



DRAFT ST HELENS INCLUSIVE GROWTH STRATEGY 2023-2028



FOREWORD

A core part of our strategy as a council is to help create a strong, thriving, inclusive and well-connected economy right across St Helens Borough. This Inclusive Growth Strategy sets out in more detail our priorities for the economy and brings together the activity that businesses, the council, further education and training providers, and other organisations working across the Liverpool City Region are undertaking to help our economy thrive.

‘St Helens Together’ was the banner for our collective efforts to support each other during the COVID-19 pandemic, and it remains core to our ethos as we seek to protect residents and business owners who are struggling during the current recession and cost of living crisis.

A growing economy that supports an improvement in living standards for all our communities is more important than ever. We are publishing this strategy at a time of significant economic uncertainty, and when the rising cost of living is creating real additional pressures for many people every day. We know that inflation has the greatest impact on the least well off and, in particular, energy cost increases disproportionately affect the lowest paid and most vulnerable. Too many of our residents fall into these categories. We are focused on supporting them right now, but also building our resilience as a community to weather future storms.

One of the many exciting things about St Helens Borough is that there are numerous major opportunities for growth and investment projects already underway or starting, supported by the recent adoption of our Local Plan to 2037. The transformational regeneration of Earlestown and St Helens town centres, assisted by major investment from the Towns Fund and the

English Cities Fund Partnership together with other sources, will create new jobs, spaces for entrepreneurs, new facilities for learning and our vibrant cultural and creative organisations, alongside new public realm. The transformation of the former Parkside Colliery and its role within the Liverpool City Region Freeport will see new, well-paid jobs, as will further investment in the Omega strategic employment site. This Inclusive Growth Strategy sets out how we will connect local people and businesses to this vast array of real and live opportunities.

We want to work together with other key anchor organisations in St Helens Borough to create new training programmes, help small businesses get supply chain contracts and gear up for future opportunities. We will help local people get good jobs in the NHS, our colleges and training providers, schools and with major local firms, as well as ensuring that the skills offer here equips people for roles elsewhere. We will work with local businesses, helping existing firms to grow and thrive, as well as working to attract new firms to our borough where location, connectivity and training offer are amongst our many assets, along with our hard-working residents.



Councillor Kate Groucutt
Cabinet Member - Economy, Skills and Business



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PEOPLE IN ST HELENS BOROUGH CARE DEEPLY ABOUT OUR PLACE

At the heart of the Northwest, St Helens is an attractive semi-rural place to live, work, visit and invest. We are well located, between the major urban economies of Manchester and Liverpool and highly connected. We are a place of strong, supportive communities and a vibrant identity, rooted in our highly successful world-famous rugby league team and our long-standing industrial heritage as pioneers and a centre for glass, chemicals, pharmaceuticals and coal mining. St Helens is the birthplace of many world firsts, from its rail and canal systems to glass production and, today, innovative manufacturing and engineering businesses are part of a continuing tradition of making. Everyone wants a successful future for St Helens. This Inclusive Growth Strategy sets out the actions we need to take over the next five years to deliver a successful, inclusive economy, driving progress and doing what is needed in the short term as well as for the long term. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) defines inclusive growth as: economic growth which creates opportunities for all segments of the population and distributes the dividends of increased prosperity, both in monetary and non-monetary terms, fairly across society.

MAJOR GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES AHEAD

We have a once in a generation opportunity through the substantial investment planned in St Helens Borough: £200m through the 20-year English Cities Fund and related masterplans, the £25m Towns Fund, major developments at Parkside and Omega West, the Global Centre of Excellence at Glass Futures, St Helens College estate masterplan, strategic housing developments, such as the former Cowley Hill Works and Moss Nook Urban Village. By linking the opportunities together, these investments have the potential to create and act as a catalyst for genuine and lasting change for our residents, improving job quality and wages, enhancing the physical experience and perception of our borough's town centres. We are also benefitting from regional investment to futureproof our economy, including HyNet Northwest, which will produce, transport and store low carbon hydrogen; and LCR Connect, a £30m 212km full-fibre, ultrafast, gigabit-capable network.

We have many of the strengths and assets needed for future success - connectivity, committed people, location, industrial experience and major development opportunities and investment. In the years ahead, we need to get this investment working in a way that maximises benefits for residents and keeps as much of the return in the local economy as possible. This means better jobs for people that want them, getting people back into work who are currently unable to do so, growing local and new businesses, regenerating our borough's town centres and places, building new commercial space and housing, increasing aspirations amongst our children and young people, and providing high-quality services.

OUR ECONOMY

Long-term industrial change has created complex, well-known and long-standing challenges for our communities. There are important structural issues in our economy that lead to fewer opportunities for many people here:

- **Economic output and productivity are in decline** - Gross Value Added per job of £42,784 is £19,500 lower than the UK average and has declined by 9.1% since 2010. This has contributed to our borough's £2.7bn economy shrinking by 7.3% between 2010 and 2019. This is linked to a reduction in traditional higher output industrial jobs and a shift towards a service-based economy. The contraction in the public sector from 2010 onwards is also a factor.
- **High employment but low wages** - 75% in employment (UK average: 74.7%) but almost 3 in 10 jobs earn below the Real Living Wage - almost 10 percentage points higher than the city region, regional and national averages - and 16.8% of working age residents claim Universal Credit, compared to 13.9% nationally. Almost 1 in 4 neighbourhoods are in the 10% most deprived in the country. School attainment is low, and many residents lack the skills and qualifications needed to access a wider range of opportunities. In addition to the gross average weekly pay in St Helens being lower compared with the national average, the median gender pay gap for all employees (full and part time) in St Helens in 2021 was higher at 19.2% compared to 16.3% in England.
- **Low disposable income with insufficient higher value leisure and retail offer** - due to low wages and high levels of deprivation, there is low disposable income amongst residents, which in turn results in demand for the current low value leisure and retail offer, creating something of a vicious circle for the borough's town centres with lower footfall and spend.
- **Cost-of-living crisis** - we are facing historically high interest rates, a cost-of-living crisis and the threat of recession. These issues are particularly acute for our residents on low wages and households out of work, reducing consumer confidence and spend on our high streets. Our businesses are operating in an increasingly difficult environment with high energy costs and increased cost pressures. In recognition, this Inclusive Growth Strategy is being developed and agreed at an important but uncertain time, we have therefore considered different economic futures and scenarios. We need to respond to these immediate pressures and take proactive longer-term action to further increase local wealth and the value of opportunities available to residents in St Helens Borough - and to retain and grow that wealth in the local economy.
- **Wealth and health** - There is plenty of evidence and studies that show greater and fairer distribution of wealth is linked with better health. Longitudinal studies have documented links between income and multiple health indicators. Delivering inclusive growth provides us with an opportunity to improve health as well as the economy.

OUR VISION

Our overarching vision for St Helens is set out in the #STHELENSTOGETHER Our Borough Strategy 2021-2030 as:

WORKING TOGETHER FOR A BETTER BOROUGH, WITH PEOPLE AT THE HEART OF EVERYTHING WE DO BY IMPROVING PEOPLE’S LIVES TOGETHER AND CREATING DISTINCT, ATTRACTIVE, HEALTHY, SAFE, INCLUSIVE, AND ACCESSIBLE PLACES IN WHICH TO LIVE, WORK, VISIT AND INVEST.

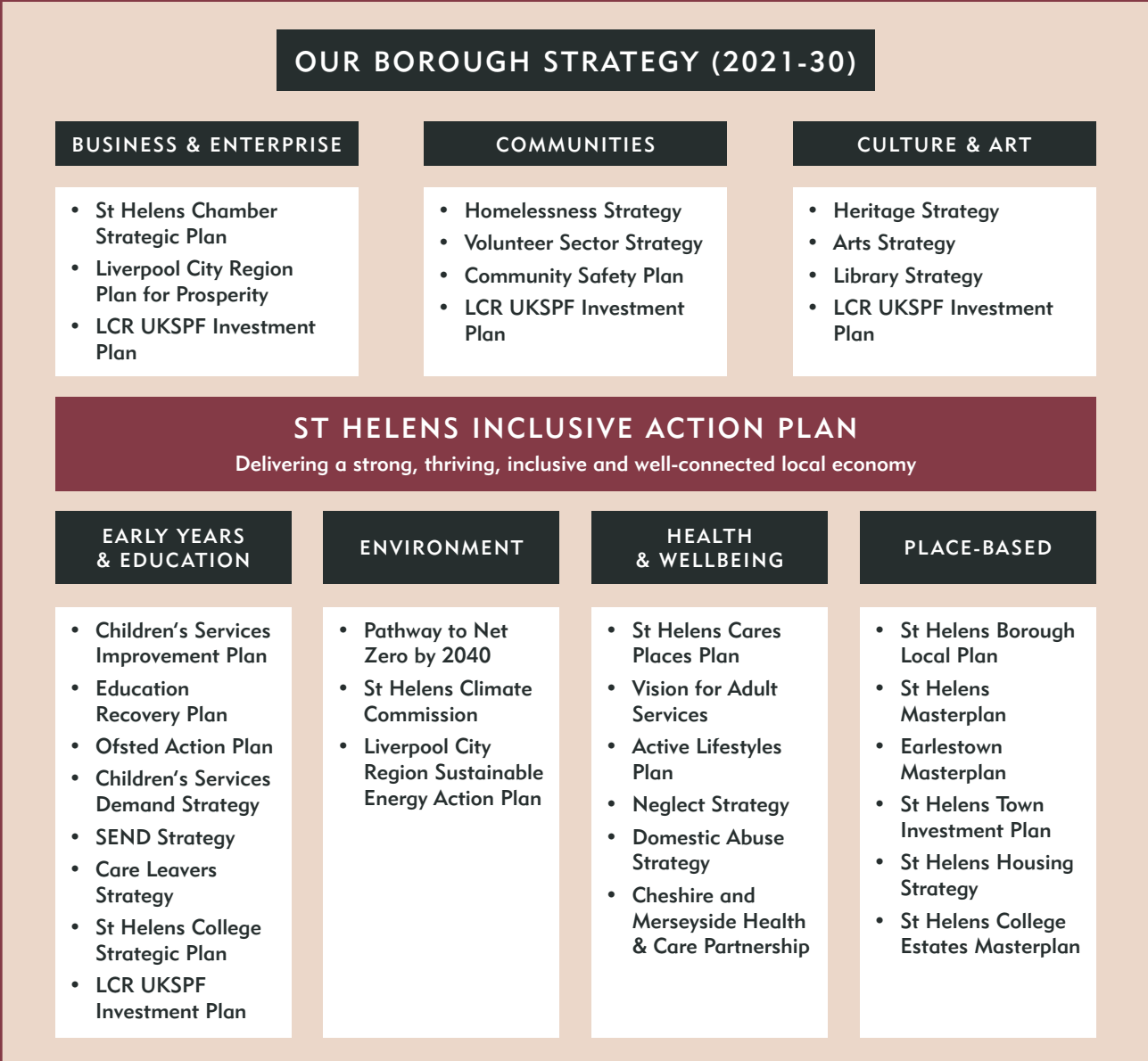
Additionally, we have set a bold ambition to: ‘MAKE ST HELENS A NET ZERO BOROUGH BY 2040.’

Partners in St Helens Borough are clear that we will:

- Ensure that regeneration and town centre renewal involve local communities, businesses, and cultural and creative groups. Everyone will benefit and our economy will grow more if we deepen engagement and collaboration in the borough. We will work with investors and developers to maximise social value and make sure the benefits we want for our residents and businesses are delivered. We will build on the success of transforming Newton-Le-Willows High Street into a bustling hub of independent businesses.
- Work together to tackle the downward pressure on wages whilst the increased cost-of-living causes even more households to struggle. This means more high-quality jobs with the opportunity to earn more for those that want to, visibility of the opportunities that are available, and access to skills and training.
- Continue to look outwards and help residents and businesses to do the same, making commuting and travel easier within and out of the borough, as more people and businesses move

- into the wider area. This should include building supply chains with businesses in the Northwest and maximising the role of regional universities.
- Continue to attract investment from UK Research and Innovation, Government departments and the private sector. Inward investment in the borough will both bring new people into the borough and create higher skilled jobs for residents now and in the future.
 - Deliver the actions in our Climate Response Plan, which sets out what we will do locally to mitigate and adapt to the risks and effects of climate change, as well as reducing emissions across the Council, residents, communities and businesses. The transition to net zero is a major opportunity for new green jobs, skills and innovation, and we are well placed to benefit from this.
- Achieving our vision means working together so that different services, activity and actions from a range of partners and groups in the borough are joined up to create momentum and have the most impact on the wealth and opportunities for our communities.

This Inclusive Growth Strategy aligns with and complements a number of other plans and strategies, as shown below:



THEMES AND PRIORITIES

This Inclusive Growth Strategy sets out new and additional actions needed over the next five years, which will help achieve its own 15-year vision to:

DELIVER A STRONG, THRIVING, INCLUSIVE AND WELL-CONNECTED LOCAL ECONOMY, WHILST MAXIMISING OUR DISTINCTIVE STRENGTHS IN INNOVATION RESEARCH, GREEN MANUFACTURING AND SUPPLY CHAINS, AND SUPPORTING THE ACTIVITIES REQUIRED TO REACH NET ZERO BY 2040.

Partners have agreed three themes that the evidence shows will have the most impact on creating and retaining wealth and opportunities in St Helens Borough for local people and improving household income, health and wellbeing. These three themes are show in the diagram below.



REGENERATION, DEVELOPMENT AND INWARD INVESTMENT

Deliver land and regeneration investments in a way that maximises economic, social and health outcomes in the borough, including higher value inward investment.

- PRIORITIES
- Create training and employment opportunities
 - Maximise supply chain opportunities for local firms
 - Curate the end and ongoing use of developments



LOCAL BUSINESS GROWTH AND NEW ENTERPRISE

Increase the number of local businesses that grow and stay in St Helens Borough, and support innovation, low carbon transition, and productivity gains.

- PRIORITIES
- Create the conditions for scale and productivity growth in our businesses
 - Encourage entrepreneurship and new enterprises to start
 - Reinvigorate businesses and the retail and leisure offer in our town centres
 - Attract new businesses to invest and locate in the borough



PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR KEY WORKER JOBS

Ensure everyone has a fair experience of work and is able to access opportunities for progression and higher pay if they want to, and maximise the economic and social potential of these sectors.

- PRIORITIES
- Improve job quality
 - Support people into work and had to progress

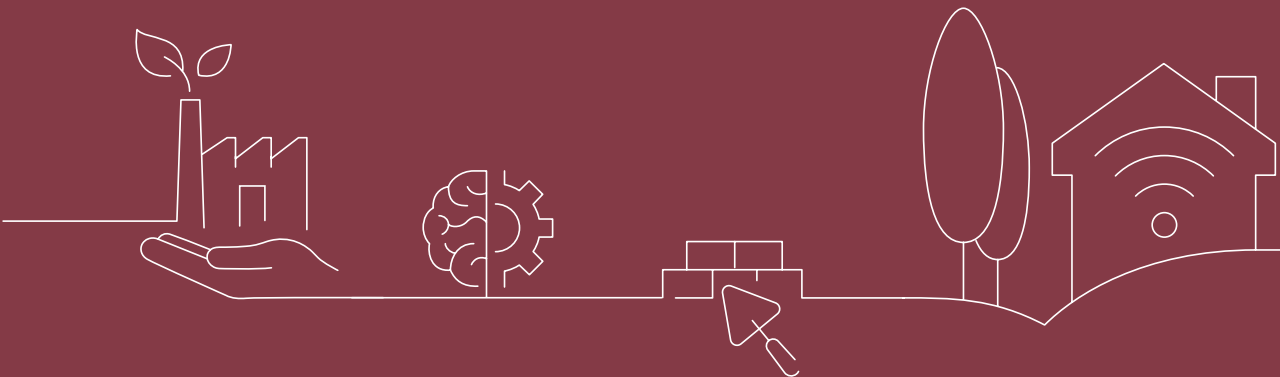
DELIVERING OUR GROWTH STRATEGY

We are setting up a new Growth Board to bring private sector and public sector partners together to help deliver our Inclusive Growth Strategy. Our local collaboration activity through the joint venture on Parkside and the English Cities Fund partnership, as well as other major infrastructure investments, means we will robustly and carefully curate these opportunities to have maximum impact for our local economy. St Helens Borough

needs the right kinds of businesses to grow and locate, the right kind of skills from its providers, and the right kind of approach and attitude from anyone investing or doing business in the borough. This is achievable, but experience elsewhere, including in nearby boroughs, shows that this curation and active management is essential for delivering the benefits that residents deserve.

OUR AIMS AND PRIORITIES

The tables on the next page summarise our aims and priorities by theme.



REGENERATION, DEVELOPMENT AND INWARD INVESTMENT

Create training and employment opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a St Helens Borough Skills Pledge to give young people and adults a clear route to good quality jobs in the borough and in the wider economy, including increased visibility of opportunities; ensuring access to a range of qualifications, such as apprenticeships, T-levels and others, focused on construction, engineering, low carbon, and health and social care; a refreshed schools and business programme; and a retraining offer for adults• Extend our employment programmes in construction and regeneration to ensure that investment in the English Cities Fund partnership, Parkside, Omega West and other sites delivers real opportunities for people, including apprentices• Design and deliver a marketing campaign to raise awareness of the opportunities available across the borough, empowering and involving teaching staff and parents in communicating these messages
Maximise supply chain opportunities for local firms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maximise the local employment and supply chain opportunities and social value from our investments for people and local businesses by negotiating and renegotiating contracts• Create a new and expanded Supply Chain Support and Local Procurement Platform to support St Helens Borough• Businesses to access new opportunities linked to our major investments and sites, as well as to identify local suppliers, increasing the amount of investment spent locally• Implement St Helens Borough Local Procurement Plan, to more than double local procurement value, with the potential to increase spend in the local economy by over £30m
Curate the end and ongoing use of developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase the availability of high-quality, flexible employment space, including industrial units for manufacturing and engineering firms in St Helens• Connect local entrepreneurs, community groups and young people with space in vacant units to enable them to hold pop-ups, events and pilot initiatives through a meanwhile use programme• Identify, create and promote new community, cultural and art space, including as part of new market facilities, working with local communities• Give a clear remit to the Growth Board to ensure investment and business growth and location decisions are focussed on the creation of higher value jobs• Deliver safer and more attractive active travel options, integrating the local transport strategy and Local Cycling and Walking Improvement Plans (LCWIP) with Towns Fund and English Cities Fund developments, aiming for 20-minute communities

LOCAL BUSINESS GROWTH AND ENTERPRISE

Create the conditions for scale and productivity growth in our businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evolve our Growth Hub offer, considering UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) funding opportunities, to provide long-term support to St Helens Borough businesses and help them grow and thrive• Explore new programmes in digital and tech adoption and low carbon transition, with a focus on SMEs in manufacturing, engineering and construction• Create new business networks aimed at securing opportunities from major developments through collaboration and joint bidding• Establish Flying Start, a scale / accelerator programme to support businesses in St Helens Borough to grow• Identify and provide grow-on space for existing businesses
Encourage entrepreneurship and new enterprises to start	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage and support the growth of socially trading organisations and community businesses to deliver social benefits for the local community, working in partnership with St Helens Voluntary and Community Action, Kindred and Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA)
Reinvigorate businesses and the retail and leisure offer in our town centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support youth entrepreneurship and enterprise through a St Helens College Enterprise Network where our borough eats, trains, drinks, plays and shops• Support cultural, art, creative and social enterprises
Attract new businesses to invest and locate in the borough	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify and agree appropriate inward investment targets with the LCRCA in manufacturing, engineering, and higher value ecommerce and logistics• Reinvigorate the St Helens Borough brand to attract inward investment and new businesses through a new place marketing platform• Explore a Business Improvement District (BID) as St Helens town centre regeneration is delivered• Create routes into work for residents by developing a St Helens Borough Recruits Programme whereby participants rotate around firms on placements, and expand awareness of career opportunities and routes within and outside of the borough

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR KEY WORKER JOBS

Improve job quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promote fair employment practices, targeting employers in health and social care, retail, hospitality and logistics, by adopting either the Liverpool City Region or a St Helens Borough Fair Employment Charter• Establish a logistics centre of excellence, focused on supporting businesses in St Helens Borough to develop and lead best practice in higher productivity, increased innovation and new technologies, and the transition to net zero/last mile, exploring options at Omega West and Parkside• Work with the LCRCA to develop a Key Worker Challenge Fund to enable businesses and organisations to develop and test innovative solutions to improve productivity and job quality• Work with the Living Wage Foundation to establish and develop a Real Living Wage campaign with the aim of becoming a Real Living Wage Borough
Support people into work and to progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore a St Helens Borough Anchor Institutions Flexi-Apprenticeship Programme, whereby young people and older workers looking to retrain can work as an apprentice on 3-month placements in different organisations• Explore options for matching residents currently out of work with vacancies in anchor institutions through a St Helens Borough Anchor Institutions Employment Programme, and support them to progress through continued support• Create new routes for residents of all ages into entry level, mid-career and managerial roles in the health system, by working with the NHS and the Health Innovation Hub: Skills Academy partners• Address barriers to entry level jobs and progression by targeting the LCRCA Adult Education Budget and Multiply funding streams

1. OUR BOROUGH TODAY



£2.7BN

GVA, declining by 7.3%
2010-19



183,200

residents with 2.6% growth
2016-21 (England 2.2%)



5,000

businesses - 98% are
micro and small businesses



59,000

jobs with - 1.7% growth
2015-20 (UK: 2.7%)

Sources: ONS GVA (2019-19); ONS Census (2016-21); ONS Business Counts (2021); ONS Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) (2015-19)

STRATEGICALLY LOCATED

St Helens Borough is a well-connected borough at the heart of the Northwest, located between two major cities, Liverpool and Manchester. Our strategic location provides excellent connections to and from our borough with direct links to the M62 and M6, and via rail. We are a short distance from two international airports and the Port of Liverpool and are near many excellent further education

colleges and universities in the region. Historically our economy has been quite inward facing, but our central location brings increasing opportunities for businesses and residents both in and outside of the borough. It is an attractive semi-rural place to live, work, visit and invest, with over half of our land being green belt.



4.3M

employees within
a 1-hour drive



35M

people within
a 4-hour drive



30 MIN

drive to the
Port of Liverpool



40 MIN

drive to
Manchester

Sources: St Helens Town Investment Plan (2021)



A PLACE THAT MAKES WITH INDUSTRIAL SKILLS AND HERITAGE

Our heritage is grounded in our world-famous glass making industry, chemical production, pharmaceuticals, canals, railways and coal mining. By the mid-twentieth century, there were 30,000 glass workers and 20,000 miners, and thousands more in other industries. We were home to major employers, including Pilkington Glass, founded in 1826, Beechams, the Vulcan Works and the Daglish Foundry. These industries were the engine of the borough and national economy and offered many generations of St Helens Borough residents lifelong and lasting work.

St Helens Borough, like many similar areas, deindustrialised over the latter half of the 20th century, leading to significant economic restructuring towards a service-based economy

and from large industry to SMEs. It also led to a reduction in jobs with 25% of jobs in Merseyside lost between 1981 and 1996 and a 61% decrease in manufacturing jobs. St Helens Borough has also experienced low and declining productivity, resulting in a contracting economy over the last decade.

St Helens Borough today has a distinctive offer as a place that makes. We are strategically located between two large cities, have space for manufacturing and production in and around St Helens town centre, and have recently attracted research and development (R&D) investment in Glass Futures. We have a large advanced manufacturing and engineering sector, which is home to high-value, innovative firms, including in low carbon, materials science, metals and glass.



£322M

manufacturing sector, making up 12% of total GVA



300

manufacturing businesses and 5,500 manufacturing jobs



£43,264

GVA per job, below the Liverpool City Region average (£49,143)



31,000

jobs in health and social care, retail, hospitality and logistics

Sources: ONS GVA (2019); St Helens Town Investment Plan (2021); ONS BRES (2019)





STRONG LOCAL IDENTITY AND SENSE OF PRIDE

We have been a rugby league borough since 1873 when our world-famous and highly successful team Saints was formed. There is pride both in the industrial history and cultural heritage of the borough, with our listed buildings and conservation areas, and our modern communities. Our close-knit local communities care about each other and their place and want a good future for it. There is a strong entrepreneurial, innovative and community spirit - manifested in both the response to the pandemic through St Helens Together and levels of business creation.

But too many of our resident's face barriers to skills and work and have challenges around wage levels in the context of the rising cost-of-living. For the resilience, health and success of our communities going forward, we need to ensure that residents are aware of and have access to opportunities within and outside of the borough, and that we improve the attainment and work readiness of our school and college leavers.



3 IN 10

jobs earn below the Real Living Wage



1 IN 4

neighbourhoods in most deprived 10% of the country



81.5%

neighbourhoods are 30% worst performing for health in England



27.3%

residents are economically inactive but want a job (national: 19.8%)

Source: ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (2020); MHCLG Index of Multiple Deprivation (2019); ONS Annual Population Survey (2021)

²ONS Annual Employment Survey in Turok, I. and Edge, N. (1999) The jobs gap in Britain's cities: Employment loss and labour market consequences. JRF.

MAJOR INVESTMENT HAPPENING

Our borough is a place of enormous potential. We will benefit from significant long-term investment over the coming years that include the following non-exhaustive list:

English Cities Fund	<p>A 20-year partnership agreement to regenerate Earlestown and St Helens town centres. In St Helens town centre, this includes a new and extended bus station, creation of the new Gamble Square, 50,000 sq. ft of modern offices, new apartments and townhouses, a new destination market hall, homes, retail units, a new hotel, and high quality, aspirational public realm. This work supports other investments including repurposing the Gamble Building as a library, archive and creative hub, and enhancing the World of Glass visitor attraction.</p> <p>The regeneration of Earlestown will create an enhanced historic market square and facilities, flexible event space, landscape and public realm improvements, restoration of the Town Hall, and rail station enhancements.</p>
Parkside - Liverpool City Region Freeport	<p>The regeneration of the former Parkside Colliery will see the 350-acre site transformed into an employment park of regional and national significance with exceptional connectivity to the M6 via the new Parkside Link Road and to both freight and passenger rail infrastructure. Recognised in the recently adopted St Helens Borough Local Plan 2022-2037, this is the largest Freeport site in the Liverpool City Region.</p> <p>Parkside West is being developed by the Parkside Regeneration LLP, a joint venture between St Helens Borough Council and the developer Langtree. Phase 1 includes 1m sq. ft of logistic employment floorspace, supported by landscaping and public space creation, providing an estimated 1,330 jobs. There are further phases of development planned that will deliver a further 5.2m sq. ft of employment space focusing on the advanced manufacturing sector. A crucial element of future development is the inclusion of a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange on Parkside East.</p>
Omega West	<p>An approved scheme between Homes England and Omega Warrington/St Helens for a three-phase development, creating over 2,500 jobs. This includes unit one, an 830,000 sq. ft logistics hub for TJ Morris; unit two, a 308,905 sq. ft logistics warehouse, admin and transport office; and unit three, which will be 505,409 sq. ft in size.</p>
Cowley Hill Works	<p>The largest brownfield allocation in the St Helens Borough Local Plan, catalysing regeneration and delivering circa 1,100 houses. It will create 250 jobs throughout the lifetime of the project and generate £75m GVA.</p>
Moss Nook Urban Village	<p>A substantial brownfield site with plans for over 800 homes, improved connectivity into St Helens town centre, public transport links, and pedestrian and cycle routes.</p>

Bold Forest Garden Suburb	This will deliver approximately 3,000 dwellings along with associated infrastructure, including extended schools, primary care, local facilities and strategic infrastructure. The site, allocated in the St Helens Borough Local Plan, presents an opportunity to bring about a step change in the housing market, providing aspirational new homes to meet needs in the local area. This includes the full range of family homes and affordable housing.
Glass Futures Global Centre of Excellence	£54m of investment into the facility which will demonstrate innovative technologies and benchmark low carbon fuels. This investment demonstrates St Helens Borough as a centre of innovation where Glass Futures is creating a new glassmaking Pilot Plant facility in St Helens town to provide a global centre of excellence for the sustainable manufacture of glass.
Digital Infrastructure	The £30m CityFibre project will deliver borough-wide full fibre connectivity. Our Town Deal aims to build on the opportunity of the LCR Connect project, which will be completed in 2023, deliver digital infrastructure across the Towns Fund area and borough wide. The creation and maintenance of LCR-wide digital infrastructure will provide additional skills and job opportunities at all levels.
Connected Places	An overarching programme for St Helens town centre which involves enhancements to key public transport nodes, including a new bus station, public realm upgrades to St Helens Central station, creation of enhanced permeability, way-finding and public realm across St Helens town centre, and provision of pedestrian and cycle connections traversing the St Helens Linkway. This aims to improve the travel options for all members of the community, making the borough more accessible overall.

Other transformational investments include the St Helens College Estates Master Plan, our status as one of 24 places prioritised for £1.5m Arts Council England Levelling Up Arts and Culture Funding, and our status as an Educational Investment Area.

These investments will lever in additional private sector investment into facilities, sites and premises, as businesses respond to the scale and potential generated by these programmes. Together the major schemes and the aggregated private development will transform our borough.

OUR GOAL IS TO MAXIMISE THE IMPACT FROM THESE INVESTMENTS BY LINKING TOGETHER THE INVESTMENTS AND TAKING A NEW APPROACH TO GROW AND RETAIN WEALTH LOCALLY.

2. OUR APPROACH

Our approach to this Inclusive Growth Strategy is grounded in our thorough understanding of the St Helens Borough economy, which we have used to inform our themes. We have also considered how to link our investment opportunities to communities and ensure that investment and actions are targeted to benefit those of our residents who need it most.

OUR THEMES

GROWING AND RETAINING VALUE LOCALLY IS CORE TO ACHIEVING A STRONGER, THRIVING, INCLUSIVE AND WELL-CONNECTED LOCAL ECONOMY IN ST HELENS BOROUGH.

Given the structural challenges in our economy and our major opportunities, we have focused on three themes where we will have most impact on creating and retaining wealth and opportunities in St Helens Borough; linking these to local people, and improving household income, health and wellbeing. The following diagram shows the links between the future opportunities that we have, the structural challenges in our economy from our review of the evidence, and the priorities that we have agreed as a partnership.



OPPORTUNITIES

MAJOR INVESTMENTS

Through the English Cities Fund, Parkside and Omega West. Potential to improve job quality and wages, enhance experience and perception of town centres, and link to the wider regional economy and national and global markets.

A PLACE THAT MAKES AND INNOVATES

Distinctive offer around location, existing strengths, space in St Helens town centre and recent R&D investment. Grow value and productivity, supporting businesses to stay and grow and attracting new ones to invest and locate here.

A NEW APPROACH TO HIGH EMPLOYMENT SECTORS

Over half of jobs are in four sectors, providing essential services for our communities and economy. Improving job quality, pathways and progression will benefit the income, health and wellbeing of many working age residents.

STRUCTURAL CHALLENGES

ECONOMIC OUTPUT AND PRODUCTIVITY DECLINE

A reduction in traditional industrial jobs, such as glass and coal, and a shift towards a service-based economy with most jobs in health and social care, retail and hospitality. A growing logistics sector due to our strategic location.

LOW SKILLS LEVEL, HIGH EMPLOYMENT AND LOW WAGES

There is low school attainment and many residents lack the skills businesses need. Employment rates are high, but low wages mean there are high levels of deprivation and many households are vulnerable to the rising cost of living.

LOW DISPOSABLE INCOME AND A LACK OF HIGH VALUE OFFER

This is caused by low wages and high levels of deprivation, resulting in low demand for the current low value leisure and retail offer. Creating a vicious cycle for town centres with lower footfall and therefore higher vacancies.

THEMES

REGENERATION, DEVELOPMENT AND INWARD INVESTMENT

Deliver land and regeneration investments in a way that maximises economic, social and health outcomes in the borough, including higher value inward investment.

LOW BUSINESS GROWTH AND ENTERPRISE

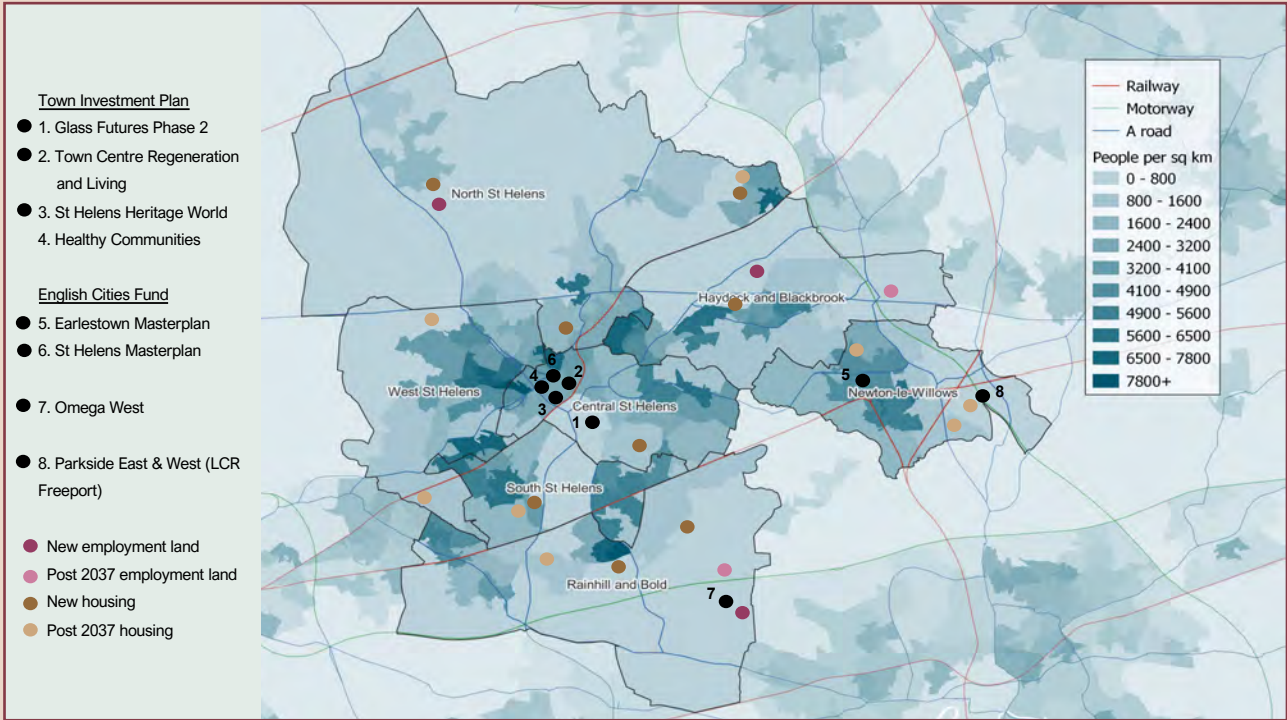
Increase the number of local business that grow and stay in St Helens Borough, and support innovation, low carbon transition and productivity gains.

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR KEY WORKER JOBS

Ensure everyone has a fair experience of work and is able to access opportunities for progression and higher pay if they want to, and maximise the economic and social potential of these sectors.

LINKING OUR INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES TO COMMUNITIES

We will ensure our residents and businesses contribute to and benefit from our investment opportunities by joining up our investments, integrating activity and better linking our major developments (shown in the map below) to the places where people live and businesses operate.



We will achieve this by delivering actions that connect our communities, neighbourhoods and local businesses to our investment opportunities within St Helens Borough, and opportunities in the city region and wider Northwest.

ST HELENS INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES	COMMUNITIES & NEIGHBOURHOODS AND LOCAL BUSINESSES	LIVERPOOL CITY REGION & WIDER NORTH WEST OPPORTUNITIES
NEW EMPLOYMENT, ART AND CULTURAL SPACE		
NEW AND EXPANDED EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS PROGRAMMES		
SUPPLY CHAIN OPPORTUNITIES FROM NEW CONTRACTS AND DEVELOPMENTS		
NEW BUSINESS SUPPORT HUBS AND NETWORKS		
INWARD INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND GROWTH PROGRAMMES		
SAFER AND MORE ATTRACTIVE PUBLIC AND ACTIVE TRAVEL OPTIONS		

TARGETING INVESTMENT AND ACTIONS ON THOSE THAT NEED IT MOST

The actions in this Inclusive Growth Strategy are designed to help those that need it most, whilst growing our economy and infrastructure in ways that mean everyone can benefit:

1. RESIDENTS ON LOW WAGES

Many of our households are facing acute pressures from the cost-of-living crisis, particularly for those earning below the Real Living Wage. We have a higher proportion of employee jobs earning below this level in the borough compared to the regional and national average. The Real Living Wage is calculated based on the real cost-of-living, so individuals earning below this threshold may have struggled to meet their day-to-day expenses even prior to the current high levels of inflation. Within

the borough, female employee jobs (35%) are more likely to be paid the Real Living Wage than male employee jobs (23%), and 61.2% of part-time employee jobs are paid below this threshold, compared to 19.8% of full-time employee jobs.

We will ensure residents have the access to training options and career advice, and higher and fair pay both through job creation and by encouraging a shift in employment practices.

2. RESIDENTS OUT OF WORK DUE TO ILL-HEALTH

Households with people out of work are often amongst those most vulnerable or at the highest risk of poverty. This can also impact health and wellbeing, and school attainment. St Helens Borough has high levels of employment and economic engagement, similar to the national average; however, there are relatively high levels of residents out of work due to ill-health at around

30%, compared to 24.8% nationally. Often residents leave the labour market due to poor health in their 50s and in St Helens Borough, 28.8% of 50-64 year olds are economically inactive, which is slightly higher than the national average (26.9%).

We will create skills and employment pathways to connect residents to existing and new job opportunities inside and outside of the borough.

3. YOUNG ADULTS NOT IN WORK

For our young adults, being out of work can have a severe effect on physical and mental health and can increase the likelihood of long-term unemployment or low wages. Whilst we have lower than average numbers of young people who are not in education, employment or training, the transition into longer-term employment is not working for too many people

- St Helens Borough has higher than average levels of unemployment amongst young adults aged 20-24 at 13.9%, compared to the national average of 9.5%.

We will ensure that young adults are aware of the opportunities available locally and are able to access these through training and employment pathways.



The table below sets out the number of people in St Helens Borough in each target group.³
The number of people in these groups represent a snapshot at a point in time.

GROUP	INDICATOR	NO. IN ST HELENS BOROUGH	PROPORTION IN:		
			ST HELENS BOROUGH	NORTHWEST	UK
RESIDENTS ON LOW WAGES	Employee jobs earning below the Living Wage Foundation Real Living Wage	14,000	29.1%	21.3%	20.2%
RESIDENTS OUT OF WORK DUE TO ILL HEALTH	Residents economically inactive due to long-term sickness	7,000	30.7%	27.5%	24.8%
YOUNG ADULTS NOT IN WORK	Residents aged 20-24 who are unemployed	1,500	13.9%	7.5%	9.5%

³Real Living Wage: ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (2020) using the Living Wage Foundation Real Living Wage of £9.50 (outside of London); economic inactivity and unemployment rate (20-24 year olds): ONS Annual Population Survey (Jan to Dec 2021); NEETs: Department for Education (2021). Note, data is missing for 16-19 unemployment rate.



3. OUR SKILLS STRATEGY

Creating and helping people access new skills at all ages is integral to developing a strong, thriving, inclusive and well-connected local economy, raising wages, increasing productivity and supporting business growth. We need to increase awareness and understanding of the opportunities that exist inside and outside of the borough, ensure that residents have access to the right skills that local and regional businesses need, and help residents create new enterprises. This will ensure that residents, both as young adults and throughout their lives, are connected to opportunities, and are able to access progression and higher pay if they want to.

HIGH DEMAND FOR TECHNICAL AND HIGHER-LEVEL SKILLS IN OUR BUSINESSES

Historically there have been lower skills levels in the borough relative to other parts of the country. Educational attainment at Key Stage 2 is in line with the regional and national average, but performance at Key Stage 4 is below average. There are lower levels of 16-17 year olds not in education, employment or training (NEET) than the regional and national average, but despite a similar proportion of young people continuing into either education, an apprenticeship or work post-18, some young people face challenges during this transition period, resulting in higher than average levels of unemployment amongst young adults aged 20-24 years old. Fewer residents than the regional and national average have higher-level skills, equivalent to a university degree or higher, and a lower proportion of 18 year olds continue in education than the Northwest average.



44.5

average score for KS4 in St Helens compared to 45.5 regionally and 46.8 nationally



3.4%

of 16/17 year olds are known to be NEET compared to 2.8% in England



36.5%

of working age residents have qualifications at NVQ L4 compared to 43.0% in the UK



73%

of the workforce received in-work training in the last 12 months compared to 61% in England

There is high demand amongst our business base for technical and higher-level skills in manufacturing and engineering, construction, and health and social care. Our employers need to continue to invest in upskilling their workforce, building on their strong track record with more staff receiving on the job training in St Helens Borough than the national average.

Our further education institutions and training providers, including St Helens College, Carmel College, University Centre St Helens (which works in partnership with Liverpool John Moores University, University of Chester and University of Central Lancashire), St Helens Chamber and others are working to improve skills levels across the borough. They are actively responding to local skills demand by tailoring their offer and developing an innovative and agile curriculum that meets the needs of students and communities. We have the potential to strengthen the links between the many excellent regional universities and our schools and colleges to raise skills levels and promote opportunities to young people.

OUR SKILLS PRIORITIES

We will build on the work of further education institutions and training providers and complement the detailed set of actions in the Liverpool City Region Skills Action Plan and the UKSPF Investment Plan, to deliver an integrated approach to skills that is tailored to the specific needs and opportunities across our three themes. We will:

- Connect residents to employment opportunities across the lifetime of our major regeneration projects and developments
- Ensure our residents have the skills and employment pathways to contribute to the growth of our local businesses and to begin new enterprises
- Support people into work and to progress, particularly in public and private sector key worker jobs
- Work collaboratively as a Local Skills Board to address these issues and develop and appropriate skills offer to support residents and businesses to invest and grow

Sources: KS4 - Department for Education (2020); NEETs – Department for Education (2021); ONS Annual Population Survey (2020); Employer Skills Survey (2019)

OUR SKILLS ACTION

- **A new St Helens Borough Skills Pledge.** Giving young people and adults a clear route to good quality jobs in St Helens Borough and in the wider economy, through a new offer that is responsive to the needs and demand of our business base. This will include increasing visibility of opportunities available inside and outside of the borough; ensuring access to a range of qualifications, such as apprenticeships, T-levels and others, focused on construction, engineering, low carbon, and health and social care; a refreshed schools and business programme, and a retraining offer for adults. This will complement UKSPF funded activity to equip residents with green and digital skills, support retraining for those in high carbon sectors.
- **Routes into work in our major sites.** Extending our successful employment programmes in construction and regeneration, and increasing awareness of such opportunities, to ensure that investment in the English Cities Fund partnership, Parkside, Omega West and other sites delivers real opportunities for people, including apprentices. This aligns with employment support for inactive people through UKSPF.
- **A marketing campaign to raise awareness of training and employment opportunities across the borough.** This will empower and involve teaching staff and parents in communicating these messages.
- **A new St Helens College Enterprise Network.** This will support youth entrepreneurship and enterprise in the Education and Entertainment Zone to help young people and adults set up businesses in the part of the borough where our borough eats, trains, drinks, plays and shops.
- **A new St Helens Borough Recruits Programme.** Creating routes into work for residents by developing a programme whereby participants rotate around firms on placements and expand awareness of career opportunities and routes within and outside of the borough.
- **A St Helens Borough Anchor Institutions Flexi-Apprenticeship Programme** providing rotating 3-month placements and **a wider Employment Programme** for other vacancies in our anchor institutions.
- **New routes into work.** Working with the NHS and the Health Innovation Hub: Skills Academy partners to create managerial pathways and training, and support people into entry level, mid-career and managerial roles in the health system.
- **Targeted Adult Education Budget and Multiply programmes.** Working with LCRCA to ensure that these programmes address barriers to entry level jobs and progression for St Helens Borough residents.



Student Services

4. REGENERATION, DEVELOPMENT AND INWARD INVESTMENT

Our borough has land and space with significant long-term investment planned through the English Cities Fund, Parkside and Omega West. We will work with investors, developers and businesses, and implement targeted interventions to ensure that these investments have a positive and transformational impact on the local economy and communities, for instance by ensuring contracts go to local companies and that local people benefit from new job opportunities. Improvements to our borough’s town centres, the availability and quality of housing and connectivity will both benefit existing residents and attract new talent to the borough.

WE WILL DELIVER LAND AND REGENERATION INVESTMENTS IN A WAY THAT MAXIMISES ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND HEALTH OUTCOMES IN THE BOROUGH, INCLUDING HIGHER VALUE INWARD INVESTMENT BY:

- CREATING TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES
- MAXIMISING SUPPLY CHAIN OPPORTUNITIES FOR LOCAL FIRMS
- CURATING THE END AND ONGOING USE OF DEVELOPMENTS

PRIORITIES	AIMS
CREATE TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a St Helens Borough Skills Pledge to give young people and adults a clear route to good quality jobs in the borough and in the wider economy, including increased visibility of opportunities; ensuring access to a range of qualifications, such as apprenticeships, T-levels and others, focused on construction, engineering, low carbon and health and social care; a refreshed schools and business programme; and a retraining offer for adults• Extend our employment programmes in construction and regeneration to ensure that investment in Parkside, Omega West and other sites delivers real opportunities for people, including apprentices• Design and deliver a marketing campaign to raise awareness of the opportunities available across the borough, empowering and involving teaching staff and parents in communicating these messages
MAXIMISE SUPPLY CHAIN OPPORTUNITIES FOR LOCAL FIRMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maximise the local employment and supply chain opportunities and social value from our investments for people and local businesses by negotiating and renegotiating contracts• Create a new and expanded Supply Chain Support and Local Procurement Platform to support businesses in the borough to access new opportunities linked to our major investments and sites, as well as to identify local suppliers, increasing the amount of investment spent locally• Implement St Helens Borough Local Procurement Plan, to more than double local procurement value, with the potential to increase spend in the local economy by over £30m
CURATE THE END AND ONGOING USE OF DEVELOPMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase the availability of high-quality, flexible employment space, including industrial units for manufacturing and engineering firms in St Helens town centre• Connect local entrepreneurs, community groups and young people with space in vacant units to enable them to hold pop-ups, events and pilot initiatives through a meanwhile use programme• Identify, create and promote new community, cultural and art space, including as part of new market facilities, collaborating with local communities• Give a clear remit to the Growth Board to ensure investment and business growth and location decisions are focussed on the creation of higher value jobs• Deliver safer and more attractive active travel options, integrating the local transport strategy and LCWIP with Towns Fund and English Cities Fund developments, aiming for 20-minute communities



5. LOCAL BUSINESS GROWTH AND ENTERPRISE

St Helens Borough has high-value firms in manufacturing and engineering, low carbon, materials science, metals and glass. Our aim is to grow these strengths, through supporting our existing businesses to grow and succeed, and attracting high value, high quality new businesses to our borough. We have a distinctive offer based on our strategic location, industrial space in and around St Helens town centre and recent R&D investment. The transition to net zero is a major opportunity for our businesses to pivot to modern

technologies, innovate and create new green jobs for residents.

To create value locally, we need to invest in the capacity of our local businesses and enable them to fulfil their potential, whilst encouraging businesses to locate in the borough through inward investment. This will complement UKSPF funded activity at the Liverpool City Region level, including strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems and supporting local level innovation and R&D.

WE WILL INCREASE THE NUMBER OF LOCAL BUSINESSES THAT GROW AND STAY IN ST HELENS BOROUGH, AND SUPPORT INNOVATION, LOW CARBON TRANSITION AND PRODUCTIVITY GAINS BY:

- CREATING THE CONDITIONS FOR SCALE AND PRODUCTIVITY GROWTH IN OUR BUSINESSES
- ENCOURAGING ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND NEW ENTERPRISES TO START
- REINVIGORATING BUSINESSES AND THE RETAIL AND LEISURE OFFER IN OUR TOWN CENTRES
- ATTRACTING NEW BUSINESSES TO INVEST AND LOCATE IN THE BOROUGH

PRIORITIES	AIMS
CREATE THE CONDITIONS FOR SCALE AND PRODUCTIVITY GROWTH IN OUR BUSINESSES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evolve our Growth Hub offer, considering UKSPF funding opportunities, to provide long-term support to St Helens Borough businesses and help them grow and thrive• Explore new programmes in digital and tech adoption and low carbon transition, with a focus on SMEs in manufacturing, engineering and construction• Create new business networks aimed at securing opportunities from major developments through collaboration and joint bidding• Establish Flying Start, a scale / accelerator programme to support businesses in St Helens Borough to grow• Identify and provide grow-on space for existing businesses
ENCOURAGE ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND NEW ENTERPRISES TO START	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage and support the growth of socially trading organisations and community businesses to deliver social benefits for the local community, working in partnership with St Helens Voluntary and Community Action, Kindred and LCRCA
REINVIGORATE BUSINESSES AND THE RETAIL AND LEISURE OFFER IN OUR TOWN CENTRES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support youth entrepreneurship and enterprise through a St Helens College Enterprise Network where our borough eats, trains, drinks, plays and shops• Support cultural, art, creative and social enterprises
ATTRACT NEW BUSINESSES TO INVEST AND LOCATE IN THE BOROUGH	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify and agree appropriate inward investment targets with LCRCA in manufacturing, engineering, and higher value ecommerce and logistics• Reinvigorate the St Helens Borough brand to attract inward investment and new businesses through a new place marketing platform• Explore a BID as St Helens town centre regeneration is delivered• Create routes into work for residents by developing a St Helens Borough Recruits Programme whereby participants rotate around firms on placements, and expand awareness of career opportunities and routes within and outside of the borough

6. PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR KEY WORKER JOBS

Over half the jobs in St Helens Borough are in health and social care, retail, hospitality, and logistics. These are vital to the functioning of our economy and communities, and are large employers, offering a range of jobs from entry level through to managerial. But for too many people, jobs in these sectors are often characterised by low wages and few opportunities for progression and development. We have an opportunity to use our collective agency as a group of anchor institutions and build on existing programmes, such as the Liverpool City Region Fair Employment Charter to improve job security, quality, employment and progression. There is also the potential as anchor

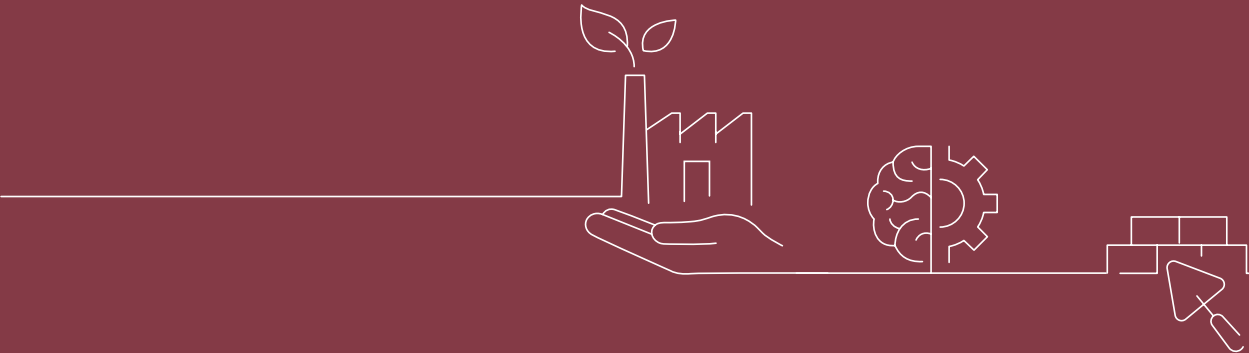
institutions to empower key workers as innovators and support creative approaches to public service delivery.

To ensure we maximise these opportunities, we are exploring schemes and programmes established elsewhere such as the Greater Manchester Foundation Economy Programme Challenge Fund, which aims to create higher pay and better jobs in the city region and reduce economic inequality while increasing productive investment. Similarly, the North Ayrshire Community Wealth Building Anchor Charter aims to create a more diverse business base while ensuring wealth is locally owned and improving collective wellbeing.

WE WANT EVERYONE TO HAVE A FAIR EXPERIENCE OF WORK AND BE ABLE TO ACCESS OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROGRESSION AND HIGHER PAY IF THEY WANT TO, AND WILL MAXIMISE THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL POTENTIAL OF JOBS IN THESE SECTORS BY:

- IMPROVING JOB QUALITY
- SUPPORTING PEOPLE INTO WORK AND TO PROGRESS

PRIORITIES	AIMS
IMPROVE JOB QUALITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote fair employment practices, targeting employers in health and social care, retail, hospitality and logistics, by adopting either the Liverpool City Region or a St Helens Borough Fair Employment Charter • Establish a logistics centre of excellence, focused on supporting businesses in St Helens Borough to develop and lead best practice in higher productivity, increased innovation and new technologies, and the transition to net zero/last mile, exploring options at Omega West and Parkside • Work with LCRCA to develop a Key Worker Challenge Fund to enable businesses and organisations to develop and test innovative solutions to improve productivity and job quality • Work with the Living Wage Foundation to establish and develop a Real Living Wage campaign with the aim of becoming a Real Living Wage Borough
SUPPORT PEOPLE INTO WORK AND TO PROGRESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore a St Helens Borough Anchor Institutions Flexi-Apprenticeship Programme, whereby young people and older workers looking to retrain can work as an apprentice on 3-month placements in different organisations • Explore options for matching residents currently out of work with vacancies in anchor institutions through a St Helens Borough Anchor Institutions Employment Programme, and support them to progress through continued support • Create new routes for residents of all ages and abilities into entry level, mid-career and managerial roles in the health system, by working with the NHS and the Health Innovation Hub: Skills Academy partners • Address barriers to entry level jobs and progression by targeting the LCRCA Adult Education Budget and Multiply funding streams



7. IMPLEMENTATION

Our Inclusive Growth Strategy has set out a clear vision, aims and priorities to further increase local wealth and the value of opportunities available to residents - and to retain and grow that wealth in the local economy. An active, strong partnership between local businesses, skills providers, community and voluntary groups and St Helens Borough Council will be vital in making it happen.

OUR GROWTH BOARD

We are setting up a new Growth Board that will oversee implementation of the core growth elements of this Inclusive Growth Strategy. It will provide a coherent and collective voice for growth-based activity in our borough, co-ordinating partnership activity to deliver the Borough Strategy, support the delivery of the Local Plan and implementation of this Inclusive Growth Strategy.

It will also bring private sector and public sector partners together to deliver other inclusive growth opportunities for St Helens Borough. This partnership and integration of effort will be needed to deploy our collective networks and assets available to deliver this Inclusive Growth Strategy.



DELIVERY PLANS

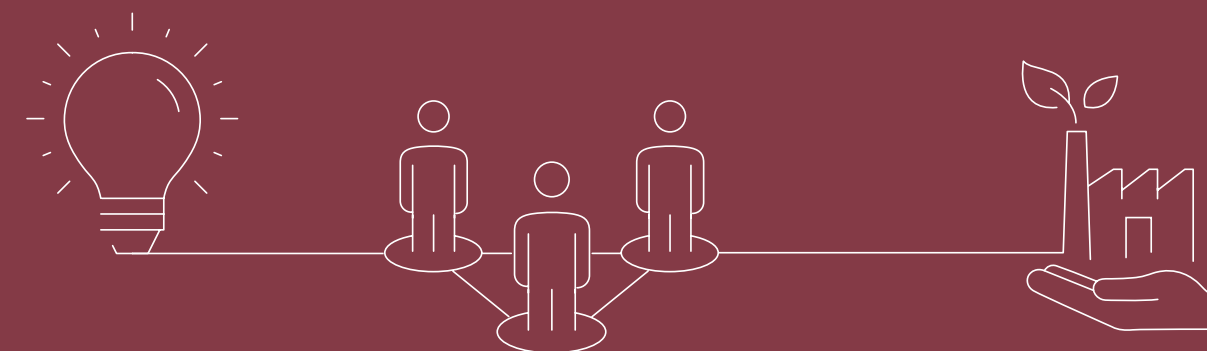
We have developed high-level delivery plans for each of our thematic areas. Under each priority, we have a set of aims, which include:

- **Actions** - specific actions for either one or multiple organisations.
- **A rationale** - linking back to our vision and ambition.
- **Lead People** - either one organisation or a group.
- **Outcomes to be achieved** - setting out the potential benefits for our communities and local economy.
- **Deliverability status assessment** - providing a three-scale RAG status to assess the deliverability of the action, including funding, capacity, approvals (e.g. planning permission)

and interdependencies with other actions. Where possible we will look to use existing resources and UKSPF, whilst continuing to attract funding from UK Research and Innovation and Government departments, and leverage investment from the private sector.

- **Dependencies** - identifying where funding, capacity and approvals need to be secured, or where interdependencies with other actions need to be considered.
- **Timescales** - for delivery of the priorities and actions.

More detailed delivery plans with clear timelines and milestones will be developed as part of the implementation of our Inclusive Growth Strategy.



REGENERATION, DEVELOPMENT AND INWARD INVESTMENT

PRIORITY	AIM	ACTIONS	RATIONALE	LEAD PEOPLE	OUTCOMES TO BE ACHIEVED	DELIVERABILITY STATUS ASSESSMENT	DEPENDENCIES	TIMESCALES
Create training and employment opportunities	Develop a St Helens Borough Skills Pledge to give young people and adults a clear route to good quality jobs in the borough and in the wider economy, including increased visibility of opportunities; ensuring access to a range of qualifications, such as apprenticeships, T-levels and others, focused on construction, engineering, low carbon and health and social care; a refreshed schools and business programme; and a retraining offer for adults.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> St Helens College (SHC), St Helens Borough Council (SHBC) and St Helens Chamber (SHCh) to explore Skills Pledge and business appetite All partners to work with businesses in target sectors to identify appetite for new / expanded programmes SHCh to develop St Helens Jobs website and Communications Strategy 	Ensure that young people and adults are equipped with the skills to access and benefit from opportunities linked to regeneration and new developments, and in high demand sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC Assistant Director - Education & Learning SHCh Head of Career Development SHC Principal Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) Executive Director - Investment and Delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More local people developing skills and taking jobs in local firms Value created and retained in the local economy Existing work to link people to skills and jobs built upon 	Funding ● Capacity ● Approvals ● Interdependencies ●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UKSPF funding Local delivery capacity Communication with communities 	Immediate development activity from 2023 onwards
	Extend our employment programmes in construction and regeneration to ensure that investment in the English Cities Fund, Parkside, Omega West and other sites delivers real opportunities for people, including apprentices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC to explore extending Ways to Work programme to target employment opportunities in construction and regeneration Partnership working with National Careers Service and Adult Education Budget (SHCh and LCRCA) 	Better connect young people and adults to job opportunities linked to regeneration and new developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC Assistant Director - Property & Economy SHBC Assistant Director - Regeneration & Planning SHBC Assistant Director - Education & Learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More local people moving into employment or higher paid employment Higher earnings levels 	Funding ● Capacity ● Approvals ● Interdependencies ●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UKSPF funding Developer social value obligations Local delivery capacity and progress at sites Funding for outreach communities Established developer supply chains 	Activity from 2023 for two years

PRIORITY	AIM	ACTIONS	RATIONALE	LEAD PEOPLE	OUTCOMES TO BE ACHIEVED	DELIVERABILITY STATUS ASSESSMENT	DEPENDENCIES	TIMESCALES
Create training and employment opportunities	Design and deliver a marketing campaign to raise awareness of the opportunities available across the borough, empowering and involving teaching staff and parents in communicating these messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC to explore the design of a marketing campaign to target residents and showcase education/career opportunities SHBC to collaborate with other partners to deliver and promote the campaign 	Increase awareness and understanding of opportunities to enable residents to make informed decisions about their training and career pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC Head of Economy SHBC Head of Regeneration SHBC Head of Communications, Engagement and Reputation Management SHBC Assistant Director - Education & Learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More local people moving into education or employment More local people developing skills and taking jobs in local firms 	Funding ● Capacity ● Approvals ● Interdependencies ●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human resource capacity requiring prioritisation 	Immediate activity from 2023 onwards
Maximise supply chain opportunities for local firms	Maximise the local employment and supply chain opportunities and social value from our investments for people and local businesses by negotiating and renegotiating contracts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC to implement new Social Value Policy SHBC to review existing contracts and further integrate social value into all new procurement processes, and to collaborate with partners through the Growth Board to encourage others to do the same 	Maximise the benefits to local communities and businesses from regeneration and new developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC Assistant Director - commercialisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More local people taking construction jobs Local firms benefitting from contracts Value created and retained in the local economy 	Funding ● Capacity ● Approvals ● Interdependencies ●	No dependencies	Immediate activity from 2023 onwards

PRIORITY	AIM	ACTIONS	RATIONALE	LEAD PEOPLE	OUTCOMES TO BE ACHIEVED	DELIVERABILITY STATUS ASSESSMENT	DEPENDENCIES	TIMESCALES
Maximise supply chain opportunities for local firms	Create a new and expanded Supply Chain Support and Local Procurement Platform to support businesses in the borough to access new opportunities linked to our major investments and sites, as well as to identify local suppliers, increasing the amount of investment spent locally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC and Chamber to explore appetite and funding availability amongst local businesses for a new and expanded supply chain support and local procurement platform 	Support businesses to benefit from major investment programmes in St Helens Borough, contribute to carbon reduction targets by shortening supply chains and the distance travelled of materials and staff, and retain spend locally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHCh Head of Business Services SHBC Assistant Director - ommercialisation SHBC - Head of Economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stronger local supply chains Lower carbon emissions More scale ups and growing businesses Job opportunities for local people Value created and retained in the local economy 	Funding ● Capacity ● Approvals ● Interdependencies ●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LCRCA and UKSPF funding End user agreements Supply chain frameworks 	Activity from 2023 for two years
	Implement St Helens Borough Local Procurement Plan, to more than double local procurement value, with the potential to increase spend in the local economy by over £30m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement St Helens Borough Local Procurement Plan 	Proactively helping local firms access and deliver local procurement opportunities will increase jobs, business growth and value in the economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC Assistant Director - Commercialisation 	Potential to more than double local procurement value, with the potential to increase spend in the local economy by over £30m	Funding ● Capacity ● Approvals ● Interdependencies ●	Engagement from business and links to other business support and advice channels will be key	Activity from late 2022 onwards

PRIORITY	AIM	ACTIONS	RATIONALE	LEAD PEOPLE	OUTCOMES TO BE ACHIEVED	DELIVERABILITY STATUS ASSESSMENT	DEPENDENCIES	TIMESCALES
Curate the end and ongoing use of developments	Increase the availability of high-quality, flexible employment space, including industrial units for manufacturing and engineering firms in St Helens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue delivery of employment space through the St Helens Borough Local Plan and SHBC Corporate Asset Strategy 	Ensure that existing businesses have access to employment space so that they can stay in the borough and grow, and create the conditions to attract new businesses to the borough and support start ups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC Assistant Director - Regeneration & Planning SHBC Assistant Director - Property & Economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More start ups More scale ups and growing businesses Increased innovation Value created and retained in the local economy 	Funding ● Capacity ● Approvals ● Interdependencies ●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress of delivery at Local Plan development sites Planning approvals SHBC Estates capacity for sites disposal programme Viability of brownfield sites LCRCA funding to overcome viability issues 	Immediate enabling activity - delivery over the next five years
	Connect local entrepreneurs, community groups and young people with space in vacant units to enable them to hold pop-ups, events and pilot initiatives through a meanwhile use programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify elements of LCRCA UKSPF Investment Plan to potentially fund investment for business support in the borough's town centres 	Enhance the environment and experience of our town centres to increase footfall, whilst supporting businesses and groups to access space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC Head of Culture & Wellbeing SHBC Head of Property SHCh Head of Business Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local business growth More start ups Improved pride of place Enhanced wellbeing Increased confidence levels and footfall 	Funding ● Capacity ● Approvals ● Interdependencies ●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Process for and expediency of approvals Engagement with property agents acting for SHBC 	Immediate activity from 2023

PRIORITY	AIM	ACTIONS	RATIONALE	LEAD PEOPLE	OUTCOMES TO BE ACHIEVED	DELIVERABILITY STATUS ASSESSMENT	DEPENDENCIES	TIMESCALES
Curate the end and ongoing use of developments	Identify, create and promote new community, cultural and art space, including as part of new market facilities, collaborating with local communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the Kindred incubator proposal for creative and social trading organisations SHBC to co-ordinate with LCRCA to deliver cultural space and events through the Borough of Culture 2023 programme SHBC to focus on meanwhile use opportunities across the borough such as the container park at Chalon Way 	Unlock greater value from the culture and art sector by supporting new enterprises, creating opportunities for economic activity and local wealth creation, and supporting people to engage in culture and learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC Head of Culture & Wellbeing SHBC Head of Regeneration SHBC Head of Property 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher levels of community enterprise Improved wellbeing and community resilience Higher skills levels Value created and retained in the local economy 	Funding ● Capacity ● Approvals ● Interdependencies ●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement to identify demand and operators Sustainability Coordination of activities Local delivery at development sites Planning approvals 	Immediate activity from 2023 for the next five years on meanwhile use opportunities
	Give a clear remit to the Growth Board to ensure investment and business growth are focussed on the creation of higher value jobs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growth Board to work together to reinforce discussions with investors, developers and the LCRCA Growth Board to help negotiate, push and lead discussions with developers and LCRCA on inward investment, employment and business opportunities 	Ensure that inward investment creates higher value jobs to improve productivity and increase wages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC Executive Director - Place Services SHBC Director - Strategic Growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More higher value jobs Increased earnings levels Value created and retained in the local economy 	Funding ● Capacity ● Approvals ● Interdependencies ●	Governance arrangements	Immediate activity from 2023

PRIORITY	AIM	ACTIONS	RATIONALE	LEAD PEOPLE	OUTCOMES TO BE ACHIEVED	DELIVERABILITY STATUS ASSESSMENT	DEPENDENCIES	TIMESCALES
Curate the end and ongoing use of developments	Deliver safer and more attractive active travel options, integrating the Local Transport Plan and LCWIP with the Towns Fund and English Cities Fund developments, aiming for 20-minute communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SHBC to proactively support the delivery of active travel schemes outlined in the Local Transport Plan and LCWIP	Ensure that new employment sites are well connected to residential areas, and that workers can get to work via public transport or active travel, helping to reduce carbon emissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SHBC Head of Regeneration• SHBC Programme Lead - Infrastructure• SHBC Head of Highways & Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Better connectivity• Lower carbon emissions• Improved access to employment opportunities	Funding ● Capacity ● Approvals ● Interdependencies ●	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development and progress of the LCWIP• Implementation funding• Scheme approvals• Deliverability	Immediate activity from 2023

LOCAL BUSINESS GROWTH AND ENTERPRISE

PRIORITY	AIM	ACTIONS	RATIONALE	LEAD OFFICER	OUTCOMES TO BE ACHIEVED	DELIVERABILITY STATUS ASSESSMENT	DEPENDENCIES	TIMESCALES
Create the conditions for scale and productivity growth in our businesses	Evolve our Growth Hub offer, considering UKSPF opportunities, to provide long-term support to businesses in the borough and help them grow and thrive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC and STCh to work together with LCRCA on delivery of UKSPF investment plan locally, including business plan for early implementation 	Develop strong, proactive relationships with business over time to identify growth opportunities, increase take-up of regional specialist programmes and reduce barriers to growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHCh Head of Business Services SHBC Head Economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More scale ups and growing businesses Job opportunities for local people Value created and retained in the local economy 	Funding ● Capacity ● Approvals ● Interdependencies ●	Additional LCRCA and UKSPF funding	Immediate activity from 2022 for the next six months
	Explore new programmes in digital and tech adoption and low carbon transition, with a focus on SMEs in manufacturing, engineering and construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC and STCh to work with LCRCA on the development of targeted programmes in the UKSPF Investment Plan, involving business 	Help businesses to benefit from broadband and new digital technologies, and to adopt business practices that support the transition to net zero and carbon reduction targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHCh Head of Business Services SHBC Head Economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher levels of tech adoption, digitisation and innovation Increased business productivity Reduced carbon emissions 	Funding ● Capacity ● Approvals ● Interdependencies ●	Additional LCRCA and UKSPF funding	Immediate activity from 2023 for one year

PRIORITY	AIM	ACTIONS	RATIONALE	LEAD OFFICER	OUTCOMES TO BE ACHIEVED	DELIVERABILITY STATUS ASSESSMENT	DEPENDENCIES	TIMESCALES
Create the conditions for scale and productivity growth in our businesses	Create new business networks aimed at securing opportunities from major developments through collaboration and joint bidding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC, STCh and partners to review and extend existing networks 	Support development of specialisms, collaboration between businesses and peer learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHCh Head of Business Services SHBC Head Economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stronger collaboration and business relationships Stronger sector specialisms 	Funding ● Capacity ● Approvals ● Interdependencies ●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional LCRCA, UKSPF or other funding Delivery at major development sites 	Activity from 2023 for the next two to three years
	Establish Flying Start, a scale / accelerator programme to support businesses in St Helens Borough to grow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC and STCh to work with LCRCA to leverage UKSPF funding 	Help identify and support local growth businesses in the borough, widening the criteria of businesses that can be supported through the scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHCh Head of Business Services SHBC Head Economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More scale ups and growing businesses Job opportunities for local people Value created and retained in the local economy 	Funding ● Capacity ● Approvals ● Interdependencies ●	Additional LCRCA and UKSPF funding	Enabling activity from 2023 for the next year
	Identify and provide grow-on space for existing businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC to explore existing available and suitable premises that could be used or repurposed as grow-on space for businesses SHBC to review land and property availability in line with Local Plan 	Help existing businesses to grow and develop in the borough by providing appropriate space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC Assistant Director - Regeneration and Planning SHBC Assistant Director - Property and Economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More scale ups and growing businesses Increased innovation Value created and retained in the local economy 	Funding ● Capacity ● Approvals ● Interdependencies ●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC Corporate Asset Strategy Planning approvals 	Enabling activity from 2023

PRIORITY	AIM	ACTIONS	RATIONALE	LEAD OFFICER	OUTCOMES TO BE ACHIEVED	DELIVERABILITY STATUS ASSESSMENT	DEPENDENCIES	TIMESCALES
Encourage entrepreneurship and new enterprises to start	Encourage and support the growth of socially trading organisations and community businesses to deliver social benefits for the local community, working in partnership with St Helens Community and Voluntary Action, Kindred and LCRCA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the Kindred incubator proposal to occupy two properties in St Helens town centre for creative and social trading organisations Continue to work with St Helens Community and Voluntary Action to set up and support Community Interest Companies 	Enable social enterprises to form and grow in the borough, and to deliver social benefits to the local community by trading commercially	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHCh Head of Business Services LCRCA Director of Development & Investment SHBC Assistant Director - Regeneration and Planning SHBC Assistant Director - Property and Economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher levels of social and community enterprises Job opportunities for local people Increased community resilience Value created and retained in the local economy 	Funding ● Capacity ● Approvals ● Interdependencies ●	No dependencies	Immediate activity from 2022
Reinvigorate businesses and the retail and leisure offer in our town centres	Support youth entrepreneurship and enterprise through a St Helens College Enterprise Network where our borough eats, trains, drinks, plays and shops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHC to work with Knowsley Community College to proactively create an enterprise network for young people and adults SHC to engage with students around appetite for the network 	Encourage and enable young entrepreneurs and new enterprises to form	SHC Business Development Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher levels of entrepreneurship and enterprise New opportunities for young people and adults 	Funding ● Capacity ● Approvals ● Interdependencies ●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional funding and capacity Senior level approval and commitment 	Enabling activity from 2023

PRIORITY	AIM	ACTIONS	RATIONALE	LEAD OFFICER	OUTCOMES TO BE ACHIEVED	DELIVERABILITY STATUS ASSESSMENT	DEPENDENCIES	TIMESCALES
Reinvigorate businesses and the retail and leisure offer in our town centres	Support cultural, art, creative and social enterprises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC and STCh to actively engage with LCRCA to leverage Borough of Culture programme funding to develop a supply chain and promote the existing cultural and creative offer in the borough SHBC and partners to scope and explore UKSPF funding to develop a supply chain and promote the existing cultural and creative offer in the borough 	Encourage community and social enterprises to form and grow in the borough, delivering benefits for the local economy and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHCh Head of Business Services SHBC Head of Culture & Wellbeing SHBC Head of Economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher levels of social and community enterprise Job opportunities for local people Increased community resilience Value created and retained in the local economy 	Funding ● Capacity ● Approvals ● Interdependencies ●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional LCRCA and UKSPF funding Programme governance 	Enabling activity from 2022 with delivery activity throughout 2023
Attract new businesses to invest and locate in the borough	Identify and agree appropriate inward investment targets with LCRCA in manufacturing, engineering, and higher value ecommerce and logistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC and partners to proactively engage with LCRCA around agreeing a new plan and setting targets 	Ensure that inward investment in the borough translates into higher value jobs with higher earnings levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC Director - Strategic Growth LCRCA Director of Commercial Development & Investment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher productivity Increased innovation More job opportunities Higher earnings levels 	Funding ● Capacity ● Approvals ● Interdependencies ●	No dependencies	Immediate activity from 2023
	Reinvigorate the St Helens Borough brand to attract inward investment and new businesses through a new place marketing platform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC to explore the rebranding of St Helens Borough SHBC to identify goals and aims of the rebranding and begin development 	Promote St Helens Borough to attract new residents, businesses, visitors, and investors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC Head of Communications, Engagement and Reputation Management SHBC Director - Strategic Growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher levels of inward investment More job opportunities 	Funding ● Capacity ● Approvals ● Interdependencies ●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritisation of activity Identification and appointment of branding agency 	Immediate activity from 2023

PRIORITY	AIM	ACTIONS	RATIONALE	LEAD OFFICER	OUTCOMES TO BE ACHIEVED	DELIVERABILITY STATUS ASSESSMENT	DEPENDENCIES	TIMESCALES
Attract new businesses to invest and locate in the borough	Explore a BID as St Helens town centre regeneration is delivered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC to proactively explore the appetite for a BID with local businesses and SHCh 	Make environmental enhancements to the borough to improve confidence levels and increase footfall, supporting existing businesses and attracting new ones back into the borough	SHBC Assistant Director - Regeneration and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher footfall Increased confidence Lower levels of retail vacancies 	Funding ● Capacity ● Approvals ● Interdependencies ●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional funding and resource capacity Agreement needed by businesses to set up and fund a BID Progress with English Cities Fund First Phase Development 	Enabling activity from 2023 for three years
	Create routes into work for residents by developing a St Helens Borough Recruits Programme whereby participants rotate around firms on placements, and expand awareness of career opportunities and routes within and outside of the borough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC, SHC, SHCh and LCRCA to explore appetite for the programme with firms and residents, including rotating placement programme SHBC to explore the potential to expand the existing SHCh Routeway to Employment Programmes 	Better connect residents in the borough with opportunities in local businesses and organisations, both within the borough and in the wider region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC Head of Economy SHCh Head of Career Development SHBC HR Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More local people developing skills and taking jobs in local firms Value created and retained in the local economy 	Funding ● Capacity ● Approvals ● Interdependencies ●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governance arrangements Developer/ Partner willingness to participate Legal and employee considerations 	Enabling activity from 2023 for two years

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR KEY WORKER JOBS

PRIORITY	AIM	ACTIONS	RATIONALE	LEAD OFFICER	OUTCOMES TO BE ACHIEVED	DELIVERABILITY STATUS ASSESSMENT	DEPENDENCIES	TIMESCALES
Improve job quality	Promote fair employment practices, targeting employers in health and social care, retail, hospitality and logistics, by adopting either the LCRCA or a St Helens Borough Fair Employment Charter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC and LCRCA to explore implementing the LCR Fair Employment Charter or adapting a local version 	Recognise and encourage good employment practices, including health, fair pay and hours, inclusivity and diversity, and employee voice and engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC Executive Director of Corporate Services LCRCA Director of Corporate Development & Delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better quality jobs Higher earnings Improved health Enhanced wellbeing 	LCR: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding ● Capacity ● Approvals ● Interdependencies ● ST HELENS BOROUGH: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding ● Capacity ● Approvals ● Interdependencies ● 	LCR: No dependencies St Helens Borough: Prioritisation of activity	LCR: Immediate activity from 2022 St Helens Borough: Enabling activity from 2023
	Establish a logistics centre of excellence, focused on supporting businesses in St Helens Borough to develop and lead best practice in higher productivity, increased innovation and new technologies, and the transition to net zero/last mile, exploring options at Omega West and Parkside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC to explore the potential to establish a logistics centre of excellence 	Support the creation of higher value jobs in logistics and encourage businesses to innovate, adopt new technologies and reduce their carbon footprint	SHBC Director - Strategic Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased productivity Higher levels of innovation Reduced carbon emissions Opportunities for start-ups and scale ups Value created and retained in the local economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding ● Capacity ● Approvals ● Interdependencies ● 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional funding and capacity Further approvals and planning permissions Viability and sustainability of proposal Learning from other such initiatives LCR Freeport opportunity 	Enabling activity from 2023 for the two-three years

PRIORITY	AIM	ACTIONS	RATIONALE	LEAD OFFICER	OUTCOMES TO BE ACHIEVED	DELIVERABILITY STATUS ASSESSMENT	DEPENDENCIES	TIMESCALES
Improve job quality	Explore with LCRCA to develop a Key Worker Challenge Fund to enable businesses and organisations to develop and test innovative solutions to improve productivity and job quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC to proactively explore with LCRCA the appetite to develop a Key Worker Challenge Fund 	Enable businesses in health and social care, retail, hospitality and logistics to adopt new technologies and innovate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC Director - Strategic Growth SHBC Executive Director of Corporate Services LCRCA Director of Corporate Development & Delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased productivity Higher levels of innovation Value created and retained in the local economy 	Funding ● Capacity ● Approvals ● Interdependencies ●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional resource and capacity Approval from LCRCA 	Enabling activity from 2023 for one-two years
	Work with the Living Wage Foundation to establish and develop a Real Living Wage campaign with the aim of becoming a Real Living Wage Borough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC to proactively engage with the Living Wage Foundation and explore the options for delivering a Real Living Wage campaign 	Recognise and encourage good employment practices in the borough	SHBC Executive Director of Corporate Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better quality jobs Higher earnings Improved health Enhanced wellbeing 	Funding ● Capacity ● Approvals ● Interdependencies ●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional resource and capacity Viability Strategic level approval Governance Co-ordination support 	Enabling activity from 2023 onwards

PRIORITY	AIM	ACTIONS	RATIONALE	LEAD OFFICER	OUTCOMES TO BE ACHIEVED	DELIVERABILITY STATUS ASSESSMENT	DEPENDENCIES	TIMESCALES
Support people into work and to progress	Explore a St Helens Borough Anchor Institutions Flexi-Apprenticeship Programme, whereby young people and older workers looking to retrain can work as an apprentice on 3-month placements in different organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC and anchor institutions, including SHCh, SHC and St Helens Cares, to engage with local people and businesses around appetite for a programme 	Develop training and career pathways for residents into St Helens Borough anchor institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC Assistant Director - Education & Learning SHCh Head of Apprenticeships & Quality SHC Business Development Manager St Helens Cares Place Director SHBC Head of Economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More local people developing skills Improved pathways into work Improved health and wellbeing 	Funding ● Capacity ● Approvals ● Interdependencies ●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional funding, resource and capacity commitments Strategic level approval Co-ordination support Governance arrangements Legal and employee considerations 	Enabling activity from 2023 for two-three years
	Explore options for matching residents currently out of work with vacancies in anchor institutions through a St Helens Borough Anchor Institutions Employment Programme, and support them to progress through continued support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC and anchor institutions, including SHCh, SHC, and NHS Trust, to scope and explore support for co-ordination and management of the collective anchor institutions SHBC and anchor institutions, including SHCh, SHC, and NHS Trust to analyse existing data to match residents with vacancies 	Connect residents who are out of work to vacancies in St Helens Borough anchor institutions, improving economic engagement and income levels for residents, and supporting public sector delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHBC Assistant Director - People & Digital Delivery SHCh Head of Careers Development SHC Business Development Manager St Helens & Knowsley Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust SHBC Head of Economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More local people in work Higher earnings levels Improved health and wellbeing 	Funding ● Capacity ● Approvals ● Interdependencies ●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional funding, resource and capacity commitments Strategic level approval Co-ordination support 	Activity from 2023 for two years

PRIORITY	AIM	ACTIONS	RATIONALE	LEAD OFFICER	OUTCOMES TO BE ACHIEVED	DELIVERABILITY STATUS ASSESSMENT	DEPENDENCIES	TIMESCALES
Support people into work and to progress	Create new routes for residents of all ages into entry level, mid-career and managerial roles in the health system, by working with the NHS and the Health Innovation Hub: Skills Academy partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">SHBC and Health Innovation Hub partners to proactively work with the NHS Trust to explore potential career routes for residents	Improve economic engagement and income levels for residents through job matching and adapting entry requirements. Support public sector delivery by filling vacancies in the health service	<ul style="list-style-type: none">SHBC Assistant Director - People & Digital DeliverySt Helens & Knowsley Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust Deputy Directors of HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none">More local people in workReduced vacanciesBetter progression pathwaysHigher earnings levelsImproved health and wellbeing	Funding ● Capacity ● Approvals ● Interdependencies ●	Approval by NHS	Activity from 2023 for one year
	Address barriers to entry level jobs and progression by targeting the LCRCA Adult Education Budget (AEEB) and Multiply funding streams	<ul style="list-style-type: none">SHBC and LCRCA to identify barriers to entry level jobs and progressionSHBC and LCRCA to explore ways in which AEB and Multiply funding streams can be targeted	Support work readiness and ensure that local people have the relevant skills to access entry level jobs and to progress once in work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">SHBC Assistant Director - Education & LearningLCRCA Executive Director - Investment and Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none">More local people in workBetter progression pathwaysHigher earnings levelsImproved health and wellbeing	Funding ● Capacity ● Approvals ● Interdependencies ●	No dependencies	Immediate activity from 2023 onwards

MONITORING PROGRESS

We want to monitor our progress against our vision. As part of Our Borough Strategy, we developed an outcomes framework using a range of measures of success and committed to report our progress to residents.

For our related Inclusive Growth Strategy, we have adapted the outcome measures for the priority of **supporting a strong, thriving, inclusive and well-connected economy**.

OUTCOME	INDICATOR
OUR LOCAL ECONOMY RECOVERS AND GROWS AND PEOPLE’S SKILLS AND ACCESS TO JOBS IMPROVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local businesses are well supported to grow• The local economy is strengthened and diversified• Investment in St Helens Borough increases• People are supported into work• More residents with higher level qualifications• Employment needs are met
OUR TOWN AND NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES ARE VIBRANT PLACES FOR ALL TO USE, VALUE AND ENJOY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We protect and enhance our town, district and local centres• Perceptions of our town and district centres improves





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ST HELENS
BOROUGH COUNCIL



RETAIL MARKET OVERVIEW

ST HELENS

THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF RETAIL

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1 UK MARKET OVERVIEW

THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF RETAIL

The retail industry has been undergoing the most rapid period of change for more than 30 years and arguably since as far back as the introduction of supermarkets.

The principal driver for change has been the impact of online shopping and the changes in consumer behaviour and attitudes towards shopping. This has led to polarisation of destinations and there has been a fundamental re-ordering of roles and relative positions with some clear winners, but a large group of losers as structural changes take hold.

Physical retail was going through seismic change long before COVID-19, fuelled by changing shopping habits and the rise of online retailing.

RETAIL MARKET CONSOLIDATION

During the last 5 years the rate of change in retailing and the resultant impact on retail real estate has arguably been greater than any other time in history.

In a world driven by technology which in turn drives changes in social behaviour and connects the world there are three distinct dynamics which are shaping change in the retail landscape:

- Globalisation
- Polarisation
- Consolidation

A digitally connected world has allowed multi-national brands to create global followings and move into greater numbers of countries. Whether sports (Nike, adidas, Puma) luxury (Louis Vuitton, Tiffany, Prada) or mass fashion (Primark, H&M, Zara) these brands have become more dominant and now influence consumer demand and habits globally. They, and their peers have increased market share, weakening their competition, through increased economies of scale and brand loyalty, maintaining their own margins. They are now so dominant and sought after by their customers that their locational strategies also determine whether locations will prosper or decline.

