

# The Purpose of the SQRF

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## 2.1 The Purpose of the SQRF

The Preston Station Quarter Regeneration Framework (SQRF) has been prepared by BDP on behalf of Preston City Council (PCC), Lancashire County Council (LCC) and the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan).

The SQRF sets a vision for the development of the west end of Preston city centre, centred on Preston Station. This is a recognition of the strategic importance of Preston Station to the ongoing success of the city centre and of the potential for significant investment and development on several adjacent sites.

The SQRF has been informed by an evidence base, which underpinned the development of four strategic options for the regeneration of the area. Following a series of stakeholder workshops and evaluation of the options, a preferred option was developed and this forms the basis of the SQRF.

**One purpose of the SQRF is to assist developers in the preparation and submission of planning applications in the Station Quarter, by providing a vision and general design principles to assist in the delivery of a co-ordinated and comprehensive development of the SQRF area (and the necessary infrastructure) as a mixed-use commercial quarter, as envisaged in Preston's City Investment Plan. The document sets out how LCC, PCC and UCLan would like to see the requirements of the City Centre Plan, as relevant to the SQRF area, implemented.**

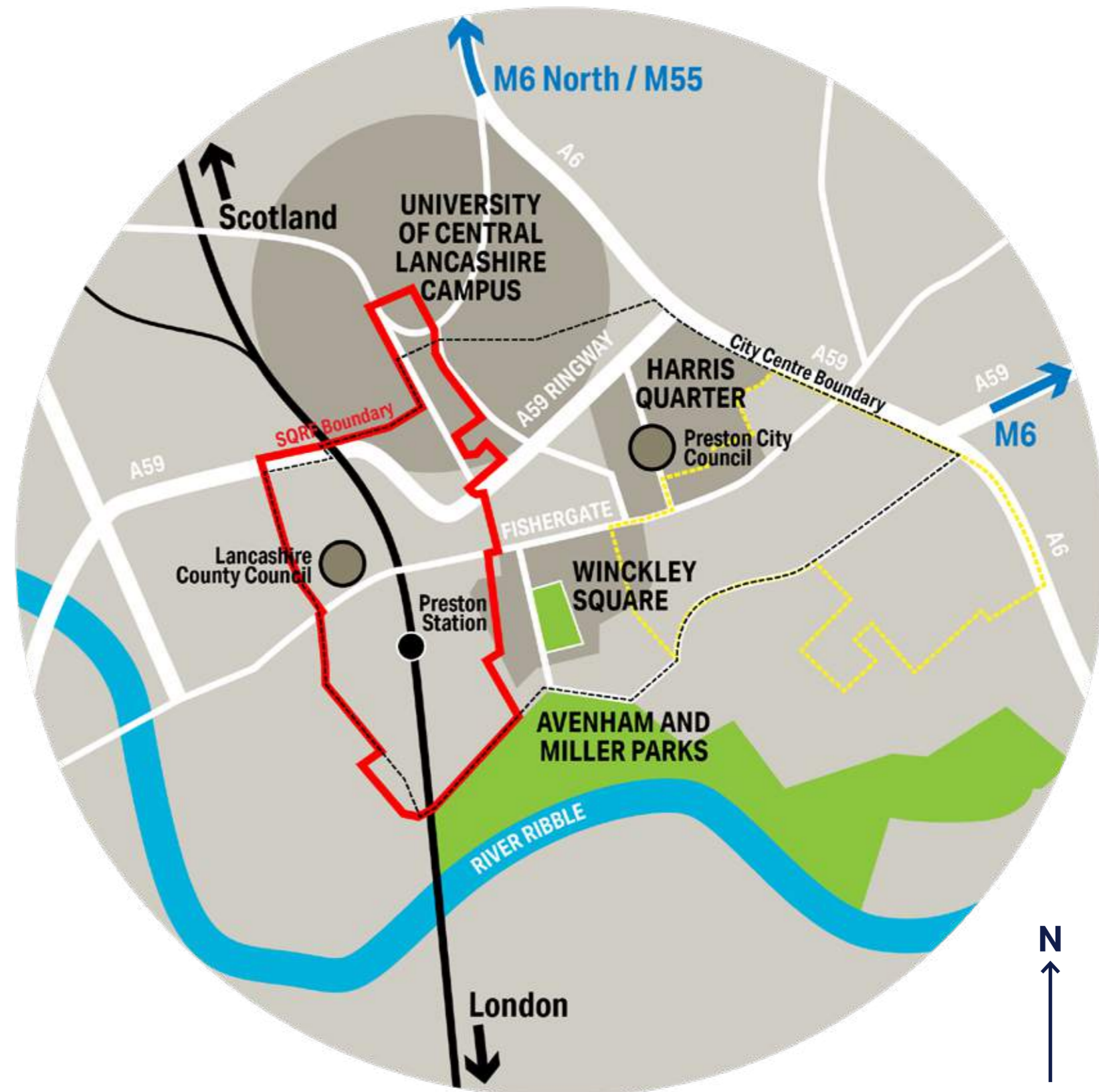


