

A Masterplan for Rawtenstall

Our Ambition →

To enhance the existing charm of Rawtenstall, looking for opportunities to strengthen the offer for its communities and visitors.

A clear vision for Rawtenstall and its wider surroundings. Analysing the key opportunities to identify 10 priority projects that would help revitalise the wider town centre.

Why does Rawtenstall need a Masterplan?

Lancashire County Council and Rossendale Borough Council have decided to commission this masterplan for Rawtenstall Town Centre due to a number of interconnected projects in development at the same time:

- Rawtenstall Connected
- Rawtenstall Market Hall Frontage Redesign
- Gyratory Redesign
- Hall Carr Estate - Safer, Greener, Healthier Streets
- Bank Street - Stage 2 Public Realm Design

Benefits

- Coordinates Public Realm, Infrastructure and to create a better functioning and more prosperous local economy
- Community opportunity to shape the future of their town centre
- Encourages investment and tourism
- Greener and prosperous future and active travel



Rawtenstall Town Centre and Surroundings (base image - Google Maps, 2024)

Consultations Events so far

10:00-13:00 30 November 2023 Public Consultation Rawtenstall Market	18:00-19:30 4 December 2023 Stakeholder Engagement Rawtenstall Unitarian Church	13:00-16:00 13 December 2023 Public Consultation Sophie's Boutique, Bank St
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What makes Rawtenstall special?

Based on our analysis and understanding of the place and its identity, we've identified a distinctive set of characteristics and assets that set Rawtenstall apart and we are looking to support and expand on these in our future proposals.



'Gateway into Rossendale'

Rawtenstall's size and strategic position in the heart of Rossendale mean it has become the primary town centre in the borough with enormous potential to benefit the whole area in this role.



Emerging Local Economy

There is a range of local, independent businesses across town from the station to the market that give the opportunity to shop local and enjoy the unique character and charm of Rawtenstall.



Rich History and Heritage

Evolving from a small medieval settlement to a thriving mill town and finally surviving the decline of industry to the proud community it is today. Fortunately, Rawtenstall has retained much of its historic character and beautiful heritage buildings.



Strong Local Community

An active network of community groups and cultural institutions, such as Civic Pride Rossendale, Rawtenstall Market and The Whitaker Art Gallery and Museum, are an intrinsic part of the fabric of Rawtenstall and make it a better place through their efforts.



Hub for Sports and the Outdoors

As a part of the 'Adrenaline Valley', the town has great linkages to the surrounding countryside and hills as well as various sport activities for people of all ages.



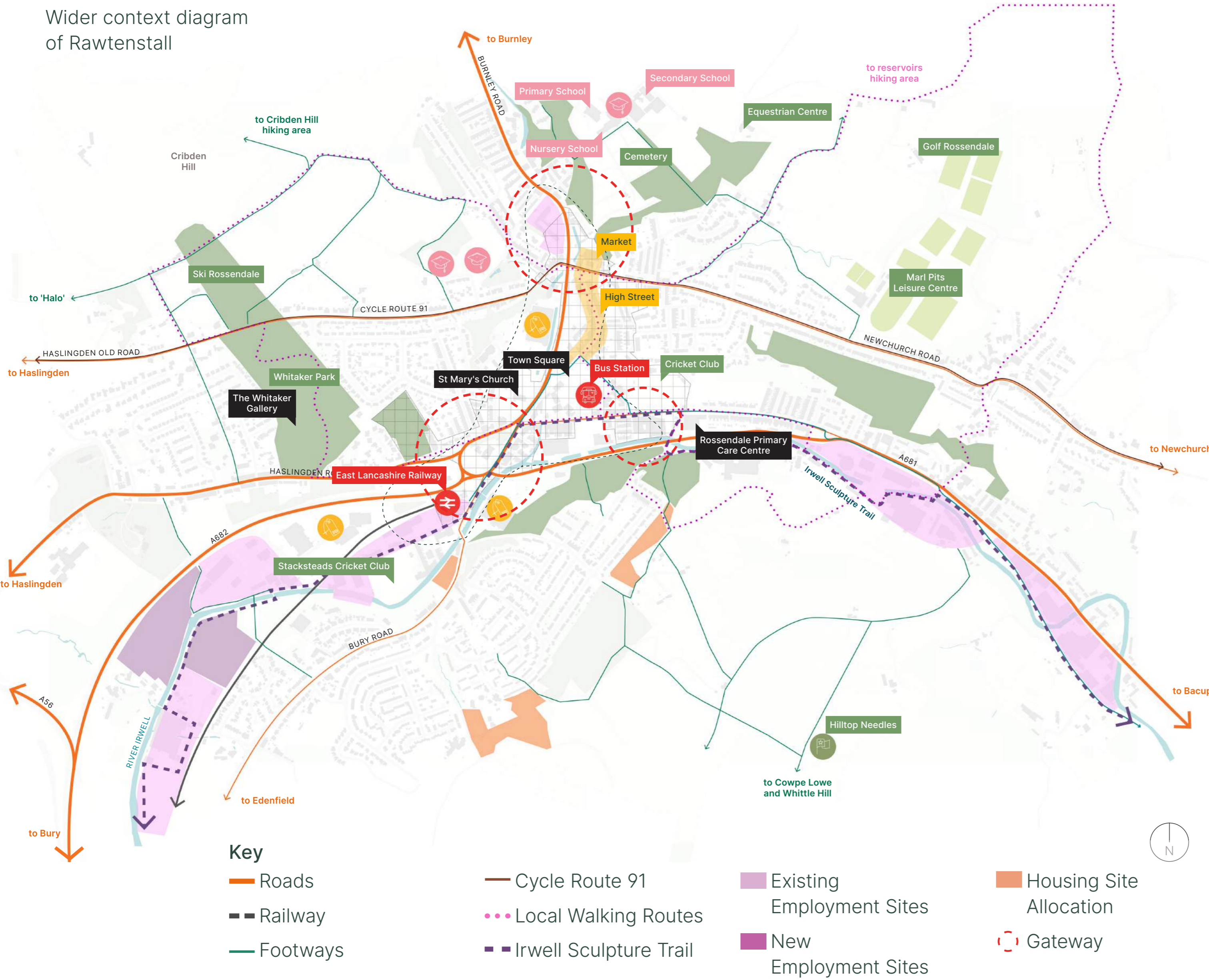
Great Landscape Setting

The town's position in the heart of the West Pennine Moors is natural to Rawtenstall's visual character, giving a dramatic hilly backdrop to the town and providing numerous walking and cycling paths for people to enjoy.



Understanding the Context

Wider context diagram of Rawtenstall

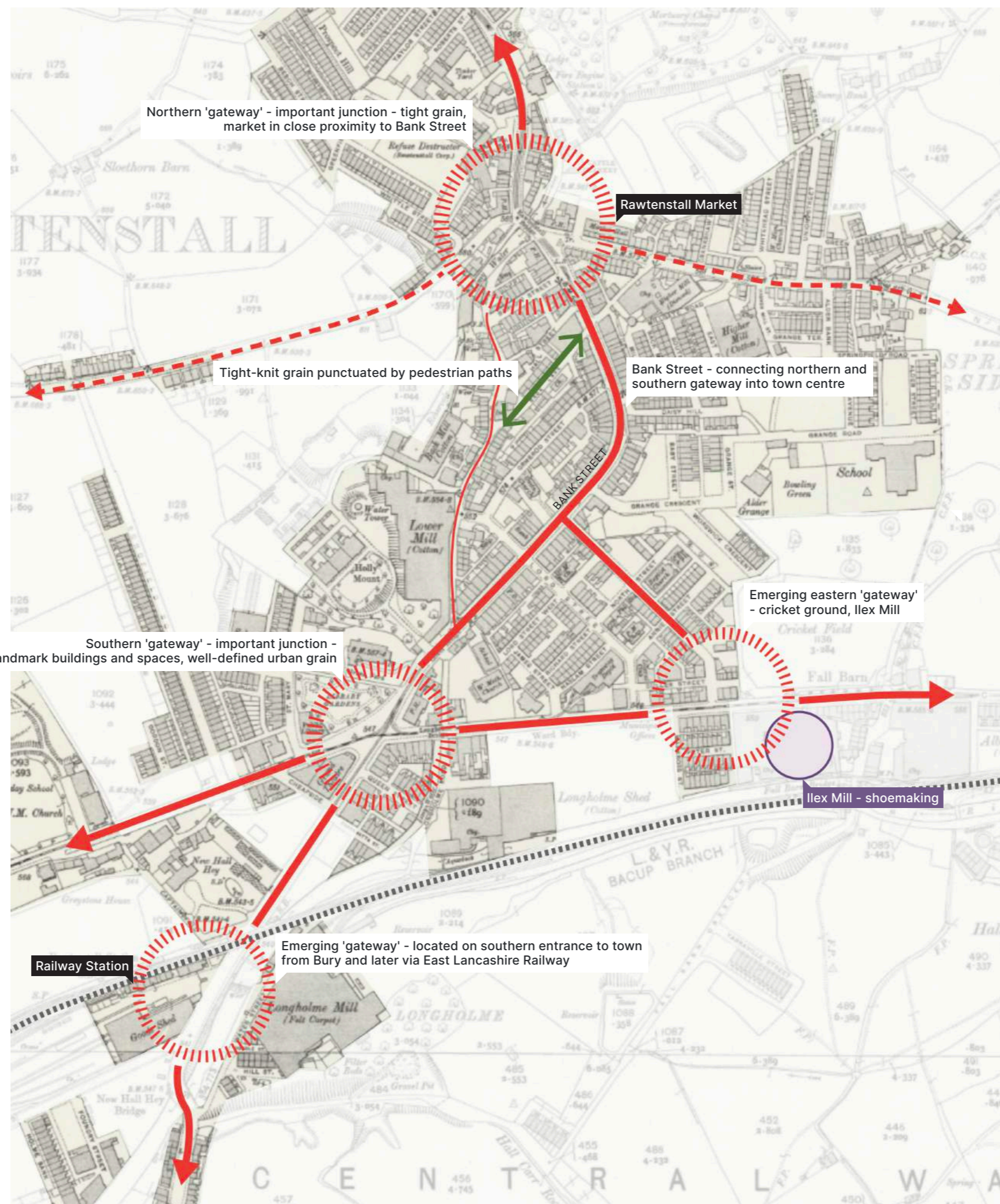


Key Findings

- Rawtenstall is strategically positioned on the southern junction of the A56 and A682 which link south to Manchester and north to the M65 corridor, making it the gateway town into Rossendale.
- Town is structured around primary road corridors along the valley
- 2 key gateways** - Rawtenstall Market (north) and Railway Station/gyratory (south)
- 3rd gateway** less well defined around Health Centre/Cricket Ground
- Wide range of facilities and independent businesses/shops
- Excellent walking and cycling connections to wider countryside
- Listed, heritage buildings with opportunity to improve their setting
- A range of public spaces, squares and parks through the town – from pocket parks to civic and semi natural spaces – a strong sense of community ownership of green space
- Retail and employment focused around the south of town
- Residential areas within walking distance of the centre – but with challenges due to topography and road severance
- Excellent public transport links

Historic Setting

Rawtenstall is a small town with rich history - transforming from a small hamlet into an industrial powerhouse, surviving the decline of industry - it stood the test of time and the local community is proud of it.



