

CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 16TH OCTOBER, 2019, 6.00 PM

SHIELD ROOM, CIVIC CENTRE, WEST PADDOCK, LEYLAND, PR25
1DH

AGENDA

1 Apologies for Absence

2 Minutes of the Last Meeting

Minutes of the last meeting held on 11 September 2019, attached to be signed as a correct record.

(Pages 5 - 10)

3 Declarations of Interest

Members are requested to indicate at this stage in the proceedings any items on the agenda in which they intend to declare an interest. Members are reminded that if the interest is a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (as defined in the Members' Code of Conduct) they must leave the room for the whole of that item. If the interest is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, but is such that a member of the public could reasonably regard it as being so significant that it is likely that it would prejudice their judgment of the public interest (as explained in the Code of Conduct) then they may make representations, but then must leave the meeting for the remainder of the item.

4 Cabinet Forward Plan

Cabinet Forward plan for the 12 month period 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020 attached.

(Pages 11 - 22)

5 Recommendations from Scrutiny Committee

Recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee and Panel attached.

(Pages 23 - 24)

ITEM(S) OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL (INTRODUCED BY COUNCILLOR PAUL FOSTER)

6 South Ribble Council Branding

Report of the Interim Chief Executive attached.

(Pages 25 - 36)

**ITEM(S) OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE,
PROPERTY AND ASSETS (INTRODUCED BY COUNCILLOR
MATTHEW TOMLINSON)**

7 South Ribble Borough Council Website Refresh (Pages 37 - 64)

Report of the Director of Customer and Digital attached.

8 Worden Hall Update (Pages 65 - 78)

Report of the Assistant Director of Property and Housing attached.

**ITEM(S) OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT
(INTRODUCED BY COUNCILLOR SUSAN JONES)**

9 Garden Waste Charging Policy and Container Charging (Pages 79 - 90)

Report of the Director of Neighbourhoods and Development attached.

10 110,000 Trees a Global Legacy (Pages 91 - 98)

Report of the Director of Neighbourhoods and Development attached.

**ITEM(S) OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING,
REGENERATION AND CITY DEAL (INTRODUCED BY
COUNCILLOR BILL EVANS)**

11 Central Lancashire Local Plan Issues and Options (Pages 99 - 258)

Report of the Director of Planning and Property attached.

12 Apprentice Factory Development Plan Update (Pages 259 - 282)

Report of the Director of Planning and Property attached.

**ITEM(S) OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT, SOCIAL JUSTICE AND WEALTH BUILDING
(INTRODUCED BY COUNCILLOR ANIELA BYLINSKI GELDER)**

13 Standard Financial Statement (Pages 283 - 314)

Report of the Director of Customer and Digital attached.

**14 Council Tax Empty Properties and Second Homes
Report** (Pages 315 - 330)

Report of the Director of Customer and Digital attached.

Gary Hall
INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Electronic agendas sent to Members of the Cabinet Councillors Paul Foster (Chair), Michael Titherington (Vice-Chair), Aniela Bylinski Gelder, Bill Evans, Susan Jones and Matthew Tomlinson

The minutes of this meeting will be available on the internet at www.southribble.gov.uk

Forthcoming Meetings

6.00 pm Wednesday, 13 November 2019 - Shield Room, Civic Centre, West Paddock, Leyland, PR25 1DH

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MINUTES OF CABINET

MEETING DATE Wednesday, 11 September 2019

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors Paul Foster (Chair), Aniela Bylinski Gelder and Bill Evans

OFFICERS: Gary Hall (Interim Chief Executive), Jennifer Mullin (Director of Neighbourhoods and Development), Jonathan Noad (Director of Planning and Property), Darren Cranshaw (Assistant Director of Scrutiny & Democratic Services), Dave Whelan (Legal Services Manager/Interim Monitoring Officer) and James McNulty (Senior Management Accountant)

OTHER MEMBERS AND OFFICERS: Councillor Jacky Alty (Member Champion (Social Justice and Equality)), Councillor Damian Bretherton, Councillor Carol Chisholm, Councillor Mary Green, Councillor Michael Green, Councillor David Howarth (Leader of the Liberal Democrats Group), Councillor Clifford Hughes MBE, Councillor Chris Lomax, Councillor Keith Martin, Councillor Alan Ogilvie, Councillor Margaret Smith (Leader of the Opposition and Leader of the Conservative Group), Councillor Phil Smith and Councillor Karen Walton

PUBLIC: 10

29 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were submitted on behalf of Councillors Sue Jones, Mick Titherington and Matthew Tomlinson.

30 Minutes of the Last Meeting

Decision made (Unanimously):

That the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on Wednesday, 10 July 2019 be approved as a correct record for signing by the Chair.

31 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Michael Green declared a personal interest in agenda item 7 – Lancashire Business Rates Pool, in his role as a Cabinet Member at Lancashire County Council.

32 Cabinet Forward Plan

Decisions made (Unanimously):

That the Cabinet Forward Plan be noted.

33 Naming of Penwortham Bypass

The Cabinet Member for Planning, Regeneration and City Deal, Councillor Bill Evans presented a report from the Director of Planning and Property proposing the naming of the Penwortham Bypass which was due to be completed in December.

A competition had been held with local primary and secondary schools close to the route of the new road. The judging panel had consisted of the Leader of the Council, Broad Oak Ward Councillor (Councillor Harry Hancock), Lancashire County Council City Deal representative and a Lancashire Enterprise Partnership representative. It was reported that Councillor David Shaw had also been a member of the panel rather than Councillor Howarth as had been indicated in the report.

The Leader welcomed Laura Gillett and Grace Shields from Penwortham Girls High School who had suggested the winning name for the new road, which would be known as John Horrocks Way. Cabinet expressed its gratitude to Laura and Grace for taking part in the competition and suggesting such an appropriate name for the Penwortham Bypass.

Decision made (Unanimously):

Cabinet notes the name of Penwortham Bypass as John Horrocks Way.

Reason(s) for Decision:

To ensure an appropriate name is given to the Penwortham Bypass.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

Various options were considered to generate a selection of suggestions, with the panel deciding a preferred name.

34 Corporate Plan Performance Report - Quarter 1

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Paul Foster presented a report of the Interim Chief Executive outlining the quarter 1 performance against the programmes, projects and key performance indicators agreed by the Council within the Council's Corporate Plan agreed in February 2019.

The report had been re-designed following engagement with the Scrutiny Committee to make it more user-friendly and easier to understand. The report had been considered by the new Scrutiny Budget and Performance Panel on Monday, 9 September 2019. The Leader reported on and accepted the recommendations made by the Scrutiny Panel.

It was reported that of the 34 projects in the Corporate Plan 28 were on track and 6 off track at the end of the quarter 1. Of the key performance indicators and measures 14 were succeeding, 22 on track and 8 off track. Further information was provided on the progress made and work to bring items back on track.

Reference was made to the homelessness and housing indicators that were off track and a commitment given to look in detail at what could be done to improve these.

An update was provided on current performance concerning the calls abandoned before being answered in 90 seconds, which had improved significantly due to the increased resources and operating processes put in place.

Decision made (Unanimously):

1. Cabinet notes the performance summary outlined within quarter 1 reflects the deliverables and priorities identified by the previous administration and corporate plan, approved in February 2019.
2. Cabinet notes that existing performance measures are currently being reviewed in conjunction with the review of the Corporate Plan.
3. Cabinet notes that the Quarter 2, Corporate Plan performance reports will be structured based upon the new administration's identified outcomes and priorities.
4. Cabinet notes that the performance report will be developed further across the course of the year.

Reason(s) for the decision:

To ensure the Council manages its performance effectively and the Corporate Plan is delivered.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None applicable for this report.

35 Budget Monitoring Report - Quarter 1

In the absence of the Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Assets, the Leader of the Council presented a report of the Interim Section 151 Officer updating the Council's overall financial position as at the end of July 2019.

The report provided a forecast of the projected outturn to 31 March 2020 compared against the current approved budget and explaining the differences and impact. The report included more detailed information as part of the Cabinet's commitment to transparency.

It was reported that the report had been considered by the new Scrutiny Budget and Performance Panel on Monday, 9 September 2019, which had welcomed the level of detail in the report and looked forward to monitoring the budgets on a quarterly basis going forward.

The overall revenue outturn forecast for 2019/2020 was a net budget saving of £681,000 which represents a variance of 4.7% of the total net budget requirement. The report provided a breakdown of the forecasted variance which were attributed to savings in staff costs, increase in garden waste income, increase in the vehicle maintenance contract income and business rates compensatory grant funding.

The report included updates on the capital budget slippage from 2018/2019 and committee approval for schemes during the year to date to reflect the current

available budget. The current capital budgets have been reviewed to establish the forecast outturn expenditure and any re-phasing of schemes into future years. The total capital budget forecast for 2019/20 is £14,939,000, with £1,986,000 potential slippage identified at this stage in the year. It was reported that the Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Assets would be going through the capital programme to ensure it is managed in a smarter way and ensure it is deliverable.

The Leader expressed concern at the variance on staffing budgets and had asked the Interim Chief Executive to ensure that vacant posts are recruited to and that a review of resource requirements is carried out. It was also acknowledged that extending shared services would also provide greater capacity and resilience.

An additional recommendation would be proposed to allocate funding of £75,000 to organise a music festival for South Ribble to be funded from the forecasted underspend to cash flow the initial phase of the festival preparations. A report would be brought forward to Cabinet in future months on the music festival for the Borough.

Decision made (Unanimously):

1. Cabinet notes the report.
2. Cabinet approves a virement of the £150,000 turnover savings target budget to reflect staffing savings achieved in the first period to the end of July 2019.
3. Cabinet approves the creation of a new budget of £75,000 for hosting a music event in the Borough in summer 2020, to be funded from the forecasted underspend in the 2019/20 revenue to cash flow the initial phase of the festival preparations.

Reason(s) for decision:

Robust financial monitoring, including scrutiny and challenging information, is a crucial aspect of running a successful and effective organisation.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

None applicable to this report.

36 Lancashire Business Rates Pool

In the absence of the Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Assets, the Leader of the Council presented a report from the Interim Section 151 Officer concerning the release of business rate growth funding prior to it being realised to support the funding of cross-county work on 'Repositioning Lancashire: The Greater Lancashire Plan'.

Decisions made (Unanimously):

Cabinet approves a contribution of £36,012 to the Strategic Economic Growth and Financial Sustainability Fund, being South Ribble's share of the £400,000 bid to fund the work on the Greater Lancashire Plan, subject to all Lancashire councils who are in the business rate pool committing to fund their share of the total cost of the work.

Reason(s) for decision:

1. The Lancashire BR Pool Executive Body have explored how £400k could be released from the Strategic Economic Growth and Financial Sustainability Fund (SEGFSF) in this financial year to fund work on the Greater Lancashire Plan, as requested by the Governing Body of the Lancashire Business Rate Pilot Pool. The proposal is that each authority provide a financial allocation towards the £400,000 in proportion to their total anticipated contribution to the Strategic Economic Growth and Financial Sustainability Fund.
2. This advance funding can be met from the council's business rate retention reserve. At the end of the financial year, when the actual outturn for business rates income is known, an adjustment can be made in relation to this payment.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

The Lancashire Business Rate Pool Executive Body considered the following options:

- Option 1 – that the advance funding is provided by one authority, or
- Option 2 – that the advance funding is provided by pool members in proportion to their anticipated contribution to the business rate pool.

The collective view that option 1 was outside the current pooling arrangements for the Strategic Economic Growth and Financial Sustainability Fund.

37 Single Use Plastics Strategy

In the absence of the Cabinet Member for the Environment, the Leader of the Council presented a report from the Director of Neighbourhoods and Development on the Council's strategy to reduce 'single use plastics' within all council operations, as part of the work of the Climate Emergency Member Working Group.

The report followed the declaration of the Climate Emergency by the Council in July 2019, which it committed to reducing its impacts on the environment from all of its activities, including single use plastics. The implementation of the strategy would be monitored by the Climate Emergency Member Working Group.

The Leader referred to the need for the Council to lead by example and ensure that a credible baseline and evidence-based monitoring process would be put in place to help measure progress in an objective way.

Decision made (Unanimously):

Cabinet adopts the Single Use Plastics Strategy and the Climate Emergency Member Working Group be given the lead to develop, implement and achieve the goals of the strategy with a view to reducing the amount of single use plastics used in council operations.

Reason(s) for decisions:

It is estimated that 8.3 billion tonnes of plastic have been produced since the 1950s. Without urgent action to cut demand, this is likely to be 34 billion tonnes by 2050, the

majority of which will either end up in landfill or polluting the world's continents and oceans. The strategy will include a full review of the use of single use plastics and implement changes to minimise their use.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

The alternative to adoption of the strategy is not to adopt it, and to decide not to take any action over the use of single use plastics and the damaging harmful impact they are having on the environment and human health.

Chair

Date

South Ribble Council – Cabinet Forward Plan

For the Twelve Month Period: 1 October 2019 - 30 September 2020

This document gives 28 days' notice of 'key' and other major decisions which the Cabinet expect to take during the next four month period. It also gives notice of the decisions that are likely to be taken in private. The document is updated as required and is available to the public on the Council's website at www.southribble.gov.uk.

A 'Key' Decision is defined as any decision in relation to a Cabinet function which is likely:

- (a) To result in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are significant. The financial threshold above which expenditure/savings become significant is set at £100,000. The financial threshold is applicable to both revenue and capital budgets; or
- (b) To be significant in terms of its effect on the communities living in an area comprising two or more Council wards.

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As a matter of local choice, the Forward Plan also includes the details of any significant issues to be initially considered by the Cabinet and submitted to the Full Council for approval.

Under the Access to Information Procedure Rules set out in the Council's Constitution, a 'Key' Decision may not be taken, unless 28 days' notice have been given in this document.

The law and the Council's Constitution provide for urgent key decisions to be made, even though they have not been included in this document in accordance with General Exception and Special Urgency provisions, set out in Access to Information Procedure Rules.

The Cabinet is made up of the Leader, Deputy Leader and five other Cabinet Members with the following portfolios:

Leader of the Council	Councillor Paul Foster
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member (Health, Wellbeing and Leisure)	Councillor Mick Titherington
Cabinet Member (Finance, Property and Assets)	Councillor Matthew Tomlinson
Cabinet Member (Environment)	Councillor Susan Jones
Cabinet Member (Planning, Regeneration and City Deal)	Councillor Bill Evans
Cabinet Member (Community Engagement, Social Justice and Wealth Building)	Councillor Aniela Bylinski Gelder

Whilst the majority of the Cabinet decisions listed in this Forward Plan will be open to the public to attend, there may be some decisions to be considered that contain confidential, commercially or personal information. The Forward Plan is a formal notice under the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 that some of the decisions listed in the Forward Plan will be held in private because the

report will contain exempt information under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as set out below and that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it.:

1. Information relating to any individual.
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.
5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
6. Information which reveals that the authority proposes –
 - (a) to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
 - (b) to make an order or direction under any enactment.
7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

Copies of the Council's Constitution and agenda and minutes for all meetings of the Council may be accessed on the Council's website: www.southribble.gov.uk. If there are any queries, including objections to items being considered in private, please contact the Council on 01772 625309 or email dscambler@southribble.gov.uk.

Gary Hall
Interim Chief Executive

Last updated: 08 October 2019

Details of the Decision to be taken	Decision to be taken by	Relevant Portfolio Holder	Reason the decision is key	Earliest Date decision can be taken	Will the public be excluded?	Are there any background papers?	Documents to be considered by Decision taker
Future meetings of the Cabinet where there is an intention to hold part of the meeting in private: 16 October, 13 November 2019, 22 January, 12 February and 18 March 2020							
October							
Leader of the Council							
South Ribble Council Branding	Cabinet	Leader of the Council	Expenditure / Savings higher than £100,000	16 Oct 2019	No	None	Report of the Chief Executive
Cabinet Member (Finance, Property and Assets)							
South Ribble Borough Council Website Refresh	Cabinet	Cabinet Member (Finance, Property and Assets)	Expenditure / Savings higher than £100,000	16 Oct 2019	No	None	Report of the Director of Customer and Digital

Details of the Decision to be taken	Decision to be taken by	Relevant Portfolio Holder	Reason the decision is key	Earliest Date decision can be taken	Will the public be excluded?	Are there any background papers?	Documents to be considered by Decision taker
Worden Hall Update	Cabinet	Cabinet Member (Finance, Property and Assets)		16 Oct 2019	No	https://southribbleintranet.mode.rngov.co.uk/documents/s9189/Worden%20Hall%20cabinet%20Report%2019th%20June%202019%20PMc%20comments%20V2.pdf	Report of the Assistant Director of Property and Housing
Cabinet Member (Planning, Regeneration and City Deal)							
Apprentice Factory Development Plan Update	Cabinet	Cabinet Member (Planning, Regeneration and City Deal)	Significant effect in 2 or more Council wards.	16 Oct 2019	No	None	Report of the Director of Planning and Property
Central Lancashire Local Plan Issues and Options	Cabinet	Cabinet Member (Planning, Regeneration and City Deal)	Significant effect in 2 or more Council wards.	16 Oct 2019	No	None	Report of the Director of Planning and Property

Details of the Decision to be taken	Decision to be taken by	Relevant Portfolio Holder	Reason the decision is key	Earliest Date decision can be taken	Will the public be excluded?	Are there any background papers?	Documents to be considered by Decision taker
Cabinet Member (Environment)							
Garden Waste Charging Policy and Container Charging	Cabinet	Cabinet Member (Environment)	Expenditure / Savings higher than £100,000	16 Oct 2019	no		Report of the Director of Neighbourhoods and Development
110,000 Trees a Global Legacy The environmental benefits of planting 110,000 trees and how the project will be delivered.	Cabinet	Cabinet Member (Environment)		16 Oct 2019	No	None	Report of the Director of Neighbourhoods and Development
Cabinet Member (Community Engagement, Social Justice and Wealth Building)							
Standard Financial Statement	Cabinet	Cabinet Member (Community Engagement, Social Justice and Wealth Building)		16 Oct 2019	No	None	Report of the Director of Customer and Digital

Details of the Decision to be taken	Decision to be taken by	Relevant Portfolio Holder	Reason the decision is key	Earliest Date decision can be taken	Will the public be excluded?	Are there any background papers?	Documents to be considered by Decision taker
Empty Homes Premium and Second Homes Policy	Cabinet	Cabinet Member (Community Engagement, Social Justice and Wealth Building)	Significant effect in 2 or more Council wards.	16 Oct 2019	No	https://southribble.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s9528/CTSS%202020-21%20Consultation%20Report%20Final.pdf	Report of the Director of Customer and Digital
Future Meetings							
HR System and Payroll Update	Cabinet	Leader of the Council	Expenditure / Savings higher than £100,000	13 Nov 2019	Paragraph 3: Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)	None	Report of the Interim Chief Executive

Details of the Decision to be taken	Decision to be taken by	Relevant Portfolio Holder	Reason the decision is key	Earliest Date decision can be taken	Will the public be excluded?	Are there any background papers?	Documents to be considered by Decision taker
Corporate Plan Performance Report - Quarter 2	Cabinet	Leader of the Council	Significant effect in 2 or more Council wards.	13 Nov 2019	No	https://southribble.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s9183/Annual%202018-19%20Corporate%20Plan%20Performance%20Report.pdf	Report of the Interim Chief Executive
Leyland Music Festival	Cabinet	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member (Health, Wellbeing and Leisure)		13 Nov 2019	No	https://southribbleintranet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=140&MId=1479&Ver=4	Report of the Assistant Director of Neighbourhoods
Budget Monitoring Report - Quarter 2	Cabinet	Cabinet Member (Finance, Property and Assets)	Significant effect in 2 or more Council wards.	13 Nov 2019	No	https://southribble.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s9160/Final%20Budget%20Output%20Turn%20Report%202018-19%20for%20Cabinet%20190619.pdf	Report of the Section 151 Officer

Details of the Decision to be taken	Decision to be taken by	Relevant Portfolio Holder	Reason the decision is key	Earliest Date decision can be taken	Will the public be excluded?	Are there any background papers?	Documents to be considered by Decision taker
Options Appraisal and Business Case for the McKenzie Arms, Bamber Bridge	Cabinet	Cabinet Member (Finance, Property and Assets)	Expenditure / Savings higher than £100,000	13 Nov 2019	No	https://southribble.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s9190/cabinet%20Report%2019th%20June%202019%20-%20site%20consultation%20feedback%20and%20OPE%20update%20V3%2010.6.19.pdf	Report of the Assistant Director of Property and Housing
Website Contract Award	Cabinet	Cabinet Member (Finance, Property and Assets)	Expenditure / Savings higher than £100,000	13 Nov 2019	Paragraph 1: Information relating to any individual	None	Report of the Director of Customer and Digital
Vehicle Procurement	Cabinet	Cabinet Member (Finance, Property and Assets)	Expenditure / Savings higher than £100,000	13 Nov 2019	No	https://southribble.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s9460/Vehicle%20Procurement%20Cabinet%20Report.pdf	Report of the Assistant Director of Neighbourhoods

Details of the Decision to be taken	Decision to be taken by	Relevant Portfolio Holder	Reason the decision is key	Earliest Date decision can be taken	Will the public be excluded?	Are there any background papers?	Documents to be considered by Decision taker
Preston and South Ribble Flood Defence Scheme Information report on the proposals for the Preston and South Ribble Flood Defence Scheme on the River Ribble.	Cabinet	Cabinet Member (Environment)		13 Nov 2019	No	None	Report of the Director of Neighbourhoods and Development
Review of Investment Property Strategy	Cabinet	Cabinet Member (Finance, Property and Assets)	Expenditure / Savings higher than £100,000	13 Nov 2019	No	None	Report of the Assistant Director of Property and Housing
Approval of the Council Tax Support Scheme to be adopted for 2020/21	Cabinet	Cabinet Member (Community Engagement, Social Justice and Wealth Building)	Significant effect in 2 or more Council wards.	13 Nov 2019	No	https://southribble.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s9528/CTSS%202020-21%20Consultation%20Report%20Final.pdf	Report of the Director of Customer and Digital

Details of the Decision to be taken	Decision to be taken by	Relevant Portfolio Holder	Reason the decision is key	Earliest Date decision can be taken	Will the public be excluded?	Are there any background papers?	Documents to be considered by Decision taker
Youth support programme A planned programme of activities and initiatives focused on young people in targeted area	Cabinet	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member (Health, Wellbeing and Leisure)	Expenditure / Savings higher than £100,000	13 Nov 2019	No	None	Report of the Director of Neighbourhoods and Development
Holiday Hunger Scheme Update on the holiday hunger pilot with proposals on the expansion of the scheme.	Cabinet	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member (Health, Wellbeing and Leisure)	Significant effect in 2 or more Council wards.	13 Nov 2019	No	None	Report of the Director of Neighbourhoods and Development
Nomination of Mayor Elect and Deputy Mayor Elect 2020/21	Cabinet	Leader of the Council		22 Jan 2020	No	None	Report of the Assistant Director of Scrutiny and Democratic Services

Details of the Decision to be taken	Decision to be taken by	Relevant Portfolio Holder	Reason the decision is key	Earliest Date decision can be taken	Will the public be excluded?	Are there any background papers?	Documents to be considered by Decision taker
Corporate Plan Performance Report - Quarter 3	Cabinet	Leader of the Council	Significant effect in 2 or more Council wards.	12 Feb 2020	No	https://southribble.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s9183/Annual%202018-19%20Corporate%20Plan%20Performance%20Report.pdf	Report of the Interim Chief Executive
Budget Monitoring Report - Quarter 3	Cabinet	Cabinet Member (Finance, Property and Assets)	Significant effect in 2 or more Council wards.	12 Feb 2020	No	https://southribble.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s9160/Final%20Budget%20Output%20Turn%20Report%202018-19%20for%20Cabinet%20190619.pdf	Report of the Section 151 Officer

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Recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee

This report details the recommendations made to Cabinet at the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on 2 September 2019 and the Scrutiny Budget and Performance Panel meeting held on 9 September 2019.

Scrutiny Committee – 2 September 2019

Draft Refreshed Council Corporate Plan 2019-23

Recommendations:

1. an explanatory note on the process and evidence base used to develop the Plan is included in the final document
2. further information be provided on the priorities to outline what the contribution of the Scrutiny Committee is
3. further information on the Community Bank be reported to Scrutiny Committee as it develops

Scrutiny Budget and Performance Panel – 9 September 2019

Corporate Plan Performance Report: Quarter 1

Recommendations:

1. a report on bin replacement be provided to the next Scrutiny Panel meeting
2. future quarterly performance reports provide examples and case studies of learning from complaints
3. more in-depth information on homelessness, numbers in temporary accommodation and numbers in bed and breakfasts be provided to the next Panel meeting

Budget Monitoring Report – Quarter 1

Recommendations:

1. the Panel welcomes the assurance that employee vacancies are being resolved and looks forward to being kept up-to-date on progress

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REPORT TO	ON
CABINET	16 October 2019



TITLE	PORTFOLIO	REPORT OF
South Ribble Borough Council Branding	Leader of the Council	Chief Executive

Is this report a KEY DECISION (i.e. more than £100,000 or impacting on more than 2 Borough wards?)	Y
Is this report on the Statutory Cabinet Forward Plan ?	Yes
Is the request outside the policy and budgetary framework and therefore subject to confirmation at full Council?	No
Is this report confidential?	No

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- To outline options for new or updated South Ribble Borough Council branding.

PORTFOLIO RECOMMENDATIONS

- That Cabinet allow for wider SRBC brand perception to form part of the up-coming Citizen Survey.
- That Cabinet consider options for brand update/change and to commit to making the minimum change necessary following the Citizen Survey feedback.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

- The current brand provision is dated and very few design elements are available for use by the communications Team and across the organisation
- The Council has a new administration and priorities and a piece of work needs to be in place to determine public perception of current brand.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

Excellence and Financial Sustainability	X
Health and Wellbeing	X
Place	X

Projects relating to People in the Corporate Plan:

People	X
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BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

7. The Council's brand and logo has been in place for a number of years and was originally created in partnership with Runshaw College.
8. Currently the logo, colours and associated branding are used internally and externally across the borough.
9. The logo and brand elements are dated. In addition, as the original brand was created a number of years ago, the Communications Team and in-house graphic designer have limited versions of the logo and suite of design elements and templates. This can cause design challenges which often result in brand inconsistencies.
10. Branding goes beyond just a logo or graphic element. In short, a brand is the way our customer perceives us. A brand encompasses the entire customer experience.
11. The vision for the Council to be modern, open and transparent and accessible for all; an organisation which listens to their stakeholders and encourages co-design and consultation – and we want our brand to reflect this.

PROPOSALS (e.g. RATIONALE, DETAIL, FINANCIAL, PROCUREMENT)

12. A concern about the current brand is that it suffers from association of a challenging council legacy. While a brand refresh is desired, the current brand we have is the identity of the council and it is important to understand the wider perception of the council brand and the thoughts of our stakeholders on the current brand before committing to a change.
13. A borough wide citizen survey is planned. This can give us ample opportunity to consult with our residents and other stakeholders about the perception of the brand, how it makes them feel, and what impression they get from the council interacting with it.
14. Pending the results of the citizen survey, we have investigated three options which could be drawn upon.
15. Three tiers of options ranging from a re-fresh of current logo and branding to modernise its look and feel and to introduce an updated suite of design elements to

a full re-brand with new logo and corporate colours with a phased update across all areas of brand/logo use externally and internally.

Options (high to lower cost)	Detail	Considerations	Potential costs
1. Full re-brand of Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full re-brand; • New logo; • New corporate colour palette; • Roll out to all external and internal usage of logo/colours; • Cross organisation re-fresh of all design elements based on new brand including but not limited to leaflet, poster, power point and report templates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High level of consultation needed. • Would wish to seek cross-party support to reduce risk of a further brand/logo changes if there is a change of political leadership; • Time intensive (if consultation is included); • Potentially high cost working with local external brand developers for design; • High roll out costs to change existing brand externally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design circa: (low end £3,000 – high end £25,000); • Implementation: Approx. £80,000; • Consultation costs to also be considered.
2 Full re-brand – lower intensity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tweak to logo or full logo change; • Retain corporate colour palette; • External supplier but lower cost; • Updated suite of templates and design elements to be used going forward. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced consultation needed dependant on level of change to current logo/brand; • Reduction of design costs if we work with an existing partner; • A change to the brand but not as intensive e.g. logo change but corporate colour palette remain; • Reduction of roll-out costs externally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design: Approx. (low end £2,000 – high end - £10,000); • Implementation approx... £50,000.

<p>3. Tweaks to existing brand and design elements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tweak to logo to modernise; • Retain corporate colour palette; • Update current suite of templates with modern design elements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low levels of consultation needed; • Not as time intensive; • Could be done in house or working with external providers at lower cost. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design: approx. External supplier: (low end £1,800 - £7,000); • In house (minimal cost); • Implementation TBC dependant on level of change.
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CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT AND OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION

16. Consultation will be undertaken through planned Citizen Survey

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

17. Option to do nothing was considered and determined unviable as current brand is dated and limited design elements are available.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

18. £20,000 has been potentially allocated from Place Promotion budget.

19. Any change of logo/brand will have budgetary impact on vehicle/bins/livery etc.

- Breakdown – full colour palette and logo change – circa £80,000 phased roll out;
- Retention of corporate colours but slight change to logo circa £50,000 phased roll out;
- In-house cost consideration to implement on existing literature and templates.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

20. Under S1 of the Localism Act 2011, a local authority has a general power of competence to do anything, whether this is for a commercial purpose or not, and for the benefit of the authority, its area or persons resident or present in it.

AIR QUALITY IMPLICATIONS

21. NONE

HUMAN RESOURCES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

22. Change to brand on all corporate templates.

ICT/TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

- 23. Change to brand on website. Will have to factor any potential changes during website re-fresh project.
- 24. Sub-websites owned by the Council would have to be changed.

PROPERTY AND ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 25. Change to brand on signage.

RISK MANAGEMENT

- 26. Risks will be dependent on the level of change.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPACT

- 27. Done with accessibility in mind for view ability in print and digital

RELEVANT DIRECTORS RECOMMENDATIONS

- 28. No further comments.

COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

- 29. A full rebrand of the Council is estimated to cost in excess of £100,000 but there are lower cost options for consideration. Although the report sets out the options being considered for improving the branding, it is with a view to make the minimum change necessary following the outcome of the Citizen Survey. The costs will be funded from the Place Promotion revenue budget.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

- 30. Please see the comments at Paragraph 20.

There are no background papers to this report

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Examples of local authority brand identities

Appendix B: Current logo

Appendix C: Examples of LA logos

Gary Hall
Interim Chief Executive

Report Author:	Telephone:	Date:
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Laura Barton-Williams Communications Manager	Tel: 01772 62	04.10.19
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Appendix A

Uses of current logo and branding

Internal:

Intranet
Internal correspondence
Signage
Pass badges
Uniforms
Posters and leaflets

External:

Vehicles
Signage
Bins
Bus stops
Website
Sub-websites
External partner websites
External correspondence
Posters and leaflets
E-newsletters
Other literature

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Appendix B:

Current logo



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Appendix C:

Examples of LA logos



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REPORT TO	ON
CABINET	16 October 2019



TITLE	PORTFOLIO	REPORT OF
South Ribble Borough Council – Website re-fresh	Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Assets	Director of Customer and Digital

Is this report a KEY DECISION (i.e. more than £100,000 or impacting on more than 2 Borough wards?)	Yes
Is this report on the Statutory Cabinet Forward Plan ?	Yes
Is the request outside the policy and budgetary framework and therefore subject to confirmation at full Council?	No
Is this report confidential?	No

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To outline options for a re-fresh of the South Ribble Borough Council website (www.southribble.gov.uk).

PORTFOLIO RECOMMENDATIONS

2. Agree to fund the 2019/20 costs from £20,000 allocated in the Place Promotion budget and the remainder from 2019/20 underspends. Approve an annual increase in the revenue budget from 2020/21 onwards to fund the annual licence and maintenance costs.
3. That Cabinet agree to a joint procurement process with Chorley Council in which South Ribble BC will take the lead.
4. That Cabinet agree to waive all relevant Contract Procedure Rules (in particular Paragraph 11 [High Value Procurement]) to allow the council to award the contract to the shortlisted providers rather than go through a procurement exercise through the Chest
5. That Cabinet agree to delegate to the Director of Customer and Digital in consultation with the Portfolio Holder to allow a direct award to the provider offering the most advantageous solution following completion of market engagement.

6. That Cabinet agree to further work regarding the merging of SRBC sub-sites into the main Content Management System (CMS) to provide budgetary and operational efficiencies.
7. That Cabinet note the intention to review self-service portals with a view to building these into the main CMS to provide budgetary and operational efficiencies.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

8. The Digital to Improve Programme sets out the way we will advance our digital capability over the next three years, ultimately enabling us to better serve our borough, while improving the day-to-day experience for those working within the bounds of the organisation.
9. The Programme identifies that the most significant and needed initiative of all identified within the strategy is concerning the website and self-service. A refreshed website will also act as an enabler for other key projects within the strategy and provide a basis to build on the council's channel shift ambitions.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

10. This report outlines the proposal to refresh the South Ribble Borough Council website by way of replacing the current Content Management System (CMS) and to re-design the website with self-service and accessibility as its focus.
11. The report outlines considerations in relation to Chorley Council who too are looking to embark on a project such as this. Both project scopes are similar and the report outlines a joint procurement approach for moving forward with the project.
12. The approach will see budgetary and operational efficiencies and the proposal is for South Ribble Borough Council to lead on the project.
13. Each Council have conducted soft market testing with a number of suppliers individually and as a joint project. The proposal is for Cabinet to approve the joint procurement method and to waive Contract Procedure Rules, in particular Paragraph 11 (High Value Procurement) and allow a direct award to the provider offering the most advantageous solution following completion of market engagement.
14. Cabinet are also asked to agree to further work to merge SRBC sub-sites into the main Content Management System (CMS) to provide budgetary and operational efficiencies.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

15. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

Excellence and Financial Sustainability	X
Health and Wellbeing	X
Place	X
People	X

BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

16. Project outline

17. This project will aim to establish a completely refreshed, simple, modern and engaging website and self-serve experience for our stakeholders.
18. The current website is not user-friendly and it is difficult for users to navigate and access self-service portals. There are limitations within the Content Management System (CMS) meaning that our website allows for limited flexibility by way of navigation and design.

19. The website will be built on principles of accessibility and ease of use, ensuring that digital services are available for as many residents as possible.

20. Digital to Improve Considerations

21. The new site and service forms should follow Government Digital Service standards and styling to keep consistent with that of other local and central government sites.

22. In order to comply with accessibility standards and legislation any new CMS provider must be able to incorporate the council's existing accessibility tools provided by Browsealoud. This will assist in providing a seamless transition for those residents making use of the accessibility tools.

23. One of the key findings from the research phase of the Digital to Improve Programme was that the website contained a number of different logins which made self-service complicated for residents. Currently the council's online portfolio contains at least five different registration and login areas (Firmstep, eBilling, Modern Gov, Public Access for Planning and Public Access for Licensing). Included within the scope of this project is the ambition to remove as many barriers to self-service as possible, and therefore provide single sign on access to as much of the website as possible.

24. A draft detailed technical specification has been developed by the SRBC ICT Team with support from an external IT consultant. **Appendix 1**. The specification will be developed further following confirmation of the joint project with Chorley Council. All bidders during the procurement process will be asked to confirm their technological solution complies.

25. Outcomes

26. Key outcomes from this project are listed below:

- Increased engagement with the website and all digitally delivered services;
- Increased awareness of the services available customers digitally;
- Significant improvements in channel-shift towards digital self-service based interaction, thereby reducing the number or more expensive phone and face-to-face transactions;
- Improved perception of the Council and its innovation/excellence, especially to the younger demographic who will typically measure against well-established digital service providers;
- Established insight into digital performance and channel shift success via regular proactive monitoring of customer engagement with digital services.

27. Following this, the Communications Team and ICT teams engaged a number of known suppliers to initiate informal discussions in relation to a project, its approximate timescales and indicative costs.

28. Consultation with key staff and Cabinet Members was also undertaken - responses of which will inform the project brief. User research has been carried out with internal users to allow us to understand where the site is failing, what users pain points are and what problems we need to solve as part of our new website and online services. This work has allowed us to understand what our users' needs are and will help us to design our site and online services based on those needs.
29. The findings concluded that the Council's current website is not user friendly, nor is it accessible or mobile responsive. Users struggled to find information and online services due to a variety of different reasons that are further explained in this report.
- 30. Scope**
31. A detailed project scope has been created outlining the project's purpose, outcomes, risk and high-level approach. The proposed project scope will see the:
 - Replacement of the CMS;
 - Retention of current forms and workflows solution (Firmstep);
 - Resolution of issues with single sign on for Capita (e-Citizen - Council Tax and Benefits citizen access);
 - Resolution of issues with single sign on for IDOX (planning online citizen access);
 - Resolution of issues for single sign on for MODGOV (citizens access);
 - Web content refreshed/re-written;
 - A review of service forms end to end;
32. Timeline for implementation is April 2020 go live running parallel with the existing website with Full go live from September 2020.
33. The Communications Team and ICT teams have engaged a number of known suppliers to initiate soft market testing and informal discussions in relation to the project, its approximate timescales and indicative costs.
34. Consultation with key staff and Cabinet Members has also been undertaken responses from which will inform the project brief. User research has been carried out with internal users to allow us to understand where the site is failing, what users pain points are and what problems we need to solve as part of our new website and online services. This work has allowed us to understand what our users' needs are and will help us to design our site and online services based on those needs.

Considerations

35. Chorley Council are also initiating a project to update the CMS for their website.
36. Initial discussions have been had with Chorley's team as we have found that we have a similar project scope and project timeline and are speaking with similar suppliers.
37. Given the future aspiration of a shared services approach with SRBC and Chorley Council – there could be potential for a joint procurement process which could 1. Reduce the overall cost of the project and 2. Futureproof the respective websites if a decision was made to merge the two later down the line.

PROPOSALS

38. Joint procurement exercise with Chorley Council

39. Both Councils would share the annual license cost of chosen CMS with both websites hosted on the same cloud solution.
40. Each Council would still have its own website, however both would be using the same template (design) so the websites would look the same, other than branding and content.
41. Each Council would not be able to access the back end of the other Council's site. They would be separate with each Council responsible for their own sites.
42. Having the same template as each other would be a great advantage if further shared services took place in the future allowing one centralised website to be used for both Councils.
43. South Ribble and Chorley residents would be familiar with the site, as they will have all been using the same site template (design) meaning other than branding, residents wouldn't see much change at all if we were to combine in the future to have one centralised website.
44. If this option is chosen then a project team across SRBC and Chorley will be created to bring together an agreement on a technical specification and requirements for a new CMS.
45. Demonstrations will then take place for the shared wider team to look at potential platform providers as well as discussions with them how a shared platform would work.
46. Both Councils have already been advised by providers that sharing is possible and a good option.
47. An agreement would then be made on a procurement method and what solution to award a contract.

48. Procurement method/route options

- 49. Both Councils are looking to resolve single sign-on issues however, each Council will seek to procure this separately. A separate report to seek approval for this spend will be brought to Cabinet after November 2019.
- 50. The anticipated overall joint project cost over a 3 year or 5 year period will be above £100,000 however, it is worth noting that South Ribble and Chorley Councils will split this cost 50/50.
- 51. In order to take advantage of collaborative working and sharing costs it is proposed to carry out a joint procurement with SRBC acting as lead authority in accordance with paragraph 32 of Contract Procedure Rules.
- 52. Both CBC and SRBC have collectively developed a statement of requirements / Specification and carried out soft market testing with five providers and identified indicative costs which suggest 50% savings can be achieved by procuring jointly.
- 53. In view of the extensive market research carried out, it is requested for Cabinet to approve a waiver of Contracts Procedure Rules to allow officers to negotiate and award directly with the shortlisted providers following soft market testing.
- 54. The point of reliance in Contract Procedure Rules is as follows: 39.1 “the nature of the market for the works to be carried out or the goods or services to be provided has been investigated and is demonstrated to be such that a departure from the requirements of the Rules is justifiable;”.
- 55. As described above if approved, next steps will be to create a joint Council project group to meet with suppliers and to arrange demonstrations to key decision makers.

56. Timescales

Cabinet Report recommendation approvals for commencement of project (both Councils).	October 2019
Invitations for suppliers and demonstrations to key decision makers.	October/November 2019
	November 2019

Cabinet report decision of preferred supplier.	
Award of contract.	November 2019
Cabinet report approval (single sign-on).	January 2020

57. Merging of SRBC sub-sites into the main CMS to provide budgetary and operational efficiencies

58. There are 7 live sites in linked to SRBC:

- businessinsouthribble.co.uk
- centrallancashirebusinessevents.co.uk
- leylandfestival.co.uk
- southribblemuseum.uk
- visitleyland.co.uk
- southribblepartnership.uk
- centralparks.info

59. All sites are hosted separately from the main South Ribble site CMS, are managed by separate budgets and are controlled by separate teams.

60. There are budgetary and efficiency gains to be had by centralising the cross organisation website budgets and to bring each website into a central control team.

61. It is recognised that this work, if approved, will need further cost and operational investigation and may be delivered as a later phase of the wider website project.

62. A number of the above identified sites are not encrypted and are hosted on out of date content management systems. This could pose a potential risk and reduces the reputation of the site.

63. It should also be noted that sites above have not been developed to support the new Web Content Accessibility Guidelines and could therefore be subject to challenge. Merging the sites to the same CMS as the corporate website will not only provide benefits from a system consolidation perspective, but also ensure that the council's entire web presence meets accessibility requirements and legislation.

CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT AND OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION

64. Consultation was carried out with staff members and cabinet members where their current use of the website was explored and challenges raised.
65. Findings showed that the website lacked modernity, was not user friendly and did not work effectively on mobile. It was highlighted that a lot of the content on the website was out of date and needs to be 'cleaned' and updated.
66. Further consultation will take place with key stakeholders as the project progresses.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

67. Do nothing. The option to leave the website as it is was rejected as it offers poor usability and discourages self-service for customers.
68. Procuring the project as a lone authority. This was considered however it became clear that the project timeline and scope from both South Ribble and Chorley Councils were similar and that a joint approach could provide significant budgetary savings and operational efficiency gains.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

69. Soft market testing has been undertaken by both South Ribble and Chorley Councils looking at industry leaders and relevant local suppliers.
70. The approximate cost for the design and build of both websites and on-going hosting will be circa £100,000 over 3 years and £160,000 over 5 years. The costs are subject to the procurement process described above and they will be split across South Ribble and Chorley Councils 50/50.
71. The overall project cost over 3 or 5 years will be split as follows: Design, build and initial licence one off costs (circa £43,000) will be taken before the end of the financial year. Then on a yearly basis annual licence and maintenance costs will be taken (circa £30,000).
72. From a budgetary point of view, for the Year 1 costs, £20,000 has been allocated from the Place Promotion budget and the remainder will come from revenue under spend.

For annual costs thereafter, this figure will be built in to existing revenue budgets which cover provisions such as annual licence fees.

73. To enable Single Sign-On between Firmstep and the council's other self-service portals, Application Programme Interfaces (APIs) will need to be purchased from those suppliers. Costs are being established for API functionality and will be shared as part of a report to Cabinet in January 2020.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

74. The website will be created to comply with relevant Local Authority accessibility legislation.
75. This will not be the case for any sub-sites related to the Council. This will have to be addressed moving forward.

AIR QUALITY IMPLICATIONS

76. None.

HUMAN RESOURCES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS.

77. None.

ICT/TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

78. As discussed within the body of the report the website refresh is a significant project within the Digital to Improve Programme and will act as an enabler for other projects and the council's channel shift ambitions.
79. From an infrastructure perspective, as a requirement of the new CMS is that it is cloud hosted, this ensures that there is limited infrastructure changes required. Firewall rules, Domain Name Servers (DNS) entries and Uniform Resource Locator (URL) routing will need to be re-configured but no additional site servers or infrastructure will be required.

PROPERTY AND ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

80. None.

RISK MANAGEMENT

81. Risks for a single authority procured website update have been considered as part of the Website Scoping document (background document 2).

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPACT

82. The website will be created to comply with relevant Local Authority accessibility legislation.

RELEVANT DIRECTORS RECOMMENDATIONS

83. The proposed refresh of the Councils website will advance our digital capability, ultimately enabling the Council to better serve our borough, while improving the day-to-day experience for those working within the organisation.

COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

84. The website development project is part of the Council's Digital Strategy and working in partnership with Chorley Council provides economic benefits to both authorities. Going forward, any budget savings secured from the digital programme will be reflected in the Council's medium term financial strategy.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

85. The proposal is to carry out a joint procurement exercise with Chorley Borough Council. The carrying out of such a joint procurement exercise is permitted by the Contract Procedure Rules (CPRs). Inevitably a joint procurement could result in significant savings for both councils.
86. The intention is to invite some preferred suppliers to bid. This follows on from a thorough testing of the market.
87. For the reasons explained in the report it makes practical sense to proceed along these lines.
88. However, this will not be fully compliant with CPRs. Ordinarily you would be going through the Chest for a procurement of this value. Hence the proposal that Cabinet should agree to waive those relevant parts of the CPRs. This can only be done in exceptional circumstances. The report above sets out what those circumstances are.
89. Ultimately formal contract documentation will be entered into to protect the interests of both councils.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Digital to Improve Strategy
Website Scope

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Draft Technical Specification

Paul Hussey
Director of Customer and Digital

Report Author:	Telephone	Date
Laura Barton-Williams, Communications Manager	01772 625333	26 th September 2019

Website Refresh (South Ribble Borough Council and Chorley Council)

Technical Specification

South Ribble's Digital to Improve Programme sets out the way we will advance our digital capability over the next three years, ultimately enabling us to better serve our borough, while improving the day-to-day experience for those working within the bounds of the organisation.

Chorley Council's Digital Strategy sets out the aim to 'provide the highest quality, customer focused digital services and to maximise the use of technology to help deliver more for residents. The ambition is to further develop the use of technology to transform the way services are provided to customers, including residents, businesses and visitors.

Arguably the most significant and needed initiative of all identified within both strategies is the one concerning the website and self-service. This must not only be completely refreshed and enhanced, but also subject to a significant increase in promotion and marketing, to ensure that the anticipated level of investment achieves the outcomes that this initiative sets out to achieve. The review and refresh of the website will allow us to transform the way residents access information and services from both Council's, enabling people to access services at a time and place that suits them quickly and easily.

The review and refresh of both sites should ensure the website is easy to use, accessible and secure. Information will be up to date and content will change regularly and finally the website should be responsive to different devices and screen sizes.

This Technical Specification contains South Ribble Borough Council's and Chorley Council's requirements for a new and refreshed web platform, including a Content Management System (CMS). A number of the specification requirements included form the scope of other projects outside of the website refresh. This is to ensure compatibility with future projects within the Digital to improve Programme at South Ribble Borough Council and the Digital Strategy at Chorley Council, and will be reflected within the weightings.

Scope overview

Both Council's expect that bidders will respond with a combined service offer including but not necessarily limited to:

- Initial design and option of using current template designs
- Implementation
- Integration
- Migration (TBC)
- Training
- SEO
- Go Live support
- Hosting
- Ongoing management and support

Scoring

The initial section of the specification is based on a pass/fail requirement. The following sections of the specification will either be a pass / fail requirement, or will be assigned a weighting and scored out of 10, which is the maximum score obtainable for each section.

The score allocated to each item is divided by 10 (the maximum) and multiplied by the weighting.

Eg. Bidder 1. Score (10)/10 (maximum) * section weighting (45) = 45%

The score for all sections will then be combined to produce a total score.

Please see full scoring matrix below:

Assessment	Score out of 10
The bidder meets expectations and demonstrates a clear understanding of issues and expands on the response sought, may contain innovation, excellent evidence of competency	10
The bidder meets expectations and demonstrates some understanding in their response, no innovation	7

demonstrated, good evidence of competency	
The bidder meets expectations but provides a standardised response and with no attempt to customise the response and the evaluator has minor reservations	5
The bidder does not meet the expectations and the response is weak/partial and does not fully address the issue	3
The bidder response is insufficient or irrelevant and requires the evaluator to make assumptions. Little evidence of competency. Solution does not meet requirements	2
The bidder has made no attempt to answer the question, unable to access due to lack of evidence	0

The cost scoring calculation is as follows:

The lowest, but feasible, price is awarded 100%, and is then converted into a score using the appropriate weighting.

The other bid prices are awarded a percentage relative to the lowest price bid and converted into a score using the appropriate weighting from the main criteria table

E.g. Pricing criteria in the tender 35, with three separate bids received – Bid 1 £1,000, Bid 2 £2,500 and Bid 3 £2,700

Relative percentage given by Lowest Bid price/bid price under evaluation * price weighting

For Bid 1 – Relative percentage is $\frac{£1000}{£1000} \times 35 = 35$

For Bid 2 - Relative percentage is $\frac{£1000}{£2500} \times 35 = 14$

For Bid 3 - Relative percentage is $\frac{£1000}{£2700} \times 35 = 12.9$

The following table provides conditions on which both Council's expects all bidders to respond to:

Conditions	Weighting	Bidder Response	Bidder Comments
Functionality – 12.5%			
1. Changes can be made using a No Code / Low Code environment, without reliance on ICT technical expertise	1. Pass/Fail		
2. Allow the design of microsites with a separate design from the core website at no additional cost.	2. Pass/Fail		
3. Functionality to allow for two Councils (South Ribble and Chorley) to share a CMS platform for two different sites/domains with each council only having access to customise their own site and microsites	3. Pass/Fail		
4. A-Z site map and A-Z of services	4. Pass/Fail		
5. Ability to provide website feedback	5. Score out of 10		
6. Dynamic alert section on homepage	6. Score out of 10		
7. Content support for documents, articles, basic pages, blogs, menus	7. Score out of 10		

<p>8. Breadcrumb trails accurately show location of the user within the site, including any self-service portals.</p> <p>9. Ability to easily customise formatting of the website without needing extensive CSS experience.</p> <p>10. Enable multiple navigation menus to be created and flexibly displayed on different parts of the site/micro sites.</p> <p>11. Supports a fully compliant mobile/responsive design out of the box enabling the site to scale to common mobile devices and browsers.</p> <p>12. Provides the ability to extend the functionality of the website in future with plug-ins or similar functionality enhancement capabilities.</p> <p>13. Compliance with GDS standards and styling</p> <p>14. Ability to utilize the CMS to not only to provide an external facing CMS solution but also to utilize for an intranet site and internal subsites.</p> <p>15. Supports authentication with Azure Active Directory</p>	<p>8. Score out of 10</p> <p>9. Pass/Fail</p> <p>10. Pass/Fail</p> <p>11. Pass/Fail</p> <p>12. Pass/Fail</p> <p>13. Pass/Fail</p> <p>14. Pass/Fail</p> <p>15. Pass/Fail</p>		
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16. Accurate and intuitive search functionality
 17. Test environment provided
 18. Support for RSS feeds

16. Pass/Fail
 17. Pass/Fail
 18. Score out of 10

Accessibility – Pass / Fail

1. Meet the International WCAG 2.1 and provide a list of those areas which don't.
2. Provide an accessibility statement explaining how accessible the CMS is.
3. Meet the EN 301549 Procurement Standard.
4. Comment on any accessibility testing which took place on your CMS and any assistive technologies which were also tested.
5. Enforce accessibility standards when adding content such as descriptive text and Alt text.
6. All page elements including images and buttons contain descriptive text for screen readers.

1. Pass / Fail
 2. Pass / Fail
 3. Pass / Fail
 4. Pass / Fail
 5. Pass / Fail
 6. Pass / Fail

Security & Compliance – 10%

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ISO 27001 Accredited hosting 2. CMS complies with the Local Government Digital Service Standards approach 3. Complies with the e-GMS Metadata Standards 4. Can you confirm that all services or systems processing information are compliant with all relevant statutory, regulatory, contractual, copyright and intellectual property requirements? 5. Can you confirm that all service information containing personal information will be handled in accordance with Data Protection legislation? 6. Has the Information Commissioner issued any assessments against you or required an undertaking to be signed? (If yes please provide further information). Have you ever had to report a breach to the data commissioner? 7. Have internal or external auditors conducted a review of information security arrangements in the last 12 months? Can you detail any weaknesses or improvements identified? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pass / Fail 2. Pass / Fail 3. Score out Of 10 4. Pass / Fail 5. Pass / Fail 6. Score out of 10 7. Score out of 10 		
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<p>8. Please describe the processes in place to ensure the ongoing monitoring of your information security arrangements.</p> <p>9. Do you have a Disaster Recovery / Business Continuity Policy and Plan and how often is it tested?</p> <p>10. What were the results of your last Disaster Recovery / Business Continuity test and does your organisation have any known risks in this area?</p> <p>11. Please describe your business continuity plan.</p> <p>12. Is penetration testing carried out and if so how often?</p> <p>13. Are changes to any of your systems tested, reviewed and applied using a documented change management process? Please describe.</p> <p>14. Regular software updates / security updates and patches are applied within a reasonable timeframe.</p> <p>15. Two factor authentication for administrator login</p>	<p>8. Score out of 10</p> <p>9. Score out of 10</p> <p>10. Score out of 10</p> <p>11. Score out of 10</p> <p>12. Score out of 10</p> <p>13. Score out of 10</p> <p>14. Pass / Fail</p>		
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15. Score out of 10

Hosting - %5

1. Please confirm uptime percentage for the last 3 years for your hosting platform. Anything below 99% will class as a fail
2. Daily Backups held for a minimum of 30 days.
3. Hosting infrastructure includes fully redundant components

1. Score out of 10
2. Pass / Fail
3. Pass / Fail

Manageability / Maintainability – 12.5%

1. Add / Edit content using a WYSISWG Editor
2. Allow the scheduling for the release or removal of content
3. Provide notifications for review dates for content

1. Pass/Fail
2. Pass/Fail
3. Pass/Fail

<p>4. Automatically scan the CMS for broken links</p> <p>5. Ability to import / export content</p> <p>6. Restful API's provided to interact with the CMS</p> <p>7. Ability to choose custom URL paths for content.</p> <p>8. Ability to redirect content to other pages or external URL's.</p> <p>9. Full audit trail of content additions and revisions.</p> <p>10. Ability to configure approval routing for content.</p> <p>11. Ability to alter page layouts using simple management tools in a GUI without extensive understanding of the CMS platform / CSS elements etc.</p> <p>12. Full CMS training provided with regular training sessions available.</p> <p>13. Full user guidance provided</p> <p>14. The CMS solution is open source and has extensibility and customization options to allow for South Ribble and Chorley Council in house developers to code extra functionality and integrations without</p>	<p>4. Pass/Fail</p> <p>5. Pass/Fail</p> <p>1. Pass/Fail</p> <p>8. Pass/Fail</p> <p>9. Pass/Fail</p> <p>10. Pass/Fail</p> <p>11. Pass/Fail</p> <p>12. Pass/Fail</p> <p>13. Pass/Fail</p> <p>14. Pass/Fail</p>		
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reliance on the vendor and at no extra cost.

Integrations and Self Service – 10%

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The ability to track and report on outgoing URL referrals. 2. Supports Google Analytics and Tag Manager 3. Supports workflow to pull documents from SharePoint (Office 365) 4. Single Sign On integration capability / portal with Firmstep, IDOX Public Access, Capita Ebilling/E Citizen, Civica Modern Gov and Internally developed Chorley My Account solution (.Net) 5. Provide full seamless integration with Firmstep Forms Solution 6. Provide full seamless integration with Chorley Council internally developed .NET forms solution 7. Can forms, websites be embedded in frames within the site 8. Google Maps and ESRI GIS Integrations | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pass/Fail 2. Pass/Fail 3. Score out of 10 4. Score out of 10 5. Pass/Fail 6. Pass/Fail 7. Score out of 10 8. Pass/Fail |
|--|--|

<p>9. Ability for YouTube videos and other videos to be embedded on site pages</p> <p>10. Ability to integrate with Webchat systems provided by third parties</p>	<p>9. Pass/Fail</p>		
<p>Performance – 5%</p>			
<p>1. Designed for Search Engine Optimisation</p> <p>2. Standard page load time < 2 seconds</p> <p>3. Confirmation of Time to Title, Start Render Time and Overall Weight.</p>	<p>1. Pass/Fail</p> <p>2. Pass/Fail</p> <p>3. Score out of 10</p>		
<p>Maintenance and Service Level Agreements – 5%</p>			
<p>1. Please provide details of your current standard SLA agreement.</p> <p>2. Please provide data on percentage of SLA's not upheld over the last 12 months.</p> <p>3. Please provide details of any additional maintenance agreements available for additional costs.</p>	<p>1. Score out of 10</p> <p>2. Score out of 10</p> <p>3. Score out of 10</p> <p>4. Score out of 10</p>		

4. Will South Ribble and Chorley Council receive a dedicated customer support consultant?

Futureproofing – 10%

The councils Digital to Improve Programme identifies several key projects outside of the Website Refresh which will be heavily linked to the CMS. Bidders should provide comments for each item and highlight whether comments refer to your CMS or Forms (CRM) solution.

1. Search facility able to search the councils existing Portals as well as CMS.
2. Ability to integrate with Smart Home devices such as Amazon Alexa or Google Assistant.
3. Ability for the site to scale and be used as mobile & kiosk self-service Public Digital Access Points
4. Potential for the site to published as a mobile application to IOS App Store and Google Play Store.
5. If South Ribble/Chorley were to migrate to another CMS, can all data be exported in bulk or migrated to other common CMS platforms

1. Score out of 10
2. Score out of 10
3. Pass / Fail

4. Pass/Fail

- 5.Pass/Fail

<p>Please provide details of 3 case studies performed by your organisation within the last three years, which are of similar size and nature and are relevant to the project, specifically demonstrating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working with two local authorities sharing a single CMS solution with each authority still having control over their own main site and subsites - Working with public sector clients and a track record in building strong and successful client relationships - Successful project management and implementation of a similar project <p>Please provide contact details for each case study. The Council may contact the customer to confirm and clarify the information provided, please include; name, email and telephone number of the relevant contact.</p>	<p>Score out of 10</p>		
<p>Describe what your approach to the project management of this project would be, including</p>	<p>Score out of 10</p>		

<p>what controls and monitoring arrangements and timescales for implementation etc.</p>			
<p>Please give details of the key staff who will undertake the project, including their professional qualifications and relevant experience. Please identify who will lead the project on your behalf, confirming a continuous presence on the project, and who will be the day to day contact for the both Council's</p>	<p>Score out of 10</p>		
<p>Cost – 30%</p> <p>Please provide full costings include any training, implementation, project management and migration. This will be used in the cost scoring calculation as described above.</p>			



REPORT TO	ON
CABINET	16 October 2019

TITLE	PORTFOLIO	REPORT OF
Worden Hall Consultation update	Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Assets	Assistant Director Property and Housing

Is this report a KEY DECISION (i.e. more than £100,000 or impacting on more than 2 Borough wards?)	No
Is this report on the Statutory Cabinet Forward Plan?	Yes
Is the request outside the policy and budgetary framework and therefore subject to confirmation at full Council?	No
Is this report confidential?	No

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

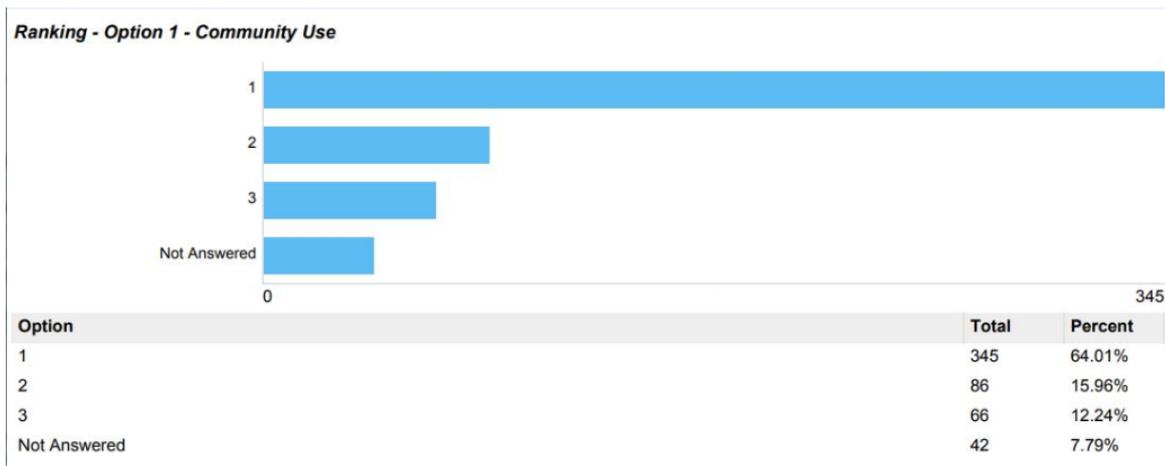
1. To update Cabinet on the outcome of the consultation exercise which sought feedback from the public in relation to three viable options for investment into Worden Hall. The consultation exercise witnessed very high levels of interest and engagement and feedback proved to be both detailed and complex. The report aims to provide clarity in relation to the qualitative as well as the quantitative data that was identified through the consultation process and recommends the next steps in order to take this project forward.

PORTFOLIO RECOMMENDATIONS

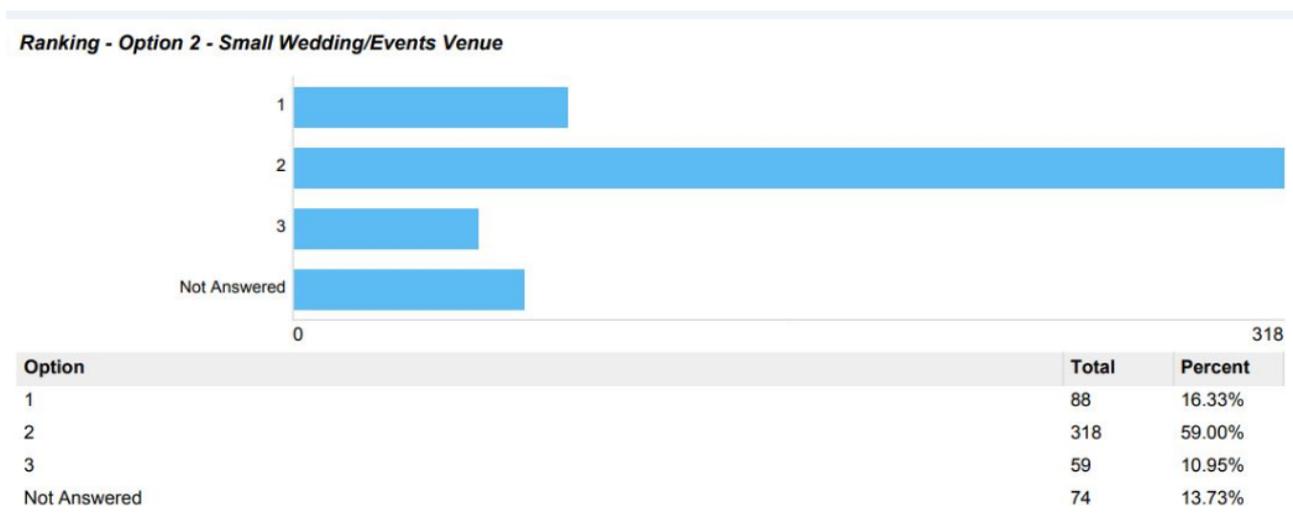
2. That Cabinet commit to undertake further detailed modelling and appraisal of Option 1 (Community Use) and Option 2 (small weddings/events venue) with a finalised recommendation and implementation plan coming back to Cabinet in January 2020.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

3. An extensive consultation exercise was undertaken from 19 August to 13 September 2019 which resulted in over 500 responses to the consultation survey. Feedback was received online, through telephone contact and across four drop-in sessions which were run at Worden Hall between 2.00pm and 7.00pm each Thursday during this period in order to enable the public to discuss the options directly with SRBC staff. On the 5 and 12 September Architectural consultants Purcell, who drafted the initial options appraisal report were also in attendance to deal with any questions or queries.
4. The survey provided a description of each of the three options and the associated costs. Respondents were given the opportunity to make comments in relation to each option and finally were asked to rank each option in order of preference with 1 as most preferred and 3 as least preferred.
5. The questionnaire resulted in a majority of respondents opting for Option 1 – Community Use as their most preferred option.



Option 2 – Small weddings/Events Venue was the second preference.



Option 3 – Large weddings/Events Venue was a distant third.

Ranking - Option 3 - Exclusive Wedding/Events Venue



Option	Total	Percent
1	53	11.40%
2	36	7.74%
3	298	64.09%
Not Answered	78	16.77%

However when the comments from respondents were examined it appeared that whilst a significant number of respondents stated that their first choice was for Option 1- Community Use, a significant number of respondents stated in their feedback that they also wanted Worden Hall to be used for small weddings and events. Therefore the feedback was much more nuanced, subtle and complex than the statistical recording of preferences and it is important that the information be considered in the round. It is also worth noting that not all questions were mandatory and some respondents answered all the questions and some did not. When examining the qualitative as well as quantitative feedback it is evident that respondents valued the Community Use of and access to the Hall but also wanted to see it used for events and weddings. It is worth noting that Option 1 and Option 2 are not mutually exclusive and a number of respondents suggested developing a hybrid model combining the best elements of both options. This is something that will be looked at by the working group.

6. Feedback regarding Option 3 was much more unequivocal as a large number of respondents felt very strongly that Worden Hall should not be privatised and should remain accessible to the people of South Ribble and visitors to the park.
7. Whilst respondents discounted Option 3 (the option with the greatest potential to make a commercial return), the feedback did indicate a strong preference for the preferred option to be commercially viable and to be run without the need for gap funding from the Council in order to cover operating deficits. As part of the next phase of the project, options shall be reviewed to ensure that the Hall is self-financing and can cover its costs. This shall be built into the business case going forward.
8. Feedback indicated that it was important to the public that the Council provided investment into Worden Hall as the status quo or do nothing option was not acceptable.
9. It is important that the Council develops viable plans to optimise the use of Worden Hall and reduce the ongoing liability and risk that the Council is exposed to.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

10. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

Excellence and Financial Sustainability	√
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Health and Wellbeing	
Place	√

Projects relating to People in the Corporate Plan:

People	
--------	--

BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

11. In June 2018 the Council appointed architectural consultant Purcell and financial consultants Amion to undertake a feasibility study and options appraisal into the potential future uses of Worden Hall. The consultant's report reviewed a number of options and the revenue and capital implications of each option. The report modelled in detail three options which formed the basis of the consultation exercise. The options were that the Hall be used for either:
 - Community Use;
 - Small Wedding Venue/Events;
 - Large Weddings/Events.
12. Following discussions with the previous administration a market disposal exercise was carried out in January 2019 which sought bids from interested parties to enter into discussions and negotiations with the Council with a view to the Council disposing of its interest in Worden Hall to a third party.
13. At the Cabinet Meeting on 20 March 2019, it was recommended by Cabinet that officers should enter into discussions with bidder A (latterly confirmed as Leyland Masonic Properties) to take forward their investment proposals for Worden Hall with further update reports to be provided to Cabinet for consideration.
14. Following the local elections in May 2019 discussions with Leyland Masonic Properties were placed on hold pending the formation of the new administration.
15. At the Cabinet Meeting on 19 June 2019 the Cabinet approved a full public consultation exercise in order to identify the most appropriate investment option for Worden Hall.
16. The consultation was launched by the Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Assets through a press briefing at Worden Hall on Tuesday 13 August 2019. An awareness raising campaign was implemented which included the use of the Council website and social media channels along with signs placed at access and egress points within Worden Park. Posters and leaflets were also distributed around public spaces and multiple press releases were issued and were picked up by local print and radio media.
17. A consultation briefing note was provided for key staff and a training session on the options for consideration was provided by the report consultants Purcell and Amion.
18. A copy of the full options appraisal report was available via a link on the Council's website which enabled members of the public to consider the report, the assumptions which were made within it and the rationale why each of the three options were chosen for consideration.
19. A large print copy of the Purcell and Amion report (attached at appendix A) was also available at each of the four consultation events at Worden Hall. An online survey with all

the relevant information was created and a print version was available on request or from Gateway.

20. An electronic copy of the Purcell and Amion report was also shared with all elected members.
21. A wide range of comments were received as part of the feedback process but some key themes did emerge including high levels of support for the hall to be accessible to the public, using Worden Hall for events and weddings, a desire for the Hall to be brought back into use and a requirement for the Hall to be financially viable. Furthermore, there was a significant amount of feedback in support of retaining the Folly Café and there was some concern expressed regarding car parking and the impact of increased traffic to the Hall regardless of which option was chosen.
22. It is important that these issues are carefully considered and addressed by the working group when finalising the financial modelling and implementation plan.

PROPOSALS (e.g. RATIONALE, DETAIL, FINANCIAL, PROCUREMENT)

23. Please note above report and recommendations. It is recommended that an officer working group comprising the Assistant Director for Property and Planning, Assistant Director for Neighbourhoods, Senior Management Accountant, Community Involvement Manager and the Partnership Manager and expert external advisers should be established to drive forward this project and to report their finalised recommendations and implementation plan to the Cabinet meeting on 22 January 2020.

CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT AND OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION

24. An extensive consultation exercise has been carried out which resulted in high levels of involvement and engagement from the public. As noted above, the detailed comments contained within the feedback did not always fully align with the preferences as expressed within the questionnaire so it is important to consider both the detailed feedback as well as the preferences in order to obtain a more rounded and clearer understanding of what is most important to the public.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

25. The Council could choose not to develop the Worden Hall. This is not recommended as the feedback from the public consultation exercise strongly supported the Council investing in the Hall and bringing it back into use.
26. The Purcell and Amion report summarised a long list of options as part of a market review undertaken by Cushman and Wakefield on behalf of the Council in 2016 in order to select the three viable options for the financial appraisal. They discounted other options e.g. residential conversion, hotel, cultural attraction or an independent retail space as being unviable.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

27. For Option 1 Community Use - the Purcell and Amion Report estimated capital investment costs of £1,300,000 in order to deliver the necessary refurbishments, demolition of the foyer and conservatory and landscaping costs whilst for Option 2 – Small Weddings and Events - the Purcell and Amion Report estimated capital investment costs of £2,100,000 in order to

deliver the necessary refurbishments, demolition of the foyer and conservatory and extensive landscaping costs including improvements to car parking.

28. The financial model used within the report estimated an annual income for Option 1 of £62,000 set against costs of £77,000 which would result in an annual deficit of £15,000 whilst for option 2 the model assumes an annual income of £360,000 set against annual costs of £400,000 which would result in an annual deficit of £40,000. It is important to state that these figures are notional and that the model was based upon a number of assumptions and sensitivities including the number of functions expected to be held each year, potential staffing costs, room hire and occupancy rates.
29. Feedback from the consultation exercise has clearly stated that the preferred investment option must be financially viable and able to return a profit without the need for subsidy from the Council to cover any deficits.
30. The working group shall review the assumptions, sensitivities and costing used in the original financial model to identify economies and efficiencies which shall lead to the recommended option being financially viable and profitable.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

31. The legal implications of the finalised recommendation and implementation plan shall be covered in the report to Cabinet in January 2020.

AIR QUALITY IMPLICATIONS

32. The Council is committed to becoming Carbon Neutral by 2030 and to tackle climate change and poor air quality. The proposed working group will ensure that Carbon Neutrality is part of the terms of reference of this group in order to ensure that the building is renovated in as Environmentally friendly a manner as is reasonably practical.

HUMAN RESOURCES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

33. Not applicable.

ICT/TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

34. Not applicable.

PROPERTY AND ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

35. Please note comments above

RISK MANAGEMENT

36. The risks associated with the discussions at this stage are not considered to be high. A more detailed risk assessment shall be provided as part of the report to Cabinet in January 2020.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPACT

37. Not applicable.

RELEVANT DIRECTORS RECOMMENDATIONS

38. It is recommended that members determine how they would like this project to proceed.

COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

39. Worden Park is a key priority in the corporate plan. Any partnership investment will seek to enhance the facility whilst reducing the overall net cost. The full financial implications of the preferred option will be identified and reported back to Cabinet in January 2020.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

40. At this stage there are no issues of substance to raise from a Monitoring Officer perspective. The Options as yet still need to be finalised. Hence there are no legal implications arising at this point.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

41. Note the Cabinet Reports dated 20th March 2019 and 19 June 2019 relating to Worden Hall. Also see the Council's website for details of feedback and comments from the consultation exercise. Feedback can be seen via <https://www.southribble.gov.uk/wordenhall> on the Council's web page.

