

Whitefield Town Centre Plan



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Contributors

This document has been prepared on behalf of Bury Council by Planit-IE.

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1

Introduction

1.1 The Whitefield Town Centre Plan

The Whitefield Town Centre Plan sets out Bury Council's and the Whitefield community's vision for their town centre – identifying the short, medium and long-term proposals and priorities.

Defining the centre of Whitefield is difficult, which in itself highlights the need for a plan. Bury New Road is dominant, its wide carriageways and heavy traffic dictating the form, function, and experience of the historic high street. The impact is undeniable.

Informed by the community, this plan aims to create a heart – a more vibrant, liveable and walkable place which puts people first. We want to create a place where people can engage in activities that support a vibrant place, whilst allowing the communities and the natural environment to thrive.

Critical to any long-term success are the people of Whitefield. Without their leadership, guidance and knowledge, the project risks becoming another report gathering dust on the shelf.

Through a series of engagement events, we will be encouraging local residents and community organisations to take a central role in developing the plan – based on a deep understanding of place, and the processes, flows and patterns that exist within it.

We hope this process will act as a conduit for bringing local people together, allowing communities to self organise and evolve in an interdependent relationship with place and the natural environment... For the most part, 'success' will be measured on this basis.



1.2 Purpose and Scope

This document acts as Stage 1 of the Whitefield Town Centre Plan, providing a holistic long-term vision for the future of the town centre, but focusing on short and medium-term deliverables to move the place forward towards that vision. The plan is iterative and adaptable, and should develop over time in response to feedback from community prototype projects.

It is intended that Stage 2 will be focussed on the long term, and will address the future strategic transport proposals along the A56 Corridor.



Slattery independent bakery and patisserie

The Whitefield Town Centre Plan will create a vision and framework to steer future development priorities in Whitefield Town Centre. Alongside the Whitefield community, the document will **define a vision for the future, to generate momentum and motivate action.**

Part of this process is distilling the aims and objectives of various Bury Council strategies, including the 'Bury: Let's Do It! Strategy' and the emerging 'Bury Boroughwide Transport Strategy', and applying them at the local scale. It is important these strategic objectives align with those identified by the local community as the town centre plan develops, and, the outcomes of the project are clear, tangible, and most importantly, deliverable. Such an objective will require deep **collaboration between community, the council and business.**

Whilst this document begins to consider long-term opportunities and interventions required to create meaningful change in Whitefield Town Centre, it is acknowledged that some of these must be considered strategically. For example, **Bury New Road is classified as a Priority 2 Corridor as part of the Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) radial corridors project**, focused on achieving a modal shift from car-based trips, to more sustainable forms of movement. As such the document provides only recommendations and best practice possibilities to inform the study as it comes to fruition over the next 24 months. In this respect, suggested improvements to this strategic road corridor can only be assessed through a consideration of wider traffic movement and modelling impacts along the corridor and within the wider strategic road network.

The Whitefield Town Centre Plan will provide:

- A holistic vision for the future of the town centre to facilitate regeneration, and ensure future investment in the town is considered;
- A desktop review and summary of existing strategies and policy;
- A baseline analysis of the town centre's current conditions, challenges, context and opportunities;
- A breakdown of short, medium and long-term opportunities to improve the town, including a list of potential projects and potential delivery mechanisms. This document places greater focus on short to medium term;
- A spatial design framework for the town centre;
- A breakdown of opportunities for community ownership and leadership; and
- A proposed governance model for a partnership between the council and the community, outlining high-level roles, responsibilities, and processes.

1.3 The Challenge and Opportunity

Why change now?

Whitefield is not the only town centre whose economy has suffered as a result of macro-scale shifts in the retail economy, the COVID-19 pandemic – and more recent economic turmoil amidst unrest in the global supply chain – and the resultant cost of living crisis. These issues are universally felt by urban centres across the UK, many of which, alongside Whitefield, are searching for a new way forward.

What does the town centre of tomorrow look like, and how do we make that happen?

Whilst there is no one panacea to this question, instilling resilience is unquestionably a key element. This means supporting self-sufficient and sustainable local economic development, creating policies and an environment where local businesses and people can exchange skills and knowledge, and retain and reinvest wealth locally.

To do this in Whitefield, we must look both *internally* – understanding the place, its specific challenges, its unique opportunities and listening to its people – as well as looking *externally* at the wider picture, including Bury Council's long-term aspirations and ambitions to create sustainable places and communities – and the role that Whitefield can play within that context.

The town centre plan seeks to provide a basis for the place to evolve and develop a new purpose, led by its citizens, which in turn will have a positive impact on the local and wider economy, and allow people and nature to thrive at the heart of Whitefield.

An Alternative Lens

Whitefield faces obvious challenges, many of which are driven by the presence of Bury New Road, severing the high street and communities to its east and west.

The environment along the road is poor for every user – businesses are crammed in, pedestrians have no space, and experience high levels of noise and air pollution. There is limited planting along the road corridor, and traffic congestion has a clear and negative impact on both sense of place and public health.

Whilst incremental, and potentially community-led, improvements to the high street and surrounding areas will have a positive impact on the street environment, the long-term strategy for Whitefield has to be to rethink Bury New Road, and indeed the town centre more broadly, through an alternative lens, that of people, place (including its economy), and the environment. The plan should support a transition from a place where people pass through in car, to all be it only visiting for singular trips to key destinations, a place where all life can thrive.

This alternative lens is the starting point as we rethink Whitefield Town Centre, and will guide us in creating a more sustainable, self-sufficient and resilient place with a new function and purpose.



People

Understanding people means two things. It means listening to the people of Whitefield, understanding their wants and needs and encouraging them to take ownership of the plan. This is fundamental to success.

Second is understanding how people use places, and how design decisions can be shaped by the community to enhance their quality of life. **Proposals in Whitefield must enhance people's quality of life, providing them with the opportunities to thrive by creating healthy human ecosystems in balance with the natural ecosystems. And calling forth a collective vocation.**



Place

The plan and future proposals will be place-led, underpinned by a thorough understanding of Whitefield, its challenges and assets – its patterns and processes but ultimately the value-enhancing role it can form for itself within the wider regional context.

We want to create a legible town centre, which celebrates Whitefield's heritage and story.



Nature

To achieve Bury Council's ambition of becoming carbon neutral by 2038, the plan must recognise the value of ecosystems – the processes that exist and the ecosystem services they provide to the community – whilst integrating, enhancing, and enriching them through the plan. The natural environment should also evolve in symbiotic relationship with the place. **Whitefield is surrounded by green space, so let's draw it in.**



A Circular Economy

We want to achieve a town centre economy where wealth is retained and reinvested locally, where local resources are used (and re-used) wisely, and a place where local skillsets and knowledge are shared and developed for the betterment of Whitefield's people. **We want to foster a local economy that benefits local people, and develops based on circular principles.**

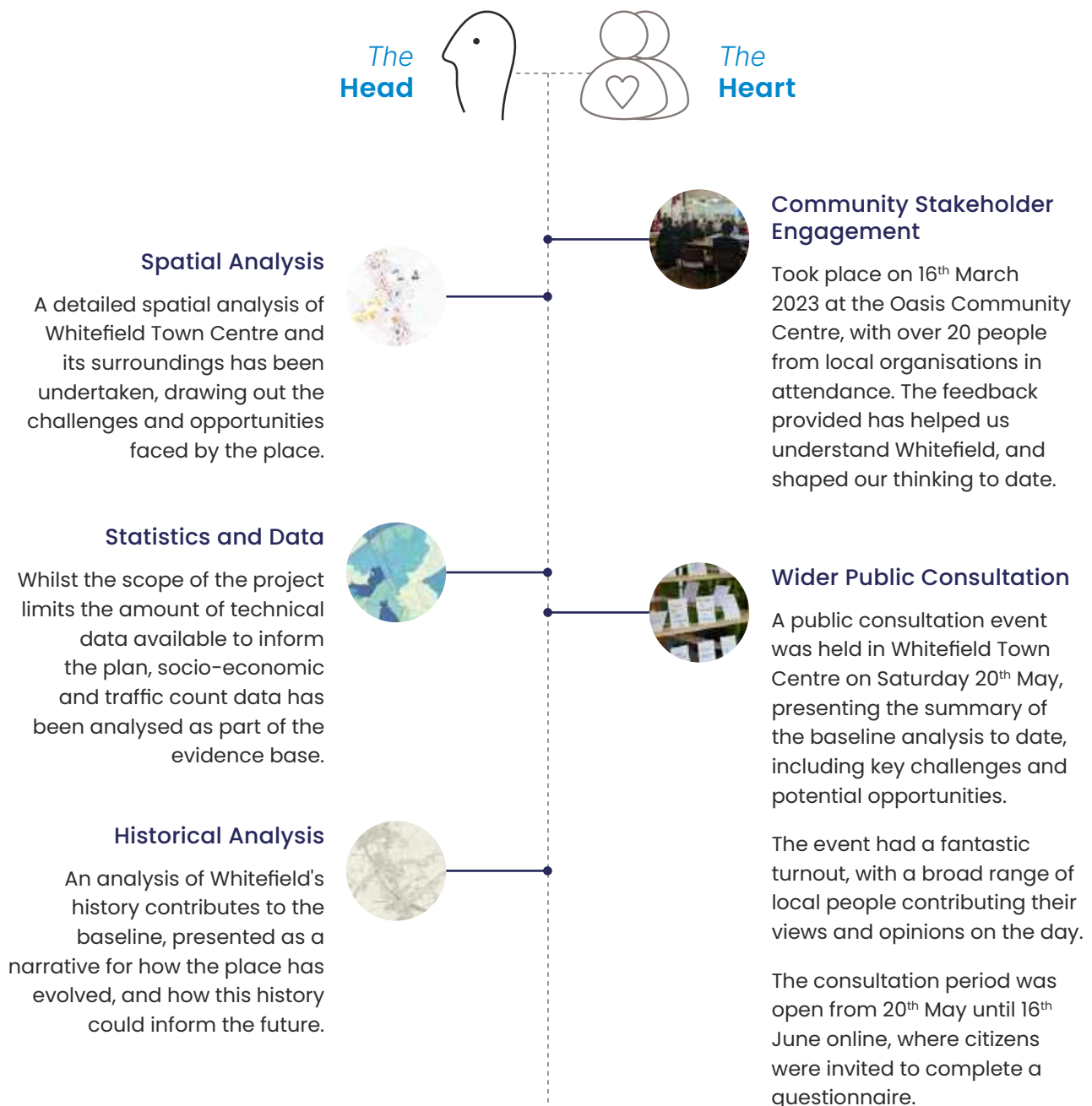
1.4 Our Approach

The Head and Heart of Whitefield

Alongside the Whitefield community, we will explore the 'Head and Heart' of Whitefield in equal measure – developing an understanding of the place, the lived experience of it, and the wants and needs of its people.

It is important to connect to the heart to:

- Utilise the inherent design intelligence of the community as a source for future evolution; and
- Stimulate collaboration and future enablers to grow the value generating capacity of the community to create cultural and economic wealth.



Big Ideas for Whitefield

Considering the overarching challenges for Whitefield, a series of key opportunities have been identified providing an overview of the possibilities for the town centre.



An Emerging Vision for Whitefield Town Centre

Informed by the long list of opportunities, the findings of the baseline analysis, and engagement work undertaken, a vision for Whitefield will be presented.



The vision will be considered through the 'alternative lens', presented earlier in the document, ensuring people, place, and the environment are embedded within proposals.

The vision will be accompanied by a spatial framework, highlighting how the vision can be realised in across Whitefield Town Centre.

Short, Medium, Long-Term Priorities

A series of proposals will be outlined in the latter stages of the plan, with specific focus on shorter-term interventions



Recommendations will be presented as to which projects should be prioritised, considering their contribution to achieving the objectives of the plan, as well as their deliverability.



Wider Public Consultation Feedback (from 16th June)

Feedback from the consultation events and online feedback has been collated, and used to test the emerging opportunities, vision and design principles.

The feedback has been used to refine the vision where necessary, to ensure it aligns with the wants and needs of local people.



Formal Public Consultation Period

A formal public consultation on the draft plan will begin in early 2024.

Stage 2

Long-term transport and places opportunities - the hardware in place to allow the software to flourish.

The vision for Whitefield Town Centre will be informed by its 'head' and 'heart' in equal measure, aligning the wants and needs of its people with the wider ambitions of Bury Council.

1.5 Strategic Backdrop

The Whitefield Town Centre Plan exists within a broader strategic context, which emphasises investment.

Greater Manchester Strategy 2021 – 2031

Sets out a route over the next decade to make Greater Manchester greener, fairer, and more prosperous. The strategy sets out a commitment to drive investment into growth locations and create opportunities in adjacent town and local centres.

Greater Manchester Culture Strategy

Provides a cultural vision for the region and promotes regeneration projects which are connected to culture

Greater Manchester Transportation Strategy 2040

Outlines how TfGM will deliver the long - term goal of 50% of travel within Greater Manchester to be made by walking, cycling and public transport.

5 Year Environment Plan for Greater Manchester 2019 – 2024

Sets out Greater Manchester's vision to be a clean, carbon neutral, climate resilient city region with a thriving natural environment and circular, zero-waste economy where:

- Infrastructure will be smart and fit for the future;
- There will be an integrated, clean and affordable public transport system, resource efficient buildings, greater local community renewable energy, cleaner air, water and green space for all;
- Access to green space in every community, more trees including in urban areas, active travel networks, environmental education and healthy and locally-produced food; and
- Citizens and businesses will adopt sustainable living and businesses practices, focusing on local solutions to deliver a prosperous economy.

Let's Do It – Bury 2030

Provides overarching strategic direction to the Council, and outlines how Bury can achieve faster economic growth than the national average, with lower than national average levels of deprivation. The strategy sets out to deliver an economic recovery strategy including regeneration plans, and broader investment within in the borough's towns, including Whitefield.

The strategy is underpinned by the guiding principles of:

- Local Neighbourhoods – empowered residents, families and local communities within our townships at the heart of decision making to make a difference to people's lives.
- An Enterprising Spirit – raising aspirations, removing barriers, and maximising opportunities to grow and develop our people and businesses.
- Delivering Together – the creation of a new relationship between public services, communities and businesses which is based on co-design, accountability and shared decision making.
- A Strength's-based Approach – a borough in which people are helped to make the best of themselves, by recognising and building on our strengths.

Bury Physical Activity Strategy

Outlines the Council's aspirations to increase the rates of physical activity through the Borough, working collaboratively with community and neighbourhood groups.

Bury Transport Strategy (emerging)

Sets out the vision that by 2040, Bury will be an attractive, well-connected and innovative Borough where people aspire to live, work and visit. The Borough's townships will be connected by a modern and efficient transport network, providing attractive, sustainable transport links both within and beyond the Borough.

Regarding Whitefield, the strategy proposes:

- The introduction of better crossing facilities for the A56;
- Improve access to Whitefield and Besses tram stops;
- Improve wayfinding in the town centre;
- Install a cycle hub at the Metrolink stop to support users travelling by bike;
- Increase high frequency bus routes, including on the 135; and
- Implementation of School Streets.

Bury Council Economic Strategy

Mitigates local impacts relating to Covid-19, risks associated with EU exit, and inflation, whilst setting out a clear framework for inclusive growth, community wealth building, and greening the economy.

Bury Council Culture Strategy 2022–2027

Sets out a strategic vision based on Stories, Skills, Strength, Space and Support to the development of Bury's culture.

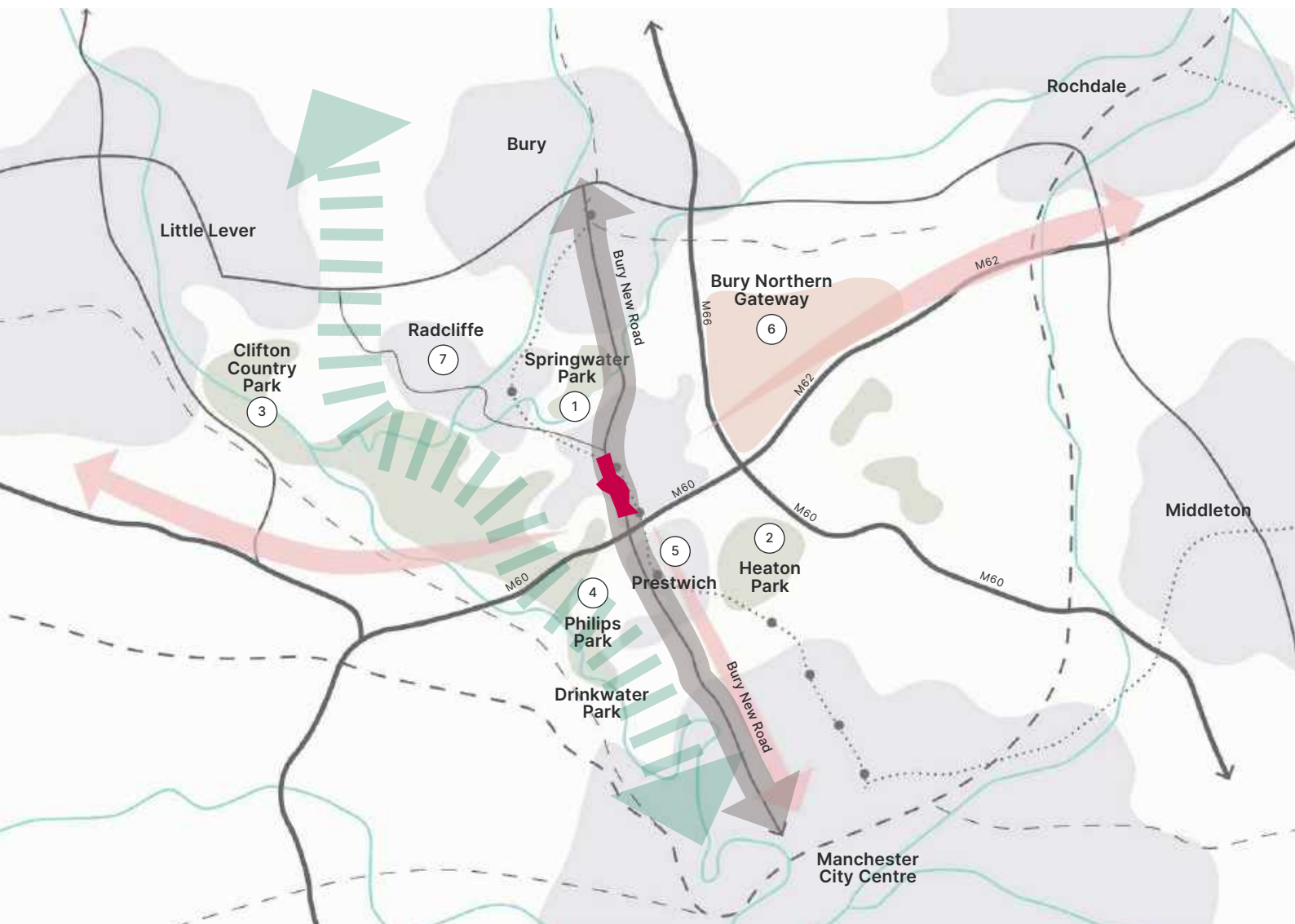
1.6 Strategic Context

Whitefield is one of a series of towns located along the Bury New Road Corridor, linking Manchester City Centre to the south with Bury Town Centre to the north.

The town centre is surrounded by several strategic green spaces, many associated with the River Irwell corridor, creating active linkages between Whitefield and Manchester City Centre.

This strategic relationship and proximity to the City Centre is major asset for Whitefield, with a central tram stop serving the town centre and a 15-minute commute to Victoria Train Station.

Access to the wider strategic green network is another key asset, despite the active travel network breaking down in residential neighbourhoods surrounding the town centre.



1. **Springwater Park** is the nearest strategic green space to the town centre, and provides access to the paths along the River Irwell corridor.
2. **Heaton Park** is Manchester's largest park, and sits in close proximity to the town centre study area to the south-east.
3. **Clifton Country Park** hugs the River Irwell, and is connected to Whitefield and Radcliffe via a network of long distance walking routes and trails.
4. **Philips Park** sits in close proximity to Whitefield, and is accessible via a bridge across the motorway.
5. Whitefield's relationship with **Prestwich** is of interest, with Prestwich having been subject to recent regeneration and road improvement schemes, as well as live regeneration proposals.
6. **The Northern Gateway** is Bury Council's largest allocation within the Places for Everyone regional development plan, and would support up to 2750 new homes and 20,000 future jobs. Strategic transport proposals will impact Whitefield as the scheme progresses, with major road and bus route proposals potentially easing congestion along the A56.
7. **Radcliffe** has also been subject to significant regeneration focus - with a strategic regeneration framework adopted in 2020 outlining the long-term vision for the town.



2

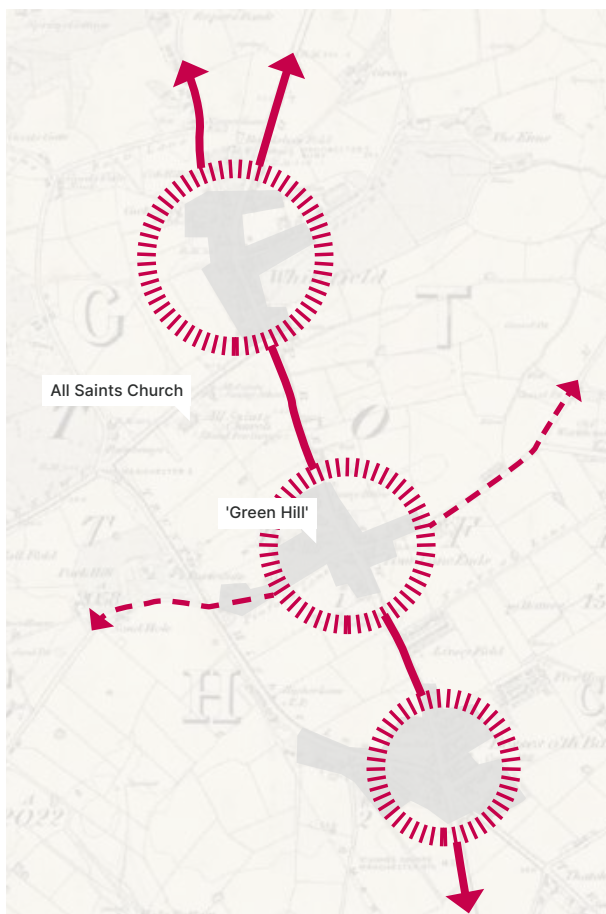
Exploring the Head

Local Scale

This section details the findings of a thorough spatial analysis of Whitefield and its surrounding context. The section flows through several scales of analysis, considering the wider strategic picture before drilling down into the study area boundary itself.

2.1 The Urban Morphology of Whitefield

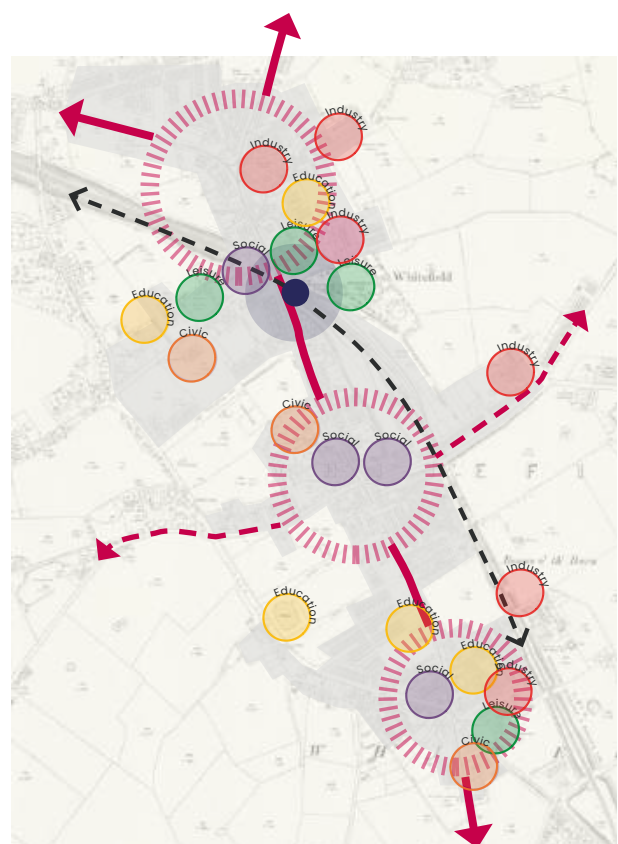
Whitefield's urban morphology provides great insight into the place we experience today. It shares clues as to why the town centre faces its challenges; provides a story behind its historic assets, and indicates a sense of where the 'heart' (or 'hearts') of Whitefield was previously located.



1848

Whitefield sits within a rural context, with three hamlets formed at the intersection of long distance rural lanes - at Whitefield to the north, Four Lane Ends at the centre, and Besse's to the south.

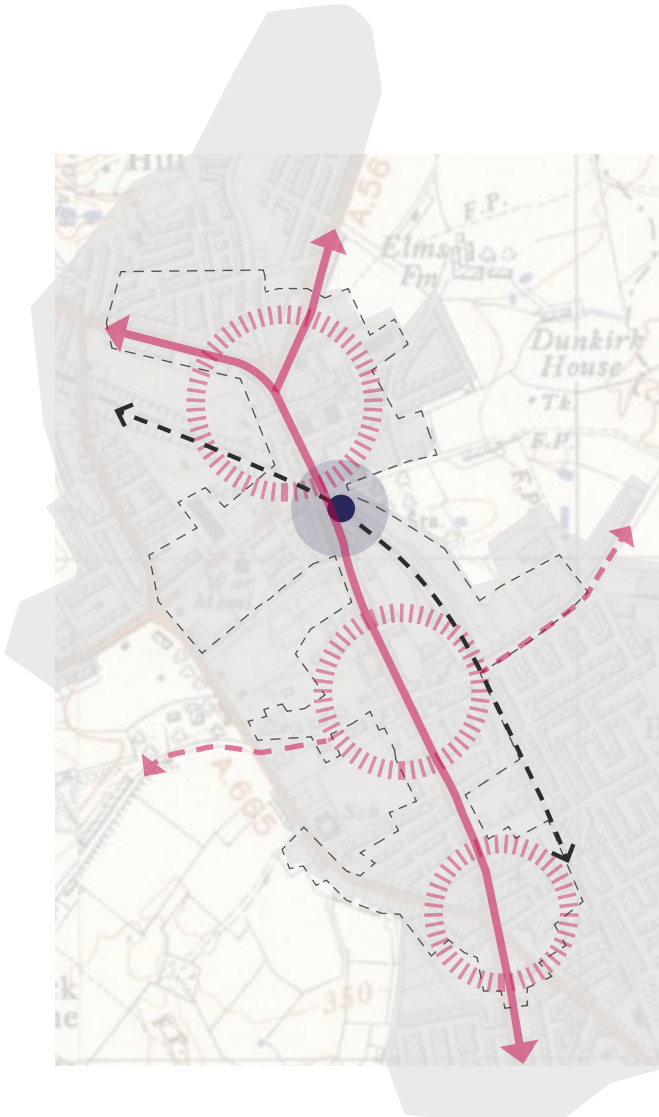
There are alternative narratives behind the naming of Whitefield, one of which suggests the name originates from the bleaching process of settled Flemish weavers as they bleached their fabric in the sun.



1910

Whitefield rapidly evolved as the area industrialised, catalysed by the development of the railway and a new station. Large mills and warehouses were developed, with rows of workers houses, schools and other amenities clustered nearby and fronting Bury New Road.

Clusters of uses and activity have formed around the historic hamlets and new station - suggesting a place with 'multiple hearts'.



1947

Whitefield's next stage of evolution from the rural clusters of the 19th-century aligns closely with many towns of its type across the UK, large-scale, post-war housing estates built away from the primary routes and facilities.

This represents the start of the process of urban sprawl, as **Whitefield begins to lose its compact urban form - previously structured along Bury New Road and clustered around the historic hearts.**



1965

The town continues to grow as more overspill estates were created to accommodate families moved out of inner Manchester as slum clearance programmes were undertaken.

By this point in history, the use of the private car as a primary means of transport would be becoming widespread. Old arterial high streets across Manchester and the UK were beginning to transform into urban highways, focused on getting cars from A to B quicker. The car and urban sprawl created the Bury New Road we see today.

The Whitefield Timeline

Whitefield has been many different places to many different communities through its evolution.

This timeline captures this process of transition.



Whitefield hamlet - 1848

pre 1066

A stop on the Roman road?

Scraps of evidence suggest that a Roman road from Manchester to Ribchester in the north once ran across part of the land on which the modern Whitefield is located.



Whitefield weavers cottages - date unknown

15-17th century

Rural

A small but thriving community of weavers and farmers had developed along rural lanes. The name Whitefield is thought to have originated from Flemish weavers and their fabric dying process. Stand Grammar School, a chapel and other landmarks begin to emerge.



Whitefield Mill

18th century

Industrialising

The first step towards modern Whitefield was made when Bury Old Road was constructed in 1755. By 1792 the population of Whitefield was 2,780. Industry started at Stand Lane where the first cotton mill was built on Peel Street (Radcliffe) in 1780.

19th century

A compact industrial suburb

By 1850, there were several cotton mills and a coal mine, which led to the construction of workers' housing and amenities around places of work. The construction of Bury New Road in 1827 and a train line from Bury to Manchester in 1879 catalysed this transition.



A mix of uses growing around the mills

20th century

Suburbanising

The commercialisation of the train line and development of the road network resulted in the suburbanisation of Whitefield. Several housing estates were built during this period (e.g. Hillock Estate) as part of urban sprawl. The population grew rapidly from 14,370 in 1961 to 21,830 by 1971.



Low-density post-war housing infill dominates Whitefield's edges

Now

Divided

Today, Whitefield is largely divided by the busy Bury New Road, which contributes to many of its current issues - poor walkability, a feeling of social and physical disconnect, a low-quality public realm and a struggling local economy.



Bury New Road divides the town centre

2.2 A bustling linear town

Learning from the past

As Whitefield grew from a series of hamlets to a linear industrial suburb during the late-19th and early-20th centuries, there was a point in time where the town appeared to be a compact and bustling urban neighbourhood – where work, home, and social facilities sat within a short walk of one another.

