

# Cabinet

## Agenda

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**Date:** Tuesday, 21st April, 2015  
**Time:** 2.00 pm  
**Venue:** Committee Suite 1, 2 & 3, Westfields, Middlewich Road,  
Sandbach CW11 1HZ

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The agenda is divided into 2 parts. Part 1 is taken in the presence of the public and press. Part 2 items will be considered in the absence of the public and press for the reasons indicated on the agenda and at the foot of each report.

### **PART 1 – MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED WITH THE PUBLIC AND PRESS PRESENT**

1. **Apologies for Absence**
2. **Declarations of Interest**

To provide an opportunity for Members and Officers to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in any item on the agenda.

3. **Public Speaking Time/Open Session**

In accordance with Procedure Rules Nos.11 and 35 a period of 10 minutes is allocated for members of the public to address the meeting on any matter relevant to the work of the body in question. Individual members of the public may speak for up to 5 minutes but the Chairman or person presiding will decide how the period of time allocated for public speaking will be apportioned where there are a number of speakers. Members of the public are not required to give notice to use this facility. However, as a matter of courtesy, a period of 24 hours' notice is encouraged.

Members of the public wishing to ask a question at the meeting should provide at least three clear working days' notice in writing and should include the question with that notice. This will enable an informed answer to be given.

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4. **Questions to Cabinet Members**

A period of 20 minutes is allocated for questions to be put to Cabinet Members by members of the Council. Notice of questions need not be given in advance of the meeting. Questions must relate to the powers, duties or responsibilities of the Cabinet. Questions put to Cabinet Members must relate to their portfolio responsibilities.

The Leader will determine how Cabinet question time should be allocated where there are a number of Members wishing to ask questions. Where a question relates to a matter which appears on the agenda, the Leader may allow the question to be asked at the beginning of consideration of that item.

5. **Minutes of Previous Meeting** (Pages 1 - 8)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015.

6. **Notice of Motion - Affordable Housing in Cheshire East** (Pages 9 - 14)

To consider and respond to the motion.

7. **Notice of Motion - Planning Policy on Method Statements** (Pages 15 - 18)

To consider and respond to the motion.

8. **Notice of Motion - Neighbourhood Plans** (Pages 19 - 22)

To consider and respond to the motion.

9. **Crewe Town Centre Regeneration Delivery Framework for Growth** (Pages 23 - 84)

To consider a report on a draft Crewe Town Centre Regeneration Framework for Growth.

10. **Strategic Acquisition - Crewe**

Report to follow.

11. **Crewe Bus Interchange Facility**

Report to follow.

12. **Crewe High Growth City - London and Continental Railways Agreement** (Pages 85 - 96)

To consider a report on developing an HS2 regeneration plan for Crewe and Middlewich in collaboration with London and Continental Railways.

13. **Cheshire East Council and Stoke-on-Trent City Council High Growth Strategy Concordat**

Report to follow.

14. **Investment to secure the Square Kilometre Array Project** (Pages 97 - 104)

To consider a report on an investment and support package in connection with the Square Kilometre Array project at Jodrell Bank.

15. **Update on Congleton Leisure Centre** (Pages 105 - 140)

To consider a report on the development of a business case for the enhancement of the Congleton Leisure Centre.

16. **Expansion Options - Snow Hill Car Park, Nantwich** (Pages 141 - 158)

To consider a report seeking approval to authorise further investigation, preliminary design, and financial appraisal for the expansion of Snow Hill Car Park in Nantwich.

17. **Procurement of Fresh Meat and Fresh Meat Products including Poultry** (Pages 159 - 162)

To consider a report on the procurement of fresh meat and fresh meat products including poultry.

18. **Innovation Bid**

Report to follow.

**THERE ARE NO PART 2 ITEMS**

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**CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the **Cabinet**  
held on Tuesday, 31st March, 2015 at Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields,  
Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

**PRESENT**

Councillor M Jones (Chairman)  
Councillor D Brown (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors Rachel Bailey, J Clowes, J P Findlow, L Gilbert, B Moran,  
P Raynes, D Stockton and D Topping

**Members in Attendance**

Councillors Rhoda Bailey, L Brown, M Grant, W Livesley, R Menlove, and  
L Smetham

**Officers in Attendance**

Mike Suarez, Lorraine Butcher, Anita Bradley, Caroline Simpson, Judith  
Tench, Heather Grimbaldeston and Paul Mountford

147 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Rod Menlove declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of the Tariff Setting Board in relation to the Fairer Power scheme, upon which he intended to speak during Members' questions to Cabinet.

148 **PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION**

Sue Helliwell asked if there would be any funding for neighbourhood grants in 2016/17. She also asked if a letter had been sent to the Secretary of State regarding future unplanned unsustainable development in Alsager and whether a reply had been received. The Leader understood that a letter had been sent to the Secretary of State; however, it was unlikely that a response would be received now, given that Parliament had been dissolved. He added that Cheshire East Council was committed to localism and would ensure that funding would continue to be available to support neighbourhood plans; the Secretary of State had only that week announced that a further £250M would be allocated to neighbourhood plans in 2016/17.

Sylvia Dyke asked if there could be a thorough investigation into the state of White Moss Quarry. She commented that the Council had done nothing to ensure that the necessary restoration works were undertaken in accordance with the original agreement. The Leader responded that he expected the site to be restored as originally agreed. He asked the Chief Executive to undertake an immediate investigation into the situation with White Moss Quarry, including how the Council had organised documents

on its website, given that some of the matters predated the creation of Cheshire East Council.

149      **QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS**

Councillor Rod Menlove asked if it could be made clear that the aim of the Council's Fairer Power scheme was to attack fuel poverty within the Borough and that the housing associations were very much on board. The Leader responded that Cheshire East Council had been the first authority in the country to introduce such a scheme and that so far approximately 1,000 residents had signed up. As more people signed up to the scheme, the tariff could be lowered further, allowing significant reductions in participating residents' fuel bills.

150      **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

**RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2015 be approved as a correct record.

151      **NOTICE OF MOTION - CORPORATE TAX MANAGEMENT**

Cabinet considered the following motion which had been moved by Councillor S Hogben and seconded by Councillor K Edwards at the Council meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2014 and referred to Cabinet for consideration:

*"Nationally, nearly half of local authority funding comes from central government – financed from general taxation which includes corporation tax. This makes corporate tax avoidance an issue directly relevant to the provision of local government services, as well as to the provision of public services around the world.*

*This Council calls upon the UK government to listen to the strength of public feeling and act to end the injustice of tax avoidance by large multinational companies, in developing countries and the UK.*

*While many ordinary people face falling household income and rising costs of living, some multinational companies are avoiding billions of pounds of tax from a tax system that fails to make them pay their fair share. Local governments in developing countries and the UK alike would benefit from a fairer tax system where multinational companies pay their fair share, enabling authorities around the world to provide quality public services."*

The report outlined the actions HMRC was already taking to tackle the issue of tax avoidance.

**RESOLVED**

That Cabinet fully supports the approach being undertaken by HMRC and refers anyone wishing to find further details to the HMRC website which shows how the Government is tackling this important issue.

152      **CONGLETON PUBLIC REALM ENHANCEMENT SCHEME**

Cabinet considered a proposal to invest in public realm enhancements in Congleton Town Centre.

The Strategy included the enhancement of the pedestrianised Bridge Street/Little Street area and creating a Shared Space at the intersection between Bridge St/High Street and Moody St/Market Street, referred to as Festival Square. Further details were set out in the report.

In December 2014 Cheshire East Council had confirmed that in principle £1m was available for these enhancements.

**RESOLVED**

That Cabinet approves

1. the prioritisation of the £1 million allocation to invest in public realm enhancements in Congleton Town Centre; and
2. the first phase of work necessary to establish a preferred option for the public realm improvements (up to a maximum of £120k) and that, following consultation with Congleton Town Council and endorsement through the Council's Project Gateway process, this be reported back to a future Cabinet meeting for approval.

153      **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING GRANTS SCHEME**

Cabinet considered a policy for the allocation of Neighbourhood Planning Grants.

The proposals in the report would enable Cheshire East Council to further support residents in Cheshire East to establish local planning policy that was relevant to their communities. To help communities achieve this, the implementation of a Neighbourhood Planning Grants Scheme was proposed. The draft policy was appended to the report.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Jobs proposed an amendment to the draft policy to remove a provision which would have prevented organisations already in receipt of support from the Council from receiving further support under the grant scheme.

**RESOLVED**

That

1. subject to the amendment now proposed, the policy for the allocation of Neighbourhood Planning Grants as described in the report be approved; and
2. the funding of grants to local town and parish councils be met by resources set aside from the grants income received from DCLG for Cheshire East's supporting role in Neighbourhood Planning.

154      **REVISION OF THE CHESHIRE EAST COMMON ALLOCATIONS POLICY**

Cabinet considered a number of proposed changes to the Cheshire East Common Allocations Policy.

The proposed changes included giving priority to those with a local connection, and rewarding those in work on all new developments, at first let only, with the aim of creating mixed sustainable communities. The changes would also bring the policy in line with current legal requirements and give flexibility for Registered Providers to undertake affordability and capital limit checks as well as give priority to cared for children in housing need for a longer period of time. The changes were set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

**RESOLVED**

That the eight changes outlined in Appendix 1 to the report be incorporated into the Cheshire East Common Allocations Policy.

155      **DETERMINATION OF LOCAL AUTHORITY COORDINATED SCHEME AND ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS**

Cabinet considered the co-ordinated scheme and admission arrangements for 2016 and subsequent years.

The coordinated scheme (Annex 1 to the report) would apply to applications for places in all publicly funded mainstream primary and secondary schools (including academies) for the school year 2016-17. The proposed admission arrangements (Annex 2) included the overall procedure, practices, criteria, published admission number (PAN) and supplementary information to be used in deciding on the allocation of school places.

**RESOLVED**

That Cabinet approves

1. the proposed co-ordinated admission scheme, which all local authorities are required by section 88M of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (SSFA) to have in place (Annex 1 to the report); and
2. the proposed admission arrangements for Cheshire East community and controlled schools, which are the overall procedure, practices, criteria and supplementary information to be used in deciding on the allocation of school places (Annex 2).

156        **BETTER CARE FUND - SECTION 75 PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS**

Cabinet considered a report providing an update on the implementation and delivery of the Cheshire East Better Care Fund.

The Better Care Fund was a nationally driven initiative supporting the integration of health and social care.

The report updated Cabinet on the implementation and delivery of the Cheshire East Better Care Fund, as approved by NHS England and overseen locally by the Cheshire East Health and Wellbeing Board. It requested Cabinet support for the Council to enter into two s75 Partnership Agreements with local health partners and sought delegated authority for the Executive Director of Strategic Commissioning to make decisions and agreements on behalf of the Council in relation to the commissioning of schemes funded by the Better Care Fund.

**RESOLVED**

That Cabinet

1. supports and approves the Council entering into two s75 partnership agreements with the relevant Clinical Commissioning Group, Eastern Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group (for Caring Together Programme) and South Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group (for Connecting Care Programme) to deliver the Better Care Fund Plan;
2. supports the proposal that the CCGs will be the lead accounting organisations for the s75 pooled budgets;
3. agrees that final amendments to the s75 be agreed with the Portfolio Holder for Care and Health in the Community, Executive Director of Strategic Commissioning, s151 Officer and respective CCG Chief Officers, and be reported back to Cabinet; and
4. agrees that the Cheshire Joint Commissioning Leadership Team be responsible for overseeing the delivery of the agreement pending a review of the existing governance arrangements and an updated

delivery position be reported to Cabinet and the CCG Governing Bodies during October 2015.

157      **ACCOUNTABLE BODY FOR THE LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP**

Cabinet considered a report seeking approval for Cheshire East Council to act as Accountable Body for all Government funding streams channelled through the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership.

Cheshire East Council was already the Accountable Body for the LEP's Core Funding grants, the Growing Places Fund and the Local Transport Body. In the light of the increasing number and value of grants being channelled through the LEP, and acknowledging the robustness of the LEP's governance and decision-making structures and its single Assurance Framework, it was recommended that Cheshire East Council act as Accountable Body for the LEP for all Government funding streams.

**RESOLVED**

That

1. subject to resolutions 2 and 3 below, Cheshire East Council act as Accountable Body for all Government funding streams channelled through Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership until such a time as the LEP or the Council determines otherwise;
2. the Chief Operating Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, be authorised to take all necessary actions to ensure the robustness of the Local Assurance Framework and certify that the final Framework is agreed and will be implemented in accordance with the standards articulated in the national framework;
3. the Chief Operating Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, be authorised to take all necessary actions to ensure the robustness of the Partnership Agreement, setting out the relationships, responsibilities and respective accountabilities of the LEP and Cheshire East Council as the Accountable Body; and
4. delegated authority be given to the Chief Operating Officer to make arrangements for the delivery of the responsibilities of the Accountable Body as described in the Local Assurance Framework and summarised in the report.

158      **DIGITAL CUSTOMER SERVICES**

Cabinet considered a report on the future 'digital by default' operating model for customer contact.

The Council had developed a business case for digital customer services which would enable customer contact across all services to be delivered primarily through digital channels. A Customer Portal would provide a single route into the Council's digital services, with information tailored around the individual's specific needs. Digital community hubs would encourage and enable customers to collaborate with the rest of the community, help people to access a support network, and potentially address issues of isolation and loneliness.

The business case had been reviewed and endorsed by the Executive Monitoring Board on 20<sup>th</sup> March. A summary was appended to the report.

## **RESOLVED**

That the Chief Operating Officer be authorised, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Outcomes, to take all necessary actions to implement the future digital by default operating model for customer contact, including:

- § Extending the existing contract with PwC to encompass further work packages to support implementation
- § Identifying an appropriate IT implementation partner(s)
- § Mobilising the Programme team to begin implementation

## **159 INTEGRATED DIGITAL CARE RECORD**

Cabinet was informed of an urgent decision taken under Cabinet Procedure Rule 53.

The decision related to the Cheshire Integrated Digital Care Record, an innovation which allowed the providers of health and care services to access information relating to vulnerable people in their care from different organisations to enable the needs of those people to be better understood and to allow more timely and appropriate interventions to support their care and support needs.

In July 2014 Cheshire East Council had submitted a bid to NHS England for Integrated Digital Care Fund - known as Tech Fund Two - capital monies on behalf of itself and partner organisations. HM Treasury had delayed the approval of the funds for several months after the submission of the bid and NHS England did not contact the Council to advise that the bid was successful until 25<sup>th</sup> February 2015. However, NHS England required the money to be spent within the 2014/15 financial year. Any delay would have resulted in the funding being lost.

The following decision had therefore been taken by the Leader, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Care and Health in the Community in accordance with Cabinet Procedure Rule 53 following consultation with the

Chief Executive, Chairman of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Group Leaders:

1. to authorise the Council to act as accountable body for Tech Fund Two;
2. to approve a supplementary capital estimate for 2014/15 of £986,949; and
3. to note that a further sum of £84,000 Tech Fund Two monies relates to 2015/16.

Further background information was provided in a report circulated at the meeting.

**RESOLVED**

That the decision taken under Cabinet Procedure Rule 53 in relation to funding for the Cheshire Integrated Digital Care Record be noted.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 11.12 am

Councillor M Jones (Chairman)



## CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

### Cabinet

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	21 <sup>st</sup> April 2015
<b>Report of:</b>	Executive Director Economic Growth and Prosperity – Caroline Simpson
<b>Subject/Title:</b>	Notice of Motion – Affordable Housing in Cheshire East
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor Don Stockton, Housing and Jobs

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#### 1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider and respond to the following motion which had been moved by Councillor Laura Jeuda and seconded by Councillor Mo Grant at the Council meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2015 and referred to Cabinet for consideration:

*“Cheshire East will resist the Government’s recent policy of allowing property developers to ‘opt out’ of providing affordable homes when submitting planning applications.”*

#### 2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That for the reasons set out in this report, Cabinet reject the motion referred to in paragraph 1.1.
- 2.2 That Cheshire East consider applications in accordance with all appropriate policies and do not ‘opt out’ of Policy Guidance but consider all applications on their relative merits.
- 2.3 Where a conflict exists between the Councils Interim Statement on the Provision of Affordable Housing and the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) the determination of applications should be in accordance with the NPPG and not require provision of affordable housing on sites of 10-units or less, and which have a maximum combined gross floor space of no more than 1000sqm (gross internal area) unless the failure to provide affordable housing renders the scheme unsustainable in the overall planning balance.

#### 3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 To ensure that planning applications are assessed in the light of current planning policies and national planning guidance as appropriate such that all material considerations are balanced accordingly.

#### **4.0 Wards Affected**

- 4.1 All

#### **5.0 Local Ward Members**

- 5.1 All

#### **6.0 Policy Implications**

- 6.1 The changes to national planning policy and this Notice of Motion have policy implications for the amount of affordable homes across Cheshire East by changing the threshold for negotiations with developers.

#### **7.0 Implications for Rural Communities**

- 7.1 National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) reduces the threshold for affordable houses on sites of 10 or more dwellings. Cheshire East policy currently seeks to negotiate for affordable units on sites of 3 dwellings or 0.2hectares in the rural areas. The changes to the NPPG will therefore be a material planning consideration in negotiation on sites of 3 to 9 dwellings within rural areas.

#### **8.0 Financial Implications**

- 8.1 To disregard national planning policy could result in an increase in planning appeals. This has financial implications in terms of increased staff costs but also the risk that the Planning Inspectorate will find the Council has acted unreasonably by not following National Planning Policy and will award costs to the Applicants against the Council. The Council is already under financial pressure in this area due to the suspension of the Local Plan Inspection, and further pressure caused by additional appeals and potential costs will be difficult to meet.

#### **9.0 Legal Implications**

- 9.1 National planning guidance is a material consideration that lawfully must be taken into consideration on each planning application along with the development plan and any other material consideration. The Council would be acting unlawfully if it did not have regard to national planning guidance.

#### **10.0 Risk Management**

- 10.1 There would be legal and financial implications if Cheshire East Council did not take into consideration national planning guidance as detailed above.

## **11.0 Background and Options**

- 11.1 This report addresses the issues raised by the motion referred to in paragraph 1.1.

### **Context**

- 11.2 On 28 November 2014 National Planning Policy was changed with regard to Section 106 planning obligations. The main change that has implications for Cheshire East is as follows:
- 11.3 For sites of 10 units or less, and which have a maximum combined gross floorspace of 1,000 square meters, affordable housing and tariff style contributions should not be sought. This will also apply to all residential annexes and extensions.
- 11.4 Changes are also proposed to the threshold for designated rural areas under Section 157 of the Housing Act 1985, however for Cheshire East, this only includes the National Park which has its own planning authority.
- 11.5 These changes in national planning policy will not apply to Rural Exception Sites. However affordable housing and tariff style contributions should not be sought in relation to residential annexes and extensions.
- 11.6 In addition the changes include a financial credit, equivalent to the existing gross floorspace of any vacant buildings brought back into any lawful use or demolished for re-development, should be deducted from the calculation of any affordable housing contributions sought from relevant development schemes. This will not however apply to vacant buildings which have been abandoned.
- 11.7 The purpose for these changes is to lower the construction cost and increase housing supply. Government believes that it will encourage development on smaller brownfield sites and boost small and medium sized developers.

### **Planning Policy**

- 11.8 Cheshire East Council have sought to ensure the delivery of brownfield sites as a priority, through both our existing Development Plan and the emerging Local Plan Strategy. Where applications for development on such sites are received a full and thorough test of site viability is undertaken at an early stage to ensure that proposals are in accordance with planning law.
- 11.9 Planning law requires that planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations

indicate otherwise (section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

- 11.10 For Cheshire East, the development plan currently consists of the saved policies within the adopted Local Plans for the former local authorities. However since Cheshire East was formed, the Council has approved for development control policies an Interim Planning Statement on Affordable Housing. In addition the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (March 2014) has been submitted to the Inspectorate however the examination has been formally suspended.
- 11.11 The Interim Planning Statement on Affordable Housing was produced because the three adopted Local Plans contained differing policies for affordable housing, did not reflect the most up to date Strategic Housing Market Assessment and was superseded National Planning guidance. It was adopted by the Council in February 2011 for the determination of planning applications pending the adoption of the forthcoming Local Plan Strategy. Therefore while it is not part of the development plan it is a material planning consideration.
- 11.12 This Interim planning statement sets the threshold for negotiation to 15 units or more or greater than 0.4 hectare in settlements of 3,000 or more and in settlements of less than 3,000 then 0.2 hectares or 3 dwellings.
- 11.13 The Local Plan Strategy (Submission Version – March 2014) sets the threshold for negotiation at 15 or more dwellings (or 0.4 hectares) in the Principal Towns and Key Service Centres and 3 or more dwellings (or 0.2 hectares) in Local Service Centres and all other locations.
- 11.14 The implications of the changes to the national planning policy will therefore currently only impact on future planning decisions on windfall sites of less than 10 units within settlements of less than 3,000 population. It does not apply to any Rural Exception sites. It may affect sites of 3-9 dwellings within Local Service Centres once the Local Plan Strategy is adopted.

### **Consequences**

- 11.15 The Interim Planning Statement on Affordable Housing is a material planning consideration, along with Local Plan Strategy (Submission Version – March 2014), and national planning guidance. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) provide the national policy framework and guidance for consideration of applications. These all must be considered, as a material consideration, when each planning application is assessed. If the Council was to disregard current national planning guidance and make a decision contrary to that guidance it is likely that a planning applicant would appeal against that decision.

- 11.16 In the event of such an appeal it is likely that any Planning Inspector would give greater weight to national planning guidance and, in the event of the applicant claiming that the Council has acted unreasonably and therefore seeking costs, then costs would be awarded against the Council.
- 11.17 In any event, the policy is only the starting point for negotiations and just one of many material planning considerations in any planning application. For example viability and specific site constraints must also be considered. Therefore while this may reduce the number of affordable units to some degree the impact is likely to be limited.
- 11.18 Furthermore, affordable housing may be secured if there is a specific identified need or other circumstances require it. However, this will be a judgement based on balancing the various planning issues to reach a sustainable decision.

### **Conclusion**

- 11.19 Cheshire East cannot 'opt out' of Government policy without associated risks. Cheshire East should continue to consider applications in accordance with all appropriate policies, national guidance, and on their relative merits, in accordance with planning law.
- 11.20 The impact of the changes on Cheshire East Council will be limited by reason that it will only impact on sites of less than 10 dwellings in settlements of less than 3,000 population, and it does not affect any Rural Exception sites. Any potential impact will also be reduced by reason of the other recent planning reforms, for instance, requiring a better housing mix of house types, and the continued emphasis on brownfield development, prioritised in the existing development plan for the Borough and in the emerging Local Plan Strategy.
- 11.21 These reforms will ensure that Cheshire East's housing needs are more than adequately met and that Cheshire East Council will continue to support our most vulnerable and in need residents, particularly the needs of working families and older people through the development of suitable accommodation, including single storey developments.
- 11.22 Therefore, where a conflict exists between the Councils Interim Statement on the Provision of Affordable Housing and the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) the determination of applications should be in accordance with the NPPG and not require provision of affordable housing on sites of 10-units or less, and which have a maximum combined gross floorspace of no more than 1000sqm (gross internal area) unless the failure to provide affordable housing renders the scheme unsustainable in the overall planning balance.

## **12.0 Access to Information**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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## CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

### Cabinet

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	21 <sup>st</sup> April 2015
<b>Report of:</b>	Executive Director of Economic Growth and Prosperity
<b>Subject/Title:</b>	Notice of Motion - Planning Policy on Method Statements
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Cllr Don Stockton, Housing and Jobs

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#### 1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider and respond to the following motion which had been moved by Councillor B Murphy and seconded by Councillor M Parsons at the Council meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2015 and referred to Cabinet for consideration:

*“The Council requests the production of a planning protocol to ensure Method Statements entailed in Planning Applications contain a “neighbourhood impact appraisal” and that the Statement should be submitted to affected ward members at pre-application discussion stage when applicable.”*

#### 2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 That for the reasons set out in this report, Cabinet reject the motion referred to in paragraph 1.1, but, in the interest of openness and transparency in decision making, Cabinet agree to the modification of the planning management system as soon as it practicably possible to provide for the automatic notification of ward members of the receipt of applications for the discharge of conditions.

#### 3.0 Reason for Recommendation

- 3.1 To enable ward members to be alerted of discharge of conditions applications in the interest of openness and transparency in decision making.

#### 4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 All

#### 5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 All

## **6.0 Policy Implications**

6.1 None

## **7.0 Implications for Rural Communities**

7.1 None

## **8.0 Financial Implications**

8.1 Unless an automated solution is available, additional resources will be required to notify members. Increased level of responses to discharge applications will increase work load for planning officers. The quantum of this additional work will have to be assessed once the system is in operation to ascertain if it warrants additional resources.

## **9.0 Legal Implications**

9.1 Section 70 of the planning Act enables planning authorities to grant planning permission subject to conditions. Conditions governing construction methods are commonly applied on major or more complex developments

## **10.0 Risk Management**

10.1 Risks associated with the issue are limited; if an automated solution of notification is possible they are very minimal. If a manual measure is required, this will place additional but modest service demands that cannot readily be mitigated.

## **11.0 Background and Options**

11.1 This report addresses the issues raised by the motion referred to in paragraph 1.1.

11.2 When a developer obtains planning permission, a condition may be attached requiring the submission of a Construction Method Statement before any work starts on site. This is to ensure that, amongst other things, the construction of the development does not create a nuisance to nearby residents from effects such as noise, vibration, mud on roads or dust. It will address issues such as hours of working, demolition, use of machinery and provision of wheel washes or road sweepers. Therefore, it is not necessary for the Method Statement to include any additional information, such as a "*neighbourhood impact appraisal*" as the relevant information should already be included.



- 11.3 The Construction Method Statement is not available at pre-application stage and it would be unreasonable to require it be submitted before consent is given.
- 11.3 The concern that the motion seeks to address is that the Method Statement may not fully address matters of concern to local residents and examples of issues that were not adequately addressed in the past include sites where inadequate wheel wash facilities were installed resulting in muddy roads and where pile driving was required for foundations; resulting in noise and vibration.
- 11.4 Construction Method Statements are approved by the discharge of conditions which are not consulted upon, although they are placed upon the website and are therefore publicly available. Conditions attached to planning applications that require the submission of details are primarily related to technical matters and therefore any consultations carried out are with the relevant technical expert(s) rather than matters which require the issues surrounding the application to be opened up to public discussion.
- 11.5 However, Cheshire East is committed to greater transparency and openness in its decision making and as part of this philosophy, applications for the discharge of conditions are now accessible online. In the interests of greater transparency and openness, the Cheshire East Council website has recently been further developed to make this and other information regarding planning applications more accessible for members. Further amendments to the system could be made to provide email alerts to ward members when applications for the discharge of conditions are received, thereby giving members the opportunity of commenting on the details. This would not just relate to applications for the approval of Construction Method Statements but for all condition discharges.
- 11.5 The notification of ward members will raise awareness and give an opportunity for local members to express a view. This would not require additional resources to carry out this notification as long as the system can be modified so as to generate an automatic alert to the relevant ward members on receipt of a discharge application. There is insufficient capacity within existing resources to carry out this additional work otherwise.

## **12.0 Access to Information**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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## CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

### Cabinet

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	21 <sup>st</sup> April 2015
<b>Report of:</b>	Executive Director of Economic Growth and Prosperity
<b>Subject/Title:</b>	Notice of Motion – Neighbourhood Plans
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor Don Stockton, Housing and Jobs

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#### 1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider and respond to the following motion which had been moved by Councillor J Jackson and seconded by Councillor S Hogben at the Council meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> February.2014 and referred to Cabinet for consideration:

*“This Council fully supports the practical introduction of Neighbourhood Plans for identifiable communities in Cheshire East. Given the perceived weakness of current, extant Borough Plans and the lack of an established new Cheshire East Local Plan, Council recognises that fully endorsed and adopted Neighbourhood Plans offer some appropriate guidance and protection in relation to the development of local communities.*

*The Council will therefore:*

- a) continue to support the current programme of supported Neighbourhood Planning;*
- b) invite further interest from local communities in pursuing Neighbourhood Plans on an annual basis;*
- c) set up, in accordance with available resources, a rolling programme of supported Neighbourhood Planning;*
- d) continue with this rolling programme after the Cheshire East Local Plan is adopted and in place.”*

#### 2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 The Council already has a full programme of activity in place to support Neighbourhood Plans that will be set out in this report, and for these reasons Cabinet reject the motion referred to in paragraph 1.1.

#### 3.0 Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 A full work programme supporting neighbourhood planning in Cheshire East is already underway to help all of our communities build a meaningful and plan led system in the places they live. This work that

is already in place has placed Cheshire East at the forefront of neighbourhood planning and we are now the most active region in the northwest for this work.

- 3.2 The statutory influence of neighbourhood plans in the development process has been confirmed over the previous year with a series of high profile planning appeals and high court challenges in this area. From Tattenhall to Winslow, Broughton Astley to Malmesbury, neighbourhood plans are being upheld to ensure that plan led development, with community participation at its heart, is being instilled in decision making.
- 3.3 Cheshire East Council has recognised the value of residents led planning throughout the production of the local plan and sought to build in the views of our communities into this key document. Building on this, the Council recognised the value of neighbourhood planning and last year instigated a programme of support to ensure that Cheshire East is the lead authority in the country to promote neighbourhood planning and ensure our residents voices are heard in the development process.
- 3.4 Toward this, it's clear that the points outlined above are already being addressed via a full work programme in support of neighbourhood planning. Cheshire East council is the most active area in the North West for neighbourhood planning with 22 communities formally preparing neighbourhood plans. We've engaged with over 50 of our 116 parish and town councils and are proactively supporting communities to prepare neighbourhood plans that have the formal authority to express community views on land use and development issues.
- 3.5 Because of the support provided by this Council we've seen great success already with Sandbach and Bunbury reaching important milestones to publish draft versions of their neighbourhood plans for consultation. These impressive achievements have been accomplished in less than 8 months which is testament both to the hard work and commitment of these communities, and to the programme of support put in place by this Council. It is expected that a series of draft neighbourhood plans from other local councils will follow very shortly over the summer.
- 3.6 With this programme of support already in place, via the Neighbourhood Plan Team, this Council will continue to assist and advise communities with hands-on support from CEC officers and external advisors. In addition further financial assistance to support the programme is already in place and the Council has established a grant scheme to offer financial support of up to £7000 to communities preparing neighbourhood plans.

- 3.7 Further expressions of interest in preparing neighbourhood plans are encouraged and queries can be submitted to [neighbourhoods@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:neighbourhoods@cheshireeast.gov.uk) or by calling the team on 01270 685893.

### **3.0 Wards Affected**

- 4.1 All

### **5.0 Local Ward Members**

- 5.1 All

### **6.0 Policy Implications**

- 6.1 The designation of a neighbourhood area, and the subsequent preparation of a neighbourhood plan, will allow a relevant local council to formally establish a community led vision for development and land use within their neighbourhood area. Once completed, neighbourhood plans will be adopted by Cheshire East Borough Council and form part of the Development Plan for the Borough. Policies held in any future neighbourhood plan will be used for decision making purposes (alongside those other relevant policies contained within the Cheshire East Development Plan) to shape development in accordance with the views of the community as formally expressed via the neighbourhood plan.

### **7.0 Implications for Rural Communities**

- 7.1 Neighbourhood plans enable rural communities to participate in the plan making process and develop policies to address those planning matters that affect their interests and well being. The neighbourhood planning process generally allows greater engagement of rural communities in the plan making process and for such communities to take ownership of developing planning policy which will directly affect their lives.

### **8.0 Financial Implications**

- 8.1 Current support for neighbourhood planning is funded from within existing budgets and from grant funding made available by central government.

### **9.0 Legal Implications**

- 9.1 The Secretary of State has made the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 under powers conferred by the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. These Regulations ("the Regulations") came into force on 6 April 2012.

- 9.2 Neighbourhood Development Plans and Orders, which may follow the making of a Neighbourhood Area, must be prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and the Regulations.

## **10.0 Risk Management**

- 10.1 Neighbourhood plans will, once formally adopted ('made') by the Council, form part of the Development Plan for Cheshire East. Their content will be determined by the community through the process of plan making and may include site allocations for development or policies that relate to the development of land. As any future neighbourhood plan would form part of the Development Plan for Cheshire East the administration of such plans will become the responsibility of Cheshire East Council and the relevant guidance on process established in the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and any further updated guidance, must be followed.

## **11.0 Background and Options**

- 11.1 This report addresses the issues raised by the motion referred to in paragraph 1.1.

## **12.0 Access to Information**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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## CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

### Cabinet

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**Date of Meeting:** 21<sup>st</sup> April 2015

**Report of:** Executive Director of Economic Growth and Prosperity

**Subject/Title:** Crewe Town Centre Regeneration Delivery Framework for Growth

**Portfolio Holders:** Councillor Don Stockton, Housing and Jobs

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#### 1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 For the benefit of both residents and businesses, it is vital that the Council develops policies and projects that help to support the vitality of its town centres. This is needed in order to promote their future development and regeneration, and ensure they are well positioned to compete against other towns and out-of-centre developments, which continue to impact on the success of our town centres.
- 1.2 Crewe town centre is at a pivotal point in terms of its potential to attract new investment, increase footfall from residents and visitors, and instil greater civic pride. A revival is already underway, instigated in part by the Council's investment in the new £15m Lifestyle Centre and the approval of a University Technical College (UTC) for Crewe. Alongside this is the prospect of Crewe being the selected as the location for HS2's North West Gateway station, which would transform the economy of Crewe.
- 1.3 As part of its approach to promoting regeneration, the Council has developed a draft *Regeneration Delivery Framework for Growth* (Appendix 1), with the support of development and regeneration consultancy DTZ. This sets a compelling vision for the immediate future of Crewe town centre ahead of the opportunities that may emerge from HS2. It provides a route map to support the economic prosperity of Crewe Town Centre through development that would bring in millions of pounds of new investment. As well as physical development of key sites, it recognises the need to ensure that the public realm is enhanced and provision is made for improving use of green spaces in the town.
- 1.4 The draft Framework report identifies three priority actions which require consideration through this and other reports being presented to Cabinet. These relate to:
  - Tightening of planning policy so that the town centre is in a much stronger position to compete against out-of-centre locations and help prevent leakage of retail and leisure investment and footfall. This matter is explained further in this report.

- The opportunity to acquire key town centre properties that, either individually or collectively, provide the most viable prospect of delivering a transformative regeneration scheme within the town centre that will address key issues identified in the draft *Regeneration Delivery Framework*. This matter is the subject of the separate report to Cabinet 'Strategic Acquisition – Crewe' (April 21st).
- Taking forward options for provision of a bus interchange to ensure that accessibility by public transport for local residents is enhanced. This matter is the subject of the separate report to Cabinet 'Crewe Bus Interchange Facility' (April 21st).

## **2.0 Recommendations**

### **2.1 Cabinet is recommended to**

- a) consider and endorse the draft *Crewe Town Centre Regeneration Framework for Growth* report (Appendix 1) including the vision, objectives and action plan;
- b) agree to further consultation with key stakeholders prior to formal approval of the Framework by Cabinet, including specific consultation on the planning policy approach as identified below; and
- c) endorse the policy approach identified in the Framework report (Appendix 1 Para 5.19 – 5.26) and Para 11.9 - 11.15 of this report that:
  - i) from a planning perspective, the primary objective must be to protect the Town Centre from uses, within it and in the wider area, that will undermine its vitality and viability as a Town Centre;
  - ii) supports a limited extension to the indicative Crewe town centre boundary, which includes the Tesco supermarket. This will inform the identification of the town centre boundary in the Site Allocations and Development Policies element of the Local Plan; and
  - iii) sees the focus within the defined Town Centre being clearly on uses which support the Town Centre including retail, leisure, business and residential uses with each application being considered on its merits in terms of how it can support the objectives for the Town Centre. This is supported by policy EG5 (Promoting a Town Centre First Approach to Retail and Commerce) and Strategic Location SL 1 Central Crewe in the emerging Local Plan Strategy.

