

Eccles Town Centre Masterplan Vision

Executive Summary

2026

Salford City Council + MUSE

Eccles Town Centre Masterplan Vision

Eccles is a historic town with a strong identity, rich heritage, excellent transport connections and an active community. However, changes in the way people shop, competition from larger destinations and long-term underinvestment have contributed to reduced footfall, vacant units and a weaker town centre offer.

The Eccles Town Centre Masterplan Vision sets out a long-term framework to bring new life into the town centre. It aims to strengthen Church Street, improve public spaces and connections, celebrate Eccles' heritage, create greener and safer places and deliver much-needed new homes.

What is the Masterplan Vision?

The Masterplan Vision is a high-level framework that sets the long-term direction for Eccles town centre. It will provide a starting point for future investment, development and regeneration and is being brought forward for approval by Salford City Council's Cabinet.

It is not a planning application, does not include detailed designs and does not grant planning permission. More detailed proposals, including building design, access, parking and landscaping, will come forward through future planning applications, with further opportunities for consultation and public comment.

What does Cabinet approval mean?

Cabinet approval confirms Salford City Council supports the direction set out in the Masterplan Vision and allows it to guide future investment and development in Eccles.

It is not planning consent. Individual proposals will still need to go through the relevant planning process before they can be approved and delivered.



The Masterplan Vision for Eccles Town Centre

The regeneration of Eccles has developed over a number of years and has been shaped by ongoing conversations with local people.

In 2022, Salford City Council carried out early engagement to understand what people wanted from the future of the town centre. This responded to long-standing challenges, including changes in shopping habits, competition from larger retail and leisure destinations and the impact of major road infrastructure on how people move around Eccles.

That work helped establish a clear community-led vision and supported the Council in securing £5.3 million of Government funding to purchase the shopping centre and begin the first stage of change.



Three themes emerged:

A place to eat, meet, work and play:

Creating more reasons for people to spend time in Eccles, with a broader mix of businesses, food and drink, leisure and community activity.

Strong roots, green shoots:

Protecting Eccles' heritage, character and community pride while creating greener streets and spaces.

Creating connections:

Making better use of Eccles' strong transport links, improving walking, cycling and public transport connections and creating a more accessible, joined-up town centre.

These themes provided the foundation for the Masterplan Vision and shaped the two further Community Conversations undertaken in Autumn 2025 and Spring 2026.

What did people tell us?

We carried out the Community Conversations in two stages so people could first help shape the ideas, and then comment on the draft Masterplan once those ideas had been developed further.

The Autumn 2025 Ideas Stage focused on what people wanted the future town centre to look and feel like. The Spring 2026 Draft Masterplan Stage then tested the emerging proposals and asked what people supported and where further changes or detail were needed.

More than 445 people attended engagement events and over 480 pieces of feedback were received across the two stages. Feedback on the draft Masterplan showed broad support for its overall direction, alongside requests for further refinement in a number of areas.

You said	We listened
Create a more vibrant and active town centre	Church Street will be strengthened as the town centre's retail core, helping to consolidate shops and services along the high street. Better public spaces, more opportunities for local businesses, community activity and meanwhile uses will help bring more people into the town centre throughout the day and evening.
Make it easier to walk, cycle and use public transport	Movement through the town centre will be improved, with better routes between the train station, Metrolink, bus interchange and town centre, alongside further work on parking, crossings and the wider movement strategy.
Protect Eccles' heritage and local character	Eccles' heritage will be protected and celebrated, including St Mary's Church, Eccles Town Hall, Eccles Library and other historic buildings and landmarks. These will help shape future change, alongside opportunities for artwork, storytelling and heritage trails.

You said	We listened
Make the town centre accessible for everyone	Accessibility has been strengthened throughout the Masterplan Vision, with step-free routes where possible, clearer wayfinding, accessible parking and more places to stop and rest.
Create greener streets and better public spaces	St Mary's Gardens will be improved, with more planting along Church Street, greener routes and better public spaces across the town centre.
Make Eccles feel safer	Better lighting, clearer sightlines and more active streets and spaces will help make the town centre feel safer and more welcoming throughout the day and evening.
Provide the right homes and community spaces	The Masterplan Vision includes a broader mix of homes to meet different needs, while protecting important community spaces and creating places that work for existing and future residents.

