

Chorlton Public Realm Plan



Consultation
DRAFT
February 2024

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01 Introduction



1.1 Introduction

Manchester City Council has commissioned a Public Realm Plan for Chorlton District Centre.

This is a unique opportunity to consider how Chorlton's public realm can be enhanced, to form a comprehensive vision that will guide future investment and support this thriving District Centre.



Chorlton District Centre

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Manchester City Council is looking at how best to improve its district centres so that all areas benefit from future growth and regeneration. In the case of Chorlton there are a number of development proposals that are likely to come forward in the coming years. It is therefore a good opportunity to put in place a vision for how the public realm might be improved in the future.

This document is a **draft** Public Realm Plan produced for public consultation in early 2024. The Council and the project team will then review all feedback and consider how the Plan could be best amended in light of the responses from the community. A final draft of the document will subsequently be presented to the Council's Executive for endorsement.

This Public Realm Plan focuses on how the streets and public spaces across Chorlton District Centre could be improved. The Plan establishes the design principles and priorities for improving the centre of Chorlton, predominantly covering spaces that are highly visible and in Council ownership. It will help to provide a more pleasant and welcoming environment for residents and visitors. An improved public realm will also benefit the local commercial, retail and food & drink offer. The Public Realm Plan has been drafted to be flexible, so that its principles and recommended approaches stay relevant over the long term as opportunities for improvements arise.

Once consulted, and endorsed by the Council, it is intended that this Public Realm Plan will help guide future investment in Chorlton from both public and private sources and provide an evidence base for future funding bids. It is also intended to inform future development schemes that are providing publicly accessible and street-fronting public realm.

1.2 Purpose

The main purpose of this document is to articulate a vision for the public realm within Chorlton District Centre following a baseline analysis of the existing area.

The public realm plan will consider the whole of Chorlton District Centre as presented in section 1.4, as well as key gateway sites on the edge of the formal district centre.

The document will establish a set of design principles and priorities which can be applied as and when funding becomes available and to inform future development within the area.

The proposals for public realm articulated in the document are a guide and individual schemes will be assessed on a scheme by scheme basis.

1.3 Objectives

- ANALYSE Chorlton’s existing assets and opportunities**
Including, existing infrastructure, open space and public realm, public transport, active travel infrastructure, and car parking.
- CREATE a distinct centre-wide strategic plan**
To illustrate a range of possible public realm projects, endorsed by the community and the council which can then be used as the basis for funding bids as and when any new funding streams emerge.
- DELIVER a public realm plan**
To uplift the existing environment and build upon the recent investment in the District Centre. It identifies a holistic set of proposals for the District Centre that includes hard/soft landscaping, a palette of materials to guide all future works, street furniture and opportunities for tree planting as well as the rationalisation of on-street parking.



The Team:

This document has been commissioned by Manchester City Council and prepared by the following team of consultants:

- ◆ Cushman & Wakefield led on the production of the LIF document.
- ◆ OPEN led on the production of the Public Realm Plan.
- ◆ Civic Engineers provided engineering, highways and drainage advice.



1.4 Study Area

The Public Realm Plan considers people, place, environment, transport and movement.

The research conducted covers the study area for Chorlton District Centre, as indicated in the plan opposite.

The vision extends to additional areas outside of the formal Chorlton District Centre boundary, such as the parade of shops between Chorlton Metrolink Station and Egerton Road North / South, as these are contiguous.

The Public Realm Plan concentrates on the Chorlton District Centre core, with three focus areas illustrated in greater detail in Chapter 6:

- 1. Chorlton Library to Nicolas Road
- 2. Wilbraham Road
- 3. High Lane Junction



02 Planning Context

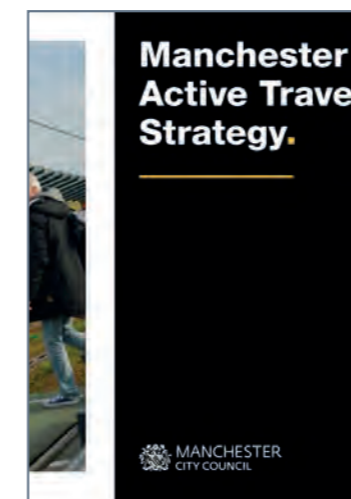
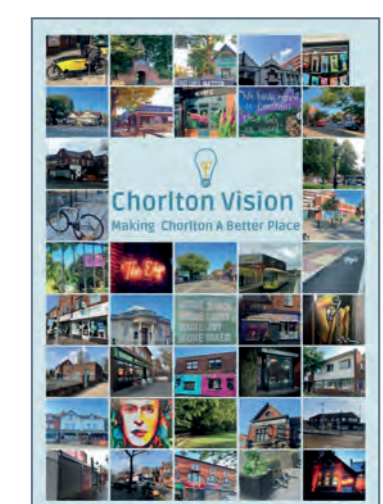
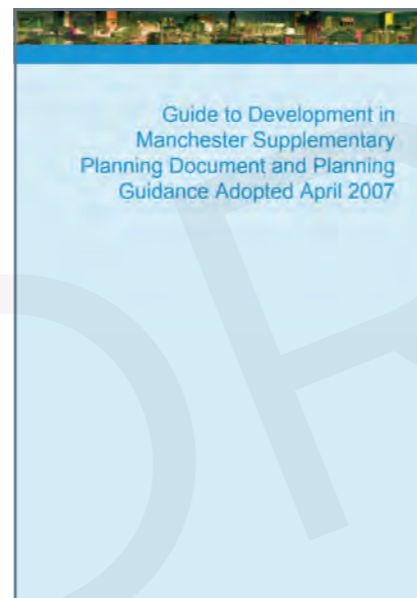
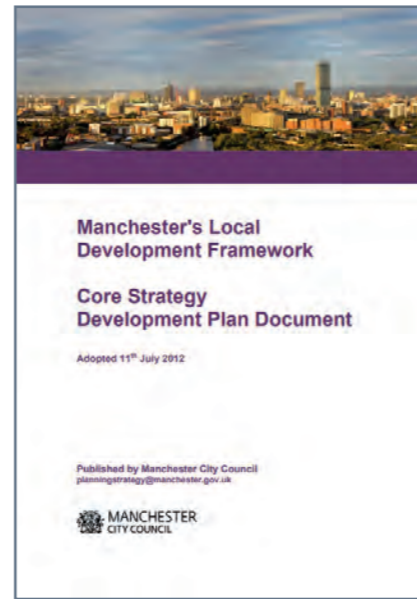


Planning policy Evidence gathering and stakeholder consultation has shaped the vision for Chorlton District Centre

2.1 Policy Background

This plan applies the policies and findings within the following documents:

- Manchester City Council's adopted Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2012
- Guide to Development in Manchester SPD 2007
- Chorlton District Centre Action Plan 2010-2020
- Healthy Active Places Principles
- Healthy Active Places for Children and Young People
- Manchester Active Travel Strategy
- Manchester City Council's Climate Change Action Plan 2020 - 2025
- Growing Manchester's Trees: MCC Tree Planting Capacity Study 2022
- Chorlton Vision: Making Chorlton a better place
- Greater Manchester's Streets for All Strategy 2021
- Manchester Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy 2021-2025
- Manchester Tree and Woodland Action Plan 2024-2034



2.2 Early Engagement

A variety of initial discussions have taken place to ensure that the Public Realm Plan considers the needs and aspirations of the local community, key stakeholders and user groups within the local area.

The consultation undertaken to date has taken place through meetings, workshops and briefings.

Consultees included the following key personnel from Manchester City Council (MCC):

- Local ward councillors
- Development
- Highways
- Planning
- Lighting
- Street Cleansing

And the project team have presented to following key stakeholders:

- Chorlton Voice
- Chorlton Vision
- Chorlton Community Land Trust

2.3 Key Findings

Common themes and ambitions from the engagement to date include:

Natural Space:

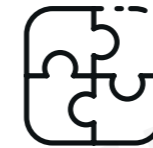


- Green spaces exist in close proximity to the District Centre but there is limited green space within the centre itself
- Chorlton has a high provision of allotments but also a high demand
- Flooding must be considered
- Green verges can be of benefit
- Upgrade the public realm to enhance pride in the district centre
- Improve the quality of the local environment to make Chorlton a better place in which to spend time
- Opportunities to take advantage of Chorlton’s creative scene through street art, trails, sculptures, signage and creative elements to brighten Chorlton
- Provide more seating and spaces to stop, rest and meet
- Clear street clutter outside of building curtilage, including commercial waste bins

Community and Identity:



- The role of the independent retail sector in Chorlton should be supported
- New development should make a contribution to the character and environmental improvements of the centre
- Chorlton centre needs to support more sustainable shopping patterns
- New development should be of the highest quality
- Create and implement a brand identity for Chorlton



Connectivity:

- Upgrade the appearance of the City’s major radial and orbital roads
- Implement improvements to the appearance of street fronting premises
- Improve the arrival experience and wayfinding through defining gateways and signage
- Improve the safety, function and appearance of the road, improving the local environment for people living and working on or close to these major routes
- Create connections to existing green spaces
- Provide clearer connections to active travel routes

‘Active Travel’ ... what this means:

When we use the term active travel, we mean walking, wheeling and cycling. It is an integral part of how Manchester will create a zero carbon, liveable city, with clean air, pleasant streets and environment in which active travel is an enjoyable, natural choice for everyday journeys.



Parking:

- Parking provision is a key concern for residents, business owners and visitors and requires careful consideration
- Parking often obstructs pavements and cycleways

2.4 Local Plan

Core Strategy Proposals Map

Manchester City Council's Local Plan guides development within Manchester.

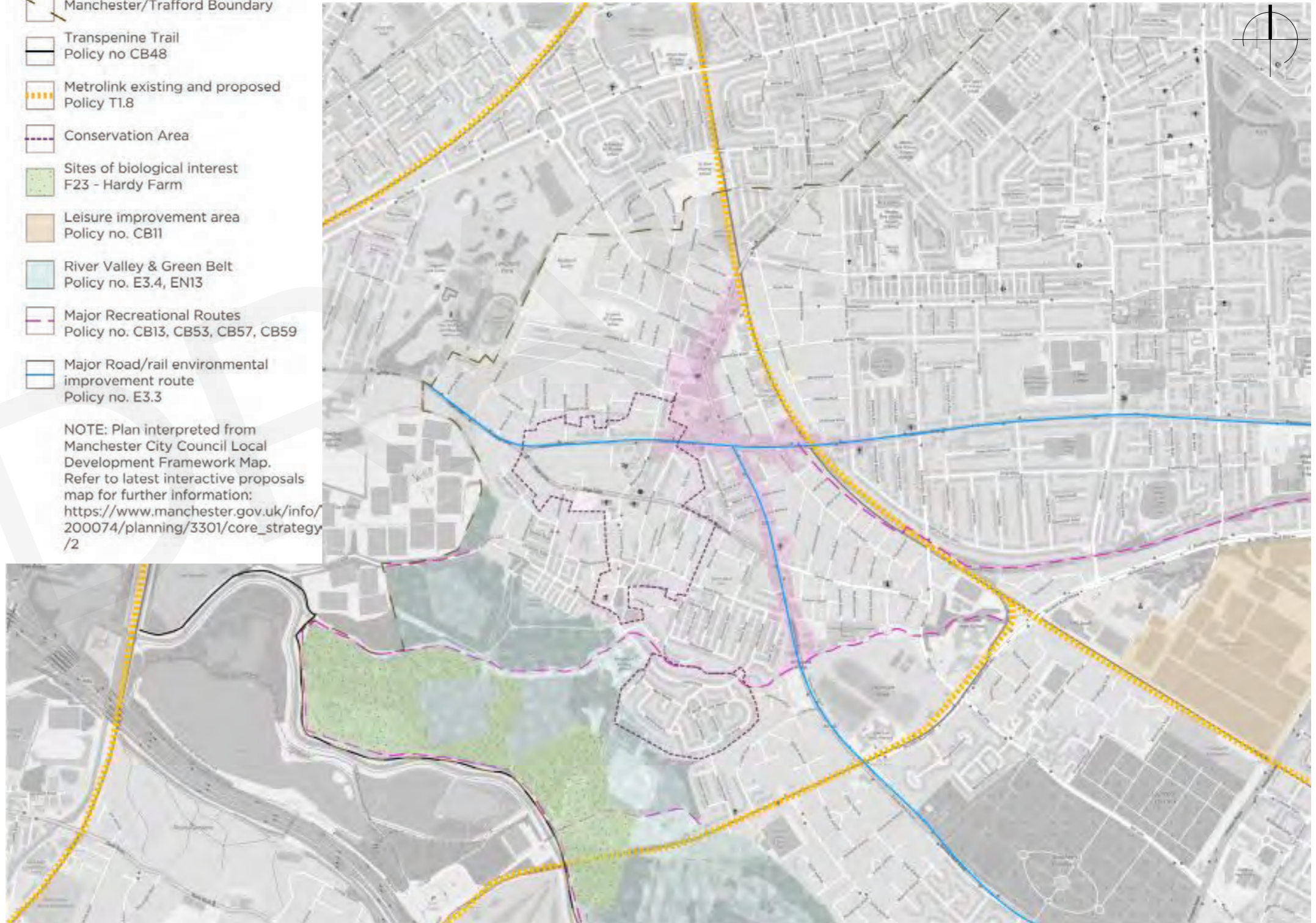
Chorlton is defined as one of South Manchester's District Centres.

The adjacent map identifies the Core Strategy and the extant (remaining) Unitary Development Plan policies relevant to Chorlton. The existing Local Plan is currently being reviewed by the Council.

Key

- Study area
- Manchester/Trafford Boundary
- Transpenine Trail Policy no. CB48
- Metrolink existing and proposed Policy T1.8
- Conservation Area
- Sites of biological interest F23 - Hardy Farm
- Leisure improvement area Policy no. CB11
- River Valley & Green Belt Policy no. E3.4, EN13
- Major Recreational Routes Policy no. CB13, CB53, CB57, CB59
- Major Road/rail environmental improvement route Policy no. E3.3

NOTE: Plan interpreted from Manchester City Council Local Development Framework Map. Refer to latest interactive proposals map for further information: https://www.manchester.gov.uk/info/200074/planning/3301/core_strategy/2



03 Baseline Analysis - Local Context



An extensive study of the site has been conducted to fully understand Chorlton and its surrounding area.

Site survey and analysis has been undertaken throughout Autumn / Winter 2023 by the consultant team.

The study utilises stakeholder engagement, data collection, local GIS data, baseline place analysis and research undertaken as part of this document to inform the Public Realm Plan.

3.1 Overview

Baseline information was collated for the study area including a review of relevant documents including:

- Manchester Streetscape Manual
- Manual for Streets
- Relevant British Standards
- Utility information
- MCC Tree and Woodland Action Plan
- Healthy people and places
- Manchester Tree Action Plan
- Greater Manchester's Streets for All Strategy 2021

The following site observations were undertaken to inform and establish the current condition of the District Centre and its wider local context:

- Key vehicular and pedestrian routes;
- Key vehicular and pedestrian nodes, which occur at the intersections of those routes;
- The location of existing pedestrian crossing points;
- Key views and vistas
- Barriers to pedestrian and vehicular movement;
- The location of active frontages;
- Existing land use;
- Listed buildings; and
- The location of Conservation Areas in the vicinity of the study area.

3.2 Purpose

- To better understand what the study area comprises, its condition and the factors affecting how it operates, in order to generate a series of potential interventions which will align it to its intended long term vision;
- To highlight a baseline on which the cost consultant can quantify costings for identified masterplan proposals.

This information has enabled an informed analysis to be undertaken as detailed in the following section.

3.3 Local Context

Overview

Chorlton is a suburb of Manchester, approximately 5km to the south of Manchester City Centre. Its district centre hosts an array of independent shops, takeaways, and offices. The area's residential housing includes largely terraced and semi-detached homes as well as apartments within purpose built buildings and above commercial premises.

Chorlton is recognised for its food & beverage offer and independent retailing sector, which make a significant contribution to its character. At present, the centre has more limited civic and community provision.

Local civic buildings within a mile of the District Centre include Chorlton Library, Edge Theatre, five secondary and eight primary schools and twelve Churches.