## **3.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1 The draft *Town Centre Regeneration Delivery Framework for Growth* sets out a compelling vision for a revitalised Crewe town centre in the immediate future in preparation for the opportunities that may emerge from HS2. It goes onto identify both current constraints and the significant opportunities to regenerate key parts of Crewe town centre, leading to its strengthening overall. Whilst the



retail sector is experiencing significant change nationally and globally, the Crewe town centre core is assessed as having great potential as a destination which is not being harnessed currently, and has even more significant potential when consideration is given to the longer-term prospects offered through securing Crewe as HS2's North-West Gateway and the creation of a rapid transit link between a new station and the town centre. The Framework will play a key role in helping to support the Council in leading the regeneration of the town centre.

- 3.2 From a planning perspective, the draft Framework identifies that the primary objective must be to protect the town centre from uses within it, and in the wider area, that will undermine its vitality and viability as a town centre. As such the emerging policy framework which supports promoting a 'Town Centre First' approach' is critical, and this will help to prevent further leakage of retail and leisure investment and footfall from the town centre. This proposed approach is in conformity with Government guidance and the Council's saved and emerging Local Plan policies

#### **4.0 Wards Affected**

- 4.1 All Crewe Wards

#### **5.0 Local Ward Members**

- 5.1 All Crewe Ward Members

#### **6.0 Policy Implications**

- 6.1 The proposal in this report relates directly to five key outcomes identified in the Council's Three Year Plan:

**Outcome 1: Our local communities are strong and supportive.** Individuals and families are self-reliant and take personal responsibility for their quality of life. Communities are cohesive, with a strong sense of neighbourliness. There is genuine civic pride and mutual respect.

**Outcome 2: Cheshire East has a strong and resilient economy.** Cheshire East is known as a good place to do business – we attract inward investment, there is access to a high quality workforce and our businesses and visitor economy grow, to create prosperity for all.

**Outcome 5: People live well and for longer.** Local people have healthy lifestyles and access to good cultural, leisure and recreational facilities. Care services focus on prevention, early intervention and physical and mental wellbeing.

- 6.2 This report aligns strongly to the Council's *Economic Development Strategy* and its more recently created *Vision and Strategy for Economic Growth: East Cheshire Engine of the North*, which articulates the need to increase investment in our town centres, by ensuring they offer themselves as attractive locations for retail and leisure operators.

- 6.3 As part of the Council's All Change for Crewe regeneration programme, there is previous work that has laid the way for this report. This includes:

*Prospectus for Crewe:* Sets out the Council's development priorities for the town centre, based on five key zones, and three development areas under the Council's influence. This served to garner interest from the development community and instigate dialogue which has helped to inform this report.

*All Change for Crewe - High Growth City:* Reflects recent progress in the wider Crewe area, including Bentley's expansion, plans for geothermal energy and investment secured to enhance connectivity through road and rail.

## **7.0 Implications for Rural Communities**

- 7.1 None

## **8.0 Financial Implications**

- 8.1 The *Regeneration Delivery Framework for Growth* includes a set of recommendations for the Council to consider, both now and in the near future. Some of these may result in immediate receipts, and others result in other capital investment that may yield a return.

## **9.0 Legal Implications**

- 9.1 The Localism Act 2011 introduced the General Power of Competence, which allows the Council to do anything an individual can do, provided it is not prohibited by other legislation. These powers have replaced the previous wellbeing powers. However, the use of these powers must be in support of a reasonable and accountable decision made in line with public law principles.

## **10.0 Risk Management**

- 10.1 The principle risk is that, without further strengthening of the policy position in support of a 'Town Centre First' approach, there will continue to be proposals for out-of-town-centre development that undermine this approach to promoting the regeneration of Crewe town centre, and that the benefits arising from new investment in Crewe will fail to be maximised.
- 10.2 In particular, with the prospect of Crewe being selected as the location for HS2's North-West Gateway there is a risk that, failing to plan ahead in terms of the town's regeneration, will result in the obvious opportunities emerging from this investment and growth will fail to be realised.

## **11.0 Background and Options**

- 11.1 As referred to in Para 1.2, the Council recently commissioned the preparation of the *Crewe Town Centre Regeneration Delivery Framework* which sets out a route map to support the transformation of Crewe town centre. The draft Framework includes:

- a Vision for the town centre and a series of key objectives

- an Action Plan to support the economic prosperity of Crewe Town Centre
- a framework for the potential acquisition and intervention by Cheshire East Council in respect of a number of priority sites
- and a review that informs the emerging planning policy of Crewe Town Centre to feed into the Local Plan process.

11.2 This framework does not replace or supersede statutory development plans which have or are being prepared by Cheshire East Council. It seeks to stimulate public and private investment to maximise the benefits for the town.

11.3 The town centre is identified as having a number of constraints including: perception; key gateways to the town are dominated by car parks; movement through the Town by foot is in some cases along poor quality corridors/vacant or underutilised buildings; and, of most significance, challenging retail and leisure markets both nationally and locally.

11.4 However, post-recession, as developer interest starts to grow and opportunities such as Crewe's offer become more attractive on the back of new investment including HS2 are realised (e.g. connectivity between town centre and SuperHub station, and other infrastructure improvements around town centre), Crewe needs a strong framework which will showcase the town's development sites and a programme of actions to overcome its constraints. The Framework sets out a series of site specific and overarching actions to respond to it objectives.

11.5 The report sets out a vision for *the Regeneration Delivery Framework* as follows:

*Capitalising on investment proposals such as the planned Lifestyle Centre and the University Technical College and proposed HS2 North West Gateway Hub Station and the Town's growing population, to re-establish Crewe Town Centre as the vibrant and attractive "Hub" offering a strong range of retail, leisure, employment and residential opportunities serving local businesses, shoppers, residents, students, visitors and rail passengers.*

11.6 This Vision will be supported by the following objectives:

- § To stimulate new investment in the Town Centre including retail, leisure, residential and business by bringing vacant sites back into use, intensifying the use of underperforming sites and utilising Cheshire East Council's assets
- § To increase the number of Town Centre users, their dwell time and spend
- § To diversify the housing stock in and around Crewe Town Centre and to increase the catchment of the Town Centre
- § To make it easier to get into and around the Town Centre by foot, bicycle, bus and car
- § To improve the quality and amount of the public space (including green space) and public realm (including green infrastructure) that links key spaces, buildings and the town's heritage and cultural offer in the Town Centre and to the Railway Station / proposed HS2 Station
- § To transform perceptions of Crewe Town Centre
- § To provide sustainable development and design and support the Council's renewable

energy agenda.

11.7 The Regeneration Delivery Framework comprises four priority themes:

1. **Investment in Opportunity Sites** - Too much of Crewe Town Centre is either vacant (buildings and sites), underutilised or dominated by surface car parks. Cheshire East Council owns a number of sites within the Town and is committed to using these to stimulate private sector investment to attract new users and uses to the Town Centre
2. **Improving access by all modes of movement into and within the Town Centre** to make it easier to get into and around the Town Centre by foot, bicycle, bus and car. The Framework will build on the current improvements already being delivered by the Local Sustainable Transport Fund programme and seek to attract additional resources to further influence travel behaviour and promote more sustainable forms of travel in and around Crewe to reduce congestion and encourage visitors to explore what the Town has to offer
3. **Improvements to the public realm** - Currently there are only a few examples in the Town Centre of high quality public realm. Careful thought needs to be given when development sites are brought forward to ensure that the public realm between these sites and the Town's existing offer is enhanced to support the principles of the Framework. The priority needs to be given to key gateways and routes/corridors. This builds upon the commitment to greening the Town set out in the Green Infrastructure Action Plan for Crewe
4. **Town Centre First** approach will remain with an emphasis on supporting mixed use investment in the designated Town Centre. This will seek to enhance vibrancy, increase visitor/consumer footfall and spend and deter any proposals that could undermine this. Until the Core Strategy is in place, the Regeneration Delivery Framework will be used to support the determination of planning applications setting new expectations for Crewe - poor quality and ill thought-out schemes will not be acceptable whilst higher quality buildings and public realm will be.

11.8 The Framework has identified 14 opportunity sites and advocates the following approach to supporting investment in and around them.

Types of Interventions	Sites
Priority sites where the Council should consider taking a direct role to deliver the regeneration priorities of the Town Centre	Royal Arcade and adjoining land
Other sites in the Council's ownership where the Council should work with the private sector to support development in accordance with the principles of the Regeneration Delivery Framework	Wrexham Terrace Car Park Civic and Cultural Quarter Lyceum Square/Market Shopping Centre Phoenix Leisure Park Oak Street Car Park and High Street The former Victoria High School Site Chester Street Car Parks
Sites to be brought forward by the private sector/existing landowners	Victoria Centre/Asda Vernon Way Retail Park Mill Street Macon Way
Sites with limited development opportunities where improved linkages to Town Centre should be supported	Grand Junction Retail Park Nantwich Road

- 11.9 The Framework sets out a series of site-specific and overarching actions to support the realisation of its Vision, under each of the themes:

**Overarching Actions**

**Sites**

S1 - Work with owners to bring priority sites forward to support new retail, leisure and residential investment in the Town. Aim to diversify uses to encourage more visitors to the town and grow evening economy

S2 – Lobby for relocation of Cheshire Archive to Crewe Town Centre - various options are being considered. Municipal Building would provide a sustainable future use for this Listed Building whilst also strengthening the Town’s cultural offer and provide an opportunity to increase footfall in the vicinity of the Theatre

S3 - Need to encourage greater collaboration of occupiers to encourage them to work together to support the long term future of the Town. Longer term consider scope to establish Business Improvement District.

**Access Improvements**

A1 - Assessment of options for new Bus Interchange - short term option and then longer term option to support emerging investment proposals for the Town

A2 - Review of existing car parking provision - need to determine which of car parks can be released for redevelopment and ensure sufficient car parking to support Town Centre at appropriate price

A3 - Further improvements in cycling as part of a programme to reduce congestion - next phase to recent improvements being delivered as part of the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) Programme and cycling strategy

A4 - Tackle pinch-point and congestion at Earle Road. Lobby to deliver as part of HS2 investment

A5 - Creation of pedestrian priority zone - need to encourage people to explore more of the Town, dwell longer and spend more money

**Public Realm**

P1 - Determine programme of public realm and access improvements within the Town Centre and between the Town Centre and Rail Station (and longer term to link to HS2 North West Gateway Hub Station). Use the Regeneration Delivery Framework recommendations to determine an appropriate capital spend programme including focus on making the Town as easy as possible to get to and then encourage users to park up and walk around the Town and to dwell longer

P2 - Delivery of public realm improvement including public art and green infrastructure - use the Regeneration Delivery Framework to establish expectations on quality of public realm and secure contributions to improve gateways, key corridors and public squares.

**Planning policy**

- 11.10 From a planning perspective, the *Regeneration Delivery Framework* identifies that the primary objective must be to protect the town centre from uses within it, and in the wider area, that will undermine its vitality and viability as a town centre. As such the emerging policy framework which supports promoting a ‘Town Centre First’ approach is critical. The designation of Crewe town centre as a Strategic Location in the Local Plan Strategy is also supported as this provides the town centre with an appropriate status to encourage investment, regeneration and improving green infrastructure.

- 11.11 In terms of boundary, the draft *Regeneration Delivery Framework* supports a limited extension to the indicative Crewe town centre boundary which includes the Tesco supermarket. This will inform the identification of the town centre boundary in the Site Allocations and Development Policies element of the Local Plan
- 11.12 Although Grand Junction Retail Park is close to the town centre given the nature of its occupiers and its separation from the Town Centre by the railway line, it clearly functions as an out of town location.
- 11.13 Given the significant changes that are occurring in the retail market in terms of demand for regional and sub-regional town centres the focus should not be on protecting retail uses per se, but to encourage a wide range of uses which support the attractiveness of the town centre. The focus within the defined town centre should be on uses which support the town centre including retail, leisure, business and residential uses with each application being considered in its own right in terms of how it can support the objectives for the town centre.
- 11.14 The importance placed on encouraging residential investment in the town centre by the emerging planning policy is fully supported. This will be critical to supporting the aspirations of the *Regeneration Delivery Framework*, in particular to increasing the overall catchment area of the town centre and encouraging the amount of footfall and extending the core hours of activity. This, in turn, should support the existing cultural offer of the town.
- 11.15 In terms of the out-of-town sites, the Framework identifies recommendations in relation to their planning status.
- 11.16 It is recommended that this part of the draft *Regeneration Delivery Framework* report (Appendix 1 Para 5.19 – 5.26) is given consideration at Cabinet to establish it as a material consideration in determining planning applications. It is also recommended that, to give the strategy further status, public consultation should be undertaken prior to being formally endorsed by Cabinet.

## **12.0 Access to Information**

- 12.1 The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writers:

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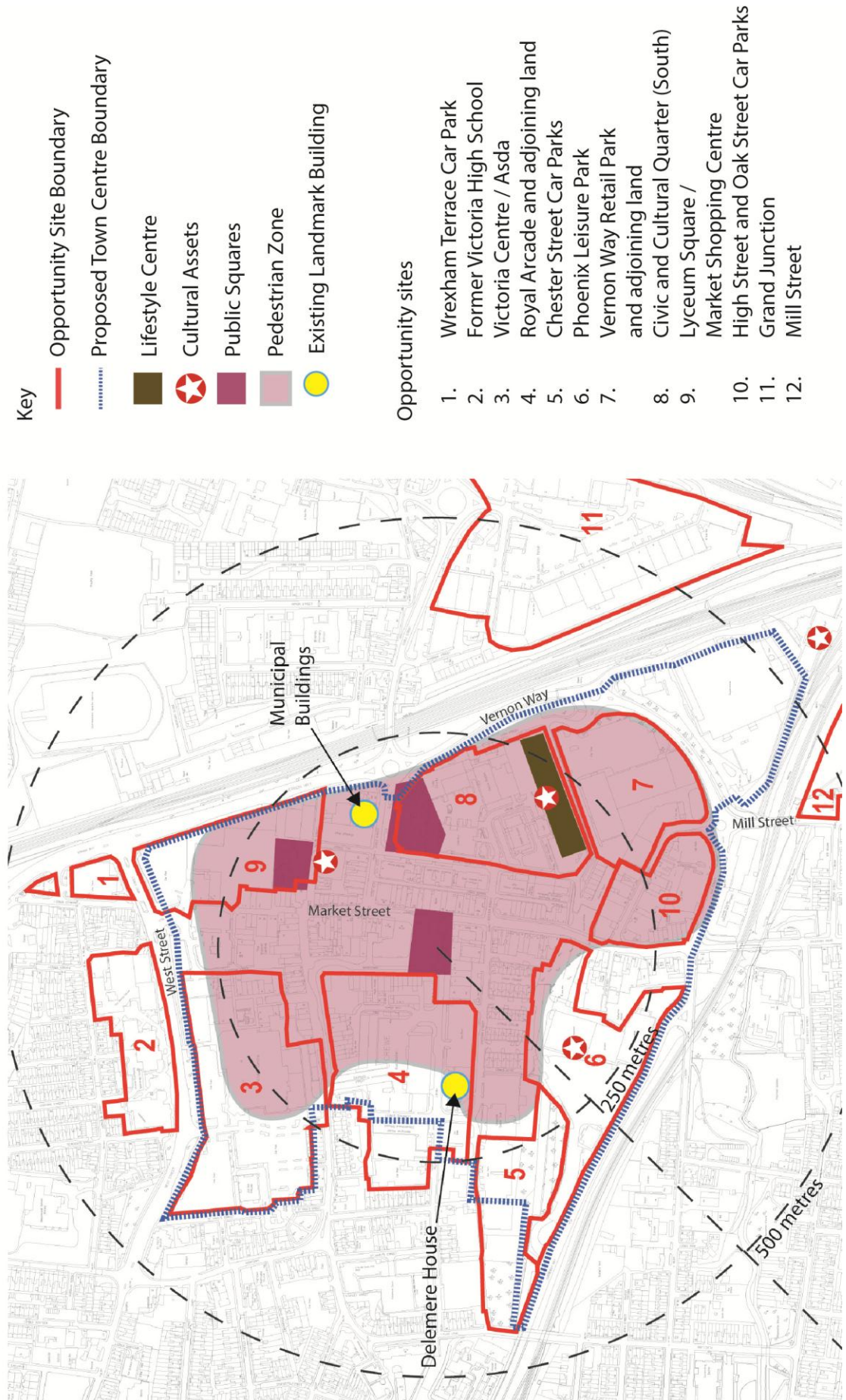
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*Appendix 1: Plan of Crewe town centre and key opportunity sites*

*Appendix 2: Crewe Town Centre Draft Regeneration Delivery Framework for Growth*

# Appendix 1: Plan of Crewe town centre and key opportunity sites

## Crewe Town Centre Regeneration Delivery Town Centre and Key Opportunity Sites



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# Crewe Town Centre Regeneration Delivery Framework for Growth *Draft Final Report*



Prepared on behalf of



4 March 2015

**DTZ**  
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Quality Assurance Record	
Authorised by:	
Date:	March 2015
Job No: 15023800	

### Disclaimer

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## Executive Summary

Crewe is the 'Gateway to the North West' and enjoys a range of advantages including:

- A strategic connection by road (M6) and rail (West Coast Mainline) to the rest of the Country. Its unique 360 degree connectivity has been recognised by the recent proposal that it will be the North West Gateway Hub for HS2
- An excellent reputation as a “place to do business”, demonstrated by its strong business base - home to in the region of 5,000 businesses (with around 60,000 work-based employees)
- A renowned Higher/Further Education presence which will be enhanced thorough the opening of the University Technical College in Crewe Town Centre in 2016
- An affluent catchment area.

However, Crewe Town Centre does suffer from a number of constraints including; perception, key gateways to the town are dominated by car parks, movement through the Town by foot in places is along poor quality corridors with vacant or underutilised buildings and, of most significance, challenging retail and leisure markets both nationally and locally (including pressure from out of town locations and other major retail and leisure destinations in the North West which are easy to access because of Crewe's excellent road and rail network).

The Town Centre core has great potential as a destination which is not being harnessed currently. The retail core comprises a number of smaller retail units surrounded by larger units on the edge. The larger format units are served by a ring of car parks and the links between these areas is in many cases poor quality or limited which discourages linked trips and reduces dwell times. Although located close to the Town Centre, the Grand Junction Retail Park, whilst attracting a range of national retailers, generates high visitor numbers at peak times creating congestion at a key gateway to the Town Centre. Whilst technically within what is geographically recognised as the Town Centre, the Phoenix Leisure Park is very poorly connected to the core of the Town and is perceived as being 'out of town', with an otherwise limited leisure offer at present. The key gateways are in many cases, dominated by car parking and fail to showcase what the Town has to offer.

The development industry is finally starting to emerge from its very deep recession. However, the retail sector has been hit very badly by the economic downturn and the retail landscape has fundamentally changed in response to shifting socio-demographic and market trends, including the growth of car based out of town shopping and online retailing. As a result, retail investment is focusing on prime locations within major city centres and retail destinations whilst many smaller district and sub regional centres, such as Crewe, have witnessed increasing vacancy rates. Crewe Town Centre must therefore establish a new role for itself that is less focused on retail and broadened out to include an enhanced leisure and cultural offer and a better choice of residential accommodation within walking distance of the Town. As developer interest starts to improve, especially as the opportunities offered by HS2 are realised, Crewe needs a strong framework which will showcase the Town's development sites and a programme of actions to overcome its constraints. It is anticipated that the house builders, in particular will take a fresh look at the Town and recognise its potential as an accessible and affordable location within the strong Cheshire residential market following further HS2 announcements.

In response Cheshire East Council has prepared a Regeneration Delivery Framework to set a route map to support the transformation of Crewe Town Centre. The Framework sets out an Action Plan to support the economic prosperity of Crewe Town Centre, establish a framework for the potential acquisition and intervention by Cheshire East Council in respect of a number of opportunity sites and to inform the emerging planning policy of Crewe Town Centre to feed into the Local Plan process. This Framework does not replace or supersede statutory development plans which have or are being prepared by Cheshire East Council. It seeks to stimulate public and private investment to maximise the benefits for the Town.

The **Vision** of the Regeneration Delivery Framework is as follows:

Capitalising on investment proposals such as the planned Lifestyle Centre and the University Technical College and proposed HS2 North West Gateway Hub Station and the Town's growing population, to re-establish Crewe Town Centre as *the* vibrant and attractive "Hub" offering a strong range of retail, leisure, employment and residential opportunities serving local businesses, shoppers, residents, students, visitors and rail passengers.

This Vision will be supported by the following **objectives**:

- To stimulate new investment in the Town Centre including retail, leisure, residential and business by bringing vacant sites back into use, intensifying the use of underperforming sites and utilising Cheshire East Council's assets
- To increase the number of Town Centre users, their dwell time and spend
- To diversify the housing stock in and around Crewe Town Centre and to increase the catchment of the Town Centre
- To make it easier to get into and around the Town Centre by foot, bicycle, bus and car
- To improve the quality and amount of the public space (including green space) and public realm (including green infrastructure) that links key spaces, buildings and the town's heritage and cultural offer in the Town Centre and to the Railway Station/proposed HS2 North West Gateway Hub
- To transform perceptions of Crewe Town Centre
- To provide sustainable development and design and support the Council's renewable energy agenda.

The Regeneration Delivery Framework comprises four **priority themes**:

- **Investment in Opportunity Sites** - Too much of Crewe Town Centre is either vacant (buildings and sites), underutilised or dominated by surface car parks. Cheshire East Council owns a number of sites within the Town and is committed to using these to stimulate private sector investment to attract new users and uses to the Town Centre

- **Improving access by all modes of movement into and within the Town Centre** to make it easier to get into and around the Town Centre by foot, bicycle, bus, car and potentially rapid transit link. The Framework will build on the current improvements already being delivered by the Local Sustainable Transport Fund programme and seek to attract additional resources to further influence travel behaviour and promote more sustainable forms of travel in and around Crewe to reduce congestion and encourage visitors to explore what the Town has to offer
- **Improvements to the public realm** - Currently there are only a few examples in the Town Centre of high quality public realm. Careful thought needs to be given when development sites are brought forward to ensure that the public realm between these sites and the Town's existing offer is enhanced to support the principles of the Framework. The priority needs to be given to key gateways and routes/corridors. This builds upon the commitment to greening the Town set out in the Green Infrastructure Action Plan for Crewe
- **Town Centre First** approach will remain with an emphasis on supporting mixed use investment in the designated Town Centre. This will seek to enhance vibrancy, increase visitor/consumer footfall and spend and deter any proposals that could undermine this. Until the Core Strategy is in place, the Regeneration Delivery Framework will be used to support the determination of planning applications setting new expectations for Crewe - poor quality and ill thought-out schemes will not be acceptable as the Council strives to ensure the delivery of higher quality buildings and public realm.

### The Opportunity Sites

The Framework has identified 14 opportunity sites and advocates the following approach to supporting investment in and around them.

Types of Interventions	Sites
Priority sites where the Council should consider taking a direct role to deliver the regeneration priorities of the Town Centre	Royal Arcade and Adjoining Land
Other sites in the Council's ownership where the Council should work with the private sector to support development in accordance with the principles of the Regeneration Delivery Framework	Wrexham Terrace Car Park Civic and Cultural Quarter Lyceum Square/Market Shopping Centre Phoenix Leisure Park Oak Street Car Park and High Street The former Victoria High School Site Chester Street Car Parks
Sites to be brought forward by the private sector/existing landowners	Victoria Centre/Asda Vernon Way Retail Park Mill Street Macon Way
Sites with limited development opportunities where improved linkages to Town Centre should be supported	Grand Junction Retail Park Nantwich Road

The Framework also sets out a series of site specific and overarching actions to respond to its objectives and support the realisation of its Future Vision under each of the Themes. In the **short term** the **priority actions** will be to driven by Cheshire East Council and will include:

- Undertaking a series of feasibility studies including: assessment of options for the bus interchange, and Car Parking Strategy (to determine which existing car park sites could be surplus to requirements)

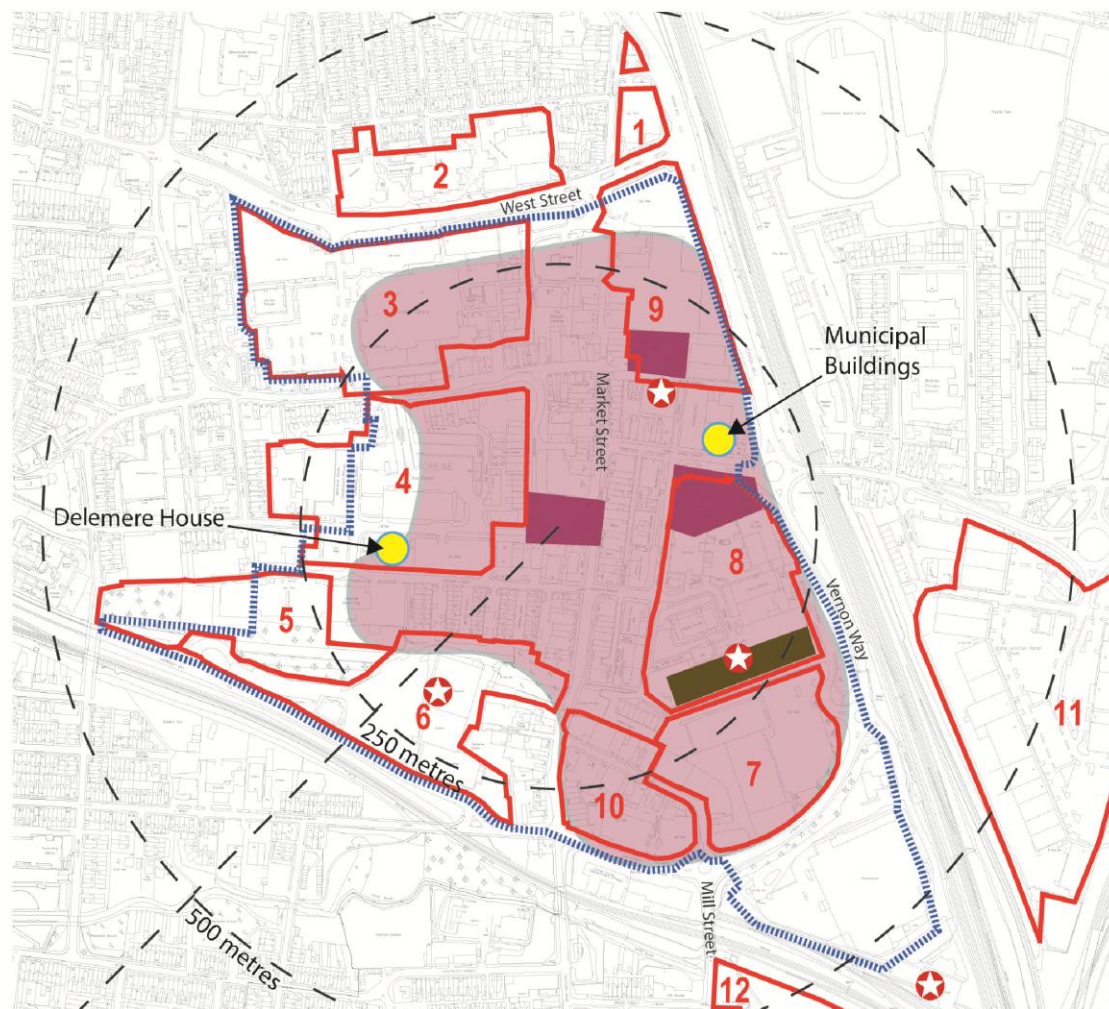
- Establishing a framework which will support the emerging planning policy to enhance and protect Crewe Town Centre
- Undertaking strategic acquisitions to ensure sufficient attractive sites are available to attract retail and leisure investment
- Driving forward the recommended actions and support the delivery of the opportunity sites including engaging with landowners, developers and potential retail/leisure occupiers
- Establishing appropriate governance and delivery structures to support the delivery of the Regeneration Delivery Framework
- Establishing appropriate resources to support the implementation of the Regeneration Delivery Framework. This will include seeking to link benefits to be invested back into the locality, fronting bids for funding and lobbying Central Government
- Lobbying on behalf of Crewe Town Centre to ensure that its profile is raised within the business community, Cheshire & Warrington Enterprise Partnership, North West and nationally and it is able to tap into opportunities to support economic development
- Engaging with local businesses, residents and potential investors to share how the transformation of Crewe Town Centre will be delivered
- Ensuring strong links are established between the Regeneration Delivery Framework and potential larger-scale delivery strategies, specifically High Growth City.

In the short term the expectation is that the public sector will need to drive change in Crewe. Cheshire East Council is committed to stimulating future retail and leisure investment and in order to do this it will use its existing land assets to leverage private sector investment from existing and new owners and it will undertake strategic acquisitions to ensure that appropriate sites are available to attract private sector investment in retail and leisure. Cheshire East Council will also continue to seek funding from a range of sources including Central Government, the Local Enterprise Partnership and the Local Sustainable Transport Fund, as well as using its own resources and assets to support further improvements to accessibility and a programme of public realm improvements including greening the Town.

The Framework will be considered to be successful when new jobs are created, further private sector investment is made, more new homes are delivered and new retail and leisure operators are attracted to the Town, new business are established in the Town Centre (and they are networking with existing businesses) and there are many more positive headlines about Crewe.



## Crewe Town Centre Regeneration Delivery Town Centre and Key Opportunity Sites



### Key

- Opportunity Site Boundary
- ..... Proposed Town Centre Boundary
- Lifestyle Centre
- ★ Cultural Assets
- Public Squares
- Pedestrian Zone
- Existing Landmark Building

### Opportunity sites

1. Wrexham Terrace Car Park
2. Former Victoria High School
3. Victoria Centre / Asda
4. Royal Arcade and adjoining land
5. Chester Street Car Parks
6. Phoenix Leisure Park
7. Vernon Way Retail Park and adjoining land
8. Civic and Cultural Quarter (South)
9. Lyceum Square / Market Shopping Centre
10. High Street and Oak Street Car Parks
11. Grand Junction
12. Mill Street

## 1.0 Crewe: A High Growth City

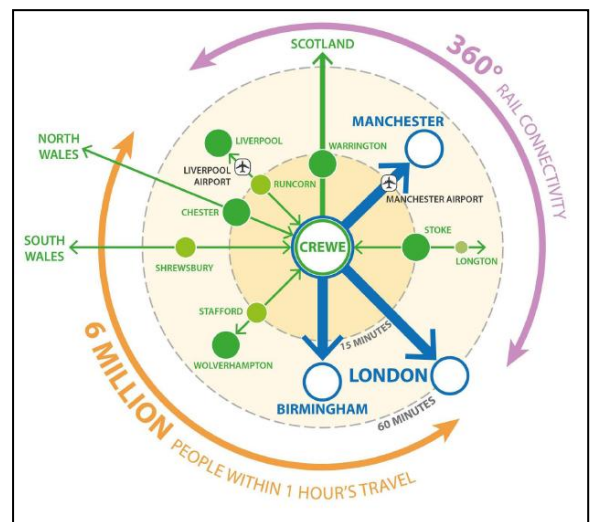
- 1.1 This section showcases Crewe's assets whilst highlighting the constraints that it must overcome if the Town Centre is to thrive.

### Crewe's Economic Assets

#### Strategic Location

- 1.2 Crewe is located in the Borough of Cheshire East in North West England. Its rail station first opened in 1837 and to this day Crewe benefits from being strategically located on the road and rail network. The Town has a strong engineering heritage. It is often referred to as the 'Gateway to the North West', as outlined below:

- **Road** - the M6 (junctions 16 and 17) lies 5 miles from Crewe Town Centre providing good links to Birmingham to the south and Manchester and Liverpool to the north. Crewe's pivotal position between the north and south of the Country on the M6 appeals to distributors from retail and manufacturing. It is estimated that up to 5 million people reside within a 1 hour drive of Crewe. Manchester Airport and Birmingham International lie 19 miles and 53 miles away respectively
- **Rail** - the town offers exceptional rail links to multiple destinations and Crewe Rail Station is a key hub in the North West rail network for England, Wales and Scotland. There are 40 trains a day between Crewe and London, running up to 4 times an hour with a fastest journey time of 1 hour 36 minutes. In addition, direct trains run to Manchester, Birmingham, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Chester and Liverpool
- **High Speed Rail (HS2)** - Crewe's unique 360 degree connectivity has been recognised as an asset for HS2. Sir David Higgins report "Rebalancing Britain" recommends that the proposed North West hub for HS2 *"should be at Crewe because that is the best way to serve not just the local region, but also provide services into the rest of the North West, North Wales and Merseyside"*. He has also advocated extending the first phase to Crewe by 2027 instead of 2033. If endorsed by Government, Crewe will be exceptionally well-placed to deliver and benefit from major economic growth over the next 20 years and beyond. It is estimated that the North West Gateway Hub could deliver 64,000 jobs and £3.5bn GVA p.a. in the region. Plans are based upon investing in a new North West Gateway Hub station just to the south of the existing station, which will provide direct connectivity between HS2 and existing rail services to Crewe, alongside a rapid transit link to the current station location and the Town Centre, providing the conditions for capturing major growth for the whole of Crewe.





### Competitive Business Base

- 1.3 Crewe has an excellent reputation as a “place to do business”, demonstrated by its strong business base. Crewe is home to in the region of 5,000 businesses (with around 60,000 work-based employees) which include concentrations of professional services, distribution and logistics, and advanced engineering built on its rich rail and car manufacturing heritage. Major employers in the town include Bentley Motors (current HQ c.3600 staff), Morning Foods, Network Rail, Virgin Rail and Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) Cheshire Campus. Bentley Motors’ headquarters in Crewe is home to all of its operations including design, R&D, engineering and production of the company’s three model lines. It has recently announced that it is to manufacture its latest model, the Mulsanne Speed, in Crewe. This is in addition to its plans to manufacture its first ever SUV at the same plant from 2015, which represents a £800m investment from the VW Group, which will generate at least 1,000 new jobs.
- 1.4 From a business investment perspective, as well as having a broad business base with a number of major employers, Crewe is also able to offer a range of available and relatively affordable employment sites which could accommodate significant inward investment opportunities.
- 1.5 Tourism has a vital role to play in the continuing economic success and development of both Cheshire East and the North West region as a whole. It remains one of the fastest growing areas of the Cheshire East Economy and is worth £650 million to the local area.

### Strong Local Leadership with Clear Growth Strategies - ‘High Growth City for Crewe’

- 1.6 Cheshire East Council recognises the strategic growth potential of Crewe and is promoting it as a ‘High Growth City’. This builds upon work undertaken by the Council in developing the ‘All Change for Crewe’ vision and growth strategy. The strategy recognises the critical role within the Cheshire & Warrington sub-region that Crewe currently plays as well as its future growth potential. The ambition for Crewe is for it to be a ‘nationally significant economic centre by 2030’. The ‘All Change for Crewe’ vision recognises the potential that the town has in terms of its strategic connectivity and strengths in advanced automotive and rail engineering amongst others. It refers to forthcoming investments relating to Bentley Motors, the recently confirmed UTC and also the proposals for an HS2 North West Gateway Hub in Crewe.
- 1.7 The Cheshire & Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) launched its 10 year Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) in March 2014. The LEP is backed by private sector businesses as well as local authorities across Cheshire and Warrington. The SEP refers to plans for a “High Growth City for Crewe” as one of its three key intervention priorities, largely reflecting its strategic importance with the proposed HS2 North West Gateway Hub. The SEP identifies four key elements that comprise the ‘High Growth City’ opportunity:
  - Significant land for growth - both homes and employment
  - Strong technological and human capital base with some of the UK’s leading businesses
  - A constellation of towns that strongly interact as a single integrated market area - with strong individual identities and strong interrelationships (e.g. Crewe, Northwich, Alsager)
  - Connectivity through its transportation infrastructure - which the North West Gateway Hub and M6 Smart Motorway will reinforce.