Figure 2.1.1: Preston SQRF Boundary. See Appendix 1 for a detailed boundary map

## Objectives

The SQRF has the following specific objectives:

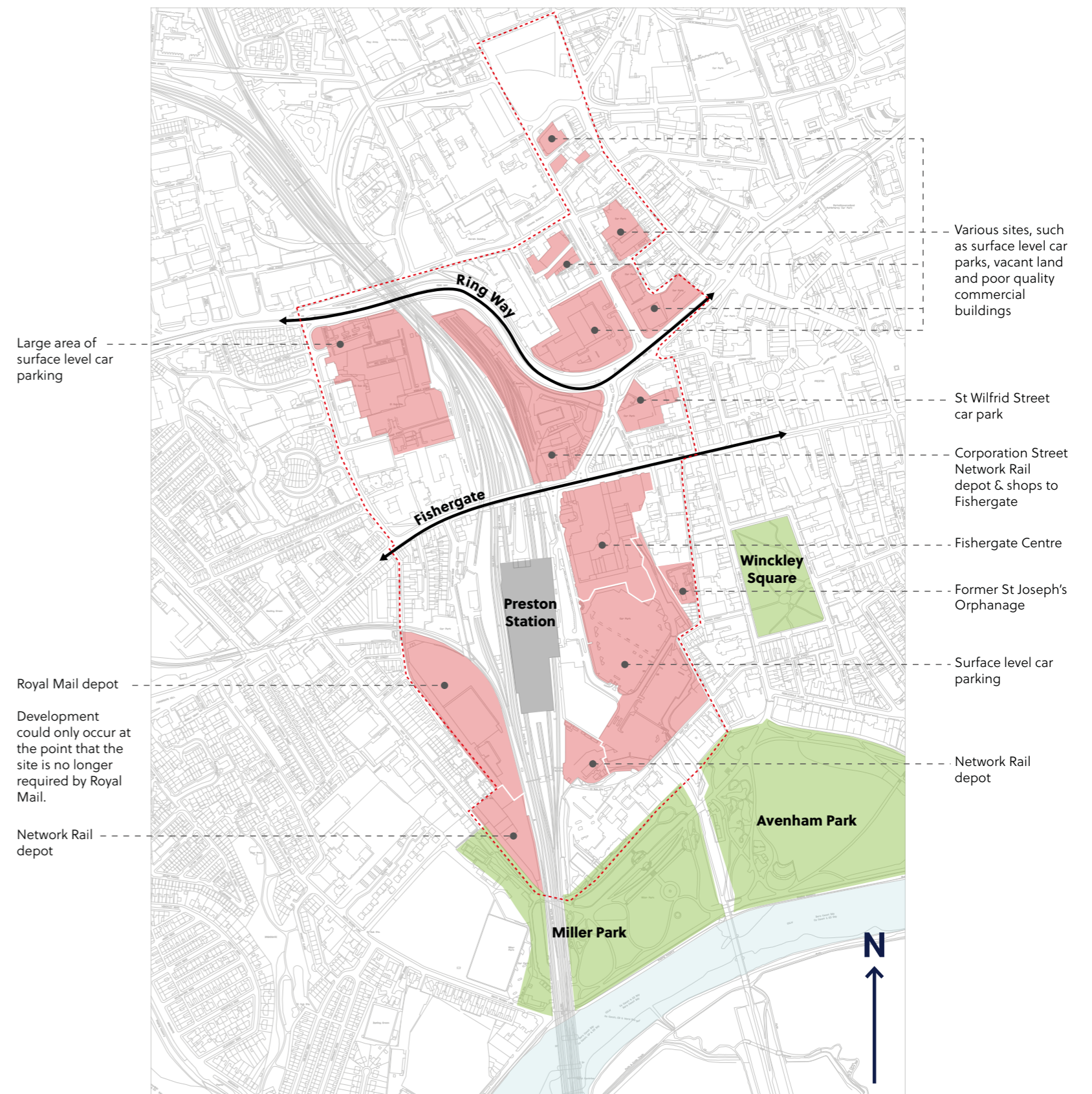
1. To set the strategic planning and regeneration context for Preston Station Quarter;
2. To exploit the significant opportunities of increased footfall at Preston Station arising from enhancements to regional, national and, in the future, HS2 related rail services;
3. To capitalise on the city centre location and linkages to other key assets such as the UCLan campus and the River Ribble;
4. To set a masterplanning vision for the Station Quarter that illustrates the scale and extent of the opportunity and highlights key development parameters and principles, including development opportunities, potential land uses and activities, and appropriate urban design principles, including the creation of new civic spaces and high quality public realm;
5. To deliver high quality offices and workspace to help realise the potential of the city as the focus of a substantial concentration of knowledge intensive industries, business clusters and innovation assets;
6. To anticipate city centre trends, including the changing nature of the retail, leisure and office market, the growth of urban living and the importance of 'liveability';

