PLOT H, SISTER

Manchester, UK

451-LYR-XX-ZZ-RPT-L-0016

Townscape & Visual Impact Assessment

Appendix 7.3: Townscape Baseline & Assessment

14th January 2026

Layer.studio

Revision: 02

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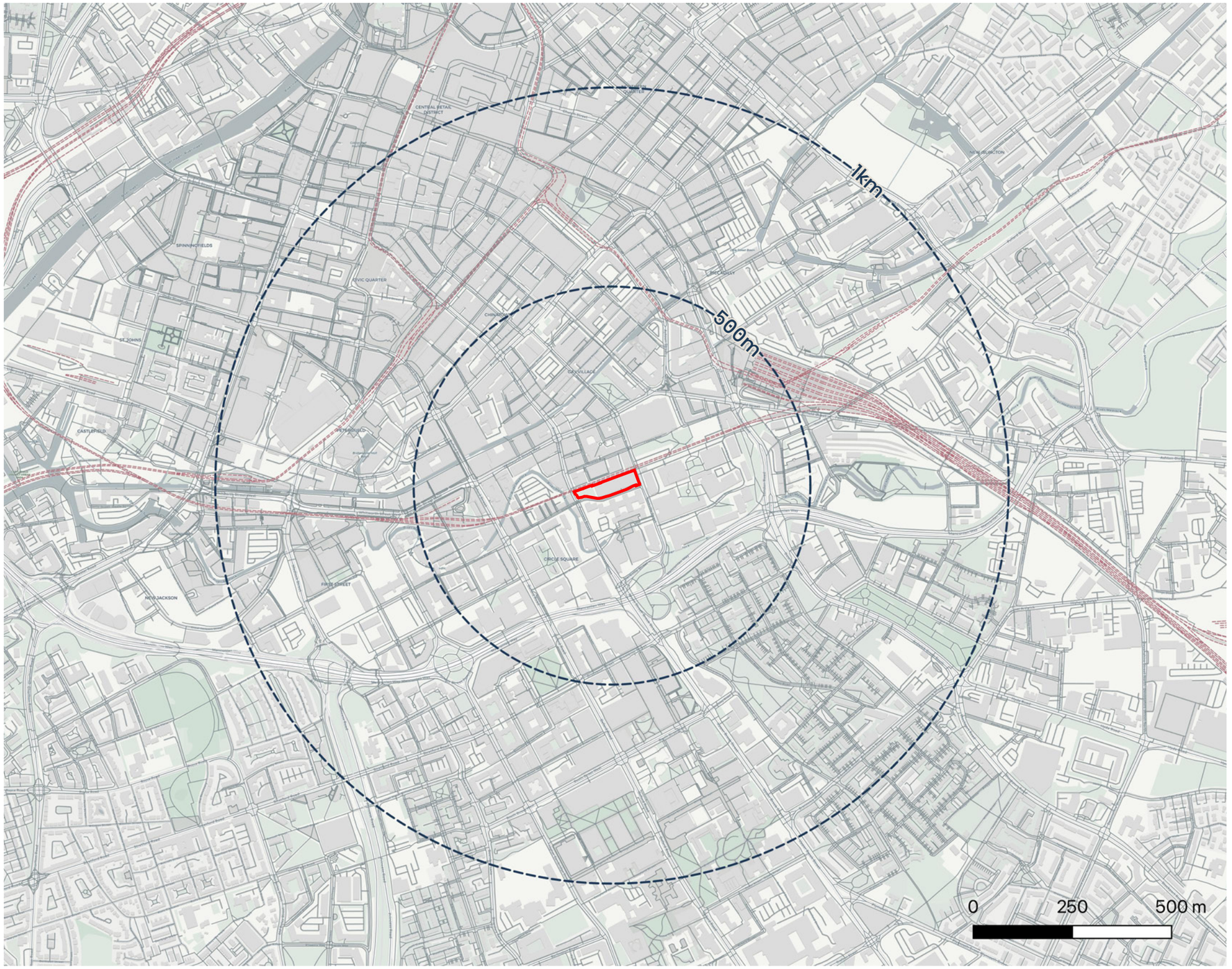
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01 Figures