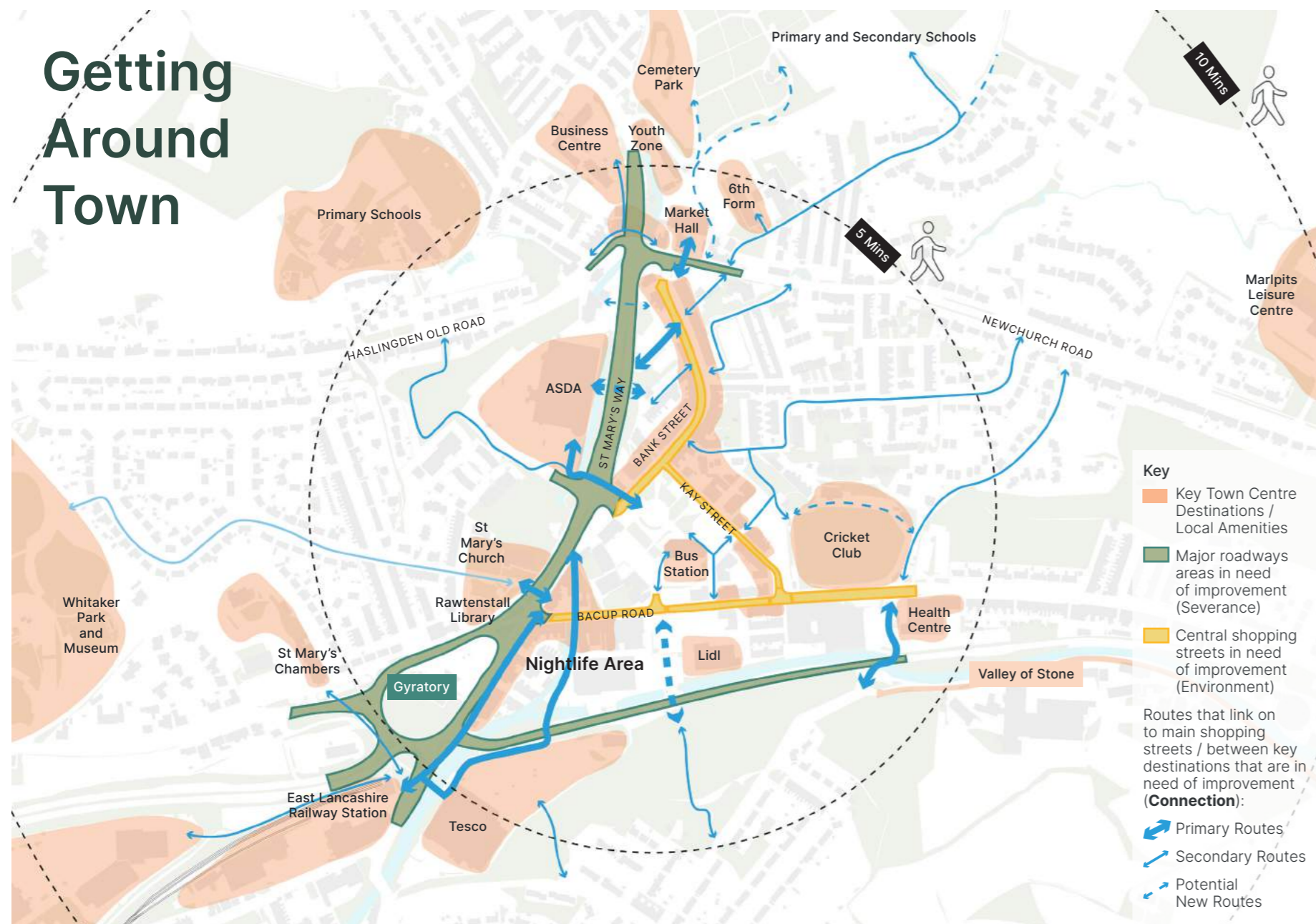
Map of Rawtenstall (published: 1911)

Key Findings

- Tight-knit historic urban grain** was eroded throughout the time due to construction of motorway and during slum clearance
- Several **pedestrian connections** between today's St Mary's Way and Bank Street enhanced permeability of place
- Northern and southern gateways** to town centre were well-defined by cultural (theatre) and community (market) buildings, creating hubs of activity
- Shoemaking** was an important part of Rawtenstall's economy and survives until today
- Tramway** connected Rawtenstall to surrounding towns, remains of which are still visible in the streets
- Mr. Fitzpatrick's temperance bar** opened in 1890 and is the last surviving traditional temperance bar in England
- East Lancashire Railway Station** (originally opened in 1846) - used to be a part of a line connecting Manchester to Bacup. After closure in 1972 the station was reopened as a heritage railway in 1991.

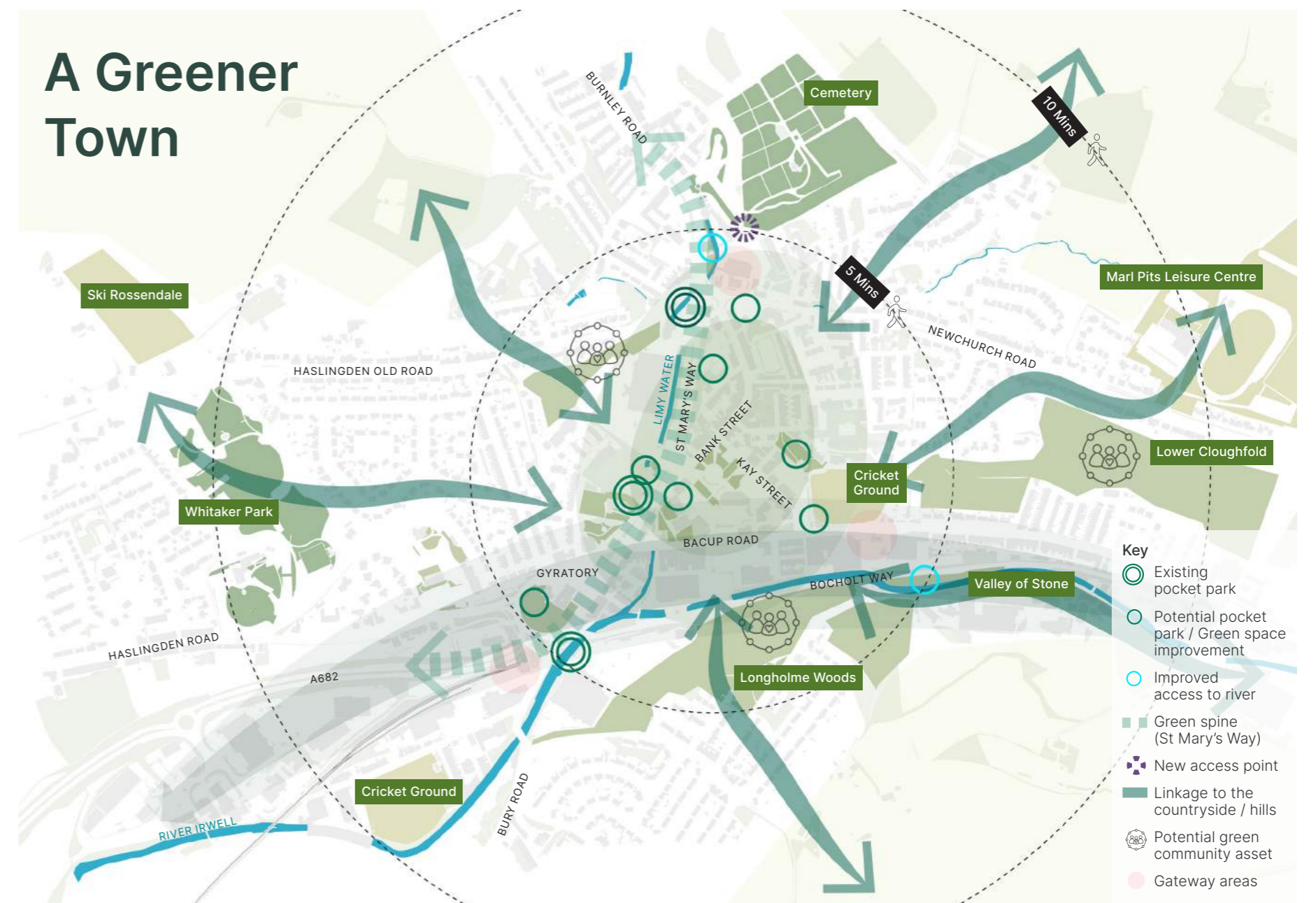
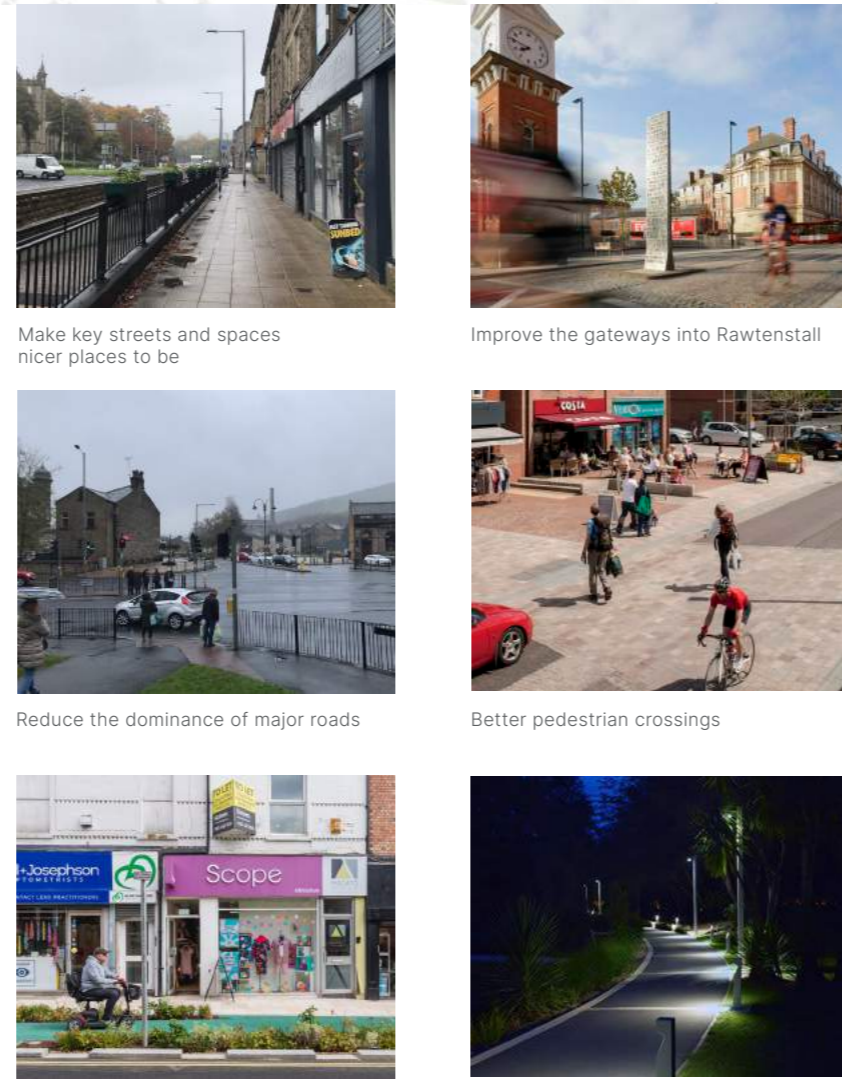
Key Themes and Opportunities

