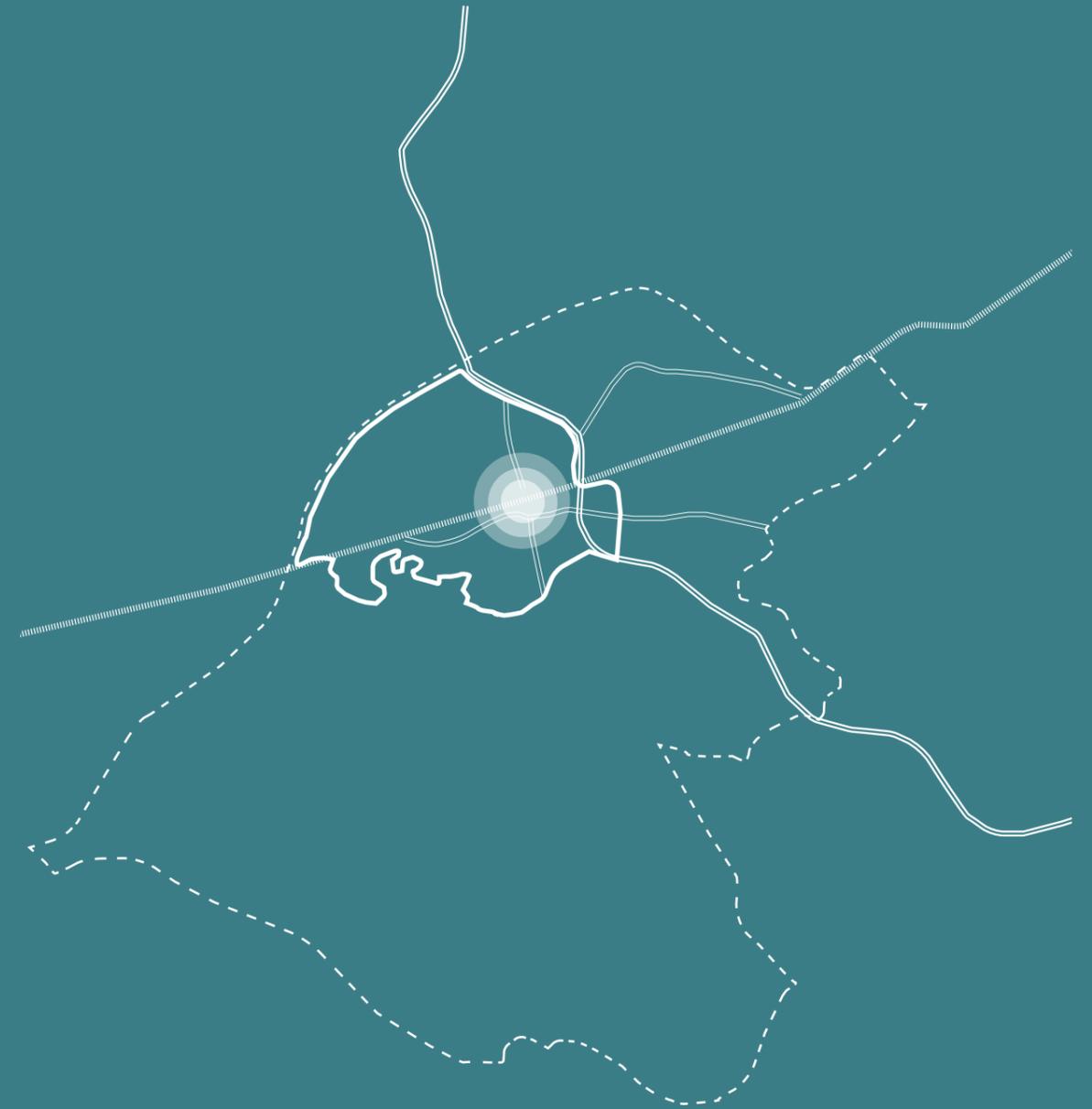


The Urmston Plan

13682-AEW-XX-XX-PP-A-P08-0014

February 2025



TRAFFORD
COUNCIL



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Summary

TOWN CENTRES PLAY A VITAL ROLE IN DRIVING ECONOMIC GROWTH, FOSTERING ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY, AND ENHANCING SOCIAL WELLBEING.

To ensure Urmston continues to thrive as a vibrant and distinctive place for residents, visitors, and businesses, Trafford Council has commissioned the creation of the Urmston Plan. This plan aims to outline a long-term vision to future-proof the town, ensuring it remains sustainable, dynamic, and attractive over the next 15 years.

Trafford Council recognises the significance of its four main town centres; Altrincham, Sale, Stretford, and Urmston as key contributors to the borough's economic, environmental, and social vitality. Each centre offers a unique yet complementary character, providing residents and visitors with access to diverse facilities and services, while creating opportunities for businesses to grow and succeed.

The Council remains committed to working alongside partners to transform town centres into vibrant, attractive environments with strong, distinctive identities. These centres should stand out from competitors, encourage business investment, and provide a sense of place where residents feel proud and engaged.

Trafford Council appointed AEW Architects and their consultant team to develop the Urmston Plan. The study is being conducted in two stages:

Stage 1: Evaluation

A comprehensive understanding of Urmston's current context through analysis of current land use, connectivity, contributors, detractors and opportunities. This has been complimented by a vitality audit which reviews the population profile, economic performance, housing need and consideration of how innovative the town centre is.

By reviewing this analysis alongside the various community, landowners, stakeholders and local businesses engagement exercises; we have been able to propose a number of evidence based recommendations.

Stage 2: Response

Develop a strategic market opportunity which responds to the evidence-based recommendations and proposes an accessible public realm within the town centre.

This has involved identifying optimal uses and consideration of policy, ownership, and constraints to establish a timeline for implementation. Careful consideration has been taken to ensure preservation of the towns distinctive character whilst enhancing the long term sustainability.

Setting the Scene

URMSTON IS A TOWN IN TRAFFORD, GREATER MANCHESTER, ENGLAND, LOCATED ABOUT 5 MILES SOUTH OF MANCHESTER CITY CENTRE, WITH A RAILWAY CONNECTING IT TO MANCHESTER AND LIVERPOOL. THE SOUTHERN BOUNDARY IS THE RIVER MERSEY, WITH STRETFORD LYING TO THE EAST, AND FLIXTON TO THE WEST.

Urmston has an estimated population of just under 42,000 (Census 2021). As a shopping and leisure destination, Urmston town centre primarily serves local residents from the north of Trafford, including the nearby areas of Davyhulme and Flixton. The town centre has easy access to the M60 motorway and has a direct rail connection on the Manchester to Liverpool line.

The Trafford Centre, which opened in 1998, created competitive challenges for Urmston's local retailers and put pressure on the town to reinvent itself to maintain its local identity and appeal.

In 2007, a major transformation of the town centre commenced when the old shopping precinct was demolished and a £45 million retail, leisure and residential development named Eden Square was constructed on the site. Other assets in Urmston include nearby green space at Goldenhill Park and the Memorial Gardens which provide recreational facilities.

Although Urmston has managed to maintain a town centre vacancy of 11% which is broadly in line with the national average, the town centre is not immune

from the pressures which have caused many town centres across the country to decline. However, a strong independent business community has helped keep Urmston town centre vibrant and it has developed a strong food and drink offer. Urmston has been considered in a variety of different scales along with its surrounding neighbourhoods and boroughs in order to form a robust analysis.

Urmston Town Centre

The town centre boundary is as defined in the map on page 10 and is the focus area for the proposed plan.

Trafford

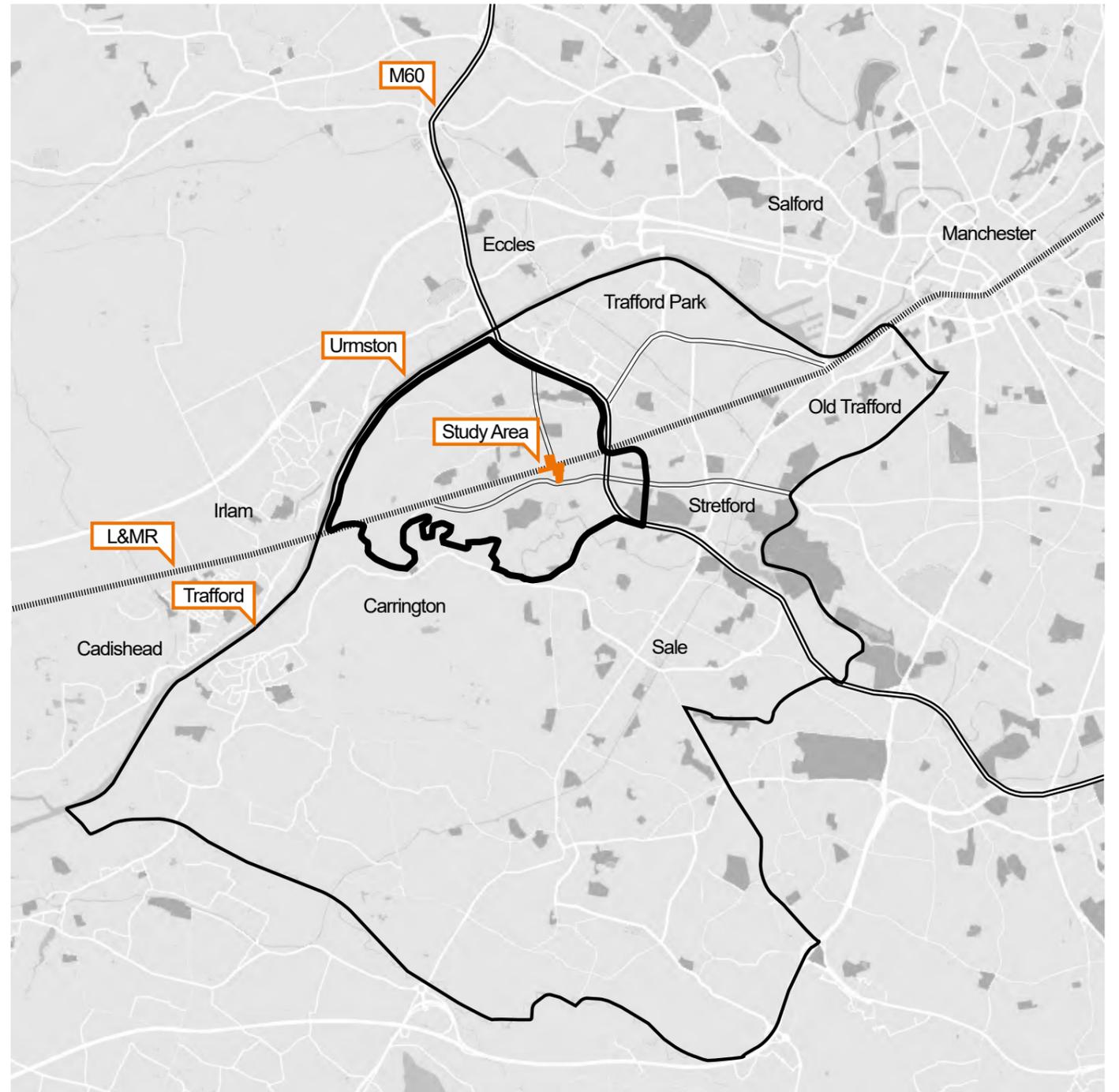
The study partly focuses on the wider area to provide an understanding of local challenges and opportunities. The local catchment is defined as the borough as a whole as most residents can access the area within 20-30 minutes via walking, cycling or public transport.

Greater Manchester

Analysis also captures the wider Greater Manchester region to provide broader context.

Several comparator locations are considered to contextualise data points and support conclusions on the vitality of Urmston Town Centre. These comparators include:

- + Stretford
- + Sale
- + Altrincham



Introduction

The evolution of Urmston

THE ADJACENT MAPS ILLUSTRATE THE HISTORIC EVOLUTION OF URMSTON OVER THE PAST 180 YEARS. THE INTRODUCTION OF A RAILWAY LINE IN 1873, CONNECTING MANCHESTER TO LIVERPOOL DURING THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION, TRANSFORMED THE AREA FROM A CLUSTER OF HAMLETS INTO A THRIVING VICTORIAN COMMUTER TOWN.

1845 Urmston originated at the crossroads of two key arterial roads, a pivotal point that remains significant today. These roads are now bordered by notable assets of varying age, emphasising the crossroad enduring importance in the town's structure.

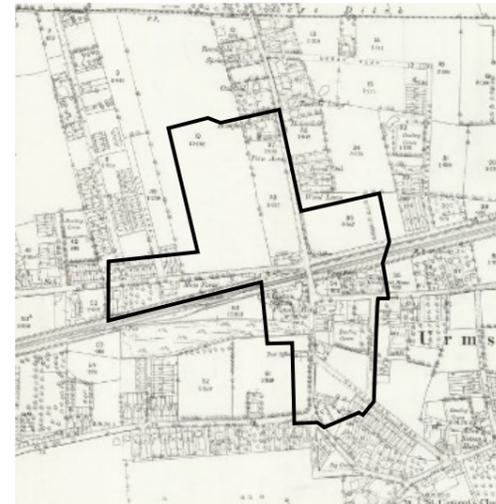
1848 The town's economy was mainly based on agriculture, with farming being the dominant industry. Around 80% of the land was farmed in Urmston with only limited industrial activity starting to take root..

1873 The opening of the Manchester to Liverpool Railway in 1873 marked the beginning of its transformation from a small rural settlement to a more industrialised and urbanised area. The railway acted as a catalyst for rapid growth, laying the groundwork for its later expansion. This growth is shown on the 1888 map where it is particularly concentrated around Flixton Road, Railway Road, and Station Road.

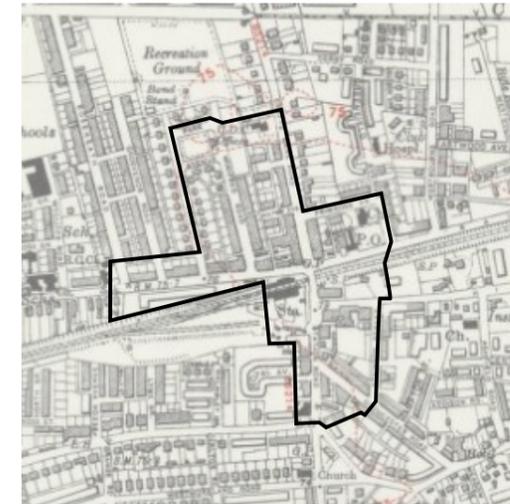
1947 By this time, the urban fabric north of the railway line was well-established. Development to the south primarily followed arterial routes such as Station Road, characterised by linear, pavement-adjacent buildings. Land directly south of the railway remained less densely developed, a pattern that continues to define this area today.



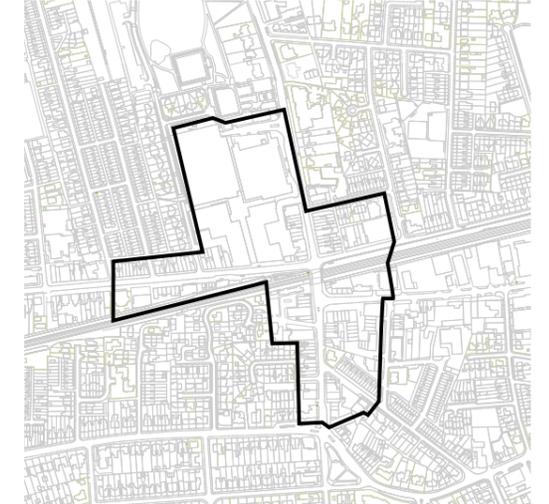
1845



1888



1947



Today



Historic images of Station Road and Flixton Road, circa 1900-1950s
Images via Trafford Lifetimes

The evolution of Urmston

1998 The Trafford Centre, which opened in 1998, created competitive challenges for Urmston's local retailers and put pressure on the town to reinvent itself to maintain its local identity and appeal.

On the positive side, the proximity of the Trafford Centre has contributed to the economic growth of Urmston, with increased footfall and business opportunities. Additionally, the Trafford Centre has encouraged infrastructure improvements in the surrounding areas, such as road upgrades, which indirectly support Urmston's growth and development.



Trafford Centre

2007 In 2007 Trafford council played a significant role in delivering the Eden Square development which was transformative for the town centre at that time, and preceded the later interventions in Altrincham and now Stretford.

The development helped create footfall in the town centre and created opportunities for local businesses to thrive. It also enhanced the town's retail and leisure offerings, providing a better mix of shops, restaurants, and services that attract visitors

Today Much of the original road network's layout remains intact, but in some areas, this has been altered by mid-to-late 20th-century developments. These changes often reflect a less consistent approach to building alignment and the design of public spaces.

The town has seen significant regeneration in recent years. Despite facing challenges such as competition from nearby retail destinations like the Trafford Centre, Urmston remains a dynamic and evolving town, with continued focus on improving pedestrian access, transport links, and housing options.



Eden Square [top] redevelopment of Urmston Precinct [bottom]

Vision

“OUR VISION FOR URMSTON IS TO CREATE AN INCLUSIVE AND THRIVING TOWN CENTRE THAT FOSTERS ECONOMIC, ENVIRONMENTAL, AND SOCIAL WELL-BEING.

WE AIM TO ENHANCE ITS VITALITY AND SUSTAINABILITY WHILE PRESERVING ITS UNIQUE CHARACTER AND VIBRANT APPEAL. BY SETTING A FRAMEWORK WE WANT TO ENSURE THE FUTURE OF URMSTON AS A DYNAMIC PLACE WHERE ALL OUR RESIDENTS, BUSINESSES AND COMMUNITIES THRIVE”

Objectives

—
TO DELIVER THE VISION, EIGHT OBJECTIVES HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED. THESE POINTS WILL BE THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES THAT WILL HELP TO SHAPE THE FRAMEWORK. THESE ARE:

-  Collaborate
-  Improve connectivity
-  Improve design quality and appearance
-  Enhance the towns historic character
-  Retain, repair and re-use heritage assets
-  Support the existing economy
-  Address deficiencies in the local offer
-  Provide housing for a diverse population

The adjacent image shows an example of a non-designated heritage asset in need of short term intervention to improve the visual appearance e.g. Like for like repairs need to be undertaken to arrest the deteriorating condition of the building. These interventions will add to the rich palette of the town centres character, with a potential new use that responds to deficiencies in the local offer.



