

Poynton



Cheshire East Town Centre Vitality Plans

December 2022



Prepared by Cushman and Wakefield,
Optimised Environments and Mott
Macdonald for Cheshire East Council

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Context of the Study

Town centres across the UK are facing unprecedented challenges. Changes in how we shop, in particular the growth in internet shopping, has significantly decreased footfall in town centres resulting in numerous store closures, leaving many centres struggling. Trends that have only been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Government has stated its commitment to helping high streets and town centres evolve and adapt to both the structural changes that are occurring in the retail market as well as to COVID-19. It has identified a number of measures to support town centres at this challenging time including the Future High Streets Fund, a High Streets Task Force, changes to the planning system and direct support to local authorities and local businesses. Alongside these national measures the government has stressed the need for strong local leadership in supporting town centres.

Town Centre Vitality Plans

Cheshire East Council (CEC) is committed to supporting the vitality and viability of all town centres within the borough. Whilst acknowledging that in areas of low deprivation, there may be limited opportunity to bid for centralised funding. When funding opportunities do become available, there is generally a need to have clear proposals already agreed before bids can be submitted.

It is also recognised that there are often initiatives which can be taken to support the vitality and viability of local centres which do not require significant capital funding, but rather require the support of local volunteers and/or businesses.

In addition, the reports could be used to support discussions regarding the allocation of S106 monies resulting from development within and in the vicinity of the local centres.

With an almost overwhelming array of options and opinions on what is the best way to support town centre vitality and viability, CEC has commissioned Cushman & Wakefield (regeneration and property advisors), supported by Optimised Environments (urban designers) and Mott Macdonald (transport planners), to work with the Town Council’s and their stakeholders to produce bespoke Town Centre Vitality Plans (TCVP) for the nine Key Service Centres (KSC):



The 9 Key Service Centres which form part of this study

Aims and Objectives

The TCVP provides a sense of direction and identify initiatives to support the nine key service centres to better fulfil their potential recognising that each centre is distinct, with its own unique opportunities and specific challenges and local groups/stakeholders. The unique characteristics of each centre will be identified along with tailored solutions for each.

They

- **Are bespoke in nature, based on a thorough analysis of individual circumstances affecting the health of each town centre, local stakeholder views and any local specific policy considerations.**
- **Are cross functional and holistic, with scope to recommend a practical and realistic set of priority actions for supporting the vitality and viability of each town centre.**
- **Are informed and tested by existing relevant national and local public policy and strategies, local stakeholder views, relevant research and a thorough understanding of commercial markets and spatial considerations.**
- **Identify a set of recommended clear priority physical and other (e.g. marketing) interventions/actions to support the vitality and viability of each town centre both in recovery from COVID-19 impacts and beyond to enhancement.**
- **Recommend deliverable actions including who should be involved in delivering of each action identified, to enable Town Councils, community groups, occupiers, property owners etc., to all work towards a common vision.**
- **Take account of proposals developed/being developed by Town Councils and develop such plans further.**

Responding to the Impacts of COVID

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, high streets and town centres were having to respond to changing consumer demands driven in part by technological changes. Many recognised the increasing importance of the consumer experience - an attractive place to dwell, shop, see friends, to eat out and be entertained. COVID-19 has led to an acceleration of changes to the reasons people visit and use local centres.

COVID-19 has not and will not be universally negative for all local centres. The requirement to stay local has supported residents to use their local facilities and where the local offer aligns with the demands of residents, local businesses have benefited. The need to work from home has also resulted in an re-evaluation of where we work going forward and it is anticipated that there has been a fundamental shift, for some, in the balance between the amount of time we spend in an office and the amount of time we work from home.

It will be some time before a clear picture emerges of the impact of new forms of working (a hybrid between office and home) have on our high streets in the longer-term. The impact will be felt differently from place to place depending on the local economy's dependency on particular sectors. It is likely that those centres that perform best

going forward will be those able to reconnect with their communities and use them to meet local needs including access to housing, culture, leisure, health etc.

The Town Centre Vitality Plans have been prepared post the outbreak of COVID-19. The impact of COVID-19 on each of the centres has been different. The bespoke Vitality Plans provide an action plan to support recovery and future success.

Vitality Plan and Toolkit

This report builds upon the Draft Baseline Report (which was a summary of the key stages undertaken in 2020 – see below) and incorporates potential actions which have been identified in consultation with local stakeholders during 2021 to form a bespoke Vitality Plan for Poynton.

The Vitality Report comprises of two sections:

- Baseline – which was undertaken in 2020 and describes the Centre in terms of its offer and key characteristics. It brings together evidence and opinion in respect of the buildings, green and open spaces, access and its residents and businesses.

- Action Plan – has been prepared in collaboration with the Town Council and identifies actions which seek to support the established Vision and Objectives for the Centre responding to its challenges and opportunities. It sets out a series of actions, identifying a small number of priorities for intervention which will have the greatest impact on improving the vitality of the Centre.

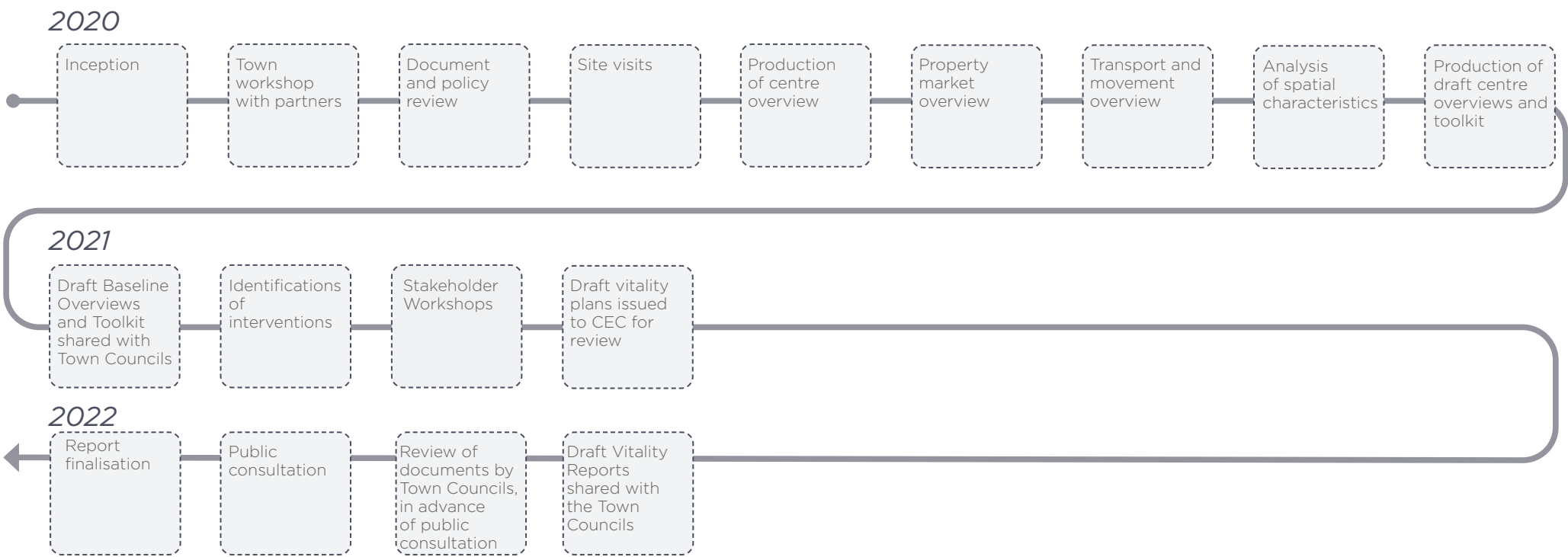
The draft TCVPs went to public consultation for six weeks from September 2022. Feedback was reviewed and where appropriate amendments have been made to the final report. A summary of other key messages have been shared key stakeholders.

The Action Plan should be read in conjunction with the Toolkit. The Toolkit presents exemplar projects from other centres (including from within Cheshire East) nationally and internationally to assist key stakeholders to determine a set of actions to support their centres to thrive.

There is not a pot of money available to support the delivery of the Vitality Plan. Rather the Vitality Plan has been prepared as a resource to support accessing funding.

Approach

The preparation of the Vitality Plans has involved the following stages:



Baseline

Note:
The Baseline analysis was undertaken in 2020. The information in the Baseline was correct and the sources were the most update at that time. It is recognised that in some cases more up to date information is available whilst it is not possible to keep updating all the evidence where a significant change has happened it is recognised. It should also be noted that Census 2011 data is provided for some indicators. Whilst the 2021 Census has just been completed, a release of this data will not be made available until March 2023 therefore the 2011 Census is the most recent consistent data source across the 9 centres for some key indicators.

02 Introduction to Poynton

Poynton Location within Cheshire East

Poynton is located in the North East of Cheshire East, 5 miles south of Stockport and 13 miles south of Manchester City Centre and lies just outside the boundary of Greater Manchester. Manchester Airport is located 6 miles to the east, with strong road connectivity to the M56 via the A555 and the A523 passing through the town, connecting it to Macclesfield, Stockport and Manchester. Poynton train station is located on the Northern line and operates local hourly services northbound to Manchester and southbound to Stoke-on-Trent. (See Strategic Context Plan)

Poynton is a small centre, with a village feel, set within the Green Belt on the edge of the Peak District. The town centre accommodates just over 100 units primarily located on Park Lane London Road South, Queensway and School Lane. The town boasts a strong convenience sector offering, anchored by Waitrose and Aldi, along with a small Morrisons and choice of independent stores including bakers, butchers and delis. There is a range of national operators including Boots and WH Smith as well as independents within the comparison goods sector.

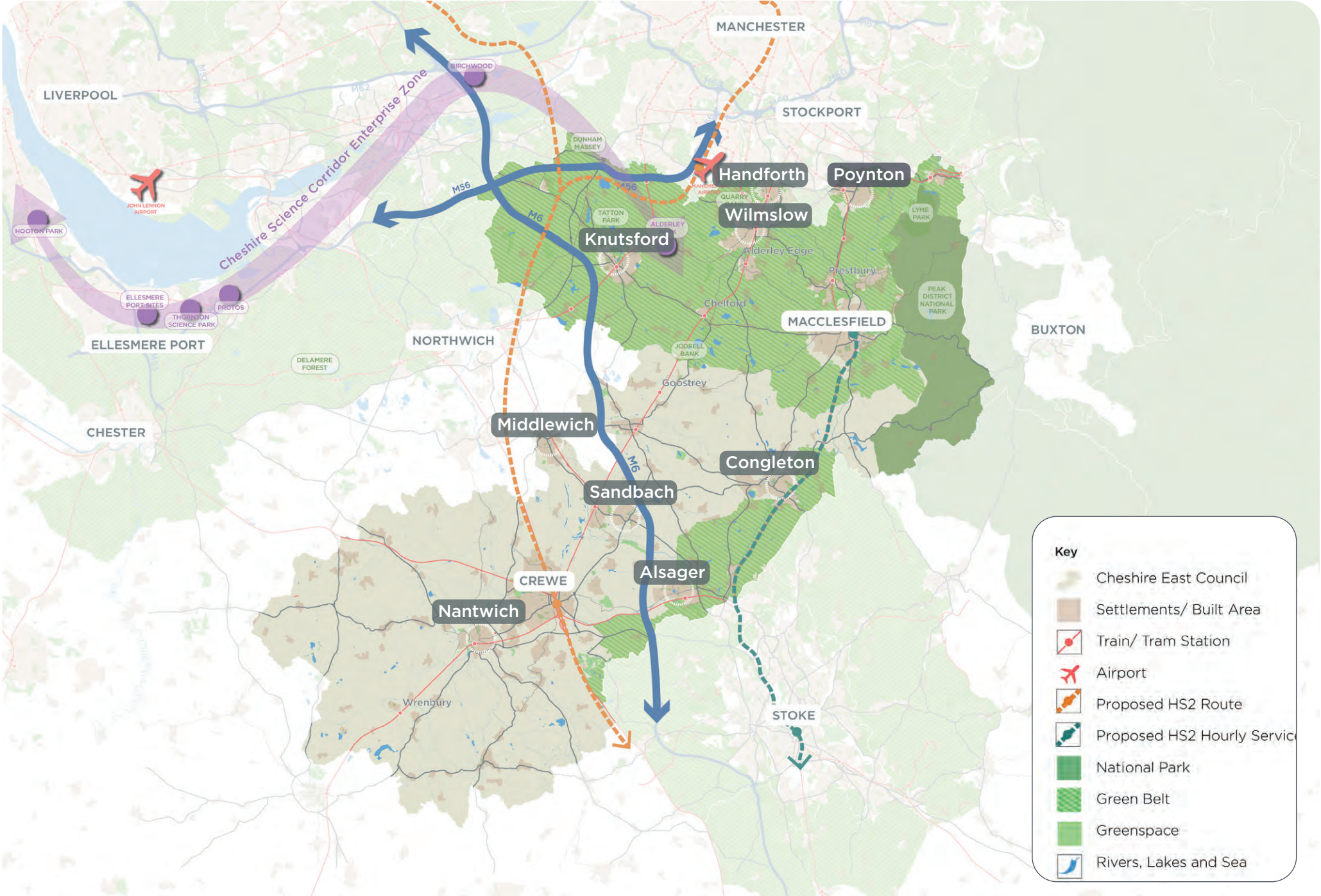
Poynton's good evening economy and high-quality environment also add to the attractiveness of the town centre. The Civic Hall located behind Waitrose is a focal point for classes and events and helps to bring locals and visitors into the town in the evenings and weekends, extending the town's offering.

The strength of Poynton's convenience sector offering, along with the mix of national and independent retailers aligned with catchment population of affluent professionals should mean that Poynton remains a viable town centre, despite the challenges facing high streets. This has been demonstrated by a year on year uplift in footfall of almost 20% since December 2019 demonstrating that during lockdown the centre has benefited from advice to stay local. Coming out of lockdown, it is anticipated that more people will choose to work from home some of the time which will support the vitality of Poynton.

Being located on the border of Greater Manchester means it is well located to access a wide range of employment opportunities. As such Poynton is a predominantly commuter town with only a small internal employment provision.

Poynton has a strong reputation as an attractive residential location, set within open countryside, but within commuting distance to employments opportunities in Greater Manchester and Cheshire. Its housing offer is dominated by family homes, having the highest proportion of detached homes in Cheshire East, and the second highest proportion of semi-detached homes – these make up 80% of the housing stock. Average house prices are just under £400,000 making it one of the more expensive towns in Cheshire.

Strategic Context Plan



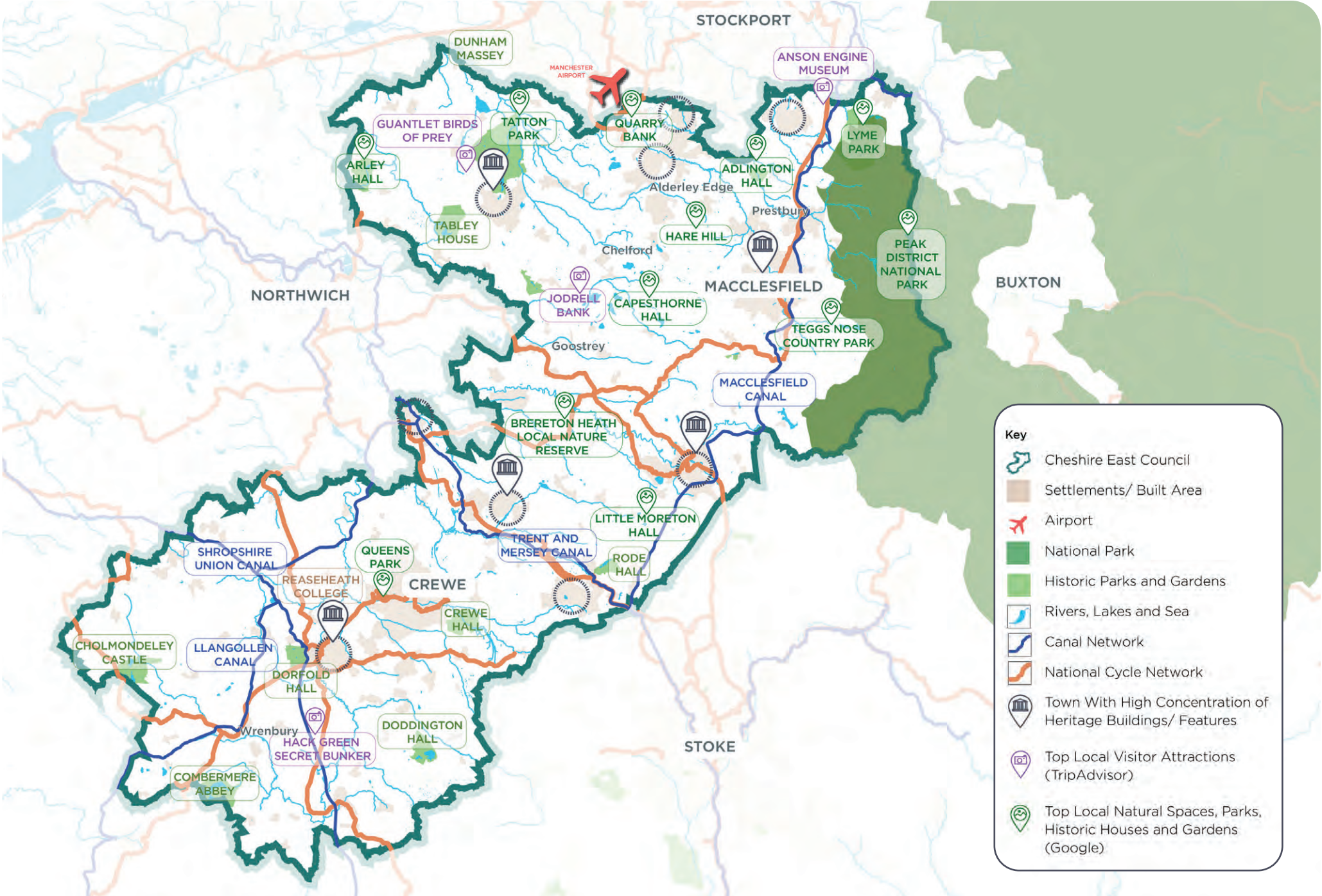
02 Introduction to Poynton

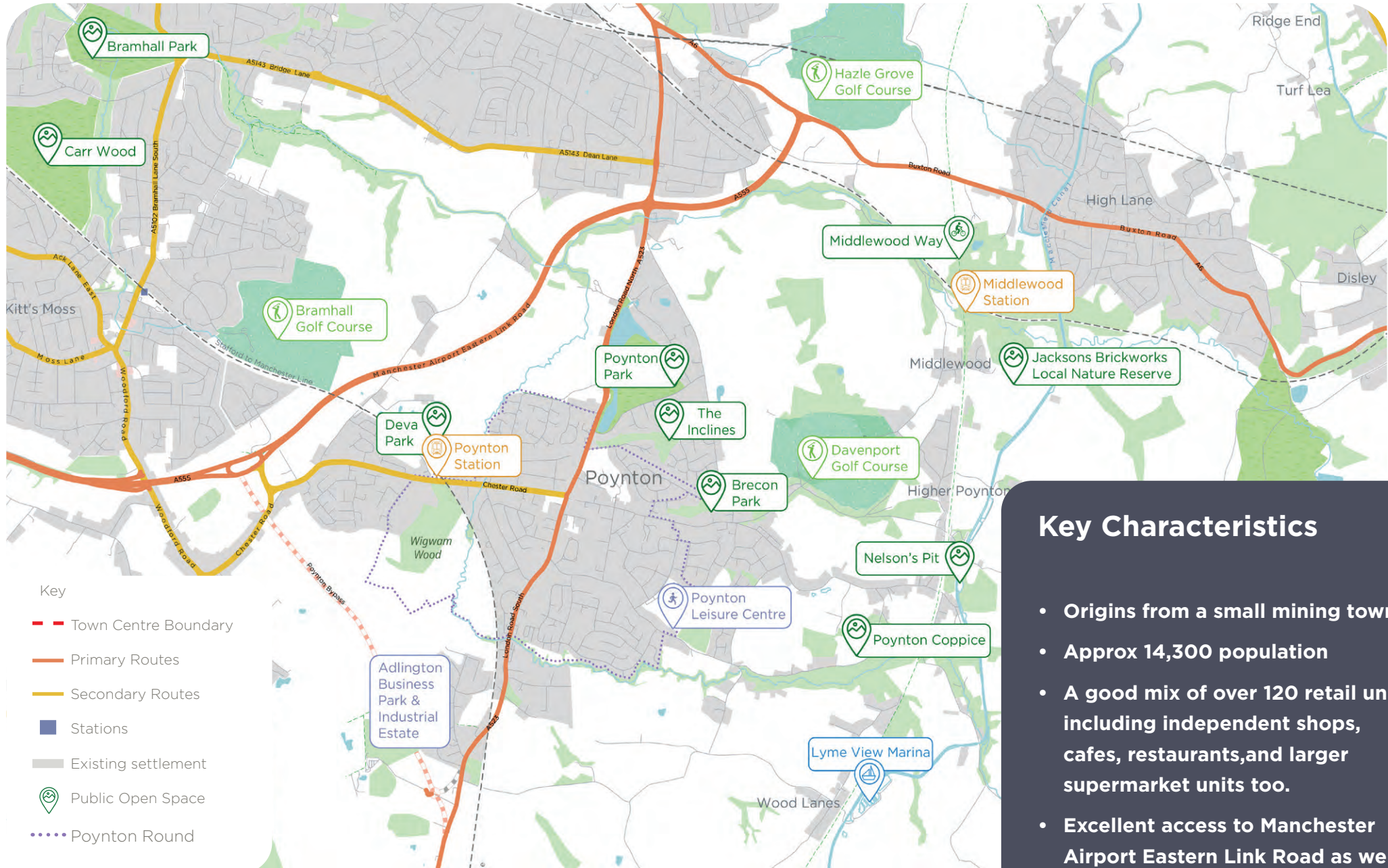
As well as providing access to countryside, Poynton has a range of attractive green space close to the centre. This includes Deva Park, Poynton Park, Brecon Park and a major wildlife corridor tracks the course of Poynton Brook incorporating land of high and medium distinctiveness along its banks and links to Middlewood Way used by walkers, cyclists and horse riders .Poynton also offers access to Lyme Park and the Peak District National Park (see Strategic Connections and Assets Plan).