APPENDICES

42. Appendix A – Copy of the Purcell and Amion Consultation Board

LT Member's Name: Peter McHugh
Job Title: Assistant Director for Property & Housing

Report Author:	Telephone:	Date:
Peter McHugh	01772 625228	7/10/2019

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WORDEN HALL INTRODUCTION



EXTENT OF WORDEN HALL PRE 1941

The core purpose of the study is to identify a long term sustainable future for the Hall, reducing the Council's revenue liability and delivering the Council's vision for Worden Park to become a destination of regional significance.

The three feasibility options assess the implications of any development on the surrounding landscape, structures, existing business within the Park and the impact on existing users.

Three options were explored within this feasibility study:

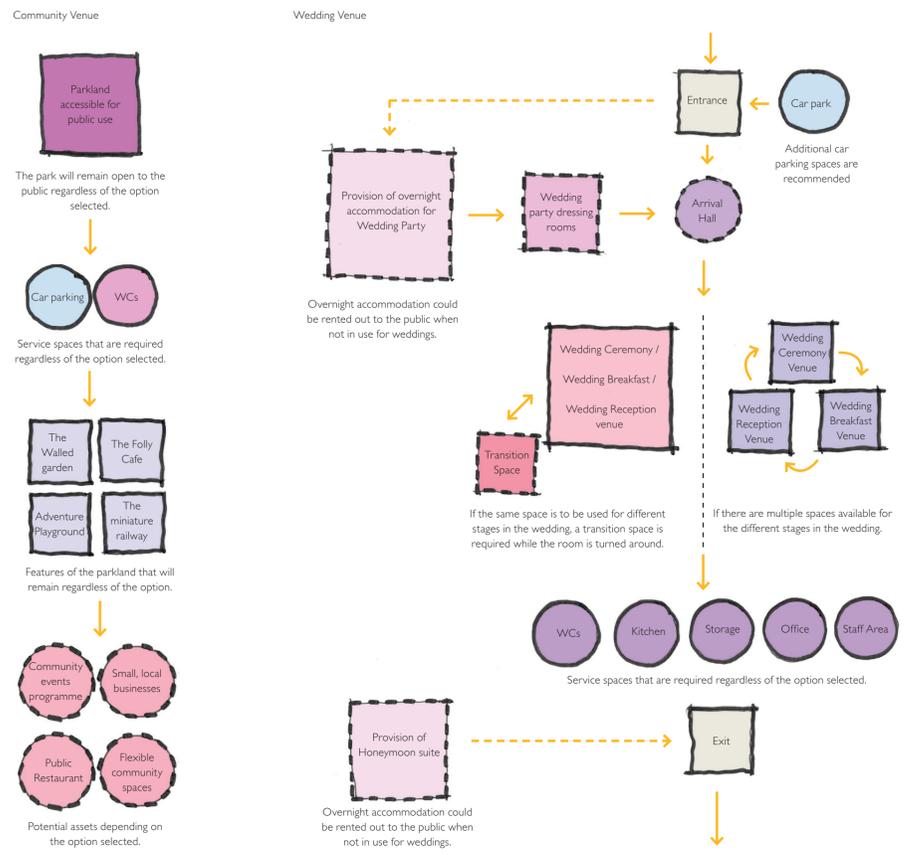
- 01 A community option that repairs and refurbishes the existing buildings to provide a series of flexible spaces that could be booked out to local groups for meetings and events. The café within the stables is retained and proposals were put forward for the range of existing outbuildings which would continue as small workspaces for local businesses. The upper floors are included as meeting and activity spaces.
- 02 A small wedding/events venue utilising the Marsden Room as the wedding and/or wedding breakfast space with the adjacent rooms being used for catering and gathering spaces. The upper floors become additional kitchen area and bedroom spaces providing an option for members of a wedding party to stay overnight both before and after the wedding. The outbuildings are retained as small business units and workspaces.
- 03 The opportunity to provide an exclusive large wedding venue providing an additional large multi-function space to sit alongside the existing Marsden Room. This solution allows for a full wedding experience including the ceremony, wedding breakfast and evening event.

Landscaping solutions have addressed parking and access routes in a similar manner so that there is consistency in any approach regarding pedestrian and vehicular movement including servicing.

All the above options recommend the removal of the conservatory which is a modern intervention. It compromises the functionality and management of Worden Hall, including maintenance and repair.

Costs include repair work to the fabric and the installation of new power, lighting and heating solutions.

A summary of each option's budget cost and business case helps to demonstrate the financial impact of the proposals on the Council.

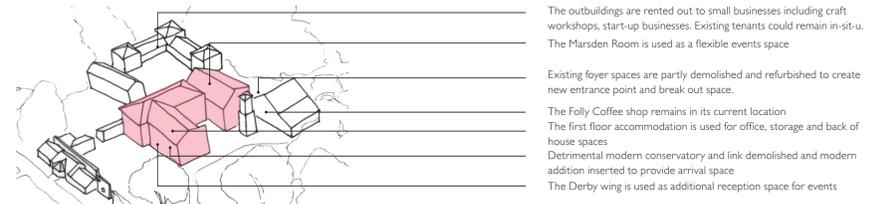


SPATIAL REQUIREMENTS DIAGRAM

OPTION SUMMARY

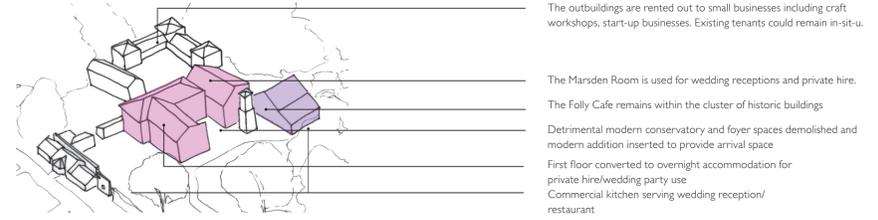
Option 01: Community

Project Cost	£1.3million
Business Case (p/a)	
Income	£62,000
Costs	£77,000
Total	-£15,000



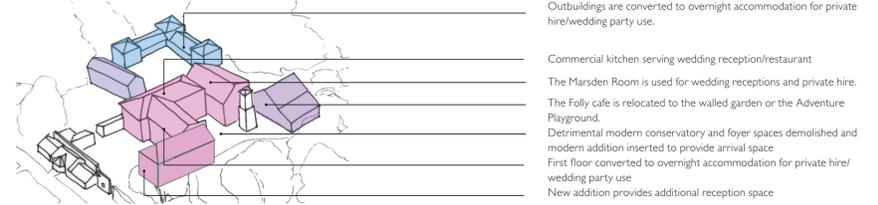
Option 02: Small Wedding/Events Venue

Project Cost	£2.1million
Business Case (p/a)	
Income	£360,000
Costs	£400,000
Total	-£40,000

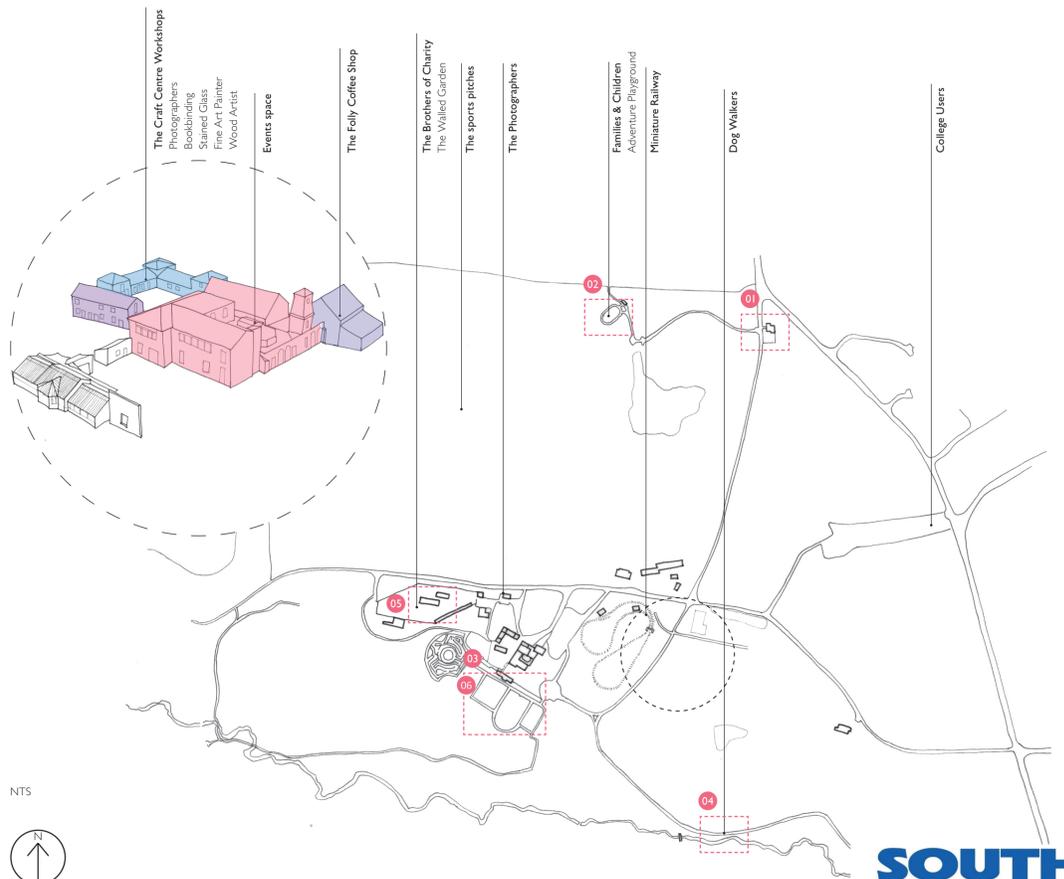
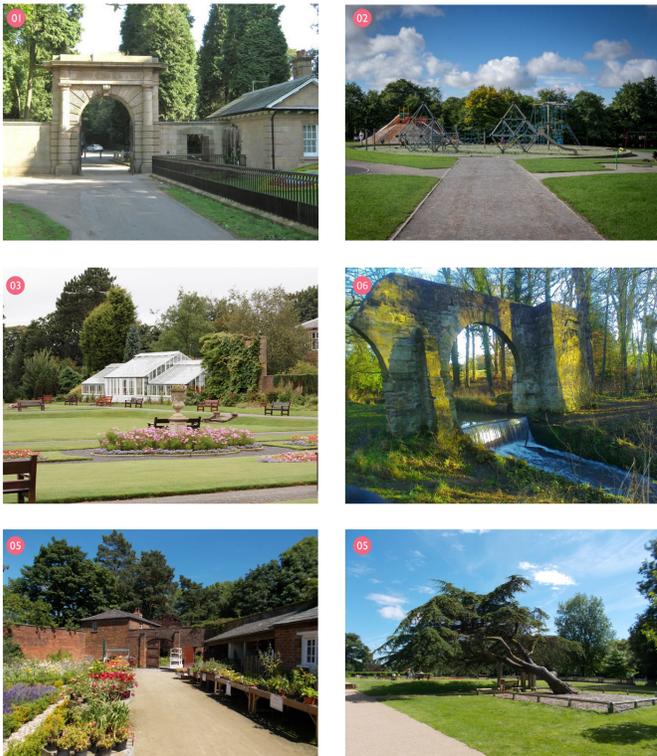


Option 03: Exclusive Wedding Venue

Project Cost	£3.7million
Business Case (p/a)	
Income	£810,000
Costs	£540,000
Total	£270,000



EXISTING USES AND USERS DIAGRAM



WORDEN HALL LANDSCAPE



EXISTING SITE CHARACTERISTICS



PROPOSED LANDSCAPE MASTERPLAN

OPTION 01
£36,000

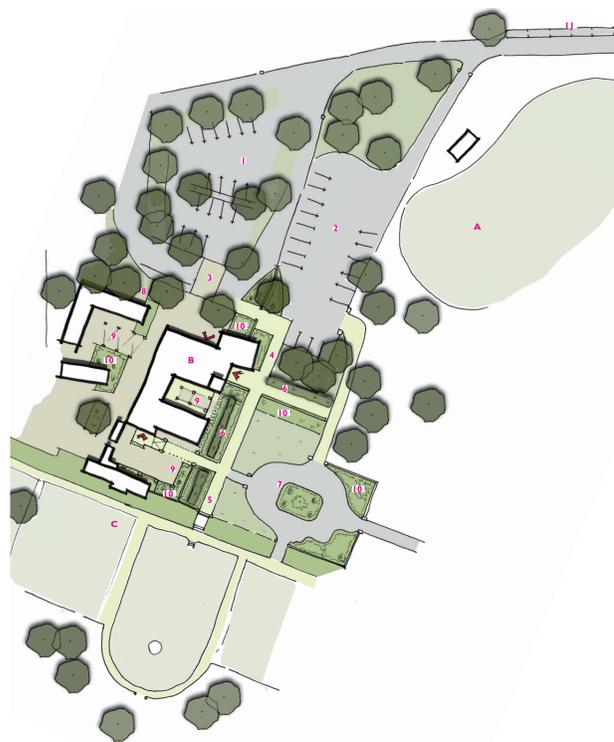
OPTION 02
£262,000

OPTION 03
£363,000

LANDSCAPE PROJECT COSTS

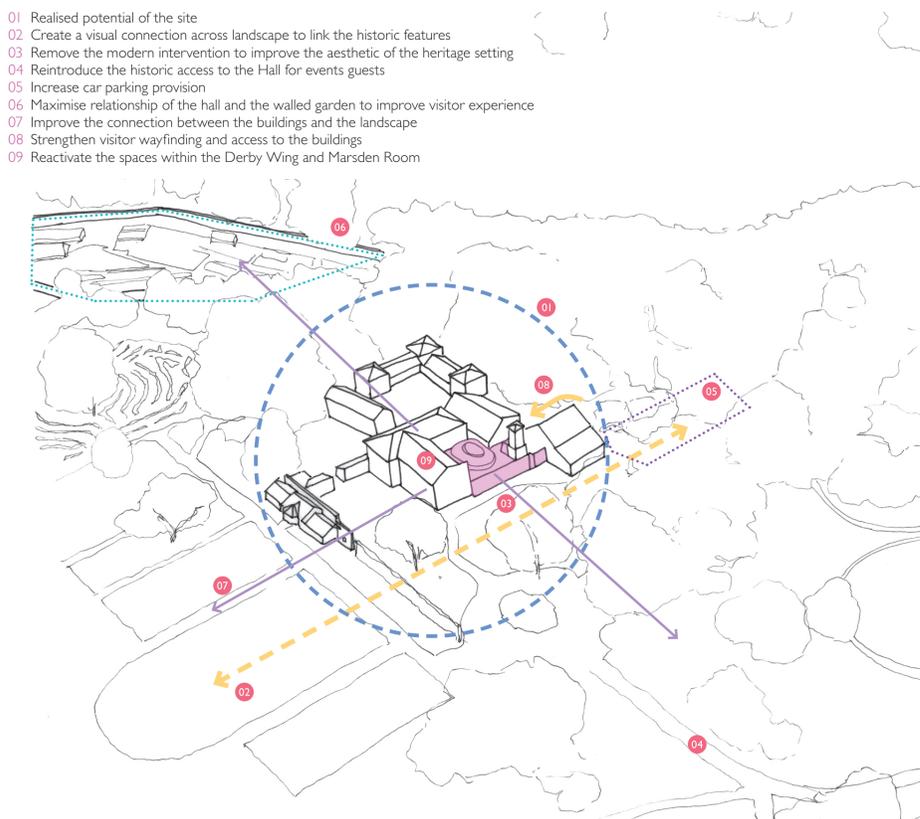


LANDSCAPE DESIGN PRECEDENT IMAGES

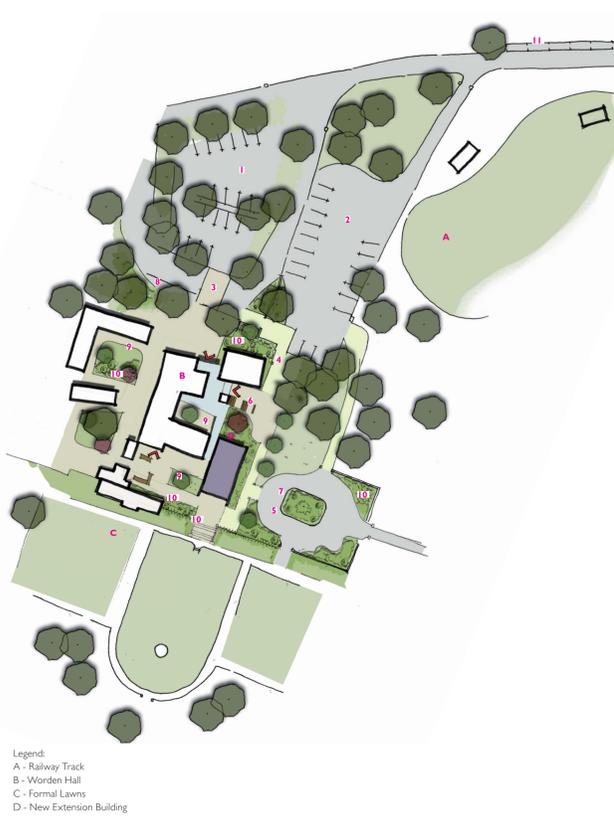


- New Car Park:** Created in the copse, retaining as many trees as possible the additional parking provides overflow and event parking spaces. Material choice of loose gravel to lessen the visual impact.
- Existing Car Park:** Retained parking area with new approaches to the main building to help with navigation and orientation on arrival.
- Pedestrian Approach:** A new pedestrianised entrance areas connect the new parking with the building entrances. Material choice of paved/ small setts to act as a rumble strip to the driveway increasing safety and prioritising pedestrians.
- Main Approach:** A formal and framed entrance creates a connection to the parking, building and gardens. Large stone pavers create a clear pathway to the main doorway and gardens.
- New Vista:** A new path creates an avenue from the car park through the gardens to the formal lawn and gate beyond.
- Formal Avenue:** Pleached trees create a soft formal frame to the clock tower and main entrance.
- Formal Arrival:** Accentuating the existing driveway with a circular drop off area the main driveway is reopened to vehicular access (on wedding days). Material choice tarmac for continuity.
- Drop-off Lay-by:** Created to accommodate deliveries and services.
- Courtyard:** Timber posts with planting and lighting create a simple/flexible external space. Material choice stone pavers and sett detail.
- Planted Borders:** New meadow and ornamental planting with structural hedge and pleached trees.
- Railway Parking Bays:** Allocated lay-by adjacent to the driveway ensures parking all year round for the Railway volunteers. Material choice grasscrete or gravel to lessen the visual impact.

OPTION 02 LANDSCAPE DESIGN



LOCALISED LANDSCAPE STRATEGY



- New Car Park:** Created in the copse, retaining as many trees as possible the additional parking provides overflow and event parking spaces. Material choice of loose gravel to lessen the visual impact.
- Existing Car Park:** Retained parking area with new approaches to the main building to help with navigation and orientation on arrival.
- Pedestrian Approach:** A new pedestrianised entrance area connects the new parking with the building entrances. Material choice of paved/ small setts to act as a rumble strip to the driveway increasing safety and prioritising pedestrians.
- Main Approach:** A formal entrance creates a connection to the parking, building and gardens. Large stone pavers create a clear pathway to the main doorway and gardens.
- Extension:** The new building will make the most of the new courtyard space and views across the formal lawns. Seating areas under new tree planting will encourage use.
- Main Entrances:** The new entrances will be accentuated by the glazed building. The landscape will help to highlight these points with stone paving details and architectural planting.
- Formal Arrival:** Accentuating the existing driveway with a circular drop off area, the main driveway is reopened to vehicular access (on wedding days). Material choice tarmac for continuity.
- Drop-off Lay-by:** Created to accommodate deliveries and services.
- Courtyard:** Flexible space and seating areas make the most of the courtyard areas. Material choice stone pavers and sett detail.
- Planted Borders:** New meadow and ornamental planting with structural hedge and pleached trees.
- Railway Parking Bays:** Allocated lay-by adjacent to the driveway ensures parking all year round for the Railway volunteers. Material choice grasscrete or gravel to lessen the visual impact.

OPTION 03 LANDSCAPE DESIGN



SPATIAL ARRANGEMENT DIAGRAM

Option 01 Summary

Option 01 focuses on the upgrade of the existing buildings to deliver a community venue containing flexible events spaces that could be hired/leased out to members of the local community or small businesses. Through careful demolition of the conservatory and upgrades to the existing foyer a new primary entrance is created. The remainder of the existing spaces are then refurbished to deliver flexible spaces that could host an events programme managed by the council/community group. Essential repairs to the outbuildings would be carried out and the units would remain as small businesses.

PROJECT COST

£1.3million

INCOME

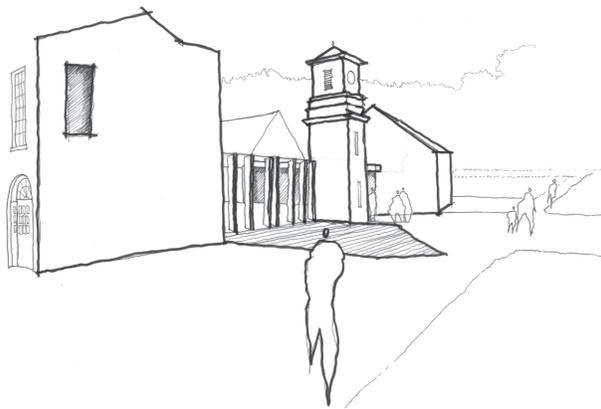
£62,000p/a

COSTS

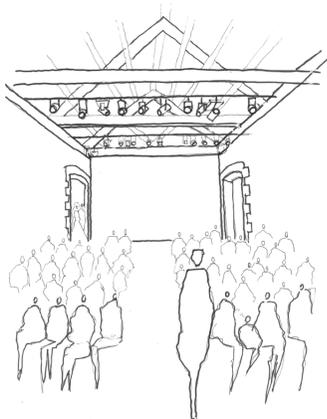
£77,000p/a

TOTAL

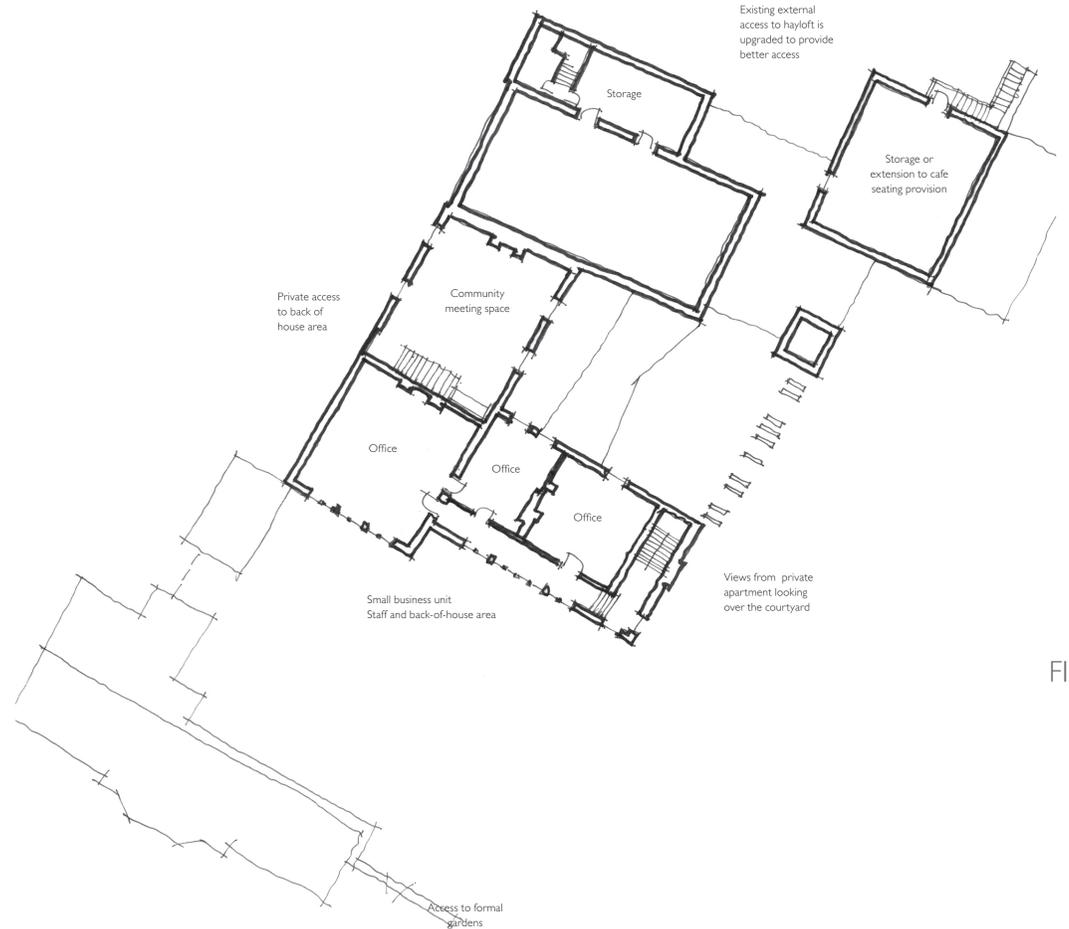
-£15,000p/a



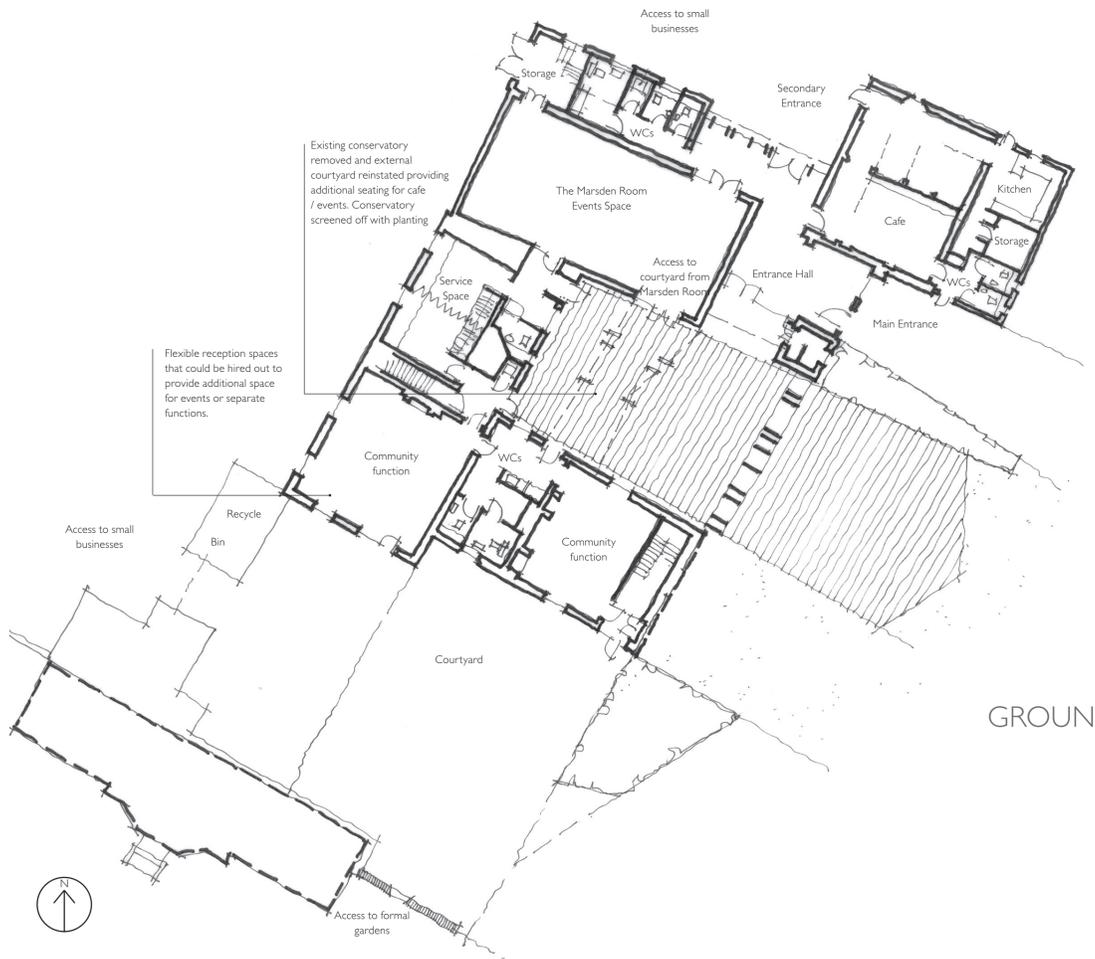
EXTERNAL PERSPECTIVE



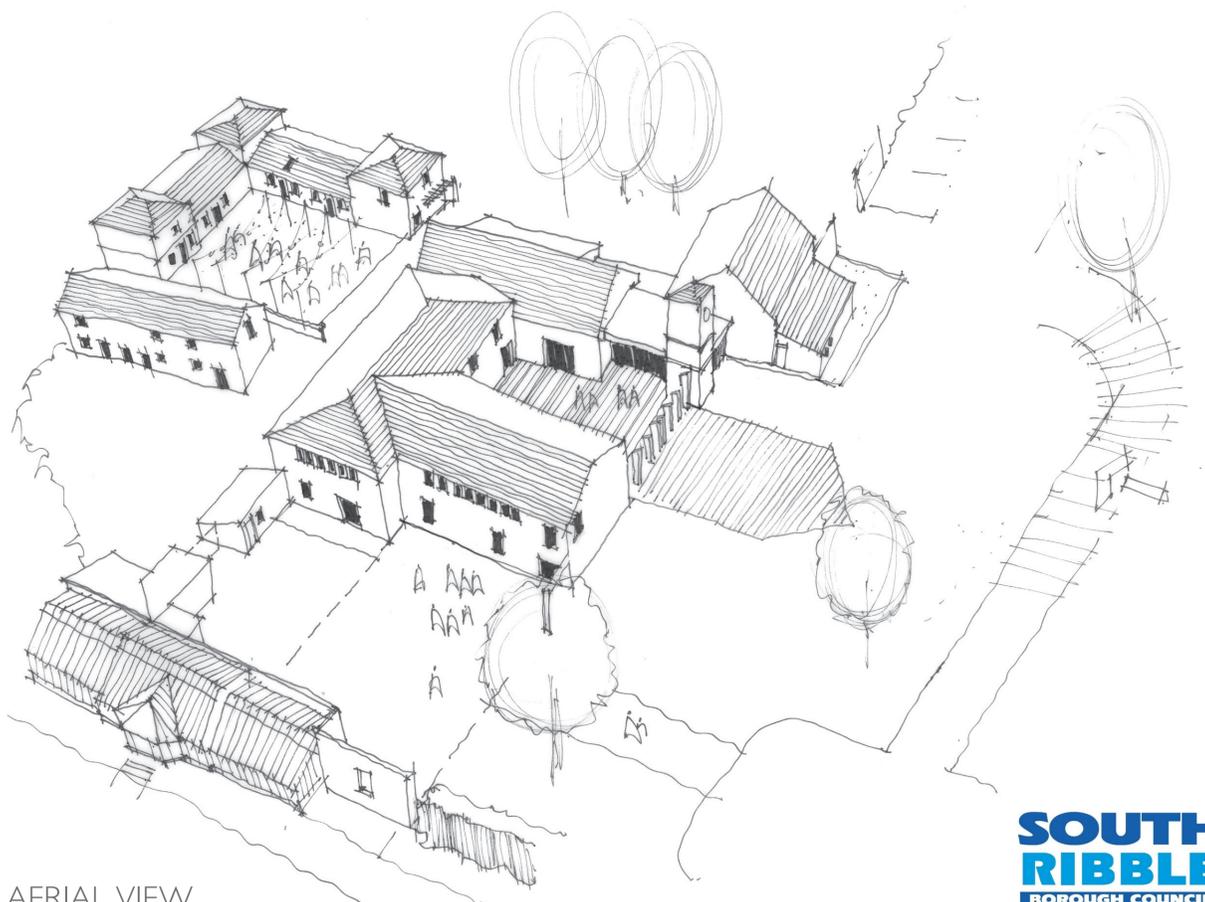
MARSDEN ROOM PERSPECTIVE



FIRST FLOOR



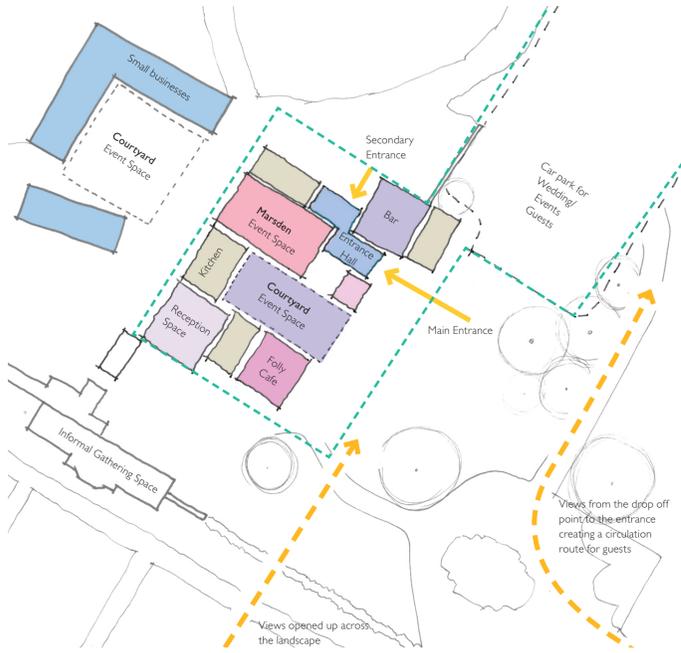
GROUND FLOOR



AERIAL VIEW

WORDEN HALL

OPTION 02



SPATIAL ARRANGEMENT DIAGRAM

Option 02 looks to adapt the building fabric to provide a small wedding/events venue. Through careful demolition of the conservatory and the insertion of new build entrance hall, the clock tower stands proud and the frontage is activated. There is the opportunity to increase the offer for events to include a bar and additional transition spaces that aid the programme of events. Overnight accommodation is also introduced on the first floor, improving the commercial viability of the site. Essential repairs to the outbuildings would be carried out and the units would remain as small businesses.

PROJECT COST

£2.1million

INCOME

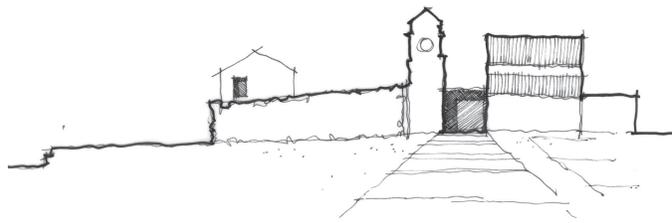
£360,000p/a

COSTS

£400,000p/a

TOTAL

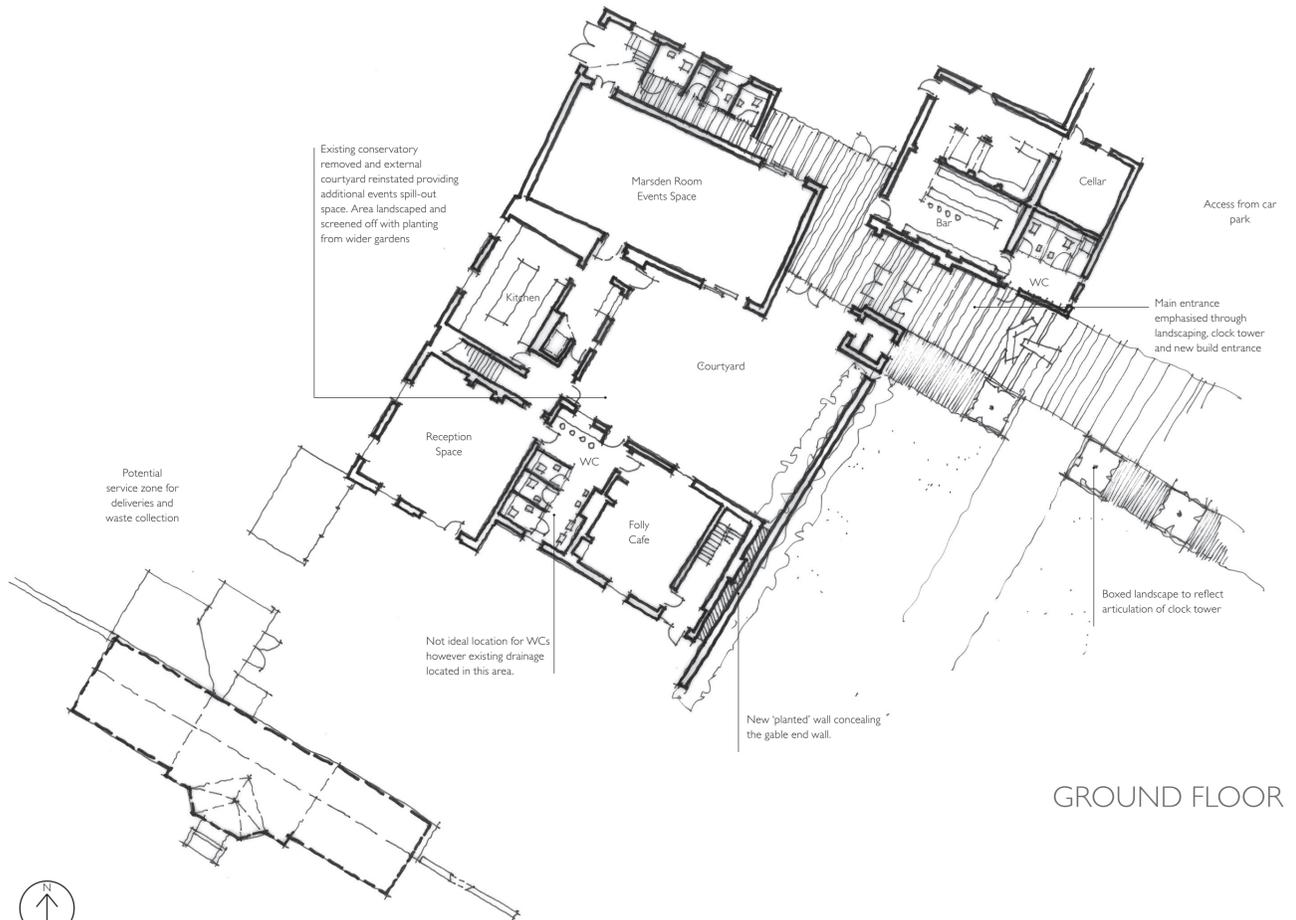
-£40,000p/a



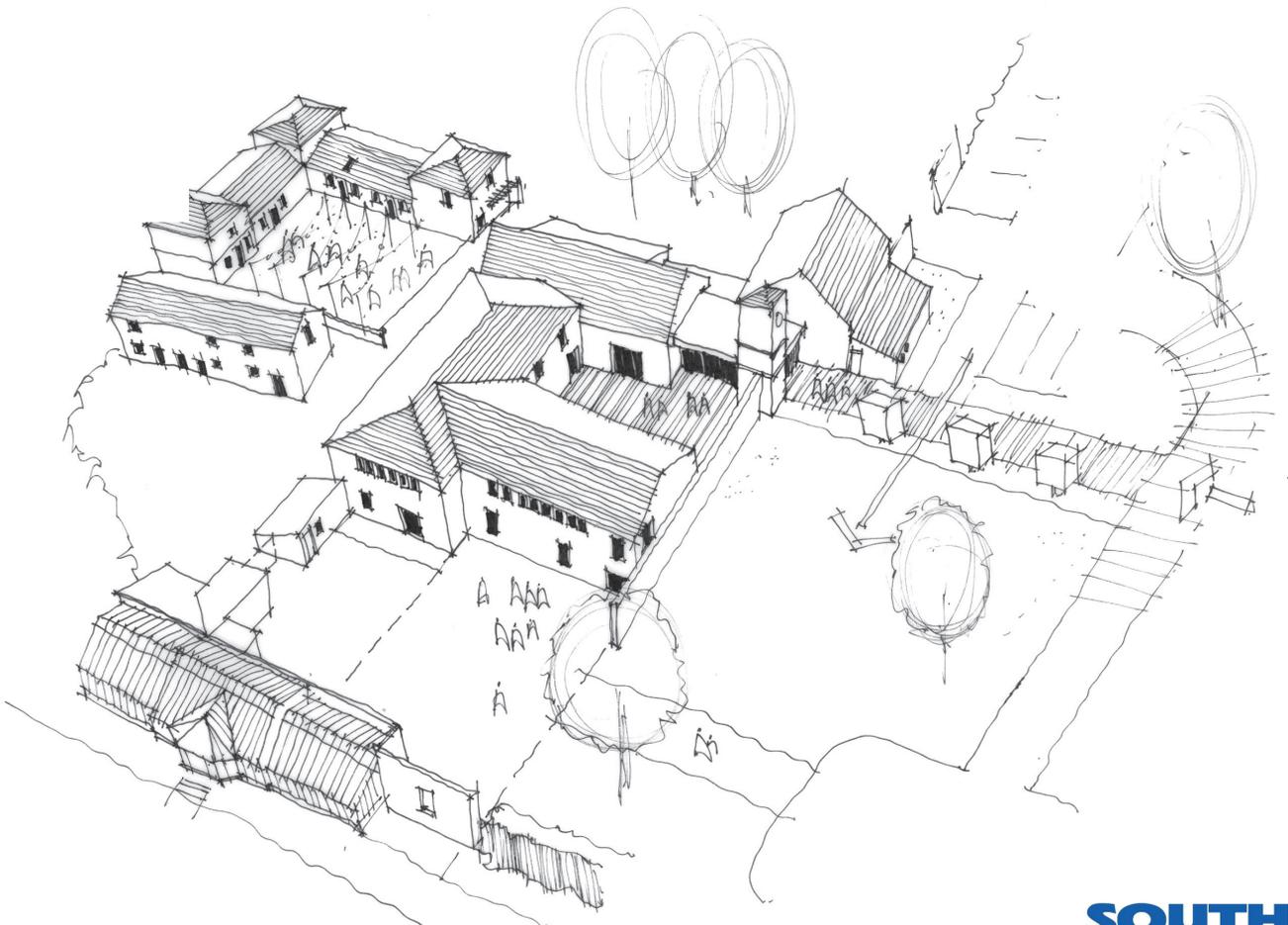
EXTERNAL ELEVATION



FIRST FLOOR



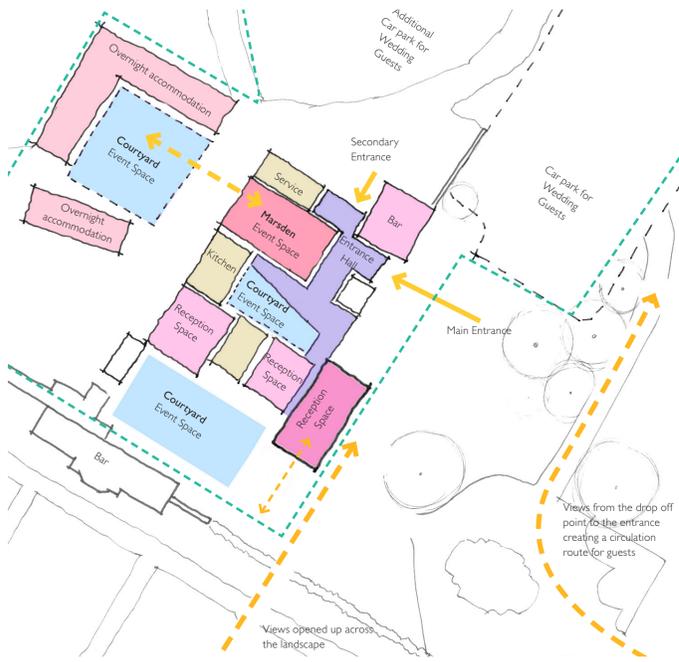
GROUND FLOOR



AERIAL VIEW

WORDEN HALL

OPTION 03



SPATIAL ARRANGEMENT DIAGRAM

Option 03 transforms the existing complex into an exclusive wedding venue containing overnight accommodation for guest. Guests arrive at the venue via the historic carriageway and additional parking is provided to the north of the complex. Through careful demolition of the conservatory and the insertion of new build entrance hall, the clock tower stands proud and the frontage is activated. In addition to the existing fabric, a new events space is constructed to provide a large reception space vital for the delivery of bigger events. The extension helps form a new protected external courtyard that provides additional private external spill-out for space guests. Overnight accommodation is introduced on the first floor and within the outbuildings, improving the commercial viability of the site.

PROJECT COST

£3.7million

INCOME

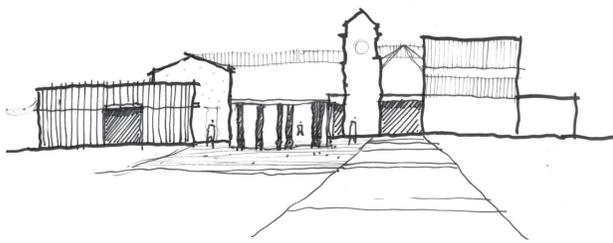
£810,000p/a

COSTS

£540,000p/a

TOTAL

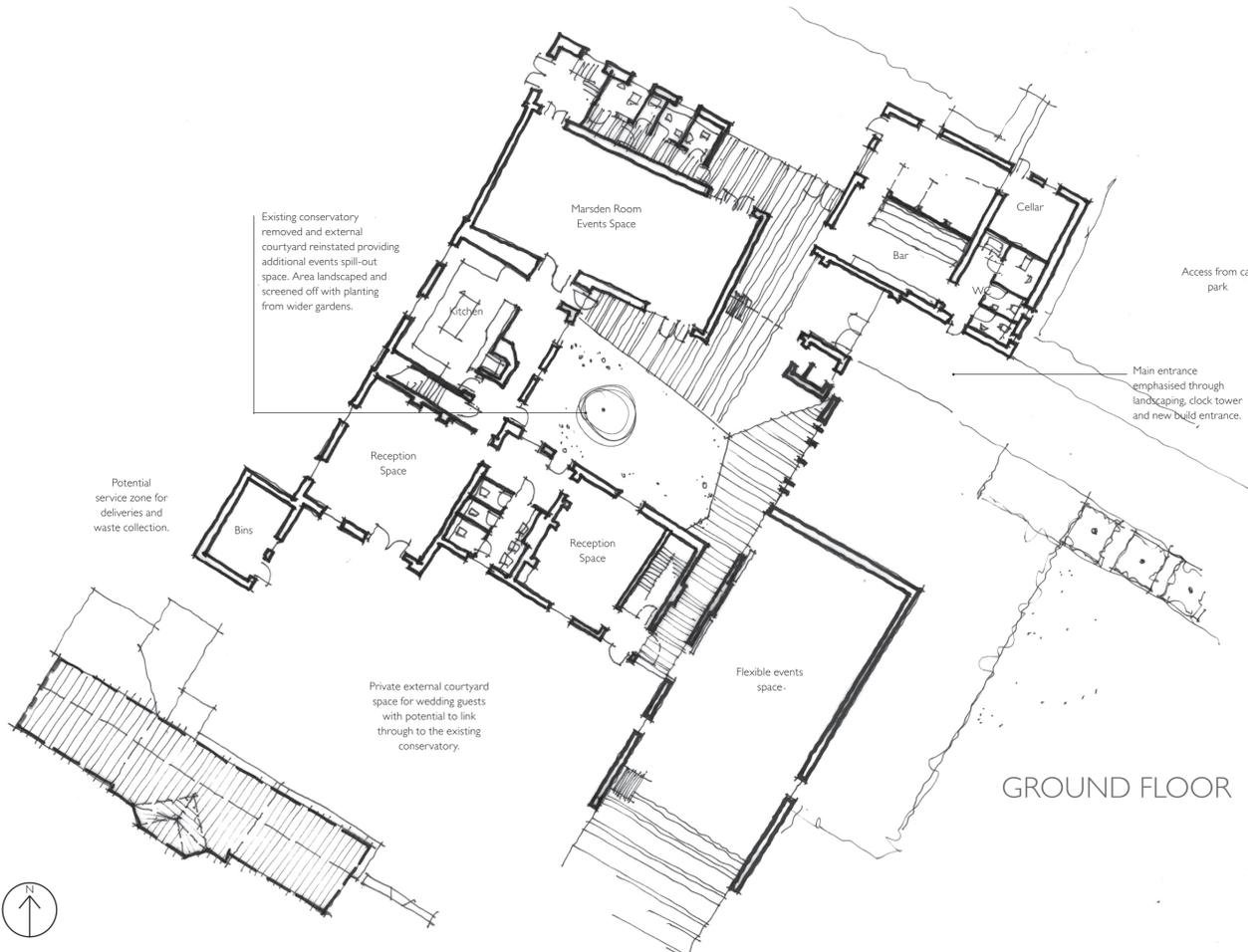
£270,000



EXTERNAL ELEVATION



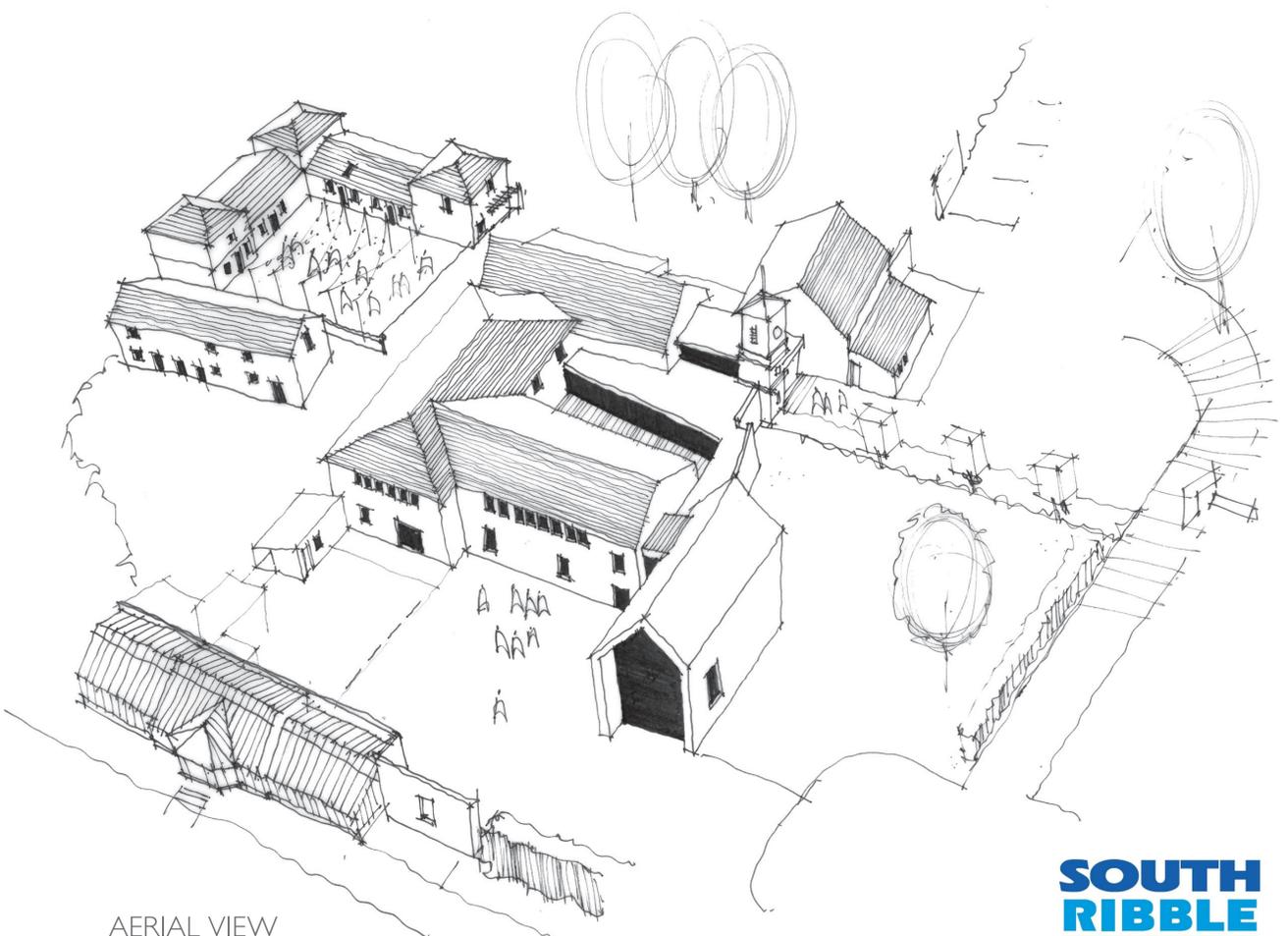
FIRST FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR



NEW MODERN RECEPTION SPACE PRECEDENTS



AERIAL VIEW

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REPORT TO	ON
CABINET COUNCIL	16 October 2019 27 November 2019



TITLE	PORTFOLIO	REPORT OF
Garden Waste Charging Policy and Container Charging	Cabinet Member for Environment	Director of Neighbourhoods and Development

Is this report a KEY DECISION (i.e. more than £100,000 or impacting on more than 2 Borough wards?)	Yes
Is this report on the Statutory Cabinet Forward Plan ?	Yes
Is the request outside the policy and budgetary framework and therefore subject to confirmation at full Council?	Yes
Is this report confidential?	No

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To seek approval on the proposed reduction in charge for the provision of the garden waste collection service and changes to the policy relating to charges for the replacement of waste containers.

PORTFOLIO RECOMMENDATIONS

2. That Cabinet proposes to Council the reduction in charge for the provision of the garden waste collection service from £30 per annum to £25 per annum from April 2020. This is a 17% tax reduction in the Garden Waste collection charge.
3. That Cabinet approves the changes in policy relating to the charges for the replacement of damaged waste containers.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

4. To support Our People and Communities to seek innovative ways to ease the financial burden on residents of the borough in line with commitment of the Council identified within the revised Corporate Plan for 2019 – 23.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

5. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

Excellence and Financial Sustainability	X
Health and Wellbeing	X
Place	

Projects relating to People in the Corporate Plan:

People	X
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BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

Green Waste Collection

6. In April 2018 the Council introduced a charge for the collection of garden waste. This followed the decision of Lancashire County Council to end the cost sharing agreement which had previously funded the garden waste collection scheme, which is a discretionary service.
7. Following the introduction of the chargeable scheme in 2018 / 19, 26,095 permits were purchased covering 24,241 properties out of a possible total of approximately 39,000 eligible properties. To date in 2019 / 20 a total of 26,695 permits have been sold to 24,596 properties.
8. Overall the amount of garden waste recycled per year has reduced by approximately 15 – 20% since the introduction of charges. A number of factors affect this figure which makes it difficult to provide exact figures, the predominate factor being the weather and its effect on growing conditions.
9. It should also be noted that this reduction has not been reflected by a corresponding increase in the amount of residual waste collected or in a significant increase in fly tipping across the borough.
10. It is hoped that a reduction in the fee will result in an increase in the numbers subscribing and a corresponding increase in the amount of garden waste collected.
11. The Council has also extended the materials collected via the co-mingled service to accept pots, tubs and trays. It is anticipated that this will increase the tonnages of co-mingled material collected by around 10% which will have a corresponding effect on the overall recycling figure.

Charging for replacement waste containers

12. In September 2017 the Council introduced a charge for replacement bins and boxes of £30 per wheeled bin and £10 per box. This applied to all replacements whether lost, stolen or damaged beyond repair, except where the container had been damaged during collection by our waste partner FCC, who would meet the cost of replacement in these cases.
13. In 2017 / 18 the Council replaced 546 damaged wheelie bins. This total was made up as follows; grey bins (7), blue bins (20), and brown bins (519).
14. Wheelie bins for the disposal of garden waste and boxes for the disposal of paper and cardboard were introduced in 2003, followed by wheelie bins for residual waste in 2005, and wheelie bins for co-mingled recycling in 2010.
15. Historically the Council has experienced issues relating to fly-tipping and abandoned waste containers predominately in those areas where collection points are utilised to facilitate the waste collection process. Since the introduction of charges for lost or stolen containers

these problems have reduced considerably. If the charges for lost or stolen containers were removed the problems are likely to return and would require additional resources to resolve.

16. At present the Council does not have a replacement programme for bins as it is difficult to estimate the usable life for a bin as a number of factors can affect this including how the bin is handled and where it is stored.

PROPOSALS (e.g. RATIONALE, DETAIL, FINANCIAL, PROCUREMENT)

17. In line with the Council's Corporate Plan to support Our People and Communities and seek innovative ways to ease the financial burden upon residents the proposal is for the charge for the garden waste collection service to be reduced from £30 per year to £25 per year with effect from the financial year 2020 / 21.
18. It is proposed that the charge for replacement bins and containers which are damaged beyond repair be withdrawn with immediate effect.
19. The charge for the replacement of wheelie bins and boxes which are reported lost or stolen will remain at £30 and £10 respectively. A charge is needed to ensure that residents are encouraged to take ownership of their containers and ensure they are returned to their property in a timely manner.
20. The charge will also be retained for new build properties at £30 for wheelie bins and £10 for boxes.
21. The changes once implemented will reduce the income to the Council as follows:
22. Based on the latest figures available the implementation of the proposed changes to the garden waste subscription will result in a loss of income of £ 133,475 per year.
23. The removal of charges for the replacement of damaged bins and boxes will result in a loss of income of £16,380 per year based on previous years.

CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT AND OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION

24. Whilst highly subscribed the introduction of charging for the garden waste collection has proved controversial and unpopular with residents. Similarly the introduction of charges for replacement containers has proved unpopular with residents.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

25. To continue with the current level of charging for both services.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

26. The reduction in charges for both the Garden Waste Collection Service and the replacement of damaged containers will reduce the income received for these services by £150,000 annually.
27. This reduction can be managed within the existing budgets because the actual level of income received for the green waste collection service is more than £150,000 above the budget figure. The volume of subscriptions has been far better than was assumed in the

budget workings and is expected to stay the same, if not increase, in future years. The income in 2018/19 was £789,000 and the income for 2019/20 is currently £805,000, which is a surplus of £155,000 against the budget. (Note: the income in 2019/20 it is likely to rise slightly, but not significantly, by the end of the year.)

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

28. Section 45(3) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 states “no charge shall be made for the collection of household waste except in cases prescribed in regulations made by the Secretary of State”. Section 4 of Schedule 1 of the Controlled Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2012 states that charges may be made for the collection of garden waste (also referred to as Green Waste).

29. Section 45(3) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 also states that the authority may recover a reasonable charge for the collection of the waste from the person who made the request. The Council has therefore set a charge with a view to recovering the majority of associated operational contract costs, overheads and administration costs, with the exception of disposal costs which, per the legislation, are not recoverable.

AIR QUALITY IMPLICATIONS

30. There are no direct implications on air quality from the introduction of the revised charges.

HUMAN RESOURCES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

31. None.

ICT/TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

32. None.

PROPERTY AND ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

33. None.

RISK MANAGEMENT

34. The reduction in charges may negatively impact on the Council's overall budget.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPACT

35. None.

RELEVANT DIRECTORS RECOMMENDATIONS

36. That Cabinet proposes to Council the reduction in subscription charges for the Garden Waste Collection Service from £30.00 per annum to £25.00 per annum.

37. That Cabinet approve the removal of the charge for replacement of containers damaged beyond repair, whilst retaining the charge for lost or stolen containers and the provision of containers to new build properties.

COMMENTS OF THE DEPUTY STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

38. The report sets out some key changes to the Councils policy for charging on a number of items. The costs of the change are outlined in the report, but in budgetary terms will be broadly cost neutral to the Council given the current over performance against budget. The assumption moving forwards therefore is that the scheme will continue to performance well in terms of take up. The proposition is affordable in that sense but needs to be taken in the context of the Councils MTFs and its expectations of Government support in the form of business rates. There is no certainty at present in respect of the outcome of both the fair funding review and business rate reform as both these pieces of work have been deferred until 2021/22

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

39. Please see Legal Implications above. The council has a discretion whether to set charges for the collection of garden waste. Many councils have indeed chosen to impose such charges. As ever though with general local government legislation such charges should be set at a reasonable level. In this instance we are considering reducing our fees. There are no concerns from a legal perspective with what is proposed here.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

40. There are no background documents to this report

APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Replacement Charging Policy for Household Recycling and Waste Containers

Andrew Richardson
Assistant Director of Neighbourhoods

Report Author:	Telephone:	Date:
Andrew Richardson, Assistant Director of Neighbourhoods	01772 625674	5 th September 2019

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Replacement Charging Policy for Household Recycling and Waste Containers

The Council has provided all existing households with a grey wheeled bin for residual waste, a green box and/or blue bin for dry recyclable waste and, where applicable, a brown bin for garden waste. All waste containers provided by the Council remain the property of the Council.

From October 2019 the Council now charge, according to the criteria below:

Current Charges

Residual Waste		
Container Type	Current Cost	Conditions
Replacement of a standard 240l grey residual waste bin (damaged beyond repair).	Free of Charge	Your damaged bin must be made available to swap for your replacement bin.
Replacement of a smaller 140l grey residual waste bin (damaged beyond repair).	Free of Charge	Your damaged bin must be made available to swap for your replacement bin.
Replacement of a standard 240l grey residual waste bin (lost or stolen).	£30	None.
Replacement of a smaller 140l grey residual waste bin (lost or stolen).	£30	None.
Repair of a damaged standard 240l grey residual waste bin (lid/axle/wheels).	Free of Charge	Your damaged bin must be made available for repair.
Repair of a damaged smaller 140l grey residual waste bin (lid/axle/wheels).	Free of Charge	Your damaged bin must be made available for repair.
Request for an additional smaller 140l grey residual waste bin.	Free of Charge	Households will need to request an additional grey bin and subsequent waste audit. If approved, the relevant bin/s will be provided.
Request to replace a standard 240l grey residual waste bin with a smaller 140l grey residual waste bin.	Free of Charge (as long as the bin being removed is in a serviceable condition)	Your current bin must be made available to swap for your replacement bin.
Request to replace a smaller 140l grey residual waste bin with a standard 240l grey residual waste bin.	Free of Charge (as long as the bin being removed is in a serviceable condition)	Your current bin must be made available to swap for your replacement bin.

Dry Recyclable Waste		
Container Type	Current Cost	Conditions
Replacement of a standard 240l blue recycling bin (damaged beyond repair).	Free of Charge	Your damaged bin must be made available to swap for your replacement bin.
Replacement of a smaller 140l blue recycling bin (damaged beyond repair).	Free of Charge	Your damaged bin must be made available to swap for your replacement bin.
Replacement of a standard 240l blue recycling bin (lost or stolen).	£30	None.
Replacement of a smaller 140l blue recycling bin (lost or stolen).	£30	None.
Repair of a damaged standard 240l blue recycling bin (lid/axle/wheels).	Free of Charge	Your damaged bin must be made available for repair.
Repair of a damaged smaller 140l blue recycling bin (lid/axle/wheels).	Free of Charge	Your damaged bin must be made available for repair.
Replacement of a damaged green box.	Free of Charge	Your damaged box must be made available to swap for your replacement box.
Replacement of a lost or stolen green box.	£10	None.
Replacement of a damaged, lost or stolen box lid.	Free of Charge	None.

Garden Waste		
Container Type	Current Cost	Conditions
Replacement of a standard 240l brown garden waste bin (damaged beyond repair).	Free of Charge	Your damaged bin must be made available to swap for your replacement bin.
Replacement of a standard 240l brown garden waste bin (lost or stolen).	£30	None.
Repair of a damaged standard 240l brown garden waste bin (lid, axle, wheels).	Free of Charge	Your damaged bin must be made available for repair.

1. Householder Ownership and Responsibility

- 1.1 All waste and recycling containers supplied to householders for the purpose of the waste and recycling collection service shall remain the property of the Council.
- 1.2 The container charge covers the administration of processing your order and the delivery of your container only. Containers cannot be collected from the Council to reduce the cost.
- 1.3 Additional grey general waste bins and blue recycling bins cannot be paid for. If it is identified that a grey or blue bin is present at your property then a bin will not be delivered. If you require an additional grey general waste bin or blue recycling bin, this must be approved by the Council through the relevant waste audit process.
- 1.4 When householders move home they are required to leave all wheeled bins at the property for the new occupants. Where this does not occur, new occupiers may recover costs for the payment of containers from the previous owners at their own discretion. The Council will not be involved in these negotiations.
- 1.5 If a wheeled bin or box from a property receiving an assisted collection is reported as missing following collection, the refuse collection vehicle's CCTV will be reviewed and the charge for the missing bin may be waived at the Council's discretion, if it has been identified that the waste container has not been correctly returned.
- 1.6 Your wheeled bins and boxes should be placed at the edge of your property, shared drive, service strip or agreed collection point by 7.30am on your day of collection and removed from here after collection on the same working day. They should be secured within the boundary of the property at all other times.
- 1.7 From time to time, the Neighbourhood Services team direct their time towards collection points or other areas of the highway where bins are persistently left out between collections. Where an area is to be cleared of bins, surrounding properties are notified in advance that this is to happen. If a resident continues to leave a waste container presented after this notification they will be required to pay for a replacement in full, if their bin is removed.
- 1.8 If the bin goes missing, the householder will be responsible for the charge of a replacement.
- 1.9 If containers go missing from within your property boundary or whilst presented for collection the householder is liable to pay for a replacement.
- 1.10 It is advised that a thorough check of the area be made by the householder before a replacement bin is requested. If the bin is found after the payment has been processed no refund will be given.
- 1.11 The Council does not encourage reporting the loss of wheeled bins or boxes to the police. A crime number will not void the charge.
- 1.12 Householders that do not acquire the appropriate container through the Council will not receive a collection service from the Council. In such cases the Council may serve a legal notice on the householder through the Environmental Protection Act (1990) Section 46(3), which will formally request the appropriate containers are provided.
- 1.13 Your waste will not be collected unless it is presented in the correct South Ribble Borough Council containers.

2. South Ribble Borough Council's Responsibility

- 2.1 Wheeled bins and boxes will be returned to the council approved point of return by the collection crew immediately after collection. CCTV and tracker technology is installed on all our refuse collection vehicles. We are able to use this to check where your bin has been left after collection. If your bin goes missing on your collection day and you believe it is down to our crews not replacing your bin correctly you will still be required to pay for a replacement, but then an enquiry can be raised to check the on-board CCTV. If it is subsequently found our crews did not replace your bin correctly you will be refunded.
- 2.2 Replacement wheeled bins or boxes should be delivered within 5 working days of the payment being received, however in busy periods can take up to 10 working days.
- 2.3 There are occasions where a wheeled bin may get damaged during collection, or be lost in the back of the collection vehicle. If this happens, our crews will report this information and a notification will be posted through your door. You will receive a replacement bin free of charge without needing to contact us.
- 2.4 The wheeled bin provided may be new or refurbished, but will be of sufficient standard for the storage and collection of waste.
- 2.5 The Council will deliver the replacement bin within the boundary of the property if access is available or next to the most appropriate door and post a delivery note through the letter box once the bin has been delivered. A householder does not need to sign for the bin.

3. Other Considerations

- 3.1 Residents requiring a smaller grey bin can receive this free of charge, providing the larger bin they are returning is in a serviceable condition. This will encourage residents to recycle more in order to manage a reduced residual capacity, resulting in a reduction in the amount of waste sent to landfill.
- 3.2 Where a smaller grey bin has been present at a household and circumstances have changed this bin will be replaced for a standard sized grey bin. This will be exchanged free of charge, providing the bin being returned is in a serviceable condition.
- 3.3 This policy will encourage residents and communities to manage their waste containers responsibly and, in turn, will have a positive impact on the street scene.

4. New Properties / New Housing Developments

- 4.1 The Council charges for the provision and delivery of waste containers to newly built and redeveloped residential properties, including the redevelopment of a property into multi-occupancy. A fee of £100 per property is due at the property numbering request stage. The containers will be delivered when requested by the occupants.
- 4.2 If the development is a multi-occupancy property, the fee will remain at £100 per unit. However a site visit will be made and bin provision may be in the form of larger communal bins.
- 4.3 The full suite of waste containers suitable for that property will be provided for the charge.
- 4.4 The charge for the first set of waste containers at new properties or new housing developments will still be made to the developer.
- 4.5 If the developer fails to make the payment the property will not receive a kerbside collection and an alternative arrangement would have to be made by the occupier.

5. Garden Waste Subscription Service (from April 2018)

- 5.1 Householders subscribing to the garden waste collection subscription service who do not already have a garden waste bin at their property will be provided with their first containers free of charge.
- 5.2 The first garden waste bin provided may be new or refurbished, but will be of sufficient standard for the storage and collection of waste.
- 5.3 Should the garden waste bin be lost or stolen after it has been delivered then a replacement container charge will apply.

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REPORT TO	ON
CABINET	16 October 2019



TITLE	PORTFOLIO	REPORT OF
110,000 Trees a Global Legacy	Cabinet Member for Environment	Director of Neighbourhoods and Development

Is this report a KEY DECISION (i.e. more than £100,000 or impacting on more than 2 Borough wards?)	Yes
Is this report on the Statutory Cabinet Forward Plan ?	Yes
Is the request outside the policy and budgetary framework and therefore subject to confirmation at full Council?	No
Is this report confidential?	No

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. This report details the environmental benefits of planting 110,000 trees, one tree for each of our residents and how we are proposing to achieve this. This report is also seeking views on the proposed programme of delivery.

PORTFOLIO RECOMMENDATIONS

2. Cabinet recommends the tree planting plan detailed in this report is taken forward and will provide on-going support feedback and suggestions that can help shape/inform the ongoing process.
3. Cabinet authorise capital expenditure on this scheme over a 4 year period up to the overall budget value of £160,000 which will be allocated from the approved Green Links capital budgets.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

4. The reason for the report is to provide Cabinet with the proposals to plant 110,000 trees, one tree for each of our residents as a key part of our plan to combat climate change. We are focused on the environment, improving the air we breathe and having the right plans in place to safeguard and protect our natural environment.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

5. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

Excellence and Financial Sustainability	
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Health and Wellbeing	x
Place	x

Projects relating to People in the Corporate Plan:

People	X

BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

“Right now, we are ignoring natural climate solutions. We spend 1,000 times more on global fossil fuel subsidies than on nature-based solutions. This is your money, it is your taxes, and your savings” Greta Thunberg

“There is a magic machine that sucks carbon out of the air, costs very little, and builds itself. It’s called a tree.” George Monbiot (Environmental Campaigner)

6. Urban forests help to improve our air quality by removing (sequestering) CO₂ from the atmosphere during photosynthesis to form carbohydrates that are used in plant structure/function and return oxygen back into the atmosphere as a by-product. Roughly half of the greenhouse effect is caused by CO₂. Therefore, trees act as carbon sinks, alleviating the greenhouse effect.
7. On average, one acre of new forest can sequester about 2.5 tons of carbon annually. Young trees absorb CO₂ at a rate of 13 pounds per tree each year. Trees reach their most productive stage of carbon storage at about 10 years at which point they are estimated to absorb 48 pounds of CO₂ per year. At that rate, they release enough oxygen back into the atmosphere to support two human beings.
8. Trees also remove other gaseous pollutants through the stomata in the leaf surface by absorbing them with normal air components. Sulphur Dioxide, Ozone, Nitrogen Dioxide and Particulates. Studies have also shown that trees can provide up to a 60 percent reduction in street-level particulates.
9. Planting billions of trees across the world is by far the biggest and cheapest way to tackle the climate crisis, according to scientists. New research estimates that a worldwide planting programme could remove two-thirds of all the emissions that have been pumped into the atmosphere by human activities, a figure the scientists describe as “mind-blowing”.
10. South Ribble Borough Council will be part of this global legacy by planting 110,000 trees, one tree for each of our residents to safeguard and protect the natural environment of South Ribble.

PROPOSALS (e.g. RATIONALE, DETAIL, FINANCIAL, PROCUREMENT)

11. Planting introduction

Forestry Commission standards suggest 1 tree per square metre. 110 000 trees therefore equates to 110 000 square metres, or 11 hectares.

To meet the planting target within identified available space in South Ribble the recommendation is that we plant a combination of whips (single stemmed young trees) and a number of standard native trees.

12. Sites and numbers

The following sites have been identified as suitable for planting and the number of trees proposed for each site include the following:

The following sites have also been identified, but are not available for planting in this financial year:

Total 103 200

In addition to the above planting the Council has been working with partner agencies such as Lancashire County Council, the Environment Agency, and developers to ensure that if any trees are removed in South Ribble that they are replaced. For example Lancashire County Council are planting in excess of 27,000 whips and trees as part of the Penwortham bypass development. We are also working with the Environment Agency to plant over 3,000 trees as part of the Preston and South Ribble Flood defence scheme.

The Council also has a two for one replacement policy if trees are lost as part of development schemes. We will ensure that all of these additional trees are recorded as part of this project.

There will be a natural failure rate with the whips and trees planted. We will continue to monitor the situation after planting and will replant as required.