Gloucester House, Station Road.

Evaluating Urmston

—

THE FOLLOWING STUDY WILL PROVIDE A COMPREHENSIVE UNDERSTANDING OF URMSTON'S CURRENT CONTEXT, CREATING A BASELINE POSITION TO RESEARCH VITALITY AND CONSULT. ANALYSIS OF THE TOWN IS STRUCTURED IN THE FOLLOWING WAY:

Context and Setting

Spatial assessment of the study area, looking into, land use, scale, landmarks, green spaces, ownership, accessibility and connectivity.

Planning Context

Understanding the impact of current policy on the town centre.

Vitality Audit

Assessing the economic, social and commercial baseline of the town.

Engagement

Exploring the community, landowners, stakeholders and local businesses views on the town centre.

The adjacent image shows the car heavy road junction connecting key arterial routes in the town, with the railway station. The width of carriageway and means of crossing limits connectivity in this area.



Station Road junction.

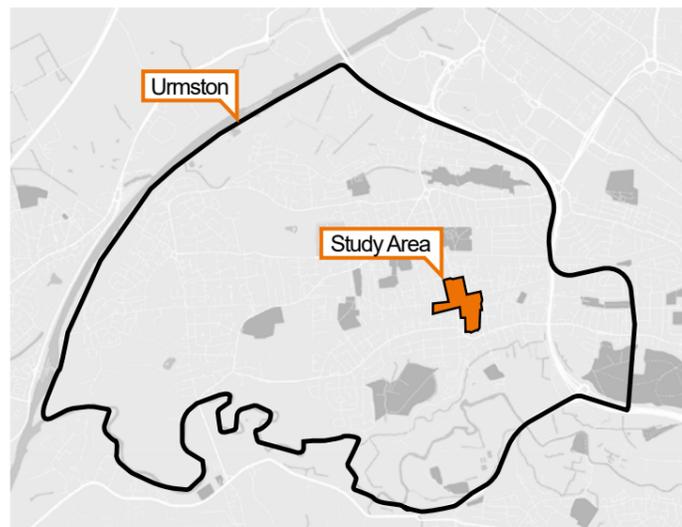
The study area

THE URMSTON PLAN FOCUSES ON AN 11-HECTARE AREA AT THE INTERSECTION OF FOUR KEY ROADS, FORMING THE BOUNDARY OF THE TOWN CENTRE.

The Urmston Plan sets out a Vision for how the local area can continue to improve and sustainably develop. Through community engagement a range of key actions and improvements have been identified to improve the overall physical, economic and social aspects of Urmston and help address local needs.

Whilst the plan also includes a range of actions, this document should not be treated as a final blueprint for development. Instead it should be viewed as a series of priorities and actions that will deliver significant benefits for the area.

 References to images on following pages



Site photography

A VISUAL ANALYSIS OF THE TOWN HAS BEEN CONDUCTED TO ASSESS HOW THE AREA FUNCTIONS IN TERMS OF BUILT FORM, SCALE, MATERIALITY, AND LANDSCAPE, LEADING TO THE FOLLOWING CONCLUSIONS:

- + 19th and early 20th Century buildings typically sit to the back edge of pavement.
- + Late 20th buildings are typically in curtilage and do not address the street in a positive way.
- + 19th buildings typically 2-3 storeys, with articulated roof forms, presented in linear runs.
- + 20th buildings typically 1-2 storeys, less articulated with simpler roof forms.
- + Tree planting typically found where footpaths are increased in width.
- + 19th buildings typically faced in rich red brickwork, with slate roofs.
- + 20th buildings faced in a more varied palette.
- + Shop front design and approach to signage to the retail units is varied and inconsistent.
- + Although street trees are noticeable, the landscape pallet between buildings feels urban, with limited areas of soft landscape.
- + The back edge of pavement approach to much of the older built form prevent any buffer or relief onto the street.
- + The width of carriageway at the junction of Crofts Bank Road, Station Road and Flixton Road discourages pedestrian movement and impacts connectivity between north and south Urmston.



1 Crofts Bank Road



2 Crofts Bank Road from the railway bridge



3 Railway Road



4 Flixton Road



5 Eden Square from Flixton Road



6 Higher Road



7 Victoria Parade from Higher Road



8 Station Road



9 Gloucester Road

Built form and public space observations

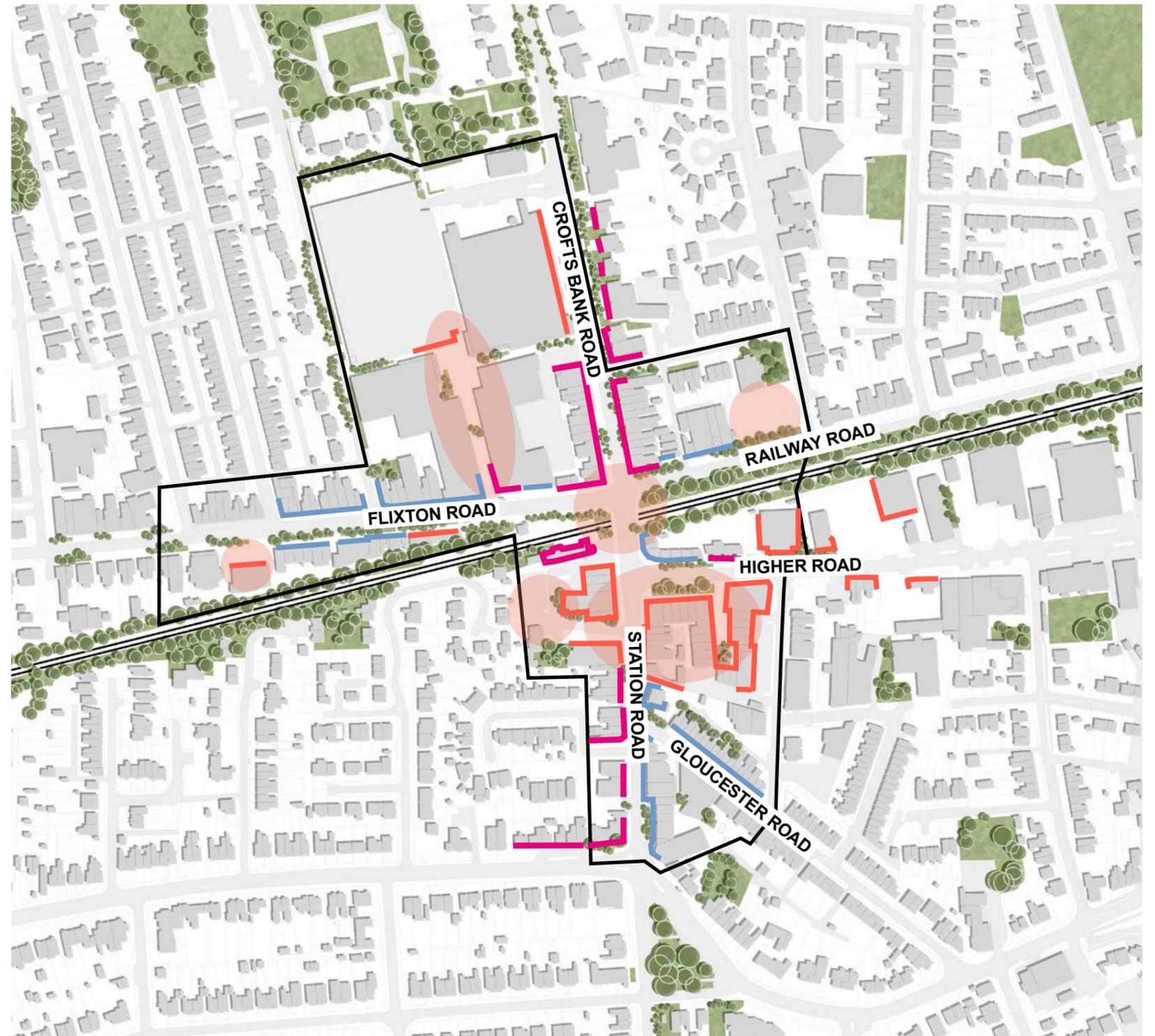
THE VALUE OF BUILT FORM AND PUBLIC SPACES HAS BEEN ASSESSED AS PART OF THE SITE ANALYSIS. WHILE THESE VIEWS ARE OPEN TO INTERPRETATION, WE HAVE FOCUSED ON EVALUATING THE TOWN CENTRE IN TERMS OF ITS POSITIVE CONTRIBUTORS, AREAS THAT DETRACT, AND THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT THROUGH CHANGE.

Objectives to be considered

-  *Improve connectivity*
-  *Improve design quality and appearance*
-  *Enhance the town's historic character*

-  Several prominent focal points can be observed along the key roads within the town. These buildings, mostly from the 19th century, have undergone little alteration, though their signage approaches often vary.
-  In addition to these buildings, there are several examples of high-quality structures that require some maintenance or repair. Minimal facade intervention could enhance the overall streetscape.
-  Some buildings along the street have a distinct presence that influences the character of the adjacent public realm. These structures, primarily from the post-WW2 era, introduce a contrast in scale and style when viewed in the context of the historic surroundings.

Interventions in the key focus areas can serve as a catalyst for positive change, enhancing the quality of the built environment, public spaces, and overall cohesion. This will help strengthen Urmston's identity and provide a foundation to ensure the town remains a viable, sustainable, and vibrant destination over the next fifteen years.



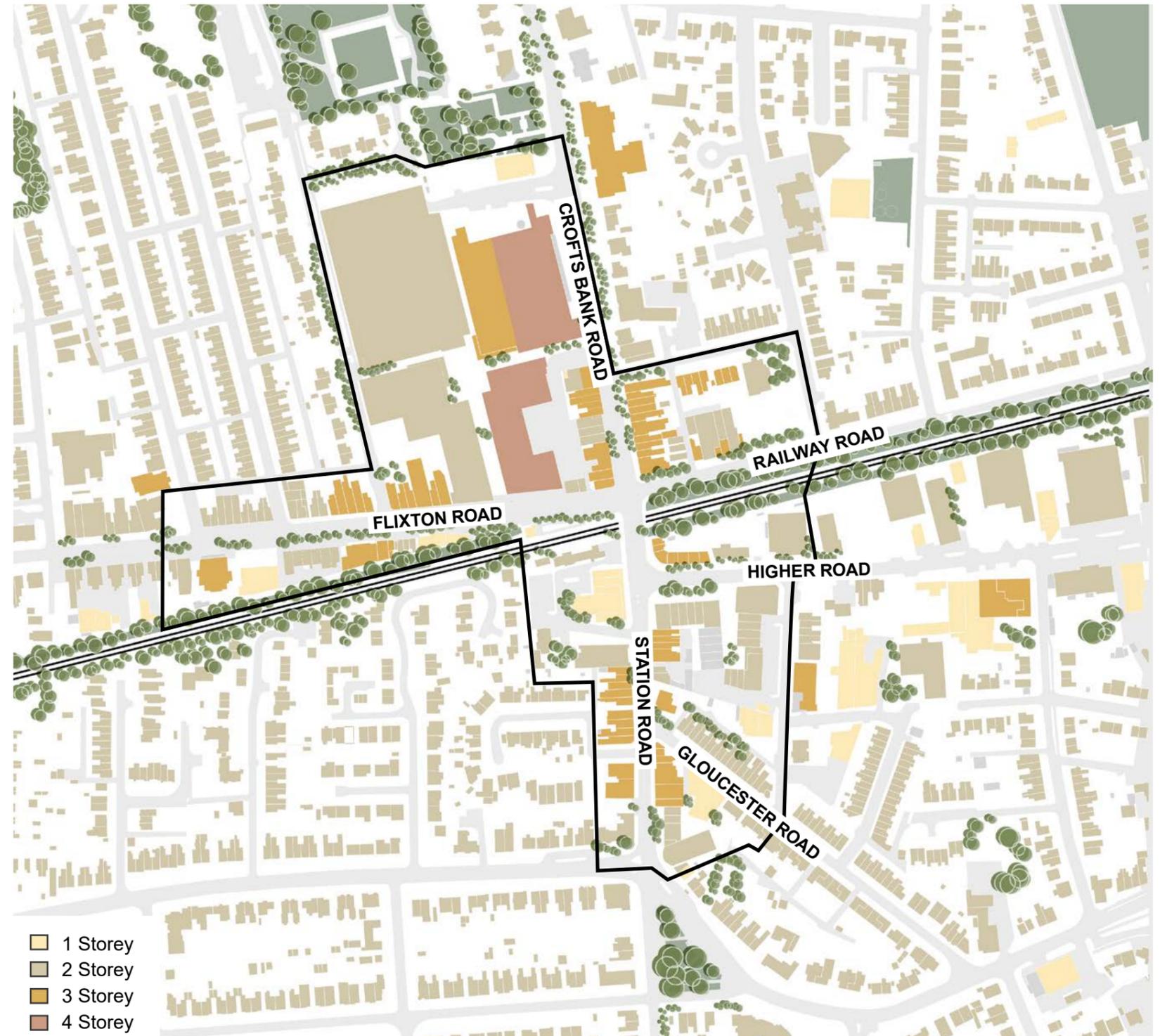
Existing scale

URMSTON MAINTAINS A CONSISTENT DOMESTIC SCALE, WHICH INCREASES ALONG KEY ROUTES WITHIN THE STUDY AREA. THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDEN SQUARE HAS INTRODUCED BUILDINGS OF UP TO FOUR STORIES, CREATING A MORE URBAN FOCAL POINT.

- + Due to the area's relatively flat terrain, variations in building height stand out prominently. Taller structures have been effectively used to create visual interest at road junctions and along linear stretches of housing
- + Eden Square and the nearby library showcase buildings of up to four stories, thoughtfully designed to blend with smaller new developments and neighbouring historic structures.
- + Storey heights within the study area south of the railway lines are more varied in scale and massing, creating inconsistencies with the established character of the area.
- + The linear terraced blocks along the primary roads generally feel appropriate in scale, contributing to the broader urban fabric. However, the footprints of some buildings within Eden Square appear disproportionately large, disrupting the area's cohesive character.
- + Where redevelopment opportunities arise, proposals will likely need to align with the existing storey heights and building lines to ensure a cohesive design approach that adheres to the Trafford Design Code.

Objectives to be considered

-  *Improve design quality and appearance*
-  *Enhance the town's historic character*



Existing uses

THE STUDY AREA IS PRIMARILY FOCUSED ON RETAIL AND FOOD AND BEVERAGE BUSINESSES, SITUATED JUST OFF THE FOUR MAIN ROADS THAT DEFINE THE TOWN CENTRE'S BOUNDARIES.

- + To the north and south of Flixton Road, units are generally small in footprint and typically house independent retailers and food and beverage (F&B) outlets. The wide, tree-lined footpaths on either side of the road create opportunities for businesses to better engage with the street.
- + Eden Square and its nearby car park occupy a significant footprint in the town centre. This area features larger, purpose-built units hosting national retailers. While Eden Square has become the retail hub of Urmston, many units lack active street frontage, and the public realm feels underutilised and lacking a distinct identity.
- + Crofts Bank Road is characterised by high-quality period buildings offering a diverse range of uses, including several larger food and beverage establishments. However, vehicle traffic impacts pedestrian connectivity between the footpaths on either side of the road.
- + Railway Road, situated near the railway siding, has limited built form to its north, resulting in a quieter street with minimal day and night activity. The Market 41 development provides an opportunity to stimulate economic activity and intensify use in this area.
- + Similar to Flixton Road, Station Road and Gloucester Road feature a mix of food and beverage, retail, and commercial businesses.
- + Around Victoria Parade and Higher Road, the built environment is newer but lacks the established character seen in other parts of Urmston. This area comprises larger units that accommodate a broader variety of uses compared to the rest of the town.

Objectives to be considered

-  Enhance the town's historic character
-  Support the existing economy
-  Address deficiencies in the local offer



Stage One Evaluation

Existing community and public realm

THE SITE AND SURROUNDING AREAS CONTAIN KEY SPACES THAT FORM URMSTON'S IDENTITY SUCH AS COMMUNITY BUILDINGS, PUBLIC HOUSES AND PUBLIC OPEN SPACES.

- + Different building uses are spread throughout Urmston, typically situated off the main streets, helping to preserve and link important spaces such as community buildings, pubs, and open areas.
- + Areas of public realm are limited within the study area.
- + Although close to the town centre, public open spaces have poor linkages.
- + When viewed alongside the existing uses, many of the community buildings and public houses are located alongside retail and food and beverage outlets, creating opportunities for increased dwell time and drive linked trips within the town.

Objectives to be considered

-  *Improve connectivity*
-  *Improve design quality and appearance*
-  *Enhance the town's historic character*

Key

01 Urmston Grammar School	23 The Barking Dog
02 Urmston Primary School	24 Lord Nelson
03 Tiny Feet Day Nursery	25 Golden Hill Park
04 English Martyrs Primary School	26 The Grove Allotments
05 Gwynth Hare School of Dancing	27 Green at The Venue
06 Jane Jarvis Dance Studio	28 Manor Gardens
07 KAS Academy Dance, Arts & Fitness	29 Granville Park Allotments
08 Our Lady & The English Martyrs Church	30 Eden Square Urmston
09 Greenfield Church	31 Victoria Parade
10 Unitarian Church	
11 St Clement Church (Grade II)	
12 2nd Urmston Scout Group	
13 Urmston Library & Conservative Club	
14 Urmston Police Station	
15 Urmston Masonic Hall	
16 Radio Millennium Lodge	
17 Golden Hill Park Bowling Green	
18 Urmston Train Station	
19 Cheeky Cherub Soft Play	
20 Urmston Mens Club & Institute	
21 The Steamhouse	
22 The Tim Bobbin	



Existing heritage assets

THE SITE AND SURROUNDING AREAS CONTAIN KEY HISTORICAL, NON DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS AND DESIGNATED LISTED BUILDINGS THAT FORM URMSTON'S IDENTITY.