Listed Buildings within the study area and nearby include the following, all with a grade II listing:

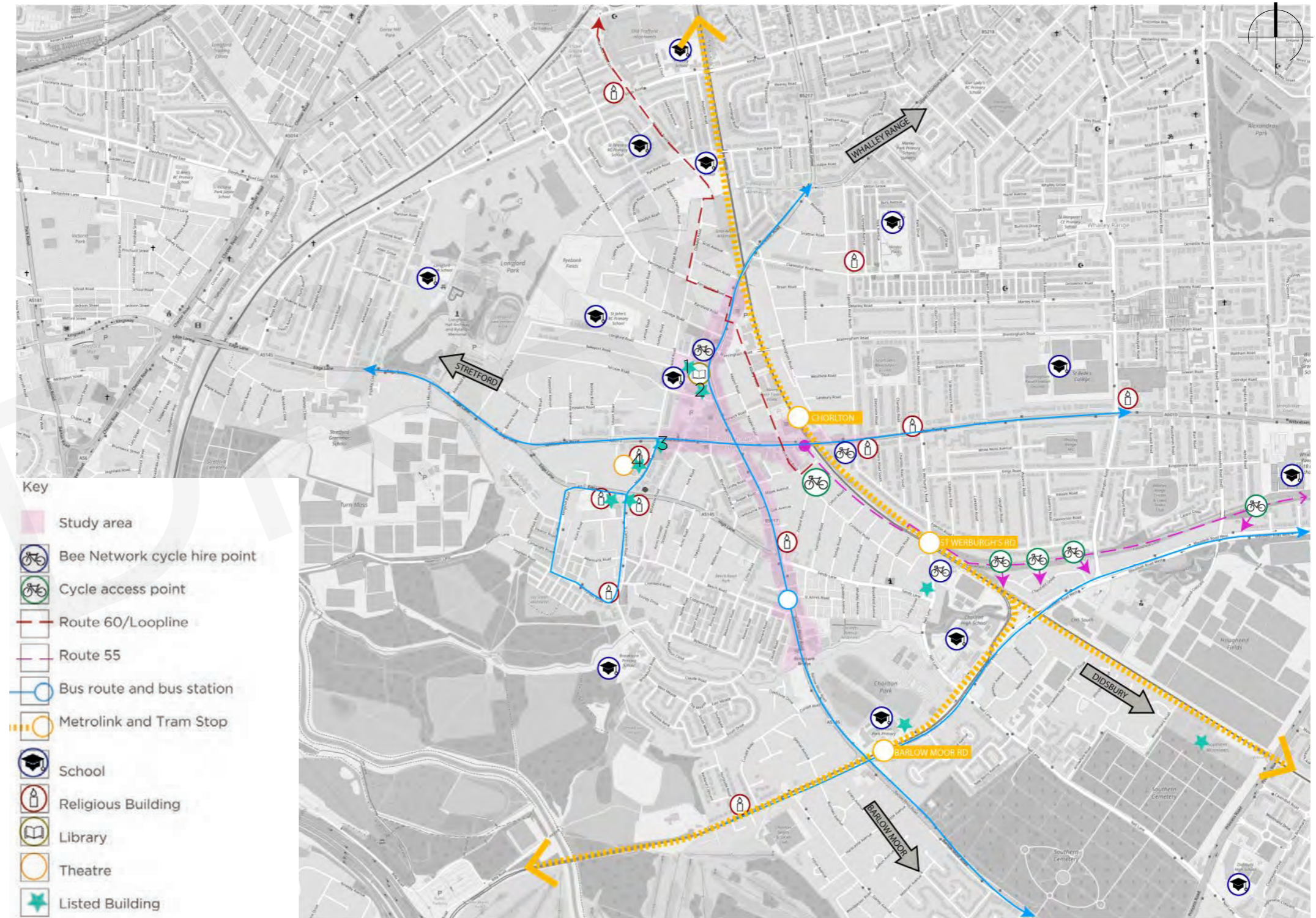
1. Chorlton Library
2. Former Temperance Billiard Hall
3. Lloyd and Platts Hotel
4. Chorlton War Memorial

Chorlton has good access to public transport links with bus services to Manchester City Centre, The Trafford Centre, Stockport, Didsbury and various other local links.

Chorlton and St Werburgh's Road are the key Metrolink Stations that provide routes to Victoria, Piccadilly, Bury, Rochdale, Manchester Airport, East Didsbury and the City Centre.

The M60 ring road provides links to the M6 which gives access to the North and South of the country and links to M62 east-west.

The Fallowfield Loop runs into the District Centre which is a well-used pedestrian connection to surrounding areas.



3.4 Local Context: Green Spaces

Overview

Analysis:

Chorlton is situated in close proximity to a variety of green spaces and amenities.

Allotments

There are three main allotments to the north and south of Chorlton.

Tree Cover

Chorlton has the second highest tree cover of any ward in Manchester. The predominant tree cover is found alongside Chorlton Brook and at Chorlton Ees Nature Reserve in the south-west. Within the District Centre, most of the places that could be planted with trees have been, and cover is more limited.

Outdoor Space

Sports fields, tennis courts, playgrounds and local parks are all within walking distance of the District Centre.

Nature Reserves

Chorlton Ees Nature Reserve provides walking trails, ponds, woodland and meadows in close proximity to the study area of Chorlton.

Chorlton Brook

There is an opportunity to create a riverside walkway along Chorlton Brook between the Mersey Valley and Mauldeth Road West.

Opportunity:

- To better connect residents and visitors to local greenspaces via active travel.
- Draw the natural/green character or surrounding open spaces into the District Centre itself.
- Inform the character of any new public realm.



3.5 Local Context: Flood Risk

Overview

Analysis:

The District Centre predominantly sits within flood zone 1 meaning that there is a low risk of flooding. The most southerly point meets the Chorlton Brook which creates an increased risk of flooding to this area, with this section of Chorlton sitting within flood zone 3. There are also small sections along the eastern boundary which sit within flood zone 2.

Zone 1: Low Probability. This zone comprises land assessed as having a less than 1 in 1000 annual probability of river or sea flooding in any one year (<0.1%)

Zone 2: Medium Probability. This zone comprises land assessed as having between 1 in 100 and 1 in 1000 annual probability of river flooding (1%-0.1%) or between a 1 in 200 and 1 in 1000 annual probability of sea flooding (0.5% - 0.1%) in any year.

Zone 3: High Probability. This zone comprises land assessed as having 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of river flooding (>1%) or a 1 in 200 or greater annual probability of flooding from the sea (>0.5%) in any year.

Opportunity (Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems):

To address flood risk, opportunities for on-street SuDS can help manage surface water run-off across the area. Within those areas with a higher risk of flooding, detailed designs for development sites and/or public realm need to consider ways to manage and mitigate risks. SuDS are considered in more detail later in this document.



3.6 Local Context: Walkability

Overview

Analysis:

This plan demonstrates that Chorlton District Centre is very accessible and well connected to neighbouring areas by foot.

Many amenities are present within this area, including but not limited to:

- Primary Schools
- High Schools
- Grocery shopping
- Library
- Doctors
- Dentist
- Parks
- Public transport links
- Sports clubs

The tram line acts as a barrier to east/west movement due to the limited number of crossing points.

Opportunity:

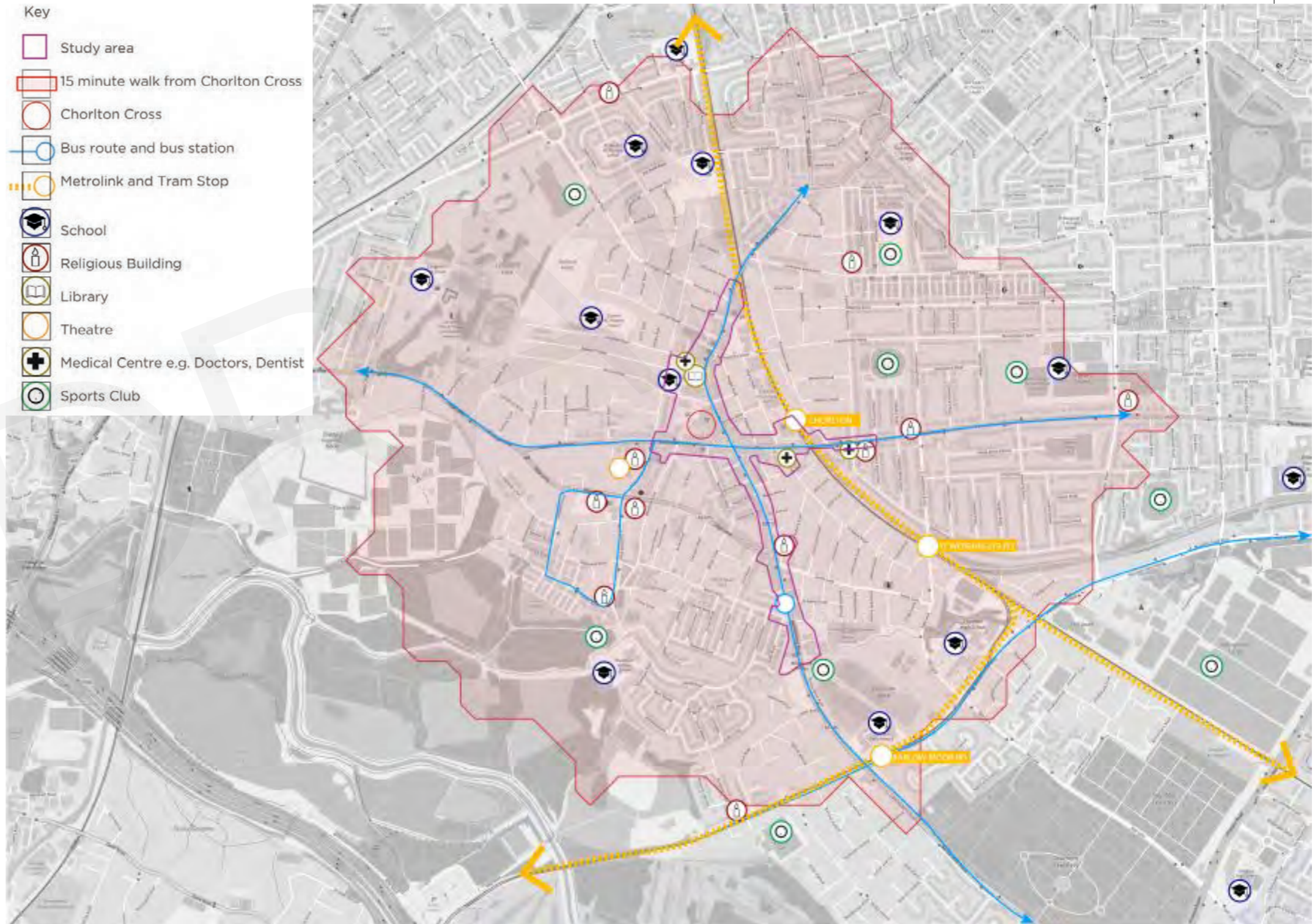
It highlights that there is a key opportunity to create a network of quality active travel routes between Chorlton centre, residential areas, and the amenities within a 15-minute walk.

Such routes would be a focus for the removal of street clutter.

Personal safety along these routes would also be a key consideration.

Key

- Study area
- 15 minute walk from Chorlton Cross
- Chorlton Cross
- Bus route and bus station
- Metrolink and Tram Stop
- School
- Religious Building
- Library
- Theatre
- Medical Centre e.g. Doctors, Dentist
- Sports Club



3.7 Local Context: Cycle Network

Overview

Analysis:

This plan shows the confirmed and indicative cycling routes in and around Chorlton. These routes are part of the wider Bee Network that aims to provide all local public transport and active travel journeys. The network covers bus, tram, train services, walking and cycling routes.

Beeways are identified by two approaches:

Beeways:

A route on a quieter street created using signage and small changes to road and pavement layouts.

Busy Beeways:

A fully protected space for people travelling on bikes and on foot, separated from traffic.

Confirmed Infrastructure:

The location of the confirmed Mayors Challenge Fund schemes that align with GM Bee Network. These are points that represent new or upgraded crossings/junctions or cycle parking facilities and lines that represent confirmed beeways.

Opportunity:

- North south connectivity is excellent through the area whereas the east west routes could be improved.
- There is opportunity here to provide quality connections into the existing network as proposals are developed, working with TGFM and partners.



Data source: https://mappinggm.org.uk/bee-network/#os_maps_light/15/53.4671/-2.2343

3.8 Local Context: Cycle Infrastructure

Analysis:

This plan, shows the confirmed and indicative cycling routes in and around Chorlton.

They are part of the wider Bee Network that aims to provide all local public transport and active travel journeys. The network covers bus, tram, train services, walking and cycling routes.

The plan shows that there are a lack of Beeways connecting the east and west but excellent north and south connectivity.

Some of the routes are disjointed, along narrow restricted streets and host limited signage for wayfinding.

There is a large proportion of cycle parking but few cycle hire points. The appropriateness of the locations of the existing cycle parking should be considered.

Opportunity:

There is an opportunity to provide quality connections into the existing network as proposals are developed, and enhance east and west connectivity.

There is also potential to improve existing cycle parking, wayfinding and signage.

Detailed routes and the design of any interventions would be subject to further feasibility and design, and funding.



3.9 Local Context: Car Ownership

Overview

Analysis:

The adjacent plan presents the percentage of households without a car.

The plan shows that 30-50% of households do not have access to a car in and around Chorlton.

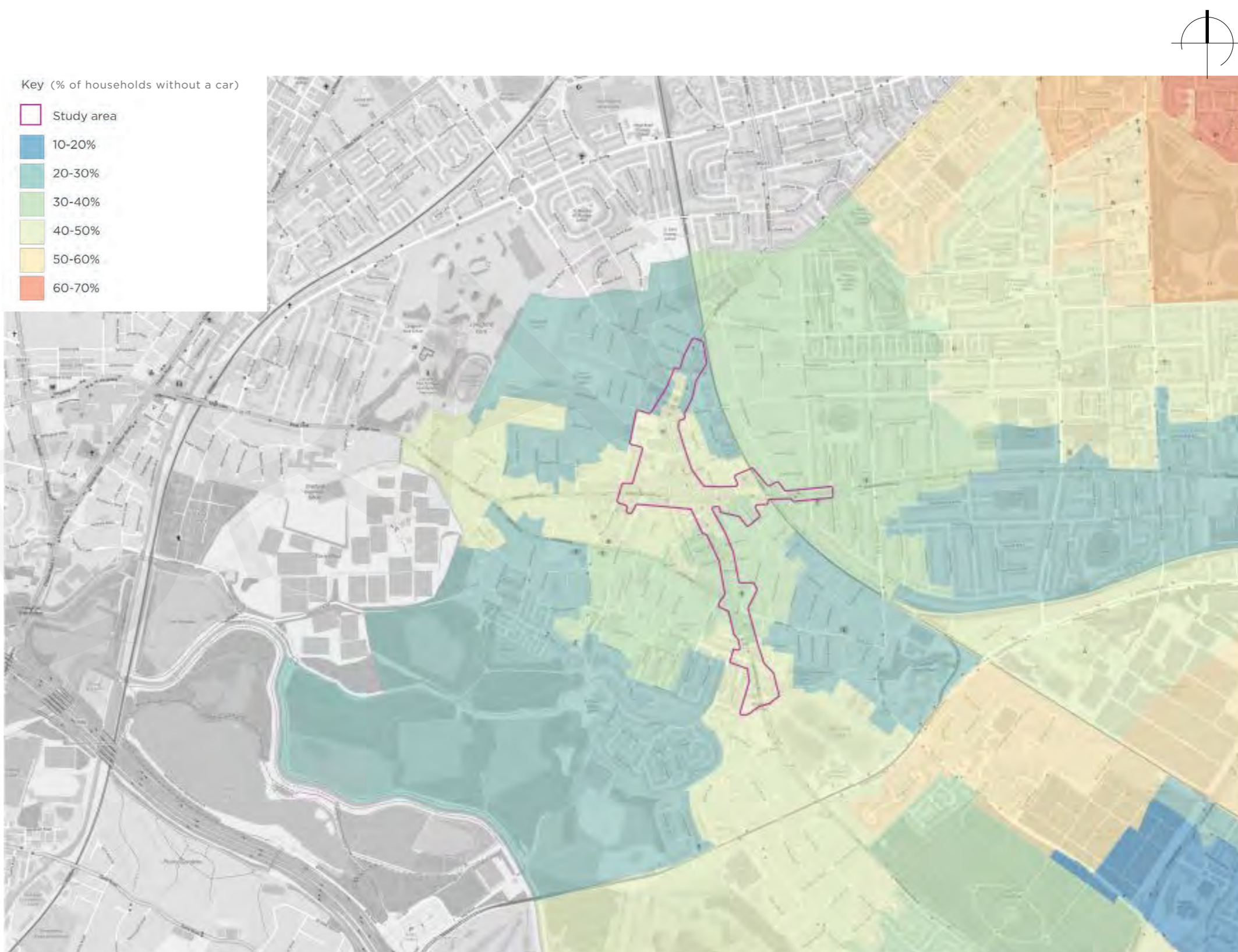
Services and amenities such as secondary schools in Chorlton District Centre do attract traffic from the wider area, alongside the significant through traffic from North to South and East to West.

Opportunity:

The public realm in Chorlton can therefore be designed and enhanced to encourage a continued use of active travel and public transport.

Noting that the policy aspiration across Greater Manchester for 50% of all trips to be by active travel or public transport, these figures of car ownership suggest that there may be an opportunity to encourage a proportion of additional local residents to use public transport and active travel routes if they don't already.

Promotion of active travel and public transport must recognise that residents with mobility or accessibility issues may require use of a car.



