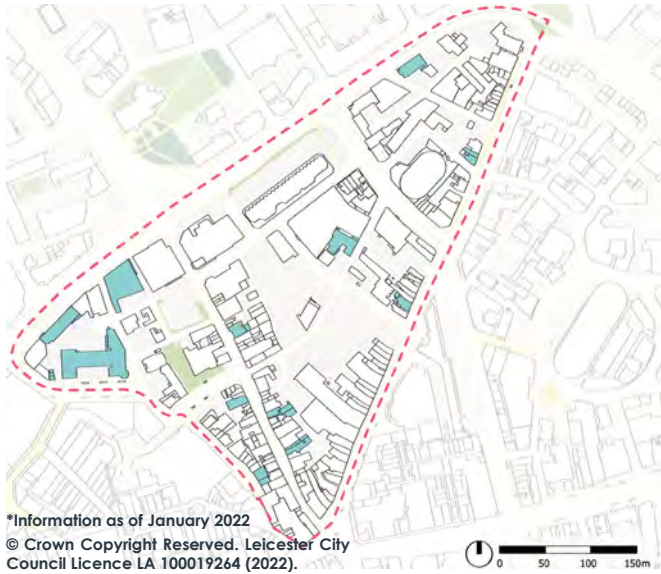


Figure 38: Office Uses

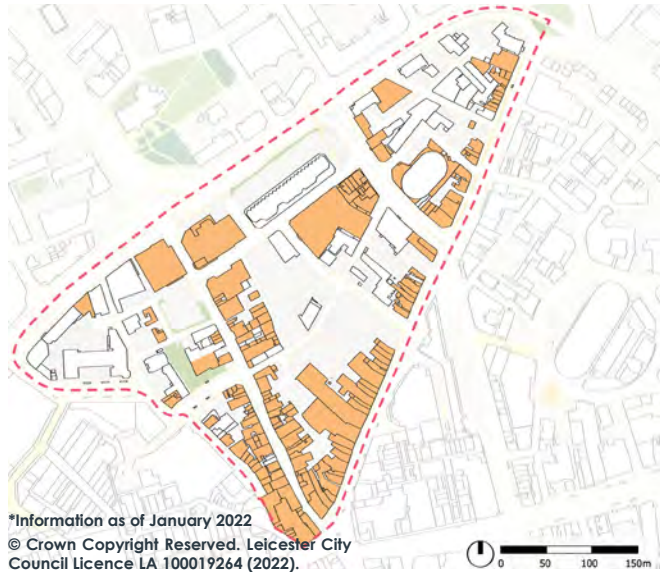


Figure 39: Commercial & Retail Uses

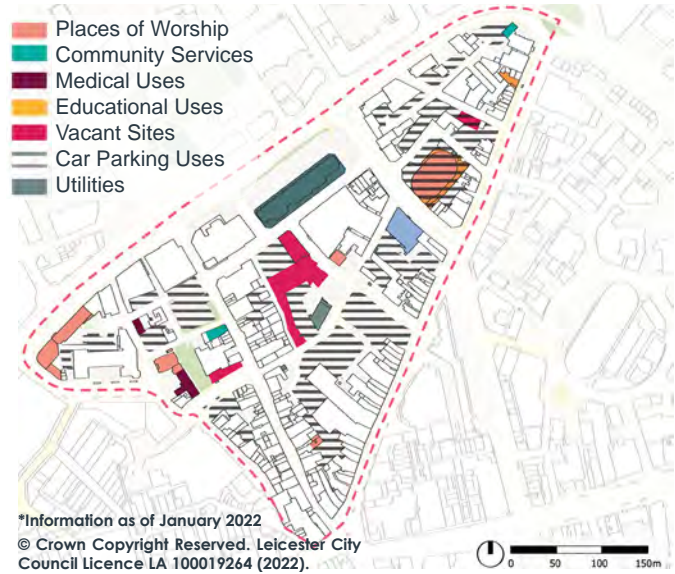


Figure 40: Miscellaneous Uses

- Places of Worship
- Community Services
- Medical Uses
- Educational Uses
- Vacant Sites
- Car Parking Uses
- Utilities

2.7. Community Infrastructure & Influence

Mansfield Street character area is very much part of the city centre and benefits from all the wide ranging services, leisure activities, arts and cultural venues and retail that are provided within and directly adjacent to the area.

Within the area itself the shopping streets of Belgrave Gate and Church Gate are destinations for city shoppers, but also provide a range of independent shops, cafés and leisure uses alongside the larger high street stores. Church Gate has the potential to be the heart of the neighbourhood providing local facilities alongside the commercial offer of the city. Given the leisure uses in the area there is a strong night-time economy.

There are a few places of worship including the Great Meeting Unitarian Chapel and some arts and cultural venues, gyms and health facilities.

The area is well served by public transport and the railway station is a 10 minute walk away.

The nearest primary and secondary schools, are Slater Street and Castlemead Academy which are over 15 minutes walking distance away, via busy streets and employment areas. There are no play areas within the area itself although Abbey Park with its play, leisure and sports facilities is 10 minutes walk away, although connections to the park are in need of quality improvement.

The area is well located to benefit from city centre facilities and services, however, open spaces are lacking and the area is limited in its ability to provide for families.

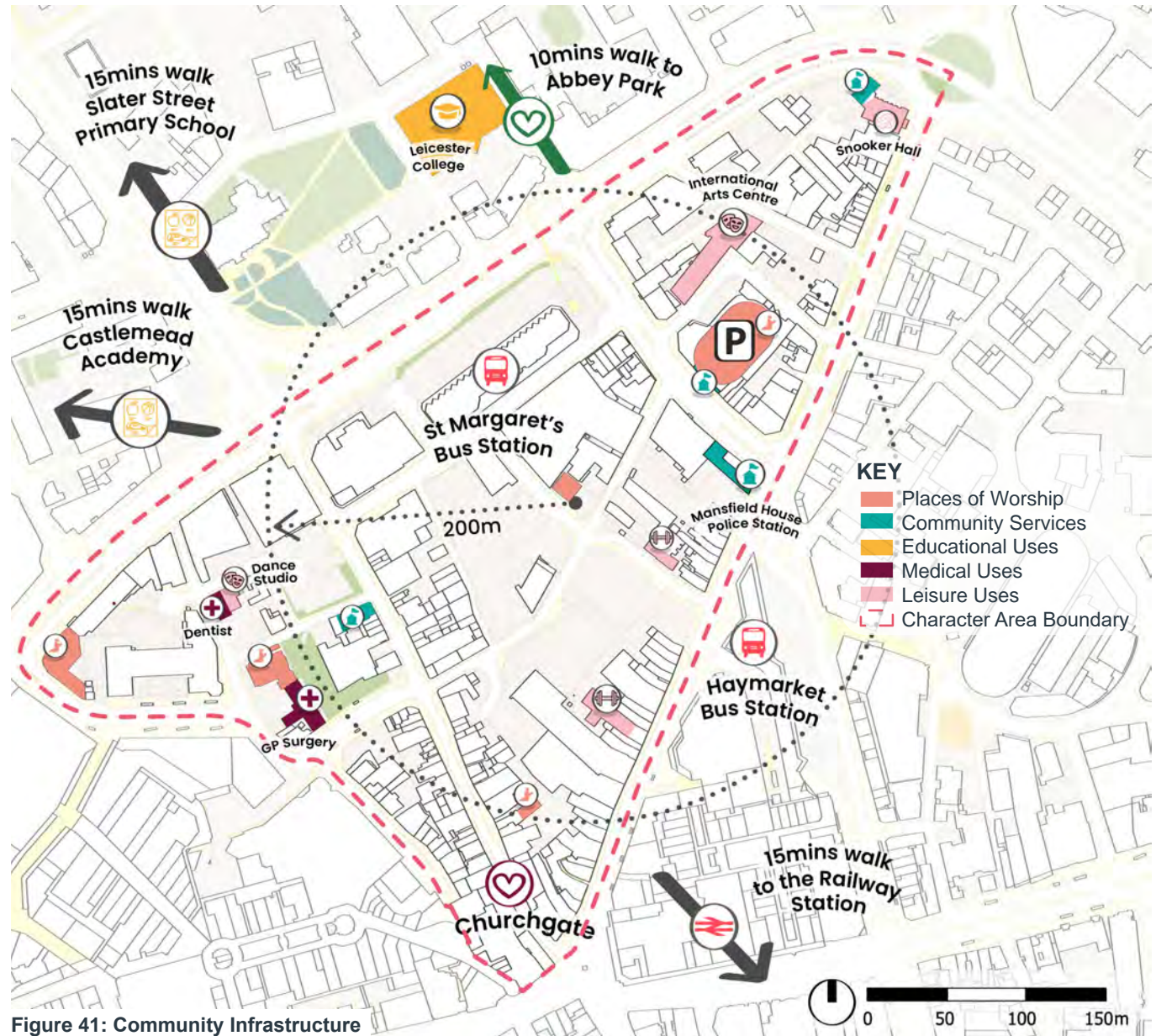


Figure 41: Community Infrastructure

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2.8. Housing & Tenure

Looking at the Mansfield Street character area, its residential coverage is low compared to other uses with most residential clustered around Church Gate.

The residential offer mainly consists of flats, mostly above shops and smaller purpose built blocks of managed accommodation. However, there are recent planning approvals for larger blocks of managed accommodation with significant number of homes. If constructed, three of the planning approvals will provide approximately 650 homes (flats) to this area significantly increasing the residential offer.

Some permitted development conversions from office to residential have also taken place.