These globally dominant brands have increased market share and piled pressure on weaker competitors. At the same time, the scale of these brands has left room for smaller and more agile brands to prosper providing a level of service and bespoke goods that allows them to thrive alongside the global giants. The retail and leisure sectors have become increasingly polarised with the global chains prospering at one end alongside the smaller more specialist ones. The 'squeezed middle' is increasingly under pressure. Operators in this space are either too big to be responsive to changing consumer habits or too small to influence them.

The same polarising effect is occurring in destinations. Larger cities, shopping and leisure destinations are becoming greater attractions offering an increasingly diverse and high quality experience. At the other end, smaller destinations are proving to be adaptable and in many cases been able to carefully align their offer to local catchments and prosper. It is essential St Helens understands the local catchment, their tastes and habits, in order to ensure the town centre offer is compelling.

1 UK MARKET OVERVIEW

THE LIKELY LASTING IMPACT OF COVID

The trends referred to above have been accelerated by the impact of COVID-19. The closure of most UK stores during Lockdowns 1, &2 drove consumers either back to local provision or increasingly online, many for the first time. The result was an increase in internet penetration. As we return to unrestricted shopping, it is expected that some of the increased online habits will be retained but it will fall back to a lower level in 2021 than currently occurring in 2020. CBRE forecast that online is likely to account for 28% of sales by 2030.

It has been widely commented that one of the effects of COVID 19 has been to accelerate the accepted pace of change. The trends of Globalisation & Polarisation outlined above have been exacerbated as the stronger locations get stronger and the weaker fall further behind unless they are able to adapt.

CHANGES IN OUR RETAIL ENVIRONMENT AND TRENDS

Retailers have been faced with rising costs such as wages and business rates, squeezed margins through global competition and the shift to online spending. This has led to record numbers of retailer failures and a general strategy for occupiers to reduce store numbers. The result is quite simply a dramatic reduction in demand and crucially a reduction in the number of visible retail business. This is very much a national problem and not one that St Helens is facing alone.

Landlords and retailers have been sharing huge financial losses facing a new a landscape of challenges and a new reality- there are too many shops and not enough retailers and most of these are in a weakened state. Any spare capital in their business is typically targeted towards improving their online platform.

Landlords are facing an uncomfortable situation where the balance of risk has moved against them. There is a question mark now over almost all supposedly strong covenants borne out by business failures of what were once perceived as solid household names such as Clarks, New Look and Arcadia Group.

Retailers are looking for sustainable occupancy costs which in some way or other will relate to a turnover based deal and one where they don't pay rent if the store is closed for example by a future pandemic. Most retailers will expect Landlords to cover most or all their fit-out costs. On top of this they want more flexible commitment, effectively shorter leases or break clauses. This is not a negotiating position. Rather than being in denial about this challenge, CBRE Asset Management find ways to structure deals, in order to meet the demands of retailers but mitigate risk and create a valuable sustainable investment for Landlords.

ADMINISTRATION / CVA

Covid 19 has accelerated change and as a result there has been a succession of well publicised failures and restructuring. However, it is important to highlight that the effects of Covid 19 have allowed many retailers to take advantage of the CVA process and to restructure their property portfolios removing poor performing stores and reducing rental overheads on others. CVA's also present owners with an opportunity to bring about tenant mix changes as we remove weaker performers and replace them with new entrants.

1 UK MARKET OVERVIEW

REPURPOSING / ADAPTIVE RETAIL

We have seen the growth in more repurposing retail to incorporate medical centres/covid testing centres, F&B and health/wellness which are likely to be more acceptable in the UK Town and Shopping Centres.

There are also companies like The Sook and Fusion who will take retail units on management contracts and adapt the space to the booking. Bookings can be anything from pop up space for retailers, to events, art galleries, community uses, e-gaming etc. When they do not have physical bookings, they can generate income from digital marketing on screens within the store.

2 IMPACT ON ST HELENS

IMPACT ON ST HELENS

For many years we have observed retailers refine their store portfolios, seeking fewer but larger stores in the best catchments where they can fully express their brand. This trend began after the Credit Crunch of 2008-09, where retailers found that the internet combined with a polarisation of spend towards prime, regionally dominant retail centres meant they no longer required a shop in every town.

There are numerous examples in St Helens of how this shift in strategy has manifested itself including the closures of M&S, Top Shop, Burton, Argos and WH Smith, all of whom have closed in the town completely or consolidated to out of town sites offering greater accessibility and free, surface level car parking.

Covid-19 and the national lockdowns it has caused has accelerated the pace of change of the high street. The pandemic's most high profile casualties, Debenhams and Arcadia were already considered to be at serious risk of financial failure anyway. What the pandemic seems to have done is expedite these failures, making them happen sooner and within a smaller timeframe than envisaged. Further Marks and Spencer and John Lewis store closures were not unexpected either, but it feels as though they would have taken longer to occur had it not been for the impact of the virus.

Simply surviving has been the biggest challenge for those bricks and mortar occupiers targeting discretionary spend, as the pandemic has brought into sharp focus the existential factors affecting the sector; over supply of property, high fixed costs (rent/rates/service charge), changes in consumer behaviour, under investment in eCommerce, failure to plan for the changes that were already in transit, and a tendency to operate with a high level of debt.

To reach locked-down consumers, retailers had to take advantage of the only channel available, scaling their online capability. This has led more and more retailers to adopt a digital first approach. The growth of online has forced retailers to reassess the true value and role of their stores, with fewer than ever now seeking to expand in bricks and mortar form.

In 2020, experience-based retailers struggled with a lack of footfall and opportunity to engage consumers. We believe experience remains essential to the future of the store – but it needs to be more thoughtful. The cost pressures remain and investments in experience need to ensure that they make sense from a brand perspective, add value to consumers, and deliver a commercial return. It cannot just be experience for experience's sake, particularly in a smaller market town such as St Helens where turnovers are low and continue to be impacted by increasing costs of minimum wage and stock.

In addition to discretionary retail, leisure is expected to go through a continued phase of correction that is perhaps more attributable to the pandemic than the issues seen in retail. Cinema is suffering now because of lockdown but as we move in to a more 'normal' trading environment the sector will continue to be under huge pressure.

The decision of Disney+, Netflix and HBO in the United States to release films immediately on to streaming services at the same time they go into cinema will impact admission numbers going forward. We understand c. 80% of cinema receipts are generated by new blockbuster movies. If those movies are available to watch at home straight away customers will be less incentivised to visit cinema, particularly as many people have invested in their home TV set up during the pandemic. We expect the cinema sector to go through a phase of correction once markets re-open, with many cinemas expected to close their doors via a run of CVAs and administrations.

Cafes, restaurants and wet led bars / pubs are experience severe challenge due to the lockdowns, which has manifested itself in several administrations and CVAs which were far more unexpected than those we have seen thus far in retail. Caffè Nero and Azzuri Group were considered strong covenants until Covid-19 came along. While this sector is struggling now a major bounce-back is expected once trading returns to normal, as the pent-up demand works its way through.

2 IMPACT ON ST HELENS

Accordingly, transactions being agreed, with a view to fitting out and being open later this year when the vaccine's impact is fully felt. However, acquisitive occupiers remain focused on fully fitted units or require major capital investment from the landlord. While it means newly fitted out space where a tenant has failed can be re-let on relatively worthwhile terms, lettings of shell or former retail units to restaurants, coffee shops or bars remain unappealing to most landlords as cash incentives can easily be upwards of 5 years rent. These deals are mostly being transacted with regional tenants offering some element of track record, rather than national tenants who for the most part remain dormant save for a handful of transactions in major centres.

The only major expansions are from non-discretionary and value retailers with Aldi, Lidl, B&M, Home Bargains, and Iceland / Food Warehouse all remaining active despite the prevailing economic climate. While this does offer an element of positivity, these requirements are primarily focused on out-of-town sites with free, grade level parking and as such do not represent a solution to the newly vacant town centre space being created by failures such as Debenhams and Topshop.

3 TRENDS IN REGIONAL SECONDARY MARKETS

TRENDS IN REGIONAL SECONDARY MARKETS

The three national Lockdowns and the growing number of people working from home has led to a return to local shopping, which we believe will continue beyond the pandemic. However, we expect the market to polarise further so that real destination stores/prime centres will attract what is left of the high value discretionary spend being transacted on the high street (fashion, footwear, jeweller etc). The rest will be spent online, as more consumers have become more comfortable shopping online than ever before; a trait that has developed out of necessity through lockdown.

Secondary towns will be primarily led by convenience, value, services and Food and Beverage with fashion, jewellery and other discretionary retail sectors continuing to exit these towns in large numbers when leases allow.

The decline in fashion demand in secondary towns has exasperated what was already a vastly reduced number of requirements for large format, expensive retail property. To ensure the supply/demand imbalance is addressed, demolition and repurposing is now more important than ever. Many of the current units in secondary town centres are no longer fit for purpose on account of the large occupational costs, inefficient space over multiple levels and cost required to put these units back in to a state of full repair. Those retailers who will consider these units either will do so on a costs only basis (i.e. no rent, covering service charges and business rates) or require large incentives that the rent is eroded to such an extent that the deal is not viable for investors/ landlords.

LOCAL INDEPENDENTS / REGIONAL OPERATORS

Local independents and regional operators are widely considered as the solution for units vacated by the national operators. This is true of the food and beverage sector, where established regional businesses are offering viable, rent paying solutions to landlords, especially on fitted out units.

However, despite the positive PR local retail independents receive from the media and pundits, the situation in the sector is complex and independents need a focussed offer to ensure viability. Local independents are a great way for identikit towns to start re-creating their own identity. They require support to start up and grow businesses within town centres, which requires flexible leasing terms, low operating and fit out costs and well-located space.

Independents and regional operators are vitally important for a town centre retail mix, rather than a commonly viewed backfill solution to existing failed high streets. This approach undervalues and misunderstands these businesses, their size requirements and what they can afford to pay for property.

In large secondary towns, like St Helens local tenants are not a long-term solution for units such as the failed Topshop; they simply cannot afford it. Suggesting carve-ups of this type of unit to create suitable space still leaves the issue of expensive service charges and, Business Rates liabilities. The units vacated by national fashion tenants are only suitable for re-letting to nationals, who have scope to afford the global occupancy costs, or repurposing out of retail.

The requirement for prominent, budget retail space on flexible terms enables independent retail to grow and sustain their businesses. This makes reconfigured prime space unviable, as the costs for landlords to convert these units and for tenants to occupy them while paying a net rent are too high.

Bespoke units, situated edge of pitch to avoid heavy handed attention from the Valuation Office and with very low service charges are what the sector needs to thrive, not well located but far too expensive former fashion units. By creating these opportunities there will be scope to relocate a small handful of tenants into more prime locations as their businesses develop.

3 TRENDS IN REGIONAL SECONDARY MARKETS

There is activity within the restaurant sector, but this is primarily regional businesses targeting fitted space. If space is not fitted, significant incentives are required by operators to cover fit out costs. Typically for a standard restaurant unit (c2,500 sq. ft), fit out costs are circa £500,000. Operators in regional towns are currently experiencing difficulties in raising capital and finance, accordingly the incentives of circa £300,000 - £350,000 are required from landlords.

4 ST HELENS – KEY PITCHES AND CURRENT VOIDS

ST HELENS – KEY PITCHES AND CURRENT VOIDS

St Helens, like many UK regional towns experienced growth in retail floor space through the 1980's to early 2000's, both in town centres and out of town.

The retail core of St Helens is identified in the GOAD Plan (Appendix 1), which highlights the 2 major shopping centres:

CHURCH SQUARE SHOPPING CENTRE

Church Square Shopping Centre comprises 325,000 sq ft of retail accommodation, with over 60 retail units. This is fashion led, Key retailers include H & M, River Island, JD Sports, Pandora The Centre also includes several national retailers including Boots, Bodycare, Vision Express, Bodycare and Clintons.

Vacant units

- 1a La Grange Arcade – 3,360 sq ft (now under offer)
- 2-6 Church Street – 3,964 sq ft
- 12 Church Street – 1,181 sq ft
- 28 La Grange Arcade – 661 sq ft
- 28-30 Church Street – 2,153 sq ft
- 7 Bridge Street – 2,150 sq ft (now under offer)
- 19 La Grange Arcade – 1,552 sq ft
- 17 La Grange Arcade – 1,583 sq ft.

Current total vacant space circa 16,700 sq ft

Although the occupancy is relatively high currently. There is a major risk around retailers intentions at forthcoming lease expiries.

There several the national retailers on short term lease agreements. For example, Poundland occupy 28,755 sq ft, by way of a 2-year lease (outside the L & T Act) at an all-inclusive rent. Ryman's have offered to stay on a 3-year lease (again outside the L & T Act) but with annual break options.

Majority of other lettings have been based on a 5-year lease but with a Tenant only break option at the end of the 3rd year. There are 14 leases in the scheme expiring from the start of 2021 to the end of 2023. These include B&M (in St Marys, need moving before expiry) River Island and H Samuel as well as Poundland. A significant percentage of leases have breaks before the end of 2023 including Boots, Bodycare (who are in the process of regearing) Millets and H&M – who may remain on a cost free basis, as evidenced in other comparable schemes.

The key concerns are River Island and H&M, if they do vacate at lease expiry, there is no current demand to backfill these large units and there is risk that the fashion mix is weakened considerably. There is also the potential risk around the potential business failure of around several occupiers following the Pandemic, in the major risk category are Select and Roman Originals, who also have large units within the Centre

4 ST HELENS – KEY PITCHES AND CURRENT VOIDS

HARDSHAW CENTRE

The Hardshaw Centre comprises 139,523 sq ft of retail accommodation, within 29 units. The Scheme is discount focused, anchored by TJ Hughes and includes Home Bargains, Heron Foods, Card Factory, One Below, Shoe Zone and Holland & Barrett

Vacant units

- Kiosk 1C - 272 sq ft (Asking £12,000 pa)
- Store 2 - 16,411 sq ft over two floors (Asking £95,000 pa)
- Unit 6A - 2,110 sq ft (Asking £35,000 pa)
- Unit 6B - 1,400 sq ft (Asking £20,000 pa)
- Unit 7B - 874 sq ft (Asking £17,500 pa)
- Unit 9 - 1,209 sq ft (Asking £22,500 pa).

Total vacant space circa 22,000 sq ft

RAVENHEAD RETAIL PARK

Ravenhead Retail Park comprises 300,000 sq ft of prime open A1 retail and part bulky goods retail space – 18 national retailers within the Retail Park (listed a few below and the size of unit)

B&Q Extra - 107,000 sq ft / Smyths Toys - 20,000 sq ft / Boots - 10,000 sq ft / Carpetright - 10,000 sq ft / Bathstore - 2,500 sq ft / Sleepmasters - 5,000 sq ft / ScS - 10,000 sq ft / Argos - 10,000 sq ft / Pets at Home - 7,500 sq ft / Next - 10,000 sq ft / Currys PC World - 22,000 sq ft / M&S – 20,000 sq ft

Reavenshead is well let, mainly large store format for national operators.

7 CONCLUSIONS

CONCLUSIONS

The structural changes in the retail sector, driven by the impact of online shopping and the changes in consumer behaviour and attitudes towards shopping, combined with the impact of COVID-19, have accelerated retail market consolidation.

The rapid pace of change during the last 5 years has resulted in reduced demand and consolidation of retail real estate. This change has arguably been greater than any other time in history and caused retail real estate stakeholders to consider how to adapt and build sustainable models for the future.

The private sector response has been to mitigate value loss in the short term and seek to remodel/ redevelop vacant retail space. The public sector response, largely led by Local Authorities has been to acquire failing shopping centres, reduce retail floor space through consolidation of town centre retail cores and providing opportunities to regenerate and facilitate a wider use mix. Increasingly, leisure, residential, workspace and public spaces are being planned and developed to ensure town centres remain vibrant and compelling to their catchment and visitors.

The reduction in capital values of the retail space has resulted in Local Authorities gaining control of key strategic town centre assets in order to accelerate the pace of change and curate the future of their town centres. The reduction of the retail footprint being undertaken in Wigan, Oldham and Bolton will accelerate the pace of change required in these town centres.

In the short term this will address the imbalance in supply and demand and to ensure the prime units that do remain are let to tenants who can generate significant turnover to sustain the overheads. This can only be achieved by limiting supply, thereby forcing national retailers to relocate into a consolidated prime pitch.

In the long term, the intervention will deliver a more sustainable town centre use mix to encourage vibrancy and create places that are compelling to their catchment and visitors.

We have identified that due to the structural changes, St Helens has an oversupply of retail that cannot be overcome by simply re-letting the existing shops. There is not retailer demand for the existing units in St Helens or any other comparable towns within the wider region. Accordingly, this requires immediate action to address through consolidation.

A medium/ long term plan is subsequently required to ensure the retail core is 'rightsized' to provide the appropriate quantum, number of units and configuration of retail space. We consider that this should be led by value convenience and supplemented by local independent and regional operators.

Local independents, community uses etc offer vibrancy and identity to high streets, but they are not enough in number or viability to meet the significant property overheads required to occupy prime retail space.

Specific provision needs to be made to allow local independents and regional tenants to develop in well located, cost effective space. They cannot be shoehorned in to reconfigured prime units as the rates and service charge make their presence unsustainable for the long-term.

We anticipate that new purpose built retail units focused on the Local and Regional independent operators would command a rental level of approximately £15 per sqft. The rental level would be supported by an incentive package, dependent upon the proposed use, covenant status and size of unit.

APPENDICES

A GOAD PLAN OF ST HELENS



Experian Goad Plan Created: 24/02/2021
Created By: Barker Proudlove Ltd

ST HELENS MARKET

Feasibility Study and Defined Vision



Presented by Market Curators
November 2022
For: Muse Developments

Market Curators Ltd
288 Bishopsgate,
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The content of this report should be considered strictly
private and confidential between authorised officers of
both parties.

MARKET^{MC}
CURATORS

“The future of our high streets and retail centres is about celebrating unique identity, supporting independent businesses, and creating a distinct sense of place. Markets and Food Halls are leading the way in the ‘Indie Revolution’, and should be a key part of any town centre regeneration strategy.”

- Market Curators

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Executive Summary. Creating a dynamic, mixed-use market at the heart of St Helens.

St Helens is undergoing transformational change in the town centre, with significant investment in new residential, public realm and commercial developments.

A focal point of the reimagined town centre will be St Helens Market, a new-build market hall offering a mix of street food, fresh food, retail, and service uses alongside a flexible programme of events and animation.

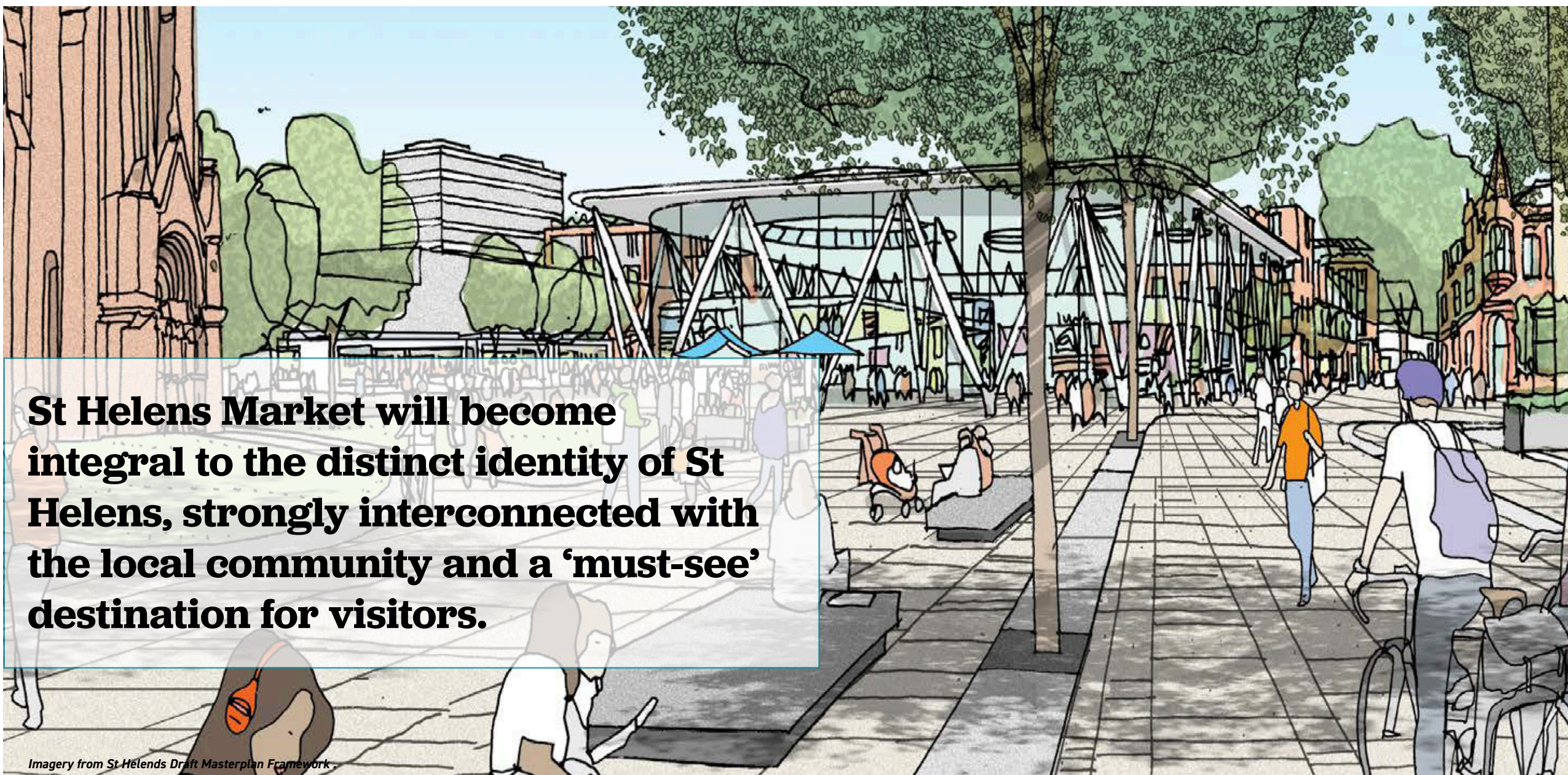
Like many town centres nationally, St Helens has suffered from a decline in footfall as a result of the rise in online shopping, out-of-town retail parks, the dominance of supermarkets and closures of big high street brands.

St Helens is home to St Mary's Market, a traditional, retail-led market which now has high vacancy rates and challenges associated with an ageing customer base, making the business model unsustainable as new customers fail to be attracted to the market. This has culminated in significant financial losses, with St Mary's Market reaching a deficit in

excess of -£325k in 19/20, pre-Covid, and -£400k in 20/21. From 2017 to 2022, the market has required subsidies in excess of £1.3m.

Successful, modern markets are increasingly repositioning to become food-led, experiential shopping, leisure and dining destinations. St Helens can build on the emerging 'community food hall' model to deliver a wide range of socio-economic benefits, creating incubator spaces, a gathering point for the community and supporting small and independent businesses while being commercially sustainable.

Market and food hall specialists Market Curators have been working with Muse and the design team to develop detailed plans and business cases for a redeveloped St Helens Market, creating a mixed-use space in the heart of the town centre to act as a strong footfall driver and independent business anchor.



St Helens Market will become integral to the distinct identity of St Helens, strongly interconnected with the local community and a 'must-see' destination for visitors.

Imagery from St Helens Draft Masterplan Framework

1. Introduction. St Helens Market as a catalyst regeneration project.

St Helens Market is at the heart of plans for the future of the town centre, creating a purpose-built market facility in Church Street that will act as a footfall driver, support a wide range of small businesses and kick start the evening economy.

With occupancy in St Mary's Market in decline and reducing footfall in this part of the town, the move offers an exciting opportunity to use a redeveloped market as a catalyst for regeneration and to become a focal point for the town centre.

Work undertaken in 2020 by Activate Workman Placemaking defined a vision for the market within the former Marks and Spencer building in Church Street, outlining the scope for a mixed-use market hall with a focus on food, both fresh food produce and street food¹.

"St Mary's Market will be established in its new location in St Helens town centre. The market will have become the home of independent retail, a food and beverage hub and an important business incubator for local entrepreneurs" - St Mary's Market Business Plan 2021 - 2024.

As successful, modern markets increasingly reposition to become food-led, experiential shopping, leisure and dining destinations, St Helens can build on the emerging 'community food hall' model² to

deliver a wide range of socio-economic benefits.

St Helens is ranked 303rd out of 317 Local Authorities in the UK for business density, with a job density of only 0.63³ leading to high levels of youth unemployment, outward migration of working-age population and deprivation issues associated with lack of economic opportunities⁴.

Markets perform natural functions as incubator spaces offering easy-in-easy-out terms to support start-ups and SMEs. Positioning the market as the first step in a town centre incubator chain that supports a wide range of business types will support wider regeneration principles.

St Helens draft Masterplan Development Framework set out the vision for St Helens town centre to deliver transformational change, with the new market development being a key strategic objective.

Building on the work undertaken by Activate in 2020, this report will review current designs and create an updated vision for the market, developing detailed spatial schedules, servicing requirements, target user clauses and operational and management regimes to support the viability of the market and deliver on the aspirations of the Development Framework.

1. St Mary's Market Business Plan 2021-2024 - Activate, Workman Placemaking

2. Article from [The Guardian](#)

3. NOMIS Official Labour Market Statistics

4. St Helens Borough Local Plan 2020 - 2035

2. Existing Market Review. Exploring current and historic trading trends to create a baseline for future development.

2.1 TRADER MIX AND OFFER

St Mary's Market reflects a traditional, retail-led market offer, with a limited offer of fresh food and a cafe. Anchor traders were identified as a butcher, babywear, homeware and alterations stall, with a cafe and seating area attracting reasonable footfall and different demographics throughout the day⁴.

A customer survey undertaken by Activate⁵ identified a lack of variety and quality of goods and a lack of food outlets as key reasons for customers not visiting the market. Non-shoppers identified artisan stalls, specialist food traders (fishmongers, greengrocers etc), craft stalls and retail lines as desirable stalls which would encourage them to visit the market.

Occupancy at St Mary's Market sat at 23 businesses with a weekly rental income of £4,400, as of April 2022. Based on the stall schedule, we estimate this reflected about 50% occupancy, although details of vacant units have not been provided for this study. In 2017, average

occupancy in Market Halls sat at 77%⁶ demonstrating that St Mary's Market is underperforming.

More traditional market traders, who make up the majority of St Mary's Market's current base, operate business models based on attrition, whereby their sales are based on a small conversion percentage from passing footfall. In 2019, only 50% of traders had any kind of online presence⁴. More modern, viable traders will be footfall drivers in themselves, actively marketing themselves to customers who come to the market specifically to visit them.

There is a need to build on the more traditional offer with a renewed focus on high-quality goods and services, a wider range of fresh food and street food options and strong standards of individual fit-out and display within trading units. Individual businesses must drive footfall to themselves through active marketing and promotions, creating a critical mass and strong anchor.

2.2 CUSTOMER PROFILE

Like many town centres nationally, St Helens has suffered from a decline in footfall as a result of the rise in online shopping, out-of-town retail parks, the dominance of supermarkets and closures of big high street brands⁷.

Traditional markets face challenges associated with an ageing customer base, making their business models unsustainable in the mid to long term as new customers fail to be attracted to the market.

Anecdotally, market customers are primarily older females, although the cafe attracts a wider variety of customers to sit and enjoy a coffee.

Respondents to the customer survey identified their modal spend as being below £5, with 62% spending less than £10⁵. The affluence and buying power of the existing customer group is likely relatively low, and the price point in a redeveloped market will need to be carefully considered so as not to disenfranchise this group.



2.3 CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

In 2019, pre-Covid, a customer survey conducted by WMC Retail Partners demonstrated that shoppers value friendly local traders and the value-for-money offer provided by the market. The food offers were most valued within the market, although this was limited to the cafe and butchers at the time.

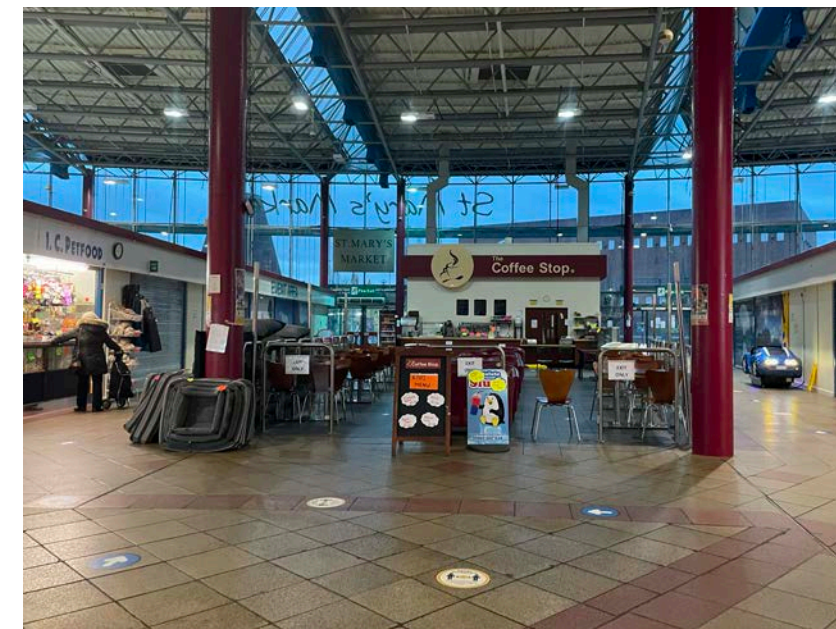
However, the location of the market, lack of variety and low quality of goods on offer, lack of atmosphere and lack of food outlets were key issues that deterred others from visiting the market. Respondents who were non-shoppers said that a stronger food and drink offer, seating, events and entertainment, improved atmosphere, artisan stalls and specialist fresh food traders would encourage them to shop at the market.

The main reason non-customers visited rival markets, predominantly Widnes, Warrington and Altrincham, were due to the better atmosphere, free parking, variety of hot food, fresh food and artisan goods, cleanliness, layout and location. In summary, St Mary's Market is not competitive in providing a high-quality customer experience.

The physical layout of St Mary's Market limits sightlines and circulation. Although this is blamed for poor trade, the issue is compounded by an unattractive atmosphere that does not encourage exploration. A lack of exciting signage, visual stock displays, colour, and feature lighting gives the market a stale feeling that does not encourage circulation or dwell time.

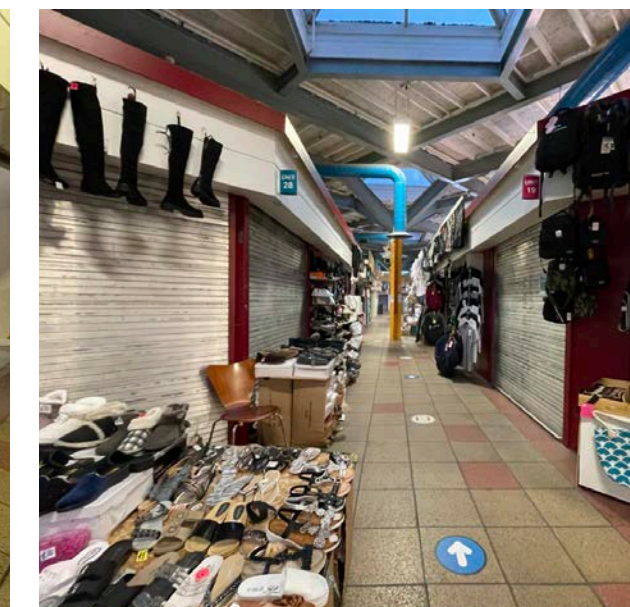
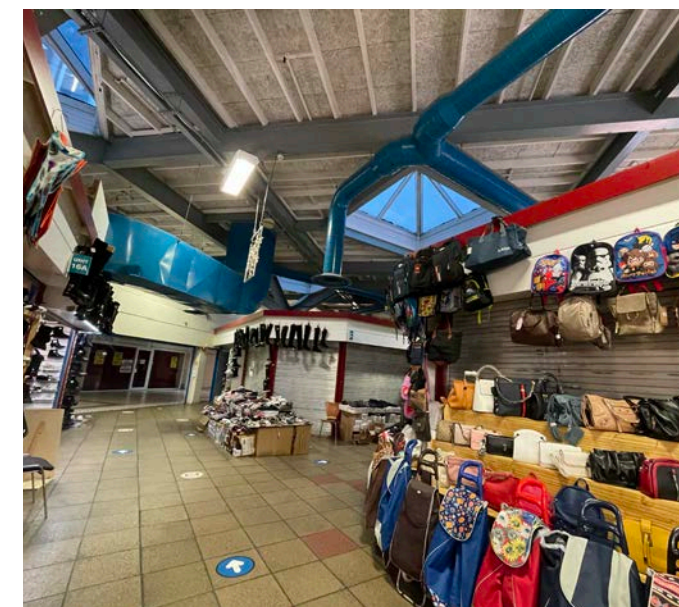
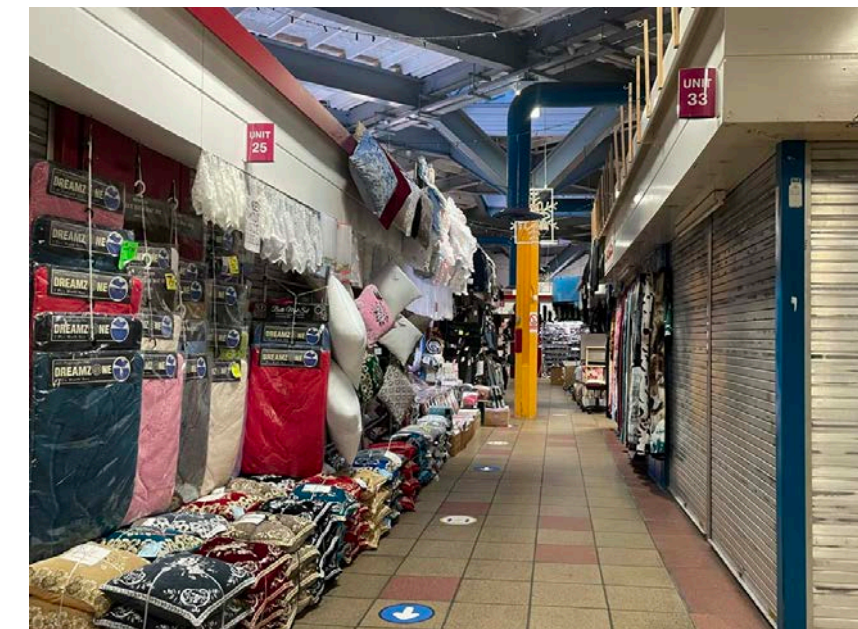
As modern markets increasingly offer street food, dining and leisure experiences, events, pop-up and specialist markets, family-friendly entertainment and evening entertainment programmes are crucial to ensure every visit to the market feels like a 'day-out' rather than a domestic chore. Introducing a vibrant calendar of weekly, monthly and major events will drive return custom, increasing income potential for turnover rents and supporting individual trader viability.

The appearance and fit-out of the market should be inviting, transitioning to a hospitality focus where the customer journey is carefully considered. Lighting, decor, seating styles, signage, feature attractions, greenery and audiovisuals will all need to be considered.



Photos taken from a site visit undertaken at 15:50.

Sightlines are constricted and do not encourage circulation.



2.4 MANAGEMENT MODEL AND OPERATIONS

2.4.1 Management Model

The market is managed in-house by the Local Authority, although WMC recommended that St Helens Council consider outsourcing the operation of St Mary’s Market to a private operator to deliver best practice operational management and a more agile approach to procurement and delivery.

There are examples of successful modern markets that are managed by Local Authorities and include street food and entertainment programmes. These include Warrington Market, Leeds Kirkgate Market and Barnsley Market.

Most modern markets that include a food hall, entertainment programme and focus on hospitality are outsourced to private operators, either through a lease arrangement or management contract. A coordinated public and private sector approach allows these venues to achieve higher standards of hospitality and retail excellence while maintaining alignment with wider strategic objectives.

Crewe Markets delivered an innovative approach to this in which a Private Sector Management Company were contracted to operate the market on behalf of the Council, with a strong suite of KPI’s and deliverables to enhance social and community value.

Other options include hybrid models in which retail units and the street food and entertainment programme is managed by the Private Sector, as proposed in Darley Street Market in Bradford.

The preferred option for St Helens will be dependent on political will, financial forecasts for the market to determine private sector appetite for the contract and wider commercial and management cases.

2.4.2 Opening Times

The market is currently advertised as being open from Monday to Saturday, 9 am - 5 pm; however, opening hours are not strictly enforced, and a large number of traders begin to pack up and leave from the early afternoon.

Compliance with opening hours is a problem across traditional markets nationally, creating a vicious cycle in which traders leave early from lack of customers, and customers stop visiting for lack of traders. Following the relaunch of the market, opening hours must be strictly enforced, with penalties for those who do not comply with advertised opening times.

2.5 FINANCIAL REVIEW

St Mary’s Market operates at a trading loss, reaching a deficit in excess of £325k in 19/20, pre-Covid. There has been an annual drop in income, equating to a 39% decline, from 2017 - 2020. Expenditure has remained relatively stable, but **from 2017 to 2022, the market has required a subsidy in excess of £1.3m.**



Market Needs Assessment

A redeveloped market must:

- Have a diverse range of traders offering high-quality goods and services, excellent levels of customer service and attractive signage, frontages and displays.
- Be food-focused, with a large proportion of fresh food and street food businesses to act as anchor attractions and increase dwell time.
- Stimulate the evening economy through later opening hours for street food and communal dining, supported by a programme of events and family-friendly entertainment to constantly attract footfall.
- Have an active marketing and social media presence for the market and each business operating within it to amplify the overall message.
- Operate on modern landlord/tenant arrangements, including turnover rents and potential for service charges.
- Be flexible to allow for pop-up and specialist markets, additional seating, events and animation.
- Have a communal dining area that has at least 250 covers. As a general indicator, the seating should include 40 covers per street food vendor to support business viability, although this can expand and contract from daytime to evening.
- Include exterior seating and have the use of a flexible outdoor area.
- Be visually attractive, with careful consideration given to lighting, audio levels, greenery, seating styles, artwork, signage and curating an atmosphere that encourages dwell time.

3. Local Context

ST HELENS TOWN CENTRE

'St Helens town centre requires radical transformation. Ambitious plans should be made and implemented, considering the offer for families and the daytime and night-time economies' - Borough Strategy

St Helens is the largest town centre in the borough, acting as the focal point for retail and services within the area. It benefits from buildings of architectural significance, conservation areas and historic investment in public realm design. However, there is a lack of connectivity that reduces circulation and sees shoppers concentrated in the town's three large indoor shopping centres, to the detriment of the high street and independent business base.

Like many town centres nationally, St Helens has suffered from a decline in footfall as a result of the rise in online shopping, out-of-town retail parks, the dominance of supermarkets and closures of big high street brands.

In Quarter 4 of 2020, the town centre vacancy rate sat at 21.1%, according to PROMIS (2021), higher than the overall GB vacancy rate of 13.7%, demonstrating key issues with viability,

and the overprovisioning of retail space.

In line with national trends, St Helens has an overabundance of retail floor space, which has led to an over-supply of lower value shops that diminish the customer experience. There is a lack of F&B offers, which limits the evening economy and town centre dwell time.

The Masterplan Development Framework outlined key strategic objectives to address the challenges experienced by St Helens and deliver *"a culturally centred vibrant town centre that matches the borough's potential with people at the heart"*

The Masterplan identified the opportunity to create a purpose-built Market Hall within the central retail zone of the town centre, with visual links to St Helens Parish Church and set within a rejuvenated public realm.

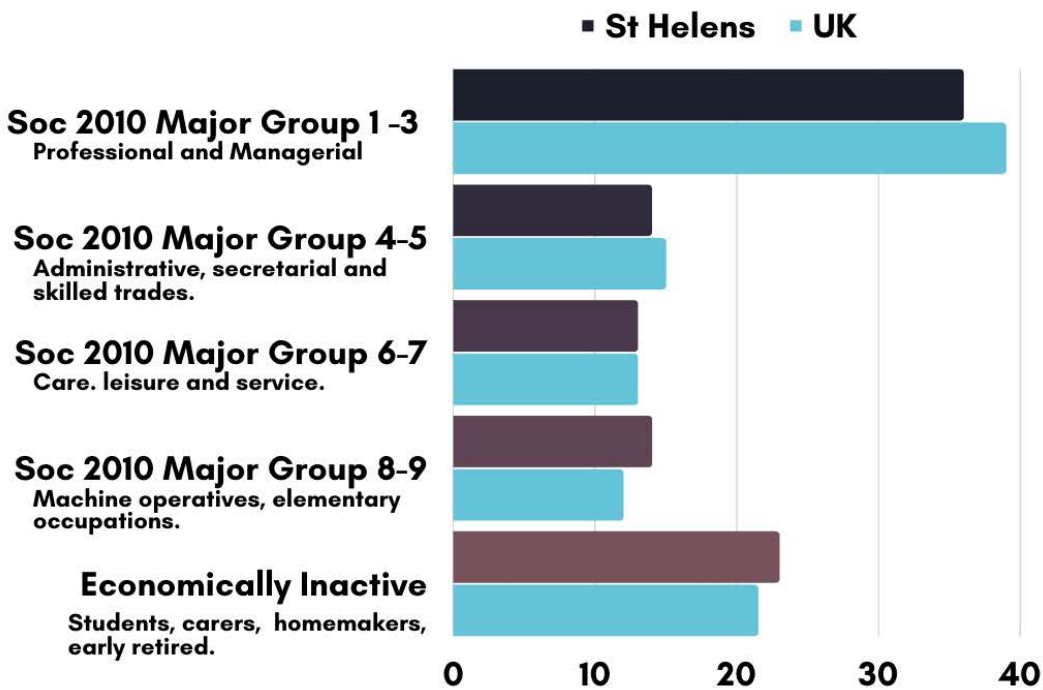
Proposed works will seek to demolish the Hardshaw Shopping Centre, creating a 'New Market Street' which will benefit from small independent shops and the new Market Hall.

Within the wider central retail zone, proposals include additional residential provision, a new hotel, facade improvements to shops and enhanced circulation routes to the wider town centre.

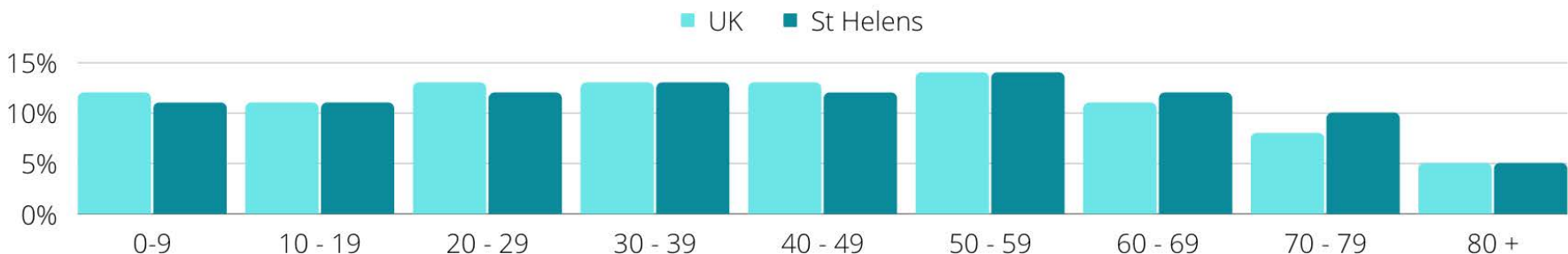


180,585
RESIDENT POPULATION
OF THE BOROUGH - 2019

£163k
AVERAGE HOUSE PRICE
IN 2021 COMPARED TO
£329K NATIONALLY



Employment in St Helens skews to less skilled jobs, with a low **job density of 0.63**, leading to high levels of youth unemployment. The average gross pay is **£29.9k per annum**, and St Helens experiences **lower levels of education attainment** that the regional or national average.



Age breakdown for St Helens compared to UK averages. Demonstrates a higher proportion of older residents and slight under-representation of younger demographics.

St Helens F&B Offer. Current Offer and Future Opportunities.

St Helens has a relatively small proportion of food and beverage units within the town centre for the size of the population and retail floor space provision.

The existing F&B provision is predominantly independent-led, with Nandos, KFC, Mcdonald's, and German Doner Kebab representing the national chain provision within the town centre.

The highest-rated restaurants within St Helens are all independents, with the top ten from April 2022 explored further here. The quality and international mix represented by these restaurants provide confidence in consumer demand for more exciting cuisines at mid-price points, with The Dean offering a more high-end experience and price point.

The Dean, which offered higher-end cuisine at a higher price-point has recently closed, which may be related to the more premium price although this is unknown at this time.

F&B units have become clustered along Duke Street and Bridge Street, with more limited options in the area identified as the Retail Core for the town centre around Church Street.

Consumers are aspirational, and there is an emerging independent food market in St Helens aimed at younger consumers, examples being Vigour on Bridge Street and the Imperial Quarter outside St Helens College. Plans are underway for a shipping container F&B venue at Chalon Way, bringing together street food and bars from the developers of SteelYard Kelham in Sheffield.

There is a strong opportunity for a distinct casual dining offer on Church Street to act as an F&B anchor for this part of the town centre and increase circulation.

Good food is not exclusive, and maintaining a mid-range price point will be important for delivering future success.



1. MR CHAN'S

Chinese and Asian cuisine.



2. BA'BURSI

Indian, Bangladeshi cuisine.



3. TOAST

British breakfast and cafe.



4. THE DEAN

Contemporary British food. **Recently closed.**



5. LILY'S VICTORIAN TEAROOMS & RESTAURANT

British cafe and afternoon teas.



6. LIMASSOL

Mediterranean and Greek restaurant.



7. ANATOLIA GRILL

Mediterranean and Barbecue Restaurant.



8. THAI JAA RESTAURANT

Thai restaurant, Asian cuisine.



9. THE COLLIER'S ARMS

British bar and traditional pub menu.



10. DIYA

Indian, balti cuisine.



Town Centre Needs Assessment

To deliver on the aspirations for St Helens Town Centre as identified in the Draft Development Framework, St Helens needs:

- To repurpose the overabundance of retail floorspace within the town centre.
- A wider range of F&B offers to kick-start the evening economy and attract people into the town centre.
- More experiential shopping opportunities.
- Wider intergenerational appeal, including offers for families, young people, professionals and older demographics.
- To circulate footfall between 'monolithic indoor shopping precincts' and independent businesses around the town centre, potentially considering wayfinding strategies.
- To enhance the architecture and heritage surround of the town centre.
- To encourage dwell time within the town centre.
- To attract and retain businesses within the town centre and support local employment in a diverse range of industries, including professional and office-based sectors.
- To Increase town centre residential provision to encourage more people to live in the town centre.

By repurposing redundant retail space, St Helens can create experiential leisure, dining and community-led spaces that underpin thriving town centres.

St Helens Market will become integral to the distinct identity of St Helens, strongly interconnected with the local community and a ‘must-see’ destination for visitors.



4. A Defined Vision for the Future of St Helens Market.

St Helens Market will be a destination attraction that acts as an anchor footfall driver within the town centre, attracting footfall from the whole of St Helens in addition to the wider region.

It will be home to an exciting mix of small, independent businesses that offer high standards of customer service, appearance and quality.

The market will have a focus on food, including fresh food retailers, hot food and street food traders, with communal seating space to enjoy food and a regularly changing programme of events and animation. There will be units for retail and service businesses, supplemented by pop-up and event retailers.

The market offers a vibrant and regularly changing space that offers an experiential shopping and dining destination with intergenerational appeal.

The food court will trade into the evenings, predominantly offering dine-in opportunities but taking advantage of third-party delivery services such as Just Eat and Deliveroo. The evening opening will be supplemented by a weekly programme of live music, entertainment and family-friendly activities to draw constant footfall and increase trader turnover.

The communal seating area should flow seamlessly into the outdoor space for summer months via bi-fold doors. Allowing ease of access and connectivity with the wider town centre.

The market will reflect retail best-practice, with integrated digital technology, including QR code table ordering, a Click-and-Collect point with refrigerated lockers for fresh food ordering and a heavy focus on social media promotion and engagement.

By utilising a modern landlord-tenant approach, including turnover rents for street food traders, flexible in-out terms, a variety of trading contracts and low start-up costs, the market will position itself as an incubator space for small and start-up businesses within St Helens.

The market could incorporate a flexible space that can be utilised for pop-up and speciality markets, exhibitions, events, community uses or additional seating, creating a diverse programme that supports repeat footfall and positions the market as a true community hub.

St Helens Market will become integral to the distinct identity of St Helens, strongly interconnected with the local community and a ‘must-see’ destination for visitors.

5. Exploring Options for a Mezzanine Level. Optimising the available space while creating a commercially viable offer.

As the project evolves, one option to reduce the overall footprint of the building and therefore reduce capital costs is to create a mezzanine level, potentially relocating some ground-floor uses up to a first-floor level.

If this concept were to be implemented, careful consideration must be given to the design and architecture of the mezzanine so as not to inhibit the sense of 'drama' for ground-floor users enjoying food, drink and shopping in a feature building.

Mezzanine levels can be notoriously difficult to attract footfall, with multi-level locations such as shopping centres or retailers struggling to encourage circulation across floors. For this reason, the capital costs of installing a mezzanine tend to exceed their income potential unless the use is carefully designed to be a destination for footfall rather than benefitting from passive foot traffic.

Mezzanine or multi-floor levels have been used in a number of market developments, notable examples being Warrington Market Hall, Accrington Market Hall, Burton Market Hall, Barnsley Market and Newport Market.

Mezzanine/secondary levels are also being considered for other ongoing market hall developments such as Rhyl, Derby and Grimsby. Other locations, such as Darley Street Market, similar to Barnsley, are planning to place their whole food halls on upper levels while placing the more traditional market tenants on the lower levels to maximise footfall to those areas.

Warrington was a new build market which is within travelling distance to St Helens and is a key comparator. Warrington Market has a mezzanine level which houses a small number of commercial units, particularly appointment-based services such as a tattooist, hairdresser, barber and nail technician. The management office and back-of-house spaces are also located on the mezzanine, alongside public toilets. These uses have been broadly successful on the mezzanine level due to their nature as destination-led or bookings-led offers, while there has been churn from more traditional retail businesses located away from key footfall routes.

Barnsley Market was another new build market, with fresh food located on the ground floor, and a large retail footprint split across the ground floor and the first floor. The 'Market Kitchen' street food development is located on the first floor, which is busy and fully occupied.

However, this destination use is directly connected to the ground floor, and the footfall it attracts does not pass the retail units located on the first floor. As a result, occupancy on the ground floor sits significantly higher than the first-floor retail units, as these locations are more desirable.

Newport Market has recently re-opened following a multi-million-pound restoration project to create a food court, business and events space, and retail and fresh food businesses. The redevelopment, which claims to be the largest project of its kind in the UK, incorporates first-floor office and meeting space, with over 70 individual workspaces, co-working space, conference and wedding space with a capacity of 400 people, all benefitting from the food court and market offer alongside external garden and outdoor gym facilities. Using the mezzanine for tertiary sector uses, they have successfully created a distinct offer within the market.

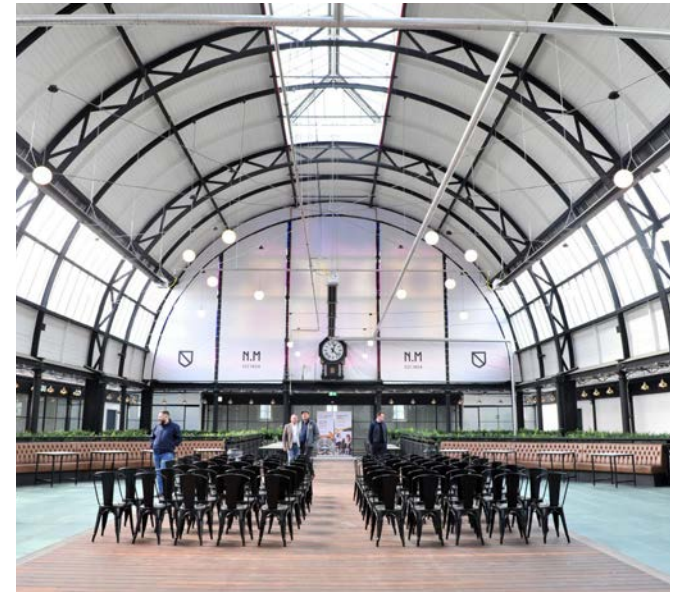
More traditional market halls such as Accrington and Burton have used their mezzanine areas for different purposes. Accrington used its upper floor as a small business suite and small footprint units for service businesses and destination businesses on low rents. Burton used their area (similar footprint) as a secondary

pop-up space. Accrington has always had high occupancy rates for these units, with low rent within a popular market hall providing a great incentive. Burton has struggled with its approach due to a lack of footfall being attracted to the upper levels.

Food halls have found success with creating additional seating space on mezzanine levels, creating inviting spaces to sit and 'people watch'. This approach works particularly well in busy food halls where ground-floor seating fills up quickly. Examples include Seven Dials Market, Mackie Mayor and Duke Street Market.

Key lessons for St Helens are that mezzanine levels must house destination uses rather than needing ambient footfall, and any potential to funnel footfall past them should be undertaken. First-floor retail units command very low rents and experience high tenant turnover and high void rates. Careful configuration to locate services such as toilets on the first floor, and directing customer flow past businesses can support viability via increased visibility, so a more successful approach would house appointment-based service businesses, speciality dining, community space, co-working or some other destination attraction on a mezzanine level and place them in the path of footfall heading to an area such as the toilets.

If a mezzanine level were to be incorporated into St Helens Market, it would have a sixty-person capacity due to fire regulations, which would limit potential uses.



Three options have been explored for the potential uses of a mezzanine.

OPTION 1: MAXIMISING LETTABLE SPACE

This option would maximise the lettable space for commercial units. Stage 2 Market Hall Workbook from Jon Matthews Architects indicates this could be nineteen units with two back-of-house spaces in a similar configuration to the ground floor.

By putting toilets on the mezzanine level and directing customers through retail units to the toilets via a feature staircase, foot flow could be maximised to support a wider range of retail businesses, whose business model is based on attrition and maximising sales to passing foot traffic. However, the proposed layout means footfall would likely channel down one side, leaving units on the other side without this passing footfall.

Although this option maximises the lettable space, these units would command very low commercial rents, with a high risk of vacancies and trader churn.

We would recommend that these units focus on appointment-based service units, office space and makers units. These businesses primarily sell through online channels, are less reliant on passing footfall, and will have the greatest viability in a first-floor, secondary location.

Despite this, nineteen commercial units in a secondary trading location will pose a significant challenge to lettings and will likely have an occupancy rate of around 60%, with rents sitting at £10 p.s.m.

Option 1 includes a provision for a seating area interspersed throughout the first-floor space. This area will likely be utilised during the daytime for people who are shopping, waiting for services or looking for somewhere a little out of the way to sit. In the evening, which will be peak trading times, customers will not be likely to use this space, as units will be shuttered, and it will feel disconnected from the vibrancy of the market hall. This could be countered by replacing shutters with shop fronts or more visually appealing barriers.

OPTION 2: OPEN MEZZANINE SPACE

This option would see the creation of toilets and back-of-house office space on the first floor, reducing the floorspace requirement on the ground floor and creating a distinct open space with a central void that can be used as additional seating.

The proposed layout of the mezzanine will leave a void in the middle of the floor space, retaining the double-height ceiling on the ground floor. If the mezzanine is to act as a commercial space, however, this will leave customers sitting on the first-floor level looking over the back-of-house and prep areas. A better approach would be to locate the mezzanine over this central block, with customers able to

sit and look over the public areas of the market, creating connectivity and a desirable environment to sit in.

If visual connectivity could be created between the mezzanine seating space and the ground floor vendors, this could become a relaxing space to sit and work, people watch, enjoy food and drink and take part in community activities, which would make it viable as a commercial seating space.

With the business case based on turnover rent generation from street food units, additional seating is directly linked to additional income through higher food and drink sales as more people spend more time in the venue.

This concept can be counter-intuitive, as more traditional markets work on the principle that more lettable space means more income. However, demand for retail space is reducing, evidenced by vacancy rates growing nationally across markets, including St Mary’s Market in St Helens.

In order to attract customers to this space, the feel of the space, style of furniture and decoration would have to be distinctly different from the ground floor. We would recommend looking at having sofas, soft seating and more comfortable space on the mezzanine level, prioritising more space-efficient bench seating and tables and chairs on the ground floor. This approach would support viability by creating a distinct space which is appealing.

An alternative option for the space is to use it for pop-up

markets and events, inviting travelling markets such as vintage weigh sales, record fairs and farmers markets. As the ground floor space has constricted, there is limited room for this on the ground floor. This is unlikely to provide a commercial income, as these events tend to operate at a breakeven point, but would provide valuable footfall benefits and socioeconomic opportunities for a wider range of small and start up businesses.

We would not recommend creating a mezzanine level simply to relocate the back of house and toilet areas without a commercial return. If the space is used for pop-up markets and events, it is assumed that they operate at a breakeven point and are cash neutral.

OPTION 3: HYBRID OPTION

Option 3 would involve a hybrid solution that combines lettable units with an attractive seating area to increase covers and dwell time.

The positioning of the mezzanine should be carefully considered to maximise visual connectivity with the public areas of the Market Hall, in particular the street food units and main seating area. This will allow people sitting upstairs to enjoy the atmosphere in the Market Hall, which will have a significant impact on dwell time and spending.

Because this seating area is secondary to the prime seating on the ground floor, it must have a distinct appeal. We would recommend exploring sofas, armchairs, soft

seating and more attractive decor to make it an attractive lounge-style area. During the day, this could be used as space for professionals to work comfortably or have meetings, with vendors creating deals targeted to this audience.

Due to the relative privacy of the space, it could also be used for community functions, offering space for reading groups, knit and natter circles, networking meetings or community support activities.

We would recommend a critical mass of no more than eight commercial units on the mezzanine, with five being an optimum number to maintain full occupancy and limit vacant units, which would then have a knock-on effect on trade and the reputation of the market.

These units should be heavily focused on appointment-based service uses, particularly beauticians, hairdressers, barbers, and tattooists. Other potential uses could be makers’ spaces, in which artisans who primarily sell online use the unit as a shopfront to showcase their products to people and use the space to work and fulfil online orders.

It may also be possible to locate a combined bar and coffee shop unit within this space, operating on limited opening hours to increase income. This has not been factored into financial analysis but may be a future route for commercial income.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Back-of-house office space and public toilets should be retained on the first floor to make the building more efficient and condense the ground-floor footprint.

At this stage in the design, a mezzanine level is unlikely to have a commercial impact on the business case for St Helens Market due to the low rent levels that these units command and the difficulties associated with driving multi-level footfall.

Based on a high-level financial analysis of the three options outlined above, there is limited benefit to creating a mezzanine level with defined uses and infrastructure.

However, there is potential in the future for a need to increase the seating capacity of the market or create an internal flexible space for pop-up markets and events.

The developing scheme does not include defined uses for a mezzanine level but retains the option to create a first-floor space in the future as the market matures and evolves.

6. Developing the Spatial Schedule. Exploring different types of units, critical mass and commercial viability.

Market halls typically include lettable units, which fall into three categories, hospitality, retail and service.

There are other types of units included within a modern market hall, but these are typically usable spaces rather than lettable spaces, i.e. private dining, co-working, digital hubs, and meeting/teaching spaces.

HOSPITALITY UNITS

Hospitality businesses are the anchor for a modern market hall, from bars to coffee shops, from fried breakfast cafes to street food kitchens. They come in a range of types and sizes. Their basic requirements are all very similar, extract, water and drainage.

Street Food Kitchens

The street food units underpin the commercial viability of the venue, operating on turnover rents in which a percentage of the trader's net income is paid to the operator in rent.

Because of this turnover environment, margins are extremely important for businesses to be viable. With an

approximate calculation of 20% rent, 20% VAT, 20% cost of sales, 10% utilities, 20% staff and 10% profit from turnover, it can be easy for inexperienced businesses to slip into losses without careful cost control and reaching minimum turnover levels.

Too many street food units and the maximum income levels for the businesses become unviable. Too few, and the venue lacks the diversity and variety to attract strong footfall levels.

We have recommended six street food units, a bar, a more traditional cafe and a coffee shop/patisserie for St Helens Market. This variety in style and peak trading times maximises turnover while limiting competition.

Although St Helens has demand for additional F&B outlets within the town centre, we would not recommend more than six street food units in the market. Based on the expected turnover potential, individual profitability would be too low to sustain more businesses successfully.

The size of street food kitchens varies widely, from around 9m2 to 20m2. Larger units within this scale are more easily lettable, as potential traders can more easily see how the

kitchen can be configured. However, intelligent storage solutions and a programme of just-in-time deliveries mean street food vendors can operate from smaller footprints, and larger units require a higher financial spend on fitting out. Within St Helens, the size of the street food units can range from 12m2 - 18m2, meaning some units could be reduced in size from current designs to reduce the overall footprint.

Bar

Although the venue will be food-led, a feature bar will create a focal point for the space and can set the tone for the whole venue. A bar is a key unit requiring a larger footprint and storage space. Although bars can be smaller, we would recommend a size of 20m2 - 30m2, ideally with a direct connection to a cold room/cellar.

Bars benefit from a longer, thinner footprint, making it easier for staff to quickly fulfil orders without having to walk around the unit unnecessarily. The void for the staff should be about 1m in depth to allow two people to pass while keeping everything in easy reach to speed up service.

If a cellar/cold room could be created, it should have

connectivity with the bar, allowing pipes to flow directly from barrels to serving taps. The shorter the length of the run, the better for cleaning and reducing wastage, which is why an adjoining storage space is the preferred route.

Cafe / Coffee Shop

Many traditional markets have a cafe unit offering fried breakfasts, sandwiches, burgers and chips, often for bargain prices. These offerings are extremely popular with an older audience and can be an anchor in this kind of market environment. The cafe in St. Mary's Market is an example of this.

Allocation for a more traditional cafe offer within St Helens Market will support a wider customer base, appealing to an older, more traditional shopper demographic and anchoring a morning food offer. Although the cafe will provide a traditional offering, it will be of a higher quality than a 'greasy spoon' cafe, utilising quality ingredients from within the market, prepared and presented to a high standard.

In addition, we would recommend that a more modern coffee shop and patisserie offer will complement the cafe, providing a distinct offer for a younger audience during the morning period. Depending on the fresh food outlets, this could include the sale of baked bread alongside pastries, sausage rolls and coffee shop snack foods.

These units will operate different opening hours to the other street food units, reducing competition while creating a more well-rounded offer throughout the day.



RETAIL UNITS

Fresh Food Retail

Fresh food is an anchor for markets, acting as a key footfall driver that generates repeat visits, increases customer spend and delivers valuable food equality services. The most successful markets have a strong fresh food offer, and delivering quality and diversity should be a success factor for St Helen's Market.

Fresh food retail can include butchers, greengrocers, bakers, fishmongers, delis, cheesemongers, zero waste supplies, wine merchants and many more, creating a critical mass of food offerings that mimics the convenience of a supermarket.

However, these industries can be difficult to source. There is a very limited fresh food offer in St Mary's Market, meaning there is not necessarily a pool of food retail businesses ready to move into a new market development.

Where butchers were traditionally passed through families, this effect is dwindling, and new butchers are not appearing at the same rate that people are retiring from the industry. However, the independent butchery industry has been given a recent boost by the closures of many supermarket butchery counters and the redundancies of trained butchers. Many of these would like to start their own businesses but lack start-

up capital. Fit-out grants could assist with the attraction of these.

Letting these food retail units will be challenging but, if done successfully, will have a transformative effect on the project.

We would recommend providing six units with a focus on food retail, enough to provide a strong anchor for the venue while maintaining strong occupancy levels. These units will have a larger footprint of around 18m² to facilitate prep and service areas within the units. Some user clauses, such as a butcher, may look to take on a double unit to create more space for a larger display.

Retail

Traditional markets are heavily reliant on retail, particularly lines such as children's clothing, bargain household goods, discount clothing and pet supplies.

As customer behaviours have evolved, these more traditional uses have struggled to compete with online shopping, particularly Amazon, pound store high street shops and out-of-town retail parks with expansive free parking.

Modern market retailers need to focus on boutique and destination goods, combined with strong online sales, delivery services, active promotion and experiential activities.

These businesses operate at customer-friendly opening times, capturing spending outside the standard retail opening hours of 9-5, whilst many traditional market traders close before 3. Modern market businesses remain open when the venue is busy, which means staying open until 6-7pm. Examples from other markets include florists whose peak trading times are Friday and Saturday evenings while customers enjoy food, drink and entertainment.

The retail offer in St Helens Market must attract these businesses to support mid to long-term viability. Many market hall redevelopments cater for high levels of retail based on historic or current occupiers, but the focus needs to be on either adaptable units or planning for what the future offer should be.

St Helens has a large amount of vacant retail floor space, meaning these units will need to be competitively priced and tenants secured who understand and support the wider vision for the market, operating as part of a bigger entity.

Unit sizes for this style of retailer range from 9m² to 20m², with some retailers growing out of smaller footprints as their business grows.

As such, we recommend that the wall partitions between the units are able to be easily removed to create modular units allowing them to flex in size. This will also enable adaptability for the future to change their use.

The market can launch with a mix of these single and

double units, with around 10-12 units provided within the venue.

SERVICE UNITS

Services are increasingly represented in markets, with a focus on appointment-based businesses such as hairdressers, nail technicians, opticians, beauticians and tattooists.

These businesses operate outside of 9-5 in order to be available for a wide range of customers and maximise their turnover. Because they are destination businesses, they are less reliant on ambient footfall, instead acting as footfall drivers which will support retail uses within the market.

Although units do not need to be specifically designated as service units, 'retail' units with water and drainage supply can easily be let to service businesses.

The businesses are more viable and can command higher rental levels than retail units.



OTHER UNIT TYPES

Private Dining

Private dining areas can increasingly be found in food halls across the country, creating intimate spaces that can be booked for private parties, celebrations and meals.

The income from these units is not derived from rentals; rather, at the time of booking, customers will order food and drinks packages from the venue, choosing across vendors and the bar. These packages will include a small income for the operator who facilitates the booking and organises the food and drinks, as well as benefitting from turnover rents from food and drink ordered by the party.

Private dining spaces act as unique selling points, increase turnover rents and make the market a desirable place to spend money for special occasions. The direct income stream will not be significant within the wider business case, but this approach will increase turnover rents to deliver the business case.

Meeting Rooms

During the day, these private spaces can be used as rentable meeting rooms and office spaces, offering rent-by-the-hour rooms for people to book through an online platform. There is potential to offer hotdesking space within the rooms, combined with refillable coffee and

lunchtime meal deal packages.

Offering low hourly charges will support more bookings for these spaces, bringing in professionals to the market, who will likely go on to purchase food and drink, generating income through turnover rents.

These spaces can have a diverse range of uses, from business meetings to educational classes.

Again, although not a strong direct income generator, this diverse offer will support additional footfall, attract a different audience and support income through turnover generation.

ADDITIONAL USES:

Communal Seating Area

A large communal seating area is very important to support street food trader turnover to achieve the business case. Income potential is directly linked to available covers, and we would recommend a core internal seating capacity of 350 covers, with the option to expand into outdoor seating.

Seating should be a mix of bench seats, individual chairs and tables and soft seating, including sofas, armchairs and coffee tables to support a wide range of food styles throughout the day and evening. Tables should have a variety of levels to add visual interest, including high tables

and stools and poser tables for standing room to enjoy drinks.

Stage and Performance

In order to attract strong and repeat footfall into the market, particularly in the evenings, entertainment, live music and performances should be programmed. Modern markets embrace weekly quizzes, performances from local bands, comedy nights, 'bongo bingo' and dance performances, to name a few.

A modular stage should be incorporated in a clearly defined area with lighting and a PA system for general announcements. Bands will be required to bring their own amplifiers and PA systems.

Storage and Back of House

Back-of-house provision has been included for all food traders. This will be in the form of a simple caged area with access to a distribution board, and tenants will be able to install their own cold storage space, shelving or fridges/freezers. There will be limited additional storage space for retailers, and the market management will have dedicated storage space for equipment, seating etc.

Welcome Desk / Click and Collect Point

The welcome desk will act as a customer-facing office space for the management team and will include click-

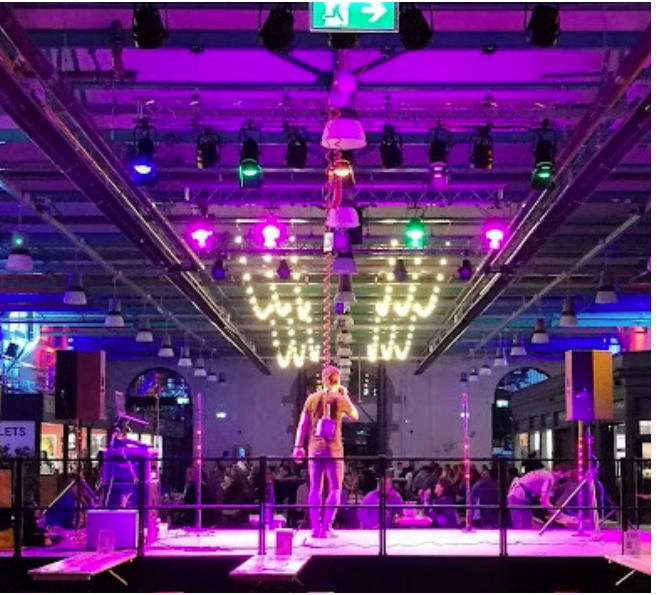
and-collect lockers. Lockers will be a mix of ambient temperature simple lockers and refrigerated lockers for fresh food. The click-and-collect desk can remain open into the evening, allowing customers to pick up shopping after work and enjoy street food, supporting the viability of other businesses within the market and wider town centre.

Toilets

Toilet provision should be based on the levels required for restaurants and hospitality venues rather than the reduced requirement for retail centres. Attractive interiors and comfortable toilets will encourage dwell time. Depending on the wider town centre provision, a changing place toilet could be incorporated, supporting accessibility and inclusivity.

SUMMARY

Based on the above rationale, we have reviewed the footprints for the market alongside business case planning to deliver a commercial offer that will retain high occupancy, drive footfall and provide flexibility for units to be able to change to other uses based on demand. For example, private dining and meeting rooms have been included, which could become retail/service spaces if market demand dictates.



7. Spatial Schedule. Determining the optimum use mix and spatial requirement.

As concepts and the direction for the project have evolved, options have been explored in more detail to create an optimum mix of uses that provides a commercially viable scheme and delivers a wide range of socioeconomic benefits.

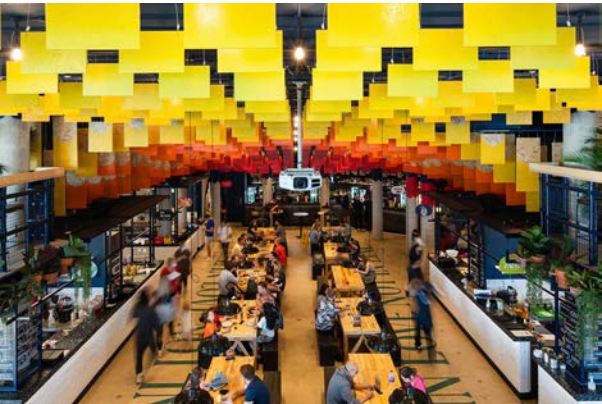
The initial direction of the project was to deliver a 25,000 sq. ft scheme with a substantial retail footprint that would support the existing trader base and additional units. The size of the scheme and associated operating costs were significant, with a high risk that there would be large number of vacant units, recreating the issues that St Mary's Market currently faces.

Although the addition of street food units would stabilise the business case from current losses, there would be a limited financial return, and the concept went against high street and market industry trends to consolidate retail space.

A second iteration of the plans reduced the footprint to 20,000 sq. ft., creating a critical mass of trading units and adding a large, flexible space for pop-up markets and events alongside 350 internal seating covers. This option offered a commercial business case, although operating costs were still significant due to the size of the venue. The addition of competitive leisure concepts was considered but discounted as alternative locations in close proximity may have been suitable for this dedicated use.

At this point, consideration was given to the creation of a mezzanine level (explored in Section 6), as a means of making the capital scheme more efficient. A mezzanine was discounted as part of the core business case due to the difficulties associated with multi-level retailing. However, the option to incorporate a mezzanine in the future has been built into the design, supporting flexibility for future changes to the market as the business case matures and evolves.

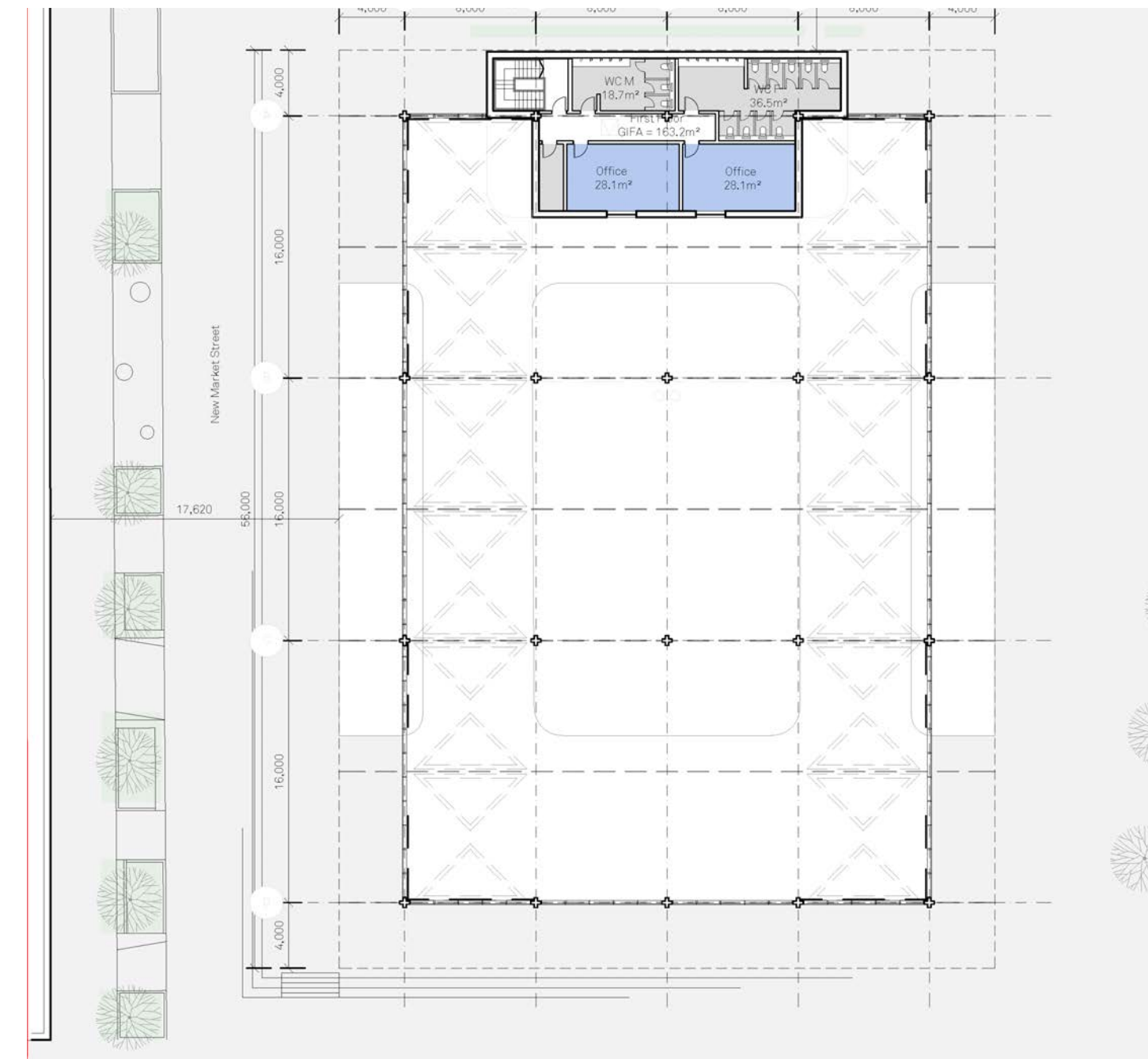
The following spatial schedule has been determined to create a critical mass of units that creates a commercially viable market (See Section 10 - Business Case), offers a modern and exciting mix to act as a footfall driver, supports a wide range of small and independent businesses and can deliver strong socioeconomic benefits.



Area	Description	No. of Units	Size (sq. m)	Total Spatial Requirement (sq. m)	Total Spatial Requirement (sq. ft)
Street Food Court	Cafe / Coffee Shop Units	2	12.00	24.00	258.33
	Street Food Units	6	15.00	90.00	968.75
	Bar	1	25.00	25.00	269.10
	Private Dining Rooms / Meeting Rooms / Teaching Spaces	4	15.00	60.00	645.83
	Seating Area Covers	350	1.25	437.50	4,709.21
Retail Kiosks	Retail / Service Units	10	12.00	120.00	1,291.67
	Retail / Service Units	2	18.00	36.00	387.50
	Welcome Desk / Click and Collect Point	1	12.00	12.00	129.17
Fresh Food Court	Fresh Food Kiosks	6	18.00	108.00	1,162.50
Storage	Storage Cages/Cold Storage	5	10.00	50.00	538.20
	Bar Cellar & Barrel Storage	1	20.00	20.00	215.28
	Cleaning Storage	1	10.00	10.00	107.64
	Market Storage	1	16.00	16.00	172.22
Waste and Plant	Waste / Recycling Room	1	30.00	30.00	322.92
	Comms, M&E, Plant and Machinery	1	30.00	30.00	322.92
Total Ground Floor:				1,069	11,501
BoH Office Space	Market Office	1	15.00	15.00	161.46
	Staff Room and Kitchen	1	15.00	15.00	161.46
	Staff Changing Room	2	10.00	20.00	215.28
Toilets	Male Toilets	1	20.00	20.00	215.28
	Female Toilets	1	40.00	40.00	430.56
	Changing Places / Disabled Toilet(s)	1	12.00	12.00	129.17
Total First Floor:				122.00	1,313.20

Emerging Layout. Developed layout based on the spatial schedule.

- 6 x Street Food Units
- 1 x Bar
- 2 x Coffee Shop / Cafe
- 6 x Fresh Food Units
- 11 x Retail Units
- 4 x Private Spaces (Meeting Rooms / Private Dining / Pop-Up)
- Welcome Desk / Click and Collect Unit
- Changing Places Bathroom
- Public Toilets
- Office Space
- Staff Areas
- Back of House Provision



8. M&E and Servicing Requirements. Overview of specifications for the development.

Modern markets are more than shopping areas; they require 21st-century amenities to create a comfortable, vibrant space where customers want to spend time and money. Servicing and M&E can form a significant proportion of capital budgets but are fundamental requirements for future trading.

Too often, designs revert to the idea of 'it's just a market', but instead, thinking should pivot around the idea of a mix between a shopping centre and a restaurant, with careful attention to operational efficiency and customer experience.

Street food and fresh food units will require a high basic standard of servicing. The proposed layout for St Helens Market condenses these styles of units together, allowing them to benefit from shared servicing and reduce capital costs.

The following are the servicing and M&E requirements we would expect to need to deliver a vibrant mixed-use market offer.

Electricity - All units within the market will require access to electrical sockets to run EPOS systems, charge card readers, and run business-specific equipment. Power

availability will also need to be considered for bands and pop-up markets, often delivered through overhead pull-down power sockets.

Street food units will require access to three-phase electricity, although as part of vendor fit-outs, they will locate plugs themselves based on the layout of equipment that works for their business.

A distribution board should be fitted, with tenants using their own electricians working to the required standards to source power. Street food tenants will need a three-phase 60-amp sub-metered supply.

Electrical Installations:

- Public area lighting zoned to allow flexibility during different times of the day. The market hall is a hospitality venue, and the lighting needs to be designed as such.
- Three-phase 60A power distribution to street food kitchens and fresh food kiosks. Kiosk electrical installation by others from a distribution board.
- Single-phase electrical supply to a distribution board per retail, service or makers unit
- Ventilation

- CCTV
- Fire and Alarm systems
- PA system, which allows background music to be played from a streaming platform (i.e. can be connected to a laptop or tablet).
- Data cabling at a high level to enable wifi and CCTV.
- All utilities to be submetered

Gas - Gas can be a valuable commodity for street food vendors, although it usually depends on the building's capacity and climate targets. If there is the intention to create a gas supply to the F&B kiosks, this will require an interlock for extraction hoods and individual unit metering.

If this is not possible, or is against the Council's decarbonisation policies, vendors can use electrical equipment, with significant progress made in recent years to improve the standards of electrical cooking equipment. Increasingly, street food vendors are expressing a preference for electrical equipment as a result of rising gas prices.

As a new build development, trading units within St Helens Market should run on electricity rather than gas. However, gas could be utilised for the venue's heating, which is often more effective than radiant panels or ground source

heat pumps, although may be contrary to the Council's decarbonisation targets.

Water & Drainage - individual, metered connections to the street food and fresh food units. Each unit will need to install sinks with grease traps, which could be installed as part of the capital development or by tenants as part of their fitout. Small water heaters can be fitted beneath the sinks for the supply of hot water.

Retailers may not need water or drainage, but if possible, units benefit from connections, giving flexibility for uses to be changed in the future or attract desirable user clauses such as a florist, hairdresser etc. If retail units cannot be supplied with water and drainage, these businesses can work from a communal tap and standalone water pump system, although this may be less attractive to potential tenants.

Extraction System - Street food units will require a connection to an extraction system. This can be through a landlord's kitchen extract master system, which acts as a 'draw', providing a negative pressure to allow the food tenants' own powered kitchen extract canopy to feed into the master system (unless the canopies are fitted as part of the capital works). An extraction system capable of a 500L/second draw would be sufficient for the kitchens within St Helens Market.

Vendors will supply and install their own fully compliant kitchen extract systems that connect to the master system,

using interlock valves if gas is available.

Floor - A usable and cleanable floor finish. This can be as simple as sealed, smooth power floated concrete.

Heating/Cooling - Heating and Cooling should be provided for a comfortable environment for customers. Seating areas, in particular, should maintain a comfortable ambient temperature.

Although many markets use infrared overhead heaters despite high ongoing running costs, gas heating is usually the most effective option.

Lighting - needs to be zoned with controllable lux levels. Mood lighting, low-hanging overhead lights, and feature lighting e.g. festoon will enhance the customer experience and create the mood. For example, draping festoon lighting across seating areas creates ambience.

Unit signage should be lit, either backlit or with uplighters to promote the businesses and create customer appeal in the evening when the market is dark.

Wi-fi - High-speed, full-coverage secure wifi provision is required for traders to operate their EPOS systems and card readers.

There is the potential for public wifi with data capture facilities, which will encourage dwell time within the building.

CCTV - Full coverage CCTV with remote connection for monitoring.

P.A. System - Music coverage across the market. Good quality music at the level of a bar environment. Zoned and controlled from a panel or app.

Building Management System - A digital BMS will be valuable for the management to take readings for tenant utilities and process rent without having to take physical readings. It helps reduce staffing levels, and the data can support improved operations.

Toilets - A suitable number of toilets should be available for the capacity of the venue. The provision of a 'changing places' toilet is suitable for some locations depending on availability within the wider town centre.

Toilets should be fitted to a high standard, with flattering lighting and attractive decor. This can be an important part of the customer experience and encourage dwell time.

Footfall Counters - It is useful to understand and evidence the use of the building and the flow of people within it by reviewing footfall data for the entrances.

9. Scheme Operational Management. Defining the opening hours and staffing schedule.

Retail Market - Required Opening Hours			
	Open	Close	Total Hours
Monday	09:00	17:00	08:00
Tuesday	09:00	17:00	08:00
Wednesday	09:00	17:00	08:00
Thursday	09:00	17:00	08:00
Friday	09:00	17:00	08:00
Saturday	09:00	17:00	08:00
Sunday	Closed	Closed	0
Total:			48

Cafe and Street Food Units*			
	Open	Close	Total Hours
Monday	Closed	Closed	0
Tuesday	08:00	18:30	10:30
Wednesday	08:00	18:30	10:30
Thursday	08:00	21:00	13:00
Friday	08:00	22:30	14:30
Saturday	08:00	22:30	14:30
Sunday	10:00	19:00	09:00
Total:			72

Bar Required Opening Hours			
	Open	Close	Total Hours
Monday	Closed	Closed	0
Tuesday	12:00	18:30	06:30
Wednesday	12:00	18:30	06:30
Thursday	12:00	21:00	09:00
Friday	12:00	22:30	10:30
Saturday	12:00	22:30	10:30
Sunday	12:00	19:00	07:00
Total:			50

*Street Food Units will be offered the following blocks of hours from which they must operate a minimum of two blocks:
Morning: 8am - 11am
Lunch and Afternoon:11am - 4pm
Evening: 4pm - Close.