Figure 1.0: Site Location



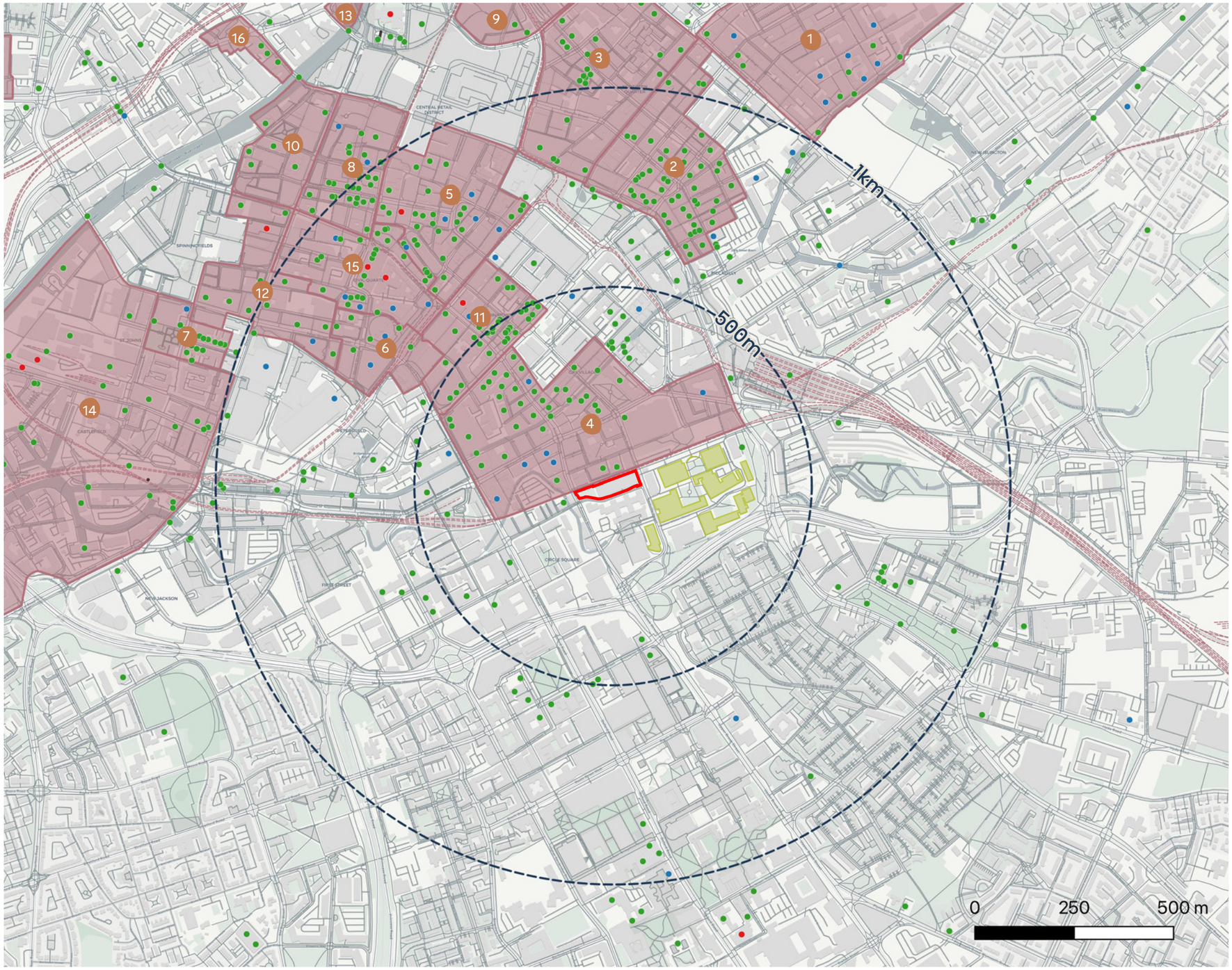
KEY

- Sister- Plot H
- Distance Radii
- Railway Line
- Built Form
- Water Body

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Available at: https://download.geofabrik.de/europe/united-kingdom/england.html