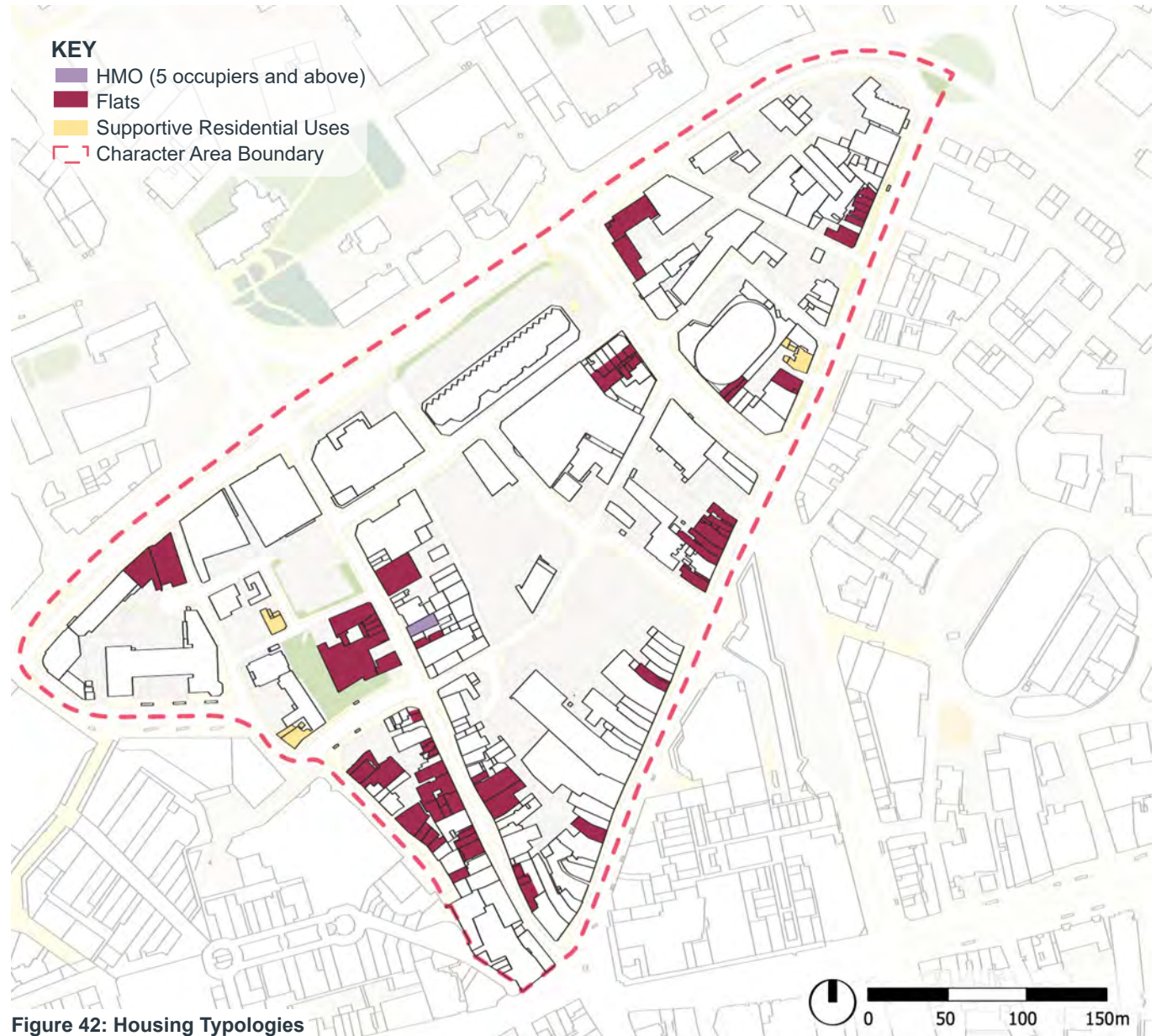


Figure 42: Housing Typologies

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2.9. Open Spaces & Public Realm

Church Gate is the key public space and improvements to make the current bus and vehicle route more pedestrian and cycle friendly have been undertaken as part of Connecting Leicester improvements. Church Gate will remain a busy street and therefore opportunities for relaxation, sanctuary and activity will be limited.

There are no landscaped open spaces in the area that are available to local residents. The largest open space within 10 minutes walking distance and that provides most facilities, including sports and play, is Abbey Park. However, its proximity is counterbalanced by its poor accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists across busy ring roads and through poorly overlooked areas which may be considered unsafe.

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 Jubilee Square. Cathedral Square and, further afield, Castle Gardens are much quieter and greener.



Figure 43: Current Public Realm in Mansfield Street

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.

Burley's Way is the highest order street on the northern boundary of the area. As part of the ring road it is a main arterial and is vehicle dominated and therefore connectivity across for pedestrians and cyclists can be challenging. Connecting Leicester improvements to Abbey Street and the crossing across Burley's Way are in progress to address this. Central connectors include the northern half of Belgrave Gate and Abbey Street.

Lower order streets that are less vehicle dominated and could be improved to prioritise their place function include the neighbourhood streets around Darker Street and Orchard Street.

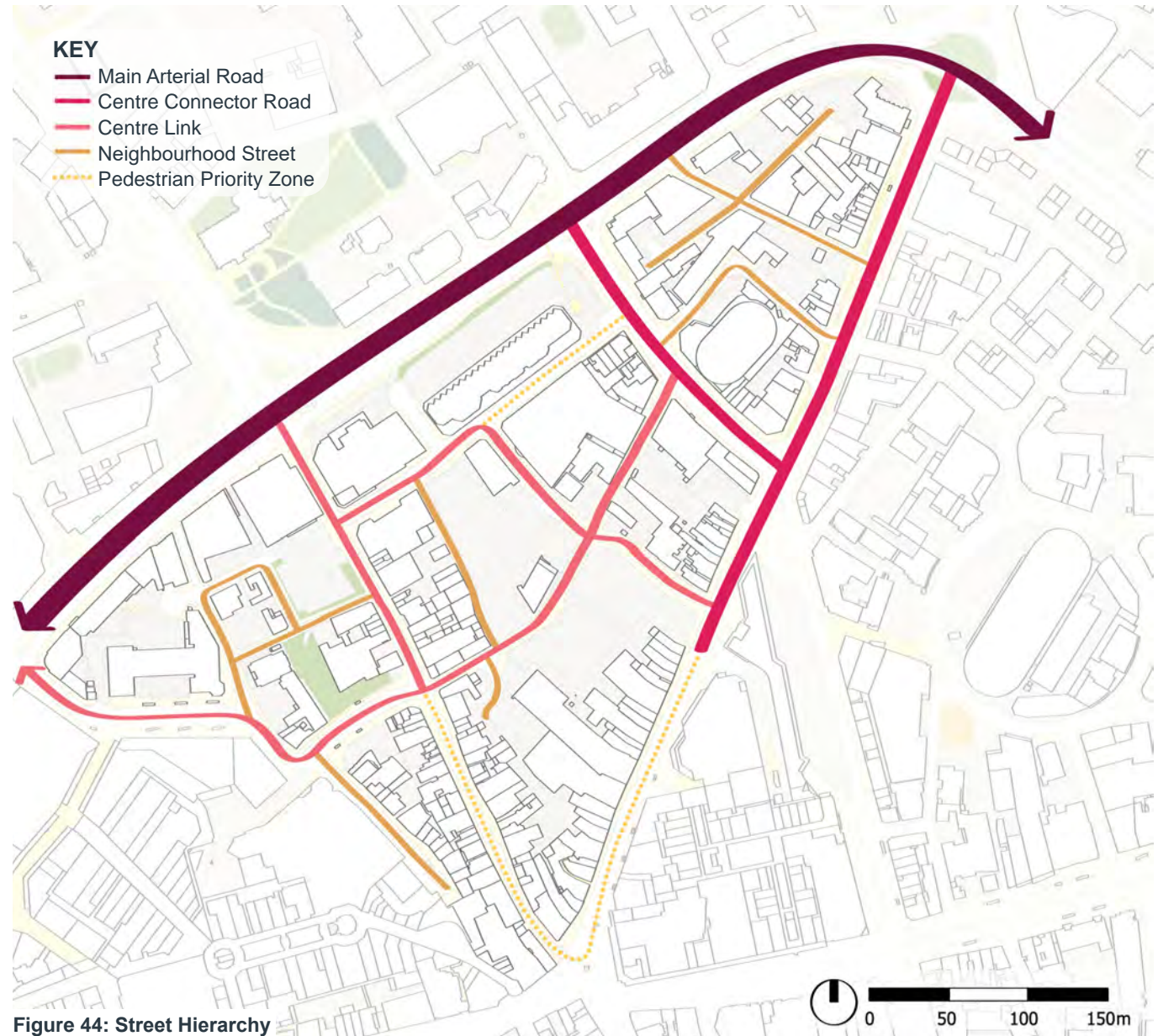


Figure 44: Street Hierarchy

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Pedestrian priority zones include the southern half of Belgrave Gate and Church Gate. Possible place-making improvements and the widening of Short Street would create a further zone.

There are a variety of street typologies in the area as existing but many of the lower order streets offer potential for improvement.

Parking Areas & Streets Configuration

Changes have recently been undertaken to bus routes and the street configuration to improve the pedestrian environment of Belgrave Gate, Church Gate and the setting of the Clock Tower. Further changes as part of the redevelopment of St. Margaret's Bus Station are also shown in figure 45 which includes limiting vehicle access along the eastern part of Gravel Street.

The area has a number of surface car parks requiring vehicle access and the visual impact of this is acute, particularly along Mansfield Street which are customer car parks and service access to the rear of major retailers. Others are pay and display surface car parks on currently undeveloped sites.

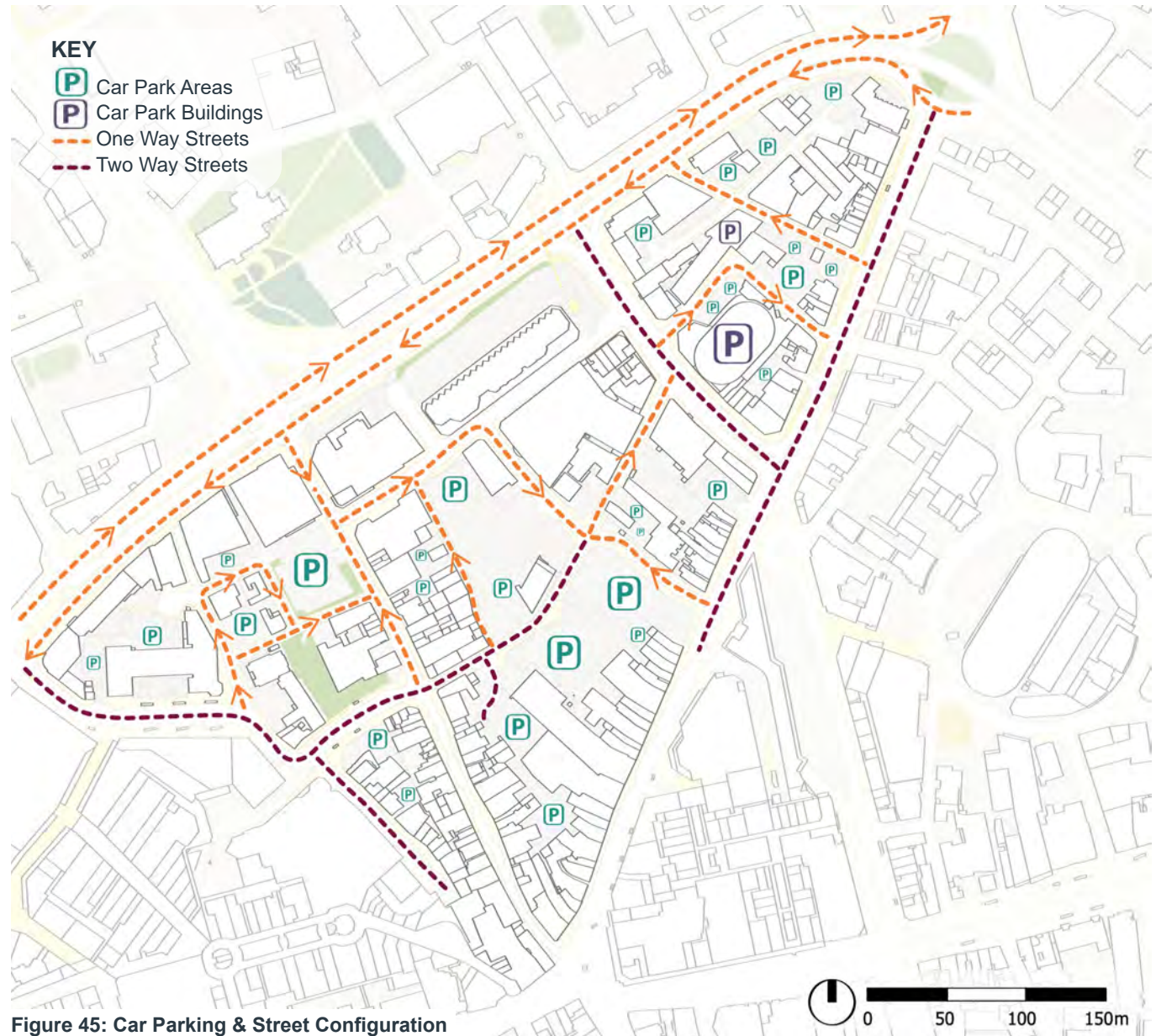


Figure 45: Car Parking & Street Configuration

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Public Transport

The area is well served by public transport with the two main city centre bus stations, offering local, regional and national services.