13. Tree giveaway

For a number of years we have each autumn given free trees to residents to plant in their own gardens and this has proved extremely popular. This year to launch this project we intend to give away 300 standard trees and 3000 whips. The event is proposed to take place on the 16th November at Worden Park. A social media campaign will be run in conjunction with this event to encourage people to participate.

It is also proposed to approach all schools within the borough in conjunction with the Woodland Trust and our Sports Development Team to encourage them to become involved in the free tree planting scheme.

In addition our Neighbourhoods Team have a scheme to encourage residents to purchase trees in the arboretum at Worden Park. This scheme will be extended to help residents support this project and do their bit to combat climate change.

14. Costs and supply

Currently one whip costs approximately £1.00 depending on the numbers ordered, a standard tree will cost in the region of approximately £15.00. The more significant cost would be the labour required for planting.

The Community Payback Service have confirmed that they can plant the whips meaning the labour costs would be in the hundreds of pounds rather than tens of thousands of pounds which would have made the project financially unviable.

The large number of trees poses a supply and delivery problem, local suppliers have been contacted and have confirmed that they can deliver the trees in the required numbers. There would be a seven day lead up time to delivery on site.

Procurement of trees would use the following processes:

- 5000 trees or fewer obtain competitive quotes from the two named suppliers
- 5000 - 13 000 trees competitive quotes from a minimum of five suppliers
- Over 13 000 trees competitive tender via The Chest

15. Planting programme

With suppliers and labour in place planting can proceed. Trees should be planted between November and March. The suggested planting programme is:

Year 1 (2019-2020)

- Leyland: Worden Park, Bent Lane 26 000
 - Land off Collins Road, Bamber Bridge 1200
 - Hutton Wildlife Area 2000
 - Middleforth Green 3000
- Total 32 200**

Rationale: The sites are available to plant. Residents at Collins Road and Hutton Wildlife Area are eager to get involved in the tree planting project as part of their local wildlife and conservation aims.

Year 2 (2020-2021)

- Withy Grove Park 3000
 - Farington Park 5000
 - The Old Railway Line 20 000
 - Valley Road 1500
- Total 29 500**

Rationale: The sites are available to plant.

Year 3 (2021-2022)

- Ribble Sidings 17 500
 - Ribble Way Bund at Howick Cross 4000
- Total 21 500**

Rationale: Ribble Sidings will become available to plant when Phase 1 of the Environment Agency's flood mitigation work is completed.

Year 4 (2022-2023)

- Farington Moss 13 000
- Penwortham Bypass compound 7000
- Total 20 000**

CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT AND OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION

16. The Green links consultation which was undertaken early this year showed residents want green spaces to be protected and enhanced to support wildlife and natural habitats.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

17. An alternative to whip planting is standard tree planting. A standard is a single stemmed tree with multiple branches. Larger trees are heavy standards and extra-heavy standards.

The lowest price of a small standard tree can be £10-15 dependent upon numbers purchased. Ten times the cost of a whip. Based on this figure the lowest budget cost for planting standards could be as high as £1.1 million, making the project financially unviable.

There would also be additional significant labour costs involved in planting 110 000 standard trees.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

18. There is an existing capital budget of £40,000 for this scheme in 2019/20, with authority to spend to that level (approved by Cabinet June 2019). The 4-year programme requires budget for a further 3 years estimated at £40,000 per year for 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23, which would make the overall total £160,000. This will be allocated from the existing Green Links capital budgets for those years. The additional maintenance requirements can be absorbed within existing budgets. Service costs will continue to be monitored and future budget setting processes will consider whether these budgets might need increasing.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

19. The trees planted on land owned by the Council will have to be maintained as we have duties to maintain trees on our land.

AIR QUALITY IMPLICATIONS

20. Please refer to the report regarding the Air Quality implications of planting trees.

HUMAN RESOURCES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

21. The Community Payback Service have confirmed that they can plant the whips and community volunteers also want to be part of the project reducing the costs of the project significantly.

ICT/TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

22. None.

PROPERTY AND ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

23. There is a possibility during this project that land may become available to develop woodlands to further achieve the aims of this project. If land is identified then further papers will be brought to Cabinet.

RISK MANAGEMENT

24. Maintenance of these trees are essential to mitigate any future risk and this will be scheduled into the Councils maintenance programme.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPACT

25. None

RELEVANT DIRECTORS RECOMMENDATIONS

26. That Cabinet approves the tree planting plan detailed in this report is taken forward and will provide on-going support feedback and suggestions that can help shape/inform the ongoing process.
27. Cabinet authorise capital expenditure on this scheme over a 4 year period up to the overall budget value of £160,000 which will be allocated from the approved Green Links capital budgets.

COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

28. The purchase and planting of the trees is a capital cost which is budgeted within the Capital Programme as part of the Green Links programme. Ongoing tree maintenance work will be scheduled into the Council's maintenance programme and met from existing revenue budgets. The annual maintenance budgets will be reviewed periodically to assess if the additional maintenance requirements of this initiative causes any budget pressure which will then need to be addressed.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

29. It is right and proper that the council as a responsible public authority should seek to set a good example when it comes to combating climate change. The specific proposal here is to plant trees on council owned land. There are no legal concerns with this. We have to be mindful of our ongoing maintenance duties and liabilities.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

There are no background documents to this report.

APPENDICES (or There are no appendices to this report)

None

Jennifer Mullin
Director of Neighbourhoods and Development

Report Author:	Telephone:	Date:
Jennifer Mullin Director of Neighbourhoods and Development	01772 625329	23.09.09

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REPORT TO	ON
CABINET	16 October 2019



TITLE	PORTFOLIO	REPORT OF
Central Lancashire Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation	Cabinet Member for Planning, Regeneration and City Deal	Director of Planning and Property

Is this report a KEY DECISION (i.e. more than £100,000 or impacting on more than 2 Borough wards?)	Yes
Is this report on the Statutory Cabinet Forward Plan ?	Yes
Is the request outside the policy and budgetary framework and therefore subject to confirmation at full Council?	No
Is this report confidential?	No

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To present to members the Central Lancashire Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation Paper November 2019 for approval alongside details of the consultation methods and programme. The Issues and Options Consultation paper has been endorsed by the Central Lancashire Joint Advisory Committee and therefore is a final version.

PORTFOLIO RECOMMENDATIONS

2. To approve the Central Lancashire Issues and Options Paper in Appendix One as the first stage in the preparation of the new Central Lancashire Local Plan, in accordance with Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning)(England) Regulations 2012
3. To accept and approve the document as drafted recognising that to make any changes at this stage would delay the subsequent approval of the final version as the same version must be approved by all three councils.
4. To approve the proposed methods of consultation including the online portal Citizenspace, and the programme for drop-in events and elected member learning sessions.
5. To approve the key timetable for the consultation commencing on Monday 18th November 2019 at 12.01am and closing at 11.59pm on Friday 14th February 2020.
6. To agree to the commencement of the consultation upon the approval by all three

Central Lancashire councils (subject to any call-in period).

7. To delegate authority to the Director of Planning and Property, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Regeneration and City Deal, to undertake any minor text, layout and formatting changes as necessary.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

8. The preparation of a new Local (Development) Plan is now required across Central Lancashire as the existing Core Strategy adopted in 2012, is now more than five years out of date. This Issues and Options consultation is the first stage towards the preparation of a new Local Plan, which considers the challenges and opportunities arising from the evidence collected to inform the new Local Plan, whilst also taking account of wider national policy objectives, priorities and strategy.
9. This new Local Plan must be prepared in accordance with The Town and County Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and the first stage is referred to as Regulation 18 under which, we will be preparing the Issues and Options Document, and the next planned consultation which will be the Preferred Options, expected in late 2020/21.
10. There is a strategic rationale for the three councils of Preston, Chorley and South Ribble working collaboratively to produce a single Local Plan, as a single housing market area, and functional economic market area with evidence to support high levels of spatial self-containment.
11. There are efficiencies to be gained to be working collectively as plan-making is resource intensive and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government have provided funding to Central Lancashire to work together in plan preparation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

12. The three Councils of Preston, Chorley and South Ribble are working collaboratively to produce a single Local Plan and we are now preparing to move into the first consultation stage, known as Issues and Options.
13. A consultation paper has been prepared by officers in the Central Lancashire Local Plan team, with support and contributions from the three "home" policy teams.
14. The basis of the Issues and Options consultation paper are key issues arising from the evidence base and also review of the existing plans and policies. It asks a series of key questions from stakeholders, partners and residents and will inform the new plan policies.
15. The consultation document has been produced in consultation with key elected members across the three Central Lancashire Authorities and endorsed by the JAC and therefore is a final version. To change this document would add lengthy delays to the process.
16. Issues and Options is a key step in plan making as it provides an opportunity for local stakeholders, residents, members, public bodies etc. to engage and shape how the three areas will grow and evolve in the next 15 years.

17. The proposed timetable for the Issues and Options consultation is 12.01am on Monday 18 November 2019 to 11.59pm on Friday 14 February 2020. (12 weeks and 4 days).

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

18. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

Excellence and Financial Sustainability	
Health and Wellbeing	
Place	x

Projects relating to People in the Corporate Plan:

People	
--------	--

BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

19. The South Ribble Local Plan currently comprises of two main documents – The Joint Central Lancashire Core Strategy, which was adopted in 2012, and the South Ribble Local Plan, which was adopted in 2015. The Core Strategy contains the wider, strategic policies for the area, whilst the Local Plan contains the area specific policies.

20. The Government introduced the requirement to review the Local Plan every 5 years in the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance. The new Local Plan will be in the form of one document, containing both the strategic and local policies, and will cover all three areas.

21. The Issues and Options is the first stage of consultation in the review process.

PROPOSALS (e.g. RATIONALE, DETAIL, FINANCIAL, PROCUREMENT)

22. This is a single Issues and Options Consultation Paper which covers the three geographical areas of Preston, Chorley and South Ribble. The report and associated documents include:

- Central Lancashire Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation – November 2019
- Appendix 1 Summary of Questions for the Issues and Options Consultation Survey
- Annex 1 – Site Suggestions proposed by Chorley Council
- Annex 2 – Chorley Council Elected Members Comments on Site Suggestions
- Annex 3 – All Site Submissions Received for Preston
- Annex 4 – All Site Submissions Received for South Ribble
- Annex 5 – All Site Submissions Received for Chorley
- Annex 6 – Proposed Changes to Town, District and Local Centre Boundaries
- Annex 7 – Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment Methodology Statement Iteration 1 – April 2019.

23. The first section of the report presents the overarching vision for the plan, which is supported by eleven objectives. The chapters of the issues and options document follow an introductory message from the three Leaders of the councils and are centred on six overarching themes which cover each of the objectives. These include;

- Delivering Homes
- Economic Growth, Employment, Education and Skills
- Transport and How We Travel
- Improving Health and Wellbeing
- Resource Management and Climate
- Locations for Future Development

24. Each section of the report presents a number of issues relevant to the themes and a series of question around how we deal with them.

25. There is a total of 67 questions throughout the document and respondents can choose to complete all or some of the questions, none other than basic personal details are mandatory. This is designed to enable respondents interested in one area or one theme or site only, to respond only on those parts relevant to them.

26. There is also an optional, equality monitoring survey which will not be linked to individual responses to Issues and Options.

Citizen Space

27. This is a simple, user-friendly piece of software which is used by a large volume of Councils and other public bodies to undertake consultations.

28. The software works on PCs, iPads, other tablets and smartphones and links to the website will be widely promoted.

29. In order to submit a response to the consultation, the user is only required to provide

their name and contact details which are for these purposes only, with clear privacy and security rules in place to protect their personal data.

Proposals for Location of Development

30. Section 8.1 of the Issues and Options Consultation paper deals with the issue of future location of development.
31. Whilst the approach to the Local Plan is very much three-way with the end product being a Central Lancashire Local Plan with broadly the same policies applied, there are inevitably going to be local nuances.
32. The approach to sites and seeking consultation responses reflects those nuances as Chorley Council and the two Councils of Preston and South Ribble are taking a slightly different approach.
33. All of the sites that were received as part of the Site Suggestions exercises are being consulted on – at this stage we are not proposing any specific sites for future uses at this stage.

The Period of Consultation

34. The Issues and Options Consultation will commence at 12.01am on Monday 18th November 2019 and close at 11.59pm on Friday 14th February 2020 (12 weeks, 4 days).
35. It is considered this is ample time for all stakeholders, partners and members of the public to be engaged and provide their views, taking account of the Christmas break.

How we will Consult

36. The main consultation mechanism will be Citizenspace, which is an online portal which is simple to use and is far more efficient than traditional paper methods of consultation.
37. Prior to the adoption of a Local Plan, an examination in public is held during which, a Planning Inspector will test the plan for soundness, to ensure it has been prepared in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
38. The Inspector will want to see evidence of the consultation processes including representations received and how these were taken account of and Citizenspace simplifies this as digital representations are far easier to manage and analyse as opposed to hard copy submissions.
39. We will be undertaking engagement with neighbouring local authorities and statutory bodies such as the Environment Agency, United Utilities and Natural England as required as part of 'duty to cooperate' duties as laid out in the Localism Act 2011.
40. The three councils working with the jointly financed Central Lancashire Team, will be hosting a series of events across all three boroughs to raise the profile of the consultation to maximise engagement. This will include drop-in events, member learning sessions and parish council engagement.

41. Preston will be hosting two drop-in events in December and January in the city centre as well as a PAC meeting and will look to tag onto any other existing events, and South Ribble are hosting one same-day afternoon (1-3pm) and an evening (5-7pm) event within each of their five Neighbourhood Areas. These are to be attended by their officers and supported by the Central Lancashire Team. One of which will be at the Civic Centre (for the Leyland/Central Neighbourhood Area).
42. Chorley are hosting one event during the times of 4-7pm for each of their twenty electoral wards, plus a morning event on one weekend in the centre of Chorley.
43. There will be digital hardware available at the drop-ins to provide access to those who are either not online at home or require some support or training to use it.
44. There will also be member learning sessions delivered in each of the three councils to ensure all members are aware of the consultation and how to access the information.
45. Gateway staff, will be provided with FAQs and details of the consultation to ensure that any customers telephoning or walking in for details about the consultation, are guided to the website and provided support if they require it.
46. Hard copy submissions can be made available if customers are not able to submit their responses online.

Developer Forum

47. A Central Lancashire Developer Forum will be established to provide an effective vehicle to engage with land owners, developers, planning agents, Homes England etc.
48. Expressions of interest have been sought from stakeholders on our mailing list and to date, there are circa 40 interested in participating in the forum.
49. JAC Members have endorsed this and confirmed that members will be involved in these meetings.
50. Preparations will continue including the finalising of all promotional material and the Citizenspace portal.
51. Upon approval by the three Executive Cabinets, hard copy materials will be distributed throughout the three boroughs as required by the three Statements of Community Involvement (public buildings, post offices etc.) and the use of social media and local press used to raise the profile of the consultation prior to commencement on Monday 18th November 2019.

CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT AND OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION

52. The draft Issues and Options document has been seen and agreed by the Central Lancashire Joint Advisory Committee.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

53. None

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

54. The costs of the consultation process can be met from existing budgets.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

55. Please see the Monitoring Officer Comments below.

AIR QUALITY IMPLICATIONS

56. Air Quality and the wide climate impact have been identified as a significant public health issue and probably the largest threat to the borough and its residents. In addition the Council has declared a Climate Emergency with an ambitious target of being carbon neutral by 2030. It is therefore imperative that sound robust and challenging policies are developed to promote carbon neutral building and reduce harmful emissions into the atmosphere.

57. The report itself and the accompanying options paper has no direct impact on air quality but must be carefully considered and improved if the objectives of the Council are to be achieved.

HUMAN RESOURCES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

58. None

ICT/TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

59. None. Citizenspace is already in place.

PROPERTY AND ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

60. None

RISK MANAGEMENT

61. The preparation of the Joint Local Plan has been risk assessed as part of the Local Development Scheme and is subject to annual review.

62. Recent appeal decisions demonstrate that the Government's agenda to significantly increase the delivery of new housing can outweigh a proven five year supply and an out of date local plan. Without an up-to-date development plan all applications will be decided in the light of the NPPF, with its presumption in favour of sustainable development. On this basis, the Council could expect to receive planning applications on safeguarded land and other un-allocated open land sites. Should applications be refused, the impact would be an increase in appeals, together with their associated costs.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPACT

63. An Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out as part of the Local Plan Process.

RELEVANT DIRECTORS RECOMMENDATIONS

- 64.** To approve the Central Lancashire Issues and Options Paper in Appendix One as the first stage in the preparation of the new Central Lancashire Local Plan, in accordance with Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning)(England) Regulations 2012
- 65.** To accept and approve the document as drafted (subject to any misinformation or fundamental errors) recognising that to make any changes at this stage would delay the subsequent approval of the final version as the same version must be approved by all three councils.
- 66.** To approve the proposed methods of consultation including the online portal Citizenspace, and the programme for drop-in events and elected member learning sessions.
- 67.** To approve the key timetable for the consultation commencing on Monday 18th November 2019 at 12.01am and closing at 11.59pm on Friday 14th February 2020.
- 68.** To agree to the commencement of the consultation upon the approval by all three Central Lancashire councils including Preston and South Ribble (subject to any call-in period).
- 69.** To delegate authority to the Director of Planning and Property, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Regeneration and City Deal, to undertake any minor text, layout and formatting changes as necessary.

COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

- 70.** The Council has revenue budget provision for its share of the Central Lancashire Local Plan costs including the proposed consultation work detailed in this report.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

- 71.** We are at a very early stage in the preparation of the new Local Plan. The process we must follow is lengthy and complex. We must ensure that we act in accordance with the relevant legislation and accompanying Regulations. Central to everything is ensuring that we (the three councils concerned) carry out robust public consultation. What is proposed here is particularly extensive.
- 72.** The approval of such policy documents is not a matter for Planning Committee. It is for Cabinet and ultimately Council to approve the Local Plan.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

There are no background papers to this report.

APPENDICES (or There are no appendices to this report)

- Appendix 1 - Central Lancashire Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation – November 2019
- Appendix 2 – All Site Submissions Received for South Ribble

<https://www.southribble.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Annex%204%20-%20South%20Ribble%20Site%20Submissions%20Compressed.pdf>

- Appendix 3 – Proposed Changes to Town, District and Local Centre Boundaries
- Appendix 4 – Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment Methodology Statement

LT Member's Name: Jonathan Noad
Director of Planning and Property

Report Author:	Telephone:	Date:
Steven Brown	01772 625422	19.09.2019

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Central Lancashire Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation November 2019



This information can be made available on large print, braille, audio tape, translated into your language or into sign language. To use these services, please telephone 01257 515151. (English)

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यह जानकारी बड़े प्रिंट, ब्रेल, ऑडियो टेप पर उपलब्ध कराई जा सकती है, जिसका आपकी भाषा में या साइन लैंग्वेज में अनुवाद किया जा सकता है। इन सेवाओं का उपयोग करने के लिए, कृपया 01257 515151 पर टेलीफोन करें। (Hindi)

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Foreword

Our Councils have a long track record of working together to improve the quality of life of the residents of Central Lancashire. As a partnership, we are looking for your views and ideas about the new Central Lancashire Local Plan, which will shape the future of the Central Lancashire area over the next 15 years.

In that time, the population will grow. We need to ensure that we provide sufficient facilities to accommodate this growth. But we need to ensure that development coming forward is sustainable and addresses the impacts and challenges of climate change.

We need your help to decide what type of homes, jobs and community facilities will be needed and where they should go. We also need to think about how enough school places, critical services and leisure facilities can be provided. Other challenges include making sure that our town and city centres are attractive and vibrant, and getting around needs to be made easier and healthier. Central Lancashire also contains a number of special places which need protecting.

So, we need your ideas about when and where homes, services and facilities should be located, and when they should be provided. We need to know what you think the key priorities are for our area.

We are looking forward to hearing what you think and thank you for your interest in the future of our area.



Councillor Matthew Brown
Preston City Council



Councillor Alistair Bradley
Chorley Council



Councillor Paul Foster
South Ribble Borough Council

Please let us have your comments by answering our survey questions in Citizen Space here:

<https://centrallocalplan.citizenspace.com/>

1. Introduction

What is this consultation about?

- 1.1 We need your help to make sure we have a plan for Central Lancashire that creates good quality places to live, work and relax over the next 15 years. People need good quality homes and these can improve the health of communities. We need you to tell us how we can improve our area for future generations and reduce the impacts of climate change by being carbon neutral by 2030.
- 1.2 We want to find out how you think people's quality of life can be improved. How do we encourage people to use their car less and make walking and cycling everyday choices? Without your ideas we cannot create a plan that meets the needs of local people and businesses.

Why do we need to review our existing policies?

- 1.3 We need to have a Local Plan in place that is up to date and in line with national planning policy. The existing Core Strategy and 3 councils' Local Plans were all adopted before recent changes were introduced. They changed how we deal with issues like the number of homes we need to provide; how we protect and improve the environment and managing climate change.
- 1.4 So, we need to create a plan that guides development and ensures that we deliver the right number of homes, jobs and infrastructure our communities need. It also means development will take place in the right places and is sustainable.
- 1.5 To deliver this it makes sense to have one Local Plan for the 3 councils which will include all policies required to guide development over the next 15 years.
- 1.6 Once the new Local Plan is adopted, any Neighbourhood Planning bodies will need to consider whether their Local Neighbourhood Plans need to be updated. There are currently three Neighbourhood Plans in Central Lancashire which are:
 - Inner East Preston Neighbourhood Plan 2015 (Preston City Council)
 - Penwortham Town Neighbourhood Development Plan 2017 (South Ribble Borough Council)
 - Broughton-In-Amounderness Neighbourhood Plan 2018 (Preston City Council).

How you can respond to this consultation

- 1.7 In this digital age, most people find it quick and easy to use their smart devices. We encourage you to do the same with this consultation because it will be much easier for

us to understand what you want to tell us. You can give us your views here: <https://centrallocalplan.citizenspace.com/>. You can also go to your local library to look at this consultation and to get help to respond online.

- 1.8 For more information about events where you can come and talk to us please see our webpage <https://centrallocalplan.lancashire.gov.uk/> or contact the Central Lancashire Local Plan team on 01257 515555.
- 1.9 If you would prefer to submit your response in writing, please ensure you make it clear which questions you are responding to in your submission. You can send these to us by emailing us at CentrallancashirePlan@chorley.gov.uk

Or in writing to:

Issues and Options Consultation
Central Lancashire Local Plan Team
Civic Offices
Union Street
Chorley
PR7 1AL

- 1.10 You can submit your response until 23.59 hours on Friday 14th February 2020.

The plan-making process

1.11 Developing a new Local Plan involves several key stages as set out by national policy. The chart below provides details of the process including the estimated timescales (which are subject to change). Issues and Options is the first stage of this process.

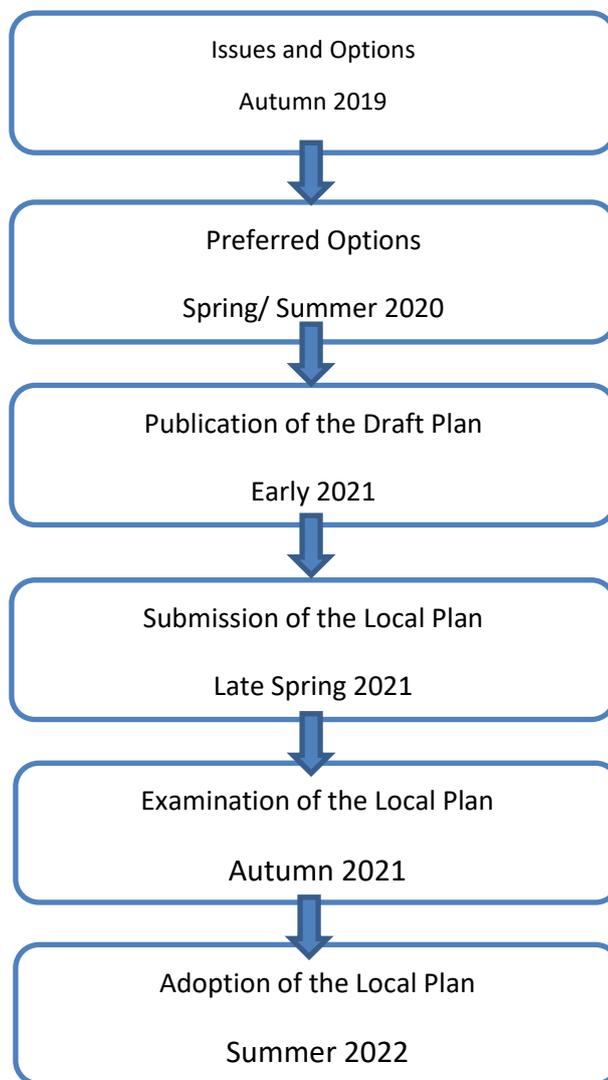


Figure 1: Central Lancashire Local Plan Process

1.12 We are required to undertake a number of assessments throughout development of the Plan. These look at the social, environmental, economic, health and equality impacts of its policies and proposals. A Scoping Report has been prepared which sets out the framework for assessing the Local Plan and this was consulted on during August and September 2019.

1.13 In addition, we also need to undertake an assessment of the impact of the plan on habitats and protected species.

What happens next?

- 1.14 Following the close of this consultation, we will consider all the comments received and publish a document summarising the results which will be used to help shape our Plan. The feedback we receive will be published along with our responses and a draft new Local Plan in a Preferred Options document.
- 1.15 This Issues and Options consultation is the first stage of preparing the Local Plan, and we will be working on this over the coming months and years, during which time there will be more chances to get involved.

2. Vision and Objectives

What are we aiming to achieve?

- 2.1 We need to develop a vision for the Local Plan which sets out how we want to see the area grow and evolve over the next 15 years. This will be different for everyone, but common themes will be shared by all. We need a vision which reflects that changes will happen, and we want to manage that to achieve the best outcome for Central Lancashire.

Our Vision for Central Lancashire is:

By 2036 Central Lancashire will lead **sustainable** development in the region. It will make the most of its economic, cultural, heritage and natural assets and be at the forefront of tackling and adapting to the impacts and challenges of **climate change**. Recognising this, the councils will seek to be carbon neutral by 2030.

The areas of Preston, Chorley and South Ribble will continue to benefit from a growing economy and be **attractive to both new and existing investors and visitors**, taking advantage of retail, heritage, education and high-quality city and town centres. Its cutting-edge technology and engineering sectors, including the aerospace industry, will **continue to invest** in the success of their businesses in the area, and this will continue to enhance our region's economy. **Skills and education attainment** will continue to improve, made possible by high quality education offered across the area and the continued success of UCLAN. Central Lancashire will continue to thrive on its creativity and entrepreneurial flair and offer opportunities for graduates which will help to retain these skills to drive a **flourishing globally connected economy**.

Connections will improve access across Central Lancashire by prioritising **sustainable transport** including walking and cycling to link town and city centres with their wider areas, alongside other destinations. Overall, Central Lancashire will be a place where people and businesses thrive and a place where people will want to work, live and visit.

New development will take place in a manner that mitigates against and adapts to the cause and impacts of climate change. It will take account of flood risk, be **energy efficient and of high design quality**, championing outstanding new architecture, making efficient use of resources and enabling waste prevention. It will respect and where appropriate reinforce local character and the relationships between buildings and their wider surroundings. Central Lancashire will be served by efficient **infrastructure** including transportation, utilities and communications.

Preston's strategic role will be fulfilled as a regional city and a major economic driver for Central Lancashire and its surrounding areas, providing high quality retail, cultural and entertainment offer. Preston will continue to operate as a successful regional centre and a place where people choose to live and work, providing opportunities for both rural and city centre living.

Chorley will continue to provide opportunities for enterprise to thrive and businesses to grow building on past success. It will continue to make the most of its natural assets through links to open countryside and outstanding parks; providing attractive, prosperous and welcoming places to live.

South Ribble will continue to boost economic growth and draw on the success of the area’s diverse economic offer. The importance of its Green links between its discreet towns and villages will be enhanced, as well as improved accessibility to the surrounding areas promoting better health and well-being.

The residential **neighbourhoods** of Preston, Chorley and South Ribble will be attractive places to live, reflecting their individual historic and cultural heritage and enhancing their **local distinctiveness**. Our communities will continue to recognise and welcome the **diversity** within them, with residents living in high quality and well designed, **low carbon housing** with a balance of housing types and tenures provided. Our **Local centres** will serve as **vibrant and accessible focal points** for communities, providing a range of shops, experiences, community services and facilities to meet the day-to-day needs of residents as well as providing opportunities to enhance and develop small business and **protecting the character** of rural villages. In Preston those most in need of a suitable home will be the priority, and the economic environment in the City will be harnessed to ensure prosperity for everyone through a **commitment to community wealth building**. **Neighbourhoods** across Central Lancashire will be safe, clean and sustainable with **healthy, highly skilled and diverse communities**. Residents will have easy access to **public services, good jobs and decent, high quality affordable homes**.

Proposed Central Lancashire Local Plan Objectives

2.2 These are our proposed objectives for delivering our vision for Central Lancashire. They will run throughout our policies and shall be the basis of how we will measure our success as we implement our Plan for the three boroughs.

Theme	Objective
Climate Change and Resource Management	O1. To ensure new development is resilient to and mitigates against the effects of climate change by achieving our goal to be carbon neutral by 2030; by reducing vulnerability to flooding; promoting development that minimises natural resource and energy use; reduces pollution and incorporates sustainable construction practices, including water efficiency measures.
Infrastructure and sustainable communities	O2. To focus development at accessible and sustainable locations which make the best use of existing infrastructure, facilities and services wherever possible, and ensure that any necessary improvements are brought forward in a co-ordinated and timely manner.
Sustainable Travel	O3. To ensure all new development delivers a design which puts active travel and sustainable modes (cycling, walking and public transport) ahead of the private car, and makes efficient use of the existing transport infrastructure and improves accessibility especially east-west links.
Housing	O4. To provide a mix of housing types and sizes to create healthy, vibrant, safe and sustainable communities that deliver the City Deal and meet the changing housing needs of Central Lancashire’s population, and support a range and variety of tenures alongside a range of

	family homes and any potential need for the Traveller community, with affordable housing delivery being a high priority.
Economic Growth & Employment	O5. To provide a range of employment and economic growth opportunities in sustainable locations, prioritising community wealth building, and building on the infrastructure improvements within City Deal, to support the growing population and attract inward investment.
Education & Skills	O6. To build on the existing education, training and skills attainment at all levels including vocational and apprenticeships, through provision of high-quality education facilities and training opportunities offered across the area.
Local Distinctiveness	O7. To protect and enhance the rich diversity of the character and appearance of Central Lancashire's landscape and townscape, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place.
Design	O8. To create the highest quality design which is sustainable, accessible, safe and promotes a sense of place through the design of the built form; the relationship of buildings with each other and the spaces around them, and which responds positively to the prevailing character of the area.
Built Environment Assets	O9. To protect and enhance the significance of the buildings, sites and features of archaeological, historic or architectural and cultural/artistic interest and their settings, and ensure new buildings, spaces and places are designed to the highest quality.
Natural Environment Assets	O10. To conserve and enhance the natural environment including designated and undesignated landscapes and biodiversity and promote a connected green infrastructure network that plays a role in managing flood risk, delivers net gains in biodiversity and improves access to nature.
Health & Well-Being	O11. To ensure that all development makes a measurable contribution to the reduction of health inequalities, whilst improving social inclusion and equal opportunities. Development shall also promote healthy lifestyles to maximise health and well-being.

Table 1: Central Lancashire Local Plan Objectives

1) Will the Vision and Objectives deliver the Central Lancashire you want to see?

2) **If not**, what changes would you like to see?

3. Delivering Homes

- 3.1. Providing new homes is an important issue for us all. The type and quality of homes that are available can have a direct impact on the local community and the health of our residents. Central Lancashire will offer homes that enable communities to thrive; where young people can stay in the community where they grew up, when they want to rent or buy their own home. Likewise, older people can stay at home for longer, as their homes are designed to be easily accessible and adaptable. Affordable housing is a key priority, delivering new homes for social or affordable rent is essential to tackling inequality and improving the life chances of those who fall into homelessness, including young people and children.
- 3.2. Central Lancashire is a diverse area, with a mix of urban and rural parts and whilst we are a single housing market area, with people moving across our boundaries, we are three distinct boroughs. For this reason, there may occasionally be a need for different approaches, for example when looking at the density of new homes or types provided, or where we locate development. In addition, we also need to consider how small sites can come forward for development.

3) How can we make sure the homes we plan for meet the needs of everybody?

The number of homes

- 3.3. The method used to work out how many homes are needed in a local authority area changed recently with the government introducing the 'standard housing method' which uses a set formula.
- 3.4. It is likely that the number of homes we must deliver for this plan period of 2021-2036 will be different to our existing policy. This currently requires the three authorities to deliver a total of 1,341 homes a year, over the plan period¹.
- 3.5. The formula for the standard housing method means that the actual number of

¹ See Housing Land Statements:

Preston – Housing Land Position At 31st March 2019

<https://www.preston.gov.uk/yourservices/planning/planning-policy/monitoring/>

Chorley - Housing Land Monitoring Report: April 1st 2018 to March 31st 2019 - (May 2019)

<https://chorley.gov.uk/Documents/Planning/Planning%20Policy/Housing%20Land%20Monitoring%20Report%202019%20new.pdf>

South Ribble – Housing Land Position incorporating update to Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment – At 31st March 2019

<https://www.southribble.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Housing%20Land%20Position%20and%20SHLAA%20-%202018-19%20-%20FINAL%20-%20App%204%20amended%20Aug%2019.pdf>

dwellings required changes annually, in line with population changes and the ratio of income to house price changes. At the time of producing this document, the figures were:

Preston	Chorley	South Ribble
<u>Homes Per year</u>	<u>Homes Per year</u>	<u>Homes Per year</u>
241	579	213

3.6. The government see these as a starting point for the planning process rather than a compulsory target but consider that it is only in exceptional circumstances that a different method could be used. Therefore, as a starting point, 1,033 houses would need to be provided every year across Central Lancashire, which over the 15-year plan period would be 15,495 houses. The three councils are still looking into the number of homes we need in Central Lancashire and how these will be spread across Preston, Chorley and South Ribble. We will have more information about this when we next consult with our communities.

4) How can the Local Plan ensure enough homes are provided so everyone has somewhere to live?

5) Do you think the Local Plan should plan for the minimum number of homes needed, but should aim to deliver more if it can?

Distribution of homes

3.7. Preston, Chorley and South Ribble Councils have agreed to work together to agree where new homes are needed, taking account of things like investment in roads and employment sites, and locations where new jobs can be created.

6) Where do you think new homes should be provided in Central Lancashire? Please be as specific as you wish.

What happens if we do not have enough land?

3.8. We are at a very early stage of preparing our new Central Lancashire Local Plan and therefore it is too early to say if we will be proposing to suggest or allocate sites within the Green Belt, (or Sites of Scientific Interest (SSSIs) or Open Countryside etc.) for development.

3.9. National policy sets out a very clear framework as to the strict criteria to be applied when deciding to allocate sites within the Green Belt, so our starting point must be to

look at whether additional housing can be accommodated on brownfield land.

- 3.10. Over half (50.2%) of Central Lancashire is designated as Green Belt, with Chorley having the highest proportion of land covered by the designation. The designation restricts the type of development which can take place and generally requires special circumstances to be demonstrated where development is proposed.
- 3.11. It will be for a future consultation to determine if and when there is a need to consider looking at sites within the Green Belt.

Meeting the housing needs of particular groups

- 3.12. Students, older people and Gypsy and Travellers are some of the specific groups we must consider and plan housing for, as part of plan-making. We are currently gathering evidence as to what we need to do to ensure the needs of all groups are considered in our new Local Plan.
- 3.13 Preston City Council has recently published a study into student accommodation in the City, which finds that the supply of purpose built accommodation significantly outstrips demand. It is also the case that the University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN) is not currently planning for future growth in student numbers. As a result, the Council has produced a policy note with the intention of requiring any applications for more purpose-built student accommodation outside of the campus area to fully demonstrate that there is sufficient demand.
- 3.14 Going forward there are various options which could be pursued in the Local Plan to deal with this issue.

7) Do you think there should be no new purpose-built student accommodation in Preston?

8) Do you think we should identify a student zone, centred around the UCLAN campus, where new purpose-built student accommodation could be built and resist it elsewhere?

9) Or do you think there is another way this can be dealt with?

- 3.15 A Study into the requirements of Gypsy and Travellers has also been produced. This identifies a need for a replacement site for the unauthorised site in Preston. The majority of the provision required can be catered for by the progression of existing sites. However, one site in Preston, at Rosemary Lane (PR4 0HF) is unauthorised. If this site were to be authorised, then that would mean that a replacement site elsewhere in Preston would be able to be much smaller.

10) Should the existing unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller site at Rosemary Lane in Preston be authorised for use by Gypsies and Travellers, or should a larger site be found somewhere else?

11) If a larger site should be found, where do you think it should be?

3.16 The Study also says that there is a need for a facility to accommodate communities travelling through the area, and this could be within any of the three authorities. This would be a “Transit Site”, which allows communities to stay temporarily on a site for a period of up to three months.

12) Where could a transit site be located?

4. Economic Growth, Employment, Education and Skills

Economic growth

- 4.1 Central Lancashire has a thriving economy and excellent higher education facilities, along with nationally important industries. Preston is the largest centre of population, work and town centre uses in Central Lancashire, and Preston city centre is the key driver of the Central Lancashire economy. These characteristics, together with general performance against overall quality of life indicators, along with strong access to key public transport hubs and the strategic road network; attract new businesses, talent and investment in the area. The Local Plan will assist in creating the conditions for our economy to continue to grow. It will do this by encouraging businesses of all types and sizes to establish, thrive and grow in Central Lancashire; and those businesses will invest in jobs, education, skills and development at sustainable locations. The Local Plan will include flexibility to help our high streets to evolve and adapt to challenging times.
- 4.2 Our high streets should better reflect changing aspirations and needs, and be enhanced as vibrant, attractive places to live, work and relax within a high quality environment and public realm. Central Lancashire has a business survival rate that is up to 5% lower than the England average². We are looking to improve broadband, business start-up and five year survival rates to boost our local economy and to contribute to a flourishing globally connected economy. Central Lancashire contains a number of internationally competitive businesses which act as a means of attracting new businesses and investment in the area. These are from sectors including: aerospace; digital; IT; health and advanced engineering and manufacturing sectors; energy and creative and business support industries. These are sectors which we need to support, develop and help to expand to contribute to meeting the government's Grand Challenges of the UK Industrial Strategy.

Employment land

- 4.3 To help understand what is needed a Central Lancashire Employment Land Study Update (2019) has been prepared. This looks at the existing supply of employment land against future predicted requirements.
- 4.4 The Study Update identifies that each authority requires additional land for local needs to 2036. The amount of land required is:
- Chorley – 37.18 hectares (ha) further need
 - Preston - 22.54 ha further need
 - South Ribble – 43.72 ha further need.

Central Lancashire Total - 103.44 ha further need.

² Source: Lancashire LIS Evidence Base, May 2019.

- 4.5 South Ribble contains two strategic land allocations – the Cuerden Strategic Site and the Samlesbury Enterprise Zone. These are strategic locations, to be marketed primarily to companies outside of Central Lancashire and, in the case of the Enterprise Zone, to specific sectors outside Lancashire. Therefore, they are distinct from the established local supply, because they are meeting a separate strategic requirement. This means that local needs cannot be met by these sites.
- 4.6 Preston City Centre and Inner East Preston comprise the Central Preston Strategic Location, which is one of the main locations in Central Lancashire where major economic growth and investment is focused.
- 4.7 The Study Update also identifies gaps in provision which the Local Plan will need to address as follows:
- Chorley – Larger B8³ options. Some 13.55 ha of primarily B1(a) office land is also required
 - Preston – Preston needs more sites suited for B1(a) offices and B8 warehousing, but has more than sufficient land allocated for B1(c)/B2 uses, with any oversupply likely focused in North East Preston (where land will also suit B8 options)
 - South Ribble – Sites suiting both larger B2/B8 uses and B1(a) offices.
- 4.8 The specific need for office space, using previous take up as a guide is:
- Chorley – 13.55 ha = 52,849 sqm at 3,900 square metres (sqm)/ha
 - Preston – 22.33 ha = 87,087 sqm at 3,900 sqm/ha
 - South Ribble – 24.97 ha = 97,383 sqm at 3,900 sqm/ha.
- 4.9 However, it is important to note that modern businesses may have different space, flexibility and business environment requirements than traditional employment uses.
- 4.10 For Central Lancashire to remain a competitive location for economic growth, the optimum choice of scale, sustainable locations and type of sites and premises should be delivered at places that are convenient, attractive and safe to travel to.
- 4.11 The safeguarding and provision of a range of appropriate education, training and skills attainment opportunities for residents of all ages, and of related infrastructure and amenities, are important to sustain and further support economic growth in Central Lancashire.

13) Are there any other types of economic growth the Plan should be planning for?

14) Where should the distribution and priority locations for economic growth be in Central Lancashire?

³ Please see Glossary for explanation of Use Classes.

Employment, education and skills

- 4.12 Despite Central Lancashire's strengths, some areas of the economy are underperforming and not reaching their full potential. More needs to be done to change this. For example, the ageing population means that we also have an ageing workforce. We need to continue to be able to attract younger people to live and work here. We also need more employment opportunities available (at the right qualification and skills level) that are attractive to our graduates.
- 4.13 We need to create the local economic conditions, business environment and enhance linkages with economic development to encourage investment and development. This will generate jobs, apprenticeship and training opportunities and community wealth building at all levels. In order to attract employers and ensure continued economic growth in Central Lancashire and for people to access higher skilled jobs, the skills gap will need to be addressed.

15) What kind of jobs would you like to see created in Central Lancashire?

- 4.14 Lancashire County Council are responsible for the provision of schools in Lancashire and we are required to work with them to plan for the number of school places, both primary and secondary, in addition to other educational provision during this plan period. Lancashire County Council have a published methodology for forecasting the future need for school places and they will use this as we develop this Local Plan, to ensure we are planning for the increase in school places which arises from the new development. This will inform future investment in schools including the location for any additional provision.
- 4.15 The change in demand for school places presents an opportunity through the Local Plan process to review school provision. Consideration could be given to how school sites could provide better facilities and may provide opportunities at some vacant sites, (if they arise), for redevelopment for alternative uses such as new homes.

16) Do you have any views about school provision in Central Lancashire?

17) How can the Plan help deliver enough job opportunities for apprentices and graduates?

Town centres

- 4.16 City/town/local centres are at the heart of community life and play a key role in shaping peoples' perceptions of an area. Attractive, vibrant and prosperous centres can be the key to attracting growth and investment into the wider area. Equally, declining centres can have the opposite effect.
- 4.17 Updated retail and leisure studies have been prepared for Central Lancashire and these will inform the policies to be developed. The studies include proposed amendments to

the boundaries of city/town/local centres, based on the findings of detailed centre health checks⁴, covering matters as set by national planning guidance.

- 4.18 The boundaries of Preston city centre and its primary shopping area are defined on the City Centre Plan Policies Map. These boundaries have been reviewed in the 2019 Preston Retail and Leisure Study, which recommends changes to them. Consistent with the current approach in Preston, the study does not recommend the designation of primary and secondary frontages in Preston. The study recommends a minor boundary extension to local centres at New Hall Lane, Plungington Road and Ribbleton Avenue to include additional shops, and a minor contraction of the centre at Ribbleton Lane to exclude a small cluster of vacancies. It also assessed Broughton Village Centre and Northway Village Centre, which are centres identified in the Broughton-in-Amounderness Neighbourhood Plan, as at most performing the function of neighbourhood centres. Therefore, a formal boundary is not suggested for these centres because they are not recommended for inclusion in the Central Lancashire retail hierarchy and their small scale and limited function is below that of the local centres in Preston.
- 4.19 For South Ribble this includes changes to the Leyland Town Centre boundary. The Primary Retail Frontages in Leyland would remain the same, with an extension to the primary shopping area to form a secondary retail frontage, to include all of Hough Lane. There are minor changes proposed to the boundaries of the 4 district centres, with no primary retail boundaries proposed. There are no proposed changes to the existing boundaries of the Local Centres in the Borough.
- 4.20 For Chorley this includes a change to Chorley's Town Centre boundary and Primary Shopping Area. It is also proposed that the existing primary and secondary frontages are not included, to encourage a more positive and flexible approach to planning for the future of the town centre, due to the rapid changes taking place in the retail and leisure industries. There are proposed changes to a number of the district and local centre boundaries including the deallocation of four local centres as they are only providing limited retail, service and leisure facilities and are not performing their local centre function. In all cases, residents still have access to amenities in proximity of these centres.
- 4.21 The changes proposed by the studies are attached as Annex 6.

18) How do you think we can make our town centres better?

19) Do you have any comments to make on the proposed revisions to town centre boundaries in Annex 6?

- 4.22 We need to ensure our Local Plan safeguards and enhances the health, diversity and resilience of centres that also allow for growth in city centre living and city centre jobs.

⁴ NPPG Paragraph: 006 Reference ID: 2b-006-20190722 sets these out.

This will help to support the retail, services, cultural, tourism and leisure functions of Preston city centre.

4.23 Our local centres should include provision for local shops, amongst other uses, in order to maintain their key function and role in the retail hierarchy and to contribute to shorter, more sustainable journeys. However, retail requires co-location with complementary uses to sustain a thriving centre in respect of changing retail, leisure and economic trends. Therefore, some flexibility will need to be allowed for to accommodate changes of use to alternative uses where appropriate. Policies will need to make clear which uses will be appropriate in principle in each type of centre and within each part of the city centre, whilst taking into consideration the current flexibility of the government’s use classes categories and that some modern business models are more fluid than this. Preston city centre needs to achieve a greater mix of evening leisure uses and has scope to increase its food and beverage offer. There are identified gaps in the provision of small convenience stores and for a food store to serve the Cottam Strategic location and North West Preston, which contain proposed centres that have not yet been delivered to support housing growth in these areas.

4.24 Alterations to the Retail Hierarchy (as was set out in Figure 13 of the Core Strategy) are proposed and are shown in Figure 2. Further details regarding the retail hierarchy are set out in Annex 6. Buckshaw Village in Euxton is no longer a proposed Centre as it has been established. The following are to be added as Tier Four - Local Centres:

Preston	Chorley	South Ribble
North West Preston (various centres) Blackpool Road / Woodplumpton Road (Lane Ends) Longsands Lane Miller Road New Hall Lane Plungington Road Ribbleton Avenue Ribbleton Lane Sharoe Green	Balshaw Lane Bolton Street Bury Lane Carrington Centre Chorley Road Pall Mall Collingwood Road Coppull Croston Eaves Green Road Eaves Lane (North) Eaves Lane (South) Clayton Brook Hall Gate Harpers Lane Lancaster Lane Market Place Mawdesley Runshaw Lane School Lane Steeley Lane Water Street Wheelton	Farington Earnshaw Bridge Seven Stars Kingsfold New Longton Walmer Bridge Higher Walton Walton-Le-Dale Gregson Lane



Figure 2: Proposed Retail Hierarchy

20) Do you have any comments to make on the Proposed Retail Hierarchy?

4.25 Hot food takeaways are a concern for our communities, and we need to consider if our Local Plan should include policies to ensure they are in the right places and their number and location is balanced. This is discussed in more detail in section 6.

4.26 In the comparison goods sector, retailers are seeking fewer, larger stores, in higher order centres, with space for click and collect facilities and their associated parking demands. Preston city centre and existing edge and out of centre retail destinations in Central Lancashire provide concentrations of large retail units. However, to ensure the continued viability of town centres, it is proposed to include a policy in the Local Plan which sets criteria concerning the information and assessment requirements⁵ for edge-of-centre and out-of-centre retail and leisure proposals.

4.27 The Retail and Leisure Studies for Preston, Chorley and South Ribble have proposed local impact assessment thresholds. These would apply to the information requirements for any proposals (including the formation of mezzanine floors) for/or which include retail and / or leisure developments which are not located within a defined centre boundary where:

For proposals in Chorley and South Ribble:

- The proposal provides a floorspace greater than 500 sqm gross; or
- The proposal is located within 800 metres of the boundary of a District Centre and is greater than 300 sqm gross; or
- The proposal is located within 800 metres of the boundary of a Local Centre and is greater than 200 sqm gross.

and for proposals in Preston:

- The proposed floorspace exceeds 1,000 sqm gross external area; or
- The proposal is located within 800 metres of the boundary of an existing or proposed district centre or an existing or proposed local centre and exceeds 200 sqm gross external area.

21) Do you agree that these distance thresholds will protect our town centres?

22) **If not**, how should the thresholds be amended?

4.28 If the Central Lancashire Local Planning Authorities are in doubt as to which tier of centre in the hierarchy is likely to be most affected, or if the centres likely to be most affected are at different levels in the hierarchy, the lower threshold will be applied. The Council of the administrative area in which the proposal is located will be the sole arbiter in deciding which threshold to apply, and this should be made clear to applicants in pre-application discussions.

4.29 The introduction of such local impact assessment thresholds for retail and leisure development would impose an information requirement for relevant proposals which would be triggered by lower thresholds than the default 2,500sq.m. gross threshold set

⁵ Impact assessment definition: This should include assessment of: a) the impact of the proposal on existing, committed and planned public and private investment in a centre or centres in the catchment area of the proposal; and b) the impact of the proposal on town centre vitality and viability, including local consumer choice and trade in the town centre and the wider retail catchment (as applicable to the scale and nature of the scheme).

by government. This will increase the quality, level of detail and availability of relevant technical retail and leisure information for assessment for relevant proposals via the planning application process in Central Lancashire.

- 4.30 Furthermore, in Preston, given the planning history of the Horrocks Quarter, its city centre location and its proximity to the Primary Shopping Area, it will be important to continue to restrict cumulative development in the A use classes (A1, A2, A3, A4, A5 use) in this Quarter. It is proposed that where proposals are located in the Horrocks Quarter:

Any net increase in floorspace comprising uses falling within the categories of the A1, A2, A3, A4 and / or A5 use class shall not, individually or cumulatively, exceed 12,500 square metres gross, unless a sequential assessment demonstrates that proposals cannot be located in the Primary Shopping Area and an impact assessment demonstrates that the proposal has no significant adverse impact on the Primary Shopping Area.

- 23) Are there any improvements required for specific centres?
- A. Preston City
 - B. Leyland
 - C. Chorley
 - D. Other district/local centre – please state which

Leisure/Cultural Offer

- 4.31 Meeting the future development needs in terms of shopping and employment is a critical function of the Local Plan. However, the Councils see the Local Plan as forming the blueprint for the future of Central Lancashire, and in doing so the Local Plan needs to recognise what makes Central Lancashire the place it is, what is special and unique about where we live, work and visit. In doing so we can, hopefully, use this to drive our future plans and proposals.
- 4.32 Culture is comprised of a wide range of activities and initiatives, about our shared history and our values. It has a crucial role in revitalising and regenerating towns and cities. Central Lancashire has many cultural attractions, including the Harris Museum, Art Gallery & Library; the Worden Arts and Craft Centre and Astley Hall Museum & Art Gallery.
- 4.33 In Preston specifically, the leisure and cultural offer of the city centre has grown significantly in recent years and is a major contributing factor in the improvements we have seen to date.

- 24) i) What do you feel defines Central Lancashire as a place?

ii) What is special and unique about Preston city centre and the towns within Central Lancashire that we can focus on to be the blueprint for future generations?

25) How important do you feel leisure and cultural opportunities are in helping to improve Preston city centre and the towns within Central Lancashire?

26) What cultural and leisure opportunities do you feel are missing in Central Lancashire?

5. Transport and How we Travel

- 5.1 National planning policy provides a clear message that the transport system needs to be balanced in favour of sustainable options, which can have a positive impact on reducing the impacts of climate change.
- 5.2 A better transport system gives people a real choice about how they travel. If developments have a mix of different uses which are close to each other, then people are less likely to have to travel to use them. Where people have to travel, they need to be able to easily access the public transport network. This means they have easy access to the employment, services and facilities available within Central Lancashire and beyond it as well. Improving the public transport system is very important so people have alternative options to using the car. Creating a safe, well connected environment will also mean people have the option to walk or cycle more.

27) How can we make travelling around Central Lancashire better and safer?

- 5.3 The location and design of development can shape how we travel, and this new Central Lancashire Local Plan provides a great opportunity to really make a difference to wider issues around congestion; air quality; climate change and poor health, whilst also allowing us to explore and make use of new technologies.
- 5.4 We will continue to work closely with Lancashire County Council and Highways England who are responsible for our roads in the preparation of the revised Local Transport Plan. This will ensure the Local Plan fits in with wider strategic aims for our County, and that Central Lancashire can grow as an economy and will continue to attract the investment we need to support our transport network.
- 5.5 National planning policy requires us to consider transport at the earliest stage. This involves promoting sustainable options (such as cycling, walking and public transport) and ensuring the impacts of development, for example, on nearby roads or the local environment, are identified at an early stage and dealt with.
- 5.6 We can reduce the need to travel if future developments have a mix of different uses and facilities (such as homes, shops, schools, and places of work) close to each other. This means that people have to spend less time in the car and have more time to enjoy life. It also promotes more active ways of getting around, which helps keep the air clean, with its health benefits and contributes to global issues of addressing climate change and managing resources.

Active travel including cycling and walking

- 5.7 There is a need to increase the levels of cycling and walking to make them the natural choice for journeys, because it provides so many benefits both to our environment and to our health. In Lancashire, we have a target to double the number of people cycling by 2028 and to increase the number of people walking by 10% by 2028.

- 5.8 We need to have better, safer and more attractive links between areas. This could be as simple as having better information on the local footpath and cycling routes around an area which can reduce travelling times and make vulnerable road users feel safer.

28) How can the Local Plan encourage people to walk or cycle more?

Reducing numbers of vehicles using the roads

- 5.9 Restricting the numbers of vehicles on the road will reduce congestion and delay, as well as reducing carbon emissions and improve our air quality. A way of achieving this is locating significant development in areas which are or can be made sustainable, for example within existing communities or on their edge, although this can be easier in urban areas compared to rural areas.
- 5.10 We can also look to increase the density of development which is close to public transport links such as rail and bus routes.
- 5.11 Other ways of reducing the number of private vehicles using the roads are to reduce the amount of road space available to them, and reallocating this to sustainable modes of transport, such as cycle and priority bus lanes; providing more park and ride facilities both for bus and rail users; generally reducing the amount of car parking; locating facilities close together to reduce the need to travel; prioritising jobs for local people to reduce commuting, and ensuring that bus/rail stations are pleasant, safe places.

29) How can the Local Plan reduce the number of cars on our roads?

- 5.12 Many people drive in to Preston city centre for work or education and to visit shops and entertainment venues. Many city centre residents need to park a car close to their home. A large variety of types of parking are provided in the city centre, which takes up a large amount of land. These are spread all across the city centre, and many are quite small. This can increase the amount of time it takes to find a space, thereby increasing air pollution as people drive round the streets looking for somewhere to park.
- 5.13 It is important that people who need to drive into our town and city centres can do so, but it is also important that we reduce the number of trips made by car by encouraging more people to travel more often on foot, by bike or on public transport. If facilities for walking and cycling and public transport services improve, more people might choose not to drive – but if there is still plenty of cheap parking available, they might still choose the car instead.

30) Do you think there is too much car parking in Preston city centre, not enough or about the right amount? Please tell us why.

31) Would you support a policy which seeks to manage, and over time, reduce the amount of car parking available in town and city centres in Central Lancashire?

32) Do you think the car parks available in Central Lancashire are fit for purpose and in the right locations?

Public transport

5.14 Public transport covers a range of different modes of travel and can have public and private sector involvement. However, public transport provision is unequal across Central Lancashire especially east to west connections, and services need improving particularly in rural areas, as well as where new development is taking place. Voluntary and community initiatives can also help those who struggle to access public transport.

5.15 To be considered a realistic alternative to the car, there needs to be fully integrated public transport system, with an investment in improving/maintaining good accessibility; connectivity; affordability; frequency; reliability; journey times; safety; facilities; attractiveness, and the public realm.

33) How can we improve public transport and encourage more people to use it?

Infrastructure

5.16 It is essential that the infrastructure (things like roads; paths; safe crossings; cycle parking; electric vehicle charge points, bus stops and train stations) needed to support new development is secured both at the right time and in the right place, to support new homes and economic growth. This will help to ensure that local services and transport infrastructure do not become overloaded, and promote local confidence in a plan-led system.

34) What do you think needs improving most in Central Lancashire?

Please rank in order of priority

A. cycle and walking routes

B. public transport

C. park and ride services

D. the existing road network

35) What needs to be in place to encourage the move towards electric vehicles?

5.17 Improvements to the provision of cycling facilities is key to increasing people cycling. This will require designated cycle only lanes and secure storage for bikes and equipment. Other facilities (such as showering/changing /drying rooms) are often overlooked but can make a real difference to whether someone chooses to cycle instead of use a car for a

journey, and all new employment developments should incorporate this within their requirements for new premises.

- 5.18 A barrier to using trains is often that people do not live near the stations and cannot park near a station easily. Therefore, in order to encourage the use of trains (which are often used for longer journeys) better provision for parking and more park and ride stations could be considered.

36) In addition to cycleways, what cycle facilities does Central Lancashire need, and where should these be located?

37) Where is there a need for more Park & Ride facilities?

6. Improving Health & Well-Being

- 6.1 Central Lancashire faces challenges of a growing population (by over 15,000 people between 2018 and 2036) and an ageing population. However, life expectancy for some is declining which indicates health is worsening for them.
- 6.2 Another challenge for Central Lancashire is that people living in the poorest neighbourhoods live shorter lives than those who live in the richest ones. These differences are known as health inequalities. Some of those living in poorer areas also spend more of their lives living with a disability. There are substantial variations in life expectancy across Central Lancashire. So, planning needs not only to support improvements to raise the general level of health, but also crucially it needs to reduce health inequalities between different areas.

38) How can planning improve health and reduce health inequalities?

Obesity

- 6.3 Obesity is a major issue facing both the UK and our area. Childhood obesity affects children from the most deprived areas disproportionately. Obesity is a serious issue because it can impact on mental health alongside serious and potentially life-threatening physical illnesses. The issue is particularly serious in South Ribble – it contains one of the highest densities of takeaway food outlets in the country. Evidence shows links between greater exposure to takeaway food outlets and the likelihood of being overweight and obese.
- 6.4 To tackle this issue Lancashire County Council’s Public Health Team (LCCPHT) recommend restrictions are placed on new hot food takeaways. Preston currently has an adopted Local Plan policy that applies a sequential test to hot food takeaway proposals (meaning they are only allowed if they do not undermine the range of facilities in a shopping area/centre). It also restricts their opening hours during the daytime where they are within 400 metres of a secondary school or sixth form college. The new Local Plan could bring forward a similar policy across Central Lancashire or if there is a more suitable approach, then we would be pleased to hear your views. LCCPHT also recommend providing opportunities to grow your own food, which has many social and health benefits.

39) Do you support the principle of a policy that seeks to restrict new hot food takeaways?

40) **If you do**, what would you suggest a policy contains?

41) Would you support policies that require implementation of the ability for people to grow their own food – such as allotments, community food growing areas, orchards etc?

Active design

6.5 LCCPHT also recommends that active design principles are incorporated into local planning policies. Active design is about designing and adapting where we live to encourage activity in our everyday lives. It aims to ensure that when environments and places are designed, they make physical activity the easiest and most practical option in everyday life. This will increase opportunities to lead active and healthy lifestyles. The principles are set out in figure 3 below.



Figure 3: The 10 Active Design Principles – Source Sport England Active Design Guide (2015)

42) Should the Local Plan include a policy that encourages people to be more active in their everyday lives?

Road safety

- 6.6 Safety of roads is a serious concern throughout Lancashire, including our districts. Motor vehicle traffic accidents are a major cause of preventable deaths particularly in younger age groups, and there are higher mortality rates in lower socioeconomic groups for children and men.

Living conditions

- 6.7 Living conditions impact on health and fuel poverty is an issue in central Preston which appears to be linked to older housing stock. Preston is also the only Central Lancashire district which has wards that lie within the worst 10% nationally for the quality of housing. Therefore, we need to think about how existing housing stock can be improved especially in deprived areas, whilst also ensuring that new housing is suitable and good quality for all. An example of improving existing homes is the award-winning Cosy Homes in Lancashire scheme - <https://www.chil.uk.com/>. Not only has this improved the energy efficiency of existing homes, but it has also improved the physical and mental health of the occupants.

43) How can the Local Plan improve our existing homes?

Healthy neighbourhoods

- 6.8 Large inequalities exist in the area in relation to how healthy neighbourhoods are, based on the Index of Access to Health Assets and Hazards. This looks at how 'healthy' neighbourhoods are. This is based on accessibility to a range of services including retail outlets and health facilities, access to green space and a safe environment, as well as the levels of air pollution (the impact of air quality on health is discussed in Chapter 7).
- 6.9 The worst areas tend to be concentrated in urban centres. The Central Lancashire Public Health Profile recommends that the Local Plan contains policies to promote a health-promoting retail offer across Central Lancashire and seek to improve access to health assets in areas which perform poorly on the Index.

44) What can the Local Plan do to promote healthy neighbourhoods?

Community Facilities

- 6.10 Our existing Local Plans seek to encourage the provision of new community facilities, as well as the protection of existing community facilities. But, in some cases, we have found this difficult to achieve. Community facilities often close for financial viability reasons, and when that facility has been closed for a significant period of time, it can be very difficult to resist planning applications for the loss of the use. A good example of this is the loss of public houses. Statistics suggest that approximately 17 public houses shut every week across the country.

6.11 Some Councils have policies in their Local Plans which prevent a community facility, such as a public house, from being lost, unless there is an appropriate alternative facility within walking distance. Another option is for communities to seek the designation of facilities as an Asset of Community Value, which is defined by regulations as a building or other land which furthers the social well-being or social interests of the local community. However, this does not necessarily mean a community facility will remain operational. It merely means that the premises in which it either currently or previously operated from is protected from demolition or re-use.

45) Do you think there are enough community facilities, such as public houses, local shops, meeting places and cultural buildings in Central Lancashire?

46) **If not**, how do you think we could attract more and where should they go?

Employment and income

6.12 Employment and income have a considerable impact on a person's physical and mental health. Worse health and lower life expectancy are strongly associated with long-term unemployment and children who are raised in workless households are often highly disadvantaged. The Marmot Review highlights the importance of getting people into work to reduce health inequalities, but also that jobs need to be sustainable, amongst other things. Even if people are employed if their income is low, they can still be in poverty and suffer the social exclusion and increased health risks this poses.

6.13 In 2018 Preston had the highest rate of unemployment in Central Lancashire (4.3%) which was higher than Great Britain (4.2%) and the North West (4.0%).

6.14 To benefit the health of the population, employment opportunities need to be provided for all. Options may include ensuring that developers show how new developments would benefit the local population and provide training opportunities. Ensuring that access to job opportunities is easy from areas of higher unemployment and lower income would also potentially benefit health.

47) How can the Local Plan provide employment opportunities to all in society, to improve health and well-being?

6.15 Preston City Council is committed to the principles of community wealth building. This approach seeks to ensure the economic system builds wealth and prosperity for everyone in the City. One way in which this can be done is through the use of co-operatives. In simple terms a co-operative is an association, such as a business, which is owned and run jointly by its members, who share in the profits and benefits.

6.16 The Local Plan could lend support to the establishment of co-operatives in Central Lancashire. This could include worker co-operatives and, perhaps more appropriately, construction co-operatives, where individuals or families work together to directly construct their own homes in a co-operative fashion. This would help in meeting housing needs in Central Lancashire, as well as providing affordable homes for those most in need. There may also be opportunities through co-operatives to establish partnerships with education establishments in Central Lancashire to provide opportunities, through apprenticeships for example, for local people who may not have otherwise had the opportunity, to acquire qualifications and learn a trade.

48) Do you think the support for co-operatives in Central Lancashire is a good thing?

49) **If so**, how can the Local Plan support them so that they flourish?

7. Climate Change and Resource Management

- 7.1 The government is committed to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment. This includes making effective use of land; helping to improve biodiversity; using natural resources prudently; minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 7.2 Our Local Plan must address the impacts of climate change and shape areas to improve air quality and make them enjoyable places to live and visit. This is why Central Lancashire is seeking to be carbon neutral by 2030 and reflects Preston & South Ribble Councils' recent declaration of a Climate Emergency. The Local Plan can have a positive impact on climate change through a variety of actions, from helping people change their habits through to how we design and build areas, as well as encouraging businesses to be more sustainable.

Climate change

- 7.3 The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) have stated that:

“It is now clear that the world has less than 11 years to switch away from fossil fuels to avoid the worst impacts of climate change”.

- 7.4 Therefore, it is clear that the issue of climate change is a global problem and one which planning alone cannot solve. However, the way in which we plan and build future infrastructure can help to reduce our impact. We need to reduce the carbon emissions from all forms of new development from new homes to new roads to help us achieve the Government's target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 100% of 1990 levels (net zero) by 2050. Through the declaration of a Climate Emergency, Preston and South Ribble are seeking to achieve this target by 2030.

- 7.5 The Local Plan can play a part in addressing the impacts of climate change by:

- Effective master planning of new large-scale development areas, to combat future climate change issues.
- Having better policies on design of new buildings/extensions/places which support the use of low carbon design approaches which can make places more energy efficient, and consider the importance of passive solar design, which is about the direction a building faces to maximise the use of the sun's energy for heating and cooling;
- Consider the use of decentralised energy networks where new facilities are being planned close to housing or employment uses, and how to design development to maximise the use of this energy and heating source;
- Work with Lancashire County Council to provide more sustainable transport options;

- Including provision for electric charging points in all new developments and in all existing and planned car parks to ease the move away from conventional fuel vehicles;
- Requiring energy performance standards for new housing or the adaptation of buildings to provide dwellings, that are higher than the building regulations;
- Design all developments to reduce the need to travel by providing green infrastructure which connects to wider cycling and walking networks and other open spaces.

7.6 Where Green Infrastructure is proposed, this can have multiple benefits. For example, it can reduce heat in urban areas; help manage flooding and provide opportunities for new biodiversity by using green roofs and green walls as part of new developments.

7.7 An effective and relatively simple method of tackling climate change is tree and woodland planting. Research indicates that planting new trees is overwhelmingly more powerful than all the other climate change solutions proposed. Woodlands can help increase biodiversity; air filtration; carbon absorption and flood protection, amongst many others. Compared with an average in the EU of about 35% of land area being covered with trees, just 13% of the UK's total land area has tree cover. The new Local Plan can help in exploring options for more tree planting in various ways.

50) How can the Local Plan help to increase tree and woodland planting?

51) Is there anything else that the Local Plan can do to address Climate Change?

Waste management sustainability

7.8 An important aspect of climate change management is the efficiency and sustainability of our waste management system. The Local Plan provides the opportunity to ensure waste and recycling collections remain safe and sustainable for the future. With further development proposed in the years to come, the Local Plan should reflect and respond to the increasing burden on the public sector. It should also ensure residents continue to receive an adequate service that is efficient and reduces its environmental impact where possible. It is likely more recyclable materials will have to be collected separately by Local Authorities over the coming years, and planning policy could play a role in how this can be achieved.

7.9 The provision of waste containers to new properties is something that is often the responsibility of the homeowner as there is no policy requirement for developers to arrange and pay for this prior to handover.

7.10 The Local Plan could address this issue, by encouraging developers to pay for and arrange, the provision and delivery of waste and recycling containers to new properties. In this way deliveries can be arranged in blocks to multiple properties on the same site in a single visit. This approach removes the onus to arrange the provision and the cost burden from

the new resident. It also simplifies the delivery and removes unnecessary vehicle trips whilst reducing the overall carbon footprint.

52) Do you agree that the Local Plan should include a policy asking developers to arrange and pay for the provision and delivery of waste and recycling containers to new build properties?

53) **If you agree**, should this arrangement apply to only major development (over 10 homes for example), or all developments?

54) **If you disagree**, please explain why.

Air quality

- 7.11 Air quality is a key issue for the Local Plan and one which the Government has identified in its Clean Air Strategy as being the largest environmental health risk in the UK. It is an important factor in preserving and improving health and well-being and a key issue for the development of the Local Plan. The Local Plan will need to consider how air quality can be improved in those areas currently considered as having poor air quality and how it prevents further degrading of air quality across the plan area. Figure 4 below shows the different sources of air pollution and their effects.
- 7.12 The Local Plan can help influence where new developments come forward and introduce ways to help society make changes to reduce the levels of air pollution. Data already shows that over the summer months nitrogen dioxide levels are lower than over the winter months. This is due to traffic volumes in the summer being lower and also alternative means of travel (e.g. walking, cycling) are generally more attractive when the weather is better.

The sources of air pollutants and their effects

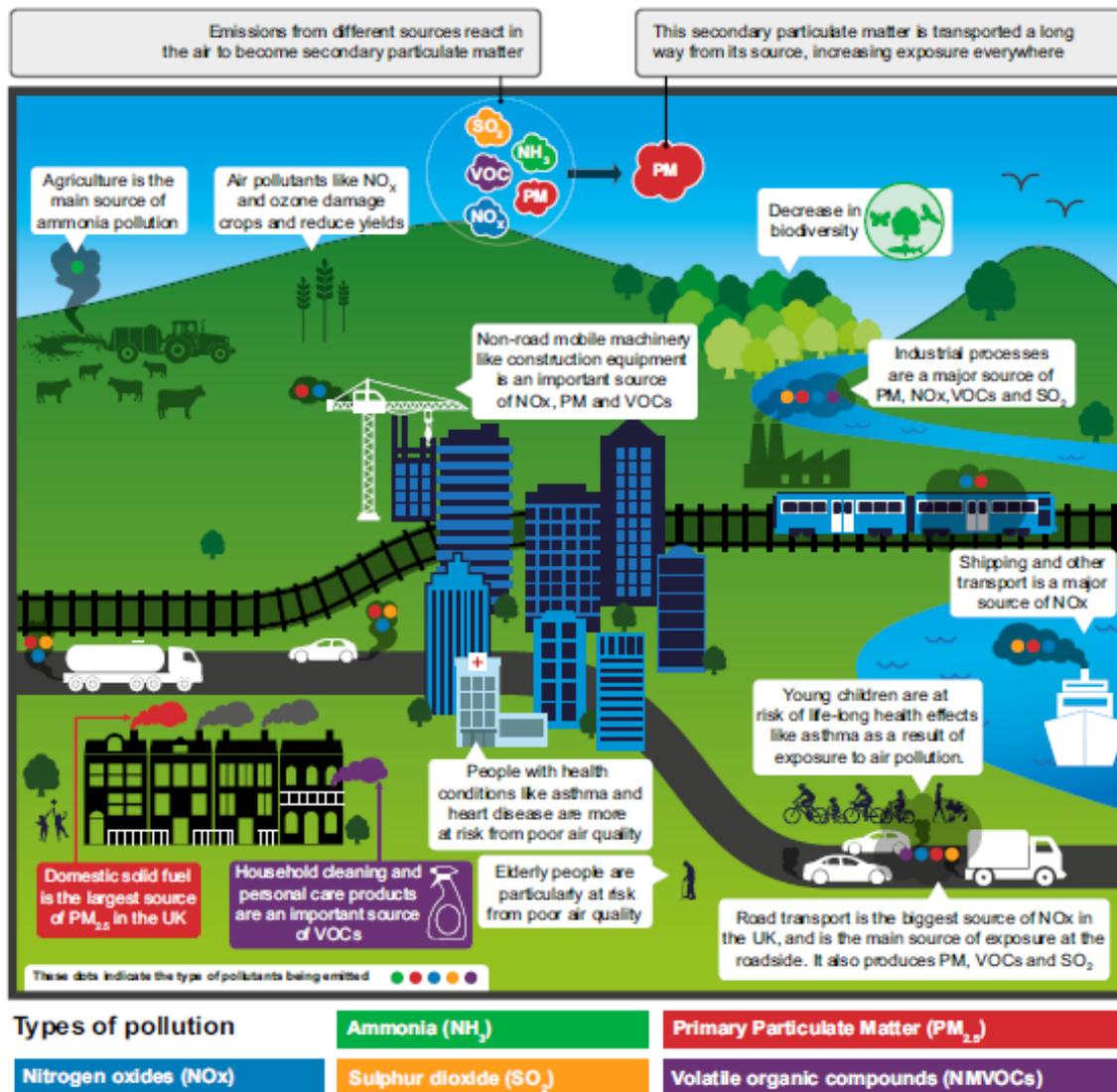


Figure 4: Source: Clean air strategy 2019

- 7.13 We need to consider if the Local Plan should contain a policy to assess the potential impacts of a development on air quality.
- 7.14 Air quality is not just about emissions of greenhouse gases, we also need to consider the impact of other harmful materials in the air⁶. These materials can be produced by vehicles; and by industrial and manufacturing processes, as well as local heating options, particularly wood burning stoves.