- + As with the previous slide, the heritage assets are distributed around Urmston, however there is a greater number of buildings along the primary streets.
- + Heritage assets located along primary roads provide the opportunity to link nodal buildings when entering to town centre, adding to the sense of arrival and generating unique character.
- + With reference to the built form and public space observations, many of these buildings are in need of refurbishment, but have the integrity to add long term value to the town.

Objectives to be considered

-  *Improve connectivity*
-  *Improve design quality and appearance*
-  *Enhance the town's historic character*

Key

1. Former Royal Bank of Scotland (2 Crofts Bank Road, Urmston M41 0TU)
2. Former Ridings Store and Showroom (5-7 Higher Road, Urmston M41 9SB)
3. Gloucester House (17 Station Road, Urmston M41 9JS)
4. 14-16 Station Road (14-16 Station Road, Urmston M41 9JN)
5. Gladstone Buildings (26-30 Station Road, Urmston M41 9JQ)
6. 47 Station Road (47 Station Road, Urmston M41 9JG)
7. Urmston Old Police Station (34 Station Road, Urmston M41 9JQ)
8. 49 Church Road (49 Church Road, Urmston M41 9FH)
9. Urmston Unitarian Church (12 Queen's Road, Urmston M41 9HA)
10. Lord Nelson (49 Stretford Road, Urmston M41 9LG)
11. 33 - 35 Stretford Road (33 - 35 Stretford Road, Urmston M41 9JY)
12. 37 - 39 Stretford Road (37 - 39 Stretford Road, Urmston M41 9JY)
13. Greenfield Church (Primrose Avenue, Urmston M41 0TY)
14. Former Cottage Hospital (Greenfield Avenue, Urmston M41 0XN)
15. Urmston Masonic Hall (15 Westbourne Road, Urmston M41 0XQ)
16. English Martyrs Roman Catholic Church (Roseneath Road, Urmston M41 5AX)
17. Former Electricity Showrooms (41 Flixton Road, Urmston M41 5AN)
18. Former Gas Showrooms (17-21 Flixton Road, Urmston M41 5AW)
19. Urmston Railway Station (Flixton Road, Urmston M41 5AW)



Significant landowners

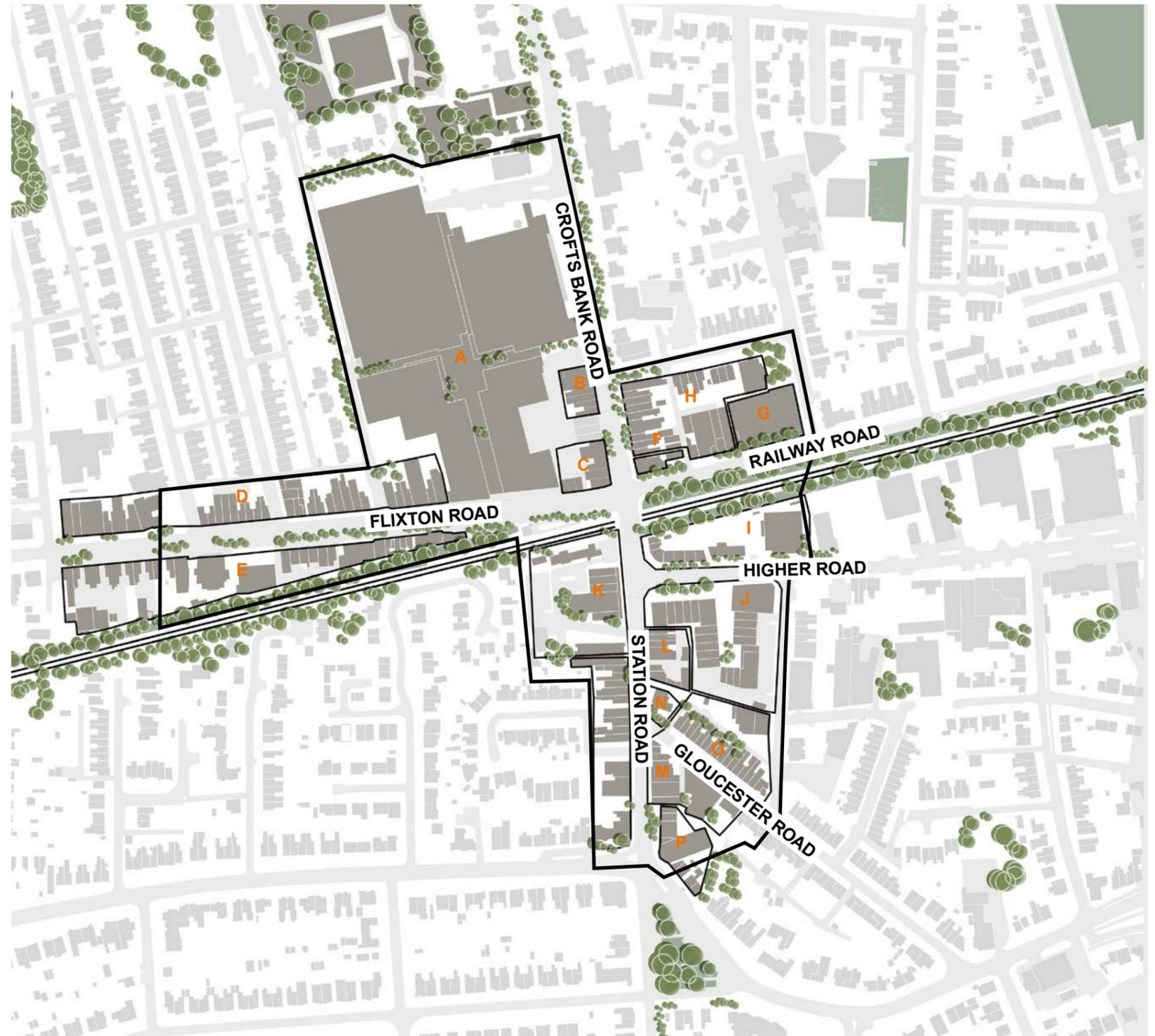
TRAFFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL ARE A DOMINANT LANDOWNER IN URMSTON TOWN CENTRE

Their freehold interest covers the entire Eden Square Shopping Complex of which there is a long leasehold in place for the shopping centre and residential units and Golden Hill Park to the north (including the flat car park and allotments) 9a-9d Crofts Bank Road and 28 Flixton Road with the exception of Urmston Police Station. The other key sites outside Trafford Borough Council's ownership are:

- + Urmston Market: a significant site which has outline permission for a new retail and leisure hub called Market 41
- + Victoria Parade: a significant site, owned by M and H Property Ltd.
- + Freehold Ownership is least complex at Eden Square shopping centre.
- + There are small parcels of single freehold and simple leasehold ownership to the east of the town centre.

Objectives to be considered

-  Support the existing economy
-  Address deficiencies in the local offer



Key

Parcel	Name	Freeholds	Leaseholds
A	Eden Square	01	120
B	Crofts Bank Rd	06	05
C	Crofts Bank / Flixton Rd	06	04
D	North of Flixton Rd	28	06
E	South of Flixton Rd	33	05
F	Former bank, Railway Rd	01	0
G	Crofts Bank Rd / Urmston Market	01	0
H	North of Higher Rd / former	25	07
I	Co-op Funeral care	09	07
J	Victoria Parade	04	16
K	South of Urmston Station	05	07
L	East of Station Rd	12	03
M	West of Station Rd	09	05
N	Former surgery on Station Rd	01	0
O	Gloucester Rd	27	09
P	Stretford Rd	04	02

Connectivity

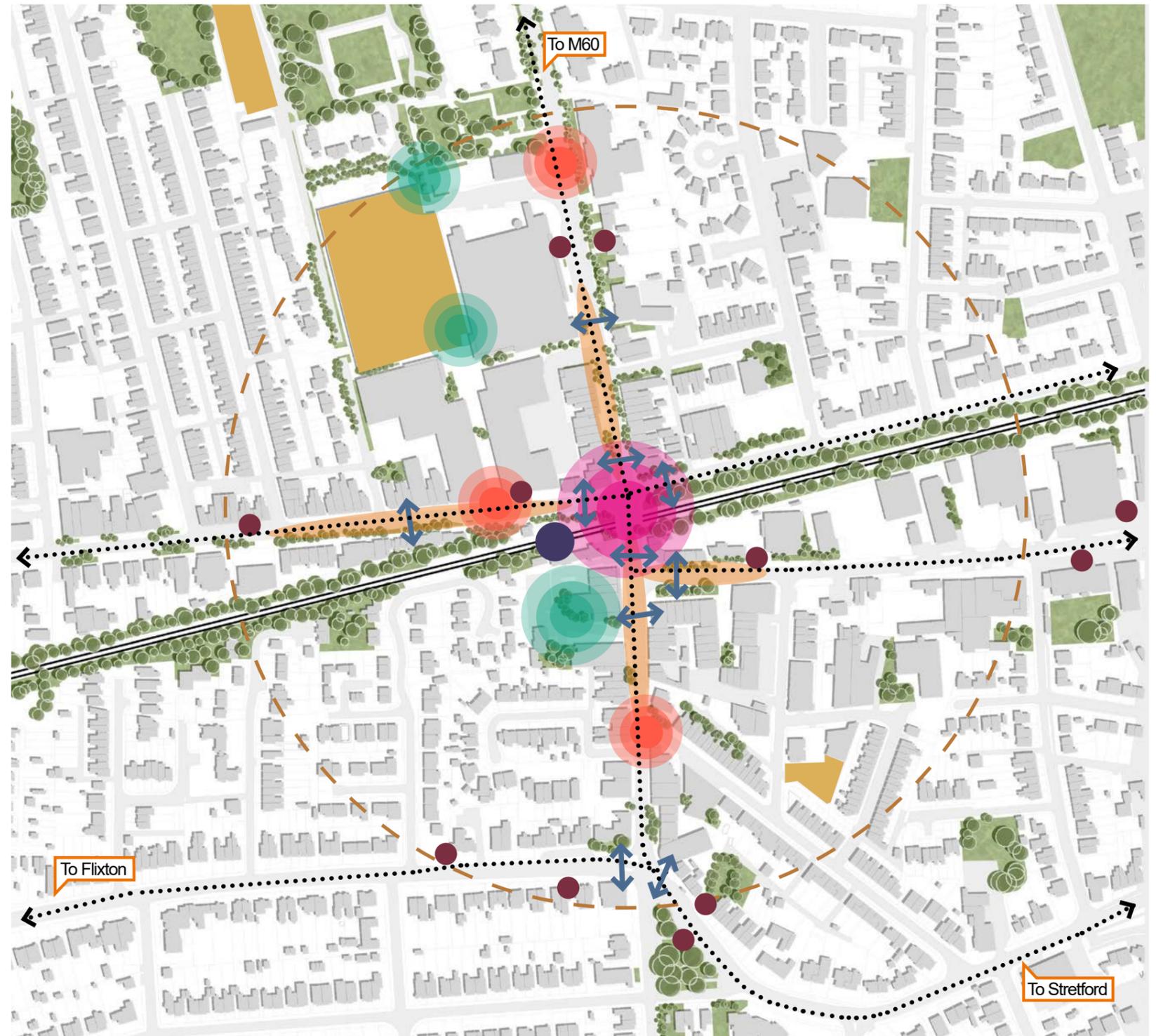
VEHICLE MOVEMENT DOMINATES THE TOWN CENTRE, WITH LIMITED PEDESTRIAN ROUTES AND FEW DEDICATED CYCLE LANES.

As the town centre developed at the crossroads of four primary roads, the built form naturally followed these routes. However, this road network prioritises car movement, creating connectivity challenges for pedestrians and cyclists. The movement of people around the town is critical to its success. To address these issues, we have identified several areas where changes could be made.

- Consider the balance of **people crossing and car movement** to create better connectivity to the north and south.
- Examine pedestrian crossing points in relation to town centre functions to ensure they align effectively. While current crossing points are well distributed, they do not correspond with key urban focal points.
- Consider accessibility challenges to key pedestrian areas, as these currently create barriers for residents.
- Vehicle congestion is visible throughout the day around the station road bridge area.
- Urmston Railway Station is well located within the town centre, providing access to Liverpool, Manchester and beyond.
- Bus stops are well distributed throughout the centre.
- The towns primary car parking is located within the Eden Square development, however small car parks are found within 3-5 minutes walk from the centre.
- ↔ Signalised crossing point.
- - - 3-5 minute walking radius.

Objectives to be considered

- *Improve connectivity*
- *Improve design quality and appearance*
- *Address deficiencies in the local offer*



Stage One Evaluation

Planning context

POLICY SUPPORTS DIVERSIFICATION OF TOWN CENTRE USES, WITH A BROAD FOCUS ON RETAIL, OFFICES, SOCIAL, LEISURE, CULTURAL AND RESIDENTIAL SPACE. POLICY SUPPORTS USE OF BROWNFIELD LAND AND TOWN CENTRE ASSETS TO DRIVE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES.

Set out below are the existing local planning policies and strategies which are of relevance to the Urmston Plan area:

NPPF (December 2024)

The National Planning Policy Framework was revised in response to the Proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the Planning system consultation on 12 December 2024 and sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The main changes to the 2024 NPPF focus on driving housebuilding, ensuring sustainable development and improvement of community infrastructure.

Section 3 (paragraphs 15-38) of the NPPF provides an overview of the plan making process, including the requirements of local authorities for producing neighbourhood plans. Paragraph 30 states that neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area or undermine those strategic policies.

Section 7 (paragraphs 90 to 95) of the NPPF focuses on ensuring the vitality of town centres. These paragraphs emphasise the importance of town centres as the heart of local communities and outlines what planning policies should cover to support their growth, management and adaptation. The key areas these policies should cover are outlined in Paragraph 90:

- + Define a network and hierarchy of town centres and promote their long-term vitality and viability – by allowing them to grow and diversify in a way that can respond to rapid changes in the retail and leisure industries, allows a suitable mix of uses (including housing) and reflects their distinctive characters;
- + Define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas, and make clear the range of uses permitted in such locations, as part of a positive strategy for the future of each centre;
- + Retain and enhance existing markets and, where appropriate, re-introduce or create new ones;
- + Allocate a range of suitable sites in town centres to meet the scale and type of development likely to be needed, looking at least ten years ahead. Meeting anticipated needs for retail, leisure, office and other main town centre uses over this period should not be compromised by limited site availability, so town centre boundaries should be kept under review where necessary
- + Where suitable and viable town centre sites are not available for main town centre uses, allocate appropriate edge of centre sites that are well connected to the town centre. If sufficient edge of centre sites cannot be identified, policies should explain how identified needs can be met in other accessible locations that are well connected to the town centre;
- + Recognise that residential development often plays an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres and encourage residential development on appropriate sites.

Places for Everyone (March 2024)

The adopted Places for Everyone (Pfe) Plan is a joint Local Plan for 9 of the Greater Manchester Metropolitan Boroughs. The Metropolitan Boroughs covered by Pfe includes Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan. The emerging policies which relate to the Urmston Plan area are as follows:

JP-P4 – New Retail and Leisure Uses in Town Centres

This policy identifies the key hierarchy of centres for retail and leisure within each of the boroughs and seeks to enhance and maintain these centres. The boundaries of the centres and details of other centres at lower levels of the hierarchy are defined in each district local plan. The need for the expansion of any existing centres, or the provision of new centres, will be identified in district local plans.

JP- STRAT9 – Southern Areas

The economic competitiveness, distinctive local neighbourhood character and environmental attractiveness of the southern areas will be protected and enhanced. There will be a strong emphasis on making as much use as possible of suitable previously developed (brownfield) land and promoting the roles of the areas' town centres and its other key assets, including education and training facilities enabling people to gain access to employment opportunities. There will be an emphasis on improving transport connections and accessibility by public transport, cycling and walking, ensuring access to key employment opportunities in this area.

Trafford Core Strategy (2012-2026)

The Trafford Core Strategy was adopted in January 2012 and sets out the Council's spatial policy framework for delivering the development and change needed to realise the Council's vision for the Borough up to 2026. The adoption of the PFE plan partly replaces some of the Trafford Council Core Strategy (2012) policies. The policies of relevance to the Urmston Plan area as follows:

Policy W1

Economy In order to encourage the development of clusters of economic activity the Council will identify a range of sites for a variety of employment uses, with the appropriate infrastructure to attract key economic growth sectors to Trafford. Employment uses within this policy refers to B1 business/office, B2 general industry and B8 storage or distribution and similar appropriate uses. The Council will focus employment uses in designated Town Centres, such as Urmston.

Policy W2

Town Centres and Retail Urmston is a designated town centre. Within these centres there will be a focus on the consolidation and improvement of the convenience and comparison retail offer, with the potential to strengthen and enhance the retail offer where suitable, as well as diversification to other uses such as offices, services, leisure, cultural and residential, as appropriate.

Planning context

Policy L7 Design

The Council will determine whether or not proposed development meets its standards of design quality, functionality, protecting amenity, security and accessibility.

The Trafford Core Strategy splits the Borough into 10 'Places.' Urmston is one of these 'Places' and each has its own set of objectives. The objectives for Urmston are as follows:

URO1 to limit new residential growth to meeting local needs, particularly for affordable housing, with general 'market housing' (in sustainable locations, well served by public transport) supporting local needs and regeneration priorities.

