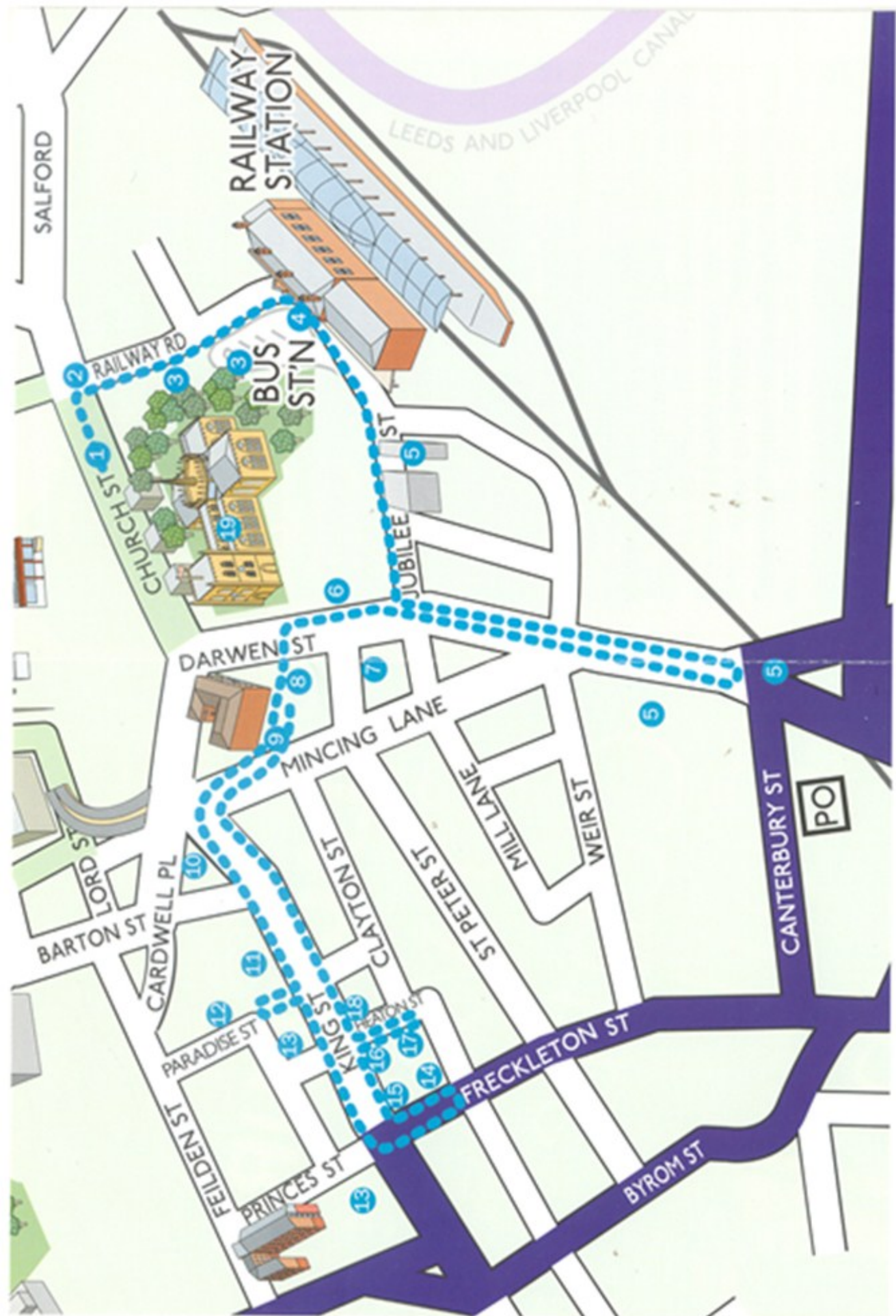


BLACKBURN



TOWN TRAIL SOUTH



Blackburn—Town Centre Trail South

Start with your back to the Cathedral

1. Turn right along Church Street...

...to the corner with Railway Road where stands Essential, formerly the White Bull a mid 19th century hotel, on the site of an earlier building dating from at least the 16th century.



2. Turn right again into Railway Road.

The row of assorted shops and businesses opposite was originally Victorian and is best appreciated by looking at the gracefully curving upper storeys. The Boulevard lies before you, a road/rail interchange established in Blackburn in the 1890s; many towns still don't have them even today.

3. Proceed past the informal statue of the grandmother and child, created by Alan Wilson in 1996, to the monumental Queen Victoria.

This was unveiled in 1905 by her daughter, Princess Louise, an event filmed by Blackburn's pioneer cinematographers, Mitchell and Kenyon. The sculptor was Bertram McKennal, and the statue is a replica of the one in Ballarat, Australia. Details appear on the back of the plinth.

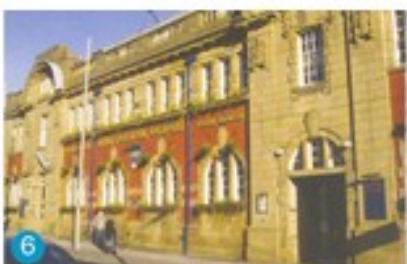


4. The Railway Station has a Grade II listed frontage and modern domed roof covering platforms one and two.

By the ramp to platform four, there is a public art installation depicting such local notables as Barbara Castle and Kathleen Ferrier.

