

3.30 Occupier demand

- *Roger Parker*

Parker & Co are acting for clients with a 2787sqm (30,000sqft) Grade A requirement between Liverpool and Manchester within the next 3 - 6 months.

- *Governetz*

This is Government requirement from the Department of Education who are looking to relocate from London into the Greater Manchester area into a space of 2787sqm to 4645sqm (30,000 - 50,000 sq ft).

- *Jackson Stephen & Co Ltd*

Leigh based solicitors who require accommodation on a business park in the area before March 2007

- *Carphone Warehouse*

For summer 2006 this requirement for freehold is looking 2322sqm to 4645sqm (25,000 - 50,000 sq ft) in the Greater Manchester, Lancashire or Cheshire areas.

- *AD Holdings*

Preston Brook based firm who require freehold accommodation for expansion. Options between Knutsford and Wigan of approximately 1858sqm (20,000 sq ft) will be considered.

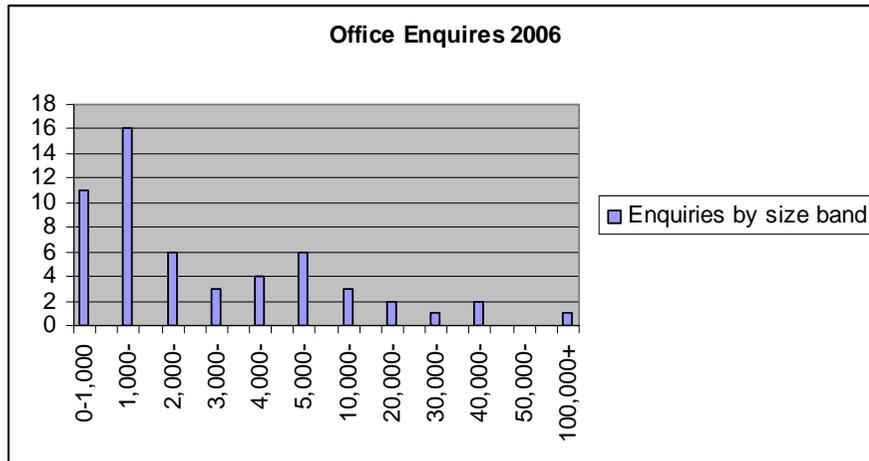
- *Central Sports Management*

December 2006 office requirement for between 148sqm to 223sqm (1,600 sq ft - 2,400 sq ft) to accommodate 16 staff.

3.31 As part of the Northern Crescent Study the Council have indicated that they potentially have a requirement for up to 5,000sqm of new offices to consolidate a number of key customer facing departments currently located in a variety of buildings around the town. Since the departments need to be accessible to the public this should be accommodated within the town centre.

3.32 WMBC's Inward Investment Marketing Manager has provided details on the level of enquires they received between 1 January 2006 and 31 December 2006. Of the 55 recorded enquires in Figure 2 below identifies that the majority of enquiries were made in respect of small units under 464sqm (5000sqft) with low levels of interest being shown for space over 929sqm (10,000sqft)

Figure 2 Office Enquiries



3.33 Whilst any demand is likely to be accommodated by stock completed or in the pipeline, we consider that similar to most towns there is latent demand for small office units available as freeholds. There are strong economic reasons driving this market linked to Self Invested Personal Pension Funds which appeal to the owners and directors of small to medium sized businesses. We propose that the area of land defined as the Northern Crescent is suitably in terms of proximity to the town centre to support a development offering this type of accommodation. Locating such uses in this area would accord with Planning Policy EM1D ".requires office developments that are likely to generate significant numbers of trips to be located in town centre or other locations that are, or are capable of being, highly accessible by a choice of means of transport, including public transport, walking and cycling".

3.34 We have spoken with Gladman Developments who provide this type of property and they confirm that they would consider further development opportunities in the town centre should sufficient land be available to make the development viable.

Primary Health Care

3.35 Wigan Primary Care Trust is a shareholder in a public private partnership company set to up under the Government's LIFT initiative (Local Improvement Finance Trust). The aim of LIFT is to radically improve the delivery of primary care through providing new facilities providing a range of joined up services in key locations with new fit for purpose buildings. We have made enquires of the LIFT company to establish their requirements within the town centre and we are informed that they have been satisfied by the recent development of a large centre at Frog lane, and their share of the joint services centre which will include primary care facilities.

Residential

3.36 A residential market in Wigan Town Centre has emerged in recent years since the Town Centre is considered viable by developers.

3.37 Residential sale values within the town centre are in the region of £2152sqm to £2583sqm (£200 - £240 per square foot). This relates to capital values of £100,000 - £120,000 for a one bedroom apartment and £140,000 -£168,000 for a two bedroom apartment. This apartment price is broadly within the range of affordability of first time buyers.

Current Development Activity

3.38 The largest single residential development proposal within Wigan town centre is Phase III of the Grand Arcade. The proposed tower is a mixed use development of 156 residential apartments, offices (3374m²) and commercial (A1/A3/A4) floorspace 1687m², and associated car parking (94 spaces) (A/05/65182). The development will be located at the rear of Debenhams with elevations to both Millgate and Riverway.

3.39 It is understood from the agent Knight Frank that the tower will not be started until Modus has secured a 50% per sale. This is quite common with residential towers as the finance costs are increased because the developer cannot give vacant possession of any of the units until the tower has been completed.

Residential Development Opportunities

3.40 Development opportunities in the North Crescent area are restricted by the availability of appropriate land within the study area. One site which would be an excellent residential

development opportunity is the playing fields next to the Civic Building.

3.41 This would involve undertaking a PPG 17 assessment. CBRE planning team have undertaken a number of these assessments previously and would be able to discuss this matter further with you.

PPG 17

3.42 This PPG describes the role of the planning system in assessing opportunities and needs for sport and recreation provision and safeguarding open space which has recreational value.

3.43 The guidance observes that it is part of the function of the planning system to ensure that through the preparation of development plans adequate land and water resources are allocated for organised sport and informal recreation.

3.44 It states that local planning authorities should take account of the community's need for recreational space, having regard to current levels of provision and deficiencies and resisting pressures for development of open space which conflict with the wider public interest.

Viability Issues

3.45 The commercial viability of nearly all development sites is anchored around the amount paid for the site. Therefore, in order to calculate the site value a residual valuation is undertaken. This involves estimating the Gross Development Value, which is what you expect the site to be worth when you have completed it. Then the costs associated with the development, including profit, are deducted and the remainder is the land value. Typically, in this location you would expect the assumptions to be as follows:-

Sales values in Wigan	£2152sqm to £2583sqm (£200 - £240 sqft)
Stamp Duty	4% (assuming the site is over £500,000)
Legal acquisition costs	0.5% (based on the purchase)
Agents fee	1.5% (based on the purchase)
Build cost	£861 to £968 (£80 - £90) Low rise £107 to £1184 (£100 - £110) psf 5 to 12 stories £1614sqm (£150) plus higher than 12 stories
Professional Fees	10 - 12.5 %
Contingency	3 - 5%

Sales agents fees	3% (including marketing suite)
Sales legal fees	0.5%
Interest on finance	6.75%
Profit on Cost	20 - 25%

3.46 The costs will vary between developments but the above figures are general ranges which would be used to calculate a broad brush land value.