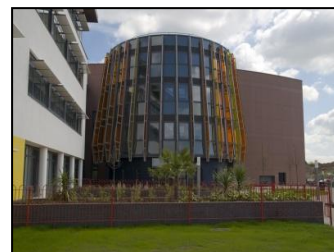
- 1.8 Following submission of the SEP to Government, the LEP has been awarded £142.7m in funding from the Government's £2bn Local Growth Fund. £20.1m has been confirmed in the first year, and as part of the Government's ongoing commitment to the LEP, there will be a further £122.6m of funding from 2016/17 onwards. As one of three principal investment priorities for the LEP, there is therefore recognition at all levels of the economic growth potential of Crewe. The direct reference to the proposals for a 'High Growth City' within the SEP is an indication of the commitment of partners across the sub-region and beyond to support future economic growth and investment in Crewe as a key driver of the wider North West and national economies.
- 1.9 Crewe is also home to the Crewe Business Park, widely regarded as the country's first 'green business park'. It was one of the first business parks in the UK to receive the prestigious Millennium Marque Award for environmental excellence. This 67 acre regional employment site is home to companies such as Busch GVT, Fujitsu and Air Products.
- 1.10 Significant investments have already been secured in relation to wider linked connectivity improvements including an investment of £27m secured to deliver the Crewe Green Link Road (South) scheme and £11.5m is also being invested into the Basford West Spine Road, improvements and widening of the A500 and enhanced junctions at both J16 and J17 of the M6. This is in addition to a £6m investment to enhance Crewe Railway Station delivered in 2014.

## Renowned Higher/Further Education Presence

- 1.11 Crewe is home to MMU's Cheshire Campus, which is located on the edge of the Town Centre. Manchester Metropolitan University is one the largest campus-based undergraduate universities in the UK with a total student population of more than 37,000. There are c.4,000 students on its Cheshire Campus and the University is seeking to increase this to c.5,000 over the next five years. The Campus is renowned for the excellence of its educational, performance and sporting programmes. MMU has recently been through a process of consolidating its physical campuses so that it now operates only from its site in Manchester City Centre and its Cheshire Campus in Crewe, reflecting the importance of the latter. MMU has invested in excess of £350m over the past 10 years in its estate and is now developing plans for a new £200m+ capital investment programme. In 2010, it opened a new £10m Exercise and Sport Science Facility on its Cheshire Campus and this followed on from a £6m investment in a new Contemporary Arts Centre in 2009.
- 1.12 The University views the 'offer' and perception of Crewe Town Centre as being critical to the recruitment of staff and students and considers there to be a distinct lack of cultural/leisure/evening economy facilities in the town. Students use the current offer available along Nantwich Road, particularly in the evening, but a large proportion also travel to locations such as Stoke and Manchester. Enhancing the overall offer of Crewe Town Centre is therefore key to promoting the ongoing success of the Cheshire Campus, which is also seeking to develop its own complementary cultural and evening economy offer on campus.



- 1.13 The University is progressing investment plans, largely focused on on-campus developments. However, it is seeking to be increasingly outward facing, with a focus on the development of partnerships and external engagement. It is currently developing a HEFCE 'catalyst' programme funding bid in partnership with Cheshire East Council (CEC) and the Cheshire & Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (C&W LEP) for some form of skills/employment facility in Crewe and the location options for this are being discussed - clearly a Town Centre location would deliver significant benefits for Crewe as a whole.
- 1.14 Crewe is also home to South Cheshire College, one of the leading Further Education and sixth form colleges nationally. The College is located on a single campus about 1.5 miles from Crewe Town Centre and was comprehensively redeveloped in 2010 at a cost of over £70m. It has consistently received 'outstanding' awards from OFSTED and in 2014, the College announced its best ever set of vocational and A-Level results, with a 99.7% pass rate for A-Levels. Reaseheath College is also located within close proximity of Crewe, on the edge of Nantwich. It is an FE College which also offers HE courses and adult learning, with a particular focus on land-based subject areas.



## Current and Pipeline Investment

- 1.15 Cheshire East Council recognises the importance of encouraging more footfall in the Town Centre to support investment by the private sector and has committed to directing new opportunities they are investing in into the Town Centre. For example:
- £15m Council investment to create Crewe Lifestyle Centre in the Town Centre is under construction. This will incorporate an eight-lane 25-metre swimming pool, a large teaching pool, sports courts, state-of-the-art fitness suites, library, cafe, multi-use hall, family support services, workspace and a specialist adult day care facility. This is due to open in 2016
  - Crewe has been successful in securing its ambitions for a University Technical College (UTC) in the town centre. This is due to open in September 2016 and will cater for circa 800 14-19-year-olds seeking to pursue careers in engineering and high skill manufacturing, working closely with major local employers. The UTC scheme is a partnership between Cheshire East Council, Bentley Motors, Manchester Metropolitan University, Siemens, Bosch, OSL Rail, Jacobs Engineering, Chevron Racing, Optical 3D and South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce. This will provide a major boost to the educational offer of the town and wider area and will serve as a potential catalyst to further investment. The exact location of this has yet to be confirmed although partners and the Education Funding Agency's preferred site is at the Former Victoria High School Site off West St.



## Affluent Catchment Area

- 1.16 Improving the residential offer within the Town Centre will help to attract and retain economically active residents and support a revitalised Town Centre through the generation of spend and longer dwell time.

- 1.17 The total population within Crewe's primary catchment area is 171,000 people with an estimated 'Greater Crewe' resident population of 83,000 people which is projected to increase to around 100,000 by 2031, representing a significant increase of 20%<sup>1</sup> and presenting a number of opportunities for economic growth.
- 1.18 Whilst the area around the Town Centre faces a number of socio-economic challenges, the Crewe area as a whole performs well on a number of socio-economic indicators, including a significant over-representation of working age adults categorised within the most affluent 'AB' social group (which includes those in managerial and professional occupations). This is further demonstrated by the industry standard 'PMA Affluence Indicator' which classes the Crewe catchment population as moderately affluent, ranking 59 out of a total of 200 centres across the UK based on a comparative assessment of a variety of income and lifestyle indicators. The CACI ACORN group profile also reveals that Crewe has an above average proportion of Wealthy Executives, Affluent Greys, Flourishing Families, Settled Suburbia and Blue Collar Roots socio-economic groups.
- 1.19 As a 'Principal' Town, the largest town in Cheshire East and the primary shopping centre in the south of the Borough there are a number of strategic opportunities for Crewe. Not least the opportunity to capitalise upon the demographics and relative affluence of its hinterland. Cheshire East as a whole is a prosperous sub-regional economy with some of the highest residential property prices and income per capita across the North West region. Neighbouring settlements, including the towns of Nantwich and Sandbach, have contrasting socio-economic characteristics yet are within close proximity of Crewe.
- 1.20 However, Crewe is underperforming as a Principal Town despite its positioning within a local economy which is surrounded by a large and relatively affluent catchment area. Its challenge is to address the current 'doughnut' effect that is prevalent through capitalising upon its economic assets and its sub-regional focus/importance to drive increased footfall, visits and expenditure from residents living in relatively affluent neighbouring areas.

## The Constraints

- 1.21 Despite a number of assets and recent investments, Crewe continues to face a series of challenges:
- Perceptions of Crewe (specifically by retailers/investors/developers) are relatively poor and perpetuated by a high volume of retail voids, unattractive physical environment in some parts, disjointed pedestrian movement and connectivity, issues of congestion, and limited visibility of the Town's offering from the surrounding arterial routes. Crewe must re-establish its positioning and heighten its profile
  - A challenging retail market nationally with investment increasingly focused on prime urban and out of town centres, resulting in growing retail voids and falling rental levels in secondary locations such as Crewe. This is despite continuing planning policy focus on local centres
  - Leisure, hospitality and food and drink markets have also been constrained by the economic climate and reduced consumer spend and remain focused on highly accessible 'cluster destinations' of retail and leisure activity
  - Crewe's strong road and rail connectivity means that it 'leaks customers and spend' as it struggles to compete with some of the Region's major retail and leisure destinations including Manchester City Centre, Liverpool One, and Chester where its residents' can easily get to.

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<sup>1</sup> All Change for Crewe - A Prospectus for Crewe (ONS 2011 Based Population Projections)

Other attractive and relatively accessible locations providing a different offer include Cheshire Oaks, the Trafford Centre, and more locally Nantwich, Sandbach and the Potteries. Crewe must find a way to differentiate itself and provide a unique proposition to attract visitors and spend

- Within Crewe itself, Grand Junction Retail Park is performing strongly, but despite its proximity it currently provides little contribution in the form of linked trips to the Town Centre. Linkages between the Retail Park and the Town Centre must be enhanced to ensure that the opportunities presented by this asset are drawn into the Town Centre and maximised
- Many major occupiers recognise the importance of their presence within a town, both in terms of creating an attractive and vibrant town centre that generates footfall and in attracting other occupiers. As a result, they therefore expect incentives to move into a Town such as Crewe, through for example business rate relief or rent free periods. These can often be for a duration of time that equates to millions of pounds
- Crewe itself faces a number of socio-economic challenges in parts and as a whole, the Town underperforms compared with the rest of Cheshire East. Taking deprivation as an example, of the 231 communities known as 'Lower Super Output Areas' (LSOAs) in Cheshire East, 23 are amongst the 25% most deprived in England and 14 of these 23 are in Crewe. Furthermore, five of these LSOAs, all in Crewe, are amongst the 10% most deprived in England (IMD, 2010). Furthermore, Crewe's average household income figure is below the Cheshire East average (2010 CACI Paycheck Data) and it has a higher rate of worklessness. Improving the residential offer within the Town Centre will help to attract and retain economically active residential and support a revitalised Town Centre through the generation of spend and longer dwell time.

## Purpose of the Framework

1.22 Partners have already prepared a number of reports setting out the future strategy for Crewe. This Regeneration Delivery Framework builds upon these to establish a route map to realise a transformational future for Crewe. Its purpose is threefold:

- To determine an Action Plan to support the economic prosperity of Crewe Town Centre - defining specific actions for key partners including CEC
- To establish a framework for the potential acquisition and intervention by CEC in respect of a number of priority sites
- To inform the emerging planning policy of Crewe Town Centre to feed into the Local Plan process.

## Structure of the Report

1.23 The Regeneration Delivery Framework is structured as follows:

- Spatial review of the Town (Section 2)
- Property market overview of key sectors in Crewe Town Centre (Section 3)
- Introduction to the Vision, Objectives and Key Themes of the Regeneration Delivery Framework (Section 4)
- Consideration of the current and emerging Planning Framework and makes suggestions for its future approach (Section 5)
- Next steps (Section 6).

1.24 The Regeneration Delivery Framework is supported by a separate Implementation Plan which is structured as follows:

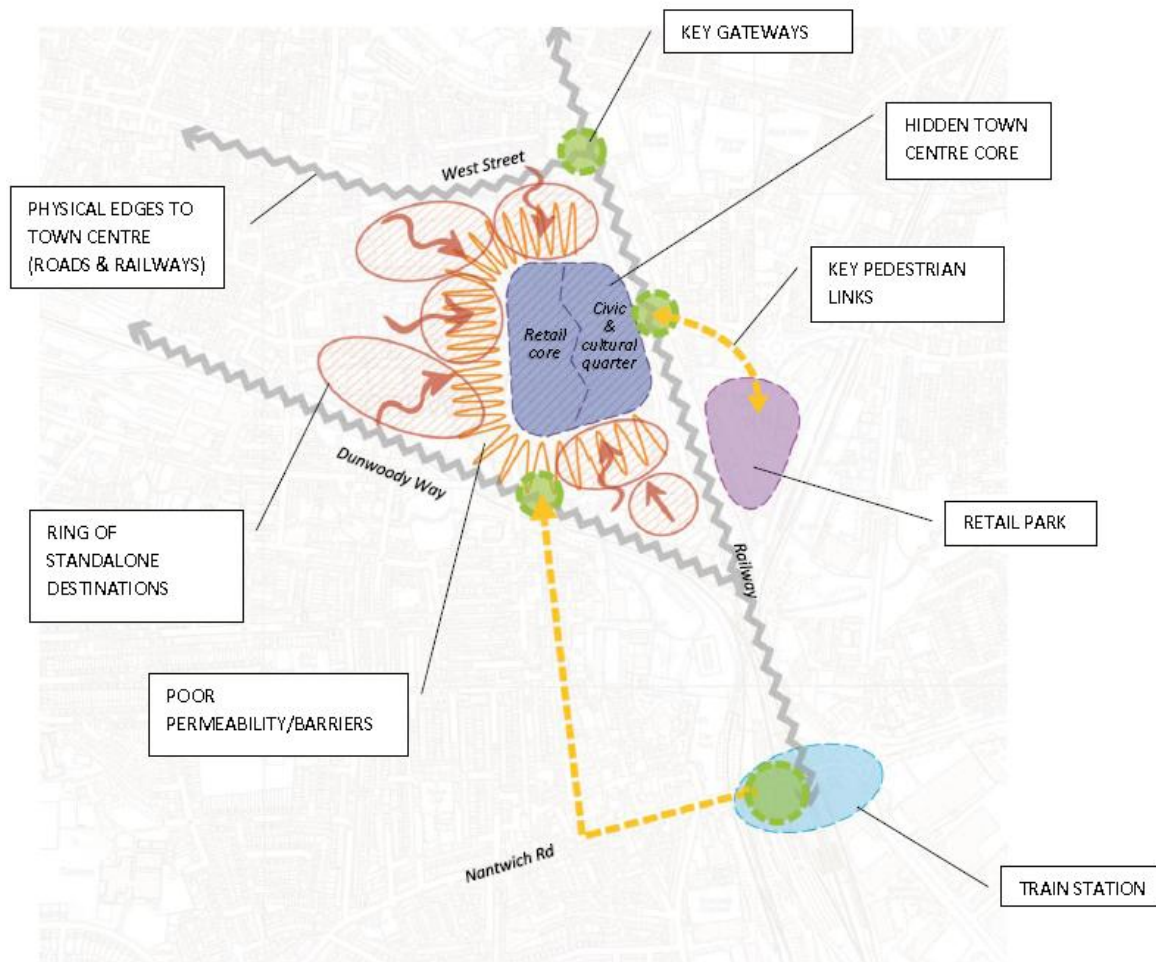
- Section 1 - Introduces the purpose of the Implementation Plan
- Section 2 - Provides a summary of the Regeneration Delivery Framework for context
- Section 3 - Sets out the actions required to underpin growth in Crewe Town Centre
- Section 4 - Considers governance and delivery issues
- Section 5 - Sets out priorities for lobbying and engagement
- Section 6 - Considers potential sources of funding
- Section 7 - Identifies further investigations required to support the realisation of the Vision.



## 2.0 Spatial Analysis

- 2.1 This section provides a spatial overview of the key physical attributes which need to be harnessed and the constraints that need to be overcome to support the transformation of Crewe Town Centre.
- 2.2 The key messages are set out in Figure 2.1. It identifies a retail core and Civic and Cultural Quarter which is surrounded by a ring of standalone destinations which in many cases are served by their own car park and separated by neighbouring destinations by service areas which act as barriers to movement through parts of the Town.

**Figure 2.1 Crewe Town Centre - Spatial Analysis Plan**



- 2.3 The Town Centre core has great potential as a destination however many parts are currently underutilised. The retail core comprises a number of smaller retail units surrounded by larger units on the edge. The larger format units are served by a ring of car parks and the links between these areas is in many cases poor quality or limited.
- 2.4 Whilst within what is geographically recognised as the Town Centre, the Phoenix Leisure Park is very poorly connected to the core of the town and is perceived as being 'out of town', otherwise the leisure offer in the Town Centre at present is fairly limited.

- 2.5 Although the Town's out of town retail park, Grand Junction Retail Park, is very close, separated by the railway line, there is a lack of linked trips.
- 2.6 The Town Centre core is compact, walkable and pedestrian dominant which presents the opportunity to lift and reinforce the Town as a destination. However, generally the Town lacks quality green spaces where people can dwell and relax. Many of Crewe's corridor routes and streets have little street tree cover.

### Poor Connectivity

- 2.7 Crewe Town Centre suffers from a compartmentalised, broken layout. A ring of standalone destinations circle the perimeter of the Town Centre (many with their own car park). These destinations are predominantly big box retail and supermarkets. The orientation of these destinations, often linked by service areas, deters people from moving through the Town Centre - people tend to park and shop in the destination and leave. Blank edges and backs to these blocks of retail create 'walls' within the public realm. The overall feel is one of poor permeability and linkages throughout the Town Centre which does little to encourage visitors to dwell in the Town or venture further afield and spend more money. Visitors need to be encouraged to break through this ring to get to the Town Centre core.



**Standalone Destinations that circle the Town Centre Core**



## Accessibility and Gateways

- 2.8 Routes into the Town Centre and gateways are dominated by vehicles. Some roads feel oversized and not urban in character. Many key desire lines/existing crossing points lack clarity or priority for pedestrians. Many of the Town's gateways have physical challenges such as bridges, underpasses, busy roads and typically open out onto big box retail and car parks. The permeability between these destinations is poor which deters visits exploring more of the Town to support linked trips, lengthening spend time and then providing the opportunity to increase spending.
- 2.9 This is further undermined by poor way finding along pedestrian routes resulting in a confusing place to visit where people are not encouraged to explore. A good example of this is at the Train Station. The Station is disconnected from the Town Centre and is 10 minutes walk from the Town Centre. However there are no signs to explain this at the Station. There should be a clear "route" identified between the Town and the Station with way findings updating visitors on their progress into Town to minimise the feeling of distance. Instead new visitors to the Town are effectively being left to find their own way there and some will be deterred and not make the trip. This issue has been recognised and the Council's Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) programme, targeted at Crewe, will be improving the signage between the station and town centre to be completed in March 2015.



**Poor Linkages between the Town Centre and Stations**

## Squares and Buildings

- 2.10 The Town does offer a number of civic squares which have benefited from public sector investment. The Lyceum Square space is dominated by car parking and as such fails to maximise its potential relationship to the Indoor Market and Theatre. Both the Indoor Market and the Theatre are not able to maximise their impact due to issues with their location in the Town and wider perceptions of the Town.
- 2.11 The Civic and Cultural Quarter accommodates the majority of the Town Centre's most attractive buildings, streets and spaces and cultural facilities including the Memorial Square. This offer will be further enhanced through the delivery of the new Lifestyle Centre, which has now started on site, and will introduce a new destination to this quarter and increase activity and interest.



**Attractive civic squares and existing pedestrian friendly routes**

## 3.0 Property Market Overview

- 3.1 This section considers the headline market demand messages for new retail, leisure and residential across Crewe Town Centre.

### Retail and Leisure Market

#### Market Overview and Drivers

- 3.2 The national retail landscape has fundamentally changed over the last decade in response to shifting socio-demographic and market trends. The significant growth of out-of-town and online retailing has led to an increasing retailer focus on a smaller number of prime city, town and destination shopping locations offering larger, more efficient floor plates and a greater critical mass of amenities. As a result, many smaller town and district centres have witnessed falling retail rental levels and increasing volumes of voids. Crewe Town Centre has not been immune to this trend and the strength and popularity of the offer at Grand Junction Retail Park is often in stark contrast to parts of the Town Centre, less than 0.5km (0.3 miles) away. This is illustrated in the CACI ratings where the footprint ranking of Crewe Town Centre has been falling whilst increasing for Grand Junction Retail Park.
- 3.3 As a result of these changes, retail investment is focusing on prime locations within major city centres and retail destinations such as the Trafford Centre - whilst many smaller district and sub regional centres have witnessed increasing vacancy rates. However, one of the few areas that have continued to see activity during the period is convenience retailing, including a proliferation of smaller local units (e.g. Sainsbury's Local and Tesco Express).
- 3.4 Whilst planning policy remains focused on local centres, ultimately all retailers from the large multiple to the local independent operators have a preferred location related to target their customer base. In determining where to locate they need to consider how their target catchment relates to the size, profile and spending power of the local catchment and the visibility, prominence and accessibility of sites. Increasingly many retailers, especially the national retailers, are seeking out of town locations due to their accessibility by car. The impact of these trends has undermined the viability and demand for new or existing retail space within many local centres, and landlords have had to offer large capital or other inducements to secure/retain tenants.
- 3.5 Turning to leisure and tourism uses, the following summarises the current market context:
- **Food and Drink** - the traditional pub format has been badly hit by the credit crunch, competition from supermarkets and the smoking ban. However, family restaurant chains and branded coffee shops have remained fairly resilient in recent years and are attracted to a critical mass of population which meets the demographics of their target market. The presence of the coffee shops encourages visitors to dwell longer and potentially spend more
  - **Hospitality** - the hospitality industry has seen limited development over recent years as businesses and individuals have sought to reduce their hotel spend. International brands are focusing on accessible city and large town locations, whilst the budget hotel sector will also consider highly accessible sites along major arterial routes, which offer the best financial viability for development. As few operators are currently undertaking development, those that are active are able to cherry pick the best opportunities
  - **Conferencing** - very much linked to hospitality, the conferencing and events market has been constrained over recent years by tightening business budgets. The sector is highly price competitive and whilst the number of events and delegates are showing signs of recovery,

average spend remains static as organisers opt for non-catering and shorter event packages<sup>2</sup>. New conferencing destinations are increasing focused on city centre destinations with a large catchment population and significant supporting amenities providing a wide variety of hotels and restaurants choices to a large number of delegates. The new ACC in Liverpool is such an example

- **Leisure and Tourist Attractions** - are also very location-driven and will focus on sites with good accessibility, significant catchment populations and in clusters with a critical mass of other attractive retail, leisure or tourism destinations.

## The Existing Offer and Market Potential

### Retail

- 3.6 Crewe is defined by market analysts CACI as being a 'Minor Average Centre'. Centres within this classification have a majority of mass retailing but also generally greater than 30% of value retailing. In terms of Crewe's retailer representation 2% is defined as Premium, 65% Mass and 33% Value. Whilst 'value' retail is an important sector for the Town, there is potential to diversify the local retail offer to appeal to a wider market audience. For example, through targeting a younger market segment, given the opportunities presented by the presence of Manchester Metropolitan University and the proposed UTC; or supporting the growth of a stronger independent retail offer.
- 3.7 There is also a need to reduce reliance on traditional retailing through a diversification of uses and users within the Town Centre. The family leisure market is an important sector and the creation of a better range of cafes, bars, restaurants and entertainment destinations will be key to broadening the attractiveness of the Town to a wider market and encouraging people to spend more and stay longer in the town, including in the evening, whilst also underpinning the existing retail offer.
- 3.8 The challenge for Crewe is to 'raise the bar' to ensure that it is able to increase its penetration into its affluent hinterland. It needs to increase and enhance the scale and quality of its offer as a whole to ensure that it does not continue to 'punch below its weight' and serve as a hindrance to wider sub-regional economic growth ambitions.
- 3.9 Crewe Town Centre provides in the order of 690,000 sq ft (64,100 sq m) of retail accommodation and serves a catchment population of approximately 83,000 people. The main retail centres within the Town Centre are:
- **Victoria Centre** - situated immediately west of the Market Centre, the 135,000 sq ft (12,540 sq m) Victoria Centre is a covered managed shopping centre anchored by Asda with other tenants including Mothercare and Bon Marche
  - **Market Centre** - a 147,000 sq ft (13,660 sq m) managed shopping arcade to the north east of the Town Centre. The arcade is anchored by Wilkinson's with other principal tenants including River Island, Dorothy Perkins, Poundland and Argos
  - **Victoria Street, Market Street and Queensway** - these pedestrianised streets provided the prime town centre retail offer. Key occupiers include Marks & Spencer, BHS, Boots, Topshop and JD Sports

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<sup>2</sup> UK Events Market Trends Survey 2014

- **Crewe Market** - Crewe's indoor market is located on Earle Street and operates five days a week (closed Tuesday and Sunday) providing a mix of local produce, clothing, gifts, home-ware and electronics across 47 'lock up' stalls.

- 3.10 The Town Centre has a clear focus on the 'value' market in terms of the type of retailer present which plays an important role responding to the needs of the local catchment area within walking distance of the Town Centre. There is a significant volume of retail voids within the Town Centre. Prime Zone A retail rental levels within the Town Centre are around £50-£60 per sq ft (£540-650 per sq m) which provides a reasonable base for medium/long term growth potential provided a step change in the shopping environment and footfall levels can be achieved.
- 3.11 The majority of the retail units in the Town Centre core are small. Whilst five years ago this might have been seen as a major barrier to major retail brands few of these are now seeking large footprints in towns of the size of Crewe. However, the size of units, generally available in the Town Centre core, is of a scale that could be attractive, if other aspects of the Town Centre are improved, to independents. The attraction of independent operators is crucial to the future prospects of our town centres. They enable places to differentiate between each other - something that the out of town retail parks cannot do. A number of other Cheshire market towns have strong independent retail offer and are attracting visitors looking to walk about a town, experience its culture, eat and drink. Crewe needs to target these visitors in addition to its traditional shoppers.
- 3.12 Crewe's out of town retail offer is provided predominantly within the Grand Junction Retail Park. It is substantially let to retailers traditionally associated with the high street, with just one small retail void. These include Next, Poundstretcher; M&S Simply Food; Laura Ashley; Home Bargain; Boots; Sports Direct; Aldi; and TK Maxx, together with a supporting food and leisure offer in the form of Frankie and Benny's, Costa Coffee, and KFC. The Retail Park dominates Crewe's retail catchment due to its higher quality and profile occupiers, good visibility, and convenient central location with easy car accessibility and around 700 free car parking spaces.
- 3.13 From an occupier perspective, the larger floorplates provided at Grand Junction Retail Park suit more modern retailing needs, allowing the efficient display of a wider stock range, whilst free and immediately accessible parking supports the growing 'click and collect' format and enables the sales of some bulkier goods that would struggle on more traditional high streets. However unlike some other towns the out of town offer is situated just 0.5km (0.3 miles) east of the Town Centre, Grand Junction Retail Park is considered to be a major competitor to the traditional town centre offer. As such scope exists to encourage linked trips between the town destinations. Importantly, scope exists to try to attract the more affluent shoppers who are visiting the Retail Park into the Town Centre if it can reposition itself and its profile.
- 3.14 Food retailing is currently well provided by Morrison (3,701 sq m net), Tesco (5,574 sq m net) and Asda (5,132 sq m net). In addition there is an Aldi (754 sq m) on Nantwich Road (as well as at Grand Junction Retail Park), Sainsbury's Local on Edleston Road, Marks & Spencer Simply Food (608 sq m) at Grand Junction Retail Park. Sainsbury's had been looking to develop a new supermarket at Vernon Way but the site could not be assembled.
- 3.15 In recognition of the challenges facing town centres, there have been a number of central and local Government initiatives to support retail high streets. In 2012, Crewe was one of four Cheshire East towns to receive £10,000 funding to support the vitality of the Town Centre as part of a Town Team Partner Initiative following an unsuccessful Portas Pilot Bid. As part of a national initiative, Cheshire East Council offers Small Business Rate Relief to retailers with a low rateable value or that move into premises that have been vacant for a year or more. Other initiatives being introduced in other



Cheshire towns such as Northwich, where consideration is also being given to, include Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) within which local businesses agree to pay an additional business rates levy to support town centre initiatives.

- 3.16 In terms of car parking, Crewe Town Centre's retail offer is served by a privately operated 170 space surface car park located directly behind the Market Shopping Centre, which together with the Council's car parks on Chester Street and Delamere Street (350 spaces) and Victoria Centre (482 spaces) provide the main car parking for the Town. There is considered to be a surplus of car parks across the Town, but a greater understanding of the location and use of Crewe's car parks is required to ensure the offer reflects future regeneration and development in the town centre.
- 3.17 A secondary retail destination approximately 1km (0.7 miles) south of the Town Centre on Nantwich Road provides a more local offer. This half mile stretch anchored by the Rail Station and Aldi store provides a mix of predominantly independent retailers and services including estate agents, hair dressers, local restaurants and takeaways. Given the pedestrian and vehicle movement along Nantwich Road, and the proximity to both MMU and South Cheshire College, it is relatively vibrant throughout the day and has relatively few voids, despite fairly limited short-term parking provision. The quality of the offer improves further to the west. The area could see a brighter future on the back of HS2 investment.

## Leisure

- 3.18 In terms of Crewe's commercial leisure offer, Phoenix Leisure Park to the south of the Town Centre off Dunwoody Way accommodates a Mecca Bingo Hall, Riverside Bowl, Odeon Cinema and Pizza Hut. The Park is within the Town Centre Boundary but suffers from poor pedestrian access and connectivity. The pedestrian access is via a steep bank and along an unattractive walkway. The owners and the Odeon are in discussion about the potential of the Cinema extending into the unit currently occupied by the bowling alley. The existing format of the unit fails to offer the range of related food and drink desired by many modern cinema complexes which impact on the income generating potential of the destination.
- 3.19 With the exception of Costa Coffee, Crewe's food and drink offer is limited to a handful of local public houses, cafes and coffee shop chains within the Town Centre itself. The only national chains are linked to the wider retail and leisure offer including a Pizza Hut at Phoenix Leisure Park and a Frankie and Benny's, Costa Coffee and KFC at Grand Junction Retail Park, further highlighting the increasing trend for retail and leisure clusters. There are also a number of independent restaurants/ takeaways on Nantwich Road.
- 3.20 The new Lifestyle Centre is currently under construction on the Christchurch car park site and is due to be operational in 2016. The Centre will combine leisure facilities including a new swimming pool, gym, multi-use hall, cafe and library with family and adult social care and community services within a single modern building. It has the potential to kick-start a new quality leisure offer in the Town Centre. Scope also exists to try to link this new leisure destination with existing leisure destinations in the Town such as the Lyceum Theatre and the Heritage Centre. The potential of expanding this cultural offer should also consider building upon the Town's rich rail and automotive history.

## Hotels

- 3.21 Crewe has a number of national hotel operators present close to the Rail Station including a Best Western Crewe Arms Hotel, a Holiday Inn Express and Premier Inn Crewe Central. Further to the east near Manchester Metropolitan University's Campus are a Ramada Encore and a Travelodge. Crewe Hall Hotel (Q Hotel Group), situated approximately three miles east of the Town Centre provides a

higher value spa, wedding and conferencing venue. The offer within the Town Centre itself is limited to local operators and rooms within public houses. Some of these hotels already provide a local business conferencing offer which should be supported. However, the potential to attract a larger conferencing offer is limited by the relative lack of supporting amenities. The arrival of HS2 would potentially strengthen the market for both hospitality and conferencing facilities within Crewe, however it is unlikely to be a driver of new facilities with operators tending to react to strong evidenced demand rather than rely on potential new economic anchors.

#### Key Message - Retail and Leisure Sector

- The Town Centres value offer accommodated mainly in the larger retail around the edge of the Town Centre core serves the immediate catchment well
- The Town's smaller retail units are well placed to serve the needs of the important independent sector
- Grand Junction Retail Park is performing strongly and attracts more affluent shoppers from Crewe's wider catchment. The key must be to entice these shoppers into the Town Centre Core by offering a better range of shops and services and a more attractive environment. Links between the two destinations need to be improved
- Extending the Town's leisure offer is critical to diversifying the Town's offer. The Lifestyle Centre has kick started a new leisure offer in the Town and this must be harnessed
- New residential development within the Town Centre would support the local retail offer through extending the hours of activity in the Town, increased footfall and spend, which in turn could generate demand in the medium to longer terms for an enhanced food and drink offer which is currently lacking
- The Town needs to become more attractive to a wider a range of visitors as possible. Scope exists to encourage more of the University's students into the Town and the planned University Technical College should be used to attract occupiers who target this market.

## Residential Market

### Market Overview and Drivers

3.22 Whilst the UK is now out of recession and we are witnessing strong headlines announcing a return of the housing market, much of this continues to be growth driven by London and the South East. The market remains cautious in more marginal locations such as the North West, where the regional residential market can be summarised as follows:

- **Regional House Prices** - Land Registry figures from the second quarter of 2014 indicate a 2.4% increase in achieved house prices over the last 12 months, but remain 17.2% below that of the 2007 market peak and are growing at a slower rate to that nationally. The most attractive and affluent regional market areas such as Manchester, Cheshire East and Cheshire West have experienced the greatest growth

- **Regional Volume of Sales** - at c.38% growth, the Land Registry figures indicate that the pace of sales across the North West has recovered much quicker than house prices over the last year, but again remain significantly below that of the market peak
- **New Build Development** - is starting to emerge, but with house builder focus shifted to profit rather than volume. There is some evidence that pace of sales and therefore build rates are slowly increasing. As such local achievable values, considered on a £ per sq ft basis, are now a key decision making factor for house builders looking to acquire sites for development. Consequently, sites with sufficient scale in more attractive residential areas capable of achieving required sales values are seeing much improved land values. Such areas are generally characterised by a significant catchment population and proximity to the region's economic drivers e.g. Manchester, Liverpool and Preston. Whilst this trend has helped to increase the volume of completions nationally, they remain very low at 135,550 in 2012/13 against a Government target of 240,000 per annum.

3.23 In response to the significant need for more housing and in light of tighter lending criteria for both purchasers and house builders, new delivery models have emerged, including the Government's Help to Buy programme which is considered to have been successful in increasing mortgage lending, sales and house building, although concerns remain around the potential to artificially increase prices.

3.24 For Registered Providers (RPs), traditional mechanisms of residential development funding have shifted, with key partners such as the HCA having significantly less funds available to support housing delivery. As such, some RPs are looking to diversify their offer and are considering new methods of delivery such as direct delivery and bond raising to fund sales and management of private sector stock. However, greater scrutiny into their business model is resulting in more caution in their activities.

3.25 In summary, the key housing market drivers are:

- **Location** - critical to decision making in respect of both the house builder and the potential purchaser/occupier. Sites in good locations, for example in close proximity to the motorway network, and of sufficient size to allow flexibility to build out desired house types, plot sizes and densities, are attractive
- **Confidence** - are prospective purchasers, occupiers and developers confident that the house is an established or up and coming area where sales can be achieved and values will rise?
- **Access to finance** - the limited availability and less favourable lending terms of finance for house builders has increased the cost of financing development. Further, stricter mortgage lending criteria for occupiers has resulted in slower sales rates and in turn, longer build out rates and higher preliminary costs and sales overheads for the developer. However, as the mortgage supply returns to some form of normality, there is a need to ensure that an appropriate supply of homes are able to come on stream to respond to demand.