St. Margaret's Bus Station is a main destination for city residents bringing activity to the area and is the arrival point for visitors to Leicester using national bus services such as National Express.

The railway station is also within a 15 minute walk.

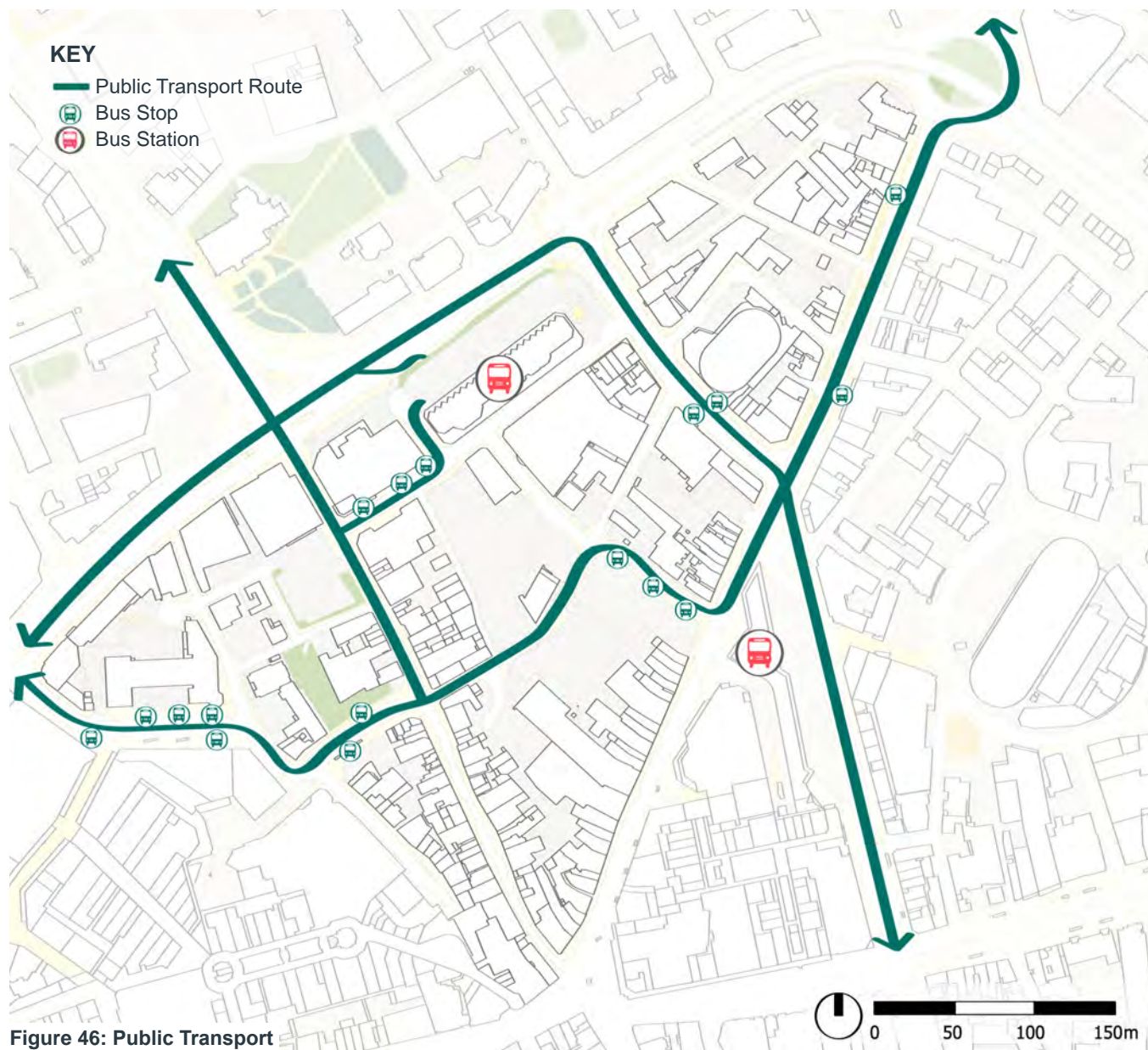


Figure 46: Public Transport

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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.

Main pedestrian connections are along the busy shopping streets of Church Gate and Belgrave Gate. North-south connections also include Abbey Street and the recently completed Savoy Street which provides a direct route between the two bus stations. East-west connections are provided by Mansfield Street / St. Peter's Lane and Gravel Street, the latter having greater footfall, but neither provide connections beyond Abbey Street and Gravel Street does not continue across Church Gate. This limits east-west pedestrian movement and connectivity across the area.

Connections to St. Margaret's character area and the Waterside Regeneration Area are across the vehicle dominated ring road and are generally hostile for both pedestrians and cyclists although improvements are planned along Abbey Street and the junction with Burley's Way.

Off road cycle routes have been provided along Belgrave Gate and are planned for Abbey Street and Gravel Street.

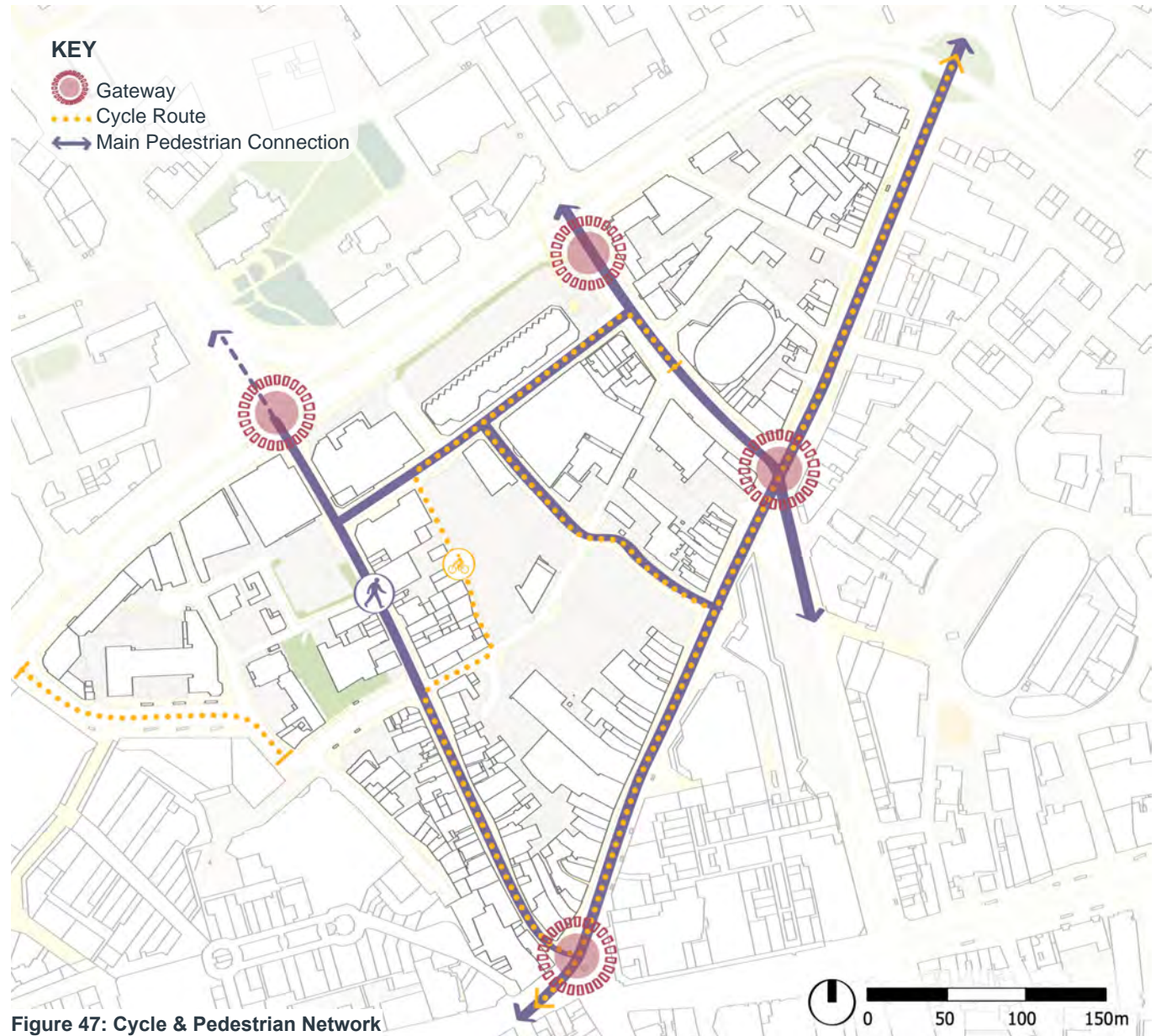


Figure 47: Cycle & Pedestrian Network

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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.

Significant changes have been undertaken to improve the movement of buses, pedestrians and cyclists through the area. Already completed are improvements to the northern end of Belgrave Gate, Humberstone Gate, Charles Street and Haymarket Bus Station and the northern end of Charles Street and Gravel Street.

A new street, Savoy Street, has been created to take buses away from Belgrave Gate and Church Gate which now provide a more pedestrian and cycle friendly public realm and improve the setting of Church Gate and the Clock Tower. Further improvements to Gravel Street, Abbey Street and the crossing across Burley's Way are also in progress.