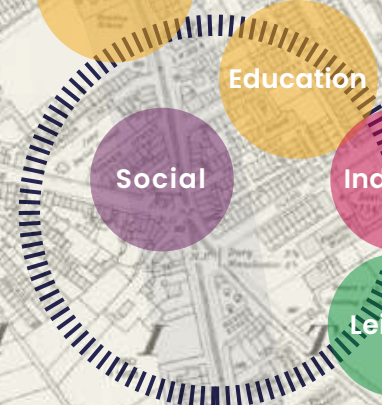
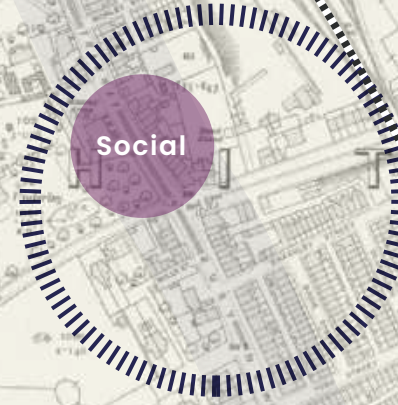
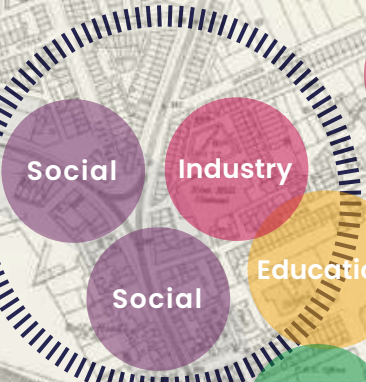
The 1910 plan of Whitefield highlights this diversity of activity. The development of the railway and modernisation of Bury New Road made the area more accessible, and a more logical location for industry.

A broad mix of uses and facilities such as pubs, schools, parks, shops, and other amenities all sat within a short walk from homes built around the mills. Bury New Road host many of these uses as the social spine of the town.

The prevalence of a range of shops, pubs and other facilities on Bury New Road suggests a bustling high street; a **place for social and economic exchange**, as opposed to fast moving traffic.

This history provides great cues for how we may address the future. The dramatic increase of vehicular traffic moving along and to Bury New Road has eroded the social spine and heart of Whitefield over time, compromising the historic structure of the town.

This can only be resolved by; creating a sense of place again along the road, reinstating the high street as a place for people.



Map of Whitefield 1910 – a bustling arterial Town 1910

2.3 Local Context

Uses and Destinations

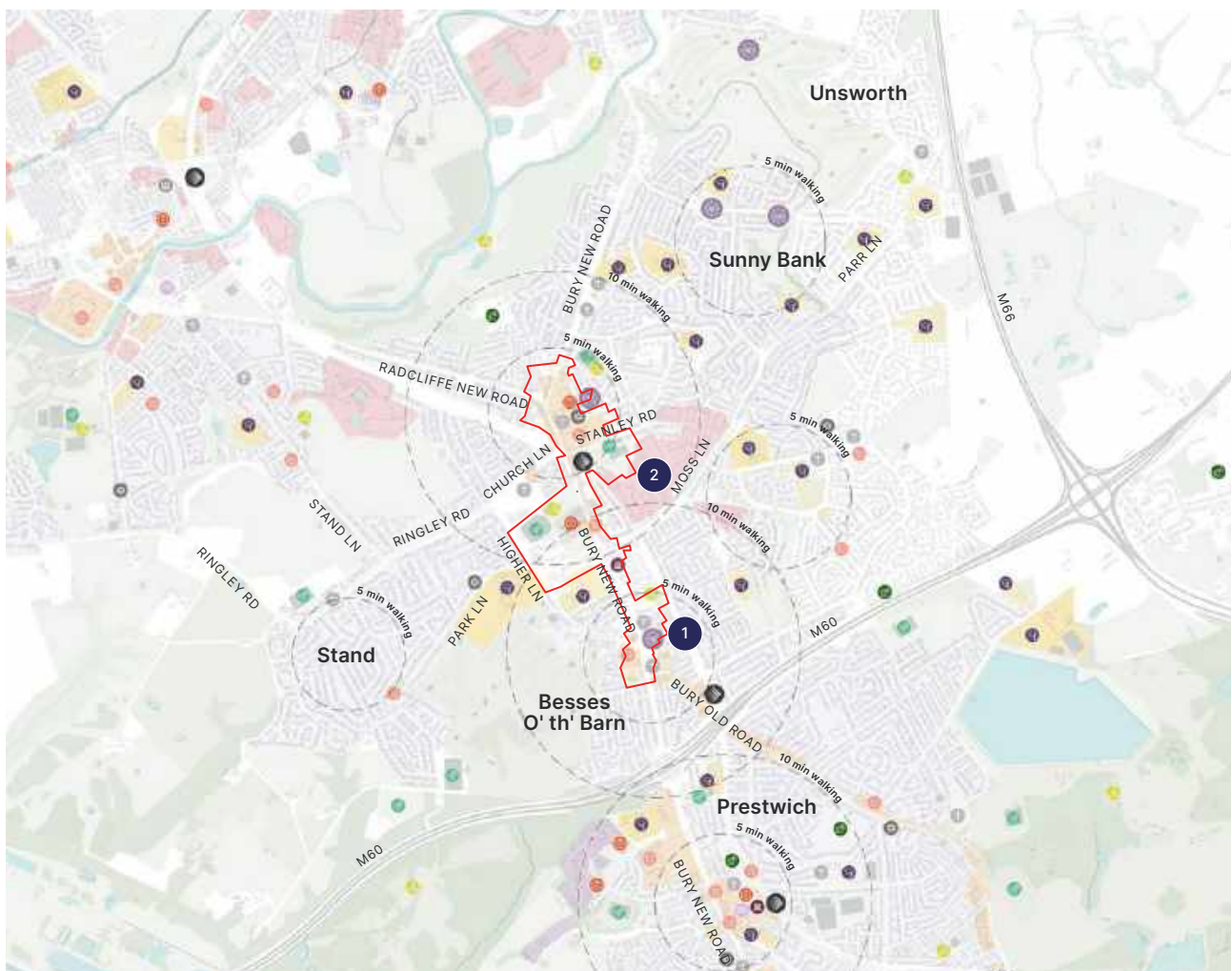
Bury New Road acts as Whitefield's 'high street', serving surrounding residential suburbs with a broad range of services and amenities. Smaller local centres can also be found at Sunny Bank and off Moss Lane, to the east.

Supermarkets, health, sport and education facilities are all located in or directly adjacent to the study area boundary – within a short walk of both Besses and Whitefield tram stations.

The area benefits from several primary schools, with six primary schools located within fifteen minutes walk of the study area boundary. Philips High School, located within five minutes walk from the town centre, is a major asset.

Key

- | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------|-------------------|---------------------------|-------------|
| School | Playground | Church | Land Use | Education |
| Healthcare | Allotment | Mosque | Predominantly Residential | Healthcare |
| Supermarket / Groceries | Library | Synagogue | Industrial | Green Space |
| Community Hub | Art Centre | Metrolink Station | Retail | |
| Playing Fields / Sports | Institution | | | |



What you've said...

"The town is small enough to navigate without a car"

Whitefield Resident



Who does Bury New Road serve?

The services and amenities located on Bury New Road are incredibly accessible on foot or bike - with the residential neighbourhoods of Stand and Unsworth located within a 10-minute cycle.

Despite this, the town centre contains a significant amount of car parking, which are not always used to their capacity; these are dispersed across the Town Centre in an unplanned manner. This suggests that short shopping trips and others short journeys are undertaken using the car.

This requires further testing and analysis, with limited data available under the scope of this study.

1



Victoria Square Shopping retail Centre

2



Industrial estate next to Whitefield Tram Station

Key Findings and Messages



- Whitefield is well provided by local amenities such as schools, healthcare, and groceries;
- There is a lack of public facilities catering for the needs of the community, notably a lack of community halls or other non-faith gathering facilities;
- Walkability and cycling accessibility are key, which would enable people to make short trips - such as school run, groceries, playground dates - without a car within the neighbourhood; and
- There is opportunity to create a highly walkable / accessible, compact and vibrant town centre in Whitefield - where active travel, crossings and associated facilities.

2.4 Local Context

Movement and Connectivity (Roads)

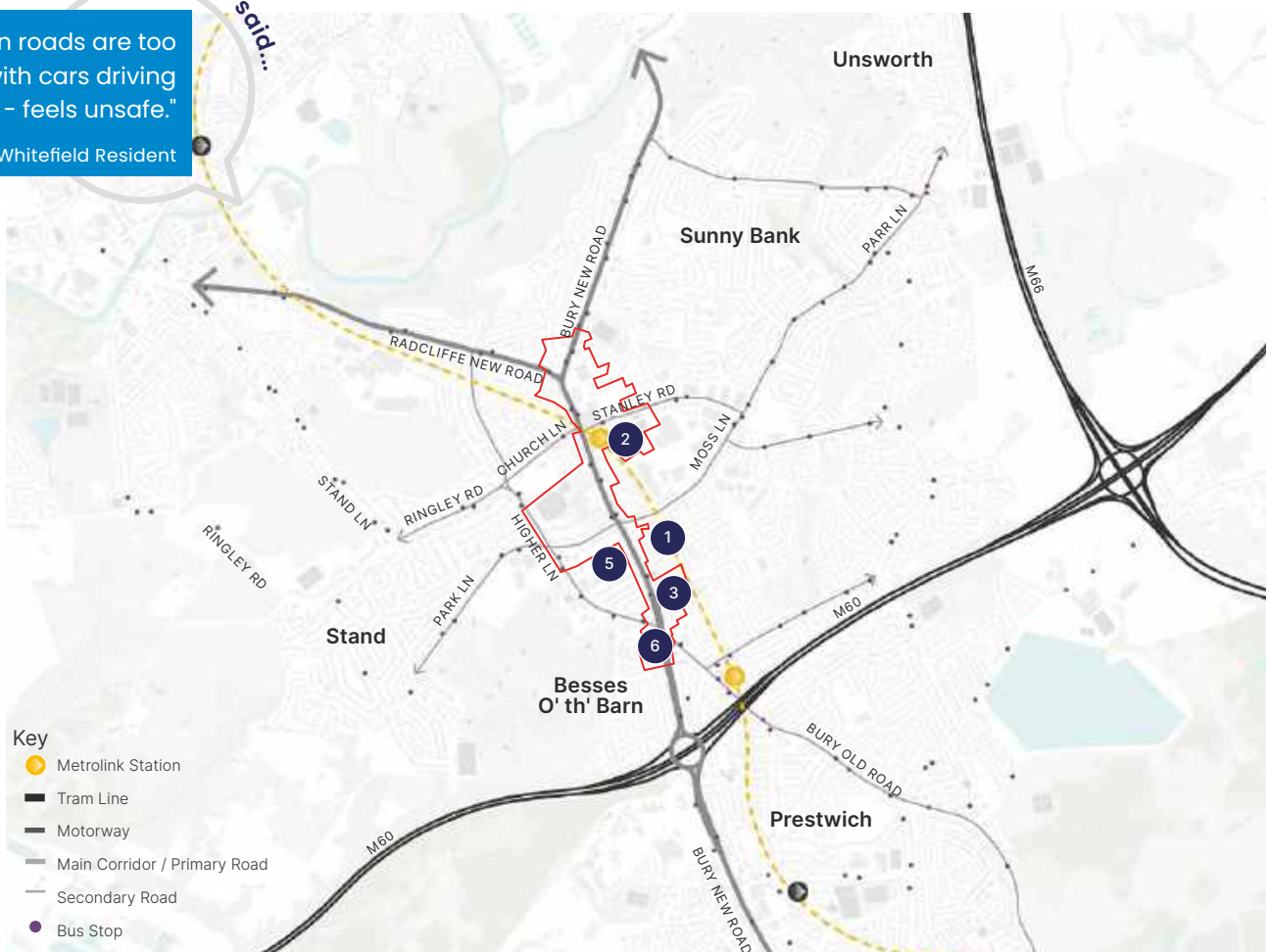
Bury New Road runs through the of Whitefield Town Centre, carrying high volumes of vehicular traffic, with Department of Transport statistics highlighting 30,000 vehicle trips a day, within particular locations in 2016.

- Bury New Road severs Whitefield Town Centre from north to south. The route connects Whitefield with Bury to the North, Radcliffe to the Northwest, and Manchester City Centre to the south.
- The A56 suffers large volumes of vehicular traffic, with strategic routes linking into the town centre at its northern and southern gateways. The constant presence of traffic negatively impacts sense of place, resulting in wide road carriageways and large junctions.
- A lack of pedestrian crossings across Bury New Road and Higher Lane prevents permeability from east to west through the town centre.
- Whitefield Metrolink station is located at the heart of the town centre, with Besses O' th' Barn station within a 15-minute walk.
- There are several bus stops serving the area; however residents consider that the connectivity is poor and bus services deficient.

What you've said...

"Main roads are too busy with cars driving very fast - feels unsafe."

Whitefield Resident



What you've said...

"Not enough parking in the right areas."
Whitefield Resident



Car Parking Facilities Plan

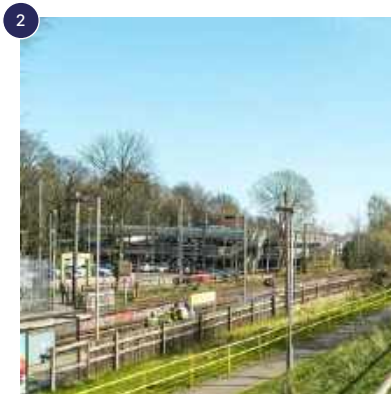
Car Parking

The ability for cars to drive into the heart of Whitefield Town Centre and park, either formally or informally, poses a major challenge as we seek to improve the quality of place.

- Two large multi-storey car park facilities are located close to the Metrolink station, including a three-storey park and ride facility and the metro and at Morrisons.
- Parking courts at Victoria Square local centre and at the southern gateway detract from the quality of the streetscene.
- Cars park in undefined spaces across the town centre, in side alleys, residential streets, to the rear of businesses, and along the edges of footways.



Residential streets are inundated with cars parked along kerbs



The tram station park and ride provides a large capacity facility



Large hardstanding parking area at Victoria Square local centre



Cars are parked along the kerbs of minor streets and alleys



Short-stay parking along the A56 is poorly integrated



Hardstanding parking courts dominate the front of shops along the A56

"More safe crossing points are needed along the busy roads."
 Whitefield Resident



Road Accidents Plan



Road Accidents

- High traffic counts and accidents are predominately located along Bury New Road and Higher Lane, with junctions acting as accident hot spots.
- Bury New Road acts as a major barrier to pedestrian movement, with crossings concentrated around large road junctions.
- Higher Lane is used as rat-run street, with motor vehicle users driving at higher speeds, creating an unsafe environment for cyclists and pedestrians in the area.
- The area around Bury New Road/ Higher Lane/ Bury Old Road junction is highlighted in the emerging Bury Transport Strategy as having major issues with safety and design.



The junction of Bury New Road is highlighted as being prone to road accidents, and presents a convoluted crossing environment for pedestrians



The junction at Bury New Road and Pinfold Lane / Moss Lane is also highlighted as an issue, with no signalised crossing, narrow footways and wide road carriageway.



Air Quality Plan



Air Quality

- Air Quality Management Area's cover significant sections of the Bury New Road corridor through the town centre, where the local air quality is unlikely to meet the Government's national air quality objectives.
- Poor air quality areas in Whitefield are concentrated in the Bury New Road corridor and the motorways M60 and M66.
- Reflects the poor environment and heavy car traffic in the motorway and main corridor.



5548 high-polluting vans, LGVs and HGVs passed along Bury New Road through the town centre in a single day in 2016 – reducing air quality and negatively impacting sense of place along the high street (Department for Transport, 2016)

Key Findings and Messages



- The volume of vehicular traffic along Bury New Road has a major impact on of place, permeability, and safety across the corridor;
- Parked cars dominate the street scene and secondary spaces across the study area, further detracting from sense of place;
- There are opportunities in large sites at the periphery of the town centre that could be used to consolidate parking in the long term, creating more space for people and nature along the corridor;
- There is a major opportunity to repair the severance caused by Bury New Road as part of a place and people focused approach to street design;
- Pedestrian experience must be considered going forward; and
- There is potential tie into TfGM strategies to improve public transport services serving the centre as part of long-term future plans.

What you've said...

"Bury New Road feels polluted from all the fast and heavy traffic passing through."

Whitefield Resident

2.5 Local Context








Walking and Cycling

Whitefield is surrounded by parks, open spaces and major strategic green and blue corridors. Despite this, the network of active-travel linkages breaks down as routes meet residential areas surrounding the town centre - where cars dominate the street environment.

The pedestrian environment along the main corridor is low-quality, - and comprises with convoluted crossings isolated to major junctions. Bury New Road acts as a barrier to east-west movement between residential neighbourhoods; this affects wider permeability.

Both tram stations offer cycle parking, and improved junctions for cyclists are proposed at Higher Lane at the junction with Pinfold Lane, as well as Church Lane. The National Cycle Route runs through Philips Park and the Irwell corridor, presenting a major opportunity regarding wider active travel connectivity.

Key

-  Metrolink Station
-  Tram Line
-  Pedestrian linkages (fully pedestrianised and / or quality pedestrian environment)
-  Open Space
-  Areas where strategic pedestrian / cycle linkages end
-  Bee infrastructure proposals
-  National cycle route 6



Walking and cycling - wider connectivity plan



What you've said...

"The town is not bike-friendly at all."
Whitefield Resident



There is limited cycle parking provision at the tram station – and existing facilities are poorly overlooked

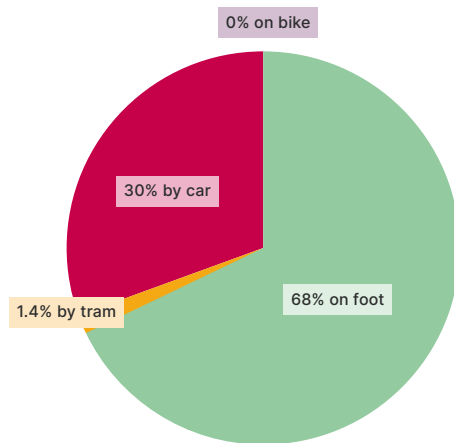


Bury New Road acts as a major barrier to east-west pedestrian movement, with pedestrian crossing facilities isolated to major junctions



There are little-to-no cycle lanes along streets around the town centre – and lanes along the corridor are narrow and unsegregated

How do people reach the town centre?



The survey responses reveal that a large majority travel to the Town Centre on foot – suggesting they live in close proximity. Over a quarter of journeys are made by car.

Key Findings and Messages



- Missing or insufficient cycle infrastructure across the area deters people from using bikes to get around, creating more short journeys via car;
- Disruptions in pedestrian movement and overall low-quality of public realm have a detrimental effect on the pedestrian experience;
- There is an opportunity to repair and enhance the pedestrian permeability of the town centre, especially crossing Bury New Road; and
- Over half of respondents said that they walk to Whitefield town Centre which demonstrates the importance of creating safe and pleasant pedestrian linkages, crossings and public realm.

What you've said...

"Feels like we're not taking advantage of the existing parks."

Whitefield Resident

2.6 Local Context

Public Open Space

Whitefield has several parks and green open spaces, creating a rich and verdant character in areas off the A56. Despite this, the A56 itself presents a hard, grey urban environment.



Hamilton Road Park – photo source: David Dixon

Existing parks within and abutting the study area are varied in their quality. Whitefield Park, which has been a key feature and focal point to the town since the late 19th century, is a major asset, presenting a mature and varied character. Parks elsewhere across the town centre are with a limited range of facilities. Springwater Park and Hamilton Road Park are holders of Green Flag for well-managed green outdoor spaces.

1. Whitefield Park



- Small urban local community park established in 1890.
- Size: 2.01 hectares
- Edges: Metrolink Station, Park and Ride, industrial estate, and residential development.

2. Victoria / Besses Park

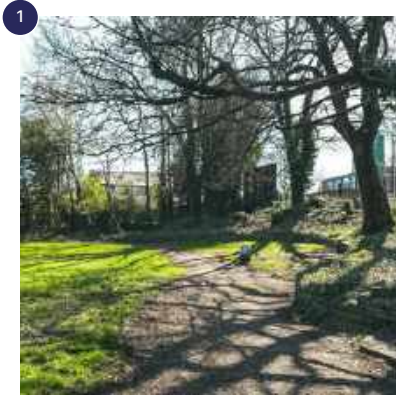


- Small local park established in 1990 catering for sports and outdoor exercise.
- Size: 1.1 hectares
- Edges: predominantly residential with retail near the high street.

3. Hamilton Road Park



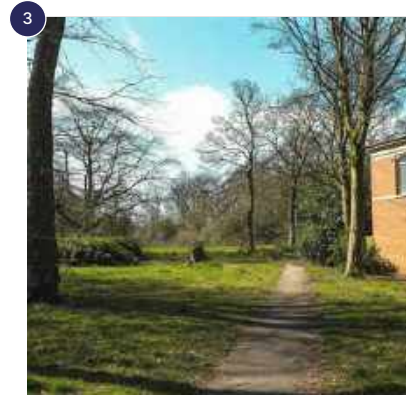
- Small park with tennis court and toddler's area.
- Size: 0.98 hectares
- Edges: Residential, healthcare facility, sports facility, and religious grounds.



Victoria Park – poor overlooking from the street and impermeable edges



Hamilton Road Park – there is an opportunity to diversify activity and planting



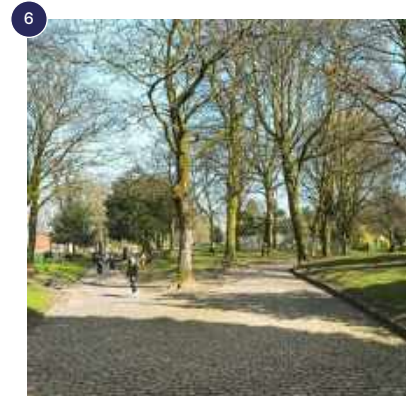
Green space adjacent to Slattery is currently poorly overlooked



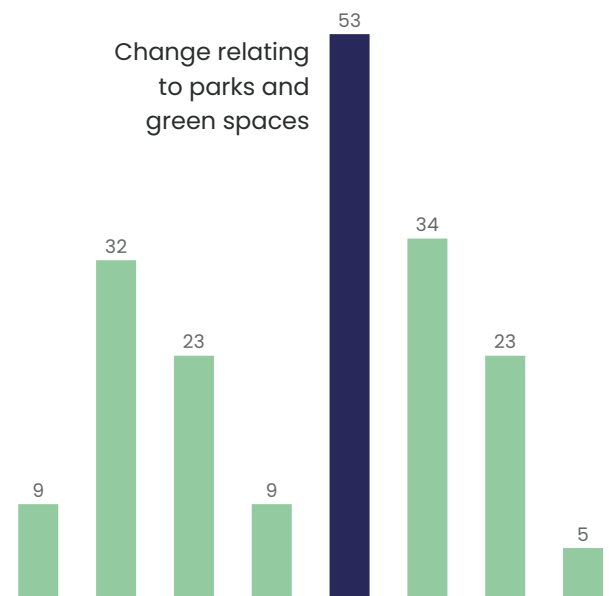
Poorly defined amenity green spaces are scattered across the town centre



Pockets of amenity green space with limited function at Victoria Square



Whitefield Park – a verdant oasis at the heart of the town



Respondents of surveys received to date highlight changes and improvements to park as a major area of focus

Key Findings and Messages



- The active travel network breaks down as strategic linkages meet residential neighbourhoods leading into the town;
- Existing parks vary in quality, and there is potential to further activate and diversify; these spaces as part of the plan, as well as creating more access points to better integrate spaces into the wider neighbourhood;
- There is an opportunity to draw the green character of the parks and surrounding green residential streets onto the A56 corridor; and
- Opportunity to improve cycle infrastructure and pedestrian environment to encourage the use of active travel for short trips within the neighbourhood, including bike parking around shops and other amenities.

2.7 Local Context

Socio-Economic / Demographics

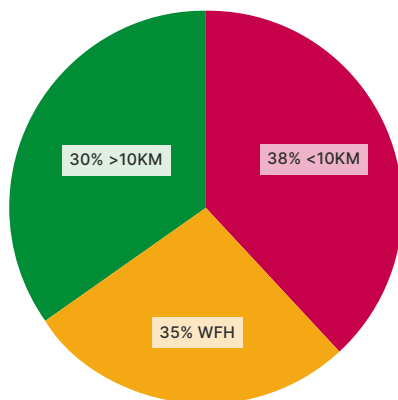
Whitefield's population is diverse in terms of age, culture and habits. This reflects in the need to create an inclusive environment that tends to all of the population, creating a vibrant town for all.



Indices of multiple deprivation (Census, 2019)

Deprivation

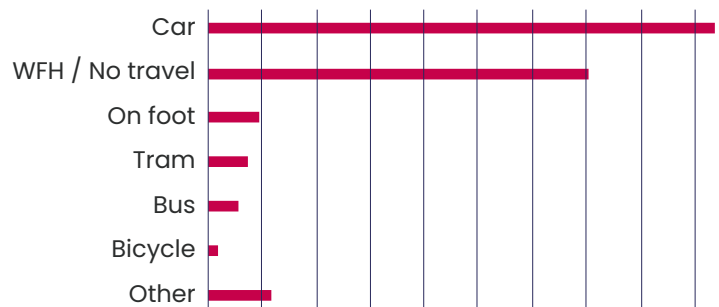
Communities to the east of Whitefield Town Centre are amongst the most deprived in the UK, whilst areas to the south and southwest in the Besses and Pilkington Park Wards also show high rates of deprivation.



Commuting habits (Census, 2021)

Work

Over a third of those employed in Whitefield work from home, suggesting there is a large number of people at home and in the area throughout the week. Of those who do travel, many prefer car as their preferred commuting method.

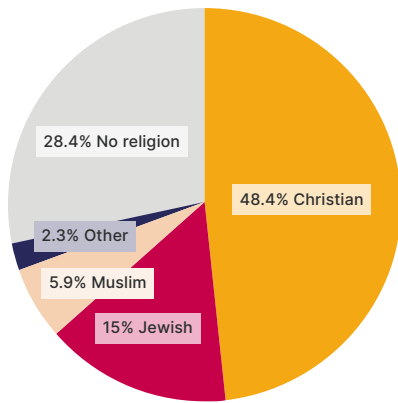


Modes of travel to workplace

What you've said...

"Neighbourhood is disconnected by major roads which also mark socio-economic barriers."

Whitefield Resident



Identity

Whitefield is a truly multi-cultural and multi-faith town, as captured in the adjacent graph (data source: project survey).

Population

42.5

Median Age in Whitefield

20.2%

of population is 65 years old and over

19.4%

School children or full-time students

Key Findings and Messages



- There is a rich cultural mix within Whitefield; this should be supported by local facilities to enable cooperation;
- A third of Whitefield's population works from home; this means that they could form an opportunity to increase local trips to the Town Centre, enhancing the local economy;
- Children of school age and students make up 1/5 of Whitefield's population and the local area has to support their needs;
- East of Bury New Road is significantly more deprived than the west - need for reconciliation and support the growth.



3 Exploring the Town Centre

Study Area

Here we zoom into the town centre, looking at more specific and detailed considerations affecting Whitefield.

This section presents analysis of the Bury New Road corridor, outlining the key challenges and constraints faced along the high street.

3.1 Key Destinations

There are several key destinations located within the town centre, acting as pull factors for Whitefield. These destinations are considered important to the town centre, and will be central to emerging plans for improvements.

Slattery

A popular family-run business, a patisserie and chocolatier shop and bakery existing since 1967. It is located north from the junction of Bury New Road and Pinfold Lane, close to the entrance to the wooded area of Green Hill. Slattery is a major draw to Whitefield, attracting visitors from far and wide.

Garrick Theatre

A purpose-built theatre located close to the Whitefield tram station. The theatre produces five plays each year, seats 87 people and includes foyer and bar facilities. The Whitefield Garrick Society was founded in 1943 and has its roots in the Whitefield Home Guard. The theatre is a very well-known and used facility among local residents.

Hamilton Road Park

A park located within All Saints Conservation Area. It is accessed via ramp from Bury New Road, and contains children's playground and a hard-paved events space.

Whitefield Park

First opened in 1890, it is a small, local urban local community park, adjacent to Whitefield tram stop. The entrance to the park is flat, then rises towards the middle and slopes away to the rear. Facilities include children's play area, multi-play ball zone and a youth shelter.

All Saints Church

A Grade I listed building built between 1821-1826, it is an Anglican parish church located on Church Lane acting as a community centre.

Former Library

The former Library and Adult Learning Centre on Pinfold Lane also served as a community meeting spot. It has been closed down due to lack of funding.

What you've said..

"Whitefield is an 'in-and-out' town rather than a destination."

Whitefield Resident

What you've said...

"There are not many places to meet - I have to leave Whitefield to do that."

Whitefield Resident



Key destinations



3.2 Understanding Bury New Road Public Realm, Pavements, Parking

Bury New Road presents a hostile and unpleasant environment for pedestrians and cyclists – with wide road carriageways dominating the streetscene.

Additional street analysis cross sections are provided in the appendix, providing further details on the problems faced along the Bury New Road corridor.

The environment at the Stanley Road intersection presents an example where the corridor is at its widest, with heavy traffic prevalent and noise / air pollution a major issue.

Clutter dominate the pavements; inactive frontages on the Morrison’s interface, and there is a lack of outdoor space for businesses to spill out into the street. There is a lack of green infrastructure, including trees, planting and greenery, and cycle lanes are narrow.

The section below captures many of the overarching issues faced by Whitefield Town Centre – as Bury New Road functions as an urban highway, not a high street.

What you’ve said..

“It’s not nice to walk along the main roads.”

Whitefield Resident

1

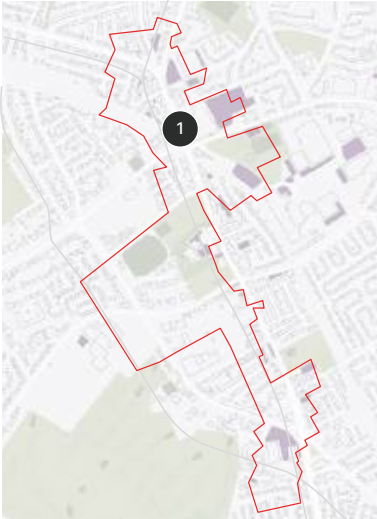


Bury New Road street analysis

What you've said...

"We want narrower road and wider pavements that are safe for everyone."