The centre has benefited from strategic infrastructure investment - Airport Link Road and the Poynton Relief Road (which is currently under construction) and public realm improvements. The Town Council is lobbying for further improvements to cycling and walking networks across the town to improve sustainable active travel.



Strategic Connections and Assets Plan





Key Characteristics

- **Origins from a small mining town**
- **Approx 14,300 population**
- **A good mix of over 120 retail units including independent shops, cafes, restaurants, and larger supermarket units too.**
- **Excellent access to Manchester Airport Eastern Link Road as well as Manchester Airport**

Poynton Neighbourhood Plan Vision and Objectives.

Poynton Town Council is proactive and initiated the preparation of the Poynton Neighbourhood Plan. It sets out the Vision and Objectives for the Town.

Vision

Over the next 15 to 20 years Poynton will evolve and develop in a way that respects and reflects the views of its community. Development will be of a high quality, sustainable and matched by the provision of infrastructure and services. Poynton will retain its character and heritage as ‘a small town with a village feel’, bounded on all sides by the Green Belt.

The wide range of community activities and mix of businesses will expand and prosper within attractive surroundings. Current and future generations will enjoy a strong and inclusive sense of community, good access within Poynton and to neighbouring towns and villages, and a positive sense of wellbeing in a flourishing natural environment. Poynton will be a healthy, happy and fulfilling place to live, which the residents will be proud to call home.

Objectives

For the Environment

- To preserve and enhance the distinctive character of Poynton which is achieved by the role of Green Belt in maintaining an open buffer between Poynton and surrounding towns, by protecting the surrounding countryside from development, by ensuring that built development is concentrated in the town and by protecting key views from and within Poynton.
- To protect and enhance Poynton's green spaces, its natural and built environment, its heritage assets and its landscapes, so as to provide for and improve the lives of the local community.

For Housing

- To enable and support sustainable development which is appropriate for the future needs of Poynton's community and age groups, whilst ensuring all development is sympathetic to the protection of the Green Belt and the preservation of the village atmosphere. By so doing this will maintain Poynton as a vibrant and aspirational place to live and work.

For Transport

- To improve access, supported and encouraged through the provision and enhancement of safe and secure walking, cycling and mobility scooter/ wheelchair routes in and around Poynton.
- To improve rail infrastructure and rail and bus services in order to help reduce car use.

For the Town Centre and Business

- To achieve a distinct identity and 'village feel' for Poynton through management of all of the aspects of the town centre (including property, architecture, streetscape and traffic).
- To develop community land and buildings (for health, recreation, adult education etc) through the allocation of land and cooperation with relevant organisations;
- To support businesses and employment in Poynton through policies for property use and for the comprehensive provision of high speed broadband.

For Health & Wellbeing

- To provide an environment which is clean and healthy; an infrastructure which supports walking, cycling and access to green spaces and the countryside; a healthy lifestyle encouraged by the provision of recreational exercise, sports and swimming facilities; outstanding education and learning; and a comprehensive healthcare provision for all age groups in the community.



03 Policy Context

Local Policy

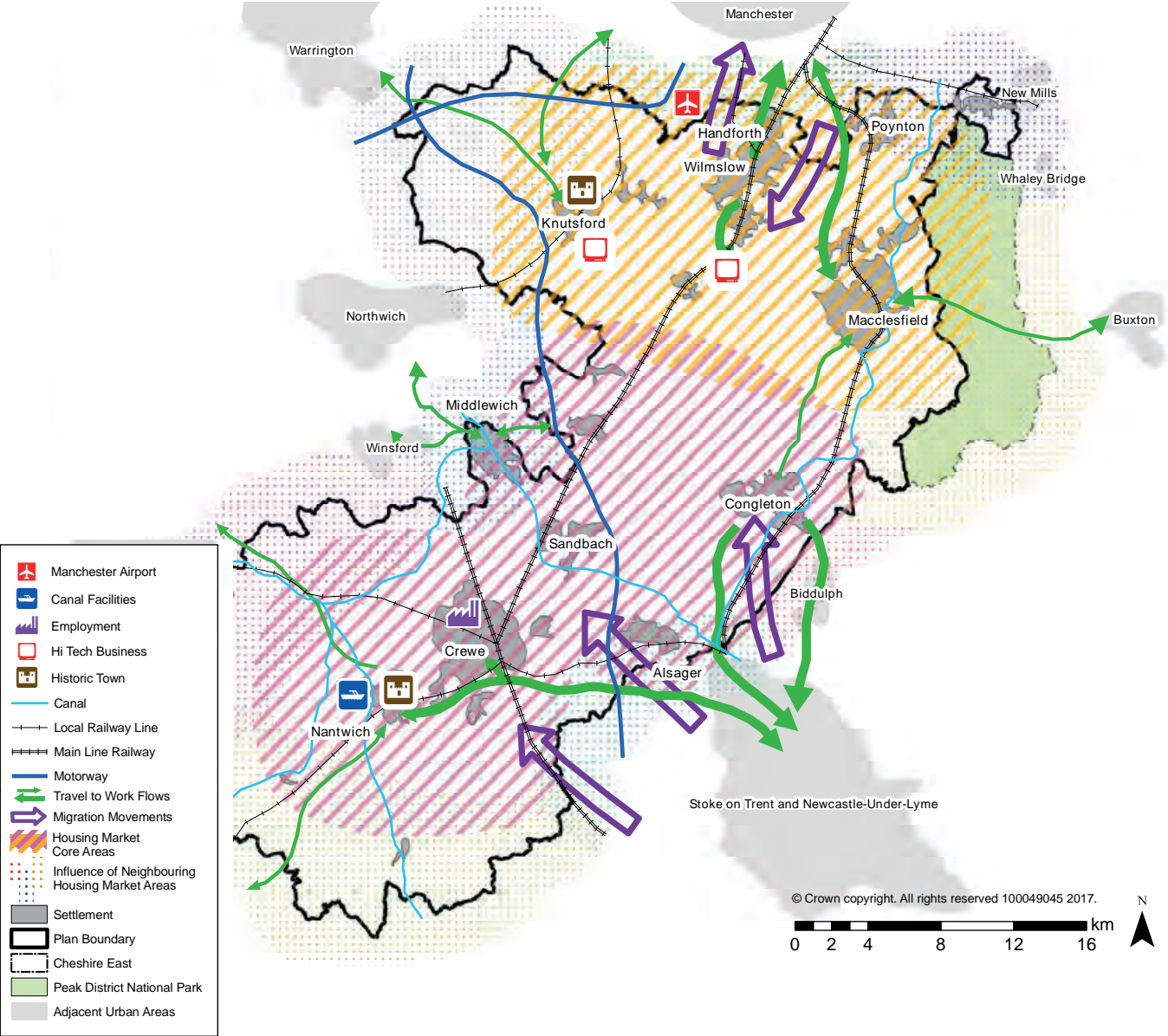
The plan opposite identifies the functional relationship that Poynton has with other centres.

Located in the north east of the Borough the centre, whilst set within open countryside, is close to employment opportunities including Manchester City Centre and Stockport. Its connectivity has been enhanced by the Airport Link Road and Manchester Airport is 7 miles to the west.

Local Plan Strategy 2017 (LPS) and Revised Publication Draft Site Allocations and Development Policies Document (SADPD) 2020

The Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy was adopted in 2017 setting strategic development sites around the borough.

SADPD will form the second part of the Local Plan, supporting the policies and proposals in the LPS by providing additional non-strategic policy detail and allocating additional sites to assist in meeting the overall development requirements set out in the LPS.



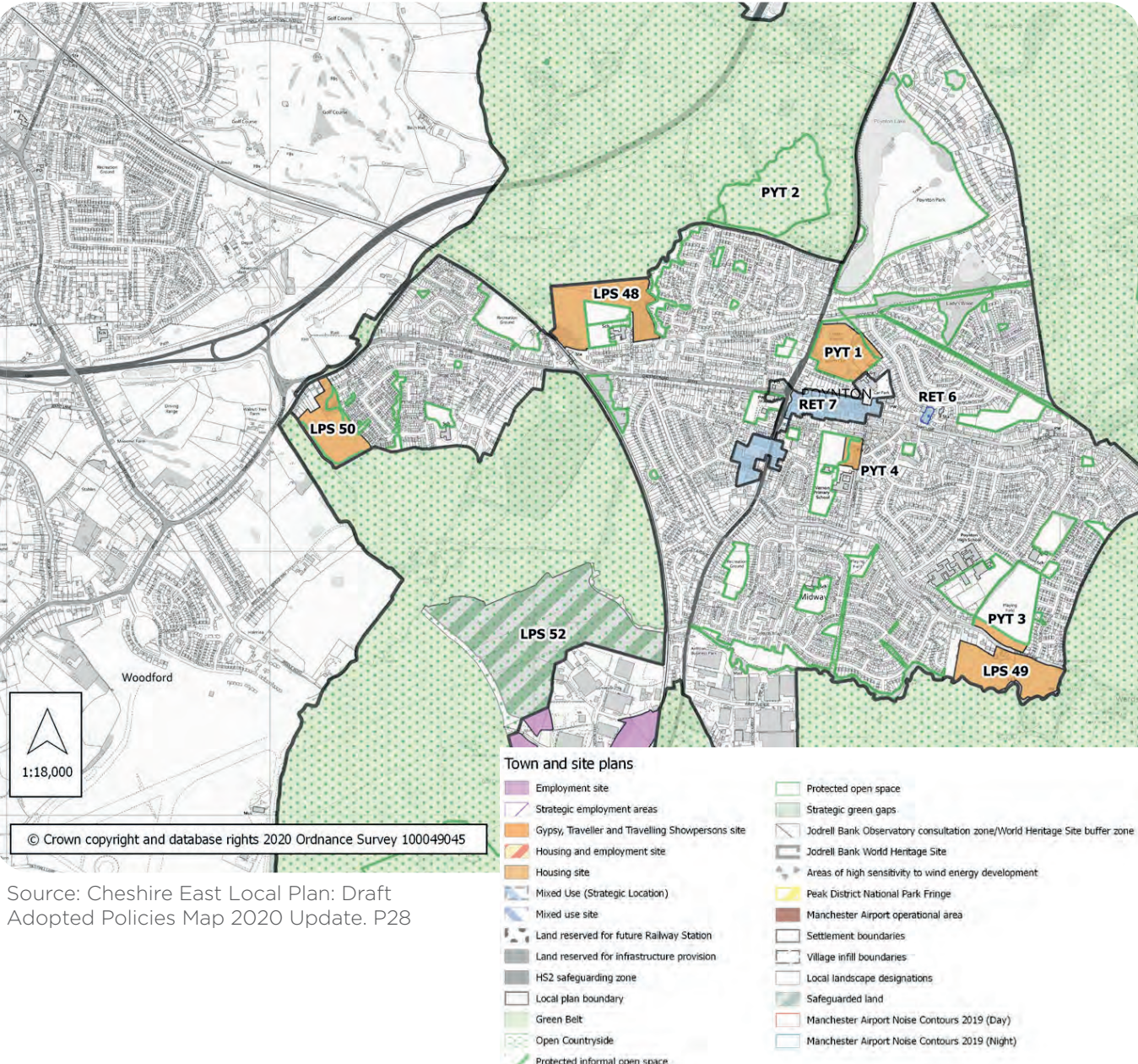
The plan opposite identifies both Local Plan Strategy sites in and around Poynton and draft allocations in the SADPD.

These include:

- Site LPS 48 ‘Land adjacent to Hazelbadge Road, Poynton’
- Site LPS 49 ‘Land at Sprink Farm, Poynton’
- Site LPS 50 ‘Land south of Chester Road, Poynton’
- Site LPS 51 ‘Adlington Business Park Extension, Poynton’
- Safeguarded Land LPS 52 ‘Woodford Aerodrome, Poynton’
- Safeguarded Land LPS 52 ‘Woodford Aerodrome, Poynton’ (22 hectares)
- RET 7 ‘Supporting the vitality of town and retail centres’ which identifies town centre locations for main town centre uses to support their long term vitality and viability, in line with LPS Policy EG 5 ‘Promoting a town centre first approach to retail and commerce’.

Draft allocations close to the Town Centre:

- PYT1 : 80 homes on site of Sports Centre
- PYT 4: 50 homes at former Vernon Infant School



Source: Cheshire East Local Plan: Draft Adopted Policies Map 2020 Update. P28

Poynton Neighbourhood Plan
January (2019)

In 2013 Poynton Town Council began to develop the Neighbourhood Plan, with the aim of informing development in Poynton until 2030. The Plan was prepared by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group supported by a wider group of volunteers. The Plan period is from 2016 until 2030. The referendum was held in October 2019 and received resounding support from voters with 88% of people who voted, voting yes to the Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan was made in November 2019.

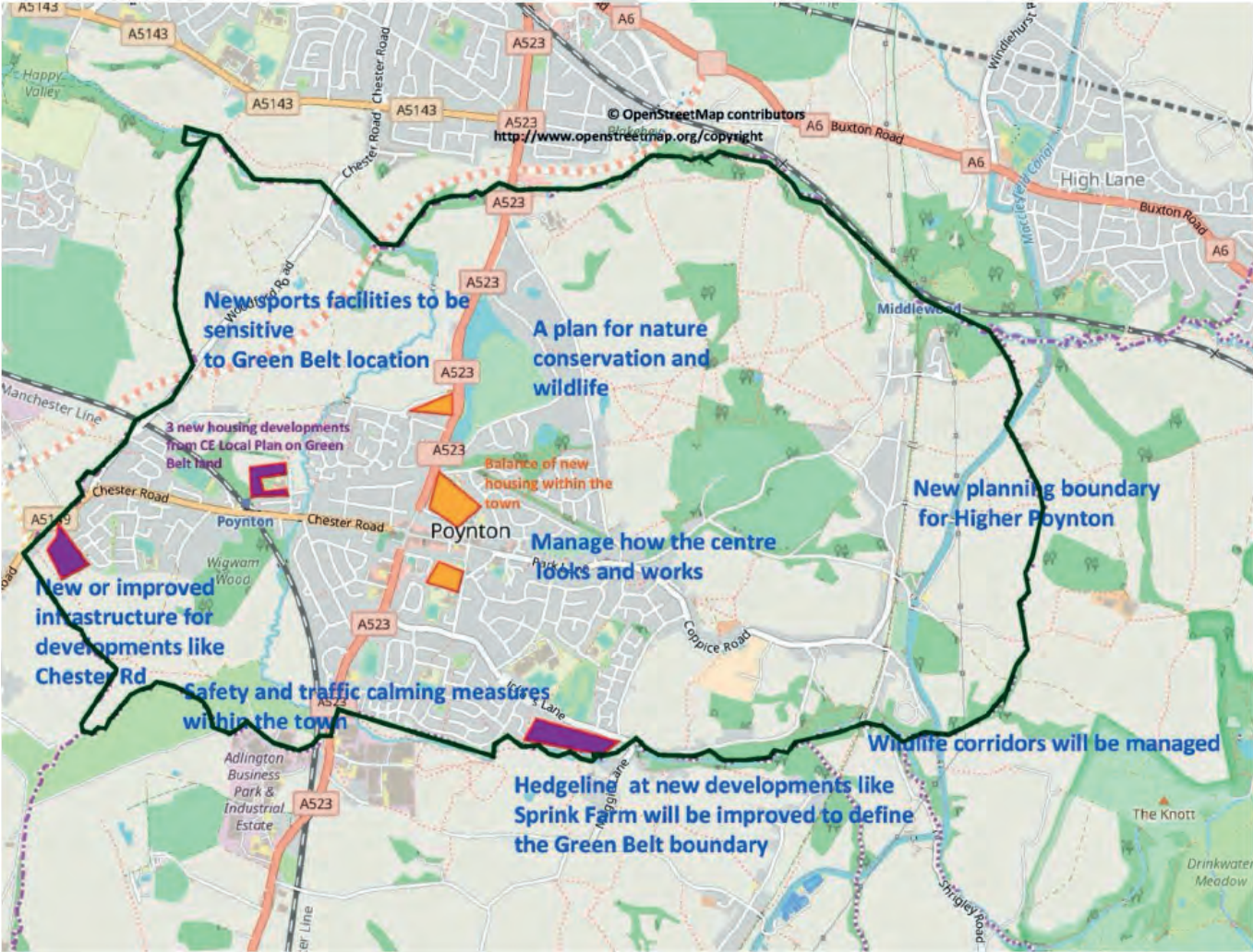
The following key issues were identified which the Plan needed to address:

- Acknowledging the town’s status as a town inset in the North Cheshire Green Belt and surrounded by countryside on all sides;
- Balancing that long-standing planning policy against the other changing national and regional factors influencing where people should live and work;
- Responding to the changing highway network partly under construction (the A6MARR) and partly still yet to be built in the form of the Poynton Relief Road;
- Aligning plans at different spatial scales for Poynton with current national planning guidelines dating from 2011 to enable a plan-led approach to new development to be achieved;
- Preparing a Neighbourhood Plan alongside the Cheshire East Local Plan, July 2017, which takes a strategic overview of the function of all the main settlements within the Borough;

- Meeting the challenge and impact of the additional infrastructure, services and facilities in Poynton as the nearest town to the redevelopment of the former Woodford Aerodrome for nearly 1,000 homes;
- Reviewing the successful Shared Space zone within the town centre so that other parts of the town may benefit from this approach to an improved retail environment, to respond to high levels of traffic and improve pedestrian access and safety.

In response to these issues the Neighbourhood Plan sought to:

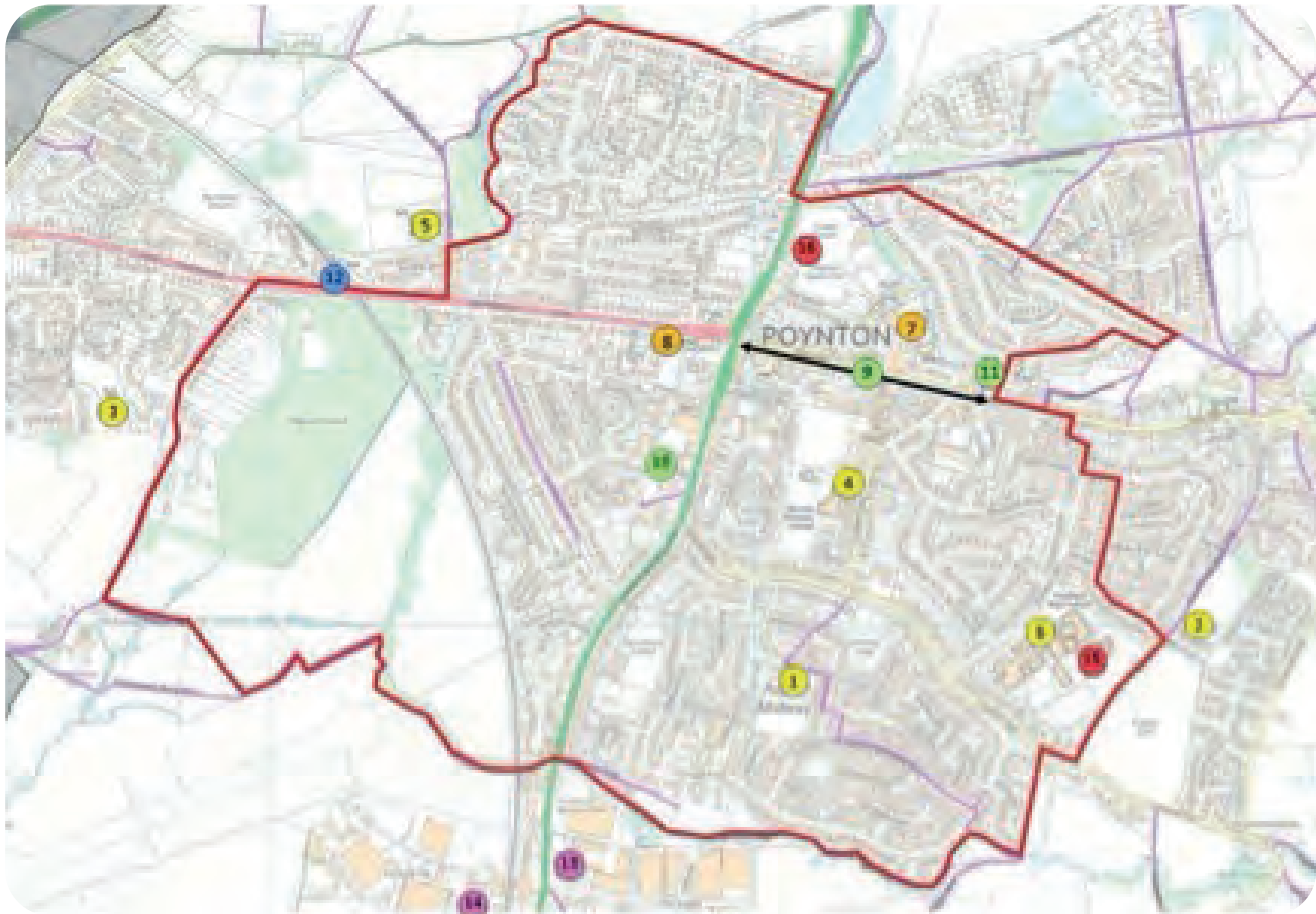
- Set out a vision for the future of the town;
- Seek to preserve and enhance the range of uses likely to be of benefit to the local community;
- Seek to retain the character of the town as one surrounded by countryside and defined as Green Belt;
- Identify land which may be used to meet the housing needs of the town;
- Designate and protect the green spaces within and around the town which would be protected from development;
- Seek to preserve and enhance the quality of the built and natural environment of Poynton;
- Widen opportunities for sustainable transport within the town following the completion of planned road schemes;
- Support appropriate development within the town centre as the heart of the community.