01 Figures

Figure 1.1: Heritage Designations



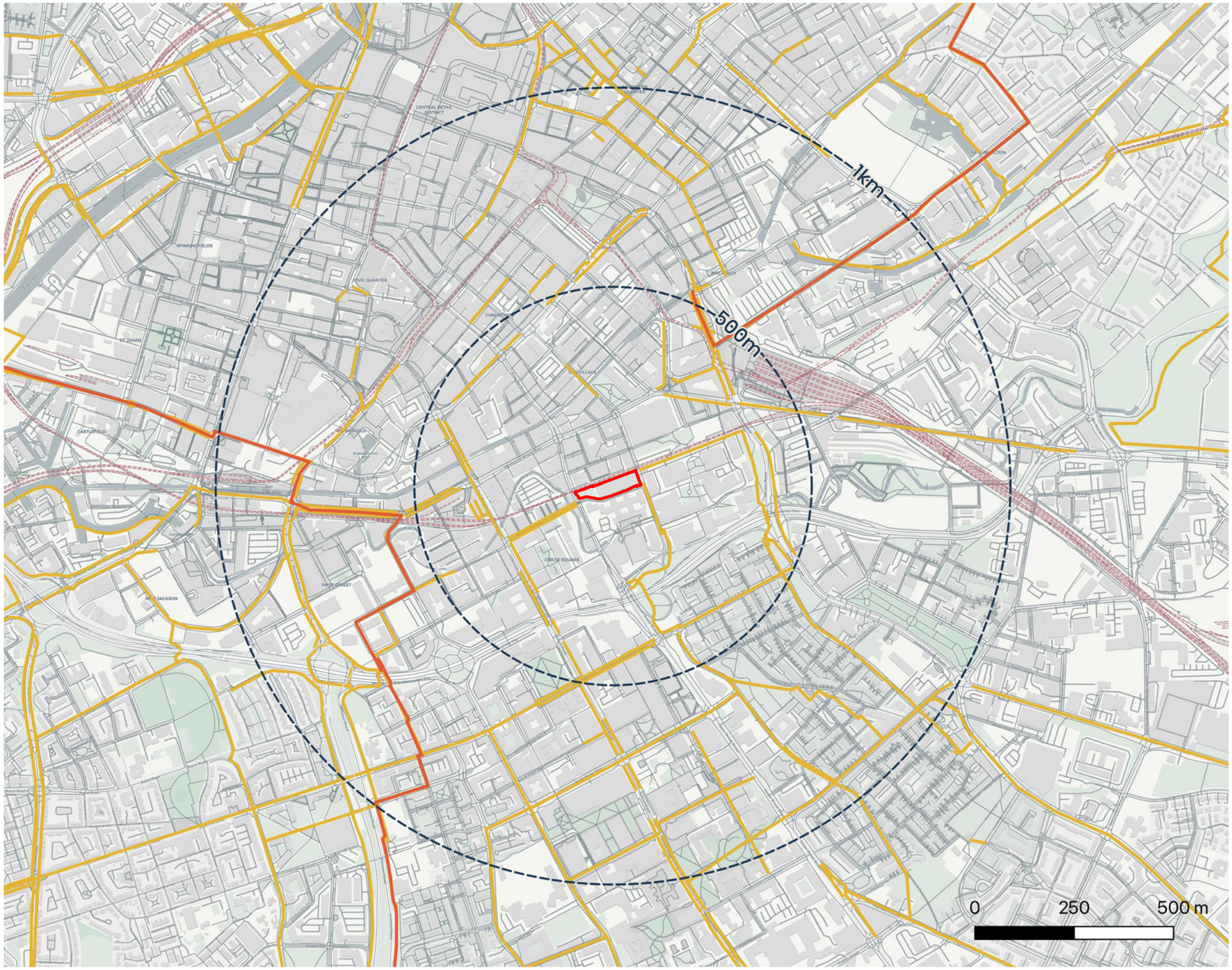
KEY

- Sister- Plot H
- Distance radii
- Railway Line
- Listed buildings Grade II
- Listed buildings Grade II*
- Listed buildings Grade I
- Conservation Areas
- Non-designated Heritage Asset (within SRF)

1. Ancoats
2. Stevenson Square
3. Smithfield
4. Whitworth Street
5. Upper King Street
6. St Peters Square
7. St John Street
8. St Anns Square
9. Shudehill
10. Parsonage Road
11. George Street
12. Deansgate
13. Cathedral
14. Castlefield
15. Albert Square
16. Flat Iron

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Figure 1.2: Walking & Cycling Routes