Whitefield Resident



Limited space for spillout from Porada restaurant



Poor cycling infrastructure



Width of carriageway creates unpleasant pedestrian environment

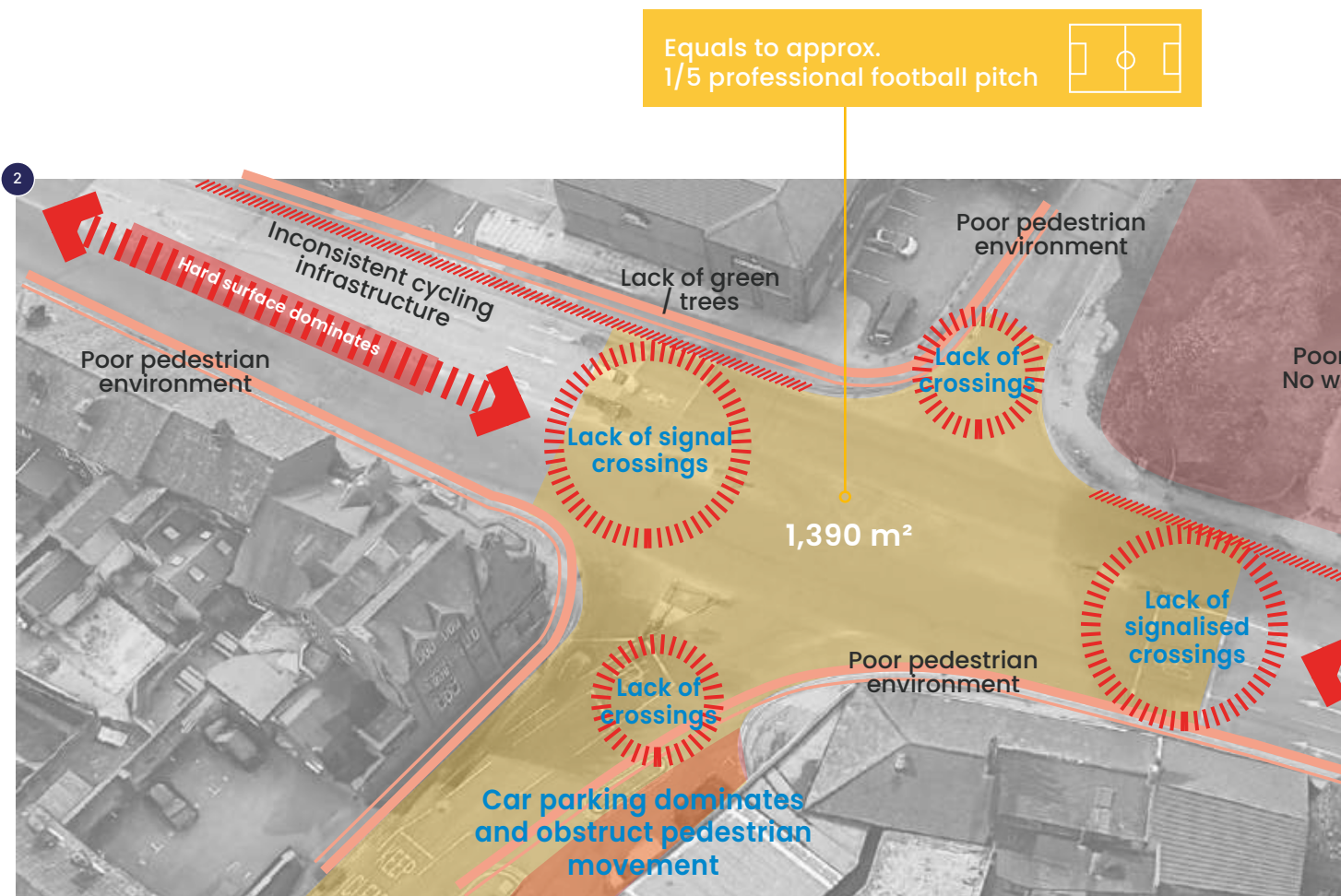


3.3 Understanding Bury New Road Junctions

Whitefield residents regularly expressed their frustration with the heavy traffic along the A56, which makes the town feel busy and overwhelming. The following junction case study captures some of the key prevailing issues faced at Whitefield's key junctions.

The pedestrian environment at key points along the A56 is of low-quality. The majority of crossings are not signalised, and fail to acknowledge pedestrian desire lines. This creates confusion, and as is a risk to pedestrian safety. Pavements are narrow leading into the junctions, further compromising the pedestrian experience and safety.

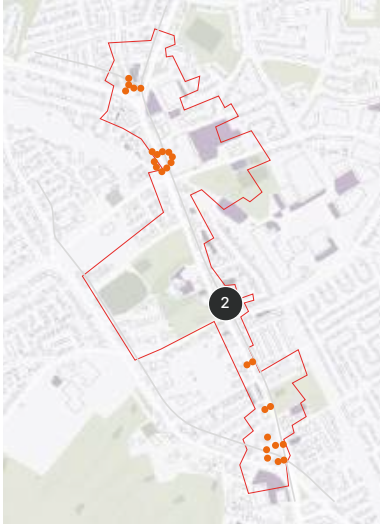
Additional analysis of each of the four key junctions and intersections along Bury New Road are provided in the Appendix.



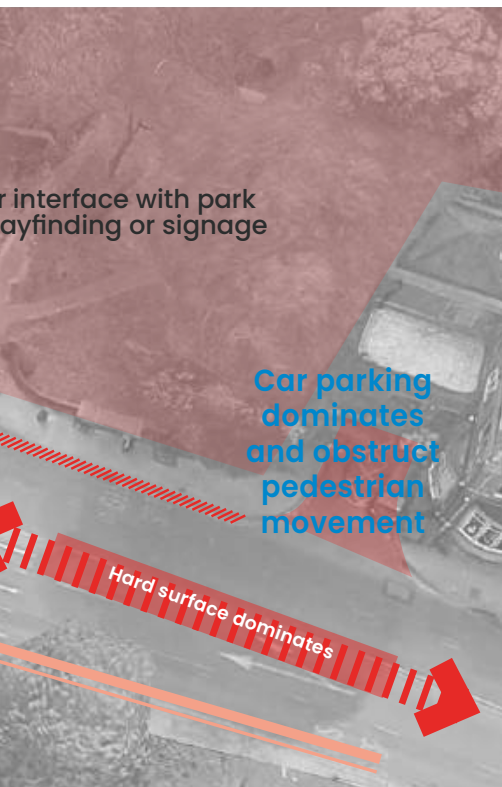
What you've said...

"The town is segregated due to the road and lack of public spaces"

Whitefield Resident



Carriageway dominates the environment



Low-quality public realm



Lack of signal used pedestrian crossings



3.4 Understanding Bury New Road Buildings and Character

Buildings in the study area present a range of architectural qualities, which changes the character of Bury New Road as you move through the town centre.

The majority of the many buildings in the area were built during the 19th and 20th century, with rows of red brick terraces, many now converted into retail units lining Bury New Road.

Larger Victorian semi-detached and detached homes address the street around the conservation area, set back from the street. Deep front gardens enhance the character of Bury New Road; and elevated buildings providing a strong sense of street enclosure.

There are several modern additions to the area, mainly in form of large-footprint retail and office buildings to the north and south. These buildings are surrounded by swathes of surface car parking, and fail to define the high street. This detracts from the sense of enclosure experienced elsewhere along Bury New Road - especially around the northern and southern gateway areas.

Key Findings

- Red brick, Victorian properties are characteristic of the area, and contribute positively to the character of Bury New Road around the conservation area;
- Other historic terraced buildings have been degraded over time, with the addition of low-quality render and fascia;
- Landmark buildings are scattered across the area, however ground floor frontages often fail to activate the street. Landmarks are poorly integrated and act as islands - a result of surrounding road infrastructure and boundary treatments; and
- The setting of landmark buildings are often poor, failing to celebrate the assets.



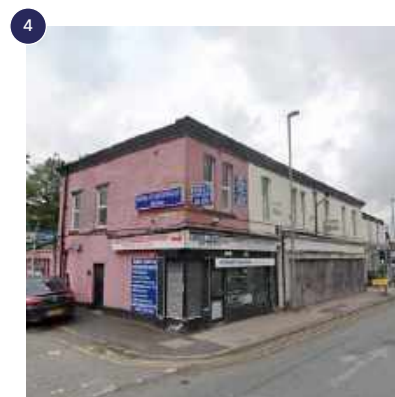
Landmark historic building with prominent facade features and strong vertical elements



Victorian terraced buildings, more recently converted into commercial properties, are characteristic of Whitefield



Victorian semi-detached houses with large, green thresholds define Bury New Road around the conservation area



Historic rows of terraced buildings where the historic character has been eroded by low-quality fascia and render

What you've said...

"The old Town Hall site has been a mess for 20 years."
Whitefield Resident



- Key**
- Study Area Boundary
 - Historic landmark
 - Building that makes a positive contribution to character
 - Building that detracts from the historic character
 - Building that needs ground floor activation / external renovation
 - Areas showcasing Victorian heritage - predominantly red brick terraced housing and workers cottages
 - Poor definition of gateway



3.5 Understanding Bury New Road Frontages

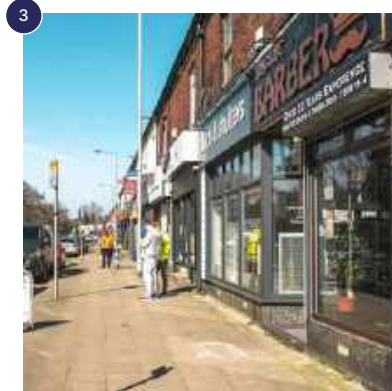
There are several types of building frontage treatment within the study area:

- Active frontages that interact with the street – with predominantly transparent ground-floor frontages;
- Active frontages that don't interact with the street. This type of frontage is predominantly detached and semi-detached villas offset from the road by a front garden;
- Residential frontages where the entrance is either directly onto the street, or via a small front garden;
- Inactive frontages – including blank walls, garage entrances, opaque shop fronts where branding or signage has been installed in a glass window;
- Areas addressing the corridor where no building frontage is present. This is particularly prevalent in gateway spaces way spaces to the north and south.

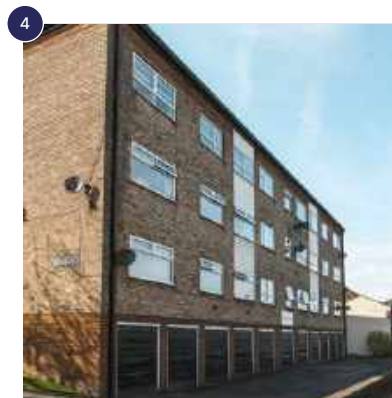
Key Findings and Messages



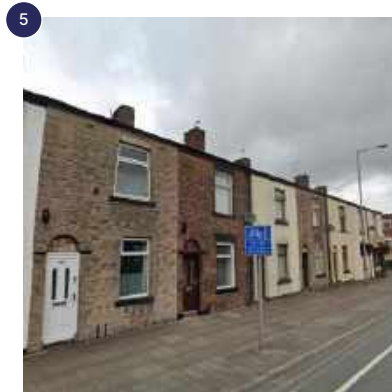
- There is limited to no spill out space along Bury New Road, preventing businesses from activating threshold and pavement spaces;
- The ground-floor frontages of many of the existing buildings along Bury New Road are opaque, failing to activate the street;
- Varying opening times of businesses result in long rows of closed shutters both through the day and in the evening;
- The location of large surface parking areas addressing Bury New Road creates fails to define the corridor, especially at key gateways to the north and south;
- The largest cluster of active frontages is located at the centre of the corridor; yet the street environment around them is poor. This is a major opportunity.



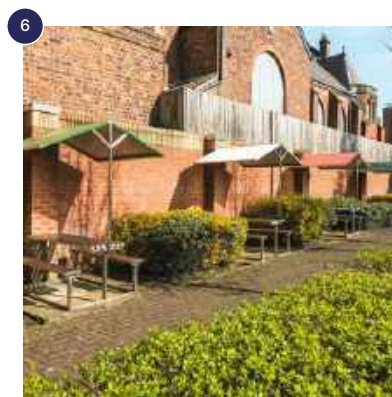
Ground floor frontage activated by shops and services



Inactive ground-floor frontage fails to activate the street



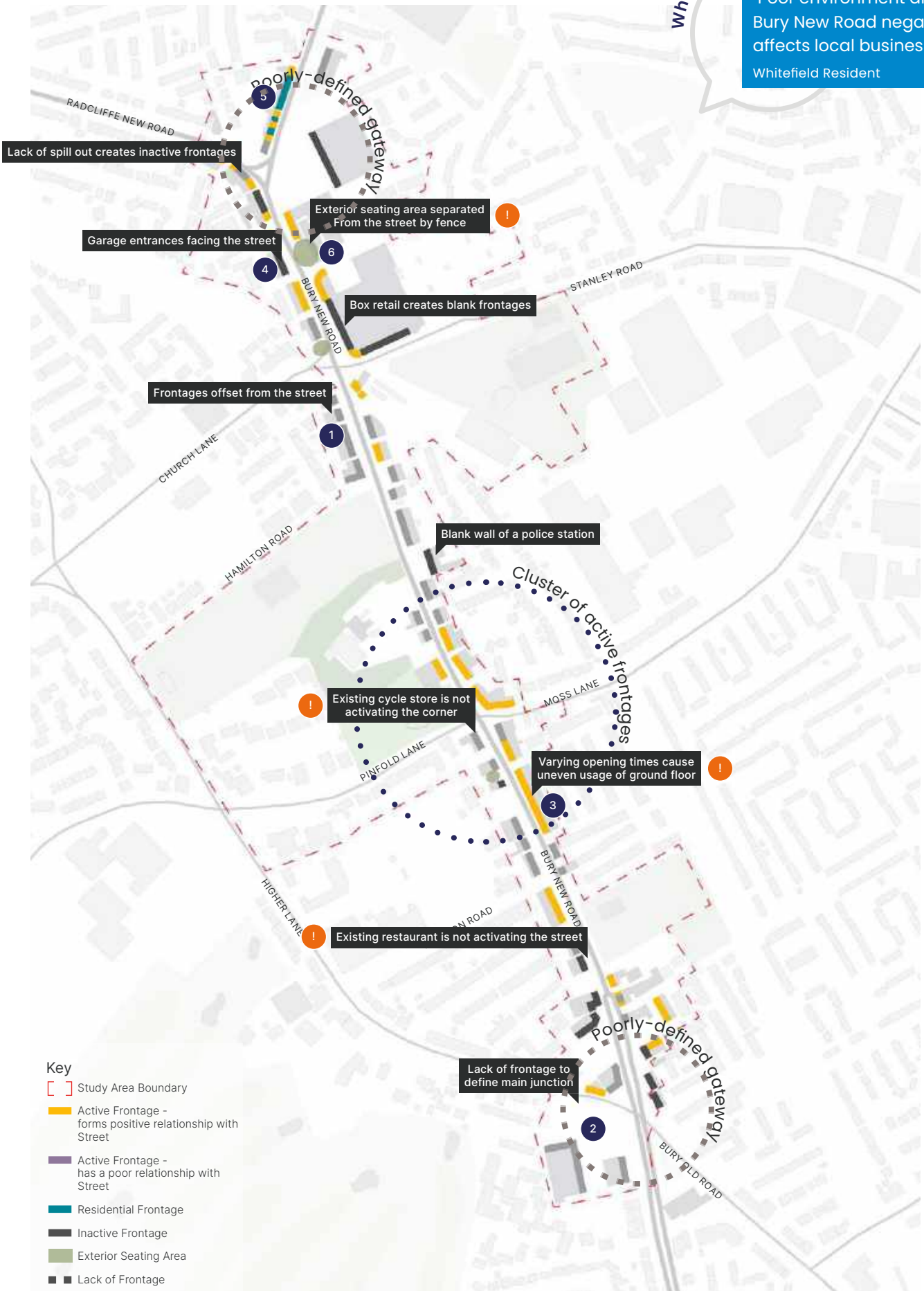
Ground floor frontage activated by residential entrances



Exterior spill out / seating areas partially activating the street

What you've said...

"Poor environment along Bury New Road negatively affects local businesses."
Whitefield Resident



3.6 Understanding Bury New Road Uses and Destinations

Whitefield is a predominantly residential neighbourhood, with the greatest mix of uses concentrated along Bury New Road, creating a central axis.

Dominant uses in the study area are retail and local services (e.g.. clothes shops, health and beauty, convenience, hardware, legal services etc.). There are some restaurants, coffee places and a range of takeaways in the area.

The majority of shops and services along the high street are small local and family businesses, but there is also presence of national retailers such as Morrisons, Subway, Aldi and McDonald's that include large areas of surface car parking. These are located in the northern and southern gateway areas of the town centre.

There is a large light-industrial / office park called Park 17 – of approx. 9 ha, to the east off Moss Lane in close proximity to the Metrolink Tram Stop and park and ride.

Key Findings

- Despite a wide range of uses, shopfronts often fail to breathe life into the high street. This is due to a number of factors, including the lack of pavement space for spillout, road traffic and associated issues and opaque ground floor frontages;
- The opening hours of shops along Bury New Road results in long rows of closed shutters throughout the day and evening; and
- Residents expressed that there is a lack of variety in cafes / pubs / bars and too few independent retailers. They also stated that car parking is having a negative impact on local businesses, as they deter from the quality of surrounding public realm and claim useable space.



Shops and services along Bury New road are mostly small businesses.



Big retailer shops with large parking areas.



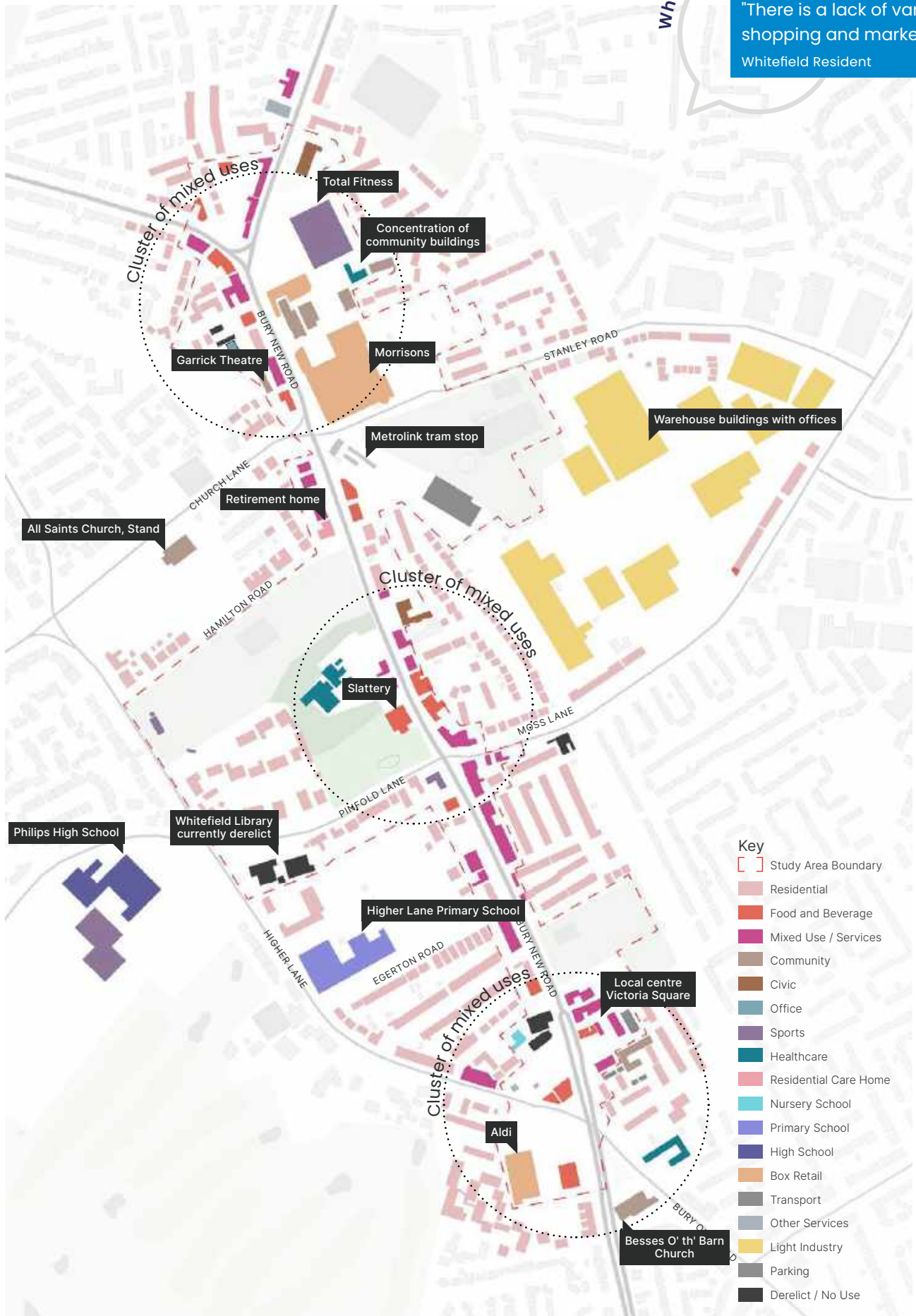
Various restaurants along Bury New Road.



Park 17 – large footprint buildings set within green space and surface car parking to the east of study area.

What you've said...

"There is a lack of varied shopping and markets."
Whitefield Resident



MARKETING &
COMMUNICATION

4 Exploring the Heart



Engagement

4.1 Exploring the heart of Whitefield

We have sought to understand how local people feel about Whitefield (the heart) to supplement our analysis of the physical elements of the place (the head).

Focusing on social flows and exchanges, rather than just the built environment, helps us understand the number of social and economic exchanges that are flowing through the study area.

We want to uncover the essence of Whitefield; the true nature or distinctive character that makes it what it is. You have to understand the essence of place to create interventions that resonate with it - its purpose and spirit.

Only through understanding how people feel about Whitefield as a place, can people develop meaningful connections and roles - becoming co-designers and stewards. It is only through a partnership with place that humans experience intimacy and responsibility to the world, creating meaningful roles for themselves. This grows new capabilities and capacity in people by including human development at every level.

4.2 Approach to Engagement

The adjacent timeline details the community engagement events and online consultation undertaken through the plan-making process.

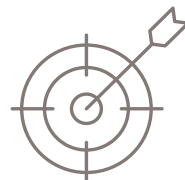
The findings have been collated and summarised to inform the vision, objectives, and proposed interventions presented in the latter half of the plan.



March

A consultation event with community stakeholders was held on 16th March.

Feedback was collated and grouped into themes, to help identify the local community's main priorities.



May - June

A wider public consultation event was held on 20th May, and online public consultation ran until 16th June 2023.

Feedback was again collated and grouped into themes and cross-referenced with the feedback we received from the first engagement event.



Early 2024

A formal public consultation is going to take place where the wider public will be able to review and provide feedback on this Vision document.

What you've said...

"There isn't a centre. It's just a road."
Whitefield Resident

4.3 Where is the centre of Whitefield?

Having asked the Whitefield community to locate the centre of the town, two key areas stood out:

1. Whitefield Tram Stop

The area around the Metrolink tram stop, Morrisons supermarket and Porada restaurant - mainly because of the location of the tram stop as a gateway and transport node. Also the historical analysis and comments from the residents suggest that the original centre of Whitefield was located within this area.

2. The area around the former Town Hall

An area further south, centred around the site of former Town Hall (now demolished), Slattery bakery and Uplands Medical Centre. This area was chosen mostly because of the former Town Hall location, as well as the renowned Slattery bakery. Historic analysis suggests that this area around Pinfold Lane was also significant in formation of the town of Whitefield.

We asked members of the Whitefield community to note where they felt the 'centre' of Whitefield sits, as identified on the adjacent plan.

The size of the circle indicates that a higher number of people identified the area as the 'heart'.



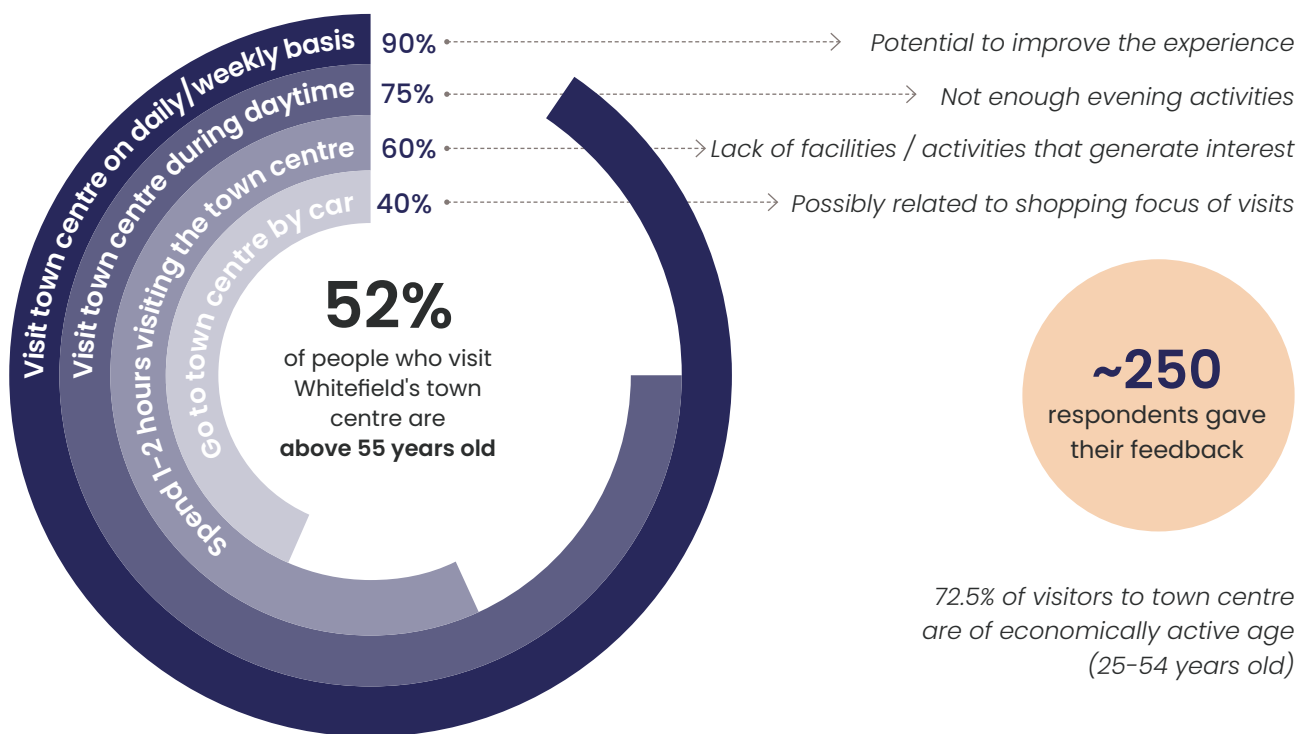
Hearts of Whitefield Plan



4.4 Community Engagement Summary

Further public engagement was undertaken between March and June 2023, providing a wealth of information and insight into the town. A summary of the key messages and findings is presented here.

For detailed summary of each community engagement event, please refer to Appendix 1.



Key Findings and Messages

These are the key themes that were identified based on the feedback from consultation events:



Lack of a central heart



It's not a destination / Lack of variety



Strong community spirit



Lack of community resources



Feels neglected which may lead to increase in antisocial behaviour



Poor experience of walking and public realm



Lack of cycling infrastructure



Heavy traffic and wide roads



Abundant parks and green spaces

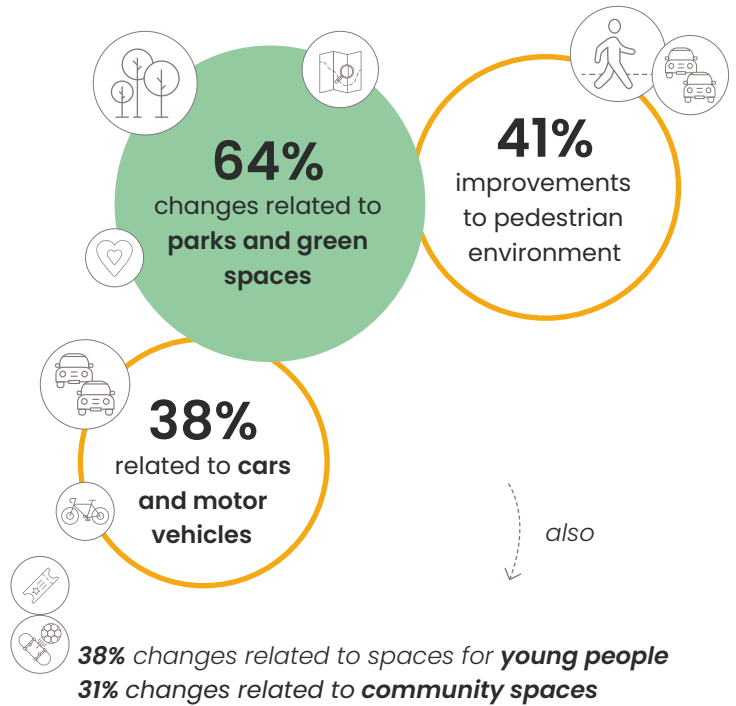


Need for facilities for young people

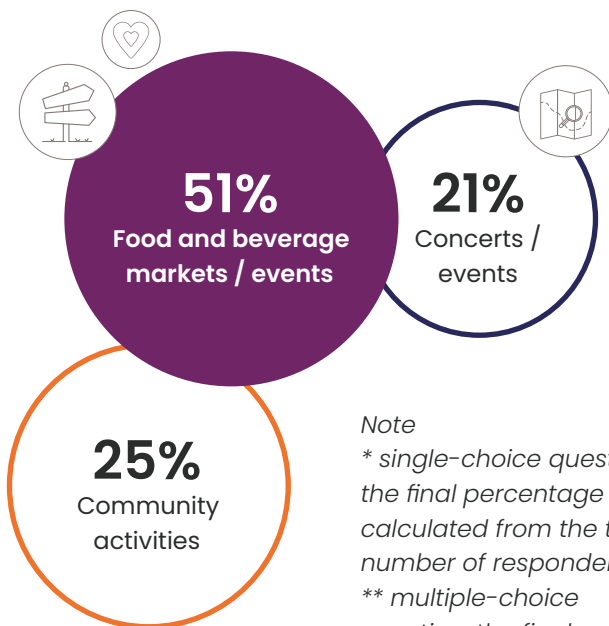
What is the main reasons for visit?*



What changes would the community like to see?*



What would they like to see more of?*



Note
 * single-choice question: the final percentage was calculated from the total number of respondents
 ** multiple-choice question: the final percentage was calculated from the total number of responses

Burning issues

Important notes from the community:

- There is no centre / heart to the town
- The local community needs a platform and physical spaces to get together
- Children's play areas and facilities need to be renovated / improved
- Road safety / lack of safe road crossings
- The environment around the Metrolink stop needs improvement to feel safer and reduce antisocial behaviour
- Demand to reduce traffic and speeding on Bury New Road
- The bus lanes seems redundant
- Strong demand to re-open the library

5 So What's Important?

WELCOME TO



WHITEFIELD

400
METRES
ON THE
LEFT

THE HOME OF

Slattery

PATISSIER & CHOCOLATIER

Challenges and
Opportunities

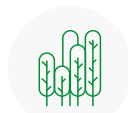
The following section critically summarises the findings of our analysis of the 'head' and 'heart' of Whitefield, outlining what we believe to be its key assets and challenges.