Source: Poynton Neighbourhood Plan 2019, page 13

Poynton’s Accessibility Masterplan - The Poynton Round (March 2021)

Poynton Town Council recognises the importance of sustainable, active travel. The accessibility masterplan identifies short, medium and long-term solutions and projects which engage and work with partners and community stakeholders. The aim of Poynton’s Accessibility Masterplan is to provide increased opportunities for residents to make their way around the town more easily by walking, cycling or jogging. The masterplan identifies a number of discreet infrastructure projects which promote Active Travel principles and offers realistic, sustainable alternatives for community and commuting routes for leisure and work-related purposes with reduced reliance on car use.



1. St. Paul's Catholic Primary School	9. Shops on Park Lane
2. Worth Primary School	10. Shops at Queensway
3. Lostock Hall Primary School	11. Shops at School Lane
4. Vernon Primary School	12. Poynton Train Station
5. Lower Park Primary School	13. Poynton Industrial Estate
6. Poynton High School	14. Adlington Industrial Estate
7. Poynton Civic Centre (Priorslegh Medical Practice, Poynton Civic Hall, Library)	15. Poynton Leisure Centre
8. McIlwade Medical Practice	16. Poynton Sports Club

Accessible Poynton. Source: Poynton’s Accessibility Masterplan The ‘Poynton Round’

It identifies the following objectives:

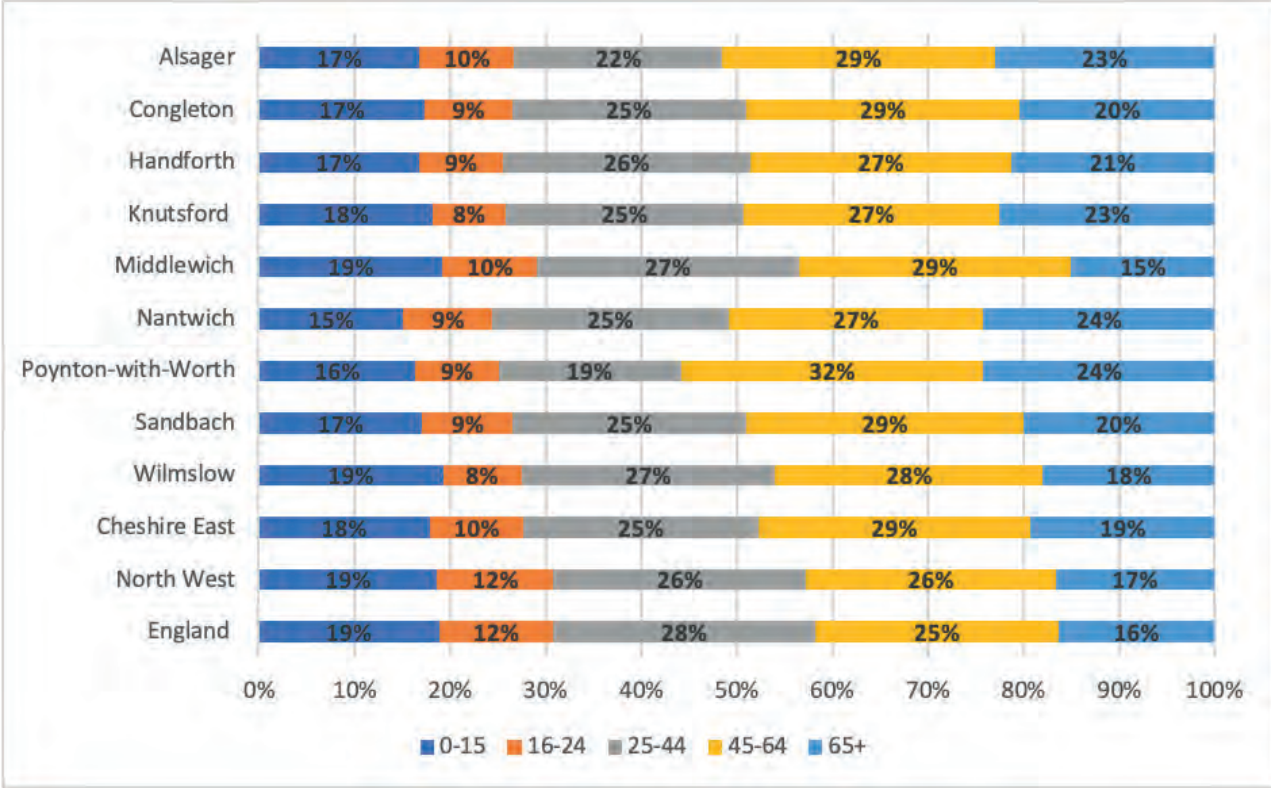
- Improve physical activity levels creating a more active and healthier population
- Encourage developers to ensure future housing developments are integrated into existing infrastructure and create new infrastructure where it doesn’t exist to meet the needs of an active community
- Reduce car dependency
- Better connect key community hubs, e.g. Schools, play areas, shops, etc.
- Improve accessibility to public transport hubs
- Integrate existing cycle routes to new and proposed road networks in the surrounding areas
- Improve air quality as demonstrated during the early weeks of the national lockdown when vehicle use was significantly reduced
- Connect green spaces with residential estates and the wider countryside
- Address residents’ concerns expressed in the ‘accessibility’ and ‘the green, safe travel’ surveys (September 2020)
- Increase confidence for safe cycling for all residents but especially for parents encouraging children to cycle

One of the key proposals is the Poynton Round is creation of an accessible all weather route around the town linking key assets.



Age

The 2011 Census data indicates that the Poynton parish area had a population of 14,260 residents representing 3.9% of Cheshire East’s total population (370,127). Generally Poynton’s age profile is similar to that of Cheshire East. Poynton also has the joint highest proportion of residents aged 65+, along with Nantwich. Compared to the other Key Service Centres Poynton has the lowest proportion of 25-44 year olds which is the most economically active age group and the second lowest proportion of under 15 year olds (after Nantwich). This explains why Poynton also has the highest average (mean) age across the 9 KSC’s at 45 years old which is higher than the Cheshire East mean age and the wider geographies of the North West (40) and England (39).



Age Structure.
Source: Census 2011, Office for National Statistics (ONS)
Most recent consistent data available across the 9 centres

Ethnicity

Broken-down by ethnic group the Census 2011 (latest available) shows the resident population across the Cheshire East is predominantly white at 96.7% which is a higher proportion than the wider geographies of the North West (90.2%) and England (85.4%).The majority of the population in Poynton is also white (98.0%), whilst having the lowest proportion of Mixed/ Multiple ethnic group residents (0.5%/ 78 people).

Area	White	Mixed/ multiple ethnic groups	Asian/ Asian British	Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British	Other ethnic group
Alsager	97.6%	1.1%	1.0%	0.2%	0.1%
Congleton	98.0%	0.6%	1.1%	0.2%	0.2%
Handforth	93.1%	1.5%	3.9%	0.9%	0.7%
Knutsford	96.5%	1.2%	1.8%	0.3%	0.3%
Middlewich	98.5%	0.8%	0.6%	0.1%	0.1%
Nantwich	98.1%	0.7%	0.7%	0.3%	0.1%
Poynton-with-Worth	98.0%	0.5%	1.1%	0.1%	0.2%
Sandbach	98.1%	0.7%	0.9%	0.2%	0.2%
Wilmslow	92.6%	1.7%	4.4%	0.5%	0.7%
Cheshire East	96.7%	1.0%	1.6%	0.4%	0.2%
North West	90.2%	1.6%	6.2%	1.4%	0.6%
England	85.4%	2.3%	7.8%	3.5%	1.0%

Population by Ethnic Group
Source: Census 2011, Office for National Statistics (ONS)
Most recent consistent data available across the 9 centres

Occupational Profile

At the time of the 2011 Census, a large proportion of Poynton residents were employed in higher order occupations including ‘managers, directors and senior officials’ (14.9%) and ‘professional occupations’ (24.0%) – a much higher rate than the wider Borough, regional and national benchmarks.

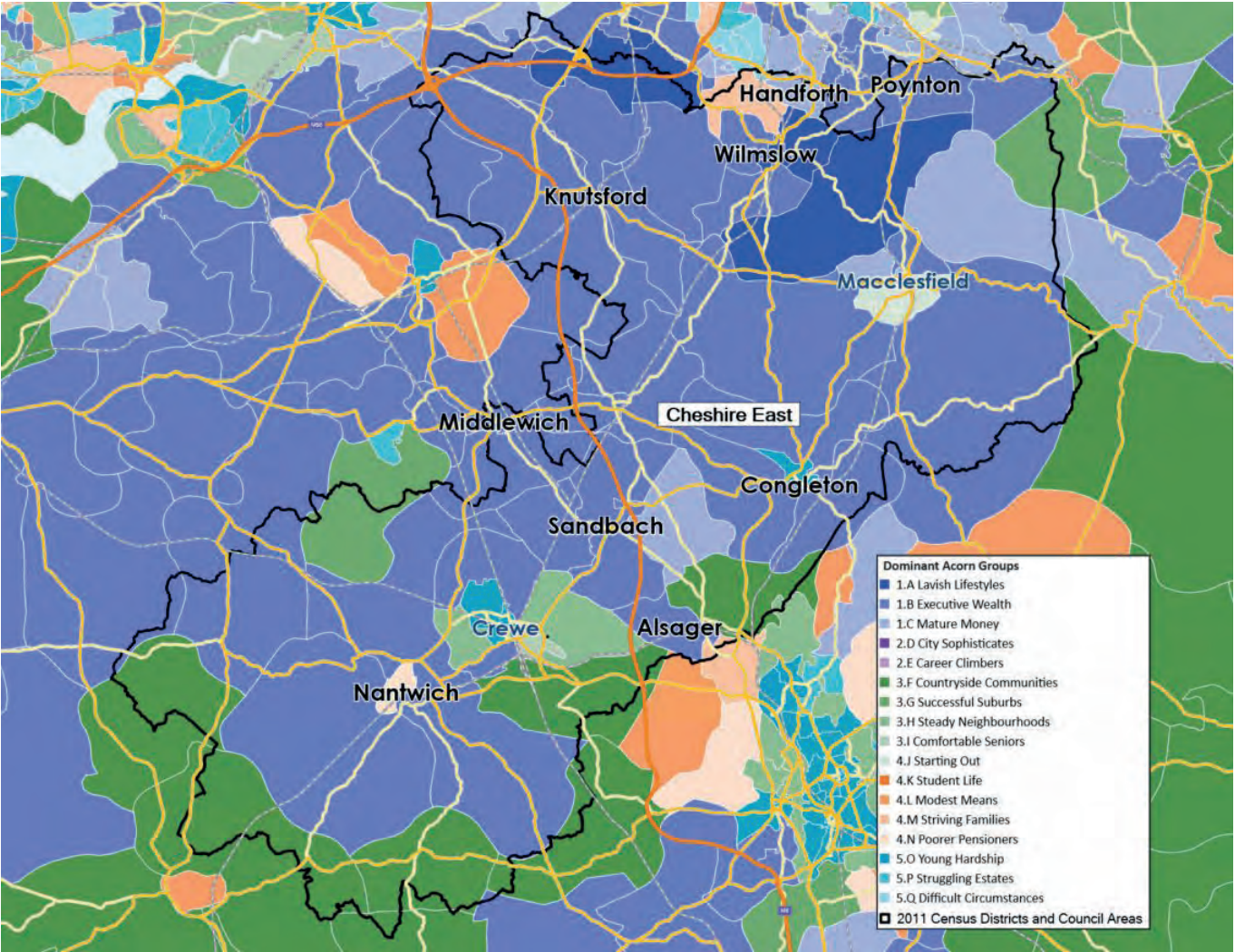
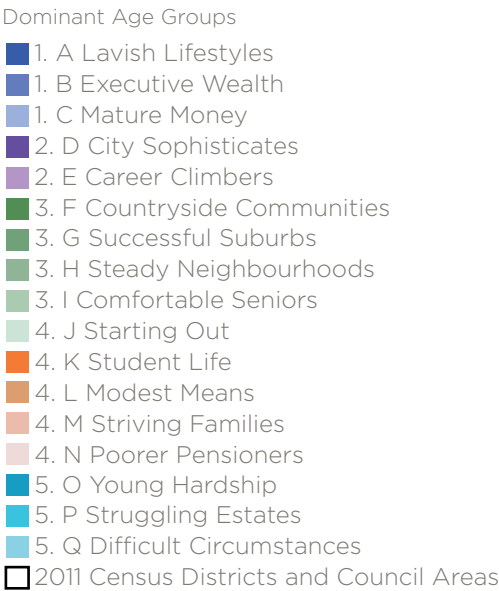
Conversely, just 9.6% were engaged in manual or elementary occupations. This is around half the North West (19.8%) and England rate (18.3%). The occupational structure of Poynton suggests a highly skilled workforce, which will in turn attract businesses (who want to attract highly skilled employees) to locate in the area.

Built Up Area	Alsager	Congleton	Knutsford	Middlewich	Nantwich	Poynton	Sandbach	Wilmslow	Cheshire East	North West	England
Managers, directors and senior officials	12.8	11.7	17.2	11.9	14.3	14.9	12.6	18.3	13.6	9.9	10.9
Professional occupations	22.3	18.9	26.2	15.8	21.8	24.0	19.9	24.6	19.6	16.3	17.5
Associate professional and technical occupations	12.6	13.2	15.1	13.4	12.3	15.1	13.3	16.3	13.0	11.5	12.8
Administrative and secretarial occupations	11.4	10.3	9.4	11.8	10.0	12.2	11.0	9.9	10.4	11.7	11.5
Skilled trades occupations	10.1	11.6	6.4	11.0	9.8	8.6	10.2	6.6	10.4	11.3	11.4
Caring, leisure and other service occupations	8.7	9.5	8.0	9.9	8.2	7.7	9.2	7.8	8.9	10.1	9.3
Sales and customer service occupations	7.5	7.0	5.7	7.4	8.3	8.0	8.2	6.9	7.5	9.4	8.4
Process, plant and machine operatives	5.8	7.9	3.8	8.5	6.0	3.3	6.6	3.0	6.5	8.1	7.2
Elementary occupations	8.8	9.9	8.2	10.4	9.3	6.3	9.0	6.6	10.2	11.7	11.1

Occupational Profile
Source: Census 2011
Most recent consistent data available across the 9 centres

Demographic Characterisation

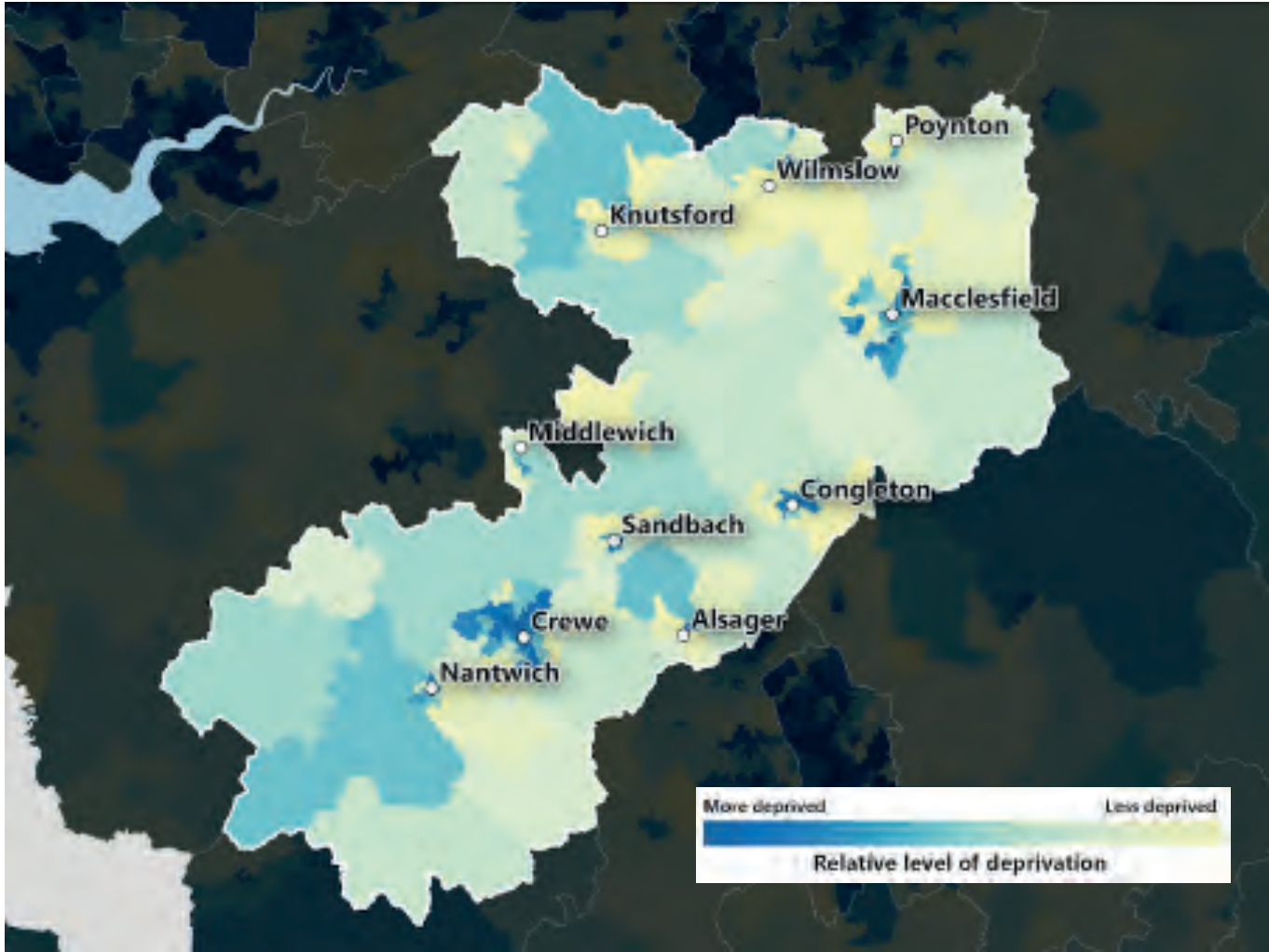
CACI Acorn classifications of local postcode geographies provide precise information and an in-depth understanding of different consumer types by analysing significant social factors and consumer behaviour. Demographic analysis of Cheshire East area demonstrates diverse segmentation groups across the area. The dominant Acorn group in Poynton is Executive Wealth characterised by affluent professionals with families living in large homes.



CACI Acorn Classifications
Source: CACI
Most recent consistent data available across the 9 centres

Index of Multiple Deprivation

The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019 illustrates the spatial distribution and pockets of deprivation relative to national averages. Cheshire East ranked 228th most deprived out of 317 local authorities in 2019 indicating relatively low levels of deprivation. Just 1.7% of the Borough is within the top 10% most deprived areas in England, with these most deprived areas being concentrated around Crewe and to a lesser extent, Macclesfield. The majority of Poynton is within the 10% least deprived areas of deprivation nationally.



Source: MHCLG, IMD 2019
Most recent consistent data available
across the 9 centres










Local Context

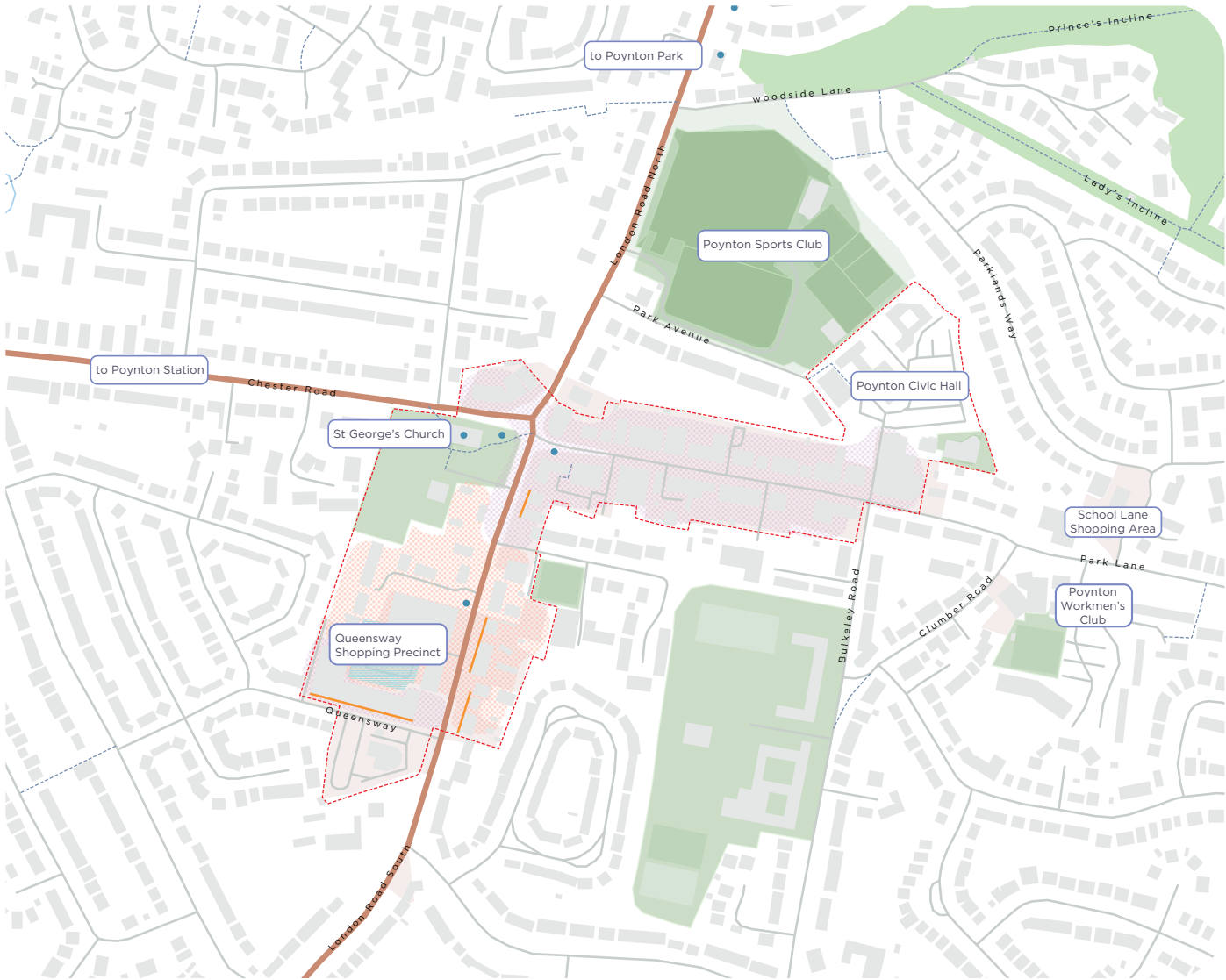
Poynton continues to provide a vibrant town centre which is popular among its residents sitting on the edge of the Peak District.