After undertaking an urban analysis of the town and its history, four key themes emerged as the main areas of opportunity to help Rawtenstall reach its full potential.



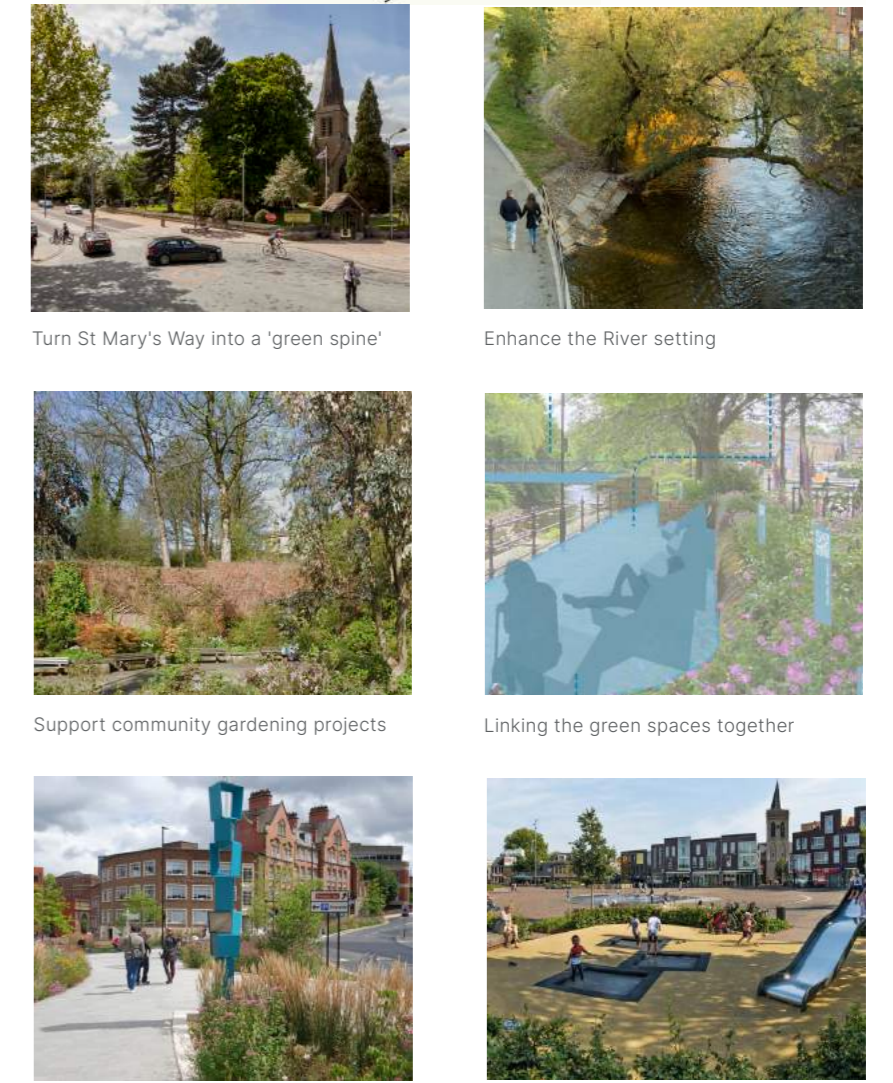
Key Findings

- Rawtenstall has great local amenities within walking distance of the town centre.
- Clear pedestrian routes exist to connect all these key destinations to each other and from the surrounding communities.
- But major roads and junctions stop the routes and destinations connecting together to help Rawtenstall reach its full potential.



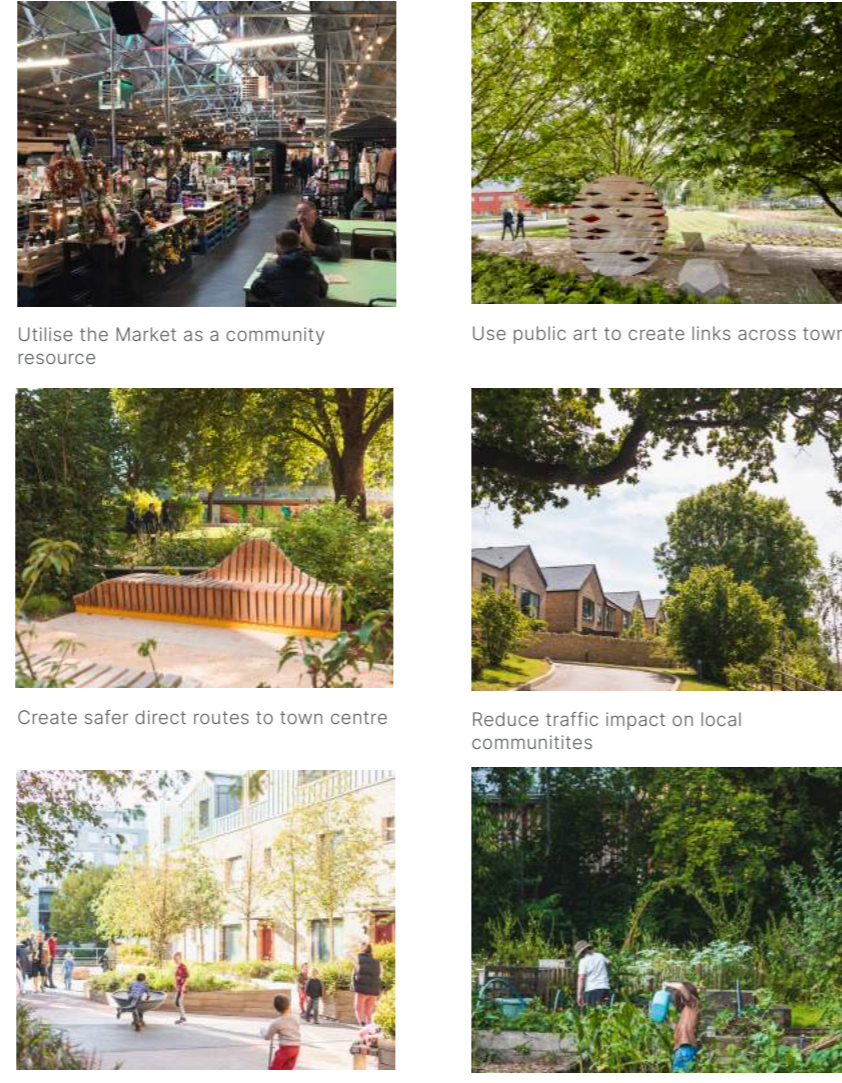
Key Findings

- High-quality existing network of green spaces and pocket parks within the town centre
- Good existing links into the wider movement network (Valley of Stone, Irwell Sculpture Trail, links out to countryside)
- Unexplored potential of the river / water bodies
- Several green spaces within 5 minute walk from centre with unexplored potential