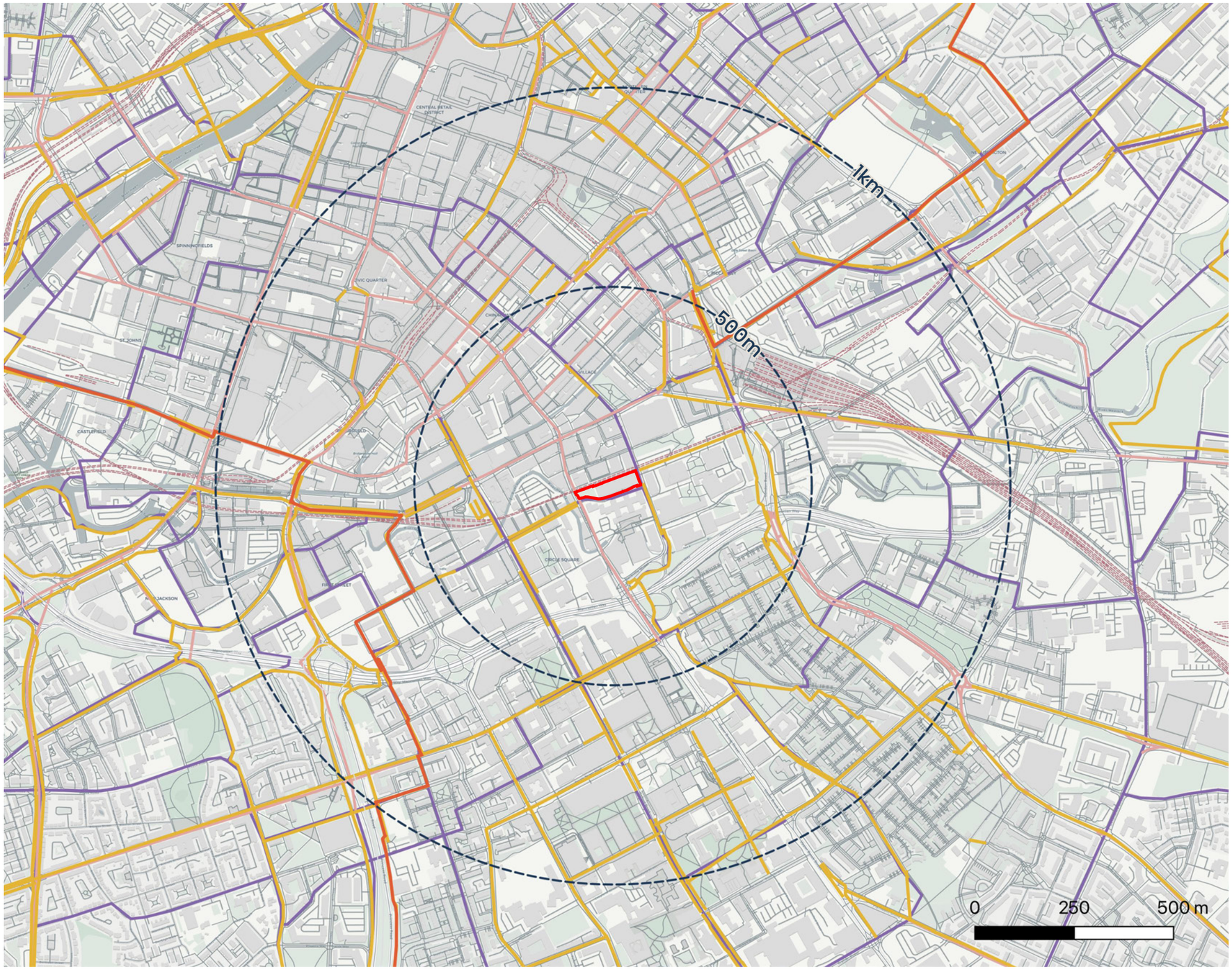


KEY

- Sister- Plot H
- Distance radii
- Railway Line
- Cycle Network (Sustrans)
- Cycle Network (TfGM)

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Available at: https://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/655a1680-fe40-44c0-832f-131067256db6/gm-cycle-routes

Figure 1.2: Walking & Cycling Routes - Beeways

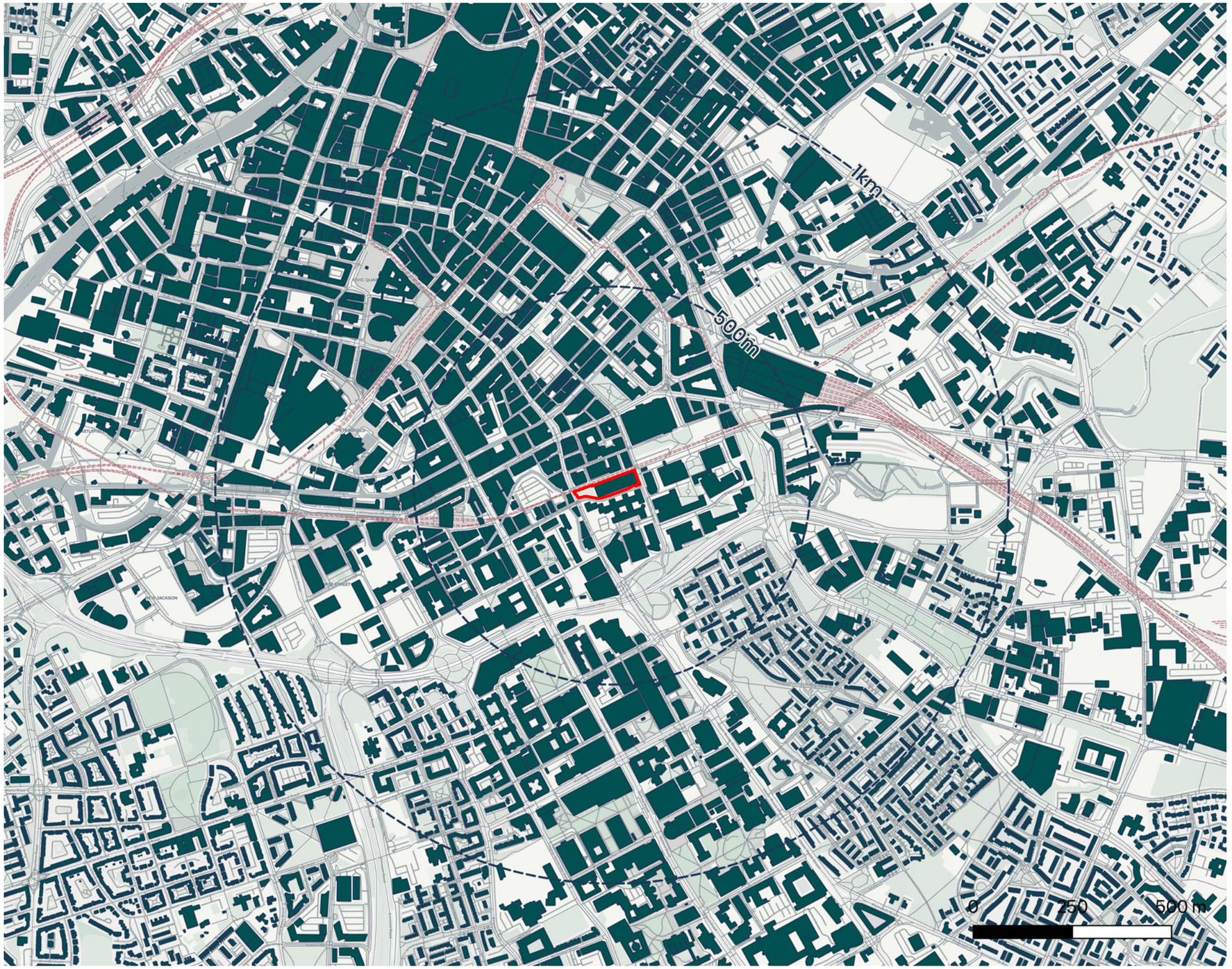


KEY

- Sister- Plot H
- Distance radii
- Railway Line
- National Cycle Network (Sustrans)
- Cycle Network (TfGM)
- Confirmed Beeway Infrastructure
- Busy Beeways
- Beeways

