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# CORNER PLOT ROCHDALE

## Design and Access Statement

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PREPARED BY

LeachRhodesWalker  
Architects

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LEACH RYDDIES WALKER ARCHITECTS | ARCHITECTURE, ID, 3D & GRAPHICS

# 1.0 Introduction

## Overview

"**Leach Rhodes Walker** have been appointed by the **RDA** (Rochdale Development Agency) to deliver a proposal for **high quality new residential homes** in the form of **carbon net zero apartments**, enveloped in a **bold and contextual design**, on a key focal site opposite the **train station** in Rochdale."

"This **Design and Access Statement** has been prepared in support of a full planning application and associated supporting documents, and comprises a summary of the **site analysis** undertaken, the **design approach** to the scheme, the **co-ordination** with other consultants and the **design proposals** for the development"

### *Vision Statement*

"To create a **gateway building** that marks this **important arrival point into the town** from the rail station, with a solution that both provides **carbon net zero, modern, high quality apartments** with an **animated street level** presence, but also **respects** and is sensitive to the listed and locally **listed landmark buildings** around it, in a **dynamic form** that derives its treatment from the **historic materiality of the town.**"

# 2.0 Team

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# 3.0 Meetings and Consultations

# 3.0 Meetings and Consultations

Throughout the design process the team have liaised closely with Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC) & Historic England (HE) via a series of meetings and consultations. A summary of the meetings that have taken place is outlined below;

## Pre-application Meeting with RMBC

*Date: 28th September 2023*

*Attendees:*

- RMBC Planning
- RMBC Conservation Officer
- Leach Rhodes Walker
- Turley
- Plan Red

## Pre-application Meeting with RMBC

*Date: 16th November 2023*

*Attendees:*

- RMBC Planning
- Leach Rhodes Walker
- Turley
- Plan Red

## Heritage Meeting with Historic England

*Date: 10th November 2023*

*Attendees:*

- Historic England
- Leach Rhodes Walker
- Turley

At the first pre-application meeting the Conservation Officer from RMBC provided comments on the emerging scheme, which are set out in Table 5.1 of Turley's Heritage Statement, along with an explanation of how these comments were addressed through further design iterations and the submission documents. The design team's response to the comments were presented back to RMBC at the subsequent pre-app meeting.

At the meeting with HE on 10th November, a document was presented which outlined our analysis of the site, the design approach, the massing options we had considered in the design process and our proposals for the preferred scheme. The scheme was very well received by HE and the following comments were received:

### Significance

*The application site is partially located within a conservation area and the following heritage assets have been included within a wider heritage impact assessment. Historic England agrees the assets that most likely could be affected by the proposals are the Maclure Road Conservation Area and Grade II\* Listed Saint John the Baptist church located within it.*

*The significance of the Maclure Road Conservation Area lies in its survival as an early 20th century settlement planned around the relocated Rochdale Fire Station. Buildings are characterised by the use of smooth engineered red brick and dressed sandstone, with slate roofs. The former fire station building itself and the church of Saint John the Baptist directly opposite dominate the area and are the exceptions to an otherwise low-rise and uniform street scene.*

*Saint John the Baptist is the only listed building in the conservation area. It has exceptional heritage value, and its artistic and architectural interests are reflected in its designation as a Grade II\* listed building. The church dominates the street scene and contrasts with the smaller scale of the surrounding housing emphasising its prominence.*

*Another key feature of the conservation area is the former fire station tower overlooking the drill yard. This is a non-designated heritage asset that positively contributes to the significance of the conservation area and is one of the town's historic landmarks. It is built in the style of a campanile bell tower, reflecting its location opposite the listed church. Impact*

*The proposals seek to demolish the corner plot buildings at 33-41 Maclure Road and redevelop the site with a 6-storey mixed use scheme. The buildings at 29-31 Maclure Road (Chicken Shaq) will be retained and refurbished as part of the scheme. The works will be part of a larger scheme of redevelopment in the Rochdale Station gateway area, which will include improvements to the public realm around the site.*