⁶ Often referred to as “particulate matter” (also known as PM₁₀) which is anything in the air that is not a gas. It can include both man-made and naturally occurring materials. It is harmful to health. Fine particulate matter (also known as PM_{2.5}) which includes things like dust, tyre fragments from road vehicles and smoke is a major health concern.

7.15 In Central Lancashire there are 10 Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs). There are 5 in Preston and 5 in South Ribble. There are no areas in Chorley which meet the requirements for the designation of an AQMA.

7.16 The Government is committed to reducing the level of harmful materials in the air. It aims to reduce the levels of the most harmful particles so less people live in areas seriously affected by them.

7.17 Combatting air pollution is an issue that the Local Plan needs to address. Policies could be developed to require all new developments to assess the potential impact on air quality, along with considering the potential for financial contributions to be paid by developers, based on the level of expected pollution.

55) How can the Local Plan help improve air quality?

56) How should the Local Plan seek contributions from new developments to improve air quality?

7.18 In recent years wood burners have been introduced to homes as a means of providing heat and energy. Figure 5 below shows the difference in pollution levels within homes based on the type of heating used. To help address this issue, EU regulations (about environmental design focussing on emissions) will come into force in 2022 which means that all new wood burning stoves will need to meet agreed emission standards.

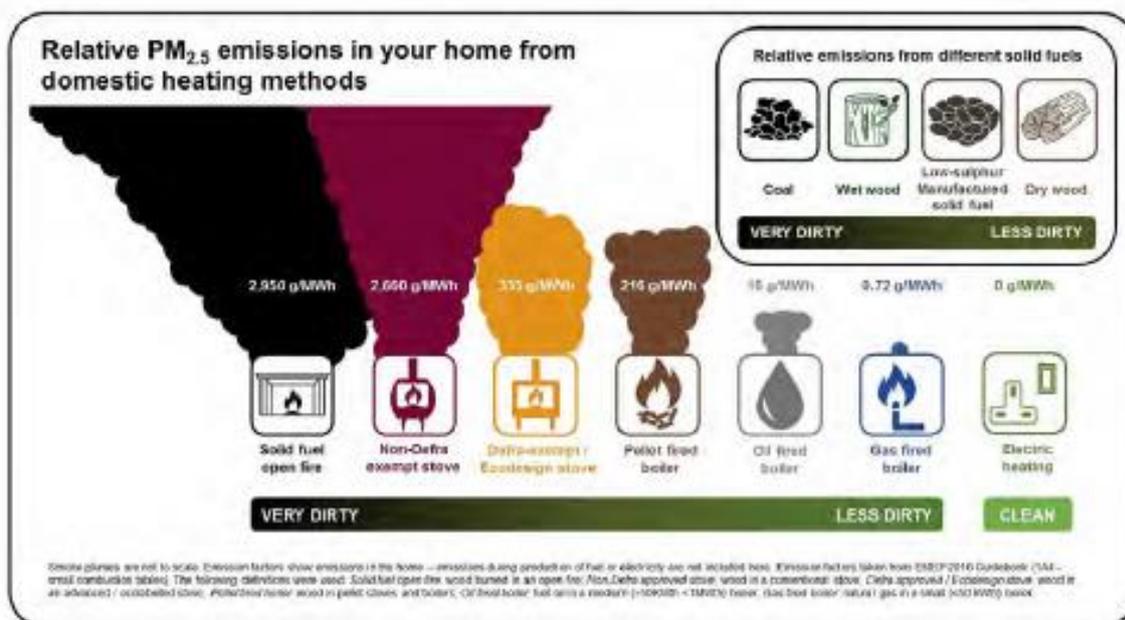


Figure 5: Source: Clean Air Strategy 2019

7.19 Local Councils can now implement smoke control areas. This would make it illegal to allow smoke emissions from the chimney of a building in those locations, unless it is a fuel that is approved by the Council. This would help reduce emissions from local burning.

57) How can the Local Plan reduce smoke emissions?

Natural assets

- 7.20 The area of Central Lancashire has international, national, regional and locally designated natural assets and is fortunate to have rich and varied landscapes and habitats. These include the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), the Ribble and Alt Estuaries RAMSAR⁷ and Special Protection Area (SPA) which is also a Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ), 6 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), 5 Country Parks and 30 Local Nature Reserves (LNR). In addition, the area contains a large number of parks, some of which are designated as historic parks and gardens, as well as a number of children's play areas and over 50% of the area is covered by Green Belt.
- 7.21 There are also 3 main rivers and their tributaries as well as 2 canals, all of which shape the landscape of Central Lancashire.
- 7.22 The Central Lancashire authorities are members of the Lancashire wide Local Nature Partnership which brings together organisations, business and people to improve their local natural environment.
- 7.23 Throughout Central Lancashire there are also many other areas of open space including amenity greenspace, playgrounds, parks and gardens, natural and semi-natural greenspaces and green corridors. An Open Space Assessment has been prepared for the Local Plan which assesses the condition, distribution and overall quality of open space across Central Lancashire and considers future requirements for provision. The report identifies 798 open space sites across Central Lancashire, equivalent to 2,281 hectares. An Open Space Standards Paper has also been prepared which follows on from the Open Space Assessment. This identifies surpluses and deficiencies in existing and future open space provision up to 2036 and it will inform how we secure open space provision through new housing developments.
- 7.24 A Playing Pitch Strategy has been produced which assesses the quantity, accessibility, and quality of all outdoor sports playing pitches and other outdoor non-pitch sports. It also considers future demand. A Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plan has also been produced which provides a strategic framework for the maintenance and improvement of outdoor sports pitches and facilities. In total 330 sites are considered. These reports will inform how new sports facilities can be secured or existing ones can be improved through developer contributions from new housing developments.

⁷ RAMSAR sites are a result of the RAMSAR Convention of the Wetlands of International Importance especially as waterfowl habitat. It is an International Treaty for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Wetlands. It is named Ramsar after the city where the Convention was signed in 1971.

7.25 These resources provide a number of benefits including contributing to better health and well-being of communities through providing opportunities for leisure and recreation. Open spaces help to support habitats and improve air quality as well as providing ways of adapting to the impacts of climate change.

7.26 The Local Plan has a role to create policies which will influence how development takes place across Central Lancashire whilst ensuring that we can still protect and enhance the natural environment and recognise the potential for improvements in biodiversity through all new developments. The improvements in biodiversity will need to be measurable and new developments which impact on existing biodiversity will be expected to assess whether a measurable improvement (referred to as net gain) in biodiversity can be delivered through the proposed development, on and off site, before permission can be granted.

58) Are there any specific issues that the Local Plan needs to address regarding the environment?

Design and the built and historic environment

7.27 Central Lancashire has a rich and varied built environment, which includes landscapes, sites, structures and buried remains of significant historic and archaeological interest. Central Lancashire contains 1,397 Listed Buildings/Structures as well as a number of locally listed buildings, 14 registered parks and gardens and 27 Conservation Areas. The Local Plan will need to continue to protect these.

7.28 The design of a new development and how this fits into the wider environment is therefore an important issue for planning. If historic buildings/heritage assets are to be altered or developed, any alterations must be sensitively designed in keeping with their significance.

7.29 The Local Plan will have to deliver its housing and employment requirements over the plan period. To ensure we can provide what is needed, high quality design is essential for all new developments to respect and enhance the context and character of the area in which they are proposed.

59) How can the Local Plan achieve high quality design in all developments?

8. Locations for Future Development

- 8.1 To identify our future development needs and growth potential we need to establish the broad principles for the distribution and location of new development.
- 8.2 We are currently reviewing how much land we need for new homes, jobs and facilities, but for now we want your thoughts on where we should be considering development. Population is predicted to continue to grow across Central Lancashire and we need new homes for everybody.
- 8.3 However, much of the land in Central Lancashire is subject to a variety of constraints, such as open space and Green Belt which affects where new development can go.
- 8.4 National policy encourages Local Plans to make the best use of the land in their area. This includes considering where schemes can provide a number of benefits; maximising the use of brownfield land in settlements; supporting the development of under-utilised land and buildings; and supporting opportunities to make the most of space that could be developed above existing buildings.
- 8.5 But we still need to decide which parts of Central Lancashire should be considered for development next and we want you to help us decide how we should do this.
- 8.6 The existing Core Strategy aims to provide the most development in bigger places and small amounts of development in smaller places like certain villages. It also seeks to protect the character of suburban and rural areas. Figure 6 below shows the Core Strategy Key Diagram.

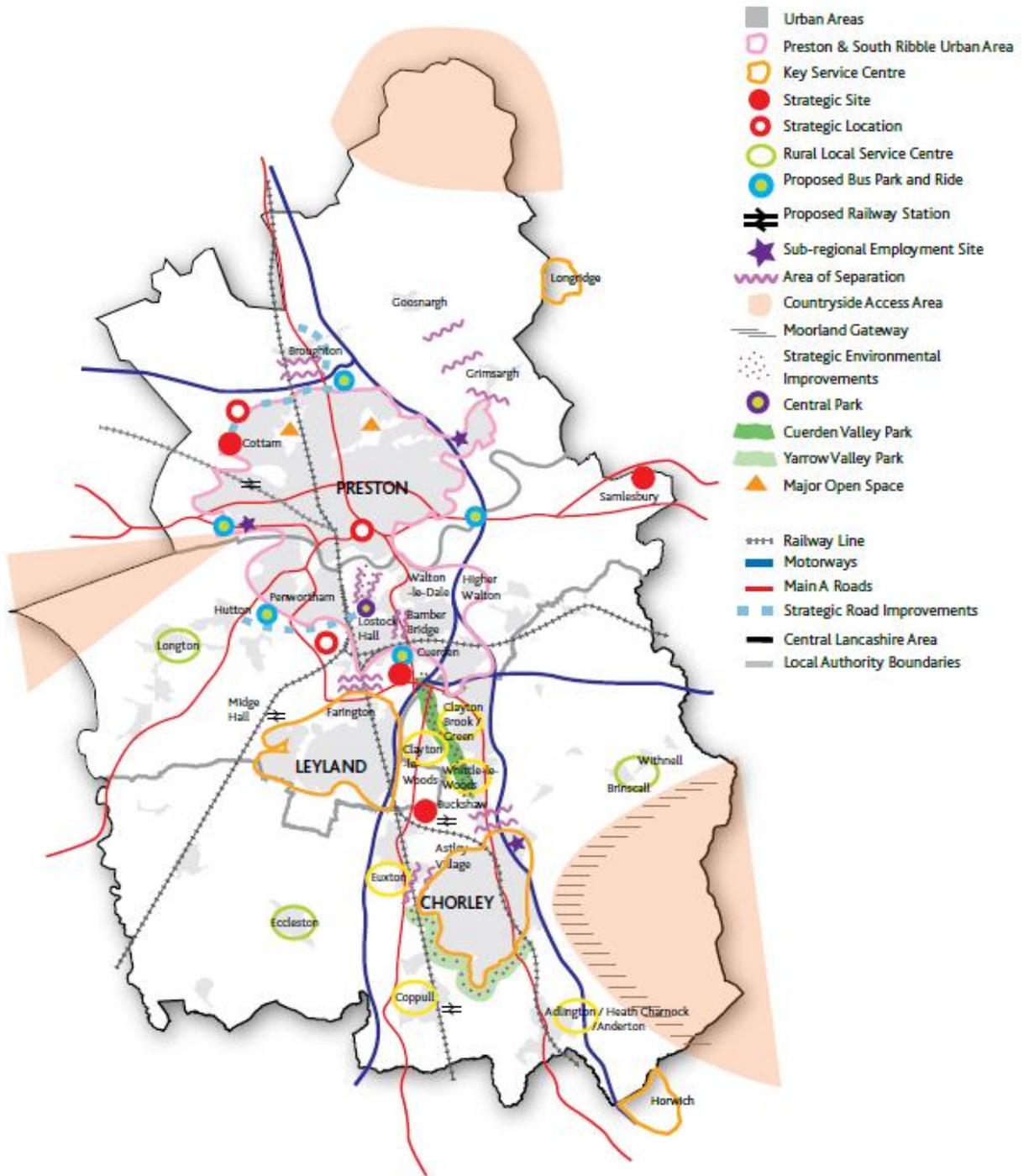


Figure 6: Source: Central Lancashire Core Strategy

8.7 An unintended consequence of the existing Core Strategy is that in some places it has limited where and how jobs can be provided. This can be due to the type and location of sites that are available, and restrictions on what can be provided. This can negatively impact the local economy, because sometimes businesses go elsewhere.

60) Is the Core Strategy approach (set out in paragraphs 8.6 & 8.7 above) providing the homes, jobs and facilities that are needed?

61) Where would you like to see the Local Plan focus new homes and jobs in the future?

City Deal

8.8 Major investment in growth has been happening across Central Lancashire in recent years including the delivery of the City Deal. The Preston, South Ribble and Lancashire City Deal was signed in September 2013 and brings investment of £434 million to expand transport infrastructure, create 20,000 new jobs and build more than 17,000 new homes. Significant areas for development have already been identified as part of the City Deal, but more land is needed as well as ensuring those areas outside the City Deal are not left behind. Figure 7 below shows the infrastructure, employment and housing schemes coming forward as part of City Deal.

Find your investment opportunities in Preston & South Ribble

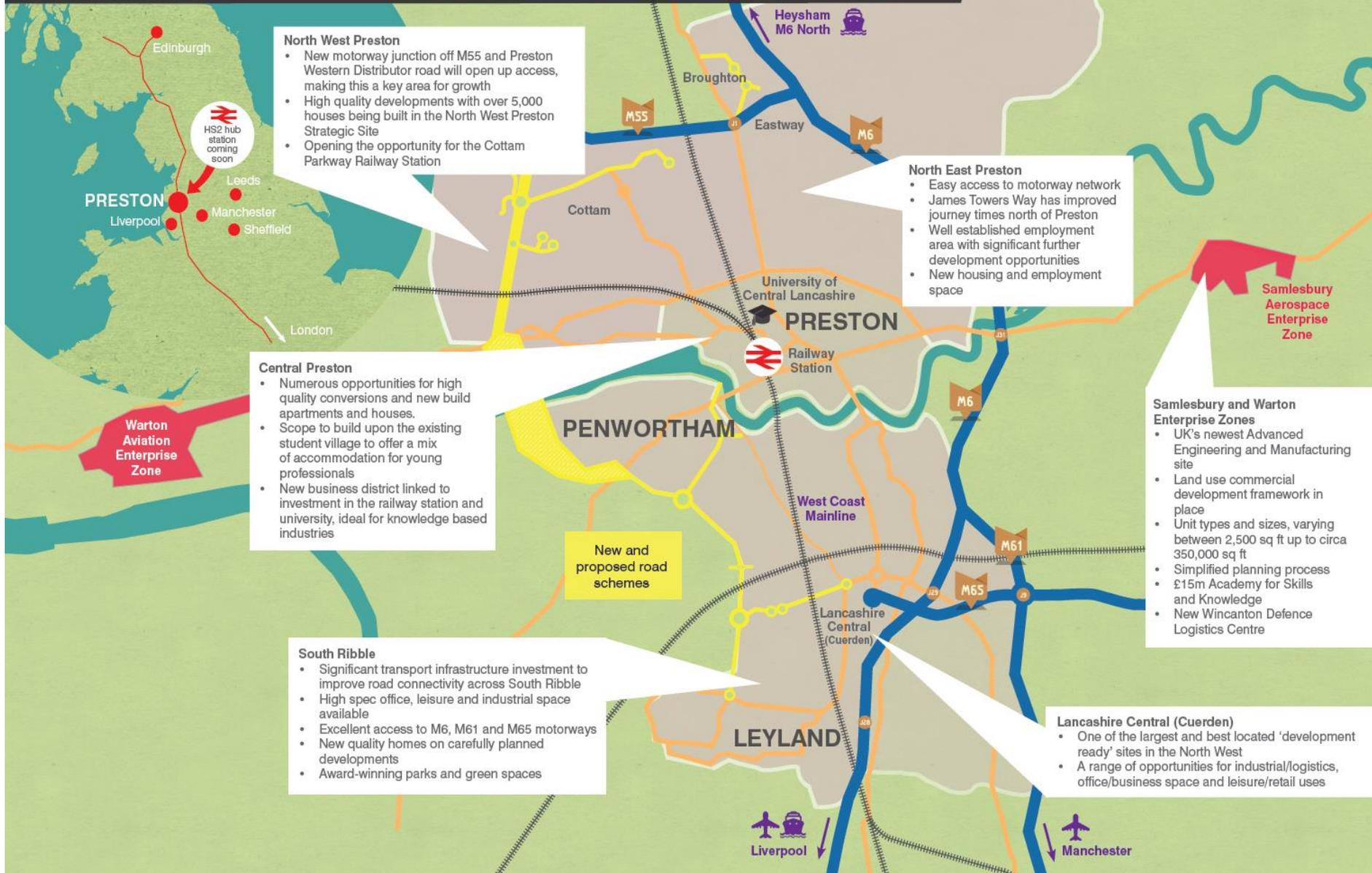


Figure 7: Source: City Deal Brochure

8.9 The City Deal does not include Chorley, but the 3 Councils are working together on planning across Central Lancashire, and therefore there are decisions to be made about where future development will take place.

How we have identified sites

8.10 We have undertaken two Call for Sites exercises to identify potential new areas for development. During the Call for Sites consultation stakeholders (interested bodies including landowners, developers and the public), had the opportunity to come forward and present land in their interest or ownership that could be suitable for future development.

8.11 We received 495 submissions for housing and employment land and are assessing these in line with National Policy as well as a further 229 sites suggested by public bodies, giving a total of 724 submissions.

8.12 The sites have been assessed through a Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA). This assesses their potential to come forward as sites for housing and economic land, by considering their likely availability, suitability, and achievability, as well as how identified constraints can be addressed. The purpose of the SHELAA is to provide an evidence base to inform the Local Plan, but it is important to note that it does not allocate sites to be developed.

8.13 A report about the SHELAA methodology accompanies this consultation (see Annex 7) and we are asking for your views on the approach used.

62) Do you have any comments to make about the SHELAA methodology set out in the Report in Annex 7?

8.14 The three councils are at different stages of assessing sites with further detail included below.

Chorley site suggestions

8.15 We are seeking your views on our proposed list of site suggestions in the borough of Chorley at Annex 1.

8.16 The site suggestions submitted for development in Chorley have been assessed in the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) for housing and employment use. The suitability for these uses is also identified in Annex 1.

8.17 This is an early stage of plan-making and therefore we are only seeking views regarding the principle of these uses. In accordance with national policy, where it is appropriate and

feasible, we will seek to allocate sites for a mix of uses. This may mean that sites have a variety of uses including housing, employment, open space and transport infrastructure.

8.18 We will be looking at what other needs we need to meet in Chorley (for example, open space, sports, recreation, schools and training, health and transport).

8.19 Therefore, these site suggestions are subject to change and representations made will be considered when assessing them and progressing through the plan process.

8.20 Elected members from Chorley Council were consulted on the proposed site suggestions and their comments are published in Annex 2.

63) Please tell us what your views are about the site suggestions proposed by Chorley Council in Annex 1. Please quote the SHELAA reference number provided on the site plan(s).

8.21 If you would like to see all the sites in Chorley borough which have been submitted, these are available at Annex 5. Chorley Council are **not** seeking representations for all of the sites, however, if you wish, you can provide your views.

64) Although we are not seeking representations on the full list of sites in Chorley in Annex 5, you can provide your views if you wish. Please quote the SHELAA reference number provided on the site plan(s).

Safeguarded Land

8.22 Chorley Council are not proposing to allocate any land which is safeguarded for future development in the new Local Plan. Safeguarded land is a policy which enables land to be allocated to meet longer term need and should only be released for development as part of a Local Plan review.

65) Do you agree that Chorley should not have a policy for safeguarded land in the new Local Plan?

Preston and South Ribble suggested sites

8.23 We are still at the very early stage of identifying sites and therefore are using this consultation to present all the sites which have been suggested in the boroughs of Preston (Annex 3) and South Ribble (Annex 4) for consideration by everyone. This does not mean we consider that all the sites proposed for development in those boroughs are considered suitable, but that we are seeking your comments on what has been submitted and which sites you think should be taken forward.

66) If you have any comments to make on the sites relating to Preston and South Ribble listed in Annexes 3-4 please provide them. Please quote the SHELAA reference number provided on the site plan(s).

8.24 The number and location of sites proposed for housing and employment development does not therefore indicate the level or location of housing and employment growth that will be permitted across Central Lancashire, it is simply reflective of the land that has been submitted and considered to date. It is also the case that there are other uses as well as housing and employment that need to be provided e.g. health, education, sports and open space facilities etc. The sites suggested will therefore be assessed further to accommodate such needs as required in an area.

Sites submitted for protection

8.25 A number of site submissions to protect Green Belt sites were received as part of the Call for Sites processes. There are no plans at this time to undertake a review of the Green Belt boundaries in Central Lancashire and therefore, site suggestions to protect Green Belt sites have not been assessed for development at this stage of plan-making.

Call for Sites 3

8.26 We are also asking are there any other sites we should be looking at which you would like to be considered. So, if you know of any other sites that could be developed please get in touch with us or submit details here:

<https://centrallocalplan.lancashire.gov.uk/consultations/call-for-sites-form/>

8.27 We are asking for further sites to be submitted because government guidance requires us to have a sufficient supply of small and medium sized sites. We are also seeking to prioritise the development of suitable brownfield land sites in accordance with government guidance.

8.28 Call for Sites 3 will be the final opportunity to submit sites to us for consideration. Any new suggestions will be assessed and presented in the Preferred Options document, so you will be able to comment on these in the future. The Preferred Options document will also present the sites that are to go forward to the Publication version of the new Local Plan and you will be able to comment on those as well at that time.

Citizen Space

8.29 We are keen to hear your views about the priorities for Central Lancashire. So please let us have your comments on how we can provide the homes, services and facilities that are needed over the next 15 years, by answering the questions in our survey here:

<https://centrallocalplan.citizenspace.com/>

67) Do you have any further comments that you wish to make?

Equality Questions

Equality monitoring enables us to increase our knowledge and understanding of Central Lancashire's diverse communities and gather information about who uses our services. The information you provide will be used to make sure that our services are being accessed equally.

The following questions are optional, if you do choose to answer you always have the option to 'prefer not to say' on any question. All of the information you provide is private and confidential and will not be shared outside the Central Lancashire Team and the three Central Lancashire Authorities.

Q1 Can you please confirm your full Post Code?

(Please Write Your Full Postcode in the Box (e.g. PR25 1DJ))

Q2 Which of the following best describes your gender?

Male Female Prefer not to say

If you describe your gender with another term please provide this here _____

Q3 Does your gender identity match your assigned sex at birth?

Yes No Prefer not to say

Q4 What was your age on your last birthday?

(Please write in numbers in the box)

Prefer not to say

Q5 Do you consider yourself to be disabled? (As defined by the Equality Act 2010 as having a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity)

Yes No Prefer not to say

Q6 To which of these groups do you consider you belong?

White British Irish

Asian/Asian British Indian Pakistani Chinese

Any other White background _____

Any other Asian background _____

Black/Black British African Caribbean

Mixed White & Black Caribbean White & Black African

Any other Black/Black British background _____

White & Asian Any other mixed background _____

Any other ethnic Group _____

Prefer not to say

Q7 Do you identify with any religion or belief?

Yes If yes, please specify here _____ No Prefer not to say

Q8 Do you consider yourself to be...?

Bisexual Heterosexual/straight Gay man Gay woman or lesbian Other

Prefer not to say

Q9 Are you currently pregnant or have you given birth in the last 26 weeks?

Yes No Prefer not to say

Q10 Are you currently...?

Cohabiting Divorced or civil partnership dissolved In a civil partnership Married

Single Separated Prefer not to say

Glossary

Asset of Community Value: a building or other land which furthers the social well-being or social interests of the local community.

Affordable Housing: Housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one or more of the definitions set out in the NPPF regarding:

a) Affordable housing for rent

b) Starter homes

c) Discounted market sales housing

d) Other affordable routes to home ownership: including shared ownership; relevant equity loans, other low-cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent).

Brownfield Land: See previously developed land.

Central Lancashire Local Plan: Document which sets out the strategic planning priorities across the Central Lancashire area.

City Deal: An agreement between government and a city, which gives local areas specific powers and freedoms to help the region support economic growth, create jobs or invest in local projects. The Preston, South Ribble and Lancashire City Deal is a landmark agreement that was signed in September 2013, to achieve a once-in-a-lifetime transformation of the area, creating thousands of new jobs and homes.

Climate Emergency: The effect of climate change poses an immediate danger and therefore the government/councils have set out how they will become carbon neutral (i.e. produce no net carbon emissions) by certain dates.

Co-operative: An association, such as a business, which is owned and run jointly by its members, who share in the profits and benefits.

Comparison Goods: These are goods which tend to have a high value and are not bought regularly such as household items, electrical goods, clothes and shoes. People tend to go to several shops to compare products before buying them.

Fuel Poverty: Where a household cannot afford to keep its home adequately heated at a reasonable cost, given its income.

Grand Challenges: The UK Industrial Strategy sets out four Grand Challenges to put the UK at the forefront of the industries of the future, ensuring that the UK takes advantage of major global changes, improving people's lives and the country's productivity. They are:

- Artificial Intelligence and data
- ageing society

- clean growth
- future of mobility

Green Belt: Land around an urban area which has been designated as Green Belt, where building or development is not usually allowed, in order to prevent urban sprawl and protect the openness and permanence of the land.

Green Infrastructure: A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.

Heritage Asset: A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by a local planning authority (including local listing).

Issues and Options: The first main consultation stage in the process of producing a Local Plan which seeks views on what the main issues are that the Local Plan should seek to address and what options there are regarding those issues.

Marmot Review: An independent review (chaired by Professor Sir Michael Marmot) to propose the most effective evidence-based strategies for reducing health inequalities in England.

National Policy: National policy regarding planning sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how they should be applied. This is contained in the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance.

Natura 2000 sites: Nature protection areas which together form a network of sites in the European Union. The network of sites has been selected to ensure the long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats. It includes both areas of land and sea.

Neighbourhood Plan: A document prepared by a local community which shapes the development and growth of their local area, and forms part of the development plan.

Neighbourhood Planning Body: An organisation which leads neighbourhood planning in an area and can be a parish or town council, a neighbourhood forum of a community organisation.

Open Countryside: The area outside of any settlement with a defined settlement boundary which does not fall within the Green Belt.

Preferred Options: The second main consultation stage in the process of producing a Local Plan which sets out the preferred option for development of an area. Views will be sought on the first full draft of the Local Plan.

Previously Developed Land: Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or was last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill, where provision for

restoration has been made through development management procedures; land in built-up areas such as residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape.

Primary frontage: Buildings fronting a street likely to include a high proportion of retail uses, which may include food, drinks, clothing and household goods.

Primary shopping area: Defined area where retail development is concentrated.

Retail Impact Assessment: An assessment of a) the impact of the proposal on existing, committed and planned public and private investment in a centre or centres in the catchment area of the proposal; and b) the impact of the proposal on town centre vitality and viability, including local consumer choice and trade in the town centre and the wider retail catchment (as applicable to the scale and nature of the scheme).

Safeguarded Land: Safeguarded Land comprises areas and sites which may be required to serve development needs in the longer term, i.e. well beyond the plan period. It should be genuinely capable of development when needed.

Secondary frontage: Buildings fronting a street, which compared to a primary frontage are likely to provide greater opportunities for a diversity of uses such as restaurants, cinemas and businesses.

Socioeconomic: Relating to the interaction of social and economic factors.

Standard Method: This is a way of calculating the minimum number of homes expected to be planned for in an area that addresses household growth and historic under-supply.

Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment: An assessment of land availability which identifies a future supply of land which is suitable, available and achievable for housing and economic development uses over the plan period.

Threshold (Locally Set): A limit applied to proposals for town centre uses, above which they would have to undertake a test of their impact on town centres.

Town Centre Uses: Retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment and more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, nightclubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities)

Use Classes: Land and buildings are used for a variety of purposes and these uses can be defined into different types. The legal basis for this is set out in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, which has been amended, along with law created by the courts (known as case law).

Most Use classes fall into 4 main classes, Classes A, B, C & D. These are further subdivided. For example, in terms of business and industrial activities there are B1 business uses, B2 general industrial use and B8 storage or distribution. B1 is further subdivided into B1(a): Offices, B1(b): Premises for Research and Development and B1(c): Industrial processes which “can” take place within a residential area without damaging the “amenity of that area”. Some uses do not fall within these classes and are known as “sui generis”.

Abbreviations

AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
AQMA	Air Quality Management Area
EU	European Union
g/MWH	Grams per megawatt hour
Ha	Hectares
HIA	Health Impact Assessment
HRA	Habitats Regulation Assessment
IA	Integrated Assessment
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
LCCPHT	Lancashire County Council's Public Health Team
LNR	Local Nature Reserves
MCZ	Marine Conservation Zone
NH ₃	Ammonia
NO _x	Nitrogen Oxides
PM _{2.5}	Fine Particulate Matter (see also Footnote 6)
PM ₁₀	Particulate Matter (see also Footnote 6)
RAMSAR	See Footnote 7
SA	Sustainability Appraisal
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SHELAA	Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment
SO ₂	Sulphur Dioxide
SPA	Special Protection Area
Sq.m	Square metres
SSSIs	Sites of Special Scientific Interest
UCLAN	University of Central Lancashire
VOCs	Volatile Organic Compounds

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Summary of Questions for the Issues and Options Consultation Survey

- 1) Will the Vision and Objectives deliver the Central Lancashire you want to see?
- 2) **If not**, what changes would you like to see?
- 3) How can we make sure the homes we plan for meet the needs of everybody?
- 4) How can the Local Plan ensure enough homes are provided so everyone has somewhere to live?
- 5) Do you think the Local Plan should plan for the minimum number of homes needed, but should aim to deliver more if it can?
- 6) Where do you think new housing should be in Central Lancashire? Please be as specific as you wish.
- 7) Do you think there should be no new purpose-built student accommodation in Preston?
- 8) Do you think we should identify a student zone, centred around the UCLAN campus, where new purpose-built student accommodation could be built and resist it elsewhere?
- 9) Or do you think there is another way this can be dealt with?
- 10) Should the existing unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller site at Rosemary Lane in Preston be authorised for use by Gypsies and Travellers, or should a larger site be found somewhere else?
- 11) If a larger site should be found where do you think it should be?
- 12) Where could a transit site be located?
- 13) Are there any other types of economic growth the Plan should be planning for?
- 14) Where should the distribution and priority locations for economic growth be in Central Lancashire?
- 15) What kind of jobs would you like to see created in Central Lancashire?
- 16) Do you have any views about school provision in Central Lancashire?
- 17) How can the Plan help deliver enough job opportunities for apprentices and graduates?
- 18) How do you think we can make our town centres better?
- 19) Do you have any comments on the proposed revisions to town centre boundaries in Annex 6?

20) Do you have any comments to make on the Proposed Retail Hierarchy?

21) Do you agree that these distance thresholds will protect our town centres?

22) **If not**, how should the thresholds be amended?

23) Are there any improvements required for specific centres?

- A. Preston City
- B. Leyland
- C. Chorley
- D. Other district/local centre – please state which

24) i) What do you feel defines Central Lancashire as a place?

ii) What is special and unique about Preston city centre and the towns within Central Lancashire that we can focus on to be the blueprint for future generations?

25) How important do you feel leisure and cultural opportunities are in helping to improve Preston city centre and the towns within Central Lancashire?

26) What cultural and leisure opportunities do you feel are missing in Central Lancashire?

27) How can we make travelling around Central Lancashire better and safer?

28) How can the Local Plan encourage people to walk or cycle more?

29) How can the Local Plan reduce the number of cars on our roads?

30) In Preston city centre, do you think there is too much car parking, not enough or about the right amount? Please tell us why.

31) Would you support a policy which seeks to manage, and over time, reduce the amount of car parking available in town and city centres in Central Lancashire?

32) Do you think the car parks available in Central Lancashire are fit for purpose and in the right locations?

33) How can we improve public transport and encourage more people to use it?

34) What do you think needs improving most in Central Lancashire?

Please rank in order of priority

- A. cycle and walking routes
- B. public transport
- C. park and ride services
- D. the existing road network

35) What needs to be in place to encourage the move towards electric vehicles?

36) In addition to cycleways, what cycle facilities does Central Lancashire need, and where should these be located?

37) Where is there a need for more Park & Ride facilities?

38) How can planning improve health and reduce health inequalities?

39) Do you support the principle of a policy that seeks to restrict new hot food takeaways?

40) **If you do**, what would you suggest a policy contains?

41) Would you support policies that require implementation of the ability for people to grow their own food – such as allotments, community food growing areas, orchards etc?

42) Should the Local Plan include a policy that encourages people to be more active in their everyday lives?

43) How can the Local Plan improve our existing homes?

44) What can the Local Plan do to promote healthy neighbourhoods?

45) Do you think there are enough community facilities, such as public houses, local shops, meeting places and cultural buildings in Central Lancashire?

46) **If not**, how do you think we could attract more and where should they go?

47) How can the Local Plan provide employment opportunities to all in society, to improve health and well-being?

48) Do you think the support for co-operatives in Central Lancashire is a good thing?

49) **If so**, how can the Local Plan support them so that they flourish?

50) How can the Local Plan help to increase tree and woodland planting?

51) Is there anything else that the Local Plan can do to address Climate Change?

52) Do you agree that the Local Plan should include a policy asking developers to arrange and pay for the provision and delivery of waste and recycling containers to new build properties?

53) **If you agree**, should this arrangement apply to only major development (over 10 homes for example), or all developments?

54) **If you disagree**, please explain why.

55) How can the Local Plan help improve air quality?

56) How should the Local Plan seek contributions from new developments to improve air quality?

57) How can the Local Plan reduce smoke emissions?

58) Are there any specific issues that the Local Plan needs to address regarding the environment?

59) How can the Local Plan achieve high quality design in all developments?

60) Is the Core Strategy approach (set out in paragraphs 8.6 & 8.7 above) providing the homes, jobs and facilities that are needed?

61) Where would you like to see the Local Plan focus new homes and jobs in the future?

62) Do you have any comments to make about the SHELAA methodology set out in the Report in Annex 7?

63) Please tell us what your views are about the site suggestions proposed by Chorley Council in Annex 1. Please quote the SHELAA reference number provided on the site plan(s).

64) Although we are not seeking representations on the full list of sites in Chorley in Annex 5, you can provide your views if you wish. Please quote the SHELAA reference number provided on the site plan(s).

65) Do you agree that Chorley should not have a policy for Safeguarded Land in the new Local Plan?

66) If you have any comments to make on the sites relating to Preston and South Ribble listed in Annexes 3-4 please provide them, including the SHELAA Reference Number, which is provided on the site suggestion plan(s).

67) Do you have any further comments that you wish to make?

Annexes

Note - These are all Separate Documents

Annex 1 - Site Suggestions Proposed by Chorley Council

Annex 2 - Chorley Council Elected Members Comments on Site Suggestions

Annex 3 - All Site Submissions Received for Preston

Annex 4 - All Site Submissions Received for South Ribble

Annex 5 - All Site Submissions Received for Chorley

Annex 6 - Proposed Changes to Town, District and Local Centre Boundaries

Annex 7 - Strategic Housing Employment Land Availability Assessment Report

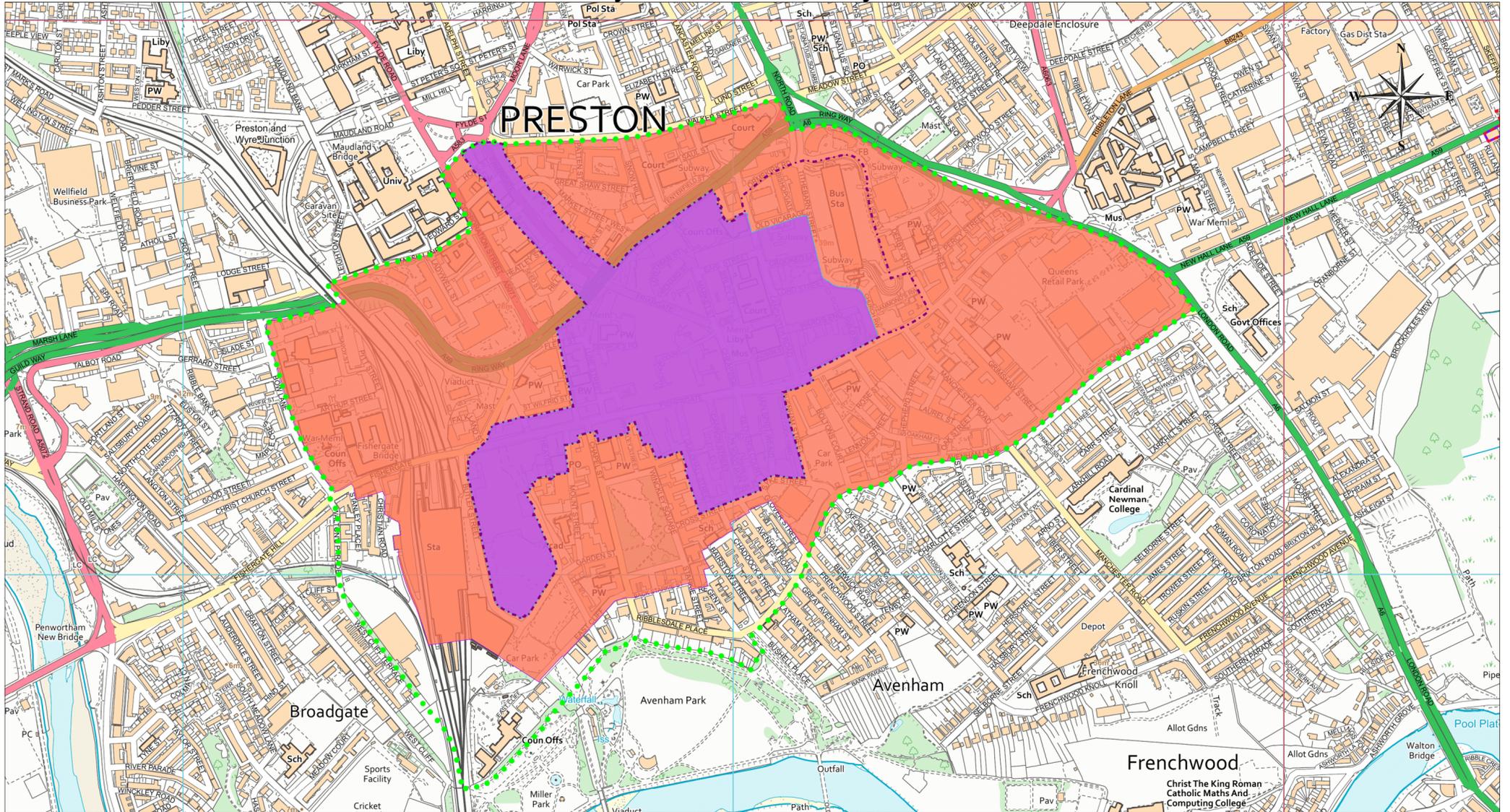
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Annex 6 - Proposed Changes to Town, District and Local Centre Boundaries

Proposed Changes to Preston Town, District and Local Centre Boundaries

Settlement	Type of Centre	Name of Centre	Proposed Change to Boundary
Preston	City Centre	Preston City Centre	Contraction of the city centre boundary to remove a predominantly residential area in the south, which is broadly located in the Avenham Park Conservation Area and the area west of the railway station and south of Fishergate. Change proposed in order to refocus the city centre on town centre retail, leisure and commercial uses. Contract the primary shopping area to exclude the bus station for the same reason.
Preston	Local Centre	Blackpool Road / Woodplumpton Road	No proposed change.
Preston	Local Centre	Longsands Lane	No proposed change.
Preston	Local Centre	Miller Road	No proposed change.
Preston	Local Centre	New Hall Lane	Extend the boundary to include some shops at the western end of the centre north of New Hall Lane.
Preston	Local Centre	Plungington Road	Extend the boundary to include an additional unit and the rear of two units (the rest of these two units are already within the centre boundary).
Preston	Local Centre	Ribbleton Avenue	Extend the boundary to include an additional shop.
Preston	Local Centre	Ribbleton Lane	Contraction of boundary at western end to exclude a small cluster of vacancies.
Preston	Local Centre	Sharoe Green	No proposed change.
Preston	Local Centres	North West Preston	Indicative local centres. <i>(No Map because these are only indicative).</i>

Preston City Centre - Primary Retail Area



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Map Legend

- Retail City Centre Boundary
- - - Primary Shopping Area - With Adopted Extension
- WYG Retail Study Proposed City Centre Boundary
- WYW Retail Study Proposed Primary Shopping Area Boundary

Map Scale



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Blackpool Road/Woodplumpton Road (Lane Ends)



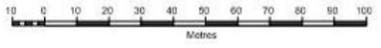
Map Scale

Existing Boundary

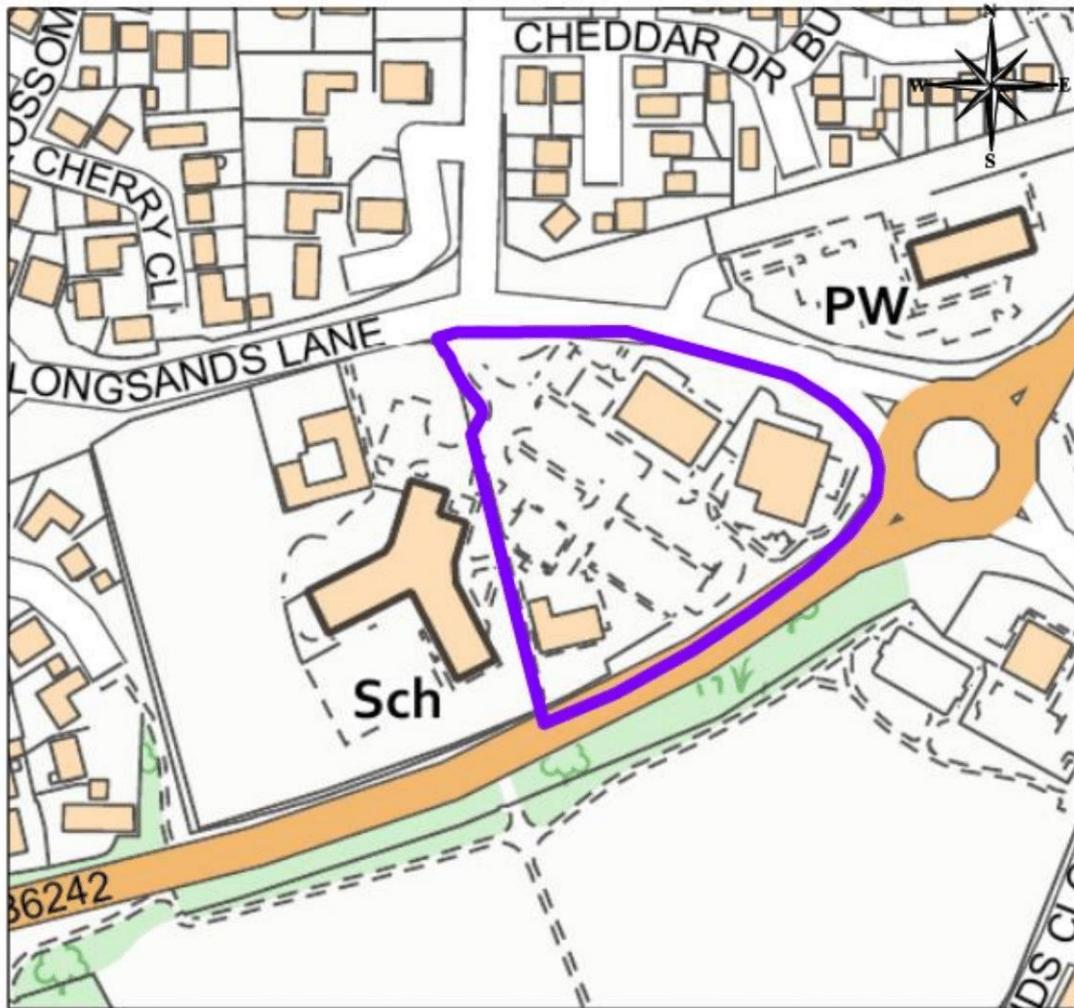
 Blackpool Road/Woodplumpton Road Local Centre - Existing Boundary

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Map Scale



Longsands Lane



Map legend



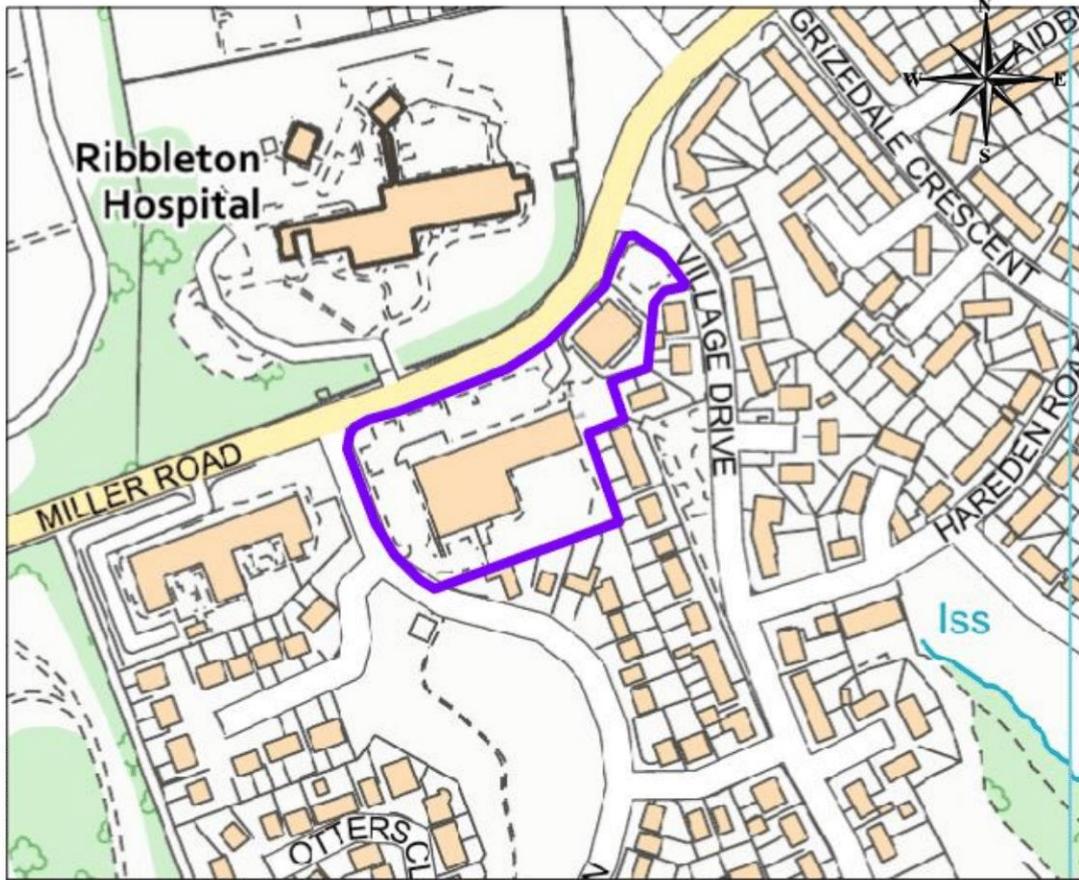
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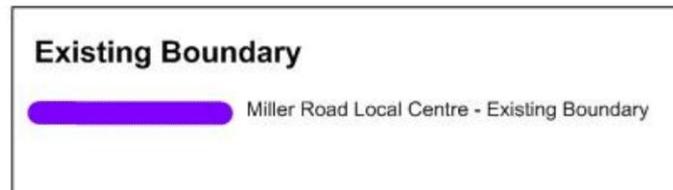
Town Hall
Preston Lancaster Road
City Council Preston PR1 2RL

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Miller Road



Map Legend

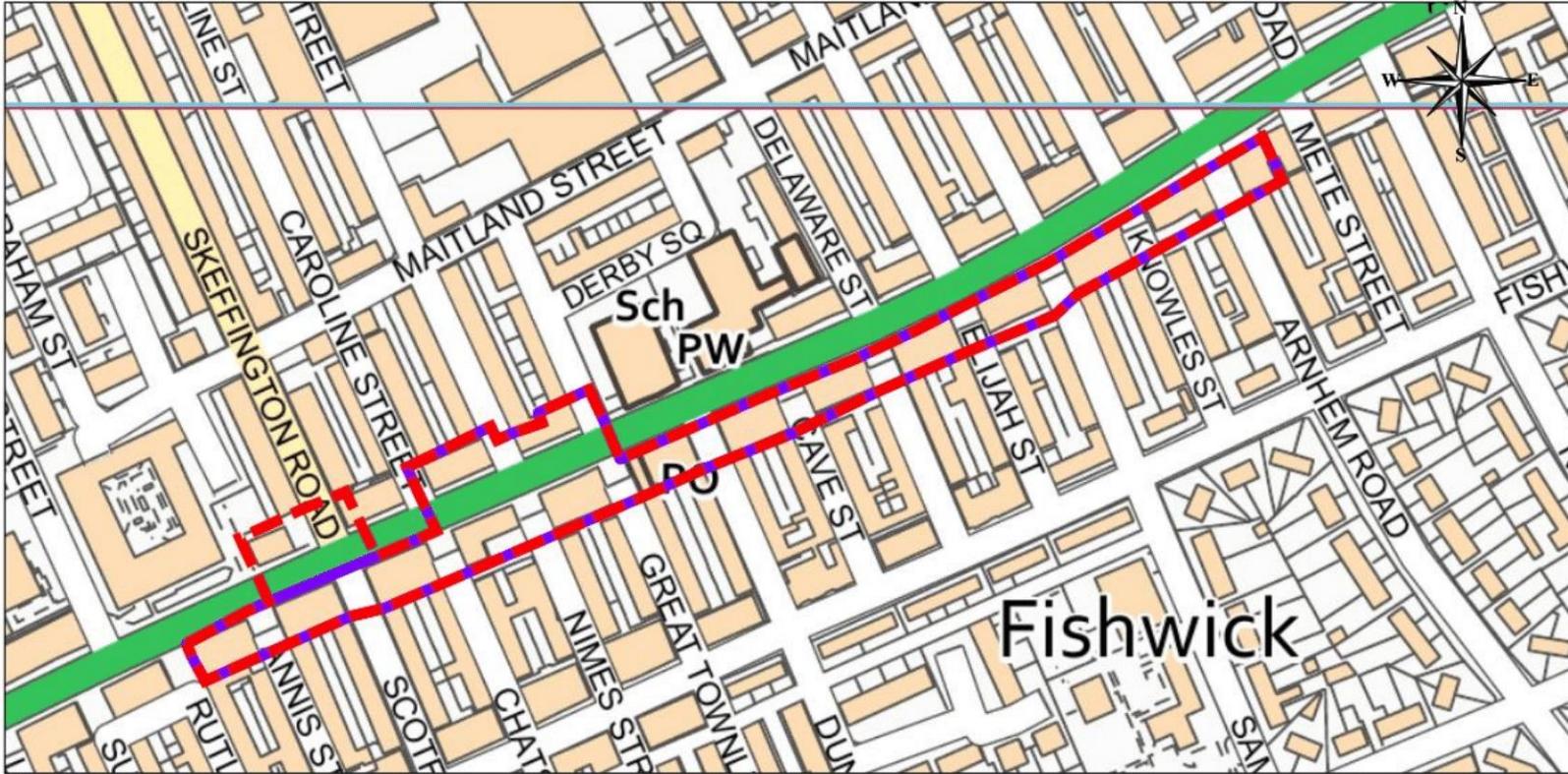


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New Hall Lane



Map Legend

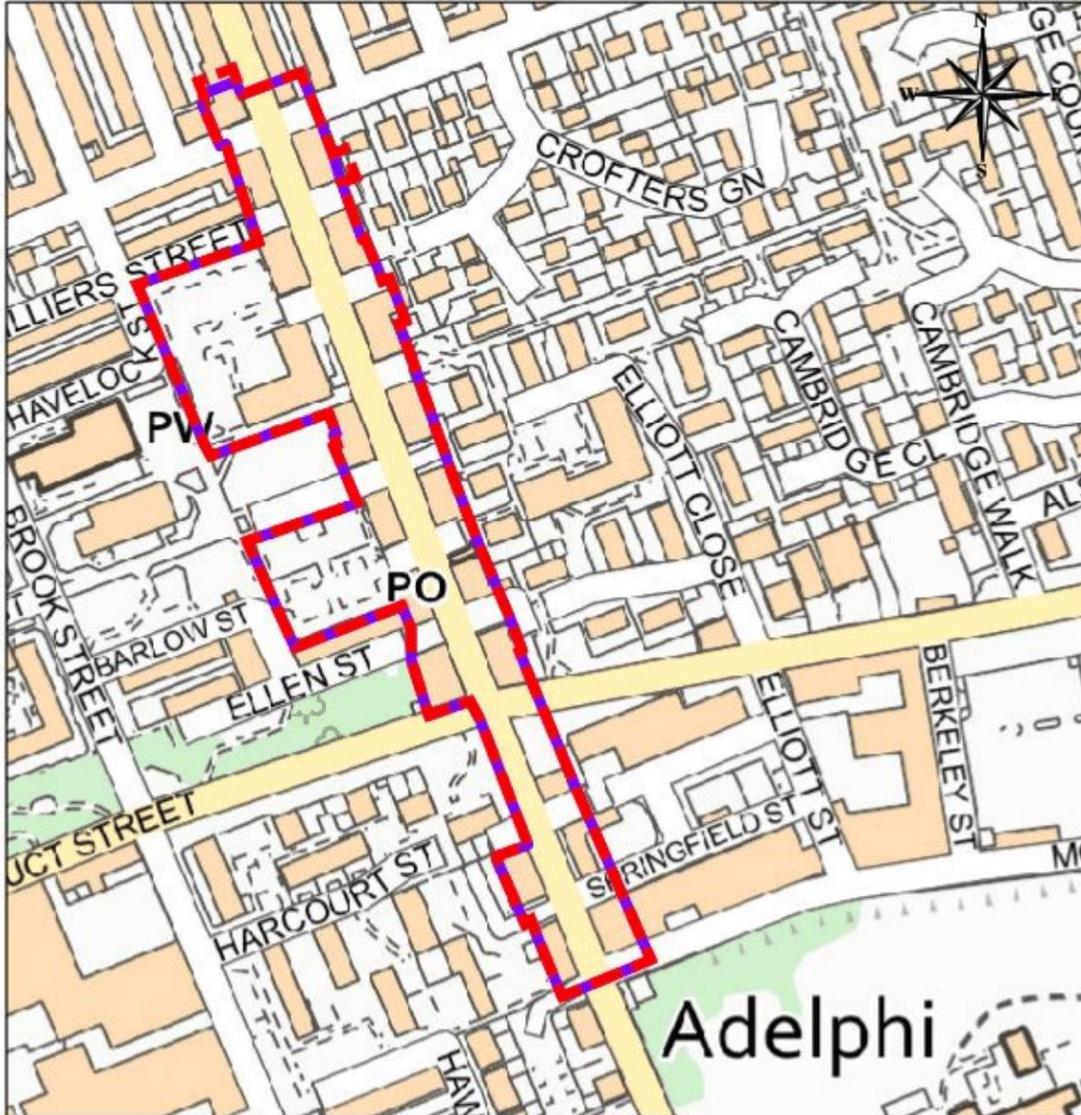
Existing Boundary	
	New Hall Lane Local Centre - Existing Boundary
Proposed Boundary	
	New Hall Lane Local Centre - Proposed Boundary

Map Scale



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Plungington Road



Map Legend

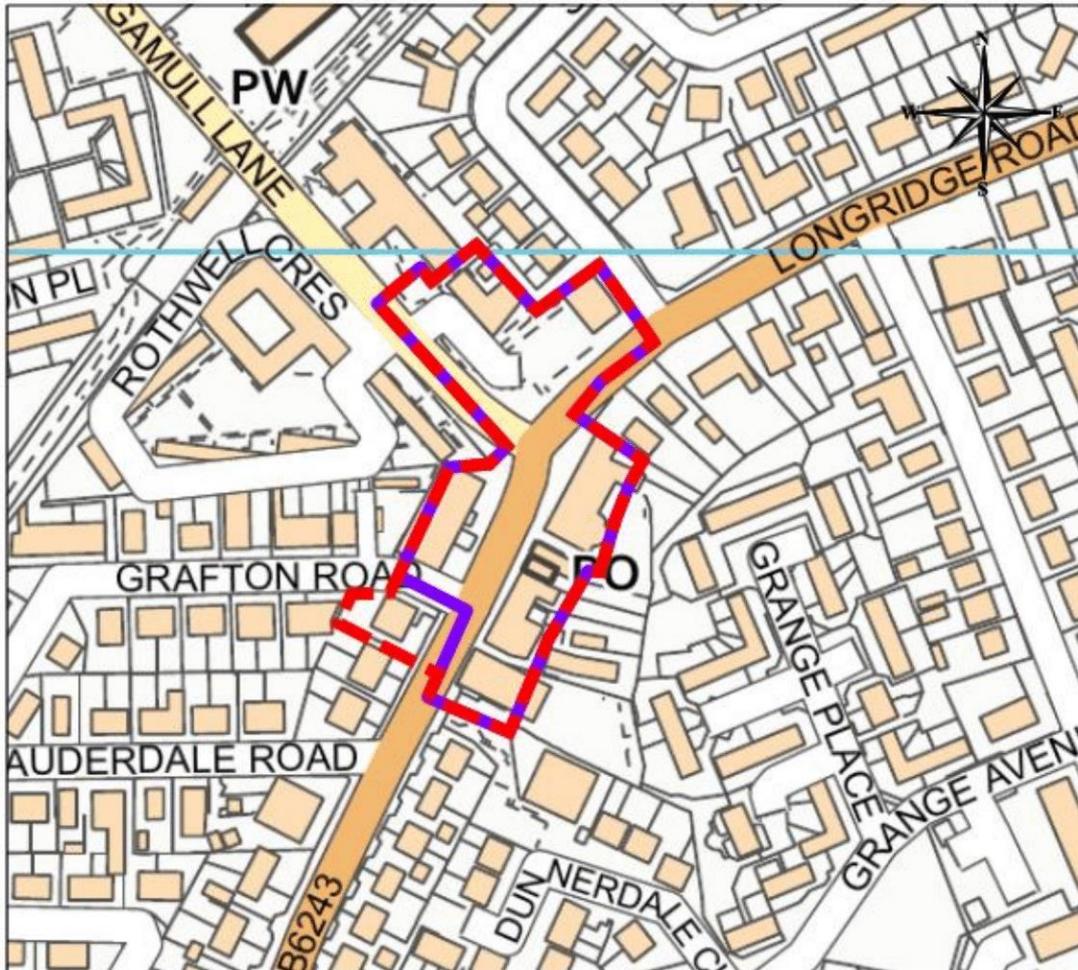
Existing Boundary	
	Plungington Road Local Centre - Existing Boundary
Proposed Boundary	
	Plungington Road Local Centre - Proposed Boundary

Map Scale



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Ribbleton Avenue



Map legend

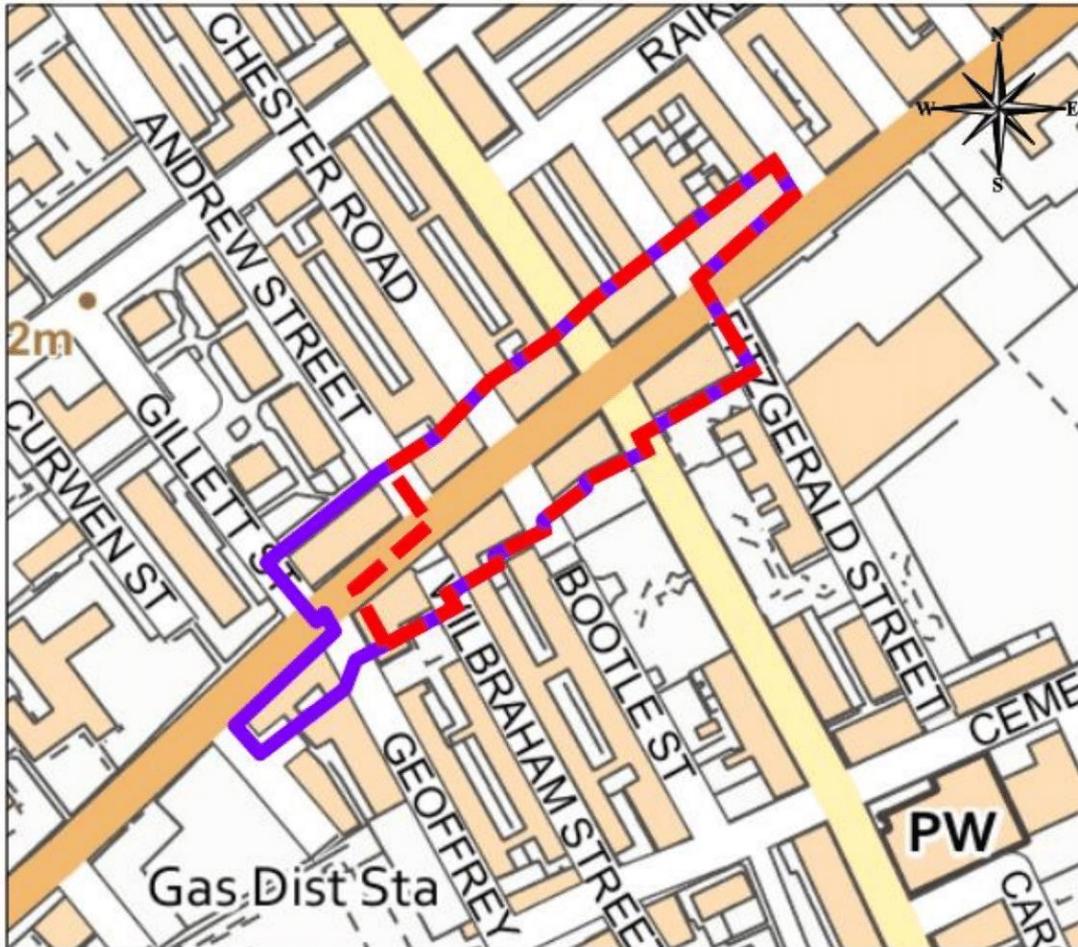


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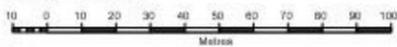
Ribbleton Lane



Map Legend

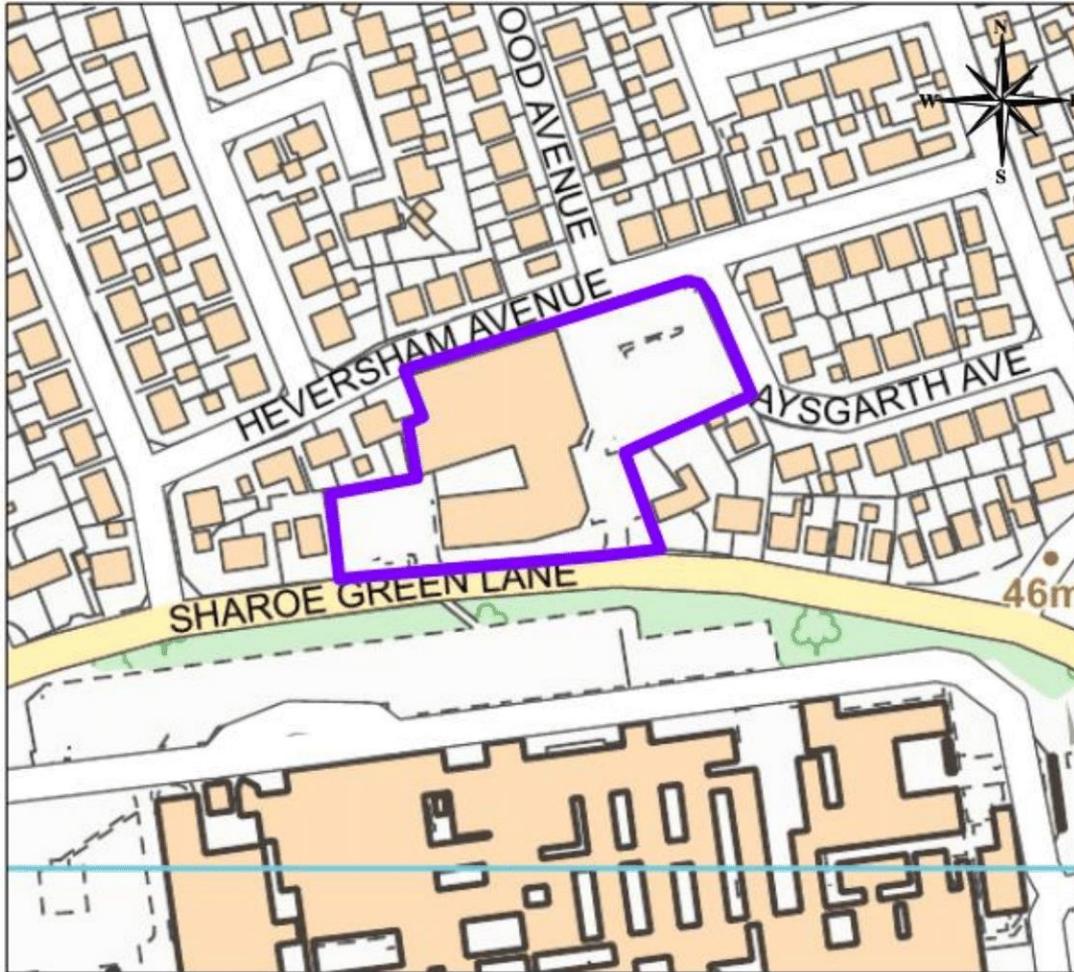


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Sharoe Green

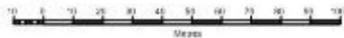


Map Legend

Existing Boundary

 Sharoe Green Local Centre - Existing Boundary

Map Scale

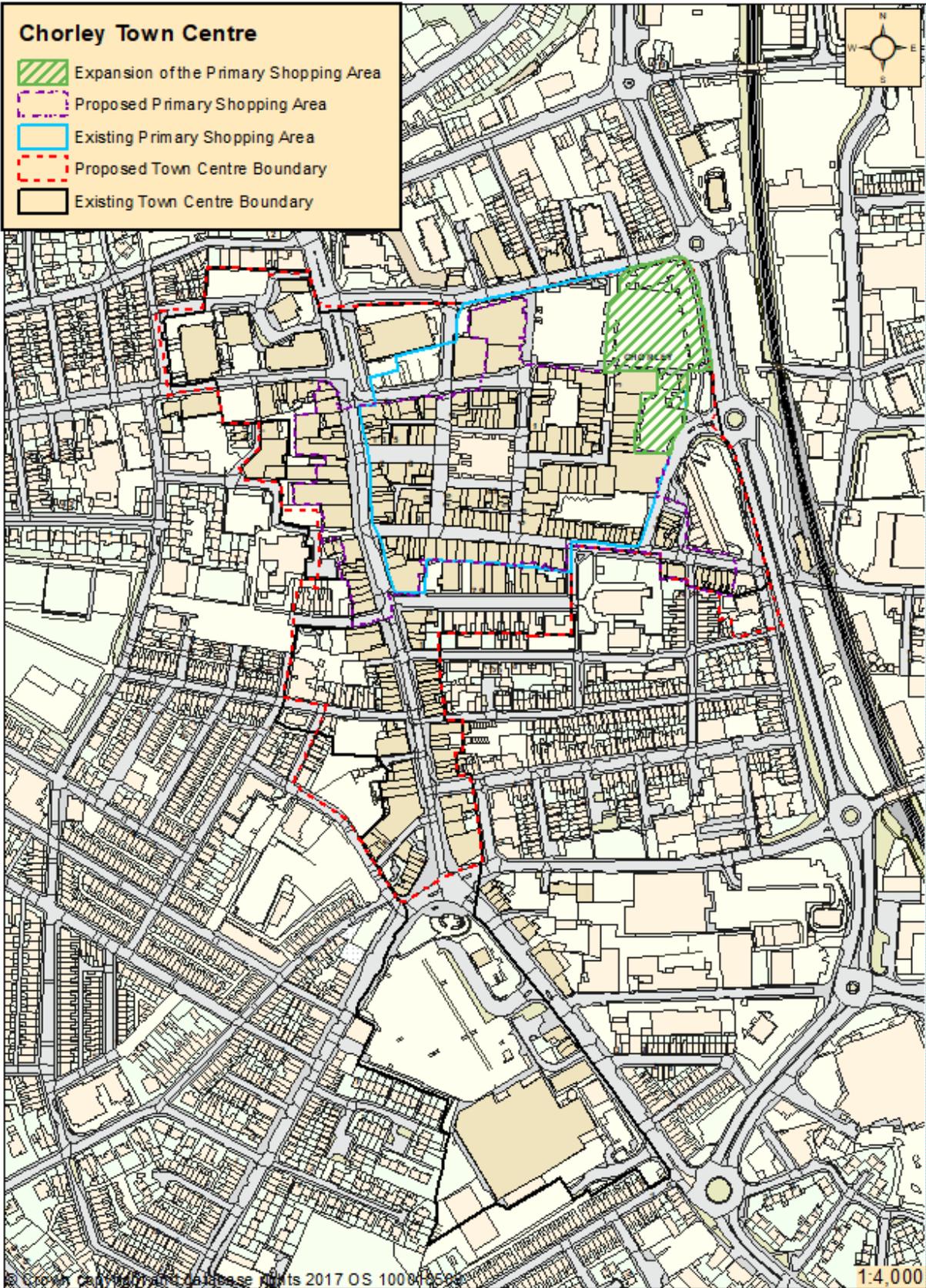


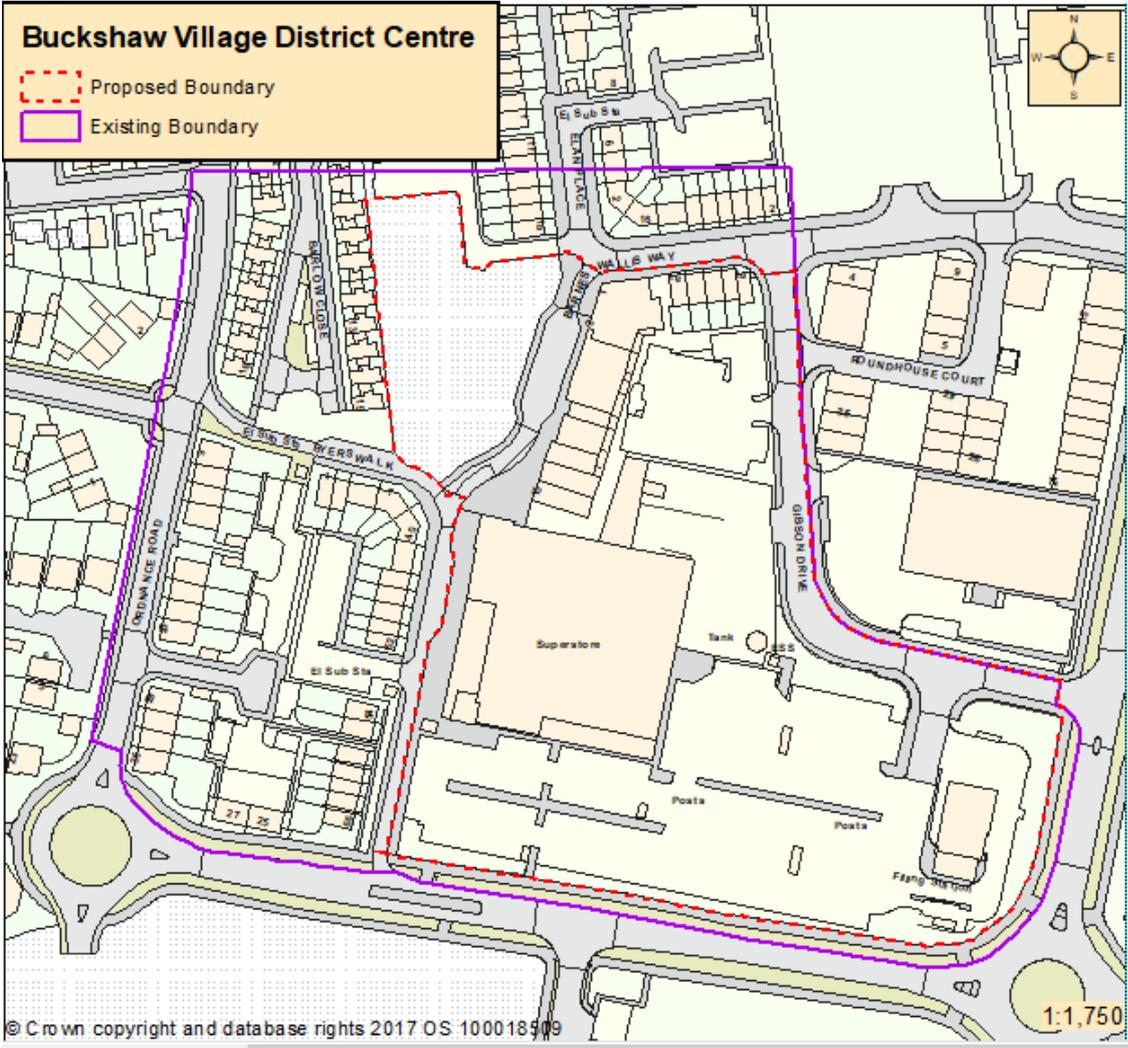
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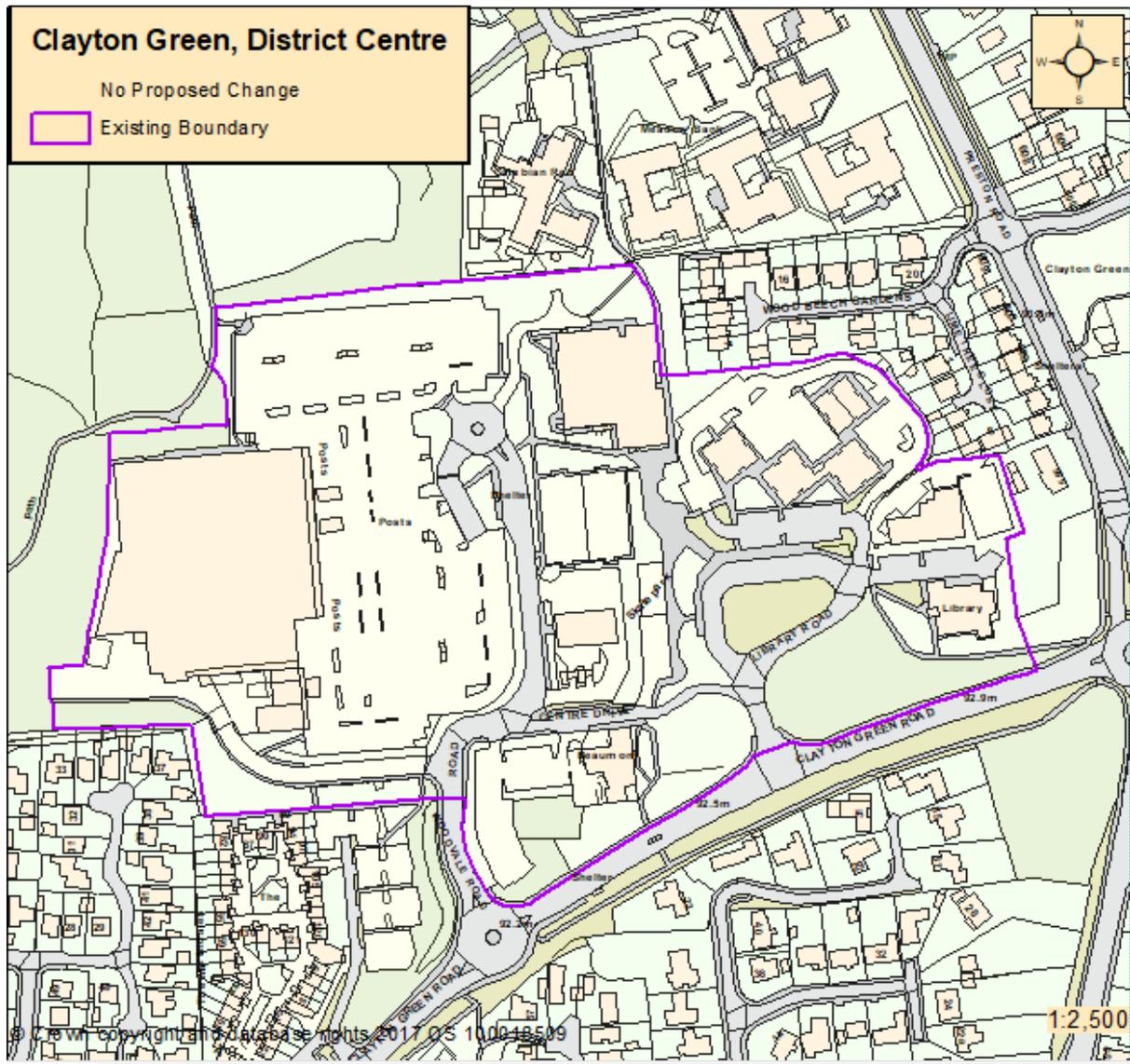
Proposed Changes to Chorley Town, District and Local Centre Boundaries