### Crewe's Existing Offer and Market Potential

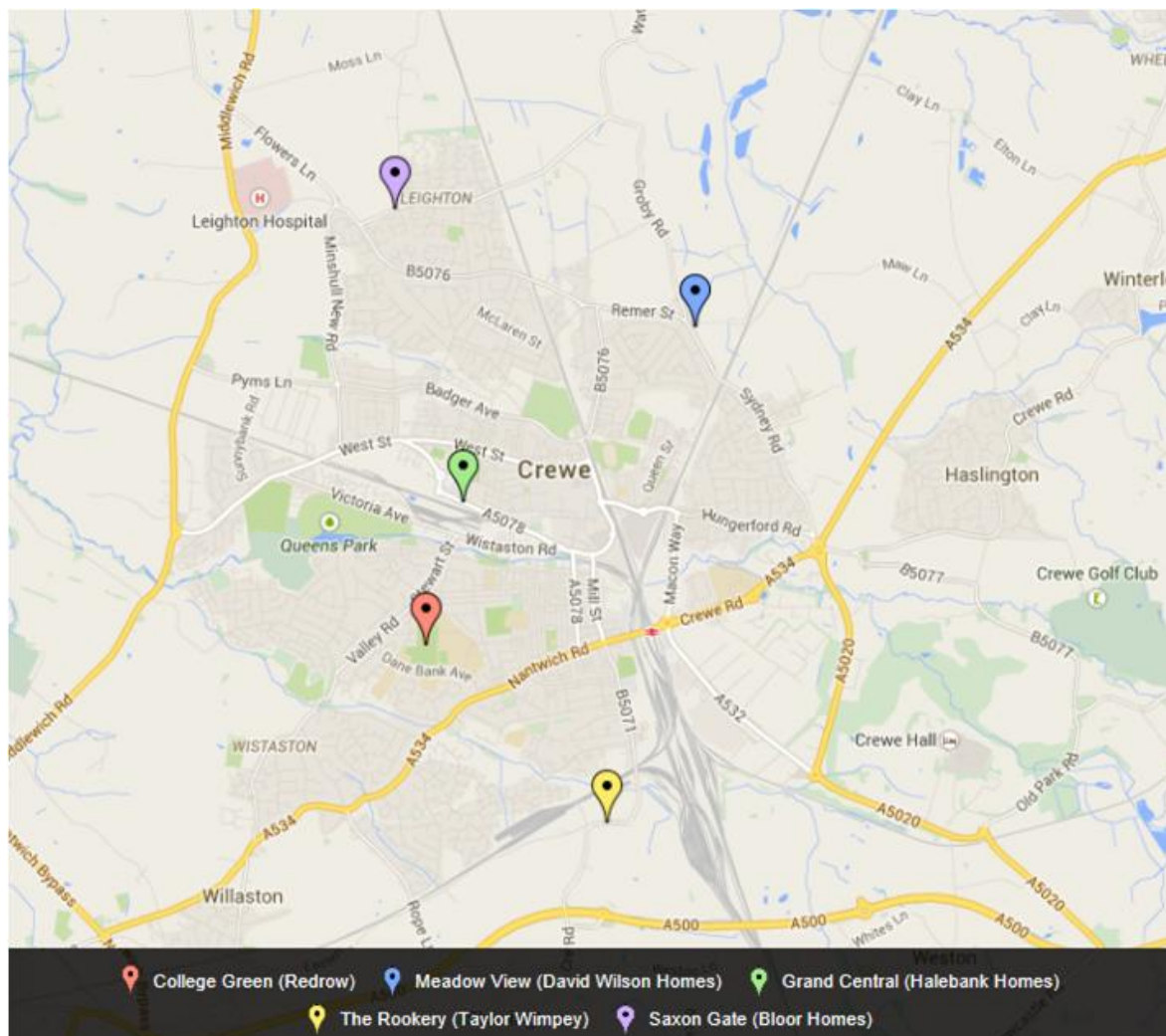
- 3.26 The seven wards that make up the urban area of Crewe have a similar housing stock profile to that of the wider borough, with a relatively high proportion of detached housing stock (33%), compared to that of the regional (18%) and national (23%) averages<sup>3</sup>. In terms of tenure, owner occupation across the Crewe wards is relatively strong at 73% compared to that of the regional (65%) and national benchmarks (64%), but marginally lower than the Cheshire East average (75%). At 13% and 12% respectively, private and social renting is in line with the wider Borough but lower than the North West and England and Wales figures.
- 3.27 However, these figures disguise significant variations within the area. The Crewe Central ward which covers much of the Town Centre, has a very different stock profile with just 4% detached and 16% semi detached properties, but 45% terraced and 35% flatted. Further, just 36% of properties are owner occupied, with 34% privately rented and 28% socially rented.
- 3.28 Although it is not unusual for central urban locations to have predominance towards higher density terraced and apartment housing types and a lower rate of home ownership, there is an opportunity in Crewe to start to diversify the housing offer in terms of type, tenure and quality to provide greater choice to attract and retain some of the more affluent and economically active residents from the surrounding hinterland into the Town Centre and further afield given the Town's strategic location which will be further enhanced by HS2. Uplift in the amenity offer within the Town Centre will support this aspiration.
- 3.29 There are currently five active private new build residential developments within the Crewe conurbation:
- Grand Central - Halebank Homes: Located off Dunwoody Way on the southern edge of Crewe Town Centre, Grand Central comprises an 86 unit development providing a mix of 1 and 2 bed apartments, and 3 and 4 bedroom townhouses. Just two show homes remain available for sale - a three bed town house at £145,000 equating to a net asking value of £152 per sq ft and a 2 bed apartment at £110,000 or £125 per sq ft net. This scheme represents the closest available comparable to Crewe Town Centre and has reportedly been slow to sell, although this is considered to be largely due to issues with the scheme's marketing. Previous DTZ analysis of achieved sales at the scheme indicates values in the order of £142 per sq ft
  - College Green - Redrow: Situated off Danebank Avenue, adjacent to the South Cheshire College approximately 3 km (1.9 miles) south of Crewe Town Centre. The scheme comprises 50 predominantly three and four bed detached properties with some additional two and three bed semi detached and mews. Current net asking at the scheme values (asking less 5% to take into account sales incentives) are in the order of £176 per sq ft
  - Meadow View - David Wilson Homes: Comprises 72 three and four bed detached and 2 and 3 bed semi detached homes. The development is situated off Maw Green Road on the eastern edge of the urban area approximately 2.4 km (1.5 miles) north east of Crewe Town Centre. Net asking values at the development are currently in the region of £190-200 per sq ft
  - The Rookery - Taylor Wimpey: The Rookery is a recently launched development of 40 two and three bed mews and semi detached homes and three and four bed detached. Just one three bed end mews has been released to the market with an asking price of £152,995, equivalent to £215 per sq ft when a 5% discount has been applied to take account of sales incentives. The

<sup>3</sup> ONS 2011 Census Data. Crewe wards include Crewe Central; East; North; South; West; Crewe St Barnabas; and Leighton

development is situated off Crewe Road approximately 2.4 km (1.5 miles) south of Crewe Town Centre in a less urban setting

- **Saxon Gate - Bloor Homes:** Bloor Homes has achieved outline planning permission for up to 400 housing units on land north of Parkers Road in Leighton, approximately 3.2 km (2 miles) north of Crewe Town Centre. The development will have an offering of mostly 3, 4 and 5 bed detached homes with some mews and bungalow style properties. Marketing has recently commenced on the first phase of development which has full planning permission for 131 dwellings. The first release comprises 34 two, three and four bed semi detached and detached homes ranging in asking price from £144,500 to £247,995 and with best asking values in the order of £190 per sq ft.

3.30 In addition to the currently active new build open market private developments, Registered Providers are also delivering a range of new homes in and around the Town. Most notably, Countryside Properties is nearing completion of 'The Carriages', a 143 unit affordable rent, shared equity and Help to Buy scheme on the former Bombardier Site off Dunwoody Way on behalf of Your Housing Group and Cheshire East Council. The £14m development has been supported by £1.5m funding from the HCA. The scheme comprises a mix of one bed apartments and two and three bed homes. Buyers must have a connection to the Town and meet minimum earning threshold to be eligible.



Source: DTZ and house builders

- 3.31 Local estate agents in Crewe have indicated that the predominance of terraced properties within the Town Centre has driven demand from largely first time buyers including singles, young couples and new families and buy-to-let investors. Demand is considered to be largely from existing Crewe residents although there is reportedly strong demand from Eastern European immigrants working within the Town. Family households tend to look towards the outskirts of Crewe around Coppenhall and Leighton where there is more open space, better schools and larger properties available. Ultimately any new housing development in Crewe Town Centre must be price competitive if it is to appeal to a broader market.
- 3.32 As the residential market continues to improve, most national and regional house builders are now focusing on opportunity sites within areas where new build achievable values are in excess of £180 per sq ft. The overview of current new build developments would therefore suggest that whilst the outer areas of Crewe are likely to be attractive to the volume residential developers, whilst at about £140 per sq ft Town Centre sites are more likely to be of most interest to the regeneration focused developers who focus their activities in areas with the potential to diversify the local offer and with values in the order of £120-£160 per sq ft. Such developers include Keepmoat, Gleeson, Countryside Properties and Lovell.
- 3.33 Where office blocks no longer meet modern business requirements, the current time limited Permitted Development Rights allow the change of use of existing office buildings into residential without the need to apply for planning permission, provided the conversion can be completed by May 2016. This could represent a potential opportunity to Crewe which currently acts as a local office location for mainly public sector occupiers but is unlikely to attract new speculative office development or significant occupiers. Conversion could increase the Town Centre population, thus supporting the vitality and spend within the Town whilst providing the values required to revitalise tired buildings which currently detract from Crewe's profile e.g. Wellington House on Delamere Street and Burford House on Prince Albert Street. However, viability given the high cost of refurbishment is likely to be a key issue, particularly in areas outside of the Town Centre such as on Nantwich Road, and further not all office premises lend themselves to easy conversion to residential uses.
- 3.34 House prices provide an indication of the level and change in demand for residential dwellings within an area. Table 3.1 sets out the HM Land Registry achieved house price and transaction volume data for all property types over the last two years within the CW1 and CW2 postcode districts combined. This area covers Crewe, Wistaston and Haslington and extends to the M6 in the east. A comparison to Q2 2007 which is considered to represent the peak of the housing market is also provided.

**Table 3.1 Land Registry Average Pricing and Transaction Volumes within CW1 and CW2 (Q212 - Q214)**

	Detached	Semi Detached	Terrace	Flats	All Properties
<b>Quarter 2 2014</b>	£208,247 (84)	£123,418 (119)	£85,767 (79)	£93,917 (18)	<b>£135,485 (300)</b>
<b>Quarter 1 2014</b>	£197,724 (59)	£120,608 (116)	£99,593 (74)	£72,163 (12)	<b>£129,855 (261)</b>
<b>Quarter 4 2013</b>	£238,310 (98)	£125,739 (112)	£98,282 (77)	£82,360 (15)	<b>£153,113 (302)</b>
<b>Quarter 3 2013</b>	£199,351 (68)	£127,536 (98)	£93,144 (64)	£76,204 (12)	<b>£136,075 (242)</b>
<b>Quarter 2 2013</b>	£197,704 (66)	£120,547 (106)	£87,451 (72)	£82,089 (14)	<b>£128,962 (258)</b>
<b>Quarter 1 2013</b>	£234,564 (44)	£119,902 (65)	£84,856 (48)	£0 (0)	<b>£141,322 (157)</b>
<b>Quarter 4 2012</b>	£206,820 (76)	£122,830 (78)	£93,272 (64)	£0 (0)	<b>£143,433 (218)</b>
<b>Quarter 3 2012</b>	£225,667 (61)	£114,602 (94)	£84,131 (53)	£0 (0)	<b>£139,409 (208)</b>
<b>Quarter 2 2012</b>	£198,457 (64)	£121,052 (98)	£76,577 (62)	£0 (0)	<b>£130,858 (224)</b>
<b>Compared With</b>					
<b>Quarter 2 2007</b>	£232,795 (104)	£133,810 (181)	£108,084 (151)	£116,109 (16)	<b>£147,358 (452)</b>

Source: HM Land Registry. ( ) Denotes Number of Quarterly Transactions

- 3.35 Based on the latest available completed transactions data from the Land Registry, the average price of a residential dwelling in Q2 2014 (January - March) within the identified CW1 and CW2 postal district areas was £135,485, compared to that of the Cheshire East average of £242,158 and the national average of £256,883. These figures could indicate relative affordability (although it should be noted that the average income of Crewe residents is below that of Cheshire East) within the area ; however they may also suggest lower levels of demand from both occupiers and house builders.
- 3.36 Turning to consider how house prices have changed, in the seven years since the approximate peak of the residential market (Q2 2007), residential house prices within the CW1 and CW2 postal district have fallen by 8%. This is in stark contrast to the 2% growth witnessed across Cheshire East and 10% nationally over the same period. Further, quarterly transaction volumes fell significantly within the CW1 and CW2 postal districts from 452 property sales in Q2 2007 to between 157 and 300 per quarter for the majority of the last two years; around one to two thirds of that of the market peak. At 300 sales, Q2 2014 indicates some return to growth in volume of sales.

### Student Residential

- 3.37 In some towns and cities a significant amount of purpose build student residential accommodation has been built over the 5 or so years. Approximately 30% of the Cheshire Campus students are 'day' students that commute in from neighbouring areas, c.25% reside on campus and c.45% live in private rented accommodation elsewhere in Crewe. The University recognises that it will need to provide additional student residential accommodation to meet increasing student numbers but at the same time recognises that it has excess space within its campus boundaries to accommodate this and also other academic based growth/expansion. As such student accommodation outside of campus will need to be private sector led and is unlikely to be supported financially by the University - a model that has been attractive to developers and investors in other areas.

#### Key Message - Residential Sector

- The Town's existing residential offer is made up of predominantly high density and lower quality terraces and apartments. As such, Town Centre values are in the order of £140 per sq ft, and therefore most likely to be attractive to house builders that specialise in regeneration focused schemes rather than national house builders
- The HS2 announcement does hold a potential key to repositioning the perceptions of Crewe and its attractiveness to builders and occupiers. In particular scope exists to target those developers starting to look at the Private Rented Sector
- Crucially residential development will increase the attractiveness of the Town Centre for a range of retail and leisure occupiers as it will increase the catchment of the Town
- Improved housing choices will be critical to help attract some of the more affluent and economically active residents from surrounding areas
- The public sector is already supporting the delivery of new residential development across Crewe. The Town Centre has the potential to play an important role in this as it can be attractive to key sub sectors particularly young people
- Student residential has been a growth sector in some town and cities. MMU consider there is scope to accommodate new residential development within their campus so any student schemes in the Town Centre would need to be led by the private sector.

## 4.0 A New Future for Crewe

- 4.1 This section sets out the Vision, Objectives and the rationale behind the strategic themes. Detailed actions to support the realisation of the Regeneration Delivery Framework are set out in a separate confidential report (due to market sensitivities) but are summarised in the Executive Summary.

### New Vision for Crewe Town Centre

- 4.2 The Vision of the Regeneration Delivery Framework is as follows:

Capitalising on investment proposals such as the planned Lifestyle Centre and the University Technical College and proposed HS2 Station and the Town's growing population, to re-establish Crewe Town Centre as *the* vibrant and attractive "Hub" offering a strong range of retail, leisure, employment and residential opportunities serving local businesses, shoppers, residents, students, visitors and rail passengers.

### The Objectives

- 4.3 This Vision will be supported by the following objectives:

- To stimulate new investment in the Town Centre including retail, leisure, residential and business by bringing vacant sites back into use, intensifying the use of underperforming sites and utilising Cheshire East Council's assets
- To increase the number of Town Centre users, their dwell time and spend
- To diversify the housing stock in and around Crewe Town Centre and to increase the catchment of the Town Centre
- To make it easier to get into and around the Town Centre by foot, bicycle, bus and car
- To improve the quality and amount of the public space (including green space) and public realm (including green infrastructure) that links key spaces, buildings and the town's heritage and cultural offer in the Town Centre and to the Railway Station/proposed HS2
- To transform perceptions of Crewe Town Centre
- To provide sustainable development and design and support the Council's renewable energy agenda.

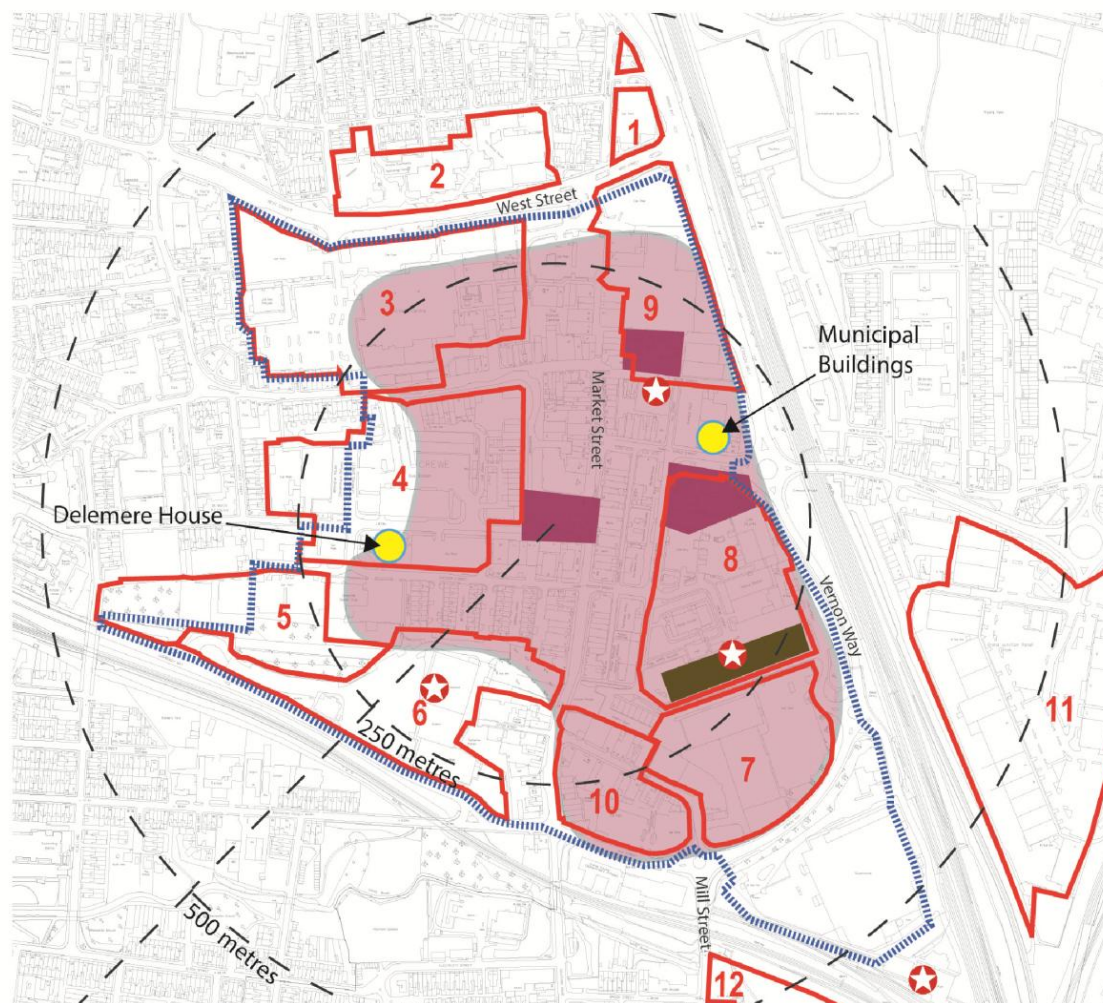
### The Regeneration Delivery Framework Priority Themes

- 4.4 The Regeneration Delivery Framework comprises the following themes which are considered in turn in the remainder of this section:

- Investment in Opportunity Sites
- Improving access by all modes of movement into and within the Town Centre
- Improvements to the public realm
- Town Centre First.



**Figure 4.1 Crewe Town Centre Regeneration  
Delivery Framework Plan**



#### Key

- Opportunity Site Boundary
- - - - - Proposed Town Centre Boundary
- Lifestyle Centre
- ★ Cultural Assets
- Public Squares
- Pedestrian Zone
- Existing Landmark Building

#### Opportunity sites

1. Wrexham Terrace Car Park
2. Former Victoria High School
3. Victoria Centre / Asda
4. Royal Arcade and adjoining land
5. Chester Street Car Parks
6. Phoenix Leisure Park
7. Vernon Way Retail Park and adjoining land
8. Civic and Cultural Quarter (South)
9. Lyceum Square / Market Shopping Centre
10. High Street and Oak Street Car Parks
11. Grand Junction
12. Mill Street

- 4.5 The need for intervention responds to the issues identified through the spatial analysis, market review and discussions with key stakeholders (see Appendix A). The actions recommended under each of the themes in terms of what, who and when is set out in a separate Implementation Plan but key messages are summarised in the Executive Summary. Figure 4.1 summarises the key recommendations of the Regeneration Delivery Framework, it identifies 14 opportunity sites, how movement could be improved by key modes of transport and identifies key gateways where public realm needs to be focused and landmark buildings developed.

### Investment in Opportunity Sites

- 4.6 Too much of Crewe Town Centre is either vacant (buildings and sites), underutilised or used for car parking. Cheshire East Council own a number of sites within the Town and identified seven development areas (see Appendix B) where they considered there is scope to support future investment to attract new users and uses to the Town. In bringing these sites forward the following uses will be encouraged:

- **Retail** - It is critical to accept that the retail landscape nationally has fundamentally changed and generally there is an oversupply of stock in part due to the growth of internet shopping and demand for new space is generally being focused on a smaller number of prime locations. Crewe Town Centre needs to diversify its offer and be less reliant on retail whilst still supporting this important sector where demand is identified for example from value retailers. Scope exists, if the Town's overall attractiveness can be raised for the expansion of the independent retail offer which adds to the experience in a number of other Cheshire towns including Nantwich and Knutsford. There is a need to shift the balance away from big box retail around the perimeter to create a broader mix of uses within the Town Centre. Retail will continue to be a predominant use but new development will seek to enhance it. Retail uses are likely to become more focused on a tighter core and new uses encouraged where retail demand is no longer strong. There is a real need to ensure that the retail property in the Town is fit for purpose. Some of the units in the core are outdated and fail to meet the needs of modern retailers. It is crucial that this is not allowed to continue as Crewe will be by-passed by occupiers and shoppers who will choose alternative Towns. The Council needs to work with the private sector to reconfigure the Town in terms of its property offer and how these are accessed to ensure that they are capable of accommodating modern requirements
- **Leisure** - Leisure will be critical to supporting the retail offer and more leisure will be encouraged in the core of the Town rather than the edge. Creating a better range of cafes, bars, restaurants and entertainment destinations that encourage people to stay longer in the town, including in the evening. The use of a quality programme of retail and cultural events, including artisan markets, to raise the profile of Crewe to non-traditional consumers should also be encouraged, given the success of this approach in other Cheshire towns, including Macclesfield (Treacle Market, Barnaby Festival) and Wilmslow (Artisan Market). There is scope for target key sectors such as young people given the important presence that Manchester Metropolitan University plays in the Town as well as the proposed UTC. The family leisure market is also an important sector to target with a range of family friendly restaurants holding a key to broadening the attractiveness of the Town. Restaurants such as Zizzi, Pizza Express, Harvester and Bella Italia add considerably to a Town's offer but often need leisure anchors such as a cinema around which to cluster. Sporting events are also important for attracting a wider audience to a Town and is something working well in a number of other towns. Crewe's relative flatness makes it

attractive for running and cycling events. Its network of public squares could also support a programme of events

- **Residential** - Attracting new uses into the Town Centre core will be critical. Although the Town is surrounded by residential development, the key to future residential in the Town will be to use it to diversify the existing offer and provide different types of residential accommodation to the town which will attract more working and affluent households. This should in turn increase footfall. General residential (for sale and private rent) should be targeted as well as specialist accommodation for older and potentially younger people will be encouraged to support the principle of sustainability by reducing the need to travel. Increasing the overall number of residents within the catchment area will also encourage investment by retail and leisure occupiers as will the extending activity in the Town Centre beyond 9-5. In bringing new residential sites forward, the key should be on diversifying the stock not adding more of the same in terms of size or tenure. HS2/High Growth City is an transformational opportunity which should put Crewe on the map for residents who recognise its potential as base to access many other parts of the Country easily
- **Public sector services** - Where public sector services are being rationalised priority should be given to the relocation of services into the Town Centre given its accessibility for a wide range of residents across Crewe and Cheshire. This principle is already being supported as demonstrated by the new Lifestyle Centre which is now being delivered in the heart of the Town's Civic and Cultural Quarters, the proposed UTC and lobbying for the relocation of the Cheshire Archives to Crewe will also support this.

4.7 From the seven development areas identified in Appendix B, the Regeneration Delivery Framework identifies 14 opportunities sites where new development should be focused. It sets out the types of uses which will be attractive to the market and the actions that are required to ensure that the sites can support the future growth, vitality and viability of the Town Centre. A summary of the sites and recommendation in respect of each is set out in Table 4.1.

4.8 An underlying principle of the development of the sites is to increase the number of Town Centre visitors/users, their dwell time (including out of hours) and spend. Obviously the delivery of these sites will not happen in isolation and therefore a range of overarching actions related to improving linkages, access and public realm will be fundamental to the realisation of the new future for the Town.

4.9 To support the delivery of the opportunity sites there is a need for:

- The Council to ensure that there are appropriate sites available to support retail and leisure investment (acquisition may be required to achieve this)
- Their land assets in the Town to be used to leverage private sector investment
- The Council to work with landowners to support them to overcome barriers to delivery to stimulate investment
- The Town to be promoted to raise awareness of the investment that is and will be made in the Town and the opportunities that this will create.



**Table 4.1 Priority Opportunity Sites**

Site	Options	Lead	Priority	Phasing
1. Wrexham Terrace Car Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remain as car park</li> <li>Landmark development - leisure or residential</li> </ul>	Council - potential to use site to leverage investment by third party on other priority sites	High	Short/Medium
2. Former Victoria High School Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preferred Site for UTC by partners</li> <li>Residential (if UTC does not proceed on site)</li> </ul>	Council	Medium	Short
3. Victoria Centre/Asda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Modernisation and reconfiguration of the store to create better linkages with the Town Centre core and potentially with an improved pedestrian link to the UTC site</li> </ul>	Asda	High	Short/Medium
4. Royal Arcades and adjoining lands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus for new retail and leisure investment</li> </ul>	Site is currently on the market. Critical that the site is bought by an active developer who will seek to deliver new retail and leisure investment	High	Short
5. Chester Street Car Parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retail/leisure/car parking and Town Centre related uses linked to stimulating investment in the Town Centre</li> </ul>	Council - depends on future uses of surrounding sites	Low	Medium
6. Phoenix Leisure Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remain as leisure</li> <li>Residential</li> <li>Potentially additional retail</li> </ul>	Future of the site could be linked to the aspirations for the new owner of site 4	High if linked to delivery of Site 4	Short/Medium
7. Vernon Way Retail Park and adjoining land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remain as retail but improve linkages to Town Centre and Civic &amp; Cultural Quarter</li> </ul>	Private but Council to encourage increased access through site to Town Centre	Medium	Short/Medium
8. Civic and Cultural Quarter (south)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target public sector occupiers to relocate</li> <li>Creation of cultural asset and Christ Church</li> </ul>	Council with other public sector partners	Medium	Short/Medium
9. Lyceum Square/Market Shopping Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remain retail/leisure/public realm</li> <li>Remove car parking from Lyceum Square</li> <li></li> </ul>	Owners on their land	Medium	Medium/Long
10. High Street and Oak Street Car Parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Landmark development - leisure/retail/residential</li> <li>Potential site for Rapid Transit Link Stop</li> </ul>	Council should seek to bring its site forward ideally in conjunction with surrounding landowners	High	Short/Medium
11. Grand Junction Retail Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remain as retail</li> </ul>	Council seek to reduce congestion around and improve linkages to core Town Centre	Low	Medium
12. Mill Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Redevelopment for residential (Retail should be focused in Town Centre core)</li> </ul>	Private - may require public sector support to bring forward as residential site	Medium	Medium
13. Macon Way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Out of town retail for bulky goods only</li> </ul>	Private	Low	Short
14. Nantwich Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mixed use residential/local retail/leisure</li> </ul>	Private	Medium	Medium/Long

### Overarching Actions – Sites

- S1 - Work with owners to bring priority sites forward to support new retail, leisure and residential investment in the Town. Aim to diversify uses to encourage more visitors to the town and grow evening economy
- S2 - Lobby for relocation of Cheshire Archive to Crewe Town Centre - various options are being considered. Municipal Building would provide a sustainable future use for this Listed Building whilst also strengthening the Town's cultural offer and provide an opportunity to increase footfall in the vicinity of the Theatre
- S3 - Need to encourage greater collaboration of occupiers to encourage them to work together to support the long term future of the Town. Longer term consider scope to establish Business Improvement District.

### Improving access by all modes of movement

- 4.10 The underlying objective of the second priority theme is to make it easier to get into and around the Town Centre by foot, bicycle, bus, car and potentially rapid transit link. There are opportunities to build on the current Local Sustainable Transport Fund programme (ending in March 2015) to influence travel behaviour for short local journeys within the Town.<sup>4</sup>
- 4.11 Current constraints undermining the attractiveness of the Town to existing and potential users include:
- Congestion particularly along Earle Street and its bridges and the Grand Junction Retail Park roundabout - a key gateway to the Town Centre core
  - The gateways to the Town Centre being dominated by car parks which do not “showcase” what the Town Centre has to offer in its heart
  - Confusion for new visitors to the Town as to where they should park to access the Town's facilities
  - Poor permeability between the car parks and the key destinations within the Town that fail to encourage linked trips to extend the length of stay in the Town and thus the amount that they spend when visiting. Specifically, the links between the Phoenix Leisure Park and the Town, the Civic and Cultural Quarter and the Town Centre core and the various retail areas and the Town Centre core
  - The existing Bus Station which fails to provide an attractive gateway to the Town Centre for bus passengers.

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<sup>4</sup> see [www.allchangeformcrewe.co.uk/smartertravel](http://www.allchangeformcrewe.co.uk/smartertravel)

4.12 Going forward the Town must:

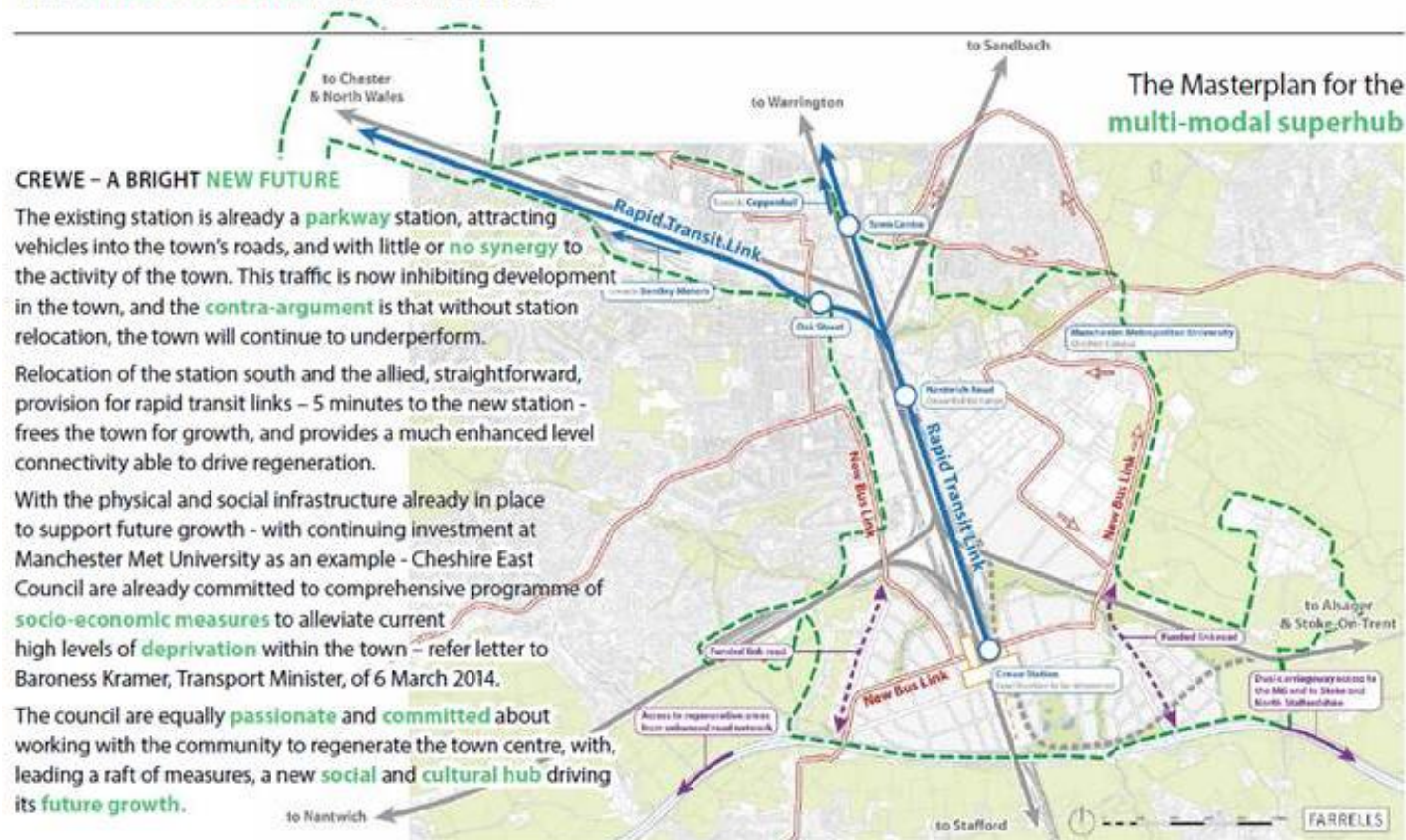
- Build on the Local Sustainability Transport Fund (LSTF) programme by promoting more sustainable forms of travel in walking and cycling particularly in and around Crewe to reduce congestion and encourage visitors to explore what the Town has to offer (see [www.allchangeformcrewe.co.uk/smartertravel](http://www.allchangeformcrewe.co.uk/smartertravel))
- Improve access generally and specifically for pedestrians walking within the Town. Scope exists to enhance the linkages between the Town's public squares to encourage Town Centre users to dwell in its more attractive locations and create a pedestrian priority zone through the Town Centre core supported by a range of car parks around the edge of the Town Centre
- Have a clearer car parking strategy providing accessible cheap short stay parking with long stay parking on the edge of the Town. Once the overall number of spaces required to service the Town Centre has been identified it is anticipated that it will be possible to develop some of the existing car parks to attract new occupiers and diversify the Town's offer. It may be found that to meet the needs of modern occupiers particularly leisure occupiers that a multi storey car park may be required
- Establish an approach to future bus services for the Town which meets modern and future bus passenger requirements.

4.13 The Regeneration Delivery Framework should be used to engage with HS2 to ensure that the major benefits that will accrue to the Town as a result of the transformational project are harnessed by the Town Centre. Specifically in terms of the emerging proposals to improve links between the Stations and the Town Centre. The proposals for an integrated rapid transport system will play a critical role in increasing footfall in the Town and the careful consideration to the location of station should take account of the recommendation of the Regeneration Delivery Framework. Figure 4.3 below identifies the current thinking on the multimodal HS2 North West Gateway Hub and how it will integrate with its catchment.

4.14 The Framework seeks to prioritise the hierarchy of travel. This is in line with existing Council policy which seeks to improve pedestrian facilities so that walking is attractive for shorter journeys, including supporting the priority of pedestrians at the top of the road user hierarchy and making sure that in settlements, town centres and residential areas, the public realm environment reflects this priority. Improving facilities so that cycling is attractive for short journeys and encouraging increased use of public transport is also supported in recognition of Crewe's relative flatness.

Figure 4.3 North West Gateway Hub for HS2

## AT THE HEART OF HIGH GROWTH CITY, THE MULTI-MODAL HS2 SUPERHUB



### Over-arching Actions - Access Improvements

- A1 - Assessment of options for new Bus Interchange - short term option and then longer term option to support emerging investment proposals for the Town
- A2 - Review of existing car parking provision - need to determine which of car parks can be released for redevelopment and ensure sufficient car parking to support Town Centre at appropriate price
- A3 - Further improvements in cycling as part of a programme to reduce congestion - next phase to recent improvements being delivered as part of the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) Programme and cycling strategy
- A4 - Tackle pinch-point and congestion at Earle Road. Lobby to deliver as part of HS2 investment
- A5 - Creation of pedestrian priority zone - need to encourage people to explore more of the Town, dwell longer and spend more money.