3.47 If for example high levels of affordable housing are required this would have the effect of significantly reducing the Gross Development Value whilst the costs would stay the same, thus reducing the amount which could be paid for the site. Therefore whilst Wigan is commercially viable, significant requirements for affordable housing and or Section 106 or 278 contributions could make a viable development scheme unviable. In determining the levels of affordable housing to be provided regard should be had to the Council's latest adopted Supplementary Planning Document on Affordable Housing.

Development requirements

- 3.48 Most developers would want to acquire sites in excess of 1 acre. However, some developers might consider 0.5 an acre if they could get a higher density. Due to the market current market level the most commercially viable development will be a 4 / 5 story apartment block. These will benefit from the lower construction cost and therefore make the development more viable.
- 3.49 Residential development in the town centre will also play a major part in the evening night life in Wigan. By developing residential apartments within the town centre, this could drive the emergence of a broader, enhanced evening economy.
- 3.50 Development is commercially viable, however it has to be carefully considered to meet the requirements of the potential purchasers and still be commercially viable.

Development Uses

- 3.51 Above we have referred to uses that we consider may be suitable to complement and develop the existing town centre offer. To establish if there is any support in the market for the development of such uses we have made enquiries of developers

and operators on an informal basis. Clearly it would be a requirement that any development proposal would have the support of the planning authority and be economically viable. The table below sets out a number of potential uses within the study area and gives an indication of the strength of demand for those uses within the town. It should be understood that this should be taken as indicative only.

Use	Strength of demand	Comment
Cinema	Non at present	Demand satisfied by the existing out of town Empire cinema
Hotel	There is an outstanding requirement from Travelodge for a 40-60 bed hotel in the Wigan area	Limited offer in the town centre at the moment. An additional hotel would broaden the town's offer. Land values are generally fairly low compared to competing uses such as residential and retail.
Residential	Good general demand	Timing will depend of other schemes coming forward so as not to oversupply the market. Pre sales may be required to trigger development.
Supermarket	The 4 major supermarket operators are represented in the borough. Supermarkets in general will look at any opportunity that strengthens their position.	PPS 6 supports retail development within the town centre and thus any demand could be accommodated subject to site availability. Potential for mixed use development incorporating residential use.
Non Food Retail	Focus's occupier requirement database identifies approximately 50 requirements from retailers (Note such	PPS 6 supports retail development within the town centre and thus any demand could be accommodated subject to site availability and economic viability. If the a number of void units in the Marketgate

	data bases are not entirely reliable)	shopping centre are still under the terms of a lease, the secure income received could dissuade the landlord from pursuing redevelopment.
Offices	Believed to be latent demand from existing local businesses. Council Requirement	The provision of modern accommodation with freehold tenure will broaden the choice for businesses in the area and support and encourage other desirable town centre uses such as restaurants. A new customer facing Council building will improve service delivery, release existing sites and the new development would act as a catalyst for regeneration. Option analysis required to inform the Council of the procurement options, the financial impact of each and the practicalities of the change

4.0 AREA APPRAISAL

Introduction

4.1 This section of the report aims to identify the key characteristics of the study area in terms of its structure, function, built form and general townscape qualities. This area appraisal is helpful in identifying those assets and features of Wigan Town Centre that should be retained and developed as part of a masterplan strategy for the Northern Crescent area. Equally the analysis identifies those areas of the environment that require improvement. This section of the report will, therefore, consider the following topics:

- Historical overview
- Townscape: layout, land use, character and public realm
- Accessibility and car parking.

4.2 This section will discuss the layout, scale and massing of development. It will identify key gateways, landmarks, focal

points, views and vistas and will assess levels of permeability, legibility and connectivity. The function of an area is defined by its activity; the analysis will, therefore, identify nodes of activity and key linkages, as well as areas that are lacking vibrancy.

Historic context

4.3 Wigan as a settlement has a history that can be traced back to at least Roman times. The early settlement grew up on rising ground above the River Douglas (a tributary of the Ribble) and situated on the alignment of the Roman Road between Preston and Warrington. It is thought that the name Wigan is probably Saxon in origin.

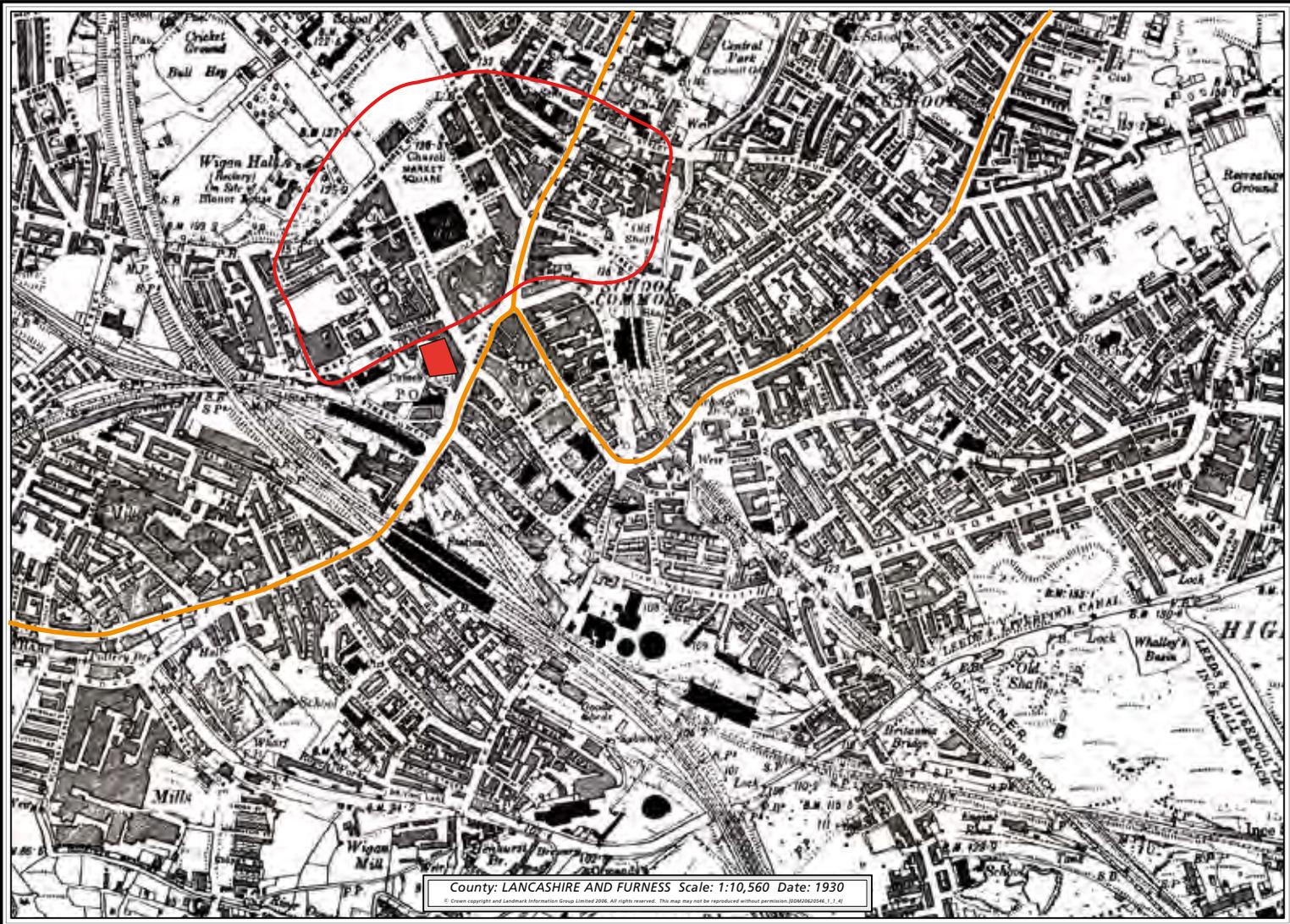
4.4 By the mid 18th Century the town was known for its brass, copper, bedding, rugs and cannel coal products. Its main industry was coal mining aided by the development of canal connections initially by a link to the River Douglas. A direct canal link to Liverpool was opened in 1772 later becoming part of the Leeds and Liverpool canal. The introduction of steam engines and innovations in textile machinery led to the growth of the textile industry into the large cotton mills.