Located between Stockport and Macclesfield, it is well connected by road and rail. Located just 14 miles south of Manchester City Centre and linked to Manchester Airport by A555.

Poynton is an attractive residential location, well served by a range of amenities, within easy access of variety of employment opportunities, located within a rural setting but within easy reach of the City. The centre is focused around 4 distinct shopping cores (Park Lane, London Road, South and Queens Way) which accommodates retail units and a range of convenience units as well as takeaways, cafés and restaurants. In addition, to the east of the centre, is School Lane Shopping Area.

The town centre also has good local walking routes and open space at Poynton Park, Brecon Park and Deva Park.

-  Local Centre boundary
-  Primary retail core
-  Potential Regeneration Area
-  Primary routes
-  Cycle paths
-  Pedestrian routes
-  Historic Assets



Spatial Review

An analysis of the experiential quality of the town centre is provided over the next few pages. The review is based on information gathered from a number of site visits to the town centre during September / October 2020 and is assessed by the key vitality indicators listed below:

- Quality of the place
- People
- Sense of Community
- Accessibility
- Gateways
- Wayfinding
- Attractions
- Amenities
- Sense of a Centre
- Character
- Public realm
- Green space
- Derelict Sites/ Vacant units
- Housing
- Covid measures

Visit information

	Visit 1	Visit 2
Date of visit:	Sunday 6th September	Monday 26th October
Time of day:	3.30-4.30pm	10-11pm
Weather:	Sun, Light drizzle	Heavy rain and sun
Mode of transport:	Car	Car
COVID 19 Lockdown Status	Eased restrictions, rule of six indoors and outdoors	Tier Two - rule of six indoors and outdoors

Quality of the place

- Small, well kept town
- Large houses close to the town centre
- Range of shops and services
- Aesthetically very tidy with modern public realm.



People

- People sitting outside Costa coffee - mostly couples or parents with children
- People sitting outside local bars - mostly couples or 20 somethings
- Older population



Sense of Community

- Noticeboards seem up to date
- Lots of well kept planters
- Signs of awards being won
- Bunting in public spaces



Accessibility

- 10 minute walk from Poynton station, however links to and from are not well sign posted and poor foothpath connections
- Short stay and long stay parking available at Civic Hall / Waitrose
- No segregated cycle routes but a few people cycling



Gateways

- Despite traffic calming measures, London Road south is still quite car dominated - due to the nature of the road and the volume of traffic it has to handle
- Junction with Park Lane, Chester Road and London Road North and London Road South provides main gateway however still issues for pedestrians and cycles

Wayfinding

- Entrance points to town centre are highlighted with Poynton monuments which help create a sense of arrival
- No memorable signage within the town however it is quite small and easy to navigate
- Poynton monuments at each of the 4 main access routes

Attractions

- Some cafes and restaurants, signs of outdoor seating
- The Centre - Community Centre on Park Lane
- Poynton Civic Hall
- Poynton Lake at Poynton Park



Amenities

- Library, Town Council at Civic Hall, Churches, Health Centre and Gym
- Waitrose Supermarket, Aldi Supermarket, Morrisons Supermarket
- Independent cafes, restaurants and bars
- 4 distinct shopping centres



Sense of a Centre

- The town does not have a typical square or focal point but instead has evolved through ribbon development. The sense of the centre isn't focused on one area but rather along the main streets that the town is formed around
- The consistent public realm material, opportunities to cross Park Lane and spill out spaces with active frontages helps to create a more readable sense of centre along Park Lane.
- Smaller shopping centres at School Lane and Queensway Shopping Centre create a secondary retail focus within the town



Character

- Flat town centre which climbs slightly east beyond Waitrose
- Some heritage buildings with a number of Grade II listed buildings, including the impressive Church of St. George as well as interesting local heritage features such as the Grade II listed milestone marker along London Road South
- Mostly dated shop fronts are well kept
- Park Lane has an attractive character, with a number of Victorian / Edwardian terraced houses converted to commercial / retail / leisure space



Public Realm

- Despite new public realm interventions, pavement and road surfaces are tired and worn in places
- Plenty of planters and seating but again falling into disrepair
- Quite generous spill out space along Park Lane and visual narrowing of carriageway helps with pedestrian priority and movement

Green space

- Tree planting with the areas of enhanced public realm complements heritage buildings and main street character
- No central green space offered in the town centre
- Brecon Park, Deva Park and Poynton Park provided closest green space under 1km from the centre
- Poynton Round is a proposed greenway route, mainly for pedestrian accessibility and some cycle access (which requires funding to deliver) that will link schools and the Leisure Centre with the Town Centre.



Derelict Sites/ Vacant Units

- Large vacant unit close to London Road South / Park Lane junction, occupying a visually prominent site on approach to the town. (Note that since our site visit this unit has now been occupied).
- Some smaller vacant shop units
- For a smaller town, not as many vacant or derelict sites as expected

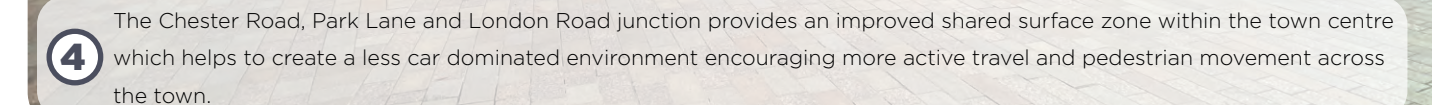
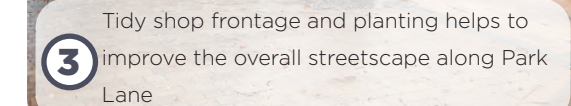
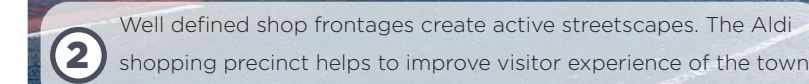
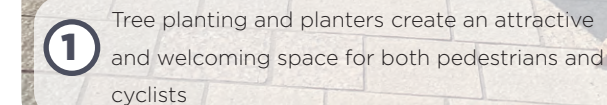
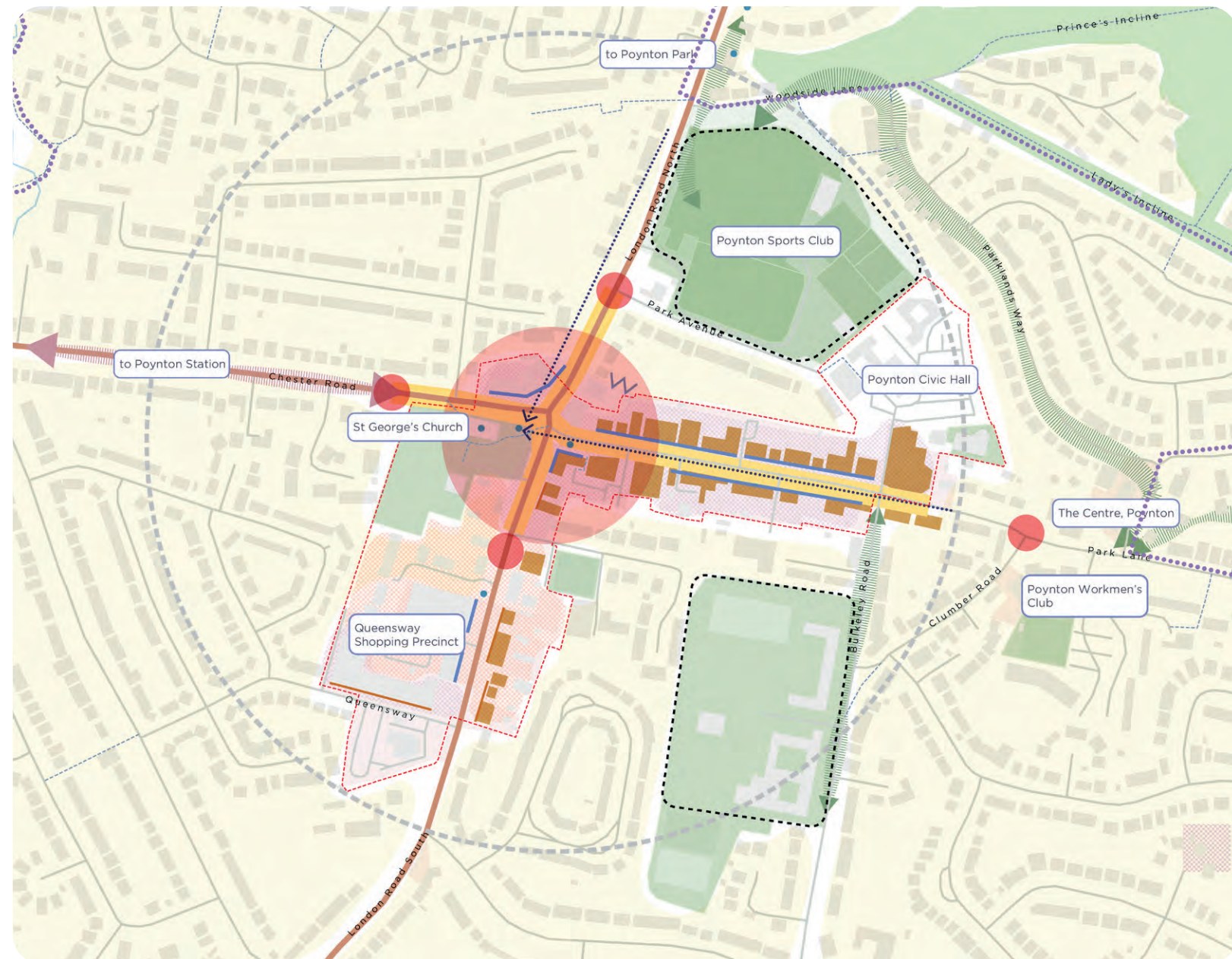


Housing

- Signs of new housing development by Queensway Shopping Centre
- Mostly terrace housing lines London Road South and Park Lane
- Larger detached and semi detached on Chester Road
- Well kept properties line Chester Road and Park Lane (in part)



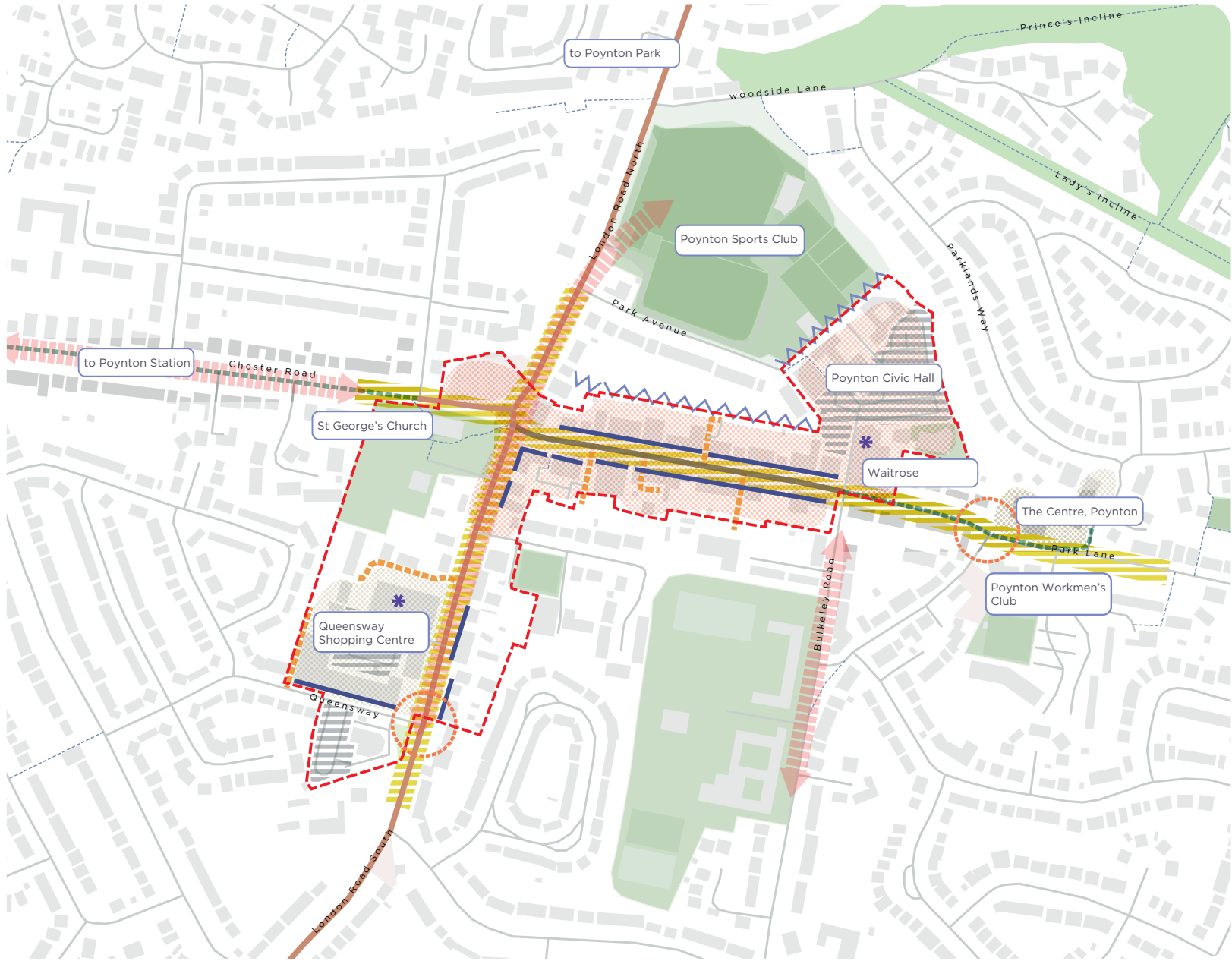
Positive spatial elements are identified on the plan:



Negative Features

Negative spatial elements are identified on the plan:

- Key
- Local Centre boundary
 - Streets and spaces dominated by car parking
 - Streets with narrow footways / poor pedestrian provision
 - Arrival gateways with a low quality arrival experience
 - Areas requiring maintenance of public realm
 - Low quality frontages
 - Arrival destinations
 - Links with poor legibility to and from the town centre
 - Local streets leading to cul-de-sacs or unclear where they connect to
 - Extent of area which reads as part of the Town Centre
 - Areas which feel beyond the extent of the Town Centre
 - Key assets which feel disconnected from the Town Centre
 - Pedestrianised high street with dated public realm and aesthetic
 - Area of severance / disconnect
 - Undeinfend / low key arrival thresholds to the town



Summary of Spatial Elements

The table below and on the opposite page identifies the key positive and spatial attributes for the town centre:

Public Realm	Gateways	Open Space	Heritage	Townscape Quality	Legibility
Positives					
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good quality public realm - which is being re-nominated for an Urbanism Award on 13th November 2020 (but it is tired and in need of repair in many places)• Dementia friendly town• Plenty of planters and seating - these have recently been repaired by the Town Council and volunteers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Junction with Park Lane, Chester Road and London Road North and London Road South provides main gateway however still issues for pedestrians and cycles• Entrance points to town centre are highlighted with Poynton monuments which create a positive arrival gateway	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No immediate town centre open space, however Brecon Park, Deva Park and Poynton Park provided closest recreational green space• Poynton Round, green way route for pedestrians and cycles• Number of walking trails that could be better promoted	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Small number of listed buildings, grouped around the enhanced traffic calming scheme help to frame a gateway into Poynton• Modern public realm scheme has helped to improve areas which also have heritage qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good local business offer within the town centre including a strong café culture/ eateries/evening offer• Strong sense of community,however there is a need for a welcoming space - other than the Civic Hall there is no real defined central space• 3 distinct shopping areas - Queens Way, London Road South and Park Lane, and School Lane Shopping Area further east.• The quality of the townscape is most intact along Park Lane, both towards St George's Church and further east towards the historic residential areas around Poynton Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information boards dotted across the centre• Some street-side wayfinding signage at the Station and other locations helps with wayfinding• Small centre which is easily navigated without large amounts of signage

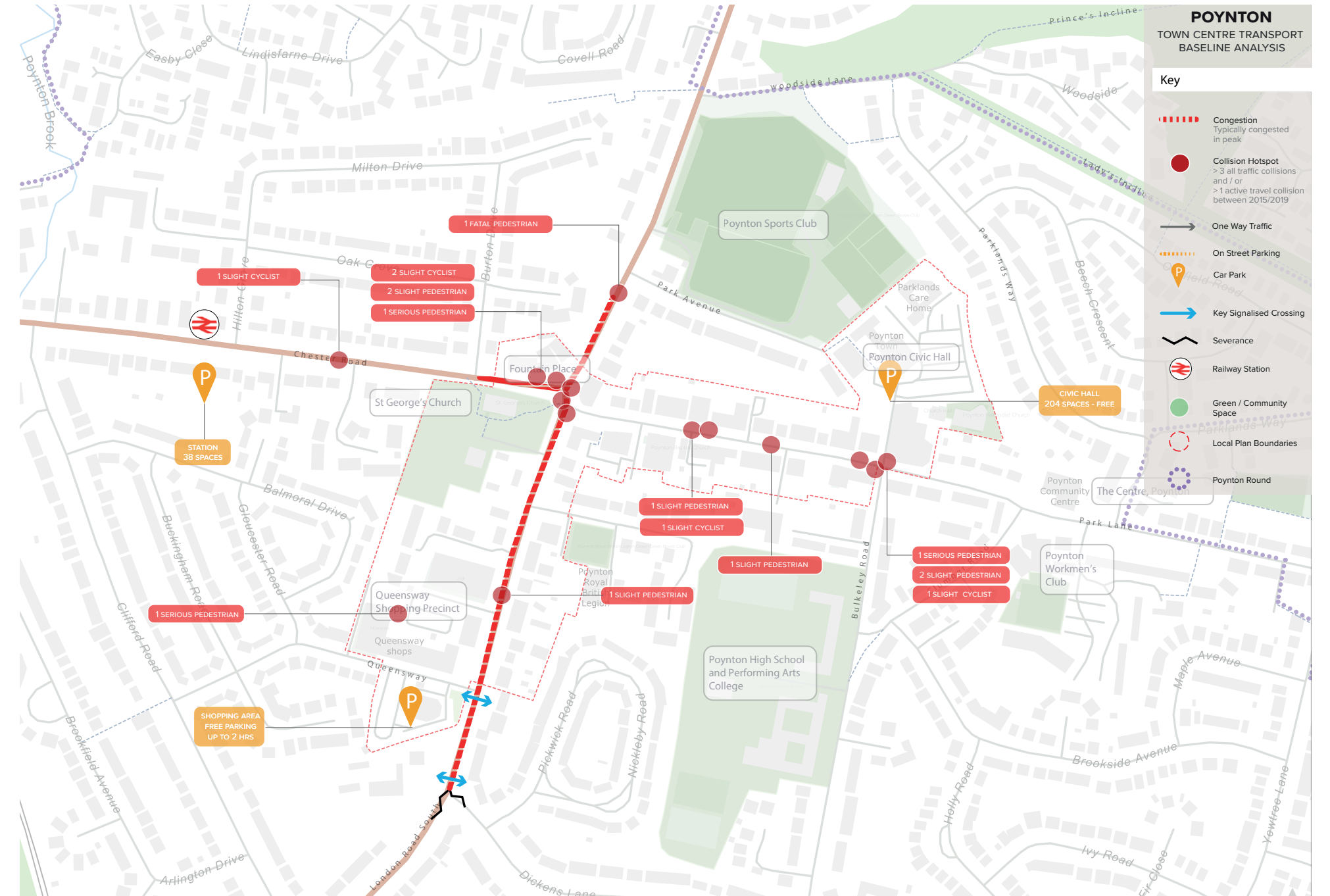
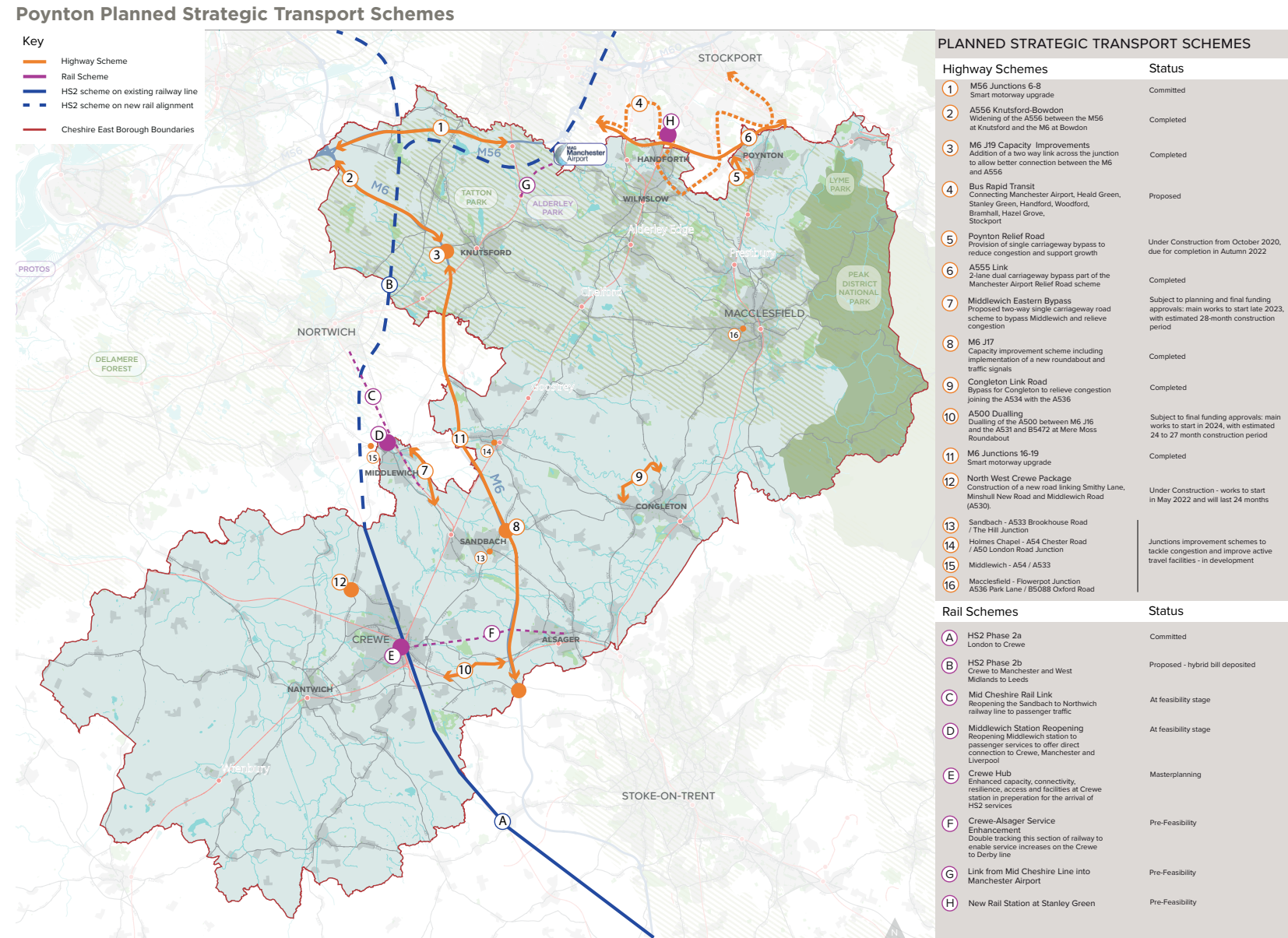
Public Realm	Gateways	Open Space	Heritage	Townscape Quality	Legibility
Weaknesses					
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Degradation of the public realm - lack of repair to public furniture / wider maintenance issues.• Limited signage to navigate to station and primary shopping centres.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Despite traffic calming measures, London Road south is still quite car dominated, due to the volume of traffic it carries• Some metal artwork identifies entrance points to the town but no framed arrival space• Arrival from the east is defined by historic residential properties, however the streetscape is dominated by kerb side parking and narrow footways	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of central open space within the immediate centre• Green spaces such as Poynton Park and Deva Park are on the periphery of the town centre, with connections to and from them not clear and of varying quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Small number of listed buildings, grouped around the enhanced traffic calming scheme• No real sense of celebrated heritage within the town, little information , art or interpretation about the mining, aviation,or agricultural heritage of the town for visitors and residents to interact with• Low quality buildings along Park Lane detract from the heritage quality of the town	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No designated square or community gathering point - Park Lane and Chester Road intersection creates a central point• Difficult to determine where designated parking is• Dated frontage for some shops and restaurants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of public transport – half the town centre is served by a bus route,• No bus link to station, Chester Road feels cut off from town centre• No clear defined cycle paths – partially provided in some areas• Walking and cycling along Chester Road is difficult to navigate. The town is fairly easy to read however visible links and wayfinding to important assets such as Poynton Park, Civic Hall and others could be improved