*It is clear the proposals will result in a significantly taller building than the existing structures on the site. This will result in a small degree of harm to the conservation area and setting of the Grade II\* listed Saint John the Baptist Church and undesignated former Fire Station and tower.*

*We accept that although a small degree of harm will result from the proposals, there will be significant improvements to the current situation on the site, and to the buildings at 29-31 Maclure Road through their renovation and inclusion in the scheme. If executed as they are shown in the proposal CGI drawings, the redevelopment of the site will provide a safer and more inviting entrance to Rochdale from the station area. We also acknowledge the massing, design and stepping back of the building has been designed to lessen impacts.*

## 3.0 Meetings and Consultations

*We also consider the proposed associated public realm improvements and proposals to integrate and display elements of the site history, local materiality, and fabric within the new buildings and external landscaping to be positive and to be an improvement on the current situation.*

### Policy

*The proposals would affect a conservation area and the setting of a listed building, therefore there is a requirement to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area (s.72, 1990 Act) and to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings s.16, 62, 1990 Act).*

*National policy relating to the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment is articulated in section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). These policies state that assets should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance (NPPF, 189) and that when considering the impact of a proposed development, great weight should be given to an asset's conservation (NPPF, 199). Where it is identified that harm will be caused, the decision maker should be satisfied that this is supported by a clear and convincing justification (NPPF, 200) and that the public benefits that it would bring about would outweigh the harm (NPPF, 202).*

*Paragraph 206 of the NPPF states that new development within conservation areas and within the setting of heritage assets should look for opportunities to enhance or better reveal significance.*

### Position

*Historic England welcomes the opportunity to consider these proposals at pre-application stage. Based on the information provided we do not wish to raise significant concerns about these plans and do not have an objection to the principle of what is proposed.*

*We would strongly encourage the design and materiality to be executed in line with the proposal CGI drawings, and the associated street works and public realm improvements to take place in conjunction with the development of this plot, in order to maximise the public benefits of the scheme and balance the small degree of harm that will be caused.*

### Recommendation

*Please note that this letter concludes our free round of pre-application advice. We recommend that you continue discussions with Rochdale Council's Conservation Officer without our continued involvement. We look forward to being consulted on these plans at application stage.*

*Thank you for involving us at the Pre-application stage. The above advice is the response that we would give if the same proposals were put forward unamended for statutory approval.*