Retail tenants will be able to operate outside of the required hours if the building is open to the public.

Building Open to the Public:			
	Open	Close	Total Hours
Monday	09:00	17:00	08:00
Tuesday	08:00	18:30	10:30
Wednesday	08:00	18:30	10:30
Thursday	08:00	21:00	13:00
Friday	08:00	22:30	14:30
Saturday	08:00	22:30	14:30
Sunday	10:00	19:00	09:00
Total:			80

Building Open to Traders:			
	Open	Close	Total Hours
Monday	08:00	18:00	10:00
Tuesday	07:00	19:30	12:30
Wednesday	07:00	19:30	12:30
Thursday	07:00	22:00	15:00
Friday	07:00	23:30	16:30
Saturday	07:00	23:30	16:30
Sunday	09:00	20:00	11:00
Total:			94



PROPOSED STAFFING SCHEDULE

	Total Cost (inc. N.I & Pensions)
General Manager	£41,300
Assistant General Manager	£29,500
Hospitality Manager	£33,040
Marketing and Events Coordinator	£25,960
Hospitality Team (80 weekly hours)	£53,997
Total:	£183,797

This staffing schedule is based on non-public-sector roles and do not take into account any public sector pay bands.

This staffing schedule reflects a comfortable staffing provision to achieve the aims and aspirations outlined within the vision for the space, including the programming and delivery of a continuous calendar of events and animation.

10. Target User Clauses. Preferred user clauses to create an optimum tenant mix.

Street Food:

- 1. Wood Fired Pizza
- 2. Indian Street Food
- 3. Thai Street Food
- 4. Greek Street Food
- 5. South American Street Food
- 6. Gourmet Burgers and Wings
- 7. Tapas and Small Plates
- 8. Dessert Bar
- 9. Sushi
- 10. Noodle Bar

Fresh Food:

- 1. Butchers
- 2. Greengrocers
- 3. Bakery
- 4. Fishmongers
- 5. Delicatessen
- 6. Patisserie
- 7. Wine Merchant
- 8. Cheesemonger
- 9. World Foods
- 10. Chilled/Frozen Ready Meals

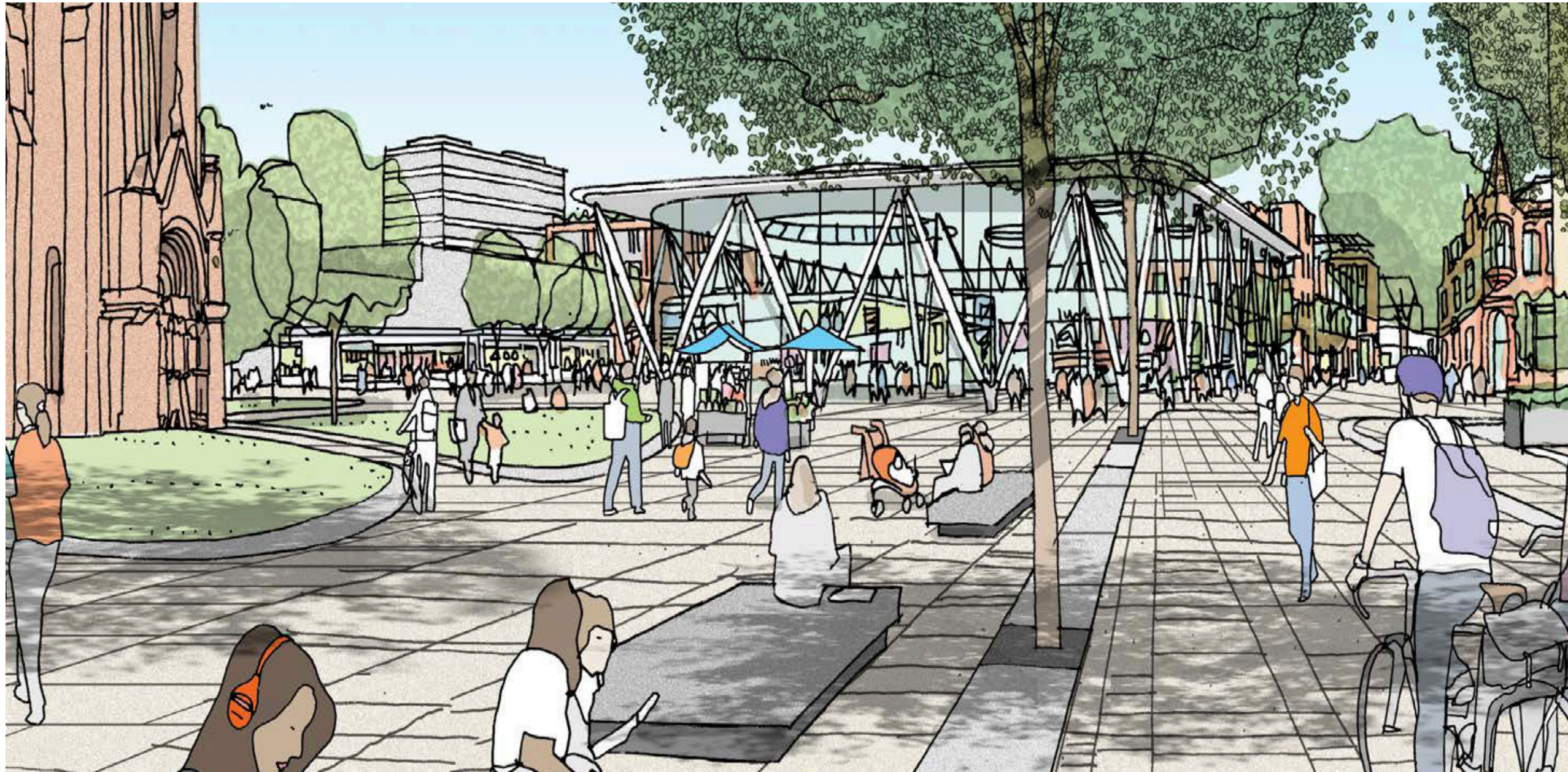
Retail:

- 1. Florist
- 2. Fabrics / Haberdashery
- 3. Sweets and American Food Products
- 4. Vintage / Upcycled Fashion
- 5. Zero-Waste Eco-Refill Shop
- 6. Records and Vinyl
- 7. Art Studio and Gallery
- 8. Jewellery Maker
- 9. Craft Beer Bottle Shop
- 10. Beauty Products

Service:

- 1. Barbers
- 2. Hairdressers
- 3. Tattoist
- 4. Nail Technician
- 5. Brow Bar
- 6. Carpets / Flooring
- 7. Curtains / Blinds
- 8. Professional Services and Advice
- 9. Physio / Chiropractor etc.
- 10. Spray Tans





9. Financial Business Case. Summary of projected income and expenditure.

A financial business case has been prepared, which includes detailed income and expenditure breakdowns. The full business case can be found in **Appendix 1: Business Case**.

In its current form, St Mary's Market operates at a loss and is subsidised by Council tax payers, requiring subsidy in excess of £325k pre-covid in 2019/20.

Based on realistic and commercial terms, accounting for risk and optimism bias, we predict that a redeveloped market could be financially sustainable after an initial establishment and consolidation period and then be profit-generating.

These figures could be outperformed through higher turnover generation for street food traders and budget reductions, although they represent a realistic expectation of performance.

Over a ten-year period, the market could generate a surplus of £1.08 million, including initial losses. There may be potential to capitalise some losses during the establishment

period, for example by including rental inducements, equipment and uniform purchase on capital rather than revenue budgets.

This surplus figure excludes the removal of the subsidy for St Mary's Market, of around £400k per annum.

The budget includes a generous allowance for marketing and events to ensure resources are in place to deliver a strong programme of recurring events that will drive footfall and allow the market to achieve projected turnover levels and deliver maximum socioeconomic benefits.

This business case is based on commercial terms and does not reflect any specific operating model. Once a preferred operating model has been confirmed, allowances may need to be made for internal recharges or central services.

INCOME

The key income driver for the market will be street food, cafe and bar operators on turnover rent agreements, in which vendors pay a percentage of net takings after VAT (if they demonstrate that they are VAT registered).

These will drive footfall to support the other tenants, raising awareness of the variety of businesses even outside of the core retail opening hours.

Street food halls across the country operate on turnover rents, ranging from 15% to 25% in high-footfall metropolitan centres such as London or proven high-turnover markets such as Altrincham.

We are recommending a turnover rent of 20% for the street food kitchens, a rate found in large towns and small cities across the UK, and justified by landlord investment in the curation of events and animation programmes. The bar has been set at 15% turnover rent due to higher income potential and the importance of securing an anchor bar offer.

Although fresh food retailers may be good candidates for turnover rent deals, the industry is dominated by more traditional business owners, and there is a strong preference for higher fixed rents across butchers/ greengrocers etc.

For the vendors operating on fixed rents (retail/service and food retail units), rental inducements have been

accounted for over the first three years, with an initial 30% discount in the first year, 20% in the second year and 10% in the third year, to allow these businesses to invest in their marketing and develop a strong customer base.

There is no need to offer rental discounts for street food vendors, as their rent is proportional to their earnings and lower initial earnings and high growth potential will result in lower rents and rapid growth.

Income increases year on year as a function of growth for the F&B outlets, and annual rent increases as a function of CPI assumed at 2.5%.

EXPENDITURE

Expenditure has been calculated based on commercial terms and data sets from comparator sites. It does not take into account Local Authority procurement or banding structures which vary between authorities. The budget reflects an appropriate but realistic level of expenditure required to attract strong footfall and achieve the turnover rent levels outlined in the income projections.

This includes high levels of spending on marketing, events programmes and a £675 weekly budget on evening entertainment.

This reflects the shift within markets to a hospitality style of management and promotion rather than the more

historic asset management style of minimal marketing and expecting people to shop there as it was the local market.

Built-in staffing provision allows staff to specialise and focus on certain activities to deliver key duties. If required, additional savings could be made within the staffing allowance by combining duties across different members of staff. This is not recommended as a successful market should be staffing intense to ensure a high-quality visitor experience and tenant management.

Estimates have been assumed for NNDR, utilities and software based on comparator sites. These figures may be adjusted depending on the heating infrastructure (gas/ electricity, radiant panels/heat curtain etc.), common areas’ size and other factors defined within the developed design.

Expenditure increases annually as a function of CPI assumed at 2.5%.

RISK AND OPTIMISM BIAS

- Initial occupancy of 90% rising to 95% over three years for retail/food retail units
- Contingency allowance of 5%

INCOME PROJECTIONS	
Street Food / Bar / Coffee Shop	£327,600
Retail / Service Units	£83,376
Fresh Food Retail Units	£80,928
Private Room Spaces	£36,400
Storage	£6,500
Outdoor Market	£23,400
Events and Flexible Markets	£51,000
Total Income	£609,204

EXPENDITURE PROJECTIONS	
NNDR (estimated for common areas - professional review recommended)	£ 50,000
Staffing	£ 183,797
Utilities (Common Areas - tenant's recharged)	£ 70,000
Repairs and Maintenance	£ 15,000
Refuse Disposal	£ 35,000
Cleaning	£ 6,000
Purchase of Materials	£ 5,000
Equipment Hire	£ 3,000
Uniforms and PPE	£ 3,000
Training	£ 1,000
Licensing (PRS Licence (based on NNDR), BT Sport (based on NNDR) or similar, Alcohol etc)	£ 12,000
Marketing	£ 30,000
Events	£ 20,000
Weekly Entertainment	£ 35,000
Office Expenses	£ 3,000

EXPENDITURE PROJECTIONS	
IT and Wifi	£ 7,500
Software Subscriptions (including till EPoS)	£ 10,000
Phones and Radio	£ 3,000
Security	£ 30,000
Graphic Design	£ 5,000
Legal	£ 5,000
Accountancy Fees	£ 8,000
Bank Charges	£ 5,000
Other Third Party and Professional Fees	£ 2,500
Direct Operational Expense	£ 547,797
Contingency (5%)	£ 27,390
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£ 575,187



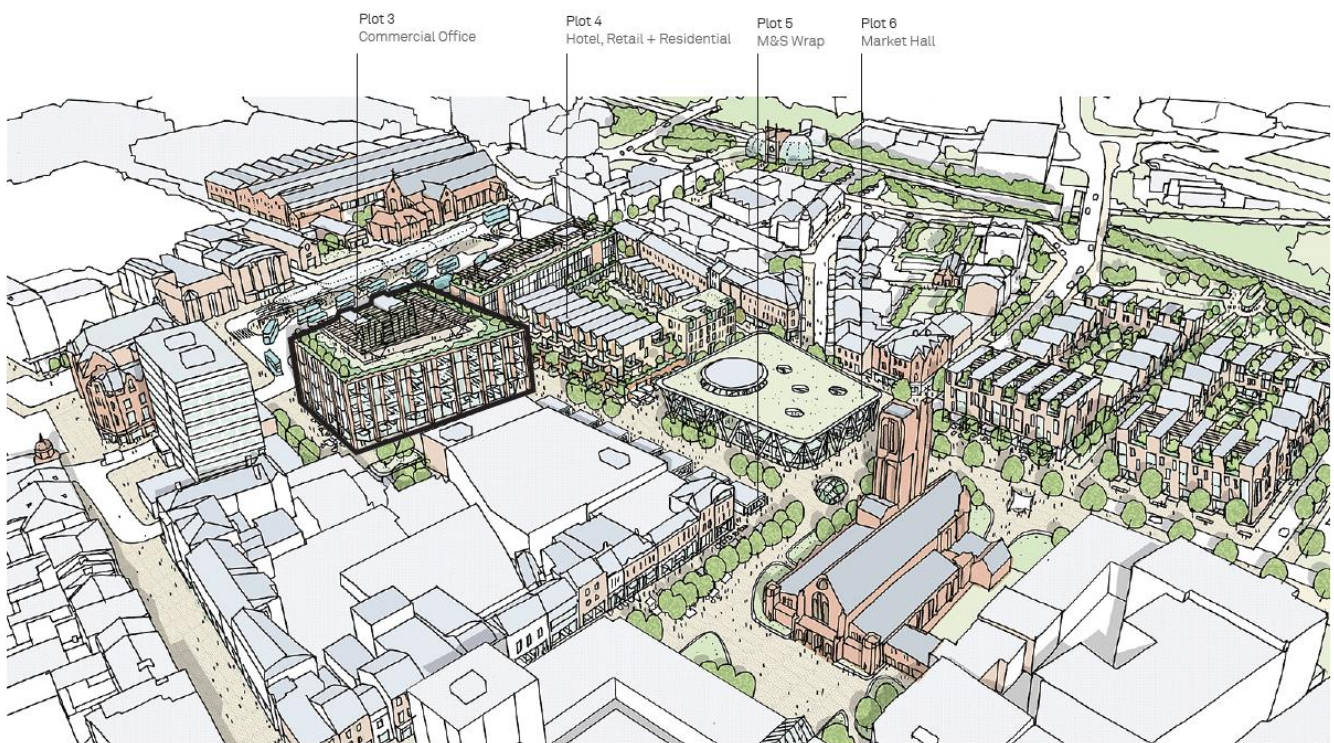
TEN YEAR FORECAST (Including occupancy, growth and rental inducements).			
	Income	Expenditure	Balance
Year 1	£ 548,412	£ 575,187	£ (26,775)
Year 2	£ 607,510	£ 589,566	£ 17,944
Year 3	£ 679,722	£ 604,305	£ 75,416
Year 4	£ 734,479	£ 619,413	£ 115,066
Year 5	£ 764,118	£ 634,898	£ 129,220
Year 6	£ 787,960	£ 650,771	£ 137,189
Year 7	£ 812,565	£ 667,040	£ 145,525
Year 8	£ 837,958	£ 683,716	£ 154,242
Year 9	£ 864,165	£ 700,809	£ 163,356
Year 10	£ 891,213	£ 718,329	£ 172,884
Cumulative Total			£ 1,084,067

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St Helens Towns Fund Final Business Case



Town Centre Regeneration and Living

13th July 2022

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Towns Fund – Town Centre Regeneration and Living

The Town Centre Regeneration and Living project will support Phase 1 delivery of a wider transformational scheme for St Helens town centre. This is a key project that has the backing of St Helens Borough Council and their partner – The English Cities Fund (ECF) - and will catalyse the regeneration of the town centre. ECF is a Joint Venture between Muse Developments, Legal & General (L & G) and Homes England.

St Helens town centre suffers from an over-supply of retail provision and a lack of an experiential offer to appeal to both St Helens Borough residents and visitors. As a consequence, footfall and dwell-time is limited, influencing high vacancy rates, and the high street is affected by a lack of local pride from the community and a poor external perception of the place.

The project is seeking funding of £7.24m from the St Helens Town Deal to catalyse Phase 1 of a comprehensive mixed-use development, which is articulated within a wider Council endorsed Masterplan Development Framework. The project will deliver new commercial office space, a new internationally branded hotel, new models of town centre residential accommodation, ancillary retail and leisure space, a relocated market hall and high-quality public realm. In unlocking Phase 1, Towns Funding will also indirectly support future phases of the town centre Masterplan Development Framework, which has a broader ambition to deliver significant additional residential development, a new public park and ancillary uses to complement the existing town centre offer.

Strategic Case

The Strategic Case sets out the context and rationale for intervention, key stakeholder requirements, risks, dependencies, and constraints. There is a clear case for change and a shared understanding amongst partners and stakeholders about the need for change, reflecting a clear alignment with national and local policy objectives, including direct alignment with the recently adopted St Helens Town Centre Masterplan Development Framework.

This project is located within the heart of St Helens town centre and firstly requires land assembly and site enabling works to create a development platform. The project will replace the area of the town centre, which is currently occupied by the Hardshaw Shopping Centre, as well as the immediate surrounding sites, and is therefore at the very heart of the town centre's retail high street.

Regeneration of the town centre has been a key priority of St Helens Borough Council for several years but requires public investment, alongside development expertise from ECF, to unlock and deliver this transformational project. St Helens Borough Council has recently acquired the Hardshaw Centre, and is now in the process of securing vacant possession of remaining leases to ensure relevant landholdings to deliver the project.

The Council has also committed £75.8m within their medium-term capital budget to assist in delivering town centre regeneration, acknowledging its priority. The regeneration scheme provides a transformational opportunity to diversify and expand the town centre's offer, creating new pride within the town and with it, creating new employment opportunities, high-quality housing and creating a place where people want to be and spend time in.

St Helens town centre has suffered from an oversupply of retail provision that no longer meets modern requirements, the location and quality of its current market hall is weak, there is limited residential development in the town centre and a lack of Grade A office stock. The offer has therefore struggled to compete with both nearby town and city centres as well as the edge-of-centre retail parks, which fail to attract people into the core high street itself.

The lack of Grade A office space has contributed to St Helens falling behind in skills and productivity. There is a need to update the offer to support key sectors – notably advanced manufacturing and foundation

industries– that remain critical to the economy of the town, and ensure that new propositions, such as Glass Futures and the proposed Medical Glass Manufacturing Facility, have the supporting infrastructure to maximise the benefits of new investment and international visitors into St Helens.

The new internationally brand hotel offer will help ensure these business travellers together with visitors to the new market hall, the improved World of Glass Museum and other attractions are encouraged to stay within the town centre for extended periods, which in turn will help generate local spending. The public realm across the mixed-use masterplan, which is being progressed to RIBA Stage 2 design, will also create a modern and sustainable heart to St Helens town centre thus improving perceptions of the town.

Therefore, this Town Centre Regeneration and Living Project will address the fundamental need to level-up, deliver new housing and jobs, and build St Helens' reputation as a destination for visitors and investors. The public realm across the mixed-use masterplan, which is being progressed to RIBA Stage 2 design, will create a modern and sustainable heart to St Helens town centre thus improving perceptions of the town. The project aligns directly with the core ambitions of the Towns Fund, as well as meeting regional and local policy drivers in terms of housing and employment growth.

ECF was formally appointed by the Council and have entered into a 20-year borough-wide partnership, demonstrating the commitment of key partners and future investors in L&G and Homes England. The site enabling works, for which Towns Fund support is sought via this Business Case, will unlock the mixed-use development as well as act as a future catalyst for change within the town centre.

Overall, the project will directly deliver 10,277 sqm of mixed commercial office, retail and leisure space at the heart of St Helens town centre. It will also contribute to delivering at least 50 residential units for Phase 1, as well as extensive public realm to establish the foundations from which future phases can come forward.

Informed by the adopted St Helens Town Centre Masterplan Development Framework, and related stakeholder engagement, ECF and St Helens Borough Council has outlined the following key objectives for the project:

- Secure all third-party land interests and vacant possession by 2024 to enable clearance of outmoded accommodation.
- Deliver around 5,800 sqm commercial floorspace by 2025 providing Grade A accommodation for office occupiers within the town centre.
- Deliver circa 13 residential town houses and 36 residential apartments by 2025.
- Deliver circa 4,000 sqm new retail and leisure floorspace (including new market hall) by 2025.
- Deliver a new internationally branded hotel by 2025 providing capacity for at least 124 new bedrooms.

Economic Case

The purpose of the economic dimension of this business case is to identify the proposal that delivers best public value to society, including wider social and environmental effects. The assessment of economic benefits for this Towns Fund scheme has been undertaken in full compliance with the latest HM Treasury Green Book (2020) and relevant Departmental guidance.

A long list of range of five options were considered within the initial appraisal. The optioneering process assessed the longlist of options for the Phase 1 project against several critical success factors including strategic fit, affordability, value for money and deliverability. Four alternative options were progressed to the detailed economic assessment stage, alongside the Reference Case:

- Option 1: Business as usual (Reference Case)
- Option 2: Proposed Phase 1 option
- Option 3: Alternative mix
- Option 5: Expanded Phase 1

Option 4 was not progressed as it was not considered to meet the critical success factors for the project.

The key results of the Economic Case based on quantified benefits and economic costs (including optimism bias in line with guidance) are that Option 2 has been identified as the preferred option due to its initial BCR of 1.2:1 and adjusted BCR of 1.5:1. It has been identified as the preferred option on the basis that it offers the highest value for money and provides the most effective and efficient approach, accounting for the known risks associated with each option. This option has also been robust to sensitivity analysis, including several technical scenario tests in line with risk, and performs strongly in the wider qualitative benefits analysis. A summary of the economic costs and benefits under the intervention options is outlined in the appraisal summary table below.

Table A1: Appraisal Summary Table			
	Option 2	Option 3	Option 5
[A] PV of initial benefits (£000)	£34,689.6	£14,019.9	£33,072.0
[B] PV of adjusted benefits (£000)	£8,703.6	£4,847.0	£10,043.4
[C] PV of public sector costs (£000)	£28,027.5	£33,923.6	£40,797.6
[D] PV of Towns Fund only costs (£000)	£6,828.8	£6,828.8	£6,828.8
[E] PV of project costs ¹ (£000)	£68,681.1	£60,525.9	£84,027.5
NPSV (£000) [A-C]	£6,662.2	-£19,903.7	-£7,725.5
Initial BCR (xx:1) [A/C]	1.2	0.4	0.8
Adjusted BCR (xx:1) [A+B/C]	1.5	0.6	1.1
Total project cost BCR [A/E]	0.5	0.2	0.4

The proposed option (Option 2) also delivers strong place-based impacts in terms of employment and Gross Value Added (GVA). It is expected that in the order of 485 gross jobs will be supported across the development once it is fully occupied, generating £23.2 million GVA each year. Once appropriate additionality factors are accounted for, Option 2 facilitates 283 net additional jobs and £13.5 million net additional GVA in the St Helens economy.

Financial Case

The Financial Case clearly demonstrates that the Town Centre Regeneration and Living Project is both viable to deliver and that it is subsequently sustainable in long term use, through its extended economic operational life, subject to securing initial grant funding support through Towns Fund.

The £7.24m Towns Fund investment will be supported by £68.86m co-funding from St Helens Borough Council to deliver the Phase 1 development, alongside £6.4 million of ECF equity in the residential component of the scheme. St Helens Borough Council has made significant progress in relation to the assembly of interests across the site, noting that land assembly costs / acquisitions have not been included within the cost analysis, and the Council has commissioned a study to support a strategy for the purchase of remaining assets under Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) as necessary. No information has been provided at this stage in relation to the cost and funding of future acquisitions.

The above figures are supported by detailed financial analysis and plans that demonstrate the required funding viability gap. St Helens Borough Council will recoup part of their investment via revenues generated through the leasing of the commercial office space, the income generated by the new hotel, new market hall and retail/leisure ancillary space.

Once viable, the residential element will be supported by ECF putting equity into the Phase 1 development, albeit the initial viability gap will need to be unlocked through St Helens Borough Council funding, Towns Funding investment. Other funding sources will also be considered.

Towns Funding will be used for the site demolition and enabling works, the costs of which are outlined in Table A2.

Table A2: Expenditure profile – Enabling Works					
Cost line	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total*
Demolition of Hardshaw	-	£1,125,000	£375,000	-	£1,500,000
Demolition between M&S & Hardshaw	-	£333,333	£166,667	-	£500,000
Public Realm New Street TC Living	-	-	-	£1,775,325	£1,775,325
Public Realm Hall Street	-	-	-	£639,540	£639,540
Strip up of existing public realm	-	-	£720,000	£480,000	£ 1,200,000
Service Disconnection pre demo	-	£100,000	-	-	£100,000
Service Diversion pre demo	-	£175,000	-	-	£175,000
Sewer Diversion pre demo	-	£100,000	-	-	£100,000
Asbestos removal pre demo	-	£250,000	-	-	£250,000
Making good Party Walls	-	£150,000	-	-	£150,000
Temporary structure works	-	£11,905	£71,429	£41,667	£125,000
Remediation non basement areas	-	£100,000	-	-	£100,000
Removal of redundant basement	-	£100,000	-	-	£100,000
Sewer Infrastructure Reinforcement	-	£75,000	-	-	£75,000
Attenuation	-	£274,832	-	-	£274,832
Service Infrastructure gas water BT	£33,333	£366,667	-	-	£400,000
Public Realm Bickerstaffe	-	-	£416,667	£83,333	£500,000
Service Diversions	-	£250,000	-	-	£250,000
Contingency	£1,667	£170,587	£87,488	£150,993	£410,735
Professional Fees	£2,500	£255,880	£131,232	£226,490	£616,102
ECF Return	-	-	-	£1,386,230	£1,386,230
Total*	£37,500	£3,838,204	£1,968,482	£4,783,578	£10,627,764

* Figures may not sum due to rounding

Commercial Case

The Commercial Case sets out the proposed delivery arrangements for the Towns Fund element of the town centre regeneration and living scheme, which will be implemented as part of a partnership approach between ECF and St Helens Borough Council.

Reflecting the status of the town centre as a priority regeneration project, a key consideration for St Helens Borough Council is ensuring sufficient control over the development of the design and delivery to sustain the vision for the project, as well as having a partner who can deliver future phases of the town centre transformational vision and wider priorities within the borough. Based on a review of delivery options, a St Helens Borough Council / ECF-led approach was identified as the most appropriate route to delivery. The Council has established appropriate governance and assurance mechanisms to ensure that potential challenges – in relation to delivery capacity and conflict of interest (with St Helens Borough Council also acting as the Local Planning Authority) - can be appropriately managed.

This delivery mechanism involves the long-term partnership arrangement with ECF, as set out within the Overarching Development Agreement, which was signed in December 2020. The ECF Partnership will procure and appoint a single contractor for the whole of the Phase 1 development given the complexity of the site and a need to carefully manage and minimise disruption to existing occupiers, whilst the works are taking place. The ECF Partnership will have a clear management arrangement for each of the project components, although the specifics of the arrangements for all elements is still being worked through. The hotel will be operated by a premier internationally recognised brand and management contract. The new

market hall is likely to be managed by a third party, but with the Council benefiting from surplus revenue generated. The office, retail and leisure elements will be managed by a third party, and the Council benefiting from rental income generated. There will be a clear exit strategy for the residential phase, with a view to look at open market sale product initially.

In terms of risks, a detailed market assessment has been undertaken which will be supported by soft market testing to demonstrate the demand for each of the uses within the town centre masterplan. St Helens Borough Council has, in the main, assembled all the relevant land interests for the Town Centre Regeneration and Living Project. St Helens Borough Council has also identified funding within their medium-term capital programme to enable the project subject to Towns Fund support being secured.

Under the pre-construction programme, a St Helens Town Centre Masterplan Development Framework has been endorsed by Cabinet, following extensive stakeholder engagement. A hybrid planning application has also been submitted to the Local Planning Authority (St Helens Borough Council) seeking detailed planning consent in respect of the demolition and site enabling works, and outline consent in respect of all other Phase 1 components.

The programme for the project is outlined in Table A3.

Table A3: Overarching project milestones		
Activities	Programme	Status
Obtain Towns Funding	Summer/Autumn 2022	In progress
Obtain match funding	Summer/Autumn 2022	In Progress – St Helens Borough Council confirmation of allocation within Capital Programme.
Update Masterplan	-	Completed – Masterplan Development Framework now endorsed by Council
Submit planning	-	Completed – hybrid planning application submitted
Hybrid Planning decision (including JR)	Expected 02/09/22	In progress – target determination date is September 2022
Reserved Matters planning application (Phase 1) - submission	23/12/22	On target
RIBA Stage 2 Design	04/04/22 – 22/07/22	On target
RIBA Stage 2 Cost Plan	11/07/22 – 22/07/22	On target
RIBA Stage 3	08/08/22 – 25/11/22	On target
RIBA Stage 3 Cost Plan	07/11/22 – 25/11/22	On target
Reserved Matters planning application (Phase 1) – determination (including JR)	05/05/23	On target
RIBA Stage 4a	08/05/23 – 25/08/23	On target
Procurement of demolition contractor	08/05/23 – 08/09/23	On target
Secure acquisitions	Assumed last date for acquisition and Vacant Possession is October 2023.	Partially completed
Procurement of main contractor	28/08/23 – 09/02/24	On target
Demolition and enabling works	20/11/23 – 05/04/24	On target
Phase 1 Works	15/01/24 – 31/10/25	On target

Management Case

St Helens Borough Council has appointed ECF as its delivery partner for the town centre project, and through this partnership approach, ECF will bring the development management resources of Muse Developments alongside a professional and technical team to support the design and planning of the project. To formalise this agreement, the Council and ECF have entered into an Overarching Development Agreement (ODA) which confirms a 20-year Borough wide partnership. The initial priority and first phase of which relates to the main Town Centres of the Borough – St Helens and Earlestown, albeit it is St Helens town centre to which this Towns Fund business case relates.

Robust management and governance arrangements have been put in place to manage this partnership and will ensure that investment through Towns Fund secures identified outputs and long-term benefits.

The Towns Fund Programme Governance Structure has been established to ensure the appropriate governance, accountability, and decision-making measures for approval of Towns Fund projects within St Helens, including the Town Centre Regeneration and Living Project. This framework has been shaped by the robust structures put in place by St Helens Borough Council on all its projects, having regard to the requirements identified under the Town Deal.

An experienced project team within ECF (with ECF performing a developer role and Muse Developments acting in a professional development management capacity) and St Helens Borough Council has been formed to lead and manage the project, as shown by their track record of regeneration and development projects. Under this arrangement, the partnership has procured a professional team which led on the Masterplan Development Framework and planning application, and which is currently working on RIBA Stage 2 design.

The ECF Partnership will procure a single contractor to deliver the Phase 1 scheme, albeit the site demolition and enabling works are likely to be part of a separate contract. The procurement strategy will ensure bids are assessed based on an appropriate balance between ensuring value for money alongside quality and experience of delivering similar complex mixed-use developments. Suitable contractor and management arrangements will be put in place including regular progress meetings between ECF, St Helens Borough Council and the contractor, reviewing programme milestones (including those aligned with Towns Fund) and managing risk. ECF intend to commence soft market testing with potential contractors in Autumn 2022.

Once Towns Fund investment has been confirmed and approved through this business case, ECF will lead on the procurement of the demolition and enabling contractor between May 2023 and September 2023, with an expectation that demolition works will commence in late 2023/early 2024. A separate tendering process for the main contractor will commence in August 2023, with contractor selection expected by February 2024. The construction period will cover a period of 21 months, commencing in January 2024 and running until October 2025. The Council and its partners will maximise the social value that can be delivered through its contracts both during the implementation of projects and subsequent operational phases of delivery.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. St Helens Town Investment Plan

In September 2019, the government formed the Towns Fund – a £3.6 billion initiative with the objective to drive economic regeneration. St Helens was selected as one of the 100 towns invited to develop proposals for a Town Deal in accordance with the objectives of the Fund, to drive the economic regeneration of towns to deliver long term economic and productivity growth through:

- Urban regeneration, planning and land use
- Skills and enterprise infrastructure, and
- Connectivity.

The development of a Town Investment Plan (TIP) marked the first stage of agreeing a Town Deal with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). The St Helens Town Deal Board submitted their Town Investment Plan in January 2021. Building on the shared understanding of our town, the St Helens Town Deal Board developed and agreed the following vision for St Helens over the next 10 years that is ambitious and, importantly, deliverable:

*“By 2030 St Helens will be **culturally centred**, will nurture and celebrate its **cultural and industrial heritage**, will build upon its creative and innovative gene in **glass making and foundation-industries** to innovate and **do things differently**, and create new opportunities, including those from the City Region. **Vibrancy** will be created for the town centre; the town will be a **smaller, accessible, and enjoyable place to come together** and will be a place where the community will learn from one another, improve their **physical and mental wellbeing** and where people want to live, work and visit. Businesses and residents will be attracted to the new opportunities available, will have **quality spaces** to dwell and linger and will benefit from **improved transport and digital connections** borough-wide”*

Under this vision, the TIP outlined a plan for growth and investment aimed at levelling up local communities. The Investment Strategy built upon a comprehensive review of the town’s key challenges and opportunities, informed by a thorough stakeholder engagement and consultation process with the public and key stakeholders. The projects were prioritised through a robust selection process, consisting of the alignment with the following strategic intervention themes and objectives:

1. Establishing the foundation for future growth through the catalytical impact of Glass Futures and the opportunity to harness innovation and skills for the benefit of the local community.
2. Delivering a high-quality residential offer within the town centre to meet housing need, diversify the town centre housing stock and providing the opportunity for a new residential population to thrive in the town centre as part of our wider place-making ambitions.
3. To create a more sustainably accessible Town Centre to respond to changing high-street functions; shrinking the proportion of retail and introducing a diverse mix of town centre uses to complement the residential offer. Creating the right spaces and places for independent businesses to thrive and building on the opportunities of greater footfall and visitors into St Helens as a result of Glass Futures.
4. Positively changing the perceptions of the town and the borough through maximising St Helens’ heritage and cultural assets to provide a distinctive offer for visitors, residents and businesses and introducing meanwhile uses to create a vibrant, animated place.
5. To enable our children, young people and the local community to raise their aspirations and take pride in their place through providing the right places and spaces to meet, collaborate, learn and develop

their skills to benefit from new employment opportunities and the transformational growth of the borough.

6. Ensuring digital inclusion and laying the foundations for communities, businesses and visitors to digitally connect, for businesses and investment to be attracted into the borough and supporting residents and businesses to be able to adapt to a new digital agenda.
7. Connecting communities with employment opportunities through ensuring sustainable movement and accessibility for St Helens town centre and borough wide.
8. Building on the St Helens Cares model to create a first-class health, wellbeing and social care hub for the town and improve residents' health outcomes.

Table 1-1: St Helens Town Investment Plan's strategic intervention themes and objectives

Themes	Description	Objectives
Urban Regeneration and Land Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land remediation Uplift in number of town centre residents Promoting greater vibrancy and activity within the town centre Delivering enhanced townscape, public realm and amenity Securing greater town centre footfall, dwell-time and expenditure Create new employment opportunities and business start-ups Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. 	SO1 – A smaller, sustainable and accessible town centre
		SO2 – Delivering a high-quality residential offer
		SO3 – Changing Perceptions
		SO4 – Establishing Foundations for future growth
Culture and Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved cultural and heritage offer Increased visitor numbers Greater dwell time Jobs created/safeguarded 	SO5 – Raising community and young people's aspirations
Employment, Skills and Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support business start-ups Support existing businesses Learners supported to secure qualifications and skills Land value uplift Jobs created/safeguarded Improve health and wellbeing 	SO6 – Improving Health Outcomes
Connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved affordability, convenience, reliability, and sustainability of travel options to and from places of work and places of interest. Reduce congestion within the town Enhanced high street and town centre experience that prioritises pedestrians Increased digital use by businesses Increased ability of residents to work remotely/flexibly Secure digital inclusion Enhanced digital skills for residents and businesses 	SO7 – A future-proofed town
		SO8 – Connected Communities

A total of 100 initial projects were identified and put forward by the Town Deal Board. These were formally assessed against key critical success factors to identify an initial shortlist of 14 projects, ahead of agreeing on a finalised list of 6 projects to go into the Town Investment Plan. This included the Town Centre Living project¹, a Health Communities² workstream, St Helens Heritage World, Glass Futures Phase 2, Connected Places and Digital Infrastructure. An initial ask of £38.55m was put forward within the TIP comprising £38.25m capital and £0.3m revenue support. Following the assessment by Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS), St Helens Borough Council was awarded an allocation of up to £25m Towns Funding investment.

1.2. Town Centre Regeneration and Living

The Town Centre Regeneration and Living Project comprises a new mixed-use development within the heart of St Helens town centre (Plan 1). A high-level summary of the project was set out within the TIP to include the potential for new commercial office space, hotel, residential, public realm and active ground floor uses, with an overarching aim to better position the town centre in terms of attracting new investment, occupiers and footfall into the town. In doing so, this project would also support the ambitions of Glass Futures, by providing the amenities and right market conditions to encourage business tourism within the town.

Envisaged outputs were as follows:

- 382 residential dwellings
- 6,764sqm leisure and/or retail floorspace created
- 8,759sqm enhanced public realm
- 4ha of brownfield land reclaimed
- Businesses supported

At TIP stage, an ask of £9.5m capital and £0.1m revenue funding support was sought. This was on the basis of an overarching Towns Fund programme ask of £38.55m. As the offer within the Heads of Terms was limited to a maximum allocation of £25m, the proportion of Towns funding attributed to the project has been scaled back to £7.24m.

At grant confirmation stage, the outputs were also revised. The only amendment being a reduction in the quantity of residential dwellings proposed, with 99 units proposed to ensure a more realistic profile within the Towns Fund programme timescales.

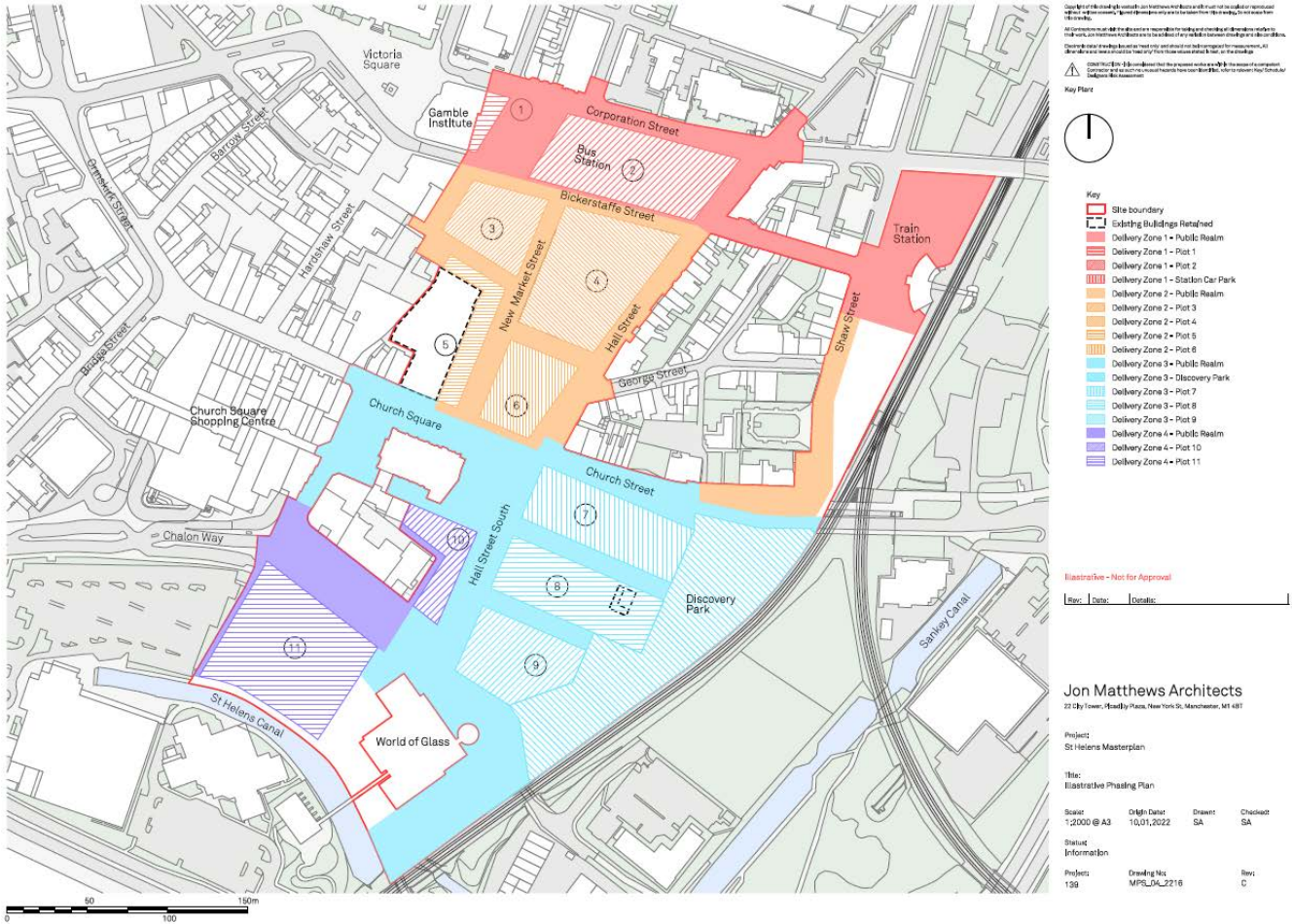
As design development has progressed through market assessment and the preparation of a hybrid planning application, the proposed project deliverables for the phase 1 scheme have been further refined. Work to progress to RIBA Stage 2 is underway and, based on proposals as configured in March 2022, the scheme will comprise of:

- 50 residential dwellings (town houses and apartments)
- 5,813 sqm commercial office floorspace created
- A 124-bed branded hotel
- New market hall (2,300 sqm)

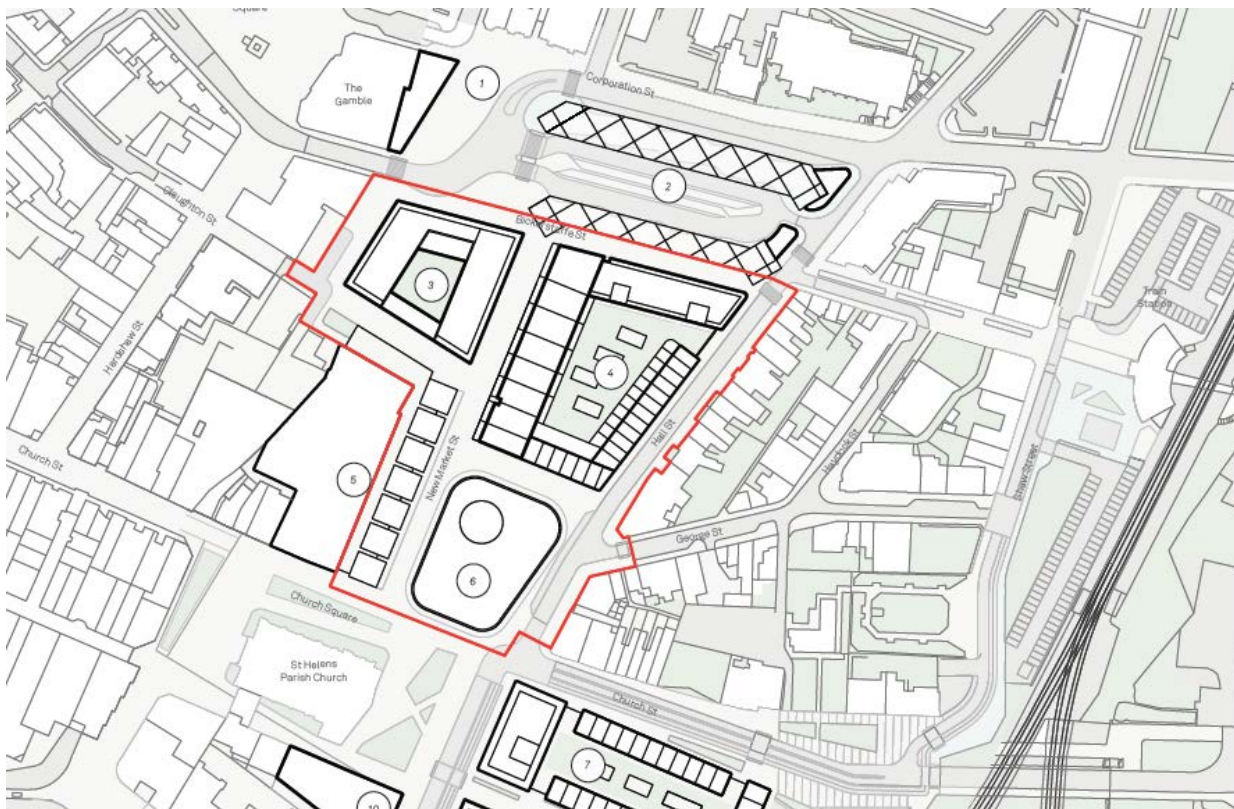
¹ Previously known as town centre living project as initial focus was on residential development before broadening this project out more widely to align with the Phase 1 proposals from ECF.

² Encompassing a proposed health innovation hub and youth zone provision.

- 2,164 sqm associated leisure and/or retail floorspace created
- 8,759sqm enhanced public realm
- 4ha of brownfield land reclaimed



Plan 1: Proposed Phasing Plan. The Towns Funded project relates to land identified in orange (Source: Jon Matthews Architects)



Plan 2: Proposed Phase 1 site (outlined in red) Source: Jon Matthews Architects

As demonstrated in Plan 1, this project is part of a wider and more comprehensive regeneration scheme for St Helens town centre. It is noted that elements of the Connected Places project (the redevelopment of the existing bus station) will be supported through Towns Fund and sub-regional investment, coming forward in parallel with the Phase 1 project. Both schemes will play a critical role in creating the conditions for future phases, which will support the delivery of further housing, alongside public realm, and other leisure provision. There is therefore the potential to see this project as a wider catalyst to unlock and enable future development phases (and therefore outputs/ benefits) to be realised.

1.3. This Business Case

AMION Consulting and CBRE, in collaboration with the project team from St Helens Borough Council, have produced this Business Case in line with HM Treasury Green Book requirements and DLUHC guidance for Towns Fund Stage 2 Business Cases.

Therefore, the Business Case continues in five further sections, as follows:

- **Strategic Case** – describes the proposed investment as well as its primary vision and project objectives, strategic alignment, rationale for intervention, and key stakeholders;
- **Economic Case** – assesses the economic costs and benefits of alternative intervention options in compliance with government guidance, as well as risks and optimism bias;
- **Financial Case** – sets out the financial costs, receipts, funding, and risks associated with the project;
- **Commercial Case** – outlines the commercial deliverability of the project, identifying the procurement route, potential for risk transfer, and wider considerations; and
- **Management Case** – describes the proposed management arrangements, including stakeholders, governance, resources, milestones, and risk management.

STRATEGIC CASE

2. STRATEGIC CASE

2.1. Introduction

The Strategic Case sets out the context and rationale for intervention, key stakeholder requirements, risks, dependencies, and constraints.

There is a clear case for change and a shared understanding amongst partners and stakeholders about the need for change. The town centre remains a key focus for services, employment and recreation within the Borough. Alongside key civic and community functions, it remains the primary retail centre and accommodates key assets including the Theatre Royal, attractions (such as The World of Glass) and other leisure assets. However, the town centre has experienced significant challenges given wider changes in the retail landscape, alongside the effects of ongoing economic restructuring at the local level.

St Helens has undergone a period of significant change as a result of economic restructuring. Following rapid expansion, the town emerged as a significant centre for coal mining, railways, and world-famous glass industries, alongside a range of other industrial activities. Glass producer NSG Pilkington is the town's only remaining large foundation industrial employer, as other founding key employers – such as Beechams, the Gamble Alkali Works, Ravenhead Glass, United Glass Bottles, Triplex, the Daglish Foundry, and Greenall's brewery – have been lost to the Borough. The growth of service sectors has been mainly focused within the key regional centres including Manchester and Liverpool, acting as a focus for skilled employment.

The lasting effects of this restructuring remain evident:

- **Deprivation** – St Helens ranks as the ninth most deprived authority in terms of relative employment deprivation. High levels of relative employment deprivation are widespread across the Borough with the exception of areas to the north of the Borough. The highest relative levels of Income Deprivation are to be found in areas within the Town Centre, Parr and Bold Wards. 16% of St Helens LSOAs fall within the most deprived 10% of all LSOAs nationally in terms of education and skills deprivation, and St Helens ranks as the 26th most deprived authority nationally.
- **Productivity and key sectors** – levels of productivity within St Helens remain below the average for the UK. As part of the East Merseyside area, GVA per filled job is around 93% of the UK average. Experian data for St Helens indicates that GVA per FTE employee for office-based sectors (financial services; information and communication; professional and private services) may be less than 65% of the UK average. ONS data suggests that these sectors account for just 16% of employment within the borough, compared to 25% at the national level.
- **Pay, jobs and living standards** – evidence suggests that economic activity and employment rates within the Borough are comparable with the national average. A relatively high proportion of residents claim out of work benefits, with very high claimant rates in a number of communities. In addition, gross median weekly pay for residents is approximately 10% lower than the national average.
- **Qualifications** – evidence suggests that St Helens has seen a significant increase in the proportion of the population qualified to NVQ level 4, though it continues to lag behind the national average.

2.2. Case for Change

2.2.1. To create the conditions for and secure long-term sustainable growth within St Helens town centre

The overarching rationale for investment within St Helens town centre is to create the conditions for sustainable economic growth in line with strategic objectives outlined in the TIP (SO1 – A smaller, sustainable and accessible town centre; SO4 – Establishing the foundations for future growth). In doing so, the capital investment and diversification of the town centre offer will help deliver greater vibrancy and

footfall, providing a sustainable and viable town centre which aligns with the future direction of the borough. Without investment, vacancies will continue to rise, footfall will dwindle, and the town centre will not be able to sustain the necessary amenities and services that residents of St Helens expect to be provided within the borough's principal town.

There is a need to re-establish the town centre as a focus for sustainable economic growth within the Borough through investment to re-balance the offer, addressing the over-supply of outdated commercial accommodation and introducing a wider range of high-quality activities. This approach responds to the findings of market assessment work commissioned by ECF:

- **Office** – the market report provided by CBRE (September 2021) confirms that there has been no supply of new Grade A office product in the town centre for many years (the last new office development was Atlas House which completed in 2000), and the fragmented and limited offer in terms of public amenity, public realm, food and beverage provision, to office occupiers within the town centre has led to an increased demand for out-of-town locations such as Mere Grange³. As a result, the town centre does not benefit from a mix of uses and activity throughout the daytime and into the evening.

Notwithstanding a greater propensity for workplaces to now offer hybrid working (a mix of in the office and working from home), there is greater emphasis on collaboration and quality amenities and facilities. Predictions by CBRE are that there will continue to be a move back into town and city centres as companies seek to attract and retain the best talent, where there is also the offer of enhanced amenity provision. St Helens town centre has the opportunity to tap into this market through a carefully curated and diverse mix of uses, delivering a wider transformational scheme.

The project will seek to address the lack of good quality office accommodation within St Helens town centre and provide the conditions to encourage new business start-ups and move on space, alongside potential inward investments linked to Glass Futures and other strategic projects. It is envisaged that it will play a role in diversifying the sectoral mix within the town centre, creating new employment and skills opportunities to benefit local residents, thus helping to address the productivity and skills gaps. In addition, it will boost footfall in the town centre and drive demand for a wider range of activities.

- **Retail** – St Helens town centre, like many regional towns, has an oversupply of dated retail units which are not attractive to occupiers, and as a consequence the town suffers from high vacancies and low rental values, and cannot compete with major cities such as Liverpool and Manchester, as national retailers look to downsize the number of outlets to either more vibrant city centre locations or, in some instances, relocate to convenient out of town retail parks that offer greater accessibility and free car parking. The high street was previously anchored by well-known brands including BHS and M & S, the latter of which closed their St Helens store in March 2019.

Whilst St Helens has been able to attract new independents over recent years and local investment such as the proposed Imperial Quarter, which is due to be completed in 2022, there remains substantial over-supply of retail stock which needs to be addressed, as noted in Market advice provided by Barker Proudlove⁴. Much of the poor performing retail offer is provided within the Council-owned St Mary's Shopping Centre, which also provides home to the current Market, and the Hardshaw Shopping Centre. These mono-lithic shopping centres add little value to the townscape and built environment within the town.

- **Hotel** – market assessments carried out by CBRE indicated that St Helens has the potential to create an improved visitor economy, catering for tourism seeking to tap into the wider Liverpool City

³ CBRE (2021) Liverpool City Region and St Helens Office Market Overview, 24th September 2021

⁴ Barker Proudlove (2021) St Helens Market Overview Report, December 2021

Region, but also for the business community⁵. There is likely to be a particular need generated from the Glass Futures proposition as this project expands and attracts potentially international visitors and companies wanting to learn about innovation in environmentally friendly glass manufacturing, St Helens' unique selling point. Providing high-quality accommodation within the town centre will capitalise on visitor income, which in turn will support local shops and businesses, and wider services on offer within the town centre. A market testing exercise has confirmed that there is demand from operators for a facility within the Town Centre⁶.

- **Residential** - There is a lack of a town centre living offer for prospective renters and purchasers, particularly for those seeking a more aspirational 'product' in St Helens. Existing residential stock comprises traditional terraced properties on the periphery of the town centre, and small numbers of poor-quality apartments. This leads to a reasonably small town centre residential population, and with it, a missed opportunity to increase the vibrancy and vitality of the centre, particularly after 5pm.

To address this challenge, St Helens Borough Council has embarked on an ambitious regeneration programme for the town centre (and wider borough), with an initial step in entering into a formal partnership with the English Cities Fund (ECF)⁷. ECF has committed to delivering Phase 1 of the town centre programme to which this Business Case relates and has prepared and secured the endorsement of a town-centre wide Masterplan Development Framework, which has informed and shaped the Phase 1 development mix and subsequent Hybrid planning application.

The development opportunity has real potential to regenerate and transform the town centre, and secure long-term sustainable economic growth for its, and the borough's future. The scheme is the first phase of a broader transformational vision (as set out within the masterplan) and will provide the catalytic impact to delivery regeneration value uplift and thus encouraging future phases to come forward in the near future. The scale of the proposal has the potential to generate spill-over effects and benefit the local community, generating social and economic value for the longer-term.

Public sector intervention is supported by the local community, businesses and occupiers within the town centre, Local Members including Cabinet, and those residing within the borough. Stakeholder engagement, which was undertaken for the St Helens Masterplan Development Framework, and in advance of a hybrid planning application being submitted, confirmed 88% support for the repurposing and repositioning of the town centre⁸.

2.2.2. To promote a more vibrant town centre offer

St Helens town centre, as with many towns and cities across the country, has a significant proportion of traditional retail units and an overall mix and offer which no longer responds to customer requirements. Even before the pandemic, more people were changing their shopping patterns to online but since national lockdowns there has been a greater shift and acceleration of these trends with internet sales accounting for 37.8% of transactions in January 2021. This has now fallen back to 26.4% which remains in keeping with long term growth trends. These transactions are no longer satisfied by visiting the local high street.

Town centres can therefore no longer rely on people coming in purely to shop, they want to enjoy an 'experience', seeking food and beverage and leisure options, in addition to retail. This is corroborated through a market assessment undertaken by Barker Proudlove noting as follows:

'If St Helens town centre is to thrive it needs to improve as an overall environment to make people want to visit. Shoppers, and particularly the more affluent shoppers, are increasingly driven by experience, as buying goods in shops is no longer a necessity; almost everything can be purchased

⁵ CBRE (2021) St Helens Feasibility Study, Hotels – Prepared on behalf of ECF, July 2021

⁶ CBRE (2022) Hotel Market Assessment

⁷ Overarching Development Agreement signed by ECF and St Helens Borough Council on 15TH December 2020

⁸ Lexington (2022) St Helens Town Centre Regeneration Consultation Statement, January 2022

online. With that being the case, the curation and presentation of town centres is of ever-increasing importance. Shopping is part of that, as is the food and beverage and leisure offer, with easy car parking and improved public realm both essential. Furthermore, uses that necessitate town centre visits such as offices and civic uses help to drive footfall and daytime spend. Businesses such as hotels also create demand within shops and restaurants while providing an equitable replacement for the oversupply of retail units. The introduction of residential property to replace retail also helps drive local spending⁹.

To further address vibrancy and vitality of a town centre, a broader mix of uses is worth consideration, so that a wide audience can enjoy and benefit the town centre offer. Justified through market assessment, ECF, and Muse as their developer partner, has put forward a mix of uses and amenities with the overall aim of stimulating activity and growth, and helping the town become more vibrant from daytime through to the evening, consistent with SO4 of the TIP (establishing the foundations for future growth). This includes new commercial office-space and a hotel which will cater for business 'tourism' which may be associated with Glass Futures, in addition to leisure visitors, mainly during weekends.

The proposed project will deliver the right mix and balance of uses within the town centre through 'rightsizing' the proportion of retail accommodation on offer and making this fit with modern retailers and occupier needs. This will help to address the high vacancy rates and associated lack of vibrancy that over-provision of redundant retail stock creates.

The town centre will be established as a focus for customer and visitor experience and enjoyment. No longer seen as a place to shop, and an inability to compete for traditional comparison retail trade given the proximity of out-of-town shopping parks and the offer in competing towns and cities within the wider area, St Helens town centre will focus on developing a local niche, building on the success of existing thriving independents. The relocated and reimagined Market Hall will be part of this solution and help to create a focal point of activity alongside smaller retail and leisure kiosks and will support existing shops and services.

2.2.3. Positively changing perceptions

St Helens town centre is negatively perceived by its local residents, critical of the town's tired appearance, as well as by the occupier and investor sector. Some of the key issues identified include:

- Poor quality-built environment
- Lack of green and/or high-quality public realm and public spaces
- Poor overall offer within the town centre
- A perception of crime and anti-social behaviour
- Low footfall and dwell-time (business/ occupier perceptions)
- Lack of suitable and attractive premises for both retailers/Food and beverage outlets and local businesses

This perception impacts the positivity and potential life chances of the local community and fails to attract the right type and quality of occupiers and uses into the town centre. To date private-sector investment has been limited to small-scale developments (such as the Imperial Quarter).

The town centre regeneration and living project is a large-scale transformational development which will re-energize the town centre, demonstrating to both the local community and investors that positive change is happening in St Helens, and in turn, will help to generate catalytic change, unlocking other pipeline and opportunity sites. The Phase 1 project will help to demonstrate potential and raise aspirations for future phases. Intervention to improve perceptions directly supports strategic objectives outlined in the TIP.

⁹ Barker Proudlove (2021) Retail analysis report St Helens

2.2.4. Introducing Town Centre Living

The housing market within St Helens town centre is poor, failing to offer attractive, high-quality accommodation to broaden the demographic within the town (and borough). Existing housing stock comprises terraced properties alongside low quality apartment blocks. The town centre population is therefore limited (in size) and suffers from high pockets of deprivation. The lack of variety in the housing offer may also impact on the ability of the Borough to retain key groups – particularly younger and skilled workers seeking opportunities for better quality leisure and recreation, but with more limited financial means.

In order to generate the vibrancy and footfall required to support businesses, and other activity within the town centre, there is an opportunity to introduce a high-quality, more aspirational housing offer. This will help to attract a wider demographic into the town centre, help encourage young professionals and a higher skilled demographic, and families to reside in the town with the benefit of great amenities on their doorstep.

2.2.5. Summary

The above analysis identifies several inter-linked needs in the town, which is holding back economic development and growth, as follows:

- There is a need to repurpose the traditional retail high street and create a mix of complementary uses, to create a more balanced offer within the town centre, which is less vulnerable to future economic changes, and curates a positive experience to attract those who want to shop, live, work and spend their leisure time in the town centre.
- There is a need for a sustainable town centre residential offer to retain students and graduates, encourage new professionals into the town centre and support the vibrancy and vitality of the town centre, through bolstering the town's population.
- There is a need to enhance the life chances and opportunities of the local community, generating new employment and business opportunities, up and re-skilling local residents, and helping to foster a more positive and entrepreneurial culture for the longer-term.

The Town Centre Regeneration and Living Project is therefore, directly aligned to an identified need. The scale of the opportunity site, within the heart of the high street, provides the potential to act as a catalyst for future change and transformational within the town centre, and the borough as a whole. Positively, much of the land required for the redevelopment is within St Helens Borough Council ownership and with ECF's backing, this presents the ideal opportunity to regenerate and transform the town centre, to secure the town's pathway to long-term sustainable economic growth.

2.3. Rationale and market failure

The case for change (above) sets out the challenges and opportunities that will capitalised upon with the Town Centre Regeneration and Living Project. An integrated redevelopment is required to ensure the inter-linked needs are met, and the variety of opportunities are capitalised upon to ensure long-term sustainable growth. The St Helens Town Centre Masterplan Development Framework provides the most optimum solution to address the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre, encouraging increased footfall, new occupiers, greater spending and employment opportunities. The proposed development will generate place-making benefits through improving and enhancing the built environment, improving permeability (through reinstating traditional streets), legibility and, in time, creating more defined character areas within the town.

However, the site has several barriers to overcome before a high-quality development, that aligns with the strategic vision of St Helens Borough Council and TIP, can be delivered. These issues include ensuring the

viability of the proposed development, the need to assemble all necessary land and secure vacant possession of the site(s), the need for site clearance and demolition and delivering key infrastructure and public realm.

The interventions are associated with the following market failures:

- **Coordination issues** – challenges associated with land assembly, (including the purchase of the Hardshaw Shopping Centre and other third-party interests), to support strategic regeneration within the town centre, with St Helens Borough Council retaining the ownership of key assets to support key uses that will contribute to the vitality of the town centre.
- **Public goods** – provision of enhanced public realm and new active travel linkages to create a high-quality built environment and place-setting to be attractive to key occupiers. As transport infrastructure and public realm are non-excludable in supply and non-rival in demand, developers do not tend to realise the full benefit from their provision and, as such, they are often underprovided by the market where development is often piecemeal in nature.
- **Positive externalities** – potential to capture wider land value uplift and placemaking effects as a result of delivering a wider range of activities within the town centre and creating a step change in the quality of the environment.
- **Imperfect information** - limited availability of information prevents rational decision-making. In advance of completing the first phase of regeneration, a lack of confidence or awareness may act as a barrier to securing private sector investment, particularly within a town centre context.
- **Institutional failure** – viability gap to deliver the complexity and scale of the development proposed, acknowledging the gap between increased costs and inability (particularly at an early stage of regeneration) to increase values until the ‘regeneration effect’ has taken hold.

Table 2-1 highlights specific market failures linked to specific elements of the proposed intervention:

Table 2-1: Market failures by project element	
Project Element	Market Failure
Site assembly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional failure – St Helens Town Centre is identified as a strategic regeneration priority for St Helens Borough, and as such the Council has intervened to secure ownership of the Phase 1 site, albeit some third-party interests have yet to be formally secured. This will enable the Council to coordinate the planning and delivery of the masterplan for the area, minimising the risk of barriers arising from third party interests.
Public realm works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public goods – As public spaces/ public realm is non-excludable in supply and non-rival in demand, developers do not tend to benefit from their provision and as such, they are typically underprovided by the market. However, in order to deliver a step-change in St Helens public realm needs to be of a high-quality to create the right physical (and economic) conditions for the proposed new buildings and uses. • Negative externalities – in the absence of intervention, individual plots will not secure the access and services needed to advance development. Moreover, without the provision of high-quality infrastructure (including digital) and public realm, new housing developments will potentially impact on existing provision. • Positive externalities - the creation of a high-quality new town centre will result in wider benefits including to adjacent landowners and developers within the immediate vicinity of the site.
Office development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imperfect information – the lack of a developed commercial office market within St Helens contributes to a lack of awareness of the potential opportunities and demand for premises. ECF has undertaken initial market appraisals and analysis to consider the prospective market and occupiers, ensuring the right layout and flexibility is built into the office scheme design.

Table 2-1: Market failures by project element

Project Element	Market Failure
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive externalities - the creation of a high-quality new town centre office scheme will result in wider benefits including to adjacent landowners and developers within the immediate vicinity of the site and generate additional footfall to increase spending within the town centre.
Hotel development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Imperfect information – the lack of a developed town centre market within St Helens contributes to a lack of awareness of the potential opportunities and demand for premises. ECF has undertaken initial market appraisals and analysis to consider the prospective market and appraise bids from two prospective hotel operators/ brands. Positive externalities – the delivery of a prestige hotel brand in St Helens will play a key role in supporting wider projects and businesses, such as Glass Futures.
Market development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive externalities – the delivery of a new market hall in St Helens will play a key role in supporting businesses, including existing retailers / F & B occupiers and (if they relocate), existing market traders.
Residential development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Imperfect information – the lack of a developed town centre market within St Helens contributes to a lack of awareness of the potential opportunities and demand for premises. ECF has undertaken initial market appraisals and analysis to consider the prospective market and ensure the right typology and mix of housing units is provided. Positive externalities – the delivery of very high-quality models of residential development will play a key role in building demand and capacity within supply chains.

Without Towns Fund investment, the Town Centre Regeneration and Living Project will not progress due to the existing barriers and market failures, particularly viability challenges in place. ECF has undertaken financial appraisals of all components of the project which has demonstrated that none of the schemes would come forward without public sector intervention.

2.4. Policy Alignment

The project has been prioritised during St Helens TIP development due to the alignment between the project vision and several overarching national ambitions within policy documents such as the UK Plan for Growth 2021¹⁰, including:

- **Covid-19 recovery** – the pandemic and resulting lockdowns have had a profound effect on communities and businesses within St Helens. Despite unprecedented levels of support, there is evidence that those in poverty have been most severely affected, while services and retail which depend on face-to-face interactions have been unable to trade. Promoting recovery in levels of activity within St Helens town centre is a key priority to support local services and businesses, particularly important in St Helens which has been affected by the long-term pressures affecting the UK high street such as vacancies and the removal of large occupiers, including M & S. It will also provide a platform for growth, as the project starts a long-term redevelopment programme across the wider masterplan including further retail and hospitality uses to stimulate spending.
- **Levelling Up White Paper** – the Government has placed significant emphasis on regional growth to support ‘levelling up’ across the country. The White Paper outlines 12 missions as a focus for policy objectives in support of Levelling Up. The Town Centre Regeneration and Living Project directly supports missions to enhance Pride In Place, provide pathways to housing ownership and reduce

¹⁰ HM Treasury, (2021); Our Plan for Growth: Build Back Better

crime. In the round, it will also contribute to enhancing wellbeing by promoting neighbourhood renewal and tackling inequalities in communities. St Helens local authority is ranked as the 26th most deprived local authority (out of 317) in the country. 28 of the Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in the borough are ranked within the 10% most deprived areas nationally. The most deprived neighbourhoods particularly suffer from employment and income deprivation according to the IMD domains. This project will help to address these critical building blocks for economic development by providing new commercial floorspace in a key town centre location. Continued regeneration in St Helens will deliver inclusive growth through the creation of jobs and raising educational ambitions.

- **Levelling Up & Regeneration Bill** – This Bill was published in May 2022 with the overall aim of driving local growth, empowering local leaders to regenerate their areas and ensure levelling up is achieved across the county. This project fully aligns with the proposals in the Bill.
- **Clean growth** – the project will ensure clean growth is embedded as a key theme through prioritising new sustainable connections and embedding sustainable principles in the design and delivery of new assets. The inclusion of significant public realm including walking and cycling routes has been imperative, as St Helens Borough Council is driving forward their climate change targets through incorporating measures to address the climate emergency. The provision of safe and active routes from St Helens Rail Station (and through the Phase 1 site) to newly created town centre assets (such as the new market hall) supports the sustainability goals of the Council.
- **Brownfield development** – Recently, Government policy has been refocused on prioritising brownfield land for development. The Brownfield Land Fund, administered by the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority is an example of the emphasis being placed on this. Given the development is within the heart of the town centre and requires site clearance and demolition of existing inward facing shopping centres to create a development platform on which to build, this proposal strongly aligns with Government’s agenda in this regard and will help ensure the efficient use of land.
- **Town centre regeneration** – the Towns Fund was launched to reverse the decline in a significant number of centres across the country. The falling influence of retailing across the UK has placed pressure on these town centres – reducing footfall, increasing vacancies, and removing key attractors from the high street. St Helens is a prime example of this, with town suffering from vacancies in key assets leading to a lack of range in enterprise, food and drink, and leisure.
- **Housing delivery** – the Homes England Strategic Plan¹¹ highlights that housing is one of the defining issues in this generation, as the lack of housebuilding has led to rising house prices and rents. Homes England highlight the need for more houses in the right places, where people want to live. There is an aim for 300,000 new homes a year on average. The project will unlock the delivery of circa 250 to 450 homes in a key town centre location over the next 10 years.

The delivery of the town centre regeneration and living project within St Helens TIP also strongly aligns with stated objectives of a range of sub-regional and local plans and strategies:

Table 2-2: Alignment with regional and local policies	
Policy document	Alignment
Liverpool City Region	<p>‘Our Places’ Spatial Development Strategy – in consultation The Liverpool City Region Spatial Development Strategy provides a vision for the City Region in 15 years’ time. A key element is to repurpose and reimagine the City Region’s town centres, including St Helens, and providing the opportunities for businesses and communities to thrive and develop.</p> <p>Plan for Prosperity – the plan sets out a long-term vision for transforming together to deliver a Fairer, Stronger, Cleaner Liverpool City Region. The proposed investment will directly support pillars relating to thriving, sustainable and resilient places and the LCR Town Centres Commission.</p>

¹¹ Homes England, (2018); Strategic Plan 2018/19 to 2022/23

Table 2-2: Alignment with regional and local policies

Policy document	Alignment
	Building Back Better: Economic Recovery Plan – proposals for the regeneration of St Helens town centre and the associated Towns Fund investment are referenced within plans for town centres.
St Helens Together: Our Borough Strategy 2021-2030	<p>The proposals for the regeneration of the town centre are being advanced in full alignment with the overarching strategy for the Borough. The proposals will support the vision – seeking to ensure that new development contributes to delivering distinct, attractive, healthy, safe, inclusive and accessible places in which to live, work and invest.</p> <p>In particular, the proposals contribute to priorities to support a thriving economy. It will promote sustainable employment opportunities and an enhanced service offer and high street within the town centre.</p> <p>It will also contribute to safe, strong communities and neighbourhoods for all through the delivery of new residential provision within the town centre.</p>
St Helens Local Plan	<p>Policy LPA02 – Spatial Strategy outlines the broad principles of growth in the Borough, focusing development on the Key Settlements, including the St Helens Core Area, and re-using previously developed land where possible. The policy notes that comprehensive regeneration of the wider Borough will be delivered by the English Cities Fund Regeneration Partnership, through the provision of quality housing, new commercial activity, and upgraded infrastructure.</p> <p>Policy LPB01 – St Helens Town Centre and Central Spatial Area establishes the area as an accessible and welcoming destination for new development and a high-quality built environment. The policy recognises that the English Cities Fund Regeneration Partnership will help to deliver a comprehensive redevelopment and an overall improvement of the social and economic viability of the area.</p>

2.5. Vision and Objectives

As stated in the overall introduction, the vision for St Helens' Town Investment Plan is as follows, which the Town Centre Regeneration and Living project plays a huge contributory role in achieving:

*“By 2030 St Helens will be **culturally centred**, will nurture and celebrate its **cultural and industrial heritage**, will build upon its creative and innovative gene in **glass making and foundation-industries** to innovate and **do things differently**, and create new opportunities, including those from the City Region. **Vibrancy** will be created for the town centre; the town will be a **smaller, accessible, and enjoyable place to come together** and will be a place where the community will learn from one another, improve their **physical and mental wellbeing** and where people want to live, work and visit. Businesses and residents will be attracted to the new opportunities available, will have **quality spaces** to dwell and linger and will benefit from **improved transport and digital connections** borough-wide”*

The overarching aim of the Town Centre Regeneration and Living Project is to transform St Helens town centre through providing a diverse mixed-use development which delivers a vibrant and sustainable town, benefiting the local community and local businesses, as well as supporting new occupiers and businesses to choose St Helens town centre as their home.

The following SMART objectives are proposed for the project:

- Secure all third-party land interests and vacant possession by 2024 to enable clearance of outmoded accommodation.
- Deliver around 5,800 sqm commercial floorspace by 2025 providing Grade A accommodation for office occupiers within the Town Centre.

- Deliver circa 13 residential town houses and 36 residential apartments by 2025.
- Deliver circa 4,000 sqm new retail and leisure floorspace (including new market hall) by 2025.
- Deliver a new internationally branded hotel by 2025 providing capacity for at least 124 new bedrooms.
- Provide 8,759 sqm of new / enhanced public realm as part of the proposals.

Through the delivery of these objectives, ECF will work with St Helens Borough Council to promote cross-cutting themes to align the scheme with strategic objectives relating to achieving net zero, promoting social value and enhancing perceptions of St Helens as a place to invest, live, play and work.

2.6. The Proposed Investment

2.6.1. Description of proposed investment

The proposed Phase 1 project involves the clearance of dated retail floorspace including the Hardshaw Shopping Centre and assets within Church Street, and redevelopment of the area with a comprehensive mixed-use development including new hotel, new commercial office, ancillary retail and leisure floorspace, new market hall, new residential uses and public realm improvements within the heart of the town centre.

Table 2-3 identifies the alignment between the project and the main strategic intervention themes and objectives set out in the Town Investment Plan.

Table 2-3: St Helens Town Investment Plan's strategic intervention themes and objectives	
Intervention	Alignment with Town Investment Plan themes
Clearance of existing retail accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban regeneration and land use – address the over-provision for outmoded retail accommodation within the town centre, ensuring that demand is focused towards better quality provision along the high street. • Connectivity – adopting a plan led approach to promote a more coherent and coordinated urban environment, benefiting from clear linkages between the core town centre and key transport infrastructure - including the refurbished bus station and rail station.
Delivery of new office accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban regeneration and land use – promoting new service based employment accommodation within the town centre adjacent to public transport hubs, contributing to greater activity within the town centre. • Employment, skills and health – providing accommodation for office based uses offering the potential to support substantial employment within service sectors which currently under-perform within St Helens. This will potentially create significant opportunities for residents of the Borough.
Delivery of new town centre market hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban regeneration and land use – relocating the market to enhanced facilities on the high street, promoting a vibrant retail and F&B offer and improving the overall experience of the town centre. • Culture and heritage – with good quality markets acting as a key component in a vibrant town centre offer, this element will support a wider package of interventions to enhance the appeal of the town to visitors and promote extended dwell times. • Employment, skills and health – markets can provide a route to market for new enterprises and platform for establishing a more fixed presence within the town centre.
Introducing a high quality town centre hotel offer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban regeneration and land use – the hotel will further diversify the town centre offer, supporting the development of an enhanced evening economy.

Table 2-3: St Helens Town Investment Plan's strategic intervention themes and objectives

Intervention	Alignment with Town Investment Plan themes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment, skills and health – alongside supporting direct employment, the hotel will support existing and new businesses within the town centre by providing a high quality venue for business visitors. This will potentially have spill over benefits for other hospitality businesses.
Establishing new models of town centre living	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban regeneration and land use – the delivery of new homes will increase the town centre population, demonstrating demand for new market housing provision and promoting increased levels of activity within the town centre.
Creating a high quality public realm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban regeneration and land use – the Phase 1 project will play a critical role in establishing new levels of public realm quality within the town centre - to be extended through future phases. • Connectivity – As part of a plan led approach, the public realm will contribute to creating a coherent urban grain linking the wider town centre to key public transport infrastructure including the new bus station.

2.6.2. Logic Model and Outputs

A consolidated effort between the Council and key delivery partners has created a high-quality masterplan that befits the potential of the town centre site. The project's logic chain in **Appendix E** demonstrates the flow of outputs and outcomes arising from the project's activities, including how low-income and deprived groups are prioritised within the intervention. The logic chain flows from the main aims and objectives for the TIP, as set out below. The Town Centre Regeneration and Living Project objectives set out in Section 2.5 are framed to ensure these overarching aims are achieved.

The main aims and objectives for the TIP are:

- Establishing the foundation for future growth through the catalytical impact of Glass Futures and the opportunity to harness innovation and skills for the benefit of the local community
- Delivering a high-quality residential offer within the town centre to meet housing need, diversify the town centre housing stock and providing the opportunity for a new residential population to thrive in the town centre as part of our wider place-making ambitions.
- To create a smaller, more sustainably accessible Town Centre to respond to changing high-street functions; shrinking the proportion of retail and introducing a diverse mix of town centre uses to complement the residential offer. Creating the right spaces and places for independent businesses to thrive and building on the opportunities of greater footfall and visitors into St Helens as a result of Glass Futures.
- Positively changing the perceptions of the town and the borough through maximising St Helens' heritage and cultural assets to provide a distinctive offer for visitors residents and businesses and introducing meanwhile uses to create a vibrant, animated place.
- To enable our children, young people and the local community to raise their aspirations and take pride in their place through providing the right places and spaces to meet, collaborate, learn and develop their skills to benefit from new employment opportunities and the transformational growth of the borough.
- Ensuring digital inclusion and laying the foundations for communities, businesses and visitors to digitally connect, for businesses and investment to be attracted into the borough and supporting residents and businesses to be able to adapt to a new digital agenda.
- Connecting communities with employment opportunities through ensuring sustainable movement and accessibility for St Helens town centre and borough wide.
- Building on the St Helens Cares model to create a first-class health, wellbeing and social care hub for the town and improve residents' health outcomes.

The activities and outputs for the project have been developed in line with these objectives. The overarching outcomes expected to arise from the project's activities and outputs are summarised in **Table 2-4** below.

Table 2-4: Expected outcomes to 2030				
	Promoting a vibrant town centre offer	Creating the conditions for sustainable economic growth	Introducing new forms of town centre living	Changing perceptions of St Helens
Short-term outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of attractive and connected spaces • Introducing a wider range of high quality uses in the town centre • Increase the number of people living and working in the town centre and associated expenditure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities to accommodate a wider range of businesses in St Helens including in knowledge intensive professional sectors • Increased employment opportunities for residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving access to good quality housing stock in the town centre • Increasing town centre population and resident expenditure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising quality levels for town centre homes and commercial accommodation • Increasing the number of visitors that can be accommodated in the town centre
Medium-term outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening occupier demand for a wider range of uses within the town centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retention of skilled workers within the Borough • Demonstrating demand for commercial uses within the town centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate demand for market housing, stimulating wider commercial investment • Enhanced retention of younger, skilled workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a positive 'place brand' for St Helens to encourage future investment.
Longer-term outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transforming St Helens town centre through providing a diverse mixed-use development which delivers a vibrant and sustainable town, benefiting the local community and local businesses, as well as supporting new occupiers and businesses to choose St Helens town centre as their home. 			

2.7. Stakeholders

The TIP development stage required substantial engagement activity to be undertaken and included building on previous engagement work within the town centre for the previous town centre strategy and consultation on St Mary's Market in 2017 and 2018, through to Towns Fund specific engagement that commenced in November 2019. Thinkingplace was appointed to lead on the Towns Fund specific engagement and led a series of focus group sessions to establish the key challenges but also opportunities for St Helens. These engagement sessions took place in April 2020 and stakeholders re-affirmed some of the challenges raised in previous engagement, confirming a need to focus on the regeneration of the town centre.

St Helens Borough Council also prepared their St Helens Together: Borough Strategy with engagement in July and August 2020. 72% of respondents wanted to see vibrant and attractive town centres within the borough, as well as more job opportunities (67%), a green and clean environment (39%) and new housing (26%).

Government also established MyTown as a portal by which members of the public could also submit their views to support the Towns Funding vision. Comments included the need for significant town centre regeneration, creating a night-time economy, attracting in new businesses and improving the town centre offer, including more leisure uses.

The Phase 1 development is set out within the St Helens Town Centre Masterplan Development Framework which was consulted on between 1st November 2021 to 13th December 2021 and included a comprehensive social media campaign, online consultation boards and information, local press releases, and in person events. A total of 248 responses were received which were largely supportive of the proposals. Of these respondents:

- 88% agreed with the vision to transform St Helens town centre, 79% agreed with the proposals to redevelop the town's market hall and to redevelop some of the existing retail space on the high street.
- 64% of respondents were supportive of the proposal to create new commercial space, recognising the potential that this would bring to grow and attract new businesses into the area.
- 66% agreed that a new residential offering should be included as part of the town centre regeneration proposals.

To support the TIP, a Stakeholder Engagement Strategy was prepared although the Council will be refreshing this to support the implementation of the individual business cases in Summer 2022.

The support for the project is demonstrated with the Statement of Consultation for the town centre wider masterplan development framework in **Appendix F**.

2.8. Dependencies and Constraints

There are several key strategic dependencies and constraints, however many of these have been mitigated through ongoing due diligence and activity, as shown below:

- **Land assembly** – ECF is working in partnership with St Helens Borough Council to secure control of the Phase 1 area through land assembly. Significant progress has been made and the majority of freehold ownerships have been secured. In addition, the Council has developed a tenant relocation strategy that will support existing occupiers to relocate within the town centre – strengthening the density of activity within the retail core. There are a number of outstanding interests and the Council has advised that it will now proceed towards securing approval for a compulsory purchase order for the wider town centre regeneration initiative. This is reflected in the updated programme for the phase 1 project.
- **Design development** – the Masterplan Development Framework for the town centre has been developed and subject to a substantial consultation exercise. Design development remains at a relatively early stage, targeting completion of RIBA Stage 2 in July 2022, and will continue to be progressed by ECF, building upon their experience of delivering complex regeneration initiatives (including the recent Salford Central scheme).
- **Planning consents** – a hybrid planning application was submitted in March 2022 (planning reference: P/2022/0212/HYBR). This outlined key parameters for the Phase 1 project that will continue to be refined through ongoing design development. Subject to approval, it is envisaged that a reserved matters application will be submitted in December 2022.
- **Confirmation of funding** – the delivery of the Phase 1 scheme is subject to confirmation of funding. ECF will directly invest in proposed housing delivery, with St Helens Borough Council investing in the delivery of a new market hall, office and hotel accommodation. After allowing for the approval of Towns Fund investment, there remains a viability gap. St Helens Borough Council has advised that it will underwrite this gap, while working with a range of partners to secure additional third-party grant funding support, subject to further business case approval.
- **Occupier demand** – St Helens Borough Council has indicated that it will fund new office accommodation at risk, subject to further business case approval. ECF is at an advanced stage of discussion with two potential hotel operators, while it is envisaged that a number of existing traders

will relocate to the new market hall facility. Proposals for new housing will be progressed by ECF based on the best available market evidence.

- **Partnership and governance** – ECF has been appointed as St Helens Borough Council’s development partner, with St Helens town centre identified within the agreement as one of the initial projects to be progressed within the Borough. The Overarching Development Agreement (ODA) sets out objectives, governance arrangements and responsibilities of each party. The ODA confirms that the partners will progress the First Phase of the project which satisfies the minimum requirements of having a gross development value of at least £40m. The partners agree a Development Proposal Notice for the first phase and enter into a phase contract for Phase 1. ECF is then responsible for preparing key development documents for the Council to approve. The ODA confirms that progress of the development is monitored through a monthly Steering Group which is chaired by the Council as well as an Executive Group comprised of a Board Member of each party. Annual reviews of the ODA are to be carried out to assess performance under the ODA as well as quality of the development.
- **Site conditions and risk** – desk-top assessments have been progressed. More detailed site investigation works will be carried out to determine specific site issues to be addressed through the development. Appropriate provision has been made for contingency at this stage of design development.
- **Bus Station delivery** – the construction of the new bus station will be carried out by St Helens Borough Council (in partnership with Merseytravel) adjacent to the phase 1 site. Design development for the bus station has been progressed by St Helens Borough Council in consultation with ECF to ensure that connections and the public realm environment are integrated and in line with the town centre Masterplan Development Framework.