KEY

- Connecting Leicester
- Completed Schemes
- Connecting Leicester Potential Schemes

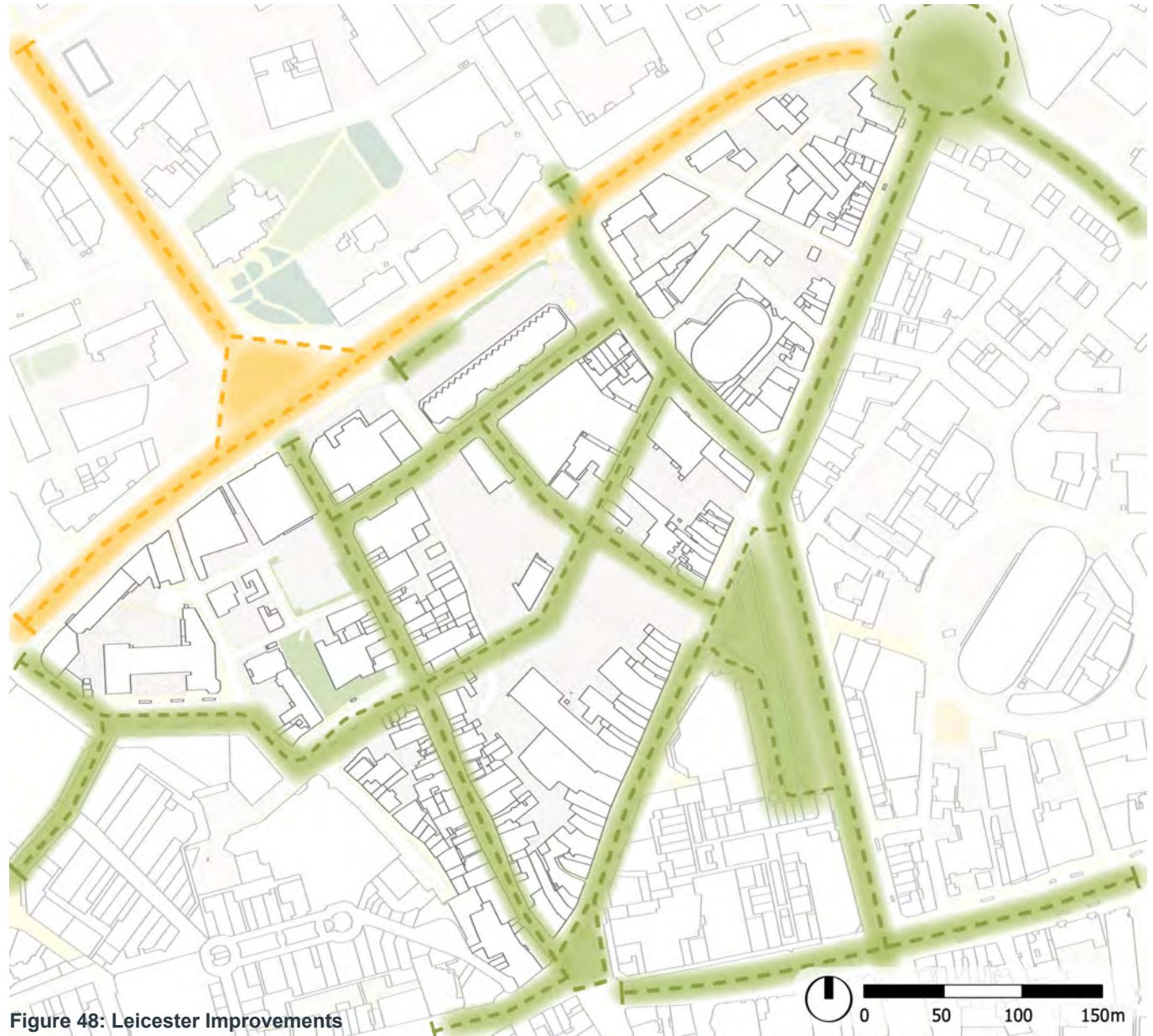


Figure 48: Leicester Improvements

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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 vital to create activity and vitality to 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 in existing buildings could contain blocked up or screened windows and doors for various reasons.

As expected the busy shopping streets of Church Gate and Belgrave Gate are very vibrant and active. However, within the area the large single use buildings, including showrooms, factories and nightclubs, provide limited active frontages and are mostly blank.

Along the key route of Abbey Street a more active street frontage is possible but windows and openings are blocked up or screened. Mansfield Street, Sandacre Street, Gravel Street are also poor. As are the collection of streets to the west of Church Gate around Darker Street and to the north of Abbey Street.

The frontages to the west of Short Street (A) and to the east of Savoy Street (B) are problematic as they present 'backs' of buildings to the public realm and so it may be difficult to create active frontages. Street Art has been used on Savoy Street to improve it's appearance.

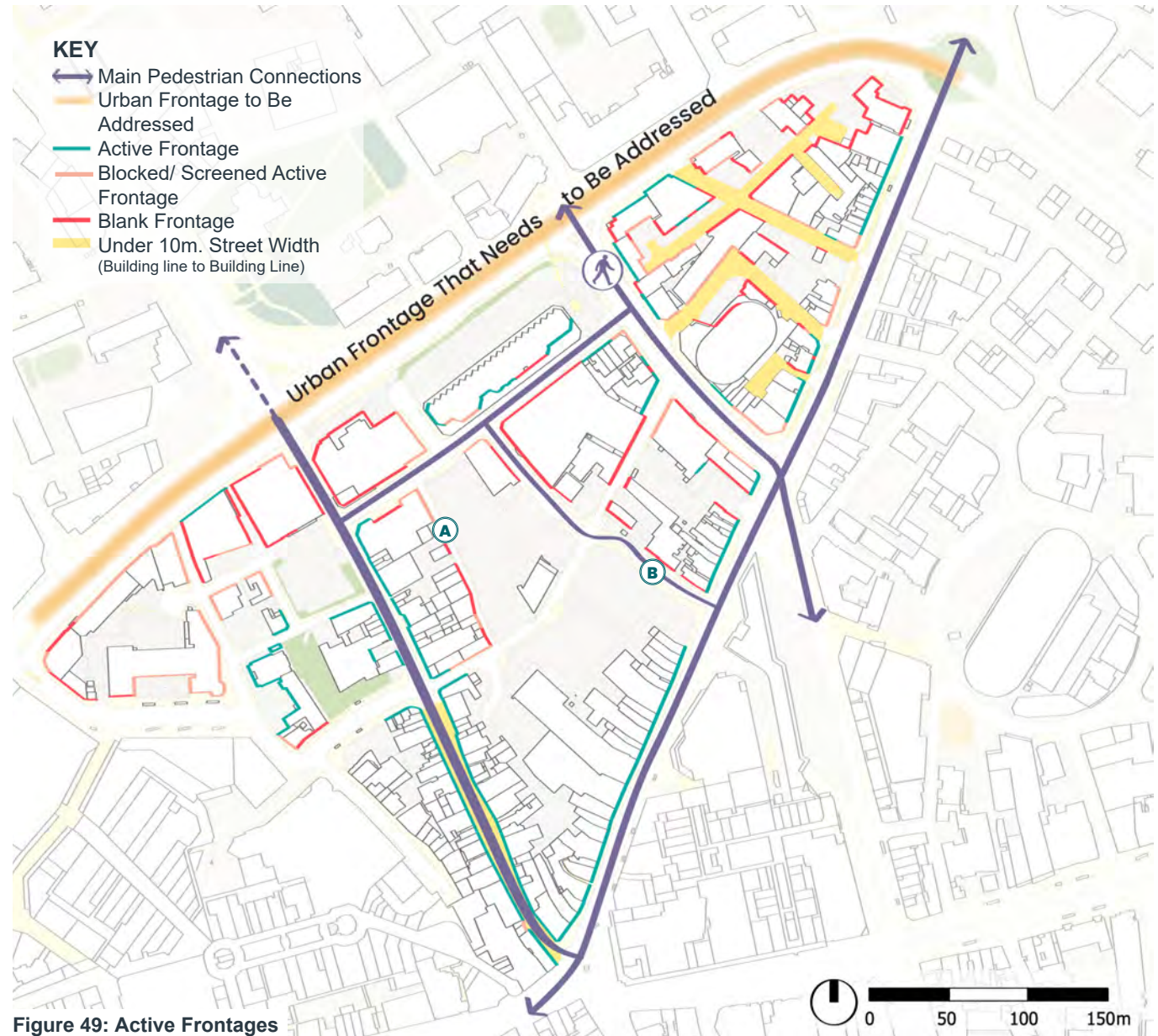


Figure 49: Active Frontages

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Figure 50: Examples of Active Frontages - Mansfield Street Character Area

2.13. Key Views & Legibility

Within the Mansfield Street area it is very difficult to find your way around with poorly defined streets, large undeveloped plots and very few landmarks of townscape merit.

The churches of St. Margaret and St. Mark terminate iconic views down Church Gate, as an evolving sequence of views, and Belgrave Gate. They both contribute to the identity of the city.

However, in the area between these two main streets views are often terminated poorly or are not terminated at all.

- View A looking south west - is poorly terminated by a surface car park and office buildings in the distance. However, the Hosiery Masters House and Workshop could be brought more prominently into the view to reconnect the west of Church Gate to the east. The marker of the 'fin' of the 81 Church Gate (the former 1930s garage for Castle's Motors) becomes more visible closer to Church Gate.
- View B looking north east - has no notable termination and the 8 storey tall building is dominant in the view.
- View C - is from outside the area looking along Abbey Street. The pedestrian bridge across the ring road and the tall buildings of Crown House and Epic House are visually dominant
- View D-D1 looking south west - has poor termination
- View D1-D looking north east - is terminated with a building of poor quality

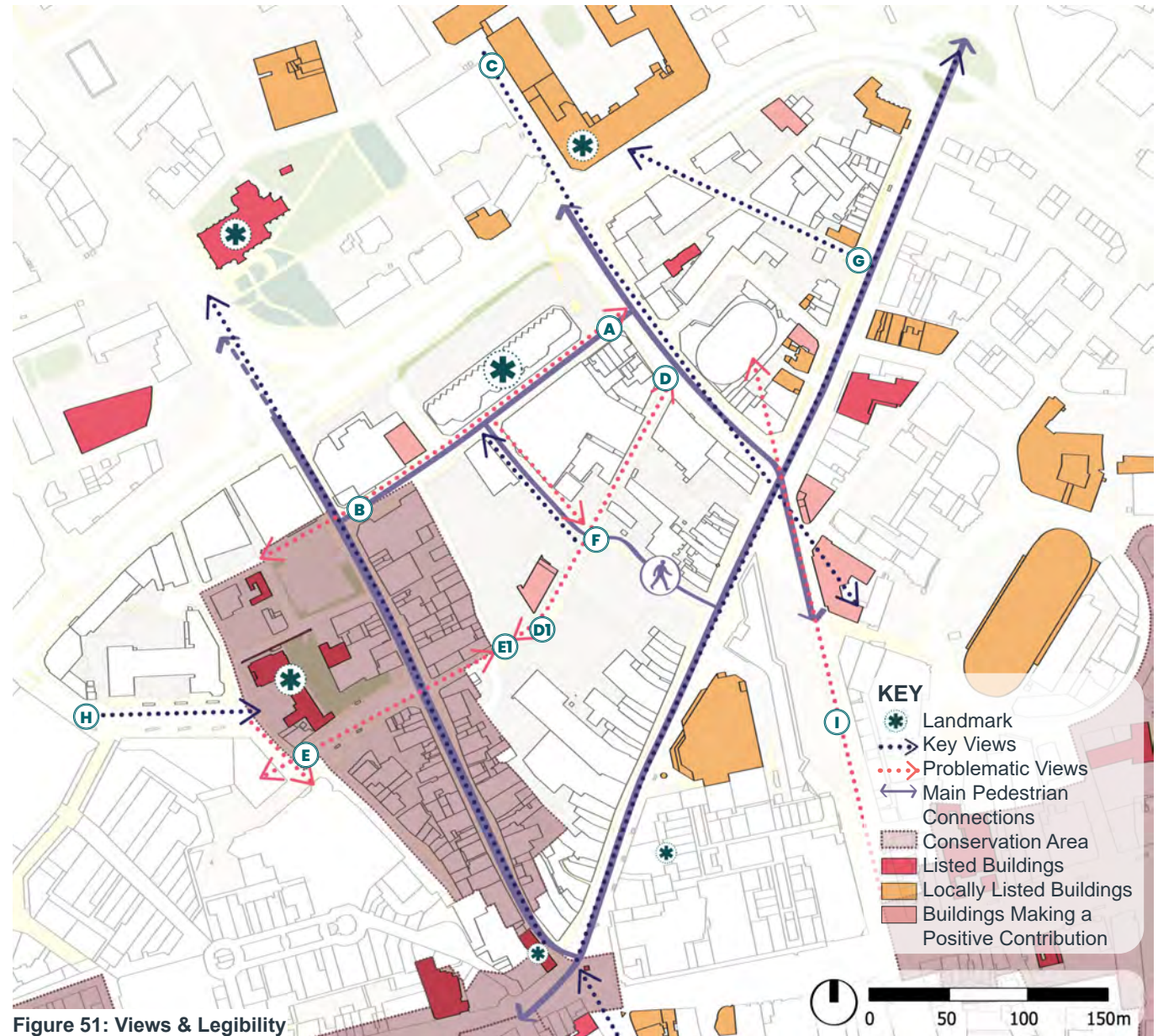


Figure 51: Views & Legibility

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- View E1-E looking west - is well terminated by the apartments for Highcross
- View E-E1 looking east - has poor termination
- View F - terminates in a blank frontage from St. Margaret's bus station, although redevelopment of the bus station will improve this termination. St. Margaret's Church can be glimpsed, but it is not a protected view
- View G - terminates with the strong and distinctive frontage of the Corah building.
- View H - terminated by the Grade II listed Great Meeting House