# 4.0 Site Analysis

# 4.1 Site Analysis

## Site Location and Urban Context

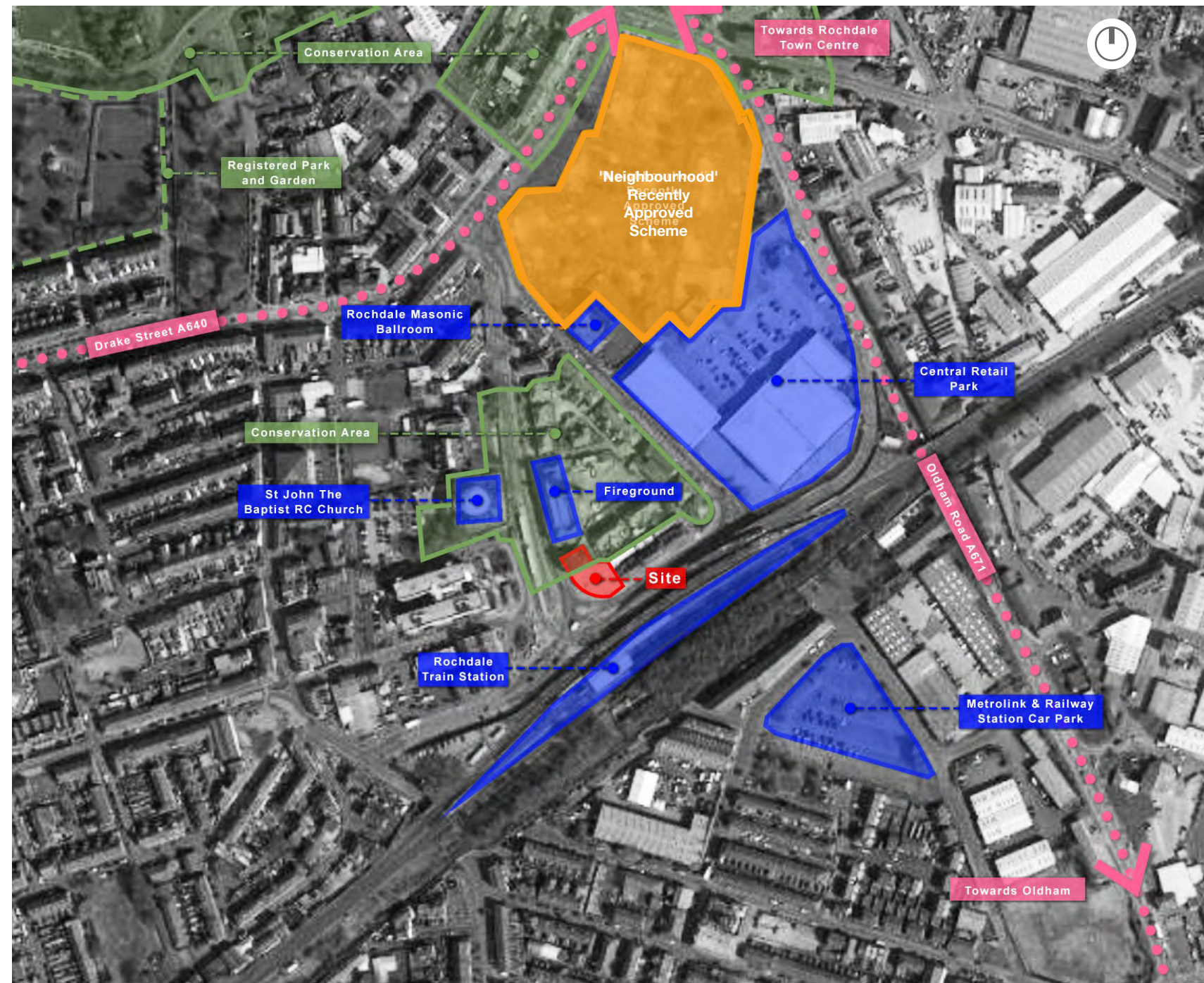
The proposed development site is situated opposite Rochdale Train Station and lies within the area referenced in the masterplan and SPD as the Fire Station Block.

At Rochdale Station the vision, with the station at its heart, is a vibrant and distinctive Transit Orientated Neighbourhood that will be created and builds upon the character of the existing community and heritage.

The aim here is to create a high quality coherent active and attractive mixed use area as part of the station approach. Any improvements that enhance the image, visual appearance and safety of the area will be encouraged. All new developments will be expected to create a strong visual frontage to the square. Any new developments should be well designed and be sensitive to the characteristics of the conservation area.