- 4.5 The town's principal industries of coal and cotton flourished during the 19th Century aided by the coming of the railway in 1832 via a link to Liverpool and Manchester. The line to Preston was completed by 1838. The development of ironworks followed the coalfield expansion. A number of independent coal owners were replaced by the Wigan Coal and Iron Company formed in 1865.
- 4.6 The town's population grew from approximately 11,000 in 1801 to 32,000 by 1851 and to 48,000 by 1881. The mid to late 19th Century was a prosperous time for Wigan and this was reflected in the rebuilding and development of fine social, commercial and civic buildings in and around the town centre during this period such as the new market hall opened in 1877.
- 4.7 Wigan town centre's pattern of development since medieval times had been characterised by the development of burgage plots, held by the town's burgesses, which were deep narrow plots of land fronting the historic main streets such as Standishgate, Millgate, Hallgate and Wallgate. These plots gradually became intensively infilled particularly during the town's expansion as an industrial and commercial centre during the 19th Century.
- 4.8 The historic plans overleaf illustrate Wigan Town Centre in 1849 and 1909. It is evident that in 1849 the majority of development was focussed along the principal routes in deep narrow burgage

plots. Development beyond these principal routes was relatively sparse. However, by 1930 the town had grown substantially. Burgage plots had been intensively infilled and a new network of streets had been developed including Market Street, Mesnes Street and New Market Street. With the exception of the development of the Ring Road around the north and east boundaries of the Town Centre the historic street pattern has remained relatively intact.

Historic Parks and Gardens

- 4.9 The study area borders onto the southern boundary of the historic Mesnes Park. The park was designed by John McLean and was officially opened in 1878 offering a place for recreation within the densely developed town. The park is listed as Grade II on the English Heritage Register of Historic Parks and Gardens. The register provides a description of the park stating that 'notable features include its topography and duck pond; the survival of the historic layout and planting structure and early buildings including the lodge, pavilion and bandstand which are listed buildings'.
- 4.10 The park forms a major element of the Mesnes Conservation Area and contains seven individually Listed Buildings within the park:



- Key Routes
- Site Boundary

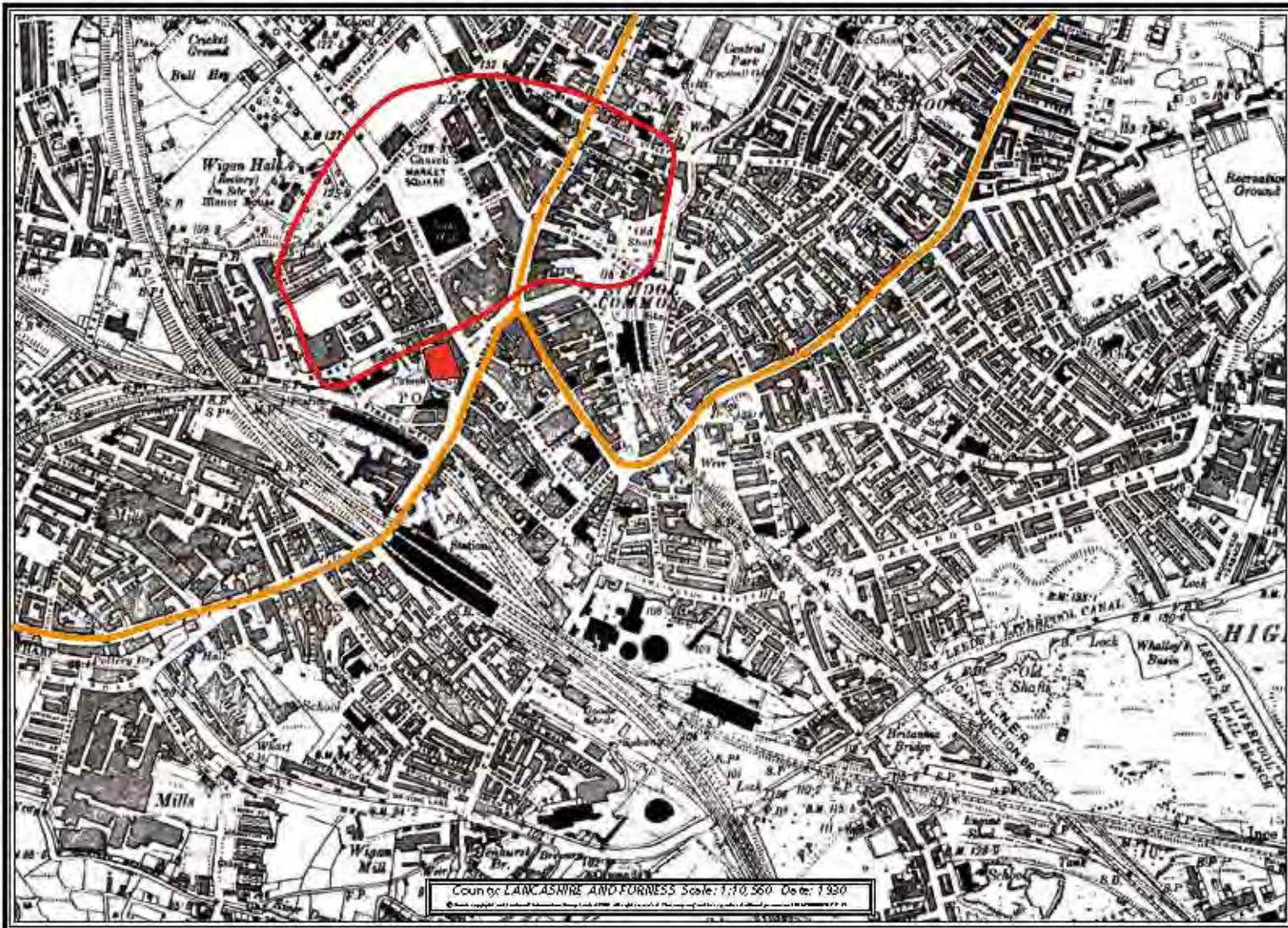
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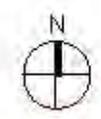
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Wigan Town Centre Wigan 1909