There are buildings in the character area which terminate significant views from outside the area. The most significant of these is the view down Charles Street (view I) currently poorly terminated by Abbey Street car park. Any future development of this site would need to carefully consider its visual impact given the building's prominence.

Future development and improvements to the area can provide an opportunity to create new local markers and improve the existing markers to enhance the legibility and appearance of the character area.



View A



View B



View C



View D-D1



View D1-D



View E-E1



View E1-E



View F



View G

2.14. Architecture, Materiality, Details

Architecture

There is a range of architectural and building styles in the area, mostly Victorian former factories and warehouses with varying levels of embellishment and decorative façades and smaller scale 19th century houses with more restrained detailing and classical influences. There are also Art Deco buildings with the familiar features evident and buildings with art and crafts influences. There are also civic buildings built in the Georgian period.

There are very few modern works of architecture in the area of note.

Materiality

There are some common materials and features which help to define the character of the area.

The majority of buildings are brick. The Great Meeting House, built in 1707, is one of the earliest brick buildings of any importance in the city. The earliest buildings have locally made warm orange-red colour, whilst later Victorian buildings have the machine made darker red bricks.

There are a few buildings with grey - buff bricks, mostly newer buildings further away from the Church Gate Conservation Area.

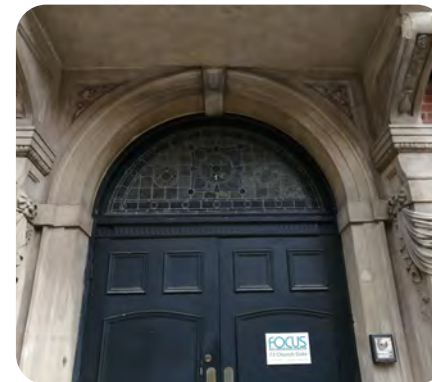
Red and orange Brick



Grey Buff Brick

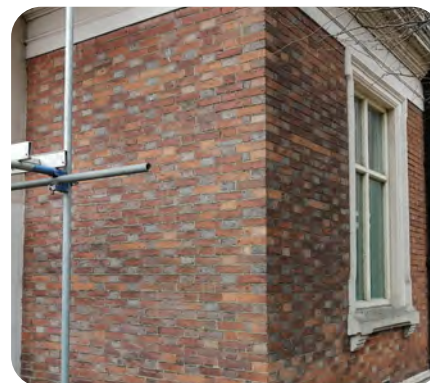


Decoration



Other materials include stone, mostly used for decorative detailing, timber for detailing and windows and most prominently to the Timber Warehouse to the rear of 66 Church Gate, slate, and metal for decorative features. Areas of stucco are also used on the Art Deco buildings.

Brick Patterns and detailing



Details

There is a wide range of detailing and features within the area. There are buildings with highly decorated stonework, decorative glass and metal work to the grander buildings, but they are very much of their time.

Well considered proportions of main buildings façades are common place, across different styles, with articulation and depth added with the expression of elements and features.

Framing



Brick patterns are used with a range of colours and textures and brick bonds which are distinctive.

The Victorian buildings have glazed brick plinths with a variety of tones including deep reds, oranges, brown and blue.

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 Mansfield Street character area will make a significant contribution to new housing in the city and is likely to undergo significant change and residential growth. Recent planning approvals within the area, which are not yet constructed, could provide approximately 650 homes. There are also additional sites that may come forward in the future. This potential level of growth will have an impact on townscape and heritage in this area and a coordinated and comprehensive approach is required. Additionally, Mansfield Street is an emerging neighbourhood, and whilst it is generally well served and well connected given its location, further consideration needs to be given to ensure that the emerging and future community needs are met and a sense of place and identity are established.

A challenge for the area is achieving a well balanced neighbourhood with a variety of dwelling types to suit a range of people, particularly given that infrastructure to support families is currently poor and other areas are more suitable.

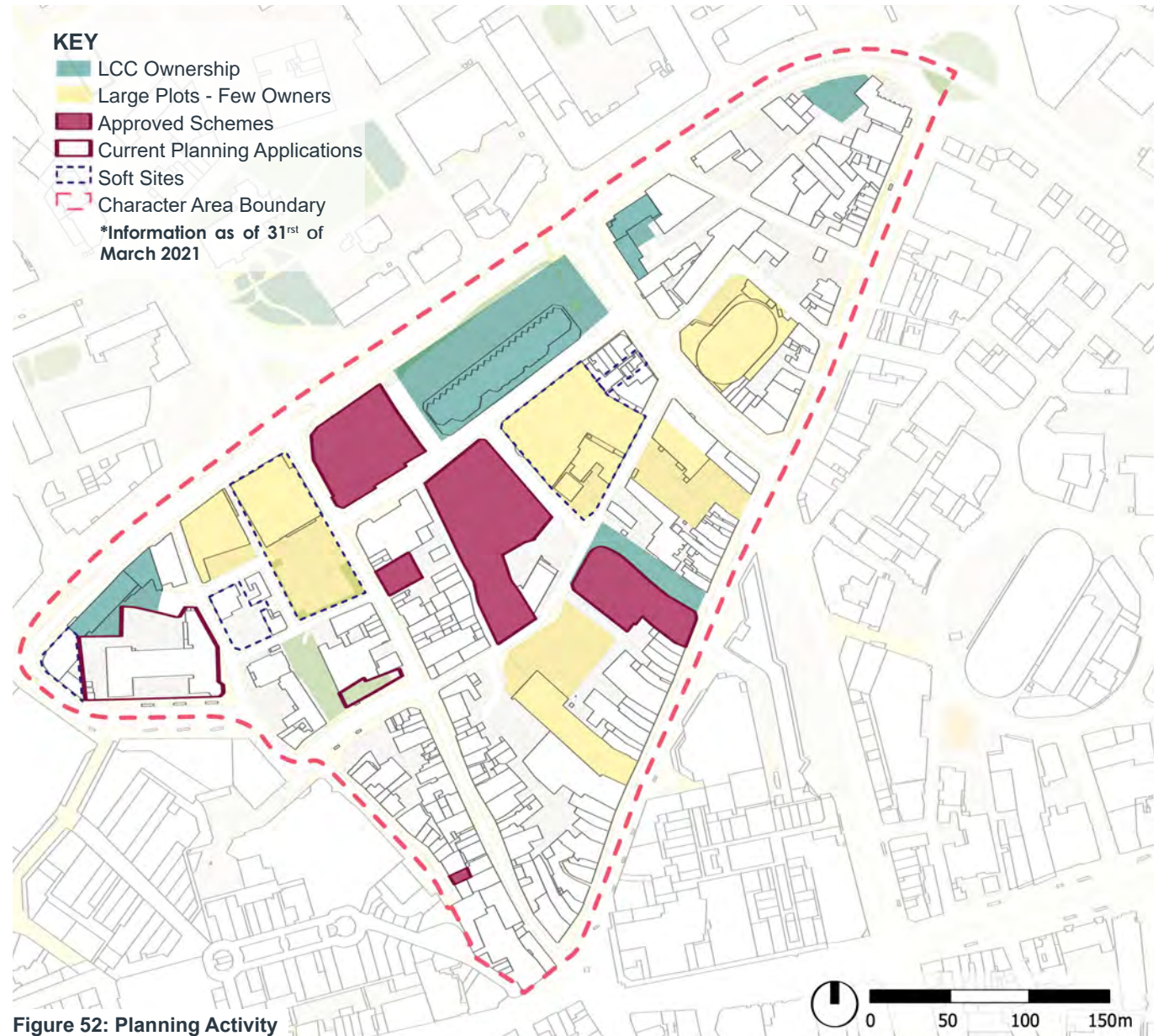


Figure 52: Planning Activity

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3



Townscape Diagnosis



3. Townscape Diagnosis

3.1. Constraints & Opportunities

The detailed townscape analysis of the Mansfield Street 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.

The Mansfield Street character area could become an area of residential growth and intensification. Although the area is in close proximity to the Grade I listed St. Margaret's Church, includes Church Gate Conservation Area and will be affected by significant city-wide views, there is a potential for growth and high quality city centre living.

Thus, a holistic vision for the area, together with the undertaking of a thorough townscape appraisal that will be able to identify and further highlight the state and potential of the current urban fabric, socio-economic activity and the overall use, function and perception of the area are crucial. 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 enable the creation of an attractive, successful and sustainable place with a distinctive identity.

It is recognised that Mansfield Street character area has challenges and issues to overcome, but at the same time further potential to explore.

Constraints

In creating a holistic, comprehensive and coordinated approach to the area's future growth the following constraints (figure 53) should be taken into account:

- Mansfield Street character area is an area with heritage and townscape assets that should be cherished and preserved within any future development. Church Gate Conservation Area is located to the south of Mansfield Street area with a number of heritage assets, including nationally and locally listed buildings. Furthermore, additional buildings that make a positive contribution to the townscape have been identified, which should also be retained.
- Views of city-wide significance recognise the heritage setting and landmark status of St. Margaret's and St. Mark's churches and their contribution to the identity and legibility of the city and the surrounding areas. New development will need to consider these views to avoid harm.
- The urban grain is quite fragmented, with blocks not properly defined, but shaped as a rather 'left-over' outcome, in absence of comprehensive development and guidance. At the same time the majority of the streets are characterised by weak enclosure, with large undeveloped plots, surface car parks and large pavilion buildings located within plots. To make matters worst, the streets that are very narrow, with a width under 10 metres, put extra pressure on the built environment and the massing of the existing building forms.
- Quite a lot of frontages and façades that shape the overall perception and function of the area are problematic. Blank façades can be found, especially at the northern half of the area, emphasising the lack of activity, vibrancy and surveillance at the street level. The 'backs' of development blocks often present a public face, most notably to the west of Short Street and the south of Mansfield Street. Furthermore, Mansfield Street's north-east edge, along Burley's Way, needs to be properly identified and addressed, responding to the ring road, providing appropriate enclosure and definition for any future and existing development and recognising the amenity requirements and accommodation quality that is needed.
- The area is quite car-dominated, something that can be understood through the car-related functions and the weak pedestrian and cycle connections, with the east-west ones mostly problematic and detrimental to legibility. Better connectivity, accessibility and integrated routes should be envisaged and further implemented. There are a few pedestrian and cycle connections where infrastructure and/ or active frontages are required to create safe, overlooked routes.