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Available at: https://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/094fa881-5c33-421d-8995-7e182aea3a88/gm_beenetworkproposals

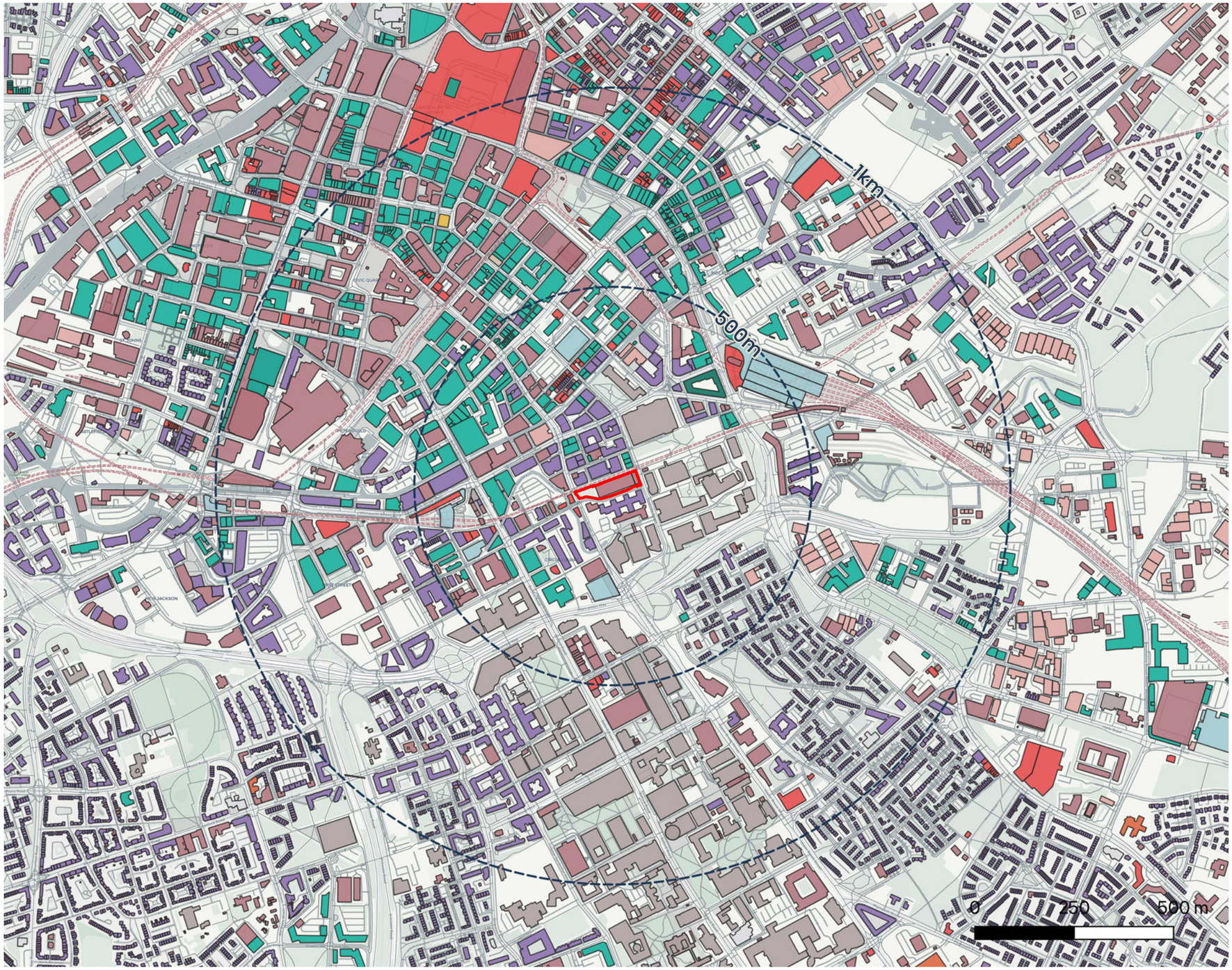
Figure 1.3: Urban Grain



KEY
- Sister- Plot H
- Distance Radii
- Railway Line
- Urban Grain

Geofabrik GmbH (2018) and OpenStreetMap Contributors. Available at: https://download.geofabrik.de/europe/united-kingdom/england.html