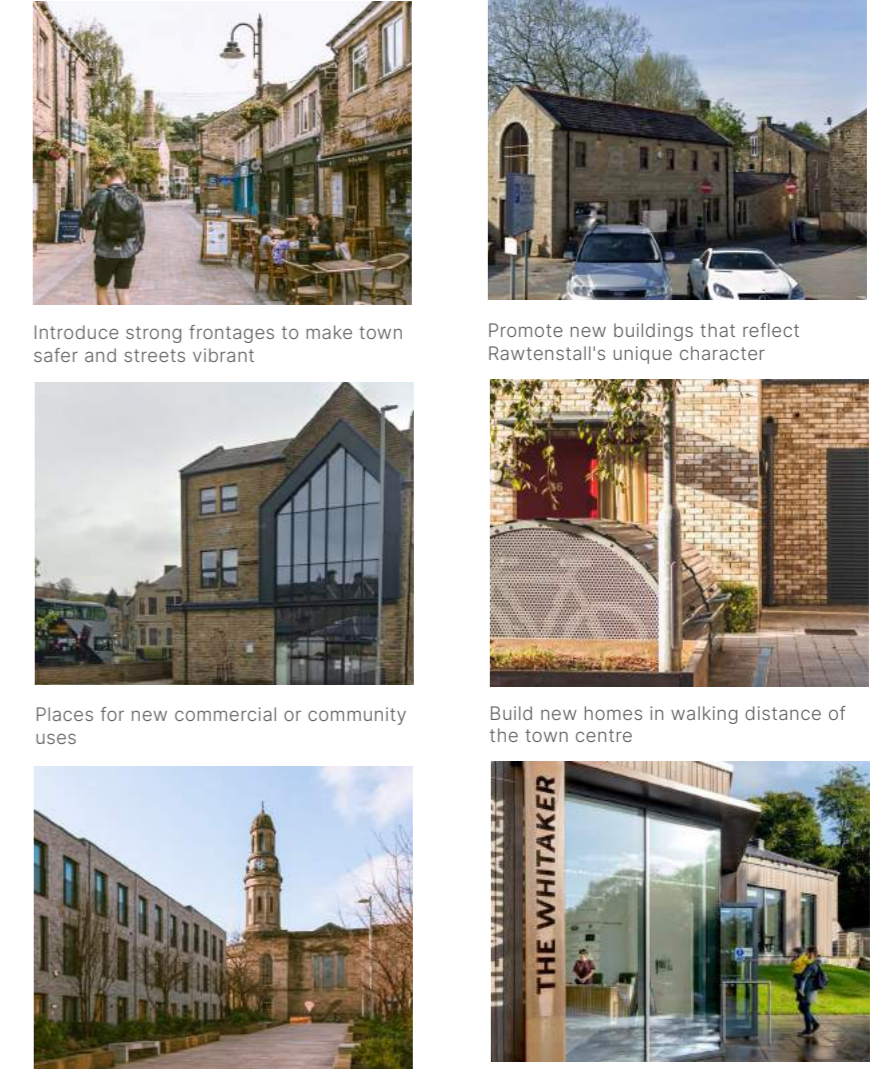
Key Findings

- Residential neighbourhoods disconnected from town centre by busy roads
- Local green spaces present an opportunity to create community assets with safe linkages to town
- Two residential areas of greater social need - in north and south
- Opportunities to strengthen links to facilities and employment



Key Findings

- Rawtenstall retains many key heritage buildings and streets but over time it has lost some of its former rich historic built fabric
- Many of these lost buildings are now surface car parks
- This could be restored through sensitive infill developments
- There is demand for new commercial and residential development in the town centre (particularly around the town square)





Vision and Action Plan

"Rawtenstall is a vibrant town where nature threads through its streets, creating lively brooks, colourful pocket parks and weaving its way into the surrounding hills.

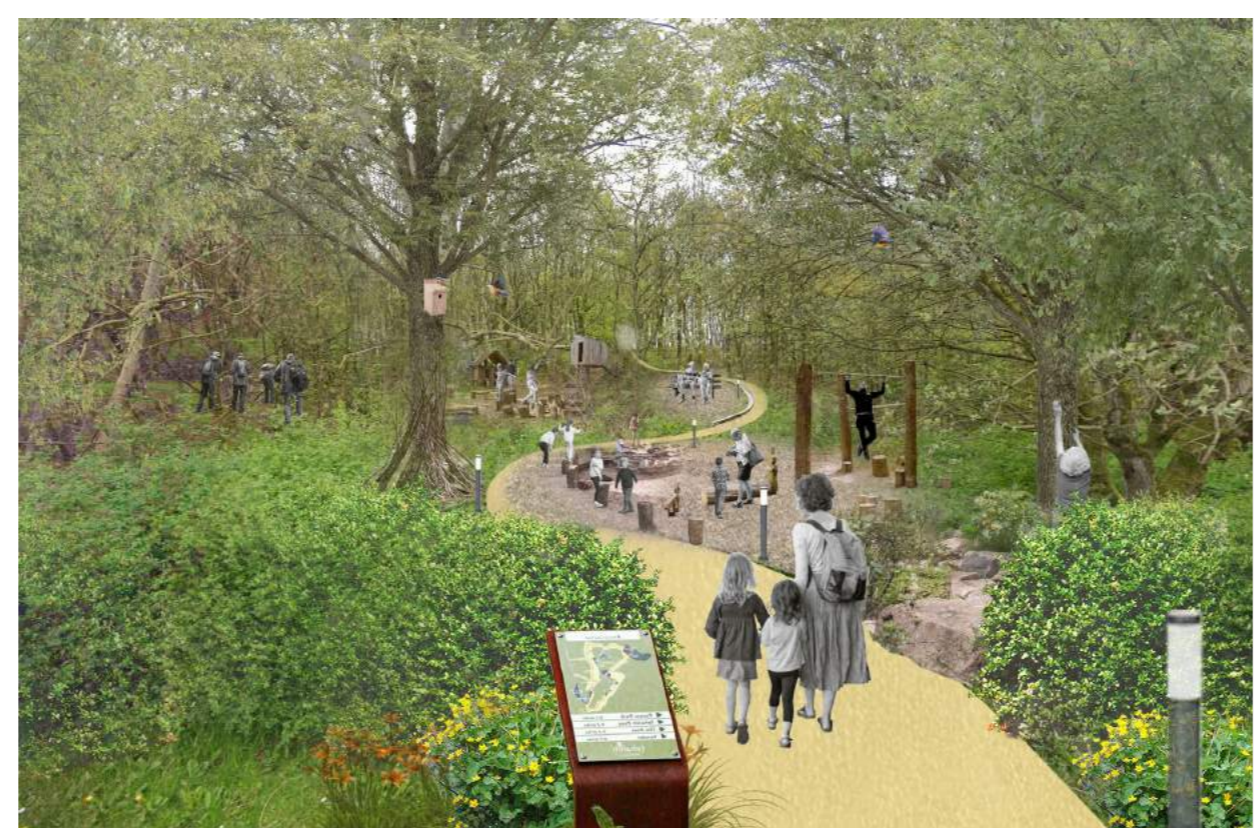
It is a welcoming place for people of all ages, where locals feel a sense of pride and visitors excitement and curiosity to explore.

The cobbled streets, set in the historic townscape are bustling with activity, showcasing local businesses and artists and giving the community space to come together and celebrate their shared spirit..."