KEY

-  Problematic Legibility View
-  Car Park Areas
-  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

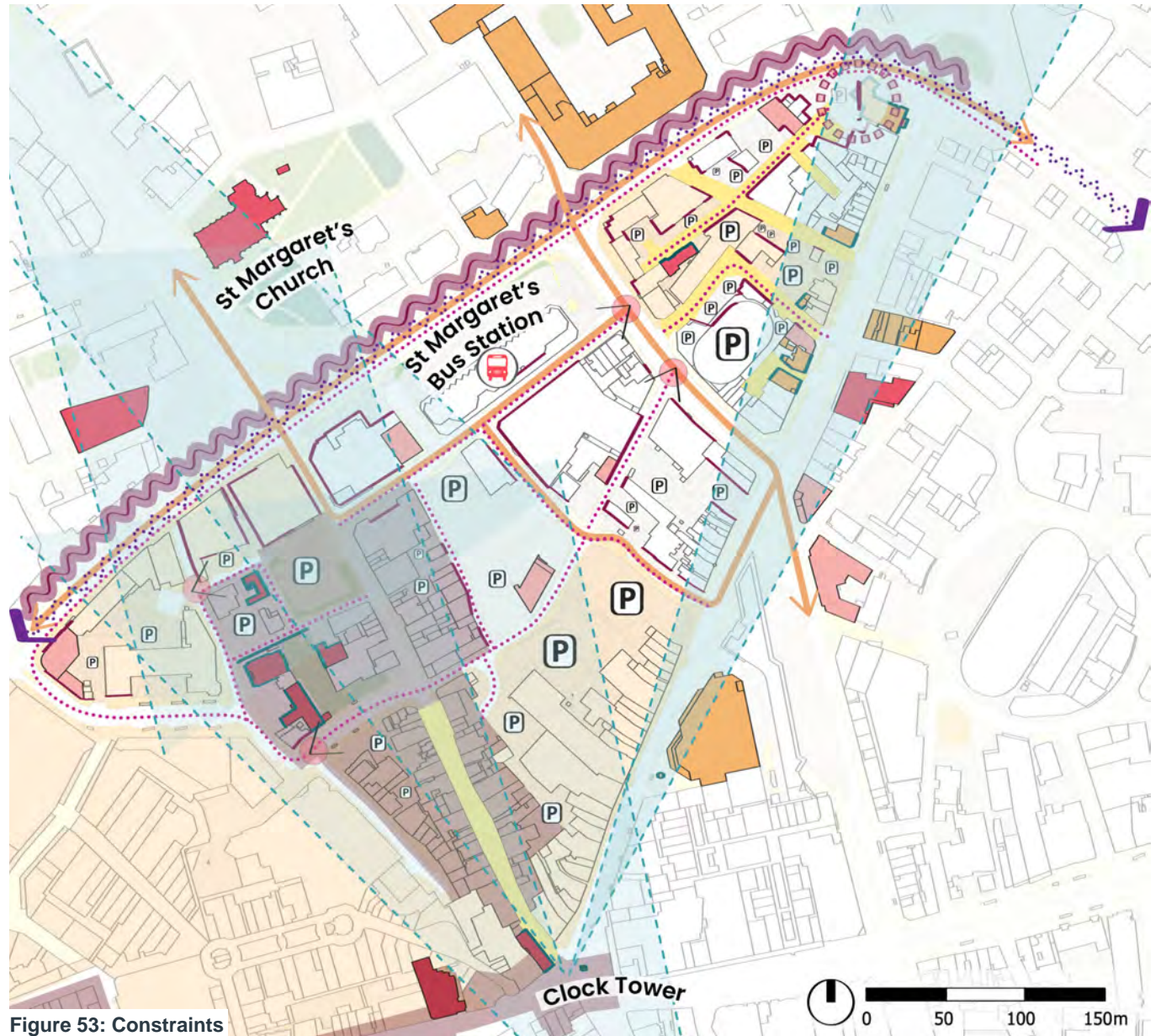


Figure 53: Constraints

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- There is no landscaped open space in the area, which could be used by residents. The largest open space, within 10 minutes walking distance providing most facilities, including sports and play, and variety is Abbey Park. However, it's proximity is negated by its poor accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists across busy ring roads and through poorly overlooked areas which will be considered unsafe.
- A challenge for the area is achieving a well-balanced neighbourhood with a variety of dwelling types to suit a range of people, particularly given that infrastructure to support families is currently poor.
- Other issues that should be taken into account are the noise and traffic disruption mainly coming from the peripheral road network.

Opportunities

The following points present development opportunities and assets that if properly utilised will enhance, upgrade and contribute to the Mansfield Street character area's aspiring regeneration and redevelopment.

- A key attribute of Mansfield Street is its prime, city-centre location, surrounded by the Clock Tower, Haymarket Bus Station and St. Margaret's and St. Mark's churches. It is also located within a 10 minute walking distance from Abbey Park and a 15 minute one from the Railway Station, while St. Margaret's Bus Station is within the area, making it an ideal place to work, live and visit.
- The future development of the Mansfield Street character area provides a number of opportunities to improve the area and establish its character and identity, better integrating it with its surroundings and the city centre. In particular, taking opportunities to repair the urban grain, reinstate perimeter blocks and implement street and public realm improvements along main pedestrian connections.
- The historic setting of the area and its concentration of heritage assets, contributes significantly to its character and identity which should be protected, respected and enhanced in any future development. A coordinated and comprehensive approach to guide the development will ensure Mansfield Street character area becomes a place, a new neighbourhood, with a coherent character and distinctive identity bringing together the historic urban fabric and new development.
- Continuing Gravel Street beyond Church Gate will recognise the key route needed to connect the east and west of Church Gate, prepare for future development to the west and reintegrate heritage assets, such as the former Masters Hosier's House, both visually and physically. To the northern edge, pedestrian and cycle connections to the adjacent St. Margaret's area are crucial to improve accessibility to, and reintegrate, Abbey Park back into the city.
- Improve the heritage setting of hidden and isolated heritage assets and their potential for redevelopment and re-use. Views of the Great Meeting House could be opened up and the setting of the former St. Patrick's School improved. The Timber Warehouse and the former factory to the rear of 39 Church Gate could be sensitively and appropriately redeveloped and/or reused.
- Reinforce and establish Church Gate as the 'neighbourhood heart' with further enhancement to the public realm, maximising active frontages, and providing a mix and variety of uses and services, including those at a neighbourhood level for existing and future residents. Welcoming spaces and places to meet and dwell will also be important.

- Future development and improvements to the area can provide an opportunity to provide new local markers and improve the existing markers to improve the legibility and appearance of the character area.

KEY

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

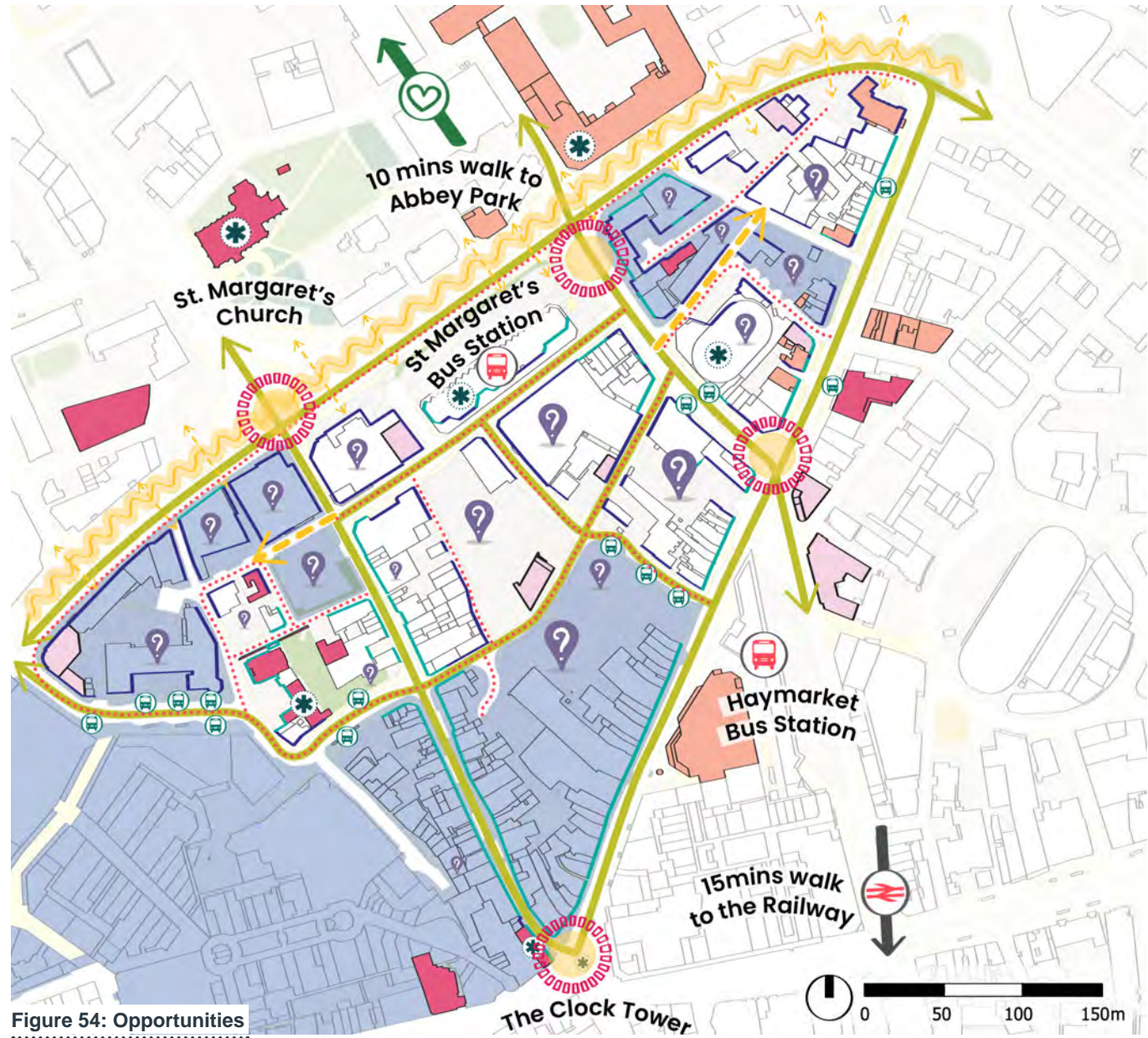
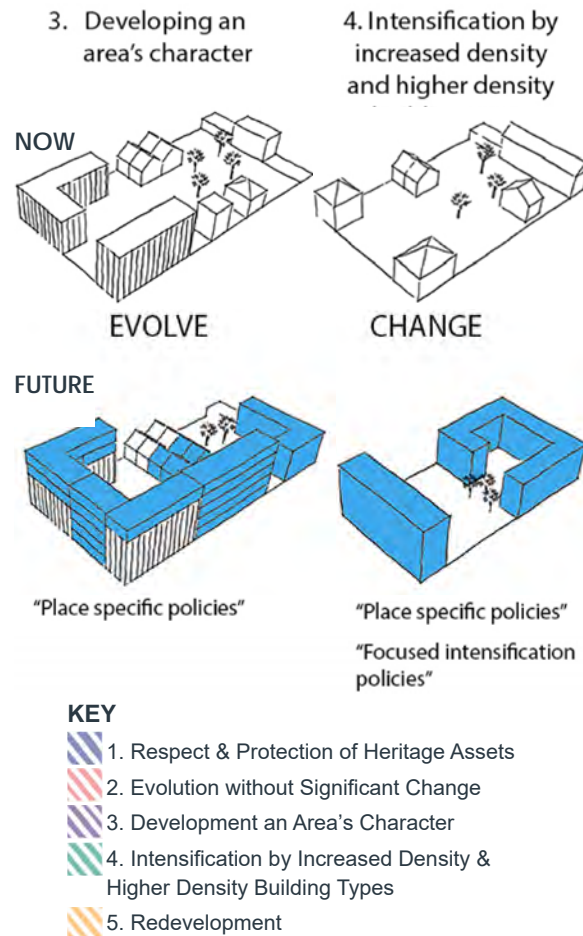