Informed by this, a series of opportunities for future improvement have been identified, to be reviewed in consideration of feedback received at the public consultation event in early 2024.

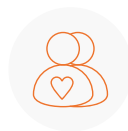
5.1 Whitefield's strengths and assets

Following extensive conversations with the Whitefield community and spatial analysis of the place, the following key assets have been identified as being important to Whitefield Town Centre:

These assets are the jewels in Whitefield's crown, and form the basis for future interventions across the town centre as the plan moves forward.



Access to wider green space network



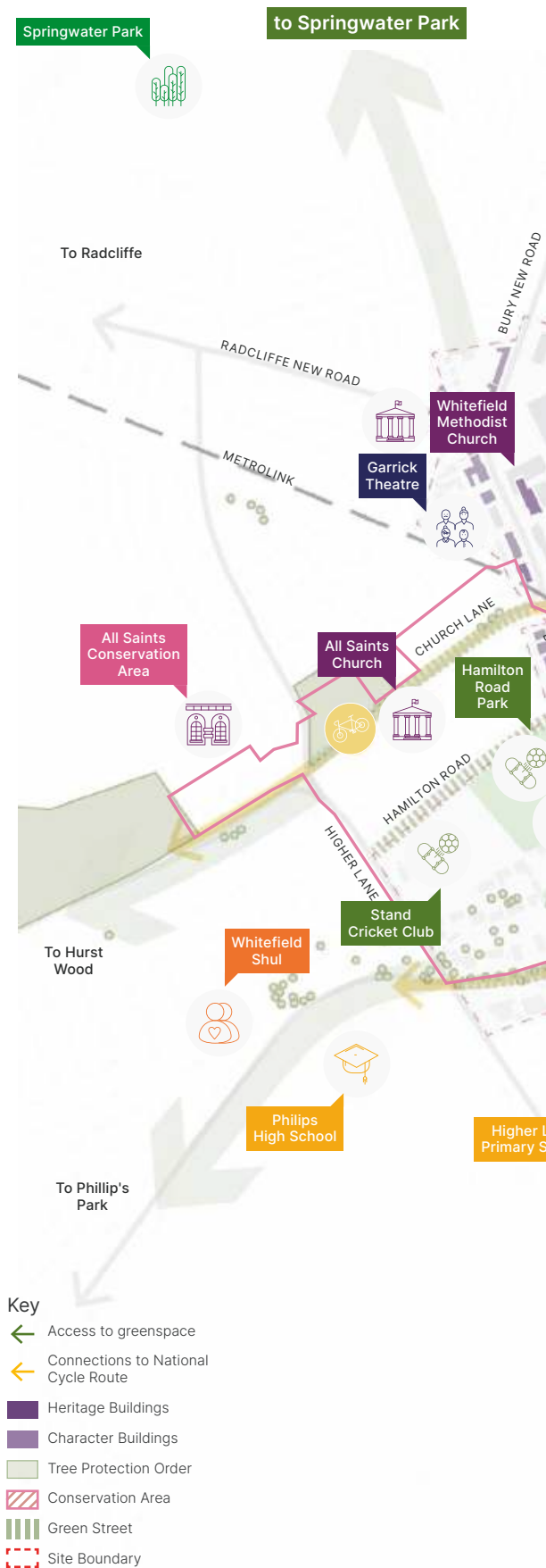
Strong community spirit with active community groups



Existing heritage buildings



Place with a story





Strategic accessibility
- road (Bury New Road) and tram links with Manchester



Famous shops and organisations



The Conservation Area



Mature trees and green residential streets



Sport and Parks at the centre of the town



Education facilities - primary and secondary

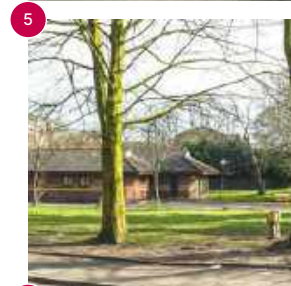


5.2 Whitefield's Challenges

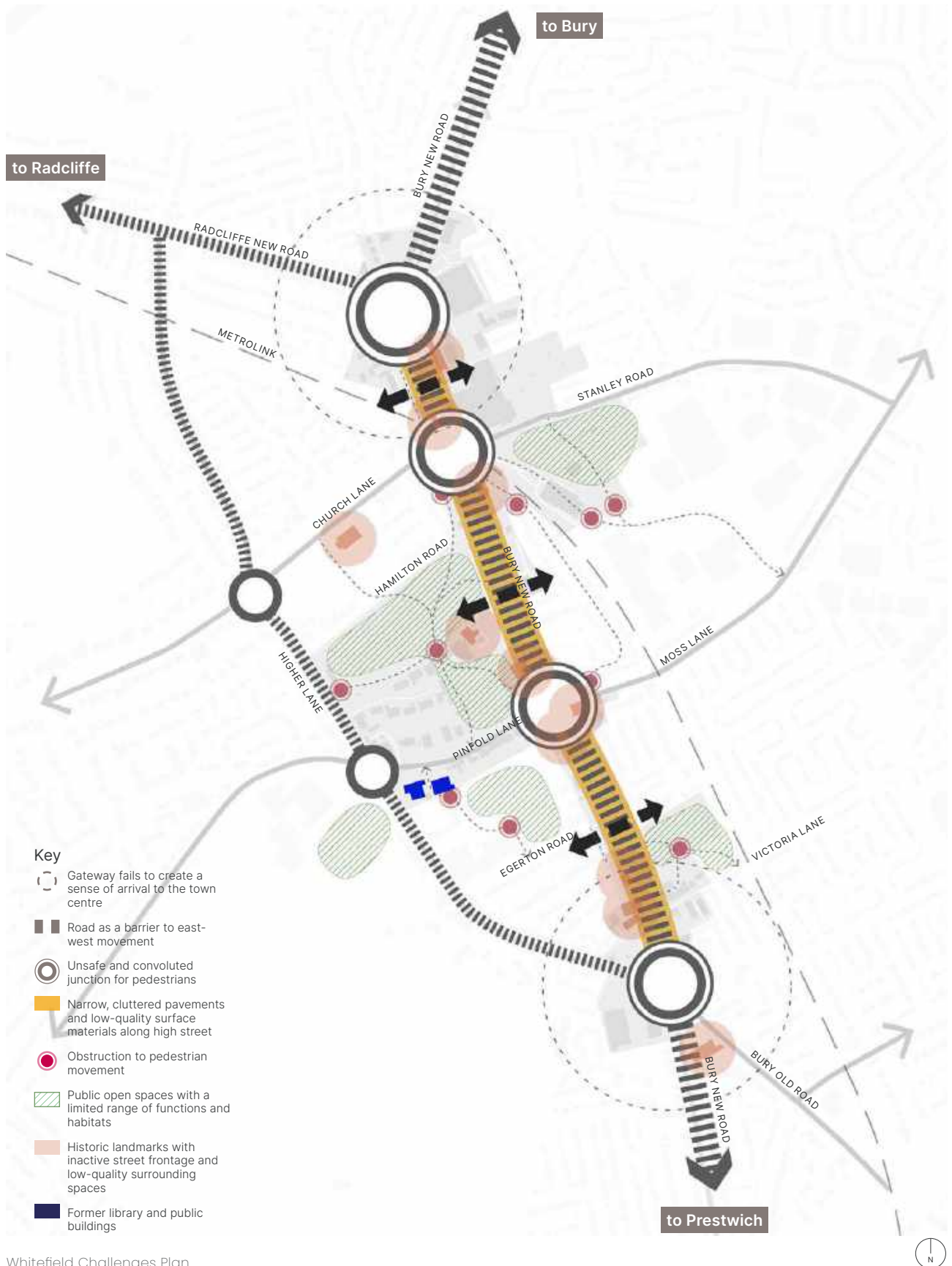
This spread summarises the key issues and challenges faced by Whitefield Town Centre, identified through the spatial analysis and feedback from the community engagement events undertaken so far.

These challenges set the basis for the emerging vision for the town centre, providing a steer on the key areas which require focus as potential interventions.

1. **Vehicular traffic and wide roads** – Bury New Road and heavy traffic is dominant, detracting from the quality of the environment, severing the high street and reducing air quality.
2. **Lack of variety** – The variety of things to do is limited, and everything is focused along Bury New Road. Young people are poorly catered for.
3. **Hard to move around on foot or bike** – It is difficult to move through the town centre on foot or bike, especially crossing Bury New Road.
4. **Narrow pavements and low-quality public realm** – Pavements are narrow and cluttered with street furniture. There's no space to sit, and very little greenery along Bury New Road.
5. **Limited community facilities** – There is a lack of community facilities and gathering spaces across the town centre.
6. **Inactive ground floors** – There are a lot of blank shop fronts and closed shutters, which has a negative impact on the vibrancy and liveliness of the high street.
7. **Parked cars** – Parked cars detract from the quality of public spaces – at the front and rear of businesses, in smaller spaces and along residential streets.
8. **Parks lack diversity** – There are a several green spaces in the town centre; however the mix of activities and facilities is limited.



9. **Degraded historic buildings** – the character and quality of the historic buildings has been degraded by low-quality fascia and render, they fail to activate the street with no windows along their ground floors.
10. **A place without a heart** – Whitefield lacks a centre due to its linear form and lack of focal points along the A56.
11. **Inactive backland spaces** – spaces are used as informal surface car parks and servicing areas. They are also poorly connected, with fences and property boundaries preventing permeability running parallel to the corridor.



5.3 Emerging Opportunities

We believe there to be an overarching opportunity to **enhance Whitefield Town Centre as a destination**, creating a range of activities, functions and uses to draw people to the town centre, and encourage them to stay there for longer.

A destination for social and cultural exchange

This isn't just about people spending money, but creating a place that people want to spend their time in. It requires spaces for the community to come together, collaborate and innovate; space for them to plan out the future of the town, and exchange cultural capital.

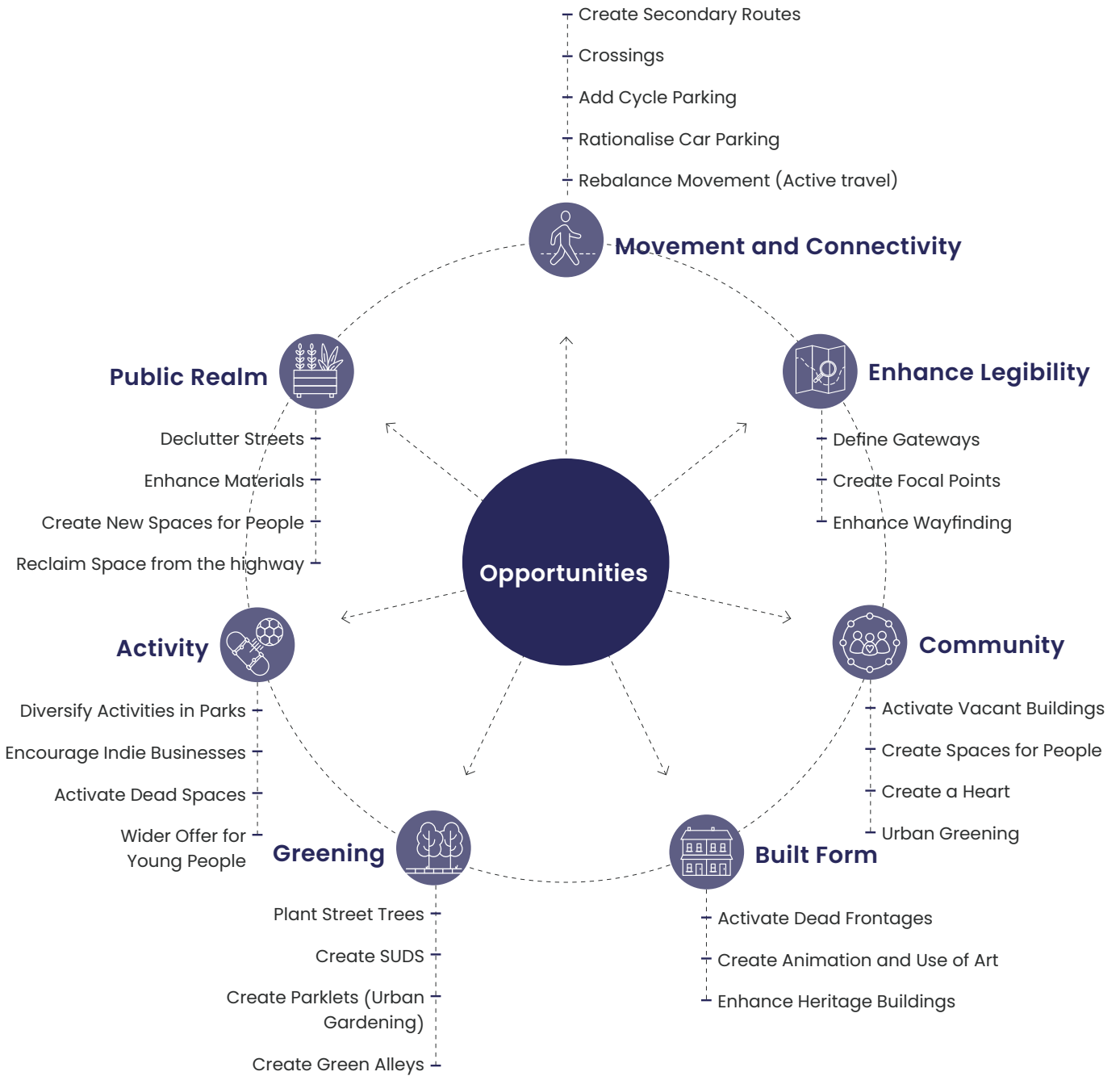
Rethinking Bury New Road

The rethinking and physical redesign of Bury New Road is another key opportunity, and is an essential step in transforming the town centre. The presence and impact of the road on its quality and sense of place and liveability is overwhelming.

A new heart?

Desktop analysis has identified a cluster of sites around the former Town Hall and Slattery, including a large area of Bury Council owned land, which collectively have the potential to create a new heart to Whitefield.

The area was outlined by a large proportion of the residents - which we consulted - as the 'heart' of Whitefield; encouraging activity in this location would be an incredibly positive and popular intervention.



6 A Vision for Whitefield



Informed by our analysis of Whitefield and feedback from the engagement events undertaken to date, the following vision statement and objectives have been developed to guide future interventions across the town centre.

Each objective is supported by a series of design principles, providing more detail on how the objective might be achieved through time. Together, the vision objectives and design principles provides a holistic framework for delivery, ensuring future development is coordinated, and focused on achieving the vision for Whitefield.

6.1 Vision Statement

Whitefield will be a place where communities come together to influence the high street and its surrounding neighbourhoods.

We will create a series of places, with a number of hearts - challenging the linearity imposed by Bury New Road.

In doing so, a more vibrant, walkable and attractive town centre will establish - a destination that prioritises the needs of its people, celebrates its unique qualities, history, and culture..





**Whitefield will become
the Town of Hearts
- interweaving
people and place.**

6.2 Big Ideas for Whitefield – The Vision Objectives

The vision for Whitefield Town Centre imagines the **'Town of Hearts'** – referencing; the strong community spirit highlighted through the engagement process; the three historic hamlets which once acted as centre points along Bury New Road; and, the three new destinations proposed later in the document.

The vision statement is informed by engagement with the community, and captures the essence of their collective input and feedback into the plan making process. As a member of the community stated during the engagement process:

"Whitefield is a town with a heart, and has a strong community spirit, we've just got nowhere to meet!"

The vision objectives highlighted in the adjacent support the vision statement, and begin to explore *how* The 'Town of Hearts' might be achieved in Whitefield. They are presented to guide and steer future action and intervention across the town centre, providing action statements.

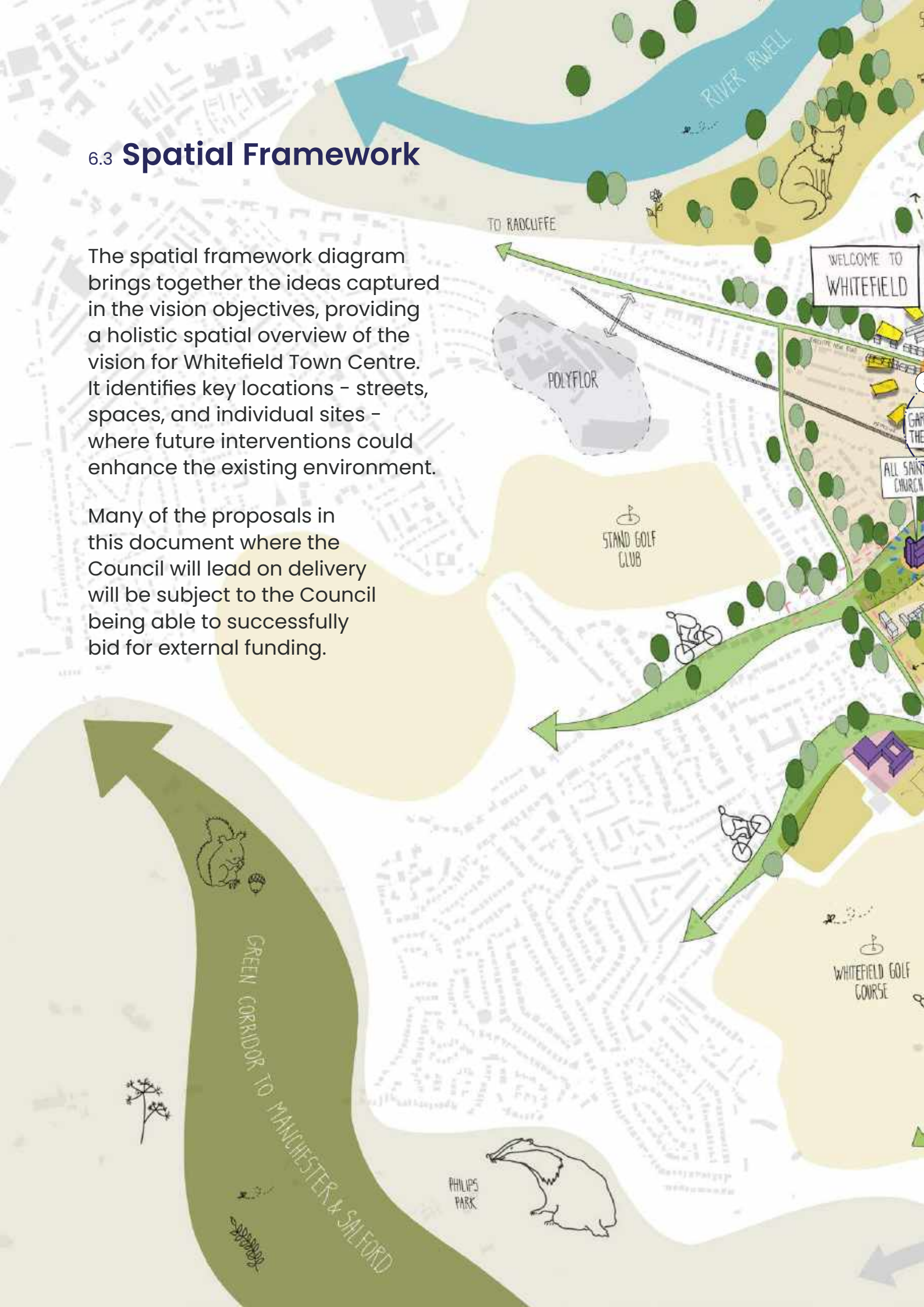
In the next section of the document, proposed short and long-term interventions and initiatives are organised around each vision objective, providing further detail on the type of intervention required to assist in achieving the vision and delivering the objectives.



6.3 Spatial Framework

The spatial framework diagram brings together the ideas captured in the vision objectives, providing a holistic spatial overview of the vision for Whitefield Town Centre. It identifies key locations – streets, spaces, and individual sites – where future interventions could enhance the existing environment.

Many of the proposals in this document where the Council will lead on delivery will be subject to the Council being able to successfully bid for external funding.





- Key**
- Gateway into town
 - Major junctions
 - Important buildings / spaces
 - Conservation area
 - School grounds
 - High street (Bury New Road)
 - Metrolink route
 - Pedestrian / green linkages
 - Priority areas
 - Residential area
 - Green space
 - Industrial area

Towards achieving the vision

Whilst the diagram paints a picture of how a future Whitefield could appear - a town centre which prioritises its people - its unique qualities, and the environment, it is important to acknowledge that achieving this vision is a process. There is great emphasis placed on multiple stakeholders and partners to collaborate, delivering incremental change over a long period of time. Small steps will lead to major benefits - a process known as 'urban acupuncture'.

Partnership working will be critical to success. Bury Council will need to take a key facilitating role in building the capacity of the Whitefield community - bringing them together, supporting development of big ideas and providing them with the tools to deliver on their priorities. This step of the process is crucial to success.

The numbers highlighted on the diagram represent the 'priority areas', with further detail provided across the following spreads.

6.4 Priority Areas

As part of the visioning and analysis process, a number of key areas across the town centre have been identified as having the potential to catalyse transformation across the town centre Town Centre. We've named these areas 'Priority Areas'.

The priority areas have been identified as:

- Key opportunities within the town centre;
- Having unique or distinctive qualities, as key locations within the spatial context of the town centre; or,
- Areas requiring major long-term investment to improve their current condition.

Many of them require significant capital investment from both the public and private sector to deliver the scale of change required. There are, however, a series of smaller, incremental steps that can happen in the short-term to begin the process of change. Many of these steps are detailed, in the next section of the town centre plan, however, we have provided an initial introduction to each area and the rationale for its identification as a priority area.

The 'Whitefield Common' has been highlighted as the priority area with the most potential for short-term change, and initial ideas regarding its potential future are explored on the following spread. The remaining priority areas are to be explored in further detail at Stage 2 of the Town Centre Plan.

1. Transforming Bury New Road

The transformation of Bury New Road is a major project in itself, and requires a strategic approach in order to have the greatest impact.

Ideas for Bury New Road are presented in the next section of the document, which should be used to inform detailed proposals as part of the TfGM Radial Corridors project, or further areas of work to be conducted by the Council.

2. The Whitefield Common

The Whitefield Common imagines a new community heart to Whitefield Town Centre, with potential to facilitate a range of active uses and a new home for existing community groups and organisations.

3. The Little Cultural Quarter

A network of minor streets and back lanes located to the north of the town, with the Garrick Theatre located at its centre. The Little Cultural Quarter could create a fitting setting to the Garrick – one of Whitefield's hidden gems and a true asset, adding colour and vibrancy to currently inactive backland streets.

4. The Little Makers Quarter

Several independent businesses, ranging from local bakeries to metal fabricators, are located in Victorian cottages and warehouses, adjacent to Victoria Park.

With support from landowners, the large car parking area to the rear could be transformed into a unique destination, with potential to host a range of events, start-up businesses, temporary uses and a unique food and beverage offer within the wider town centre.

5. The Tram Stop Gateway

The junction of Church Lane and Bury New Road marks a historic centre point to Whitefield, and many of the residents who took part in the community engagement process identified it as the heart of the town.

There is an opportunity to re-imagine the junction through the lens of people and place; thus creating a new front door to the town centre which celebrates the historic significance of the junction.

6.5 Priority Areas

The Whitefield Common

The Town Plan imagines the Whitefield Common, a new community heart to the town. This priority area has the greatest potential to deliver multiple objectives simultaneously, acting as a new destination and catalyst for future transformation.

Where?

The area is located to the west alongside Bury New Road, and is roughly bound by Hamilton Road to the north, Bury New Road to the east, Higher Lane to the west and Pinfold Lane to the south. It comprises a cluster of sites adjoining each other that are either established and well-recognised (Slattery), public spaces that have the potential to be improved (Hamilton Road Park), or currently underutilised sites (former gardens of Whitefield Town Hall).



Priority Area - Whitefield Common - Location Plan

Site Background

The continued deterioration of the Uplands Health Centre site makes the re-provision of accommodation for the Uplands Medical practice a key element of the wider Whitefield town plan. Current proposal included within the Whitefield town plan is to redevelop the former Whitefield library site on Pinfold Lane for use by the Uplands Medical practice that will then allow full commercial disposal of the Uplands site in its entirety. It is anticipated that the GP and health services to be accommodated on the ex-library site will be a key element of the wider town plans. The Council will continue support the intense work as it continues with senior NHS ICB and NHS Property Services colleagues to achieve this important health scheme in Whitefield.

Why here?

The area has been identified through site analysis and conversations with the community and stakeholders during the public / stakeholder engagement process.

The area represents a major opportunity, underpinned by the following reasons:

- **Cluster of sites** - as mentioned above, the area is formed by a cluster of sites adjoining each other, currently acting as individual 'island' sites.
- **Engagement feedback** - during the engagement sessions we learned that the community considers these sites to be an important area within the town, especially Hamilton Road Park, Slattery and former Town Hall.
- **Potential for improved permeability** - collectively, the sites have the potential to create a series of connected destinations off the Bury New Road corridor - one of the few locations where this is possible within the town centre. New paths could draw people through each space, where a range of facilities, uses and pop-up events could provide interest and activity along the journey.
- **Council land ownership** - Bury Council own the former Whitefield Town Hall gardens site at the centre of the cluster - a large landholding with the potential for activation. This provides scope for experimentation in land use and temporary installations, without having to engage private landowners in the process.
- **Achieving multiple objectives** - the scale of the site, its location at the centre of the town and its mature landscape setting make it an opportunity to deliver multiple, of the vision, objectives simultaneously.

6.6 A new heart to Whitefield

The Whitefield Common could be developed around a new focal public space; surrounded by a range of meanwhile uses and new footpath connections. Temporary structures could provide space for community activity and events.

Potential Features

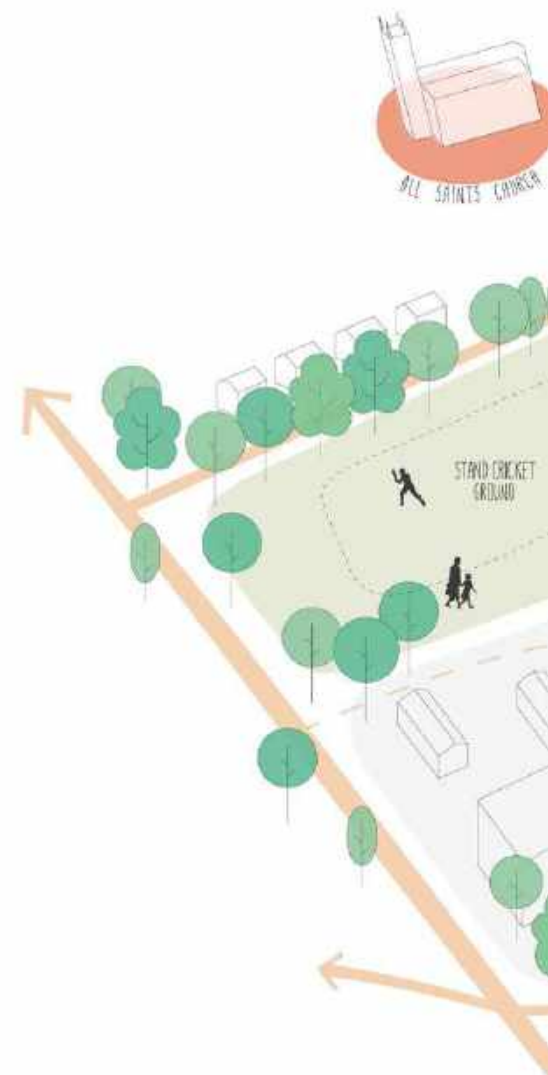
1. Retained vehicle access and sloping access route / street.
2. Urban Village – potential for a mix of new homes around a series of courtyard spaces.
3. Community garden space – possibly growing space and spill out to rear of Slattery’s.
4. Integrating Slattery – there is potential for activating the edges of the Slattery building where levels allow, creating spill-out spaces around the building and more transparent façades.
5. Site in private ownership – opportunity for possible future development.
6. Former library to be redeveloped to accommodate GP and health facilities. Options are being considered for Pinfold Day Centre.
7. Retained woodland and pedestrian routes through parkland and to Hamilton Road Park.



Create a series of pedestrian and cycle linkages through the site



Highlight activating local assets



The Whitefield Common – indicative concept



Activate Whitefield
Enhance existing
sets



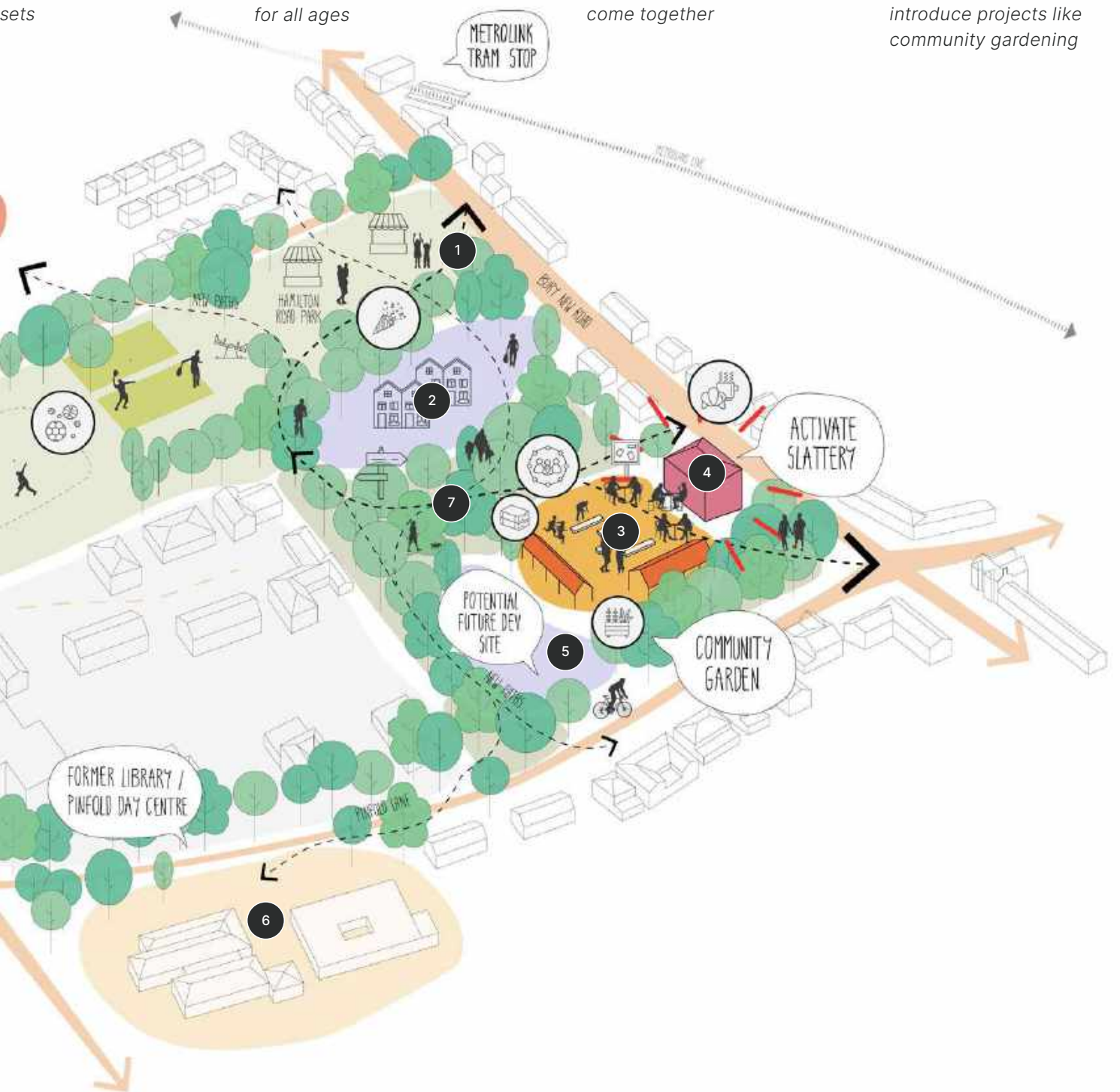
Create a range of
events and activities
for all ages



Create spaces where
the community can
come together



Enhance existing
green spaces and
introduce projects like
community gardening



7 Placemaking Strategies

Each project will require a lead – a stakeholder who will be naturally more suited to leading on the design and delivery of a certain type of project.