Figure 1.4: Land Use

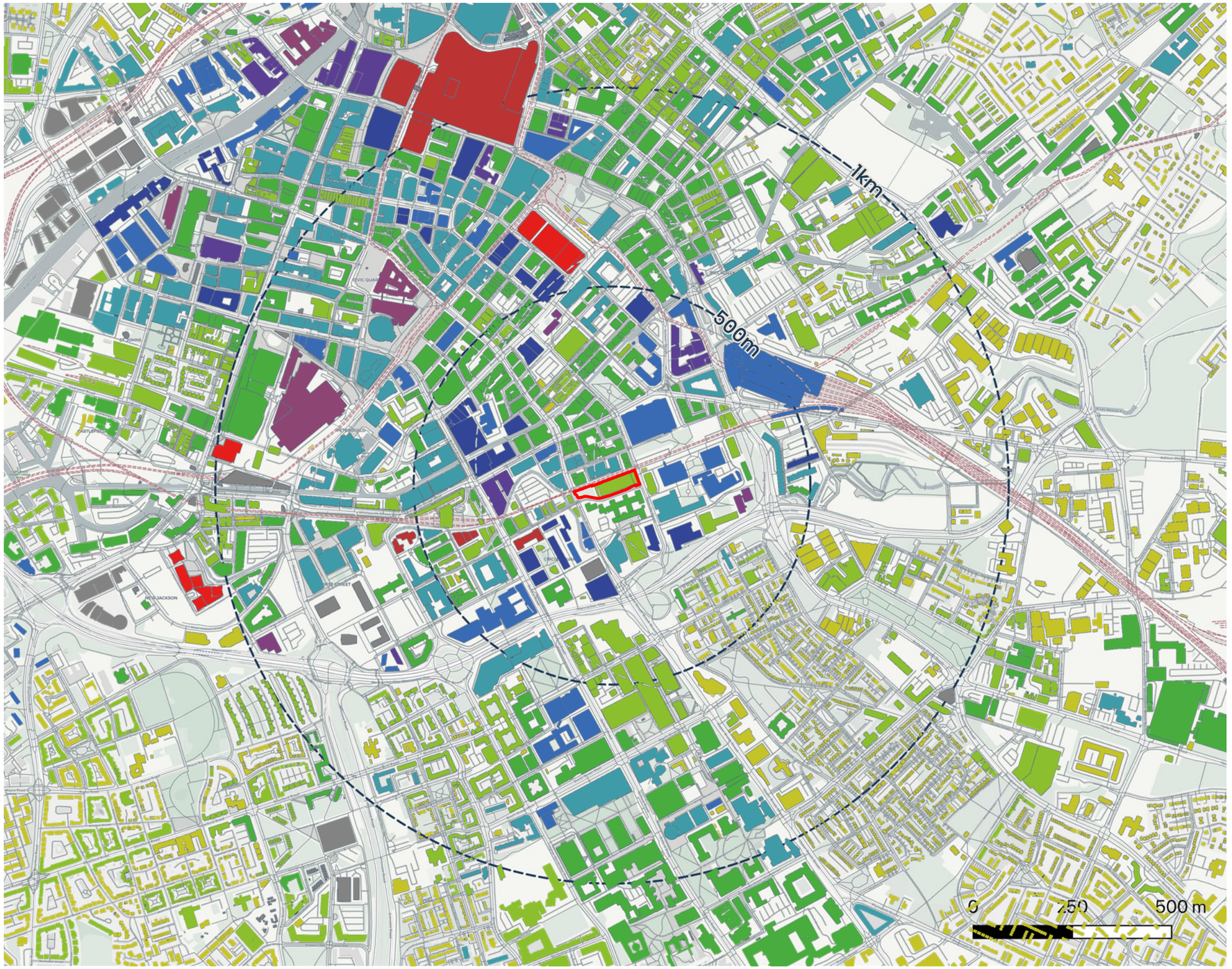


KEY

- Sister- Plot H
- Distance radi
- Railway Linei
- Residential
- Car Park
- Retail
- Commercial
- Religious
- Education
- Industrial
- Transport
- Leisure/ Entertainment
- Derelict/ unknown
- Healthcare
- Public Facilities
- Agricultural
- Other
- Greenspace

Geofabrik GmbH (2018) and OpenStreetMap Contributors. Available at: https://download.geofabrik.de/europe/united-kingdom/england.html