NTS



- Key Routes
- Site Boundary



Building Design Partnership

**Wigan Town Centre
Wigan 1930**

INTS



-  Key Routes
-  Site Boundary



Building Design Partnership

Wigan Town Centre Wigan 1849

NTS

- The Bandstand; c1880.
- The Powell Monument; a monumental statue in bronze on granite plinth dated 1910.
- The Pavilion; c1880.
- Double flight of steps to west of pavilion.
- Double flight of steps to south of pavilion, both c1880.
- Entrance gateway to Mesnes Park from Mesnes Park Terrace, 1878.
- Entrance Lodge, 1878 vernacular revival style, enlarged and altered; 2 storey portion added set back (c1928).

Listed Buildings

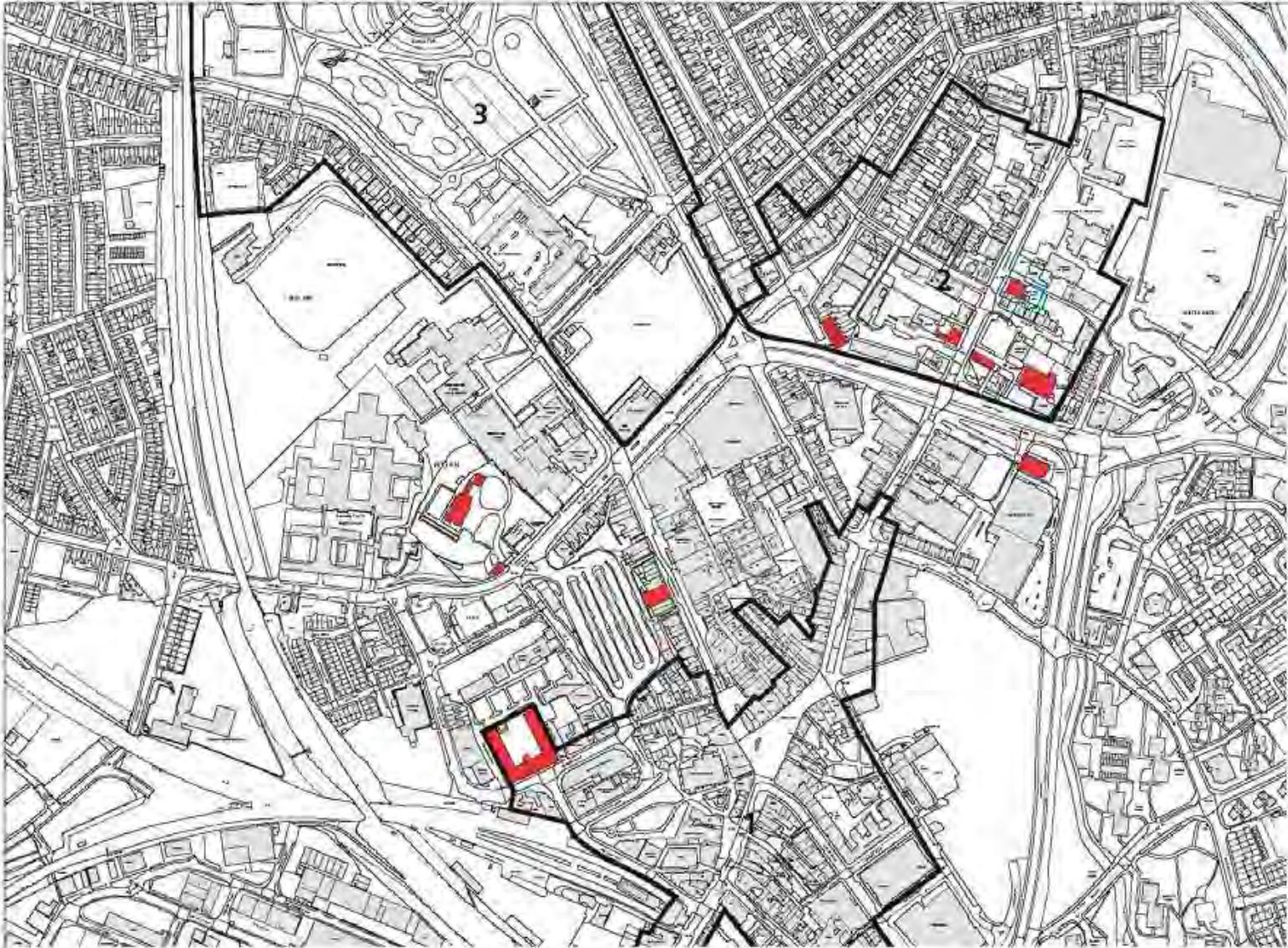
- 4.11 There are a significant number of listed buildings located within the Town Centre, a number of which are attractive landmarks in

the street-scene. The majority of these listed buildings are located within a cluster around Market Place and Wallgate south of the study area. Within the study area buildings of note include the terrace of Georgian style town houses, Dicconson Street (All Grade II); St Johns Club, Standishgate (Grade II); The Griffin Hotel, Standishgate (Grade II); The Royal Oak, Standishgate (Grade II); Church of St John and the monument in front of the Church, Standishgate (Both Grade II); Church of St George, Water Street (Grade II*); Queens Hall Methodist Mission, Market Street (Grade II); Wigan Hall including the Gate House, terrace walls and steps, New Market Street (All Grade II); and Coops Factory Building, Dorning Street (Grade II). Those listed buildings that fall within the study are identified on the plan overleaf.

- 4.12 Immediately to the north of the boundary is the former Wigan Grammar School Building off Parsons Walk (Grade II) and the several listed buildings and structures in Mesnes Park.