The Whitefield community / Community Organisation / Community Activator



Bury Council



The Whitefield business community



TfGM and regional bodies



Private sector developers

This section breaks down the vision and framework into a series of spatial strategies, to guide Bury Council and the Whitefield Community in making decisions on the regeneration of their town centre. These strategies focus on the delivery of the six vision objectives outlined earlier in the document.

The section includes:

Spatial Strategy

A spatial strategy plan is provided for each vision objective, highlighting locations within the town centre where there are specific opportunities to deliver the design principles and key interventions – based on the current physical form and its suitability for change.

Quick Wins and Big Moves

A breakdown of potential short, medium and long-term projects and interventions, both physical and non-physical, focused on achieving the vision and objectives of the Whitefield Town Centre Plan.

Interventions relating to highways and Bury New Road are subject to the feedback of Bury Council's Highways Department at the next design stage.

Further detail on a potential implementation process is provided in the final section of the document.



**Active travel
comes first**

Bury New Road severs Whitefield, both physically and socially, stifling wider permeability and access to the green space network. The Town Centre Plan begins a conversation on how people move around - coming to the town centre and moving across Bury New Road.

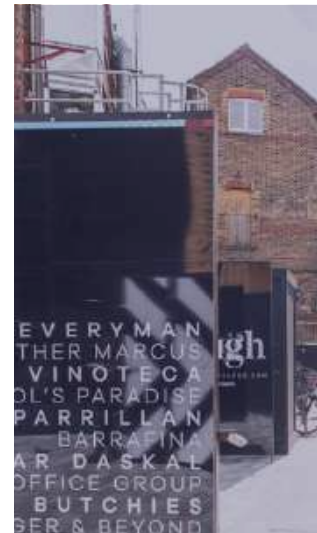
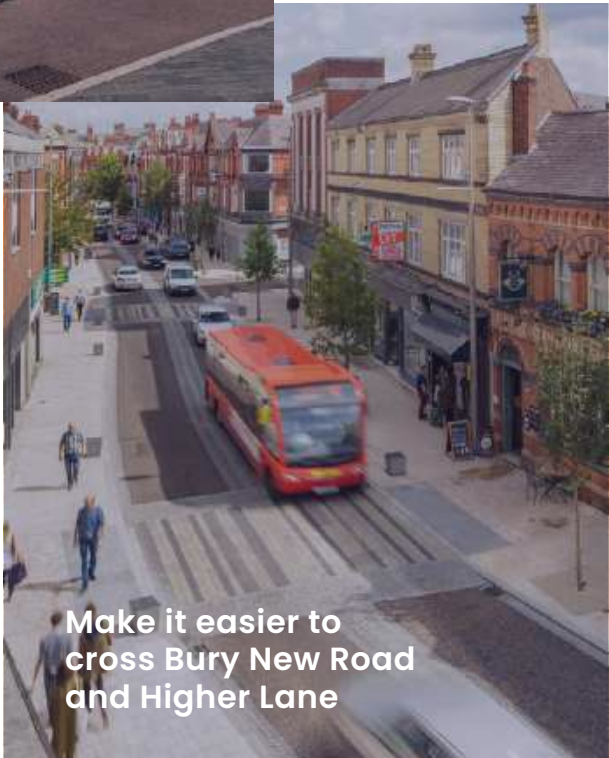


Key Design Principles

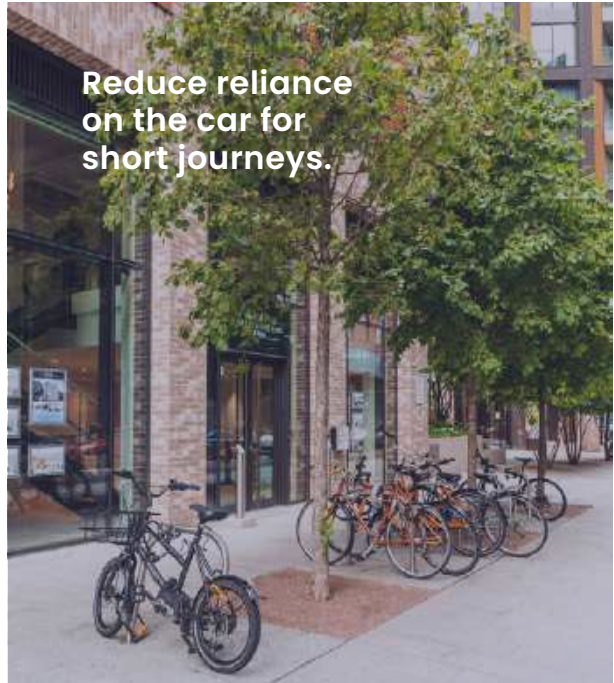
The movement strategy focuses on achieving three key goals: to improve active travel linkages leading into the town centre; create a more enjoyable and safer pedestrian experience along the high street, and rebalance movement along the A56 corridor to encourage cycling as a primary means of travel.



Enhance the walking and cycling facilities leading to the town centre.

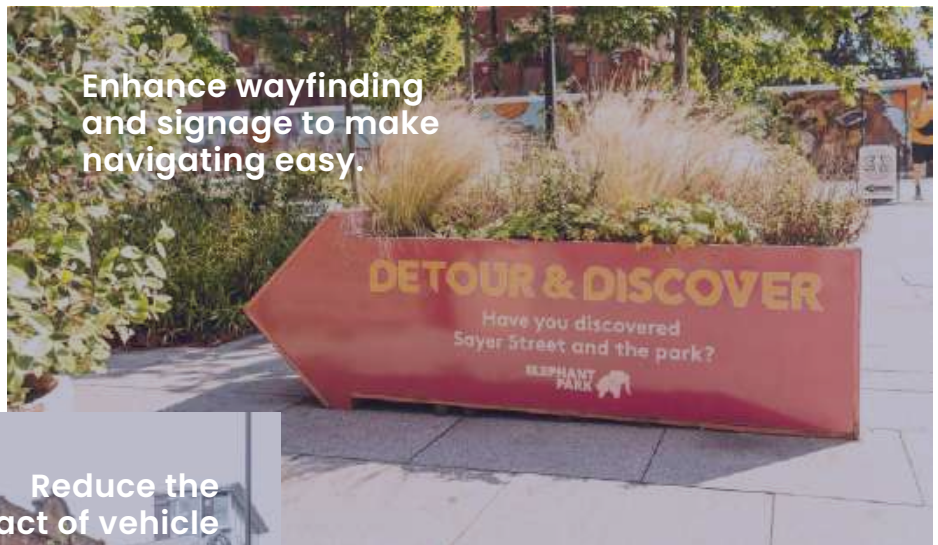
Make it easier to cross Bury New Road and Higher Lane



Reduce reliance on the car for short journeys.



Enhance permeability off the corridor, creating new secondary routes and linkages.



Enhance wayfinding and signage to make navigating easy.



Reduce the impact of vehicle traffic along Bury New Road and Higher Lane.

Topics and Themes

The vision objective covers a range of urban design topics and themes, notably:

- Active Travel
- Connectivity and permeability
- Wayfinding



Spatial Strategy

Ultimately, proposed interventions are intended to create healthier, people-focused streets which emit less carbon. This means fewer cars, and more people walking, wheeling and cycling.

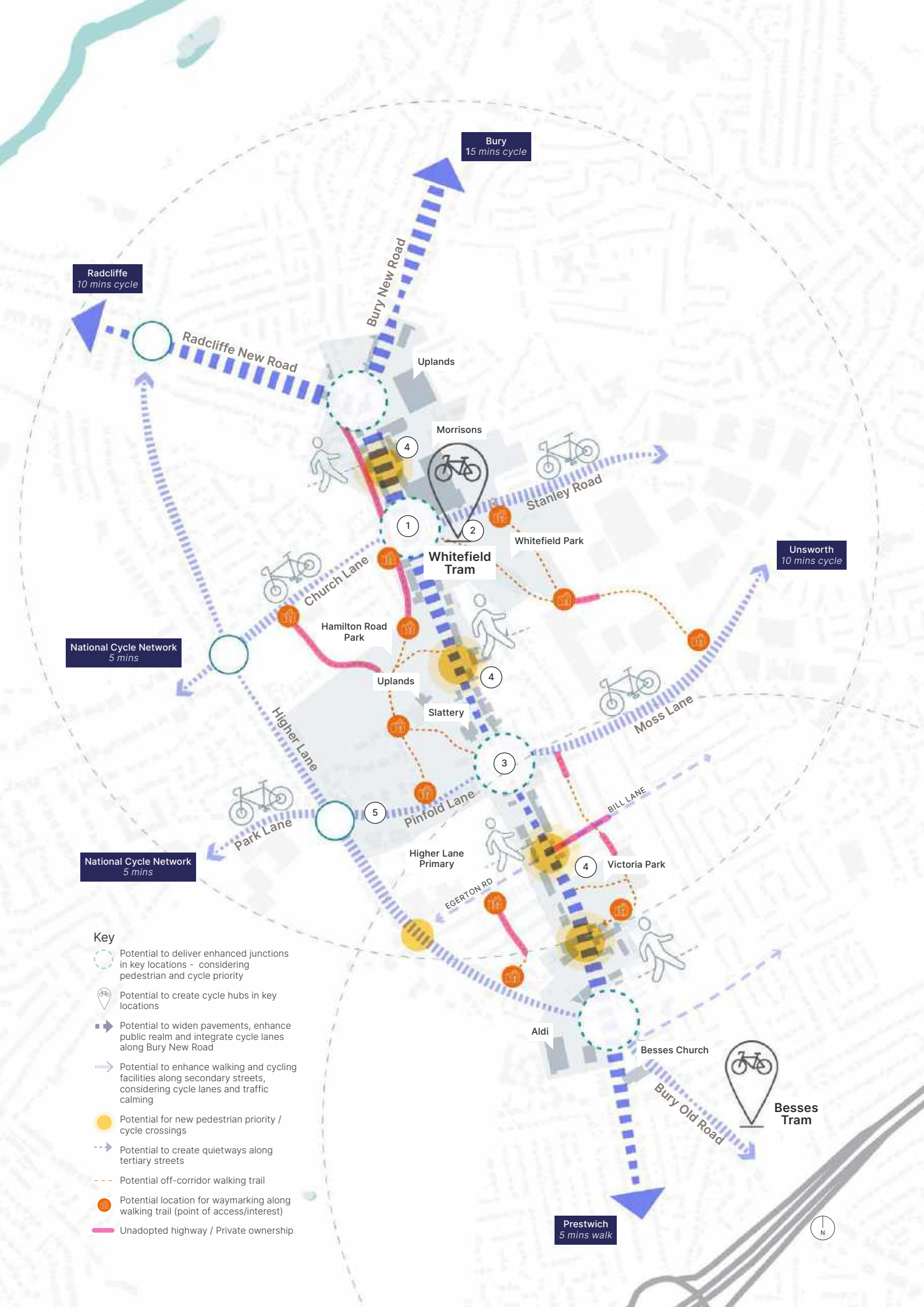
There is scope to deliver enhanced crossing facilities as a starting point along Bury New Road, encouraging a smooth flow of pedestrian movement across the corridor between different businesses and destinations. Further enhancement of surrounding cycle lanes will also better connect the centre with the wider green space network, and reduce the number of cars coming into the town centre.

The aim is to start a process of long-term change, delivering small-scale interventions to begin encouraging people out of their cars.

Some of the proposed interventions would take place on an unadopted public highway. All interventions on unadopted highways would have to be made to an adoptable standard, to enable formal adoption by the Council.

Emerging Priorities

1. The junction of Church Lane and Bury New Road is a key historic node. Enhancing the junction to improve permeability and sense of place is a key long-term priority.
2. There is scope to increase the number and quality of cycle parking facilities at Whitefield Tram Stop - within a 5-minute walk of most town centre amenities
3. The junction of Pinfold Lane and Moss Lane marks one of the three historic centre points of Whitefield. Future junction design should prioritise pedestrians and cyclists, and deliver enhanced sense (and quality) of place.
4. Pedestrian priority crossing points should be delivered in key locations, breaking down Bury New Road and enhancing permeability.
5. Park Lane and Pinfold Lane connect with green spaces and the National Cycle Network to the west. Cycle facilities should be enhanced along these key routes.



Radcliffe
10 mins cycle

Bury
15 mins cycle










Unsworth
10 mins cycle

National Cycle Network
5 mins

National Cycle Network
5 mins

Prestwich
5 mins walk

Key

-  Potential to deliver enhanced junctions in key locations - considering pedestrian and cycle priority
-  Potential to create cycle hubs in key locations
-  Potential to widen pavements, enhance public realm and integrate cycle lanes along Bury New Road
-  Potential to enhance walking and cycling facilities along secondary streets, considering cycle lanes and traffic calming
-  Potential for new pedestrian priority / cycle crossings
-  Potential to create quietways along tertiary streets
-  Potential off-corridor walking trail
-  Potential location for waymarking along walking trail (point of access/interest)
-  Unadopted highway / Private ownership





Active travel comes first

Potential Interventions

Enhance the walking and cycle facilities leading into the town centre.

Whitefield is connected to local towns, Manchester City Centre, and large parks by a network of strategic off-road walking and cycling routes.

As these routes meet the suburban residential areas surrounding the town centre, the quality of the walking and cycling environment deteriorates – few cycle lanes are present and pavements are narrow.

The following interventions outline how this could be improved, providing quick wins, and longer-term ambitions for surrounding streets.



Quick Wins

- A. Strategic off-road linkages tie into secondary residential streets at Park Lane and Phillips Park Road to the west, and Moss Lane to the east. Carriageways are **sufficiently wide to incorporate painted cycle lanes, which could be delivered in partnership with local artists and residents.**

Ringley Road connects to the National Cycle Network, and similar temporary interventions could be delivered here.



Big Moves

1. **Deliver appropriate cycle lanes** along key town centre access routes, as highlighted in the spatial strategy diagram.
2. **Traffic calming principles and street enhancements could be delivered** in residential areas where active travel routes breakdown, making it easier and safer to walk and cycle into the town centre. A range of measures could be considered as part of the project, including well-designed traffic calming, modal filters and new street spaces including seating and green infrastructure.

Recommendations

- **Bury Council Highways Department should undertake a road audit** of Park Lane, Ringley Road, Church Lane and Moss Lane to understand scope for temporary lanes.
- Work with TfGM to further develop its Bee Network strategy in the area, encouraging the integration of permanent cycle lanes along these key routes.
- Engage private landowners of plots off the corridor in discussion around the benefits of new routes and spaces through their plots. This may result in controlled access agreements at different times of day.

Enhance permeability off the corridor, considering parallel secondary routes.

Permeability through the town centre is currently poor, forcing pedestrians onto narrow pavements along the A56 to walk from north to south.

A series of more meandering routes through backland spaces could be delivered, providing a quieter alternative to walking along the corridor. These routes could connect new areas of interest in backland spaces and better integrate the existing parks with their surroundings.

Quick Wins

- A new parallel route could be delivered parallel to the A56 through the conservation area**, with only minor adjustments to barriers which prevent permeability. The route would begin at the junction Moss Lane and Pinfold Lane, link through the Old Town Hall Site and the Uplands and push through the wall bounding public space at Church Lane.
- Temporary signage** could be developed by local community groups to waymark the route, tying into the emerging Whitefield brand.

3



Big Moves

- Additional routes could be delivered** on both sides of the A56, connecting new areas of interest and parks (see strategy plan for route details). Once agreed, the design of routes should integrate art installations, green infrastructure and signage; showcasing the Whitefield Town brand.



Active travel comes first

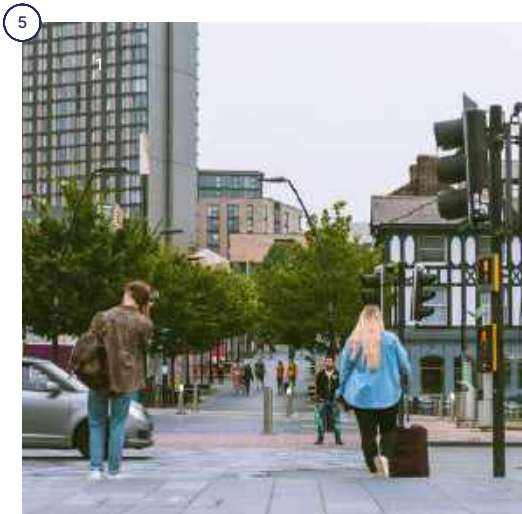
Make it easier to cross Bury New Road.

Breaking down the barrier to pedestrian movement created by Bury New Road is a crucial step in achieving a more people-focused and permeable town centre. New and enhanced crossings will need to be integrated as part of a holistic design scheme for the corridor, which considers Whitefield's townscape qualities and places pedestrian movement at the top of the hierarchy.

Refer to the spatial strategy plan for specific locations of proposed interventions.

Big Moves (long-term)

4. **Enhance existing crossing points at key junctions**, making it quicker and safer for pedestrians to cross along key desire lines. The character and type of crossings should respond to the level of footfall expected.
5. **Deliver new crossing points** (both signalised and pedestrian priority) along Bury New Road and Higher Lane, helping to breakdown the mass and width of the road carriageway. Crossing points should be designed as key features in the street, enhancing sense of place and encouraging pedestrian activity, as well as offering safer crossing facilities.



Enhance wayfinding and signage to aid discovery.

As the range of activities and destinations begins to expand, effective wayfinding and signage will be key. Wayfinding unlocks seamless navigation, and will elevate the Whitefield experience. Every sign, symbol, and arrow should lead to a point of interest, guiding pedestrians through one place to the next as they move through the centre.

Wayfinding can be the speaker announcing the community's vision and brand, and will knit together a new network of spaces and destinations.

7



Quick Wins

- D. **A wayfinding palette and style** should be developed as part of the community branding workshops. Community art groups could then be engaged in developing signage and other elements to drop around the town.
- E. **Temporary signage or other installations** could be created at key locations along emerging secondary routes and in locations of interest off Bury New Road – encouraging pedestrian activity off the main corridor.

Big Moves

- 6. **A holistic wayfinding strategy should be developed**, establishing a hierarchy of potential installations to deliver across the town centre. The strategy will need to consider emerging destinations the arrival experience at town centre gateways, and how it portrays Whitefield's story.
- 7. **Installations should be delivered incrementally**, with larger-scale installations along Bury New Road considered as part of a holistic street design.

Recommendations

- **Bury Council should initiate early dialogue with TfGM regarding the future of Bury New Road – highlighting the ambitions and principles presented within the town centre plan. It is important to highlight the vision for Bury New Road, as a place and centre, not just a highway.**
- **Engage active community members and groups in branding workshops to explore the vision and purpose of Whitefield Town Centre – informing future wayfinding installations.**



Summary

Key Topics and Themes

- Active Travel
- Connectivity and permeability
- Wayfinding

Stakeholders involved



The Whitefield community /
Community Organisation /
Community Activator

L Lead

S Support



Bury Council



TfGM and regional bodies



Private sector developers



The Whitefield business community

S **L**

Quick Wins



A. Strategic off-road linkages tie into secondary residential streets at Park Lane and Philips Park Road to the west, and Moss Lane to the east. Carriageways are **sufficiently wide to incorporate painted cycle lanes, which could be delivered in partnership with local artists** and residents. **Ringley Road connects to the National Cycle Network**, and similar temporary interventions could be delivered here.



B. **A new route could be delivered parallel to the A56 through the conservation area**, with only minor adjustments to barriers which prevent permeability. The route would begin at the junction Moss Lane and Pinfold Lane, link through the Old Town Hall Site and the Uplands and push through the wall bounding public space at Church Lane.



C. **Temporary signage** could be developed by local community groups to waymark the route, tying into the emerging Whitefield brand.



D. A **wayfinding palette and style** should be developed as part of the community branding workshops. Community art groups could then be engaged in developing signage and other elements to drop around the town.



E. **Temporary signage or other installations** could be created at key locations along emerging secondary routes and in locations of interest off Bury New Road – encouraging pedestrian activity off the main corridor.

S **L**

Big Moves



1. **Deliver appropriate cycle lanes** along key town centre access routes.



2. **Traffic calming principles and street enhancements could be delivered** in residential areas where active travel routes breakdown. A range of measures could be considered as part of the project, including well-designed traffic calming, modal filters and new street spaces including seating and green infrastructure.



3. **Additional routes could be delivered** on both sides of the A56, connecting new areas of interest and parks. Once agreed, the design of routes should integrate art installations, green infrastructure and signage; showcasing the Whitefield Town brand.



4. **Enhance existing crossing points at key junctions**, making it quicker and safer for pedestrians to cross along key desire lines. The character and type of crossings should respond to the level of footfall expected.



5. **Deliver new crossing points** (both signalised and pedestrian priority) along Bury New Road and Higher Lane, helping to breakdown the mass and width of the road carriageway. Crossing points should be designed as key features in the street, enhancing sense of place and encouraging pedestrian activity, as well as offering safer crossing facilities.



5. **A holistic wayfinding strategy should be developed**, establishing a hierarchy of potential installations to deliver across the town centre.



6. **Installations should be delivered incrementally**, with larger-scale installations along Bury New Road considered as part of a holistic street design.

Principles

- Enhance the walking and cycling facilities leading to the town centre.
- Make it easier to cross Bury New Road and Higher Lane.
- Reduce the impact of vehicle traffic along Bury New Road and Higher Lane.
- Enhance permeability off the corridor, creating new secondary routes and linkages.
- Enhance wayfinding and signage to make navigating easy.
- Reduce reliance on the car for short journeys.

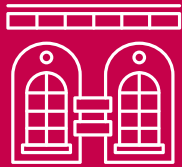
Emerging Spatial Priorities

- The junction of Church Lane and Bury New Road is a key historic node. Enhancing the junction to improve permeability and sense of place is a key long-term priority.
- There is scope to increase the number and quality of cycle parking facilities at Whitefield Tram Stop - within a 5-minute walk of most town centre amenities
- The junction of Pinfold Lane and Moss Lane marks one of the three historic centre points of Whitefield. Future junction design should prioritise pedestrians and cyclists, and deliver enhanced sense (and quality) of place.
- Pedestrian priority crossing points should be delivered in key locations, breaking down Bury New Road and enhancing permeability.
- Park Lane and Pinfold Lane connect with green spaces and the National Cycle Network to the west. Cycle facilities should be enhanced along these key routes.



Recommendations

- **Bury Council Highways Department should undertake a road audit** of Park Lane, Ringley Road, Church Lane and Moss Lane to understand scope for temporary lanes.
- Work with TfGM to further develop its Bee Network strategy in the area, encouraging the integration of permanent cycle lanes along these key routes.
- Engage private landowners of plots off the corridor in discussion around the benefits of new routes and spaces through their plots. This may result in controlled access agreements at different times of day.
- **Bury Council should initiate early dialogue with TfGM regarding the future of Bury New Road - highlighting the ambitions and principles presented within the town centre plan. It is important to highlight the vision for Bury New Road, as a place and centre, not just a highway.**
- Engage active community members and groups in branding workshops to explore the vision and purpose of Whitefield Town Centre - informing future wayfinding installations.



**Celebrate
Whitefield -
its history, story
and essence**

Whitefield is a town
with a story – a
fascinating history,
distinctive landmarks
and characterful
victorian buildings.

The historic relationship
between people and
place can be rekindled
and celebrated through
the town centre plan –
redefining the essence
of Whitefield.



Key Design Principles

Whilst elements of Whitefield's history remain in the built form of today, much of this historic character has been eroded through the processes of urban infill, and the transition of Bury New Road from high street, to highway.

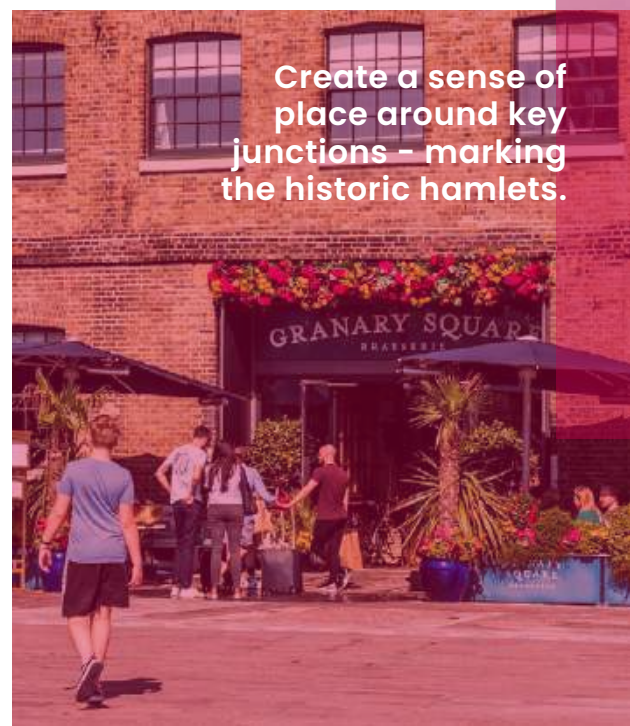
The historic landmarks that remain are isolated – disconnected by road infrastructure, boxed in by walls and fences, and surrounded by low-quality public realm. Furthermore, its historical focal points now function as busy road junctions, with no notable sense of place.

The Town Centre Plan aims to reverse this trend, promoting interventions that celebrate Whitefield's heritage, and tell its story – creating a new found sense of place along the high street.

Create new beneficial exchanges of economic and cultural value, which reflect the essence of Whitefield.



Enhance the environment around historic buildings and local assets.



Create a sense of place around key junctions – marking the historic hamlets.



Topics and Themes

The 'Celebrate Whitefield' vision objective covers a range of urban design topics and themes, notably:

- Legibility
- Heritage
- Brand and Identity



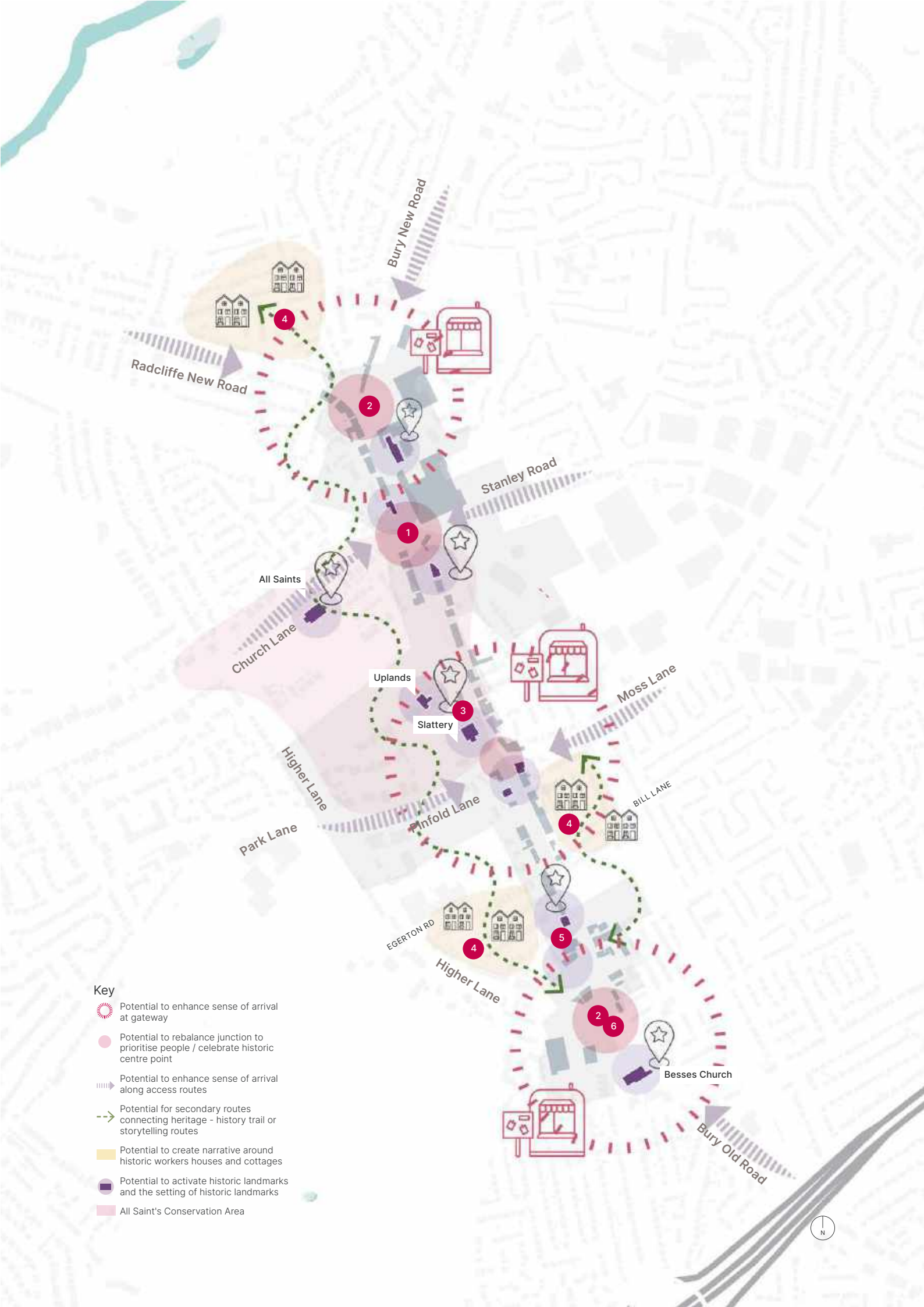
Spatial Strategy

The strategy outlines how we might celebrate Whitefield through a range of physical and non-physical interventions – aimed at improving legibility, enhancing heritage, and using Whitefield’s story creatively to enhance the experience of place.