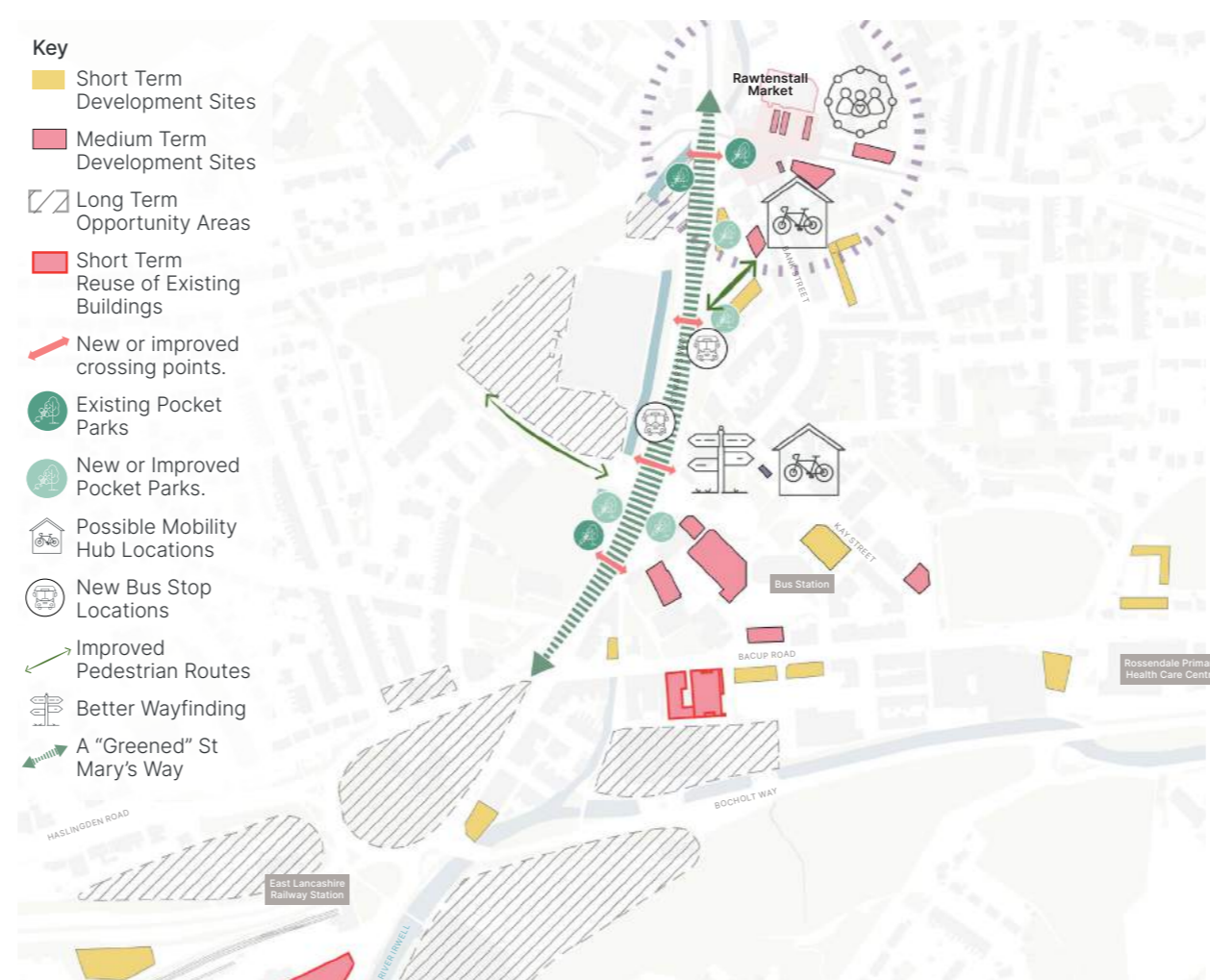
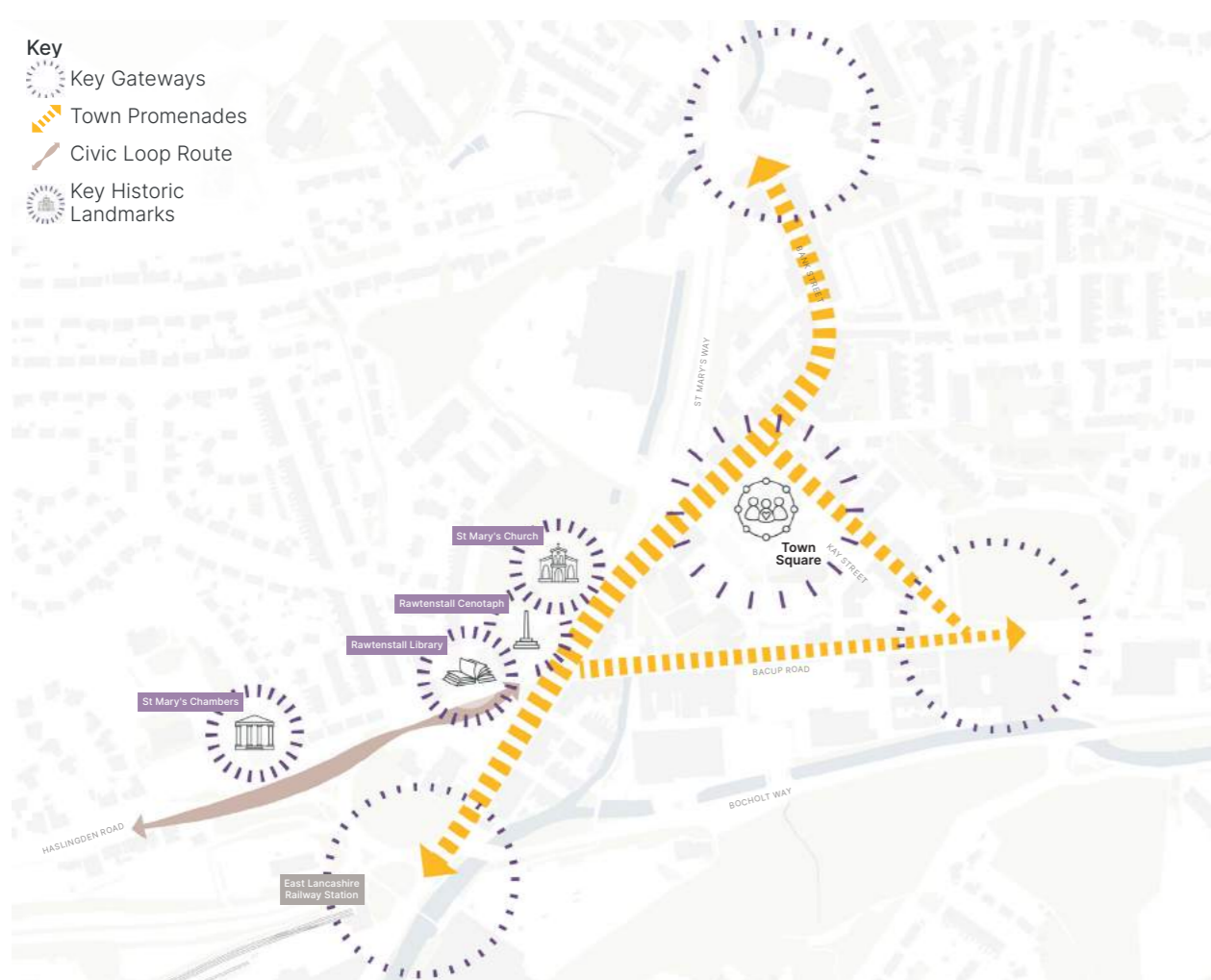
Improved Arrival Experience



Better Places and Spaces



Connecting Communities



1 - Town Promenades
Building on the *Rawtenstall Connects* project, a new main north-south link connecting the ELR Station, market and emerging 'Eastern gateway' with improved public realm, people-friendly crossing points and easier wayfinding around the town.

2 - Civic Loop
Making the cultural and community gems of St Mary's Church, Rawtenstall Library, the Cenotaph and St Mary's Chambers truly part of the town centre.

3 - Revitalised Town Square
Celebrating Rawtenstall's central square: improving the arrival experience, providing a 'mobility hub' and exploring opportunities for development to bring more active frontage to this central community space.

4 - A New 'Green Spine' (St Mary's Way)
Turning St Mary's Way into a lush green boulevard not only enhances the biodiversity, but importantly creates a safer pedestrian environment, re-stitching this east-west divide by new crossing points, a bus stop and a series of community pocket parks.

5- Rawtenstall Market Place
A great opportunity with the forthcoming new outdoor Market Stalls improvements to improve the public realm, create a better crossing from Bank Street and provide a possible cycle/mobility hub.

6 - Development Opportunities
Whilst many sites exist in the town that could be developed upon, it is important that it is sensitive to Rawtenstall's unique historic character and informed by car parking requirements. Opportunities are categorised in to short, medium and long term based on the barriers that exist to development going ahead.

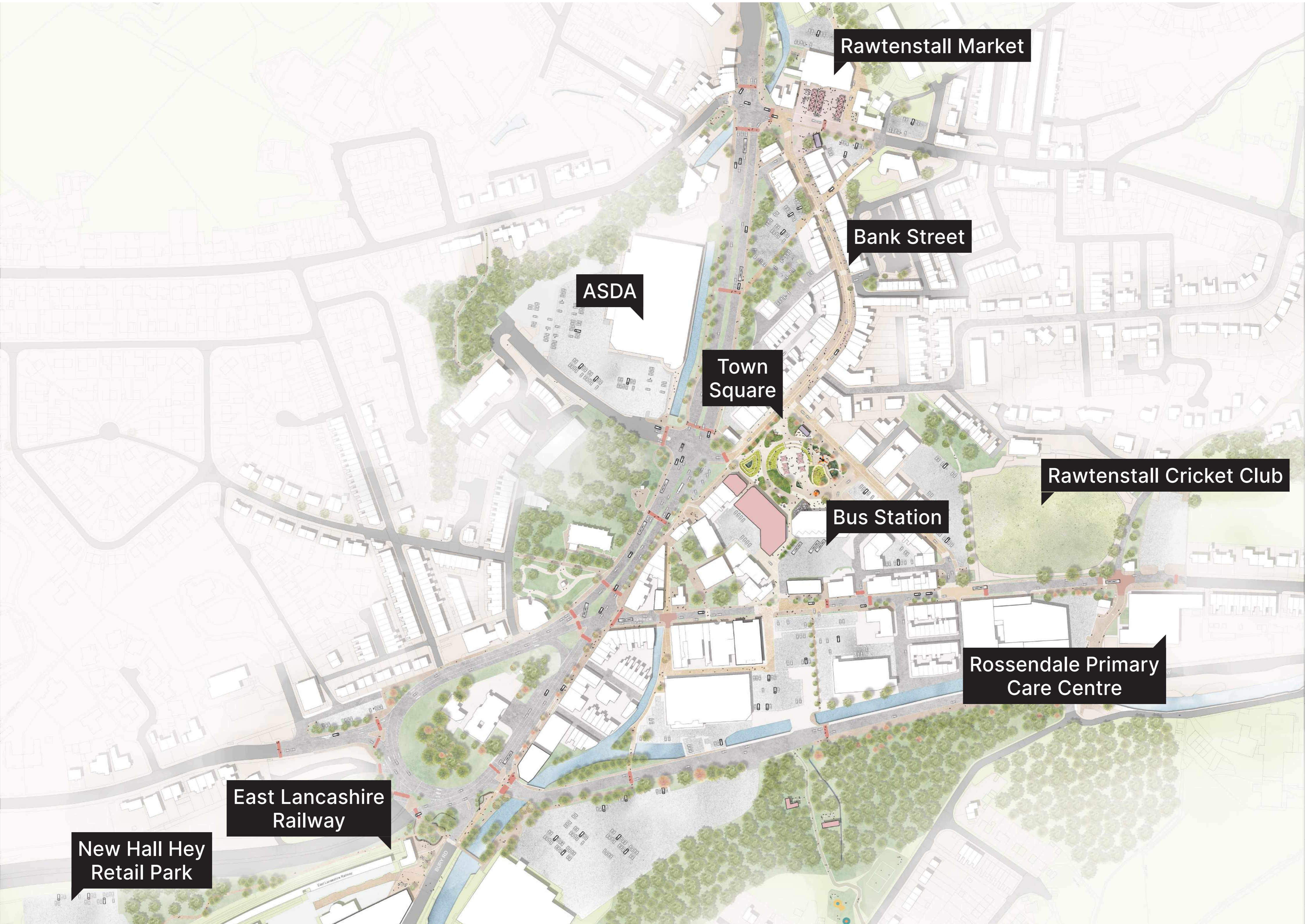
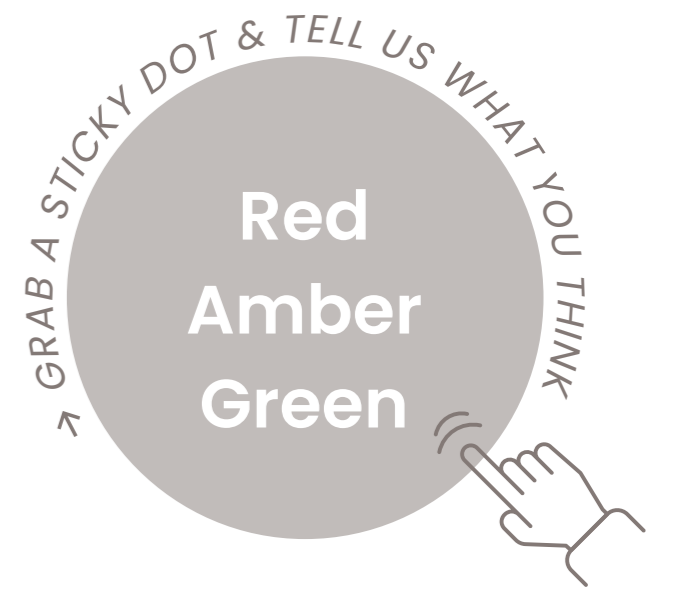
7 - Wider Links - Valley of Stone
Connecting the town centre to the Valley of Stone recreation route in order to create a better sense of arrival from the southwest, while linking some of the assets along this path.