### Improvements to the Public Realm

- 4.15 The attractiveness of a Town Centre is critical to the experience of the user. Currently there are only a few examples in the Town of high quality public realm. Going forward careful thought needs to be given when key development sites are brought forward as to how the public realm between these sites and the Town's existing offer can be improved.
- 4.16 A key objective of the Framework is to improve the quality and amount of the public space and the realm that links key spaces, buildings and the Town's heritage and cultural offer in the Town Centre and to the Railway Station/proposed HS2 North West Gateway Hub. The Regeneration Delivery Framework builds upon the Green Infrastructure Action Plan for Crewe which has already established a number of priorities for greening the Town. The priority needs to be given to key gateways and routes/corridors.
- 4.17 All new development will need to demonstrate how they have sought to knit into and enhance the existing public realm and establish their own with the aim of increasing the overall attractiveness of the Town. In particular, all new development on the edge of the Town should carefully consider public realm, creating quality, welcoming routes - all leading into the Town Centre core which will be pedestrian focused to stimulate movement between the Town's destinations and seeking to improve both the daytime and evening economy and experience.
- 4.18 The Regeneration Delivery Framework will seek to enhance the use of the Town's public squares, some of the most attractive areas of the Town. It will seek to use these as focus points to encourage visitors to dwell for longer and thus the likelihood of spending more money. The active use of squares for events and pavement cafes will also be encouraged to increase footfall and activity levels in the Town. Investment in planting and public art will be encouraged. In the Town Centre core in particular, wide pavements should be utilised for cafes and pop-ups/events to create more activity around the Town.
- 4.19 The Framework does not recommend the commissioning of expensive bespoke street furniture but

the introduction of clear principles in respect of the quality of the hard and soft landscape in the Town to enhance the experience of all users. The focus on all public realm will be on scheme that minimise the ongoing cost of maintenance so that the impact is sustained for the longest period.

- 4.20 It does however recognise the role of public art in enhancing the experience of visitors. Consideration should be given to the appropriate commissioning of public art to encourage visitors to move through the Town Centre.

#### Overarching Actions - Public Realm

- P1 - Determine programme of public realm and access improvements within the Town Centre and between the Town Centre and Rail Station (and longer term to link to HS2 North West Gateway Hub Station). Use the Regeneration Delivery Framework recommendations to determine an appropriate capital spend programme including focus on making the Town as easy as possible to get to and then encourage users to park up and walk around the Town and to dwell longer
- P2 - Delivery of public realm improvement including public art and green infrastructure - use the Regeneration Delivery Framework to establish expectations on quality of public realm and secure contributions to improve gateways, key corridors and public squares.

### Protection of the Town Centre

- 4.21 As the market starts to improve and the Framework attracts development interest to the Town, the Regeneration Delivery Framework must set out clearly the types of uses that will be acceptable within the Town Centre which support its overall objective.
- 4.22 This needs to be achieved on numerous levels:
- Through the formal planning framework setting a clear policy context for the Town specifying which uses will be acceptable in which areas with the emphasis on supporting mixed use investment in the designated Town Centre, providing enhancement in vibrancy and increased visitor/consumer footfall and spend, and deterring any retail proposals outside of this area that could undermine this
  - Until the Core Strategy and land allocations plan are in place, use the Regeneration Delivery Framework to support the determination of planning applications ensuring that they support its objectives and add to the overall experience of the Town
  - Raising expectations that Crewe will not accept poor quality and ill thought-out schemes. That, with appropriate recognition of viability, key stakeholders will work with the private sector to support higher quality buildings and public realm in the Town to enhance its attractiveness.



## 5.0 The Planning Review

- 5.1 This Section provides a brief overview of the current and emerging planning framework in order to make recommendations on the most appropriate future policy to support the objectives of the Regeneration Delivery Framework.

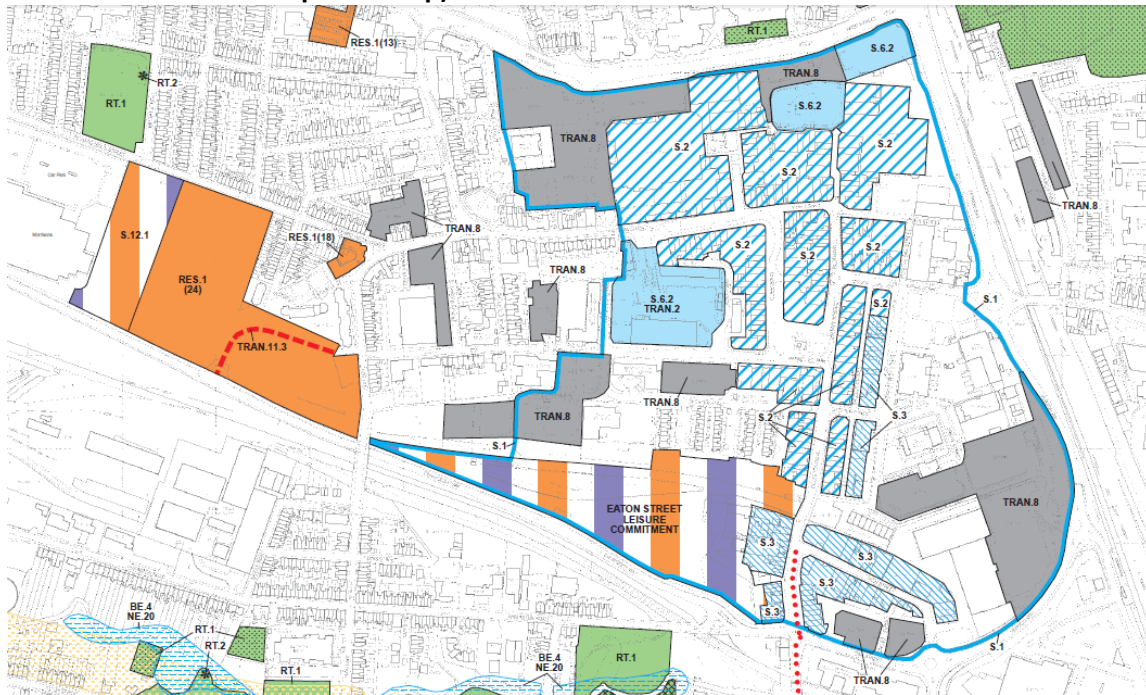
### Local Planning Framework

- 5.2 In terms of Crewe Town Centre, Cheshire East Council's Local Plan comprises the Saved Policies contained within the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011. Given that the Cheshire East Council's Local Plan Strategy is at examination stage and the relevant emerging policies have also been taken into account, in addition to the supporting evidence base which includes the Draft Crewe Town Strategy Consultation (2012) and the Green infrastructure Action Plan (2012).

### Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011 - Saved policies

- 5.3 Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan notes that Crewe Town Centre is the largest shopping area within South Cheshire, and whilst there has been investment during the 1980s there is a need for further investment to support its viability, vitality and sustainability. The Cheshire Retail Study (2011) recognises Crewe as the main focus for retail spend and capacity in East Cheshire with capacity for almost 10,000 sq m of retail in the Town. Crewe is defined as a Primary Town Centre within the now revoked Cheshire Replacement Structure Plan (2011).
- 5.4 Given this context the extant, saved policies take a protectionist approach to preserving and enhancing the retail offer specifically, as well as considering additional leisure and community uses as a complementary offer. Policy S.1 defines the area of Crewe Town Centre, as identified in Figure 5.1. Grand Junction Retail Park is excluded from the S1 boundary, and has been defined by Cheshire East Council planners as an out of centre development, due to the barrier of the railway line.
- 5.5 Proposed Town Centre uses/developments outside the defined boundary will be defined as edge of centre/out of centre. As a result, major retail development, and leisure uses sited outside the S1 boundary will have to demonstrate there is a need for the development, that a sequential test has been undertaken (in line with National policy/NPPF paragraph 24) and that such schemes will not have a detrimental impact on the vitality and viability of the defined Town Centre (Policies S.10 and S.11).
- 5.6 The Council's current policies further delineate the types of frontages within the Town Centre boundary, through a typology of Primary/Secondary frontages. This approach is in line with Government policy (NPPF, paragraph 23). For areas defined as Primary Frontages non-retail uses are not generally permitted unless this provides leisure/civic use which is complementary to A1 uses, and that the overall balance of A1 uses is maintained (Policy S2). The Primary shopping frontages relate to the areas of the Town Centre to the north of High Street and east of Sandon Street (this includes the following identified development sites: 3, 4 and 9 (see Section 5)). Areas defined as Secondary frontages (Policy S3) have greater flexibility in that changes of use are permitted to encompass retail, leisure, business or entertainment uses. The secondary frontages are sited closely to the Town's civic/community uses and the Leisure quarter of the Town (Eaton Street) (this includes opportunity site 10, see Section 4 of this Framework).

**Figure 5.1 Crewe Town Centre boundary, identified by blue bounded line (extract from Crewe and Nantwich Local Plan Proposals Map)**



### Area Specific Policies and implications

5.7 There are a number of saved policies which affect other opportunity sites (identified in Section 4) as follows:

- Site 4 is identified as a suitable location for providing an extension to the existing retail offer (Market Centre Extension, Policy S.6.2). This is currently used as the Crewe bus station, but this may change following a review of the location and form of the future bus interchange. As part of any redevelopment proposals, the policy identifies the need for replacement car parking and operational car parking in this location. *This should not be a barrier to investment as any new retail or leisure opportunity is likely to require good access to car parking*
- Policy S.12 allocates the southern section of the Town Centre as a mixed use regeneration area. This relates to the Phoenix Leisure Park (Site 6) which, following securing planning permission now provides for a 5-screen Odeon cinema, Bingo hall and bowling alley. Recent planning history confirms that there are proposals to provide for a larger cinema complex through extension into the bowling alley unit (reference: 13/4748N). *Any future use on this site must support the Town Centre and seek to improve linkages to the Town Centre core*
- Site 2: North of West Street is the preferred location for a proposed University Technical College and comprises the former Victoria High School but this sits outside the Crewe Town Centre boundary. Development here is affected by policy RT 1 which seeks to protect open space unless a needs assessment can justify that there is no requirement for playing pitch provision.
- Site 14: Nantwich Road is covered by Policy S9, which confirms the Council's objectives for this area to be retail focused. There is flexibility in bringing forward non-retail uses but these must be complementary to the existing area, and not have a detrimental impact on residential



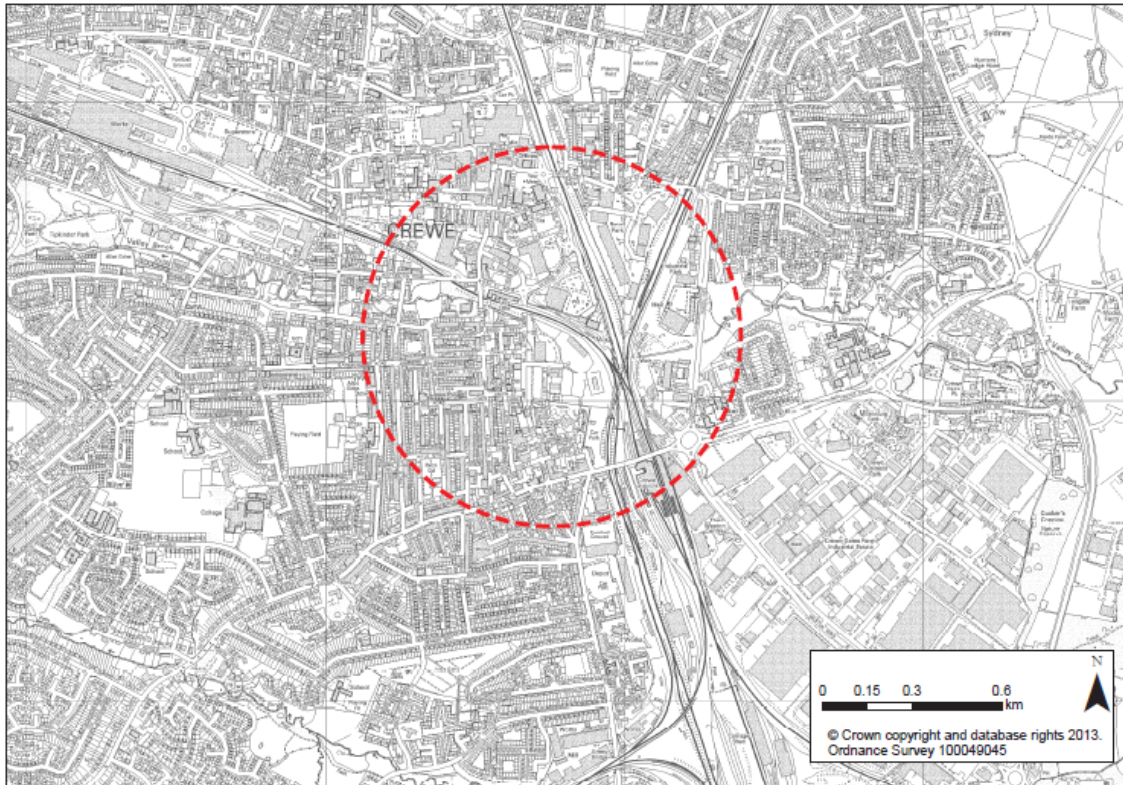
amenity. The policy notes that residential amenity should be preserved in this location. This approach is also reinforced within the Draft Town Centre Strategy. *The proposals for improvements in this area are unlikely to be impacted by the general policy which seeks the same outcome.*

### Emerging Local Plan Strategy - Key Messages

- 5.8 Cheshire East Council's emerging Local Plan Strategy recognises the importance of retail planning in ensuring the vitality and viability of Town Centres is maintained and enhanced, with specific reference to this within the Strategic Priorities (Strategic Priority 1). Specific policies which will be of relevance to the development and regeneration of the Town Centre going forward include Policy EG 5 'Promoting a Town Centre First Approach to Retail and Commerce'. This policy recognises and defines Crewe as a Principal Town, noting that this should be the primary focus for high quality comparison retail uses in addition to other town-centre uses, including residential. This policy also reinforces the sequential test/impact assessment approach for approving edge of centre/out of centre town centre uses.
- 5.9 Crewe Town Centre is also identified as a Strategic Location within the emerging Local Plan, as part of the wider Central Crewe area (SL 1) (Figure 5.2). This confirms the Council's overarching priorities for Crewe in encouraging improvement, regeneration as well as introducing and improving green infrastructure. These priorities are to be achieved through the following:
1. Introducing new homes (apartments, family housing and student accommodation)
  2. Providing comparison retail and leisure uses, including at least one anchor store and large-scale leisure use within the Town Centre Boundary and up to 5,000 sq m floorspace in Mill Street
  3. Diversifying uses within the wider Crewe area, including commercial, cultural offer, multi-use facilities and promoting 24 hour uses to support vibrancy of the Town Centre, as well as a new leisure facility at Crewe Alexandra Football club
  4. Delivering a variety of transport and environmental improvements including car parking, facilities around and linkages to Crewe Railway Station, green infrastructure improvements, civic space enhancement and a new bus interchange
  5. Improving existing and providing new green infrastructure.
- 5.10 Introducing residential development is seen as key in regenerating the Town Centre, enhancing key gateway sites, the built environment, and promoting linkages and connections with the Railway Station.
- 5.11 Whilst there is not a specific residential figure identified for Crewe Town Centre, the Local Plan Strategy confirms capacity for approximately 250 dwellings across the wider Crewe urban area. This figure takes into account brownfield land capacity. There have been a number of representations to the Local Plan which question the level of demand and viability for these units within the Town Centre. The Council has confirmed however that the 250 dwelling figure relates to the Crewe wider area as opposed to Town Centre specifically, although this could be significantly increased as a result of the HS2 North West Gateway Hub Station.

- 5.12 Whilst the development of Mill Street is noted as a priority area for additional retail provision<sup>5</sup>, the references to retail use relate back to an extant outline mixed use consent for this site incorporating 53 units, food retail of 1,329 sq m and comparison floorspace of 2,787 sq m (planning reference: P07/0639) which was granted in April 2013, and will therefore lapse in 2016. Mill Street is also referenced within the draft Crewe Town Strategy, which need to provide predominantly residential uses in this location. As such, going forward the Regeneration Delivery Framework considers that residential use would be more appropriate on this site. It would support footfall and improve the quality of linkages between the Town Centre and Railway Station. It is however, recognised that public sector support may be required to bring this site forward due to issues with viability.

**Figure 5.2 Central Crewe Strategic Location (Source: Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy, 2014)**



#### Draft Crewe Town Strategy Consultation (August, 2012)

- 5.13 The draft Crewe Town Strategy (2012) forms part of the Local Plan Strategy evidence base. Key objectives are around the knowledge economy and business growth, connectivity and linkages (particularly in terms of the links between the station, Town Centre and Grand Junction Retail Park), identifying physical development opportunities (including identifying retail and leisure uses in the Town Centre), liveability and aspiration (with a focus on regenerating the Town Centre as well as key locations including Mill Street, West Street and Nantwich Road), as well as changing the image and perception of Crewe to encourage inward investment and attract people to Crewe as a place to live.

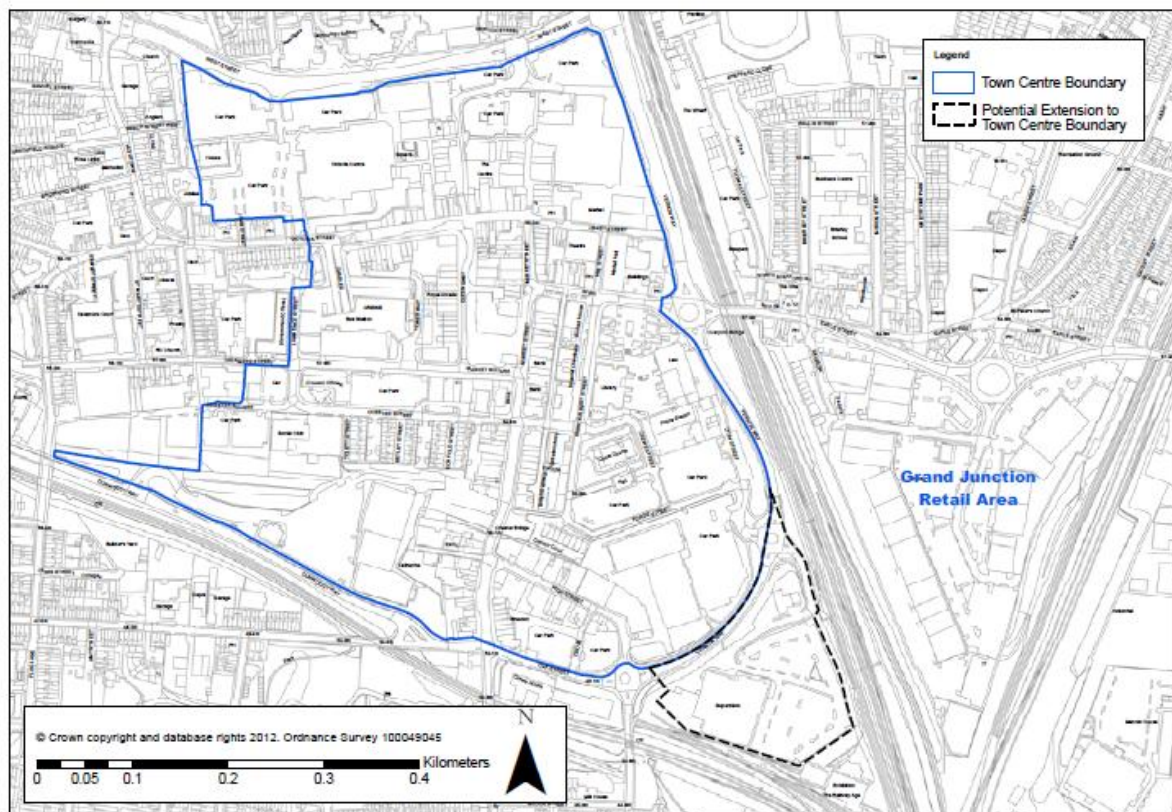
<sup>5</sup> The Growth Strategy for residential use, as opposed to encouraging additional out-of-town retail provision which could undermine the Town Centre

5.14 In terms of the identified development sites the following is of interest:

- Mill Street (Site 12) is identified as a potential development area within the draft strategy (site H1). It is noted that this, along with an adjacent site to the south, has the opportunity to bring forward 140 dwellings as part of a mixed use scheme, including retail and offices, which would help to tie together the railway station and the Town Centre
- Student accommodation has been suggested as coming forward at Oak Street (Site 10), as well as providing a mix of uses at ground floor level
- The Council is seeking to encourage residential development around Chester Square
- Opportunity areas are identified including redevelopment of the existing bus station and existing surface level car parks, to provide new retail and residential uses
- West Street (including Site 2) is seen as a residential gateway into town, providing social housing and student accommodation, as well as a family housing offer. The Council also recognises the opportunity to re-use community facility buildings in this location
- Nantwich Road (Site 14) is identified within the Framework as playing an important role for independent traders/retailers, with the Council seeking to maintain the popularity of this area through planning and regeneration policy/strategy
- Grand Junction Retail Park (Site 11) is also identified as requiring to be managed in terms of the retail impact on the Town Centre, aiming to discourage expansion opportunity.

5.15 The draft Town Strategy also refers to the delineation of the existing Town Centre boundary, with a suggestion that this is extended to incorporate Tesco (see Figure 5.3 below).

**Figure 5.3 Indicative Crewe Town Centre Boundary extension (Source: Draft Crewe Town Strategy, 2012)**





### Green Infrastructure Action Plan

- 5.16 A further part of the evidence for the Local Plan Strategy in developing the Town Centre is the Green Infrastructure Action Plan which seeks to enhance the built environment through management and enhancement of existing green spaces, in addition to greening the Town Centre through identifying new opportunities. This references West Street as a key priority area in delivering a green environment as well as the peripheral routes around the Town Centre boundary (Vernon/Dunwoody Way). *The recommendations of this Regeneration Delivery Framework are in line with the principles of this Action Plan.*
- 5.17 Government technical consultation (DCLG, May 2014) and changes in permitted development rights and use classes order which could have implications for the level of control that the Council can exercise in terms of retail use policies and protection to Primary Shopping Frontages. The proposed changes include expanding the A1 retail class to incorporate the majority of financial and professional services currently classes as A2 use. This extended class will exclude betting shops and pay day loan shops however.
- 5.18 Existing permitted development rights allow changes of use from A1 to A2, A3 and B1 uses as of 30<sup>th</sup> May 2013. This is a temporary measure only however and is only permitted for a period of two years. Permitted rights which came into power from April 2014 allow for a new class IA which allows change of use from A1/A2 uses to C3 residential use, via a prior approval process, to enable up to 150 sq m to be able to change to residential use without requiring planning permission. There is also greater flexibility in changing retail (A1) to a bank/ building society without requiring LPA approval.

### Future Planning Strategy Recommendations

- 5.19 The primary objective of future planning policy must be to protect the Town Centre from uses within it, and in the wider area, that will undermine its vitality and viability. As such the emerging policy framework which supports promoting a Town Centre First Approach is critical (Policy EG5). The designation of Crewe Town Centre as a Strategic Location is also supported as this provides the Town Centre with an appropriate status to encourage investment, regeneration and improving green infrastructure.
- 5.20 In terms of boundary the Regeneration Delivery Framework supports the indicative Crewe Town Centre Boundary extension as identified in Figure 5.3. It makes sense to include the Tesco Store as part of the core Town Centre. Although Grand Junction Retail Park is close to the Town Centre, given the nature of its occupiers and its separation from the Town Centre by the railway line, it clearly functions as an out of town location and should not be included within the boundary. The Regeneration Delivery Framework will however seek to improve linkages and movement between the two areas but as a planning policy their inherent differences need to be recognised as do the other out of town sites.
- 5.21 Within this Town Centre Core specific uses should not be too tightly defined to allow flexibility to encourage proposals that support the overall vitality and viability of the Centre even if they are not retail. Retail will continue to be the key use but it must be complemented by other uses including leisure. A Primary Retail area could be identified but it needs to be clear that this may not be exclusively retail but about supporting uses that enhance the retail offer. As such planning applications must be considered on their individual merit to support the vitality and viability of the Town Centre.

- 5.22 In terms of the out of town sites the Regeneration Delivery Framework recommends the following recognition of their planning status:
- Grand Junction Retail Park (Site 11) - is clearly an “out of town” offer accommodating a range of users who target such locations however unlike many such retail parks it is relatively close to Crewe’s Town Centre. Going forward the site should be continued to be recognised as an out of town retail location but efforts made to improve connectivity between the two destinations
  - Mill Street (Site 12) - consider the re allocation of the site for residential use in order to support investment in this key site between the Town Centre and the Station/HS2. Although it is acknowledged that the site has an extant planning permission for retail, discussions with the owner have identified issues with viability and it would be worth engaging further with the owners to determine whether a residential scheme could be made to work on the site to allow retail to be focused within the Town Centre. The site provides an opportunity to diversify the residential offer in this part of Town close to the Station whilst also improving the public realm of an area which currently detracts from the wider area
  - Macon Way (site 13) - site should be protected to provide suitable location for retailers who do not thrive in Town Centre locations including trade counters uses/bulky retail and light industrial locations. It is important to offer this type of use to complement the Town Centre Core and this site provides a good accessible location. Given its location on a road that essentially operates as a ring road from a function perspective this site is a better location for bulky retail than Mill Street. Reserve matters have been submitted for the delivery of a bulky goods retail unit
  - Nantwich Road (site 14) - area specific designation recognising its strategic location close to the Station and the Town Centre. It is an area that has the potential to see investment as the proposals for HS2 are firmed up. As such, the importance of quality design and investment in public realm must be encouraged in any future planning applications that are brought forward.
- 5.23 A number of the potential opportunity sites identified in this Framework (1,3,5,7 and 14) are affected by the Council’s car parking/transport policies which require existing car parking spaces to be re-provided or that investment is made into enhancing public transport (TRAN 8), as part of proposed development in these locations. In order to increase the flexibility of this policy going forward, the Council will need to consider consolidation opportunities, car park management and shared facilities, whilst still fulfilling the necessary car parking standards.
- 5.24 Given the significant changes that are occurring in the retail market in terms of demand for regional and sub regional town centres the focus should not be on protecting retail uses per se but to encourage a wide range of uses which support the attractiveness of the Town Centre. The focus within the defined Town Centre should be on uses which enhance the Town Centre function including retail, leisure, business and residential uses with each application being considered on its merit in terms of how it can support the objectives for the Town Centre.
- 5.25 The importance placed on encouraging residential investment in the Town Centre by the emerging planning policy is fully supported. This will be critical to supporting the aspirations of the Regeneration Delivery Framework in particular to increasing the overall catchment area of the Town Centre and encouraging the amount of footfall and extending the core hours of activity. This in turn should support the existing cultural offer of the Town.

- 5.26 It is recommended that this part of the Regeneration Delivery Framework report is given consideration at Cabinet to establish it as a material consideration in determining planning applications. It is also recommended that, to give the strategy further status, public consultation should be undertaken prior to being signed off by the Cabinet, potentially as an Area Action Plan.

## 6.0 Next Steps

- 6.1 This Regeneration Delivery Framework and its supporting Implementation Plan set out a series of site specific and overarching actions to respond to the agreed objectives for the Town Centre. The implementation of the Regeneration Delivery Framework will support the realisation of the Vision.
- 6.2 In the short term the priority actions will be driven by Cheshire East Council and will include:
- Undertaking a series of feasibility studies including: assessment of options for the bus interchange and Car Parking Strategy (to determine which sites are surplus to requirements)
  - Establishing a framework which will support the emerging planning policy to enhance and protect Crewe Town Centre
  - Undertaking strategic acquisitions to ensure sufficient attractive sites are available to attract retail and leisure investment
  - Driving forward the recommended actions and support the delivery of the opportunity sites including engaging with landowners, developers and potential retail/leisure occupiers
  - Establishing appropriate governance and delivery structures to support the delivery of the Regeneration Delivery Framework
  - Establishing appropriate resources to support the implementation of the Regeneration Delivery Framework. This will include seeking to link benefits to be invested back into the locality, fronting bids for funding and lobbying Central Government
  - Lobbying on behalf of Crewe Town Centre to ensure that its profile is raised within the business community, Cheshire & Warrington Enterprise Partnership, North West and nationally and it is able to tap into opportunities to support economic development
  - Engaging with local businesses, residents and potential investors to share how the transformation of Crewe Town Centre will be delivered
  - Ensuring strong links are established between the Regeneration Delivery Framework and potential larger-scale delivery strategies, specifically High Growth City.

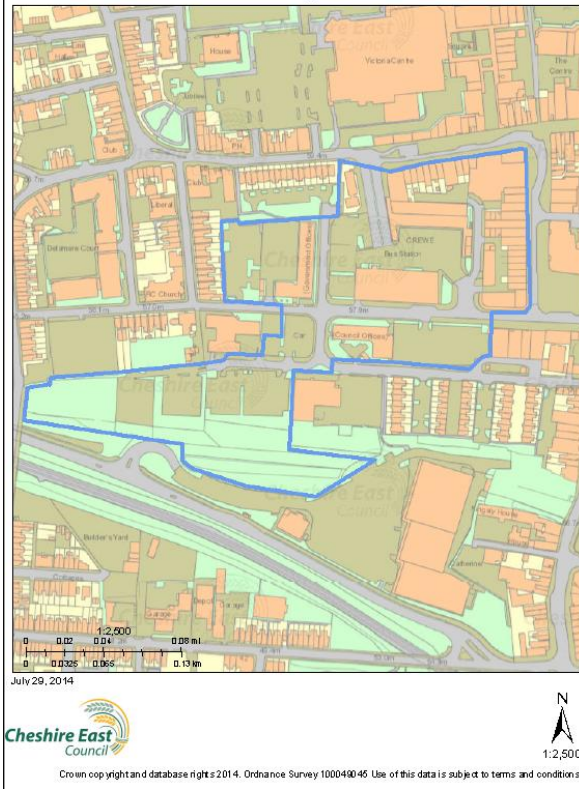
## Appendix A - Consultees



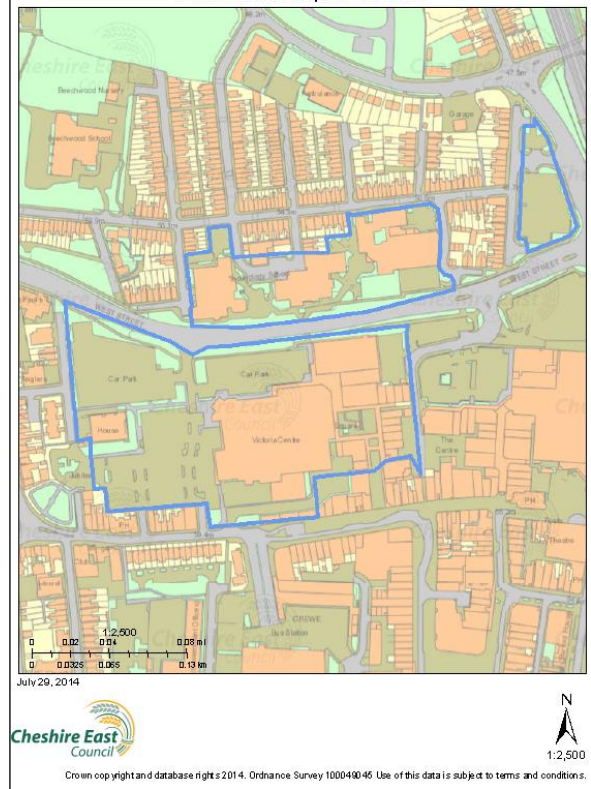
Organisation	Contact
All Change for Crewe Board	
Cheshire East Council	Cllr Michael Jones Dorothy Flude (Crewe South Cllr) Steve Hogben (Crewe South Cllr) Mo Grant (Crewe North Cllr) David Newton (CreweEast Cllr) Caroline Simpson Jez Goodman Chris Jackson Karen Tierney Glyn Roberts Andrew Sellors Allan Clarke Fintan Bradley Jenny Marston Andrew Ross
Quad	Nick Davies Phil Smith
Manchester Metropolitan University	Prof. Neil Fowler Acting Dean for the Crewe Campus UTC Board Member
Church of England Diocese of Chester	Venerable Ian Bishop Reverend Tim Watson
Savills (agents for UBS Grand Junction)	Tim Price
Threadneedle	Nicholas Buckland
Clowes Developments	Ian Melville
HOW Planning	Matthew Robinson
New River Retail	Robert Pennington
Scottish Widows/Aberdeen Asset Management	Haseeb Hassan
Redefine	Nick Gregory
Albermarle	Insert name
Egan property Asset Management	Insert name
Odeon	Insert name
Sainsbury's	Reid Crane
Primark	Patrick Wymer
New Look	Emma Lessani/James Ingrey
Matalan	Anthony Darbyshire
M&S	Helen Nash
Lidl	Ed Whalley
Asda	John Mutton
Legat Owen (Wellington House)	Stephen Wade