Conservation Areas

- 4.13 A significant proportion of the site falls within one of the three separate Conservation Areas. The Mesnes Conservation Area incorporates the Mesnes playing fields and the current Council building on New Market Street and extends north-west to encompass the whole of Mesnes Park. A detailed character



-  Listed Buildings
-  Conservation Area Boundary



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Wigan Town Centre

Conservation Areas & Listed Buildings

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appraisal for Mesnes Conservation Area was published in January 2006 and is summarised in more detail at Para's 2.15-2.17.

- 4.14 The Dicconson Conservation Area incorporates a number of listed buildings fronting onto Dicconson Street and Standishgate and comprises a mix of uses including residential and office. The Town Centre Conservation Area falls mainly outside of the study area but incorporates key landmark buildings centred on the principal historic streets of Standishgate, Market Place and Wallgate.

General Layout

- 4.15 To a large extent the physical layout and structure of Wigan Town Centre has remained relatively unchanged over the years. Market Place represents the centre of activity with key historic routes such as Standishgate, Wallgate, Market Street and Library Street all converging at this point. Other key routes in the Town Centre include New Market Street, Northway, Crompton Street, Mesnes Road, Millgate and Hallgate. The development of the Galleries and Marketgate Shopping Centres has incorporated a number of minor historic routes including the attractive Makinson Arcade.
- 4.16 Within the study area the principal areas of pedestrian activity are Market Street, Standishgate and the Galleries and Marketgate shopping centres. The opening of the Grand Arcade development

however is likely to have a significant impact on this, particularly for the Galleries/ Marketgate Shopping centres. The Galleries/ Marketgate shopping centres built in the late 1980s occupy a major section of the study area and form a core part of the designated Principal Shopping Area of the Town Centre. The buildings are orientated around a series of internal squares including Woodcock Sq, Atherton Sq and Wigan Sq (which currently holds an outdoor market). A number of arcades and passageways provide access through the centres and to the squares, although access is restricted at night when the centres close and passageways are gated.

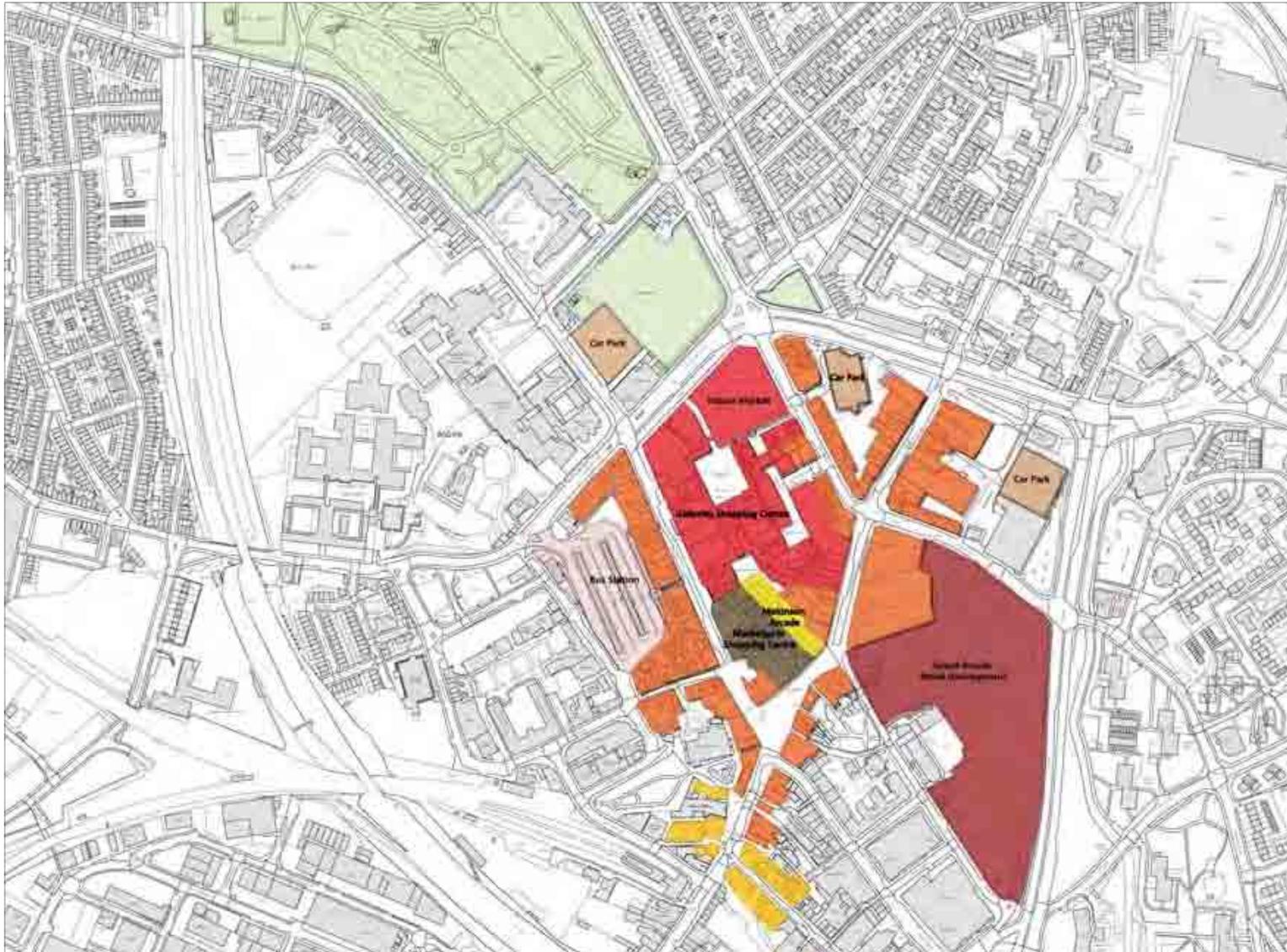
- 4.17 The ring road of New Market Street, Northway, Powell Street and River Way provides the principal areas of vehicular activity with the junctions with Market Street/Parsons Walk and Mesnes Street/Bridgeman Terrace providing key vehicular nodes and gateways to the Town Centre. The ring road is substantial in width comprising four lanes of vehicular traffic. The section along New Market Street also includes an additional two lane taxi rank. This acts as a significant barrier to pedestrian movement and serves to constrain the growth of the centre to the north. It also has a negative impact for the quality of the public realm insofar that it fails to achieve any sense of enclosure.

Land-use

- 4.18 The plan overleaf illustrates the variety of land uses in the town centre. It illustrates the location of the major retail shopping centres including the Galleries/Marketgate Shopping Centres, the Makinson Arcade and the Grand Arcade which is currently under construction. The plan also identifies the location of key Town Centre uses along the principal streets, namely Market Street, Market Place, Standishgate and Mesnes Street. Key town centre uses include elements of A1 retail but also include financial and professional services (A2), restaurants and cafes (A3), drinking establishments (A4), takeaways (A5), office (B1) and other such town centre uses.
- 4.19 While a range of uses are distributed throughout the Town Centre there is also a tendency for some uses to cluster in particular locations. Banks and Building Societies generally cluster around Market Place, office accommodation around upper Standishgate and Bars and Night Clubs around lower Standishgate and King Street.