06 Connectivity and Accessibility

Poynton has excellent links to the strategic transport network with its surrounding A roads providing direct access via the A555 Manchester Airport Eastern Link Road motorway, to Manchester City Centre and Manchester Airport.

Manchester Airport is accessible from Poynton within less than 15-minutes drive time making it an attractive place to live, work and invest.

As well as Manchester, which is readily accessible by both road and rail, Poynton is within a 10 minute drive to the Peak District.



Car Parking

Car parking across Poynton town centre comprises several off-street car parks offering a maximum stay of 2 hours free of charge.

On-street parking is limited across Poynton giving maximum space to pedestrians and cyclists areas of enhanced public realm. Where it is provided, it is usually formalised in bays and complementary to the public realm. On-street parking is enforced in a number of locations such as Queensway through provision of Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO’s).

As the main off-street car parks are located a short walk from retail facilities, it is important to ensure the main pedestrian routes along Park Lane, Queensway, School Lane and London Road South provide safe and attractive environments. This will support access to the town centre and encourage journeys into the town by more sustainable modes. This is particularly important in an area such as Poynton where the majority of households (81%) have access to a car.

The TCVPs consider the role of car parking in relation to the vitality of each town centre. However, any proposals to review or modernise car parking provision and management will be considered on a town by town basis as part of the Council’s approach to travel demand management. Therefore the delivery of any car parking proposals is outside the scope of the TCVPs.

Public Realm

Poynton has benefited from a major investment in public realm, with an informal street design implemented along the key axis of the town, centred on Fountain Place. It is a key strength of the town, creating a high quality of environment and strong sense of place where pedestrian and cyclists are prioritised and embraced, despite high vehicular flows through the town. Public realm within these areas also presents gateway features to enhance sense of arrival into the town, enhanced lighting facilities and seating to provide opportunities for people to stop and rest. Despite the success of the scheme, maintenance is required in many places to ensure this high-quality environment is maintained.

In contrast to the area of Park Lane and Fountain Place, the streets around the local facilities at

Queensway and School Lane comprise aging highways infrastructure and public realm creating an inconsistency in relation to sense of place within different areas of the town. As parking restrictions are already in place in these areas with no on-street parking facilities, and large amounts of space is present along retail frontages, there are significant opportunities within these areas to bring the quality of public realm up to a similar standard to that evident along Park Lane and Fountain Place.

There is also potential to gain further benefits from the public realm scheme in Poynton town centre once the Poynton Relief Road opens in 2022, removing a significant proportion of traffic from the town.

Town Centre	Car Park ID	Parking Spaces	Duration	Pricing
Poynton	Poynton Train Station Car Park	38	Long Stay	£2 per day
	Civic Hall Car Park	204 spaces: 73 operated by the Council and 131 leased by Waitrose	Mix of 2hrs short stay and long stay spaces	Free
	Shopping Area Car Park		/	Free
	TOTAL			

Road Safety

There are a number of places across Poynton town centre where the safety of pedestrians and cyclists could be improved. A lack of crossing points is provided across London Road South around the junction with Abbey Court which forms part of the key route between facilities, the rail station and off-street car parks. There is also a lack of safe crossing points for pedestrians and cyclists in the vicinity of the rail station to support pedestrian access to the town centre and nearby bus stops. New crossing facilities should therefore be considered throughout this study along key pedestrian desire lines to enhance road safety and encourage the use of more active modes.

Active Travel

Key pedestrian desire lines within the centre of Poynton include the routes between the station, along Chester Road towards the high street and key facilities. Poor pedestrian and cyclist facilities are present along Chester Road with a single narrow footway adjacent to the key A road proving the only means of pedestrian access towards the town centre. Signage and wayfinding from the station for pedestrians and cyclists is also poor and unclear.

Cycle parking is provided within a number of locations around Fountain Place and Park Lane. However, the provision of cycle infrastructure is reduced in areas where public realm is of a lower quality.

The public realm scheme delivered in Poynton provides substantial benefits for pedestrians in particular. Expansion of this scheme across a wider area of Poynton would support more sustainable movement within the town.

Public Transport

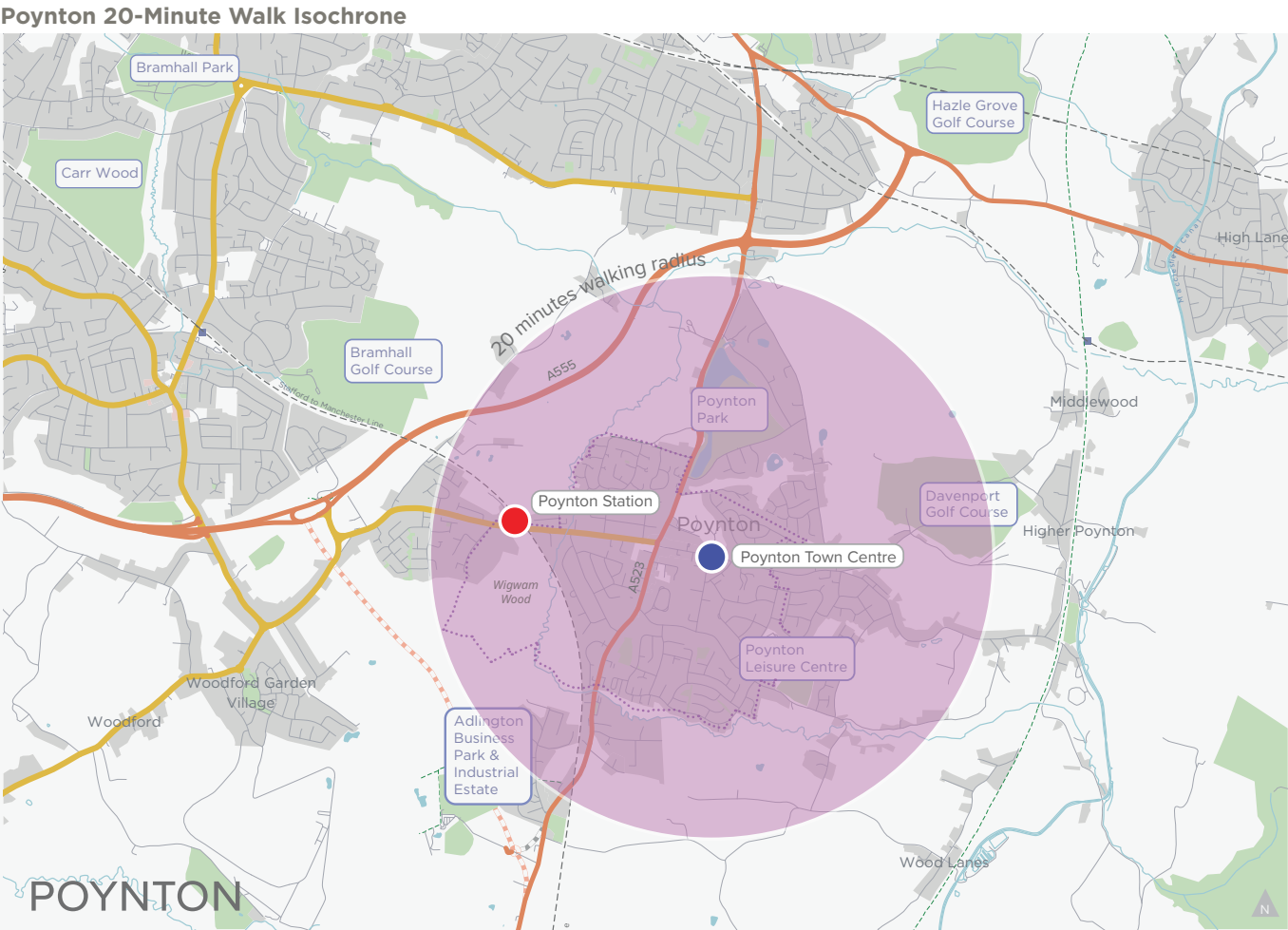
Poynton railway station is located around a 10-minute walk away from the main retail area and key facilities. Poynton is served by 1 train per hour to Manchester Piccadilly northbound and southbound to Stoke-on-Trent. Access to Poynton from the wider area by rail is therefore limited by a lack of direct rail services and service frequency.

Bus services within the area comprise 1 bus per 90mins serving Queensway to Macclesfield and 1 bus per 90 mins serving Chester road to Stockport. There is a lack of direct bus services to the rail station with the closest stop (around a 3-minute walk away) offering only 1 bus per 90 mins to Stockport further reducing the accessibility to the rail network. There are also no Sunday bus services.

The poor connectivity to the area by public transport is intensified by the high proportion of elderly residents who often rely on bus and rail services to access key facilities.

Movement Trends

The town centre is predominantly within a 20-minute walk of the wider built-up area, and as such there is a significant opportunity to increase the levels of walking and cycling access to the town centre. However, car ownership in Poynton is particularly high and the local highway network (outside of the town centre) does little to prioritise people on foot or bike.



Local Aspirations

In October 2020, work began on the £53m Poynton Relief Road which is expected to open to traffic in Autumn 2022. Poynton Relief Road will be a modern single carriageway including two over-bridge crossings for use by walkers, cyclists and farm vehicles. A 3.5-metre-wide combined cycle and footway will run beside the length of the route on the western side of the main carriageway.

This not only provides opportunities to divert traffic away from the town, but also offers the opportunity to enhance the provision of walking and cycling infrastructure in the area and promote sustainable access to the town centre.

There are also aspirations to improve the A523 route for cyclists between Poynton Town Centre northwards towards Hazel Grove and linking to the A555 route – as the current highway’s width could accommodate cycling infrastructure and the Poynton Relief Road is expected to take traffic off this section.

- 5% of people living in Poynton work within the town centre
- 24% of residents travel less than 5km to work
- Public transport accounts for 6% of commuter trips
- Only 13% of households in Poynton do not have access to a car, 36% have access to two or more vehicles
- 72% of residents in Poynton in employment drive to work by car
- 11 minute walk between town centre and railway station
- Active travel accounts for 10% of commuter trips
- One train per hour in each direction to Stoke-on-Trent and Manchester Piccadilly. Additional services operate at peak commuter times and after 10pm. Six services in each direction on Sundays

Source: Census 2011, Office for National Statistics (ONS)

Cheshire East Council has approved Local Transport Development Plans (LTDP) for its principal towns, keys service centres and surrounding rural areas. The table opposite summarises the potential transport schemes included in the LTDP relating to the town centre at the point they went out to public consultation. Please note the majority of schemes are at concept stage, subject to feasibility work and must be viewed as potential schemes. Therefore the LTDP are live documents and this list of schemes is subject to change and will evolve as further work is undertaken.

In Poynton the LTDP sets out a wide range of actions that CEC are exploring. In Poynton, the LTDP has fewer actions than many other towns given the significant investment that has been made in public realm in the town centre. There is however recognition that improvement of the A5149 Chester Road and A523 London Road is needed outside of the town centre core.

The table contains detail on the schemes set out in the LTDP.

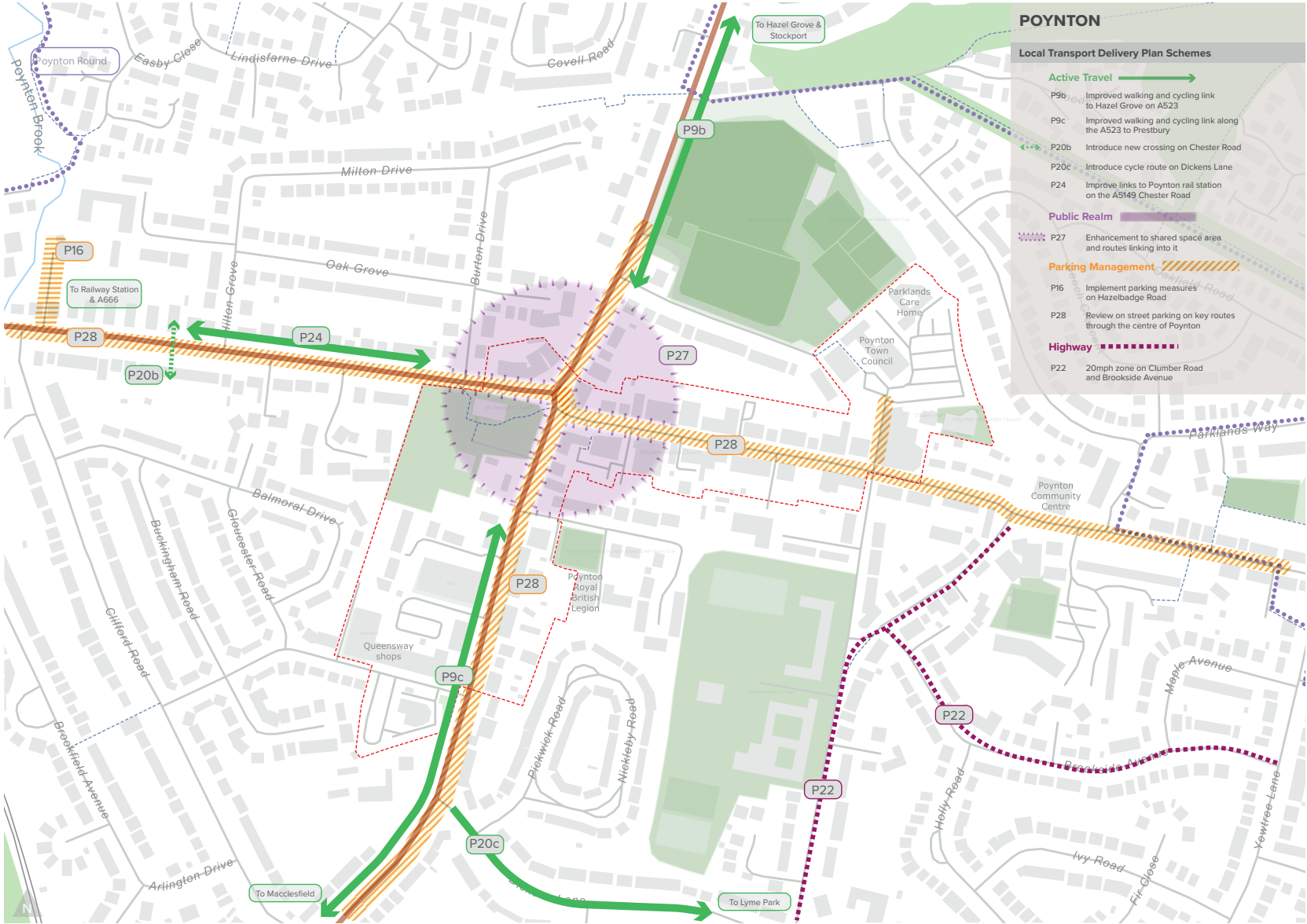
For full information on LTDP and the latest version of the LTDP please refer to the Highway pages of the CEC website.

Poynton LTP and LCWIP schemes

Type	Ref	Scheme	Description	Costing ¹
Active Travel	P9b	Improve walking and cycling route to Hazel Grove on the A523 (north)	Improve walking and cycling route along the A523 London Road North to Hazel Grove and Stockport.	£1m-£5m
	P9c	Improve walking and cycling route to Prestbury on the A523 (south)	Improve walking and cycling route along the A523 to Macclesfield and Prestbury.	£1m-£5m
	P20b	Introduce new pedestrian crossing on Chester Road	Introduce a new pedestrian crossing on Chester Road, near to Deva Park, west of the train station.	<£1m
	P20c	Provide cycle links on Dickens Lane	Introduce a cycle route along Dickens Lane and upgrade the existing uncontrolled crossing near Yewtree Lane.	<£1m
	P24	Improve walking and cycling route on the on the A5149 Chester Road to Poynton train station	Improve walking and cycling route on the A5149 Chester Road to Poynton train station.	<£1m
Public Realm	P27	Enhance the existing shared space area and routes linking into it	Review the shared space scheme once the Poynton Relief Road has opened, to assess parking and signage requirements within the area and on routes linking into it.	<£1m
Parking Management	P16	Parking management measures on Hazelbadge Road	Implement parking management measures linked to the development at Hazelbadge Road.	<£100k
	P28	Review of parking management measures on Chester Road, London Road, Park Lane and School Lane	Review of parking management measures – particularly on-street parking – across the town centre on Chester Road, London Road, Park Lane and School Lane.	<£1m
Highway	P22	Introduce 20mph zone on Clumber Road and Brookside Avenue	Introduce 20mph zone on Clumber Road and Brookside Avenue to provide a safer environment and access to the High School.	<£1m

¹ The costs presented are indicative only at this stage. Costs will depend on type and level of interventions delivered – and should be revised at subsequent design stages.

Poynton Local Transport Development Plan Schemes



Retail and Leisure

Cheshire East Council recognises the importance of monitoring key information to assess and respond to issues in its centres and commission regular reviews of the retail and leisure market across the Borough. The latest partial update of the Retail Study Report paints a strong and positive picture for Poynton in terms of performance since the last Report (2016).

Poynton is identified as a KSC within Cheshire East that is performing strongly and continues to be a vital and viable town centre. A mix of national and independent operators provide important retail and service provisions for the local catchment population, with a particularly strong convenience sector offering. Poynton’s good evening economy and high-quality environment also add to the attractiveness of the town centre.

As of August 2018, Poynton town centre had 108 units, a decrease of 2 since 2016, which are primarily concentrated on Park Lane and London Road South.