7. The attraction of regional, national and international businesses to the City;
8. To take a distinctive approach to urban design, reflecting Preston's distinctive heritage and character, raising public realm design standards in line with improvements already proposed around Ring Way and Friargate for example;
9. To promote an environmentally sustainable, low carbon development with new homes and businesses constructed to high environmental standards; and better integration of rail, bus, walking and cycling; and
10. To focus on active travel modes, place-making and city centre connectivity, and the opportunity to reduce the impacts of roads and vehicles on enjoyment of the city centre.

## Station Quarter Sites

There are a number of strategic sites surrounding Preston Station that offer the potential for development to meet the objectives of the SQRF. These sites include public sector assets, underutilised surface car parks and large privately owned sites where existing buildings may not meet future requirements. Opportunities and proposals for development are expected to come forward for the majority of these sites over the next 10 years.

Figure 2.2.2: Preston Station Quarter Key Sites



## 2.2 Preston Station Quarter

The Station Quarter is located to the west of Preston City Centre, and is contained by Ring Way to the north, by the River Ribble to the south and the largely residential Fishergate Hill Conservation Area to the west. Preston Station is a fine listed building at the heart of the quarter and is a spectacular arrival point to the city, especially when travelling by train from the south, which involves an elevated approach above the River Ribble.

Preston Station, a major station on the West Coast Main Line, is a key interchange midway between London and Glasgow. The station is served by national, regional and local services, including overnight sleeper trains between London and Scotland, providing frequent, direct services to major conurbations including London, Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds, Glasgow and Edinburgh.



Figure 2.2.3: Location Plan



Most of the Station Quarter was first developed with the arrival of the railways and laid out as railway sidings and yards. As a result, much of the quarter is level, higher than the River Ribble and the waterside Avenham and Miller Parks but lower than Fishergate, the historic high street which traverses the city centre. The exception is County Hall which sits on the bluff at the high point of Fishergate Hill, overlooking the station area. Over the last 50 years the land used for rail operations has been pruned back and some redevelopment has taken place, for example for the Fishergate Shopping Centre, whilst other areas have been utilised for surface car parking.

In recent years, there has been minimal investment directed at the station itself and whilst the SQRf focusses on the land surrounding the station, LCC, PCC and UCLan are seeking to work collaboratively with rail industry partners to make the case for major investment in the station itself. This document contributes to this aim by demonstrating the potential for large-scale regeneration and development which will support any future business case.