8 - Linking Communities
Southern woodland links to Hall Car Estate including play, sports and recreation including a crossing point across Bolsholt Way, and past Lidl to the old Town Hall and Rawtentsall Square.

9 - Gateway to the Hills
A countryside link to the north past St Mary's and St James the Less primary schools- wayfinding ped/ cycle connection through housing area - possible new play offer/ café hub at the upper level.

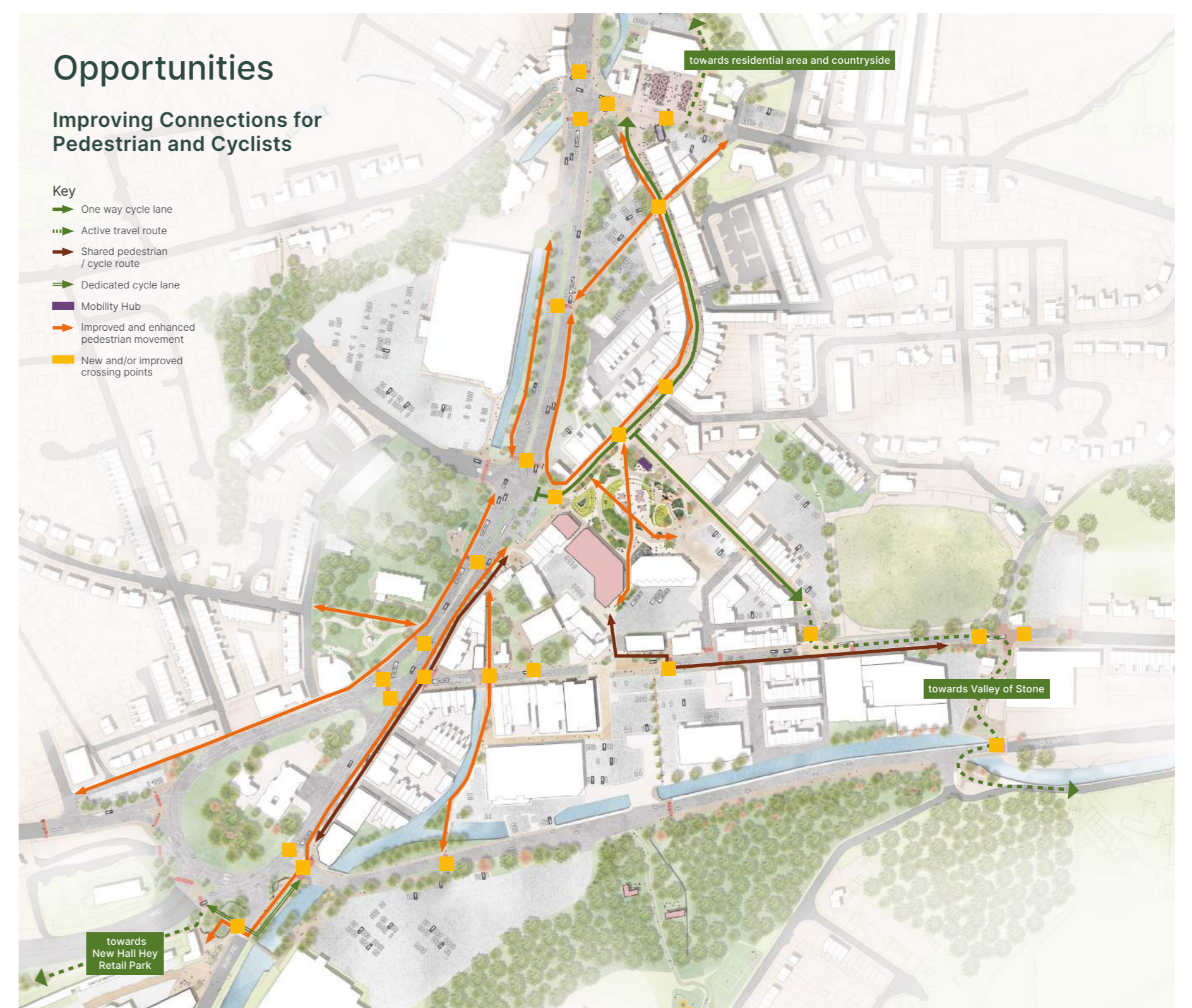
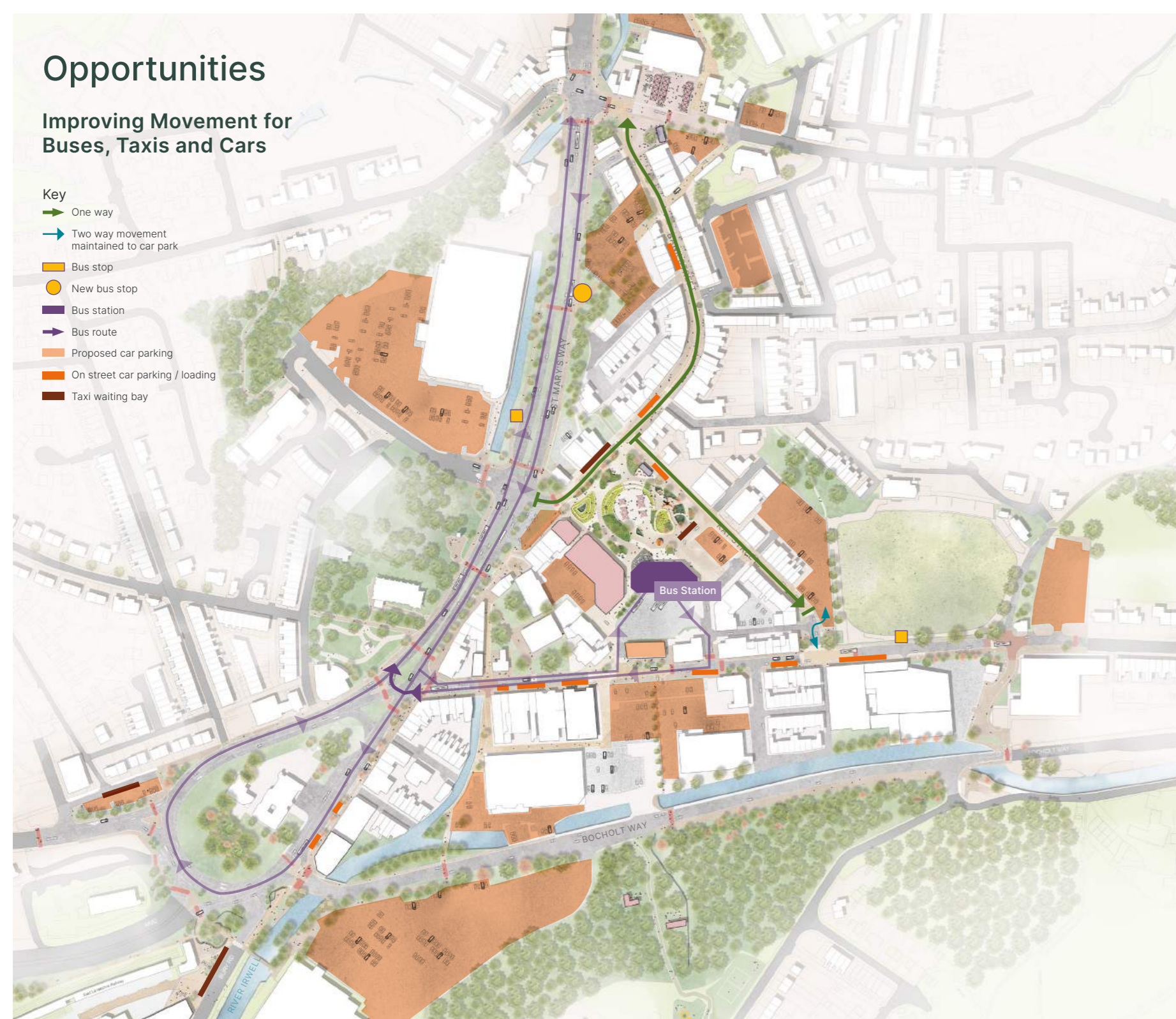
10 - Drawing in the Nature
Connecting the wider moorland landscape to the town centre's vibrant planting and greenery through closeby greenspaces, parks and woodlands. From the North through the cemetery to the Market Hall, the East through the cricket ground to Kay Street, the West through Whittaker Park to Sparrow Park and St Mary's Church.