3.10 Local Context: Commuting via car

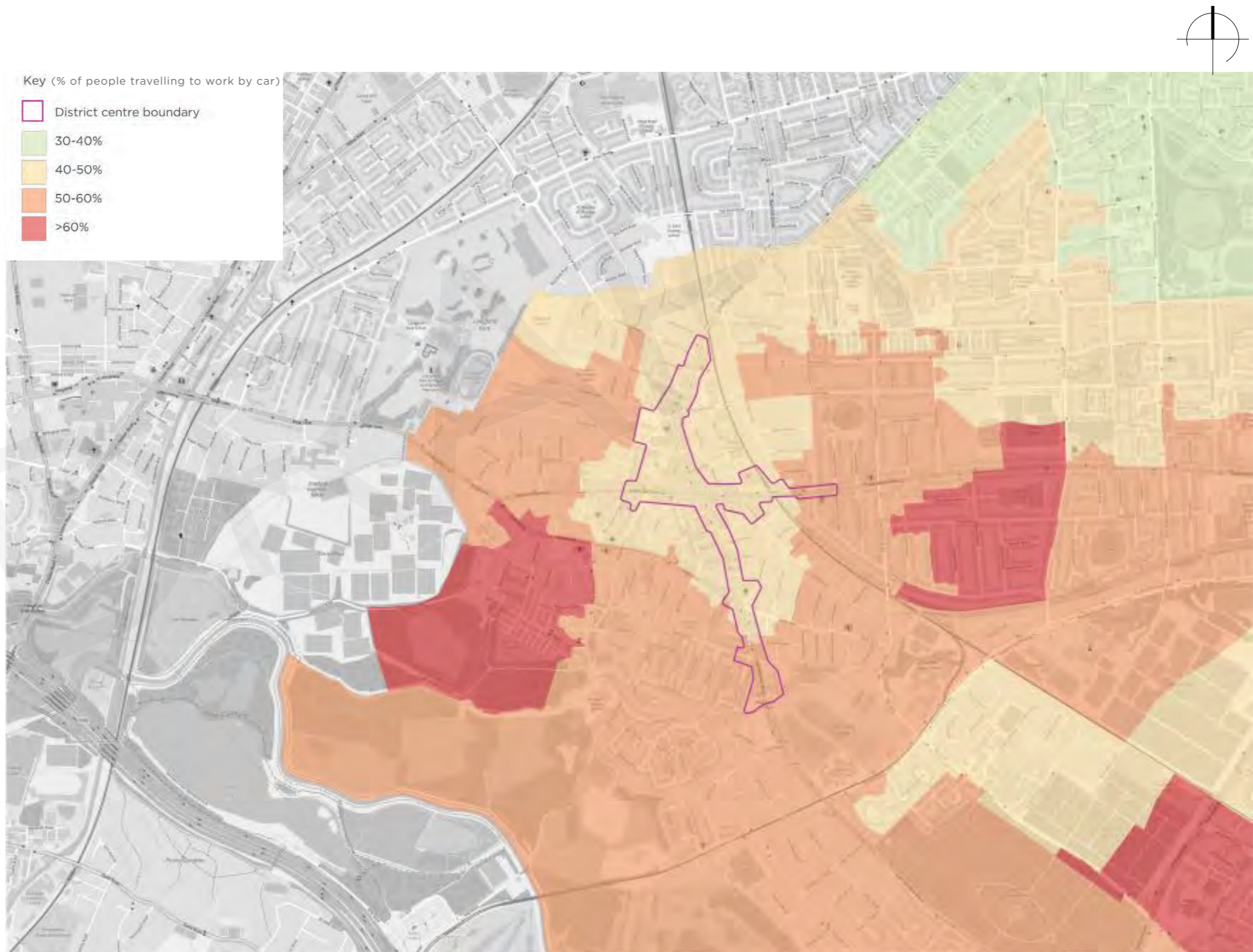
Analysis:

Baseline diagram shows percentage of people travelling to work by car.

The data shows that 40-50% of residents travel to work via car, though this data does not tell us the length of journey. Approximately 50-60% of people living in the study area use an alternative mode of transport to driving.

Opportunity:

Noting that the policy aspirations of Greater Manchester are for 50% of all trips to be by active travel or public transport, this should be a key design consideration within the District Centre.



3.11 Local Context: GMAL

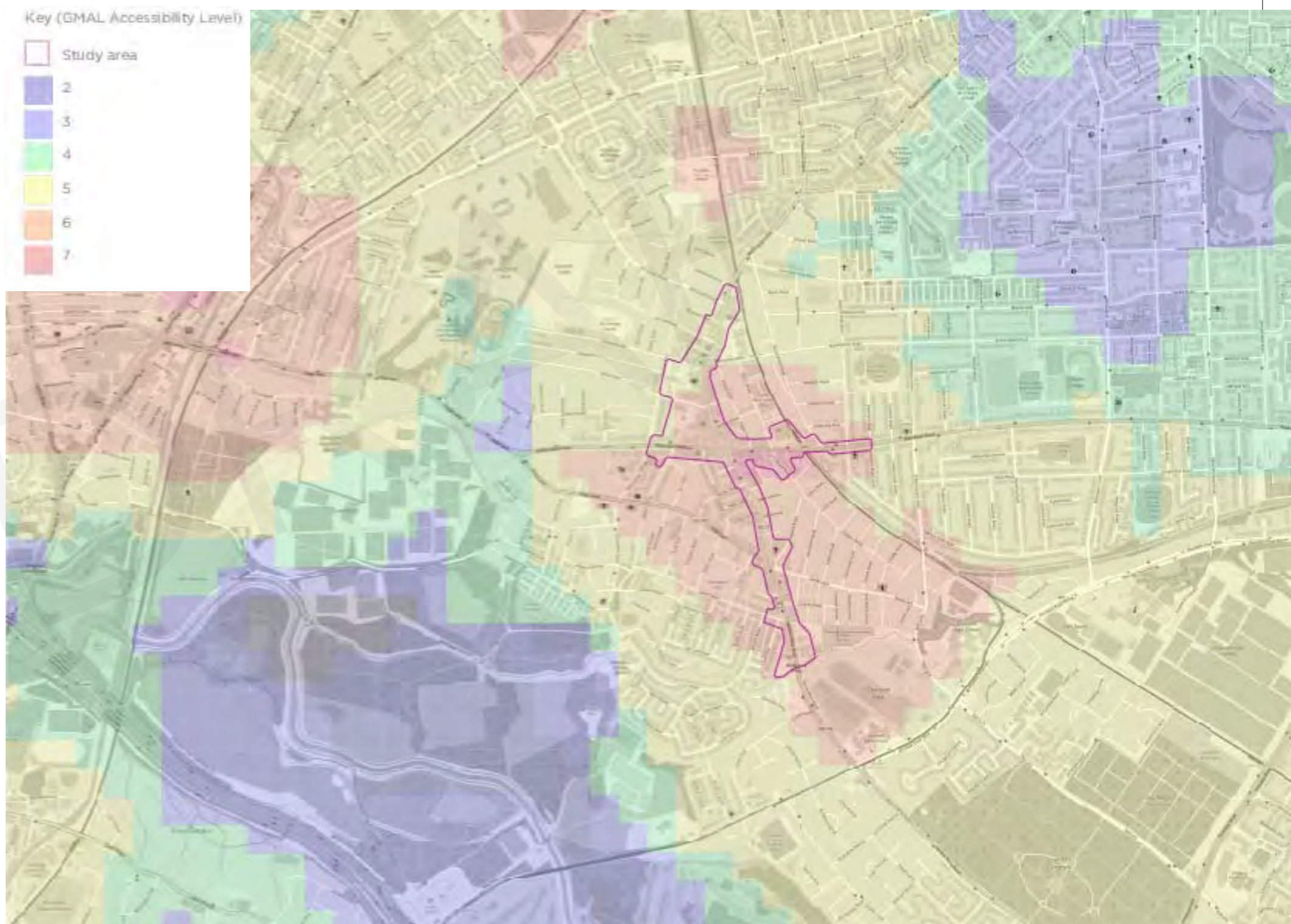
Analysis:

Greater Manchester Accessibility Levels (GMAL) measures the accessibility of a place on a scale of 1-8. It is based on the proximity to bus and tram stops and the frequency of the services that operate from them.

The study area scores between 5-7, which is a good to very good accessibility level.

Opportunity:

There is an opportunity for the public realm to enhance the experience for people travelling on public transport and for people travelling to / from public transport stops, particularly around the tram stop and bus stops on Wilbraham Road for people making multi-modal trips.



3.12 Local Context: Street Hierarchy

Analysis:

The adjacent plan uses the Greater Manchester 'Streets for All' document to classify a hierarchy of street.

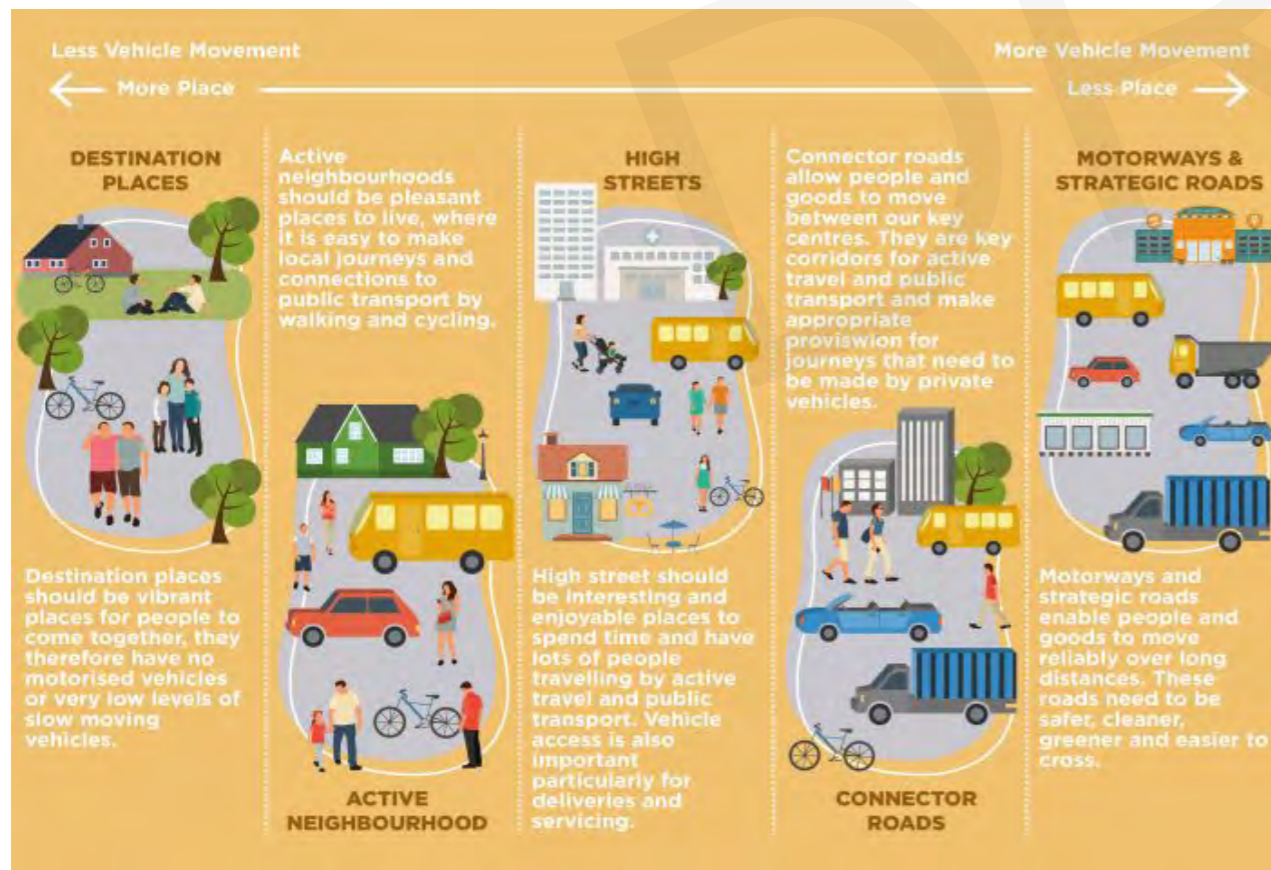
Three street types have been identified within Chorlton:

1. Active Neighbourhood
2. Connector Road
3. High Street

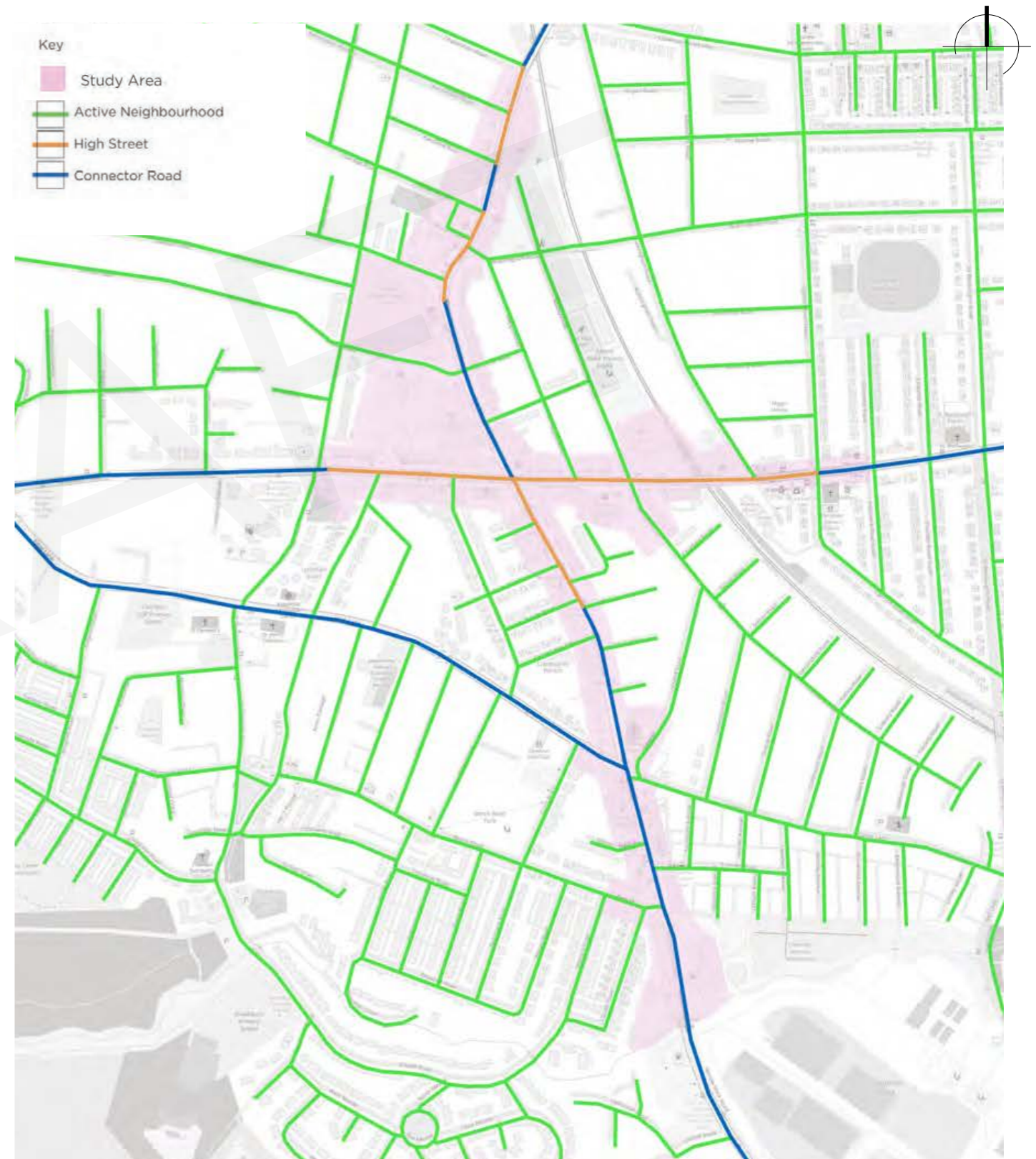
Streets for All also has the categories of 'Motorways & Strategic Roads' and 'Destination Places' which were deemed to be inapplicable to Chorlton. The diagram below represents all definitions.

Opportunity:

Chorlton has a great opportunity to provide 'Destination Places' within the District Centre. Chorlton is currently a vibrant place where people come together, but it lacks a place in which to congregate comfortably. It is an area with abundant independent shops, community activity and social infrastructure that can be better connected and enhanced to provide a 'Destination Place'.



Original content source: <https://tfgm.com/strategy/streets-for-all>



04 Baseline Analysis - District Centre



4.1 Chorlton District Centre

Photo Mapping Survey

Chorlton as a suburb has a mixed character, filled with coffee shops, clothing stores, parks, pubs, restaurants and bars. It has an independent community spirit and is predominantly occupied by young professionals and families.

Unfortunately, the public realm in the district is of poor quality, lacking in planting and prone to surface flooding.

There is a consistency in Chorlton's materiality and local vernacular. The hard landscape is predominantly tar macadam with occasional large mature trees which in places are causing damage to the pavements.

Guard rails create hard divides between road users and pedestrians.

Some roads are very wide with few crossing points, whilst others are narrow and create competition for space.

Cars regularly park on double yellow lines or on the wider tarmac pavements.

There is a dominance of car users which is accentuated by the predominantly hard landscape and lack of traffic calming features that prioritise the pedestrian experience.



