

# Land Use Requirements

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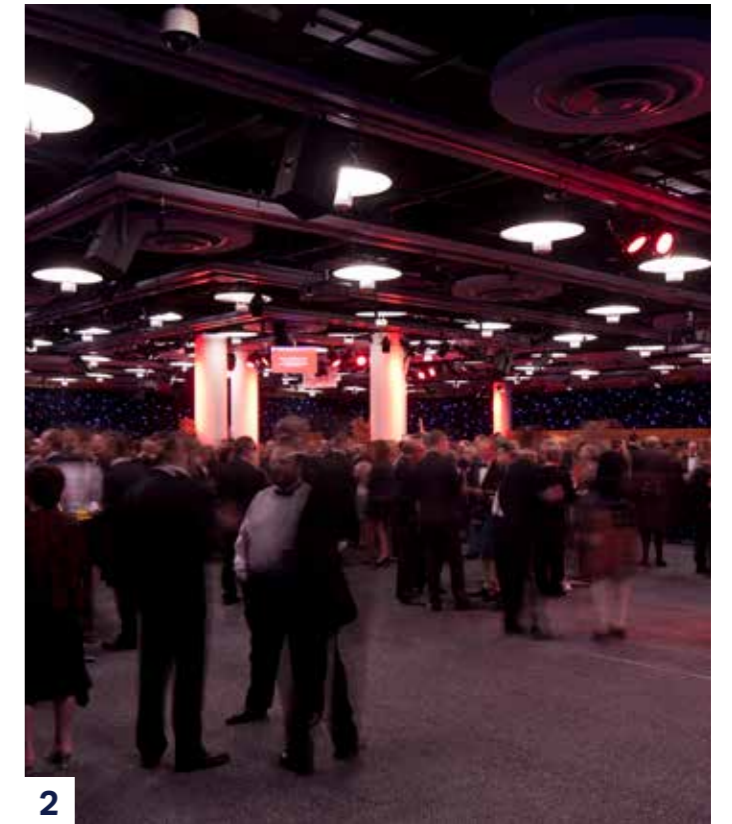
# 5.1 A City Centre Opportunity

Preston Station Quarter is well positioned to attract a wide range of city centre uses, from offices and other forms of workspace to leisure, conferencing, retail, food & drink and urban living. With Preston Station at its heart, the Station Quarter is a particularly good location for activities that are attracted by excellent connectivity and the footfall that a major transport interchange generates.

The SQRF is not prescriptive regarding the mix of uses that should be accommodated, but in the more detailed character area guidance that follows in Section 7, there is clear guidance on the optimal uses for each quadrant of the Station Quarter.



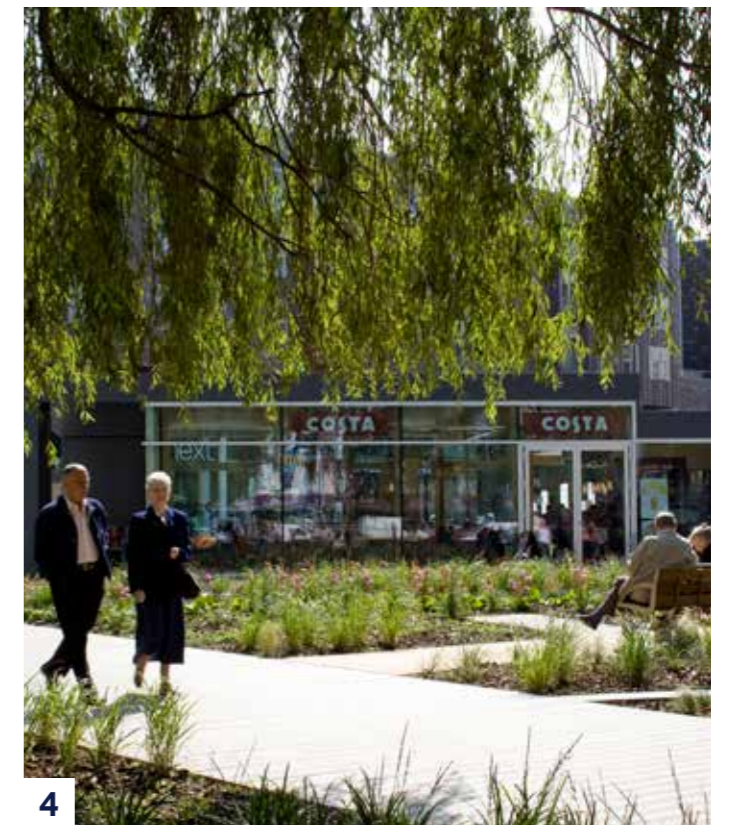
1  
One Angel, © Hufton & Crow



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Atria, Edinburgh © David Barbour



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Technology and Innovation Centre, University of Strathclyde © David Barbour



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The Rock, Bury © Sanna Fisher-Payne

- 1 Northamptonshire County Council, One Angel Square
- 2 Atria Conference Centre
- 3 TIC, University of Strathclyde
- 4 The Rock, Bury
- 5 The Rock, Bury



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## 5.2 Office and Workspace

### Public Sector and Corporate

Preston, as the administrative centre of Lancashire, already has a large presence of public sector offices including PCC, LCC, the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC). Other major office-based employers in the area include the NHS, Land Registry, BAE Systems, University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) and Places for People. In addition to this, like all major regional cities, Preston is the home of several employers in the Professional Services sector.

New, more flexible ways of working will benefit hugely from the accessibility that Preston Station Quarter provides, as well as the availability of high quality working environments that offer potential for collaboration, combined with excellent amenities to attract and retain employees. Businesses are already gravitating towards 'Grade A' offices that are more user-centric, reduce environmental impact and support corporate ambitions on requirements around ESG (Environment, Social and Governance); which utilise technology and the data it generates to measure, manage and curate what will be a more dynamic workplace environment and experience.