Figure 2.2.4: Preston OS Map, 1913

### Station Quarter Quadrants

Preston Station sits at the centre of four distinct quadrants. The West Coast main line bisects the Station Quarter area east and west. And Fishergate, which continues onto Fishergate Hill, bisects the area north and south.

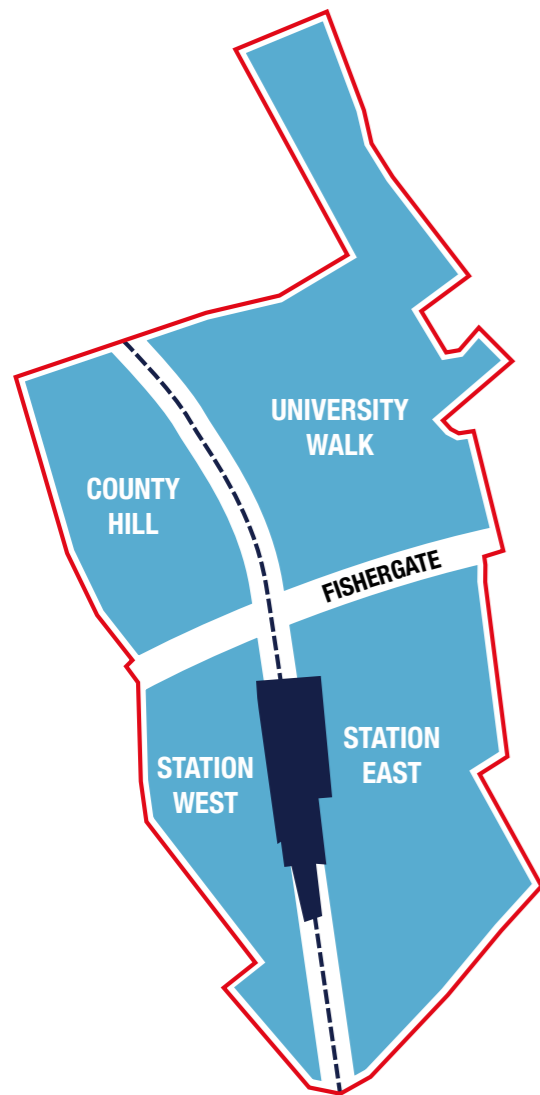


Figure 2.2.5: Station Quarter Quadrants

### South East Quadrant – Station East

This area is dominated by the Fishergate Shopping Centre with surface and multi-storey car parks associated with the shopping centre and the station. Whilst the major formal entrance to the station is from Fishergate Bridge to the north, the Butler Street entrance is an important multi-modal access point with links to Fishergate and the main shopping and cultural destinations, Winckley Square and the parks.

### North East Quadrant – University Walk

This quadrant links the station to the UCLan campus via Corporation Street, which is lined with a number of small businesses such as hot food takeaways that benefit from the footfall and road frontage. This stretch of Corporation Street also provides access to a Network Rail depot and to the Fishergate Centre car parks (via a link under Fishergate itself). The route to UCLan is compromised by the barrier effect of Ring Way and traffic on Corporation Street itself. Considerable investment has taken place within the UCLan campus and complementary work is being planned by LCC and PCC to improve connections across Ring Way. However, more work remains to fully integrate the university campus into the city centre.



### North West Quadrant – County Hill

This area is dominated by County Hall which is a large, but unlisted building at the apex of Fishergate Hill. It is clearly visible from Fishergate as well as to rail passengers. LCC is the dominant landowner and occupier of an estate that includes other listed structures, archives, Victorian buildings and post-war office blocks. There are extensive surface car parks situated to the north of County Hall, on land which slopes down to Ring Way.

### South West Quadrant – Station West

The former 'parcels platforms', rail maintenance sites and the Royal Mail Depot occupy land between the station and the established residential areas of West Cliff and the Fishergate Hill Conservation Area. The operational rail line to Preston Docks passes through the site in a cutting underneath Fishergate Hill.