From community feedback to clear strategic priorities

The Community Conversations helped shape the direction of the Masterplan, but they are only one part of the wider picture. The feedback has been brought together with the Council's wider ambitions for Eccles, including creating a greener and more inclusive town centre and making sure regeneration delivers lasting benefits for local people.

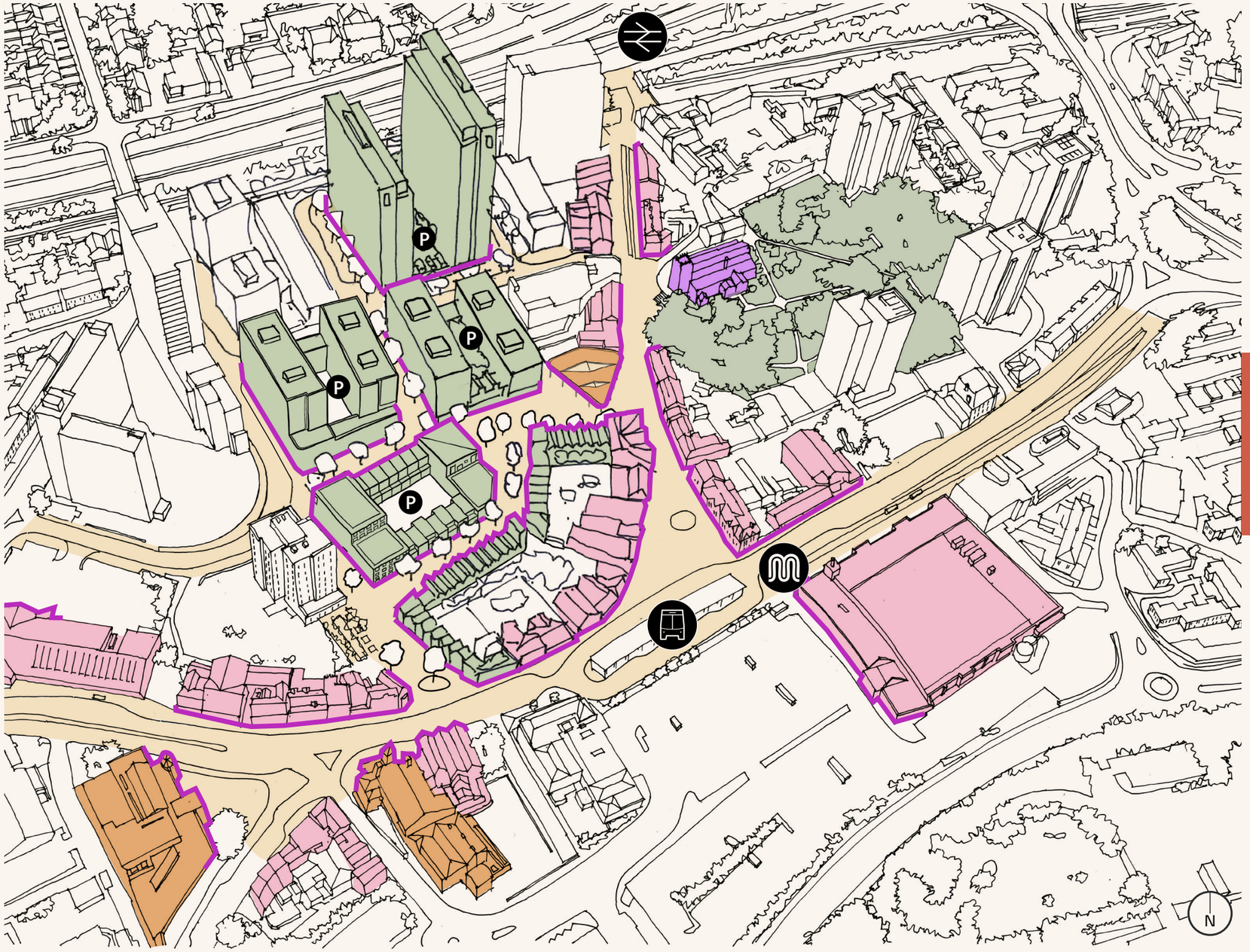
From this, eight strategic priorities have been identified to guide future change across the town centre:

- Town Centre Activation
- Safety and Security
- Accessibility
- Movement
- Green Spaces
- Heritage and Identity
- Sustainability and Inclusive Growth
- Social Value

Together, these priorities provide the framework for how the Masterplan Vision will be developed and delivered over time.