Chorlton Library



Chorlton Precinct



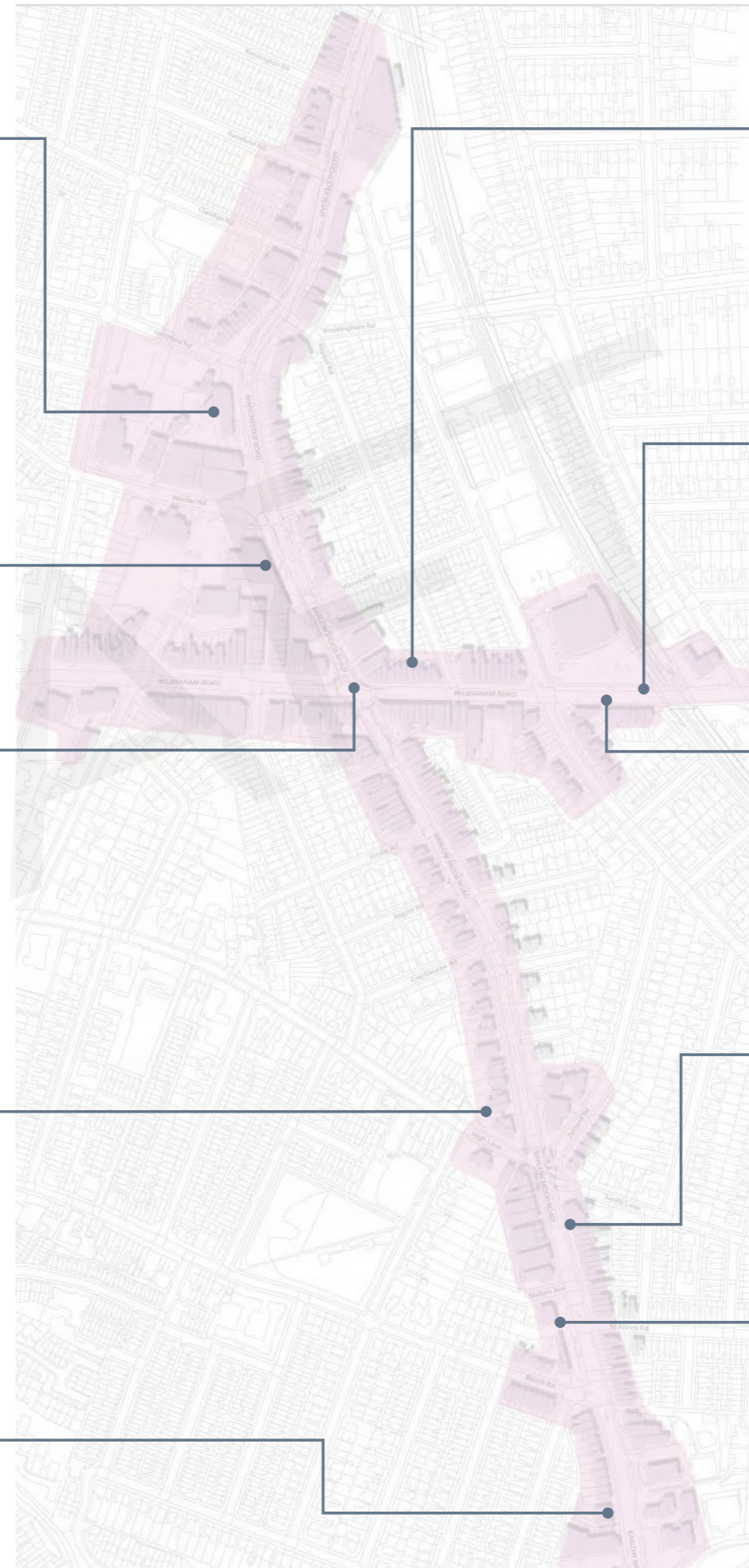
Four Banks Cyclops



High Lane



Chorlton Gateway



Wilbraham Road Takeaways



Fallowfield Loopline End



View from metrolink exit



Row of bars and Restaurants



Bus Station

Baseline Analysis

4.2 District Centre: Parking and TROs

Analysis:

The adjacent plan shows the current constrained parking limitations within the District Centre.

NOTE: TROs are subject to change following the completion of the current cycle lane works being constructed as of November 2023.

Off-street Parking

Currently there are two main locations for off-street parking in Chorlton. The car park at Morrisons, operated by Euro Car Parks, is a camera controlled, 167-space car park with a 2-hour maximum stay. The other off-street car park in Chorlton is at the Precinct. 'The Square' car park is a privately owned car park with 190 parking spaces. Data from The Square car park operator shows that the maximum occupancy during the week of 2-8 October 2023 was only 38 vehicles (20% of the capacity). The Square Car Park is part of the Precinct development site and will be closed to allow development to take place.

On-street Parking

Currently, on-street parking in Chorlton is available away from the main roads on residential streets around the edge of the district centre. For example, Whitelaw Road and York Road. Most Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) are on the through routes of Barlow Moor Road/Manchester Road and Wilbraham Road. Many of the side streets and local streets in the area are unrestricted away from junctions. The exceptions are on Nicolas Road, Oswald Road, and Longford Road outside the primary school. Where there is on-

street parking, the time restrictions are for between 60 minutes to 2 hours. Loading bays and disabled parking are also provided on Wilbraham Road.

Opportunity:

Preliminary work is being undertaken to assess the feasibility and safety of introducing additional on-street parking on Wilbraham Road.

There are limited opportunities for new spaces along the section of Wilbraham Road from Oswald Road to Buckingham Road due to existing vehicle accesses, signalised pedestrian crossings, trees and bus stops.

The new cycle infrastructure built on Barlow Moor Road/Manchester Road prevents any new on-street parking from being provided here.

There is a need to reduce the reliance on cars to align with the council's wider objectives around Active Travel and Healthy Places to create sustainable, carbon conscious places. This should be achieved through improvements to active travel routes and public transport in and around Chorlton District Centre.

However, it is recognised that on-street parking is important to business operation and helps increase accessibility, especially for some with limited mobility, things to carry, and those with small children.

Therefore, where it is possible for additional parking provision, priority should be towards improving accessibility to amenities and providing adequate loading facilities for businesses.



4.3 District Centre: Bus Frequency

Analysis:

There are frequent bus services which pass through Chorlton, many stopping at a bus station off Barlow Moor Road. The roll out of the bus franchise could create further improvement to the bus services in Chorlton.

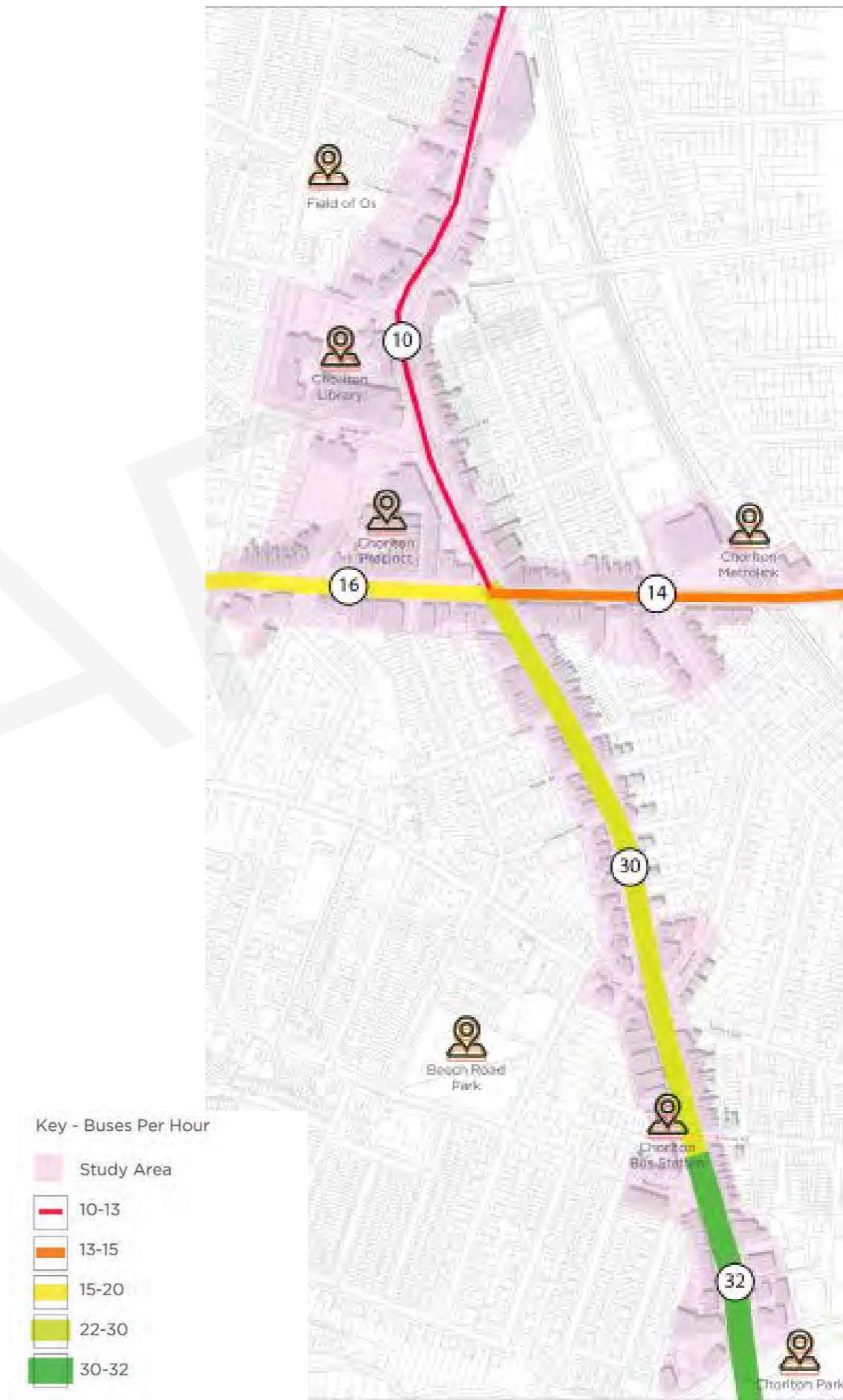
Chorlton has good connections to the wider area, running throughout the day, including the 86 night bus which connects to the city centre until late.

Opportunity:

There may be an opportunity to include targeted bus priority measures on busy routes. These would require detailed assessment, including the potential impact on other forms of movement and transport.

This could help to futureproof routes for an increase in service frequency should there be demand for it.

DRAFT



Data source: <https://tfgm.com/bus/timetables>

4.4 District Centre: Ground Floor Frontages

Analysis:

Commercial units feature predominantly along the frontages of the main streets of the study area.

Residential development includes largely terraced and semi-detached housing as well as apartments within purpose built buildings and above commercial premises.

There are two civic buildings: Chorlton Library and the Chorlton Central Church.

The Wilbraham Rd / Edge Lane Conservation Boundary covers part of the centre on the Western edge of Wilbraham Rd.

The façades within the centre of Chorlton create a fragmented character due to the mix of vacant, occupied, poor and good conditions.

Opportunity:

The existing features and uses of the centre could be enhanced to create a more cohesive street scene, enhancing the existing features and uses of the town centre. Such changes would need to be driven by landlords and /or building occupiers.

The council is developing a Shopfront Guide, which will inform any proposals that come forward concerning frontage design in Chorlton in the future.



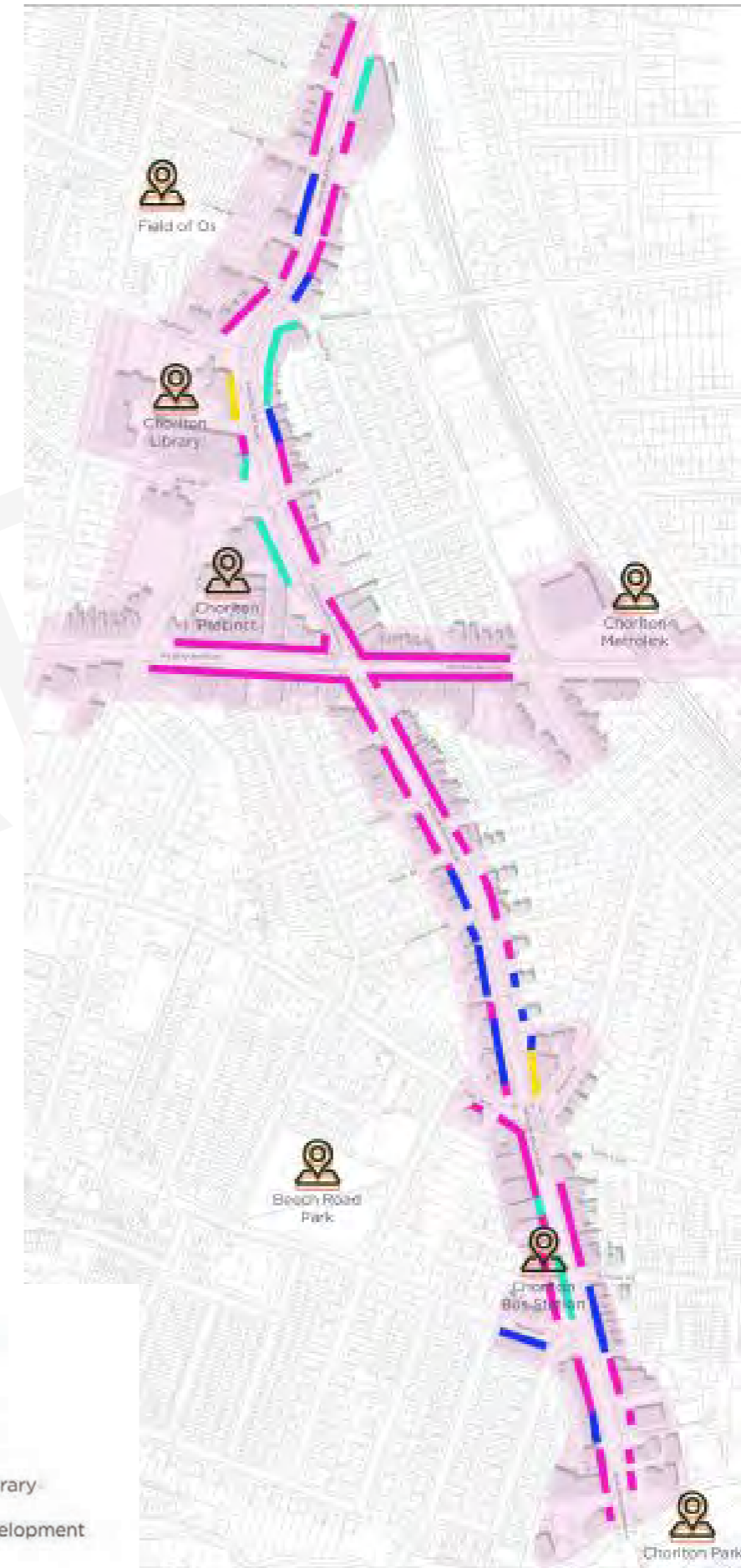
Typical Residential



Typical Commercial



Civic Building



4.5 District Centre: Commercial Frontages

Analysis:

The centre of Chorlton is characterised by the frontages of a variety of local businesses.

Whilst some rows of properties have coherent external structures which add to the street character, many rows lack coherence, creating a disordered setting to navigate as a pedestrian.

Many commercial chain developments are set back from the roads and feature extensive car parking to the front and alongside the roads/pavements. This is particularly prominent at the Morrisons on Wilbraham Rd and the cluster of new developments on Barlow Moor Rd just north of Chorlton brook. This creates an obstruction and disconnection between the pedestrians and businesses whilst prioritising vehicular use.

A number of commercial premises remain vacant which leaves wide pavements unused.

Opportunity:

The food and beverage offerings across Chorlton offer the opportunity to activate the streetscene with seating - something which has worked successfully along some frontages.

Unoccupied / low quality frontages could benefit from an improved public realm.

Interventions must ensure clear pedestrian routes are retained.



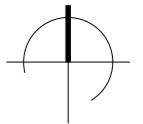
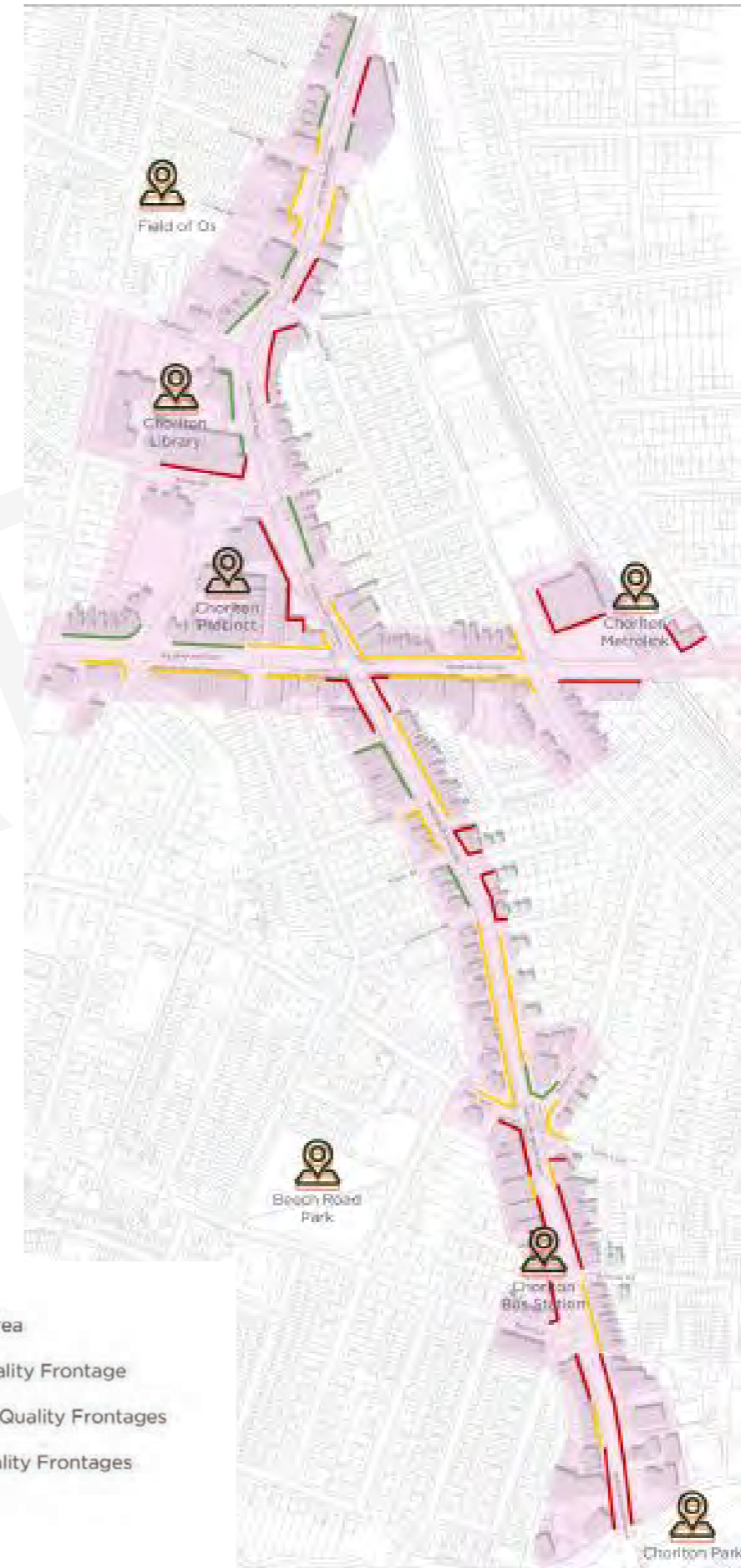
Unoccupied frontages



High quality frontages



Activated Food & Beverage



4.6 District Centre: Pedestrian Experience Street Quality

Analysis:

Surface Quality

Chorlton is predominantly surfaced with black macadam. Tree roots, resurfacing and regularly dropped kerbs create uneven pavement levels. In the diagram opposite, quality has been subjectively assessed by the project team based on observations during study visits to the area.