Proposed interventions provide further detail on how the design principles may be realised. Many of the longer term aspirations in this section are reliant on the rethinking and redesign of Bury New Road, which requires a strategic overview and is beyond the scope of this plan. However, the ideas and interventions here should be used to inform proposals when TfGM and Bury Council begin this work, supporting a place-led approach to redesigning Bury New Road.

Emerging Spatial Priorities

1. The junction of Church Lane and Bury New Road is a key historic node, and marks a key arrival point into the town centre. The space could be transformed to become a key focal point and attractive arrival space.
2. The two main gateways are poorly defined and addressed by surface car parking. Installations and public realm improvements at the junctions and potential new gateway developments could create a new and fitting sense of arrival to the town.
3. The area surrounding Slattery and the Uplands Medical Centre was regularly flagged as the 'heart of Whitefield' by the community. New spaces and building enhancements could be delivered to celebrate these key assets.
4. Small-scale interventions in alleyways and streets around areas of Victorian housing could be used to explain their historical significance.
5. There is scope to enhance the value and setting of the currently vacant former telephone exchange and Mogul; considering a new future for the vacant building, new active frontages and new pocket spaces.
6. Whitefield’s southern gateway is poorly defined and fails to create a sense of arrival.



Key

-  Potential to enhance sense of arrival at gateway
-  Potential to rebalance junction to prioritise people / celebrate historic centre point
-  Potential to enhance sense of arrival along access routes
-  Potential for secondary routes connecting heritage - history trail or storytelling routes
-  Potential to create narrative around historic workers houses and cottages
-  Potential to activate historic landmarks and the setting of historic landmarks
-  All Saint's Conservation Area





Potential Interventions

Enhance the arrival experience at town centre gateways

Whitefield’s gateways fail to capture the imagination – dominated by road infrastructure, vehicular traffic, and nothing but a small sign announcing the arrival to the town.

The plan aims to address this incrementally over time, working alongside both local community and business stakeholders to create a more colourful and attractive arrival experience.



Ideas for Deansgate, Streets for All



Church Alley, Bluecoat, Liverpool

Big Moves (long-term)

1. **Work with TfGM to redesign town centre gateway junctions, and considering the utilisation of balanced streetscape principles.** Redesigned junctions should create attractive spaces, fostering a positive sense of arrival, and should prioritise pedestrian activity over that of motor vehicles.
2. **Totems or other permanent art instillations** should be considered as part of redesigned junctions, and should encapsulate any emerging branding principles developed by the community.
3. **Explore potential development opportunities** around gateways, where new development could better define and activate the edges of gateway spaces.



Altrincham, Cheshire

Quick Wins

- A. **Temporary art, signage and lighting can be used to announce arrival.** Initial installations could be planned, designed and implemented by the Whitefield community, working alongside local artists.

Installations and interventions should not require any fundamental redesign of highway space – and can be as simple as painting existing highway infrastructure.

Recommendations

- Bury Council should conduct a movement audit of existing road junctions identified in the spatial strategy along the A56, considering levels of usage and identifying opportunities for temporary interventions to improve sense of place and arrival.
- Bury Council should work with TfGM to develop a long-term strategy for Bury New Road, considering the principles outlined in this section of the plan. The strategy should be underpinned by detailed audits of existing traffic data and highway capacity – as well as forecasts for future use to inform short and long-term street design interventions.
- Engage key landowners in dialogue on potential development opportunities around town centre gateways – using the plan to highlight benefits to both them and Whitefield Town Centre.

Create a sense of place around key junctions – marking the historic centres

The four historic centrepieces of Whitefield mark the convergence of strategic historic routes, and are important focal points within the town centre. The routes remain, but have become heavily used transport corridors – resulting in wide junctions dominated by vehicular traffic.

Proposed interventions here aim to create more attractive spaces at key road junctions – celebrating place and prioritising people and nature.

Quick Wins

- B. **In partnership between Bury Council Highways Team and the Whitefield community, opportunities for integrating temporary measures** should be explored at existing road junctions – aiming to breakdown the visual mass of road carriageways and improve the pedestrian experience and safety.
- C. **Temporary planters, public art installations, painting existing barrier railings** should all be considered as short-term interventions, without having to physically change junction geometries.



London Bridge underground entrance area, London

Big Moves (long-term)

- 4. **Road junctions should be considered extensions of the public realm**, prioritising the activity and movement of pedestrians and cyclists over cars. The future design of junctions along the A56 should start with this principle, using trees and a set of high-quality and complementary surface materials to contribute to attractive spaces.
- 5. **Signage and art should be integrated above or around road junctions**, referencing Whitefield's history and any place branding guidelines established by the Whitefield community in early workshops.



Celebrate Whitefield – its history, story and essence

Activate historic buildings and building frontages

There is real scope to better celebrate Whitefield's historic built form as part of the town centre plan. Heritage assets should act as beacons and focal points along the high street, fostering a range of activities both within the building footprint and in surrounding spaces.

Quick Wins

- D. **Involving local artists and groups in painting run-down, historic building façades** is a short-term way of activating and enhancing the quality of heritage buildings at risk, adding vibrancy and colour to the high street.
- E. **The content of murals could reference the social and physical history of Whitefield**, and could act as part of a Whitefield heritage trail around the town centre. Colours should tie into any emerging Whitefield place branding guidelines established by the community.



Bath

Big Moves

6. **Lighting along building elevations and in threshold spaces** will help animate historic buildings in the evening, highlighting them as key historical features. Lighting of varying tones, colours and lumens also creates atmosphere and interest in the streetscene.
7. **Painting and re-rendering of degrading elevations** should be considered to improve building appearance and add vibrancy to the street. This project should be considered as part of an overarching shop and building frontage strategy, setting out design requirements for the high street building frontages.
8. **Increasing the transparency of ground floors** to historic buildings, where currently inactive, will add life to the high street and create activity.



Sadler's Yard, Manchester

Enhance the environment around historic buildings and local assets

The surroundings of historic buildings have just as an important role to play in enhancing sense of place along the high street as the buildings themselves. Creating a positive relationship between landmark buildings, their threshold spaces, and the street is key – simultaneously integrating buildings into the high street as prominent features, and creating pockets of activity, interest and animation along the route.



Whitfield Gardens, London



Sugar House
Island
London

Quick Wins

- F. **Temporary pocket parks and spaces**, including planters, flexible seating, art or play facilities will enhance the setting of historic landmarks – marking them as destinations within the wider the town centre. These spaces should encourage activity and dwell time around the landmark, and could host small-scale community events.

Temporary instillations in these spaces should consider the history of the building, its role and significance in the development of Whitefield. They should contribute to a wider narrative about the history and growth of Whitefield.

Big Moves

9. **Permanent pocket parks and spaces can be created around landmark buildings** as part of a holistic redesign of Bury New Road, where highway space can be reclaimed to create more space for pedestrians. The threshold and private boundary treatments of buildings will need to be considered, creating a more inviting and permeable space around the buildings that better integrates them into the high street. These spaces will add variety breaking up a the linearity route, and create minor destinations and points of activity.

Recommendations

- Engage landowners and building owners in dialogue on the improvement of historic façades across the town centre – referring to painting, rendering and lighting.
- Work with the owners of historic building owners to discuss the long-term role and use of historic buildings and landmarks along the high street. Discussion should identify where there are opportunities to create space and activity around buildings to enhance their setting.



Celebrate Whitefield – its history, story and essence

Create space for exchanges of economic and cultural value, which reflect the essence of Whitefield

Whitefield has an active and engaged community, comprising various stakeholders. Despite this, the town centre lacks a regularly available and clearly signposted space for these groups to come together, exchange ideas and collaborate.

This community spirit is a fantastic starting point for the plan, which can catalyse processes of collaboration, innovation and exchange between groups, encouraging a vocation of place. This is essential in creating a robust and resilient local economy in Whitefield, and central to a healthy future high street.



Pop-Up Penzance, Cornwall



Recommendations

- Conduct an audit of community premises across the town centre, identifying opportunities to better coordinate available community space.
- Engage landowners in discussion regarding their plans for units and potential for temporary occupation.



Old Bank Residency, NOMA, Manchester



Hatch, Manchester

Quick Wins

- G. **Bring together existing local artists and active community groups to discuss ideas for storytelling through art across the town centre.** Working alongside Bury Council, this group should use an emerging Whitefield branding palette to deliver storytelling interventions - improving wayfinding and creating moments of interest.

A Whitefield History Trail could be created, comprising a network of interest points to provide information on Whitefield's history and story.

- H. **Allow the community, start-ups and charities to occupy vacant spaces, shops and buildings on a temporary basis** - spaces for social cohesion, cultural and economic exchange. These temporary spaces create an environment which fosters social innovation, encourages community-led business opportunities and social innovation.

They could also provide an initial home for community leadership groups, Bury Council and other business stakeholders to collaborate on moving the town centre plan forward and share information.



Summary

Key Topics and Themes

- Legibility
- Heritage
- Brand and Identity

Stakeholders involved

-  The Whitefield community / Community Organisation / Community Activator
-  Bury Council
-  TfGM and regional bodies
-  Private sector developers
-  The Whitefield business community

L Lead

S Support

S **L**

Quick Wins



A. **Temporary art, signage and lighting can be used to announce arrival.** Initial installations could be planned, designed and implemented by the Whitefield community, working alongside local artists.



B. **In partnership between Bury Council Highways Team and the Whitefield community, opportunities for integrating temporary measures** should be explored at existing road junctions.



C. **Temporary planters, public art installations, painting existing barrier railings** should all be considered as short-term interventions, without having to physically change junction geometries.



D. **Involving local artists and groups in painting run-down, historic building façades** is a short-term way of activating and enhancing the quality of heritage buildings at risk.



E. **The content of murals could reference the social and physical history of Whitefield,** and could act as part of a Whitefield heritage trail around the town centre.



F. **Temporary pocket parks and spaces,** including planters, flexible seating, art or play facilities will enhance the setting of historic landmarks – marking them as destinations within the wider town centre.



G. **Bring together existing local artists and active community groups to discuss ideas for storytelling through art across the town centre.**



H. **Allow the community, start-ups and charities to occupy vacant spaces, shops and buildings on a temporary basis** – spaces for cultural and economic exchange. These temporary spaces create an environment which encourages community-led business opportunities and social innovation.

S **L**

Big Moves



1. **Work with TfGM to redesign town centre gateway junctions, and considering the utilisation of balanced streetscape principles.** Redesigned junctions should create attractive spaces and prioritise pedestrian movement. **Road junctions should be considered extensions of the public realm,** prioritising the activity and movement of pedestrians and cyclists over cars.



2. **Totems or other permanent art installations** should be considered as part of redesigned junctions.



3. **Explore potential development opportunities** around gateways, where new development could better define and activate the edges of gateway spaces.



4. **Signage and art should be integrated above or around road junctions,** referencing Whitefield's history and place branding.



5. **Lighting along building elevations and in threshold spaces** will help animate historic buildings in the evening, highlighting them as key historical features.



6. **Painting and re-rendering of degrading elevations** should be considered to improve building appearance and add vibrancy.



7. **Increasing the transparency of ground floors** to historic buildings, where currently inactive, will add life to the high street and create activity.



8. **Permanent pocket parks and spaces can be created around landmark buildings** as part of a holistic redesign of Bury New Road, where highway space can be reclaimed to create more space for pedestrians. These spaces will add variety breaking up the linearity route, and create minor destinations and points of activity.

Principles

- Enhance the environment around historic buildings and local assets.
- Create a sense of place around key junctions - marking the historic hamlets .
- Create a platform and structure for community leadership, self-organisation and order.
- Create new beneficial exchanges of economic and cultural value, which reflect the essence of Whitefield.
- Develop a strong brand identity for Whitefield..
- Bring vacant buildings back to life and activate historic building frontages.

Emerging Spatial Priorities

1. The junction of Church Lane and Bury New Road is a key historic node, and marks a key arrival point into the town centre. The space could be transformed to become a key focal point and attractive arrival space.
2. The two main gateways are poorly defined and addressed by surface car parking. Installations and public realm improvements at the junctions and potential new gateway developments could create a new and fitting sense of arrival to the town.
3. The area surrounding Slattery and the Uplands Medical Centre was regularly flagged as the 'heart of Whitefield' by the community. New spaces and building enhancements could be delivered to celebrate these key assets.
4. Small-scale interventions in alleyways and streets around areas of Victorian housing could be used to explain their historical significance.
5. There is scope to enhance the value and setting of the currently vacant former telephone exchange and Mogul; considering a new future for the vacant building, new active frontages and new pocket spaces.
6. Whitefield's southern gateway is poorly defined and fails to create a sense of arrival.



Recommendations

- Bury Council should conduct a movement audit of existing road junctions identified in the spatial strategy along the A56, considering levels of usage and identifying opportunities for temporary interventions.
- Bury Council should work with TfGM to develop a long-term strategy for Bury New Road, considering the principles outlined in this section. The strategy should be underpinned by detailed audits of existing traffic data and highway capacity.
- Engage key landowners in dialogue on potential development opportunities around town centre gateways
- Engage landowners and building owners in dialogue on the improvement of historic façades across the town centre.
- Work with the owners of historic building to discuss the long-term role and use of these buildings and landmarks along the high street.
- Conduct an audit of community premises across the town centre, identifying opportunities to better coordinate available community space.
- Engage landowners in discussion regarding their plans for units and potential for temporary occupation.



**Unite the people
of Whitefield
around a series
of community
hearts**

A 'lack of a central heart' or focal point is one of the key take aways from both our analysis and feedback from local residents.

In addition, the community have referred to 'Whitefield's strong community spirit', yet the town centre has nowhere for the community to meet.



Unite the people of Whitefield around a series of community hearts

Key Design Principles

Most of the key principles associated with uniting Whitefield refer to non-physical interventions, and consider the role of the community in delivering future, positive change in Whitefield Town Centre.

Central to achieving this objective is the future presence of a community activator, tasked with galvanising the strong community spirit that already exists across Whitefield, and uniting already active community groups.

Undertaking this process is an important step in building the community's capacity to deliver change across the town centre in the future, fostering a more resilient and sustainable local economy.





**Support diversity.
Diversity = resilience.**

Topics and Themes

The 'Unite the Whitefield Community' vision objective covers a range of topics and themes, notably:

- Brand and Identity
- Community activation
- Community spaces and events



**Create a platform
and structure
for community
leadership, self-
organisation
and order.**



**Support the
community in
creating a cultural
and brand identity
for Whitefield.**



Unite the people of Whitefield around a series of community hearts

Spatial Strategy

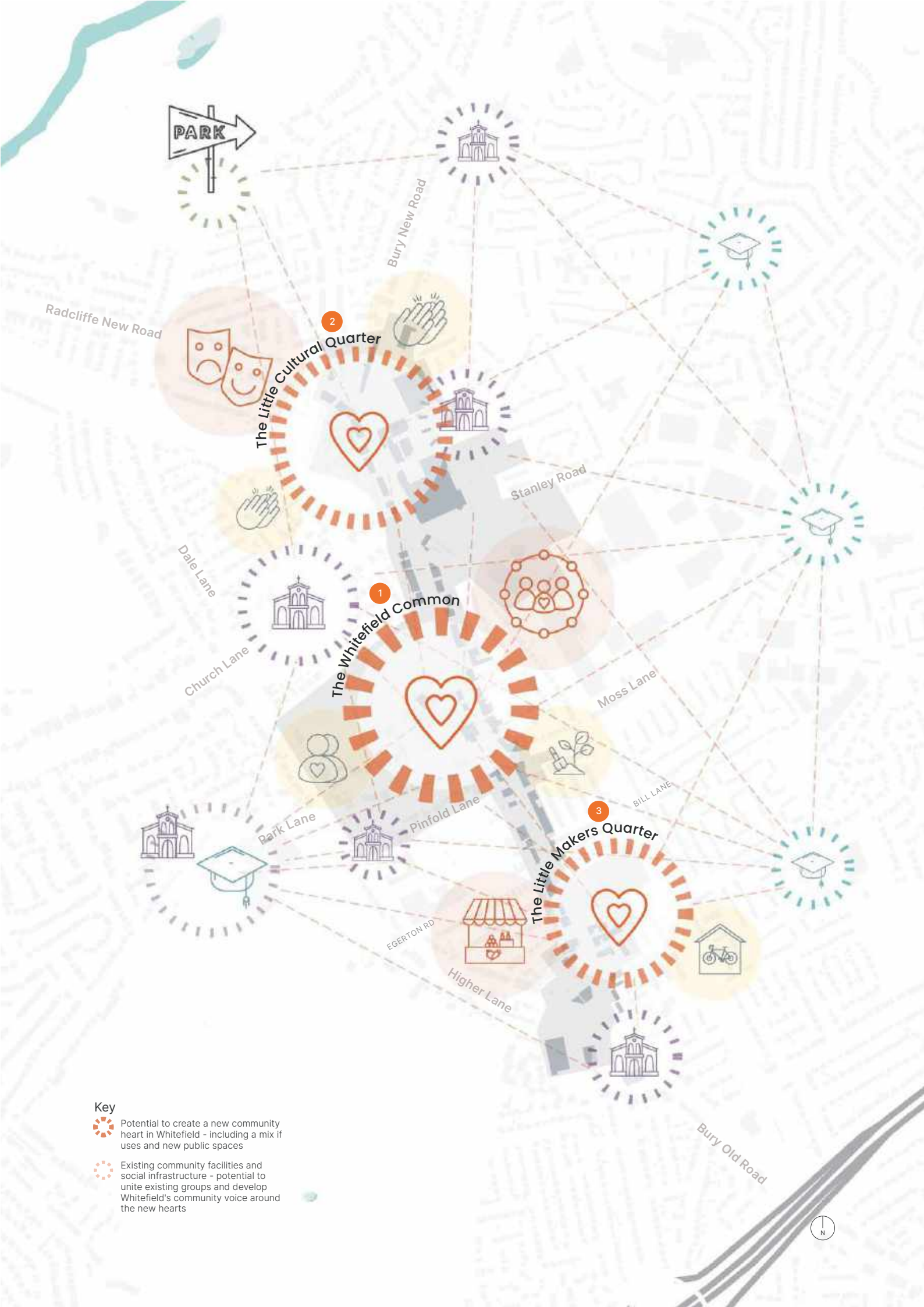
Three sites have been identified as having the potential to become new community focal points for Whitefield. The plan proposes a series of 'hearts', varying in their scale and use.



These spaces could emerge without any major capital investment or upheaval of infrastructure. Through collaboration with private landowners, an emerging body of residents and community members, and Bury Council, a series of short-term interventions could be delivered within each location to begin creating activity and interest.

The Whitefield Common presents a significant opportunity to create a community heart to the town centre, with a proportion of the land across the sites currently within Bury Council ownership.

Emerging Spatial Priorities

1. A cluster of sites around Slattery with potential for future development – including the old town hall site, the former town hall gardens, and the Uplands Medical Centre site. Through a holistic approach, the site could become 'The Whitefield Common' – an active new community heart to Whitefield.
2. The fine grain back streets surrounding the Garrick Theatre have the potential to become something unique – through community-led street interventions and the activation of the Garrick.
3. A small cluster of Victorian warehouses and cottages, surrounding an old workers yard. Potential to tie into Victoria Park and become the 'Little Makers Quarter'.



- Key**
-  Potential to create a new community heart in Whitefield - including a mix of uses and new public spaces
 -  Existing community facilities and social infrastructure - potential to unite existing groups and develop Whitefield's community voice around the new hearts





Unite the people of Whitefield around a series of community hearts

Community Activation Strategy

The following pages outlines both the short steps and long-term aims of an emerging community activation strategy. It is important this strategy is refined, and a detailed community activation strategy prepared, at Stage 2 of the town centre plan.

Support residents and community groups in developing a community-led organisation.

Through our Stakeholder Workshop and public engagement events we have established a core group of active citizens that are keen to play a wider role in strengthening community connections and uniting already active community groups.

This group has enthusiasm, local knowledge and time, but need support and space to initiate collaboration and develop their capacity to deliver change in Whitefield.

The following steps are important to capture the momentum gathered from the community engagement process, and achieve one of the key aims of the town plan.



North East Community Assembly, Sheffield



Whitefield Company of (May 2023)

Quick Wins

- A. **Consider a 'Community Activator'**, who will play a critical role in facilitating the development of a community-led organisation. Their specific duties could include:
- Organising early workshops with engaged community members;
 - Supporting on setting out the role, purpose, scope and objectives of the group;
 - Creating a governance or organisational structure for the group; and
 - Become a point of communication for the group, liaising between the group and Bury Council stakeholder groups as potential projects are proposed.
- B. **Contact community groups and stakeholders** who have expressed interest in developing a wider community organisation during the engagement process. This is an important first step to further gauge the community interest in a community-led organisation.
- C. **Arrange an initial face-to-face workshop for interested groups and stakeholders**, initiating dialogue on the scope, role and purpose of a potential community group. This workshop could coincide with the community place branding workshop.
- It is important a representative of Bury Council or an established community activator is in attendance to mediate and facilitate discussion.



Whitefield Company of Society Event, Whitefield (May 2023)



Unite the people of Whitefield around a series of community hearts

Big Moves

1. *Hearts in Whitefield* – Following initial workshop sessions, it is hoped a community-led organisation will form in Whitefield, to work in partnership with Bury Council and private stakeholders to deliver initiatives and projects outlined in the town centre plan.

In line with the emerging vision for Whitefield Town Centre, and initial thoughts on brand identity, we imagine the 'Hearts in Whitefield' – guardians of the town centre plan and couriers for positive change in Whitefield.

Hearts in Whitefield will aim to:

- To bring people, and groups of people together and seek to encourage new collaborations;
- To work in partnership with Bury Council and the private sector to initiative and deliver positive change in Whitefield;
- To promote existing community and cultural events, groups, and happenings in Whitefield;
- To seek opportunities to create and encourage more art, culture and community in Whitefield, including applying for funding grants to support new commissions;
- To widen the appeal and reach of art and culture in Whitefield, specifically seeking to create increased participation of hard to reach sections of the community, including people who don't tend to engage with art and culture; and
- Become the guardians of the town plan and the emerging Whitefield brand.

Whitefield Events Calendar

It is hoped the Hearts in Whitefield could develop an events calendar for Whitefield, collating ongoing local events organised by existing organisations, businesses and groups across the town; alongside events the group may organise themselves.

The marketing and communication of the events calendar across multiple channels would be a key challenge, and should be discussed at early meetings between the council and interested community stakeholders.



The purpose of Hearts in Whitefield is to promote community-led activity. This isn't an organisation to raise local issues or lobby the council.



Unite the people of Whitefield around a series of community hearts

Support the community in developing a cultural and brand identity for Whitefield

Key to celebrating Whitefield and developing the Whitefield story is understanding the type of place it is, and the type of place it wants to showcase to the world. Furthermore, developing a brand is a fantastic opportunity to further explore what Whitefield means to the community, allowing them to find consensus on what is important, and how they will deliver it.

Whilst the output is a branding strategy to guide future interventions across the town centre, arguably, the collective endeavour of the process is more important.

Some good starting points have been made during our public engagement work (May 2023), and a key central message has been developed. To take this forward we will need to complete the following steps.

Initial steps

- **Brand identity workshops should be held early by Bury Council and community activators**, bringing together members of the community identified through the town centre plan engagement process, to develop ideas and create a branding strategy for Whitefield. Workshops should explore how this could be used, options for application, colours and tone of voice etc.
- Following this, **key branding elements and a 'Whitefield palette' should be established**, aimed at conveying the key messages outlined in the strategy. This palette should be used to inform future interventions and installations across the town centre.
- **Initiate a large-scale town centre physical branding exercise**, accompanied by a press release and digital campaign led by the newly established Whitefield Community Organisation. The exercise could be delivered with other initiatives within the plan - relating to wayfinding, art installations and painting.



Following an initial community place branding workshop, and based on public consultation feedback received to date, one idea really jumped out at us...





Unite the people of Whitefield around a series of community hearts

Potential Interventions

Create a series of community hearts – with space for a range of activities and events

In response to community feedback and our analysis of Whitefield to date, the town centre plan identifies opportunities to create new community-focused destinations across the town centre. The overarching message arising from the analysis process was Whitefield's lack of heart – a lack of a focal point or space that people considered the centre.

D



Plant NOMA, Manchester

Big Moves

2. **Family Hub** – Establish a family hub for Whitefield. Family Hubs bring together multiple organisations to a "one stop shop" which will provide support for families with babies, children and young people from birth until they reach the age of 19 (or up to 25 for young people with special educational needs and disabilities). The family hub would offer programmes to help support for the physical and mental health, housing and debt advice, youth services, domestic abuse support, as well as services run by charities.
3. **Potential Community Spaces** – The plan identifies three potential new 'hearts', with the capacity to deliver wider social benefits and a home for the 'Hearts in Whitefield' – each varying in scale and character.

Given the constrained nature of these sites, all three spaces are considered long-term aspirations. However, pending discussions with relevant Bury Council stakeholders and other private landowners, there may be potential for early activation of each space as part of the 'Hearts in Whitefield' project.

Quick Wins

- D. **Our Stakeholder Workshop and Public Consultation both pointed us towards a local enthusiasm for community gardening and town greening.** The local Incredible Edible group are active in Whitefield but aren't well represented in the Town Centre Study zone. There is potential to engage the group in initial activation projects across the town centre as potential anchors of the three identified 'hearts', or in smaller 'dead' spaces along the high street. The group have the potential to tap into many of the smaller quick-win projects outlined across the plan, and should be engaged early in the delivery process.
- E. Improve partnership working with organisations and locations which have large facilities, which could be used as community space, such as the Oasis Centre.
- F. Consider expanding the use of the large facilities which could be used as community space to deliver Council services from.



The Whitefield Common

A cluster of sites around the old town hall, including the Uplands Medical Centre, presents a major opportunity to create a new hub for the community at the heart of the town. Public feedback unanimously identifies the area as a key focus area for the plan with the potential to host a permanent community facility.



's Yard, Manchester

The Little Cultural Quarter

The Garrick Theatre is a hidden gem in Whitefield – its only cultural destination. It is housed in a modest building with a blank frontage, along one of Whitefield's back streets. The theatre is a real draw, and proposals could activate the frontage of the building alongside a range of other small-scale measures to bring surrounding streets to life.

The Little Makers Quarter

Several independent businesses, ranging from local bakeries to metal fabricators, are located in Victorian cottages and warehouses, adjacent to Victoria Park. With support from landowners, the large car parking area to the rear could be transformed into a unique destination, with potential to host a range of events and local businesses. The land on Victoria Square is Council owned under Six Town Housing.



Howth Market, Dublin

Recommendations

- Build community capacity for town greening through the delivery of a well publicised campaign delivered through the newly established Community-Led Organisation. Consideration of how the brand is applied and launched is key, and should be discussed early on in the process.
- Engage already active groups early in the delivery process, understanding their willingness and capacity to deliver projects, and the level of investment needed to achieve the strategic place enhancement goals.
- Work with landowners of identified areas and relevant Bury Council stakeholders to broker permissions and manage liability for temporary projects.



Unite the people of Whitefield around a series of community hearts

Summary

Key Topics and Themes

- Brand and Identity
- Community activation
- Community spaces and events

Stakeholders involved



The Whitefield community /
Community Organisation /
Community Activator

L Lead

S Support



Bury Council



TfGM and regional bodies



Private sector developers



The Whitefield business community

S L

Quick Wins



1. **Consider a 'Community Activator'**, who will play a critical role in facilitating the development of a community-led organisation.



2. **Contact community groups and stakeholders** who have expressed interest in developing a wider community organisation during the engagement process. This is an important first step to further gauge the community interest in a community-led organisation.



3. **Arrange an initial face-to-face workshop for interested groups and stakeholders**, initiating dialogue on the scope, role and purpose of a potential community group. This workshop could coincide with the community place branding workshop.



4. **Our Stakeholder Workshop and Public Consultation both pointed us towards a local enthusiasm for community gardening and town greening.** The local Incredible Edible group are active in Whitefield but aren't well represented in the Town Centre Study zone. There is potential to engage the group in initial activation projects across the town centre as potential anchors of the three identified 'hearts', or in smaller 'dead' spaces along the high street. The group have the potential to tap into many of the smaller quick-win projects outlined across the plan, and should be engaged early in the delivery process.



5. Improve partnership working with organisations and locations which have large facilities, which could be used as community space, such as the Oasis Centre.



6. Consider expanding the use of the large facilities which could be used as community spaces to deliver Council services from.

S L

Big Moves



1. Hearts in Whitefield

Following initial workshop sessions, it is hoped a community-led organisation will form in Whitefield, to work in partnership with Bury Council and private stakeholders to deliver initiatives and projects outlined in the town centre plan.



2. Family Hub

Establish a family hub for Whitefield. Family Hubs bring together multiple organisations to a "one stop shop" which will provide support for families with babies, children and young people from birth until they reach the age of 19 (or up to 25 for young people with special educational needs and disabilities). The family hub would offer programmes to help support for the physical and mental health, housing and debt advice, youth services, domestic abuse support, as well as services run by charities.



3. Potential Community Spaces

The plan identifies three potential new 'hearts', with the capacity to deliver wider social benefits and a home for the 'Hearts in Whitefield' – each varying in scale and character. All three spaces are considered long-term aspirations. These are:



Whitefield Common – A cluster of sites around the old town hall including the Uplands Medical Centre,
The Little Cultural Quarter – The Garrick Theatre and surrounding street

The Little Makers Quarter – large car parking area to the rear of a cluster of independent businesses adjacent to Victoria Park.

Principles

- Create a series of community hearts in Whitefield Town Centre – with space for a range of activities and events.
- Support existing residents and community groups in developing a community led organisation.
- Create a platform and structure for community leadership, self-organisation and order.
- Support diversity. Diversity = resilience.
- Support the community in creating a cultural and brand identity for Whitefield.

Emerging Spatial Priorities

1. A cluster of sites around Slattery with potential for future development – including the old town hall site, the former town hall gardens, and the Uplands Medical Centre site. Through a holistic approach, the site could become 'The Whitefield Common' – an active new community heart to Whitefield.
2. The fine grain back streets surrounding the Garrick Theatre have the potential to become something unique – through community-led street interventions and the activation of the Garrick.
3. A small cluster of Victorian warehouses and cottages, surrounding an old workers yard. Potential to tie into Victoria Park and become the 'Little Makers Quarter'.