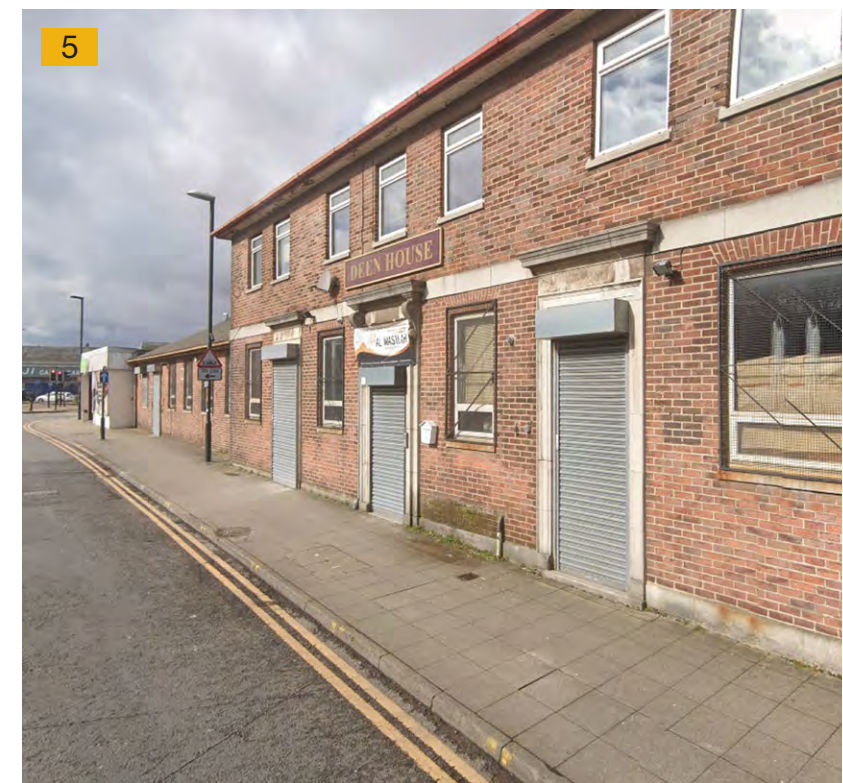
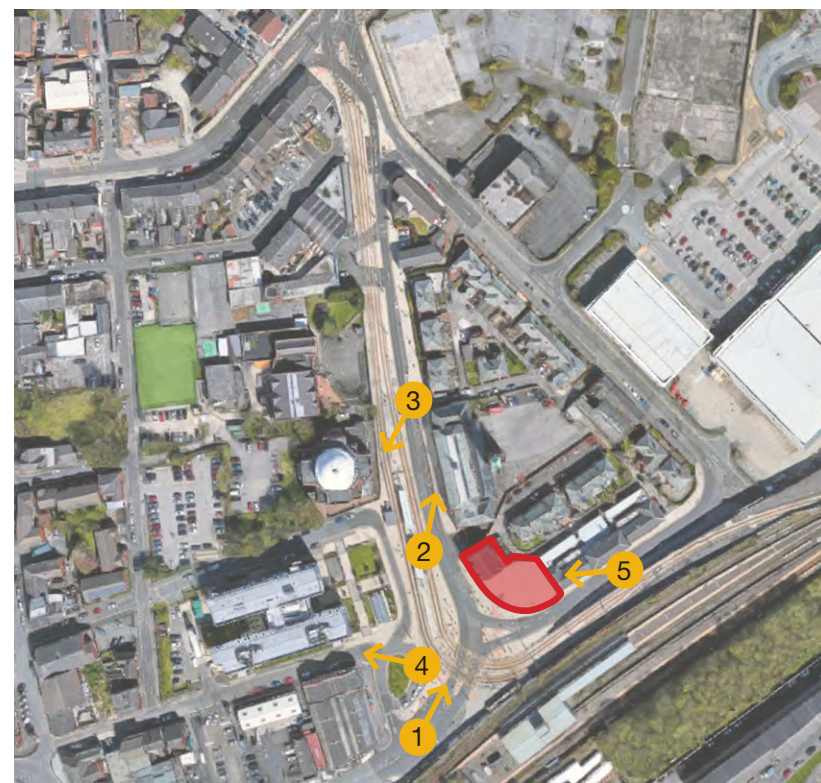
In line with the SPD, the scheme has been developed to contribute to a higher quality aspirational streetscape to further enrich active frontage on Station Road and Richard Street.

The scheme enhances activity at ground floor level. This will be through good quality design, natural surveillance from 'eyes on the street,' as well as including well designed and inviting entrances, creating an open and diverse area and a gateway to the town and mixed commercial development to the future needs.