Figure 1.5: Building Heights



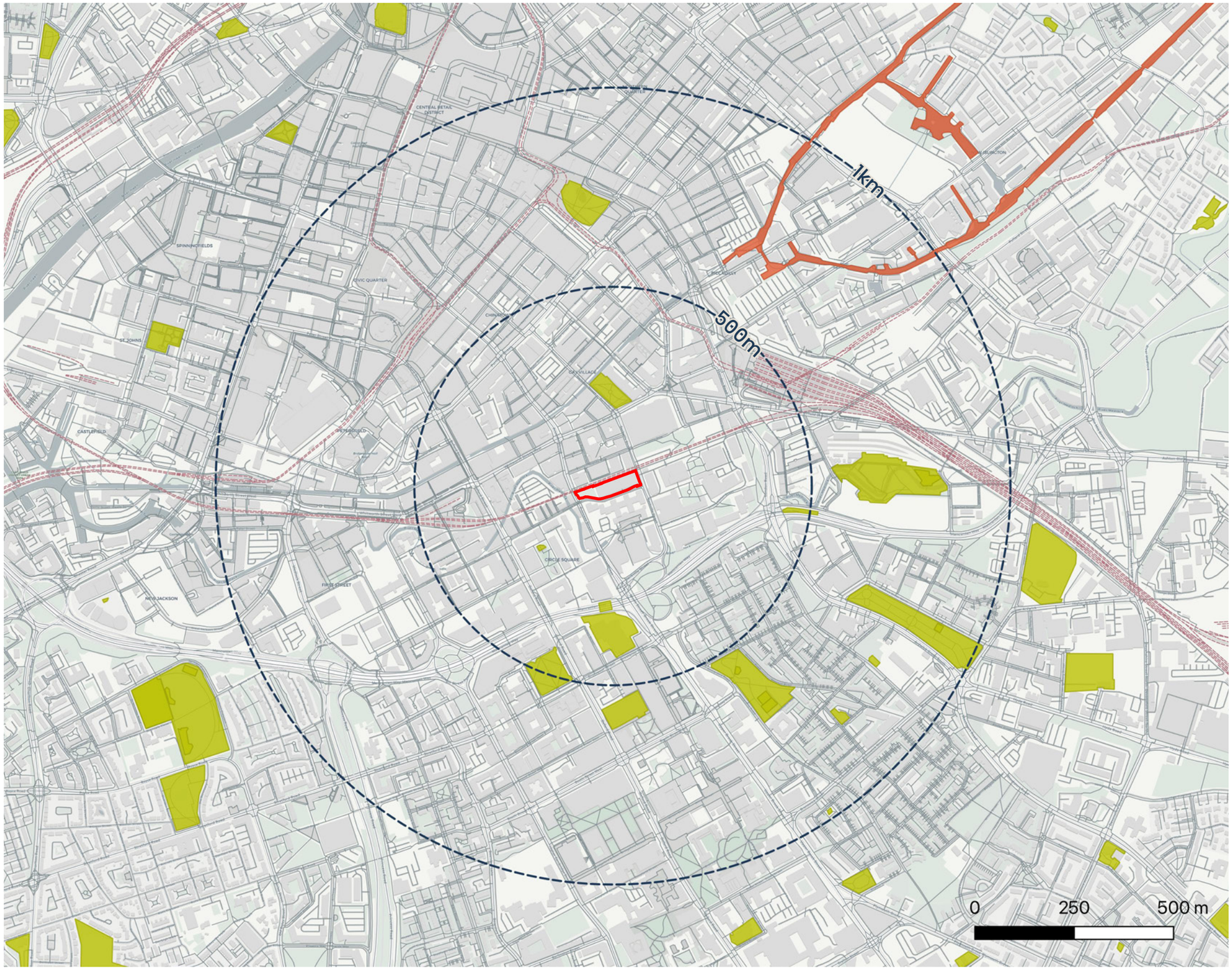
KEY

- Sister- Plot H
- Distance Radii
- Railway Line

- 0-10m
- 11-20m
- 21-30m
- 31-40m
- 41-50m
- 51-60m
- 61-70m
- 71-80m
- 81-90m
- 91-100m
- 100m+
- unknown

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Figure 1.6: Environmental Designations



KEY

- Sister- Plot H
- Distance radii
- Railway Line
- Sites of Biological Importance
- Open Spaces

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02 Baseline

Receptor	Scenario 1: Baseline	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
Urban grain	Grain is fairly tight and regular to the north of the railway, defined by historic routes into the city. Between the railway viaduct and Mancunian Way, grain is looser with larger footprints that respond to university and commercial uses. This is reflected in the shape and form of the multi storey car park and adjoining buildings that are subject to this planning application	Low	Low	Low
Land use	This area of the city is primarily educational (though much is now vacant), with some residential, transport and commercial uses. Vimto Park and Sackville Gardens provide local pockets of public greenspace. As a multi storey car park, The Site itself is categorised as “other”.	Low	Low	Low
Building height	Locally, buildings are typically 11-40m tall. Moving away from The Site in both easterly and westerly directions, heights increase to 41-60m and include long established university buildings (now vacant) and the more recently constructed residential towers developed as part of the Oxford Road Corridor regeneration area.	Low	Low	Low
Public realm and streetscape	Plot H is bounded on three of its four sides by the highway network. Sackville Street and Princess Street are significant arterial routes in and out of the city and are connected to one another by Charles Street, which is aligned perpendicularly. These routes support pedestrian and vehicular permeability around The Site but don’t offer the most appealing environment for users. Altrincham Street offers a car free link between Plot H, the A6 and Piccadilly Station but the section immediately north of The Site is stopped off. Altrincham Street is recognised as a TFGM cycleway which although fragmented connects to the wider city. Future connectivity improvements are planned via the Bee Network. The A57(M) Mancunian Way runs south of the site, linking to key roads including the A6, A34, and A685. However, these major roads can act as barriers for pedestrian movement.	Low	Low	Low
Site character	While not part of the Whitworth Street Conservation Area, The Site is located nearby and surrounded by a wealth of listed heritage assets. Owing to its proximity, the railway viaduct has the biggest influence on character , although the multi storey car park hides much of it from public view. Because of existing land use and the physical constraint of rail infrastructure, The Site bears a greater relationship to the former university campus (now Sister) and eastern edge of the Oxford Road regeneration area, than the conservation area.	Medium	Low	Low/medium