Gateways

- 4.20 Strategic access into the town centre from the town's hinterland is dealt with in Para's 5.1-5.2. This section looks at the key entry points into the study area and into the town centre generally. There are a number of key gateways into the town centre, but all are relatively poor in aesthetic terms. Access from the ring road is provided at six key junctions. Within the study area these include the gateways via Dorning Street, Market Street, Mesnes Street and Standishgate.
- 4.21 Entry into the town centre from the west is via Dorning Street. This gateway is characterised by surface car parking and two-storey residential development. The surface car parking also provides direct views of the Royal Mail Sorting Office which provides a poor first visual impression of the town centre.
- 4.22 The gateway via Market Street is provided at the cross-roads with Parsons Walk. The imposing Council building has a strong presence at this location and the buildings on the west side of Market Street create an attractive corner feature. The presence of these buildings however is undermined by the width of New Market Street and the poor relationship of the college building and Morrison's to the street. The visual clutter of traffic lights,



- General Town Centre Uses (A1 - A5)
- Open Space
- Galleries Shopping Centre & Market
- Marketgate Shopping Centre
- Makinson Shopping Arcade
- Bus Station
- Car Park
- Grand Arcade Shopping Centre
- Bars/Night Clubs



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Wigan Town Centre Land Use

NTS

signage and guardrails also detracts from the quality of this gateway.

- 4.23 The gateway via Mesnes Street is provided at the cross-roads with Bridgeman Terrace. Again the width of New Market Street and the poor quality of buildings fronting onto the street provides a poor first visual impression of the town centre and creates an intimidating pedestrian environment.
- 4.24 Access to the town centre from the north-east is provided via the historic route of Standishgate. However, the existing buildings to the south of the ring road are set back from the street and orientated away from the ring road. This provides poor frontage to the ring road and an unwelcoming approach to the town centre.

Landmark Buildings

- 4.25 Wigan town centre contains a number of landmark buildings that provide important points of reference. At the centre of Wigan to the south of the study area is the All Saints Church. This imposing building occupies an elevated position and provides glimpse views of its attractive tower from around the town centre and from Mesnes Park. Within or directly adjacent to the study area key landmark buildings include the Old Grammar School with its

substantial Clock Tower, the former industrial buildings on New Market Street (Council Building) and Dorning Street (Coops Building) and the Queens Hall Methodist Mission on Market Street. The Galleries Shopping Centre also provides a modern landmark building in the form of a substantial clock tower which has a significant impact on the town centre skyline.

Open Space

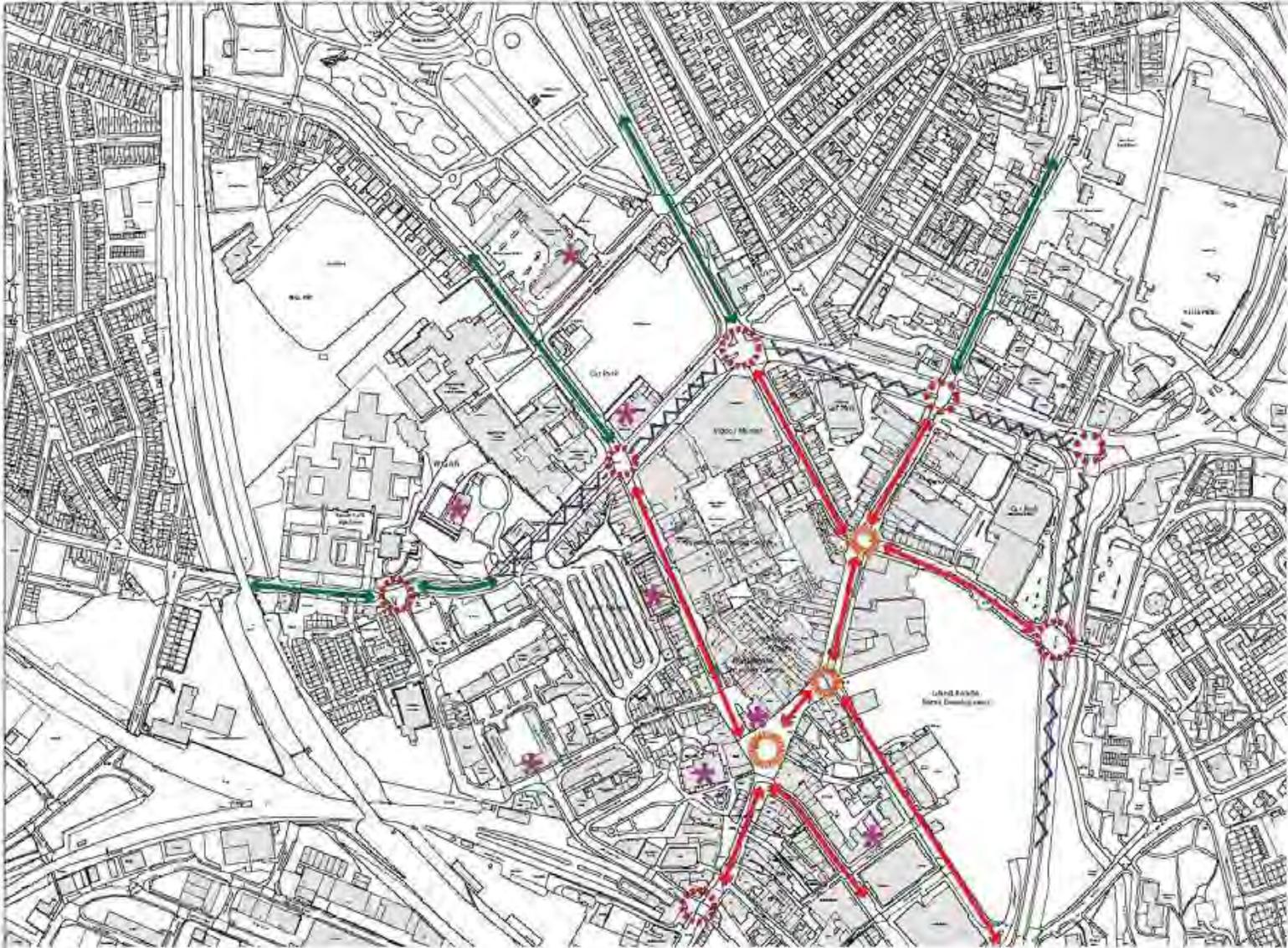
- 4.26 There are a limited number of green open spaces within the town centre. However, the substantial Mesnes Park is located within a short walking distance. The interface between the park and the town centre is provided by the Mesnes Playing Fields adjacent to New Market Street. The playing fields offer open views across the area to the exposed rear of buildings fronting Mesnes Park Terrace and to the area of car parking associated with the Council offices. The playing fields lack any defined function having no clear public rights of way.