URO2 To ensure that the local character of the area is not undermined by new residential development, particularly in terms of existing plot sizes.

URO3 To secure opportunities for improved health care provision to meet the needs of local people.

URO4 To ensure new developments help to reduce the incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour in areas such as Woodsend, and Humphrey Park station.

URO5 To improve the appearance and quality of green and open space for recreational purposes.

URO6 To ensure residents in Urmston can acquire the necessary skills to access jobs in key employment locations, particularly Trafford Park and the Regional Centre.

URO7 To protect and enhance the existing town centre and small neighbourhood shopping centres located in the area.

URO8 To consolidate and improve the retail offer of Urmston Town Centre and diversification to other uses.

URO9 To ensure that maximum potential is made of the strategic countryside areas bordering this area to provide recreation and to mitigate against climate change and to improve the health of its residents.

URO10 To protect and enhance sites of biodiversity opportunities, for example Millennium Nature Reserve and Wellacre Country Park.

URO11 To secure improvements to east-west public transport linkages.

URO12 To secure improvements to public transport to enable better access to Carrington, Trafford Park and the Regional Centre.

URO13 To manage the congestion in the vicinity of the Trafford Centre and parking problems associated with Trafford General Hospital.

URO14 To ensure all new mixed use development is constructed in accordance with the latest environmental standards.

URO15 To encourage and support opportunities to locate low-carbon/decentralised energy facilities.

URO16 To maximise opportunities for green roofs and tree planting.

URO17 To protect and enhance areas of historic character and archaeological importance.

SPD 7: Trafford Design Code (September 2024)

The Trafford Design Code makes clear to the community, developers and landowners the quality of new development which is expected in Trafford. The Design Code seeks to take the best of Trafford and use that to underpin a set of design principles, codes and guidance to ensure that future development continues to offer distinctive, innovative and high quality placemaking which can be enjoyed for generations to come.

The Trafford Design Code provides specific guidance on the residential areas of Urmston, Flixton and Davyhulme. Together these areas retain a distinct identity, known for their verdant suburban qualities, with an extensive network of open spaces and established tree lined streets. Urmston is the main town centre for the area and includes an historic high street while period properties are focused around its core.

The following specific design cues are identified for the area, which should be taken from best examples of properties that were built at the time these areas began to develop:

Notable buildings and landmarks consider how these might inform new design.

Built Form, Height, Roofscape generally two storey with dual pitched roofs.

Local building materials almost exclusively red brick in stretcher, English Garden Wall or Flemish bond with sandstone detailing, and blue slate or red clay tiled roofs.

Façade composition generally bay windows at ground and first floor, with vertically proportioned sash windows.

Architectural detailing particularly prevalent around doorways, windows, bays and eaves. Mock Tudor panelling or planted timber detail and rough cast render to first floor. Recessed windows, doors and open porches.

Planning context

THE HOUSING NEEDS STUDY INDICATES NEED FOR A MIX OF HOUSING TYPES AND TENURE, WITH FOCUS ON AFFORDABLE DELIVERY, RENTAL PRODUCTS AND OLDER PERSONS HOUSING.

Trafford achieved 78% on the 2023 Housing Delivery Test.

No. bedrooms	Market	Affordable Rent	Affordable Homes Ownership	Overall
1-bed	13%	28%	13%	13%
2-bed	38%	48%	48%	38%
3-bed	38%	18%	28%	43%
4-bed	18%	8%	13%	18%

Source: Trafford Strategic Market Assessment 2023.
NB: These figures quoted are averages of minimum and maximum shares.

Affordable Housing Needs

The Trafford Housing Need Study 2023 (HNS) provides the council with up-to-date evidence on housing need across all sections of the community over the period 2022 to 2039. The evidence will inform the update of the preparation of the Local Plan, other strategies, policies and decisions of the council and its partners.

Trafford's 2023 Strategic Housing Market Assessment sets out a requirement for 1,122 net additional dwellings during 2021 – 2039, comprised of the tenures and types detailed below. The HNA 2023 confirmed that the majority of the market sale accommodation required in Urmston is 3 and 4+ bed houses and 2 bed flats. There is an annual gross need of 256 new market sale housing units required in Urmston.

The HNS 2023 identifies an annual imbalance of 858 affordable homes, justifying a need for robust affordable housing policy and delivery, with a gross need of 256 units in Urmston. In Urmston there is a greatest need for affordable 2 and 3 bed houses and

2 bed bungalows with 45% being intermediate/shared ownership and 55% for affordable/social rent.

The HNS puts forward an affordable tenure mix of 60% rented and 40% affordable homes in line with Policy JP - H2 of Places for Everyone.

The HNS seeks to maximise delivery on market sites subject to viability and consider new ways of delivering affordable, particularly social rented housing.

Needs of Different Groups

Particular needs which have been identified in the HNS are:

Increasing and diversifying the supply of specialist housing for older people. There is a need for 4,441 additional older persons specialist accommodation including 2,662 C3 dwelling units, 1,104 C2 Extra Care units and 673 C2 residential care bedspaces.

There is a particular need for leasehold sheltered housing, enhanced sheltered housing and Extra Care housing for sale. Trafford has a good supply of dementia-friendly older persons accommodation and sufficient sheltered housing to rent.

Based on an assessment of additional needs and longer-term demographics, 4% of new dwellings (41 each year) should be built to M4(3) wheelchair accessible standard; and all other new dwellings should be built to M4(2) accessible and adaptable standard which would include bungalows/level access accommodation.

Urmston's Need & Demand

The broad area of Urmston, Davyhulme and Flixton has a good range of housing. The sales market is really busy, but the rental market is 'ridiculously busy'. Agents are inundated with viewings and applications when a property comes to market. Rental properties are in high demand and short supply. Agents also highlighted that there is lots of interest in bungalows when they do come onto the market but there are not many around.

Urmston is able to offer a family friendly location with the quality of Trafford schools without the Sale and Altrincham price bracket while maintaining the strong transport links into Manchester.

The HNA 2023 confirmed that the majority of the market sale accommodation required in Urmston is 3 and 4+ bed houses and 2 bed flats. There is an annual gross need of 256 new market sale housing units required in Urmston.

Family sized homes, three-bedroom semi-detached properties and terrace houses are all popular. Anything in the price bracket £300,000 - £380,000 has a high level of demand. The HNS 2023 identifies an average three-bedroom property will market at £350,000 so for first-time buyers there is a definite now or never approach to getting on the housing ladder.

Summary

- + Policy is supportive of residential growth to meet 'need' within sustainable locations with a focus on delivery of affordable housing.
- + There is a recognition of the need to deliver improved health care provision to meet the needs of local people.
- + Policy provides a focus on design quality and the environment, with importance of using development to reduce the incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour, meeting environmental design standards, safeguarding heritage assets and improving the appearance and quality of green and open space.
- + Policy supports employment focussed development, particularly schemes that will support skills for local people to access jobs, and those supporting high-value growth sectors.
- + Policy is supportive of enhancing the town centre through consolidation and improvement of the convenience and comparison retail offer, as well as diversification to other uses such as offices, services, leisure, cultural and residential, as appropriate.
- + All levels of policy place emphasis on improving public transport connectivity, solving parking and congestion issues, and improving active travel connections.

Economic, social and commercial evidence

STUDY GEOGRAPHIES - THIS DOCUMENT PRESENTS DATA AT THREE SPATIAL SCALES:

Urmston Town Centre

The socio-economic and commercial analysis focuses on the town centre itself to provide an overview of its performance and trends (outlined in orange on the adjacent map). A statistical boundary has been built around the town centre boundary used within the project brief (outlined in black on the adjacent map).

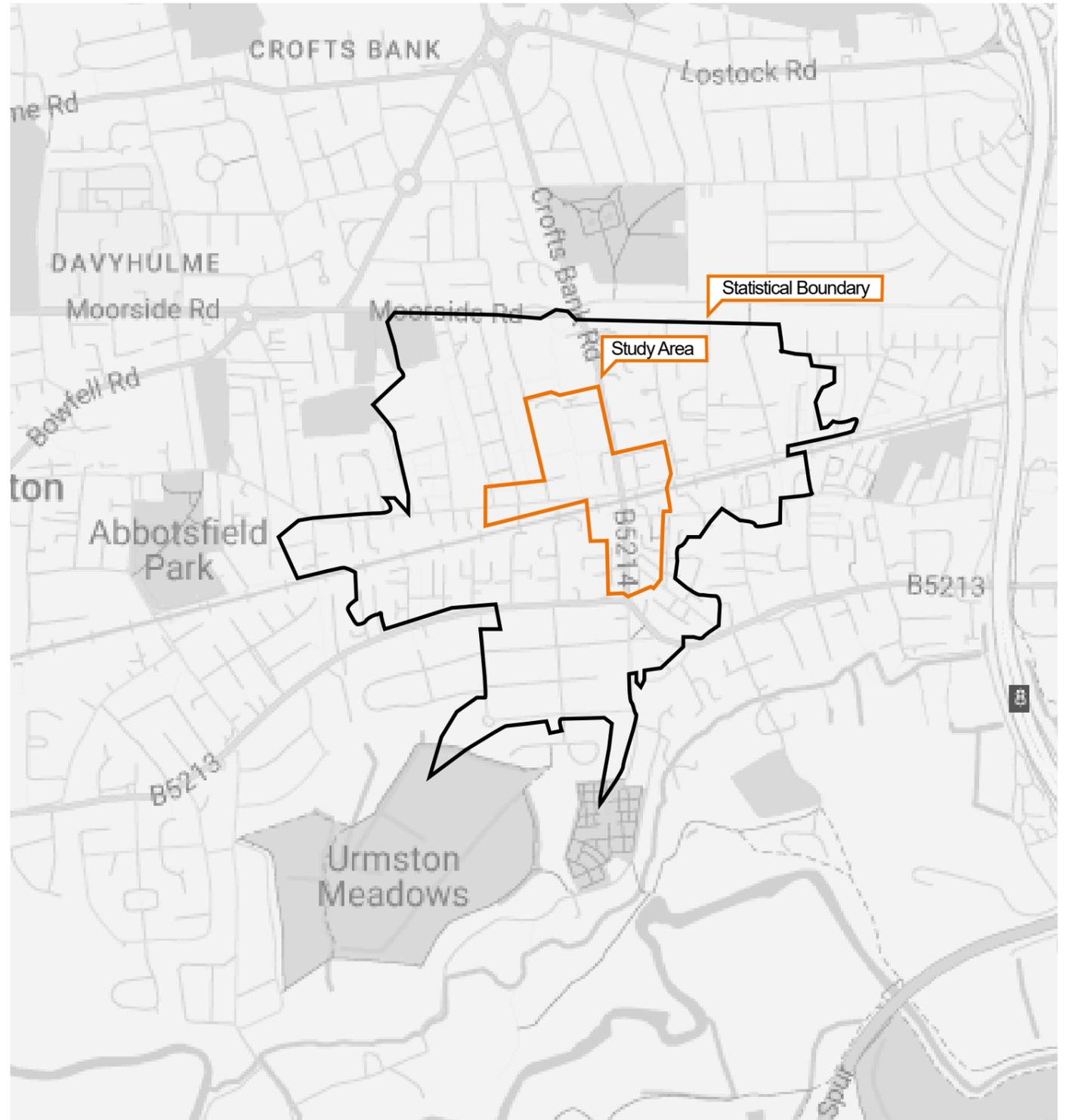
Trafford

The socio-economic and commercial analysis also partly focuses on the wider borough to provide an understanding of local challenges and opportunities. The local catchment is defined as the borough as a whole as most residents can access the area within 20-30 minutes via walking, cycling or public transport.

Greater Manchester

Some of the socio-economic analysis also captures the wider Greater Manchester region to provide broader context. The section will evaluate the following points, to help understand the economic, social and commercial baseline of the town.

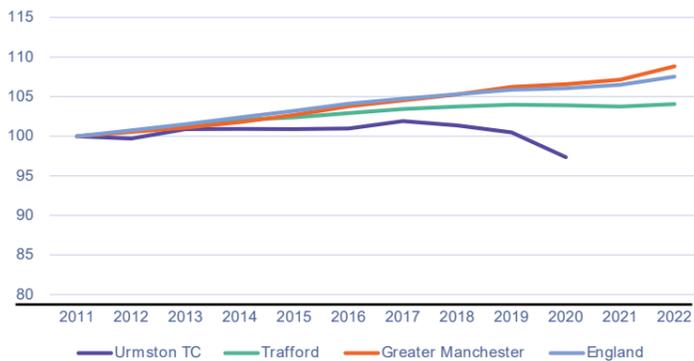
The following analysis is a part of a much more detailed baseline report. They form part of the evidence gathering to inform the overall proposition put forward within the town centre and when read as part of the fuller document shared, they are important considerations to form the basis of recommendations put forward.



Economic, social and commercial evidence

URMSTON TOWN CENTRE'S POPULATION HAS FALLEN IN RECENT YEARS, BUT TRAFFORD IS SET TO SEE SIGNIFICANT GROWTH OVER THE NEXT 20 YEARS.

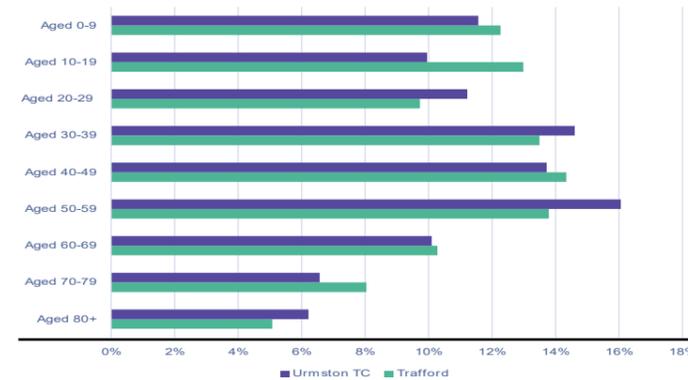
Total population, 2011-2022, indexed 2011 = 100
Source: ONS 2020 and 2023



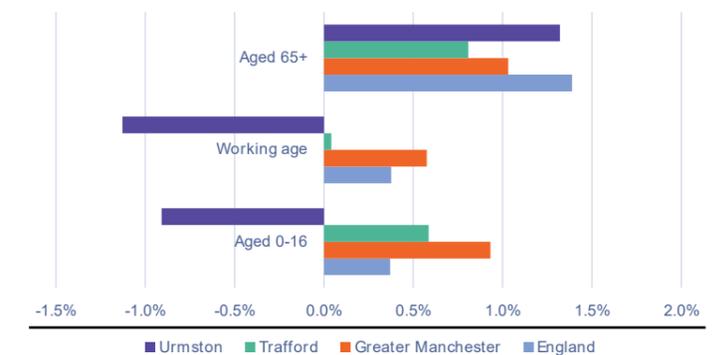
Population growth projections, 2024-2043
Source: ONS 2022



Share of Population by Age, 2020
Source: ONS 2020



Change in Population by Age, 2015-2020
Source: ONS 2020 and 2023



Urmston town centre's population was 4,279 in 2020, about 2% of Trafford's total. It has declined slightly by 2.6% from 2011 to 2020, with a steady decrease since 2017. Data is available only up to 2020 for small geographies. From 2011 to 2022, Trafford grew by 4%, while England and Greater Manchester grew by 8% and 9%, respectively.

Trafford and Greater Manchester are projected to see strong population growth over the next 20 years, with an increase of 6.9%. Trafford's working-age population is expected to grow by 4%, slightly lower than Greater Manchester's 4.2%.

The borough will still have 16,822 more working-age individuals, totalling 260,208. Trafford and Greater Manchester are projected to grow by 6.9% over the next 20 years. Urmston town centre and Trafford's largest age groups are children and younger to middle-aged adults.

Urmston town centre has a higher proportion of 20-39-year-olds (+1.5 percentage points), 50-59-year-olds (+2.3 pp), and those aged 80+ (+1.1 pp) compared to Trafford. The first two groups reflect the town's appeal to young and mature families, while the latter is influenced by nearby older persons' accommodation.

Since 2015, Urmston's 65+ population has grown, while declines in its larger working-age and child populations have led to overall population decreases.

In summary there has been a decline in population within Urmston town centre.

This goes against trends at the borough, regional and national level. It also does not align with policy ambitions, which seek delivery of new residential space to meet 'need' in sustainable locations.

Whilst Urmston still presents greater working age population than Trafford, the population decline has been most pronounced in working-age groups.

Contrary to the overall trend of population decline, there has been steady growth in the 65+ population, outstripping growth in Trafford, Greater Manchester and England.

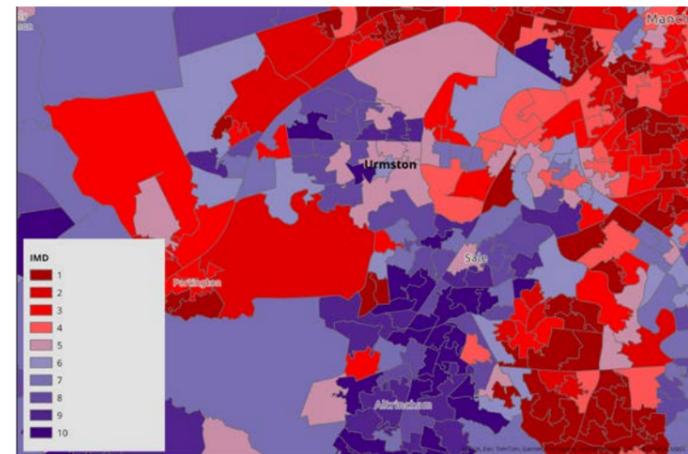
These factors combined are driving a shrinking, and ageing town centre population.