Emerging Masterplan



Improving Movement for Buses, Taxis and Cars:

Improving Connections for Pedestrian and Cyclists:



St Mary's Way



1

Reconfigured footpaths to allow for cycle and spill-out space



2

Improved pedestrian crossing points

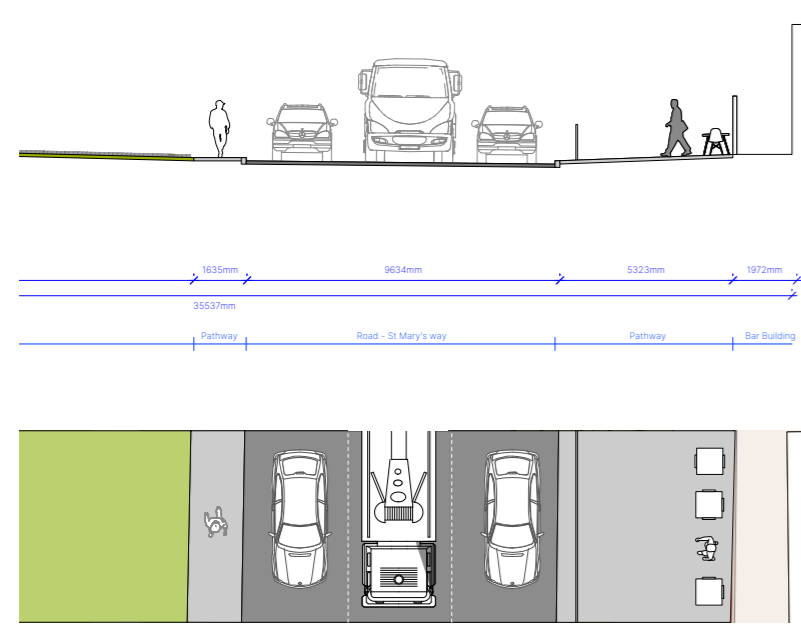


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Green verges helping to separate pedestrian links from busy vehicular routes

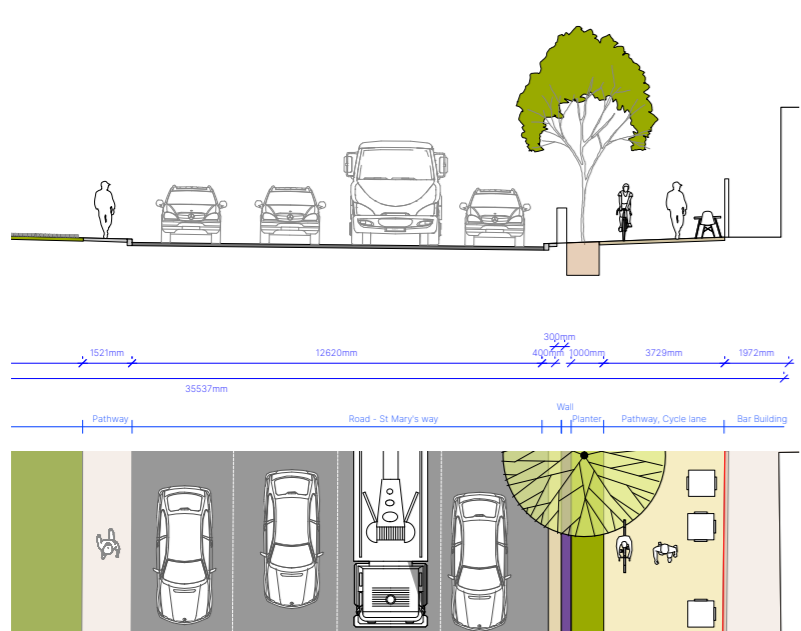
Before

2



After

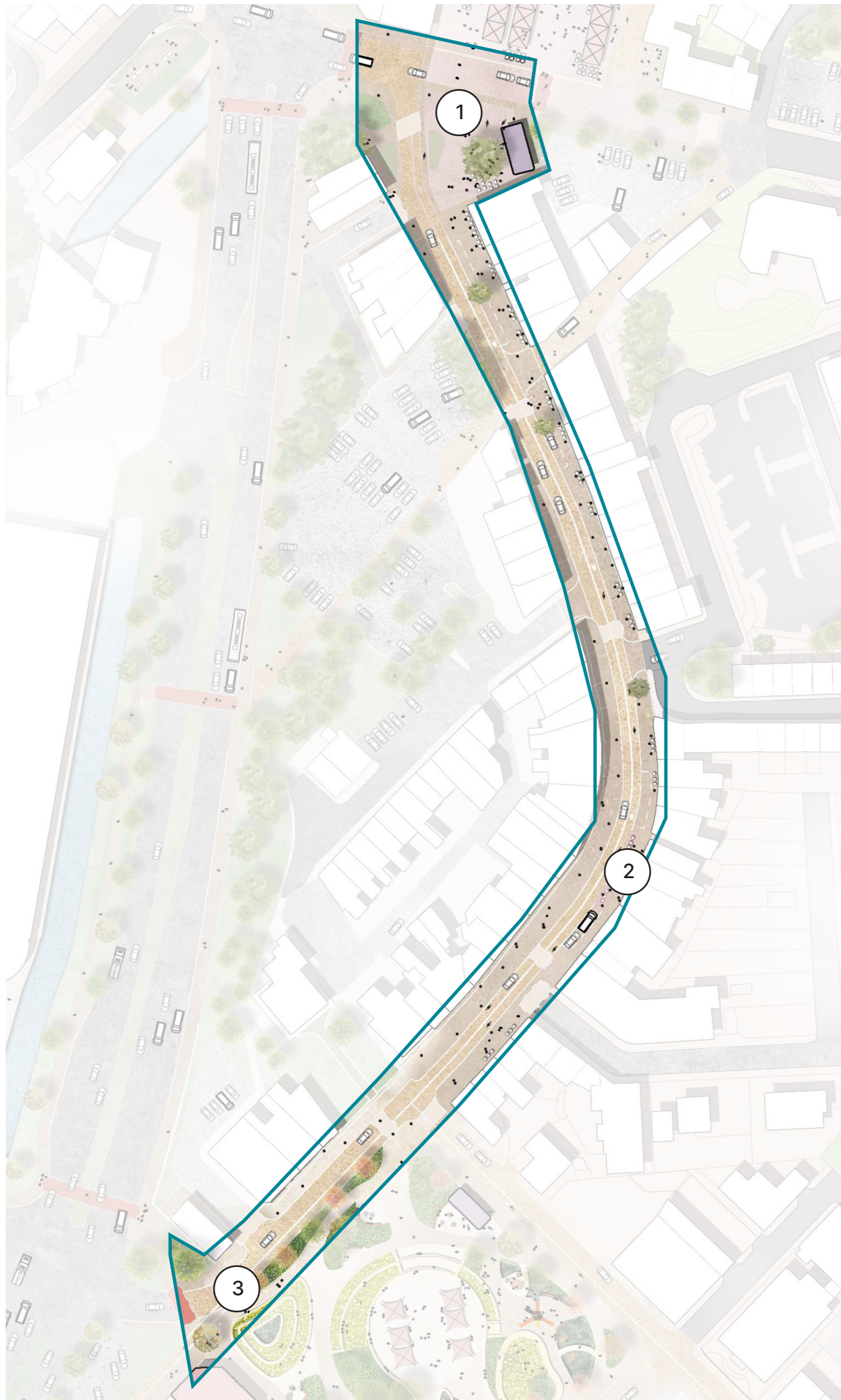
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Before

After

Bank Street



1 Gateway Market Place Public Realm which improves connections to Bank Street



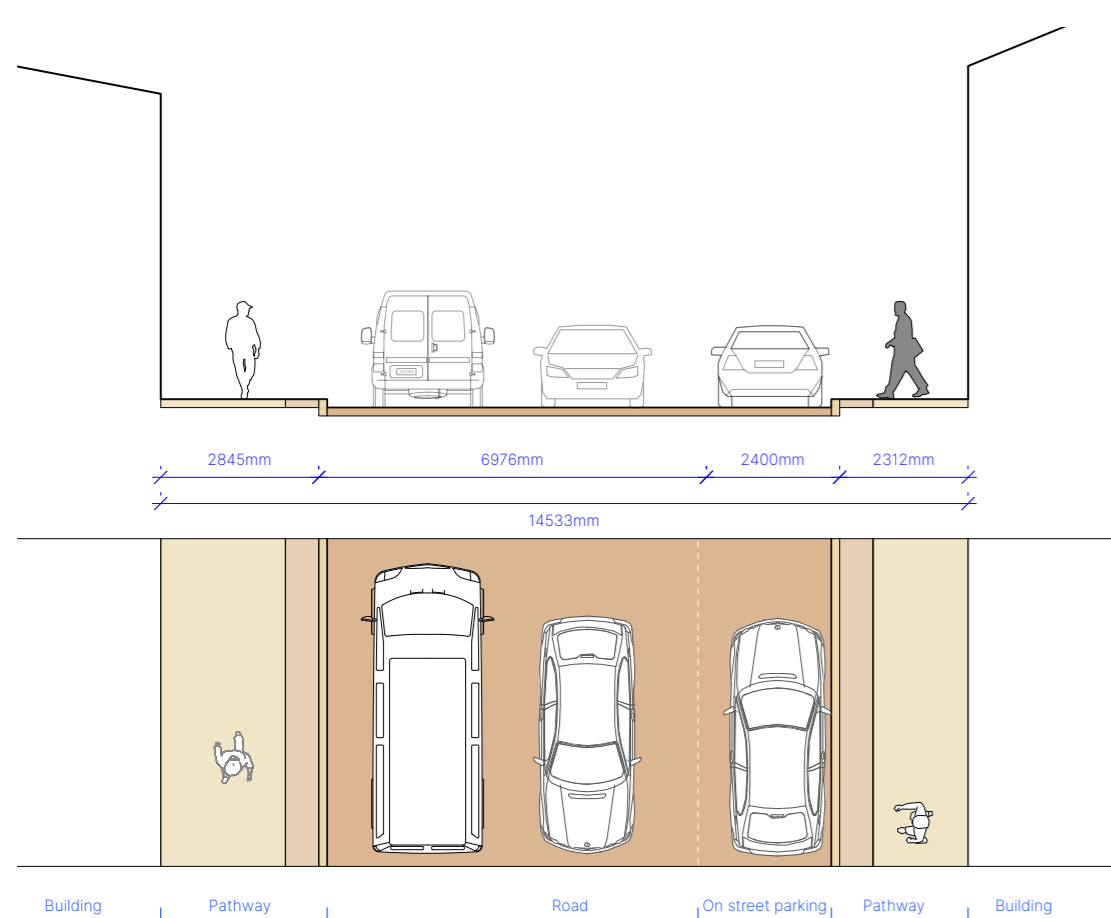
2 Creating spill-out space for Bank Street businesses