Figure 54: Opportunities

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- There have been considerable cycle and pedestrian improvements in the area to Church Gate, Belgrave Gate, Abbey Street and Gravel Street linked mainly to the opportunities provided by the redevelopment of both bus stations. However, north-south and east-west pedestrian connections could and should be enhanced (figure 53 - constraints), making walkable, legible, well-designed and well-enclosed routes that will link to the current gateways at the edges of the area and establish Mansfield Street as a main east-west pedestrian connection. Those existing gateways, arrival points, could be further enhanced, leading and guiding pedestrians through the area and upgrading the area's legibility and permeability.
- Figure 54 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 development.

- Figure 54 illustrates the sites that could present future development, transforming and place-making opportunities for the overall area's regeneration. Heritage assets highlight the area's value and heritage.



Character Area Townscape Management

Mansfield Street character area falls within 4. *Intensification by Increased Density & Higher Density Building Types* where place specific policies and focussed intensification policies will be used to guide future development (see page 7 - Townscape Character Management).



Figure 55: 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.

The Mansfield Street area will undergo significant change in the years to come and this process needs to be managed positively and pro-actively. Taking into account the aforementioned elements of the townscape analysis and diagnosis (townscape appraisal), Mansfield Street character area is envisaged as:

An emerging **commercial and city-living community**, with **Church Gate** at its heart and within **easy, walking distance** to city-based services and facilities.

A place that enhances and celebrates Leicester's unique **historic legacy** with a **new identity** created through the **integration of old and new**.

Figure 56 illustrates Mansfield Street 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 56: Mansfield Street Character Area Vision

4.2. Main Future Development Objectives

1 Character & Identity



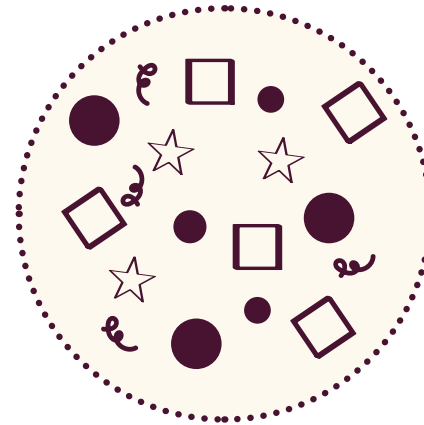
Development should enhance the character, identity and sense of place by considering the built, natural and historic context, responding to it ecologically, socially and aesthetically. All development should contribute to the unique character of the area by protecting and enhancing existing heritage 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



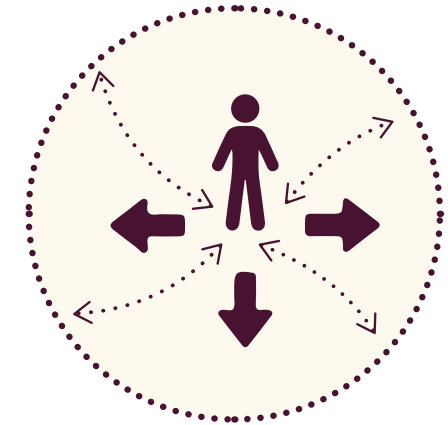
Ensure everyone's health, safety and quality of life creating buildings, streets and spaces that encourage people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to meet and mix. All development should use the appropriate built form, layout, scale and mixture of uses and tenures to create a welcoming and attractive 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.

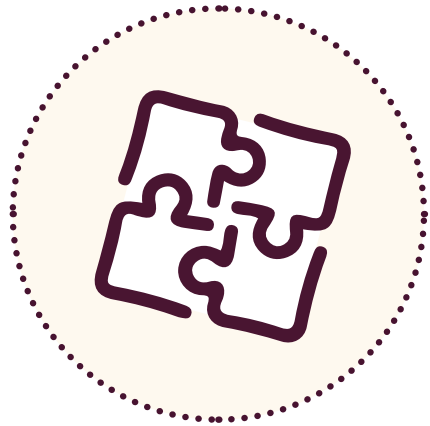
4 Ease of Movement



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

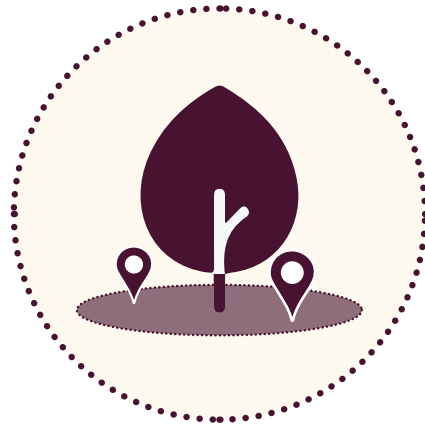
Legibility & Permeability



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

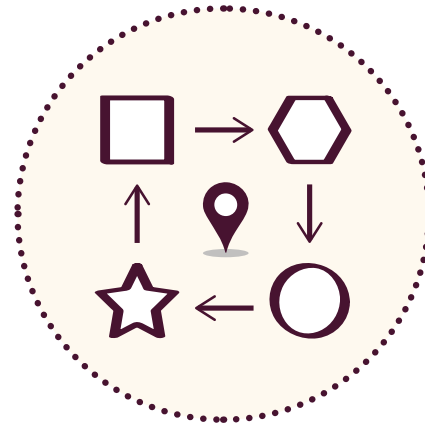
Public Realm & Landscape



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

Mansfield Street character area will provide significant growth to the city centre, 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'
-  Linear Proposed Public Realm/ Enhanced Streetscape
-  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
-  Opportunities to Reintegrate Hidden Heritage Assets
-  Active Frontages Priority Areas / Façade Animation
-  Built Continuous Frontage - Repair Urban Grain
-  Redefined Urban Blocks
-  Potential Development Sites
-  Larger Sites & Areas That Would Benefit from Redevelopment
-  Listed, Locally Listed & Positive Contribution Buildings

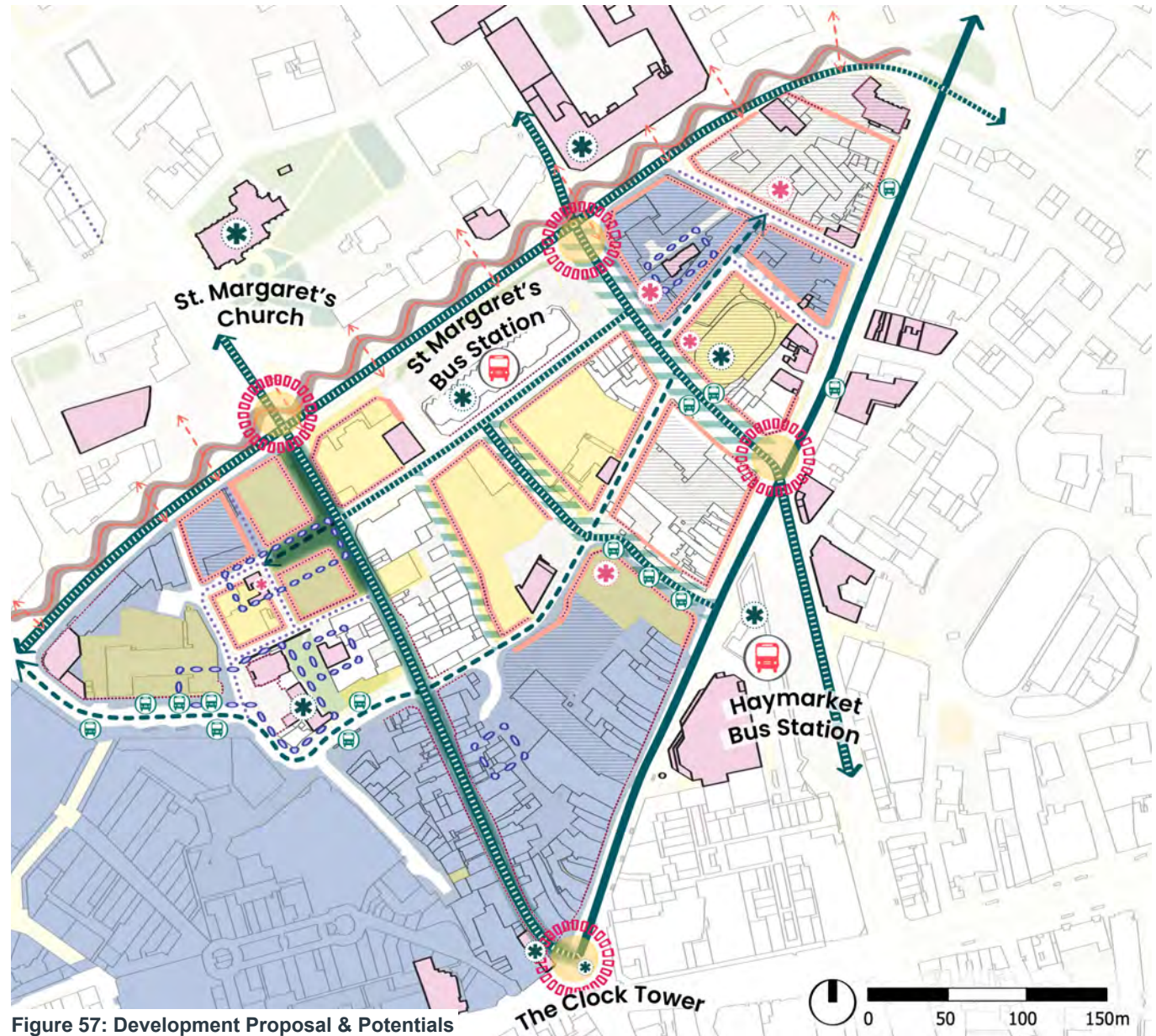


Figure 57: Development Proposal & Potentials

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- Specific area policies and a coordinated and comprehensive approach to guide development will ensure that Mansfield Street 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.
- Creation of a new coherent identity to weave together the old and the new, recognising the potential of a new mixed-use neighbourhood with a growing residential and commercial community, linking to city-based facilities and services and reintegrating Abbey Park into the city centre.
- The historic and industrial heritage contributes to the uniqueness of Mansfield Street's character area. Heritage and townscape assets (listed, locally listed, landmarks and positive contribution buildings (buildings not nationally/ locally listed or within conservation areas, but with a positive contribution to the townscape)) will be integrated into any new development so they successfully define the area's ongoing identity and legibility as dominant 'markers' and frontages. Adjacent new development will be designed to be sympathetic to the townscape and heritage value of these assets allowing valuable features to remain dominant in the streetscape preserving and enhancing the heritage and the historic setting of the area.