The Masterplan Vision

The Masterplan Vision brings together the priorities raised through the Eccles 2022 Vision and the Community Conversations. It sets out how change could come forward across Eccles Town Centre.



The Masterplan Vision seeks to deliver:

- approximately 1,300 new homes, with a mix of housing types and tenures;
- a stronger Church Street as the town centre's retail core, with a more consolidated retail offer and more opportunities for local businesses and activity;
- improvements to St Mary's Church Gardens, including better integration with Church Street;
- greener streets and better public spaces;
- better walking, cycling and public transport connections;
- improved accessibility across the town centre;
- more opportunities for community activity and events; and
- meanwhile uses and early improvements while longer-term plans come forward.

The Masterplan Vision shows how these different elements could work together. It is not a fixed design. More detailed proposals will be developed through future planning applications, with further opportunities for people to have their say.

Key

- Retail Use
- Residential Use
- Mixed/Community Use - TBD
- St.Mary's Church Grade I Listed
- Transport
- St.Mary's Gardens
- Public Realm Improvements
- Transport
- Courtyard Parking
- Active Frontages

ECCLES TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN VISION - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 2026

Delivery and phasing

The regeneration of Eccles town centre will take place over approximately 10 to 15 years, with timings kept flexible to respond to funding, market conditions and detailed design work.

Change will start much sooner, with movement work, early activity and the first new homes coming forward in stages.

What happens first?

Early activation and animation – 2026 onwards
A programme of events and activities will continue across Eccles town centre, including quarterly Artisan Markets, the Get In! to Eccles music festival and community events celebrating local green spaces and heritage.

Public space quick wins – 2026–2027
A programme of early improvements is being developed for Church Street, with a particular focus on the top of Church Street and the area around Eccles Cross.

Movement, infrastructure and public spaces – feasibility 2026–2027
A detailed transport assessment will help identify opportunities and inform future improvements to movement, infrastructure and public spaces across the town centre.

Meanwhile uses – 2027 onwards
A meanwhile use strategy is being developed to introduce new activity while longer-term regeneration progresses and provide opportunities to test ideas ahead of permanent development.

Church Street and St Mary's Church Gardens – 2027 onwards
An improvement plan will be developed for St Mary's Church Gardens, with a focus on accessibility and alignment with any maintenance works being carried out by St Mary's Church. Permanent improvements to Church Street will also be developed, alongside better connections between Church Street and St Mary's Church Gardens.

Infrastructure and public spaces within residential areas – 2028 onwards
Improvements associated with residential development will come forward through individual planning applications and will be coordinated with the wider town centre programme.

The first new homes

Plots E and F – 2028–2031
The first residential phase is expected to deliver approximately 250 affordable homes, together with supporting improvements to surrounding public spaces.