Public realm

- 4.27 The quality of the public realm varies considerably throughout the study area and throughout the town centre as a whole. Some attractive frontage is achieved along lower Standishgate, Market Place and Wallgate in the southern part of the study area and the Makinson Arcade is a particular asset. Along these facades the appearance of a fine grain has been achieved and the Galleries and Marketgate shopping centres are well integrated into the street-scene. There are also a number of attractive buildings on the west-side of Market Street, the narrow courts off Hallgate and the east side of Mesnes Street, although a number of these would benefit from some refurbishment and reuse.
- 4.28 Townscape quality however suffers generally around the north boundaries of the Town Centre and within the Galleries/Marketgate Shopping Centres. The Galleries/Marketgate Shopping Centres presents a poor quality of frontage onto Market Street with the exposed service yard providing the termination of views along the historic Hallgate. Frontage onto New Market Street is particularly poor. The Morrison's Store and the Market building present dead-frontage onto the street and the width of the road creates an intimidating pedestrian environment. Some poor quality buildings also occupy frontage positions along upper Standishgate which undermines the quality of the public realm.

4.29 In terms of design the key points worth noting are:

- Some attractive frontage and successful integration of buildings around Market Place, lower Standishgate and Hallgate;
- Poor quality gateways into the town centre give a negative first visual impression of the town;
- The ring road creates a physical barrier around the centre restricting growth and pedestrian movement to the north;
- A successful alternative shopping destination is provided in the narrow courts off Hallgate;
- The Galleries/Marketgate Shopping Centres provide a poor quality frontage onto Market Street, New Market Street and Mesnes Street and the complex network of passageways lacks legibility and dilutes footfall; and



-  Key Gateway
-  Nodes/ Centres of Activity
-  Key Approaches
-  Key Routes/ Linkages
-  Landmark Feature or Building
-  Barrier to Pedestrian Movement



Building Design Partnership

Wigan Town Centre Townscape Appraisal

ITS



Land Use

- 1 Retail frontage on Market Street
- 2 Internal squares within the Marketgate/ Galleries Shopping Centres
- 3 The attractive Makinson Arcade in the heart of the retail core
- 4 Entrance to the Galleries Shopping Centre from Standishgate
- 5 A range of town centre uses on Mesnes Street
- 6 The outdoor market within the Marketgate/ Galleries Shopping Centres
- 7 Banks and Building Societies cluster around Market Place
- 8 The completion of the Grand Arcade will expand the existing retail core to the south-east

Townscape

- 9 Gateway via Mesnes Street gives a poor first visual impression of the town centre
- 10 Gateway via Market Street is undermined by the width of the ring road and the poor frontage of the Morrison's building
- 11 Imposing landmark building (Council Offices) at the corner with New Market Street and Parsons Walk
- 12 Mesnes Park provides long range views of the town centre. Landmark buildings provide key features on the skyline
- 13 Surface car parking and direct views of the Royal Mail Sorting Office provides the Gateway via Dornig Street
- 14 Coops building provides an imposing landmark on Dornig Street
- 15 The loading bay for the Marketgate/Galleries Shopping Centres terminates the vista along Hallgate
- 16 The narrow courts around Hallgate provide alternative shopping destination



Building Design Partnership

Wigan Town Centre
Land Use & Townscape

- Mesnes Playing field provides a poor interface between the park and the town centre and lacks any defined function or use.

Night Time Analysis

- 4.30 Night time issues and opportunities are integral to any successful masterplan. This is to extend the benefits of change beyond the 9-5 working day and ensure that positive change witnessed during the daylight hours is not undermined by negative night time problems.
- 4.31 Wigan has a very concentrated night time economy with a dense cluster of bars and night clubs situated to the south of the study area around Wallgate and Kings Street. Elsewhere the evening economy mainly comprises a number of public houses scattered around the centre and the Gala bingo hall off Crompton Street. Much of the existing night time economy is targeted at the 18-30 age category and the Gap & Market analysis has already identified the lack of night time uses for the middle age category.
- 4.32 The plan overleaf demonstrates the apparent lack of night time uses within or around the Galleries/Marketgate Shopping Centre. This represents significant opportunity to spread the evening economy throughout the town centre and to attract new uses.

The plan also highlights the routes which benefit from high levels of street lighting. The principal through routes are identified as having high levels of lighting as is the ring road, although the latter is orientated towards the vehicular user rather than the pedestrian.

Vehicular Access and Circulation

- 4.33 The main vehicular access to the town centre is provided via the ring road comprising Frog Lane, New Market Street, Northway, Powell Street and River Way. A number of roads connect to the ring road providing access to car parking. Vehicular access is restricted on Market Street, Market Place and lower Standishgate. However, Mesnes Street, Crompton Street and Upper Standishgate do provide some through traffic in the north-east of the town centre. In general traffic appears to flow quite well around the Town Centre although the volume of traffic using the ring road does create problems for other users.

Public Transportation Accessibility

- 4.34 Wigan town centre benefits from a large bus station located directly adjacent to the principal shopping area of the town and from two railway stations. The bus station provides vital



-  Key Night-Time Uses
-  High levels of street Lighting



Building Design Partnership

Wigan Town Centre Night-time Appraisal

INTS

connections to the outer lying areas providing regular services across the town and the wider region. The bus station is situated to the rear of properties fronting Market Street and is accessed via narrow pedestrian alleyways. The connection between the bus station and Market Street is relatively poor having little visual prominence in the street-scene and restricting pedestrian flow to this key resource.

- 4.35 Wigan Wallgate and Wigan North Western railways stations are located on Standishgate in the south of the town centre and provide comprehensive services across the region and beyond. Every effort should be made to capitalise on these key sustainable transport connections.

Car Parking

- 4.36 Car parking in the town centre is generally provided in multi-storey and surface car parks located around the town centre. Multi-storey car parks are located off Mesnes Terrace (325 spaces), Water Street (520 spaces) and the Galleries Shopping Centre (625 spaces) and provide to a total of 1470 spaces. There are a further eight surface car parks providing an additional 829 spaces, the major ones being Chapel Lane (320 spaces), Parsons Walk (178 spaces) and Harrogate Street (107 spaces). In addition a

total of approximately 314 on-street parking spaces are also available¹.

Pedestrian Accessibility

- 4.37 The plan overleaf shows the key pedestrian routes in and around Wigan town centre. The plan identifies the main pedestrian routes emphasising Market Street, Market Place and Standishgate. The plan also identifies key secondary pedestrian routes. These secondary routes serve as important connecting pedestrian routes to key arrival points within the town centre including the bus station and multi-storey car parks. The identified principal and secondary routes provide unrestricted access for pedestrians.
- 4.38 In addition to this network of routes a complex arrangement of pedestrian routes also exists within the Galleries/Marketgate Shopping Centres. These routes provide restricted access through the centre via a range of covered and uncovered arcades, passageways and alleyways. These routes provide restricted access insofar that they are gated when the shopping centre is closed during the evening and at night. This significantly affects the permeability of the town centre during these periods.