## Appendix B - Development Areas

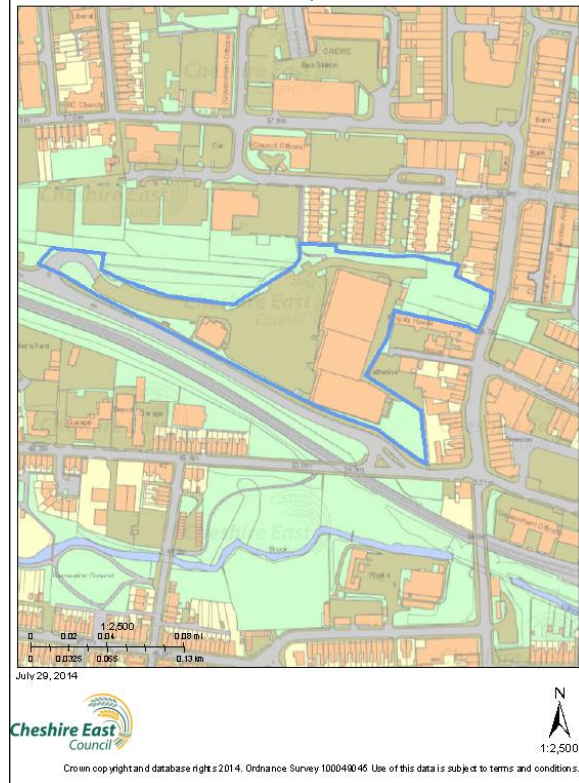
Potential Development Area 1



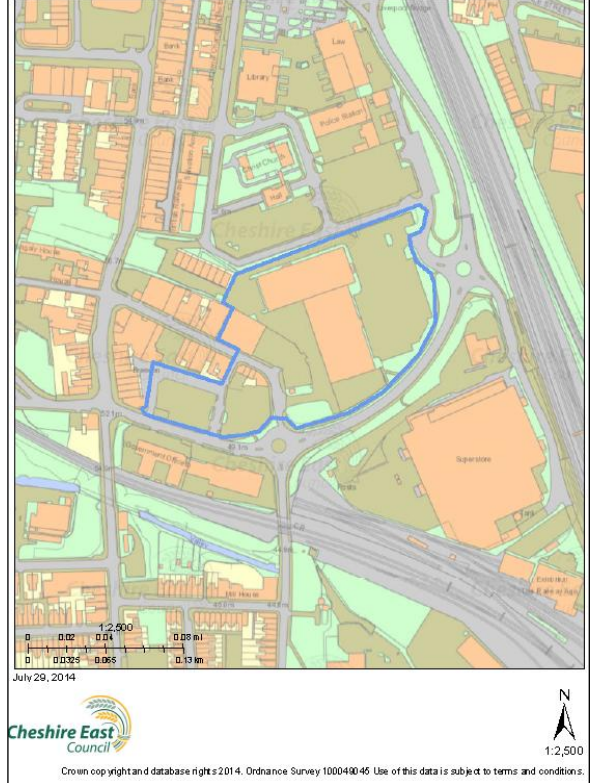
Potential Development Area 2



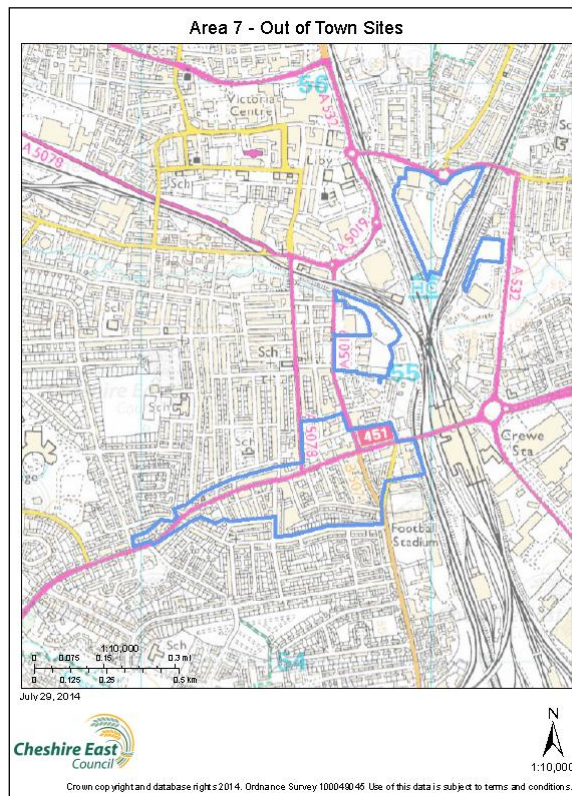
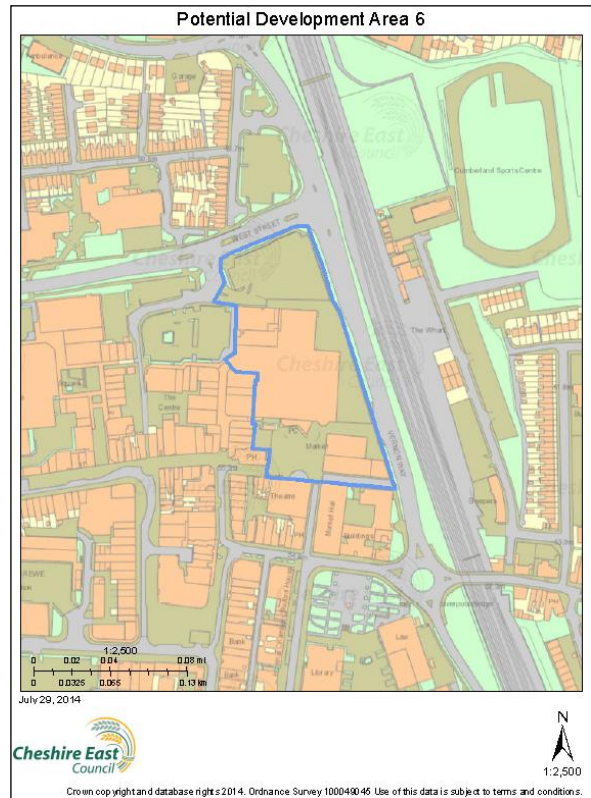
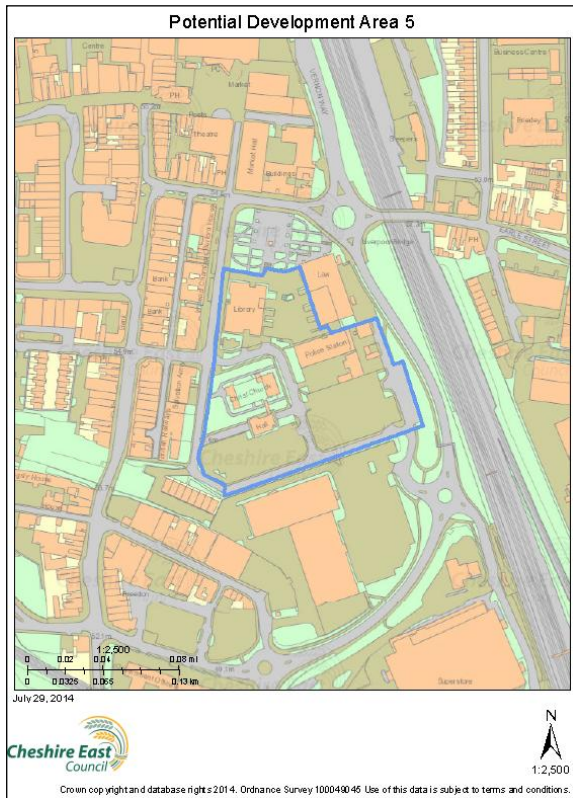
Potential Development Area 3



Potential Development Area 4







## CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

### Cabinet

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	21 <sup>st</sup> April 2015
<b>Report of:</b>	Executive Director of Economic Growth and Prosperity
<b>Subject/Title:</b>	Crewe High Growth City – London and Continental Railways Agreement
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Cllr Don Stockton, Housing and Jobs

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#### 1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 The Council has campaigned vigorously over the last 4 years to secure an HS2 Hub station at Crewe by 2026. This is the right solution for the region and the UK and will deliver transformational impacts for Crewe and Middlewich and has received the strong backing of key Government advisers Sir David Higgins and Lord Deighton.
- 1.2 Government is already working with local authorities to develop growth strategies for HS2 station locations and has backed this up with the exciting offer of support from a key regeneration agency of Government, London Continental Railways (LCR). Proposed Heads of Terms of any LCR Collaboration Agreement are shown in Annex A.
- 1.3 Even though the Crewe HS2 Hub Station isn't confirmed, the offer of support to the Council is a strong signal of intent. It is considered that having the insight and experience of LCR is extremely attractive and they would bring direct access to key Government Departments and Agencies.
- 1.4 As such, it is recommended that the Council should commence getting ready its HS2 regeneration plan for Crewe and Middlewich and should enter into a collaborative working arrangement with LCR to help achieve this.

#### 2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet is recommended to
  1. approve the commencement of work on developing an HS2 regeneration plan for Crewe and Middlewich;
  2. if (a) is approved, that, based on the Heads of Terms and Memorandum of Understanding for Collaborative Working, as set out in Annex A, agree to enter into a collaborative working arrangement with LCR to support development and delivery of a HS2 regeneration plan for Crewe and Middlewich;
  3. endorse the release of £200,000 from the Council's budget allocation for Crewe HS2 High Growth City to commence the development of the HS2 regeneration plan for Crewe and Middlewich; and

4. note that, if Government formally commits to HS2 to Crewe, further funding support for this work is anticipated.

### **3.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1 Sir David Higgins, Chairman of HS2, has backed the Council's case for a North West Hub station at Crewe to capitalise on the town's 360° connectivity across the North West, North Wales and the West Midlands. Sir David Higgins also made a strong recommendation to accelerate delivery of the North West Hub to 2027, instead of 2033, so that the North begins to reap the benefits of HS2 as early as possible.
- 3.2 A new HS2 Hub station and the associated inward investment, regeneration and job creation would have a transformational effect on Crewe and Middlesbrough. It would bring a second rail revolution to the town with its heritage built on the Victorian railway.
- 3.3 The Government have proposed that LCR offer local authorities, where major HS2 station investment is planned, the opportunity to enter into collaborative working arrangements, and potentially a Joint Venture, to help with the planning and delivery of economic growth and regeneration.
- 3.4 This report highlights to Cabinet the need to progress our regeneration plans and the work undertaken to date on scoping an agreement with LCR and how we would hope to engage with them in this transformational work programme.

### **4.0 Wards Affected**

- 4.1 All Wards.

### **5.0 Local Ward Members**

- 5.1 All Ward Members.

### **6.0 Policy Implications**

- 6.1 Entering into this type of arrangement with LCR has no direct policy implications.
- 6.2 The development of plans for the regeneration of Crewe and Middlesbrough is supportive of a wide range of Council policy areas. Even though the impacts of these plans would be transformational, the proposed work will be undertaken in line with the broad direction of the Council Corporate Policy agenda.
- 6.3 With the regeneration plans in place and a Government formal commitment to the HS2 Crewe Hub Station then the implications for a number of policy areas would need to be reviewed.

### **7.0 Implications for Rural Communities**

- 7.1 The regeneration and intensification of use of the significant areas of brownfield land within and around the railway corridors in Crewe and

Middlewich may reduce the pressures for development in the surrounding rural communities.

## **8.0 Financial Implications**

- 8.1 The Council has earmarked reserves to support investment that can increase longer term financial independence and stability of the Council. Initiatives related to growth of the domestic and non-domestic tax bases, such as those in the High Growth City initiatives, are therefore an appropriate use of this reserve.
- 8.2 The Executive Director of Economic Growth & Prosperity will work with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and the Chief Operating Officer to monitor spending in accordance with the Reserves Strategy. The initial cost estimate, to be funded from the Investment (Sustainability) reserve, for the work detailed in this report is £200,000, which includes specialist consultancy support.
- 8.3 Growth in the Domestic and Non-Domestic tax bases will support funding for future Council services, particularly while government grants overall continue to reduce. As such this forms an intrinsic element of financial planning for the Council. The overall financial impact of significant development in the region will therefore be closely monitored and planned to support forecasting of future resources.
- 8.4 The £200,000 resource will complement the wider Stoke/Crewe Growth Plans that will be developed as a result of the Stoke City Council/Cheshire East Council Concordat which involves a further £250,000 resource commitment to the development of the wider Growth Plan.

## **9.0 Legal Implications**

- 9.1 Under the Heads of Terms (HOT's) the Council and LCR will be collaborating for a period of between 12 – 18 months on HS2 regeneration associated activities. The HOT's are high level and are not legally binding. Moving forward governance arrangements will need to be established to make decisions in relation to expenditure within a binding collaboration agreement.
- 9.2 Collaboration agreements between contracting authorities are excluded from the Public Procurement Regime by virtue of Regulation 12 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 as long as that cooperation is governed solely by considerations relating to the public interest and the parties perform on the open market less than 20% of the activities concerned by the co operation. Assurance should be sought as to whether LCR meets this requirement.
- 9.3 The HOT's state that the parties wish in due course to establish a Joint Venture. The Council can rely on the general power of competence contained in section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 as authority to do this.
- 9.4 The fact that the Council has the power to enter into a joint venture with another private or public body does not allow it to circumvent any procurement rules and so the Council should be mindful of commissioning services from the LCR that could give rise to procurement requirements.

- 9.5 In addition to ensuring that the parties have the requisite power to establish a joint venture the Council needs to consider the range of structural options. A company limited by guarantee will require a shareholder's agreement detailing the possible funding and debt/equity split between the parties. The HOT's do contain high level governance principles on the basis of 50/50 ownership and responsibilities for administrative costs.
- 9.6 Regeneration activities include... "a funding strategy to deliver the regeneration and growth vision, including Tax Incremental Financing Proposals and other funding mechanisms". Further approvals and advice will be required if such an investment fund is to be resourced and implemented. Consideration would need to be given as to;
- (i) the appropriate structure for such a fund;
  - (ii) what powers the Council could rely on to participate in the fund;
  - (iii) whether there are any state aid considerations to be taken into account;
  - (iv) development of agreed investment and operational guidelines; and
  - (v) procurement of a suitably qualified and regulated Fund Manager;

## **10.0 Risk Management**

- 10.1 The risk to the Council is that if the next and future Governments decide to either not proceed with HS2, or not include a station at Crewe, the value of this work would be undermined. Having said this, the sentiment towards HS2 and the Crewe Hub Station is strong and, regardless of HS2, this work may identify important projects to assist with the Council's ambitions to deliver regeneration and economic growth for both towns.
- 10.2 It is our understanding that a decision on HS2 and a Crewe Hub Station is expected towards the end of this year and, if the outcome is positive that the Government would then start to support this work with its own financial resources as it has done for the Phase 1 stations. This would reduce the pressure on the Council budgets going forward.

## **11.0 Background and Options**

### HS2 Phase 2 Consultation – January 2014

- 11.1 In January 2014, the Council submitted a response to the Government's consultation on the proposed route alignment for the section between the West Midlands and Manchester. The Council took a supportive stance on HS2 subject to the inclusion of a new Hub Station at Crewe and the highest standards of mitigation and compensation being applied.
- 11.2 The response built a compelling case for a Hub station at Crewe to capitalise on the town's unique connectivity to the entire North West, North Wales and the North Midlands. The response developed a strong strategic case to deliver the connection to Crewe, which would spread the benefits over a wider area.



#### HS2 Plus Report – March 2014

- 11.3 In March 2014, Sir David Higgins published a report (HS2 Plus) on maximising the benefits of HS2 and managing costs. In the report Sir David Higgins states that in his view the two main transport challenges we face as a country are the lack of capacity and poor connectivity within and in to the North.
- 11.4 One of the key proposals is to spread the benefits of HS2 further north sooner by accelerating delivery of Phase Two to a new transport hub at Crewe by 2027, six years earlier than planned. Higgins states that the hub at Crewe would bring together road and rail services for the region as a whole, allowing faster services sooner to Manchester, the rest of the North West and to Scotland. Higgins stated that an integrated transport hub at Crewe is the right strategic answer for the long term and it would also act as a real agent of change in the region.

#### Lord Deighton's HS2 Growth Task Force Report – Getting Ready – March 2014

- 11.5 The HS2 Growth Taskforce, chaired by Lord Deighton, was established to examine how to maximise economic growth and job opportunities from the Government's plans to build a high speed rail network. The taskforce published their final report in March 2014.
- 11.6 As well as highlighting the great opportunities from a Hub Station at Crewe, the report also set out how areas which included a station on the HS2 network should start early and plan for realising this growth both in terms of the place and its people. It made a strong recommendation that these areas develop growth strategies in consultation with Government and key agencies and stakeholders.

#### Rebalancing Britain Report – October 2014

- 11.7 In October 2014, Sir David Higgins published his second report – Rebalancing Britain. Higgins recommended that the proposed North West Hub should be at Crewe because that is the best way to serve not just the local region, but also provide services into the rest of the North West, North Wales and Merseyside.
- 11.8 He also reaffirmed the strong recommendation and the merits of the accelerated delivery of the North West Hub to 2027, instead of 2033, so that the North, and Scotland, begins to feel the benefit of HS2 as early as possible. Further to the hub recommendations, it was also recommended that the possibility of running classic compatible services to Stoke-on-Trent, Macclesfield and Stockport be investigated.

#### HS2 Phase 2 Fradley – Crewe Safeguarding Consultation

- 11.9 In November 2014, the Secretary of State announced a consultation on proposals to safeguard a section of the HS2 Phase Two route corridor between Fradley and Crewe. The aim of safeguarding is to ensure that new developments in this corridor do not affect the ability to build or operate HS2 or lead to excessive additional cost.

- 11.10 The Council's response welcomed the Government's proposal to safeguard this part of the HS2 Phase Two route. It will help owner-occupiers of homes, small businesses and farms along the proposed route to serve statutory blight notice as soon as possible, requiring Government to consider purchasing their property and this is supported by a continuation of the Exceptional Hardship Scheme.
- 11.11 Whilst the Council recognises that no final decisions have yet been taken on the precise alignment of Phase Two, it is encouraging that, based on work undertaken over the past year by Sir David Higgins and HS2, that the Secretary of State considers the existing evidence sufficiently persuasive in favour of a connection from Phase 1 to Crewe. It is hoped that the safeguarding process will enable Government to drive forward and deliver HS2 and the North West Hub by 2026.

### The need to Get Ready

#### Government response:

- 11.12 The fact that the Council's plans for an HS2 Hub Station at Crewe have been backed by both Sir David Higgins and Lord Deighton is recognition of the strength of the case. What is equally assuring is the response from the Government and the Secretary of State for Transport, the Rt Honourable Patrick McLoughlin. The following key actions have already been taken:
- Appointing Network Rail to examine the station options for Crewe and identify a preferred solution.
  - Consulting on safeguarding the HS2 line of route from Lichfield to Crewe.
  - Announcing the intention to move ahead with a second HS2 Hybrid Bill early in the next parliament for early delivery of the line of route from Lichfield to Crewe. This is anticipated to be between October and December.
- 11.13 Further, growth strategies for the HS2 Phase 1 stations are being finalised by local authorities and LEPs following close working and funding support from key Government Departments and Agencies. This experience has enabled Government to define clear Departmental roles and responsibilities and working relationships with local authorities and LEPs.
- 11.14 One such development is the offer of collaborative support from London Continental Railways (LCR) to local authorities. LCR is a limited liability company wholly owned by the Department for Transport. The extent of the support on offer from LCR is set out in the Heads of Terms of a Collaboration Agreement, shown as Annex A. At this stage the arrangements would be flexible based on a collaborative approach but would have the potential to grow into a formal Joint Venture if this were deemed beneficial.
- 11.15 The advantages of this approach are the experience LCR bring from other major regeneration projects, particularly at major rail stations, such as at Kings Cross, London, as well as direct access into key Government Departments and Agencies. They have specialised in the management, development and

disposal of property assets within a railway context and, in particular, property assets associated with major infrastructure projects.

- 11.16 Even though there is not yet a formal decision to include the full HS2 Hub Station solution being sought at Crewe, the Council has been invited to attend the HS2 Local Places Working Group, which includes all local authorities with an HS2 station, so we can learn from the experiences of the Phase 1 stations. It is worth noting that several of the other station locations are entering into the collaborative arrangement with LCR.

Council response and next steps:

- 11.17 The Council has campaigned vigorously over the last 4 years to secure an HS2 Hub Station at Crewe by 2026. This is the right solution for the region and the UK and will deliver transformational impacts for Crewe and Middleswich. A significant degree of positive sentiment is now building up in support of the Council's proposals.
- 11.18 In response, the Council budget already includes a reserve provision of up to £2.5m to enable the necessary work to take place on regeneration plans for Crewe and Middleswich and a wider Growth Strategy.
- 11.19 Based on the position set out in this report, it is considered the right time for the Council to commence getting ready its regeneration and growth plans alongside Government and its relevant agencies.
- 11.20 The collaborative working arrangement with LCR is considered to offer an effective way to commence the development of an HS2 Crewe Hub Station regeneration plan. In addition to input from LCR, there will also need to be specialist consultancy support covering a wide range of disciplines to support this work.
- 11.21 The initial phase of work will explore the extent of the programme, timescales, and reporting arrangements. Given the transformational nature of this project for Crewe and Middleswich, the areas to be considered cover the station environs in Crewe, existing strategic investment sites and business areas, the town centres and rail corridors in both towns, brownfield land, and key housing allocation sites.
- 11.22 The Council also needs to support the station option work the DfT have commissioned from Network Rail. The regeneration plan needs to be fed into the identification of a preferred option.
- 11.23 This report sits alongside the report to consider a Concordat between Stoke-on-Trent City Council and Cheshire East Council. This broader Concordat sets out guiding principles for a High Growth Zone on which a compelling growth strategy could be developed across a much wider geography than Crewe and Middleswich and form the basis for future Government engagement and wider investment.
- 11.24 The relationship between the two pieces of work will be crucial to delivering the optimum position for Crewe and the Hub Station. This paper and the

relationship with LCR will focus specifically on developing regeneration proposals for Crewe and Middlewich. This work will feed into the wider Growth Zone strategy to be developed with Stoke-on-Trent City Council, and importantly ensure that Crewe and Middlewich have a dedicated approach to secure the optimum position for the area.

- 11.25 All work will be reported back through the relevant Portfolio Holders to Cabinet.

## **12.0 Access to Information**

- 12.1 The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

Name: Andrew Ross  
Designation: Head of Strategic Infrastructure  
Tel No: 01270 686335  
Email: [andrew.ross@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.ross@cheshireeast.gov.uk)

**HEADS OF TERMS  
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR COLLABORATIVE WORKING AND A  
JOINT VENTURE AGREEMENT**

**PARTIES**

Cheshire East Council (CEC) and London and Continental Railways Ltd (LCR).

This agreement will be assignable to a Joint Venture (JV) between HS2 Ltd and LCR, if this were to be formed at some point in the future.

**Collaboration Agreement**

It is proposed that LCR and CEC agree to collaborate as follows in the short term (next 12-18 months) on HS2 regeneration associated activities:

- § To jointly develop and agree a regeneration action plan to maximize the opportunities from HS2 and Network Rail (NR) station development options.
- § Develop the regeneration partnership, by agreeing roles and responsibilities, key actions and areas of intervention.
- § To develop robust and comprehensive business cases for regeneration interventions where fiscal support may be required.

It is envisaged that key activities will include:

- § Proactively collaborating to identify and exploit site assembly opportunities at key strategic sites in close proximity to the proposed station(s). To include business case development and progressing land acquisitions through the appropriate legal mechanisms.
- § Providing regeneration input to the consideration of options for the location of any new station
- § The drafting of a regeneration strategy for the whole of Crewe, to ensure comprehensive regeneration
- § The development of the regeneration proposals within the HS2 Growth Strategy
- § Develop a funding strategy to deliver the regeneration and growth vision, including Tax Incremental Financing proposals and other funding mechanisms.

- § Development of an inward investment strategy associated with HS2 regeneration and NR station development options to target and maximise private sector investment.
- § To partner with other Government agencies, such as Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), Regeneration and Investment Organisation (RIO) and Network Rail (NR) as appropriate on activities.

## **Joint Venture**

In addition, it is proposed that the parties will wish in due course to further develop and establish a Joint Venture (JV); the potential Heads of Terms for which are as set out below.

### **PURPOSE OF JOINT VENTURE**

To work collaboratively and transparently to deliver regeneration within the areas identified within the HS2 and NR station development options Growth Strategy for Crewe.

### **FOCUS**

Principally the JV will focus on regeneration around the rail corridor through Crewe, including the existing and any new station locations.

### **SHORT TERM AIMS AND ROLES OF THE JOINT VENTURE**

The intention is to establish the JV to undertake regeneration based activities as appropriate.

This may include, but not limited to, activities such as:

- Joint promotion of regeneration opportunities
- Assembling land
- Driving forward masterplanning of assets owned by the vehicle. De-risking sites through, inter alia, securing planning permissions, investing in on site infrastructure and remediating sites.
- Partnering with other Government agencies, such as HCA, RIO and Network Rail as appropriate.
- The delivery of infrastructure
- Seeking to partner with other regional partners
- Bringing forward appropriate development at the earliest opportunity
- De-risk areas to enable wholesale regeneration and deliver maximum economic growth.
- Securing public and private funding to support site development and regeneration interventions

- Developing and implementing funding proposals, taking into account long term view of delivering financial value
- Identifying private sector developers at appropriate time
- Seeking to identify other funding sources, such as, private sector finance and also working with RIO.

Initially, the JV will be a legal mechanism by which land could be jointly acquired or funding jointly secured.

The scope and remit of the JV will develop over time and be informed by the HS2 masterplan, HS2 Growth Strategy and outputs agreed through the collaborative working. It is proposed to retain flexibility as to the methods by which the vehicle will operate so that it can respond accordingly to the interventions required.

### GOVERNANCE

- The joint venture will be formed on the basis of 50/50 ownership
- There will be two directors from each party
- Decisions made must require the approval of a Council representative
- Deadlock provisions will apply
- An annual Business Plan will be prepared and submitted to the Board
- Monthly Board meetings will be held or when decisions are required
- A Council representative will chair the meetings
- Administrative costs and duties will be shared 50:50 between both parties.

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## CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

### Cabinet

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	21 <sup>st</sup> April 2015
<b>Report of:</b>	Executive Director for Economic Growth and Prosperity
<b>Subject/Title:</b>	Investment to Secure the Square Kilometre Array Project
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor Don Stockton, Housing and Jobs

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#### 1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 Jodrell Bank Observatory is a key asset within the Cheshire science corridor portfolio it attracts over 160,000 visitors each year. It is currently going through a period of rapid expansion and is currently competing on a world stage to retain the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) project and headquarter status for a further 50 years, which is significant as the current contract is for only 4 years.
- 1.2 Retaining the headquarters of the SKA project is estimated to be worth £1 billion of private sector investment and will help to secure a further 200 on site high value jobs, along with giving additional benefit to the visitor economy in Cheshire.
- 1.3 CEC investment in Jodrell Bank as part of the SKA project will not only help to support the growth in the economy it will unlock further funding from (EDRF, Heritage Lottery, and Universities) which is estimated to equate to over £100 million.
- 1.4 CEC sits at the heart of a region that has one of the strongest science and technology clusters in the UK boasting world class academic, research and innovation support infrastructure, and which, in particular, excels in the fields of life sciences and biotechnology, chemicals, and aerospace, and associated growth industries.
- 1.5 The wider science corridor generates of £970 million in Gross Value Added (GVA) and employees over 11,000 people. Cheshire East itself accounts for 36.9% of the North West region R and D jobs and companies in the region have consistently experienced growth rates of a 7% per annum.
- 1.6 These highly skilled international industries require expertise in key growth areas to ensure that Cheshire East is able to realise its full potential as the fastest growing science and technology cluster in the

UK supporting new Small and Medium Enterprise's and building upon our unique asset base.

- 1.7 As part of its ambitious jobs-led growth agenda, CEC has set out a clear action plan to develop and grow the Technology and Science corridor in the area and as part of the plan Jodrell Bank given the unique importance of the site.
- 1.8 In April 2011, Jodrell Bank Observatory of the University of Manchester, in Cheshire, England was announced as the location of the headquarters office for the project. The SKA Organisation was formed and the project moved from collaboration to an independent, not for profit, company.
- 1.9 CEC is committed to supporting the growth and success of the Jodrell Bank site as a unique asset in the Cheshire Science Corridor, and continues to work closely with partners across the Manchester city region to develop the site's record in hosting world-class science and visitor activities.
- 1.10 CEC is facilitating discussions with the University of Manchester, Jodrell Bank Observatory and the Science and Technology Facilities Council to develop a strong vision and action plan for the future of the site.
- 1.11 In line with the vision for the site to remain a world leading resource in the field of Astrophysics and Astronomy, development package support will include:
  - a) £290 million pounds to be invested now and in the next five years of highway improvements across our area – benefiting Jodrell Bank in providing enhanced connectivity across Cheshire and connections into Manchester and our road and rail network.
  - b) Access improvements for the Jodrell Bank site specifically.
  - c) £1m direct capital investment to the SKA project is included in our approved capital programme for draw down over the next two years.
  - d) We will work with the Site Team at Jodrell to put in place a Local Development Order for the site allowing for simplified planning.
  - e) We will work partners to establish an International School to support our growing international workforce and science/technology based industries.

## **2.0 Recommendations**

### **2.1 That Cabinet**

- 1 approve the investment of £1million by the Council via the capital programme into a package of activity and support, focusing on connectivity and asset enhancement as part of the SKA project and headquarter retention;
- 2 delegate the final investment decision to the Executive Director of Economic Growth and Prosperity in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Jobs and Housing, and the Portfolio Holder for Resources and S151 Officer; and
- 3 request that officers undertake all necessary due diligence including the development of a full business case, subject to the retention of the SKA project at Jodrell Bank.

## **3.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1 The investment and support package will set clear directive in terms of the growth of this key asset as part of the retention of the SKA project and headquarters. It will also further demonstrate the Council's role in the Growth of the Science Corridor, thereby demonstrating its commitment to Economic Growth in Cheshire.
- 3.2 The project relates directly to the Council's key priority: *A growing and resilient local economy*.
- 3.3 'Ambition for All: Sustainable Communities Strategy 2010-2025' – Priority 2 Create conditions for business growth, harness emerging growth opportunities and create a climate attractive to business investment.
- 3.4 'Cheshire East Corporate Plan 2013-2016' – Outcome 2 Cheshire East has a strong and resilient local economy. Priority 1 – investment to support business growth.
- 3.5 Investment in Jodrell Bank as part of the SKA project will also help to support and unlock further funding from (EDRF, Heritage Lottery and) which equates to over £100 million.
- 3.6 Continued support for Jodrell Bank redevelopment and other key investment projects, "Visitor Economy Strategy" 2011.

## **4.0 Wards Affected**

- 4.1 Jodrell Bank is located on the border between the wards of Gawsworth and Dane Valley, although the significance of the site makes it relevant to all wards.

## **5.0 Local Ward Members**

- 5.1 The local ward members to the site are :  
Councillor Lesley Smetham (Gawsworth),  
Councillors Andrew Kolker and  
Councillor Les Gilbert (Dane Valley)

## **6.0 Policy Implications**

The project relates directly to the Council's key priority: *A growing and resilient local economy*. It is also prioritised in the Council's Three Year Plan:

- Outcome 2: *Cheshire East has a strong and resilient economy*,
- Priority 1 (*Local Economic Development*), and
- Change Project 1.3 (*Investment to support business growth*).

This proposal also accords with, and is complementary to the following:

*Ambition for All: Sustainable Communities Strategy 2010-2025: Priority 2 Create conditions for business growth*

- Harness emerging growth opportunities;
- Create a climate attractive to business investment..

*Cheshire East Economic Development Strategy*

- Ensure that Cheshire East maintains and enhances its role as a 'knowledge economy';
- Facilitate economic growth through progressing schemes that will create jobs and improve the attractiveness of the area as a place to invest, live and visit;
- Macclesfield and its hinterland sustain their current position as one of the most successful parts of the regional economy.
- Emerging Science Corridor Opportunity Study

## **7.0 Implications for Rural Communities**

- 7.1 The site has significance for the borough as a whole both in leisure offer, economic benefit.

## **8.0 Financial Implications**

- 8.1 The in principle investment of £1million, identified in the 2015/216 capital programme, will be funded by Cheshire East as a first call on available capital reserves. This commitment will be part of the package to help ensure that Jodrell Bank retains its world SKA project and headquarter status; in terms of its site infrastructure, science engagement offers, international science facilities. A full business case will be commissioned with comprehensive costed programme of works subject to the retention of the SKA project.

- 8.2 The business case should include details of how this investment will specifically benefit the wider economy and stimulate business growth and release more quality jobs available in the area.
- 8.3 Highways improvements as yet undefined some of which will be part of existing planned programme.

## **9.0 Legal Implications**

- 9.1 As this project progresses the council will have to be mindful of matters including state aid, procurement, contractual matters, vires, planning, highways and consultation which will be considered as part of the project as it develops and the business case is prepared.

## **10.0 Risk Management**

- 10.1 There is a reputational and economic risk if Jodrell Bank is not supported to retain its SKA world status and continued growth. This support package will be key (along with work with partners).
- 10.2 Development proposals in the vicinity of Jodrell Bank are subject to the Town and Country Planning (Jodrell Bank Radio Telescope) Direction 1973 which sets out consultation procedures for planning applications in a defined protection zone. Planning policies are designed to ensure that developments which adversely affect the scientific work of the telescope are not permitted. Unfortunately these principles have not always been adhered to at appeal. There are several developments proposed in settlements within the protection zone – and these will require careful scrutiny to ensure the integrity of the scientific work at Jodrell Bank is not affected.

## **11.0 Background and Options**

- 11.1 Established in 1945 by Sir Bernard Lovell, the Jodrell Bank Observatory has been a long established world leader of academic research, hosting high profile research in the field of Astrophysics. The 76m tall Lovell Telescope on site is the third largest in the world, and is joined by three other smaller telescopes at the Observatory. The telescopes have made Jodrell Bank and the University of Manchester key players in the research of meteors, quasars, and gravitational lenses. During the Space Race the Observatory played a leading role in tracking space probes, and is credited with being the first in the world to locate Sputnik's booster rocket, following the launch of the world's first artificial satellite in 1957

The impact of Jodrell Bank beyond academia was recently assessed in the Research Excellence Framework exercise (REF) which assessed the quality and impact of research in UK higher education institutions. The University of Manchester's School of Physics and Astronomy

impact, including the public engagement work at Jodrell Bank, was rated highest of any Physics Department in the UK. This was achieved through a strategic approach to developing a high national and international media profile combined with a purpose-built facility at Jodrell Bank to welcome visitors and engage them directly with the actual research going on at the site and beyond.

- The award winning £3M Jodrell Bank Discovery Centre opened in April 2011.
- 160,000 people visit the Centre each year, including 16,000 school pupils which is forecast to raise to 25,000 each year.
- Current exhibits highlight radio astronomy research, including the work of the Lovell Telescope and e-MERLIN, pulsars, the CMB, black holes, gravitational lensing, the evolution of stars and the science & technology of Big Telescopes (including the SKA).
- In November 2011, the SKA Organisation was formed and the project moved from collaboration to an independent, not for profit, company. The members of the SKA Organisation are:

Australia: Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research

Canada: National Research Council

China: National Astronomical Observatories of the Chinese Academy of Sciences

Germany: Federal Ministry of Education and Research (withdrew in 2014)

India: National Centre for Radio Astrophysics

Italy: National Institute for Astrophysics

New Zealand: Ministry of Economic Development

South Africa: National Research Foundation

Sweden: Onsala Space Observatory

The Netherlands: Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research

United Kingdom: Science and Technology Facilities Council

The BBC Stargazing Live series has been broadcast live from Jodrell Bank annually since 2011. It typically attracts around 2-3 million viewers per episode although the 2015 eclipse special attracted a peak

of 4.7 million viewers, the highest morning TV audience since the Diamond Jubilee in 2012.”

Significant infrastructure and site development is planned at Jodrell Bank to; one retains its world status and two; flourish as part of the rapid expansion. The University of Manchester is already investing £16million toward refurbishment of the Grade 1 listed assets on site and over £19 million is being sought from HLF and ERDF to building a new visitor pavilion and gallery space.

CEC investment (£1million) and partnership support in terms of helping to unlock further funding and project support will be key. CEC has a vested interest to ensure that Jodrell Bank reaches its full long term potential as part of the SKA project, both in terms of its continued contribution to science ecology, cultural and visitor offer and economic growth.

Endorsement of a package of support will enable CEC to directly stimulate further economic growth within the science corridor and this world class science asset.

## **12.0 Access to Information**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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## CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

### Cabinet

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	21 <sup>st</sup> April 2015
<b>Report of:</b>	Lorraine Butcher, Executive Director of Strategic Commissioning
<b>Subject/Title:</b>	Update on Congleton Leisure Centre
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Cllr Janet Clowes, Care and Health in the Community Cllr David Brown, Strategic Outcomes

---

#### 1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 Cheshire East Council is committed to improving the leisure facilities in Congleton as part of its strategic approach to improve the health and wellbeing of residents.
- 1.2 This will be the second in a programme of leisure related improvements and follows the significant investment in new facilities in Crewe which are due to open in Spring 2016.
- 1.3 To inform what Congleton residents want in their local facility a pre-consultation survey was undertaken (Appendix 1). The key messages from the survey were that residents would like most to see modernisation/replacement of the existing leisure centre. Additionally there was no strong public desire shown to re-locate the leisure centre, nor to re-locate a wider range of services for vulnerable adults or children onto that site.
- 1.4 Hankinson's Field is highly valued by the residents of Congleton. This report therefore outlines the next steps required to optimise this fantastic asset that is the current location for the leisure centre and to deliver 21<sup>st</sup> century facilities for the benefit of residents on that site. To ensure the successful delivery of this and maximise opportunities for the site, Cheshire East Council is committed to working with sporting clubs and park users, including Congleton Rugby Club and Friends of the Park.
- 1.5 This project is linked to current and future regeneration projects in Congleton through the Local Plan and emerging Neighbourhood Plans.

#### 2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet is requested
  - 1 to authorise the development of a detailed business case for the enhancement of the existing leisure centre facility, thereby allowing the Project Board to progress the modernisation of the existing leisure

facilities, through a consideration of refurbishment, enhancement and new build options, including the possible provision of a new swimming pool; and

- 2 to authorise the Project Board to review the financial structure for the scheme including the exploration of alternative financial delivery models to explore and determine the best overall solution for local residents.