ECONOMIC CASE

3. ECONOMIC CASE

3.1. Introduction

The purpose of the economic dimension of this business case is to identify the proposal that delivers best public value to society, including wider social and environmental effects.

3.2. Approach to economic case

The Economic Case assesses the economic impacts of the scheme and whether value for money for the public sector is optimised. This involves developing a long list of options, with the options qualitatively compared to identify a shortlist. A quantitative comparison of the shortlisted options and the Reference Case is then set out to identify the preferred option. Sensitivity analysis follows to test the quantitative findings of the preferred option.

The assessment of economic benefits has been undertaken in full compliance with the latest HM Treasury Green Book (2022) and relevant Departmental guidance published by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) There are several over-arching assumptions which apply to the value for money assessment (unless otherwise stated):

- all short-listed options have been appraised over a 40-year period, reflecting the financial appraisals prepared by CBRE and consistent with appraisal guidance for development projects;
- where Present Value figures are presented, cost and values have been discounted at 3.5% for the next 30 years and 3% thereafter;
- all monetised costs and benefits have been converted to 2022/23 prices;
- the costs and benefits of the intervention options are presented in net terms and relative to the reference case. Adjustments have also been made for displacement in the benefits assessment, alongside leakage and multiplier effects within the analysis of local impacts. Further detail is provided in relation additional assumptions below; and
- optimism bias has been calculated for each short-listed option using HM Treasury methodology and included in the value for money analysis.

3.3. Approach adopted

The framework for assessing the economic benefits of the s scheme has been developed having regard to the HM Treasury Green Book, DLUHC, BEIS and DCMS guidance. As set out within the DLUHC Appraisal Guide, projects should be appraised on the basis of a benefit cost ratio (BCR) reflecting the private benefit associated with the change in land use and the external benefits (and costs) of the scheme, compared to the net public sector cost. Table 3-1 sets out a summary from the DLUHC Appraisal Guide of the potential benefits and costs that inform the assessment of the BCR.

Table 3-1: Description of the benefits and costs identified within the DLUHC Appraisal guide*		
	Consumer and business impacts	External impacts and public sector finance impacts
Present value benefits (numerator)	Private benefits e.g. land value uplift [Private sector costs if not captured in land value] Public sector grant or loan if not captured in land value [Public sector loan repayments if not captured in land value] Distributional benefits	External benefits [External costs]
Present value cost (denominator)		Public sector grant and/or loan [Other public sector loan repayments] Other public sector costs [Other public sector revenues]

* The benefits and costs in brackets are negative values

The calculation of costs and benefits has accounted for the latest recommendations from DLUHC in relation to the Towns Fund, as well as other recent publications for regeneration and employment projects. Reflecting the diverse nature of the interventions and their expected impacts, as well as the existing conditions within St Helens town centre and St Helens local authority area, a wide range of external benefits have been assessed in accordance with guidance as set out in the Economic Benefits section below.

In addition to the calculation of a BCR for the project in line with DLUHC's recommended methodology, the strategic importance and local economic impact has also been assessed at the local level (St Helens local authority area), also in line with guidance. This has been based on an analysis of the net additional jobs and GVA that will be created across the programme.

3.4. Shortlisting of options

A range of alternative options for the Town Centre Living and Regeneration Project have been considered by ECF and its strategic partners in developing proposals for St Helens town centre. At a strategic level, the adopted Masterplan Development Framework confirms that consideration was given to a range of potential options to achieve the overarching vision for the town centre. This identified the importance of adopting a multi-faceted approach, curating a range of uses within the town centre that would contribute to a more balanced and sustainable pattern of activity. The Masterplan Development Framework also supported a phased approach to the regeneration of the town centre, recognising the importance of an initial round of intervention to catalysing future phases.

The Phase 1 scheme will be focused around the site of the existing Hardshaw Shopping Centre, which has been the primary focus for land assembly. The hybrid planning application seeks outline consent for the Phase 1 scheme based on a range of key parameters. In light of these factors, consideration of potential options for the phase 1 scheme has had regard to the following potential variables:

- **Scale/extent** – the phase 1 site offers the potential to scale the level of development proposed. As design development progresses towards RIBA Stage 2, the level of development has been informed by market analysis and testing. However, the scale of the site and proposed parameters potentially allow for either a higher density of development (based on identified demand or need) or a reduced scale of development in Phase 1. There is a recognition that a scale of development activity is needed to achieve a transformative effect capable of catalysing future investment.
- **Use mix** – the mix of uses has been considered having regard to market analysis and the strategic objectives of key partners, particularly St Helens Borough Council. There is a recognition that new uses need to be introduced to promote a more diverse and vibrant offer. However, there is significant scope to vary the mix of uses under the proposed parameters, particularly in relation to the balance of commercial and residential uses.

- **Configuration** – consideration is being given to optimising the configuration of the phase 1 scheme as part of the ongoing design development process. While there are a range of potential configuration options, it is envisaged that the design process will ensure that the selected scheme achieves best value, having regard to the strategic objectives for the project.
- **New build or refurbishment** – the existing premises reflect outmoded models of town centre retail provision and are no longer attractive to occupiers or shoppers. The potential to adapt key buildings – notably the Hardshaw Shopping Centre – while achieving wider objectives to enhance the public realm and connectivity was judged to be very limited. On this basis, refurbishment was not considered to represent an appropriate option.
- **Delivery mechanism** – discussions between the project partners are ongoing to test potential delivery and long-term management arrangements for each element of the project. The scope of the delivery options is outlined further within the commercial case.

Based on the identified variables, a long list of potential options has been identified and subject to review by the project partners. Options include:

1. **Business as usual:** under this option there will be no further intervention. The market will continue within its current operation, while the existing retail facilities will continue to be marketed to occupiers.
2. **Proposed scheme:** The scheme as proposed in the Introduction, including residential, office, hotel, ancillary retail/leisure, and public realm provision.
3. **Expanded Phase 1 scheme:** The proposed Phase 1 scheme is expanded within the overall scope of the parameters outlined within the planning application. Under this option, it is proposed that more office and residential space would be delivered through increasing the density of development. The public realm quality will be reduced as a result and a larger viability gap is likely to need to be filled.
4. **Reduced Phase 1 scheme:** The proposed scheme is reduced whereby there are no residential outputs included within the mixed-use masterplan. While this may support a reduced viability gap, this option does not fit with the strategic regeneration objective to introduce new models of town centre living.
5. **Alternative mix scheme:** An alternative mix of uses is proposed, whereby the office space within the existing masterplan is replaced by an extra 65 units of residential provision. This provision will allow the town centre to meet the demand from a wider market. However, it does not directly align with the vision for a mixed-use masterplan regeneration scheme supporting a more diverse town centre economy.

The assessment of long-listed options has been based on their ability to meet a range of Critical Success Factors (CSFs) identified in the HM Treasury Green Book, as shown below. These CSFs were agreed by the project team in workshops having regard to Green Book guidance and the strategic objectives for the project. The CSFs ensured that each option could be robustly assessed against agreed priorities and deliverability criteria, with the shortlist determined by whether the option has a reasonable chance of success on across a range of factors. The CSFs are as follows:

- **Strategic Fit** – the strategic objectives of the project include:
 - Creating the conditions for long term sustainable growth within the town centre;
 - Promoting a vibrant mix of uses within the town centre;
 - Positively changing perceptions of St Helens; and
 - Introducing town centre living.
- **Affordability** – the extent to which the option can be resourced from within available budgets.
- **Value for money** – the extent to which the project is expected to achieve value for money based on expected outputs and costs.

- **Deliverability** – Reflecting the capacity of the Board in its current form to deliver a complex capital scheme. It is noted that an initial investment will play a key role in building the capacity and capability of the Board for major future investment

Options that fail to meet a CSF are rejected at this stage and not taken forward to the shortlist, in line with Government guidance. Additionally, options that did not score favorably across the appraisal were ruled out from selection. The results of the long list assessment are displayed in the table below.

Table 3-2: Longlist assessment					
Option	Strategic Fit	Affordability	Potential VFM	Deliverability	Conclusion
1. Business as usual	Does not meet the strategic objectives	Affordable in capital terms. Note the ongoing liability on the market	Unlikely to deliver benefits and low occupancy may contribute to negative effects	Fully deliverable but fails to achieve objective.	Yes – As Reference Case
2. Proposed option	Fully meets the objectives for phase 1	Potentially affordable subject to further financial appraisal	In advance of detailed analysis, the VFM is expected to be marginal based on identified costs	Subject to design development, with a full team appointed. Expected to be fully deliverable	Yes – preferred option
3. Expanded phase 1	Fully meets the objectives for phase 1	Potentially unaffordable subject to further financial appraisal	In advance of detailed analysis, the VFM is expected to be marginal based on identified costs	Delivering the full vision may be challenging	Yes – but potentially unaffordable
4. Reduced Phase 1	Does not meet objectives to promote town centre living	Potentially affordable subject to further financial appraisal	In advance of detailed analysis, the VFM is expected to be marginal due to costs and reduced outputs	Subject to design development, with a full team appointed. Expected to be fully deliverable	No – not aligned with long-term vision
5. Alternative mix	Low contribution as no office space is proposed	Potentially affordable subject to further financial appraisal	In advance of detailed analysis, the VFM is expected to be marginal based on identified costs	Subject to design development, with a full team appointed. Expected to be fully deliverable	Yes – weaker alignment

Following the analysis of long-listed options against the critical success factors, four options have been short-listed for more detailed assessment and consideration:

- **Option 1:** Business as Usual
- **Option 2:** Proposed Phase 1 option
- **Option 3:** Alternative mix
- **Option 5:** Expanded Phase 1

Option 4 (a reduced Phase 1 scheme) has not been shortlisted as it fails to meet key objectives to promote new models of town centre living.

Option 2 has been taken forward as the preferred option because it provides a holistic, coherent solution to meet all the public sector objectives in an achievable approach within the Town Deal funding envelope and timescales. The Do-Nothing option (Option 1) is short-listed as the Reference Case. Options 3 and 5

have also been shortlisted as an alternative as they do not fail any of the CSFs but are considered to score less favorably in a number of categories.

Outputs and costings have been produced for the Reference Case and shortlisted options to inform the detailed analysis.

The reference case assumes that in the event the project did not advance, St Helens Borough Council would retain the existing assets including the Hardshaw Shopping Centre. In light of current market conditions, it is considered unlikely that the Council would be able to secure the disposal of these assets on acceptable terms. There is a very high level of vacancy within the Hardshaw Shopping Centre and it is envisaged that units would remain unlet or low value use for the foreseeable future. While it is considered likely that the Council would incur significant holding costs, to be prudent it has been assumed that these would be offset by any rental income. Under this scenario, it is further assumed that the Council would continue to operate the market within the St Mary's Centre, with current performance (circa £200,000 operating deficit) supported by the Council on an ongoing basis.

3.5. Economic costs

The financial costs of the proposed interventions have been developed by St Helens Borough Council with support from professional advisors. The profile has been also guided by colleagues within the Council's Finance Service who have significant experience in relation to managing existing and future budgets.

The following amendments and assumptions have been made to incorporate the financial costs into economic costs for this assessment, in line with Green Book guidance:

- The nominal financial costs in the Financial Case have been converted to economic costs in line with the Green Book approach by using the HM Treasury's GDP deflator index to convert estimates of future costs to constant (2022/23) prices.
- Cost of capital has been excluded from the assessment, with costs and revenues profiled in the period in which they are incurred. Interest costs on SHBC borrowing is outlined in the Financial Case.
- The constant price costs have been adjusted to present value costs by applying the Treasury's Social Time Preference discount rate (3.5% for the first 30 years and 3.0% thereafter).
- The balance and of the cost, over and above the Towns Fund investment, will be funded through borrowings, with the principle and interest repaid over the remainder of the 40 year period. On this basis, a 40 year appraisal period has been adopted.

Public capital expenditure within the programme is expected to run until 2025/26, which aligns with the Towns Fund guidance (Towns Fund funding must be spent by 2025/26). It is assumed that St Helens Borough Council will fully fund the delivery of enabling works, alongside the hotel, office, market hall and market provision. The residential component will be part funded by ECF with the benefit of gap funding support. Table 3-3 provides a summary of capital and interest costs under the preferred option (Option 2).

Table 3-32: Gross public sector economic costs for Option 2 (£000)							
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Beyond	Total	PV Cost
Capital cost							
Enabling works	£37.5	£3,761.4	£1,890.5	£4,502.3	-	£10,191.7	£9,473.7
Office	-	£515.1	£12,314.6	£5,596.6	-	£18,426.3	£16,994.0
Hotel	-	£462.5	£11,056.2	£5,024.7	-	£16,543.4	£15,257.5
Retail	-	£98.2	£2,397.5	£1,307.4	-	£3,803.0	£3,502.1
Market Hall	-	£320.8	£6,709.4	£3,070.1	-	£10,100.3	£9,316.4
Residential (gap)	£205.2	£4,973.9	£2,549.0	-	-	£7,728.2	£7,378.8
Sub-Total*	£242.7	£10,132.0	£36,917.2	£19,500.9	-	£66,792.8	£61,922.4

*Figures may not sum due to rounding

The estimated undiscounted and discounted public sector costs of each option are set out below. The total Present Value cost under the intervention options ranges from £54.5 million under Option 3 to £75.9 million under Option 5.

Table 3-43: Summary gross public sector economic costs (£000)							
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Beyond	Total*	PV Cost
Option 1	-	-	-	-	-	£0.0	£0.0
Option 2	£242.7	£10,132.0	£36,917.2	£19,500.9	-	£66,792.8	£61,922.4
Option 3	£509.5	£16,082.9	£27,916.3	£13,904.4	-	£58,413.1	£54,520.8
Option 5	£571.1	£18,154.5	£42,533.6	£20,199.9	-	£81,459.2	£75,850.9

*Figures may not sum due to rounding

Optimism bias is the proven tendency for appraisers to be optimistically biased about key project parameters, including capital costs and operating costs and project duration.

The economic costs for each intervention include an allowance for Optimism Bias. This has been estimated using an Optimism Bias Mitigation Model based on the Supplementary Green Book Guidance produced by Mott MacDonald. All costs have been considered expenditure relating to standard building projects. A summary of the most significant mitigations made for each intervention is included in the below.

Table 3-54: Optimism Bias by type of intervention				
Intervention	Type	Upper Bound OB	Mitigated OB	Comments
Residential development, retail and leisure spaces, site assembly, acquisition	Standard Building projects	24%	10.2%	Key mitigations include reducing the risk of project through the experience of the St Helens Borough Council and partners of managing this type of facility, the level of design and master planning completed as part of this Business Case process and mitigating likelihood of additional costs from poor public relations through extensive stakeholder engagement to date. Additionally, the Council has a knowledge of the site and ECF and St Helens are working under a Strategic Development Agreement
New public realm and infrastructure	Standard civil engineering projects	44%	15.0%	Key mitigations include the knowledge and complete due diligence of the site, the involvement of cost consultants in each stage of the project and well-developed procurement processes by the Council for this type of intervention.

The discounted net present public sector cost including Optimism Bias for each intervention option is set out below.

Table 3-65: Summary gross public sector economic costs with OB (£000)							
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Beyond	Total*	Net present cost
Option 1	-	-	-	-	-	£0.0	£0.0
Option 2	£269.2	£11,343.9	£40,766.3	£21,702.3	-	£74,081.7	£68,681.1
Option 3	£563.2	£17,900.7	£30,849.1	£15,535.9	-	£64,848.9	£60,525.9
Option 5	£631.0	£20,183.3	£46,954.6	£22,472.4	-	£90,241.2	£84,027.5

*Figures may not sum due to rounding

Based on financial modelling undertaken by CBRE, it is envisaged that St Helens Borough Council will secure rental income through the leasing and operation of premises delivered through the Phase 1 scheme. In addition, provision has been made for the residual value of the assets to the Council at the end of the appraisal period. Allowing for the projected values, Table 3-7 outlines the net public sector cost under each option.

Table 3-76: Summary net public sector economic costs (£000)							
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Beyond	Total*	Net present cost
Option 1	-	-	£250.0	£250.0	£9,500.0	£10,000.0	£5,323.4
Option 2	£269.2	£11,343.9	£40,516.3	£21,452.3	-£93,795.5	-£20,213.8	£28,027.5
Option 3	£563.2	£17,900.7	£30,599.1	£15,285.9	-£60,857.2	£3,491.8	£33,923.6
Option 5	£631.0	£20,183.3	£46,704.6	£22,222.4	-£101,153.1	-£11,411.9	£40,797.6

*Figures may not sum due to rounding

The net marginal cost for each of the intervention option can be derived by deducting the net present cost under the reference case. This assumes that revenue costs associated with the operation of the market hall in its existing location (£0.25 million per annum based on financial reports provided by St Helens Borough Council) persist into the future. While it is also assumed that St Helens Borough Council would retain units within the Hardshaw Shopping Centre, it has been assumed that operational income will cover ongoing costs.

The net marginal cost (allowing for the deduction of the PV cost under the business as usual scenario) is estimated to be £22.7 million under Option 2, compared to £38.6 million and £35.5 million under Options 3 and 5 respectively.

As detailed within the financial case, it is proposed that ECF will invest equity into the residential component of the project. This cost to the private sector has been assessed within the calculation of benefits.

3.6. Economic benefits

3.6.1. Additionality

Additionality (i.e. the extent to which activity takes place at all, on a larger scale, earlier, or within a specific designated area or target group as a result of the intervention) has been assessed to determine net additional effects of the proposed project.

- **Leakage** – the proportion of outputs that benefit those outside of the project's target area or group;
- **Displacement** – the proportion of project outputs accounted for by reduced outputs elsewhere in the target area. Displacement may occur in both the factor and product markets;
- **Multiplier effects** – further economic activity associated with additional local income and local supplier purchases; and
- **Deadweight** – outputs which would have occurred without the project (the Reference Case).

The approach to assessing the net additional local impact of a project, accounting for the above adjustments, is shown diagrammatically in Figure 3.1. For the purposes of this assessment, the local additionality of the proposals (employment and Gross Value Added (GVA)) has been considered at the St Helens local authority level. In terms of the cost benefit analysis, the national level has been considered in line with guidance.

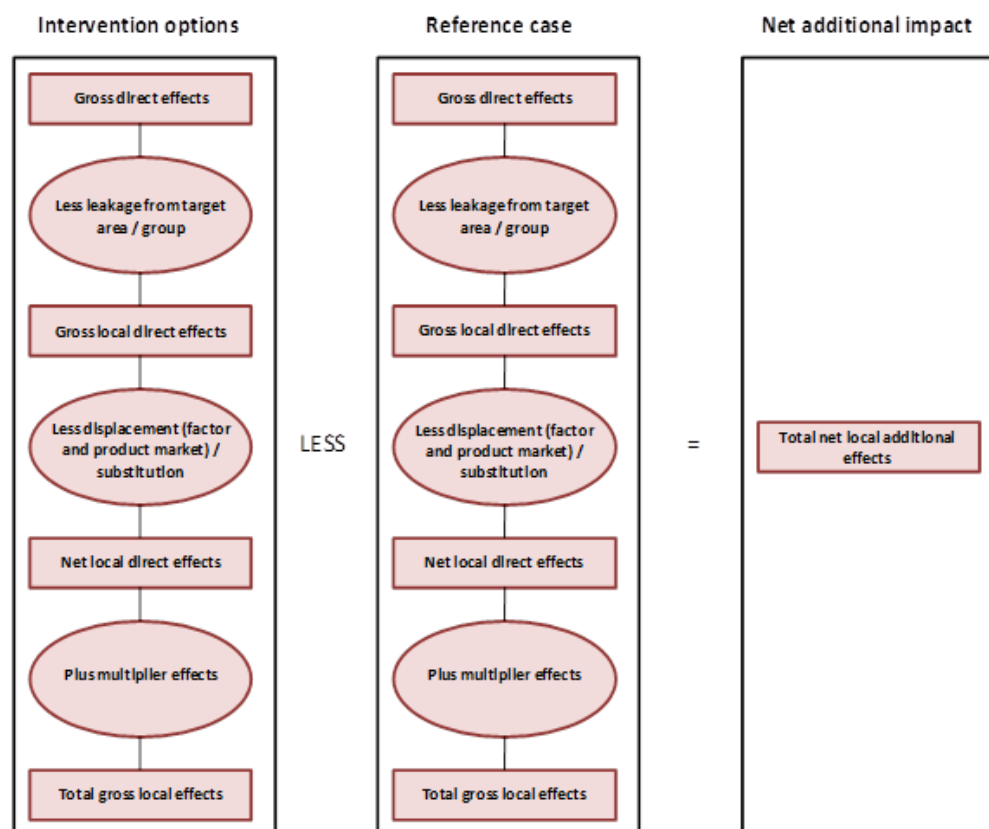


Figure 3.1: Additionality framework

At the national level, the assessment of additionality focuses on displacement and deadweight effects. Specific assumptions in relation to these adjustments are described below:

- **Displacement** – although it is inevitable the project may compete with existing office and residential provision, the proposals respond directly to an identified need for new facilities in the area. The project aligns with government’s levelling up ambition and the Towns Fund objectives to create new activity in areas of need particularly relating to residential provision and enterprise. However, to be prudent, a 25% displacement factor (75% additionality) has been applied to the value for money assessment for each option based on a low displacement level in the Additionality Guide and existing local evidence. This level is deemed to be appropriate having regard to ready reckoners and benchmarks in guidance due to the contribution from the Town Centre Living and Regeneration project to introducing new typologies of housing, as well as the scheme’s crucial role in strengthening the labour market, local economy, and hospitality offer.
- **Deadweight** – no project outputs will be delivered without the Towns Fund investment as the scheme will be unviable.

3.6.2. Project outputs

Key outputs, for the purposes of the Economic Case, will include those identified in the following table:

Table 3-87: Outputs				
	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 5
New residential units	0	50	115	130
New office floorspace (sqm)	0	5,813	0	6,539
New retail floorspace (sqm)	0	2,164	2,164	2,164
New hotel beds	0	124	124	124
Public realm improved	0	5,000	5,000	5,000

3.6.3. Project outcomes and impacts

Key economic outcomes and impact will comprise the below list of benefits. These benefits are all cited in the Green Book or relevant departmental guidance (DfT, BEIS, or Green Book Supplementary Guidance) and therefore, are included in the initial BCR:

- **Land value uplift:** Analysis of changes in land values which reflect the economic efficiency benefits of converting land into a more productive use within the St Helens Town Centre Living and Regeneration Project.
- **Wider land value uplift:** Wider placemaking effects for the proposed development which the funding programme will facilitate have been estimated using Valuation Office Agency (VOA) data for commercial analysis and Council Tax band data for the residential value assessment. A cautious impact area has been used consisting of LSOAs and postcodes within the town centre area. A Homes England accepted methodology has been used.
- **Reduced crime wellbeing benefits:** The new, high-quality residential development will have benefits associated with the social impact of community investment. These benefits relate to residents benefitting from reduced fear of crime and anti-social behaviour.
- **Amenity value:** The project would enable 8,759sqm of improved public realm within the associated development. This will provide enhanced amenity benefits for the local population, using values within the DLUHC Appraisal Guide.
- **Residents into employment wellbeing benefits:** Wellbeing benefits associated with unemployed residents moving into new jobs arising from the additional employment-generating floorspace of the project.
- **Labour supply benefits:** The project will have benefits associated with employment creation and reduction in barriers to employment for local workers through new high-quality education and research floorspace. The reduced barriers to entry will generate local economic benefits for the area, as calculated through labour supply benefits in line with DLUHC guidance.
- **Productivity uplift benefits:** the new jobs which will be created at the redevelopment are predominantly in sectors which are above average productivity (office provision). The subsequent benefits arising from transferring labour into more productive roles have been captured using average wages data and wage premia, consistent with BEIS Appraisal Guidance. The dis-benefits from sectors below average productivity, such as retail sectors, have been accounted for within these calculations.

The calculation of initial benefits also allows for private sector costs in relation to the residential elements of the scheme as a disbenefit.

The following benefits are included as part of an adjusted BCR, in line with Towns Fund guidance:

- **Distributional benefits:** as outlined in the Green Book and DLUHC Appraisal Guidance, to accurately evaluate willingness to pay, there is a need to understand the value for money to each group under consideration. This analysis has been considered as part of an adjusted BCR.

3.6.4. Land value uplift

The estimate of land value uplift has been calculated in accordance with DLUHC guidance, whereby the existing value of the land is subtracted from the value under the proposed option. The estimate of uplift has been calculated having regard to benchmarks published by DLUHC to inform policy analysis.

The existing land value for the economic assessment has been calculated based on an assumed take-up of existing retail space within the existing Hardshaw Shopping Centre. This approach is considered to be prudent, given that the leasing of units within the Centre is unlikely to generate a significant return.

The benefits from these effects are presented below for each option:

Table 3-98: Land value uplift benefits				
	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 5
Present value accounting for additionality (cumulative, £000)	0	£2,164.0	£2,443.9	£3,459.4

Based on the approach adopted, allowance has been made for private costs (based on ECF equity investment). This has been estimated at £4.3 million under Option 2, £9.9 million under Option 3 and £11.2 million under Option 5.

3.6.5. Wider land value uplift

Based on the principle that the investment proposed through the programme will result in wider market effects across the town, an estimate has been made of the wider land value uplift (or place-making effects) which will be generated. An impact area of St Helens town centre, as defined by ONS, has been considered to be influenced by the investment, taking account for the direct land value uplift calculations. Any Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) that cross this impact area have been accounted for, with the proportion the LSOA crosses into the area applied to any analysis.

From the research into a series of academic pieces into placemaking and wider land value uplift, these impacts are likely to arise from the following elements of the scheme hotel; residential provision; public realm; and reinstated Market Hall. The market hall is expected to have a marginal zero impact, as these effects are felt in the Reference Case.

In order to assess the impact of interventions, analysis has been undertaken to establish baseline asset values for commercial and residential property within the consolidated impact areas:

- the commercial analysis was based on VOA data and is assessed for the consolidated impact area across the town centre. The rateable value evidence has been capitalised, based on Knight Frank's Yield Guide May 2020.
- the residential value assessment is based on Council Tax band data for residential properties within the three LSOAs which form part of the impact area. An average unit price has been estimated based for properties in each Council Tax band, taking account of the uplift in house prices since properties were rated for Council Tax in 1991. This average price has been applied to unit volume data within each Council Tax band within the impact area to estimate the total value of residential property which is likely to benefit from an uplift in value as a result of the interventions.

An uplift to the capital value of residential property types has been applied, based on the extent to which they are likely to benefit from the interventions. A 1.5% uplift has been applied to the values in the consolidated impact area for Option 2 and Option 3 due to the growth enabled by the programme. An uplift of 2.0% has been applied to Option 5 due to its expanded regeneration programme. This rate aligns with recent AMION research for DLUHC into placemaking effects.

A range of uplifts to the capital value of different commercial property types has been applied, based on the extent to which they are likely to benefit from the Town Centre Living programme. The following uplifts have been applied:

- High uplift value of 7.5%: Hairdressing salon and premises; Hotel and premises; Office and premises; Public house and premises; Restaurant and premises; Shop and premises; Fitness studio and premises
- Medium uplift value of 5.0%: Bank and premises; Cafe and premises; Garage and premises; Workshop and premises
- Low uplift value of 2.5%: Store and premises; Tattoo parlour and premises; Betting shop and premises
- None: Building under redevelopment; car parks; kitchens; tyre centres; education facilities

A 75% additionality factor has been applied as set out above.

Table 3-10: Wider land value uplift benefits				
	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 5
Present value accounting for additionality (cumulative, £000)	0	£21,301.6	£21,083.0	£24,170.1

3.6.6. Reduced crime wellbeing benefits

The reduction in crime brought about by the St Helens Town Centre Living and Regeneration Project residential developments will have wellbeing benefits for the number of residents who will occupy the residential properties within the masterplans as they will experience reduced fear of crime. Research into wellbeing has identified the monetary value of the benefit (£7,085) which is experienced by those who report having 'no problem with anti-social behaviour'¹².

This benefit has been applied to the number of residents who are expected to occupy the new housing developed through the housing programme, using an average occupancy level of 2.0 residents per unit which is in line with local statistics. Using local crime statistics, it has then been used 25% of these residents currently experience the fear of crime in the area. The benefit is expected to last for one year.

The benefits from these effects are presented below for each option:

Table 3-119: Reduced crime wellbeing benefits				
	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 5
Present value accounting for additionality (cumulative, £000)	0	£119.4	£274.6	£310.4

3.6.7. Amenity benefits

Under each of the intervention options, the project will deliver 8,759sqm of improved public realm surrounding the facility. These interventions will enhance the amenity value experienced by residents, workers, and visitors.

Consistent with the DLUHC Appraisal Guide, it has been assumed that new open spaces in an urban environment have an economic benefit of £109,138 per hectare per annum (2016 prices), which has been assumed to be applicable to all the formal public realm created as part of the enabled development. As the public realm within the redevelopments will be improved spaces rather than new spaces, 33% of this benefit figure has been applied in line with previously accepted methodologies. The benefits are assumed to persist for a period of 25 years.

The benefits from these effects are presented below for each option:

¹² 'Measuring the Social Impact of Community Investment: A Guide to using the Wellbeing Valuation Approach', Trotter, Vine, Leach & Fujiwara, HACT, 2014

Table 3-12: Amenity benefits				
	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 5
Present value accounting for additionality (cumulative, £000)	0	£391.4	£391.4	£391.4

3.6.8. Residents into employment wellbeing benefits

The project will generate new employment within the retail and leisure floorspace. Employment densities from the HCA Employment Density Guide¹³ have been applied to the respective employment-generating floorspaces within the development for each option. Occupancy rates from have been applied to the commercial floorspaces. The following densities has been used in line with guidance:

- Retail: 17.5 sqm (NIA) per FTE job;
- Office: 12.0 sqm (NIA) per FTE job;
- Hotel: 80.0 sqm (GIA) per FTE job (equating to 2.5 bedrooms per FTE job).

The above employment generation will have wellbeing benefits associated with individuals moving into employment. Based on the labour market availability and analysis of ONS Labour Market Flows data, it is assumed 10% of jobs will be occupied by new entrants. Benefits have been estimated by applying a wellbeing value of £11,180¹⁴ to each full-time equivalent job. The overall wellbeing benefit is expected to last for one year.

The benefits from these effects are presented below for each option:

Table 3.13: Resident into employment wellbeing benefits				
	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 5
Present value accounting for additionality (cumulative, £000)	0	£329.1	£24.3	£367.2

3.6.9. Productivity uplift benefits

Where the new jobs created through the scheme are in sectors that have higher productivity than the St Helens average, there will be economic benefits from the transfer of labour into more productive roles. This is captured through the wage premium – the additional wages earned by those moving into jobs created through the intervention, over and above what they would have earned in an ‘average’ job. Most of the jobs created at the office space to be created within the scheme are expected to be in sectors with above-average earnings. The retail jobs are in sectors below what would be earned in an ‘average’ job; these effects have been included as disbenefits. These effects are expected to persist for a period of five years.

Data on average wages within each sector is taken from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings and compared to the average across all sectors. As robust sector-based earnings data is not available at St Helens level, national data is used and then adjusted to local level, based on average St Helens earnings relative to average national earnings. The premium reflects the difference between sector wages and the all-sector average at a UK level, weighted to reflect local performance based on ASHE data for the St Helens local authority area. The total premium is then calculated through the application of a GVA: employment cost ratio for each sector, derived from the Annual Business Survey (ABS).

To minimise the risk of double counting private benefit, the land value uplift has been deducted from the assessment of productivity uplift.

The productivity uplift benefits for each option are presented below:

¹³ HCA, (2014); Employment Density Guide: 3rd Edition

¹⁴ As stated in HACT's Measuring the Social Impact of Community Investment (2014) for full-time employment adjusted to 2021 prices

Table 3-1410: Productivity uplift benefits				
	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 5
Present value accounting for additionality (cumulative, £000)	0	£10,386.8	-£1,216.2	£10,812.1

3.6.10. Labour supply benefits

The employment density methodology set out under the residents into employment wellbeing benefits has been used to calculate the total number of jobs. In line with DLUHC guidance, a local GVA per worker figure (£39,660 to £47,923 depending on mix of uses)¹⁵ has been applied to the jobs taken up by new entrants. Based on the labour market availability and WebTAG guidance¹⁶, it is assumed 10% of jobs will be occupied by new entrants and there will be a 40% welfare impact for these jobs.

The labour supply benefits for each option are presented below, which form part of the adjusted BCR:

Table 3-1511: Labour supply benefits				
	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 5
Present value accounting for additionality (cumulative, £000)	0	£3,487.5	£84.0	£3,912.9

3.6.11. Distributional benefits

One of the key reasonings for the Towns Fund is to help level up the country, seeking to help rebalance activity from London and the South East to deteriorating town centres that have fallen behind. St Helens is designated as the 26th most deprived local authority in the country (out of 317 local authorities) according to the 2019 IMD Rankings from DLUHC. As such St Helens Towns Fund portfolio has a clear focus on redistributing growth and this effect should be included in the analysis. The Towns Fund guidance indicates distributional analysis can be used to present the economic value of this effect.

Consequently, local authority level distributional weights have been applied to the benefits. The approach used to calculate these is that set out in the HM Treasury Green Book, based on equivalised disposable household income and welfare weights (the estimate of the marginal utility of income). In the case of St Helens, a distributional weight After Housing Costs of 1.26 has been applied.

The distributional benefits associated with each option are presented below. This has been presented within an adjusted BCR.

Table 3-1612: Distributional benefits				
	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 5
Present value accounting for additionality (cumulative, £000)	0	£8,703.6	£4,847.0	£10,043.4

3.7. Other local benefits

3.7.1. Employment

Additionality has been estimated at the local level consistent with the framework outlined above based on the following adjustments:

- **Leakage** – a leakage rate for the local employment and GVA analysis has been applied at the St Helens local authority level based on commuting data derived from the 2011 Census. Overall, the leakage

¹⁵ As provided by Experian 2022 data for St Helens within the respective sectors in the facility

¹⁶ Department for Transport, (2018); TAG Unit A2.1: Wider Economic Impacts Appraisal

rate for operational employment activity at a local level is estimated to be 32% based on the origin-destination data in the Census.

- **Displacement** – displacement has been considered through analysis of local similar facilities and existing economic factors. The project aligns with government’s levelling up ambition and the Towns Fund objectives to create new activity in areas of need particularly relating to residential provision and enterprise. However, to be prudent, a 25% displacement factor (75% additionality) has been applied to the value for money assessment for each option based on a low displacement level in the Additionality Guide and existing local evidence. This level is deemed to be appropriate having regard to ready reckoners and benchmarks in guidance
- **Multiplier** – alongside directly supporting employment creation, the proposed development will also lead to additional job opportunities through supply chain expenditure (indirect effects) and induced effects through employee spend on goods and services within the region. To consider both the indirect and induced multiplier effects associated with the scheme, reference has been made to benchmarks outlined within additionality guidance. For operational activity, a composite employment multiplier of 1.15 has been applied to the local-level analysis reflecting the nature of the proposals; and
- **Deadweight** – deadweight has been considered through the Reference Case as set out above.

Table 3-17 sets out the gross and net additional employment outcomes for St Helens associated with each option.

Table 3-1713: Local employment impacts				
	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 5
Increase in gross operational jobs	121	566	155	618
Gross local jobs (accounting for leakage)	82	383	105	418
Net local jobs (accounting for displacement)	62	287	78	313
Total net local jobs (accounting for multiplier)	71	330	90	360
Total net local additional jobs (accounting for deadweight)	-	259	19	289

3.7.2. Gross Value Added

Table 3-18Error! Reference source not found. sets out the estimated net additional GVA impact per year in St Helens of each option once they are fully occupied. These calculations have utilised Experian data for St Helens in 2022, capturing the relevant sectors within the project. The calculation of net additionality GVA at the local level does not make an adjustment for leakage as it is a workplace-based measure of activity.

Table 3-1814: Local GVA impacts (£m)				
	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 5
Increase in gross GVA	£4.8	£26.0	£5.4	£28.6
Gross local GVA (accounting for leakage)	£4.8	£26.0	£5.4	£28.6
Net local GVA (accounting for displacement)	£3.6	£19.5	£4.0	£21.5
Total net local GVA (accounting for multiplier)	£4.2	£22.5	£4.6	£24.7
Total net local additional GVA (accounting for deadweight)	-	£18.3	£0.5	£20.5

3.8. Non-quantified benefits

Building upon the analysis of quantifiable effects, consideration of the wider economic, social, and environmental benefits associated with each option has been undertaken. The following benefits have been considered as part of the contribution to local growth and development:

- **Regeneration** – the Town Centre Living and Regeneration Project has been given status as a priority regeneration project within St Helens Borough Council. The significant site alongside the key town centre gateway has real potential to trigger economic regeneration across St Helens. The facilities on the site have been underused or vacant for a considerable period and present the ideal opportunity to redevelop the town centre. Through this regeneration, which aligns directly with the Towns Fund guidance, there is the opportunity to create employment opportunities for residents alongside a high-quality residential development. St Helens is currently ranked poorly in the housing and employment domains within the IMD deprivation rankings; this mixed-use development will help to reverse this trend and stimulate economic activity in the surrounding area.
- **Image** – This project is required to reverse the image and perceptions of St Helens through the development of a residential-led mixed-use masterplan in a key location. These proposals will also create more attractive gateways around the town through the public realm, in line with the advice within the Towns Fund guidance for projects. The sustainable connections across the mixed-use development will enhance routes throughout the town centre to improve sustainability and increase walking and cycling as a primary method of transport. Additionally, the leisure space increases the service provision for residents. Therefore, the proposals will greatly improve the image of the town as a place to live, do business, and visit.
- **Local spending** – the delivery of significant high-quality residential provision as part of a mixed-use development within the town is likely to attract new people to St Helens, particularly within more affluent groups and younger families. The delivery of new retail and hospitality floorspace will also support new businesses, who will benefit from the stimulated economy. Overall, the project is expected to have a positive influence on spending in the area, which will further help supply chains and linkages to surrounding economies.
- **Community benefits** – The scheme will raise the ambitions of the town, its businesses, and its communities. Additionally, the retail, café and co-working facilities amongst a high-quality residential development will result in a community ‘hub’ and ‘place to meet’ as part of the local offering, helping to improve social interaction and the community feel in St Helens for all age groups.
- **Covid-19 recovery** – Covid-19 has exacerbated some of the market failures that the project is looking to address. For example, low-income groups have been disproportionately affected by the economic downturn as retail and hospitality sectors have been forced to close and/or adapt. This project will generate new activity across a range of sectors, providing a much-needed boost to St Helens business base to help mitigate the long-term economic effects of Covid-19 within a deprived town in England.

The communities are also in desperate need for increased housing choice in the town to ensure long-term resilience and sustainability.

A scoring and weighting framework has been adopted to assess the potential scale of the wider benefits under each option. Performance against each criterion is scored out of 10, while the weighting reflects the relative importance ascribed to each benefit based on the objectives for the project. Table 3.16 presents the assessment of non-quantifiable effects.

Table 3-1915: Contribution to local growth and development					
	Weight	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 5
Criterion					
1 Regeneration	30%	3	9	8	9
2 Image	30%	2	9	8	9
3 Local spending	20%	2	8	8	9
4 Community	10%	3	9	7	8
5 Covid-19 recovery	10%	2	8	7	9
Overall score (out of 50)		12	43	38	44
Weighted score (out of 10)		2.4	8.7	7.8	8.9

3.9. Value for money assessment

The key results of the Economic Case based on quantified benefits are summarised in the Appraisal Summary Table. As can be seen below, Option 2 has been identified as the preferred option due to its initial BCR of 1.2:1 and its adjusted BCR of 1.5:1. The adjusted BCR includes the distributional analysis set out above. These BCR figures demonstrate Option 2 represents 'acceptable' value for money. The next best alternative is Option 5 which has an initial BCR of 0.8:1 and an adjusted BCR of 1.1:1.

Table 3-2016: Value for money assessment			
	Option 2	Option 3	Option 5
[A] PV of initial benefits (£000)	£34,689.6	£14,019.9	£33,072.0
[B] PV of adjusted benefits (£000)	£8,703.6	£4,847.0	£10,043.4
[C] PV of public sector costs (£000)	£28,027.5	£33,923.6	£40,797.6
[D] PV of Towns Fund only costs (£000)	£6,828.8	£6,828.8	£6,828.8
[E] PV of project costs ¹ (£000)	£68,681.1	£60,525.9	£84,027.5
NPSV (£000) [A-C]	£6,662.2	-£19,903.7	-£7,725.5
Initial BCR (xx:1) [A/C]	1.2	0.4	0.8
Adjusted BCR (xx:1) [A+B/C]	1.5	0.6	1.1
Total project cost BCR [A/E]	0.5	0.2	0.4

3.10. Sensitivity

3.10.1. Scenario testing

Sensitivity analysis has been undertaken to test the robustness of the value for money estimates and their susceptibility to change in any of the key conditions underlying the programme.

The first form of sensitivity analysis is scenario testing. This approach considers the potential implications of changes to key outputs or costs for the delivery of economic benefits and value for money. The scenarios include some more 'technical' changes – for example, adjusting optimism bias or other assumptions.

The following scenarios have been run:

- **Scenario 1:** Optimism bias is applied at the upper bound equating to 24% for standard building project;
- **Scenario 2:** Wider land value uplift for residential properties is reduced by 25%;
- **Scenario 3:** Displacement increases to 33% for all benefits;
- **Scenario 4:** Net income to SHBC reduced by 20% over the full appraisal period; and
- **Scenario 5:** All benefits are reduced by 10% and all costs are increased by 10%

The effects of these tests on the initial BCR are shown in the below table for each option.

Table 3-2117: Sensitivity tests			
	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
Core scenario	1.2	0.4	0.8
1: Optimism bias at the upper bound	1.0	0.3	0.7
2: 25% reduction in wider LVU	1.0	0.3	0.7
3: Increase displacement to 33%	1.1	0.4	0.7
4: Reduce net income to SHBC by 20%	1.0	0.4	0.7
5: 10% increase in costs and 10% decrease in benefits	1.0	0.3	0.7

As highlighted in Table 3.18, the initial BCR under Option 2 remains at or above 1.0:1 under each of the scenarios. Nevertheless, it is evidence that the BCR is sensitive to fluctuations in costs and benefits. On this

basis, achieving value for money will be dependent upon ensuring that effect mechanisms are in place to control costs, ensure that commercial opportunities are realised, and maximise benefits.

3.10.2. Switching values

The second form of sensitivity analysis is the switching values method. This approach identifies the point at which the programme moves from offering 'acceptable' value to money (a BCR of over 1.0) to 'poor' value for money (a BCR of under 1.0), as defined in the DCLG Appraisal Guide. The switching values for both costs and benefits are assessed.

The below table presents the results from the switching values analysis. As can be seen, relatively significant changes to either the benefits or the costs must occur for Option 2 to not represent good value for money. This analysis has taken place on the initial benefits, not accounting for the distributional analysis.

Table 3-2218: Switching values – initial BCR to 1:1	
	Option 2
Percent change in net additional benefits	-19.2%
Percent change in net costs	23.8%

3.11. Summary

From the analysis set out above, Option 2 has been identified as the preferred option on the basis that it offers the most effective and efficient approach. This is based on an initial BCR of 1.2 and an adjusted BCR of 1.5. This option has also been shown to be robust to sensitivity analysis (BCR remains above 1.0 under scenario testing) and performs strongly in the wider benefits analysis.

On this basis, it is considered that the proposed scheme represents acceptable value for money. However, as the BCR is below 1.5, there will be a need to ensure that appropriate measures are in put in place as design development is progressed by the project partners to ensure that minimum value for money thresholds are met including effective cost control and benefit maximisation arrangements.

FINANCIAL CASE

4. FINANCIAL CASE

4.1. Introduction

The Financial Case has been prepared with a view to clearly demonstrating that the Town Centre Regeneration and Living Project is both deliverable and sustainable in the long term subject to securing initial grant funding support, from the Towns Fund.

The project forms part of a wider transformational vision for St Helens town centre, as articulated within the endorsed Masterplan Development Framework, but Towns Funding alongside funding from St Helens Borough Council will unlock and enable the delivery of Phase 1 of the scheme.

The Financial Case draws from the accompanying Financial Model (**Appendix A**) to set out the forecast expenditure and funding sources associated with delivery of the Phase 1 Town Centre Regeneration and Living Project. Towns Funding will support the delivery of the overall Phase 1 project, as part of the gap funding that is required to ensure that the project is viable. Partners will continue to seek other sources of grant funding, with St Helens Borough Council identified as the funder of last resort to address any residual funding gap. Works will include site enabling works, including demolition of the Hardshaw Shopping Centre, installation of necessary infrastructure (including public realm) and supporting the development of the individual plots/components to come forward as part of the proposed mixed-use scheme comprising:

- Delivery of a new commercial office development;
- Delivery of new residential dwellings (town houses and apartments) to encourage a step-change in the housing market within the town centre, focusing on more aspirational housing to appeal to a different demographic;
- Delivery of a new internationally branded hotel;
- Delivery of ancillary retail and leisure space, which is fit-for-purpose to meet the requirements of retail, leisure and food and beverage occupiers;
- Delivery of a new centrally-located Market Hall.

Other phase 1 development will be delivered out with this Towns Funded project but will also be unlocked by Towns Fund investment includes an enhanced bus station, as part of the Connected Places Project. This project is located immediately north of the Town Centre Regeneration and Living Project red line. Funding and outputs associated with this project are not identified within this business case.

The initial injection of funding from Towns Fund will set the groundwork and allow future phases to come forward, as a result of the key moves that this project will unlock. Through site clearance of the Hardshaw Shopping Centre, the existing Market Hall (currently in St Mary's Shopping Centre) will be able to be relocated to a more central position, and in doing so, will help ensure vacant possession of St Mary's, which will be demolished as part of Phase 2 of the project. This will create a future development parcel that will be able to accommodate future residential dwellings (and supporting uses) as the town centre housing market becomes more established and regeneration uplift is realised.

The financial appraisal outlines the delivery costs associated with the Town Centre Regeneration and Living Project based on cost plans prepared by ECF's appointed cost consultant. The appraisals demonstrate that there is a viability gap for each component part of the project, given the abnormal costs associated with site enabling works (including Hardshaw Shopping Centre acquisition, holding costs, demolition, infrastructure works etc.), and gap between build costs and projected values within St Helens town centre.

The scheme therefore cannot proceed without public sector support, and a mix of grant funding (through Towns Funding) alongside St Helens Borough Council PWLB borrowing.

Whilst the initial phase is not viable, the expectation is that through the provision of a high-quality development, a new market will be established within the town centre, clearly demonstrating demand for the proposed development. The place-making benefits arising from the development is likely to generate future regeneration uplift to support the viability of future phases of development, thus making subsequent phases more deliverable.

The overall infrastructure project capital costs relate to the delivery of accessible, cleared and serviced sites, alongside public realm enhancements. Once all acquisitions have taken place, the investment will take place on land in Council ownership, situated within the heart of St Helens Town Centre.

Towns Deal funding specifically, will help to unlock the whole of the Phase 1 development, albeit the focus of the funding will be used for the site demolition and enabling works and key enabling infrastructure.

4.2. Approach to financial case

The Financial Model (**Appendix A**) comprises a series of linked development appraisals which assess the value of the completed schemes against the capital costs of delivering the schemes, with any shortfall between the costs and value representing the funding gap for which Towns Deal funding alongside PWLB is sought. This approach allows for any surplus representing an initial site value to cross subsidise other elements of the scheme.

In addition to the development appraisals, an investment model has been prepared which provides confirmation that based on the identified level of capital grant, revenue generated through the proposed hotel, retail, office, retail elements will be sufficient to both repay St Helens Borough Council's borrowing costs and to ensure that the scheme is operationally viable. There is however a shortfall for the market hall and residential elements, albeit overall, the scheme generates a surplus.

A note has been prepared which sets out the Financial Model functionality and key assumptions applied (**Appendix A**). Table 4-1 provides a summary of funding sources required to deliver the town centre regeneration and living project.

The appraisals undertaken to date do not include the costs incurred by St Helens Borough Council to acquire the Hardshaw Shopping Centre not those within Church Street. For the purposes of the Business Case, these have been excluded from the value for money assessment.

Table 4-1 provides a summary of expected capital costs alongside the funding sources to deliver the project.

Table 4-1: Funding sources – total project costs				
Source	St Helens Borough Council	Towns Funding	ECF	Total
Office	£19,294,251	-	-	£19,294,251
Hotel	£17,322,640	-	-	£17,322,640
Residential	£7,934,766	-	£4,557,222	£12,491,988
Market Hall	£10,575,328	-	-	£10,575,328
Retail	£3,985,503	-	-	£3,985,503
Infrastructure	£3,387,764	£7,240,000	-	£10,627,764
Total	£62,500,252	£7,240,000	£4,557,222	£74,297,474

It should be noted that the estimate of cost does not include provision for land assembly. St Helens Borough Council has made significant progress in relation to the assembly of interests across the site. The Council has commissioned a study to support a strategy for the purchase of remaining assets under CPO. No information has been provided at this stage in relation to the cost and funding of future acquisitions.

4.3. Costs

The project costs included within the Financial Model have been collated from sources which include the advice of the appointed professional team, based on a Cost Plan that has been prepared by Cost Consultants based on the RIBA Stage 1 design report (**Appendix C**). ECF has been involved since RIBA Stage 0 to minimise risk of cost overruns. St Helens Borough Council funding has previously enabled site acquisition (Hardshaw Shopping Centre, Church Street assets) and a lease is proposed to be granted to ECF to enable project delivery.

The total project cost of £69.7 million comprises £59.1m in relation to the proposed development plots as well as £10.6m infrastructure enabling costs.

A summary of the expected enabling cost profile is outlined in **Table 4-2**.

Table 4-2: Expenditure profile – Enabling Works					
Cost line	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
Demolition of Hardshaw	-	£1,125,000	£375,000	-	£1,500,000
Demolition between M&S & Hardshaw	-	£333,333	£166,667	-	£500,000
Public Realm New Street TC Living	-	-	-	£1,775,325	£1,775,325
Public Realm Hall Street	-	-	-	£639,540	£639,540
Strip up of existing public realm	-	-	£720,000	£480,000	£ 1,200,000
Service Disconnection pre demo	-	£100,000	-	-	£100,000
Service Diversion pre demo	-	£175,000	-	-	£175,000
Sewer Diversion pre demo	-	£100,000	-	-	£100,000
Asbestos removal pre demo	-	£250,000	-	-	£250,000
Making good Party Walls	-	£150,000	-	-	£150,000
Temporary structure works	-	£11,905	£71,429	£41,667	£125,000
Remediation non basement areas	-	£100,000	-	-	£100,000
Removal of redundant basement	-	£100,000	-	-	£100,000
Sewer Infrastructure Reinforcement	-	£75,000	-	-	£75,000
Attenuation	-	£274,832	-	-	£274,832
Service Infrastructure gas water BT	£33,333	£366,667	-	-	£400,000
Public Realm Bickerstaffe	-	-	£416,667	£83,333	£500,000
Service Diversions	-	£250,000	-	-	£250,000
Contingency	£1,667	£170,587	£87,488	£150,993	£410,735
Professional Fees	£2,500	£255,880	£131,232	£226,490	£616,102
ECF Return	-	-	-	£1,386,230	£1,386,230
Total*	£37,500	£3,838,204	£1,968,482	£4,783,578	£10,627,764

* Figures may not sum due to rounding

All the costs and values included within the initial development appraisals relate to current day figures. Although the construction costs have been cited as including inflation adjustment, this only brings the cost plan into accordance with the expected costs which would be included by contractors, tendering for the works.

Appropriate contingency allowances have been included within the financial model based on benchmark industry standard assumptions for projects of similar scale and nature at the current stage of evolution.

These contingencies are as per recommended by the professional team and included within the relevant cost plans.

Note that these costs do not include for optimism bias, which is taken into account within the Economic Case.

4.4. Funding and revenues

Full funding for the projects has been identified assuming the Towns Deal funding allocation is confirmed. Alongside proposed ECF equity investment in the residential component of the scheme, this will secure funding from St Helens Borough Council on an investment basis.

Table 4.3 sets out the identified public sector funding profile needed to deliver the project including site enabling works and the delivery of identified development plots.

Table 4-3 Public Sector Funding Profile					
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total*
1. Site Enabling Works / Infrastructure					
St Helens Borough Council	-	-	-	£3,387,764	£3,387,764
Towns Funding	£37,500	£3,838,204	£1,968,482	£1,395,814	£7,240,000
TOTAL*	£37,500	£3,838,204	£1,968,482	£4,783,578	£10,627,764
2. Commercial Office					
St Helens Borough Council	-	£525,639	£12,822,373	£5,946,240	£19,294,251
Towns Funding	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL*	-	£525,639	£12,822,373	£ 5,946,240	£19,294,251
3. Hotel					
St Helens Borough Council	-	£471,925	£11,512,100	£5,338,615	£17,322,640
Towns Funding	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL*	-	£471,925	£11,512,100	£5,338,615	£17,322,640
4. Market Hall					
St Helens Borough Council	-	£327,384	£6,986,010	£3,261,934	£10,575,328
Towns Funding	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL*	-	£327,384	£6,986,010	£3,261,934	£10,575,328
5.1 Residential - Townhouses					
St Helens Borough Council/ Other	-	£75,196	£1,834,318	£850,646	£2,760,159
Towns Funding	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL*	-	£75,196	£1,834,318	£850,646	£2,760,159
5.2 Residential - Apartments					
St Helens Borough Council/ Other	-	£130,035	£3,241,102	£1,803,470	£5,174,607
Towns Funding	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL*	-	£130,035	£3,241,102	£1,803,470	£5,174,607
6. Retail/ Leisure					
St Helens Borough Council	-	£100,154	£2,496,310	£1,389,040	£3,985,503
Towns Funding	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL*	-	£100,154	£2,496,310	£1,389,040	£3,985,503
TOTAL					
St Helens Borough Council		£1,630,333	38,892,211	21,977,708	62,500,253
Towns Funding	£37,500	£3,838,204	£1,968,482	£1,395,814	£7,240,000
TOTAL*	£37,500	£5,468,537	£40,860,694	£23,373,522	£69,740,253

* Figures may not sum due to rounding

** Public sector funding based on expected property income

The summary financial model for each of the component parts of the project is presented at **Appendix A**. This sets out the financial structure envisaged for the project. In particular, the financial case is aligned with the following elements of the model:

Tab 1.4 Summary Financial Model

Tab 1.5 Detailed Financial Model: ECF

Tab 1.6 Detailed Financial Model: Council

Tab 1.7 End Values

The following paragraphs outline each of the component parts of the project.

4.4.1. 1. Site Enabling/ Infrastructure Works

Site enabling and infrastructure works for this project are extensive given the acquisition of the existing shopping centre, holding costs and demolition work required ahead of ensuring a cleared development site. St Helens Borough Council has secured the Hardshaw Shopping Centre from LCP (as well as the former M & S unit), but vacant possession is still to be resolved given existing tenants within the property. The Council will also have to hold and manage the asset pre-demolition works. Formal approval to acquire the asset was confirmed on 29th September 2021.

Land assembly costs in terms of the acquisition costs will be funded by St Helens Borough Council and, as noted above, these costs are not included in the schedule outline in Table 4.4. The demolition and enabling works costs will be part funded through Towns Funding. The balance will be funded by St Helens Borough Council through borrowings, repaid through rental revenues secured through the development of plots.

Table 4-4: Site Enabling Works Summary	
Calculation of PWLB Principal Repayment	
Capital Investment	-£ 10,627,764
Capital Funding - Town Deal Grant	£ 7,240,000
PWLB Principal Repayment (MRP)	-£ 3,387,764
Cashflow	
PWLB Principal Repayment (MRP)	-£ 3,387,764
PWLB Interest	-£ 1,503,320
Long Term Cash Flow (Revenues)	£ -
Asset Valuations	£ -
Total	-£ 4,891,085

4.4.2. 2. Commercial Office

The current proposal is for the office to be funded by St Helens Council using PWLB. Upon completion, the asset will be owned by St Helens Council. The occupiers of the office have yet to be confirmed but may include a mix of public and private sector. The aim is for the building to be fully let and be income producing.

In the event that an occupier/s cannot be initially secured, the Council will consider taking an occupational lease on the building (or part of). Under this arrangement, the additional risk to the Council would be offset by the increase in revenue (as the Council would capture the full rental from tenants).

The Investment Model profiles the capital costs of constructing the proposed office over a 3-year period and PWLB borrowing over a 35-year period.

This Investment Model Summary (**Appendix A**) provides the following brief analysis in table 4.5.

Table 4-5: Commercial Office Summary	
Calculation of PWLB Principal Repayment	
Capital Investment	-£19,294,251
Capital Funding - Town Deal Grant	£-
PWLB Principal Repayment (MRP)	-£19,294,251
Cashflow	
PWLB Principal Repayment (MRP)	-£19,294,251
PWLB Interest	-£8,561,824
Long Term Cash Flow (Revenues)	£34,326,078
Asset Valuations	£20,369,270
Total	£26,839,274

4.4.3. 3. Hotel

The current proposal is for the hotel to be funded by St Helens Borough Council using PWLB. Upon completion, the asset will be owned by St Helens Council. Extensive market analysis has been undertaken by CBRE based on an assessment of existing supply and projected demand. CBRE has been supporting the ECF/ Council partnership in determining the most appropriate brand for St Helens (and the overarching transformational objectives) in addition to a management company to operate the hotel on a day-to-day basis on the Council's behalf.

The Investment Model profiles the capital costs of the proposed hotel over a 3-year period and PWLB borrowing over a 35-year period.

This investment model summary (**Appendix A**) provides the following brief analysis in table 4.6.

Table 4-6: Hotel Summary	
Calculation of PWLB Principal Repayment	
Capital Investment	-£17,322,640
Capital Funding - Town Deal Grant	£-
PWLB Principal Repayment (MRP)	-£17,322,640
Cashflow	
PWLB Principal Repayment (MRP)	-£17,322,640
PWLB Interest	-£7,686,921
Long Term Cash Flow (Revenues)	£41,928,734
Asset Valuations	£18,767,422
Total	£35,686,595

4.4.4. 4. Market Hall

The proposal is for the new market hall to be funded by St Helens Borough Council using PWLB. Upon completion, the asset will be owned by the Council but will likely be managed by a specialist management company. Market research undertaken by Market Curators and Quarterbridge has confirmed that there is demand for a new market hall proposition which provides the right type and mix of uses to appeal to a broader demographic.

The Investment Model profiles the capital costs of the market hall over a 3-year period and PWLB borrowing over a 35-year period.

This investment model (**Appendix A**) provides for the following brief analysis in table 4.7.

Table 4-7: Market Hall Summary	
Calculation of PWLB Principal Repayment	
Capital Investment	-£10,575,328
Capital Funding - Town Deal Grant	£-
PWLB Principal Repayment (MRP)	-£10,575,328
Cashflow	
PWLB Principal Repayment (MRP)	-£10,575,328
PWLB Interest	-£4,692,802
Long Term Cash Flow (Revenues)	£3,035,093
Asset Valuations	£2,079,400
Total	-£10,153,637

4.4.5. 5. Residential

Development appraisals prepared by ECF demonstrate a significant viability gap in relation to the proposed residential component of the scheme, as market values for town centre living remain significantly below the cost of development (see **Appendix A**). The intention is for the residential dwellings to be aspirational market housing as opposed to affordable or shared ownership at this stage. Market analysis has been undertaken, initially by CBRE and then more recently by Countrywide which has informed the proposed mix and quantum of units within the initial phase. Countrywide has confirmed that there is a healthy market for starter homes and apartments in St Helens, with up to 78% of existing applicants (price bracket depending) looking to move to St Helens from outside the area.

ECF and St Helens Borough Council are jointly exploring opportunities to secure grant funding to support this component of the scheme. However, there is potential for the Council to act as the funder of last resort, using PWLB to ensure that the scheme is viable. Once viable, ECF will put equity into the scheme.

The Investment Model profiles the capital costs of the proposed residential scheme of townhouses and apartments over a 4-year period and PWLB borrowing over a 35-year period.

This investment model (**Appendix A**) provides for the following brief analysis in table 4.8 and 4.9.

Table 4-8: Calculation of Council and ECF Capital Investment	
Residential Sales Values	£6,431,020
Residential Development Costs	-£12,491,988
ECF Profit	-£1,873,798
Total Development Costs + Profit	-£14,365,786
ECF Capital Investment	£6,431,020
Council Capital Investment	-£7,934,766

Table 4-9: Residential Summary	
Calculation of PWLB Principal Repayment	
Capital Investment	-£7,934,766
Capital Funding - Town Deal Grant	£-
PWLB Principal Repayment (MRP)	-£7,934,766
Cashflow	
PWLB Principal Repayment (MRP)	-£7,934,766
PWLB Interest	-£3,521,052
Long Term Cash Flow (Revenues)	£-
Asset Valuations	£-
Total	-£11,455,818

4.4.6. 6. Retail/ Leisure

The current proposal is for the retail and leisure uses to be funded by St Helens Borough Council using PWLB. Upon completion, the asset will be owned by the Council but will be managed by a management company who will lead on lettings. Market research undertaken by Barker Proudlove has confirmed that whilst there is an over-supply of retail space, replacement of a proportion of retail/ leisure units to ensure active ground floor uses is appropriate, provided that these meet the modern needs of retailers and food and beverage occupiers.

The Investment Model profiles the capital costs of the proposed retail/ leisure units over a 3-year period and PWLB borrowing over a 35-year period.

This investment model summary (**Appendix A**) provides the following brief analysis outlined in table 4.10.

Table 4-10: Retail Summary	
Calculation of PWLB Principal Repayment	
Capital Investment	-£3,985,503
Capital Funding - Town Deal Grant	£-
PWLB Principal Repayment (MRP)	-£3,985,503
Cashflow	
PWLB Principal Repayment (MRP)	-£3,985,503
PWLB Interest	-£1,768,567
Long Term Cash Flow (Revenues)	£13,376,052
Asset Valuations	£6,615,705
Total	£14,237,687

4.4.7. 7. Summary

The following tables presents the total capital investment and capital funding (town deal grant), long term cashflow (revenues), PWLB repayments, PWLB interest and Asset Valuations.

Table 4-11: Financial Summary	
Calculation of PWLB Principal Repayment	
Capital Investment	-£69,740,253
Capital Funding - Town Deal Grant	£7,240,000
PWLB Principal Repayment (MRP)	-£62,500,253
Cashflow	
PWLB Principal Repayment (MRP)	-£62,500,253
PWLB Interest	-£27,734,487
Long Term Cash Flow (Revenues)	£92,665,958
Asset Valuations	£47,831,797
Total	£50,263,015

While the project delivers a significant positive cashflow, the internal rate of return (even allowing for grant) remains at 5.12%. This is below the threshold at which a commercial operator would usually invest and reflects the wider economic objectives of St Helens Borough Council in respect of the town centre. The Council will progress as the funder of last resort and will continue to work with ECF to identify alternative sources of funding.

4.5. Wider financial implications

The project relates to the delivery of a new mixed-use development located within the heart of St Helens town centre, delivering exemplar Grade A commercial office space, new aspirational housing, revitalised market hall, hotel, ancillary retail and leisure floorspace as well as high quality public realm. This project is

the first phase of a larger town centre regeneration programme and will help to set the benchmark for high quality development within the town centre as well as catalyse future developments through providing strong place-making as part of Phase 1.

COMMERCIAL CASE

5. COMMERCIAL CASE

5.1. Introduction

This section considers the Commercial Case for the Town Centre Regeneration and Living Project including the proposed delivery structure and procurement procedure. It considers the risk allocation between the public and private sector, programme for delivery, as well as legal, procurement and state subsidy issues.

The proposed delivery arrangements for the Towns Fund element of the Town Centre Regeneration and Living Project will be implemented by ECF and St Helens Borough Council in partnership. Under this arrangement, the Council has entered into a long-term partnership with the English Cities Fund (ECF) who will act as development partner. The partnership will procure a contractor to deliver the project, which is likely to be split between a contractor for the demolition works and a separate contractor for the main scheme.

The Commercial Case details the status of the project, demonstrating that the Council has made significant progress through the assembly of land and procurement of a partner in ECF. This provides a clear basis for moving the project forward at pace, allowing for a clear understanding and apportionment of risk.

5.2. Market commentary

5.2.1. Introduction

A detailed market assessment has been carried out for all proposed elements of the project and will be refreshed and updated as the design is developed through RIBA Stages 2 and 3. ECF has secured advice from a range of providers and the relevant market assessment reports are attached at **Appendix G**. A summary of key points identified through the assessment is outlined below.

5.2.2. Office market summary

CBRE has prepared a market assessment setting out the potential for new Grade A commercial floorspace within the town centre. This has demonstrated that there has been a dearth of new supply for a number of years and the opportunity is to create new high quality office provision, alongside high-quality amenity and services within a revitalised part of the town centre, which will be attractive to new occupiers, both within the private as well as public sector.

5.2.3. Hotel market summary

CBRE Hotels Team have prepared a comprehensive market assessment, appraising the baseline position in terms of St Helens' visitor economy, existing hotel supply and pipeline developments which will have a bearing on demand and occupancy of a new hotel. This includes the prospects that will be created through the new Glass Futures development, helping to generate new business visitors within the town. CBRE and ECF have undertaken rigorous market testing and have received a number of offers from premier hotel brands and management companies to run and operate the hotel on the Council's behalf. Of these proposals, the ECF Partnership has shortlisted two hotel brands and two management companies.

5.2.4. Residential market summary

CBRE and latterly, Countrywide have prepared a residential market assessment appraising current values, housing supply and likely demand-side factors to influence the proposed mix and tenure of residential units as part of the Phase 1 scheme. This has confirmed that there is an appetite to deliver more aspirational housing and an open market sale product within St Helens town centre.

5.2.5. Market Hall/ Retail/ Leisure summary

Market Curators has undertaken an assessment of the local market and wider demographic in relation to the proposed new market hall. This confirms a need to build on the more traditional offer whilst at the same time, provide a wider range of fresh food and street food options, including provision of communal dining area and external space. A suggested new mix of uses has been proposed along with staffing and management arrangements.

5.3. Commercial deliverability

5.3.1. Introduction

Consideration has been given to options for the delivery structure for the Town Centre Regeneration and Living Project having regard to the construction and ongoing operation of proposed facilities. In developing the proposals, a range of options have been considered, having regard to the scope of the scheme incorporating site wide infrastructure, public realm enhancement, the commercial office space, hotel, market hall, ancillary retail/ leisure space and residential. Within the scope of the masterplan, a master developer approach has been identified as a requirement. On this basis, the following delivery options were identified and considered at an early stage in the process:

- **St Helens Borough Council led** – under this option, the Council would secure consent to the Phase 1 development, assemble the requisite land interests and directly procure a contractor to undertake site wide infrastructure and public realm works. The Council could then market individual plots which would be taken forward by individual developers. For the market hall, it is envisaged that the Council would take forward development under a separate procurement.
- **Developer led** – upon securing planning and funding consent, St Helens Borough Council would complete site assembly and then seek to dispose of the site to a third party developer who would undertake infrastructure works and progress the delivery of individual plots, either directly or through site disposals to other delivery partners.
- **New local partnership/vehicle** – St Helens Borough Council could enter into a joint venture or other contractual arrangement with a development partner for the delivery of the town masterplan. Under this arrangement, it is envisaged that the Council would conclude land assembly while the commercial partner would be responsible for securing planning and arranging project finance. The developer would be responsible for managing the delivery of the site-wide works and creation of development plots which could either be developed directly or by other delivery partners.

Table 5.1 set out a summary of key advantages and disadvantages of each option.

Table 5-1: Delivery options		
Delivery option	Advantages	Disadvantages
St Helens Borough Council led	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Retain full control over the strategic vision for the town centre to support future phases• Council expected to retain responsibility for maintenance of market hall and public realm• Avoidance of developer profit and SDLT which can potentially enable reduced capital costs• Access to PWLB borrowing provides flexible finance• Good understanding of local area and market characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Limited track record of carrying out complex development projects. The Council does not have the necessary expertise or capacity within core team• Significant risk retained by the Council (planning, construction, marketing, management)• Limited knowledge of new markets including hotel sector• Bringing forward development within the Towns Fund programme period may be a significant challenge due to governance / compliance factors

Table 5-1: Delivery options

Delivery option	Advantages	Disadvantages
Developer led	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brings relevant experience of delivering complex town centre regeneration projects on budget and to programme • Potential access to commercial finance • Ability to respond quickly to market opportunities/challenges • Transfer of risk associated with planning, construction and marketing to private sector partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk of limited appetite for non-core markets within uncertain economic conditions – reflected in risk premium • Limited number of potential developers would take the project on. • Loss of control over strategic vision for the overarching masterplan • Project viability a significant challenge and impediment to securing commercial finance • Requirement for significant land assembly (potentially requiring CPO)
New partnership or vehicle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that appropriate expertise is in place to manage the development process. • Establish a mechanism that allows for the appropriate allocation of risk between partners • Bring access to sources of commercial finance as well as PWLB funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time needed to establish appropriate structure and procure a suitable partner – can be inefficient for smaller schemes • Complexity of partnership structure could act as an impediment if not effectively managed

5.3.2. Proposed delivery option

Reflecting the status of town centre as a priority regeneration project, a key consideration for the Council is retaining control over the development of the design and delivery to sustain the vision for the project whilst, at the same time, ensuring sufficient resources and technical expertise are in place to mitigate risk in the design, construction and marketing of new premises. This priority project was also taken into account alongside the Council's wider regeneration priorities across the Borough.

Having regard to aspirations for the regeneration of the town centre, alongside a range of other regeneration projects, St Helens Borough Council elected to proceed with the procurement of a development partner.

CBRE supported the Council in reviewing and determining their regeneration priorities boroughwide. The Council confirmed a need to ensure that both town centres (St Helens and Earlestown) would be regenerated alongside support for bringing forward housing and employment schemes across the borough. There was a requirement therefore to have a partner who would take a long-term, patient capital approach and would not 'cherry pick' the more viable sites. The English Cities Fund (ECF) were considered to provide the right mix of investor support, regeneration and development expertise alongside an ambition to work with the Council over the long-term. Through various discussions and formal notification to the market to meet procurement requirements, the Council and ECF formally entered into an Overarching Development Agreement (ODA) which sets out the following:

- The overarching objective of the partnership is to secure a sustainable progressive implementation of development on a phase-by-phase basis across the Borough in line with set agreed criteria
- The ODA has a term of 20 years from exchange
- The first phase has been agreed to be advanced prior to the preparation of delivery documents.
- The first phase must provide a gross development value of at least £40m.
- ECF must progress the initial works and appoint a professional team that has been approved by the Council.
- There are governance arrangements in place to monitor the success and progress of the partnership. This includes a monthly steering group meeting as well as an executive group which comprises of a Board Member of each party.

- Annual reviews are also undertaken to ensure the performance of the ODA and quality of the development. Progress against key milestones has also been agreed to be reported.

Based on the scale of the opportunity and the need to ensure patience capital, the English Cities Fund (ECF) was the best delivery model for the project.

Table 5-2: Delivery arrangements for Town Centre Regeneration and Living Project		
Scheme	Delivery Route	Delivery Status
Site wide Infrastructure works	Appointed contractor	ECF procured team progressing masterplan preparation and planning submission Demolition contractor to be appointed to undertake enabling works once vacant possession is secured.
Commercial office/Hotel/Residential/Market Hall/ Retail/ New public realm	ECF/ St Helens Council Assets will be retained as investment by the Council.	Council and ECF will undertake soft market testing to identify suitable contractors. The appointed contractor will be responsible for undertaking detailed design, post RIBA stage 3.

5.4. Procurement strategy

5.4.1. Overview

St Helens Borough Council's procurement and contracting arrangements are designed to ensure that best value is achieved for the public purse. In order to manage this, procurement officers follow both St Helens Borough Council's internal Contract Procedure Rules and financial regulations, but also relevant UK legislation.

The procurement process for each element of the scheme is outlined below.

5.4.2. Professional team procurement

St Helens Borough Council and ECF appointed a multi-disciplinary team to provide architectural, planning, cost consultancy, property expertise, M & E and utilities/energy services. The ECF Partnership has ensured best value through seeking competitive quotes, as well as considering the quality and experience of the respective discipline. The project team and structure is subject to regular review. A range of property experts has also been formally tendered and successful firms now form part of a framework agreement with ECF and are invited to prepare fee proposals for key elements of work (for example, in preparing the planning application). It is envisaged that this will remain the team and structure right through post project completion.

5.4.3. Contractor procurement

Given the status of the project, a confirmed contractor procurement strategy has yet to be formalised between St Helens Borough Council and ECF. Notwithstanding this, there is the intention to undertake soft market testing which will support and help to define the final preferred procurement strategy for the project.

ECF will lead on the procurement process on behalf of the partnership and will secure best value through a competitive tendering process with contractors, taking account of public sector accountability and probity. ECF will obtain no fewer than three quotes from reputable potential Building Contractors each of whom are:

- suitably qualified to carry out the works or services that are the subject of the proposed Building Contract; and
- approved in writing by the Council, such approval in each case not to be unreasonably withheld or delayed.

When appointing any such Building Contractor and/or Appointee, ECF shall have due regard to such proposed Building Contractor and/or Appointee's track record, experience and transparency of fees and whether the proposed Building Contractor and/or Appointee offers value for money in the context of the relevant Building Works and enter into contract with whoever provides the "most commercially advantageous tender" but is not required to appoint the party who provides the lowest price.

The intention is to procure a specialist contractor for the demolition works and a separate contractor for the main works (which is to include all proposed uses as well as infrastructure and public realm).

5.4.4. Social Value

Delivering social value is integral to the projects vision, priorities, and objectives for the Town Centre Regeneration and Living Project. The Project Team are working closely with the Council's Procurement Team and the Partnership's appointed Social Value Manager. A social value tracker is being developed that draws from the monitoring and evaluation plan for the Towns Fund alongside a much wider scope of social value targets that the project will aspire to deliver and builds upon ECF's Sustainability Strategy Framework which underpins all of the proposals set out within the Town Centre Masterplan Development Framework.

Social value is a key metric within the Sustainability Framework and ECF has an objective 'to have a positive impact on the local community and significantly increase social value'. This will be measured by agreed KPIs between the partnership including monitoring the ratio of the value spent on the project against the value of social value generated.

The project will deliver social value in line with ECF's wider Social Value strategy. The consideration of social value will focus on:

- Promoting local skills and employment working with established organisations;
- Providing local businesses with skills to compete for opportunities to work for public sector clients within the supply chain;
- Paying real living wage (supply chain);
- Providing educational visits;
- Providing apprenticeships and training;
- Delivering charitable hours and volunteering through the project;
- Healthier, safer and more resilient communities;
- Promoting sustainable procurement approaches wherever possible; and
- Maximising local labour spend within an agreed catchment of St Helens.

Social Value Portal (SVP) has been appointed along with their engagement partner – Placed. SVP will be developing a strategic social value strategy for the town centre living and regeneration project, based on a needs assessment to ensure maximum social value return on investment through the lifetime of the project and beyond. A social value working group will also be established that will have accountability in determining these wider social value indicators, outputs, timescales, and responsibilities. Accountable organisations will be represented on this working group, working holistically to devise and implement action plans to support achievement of these outcomes.

5.5. Risk allocation

A detailed risk register has been produced for the project which is attached at **Appendix H**. Appropriate mitigation measures will be identified, together with the individuals responsible for managing each risk. The main risks and their mitigation measures are as follows:

- **Lack of market demand for the proposed development** – Whilst this would have a major impact on the project, careful due diligence and market feasibility work has been undertaken to ensure that the proposals are market-facing and will meet the needs of occupiers/ future residents.
- **Unforeseen Phase 1 delivery costs (including acquisition, securing vacant possession of the key assets, etc)** – This would have a major impact on the project, but the partnership is being advised by Keppie Massie to provide independent acquisition and appraisal advice. Global Mutual are also appointed to set out a proposed vacant possession strategy for the Hardshaw Centre.
- **Failure to secure Statutory Officer (Section 151 officer) agreement on funding strategy** – Ongoing engagement with s151 officer and finance team throughout the development process to explain funding options and present robust modelling. Specialist support including from Keppie Massie to provide independent assessment of the development appraisals to support St Helens Borough Council in understanding the financial implications of the project, and risks versus reward.
- **Failure to reach agreement with third party landowners to secure land necessary for the proposed development** – At the time of writing this Business Case, the majority of acquisitions have been secured. If remaining acquisitions cannot be secured by a fixed long-stop date, the Council has secured in principle approval to use CPO powers to secure the land.
- **Failure to secure stakeholder buy-in** – Ongoing engagement with stakeholders required to mitigate risk along with forward plan and communications strategy.
- **Failure to secure external funding for the project** – With the exception of Towns Funding, the residential component was also going to be unlocked through Brownfield Land Funding. Unfortunately, this has now not been secured and as such the viability gap will need to be plugged through alternative means. The ECF Partnership is currently exploring routes to remedy this viability gap, which could include identifying alternative sources of funding as well as the potential for St Helens Borough Council to increase their level of PWLB.

The allocation of programme risks between the private and public sector is summarised below in Table 5.3. However, whilst risks have been allocated to Public and Private partners in the table below, the allocation may vary dependent on the stage of the programme, the nature of the risk and in particular whether the risk materialises pre or post infrastructure funding.

Table 5-33: Risk allocation				
Risk Description	Public	Private	Shared	Mitigation
Procurement				
Financial stability of delivery/supply chain partners - risk that delivery/supply chain partners cease trading or go into receivership - impacting on programme and costs			✓	Assumed delivery partner risk with ECF and St Helens Borough Council, supply chain partner risk with contractor. Suitable checks in place as part of financial due diligence ahead of contractor appointment.
Contractual agreements – risk that appropriate procurement and governance processes are not followed			✓	Requirement for partnership to follow due process
Construction risk - the risk that a suitable contractor cannot be secured or are involved only at a late stage in the design process, resulting in the project not being completed on time, to budget or to specification.		✓		ECF will manage this risk through early contractor engagement and soft market testing.
Governance - proposed structure/governance mechanism not accepted by government			✓	Where issues are identified, the ECF Partnership will work with Government to refine proposed processes.
Project specific				

Table 5-33: Risk allocation

Risk Description	Public	Private	Shared	Mitigation
Design complexity - the risk of not successfully conforming the required specifications, and parameter plans with the Planning Team - which could impact on quality, cost and programme		✓		Mitigation measures including the adoption of appropriate client oversight and ongoing dialogue through planning and design stage.
Environmental impact - lack of early engagement and certain around treatment of environmental issues		✓		Partnership has secured advice from specialist EIA consultant (CBRE) to support planning application and has submitted an Environmental Statement with the application.
Capital costs - the risks that the costs are greater than currently identified.		✓		Following the completion of the design stage, risk associated with cost increases will be the responsibility of ECF, as well as passed to the contractor.
Demand risk - the risk of not having a sufficient understanding of the pipeline in the town and current and future demands.			✓	Significant demand assessment work has been carried out.
Partner engagement - the risk of not demonstrating effective engagement with all stakeholder groups (including statutory bodies) resulting in delayed approvals, potential planning objections and partner engagement			✓	The partnership is mitigating this risk by preparing and implementing a stakeholder management plan.
Ground conditions - the risk of insufficient cost plan allowances for discovery items on site once works have commenced (archaeology, buried services, asbestos, etc.) which may result in delays to programme and cost increases		✓		This risk is being mitigated through detailed ground investigation works.
Public sector funding - The risk that the scheme does not get requisite approvals and funding - inability to obtain full approval and required funding levels			✓	The partnership is managing this risk through early engagement with prospective funders, and the opportunity for additional PWLB to meet the shortfall (if required).
Land ownership – the risk that failure to secure ownership of sites acts as a barrier to delivery of the full vision			✓	The Partnership is working to secure control of the site. CPO powers will be utilised if required.
Reputation - risk of delayed approvals and impact on the programme, cost increases or reputational damage to the partners			✓	Mitigated through resourcing appointment of project manager and client team to ensure that scheme progresses in line with programme
Community impacts - the risk that there is strong opposition from local residents due to noise, dust, traffic congestion; impact on the local community and neighbours			✓	Carry out engagement with local community. Appointed contractor to adopt good site management practices.
Site characteristics - the risk of site-specific issues including providing a safe and secure site from a health & safety perspective		✓		This risk will be transferred to the primary contractor.
Client specific				
Climate Change Emergency - the risk that any new Government targets integrated into legislation will need to be adapted on the development and physical, political and cost impact on the current development			✓	Proposals are consistent with established targets at the local and national levels.
Planning approval - the risk that key projects fails to secure the necessary planning consents or that constraints are imposed that result in changes to the		✓		The partnership has carried out extensive pre-application engagement with planners with

Table 5-33: Risk allocation

Risk Description	Public	Private	Shared	Mitigation
scope of the scheme.				guidance from specialist advisors CBRE. The hybrid application has been validated and is being determined.
Political - the risk that the scheme lacks support from key political stakeholders. This risk could be exacerbated by changes in the strategic focus of key partners.	✓			St Helens Borough Council is fully supportive of the project which has secured Cabinet backing and represents a strategic investment priority.
Economic - the risk that changes in external economic influences occur that result in a failure to achieve the scheme objectives.			✓	St Helens Borough Council will transfer risks associated with cost increases to the delivery partner.
Environment				
State subsidy - the risk that the interventions do not comply with state subsidy regulations.			✓	St Helens Borough Council has secured appropriate legal advice to provide comfort that interventions comply with State Subsidy regulations.
COVID-19 - the impacts associated with the COVID-19 Pandemic/ external influences/ inflationary pressures.			✓	Supply chain and labour risk will be transferred to the primary contractor. Demand risk will lie with the Council in most instances.
Legislative - The risk of legislative / regulatory issues resulting in delays to the project or enforced changes to the scope of the proposed development.			✓	Mitigation measures include ensuring that the project team is sighted on significant legislative / regulatory changes.

The approach to risk management is set out within the Management Case.

5.6. Project Status

5.6.1. Land ownership

At the commencement of the process, St Helens Borough Council carried out a land referencing exercise to provide a full schedule of ownerships within the identified Phase 1 site area. Based on the schedule of interests, a site acquisition strategy was prepared and secured Cabinet approval.

The Council has now started the process of acquisitions in and has now secured the interests of the Hardshaw Shopping Centre, former M & S unit and a proportion of the former Woolworths retail unit within the town centre. Discussions are proceeding in respect of outstanding interests and the Council is gathering information to support a formal resolution to proceed with a Compulsory Purchase Order to support the acquisition of remaining interests.

In parallel, the Council has prepared a tenant relocation strategy to support the retention of displaced businesses within the town centre. The Council is in the process of working with tenants to identify alternative premises within the town centre.

5.6.2. Funding agreements

This Business Case has been prepared to support the proposed allocation of £7.24 million of Towns Fund support for the project. The financial appraisal has confirmed the need for this funding based on a viability gap. It is envisaged that the Towns Fund support will be allocated predominantly towards infrastructure works associated with the clearance of existing premises, provision of services and creation of development plots, alongside the delivery of a high quality public realm environment.

Based on the financial appraisal for Phase 1, the level of viability support required exceeds the level of funding available through the Towns Fund. ECF and St Helens Borough Council remain committed to working collaboratively to secure additional third-party grant funding support for this project.

St Helens Borough Council has allocated funding within its' medium-term capital programme for the Town Centre development. A formal gateway process is required to be undertaken for each project component and requires sign off by St Helens Borough Council Cabinet prior to the funding being formally secured. The intention is for the Council to use PWLB to forward fund the project elements. While it is intended that borrowings will be repaid through project income, a flexible approach will be adopted to enable the Council to draw from wider capital budgets.

ECF has indicated that it intends to invest equity into the residential component of the scheme, subject to securing viability funding. The funding strategy for this element will continue to be developed as design work progresses informed by further market analysis.

5.6.3. Planning consent

A hybrid planning application has been submitted to the local planning authority and was validated on 29th March 2022. The hybrid planning application comprises detailed permission for the demolition works and outline for the remainder. A Reserved Matters application is expected to be submitted by the end of 2022.

5.7. State subsidy

St Helens Borough Council will take advice in relation to State Subsidy as part of the assurance process in its capacity as accountable body for the Towns Fund grant.