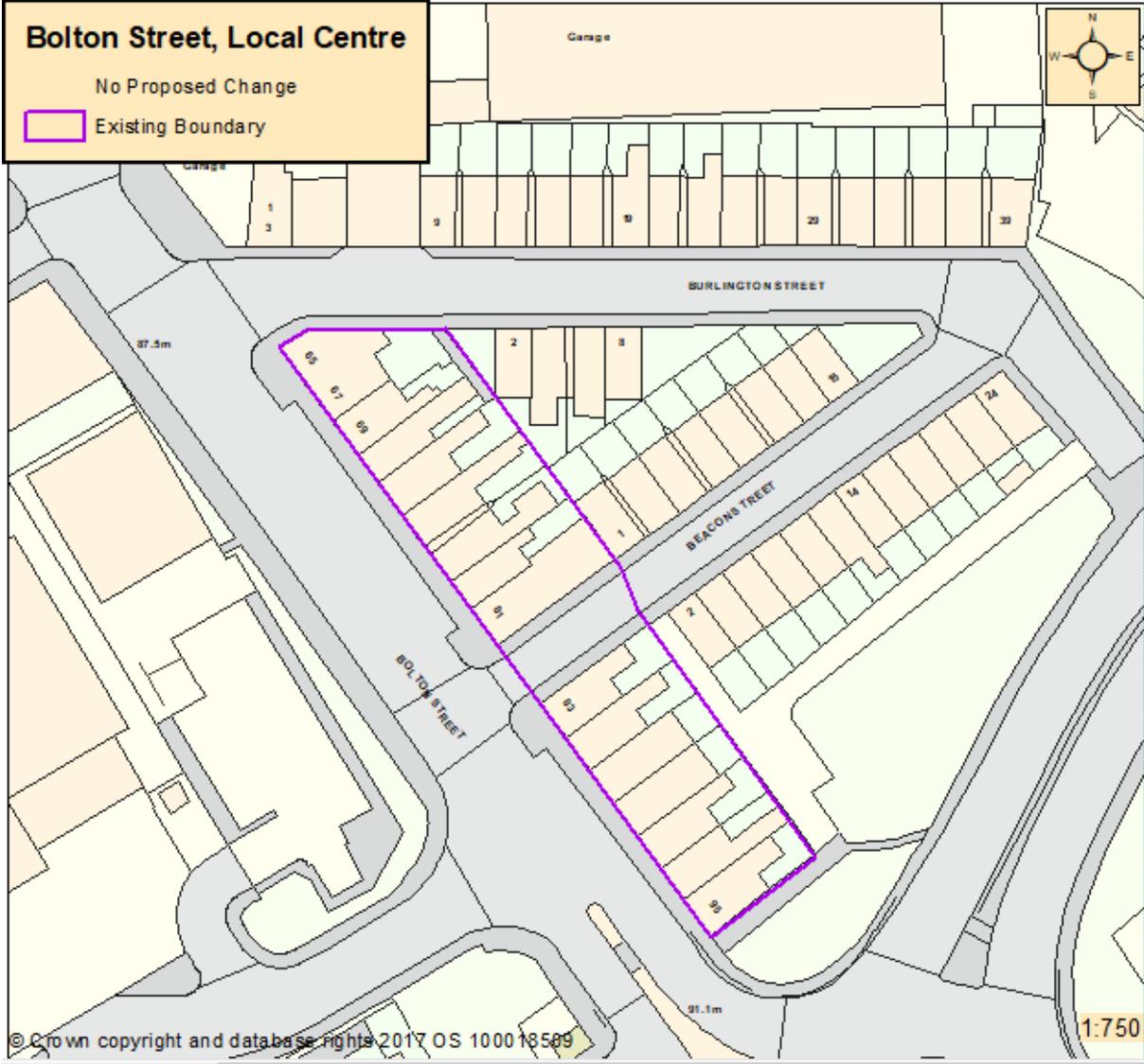
Settlement	Type of Centre	Name of Centre	Proposed Change to Boundary
Chorley	Town Centre	Chorley	Proposed boundary changes to the Town Centre Boundary Proposed boundary change to the Primary Shopping Area Proposed deletion of the existing primary and secondary frontages (not shown).
Euxton	District Centre	Buckshaw Village	Proposed boundary change to delete existing residential element and other ancillary uses.
Clayton Green	District Centre	Clayton Green	No Proposed Change.
Euxton	Local Centre	Balshaw Lane	No Proposed Change.
Chorley	Local Centre	Bolton Street	No Proposed Change.
Withnell	Local Centre	Bury Lane	No Proposed Change.
Eccleston	Local Centre	Carrington Centre	No Proposed Change.
Whittle-Le-Woods	Local Centre	Chorley Old Road	Proposed for Deallocation as not fulfilling the role of a Local Centre for residents as it does not include a range or mix of shops and services or a convenience store.
Adlington	Local Centre	Chorley Road	No Proposed Change.
Chorley	Local Centre	Pall Mall	No Proposed Change.
Chorley	Local Centre	Collingwood Road	No Proposed Change.
Coppull	Local Centre	Coppull	No Proposed Change.
Croston	Local Centre	Croston	No Proposed Change.
Chorley	Local Centre	Eaves Green Road	No Proposed Change.
Chorley	Local Centre	Eaves Lane (North)	Proposed boundary change to delete residential uses.
Chorley	Local Centre	Eaves Lane (South)	Proposed boundary change to delete residential uses.
Eccleston	Local Centre	Eccleston	Proposed for Deallocation as not fulfilling the role of a Local Centre because of the lack of convenience goods provision and presence of Carrington Local Centre located 300 metres from this centre boundary.
Clayton Brook	Local Centre	Clayton Brook	No Proposed Change.
Astley Village	Local Centre	Hall Gate	No Proposed Change.
Chorley	Local Centre	Harpers Lane	No Proposed Change.
Clayton-Le-Woods	Local Centre	Lancaster Lane	Proposed boundary change to delete residential uses.
Adlington	Local Centre	Market Place	Proposed boundary change to retract the eastern boundary to delete area allocated in the adopted Chorley Local Plan for a new foodstore and to provide greater control over the protection of the existing commercial uses within the amended boundary.
Mawdesley	Local Centre	Mawdesley	No Proposed Change.
Chorley	Local Centre	Park Road	Proposed for Deallocation as not fulfilling the role of a Local Centre given the limited commercial offer it provides.
Chorley	Local Centre	Pilling Lane	Proposed for Deallocation as not fulfilling the role of a Local Centre given the limited commercial offer it provides.
Euxton	Local Centre	Runshaw Lane	No Proposed Change.

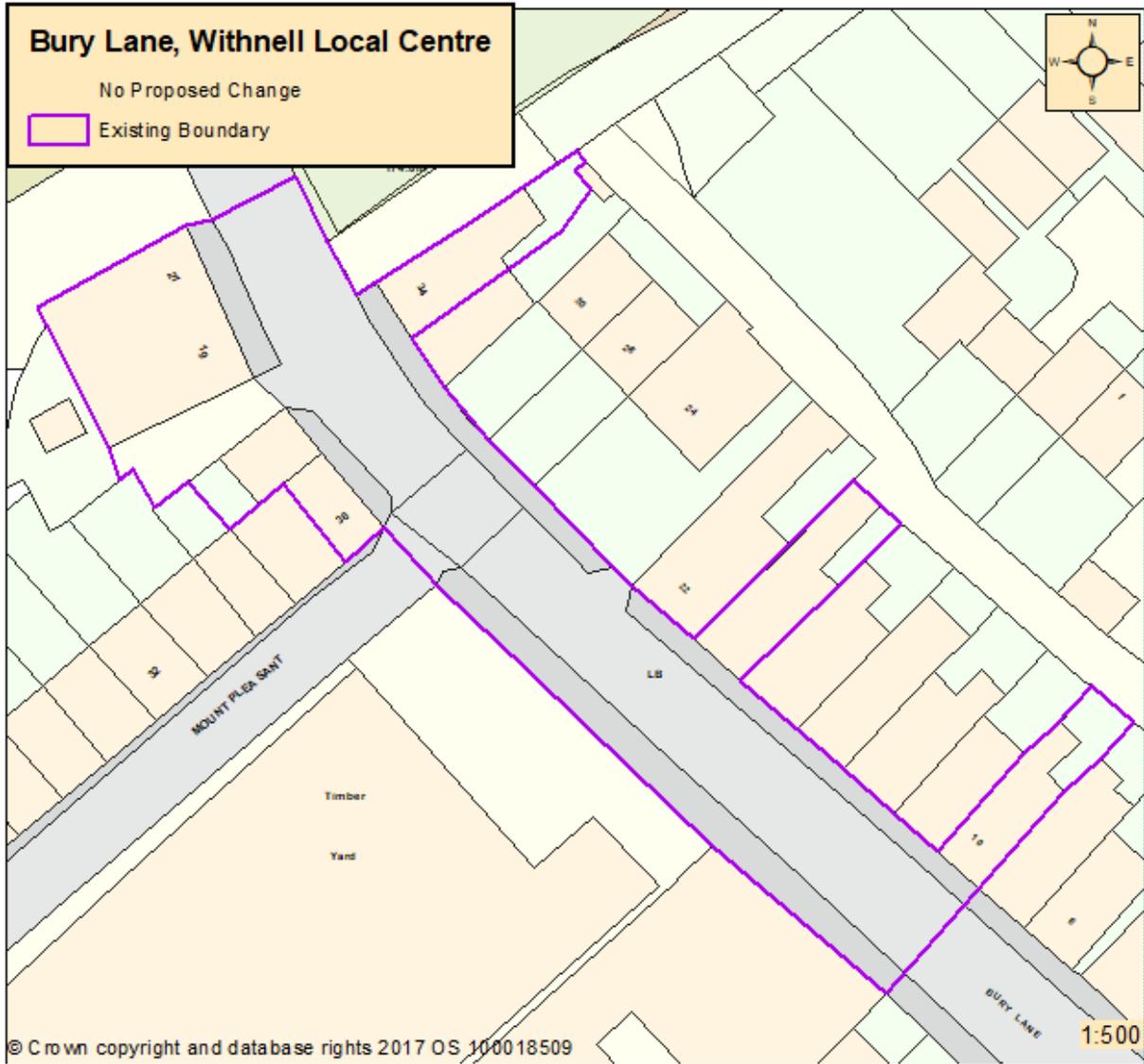
Brinscall	Local Centre	School Lane	No Proposed Change.
Chorley	Local Centre	Steeley Lane	No Proposed Change.
Chorley	Local Centre	Water Street	No Proposed Change.
Wheelton	Local Centre	Wheelton	Proposed boundary change to delete residential uses.