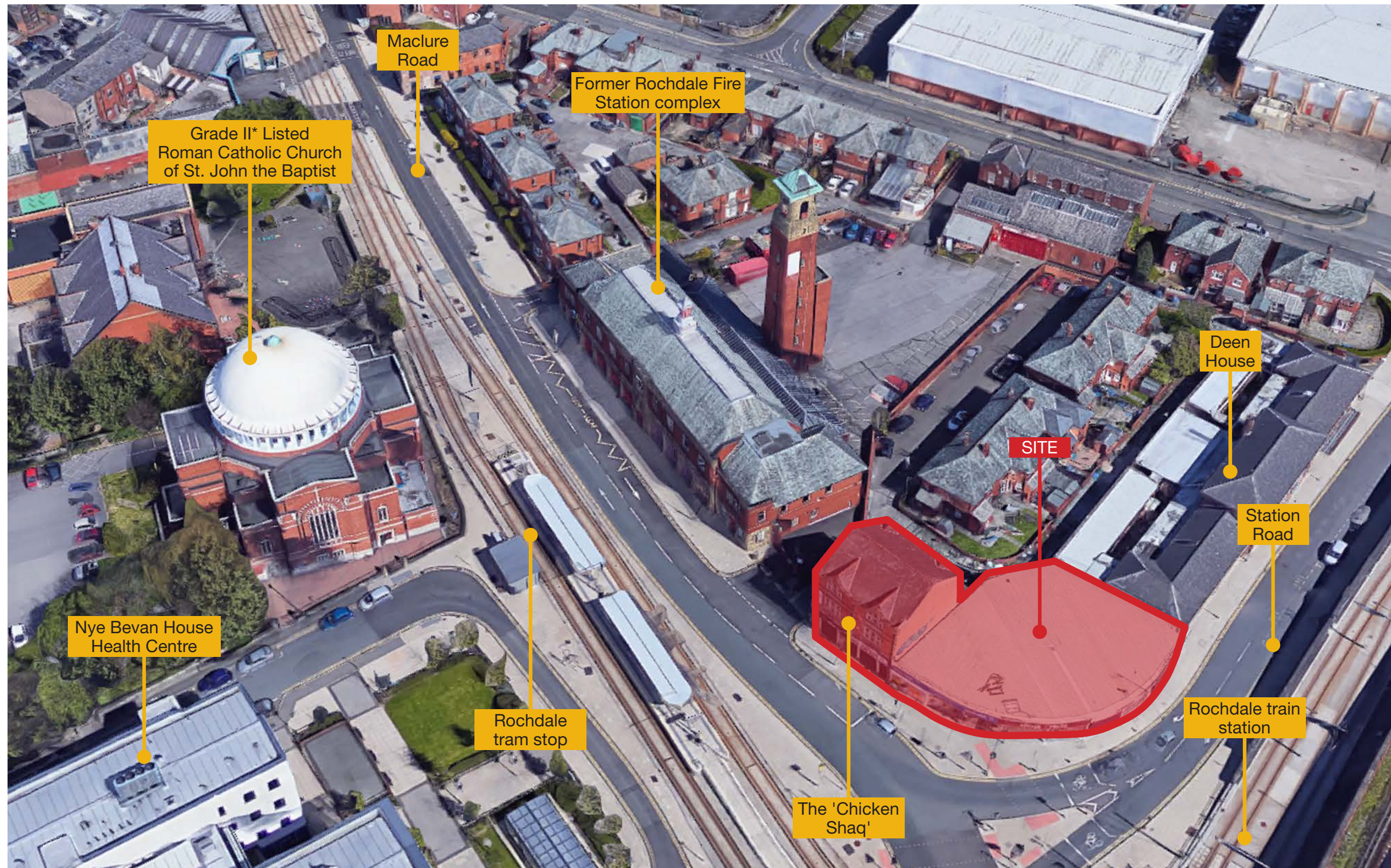
# 4.2 Site Analysis

## Immediate Local Urban Context



# 4.3 Site Analysis

## Existing Site & Surrounding Context



# 4.4 Site Analysis

## Highways and Connectivity

Key:

- Primary street (vehic. access)
- Secondary street (vehic. access)
- Access via train
- Access via tram