MANAGEMENT CASE

6. MANAGEMENT CASE

6.1. Introduction

This section sets out the management case for the proposed Town Centre Regeneration and Living project. It draws upon the Governance and Assurance Framework for the Town Deal programme (**Appendix I**) alongside the Project Execution Plan (**Appendix J**) for the project.

As demonstrated within the Commercial Case, St Helens Borough Council has procured a delivery partner for the project and appointed English Cities Fund. Robust management arrangements have been put in place to manage this contract and ensure that investment through Towns Fund secures identified outputs and long-term benefits.

6.2. Project organisation and governance

The Towns Fund Programme Governance and Assurance Framework sets out the governance, accountability, and decision-making structure for delivery of Towns Fund projects within St Helens, including the Town Centre Regeneration and Living Project. This framework has been shaped by the robust structures put in place by St Helens Borough Council on all its projects, having regard to the requirements identified under the Town Deal. The structure is detailed within a Towns Fund Governance and Assurance Framework document, drafted by the Towns Fund Programme Manager, and follows the requirements of DLUHC Town Deal Guidance. It will ensure:

- Accountable and transparent decision making
- Value for money and efficient programme performance
- Effective monitoring, evaluation, and reporting
- Delivery of programme outputs and outcomes

The Governance and Assurance Framework for St Helens Town Deal (**Appendix I**) outlines the necessary governance functions and details key roles and responsibilities in accordance with the structure set out in Figure 6.1. In relation to Town Centre Regeneration and Living Project:

- **Decision making: Developing business cases** – preparation of the business case has been managed by the Programme Manager with oversight from the Towns Fund Officer Programme Board. Arrangements are in place for both internal and independent external appraisal of the completed business case. The Town Deal Board will be responsible for approvals.
- **Implementation** - The Accountable Body, St Helens Borough Council is ultimately responsible for the delivery of the TIP. The TDB will oversee delivery of the programme and ensure compliance with the Heads of Terms Agreement with government. The Programme Manager will be responsible for operational oversight of the TIP. The Project manager will lead the delivery of the project, coordinating the requisite approvals and consents, funding contributions and construction contracts.
- **Stakeholder engagement** – The Towns Fund Engagement Plan sets out strategic arrangements and has been approved by the Town Deal Board and DHLUC. The project manager has developed a Stakeholder Management Plan for Town Deal with oversight by the Towns Fund Officer Programme Board. The project manager is responsible for coordinating stakeholder environment through the delivery phase of the project.
- **Financial regulation and compliance** – The Council's statutory Section 151 Officer is also charged with ensuring that proper financial management processes are in place. In line with other major projects financial compliance will be assured through the inclusion on the Towns Fund Officer Programme

Board of senior representation from finance and legal services. The S151 Officer will approve all Business Cases prior to submission to DLUHC.

- **Risk management** – St Helens Borough Council has an established approach to risk management in relation to major capital projects and programmes which will be utilised and implemented in relation to the TIP. Top risks for each project will be shared by each Project Manager with the Towns Fund Officer Programme Board on a monthly basis via project Performance Dashboards to ensure that appropriate mitigating action is being taken. Risks will be escalated as necessary to the Programme Manager, Director for HEI and the Director for Prosperity and Investment. Top risks and mitigating actions will also be reported on a regular basis to the TDB.
- **Procurement** – St Helens Borough Council is a ‘contracting authority’ under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and employs rigorous procurement processes which fully comply with all statutory requirements and best practice for tendering and procurement. As outlined in the Commercial Case, procurement carried out as part of the Towns Fund programme will follow the Council’s procurement procedures.

A summary of the roles and responsibilities of key participants in respect of the key Governance functions set out above is outlined in Table 6.2.

6.3. Programme and milestones

The project milestones as originally put forward within the TIP bid broadly remain on track, and since the original submission there have been a number of key achievements as detailed in the table below.

The key milestones derived by this date are set out in **Table 6-1** below.

Table 6-1: Overarching project milestones		
Activities	Programme	Status
Obtain Towns Funding		In progress
Obtain Match Funding		In Progress – plus St Helens Borough Council confirmation of allocation within Capital Programme.
Secure acquisitions	Assumed last date for acquisition and Vacant Possession is October 2023.	Partially completed
Update Masterplan	February 2022	Completed – Masterplan Development Framework now endorsed by Council
Submit planning	March 2022	Completed – hybrid planning application submitted
Hybrid Planning decision (including JR)	Expected September 22	In progress – expected to be received in September, following Planning Committee.
Reserved Matters planning application (Phase 1) - submission	23/12/22	On target
RIBA Stage 2 Design	04/04/22 – 22/07/22	On target
RIBA Stage 2 Cost Plan	11/07/22 – 22/07/22	On target
RIBA Stage 3	08/08/22 – 25/11/22	On target

Table 6-1: Overarching project milestones		
Activities	Programme	Status
RIBA Stage 3 Cost Plan	07/11/22 – 25/11/22	On target
Reserved Matters planning application (Phase 1) – determination (including JR)	05/05/23	On target
RIBA Stage 4a	08/05/23 – 25/08/23	On target
Procurement of demolition contractor	08/05/23 – 08/09/23	On target
Procurement of main contractor	28/08/23 – 09/02/24	On target
Demolition and enabling works	20/11/23 – 05/04/24	On target
Phase 1 Works	11/03/24 – 31/10/25	On target

All pre-construction milestone associated activities will be monitored, managed, and vetted via the governance structure set out previously. The Business Case will require St Helens Borough Council Cabinet and Town Deal Board sign-off. RIBA Stage 2/ Reserved Matters application documentation and RIBA Stage 4/ Contractor procurement will require sign off by the ECF Partnership Executive Board and St Helens Borough Council Cabinet. All other milestones will be concluded and signed-off by the Towns Fund Officer Programme Board, with regular reporting and updates provided to the wider structure; unless a change of scope or an increase in budget occurs and approval is then required via both Boards and potentially the Council's Cabinet.

6.4. Project Management

6.4.1. Overview

Project management will be undertaken in accordance with the Project Execution Plan (**Appendix J**).

The Project Managers are responsible for day-to-day management of the project.

6.4.2. Project team

A project team is now in place for the project and comprises Muse Developments as project managers and development managers for the project, supported by a professional team. St Helens Borough Council has a defined project team to support the delivery of the project and partnership.

The team structure is outlined in **Table 6-2**.

Table 6-2: St Helens team members		
Group	Lead team members	Role
St Helens Towns Fund Programme Manager	Karen Houghton (St Helens Council)	Programme manager overseeing Towns Fund Programme.
	Rob Gatensbury (St Helens Council)	Programme Lead – GDP Team
St Helens SRO	Lisa Harris	Executive Director for Place Services
ECF Lead Board Member	Phil Mayall	
St Helens Project Team	Sean Traynor	Director of Strategic Growth
	Stephanie Ramsden Keppie Massie (financials and acquisitions)	Assistant Director – Regeneration and Planning Professional Services Consultant
ECF Project Team	Leon Guyett (Development Director)	Main project lead from ECF (Muse Developments)

Table 6-2: St Helens team members		
Group	Lead team members	Role
	Stuart Rogers (Project Director)	Project Manager from ECF (Muse Developments)
Professional Team	Jon Matthews (architect) Planit (landscape architect) Hilson Moran (engineer) Faithful+Gould (cost consultancy) AKT II (structures) CBRE (planning, EIA, hotels, offices) TEP (ecology) WSP (transport) Market Curators/Quarterbridge (market hall) Barker Proudlove (retail/leisure) Countrywide (residential)	Appointed by ECF to progress design development to full planning

6.4.3. Change control

Change control procedures at a project level will be managed by ECF and St Helens Borough Council, with support from the professional team and contractor/s once appointed.

6.5. Risk management

6.5.1. Risk Management Strategy

St Helens Borough Council has an established approach to risk management in relation to major capital projects and programmes which will be utilised and implemented on this project. In line with Government guidance, Risk Management Plans and Risk Registers are established appropriate to the scale and complexity of the project (refer to **Appendix H Risk Register**).

6.5.2. Risk status

Appendix H sets out an overarching project risk register which is also summarised below.

Table 6-3: RISKS (new or raised)

Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Overall	Mitigation
Lack of demand evidence for hotel and office components results in financial losses for the Council	Major	Unlikely		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertaken demand studies. • Intelligence gathered from existing businesses in respect of client demand. • Hotel operator and management company selection due May 2022 following strong interest levels and interviews, site visits. • Council Finance Officers reviewing proposed funding model in further detail in line with the selection of operator and management companies.
Council Ways of Working reduces demand for office component.	Major	Likely		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently assumed in the financial model that the Council will not occupy new office. • Sought clarification from the Council on office floorspace requirement alongside that of other agencies/potential occupiers. • Sought clarification from the Council on intentions for Atlas House and moreover Wesley House accommodation if no new office demand is required.
Unforeseen Phase 1 delivery costs (including acquisitions, loss of income, compensation, relocations, construction, statutory undertakers, etc.)	Catastrophic	Possible		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECF shared detailed development appraisal. • Council have appointed Knight Frank to provide independent acquisition advice. • Council have appointed Keppie Massie to provide independent assessment of development appraisals • Council has appointed Global Mutual on vacant possession strategy.
Failure to secure Statutory Officer agreement on funding strategy	Major	Unlikely		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement with s151 officer and finance team to explain funding options and present robust modelling. • Council have appointed Keppie Massie to provide independent assessment of development appraisal.

Table 6-3: RISKS (new or raised)

Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Overall	Mitigation
Failure to reach agreement with owners of Hardshaw Centre, former Woolworths and M&S stores, Bickersaffe Street premises, Swan PH, etc over acquisition	Major	Possible		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hardshaw Centre acquired. One outstanding – former Woolworths. • Alternative masterplan prepared with Phase 1 development on St. Mary's for consideration. • Rephase and/or redesign bus station enhancements. • In principle approval to use CPO powers received from Cabinet subject to further updates. • Formal CPO approval to be sought. • Proactive engagement with parties • Progression of legal process
Failure to secure Cabinet approval to Phase 1 funding strategy	Major	Unlikely		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further to Statutory Officer actions above, engage Policy Cabinet and wider Labour Group. • Secure approval from Strategic Acquisition Group.
Delay in vacant possession of Hardshaw Centre by April '23	Major	Likely		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council has appointed Global Mutual to advise on decant strategy and early engagement with tenants following sale completion. • Consider a programme reprofile. • Alternative masterplan prepared with Phase 1 development on St. Mary's. • Progress CPO powers.
Insufficient space available to accommodate decants from Hardshaw Centre (i.e., T J Hughes) and St. Mary's (i.e., B&M, Costa)	Major	Possible		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquisition of former M&S Store – exchanged. • Prioritise existing businesses that are to be found alternative accommodation. • Proactive stakeholder management. • Conscious decision making to intervene with businesses that are unlikely to survive moving forwards having regard to financial stability. • PR/Comms activity.
Increased and continued costs to Council from St. Mary's voids	Major	Possible		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative masterplan prepared with Phase 1 development on St. Mary's for consideration. • Negotiate exit of final unsecured occupiers (B&M, Costa) to facilitate demolition. • B&M only substantive risk currently.

Table 6-3: RISKS (new or raised)				
Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Overall	Mitigation
Impact on viability of market traders retained in St. Mary's	Moderate	Possible		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider temporary relocation to M & S unit or Chalon Way meanwhile use space. Proactive engagement as part of detailed design.
Reputational harm associated with loss of businesses from acquired premises prior to opening of new-build development	Moderate	Likely		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seeking to identify alternative premises and facilitation of fit-out. Quantifying compensation payments. PR/Comms activity. Economic conditions likely to result in loss of some businesses or relocations to retail parks.
Adverse reaction to masterplan development frameworks proposals during consultation period	Moderate	Unlikely		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive engagement with key stakeholders. Positive PR/Comms activity. Willingness to adapt proposals in response to feedback. Reassurance over delivery prospects. Positive feedback received with a high majority in support.
Failure to secure external funding for key components i.e., CRSTS contribution to transport hub, Town Deal contribution to ECF, The Gamble Medical Innovation Centre, Youth Hub, Digital Connectivity, etc.	Catastrophic	Possible		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town Deal Project Confirmation Documents returned by 6th October 2021 deadline. Conduct robust business cases for Town Deal for August submission. Explore alternative funding contributions and/or solutions working with partners. Submit LUF2 bid in July 2022.
Conflicts with or disruption caused by other work programmes or initiatives i.e., LCR backhaul network, City Fibre, Heat Network, College estate review.	Moderate	Possible		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instigate a mapping exercise of key dependencies. Liaison with promoters of other projects to understand potential conflicts and agree mitigations wherever possible. Amend phasing programmes. PR/Comms activity.
Independent private sector investment competes with masterplan development framework proposals i.e., separate hotel development proposal.	Moderate	Possible		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify potential competing projects. Understand impact on ECF demand studies. Utilise masterplan development framework to influence appropriate

Table 6-3: RISKS (new or raised)				
Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Overall	Mitigation
				proposals by others as far as possible having regard to status of document. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amend ECF proposals and associated funding strategy as appropriate.
Demolition of the Hardshaw Centre would compromise the current first floor servicing provision of the former M&S Store	Major	Unlikely		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider reconfiguration of the rear servicing arrangements post demolition of the Hardshaw Centre and necessary accommodation works/related costs (including any compensation entitlements). Council purchasing former M&S store which will enable a reconfiguration.
Reputational harm due to lack of visible development activity pending vacant possession of the Hardshaw Centre	Moderate	Possible		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progression of planning applications. Regular PR/Comms activity and related announcements. Continued engagement with businesses and key stakeholders. Progression and delivery of Town Deal projects. Regular events across the town centres.
Timing of planning application submissions	Major	Unlikely		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reconsider programme to negate impact of Purdah on decision announcements. Hybrid application submitted.
Compulsory Purchase Order required to acquire sites	Major	Likely		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Masterplan Framework will be adopted and hold some planning policy weight. Expected strategy will be negotiation by Private Treaty whilst any CPO is running.
Risk opposite design interfaces between Phase 1 and Bus Station Project	Major	Possible		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure both design teams are in regular communication. Regular meetings at senior level opposite decisions to be made.
OVERALL STATUS:				
Moderate				

6.6. Track Record

6.6.1. St Helens Borough Council

St Helens Borough Council has a significant track record of successfully supporting key regeneration projects, as well as unlocking development within St Helens town centre.

Key projects include:

- Glass Futures, in partnership with Network Space Limited
- Parkside West, in partnership with Langtree
- Infrastructure and enabling works within St Helens town centre

6.6.2. The English Cities Fund (ECF)

The English Cities Fund (ECF) is a £200m partnership between three partners – Homes England (50%), Muse Developments (25%) and Legal & General (25%). ECF was set up by Government in 2001 with the overall remit to drive greater institutional and private investment in English towns and cities. ECF specialises in large-scale, area-based regeneration.

ECF's track record of delivery (further details in **Appendix K**) includes:

- Millbay, Plymouth
- Merchant Gate, Wakefield
- Rathbone Market, Canning Town
- St Paul's Square, Liverpool
- Salford Central
- Salford Crescent

Through these projects ECF has transformed 100 acres of brownfield land into 1,300 new homes, 850,000 sqft of office, retail and leisure space, over 140 hotel rooms and 2,500 car parking spaces.

Generating social impact and value is important for ECF too, with schemes having the potential to generate new homes, create jobs, deliver community facilities and support education, health and wellbeing. It is estimated that ECF has helped to generate £400m in GVA per annum to help build strong local economies.

6.7. Communication and stakeholder engagement

6.7.1. Project reporting

The following formal reporting processes have been established to support the established communication structure. This comprises a Steering Group reporting to an Executive Group. Further details are set out in **Appendix L**.

6.7.2. Stakeholder engagement plan

The original TIP submission included a stakeholder engagement plan which set out the process for engagement across the programme. A project-specific engagement plan will be prepared to support project delivery, building on the engagement work that has already taken place for the town centre masterplan. A specialist communications team will be appointed to support the project. St Helens Borough Council is in the process of preparing a tender for 2 roles to support the project for Communications/PR as well as marketing.

6.8. Benefit monitoring and evaluation

6.8.1. Overview

The St Helens Town Fund Programme will adhere to the requirements of the 'Towns Fund Monitoring and Evaluation Guidance' (April 2021) which clearly identifies the differing responsibilities for monitoring and evaluation.

6.8.2. Project monitoring

In line with the guidance issued by DLUHC, mandatory indicators will be collected and reported on by the Programme Management Team. While data will largely be presented for the programme as a whole, it will be collated from information returned by the individual project managers. These indicators relate to inputs, activities and outputs which will be reported on a six-monthly basis; and intermediate qualitative outcomes, and a limited set of quantitative outcomes such as jobs and footfall on an annual basis.

Table 6-43: Programme level mandatory indicators			
Theory of Change	Indicators	Reporting	
		June	Dec
Level 1: Inputs and activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £ spent directly on project delivery £ co-funding spent on project delivery (public and private) £ co-funding committed (public and private) Percentage of projects started on time (based on contract) 	√	√
Level 2: Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of temporary full-time jobs supported during implementation Number of projects successfully completed Percentage of projects completed within budget Percentage of projects completed on time 	√	√
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of staff in regeneration team at local authority £ budgeted for economic development teams and functions Project-specific output indicators (as set out in table 2 below)	√	
Level 3: Intermediate outcomes	Self-assessment on: Leadership and vision; delivery capacity and capability; financial viability and ability to attract investment; and accountability, collaboration and responsive governance.	√	
Level 4: Outcomes (annually)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of FTE permanent jobs created through the projects Number of FTE permanent jobs safeguarded through the projects Year on Year monthly percentage change in footfall 	√	

Project outputs and outcomes comprise a mix of DLUHC project specific measures (selected from the DLUHC guidance for Towns Fund interventions) and local measures which reflect priorities for the area. As shown in Table 6-5 these benefits have been allocated an owner, with responsibility for forecasting and monitoring achievements. Benefits will continue to be reassessed, as new benefits may emerge as the project progresses and expectations change. Data will be collected on an ongoing basis and reported on annually to DLUHC.

Table 6-54: Project-specific outputs and outcomes for the Town Centre Regeneration and Living Project		
Key Performance Indicators	Responsibility/ Reporting Lead	How data will be collected
Mandatory Indicators		
£ spent directly on project delivery	ECF Project Lead St Helens Financial team	Data will be collected from ECF and St Helens Council’s financial management system. Quarterly project accounts will be prepared All evidence to support each output will be stored by the Programme Management Team in a central folder. Output numbers will be reported to DLUHC via their DELTA system. Data will be held in line with DLUHC guidance.
£ co-funding spent on project delivery (public and private)		The projects accounts will include information on sources of funding and spend.
£ co-funding committed (public and private)		Committed funding will be determined by the contracts that are in place committing funding to the project. Output numbers will be reported to DLUHC via their DELTA system. Data will be held in line with DLUHC guidance. See above.
Number of temporary FT jobs supported during project implementation	ECF Project Lead	The PM or Programme Manager (TBC) will request data from the lead contractor for the development. Once data and evidence has been received it will be retained by the programme management team in a central folder. Output numbers will be reported to DLUHC via their DELTA system. Data will be held in line with DLUHC guidance.
Number of full-time equivalent (FTE) permanent jobs created through the projects	ECF Project Lead St Helens Council Project Lead	ECF project lead will monitor no of full-time jobs created as a result of the project. These will obviously come forward post-project completion, as the buildings then are formally occupied, and in light of the mix of uses put forward, is likely to include a wide range of occupations and skill-levels. All evidence to support each output will be stored by the Programme Management Team in a central folder. Output numbers will be reported to DLUHC via their DELTA system. Data will be held in line with DLUHC guidance.
Number of full-time equivalent (FTE) permanent jobs safeguarded through the projects		
Outputs		
Area of brownfield land reclaimed	ECF Project Lead	Evidence will be sent to the Programme Management Team. Once data and evidence has been received it will be retained by the programme management team. All evidence to support each output will be stored by the Programme Management Team in a central folder. Output numbers will be reported to DLUHC via their DELTA system. Data will be held in line with DLUHC guidance.
Proportion of new commercial floorspace created		
Proportion of new retail/ leisure space created		
No of new dwellings constructed		
No of new hotel rooms delivered		
No of new enterprises supported		
Amount of new public realm		
Number of trees planted		

Table 6-54: Project-specific outputs and outcomes for the Town Centre Regeneration and Living Project		
Key Performance Indicators	Responsibility/ Reporting Lead	How data will be collected
Outcomes		
Improvement in perceptions of the Town Centre measured through Residents Survey	St Helens Council	It is anticipated that a set of perception questions will be included in the St Helens Resident Survey. The next survey will form the baseline by which to measure improvement. A report will be produced and kept on file by the Programme Management Team
Improvement in business perceptions of the Town Centre	St Helens Council/ ECF	Business survey to go through St Helens Chamber contacts to establish baseline position and then future monitoring to be put in place.
Increase in footfall year on year	St Helens Council	Output numbers will be reported to DLUHC via their DELTA system. Data will be held in line with DLUHC guidance.

6.8.3. Benefits Maximisation and targeting

Maximising local benefits is a core principle that will underpin all activities delivered by Towns Fund partners and delivering social, economic and environmental value is key to this.

St Helens Borough Council and its partners will maximise the social value that can be delivered through its contracts both during the implementation of projects and subsequent operational phases of delivery. A specialist Social Value consultant – Social Value Portal has now been appointed to maximise the social value that can be delivered throughout the project's lifetime and beyond.

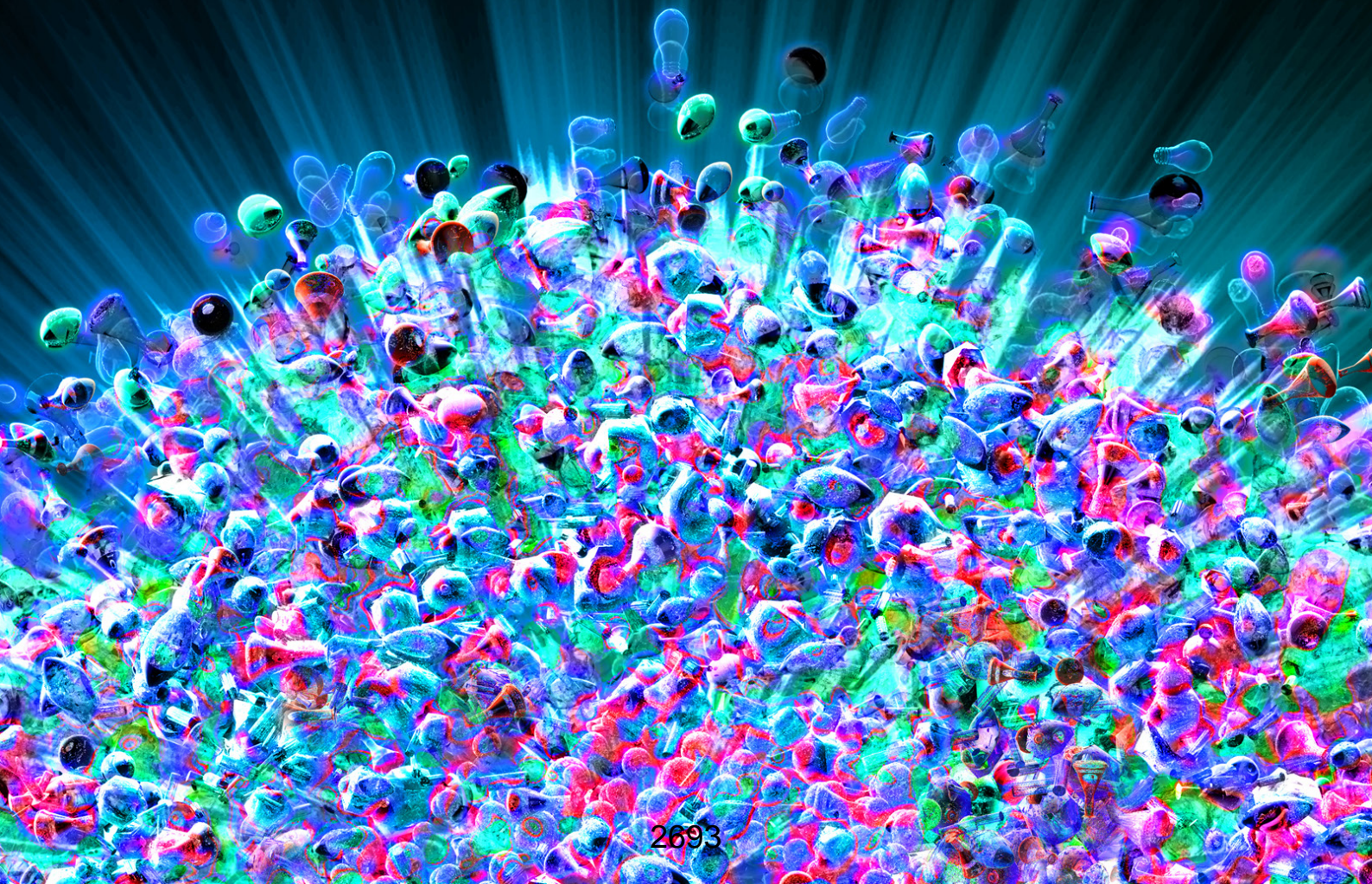
6.8.4. Evaluation

While the impact evaluation will be led by DLUHC and the external evaluation provider, it is understood that deep dive case studies will be identified and resourced by DLUHC.

While local evaluations are not mandatory, there is a recognition that some areas may have an interest in measuring different outcome indicators to those mentioned in the guidance to identify whether particular groups may have been reached through project activity. St Helens Borough Council will work with the national provider where appropriate to provide suitable case study projects for assessment, where existing local evaluation activities can add value.

ST HELENS TOWN CENTRE STRATEGY

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION | SEPTEMBER 2017

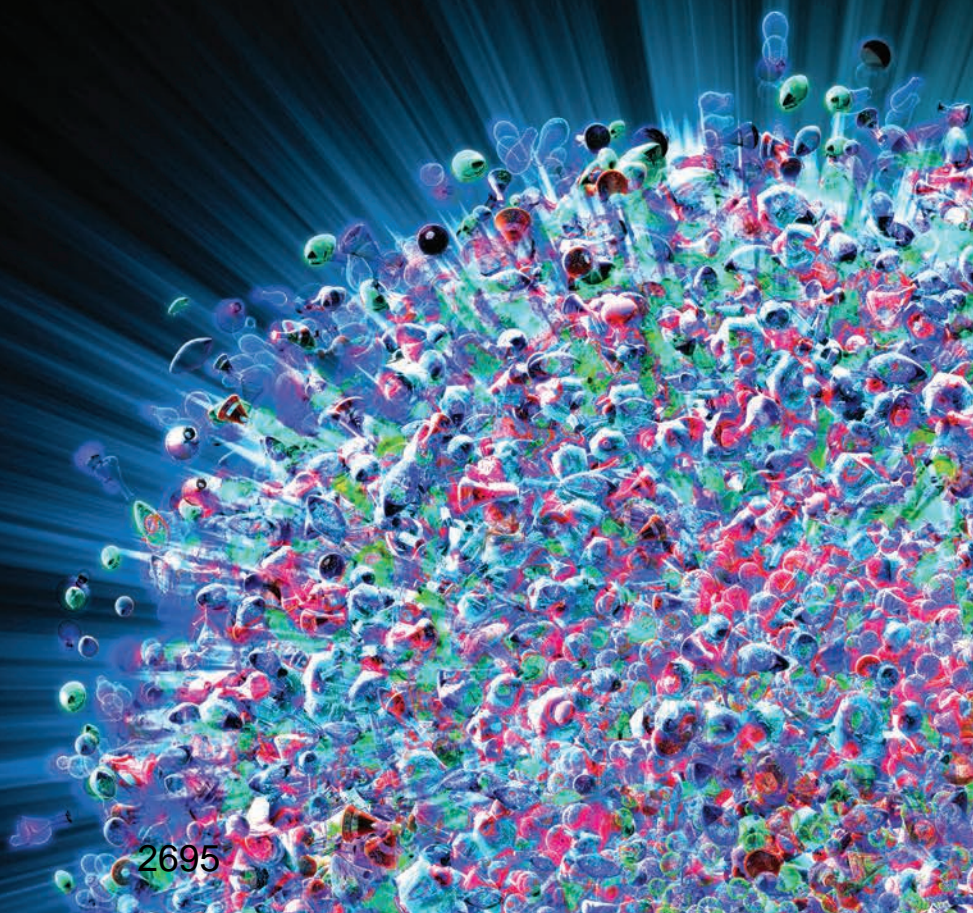




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1.0 INTRODUCTION



INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 St Helens is a large and significant town at the heart of the North West of England, a prime position on the national motorway and rail network, is less than 30 minutes from the Port of Liverpool, 40 minutes from Manchester and has a market of over 35 million people within just a few hours drive. St Helens sits at the heart of the North West, the Atlantic Gateway, and the SuperPort initiative which are all key drivers of growth within the North. More and more big name businesses are appreciating that St Helens really is a fantastic location.
- 1.2 The town is making use of what's in its DNA and what made it special to be at the forefront of its renaissance; enterprise and entrepreneurship. This also drives our approach to culture and the arts and we are creating a 'hotbed' of creativity in the town centre, driven by fresh thinking with the aim of inspiring a new generation. St Helens is a place that nurtures, celebrates and hosts culture in all its forms and we have a substantial foundation to build this upon. Many of the cultural assets within St Helens celebrate the borough's intangible industries, heritage and communities. St Helens will use its legacy alongside a new creative energy to unleash a cultural dynamic that radiates out from the town centre to the widest parts of the area.
- 1.3 St. Helens is a fantastic place to grow a family and live your life. The borough boasts outstanding education provision that extends right through from primary schools to post-16 and University degrees. Our education system is turning out ambitious young people who will provide the ingenuity and energy to power the future St Helens. The area also offers many new housing developments to rural villages, with the potential for professionals to live in the town centre. There is already a tremendous range of things to do, including Super League rugby league in the heart of the town or watching horse racing at Haydock Park.

WHY A TOWN CENTRE STRATEGY

- 1.4 St Helens Town Centre Strategy sets out the direction and vision for the town centre over the course of the next 10 years (2017–2027). St Helens has not had a town centre specific strategic document for a number of years. For the town centre, and indeed the borough to move forward, there needs to be a new and up to date strategy that will give the council, partners, local residents and investors a clear sense of ambition for what St Helens town centre will be in the years ahead.
- 1.5 In addition, St Helens town centre remains a hugely important economic, cultural and social asset to the borough, and this has led to renewed focus over the past year. St Helens has a strong foundation but it needs to be ambitious and act on its many assets and opportunities. Combined with its position at the heart of the North West, these provide the town centre and the borough with the raw materials that can drive a significant transformation for people who live and work in the borough.



- 1.6 St Helens town centre has a strong cultural offer, well located with excellent transport links and is home to St Helens College and University Campus. However the town centre faces considerable structural and physical challenges and is rapidly declining.
- 1.7 For the borough to attract inward investment, seize opportunities, raise its profile and to maximise its assets. Town centres nationwide are having to adapt and change to dramatic changes in retail and many towns in the north-west have future strategies for their town centres, or are underway in preparing one (e.g. Preston, Wigan, Oldham, Warrington).



St Helens Town Centre

ST HELENS CURRENT TOWN CENTRE POSITION

- 1.8 A transformational solution is required to re-position and 'shrink and link' the town centre to become an attractive destination with a varied offer of retail, leisure and culture – particularly for families, to quickly reverse a declining trend and find the basis for a more sustainable future.
- 1.9 St Helens town centre faces a number of challenges:
- **Not seen by residents as their main shopping destination** – Only 48% of St Helens primary catchment area regard St Helens town centre as their main shopping centre, which is considered similar to that of an 'Average Weak Town' based on comparison surveys of similar national retail centres (PROMIS, CBRE 2016). The estimated shopping population of St Helens is 105,000, ranking the town 132 (out of 200) of the PROMIS (Promis centres, are those centres which are reviewed by the company Property Market Analysis), meanwhile Wigan and Warrington rank 85 and 75 respectively. The shopping population is an estimate of the number of people who regard the town as their main shopping centre. St Helens has fallen away notably over recent years
 - **Faces significant competition** – The town centre faces significant competition from at least four major destination shopping centres which are within easy reach; Manchester central and Liverpool (4th and 5th Top retail centres – ranking on comparison spend, Experian) and the Trafford centre (9th retail centre with the strongest market potential in the UK, Experian). St Helens faces above average competition from competing town centres and out of town retail centres and ranks 190 (out of 200) nationally in terms of the competition indicator. The Competition Indicator is a measure of the total retail score of competing towns and cities and out of town shopping centres within given drive times for each centre relative to the retail scope of that centre. The ranking therefore shows a very high level of competition
 - **Low quality and diversity** – The town centre is considered to have a lower than average quality and diversity of retail offer, with in particular, an identified lack of anchor stores and restaurants/cafes (PROMIS, CBRE, 2016)
 - **Dated infrastructure / feel** – The town centre has a fragmented urban fabric and is negatively perceived by residents, businesses and visitors. The retail core of St Helens has not had levels of investment similar to that of adjacent town centres and is regarded less modern, therefore negatively perceived by residents, business and visitors

- **Disjointed / no natural walk way** – The street-plan of the town centre is not easy to navigate and there is no clear main high street and poor connectivity between the different squares such as Victoria Square, Church Square and sites such as the large open space within the St Helens College / University Centre St Helens Campus. There are also no clear linkages between major transport arrival points – such as St Helens Central train station, and the major assets of the town centre
- **Lack of a (diverse) night time economy** – There is a strong focus on ‘vertical’ drinking catering for a narrow market of users within the town centre. There is a real lack of a family orientated evening offer, particularly from national chain restaurants, and little association between a possible evening economy offer and what is seen as an often strong cultural offer in the town
- **An oversupply of car parking** – There are a number of underused multi-storey car parks in prime locations and a poor parking management strategy overall. The car parks tend to dominate what could be key locations within the town centre without adding to or supporting any wider ambition

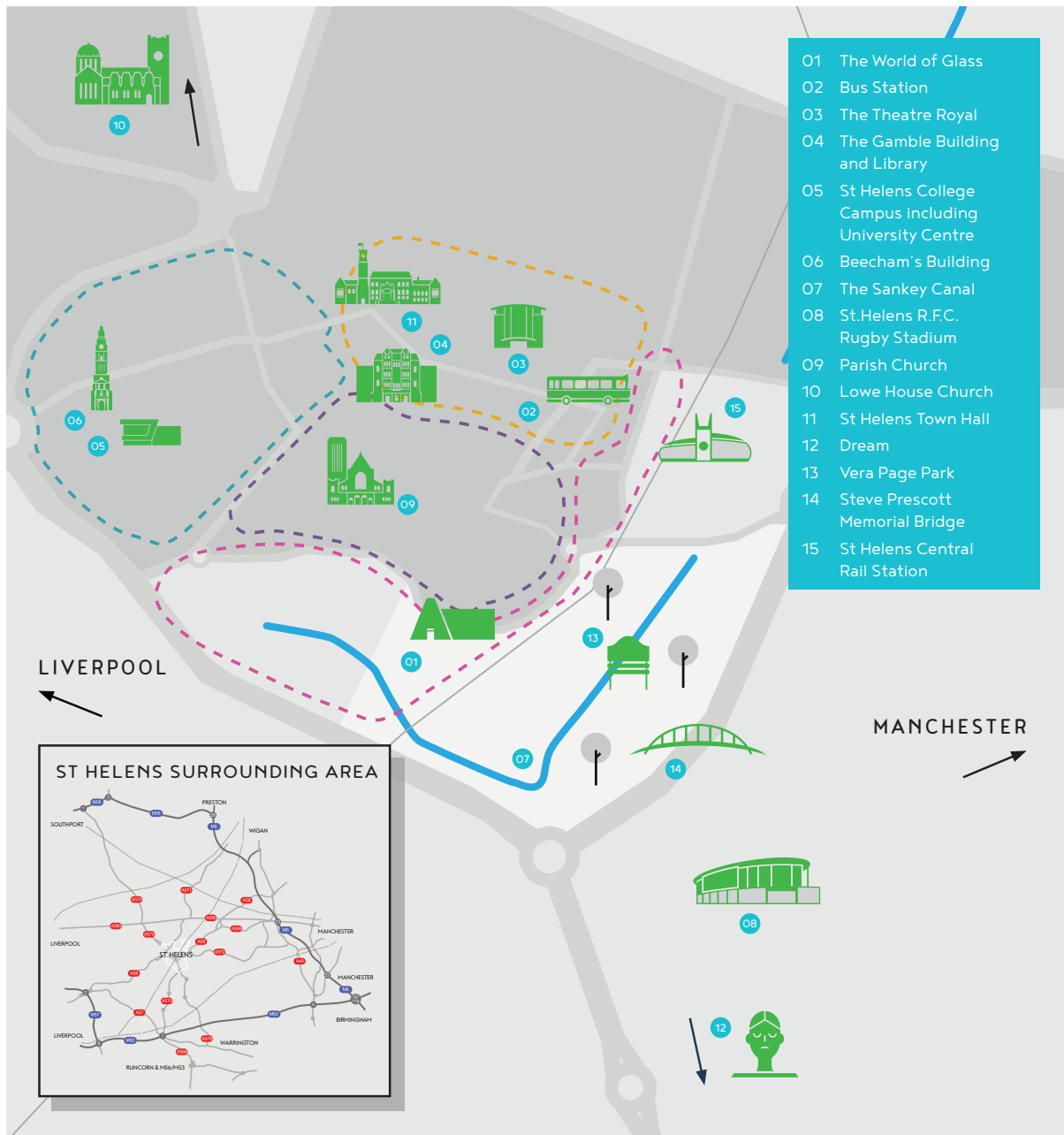
However, St Helens town centre does have a number of assets and strengths that could provide substantial opportunities if brought forward/maximised:

- **Investment opportunities** – Strong regeneration interest from the council, the potential for the council to act as an investor, and a strong political willingness to enable change. The borough has shown it has the capability to pull in inward investment and has strong relationships with private investors. For example, St Helens first public-private partnership, Ravenhead Renaissance, as well as the borough’s many housing and infrastructure providers
- **Strong cultural offer** – A number of established arts and cultural organisations offering a range of cultural and visitor activities. The arts and cultural offer of St Helens is receiving national recognition and provides an opportunity for the town to develop an alternative destination offer to retail or to that of other competitor towns
- **Strong ‘loyalty’ and pride in the town** – St Helens residents remain very proud of the borough and are very loyal in terms of wanting to see the town do well
- **Strong local public transport network** – St Helens Central has a large station for the size of service and provides connections currently to Liverpool and on to Wigan and Preston. From 2018 new franchise arrangements will provide connectivity to additional cities in Scotland and the North of England with St Helens acting as the first station stop out of Liverpool. This increased connectivity is an opportunity to be grasped. St Helens has multi modal access, sufficient car parking good public transport routes via bus
- **Location** – St Helens is well-located in terms of road connections. It has a prime position on the national motorway network and rail network, is less than 30 minutes from the Port of Liverpool, 40 minutes from Manchester and has a market of over 35 million people within just a few hours drive. The borough has a strategic position at the heart of the North West with the M6, M62, M58 and A580 all passing through the borough. Approximately 35 million people live within a 4 hour drive of the town
- **Modern town centre education campus** – St Helens College and University Centre St Helens has a modern campus environment and considerable student numbers right in the centre of the town centre. It’s one of the largest further and higher education providers in the North West, with a proven track record of providing quality education since 1896. It provides courses and training to around 8,000 students.

INTRODUCTION TO THE TOWN CENTRE QUARTERS

1.10 The town centre is divided into distinct quarters, defined by their characteristics. Within the town centre boundary the following quarters have been identified:

- Civic and Heritage Quarter
- Shopping Quarter
- Educational Quarter
- Growth Quarter.



CIVIC AND HERITAGE QUARTER

- 1.11 This quarter, located in the northern part of the town centre, is structured around the historic civic and council office buildings that serve the borough's community.
- 1.12 The quarter contains historic Grade II listed buildings, locally listed buildings / neighbourhoods, such as George Street Conservation Area, and civic open space to the Town Hall (surrounding the Victoria Memorial).
- 1.13 The quarter contains various buildings that have a cultural or educational purpose/ activity and there are numerous small businesses that trade within this area. The quarter is a mixed-use area, including commercial, retail, restaurant, etc. In general, the quarter consists of a high quality, extensively pedestrianised public realm.
- 1.14 This strategy recognises that the collection of historic buildings, civic function and high-quality public realm within this quarter have a collective identity to form a Civic and Heritage Quarter.

SHOPPING QUARTER

- 1.15 This quarter, located at the core of the town centre, consists of Church Square and Hardshaw Centre (with internalised shopping malls) interspersed alongside one of the historic town centre's main high street, Church Street. These centres are each served by individual multi-storey car parking.
- 1.16 Central to this quarter is St Helens Parish Church, a Grade II listed building with buttresses and a bell tower forming the most significant building to the town centre square.
- 1.17 The public realm is highly fragmented and pedestrian/ shopping legibility poor due to the internal malls, snickets and pedestrianised streets.
- 1.18 The quarter is well served by bus public transport on its periphery and the town centre bus station (which is currently disconnected from the central point of the main retail destination).
- 1.19 This strategy recognises that this area has all the required components in terms of retail / commercial / leisure activity, public transport accessibility, and urban structure to form the Primary Shopping Area.

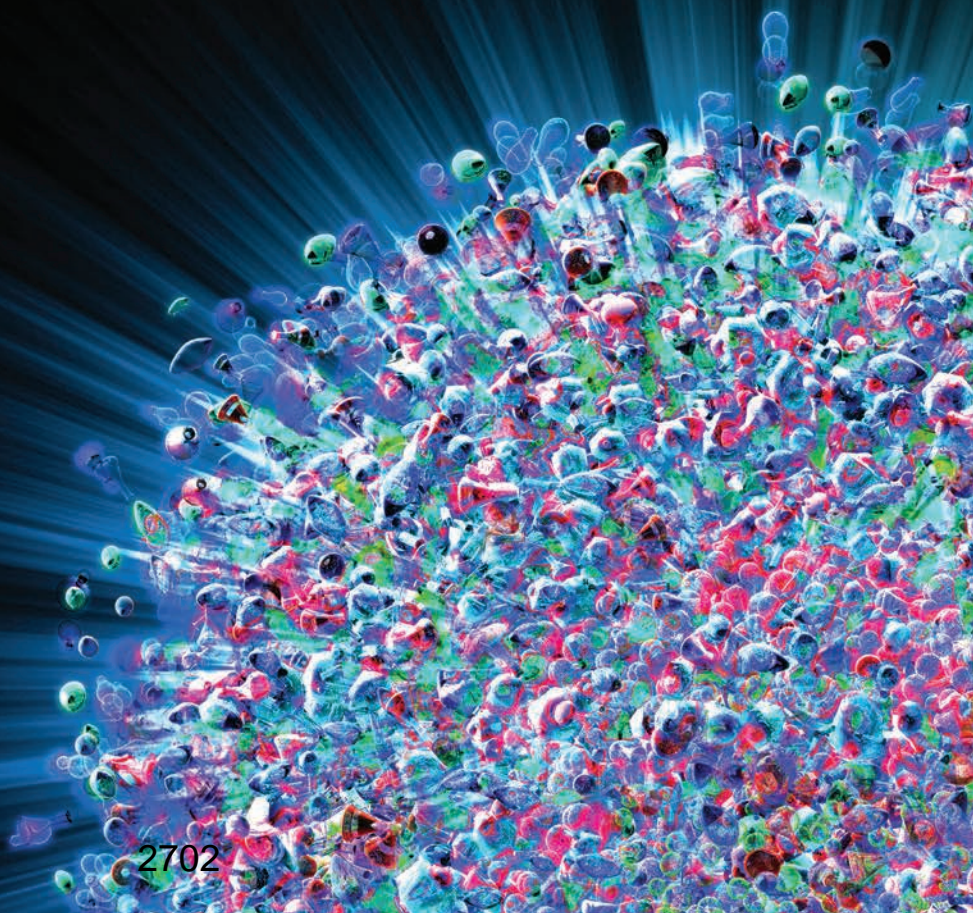
EDUCATIONAL QUARTER

- 1.20 This quarter, located in the west of the town centre, is enclosed to the west and south by the A58 Linkway ring road forming the town centre boundary.
- 1.21 At the centre of the quarter is St Helens College and University Centre St Helens, a modern building with extensive campus-like courtyard, surrounded by a mixed-use environment of building styles and activity. Both Westfield Street and Bridge Street form traditional High Streets well served by public transport.
- 1.22 There are numerous surface car parks abutting the A58 within this quarter that have the potential for development and create a stronger visual 'edge' to the town centre.
- 1.23 The legibility and functionality of the pedestrian public realm/ public open space linking into the adjacent quarters has potential for improvement, while linkages from the Educational and Housing Quarter to Duke Street, (west - towards Asda) are poor.
- 1.24 This strategy recognises much could be made of creating a quarter identity around the college / university built environment to create an enlarge 'campus' feel to this part of the town centre. This quarter is also beginning to see the provision of smaller-scale housing provision, particularly above retail units.

GROWTH QUARTER

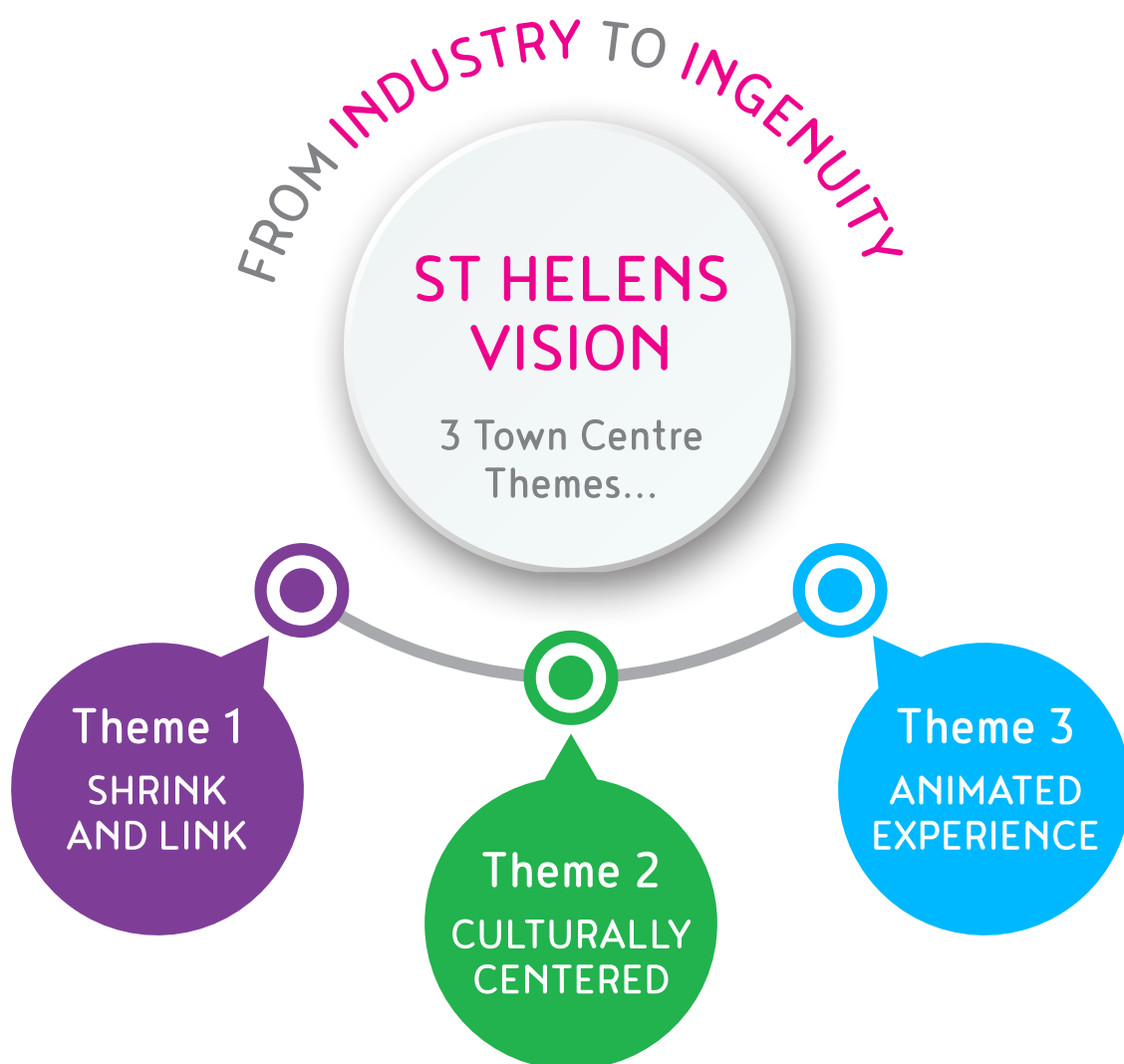
- 1.25 There are two parts of this quarter, one is located to the south of the Primary Shopping Area and is enclosed by the ring road (to the south) and railway line (to the east). The second part of the quarter is the area surrounding the train station.
- 1.26 In general this area comprises large, mono-functional buildings with very limited public realm walkways and floor animation - there are stand-alone buildings surrounded by surface or multi-storey car parking.
- 1.27 Lost within this quarter are the glass museum, the historic canal, and the railway station, all of which could be used to re-structure this quarter into a more pedestrian-legible environment.
- 1.28 The current station area has the potential to create a town centre modal interchange (train, bus and taxi) for St Helens.
- 1.29 This quarter has extensive potential for development / re-development to create a new retail and leisure quarter for St Helens structured around a new public realm hierarchy with links into the Primary Shopping Quarter.

2.0 THE VISION



THE VISION – FROM INDUSTRY TO INGENUITY

- 2.1 The Town Centre Strategy creates a shared vision and action plan so that the wider public, private sector and stakeholder community can all unite and share in order to change perceptions and create a sense of purpose and direction for the town.
- 2.2 In order to improve the area, residents felt the focus of the town centre should be on:
- Public realm and appearance
 - Retail
 - Quality of bars, cafes and restaurants
 - Investment and growth areas
 - Canal regeneration
 - Entertainment
 - Arts and Culture
 - Digital hub
- 2.3 Building on St Helens' unique heritage of invention, innovation, connectivity and its strong sense of community, the Town Centre Strategy proposes to rejuvenate the town centre into a modern, vibrant and desirable location. The strategy recognises that the town's key cultural and heritage assets, digital advancements and connectivity are all key opportunities to be embraced in order to set out a plan for the future, whilst acknowledging St Helens' innovative past. These ingredients, together with an expanding knowledge economy, will help forge the new vision for the town centre.



THEME 1 – SHRINK AND LINK

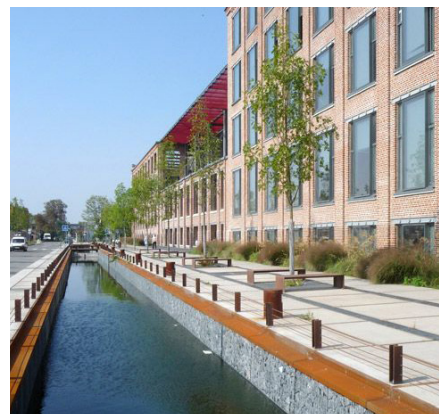
2.4 Earlier sections of the Town Centre Strategy identified that the majority of the key assets within the town centre are currently located on the periphery of the town centre boundary. The strategy strives to capture these key assets and cluster where appropriate to promote St Helens. It is integral that we use assets to celebrate St Helens and link them to other assets to get extra value. Set out below are a number of key objectives associated with this theme:

- Improving the use of existing assets through consolidating retail and cultural activity within the town centre to create quarters, that offer a concentrated, easy and accessible and sustainable offer
- Church Square has the potential to act as a catalyst to drive shoppers back into the town centre and put St Helens town centre on the map. Major development activity will take place within the Shopping Quarter. The Square may require the reconfiguration and / or redevelopment of existing land and premises, subject to securing agreements with landowners
- Using St Helens Central train station as a gateway to the town and locating car parks in strategic locations, creating an accessible and legible town centre
- Improving the leisure offer in the town centre and diversify the night time economy to meet family needs
- Using the canal as a multi-functional asset for the town through providing a corridor of water infrastructure, integrating canal-side developments and improving the canal as a key pedestrian and cycle route for recreation purposes
- Providing modern living environments, focusing on high quality, higher density and well-designed housing around key transport nodes of the town centre
- Use the Growth Quarter as an arc of opportunity to enhance the vitality and viability of St Helens town centre and its role as a sub-regional shopping centre
- Improve signage and wayfinding within the town centre, which will be an essential programme to connect the assets on the periphery of the town centre and improve the navigability into the Growth Quarter.

Best practice examples of canal side developments



Broadway Malyan, 1 Gunwharf Quays, Portsmouth, UK



Atelier des Paysages, Haute Deule River Banks, Lille, France



Chapman Taylor, St Marks Lincoln, Lincoln, UK



Haskoll, The Oracle, Reading, UK



OKRA, Catharina Amalia Park, Apeldoorn, Netherlands

THEME 2 - CULTURALLY CENTERED

2.5 Becoming a town centre recognised for being culturally centered is a key objective of the Town Centre Strategy. Many of the assets and organisations within St Helens celebrate and preserve the town's intangible heritage, industries and communities while also exploring how culture and the arts can make a contribution to creating a new identity for St Helens. However, it is now necessary to re-think how St Helens town centre can re-position itself through using key assets and its cultural organisations to become a culturally centered town. St Helens has developed a strong reputation for arts and cultural practice, which forms a strong basis to attractive people into the town centre. This will be achieved through the following strategic objectives:

- Consolidate the cultural organisations within the town centre in one accessible location to maximise and strengthen St Helens cultural offer through critical mass. This will create a strong leisure and family entertainment offer by the canal
- Identifying areas for displays of art, creativity and innovation via modern delivery, for example through the digital medium
- Strengthening links with Manchester and Liverpool arts venues as well as linking to nearby cultural activities, such as Shakespeare of the North
- Creating a stronger link with DREAM within the town centre
- Showcasing cultural events / shows in the new market.

Best practice examples of cultural centers



Zaha Hadid, Riverside Museum, Glasgow, UK



Daniel Buren, MUDAM, Luxemburg City, Luxemburg



David Chipperfield, River and Rowing Museum, Henley, UK



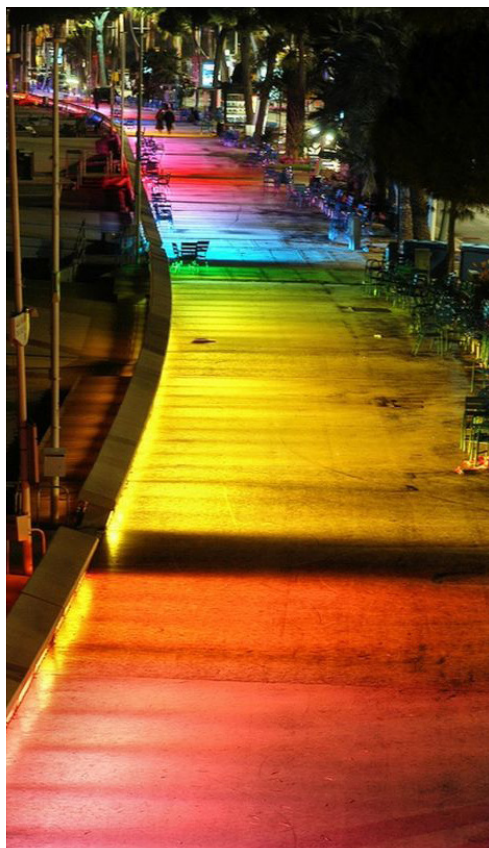
Rafael Moneo, Museum of Art and Architecture, Stockholm, Sweden

THEME 3 – ANIMATED EXPERIENCE

2.6 Creating an attractive and animated town centre is increasingly important to increase visitor 'dwell' time, attract local residents to the town centre and retain key businesses, as well as attract new investment. Below is a summary of strategic objectives, linking to the cultural and heritage assets, which will animate the town centre:

- Ensure that there is a wide range of regular events taking place over the year within the town centre, bringing in a rich mix of culture, arts and creativity during the day and evening
- Provide a safe, clean, vibrant and desirable place to live, work and visit – bringing life back into the town centre through planned proactive enforcement activity
- Celebrate the town centre's rich heritage and architecture through making better use of the architectural backdrop and encouraging high quality development
- Driving economic prosperity within the town centre through supporting enterprise, start-ups and local businesses within the town centre
- Improve the public realm in order to create an improved place for both residents and visitors to spend time and enjoy
- Improve the flow of pedestrian walk ways and link up key assets within the centre. Within the town centre, attractive and accessible routes must flow into key areas, for example the canal must be easily accessible from the growth quarter:

Best practice examples of street lighting



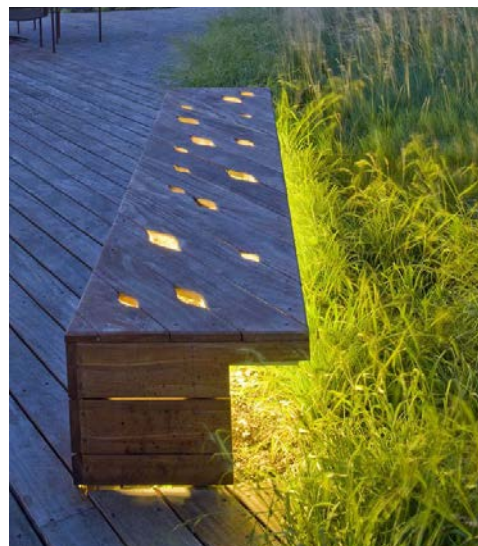
GCC Boardwalk, Cannes, France



FAY Seafront Light Columns, Hastings, UK



Morpho Logic, Lucky Light, Regensburg, Germany



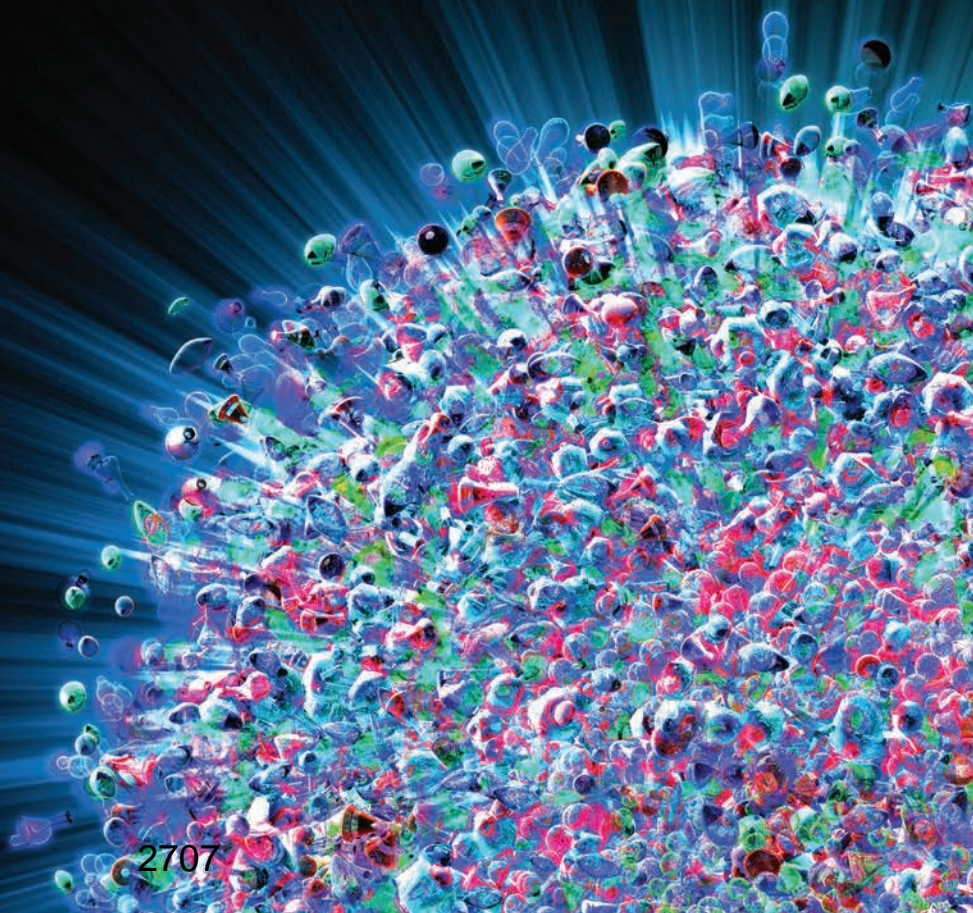
Landwork Studio, Macallen Building, Boston, Massachusetts



SDISF, Landscape Seating, San Francisco, California

3.0

THE PROJECTS



THEME 1: 'SHRINK AND LINK'

NEW URBAN FORM

- 3.1 The redevelopment of Church Square and the Hardshaw centre should be explored to provide a mixed use retail-leisure development to provide a new offer within the town centre. The three anchors proposed are:
- A Retail Anchor
 - A Leisure Anchor and a St Helens Art and Culture Centre
 - An Ambition Centre and Youth Zone
- 3.2 The redevelopment of the Church Square area intends to strengthen the position of St Helens as a retail and visitor destination and reverse the trend in its decline in the retail rankings. The design of any proposed new development must integrate with adjoining land uses and the established retail offer, whilst adding diversity and choice to its current offer. The redevelopment of Church Square should provide and open up pedestrian links to assets on the periphery of the town centre, such as the Stadium and the canal / growth quarter.
- 3.3 The Retail Study (2012) highlights Church Square as a target area for the town centre. The town centre offer is currently missing a higher order representation and therefore proposals should be supportive of larger floor plates (to accommodate the demand of retailers) and an anchor leisure opportunity to attract a strong food and beverage offer. The proposed offer of the town centre and the development of a diverse and vibrant night time economy will attract families back into the town centre.
- 3.4 The town centre strategy also proposes to relocate and consolidate service providers into an Ambition Centre and Youth Zone which will be located at the heart of the town centre.
- 3.5 Linking to the annual events programme, holding participatory artistic performances in Church Square would help create a linkage between the street and the interior of the building. The quality of offer of retail provision will be improved through inward investment and a strong public realm and wayfinding strategy.
- 3.6 The town centre has an excellent canal which is currently underutilised. The canal needs to be opened up, particularly around the 'Growth Quarter' in order to present opportunities and encourage recreational uses along the waterfront. The unique water front could promote the cultural offer of the town centre, building on the location of the World of Glass by the canal.
- 3.7 Transforming St. Mary's Market into a diverse demographic back into the town centre which will add vitality to the town centre. Consultation with the market traders to ensure they are suitably located, including those traders which are currently trading on the high street will be key to the delivery of this project.

Best practice examples of shopfronts



Klein Dytham, Uniqlo Ginza, Tokyo, Japan



Chalmers University of Technology, Campus, Gothenburg, Sweden



GCC, Corstorphine+Wright, Farnham, UK



Leslie Jones, Hereford Old Market, Hereford, UK



Mixed use Retail, St Austell, Cornwall, UK



3dReid, Primark, Newcastle, UK

Best practice examples of markets



Josep M. i Vila, La Boqueria, Barcelona, Spain



Fermin Vazquez, Encants Vells Flea Market, Barcelona, Spain



Snohetta, James Beard Public Market, Portland, Oregon, USA

RESIDENTIAL

- 3.8 There are a number of underused and vacant sites located around the town centre boundary, including Birchley Street car park and land surrounding St Helens Central (train station) which are appropriate for mixed-use-residential development. The One Public Estate funding to masterplan Birchley Street car park will revitalise an underused area of land to the north-west of the town centre. Meanwhile, this strategy strongly supports proposals for residential development along the canal and on land surrounding St Helens Central station. Higher density housing will attract more young professionals and families into the town centre.
- 3.9 These new residents will further increase the footfall in the town centre, creating a need for shops to service and support new leisure and entertainment investment.

TRAIN STATION

- 3.10 St Helens Central station provides another development opportunity for the town centre and with improved rail services, including a direct service to Glasgow, there will be increased use of the station and improved accessibility to the town centre. Currently, to access St Helens town centre from Manchester by rail either involves changing at Wigan or Huyton, or using a rail service from stations in the south of the borough and changing on a bus service. There is scope in the long-term to reopen the disused line between St Helens Town Centre and St Helens Junction to allow direct services towards Warrington, Manchester and beyond as part of wider Transport for the North aspirations. This would improve accessibility to and from St Helens Town Centre by sustainable and environmental transport and increase the economic viability and development potential for not only St Helens Town Centre but other locations along the route

CAR PARKING

- 3.11 There are currently four main car parks that serve the town centre, but they provide a poor first impression, and are largely underused. Some of them occupy key locations where regeneration and fresh development could take place, such as Chalon Way.
- 3.12 A separate review of car parks needs to be undertaken to assess how much will be needed, the right location for them and the requirement for resident parking within the town centre if more housing is developed.

DIGITAL

- 3.13 Digital technology is key for the future knowledge economy and the creation of a 'cluster' of digital and creative companies will create a distinct presence within St Helens. Flexible office space, targeted at encouraging local enterprise and providing necessary grow-on space for local firms should be encouraged near to key transport nodes.

THEME 2: CULTURALLY CENTERED CANAL SIDE

- 3.14 Proposals for the future of the town centre will place the canal as the cultural anchor of the town centre and form part of a new retail and leisure redevelopment anchor project located within the Growth Quarter.
- 3.15 The current cultural and museum offer within St Helens is highly fragmented and its collective visual identity and pedestrian legibility is poor. The various cultural and museum destinations around the town centre should be consolidated into infrastructure by the Canal to create a cultural hub, providing an internationally recognised Centre of Arts and Culture. The Growth Quarter should aspire to become a One Stop visitor information centre located to maximise access and exposure to commercial footfall / arrival.
- 3.16 A review of stronger visual linkages and pedestrian legibility between this proposed cultural hub and St Helens Parish Church, (which is the focus of the Shopping Quarter) and St Helens Central Train Station, should be undertaken.

CIVIC AND HERITAGE BUILDINGS

- 3.17 Potential for Victoria Square to become a venue for regular, private and publicly organised events, festivals, markets, etc. to create a civic heart within the town, linked to retail and leisure facilities within the Shopping Quarter.
- 3.18 Review of possible commercial opportunities for St Helens Town Hall, due to its impressive Victorian interior. Any assessment of the future use of the town hall would be undertaken in conjunction with a review of its long term function and use of surrounding buildings.
- 3.19 A strategy to encourage digital and creative companies to locate in the town, preferably within the George Street area where flexible office space can be accommodated, in an attractive terraced setting close to key transport hubs.
- 3.20 The George Street area is an untapped asset that the town centre possesses. Located by the train centre and in an attractive terraced setting, it offers the perfect environment for the growth of independent business, particularly those in the digital and creative sectors. The investment that the area attracted in the recent past was designed to promote this idea. However, it has not had the focus it once did.

HERITAGE OF GLASS AND INGENUITY

- 3.21 St Helens town centre is surrounded by numerous industrial buildings which have historic, building merit, such as the industrial smoke stacks, canal etc. Furthermore, through the idea of ingenuity, the council should explore how newer or future buildings could be designed or / and used to express this idea and form part of the town's changing story.
- 3.22 St Helens has a proud economic and cultural heritage based on industrial manufacturing, invention and ingenuity. Globally identifiable names such as Beecham's, Gamble, Smurfit and Pilkington's can all trace their origins to the borough.
- 3.23 St Helens glass heritage should be embraced and placed at the core of any re-positioning and place-vision for the town centre. It is something that St Helens has a global renown for and helps define its special identity. It should seek to maximise the identity and commercial opportunities out of its historic role and become a world renowned global centre for glass production, which plays well with the overarching vision of 'industry to ingenuity'. As such, the identity of 'glass' should become an important aspect of the town's identity and living heritage.
- 3.24 The potential for a European festival of glass should be explored, potentially coupled with European towns with a similar unique heritage. This festival should have a central theme, which could then include associated ideas. St Helens could build on twinning with Chalon-Sur-Saone and Stuttgart to deliver glass-themed artworks installation proposals (e.g. exchange of glass art work) in 2018, which should be linked to St Helens 150 years anniversary in 2018.
- 3.25 Glass should be incorporated with the design of the town centre, through innovative glass solutions, wayfinding strategies, specific commissioned art installations, through new innovative approaches to street lighting and the lighting up of key buildings and spaces, or even to new street treatments incorporating glass. Through glass the town centre can be radically transformed.

CULTURAL LINKS

DREAM

- 3.26 The iconic 20-metre high internationally significant artwork by artist Jaume Plensa is a significant statement for St Helens. Despite being a significant piece of iconic artwork, DREAM has never really captured the imagination to the same extent as Angel of the North has, yet it is an asset and much more can be done to promote it as a central feature of the St Helens brand and identity. This would include further commissioned works in the town centre, and even linking into other installations from artists working with glass throughout the world. Through the Dream sculpture, there is an opportunity to build a long term vision for a visitor experience in St Helens by joining up with the town centre.

VACANT GROUND FLOOR UNITS

- 3.27 Vacant units should be brought back into use as part of a celebration of glass and art in St Helens. Efforts should be made to work with landlords, local artists, art colleges, universities and museums in Liverpool and Manchester, through exhibiting works that are archived in Manchester / Liverpool, to showcase art with a St Helens connection.

TOWN CENTRE WRAPS

- 3.28 In an increasingly digital IT world, first impressions are critical and powerful. St Helens needs to announce that it is changing and needs to create a branding and strong identity. Suitable locations for hoardings near to key areas (i.e. graffiti piece / murals / St Helens branding / digital hoardings) should be identified to create an attractive and striking addition to the town centre, adding character and vibrancy.
- 3.29 A bold investment programme demands bold statements of intent being well publicised and promoted throughout the town centre and the redevelopment programme for the town centre. Wraps signalling the plan for the town centre will animate spaces. Meanwhile, greater signage and navigation can help install a greater degree of confidence amongst visitors, shoppers, and residents that major investment is signalled and underway.

THEME 3: ANIMATED EXPERIENCE

SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS

- 3.30 As part of the approach to develop the experience and promotion of St Helens, it is suggested that businesses are asked to sign up to create a Business Improvement District (BID). This would generate an income stream that could be used to develop, manage and promote the newly defined town centre experience. The income could fund an events programme, festivals, art installations, street theatre etc. as well as management to look after these key events and activities. The BID would also be another important part of engaging more businesses in developing and promoting St Helens and bringing life to the town and borough's new defined narrative. This would also be a natural extension of creating 'place led' governance, leadership and stakeholders in the town centre and beyond whilst generating greater pride in St Helens.
- 3.31 Working within the context of the BID, specifically selected stakeholders will be involved in devising a series of activities and interventions examining innovative and productive options for sustainable uses of unoccupied, under-utilised, buildings and mismanaged spaces / places to provide support for increasing the number of independent businesses that are thriving in the town centre. Design options around selective acquisition, remodelling, creating spaces and places that work for independent businesses will be explored under a development brief for the two areas.

PUBLIC REALM AND WAYFINDING STRATEGY

- 3.32 The town centre's public realm has evolved over time, with the gradual pedestrianisation of streets and introduction of paving and street furniture. The public realm is highly fragmented and the visual / environmental links to all heritage and cultural destinations within the town centre is not evident.
- 3.33 The spaces between buildings are often the most important consideration in the regeneration of town centres. For St Helens, whilst there are several examples of some quality public realm which has been implemented over the years, the new approach to public realm will be focused and targeted on key areas of the town centre ensuring that the look and feel of the town centre makes it look to all as one complete network of interesting and fun connected spaces and places. The choice of materials will be a key difference in terms of what has gone before. In line with the celebration of glass new materials and lighting will come to the fore, replacing the darker, greyer palette of the current town centre.
- 3.34 The Public Realm and Wayfinding Strategy will directly link to the town's heritage and industrial past and align with the vision of the town centre: 'From Industry to Ingenuity'. The number of active frontages around key squares within the town centre should be included in a comprehensive strategy. Architectural signage to help visitors and residents navigate from the assets on the periphery, including the canal is key.

ANNUAL EVENTS PROGRAMME

- 3.35 An annual events programme for public squares and pop-up independent businesses should form the backbone of the town centre animation. Setting up a temporary stage in the square, under a proposed new canopy could help support its use for artistic events like street theatre, comedy, choir performances, public speeches or folk dancing etc. Treasure hunts / orienteering challenges around the historical heritage of the town could also be offered to schools and families. Additionally, St Helens should also build on its links with nearby cultural events through fringe events, such as Shakespeare of the North in Prescot.
- 3.36 Key themes could include historical (i.e. glass and industrial past of St Helen's), artistic (i.e. a musical picture of the town) or political. St Helens town centre should build on the transformation of the borough, including assets such as the new Saints stadium 'Langtree Park', Haydock Park Racecourse, and should tie these into the annual events programme to build on that link.

Best practice examples of public realm



Insitu Architects, Pavement / Seating, Saint Flour, France



Sant en Co, Pavement, Amersfoort, Netherlands



Fermin Vazquez Arch, Plaza del Torico, Teruel, Spain



T. Andersson, Borås Textile Fashion Centre, Borås, Sweden



Thomas Heatherwick Blue Carpet, Newcastle, UK



EPA Arch, Town Hall Square, Solingen, Germany

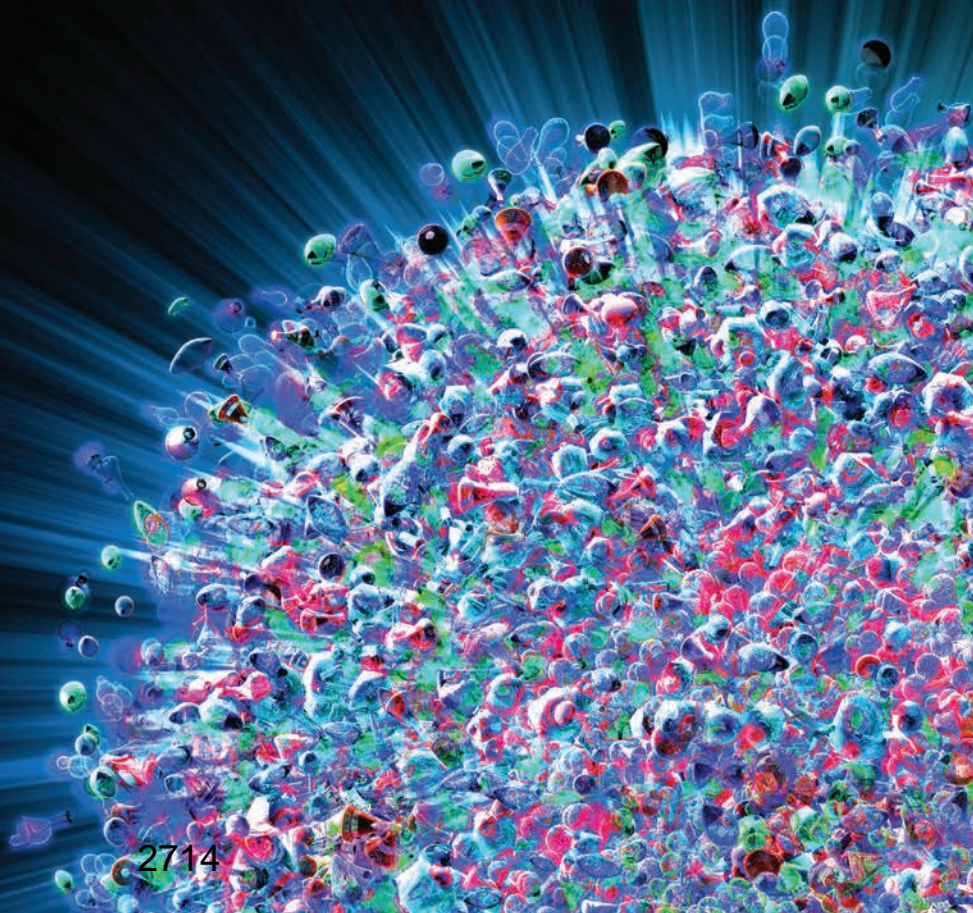


EPA Arch, Town Hall Square, Solingen, Germany



Bureau B+B, Mariahilferstrasse, Vienna, Austria

4.0 DELIVERY



HOW WE WILL DELIVER

- 4.1 Key to the success and delivery of the town centre strategy is 'how' we deliver the vision and meet the objectives set out above. This chapter is intended to explain the anticipated programme. The town centre strategy is a 10 year vision, which will deliver a key step change in 2018:

2018

Celebration Programme, Public Realm,
Wayfinding & signage, Victoria Square

2020

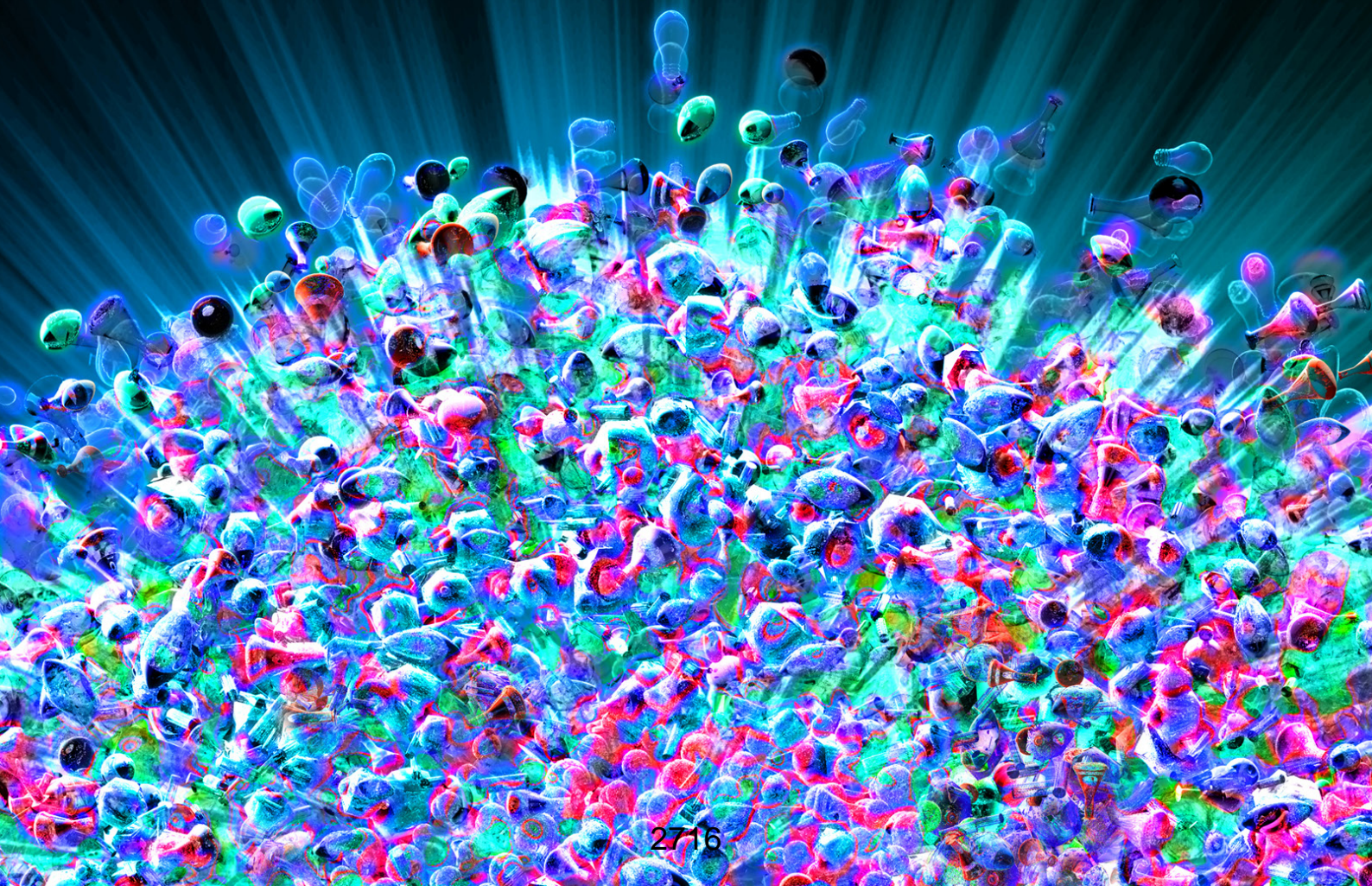
St Helens Arts and Culture Centre, BID,
Improved links with DREAM

2022

Shopping Quarter, Canal-side regeneration.
Ambition Centre & Youth Zone

2024

Ongoing development



**INVEST
ST HELENS**

TOWN

INVESTMENT

PLAN



ST HELENS
BOROUGH COUNCIL





PROPOSED MARKET HALL - CGI



GLASS FUTURES - CGI

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NEW HOMES DELIVERED

382



JOBS CREATED

236



LEARNERS SUPPORTED PER ANNUM

170



BROWNFIELD LAND RECLAIMED

8.10

HECTARES



NEW BUILDINGS/ FLOORSPEACE CREATED

20,625

SQMS



PUBLIC REALM ENHANCED

5.6

HECTARES



PROJECTED VISITOR NUMBERS PER ANNUM

200,000



YOUNG PEOPLE SUPPORTED

78,000



01

ST HELENS – A CULTURALLY CENTRED TOWN

St Helens, like many towns of its type, felt the cold wind of contraction and modernisation, as its large industrial employers, one by one shut their operations down and closed their doors for the last time. The void which ensued led to a blighting of our proud town, which the most farsighted of administrations would have had difficulty in addressing. Thus a period of general decline began, which witnessed the slow and inexorable decay and vibrancy of our town centre, its woes only compounded by the typical seventies monolith developments within the heart of the town, from which a great deal of its character had been ripped out.

Despite all of this our town toughed it out, its people remaining loyal and resolute in the face of hardship and disappointment.

The deep-rooted pride in everything that the town was still shines through, evidenced in the engagement work undertaken for the purpose of this Town Investment Plan (TIP). It is however, not just about the past, our town looks forward to and deserves a brighter future. The beacon of innovation has never been extinguished. It's in the DNA, culture and fabric of the town itself. We see it expressed in the fabulous endeavours of a vibrant and resurgent arts and culture sector and in the passion expressed for our heritage assets. In the entrepreneurial drive demonstrated across the borough and in the pride taken in the outstanding achievements of our rugby league club – Saints.

I am intensely proud of St Helens; it is an immense personal honour and privilege to be Chairman of the St Helens Town Deal Board. When the call went out for people to serve on the Board, it was answered in great measure. Further testament, of the support and desire to see the town centre emerge from its years of decline and flourish again in a new age of development and prosperity. I could not be prouder of the efforts every member of the Board has put into this TIP, particularly at a time when so much worry and uncertainty surrounded their own businesses and jobs.

St Helens is a people bursting with desire to see the town move forward and embrace a new future, one built on its past glories, but very much focused on what the future can deliver. The enthusiasm which has greeted the advent of the Glass Futures development, highlights the town at its brilliant best. This timely reminder of what all generations of our people associate our borough with, is a huge confidence boost.

Glass Past meets Glass Futures is a fitting catalyst to light the blue touch paper of regeneration, so let's crack on!

JOHN TABERN

*Chair of the St Helens
Towns Fund Board*

02

EXECUTIVE
SUMMARY

PILKINGTON GLASS

02. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

St Helens is home to over 180,000 people, with a strong identity and sense of pride that is rooted in its history and heritage. A key part of this is glass – part of its evolutionary building blocks and an integral part of St Helens’ future. The opportunities presented by Glass Futures, a world-class research and development sustainable, low carbon glass manufacturing facility will contribute to reducing sector emissions by at least 10%.

ST HELENS DAY CELEBRATIONS - 150 YEARS CELEBRATIONS IN 2018



There is confidence in the future, reflected by increasing business investment and therefore more jobs and opportunities; strong housing growth; a growing reputation as a centre for arts and culture and a nationally recognised, award-winning approach to delivering health, care and community wellbeing.

In our position at the heart of the North West, we have excellent road and rail infrastructure connectivity and are a short travelling distance from two international airports and the Port of Liverpool. Its spatial location in terms of Greater Manchester to the east, Cheshire & Warrington Sub-region to the south and Lancashire to the north makes it extremely attractive to logistics and distribution operators.

St Helens forms part of a strong Liverpool City Region which ‘has enjoyed a sustained period of growth and development’ supported by regeneration and economic opportunities including developing an international culture and visitor economy; diversifying the economy and progressing key sectors including clean growth, material science, infectious

disease control and high-performance computing and AI².

The focus for our Towns Fund bid is to build upon the catalytical opportunities within St Helens town centre, particularly Glass Futures³, Phase 1 of which has secured BEIS and UKRI funding. Glass Futures will support the borough’s economic recovery creating local jobs, skills and importantly inspiring the next generation of the borough’s residents, but we cannot rely on this opportunity alone.