3 Improved crossing points and cycle infrastructure

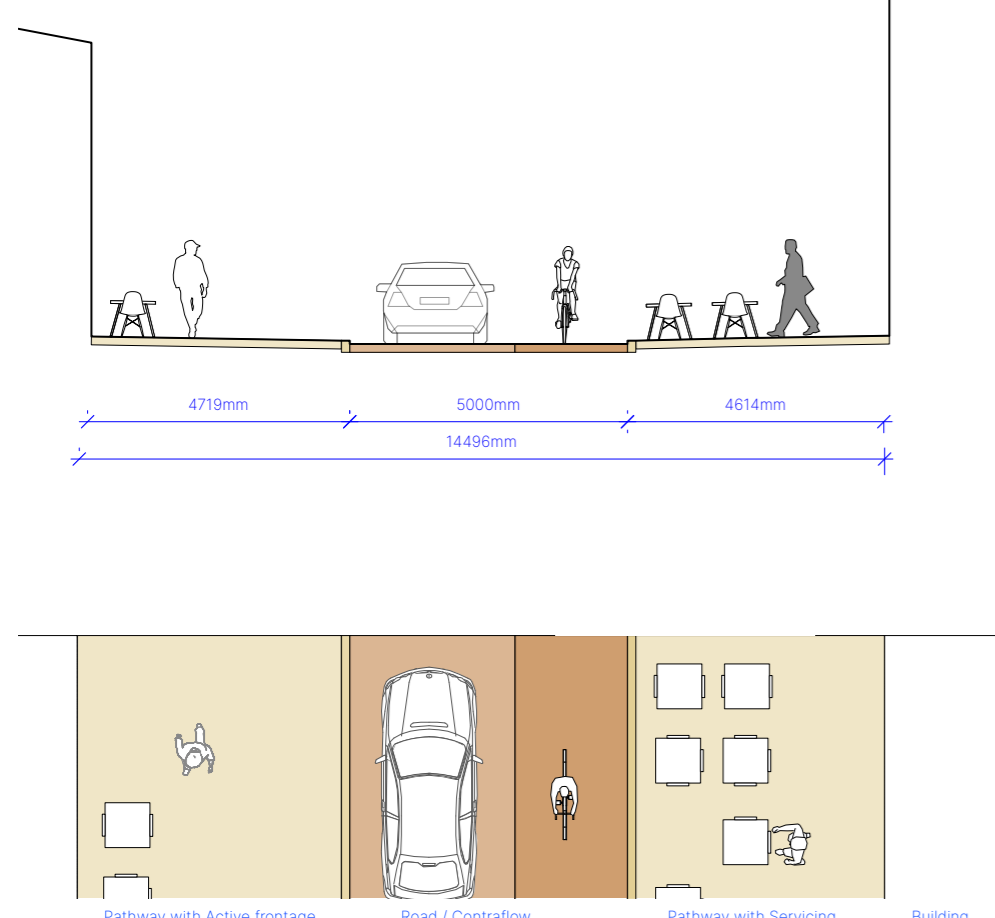
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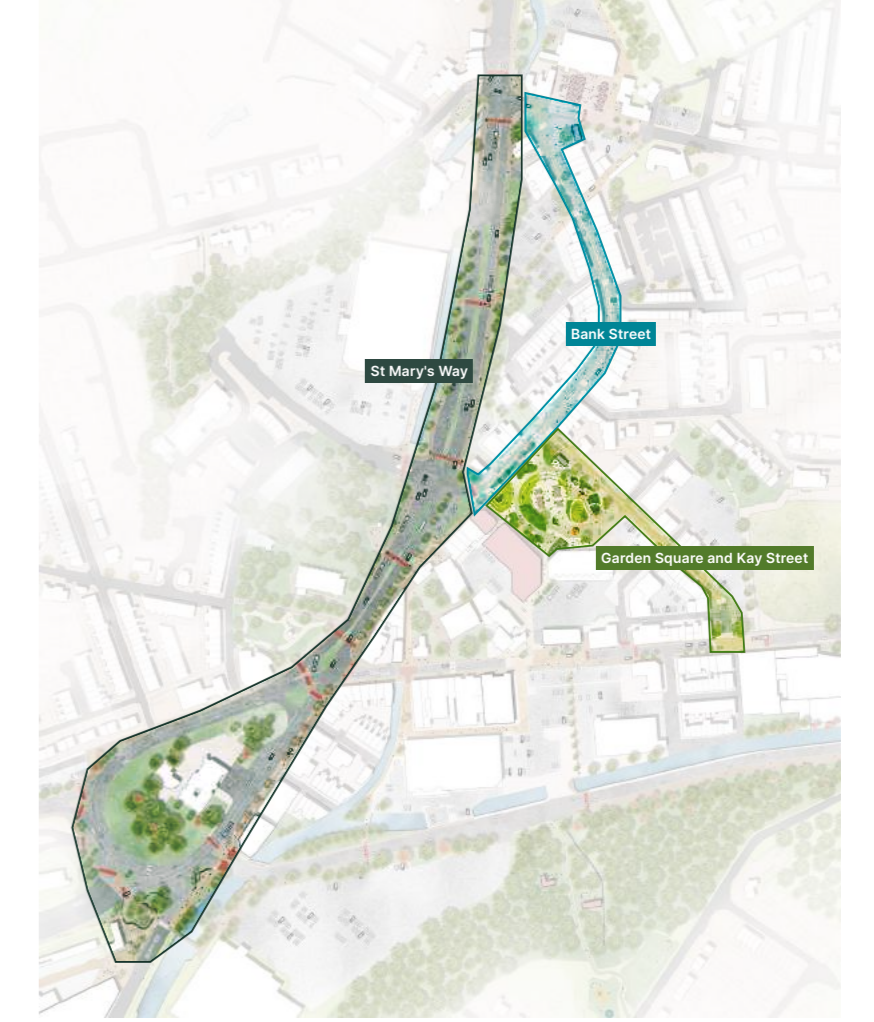


After

2



Town Square and Kay Street



1

Lush garden islands with community involvement



2

A flexible central square with terraced lawns & planted borders to the edges

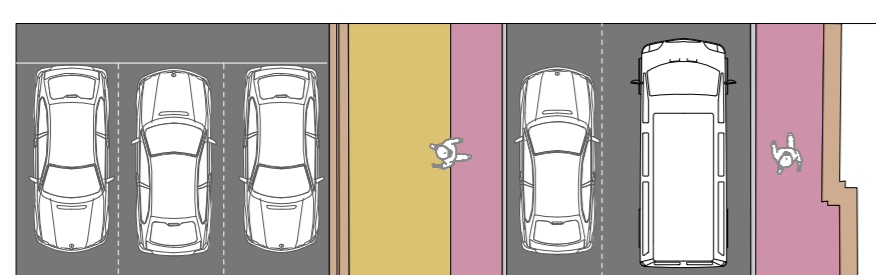
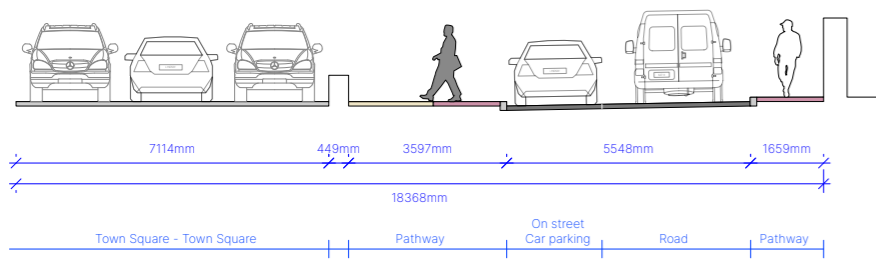


3

Improve pedestrian and cycle movement of Kay street with materiality change

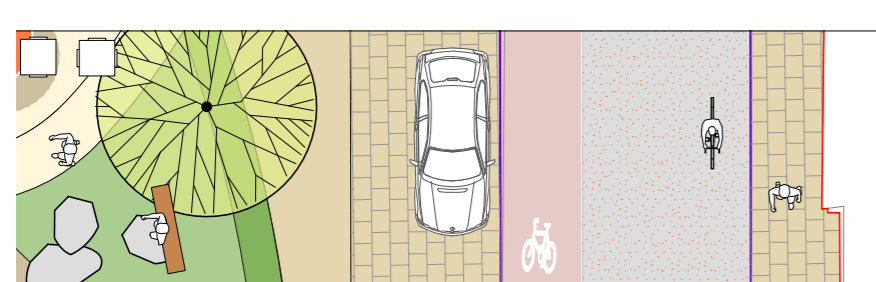
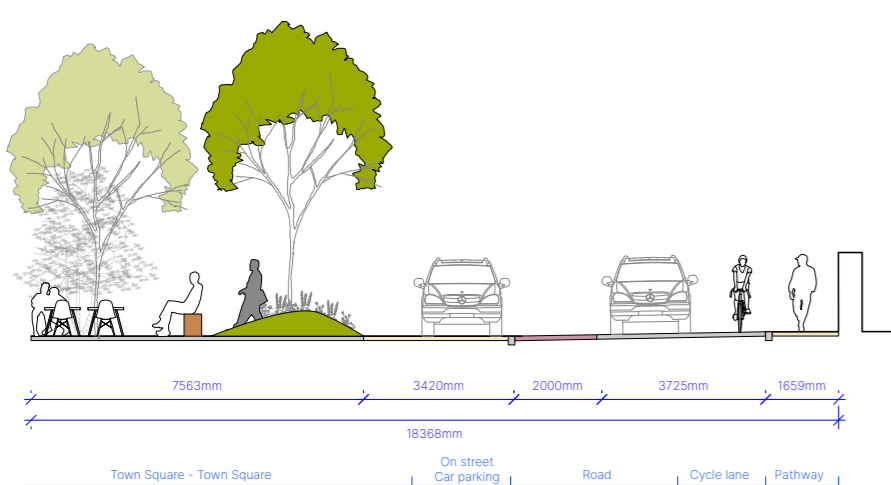
Before

3



After

3



Rawtenstall Gyratory Preliminary Design