Surface Quality

Accessibility

The street activity along many pavements within the study area often renders extensive sections inaccessible. This is predominantly due to vehicle parking and scattered bins blocking pavements, but also as a result of various types of street clutter.



Restricted trees

Pavement Widths

The pavement widths throughout the study area vary. Business frontages often have the most significant width availability.

Trees, planting and SuDS

Trees are sporadically located along the street. Their tree pits are often small, filled with weeds or broken macadam. Planting and SuDS is not visible along the public streetscape.

Opportunity:

Many commercial curtilage are utilised as successful spill out spaces from food and beverage outlets. There is an opportunity to enhance this and create a cohesive environment.

Many large areas of tar macadam are underutilised or utilised for parking and/or storage. They provide an opportunity for enhancement and improvement.

Definitions

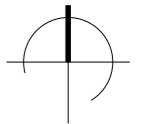
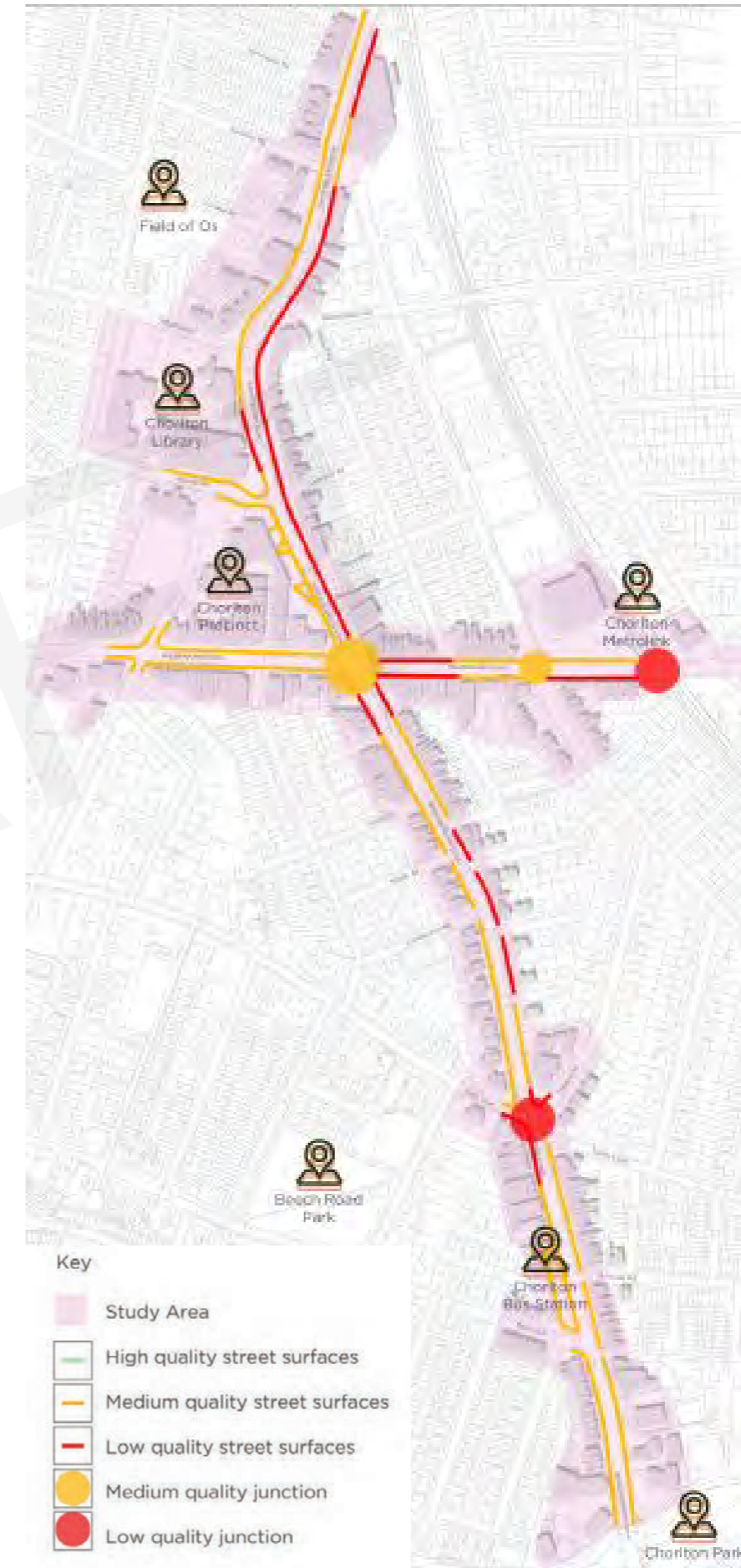
'SuDS':

Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) are a way of draining surface water as an alternative to using networks of pipes and sewers. By mimicking natural drainage processes, SuDS aim to reduce surface water flooding, improve water quality and enhance the amenity and biodiversity value of the environment.

'Quality' Defined:

When measuring quality the following factors were assessed:

- Appearance
- Character
- Function
- Usability



4.7 District Centre: Legibility

Analysis:

There is a distinct lack of wayfinding across the study area with limited signage to the centre of Chorlton and local connections such as the Fallowfield Loop and the tram stop. As a result, pedestrians and cyclists may find navigating Chorlton difficult.

Sense of Chorlton District Centre

The junction at Wilbraham Rd and Barlow Moor Rd, also known as the Four Banks, is a central point in terms of connectivity which connects into key amenities from the public Library on Manchester Rd to the Post office on Wilbraham Rd which forms an area with a sense of centre.

Arrival Gateways

The sense of arrival into Chorlton as a pedestrian from key anchor points including the bus station and Chorlton Tram Stop is a low quality experience within the study area. This can in part be attributed to the lack of wayfinding and vistas towards the centre and a poor quality public realm.

Opportunity:

Create more welcoming gateway arrivals at active travel locations though implementation of signage and public art.

Enhance the sense of 'centre' with public realm enhancements to connect concentrations of anchor retail and food & beverage locations with arrival destinations and buildings of interest.

Extend the experience of Chorlton 'centre' north along Barlow Moor Rd and east and west along Wilbraham Rd through public realm enhancements to create connectivity and cohesiveness.



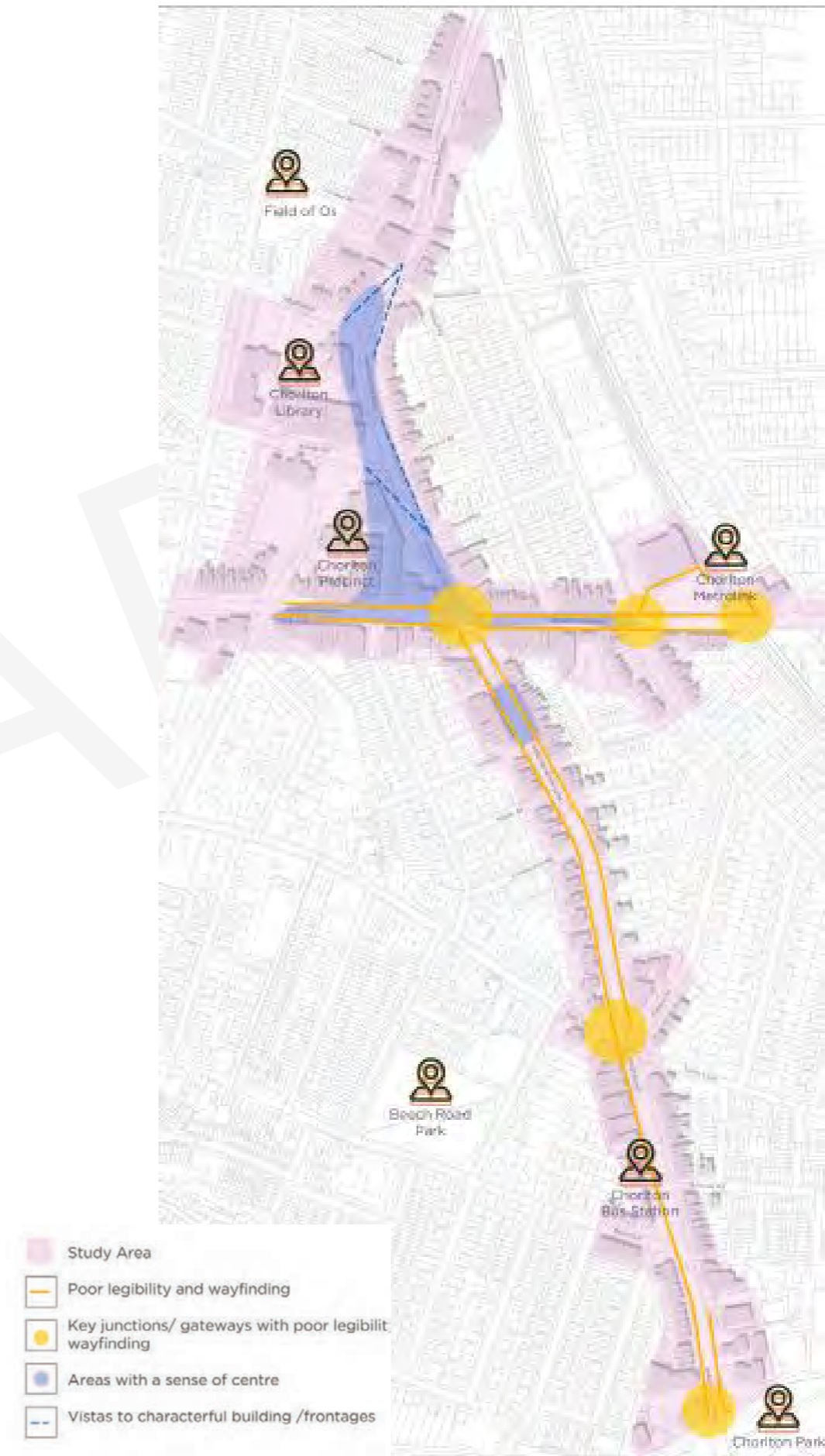
Sense of centre



Key junctions



Poor wayfinding



4.8 District Centre: Existing Public Realm Community Activity

Analysis:

Chorlton is home to a vibrant community with a distinctive character. Events are regularly held within the suburb and can provide insight into where people gather, use of spaces, community needs and interests.

Key current events:

- The Makers Market happens once a month outside Chorlton Library and the school car park. It brings together local artists and is hugely popular craft and art market across Greater Manchester.
- Chorlton Get Together is a community event that closes a section of Wilbraham road to cars so that local people can gather, chat and play. Creative activities and spaces take place and businesses remain open.
- The Manchester Marathon passes through Chorlton as part of its 26.2 mile route through Greater Manchester. Thousands take part as it is the second-largest marathon event in the UK and the fourth largest in Europe overall.

Opportunity:

Opportunity to improve these areas in which activity occurs in order to enhance the opportunities they currently provide, and create a true 'Destination Place' as referenced in section 3.12.



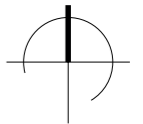
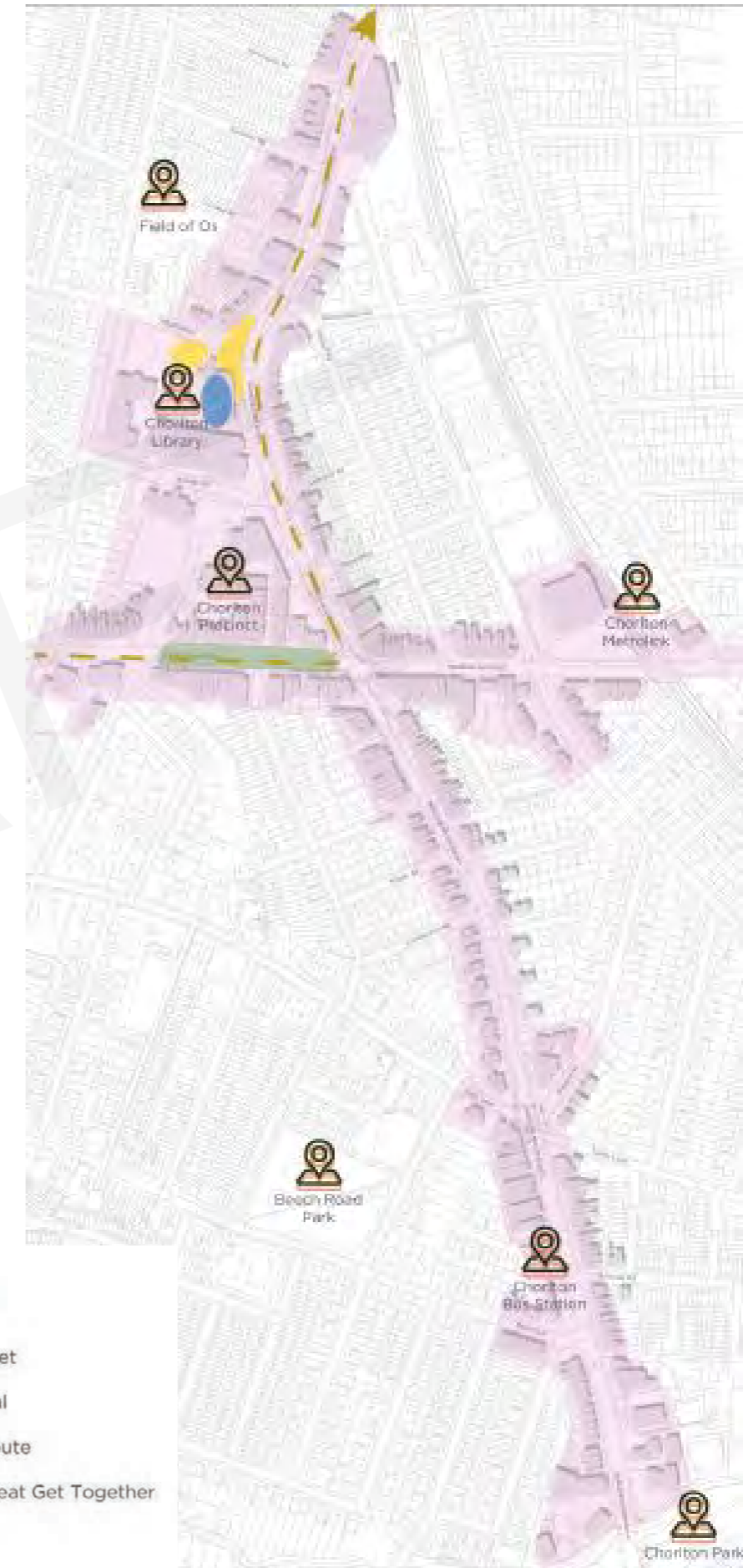
Makers Market



Manchester Marathon



Great Get Together



4.9 District Centre: Pipeline Developments

Analysis:

An analysis of the planning “permissions” within Chorlton District Centre gives an understanding of future land uses and proposals.

A desktop study found that the majority of development is for the provision of additional residential housing with some commercial usage.

These schemes include:

1. Chorlton Baths
Over 50s Residential Development
Planning Reference:136791/FO/2023
2. 515-521 Barlow Moor Road
House and Flats
Planning Reference 127241/
FO/2020
3. Former coop, Barlow Moor Road
Commercial Ground Floor and
Flats Planning Reference 128446/
FO/2020
4. Land at Chorlton House
Potential development site
5. Coop Funeral Care
Flats and Commercial
Potential development site
6. Chorlton Precinct
Unknown at time of print
Residential scheme with ground floor
retail / commercial
7. Kemp's Corner
Commercial Ground Floor and Flats
Potential development site
8. Santander and Land
Cafe Nero
9. 4B Albany Rd
Shared ownership flats
Planning Reference: 136878/FO/2023

Opportunity:

To create a cohesive public realm that enhances current developments and encourages future development.

To work with developers to integrate new schemes within the public realm to create a cohesive district centre.

Public realm improvements will enhance high streets, create ‘destination places’, improve accessibility to future developments and activate Chorlton.



4.10 District Centre: Existing Landscape

Analysis:

Chorlton is situated in close proximity to a variety of green spaces and amenities that are accessible by active travel. However, locally within the District Centre, green space is limited.

Allotments & Community Gardens

There are two main allotments to the north and south of Chorlton District Centre. An active community garden is situated by Chorlton Library and other community planting can be found at the Field of Os.

Street Trees

Chorlton has the second highest tree cover of any ward in Manchester. Within the District Centre, this is evident by the number of mature street trees. However, MCC Tree Planting Capacity Study (2022) states tree canopy cover should increase from 28.7% to 30%.

However, most of the places that could be planted with trees, have been and those that exist are constrained by tar macadam and weed overgrowth.

Outdoor Amenities

Sports fields, tennis courts, playgrounds and local parks are all within walking distance of the District Centre.

Opportunity:

There are some limited opportunities for additional street tree planting in Chorlton. However, existing trees would benefit from undercanopy planting and any dead/dying trees should be replaced. There is also an opportunity to introduce SuDS and rain gardens along streetscapes to connect existing greenspaces.