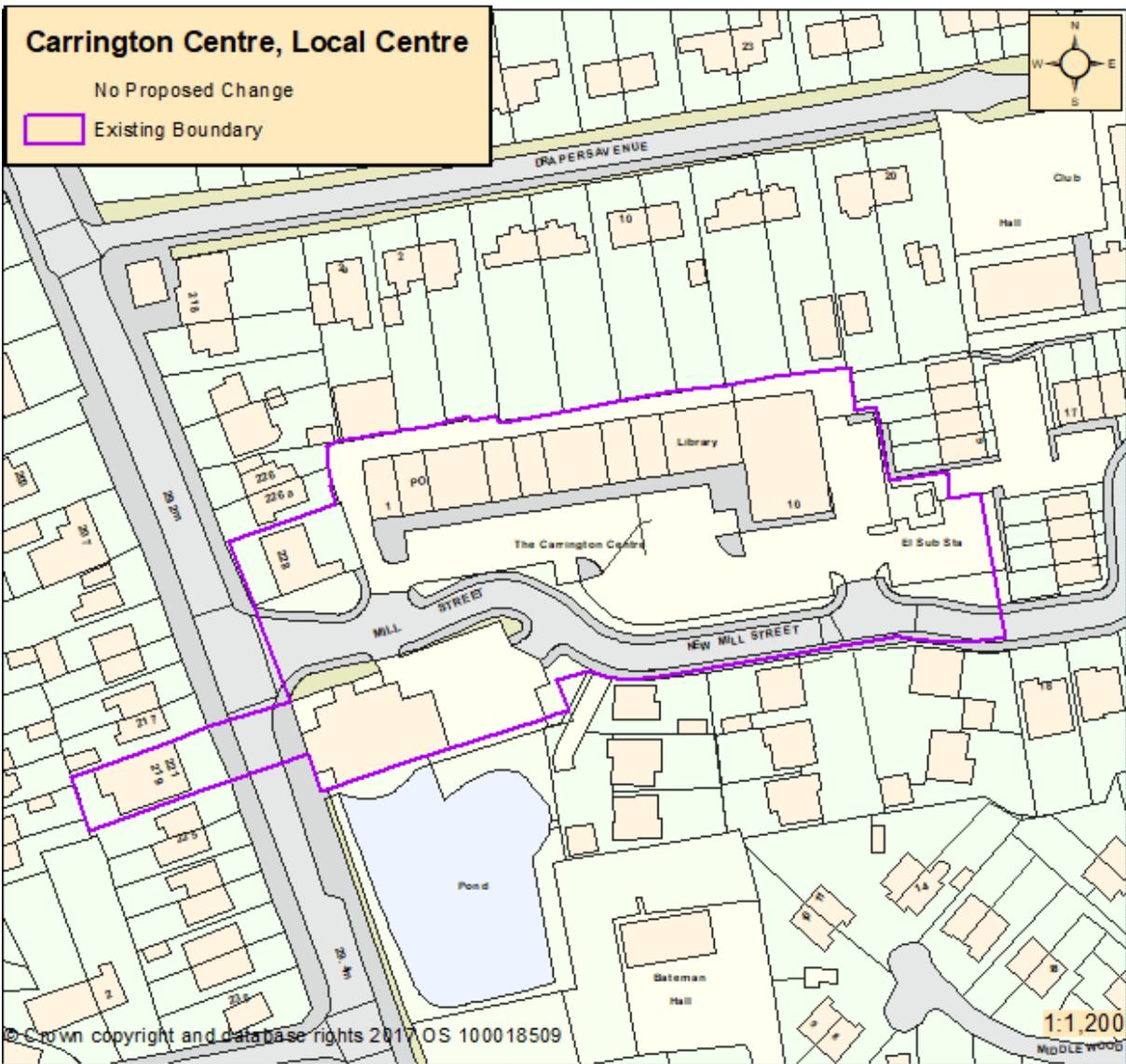


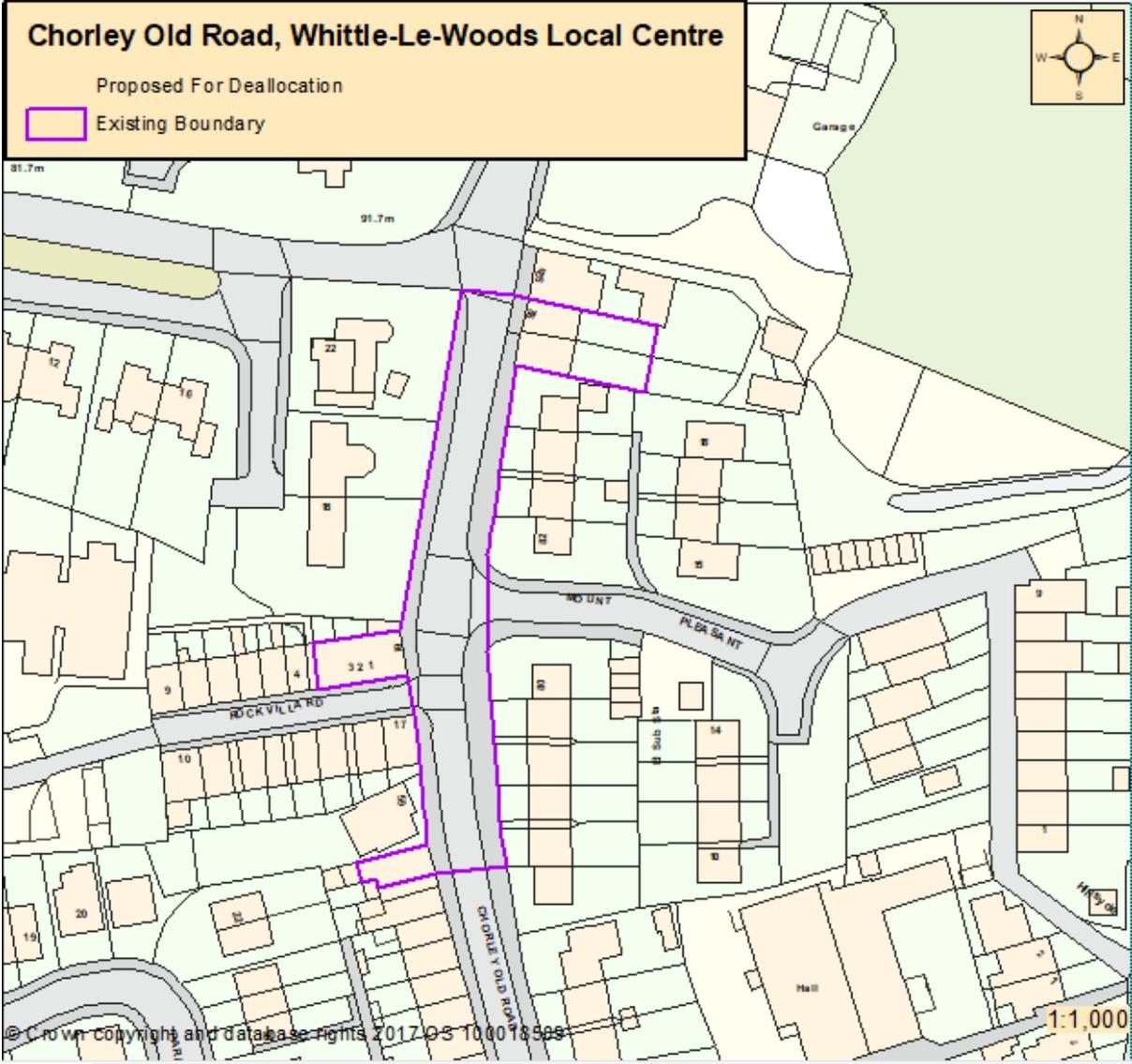


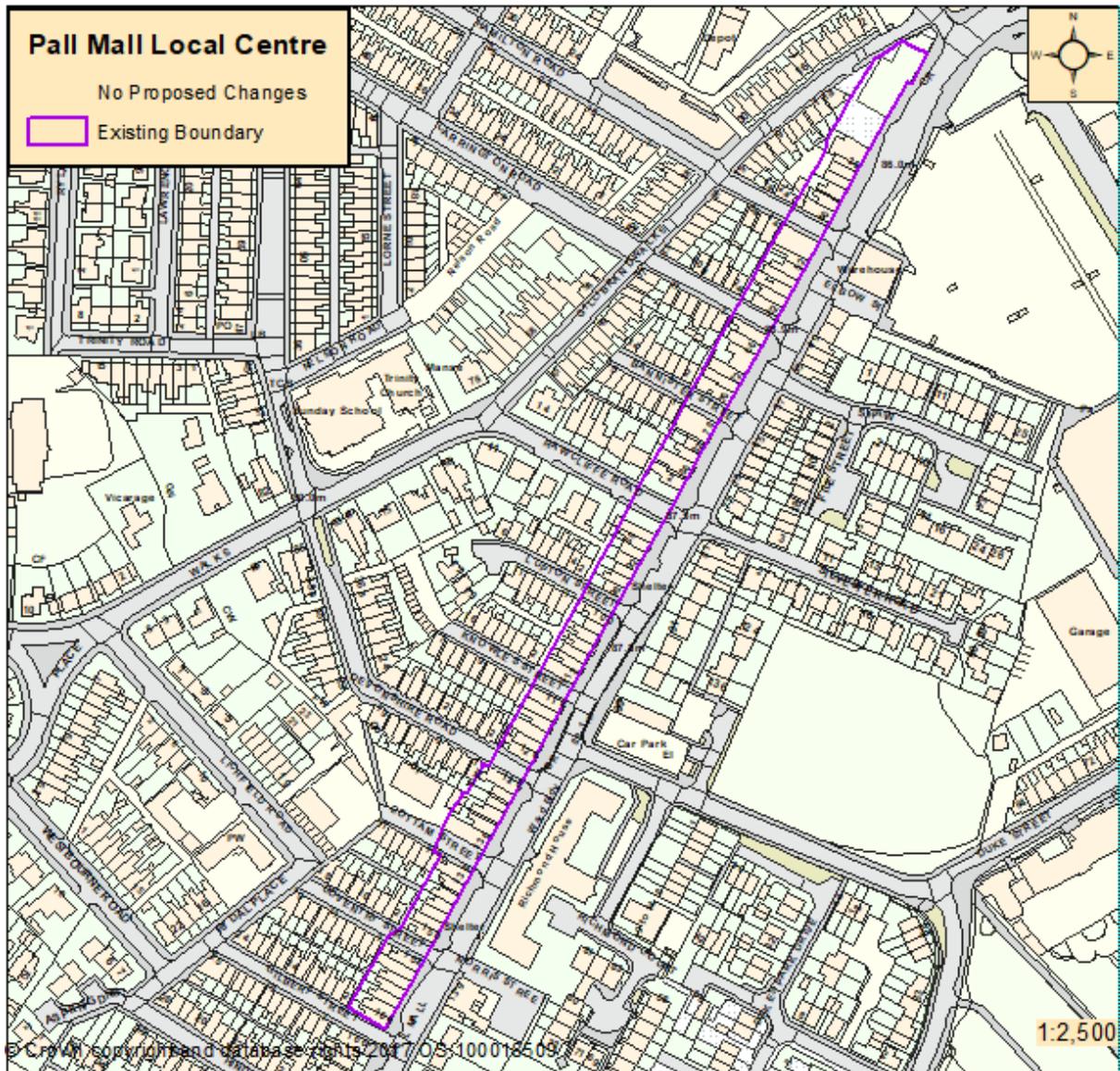




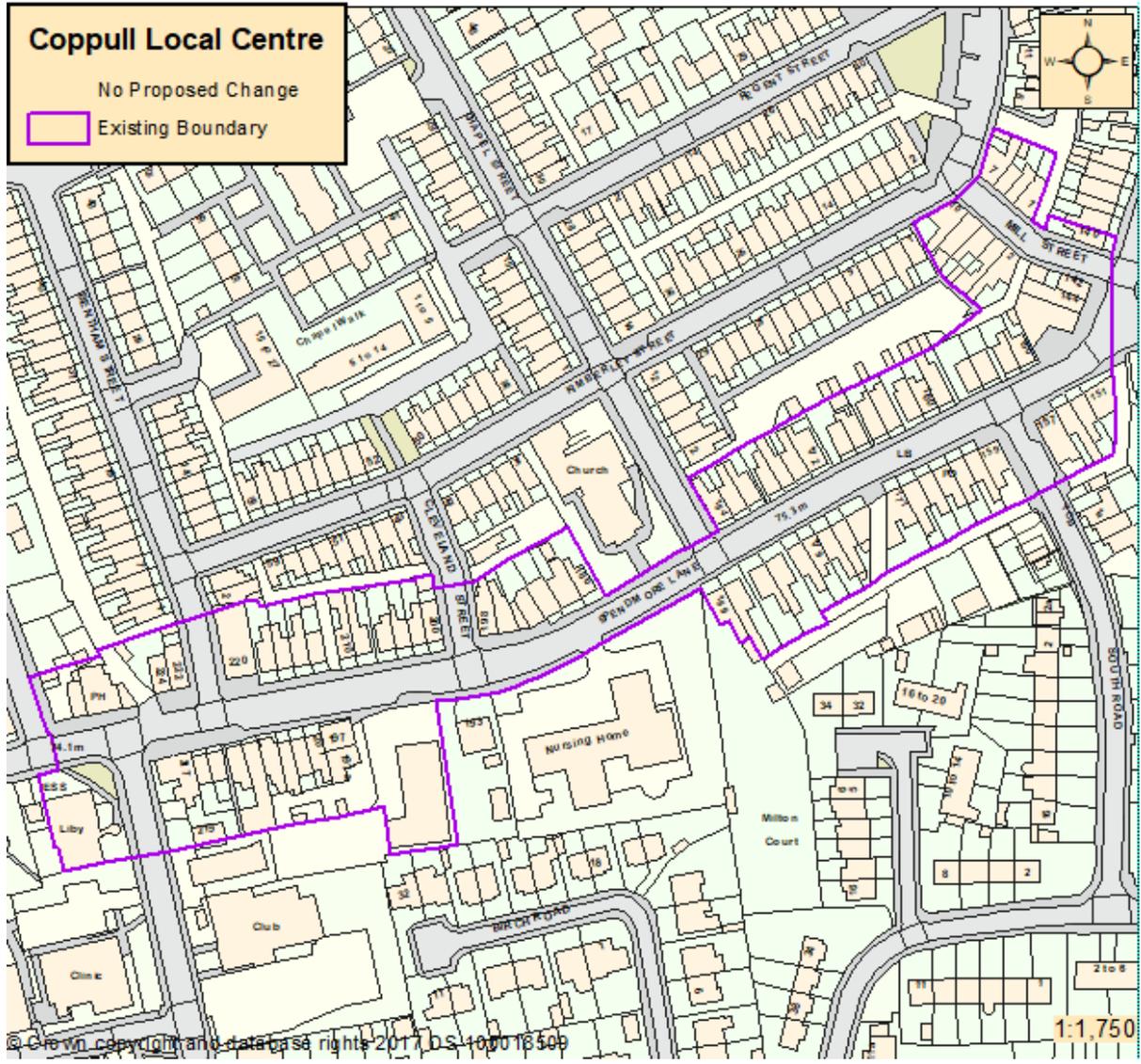


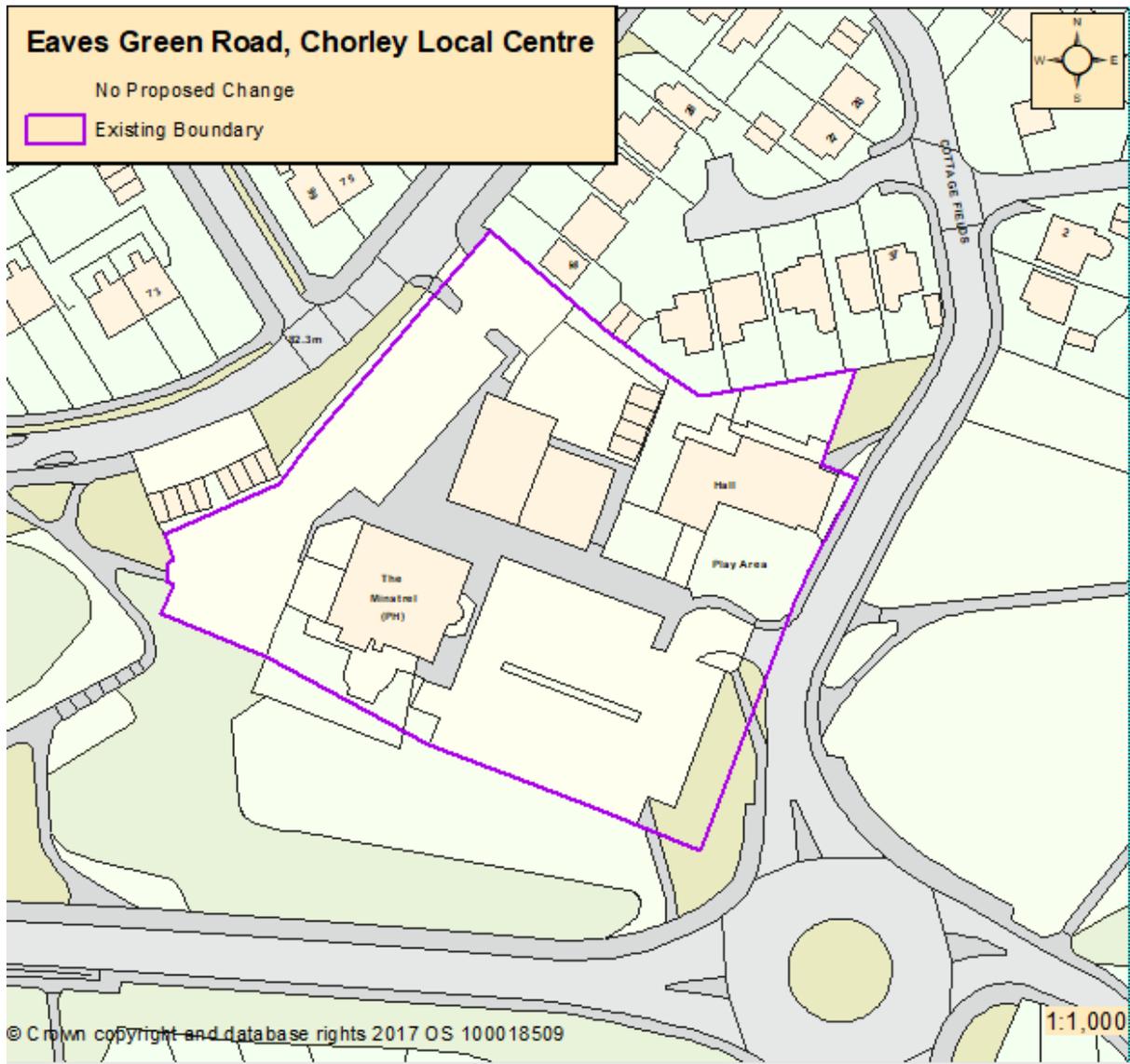


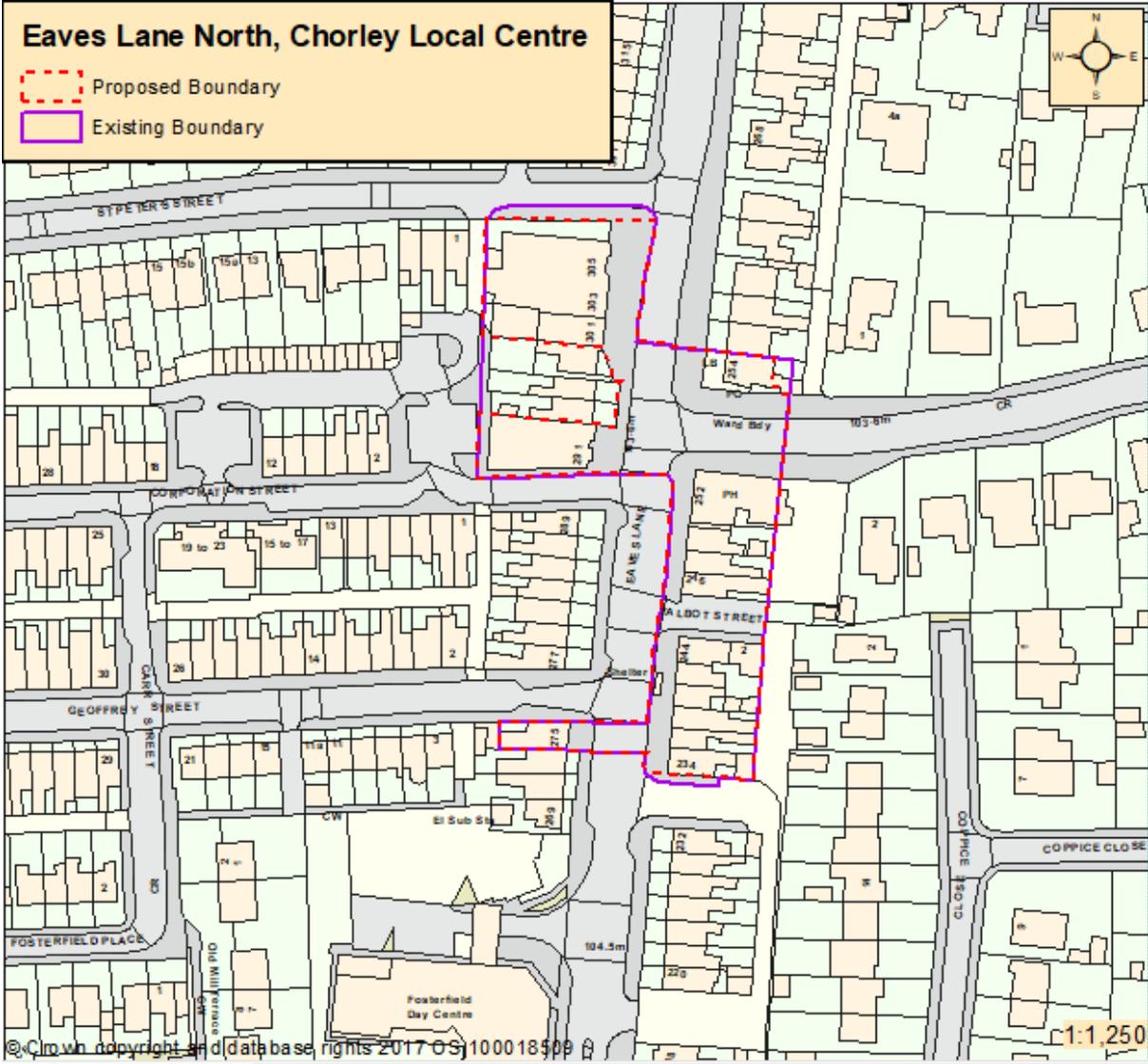


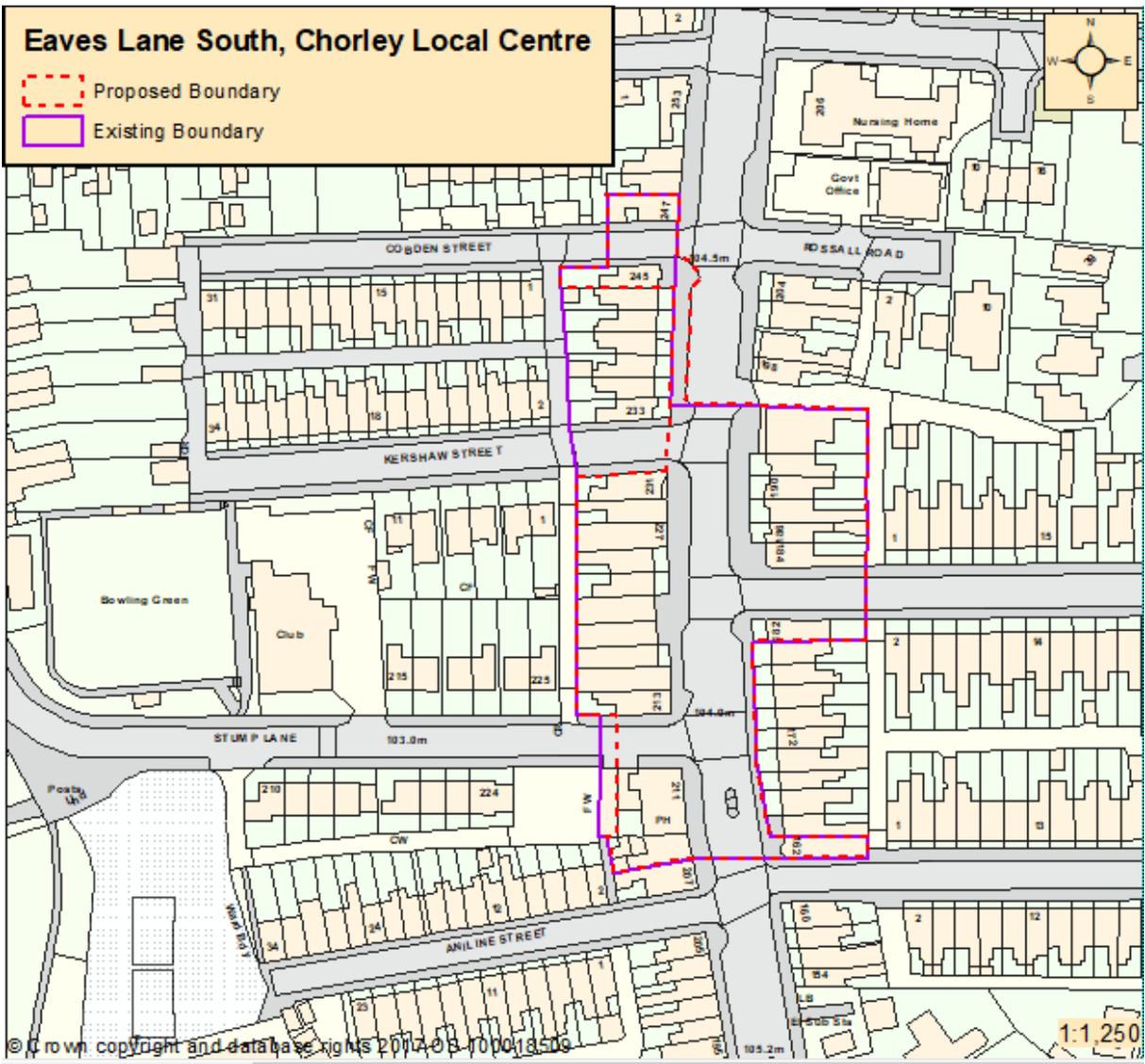




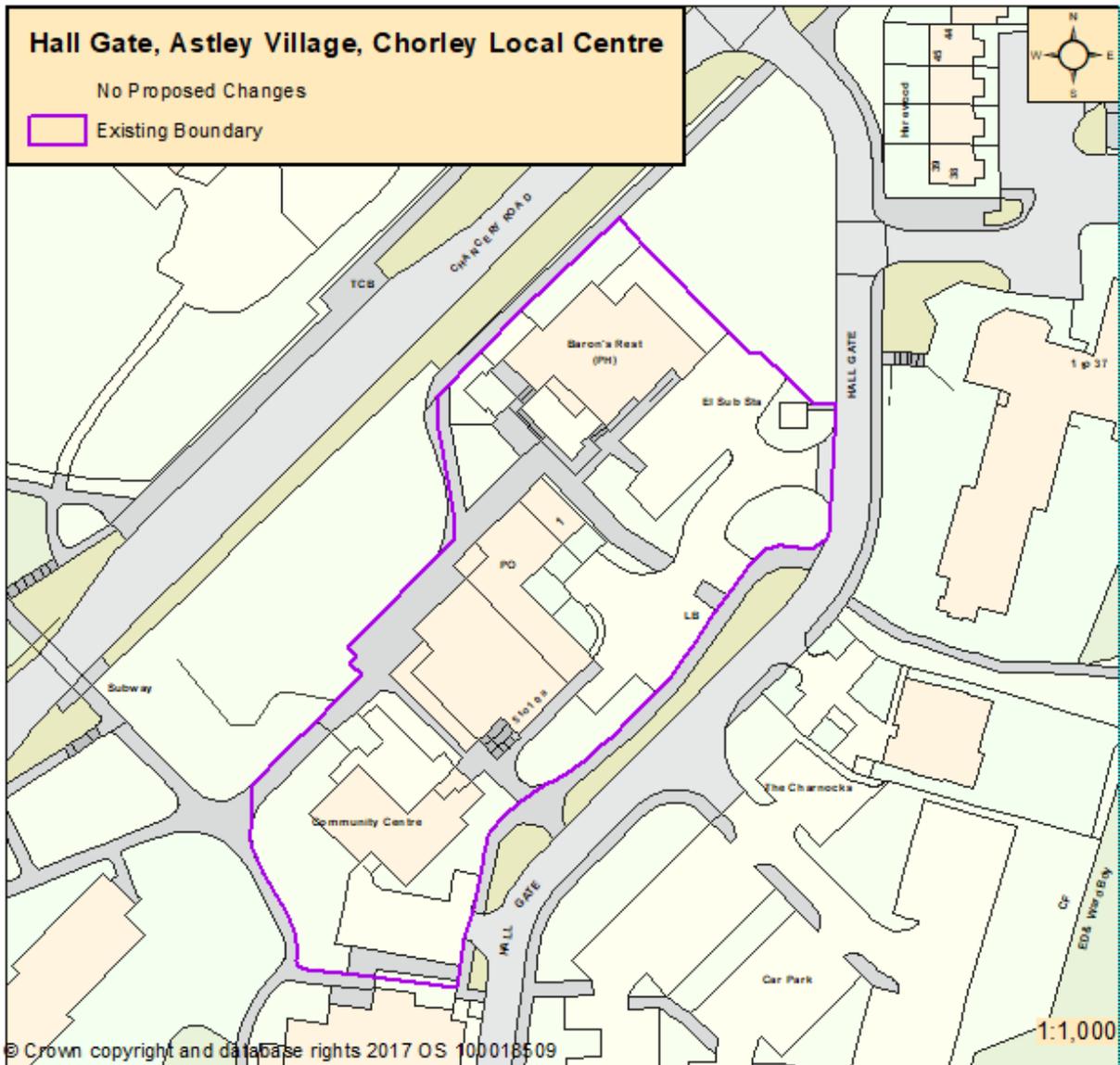


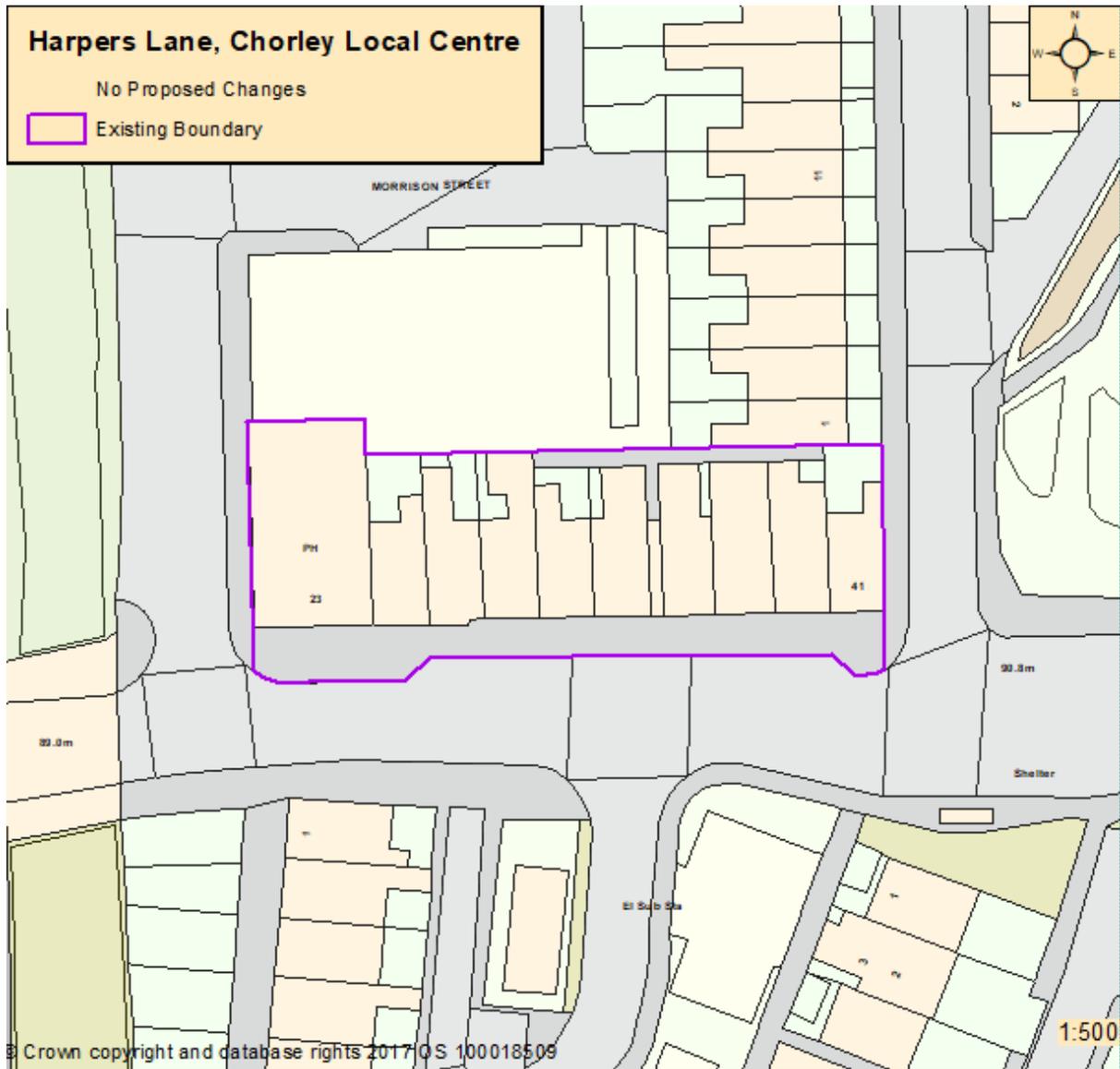


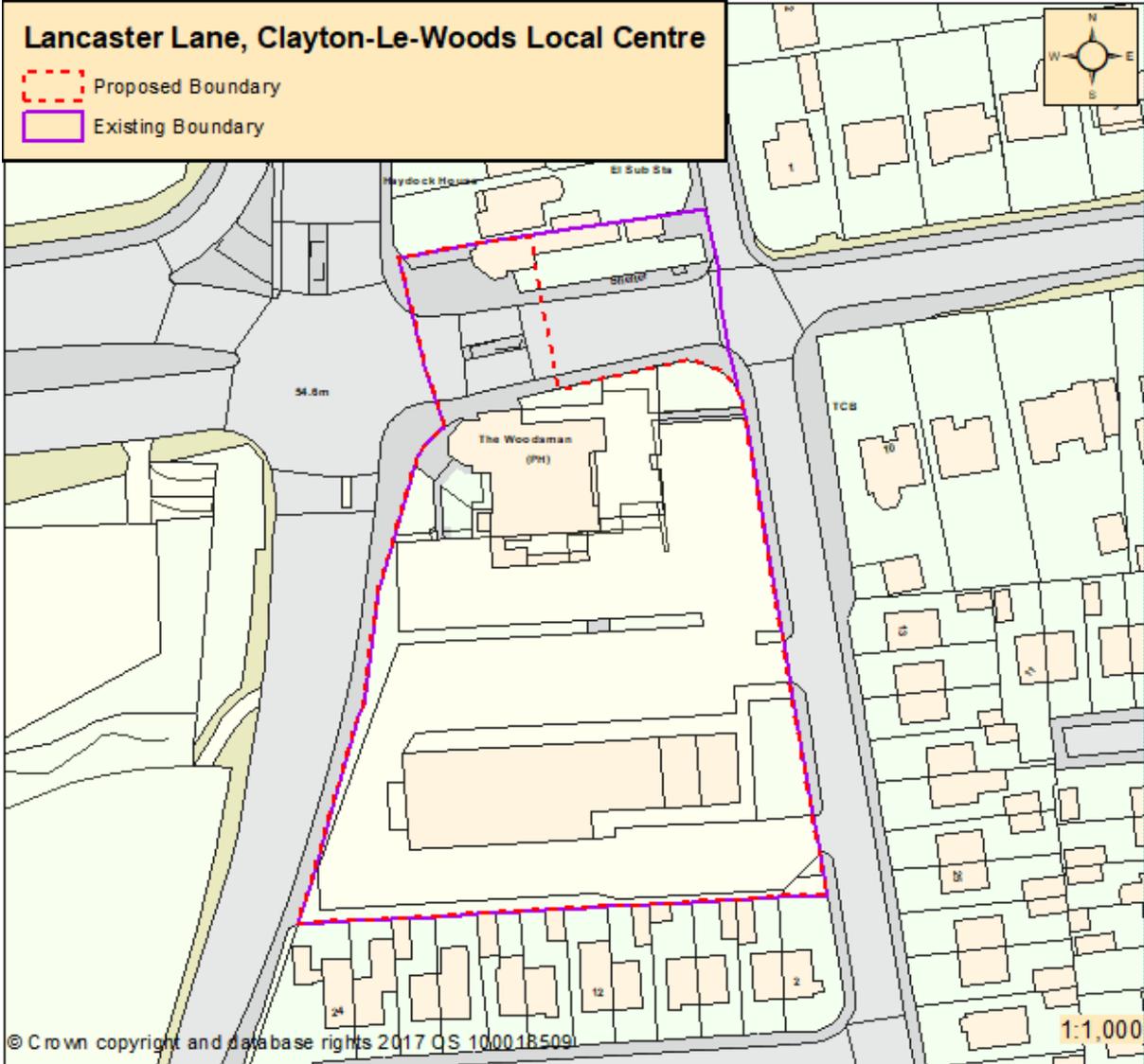


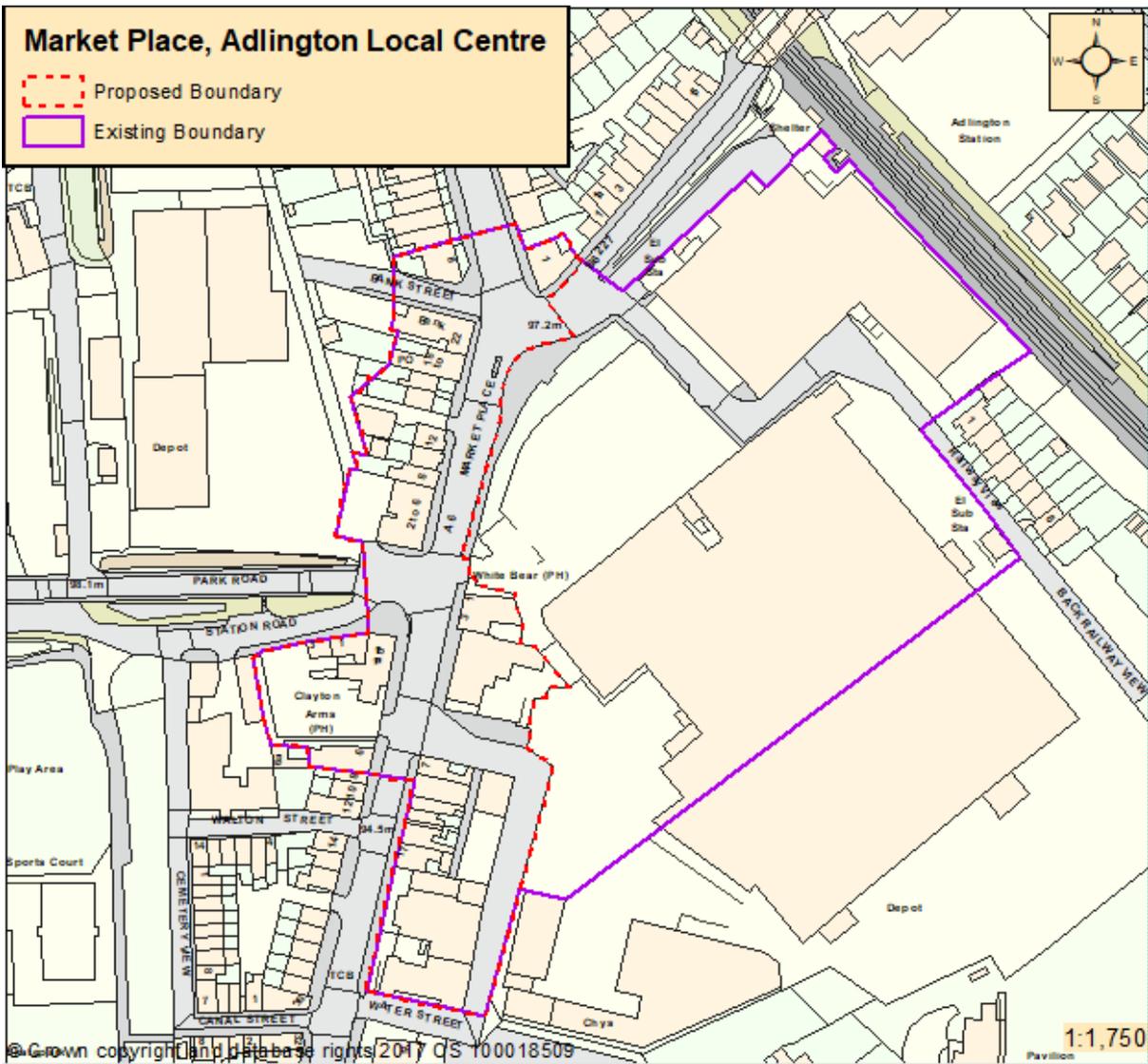


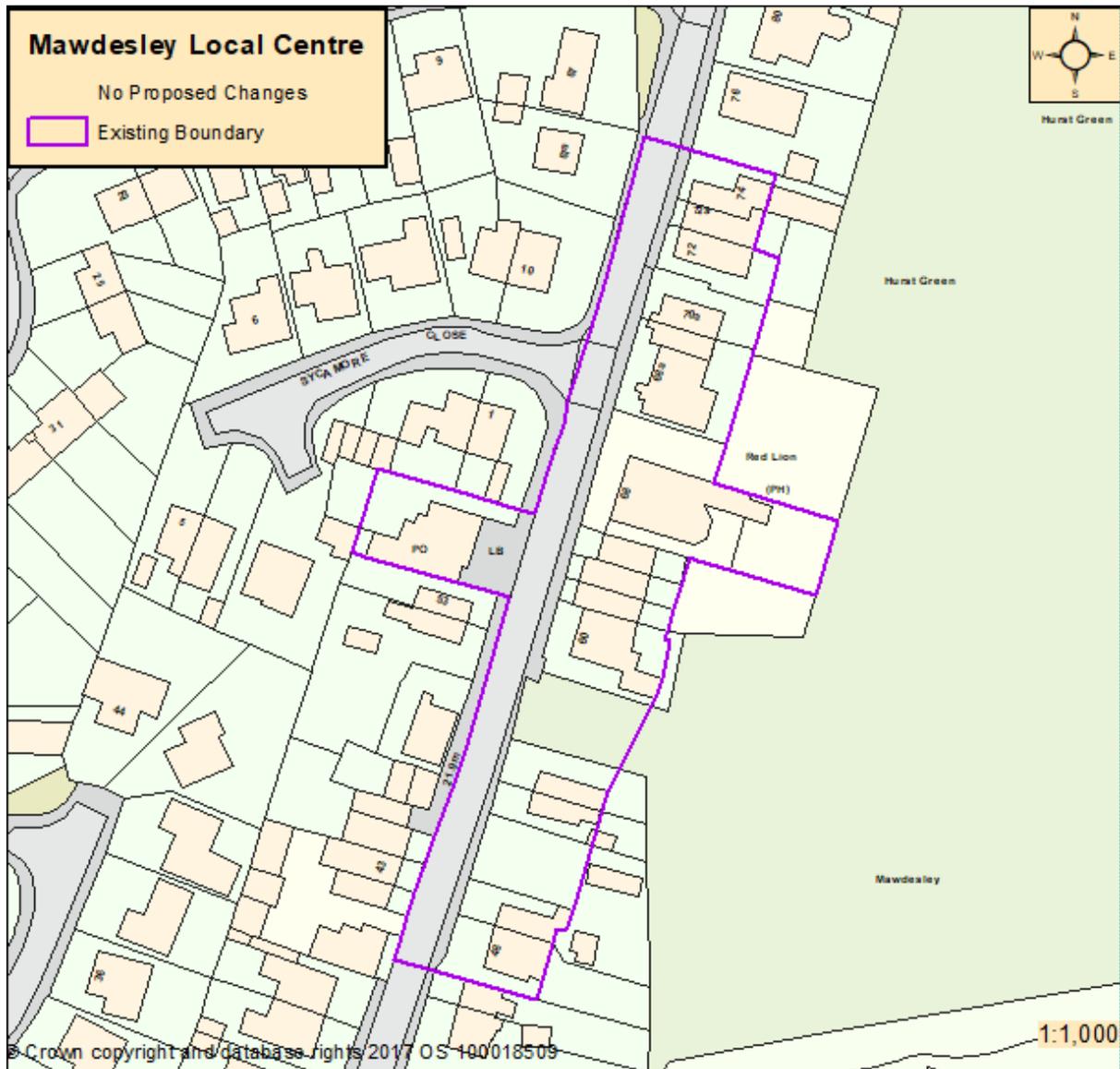


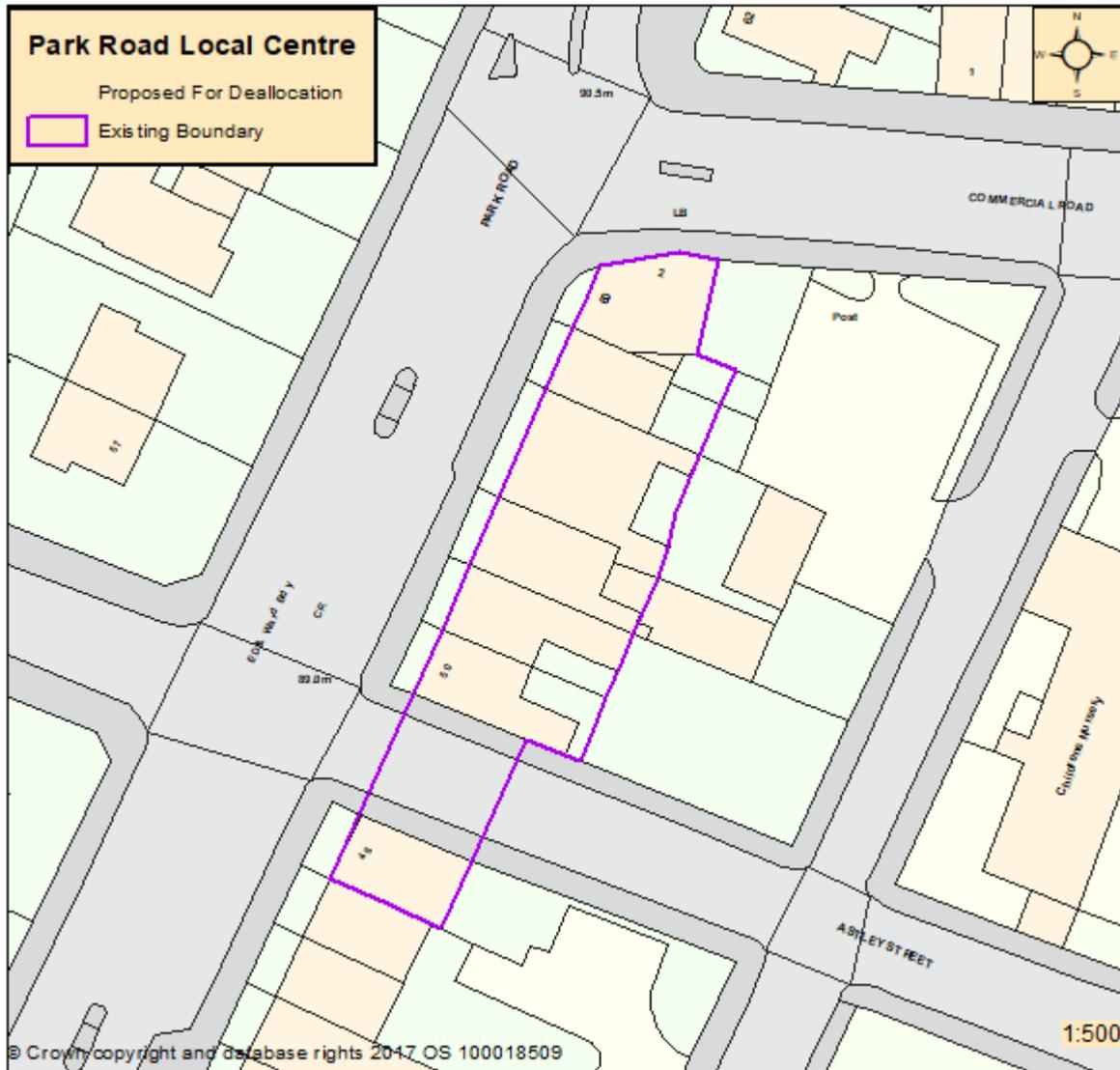


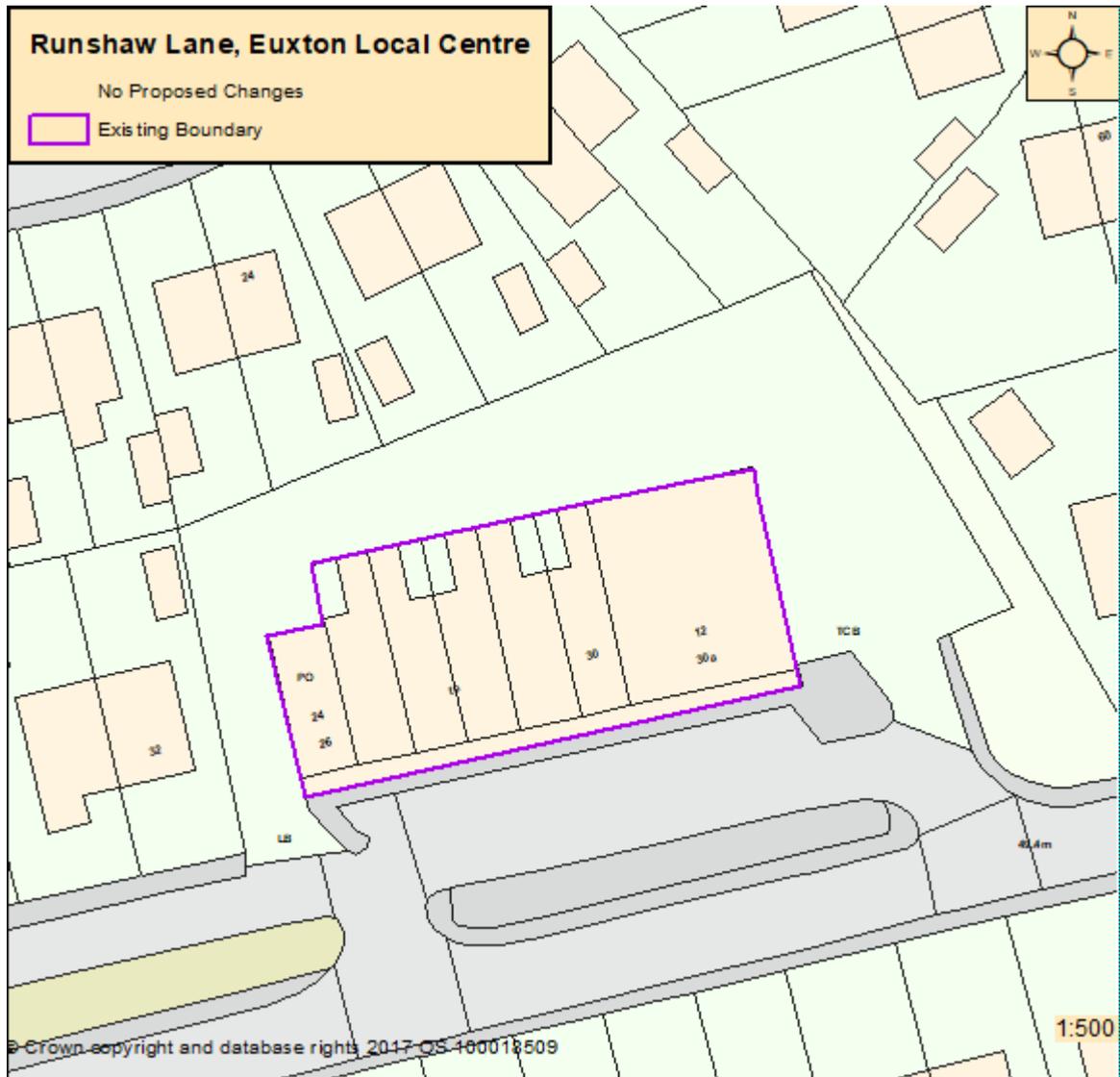


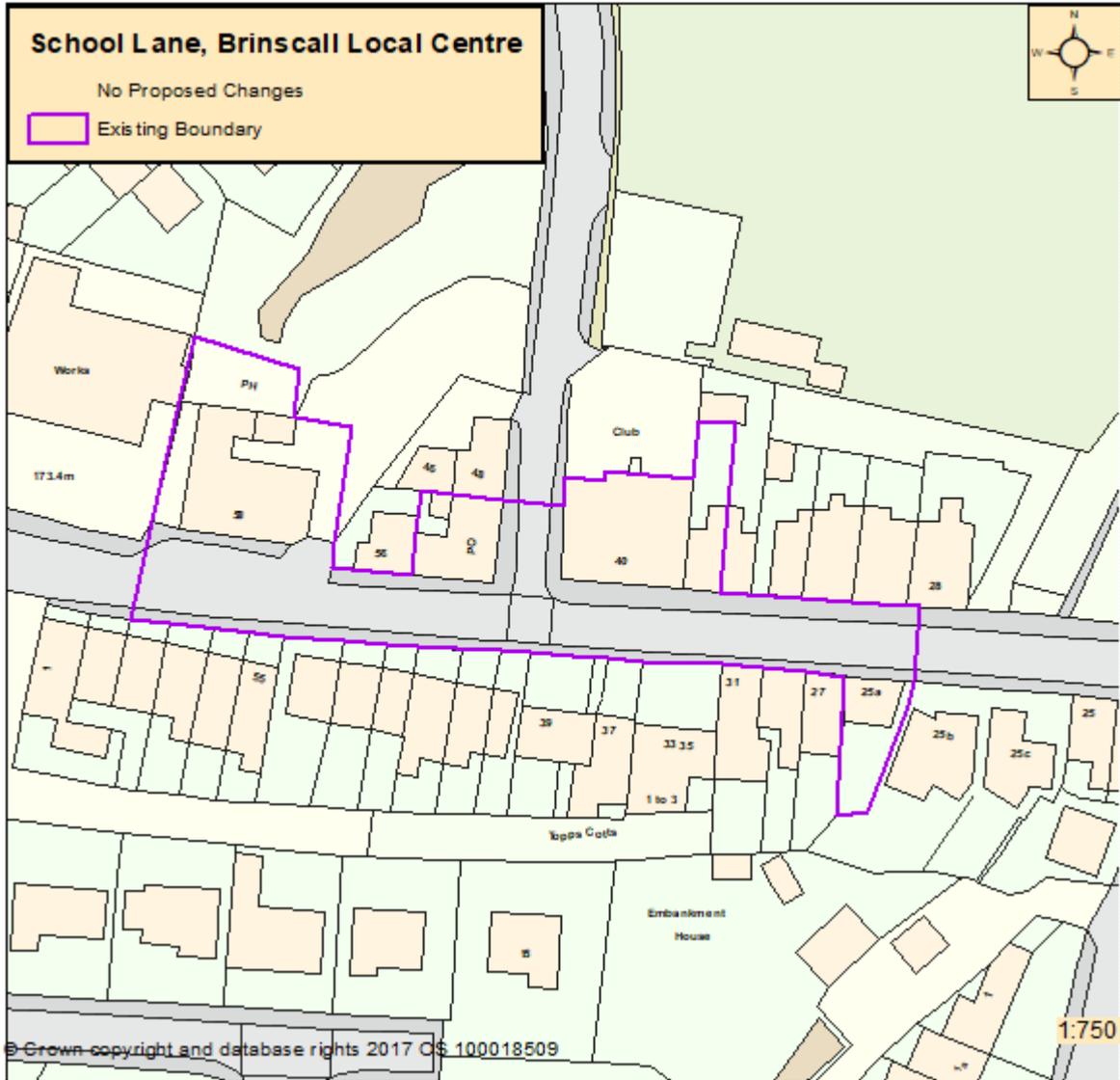


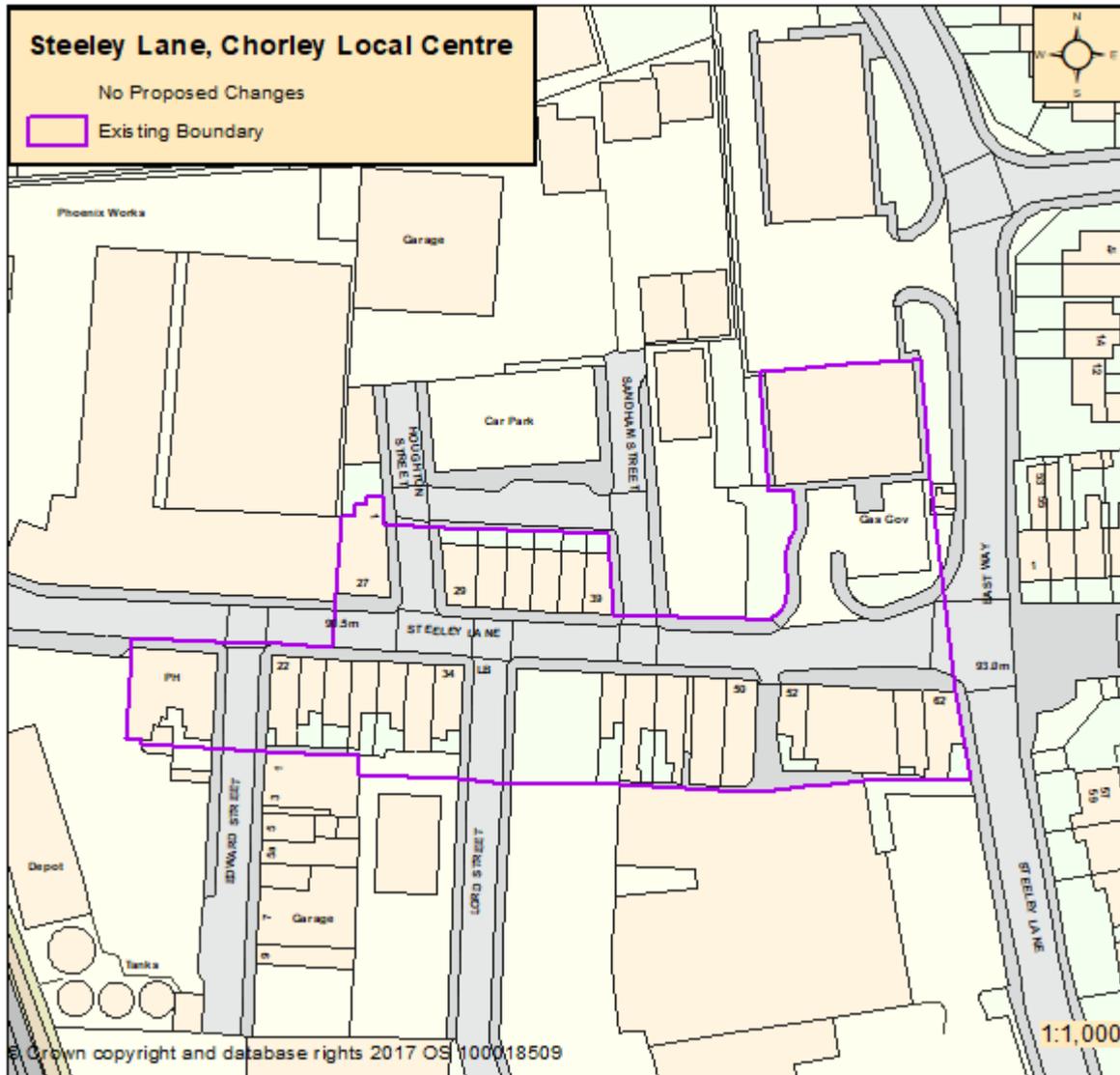


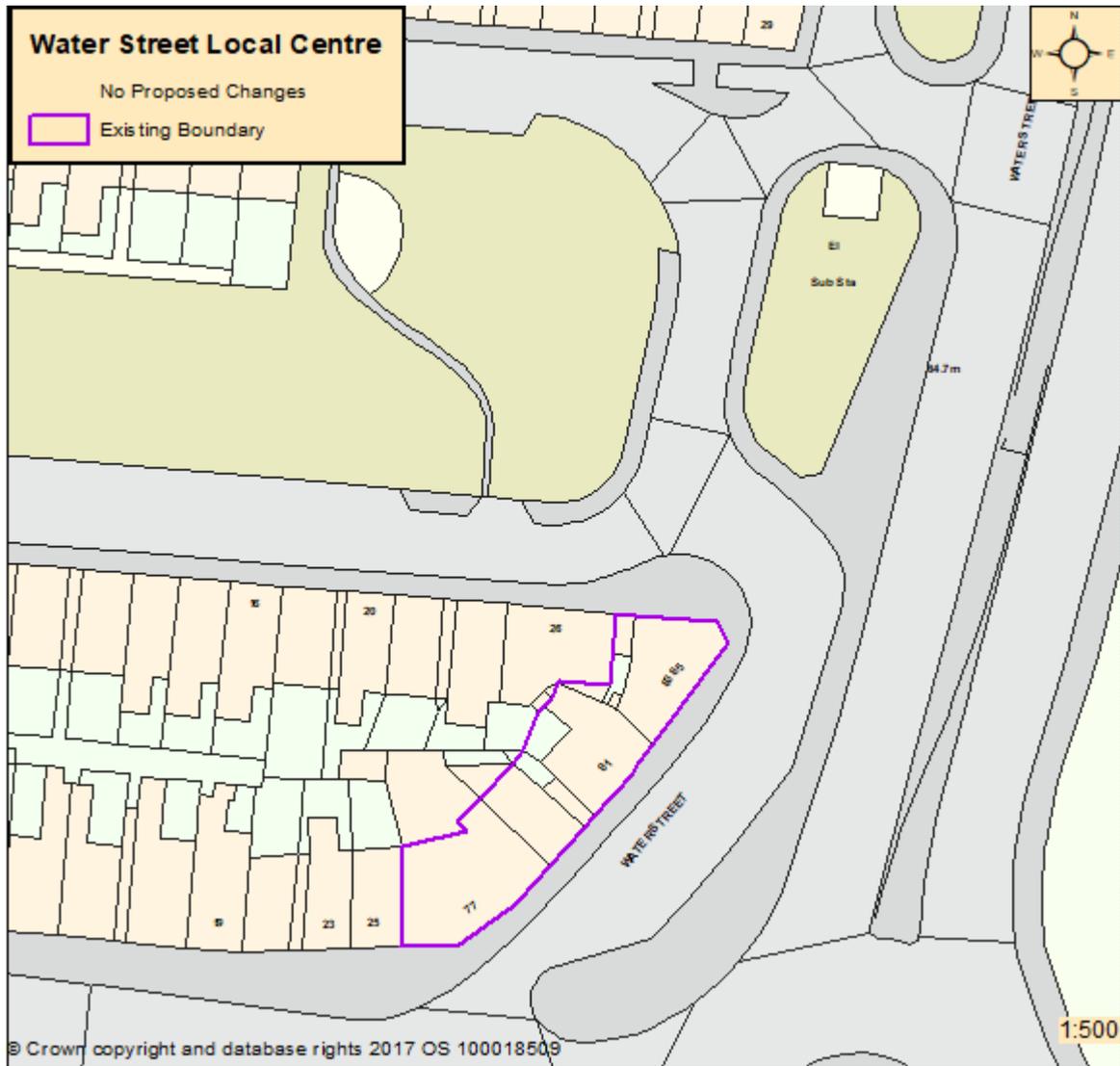


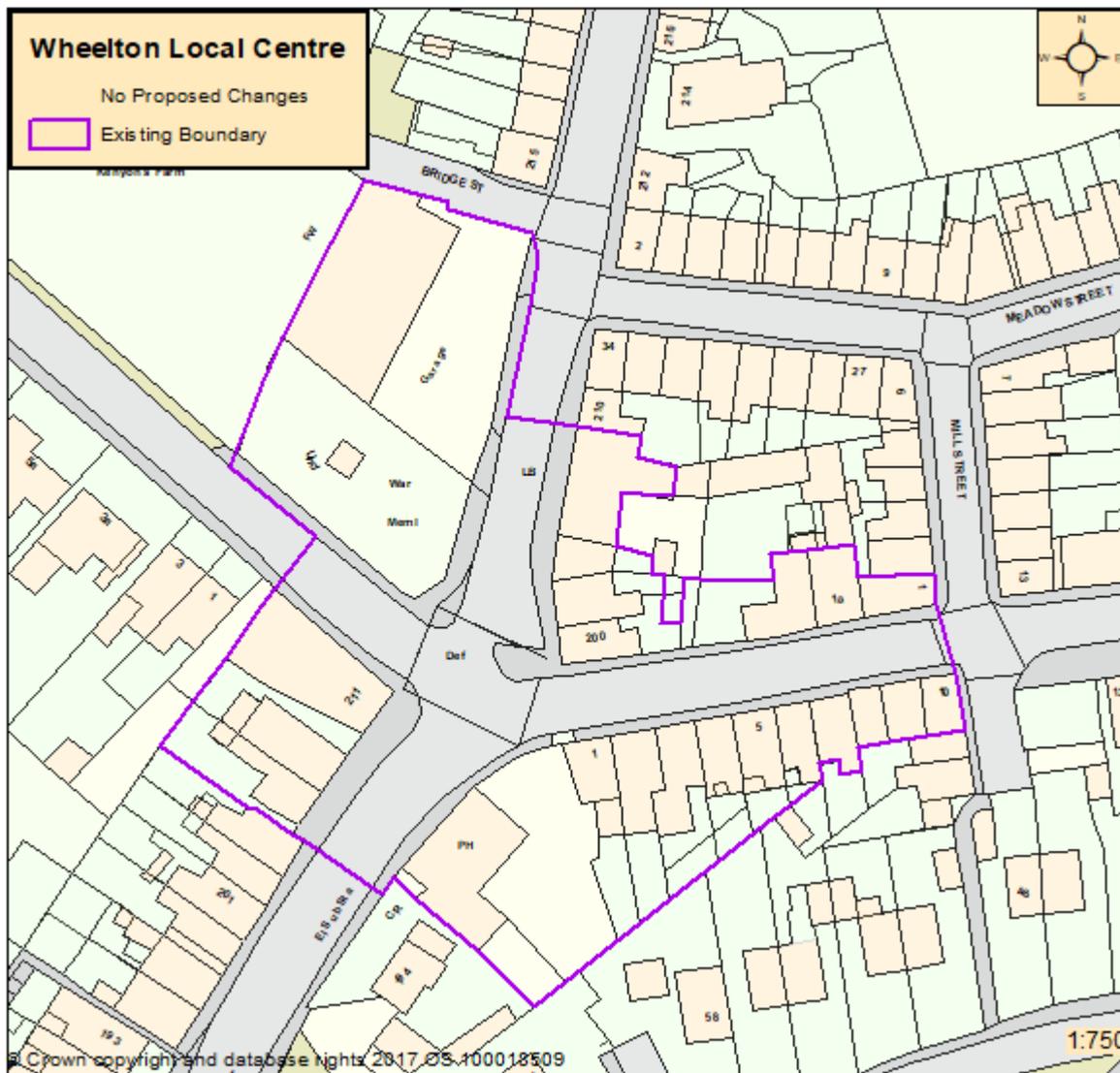








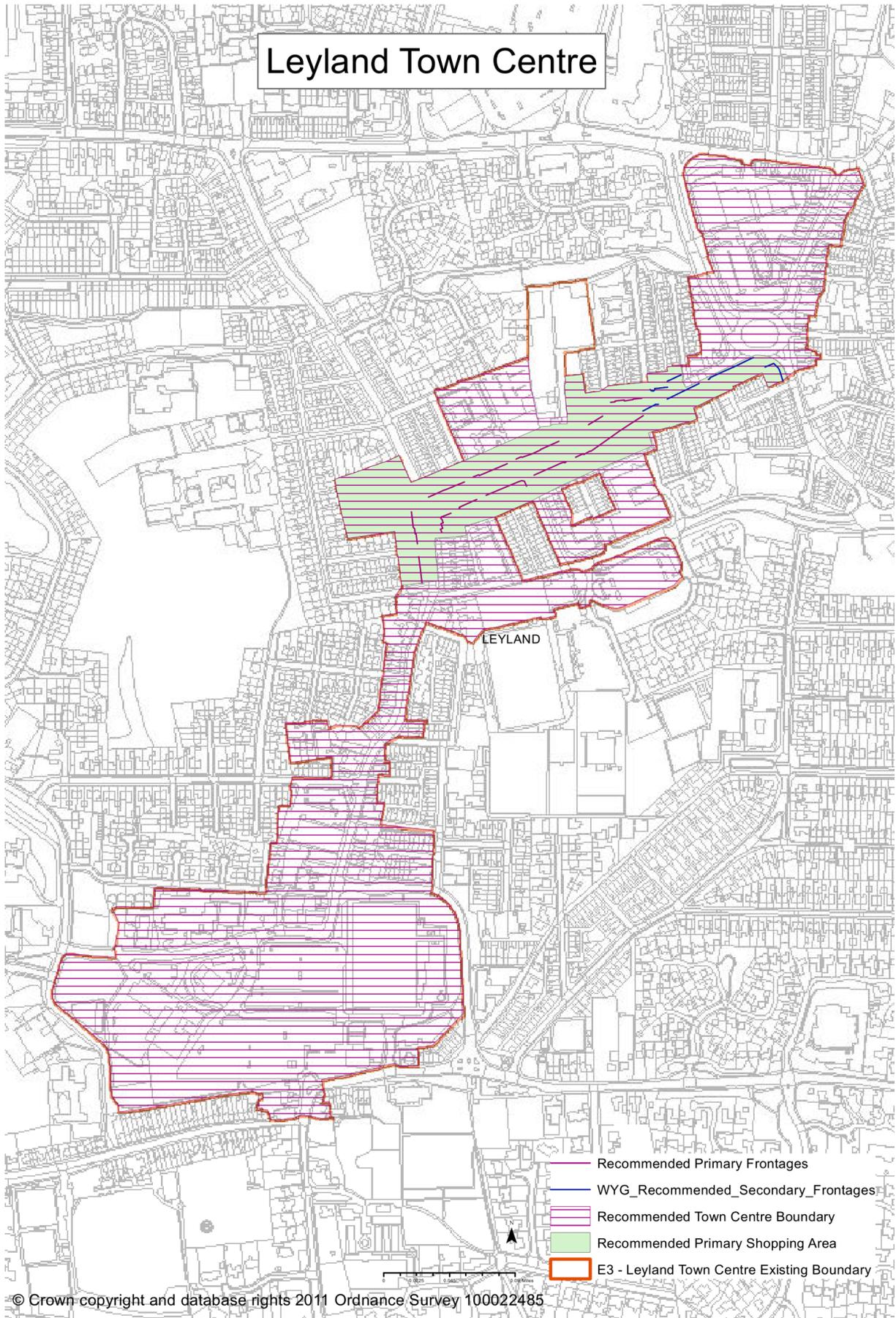




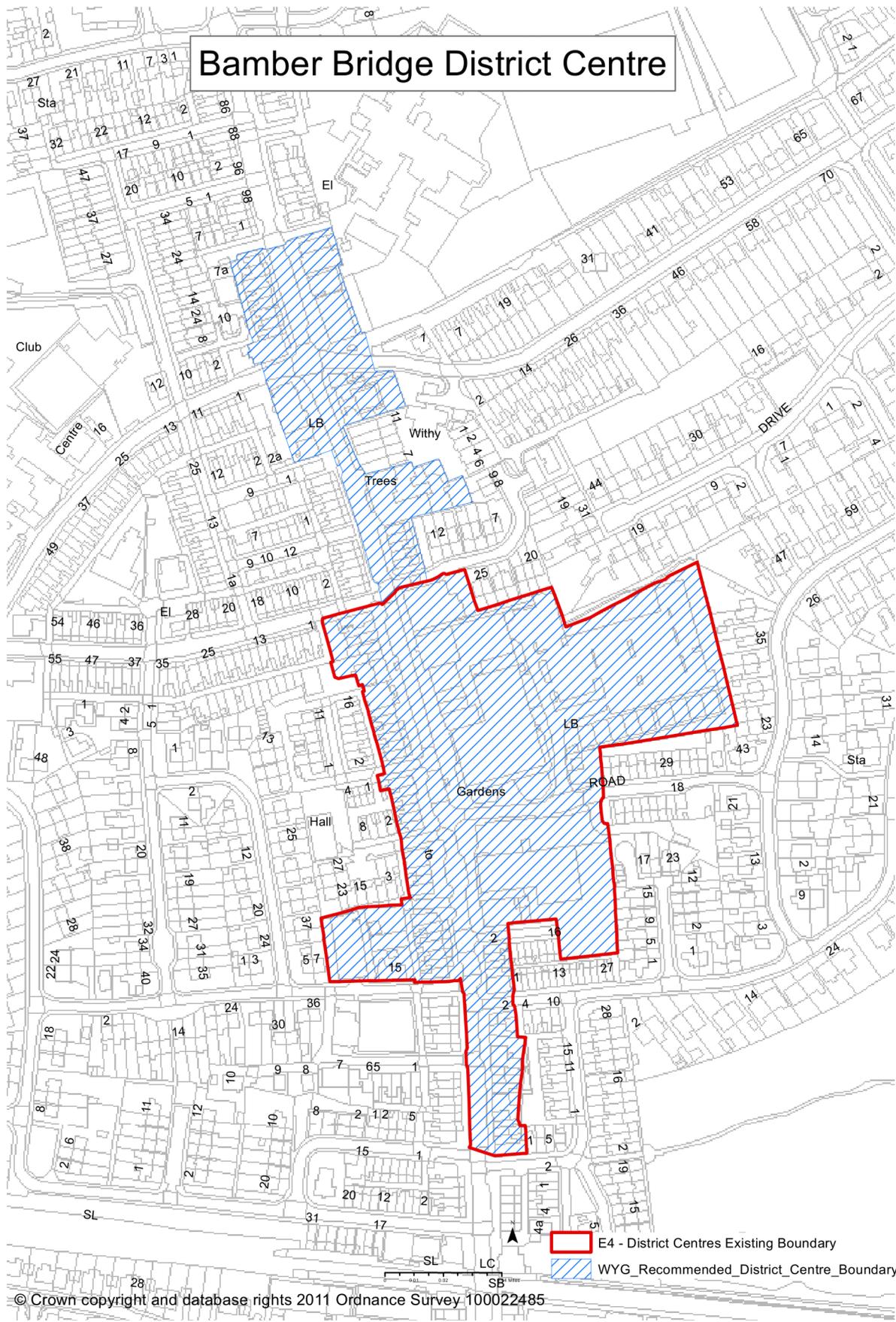
Proposed Changes to South Ribble Town, District and Local Centre Boundaries

Settlement	Type of Centre	Name of Centre	Proposed Change to Boundary
Leyland	Town Centre	Leyland Town Centre	Extension to primary shopping area to include all of Hough Lane as a secondary retail frontage.
Bamber Bridge	District Centre	Bamber Bridge	Proposed boundary change to be extended north.
Penwortham	District Centre	Penwortham	Proposed boundary change to be extended north-east to include retail units on Priory Lane and east.
Longton	District Centre	Longton	Proposed boundary change to be extended east to include retail units at the intersection of Liverpool Road, Chapel Lane and School Lane.
Lostock Hall	District Centre	Tardy Gate	Proposed boundary change to be extended south east to include Tardy Gate Library. Also, potentially extend the boundary to include the Co-operative foodstore.
Leyland	Local Centre	Farington	No proposed change.
Leyland	Local Centre	Earnshaw Bridge	No proposed change.
Leyland	Local Centre	Seven Stars	No proposed change.
Penwortham	Local Centre	Kings Fold	No proposed change.
New Longton	Local Centre	New Longton	No proposed change.
Walmer Bridge	Local Centre	Walmer Bridge	No proposed change.
Higher Walton	Local Centre	Higher Walton	No proposed change.
Walton-Le-Dale	Local Centre	Walton-Le-Dale	No proposed change.
Gregson Lane	Local Centre	Gregson Lane	No proposed change.

Leyland Town Centre

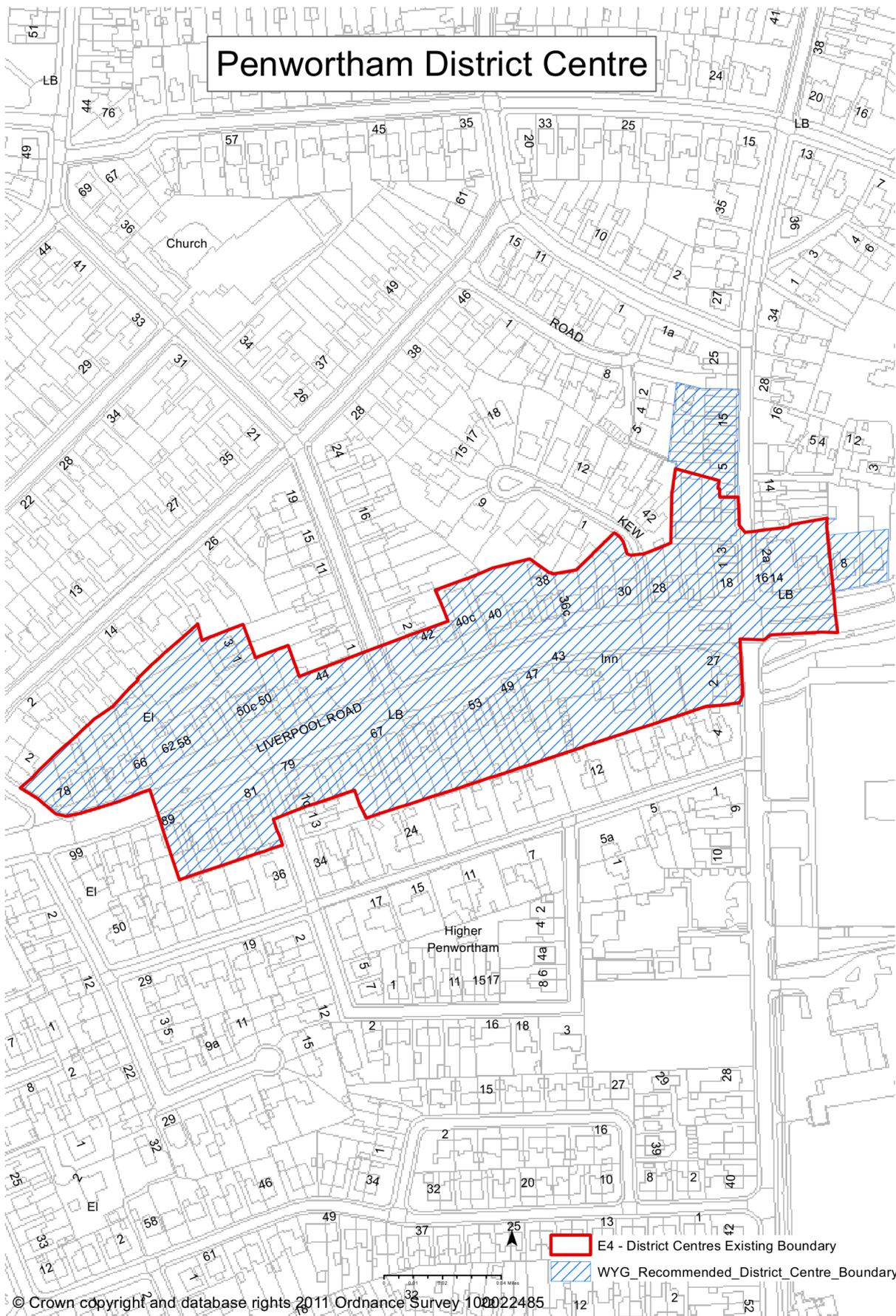


Bamber Bridge District Centre

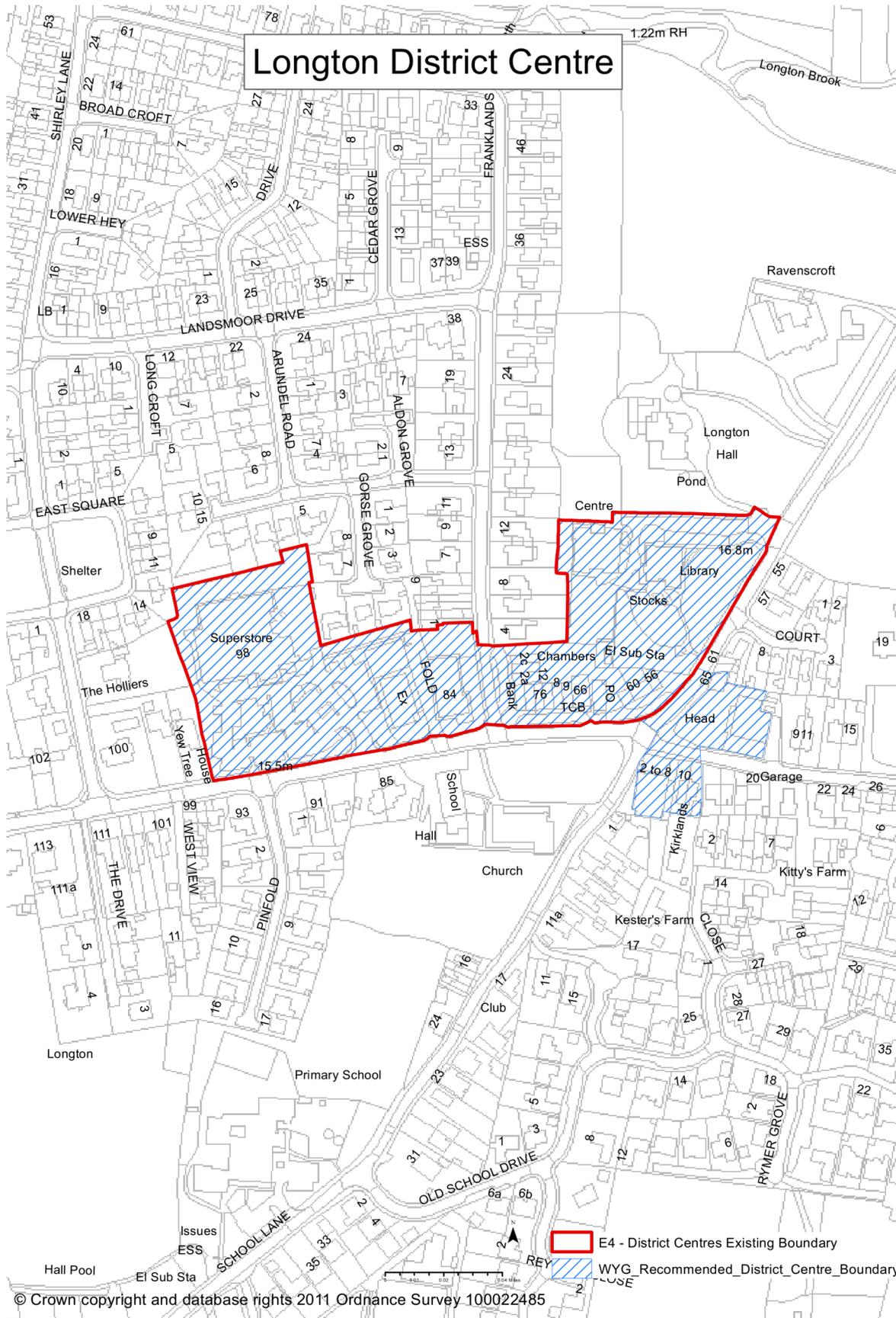


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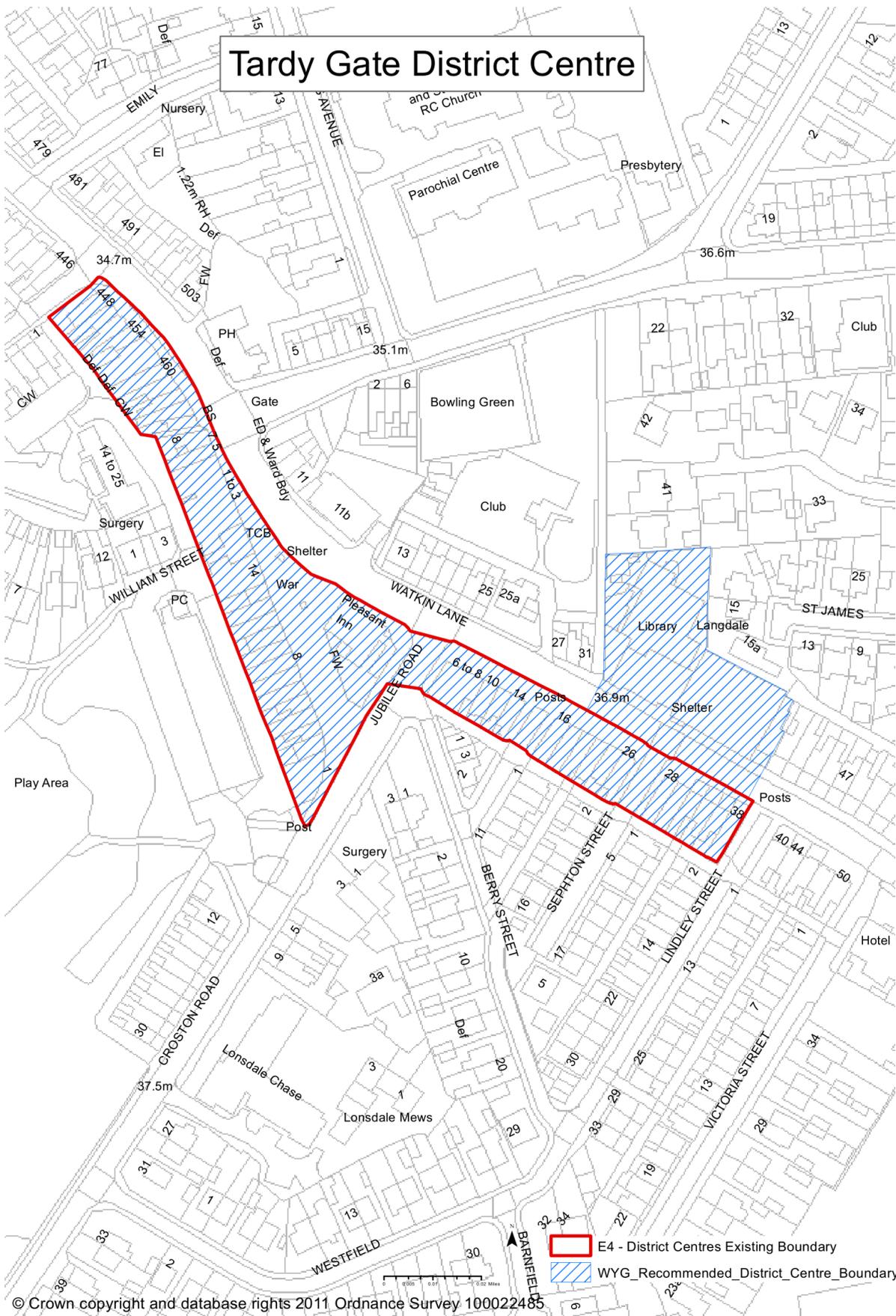
Penwortham District Centre



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Tardy Gate District Centre



E4 - District Centres Existing Boundary
 WYG_Recommended_District_Centre_Boundary

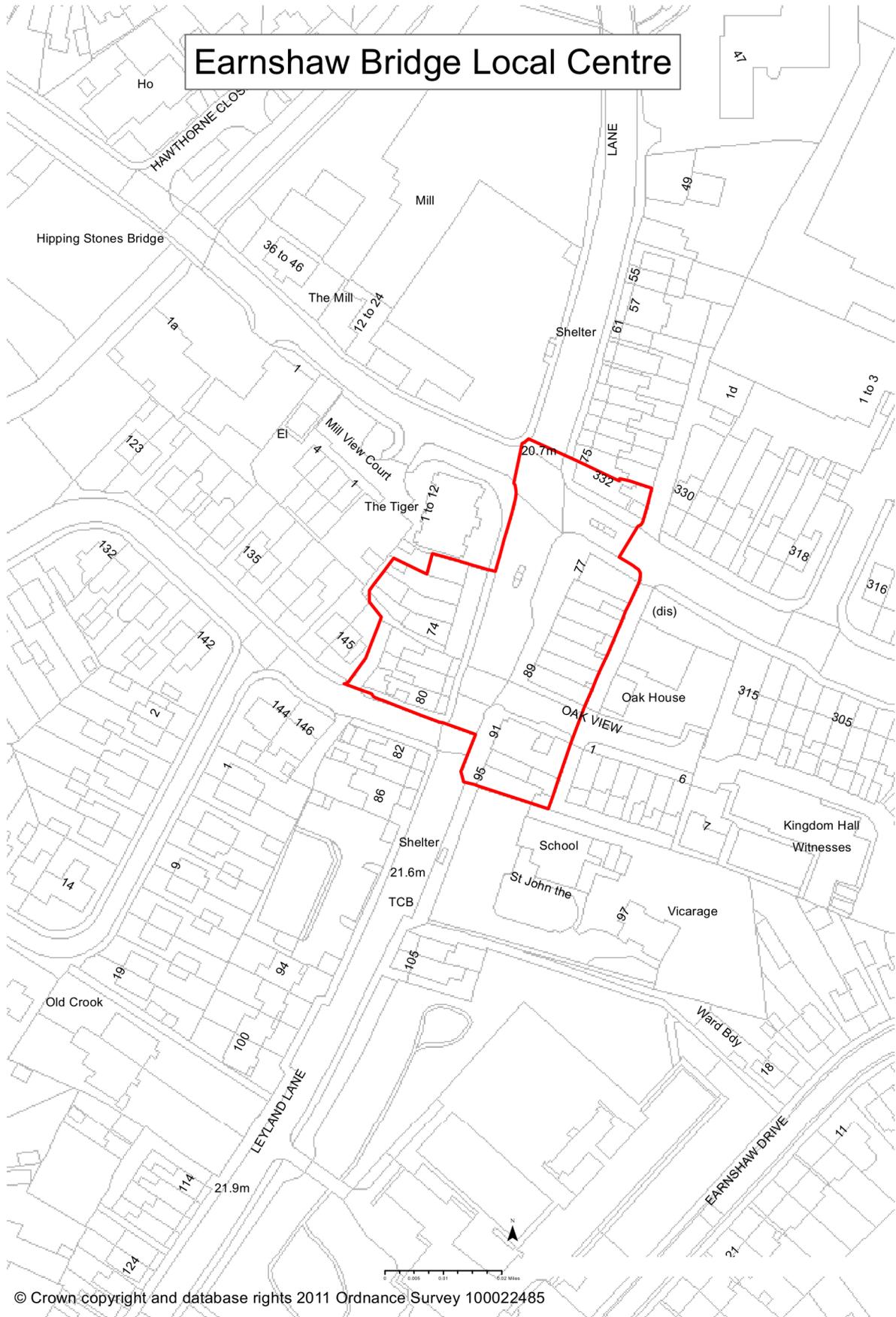
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Farington Local Centre



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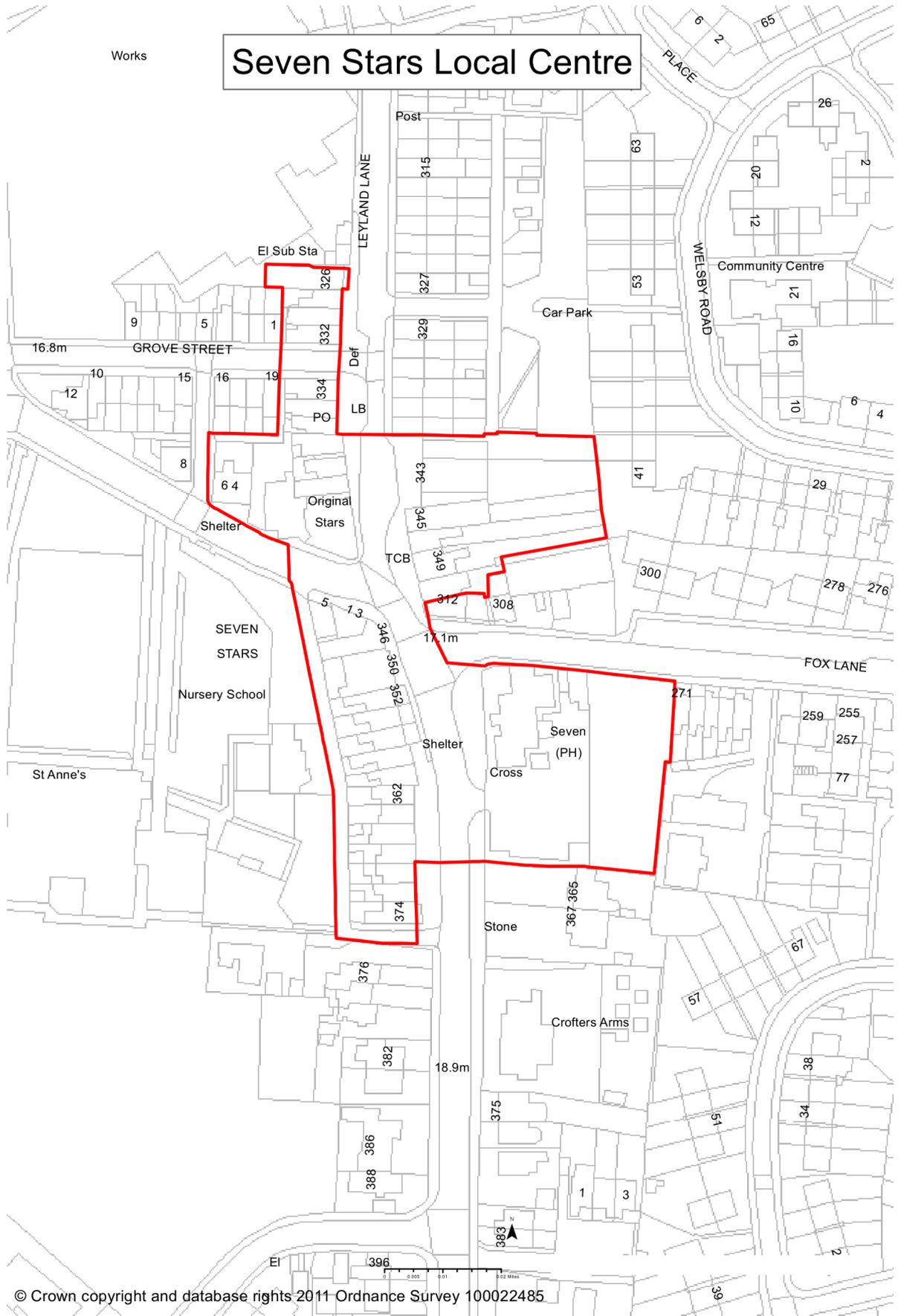
Earnshaw Bridge Local Centre



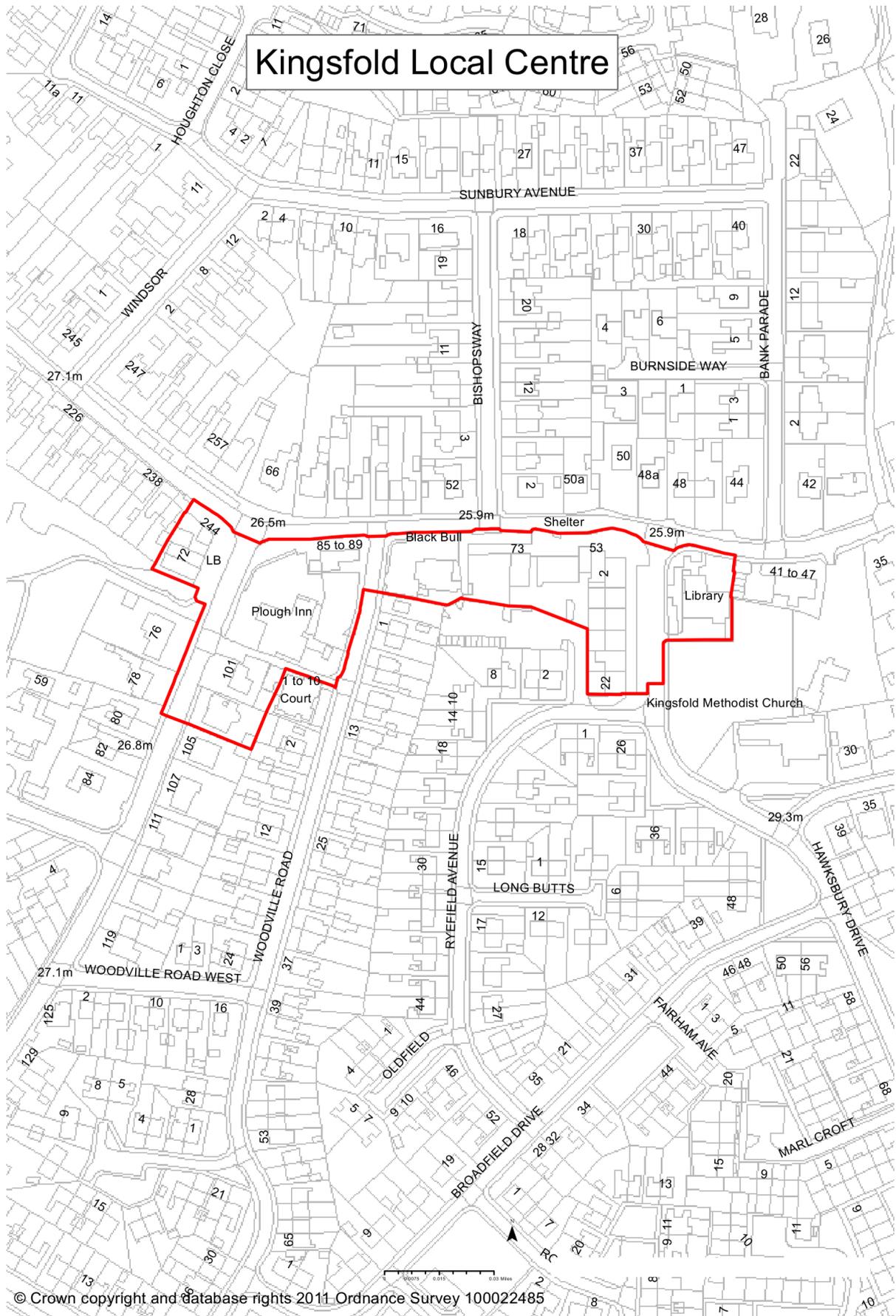
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Works

Seven Stars Local Centre



Kingsfold Local Centre



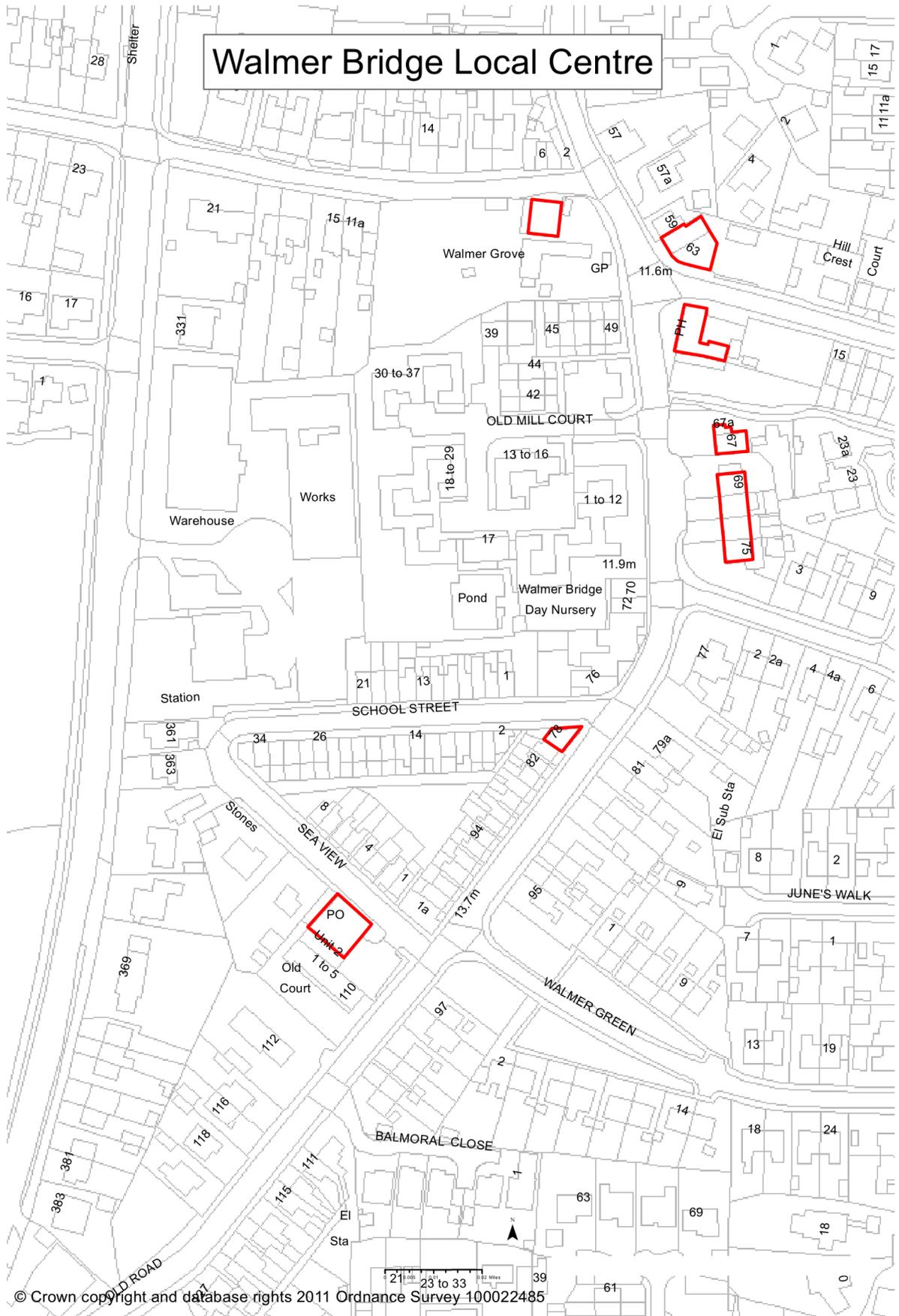
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New Longton Local Centre



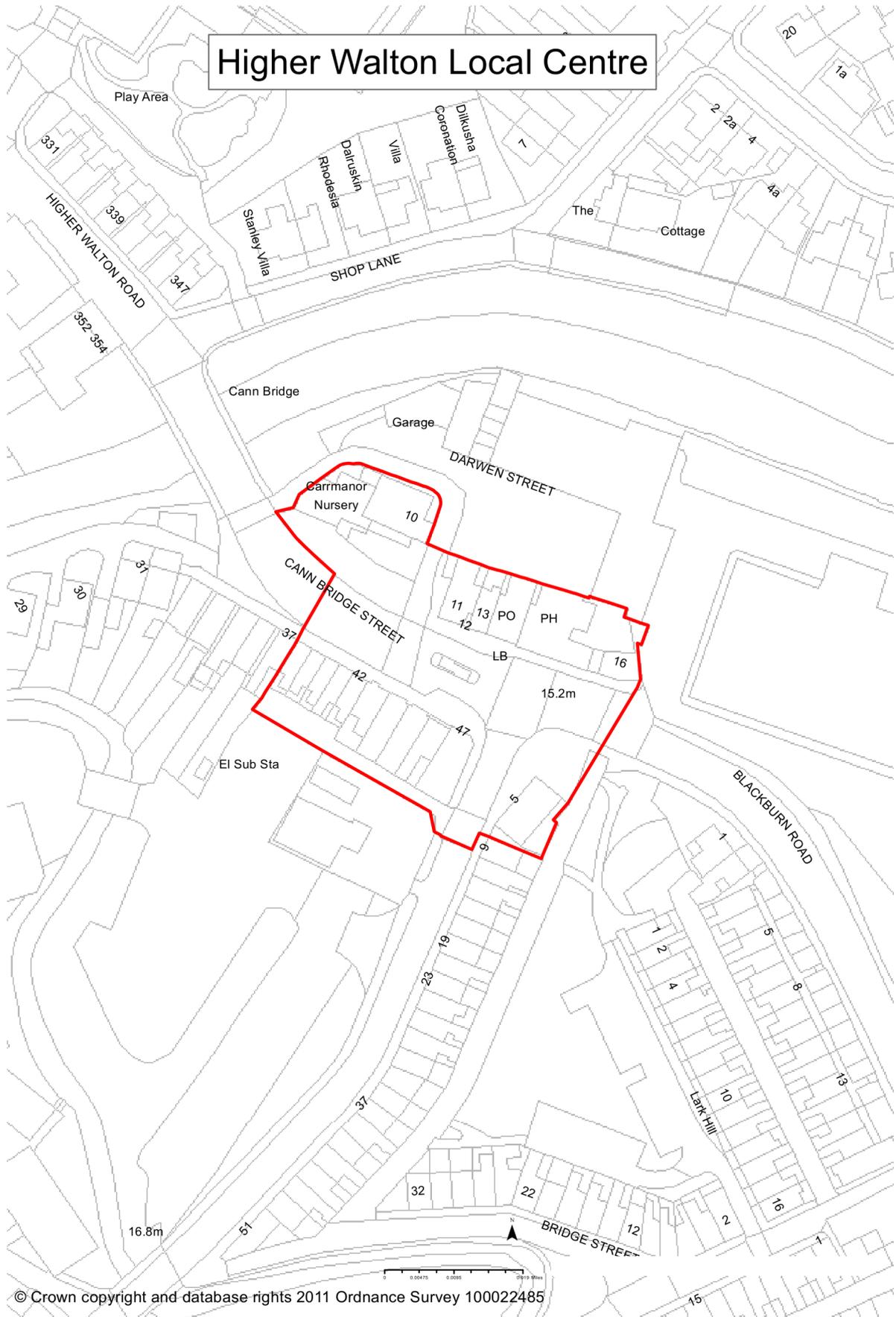
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Walmer Bridge Local Centre



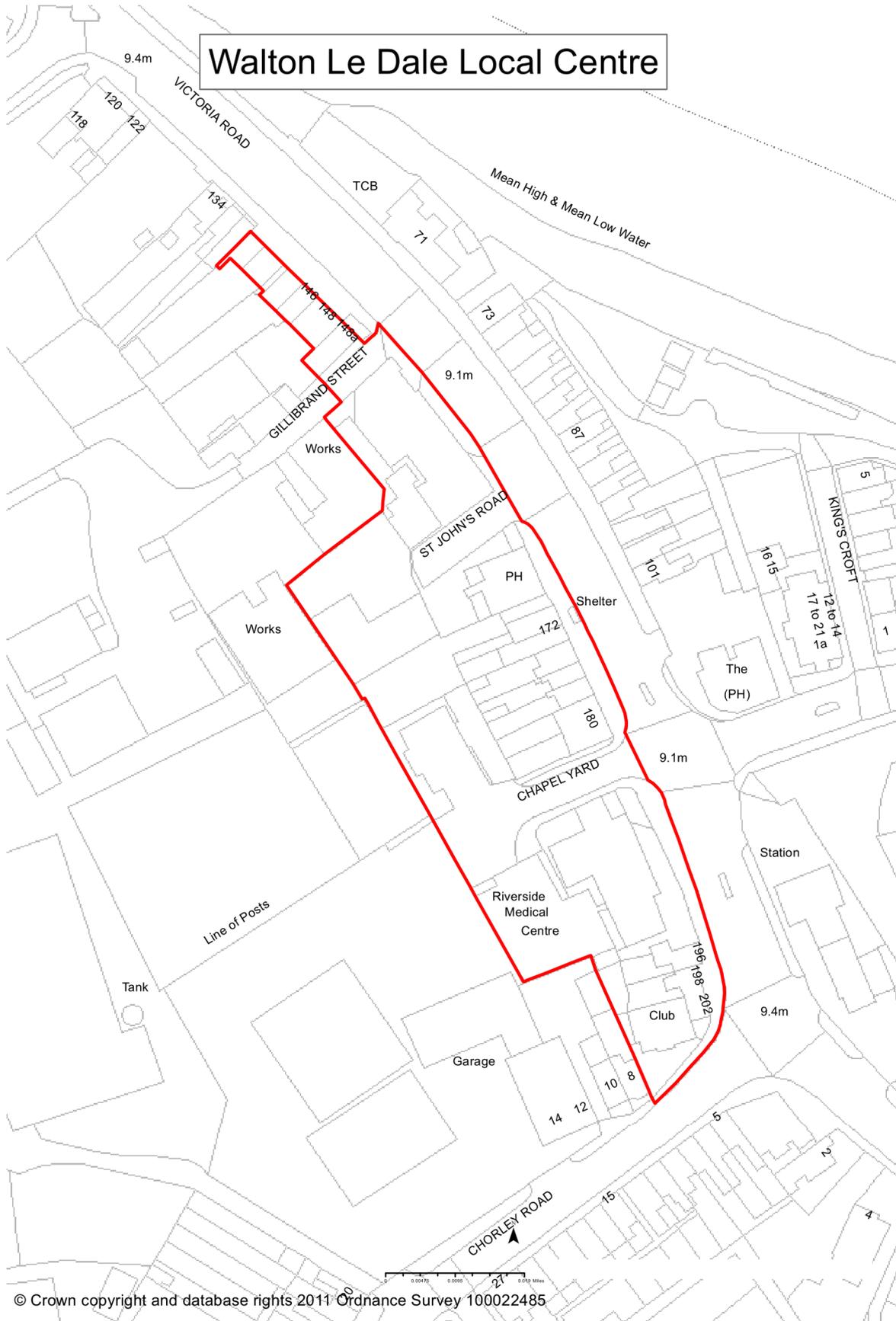
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Higher Walton Local Centre



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Walton Le Dale Local Centre



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Gregson Lane Local Centre



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Central Lancashire Local Plan

Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment Methodology Statement

Iteration 1 - April 2019



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Glossary of Acronyms

AMR:	Annual Monitoring Report
ANR:	Assumed Net Ratio
AONB:	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
AoS:	Area of Separation
BHS:	Biological Heritage Site
CS:	Core Strategy
DC:	Density Classification
DM:	Density Multiplier
EqIA:	Equalities Impact Assessment
ELR:	Employment Land Review
ELS:	Employment Land Study
FEMA:	Functional Economic Market Area
HIA:	Health Impact Assessment
HMA:	Housing Market Area
IA:	Integrated Assessment
LGS:	Local Geodiversity Site
LPA:	Local Planning Authority
LPR:	Local Plan Review
MCZ:	Marine Conservation Zone
NDA:	Net Developable Area
NNR:	National Nature Reserves
NPPF:	National Planning Policy Framework
NPPG:	National Planning Practice Guidance
POS:	Public Open Space

RAMSAR:	A “Ramsar” site is a wetlands site of international importance, as designated under the Ramsar Convention ¹
SA:	Sustainability Appraisal
SAC:	Special Area of Conservation
SHELAA:	Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment
SHLAA:	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
SLA:	Special Landscape Area
SPA:	Special Protection Area
SSSI:	Site of Special Scientific Interest

¹ The Ramsar Convention is an intergovernmental environmental treaty established in 1971 by UNESCO, which came into force in 1975.

1. Introduction

Central Lancashire in context

- 1.1 The Central Lancashire Authorities of Preston, South Ribble and Chorley are working towards the preparation of a new Local Plan. Once adopted, the Local Plan will guide future growth and development in the Central Lancashire area and replace the planning framework currently provided through the Central Lancashire Core Strategy (adopted in 2012) and the Local Plans / Site Allocations and Development Management Policies of the three Central Lancashire Authorities Preston, South Ribble and Chorley (all adopted in 2015).
- 1.2 The SHELAA will assess the development potential and suitability of sites (including availability and achievability) and will form an important component of the evidence base for the new Central Lancashire Local Plan. Whilst the SHELAA will not determine whether sites should be allocated for development (this will be done separately through the local planning process), it will provide information on a range of sites which are potentially available to meet future objectively assessed development needs.
- 1.3 Previously the Central Lancashire authorities have undertaken Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments (SHLAA - focusing solely on housing land) and Employment Land Studies (ELS - focussing solely on employment land) separately, rather than in one combined study. However, the most recent national policy and guidance now require that land availability assessments should be carried out jointly for both housing and economic development. Monitoring of the housing and employment land positions for each authority has taken place either at Central Lancashire level and/or at local authority level.
- 1.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to have a clear understanding of the housing land available in their area. From this, planning policies should identify a sufficient supply and mix of sites, taking into account their availability, suitability, and likely economic viability. Planning policies should identify a supply of:
 - a) specific, deliverable sites for years 1-5 of the plan period; and
 - b) specific, deliverable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15 of the plan.
- 1.5 For employment, planning policies should, amongst other things, set out a clear economic vision and strategy to encourage sustainable economic growth, including setting criteria or identifying strategic sites to meet anticipated needs over the plan period, seek to address potential barriers to investment, be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan, and recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors.
- 1.6 The SHELAA is an important evidence source to inform plan-making, but will not in itself determine whether a site should be allocated for housing or economic development. The SHELAA will provide an evidence base on the potential housing land supply across Central Lancashire. This document will not allocate specific sites for housing development but will be used as a key piece of evidence to inform the emerging Local Plan and Site Allocations.

Core outputs of the SHELAA

- 1.7 The core outputs of the SHELAA will include:
 - Identification of suitable sites and broad locations - including a list/database of sites, cross-referenced to maps, showing specific sites, and broad locations where necessary, and an initial assessment of their likely suitability using site surveys to identify site size/characteristics/constraints, etc. (taken from a desktop review of existing data sources and a Call for Sites).

- Assessment of development potential – an assessment of the estimated capacity of the site (no. of housing units / employment floorspace) - guided by factors such as the net developable area, constraints, and existing and emerging National and Local Plan policies (particularly the approach to densities at a local level);
 - Assessment of when / whether sites are likely to be developed: An assessment of suitability, availability and achievability, including how identified constraints can be overcome (such as infrastructure investment, or a review of planning policy, etc.) and;
 - A statement of housing and employment land supply.
- 1.8 NPPG advocates a partnership approach to undertake assessments and to ensure a joined-up and robust approach, with key stakeholders including local planning authorities; land owners/property agents/developers; local communities / businesses, and parish councils, etc. The assessment is not a one-off study. The assessment will need to be regularly reviewed.
- 1.9 This will be the first SHELAA to be produced for Central Lancashire, following the initial two call for sites exercises undertaken in 2018 and 2019.
- 1.10 Stakeholders were able, as part of the Call for Sites consultations, to submit site suggestions through the Local Plan process. All sites submitted will be incorporated into the SHELAA. The sites in the SHELAA will then be used as the basis for identifying potential sites for development. This process is described further in Section 2, below.
- 1.11 As part of the evidence base to the Local Plan, the SHELAA can only consider existing or emerging national and local planning policy. As such, a number of sites submitted in the Call for Sites may initially have to be "parked" (excluded from further assessment in the SHELAA) if they don't comply with current planning policy (for example, if they are located in the Green Belt). However, this does not mean that they will be discounted from consideration through the Local Plan Review (LPR).
- 1.12 This SHELAA methodology (Iteration 1) will be published at the Issues and Options stage, and future iterations will also be published at subsequent stages of the Local Plan review as necessary, on the respective websites of the three Central Lancashire authorities (Preston, South Ribble, and Chorley) and on the Central Lancashire Local Plan website at: <https://centrallocalplan.lancashire.gov.uk/>

2. Approach and Methodology

Planning Policy and Guidance

- 2.1. The SHELAA will need to take into consideration existing and emerging national and local planning policy. The key policies are summarised below.

Current National Planning Policy and Guidance

- 2.2. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the framework for producing Local Plans. National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) contains further guidance on preparing housing and employment land assessments. The proposed methodology for the Central Lancashire SHELAA, as set out below, closely follows the NPPG guidance.

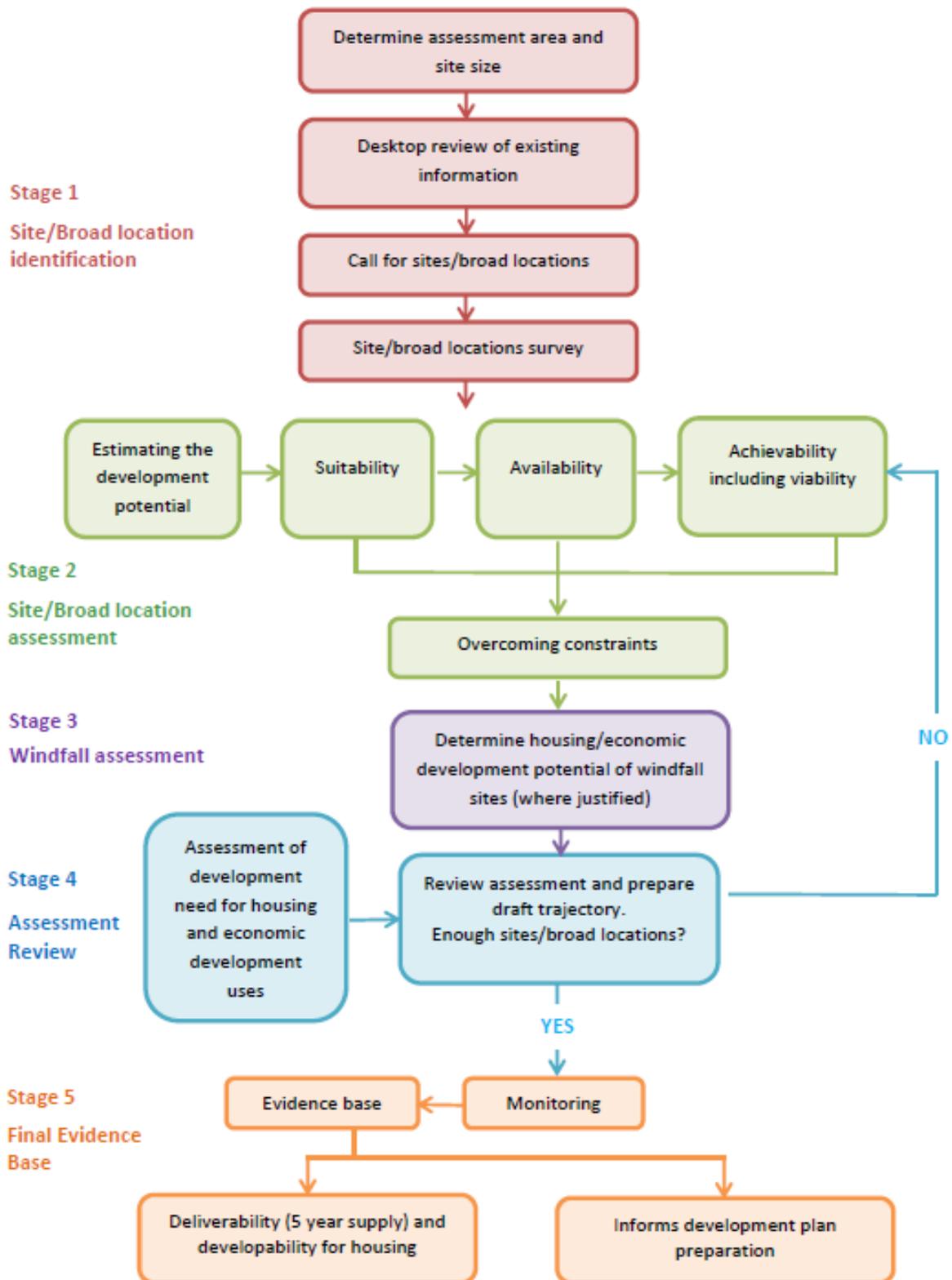
Existing Local Planning Policy and Guidance

- 2.3. There are a number of key local policies/designations in the existing Central Lancashire Core Strategy (adopted 2012) and the three Local Plans of Preston, Chorley and South Ribble (all adopted 2015) that are of relevance to the SHELAA.
- 2.4. The existing Central Lancashire Core Strategy states that growth and investment should be focussed on brownfield sites and key regeneration areas in Preston, the key service centres of Chorley and Leyland as well as Longridge in Ribble Valley, Strategic sites, and the other main urban areas in South Ribble, whilst protecting the character of suburban areas. Some growth and investment is also encouraged at the Urban Local Service Centres of Adlington, Clayton Brook/Green, Clayton-le-Woods (Lancaster Lane), Coppull, Euxton and Whittle-le-Woods, with limited growth and investment encouraged at identified Rural Local Service Centres. The Core Strategy also recognises that there may be a need for some greenfield development on the fringes of main urban areas and also in specified local service centres.
- 2.5. Chorley, Preston and South Ribble Councils are required to aim to provide for and manage the delivery of new housing by ensuring that there is enough deliverable land suitable for house building. The SHELAA will therefore be an important evidence base for the Site Allocations work which will set out site specific allocations to meet development needs and protect areas from inappropriate development. Both Chorley and South Ribble boroughs have extensive areas of Green Belt land, whereas Green Belt land is far more limited in extent in Preston. Most types of development, including nearly all forms of housing development, are not appropriate in the Green Belt.
- 2.6. In both South Ribble and Chorley there are large areas of designated Safeguarded Land on the edge of towns and villages. This land could be used for development including housing if there is a need and it is otherwise appropriate to allocate the land for residential development. Predominantly to the east of Chorley town and around the west, north and east of Preston City the open countryside is protected from most forms of development including most types of housing, although land adjoining the urban areas could be suitable. In all three districts public and privately owned open space used for amenity, sport and other recreational purposes is protected from development and not normally allowed for housing.

SHELAA methodology

- 2.7. This document sets out the proposed methodology for undertaking the SHELAA.
- 2.8. The NPPG sets out a flow chart for carrying out a SHELAA, shown in Fig. 1 below:

Figure 1. SHELAA Stages



2.9. With reference to the flowchart (Figure 1, above):

- This SHELAA methodology will focus on **Stages 1 and 2**.
- The work for Stage 3 (Windfall Assessment) and Stages 4 and 5 (Assessment Review, and Final Evidence Base) will be undertaken partly through the Local Plan Review, and partly through the Housing Land Monitoring Reports and Employment Land Reviews.

2.10. The different stages of the SHELAA process are outlined in more detail below.

Stage 1 – Identification of Sites / Broad Locations
(Including Desktop Review, Call for Sites, Sieving Process & initial Site Surveys)

Stage 1 – Identification of sites / broad locations

- 2.11. NPPG advises that the SHELAA evidence base should be proportionate, and central government emphasises the speedy preparation and delivery of local plans.
- 2.12. Stage 1 of the NPPG flowchart sets out how local planning authorities can identify sites / broad locations and how to carry out an initial survey of potential sites to identify any constraints (policy / physical, etc.). This will enable an initial assessment of suitability to be made, prior to undertaking more detailed site assessments at Stage 2 of the flowchart.
- 2.13. Using national policy and designations to apply a sieving approach at the first stage will ensure a proportionate approach to site assessments, in accordance with NPPG. This will mean that only sites with reasonable development potential will be taken forward for further assessment. Iteration 1 of this SHELAA methodology sets out the parameters to be used in the sieving process to ensure a sequential approach is applied to assessing the most suitable sites first. Subsequent iterations of the SHELAA may need to amend these parameters. For example, if not enough sites are identified when applying the parameters set out in Iteration 1 of the SHELAA to meet the identified need.
- 2.14. When carrying out the initial Stage 1 site assessments, further sites with potential for development can also be identified.

Stage 1 (A) Determining the assessment area, and site size (thresholds)

- 2.15. NPPG requires the geographical area of assessment, and the size of sites that will be considered in the SHELAA, to be specified. NPPG also suggests thresholds that may be applied.

Determining the assessment area

- 2.16. The first task of Stage 1 is to determine the area to be covered by the SHELAA assessment. NPPG advises on the geographical area of assessment and suggests that a SHELAA should cover the Housing Market Area (HMA) and Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA). Therefore, where an HMA / FEMA straddles more than one local authority area (such as Central Lancashire), the SHELAA should by implication be prepared jointly with neighbours.
- 2.17. In the case of Central Lancashire, the three Authorities of Preston, South Ribble and Chorley have a history of joint working and a new Central Team, working in partnership with the three home teams, and are currently preparing a Central Lancashire Local Plan. The joint evidence base is in the process of being updated and these separate studies, in addition to the national standard housing methodology, will predominantly determine the housing and employment needs across the Central Lancashire area.
- 2.18. There is a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the three authorities which sets out the commitment to working collaboratively including an appropriate distribution of the identified requirements, based on local conditions. As part of the plan-making process, a statement of common ground will be produced to set out the duty to co-operate arrangements between the three councils plus Lancashire County Council. The land supply position can only be determined once there is clarity as to the housing and employment land requirements and distribution across Central Lancashire.
- 2.19. For the reasons set out above, the area for assessment in the Central Lancashire SHELAA will comprise the three Central Lancashire authority areas of Preston, South Ribble and Chorley.

Determining the site size (thresholds)

2.20. NPPG requires the size of sites to be considered in the SHELAA to be specified. It also suggests that the SHELAA should consider all sites and broad locations capable of delivering:

- Residential uses: five or more dwellings, or
- Economic development: sites of 0.25ha (or 500sqm of floorspace) and above.

Residential land threshold

2.21. NPPG also advises that where appropriate, alternative site thresholds may be considered. The Central Lancashire Authorities have decided that the threshold to be applied for residential development (in the first iteration of the SHELAA), will be:

Residential use threshold for SHELAA Iteration 1:
No threshold applied. (All sites, regardless of size, will be included in Iteration 1 of the SHELAA)

2.22. The reasons for this departure from the suggested NPPG threshold for residential use in Iteration 1 of the SHELAA are as follows:

- To help ensure there are enough housing sites to meet the likely requirement;
- To facilitate a minimum allocation of 10% small and medium sized housing sites (i.e. no larger than 1 hectare) as required by the NPPF; and
- To have enough small sites to encourage self-build housing and additions to the brownfield register, etc.

Employment land threshold

- 2.23. For employment, the Central Lancashire authorities have agreed that the suggested threshold in the NPPG for economic use will be applied. The threshold to be applied for economic development in Iteration 1 of the SHELAA will therefore be:

Employment use threshold for SHELAA Iteration 1:
Sites equal to or exceeding 0.25ha (or 500sqm of floorspace) will be included. (Any sites below the above threshold will not be included in Iteration 1 of the SHELAA)

- 2.24. Therefore, the only sites to be excluded from consideration in Iteration 1 of the SHELAA will be employment sites of less than 0.25ha (or 500sqm of floorspace).

Stage 1 (B) Identifying sites: Desktop review of existing information

- 2.25. The next part of Stage 1 is to undertake a desktop review of existing information to identify sites and broad locations which may potentially be suitable and available for development. Sources will include any evidence emerging from previous studies which are in the process of being updated (for example an update to the Employment Land Study, which has been commissioned).
- 2.26. The NPPG outlines potential data sources that may be used to collate potential SHELAA sites as part of the desktop review. These include some sites that are currently in the planning process, and some which are not. Based on this guidance, the table below sets out some potential data sources for identifying sites in Central Lancashire for each type of site listed:

Potential data sources for identifying sites:	
<u>Type of site</u>	<u>Potential data source(s)</u>
Existing housing and economic development allocations and site development briefs not yet with planning permission.	Local Plan Development briefs
Planning permissions for housing and economic development that are unimplemented or under construction.	Central Lancashire authorities housing land database and housing trajectory Planning application records Development start and completion records
Planning applications that have been refused (including those subject to appeal) or withdrawn.	Planning application records
Undetermined planning applications, including those subject to pending legal (Section 106) agreements.	

Land in local authority ownership.	Engagement with the Central Lancashire authorities (officers and members) via Call for Sites exercise and general day-to-day liaison.
Surplus / likely to become surplus public land.	Engagement with public sector bodies and statutory undertakers
Vacant and derelict land and buildings	Engagement with the Central Lancashire authorities (officers and members) and Call for Sites
Additional opportunities in established uses	
Business requirements and aspirations	Engagement with the sector
Rural sites	Desktop review Call for Sites Existing SHLAA sites Assessment of employment areas Local knowledge Member / Parish Council involvement Local Plan Review evidence base
Large scale redevelopment / redesign of established residential / employment areas	
Sites in and adjoining settlements and rural exception sites	
Potential urban extensions / new free standing settlements	

- 2.27. The desktop review of existing evidence will identify sites with potential for housing and employment development. A wide a range of sites should be identified, including existing sites that can be improved, intensified, or changed.
- 2.28. Brownfield land, development hotspots, town and district centres, principal public transport corridors, specific locations within or adjoining settlements are all potential areas for identifying sites for further assessment.
- 2.29. Potentially suitable sites which have known constraints should still be included in the desktop review for comprehensiveness, but the constraints will need to be set out clearly and the appropriateness of those constraints will be re-tested.
- 2.30. Given there will be a number of potential sites already in the planning process, for clarity the following types of sites will be considered in Iteration 1 of the SHLAA when identifying potential sites for housing and employment:

Identifying potential sites for SHELAA Iteration 1 (Sites already in the planning process):

- Existing housing and employment allocations (without planning permission) and sites with development briefs;
- Expired, refused or withdrawn planning permissions (within the last three years) for housing or employment;
- Land identified in existing Local Plans as Safeguarded Land.

Extant planning permissions for housing or employment (either sites which are yet to commence but are still within the permitted time limit to start development, or sites which are currently under construction) will be included in the overall land availability figures, but they will not be included in the SHELAA database. They will be appended to the SHELAA separately. These sites already benefit from planning permission and are therefore already monitored extensively by the home teams in the Annual Monitoring Reports, so detailed assessments will not be required as part of this SHELAA.