Economic, social and commercial evidence

URMSTON TOWN CENTRE IS A HUB FOR REASONABLY AFFLUENT COUPLES AND YOUNG FAMILIES WORKING IN MANAGERIAL AND PROFESSIONAL OCCUPATIONS.

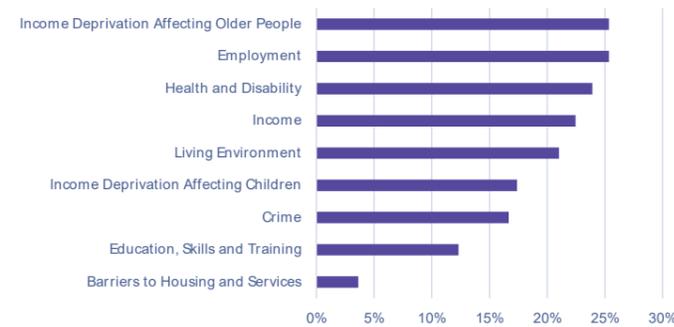
Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2019

Source: IMD



Drivers of Deprivation in Urmston Town Centre, 2019

Source: IMD 2019 and ONS 2021



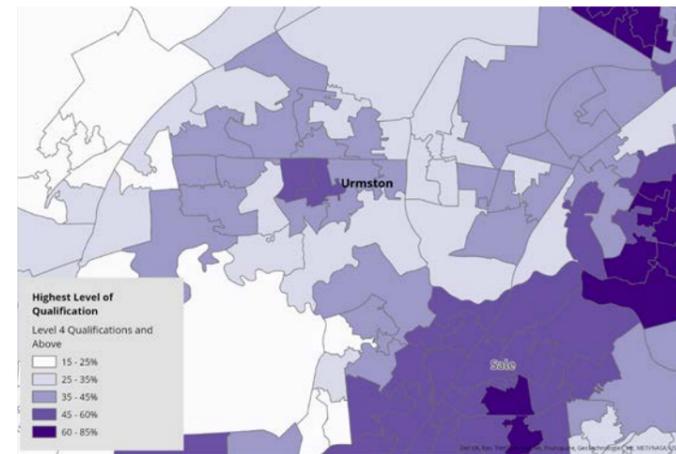
Whilst Trafford is a relatively affluent borough, some domains of the Index of Multiple Deprivation show areas of deprivation within Urmston Town itself:
 + Income Deprivation Affecting Older People (25%)
 + Employment (24%)
 + Health and Disability (24%)

The most significant drivers of deprivation in Urmston are income deprivation affecting older people, employment, and health and disability.

One of the lowest-scoring domains of deprivation is Education, Skills and Training. This is reflective of the borough's high levels of educational attainment. 43% of people have a Level 4 qualification or above, compared to 32% across Greater Manchester and 34% across England.

Qualification Levels Across Trafford, 2019

Source: ONS 2021



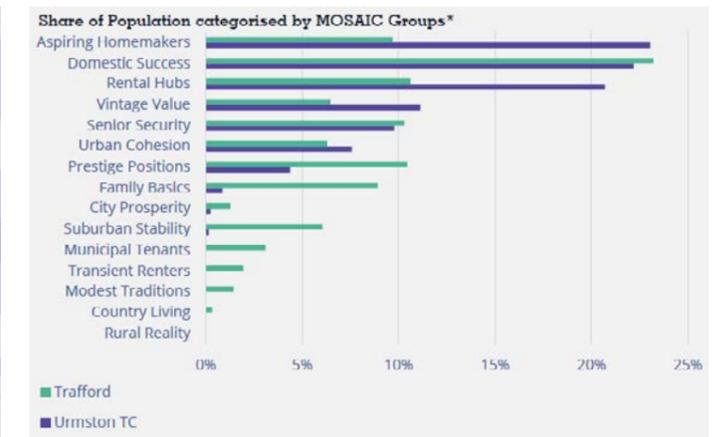
As a result of this higher level of educational attainment, a large proportions of the population are employed in managerial, administrative and professional occupations compared to Greater Manchester.

Urmston contains a slightly higher concentration of these roles, although lower managerial roles comprise more of this total rather than higher managerial roles.

There is a balanced, affluent demographic profile, including younger households settled down within their means; families busy raising children and following careers and educated young people privately renting.

Population categorised by MOSAIC Groups

Source: Experian



MOSAIC is a socio-economic classification system which categorises the population into 15 groups. The most dominant groups in Urmston are:

- + Aspiring Homemakers: Younger households settled down within their means;
- + Domestic Success: Thriving families busy raising children and following careers;
- + Rental Hubs: Educated young people privately renting.

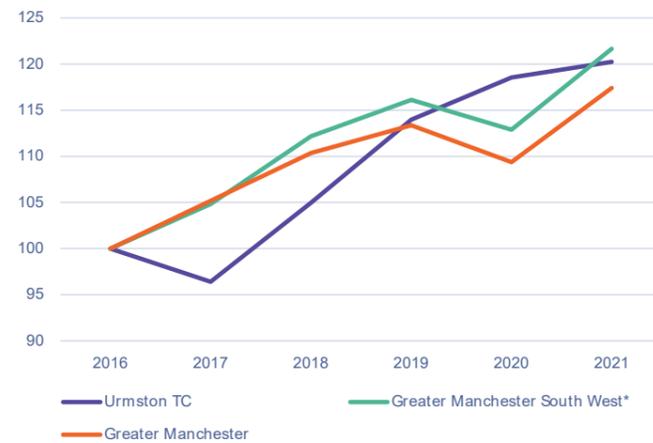
Evidently, Urmston town centre contains a different mix of groups compared to Trafford as a whole. The most prevalent groups in the latter include Domestic Success, Rental Hubs and Prestige Positions.

Economic, social and commercial evidence

URMSTON TOWN CENTRE HAS SEEN MIXED LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE IN RECENT YEARS.

Change in GVA, 2016-2021, indexed 2016 = 100

Source: ONS 2023. *Trafford and Salford. Distinct data not available.



Urmston town centre produces £98m in GVA, which accounts for 0.5% of 'Greater Manchester South West' total GVA*. This geography also includes Salford but is the most granular data available.

Urmston town centre has seen similar levels of GVA growth (20.3%) since 2016 compared to 'Greater Manchester South West' (21.7%). Greater Manchester South West has also outperformed Greater Manchester as a whole, the latter achieving 17.4% GVA growth over the period.

A total of 2,360 people are employed in the town centre across 340 businesses.

Over the past five years, Urmston has seen a decline in its employment of -2.3%, which is against the trend of the Trafford and Greater Manchester growth of 13.2% and 8.6% respectively. This trend is however common in other comparator towns such as Stretford and Sale.

Although the town centre's number of businesses has remained static over the period, this outperforms Trafford's (-0.8%) average performance and declines seen in Altrincham, Sale and Wythenshawe.

GVA £m, 2021, Quoted in 2024 Prices

	GVA £m
Urmston TC	£98
Greater Manchester South West*	£18,489
Greater Manchester	£52,734

Employment and No. Businesses, alongside Growth over Past Five Years

	Employment 5-year change (2022)	Employment (2022)	No. businesses 5-year change (2023)	No. businesses (2023)
Altrincham	16.7%	11,875	-5.5%	2,255
Sale	-5.2%	7,955	-0.5%	1,050
Stretford	-8.4%	1,480	9.1%	240
Urmston	-2.3%	2,360	0.0%	340
Wythenshawe	53.8%	3,660	-17.4%	95
Trafford	13.2%	173,400	-0.8%	11,260
Greater Manchester	8.6%	1,450,250	0.2%	105,425

Trafford's most significant sectors by share of employment are Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (26%), Business Administration and Support (12%), and Retail (8%). This is driven by its town centre and out-of-town office employment centres, as well as the Trafford Centre and Trafford Park as retail and industrial centres, respectively.

A similar trend is seen when measured in shares of total numbers of businesses, with the aforementioned sectors accounting for 20%, 12% and 8% of all businesses, respectively.

Trafford's most specialised sectors in terms of employment are Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (1.77), Wholesale (0.50), and Business Administration and Support (0.33), when measured against England's average.

In terms of number of businesses, the borough's most specialised sectors are Business Administration and Support (0.63), Arts, Entertainment and Recreation (0.50), and Retail (0.32).

Urmston's town centre's most significant sectors by their share of employment are Health (18%), Accommodation and Food Services (16%), and Retail (14%). This is driven by the dominance of Trafford General Hospital in the local economy, as well as the retail, shopping and leisure uses within the town centre.

In terms of number of businesses, the most significant sectors are Construction (15%), Accommodation and Food Services (13%), and Professional, Scientific and Technical (13%).

Compared to England's average share of employment, the most specialised sectors by employment are Wholesale (1.03), Property (0.67), and Accommodation and Food Services (0.40).

In terms of the number of businesses, the most specialised sectors are Financial and Insurance (1.61), Accommodation and Food Services (1.15), and Arts, Entertainment and Recreation.

Urmston town centre could build on its professional services, arts, and F&B businesses which are specialised by number of businesses, but less so in employment.

Economic, social and commercial evidence

TRAFFORD HAS A GREATER SHARE OF SMALLER BUSINESSES AND HAS GENERALLY SEEN LOWER GROWTH IN BUSINESSES OVER RECENT YEARS. DESPITE LIMITED HIGH QUALITY STOCK, OFFICE AND RETAIL VACANCY IS VERY TIGHT, INDICATING AN UNDERSUPPLY OF SPACE WITHIN THE TOWN CENTRE.

Urmston has a marginally greater share of micro and small businesses compared to Trafford, Greater Manchester and England (98%). By contrast, Trafford has a marginally lower share of micro and small businesses (97%). This is likely driven by the dominance of Trafford Park and the Trafford Centre in the borough's economy.

Over the past five years, Trafford's rate of new businesses which have survived (38%) has been lower than England's but higher than Greater Manchester's.

In most years since 2017, Trafford's rate of net business births (26%) underperformed the Greater Manchester and England averages. Only in 2021 did the borough outperform. In the most recent data for 2022, Trafford saw a notable decline in its rate of net business births of -12%.

Trafford's reasonable rates of business survival (38% over five years) indicate that the borough's vitality is being restricted by business births rather than deaths.

Therefore, the local economy seems focused more on smaller businesses but is not growing as strongly as other areas. There is a limited range of workspaces and amenities which support local small businesses. For instance, the town centre has no flexible workspace or co working facilities. Its commercial space is dominated by retail units and some smaller industrial spaces.

Vacancy rates are very low in Urmston, suggesting an insufficient volume of space to cater for demand. Despite this, rental levels have remained static, likely due to the poor condition of commercial space.

Share of Businesses by Size, 2022

Source: ONS 2023



Business Five-Year Survival Rates, 2017-2022

Source: ONS 2023. Data not available at smaller geographies.



Urmston Floorspace by Size Band, 2024

Source: CoStar, 2024

Building Size (sq ft)	Office		Retail	
	Number of Properties	Total Area (sq ft)	Number of Properties	Total Area (sq ft)
<1,000	1	732	25	17,772
1,000 – 2,500	1	1,260	30	49,728
2,500 – 5,000	2	6,851	10	38,926
5,000 – 10,000	2	11,777	6	45,018
10,000-25,000	0	-	0	-
25,000-50,000	0	-	2	65,422
50,000-100,000	0	-	0	-
100,000 +	0	-	1	121,507
Total	6	20,620	74	338,373

Urmston Stock Quality, 2024

Source: CoStar, 2024



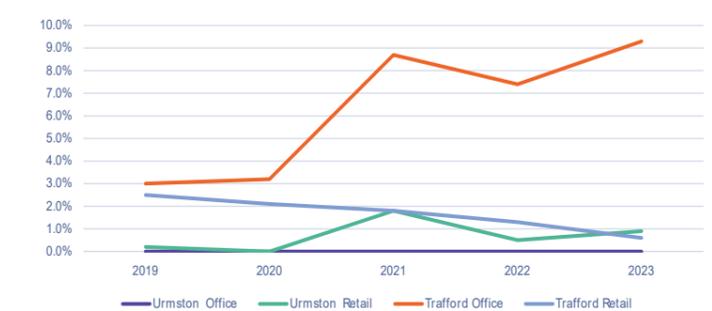
Floorspace and Property, 2019 - 2023

Source: CoStar, 2024

Year	Urmston				Trafford			
	Office Units	Office Floorspace (sq ft)	Retail Units	Retail Floorspace (sq ft)	Office Units	Office Floorspace (sq ft)	Retail Units	Retail Floorspace (sq ft)
2023	6	20,620	74	338,373	532	5,377,627	1173	9,001,131
2022	6	20,620	74	338,373	531	5,375,104	1173	9,001,131
2021	6	20,620	74	338,373	531	5,375,104	1172	8,997,631
2020	6	20,620	74	338,373	530	5,359,182	1169	8,882,856
2019	6	20,620	74	338,373	528	5,261,902	1165	8,827,818
% Change	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	-0.75%	-2.15%	-0.68%	-1.93%

Vacancy rates

Source: ONS 2023



Average Archived Rents 2019-2023

Source: CoStar, 2024

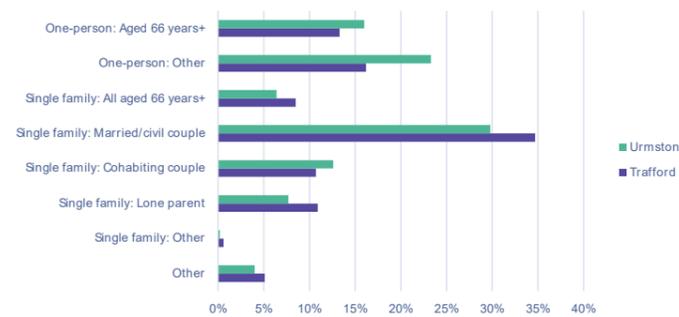


Economic, social and commercial evidence

URMSTON'S HOUSING MIX IS SKEWED MORE TOWARDS FLATS AND TERRACED HOUSES WHEN COMPARED TO THE TRAFFORD AVERAGE. OVERALL, SEMI-DETACHED HOUSES MAKE UP THE LARGEST SHARE OF HOUSING.

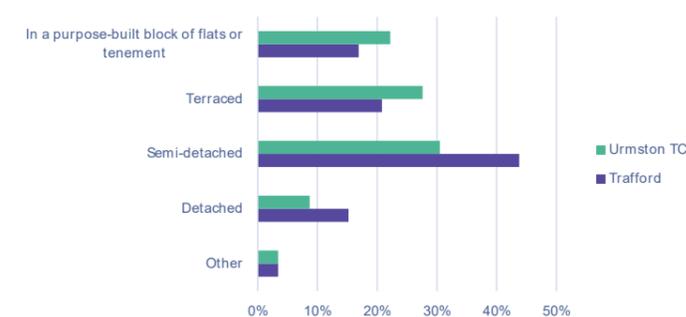
Share of Housing by Type, 2021

Source: ONS 2021



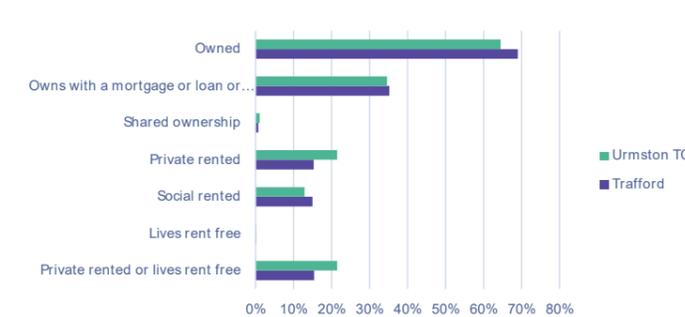
Share of Housing by Tenure, 2021

Source: ONS 2021



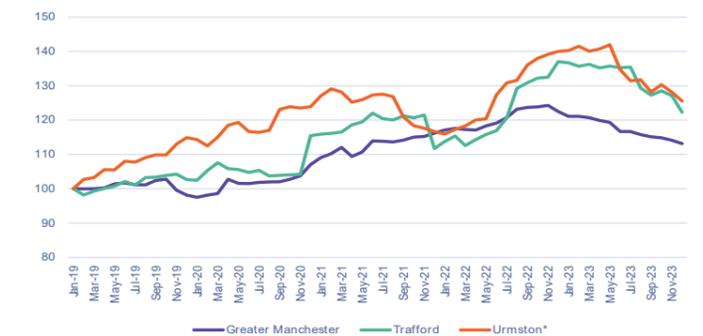
Share of Households by Composition, 2021

Source: ONS 2021



House Price Change 2019-2023, Indexed 2019 = 100

Source: Land Registry via Searchland.



Urmston's housing mix is skewed more towards flats (22%) and terraced houses (28%) when compared to the Trafford average. Overall, semi-detached houses make up the largest share of housing (31%).

Urmston's average house price stood at £333,306 in 2023, which was 26% higher than five years ago in 2019. This rate of growth outpaced Greater Manchester (13%) by a significant margin and also the wider Trafford borough (22%).

A total of five residential schemes of 10+ units that have been approved for development since January 2020 in Urmston, totalling 103 units. All of these schemes are by, or in partnership with, Registered Providers and therefore have a high proportion of affordable housing delivery.

Single and cohabiting couples are over-represented compared to the Trafford average, accounting for 29% and 13% of the population and reflecting the area's dominant MOSAIC group of aspiring homemakers.

Urmston town centre has a lower rate of outright ownership (65%) and mortgage-based ownership (35%) than Trafford, whilst its proportion of private renters (22%) is higher.

The general upwards trend seen since 2019 has reversed over the past 12 months following the Bank of England's rate-hiking cycle, in which sense Urmston has followed local and regional trends.

In the wider area, including Stretford and Sale, a total of 1,224 units across 13 schemes have been approved over the same period, including 800 units at Stretford Mall, by far the largest development in the area.