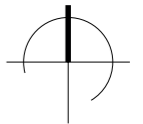
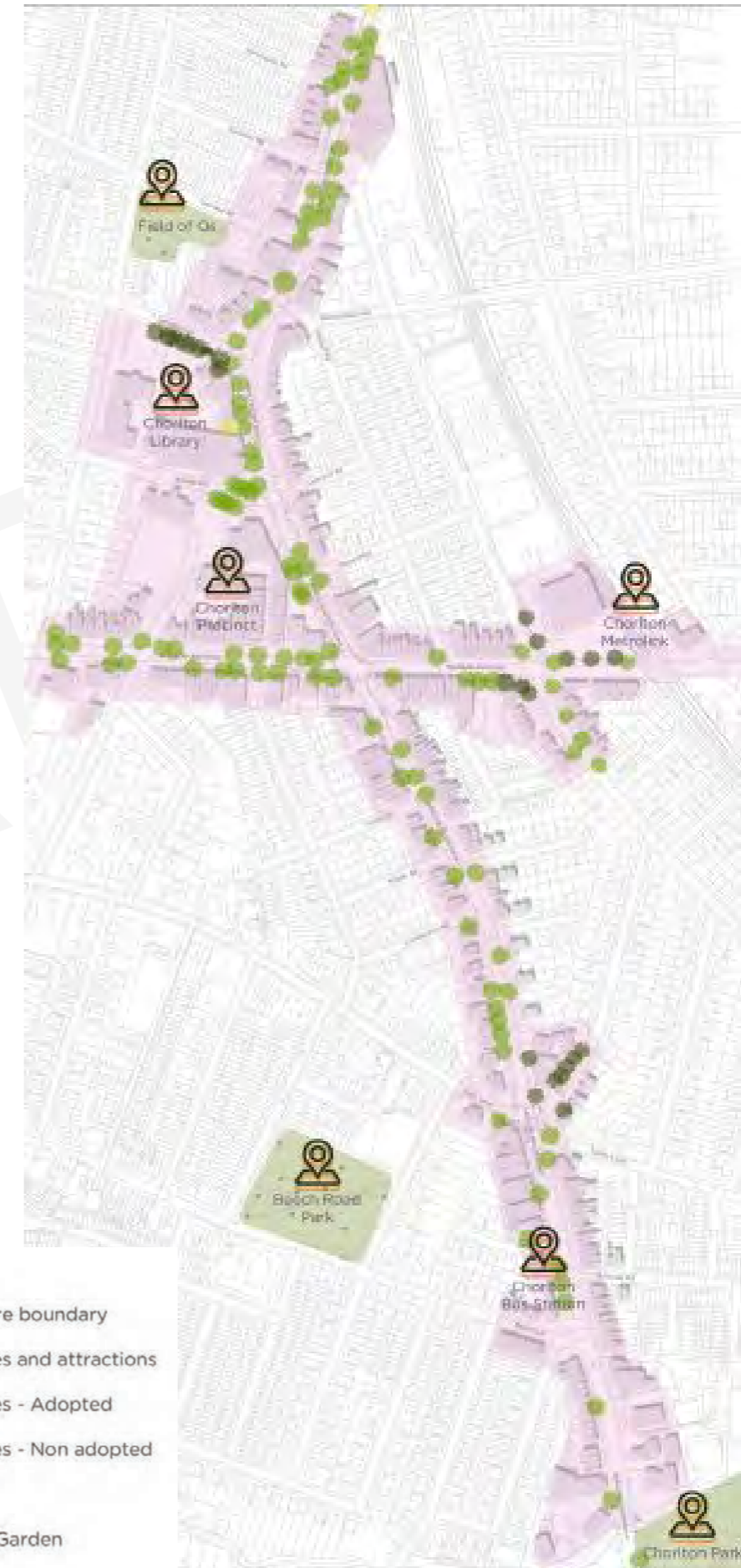
Community Garden



Constrained Tree Planting



Community Gardening



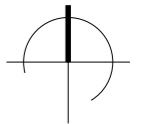
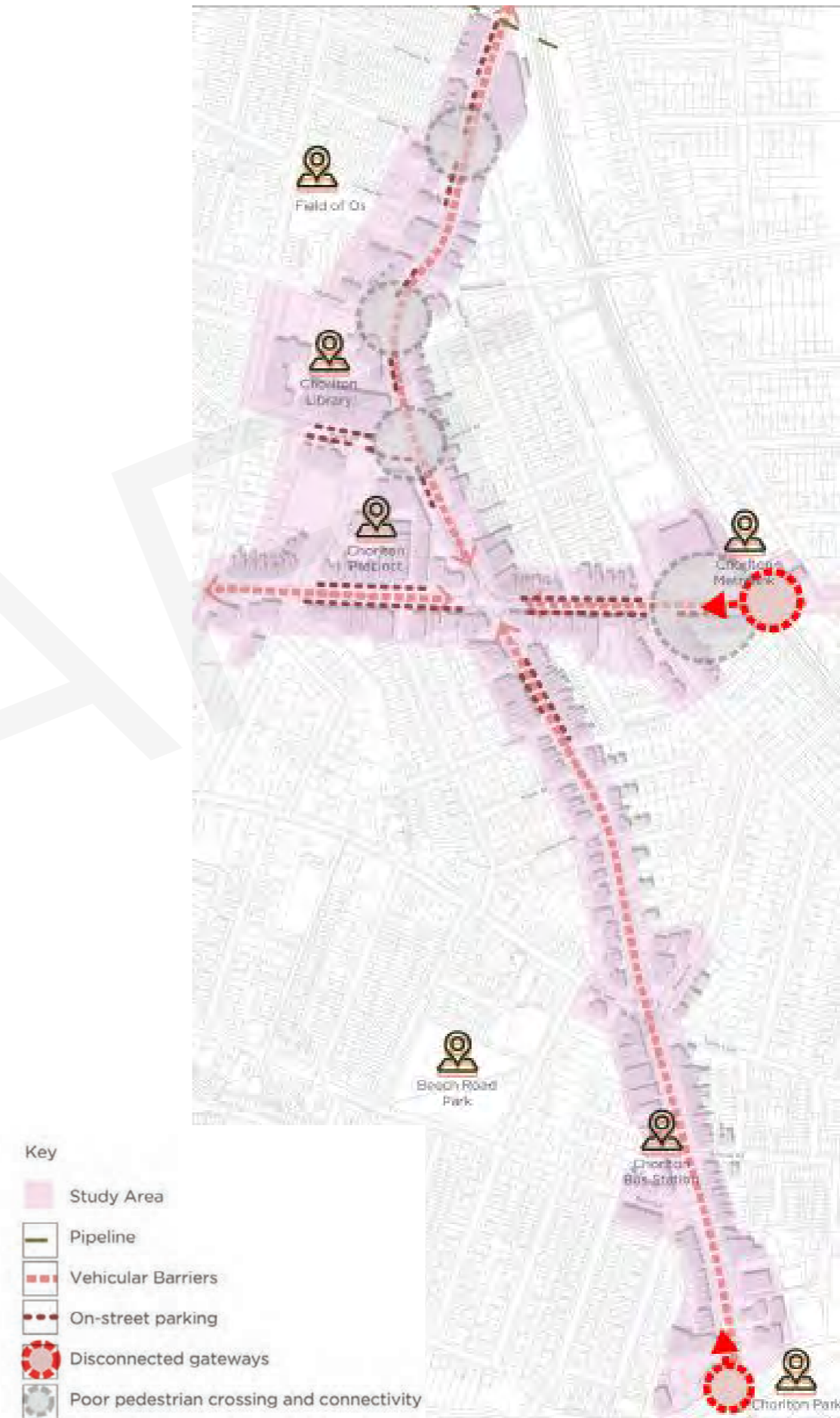
4.11 District Centre: Constraints

Overview:

This constraints analysis outlines the weaknesses in the local environment to be recognised when considering interventions across Chorlton.

Analysis:

- There are local connections to green spaces and parks however, the journey to them feels disconnected and poorly signposted
- The centre of Chorlton is dominated by vehicles, particularly when parked along pavements which causes obstructions to pedestrians and cyclists
- The quality of the built form is incoherent with varied curtilage and frontages
- Arrival points into Chorlton are poorly defined - in particular on approach from the Chorlton metrolink and Chorlton bus station
- The study area as a whole lacks defined gateways
- Cycle access to Chorlton is poorly located and indistinguishable. Sustrans routes are difficult to locate from both the town centre and public transport connections. Unlit and overgrown entrances with a distinct lack of wayfinding throughout the centre contribute to this issue
- Street clutter and untidiness weakens the aesthetic and quality of the town as well as contributing to accessibility issues, impacting the pedestrian experience
- Building curtilage are predominantly cluttered by bins
- Generally there is limited street furniture available within Chorlton. Few opportunities for seating or public bins
- Poor quality and distressed public realm material
- Tree pits are small with overgrown weeds
- Little biodiversity value along streets aside from existing street trees
- Distinct lack of species-rich planting and SuDS



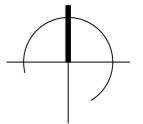
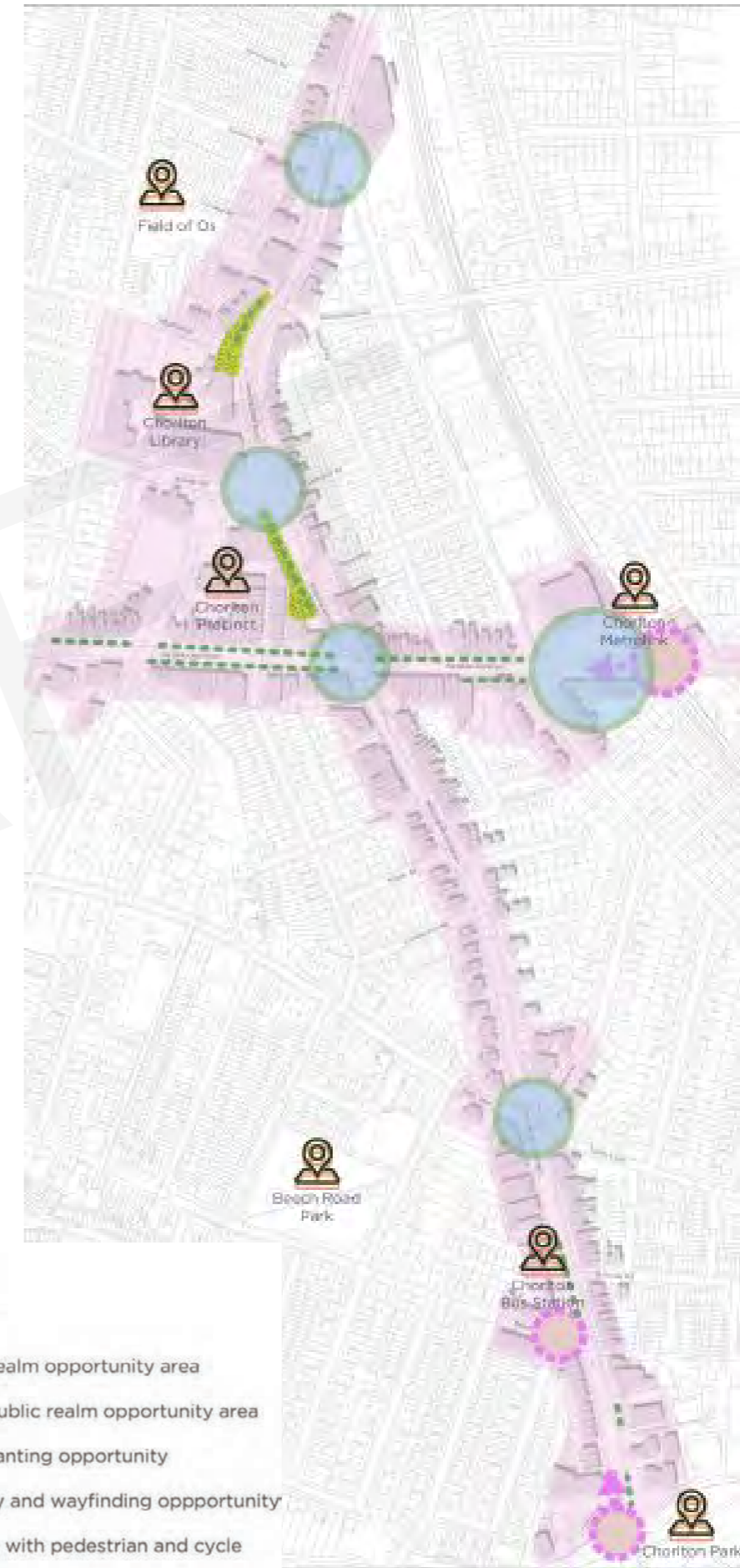
4.12 District Centre: Opportunities

Overview:

An accumulation of minor interventions could vastly improve the local environment and the experience of those living, visiting and working in Chorlton.

Analysis:

- Create coherent commercial frontages and spill out spaces
- Create designated space for temporary community and event use
- Optimise meanwhile uses of wide pavements
- Install SuDS along existing road corridors
- Create growing streets to green the landscape and serve the community
- Encourage 'Incredible Edible' style growing gardens in collaboration with local businesses.
- Install rain gardens to reduce the risk of flooding
- Create destination places
- Create a sense of arrival at gateway entrances to Chorlton i.e. metrolink, bus station and road
- Improve walkability and pedestrian experience
- Improve parking facilities
- Link existing areas of open space in Chorlton and Barlow Moor as part of a network of greenways and create a recreational resource
- A network of off-street cycling and pedestrian routes in Chorlton could connect the centre with existing areas of open space
- Introduce wayfinding strategies across Chorlton to improve pedestrian and cyclist navigation and to create a strong identity for Chorlton



4.13 SWOT Summary



Strengths

- Excellent public transport connections
- Mature street trees within the district centre
- Close proximity and connections to surrounding green spaces
- Wide pavements
- Good pedestrian and cycle prioritisation along the Manchester Rd - Barlow Moor Rd spine which runs through the centre of Chorlton as part of the Chorlton Busy Beeway Area 3B
- Strong sense of local community in Chorlton with several organisations and spaces in the area such as Chorlton Civic Society and Chorlton Traders, Friends of Turn Moss, Chorlton Community garden, and Friends of Chorlton Meadows
- A range of independent shops and businesses
- A significant residential community who can support local services, businesses and amenities
- Regular festivals and events in the area that activate the streetscape
- A strong sense of community and identity



Weaknesses

- Public realm often compromised by pavement parking and idling
- Poorly defined arrival points and wayfinding
- Active travel routes are poorly signposted
- Street clutter reduces accessibility and weakens the aesthetic and quality of the town
- There is limited street furniture available within Chorlton
- Poor quality and distressed public realm materials and pedestrian surfacing
- Little biodiversity value along streets aside from existing street trees with a distinct lack of species-rich planting and SuDS
- A lack of defined public realm spaces
- Chorlton has limited street space to increase tree canopy cover and the available opportunities for additional tree planting tends to be in surrounding green spaces



Opportunities

- SuDS, rain gardens and growing streets can be installed along existing road corridors to reduce the risk of surface flooding, increase biodiversity and provide community uses
- New development can make a contribution to the character and environmental improvements of the centre
- Provide clear cycle access points to existing routes
- Tackle parking opportunities, pavement parking and idling
- Enhance the coherence of commercial frontages and spill out spaces
- Create an art trail with murals, sculpture etc.
- Enhance existing locations that are used for temporary community use
- Optimise use of wide pavements to supply event space, dwell areas and commercial expansion
- Incorporate wayfinding strategies across Chorlton
- Increase tree capacity from 28.7% to 30% (MCC Tree Planting Capacity Study '22)
- Opportunity to develop a riverside walkway along Chorlton Brook (Policy CB13b UDP)



Threats

- Loss of existing shops and businesses currently located in the Chorlton Cross Shopping Centre as a result of construction and development work
- Unpredictable retail behavioural change as a result of national and macro economic trends.
- Unrealistic landlord expectations leading to high business turnover and long term vacancies in addition to the oversupply of commercial premises
- Increased demand on the existing provision of parking spaces in central Chorlton may put additional pressures on pedestrian pavements. This could result in movement and accessibility issues for pedestrians and cyclists
- Threat of ageing buildings falling into disrepair due to lack of future development opportunities and maintenance.
- Climate change is leading to an increase in extreme weather events such as heavy rain fall and flooding events which puts pressure on the urban environment in Chorlton

05 Public Realm & Vision



The vision for Chorlton District Centre.

The Public Realm Plan presents the design principles and the overarching strategies to inform the future enhancement of Chorlton District Centre.

These strategies underpin the design principles shown in the focus areas in chapter 6.

The design principles have been developed following our analysis, identification of assets and opportunities.

The design principals can, where appropriate, inform future development and investments plans.



5.1 Soft Landscape, Local Context

Overview:

Chorlton is situated in close proximity to a variety of green spaces and amenities but is lacking in green space within its District Centre.

The adjacent plan visualises the key connections to existing green spaces and potential to create stepping stones of soft landscape.

Recommendations:

- Deliver a series of landscape-focused interventions that create stepping stones between key assets and spaces
- Create a cohesive and distinctive landscape that responds to Chorlton’s unique streetscape character
- Provide enhanced green routes that connect to the wider area



5.2 Soft Landscape, District Centre

Overview:

There is a great opportunity to enhance connections to the existing green assets and implement directed design within the District Centre in the future. A number of options have been suggested which could be implemented across the district centre over time, subject to detailed design and funding.