The convenience sector in Poynton is strong with a mix of national brands and independent retailers. The centre is anchored by Waitrose on Park Lane and Aldi on London Road South, which has been created along with 4 retail units

	Units			Floorspace		
	No.	%	UK Average (%)	Sqm.	%	UK Average (%)
Convenience	13	12	9	6,049	39	15
Comparison	30	28	29	2,679	17	34
Retail Service	23	21	15	1,405	9	7
Leisure Service	24	22	25	2,987	19	26
Vacant	9	8	10	700	5	7
Financial and Business Service	9	8	12	1,659	11	11
Total	108	100	100	41,220	100	100

Diversity of Uses in Poynton Town Centre in September 2019
Source: Experian GOAD Survey, August 2018. UK Average from the Experian GOAD Category Report (February 2020)
Most recent consistent data available across the 9 centres

from the demolition of the Poynton Cinema. The centre is also catered for by a small Morrisons and a small number of independent bakers, butchers and delis. This has contributed to the proportion of units (12%) being slightly above the UK average (9%) and a proportion of floorspace being significantly above the UK average (39% compared to UK average of 15%).

The comparison goods offering in Poynton is predominantly independent retailers however there are a small number of national operators including Card Factory, Boots and WH Smith.

Whilst having experienced a decrease in the number of units since 2016, a fall from 36 to 30, the proportion of comparison goods units is in line with the UK average (28% and 29% respectively). With the comparison goods retailers in Poynton occupying small units, this lends to a floorspace proportion of half the UK average (17% compared to UK average of 34%).

Poynton is well represented in both the retail and leisure sector provisions with a particular strength of 14 hairdressers/ beauty salons in the centre. This contributed to a proportion of retail units in

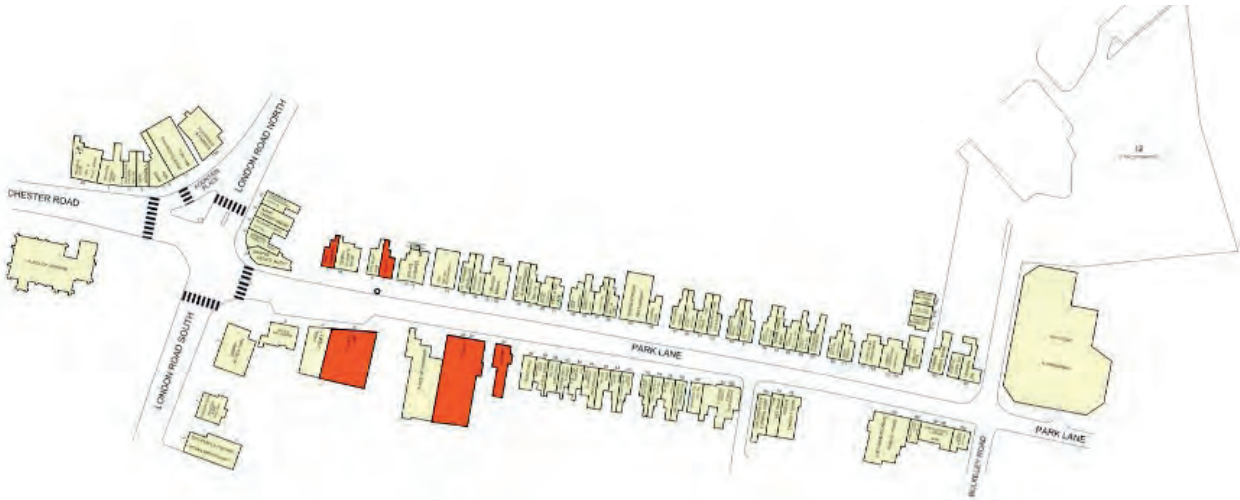
the centre of 21%, above the UK average of 15%. The number of leisure service unit has increased since 2016, a proportion of 22% of all units and just below the UK average of 25%. Most of these leisure units are occupied by independent food and beverage operators providing a range of restaurants, take aways and pubs, with some national operators of Pizza Express, Costa Coffee and Subway. The loss of Natwest and RBS banks has meant there are no banking facilities within the town centre which does weaken the service offer, but has been a national trend seen across smaller/ medium sized towns.

The town centre had a recorded 9 vacant units, representing 8% of the total number of units and below the UK average of 12%. This is an increase on 6 vacant units recorded in 2016, and an identical proportion of vacant floorspace compared to the UK average of 11%. The total vacant floorspace was 1,659 sqm. Since 2018 it is noted that at least 2 of these units have now been occupied.

At this stage, it is unclear what the impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic will be on Poynton’s town centre occupiers. Town centre spend will have been, in part, compensated for by more people

working from home and using local facilities as the town centre predominantly serves the catchment population.

The strength of Poynton’s convenience sector offering, along with the mix of national and independent retailers aligned with catchment population of affluent professionals should mean that Poynton remains a viable town centre, despite the challenges facing high streets due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Whilst some occupiers may experience short term impacts, longer term the centre should remain an attractive and vital location within Cheshire East.



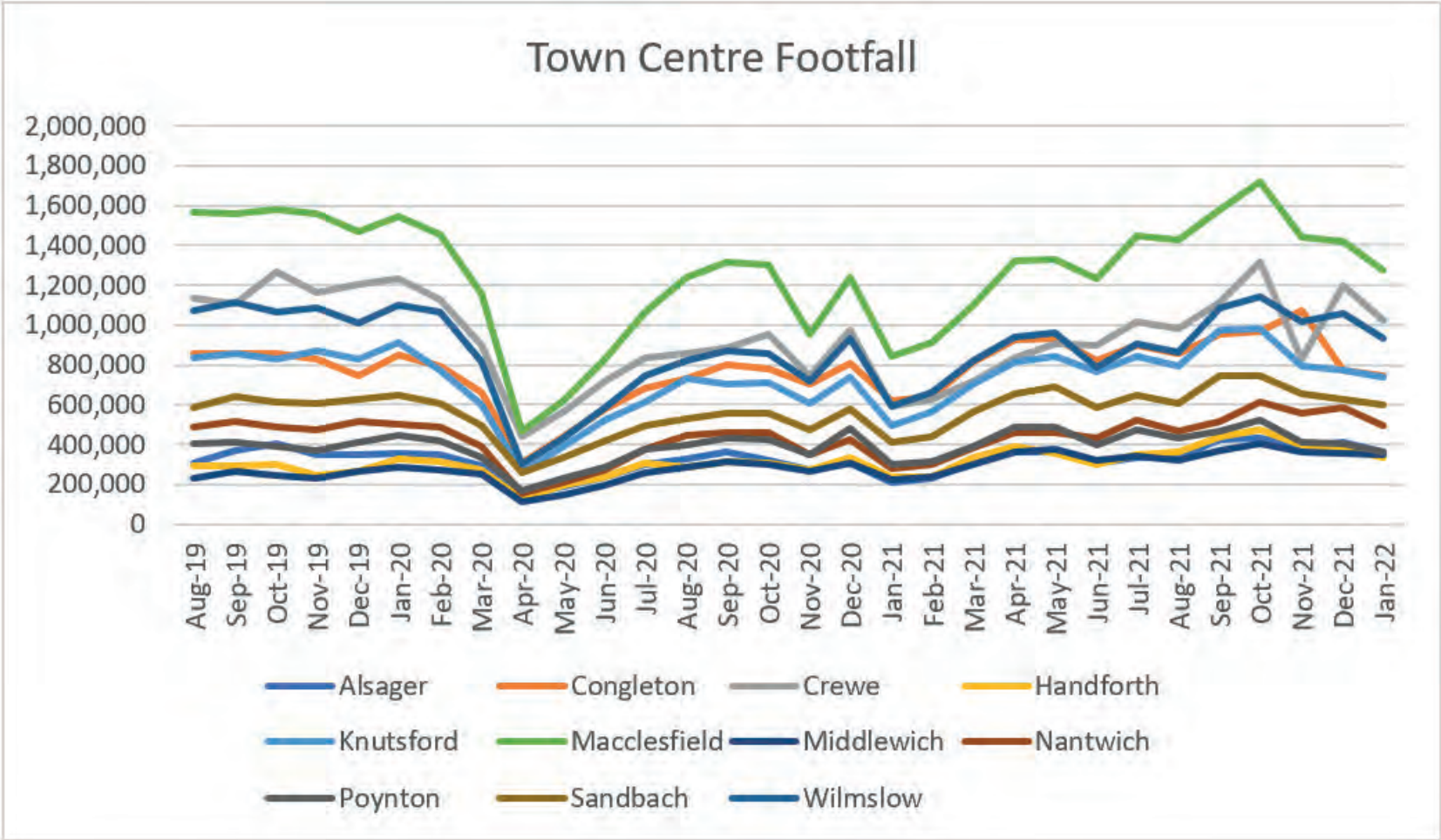
Location of voids in the Town Centre, 2018 .
Source: GOAD

Footfall

In recognition of the important relationship between footfall and vitality, CEC is now commissioning regular monitoring of footfall across the centres. The graph opposite shows footfall across the key Cheshire Towns between August 2019 and December 2021, including the impact of national lockdowns as a result of COVID-19. It starkly shows the impact of Covid on footfall, across Cheshire East particularly in March and November 2020 (during national lockdowns) and some bounce back in December.

As a small centre Poynton has the fourth lowest footfall of the KSC - a position that has remained broadly consistent during the period that footfall has been recorded. In December 2020 footfall reached 483,000 from 403,086 in August 2019. This was an 18.3% uplift on December 2019 - second only to Handforth in terms of increases. A number of other centres recorded a fall over the same period.

Covid has had a significant impact on footfall, both during enforced lockdowns but also in further accelerating online retail use. The ability of a centre to attract a wide range of visitors (rather than just relying on shoppers) will have a significant impact on how centres emerge from Covid. As a local centre Poynton should be more resilient than other centres – as has been seen during lockdown.



Source: Visitor Insight Baseline Report: December 2021



Residential Market Context

Poynton provides an attractive residential location surrounding the town centre, set with open countryside in the north east of the Borough. It offers easy commuting to employment destinations via the A523 and A555 and is 7 miles from Manchester Airport.

At the time of the 2011 Census the dominant house type across the Cheshire East area was detached housing (35.6%) which is a much higher proportion than the North West (18%) and England (22.4%).

The Poynton parish area had a total of 6,024 households, representing 3.8% of Cheshire East’s total residential stock (159,441). Poynton’s housing stock is dominated by larger family housing, with 42.7% detached homes, the highest proportion in Cheshire East and 39.2% being semi-detached, the second highest amount after Alsager. Together these contribute to over 80% of the housing stock in Poynton.

Therefore, there is a need to rebalance the housing offer to provide more starter homes, affordable housing and homes for older people to meet changing demographics and future local needs.

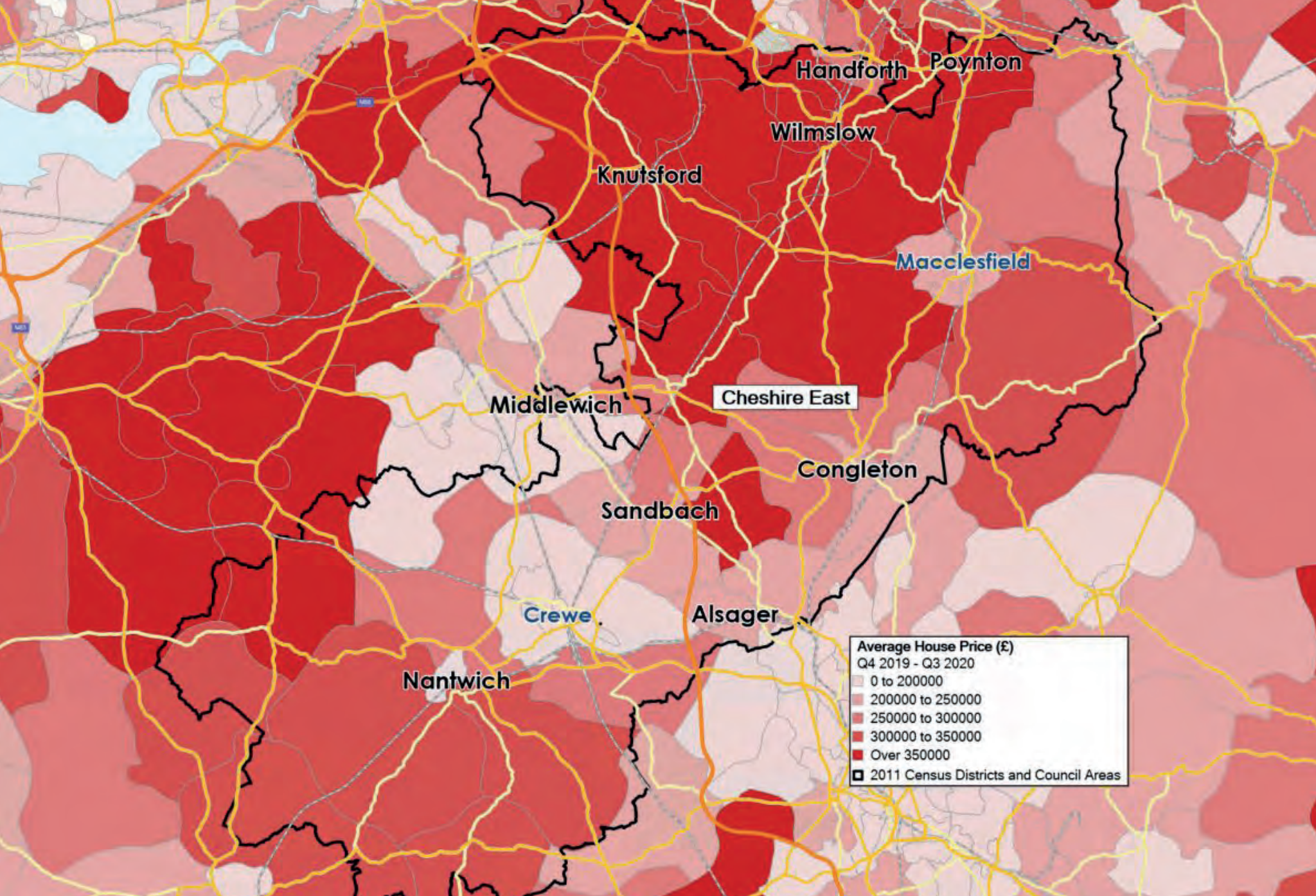
Over the last year, the average house price in Poynton was just under £400,000 (£398,000), 9% down on the previous year. This makes Poynton one of the more expensive towns to live in Cheshire East.

Currently active new housing developments include the Kingswood Development on

Chester Road by Bloor Homes and Copperfields Development on Dickens Lane by Bellway Homes. These are both developments of 2-5 bedroom homes, with a 3-bed semi-detached ranging from £356,000-410,000.

Dwelling Type/Area	Detached	Semi Detached	Terrace	Flat	Other	Total Households
Alsager	39.9%	40.4%	11.6%	8.1%	0%	5,183
Congleton	36.3%	35.4%	19.3%	8.9%	0.2%	11,561
Handforth	26.1%	23.1%	27.9%	22.8%	0.1%	2,936
Knutsford	38.8%	34.2%	19.7%	7.0%	0.4%	5,671
Middlewich	39.0%	26.0%	19.7%	15.3%	0%	5,910
Nantwich	20.8%	30.6%	26.8%	21.6%	0.2%	6,710
Poynton-with-Worth	42.7%	39.2%	10.5%	7.2%	0.3%	6,024
Sandbach	39.1%	36.1%	17.6%	6.8%	0.3%	7,840
Wilmslow	39.5%	26.6%	19.5%	14.3%	0%	10,615
Cheshire East	35.6%	32.6%	21.2%	10.2%	0.5%	159,441
North West	18.0%	36.3%	29.8%	15.4%	0.5%	3,009,549
England	22.4%	31.2%	24.5%	21.2%	0.7%	22,063,368

Housing Stock by Type.
Source: Census 2011, Office for National Statistics (ONS)



08 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats

This SWOT is based on the analysis of the consultant team and discussions with the Town Council and other local partners including councillors.

Strengths

- Location of the town - Stockport/South Manchester catchment as well as Cheshire
- Attractive village feel
- Good quality public realm in some places - re-nominated for an Urbanism Award
- Good local business offer within the town centre including a strong café culture/eateries/evening offer
- Strong sense of community
- Residents like to stay local
- Accessibility is good in parts, for pedestrians and vehicles - improvements needed for public transport
- Free parking
- Pre COVID-19 there was a good number of events taking place in Poynton - Christmas Fest, Summer Fest, folk nights, food and drinks events, the Poynton Show and Party in the Park.
- Civic Hall - high occupancy rate providing space for classes and events bringing people into the town in the evenings or at weekends
- 3 distinct shopping areas - Queensway, School Lane and Park Lane
- Dementia friendly town
- Town supported by Poynton Area Community Partnership
- Strong community spirit – Town Council and Poynton Area Community Partnership. Community Support Team (CCST) - very good asset for the community

Weaknesses

- Lack of repair to public furniture / wider maintenance issues. Including complaints from residents regarding the deteriorating surface of the Shared Space impacting on accessibility, upkeep (for example flower beds on London Road North) and street sweeping. The town needs to look like a place people want to come to
- No real defined central space other than the Civic Hall
- Lack of public transport - only half the town centre is served by a bus route
- No bus link to station, Chester Road feels cut off from town centre
- No clearly defined cycle paths - partially provided in some areas
- Walking and cycling along Chester Road is difficult to navigate
- Lack of a local market - e.g. Makers market

Opportunities

- Creation of a ‘Destination Town’
- Improved branding and marketing of the town, and an enhanced schedule of events
- Better utilisation of CE land outside Civic Hall - could be used for markets/craft fairs (currently attracts anti-social behaviour)
- Attract more independent shops/cafes/restaurants/bars - maintenance of public realm is important to retaining/building on this.
- Poynton Relief road currently under construction which will improve accessibility
- Better connections to Deva Park and Poynton station including improved pedestrian crossings
- Sports and recreation facilities at Poynton Leisure Centre could be linked to wider green space in the town
- The Poynton Round - a green route for pedestrians that loops around the town avoiding vehicular routes
- Raise profile of Middlewood Way as a green link and walking opportunity

Threats

- Potential changes to parking at Waitrose / Civic Hall - introduction of charges for long stay car park and short stay
- Over-development of the town putting a strain on infrastructure - 3 strategic development sites located in the town, however the infrastructure is not adequate to support these
- Separation of the 3 shopping areas
- Loss of Green Belt due to development
- High proportion of elderly residents (highest percentage of over 80s in Cheshire) - intensifies poor public transport issue and other walkability issues.
- Flooding



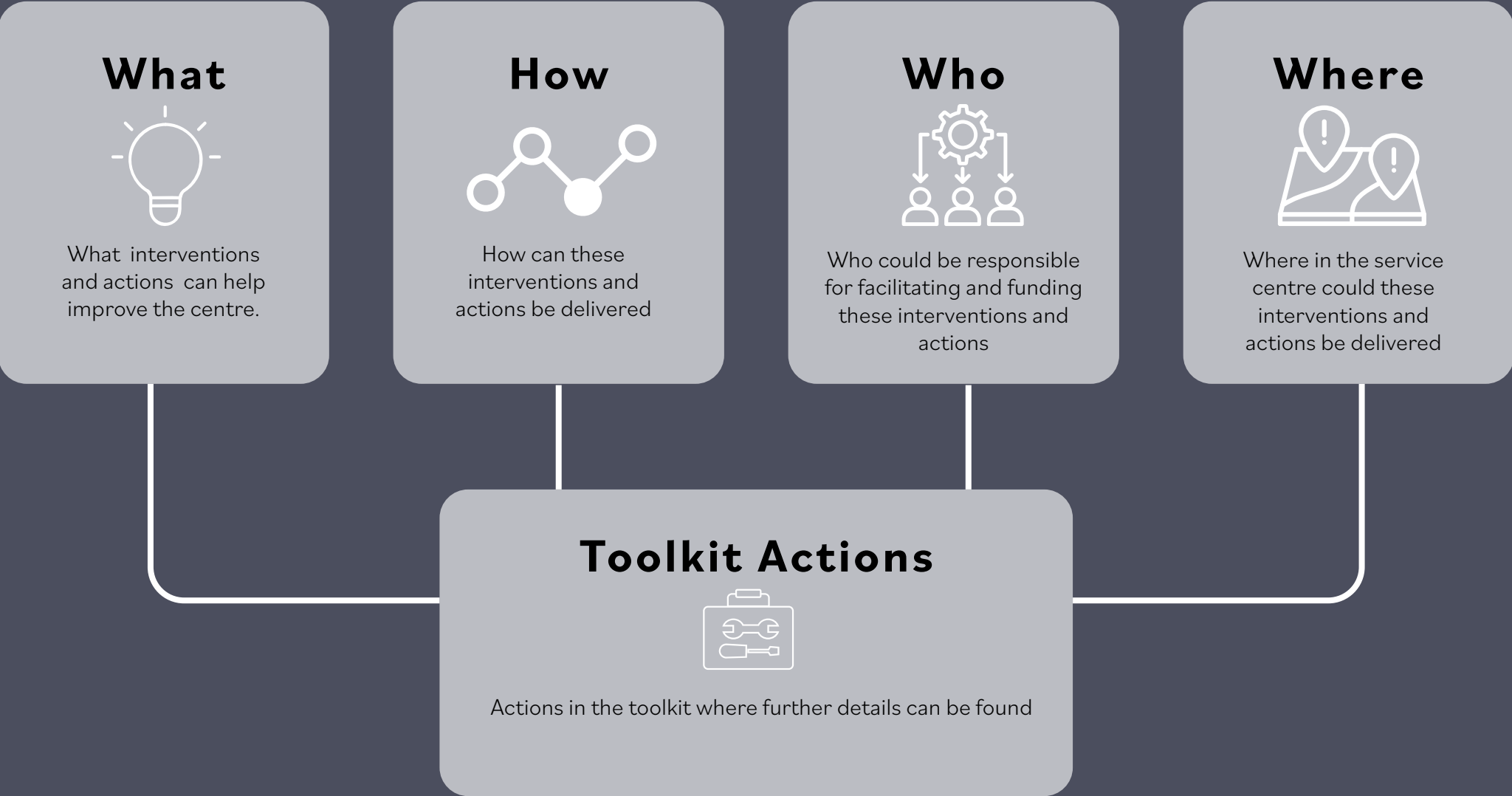
POYNTON ACTION PLAN

9 Priority Areas for Intervention

The Action Plan has been prepared in collaboration with the Town Council and identifies actions which seek to support the established Vision and Objectives for Poynton responding to its challenges and opportunities. It sets out a series of actions, identifying a small number of priorities for intervention which will have the greatest impact on improving the vitality of the Centre.