Stage 1 (C) Identifying sites: Call for sites / broad locations

- 2.31. In addition to local authorities identifying sites / broad locations, another key part of the site identification process is the “Call for Sites” exercise. There was an initial Call for Sites(1) in late Summer 2018, which was re-opened as Call for Sites(2) in early 2019.
- 2.32. The Call for Sites exercises brought forward suggestions for potential housing and employment sites as well as other land uses (including protection of current use).
- 2.33. Various data was recorded to help identify any potential constraints / barriers to development and to provide a better understanding about the suitability and availability / likely development potential of the sites suggested in the Call for Sites.

Stage 1 (D) Site / broad location Survey (including sieving process / exclusions from further assessment)

- 2.34. Potential sites identified from both the desktop review of existing information and from the Call for Sites will be mapped and recorded in a comprehensive Excel database, with cross reference to a GIS map of sites and their key details. The database will also include any identified potential constraints/barriers to development.

Site Sieving process

Policy exclusions

- 2.35. All sites in the database will then be subject to an initial assessment against national policies and designations to establish which sites have reasonable potential for development and should therefore be considered further. Applying a “sieving” exercise early on in the process will result in a database of sites that are considered worthy of further detailed assessment, and this will ensure the most suitable sites are considered first.
- 2.36. In the first iteration of the SHELAA, certain types of land (e.g. important statutory designations / protected areas) will therefore be “parked”. The sites to be excluded, and their reason for exclusion in Iteration 1, are set out below. Any sites that are “parked” at this stage can still be re-visited later in the process / in

future iterations of the SHELAA (for example, if there is not a sufficient supply of suitable sites identified to meet local need).

Policy exclusions for SHELAA Iteration 1:	
Nationally / Internationally Designated Nature Conservation Sites	Any sites in, or partially within any nationally / internationally designated nature / species / habitat, geological, or landscape conservation site, such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's), Special Protection Areas (SPA's), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's), Ramsar sites, Marine Conservation Zones (MCZ's), Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB's), etc. will be excluded from the study, due to their importance for nature and conservation.
Flood Zones 3a and 3b	<p>Parts of Central Lancashire are vulnerable to flooding. More vulnerable uses, such as residential dwellings, are only appropriate in Flood Zone 3a if the exception test is passed. Residential dwellings will not be permitted in Flood Zone 3b.</p> <p>Any sites in, or partially within Flood Zones 3a or 3b will be excluded from the study, unless they already have planning permission, or form part of an existing housing or employment or mixed-use allocation.</p>
Green Belt Land	<p>The importance of Green Belt is recognised both nationally and locally in maintaining the openness between built up areas. Any sites wholly within the Green Belt will therefore be excluded from the study.</p> <p>It may be that Green Belt boundaries might need to be reviewed if there is not enough land suitable/available elsewhere in the plan area to meet the identified need.</p>
Open Countryside (<i>"Open Countryside"</i> in Preston; <i>"Area of Other Open Countryside"</i> in Chorley; and <i>"Protected Open Land"</i> in South Ribble)	<p>As with Green Belt land, Special Landscape Areas (SLA's) such as designated Open Countryside in Preston; Area of Other Open Countryside in Chorley; and Protected Open Land in South Ribble, is currently protected. Any sites wholly within these areas will therefore be excluded from the study.</p> <p>Some SLA land adjoining built up areas may be suitable for development, or on previously developed land, for example, so these sites may need to be re-visited at a later time.</p>

2.37. An example of where a "parked" site might be revisited in later iterations of the SHELAA could be where a large site falls partly within a designated area / flood zone, etc. In such cases, it may be that some of the site might be acceptable for development, so the net developable area could be reduced pro-rata to reflect the proportion of the site covered by the designation, for example.

Policy inclusions

2.38. For clarity, in relation to sites not already parked due to the policy exclusions referred to above, sites comprising the following land types will be assessed in the first iteration of the SHELAA.

Policy inclusions for SHELAA Iteration 1:	
Brownfield Land	Brownfield land is generally preferred for development, although the SHELAA will take into account current planning policies, locational circumstances, and the need for other land uses, when brownfield sites are assessed for their suitability for housing.
Greenfield sites	Planning policies recognise that the priority is to develop brownfield sites. However, some greenfield sites will be appropriate for development. The SHELAA will therefore assess greenfield sites to determine their suitability.
Safeguarded Land	Safeguarded Land, identified in the Chorley and South Ribble Local Plans, is safeguarded from development in order to help meet long term development needs without encroaching onto Green Belt land. It will therefore be appropriate to assess this land for development suitability.
Public Open Space	Sites that predominantly comprise public open will initially be included in the assessment.
Flood zones 1 & 2	Sites within Flood zones 1 & 2 will not be excluded from the assessment as measures can be taken in a development to mitigate the risk of flooding. The flood risk element and the cost of mitigation will be considered at the viability stage of the assessment.
Locally designated Nature Conservation Areas	Locally designated conservation sites such as Local Nature Reserves and Wildlife Sites have a lower status than national designations and sites will initially be included in this assessment.
Areas of Separation (AoS)	Some areas of Green Belt or Open Countryside are also Areas of Separation, which is an additional layer of protection primarily aimed at stopping settlements from merging. However, if any AoS sites are not within the Green Belt or Open Countryside, these sites will initially be included in the assessment.

2.39. No other sites (either those sites received via the Call for Sites exercise, or through the Desktop review of existing data sources) will be excluded at Stage 1 of the SHELAA assessment, other than sites put forward purely for the protection of an existing use/allocation, which by implication will not need assessing.

Sites excluded from further assessment

2.40. The only sites to be excluded from further assessment at Stage 1 of SHELAA Iteration 1 will be:

Sites to be excluded (policy exclusions) for SHELAA Iteration 1:

- Sites in or partially within any Nationally / Internationally designated Nature conservation sites (e.g. SSSI's; SPA's; SAC's, Ramsar sites, MCZ's & AONB's, etc.);
- Sites in or partially within areas designated as Flood Zones 3a and 3b;
- Sites wholly within the Green Belt or Open Countryside*

For this iteration (SHELAA Iteration 1), any site lying partly within the Green Belt or Open Countryside will be subject to an officer adjustment to the site boundaries / site area, so that any Green Belt or Open Countryside will not be included in the site assessments. This manual adjustment to the site boundaries is for the purposes of the sieving approach being applied in Iteration 1 of the SHELAA only.

*Open Countryside is defined as "Open Countryside" (in Preston); "Area of Other Open Countryside" (in Chorley); and "Protected Open Land" (in South Ribble).

Site surveys

- 2.41. All remaining sites and broad locations within the database will then be subject to an initial site survey to identify/clarify constraints and make an initial assessment of the likely suitability of the site for development. This will be a desk based assessment, for example using GIS and other available resources. The site surveys will include all sites in the database, including sites put forward for any use (not just those put forward for residential or employment or mixed use).
- 2.42. NPPG stresses that assessments should be proportionate. The Stage 1 site survey results will therefore highlight the realistic contenders for development and will inform how detailed the Stage 2 site assessments can/should be, as well as providing a sound evidence base for the further assessments of development potential, suitability, availability, and achievability.

Site visits / Site visit exclusions

- 2.43. As a general rule, site visits will not be undertaken as part of the initial desk based site surveys to ensure time and resources are focussed on assessing sites which have the most realistic development potential. It is likely that sufficient information will either already be known, or can be obtained using other reliable sources, to be confident about the likelihood of development realistically coming forward.
- 2.44. This approach is justified in the NPPG, which advises that site surveys should be proportionate to the detail required for a robust appraisal, and that more detailed site surveys (including site visits) should be carried out for sites which are considered realistic candidates for development.
- 2.45. Notwithstanding this, a site visit can still be undertaken if considered appropriate / necessary at this stage. In such cases, site characteristics that will help determine the likely suitability of a site will be recorded by officers on site.
- 2.46. A standard site visit template has been prepared, (including prompts for information/observations and room for additional comments) has been prepared to assist officers on site and to help ensure consistency.
- 2.47. Characteristics to be noted on the site visit will include: access; site size; boundaries; current use; surrounding land use & character; development progress; and any physical constraints such as steep

slopes; potential for flooding; and other natural features of significance such as trees or ponds, or man-made constraints such as pylons or pipelines (including electricity network buffer requirements).

- 2.48. For sites where there are known insurmountable physical/other constraints or ownership/viability issues, etc. (and the data source is reliable, accurate, and up to date), these sites will not be considered realistic contenders for coming forward and they will not be considered worthy of further detailed assessment. However, they will remain in the SHELAA database, but they will be “parked” until such a time as it may be necessary to re-visit them later in the process.

Initial determination of potential suitability of sites

- 2.49. At the end of Stage 1 of SHELAA Iteration 1, it will be possible to make an initial assessment (prior to undertaking a detailed Stage 2 assessment) of whether the site has potential to be considered suitable for housing or employment, or housing/employment as part of a mixed use development.
- 2.50. Stage 1 of SHELAA Iteration 1 will therefore result in a comprehensive list of sites that highlights the realistic contenders that are considered worthy of more detailed assessment at Stage 2.

Stage 2 – Site / Broad Location Assessment
(Including Estimating Development Potential, Suitability, Availability, Achievability
& Overcoming Identified Constraints)

Stage 2 – Site / Broad Location Assessment:

- 2.51. Stage 2 will involve more detailed assessments of the sites with realistic development potential (sites considered worthy of further assessment after Stage 1, above). This will involve an assessment of their availability, suitability, and achievability, as well as how and when identified constraints can be overcome. The Stage 2 assessments are likely to evolve and will become more focussed on key sites / issues as the Local Plan progresses. For example, site assessments will need to be updated / amended to reflect emerging policy, changes to market strength, build out rates, and / or input from developers, etc. Each part of Stage 2 is set out in more detail below:

Stage 2 (A) Estimating Development Potential (capacity/density)

- 2.52. The first part of Stage 2 is to estimate the development potential of each site in the SHELAA database, guided by existing or emerging national and local policy. When assessing capacity, due regard should be given to identified constraints, the net developable area, and the approach being taken to housing densities at a local level.
- 2.53. In the Call for Sites exercise, an indicative site capacity (number of dwellings, or employment area / floorspace) was requested for each submission. However, these figures may need to be corrected upon further analysis. If any subsequent alterations are made by officers to the information originally submitted (i.e. when taking into consideration density and net developable area, etc.), any changes to the potential capacity that are made by officers will need to be recorded.
- 2.54. Notwithstanding the number of dwellings / floorspace provided by the submitting party in their call for sites submissions, when officers consider housing or employment potential capacity of sites (nos. dwellings / amount of floorspace), regard will be given to the following factors:
- Net developable Area:

2.55. (An assumed net ratio will be applied to estimate how much of the site is likely to be developed, taking into consideration likely infrastructure requirements (e.g. open space, community facilities, etc), any physical and environmental site constraints / barriers to development, including parts of the site that may not be developable due to awkward site shape, flood risk, etc).

- Densities set out in existing Local Plan policies and emerging policies / site allocations, any planning permissions, and consideration of local circumstances:

2.56. (Where data is out of date or does not exist, consideration will be given to existing development schemes, adjusted for site characteristics and physical constraints, or by using floor space densities for certain industries as a general guide);

- Density guidance as set out in national policy:

2.57. (This will include NPPF and NPPG requirements, such as making efficient use of land, and where there is an existing or anticipated shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs, optimising the use of land and increasing densities, including applying minimum density standards for city and town centres and other locations that are accessible/well served by public transport, etc).

Assumed Net Ratio (Net Developable Area Assumptions to be used for Housing Sites)

2.58. An agreed methodology for calculating the Net Developable Area of sites (i.e. the Assumed Net Ratio to be applied) based on the Gross Site Size in this SHELAA is yet to be finalised.

2.59. Fundamentally, net developable area assumptions recognise that an adjustment needs to be made in order to allow for on-site infrastructure requirements. For example, larger sites will generally have reduced developable areas, given they are more likely to be required to provide areas of open space; landscaping; community facilities, etc. on site.

2.60. For the purposes of producing an estimated (indicative) housing number at this stage (SHELAA Iteration 1), the same net developable area assumptions that were previously applied in the SHLAA for the Central Lancashire Core Strategy (adopted in 2012) will be applied again. However, any initial calculations are likely to be refined in subsequent iterations of the SHELAA, when a final approach has been agreed.

2.61. The initial net developable area assumptions (Assumed Net Ratio) that will be applied to housing sites of different sizes in Iteration 1 of the SHELAA are therefore set out below:

Assumed Net Ratio (ANR) for SHELAA Iteration 1: (ANR to be applied when estimating the net developable area of different sized sites)	
<u>Gross Site size:</u> Less than 0.4 hectares: 0.4 – 4.9 hectares: 5 – 10 hectares: Over 10 hectares:	<u>Estimated percentage of site to be developed for housing:</u> 90% of site developed for housing 80% of site developed for housing 60% of site developed for housing 50% of site developed for housing

2.62. For Iteration 1 of the SHELAA, the above net ratio will be applied, but it is acknowledged that in future iterations the estimated net developable area of certain sites may need to be reduced further if there are further specific development constraints. For example, if there are steep slopes, heavy tree cover, or an awkward site shape, etc. However, any subsequent additional reductions to the net site area will need to be made sparingly, particularly for larger sites, as some or all of the constrained area may be used as

amenity greenspace, green corridors etc. and thus will already be accounted for in the specified gross to net density calculations.

2.63. However, for the initial Iteration 1 calculations, no additional deductions (such as those referred to in the paragraph, above) will be made at this stage.

Density Multiplier (Density Assumptions to be used for Housing Sites)

2.64. There are no specific prescribed densities within existing Local Plan and Core Strategy policies. Policy 5 of the Core Strategy seeks to secure densities of development which are in keeping with local areas and which will have no detrimental impact on the amenity, character, appearance, distinctiveness and environmental quality of an area, consideration will also be given to making efficient use of land.

2.65. The Density Assumptions that will subsequently be applied to housing sites are yet to be finalised, and the preferred approach has yet to be agreed.

2.66. However, the three Central Lancashire Authorities have agreed that the initial Density Multiplier that will be applied to all housing sites in Iteration 1 of the SHELAA is set out below:

Density Multiplier for Housing Sites for SHELAA Iteration 1: (estimated density to be applied, per hectare)
ALL sites: 35 dwellings per hectare (dph)

2.67. The above density multiplier is for the purposes of undertaking an initial calculation for Iteration 1 of the SHELAA only.

2.68. It is recognised that a standard density of 35 dph will not be appropriate for every site (particularly sites in Preston City Centre, or isolated rural sites, etc), but applying this figure will at least give an initial indication / estimate of potential housing numbers. It is expected that the estimated density assumptions will evolve as the Local Plan progresses.

2.69. For example, in subsequent calculations, various density assumptions may be applied in different areas / types of location in order to determine the development potential of each site. It is anticipated therefore that different sites may be given specific "Density Classifications" based on their local character and individual circumstances, etc.

2.70. Some examples of Density Classifications that *might* be applied in future density assumptions/calculations include the classifications listed below (these classifications were previously applied in the SHLAA for the Central Lancashire Core Strategy, adopted in 2012):

2.71. Example Density Classifications which *might* be applied in future iterations of the SHELAA

- Preston City Centre;
- Preston Docks;
- Inner Urban;
- Suburban;
- Rural Settlement;
- Other Rural, etc.

- 2.72. The different Density classifications (above) would then be given a corresponding Density Multiplier, or a density *range* (in dph), as opposed to a standard 35 dph for all proposed development across all locations, to calculate the estimated number of dwellings.

Housing Yield

- 2.73. To calculate an initial estimated housing yield for each site in Iteration 1 of the SHELAA, the following formula will be used:

Estimated Housing Yield Calculation for SHELAA Iteration 1:
GROSS SITE SIZE (..ha) x ASSUMED NET RATIO (..%) x DENSITY MULTIPLIER (35 dph) = Estimated Housing Yield

- 2.74. A Developer Panel will be established early in the process to directly inform the SHELAA work. It is intended that at these meetings, local and regional housebuilders, landowners, developers and other industry stakeholders will give their expertise on the method to be applied when considering development potential / density etc. (particularly in relation to viability / market conditions / build out rates, etc.) and any assumptions that are to be made in those calculations / assessments.
- 2.75. It may be considered necessary later in the process to enlist further expertise on the achievability of housing development by commissioning private consultants, supplemented by any new information received from the Developer Panel, landowners/ developers, and any known cost factors (flood risk, contamination etc.) and delivery factors, taking account of developers own phasing proposals where known.
- 2.76. Capacities assigned to SHELAA sites, particularly in Iteration 1, will only be indicative. Final capacities for sites will eventually be determined through the planning application process.
- 2.77. For housing sites already benefitting from planning permission, the number of housing units submitted in the approved planning permission will be used, except in circumstances where evidence suggests that re-planning of the site may be necessary due to changes in market conditions, for example. This approach may evolve in subsequent iterations of the SHELAA. However, for the purposes of Iteration 1, the number of units approved in the planning permission will be the number of units assumed.

Employment Site Assumptions

- 2.78. The full employment Need for Central Lancashire is shown in the Joint Employment Land Review (ELR).
- 2.79. For employment sites, the percentage of the gross site area that will generally be assumed to be developable in this SHELAA is yet to be finalised. The methodology will therefore be updated in future iterations when the approach has been agreed.

Assessing whether / when sites are likely to be developed

- 2.80. The NPPG splits the next stage (the assessment of whether / when sites are likely to be developed in to three steps, which relate to assessing when and whether sites are likely to be developed:
- Suitability;
 - Availability; and

- Achievability.
(including How to overcome identified Constraints).

2.81. An assessment of the suitability, availability and achievability of each site will be undertaken (including whether the site is economically viable) and an analysis of whether / when identified constraints can be overcome. This will allow judgements to be made as to whether sites can be considered *deliverable*, *developable*, or *not currently developable*, for development.

2.82. The NPPF provides definitions of ‘*deliverable*’ and ‘*developable*’, as follows:

- *“To be considered deliverable, sites for housing should be available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years. Sites that are not major development, and sites with detailed planning permission, should be considered deliverable until permission expires, unless there is clear evidence that homes will not be delivered within five years (e.g. they are no longer viable, there is no longer a demand for the type of units or sites have long term phasing plans). Sites with outline planning permission, permission in principle, allocated in the development plan or identified on a brownfield register should only be considered deliverable where there is clear evidence that housing completions will begin on site within five years.”*
- *“To be considered developable, sites should be in a suitable location for housing development with a reasonable prospect that they will be available and could be viably developed at the point envisaged.”*

2.83. As was the case at Stage 1, NPPG advises that when undertaking the Stage 2 assessments of suitability, availability and achievability, the assessments should be proportionate, with greater emphasis on sites which are considered more realistic candidates for development.

Stage 2 (B) Assessment of Suitability

2.84. NPPG requires an assessment of the suitability of a site for the intended use, or mixed use. These may include, but are not limited to: market housing; private rented; affordable housing; self-build; housing for older people, and economic development uses.

2.85. The assessment of the suitability of sites will be guided by existing and emerging Local Plan policy and national policy, and market and industry requirements in the Central Lancashire area.

2.86. For Iteration 1 of the SHELAA, the following sites will generally be considered suitable:

Examples of sites considered suitable for SHELAA Iteration 1:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Allocated sites; - Sites with planning permission.

Policy Restrictions

2.87. At the initial stage of the assessment very few types of land with potential for housing will have been excluded from the study, to ensure that the assessment is as thorough as possible. However, a number of sites that have not been excluded might still be considered unsuitable at Stage 2B in terms of policy restrictions, and will be parked.

2.88. For Iteration 1 of the SHELAA, the following sites will generally be considered un-suitable, but they will still be subject to a proportionate assessment to consider whether they might be acceptable in all other respects:

Examples of sites considered un-suitable for SHELAA Iteration 1:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Locally designated nature conservation sites, such as Biological Heritage Sites (BHS) or Local Geodiversity Sites (LGS) (these sites have a lower status than national designations, but are still of importance for nature and conservation purposes and will generally be considered unsuitable).- Public Open Space (these sites will generally be considered unsuitable, although where the POS forms part of a larger housing site for example, in subsequent iterations of the SHELAA the net developable area could be reduced to allow the retention of the public open space).

2.89. For employment, assessment of the suitability of employment sites will require a number of different criteria specific to employment sites, for example parking provision or servicing.

2.90. Employment sites included within the study as a result of the ELR will be assessed on a site by site basis.

2.91. The following factors will also be considered when assessing suitability:

- Policy restrictions (designations/protected areas), existing/emerging planning policies, corporate or community strategy policy, or contribution to Regeneration Priority Areas, etc.;
- Physical / environmental limitations or problems, such as site shape, access, infrastructure/utilities, ground conditions, flood risk, hazardous risks, pollution or contamination, man-made or natural features of significance, etc.;
- Potential impacts upon nature conservation / habitat, landscape and heritage;
- Potential amenity impacts that could be experienced by would-be occupiers or neighbours, compatibility of adjacent uses, and proximity/access to key services;
- Appropriateness and likely market attractiveness for the type of development proposed, or any alternative more suitable use.

Site suitability assessment criteria

2.92. Examples of factors to be considered when assessing site suitability will therefore include:

Policy factors

- Is the site allocated for a particular use? (i.e. in the Local Plan)
- Is there any other relevant designation? (e.g. public open space, etc)
- Is it in an isolated location, or within or adjacent to an existing settlement?
- Does the site comprise or include previously developed land?
- Is it infill?
- Does the site comprise best and most versatile agricultural land (Grades 1, 2 and 3a) and will it result in irreversible damage to the soil?
- Does it have planning permission?
- Is there any relevant corporate or community strategy policy?
- Is it in or close to a Regeneration Priority Area?

Physical / environmental factors

- Are there any pylons within or close to the site?

- What are the ground conditions?
- Are there any hazardous risks?
- Is the site contaminated or polluted?
- Is there adequate road access to the site?
- Is the site susceptible to flooding – is it in Flood Zone 2, 3a or 3b?
- Is the site sloping?
- Is the site an awkward shape for development?
- Are there any man made or natural features of significance?
- Are there any public rights of way on the site?

Potential nature conservation, species & habitat, geological, landscape or heritage impacts

- Is the site within or adjacent to any national or internationally designated nature conservation area? (including National Nature Reserves (NNR), SSSI, SPA, and SAC including Ramsar sites and MCZ, etc.?)
- Is the site within or adjacent to a locally designated nature reserve or nature conservation area, such as BHS or LGS?
- Are there any wildlife habitats / protected species that could be affected?
- Is it in or adjacent to a wildlife corridor / ecological network?
- Are there any protected or other trees, ancient woodland, or hedgerows on site?
- Are there any ponds, streams, or other watercourse on or adjacent the site?
- Does the site have any national landscape designations, such as AONB, or any relevant local landscape designation?
- Does the site have any nationally or locally recognised heritage assets, or community assets, within or adjacent to it? (e.g. Listed Building, Ancient Monument, Registered Park or Garden, Conservation Area, etc).

Potential amenity impacts on future occupiers or neighbours

- How compatible are the proposed and neighbouring uses (e.g. is there any potential overlooking, or any potential noise issues from adjoining sites)?
- Are there any air quality issues?
- Proximity / access to the strategic road network, and to cycle routes and footpaths;
- Availability of infrastructure (utilities, broadband, etc.);
- Proximity to key services (bus stop, train station, schools, local centre; shops; Post Office, hospital/health centre/GP surgery, open space, etc.);
- Proximity to employment (dependent upon the employment use).

Appropriateness and likely market attractiveness

- Is residential or employment use an appropriate use?
- Will a mixed use or another use be more appropriate?
- Will there be a market / interest for that type of development in that location?

2.93. By considering the ‘performance’ of each housing and employment site against the above criteria, a judgement can be made as to the site’s suitability for development. It will also be necessary to consider whether mitigation may allow for some constraints to be overcome. These assessments will continue to evolve in subsequent iterations of the SHELAA, as the sites which are realistic contenders are assessed in more detail.

Stage 2 (C) Assessment of Availability

2.94. A site will be considered available for development when on the best information available there is confidence that there are no legal or ownership problems that would prevent development.

2.95. The following sites will generally be considered available:

Examples of sites considered available for SHELAA Iteration 1:

- Sites with planning permission (although it is acknowledged that in certain cases there may be no intention to develop within a certain timescale, or the landowner may not necessarily be willing to allow development to take place, etc.); and
- Sites that have been put forward by landowners/developers for development as part of the Call for Sites exercise.

2.96. For other sites, in order to assess the availability of sites for potential development, the following factors will be taken into consideration:

- Is the owner of the site known?
- Is the site in multiple ownership?
- Are there any ransom strips, tenancies, or easements / operational requirements of landowners etc.?
- Has the owner indicated a willingness to dispose of the site in the next 15 years?
- Is there a current active use on the site?
- Is there developer interest in the site? (and what is the delivery record of the developers)?
- Is there a planning history of unimplemented permissions on the site?
- Can any identified problems be realistically overcome?

2.97. Where there are no legal ownership problems such as multiple ownerships, ransom strips, tenancies or operational requirements of landowners, then a site will generally be considered available for development.

2.98. Where potential problems are identified, an assessment will be made of whether, how and when the identified problems can realistically be overcome. Consideration will also be given to the delivery record of developers / landowners, and/or whether the planning background of a site shows a history of unimplemented permissions, for example.

Stage 2 (D) Assessment of Achievability (including economic viability)

2.99. The following sites will generally be considered achievable:

Examples of sites considered achievable for SHELAA Iteration 1:

- Where there is a reasonable prospect that the type of development in question will be delivered on the site within the timescale envisaged.

2.100. This will essentially be a judgement about the economic viability of a site, and the capacity of the developer to complete the development over a certain period, and will be affected by market factors; cost factors and delivery factors.

2.101. It would be impractical to undertake a detailed viability assessment of each of the SHELAA sites. In accordance with NPPG, the viability of every site will not need to be tested. Site typologies can instead be used to determine viability at the plan making stage. Assessment of samples of sites may also be helpful to support evidence. A typology approach is where sites are grouped by shared characteristics such as location, whether brownfield or greenfield, size of site and current and proposed use or type of

development. The characteristics used to group sites should reflect the nature of sites and type of development proposed for allocation in the plan. Average costs and values can be used to make assumptions about how the viability of each type of site would be affected by all relevant policies. Comparing data from existing case study sites will help ensure assumptions of costs and values are realistic and broadly accurate.

2.102. In some circumstances more detailed assessment may be necessary for particular areas or key sites on which the delivery of the plan relies. It is important to consider the specific circumstances of strategic sites and site specific viability assessments can be undertaken for sites that are critical to delivering the strategic priorities of the plan. This could include, for example, large sites, sites that provide a significant proportion of planned supply, sites that enable or unlock other development sites, or sites within priority regeneration areas. A review of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and planning contributions (S106 agreements) will be undertaken alongside the viability assessment of sites.

2.103. It is likely that the detailed assessments of economic viability and whether there is a reasonable prospect that housing will be developed on a site at a particular point in time, will evolve throughout the SHELAA and Local Plan process.

2.104. In future iterations of the SHELAA there will need to be input from the Developer Panel and external consultants may be required to assist with the assessments. Achievability is affected by market, cost and delivery factors (including phasing, assessing policy context, housing market performance, comparable development review, soft market testing and developing a site typology for assessing achievability, etc).

2.105. The likely rate of development on sites (Build Out Rates) will also be considered at this point.

2.106. The following factors may be taken into consideration in order to make a (proportionate) assessment of achievability:

- Information taken from Call for Sites forms;
- Informal discussions with landowners;
- Existence of any interested parties;
- Existing evidence base (including Employment Land Study, etc.);
- Build rates for similar / nearby sites;
- Market strength in the area;
- Identified constraints, e.g. ground conditions, abnormal costs.

Stage 2 (E) Overcoming identified constraints

2.107. The final stage of the Stage 2 assessments is to consider all the identified constraints and how / when these can be overcome, including what action would be needed to remove them.

2.108. Consideration will be given to the ease with which any constraints can be removed, and consequently, whether sites have potential in future to contribute towards meeting development needs. For example, there might be a need for new infrastructure, dealing with fragmented land ownership, environmental improvement, or a review of development plan policy.

2.109. Some sites will be recognised as having constraints on development such as contaminated land. These constraints can normally be overcome at a cost and this will be a factor taken account when assessing the achievability of otherwise suitable sites.

2.110. Where development is restricted by current planning policy (e.g. Green Belt) which rules out housing or employment development in most instances, no contribution to current housing land supply will be assumed. However, Green Belt boundaries can be amended through the Local Plan process, should that be considered necessary. This is a separate process from the SHELAA assessments.

2.111. A judgement can then be made as to whether / when the site is likely to be developed. Sites with minor, easily addressable constraints can contribute towards the 15 year supply; sites with more significant constraints are likely to be parked, but can be reconsidered if necessary.

Stage 2: Assessment of Deliverability / Developability

2.112. From all the sites listed in the initial database, the remaining sites will all be considered realistic candidates for development. During the SHELAA process, a number of sites will have been excluded altogether from the assessment, for example because development has been completed on the site, or because something has happened to the site that rules out it being developed for housing or employment uses. Other sites will have been parked from further assessment due to identified constraints, etc.

2.113. By drawing together all the information gathered for the remaining sites in the assessments of availability, suitability, and achievability (and how identified constraints can be overcome), this will enable an assessment of the timescale within which each identified site is capable of being developed.

2.114. For different scales of sites, the timescales for development may include indicative lead-in times and build out rates, and on the largest sites, allowance should be made for several developers to be involved. As previously referred to in the assessment of achievability, the advice of the Developer Forum, including developers and local land owners etc, will be important to assess lead in times and build out rates by year. Future iterations of the SHELAA will therefore refine initial assessments of estimated timescales.

2.115. It will then be possible to determine whether the site is deliverable or developable, as per the NPPF definitions.

2.116. Each site will be assigned a time period for expected delivery, as follows:

Estimated timescales for expected delivery:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Within 5 years – 'deliverable' sites;• Within 6 - 10 years – 'developable';• Within 11 - 15 years – 'developable' <p>No yield will be assumed within the SHELAA period for "Parked" sites (i.e. due to identified constraints).</p>

Next steps

2.117. Following completion of Stages 1 and 2 of the SHELAA Iteration 1, it will be possible to prepare an indicative trajectory setting out how much housing and economic development land can be provided in the short term (0-5 years), medium term (6-10 years) and long term (beyond 10 years). This 'SHELAA sites trajectory' will not be a complete measure of housing land supply, but will feed into the more comprehensive housing trajectory set out in the Annual Monitoring Reports (AMRs). In particular, any SHELAA sites in the 0-5 year category (the 'deliverable SHELAA sites') will comprise one element of the 5 year housing land supply for the Central Lancashire authorities in the AMR housing trajectories.

2.118. As previously highlighted, this SHELAA will primarily cover Stages 1 and 2 of the NPPG methodology for housing and employment land assessments. Stages 3-5 are discussed below.

Stage 3: Windfall Assessment

2.119.NPPF paragraph 70 states:

“Where an allowance is to be made for windfall sites as part of anticipated supply, there should be compelling evidence that they will provide a reliable source of supply. Any allowance should be realistic having regard to the strategic housing land availability assessment, historic windfall delivery rates and expected future trends. Plans should consider the case for setting out policies to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens, for example where development would cause harm to the local area.”

2.120.Calculating the appropriateness and size of a windfall allowance in the housing trajectory will be undertaken as part of general housing land monitoring work, and not as part of this SHELAA study.

2.121.The disadvantage of windfall sites is that because it is not clear exactly where development is likely to occur there is little certainty for communities or developers and it makes it difficult to plan, for example in terms of making sure necessary infrastructure is in place. Where a windfall allowance can be justified this should be based on an estimate of the amount of housing that could be delivered in the area on land that has not been identified in the list of deliverable/developable sites, or as part of broad locations for housing development.

2.122.To determine whether a windfall allowance is justified, housing land monitoring figures will be used (number of units granted permission on windfall sites, and number of housing completions on windfall sites) over previous years. The results will be set out in the housing land monitoring reports.

2.123.It should be noted that the windfall allowance applies only to housing land, not to employment land.

Stage 4: Assessment Review (Draft Trajectory – Enough Sites to meet the Need?)

2.124.Figure 1 shows two components to Stage 4: Assessment Review:

- I. *Assessment of development need for housing and economic development; and*
- II. *Review assessment and prepare draft trajectory – enough sites / broad locations?*

2.125.In terms of the first component (assessment of need), the Central Lancashire authorities have commissioned an update to the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for Central Lancashire. The SHMA update will add to the existing evidence base for housing need and will look primarily at specialist housing and evidence of distributing housing in Central Lancashire, including consideration of the effects of the Preston and South Ribble City Deal. Further work has also been commissioned to update Central Lancashire's Employment Land Study.

2.126.The second component of Stage 4 of the flowchart will require the preparation of a draft trajectory, in order to consider whether there is a sufficient supply of sites and / or broad locations identified in the SHELAA to meet the identified need.

2.127.“Broad locations” are where development is considered feasible and will be encouraged, but where specific sites cannot yet be identified. They could be within, adjoining, or outside of settlements.

2.128.If Stages 1 to 3 of the flowchart fail to identify a sufficient supply of sites to meet local housing and employment needs, subsequent iterations of the SHELAA will need to re-visit the parameters that were applied in Stages 1 and 2 of Iteration 1 of the SHELAA. For example, amendments could be made to the assumptions that were applied when calculating housing yield (e.g. the assumed net ratio and density multipliers). Sites that were initially sieved out / parked due to identified constraints (such as policy restrictions / physical constraints, etc) will also be re-considered, including whether / how identified constraints can be overcome. If necessary, broad locations and other sources of sites can also be considered.

- 2.129. If there are still insufficient sites after undertaking further SHELAA iterations, it will be necessary to consider how this shortfall will be best planned for. If there is clear evidence that the identified need cannot be met locally, it will be necessary to consider how needs might be met in adjoining areas, in accordance with the duty to co-operate.
- 2.130. Work on the Central Lancashire Local Plan Issues & Options / Preferred Options will involve an assessment of the deliverability / developability of the SHELAA sites. The Issues and Options / Preferred Options document will contain a number of SHELAA sites proposed as housing and / or employment land allocations. Preparing the SHELAA and Local Plan is an iterative process, with the SHELAA influencing the Local Plan (Issues & Options / Preferred Options), and the Local Plan (Issues & Options / Preferred Options) influencing which SHELAA sites are eventually put forward as proposed housing and / or employment land allocations in the Local Plan.

Stage 5 – Final Evidence Base

- 2.131. The final SHELAA will comprise a list of all the sites identified and assessed. Each housing site identified will be accompanied by a site plan, details on development potential (potential capacity) and a judgement as to whether the site is available suitable and achievable, with a summary of how identified constraints can be overcome, and an estimated timeframe for delivery (i.e. whether they are deliverable within 5 years, developable after 5+ years, or not developable at all within the life of the plan).
- 2.132. As part of the Local Plan Site Allocations process, each SHELAA site will then be assessed against sustainability criteria, for example proximity to services such as public transport. The specific criteria to be used in the assessment of the sustainability of sites will be undertaken in accordance with specific indicators to be set out in the Central Lancashire Local Plan Integrated Appraisal Scoping Report (and subsequent revisions), which will guide the preferred sites for allocation in the Local Plan.
- 2.133. As described above, the number and type of sites to be allocated in the Local Plan will be dependent upon the identified requirement, but the SHELAA will form an important part of the evidence base for site selection in the Central Lancashire Local Plan.

3. Monitoring and Review

Review and updates

- 3.1. The Central Lancashire authorities intend to update the SHELAA periodically, in line with the individual housing and employment monitoring reports, and the 5 year housing supply statement (Central Lancashire), which report on employment land development and set out a detailed statement of housing land supply.
- 3.2. SHELAA updates will take account of whether sites have been granted planning permission, as well as any progress on starts / completions and any significant changes to constraints. Subsequent reviews of the SHELAA will also include assessments of any new sites which have been identified or submitted for consideration.

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REPORT TO	ON
CABINET	<i>16 October 2019</i>



TITLE	PORTFOLIO	REPORT OF
Apprentice Factory Development Plan Update	Cabinet Member for Planning, Regeneration and City Deal	Director of Planning and Property

Is this report a KEY DECISION (i.e. more than £100,000 or impacting on more than 2 Borough wards?)	Yes
Is this report on the Statutory Cabinet Forward Plan ?	Yes
Is the request outside the policy and budgetary framework and therefore subject to confirmation at full Council?	No
Is this report confidential?	No

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. The Apprentice Factory is a project within the Corporate Plan 2018 – 2023. This report provides members with background information, an updated position and future proposals for the Apprentice Factory project and how this assists with implementation of Employment and Skills Plans coming forward through the planning process.
2. This report should be read in conjunction with the attached development programme, which sets out how Apprentice Factory supports economic growth and skills development within the council and across the borough.

PORTFOLIO RECOMMENDATIONS

3. Cabinet are asked to note the updated project plans contained within the report, which have an additional focus on assisting harder to reach people.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

4. The Apprentice Factory project is included within the Corporate Plan 2018 – 2023. Cabinet are asked to note the updated project plans, which have an additional focus on harder to reach people, and for their views on any additional actions to ensure that the Apprentice Factory project is aligned with the revised Corporate Plan.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

5. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

Excellence and Financial Sustainability	
Health and Wellbeing	

Place	✓
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Projects relating to People in the Corporate Plan:

People	✓
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BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

1. The introduction and implementation of the Apprentice Levy in May 2017 marked a turning point in the history of Modern Apprenticeships in the UK. By introducing the Levy the government hopes to inspire employers to either expand existing or introduce new apprenticeship programmes.
2. Apprenticeships are now available to everyone regardless of age and previous qualifications. Apprenticeships can be used as a route into employment and as a route for re-training or up-skilling. People can undertake an apprenticeship even if they already hold qualifications provided they wish to up-skill by studying at a higher level or change skills by studying a different qualification.
3. Apprenticeships are now available from level 2 to level 7 (Master's degree level). They offer a job with fully funded training (incurring no tuition fees), which makes them accessible to everyone. People can progress their careers through apprenticeships at any level, gaining work experience and being paid while they learn.
4. The range of apprenticeship standards (occupations) available has expanded considerably and now includes teaching, nursing, digital, policing, law and many others.
5. A target of 3 million apprenticeships has been set during the current parliament. However, the number of apprenticeship starts has reduced nationally following the introduction of the funding changes.
6. In November 2017, the government published its Industrial Strategy White Paper, setting out an ambitious plan for jobs and industry. One of the key issues it identifies is the need for better routes into work and training, boosting the economy with skills fit for the future.
7. The Local Government Association (LGA) has published a series of 'Work Local' reports between June 2017 and June 2019. They set out a vision for employment and skills. The reports conclude that the current skills and employment system is fragmented, lacks coherence and is failing those most in need of support to help them gain skills, access employment and escape poverty.
8. Careers, Employment and Skills are funded nationally. There are twenty employment and budget streams managed by eight different government departments, spending more than £10 billion a year. However, the LGA considers they often fail to meet local need, address economic and social challenges, or make a decisive impact on outcomes.
9. There is currently a gap in provision of local, impartial careers information, advice and guidance. There is a need for dedicated support, tailored to the needs of our local residents, especially the most vulnerable, to help everyone access jobs, training and career development opportunities.
10. The emergence of T-Levels in 2020 means that we have to start planning now to offer dedicated local support so young people have a coherent picture of locally available options (A-levels, T-levels, apprenticeships) and that T-level reforms benefit our local communities. Runshaw College and Newman College have been selected to pilot T-Levels from 2020.

PROPOSALS (e.g. RATIONALE, DETAIL, FINANCIAL, PROCUREMENT)

- 11.** Councils working with local businesses and partners know their areas and residents. They understand the current and future skills of their local economies and residents, and the support required for sustainable employment. All local areas want to build strong, resilient economies where residents contribute to, and benefit from growth. Fundamental to achieving this is a steady supply of skills and jobs, encouragement of local businesses and effective support to help all people get on in life regardless of their circumstances.
- 12.** The Apprentice Factory project aims to make sure that job opportunities are available for everyone. Developing a simplified, targeted, local approach will help us to support those in need to eliminate barriers they may face to accessing sustainable employment.
- 13.** In its most recent assessment of skills shortages facing the economy, the UK Commission for Employment & Skills (UKCES) found 19% of employers now have at least one unfilled skills shortage related vacancy, which is up from 15% the last time the survey was done in 2013. Overall it found 22% of all job vacancies are a results of a skills shortage. The Apprentice Factory project aims to make sure that people are equipped with the appropriate skills and have the support they need to find and access the available jobs.
- 14.** The UKCES finding has chimed with what many employers say, that they have been suffering for years from the poor work-readiness of university and college graduates with little or no business experience. In a particular scathing government report, a staggering 52% of graduate employers said that 'none' or 'few' of the candidates they saw were work-ready. The Apprentice Factory Project also aims to address this gap in the work-readiness of job-seekers by promoting key employability skills so people are prepared to access work.
- 15.** Local areas are now to be allowed to pool and redistribute unspent Levy contributions. Our ambition is for the Council to coordinate and influence how unspent levy funds are used locally, including delivery of pre-apprenticeship training and delivering work-ready programmes.
- 16.** One of the key achievements of the Apprentice Factory internally in phase 1 is the introduction of degree apprenticeships, which have supported our own employees into higher level jobs, helping them develop their careers. The government currently funds 95% of apprentice training costs, this includes funding for undergraduate (level 6) and Masters (level 7) degree qualifications.
- 17.** Successful activities delivered to date by the Apprentice Factory include:
 - All the apprentices in phase 1 have passed their exams, achieving nationally recognised qualifications, which will help them take the next step in their careers.
 - The Council has exceeded the national public sector organisation apprenticeship target of 2.3%, being the highest performing in Lancashire.
 - A workshop with CITB training providers to support construction skills;
 - A Technical Education event in partnership with Runshaw College held during National Careers Week;
 - Hosting the 'careers café', delivering impartial information, advice and guidance at the Lancashire Apprenticeship Expo, which had 2,000 plus attendees;
 - Google Digital Garage to deliver digital skills training for businesses, in partnership with LEP Skills Hub;
 - South Ribble Careers Fest in June, which saw hundreds of attendees.
 - Recruitment and Jobs Fair in partnership with Jobcentre Plus, offering opportunities for those made redundant or seeking work to meet with local employers (with job

- vacancies), access advice on self-employment, create or update their CV, access Universal Credit and find apprenticeship opportunities.
18. The vision for phase 2 of Apprentice Factory is to coordinate external activity, access funding and deliver a joined-up service bringing together impartial advice and guidance, employment, skills, apprenticeships and support for individuals and employers.
 19. The updated proposals extend the project to add an increased focus on helping people who are harder to reach and may require additional support to access employment. This will include working with local schools, colleges and other partners to help people who are at risk of becoming NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training).
 20. The ambition is to bid for funding and to draw partner resources together to create co-ordinated, prioritised local delivery supporting those most in need and avoiding duplication.
 21. The following are proposed key deliverables within phase 2:
 - Working with key stakeholders, to create the 'Apprentice Factory Engine Room' which will act as an impartial governing body for career development activity within South Ribble.
 - Prevent unspent local, Apprentice Levy funds being returned to the treasury by acting as a central co-ordinating body to attract and invest unspent levy funds back into the local community to create more apprenticeships.
 - Expand the remit of the Apprentice Factory project so that we are able to support people to access job opportunities in hard-to-fill key roles, such as care, medical, nursing and midwifery occupations.
 - Establish permanent and temporary advice hubs in locations where there is high footfall, making information easily accessible.

CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT AND OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION

22. Consultation has been carried out both externally and internally with the relevant partners.
23. Discussions with businesses on an individual and sector basis have identified that there are barriers to creating apprenticeships, which include lack of time to manage the process, multiple approaches by competing training organisations resulting in a confused picture, lack of awareness of the costs, funding streams and availability of suitable apprenticeship training.
24. A company survey was carried out in South Ribble during 2017 to inform council priorities. Of 300 companies surveyed, '*promoting apprenticeships*' to increase the skill levels of local workers was the clear top priority for the Council investment, being ranked first amongst 41% of all companies.
25. Relevant policies and practice from the Local Development Framework have been built into the development plans for Apprentice Factory. This includes the Central Lancashire Employment and Skills Supplementary Planning Document, which requires employment and skills plans to be set out in advance for new development sites and the Employment and Skills Statement and plans for the Cuerden Strategic Site.
26. Discussions and consultation briefings with the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Skills Hub are ongoing. The LEP are fully supportive of the South Ribble Apprentice Factory model as this will assist with the wider skills development and careers support across Lancashire. It also address gaps in provision within South Ribble and will

contribute to delivery of both the county wide skills and apprenticeship targets and the specific needs of residents within South Ribble.

27. Two apprentices have recently been recruited to support current delivery of this area of work. However, should the demand increase, further resources may be required.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

28. The option to do nothing was considered. However when the existing skills provision and availability of careers advice was mapped, it became obvious that there are gaps in support for local people which need to be addressed.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

29. There are no new financial implications relating to this report because it is an update on the existing, approved project.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

30. None relating to this report.

AIR QUALITY IMPLICATIONS

31. None relating to this report.

HUMAN RESOURCES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

32. None relating to this report.

ICT/TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

33. None relating to this report.

PROPERTY AND ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

34. None relating to this report.

RISK MANAGEMENT

35. None relating to this report.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPACT

36. An initial screening equality impact assessment has been undertaken. This project is designed to be fully inclusive and is delivered within the council's Equality Framework guidance.

RELEVANT DIRECTORS RECOMMENDATIONS

37. The Apprentice Factory project is included within the Corporate Plan 2018 – 2023. Cabinet are asked to note the updated project plans and for their views on any additional actions to ensure that the Apprentice Factory project is aligned with the revised Corporate Plan.

COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

38. There is budgetary provision for the Apprentice Factory programme of work within the approved budget.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

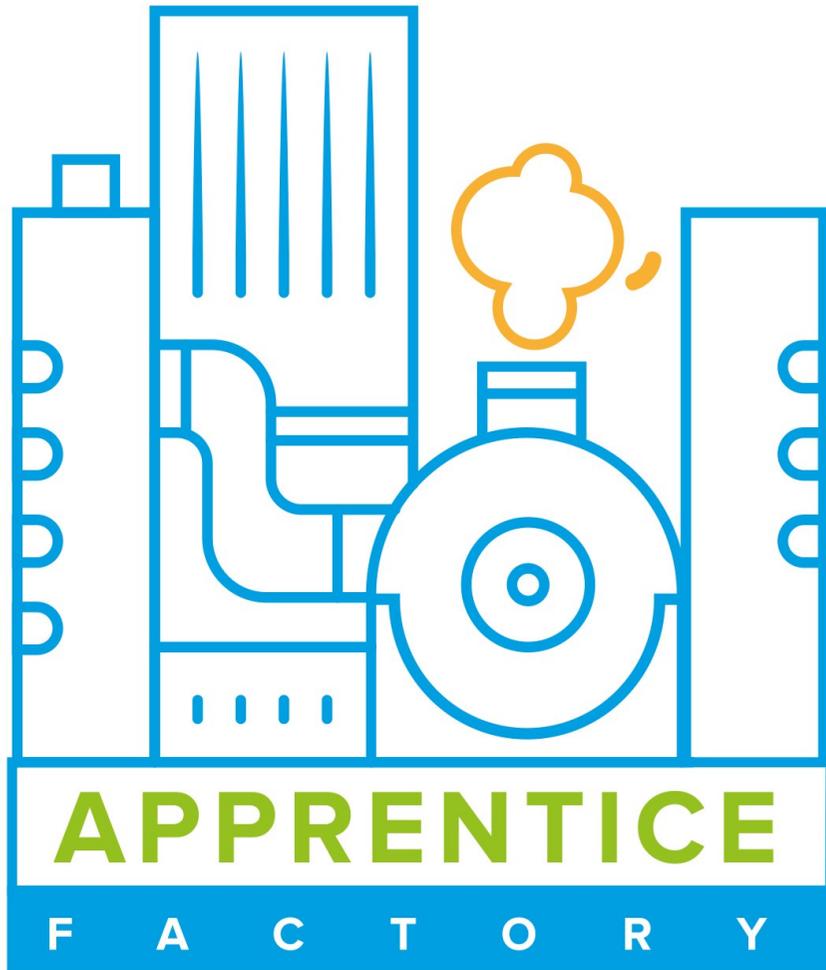
39. There are no issues that need to be raised in relation to this report.

APPENDICES

40. Apprentice Factory – Upskilling South Ribble

LT Member's Name: Jonathan Noad
Job Title: Director of Planning and Property

Report Author:	Telephone:	Date:
B Markham & J Clough	01772 625215	12/09/2019



Powering our future workforce

Apprentice Factory

Upskilling South Ribble

October 2019



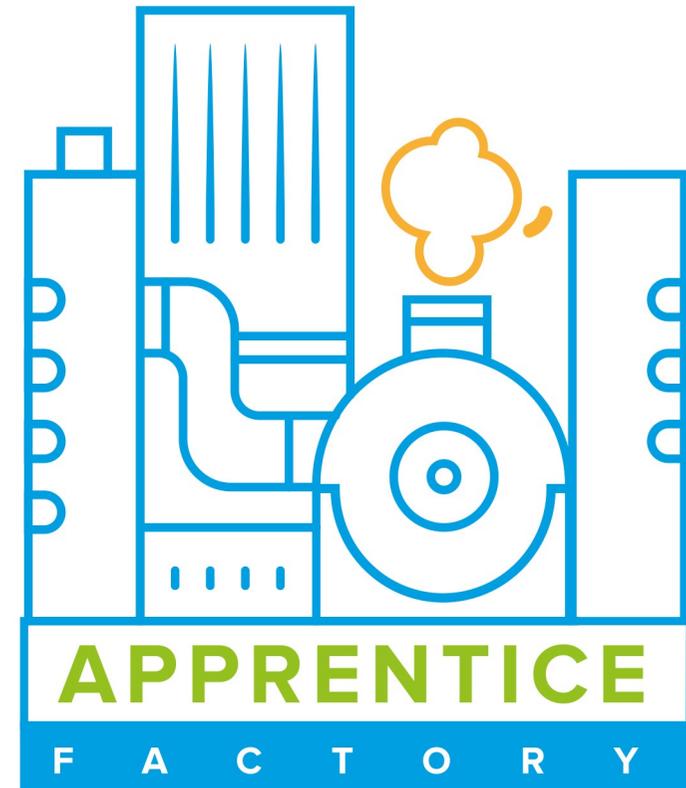
South Ribble Apprentice Factory offer

Internal

- An inclusive career development programme for South Ribble Council staff, using apprenticeships to maximise the number of training opportunities for employees

External

- An impartial, informed voice for apprenticeships, jobs and training in South Ribble, which can engage with regional and national institutions to deliver the needs of South Ribble residents and businesses
- Providing impartial careers and employment support (information, advice & guidance) in schools, colleges and communities
- Supporting businesses to create and manage new apprenticeships and jobs, linking them with the most relevant, cost-effective training providers
- Helping to re-skill and up-skill residents to enable them to access employment opportunities and to progress their careers



Powering our future workforce

Introduction

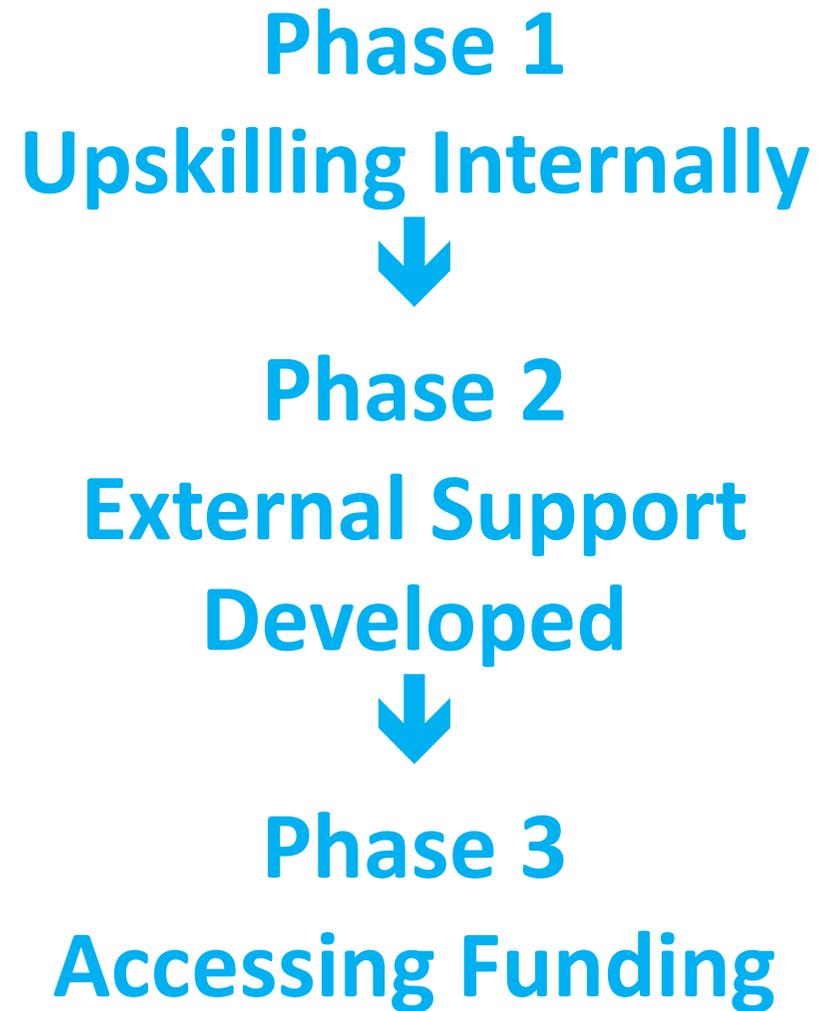
The South Ribble Corporate Plan 2018-2023 included the creation of the South Ribble Apprentice Factory. The Apprentice Factory Development Plan, approved in April 2018 set out the proposals, timescales and phasing for the project .

This is an innovative project aimed at upskilling council employees and the residents of the borough, creating a business skills resource to support economic growth, access skills and training funding for South Ribble and help residents access jobs, training and apprenticeships.

Internally, the Apprentice Factory will, via the Apprentice Levy funds and government co-investment, offer high quality apprenticeships so that we can attract and develop the next generation of skilled people, which will be essential in ensuring that South Ribble Borough Council meets the challenges of today, and the possibilities of the future.

Externally, the introduction of the Apprentice Factory will allow us to work with residents, employers and partners to create quality apprenticeships and training that are relevant to local growth sector needs. The aim is to make sure that the skills supply is appropriate to local skills demands going forward and that all local residents have support to access the job opportunities being created

Nationally the advice and funding for training and apprenticeships is complex, fragmented and has significant gaps, not reaching all those in need. The Apprentice Factory Development Plan sets out key points where employment and skills interventions could be more effectively managed locally by this council taking a lead to create parity for everyone in accessing apprenticeships, training and employment support, helping our residents to access job opportunities .



Phase 1

The Investors in People (IIP) report identified the need for ROCK (retention of critical knowledge) and succession planning at the council.

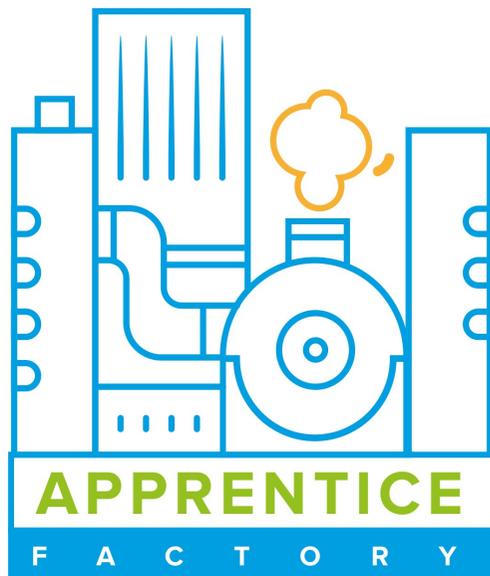
Government has set a target of 2.3% of the public sector workforce being apprentices in organisations employing 250 +.

Apprenticeships provide cost-effective training options

Apprenticeships are open to all age groups

Apprenticeships can help to fill hard-to-recruit vacancies

Apprenticeships offer training up to degree level and beyond



Powering our future workforce

CFO asks CEO, “What happens if we invest in developing our people and then they leave us?”

CEO: “What happens if we don’t, and they stay?”

(Peter Baeklund)

High-quality apprenticeships can deliver significant benefits for our organisation.

How We Are Delivering

- A target -led approach to upskilling South Ribble Council
- Adopting an apprentice first approach to all training requests
- Integrating apprenticeships into the PDR process with all staff engaged in identifying personal development opportunities
- Integrating the Apprentice Factory approach into succession planning for service areas
- Recruiting the ‘Class of 2019’

Academy Approach

Integral to the success of the Apprentice Factory will be the creation of 'Academies' to share learning and to support apprentices as they progress. In phase 1, the Academies have an internal focus, up-skilling our existing employees and delivering new apprenticeships to ensure our workforce is skilled, qualified and fully engaged to deliver the council's objectives.

Our vision is to create the best Public Sector Apprentice Programme in Lancashire and showcase it to encourage other employers to adopt our approach in providing a supportive environment for new recruits.

Through the 'Academy' approach, we also aim to prepare residents to be work-ready, supporting them to access job opportunities, apprenticeships and training and helping them to overcome barriers to accessing opportunities.

How We Will Deliver

- A target-led approach to upskilling South Ribble Borough Council
- Adopting an apprentice first approach to all training requests as an integral part of the PDR process with all staff engaged in identifying personal development opportunities
- Integrating the Apprentice Factory approach into recruitment

Academies

- Providing consistent and dedicated support for apprentices, offering clear progression routes
- Specific training to meet identified needs of the council and business growth sectors e.g. the **Digital Academy**, informed by the Digital Strategy and needs of the ICT sector; and the Project **Management Academy**, following industry best practice
- Peer to peer support
- Apprentice mentoring scheme
- Sharing learning sessions (formal and informal) between apprentices and all relevant staff
- Create a coaching network to support apprentices and existing staff who wish to join the apprenticeship development programme
- Offer opportunities for work shadowing to broaden experience—contributing to 20% off the job training
- A South Ribble—wide 'Apprentice Academy' working with other public and private sector organisations to share good practice and the benefits of apprenticeships (Apprentice Ambassadors)

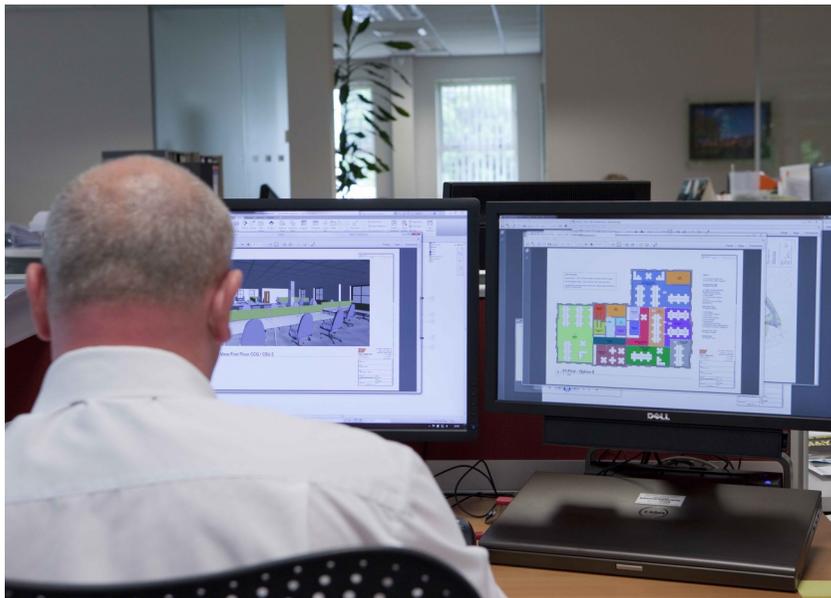


Digital Academy

Digital literacy is growing in importance and its requirements are constantly changing, meaning many employees may not have the digital skills required in the future. By implementing digital training programmes and using Apprentice Levy funds to do this we can help address this skills gap.

The requirements of digital literacy are constantly changing in line with the ways in which technology is being used and how to get the most out of it. This means that improving the digital literacy of our employees is key when it comes to ensuring that we remain efficient by incorporating new technologies into daily processes.

Upskilling our residents and employees needs to be an ongoing goal in order to respond to the challenge that radical transformation brings. Projections show that, nationally, 95% of future jobs will require digital skills



A Digital Academy approach will ensure that training is appropriate for residents, our employees and local organisations and businesses.

How We Will Deliver

- Offer all employees the opportunity to improve their digital literacy skills
- Create a Digital Academy and equip employees with the digital skills that will enable them to support project teams and to provide marketing support for our commercial activities.

Digital Academy offer:-

- IT apprenticeships up to post-graduate level
- IT short courses
- Digital marketing
- Pop-up learning events-Social media/LinkedIn/Twitter/Facebook
- Qualification courses
- Links to colleges/universities/training providers
- Member training
- Service specific training
- Joint training events with South Ribble businesses e.g. Google Digital Garage
- Digital literacy

Project Management Academy

Project management skills are essential for the successful delivery of council priorities and to drive innovative ideas forward, including the **projects within the Corporate Plan.**

How We Will Deliver

This approach could be rolled out as a training opportunity to existing staff involved in project delivery.

The initial cohort undertaking project management training could form a Project Management Academy, working alongside staff who already hold relevant qualifications and have experience.

The academy would share best practice and set high standards for project delivery across the council, making sure of the effective use of resources. The academy would also act as a knowledge resource for other colleagues undertaking project delivery, maximising the spread of skills across the council.

We could offer apprenticeships, other qualification courses and short courses that are appropriate to our organisational needs and systems.

The most cost-effective and practical training delivery model would be co-ordinated in-house provision by an external provider. Examples of the courses include:



PRINCE2 Foundation & Practitioner
MSP Foundation and Practitioner
Agile PM Foundation & Practitioner
APM PMQ
PMP
PRINCE2 Agile Practitioner
P3O
Change Management Foundation & Practitioner
Scrum Master Certification
Management of Risk

Corporate Priorities

Aligned to the council priorities of :

- A Strong South Ribble in the Heart of a Prosperous Lancashire by supporting Economic Growth and Skills
- Contributing to the council priority of providing an Efficient, Effective and Exceptional Council – Financial Stability, Business Transformation & Organisational Development

Outcomes

- **KPI—Number of staff undertaking apprenticeships at SRBC**
- Exceeding Government 2.3% apprenticeship target
- Best performing public sector organisation in Lancashire
- **Saving >£100,000 on training budgets**
- Upskilling our people & being digitally inclusive
- Creating an environment where all our employees thrive
- Skilled, high performing teams
- Attracting and retaining staff
- Development opportunities regardless of age
- Maximising training benefit from training budgets
- Capturing staff development aspirations
- Enhanced learning and development outcomes
- Delivering training with greater impact
- Building business resilience
- Plugging the skills gaps at the council and in the borough
- Retention of critical knowledge and skills
- Embedding links between the council, voluntary sector, private sector businesses and the academic sector



#IMPACT

Phase 2

Phase 2 of the Apprentice Factory involves the external facing development proposals, which will run concurrently with phase 1.

Apprenticeships are now available to everyone regardless of age and previous qualifications. Apprenticeships can be used as a route into employment and as a route for re-training or up-skilling.

Apprenticeships are now available from level 2 to level 7 (Masters degree level). They offer a job with fully funded training (incurring no tuition fees), which makes them accessible to everyone. People can progress their careers through apprenticeships at any level, gaining work experience and being paid while they learn.

The range of apprenticeship standards (occupations) available has expanded considerably and now includes teaching, nursing, digital, policing, law and many others.

The Apprentice Factory will provide impartial information, advice and guidance to enable businesses and residents to access the right training and career development opportunities for them, supporting skills development and jobs in South Ribble.

Objectives of Phase 2

- Enabling individuals and employers to access the right skills support, by providing simple advice and guidance to help overcome the confused and crowded market place which currently exists
- Encouraging and supporting more employers to offer apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeship training
- Helping everyone to access jobs, training and apprenticeships
- Supporting those who are not in employment, education or training (NEET)
- Encourage young people to realise their potential and achieve their career ambitions
- Maximising benefits of Jobcentre Plus co-location
- Working alongside the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Skills Hub
- Supporting growing sectors of the economy to create jobs and apprenticeships and helping people to access the new opportunities
- Advising businesses and local residents on the new system of technical education-T-levels
- Working with local schools and colleges to link the relevance of the curriculum to industry needs so students are work-ready
- Addressing projected local skills gaps by ensuring that apprenticeship and training provision is relevant
- Providing options to re-skill for people made redundant and older workers changing career
- Delivering rapid redundancy support packages



LGA Work Local

Work Local is the LGA's positive vision for an integrated and devolved employment and skills service – bringing together information, advice and guidance alongside the delivery of employment, skills, apprenticeships and wider support for individuals and employers. Research shows:

- 4.6 million people want a job or more hours – 14 percent of work-force in England.
- one in nine workers are in insecure work
- nine million people lack literacy and numeracy skills
- four fifths of UK manufacturers struggle to hire staff with the right skills and experience.

By 2024 there will be

- > four million too few high-skilled people to take up available jobs
- two million too many with intermediate skills
- more than six million too many low-skilled.

Failure to address these skills gaps puts future economic growth at risk, **while the average worker will be £1,176 a year worse off.**



A radical overhaul of careers advice

The LGA states: The anticipated government review of careers advice and guidance needs to put local areas as the leaders for co-ordinating and commissioning careers information, advice and guidance. The LGA is calling for the Government review to heed their recommendation for a locally commissioned and co-ordinated all age careers service for all with requisite devolved funding.

The Apprentice Factory aims to position South Ribble to be ideally placed and ready to take the lead in providing local co-ordinated skills advice, guidance and training, driven by the needs of local employers.

The LGA recommends that a well-functioning careers service should follow this model:

Valuing local intelligence

A local offer based on local labour market intelligence will be more effective than the current national approach. It should form the bedrock that careers advice and guidance is based on.

Prioritising work experience

Work experience is critical to raise awareness of opportunities available in the local and national labour markets to be the norm for young people.

Commissioning career advice locally

We need locally commissioned, comprehensive careers services for all ages, where everyone has the opportunity to access high quality careers education, information, advice and guidance to make the right decisions about their future.

Taking a personal approach

Access to personal guidance and support which takes account of individual needs is central to success.

Ensuring lifelong support

Careers advice and guidance should be embedded and available to support adults and people of all ages at pivotal stages of their learning and working lives.

Central Lancashire
Employment Skills
Supplementary Planning
Document
September 2017



Employment and Skills Statements are required for developments

- 1,000 sq m commercial floorspace
- 30 housing units

Apprentice Factory Support for delivery of Employment and Skills Plans:

The Apprentice Factory will offer bespoke support to help businesses develop and deliver employment and skills plans - to upskill local residents to meet the skills needs of the construction sector and the businesses occupying new commercial developments.—and to help residents to access the new job opportunities being created.

We can:

- Help to find the right apprenticeships
- Identify skills needs (using the recognised National Skills Academy for Construction framework) and advise businesses on appropriate training
- Promote jobs and business skills needs to young people in schools
- Link businesses with digital training opportunities through Digital Lancashire
- Support talent acquisition through recruitment events and promotion
- Providing impartial one-stop advice to help businesses navigate through the many training offers
- Identify and help businesses access any financial training support
- Help local residents prepare for the job opportunities

Supporting Businesses

In response to demand from businesses, the Investment and Skills Team has delivered a programme of digital training for local businesses. These include Google Digital Garage workshops and social media training, delivered in partnership with UCLan.

We are working closely with the LEP Skills Hub to identify the skills development needs locally of the business sectors with the potential for growth, looking for synergies between council needs and those of the businesses.

The team also works closely with Boost Lancashire to support local businesses, including referrals into externally procured support and locally delivered Boost Business Masterclasses.

This is supported by non-sector-specific advice and networking such as the Central Lancashire Business Event.

How we will deliver

- Integrated pop-up learning sessions on identified topics with staff and businesses learning together
- Use new business and conference facilities to host development and training sessions for businesses
- The Apprenticeship Pledge—supporting businesses with their recruitment and up-skilling commitments
- Offering spare capacity on council training courses to local businesses
- Engaging businesses through established local networks, meeting their preferred spaces rather than expecting them to come to us
- Providing an Apprentice Factory business advice hub for skills. Town centre options are being scoped for the hub location, it will also be linked into the campus development and the Cuerden Strategic Site.
- Developing local partnerships with Levy payers to retain un-spent levy in South Ribble, benefitting local residents and businesses and supporting the development of supply chain companies to embed the businesses locally and benefit the smaller SMEs, safeguarding jobs



Career Development

Phase 2 includes developing strong links between the education sector, businesses, residents and partners.

The key element will be the development of pop-up events and information hubs providing impartial advice and guidance. The establishment of physical hubs in South Ribble will link to the Cuerden Strategic Site, Leyland Masterplan and Enterprise Zone job opportunities. By aligning delivery of the projects, we will maximise the potential for residents and businesses to engage and benefit.

How We Will Deliver

- Enterprise Adviser Network in schools
- Lancashire Apprentice Ambassador Network
- Apprentice Factory hubs to provide impartial advice & guidance
- Responsive local partnerships specific to apprenticeships
- Establishing mechanisms to draw in external funding
- Engaging businesses by offering impartial skills advice and guidance
- Building apprenticeships into pre-employment training
- Maximising Jobcentre Plus co-location with joint delivery of initiatives
- Pop-up learning events for members, staff, businesses & residents
- Pop-up advice 'coffee shop' at events
- Developing a model for reciprocal off-the job training locally
- Maximising opportunities for use of Levy funding and co-investment
- Establishing close links with the National Apprenticeship Service
- Linking Apprentice Factory to the Employment Taskforce support
- Co-ordinating with Skills Support for the Workforce Programme
- Link Apprentice Factory delivery with BOOST Lancashire
- Delivering annual National Apprenticeship Week activities
- Sharing skills and learning with private and public sector partners
- Building links between Levy payers and non-Levy payers to help keep un-spent Levy funds in South Ribble
- Targeted support for schools and individuals in most need
- Support the 'Fuller Working Lives' 50 plus initiative (DWP)
- Promoting employability skills to help people access work



Enterprise Advisers

The Enterprise Adviser Network aims to:

- Ensure every young person in England gets at least 4 employer and workplace encounters.
- Make sure careers education starts in year 7.
- Incorporate evidence of what works to guide careers planning in schools and colleges.
- Embed an ethos that celebrates careers and enterprise opportunities and places them at the heart of school and college curriculums.



66% businesses believe work experience is critical for recruitment

The opportunity for the council, through Lancashire Enterprise Adviser Network, is to influence and improve the careers and enterprise skills of young people in South Ribble. This is essential if we are to deliver the City Deal jobs and skills targets.

By supporting the network, the council has the opportunity to attract young people to fill the apprenticeships we create, meeting our skills needs to drive the council forward.

It offers the opportunity to raise the profile of the council, demonstrating that we are an innovative, forward thinking organisation.

The work of the Enterprise Advisers also contributes to reducing youth unemployment and minimising the number of young people at risk of becoming not in employment or education (NEET) by inspiring and guiding young people about the right career opportunities for them.

Our own staff will be developed through their role as Enterprise Advisers, through interaction with schools and through offering work inspiration activities and careers programmes. It represents an excellent learning opportunity for those involved.

How We Will Deliver

Two members of staff have already joined the Enterprise Adviser Network . This involves arranging support activities and developing interactions between employers and schools to help young people understand the opportunities available and raise awareness of future job opportunities.

We plan to commit to supporting all South Ribble schools, prioritising those in most need and offering bespoke support to help them to achieve the Gatsby Benchmarks.

Apprentice Ambassadors

Lancashire Apprentice Ambassador Network is part of a county wide drive to increase training and employment opportunities for young people and to improve skills

The apprenticeship ambassadors are all either current apprentices or former apprentices who want to highlight the benefits of taking part in the Apprenticeship programme to employers and other young people.

Employer Ambassadors represent businesses, which are committed to employing apprentices, and want to promote the benefits to other employers.



Lancashire Apprentice
Ambassador Network

The Lancashire Apprentice Ambassador Network (LAAN) is a joint initiative set up by the Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub, which is part of the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP), and the Lancashire Work Based Learning Executive Forum (LWBLEF), a consortium of Lancashire apprenticeship providers.

Becoming an Apprentice Ambassador offers a good development opportunity for our staff and contributes to the delivery of City Deal employment and skills targets.

Lancashire WBL Executive Forum provides training for all Apprentice Ambassadors to make sure that they are giving the same consistent message. The training offers a good learning opportunity, helping apprentices to integrate their own personal experiences in presentations they give, outlining what an Apprenticeship is and the benefits experienced by them and their employer.

LWBLEF coordinates opportunities for Ambassador presentations and involvement in events and provides the materials and resources they need.