The town centre requires real investment to be able to capitalise on this opportunity—in terms of place-making and regeneration, support for local businesses, encouraging young people to succeed and creating a strong offer and experience to reverse the decline of the high street. As with many towns and cities UK-wide, we cannot rely on the retail sector to attract people back into the heart of our town. We need to deliver a town centre that matches the potential of the borough and underpins the role that St Helens will have in the Liverpool City Region.

¹ LCR (2020) Building Back Better – Economic Recovery Plan
² ibid
³ A Joint Venture between St Helens Council and industry/ private sector

02. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The borough has many strengths but also several challenges, which we are working to address and are responded to within our Town Investment Plan (TIP):



Transforming St Helens’ cultural and heritage offer through creating an impressive experience for visitors which builds upon the town’s key heritage assets and provides much-needed support for the visitor economy which has been significantly impacted as a result of Covid-19. This cultural focus will help positively change the perceptions of the place and the outlook of its people, particularly in terms of health and wellbeing.



Creating higher value jobs for local people, as well as the opportunity to up or re-skill, particularly within the research and innovation sectors whilst also addressing the borough’s lower than average productivity rates.



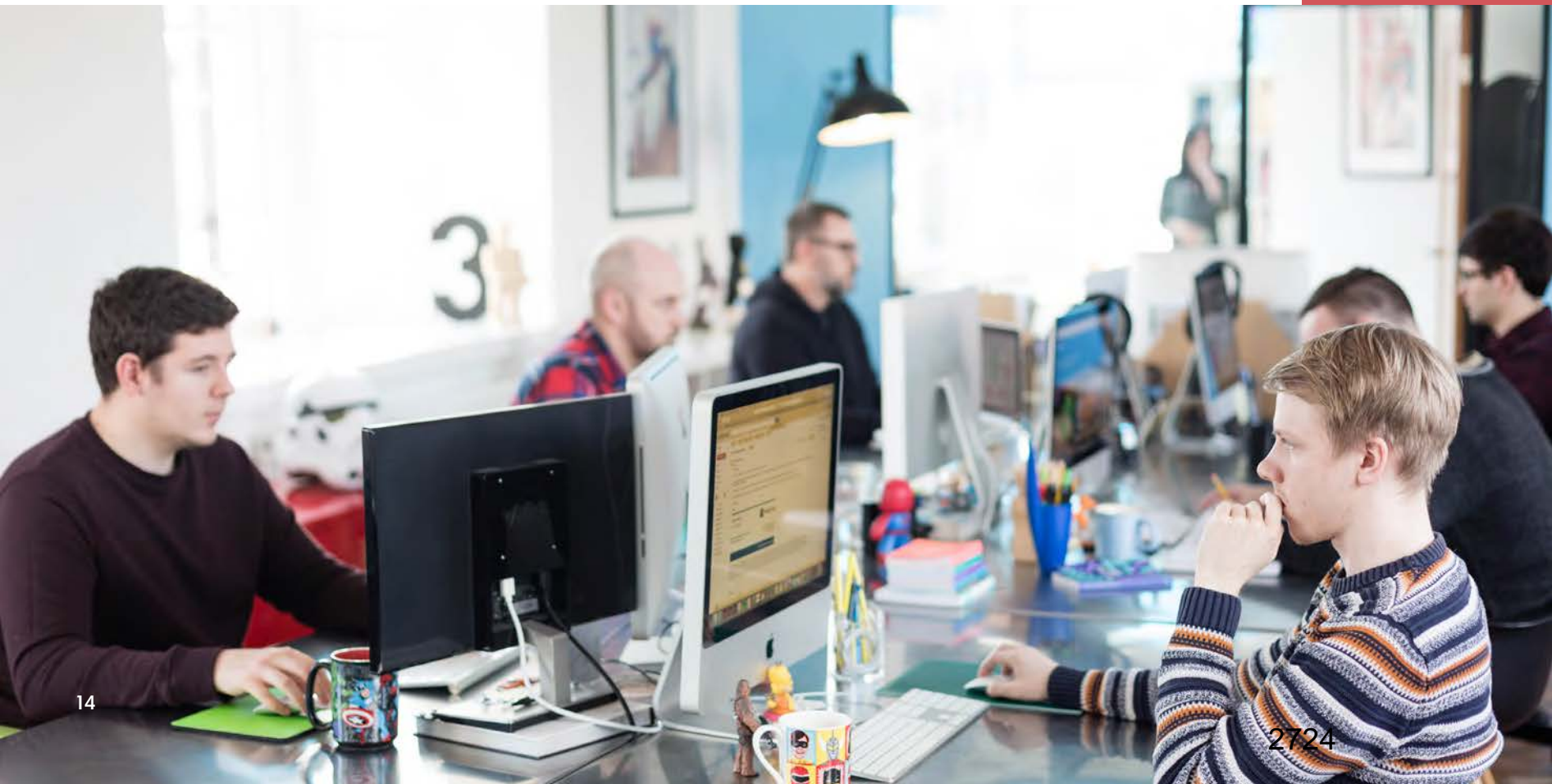
Addressing health deprivation through offering appropriate health and wellbeing support to residents given that St Helens experiences significant of health inequalities⁴ which impacts upon productivity rates for the borough, a strain on health-related services and negatively effects the wellbeing of young people. There are disparities within the borough with a 10.4 years life expectancy variation between the least and the most deprived wards⁵.



The need to provide affordable and high-quality housing borough-wide but particularly in diversifying the offer in the town centre, which aligns strongly to addressing health deprivation and provides a place-making opportunity – creating the critical mass of people to reside within the heart of the town centre and new people who will work, play and spend in the town.



Providing improved key connections and enhanced public realm to encourage people to walk, cycle and use public transport to access the town centre, stay for longer, and helping shift the focus back into the high-street as opposed to the out-of-town retail parks on its periphery.



⁴ IMD (2019)
⁵ In Rainford males are expected to live until 82 years old but only 71.6 years for those in the town centre ward (Source: Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Mortality, 2020)

02. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OUR SHARED VISION
FOR ST HELENS OVER
THE NEXT 10 YEARS

2020-2030



GLASS FUTURES - CGI

“By 2030 St Helens will be **culturally centred**, will nurture and celebrate its **cultural and industrial heritage**, will build upon its creative and innovative gene in **glass making and foundation-industries** to innovate and **do things differently**, and create new opportunities, including those from the City Region. **Vibrancy** will be created for the town centre; the town will be a **smaller, accessible and enjoyable place to come together** and will be a place where the community will learn from one another, improve their **physical and mental well-being** and where people want to live, work and visit. Businesses and residents will be attracted to the new opportunities available, will have **quality spaces** to dwell and linger and will benefit from **improved transport and digital connections** borough-wide”.

02. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Towns Fund investment is key to securing the transformational change for St Helens and to supporting our sustainable growth ambitions. Our funding ask is for **£38.55m of towns funding⁶** to deliver the following:

A

GLASS FUTURES
PHASE 2

(INCLUDING CANNINGTON SHAW)



B

TOWN CENTRE LIVING
& REGENERATION



C

ST HELENS
HERITAGE WORLD



D

HEALTHY
COMMUNITIES

(YOUTH ZONE, HEALTH INNOVATION HUB)



E

CONNECTED
PLACES



F

DIGITAL
INFRASTRUCTURE



⁶ Comprises £38.25m capital funding and £0.3m revenue funding support

Our proposed projects are located within, or in close proximity of St Helens Town Centre, as this is where the funding will make the most impact. The borough needs a town centre to be proud of, one which reflects the growth ambition, capitalises on its industrial heritage and the opportunity that a **globally significant project** in Glass Futures provides. The route to deliver this immense opportunity is through Town Deal.

Building on the nationally and globally significant project that is Glass Futures, we consider our Towns Fund Programme to be regionally important. Large-scale transformational growth is proposed within St Helens Town Centre through a series of complementary projects which will have a significant impact on the people, and the businesses in St Helens. Such changes will create long-lasting opportunities for St Helens Town Centre, the borough and City Region as a whole.



PROPOSED MARKET HALL - CGI

02. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OUR PROPOSED

TOWNS FUND PROJECTS

SPATIAL PLAN

- PROJECT A

Glass Futures Phase 2
- PROJECT B

Town Centre Regeneration and Living
- PROJECT C

St Helens Heritage World
- PROJECT D

Healthy Communities

- PROJECT E

Connected Places

Creating Strong Pedestrian Links

Transport Nodes

Green Bus Route to Liverpool

Major Road

Improved Link and Public Realm
- PROJECT F

Digital Infrastructure (borough-wide)

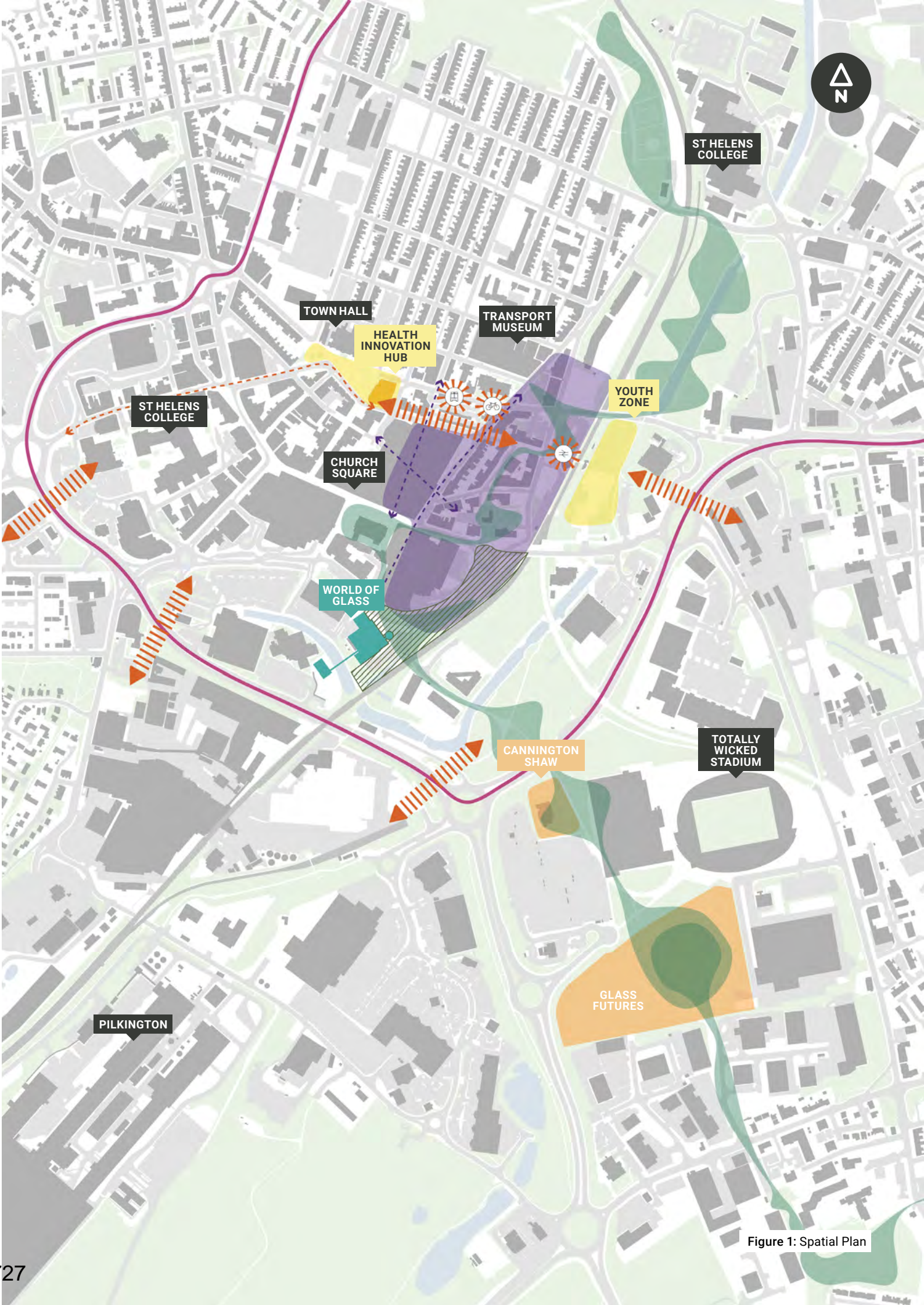


Figure 1: Spatial Plan

02. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

All of our projects are aligned with the **nationally and globally significant Glass Futures project** which will create the UK’s first medical glass research and development centre of excellence in St Helens, a town and borough which is renowned for its heritage and innovation in glass-making. Such an ambitious project not only requires investment into the facility itself, but also needs to be complemented by the necessary investment into the regeneration and transformation of the town centre, including new high-quality housing, amenities⁷, transport and digital infrastructure to be able to maximise its impact and benefit the people of St Helens.

With the support of Towns Fund investment, we will benefit our residents and generate new employment opportunities, a skilled workforce, high quality and affordable housing, excellent amenities and services that people come to expect in a thriving town centre. New opportunities will be matched with a focused skills programme, enabling the town and borough to benefit from the high growth jobs created in the City Region.

St Helens is a **borough of opportunity, ingenuity and has strong potential for growth**. The borough has been identified as a key place for transformational regeneration by **English Cities Fund (ECF)**⁸. The Council and ECF have signed a 20-year Borough wide commitment comprising an Overarching Development Agreement to deliver a potential £200m mixed use scheme in St Helens Town Centre as well as

improvements for Earlestown as part of Phase 1⁹. Town Deal is the very catalyst that is needed to spark the momentum. Towns Funding investment will act as seed-capital to kickstart this partnership opportunity, which intends to create a revolving fund as surplus profits are to be re-invested in other much-needed parts of the borough.

ECF provides a strong delivery mechanism for Towns Fund and is a tried and tested approach which has already successfully achieved regeneration in other parts of the UK, including in Salford and Liverpool. ECF’s expertise and experience provides St Helens with a nationally significant opportunity, and with the Towns Fund investment as a catalyst, the town and borough is ripe and ready for transformational growth. St Helens is a first for ECF investment insofar as the borough-wide approach which is proposed. Towns Funding will help to unlock the

initial development phase for the town centre but the Development Agreement approach between the partnership will enable the grant funding to go further; effectively acting as a revolving fund mechanism to deliver future growth and priority interventions across the borough.

It has repositioned itself as a borough for change and transformation, with a new delivery-focused structure, new leadership capacity in place for growth, and with ECF aligned as a key delivery partner to take forward the borough over the next 20 years. The Towns Fund Programme we have put forward is deliverable by March 2026; a number of the projects are well established and are ‘shovel ready’ to start incurring the funding allocation in 2021 and delivering the step-change which is needed to take St Helens into the future.

⁷ Including the Health Innovation Hub, Youth Zone & cultural offer
⁸ ECF comprises developer Muse Developments, fund manager Legal & General and Homes England
⁹ The ODA was announced on 15th December 2020 - <https://www.placenorthwest.co.uk/news/ecf-st-helens-ink-20-year-development-agreement>



03

INTRODUCING
ST HELENS



03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS

ST HELENS
BENEFITS FROM
BEING WITHIN
1-HOUR DRIVE-
TIME FOR MORE
THAN 7 MILLION
PEOPLE AND
4.3 MILLION
EMPLOYEES.

St Helens forms part of the Liverpool City Region (LCR) and has circa 180,585 residents¹⁰. Spatially, it is well-connected to the other LCR authorities and abuts the Cheshire & Warrington sub-region, Greater Manchester and West Lancashire boundaries, and midway between the commercial and cultural hubs of Liverpool and Manchester.

Its central location enables St Helens to benefit from excellent connectivity on the strategic road network with direct links to the M62 and M6. The arterial A580 East Lancashire Road also traverses the north of the borough. Its location allows easy access to Liverpool and Manchester Airports and the Port of Liverpool.

¹⁰ ONS population in 2019 (source: info4StHelens.gov.uk)

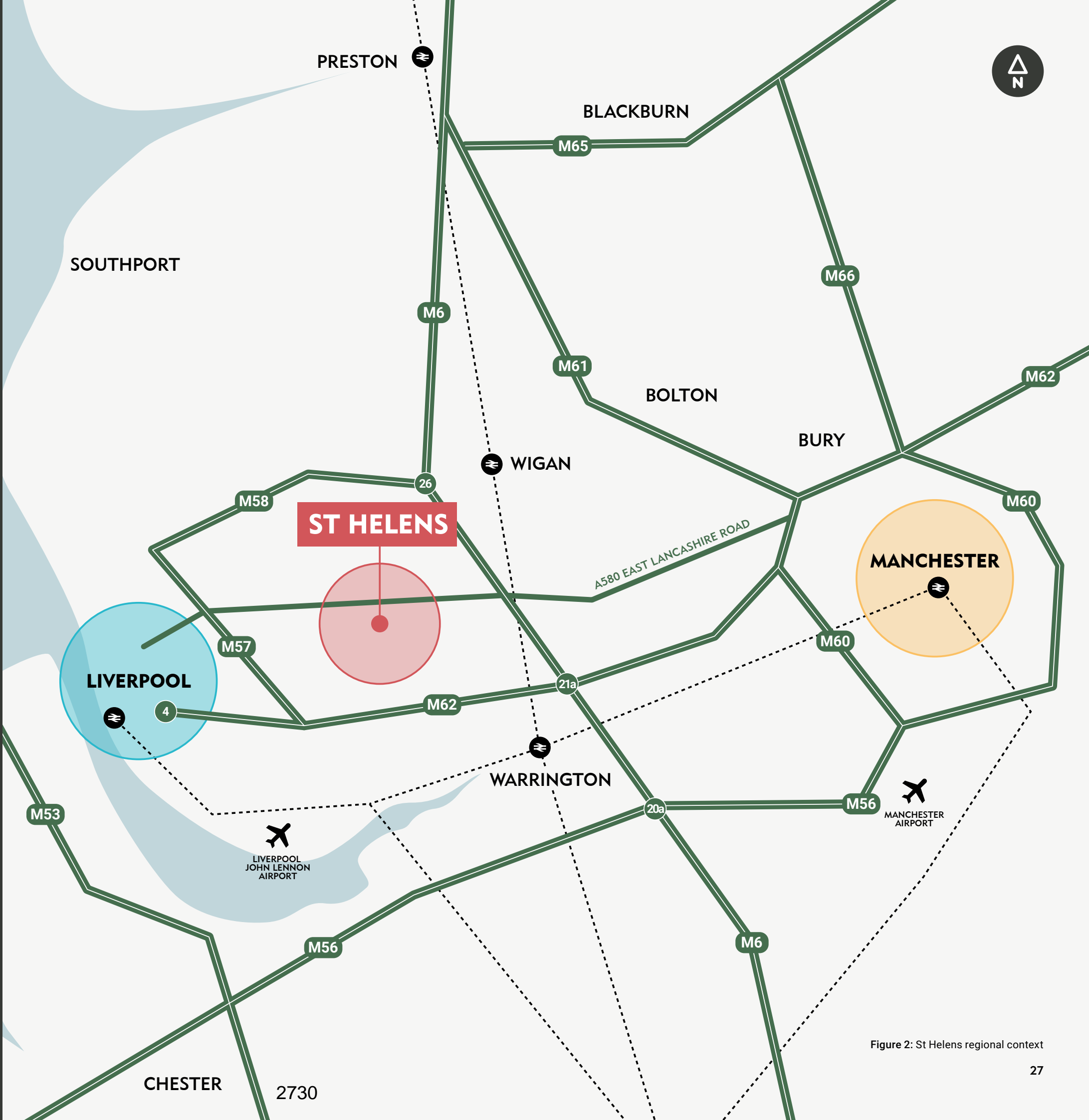


Figure 2: St Helens regional context

03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS

The Borough comprises key centres and substantial urban areas (including Haydock, Newton-le-Willows and Rainhill) alongside villages and hamlets (Figure 3).

‘ALTHOUGH ST HELENS HAS BEEN AN INDUSTRIAL CENTRE IT BOASTS RURAL SURROUNDINGS WITH AGRICULTURE, TRADITIONAL VILLAGES AND PLENTY OF GREEN SPACE’.

THE DREAM



Achievements include the new rugby stadium for the Saints Rugby Football Club, Town Centre Campus for St Helens College, creation of The Dream¹¹ and logistics sites attracting Amazon and Movianto at Haydock Green.

¹¹ 'A major art work asset' (Arts Strategy 2020)

03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS

- Key Settlements
- St Helens Administrative Boundary
- Proposed Housing Growth Areas
- Proposed Employment Growth Areas
- Railway
- Motorway
- A Roads

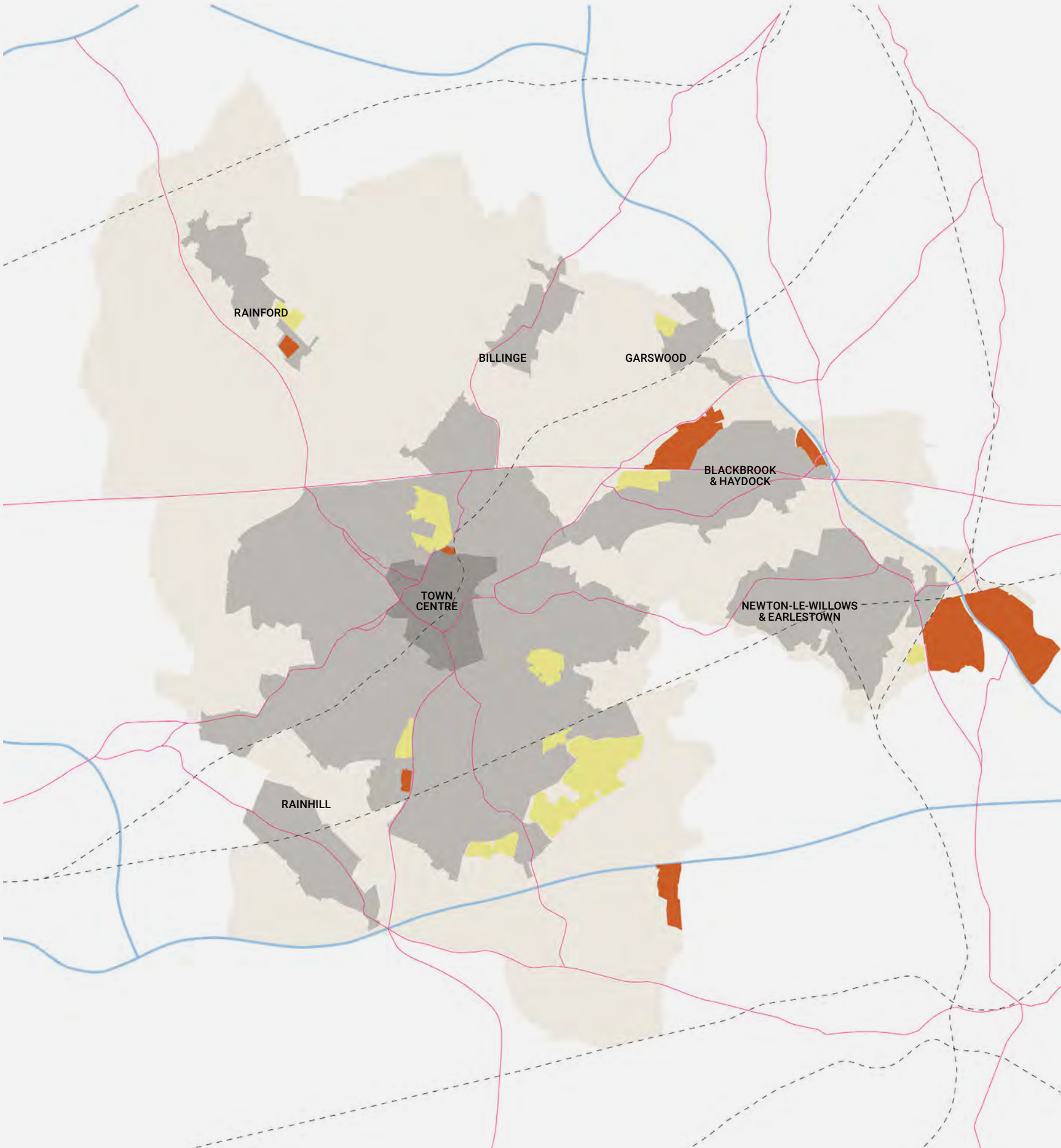


Figure 3: St Helens - Key settlements and proposed areas of growth

Figure 4: St Helens in the context of the UK

03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS



65%
OF THE BOROUGH IS
GREEN BELT¹²



ST HELENS HAS UNDERGONE POSITIVE CHANGE INCLUDING THE CREATION OF A STRONGER ECONOMY WITH OVER

4,000+
NEW JOBS CREATED¹³
- INCREASED EARNING POTENTIAL FOR RESIDENTS AND THE GROWTH IN BUSINESS BASE OF **OVER 9%**¹⁴



30 MINUTES DRIVE-TIME TO THE PORT OF LIVERPOOL



4.3M
EMPLOYEES ARE **WITHIN 1 HOUR'S** COMMUTING TIME OF ST HELENS¹⁵, AND PROVIDE A SKILLED WORKFORCE FOR THE MANY KEY EMPLOYERS THAT HAVE CHOSEN TO LOCATE IN ST HELENS

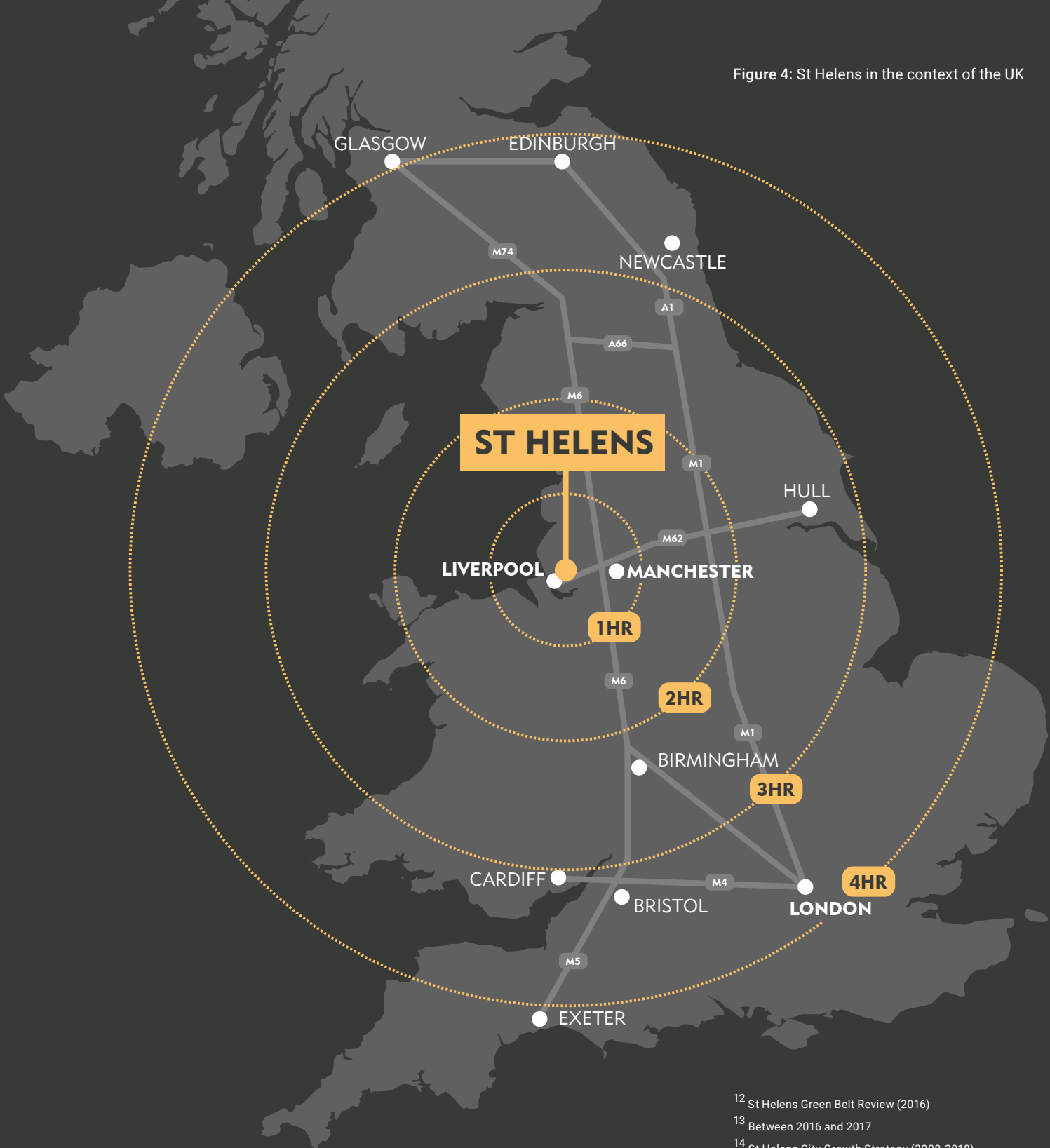


ST HELENS OCCUPIES A PRIME POSITION ON THE MOTORWAY NETWORK, WITHIN

4HRS
DRIVE OF **35 MILLION PEOPLE**¹⁶



40 MINUTES DRIVE-TIME TO MANCHESTER



¹² St Helens Green Belt Review (2016)
¹³ Between 2016 and 2017
¹⁴ St Helens City Growth Strategy (2008-2018)
¹⁵ Invest in St Helens
¹⁶ Invest in St Helens

03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS

OUR EVOLUTION

1086

Newton-le-Willows (as Neweton) is mentioned in the Domesday Book

1552

There is a reference to St Elyn's Chapel, 'consisting only of a 'challis and a lytle bell', a chapel of ease for travellers from Prescot to Warrington. The townships of Ecclestone, Windle, Parr & Sutton existed and the area is known for agriculture and mining

1726

The Turnpike Road opens from Liverpool to Prescot, providing connections to St Helens

1757

The St. Helens / Sankey Canal opens, built by Henry Berry (the first canal of the industrial age)

1829

Mr Josias C. Gamble founds a chemical works

1826

Pilkington Glass is founded

1798

Lee Watson establishes the St. Helens iron Foundry (later bought by Robert Daglish)

1773

The St. Helens / Sankey Canal opens, built by Henry Berry (the first canal of the industrial age)

1829

The Rainhill Trials take place, to select which locomotive design will be used to operate the Liverpool & Manchester Railway. Stephenson's Rocket wins.

1830

The Liverpool & Manchester Railway Line opens. It is the first intercity line in the world. It is carried over the Sankey Canal by the Sankey Viaduct – the first major railway viaduct in the world.

1842

Thomas Beecham begins producing Beecham's Pills

1873

St. Helens Rugby Football Club is founded

1974

St. Helens becomes a Metropolitan Borough

1896

The Gamble Institute (a technical institute) is opened

1889

The County Borough of St. Helens is formed

1886/87

Cannington Shaw begins production as the world's first regenerative furnace for the continuous production of glass bottles & Pilkington begins production for the continuous production of flat glass.

1993

Parkside Colliery closes (the last deep colliery in the Lancashire Coalfield)

2000

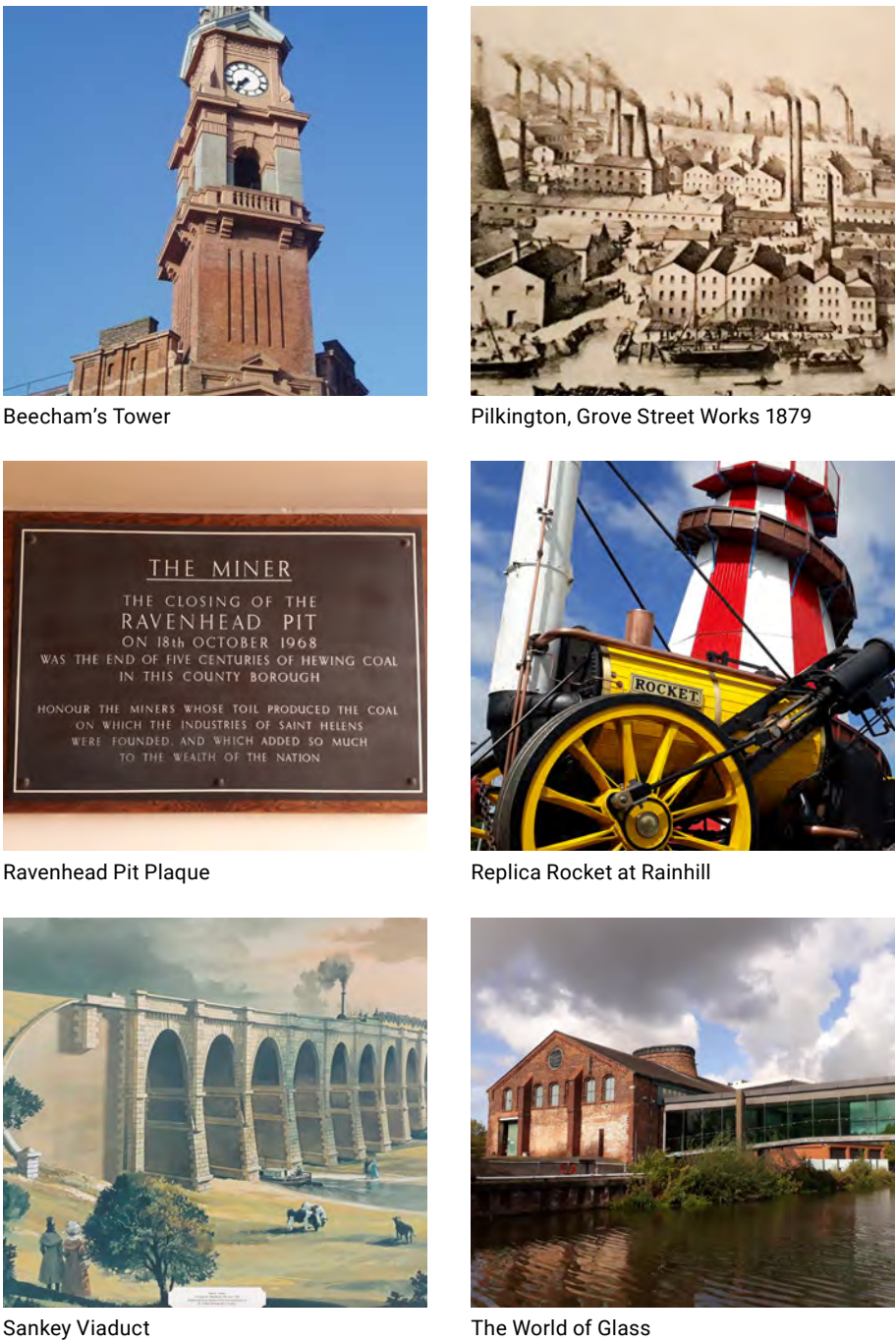
The World of Glass opens

2009

Jaume Plensa's "Dream" statue is unveiled at the former Sutton Manor Colliery site

2012

St. Helens Rugby League Club (Saints) move to Langtree Park (later renamed Totally Wicked Stadium)



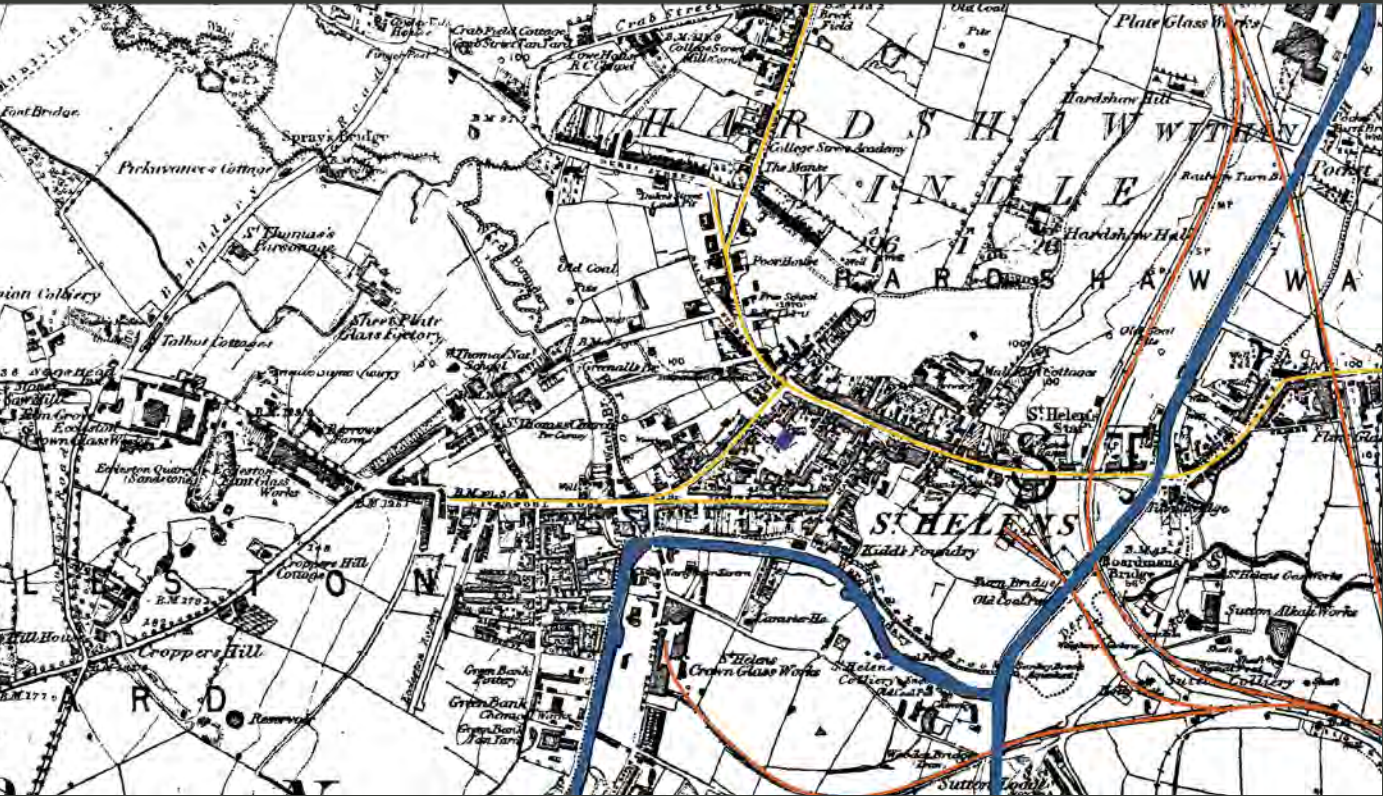
“I am a St Helens lad, born and bred. As a youngster, I grew up in an industrial powerhouse, a town even then I was proud of being known as the glass making capital of the world. When the time came for me to find a job, I followed my Father and my Grandfather before him, into the Glass Industry. Such was the nature of things in an era when the phrase “job for life” was common amongst the older generations. I owe much to the industry that gave me a good living, opportunities and the benefit of a University education.”

JOHN TABERN
CHAIR ST HELENS TOWNS FUND BOARD

03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS

OUR EVOLUTION

The borough of St Helens derives its name from the chapel of St Elyn, which stood where the townships of Eccleston, Windle, Parr and Sutton met, in what is now St. Helens Town Centre. The area developed from the early modern period due to its coal deposits. The creation of the Sankey Canal (1757), England’s first modern canal, enabled coal to be transported to Liverpool and beyond, and was a catalyst for the development of the town centre. The southern part of the borough was scene of the 1829 Rainhill Locomotive Trials, won by Stephenson’s Rocket. The Grade I Listed Sankey Viaduct (1830) was the first major railway viaduct in the world, built to carry the Liverpool-Manchester Railway over the Sankey canal at Newton-le-willows.



1850

The current day street pattern along Church Street is visible as are the railway lines and canal. The Town Hall is shown in a different location.

- CURRENT DAY STREET PATTERN
- TOWN HALL
- RAILWAYS
- CANAL

St Helens became a centre for innovation in glass making, chemical production, and pharmaceuticals. By the mid-twentieth century, St Helens had:

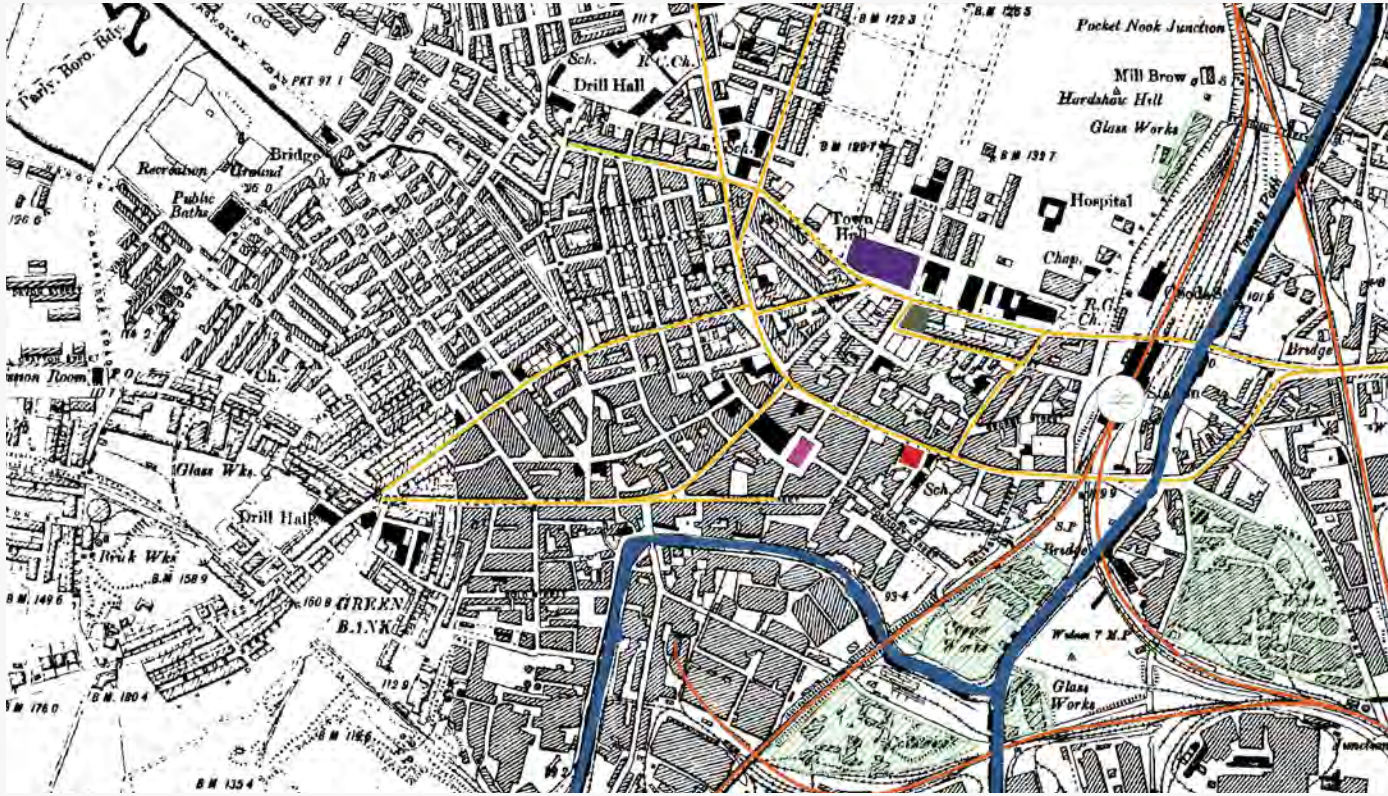


30,000
GLASS WORKERS



20,000
MINERS

and many thousands more in other industries.



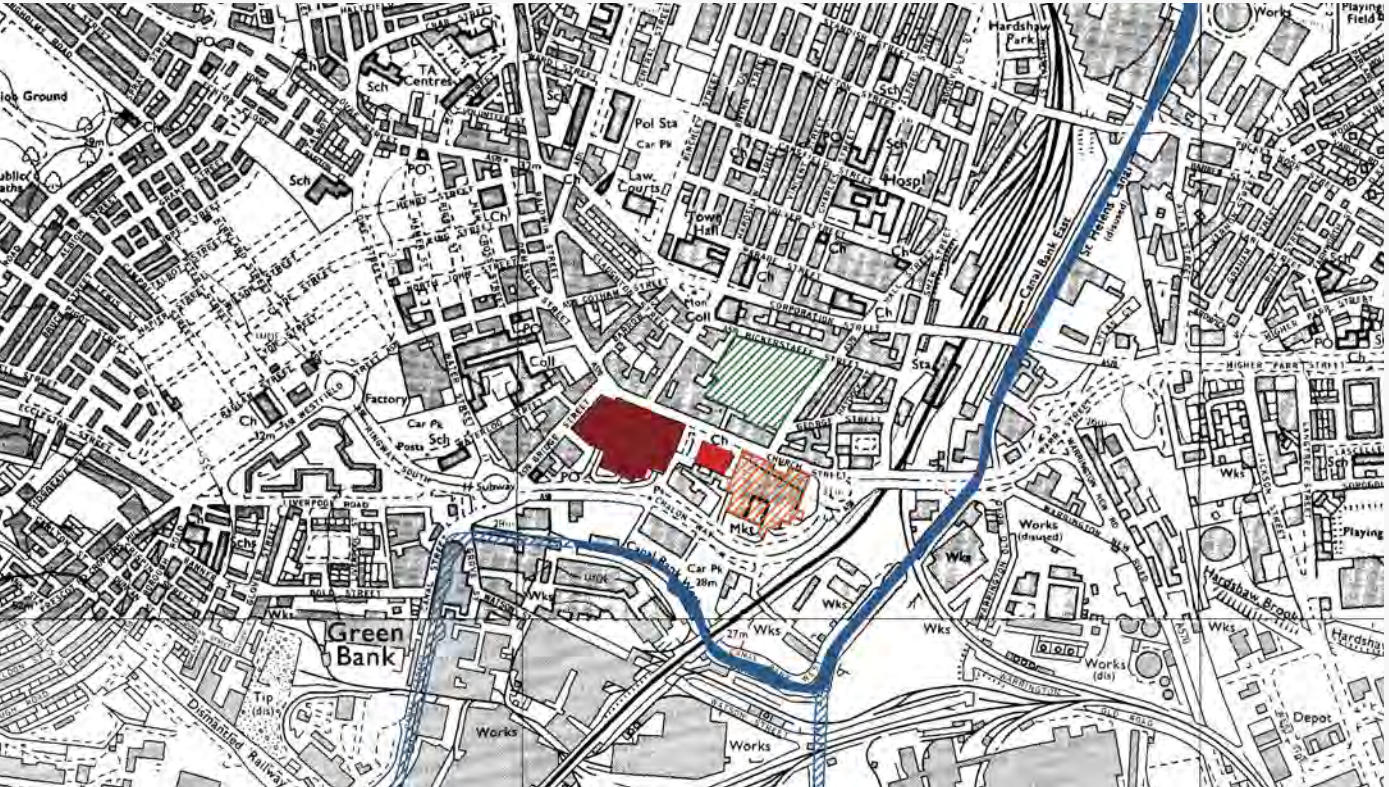
1890

The historic street pattern is clearly visible and remains to the current day. The town hall has now become the market and the Town Hall has been constructed in its current location along with the library and train station. The growth of the industries around the canal and railways can be clearly seen, notably: glass, copper, lead and the gas works.

- CURRENT DAY STREET PATTERN
- TOWN HALL
- RAILWAYS
- RAILWAY STATION
- CANAL
- MARKET
- ST HELENS CHURCH
- GROWTH OF INDUSTRY
- LIBRARY

03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS

OUR EVOLUTION



1980

The block containing the original market hall and square has been demolished as has the block to the east of St Helens Church. The Church Square shopping centre built. North of St Helens Parish Church has been cleared ready to construct The Hardshaw Centre. By the 1920s significant lengths of the canal have been filled in.

- CHURCH SQUARE SHOPPING CENTRE
- ST HELENS CHURCH
- BLOCK DEMOLISHED
- PLOT CLEARED FOR HARDSHAW CENTRE
- CANAL
- BACK FILLED CANAL

PRESENT DAY

The most significant changes over the past 40 years is the removal of industry and associated rail lines.



03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS

OUR PEOPLE

“St Helens - a place that exudes northern spirit – where our people are proud, they work hard, and are full of ingenuity and endeavour – but are also brave, kind, compassionate and blessed with an unbreakable sense of community”.

ANDREW DARRON
GROUNDWORK CHESHIRE, MERSEYSIDE AND LANCASHIRE
ST HELENS TOWNS FUND BOARD MEMBER



PAUL BLANCHARD, MULTIMESH UK

“St Helens is a historic place with a bright future. Past successes are the foundation for future significant growth in the industries and sectors that are important to the way we live now, including low carbon technologies, medical technologies, logistics, digital firms and our advanced manufacturing. The people of St Helens are its biggest asset – generous, practical and immensely supportive, St Helens firms will ensure that the community will benefit from Town Centre regeneration.”

TRACY MAWSON
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
ST HELENS CHAMBER



CORAL PRODUCTS PLC - AMBASSADORS



STEPHEN SINGLETON, EUROSOLVE

Our people have a strong sense of pride and are very loyal to the borough and the town, there is a plethora of close-knit resilient communities. They are proud of St Helens’ rich history and have a strong entrepreneurial and innovative spirit which is rooted in the town’s manufacturing past, and which continues to the present-day.

These views and aspirations of the local community are embedded within the TIP, clearly demonstrating the vision and projects have the support from those who will be impacted.

The sense of pride is a powerful asset, local people are fiercely protective of ‘their own’. Communities in St Helens are renowned for pulling together in times of crisis and need; the St Helens Together response to Covid-19 is a compelling example of this.

It is this sense of unbreakable community spirit that sets St Helens apart from its neighbours, creating a powerful collaborative approach that will be the driving force behind the success of Towns Fund.

03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS

TOWNS FUND
BOUNDARY

The Towns Fund boundary broadly correlates to the ONS Major Towns and Cities boundary and encompasses all or part of the following wards¹⁷:

- 1

Town Centre
- 2

West Park
- 3

Thatto Heath
- 4

Bold
- 5

Parr
- 6

Eccleston
- 7

Windle
- 8

Moss Bank
- 9

Blackbrook

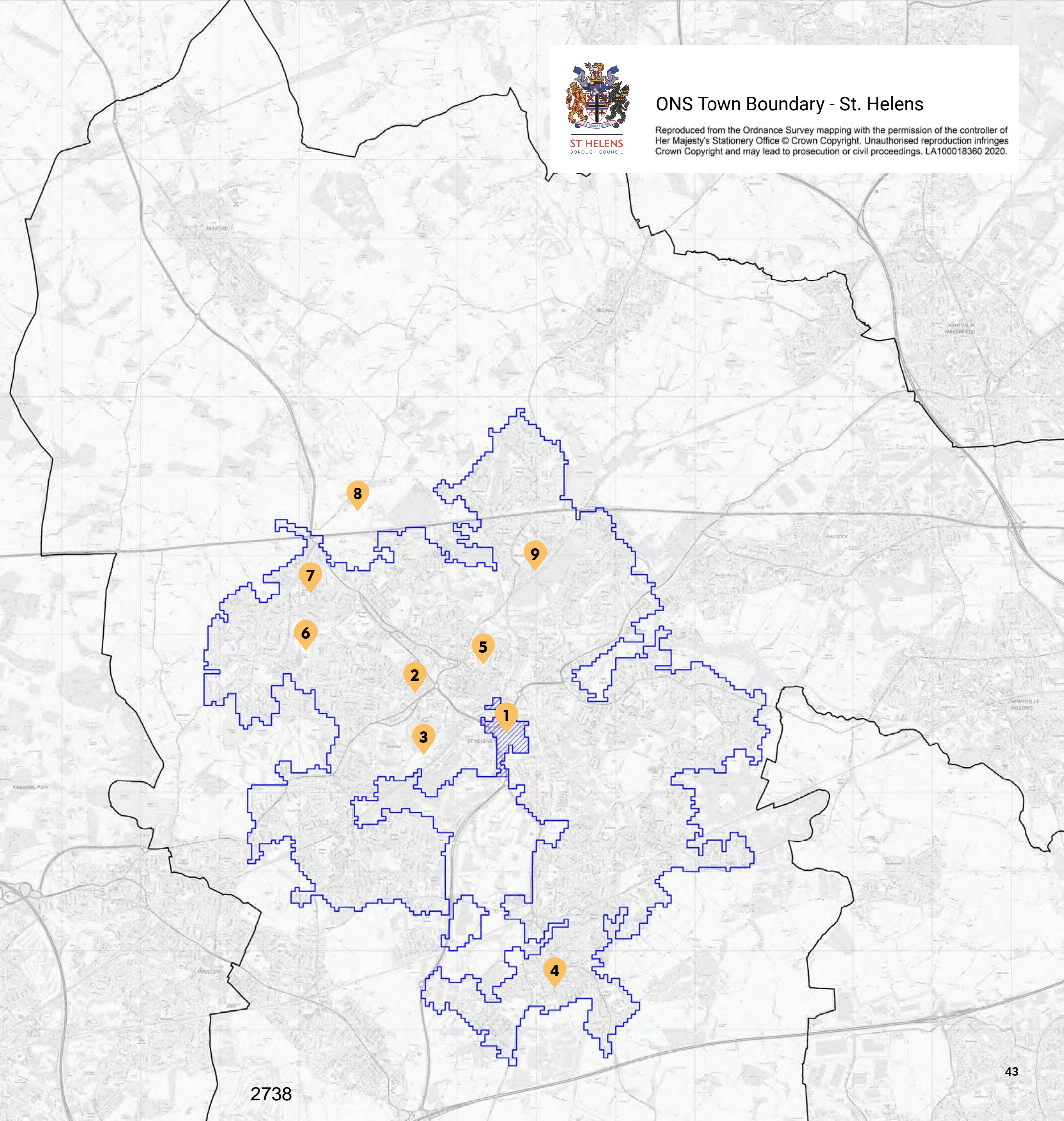
KEY

ONS Major Towns & Cities

St. Helens Borough Boundary

¹⁷ An amendment to the boundary was agreed with BEIS to incorporate the Glass Futures project given that this is a major project for the town (Figure x).

Figure 6: Towns Fund Boundary Plan (revised to accommodate Glass Futures Proposals) (Source: St Helens Council)



03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS

St Helens Town Centre is the focus for the Towns Fund investment as this will deliver the greatest catalytical impact for the borough and is a key priority for the community¹⁸. Each of the proposed projects complement one another.

- ST HELENS TOWN CENTRE
- GLASS FUTURES



Figure 7: St Helens Town Centre and Glass Futures

¹⁸ Based on stakeholder feedback in 2016/17 and latest engagement in 2020

03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS

OUR STRENGTHS

Our strengths provide a strong baseline laying the foundations for future growth.

CULTURALLY CENTRED

Our cultural heritage provides uniqueness. The borough developed through its industrial roots in glassmaking and coal mining, providing home to key employers: Pilkington, Beechams and the Daglish Foundry. St Helens’ motto, Ex Terra Lucem: Out of Earth- Light, reflects the borough’s mining history.

This cultural heritage remains important today with the opportunity for enhanced place-making centred around key Listed buildings and the two Conservation Areas (Figure 8).

- Listed Buildings
- Key Buildings
- Conservation Areas
- 1 Church of St Helens (Grade II Listed)
- 2 Quaker Meeting House (Grade II Listed)
- 3 Former no. 9 Tank House (Grade II* Listed and Scheduled Ancient Monument)
- 4 No. 7 Bottle Shop, Cannington Shaw (Grade II Listed, Scheduled Ancient Monument, Heritage at risk register)
- 5 St Mary’s Lowe House, (Grade II Listed)

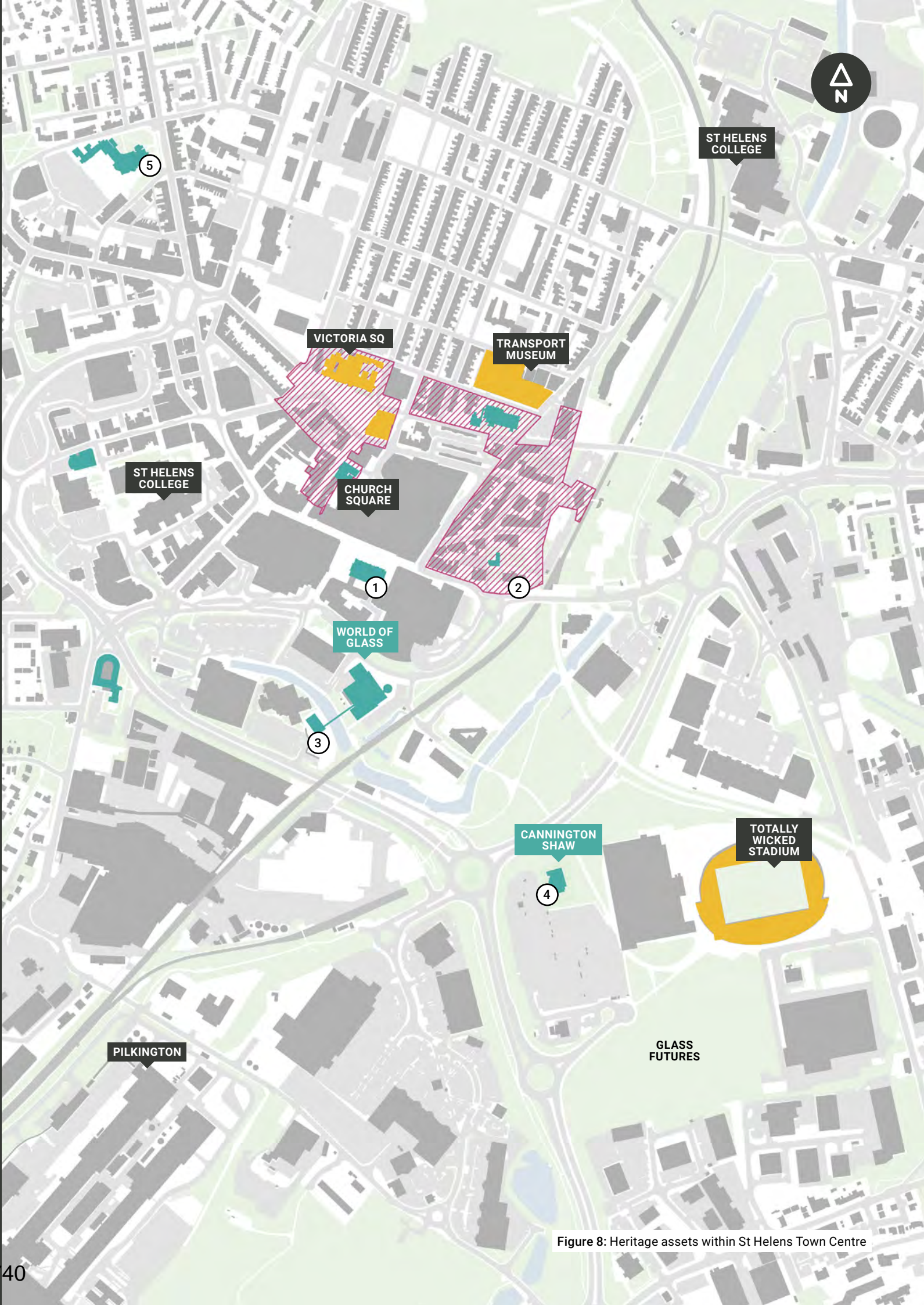


Figure 8: Heritage assets within St Helens Town Centre

03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS

OUR STRENGTHS

Arts and culture are important to the borough. It was the first borough of culture in the Liverpool City Region in 2018 and will be in 2023.

It is a *'hotbed of creativity'*¹⁹ with Heart of Glass, which focuses on socially engaged art, and the Council's Arts in Libraries programme securing National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) status. Other important cultural assets include the Citadel and The Theatre Royal, and organisations such as The World of Glass, MD Productions, Platform Studios and Citadel Arts.

There is the opportunity to create the town as an art centre, delivering public art, heritage trails and events over the next ten years²⁰.



MORE THAN
46,000



JOB'S RELY ON THE HERITAGE ECONOMY IN THE NORTH WEST²¹

HERITAGE ATTRACTED MORE THAN
25M



VISITS TO THE NW IN 2019, GENERATING REVENUES OF
£1.62BN²²

ENGAGEMENT IN THE ARTS IN ST HELENS IS IMPROVING – INCREASING FROM 31% IN 2014 TO NOW OVER



50%
OF THE POPULATION BEING ENGAGED.²³

OVER
7,000



CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN ST HELENS ENGAGED WITH ARTS & CULTURE THROUGH THE 'DEAR ST HELENS' PROJECT.

BETWEEN 2014 AND 2020, HEART OF GLASS DELIVERED MORE THAN
565



WORKSHOPS, EVENTS AND PROJECTS AND COMMISSIONED
677 ARTISTS TO ACTIVATE NEW SPACES AND PARTNERSHIPS

¹⁹ St Helens Storybook (2017)
²⁰ St Helens Borough Heritage Opportunities, June 2019 and St Helens Borough Arts Strategy, July 2020
²¹ Historic England (2019) Heritage and the Economy
²² ibid
²³ Based on Active Lives Survey data between 2014 and 2020

03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS

OUR STRENGTHS

HOME TO
AWARD-WINNING
BUSINESSES AND
A GROWING
ECONOMY



St Helens provides home to award-winning businesses in manufacturing and digital technologies. Many choose St Helens because of its unrivalled position, connectivity and access to a large skilled workforce. St Helens is a **‘Making Town’**, known for glass production and innovation, engineering and manufacturing, materials science, logistics, advanced manufacturing, recycling and the circular economy. Our health and social care sector also has potential for employment growth.

4,780



BUSINESSES IN ST HELENS INCLUDING



Sainsbury’s



TATA STEEL



NUMEROUS SMES ALSO CONTRIBUTE TO A BOOMING BUSINESS COMMUNITY²⁴

5,000+



NEW JOBS HAVE BEEN CREATED WITHIN THE LOGISTICS AND DISTRIBUTION SECTOR AND MAJOR OPERATORS INCLUDING



²⁴ UK Business Counts (2020) NOMIS


03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS

OUR STRENGTHS

St Helens benefits from a growing economy

OVER

75%



OF WORKING AGE ADULTS ARE IN WORK, ALMOST **5,000 MORE** THAN 5 YEARS AGO.

A STRONG

ASSET BASE²⁶

WITH A GOOD DISTRIBUTION BETWEEN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR²⁷

16-25



YEAR OLDS IN ST. HELENS HAVE A HIGHER ECONOMIC ACTIVITY RATE THAN NATIONALLY²⁵

ON AVERAGE,

12



NEW FIRMS START IN THE BOROUGH EACH MONTH



²⁵ PROMIS Report December 2020
²⁶ Manufacturing, transportation & storage, wholesale & retail and administrative/support services
²⁷ St. Helens has c. 15% less employed in public sector than is the case nationally
²⁸ Coral Products, Klockner Pentaplast
²⁹ Heptron, 2DHeat
³⁰ Firms include: The Filter Design Company (also known as Core Protection Systems); Inovus



MANUFACTURING

St Helens' advanced manufacturing sector is a critical driver of jobs and economic prosperity. There is innovation for recycled plastics manufacturing²⁸ and growth potential in the low carbon sector²⁹. This 'restructured' manufacturing sector is showing signs of growth (GVA).



DIGITAL & CREATIVE

St Helens benefits from close proximity to the digital powerhouses of Liverpool and Manchester, and as part of the Liverpool City Region. LCR has strengths in AI/high-performance computing (HPC), digital materials chemistry/advanced manufacturing, and infection control/health innovation.



LOGISTICS & DISTRIBUTION

At the heart of the M6 growth corridor it has strong growth prospects in logistics which has benefited from employment growth over recent years, and particularly as a result of Covid.




HEALTHCARE

St Helens has medical technology manufacturers which are growing rapidly³⁰.

HOME TO OVER

300



MANUFACTURING BUSINESSES, EMPLOYING

6,000

PEOPLE

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION HAS A COMBINED DIGITAL GVA OF

£359M





03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS

OUR STRENGTHS

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

High quality teaching institutions are within the heart of the town centre. St Helens College offers vocational courses and apprenticeships, modern teaching facilities and prides itself on ‘Connecting Classroom to Career’ for students. It specialises in growth sectors³¹ and established the Northern Logistics Academy in December 2016.

The University Centre provides Higher National Certificates and Diplomas, Foundation Degrees and Honours Degrees and has developed strong links with the University of Chester and University of Central Lancashire (UCLan).

Carmel College is regionally and nationally outstanding.

ST HELENS CHAMBER

APPROXIMATELY

8,000



STUDENTS HAVE DEVELOPED STRONG LINKS WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF CHESTER AND UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL LANCASHIRE (UCLAN).

APPROXIMATELY

3,000



STUDENTS ARE ENROLLED AT ST HELENS COLLEGE

THE CHAMBER DELIVERS APPRENTICESHIPS AND TRAINEESHIPS TO MORE THAN

1,500



PEOPLE EACH YEAR.

WAYS TO WORK HAS HELPED OVER

100



LOCAL PEOPLE INTO WORK DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC.

ST HELENS CHAMBER

St Helens Chamber is one of the most successful large social enterprises in the country, with over 100 staff based in a flagship business incubator building and three other sites in St Helens and Liverpool. St Helens Chamber is a Membership organisation, the Growth Hub for St Helens, and provides several business support and business start-up programmes.

WAYS TO WORK

Ways to Work - a successful employment and skills programme secures jobs and training opportunities for the hardest to reach groups of adults in the borough.

³¹ including advanced manufacturing, creative & digital, low carbon, health & life sciences and the visitor economy

03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS

OUR STRENGTHS



ST HELENS CARES

St Helens Cares (established in 2018) is a nationally recognised approach to delivering health and care and provides a locality-based approach to tackle health deprivation with a wide range of partners.³² Future proposals are to deliver an Integrated Care Partnership model.

CONNECTIVITY

A key driver is St Helens’ position on the strategic road network and its excellent connectivity to large urban populations, including the cities of Manchester and Liverpool. It is less than 30 minutes by train to Liverpool and has strong bus connections within the borough and to Liverpool. SuperPort has attracted over £500m of transport investment into the City Region supporting logistics and road freight operations; a number of these businesses have chosen St Helens as their base.



GREEN & BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE

Over half of the borough is rural or semi-rural benefiting from an extensive network of countryside and greenspaces, including 120 designated Local Wildlife Sites. Victoria Park in Windle secured Green Flag status in 2019 and Carr Mill Dam provides the biggest inland body of water in Merseyside. Public realm is also within the more urban settings including the Sankey Canal and Vera Page Park in the town centre.

³² CCG, NHS Foundation Trust, Torus, Healthwatch, Voluntary Community Action, St Helens Council, National Probation Service, Merseyside First and Rescue, Merseyside Police

03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS

OUR STRENGTHS

STRATEGIC
DEVELOPMENT
SITES AND
OPPORTUNITIES

We have key strategic development sites to support our economic growth ambitions. These do not require Towns Funding but will complement the projects in the Town Investment Plan (TIP) delivering sustained economic growth over the next 20 years.

GLASS FUTURES PHASE 1/FOUNDATION INDUSTRIES

St Helens Council and Glass Futures are working in partnership to deliver a Global Centre of Glass Excellence on the former United Glass site. The project is supported by UKRI, Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, St Helens Council and the industrial partners to Glass Futures. Phase 1 will be the world's only open access sustainable research and development glass centre, due on site in April 2021, scheduled for completion in Autumn/Winter 2022. It will drive the decarbonising strategy for the glass industry providing the technical solutions and reducing sector emissions by at least 10%.

The facility will retain demonstration manufacturing capabilities and decarbonise the high-temperature industrial processes. The St Helens spur of HyNet, to secure a dedicated low carbon fuel supply³³ for Glass Futures and the Foundation Industries Sector, is at business-case stage. A Foundation Industries Campus, bringing together manufacturing activity, innovation and research & development centres is also on the horizon which could align with transformation proposals for the town centre.



GLASS FUTURES - CGI

“On behalf of Glass Futures and our partners, we wholly support the St Helens Town Investment Plan and specifically the proposal to bring forward a new advanced manufacturing facility in the medical glass sector to the town. It has arguably never been more important to support the UK medical industry and we look forward to playing our part in helping the country grow the economy following the global pandemic. We are proud to base our new Global Centre of Glass Excellence in St Helens and look forward to working with the Council and our industry partners to make this ‘phase 2’ project a huge success.”

RICHARD KATZ
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
GLASS FUTURES

03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS

COWLEY HILL

Comprises 42 ha former Pilkington UK Ltd site within 15-minutes of the town centre (800 metres). A planning application to deliver up to 1,100 dwellings, mixed use development and new public realm/greenspace is in the process of being determined³⁴. Cowley Hill, together with proposals to regenerate the town centre, provides an opportunity to increase the population of the town centre and create new family-housing.

DISTRICT HEATING NETWORK

Proposals to create a district heating network (DHN) in St Helens town centre are aligned with the clean growth agenda³⁵. Using waste heat from Pilkington Greengate Glassworks creating clusters within the town centre, it will provide heating to public-sector buildings, affordable housing schemes and future connections to growth areas³⁶.

LCR BACKHAUL NETWORK

A city regional network of high capacity fibre and duct cabling that will connect several transatlantic cable landing and major economic assets. It will improve the LCR fibre connectivity to bolster long-term productivity, increase the attractiveness of the LCR for investment and as a place to live.

It will act as a ‘open access’ platform for telecoms service providers to develop additional fibre capacity (‘Local Loops’) to provide fibre capacity to homes and businesses.

A joint venture partner is being procured and launched in spring 2021.



OMEGA SOUTH WESTERN EXTENSION

The Omega site (31 ha) proposes to extend the existing Omega Logistics Park³⁷ into St Helens’ administrative boundary, building on the success of this logistics hub and create circa 1,900 new jobs³⁸.



PARKSIDE EAST SUPERHUB & RAILFREIGHT INTERCHANGE

A 198 ha strategically positioned development site with rail connectivity to create a new logistics Superhub with a railfreight interchange. It will provide multi-modal connectivity to the Port of Liverpool and to other national and global locations. The Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI) will create economic, employment and regeneration benefits. It will contribute to economic recovery, help to build export potential, utilise and improve the local skills base, and bolster the area’s manufacturing and other key growth sectors.

³⁵ This will not be funded through Towns Funding given the projected delivery programme

³⁶ Including Glass Futures, Town Centre Regeneration & Cowley Hill

³⁷ Sited at Junction 8 M62, Omega sits within Warrington Borough Council’s administrative boundary providing predominately B2/B8 employment uses given its strategic location to the motorway network and Port of Liverpool.

³⁸ Planning application approved at Planning Committee in October 2020 but has been called in for a formal decision by the SoS.

04

KEY

CHALLENGES,

OPPORTUNITIES

AND EVIDENCE

OF NEED

04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

Key challenges and opportunities have been identified through discussions with Board Members³⁹, analysis of socio-economic data, and builds upon community engagement feedback⁴⁰. These have been categorised into the five intervention framework categories which also formed the basis of Board Member and Council officer focus groups

THE WORLD OF GLASS



URBAN
REGENERATION
& LAND USE



CULTURE &
HERITAGE



EMPLOYMENT,
SKILLS & HEALTH



TRANSPORT
CONNECTIVITY



DIGITAL
CONNECTIVITY

³⁹ See Appendix B for list of Board Members

⁴⁰ as part of MyTown, the Borough strategy work, Big Conversation and Draft Local Plan consultation

04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

URBAN
REGENERATION
& LAND USE

Key Challenges & Evidence of Need

TOWN CENTRE HEALTH-CHECK

St Helens town centre has suffered from declining footfall and market share of comparison goods. Previously the town was very vibrant and benefited from loyal shoppers. A perfect storm with the introduction of out-of-town retail parks⁴¹, the closure of Marks & Spencer's in March 2019, Topshop in July 2019 and the broader macro trends of a shift to online retail has badly impacted the town centre. The high street is over-stocked in terms of retail quantum, has an over-supply of lower value shops, and there is a need to create a broader experiential offer to entice people back into the town centre.



BETWEEN 2011 AND 2016 THERE WAS
A REDUCTION IN MARKET SHARE OF

15.6%

FOR CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR⁴²



IN 2018 LESS THAN A

QUARTER

OF RESPONDENTS VISITED THE TOWN
CENTRE AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK



18.1%

AND TWO THIRDS OF RESPONDENTS NOTED
THE OPPORTUNITY TO IMPROVE THE TOWN
CENTRE AS AN EVENING DESTINATION⁴³.



THE MARKET HAS

51%

OCCUPANCY AND DECLINING FOOTFALL.



VACANT SHOPS INCREASED FROM

12.8% - 15.8%

(2011)

(2016)⁴⁴

GREATER THAN THE NATIONAL AVERAGE
VACANCY RATES⁴⁵.

⁴¹ offering convenience and free car parking

⁴² WYG (2018) St Helens Retail and Leisure Study, January 2018 Update

⁴³ Ibid- 66% of respondents stated they wouldn't visit St Helens town centre in the evening (2018 study).

⁴⁴ WYG (2018) St Helens Retail and Leisure Study, January 2018 Update

⁴⁵ 11.2%

04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

URBAN
REGENERATION
& LAND USE

Key Challenges & Evidence of Need

“Layout and structure of town centre needs a total re-think! Need to make it easier for small retail & food/drink businesses to thrive with smaller retail units and improved look and feel.”

“There needs to be a town centre redesign to make the area attractive – needs to be less shops (we can’t fill them), cheaper business rates to attract in independent businesses, improved environment with more greenery and landscaping, plus some places to sit.”

“Safe outdoor spaces are essential to young children and their families to stay happy and healthy.”



04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

URBAN
REGENERATION
& LAND USE

Key Challenges & Evidence of Need

QUALITY OF BUILT-ENVIRONMENT

The quality of the built environment and cohesiveness within the town centre is poor. Assets are disparate and disconnected; wayfinding is lacking, and public spaces do not achieve their full potential nor encourage dwell-time.

200 HA

OF BROWNFIELD LAND IN THE BOROUGH⁴⁶ COULD BE DEVELOPED



ALMOST
10 HA

OF BROWNFIELD LAND IS IN THE TOWN CENTRE



HOUSING OFFER

Town Centre housing is generally low quality, with little alternative to the existing terraced stock which borders the town centre, to the north⁴⁷. The housing stock needs to better reflect local need—appealing to a new demographic, addressing local affordability and provide alternative tenures.

The borough has experienced housing growth over recent years, but new build stock has been focused in affluent areas. Delivering economic growth must be alongside an improved housing and providing sites for SME developers and Registered Providers.

⁴⁶ St Helens Council (2019) Brownfield Land Register
⁴⁷ 77.4% of households in WA9/WA10 live in either terraced or semi-detached dwellings (Source: Experian)

ST HELENS HAS A HIGHER PROPORTION OF YOUNGER HOUSEHOLDS, SINGLE-PERSON RENTERS AND HOUSEHOLDS WITH LIMITED BUDGETS THAN THE NORTH WEST AVERAGE⁴⁸

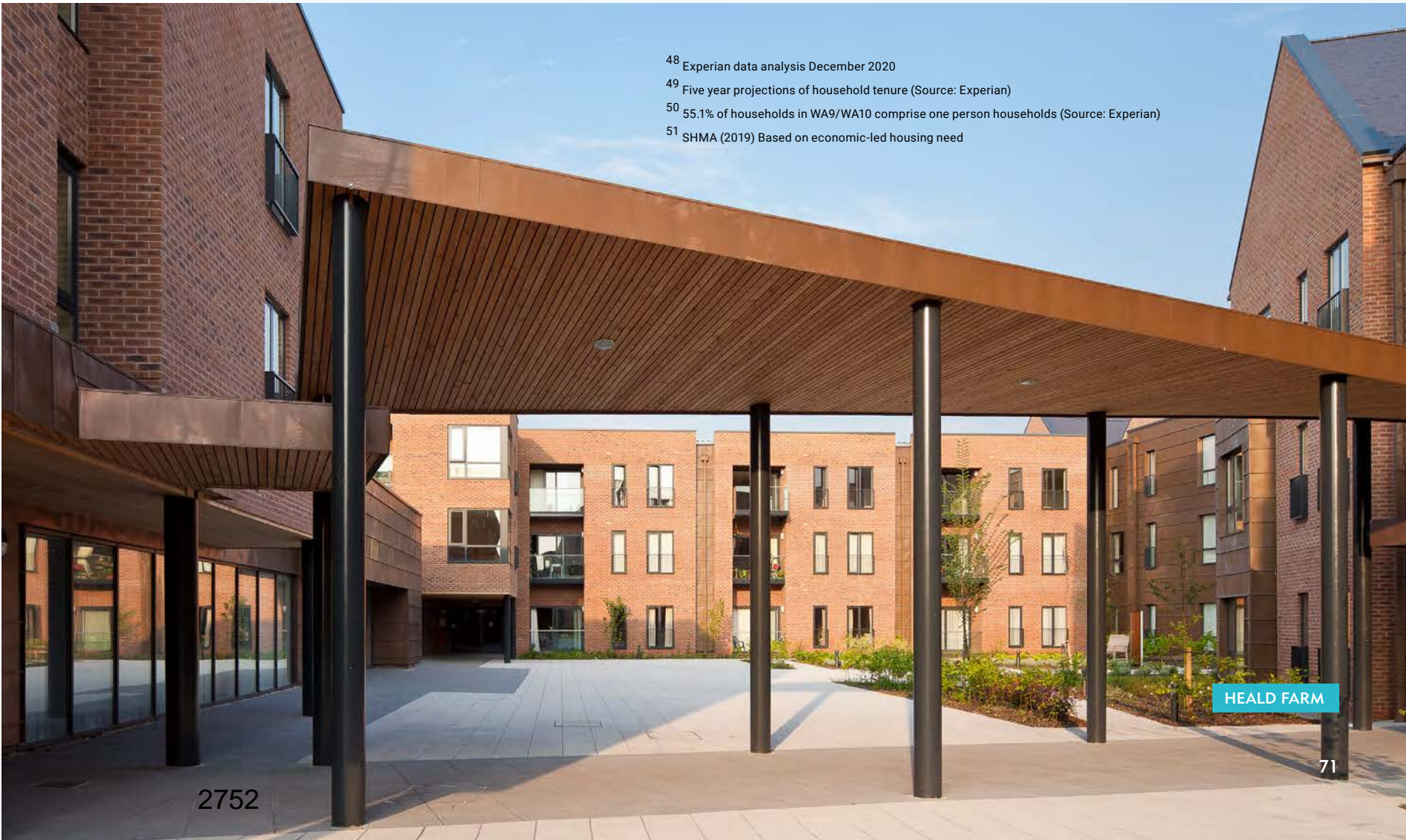
TRENDS FORECAST AN INCREASED DEMAND FOR PRIVATE RENTED OPTIONS⁴⁹, AND SMALLER DWELLINGS, PARTICULARLY IN THE TOWN CENTRE⁵⁰.

ST HELENS REQUIRES

514
DWELLINGS PER ANNUM⁵¹ INCLUDING
117
AFFORDABLE DWELLINGS.



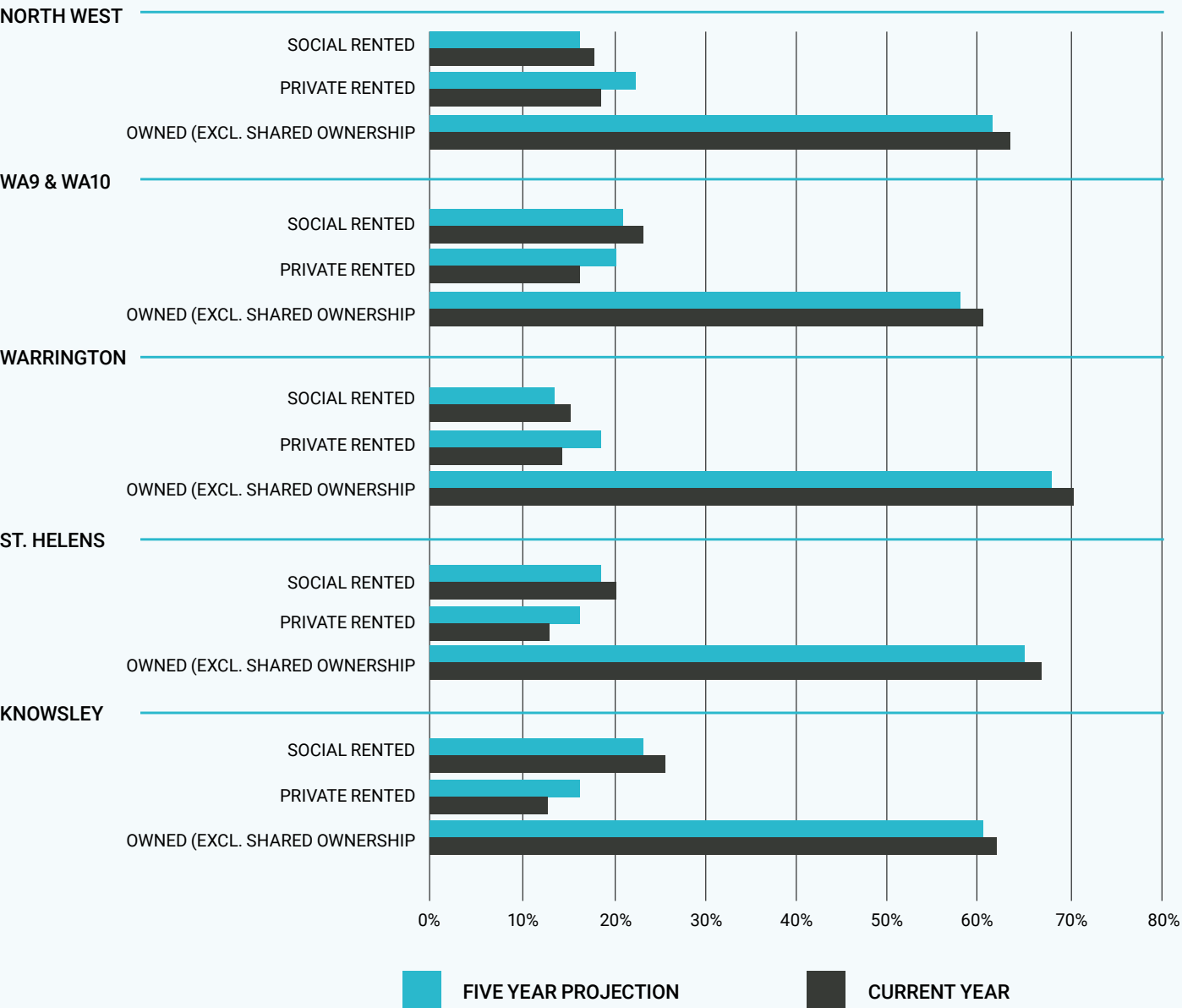
⁴⁸ Experian data analysis December 2020
⁴⁹ Five year projections of household tenure (Source: Experian)
⁵⁰ 55.1% of households in WA9/WA10 comprise one person households (Source: Experian)
⁵¹ SHMA (2019) Based on economic-led housing need



04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

URBAN
REGENERATION
& LAND USE

Figure 9: Five Year Projections of Household Tenure (Source: Experian)



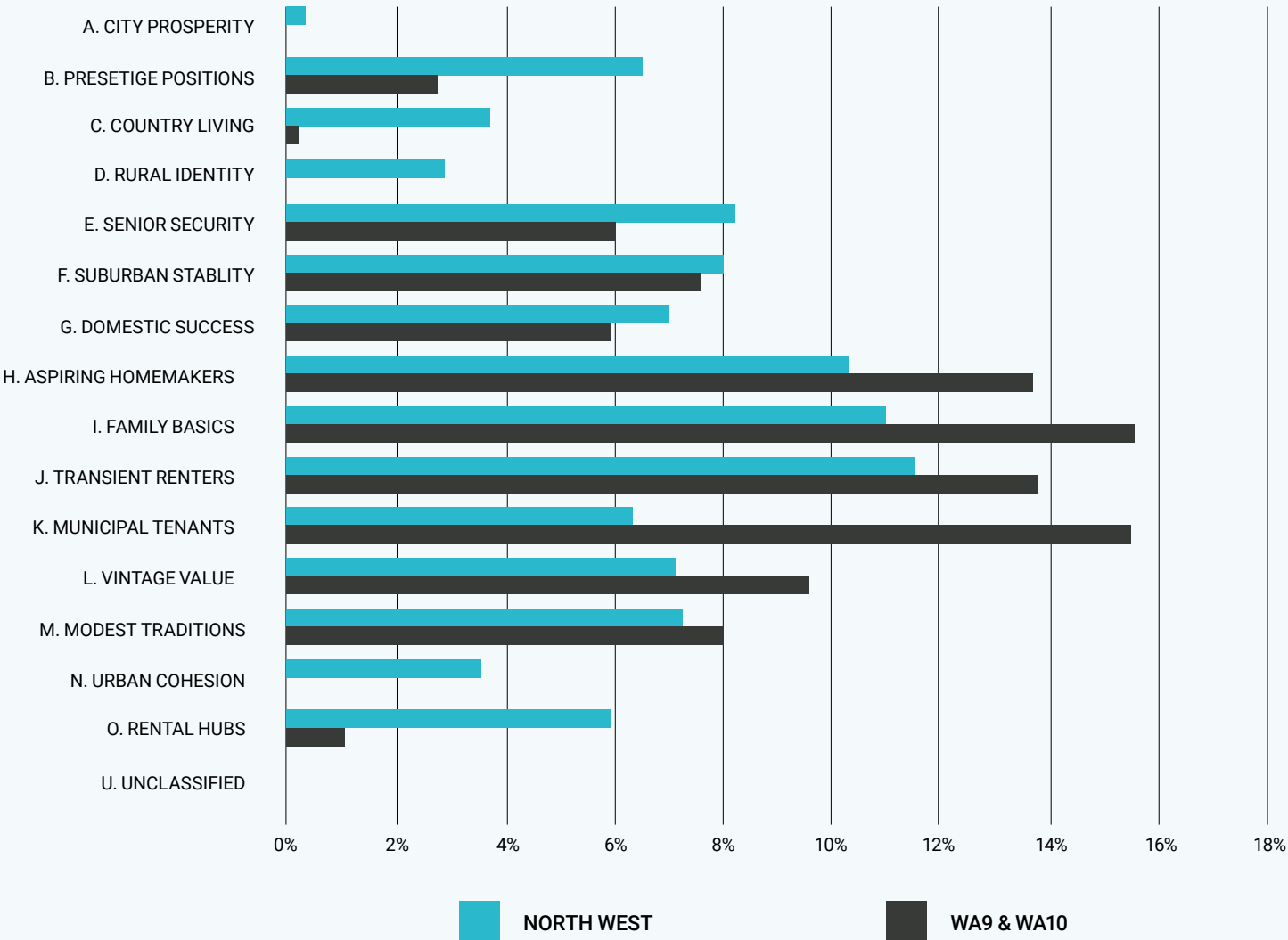
Key Challenges & Evidence of Need

COVID IMPACT

Government’s decision to close non-essential retail outlets during lockdown has impacted both retail and leisure.