For each of the actions further details are provided in terms of what, how, who and where (see Box for further details).

The Action Plan is supported by a Toolkit which provides a wide range of actions across 25 intervention areas (which align with the High Street Task Force recommendations) which can be undertaken by a range of stakeholders.



Vision and objectives

Vision Statement

Over the next 15 to 20 years development in Poynton will be of a high quality, sustainable and matched by the provision of infrastructure and services. This development will enable Poynton to retain its character and heritage as ‘a small town with a village feel’, bounded by Green Belt.

Community activities and the current mix of businesses will expand and prosper within attractive surroundings. Poynton will maintain a strong and inclusive sense of community, good access to neighbouring towns and villages and a positive sense of wellbeing making Poynton a healthy, happy and fulfilling place to live.

Objectives

- **To preserve and enhance its distinctive character and green spaces**
- **To enable and support sustainable development**
- **To improve access by walking, cycling and public transport in order to reduce car use**
- **To support the Town Centre and Business**

Role of the Centre

Poynton plays a number of important roles:

- A small town with a village feel serving the needs of its local residents
- A commuter town providing access to extensive employment opportunities in Cheshire and Greater Manchester
- A great base from which to access to attractive countryside in Cheshire and the Peak District

The Vitality Plan seeks to support Poynton to fulfil its potential across these important roles.

Areas for intervention

The following have been identified as areas for intervention, with priorities highlighted with white borders. Potential actions are identified in Section 10:



Spatial action plan

The Spatial Action Plan illustrates key features of the Centre and identifies where proposed actions could be delivered. It highlights the significant green assets both within and around the Centre as well as its the Centre’s range of civic amenities. It also highlights how all the assets are well connected.

The two priority actions which have emerged from the public consultations are:

1. Action 1: Connecting green assets and encouraging walking and cycling

Poynton has a number of good quality green spaces within its immediate centre catchment, such as Poynton Park, Deva Park, and Brecon Park however they are not well accessed by good quality walking and cycling routes. The Action Plan identifies Poynton’s opportunity to better promote sustainable movement between these green assets and reconnect them with the centre of Poynton.

2. Action 2 Tackling Void Properties

There are a small number of voids in Poynton. Generally, occupancy is good. However, some properties have been empty for a long time despite approaches being made to the property holders by other businesses. The Town Council and Cheshire East Council will engage with landlords to encourage them to identify new occupiers to bring vacant units back into use.

Key

Local centre boundary

Train station

Sport and recreation

Key community services

Existing key walking routes

Listed building

Primary routes through local centre

Public realm improvement corridors

Existing car parks

Existing woodland

Existing play / sports area

Existing open space

Local centre main street

Signposted gateways into centre

Poynton Round

Priority Actions

Action 1
Connecting green assets and encouraging walking and cycling

Action 2
Tackling Void Properties



Movement action plan

Building on the transport schemes suggested in the LTDP, additional town centre transport schemes are suggested as likely to be beneficial in supporting town centre vitality and viability. These additional schemes, which place a strong emphasis on public realm and enhancing the street environment are set out in the table and plan opposite.

The impact of the Poynton Relief Road should be assessed to determine how active travel can be prioritised going forward.

Town Centre movement schemes suggested in addition to LTDP potential schemes

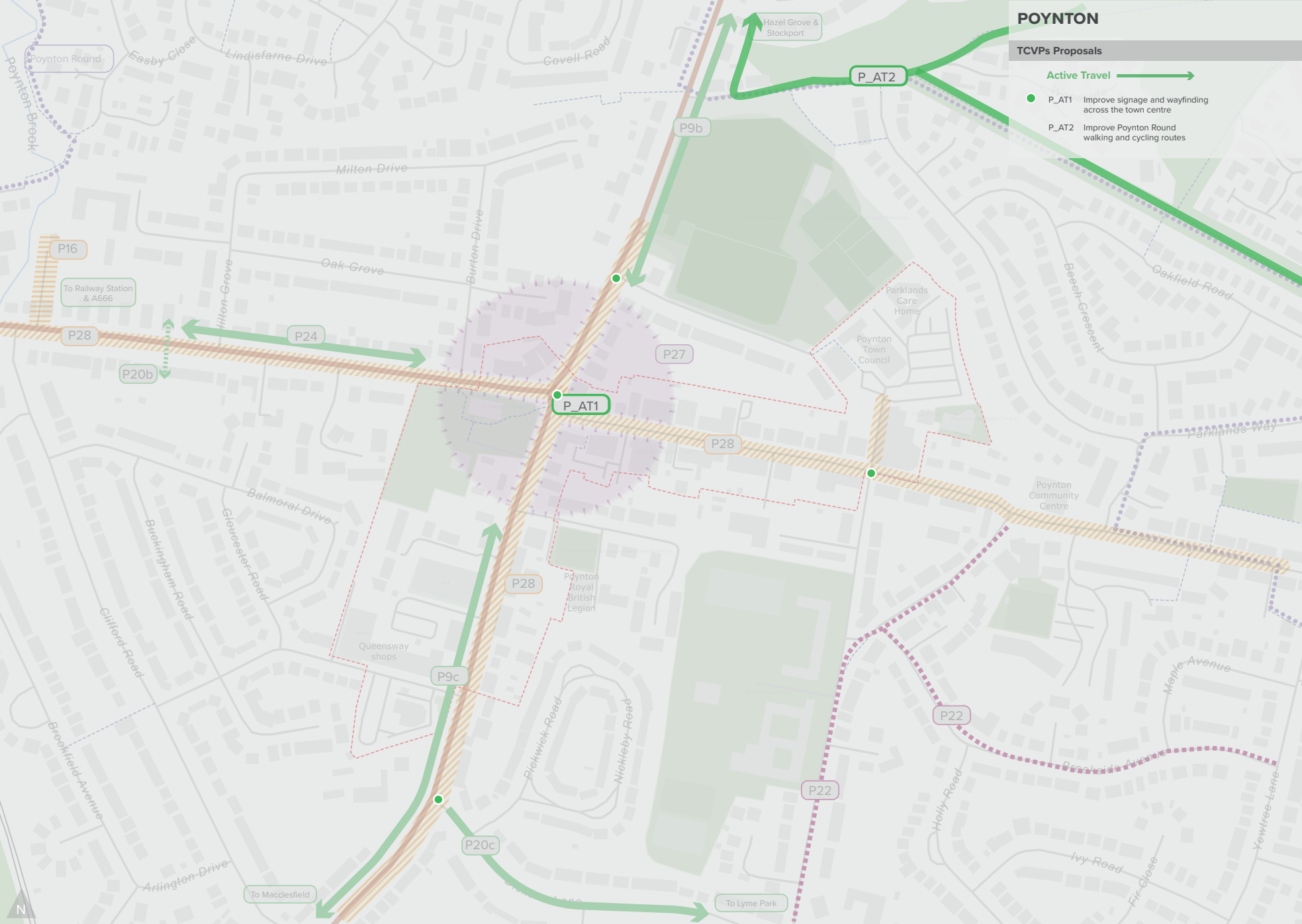
Type	Ref	Scheme	Description	Costing ¹
Active Travel	P_AT1	Improve signage and wayfinding across the town centre	Improve signage and wayfinding across town at key gateways and landmarks.	<£100k
	P_AT2	Improve Poynton Round walking and cycling routes	Improve Poynton Round walking and cycling routes to provide connections to leisure facilities and attractions in Middlewood.	£1m-£5m

¹ The costs presented are indicative only at this stage. Costs will depend on type and level of interventions delivered – and should be revised at subsequent design stages.
cheshireeast.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=48d6af7045d2495c81a1850a2c8a72c1



High-quality surfacing on a shared walking and cycling route through park and woodland – Poynton Round could be upgraded in a similar way. – Sirmione, Italy (Photo credit: MottMacdonald)

Poynton Town Centre Viability Plan Proposals



10 Potential Actions



Action 1: Connecting Green Assets and Encouraging cycling and walking (PRIORITY)

What

Poynton has a number of good quality green spaces within its immediate centre catchment, such as Poynton Park, Deva Park, and Brecon Park however they are not well accessed by good quality walking and cycling routes. Poynton has an opportunity to better promote sustainable movement between these green assets and reconnect them with the centre of Poynton.

Poynton is in an envious position with regard to the look, feel and quality of its town centre streets. However, there is more to do beyond the immediate town centre to improve conditions for people on foot and cycle.

On the main roads outside of the town centre core, conditions for people on foot can be challenging, with high vehicle flows, high design speeds, narrow footways, and limited safe crossing points. An example of this is the connection between the town centre and railway station.

Poynton Round is a well-used asset, but could be significantly improved. It has the potential to be an exemplar connection - stitching together residential areas with high-quality green active travel infrastructure.

How

- Events such as markets, festivals, carnivals and other cultural performances could be held in the various parks. A programme of events would help coordinate events across the spaces
- Enhanced public realm along Chester Road would provide safer cycle and pedestrian routes between the station and the centre
- Establish a wayfinding strategy that better connects the green assets
- Change of materials on routes that allows for accessibility by all
- Explore options for improving links along Chester Road, London Road (North & South), Poynton Pool and Dickens Lane as set out in the Local Transport Development Plan (LTDP)
- If redevelopment proposals come forward for Poynton Sports Club ensure strong direct walking and cycling links with town centre services such as the Library, explore potential for children’s play to serve both new homes and the town centre plus ensure strong walking and cycling links to any re-provided sports facilities

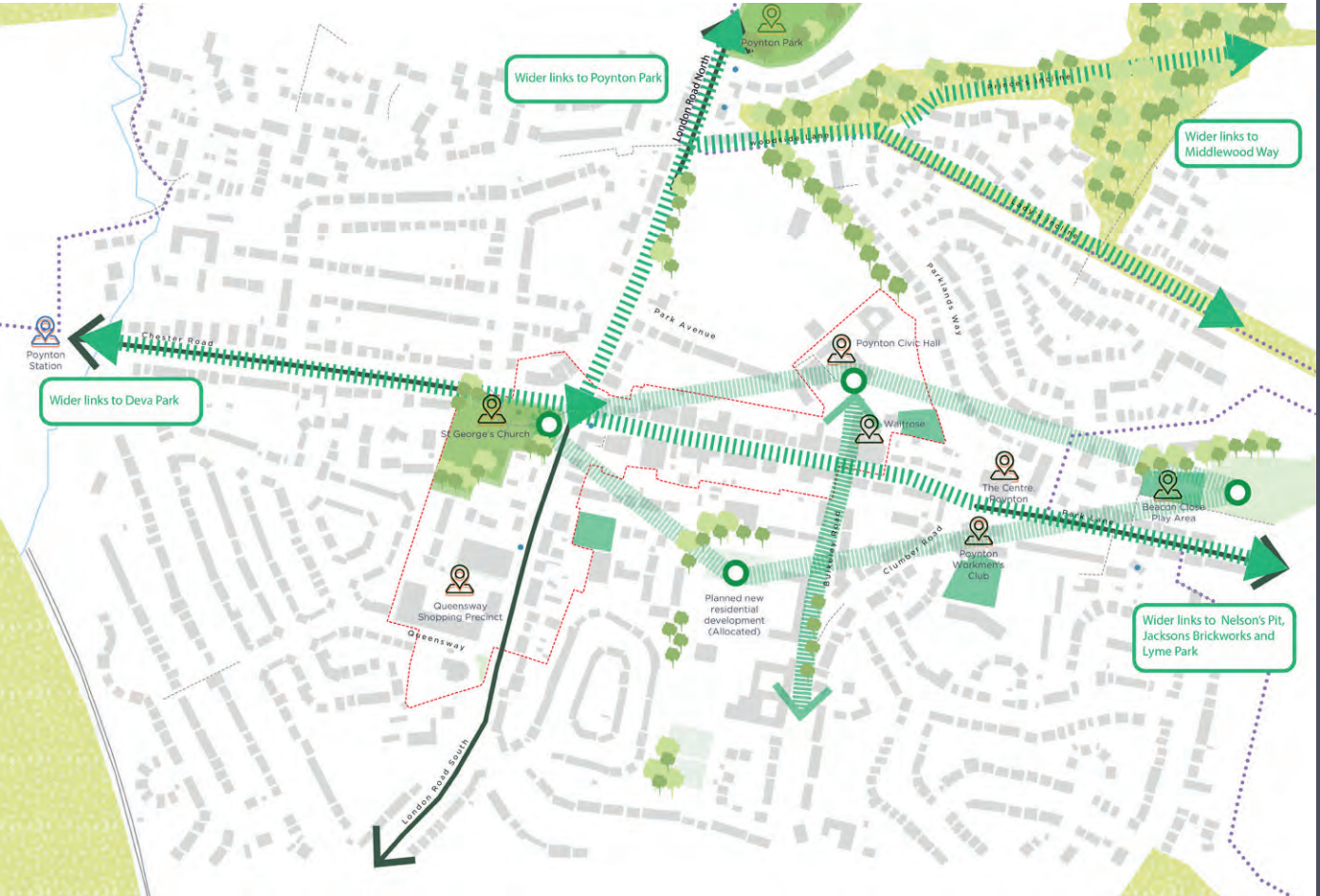
- Develop a detailed strategy for the phased improvement of Poynton Round
- Introduce new pedestrian crossings on Chester Road
- Review of on-street parking on key routes through the town centre to ensure balance of street space for pedestrians
- Improve maintenance of pavements, drains and vegetation to support more walking and cycling
- All future proposals must ensure they are accessible for everyone
- More seating providing resting points and places to dwell

Who

- Town Council
- CEC
- Community Groups

Where

- CA523 London Road South and London Road North linking to Poynton Park and Pool
- A555
- Chester Rd
- Dickens Lane
- Poynton Train Station



Action 1 supports the following objectives:

- To preserve and enhance its distinctive character and green spaces
- To enable and support sustainable development
- To improve access by walking, cycling and public transport in order to reduce car use

Toolkit Actions

- 1b Use of events to open up and connect
- 1c Enable autumn and winter al fresco
- 1d Use of lighting
- 4e Enhance gateway sites
- 9c Enable a café culture
- 15a Annual/regular events
- 16a Self guided heritage tours
- 17 Markets

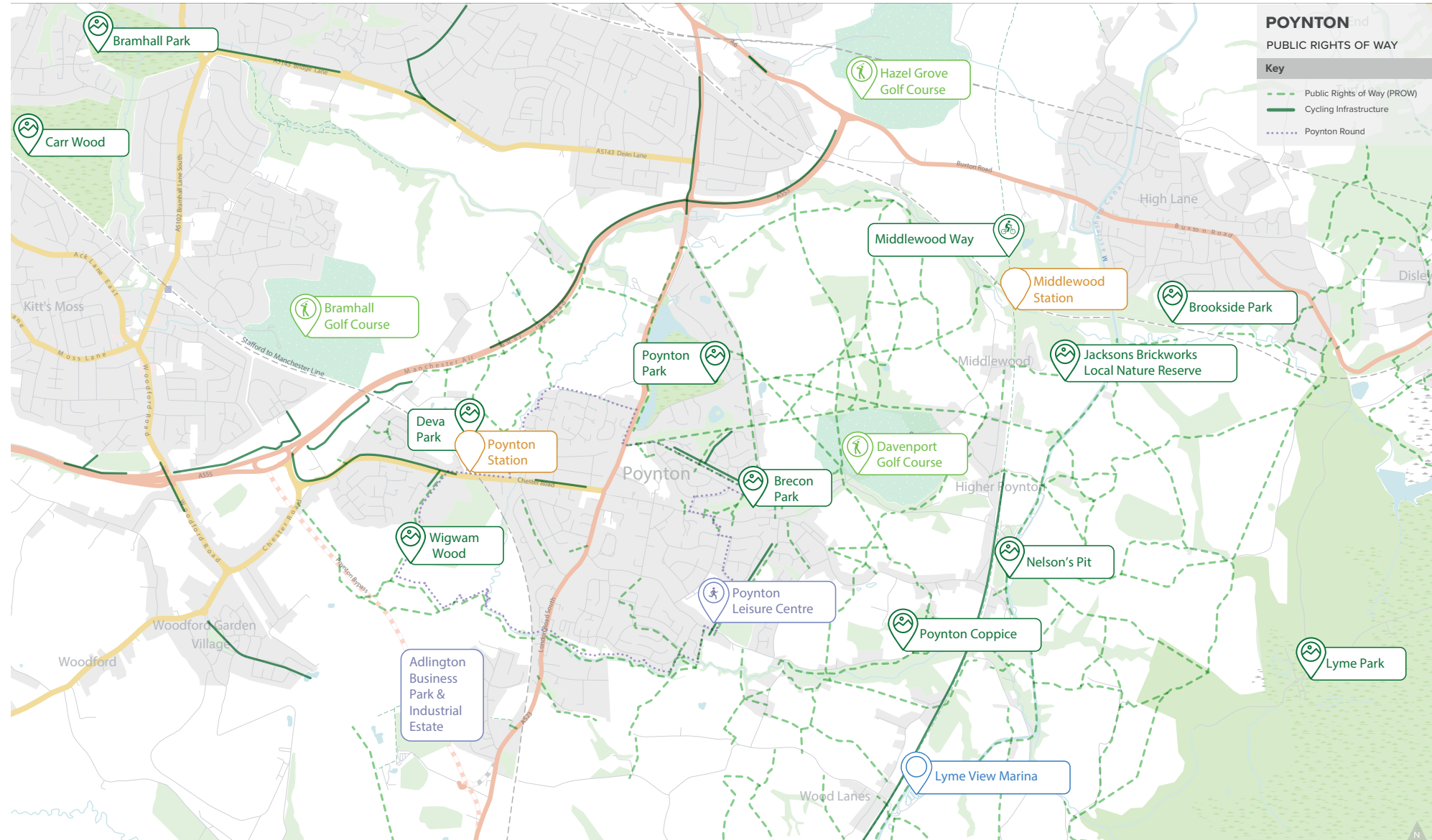


Action 1: Connecting Green Assets and Encouraging cycling and walking (PRIORITY)

Designing safe and accessible routes is key to enhancing the attractiveness of active travel connections between Poynton and the nearby green spaces and facilities. Active travel infrastructure should generally be separated from traffic if it is to be safe and well used.

Routes should be barrier-free, to allow unrestricted access for all users. In many locations this may mean removing existing barriers that exclude disabled people from using the PROWs.

Good quality surfacing and drainage is particularly important to maintain year-round use and accessibility.



Shared walking & cycling route on the edge of a settlement. Peschiera, Italy (Photo Credit: MottMacdonald)



Well sign posted routes aid wayfinding across the centre. (Photo Credit: Adobe Stock)



Barrier-free access to a Public Right of Way – Liverpool UK. (Photo Credit: MottMacdonald)



Action 2: Tackling Void Properties (PRIORITY)

What

There are a small number of voids in Poynton. Generally, occupancy is good. However, some properties have been empty long term despite approaches being made to the property holders by other businesses.

Further approaches should be made where resources allow with the Town Council and CEC collaborating to try and establish the root cause, with consideration being given to all potential options to tackle vacancies.

How

It is acknowledged that the ability to identify new retail occupiers for the large vacant units is likely to be difficult particularly as a result of Covid which has compounded structural change in the retail sector. Instead of focusing on new retail occupiers it is worth trying to target leisure operators. Flexible workspace is being looked at in some vacant departments stores but usually in those with some character.

Residential is also another option to be considered for smaller units on the edges of the town or above shops. The key is to work with local developers and to complement the wider new homes being developed on the edge of the town.

Meanwhile uses (until development can happen) and pop up stores or activities can support footfall and allow potential occupiers to test the local area.

Other short term solutions which brighter up vacant shopfronts include “wrappers” promoting the town and its businesses or existing shops to showcase their products.

Town Council and Cheshire East Council to engage with landlords to encourage them to consider which of these ideas could work best to support their vacant units to be brought back into use or as a temporary use whilst an occupiers can be identified.

Town Council and Cheshire East Council to work with owners of vacant units to encourage them to use vacant shops/windows to display exhibitions/art work or for use by community groups to engage with community.

Who

- Town Council and CEC working with landlords and local developers

Where

- Vacant units



Livening vacant units with colourful, co-ordinated shutter painting as shown in this example.



Make Shift, Pop Brixton, London; Providing a location for local, independent businesses to set up shop, trade and exchange ideas



Hatch, Mancunian Way, Manchester; Demonstrates a great example of filling voids in what would be left as a barren, uninviting space



Action 2 supports the following objectives:

- To support the Town Centre and Business



Toolkit Actions

- 5c – Dressing vacant sites
- 9a – Repurposing of assets
- 15b – Community organised artwork
- 19a – Affordable start-up space to help new businesses establish themselves
- 21a – Managed activation of underutilised space
- 25a – Meanwhile uses



Action 3: Mobilising Poynton's Community

What

Poynton already has an impressive network of local community groups who support the town and its amenities. The Town Council is also supporting businesses to network through the establishment of the Poynton for Business website which has a directory of over 320 businesses. Having created a platform to engage with local businesses the key now is to harness this into encouraging them to collaborate to generate new revenue opportunities and to determine how businesses could give back more to the Centre and its community

How

Groundwork have recently been appointed by the Wilmslow Town Council to support local business engagement and to test the appetite to establish a Business Improvement District (BID). However a lighter approach could be pursued in Poynton using the new platform to identify potential actions which different sectors could support the Council with. As part of their commitment to supporting their local communities businesses may be willing to offer

- Sponsorship
- Materials
- Technical support
- Volunteers

Businesses networking could also identify “themes” where businesses can drive opportunities forward for example retailers and F&B hosting a fashion show or beauty events.