Providing such space will be key to creating a distinctive and transformational commercial offer, which will attract and retain business whilst also strengthening the knowledge based economy linked to the UCLan and other world-class innovation assets such as the Advanced Manufacturing and Research Centre at Samlesbury Enterprise Zone.

### Innovation and Enterprise

UCLan continues to grow significantly having already invested over £200m in a new Student Centre, the Engineering Innovation Centre, student social spaces, Oasis Faith and Spirituality Centre, and extensive new public realm. With student numbers expected to grow further, future investment is forecast to continue.

The growth of UCLan is both stimulating new business formation and attracting business aligned with the university's strengths. In December 2021, UCLan was celebrated as top in the north for start-up business, assisting 851 graduate start-ups in six years.

Collaboration between UCLan and business will see courses curated with the end user in mind, producing sector-specific talent to assist growth. This creates the conditions for Research and Development and new business formation, in turn driving a market for different types of city centre workspace, including managed and collaborative workspaces such as Innovation Centres and Business Incubators, which would fit well with the Station Quarter aspirations. The demand for innovation space has been identified in recent research undertaken by the university.

### Space requirements

Office space needs to meet the demand profile of the city and cater for larger requirements arising from relocations or inward investment:

- The dominant size range of local demand is from 2,500 – 5,000 sq ft (25 – 50 people), growing to approximately 10,000 - 15,000 sq ft;
- There are several larger corporate occupiers based in the City and the wider region that could occupy space ranging from 25,000 - 50,000 sq ft;
- A major inward investment or relocation would drive demand for larger scale development. The Government Property Agency (GPA) programme for example has generated requirements for office 'hubs' ranging from 100,000 - 300,000 sq ft.

Overall the Station Quarter provides a fantastic opportunity to provide highly accessible employment space, configured to meet post-pandemic working patterns and satisfying a number of potential business requirements, from R&D to major corporate or government occupiers.



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© David Millington



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- 1 *Blackburn Cathedral Quarter*
- 2 *Central Riverside, Sheffield*
- 3 *Bright Building, Manchester Science Park*

# 5.3 Urban Living

**City centre living is enjoying a renaissance, across a range of age groups and household types, driven by accessibility, proximity to city centre amenities particularly leisure and culture, and the prospect of spending less time commuting or at least being able to use public transport to access a wider jobs market.**

Preston enjoys the benefits of being a compact and walkable city centre with a full range of facilities and amenities, whilst offering excellent access to other urban centres across the north west and beyond. Outdoor leisure pursuits are well provided for by the nearby Lake District and Yorkshire Dales National Parks and various Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, all within easy reach.

The city centre already offers traditional housing, much of which has a distinctive local character recognised by Conservation Area designations for Fishergate Hill, Winckley Square and Avenham. The Station Quarter offers an excellent opportunity to widen provision with complementary and modern urban housing typologies including apartments and townhouses.

The presence of UCLan also supports a student housing market in the city. Whilst the need for further student accommodation will need to be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the city council and will need engagement with UCLan, a high-end premium student living offering could help attract overseas students to the city, in support of UCLan's growth plans.

Figure 5.3.1: Travel Distances from Preston



- 1 Tollgate Gardens, London
- 2 Abito Greengate, Salford
- 3 The Rock, Bury

## 5.3 Retail and Leisure

**The development of new office and workspace across the Station Quarter will also drive demand for retail, leisure, health and fitness, and food & beverage outlets, further supported by footfall arising from increasing rail and bus services. Surplus accommodation within the station itself could also be better used to meet this demand, catering to passengers who interchange at Preston in particular.**

Students, staff and visitors to UCLan, many of whom use Preston station, will also generate footfall along Fishergate and Corporation Street which could be better served by a range of outlets en-route to the university campus.

The expansion of the retail and leisure offering is encouraged within ground floor units below residential and / or commercial developments, as a means of delivering the required activation of these frontages and the adjacent streetscapes.

'Experiential' retail and leisure destinations, whether delivered as 'meanwhile uses' within the public realm or taking advantage of vacant sites or buildings, or as bespoke developments, are increasingly popular and could form part of the attraction of the Station Quarter. Successful developments, like Box Park in London or Hatch in Manchester, have also been key factors in transforming perceptions and attracting new occupiers and business to take space nearby. The instigation of an events strategy within these areas will be another differentiator for the city compared to surrounding locations and the need to ensure new public realm is fully equipped services wise to accommodate these will be important.

Hotel development will help support an active and animated city centre, further fuelling the city centre evening economy. Several recent hotel developments and proposals such as those on Ring Way, Mount Street and East Cliff evidence the demand for additional visitor accommodation driven by business and leisure markets. Further and complementary hotel provision will be encouraged at the Station Quarter to meet expected demand and to take advantage of the excellent connectivity that a location next to Preston Station can provide. Conferencing facilities, which tend to fair better viability wise when included as part of a hotel development, rather than stand alone, would also be supported.

- 1 *Boxpark, Croydon*
- 2 *Hotel, Union Square, Glasgow*
- 3 *Mayfair and Belgravia*



# 5.4 In Summary - A Rare Opportunity

A major national transport hub is allied here to strategic site availability. There are several opportunities for major development and densification of activity, based in part on better utilisation of public sector land ownerships and in part on an ambition, shared with key stakeholders including the University and private land owners, to transform the Station Quarter and to create a new gateway to the City of Preston and to Lancashire.



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- 1 Construction of new UCLan Student Centre
- 2 Avenham and Miller Park
- 3 Preston Railway Station
- 4 Winckley Square
- 5 Preston Fishergate
- 6 Preston County Hall