Urmston's house price growth has been higher than the Trafford average over the past five years at 26%. Recent development in Urmston has delivered mainly small blocks of flats for affordable and intermediate tenures. As developments have been smaller in scale, there is likely to be further demand for high-quality town centre schemes.

Urmston's most over-represented groups compared to the Trafford average are single-person households (39%) and cohabiting couples (13%), whereas it has a lower share of married couples (30%) compared to the Trafford average. In summary, Urmston's housing mix and population is generally skewed towards singles and cohabiting couples privately renting.

Semi-detached houses have seen the greatest price growth over the past five years (25%), following by terraced (24%) and detached (23%) at similar levels of growth. Flats by contrast have seen a marked decrease of 7%, following a national trend in cooling flat prices due to demand shifts following the Covid-19 Pandemic.

In summary, there is need for a mix of housing types and tenures, including affordable delivery, rental products and older persons housing. Urmston has a lower rate of outright ownership (65%) and mortgage-based ownership (35%) than Trafford, whilst its proportion of private renters (22%) is higher.

Economic, social and commercial evidence

—
THE FOLLOWING THEMES HAVE BEEN HIGHLIGHTED BY THE THE ANALYSIS.

Future-proof the town centre

By introducing a much broader mix and scale of uses to increase vibrancy, drive footfall and address the dominance of retail (e.g. housing, workspace, education, leisure, culture, healthcare etc). Curate an interconnected town centre neighbourhood where people can live, work and meet all their daily needs in one place without the need for private vehicles - the centre should serve a strong hyper-local catchment, as well as its existing local and wider catchment. Particular focus should be placed on deficiencies in the local offer borne out through the gap analysis exercise (slide 36) – enhancing provision of arts, culture and leisure facilities. Conversely, there should be a focus on building on the town centres strengths (F&B, gyms/fitness) with additional, complimentary space that can increase dwell time and drive linked trips. Given the F&B focus, there is a good opportunity to build a vibrant and more diverse evening economy.

Provide the workspace, infrastructure, amenities, environment and services

That will attract businesses in higher-value specialised sectors to locate and start up in Urmston (i.e. those in the Professional, Scientific & Technical, Financial & Insurance, and Construction sectors).

Identify opportunities in the core town centre

To provide and test market demand for high-quality, low-cost business space for start-up businesses and entrepreneurs with associated wraparound support (e.g. council asset(s), vacant retail unit(s), vacant site(s)) to help address challenges around business births.

Provide a range of housing types and scales

In the core and around the periphery of the town centre to address the recent reduction in population. In particular, focus on the growing number of people aged 65+. the high concentration of young educated renters and working age families that underpin the local labour market and economy but are currently in population decline.

Address the main drivers of deprivation in the town centre

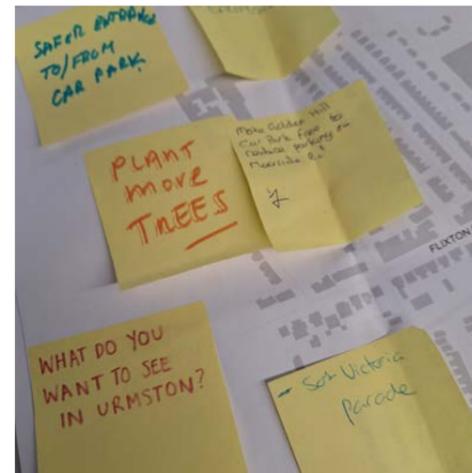
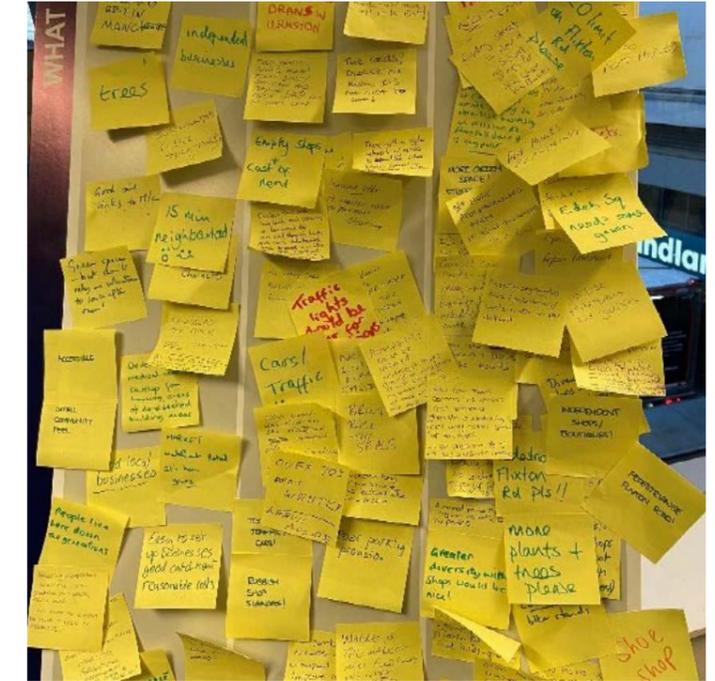
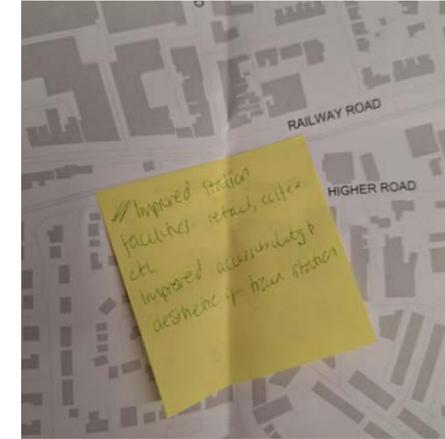
By providing targeted support to older people through appropriate and affordable housing options, and provision of services and amenities in accessible town centre locations; delivering additional employment space & providing enhanced skills support to create jobs and provide skills to get the most deprived in the town centre into employment and explore opportunities to provide targeted support for existing challenges residents experience in health and disability.

Public Engagement

A VARIETY OF ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS WERE HELD WITH TRAFFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL, THE PUBLIC, LANDOWNERS, STAKEHOLDERS, LOCAL BUSINESSES AND YOUTH GROUPS TO BETTER UNDERSTAND THE SITE CONTEXT, VIABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES TO INFORM THE PLAN.

Two public consultation events were held to engage, collate feedback and information from the residents of Urmston to support the development of the Urmston Plan. The first round of consultation on the Urmston Plan consisted of an in-person consultation which took place on 21st March 2024 and the online consultation which took place between 17th May and 2nd June 2024. The purpose of the first round of public consultation was to ‘fact find’ from members of the local community to understand what they currently like and dislike about Urmston and what could be improved.

A range of media and materials were used in the in-person consultation held in the Urmston Library to make it more interesting and interactive for the public. Boards were displayed in the room to show the current public and community spaces in Urmston. Other boards were also put up with questions for the public to answer, using Post it notes. The demographic of the community demonstrated an older growing population, as many of the consultees were between 50- 70 years. Passion was clear amongst these residents, as many of them had lived in Urmston all their lives and had watched it change over the decades.



Stage One Evaluation

Public Engagement

The online consultation had its own webpage on the Council's website, and included electronic copies of the consultation boards which were on display at the in-person consultation event on 21st March and an online survey asking open questions. The first Urmston Plan online consultation was advertised via a press release, posts on Trafford Council's social media pages and a poster in community buildings around Urmston. Those members of the public who came to the first in-person consultation event who left their email addresses were also contacted to let them know when the online consultation would start and finish.

Questions which were asked in the first round of consultation were purposely open ended to allow the free-flowing of ideas. The questions are summarised in the following text.

250 people attended the in-person consultation and 140 responses were collated. Over 400 responses were collated from the online consultation event.

What do people like about Urmston?

- + Good, safe community feel, family-feel with access to schools and nurseries.
- + Green infrastructure, tree-lined streets, parks and heritage features.
- + Pedestrianised centre.
- + Good selection of amenities and independent businesses - supermarkets, chains and small businesses and library.
- + Good transport links with trains, buses and the access to motorway.
- + Free parking.

What do people dislike about Urmston?

- + General upkeep and maintenance of Urmston's centre, such as cracked paving, potholes, litter and refuse in public areas.
- + Absence of public toilets in the park and comfortable seating areas for the elderly.
- + Lack of progress of the M41 development site.
- + Lack of variety of shops on the highstreet, too many of the same type of shops such as vape, takeaways, nail bars and hairdressers.
- + Disappointment in the prevalence of vacant units in Urmston's centre and dated town centre.
- + Traffic issues - congestion, poor parking and lack of cycle infrastructure.
- + Anti-social behaviour within open spaces, car parks.
- + Green areas of the town are not maintained by the Council, with community groups being relied on.
- + Lack of greenery in Eden Square.
- + Unreliable public transport to serve the town, residents would like to see a Metrolink service.

How do residents think Urmston could be improved?

- + Traffic calming measures.
- + Improved pedestrianisation with safer road crossings, pedestrian routes and prioritisation and provision of cycling.
- + Plant more trees and flowers in Eden Square.
- + Upgrade the quality of shop frontages to make them more welcoming.
- + Create entertaining hubs and youth clubs for younger people to reduce anti-social behaviour.

- + Open a range of diverse shops to encourage higher quality independent, and small businesses.
- + Development of M41 site with either the proposed foodhall or market to provide a community focal point.
- + Improve public realm of the town, ensuring there are enough bins, greenery is kept in good condition, pavement and potholes are repaired.
- + More areas suitable for outdoor dining.
- + Redevelopment of Victoria parade and re-use of empty shops/buildings.
- + Better car parking to prevent on-street and pavement parking.
- + Better public transport provision with an extension to the Metrolink.
- + More sports and leisure amenities and space for arts and performance

What do residents think Urmston will look like in 15 years?

- + Less congestion in the town centre.
- + More open spaces, and a well-maintained park with public toilets.
- + Better, more frequent public transport that connects to the surrounding areas of Urmston, such as Altrincham, Sale, Chorlton, and Stretford.
- + Vibrant town centre with a mix of amenities and largely local, independent shops, fostering a sense of community.
- + The market site will have been developed, making Urmston a market town again.
- + More green spaces that are well looked after.
- + Improved pedestrian and cycle access
- + Metrolink extended to the town.

Summary

Overall, it was a highly successful first consultation for the Urmston Plan. The level of community engagement in Urmston is high, with a strong turnout from the local community.

Youth Engagement

A YOUTH ENGAGEMENT WORKSHOP WAS HELD WITH A TRAFFORD COUNCIL RUN COMMUNITY YOUTH GROUP THAT HOST WEEKLY MEET-UPS IN ABBOTSFIELD PARK IN URMSTON. THIS ENGAGEMENT EVENT WAS USED TO COLLECT FEEDBACK AND INFORMATION FROM THE YOUNGER RESIDENTS OF URMSTON TO INFORM THE URMSTON PLAN.

The workshop took place on the 8th of July and overall 11 young people were spoken to. The age range of the young people were from 11-18 years old and we spoke to a mix of boys and girls.

To make the consultation event more interactive and engaging, laminated maps of Urmston were used for the young people to refer to whilst we asked them questions about Urmston. The attendees were asked what they liked and disliked about living in Urmston as well as how they would like Urmston to be improved.

They were also asked where they currently socialise with their friends and how the town could better cater for young people.

What do young people like about Urmston and where do they socialise?

The young residents noted that they prefer to socialise with their friends outdoors and amongst nature, with parks being the most popular choice. Additionally, they enjoy meeting at the local food spots in Urmston.

Young people mentioned that they like that the town is quite green. The young people we spoke to tend to hang out with their friends either in Flixton Park or Abbotsfield Park.

There was a general consensus from the young people we spoke to that there is good public transport provision in Urmston and they regularly use the local bus services and train services.

What do the younger residents dislike about Urmston?

It was felt strongly among the workshop attendees that there was a lack of public space for the younger residents of Urmston to meet and call their own. When the weather is good, the younger residents meet up in the local parks, Eden Square and bus stops whilst waiting for the bus. When the weather is poor, there is a limited number of places where they can meet up with friends.

How do the younger residents think Urmston could be improved?

To improve Urmston Town Centre, many of the young people we spoke to suggested that more social areas are introduced into the area with better seating arrangements. For example, seating around the edges of Eden Square and not in the middle.

It was also mentioned that new outdoor seating could include tables, so that young people can socialise with their friends whilst eating food from nearby shops.

It was suggested that the bike sheds in between Golden Hill Park and the Eden Square car park (currently locked and overgrown) be removed, and instead seating be placed there.

It was also mentioned that in Trafford there is only one Youth Centre which is located in Partington, and whether a youth centre in Urmston would be possible.

As mentioned previously, a major theme of the feedback was the importance of green spaces for socialising. Therefore, several young people we spoke to suggested the introduction of green gyms in the parks to give teenagers something to do and better green spaces for younger residents to meet in where they feel safe.

It was also suggested that to improve the visual appearance of the town centre green walls and artwork, such as murals, could be added as well as more bins.

Safety Concerns

In particular, several young people mentioned that they have felt unsafe in Golden Hill Park. Some young people noted that there are a lot of access routes into Golden Hill Park, and they are unable to see where people are coming from. There were reports of Anti-Social Behaviour taking place in the park. Additionally, they were concerned that the park was overgrown, and they did not feel safe in the surrounding pathways and alleyways.

Some of the workshop attendees noted that they also felt unsafe at Penny Lane Bridge and the Golf Course. As a result of these safety concerns, many of the young attendees have chosen to meet in Abbotsfield Park where the area is enclosed with a fence and has less entrances. Abbotsfield Park is also more open, so it is easier to see who is in the park, and there are less hiding places. It has been suggested by the young people we spoke to that the town centre improvements include better methods of way-finding in the park and that public pathways are made safer.

Summary

In summary, the attendees of the Youth Engagement Workshop showed a high level of engagement and desire to improve their local community.

The main outcomes the attendees would like to see is the provision of better spaces for socialising and to feel safer in their local community and for better green spaces for younger residents to meet in where they feel safe.

Business Engagement

AS PART OF THE URMSTON PLAN CONSULTATION, LOCAL BUSINESSES ACROSS URMSTON WERE CONTACTED BY TRAFFORD COUNCIL AND AVISON YOUNG TO PARTICIPATE IN A BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT WORKSHOP. THIS INCLUDED A DIRECT EMAIL TO 102 BUSINESSES WITH A LETTER ATTACHED CONTAINING INFORMATION ABOUT THE WORKSHOP AND A REGISTRATION QR CODE.

The Business Engagement Workshop was held on the 16th of July at Urmston Library and between 5-7pm. In total, there were 6 attendees who represented a variety of local businesses. Two of the attendees were also representatives of the Urmston Partnership. The following themes were discussed.

What do you think is needed in Urmston Town Centre to encourage new businesses to locate here?

- + Urmston needed a stronger vision and place-branding to attract new businesses to the area.
- + Strong business community and is a good place for people to live, work and play.
- + Lack of awareness of Urmston within the Greater Manchester area
- + Improve the accessibility of Urmston to encourage more businesses to locate in the Town Centre.
- + Urmston is seen as more of a place to pass through rather than a destination for shoppers.
- + It was suggested that existing car parks are used more efficiently.
- + Better signage could be implemented to increase way-finding from car parks to different local businesses.
- + Create greater awareness of the different businesses which exist in Urmston, would create better footfall for the existing local businesses
- + New businesses are put off locating in Urmston due to the unaffordability of rents and poor-quality landlords.

Thinking of a successful town centre you know, what are the key factors that make it successful for businesses?

- + Importance of good public realm. Some of the business representatives referred to Poynton and Chorlton as good examples of public realm.
- + Suggestion of public art to brighten up grey walls and shutters, which has been done successfully in Withington.
- + Traffic calming measures were also suggested, to ensure a safe environment for pedestrians in the town centre.
- + Importance of the older demographic in Urmston in the success of local businesses - hospitality and independent shops rely heavily on the disposable income of those who are retired.
- + Businesses wish to encourage a younger demographic to the area to provide some diverse clientele.
- + In order for the area to cater for a younger demographic they need to provide appropriate housing for a younger population, such as homes for new families and young professionals.
- + Greater advertisement of the town so that it becomes appealing to a younger demographic.
- + One of the key comparisons that was made to other local centres, was the appeal of smaller enclaves of independent shops, bars and cafés, such as those seen on Beech Road in Chorlton and Burton Road in Didsbury.
- + It was suggested that Urmston could create an established secondary 'high street' which could be known as 'South Urmston', creating a new destination for locals to go and for new businesses to flourish.
- + Suggestion for a variety of independent traders in the town centre. The town needs to identify businesses which they are lacking and draw them into the area.
- + Suggested that these spaces could be used as pop-up spaces, which would encourage new businesses into the area.

What can you do as a business to contribute to make Urmston successful?

- + Importance of each business in maintaining the quality of the public realm, through keeping their own properties tidy and attractive.
- + The existing independent businesses in Urmston need to function as an ecosystem and work together. Local supply chains in Urmston could be created, so that Urmston businesses can support one another and help each other grow.
- + To achieve this a local business directory and map could be created, which could be updated regularly, so that local businesses know which businesses are in Urmston. One business representative drew attention to the importance of these local business networks not only for small businesses, but for the larger corporations too.
- + Importance of the Urmston Partnership in facilitating improvements and supporting the local community and businesses.
- + It was noted that Urmston Partnership do not feel supported or utilised by all in the area
- + To increase the success of Urmston, local businesses must utilise the support that is provided through the Urmston Partnerships and opportunities for growth.

What things would you like to see in Urmston to help your business thrive?

- + Increase accessibility - whilst Urmston has a large provision of parking, the parking needs better way-finding and to be better connected to the high street. It was suggested that signposts could be installed around the town centre, stating how many minutes walk it is to the shops.
- + Better quality and safer active travel routes, such as cycle lanes and pathways, were needed in Urmston town centre to make it more interconnected with the surrounding residential areas.
- + The traffic is discouraging people to drive through the town, reducing footfall.