Suggested Long-Term Recommendations:

- Replace dead/dying trees
- Replace asphalt tree pits with planting
- Additional street tree planting where appropriate
- Planted and paved tree pits for new trees
- Rain gardens
- Planted verges
- Commercial curtilage planting
- Consistent planting palette
- Growing Streets and edible planting trails to encourage community engagement
- Connection to existing allotments and community garden projects



Tree Planting



Rain Gardens



Raised Street Planters



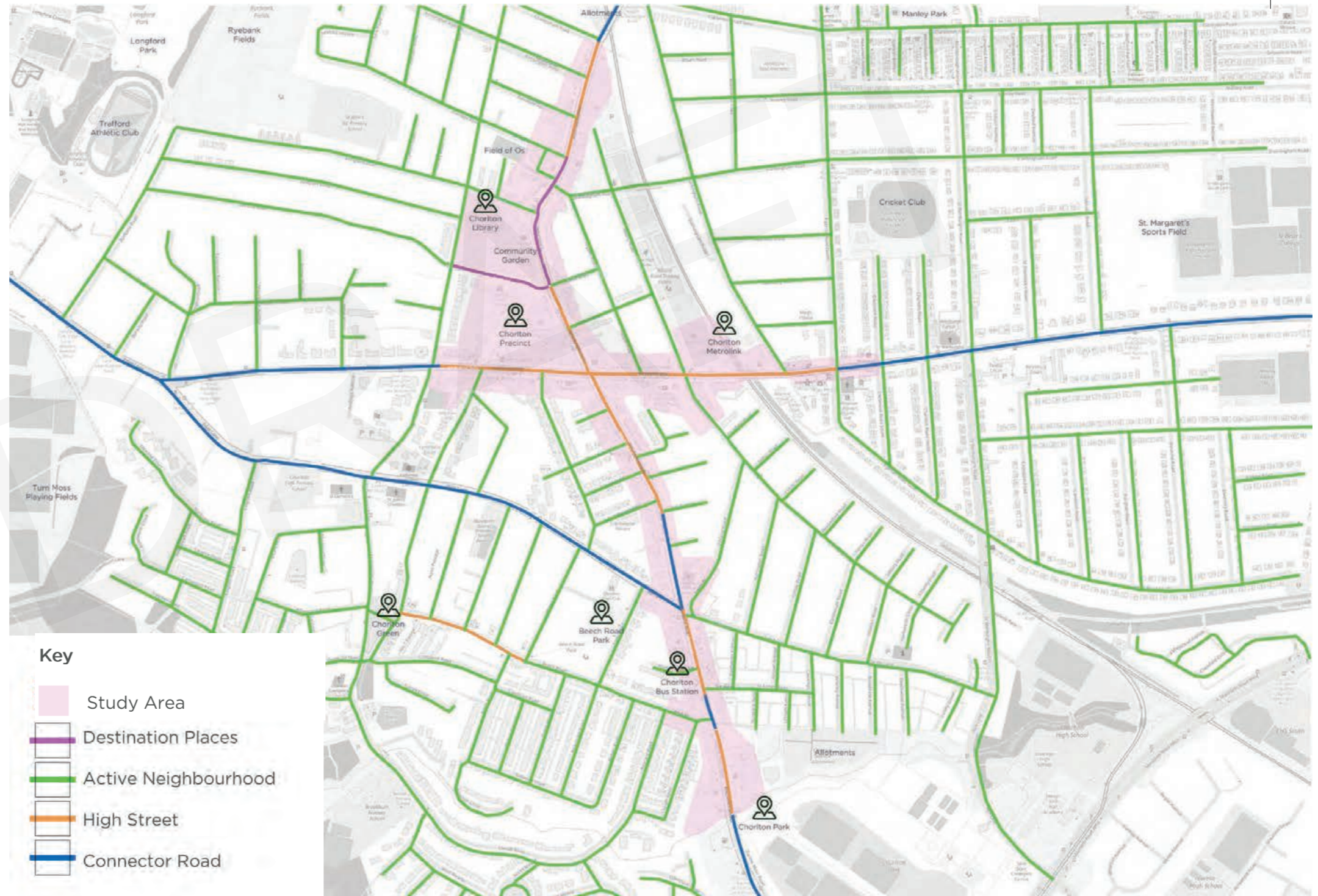
5.3 Street Hierarchy, Local Context

Overview:

The District Centre's existing street hierarchy can be improved upon through the adaptation of current street uses and their associated public realm structures. Enhancements to the public realm can compliment existing uses of the streets and create, safer, more pleasant places to spend time.

Recommendations:

- Manage vehicle movement to create more places to dwell
- Consider street hierarchy to focus design elements
- Enhance and extend upon existing high streets to create interesting and enjoyable places to spend time
- Improve active travel and public transport access along connector roads and key corridors
- Provide accessible local journeys and connections to public transport by walking and cycling
- Design 'destination places', with low levels of slow moving vehicles, where people can come together. In particular, along Nicolas Road and outside of the Library where there is large space and frequent activity already within the public realm
- Enhance existing connector roads and key corridors with street planting, wayfinding and furniture
- Clear street clutter to increase accessibility to amenities, active frontages and cohesive streets



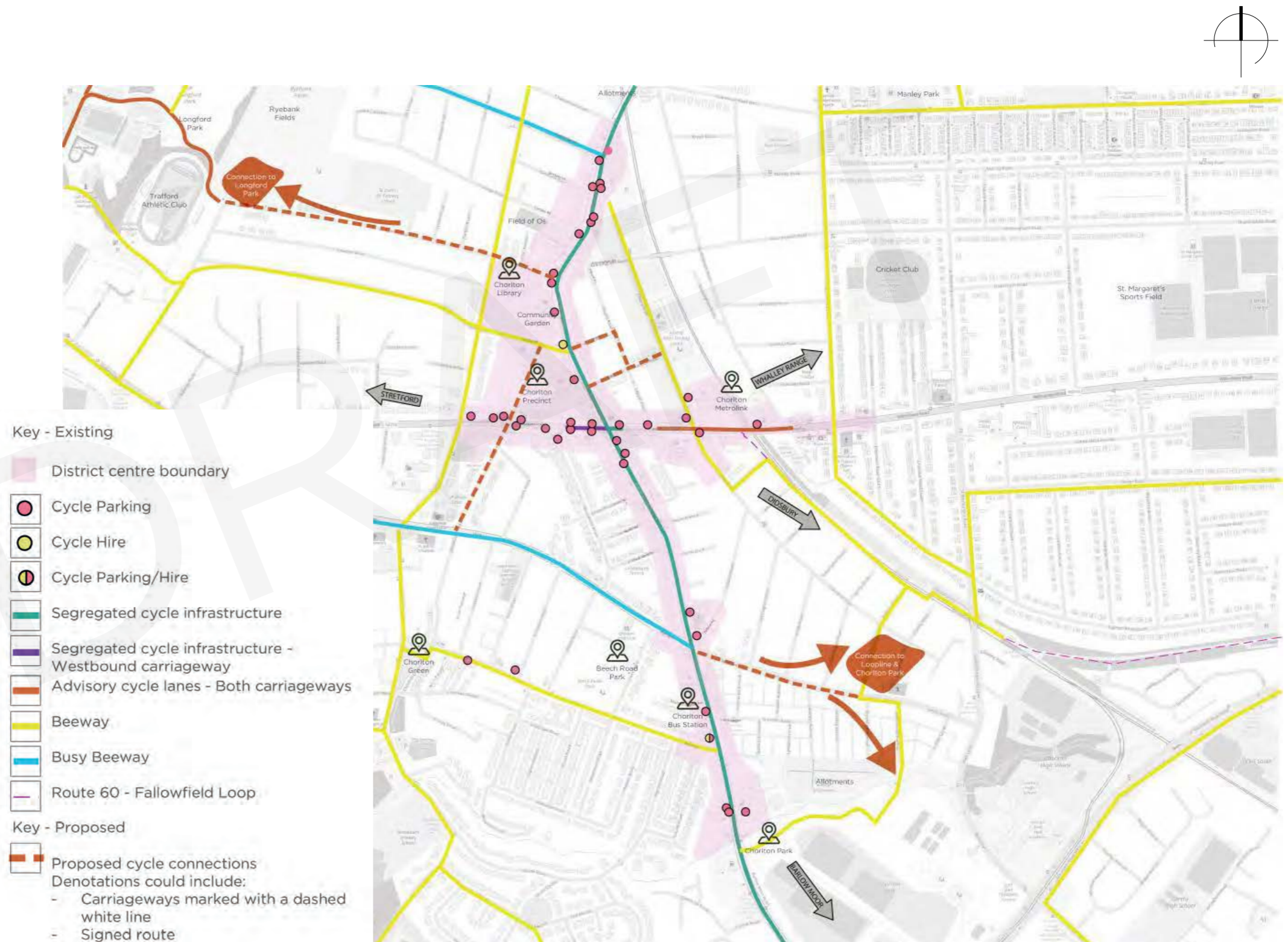
5.4 Cycle Connectivity, Local Context

Overview:

Active travel is a key consideration as part of the public realm plan. There is an opportunity to provide quality connections into the existing bee network as proposals are developed and enhance east and west connectivity. The potential options are set out below; these would require further detailed design and modelling if taken forward.

Potential Options:

- To improve east-west cycle connectivity movement through Chorlton, Sandy Lane could be connected to the proposed bee Network routes on High Lane and Nicolas Road to the existing route on Albany Road/Corkland Road
- Segregated infrastructure would be needed on Wilbraham Road due to traffic volume.
- Additional signage, wayfinding and gateway acknowledgment required throughout Chorlton to provide clear connections
- A signalised junction via residential street would provide a safer connection to the Fallowfield Loop
- Zetland Road would provide a quieter north/south route alternative to Barlow Moor Road to benefit through traffic with direct connections to Chorlton tram stop and the Fallowfield Loop.



5.5 Parking, District Centre

Overview:

An initial review of the District Centre’s car parking capacity identified that some car parks are underutilised.

The plan on this page outlines what marked on-street parking spaces will be available after the cycle infrastructure works are complete.

A ‘marked space’ is a parking space for individual or multiple vehicles that is denoted by lines.

Recommendations:

- It is recognised that on-street parking is important to business operation and helps increase accessibility to the district centre
- To provide more on-street parking it would require some localised narrowing of carriageways and footways including realignment of kerbs to reduce radii
- It could also mean that parking is introduced alongside advisory cycle lanes
- When considering whether to provide on-street parking, choices need to reflect a balance of different needs
- The minimum ratio of disabled spaces provided should be 6% in accordance with MCC policy
- 36 marked on-street parking spaces currently available, including 2 disabled parking bays



On-street paved parking area



Parking between planting



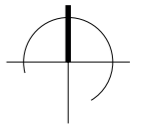
Key

- Study Area
- Approximate parking extent (2 hours)
- Approximate parking extent (1 hour)
- Approximate parking extent (Disabled Parking)
- 7 Number of on-street parking spaces

Parking can also take place where there are no markings or on single yellow lines at certain times, these spaces have not been counted and are not considered marked spaces.

The plan does not include any additional proposed spaces.

Any additional spaces would be subject to further discussion and agreement as to what can be accommodated, given technical and safety assessment.



5.6 Arts, District Centre

Overview:

Chorlton is fortunate to have a creative District Centre with creative local community organisations and festivals which take place annually, exhibiting local artist's and creative's work. These are often temporary exhibitions and the public realm itself is missing permanent public art installations aside.

Recommendations:

- Public art should be location-specific, context sensitive and respond and contribute to a 'spirit of place'
- Teams should partner with cultural organisations when delivering projects to ensure quality, integrity and authenticity
- Artistic signage and wayfinding:
- Totem sculpture incorporating signage and habitats for pollinators. Located in the highly visible focal point within central Chorlton in planted verge.
- Community art murals: Utilising existing blank building façades to represent community and place and enliven inactive streets, spaces and blank walls
- Locate art within clear vistas along the central spine of Barlow Moor Rd and Wilbraham Rd
- Use art to strengthen pedestrian and cycle connections - this could be implemented as an arts trail through both signage, sculpture and wall art



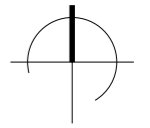
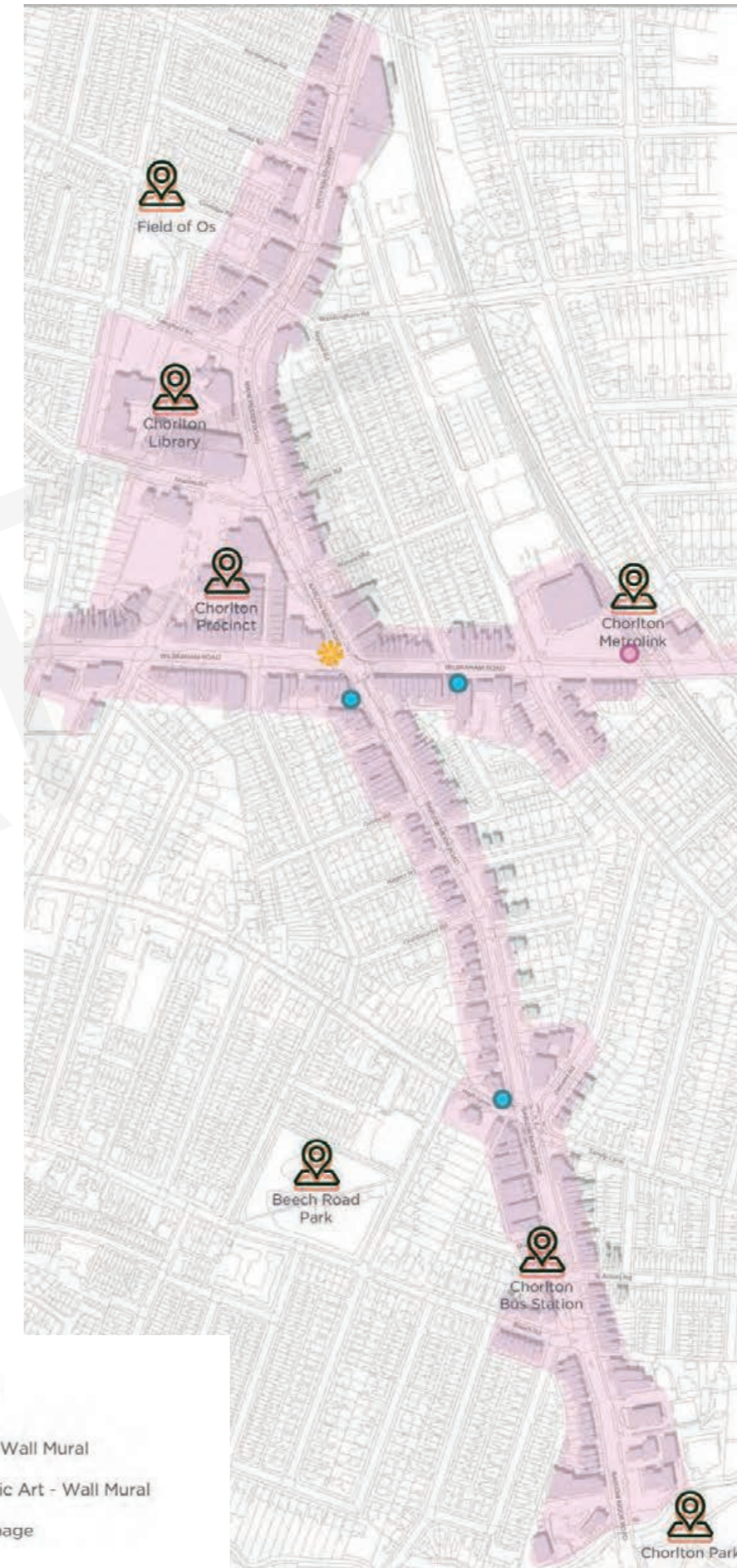
Artistic signage precedent



Example blank façades



Existing art murals



5.7 Materiality

Overview:

The focused implementation of different paving materials and street furniture is important in defining public space.

Material applications can help to define the character and use of the public realm, improve wayfinding, create a greater sense of ownership for the occupiers of the spaces, and a more attractive public environment. The recommendations below suggest low cost options which would enhance the character of the district centre, with alternative material choices for the higher quality key public realm spaces.

Specific material selection will be made on a site by site basis in discussion with the council's Highways and Planning Officers. Long-term management and maintenance will also be a consideration.

Potential Options:

Primary public realm spaces

Key public spaces in which the most congregation and activity occur including event areas and surfaces (See Focus Area 1 in Chapter 6)

1. Natural Stone Flags

Greyish Buff	600 x 400 x 63 mm	Product TBC
	400 x 300 x 63 mm	

Pedestrian feature paving

Defined areas and transitional spaces such as at key junctions, pocket spaces, seating areas and boundary edges

2. Natural aggregate concrete paving

Silver Grey	50 x 300 x 60 mm	Product TBC

3. Natural aggregate concrete paving

Grey Mix	100 x 100 x 60 mm	Product TBC

Pedestrian footways

Applied to existing and transitional pedestrian footways

4. Asphalt

Black

Kerbs

Defining highways, pedestrian areas and rain gardens

5. Pre-cast concrete highways kerb

Edging

Creating defined areas and boundaries to soft landscaping

6. Flush flat top pre-cast concrete edging with natural aggregate

Grey	50 x 150 mm	Product TBC

Indicative images of materials:



1.



2.



3.

(Image: Tobermore)



4.



5.



6.

5.8 Street Furniture

Overview:

Selection of street furniture which could be implemented within Chorlton. This is an optional palette which has been selected with coherence of the public realm in mind, enhancing the character of the district centre whilst creating opportunities for people to interact with the environment. Product selection would be undertaken in consultation with MCC Highways officers.