Apprentice Ambassadors speak about their experiences at schools, youth clubs and careers fairs and meet employers face to face to encourage them to take on Apprentices. Employer Ambassadors attend business events and meetings to discuss the benefits and provide advice on employing apprentices.

How We Will Deliver

Staff from the Investment and Skills Team have joined LAAN as Employer Ambassadors and are engaged in network activities, which support events in National Apprenticeship Week and throughout the year.

We plan for the Class of 2019 to become Apprentice Ambassadors, contributing to their development, raising the profile of the council and supporting skills development in the borough

Phase 3

Phase 3 will aim to access external funding to create additional Apprentice Factory resources to drive up skills in South Ribble.

Funding streams will include devolved funding from government, Levy underspend, new skills funding post-Brexit and pooled partner resources.

A permanent hub will be established, which we aim to be largely self-financing.

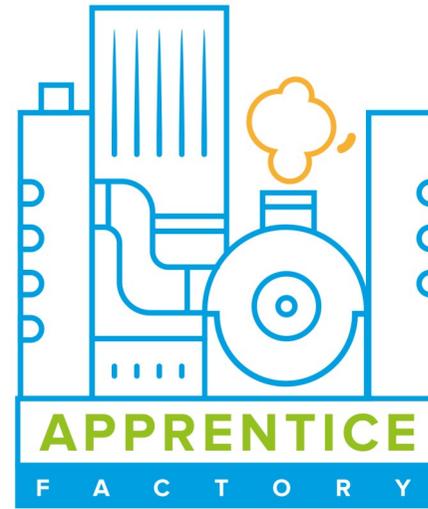
The availability of funding will guide development of additional services to businesses and residents.

Work will be coordinated with the LEP Skills Hub plans, using the Labour Market Information Toolkit data.

Partnerships will be developed with the relevant delivery bodies and on a sector basis.

Celebrating success with 'Academy Awards '

Impartial, comprehensive careers, skills and training information, advice and guidance provision.

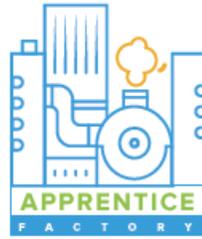


Powering our future workforce

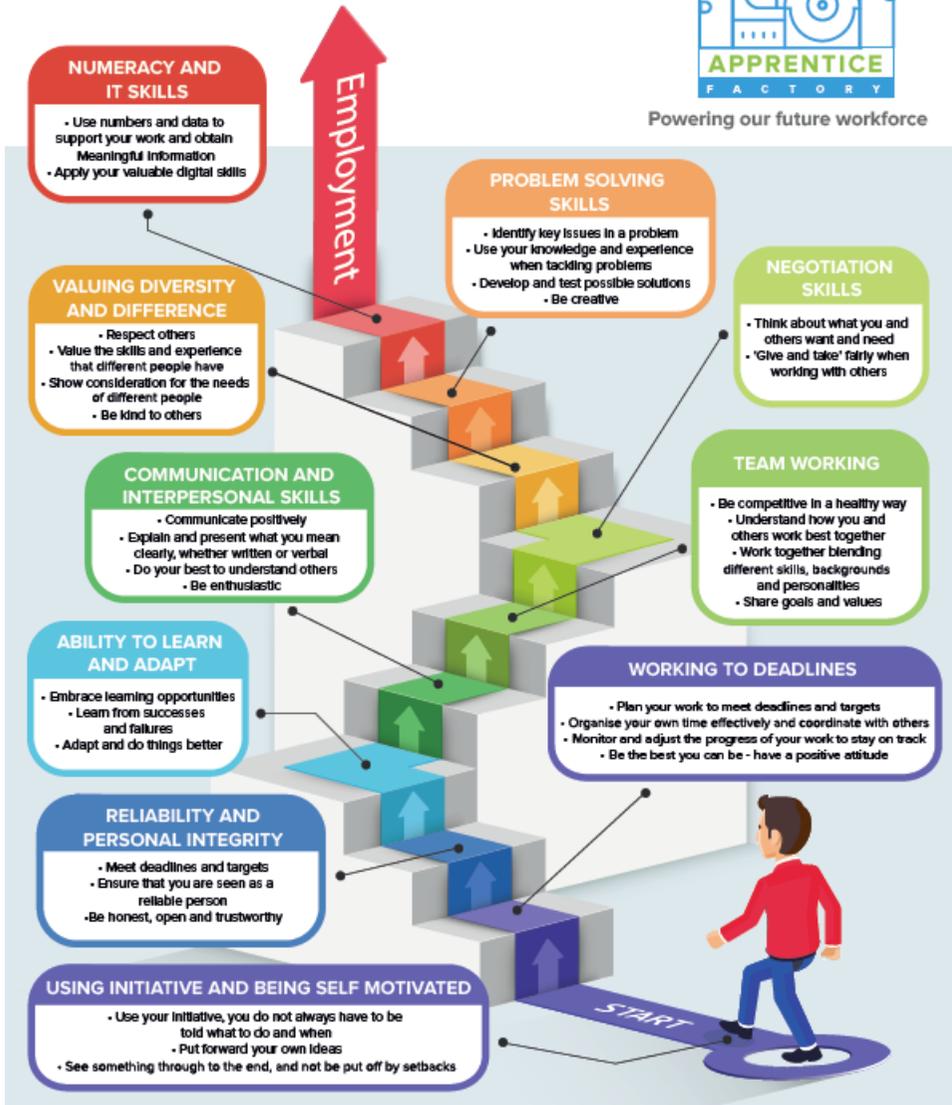


Steps to Success in Employment

The skills employers look for - It isn't just about exam results!



Powering our future workforce

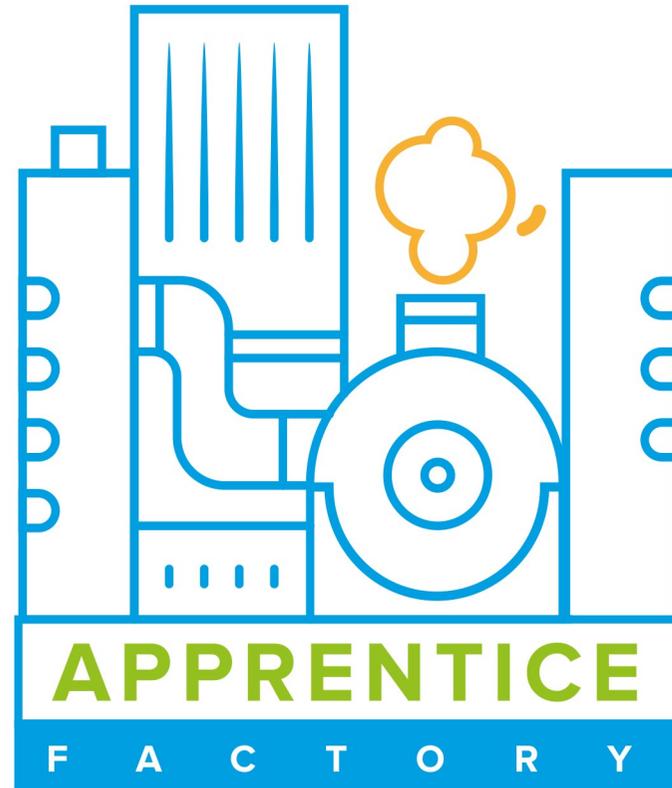


Outcomes

- KPI—Number of apprenticeship starts in South Ribble
- KPI—Number of higher level jobs in the borough
- National Skills Academy for Construction KPIs on sites
- Being ready to attract devolved and external funding
- Raising the career aspirations of our residents
- Attracting investment and supporting businesses & residents
- IMPARTIAL information, advice, guidance
- Sharing good practice across Lancashire and North West
- Helping people and businesses overcome barriers
- Matching young people's career aspirations to opportunities
- Simplifying pathways to jobs, apprenticeships and training
- Helping people to be work-ready
- Retraining from shrinking sectors to job growth areas
- Supporting the ageing workforce to remain in employment
- Retaining our position as the best performing public sector organisation in Lancashire for apprenticeships
- Supporting people not in employment, education or training (NEET) to access local opportunities
- Co-ordinating support for residents to access jobs in organisations struggling to attract staff e.g. the NHS/care sector

**SOUTH RIBBLE
APPRENTICE
FACTORY
DEVELOPMENT
PLAN
2018-23**

**BERNADETTE MARKHAM
JENNIFER CLOUGH**



Powering our future workforce



REPORT TO	ON
CABINET	16 October 2019

TITLE	PORTFOLIO	REPORT OF
Standard Financial Statement	Cabinet Member for Community Engagement, Social Justice and Wealth Building	Director of Customer and Digital

Is this report a KEY DECISION (i.e. more than £100,000 or impacting on more than 2 Borough wards?)	Yes
Is this report on the Statutory Cabinet Forward Plan ?	Yes
Is the request outside the policy and budgetary framework and therefore subject to confirmation at full Council?	No
Is this report confidential?	No

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To inform Members of the current information and documentation from the debt advice sector on the Standard Financial Statement (SFS) and on the proposed use of the SFS practices for Council Tax collection.

PORTFOLIO RECOMMENDATIONS

2. That Cabinet notes the Standard Financial Statement guidelines as summarised within this report and contained within **Appendix A**.
3. That Cabinet notes the proposals within this report including the current debt recovery procedures and the recommendation to undertake further work in relation to the Council signing up fully to the Standard Financial Statement code of conduct which is attached at **Appendix B**.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

4. As part of the council's commitment to reducing the tax burden and protecting the vulnerable it was agreed at Cabinet in July that the Council would review and explore opportunities associated with the collection of Council Tax.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

5. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

Excellence and Financial Sustainability	X
Health and Wellbeing	

Place	
-------	--

Projects relating to People in the Corporate Plan:

People	
--------	--

BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

6. The Standard Financial Statement (SFS) can be summarised along with some common questions as follows:

- What is the SFS?

The Standard Financial Statement (SFS) is a landmark development for debt advice in the UK which delivers a universal income and expenditure statement, together with a single set of spending guidelines.

The tool is used to summarise a person's income and outgoings, along with any debts they owe. Primarily for people seeking debt advice, the SFS is mainly used by debt advice providers and other relevant organisations.

It provides a single format for financial statements, allowing the debt advice sector and creditors to work together to achieve the right outcomes for people struggling with their finances.

- Who created the SFS?

The Money and Pension Service (MAPS) has a statutory responsibility to improve the quality, consistency, and availability of debt advice services across the UK. As part of this work, MAPS collaborated with representatives from the debt advice and creditor sectors to agree on the best format for a SFS.

- Who are MAPS?

Set up by government, they bring together three respected bodies of financial guidance: the Money Advice Service, The Pensions Advisory Service and Pension Wise into one single organisation - The Money and Pension Service.

To support those struggling with debt, MAPS works with partners to improve the quality, consistency and availability of debt advice. As part of its objective to improve quality and consistency across the debt advice sector, the Money Advice Service facilitated the set-up of the pre-launch Governance Group following a public consultation on the SFS. MAPS also continues to facilitate the ongoing monitoring and development of the SFS with the post-launch Governance Group.

- What are the spending guidelines and how are they calculated?

The spending guidelines are a set of figures derived from Office of National Statistics (ONS) data that provide a benchmark for typical monthly spending based on household composition for certain areas of discretionary household expenditure, labelled in the SFS as 'Flexible Outgoings' and cover the three spending categories as follows:

-Communications and leisure

-Food and housekeeping

-Personal

The spending guidelines are reviewed each year in light of the latest ONS Food and Living Costs survey and the latest inflation statistics. There are no regional versions of the spending guidelines for the SFS. The methodology bases its figures on the UK-wide ONS Food and Living Costs survey, building in household expenditure from a range of household sizes from a variety of urban and rural regions. This gives a representative

set of spending guidelines for use across the UK, though it is acknowledged that geographical factors may have significant effects on household expenditure.

- Are creditors expected to never query, request extra information or audit financial statements?

Based on the SFS principle below, creditors are now expected to never query, request extra information or audit financial statements where expenditure falls within spending guidelines or when advisers provide reasonable explanation for an exceeded guideline(s)?

'A commitment from creditors not to challenge statements where expenditure falls within spending guidelines and to accept advisers' reasonable explanations, unless they have reasonable cause to believe that the customer's income and expenditure statement may be incomplete or inaccurate'.

Where expenditure exceeds the spending guidelines, or is otherwise anomalous, advisers are expected to explain why this is the case. It will then be for creditors to determine whether an advisers' explanation is sufficient to remove the need to seek further clarification before considering proposals. However, the principle articulates the expectation that creditors will not reject or challenge explanations, or seek further clarification unless they believe that it is necessary to do so.

- Is the SFS suitable for someone who is self-employed?

The SFS does not include budgeting categories for business-related expenditure. As business and trading cases can be complex in nature, appropriate clients should be signposted to an adviser with relevant skills.

- Is there a field to record repayment term in the SFS?

There is no field for stating an expected repayment term in the SFS, though commentary should be provided in the comments section of the statement around the appropriateness of any repayment term and its relation to the proposed solution, particularly where the repayment term recommends a long term commitment from the client.

7. The council's existing Council Tax recovery practices/procedures can be summarised as follows:

- The council has previously and continues to practice and implement existing advice and guidelines issued by the debt advice sector.
- The council works closely with Citizens Advice and has been signed up to their Council Tax Arrears Good Practice Protocol since March 2018. Please see **Appendix C**.
- The council signposts customers to other debt advice agencies whenever appropriate.
- The council already has an SFS membership, but it does not commit us to using the SFS. Therefore, the Council may still have access to SFS information and spending guidelines in order to handle customer financial statements from debt advice agencies. If the council did decide to fully implement the SFS internally, it would then be subject to the full SFS code of conduct.
- The council still has a number of trained officers within Gateway who can offer a Personal Budgeting Support service, even though the responsibility and funding for this has now been transferred by the Department for Works and Pensions to Citizens Advice.
- A project group has been established to continually review all policies and procedures surrounding the collection & enforcement of Council Tax (and other

monies owed to the council including Business Rates, Housing Benefit Overpayments, Sundry Debts)

PROPOSALS

8. To continue to work with the Citizens Advice and other debt advice agencies when accessing a customer's financial circumstances and affordability for repayments of Council Tax.
9. To continue to reference and follow the MAPS SFS User guidance and information.
10. To review the existing use of a detailed income & expenditure statement to keep in line with and compare to the SFS spending guidelines e.g. spending guidelines calculator.
11. To develop an improved awareness and the training of staff for the increased use of the SFS within debt advice sector.
12. To undertake further work with a view to potentially fully signing up to the full SFS code of conduct.
13. To continually review and develop South Ribble Borough Council's Corporate Debt Policy to ensure the Council has effective procedures in place for the collection of debts whilst supporting the most vulnerable members of our community.

CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT AND OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION

14. Previous consultation undertaken in relation to Council Tax administration. Any future changes, such as the full sign up, would be consulted upon.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

15. Alternative options considered included no change to any current practices.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

16. Any changes made to the policies/procedures of collection may have a direct impact on the collection rates.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

17. The council has a legal duty to recover all monies owed. The collection of Council Tax helps pay for vital public and local services including schools, roads, social care, police and fire service.

AIR QUALITY IMPLICATIONS

18. None

HUMAN RESOURCES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

19. Introduction of some changes to working practices may prove to be more resource intensive. The overall staffing resources and collection rates would be monitored and may need to be revised.

ICT/TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

20. Existing software is already accomplished in the processing and administering of relevant customer information and production of documentation.

PROPERTY AND ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

21. None.

RISK MANAGEMENT

22. The keys risks are managing the Councils reputation associated with the proposed changes and collection rates. A detailed risk assessment will be completed further to agreement to the proposed changes.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPACT

23. The relevant Equality implications are ensuring that the proposed changes do not have a detrimental impact on targeted groups. A detailed equality impact assessment will be completed further to agreement to the proposed changes.

RELEVANT DIRECTORS RECOMMENDATIONS

24. This report addresses the challenges for the council in relation to mitigating the risks associated with any changes to the Council Tax Debt Recovery policy and the general collection of Council Tax.

COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

25. Council tax is a statutory charge and also a major source of income to the Council and its preceptors. Therefore the effective collection of Council Tax including the recovery of debt is a key priority. The Council has an excellent record in relation to the collection of Council Tax and officers work with external agencies to assess the financial circumstances of individuals including the most vulnerable members of the community.

26. The report proposes to keep the current procedures under continuous review. Any changes to the Council's Corporate Debt Policy are subject to Cabinet approval.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

27. Obviously the collection of Council Tax is a vital function of the council. It is a major source of income not just for us but for the precepting authorities. We must continue to carry out this role as efficiently as possible. What is proposed here should in no way impede that – indeed it may help to improve our processes.

28. A review of the Corporate Debt Policy will of course affect not just Council Tax payers. Member approval would be sought to any amendment of this policy.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended)
The Council Tax (Administration and Enforcement) Regulations 1992 (as amended)
South Ribble Borough Council's Corporate Debt Recovery Policy
Cabinet 10th July 2019: Council Tax Support Scheme 2020/21 Consultation
Supportive Council Tax Recovery
Working collaboratively with debt advice agencies

APPENDICES

Appendix A - Standard Financial Statement User Guide
Appendix B - Standard Financial Statement Code of Conduct
Appendix C - Council Tax Protocol

Paul Hussey
Director of Customer & Digital

Report Author:	Telephone:	Date:
Andrew Bamber Council Tax Team Leader	01772 625346	24/09/2019



Standard Financial Statement

User Guide

Standard Financial Statement User Guide

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Introduction

The purpose of this guidance is to explain the format of the Standard Financial Statement (SFS) and the intentions behind the categories contained within it.

In the event that there are differences between this guidance and regulatory requirements, such as the FCA rulebook and insolvency law, the regulatory requirements must always take precedence.

Principles

The SFS is underpinned by the following set of principles, which users of the tool must adhere to:

- A commitment from organisations representing clients or assisting them in completing a financial statement that they will provide a meaningful explanation if spending guidelines have been exceeded. This will enable consideration of exceptional circumstances.
- A commitment from creditors not to challenge statements where expenditure falls within spending guidelines and to accept advisers' reasonable explanations, unless they have reasonable cause to believe that the customer's income and expenditure statement may be incomplete or inaccurate.
- A commitment to use the latest version of the SFS and spending guidelines.
- A commitment to a partnership approach that improves transparency between advisers, clients and creditors.

1 Section one: general

- 1.1. This guidance sets out an approach to achieve consistency in the application of the SFS and client contribution calculations that are fair to all parties concerned.
- 1.2. The guidance recognises that circumstances will be different for each individual client and it sets out some key guiding principles, while still allowing for reasonable adviser and agency level discretion. The guidance follows the structure of the SFS and provides general information on what is required to support the financial and household information recorded.
- 1.3. The income and expenditure information gathered from the client will be input to create a two-page Standard Financial Statement. In the first instance, this should be returned to the relevant creditors who will take it as an accurate reflection of the client's circumstances, unless there are clear and exceptional reasons not to do so. If a creditor has a query or requires more detail on a given point, it is expected they will contact the advice agency to discuss further or the client directly where they are negotiating with creditors themselves.
- 1.4. The data must be input using the most up-to-date version of the SFS, including the most up-to-date spending guidelines.

Timeframes

- 1.5. When entering figures directly into the SFS Excel tool, there is the functionality to enter amounts as weekly, fortnightly, monthly, quarterly or annual figures. Resulting totals will be calculated by the spreadsheet as a monthly figure.

Additional information / use of notes

- 1.6. The SFS provides an area for notes against each individual entry to the tool and a larger section for general notes at the end of the statement. Examples of detail that may be added include meaningful explanation of spending above guidelines, exceptional client circumstances, explanation of vulnerability and expected first payment date, if appropriate. Please note this is not an exhaustive list.

Self-help clients

- 1.7. Where organisations provide a self-help tool to support clients in resolving their debt problems and assist them in creating a financial statement, the agency providing the tool should have a SFS membership code number. However, members of the public using these tools will not require their own code number.
- 1.8. Agencies offering self-help advice should take reasonable steps to encourage clients to provide creditors and others with adequate information to support their financial statement.
- 1.9. For self-help clients, the fields 'contact / team name', 'agency', 'agency address', 'membership code number' and 'case reference number' may not be required. However, in these cases, it should be made clear where the SFS has originated from and where queries should be directed.

2 Section two: completing the client / agency details

- 2.1. All fields in the client / agency section at the beginning of the form are mandatory to create a compliant SFS, aside from those marked '(if applicable)', which can be left blank if appropriate.

Adding a partner

- 2.2. Details for an additional client should be added when a joint application is being made. A financial statement can be prepared based on a client's sole income even if they have a partner.
- 2.3. In the SFS Excel tool, two sets of tick boxes are provided under the 'Employment' category to record a partner's employment status if applicable.

Other dependants

- 2.4. It is important to account for any household contribution from or any expenditure by other dependants. Accordingly, a category is included to list 'other dependants' in the introductory section.
- 2.5. For many organisations, they will only record dependants and non-dependants, creating some confusion over the definition of 'Other dependants'.
- 2.6. The intention for this field is to capture household members who, while they may have their own income and possibly contribute towards household expenditure, would still be considered dependent on the head of household's income. The addition of an 'Other dependant' would be considered as an additional adult in terms of the application of spending guidelines.

Number in household

- 2.7. This number cannot be less than the total number of people entered for dependent children, other dependants and the applicant(s). It can, however, be more; for example, where there are non-dependants in the household who are impacting on household income or expenditure.

Number of vehicles in household

- 2.8. For clarity, vehicles subject to a Statutory Off Road Notification would not be included here but may still be considered an asset.

Assets

- 2.9. Assets can have a significant impact on advice given. Advisers should therefore adhere to their organisational policies on treatment of assets and the relevant statutory insolvency requirements. Users should tick the box confirming that use of assets to make lump sum payments has been considered. However, advisers must respect the boundaries regarding regulated advice for assets such as property and pensions.

Contact / team name, agency and agency address

- 2.10. This should be completed so recipients of the SFS can see where the statement has originated from and where to direct queries.

Membership code number

- 2.11. A valid membership code number must be entered, which can be obtained from the SFS website by completing the application form and agreeing to the SFS Code of Conduct. This number must be the one given to the organisation and enables anyone to look up the validity of the membership code using the search functionality on the SFS website. Failure to enter a number in this field may result in a creditor or other relevant body rejecting the financial statement.

Date of statement

- 2.12. This should be the date the budget was last agreed by the client as an accurate reflection of their financial situation.

Self-help clients

- 2.13. Some fields in this section may not be relevant for self-help clients. Please see paragraphs 1.7, 1.8 and 1.9 for further guidance.

Date of review

- 2.14. If appropriate, advisers can add the date when they expect to review the client's financial situation.

Self employment

- 2.15. The SFS does not include budgeting categories for business-related expenditure. As business and trading cases can be complex in nature, appropriate clients should be signposted to an adviser with relevant skills.

3 Section three: overview and monthly income

- 3.1. An overview section is included at the beginning of the SFS.
- 3.2. If an adviser is entering data using a digital system or the SFS Excel tool, these fields will automatically populate as the income, expenditure and savings details are completed.

Earnings

- 3.3. The 'Earnings' category includes 'Salary or wages (take home)' and 'Partner salary or wages (take home)'. Therefore, the amounts included in the SFS should be after all deductions direct from pay have been made for example auto-enrolment pension contributions, childcare vouchers or healthcare schemes – with the exception of direct from earnings deductions on priority debts, as per point 3.7 below.
- 3.4. The deductions should not be included as expenditure in the SFS, to avoid double counting.
- 3.5. Advisers should provide comments where necessary.
- 3.6. Advisers should refer to their organisational policy on what may or may not be reasonable direct deductions from earnings and discuss with the client as appropriate. Where these relate to pension or other financial services product contributions, advisers must avoid providing any regulated financial advice.
- 3.7. Arrears on priority debts subject to direct from earnings deductions (such as Direct Earnings Attachments, Deduction from Earnings Orders, Attachment of Earnings Orders, Conjoined Arrestment Orders and Earnings Arrestment) should be listed in the debt section as a priority debt.
- 3.8. The amount being deducted should not be included in the fields under 'Earnings' but alongside the listing of the arrears in the priority debt section, under the 'Offer' column.
- 3.9. This is to give clarity to clients and creditors around deductions in place and visibility of when they are likely to be cleared.
- 3.10. For example, in a household earning £2000 per month, paying £200 tax and £75 national insurance, and with a priority debt of £800 with a £40 attachment of earnings:
Net income:
 $(2000 - 200 - 75) = 1725$
Debt listing:
Priority debt / Owed – 800 / Repayment (via attachment of earnings in comments) - £40

Partner salary or wages

- 3.11. This field should only be completed in joint applications. In sole applications, contributions from a partner should be included as 'Other income' in the 'Other income' section with an explanatory note if required.

Other earnings

- 3.12. All other earnings should be included in this section, along with comments if necessary.

Benefits and tax credits

- 3.13. Disability Living Allowance (DLA), Attendance Allowance (AA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP) should be included under the 'Disability Benefits' field in 'Benefits and tax credits'. Advisers should add a note to explain the amount paid under each allowance / payment and may wish to add a note to explain if both mobility and care components are awarded.
- 3.14. The intention behind these payments is that they will be used for specific disability costs and related expenditure should be recorded as appropriate. Disability related expenditure should be listed under 'adult-care costs', while expenditure relating to mobility needs should be included within the 'transport and travel' category. However, it should be noted, clients may also choose to use DLA, AA or PIP payments to repay debt, where appropriate.
- 3.15. Advice organisations may differ in how they record Local Housing Allowance (LHA) in income and expenditure. Advisers should therefore refer to the guidance from their own organisation when considering how to record LHA and associated outgoings.
- 3.16. Where deductions for priority debts are being made direct from benefits, please treat benefits the same as any other earnings in regards to these deductions (see point 3.4-3.10).

Other income

- 3.17. Any other income not listed elsewhere on the statement should be included in this section, along with comments if necessary. For clarity, any contribution towards household costs by a dependant should be listed in other income and a note added if appropriate.

4 Section four: monthly outgoings – fixed costs

- 4.1. The SFS groups spending into two sections; fixed and flexible outgoings. Items in these two sections are further grouped under headings.

Gas and electricity

- 4.2. In many cases, gas and electricity will be combined in a 'dual-fuel' bill. Where possible, these payments should be separated and included in the corresponding expenditure categories. If it is not possible to obtain the separate figures, the expenditure should be included in 'Gas'.

Water

- 4.3. Water has been included as a standalone category with sub-categories for water waste and water supply. This is because clients in some regions may be billed separately for these two services.
- 4.4. In some areas of the UK, water and water supply will be included with council tax payments. Where possible, these payments should be separated and included in the corresponding expenditure categories. If it is not possible to obtain the separated figures, the expenditure should be included in 'Council tax / rates' and a note added to reflect it also includes water costs.

School costs

- 4.5. For clarity, private school fees should not be included under this heading. See paragraph 5.10 for further guidance.

Other essential costs

- 4.6. Any items of additional fixed costs not captured under the given categories should be included in this field along with any relevant comments.
- 4.7. For clarity, court fines being repaid in instalments should be included in this section. The exception to this being where these are directly deducted from earnings or benefits. In these cases, refer to the guidance given in points 3.7 to 3.10.

Items deducted directly from salary, wages or benefits

- 4.8. Clients may have items deducted direct from their salary, wages or benefits. Where these deductions are expenditure items such as pension contributions, childcare vouchers, insurance contributions, these should not be listed in expenditure but simply reflected in the take-home pay and commented accordingly. This is to avoid these outgoings being counted twice. Where these deductions relate to payments on arrears, guidance points 3.7 to 3.10 should be followed.

5 Section five: monthly outgoings - flexible costs

- 5.1. The SFS includes a set of pre-agreed spending guidelines associated with the three areas of flexible spending costs.
- 5.2. The spending guidelines are a set of figures derived from Office of National Statistics data that provide a benchmark for typical flexible or discretionary monthly spending based on household composition.
- 5.3. The guidelines cover three spending categories:
 - 'Communications and leisure'
 - 'Food and housekeeping'
 - 'Personal'

Updates to spending guidelines

- 5.4. The spending guidelines will be updated periodically to reflect changes to expenditure patterns and any significant fluctuations in the Consumer Price Index. This will ensure that the real value of the expenditure figures is maintained over time.

Discussing spending guidelines

- 5.5. The SFS spending guidelines must not form the starting point for any assessment of expenditure. Only in circumstances where spending guidelines have been exceeded or where an adviser believes further reflection on expenditure is required, should they be used as guidance around levels of expected spending.

Exceeding spending guidelines

- 5.6. In circumstances where spending guidelines need to be exceeded, a comment should be added in the notes and any evidence of why this expenditure is required should be provided, where possible.

Spending categories

- 5.7. While not an exhaustive list, further detail of expenditure included within each area of flexible spending is included as an appendix.

Home phone, internet, TV package and mobile phone

- 5.8. In some cases, expenditure across both these categories will be presented as part of a combined bill. Where possible, the mobile phone elements should be separated and included in the corresponding expenditure category. If it is not possible to obtain the separated figures, the expenditure should be included in 'Home phone, internet, TV package'.

Smoking products

- 5.9. It is important that offers of payment submitted to creditors using the SFS are realistic and sustainable. For this reason, smoking has been included in the budget. Costs for 'smoking products' should be included under 'food and housekeeping' in the 'monthly outgoings: flexible costs' section. If the total housekeeping amount does not exceed the spending guideline for this category, it should not be queried by creditors. If spending on cigarettes and tobacco is significant, this may lead to the spending guideline being exceeded. In these cases, an explanation should be included in the notes as creditors and other relevant bodies vary in how they consider smoking related costs.

Private school fees

- 5.10. In exceptional cases, it may be appropriate for a client to pay private school fees. These costs should be included under 'Other costs' in the 'Personal costs' section and a note added to explain the specific circumstances.

6 Section six: savings category

6.1. The savings category is a standalone category within the fixed costs section of the SFS and is separate from the income and expenditure outlined in other categories. The primary purpose of this category is to foster a habit of regular savings for clients; the advantages of which include:

- Providing a protective element for clients against unforeseen financial shocks;
- Providing an enabling element for clients, such as saving for a goal;
- Decreasing the chance of disruption to agreed repayment plans;
- Fostering positive financial behaviour.

Savings level

6.2. The savings level can be set at any amount up to a maximum level of 10% of the client's available income (the income left after outgoings have been paid but before payments to creditors are made), with a cap of £20 per month. For clarity, the maximum levels of saving are per SFS and would not, for example, be doubled in a joint budget. When using the SFS Excel tool, users will be able to enter any value agreed with the client, though a warning will show if the £20 limit is exceeded. There is no restriction on the total amount which can be saved on an ongoing basis within the limits described above. An exception to this is if the client is entering an insolvency solution. In which case, insolvency rules and procedures should be followed.

Other considerations

- 6.3. Clients should be given all of the information in relation to the benefits of savings and an explanation of how this would impact on their repayment plans and debt solutions, for example highlighting the consequences of reducing the amounts available to offer to creditors. Ultimately, if a client chooses not to save then this should be accepted.
- 6.4. Given the recognised benefits of savings, reviews of client circumstances may be an opportunity to revisit the savings category. This is particularly the case where a client's available income has increased, and/or their expenditure or repayments have decreased.

Priority debts

6.5. Arrangements to deal with any priority debts the client has should take precedence ahead of the savings category. However, if it is not practical to obtain agreements with all priority creditors immediately, then advisers may use discretion to include savings if it is considered that reasonable offers on the priority debts are being made. This will avoid possible delays and enable the financial statement to be sent to all creditors at the earliest possible time. As with other changes in circumstances, if arrangements are subsequently refused or fail, the savings allowance may need to be revisited.

Debt administration fees

6.6. Any debt management administration fee should be subtracted after the savings contribution has been considered. Please see section 7 for further guidance.

Products

- 6.7. Whilst a debt adviser must not compel a client to save in any particular product, advisers should note that introducing clients to deposit accounts, and enabling the client to make an informed choice about using that deposit account, is not a regulated activity. A client should be advised to set up a standing order, where possible, to pay the savings contribution into the deposit account.
- 6.8. Advisers should be aware that there are no regulatory barriers to making a client aware of the HMRC Help To Save Scheme, which will give a 50% bonus on savings within the scheme. Please note that only certain clients will be eligible, this eligibility criteria and further information on the scheme can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/get-help-savings-low-income>.
- 6.9. Advisers should recommend that clients save in an account with a savings provider to whom they do not owe money (or with a creditor who has formally agreed not to exercise their right of set off on any credit balances held).
- 6.10. Clients should also be encouraged to deposit their savings in an account which is covered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme.

7 Section seven: debt admin fee

- 7.1. A field is included to record debt administration fees if applicable. For clarity, this would not include fees associated with formal debt solutions, such as a payment distributor fee in a Debt Payment Programme in the Debt Arrangement Scheme or a supervisor fee in an Individual Voluntary Arrangement, as these are dealt with as part of the formal process.
- 7.2. If appropriate, advisers should add a note to explain the breakdown of any administration fees and any likely changes, such as when a set-up fee paid in instalments concludes.

8 Section eight: debts

- 8.1. Individual debt listings should be made in the corresponding priority or non-priority section. If using the SFS Excel tool, a free text field is provided for listing the name of the creditor. If the originator or type of debt is not clear from the current creditor name, then a note should be added in the comments box.
- 8.2. The outstanding amount owed, and the repayment offer, should be entered in the corresponding columns as appropriate.
- 8.3. Arrangements to deal with any priority debts the client has must take precedence ahead of non-priority debts. In some cases, it will not be possible to obtain agreements with all priority creditors immediately and therefore advisers may use discretion to calculate and make offers on non-priority debts if it is considered that reasonable offers are being made on priority debts. This will avoid possible delays and enable the financial statement to be sent to all creditors at the earliest possible time. As with other changes in circumstances, if arrangements are subsequently refused or fail, the offers on non-priority debts may need to be revisited.
- 8.4. To avoid double counting of payments towards priority debt, only the arrears amount should be listed in the 'owed' column in the debt section, along with any offer of payment already made. The ongoing liability should be recorded in the outgoings section where appropriate.
- 8.5. Arrears on hire purchase and conditional sale items are sometimes treated as priority debts, such as those related to a vehicle which is essential for work. In these cases, only the arrears amount should be included, rather than the full amount outstanding, as the usual contractual payment should be recorded in the outgoings section.
- 8.6. Please also see paragraph 3.5 with regard to repayment of arrears on priority debts made through direct deduction from earnings.

Priority debts

- 8.3. Arrangements to deal with any priority debts the client has must take precedence ahead of non-priority debts. In some cases, it will not be possible to obtain agreements with all priority creditors immediately and therefore advisers may use discretion to calculate and make offers on non-priority debts if it is considered that reasonable offers are being made on priority debts. This will avoid possible delays and enable the financial statement to be sent to all creditors at the earliest possible time. As with other changes in circumstances, if arrangements are subsequently refused or fail, the offers on non-priority debts may need to be revisited.
- 8.4. To avoid double counting of payments towards priority debt, only the arrears amount should be listed in the 'owed' column in the debt section, along with any offer of payment already made. The ongoing liability should be recorded in the outgoings section where appropriate.

Non-priority debts

- 8.7. Where pro-rata payments are appropriate for all non-priority debts, all creditors should be listed, along with the full amount outstanding. If using the SFS Excel tool, the financial statement will automatically populate the repayment offer column with pro-rata amounts by balance owed. As agencies may differ in how they pro-rata non-priority debts, the tool provides the functionality to override these amounts for organisations using a different calculation method.
- 8.8. Where a CCJ is in place for a non-priority debt, the tickbox should be checked alongside the debt listing. Advisers should override the pro-rata amount to reflect the requirement of the CCJ.
- 8.9. If using the SFS Excel tool, advisers can use the red boxes against 'Token Payments' or 'Round to the nearest' to set an appropriate value for these overriding calculations.

Appendix

When inputting a client's expenditure to the flexible outgoings section, a breakdown of items which may be included under the three main categories are listed below for reference. Please note this is a guide and not an exhaustive list.

Communications and leisure

Home phone, internet, TV package (including film subscriptions)

- Telephone account
- Telephone purchase
- Answering machine, fax machine etc
- Telephone coin and other payments
- Satellite subscription
- Rental for TV/Satellite/DVD players
- Cable subscription
- TV slot meter payments
- Entertainment rental (video cassettes, DVD rental, library hire)
- Internet subscription fees

Mobile phone

- Mobile phone purchase
- Mobile phone - other payments
- Mobile telephone account

Hobbies, leisure or sport (including socialising, outings and clubs)

- Spectator sports, participant sports, equipment hire
- Subscriptions to sports and social clubs
- Leisure class fees
- Cinemas and live entertainment: theatre, concerts, shows
- Museums, theme parks, houses and gardens
- Social events and gatherings
- Subscriptions for leisure activities and other subscriptions
- Eating out
- Games, toys and hobbies
- Computer software, consoles and games
- Gardening materials

Gifts (including birthdays, festivals and charitable donations)

- Money/presents given

Pocket money

- Money given to children for specific purposes
- Pocket money

Newspapers, stationary and postage

- Diaries, address books, cards etc.
- Cards, calendars, posters
- Newspapers
- Postage

Food and housekeeping

Groceries (including food, pet food, non-alcoholic drinks and cleaning)

- Food and non-alcoholic drinks
- Pet food
- Hot / cold take away meal eaten at home

Nappies and baby items

- Baby toiletries and accessories

School meals and meals at work

- School meals
- Meals bought and eaten at workplace

Laundry and dry cleaning

- Dry cleaners
- Laundry, launderettes
- Detergents, washing-up liquid and washing powder

Alcohol (consumed at home)

- Spirits and liqueurs
- Wine
- Beer and lager
- Ciders
- Alcopops

Smoking products

- Cigarettes
- Cigars
- Other products

Vet bills & pet insurance

- Veterinary and other services for pets

Maintenance and repair of dwelling

- Central heating repairs
- House maintenance
- Other services for the maintenance and repair of the dwelling
- Paint, wallpaper, timber etc.

Personal costs

Clothing and footwear (for men, women, children and infants)

- Clothing and underwear
- Footwear
- Repair and hire of footwear
- Accessories

Hairdressing

- Hairdressing and beauty treatment
- Hair products

Toiletries

- Toilet paper
- Toiletries
- Cosmetics and related accessories
- Electrical appliances for personal care, including hairdryers, shavers etc

Version Control: v2.3

Original Author: Craig Simmons

Last Updated by: Catherine Thomas

Date of Last Update: 25/04/2019

The Money Advice Service has, in partnership with industry experts, developed the Standard Financial Statement (SFS) for use by debt advice agencies, creditors and other relevant bodies to record and summarise a person's financial circumstances and, where appropriate, provide this information to that person's creditors or relevant third parties.

It includes a set of spending guidelines in three areas of 'flexible' spending. These spending guidelines are designed for use with over-indebted clients and should be used accordingly.

Ongoing oversight and development of the SFS will be delivered in collaboration with a governance group made up of industry practitioners (known as the SFS Governance Group).

Users signing up to this code agree to follow this statement of good practice and will be given access to the data entry format, the statement to be sent to recipients of the SFS, the spending guidelines, logo, and user guidance. Agencies signing up will also be added to a register of Code of Conduct members on the SFS website.

The SFS Spending Guideline methodology is included as an appendix.

SFS Good Practice

Good practice in using the SFS is:

1. Using the specified categories at the data entry stage (with no amendment, deletion or adding of any additional categories), as set out in the most up-to-date data entry format. This data entry format should be integrated into an organisation's own system, or used through the most up to date Microsoft Excel tool produced by the Money Advice Service.
2. Using the latest version of Spending Guidelines for the three flexible spending categories: communications and leisure; housekeeping and personal costs as published by the Money Advice Service at least annually.
3. The Spending Guidelines should only be shared with members of the public as set out in the SFS user guidance.
4. The outputted SFS contains the specified categories (with no amended, deleted or additional categories) as set out in the most up-to-date statement produced by the Money Advice Service.
5. The SFS logo is included on the statement sent to recipients of the Standard Financial Statement, as is the version number of the statement being used.
6. Using the latest user guidance as released by the Money Advice Service.
7. Transitioning to the latest version on the first Monday of April each year (unless specified otherwise) when the Money Advice Service produces an update to the data entry format, the statement to be sent to recipients of the SFS, the Spending Guidelines, the logo and / or the user guidance.
8. The code member shall co-operate with the Money Advice Service in good faith in demonstrating its adherence to this good practice. This will particularly be the case where there is information to suggest the agency is not adhering to the Code of Conduct.

Withdrawal of Code Membership

The Money Advice Service owns the SFS logo. In the event of an agency having its code membership withdrawn, the Money Advice Service will withdraw its permission for the logo to be included on that agency's financial statements. Access to the restricted area of the SFS website will also be withdrawn and the agency will be removed from the register of code members on the SFS website.

Agencies may also withdraw from SFS code membership at any point by writing to the Money Advice Service. This can be with immediate effect or at an agreed future date at the discretion of the code member.

Ongoing operation of the SFS and the Code of Conduct

Updates to the SFS Spending Guidelines, Formats, User Guidance and/or Logo

The Money Advice Service will, in conjunction with the SFS Governance Group, ensure the SFS remains relevant and up-to-date by issuing updates to the data entry format, the statement to be sent to recipients of the SFS, the Spending Guidelines, the logo, and the user guidance from time-to-time. The SFS Spending Guidelines will be updated at least annually. In the event that the Money Advice Service issues an update to any of these, members will be given at least two months notice of the updated figures each year before they take effect on the first Monday of April. However, in the event of significant changes, the Money Advice Service will consult with code members to agree a sufficient transition period, which may be longer than two months.

To aid clarity during transition periods, the Money Advice Service will include a version number on each update. As stated in good practice point (5), when providing statements to recipients of the SFS, agencies should indicate which version number is being used.

The Money Advice Service will inform code members of updates via email to the contact points provided by each code member, communications through trade associations, membership bodies and relevant media outlets and via reports on the SFS website.

Relationship between the Money Advice Service and the SFS Governance Group

The SFS Governance Group is made up of relevant industry practitioners. It will assist and guide the Money Advice Service in oversight of ongoing development and usage of the SFS, ensuring it remains relevant and effective for the sector. Members will be appointed as set out in the Group's Terms of Reference. The Terms of Reference also set out the Group's duties, how it will consider adherence to this code of conduct and the process to be followed when a failure to adhere to the code of conduct is identified.

Monitoring Adherence to this Good Practice

Use of the SFS will be monitored by the broader debt sector. For example, it is expected a creditor would monitor a debt advice agency's use of the statement through its usual ongoing oversight practices. The Money Advice Service will provide an email inbox at sfs.support@moneyadviceservice.org.uk for reporting use which does not meet good practice. The process that will be followed when these reports are received are also set out in the SFS Governance Group's Terms of Reference.

APPENDIX

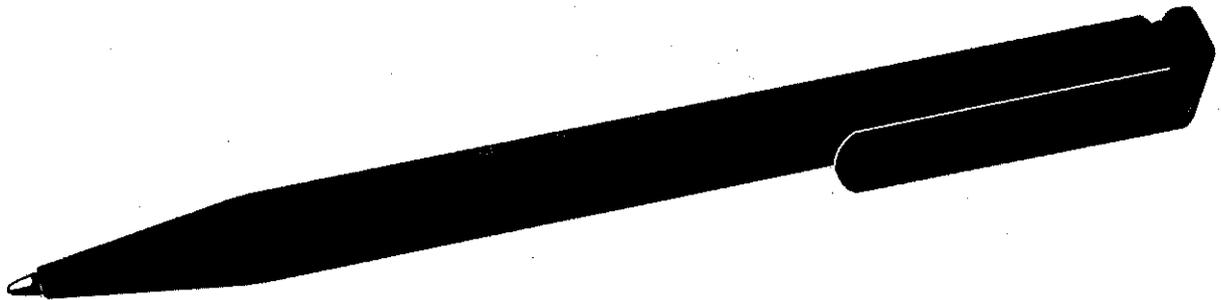
Spending Guideline Methodology

The Standard Financial Statement spending guidelines are derived using the following methodology:

1. Levels of expenditure observed among typical households within the UK are identified.
2. Granular-level expenditure data is mapped to the three Standard Financial Statement flexible costs spending categories.
3. Allowances are then made to reflect the composition of households of varying sizes, including varying numbers of adults plus children, taking into account the higher consumption levels necessary for larger households.
4. The guideline figures will be updated annually to reflect changes to expenditure patterns based on data taken from the annual ONS Food and Living Costs survey and / or any significant fluctuations in the Consumer Price Index. This will ensure that the real value of the expenditure figures is maintained over time. A 3% positive or negative variance in real inflation from the forecasts applied to the SFS will be notified to the Governance Group, while a 5% positive or negative variance will trigger a review of the current figures.
5. Updated figures will be published on the SFS website each year. Members will be given at least two months notice of the updated figures each year before they take effect on the first Monday of April.
6. The SFS Governance Group will be consulted ahead of changes to spending guidelines.

Council Tax Protocol

Revised Collection of Council Tax Arrears Good Practice Protocol



Agreed by:

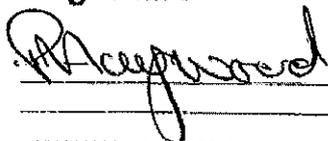
Citizens Advice and South Ribble BC March 2018



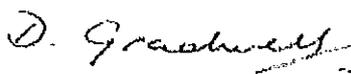
Council Tax Protocol

We agree to adopt this protocol in
as our public commitment to its principles of fairness, partnership
working and transparency in local authority debt collection:

Signature



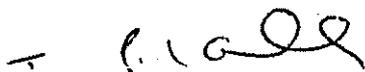
Signature



Local authority representative

Local Citizens Advice / advice
agency representative

Signature



Signature

Enforcement agency
representative

(where relevant)¹

External contractor
representative

(where relevant)¹

Date:

29/3/18

¹ Enforcement agents and external contactors may sign this protocol if they and the authority agree that it is appropriate.

Council Tax Protocol

Revised collection of council tax arrears good practice protocol

Council tax payers receive a better level of service when local authorities², enforcement agencies and debt advice agencies work closely together. Early intervention and proactive contact with people struggling with bill payments can help prevent them incurring further charges and help alleviate stress. It can also potentially help reduce both collection costs and calls on local public services, particularly mental health services.

This good practice protocol makes a number of suggestions on how local partnerships can be strengthened and residents better supported.

Developed through partnership work between the national bodies representing advice agencies, local government and enforcement agencies throughout England and Wales, it builds upon the previous protocol, which government recommended local authorities adopt in their 2013 guidance.

The protocol reflects best practice at local level and is intended to facilitate regular liaison on practices and policy concerning council tax debt collection.

In setting down clear procedures and keeping them regularly under review, all parties can ensure that cases of arrears are dealt with appropriately whilst complaints are handled efficiently.

By signing the protocol and adopting the practices set out below, local authorities, enforcement agencies and advice agencies can help taxpayers pay their council tax bills while accessing debt advice when needed.

² Where we use the term 'local authorities', this should also be read to cover a local authority's external contractors, where the local authority has contracted out the administration of some or all of its council tax collection process.

Partnership

To foster more effective partnership working:

1. Local authorities, enforcement agencies and advice agencies should meet regularly to discuss practical and policy issues with a recommendation to meet 6 monthly with officers and more regularly if required.
2. All parties should have dedicated contacts accessible on direct lines and electronically so that issues can be taken up quickly.
3. All parties should promote mutual understanding by providing training workshops, undertaking exchange visits and sharing good practice.
4. As local authorities are responsible for the overall collections process, they should ensure all their staff, external contractors and enforcement agencies receive the appropriate training, particularly on vulnerability and hardship.
5. Advice agencies, enforcement agencies and local authorities should work together to develop a fair collection and enforcement policy, highlighting examples of vulnerable people or those who find themselves in vulnerable situations, and specifying clear procedures in dealing with them.
6. Local authorities should consider informal complaints as debtors may be afraid to complain formally where enforcement agent activity is ongoing. Informal complaints received from advice agencies can indicate problems worthy of further investigation both locally by the local authority and by referral to national bodies.

Information

To improve the information supplied to council tax payers about the billing process, how to get support and debt advice and to promote engagement:

1. All parties should work together to produce letters that clearly and consistently explain how council tax bills have been calculated (including any Council Tax Support award). Council tax bills should make clear council tax is a priority debt and explain the consequences of not making payment by the date specified. The layout and language of bills and letters should be easy to understand, with any letters including a contact phone number and email address. All information should also be made available online in a clear format.
2. Local authorities should consider reviewing payment arrangements and offer more flexible options, including, subject to practicality, different payment dates within the month, spreading payments over 12 months and, potentially, different payment amounts to assist those on fluctuating incomes. This can allow people to budget more effectively.
3. Local authorities and enforcement agents should publicise local and national debt advice contact details on literature and notices. Advice agencies can help by promoting the need for debtors to contact their local authority promptly in order to agree payment plans. Parties can work together to ensure the tone of letters is not intimidating but encouraging of engagement.
4. Local authorities should consider providing literature about concerns council tax debtors may have about enforcement agents and enforcement. Information could cover charges enforcement agencies are allowed to make by law, how to complain about enforcement agent behaviour or check enforcement agent certification and further help available from the local authority or advice agencies.
5. All parties should work together to review and promote better engagement by council taxpayers. This should include information on how bills can be reduced through reliefs, exemptions and council tax support schemes, advising taxpayers that they should contact the local authority if they experience financial hardship. Information and budgeting tools should be made available on local authority and advice agency websites, via social media and at offices of relevant agencies. This is an opportunity for joint campaign work.

Recovery

If a council tax bill is not paid, then the local authority's recovery process comes into play. While local authorities strive to make early contact with a debtor, the first point of engagement by a debtor often only occurs when an enforcement agent visits the premises. Greater effort should be made at or before the Tribunal Courts and Enforcement Act's compliance stage, including debt and money advice referrals and to assess whether vulnerability or hardship applies, so as to avoid escalating a debt. Therefore:

1. Local authorities and enforcement agencies will ensure that documents produced by the local authority and agents acting on its behalf which are part of the enforcement process detail the rights and responsibilities of all parties, particularly those of the debtor.
2. Enforcement agents should provide the debtor with a contact number and email address should they wish to speak to the local authority.
3. Enforcement agents should only make charges in accordance with council tax collection and enforcement regulations, particularly the Tribunal Courts and Enforcement Act.
4. Local authorities should periodically review their corporate policy on debt and recovery, particularly what level of debt (inclusive of liability order fees) should have accrued before enforcement agent action, as enforcement will add additional costs to a debt.
5. As part of their corporate policy on debt and recovery, local authorities should have a process for dealing with cases that are identified as vulnerable, bearing in mind that different local authorities may have different definitions of a vulnerable person or household. Where a local authority's vulnerability criteria apply, In these cases, debts should be considered carefully before being passed to enforcement agencies. Where enforcement agents or other parties identify a vulnerable household, recovery action will be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Taking Control of Goods Act and having regard to the Taking Control of Goods National Standards.
6. Local authorities should regularly review and publish their policies which cover hardship, and in particular their Council Tax Support scheme.

7. Where a household is in receipt of Council Tax Support, the local authority should consider matters carefully and determine whether to pass such cases to enforcement agents, based on the individual circumstances of the case.
8. The debtor may have outstanding claims for Universal Credit, Council Tax Support or other benefit(s) which are contributing to their arrears. Local authorities can suspend recovery once it is established that a legitimate and relevant claim is pending. However, it should be acknowledged that delaying recovery could, in order to avoid two years instalments being due at the same time, result in higher instalment amounts once payments are due.
9. Local authorities and their enforcement agents should consider offering a 28 days hold or "breathing space" on enforcement action if debtors are seeking debt advice from an accredited advice provider. However, it should be acknowledged that delaying recovery could, in order to avoid two years instalments being due at the same time, result in higher instalment amounts once payments are due.
10. Procedures should exist for debt advisers to negotiate payments on behalf of the taxpayer at any point in the process, including when the debt has been passed to the enforcement agent. In some cases, the debtor may only contact an advice agency following a visit from the enforcement agent.
11. Local authorities and enforcement agents should consider accepting and using the Standard Financial Statement (SFS) or Common Financial Statement in assessing ability to pay as long as this is consistent with securing value for money for all council tax payers.
12. Each case should be examined on its merits and repayment arrangements need to be affordable and sustainable, while ensuring that the debt is paid off within a reasonable period. Where appropriate, local authorities should provide the flexibility to spread repayments over more than a year, including beyond the end of a financial year.
13. Local authorities should prioritise direct deduction from benefits or attachment of earnings in preference to using enforcement agents. This avoids extra debts being incurred by people who may already have substantial liabilities.
14. Clarity should be provided to the debtor and enforcement agency as to which debts are being paid off. Where appropriate, debts should be consolidated before being sent to enforcement agents.
15. Local authorities should publish a clear procedure for people to report complaints about all stages of recovery action. Local authorities will regularly monitor the performance (including complaints) of those recovering debts on their behalf and ensure that contractual and legal arrangements are met.

Free, confidential advice. Whoever you are.

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We value diversity, champion equality, and challenge discrimination and harassment.

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Published June 2017

Citizens Advice is an operating name of The National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux.

Registered charity number 279057.



REPORT TO	ON
CABINET	16 October 2019

TITLE	PORTFOLIO	REPORT OF
Council Tax Empty Properties & Second Homes Report	Cabinet Member for Community Engagement, Social Justice and Wealth Building	Director of Customer and Digital

Is this report a KEY DECISION (i.e. more than £100,000 or impacting on more than 2 Borough wards?)	Yes
Is this report on the Statutory Cabinet Forward Plan ?	Yes
Is the request outside the policy and budgetary framework and therefore subject to confirmation at full Council?	Yes
Is this report confidential?	No

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To inform Members on the proposed changes to the Council Tax Second Home discount and of the proposed changes to the Council Tax Long Term Empty Premium charge.
2. To outline proposals and gain approval to the removal of the Council Tax Second Home discount and increase the Council Tax Long Term Empty Premium charge (as below paragraph 5) with effect from 1 April 2020.
3. To gain approval for a new Council Tax Local Empty Discounts and Exemptions Policy (please see **Appendix A**).

PORTFOLIO RECOMMENDATIONS

4. That Cabinet supports the recommendation for Council to approve the proposed policy changes for the removal of the current 10% discount applied for Council Tax Second Homes.
5. That Cabinet supports the recommendation for Council to approve the proposed policy changes to increase the Council Tax Long Term Empty Premium charge from 1 April 2020 as shown below:-

Effective Date	Empty Period	Existing Premium	Proposed Premium
1 April 2020	2-5 years	50%	100%
	5 years+	50%	200%

1 April 2021	2-5 years	50%	100%
	5-10 years	50%	200%
	10 years+	50%	300%

6. That Cabinet supports the recommendation for Council to approve a new Council Tax Local Empty Discounts and Exemptions Policy to reflect the above changes (please see **Appendix A**)

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

7. The council implemented an Empty Home Policy in 2013. These changes are intended to complement and enhance this policy in returning long term empty properties back into use.
8. To make best use of the housing in the area by minimising the length of time it remains empty.
9. To raise additional Council Tax income that can be used to maintain services and help keep the overall level of Council Tax at an affordable level for all residents.
10. The proposed changes will maximise the incentive for owners of long term empty homes to bring their properties back into use and support work already undertaken by the Council to reduce the number of long term empty properties and make better use of existing housing in the borough.
11. It was approved at Cabinet in July 2019 that due to the proposed changes to the Council Tax Support scheme (CTSS) for 2020/21, the Council would explore other income opportunities associated with the Council Tax second homes and empty homes premium charges.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

12. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

Excellence and Financial Sustainability	X
Health and Wellbeing	
Place	

Projects relating to People in the Corporate Plan:

People	
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BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

13. The Government introduced technical reforms of council tax as part of the Local Government Resource Review. The Local Government Act 2003 introduced the ability to reduce the discount offered on Second Homes and furnished empty properties down from 50 to 10%. These changes were implemented by the council in 2004.
14. The Local Government Finance Act 2012 introduced further discretion for billing authorities to vary some of the existing council tax discounts and exemptions from the

1st April 2013. The Council decided initially not to implement these changes in 2013/14, but did so with effect from 1st April 2014. This included the provision to levy a premium of 50% upon Long Term Empty Properties where a period of 2 years has elapsed since the property was last occupied.

15. In July 2018 an amendment to the Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act has given local authorities powers from 1 April 2019 to charge greater Council Tax premiums on homes that have been empty and unfurnished for more than 2 years.

PROPOSALS

16. Second Homes

A second home is defined as a dwelling, which is no one's sole or main residence but which is furnished.

As at September 2019 the total number of second home properties is 134.

Currently a charge of 90% is applied (10% discount). A proposed charge of 100% will be applied for second homes (0% discount). The charge applies to all cases except where the legislation determines otherwise and in those cases (as follows) a charge of 50% will apply (rather than the proposed 100%):

- Dwellings which are furnished but unoccupied because the owner is liable to a Council Tax elsewhere in job-related accommodation;
- Empty but furnished dwellings of service personnel resident in accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence;
- If the dwelling is a caravan or houseboat; or
- Where members of the clergy are required to live in accommodation provided by their employer to perform the duties of their office.

17. Empty Homes Premium (Long Term empty dwellings >2 years)

A long term empty dwelling is one that has been vacant in excess of two years and as such is currently subject to an Empty Homes Premium of 50%, in addition to the 100% charge already levied in respect of empty premises.

As at September 2019 the total number of long term empty homes premium is 172 properties.

The main aim of the proposed change is to encourage owners to bring empty properties back into use quicker, at a time when there is an overall housing shortage and social housing waiting list. The Government considers that long term empty properties attract squatters, vandalism and anti-social behaviour, and are a blight on the community.

Liability for the Empty Homes Premium is determined by the length of time that the property has been empty. An individual who purchases a property, which has already been empty for two-years, may be required to pay the premium as soon as they take ownership. A period of occupation of over six weeks qualifies as a break in the empty period, 'resetting the clock' for the purposes of the Empty Homes Premium.

Two classes of property are exempt by statute from the Empty Homes Premium as detailed below:

- A dwelling which is the sole or main residence of a member of the armed forces, who is absent from the property as a result of such service.
- An annex deemed unoccupied because it is being treated by the occupier of the main dwelling as part of that main building.

18. Council Tax Local Empty Discounts and Exemptions Policy (including Discretionary Powers)

It is proposed that with the approval of the above recommendations to the changes in the charges, that a Council Tax Local Empty Discounts and Exemptions Policy also be

approved that provides full details of the changes. It is also proposed that contained within the policy is information relating to delegated authority to the director in consultation with the portfolio holder (please see Appendix A).

CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT AND OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION

19. A question regarding changes to Council Tax for second homes and empty premises has been built into the Council Tax Support Scheme 2020/21 Consultation.
20. There are no legislative requirements to undertake further consultation in relation to the proposals contained within this report. However members may wish officers to undertake further consultation recognising this may impact on the implementation of the proposed changes and require additional time and resources.
21. Any changes to these discounts will be formally advertised in accordance with the regulations. In addition all potentially affected charge payers will be contacted prior to the annual billing process in March 2020.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

22. An alternative option would be to leave the current Council Tax discount on for second homes and the premium at 50% on for homes that have been empty and unfurnished for more than 2 years. This option would mean the Council would not be using all available measures to incentivise long term empty property owners to bring their properties back into use or maximise any potential additional income.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

23. These changes will provide additional income for the council's Collection Fund. This would therefore benefit all participants of the collection fund (i.e. Lancashire County Council, Police authority, Fire authority and South Ribble Borough Council). The benefit is split in proportion of the Council Tax. Therefore, all but 12% of the benefit would be passed to the other precepting authorities. The estimated income in 2020/21 for the County Council is £104,504.29 and for SRBC the estimated income in 2020/21 is £16,946.64. Please see **Appendix B** for an estimated breakdown of income per authority for 2020/21. The formula used to determine the income involves adding the amended 2nd home figure (no discount) to the new premium figures (increase in >2yr & >5yr) minus the existing premium figure (50%), which gives a total additional revenue amount. It should be noted that if the proposed changes to the policy prove successful in encouraging more properties back into use, the revenue they raise will decline in future years.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

24. The Acts detailed in the report provide the framework to enable South Ribble Borough Council to implement these changes.
25. Under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) the Council, as the billing authority, may determine that the prescribed Council Tax discount shall not apply or shall be of a lesser percentage in relation to second homes and empty homes. The Council when varying or revoking a previous determination under Section 11A of the 1992 Act for a financial year, must do so before the beginning of the year. Any such determination must be published in at least one newspaper

circulating in its area before the end of twenty one days beginning on the date of the determination.

AIR QUALITY IMPLICATIONS

26. None

HUMAN RESOURCES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

27. Whilst the changes will result in additional Council Tax being charged, collection of monies due on empty properties has historically proven to be more challenging and resource intensive. The projected collection rates would be monitored and may need to be revised.

ICT/TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

28. Our existing software is already capable of processing and administering the relevant proposed changes.

PROPERTY AND ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

29. None.

RISK MANAGEMENT

30. The keys risks are managing the Councils reputation associated with the proposed changes and collection rates. Detailed risk assessment will be completed further to agreement to the proposed changes.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPACT

31. The relevant equality implications are ensuring the proposed changes do not have a detrimental impact on targeted groups. A detailed equality impact assessment will be completed further to agreement to the proposed changes.

RELEVANT DIRECTORS RECOMMENDATIONS

32. This report addresses the challenges for the council in relation to mitigating the risks associated with the changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme 2020/21 and bringing empty homes back in to use.

COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

33. As set out in the report, local authorities have been given powers to charge greater Council Tax premiums on homes that have been empty and unfurnished long-term. By applying these measures, the Council is encouraging property owners to bring these properties back into use. At the outset this will increase income and this has been modelled based on current data, although if the policy is successful then the additional income from charging these premiums will reduce over time. With regard to second homes, the removal of the 10% discount will also result in a further increase in income for the Council and the precepting authorities.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

34. There is a profusion of legislative provisions in this area. In particular the proposed premium for Long Term Empty properties is in line with the parameters set out in the Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act. As ever when exercising our discretion we must do so in a reasonable way – our decisions should be informed by proper reasoning. In this instance it is considered that what is proposed here is reasonable. Members may consider it desirable to carry out a consultation exercise on these proposals – this is a matter for them.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended)
Local Government Act 2003 (as amended)
Local Government Finance Act 2012 (as amended)
The Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012
Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018
South Ribble Borough Council's Empty Homes Policy
Cabinet 10th July 2019: Council Tax Support Scheme 2020/21 Consultation

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Council Tax Local Empty Homes Discounts and Exemptions Policy
Appendix B – 2020-21 Projected Additional Revenue

Paul Hussey
Director of Customer & Digital

Report Author:	Telephone:	Date:
Andrew Bamber Council Tax Team Leader	01772 625346	24/09/2019



South Ribble Borough Council

Council Tax Local Empty Discounts and Exemptions Policy

Introduction

The Local Government Finance Act 2012 amended the Local Government Finance Act 1992 allowing local discretion over the implementation of certain discounts in place of statutory exemptions and also allows for the use of premiums for certain long term empty premises. In July 2018 an amendment to the Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act has given local authorities powers from 1 April 2019 to charge greater Council Tax premiums on homes that have been empty and unfurnished for more than 2 years.

The intention of Central Government is to allow Councils the flexibility in raising additional Council Tax. In addition, Government is keen to ensure that premises do not remain unoccupied or unused for extensive periods and to encourage the maximum use of all available premises within Council areas.

Legislation

- The Local Government Finance Act 1992
- The Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended by The Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012; and
- The Council Tax (Exempt Dwellings) (England) (Amendment) Order 2012
- Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018

In addition to the above legislation, Central Government has provided a number of documents to assist local authorities in the implementation of the regulations:

- Technical Reforms of Council Tax - A consultation
- Technical Reforms for Council Tax - A summary of responses;
- Council Tax Information Letter: Council Tax - Definitions of Empty Homes and Second Homes;
- Council Tax - Empty Homes Premium - Guidance - for properties for sale and letting.

Purpose

South Ribble Borough Council (the Council) has approved the following changes to Council Tax exemptions, discounts, long term empty properties and second homes with effect from 1 April 2020 by:

- Removing the 10% discount on second homes (100% charge)
- Levying an increased additional premium on top of Council Tax due on properties that have been empty and unfurnished for at least two years, subject to any statutory or local exceptions

This policy sets out the factors that the Council will take into account when applying a discount, exemption or premium and deciding if any exception to charge of the premium can be granted. Each case will be treated strictly on its merits and all applicants will be treated equally and fairly through administration of the policy.

Council Tax charges in relation to Long Term Empty properties

Council Tax is charged at the full rate (100%) on all long term empty properties. In certain circumstances some dwellings will not be classed as being long term empty dwellings. The majority of these exemptions are determined by Central Government and Legislation.

Exempt Class	Type of Property	Period of Exemption	Class of Property after prescribed period
A (Former)	Property in need or undergoing major repairs	12 Months	Long Term Empty
B	Unoccupied, owned by a charity	6 Months	Long Term Empty
C (Former)	Empty and Unfurnished for up to 6 month	6 Months	Long Term Empty
D	Empty due to a person being in prison	Indefinite	N/A
E	Empty due to a person having gone to live in a care home	Indefinite	N/A
F	Council tax payer deceased	6 Months from Grant of Probate	Long Term Empty
G	Occupation prohibited by law	Indefinite	N/A
K	Dwelling left empty by a student	Indefinite	N/A
L	Unoccupied dwelling where a mortgagee is in possession	Indefinite	N/A
R	Caravan Pitches and Boat Moorings	Indefinite	N/A
W	Dependent Relative	Indefinite	N/A
H	Unoccupied dwelling held for a Minister of Religion	Indefinite	N/A
I	Person living elsewhere to receive personal care	Indefinite	N/A
J	Dwelling left empty by a person providing personal care	Indefinite	N/A
Q	Dwelling Left Empty by a Bankrupt	Indefinite	N/A

Second Homes

A second home is defined as a dwelling, which is no one's sole or main residence but which is furnished.

A charge of 100% is applied for second homes (0% discount). The charge applies to all cases except where the legislation determines otherwise and in those cases (as follows) a charge of 50% will apply (rather than the 100%):

- Dwellings which are furnished but unoccupied because the owner is liable to a Council Tax elsewhere in job-related accommodation;
- Empty but furnished dwellings of service personnel resident in accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence;
- If the dwelling is a caravan or houseboat; or
- Where members of the clergy are required to live in accommodation provided by their employer to perform the duties of their office.

Council Tax Premium

A premium is charged for empty homes once a property has been empty for a period of two years and where the property is classed as a long term empty property. The follow types of property are excluded from these provisions:

- A dwelling which is the sole or main residence of a member of the armed forces who is absent due to service
- An annex treated as part of the main dwelling

The premium charges that apply are:

Effective Date	Empty Period	Premium	Total Charge
1 April 2020	2-5 years	100%	200%
	5 years+	200%	300%
1 April 2021	2-5 years	100%	200%
	5-10 years	200%	300%
	10 years+	300%	400%

Local Exceptions to the Council Tax Premium

The Council will consider waiving the Council Tax Premium for applicants who meet the qualifying criteria as specified in this policy. The Council will treat all applications on their individual merits, and will seek through the operation of this policy to grant exceptions to additional charge for the Council Tax Premium:

- For those owners who are genuinely attempting to sell or let their property which has been vacant for at least two years
- For those owners who are experiencing exceptional and/or unforeseen circumstances, and/or particular legal or technical issues which is preventing the sale or letting of the property
- Those owners who are in negotiation with the Council with a genuine view to letting the property under the Council's scheme(s).
- Cases where imposition of the Council Tax Premium would result in hardship and a reasonable person would regard the imposition as unfair.

Claiming a Local Exception to the Council Tax Premium

A claim must be made in writing to the Council and signed by the owner of the vacant property or their representative. The claimant must include any relevant supporting evidence.

A Council Officer may make an appointment to visit any applicant who for whatever reason is unable to confirm the details provided, which may necessitate being given access to the premises.

The Council may request any (reasonable) evidence in support of an application but the applicant will be asked to provide the evidence within one month of such a request although this will be extended in appropriate circumstances.

If the claimant is unable to, or does not provide the required evidence, the Council may still consider the application and will take into account any other available evidence including that held at the time on Council Tax records.

The Council reserves the right to verify any information or evidence provided by the applicant.

Payment of Council Tax (including the premium) may not be withheld whilst awaiting the outcome of an application or the review of a previous decision.

Period of Exception

In all cases, the Council will decide the length of time for which an exception will be awarded on the basis of the evidence supplied and the facts known.

The start date of an exception will normally be the date the application is received by the Council providing the Council is satisfied the reasons for the exception existed at that time and the exception will continue for a period of twelve months subject to those circumstances continuing.

The Council will at least annually review the award and request confirmation that the circumstances leading to the award of the exception remain applicable.

The Council will comply with any regulations issued by the Secretary of State in relation to any application and have regard to any related national policy guidance.

Awarding an Exception to the Council Tax Premium

In deciding whether to award an exception to payment of the Council Tax Premium, the Council will take into account the following criteria:

- Owners who are genuinely attempting to sell or let their property which has been vacant for at least two years:
 - Has professional advice and assistance been obtained?
 - It is expected that when a property has been vacant for two years a professional agent with specialist knowledge of the locality will have been engaged.
 - Have any offers to purchase or rent the property been received? If Yes – why were those offers refused?
 - Written confirmation of the reasons for refusal will be required from a professional agent
 - Is the sale price or rental in line with recent sale or rental prices for similar properties in the locality?
 - If no does this property have special features that reasonably warrants a higher value or rent?
 - Has the property been put up for sale by public auction?

- Cases where the dwelling has remained empty beyond a two year period due to exceptional and /or unforeseen circumstances and/or occasionally any other circumstances, proven to be beyond the control of the owner:

- Are the circumstances exceptional or unforeseen?
 - Is there a legal difficulty or issue which is preventing the sale or letting of the property?
 - A solicitor's or legal conveyancer's letter should be produced in evidence, detailing the reasons preventing sale or letting.
 - Is a sale or letting being delayed by the actions of a public body?
 - Full details must be provided, decision to be based on evidence
- Owners who are in negotiation with the Council with a genuine view to letting the property under the Council's Empty Homes policy:
 - Has there been a genuine expression of interest in transferring management of a property via the Council with a view to letting the property to local people with housing needs?
 - The Council's Housing Officer will be asked to confirm details of the expression.
 - The exception would only be applied from the date of signing the approval notice.
- Cases where imposition of the Council Tax Premium would result in hardship and a reasonable person would regard the imposition as unfair.
 - Will imposition of the Council Tax Premium result in the owner suffering hardship?
 - Granting an exception under this criterion is likely to be the exception rather than the rule as it is expected the majority of exceptions will have been granted under earlier criteria.

Changes of Circumstances

The Council may need to revise the decision to grant an exception to the premium if it becomes aware that the circumstances of an applicant have materially changed. Individuals must immediately advise the Council of any change in circumstances affecting the decision.

Notification

The Council will inform the applicant in writing of the outcome of their application within 28 days of receipt, or as soon as possible after. Where the application is unsuccessful, the Council will set out the reasons why this decision was made and explain the right of review.

The right to seek a review

As the exceptions to the premium in this policy are determined locally, any decisions are not subject to a statutory appeals mechanism. The Council will therefore operate its own procedures for dealing with appeals against a refusal to award an exception to the premium.

An applicant (or their appointee or agent) who disagrees with a decision not to award an exception may dispute the decision. A request for a review must be made in writing to the Revenues department within one calendar month of the written decision being issued.

A Revenues officer will review all the evidence held and may ask for further clarification to be provided. A decision will be made within 28 days of the request for a review. The decision will be notified to the claimant in writing, setting out the reasons for the decision.

Where the claimant is still not satisfied, they will be entitled to a further review, provided this is delivered in writing within one calendar month of the date on the decision letter giving reasons for the further review sent by the Revenues officer. This review will be carried out by a Director or Assistant Director of the Council. The decision made following the further review will be notified in writing within 28 days of the request for the review.

Policy effective from 1 April 2020.

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2020/21 2nd Home Discount %
 2020/21 2nd Home Discount Revenue

0%
£12,069.36

2020/21 Premium >2 yrs %
 Long Term Empty Premium Revenue

100%
£90,998.02

2020/21 Premium >5 yrs %
 Long Term Empty Premium Revenue

200%
£129,337.04

Discount Collection Rate
 Premium Collection Rate

98%	£11,767.63
98%	£214,826.68

Existing Long Term Empty Premium %
 Existing Long Term Empty Premium Revenue

50%
£85,372.30

Total Additional Revenue

£141,222.01

County	Police	Fire	SRBC
£104,504.29	£14,122.20	£5,648.88	£16,946.64
74%	10%	4%	12%

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