- + The need for a community hub for local events - a Community Land Trust could be established, and an empty building could be bought and shared and used for community purposes. This space could help promote the different activities that are going on in the local area.
- + Town centre was visually unappealing and in need of beautifying. Suggested use of green infrastructure / flowers and artwork / murals to improve the public spaces and streetscapes.
- + The importance of having pleasant open spaces throughout the town centre and suggested more street furniture should be incorporated into the public realm.
- + Lack of uniformity and consistency within the town centre, whether that's branding, shop frontages or street design. Stronger place branding required to draw together businesses across the town centre.

Summary

Despite the small turnout, the business representatives showed a high level of engagement and a strong desire to contribute to the local community. The main outcomes that the businesses wish to see are an improved public realm, utilisation of empty shops and increased accessibility into the town centre. Additionally, there is a general consensus that there needs to be a USP and branding for the town to help make Urmston into a destination and attract visitors.

Finally, to ensure that there is a strong ecosystem of businesses and supply chains in Urmston, the Urmston Partnership needs more promotion and support from Trafford Council and the local community. It was noted that Urmston Partnership do not feel supported or utilised by all in the area and representatives at the workshop were very disappointed that there had been such a small turnout to this business engagement workshop. To increase the success of Urmston, local businesses must utilise the support that is provided through the Urmston Partnerships and opportunities for growth.

Evidence based themes

ANALYSIS HAS HIGHLIGHTED THE FOLLOWING THEMES, WHICH HAVE BEEN GROUPED ALIGNED TO THE OBJECTIVES.

 Collaborate



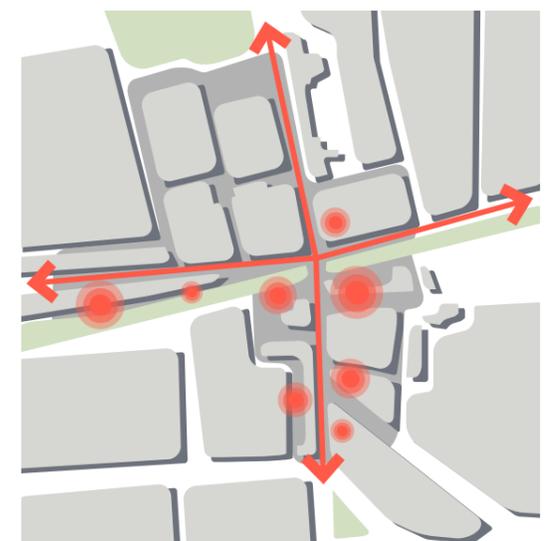
 Improve connectivity



 Improve design quality and appearance



 Enhance the town's historic character



To increase the success of Urmston, local businesses must utilise the support that is provided through the Urmston Partnerships and opportunities for growth.

To ensure that there is a strong ecosystem of businesses and supply chains in Urmston, the Urmston Partnership would benefit from continued promotion and support from Trafford Council and the local community.

By working together, local authorities, businesses, community groups, and residents can align their efforts toward common goals, ensuring that development is inclusive and meets the needs of all stakeholders.

Connectivity is crucial for linking retail cores and aiding pedestrian navigation within the town and to surrounding areas. Urmston has excellent public transport links, including:

- + Direct rail connections to Manchester city centre.
- + Close proximity to the M60 ring road, offering access to regional employment hubs like Salford Quays and Trafford Park.

The spatial assessment and community engagement highlighted the need to:

- + Reduce congestion in the town centre.
- + Consider the balance of vehicle and pedestrian movement.
- + Enhance the public realm.
- + Maximise potential of Urmston railway station as a key transport hub

Understanding where selective refurbishment, re purposing, and new development can enhance the town's character is essential.

Urmston's high-quality natural assets contribute significantly to its appeal for residents and businesses, especially along the town's historic areas. The building grain and storey heights reflect the characteristics of late Victorian towns. Future redevelopment should:

- + Respect the historic context of the town.
- + Introduce new projects only in areas where they complement the existing fabric of the town.

There is an opportunity to reposition Urmston town centre as a resilient and thriving destination, capable of adapting to economic changes by increasing footfall and offering a diverse, appealing mix of retail and leisure options.

Engagement, particularly with local businesses, has highlighted the need to establish a clear unique selling proposition (USP) for the town. This can be achieved through measures such as improved signage, public art installations, and enhancing the quality of existing façades along key routes.

Proposed developments, such as M41, have the potential to attract a more affluent demographic, strengthening Urmston's appeal as an attractive, investable destination for businesses.

Evidence based themes

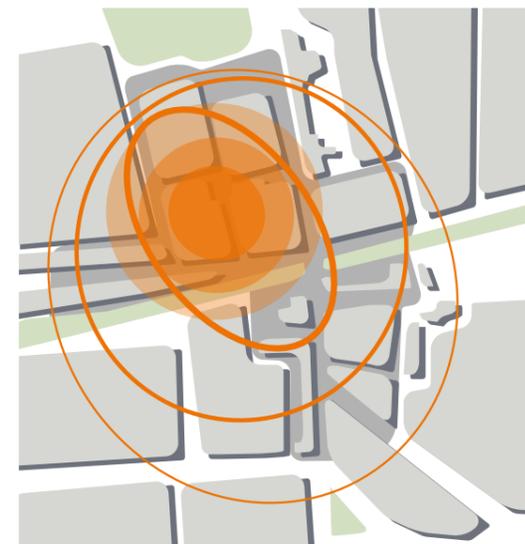
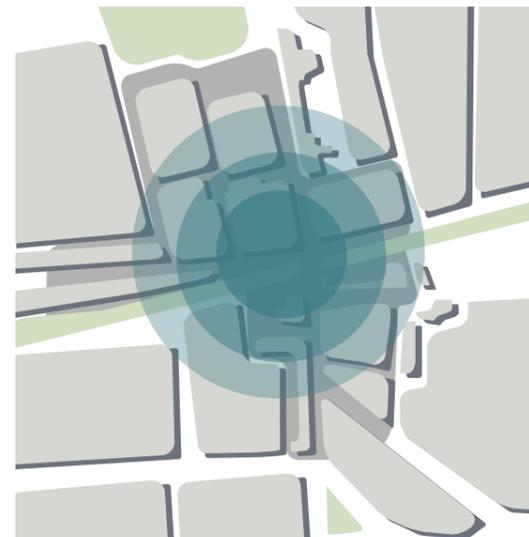
ANALYSIS HAS HIGHLIGHTED THE FOLLOWING THEMES, WHICH HAVE BEEN GROUPED ALIGNED TO THE OBJECTIVES.

 **Retain, Repair and re-use heritage assets**

 **Support the existing economy**

 **Address deficiencies in the local offer**

 **Provide diverse housing types**



Retaining, repairing, and re-using heritage assets in Urmston is crucial to preserve the towns cultural identity, connecting present generations with the history and character of the place.

Additionally, re-using existing buildings contributes to environmental sustainability by reducing the need for new construction, minimizing waste, and conserving resources.

Maintaining and enhancing heritage assets will improve the overall appeal of the town, creating visually attractive and memorable environments that can draw both residents and visitors alike. Preserving the Heritage assets will contribute to the overall growth and vibrancy of Urmston.

Urmston boasts a strong retail and commercial core at its heart. However, activity is primarily concentrated in the northern part of the centre, with the railway and road network creating a disconnect to the south.

The town benefits from a relatively affluent local population, capable of supporting a wide range of customer-facing businesses and services. Additionally, shifts in working patterns have made places like Urmston increasingly attractive for both living and working, presenting opportunities to foster a more robust local economy.

The town centre hosts a variety of uses, retailers, and community spaces. Efforts should focus on increasing dwell time and encouraging linked trips to maximise economic activity.

An analysis of Urmston highlights a substantial retail presence but reveals a notable lack of peripheral services that could diversify and strengthen the local economy. Sector specialisms, such as Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation, should be prioritised to support both day- and night-time economies.

Additionally, the town lacks dedicated workspaces to support entrepreneurs, start-ups, small businesses, and scale-ups. Addressing this gap could foster innovation and economic growth.

Housing and care provision within Urmston is currently limited. Responding to the pressures of the cost-of-living crisis and an aging population presents an opportunity to offer a wider range of housing options, catering to a more diverse mix of residents.

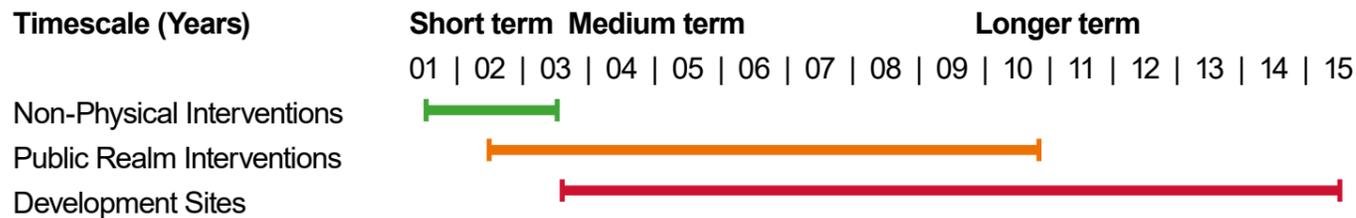
Providing a range of housing types and scales in the core and around the periphery of the town centre ensures that Urmston meets the diverse needs of its population, catering to individuals and families at different life stages, income levels, and lifestyle preferences.

A variety of housing types will help address issues such as housing affordability and availability, allowing Urmston to attract a wider range of residents. This will also enhance the towns resilience by attracting people with different needs and preferences, making Urmston a more sustainable and adaptable place for the future.

Phasing of delivery

HOW SHOULD INTERVENTIONS BE PROGRAMMED?

The programme of delivery across the interventions identified assumes a circa 15-year delivery programme. This is summarised within the table below, which provides high-level indicative assumptions on timings for each intervention by type. The reality is that, in some cases, individual interventions will come forward more quickly or slowly than shown below but this provides a broad understanding of how delivery could be realised. More detail on each category is provided below.



Non-Physical Interventions

With reference to the non-physical interventions noted on page 37, it is fundamental that as part of the implementation of the Plan, the 'quality' or perception of quality of the Town Centre is optimised. This is a focus for public intervention and a signage strategy to assist with way-finding towards existing services, carparks, bus stops, Urmston Train Station, community spaces and businesses to encourage visitors, attract new businesses and raise property values, catalysing development and investment.

In delivery terms there is a need to build market interest and confidence in the Town Centre over time, co-ordinating existing investment, events programmes and other interventions to create a stronger overall 'brand' for the Town Centre. This will encourage greater usage and, in turn, improve the viability position for future development.

Non-physical interventions are therefore expected to be prioritised in the short-term, subject to securing funding, to ensure that there is an offer within the Town Centre that attracts new residents, activities and businesses. Those focused on place branding and diversifying the Town Centre offer should be prioritised for delivery over the short term.

These can be supported by targeted events, pop-up activities and meanwhile space to help 'new' residents and businesses as well as existing communities find new opportunities to engage with the Town Centre. A range of other non-physical interventions are also important to ensure that the economic benefits of physical interventions focused on supporting economic growth are maximised. These need to come forward alongside or ahead of physical interventions to deliver the greatest economic benefits possible. Examples include business support programmes and inward investment campaigns.

These non-physical actions are, at this stage, suggested areas for exploration. These may require additional sources of funding to be secured as well as further planning and investigation into feasibility before they can be formalised and progressed

Public Realm Interventions

Movement interventions across the Town Centre could improve the centre environment. At this stage, it is challenging to address phasing as no technical highways analysis or capacity modelling has been undertaken. Further studies and analysis will therefore be required.

Given the sustainable town centre location, it is unlikely that movement interventions will need to precede developments for capacity purposes. However, identifying some strategic early movement interventions has the potential to improve town centre perception, and optimise results from subsequent developments. Following more detailed highways input, we would recommend identifying priority movement interventions and creating an action plan.

There is opportunity to deliver public space interventions tied to delivery of the development sites. These interventions are therefore likely to come forward as part of development schemes so are expected to be delivered over the medium- and long-term.

Other public space interventions that sit outside development plots could be funded, at least in part, by Section 106 (S106) contributions and other public sector funding pots. Some of these can be delivered relatively quickly where funding can be secured early, but others will take longer to come forward where additional funding and developer contributions are required.

Phasing of delivery

Physical Interventions

Factors such as ownership complexity, scheme design, feasibility, viability, and progression through the planning process all impact the speed at which development sites across the Town Centre can be delivered. Given this, most development site interventions are spread across both the medium-term and the long-term.

In terms of low ownership complexity with significant impact, intervention site 03 (Public realm adjacent to the library) presents opportunity for short term delivery, as it sits within Council ownership, with no clear barriers to delivering an Opportunity for younger person focused community space.

Intervention site 01 (Urmston Market) also presents an opportunity for delivery reasonably quickly. This is likely to be early in the medium-term bracket. The site sits in single ownership and benefits from a planning consent. We understand that the site is currently stalled, with the landowner citing viability challenges. The approach to addressing this will likely be a key influence on delivery timescales.

There are a number of sites (Intervention sites 02, 08, 10) that sit within single ownership with either no underlying leases, or leases due for imminent expiry. Subject to landowner aspirations, there is opportunity for delivery within the medium-term.

Plots 07 represent sizeable development plots with opportunity to deliver significant change within the town centre. However, these plots sit in complex ownership. This may require intervention from Trafford Council to support delivery. We would recommend engagement with landowners and consideration of a CPO strategy should the Council wish to secure development on these plots. Without intervention, we envisage these being longer-term development plots, as it is challenging to foresee the market bringing them forward without land assembly support.

In summary

The overarching goal of the study is to craft an inclusive vision for Urmston which fosters economic, environmental, and social well-being, enhancing the vitality and sustainability of Urmston town centre while preserving its vibrant, unique appeal for residents, visitors, and businesses alike.

Focusing on the bridge over the Urmston railway line as a key intervention point is essential to enhancing the long-term vitality and sustainability of Urmston's town centre, responding to many of the objectives. Subtly adjusting the road network here could encourage pedestrian movement and active travel connections in alignment with the Urmston Active Neighbourhood scheme, supporting a safer and more walkable environment.

This strategic enhancement could act as a catalyst for the refurbishment of key buildings and the introduction of new development that aligns with evidence-based recommendations. By establishing this connection, the project has the potential to inspire confidence in Urmston's future, fostering a ripple effect of redevelopment throughout the area and invigorating the local economy.

Our thoughts on phasing can be seen on the following pages.

Non-Physical Interventions

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Intervention sites

+ Study area

Objectives achieves

-  Collaborate
-  Improve connectivity
-  Improve design quality and appearance
-  Enhance the town's historic character
-  Support the existing economy

Overview

There is a need to build market interest and confidence in the Town Centre over time, co-ordinating existing investment, events programmes and other interventions to create a stronger overall 'brand' for the Town Centre. This will encourage greater usage and, in turn, improve the viability position for future development. There are a number of interventions which can reinforce the towns distinctive character whilst enhancing the long term sustainability, these include;

Place Branding and Marketing

Developing a way-finding strategy, to assist with the movement of people towards existing services, Transport points, carparks, community spaces and businesses to encourage visitors, attract new businesses and raise property values catalysing development and investment.

Meanwhile support

Build upon an established local calendar with targeted events, pop-up activities and meanwhile space to help 'new' residents and businesses as well as existing communities find new opportunities to engage with the Town Centre.

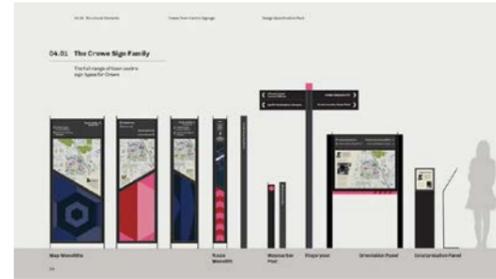
Retail and commercial signage

Encourage a consistent approach to shop front design and facade uplift to refine the towns USP. Properties along key routes could benefit from this; Flixton Road, Crofts Bank Road, Eden Square, Station Road and Gloucester Road.



Non-Physical Interventions

Examples of successful way finding and branding which together, helps to define a town USP.



Intervention sites

FOLLOWING THE EVALUATION A NUMBER OF OPPORTUNITIES HAVE BEEN HIGHLIGHTED WHICH COULD COMPLIMENT THE VISION AND ALIGN WITH REGENERATION OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE BASED RECOMMENDATIONS.

The locations we feel add to the long term vision of Urmston are;

Public Realm Interventions

- 01 Higher Road
- 02 Public realm adjacent to the library
- 03 Public realm by Flixton Road / Crofts Bank Road
- 04 Gloucester Road

Refurbishment Opportunities

- 05 Former bank on corner of Crofts Bank Road
- 06 Urmston Market
- 07 Former Ridings Store
- 08 Victoria Parade
- 09 Former TMBC Depot Building
- 10 Former surgery on corner Station Road

The following strategy will explain how these locations could be redeveloped over short, medium and long term time-scales. The identified sites are not Planning policy allocations. Any development opportunities that come forward through the planning system would need to be considered in the context of policies that form part of the planning permission and development plan polices in place at the time.



Stage Two Responding to Findings

Public Realm Interventions

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Intervention sites

- 01 Higher Road
- 02 Public realm adjacent to the library
- 03 Public realm by Flixton Road / Crofts Bank Road
- 04 Gloucester Road

Objectives achieves

-  Improve connectivity
-  Improve design quality and appearance
-  Enhance the town's historic character
-  Support the existing economy

Overview

The provision of traffic calming measures, reduction in congestion and increased greenery and nature in the town centre were noted in the evidence based recommendations; these points have influenced the design response, which aligns with the key principles of the Urmston Active Neighbourhood. The site analysis and engagement highlighted how significant the road and footpath network around the Station Road Bridge was to the long term vision of the Plan, to join communities and create a focal point to the town. This approach could be extended along Flixton Road, Crofts Bank Road, Railway Road, Higher Road and Gloucester Road.