Recommendations:

Benches

FSC hardwood seating slats. Powder coated galvanised steel frame with armrests and backs

1. Standard
2. Curved

Planters

FSC pressure treated softwood

3. Raised timber planters within private curtilage

Play

Incidental timber natural play

4. Stepping stones, balance beams

Cycle Infrastructure

Bike repair infrastructure

5. Stainless steel Sheffield cycle hoops and cycle repair stations

Signage

6. Interactive signage
7. Wayfinding

Ecology

8. Habitat boxes

E.g. Bee hotels and bird boxes

Landscape

9. Tree grille

Recessed cover with;

- Sandstone paving infill to match adjacent paving
- Gravel surround
- Steel grille



1. (Image: mmcite)



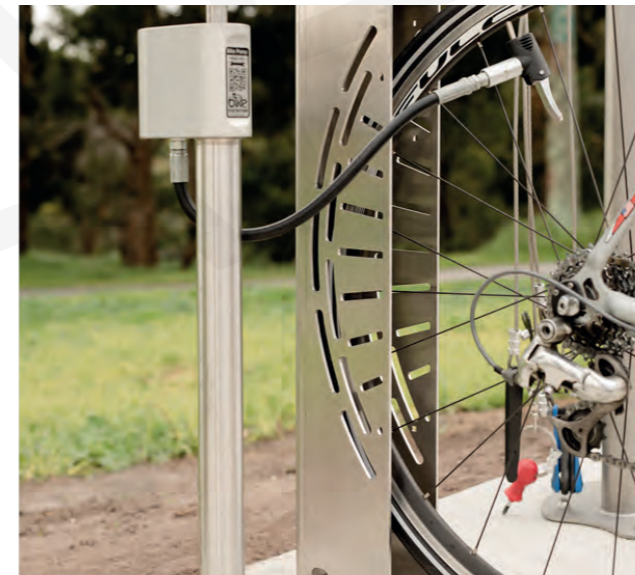
2. (Image: mmcite)



3. (Image: WoodBlocX)



4.



5. (Image: Cyclehoop)



6.



7.



8. (Image: Vestre)



9. (Image: Trueform)

5.9 Planting

Overview:

Planting design should contribute to biodiversity net gain, local ecology, be climate resilient and low maintenance. This palette is a list of recommendations which could be implemented across Chorlton district centre. The specific planting choices will be made on a site by site basis in consultation with the councils Aboricultural officers.

Street Trees:

Low maintenance species suitable for the urban environment which promote biodiversity and healthy air quality.

- Acer campestre
- Betula pendula
- Ginkgo Biloba
- Sorbus aucuparia
- Tilia cordata

SuDS rain garden planting:

Mix of herbaceous perennials and grasses with benefits including storm water management and seasonal interest.

- Ajuga reptans
- Astillbe
- Carex pendula
- Deschampsia cespitosa
- Echinacea pupurea
- Hemerocalis
- Hosta
- Monarda
- Persicaria

Pollinator friendly verge planting:

Herbaceous perennials provide a low maintenance opportunity for habitat creation with emphasis on supporting pollinators.

- Achillea
- Anemone x hybrida
- Centaurea montana
- Elaeagnus pungens
- Geum rivale
- Hebe
- Pachysandra teminalis
- Rudbeckia
- Vinca minor

Edible planting:

Low maintenance evergreen edible planting suitable for the streetscape.

- Allium schoenoprasum
- Allium ursinum
- Corylus avellana
- Fragaria vesca
- Lavandula angustifolia
- Pyrus communis
- Ribes uva-crispa
- Rosmarinus nobilis
- Thymus vulgaris
- Tropaeolum majus



Acer campestre



Ginkgo biloba



Betula pendula



Ajuga reptans



Carex pendula



Perscaria



Rudbeckia



Achillea



Centarea montana



Fragaria vesca



Lavandula angustifolia



Rosmarinus officinalis

5.10 Illustrative Sitewide Plan

Potential Public Realm Improvements:

This illustrative site wide plan is to demonstrate the variety of public realm improvements that could be implemented throughout Chorlton's District Centre.

All of these improvements would be subject to further design and identification of funding.

Focus Area 1 - Chorlton Library to Nicolas Rd

- Open spaces for pop up events such as the Makers Market and festivals
- New seating
- New planted verges
- Informal play opportunities
- New street trees

Focus Area 2 - Four Banks

- New public art and signage
- New seating including opportunities for outdoor cafe/bar seating

Focus Area 3 - High Lane Junction

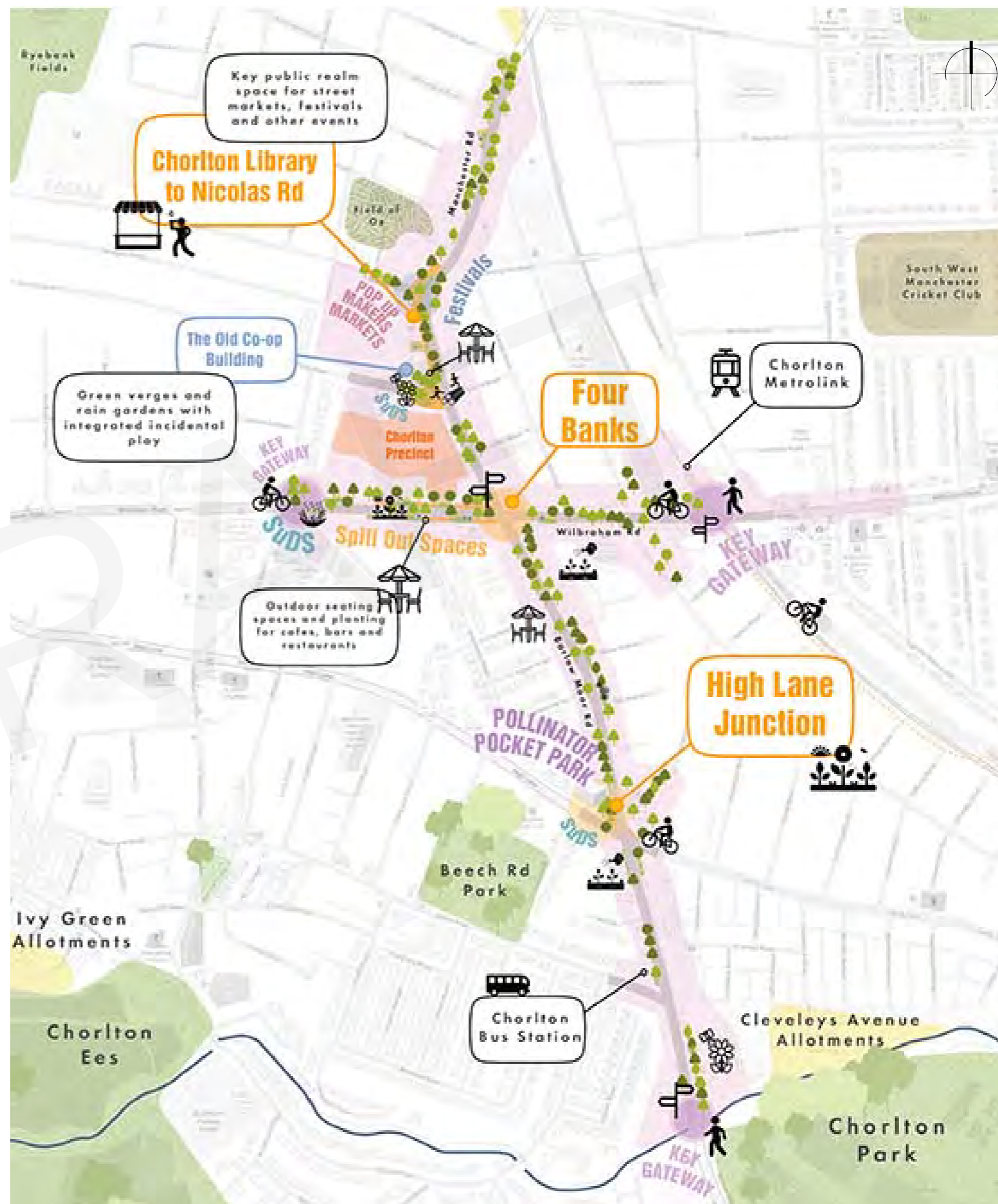
- Pocket park with rain garden with pollinator-friendly planting as well as seating and play opportunities
- New planters in front of commercial premises
- Public art including wall murals

Key Gateway: Fallowfield Loop

- Improve pedestrian and cycle connection to the Fallowfield Loop
- Better wayfinding signage

Potential District Centre-wide Improvements

- New street trees
- New planted verges
- De-clutter the streetscape and remove pedestrian barriers
- New community planters in front of commercial premises
- Rain gardens and swales (SuDS)



06 Proposed Projects & Focus Areas



6.1 The vision for Chorlton District Centre.

This commission includes the development of proposals for three locations within the study area. The illustrative proposals on the upcoming pages demonstrate design principles for each of these Focus Areas. These proposed projects encompass some of the design principals to be applied across Chorlton in areas associated with key buildings, spaces and central spaces in Chorlton. Delivery of improvements to these three areas would be subject to detailed design and funding.

The three Focus Areas identified include:

1. Chorlton Library to Nicolas Road
 - Opportunity to create a key public realm space outside the library or the old Co-op building for events such as the regular street market. Potential road closure (temporary of permanent) of either Longford Rd or Nicolas Rd as one of a number of options which would be looked at in further detailed design.
2. Wilbraham Road
 - Opportunity to define spaces for spillover activities from local businesses, improved surfaces, street furniture and green verges in this central area of the district.
3. High Lane Junction
 - Opportunity to create a pocket park with dwell spaces and incidental play. Environmentally, the space could benefit from the creation of a rain garden, new tree planting and pollinator friendly planting due to the proximity to the roads.



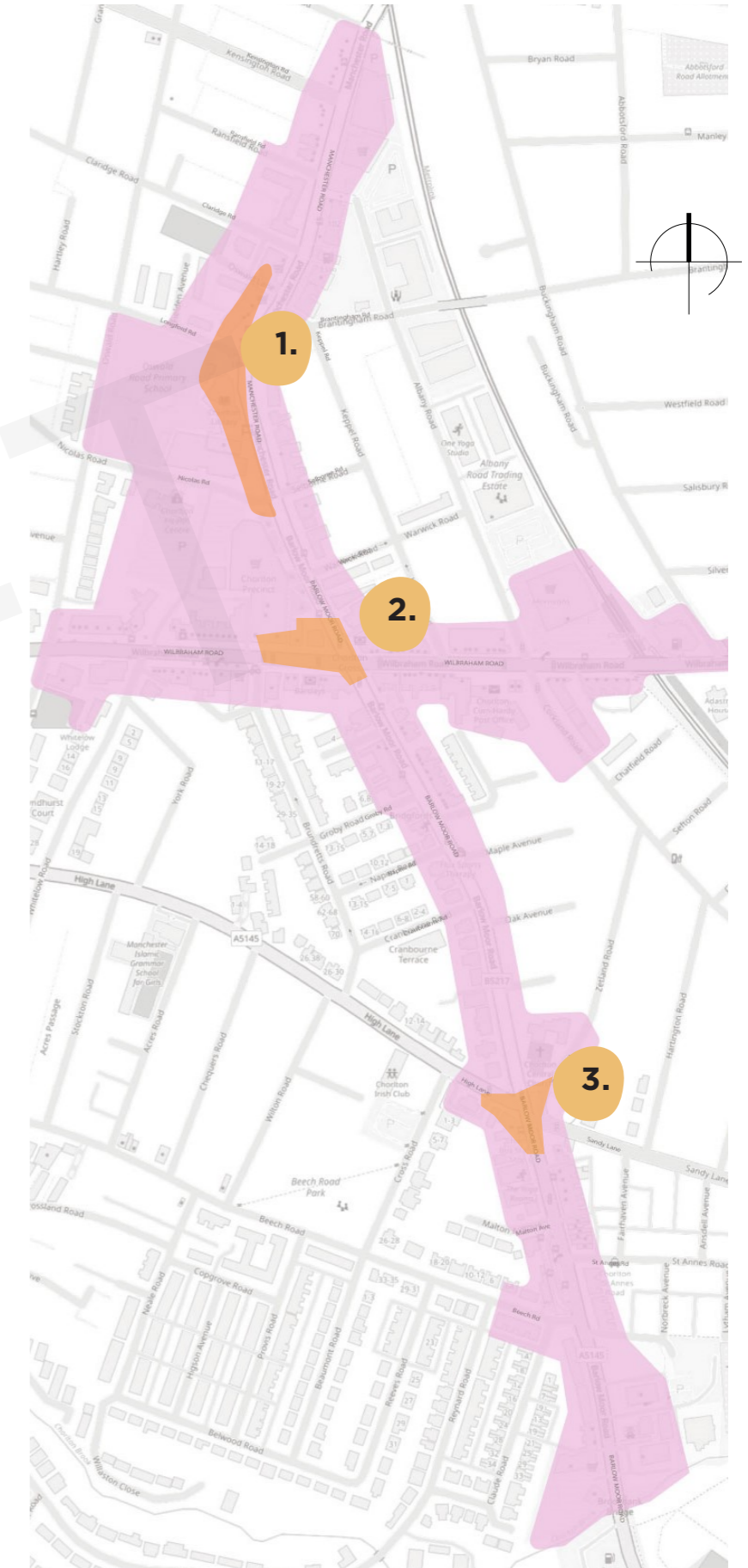
1. Chorlton Library to Nicolas Road



2. Wilbraham Road



3. High Lane Junction



6.2 Public Realm Plan: Focus Area 1

Chorlton Library to Nicolas Rd

Overview:

Focus Area 1 has the potential to become a great 'Destination Place' through the installation of new paving, greenery and dwell spaces. There could be options in the future to propose closing off Longford Rd or alternatively Nicolas Rd to maximise the opportunity to create a 'Destination Place'. Any such closures could be temporary or permanent, depending on design and other considerations. Options would also include filters, raised tables or occasional closures.

As an area that is currently used by the community, public realm enhancements here will create an inviting and active space to explore.

Recommendations:

- Incidental play spaces within planting
- Pop-up space opportunities to host markets, events and community activity
- Pollinator-friendly planted verges with habitat boxes to create separation from the highway
- Cycle hire and cycle parking locations for active travel
- Formalised paving to define and enhance the space
- Seating areas and dwell spaces to create an inviting area to spend time
- New tree planting to replace dead/dying trees and enhance the space



Proposed Projects

6.3 Public Realm Plan: Focus Area 1



6.4 Public Realm Plan: Focus Area 2

Wilbraham Rd

Overview:

Focus Area 2 has the potential to become a key arrival space and gateway within the District Centre.

The installation of new paving in the 'Four Banks' area, enhances the experience and defines the different uses along the street.

Areas for parking, dwelling, commercial spill out and active travel are more distinguishable and inviting.

Recommendations:

- Feature paving to define areas
- Pollinator-friendly planted verges with habitat boxes
- Spillover commercial spaces
- Cycle parking
- Parking bays integrated within planted verges
- New tree planting where possible
- Wayfinding, signage and lighting



Proposed Projects

6.5 Public Realm Plan: Focus Area 2



6.6 Public Realm Plan: Focus Area 3

Overview:

Focus Area 3 provides small dwell spaces for those travelling to nearby areas and green spaces. It includes a small pocket park with incidental play and a cycle hub for making any necessary repairs whilst on the adjacent beeway.

Planting softens this area and creates a pleasant thoroughfare for both active travellers and drivers.

Recommendations:

- Rain gardens
- Seating and dwell spaces
- Incidental Play
- Cycle parking and pit stop station
- Street art
- Pollinator-friendly planted verges with habitat boxes
- Wayfinding and interpretation signage



Proposed Projects

6.7 Public Realm Plan: Focus Area 3



07 Summary & Next Steps



Public Realm Plan Vision

The document establish a set of design principles and priorities which can be applied as and when funding becomes available and to inform future development within the area.

7.1 Summary

Connectivity:

- Chorlton is a well connected place and accessible via active travel, car and public transport
- The bus station and the metrolink are assets to Chorlton but the arrival experience and wayfinding at these locations could be improved
- Better wayfinding across Chorlton would improve the knowledge and use of active travel connections

Natural Space:

- Great potential to link up green spaces with improved connectivity, cycle routes, walkways and wayfinding
- Opportunity to install rain gardens, new tree planting, pollinator friendly verges
- Aim to increase the biodiversity value along streets with more species rich and pollinator friendly planting
- SuDS and growing streets can be implemented along existing road corridors to green the landscape and serve the community.
- Rain gardens can be introduced to reduce the risk of surface flooding
- Pocket parks create places for community and events

Parking:

- Opportunity to provide limited new on-street parking along Wilbraham Road
- Parking along pavements needs to be addressed and deterred through public realm design

Community and Identity:

- Strong local spirit and community groups
- A range of independent shops and businesses play an important role
- There is an opportunity for the public realm to better serve the community
- Areas of existing activity such as artisan markets should be provided with a dedicated space
- Sense of place can be enhanced through defining Chorlton's character and use of the public realm
- Create a greater sense of ownership for the occupiers of retail units through enhancing commercial frontages and their external spaces
- Enhance the coherence of Chorlton's frontages in line with the new MCC Shopfront Design Guide (due 2024).
- Introducing anchor public realm spaces in a central location, connecting into arrival destinations and other existing or future anchor developments
- Management and maintenance of the public realm will be a key consideration in any future interventions.

7.2 Next Steps

This draft document examines the existing environment, identifies key opportunity areas, and sets out general guiding principles for good public realm design suitable to Chorlton District Centre. The recommendations set out in this document are subject to detailed design, consultation and funding.

The public realm plan will empower stakeholders to take a positive role in delivering change and realising common goals, providing a foundation to attract external funding.

The Public Realm Plan has been informed by extensive, early engagement, and applies the views collated from previous workstreams and consultation events in Chorlton.

This draft document will go out to public consultation in early 2024.

The council and project team will then review that feedback and consider how the Public Realm Plan could be amended in light of feedback from the community.

A final draft of the document will subsequently be presented to the Council's Executive for endorsement.