### **3.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1 The policy of improving health outcomes through the use of leisure and related services has been previously reviewed and following the development of a business case, implementation has commenced with new provision at Crewe. As part of the original consideration it was intended to review a roll out of such a policy in Cheshire East, including Congleton.
- 3.2 As a result a pre-consultation survey in Congleton was completed on 16 Oct 2014. The key messages from the survey were that residents of Congleton would like most to see modernisation/replacement of the existing leisure centre. There was no strong public desire shown to relocate leisure services to the town centre, nor to relocate a wider range of services such as Adults and Children's services onto one site.
- 3.3 Whilst there was no strong public support for the need to bring existing lifestyle type services into one asset, the project is cognisant the Councils policy to where possible develop the lifestyle concept. Consequently, the addition of such services has been actively considered and the demands in terms of space requirements and integration into the existing footprint have been made. However, the demand modelling undertaken has demonstrated the problems of bringing such additional services onto the site, which would render a full lifestyle centre as unachievable. These have included health related services such as GPs Practice and the local Police service.
- 3.4 The ongoing Community Hub pilot underway in Congleton is suggesting that local service delivery should meet the needs of the local population and supports the premise that providing services in one asset is not necessarily the best approach for Congleton residents. The Team has a very active local community represented on the Congleton Partnership and on the community hub. These community initiatives to self-provide for its residents should be encouraged.
- 3.5 Strong support has been given from local partners including Congleton Town Council to improve the provision in Congleton. It has been noted that whilst a redevelopment of the existing Congleton Leisure Centre is long overdue, any changes on the current site would be a vast improvement. The site has a unique feature in that it sits within a much valued and large public open space incorporating playing fields, open parkland and a riverbank. This project will look to integrate and enhance the open spaces within the design of any new pool construction and refurbishment of the exterior walls to the sports hall; this will make the building more aesthetically appealing from all elevations whilst taking advantage of the views from the facility,

particularly towards the river and parkland. Formal planning may result in some change to the current footprint. However, the intention of this project is that for any refurbishment to be more in keeping and reflective of the public open space so that indoor and outdoor leisure pursuits can be maximized for all residents and users.

- 3.6 There is also the potential to increase formal playing pitch provision within the overall design for the site. There is further scope to integrate and improve the skate park which although is extremely well used at present, it is acknowledged that its current location can attract elements of anti-social behavior. Relocating and integrating the skate park within the site could present opportunities to incorporate dedicated walkways, cycle and running paths around the perimeter of the public open space. The potential to incorporate new landscaping and planting to improve the biodiversity of the site will showcase this valuable asset as a standout indoor and outdoor leisure facility for the residents of Congleton and visitors alike.
- 3.7 The modernisation/replacement of existing leisure facilities would form part of a wider regeneration plan for Congleton which will bring modern public realm, connectivity improvements and development opportunities in a manner that meets the needs of Congleton.
- 3.8 The extensive refurbishment of the leisure facility and in particular a new pool would significantly reduce the maintenance backlog liability and lead to lower ongoing operational running costs and future maintenance liability.
- 3.9 A full highways assessment alongside other investigatory work will be carried out as part of the necessary requirements.

#### **4.0 Wards Affected**

- 4.1 Primarily it affects residents using the existing facilities in Congleton, though users could be resident in any area of the Borough

#### **5.0 Local Ward Members**

- 5.1 The local wards in Congleton East. The Councillors are:

Cllr David Brown  
Cllr Peter Mason  
Cllr Andrew Thwaite

- 5.2 The local wards in Congleton West. The Councillors are:

Cllr Gordon Baxendale  
Cllr Roland Domleo  
Cllr David Topping

## **6.0 Policy Implications**

- 6.1 As an early part of the regeneration plan for Congleton, this refurbishment project will provide a much needed and visible investment in Congleton. This will contribute directly to the regeneration of the town and potentially improve participation in active leisure and sport activities.
- 6.2 Congleton Leisure Centre is already established as a well-used and important community facility, with a specific focus on the provision of wet and dry leisure facilities for the local and wider population. The existing land footprint has the potential for some expansion to provide an improved leisure facility and the potential for some multi use community space designed to a high standard. Facility improvements invariably bring increased income and usage benefiting improved health outcomes for local residents.
- 6.3 Wider consideration around the lifestyle concept has been considered within the demand modelling exercise which has highlighted the site constraints whilst still retaining public open spaces (Hankinson's Field). The unique features of the site presents a number of opportunities to elevate the profile of the leisure provision in Congleton for residents, through the enhancement and integration of the public open space. This will be subject to discussions with statutory agencies including the Environment Agency, Sport England and other park users.
- 6.4 Any refurbishment options will impact in the short term on service provision while upgrades are taking place. If the pool is refurbished rather than replaced, it may require a period of time where the pool is not available while refurbishment takes place. This process would be dealt with as part of the detailed business case.
- 6.5 Any form of refurbishment or redevelopment of the site will need the consideration of a number of 'key dependencies'. These include the Rugby Club, Scout Hut (next to the leisure centre) and users of the public open spaces in particular users of the skate park and the local 'friends' group.
- 6.6 This project will also have dependencies on the following strategies underway in the council:
  - a) Regeneration plan for Congleton – The Council is developing a Masterplan for Congleton. The benefits from this project will be fed into the wider master-planning activity.
  - b) Community hub – A pilot scheme is underway which is shaping the 'hub' of community services in the town. Some of those may be provided as part of the leisure centre upgrade.
  - c) If new or improved community space was provided in the final design, it could benefit both these existing council operated services and the wider community where good quality community space is demonstrated to be in short demand.

d) Indoor Facilities Strategy. A new strategy is currently being developed in support of the emerging Local Plan.

e) Congleton Neighbourhood Plan, this is an emerging plan being developed with the Local Partnership and will also feed into the Community Hubs project.

6.7 Key assessments will need to be undertaken during the next stage which will inform both the business case and the viability of a planning application. These will require additional assessments and studies which are listed in Section 10

## **7.0 Implications for Rural Communities**

7.1 None

## **8.0 Financial Implications**

8.1 The project currently has a budget of £8.5m within the Capital Programme for 2015/16 to support and enhance the facility. The scheme will reduce the expected maintenance liability though this would not result in a direct 'saving' towards the business case of a redeveloped asset.

8.2 Alternative funding models might deliver wider opportunities for redesign and these should be explored before a final determination of options is made.

8.3 The design stage will look at maximising the efficiency of the asset to reduce the existing running costs.

## **9.0 Legal Implications**

9.1 A contractor to undertake the refurbishment works can be procured by a mini competition under the North West Construction Hub High Value Framework or other Framework, procurement via this route could select a company in four months. Alternatively the Council can undertake an EU compliant procurement that will take between six to nine months.

9.2 The Consultation with local stakeholders will be conscientiously taken into account in finalising the scope of the scheme.

9.3 The Leisure Centre is managed on behalf of the Council by Everybody Sports and Recreation Ltd (ESAR). The Council may be liable to compensate ESAR for loss in earnings during the refurbishment.

## **10.0 Risk Management**

10.1 A full risk log collated during the work undertaken to reach procurement will be available in the detailed business case.

10.2 There are still significant risks with the delivery of this project which will be mitigated in detailed design and subsequent planning stage. These are highlighted below:

- a) Highways – The need to undertake local highway modelling based on the demand data to understand the highway impact of any new scheme, its viability and to identify any highway improvements for inclusion in the overall cost – Full transport Assessment to determine a transport strategy.
- b) Pre planning responses – The need to start initial conversations with planning application and statutory consultees such as Sport England. This will ensure that any proposal can be compliant with current local and national policies in relation to public open space.
- c) Demand modelling has been carried out, which has identified and validated the facilities in terms of size and number which will inform costs and provide base data for highway modelling.
- d) The site sits within a Zone 2 flood plain, early engagement with the Environment Agency has confirmed that any refurbishment or new construction would require sufficient defence mechanisms to lessen the impact of any flooding should this occur. This may have some impact on scope and budget.

## **11.0 Background and Options**

11.1 The Congleton Leisure Centre project was formally triggered by Cabinet in July 2014 and after a 2 month initiation period started delivery in September 2014. A number of consultation meetings have taken place with stakeholders and prospective services in order to establish the scope of services to be included. A pre-consultation survey was launched to gauge public opinion with over 500 responses. Public meetings with the Town Council and Congleton Partnership also took place.

11.2 Congleton Leisure Centre comprises two distinct elements built at different times with a number of separate power plants running different parts of the building. The pool building envelope/facades are in poor condition, resulting in energy inefficiency. The plant is maintained but nearing 40 years old, so suffers from poor energy efficiency. The current layout does not comply with current design standards (Sport England, Equality Act) which makes it an extremely inefficient building and presents construction complications for some design options.

11.3 A small feasibility team comprising architectural, mechanical and electrical and highways completed a desktop options appraisal advising the council of the options available. It has assessed the condition of the existing asset and undertook a costing appraisal for a range of options. These have formed the basis for this report.



- 11.4 Based on the responses provided through the survey, from other interdependent projects underway in Congleton and from the responses from the Town Council; a budget target of £8.5m has been earmarked with the scope focussed to provide modernised leisure facilities with a desire for a new pool.
- 11.5 A range of options for the site are being considered and are summarised in Appendix 2.
- 11.6 The final design may need to include additional land use in order to deliver the objectives above, particularly if the desire to construct a new pool is realised. There are constraints of the site in terms of access and existing footprint and the ability to temporarily house plant equipment to facilitate the refurbishment/redevelopment of the centre. This could include the potential to utilise elements of the surrounding open space but this would be subject to an agreement with the requisite statutory agencies including Sport England as appropriate.
- 11.7 The project is aiming to deliver a refurbished leisure centre with the possibility of a new pool facility and some community space all housed in a more efficient building. Appendix 3 contains photographs of the current site and the public open spaces that surround some of the site. Some illustrations are also provided to show how the new pool construction might look from the approach to the site from Worrall Street as well as how this may look when approaching from the park and Hankinson's Field.
- 11.8 The outline delivery timetable for the feasible options will consist of a 4-6 month procurement process followed by a 4 month detailed design stage to arrive at a design for planning application. Concurrently, further assessments and detailed business case planning would form supporting evidence.

## **12.0 Access to Information**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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Appendices:

- Appendix 1 – Pre-Consultation Survey Report
- Appendix 2 – Design options
- Appendix 3 – Site photos & illustrations

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# Congleton Leisure and Healthy Lifestyle Opportunities

## Full Report



**November 2014**

**Produced by:  
Research and Consultation  
Cheshire East Council  
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## Executive Summary

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### Background

Cheshire East Council are looking at a new healthier lifestyle / leisure opportunity for Congleton - the second in a programme of leisure related improvements that would potentially provide new all-inclusive leisure facilities, modern family and adult social care provision, Health Services, and community facilities all in one place.

As part of this programme, a pre-consultation survey was undertaken; the survey ran for 4 weeks during October 2014. Its aim was to gather resident views on what they would like to see within a new facility. Respondents were invited to answer either an online or a paper questionnaire. A total of 541 responses were returned (321 Online, 220 Postal).

### Key findings

#### Current use of services

The main services considered to be included within the Congleton Lifestyle Provision were the leisure centre, children's centre, medical centre, Police service, adult day care centre, library and cafe and meeting rooms. The majority of respondents had never been to or used adult day care services (86%) or children's centres (72%) within Congleton. Respondents however were more likely to have used/visited the leisure centre; 12% used it most days every day, 39% used it at least once a week with only a small proportion (9%) having never been or used.

#### Future opportunities

Just under half of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposal to move children centre services into one joint use building (43%) and with the proposal to move adult day care services (47%). Respondents were more likely to agree with the proposal to move the leisure centre into a joint use building with 50% agreeing however, 29% seemed unsure answering neither agree nor disagree.

Respondents were provided with the opportunity to leave additional comments regarding the future opportunities for the offer. There were a total of 256 open comment responses received for this question, of which 15% were concerned about the specific requirements needed for each service and felt it would not be appropriate to join the three services above together into one building. However, a similar proportion (14%) felt that joining services would increase the usage of each service and improve access. A further 12% felt that joining services would help save money and would be more economic/cost effective.

When asked what would be their main method of transport to a new lifestyle provision, just over half of respondents (51%) stated that they would mainly travel by car, 22% would more than likely walk. Half of respondents (50%) stated that they would be prepared to travel up to 10 minutes to get to a new lifestyle provision.

The three most desired general facilities within a new lifestyle provision for Congleton were as follows: - Light refreshment facilities (80% would like or really like available), Cafe, (78% would like or really like available) and Community rooms for hire, (66% would like or really like available).

The five most desired facilities specifically relating to leisure were as follows:- Large swimming pool, (93% would like or really like available), Sports hall, (92% would like or really like available), Fitness Suite, (87% would like or really like available), Indoor tennis/ badminton courts, (84% would like or really like available), Outdoor sports pitches, (79% would like or really like available).

The three most desired well-being services within a new lifestyle provision were as follows: - Physiotherapy, (66% would like or really like available), Hydrotherapy, (57% would like or really like available), Sensory rooms, (45% would like or really like available).

### **Social media analysis**

The survey link was promoted via Facebook and Twitter and as such, comments were received directly on these posts. The comments were grouped into themes; Of the 21 comments made, 6 felt that money was better spent elsewhere, 5 mentioned the need for updated leisure facilities in other towns such as Sandbach, Middlewich and Macclesfield.

### **Conclusions**

#### **Joining the three main proposed services together**

Respondents seemed to have neutral views regarding the proposal to move Congleton Leisure Centre, Adult Day Care Services and Children's Centre Services into a joint use building. This may not seem surprising considering the majority of respondents had not used or been to the Adult Day Care Centre or Children's Centre.

An updated leisure centre building with added/ upgraded facilities appeared to be the main priority for respondents with the swimming pool being the most important with 74% indicating that they would really like a pool to be available, 67% would really like a sports hall.

#### **Opportunity to join other related services**

There was no consensus for joining the three main proposed services together; updating the leisure centre seemed the highest priority. However, it may be worthwhile looking at the option of including related health services in to the building. Services such as walk in medical centre, selected health check and related services, physiotherapy and hydrotherapy were the most popular. Health services such as a doctor surgery and dentist were not as high of a priority.

#### **Further considerations**

Adequate parking provision would be required near to/ on site at the new lifestyle provision along with safe access by foot. Consideration is also needed for those who would travel in by alternative transport methods such as bus, train and bicycle.

The Research and Consultation team would recommend that a further consultation be undertaken when the feasibility study has been complete and the plans are in there draft stage.



## Full analysis of results

---

### Background

Cheshire East Council are looking at a new lifestyle opportunity for Congleton - the second in a programme of leisure related improvements that would potentially provide new all-inclusive leisure facilities, modern family and adult social care provision, Health Services, and community facilities in one place.

As part of this programme, a pre-consultation survey was undertaken; the survey ran for 4 weeks during October 2014. Its aim was to gather resident and visitor views on what they would like to see within a new facility. Respondents were invited to answer either an online or a paper questionnaire. Paper versions were left at various locations across Congleton including the Leisure Centre and Library. The survey was also promoted on social media sites such as Twitter and Facebook. A total of 541 responses were returned (321 Online, 220 Postal).

### Analysis of results

#### Current use of services

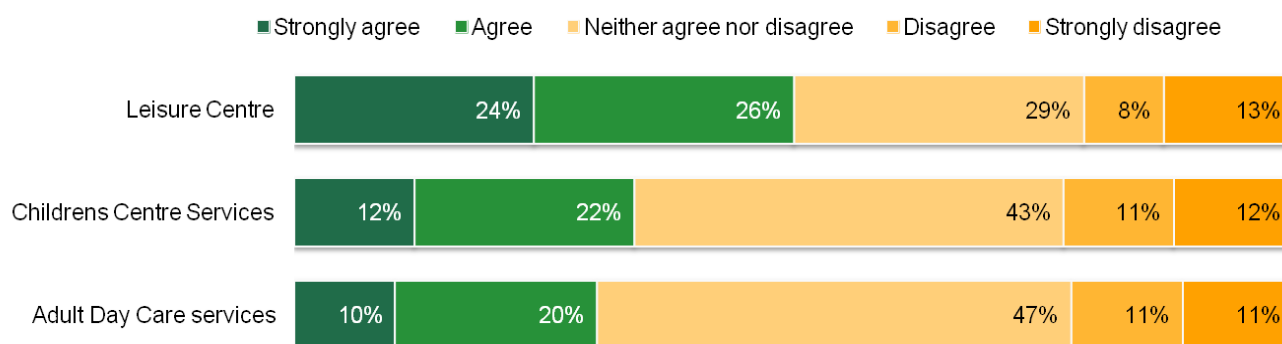
The main services proposed to be included within the Congleton Lifestyle Provision were the leisure centre, children's centre and adult day care centre. Within the survey, respondents were asked how often within the last 12 months they had used each of these services.

The majority of respondents had never been to or used adult day care services (86%) or children's centres (72%) within Congleton. A small proportion (6%) of respondents used adult day care services most days/ every day and 8% had used Children's Centre services at least once a month. Respondents however were more likely to have used/visited the leisure centre; 12% used it most days every day, 39% used it at least once a week with only a small proportion (9%) having never been or used.

#### Future opportunities

All respondents were asked how strongly they agreed or disagreed with the proposal to move each of the three services into a joint use building. Just under half of respondents (43%) stated that they neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposal to move children centre services into the joint use building, with around a third (35%) agreeing. A similar number (47%) neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposal to move adult day care services, with 30% agreeing. Respondents were more likely to agree with the proposal to move the leisure centre into a joint use building with 50% agreeing however, 29% seemed unsure answering neither agree nor disagree. Figure 1 on the next page shows the full responses received for each proposed service.

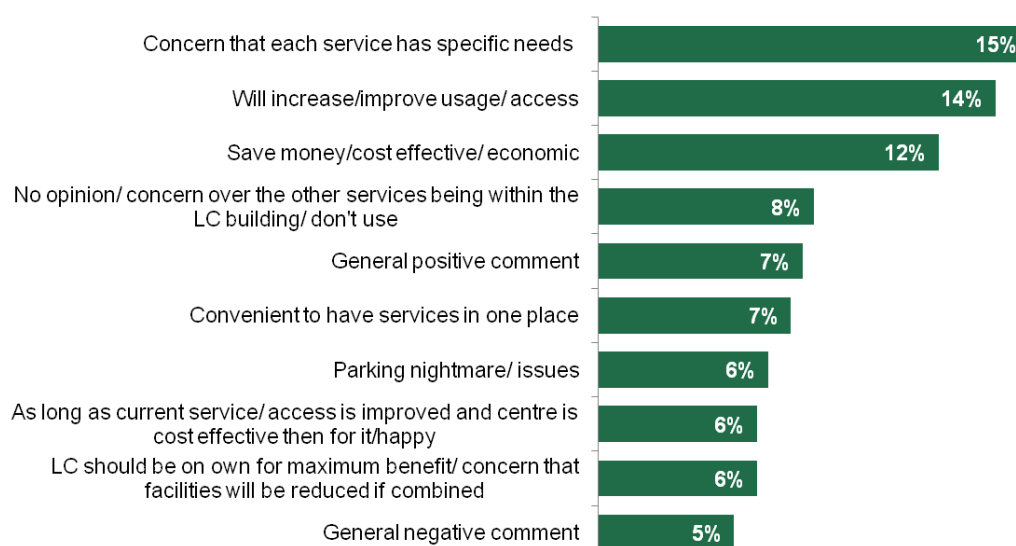
**Figure 1:** How strongly do you agree or disagree with the proposal to move the following services into one joint use building?



Base for % = 478 - 524

Respondents were invited to provide a reason for their answer if they so wished. 256 respondents left a valid comment, of this 15% were concerned about the specific requirements needed for each service and felt it would not be appropriate to join the three services above together into one building. However, a similar proportion (14%) felt that joining services would increase the usage of each service and improve access. A further 12% felt that joining services would help save money and would be more economic/cost effective. The top 10 grouped open comment responses can be seen within figure 2 below:

**Figure 2:** Please state your reasons:

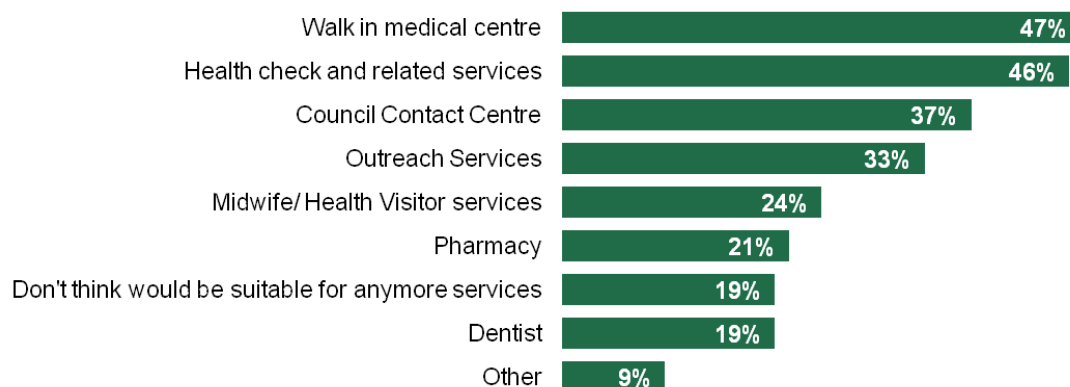


Base for % = 246

Respondents were then asked if there were any other services they felt would benefit from being within the proposed lifestyle provision, they were able to select as many services as applied. Figure 3 shows that nearly half of respondents felt that a walk in medical centre would be of benefit (46%) along with health check and related services (46%). Around a third of respondents

felt that outreach services (33%) and a Council contact centre (37%) would benefit from being within the building.

**Figure 3:** Are there any other council/ partner services that you feel would benefit from being within the proposed Congleton lifestyle provision?



Base for % = 469

37 respondents provided another service suggestion that could also be included within the proposed Congleton Lifestyle Provision. The five top grouped open comment responses were:

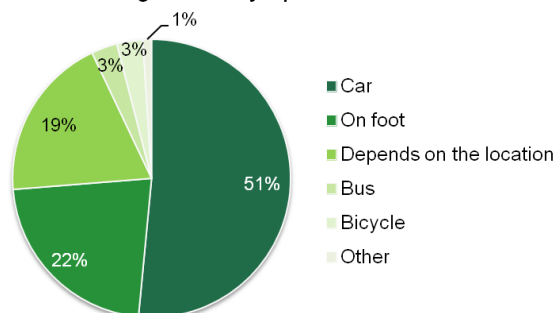
- Young people groups, clubs and services (seven respondents mentioned)
- Library (five respondents mentioned)
- Police (five respondents mentioned)
- Disability Information Bureau/support services for those with a disability (five respondents mentioned)
- Art/ music centre (four respondents mentioned).

When asked what would be their main method of transport to a new lifestyle provision, just over half of respondents (51%) stated that they would mainly travel by car, 22% would more than likely walk and 19% stated that they didn't know as it was dependent on the location. 7% would use alternative transport methods. Full results can be seen in the pie chart below.

Half of respondents (50%) stated that they would be prepared to travel up to 10 minutes to get to a new lifestyle provision; 38% would be prepared to travel up to 20 minute and 12% were willing to travel longer than 20 minutes.

**Figure 4:**

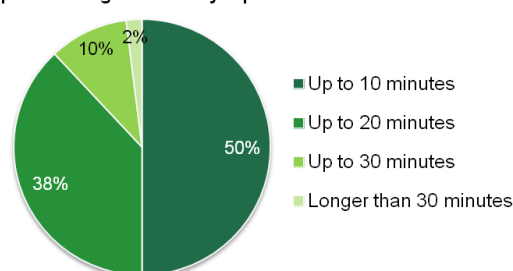
What would be your main method of transport if you were to visit the Congleton lifestyle provision?



Base for % = 513

**Figure 5:**

How long would you be prepared to travel to get to the proposed Congleton lifestyle provision?



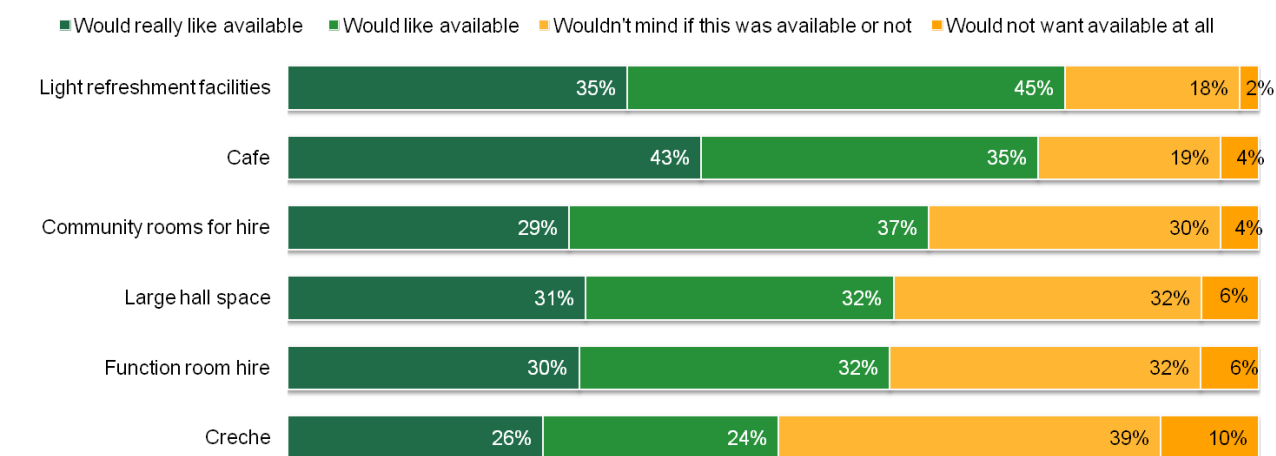
Base for % = 531

Those who would travel by car were more likely to state they would be willing to travel up to 10 minutes (57%) compared to those who would travel on foot (30%). Those who would travel by foot were more likely to state that they would be willing to travel up to 20 minutes (54%).

The three most desired general facilities within a new lifestyle provision for Congleton were as follows:-

1. Light refreshment facilities, 80% (35% really like available, 45% like available)
2. Cafe, 78% (43% really like available, 35% like available)
3. Community rooms for hire, 66% (29% really like available, 37% like available).

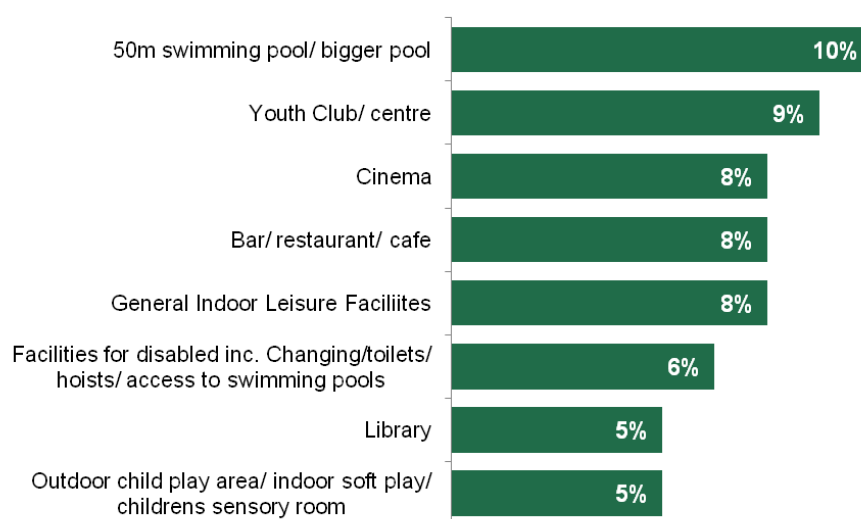
**Figure 6:** Thinking about the proposed Congleton lifestyle provision, would you like available within the building...



Base for % = 453 - 493

Respondents were able to offer suggestions for other general facilities they would like within the building. 80 respondents left a suggestion, of which 10% mentioned the need for a bigger swimming pool, 9% felt that a youth club/centre would be beneficial. The top eight open comment responses made can be seen within figure 7 below.

**Figure 7:** Are there any other facilities you would like available within the proposed Congleton lifestyle provision?

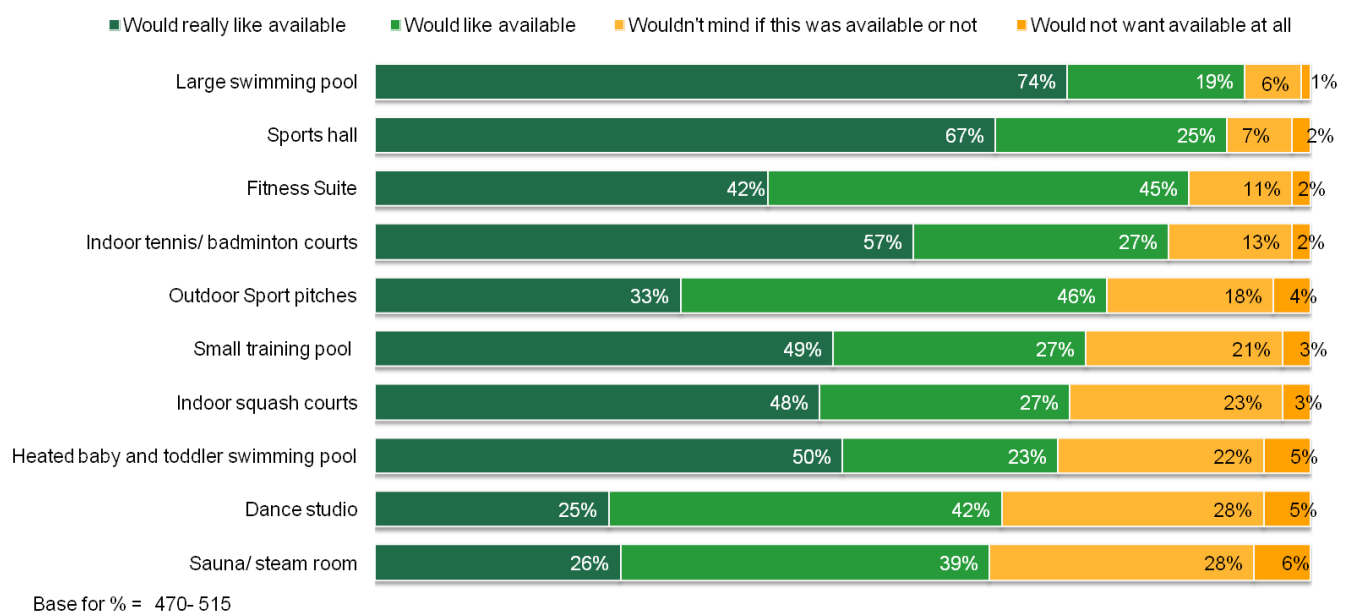


Base for % = 80

The five most desired facilities specifically relating to leisure were as follows:-

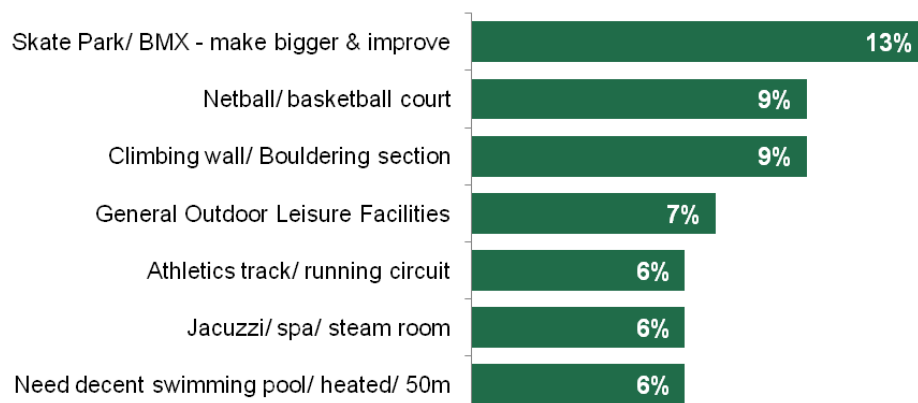
1. Large swimming pool, 93% (74% really like available, 19% like available)
2. Sports hall, 92% (67% really like available, 24% like available)
3. Fitness Suite, 87% (42% really like available, 45% like available)
4. Indoor tennis/ badminton courts, 84% (57% really like available, 27% like available)
5. Outdoor sports pitches, 79% (33% really like available, 46% like available).

**Figure 8:** Thinking specifically about leisure services at the proposed Congleton lifestyle provision, would you like to be available...



Respondents were able to offer suggestions for other leisure facilities they would like within the building. 117 respondents left a suggestion, of which, 13% would like the skate park to be improved/ made bigger. The top 10 responses are shown in the figure 9 below:

**Figure 9:** Are there any other facilities you would like available as part of the proposed Congleton lifestyle provision?

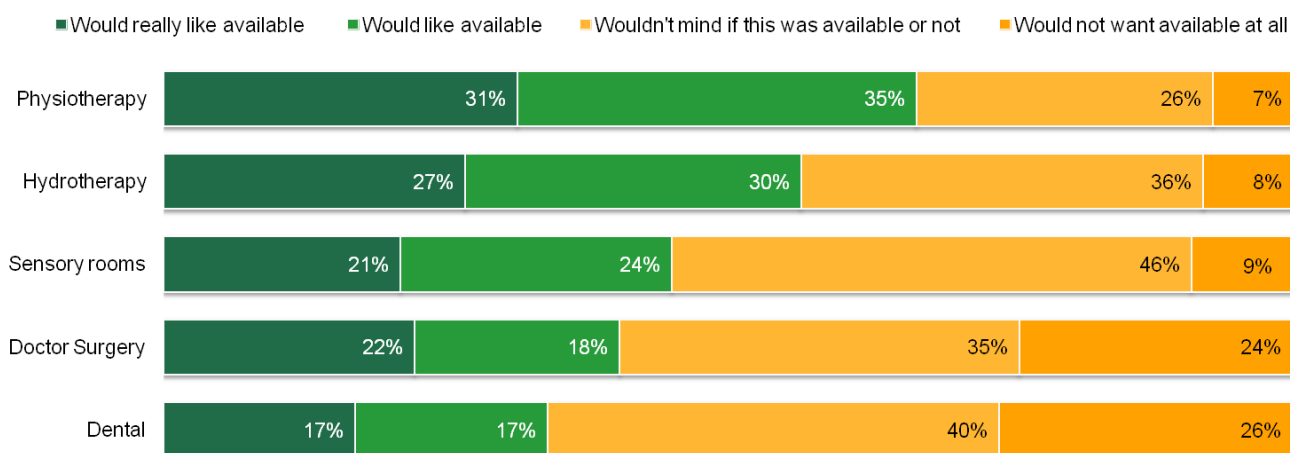


Base for % = 117

The three most desired well-being services within a new lifestyle provision were as follows:-

1. Physiotherapy, 66% (31% really like available, 35% like available)
2. Hydrotherapy, 57% (27% really like available, 30% like available)
3. Sensory rooms, 45% (21% really like available, 24% like available).

**Figure 10:** Thinking specifically about well-being services within the proposed Congleton Lifestyle provision, would you like available...



Base for % = 443 - 488

Respondents were able to offer suggestions for other wellbeing facilities they would like within the building. 28 chose to leave a suggestion, the top four grouped open comment responses were:-

- Alternative therapies such as acupuncture/ art therapy (7 respondents mentioned)
- Related health/ well being facilities such as beautician/hairdressers/ massage and spa (6 respondents mentioned)
- Disability advice bureau/ support services for disabled (4 respondents mentioned)
- Overall health checks (2 respondents mentioned).