The opportunity to deliver public realm interventions could be tied to the delivery of potential redevelopment. Changes are therefore likely to come forward as part of the identified physical interventions so are expected to be delivered over the medium and long-term. Other public space interventions that sit outside development plots could be funded, at least in part, by Section 106 (S106) contributions and other public sector funding pots. Some of these can be delivered relatively quickly where funding can be secured early, but others will take longer to come forward where additional funding and developer contributions are required.



Stage Two Responding to Findings

Public Realm Interventions

Montage 01 | Higher Road

At the west end of Higher Road, there is a row of cherry trees running from the pedestrian Victoria Parade to the junction. They are planted with wide sections of paving on all sides, and have the potential for much more planting around their base.

This area lends itself to more, high quality public seating among colourful and robust planting. Catenary lighting encloses the space and gently lights it at night.



Public Realm Interventions

Montage 02 | Public realm adjacent to the library

Beneath Urmston Library, an overhanging roof provides the potential for cover while people wait for a bus. However the area is not well lit, and requires more seating and planting.

A selection of colourful seats and planters create a fun place for people to pause. Catenary lighting illuminates at night. Elevating the space further, existing columns and walls could host local artworks or glazed tiles, to make this forgotten corner evoke feelings of local pride.



Public Realm Interventions

Montage 03 | Public realm by Flixton Road / Crofts Bank Road

From the pedestrianised Golden Way to Urmston train station, there is not presently a direct crossing for pedestrians.

This intervention proposes a raised crossing, with surface extending across the existing path to the Millennium Clock, enhancing its setting. The bus stop outside Bevano Lounge will be moved west up the road, and street trees would be planted.



Public Realm Interventions

Montage 04 | Gloucester Road

From Atkinson Road to the B5214, Gloucester Road hosts a variety of businesses. Car parking runs along its northeast edge. The pavement is wide, though some of it is occupied with outdoor seating by cafes. This intervention proposes the planting of street trees at intervals along the path and parking. Some planters will support seats, so people who may be waiting for an appointment or drinking a hot chocolate can sit.



Stage Two Responding to Findings

Public Realm Interventions

Intervention site	Status	Complexity	Responsibility	Time-scales	NDHA	Objectives	Next Steps / Recommendations
01 Higher Road Opportunity to adjust road arrangement to provide pedestrian friendly environment.	No work progressed to date.	Trafford Borough Council Ownership.	Trafford Council	Medium-term		Improve connectivity Improve visual appearance	Trafford Council should consider initial feasibility and assessment of cost of work and devise a delivery strategy.
02 Public realm adjacent to the library Opportunity fro pop-up community space.	No work progressed to date.	Trafford Borough Council Ownership.	Trafford Council	Medium-term		Improve connectivity Address deficiencies in the local offer	Trafford Council should consider initial feasibility and assessment of cost of work and devise a delivery strategy.
03 Public realm by Flixton Road / Crofts Bank Road Opportunity to adjust road arrangement to provide pedestrian friendly environment which links north and south Urmston.	No work progressed to date.	Trafford Borough Council Ownership.	Trafford Council	Medium-term		Improve connectivity Improve visual appearance Enhance the town centres character Support the existing economy	Trafford Council should consider initial feasibility and assessment of cost of work and devise a delivery strategy.
04 Gloucester Road Opportunity to adjust road arrangement to provide pedestrian friendly environment.	No work progressed to date.	Trafford Borough Council Ownership.	Trafford Council	Medium-term		Improve connectivity Improve visual appearance	Trafford Council should consider initial feasibility and assessment of cost of work and devise a delivery strategy.

Stage Two Responding to Findings

Refurbishment Opportunities

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Intervention sites

- 05** Former bank on corner of Crofts Bank Road
- 06** Urmston Market
- 07** Former Ridings Store
- 08** Victoria Parade
- 09** Former TMBC Depot Building
- 10** Former surgery on corner Station Road

Objectives achieved

-  Improve design quality and appearance
-  Enhance the town's historic character
-  Support the existing economy
-  Address deficiencies in the local offer

Overview

We believe there are a number of medium to long term opportunities which align with the evidence based recommendations and achieved the vision for Urmston. These include;

Ensure the development of plot **06** happens within a medium time-scale to help support the vision and objectives of study and needs of the town.

For plots **05**, **07** and **10**; encourage the refurbishment of key nodal buildings along key routes, to act as a catalyst for change with new uses being proposed that respond to the recommendations and provide uses such as the provision of arts, culture and leisure facilities, or spaces for young people. This may occur over a medium and long timescale.

For plots **08** and **09**, consider how redevelopment of these sites can align with the needs of the community to provide reliant uses such as a varied housing offer, care provision and commercial space whilst aligning with Planning Policy and the Trafford Design Code.



Refurbishment Opportunities

Intervention site	Status	Complexity	Responsibility	Time-scales	NDHA	Objectives	Next Steps / Recommendations
<p>05 Former bank on corner of Crofts Bank Road Refurbishment opportunity to align with community needs, such as arts, culture and leisure use or, support space to address local deprivation. 2 Crofts Bank has already been refurbished and permission granted for re-use</p>	<p>The unit is currently vacant. Landowner aspirations are unknown.</p>	<p>Single freehold ownership: J Goodwin Properties Limited. No leasehold interests.</p>	<p>J Goodwin Properties Limited. odwin Properties</p>	<p>Short-term</p>	<p>Sensitive proposal required to not impact significance of NDHAs</p>	<p>Improve visual appearance Address deficiencies in the local offer</p>	<p>Active engagement with the landowner to shape development is recommended.</p>
<p>06 Urmston Market Redevelopment of the former market site into indoor market hall, dedicated co-work hub, 29 hotel rooms and indoor / outdoor children’s play areas.</p>	<p>Scheme being led by McGoff Group. Full planning permission granted Feb 2022.</p>	<p>Single freehold ownership: Urmston Beverage & Leisure Company Limited. No leasehold interests.</p>	<p>McGoff Group</p>	<p>Medium-term</p>	<p>Sensitive proposal required to not impact significance of NDHAs</p>	<p>Enhance the town centres character Address deficiencies in the local offer</p>	<p>Trafford Council should continue to monitor development delivery in line with planning conditions. We recommend engagement with the landowner to understand reasons for lack of delivery and work to reach a solution. Engage with end-operator to link in with relevant non-physical interventions.</p>
<p>07 Former Ridings Store Refurbishment opportunity to align with community needs, such as arts, culture and leisure use or, support space to address local deprivation.</p>	<p>We understand SES have some ownership within this plot and has aspirations to re-develop. However, a review of ownership data is inconclusive.</p>	<p>Complex freehold ownership, with 9 freeholders. Leasehold ownership includes 9 interests. Most of these present 9 years unexpired.</p>	<p>Landowners via collaboration</p>	<p>Long-term</p>	<p>Sensitive proposal required to not impact significance of NDHAs</p>	<p>Improve visual appearance Address deficiencies in the local offer</p>	<p>Given complexity of ownership, it is likely that intervention from Trafford Council may be required in the future to unlock the site. There is opportunity to consider delivery alongside adjacent plots. We suggest initial engagement with landowners to understand aspirations, followed by devising a more comprehensive CPO strategy if required.</p>
<p>08 Victoria Parade Opportunity for mixed-use residential building with commercial / workspace.</p>	<p>We understand SES has some ownership within this plot and has aspirations to re-develop. However, review of ownership data is inconclusive on this.</p>	<p>Large freehold owned by M&H Property Limited. Greater freehold complexity directly adjacent to Station Road. Complex leasehold ownership across the plot.</p>	<p>Landowners via collaboration</p>	<p>Long-term</p>	<p>Sensitive proposal required to not impact significance of NDHAs</p>	<p>Improve visual appearance Enhance the town centres character Address deficiencies in the local offer</p>	<p>Trafford Council should establish details of ownership and landowner aspirations through engagement. Following this, there is potential to consider more interventionist longer term approaches to support development delivery, including devising a CPO strategy.</p>

Stage Two Responding to Findings

Refurbishment Opportunities

Intervention site	Status	Complexity	Responsibility	Time-scales	NDHA	Objectives	Next Steps / Recommendations
<p>09 Former TMBC Depot Building Opportunity for residential use to support general housing need or older person accommodation.</p>	Landowner aspirations are unknown, likely to support re-development.	2 freehold owners (majority of the plot sits under Challenger Homes ownership.)	Landowners	Medium-term		Address deficiencies in the local offer	Trafford Council should influence development through the planning system. Active engagement with the landowner to shape development is recommended. Opportunity to consider more comprehensive delivery along with adjoining plots depending on how interventionist Trafford Council wish to be.
<p>10 Former surgery on corner Station Road Refurbishment opportunity to align with community needs, such as arts, culture and leisure use or, support space to address local deprivation.</p>	The landowner has aspirations to re-develop.	Single freehold ownership, listed as private owner. We understand this to be SES Developments. No underlying leasehold interest.	SES Developments	Medium-term		<p>Improve visual appearance</p> <p>Enhance the town centres character</p> <p>Address deficiencies in the local offer</p>	Trafford Council should influence development through the planning system. Active engagement with the landowner to shape development is recommended.

Stage Two Responding to Findings

Delivery Options

THIS PLAN MARKS A STEP CHANGE FOR URMSTON AND ITS DELIVERY WILL REQUIRE PARTNERS TO WORK CLOSELY TOGETHER TO SECURE TANGIBLE CHANGE.

The Plan provides a clear roadmap that stakeholders can get behind and progress at pace. It does, however, come at a challenging time. The public sector has fewer resources than ever before and macro-economic events such as COVID-19, Brexit and the cost-of-living crisis are having fundamental impacts on public sector capacity, local businesses and on residents. Therefore, partners will need to be innovative in their approach to delivery, where possible drawing on the principles set out below.

Collaboration and Partnership

Making the most of opportunities to work collaboratively to share resources and accelerate, positively shape, secure 'marriage value' and refine delivery.

Positivity and Problem Solving

Approaching delivery positively and having a 'can do attitude' to solving problems and overcoming barriers.

Commitment and Focus A shared long-term commitment to responding to the challenges and opportunities identified and driving forward delivery.

Innovation and Creativity Experimenting with innovative project ideas and exploring innovative approaches to leverage funding.

Agility and Pace Working rapidly together to deliver change and continuously reviewing projects to ensure they respond to changing needs.

A mix of short-term, medium-term and long-term proposed physical interventions are identified as a high level action plan. Alongside these physical interventions, the Plan has identified non-physical actions that need to be progressed, in many cases to enable physical change to manifest. The approach to consider change on a phased basis has been designed intentionally to ensure that positive outcomes can be secured incrementally over time. It is intended that early interventions will catalyse wider investment from businesses, residents, developers, and investors as other projects come forward. The next step for each intervention will be to progress them towards becoming fully 'shovel ready' so that all the information and arrangements are in place for delivery. This will involve undertaking further feasibility work where required. Non-physical interventions are considered to be;

Place Branding and Marketing

Use consumer messaging platforms to launch a newly-developed place brand to attract different types of people to visit a revitalised Town Centre.

Retail Innovation Grants / Loans

Explore the potential role of small grants and loans to support independent retailers looking to evolve their business model to better meet consumer needs and to support retail entrepreneurs with innovative ideas that will enhance the Town Centre offer.

Retail Business Support Programme

Secure funding for a retail expert to provide intensive 1-1 support for independent high street businesses to help them adapt their offering to better meet consumer expectations and increase revenue (e.g. related to digital engagement, marketing, customer service, nudge tactics etc).

Inward Investment Campaign

Use consumer messaging platforms to launch a concerted inward investment campaign to attract developers / investors to the town centre, and to encourage businesses to take up new space coming forward.

Business Bootstrap/ Accelerator Programme

Work with partners to secure funding to set up or commission an accelerator/bootstrap programme to support entrepreneurs and promising businesses in new workspaces (e.g. Innovation Hub) to rapidly scale-up, grow and create new employment opportunities for local people.

Business Support Programme

Work with partners to secure funding to set up or commission a programme to help existing small and medium sized enterprises grow and become more efficient, particularly in sectors that the Town Centre needs to retain (e.g. Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities).

Incubator Units

Undertake feasibility and business case analysis to further understand the potential to deliver low-cost retail incubator units that allow independent entrepreneurs to test and scale new high street concepts (e.g. within Council assets or new developments), either as formal developments or within meanwhile/temporary space.

Delivery Options

High-level viability testing has been undertaken to support the Plan. This has been assessed using Argus-developer, an industry standard tool to assess development viability. Development appraisals have been built utilising market facing input assumptions and assume a standard delivery model.

A wide range of public and private funding sources may be needed to deliver the interventions set out in this Framework. Where possible funding will be secured from private sector developers, both via direct delivery on development sites and through S106 agreements and CIL monies. However, in some circumstances public sector funding will be needed to optimise outcomes.

The Council can also consider its own borrowing potential and risk profile to understand the role The current climate for public funding to unlock development is uncertain with the new Government yet to provide any clarity on future funding programmes. There are existing programmes delivered through the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, including brownfield programmes and devolved Homes England funding.

The majority of this funding is targeted at unlocking housing delivery on brownfield land and is linked to existing spend review periods. It will be important for the Council to engage with GMCA, Homes England, and Government (if and when additional funding programmes are launched), to explore potential for investment to unlock delivery across the town centre. Important Government departments and agencies to place focus on as delivery on the Plan evolves include, but are not limited to:

- + Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.
- + Department for Transport.
- + Department for Business Energy Industrial and Strategy.
- + Homes England.
- + Historic England.
- + National Lottery.
- + GMCA / TFGM

It would be prudent for the Council to develop an engagement and awareness raising programme with these departments to ensure the Council is in the best place possible to secure future funding. It may also be prudent for the Council to make initial investment in outline business case considerations including value for money of any grant funding sought.

The Council has acknowledged its Commitment for supporting the delivery of change in Urmston Town Centre by leading on the commissioning of this work. However, given no project is within the sole gift of one delivery partner, successful delivery will require partnership working. The Council should therefore continue to work collaboratively with partners to support a comprehensive approach to regeneration across the Town Centre.

The actions available to the Council are largely dependent on the specific circumstances surrounding each site. Subject to that process of engagement, it may be concluded that the Council need to acquire third party interests to enable delivery. These have been split out and considered in more detail in the text below:

Development Sites in Simple Private Ownership

For development sites in simple private ownership it may be possible to unlock delivery through proactive and clear development management. The Council can take a positive approach to development management by:

- + Capturing and steering emerging proposals through pro-active pre-application discussions.
- + Continuing to produce and evolve planning policies and frameworks that reflect the area's changing context including production of Design Codes and other Supplementary Planning Document(s) as appropriate.
- + Shaping proposals and securing high quality details/specification through the effective use of planning conditions and obligations.
- + Using planning conditions to minimise disruption during construction.
- + Using planning obligations to secure on-site and off-site infrastructure (including social infrastructure) delivery, mitigation measures and financial contributions.
- + Treatment of the projects as a programme of delivery across the town centre in articulation of funding requirements.

Delivery Options

Development Sites in Complex Private Ownership

There are several plots in more complex private ownership where a more interventionist approach is likely to be required to support delivery. The Council may wish to consider opportunities for site assembly via:

- + Acquisition by agreement
- + Option agreements / deferred purchase

How can Trafford Council secure delivery?

All the sites are situated within the town centre and effectively represent a planned investment strategy deemed crucial for maintaining its long-term vibrancy and vitality. To support the delivery of this comprehensive programme, and considering the complexities of land ownership, the Council will leverage its convening powers to facilitate and encourage development.

Self-delivery

Where all of the construction and sales risks are borne by a single party. This does have the benefit that all the returns also flow back to that same party, however, presents an additional degree of risk. This would require the Council to provide sufficient finance to enable delivery with 100% of risks (construction and commercial exit) sitting with the Council.

Joint Venture

These are typical for larger more complex sites as they can be costly and lengthy to establish. Under a JV agreement, commonly established between Local Authorities and private sector partners, both parties tend to operate on a 50/50 basis to bring forward a scheme with costs and returns shared amongst partners. Under a JV the Council would seek to share risk but would have to forgo a proportion of value generated as a result. The procurement of a JV partner could be time consuming, but it would likely involve securing Development Management support to deliver.

Development Agreement

This is a land sale where there are obligations around performance such as planning consent and programme timing placed by the landowner (in this case the Council) on the developer. In the event that these conditions are not satisfactorily met, there are remedies for breach which can include step in rights or an option to take the land back. This can work in circumstances where the Council would like to see more comprehensive development but retain some level of control. Any such agreement could include an overage clause to recover additional land receipt subject to ultimate performance of the project and return generated.

Single partner delivery solution

A package of projects will offer greater scale and attractiveness to prospective developer/ investor partners. This approach could elevate the opportunity in the market and attract a better calibre of partner who is likely to be able to take a longer-term view and commercial interest in the town centre.

Enhancing viability e.g. approach to affordable housing delivery

Consideration of the development potential on a portfolio basis will allow for more testing of viability – including for example concentration of affordable housing provision in single site solutions to reduce impact on higher value development locations.

Funding

Having maximised leverage from the private sector, enhanced viability and supported delivery as much as possible through cross-subsidy where it can be achieved, it may still be necessary or advantageous to pursue public funding. Whilst government and the Combined Authority have not launched any new funding programmes, there is appetite for programme-level engagement (i.e. multi-site / multi engagement rather than individual project engagement). This suggests a move towards greater devolved funding arrangements which could include within-programme recycling of funds.

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