Recommendations

- Build community capacity for town greening through the delivery of a well publicised campaign delivered through the newly established Community-Led Organisation. Consideration of how the brand is applied and launched is key, and should be discussed early on in the process.
- Engage already active groups early in the delivery process, understanding their willingness and capacity to deliver projects, and the level of investment needed to achieve the strategic place enhancement goals.
- Work with landowners of identified areas and relevant Bury Council stakeholders to broker permissions and manage liability for temporary projects.



**Create more
activity, interest
and things to
discover**

The community have highlighted a lack of variety across the town centre – with a limited range of activities and things to do.

Whilst most of Whitefield's activity is focused along the A56, there are spaces, locations and buildings off the corridor which offer opportunities to expand Whitefield's offer.

Here we further explore these opportunities to create more variety and interest.

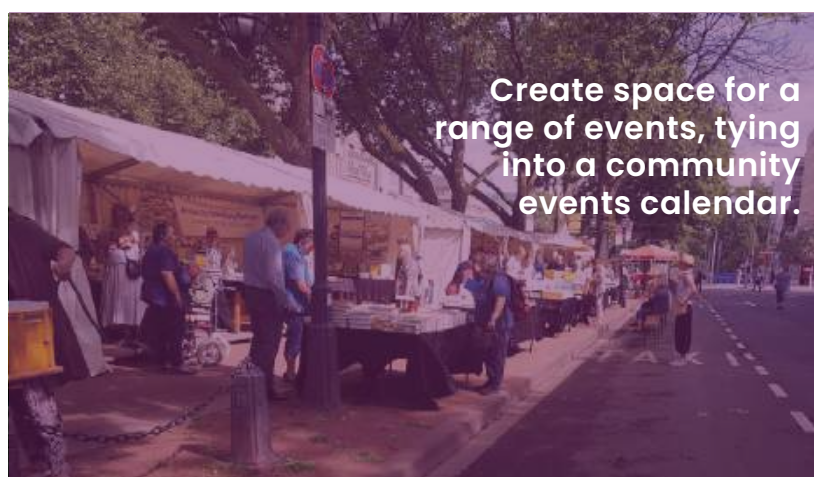


Key Design Principles

The baseline analysis and feedback from local residents suggests there is a lack of variety across Whitefield Town Centre. This not only refers to the types of businesses and land uses, but extends to its parks and backland areas off Bury New Road.

Whilst most of Whitefield's activity is clustered along the A56, there are spaces, locations and buildings off the corridor which offer opportunities to create variety and more interest. The strategy explores what these lost spaces might become, and how they tie together to create a more holistic destination offering a variety of activities.

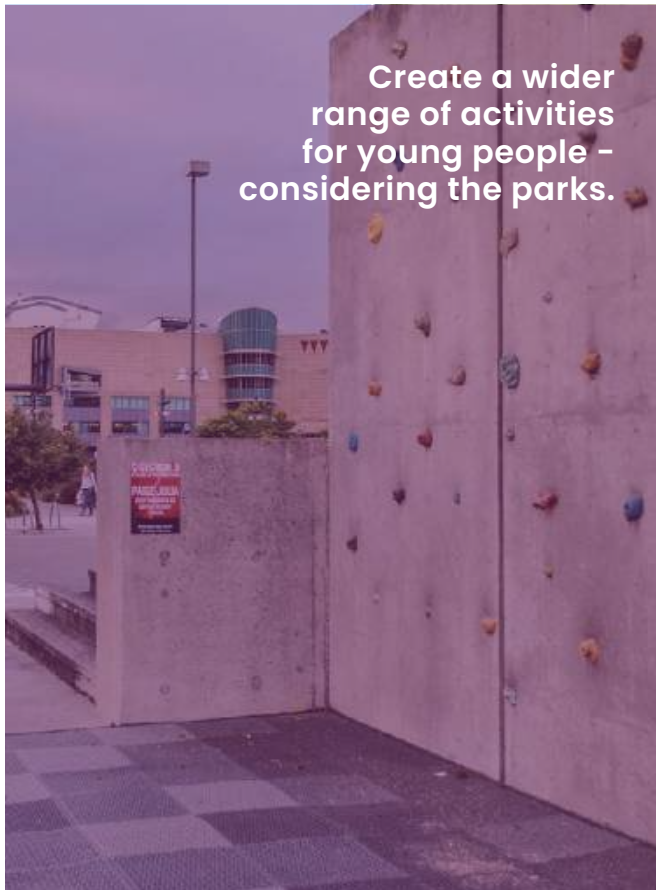
Whitefield has the spaces, although not immediately evident, and an active community ready for new experiences within the town. The focus in this section of the Town Centre Plan is to identify these areas, and setup the processes to allow the community to activate them.



Create space for a range of events, tying into a community events calendar.



Create activity and interest in streets and backland spaces off Bury New Road.



Topics and Themes

The vision objective covers a range of urban design topics and themes, notably:

- Land Use
- Temporary Urbanism
- Events
- Children's Play
- Facilities for young people





Spatial Strategy

The strategy seeks to harness Whitefield's strengths and assets to create a unique destination, drawing people in, and providing a reason to stay for longer. Creating a more diverse offer in Whitefield means being creative, taking risks, and allowing the community the time, platform, and space to lead the change required to deliver social and economic value.

While increasing footfall along the high street is an important objective, the strategy looks beyond this traditional measure. The aim is to create a more resilient and sustainable economy where social capital is just as important a success factor as financial capital.




There is emphasis on the community to achieve this objective, with the support of private partners and Bury Council. The council will play an important supporting role - identifying funding opportunities, working with land owners to identify vacant buildings and spaces for community-led growth, and creating a policy framework which supports business innovation.

Emerging Spatial Priorities

1. The Old Telephone Exchange building could become a pop-up hub for community events and activity
2. Bank Street, Silver Street and Devon Avenue, linking through the proposed 'Little Cultural Quarter', could be used for street greening and painting projects. The Garrick Theatre could play host to Whitefield's first commissioned mural.
3. The yard space off Victoria Lane, surrounded by independent businesses, could be used as a temporary market and events space; with a view of becoming a more permanent home to small traders and local craftspeople.
4. A range of uses could be integrated at the Whitefield Common and surrounding parkland to create an off-corridor hub of activity
5. Connecting alleyways and spaces across the town centre have scope for activation. Small-scale interventions could be delivered over time, creating a network interest and activity connecting emerging off-corridor destinations.



Key

-  Potential to activate area, considering diversification of land uses and facilities
-  Potential to diversify the range of uses and facilities within existing park / green space
-  Potential to create small-scale destination off the Bury New Road corridor





Potential Interventions

Create space for a range of events, tying into a community events calendar

Identification of key spaces – either vacant buildings, public spaces or incidental spaces within streets – will be required to understand where events could take place. The re-purposing of vacant buildings is a key part of this; creating space for community and business innovation which will support a more vibrant and interesting town centre – in turn encouraging more visitors.

Quick Wins

- A. **Identify existing spaces, within vacant buildings, public spaces or incidental spaces within streets,** with the potential to host events.
- B. **Work with the emerging Whitefield Community Organisation to develop an events calendar** for the year ahead. These could initially tie into the Hearts in Whitefield branding campaign.
- C. **Create a database of existing community groups** running events across the town centre. These should be entered into an emerging events calendar and advertised through digital channels.
- D. **Create a community noticeboard** in a central location / various central locations (e.g. the space at the top of Church Lane).

1



Sadler's Yard, Manchester

Big Moves

1. **Identify and develop new public spaces and vacant buildings to accommodate a range of events** – ranging from small-scale internal practice spaces, to large and multifunctional civic spaces for larger events.
2. **Create a Whitefield events group to co-organise and manage the events calendar.** The group should contain a variety of stakeholders, including local business owners and community groups, to ensure a broad range of events are delivered.
3. **Consider new ways of supporting local businesses;** advising on creative means of operating beyond the four walls of their premises.
4. **Create a permanent home for the community within the town centre.** This could be located within one of the priority areas identified in the previous chapter (e.g. The Whitefield Common) or in an existing large facility.
5. **Create a policy framework which supports meanwhile and temporary uses** across Whitefield.

Recommendations

- Bury Council should undertake an audit of land and ownership to identify spaces or buildings that could be used to accommodate activities or events.
- Engage with community groups, charities, place managers, Business Improvement Districts, retailers, landlords and civic societies to understand their appetite for engaging in a Whitefield Events Group.
- Conduct an audit of Whitefield's existing parks and green spaces to understand where new facilities could diversify the offer.
- Arrange a young people's engagement workshop, bringing together local schools and colleges.
- Begin to identify potential partners and investment opportunities to provide funding support for events in Whitefield.

Create a wider range of activities for young people, diversifying the parks and other 'dead' spaces.

Engagement to date has identified a deficiency in facilities and activities for younger people in Whitefield – opinions supported by our spatial analysis of the town centre.

Whitefield's parks, whilst key assets, could do more to engage a wider range of young people. Beyond the parks, there are also a range of inactive backland spaces that could be improved; using creative measures to create new areas for young people to enjoy.

Quick Wins

- E. Involve a range of young people in the visioning process**, ensuring any intervention is supported by an assessment of their wants and needs. A specific engagement event could be delivered at Stage 2 of the plan, specifically engaging local schools and colleges.
- F. Alongside the Community Organisation, temporary play installations could be delivered** with other storytelling initiatives outlined in the plan to activate lost spaces and create new facilities for young people.



Church Alley, Bluecoat, Liverpool



Create more activity, interest and things to discover

Create activity and interest in streets and backland spaces off Bury New Road

The Town Centre Plan imagines a Whitefield high street beyond the Bury New Road corridor, with pockets of interest, activity and animation peppered around backland streets away from the main road.

This not only relates to the three identified priority areas (refer to page 115 for details), where there is opportunity to create more prominent destinations, but refers to smaller-scale interventions that could bring lost and inactive spaces to life.



Sayer Street, Elephant Park



Sadler's Yard, Bath



Wellington
New Zealand

Quick Wins

- G. **Earmark key backland streets / alleys and spaces with scope for small-scale, temporary installations.** A range of measures could bring a 'dead' space to life - including painting surfaces and walls, adding trees, and planters, temporary seating areas, or creating new built structures to house businesses in larger spaces.
- H. **Use the indicative concepts for the three identified priority areas (page 115) to engage landowners** in dialogue around the feasibility of activating each area.
- I. **Identify areas across the town centre where temporary structures** could be located - with the potential to house business start-ups, pop-up shops, or other community initiatives.

Big Moves

6. **Deliver the three 'priority areas' to create a unique, off-corridor offer for Whitefield.** These areas provide real opportunities to expand the food and beverage economy - including evening - for markets, and for innovative start-up businesses with links to Manchester's growing technology and innovation scene.
7. **Create a network of secondary links and routes between new spaces and destinations,** with wayfinding, public art and innovative street lighting aiding navigation around the town centre.



Sayer Street, Elephant Park



Lower Market,
Altrincham

Recommendations

- Work with local residents and the emerging community organisation to identify alleyway spaces and backland streets with scope to deliver temporary interventions and installations.
- Create a business case to better understand the feasibility and viability of meanwhile structures and pop-up uses across the town centre. The business case should outline the benefits of such an approach to landowners of areas of interest.
- Conduct an audit of Bury Council owned land, initiating conversations amongst key council stakeholders around the scope for more permanent meanwhile spaces.



Summary

Key Topics and Themes

- Land Use
- Children's Play
- Temporary Urbanism
- Facilities for young people
- Events

Stakeholders involved

-  The Whitefield community / Community Organisation / Community Activator
-  Bury Council
-  TfGM and regional bodies
-  Private sector developers
-  The Whitefield business community

L Lead
S Support

S **L**



Quick Wins

- 1. Identify existing spaces, within vacant buildings, public spaces or incidental spaces within streets, with the potential to host events.**
- 2. Work with the emerging Whitefield Community Organisation to develop an events calendar** for the year ahead. These could initially tie into the Hearts in Whitefield branding campaign.
- 3. Create a database of existing community groups** running events across the town centre. These should be entered into an emerging events calendar and advertised through digital channels.
- 4. Create a community noticeboard** in a central location / various central locations.
- 5. Involve a range of young people in the visioning process**, ensuring any intervention is supported by an assessment of their wants and needs.
- 6. Alongside the Community Organisation, temporary play installations could be delivered** with other storytelling initiatives outlined in the plan to activate lost spaces.
- 7. Earmark key backland streets / alleys and spaces with scope for small-scale, temporary installations.** A range of measures could bring a 'dead' space to life - including painting surfaces and walls, adding trees, and planters and other interventions.
- 8. Use the indicative concepts for the three identified priority areas to engage landowners** in dialogue around the feasibility of activating each area.
- 9. Identify areas across the town centre where temporary built structures** could be located - with the potential to house business start-ups, pop-up shops, or other community initiatives.

S **L**



Big Moves

- 1. Identify and develop new public spaces and vacant buildings to accommodate a range of events** - ranging from small-scale internal practice spaces, to large and multifunctional civic spaces for larger events.
- 2. Create a Whitefield events group to co-organise and manage the events calendar.** The group should contain a variety of stakeholders, including local business owners and community groups, to ensure a broad range of events are delivered.
- 3. Consider new ways of supporting local businesses;** advising on creative means of operating beyond the four walls of their premises.
- 4. Create a home for the community within the town centre.** This could be located within one of the priority areas identified in the previous chapter (e.g. The Whitefield Common) or in an existing large facility.
- 5. Create a policy framework which supports meanwhile and temporary uses** across Whitefield.
- 6. Deliver the three 'priority areas' to create a unique, off-corridor offer for Whitefield.** These areas provide real opportunities to expand the food and beverage economy - including evening -, for markets, and for innovative start-up businesses with links to Manchester's growing technology and innovation scene.
- 7. Create a network of secondary links and routes between new spaces and destinations,** with wayfinding, public art and innovative street lighting aiding navigation around the town centre.

Principles

- Create space for a range of events, tying into a community events calendar.
- Create a wider range of activities for young people – considering the parks.
- Facilitate community start-ups – occupying vacant spaces, and newly created hubs.
- Create activity and interest in streets and backland spaces off Bury New Road.

Emerging Spatial Priorities

1. The Old Telephone Exchange building could become a pop-up hub for community events and activity.
2. Bank Street, Silver Street and Devon Avenue, linking through the proposed 'Little Cultural Quarter', could be used for street greening and painting projects. The Garrick Theatre could play host to Whitefield's first commissioned mural.
3. The yard space off Victoria Lane, surrounded by independent businesses, could be used as a temporary market and events space; with a view of becoming a more permanent home to small traders and local craftspeople.
4. A range of uses could be integrated at the Whitefield Common and surrounding parkland to create an off-corridor hub of activity
5. Connecting alleyways and spaces across the town centre have scope for activation. Small-scale interventions could be delivered over time, creating a network interest and activity connecting emerging off-corridor destinations.



Recommendations

- Bury Council should undertake an audit of land and ownership to identify spaces or buildings that could be used to accommodate activities or events.
- Engage with community groups, charities, place managers, Business Improvement Districts, retailers, landlords and civic societies to understand their appetite for engaging in a Whitefield Events Group.
- Conduct an audit of Whitefield's existing parks and green spaces to understand where new facilities could diversify the offer.
- Arrange a young people's engagement workshop, bringing together local schools and colleges.
- Begin to identify potential partners and investment opportunities to provide funding support for events in Whitefield.
- Work with local residents and the emerging community organisation to identify alleyway spaces and backland streets with scope to deliver temporary interventions and installations.
- Create a business case to better understand the feasibility and viability of meanwhile structures and pop-up uses across the town centre. The business case should outline the benefits of such an approach to landowners of areas of interest.
- Conduct an audit of Bury Council owned land, initiating conversations amongst key council stakeholders around the scope for more permanent meanwhile spaces.



**Reduce car
dominance to create
space for people**

Whitefield Town
Centre is dominated
by cars, to the
detriment of both
sense of place and
the pedestrian
experience.

Reducing this
dominance over time
requires a broader
culture shift, but is
essential to creating
a more attractive
and vibrant high
street along Bury
New Road.



Reduce car dominance to create space for people

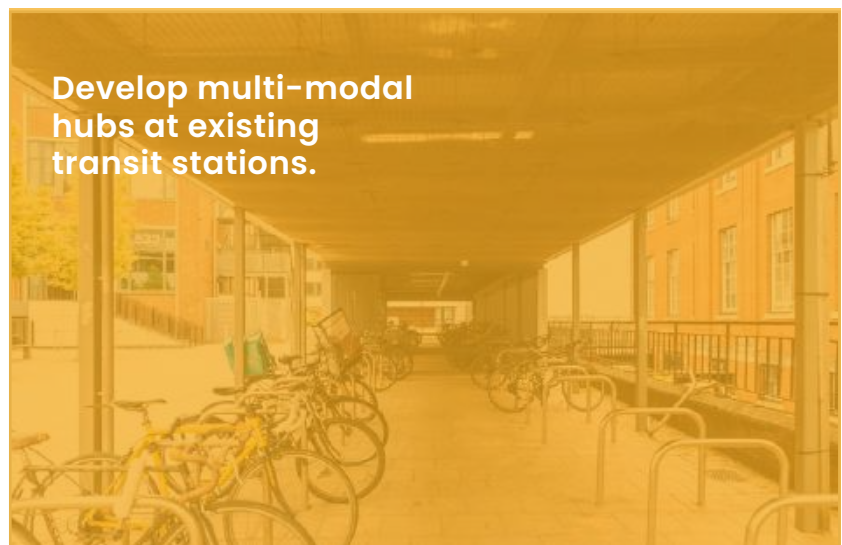
Key Design Principles

The process for reducing the impact of vehicular traffic in Whitefield will take time. Rethinking Bury New Road, a key transport corridor across the wider region, requires a strategic approach involving multiple stakeholders across Greater Manchester.

However, the process can be incremental, and can start now, with shorter-term quick wins helping to shift the focus of Bury New Road towards people and place. The design principles outlined provide a starting point for this transition, and should be used to help to guide the approach as the TfGM Corridors programme progresses.

Future interventions should refer to Local Transport Note 1/20 standard and emerging Streets for Healthy Life guidance.





Topics and Themes

The vision objective covers a range of topics and themes, notably:

- Car parking strategy
- Balanced streets
- Public realm
- Active travel



Spatial Strategy

The spatial strategy focuses on three key areas, ultimately aimed at reducing the number of cars moving into and through the town centre and, in turn, opening up space to deliver interventions which will enhance the high street environment and sense of place.

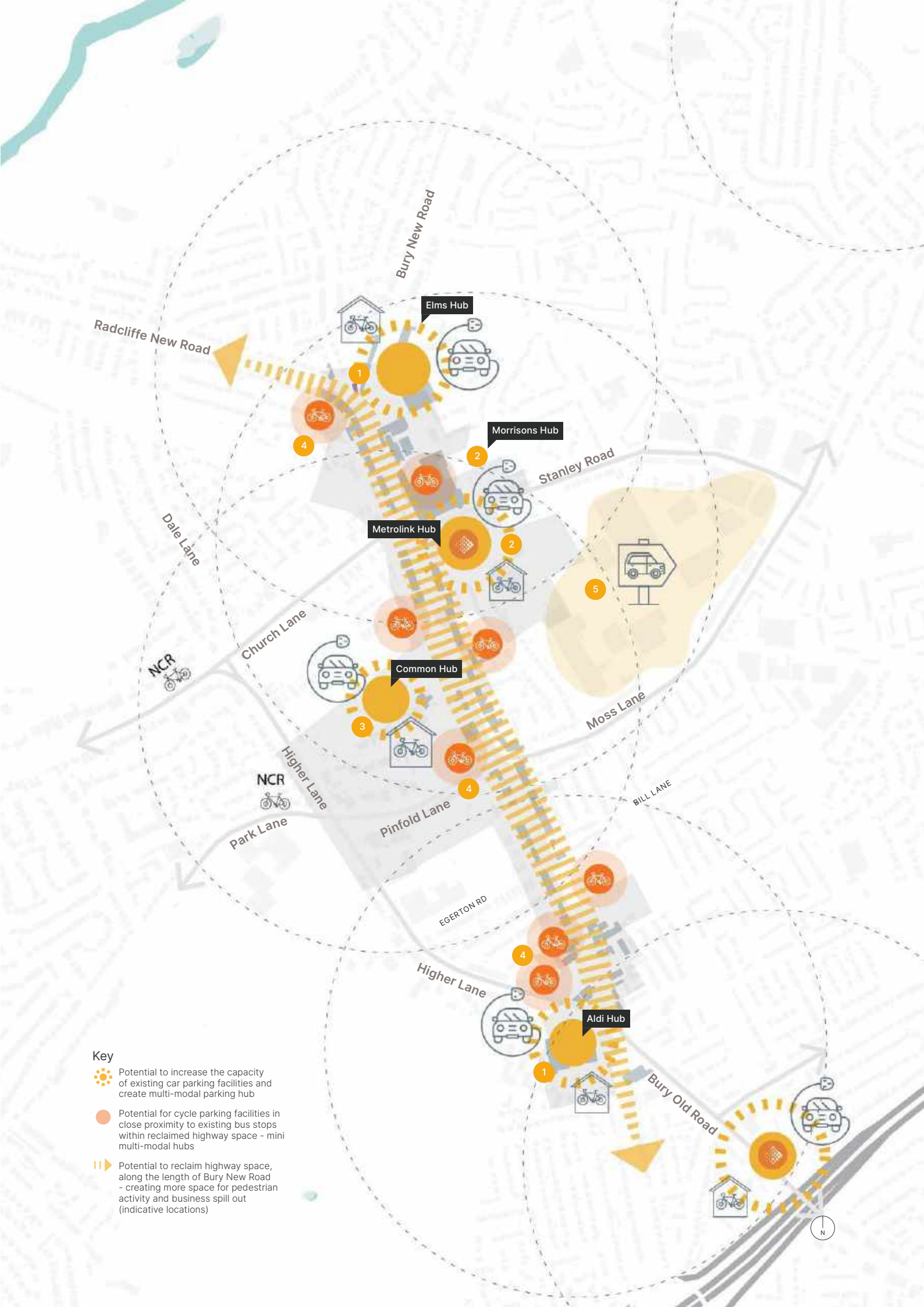
First, it seeks to rationalise and consolidate car parking across the town centre; aiming to reduce pressure on surrounding residential streets, backland spaces and hardstanding parking areas located along Bury New Road. It considers opportunities to increase the capacity of existing car parking facilities. This includes large-scale parking areas identified across the town centre, and the future capacity of Bury New Road to incorporate well-designed, short-stay car parking adjacent to shops and areas of activity. This is a long-term aim, and should be considered as the TfGM strategy for Bury New Road emerges.

Secondly, it explores opportunities to reduce the number of short trips made into the town centre by car, focusing on improving cycle parking facilities around amenities and existing transport nodes; making it safer and easier to make multi-modal trips via public transport. These measures should be considered alongside those outlined earlier regarding active travel.

By reducing the number of cars moving along Bury New Road and parking in the public realm across the town centre, we create space to deliver interventions which will enhance the pedestrian experience along the high street. The approach delivers multiple (proven) benefits. By creating a more attractive high street for businesses to operate, in-turn increasing footfall, reducing pollution, and creating a healthier, safer and more vibrant high street where people choose to spend their time.

Emerging Spatial Priorities

1. Large car parking areas already exist across the town centre, albeit mainly in private management. The council should engage in conversations about the scope to increase the capacity of these facilities.
2. Large multi-storey facilities are located at Morrisons and the Metrolink Park and Ride. Public access to these facilities and their capacity for expansion should be considered, alongside the integration of improved cycle parking facilities.
3. The scope to deliver parking facilities as part of the 'Whitefield Common' priority area should be explored.
4. Multiple bus stops exist in key locations along Bury New Road. There is potential to develop these into small multi-modal hubs, integrating cycle parking facilities in close proximity to amenities.
5. The existing business park adjacent should be considered for expanding car parking facilities in close proximity to the Metrolink.



Key

-  Potential to increase the capacity of existing car parking facilities and create multi-modal parking hub
-  Potential for cycle parking facilities in close proximity to existing bus stops within reclaimed highway space - mini multi-modal hubs
-  Potential to reclaim highway space, along the length of Bury New Road - creating more space for pedestrian activity and business spill out (indicative locations)





Car Parking Strategy

Rationalising car parking across the town centre

The first step in creating a better environment along the high street is reducing the number of cars – both moving and parked. Proposed interventions here require conversation between various stakeholders and partnership working, to understand the scope for increasing the capacity of existing facilities, as well as the scope for expansion in the right locations.

Quick Wins

- A. **Conduct an audit of the number of car parking spaces within the town centre, and within a 5-minute walking radius of the boundary.** The audit should outline the number of public and private car parking spaces currently available, as well as the capacity of each car parking area at different times of the day and week.
- B. **Engage landowners of private car parking facilities in conversations around the potential to use facilities for the good of Whitefield Town Centre.** These conversations are key to understanding both the scope for public usage, as well as opportunities to increase the capacity of car parks in the most sustainable locations.
- C. **Create real-time, directional signage** that better directs visitors to available parking capacity within and around the town centre – potentially reducing traffic congestion.
- D. **Encourage the installation of electric vehicle charging points** in existing car parks and ensure that EV charging is a fundamental part of any new car parking areas.



Olympic Park, London



Nordhavnen, Copenhagen

Recommendations

- Develop a detailed parking strategy at Stage 2 of the town centre plan, underpinned by an audit of existing parking facilities and dialogue with owners of existing parking facilities. The strategy should identify locations where car parking capacity can be increased, as well as exploring opportunities for new facilities in sustainable locations; along with the utilisation of real-time directional signage.
- Use this document to initiate early dialogue with TfGM regarding the future of Bury New Road, to inform future proposals as part of the TfGM Corridor Enhancement projects.



Whitfield Gardens, London



Stamford
New Road
Altrincham

Big Moves

1. **Create larger, more efficient car parking hubs in key locations at the edges of the town centre.** Ideally, these hubs would utilise existing infrastructure, and the council should work in partnership with private landowners to develop the approach.
 - Hubs should serve as multi-modal facilities, integrating improved cycle parking facilities alongside increasing the car parking capacity.
 - Where a new hub interfaces with the high street or residential streets, should be sensitively 'wrapped' by development wherever possible, creating an active perimeter around the building.
2. **Work alongside TfGM to explore opportunities to integrate short-stay, parallel, on-street parking along a redesigned Bury New Road corridor.** These spaces should be located adjacent to local businesses, and should be considered as part of a vision for a narrower, and quieter, A56.
 - Parallel spaces should be carefully designed alongside other street furniture elements, including street trees, seating, and bins; and should function as pavement when not in use.
 - Parallel spaces should also be designed to provide servicing and loading facilities to businesses locate along Bury New Road.



Reduce car dominance to create space for people

Potential Interventions

Deliver infrastructure to encourage multi-modal trips via public transport and active travel

Data obtained from the public consultation process suggests the majority of trips made to Whitefield are for shopping, and many of these trips are made by car. The following interventions aim to reduce the number of short trips to the town centre by car - increasing the number of cycle parking facilities across the town centre in key locations, notably around existing public transport stops.



Pocket Park, Stockport

Quick Wins

- E. **Advertise existing bike shop and cycle parking facilities at Cookson Cycles and around the town centre.** Engaged stakeholders could work with the bike shop to deliver cycle focused events in wider pavements and car parking spaces around the shop, highlighting how public space could be used without parked cars.
- F. **Identify busy and popular bus stops across the town centre where multi-modal hubs could be delivered.** Temporary cycle parking facilities could be delivered around identified stops as part of multi-purpose community art installations, to improve the quality of the streetscene along the high street.
- G. **Advertise and deliver a series of events, or focused days with the Nationwide Cycling Academy (run out of Philips Park), encouraging local people to do everyday tasks on bike,** instead of in the car. This could include the weekly shop; the school run; or, a trip to the pub. Activities could be planned in public spaces around the town centre to celebrate each event and bring people together around the cycling and walking.
 - Local schools and businesses should be engaged and support on delivering this initiative.
- H. **Establish a bike library** within Whitefield town centre, where residents can borrow bikes for free.
- I. **Roll out E-cargo bikes trial** for Whitefield town centre businesses.



Well-integrated cycle parking, London

3



Cathedral Square, Blackburn

Big Moves (long-term)

3. **Develop multi-modal transit hubs at Whitefield and Besses tram stations**, increasing the number of cycle parking spaces, and improving the quality of existing facilities. New facilities should be considered as part of a holistic redesign of the station entrances, enhancing sense of arrival and safety.
4. **The Whitefield Common could house a temporary cycle workshop and cafe spaces, as part of a wider community offer within the priority area.** The area is well placed at a cycling gateway to the town from the National Cycle Route to the west, as well as Hamilton Road Park to the north.
5. **Small-scale, multi-modal hubs should be considered around bus stops along the A56**, integrating cycle parking facilities alongside other street furniture elements to create inviting and active pocket spaces.
6. **Short-stay cycle parking facilities should be delivered in reclaimed pavement spaces around shops and amenities along Bury New Road.** Facilities should be delivered as part of a holistic public realm design, creating a more attractive and vibrant streetscene.

Recommendations

- Bury Council should conduct a detailed audit of existing cycle parking facilities across the town centre – considering both quantity and quality of facilities, as well as gaps in provision.
- The audit should inform a detailed Active Travel and Public Transport Strategy, identifying locations for improved facilities and providing design guidance on delivering facilities.
- Work with TfGM to develop multi-modal hub strategy as part of the emerging A56 Corridor project.
- Conduct an audit of existing bus services and stops, identifying highly used bus stops where cycle parking facilities could be integrated to encourage multi-modal public transport trips.
- Traffic data and capacity modelling will be required to understand the impact of the highways-related interventions proposed in the strategy, including: footpath widening, the addition of cycle lanes and public transportation route enhancement. Proposals will need to be informed by the data obtained.



Reduce car dominance to create space for people

Reclaim highway space for people and nature

Whitefield's gateways fail to capture the imagination – dominated by road infrastructure, vehicular traffic, and nothing but a small sign announcing the arrival to the town.

The plan aims to address this incrementally over time, working alongside both local community and business stakeholders to create a more colourful and attractive arrival experience.

Quick Wins

- J. **Painting surfaces and art installations, potentially delivered by a Whitefield Community Organisation**, within existing parking courts along Bury New Road to create interesting and vibrant when cars aren't parked.
- Interventions could be coordinated with the launch of a Whitefield town brand, or as part of an initial high street enhancement project delivering multiple small-scale community interventions simultaneously.
- K. **Create temporary parklets in:** underused parking spaces; reclaimed highway spaces; and, areas used informally for parking along Bury New Road or surrounding streets.
- L. **Identify existing areas along Bury New Road where pavements are wider**, in order to activate these areas through a series of small-scale street furniture interventions.