It is estimated that there has been a reduction in retail sales of -7.5% in 2020 in St Helens, compared with 3.4 % growth in 2019, increasing already struggling or heavily indebted retailers at risk of falling into administration, leading to higher vacancy rates.

Figure 10: Socio-demographic analysis of St Helens’ households compared to the North West, based on Mosaic classification data (Source: Experian)



04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

URBAN
REGENERATION
& LAND USE

OPPORTUNITIES



1

Introducing a mix of new uses and diversifying the traditional retail offer through ‘shrinking and linking’ the town centre. This will include repurposing monolithic shopping centres which over-dominate the built form.



2

Creating amenity and experience so people want to visit and spend time in St Helens, are encouraged to dwell, spend their disposable income and create a vibrant high street.



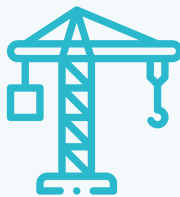
3

Positively changing the perceptions of the town centre, through meanwhile uses to show change is happening.



4

Delivering a quality town centre living offer to provide an alternative for those wanting to experience the new amenities in the town centre. This will appeal to a new socio-demographic and create a critical mass of new population who will invest in their local high street.



5

The availability of development sites and the potential of brownfield land to enable growth with minimal environmental impact.



6

Improving place-making and redeveloping Council-owned assets including heritage buildings and brownfield land to best effect.

04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

CULTURE & HERITAGE

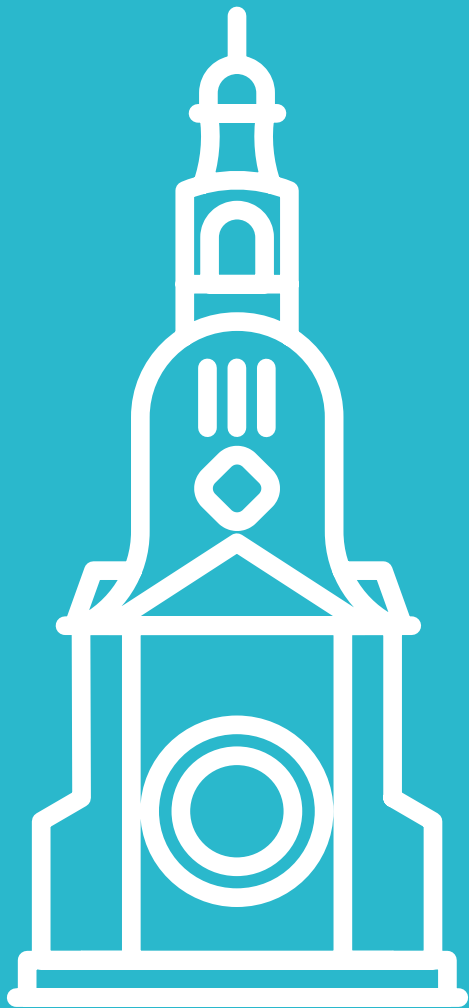
Key Challenges & Evidence of Need

POOR VISITOR EXPERIENCE & PLACE-MAKING

St Helens has a rich history and culture but the overall offer and experience is lacking. Cultural assets are under-appreciated and have suffered from a lack of investment.

Some key assets are hidden from view or have been over-taken by insensitive modern developments:

- **Sankey Canal**, the UK’s first modern industrial canal, is obscured by a multi-storey car park and dominated by surface car parking.
- **Cannington Shaw**⁵², the world’s first regenerative furnace for glass production, is on the Heritage at Risk Register and has been left to ruin.
- **The World of Glass (TWOG)**, a millennium project which hosts the town’s glass heritage has suffered from falling visitor numbers and is disconnected to the heart of the town through poor quality public realm and wayfinding.
- **The Gamble**, an important community asset, and home to the St Helens’ archive requires remedial works.



⁵² Scheduled Ancient Monument and Grade II Listed



“Utilising parts of the town centre to develop a historical zone would bring in both investment and footfall – there is so much to do as it would be a diverse feature and something to build a new future for the town centre.”

“Foster pride and invest in town’s heritage – using canals, glass museum etc. all together we could have a heritage industry...providing jobs, pride and further investment – History has become a growth industry let’s build on ours.”

04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

CULTURE & HERITAGE

Key Challenges & Evidence of Need

LACK OF CULTURAL COHESIVENESS

There are key cultural groups within the town and cultural assets but poor coordination between them. Cultural assets are physically disparate and there is no ‘St Helens’ Story’ as an overarching narrative to weave these assets together.

FALLING VISITOR NUMBERS & LOSS OF INCOME

Attractions have suffered from falling visitor numbers, exacerbated due to Covid. Income has been impacted, and whilst cultural funding will assist in the short-term⁵³, these assets need to be re-purposed and repositioned to be sustainable and viable.

- **The Citadel** was a popular music venue and theatre but closed in June 2019. Citadel Arts offers an arts and culture programme now relying on pop-up locations.
- **The World of Glass** has suffered from falling visitor numbers, closures as a result of Covid and declining income. Income in 2020 declined by almost 88% compared to 2019⁵⁴, despite relocating the town’s library into the building. The museum offer is dated and the building (which includes the Grade II* listed Jubilee Cone building) needs repair.

COVID IMPACT

Venues have been forced to close and there is a major strain on the Council’s budget to support this sector. Cultural organisations have been the recipients of grant funding⁵⁵ to help them during Covid.

⁵³ £757,000 grant funding has been provided since March 2020

⁵⁴ TWOG Forward Plan (2020)

⁵⁵ ibid

“There is next to no opportunity to showcase your art or develop yourself as an artist. Given the popularity of art in the town this is absurd, and more should be done to help support local artists.”

“More money to be used on actual music venues – there is a fair-sized music backing in St. Helens and talent coming through, one way to help the town would for music to be taken seriously, giving an increase in jobs and tourism from further afield.”

“Encourage people to visit and create a centre for the community.”



04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

CULTURE & HERITAGE

OPPORTUNITIES



1

Using heritage and culture as a key place-making opportunity for the town – heritage is part of St Helens’ DNA and needs to be showcased appropriately.



2

Providing stronger links between the heritage and cultural assets, encouraging greater partnership working between the cultural organisations within the borough – including the two NPOs⁵⁶ and TWOG



3

Building on the cultural opportunities in the borough and North West – including the Shakespeare of the North in 2022 and St Helens as the Borough of Culture in 2023.



4

To support economic recovery and address health & wellbeing inequalities. Events such as ‘A Mad Love Takeover Festival’ in 2019 focused on the links between art and mental health.



5

Delivering a comprehensive heritage, culture and arts strategy for the borough.



6

Becoming a Centre of Excellence for socially-engaged art – building on the ‘Creative People and Places’ Programme (Heart of Glass) and investing in artists, support programmes and events⁵⁷.

⁵⁶ Heart of Glass, Libraries Service

⁵⁷ Take Over festival

04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

EMPLOYMENT,
SKILLS & HEALTH

Key Challenges & Evidence of Need

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES & PRODUCTIVITY

St Helens has comparatively high levels of unemployment compared to England and experienced a decline in employment growth between 2015 and 2018⁵⁸. St Helens has a higher proportion of claimants than the average for Great Britain⁵⁹ and more workless households⁶⁰.

Whilst the number of economically active people is higher than the national average⁶¹, St Helens has a lower productivity rate, fewer people in higher value employment sectors given the sectoral make-up of the borough, and gross weekly pay is below the regional and national average⁶².

High level professional jobs are underrepresented, and the labour market is characterised by low skilled occupations. There is considerable commute out to other regions for work, including Warrington, Liverpool, Knowsley and Wigan.

“Need to invest in the community into the town, how we operate and how we make a small hardworking town shine, because the working people of St. Helen’s make the town rotate and we need to support that.”

“Help tackle the increasing unemployment rates and homelessness.”



⁵⁸ -2.3% employment growth compared to 3.7% national average (Source: Business Register and Employment Survey 2018)
⁵⁹ 6.9% in St Helens compared to 6.3% for Great Britain. ONS claimant count, October 2020
⁶⁰ 17.3% compared to 13.9% for GB (ONS annual population survey – Jan-Dec 2019)
⁶¹ 79.9% compared to 79.4% for Great Britain (ONS annual population survey – Jul 2019- Jun 2020)
⁶² ONS annual survey of hours and earnings (2020) – St Helens residents earn £536.50 per week o average compared to £560.30 for the North West and £587.10 for Great Britain)

OVER
7,615
IN ST HELENS IN NOVEMBER
2020 EQUATING TO
6.9%
OF 16-64 YEAR OLDS⁶³



THE PERCENTAGE OF
CLAIMANTS IN ST HELENS IS
6.9%
COMPARED TO 6.3% FOR
GREAT BRITAIN AS A WHOLE⁶⁴



OVER A QUARTER OF CHILDREN
25.2%
IN ST HELENS LIVE IN INCOME
DEPRIVED FAMILIES⁶⁵



16.5%
OF THE WORKING AGE
POPULATION IN ST HELENS
IS EMPLOYED DEPRIVED⁶⁶



ST HELENS IS THE
9TH
MOST EMPLOYMENT DEPRIVED AUTHORITY⁶⁷

⁶³ Out of work benefits, NOMIS
⁶⁴ ONS claimant count, October 2020
⁶⁵ Indices of Deprivation 2019
⁶⁶ Indices of Deprivation, 2019
⁶⁷ Ibid 2019

04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

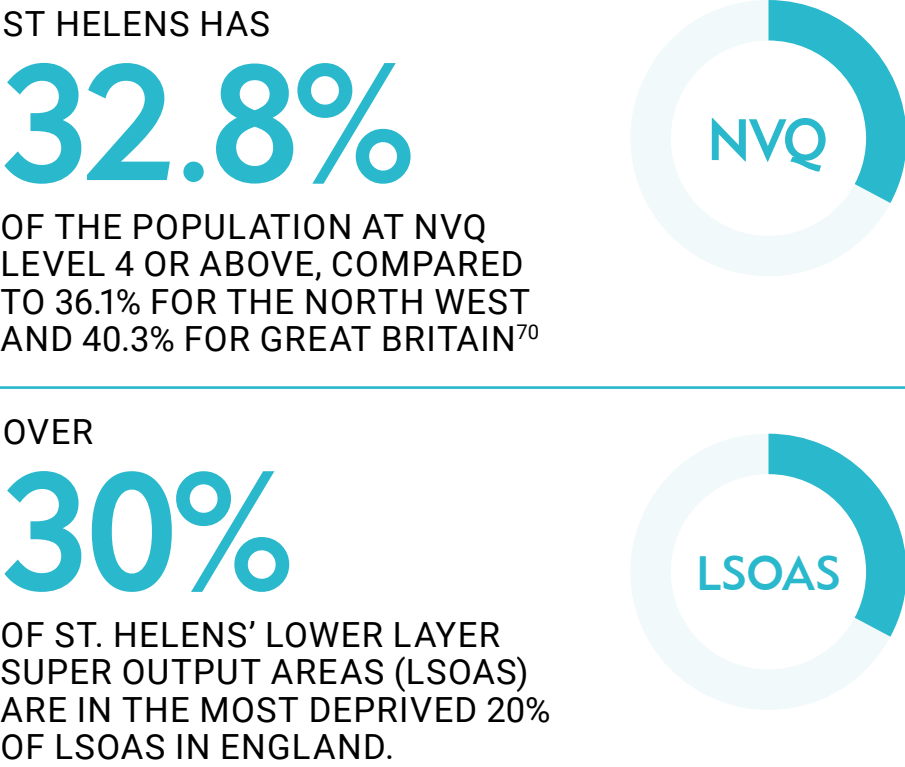
EMPLOYMENT,
SKILLS & HEALTH

Key Challenges & Evidence of Need

SKILLS GAP

Those with NVQ level 4 and above is below the regional and national average. Productivity and skills gaps mean that St Helens’ residents are more vulnerable to the economic impacts of Covid, with a higher proportion (52.1%) of employees in the ‘at risk’ employment categories compared to the national average⁶⁸. Our jobs market is generally skewed towards a higher proportion of lower skilled jobs which has a cause and effect impact on skills retention⁶⁹.

Education and skills relative deprivation will worsen without investment. Our residents need to have the right skills to benefit from emerging and growth sectors. Poor educational performance limits progression into and skills availability in the labour market.



Employers report a tightening of the labour market, with difficulty filling technical roles due to a shortage of qualified candidates and in lower level roles due to job readiness.

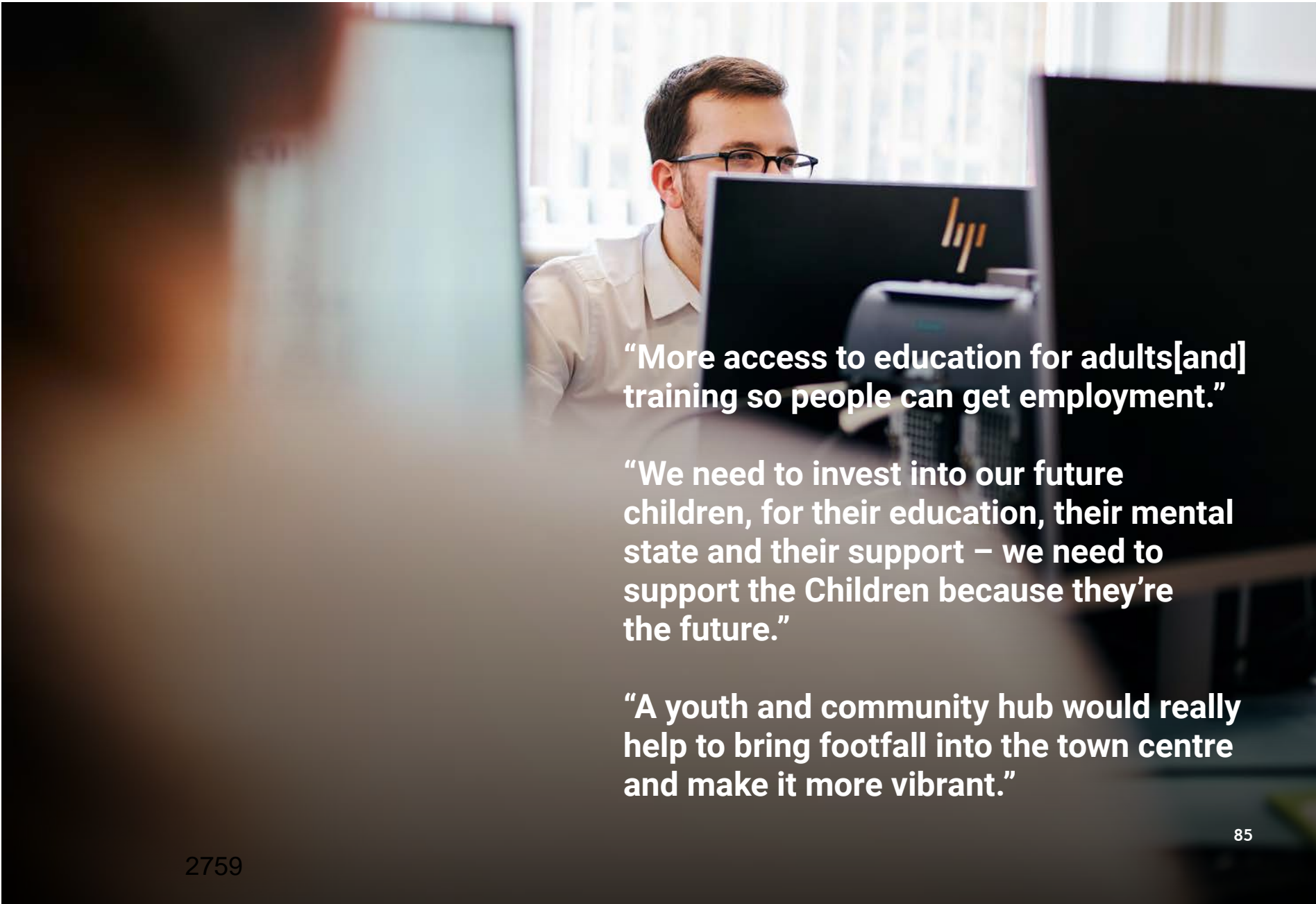
We need to develop, retain and attract skilled people, and encourage aspiration focusing on STEM subjects⁷¹. These skills combined with an entrepreneurial culture will deliver success in industry, research and innovation. We need to develop, retain and attract skilled people, and focus on STEM subjects. These skills combined with an entrepreneurial culture will deliver success in industry, research and innovation.

⁶⁸ Source: Business Register and Employment Survey, Grant Thornton 2018 and 2020. At risk sectors have been defined by having over 50% reduction in GDP, e.g. retail.

⁶⁹ 45% of St Helens’ population are in managerial and professional occupations compared to over 49% for Great Britain as a whole (NOMIS, Employment by Occupation, October 2019-September 2020)

⁷⁰ ONS annual population survey Jan-Dec 2019

⁷¹ science, technology, engineering and mathematics



“More access to education for adults[and] training so people can get employment.”

“We need to invest into our future children, for their education, their mental state and their support – we need to support the Children because they’re the future.”

“A youth and community hub would really help to bring footfall into the town centre and make it more vibrant.”

04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

EMPLOYMENT,
SKILLS & HEALTH

Key Challenges & Evidence of Need

ASPIRATIONS AND CONFIDENCE

Local aspirations are low – echoed in the lower level of business start-ups. St Helens’ business base has grown at a slower rate than the North West and the national average. St Helens is ranked 303rd out of 317 local authorities in England for business density indicating a lack of resilience to an economic shock⁷².

PROVISION OF HIGH-QUALITY
OFFICE STOCK AND CO-WORKING SPACE

The quality of office-stock provision in the Borough and town centre is poor. Lack of Grade A Office stock and latent demand, which has been building since the last office transaction at Mere Grange⁷³, means there is a potential opportunity for new provision and could reduce the net outflow of workers. Due to lack of suitable stock St Helens occupiers have relocated⁷⁴.

New office space needs to be matched with public realm enhancements, connectivity and an improved Food & Beverage (F&B) offer to secure the ‘battle for talent’.

The quality of office-stock provision in the Borough and town centre is poor. Lack of Grade A Office stock and latent demand, which has been building since the last office transaction at Mere Grange, means there is a potential opportunity for new provision and could reduce the net outflow of workers. Due to lack of suitable stock St Helens occupiers have relocated.

HEALTH DEPRIVATION

Ranked as the 26th most deprived local authority in England out of 317, St Helens’ relative position has deteriorated since the 2015. Nearly a quarter of St Helens neighbourhoods (LSOAs) lie within the most deprived 10% in England. Relative health and disability deprivation is very pronounced; 42% of St. Helens’ LSOAs in the most deprived 10% in England. There is significant inequality in life expectancy across different wards in St. Helens, with 10.4 years difference between the highest and lowest wards for men and 9.2 years difference for women.



“Mental health is a big issue in St Helens... which needs more stuff to support.”

RANKED AS THE
26TH
MOST DEPRIVED LOCAL
AUTHORITY IN ENGLAND OUT OF
317



OVER
40%
OF ST. HELENS’ LSOAS IN THE
MOST DEPRIVED 10% IN ENGLAND.



⁷² ONS UK Business counts, 2019
⁷³ 2 units totalling 5,523 sq ft were let in 2019 to Apollo Health Care (599 sqft) Mere 1 and Volker Rail (4,924 sqft) Mere 107/108 for £12.50 per sqft
⁷⁴ For example, Rapid EIP IT company to Liverpool and 360 Resourcing to Warrington (CBRE)
⁷⁵ Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs)

04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

EMPLOYMENT,
SKILLS & HEALTH

Key Challenges & Evidence of Need

MEDICAL GLASS PRODUCTION

Given the Covid pandemic there is an increased focus on ensuring a robust UK-based supply chain to address our health needs. Glass Futures has prepared an initial feasibility study to investigate the supply of medical glass noting:

- The UK consumes between 150 million and 200 million vials for injectables medicines each year, but currently has no manufacturing capability for these.
- Vial manufacture in the UK is based on imported glass tubes.

COVID IMPACT

We are already seeing the heavy toll the pandemic has had on mental health. This is more pronounced in St Helens where levels of deprivation in relation to employment, education and social interaction with friends and family means that people are at greater risk of experiencing poor mental health.

THERE IS SIGNIFICANT INEQUALITY IN LIFE EXPECTANCY ACROSS DIFFERENT WARDS IN ST. HELENS, WITH

10.4 YEARS

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE HIGHEST AND

9.2 YEARS

DIFFERENCE FOR WOMEN.



ST HELENS CURRENTLY HAS THE

5TH

HIGHEST SUICIDE RATE IN ENGLAND AND WALES.



ST HELENS IS THE

8TH

MOST DEPRIVED AUTHORITY IN TERMS OF HEALTH DEPRIVATION AND DISABILITY⁷⁶



04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

EMPLOYMENT,
SKILLS & HEALTH

OPPORTUNITIES

- 

1

Co-ordinating action to strengthen labour market performance
- 

2


Engagement with Liverpool City Region’s critical mass of innovation, science, research and university assets
- 

3


Creating a net zero carbon sustainable circular system that recycles glass used in medical and healthcare back into high quality vials for injectables.

- 

4

Creating a UK-focused supply chain for medical glass vials
- 


5

Increasing our Social Enterprise sector to revitalise our local economy and develop enterprise and skills.
- 


6

Boosting enterprise and improve rates of business start-ups and scale-ups
- 

7

Driving improvements in English, maths and digital core skills
- 

8

Developing R&D led solutions, products and services for reducing carbon and adopting sustainable technologies.
- 

9

Building on St Helens Cares model to create a health hub within the town centre.

04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

TRANSPORT
CONNECTIVITY

Key Challenges & Evidence of Need

Our growth ambitions need to be supported by sustainable transport interventions and address connectivity issues.

POOR PEDESTRIAN & CYCLE PERMEABILITY

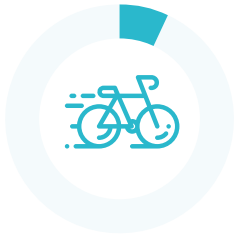
Local connectivity in terms of pedestrian and cycle-links is poor. The Town Centre’s built form hinders permeability and visual sightlines, contributes to the underuse of public spaces⁷⁷ and the link between St Helens Central to the bus station is not obvious nor does it provide a sense of arrival⁷⁸. Vehicles take priority and is a difficult environment for pedestrians and cyclists to navigate.

A lack of dedicated cycling infrastructure causes risks to cyclists, specifically around the bus station and cycle routes are not linked to the wider network– making it difficult for cyclists to be able to navigate through town safely.



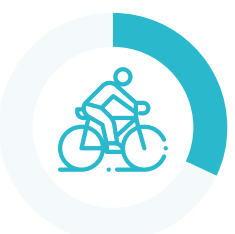
7%

OF RESIDENTS CYCLE AT LEAST
ONCE A WEEK, BELOW THE LCR
AVERAGE OF 13% ⁷⁹



32%

OF ST HELENS’ RESIDENTS DON’T
CYCLE BUT WOULD LIKE TO ⁸⁰



56%

THINK MORE CYCLING WOULD
MAKE ST HELENS A BETTER
PLACE TO LIVE AND WORK ⁸¹



72%

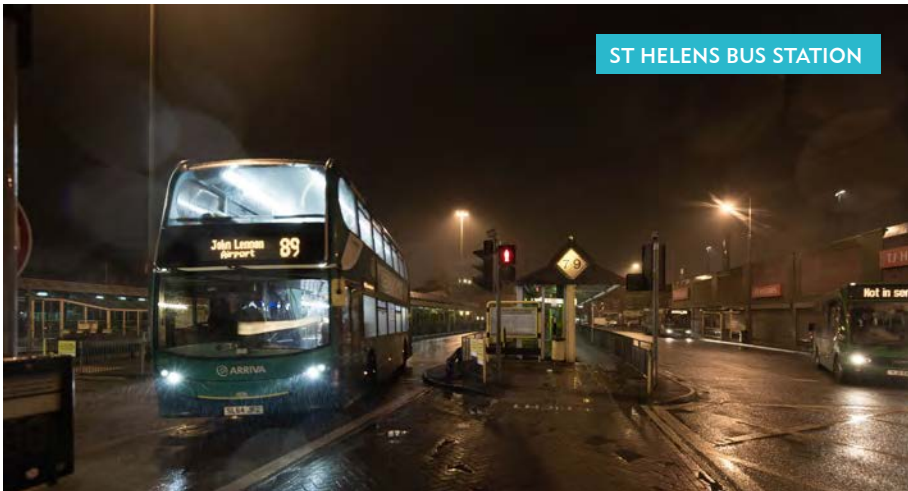
THINK SPACE SHOULD BE INCREASED
FOR PEOPLE SOCIALISING, CYCLING
AND WALKING ON THEIR LOCAL
HIGH STREET ⁸²



⁷⁷ Such as Victoria Square
⁷⁸ St Helens Town Centre Public Realm Enhancement Review (2019)
⁷⁹ Bike Life 2019 – Summary Report (LCR CA)
⁸⁰ Bike Life 2019 – Summary Report (LCR CA)
⁸¹ ibid
⁸² ibid

04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY



Key Challenges & Evidence of Need

BUS STATION CAPACITY AND ENVIRONMENT

Corporation Street and Bickerstaffe Street can become overrun with buses⁸³, contributing to the vehicular dominance of the streetscape. This poses a risk to passengers, where passengers alight directly on the road.

There is an imbalance in the number of services, with some stands very busy throughout the day whilst others are much less used. Improvements to the station would improve the public realm, its walking and cycling permeability, safety, and critically – improve connections to St Helens Central to encourage an uptake in rail use and reduce journey times associated with linked trips via bus and rail.

ST HELENS HAS A VERY HIGH PROPORTION OF TRIPS INTO THE TOWN CENTRE BY BUS, AT AROUND

26% & 31%



IN THE AM PEAK AND INTERPEAK RESPECTIVELY ⁸⁴

THE BUS ROUTE 10A BETWEEN ST HELENS TO LIVERPOOL HAS MORE THAN

2M PASSENGERS A YEAR



THE 10A ROUTE TAKES

24 MINUTES LONGER TODAY THAN IT DID THREE YEARS AGO ⁸⁵



⁸³ 118 buses per hour in both directions from Bickerstaffe Street

⁸⁴ Mott Macdonald (2016/17)

⁸⁵ Green Bus Routes Outline Business Case, July 2020, LCRCA/ Merseytravel

04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

TRANSPORT
CONNECTIVITY

Key Challenges & Evidence of Need

ENCOURAGING MODAL SHIFT

Relatively few trips are made on foot or by bike, and the town does not have high quality cycle routes connecting St Helens to key destinations in neighbouring areas.

There is poor connectivity between the bus and rail network, particularly the lack of a direct rail link from St Helens town centre into Manchester. There is the opportunity to provide better linkages and improved public realm between St Helens Central and the bus station, and, longer-term, the frequency of service that is currently offered⁸⁶.

Residents would like to see more government spending on public transport, cycling and walking

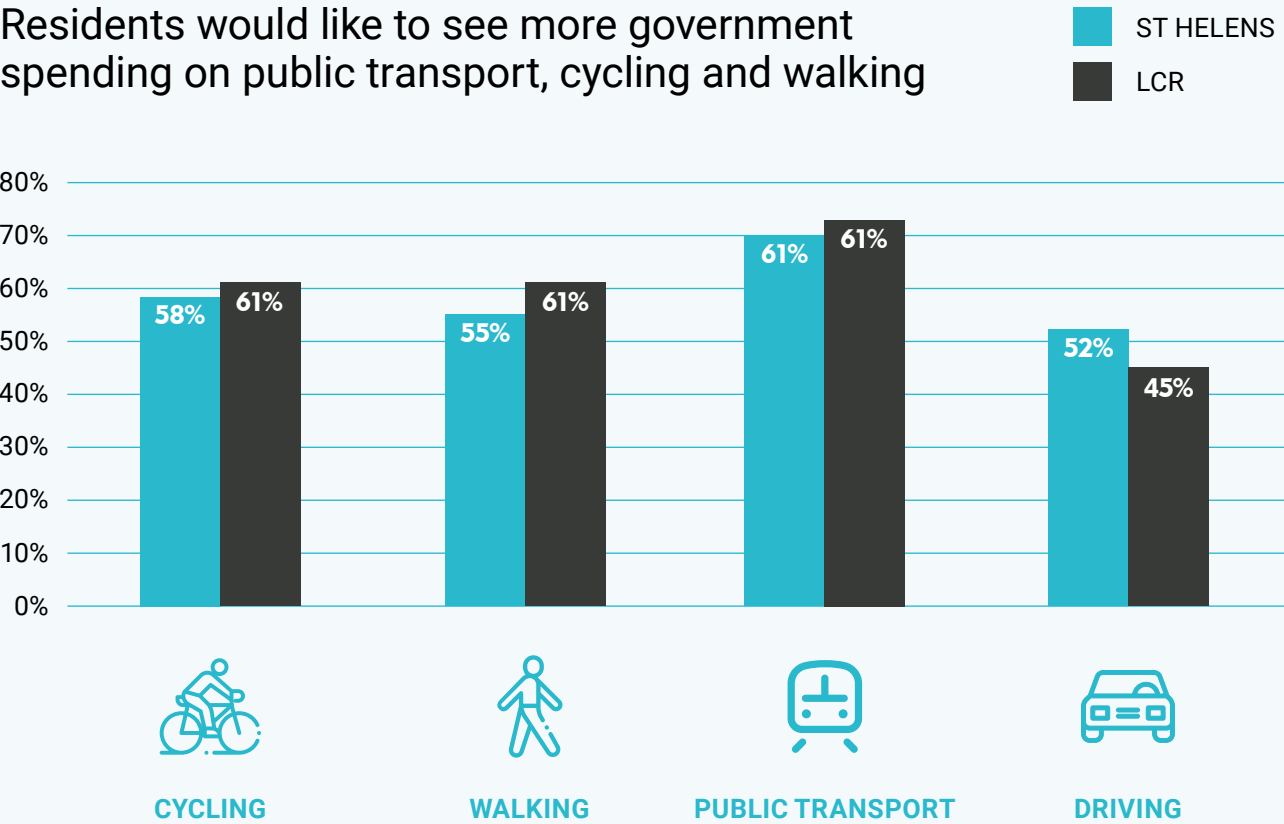


Figure11: St Helens’ residents opinion as to how Government spending should be allocated (Source: LCR CA, 2019, Bike Life)

IN 2016/17 THERE WERE

19,000

DAILY TRIPS INTO THE TOWN CENTRE, BUT 53% WERE UNDERTAKEN BY PRIVATE CAR.



THE REGIONAL AVERAGE OF

68.3%

DRIVING A CAR OR VAN FOR COMMUTING PURPOSES IS HIGHER THAN THE NATIONAL AVERAGE OF 54%⁸⁷



CYCLING ACROSS THE BOROUGH IS LOWER THAN THE NATIONAL AVERAGE AS A MEANS OF COMMUTING

(1.5% VERSUS 2.9%).



8.7%

OF PEOPLE IN ST HELENS WALK TO WORK COMPARED WITH 11.3% NATIONALLY



OVER TWO FIFTHS

44%

ARE CONCERNED ABOUT SAFETY AND 75% WOULD LIKE TO SEE SEGREGATED CYCLE TRACKS



THE PERCENTAGE COMMUTING BY TRAIN IN ST HELENS IS SIGNIFICANTLY LOWER THAN THE NATIONAL AVERAGE, AT

3% VERSUS 5.6% NATIONALLY



⁸⁶ Currently (pre-covid) there are 86 buses an hour from St Helens bus station and 6+ trains per hour from St Helens central.

⁸⁷ St Helens Local Plan Transport Impact Assessment, WSP, January 2019

04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

TRANSPORT
CONNECTIVITY

Key Challenges & Evidence of Need

CONCRETE COLLAR

The ‘concrete collar’⁸⁸ constrains access, connectivity and trips into the town centre. Acting as a barrier to permeability between employment and residential areas to the south of the town centre it contributes to a reliance on commercial areas outside the town centre⁸⁹.

The A58 corridor is highly trafficked, with vehicles travelling over the speed limit. The dual carriageway and the large roundabout at A58 Parr Street and Peasley Cross Lane are difficult to navigate for pedestrians and cyclists. The A571 is also a busy route and has a lack of formal pedestrian crossing facilities.

COMBINED TWO-WAY FLOWS ON THE
A58 IN THE AM AND PM PEAKS ARE

2,176 & 2,566

VEHICLES PER HOUR RESPECTIVELY ⁹⁰

COMBINED TWO-WAY FLOWS ON THE
A571 IN THE AM AND PM PEAKS ARE

1,554 & 1,846

VEHICLES PER HOUR RESPECTIVELY ⁹¹

HIGHER RATE OF **KSI**⁹² COLLISIONS ON THE KEY
ROUTE NETWORK IN ST HELENS COMPARED TO
OTHER AREAS OF THE CITY REGION.

⁸⁸ A58, Linkway East, Parr Street
⁸⁹ WSP (2019) St Helens Town Centre
Public Realm Enhancement Review
⁹⁰ DfT 2019 countpoint data
⁹¹ ibid
⁹² Killed or Seriously Injured
(Source: LCR Road Safety Strategy 2017-20)

“I think the trees and benches
would make the town more
attractive and will give home
to more birds and allow the
elderly to enjoy and have nice
places to sit down.”

Figure 12: St Helens Town Centre Public Realm Enhancement Review (2019 WSP)



04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

TRANSPORT
CONNECTIVITY

OPPORTUNITIES



1

Enhancing the attractiveness of public transport, facilitate greater interchange between rail and bus services and improve the reliability of the transport network, especially bus services.



2

Improving safety measures for pedestrians and cyclists.



3

Providing better connectivity between communities and employment opportunities, amenities and key town centre services, enabling local communities to access growth opportunities including Glass Futures.



4

Enhancing connectivity between economic centres and employment opportunities to key jobs markets.



5

Improving air quality and reduce car trips into the town centre.



6

Improving access to the rugby stadium, heritage and visitor attractions and visitor experience by making the access to the attractions part of the attraction itself.



7

Supporting the town centre as vibrant, inclusive and sustainable place to live and work through enhancing the attractiveness of sustainable modes of travel.



8

Capitalising on increased walking and cycling in response to Covid and encourage further take-up of more sustainable modes.



9

Place-making/better sense of arrival



10

Redesigning the bus station to make the layout and design as operationally efficient as possible⁹³.

04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

DIGITAL
CONNECTIVITY

Key Challenges & Evidence of Need

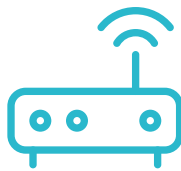
To compete with other centres, attract investment, new businesses and residents St Helens needs to be future-proofed, having the right infrastructure and technology to meet current and future demands. This will support recovery and underpin our transformational innovation-led growth.

Access to fast, reliable and affordable internet connectivity is essential. Digital connectivity is a critical infrastructure, facilitating the ability to learn, work, shop and socialise, and provides access to vital public information and services.



THE IMPACT OF A UK-WIDE FIBRE-TO-THE-PREMISES (FTTP) BROADBAND ISP NETWORK BY 2025 IS A GROSS VALUE ADDED (GVA) UPLIFT OF

£59BN



THE TAKE-UP OF ULTRAFAST SERVICES ACROSS LCR IS BELOW

3%



THERE IS LESS THAN

21%



COVERAGE OF FULL FIBRE BROADBAND TO PREMISES AT A CITY REGION LEVEL

POTENTIAL BENEFIT TO THE LCR WOULD BE

c.£1BN



OVER A 15-YEAR PERIOD FOR BOTH BUSINESSES AND HOUSEHOLDS.



04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

DIGITAL
CONNECTIVITY

Key Challenges & Evidence of Need

LACK OF DIGITAL COVERAGE

Broadband access is unevenly distributed, often due to affordability. Gigabit-capable connectivity is low in the Liverpool City Region. The Council wants to provide progressive digital connectivity infrastructure borough-wide including broadband/fibre, mobile telecommunications (4G/5G) and public wi-fi and has prepared a Digital and Smart Borough Strategy (2021-24).

An overlay of the proposed growth areas identifies the ‘white spots’ where broadband coverage is limited (Figure 13). These gaps must be addressed to facilitate forecasted growth, especially Glass Futures which is seeking to develop first-class research & development capabilities.

Ultrafast broadband is available in existing residential areas, but internet speeds fall dramatically within the town centre itself, where less than 10Mbps speeds are available. Given the shift and reliance on an online presence for retailers, the need for fast, reliable broadband is essential. Coverage falls to nil for future proposed growth areas including Glass Futures and Cowley Hill.

A proliferation of digital infrastructure does not close the “digital divide” for those who cannot afford or do not know how to use digital services. We must ensure digital connectivity is delivered in a fair and inclusive way across our borough, and that residents have suitable skills and means.

A proliferation of digital infrastructure does not close the “digital divide” for those who cannot afford or do not know how to use digital services. We must ensure digital connectivity is delivered in a fair and inclusive way across our borough, and that residents have suitable skills and means.

BOROUGH WIDE BROADBAND CONNECTIVITY

No Broadband Cover

No Broadband Cover on Development Site

Town Fund Bid Boundary

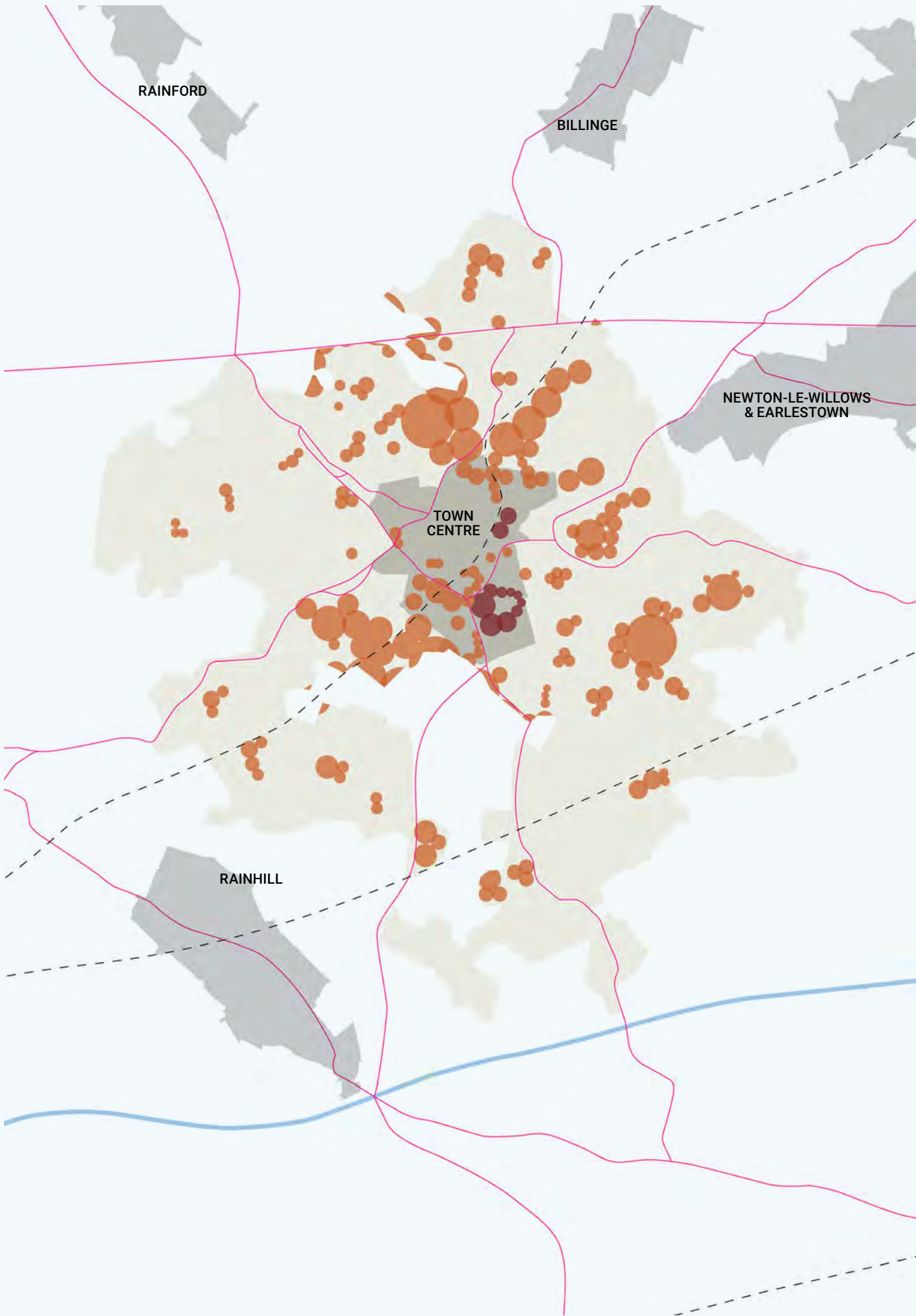
Key Settlements

-- Railway

— Motorway

— A Roads

Figure 13: Broadband coverage, St Helens - areas in orange/dark red are those with no broadband coverage



04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY



Key Challenges & Evidence of Need

DIGITAL EXCLUSION

IN 2014

11%

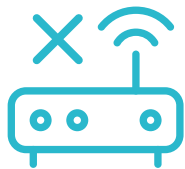
OR 5.9 MILLION PEOPLE IN THE UK HAD NEVER USED A COMPUTER⁹⁴



IN 2018

5.3M

ADULTS, OR 10% OF THE ADULT UK POPULATION, WHO WERE NON-INTERNET USERS⁹⁵



Often those digitally deprived are on low incomes and are disproportionately represented in St Helens. Covid has placed even greater emphasis on the need for digital connectivity. We will support with equipment and training providers for both staff and participants.

COVID IMPACT

Just as the Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated that digital skills are a form of basic literacy, it has highlighted that digital connectivity is a critical infrastructure, facilitating the ability to learn, work, shop and socialise, and provide access to vital public information and services. The Council recognises this and working with Torus Homes has successfully delivered a 'Digital Inclusion During Covid' initiative to offer residents support.

The increased demand on the digital network due to home working is also a challenge. Residents require faster network speeds to work from home effectively.


⁹⁴ ONS statistics

⁹⁵ ibid

04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED


DIGITAL
CONNECTIVITY

OPPORTUNITIES




1

Building on the opportunity of the LCR Backhaul Network which will be completed by 2023.




2

There is direct correlation between connectivity investment and economic performance. Integrated digital connectivity and the availability of full fibre will benefit St Helens by powering innovation, supporting business start-ups, growth and productivity gains, developing new high-tech business clusters, and attracting inward investors.




3

Delivering digital infrastructure across the towns fund area and borough-wide, which does not leave our rural areas or key business corridors behind.




4

The creation and maintenance of LCR-wide digital infrastructure will provide additional skills and job opportunities at all levels



5

Enabling effective and efficient citizen engagement and public service delivery – creating community resilience and support residents in their communities.



6

Supporting residents to maintain their independence and improve health and well-being outcomes.

05

OUR VISION,
OBJECTIVES &
STRATEGY



PROPOSED CANNINGTON SHAW - GLASS FUTURES

05. OUR VISION, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGY

CONTEXT

There has been considerable engagement with key stakeholders to inform the vision, building on previous engagement in 2016/17 and the views from the Towns Fund Sub-Groups (Appendix C).



05. OUR VISION, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGY

ST HELENS' TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN:

“By 2030 St Helens will be **culturally centred**, will nurture and celebrate its **cultural and industrial heritage**, will build upon its creative and innovative gene in **glass making and foundation-industries** to innovate and **do things differently**, and create new opportunities, including those from the City Region. **Vibrancy** will be created for the town centre; the town will be a **smaller, accessible and enjoyable place to come together** and will be a place where the community will learn from one another, improve their **physical and mental well-being** and where people want to live, work and visit. Businesses and residents will be attracted to the new opportunities available, will have **quality spaces** to dwell and linger and will benefit from **improved transport** and **digital connections** borough-wide”.



05. OUR VISION, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGY

VISION

CULTURALLY CENTRED

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	S01: A smaller, sustainable & accessible Town Centre	S02: Delivering a high-quality residential offer	S03: Changing Perceptions	S04: Establishing foundations for future growth	S05: Raising Community & Young People's aspirations	S06: Improving health outcomes	S07: A Future-proofed Town	S08: Connected Communities
THEMES	URBAN REGENERATION & LAND USE		CULTURE & HERITAGE	EMPLOYMENT, SKILLS AND HEALTH		CONNECTIVITY		
OUTCOMES	<div><div>✓</div> Remediation of brownfield sites removing blight and improving perceptions with 8.10 ha of land remediated</div> <div><div>✓</div> Increase in town centre resident numbers</div> <div><div>✓</div> Greater activity and vibrancy.</div> <div><div>✓</div> Enhanced townscape & public realm</div> <div><div>✓</div> Increased town centre footfall, dwell-time & expenditure</div> <div><div>✓</div> New employment opportunities created (with associated uplift in GVA)</div> <div><div>✓</div> Reduce crime rates and anti-social behaviour (increased natural surveillance)</div>		<div><div>✓</div> Improved cultural and heritage offer</div> <div><div>✓</div> Increased visitor numbers</div> <div><div>✓</div> Greater dwell-time</div> <div><div>✓</div> Jobs created/ safeguarded</div>	<div><div>✓</div> Support business start-ups</div> <div><div>✓</div> Support existing businesses</div> <div><div>✓</div> Learners supported to secure qualifications & skills</div> <div><div>✓</div> Land value uplift</div> <div><div>✓</div> Jobs created/safeguarded</div> <div><div>✓</div> Improve health and wellbeing</div>		<div><div>✓</div> Improved affordability, convenience, reliability and sustainability of travel options to and from places of work & places of interest</div> <div><div>✓</div> Reduced congestion within the town</div> <div><div>✓</div> Enhanced high street and town centre experience that prioritises pedestrians</div> <div><div>✓</div> Increased digital use by businesses</div> <div><div>✓</div> Increased ability of residents to work remotely / flexibly</div> <div><div>✓</div> Secure digital inclusion</div> <div><div>✓</div> Enhanced digital skills for residents and businesses</div>		

05. OUR VISION, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGY

TIP STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Our 10-year Town Investment Plan (TIP) aligns with wider aspirations for the Borough, as set out in the emerging Local Plan and Borough Strategy (Figure 14). Collectively these strategies will drive the growth and transformation of the borough. With a focus on Towns Fund and the short to medium term our strategic objectives are as follows:

- 

1

Establishing the foundation for future growth through the catalytical impact of Glass Futures and the opportunity to harness innovation and skills for the benefit of the local community.
- 

2

Delivering a high-quality residential offer within the town centre to meet housing need, diversify the town centre housing stock and providing the opportunity for a new residential population to thrive in the town centre as part of our wider place-making ambitions.
- 

3


To create a smaller, more sustainably accessible Town Centre to respond to changing high-street functions; shrinking the proportion of retail and introducing a diverse mix of town centre uses to complement the residential offer. Creating the right spaces and places for independent businesses to thrive and building on the opportunities of greater footfall and visitors into St Helens as a result of Glass Futures.
- 

4


Positively changing the perceptions of the town and the borough through maximising St Helens' heritage and cultural assets to provide a distinctive offer for visitors, residents and businesses and introducing meanwhile uses to create a vibrant, animated place.

Figure 14: Our Strategic Priorities, St Helens Draft Borough Strategy 2021




- 


5

To enable our children, young people and the local community to raise their aspirations and take pride in their place through providing the right places and spaces to meet, collaborate, learn and develop their skills to benefit from new employment opportunities and the transformational growth of the borough.
- 

6

Ensuring digital inclusion and laying the foundations for communities, businesses and visitors to digitally connect, for businesses and investment to be attracted into the borough and supporting residents and businesses to be able to adapt to a new digital agenda.
- 

7

Connecting communities with employment opportunities through ensuring sustainable movement and accessibility for St Helens town centre and borough wide.
- 

8

Building on the St Helens Cares model to create a first-class health, wellbeing and social care hub for the town and improve residents' health outcomes.

05. OUR VISION, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGY

SPATIAL STRATEGY

Our Towns Fund projects are located within St Helens Town Centre and spatially are in three key areas:

- 1

South of the Linkway/Peasley Cross

Glass Futures Phase 2, Cannington Shaw as a proposed visitor centre, and the ‘Concrete Collar’ element of the ‘Connected Places’ project.
- 2

Church Square/High Street/St Mary’s

Town Centre Regeneration/Living project and St Helens Heritage World
- 3

Civic Quarter

Healthy Communities and Connected Places project (related to the bus and train station)

Whilst not depicted in Figure 15, the digital infrastructure project cuts across the whole of the Town Fund area.

- PROJECT A

Glass Futures Phase 2
- PROJECT B

Town Centre Regeneration and Living

- PROJECT C

St Helens Heritage World
- PROJECT D

Healthy Communities

- PROJECT E

Connected Places
- Creating Strong Pedestrian Links
- Transport Nodes
- Green Bus Route to Liverpool
- Major Road
- Improved Link and Public Realm

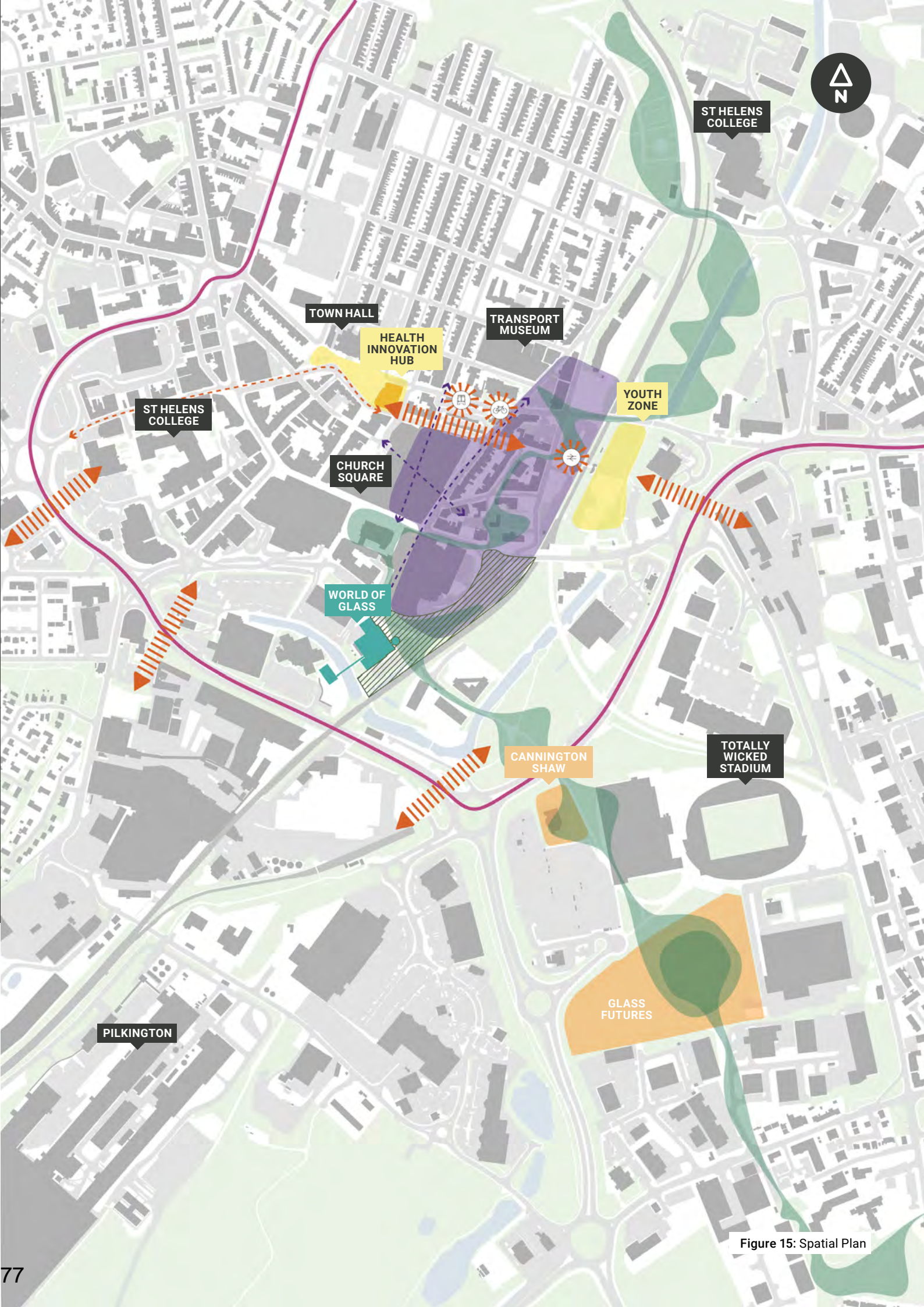


Figure 15: Spatial Plan

05. OUR VISION, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGY

PRIORITY AREAS

Our short, medium and long-term priorities in relation to Towns Funding projects are referenced in table 1.

TOWNS FUND PROJECT	SHORT-TERM (WITHIN 2 YEARS)	MEDIUM TERM (3-5 YEARS)	LONG-TERM (6 YEARS PLUS)
GLASS FUTURES PHASE 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Preparation of a Masterplan for Peasley Cross (Foundation Industries plan)Developing the Business case for Glass Futures Phase 2Prepare a business case for Cannington Shaw reviewing options to repurpose the heritage asset alongside Glass Futures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Delivery of Glass Futures Phase 2	
TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION /LIVING	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Preparation of a comprehensive Town Centre Masterplan/ Development Framework in conjunction with ECF.Developing the Full Business caseAgree and finalise a Phase 1 Town Centre transformational scheme incorporating a mix of proposed uses including residential and potential for commercial floorspace, leisure, hotel and new market hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Delivery of Phase 1 Town Centre Mixed-use Scheme (including residential elements)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Preparation of Business Case for Town Centre Scheme Phase 2Delivery of Town Centre Scheme Phase 2
ST HELENS HERITAGE WORLD	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Prepare a full business case and secure planning for a repurposed World of Glass attraction (St Helens Heritage World)Support town centre public realm animation and programming delivered by existing arts and cultural providers including Citadel Arts, Heart of Glass, Cultural Hubs and others to attract and encourage footfall to the town centre post pandemic.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Deliver St Helens Heritage World including enhancement public realm around the cultural quarter of the town, new heritage trail and park	
HEALTHY COMMUNITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Developing the Business case for the Health Innovation HubDeveloping the Business case for the Youth Zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Delivery of Health Innovation Hub (Gamble building)Delivery of Youth Zone	
CONNECTED PLACES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Prepare a full business case and secure planning for a new bus stationPrepare a full business case and secure planning for new linkway pedestrian crossing points and new cyclewaysPrepare a full business case and secure planning for new public realm proposals town-centre wide (in conjunction with the overarching masterplan), including upgrading public realm around the train station – St Helens Central.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Deliver the new bus stationDeliver the proposed crossing points and cyclewaysDeliver the upgraded public realm	
DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Developing a full business case and delivering full-fibre broadband Borough-wide to residents and businesses.Deliver digital skills programme in associated with Clickworks/ Ways to Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Connecting into the LCR Backhaul Network which is intended to be delivered by 2023 and to create a St Helens 'local loop'Establish a 5G network	

Table 1: Towns Fund Priority Areas

The potential hotel and office elements are expected to be delivered outwith towns fund Outwith Towns Funding investment ask

05. OUR VISION, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGY

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT






TIP THEME	 URBAN REGENERATION AND LAND USE	 CULTURE AND HERITAGE	 EMPLOYMENT, SKILLS & HEALTH	 TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY	 DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY
Towns Fund Guidance Themes	Urban regeneration, planning and land use	Arts, culture and heritage	Skills infrastructure Enterprise infrastructure	Local transport	Digital connectivity
Strategic Alignment – Local Authority	<p>St Helens Town Centre Strategy 2017: outlines the need to diversify the retail and leisure offering to meet family needs.</p> <p>Draft St Helens Local Plan (2019): Identifies a need to provide new housing choices for a growing population, allowing for up to 9,000 new homes, as well as to deliver 215 hectares of employment space and support the development of tourism, leisure and rural economies.</p>	<p>St Helens Heritage Strategy (2020): Recognises heritage as an important part of sustainable development.</p> <p>St Helens Town Centre Strategy 2017: Identifies ‘culturally centred’ as one of three town centre themes.</p>	<p>St Helens People’s Plan (2017-2020): Sets out the vision to improve the lives of people in St Helens, with one of the aims to contribute to increasing aspiration, education and reducing poverty across the borough.</p>	<p>Draft St Helens Local Plan (2019): Presents the Council’s priorities for transport to support economic growth, accessibility, improve air quality and minimise emissions in the borough.</p>	<p>Our Digital Strategy and Action Plan (2016-2020): Will support the improvement of Council services and culture change and provides opportunities to support a digitally enabled workforce, thereby supporting economic growth as well as social ambitions.</p>
Strategic Alignment – Sub-Regional	<p>Building Back Better – Economic Recovery Plan (2020): Identifies a Towns Agenda that focusses on town centres to improve private investment and making public plans more attractive for investment.</p> <p>Building Our Future – LCR Growth Strategy (2016): Identifies key growth sectors within the economy and recognises the need to invest in people’s skills within the City Region.</p>	<p>Building Our Future – LCR Growth Strategy (2016): Support the growth of a recognised sub-regional sectoral strength in the visitor economy.</p> <p>Building Back Better – Economic Recovery Plan (2020): Recognises the opportunity for the City Region to project itself internationally through its cultural, sporting and natural assets.</p>	<p>Building Our Future – LCR Growth Strategy (2016): Responds to recognised sub-regional challenges, including a historic skills gap, a lack of private sector jobs, high levels of worklessness and pockets of concentrated poverty.</p> <p>Local Industrial Strategy (draft 2020): Responds to the need to enable the collaboration between innovators in research, industry, and society to help close the productivity gap. The LIS also seeks to create the most inclusive economy in the UK, addressing systemic disadvantage.</p> <p>Building Back Better – Economic Recovery Plan (2020): Responds to the COVID-19 pandemic by outlining targeted interventions to support the recovery, including recognising the importance of employment support programmes and improving links between education and employment.</p>	<p>Combined Authority Transport Plan (June 2019): Sets the vision to develop a transport system that is affordable and reliable, integrated, easy to use, and supports the development of new and existing communities.</p> <p>Local Industrial Strategy (draft 2020): Plans support the provision of infrastructure to connect residents to opportunities, allowing the City Region to build on its assets and ensure residents can contribute to and benefit from innovation and growth.</p>	<p>Building Our Future – LCR Growth Strategy (2016): Will support growth across a series of elements of the economy (including recognised strengths in the digital and creative sector and financial and professional services) as well as supporting greater social inclusion.</p> <p>Local Industrial Strategy (draft 2020): Plans will support the introduction of the strategic infrastructure needed to connect residents to opportunities. Industrial digitalisation has also been identified as an opportunity.</p> <p>Building Back Better – Economic Recovery Plan (2020): Seeks to eradicate digital poverty and supports the digitalisation of businesses with investments in infrastructure and growing the digital service offer and engagement in it important to success.</p>

Table 2: Strategic Alignment

05. OUR VISION, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGY

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT






TIP THEME	 URBAN REGENERATION AND LAND USE	 CULTURE AND HERITAGE	 EMPLOYMENT, SKILLS & HEALTH	 TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY	 DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY
Strategic Alignment – National	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Help to kickstart the COVID-19 recovery (as outlined in Our plan to rebuild: The UK Government’s COVID-19 recovery strategy) by securing a new future for the town centre• Aligns with government recognition of the changing role of town centres (e.g. through the Future High Streets Fund) and a need to increase housing levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Builds on the presence and success of two Arts Council National Portfolio Organisations• Creative People and Places investment made in the Heart of Glass• Supports priorities identified in the Culture White Paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• DCMS funding request made for the Youth Zone• Youth Investment Fund for activities to support young people• COVID-19 Arts Funding to protect leisure and cultural facilities through the pandemic• Build on UKRI and BEIS investment in Glass Futures phase 1 and the wider ambitions of the UK Industrial Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Future of Mobility: Urban Strategy (2019) aligns with the development of Local Industrial Strategies to achieve net zero• Contributes towards the UK Industrial Strategy (2017) Clean Growth ambitions• Aligns with the ambitions of the National Infrastructure Strategy, prioritising interventions at a local level	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supports BDUK ambitions to stimulate private investment in high speed connections across the country• Supports the UK Industrial Strategy (2017) ‘AI and Data’ Grand Challenge for the UK to develop specialisms and digitisation to develop local, innovative solutions to global challenges
Thematic Alignment	Activity under this theme will also support achievements across the other four themes by creating an environment and diversified activity mix that enhances both perceptions and experience of the town.	Activity under the culture and heritage theme will also support and be supported by improvements to connectivity and investment in Town Centre Regeneration. An opportunity has also been identified to re-use a heritage building (The Gamble) under the employment and skills theme.	This theme will align with improvements in digital and transport connectivity, improving the ability of residents to access work. Town Centre Regeneration activities will also help to create new local employment opportunities.	The delivery of activity under this theme will support aspirations under the urban regeneration, culture and heritage and employment and skills themes by improving connections into and around the town centre.	This theme will support employment and skills and urban regeneration activities. Further, improved digital connectivity offers the potential to generate wider environmental benefits as levels of unnecessary travel are reduced.
Example Project Alignment	The Town Centre Living works will also benefit from the delivery of improvements to the bus station, improved digital connectivity and improved pedestrian and cycle routes.	The heritage element links to Glass Futures phase 2 (which seeks to build on St Helen’s specialism) while the Town Centre Regeneration works and connectivity improvements will help to improve visitor’s wider experience of spending time in the town and the likelihood of repeat visits.	This theme will benefit from improvements to local superfast broadband through The Loop and the introduction of new uses through the Town Centre Living project.	Improvements under this theme will help to support the success of proposed works to The Gamble, the success of the canal and glass heritage centre and the Town Centre Regeneration works by providing both an enhanced entry point to the town and improved, safe connections across it..	Improved digital connectivity will support improvements under the employment and skills theme, helping businesses to work more efficiently and access new markets – which can support jobs growth – and help those that are currently disengaged from the employment market to be engaged. It will also support aspirations to attract new residents and businesses into the town.

Table 2: continued

06

OUR TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN

06. OUR TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN

ST HELENS
TOWNS FUND ASK

St Helens Town Fund Board is seeking to secure **£38.55m** of Towns Fund investment to support the delivery of our strategic priorities identified within our TIP. This will be matched by other public sector funding streams as well as leveraging in private-sector investment (including that of ECF) and will deliver a step-change within the key areas of intervention within the town centre and for the borough as a whole. The importance of Glass Futures and the alignment of this with the wider Towns Fund programme will deliver a programme which is nationally significant and benefits the wider Liverpool City Region.

The core areas of focus within the town centre are those where the most transformational change will occur, with the opportunity to create a wider ‘ripple effect’ as a result of the initial investment. This catalytical impact can be demonstrated through the partnership with ECF, where surplus profits created will be used to create a revolving fund for the Borough’s transformation. The Towns Fund investment will support this approach.



06. OUR TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN

PRIORITISATION
PROCESS

An initial list of over **100 project ideas** and concepts were put forward by the Town Fund Board building upon the outcome of the engagement exercise via MyTown, feedback through other key stakeholders in St Helens (including Council officers) and focus group discussions with all Board members⁹⁶. All members of the Towns Fund Board asked to participate in at least one focus group to identify and discuss ideas for Towns Funding.

Individual project proformas were completed and then appraised by CBRE which included 1:1 discussions with each Focus Group lead to identify a ‘top 3’ and to rank the project ideas put forward.

CBRE objectively appraised the top-ranking projects using an evaluation matrix (Appendix D); key to this was ensuring that projects were capable of delivery within the Towns Fund period (i.e. spend by 31/03/2026) and adhered to the Towns Fund guidance.



⁹⁶Focus Groups were established around the following themes: business & skills; heritage & culture; regeneration & land use; connectivity

THE EVALUATION PROCESS WAS A TWO-STAGE PROCESS
WITH THE KEY CRITERIA IDENTIFIED BELOW.

- STEP 1

Pass/Fail Assessment

→ Strategic Fit; and

→ Funding Quantum/ type/ profile.
- STEP 2

Detailed Assessment of Projects for Ranking

→ Deliverability;

→ Viability;

→ Value for Money;

→ Strategic rationale;

→ Stakeholder support;

→ Sustainability; and

→ Technical Quality.

Figure 16: Evaluation Matrix Stages

The focus group sessions coupled with the evaluation matrix analysis provided the initial shortlisted projects which were presented back to Board and formally ratified on 16th October 2020.








Figure 17: Shortlisting approach

06. OUR TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN

PRIORITISATION
PROCESS

A total of **14 projects** were initially within the shortlist (Table 3) and then through project scoping and engagement with key partners to ensure that projects were capable of delivery by March 2026, a revised shortlist of 6 projects was identified for the November Board. This also ‘grouped’ or aligned key projects together as part of an overall programme approach (Table 3).



PROJECTS (AS AT OCTOBER BOARD)	THEME	REVISED PROJECT SHORTLIST (NOVEMBER BOARD)
Urban Regeneration & Land use 	Town Centre regeneration	Town Centre Living
	Town Centre Living	
	Youth/ Community Zone	Healthy Communities
	District Heating Network	
Culture & Heritage 	Canal & Glass Heritage Centre	St Helens Heritage World
	Canal & Glass Heritage Trail	
Employment & Skills 	Glass Futures Phase 2	Glass Futures Phase 2
	Meanwhile/Pop up uses	
	Community/health hub/co-working space (The Gamble)*	
Transport Connectivity 	Bus Station Improvements	Connected Places
	Town Centre Permeability – pedestrian/ cycleways	
	Wider Borough Network – pedestrian/ cycleways	
Digital Connectivity* 	Digital High Street	Digital Infrastructure
	The Loop	

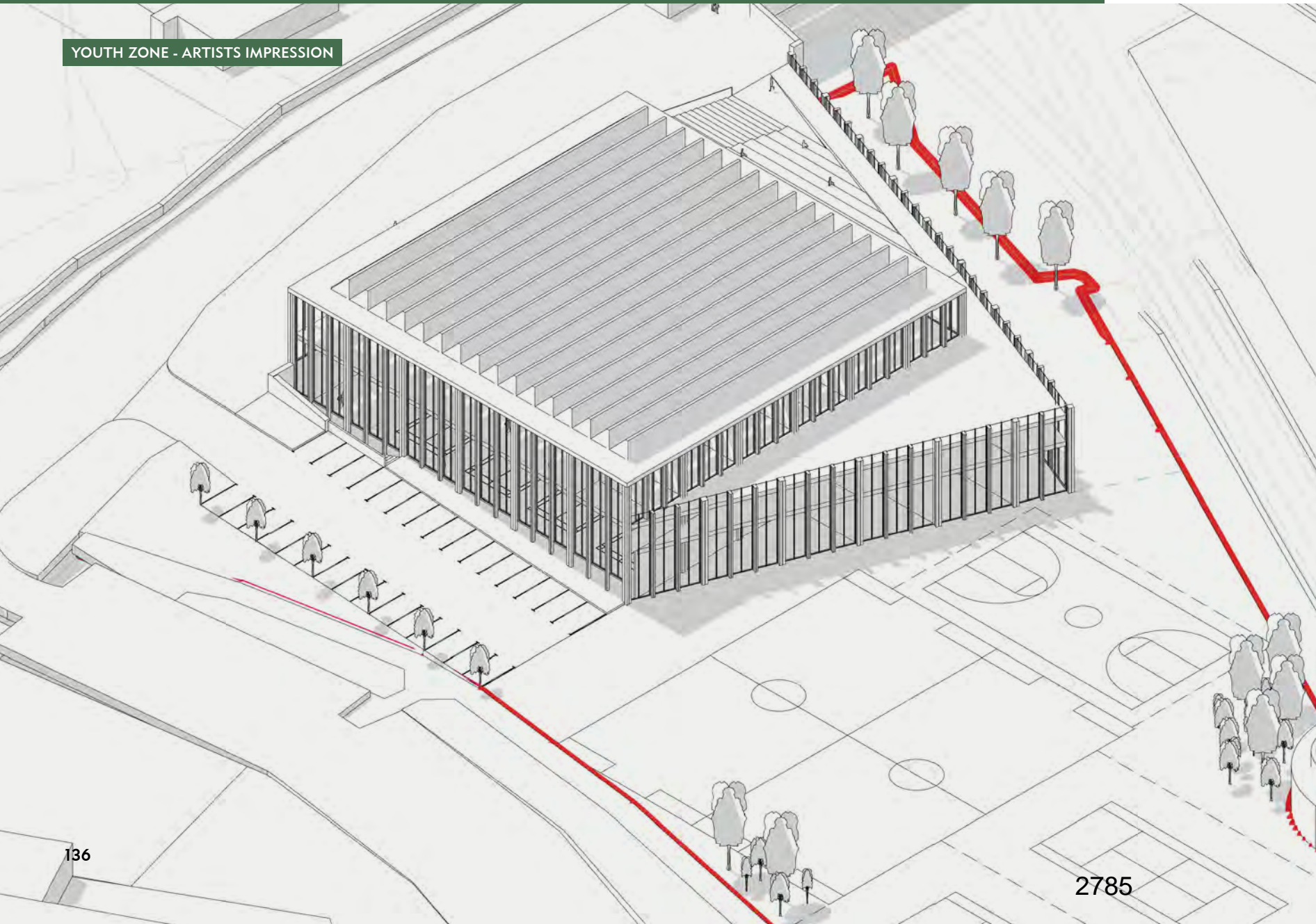
*Project merged with Youth Zone to create ‘Healthy Communities’ project

Table 3: Project shortlisting/ grouping approach

06. OUR TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN

OUR TOWNS FUND PROJECTS

St Helens Towns Fund Ask comprises a total of 6 projects with a collective investment requirement from Towns Funding of £38.55m and a total value of over £140m. All 6 projects align together to create a programme which is greater than the sum of its individual parts (Table 4). The projects are as follows:



A
**GLASS FUTURES
PHASE 2**
(INCLUDING CANNINGTON SHAW)



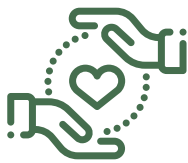
B
**TOWN CENTRE LIVING
& REGENERATION**



C
**ST HELENS
HERITAGE WORLD**



D
**HEALTHY
COMMUNITIES**
(YOUTH ZONE, HEALTH INNOVATION HUB)



E
**CONNECTED
PLACES**



F
**DIGITAL
INFRASTRUCTURE**



06. OUR TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN

ALIGNMENT OF TOWNS FUND PROJECTS

Our proposition of priority projects mutually reinforce one another. Spatially they are linked together, given the focus for the investment is centred around the town centre but they also align with other non-Towns Fund projects identified within the Council’s pipeline of proposals for the town centre and the borough (Table 4).



NATIONALLY SIGNIFICANT PROJECTS	TOWNS FUND PROJECT ALIGNMENT	RATIONALE
GLASS FUTURES PHASE 1 <i>(Already funded)</i> New glassmaking pilot plant facility and a Global Centre of Excellence for the sustainable manufacture of glass	Town Centre Regeneration/Living	New uses including the creation of a mixed-use development in the heart of the town centre with the potential for commercial office space, a hotel and complemented by a new high-quality Town Centre Living residential offer, public realm and active ground-floor uses will be instrumental to providing the right place-making conditions to attract business and further investment into the town, including making Glass Futures a more attractive proposition.
GLASS FUTURES PHASE 2 <i>(Investment sought through Towns Fund)</i> A Global Centre of Excellence for research and innovation related to medical glass production and includes ‘where glass past meets glass futures’ through the redevelopment of Cannington Shaw as a visitor centre.	Connected Places	Those visiting the Glass Futures plant facility and Centre for Excellence will be encouraged to spend time in the town centre through enhanced connections. The Connected Places project will enable local residents to have improved sustainable transport choices to travel to work, including those working at Glass Futures itself. Upgrading the public realm and addressing the overall legibility of the town centre will make it more attractive for new businesses (including those related to innovation in glass manufacture) to want to locate and/or expand their operation in St Helens.
	Healthy Communities	The health and wellbeing of St Helens’ residents will be improved through the creation of the Health Innovation Hub and Youth/Community Zone – providing opportunities for increased activity rates, delivering the right environment for people to talk about mental health issues and seek out the right level of support and raising aspirations of young people to follow career pathways in health and social care, glass futures or research & development across other foundation industries.
	Digital Infrastructure	Digital connectivity will be crucial to St Helens’ success. The need to lay solid digital foundations and ensure the infrastructure and skills levels in St Helens are fit for the future will be key to ensure Glass Futures Phase 1 and 2 can operate effectively and enable the town and borough to be attractive to existing innovative businesses and those wanting to relocate here.
	St Helens Heritage World	The development of our heritage, cultural, arts and visitor offer will aid the Town’s recovery through encouraging greater footfall, dwell-time and linked trips to benefit the retail and leisure sector in the town, as well as aligning with health and wellbeing objectives and the important link between culture, arts and health. This project in turn will support changing perceptions of the town and borough and assist with positive place-making.

Table 4: Alignment of Towns Fund Programme, including linkages to nationally significant project: Glass Futures (Phase 1 & 2)

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06. OUR TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN

CLEAN GROWTH

Addressing climate change and delivering clean growth is a core component which underpins all of the proposed projects ensuring that they adhere to the clean growth principle of Towns Fund. St Helens Borough Council declared a Climate Change Emergency in July 2019 and aspires to achieve a zero-carbon target by 2040. The Council has several priorities to achieve this including encouraging net-carbon developments and communities⁹⁷.

There is scope to spatially link the projects with an overarching district heating network for the town (Figure 17), in addition to the project-specific clean growth/ sustainability targets and outcomes.

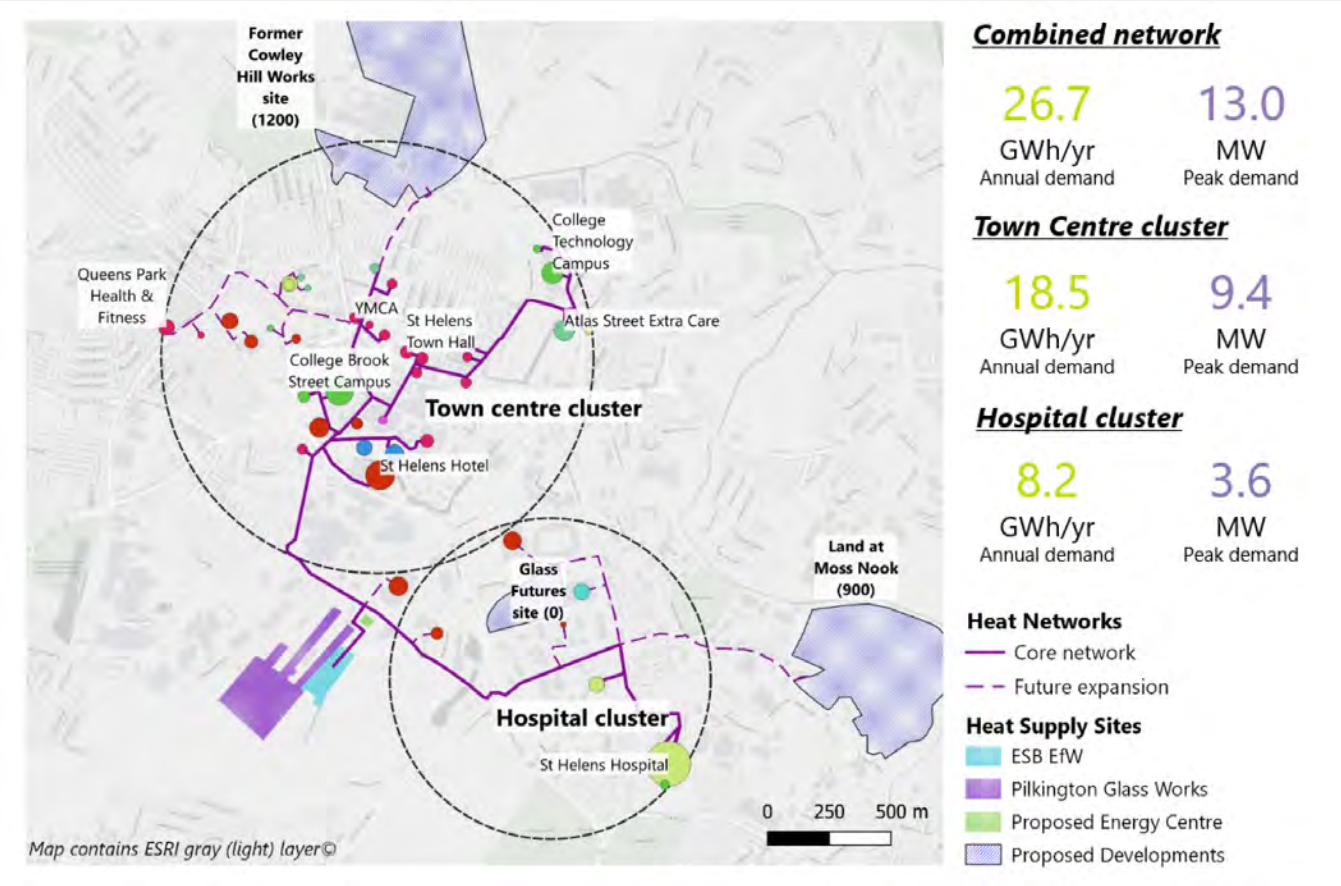


Figure 17: Proposed District Heat Network – Indicative Plans (subject to Funding & further feasibility)

COVID-19 IMPACT

A key consideration for the Towns Fund programme has been the impact and the response of the borough to the Covid-19 pandemic (as detailed in the ‘Evidence of need’ section). Our priorities are those which will have the greatest catalytical impact on the economy, social and physical regeneration and are needed for economic recovery, but also support the borough and town in achieving a sustainable, long-term future. As a result of Covid-19 key trends such as the growth in online commerce have accelerated and had an even greater impact on our high-street. Towns Fund investment cannot be delayed; funding support is needed now to reverse the decline and ensure we have a Town Centre which is fit for the future and our growth aspirations.

BENEFITS

Our investment priorities will act as seed capital to support the regeneration of the town centre. Surplus profits from the ECF proposals will be put back into the development account as part of the ECF partnership arrangements and recycled to create additional benefits elsewhere in the town and the wider borough.

Further analysis will be undertaken at business case stage but the overall benefits will include:

- Additional Gross Value Added
- Delivery of high quality, affordable housing
- Creation and safeguarding of jobs
- Supporting existing and new businesses
- Creation of a vibrant town centre
- Attracting new visitors into the town and borough
- Positively changing the perceptions of St Helens

ACCELERATED FUNDING

The Towns Fund Board has agreed to use £1m of Accelerated Towns Funding to demolish an eyesore within the town centre – Chalon Way car park, which will create a visual link to the Sankey Canal and provide the opportunity for meanwhile uses in the short-term. In the medium term this site will become a future development plot, likely to accommodate future residential use.

⁹⁷ St Helens Borough Council (2020) Climate Change Background Paper, October 2020

06. OUR TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN

PROJECTS

Table 5: Towns Fund Projects

PROJECTS	PROJECT OVERVIEW	TOTAL PROJECT VALUE (INDICATIVE)	TOWNS FUND ASK - CAPITAL	TOWNS FUND ASK - REVENUE	INDICATIVE MATCH FUNDING	ESTIMATED OUTPUTS
A Glass Futures Phase 2	The delivery of a world-class centre of excellence for medical glass production, research and development which builds upon Glass Futures Phase 1 and includes the re-purposing of Cannington Shaw - a Grade II Listed heritage asset and scheduled ancient monument to create a visitor centre where ‘glass past meets glass futures’	£34.25m	£13.25m	£0.2m	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• £10m industry investment• £5m BEIS medical glass bid	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 45 jobs created• 50 new learners assisted• Restoration of ‘Heritage at Risk’ asset
B Town Centre Regeneration & Living	Repurposing of St Helens town centre high-street to create a mixed-use scheme including delivery of high-quality residential dwellings within the heart of the town centre and across brownfield infill parcels across the town.	£40.35m	£9.5m	£0.1m	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• St Helens Council• ECF• Homes England• Levelling-up funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 382 Residential dwellings (Direct & Indirect)• 6,764sqm Leisure/ retail floorspace created• Enhanced public realm - 8,759sqm• Brownfield land reclaimed - 4 ha• Businesses Supported
C St Helens Heritage World	A reimagined World of Glass experience coupled with public realm enhancements, new park and digitally enabled heritage trail.	£11.9m	£3m		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• St Helens Council• ECF• Heritage Lottery• Arts Council• Historic England• Clore Duffield Foundation• Garfield Weston Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 40 new jobs created• Estimated 200,000 visitors per annum• Creation of new Park• Creation of new Heritage Trail
D Healthy Communities (Youth Zone and Health Innovation Hub)	<p>Comprises two discrete elements but both are linked together under the ‘Healthy Communities’ programme with a key focus on health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Youth & Community Zone Provision of a youth and community zone to provide leisure uses and services provision for young people and the wider community in the town centre.</p> <p>Health Innovation Hub Repurposing of The Gamble, a Grade II listed heritage asset, to create a health innovation hub providing key health services, training and co-working space for health-focused SMEs to collaborate and innovate, continuing the success of the St Helens Cares Model.</p>	<p>£11.07m Health Innovation hub</p> <p>£12m Youth & Community Zone</p>	£3m		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• £5m DCMS• Torus Group• St Helens Council• ECF	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creation of a dedicated youth zone including 2 no. football pitches• Creation of Health Innovation Hub• Businesses and social enterprises supported enhancement of Victoria Square• 51 jobs created• 78,000 visitors to youth/community zone per annum
E Connected Places	An overarching Connected Places programme for the Town Centre which includes enhancements to key public transport nodes including new bus station delivery and public realm upgrades to St Helens Central, creation of enhanced permeability, way-finding and public realm town centre wide and provision of pedestrian and cycle connections traversing the ‘Concrete Collar’ of St Helens Linkway.	£21.7m	£7m		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• St Helens Council• ECF• Merseytravel• LCR CA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improved bus station created - 8,787 sqm• Public realm enhanced• New footways/cycleways installed• Public realm improvements to St Helens Central - 18,049 sqm
F Digital Infrastructure	Creation of a local loop which connects into the LCR Backhaul Network and provides full-fibre broadband to homes and businesses Borough-wide.	£26.5m	£2.5m		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Digital infrastructure provider - £21m• St Helens Council - £3m	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 42,500 homes connected• 100 jobs created

06. OUR TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN

REVENUE FUNDING

In addition to the Towns Fund capital ask we are also seeking £0.3m revenue funding (as identified in Table 5) to provide project management and consultancy support to deliver the Towns Fund programme alongside our restructured Growth Team.