5. Coming out of the station turn right into Jubilee Street.

On the left is the site of the original Electric Tramway Generating Station, complete with commemorative blue plaque. At the end of the road is Darwen Street. Turn left to view the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Bridge, completed in 1884. Before it (opposite Edmondson's) is the current bridge over the River Blakewater, which replaces the former ancient structure, where the town lock-up stood.



6. Retrace your steps and further along Darwen Street, on the right, is a Wetherspoons pub.

Originally the main Post Office opened in 1910. A blue plaque commemorates the pre-1900 terminus of the steam tramway to Darwen.



7. Opposite are the former offices of the Blackburn Philanthropic Mutual Assurance Society, a fine example of late 19th century commercial architecture.

8. Numbers 28-32 represent some of the oldest surviving buildings in Darwen Street, recently sensitively renovated.

Next door is BBC Radio Lancashire with a blue plaque marking the scene of the 1842 Plug Riots. Cotton workers feared the newly mechanised mills threatened their livelihoods, and disabled them by removing the plugs from the steam engine boilers. The military opened fire and it is thought three people were killed.



9. Further along on the left is Fleming Square and the 1849 Exchange Arcade, originally the Cotton Exchange and later Turkish baths.

Now small businesses flourish here. The square has been landscaped with artist-designed seating and flooring. The walls incorporate various salvaged architectural features, including the drinking fountain dedicated to George Dewhurst, a leading 19th century radical, once imprisoned for his political activities. The design of the railings at the end of the square recall its days as a fish market.

10. Across the road is King Street, once the grandest street in Blackburn.

Numbers one and two are Georgian. The front of number two has a replica of the original Sun Insurance fire mark, and a rainwater head with the date 1741. W H Hornby, one of the town's leading figures and a major cotton mill owner, was living here when it was attacked by a mob, following the General Election in 1841. His son, the future Sir Harry Hornby MP was born here on 29th August of that year. A shop front has been added and the original upper storey windows have been replaced.



11. Further down King Street a camping store occupies the Georgian town-house of the Sudell family.

Home of Henry Sudell, once the town's richest man, philanthropist and who later became bankrupt. The original roof and gable end chimneys are still visible from outside.



12. Turn immediately right for the Quaker Meeting House at the end of Paradise Lane.

A plain brick building, it is one of the oldest places of worship in Blackburn that is still in use. Built in 1824, it was erected on what was known as Alice Sudell's Orchard. Simple numbers mark the small, square gravestones. The Meeting House seats 226 members. Inside large hat-pegs for the traditional broad-brimmed hats still survive.

13. Retrace your steps and look at the gable end of the building, on the corner of King Street and France Street.

This was one side of a square or garden in the 18th century. Opposite, on Princes Street is a row of recently restored buildings, one Georgian, the others Victorian. The Georgian building housed the Dispensary which served the town before the Royal Infirmary was built. Adjoining the Dispensary was Hoole's Academy. Here John Morley and other notable gentry received their early schooling. William Hoole was chairman of the Improvement Commissioners, under whose auspices the Borough received its incorporation.



14. Turn left along Freckleton Street to the spire which is all that remains of Chapel Street Congregational Church.

A little further along parts of the Grammar School building of 1819 are incorporated in modern business premises. Across the road is the churchyard of the now demolished St Peter's Church.

15. Retrace your steps to King Street and on the corner is the Wish Centre (formerly known as the King's Head built c1765 by John Ainsworth).

In the 1850s this inn used to be the meeting place for the bleachers from Heapey, Brinscall, Chorley and Leyland, when they came to collect calico from the warehouses in nearby Heaton, Paradise and Clayton Streets.



16. Next is a group of Georgian buildings which includes the Hornby house at number 41, W H Hornby's home after he left number 2 King Street.

It was the birthplace of his son, A N 'Monkey' Hornby, captain of England at both rugby and cricket and the first captain to lose the Ashes. This is the most imposing Georgian town house in Blackburn, built for Bertie Markland in 1778. His initials and the year are recorded on a rainwater head.

17. Turn right into Heaton Street to a group of old buildings, one of which still has the wide windows to give maximum light for handloom weaving.

A blue plaque on the Salvation Army hostel marks the birthplace of John Morley (Viscount Morley of Blackburn), essayist, biographer and statesman, born 24th December, 1838.



18. Back on King Street, the building on the right, once known simply as the Hotel, was one of Blackburn's principal coaching inns.

At the beginning of the 19th century the town's Assembly Room were here. It was here that the victory of Waterloo was celebrated in 1815, and here also where the Town Council used to meet before the Town Hall was opened in 1856. It has been restored and refurbished and a modern extension added at the rear.

19. Go back through Fleming Square to finish the trail at the Cathedral.

Originally the parish church of Saint Mary the Virgin, it was consecrated in 1826. In 1926 it became the Cathedral of the newly formed diocese of Blackburn. Extensions, including the transepts and lantern tower were added from the 1930s onwards. The interior is notable for the quantity and quality of its 20th century artwork. Outside are several family vaults on the site of the medieval parish church.



Acknowledgements

This booklet has been updated by Blackburn with Darwen Library and Information Service and is adapted from the original Heritage Town Trails leaflet produced in September 2007.

The information contained in this booklet was correct at the time of going to print, but the town's regeneration may cause certain buildings to change in the future.

Photography Credits

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council

Bruce Kitchin—Blackburn trail

Malcolm Taylor—Blackburn Railway Station art work

Rev, Geoff Tolley—Darwen trail

Simon Webb—Darwen trails

Cotton Town

More information and learning journeys about both towns can be found on www.cottontown.org