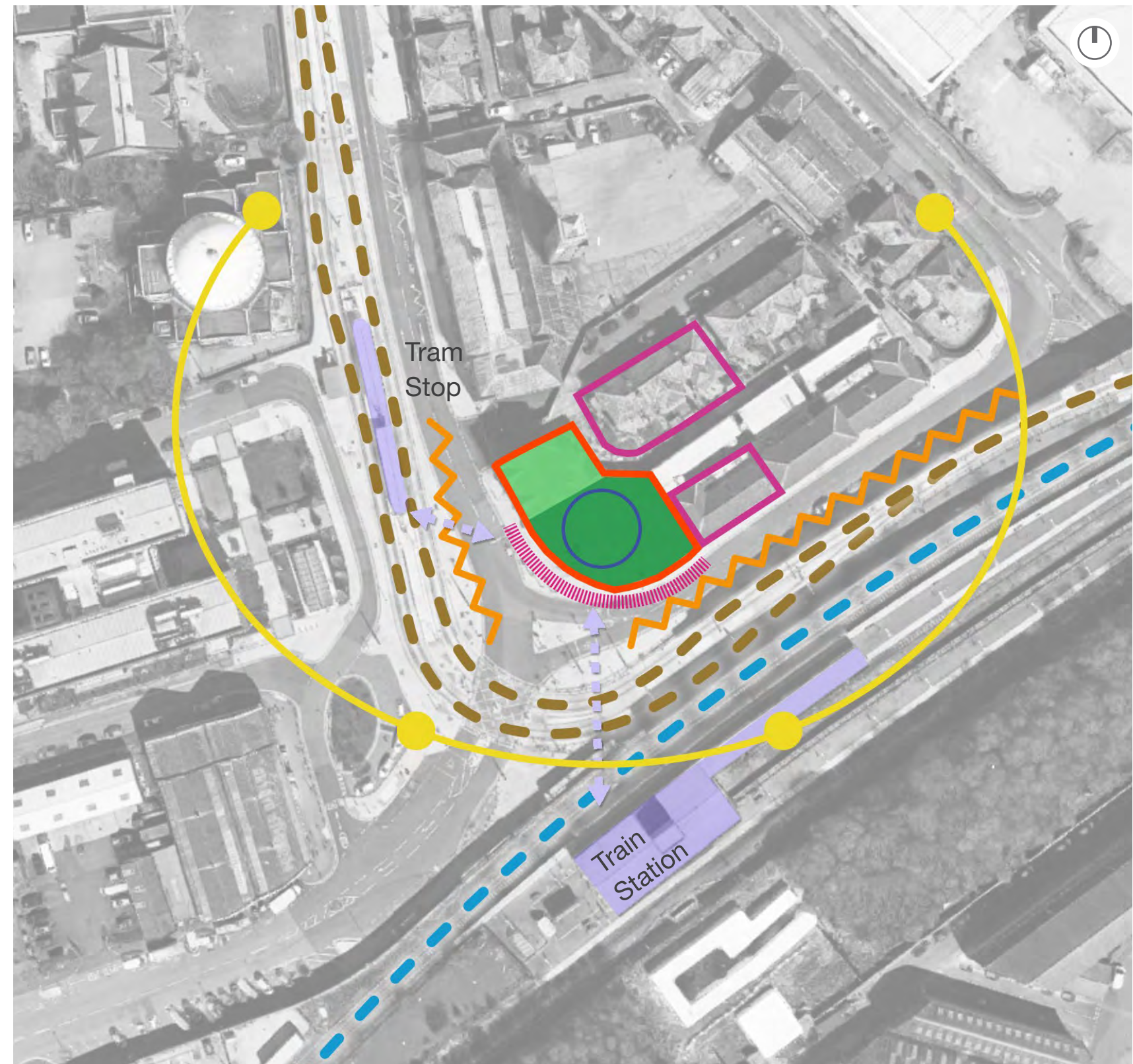


# 4.5 Site Analysis

## Site Constraints & Opportunities

### Key:

- Site Boundary
- Proximity to adjacent buildings
- Noise
- Solar path
- Train Tracks
- Tram Tracks
- Existing structures on site to be demolished
- Existing structures on site to be retained
- Active frontages
- Key focal point
- Close access to public transport



# 4.6 Site Analysis

## Building Heights surrounding the site

### Key:

- Site Boundary
- Railway Line
- Low Rise
- Medium Rise
- High Rise