Finally, respondents were asked whether they had any more comments to make regarding the proposed lifestyle centre. 185 left a comment of which 13% felt that an updated leisure centre was all that was needed/ should be the focus to achieve maximum benefit. 11% felt that improvements were long overdue as the current Congleton Leisure Centre is very dated. A further 11% mentioned the need for high quality sport facilities. The top 10 comments received are shown in figure 11 below:

**Figure 11: Do you have any other comments/ suggestions to make on the proposed Congleton lifestyle provision?**



Base for % = 185

## Social Media Analysis

The survey link was promoted via Facebook and Twitter and as such, comments were received directly on these posts. The comments were grouped into themes – these themes and the number of mentions can be seen in table 1 below:-

**Table 1:**

Theme of comment	Number of mentions
Money would be better spent elsewhere	6
Need improved Leisure Centre in Sandbach/ Macclesfield/ Middlewich	5
Congleton leisure centre should be knocked down	3
Need more information about proposals and where the money is coming from	2
Redevelop Crewe Town Centre	1
Lower Council Tax instead	1
More health services e.g. breast clinic, testicular clinic, GUM clinic and smoking cessation support	1
New changing rooms needed	1
Children and young people should have been asked for their opinions when Crewe Lifestyle Centre was drawn up	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>



## Conclusions

---

### Joining the three main proposed services together

Respondents seemed to have neutral views regarding the proposal to move Congleton Leisure Centre, Adult Day Care Services and Children's Centre Services into a joint use building especially the Adult Day Care Centre and Children's Centre services with the majority neither agreeing nor disagreeing with the proposal (47% and 43% respectively). This may not seem surprising considering the majority of respondents had not used or been to the Adult Day Care Centre or Children's Centre. However, a higher number had used/ been to the leisure centre and still 29% were unsure with the proposal.

Respondents were able to provide reasons for their answer if they wished, 15% (out of 256 responses received) were concerned that each service would have specific needs. A similar proportion however, (14%) felt that joining services would increase/ improve the usage and access of all the services within the building and 12% thought it would be more economical/cost effective to join services.

An updated leisure centre building with added/ upgraded facilities seemed to be the main priority for respondents with the swimming pool being the most important with 74% indicating that they would really like a pool to be available, 67% would really like a sports hall.

### Opportunity to join other related services

There was no consensus for joining the three main proposed services together; updating the leisure centre seemed the highest priority. However, it may be worthwhile looking at the option of including related health services in to the building as when asked about other services that would benefit from being within the building 47% selected walk in medical centre and 46% selected health check and related services. Further on, when asked what well-being services they would like available within the building 66% would like or really like physiotherapy services to be available and 57% would like or really like hydrotherapy to be available. Health services such as a doctor surgery and dentist was not as high of a priority; 58% would not mind/ want a doctor surgery to be included, 66% would not mind/ want a dental surgery to be included.

### Further considerations

Just over one-half of respondents (51%) would travel to the lifestyle provision by car, indicating that adequate parking provision would be required near to/ on site at the new lifestyle provision. Safe access by foot is also required with 22% indicating they would travel by foot to the new provision. Consideration is also needed for those who would travel in by alternative transport methods such as bus, train and bicycle.

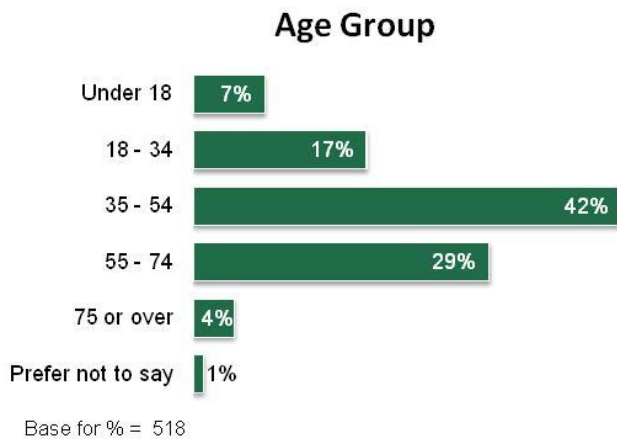
Within some of the open comment questions, the most popular suggestions were to include young clubs/groups (9% out of 80 comments) to be held at the leisure centre with improvements being made to the skate park (13% out of 117 comments) . This presents the Council with the opportunity to look into providing more services specifically aimed at young people within the lifestyle provision.

The research and Consultation team would recommend that a further consultation be undertaken when the feasibility study has been complete and the plans are in their draft stage.

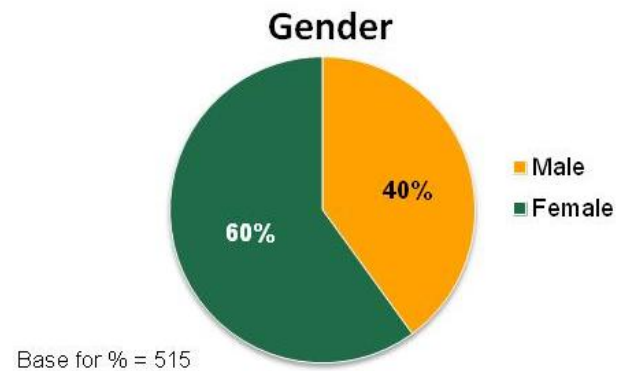
## Demographic Profile

The charts below show the age and gender breakdown of those who responded to the survey.

**Figure 12:**



**Figure 13:**

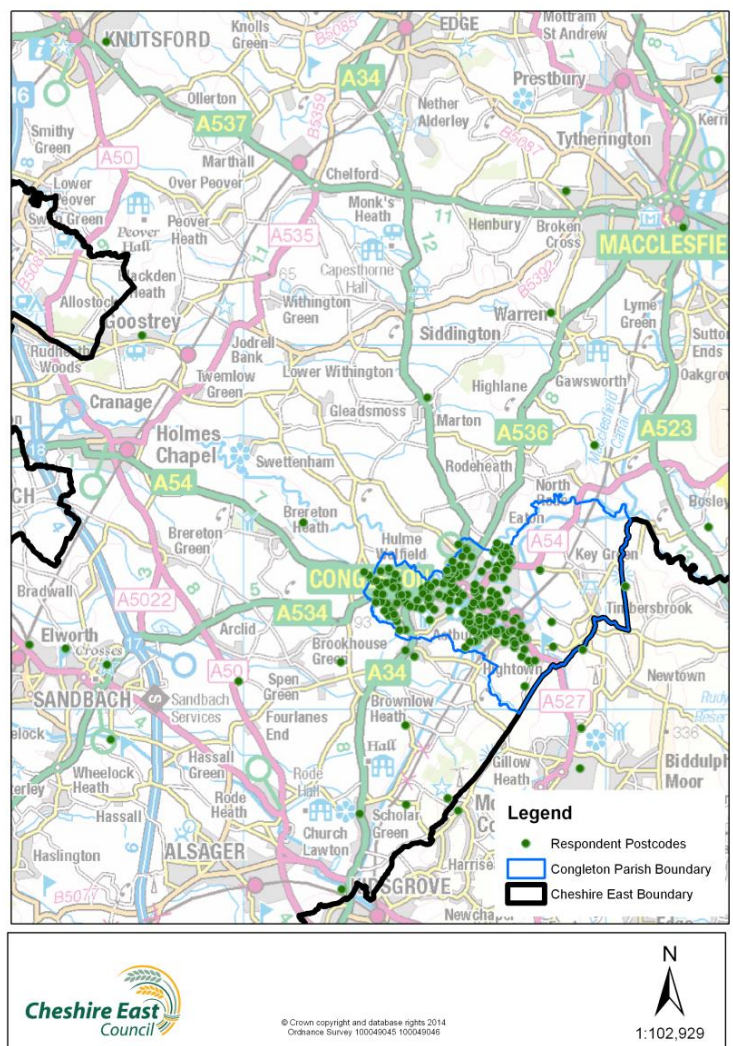


95% answered the survey as a Cheshire East resident

94% of respondents would class themselves as White English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish/ British

16% said that they had a long-term illness, health issue or disability that limits their activities in some way.

The map to the right shows the spread of respondents by those who left a valid home postcode. The majority were around the Congleton town area.



## **Congleton Leisure Centre**

### **Appendix 2**

## OPTION 1

P4192 Congleton Leisure Centre

Option 1

Refurbishment of existing facility and addition of AWC Changing Room

April 2015



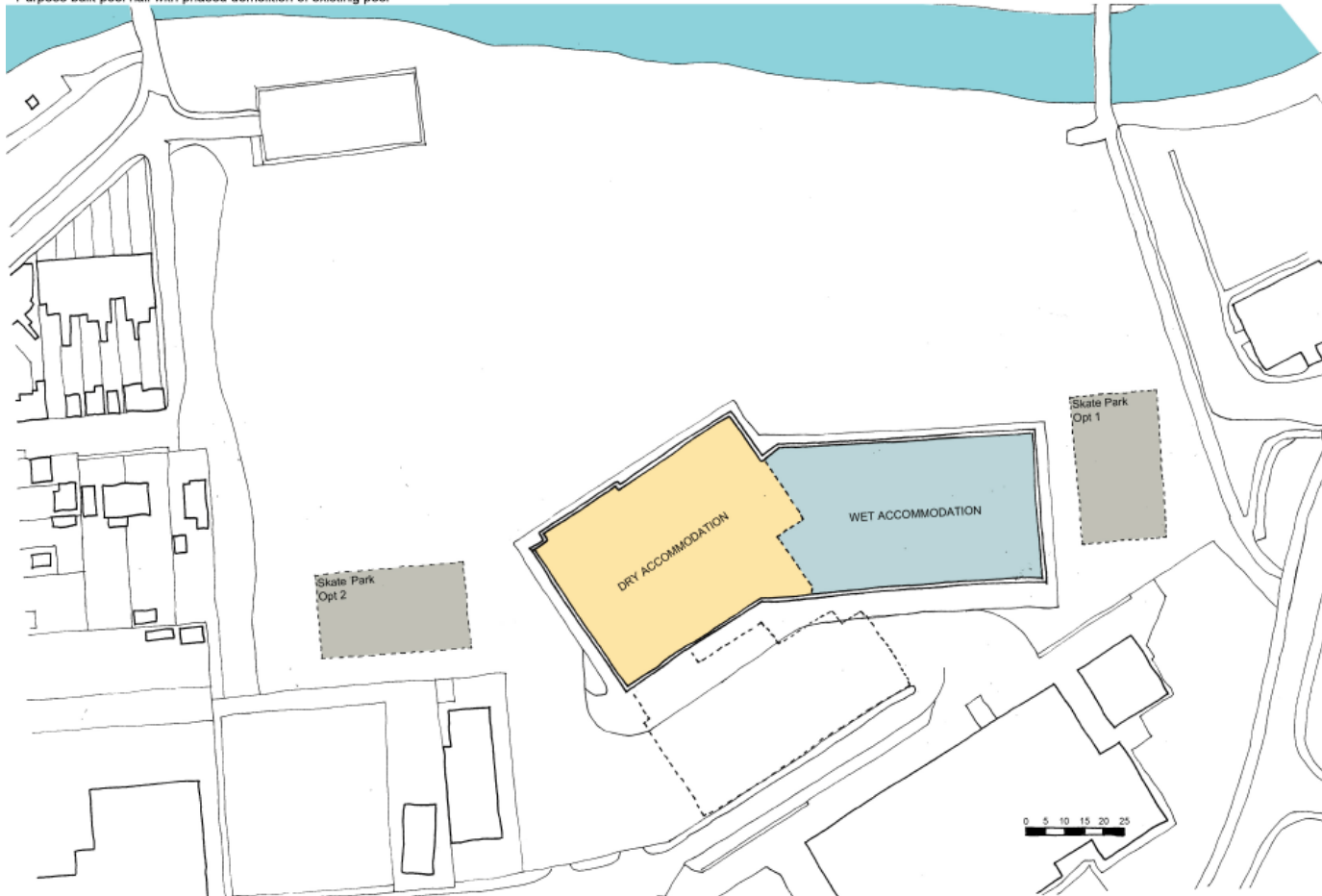
Option 1 comprises of a refurbishment and facelift to the existing building mass with the addition of a disabled wet changing suite accessed from wet change within the swimming pool block. As part of the refurbishment works we would consider a proposal to replace the squash courts with a new studio along-side a relocated and refurbished gym suite. The proposed works would include the recladding of the existing mass while also opening up the façade to the fitness suite allowing views and natural light into the space and creating a 'shop window' to the proposed option. Internally the rest of the facilities would undergo a substantial refit programme which can be phased to suit the current and future use of the building.

## OPTION 2

P4192 Congleton Leisure Centre  
Option 2

April 2015

Purpose built pool hall with phased demolition of existing pool



Option 2 comprises of a refurbishment and facelift to the existing dry sports leisure accommodation but the addition of a new purpose built 25m x 6 lane competition pool and learner pool with wet change village, pool view, main reception and associated administration space. We propose that the new building mass could be constructed independently of the existing building and connected through to suit the existing building programme. The proposed pool hall will enjoy views across Hankinson's Field while maximising potential north light into the space. As part of the proposed option, like option 1, we would propose refurbishing and repositioning the existing fitness suite along-side a new studio space within the existing squash courts. Dry change will be refurbished and repositioned in order to allow a new access route which benefits from new glazing along the south wall of the existing building mass helping to open up the building and allow views and expression of the use through the façade. Like option 1 a new shop window will be created by adding areas of glazing into the fitness suite and new studio space. Due to the position of the proposed block consideration would need to be given to integrating the skate park as part of the redevelopment.

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Congleton Leisure Centre

Appendix 3







Picture 1 shows the approach to the Leisure Centre along Worrall Street.

Picture 2 shows the entrance to the Leisure Centre, note that there are 2 distinct buildings joined in the centre. As you look, the building on the left is the sports hall area (dry side) and the building to the right is the swimming pool area (wet side).

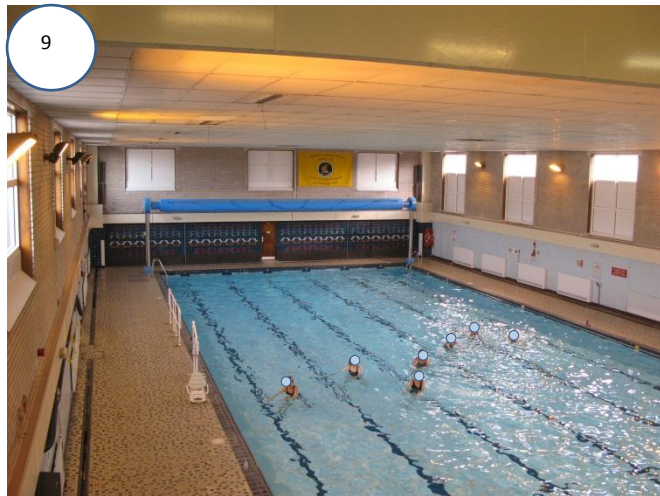




Picture 3 shows the leisure centre entrance from the main car park.

Pictures 4 to 6 show the rugby pitch area from various angles and also shows the appearance of the sports hall and surrounding area as approached from Congleton Park.





Picture 7 shows the skate park when viewed from the path to the Church.

Pictures 8 shows the Green Flag award winning park area.

Picture 9 shows the main pool area as viewed from the spectator area.

Picture 10 shows the gym, note that there is no natural light in this area.

Artist's impression of how the Leisure Centre could potentially look like when viewed from Worrall Street





Artist's impression of how the Leisure Centre could potentially look like when viewed from Hankinson's Field

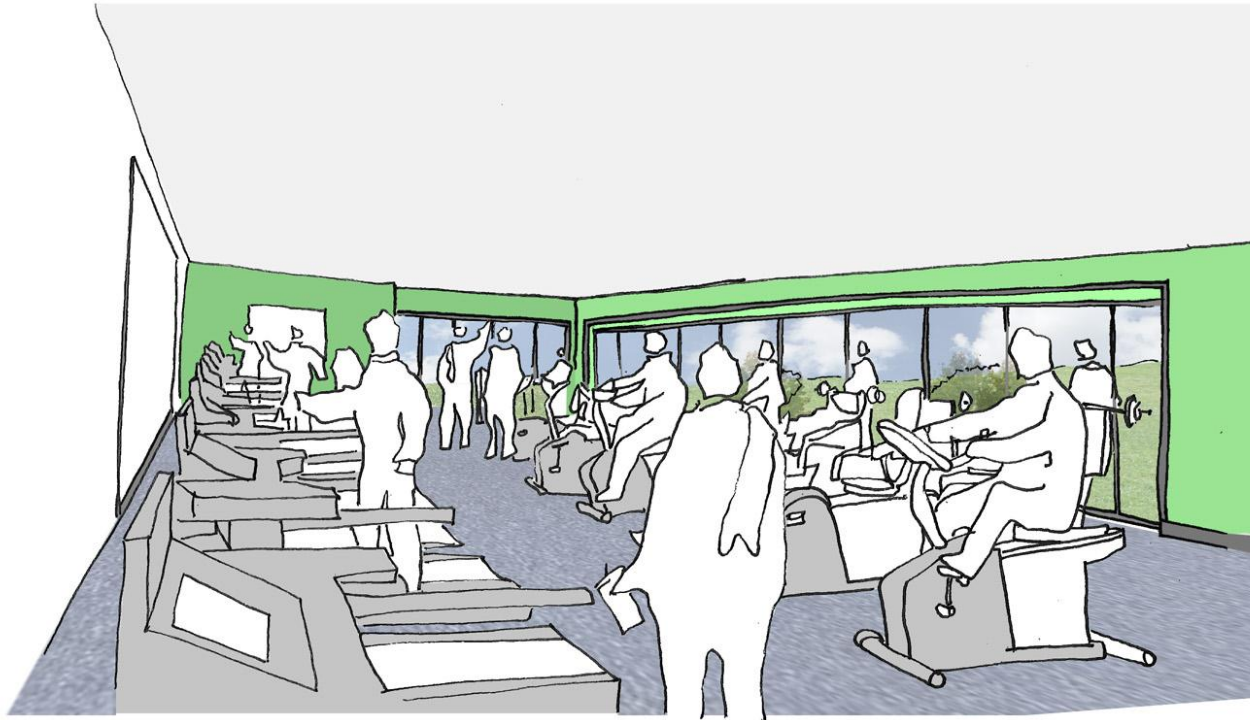


Artist's impression of how the swimming pool could potentially look, with views out to Hankinson's Field





Artist's impression of how the fitness suite could potentially look, with views out to Hankinson's Field



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## CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

### Cabinet

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	21 <sup>st</sup> April 2015
<b>Report of:</b>	Lorraine Butcher, Executive Director of Strategic Commissioning
<b>Subject/Title:</b>	Expansion Options – Snow Hill Car Park, Nantwich
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Cllr David Topping, Service Commissioning

---

#### 1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 This report seeks Cabinet approval to authorise further investigation, preliminary design, and financial appraisal for the expansion of Snow Hill Car Park in Nantwich.
- 1.2 The historic market town of Nantwich hosts a significant number of really successful events such as the Food and Drink Festival, Holly Holy day, and the Jazz Festival which attracts large numbers of visitors boosting the local economy. It is one of our really attractive market towns and further to discussions and consultation with residents, businesses and visitors, the expansion of the towns car parks will be taken forward to improve accessibility into the town for shoppers and leisure activities.
- 1.3 We carried out a Road Show in Nantwich Town Centre on 19 March 2015. The roadshow was well attended by residents, shoppers, businesses and visitors. They were asked for their views with regards to existing parking provision and future improvements to the public realm.
- 1.4 The key points relevant to this report are:
  - 40% of respondents said that more parking was needed;
  - Suggestions for additional parking included both short and long stay; and
  - Snow Hill was frequently identified as a suitable site for parking expansion.
- 1.5 As a Residents First Council, we have listened to the views put forward and now have a great opportunity to deliver the aspirations for additional parking capacity in Nantwich.
- 1.6 It is also clear that we need to ensure that people who use Nantwich Swimming Pool can be recompensed for parking at Snow Hill car park. Therefore, we have agreed with Everybody Sports and Leisure Trust (ESAR) that we will offer a refund administered by ESAR to all users of

the leisure facilities in Nantwich. This follows on from our existing commitment to Wilmslow Leisure Centre and Crewe Lifestyle Centre.

## **2.0 Recommendation**

- 2.1 That Cabinet authorise further investigation, preliminary design, and financial appraisal for the expansion of Snow Hill Car Park, Nantwich.

## **3.0 Reasons for Recommendation**

- 3.1 Appendix A provides a technical note on the available options to expand the existing car park within land owned by the Council. The report identifies 3 potentially deliverable options for car park expansion:
1. Modifications to existing car park to the south of the Leisure Centre to provide an additional 11 spaces (indicative costings £24,800);
  2. Conversion of a grassed area to the southwest of the Leisure Centre to provide an additional 24 spaces (indicative costings £174,000); and
  3. Provision of a new car park to the west of the Leisure Centre, linked to the existing to provide an additional 73 spaces (indicative costings £318,000).
- 3.2 It is proposed to further investigate these 3 options with a view to ensuring the final design takes into account the potential growth aspirations for Nantwich, together with ensuring the facilities are fully utilised.

## **4.0 Wards Affected**

- 4.1 Nantwich wards.

## **5.0 Local Ward Members**

- 5.1 Cllr P Groves, Cllr A Martin, Cllr A Moran & Cllr P Butterill.

## **6.0 Policy Implications**

- 6.1 The car park expansion will actively contribute to the delivery of the Cheshire East Council Three Year Plan outcomes:
- Outcome 1: Our Local Communities are Strong and Supportive
  - Outcome 2: Cheshire East has a strong and resilient economy
  - Outcome 4: Cheshire East is a green and sustainable place

## **7.0 Financial Implications**

- 7.1. The Council is entering into a Section 106 agreement with a housing developer to secure funding in order to take this proposal forward. The agreement is proposing to include the provision of £250,000 for the improvement of parking provision within Nantwich Town Centre together with £500,000 additional funding for improvements to the town's public realm.

- 7.2. The preliminary expenditure associated with the further investigations will initially be funded through Strategic Development, with these costs being recovered through the S106.
- 7.3. There will be a potential loss of income initially from Leisure Centre using our carpark. However, this can potentially be offset with the investment in additional car park spaces.

## **8.0 Legal Implications**

- 8.1 The procurement of the services necessary to design and appraise the expansion options will be delivered through the current Highway Services Contract (Ringway Jacobs) subject to achieving best value for money.

## **9.0 Risk Management**

- 9.1 The major risk lies in the delivery timescale of the development and the associated release of the financial contributions.
- 9.2 All option to be considered for car park expansions are within land owned by the Council, thereby removing the risks associated with land purchase.

## **10.0 Background and Options**

- 10.1 The options for provision of additional car park spaces in Nantwich town Centre are set out in Appendix A.

## **11.0 Access to Information**

- 11.1 The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

Name: Paul Traynor  
Designation: Strategic Commissioning Manager - Highways  
Tel No: 01260 371055  
Email: [paul.traynor@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:paul.traynor@cheshireeast.gov.uk)

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## **Snow Hill Car Park, Nantwich** **Proposed Car Park Expansion Options**



**Technical Note**

**February 2015**

Doc Ref: B1832035 SHCP/TR/01



## Document Control Sheet

Client: Cheshire East Council Project No: B1832035-272-HA  
 Project: Snow Hill Car Park  
 Document Title: Proposed Car Park Expansion Options  
 Ref. No: B1832035 SHCP/TR/01

	Originated by	Checked by	Reviewed by	Approved by
<b>ORIGINAL</b>	NAME	NAME	NAME	NAME
<b>Revision 0</b>	<b>Hossein Atarnejad</b>	<b>Adam Wilson</b>	<b>Paul Bartley</b>	<b>Rob Welch</b>
DATE	INITIALS <b>HA</b>	INITIALS <b>AW</b>	INITIALS <b>PB</b>	INITIALS
	<b>Document Status</b>	<b>DRAFT : For Client Comment</b>		

<b>REVISION</b>	NAME	NAME	NAME	NAME
DATE	INITIALS	INITIALS	INITIALS	INITIALS
	<b>Document Status</b>			

<b>REVISION</b>	NAME	NAME	NAME	NAME
DATE	INITIALS	INITIALS	INITIALS	INITIALS
	<b>Document Status</b>			

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## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Background

Cheshire East Council (CEC) is considering the provision of additional off-street parking spaces within the vicinity of the Swimming Pool and Fitness Centre in Nantwich.

The objectives of the note are to:

1. Identify Council land in the vicinity of Snow Hill car park
2. Determine the current layout and number of spaces
3. Develop options to identify where additional spaces could be provided
4. Identify any additional spaces on the existing car park that could be realised by alteration to the parking bays
5. Identify additional number of spaces that can be realised by extending the car park
6. Provide indicative cost estimates associated with points 4 and 5 along with any risks / constraints in implementing any proposed changes

### 1.2 Existing Parking Situation

Currently, Off-street car parking for use by the general public is provided at Snow Hill Car Park. The car park consists of two sections located to the north and south of Wall Lane.

The northern section of the car park has an area of approximately 4000m<sup>2</sup> and offers 156 parking spaces. In addition to these there are 8 parking spaces designated for the disabled badge holders and 2 motorcycle parking spaces.

The site was visited on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2015 between 11:00 and 12:00.

At the time of the visit 68 of the spaces (and 1 disabled) were occupied.

These figures represent the utilisation rates of 44% and 13% (for disabled users).

No data on the level of demand, volume of traffic or collisions have been provided at the time of writing this technical note.

## 2 Proposed Options

### 2.1 General

The following options identify proposed increases to parking provision within or surrounding Snow Hill Car Park, along with indicative costs. Each of the options presented are within land owned by CEC.

### 2.2 Option 1: Existing Car Park Modifications

The first option examines the introduction of additional spaces within the existing car park.

The existing layout of the car park, i.e. bays at 90 degrees is the optimum for the available area and angled parking bays (60 or 45 degrees) would not increase the capacity.

There are however, a number of kerbed areas within the car park which can be removed and modified to create additional bays.

The maximum number of additional spaces that can be achieved is 11.

In other words the existing 156 bays will be increased to 167.

The works associated with this option involves the removal of kerbs, full depth construction and new road markings. The cost of these undertakings is expected to amount to approximately £24,800. This figure includes 15% contingency to cater for unforeseen factors.

The works costs are construction costs only and exclude design fees and traffic management.

The cost per any one extra space therefore is about £2,255 which can be used for comparison purposes with other options and also to calculate the return on any investment.

### 2.3 Option 2: Area A

The second option is the conversion of the grass area to the west of the existing car park denoted 'Area A' on the drawing.

The conversion of this land, would add an additional 22 spaces plus 2 disabled bays and a motorcycle parking area.

The proposed layout envisages the retention of the row of trees separating the area from the existing car park.

The cost of constructing a car park in Area A is estimated to be around £174,000.

The works are construction costs only and exclude design fees, traffic management, utility costs and site investigations. This figure includes 25% contingency to provide for possible unanticipated issues.

The cost of each bay for this option is approximately £7,900.

## **2.4 Option 3: Area B**

This option looks at the potential for a new car park in the area denoted 'Area B' on the drawing.

The access and egress to this car park is assumed to be from the existing car park. There is sufficient space for 73 parking bays within this area. This option includes the removal of 6 trees.

The approximate cost of constructing a car park in this area is estimated to be in the neighbourhood of £318,000. This costs excludes, design fee, traffic management, utility costs and site investigation.

The contingency for this option is 30% to offer some margin of safety against possible issues met at site.

The cost of each bay for this option is approximately £4,360.

## **2.5 Option 4: Area C**

A fourth possibility is the utilisation of 'Area C' which is the grass land located to the northeast of the leisure centre. The topography of this land is more arduous than the areas discussed in the previous options in particular the difference in level of different sections in this area is substantial.

This area has the potential to provide 151 parking spaces plus 3 for the use by the disabled and 1 motor cycle parking place.

The entrance/exit to the car park would be from Wall Lane adjacent to the existing parking lay-by which would become part of the future car park.

The cost of providing a car park on this strip of land is expected to be approximately £674,000 which includes 40% contingencies to reflect the difficult terrain and the range of unknown parameters.

The cost of each bay for this option would be approximately £4,460.

### 3 Conclusions

- 3.1 There are a number of potential options to provide additional parking spaces at this location. All the options discussed above would take place within the land owned by the Council and therefore no land purchase would be necessary.

The information provided by statutory undertakers indicates that their apparatus would not be affected; however, C2 information should be sought at preliminary design stage to verify the initial information.

- 3.2 Appendix B presents the breakdown of construction costs and as would be expected, the majority of the costs are expected to be consumed by earthworks requirements. There are no apparent insurmountable physical constraints in constructing any of the options.

However, as there is a significant cost involved, it is recommended that a cost benefit analyses is carried out prior to making a decision.

- 3.2 Finally, it is worth mentioning that each off street parking bay in a small town centre is estimated to generate £800 pounds of revenue per annum on average. The corresponding running cost is estimated to be about £150 per year. The oversupply of parking facilities and the consequent lack of full utilisation of the facilities may prove costly in the long run.

**4      Appendix A : Sketch of Potential Layouts**



## 5 Appendix B: Cost Breakdown

<b>Option 1: Existing Car Park</b>		
Existing no. of Spaces: 156 (+2 Disabled+1M/C)	Additional No. of Spaces: 11	Potential No. Spaces: 167 (+2 Disabled + 1M/C)
200	Site Clearance	£990
500	Drainage	£900
600	Earthworks	£400
700	Pavements	£17,900
1100	Kerbing & Footways	0
1200	Signs, Road Markings & Miscellaneous	£1,400
1300	Lighting	0
Contingency @15%		£3,250
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£24,800</b>

<b>Option 2: Area A</b>		
Potential No. of Spaces: 22 (+2 Disabled + 1 M/C)		
200	Site Clearance	£300
500	Drainage	£4,520
600	Earthworks	£28,000
700	Pavements	£88,000
1100	Kerbing & Footways	0
1200	Signs, Road Markings & Miscellaneous	£9,400
1300	Lighting	£7,000
1400	Electrical work for lighting	£2,000
Contingency @25%		£35,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£174,000</b>

<b>Option 3: Area B</b>		
Potential No. of Spaces: 73		
200	Site Clearance	£900
500	Drainage	£7,400
600	Earthworks	£50,000
700	Pavements	£156,000
1100	Kerbing & Footways	£2,700
1200	Signs, Road Markings & Miscellaneous	£15,720
1300	Lighting	£10,000
1400	Electrical work for lighting	£3,000
Contingency @30%		£73,500
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£318,300</b>

<b>Option 4: Area C</b>		
<b>Potential No. of Spaces: 151 (+3 Disabled +1M/C)</b>		
200	Site Clearance	£3,200
500	Drainage	£14,800
600	Earthworks	£100,000
700	Pavements	£312,400
1100	Kerbing & Footways	£5,400
1200	Signs, Road Markings & Miscellaneous	£24,450
1300	Lighting	£15,000
1400	Electrical work for lighting	£5,000
Contingency @40%		£193,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£674,000</b>



1.22m RH

Area C  
OPTION 4  
(151, 3D, 1M/C)

Land owned by Cheshire East Council

Land owned by  
Cheshire East Council

Land owned by Cheshire East Council



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CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL LAM040454B18035-H-0001

## SNOW HILL CAR PARK

### POTENTIAL CAR PARK EXPANSION

THIS IS A COLOUR PLAN

Contact Name:	Cheshire East Council Highways - 5th Floor Delaware House, Delaware Street, Crewe, Cheshire, CW1 2LJ	Sheet 1 of 1
Drawn by:	HA	Drawn by:
DATE:	FEB 2015	Checked by:
Checked by:	AM	Drawn by:
Scale at A3:	1:500	Project No.:
		APPENDIX A
		Revision:
		0

Rev	Revision Details	Rev by	Date
-	-	-	-



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## CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

### Cabinet

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	21st April, 2015
<b>Report of:</b>	Joanne Cooper Interim Catering Services Manager
<b>Subject/Title:</b>	Procurement of Fresh Meat and Fresh Meat Products including Poultry
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Cllr Rachel Bailey, Safeguarding Children and Adults Cllr Janet Clowes, Care and Health in the Community

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#### 1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 Cheshire East Council currently spends circa £433,000 per annum on Fresh Meat and Fresh Meat Products including Poultry. These items are used primarily in schools in the preparation of meals within schools and also within Council operated care homes.
- 1.2 Currently the provision is provided through contracts with three local butchers, which is due to end on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015. All allowable extensions to these contracts have been used.
- 1.3 The Corporate Procurement Unit have researched the procurement options available to manage establishing a new contract in the timescales available, which can supply the range of products required at competitive prices. The most appropriate route is a full procurement in line with the EU regulations, exploring variable 'lots' or sizes of contracts to support local / Small and Medium sized Enterprise (SMEs) suppliers who may wish to engage with the Council.
- 1.4 The new contract term is proposed to run from 1st October 2015 initially for a two year period until 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017, with options to extend the contract for two separate periods of one year each, two being the maximum, until 30th September 2019.

#### 2.0 Recommendations

##### 2.1 That Cabinet

- 1 approve that new contract(s) be procured for a period of two years with two possible extension periods each of 12 months, with contracts being awarded to the highest scoring tenderers; and
- 2 note that new contract(s) need to be in place by 1st October 2015.

### **3.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1 To ensure that the Council obtains maximum value for money and to ensure a robust, compliant procurement procedure is undertaken.
- 3.2 To provide the opportunity for greater flexibility on the contracts than those that currently exist in the marketplace. The procurement will be broken down into geographical lots in order to appeal to SMEs.
- 3.3 To ensure that procurement and contracts for the supply of these goods comply with the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 and 2015 and the Council's Finance and Contract Procedure Rules.
- 3.4 To ensure the highest quality meat is obtained at competitive rates and sourced in a responsible manner ensuring acceptable socially, sustainable products with full traceability.

### **4.0 Wards Affected**

- 4.1 All

### **5.0 Local Ward Members**

- 5.1 All

### **6.0 Policy Implications**

- 6.1 The recommendations within this report support the Council in its general operational activity. By ensuring more local produce is delivered together, this helps with the Council's Carbon Reduction levels and supports the School Food Plan in relation to reducing food miles.
- 6.2 The new contract will be for use by the Council Catering Dept. and any associated companies whom are legally able to use these arrangements.

### **7.0 Implications for Rural Communities**

- 7.1 N/A

### **8.0 Financial Implications**

- 8.1 Cheshire East Catering purchase fresh meat and fresh meat products including poultry on behalf of the schools, as required for school meals.
- 8.2 The approximate annual spend on fresh meat is £433,000 across all the Lots or regions of Cheshire East; this is fully funded through service level agreement recharges to schools and Care Homes. Invoices are paid retrospectively.

## **9.0 Legal Implications**

- 9.1 The existing contracts for Fresh Meat and Fresh Meat Products including Poultry will expire on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015 and cannot be further extended beyond that expiry date.
- 9.2 The total aggregate contract value for the new proposed contract will be in the region of £1.73 million over the full 4 year term (including the optional extension periods). In order to re-procure a new contract of that value, which exceeds the current applicable EU threshold of £172,514 for supplies (goods) contracts, as such the Council is required to carry out a competitive procurement exercise for the new contract in a suitable form that is in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations 2006 and 2015 and the Council's own Finance and Contract Procedure Rules.

## **10.0 Risk Management**

- 10.1 Failure to re-procure a new contract for these supplies by end September 2015 would potentially breach the Public Contract Regulations 2006 and 2015 and the Council's own Finance and Contract Procedure Rules.

## **11.0 Background**

- 11.1 The Catering Service currently holds a Bronze, Soil Association accreditation for the food served in schools and is working towards Silver with the intention to become Gold during the term of the contract; this means the produce is Seasonal, Organic, Sustainable, Free Range, Traceable and Healthy.
- 11.2 It is proposed new contract(s) be procured for a period of two years with two possible extension periods each of 12 months. In total the proposed contract value is estimated to be in the region of £1.73 million.
- 11.3 Cheshire East is running it's "own tender" EU procurement exercise using the Chest system. This provides the flexibility to run a single exercise, but the opportunity to split the Borough into 12 regional 'lots' in order to make the opportunity more appealing to any SME organisations operating in this area who may have the capability to service one of the regions of Cheshire East, but may not be able to service the Borough as a whole. Given the timescales in which the procurement must take place in order to award a contract to start on the 1st October 2015 the procurement process has already begun.
- 11.4 The tender documents include clear requirements re traceability procedures. As a result, you can identify not only which farm a certain cut of meat has been bought from and the school it has gone to but also the individual animal involved. As a result the risks associated with any future issues regarding traceability – for example, 'horsemeat in burgers' - should not affect the Council



## **12.0 Access to Information**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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