Consider creating a single platform for all networks/ local charity groups/activities/council information etc and offer support and advice for volunteers looking to set up events/ workshops/ classes

Businesses could also come together to established loyalty schemes to support shoppers to stay local. This has worked well in Belper <https://lovebelper.co.uk/>

Poynton also has active community groups and these important resources should be utilised to support the delivery of the Action Plan

Who

- Town Council
- Local businesses especially larger and dynamic/ innovative/creative businesses. It is recognised that some retailers may be struggling but other local businesses may be keen to get involved and support their community
- Community Groups

Where

- Across Poynton



Action 3 supports the following objectives:

- To support the Town Centre and Business



Toolkit Actions

- 3b Appointment of town centre champions
- 10a Independent shop guides
- 13a Business profiles
- 13b Community wealth building
- 25f Tap into local talent



Action 4: Raising Poynton's Profile

What

Poynton has a number of websites – Town Council, Business and Community - showcasing the town and whilst this is a great start there are lots of ways in which the town's offer could be better promoted to attract more local residents, workers, visitors and tourists.

How

Consideration should be given as to whether these existing websites could be combined into a single platform providing information for local residential, businesses and visitors. The website could also be linked to other partner websites including CEC and Visit Chester and Marketing Cheshire. Content could be added to really showcase the town including profiles of local businesses (including individuals to make it more personal), local walks, cycle routes etc

To support increased footfall on the website it would be worth considering which other websites it could be linked up with. Such as other centres in the area or with centres that are linked by cycling or walking and local visitor attractions. Reviewing the newly revamped website for Wilmslow (www.wilmslowswaybetter.co.uk) may provide inspiration for energising Poynton's website. showcases many exciting aspects of the town its wellbeing, F&B, cinema, businesses, shopping and how to explore the wider area. The website was created by local businesses who wanted to support Wilmslow. Town Council is preparing a Welcome to Poynton leaflet with information for new residents and has set up a Business Directory and is currently looking at how to work with businesses in the Town.

Consideration should also be given to how to make more of social media. For example tapping into cycling and walking groups discussions to encourage them to visit Poynton as part of their journeys. Encouraging local groups to actively promote what's on in Poynton.

Other mechanisms to raise the profile of the centre could include:

- Improved signage (physical and virtual via app/ QR code) to stop people just passing through
- Establish Town Ambassadors
- Expand the already impressive programme of events to attract as wide an audience as possible and use this to raise awareness of businesses. Hitchin held special events to showcase individual streets to encourage people to explore other parts of the town not just where they usually visit
- Turn the heritage leaflet into an interactive trail around the town showcasing buildings of historic value or interesting people or historic events. This can be real or virtual embracing technology (Apps or QR codes)
- Ensure that key messages from the Vitality Plan is fed into the Visitor Economy Strategy that is being prepared for Cheshire East

Who

- Town Council
- Marketing Cheshire
- Local Businesses

Where

- N/A



Action 4 supports the following objectives:

- To preserve and enhance its distinctive character and green spaces
- To enable and support sustainable development
- To improve access by walking, cycling and public transport in order to reduce car use
- To support the Town Centre and Business



Toolkit Actions

- 1b Use events to open up new areas
- 2a Create a smarter High street
- 3b Appointment of town centre champions
- 3c Destination management plans
- 4b Better signage
- 10a Independent shop guides
- 12a Create an App
- 12b Creation of Local Brand
- 12c Set-up an online platform
- 12d Introduce WIFI/ digital high street/ town centre app
- 15a Annual/ regular events



Action 5: Expanding the Events Programme

What

Pre COVID-19 there was a good number of events taking place in Poynton - Christmas Fest, Civic Bonfire, Summer Fest, folk nights, food and drinks events, the Poynton Show and Party in the Park. In addition the Civic Hall a range of classes and events bringing people into the town in the evenings or at weekends. Following the ending of COVID restrictions there is considerable scope to reinvigorate the events programme.

How

- The majority of pre Covid events have been re-established in 2022 of there are plans to bring them back in 2023. All events as promoted on the Town Council website. Preparation is underway for the Poynton Arts Festival which will take place in summer 2023
- Scope exists to work with other centres to develop an integrated programme of themed events which could target audiences that are currently not coming to Poynton
- Participation of walking and cycling has been strong during COVID and the extensive networks that are close to the Centre should be targeted to encourage more visitors to use the Centre's amenities as part of their cycles or walks
- The Centre enjoys an impressive range of spaces within its heart which could be used more often to accommodate a wider range of events
- Try to encourage a regular makers market to visit the Centre
- More day time events for the elderly and less mobile residents as well as events for young people
- Conduct a drive for volunteers for events
- The Civic Hall is already a vibrant centre offering a wider range of activities but consideration should be given as to how this and other public buildings and land in the area could be used to host an enhanced programme of events including larger events utilising the car parking (temporarily) and open space in the area
- Enhancing the public realm around the Library with consistent paving, seating, and planting which would allow for small scale event space.

Who

- Town Council
- Local Businesses
- CEC
- Community Groups

Where

- Across the town, including Poynton Park



Tarascon, France. Open public space: example of how decluttering the street environment and integrating green features can upgrade the look and feel of the space. (Photo Credit: MottMacdonald)



Jerdan Place, Fulham. Small public space with active frontages, trees and seating (Photo Credit: MottMacdonald)



Use of public realm to host markets and local events. (Photo Credit: Getty)



Action 5 supports the following objectives:

- To preserve and enhance its distinctive character and green spaces
- To support the Town Centre and Business



Toolkit Actions

- 1b Introduce a programme of events which open-up and connect different parts of the centre for a limited time
- 1c Enable autumn and winter al-fresco dining
- 1d Use Lighting
- 4a Provide pop-up seating
- 9b Curated events
- 9c Enable a café culture
- 15a Annual/regular events
- 17 Markets
- 20b Use space and activities to attract people
- 21a Managed activation of underutilised space

Centre Wide Actions

In addition to the specific actions identified for Poynton, a number of actions have been identified that are relevant to all of the nine centres. These are:

1. **Appointment of CEC Centre Champion-** The identification of a nominated officer (go to person/champion) within CEC management team for each of the Centres who would understand local priorities for the Centre and would support them to access appropriate officers within key departments and also would seek to unblock issues. It is understood that this is something CEC is currently considering. This would be supported by an providing each of the centres with a clear organogram of who within CEC is responsible for what to make engagement easier.

2. **Creation of a Centres Forum**
- Establishment of forum where key representatives from each of the centres could come together on a regular basis to receive updates from CEC about common issues/opportunities would be beneficial. It is also recognised that during the preparation of the Vitality Plans that a number of the centres are making a great progress overcoming specific issues. By coming together and sharing progress and discussing issues it is considered that the centres would be better able to share best practice and to identify actions where they could collaborate with

- other centres to drive economies of scale/value for money. Some meetings may just be held between the centres (within out representation from CEC officers) whilst others could include CEC and/or other partners such as C&W LEP, Groundwork etc.
3. **Centre Focused Meetings in CEC** - The process of preparing the Vitality Plans has involved internal workshops with relevant department leads within CEC to ensure that all departments are considering challenges and opportunities in the round rather than just in terms of their individual responsibility. It would be beneficial to continue to hold more regular Centre focused workshops. The best decisions for the centres will be taken when the implications of proposals are considered in the round taking into account both potential investment and long term maintenance.
4. **Streamlining maintenance of public realm and greenspace** - In light of the local desire for improved maintenance combined with recognition that CEC budgets are under severe pressure, it is recommended to ensure maintenance of public realm can be optimised that further engagement would be beneficial to agree how the resources of CEC, the Town Council and wider stakeholders could

- be targeted to support maintenance. Work to establish a more comprehensive schedule of local assets in each centre and who is responsible for their maintenance should be the starting point of drive for improved maintenance. Going forward any future capital investment must be supported by appropriate consideration as to how assets will be maintained over their lifetime. It is also important to recognise that better maintenance does not necessarily just relate to grass being cut regularly. In recognition of the importance of biodiversity, going forward it is anticipated that consideration will be given to allocating parcels of land to the “wild” to support biodiversity.
5. **Increasing importance of sustainability**
- sustainability is now a critical issue for many organisations and important for local residents both in terms of operational implications (for example energy costs) but also in terms of local impact on the local community and the planet. As such sustainability can no longer be positioned as another priority action but rather must be a concept that is considered in every aspect of proposed actions to minimise their carbon footprint and maximise their positive benefits for the local area and its community.

6. **Improved platform for communicating activities** - the preparation of the Vitality Plans has demonstrated that all of the centres are proactively trying to improve their centres. However it is recognised that many stakeholders will not be aware of all these efforts. Consideration therefore needs to be given as to how to amplify to more local residents, shoppers, visitors and businesses what is going on. Consideration should be given as to how to enhance the current websites for example adding more content and sharing this through a variety of channels and to ensure that these are also linked to other key partners for example CEC and the other centres (so collectively they reinforcing each other’s profiles)
7. **Enhanced engagement with local businesses** - many of the centres benefit from having a range of national, and in some cases international businesses, many of which are innovating in their specialist areas. There is a significant benefit to the centres and their businesses to collaborating. Whilst restrictions on public sector revenue budgets is putting pressure on what CEC can support there is an increasing recognition by businesses, especially corporates, for the need to support their local communities (Corporate Social Responsibility). This can
- be in the form of grants, offering expertise or encouraging their employees to volunteer. Even smaller businesses often want to give back to the communities in which they operate. This can be in the form of materials and/or specialist expertise (e.g. marketing which has been harnesses by Wilmslow in setting up the Wilmslow’s Way Better brand and website). All centres should seek to better engage with their local businesses to determine how they can collaborate to support each other’s objectives. This type of collaboration can give centres a significant boost particularly when it happens around public realm (investment and maintenance), marketing and branding.
8. **Greater ownership of community assets** - a couple of Town Councils have taken responsibility for their community assets (both in terms of ownership and/or management). CEC is willing to engage with each of the Town and Parish Councils to discuss whether there could be benefits from greater local ownership of local assets. A process is in place to support this to happen. There is also scope for centres who are already doing this to share pro and cons with other centres (via the proposed Centres Forum).

11 Delivery

Governance and Delivery

Poynton Town Council is responsible for supporting Poynton to fulfil its potential working closely with local community groups. Going forward the Town Council will continue to be a major driver in the delivery of the agreed actions emerging from the Vitality Plan.

Having established a range of potential projects that will support Poynton to thrive, further work is now required to determine a detailed action plan setting out who will do what and by when.

It is recommended that dedicated working groups are set up to drive specific short term priority actions forward. The action focused working groups will be responsible for:

- Defining the details of the proposed action
- Considering how it could be funded
- Determining who needs to be involved in supporting its delivering and what their role will be
- Seeking funding - this might require support from other partners
- Determining the timetable for intervention

- Monitoring and evaluating progress against key performance indicators and refining actions if agreed outcomes are not being met
- Reporting progress to relevant partners including the WIP and CEC
- Recommending that CEC, Town Council and any other key local stakeholder groups be invited to adopt the TCVP as a shared common plan. This would allow easy demonstration to potential funders that there is a consensus of approach and buy in from the local community

The makeup of the working groups will vary depending on the specific actions they are focused on. It is important to ensure that the same people are not tasked with getting involved in all the working groups as this will impact on progress. As such the number of working groups and pace of delivery will depend on the number of stakeholder partners that can be engaged with and encouraged to get involved.

Consideration should be given as to whether specific stakeholders need to be invited to be involved to provide technical support. For example CEC, national organisations like the Canal and River Trust or local businesses with specific expertise around specific actions already. CEC Connected Community officers may be able to provide development support.

Progress will be reported into the Town Councils who will in turn also report regularly to CEC. Where issues regarding progress/delivery are identified discussions will need to be taken to determine the required refinements to get progress back on track.

It is acknowledged that partners will need to determine their appetite and ability to deliver the proposed actions. Depending on resources it may be determined that additional staff may need to be recruited to support the pace of delivery of the Vitality Plan and supporting Action Plans.

Communication and Engagement

There is scope to expand on the current websites and to use them to engage more effectively with a wider range of residents, visitors, workers and businesses. There is a need to begin to share important messages with key stakeholders including:

- Recent and proposed investment in the centre
- Projects that are being worked up
- Funding that is being sought and accessed

How to get involved

- The key partners to be engaged with on a regular basis include:
 - Local businesses
 - Residents
 - Local community and interest groups

- Other towns centres generally and specifically those who are focusing on common actions for example centres looking to make more of wider cycling and walking opportunities.

Quality engagement should generate potential volunteers to get involved in the delivery of specific actions and potentially resources to support their delivery.

The following mechanisms should be used to engage with key partners:

- Further enhancement of the website and strengthen profile on social media
- Public engagement consultations – the draft Vitality Plan will be consulted upon and this be used to continue the dialogue with local residents
- Piggybacking Events – for example a stall at markets showcasing what’s on in Poynton and how to get involved
- Existing and enhanced business networking events – to share emerging ideas, test support and encourage ideas to refine and support their delivery
- Identification of a team of local ambassadors – ambassadors could be trained and then

kept up to date about what it going on in the Centre and then they can showcase positive messages to their contacts. Ambassadors can be proactive local independent businesses leaders and other individuals who come into contact with lots of local people e.g. taxi drivers.

Consideration could be given to the appointment of a part time marketing officer for the centre as Wilmslow has just done.

In addition, as set out in Section 10, it is important for enhanced communication and engagement between CEC and Poynton Town Council.

Funding

There is not a pot of money available to support the delivery of the Vitality Plan. Rather the Vitality Plan has been prepared as a resource to support discussions with potential funders. As such it provides a useful tool with which can be used to:

- Articulate priorities for Poynton to CEC - the Vitality Plan will be used to articulate local priorities to CEC to guide them in their negotiations with developers in respect of contributions linked to planning applications (especially to support improvements in cycling, public transport and public realm) and also in determining their own capital budgets. Formal adoption of the TCVP by key stakeholder organisations can help demonstrate common objectives and priorities for any party submitting funding bids.
- Support external funding bids – having a clear action plan which provides an evidence base and priorities that have been consulted upon is now essential for most funding bids. It is important to recognise that often funding bids have specific funding leads. In some cases this may be CEC or Cheshire & Warrington LEP in others it might need to be a community

- group. Whoever may be responsible for leading and submitting a specific funding application, demonstration of collaboration between stakeholders and community support is essential
- Engage with local businesses – to determine whether there are actions that they can get involved in which align with their priorities for supporting their local communities

Another approach to generating more revenue to spend locally is for the Town Council to take responsibility for owning or managing assets with any surpluses being generated being invested back into the local centre.

It is important to note that when determining potential interventions consideration must be given to both initial capital investment and longer term revenue implications such as maintenance.

Phasing

The actions identified in Section 10 range from projects which are already being progressed to long term aspirations which will require feasibility and funding before they can be delivered. The Vitality Plan identifies 5 actions which support the established vision and objectives for the Centre. The Town Council is proactive and a number of the identified actions are already being pursued.

The public consultation identified the following as priority interventions:

- Connecting green assets and encouraging cycling and walking
- Tackling void properties

Partners now need to determine a detailed action plan related to funding that they are able to access and the resources that they have available or can access to support delivery.

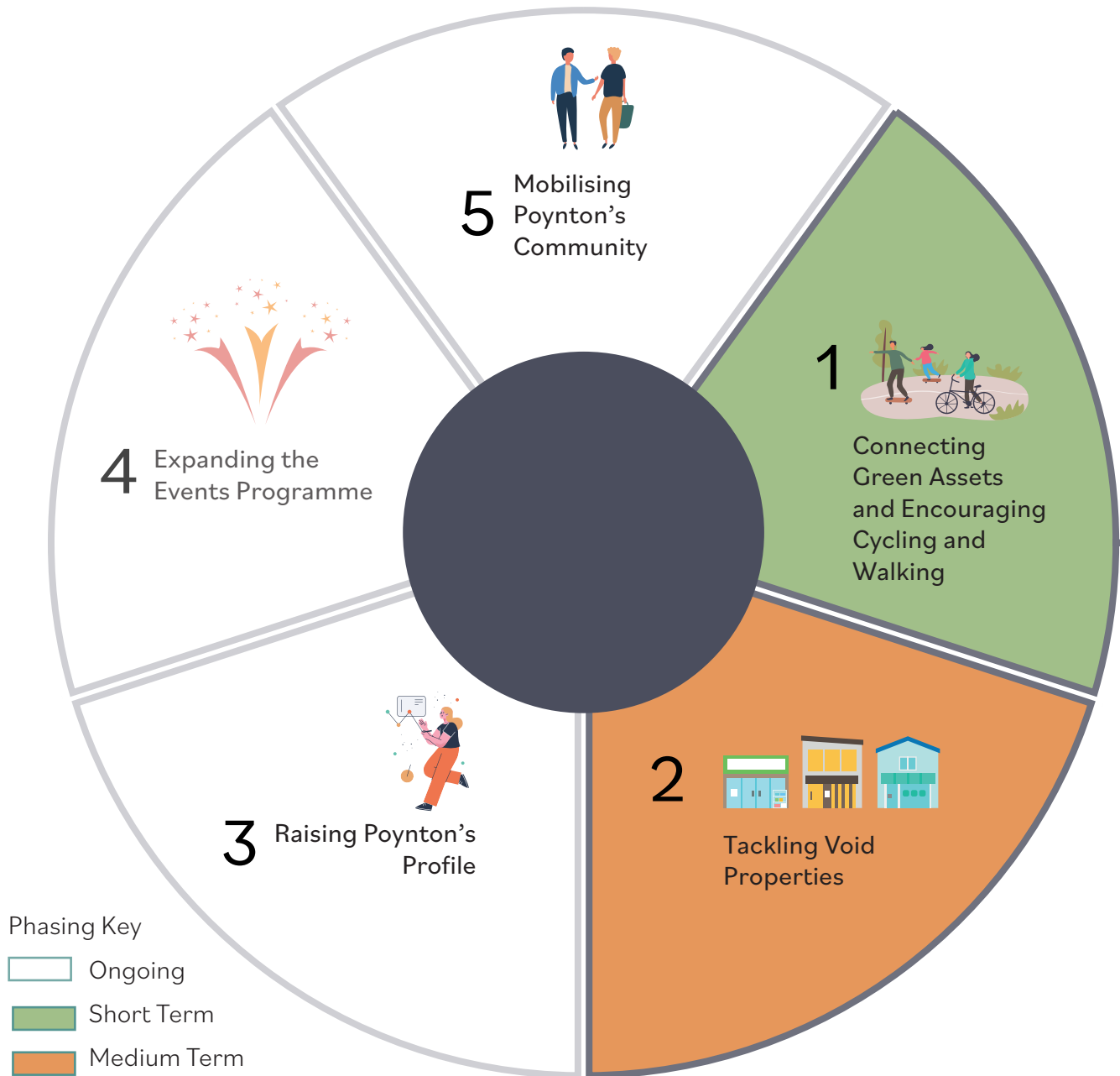
It is important to acknowledge that this indicative programme is not fixed and if specific sources of funding are identified the programme should be adapted to respond to the opportunity.

Covid has taught us important lessons about testing new approaches. For example temporary road closures to gauge whether reducing car access to encourage cycling or to provide outside dining space would benefit local centres.

This approach should be continued so that rather than a public realm project having to be worked up in huge detail and then significant resources found to deliver it more temporary solutions can be tested in terms of their impact and determine whether a more permanent solution is required or desirable. Changes are much more likely to be embraced by businesses and supported by local residents if they know that ideas are being tested and monitored and if they do not work can be reverted back to how they were.

A broad phasing plan for the identified actions is identified below where short term relates to 1-2 years, medium 3-5 and long 5+ years.

- A number of interventions will require further feasibility and this can be ongoing but intervention on the ground is likely to be a few years off whist planning permission and funding is sought
- A number of interventions are interrelated in particular strengthening green links and expanding the events programme



Monitoring and Evaluation

As noted above the programme and the action plan will not be set in stone but must be capable of responding to new opportunities or challenges. As such it will be important to monitor impact to determine whether the established vision and objectives are being met. Suggested key performance indicators (KPIs) and how they could be measured and how often are identified opposite.

KPI	How measured	Frequency
Footfall	External provider	Monthly
Number of vacancies	Town Clerk	Quarterly
New units opening	Town Clerk	Quarterly
Businesses engaged	Town Clerk to keep a list	Ongoing
Area of greenspace/open space/cycleways and footpaths improved	CEC	Annually
Hits on website	Traffic on social media	Quarterly
Increase air quality	CEC	Quarterly

Note: CEC has recently commissioned monthly footfall data to end Sep 2026. Recommend all those involved regularly share useful monitoring data with other parties so that all can be aware of progress.

Glossary

Term	Explanation
Comparison Goods Sector	Retail that stocks higher value goods that are purchased infrequently
Convenience Sector	Retail that stocks everyday items such as groceries, newspapers, toiletries, confectionery
F&B	Food and Beverage
Green Belt	A designated area of countryside, protected from most forms of development to help stop urban sprawl but can be used for agriculture, forestry and outdoor leisure
Greenspace	Parks, public gardens etc
HS2 route	The UKs new high speed rail network
KSC	Key Service Centres
Linkages	The connections between two or more places/ sites within the town centres
Public Realm	Space between and within buildings that is publicly accessible for everyone
S106 monies	Money that developers can use towards the development of community and social infrastructure
TCVP	Town Centre Vitality Plans
Wayfinding	The ways in which people orient themselves in a physical space and navigate from place to place
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
Dwell time spend	The time a person may spend in a particule place or area. For example, the length of time spent sat on a public bench.



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