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 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:

- 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).

- Creation of linear public realm areas (at Church Gate, Short Street, Sandacre Street, Savoy Street and Abbey Street) with enhanced streetscape, and tree planting and landscaping, meeting the needs of existing and future residents by providing much needed spaces. Improvements to adjacent buildings, by pushing back building lines to increase the public realm or creating more active interfaces will be encouraged. Continuing and even introducing Abbey Park's landscape qualities and characteristics to city-living and the city centre.
- Church Gate is envisaged as the new, 'healthy street' with pedestrian and cycle priority, reinstating its importance as the 'neighbourhood heart' and including areas to 'dwell', trees, public realm improvements, active frontages and an improved highway configuration.
- Strengthened pedestrian and cycle connections, providing both infrastructure and active frontages, are key to a future walkable and city-living community. East-west pedestrian and cycle links, of various hierarchy levels, are proposed to enhance the existing north-south ones, creating a pedestrian and cycle network as illustrated at figure 57. Consider reconfigured building lines where these can be consistently achieved. All proposed connections are linking the existing gateways, which are to provide a welcoming and pleasant experience to and from the character area. Reconnecting the areas east and west of Church Gate is essential to create a legible and permeable place of coherent identity, ensuring existing and new development is well-connected and not left isolated.

- New pedestrian and cycle connections are proposed to Church Gate gateway to improve connections to the Waterside area, St. Margaret's character area and Abbey Park.
- Ensure new development delivers specific interventions in the identified locations (figure 57) where the heritage setting of the heritage assets should be improved by reconfiguring future development building lines to improve views and opening up connections to provide clear visual and physical links. Such as the east-west connection between Church Gate and Darker Street and the corner of East Bond Street and Causeway Lane to open up views of the Great Meeting House. Undertake the sensitive and appropriate re-use of the currently hidden and isolated heritage assets in the area including the former Masters Hosier's House and workshop, the Timber Warehouse and the former factory to the rear of 39 Church Gate.
- New development will be expected, in design terms, to repair fragmented urban grain and the street-level status of the area, reinstating perimeter blocks that will be able to efficiently facilitate both residential and mixed-use development and recreating well-defined and well-enclosed streets (figure 57). Surface car parking which is currently detrimental to this objective will be minimised. Larger sites and areas that would benefit from redevelopment have been identified that would make a significant contribution to place-making if they were to come forward for development, in particular the employment areas to the north where residential and employment uses could be better integrated.
- New development will be expected to improve the legibility of the area by providing new high quality and distinctive townscape markers/ landmarks (figure 57) to terminate views within the area. These locations are not to be considered a justification for an increase in scale and have been identified to provide a coherent and consistent approach across the area. Abbey Street Car Park as an existing landmark of scale terminates views from Charles Street and any future development would need to recognise its visual prominence and potential for significant improvement.
- The redevelopment of the area, given its proximity to Abbey Park, could significantly contribute to reintegrating the park into the urban fabric of the city centre by providing safe and welcoming connections for a significant number of existing and future residents to the north of the city. Safe and welcoming pedestrian and cycle connections over the ring road will be needed.
- Development should allow for and support the ongoing provision of a mix of uses, particularly around Church Gate where they are fine grain, so they 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.
- Proposed development will be expected to present active frontages, especially along main and secondary pedestrian connections (according to figure 57) 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 deliver homes of city-living typologies and tenures to encourage and support a well-balanced community.
- Ensure any future development along the ring road is well-designed and 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.

An average height of up to 15 metres, broadly equivalent to 5 residential storeys, is proposed within Church Gate Conservation Area and an adjacent buffer to reflect and respect the scale and character of the existing heritage. Heights of a similar range are also proposed to areas which will impact on the setting of the three views of city-wide significance within the character area. These are:

- the north end of Church Gate, where St. Margaret's Church terminates a sequence of views looking north along Church Gate, to ensure St. Margaret's Church remains prominent in the view;
- along Belgrave Gate looking north-east where the view is terminated by St. Marks Church and
- the junction of Causeway Lane and East Bond Street at 5 storeys and below to respect the setting of the Grade II Listed Great Meeting House, with consideration given to pushing back the building line if the site is redeveloped to improve its setting.

Considering the wider area, outside the areas constrained by heritage as described above, there are limited constraints and the Council has considered heights in this area as demonstrated in the recent applications. This has included 3D modelling using the city model and assessing the impact of development and associated heights and massing on the setting of heritage assets, including identified key views. There are opportunities for buildings of up to 21 metres to the south west, north east and interior of the area away from the significant heritage views and where consistency of height along the street frontages to create enclosure is supported.

There are also three areas which could accommodate buildings of up to 24 metres and there is some potential for tall elements (above 24m). Development between 21m and 24m falls within a transition height between what is and is not defined as tall for Leicester. Such buildings, or parts of buildings will therefore need to be considered with care and potentially tall building policies will apply. Tall development is defined as above 24 metres, broadly equivalent to 8 residential storeys. However, the mass, scale, and form must be appropriate to the context, respect the setting of heritage assets and key views and be of exceptional design quality. Figure 56 shows an illustrative location for potential tall elements, however every proposed tall element should justify both location and appropriateness of design. Proposals must avoid forming a detrimental 'halo' of buildings behind St. Margaret's Church, as viewed from the north looking south, which will have a harmful effect on its setting. The ring road should not be seen as an argument for tall development in isolation and proposals should avoid reinforcing the barrier effect of the ring road and creating a canyon effect.

The cluster of existing tall buildings on Abbey Street and Burleys Way are both of a proportion and built form which works well in the context of the general height of the area, although the appearance could be improved. Any increase in height to the surrounding context of these buildings would have an impact on how they sit in the townscape, which is currently considered to be positive. The proposed heights around these two buildings, of up to 15 metres, reflects the need to avoid a scale of development adjacent to these buildings that would undermine their townscape contribution.

KEY

- - - Important Views
 - W Avoid the Canyon Effect
 - - - Narrow Streets
 - Create Enclosure Around Public Space
 - Set Back Building Line (south view) & Avoid Solid Halo of Development behind St. Margaret's Church (north view)
 - 0 - 15m.
 - 15 - 21m.
 - 21 - 24m.
 - ✱ Potential for above 24m. - Illustrative Location
 - Existing Tall Buildings
 - Listed & Locally Listed Buildings
 - Character Area Boundary
- *3m is broadly equivalent to 1 residential storey

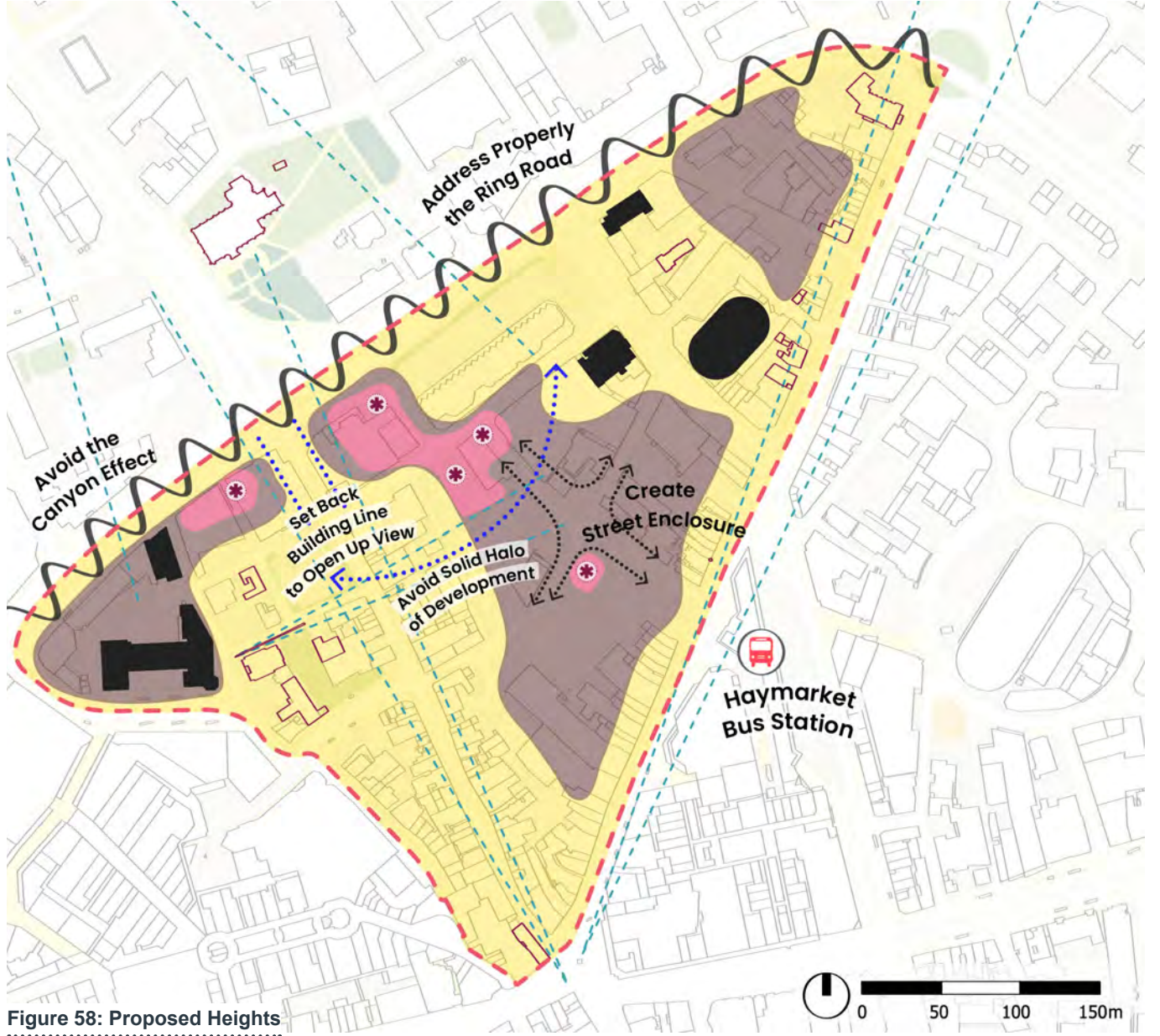


Figure 58: Proposed Heights

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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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