Elephant and Castle, London



Wellington
New Zealand



Poynton High Street, Cheshire

Big Moves

7. **Deliver pavement widening schemes along Bury New Road, narrowing down the width of the road carriageway to create space for a range of place enhancement measures.** Wider pavements will deliver a number of social, environmental, and economic benefits – allowing space for green and blue infrastructure, dwelling spaces for visitors, cycle parking stations, and spill-out areas for businesses
8. **New public spaces and parklets should be delivered in reclaimed parking court areas, and existing areas where pavements widen along Bury New Road.** Locations for spaces should be identified within a public realm strategy, and delivered incrementally alongside new short-stay parking bays adjacent to businesses along Bury New Road.

Bold Street,
Liverpool

Recommendations

- Conduct a detailed audit of pavement widths along Bury New Road as part of Stage 2 of the Whitefield Town Plan, to inform potential locations for parklets.
- Engage TfGM in dialogue regarding pavement widening and carriageway narrowing schemes along Bury New Road, using the aspirations set out here to inform discussions and outline the ambitions for a people-focused high street. The town centre plan should act as a key consideration in the TfGM strategy for Bury New Road.
- Develop a public realm strategy for the town centre, outlining a material palette, standard design treatments and details, and locations for new public spaces.
- Engage business owners with parking courts in discussions around new integrated parking bays, identifying scope to claim parking courts for public realm enhancements.



Reduce car dominance to create space for people

Summary

Key Topics and Themes

- Car parking strategy
- Public realm
- Active travel
- Balanced streets

Stakeholders involved

-  The Whitefield community / Community Organisation / Community Activator
-  Bury Council
-  TfGM and regional bodies
-  Private sector developers
-  The Whitefield business community

L Lead

S Support

S **L**

Quick Wins



A. **Conduct an audit of the number of car parking spaces within the town centre, and within a 5-minute walking radius of the boundary.**



B. **Engage landowners of private car parking facilities in conversations around the potential to use facilities for the good of Whitefield Town Centre.**



C. **Create real-time, directional signage** that better directs visitors to available parking capacity within and around the town centre.



D. **Encourage the installation of electric vehicle charging points** in existing and new car parks.



E. **Roll out e-cargo bikes trial** for Whitefield town centre businesses.



F. **Advertise existing bike shop and cycle parking facilities at Cookson Cycles and around the town centre.** Engaged stakeholders could work with the bike shop to deliver cycle focused events.



G. **Identify busy and popular bus stops across the town centre where multi-modal hubs could be delivered.** Temporary cycle parking facilities could be delivered around identified stops.



H. **Advertise and deliver a series of events, or focused days with the Nationwide Cycling Academy** (run out of Philips Park), encouraging local people to do everyday tasks on bike, instead of in the car.



I. **Establish a bike library** within Whitefield town centre.



J. **Painting surfaces and art installations, potentially delivered by a Whitefield Community Organisation,** within existing parking courts along Bury New Road.



K. **Create temporary parklets.**



L. **Identify existing areas along Bury New Road where pavements are wider,** in order to activate these areas.

S **L**

Big Moves



1. **Create larger, more efficient car parking hubs in key locations at the edges of the town centre.** Ideally, these hubs would utilise existing infrastructure.



2. **Work alongside TfGM to explore opportunities to integrate short-stay, parallel, on-street parking along a redesigned Bury New Road corridor.**



3. **Develop multi-modal transit hubs at Whitefield and Besses tram stations,** increasing the number of cycle parking spaces, and improving the quality of existing facilities.



4. **The Whitefield Common could house a temporary cycle workshop and cafe spaces, as part of a wider community offer within the priority area.**



5. **Small-scale, multi-modal hubs should be considered around bus stops along the A56,** integrating cycle parking facilities alongside other street furniture elements.



6. **Short-stay cycle parking facilities should be delivered in reclaimed pavement spaces around shops and amenities along Bury New Road.**



7. **Deliver pavement widening schemes along Bury New Road, narrowing down the width of the road carriageway to create space for a range of place enhancement measures.** Wider pavements will deliver a number of social, environmental, and economic benefits.



8. **New public spaces and parklets should be delivered in reclaimed parking court areas, and existing areas where pavements widen along Bury New Road.** Locations for spaces should be identified within a public realm strategy, and delivered incrementally alongside new short-stay parking bays adjacent to businesses along Bury New Road.

Principles

- Reclaim highway space for people and nature.
- Integrate well designed short-stay parking along Bury New Road.
- Create the infrastructure to encourage short trips via active travel.
- Increase the capacity of 'edge of centre' car parks.
- Develop multi-modal hubs at existing transit stations.

Emerging Spatial Priorities

1. Large car parking areas already exist across the town centre, albeit mainly in private management. The council should engage in conversations about the scope to increase the capacity of these facilities.
2. Large multi-storey facilities are located at Morrisons and the Metrolink Park and Ride. Public access to these facilities and their capacity for expansion should be considered, alongside the integration of improved cycle parking facilities.
3. The scope to deliver parking facilities as part of the 'Whitefield Common' priority area should be explored.
4. Multiple bus stops exist in key locations along Bury New Road. There is potential to develop these into small multi-modal hubs, integrating cycle parking facilities in close proximity to amenities.
5. The existing business park adjacent should be considered for expanding car parking facilities in close proximity to the Metrolink.



Recommendations

- Develop a detailed parking strategy at Stage 2 of the town centre plan, underpinned by an audit of existing parking facilities and dialogue with owners of existing parking facilities. The strategy should identify locations where car parking capacity can be increased, as well as exploring opportunities for new facilities in sustainable locations; along with the utilisation of real-time directional signage.
- Use this document to initiate early dialogue with TfGM regarding the future of Bury New Road, to inform future proposals as part of the TfGM Corridor Enhancement projects.
- Bury Council should conduct a detailed audit of existing cycle parking facilities across the town centre – considering both quantity and quality of facilities, as well as gaps in provision.
- The audit should inform a detailed Active Travel and Public Transport Strategy, identifying locations for improved facilities and providing design guidance on delivering facilities.
- Work with TfGM to develop multi-modal hub strategy as part of the emerging A56 Corridor project.
- Conduct an audit of existing bus services and stops, identifying highly used bus stops where cycle parking facilities could be integrated to encourage multi-modal public transport trips.
- Traffic data and capacity modelling will be required to understand the impact of the highways-related interventions proposed in the strategy, including: footpath widening, the addition of cycle lanes and public transportation route enhancement. Proposals will need to be informed by the data obtained.
- Conduct a detailed audit of pavement widths along Bury New Road as part of Stage 2 of the Whitefield Town Plan, to inform potential locations for parklets.
- Engage TfGM in dialogue regarding pavement widening and carriageway narrowing schemes along Bury New Road, using the aspirations set out here to inform discussions and outline the ambitions for a people-focused high street. The town centre plan should act as a key consideration in the TfGM strategy for Bury New Road.
- Develop a public realm strategy for the town centre, outlining a material palette, standard design treatments and details, and locations for new public spaces.
- Engage business owners with parking courts in discussions around new integrated parking bays, identifying scope to claim parking courts for public realm enhancements.



**Create a greener,
more vibrant
Whitefield**

Whitefield is surrounded by amazing green spaces, and connected by beautiful green residential streets—yet Bury New Road is devoid of greenery.

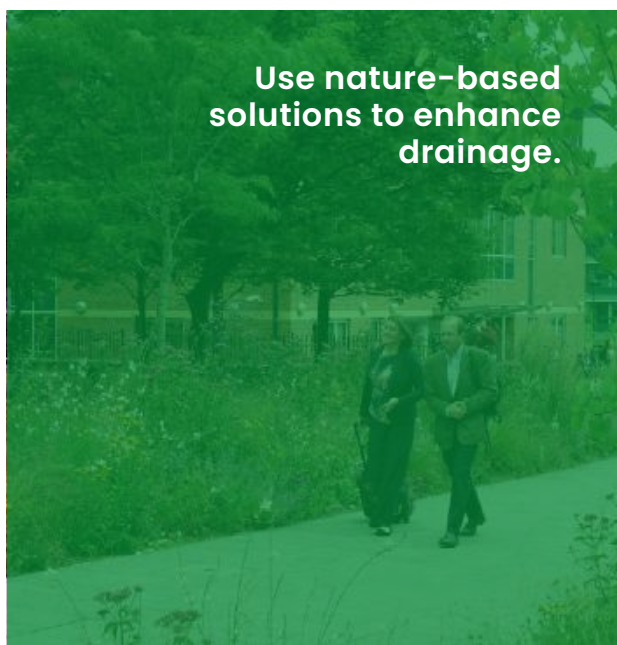
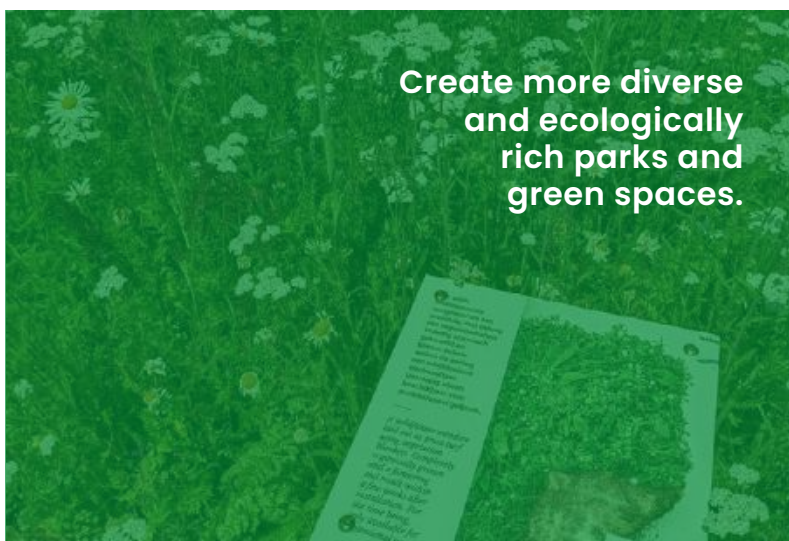
The town plan aims to draw the surrounding greenery onto the high street, allowing people and nature to thrive as one.

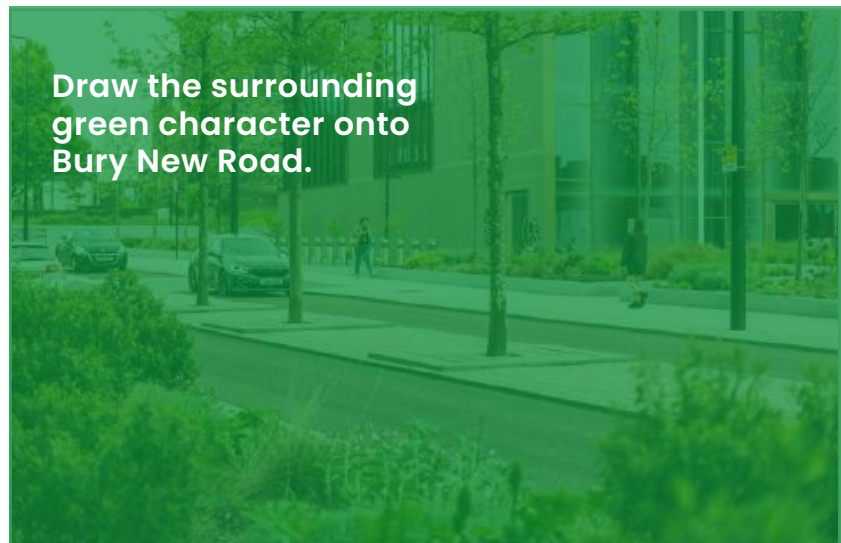


Key Design Principles

Creating vibrancy is a key element in drawing people to the high street and creating a sense of place - providing a reason to come to the high street in the first place, as well as staying for longer. It is accepted that a vibrant place cannot simply be planned and delivered overnight - it takes time, and requires people.

While previous vision objectives and related interventions have outlined ideas for building social capital and community capacity in Whitefield, this section explains the role of art and nature in creating a physical environment which inspires activity and interaction with place.





Topics and Themes

The vision objective covers a range of topics and themes, notably:

- Green and blue infrastructure
- Urban greening
- Building frontages
- Art



Spatial Strategy

The strategy seeks to draw the influence of green infrastructure from surrounding streets, countryside, and parks onto Bury New Road – softening the streetscene and enhancing its appearance.

Over time, there is significant scope to transform Bury New Road through a series of hard and soft interventions – adding vibrancy and colour.

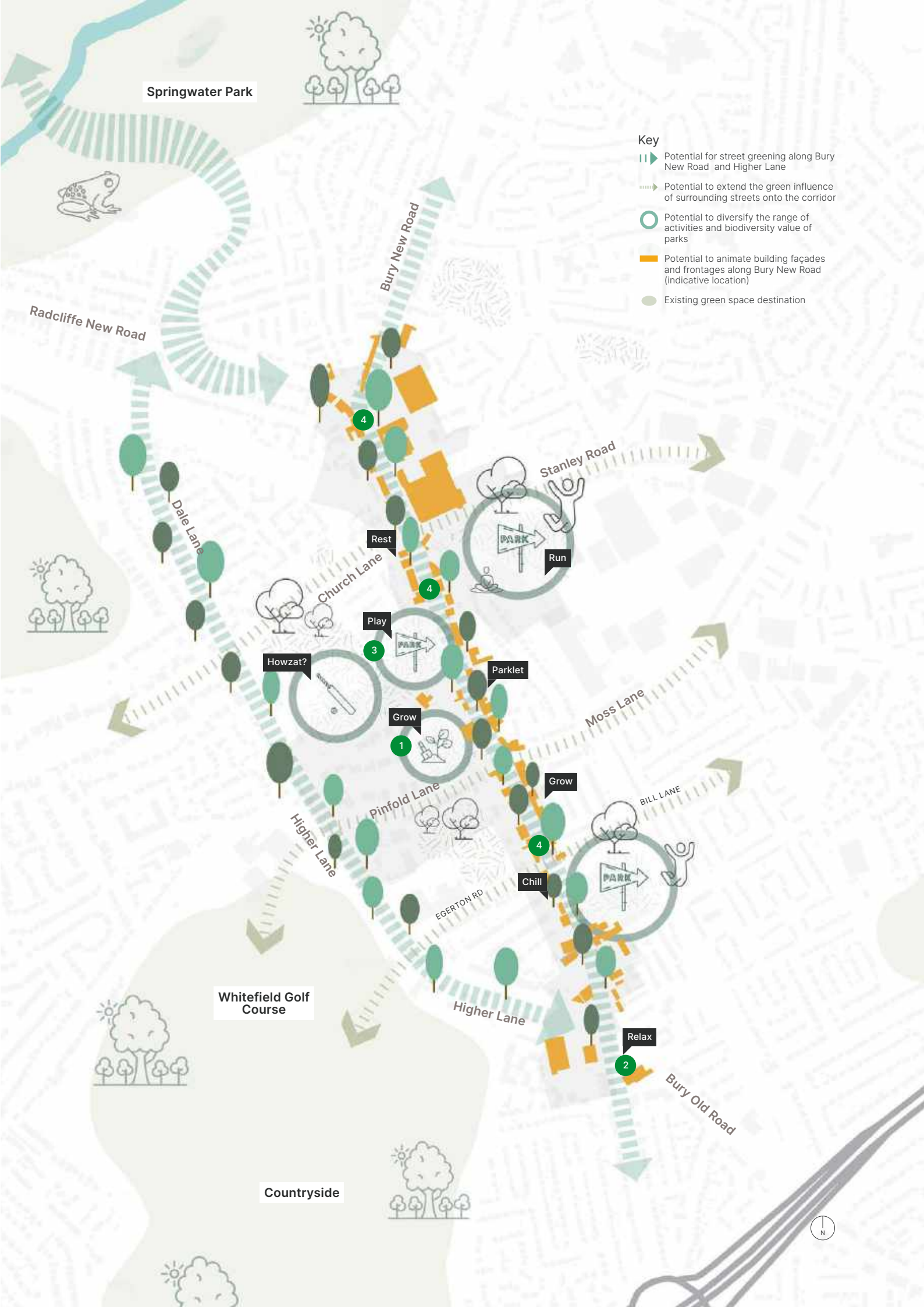
Green infrastructure is a key tool in this transformation, and should be integrated along the high street, from floor to roof, to soften the existing urban landscape, and create a green buffer to the busy highway.

In turn, a more pleasant, safe and quieter pedestrian environment can be created to: support local businesses; encourage human interaction; facilitate an increase in footfall along the high street; and, improve interaction with nature.

Given the high volumes of traffic moving along Bury New Road, and resulting noise and air pollution, the carbon capturing and cooling qualities provided by blue and green infrastructure are an added, and much needed, bonus.

Emerging Spatial Priorities

1. 'The Whitefield Common' – an active new community heart to Whitefield – could play host to community growing space and new pockets of biodiversity.
2. The amenity green space adjacent to Besses Church could become a new pocket park, including natural play facilities, seating, and biodiversity enhancement.
3. Much of Hamilton Road Park comprises hardstanding surfaces, and green spaces lack biodiversity value. There is scope to soften the park and create a more varied and complex landscape framework.
4. Street trees and SuDS features have a key role to play in the long-term transformation of Bury New Road, and could be used to create a green buffer between businesses and the highway.



Springwater Park

Key

- Potential for street greening along Bury New Road and Higher Lane
- Potential to extend the green influence of surrounding streets onto the corridor
- Potential to diversify the range of activities and biodiversity value of parks
- Potential to animate building façades and frontages along Bury New Road (indicative location)
- Existing green space destination

Radcliffe New Road

Bury New Road

Stanley Road

Dale Lane

Church Lane

Moss Lane

Howzat?

Play

Parklet

Grow

Grow

Higher Lane

Pinfold Lane

BILL LANE

EGERTON RD

Chill

Whitefield Golf Course

Higher Lane

Relax

Bury Old Road

Countryside





Create a greener, more vibrant Whitefield

Potential Interventions

Draw the surrounding green character onto Bury New Road

An urban greening strategy for Whitefield starts with the people of Whitefield, and can be delivered without making any changes to the physical layout of Bury New Road.

Pockets of amenity green space, blank walls and unused pavement space exist in abundance across the town centre, and provides the platform to deliver substantial changes to the appearance and biodiversity value of the high street without having to dig a tree pit.

Big Moves (long-term)

1. **Tree planting and the installation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems should act as a fundamental element of a redesigned Bury New Road.** The long-term strategy for the high street should aim to integrate tree planting to the road carriageway, creating safer, quieter and more attractive spaces around businesses along pavements.
2. **Work with homeowners and landowners to deliver vertical greening projects along existing building façades and built structures.**



Liverpool Waters, Liverpool



UCLan, Preston



Elephant and Castle
London

Quick Wins

- A. **A wildflower planting project could be delivered within existing pockets of amenity green space along Bury New Road,** many of which serve little purpose in their current state.
- B. **Box planters could be delivered along street edges, in 'leftover' pavement spaces along Bury New Road and in parking courts.**
- C. **Natural play installations should be considered in larger amenity green spaces across the town centre, such as the Besses Church gateway space.** Facilities could be crafted in a partnership between local artists, makers and the Whitefield Community Organisation..

Recommendations

- Planting and biodiversity strategy should be delivered as part of the Whitefield Town Centre public realm strategy.
- Audit of existing green spaces to understand the scope for short and long-term interventions aimed at diversifying the range of facilities and activities, and enhancing biodiversity value.
- Engage TfGM in dialogue on the importance of green and blue infrastructure in the future strategy for Bury New Road (A56) in Whitefield.
- Approach the Incredible Edible group and other community gardening groups in Whitefield to gauge interest in creating new growing spaces within the town centre.

Create space for community food growing and gardening projects

Feedback from the public engagement process highlighted overwhelming support for investment in Whitefield's green spaces, with a specific focus on creating space for urban gardening and community food production.

With active and established environmental groups delivering projects across the area, including the Love Springwater Park group and Incredible Edible, there is potential to initiate a series of projects across the town centre at an early stage of the plan delivery process.

Quick Wins

- A focused community growing project could be delivered to activate the old town hall grounds**, potentially engaging the local Incredible Edible group in the delivery of the project.
- Identify small amenity green spaces across the town centre with scope to deliver small-scale growing, planting and gardening projects.**
- Consider alleyway and backland spaces across the town centre for urban growing and gardening projects**, engaging residents' associations and local schools in the project.
- Engage local schools in emerging growing, planting and gardening projects as an educational tool.**



Urban Community Allotments, Bath

Create a greener, more vibrant Whitefield

Create more diverse and ecologically rich parks and green spaces

Whitefield's parks are a key asset to the town centre, with three key green spaces directly interfacing with the high street.

As mentioned previously, there is a large appetite amongst local residents to further activate, animate and diversify the parks – providing a broader range of activities and better catering for Whitefield's younger population.



Floriade Expo, Almere, Holland



Playfield Mayfield Engagement, Manchester

Quick Wins

- H. **Identify areas across Whitefield's parks where ecological diversity could be enhanced** – tying into a wider strategy aiming to increase the ecological value of the town centre.
- I. **Host a series of events in partnership with local schools and community groups, to develop a community vision for each park.** Feedback from the event should steer future interventions.
- J. **Develop a small-scale instillations plan** alongside the emerging community organisation and existing gardening groups – considering natural play facilities, art instillations, herb growing planters and wildflower planting.
- K. **Deliver a series of park improvement events,** working with engaged community groups and local schools to plant wildflower and deliver small-scale interventions within the parks.

Big Moves

- 3. **Deliver a more diverse range of facilities and activities across Whitefield's parks,** informed by consultations with the local community.
- 4. **Create space within parks for a range of events,** including local seasonal markets, music, arts and culture festivals
- 5. **Enhance biodiversity across the parks, dedicating zones to biodiversity enhancement** and working with local schools to deliver individual enhancement projects.

Recommendations

- Conduct an audit of Whitefield's parks and local green spaces to understand gaps in the provision of facilities.
- Organise an initial engagement event with local schools and community groups to better understand the wants and needs of young people. Ideally the engagement would lead to a leadership group forming to work with the Council on creating a vision for the parks and delivery of future interventions.
- Begin dialogue with the Bury Council parks / maintenance team to develop skills relating to the delivery and maintenance of a more biodiverse landscape. Delivering an ecologically rich landscape doesn't necessarily require more maintenance, but it is important staff are up-skilled to ensure planting thrives.
- Initiate dialogue with building and shop owners regarding the painting of buildings and walls across the town centre.
- Deliver a 'Shop Fronts and Façade Strategy' at stage 2 of the town centre plan, in consultation with building and shop owners.

Activate and animate building frontages and façades

The quality of buildings across Whitefield varies, with modern development and low-quality rendering generally deterring from the Victorian townscape which characterises the town.

The town centre plan does not prescribe the removal of any building and structure across the town centre – a carbon intensive approach which doesn't always bring the right result. Instead, the plan seeks to breathe life and vibrancy into the existing built form, with light touch measures proposed with the potential to yield huge benefits with regards to sense of place.

Olympic Park, London



Quick Wins

- L. **Identify blank façades, gable ends, and building frontages where low-quality rendering and fascia has deterred from the charm of the building.** Initial 'priority façades', in key locations with high footfall, should be targeted for mural painting and vertical greening.
- M. **Small-scale wall painting projects or the planting of climbing plants** could be delivered alongside local schools and art groups, along back streets or alleys, to breathe life into lost spaces.
- N. **Where space allows, create temporary spillout areas for businesses along Bury New Road.** Areas could be marked using painting or small planters to create a buffer to the footway.

Big Moves

- 6. **A major refurbishment of shop frontages and fascia, informed by a Shop Front and Façades Strategy.** The strategy should tie into the emerging Whitefield branding palette, and seek to deliver distinctiveness and interest in a complementary manner.
- 7. **The frontages strategy should identify buildings with 'dead' or inactive ground floor frontages.** It should be used to inform conversation with building and shop owners regarding the activation of frontages – especially along historic landmark buildings.
- 8. **Deliver more transparent and inviting ground floor frontages and building entrances;** including featurewall lighting to create vibrancy at night.
- 9. **Encourage carbon neutral new builds and retrofits** where possible, incorporate solar panels and blue-green roofs on Whitefield's buildings.

Summary

Key Topics and Themes

- Green and blue infrastructure
- Urban greening
- Building frontages
- Art














Stakeholders involved

-  The Whitefield community / Community Organisation / Community Activator
-  Bury Council
-  TfGM and regional bodies
-  Private sector developers
-  The Whitefield business community










L Lead

S Support

S L Quick Wins

-  A. A wildflower planting project could be delivered within existing pockets of amenity green space along Bury New Road.
-  B. Box planters could be delivered along street edges, in 'leftover' pavement spaces along Bury New Road and in parking courts.
-  C. Natural play installations should be considered in larger amenity green spaces.
-  D. A focused community growing project could be delivered to activate the old town hall grounds.
-  E. Identify small amenity green spaces across the town centre with scope to deliver small-scale growing, planting and gardening projects.
-  F. Consider alleyway and backland spaces across the town centre for urban growing and gardening projects.
-  G. Engage local schools in emerging growing, planting and gardening projects as an educational tool.
-  H. Identify areas across Whitefield's parks where ecological diversity could be enhanced.
-  I. Host a series of events in partnership with local schools and community groups, to develop a community vision for each park.
-  J. Develop a small-scale installations plan.
-  K. Deliver a series of park improvement events.
-  L. Identify blank façades, gable ends, and building frontages where low-quality rendering and fascia has detracted from the charm of the building.
-  M. Small-scale wall painting projects or the planting of climbing plants could be delivered.
- N. Where space allows, create temporary spillout areas for businesses along Bury New Road.

S L Big Moves

-  1. **Tree planting and the installation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems should act as a fundamental element of a redesigned Bury New Road.** The long-term strategy for the high street should aim to integrate tree planting to the road carriageway, creating better spaces.
-  2. **Work with homeowners and landowners to deliver vertical greening projects along existing building façades and built structures.**
-  3. **Deliver a more diverse range of facilities and activities across Whitefield's parks,** informed by consultations with the local community.
-  4. **Create space within parks for a range of events,** including local seasonal markets, music, arts and culture festivals
-  5. **Enhance biodiversity across the parks, dedicating zones to biodiversity enhancement** and working with local schools to deliver individual enhancement projects.
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-  9. **Encourage carbon neutral new builds and retrofits** where possible, incorporate solar panels and blue-green roofs on buildings.

Principles

- Create more diverse and ecologically rich parks and green spaces.
- Use nature-based solutions to enhance drainage.
- Activate and animate building frontages and facades.
- Create space for community food growing and gardening projects.
- Draw the surrounding green character onto Bury New Road.

Emerging Spatial Priorities

1. 'The Whitefield Common' – an active new community heart to Whitefield – could play host to community growing space and new pockets of biodiversity.
2. The amenity green space adjacent to Besses Church could become a new pocket park, including natural play facilities, seating, and biodiversity enhancement.
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Recommendations

- Planting and biodiversity strategy should be delivered as part of the Whitefield Town Centre public realm strategy.
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- Conduct an audit of Whitefield's parks and local green spaces to understand gaps in the provision of facilities.
- Organise an initial engagement event with local schools and community groups to better understand the wants and needs of young people. Ideally the engagement would lead to a leadership group forming to work with the Council on creating a vision for the parks and delivery of future interventions.
- Begin dialogue with the Bury Council parks / maintenance team to develop skills relating to the delivery and maintenance of a more biodiverse landscape. Delivering an ecologically rich landscape doesn't necessarily require more maintenance, but it is important staff are up-skilled to ensure planting thrives.
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- Deliver a 'Shop Fronts and Facade Strategy' at stage 2 of the town centre plan, in consultation with building and shop owners.



8

Summary and Action Plan

HEARTS
IN
WHITEFIELD
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Stage 1 of the Town Centre Plan has outlined a vision for the future of Whitefield Town Centre, informed by extensive engagement with the local community, a range of council stakeholders, and detailed spatial analysis of the town centre.

Whilst this vision provides a fantastic start in re-imagining and regenerating the town centre, it is only a start.

The next steps in the process are critical, using the momentum gained at the Stage 1 plan production process to galvanise community activity and gain support from key wider stakeholders.

This final chapter lays out the crucial next steps in achieving the objectives set out within this document, as we work towards a more detailed delivery strategy at Stage 2.

Town Centre Plan Stage 2

Stage 2 of the town centre plan will focus on the planning and delivery of long-term, 'big move' proposals outlined throughout the report.

Part of this will require more detailed strategies to be developed, working alongside the emerging Whitefield Community Organisation. It is recommended the following strategies are included:

- Shop Fronts and Façades Strategy
- Public Realm Strategy
- A vision for Whitefield's parks
- Active Travel and Public Transport Strategy (tying into the emerging Bury Council 2040 Transport Strategy)
- Detailed plans and proposals for the priority areas
- A detailed Delivery and Implementation Plan

8.1 The Next Steps

'Quick Wins' and 'Big Moves' have been identified alongside each vision objective, outlining the short-term initiatives that could be delivered incrementally as we work towards the long-term goals.

Supplementing these are recommendations, detailing the initial steps required to move the town plan forward in the interim period between Stage 1 and 2. These are practical tasks, achievable without accessing significant additional resources.

The following pages provide a high-level action plan for delivering the vision objectives, bringing together the various projects and recommendations outlined throughout the document.



The action plan focuses on the steps required in the interim period between Stages 1 and 2 of the Town Centre Plan, ensuring the base is setup for the achievement of long-term, strategic aims and objectives, as new funding streams become available and strategic projects such as the TfGM Corridors project begin.



8.2 Towards 'The Town of Hearts'

The Town Centre Plan imagines 'The Town of Hearts' in Whitefield, a response to the strong community spirit highlighted throughout the engagement process, and the three historic hamlets around which the town grew.

The vision is clear and discernible, and is supported by achievable objectives which capture the priorities, wants and needs set out by the community, through the engagement process.

The vision objectives are not prescriptive or fixed; they are there to steer the way as we embark on Whitefield's journey towards a new purpose and sense of place - breaking down a complex and multi-layered task into manageable, bitesize chunks.

The plan places great emphasis on the emergence of a community organisation to help drive change across the town centre. We see this as a vital step in ensuring change in Whitefield comes from its people, not a higher body or stakeholder prescribing the agenda. Whilst this organisation will undoubtedly require support in mobilising, organising and eventually delivering projects, it is hoped that it can become independent and self-sufficient over time, working in partnership alongside Bury Council and other stakeholders to deliver meaningful change.

A range of short and long-term initiatives and interventions have been outlined, aiming to move the place forward towards achieving a more liveable, resilient and sustainable town centre. Again, these are not prescribed, and provide an overview of the types of project we believe will contribute towards achieving the vision and objectives for Whitefield Town Centre.



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