03 Assessment

Potential Effect on Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Significance and effect
Scenario 2: Proposed Development The uniformity of the multi storey's single block will be replaced by the more intricate footprint of three (linked) residential towers. This will instil more varied texture and bear greater resemblance to the existing grain to the north of the railway.	Low	Moderate	Minor/moderate Beneficial
Scenario 3: Proposed Development + Cumulative Committed development subject to this assessment is at too distant location to have a bearing on this townscape receptor. The proposal at Weston Halls & Pendulum Hotel will likely break up urban grain to the immediate south on the Site. In combination effects are not great enough to impact magnitude, which will remain as per scenario 2.		Moderate	Minor/moderate Beneficial
Scenario 4: Proposed Development + Cumulative + IDM Masterplan Masterplan development plots are similar to existing and therefore magnitude of change is as per scenario 3.		Moderate	Minor/moderate Beneficial

Potential Effect on Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Significance and effect
Scenario 2: Proposed Development The change from "other" to residential brings a use that is congruent with its surroundings. The commercial use at ground floor offers greater animation onto the street scene.	Low	Moderate	Minor/moderate Beneficial
Scenario 3: Proposed Development + Cumulative Committed development subject to this assessment is at too distant location to have a bearing on this townscape receptor. The proposed use at Weston Halls & Pendulum Hotel will mirror that of the application site. In combination effects are not great enough to impact magnitude, which will remain as per scenario 2.		Moderate	Minor/moderate Beneficial
Scenario 4: Proposed Development + Cumulative + IDM Masterplan Across the masterplan area, the prominence of educational land use will reduce and be replaced by a broader mix of uses, mainly commercial and residential. These uses are congruent with what exists locally.		Moderate	Minor/moderate Beneficial

Potential Effect on Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Significance and effect
Scenario 2: Proposed Development The proposal will be significantly taller than the baseline with Tower 1 being the largest at 30 storeys. This is a high magnitude of change but on balance with the city centre context and other tall buildings in the vicinity, effect is neutral.	Low	High	Moderate/major Neutral
Scenario 3: Proposed Development + Cumulative Committed development subject to this assessment is at too distant location to have a bearing on this townscape receptor, however the proposal at Weston Halls & Pendulum Hotel will mean that in combination, magnitude increases to substantial.		High	Moderate Neutral
Scenario 4: Proposed Development + Cumulative + IDM Masterplan The masterplan suggests a range of building heights across the development zones. More widespread variation makes for a greater magnitude of change than scenario 2, but does not increase beyond that of scenario 3. When considered at this more strategic scale, in combination effects are beneficial		Substantial	Moderate/major Beneficial

03 Assessment

Townscape receptor - Public realm & Street scene

Potential Effect on Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Significance and effect
Scenario 2: Proposed Development New public realm will create amenity and enhance the street scene on Sackville Street, Charles Street and Princess Street. Streets will be more welcoming, easier to navigate and better connected to adjoining neighbourhoods. Ground floor uses will present active facades and Altrincham Street will be opened up to pedestrians .	Low	High	Moderate Beneficial
Scenario 3: Proposed Development + Cumulative Completion of the proposal at Weston Halls & Pendulum Hotel will introduce further improvements to the public realm, in particular Charles Street. In combination effects will be on par with scenario 2.		High	Moderate Beneficial
Scenario 4: Proposed Development + Cumulative + IDM Masterplan Delivery of strategically considered public realm will make for a more welcoming and navigable environment for people, much improved on both the baseline position and scenarios 2 and 3.		Substantial	Moderate/major Beneficial

Potential Effect on Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Significance and effect
Scenario 2: Proposed Development The Proposed Development will present active frontages onto adjoining streets and will be further enhanced with new public realm. Proposed building materials have been selected to complement the established character of this part of Manchester and are therefore more in keeping than what is offered by the baseline position.	Low	High	Moderate Beneficial
Scenario 3: Proposed Development + Cumulative Committed development subject to this assessment is at too distant location to have a bearing on this townscape receptor, however the proposal at Weston Halls & Pendulum Hotel presents an opportunity to further enhance local character. Ultimately the architecture and materials will play a critical role, but in the absence of any detail, magnitude of change is mintained at the same level as scenario 2.		High	Moderate Beneficial
Scenario 4: Proposed Development + Cumulative + IDM Masterplan The impact on the character of Plot H depends on the detailed design of nearby development zones. As this is an unknown entity, the magnitude of change is deemed to be equal to that under scenario 2 and 3.		High	Moderate Beneficial

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