¹ A number of the multi-storey and surface car parks have restricted access during the week.

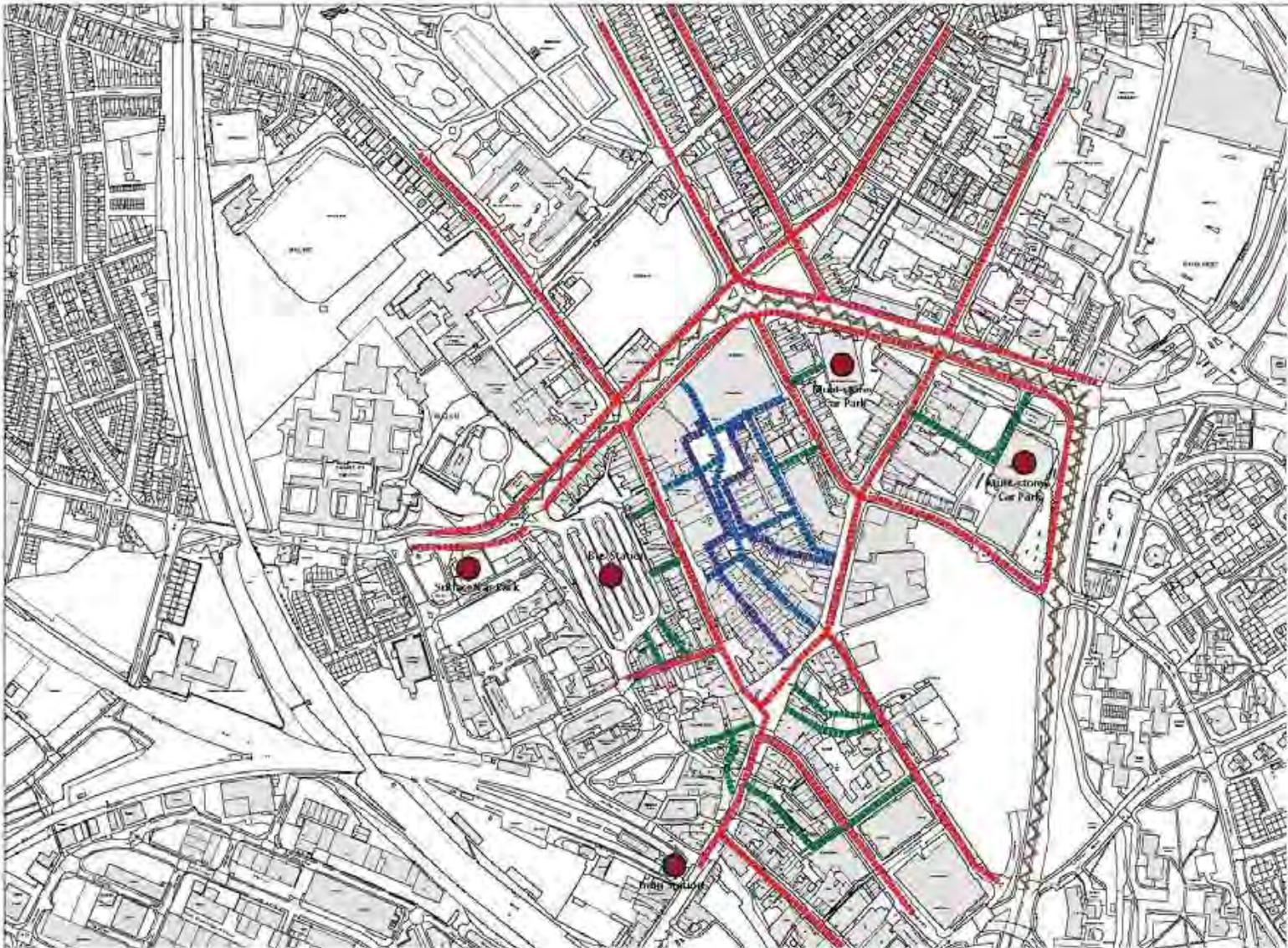
- 4.39 Beyond the town centre the ring road provides the greatest barrier to pedestrian movement. The scale of the ring road and the volume of traffic passing along it create an intimidating and hostile environment for pedestrians. Although pedestrian crossing facilities are provided at key points, greater effort could be made to promote pedestrian priority and minimise the disruption to pedestrian flow.

Pedestrianised Streets

- 4.40 Wigan town centre has a number of semi-pedestrianised streets namely Market Street, Market Place and lower Standishgate and this helps to create a pleasant pedestrian environment in these core shopping areas. The Galleries/Marketgate Shopping Centres provide a fully pedestrianised environment as will the Grand Arcade.
- 4.41 The Council is currently investigating the partial pedestrianisation of a section of Wallgate due to a relatively high pedestrian accident rate in the area. Other than this there is at present no clear demand for the pedestrianisation of additional areas in the town centre. Any future schemes must consider carefully the impact of such on the generation of activity so as not to harm the existing vitality and viability of the town centre.

Cycling Accessibility

- 4.42 Many of the issues facing pedestrians within Wigan town centre are closely paralleled for cyclists, particularly the barrier effect of the ring road.
- 4.43 A Cycle Accessibility Study has recently been completed which makes a number of recommendations to improve cycling in and around the town centre. This study identifies demand for a range of cycling infrastructure including advance stop lines and cycle lanes. At present however the provision of cycle infrastructure is relatively poor with cyclists expected to share the highway with vehicular traffic. Cyclists within the town centre are subject to the same restrictions as vehicular traffic.
- 4.44 The location of cycle parking has not been noted. If it does exist it does not occupy a prominent position within the town centre.



-  Primary Pedestrian Routes
-  Secondary Pedestrian Routes
-  Restricted Access Pedestrian Routes (Ground Floor)
-  Restricted Access Pedestrian Routes (First Floor)
-  Barrier to Pedestrian Movement
-  Key Arrival Points



Building Design Partnership

Wigan Town Centre Pedestrian Movement

NTS

Accessibility for those with Mobility Impairment

- 4.45 A full audit of provision within the town centre for those with mobility impairment is required.

Conclusion

- 4.46 The Northern Crescent area is divided into two distinct parts by the section of the ring road comprising New Market Street, Northway and Powell Street. The ring road is a main vehicular route which provides a number of poor quality gateways to the town centre to the south. It also acts as a barrier to pedestrian movement, particularly between the town centre and Mesnes Park and restricts the growth of the town centre to the north. The current retail core is focused around Marketgate and Galleries shopping centres and Market Place and Standishgate. The centres provide poor frontage onto Market Street and Mesnes Street and contain a complex pattern of internal pedestrian routes which lack legibility and dilute footfall.