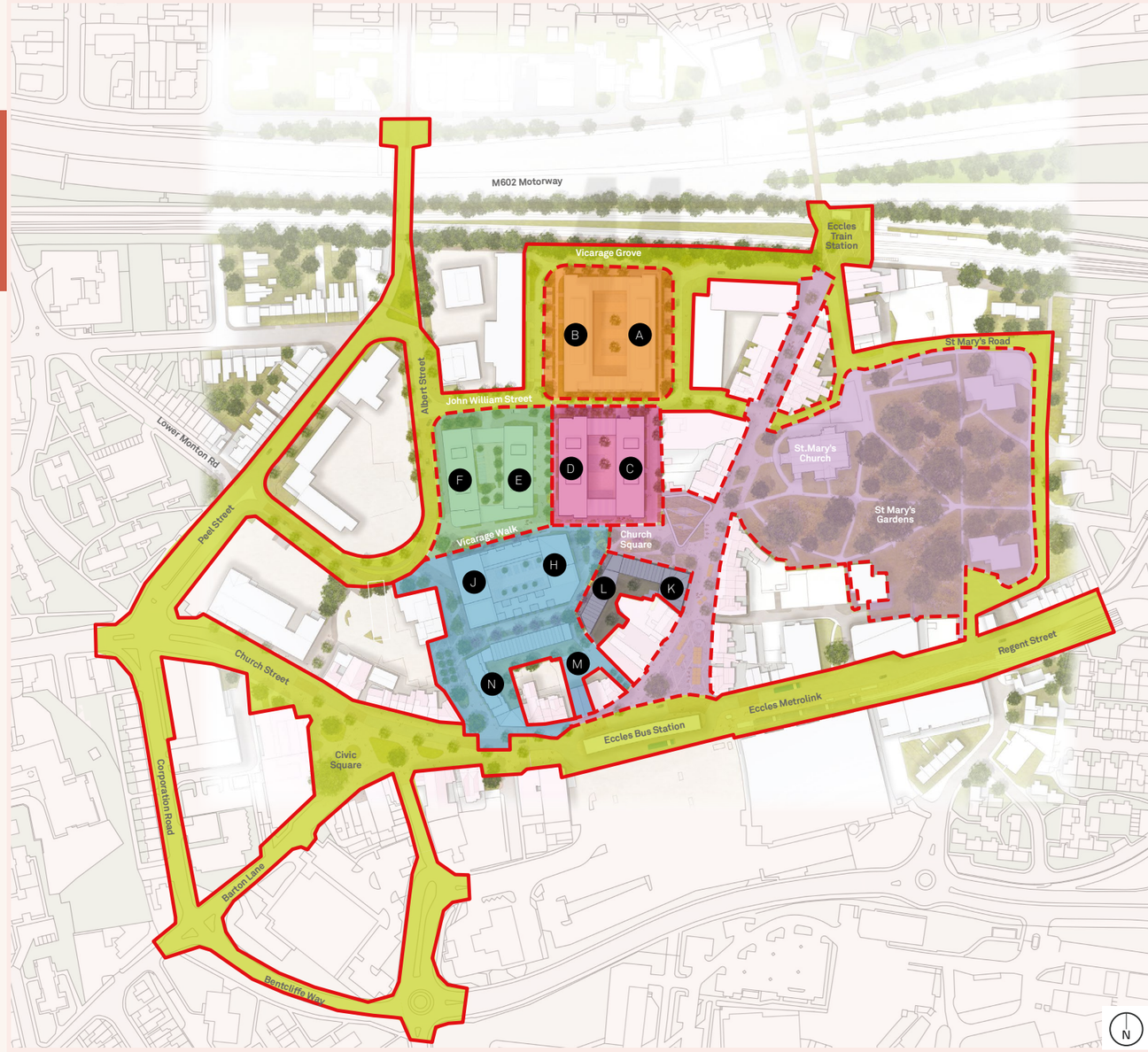
Plots A and B – 2029 onwards
The second residential phase is likely to provide more than 700 new homes in two taller buildings.

Later phases

Plots J, H, M and N – timing to be confirmed
Later residential phases will support a key town centre gateway and improve the Southway connection, with flexibility in housing type and tenure.

Plots L and K – timing to be confirmed
These plots could provide lower-rise homes, including apartments, townhouses and family accommodation. Plot K is also expected to include ground-floor retail at the key corner with Church Street.

Plots C and D – timing to be confirmed
The final residential phase is currently anticipated to deliver approximately 181 apartments.



Key

- St.Mary's Gardens/ Church Street
- Plots E&F
- Plots A&B
- Plots J,H, N & M
- Plots C & D
- Plots L & K
- Movement, Infrastructure & Public Realm Programme

ECCLES TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN VISION - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 2026

What happens next?

Cabinet approval is an important milestone, but it marks the start of the next stage rather than the end of the process.

Next steps include:

- continuing work towards the demolition of Charles House and the remaining shopping centre buildings
- bringing forward planning applications for the first new homes
- developing early activity and meanwhile uses across the town centre
- progressing the movement and public realm programme to identify and test improvements to transport, access and public spaces
- exploring funding and investment opportunities
- continuing to involve local people as individual phases and proposals develop.

The programme will continue to evolve as more detailed work is completed, funding opportunities become available and individual projects move forward.

Moving into delivery

Approval of the Masterplan Vision will allow Eccles to move from developing the Masterplan towards delivering the ambitions it sets out.

Regeneration will take place over a number of years, but work is already starting. The focus will be on bringing forward the first phases, creating early activity and gradually delivering the homes, public spaces and connections set out in the Masterplan Vision.

Local people have helped shape the plans so far, and that will continue. As individual proposals come forward, there will be further opportunities for residents, businesses and community groups to have their say and help shape the future of Eccles town centre.

Salford City Council + MUSE