06. OUR TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN

THEORY OF CHANGE
PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

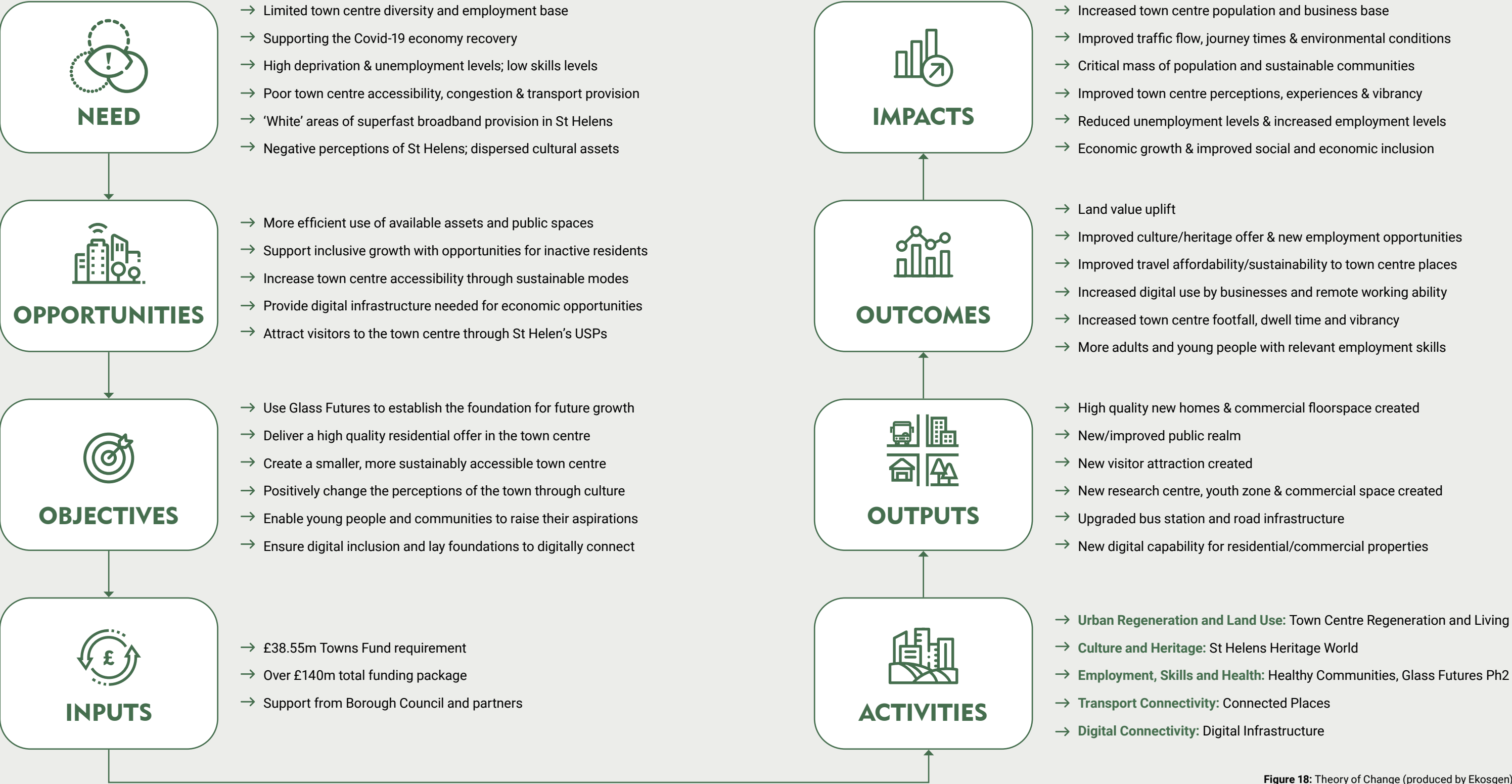





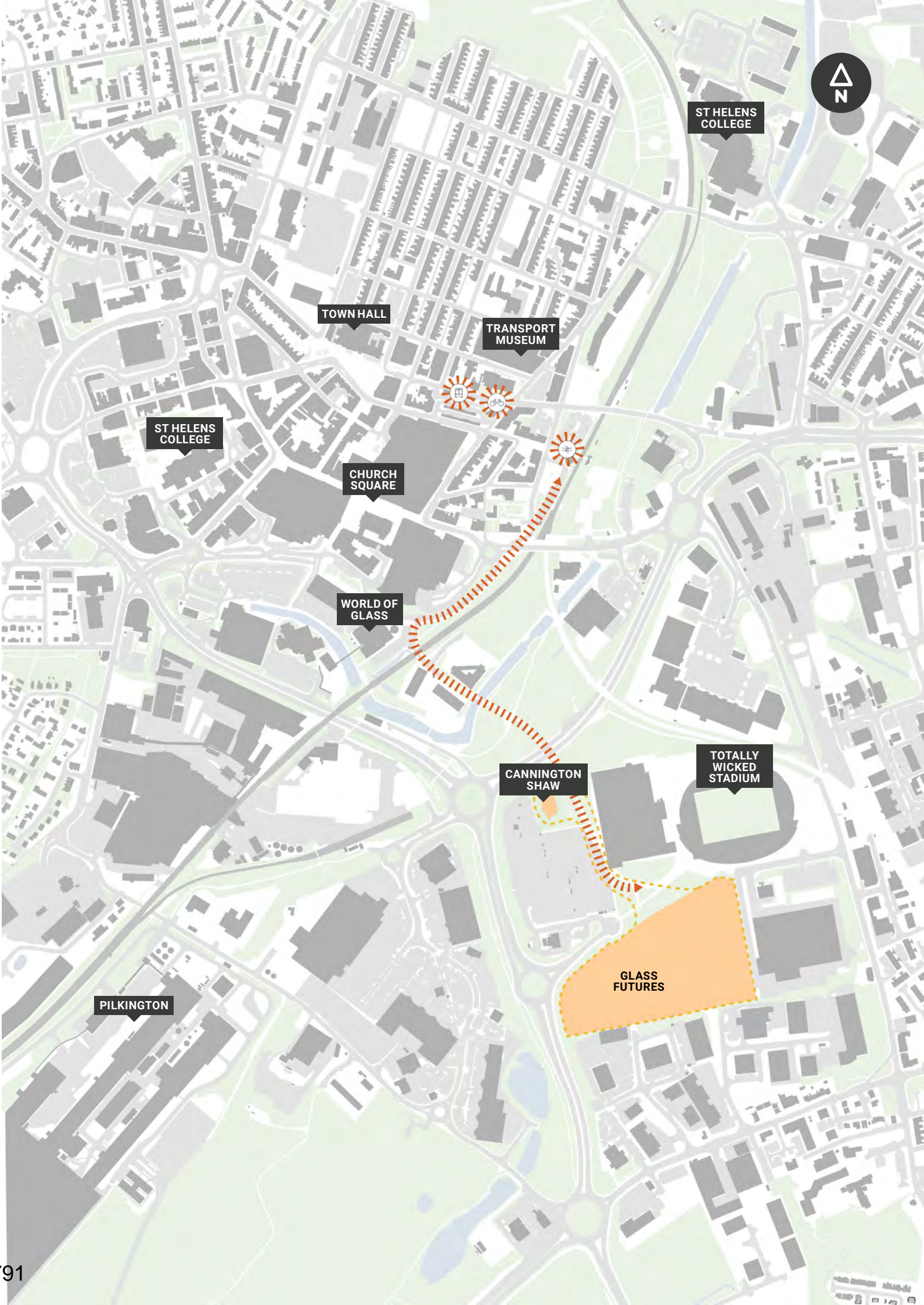
Figure 18: Theory of Change (produced by Ekosgen)

06. OUR TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN

A
GLASS FUTURES
PHASE 2

KEY

-  Transport Nodes
-  Glass Futures
-  Creating Strong Pedestrian Links



06. OUR TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN

B
TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION
AND LIVING

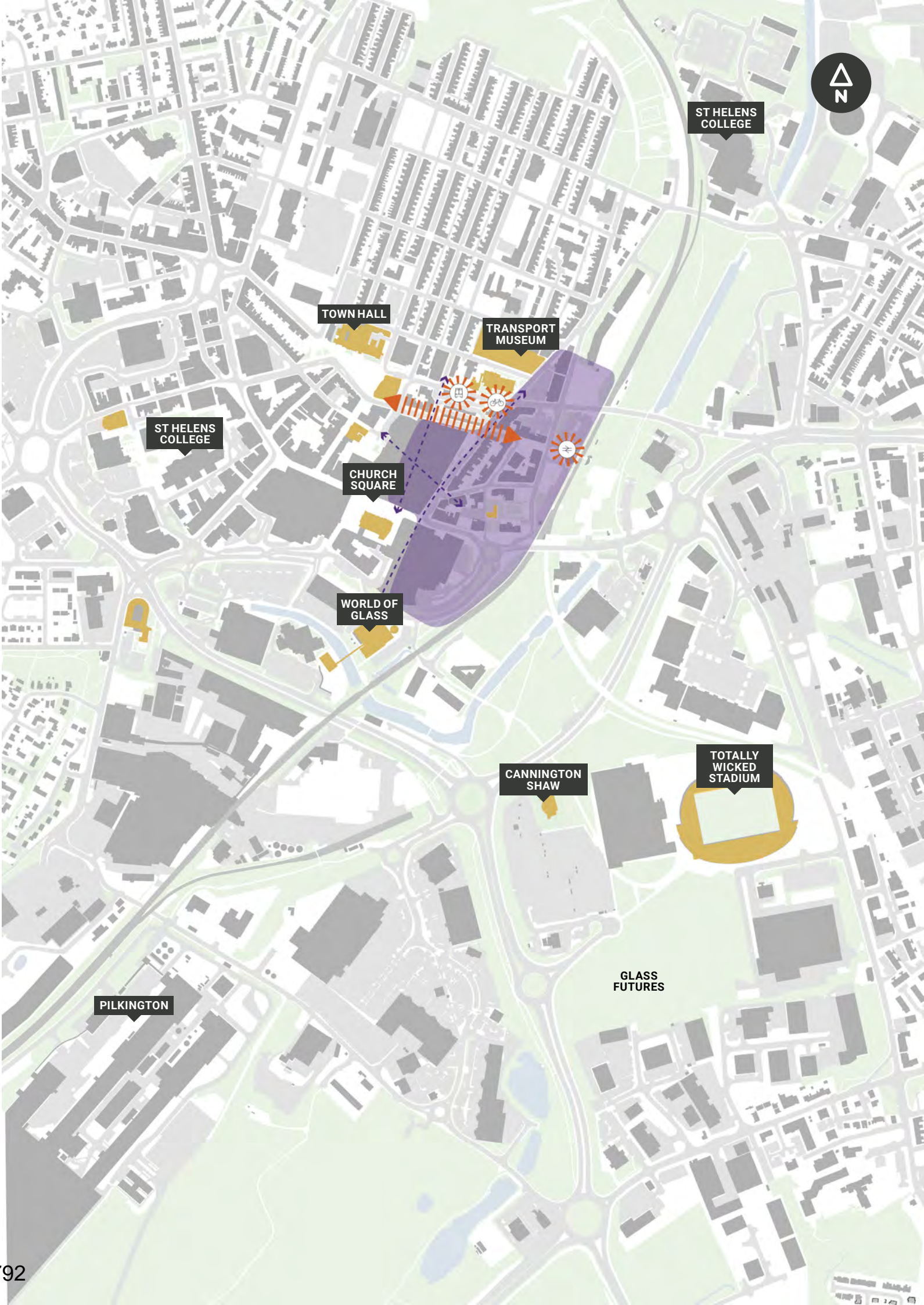
KEY

Town Centre Regeneration/Living

Transport Node

Improved Link and Public Realm

Key Buildings

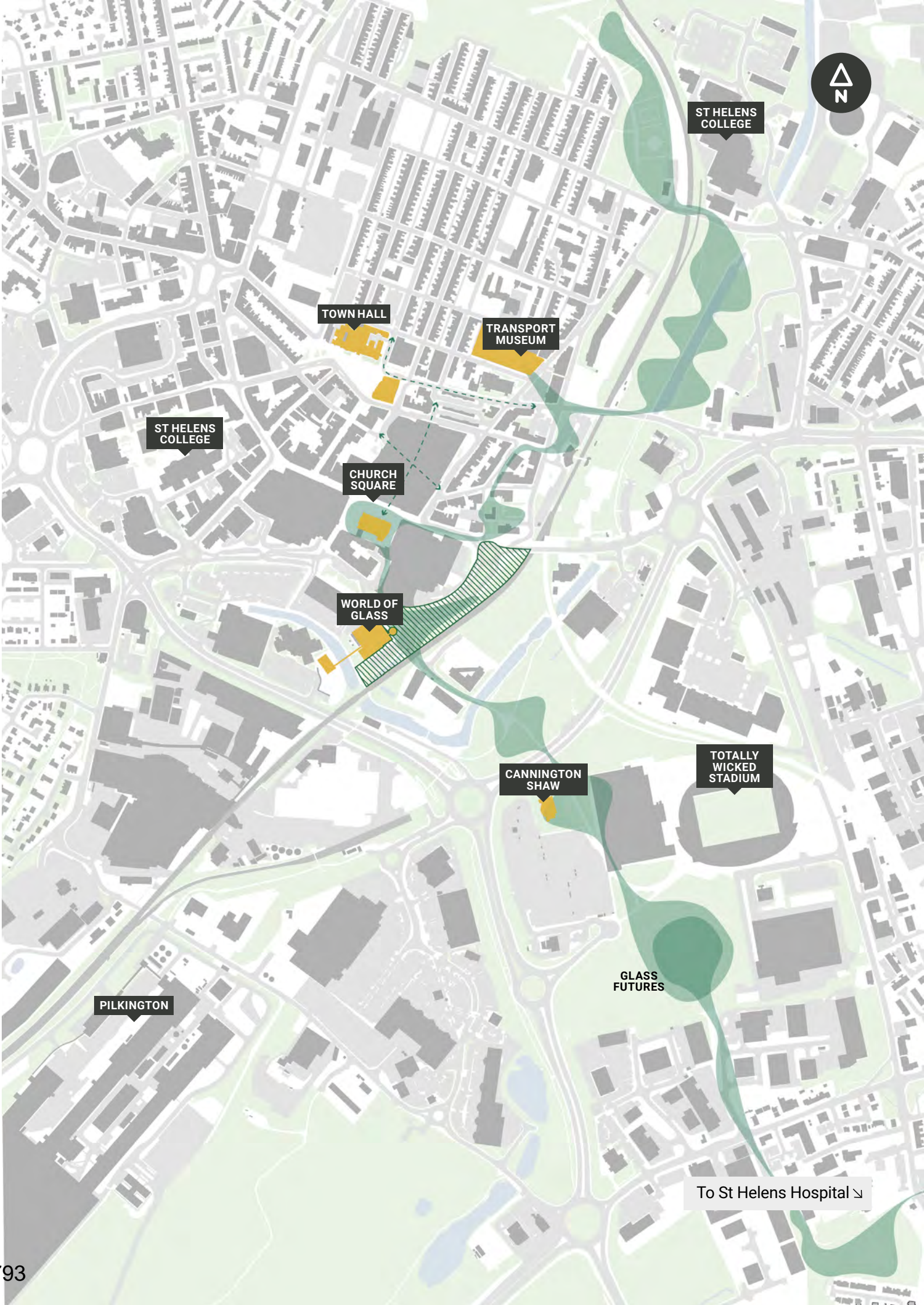


07. OUR TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN

C
ST HELENS
HERITAGE WORLD

KEY

- St Helens Heritage Trail
- Pedestrian Links
- Discovery Park
- Key Buildings



06. OUR TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN

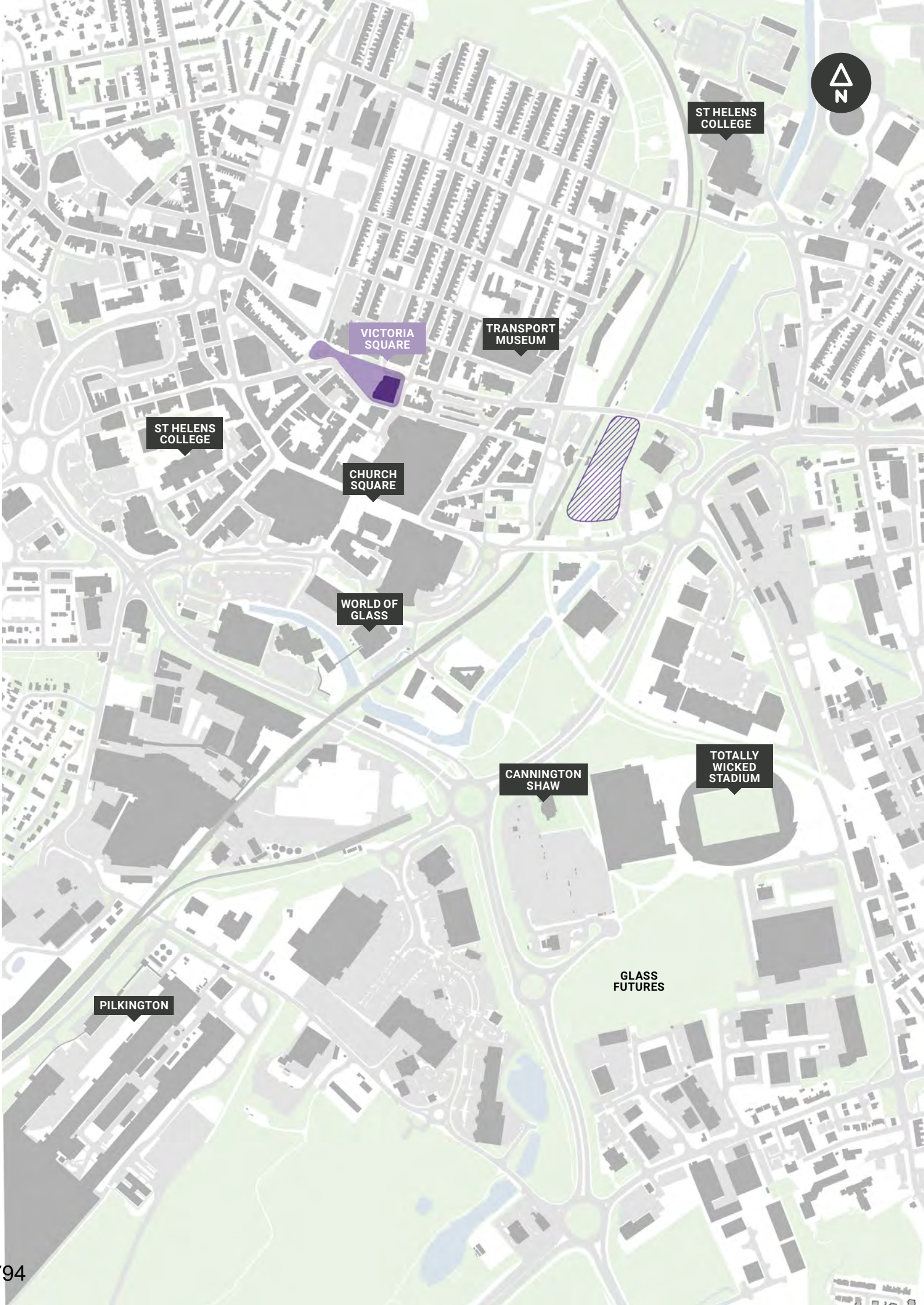
D

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

(YOUTH ZONE, HEALTH INNOVATION HUB)

KEY


<div></div> St Helens Heritage Trail	<div></div> Gamble Institute
<div></div> Disused Railway Line Green Route	<div></div> Youth and Community Zone
<div></div> Discovery Park	<div></div> Victoria Square Public Realm





06. OUR TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN


E
CONNECTED
PLACES


KEY


- 


Transport Nodes
- 

Improved Link and Public Realm
- 

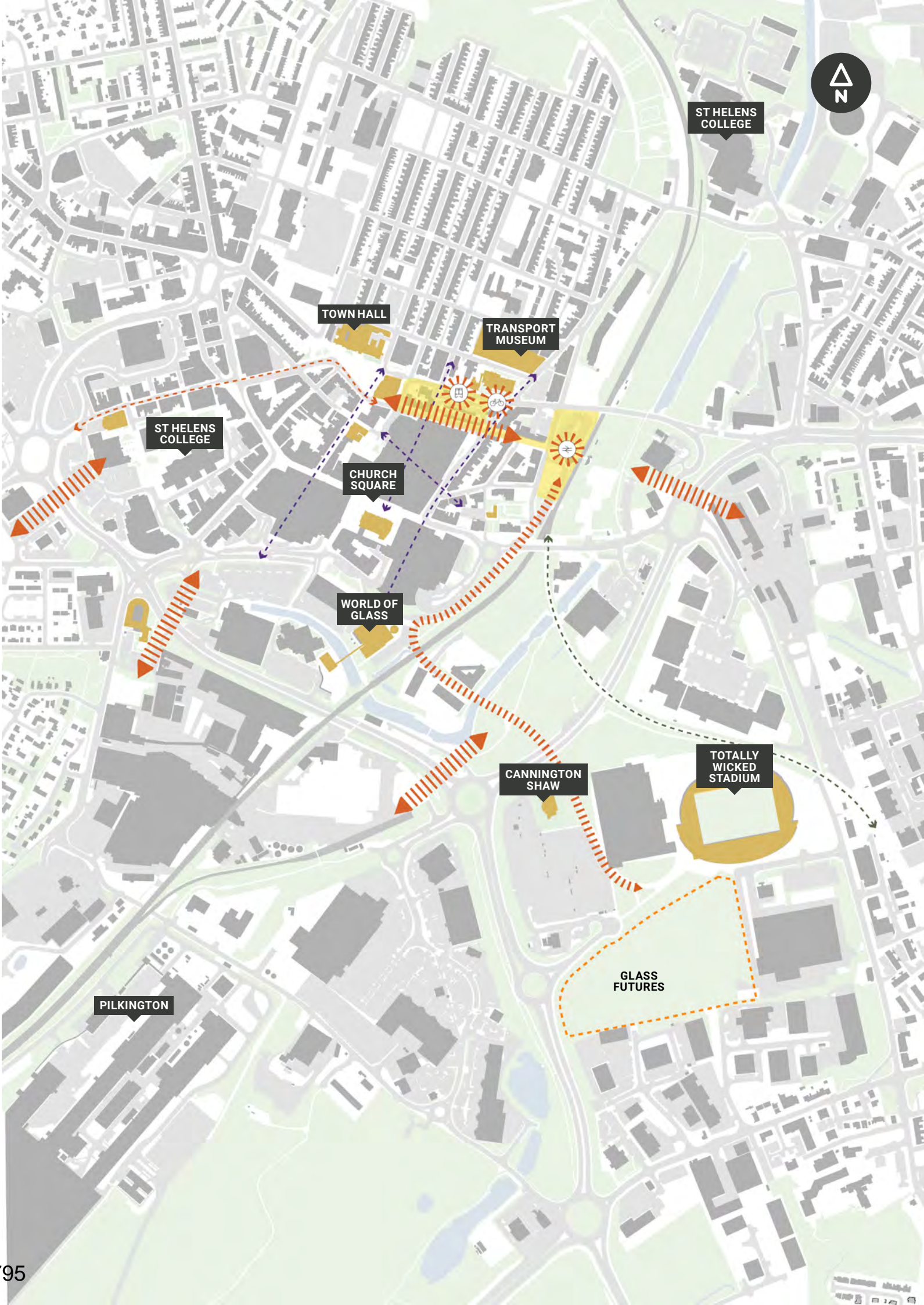
Green Bus Route to Liverpool
- 

Disused Railway Line Green Route
- 

Transport Hub
- 

Key Buildings
- 

Creating Strong Pedestrian Links



06. OUR TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN

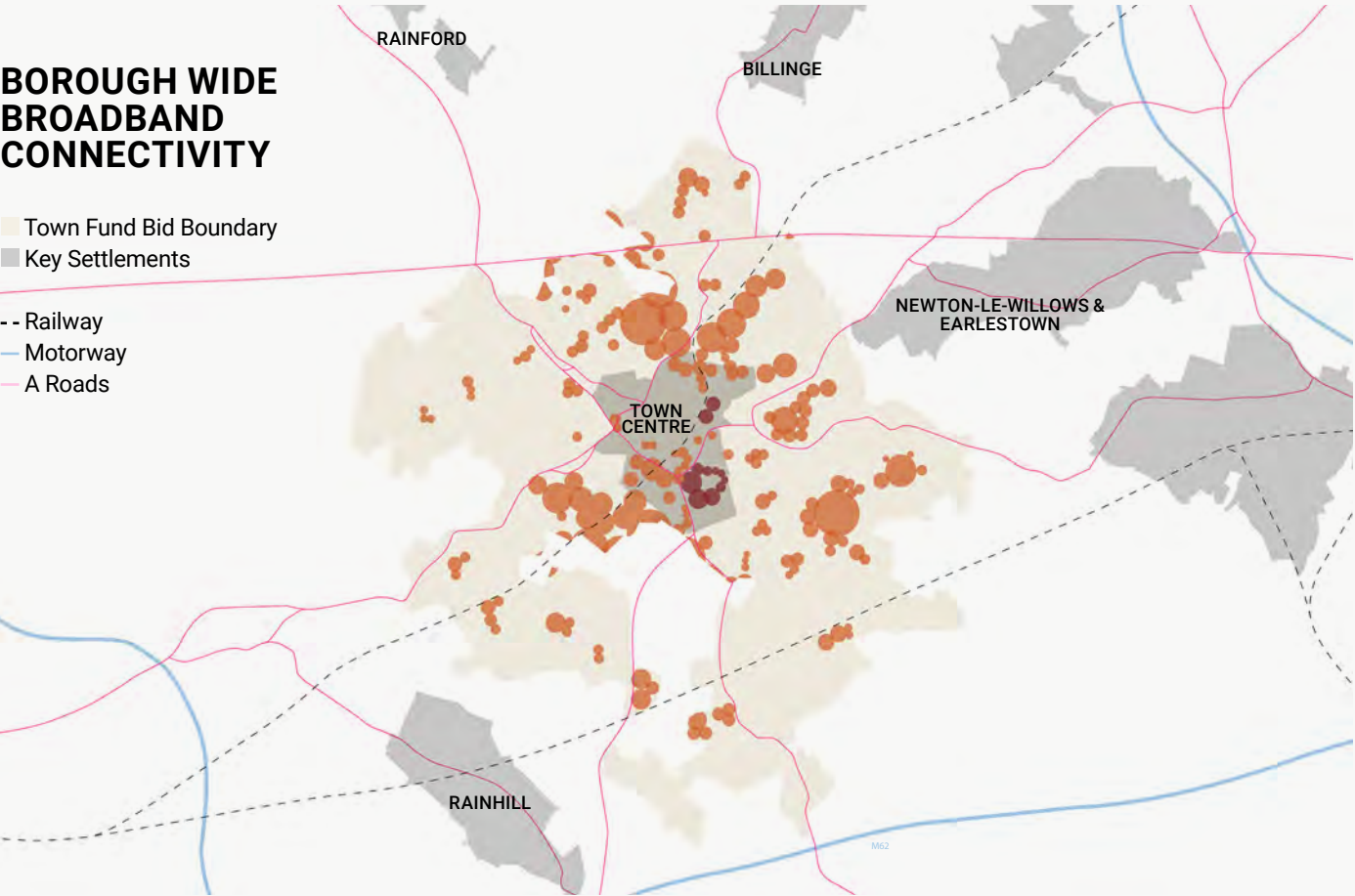
F
DIGITAL
INFRASTRUCTURE

KEY

- No Broadband Cover
- No Broadband Cover on Development Site

BOROUGH WIDE
BROADBAND
CONNECTIVITY

- Town Fund Bid Boundary
- Key Settlements
- Railway
- Motorway
- A Roads



07

ENGAGEMENT AND DELIVERY



07. ENGAGEMENT AND DELIVERY

STAKEHOLDER
ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

Stakeholder engagement has been integral to the preparation of our TIP. Consultation and engagement have been ongoing since 2016 (Figure 20)⁹⁸ and a wide range of methods have been used including online surveys, focused workshop discussions and 1:1 engagement.

Engagement specifically for the Towns Fund programme⁹⁹ has been supplemented with consultation for our Town Centre Strategy, Draft Local Plan and emerging Borough Strategy #sthelensitogether, and consultation undertaken by key partners, for example, the Big Conversation, led by the faith sector.

The identification of the key issues, challenges and opportunities, development of the proposed vision, and the Towns Fund projects set out within this TIP have all been informed by engagement.

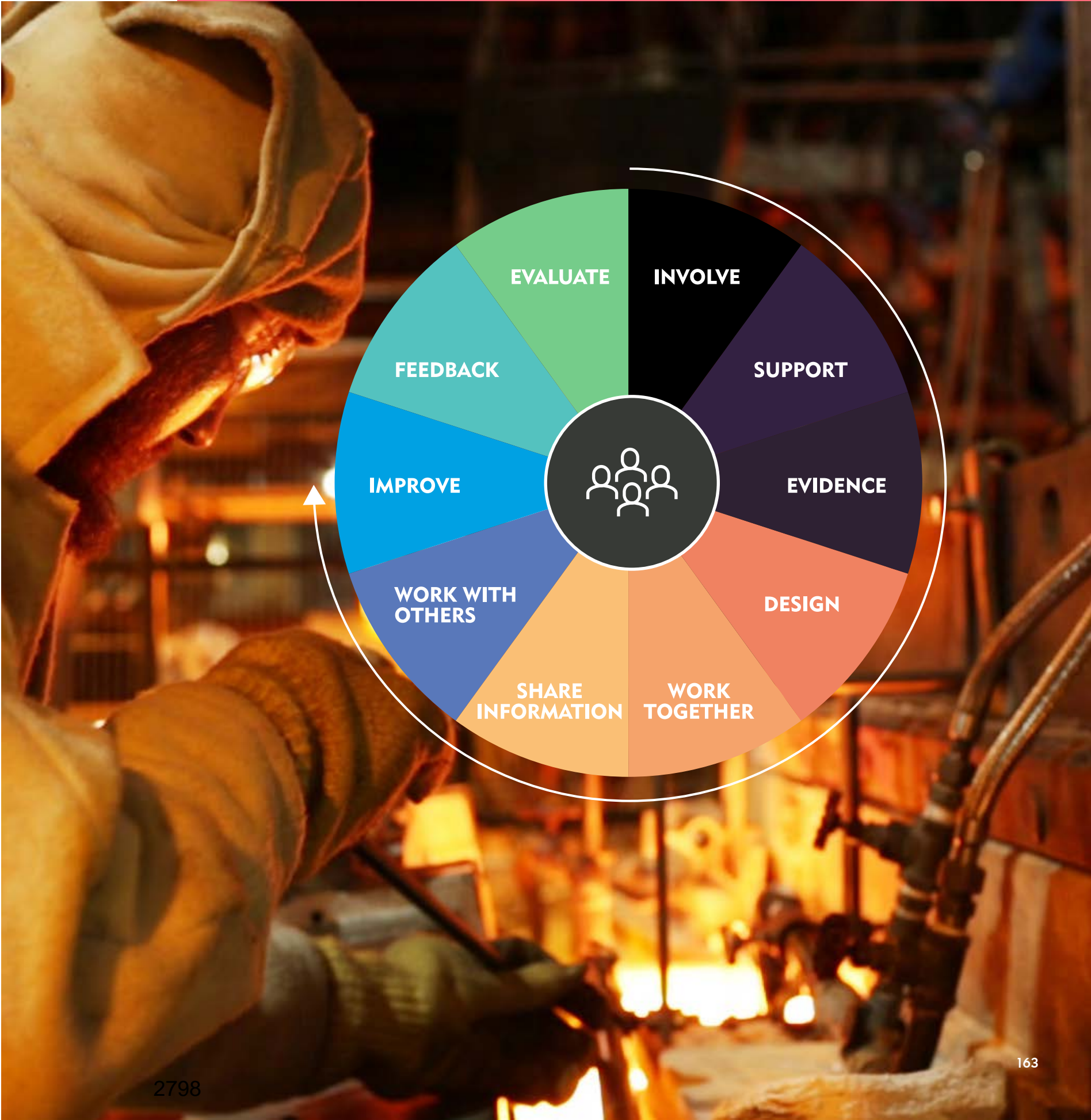
Aligned to the guidance in the Towns Fund Prospectus, we have prepared a Stakeholder Engagement Plan which details the engagement undertaken to date and comprises our plan for future engagement, in recognition that discussions will be ongoing as the Full Business Cases are prepared (Figure 19).



⁹⁸ <https://www.investsthelens.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/St-Helens-Storybook-Final.pdf>

⁹⁹ This included a series of 1:1 discussions, workshops and focus groups and was undertaken between August and October 2020, led by thinkingplace on behalf of the Council to develop the St Helens Story

Figure 19: Our approach to Stakeholder Engagement



07. ENGAGEMENT AND DELIVERY

STAKEHOLDER
ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

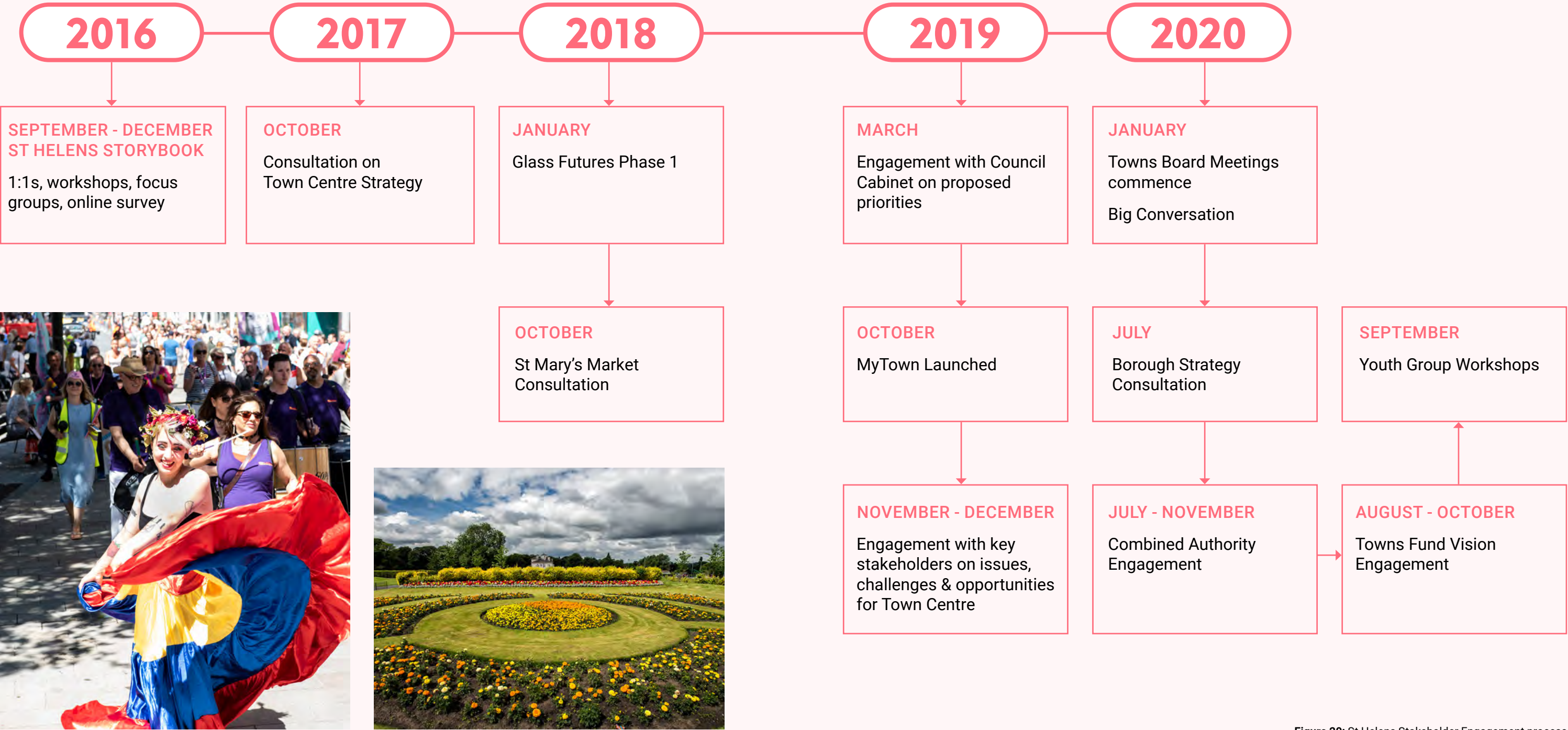


Figure 20: St Helens Stakeholder Engagement process

07. ENGAGEMENT AND DELIVERY

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

ST HELENS TOWNS FUND BOARD

Our St Helens Towns Fund Board¹⁰⁰ has wide-reaching membership encompassing private, public, voluntary organisations and political members. The Board was established in December 2019 following an invitation to formally express an interest to become a Board member. The Board met on a monthly basis to ratify the TIP proposals.

We established an Executive Group¹⁰¹ which meets at least monthly as a ‘task and finish group’, discussing key projects and proposals. The Executive Group was directly involved in reviewing and commenting on the draft TIP document.

Key focus groups based on the Towns Fund Prospectus intervention themes were held in April 2020 to identify initial projects (Section 6). Those nominating a project completed a proforma to enable the project to be tested against the Towns Fund objectives.

Some Board members were invited to take place in focus groups and 1:1 discussions to define the key issues, opportunities and vision. The outcome of these discussions is provided in Appendix C.

COMMUNITY & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Engagement with stakeholders will continue to inform our growth ambitions. To inform the priorities we have built upon existing feedback already collated. A key message emerging from the non-Towns Fund engagement was that the focus for investment needed to be on St Helens Town Centre (Figures 21,22,23,24).



¹⁰⁰ Full details of Board members are provided in Appendix B

¹⁰¹ Full details of the Executive Group members are provided in Appendix B

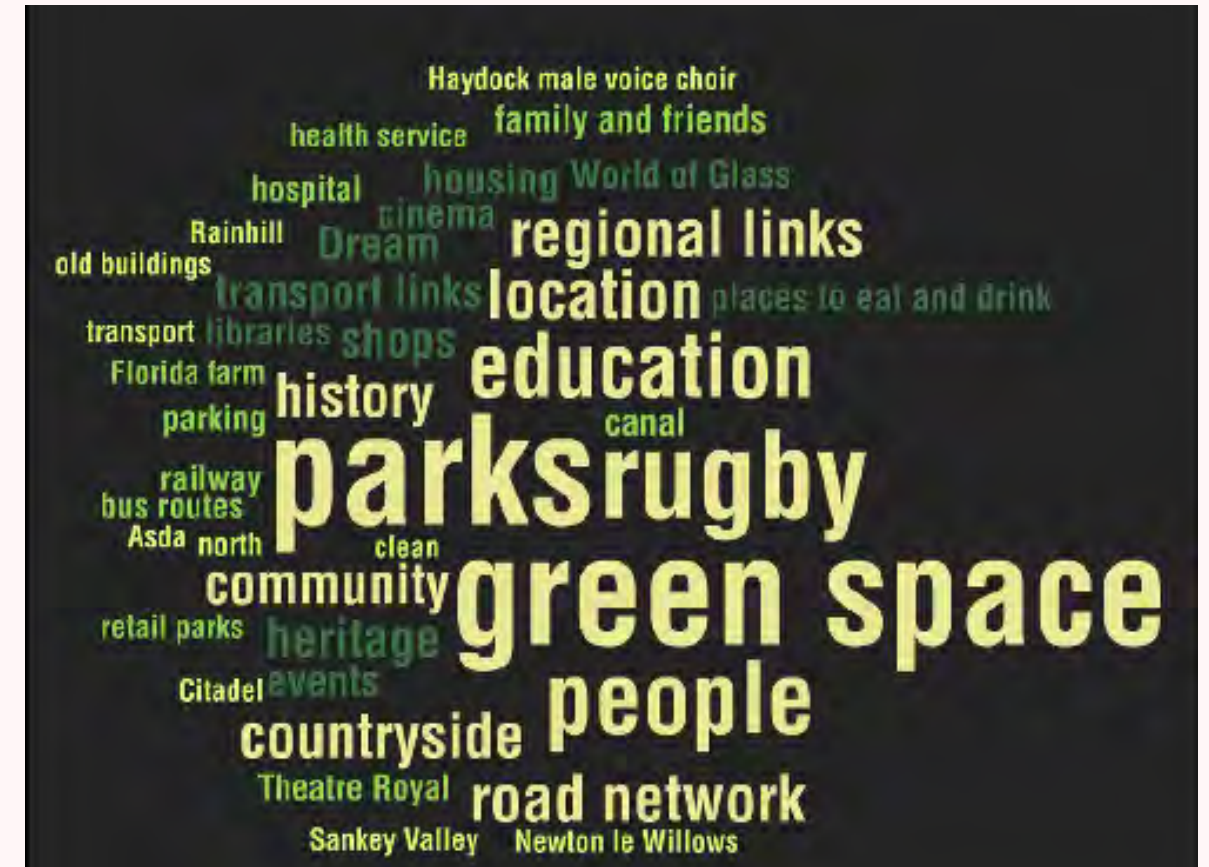


Figure 21: Feedback from 2016/17 engagement – stakeholders were asked ‘what are the three best things about the area?’



Figure 22: Feedback from 2016/17 engagement – stakeholders were asked ‘what are the three things that would help to improve the area?’

07. ENGAGEMENT AND DELIVERY

STAKEHOLDER
ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW



Figure 23: Emerging themes distilled from St Helens Together: Borough Strategy engagement (July & August 2020)



Figure 24: Feedback from St Helens Together: Borough Strategy when asked ‘what are your top 3 dreams for St Helens Borough over the next 10 years?’ (engagement undertaken between July and August 2020)

Previous engagement has been collated alongside Towns Fund specific consultation¹⁰². Results are provided in Appendix C.

PROJECT THEMES

URBAN
REGENERATION
& LAND USE



- ✓ Need for significant town centre regeneration
- ✓ Currently a lack of night-time economy and music venues particularly emphasised by respondents
- ✓ Improvements to community health and provide mental health services
- ✓ Need for investment in a youth zone and activities to discourage antisocial behaviour
- ✓ Housing for the elderly and community hubs to reduce loneliness and isolation

CULTURE AND
HERITAGE



- ✓ Attract leisure facilities and promote more cultural and community activities
- ✓ Reopen the Library
- ✓ Embrace St Helen’s Industrial Heritage (using canal glass museum and heritage industry)
- ✓ Improve green areas and improvements to existing parks
- ✓ Canal Restoration to attract residents and visitors to use this asset and improve connectivity

TRANSPORT
CONNECTIVITY



- ✓ Improvements to public transport
- ✓ Improve accessibility around the Town Centre

EMPLOYMENT
& SKILLS



- ✓ Attract new businesses and support growth of existing businesses (small/medium sized)
- ✓ More support for tackling unemployment
- ✓ Educational courses for adults and training to develop specific industries

Figure 25: Overview of MyTown engagement responses

¹⁰² MyTown and Towns Fund Vision workshops undertaken between August and October 2020

07. ENGAGEMENT AND DELIVERY

STAKEHOLDER
ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

DEVELOPING THE TOWNS FUND VISION
(AUGUST-OCTOBER 2020)

Thinkingplace held a series of one-to-one conversations with 20 stakeholders including the business community¹⁰³, group workshops and focus groups to establish if the issues identified in 2016/17 were still relevant. This was used to develop a place-narrative (Appendix C) which informed the Town Investment Plan’s vision. Feedback is summarised in Figure 27 and 28.

- St Helens attributes
- Pros and Cons and Key Descriptors
- St Helens positioning
- Business in St Helens
- St Helens Town Centre
- The Future for St Helens

Figure 26: Topics discussed during Towns Fund focused engagement in August-October 2020 (thinkingplace)

¹⁰³ Including businesses, voluntary sector and those representing 'hard to reach' groups



Figure 27: Feedback from stakeholder engagement (August-October 2020)
(Source: thinkingplace)



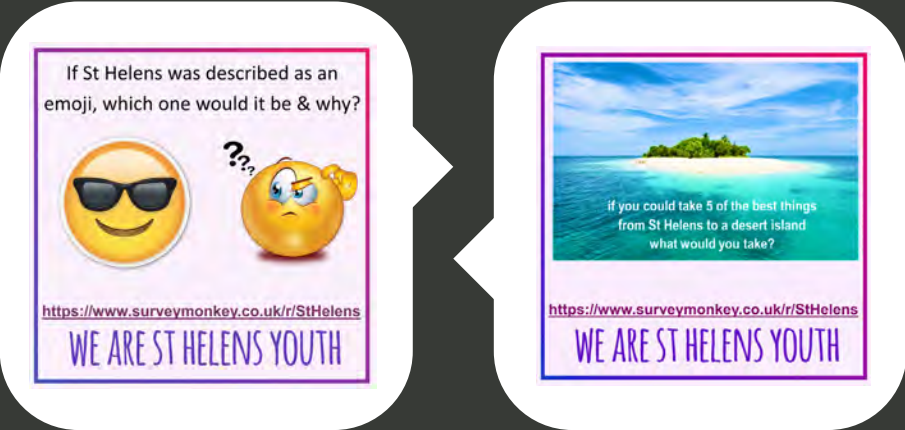
Figure 28: Feedback from stakeholder engagement when asked to describe a vision for the town centre in the future (August-October 2020) (Source: thinkingplace)

07. ENGAGEMENT AND DELIVERY

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

Engagement with young people included focus groups with the Youth Council, Youth Parliament and Children in Care Council¹⁰⁴ and an online survey. Feedback has shaped the vision and priority projects.



<https://twitter.com/YouthServiceSTH/status/1314256948322349059/photo/1>

"You don't need to go to Venice to blow glass, you can do it right here on your doorstep! We need to shout about these initiatives and opportunities"

YOUTH COUNCIL MEMBER
STEFAN WILKINSON-HILL (AGE 16)

"I am honoured and privileged to be the MYP for St Helens, representing young people across the Borough. I am delighted that St Helens Youth Council have been given the opportunity to share our views and help shape the vision for the Town Investment Plan. I am really pleased to see so many of our ideas and suggestions reflected in the plan and look forward to the next stage of the journey for St Helens."

BEN LOMAS
ST HELENS MEMBER OF YOUTH
PARLIAMENT AND CHAIR
ST HELENS YOUTH COUNCIL

¹⁰⁴ September 2020



"We must be active, bold and aggressive in our growth strategy. In a changing environment, businesses and St Helens as a whole, need to do things differently to get the outcomes we aspire to. We need a renewed way for the public, private and third sector to work together and joint resources to compete nationally and internationally like never before.

New developments are transforming St Helens and creating new opportunities. Such as major town centre transformation and major development on the M6 corridor – the time to act is now!

We can't be a mere observer. We must all participate, contribute, and benefit from what should be a long period of economic outperformance for this region"



EAMONN MCMANUS
CHAIRMAN, ST HELENS RFC

07. ENGAGEMENT AND DELIVERY

STAKEHOLDER
ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

“Make it attractive for business, businesses aren’t connected enough”

“Warrington Base has attracted similar businesses into a space good for networking – St.Helens needs something similar.”

BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT

Engaging with businesses as stakeholders has been critical to shaping our TIP. Alongside those businesses represented on the Board, we have had 1:1 discussions with 8 business leaders, undertaken focus groups with St Helens Chamber members, engaged with the Ambassadors Programme (153 businesses represented).

PROJECT-SPECIFIC ENGAGEMENT

Specific stakeholder discussions have also taken place to scope out individual projects:







COUNCIL ENGAGEMENT

Council officers and members engagement has been crucial too. Cllr McCauley, Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Planning sits on the Board and Executive Group, and the TIP has been taken through the Council’s approval processes, being endorsed by Cabinet on 27th January 2020.

07. ENGAGEMENT AND DELIVERY

DELIVERY PLAN

The Council recognises that to deliver on its strategic priorities it needs to adapt and redesign both its operating model and resource base; A process that is underway through the introduction of a new leadership structure that reflects the strategic importance of delivering growth directly and in partnership.

A Growth Department has been established within the Place Directorate, where the skills and services are clustered to create an effective, high performing and market-facing regeneration function. The Department, which includes capital programme and project management, planning, economic development, skills and property represents a significant investment in new resources.

The potential for growth in St Helens is regionally and nationally significant and the council has invested heavily to translate the potential into delivery through its Growth Department and its partnership with ECF.

A successful Town Investment Plan submission is a pivotal milestone in the regeneration journey for St Helens. The Council, with partners, has created the conditions to deliver the economic prosperity it deserves.



07. ENGAGEMENT AND DELIVERY



OUR DELIVERY PARTNER
THE ENGLISH CITIES FUND

The Council has entered a Borough-wide 20-year partnership to transform the borough, with an initial focus on the town centre. ECF will provide direct delivery, investor and development-management support, where appropriate, to deliver the Towns Fund priorities. ECF has directly inputted into this TIP to ensure proposals are deliverable within the Towns Fund programme.

ECF will support the Council in delivering its growth and regeneration programme and will prepare a town-centre masterplan/ development framework in early 2021 ensuring that opportunity sites are spatially linked.

The Council, with support from its partners, is confident it can effectively manage the Towns Fund programme. The projects are capable of being delivered independently, there are no inter-dependencies between them.

BUSINESS CASE DEVELOPMENT

In parallel to securing Towns Fund investment, the Council, Towns Fund Board and our delivery partners will prepare the Full Business Cases for each project adhering to latest guidance¹⁰⁵. This will include a more detailed financial, strategic, economic, commercial and management case. The Council and Towns Fund Board will appoint a professional team to support them alongside development expertise in ECF and our proposed delivery partners.

Initial appraisals for the economic and strategic case have already been undertaken for the TIP and we are confident that each of the projects are capable of delivery and incurring the capital funding sought by March 2026. Delivery leads are working alongside the TIP preparation to ensure project readiness – this includes undertaking further feasibility work (where relevant), procurement of professional team, development of RIBA Stage 2 Design and preparation of relevant planning and other statutory consents.

TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN

An integral part of the Towns Funding programme is the preparation of an overarching masterplan for the Town Centre. This work is being prepared by the Council and ECF with consultation due to commence in Spring 2021. This will ensure the package of towns funding priorities are spatially aligned and appropriately phased over the next 6 years.

¹⁰⁵ Towns Fund Guidance (stage two): Business Case Development, 16th December 2020

“St Helens’ Town Investment Plan is a great opportunity for the area to prosper, to grow and we’re proud to support the council in helping them realise their vision for a brighter borough.”

“We’re on a journey with our partners at St Helens Council, bringing our unique business model to enable them to repurpose a number of exciting projects, including the town centre, transforming them into vibrant new mixed-use destinations that’ll attract inward investment, create opportunities for local people and drive community wealth at a time it’s needed most.”

“St Helens is a proud borough steeped in history, but with a real aspiration to bring innovative spaces and to benefit the community, which is in the fund’s DNA. We look forward to further strengthening our partnership with the council as we move forward, together.”

PHIL MAYALL
REGIONAL DIRECTOR
THE ENGLISH CITIES FUND.

07. ENGAGEMENT AND DELIVERY

GOVERNANCE

The proposals in this Towns Fund bid are commended by the Board and have political support.

Council budget approval for ‘match funding’ will be sought through Cabinet following confirmation of “in principle” Towns funding support. The Council and delivery partners will seek match funding through the sources already identified.

As the accountable body the Council will:

- ✔

Provide support to the Towns Fund Board through the negotiation on the Heads of Terms Agreement
- ✔

Ensure compliance with the Heads of Terms Agreement once formally signed
- ✔

Oversee and ensure the Towns Fund Board is compliant and adheres to agreed protocols within the Terms of Reference, and the Heads of Terms Agreement once signed
- ✔

Ensure transparency and good governance is adhered to
- ✔

Work alongside key delivery partners and stakeholders to prepare a comprehensive Towns Fund Programme, establish monitoring and review procedures (including identifying risks and mitigation) and ensure delivery of KPIs.
- ✔

Support the development of the Full Business Cases

There is external accountability through the Towns Fund Board and will also be kept regularly informed of progress by the SRO, reporting back through the Strategic Executive Board and sub-boards.

PROJECT READINESS

Projects have been selected on the basis of their deliverability and feasibility work is ongoing, in parallel to the Towns Funding outcome.

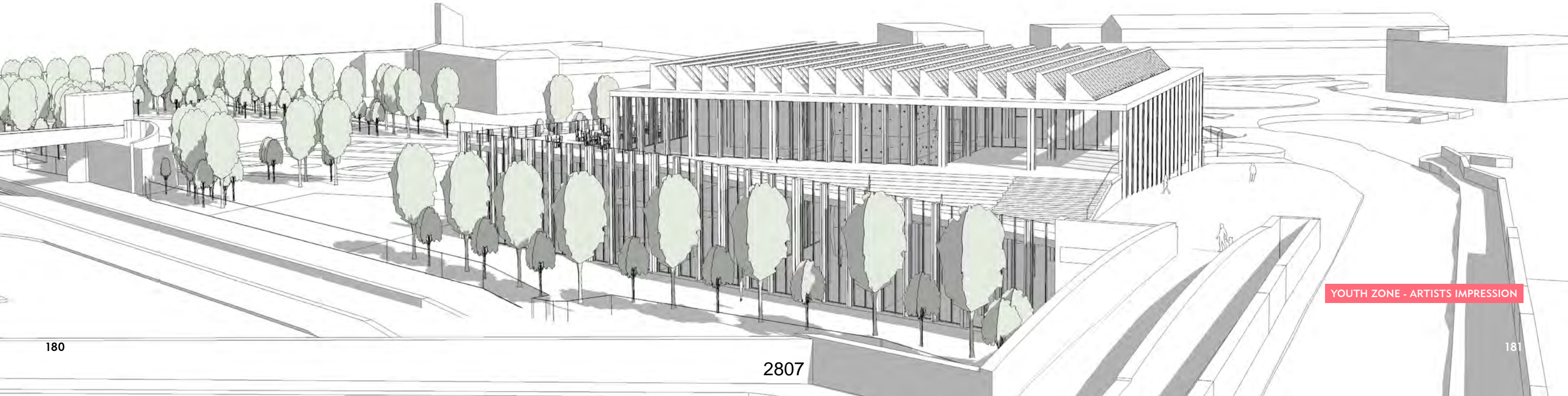
There is limited risk that the Towns Fund will not be spent by 31st March 2026. Each project and the programme overall will be carefully monitored and reviewed, risks identified and mitigated swiftly to ensure timescales can be achieved and outputs delivered.

The Council has relevant in-house expertise to manage a programme of this nature.

Once funds are committed, the Council/ project lead will proceed to the next stage of the project programme - procuring contractors/ developer partners, concluding agreements, advancing planning applications, and resolving any land assembly issues.

The project programmes incorporate allowances for slippage and provide sufficient float to ensure that the Towns Fund programme can still be achieved.

The projects will be progressed by a suitably qualified professional team managed through an experienced external development manager reporting to an internal Council project manager on a weekly basis and senior officers on a monthly basis. Where relevant, suitably resourced and experienced private sector development partner(s) will be selected, to deliver the schemes, where necessary, through an OJEU competitive tender process.



07. ENGAGEMENT AND DELIVERY

PHASED DELIVERY OF OUR PRIORITIES

2020/21

- Formal Exchange of ECF/ St Helens Council Partnership (December 2020)
- Preparation of masterplan/ Development Framework for Town Centre & Earlestown
- Consultation on Town Centre masterplan & Earlestown
- Preparation of masterplan for Glass Futures/ Foundation Industries
- Completion of Accelerated Funding package – Demolition of Chalon Way Car Park (March 2021)
- Procure professional team for project delivery
- Preparation of Full Business Cases for each identified TIP project
- Secure DCMS funding for proposed youth zone (Healthy Communities)
- External works commence on The Gamble (March 2021)
- Preparation of Meanwhile Use Strategy and Events Programme for Town Centre

2021/22

- Agree Heads of Terms for Town Deal with Government
- Continue to finalise Full Business Cases including securing match-funding & submit to BEIS
- Drawdown first tranche of funding
- Finalise Town Centre Masterplan
- Detailed feasibility and secure BEIS funding for Glass Futures Ph 2
- Resolve site assembly
- Secure outline planning applications.
- Detailed design for all projects
- Secure Reserved Matters/ Full Planning consents
- Procure developer/ contractors
- Commence infrastructure works/ de-engineering
- Procurement of digital infrastructure provider

2022/23

- Construction works commence (Heritage World)
- Resolve site assembly/ VP
- Procure additional developer/contractors

2023/24

- Demolition works commence (Town Centre Living)
- Construct new residential blocks (Town Centre Living)
- Construction works commence (Healthy Communities)
- Connected Places work commences

2024/25

- Construction of projects continues
- Connected Places scheme completed

2025/26

- Towns Fund Projects complete – all funding incurred







ST HELENS
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Liverpool City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement

A Fairer, Stronger, Cleaner City Region

Where No One is Left Behind

A Transport Investment Prospectus for the Liverpool City Region

2022/2023 – 2026/2027



Foreword

The most successful city regions have the infrastructure to move people, goods and services quickly, safely and efficiently within and between them. We know that the availability of good transport connectivity remains a barrier to employment and opportunity for too many in the Liverpool City Region (LCR), which limits our ability to maximise productivity and quality of life.

We are committed to levelling up our economy and the fortunes of our communities and we are committed to acting now, by delivering transformative infrastructure improvements in our transport network. Together with complementary investment in education; employment and skills; housing; and access to key services, we will meet our economic, social and environmental challenges head on.

The overarching message underpinning our recovery strategy is one of hope and confidence. As we plan for a people-focused recovery that responds to place-based challenges, our aim is to Build Back Better: to reshape our economy and society so that it is greener, fairer and more inclusive, where no-one is left behind. There can be no return to business as usual, or the old way of doing things. Our transport investment prospectus is a fundamental component of our recovery strategy.

We have a clear five-year transport investment plan supported by a longer-term pipeline that will enable us to advance our vision of a London-style transport system and a positive step change in our residents' lives. This is fundamental to our ability to decarbonise and meet our ambitious City Region 2040 net zero carbon target.

We're ambitious for our residents and we are delivering transformative transport interventions, as evidenced in our ongoing Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) delivery programme.

Through four targeted corridors of transport investment supported by an LCR-wide programme of infrastructure upgrades, we will continue in our delivery of an active travel revolution, transforming people's ability to walk and cycle safely in their local communities and linking to bus and rail services for longer journeys.

As part of our Vision for Bus and a wider programme of Bus Reform, we will revolutionise bus travel across the region: using innovative, clean technologies to deliver an accessible, reliable, high-quality bus network which builds on our TCF investment in hydrogen buses and provides bus priority on key routes.

New rail stations in Knowsley and the city centre will address key gaps in the network and battery technology will enable our new trains to run beyond the end of the Merseyrail network, enhancing our £500m investment and providing better connections beyond the City Region, widening the breadth of opportunities for our residents.

Our City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) investment will help to transform local and strategic connectivity, making it easier than ever before to travel sustainably, affordably and quickly, improving access to employment and enhancing quality of life.



Steve Rotheram

Steve Rotheram
Metro Mayor of the Liverpool City Region



Katherine Fairclough

Katherine Fairclough
Chief Executive, LCRCA

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Our Commitment

We are committed to building a fairer, stronger, cleaner City Region where no one is left behind.

We recognise the intrinsic relationship between our economic, social and environmental performance and the quality of our transport network and this is explicit in our statutory Local Transport Plan (LTP) and non-statutory Combined Authority Transport Plan. We must deliver a high-quality, fully integrated, inclusive transport network that enables people, goods and services to move quickly, efficiently and sustainably for both intra-city region and inter-city region movements:

Offering significant journey quality improvements for users;

Enabling decarbonisation through behaviour change and cleaner fleets; and

Providing equitable access for all.

Through investment in our transport system we can support Government in realising its ambition to strengthen and level up opportunity, using transport as a key enabler to unlock growth and improve the LCR and national economic performance.

Over the last five years we have successfully delivered a series of major transport investments including the first 113km of our 600km active travel network (£66m), a major upgrade at Newton-Le-Willows Station (£20m), a new rail station at Maghull North (£13.7m), Halton Curve (£15.6m), Access for All station improvements in conjunction with Network Rail (£20m) and new Rolling Stock across the entire Merseyrail network (£500m). Our residents are already realising the benefits of this:

- Over **60 new, high-quality active travel routes**, linking local communities with employment opportunities in line with the Government's ambitions set out in Gear Change.
- **250 new direct rail services per week** between Liverpool, Chester and North Wales, removing the need for 170,000 car journeys and opening up new catchments for employment and business.

- **Safer trains** on Merseyrail services with level platform access, **50% more capacity**, improved station accessibility and have successfully trialled the use of battery technology to extend the reach of our state of the art trains beyond our existing network.

Our evolving Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) will set out ambitious plans for the city region's largest ever investment in bus, aligned to Bus Back Better. We understand the links between infrastructure and quality of service and the BSIP will include existing development projects such as the introduction of hydrogen buses on our busiest commercial route and new proposals such as Bus Rapid Transit between the city centre and Knowledge Quarter. We will deliver quicker and more reliable services, cheaper and simpler fares and a higher quality, branded customer experience. In tandem we are undertaking an open, robust review of governance (enhanced partnerships and franchising) to ensure that services are structured in a manner that best meets passenger needs.

We must continue to be bold, make strong investment decisions and improve delivery if we are to meet our Metro Mayor's manifesto pledges:



**Fair and
Inclusive
Economy**



**London-
Style
Transport**



**Green
Industrial
Revolution**



**Doing
Things
Differently**

As a Combined Authority, we have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to write the next chapter in our long and storied history, and to make it a chapter of success. We take this responsibility very seriously and we will not accept growth at any cost – not at the cost of the environment and not at the cost of deepening inequalities in our society. In our forthcoming Plan for Prosperity we will set out how we will deliver clean, inclusive growth based around People, Place and a Green Recovery.

We have developed an evidence-driven, long-term Transport Pipeline that fully supports our transition to carbon net zero. This prospectus illustrates our investment plans and demonstrates our commitment to delivering better outcomes for the people of the LCR.

We will use our CRSTS to continue the delivery of a London-Style Transport System - an integrated, world class active travel and public transport network with full devolution of the Merseyrail network, which will be extended to all boroughs of the City Region, greater control of the bus network and daily fare caps.

We were the first area in the country to commit to becoming carbon net zero by 2040, a full ten years ahead of the national target, and we have analysed the whole life carbon impacts of our Transport Pipeline to ensure that it delivers on decarbonisation.

Our capital ask to Government is for £792.4m:

- **£206m** to continue the delivery of our 600km high-quality **active travel network**, linking residential communities to employment opportunities and connecting to the public transport network for longer journeys;
- **£276.9m** to deliver bus reform and continue the introduction of **Green Bus Corridors** and wider bus priority and infrastructure measures on key corridors;
- **£156.5m** to deliver **St James**, a new rail station in Liverpool's creative and digital cluster, a remodelled rail station in Runcorn and invest further in **new battery technologies** that can in future expand the Merseyrail network to Widnes and Borderlands; and
- **£153m** in critical **Key Route Network and local road maintenance** aligned geographically to our investment in bus and active travel, that will deliver safety, reliability and journey quality improvements for all road users, reduce the negative impact of road traffic on local communities and support the resilience of the KRN to climate change, in the context of potential new powers to accelerate and deliver our priorities for modal shift and travel by bus and bike. Evidence demonstrates that we need to invest at least £20m a year just to maintain the current network.

This investment in our transport system will:

- Deliver a reduction of over **170,000 tCO2e** by 2050 based on the high funding scenario;
- Deliver Value for Money (VfM), with 18 of our 20 schemes forecast to generate High or Very High VfM with **BCRs up to 9.9**;
- Reduce car dependency and induce mode shift, with all 20 schemes providing new or upgraded public transport and active modes infrastructure;
- Help to unlock land for new employment and housing growth, including **1,100 homes** in St Helens and **18,000 homes** in Birkenhead and **10,000 planned jobs** at Sci-Tech Daresbury; and
- Enable us to meet our target of delivering a **fully accessible rail system by 2030**.

St Helens

Home to the new £54m Glass Futures plant with provision for research and development trials to decarbonise the UK glass industry; a proposed hydrogen refuelling station which will enable the roll out of hydrogen buses on the city region's busiest bus corridor; a £25m Town Deal and Local Plan growth proposals of 7,784 new homes by 2037, St Helens is a key focus area for public and private sector investment. Our investment includes a £30m Green Bus Corridor, £20m investment into high-quality walking and cycling infrastructure, £10m to provide a new multimodal interchange in St Helens town centre as part of a transformative regeneration scheme and £10m to unlock new housing sites to the north of the town.

Together with the Combined Authority's wider investment of £143.4m in Business Growth, Culture & Tourism, Economic Infrastructure, Housing, Low Carbon & Environment, Skills & Careers, our Transport Pipeline has the potential to drive significant growth in productivity, level up the City Region and create a wealth of new opportunities.

Birkenhead / Liverpool City Centre Cross River Corridor

Ambitious plans for Left Bank in Birkenhead, including up to 18,000 brownfield homes, the overhaul of the retail and business core, a children's museum and a green core, coupled with the £3-10bn Mersey Tidal Power project and Towns Fund, the existing cultural and economic assets in the city centre and the Knowledge Quarter developments (£290m Paddington Village and £450m Upper Central) require bold investment in cross river connectivity. Our CRSTS ask includes £8m in new active travel infrastructure, £55m in a new city centre rail station, £33m for Birkenhead Central Gateway, £25m for St George's Gateway and £20m for cross river connectivity improvements.

Our Challenges

The LCR faces a set of unique and longstanding challenges in achieving its vision, many of which have worsened since the climate change emergency and COVID-19 and with disproportionate impacts across different groups:



Productivity

In economic and productivity terms, the LCR has historically lagged behind the UK average. GVA per head is only 74% of the UK level, with 11% growth in the last 5 years compared to 16% nationally. Per hour worked, GVA in the LCR is £31 compared to £34 nationally.



Economic Inactivity

In 2020, 24% of residents were economically inactive, compared to 20% nationally. Of which 30% (68,000) were out of work due to long-term sickness, compared to 23% nationally. Along with the productivity metric, these figures are indicative of a region in need of investment.



Skills Gap

10-20% of all adults in the city region have no NVQs and 60% of graduates leave the city region at the end of their studies. It is anticipated that local long-term unemployment will grow as a result, alongside other factors such as increasing automation and the number of people in sectors (such as hospitality and tourism) facing the worst disruption, as well as a fall in the overall number of job vacancies.



Deprivation

Significant pockets of multiple deprivation exist across the city region with almost half of the city region's neighbourhoods being in the top 20% most deprived nationally. Many of these areas show high car dependency, as often it is the only mode available for longer-distance journeys; however, this is an expensive option which limits people's ability to access opportunity.



Health & Wellbeing

The link between economic and health inequalities has intensified during the pandemic and is most acute in areas of high deprivation. Life expectancy varies by 25 years depending on where a person is born within the LCR. The health and economic impacts of COVID-19 risk widening inequalities and further entrenching deprivation in local communities.



Emissions

Transport now contributes 34% of all LCR emissions compared to just 23% in 2010. No subsectors within transport have seen significant reductions in carbon dioxide emissions between 2005 and 2018.



Air Quality

Poor air quality costs £480m and contributes to 800 deaths per year in the city region. While improvements were seen during the first national UK lockdown 2020, they were quickly reversed with air pollution returning to its pre-pandemic levels in Liverpool despite the city not returning to previous levels of economic activity.

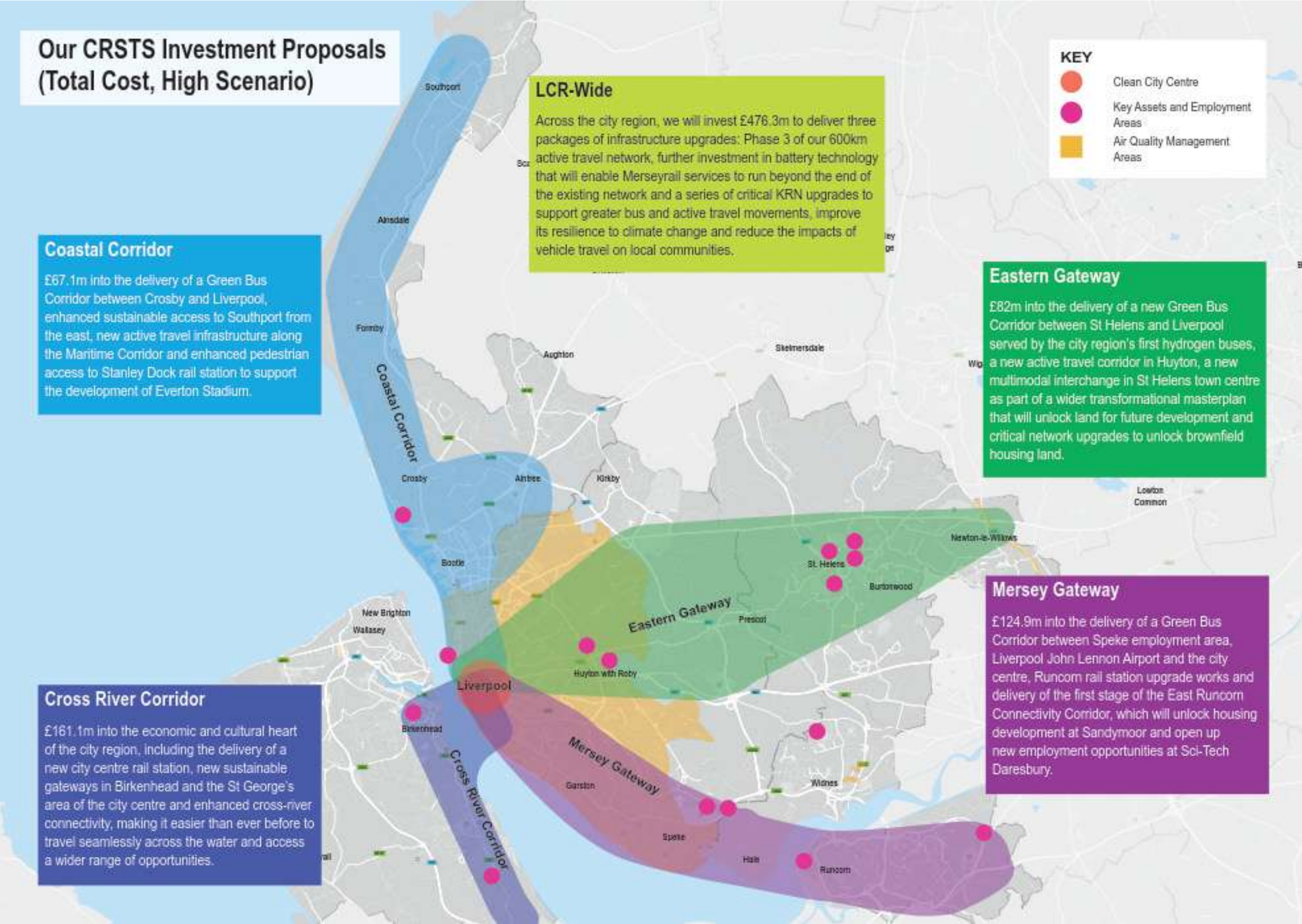
Despite the many challenges that the LCR faces, there are a number of opportunities that we can grasp to level up the economic, social and environmental outcomes we deliver and the ways in which those outcomes are distributed. The LCR economy, which is estimated to be worth £33bn (GVA), has been one of the fastest growing in the North of England over the last 10 years and offers significant opportunities to realise Government's levelling up aspirations. Our 'Building Back Better' economic recovery plan demonstrates how £1.4 billion in investment can unlock £8.8 billion of projects, which would create 94,000 permanent jobs and a further 28,000 short-term jobs in construction.

Our future prosperity depends on our ability to improve connectivity through a fully integrated, modern and inclusive transport network. Our CRSTS schemes will deliver transformational change, with investment prioritised into four strategic corridors and one LCR-wide package that best align with our most significant place-based challenges and opportunities for growth, are readily deliverable and can generate measurable impacts on productivity, levelling up and decarbonisation. We welcome the opportunity to work collaboratively with Government to achieve these common goals.

We will deliver:

- **A new St James station in Liverpool city centre, which, coupled with our IPEMU scheme and the ongoing development of Liverpool Central station will enable us to maximise the benefit of our £500m investment in new rolling stock;**
- **Three Green Bus Corridors which provide bus priority and upgraded passenger infrastructure on key corridors through some of the city region's largest residential areas, with one corridor served by the city region's first hydrogen buses; and**
- **The next phase of our 600km active travel network, which is already transforming access to safe, coherent walking and cycling routes that open up new employment opportunities.**

Together with targeted maintenance on the KRN and local road network, our CRSTS investment will induce mode shift, improve network safety, enhance the passenger experience and cut carbon.



Investment Corridor / Schemes	Total Cost (£m, High Scenario)	DfT Ask (£m)		Local Contribution (£m)		BCR (Based on DfT Ask)	
		Low	High	Low	High	Low	High
LCR-Wide							
LCWIP Phase 3	31	30	30	1	1	3.3	3.3
IPEMU – Network Expansion	101	27.1	71	3	30	5.5	7.3
Key Route Network Levelling Up	50	20	50	-	-	9.9	9.9
Highways Maintenance	221.7	126.4	221.7	-	-	>2	>2
Non-Highways Maintenance	11.3	7.6	11.3	-	-	>2	>2
TCF - Headbolt Lane Station	46.0	38.2	38.2	7.8	7.8	1.4	1.4
TCF - Active Travel	2.8	2.8	2.8	-	-	3.5	3.5
TCF - Hydrogen Buses	12.5	12.5	12.5	-	-	1.1	1.1
Cross River Corridor							
Liverpool Baltic Rail Station (St James)	66	55	55	11	11	2.7	2.67
Birkenhead Central Gateway	36	20	33	3	3	2.3	2.3
St Georges Gateway	28	10	25	3	3	2.3	2.2
Cross River Connectivity	22	12.5	20	2	2	2.2	2.8
Ropewalks Phase 2	9.1	8	8	1.1	1.1	3.3	3.3
Mersey Gateway							
LCWIP Phase 2 (Runcorn - Daresbury)	7	6	6	1	1	2.9	2.9
Runcorn Station Quarter Phase 2	15	10	10	5	5	2.9	2.9
Runcorn Busway Active Travel Corridor	20	3	10	10	10	2.9	2.9
East Runcorn Connectivity	50.9	15	30.9	20	20	2.9	2.9
Green Bus Corridor (86)	32	-	30	-	2	-	2.7
Eastern Gateway							
St Helens Town Centre Multimodal Interchange	14.7	7.5	10	4.7	4.7	3.8	4.1
M57 J4 Active Travel Improvements	10	7.5	10	-	-	3.1	3.0
St Helens Routes to Regeneration	14.3	7.5	10	4.3	4.3	1.8	1.8
Huyton Active Travel Corridor	11	7.5	10	1	1	3.1	3.1
Green Bus Corridor (10a)	32	30	30	4	2	2.2	2.7
Coastal Corridor							
Southport Eastern Access	13.1	10	12	1.1	1.1	3.6	3.6
Stanley Dock Rail Access (Sandhills)	8	3	3	5	5	1.9	1.9
Maritime Corridor	13	10	12	1	1	4.5	4.5
Green Bus Corridor (53)	33	-	30	-	3	-	2.7
Totals	911.4	487.1	792.4	89	119		

Delivering Our Vision

In our Transport Plan we set out a strategic vision for a comprehensive, affordable, reliable transport network, that is integrated and easy to use and that supports the development of healthy, sustainable communities.

A series of strategic objectives articulate what we need to do to deliver our vision, aligned to the economic, environmental, social and specific transport challenges faced:

- To support inclusive economic growth and levelling up with a transport system that effectively moves people and goods;
- To exploit the city region's role as a global gateway accessible by all forms of transport;
- To deliver a new mobility culture, where transport services are modern, safe, clean, healthy and inclusive;
- To deliver a transport system that supports the health and wellbeing of residents and supports the move to net zero carbon by 2040; and
- To provide a safe, resilient and well maintained transport network.

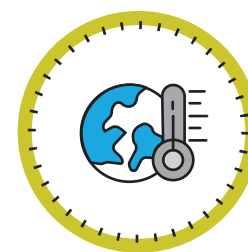
These objectives also align with many of the well-evidenced principles in the in the Transport for the North (TfN) Strategic Transport Plan.

Fundamental to the delivery of our vision is making public transport the natural choice for longer journeys and walking and cycling the natural choice for shorter journeys, in line with our LCWIP. Evidence shows that two thirds of journeys made in the LCR are less than 5km and 50% of those are made by car. Furthermore, as the country's foremost Transatlantic Port, we are committed to exploring clean, sustainable solutions for freight.

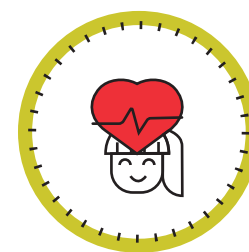
"A City Region committed to a low carbon future, which has a transport network and mobility culture that positively contributes to a thriving economy and the health and wellbeing of its citizens and where sustainable travel is the option of choice."
[Existing LTP3]

The Transport Plan builds on the ambitions set out in our statutory Local Transport Plan in terms of the importance of decarbonising the transport system, offering modal choice and improving health and wellbeing, priorities which remain at the forefront of our investment strategies.

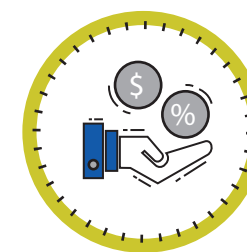
Together with our forthcoming Plan for Prosperity, our Economic Recovery Plan and emerging Spatial Development Strategy, these documents set the policy framework in which our Transport Pipeline was developed, based on the following five themes:



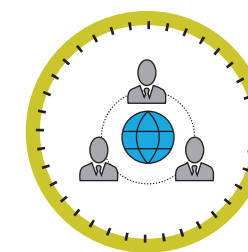
**Climate
Change and
Environment**



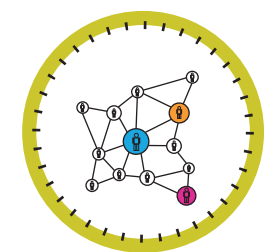
**Health
and
Wellbeing**



**Inclusive
Economy**



**Placemaking
and
Communities**



**Social
Value**

We have now embarked on the development of a new statutory LTP, which will articulate the Metro Mayor's vision for transport in more detail.

The time is right to produce Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) as:

- We are able to draw on new economic forecasts that include COVID recovery scenarios and assess our proposals using the DfT's recently published Uncertainty Toolkit, to facilitate planning in an uncertain world;
- The development of our evidence-based Plan for Prosperity as a successor to the Local Industrial Strategy and the forthcoming Climate Action Plan and Spatial Development Strategy provide a strong and co-dependent basis for the Plan; and
- The publication of the Government's Transport Decarbonisation Plan, the TfN Decarbonisation Plan, Gear Change and Bus Back Better provide very clear, externally and locally significant policy drivers for the development of the Plan.

We are undertaking broad consultation on our Spatial Development Strategy, which will inform the vision for LTP4. In the context of an uncertain future, LTP4 will include a range of future travel demand scenarios, against which policies and investment can be assessed, as well as examining the forecast carbon impacts of each scenario. From this, a detailed transport strategy and delivery plan will follow, which will undergo further consultation in summer 2022. Following statutory assessments, including Strategic Impact Assessment and Equalities Impact Assessments, the intention is to secure formal adoption of LTP4 in 2022.

Our Strategic Investment Fund (SIF) enables us to take a strategic view of infrastructure requirements, irrespective of the form they take.

The CRSTS will form a ringfenced part of this strategic investment fund and other SIF funds will support complementary infrastructure enhancements, including the remediation of land and property, retrofitting energy inefficient homes and supporting the ongoing vitality of our towns and city centre.

We recognise the local contribution needed to support our capital ask of Government and in developing our CRSTS portfolio, we have accelerated an existing process to identify new, local sources of complementary funding to support greater outcomes. **We have identified a local contribution of £119m (21% of the total value and 15% of our entire ask) towards our high value CRSTS programme, comprised solely of non-Governmental funding including £35m from Riverside to deliver housing in East Runcorn and a total of £6.2m from the Freshfield Foundation and Sustrans to deliver our Liveable Neighbourhoods programme.** Our local contribution from the Rolling Stock programme is circa £500m, part of which will be used to support our CRSTS programme.

In addition, we are exploring new and innovative funding sources to add value to our CRSTS and wider investment programmes, including:

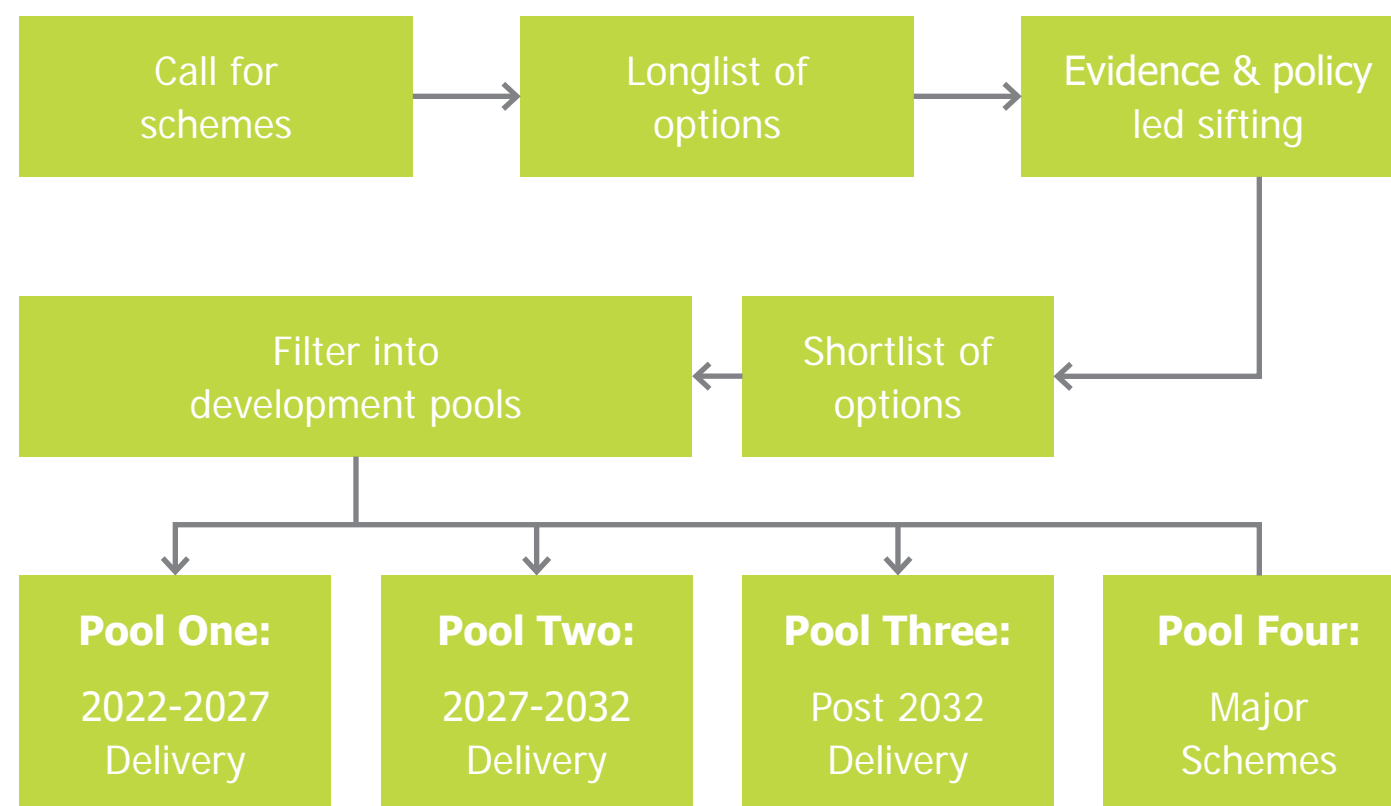
- Options to reinvest surplus income from the Mersey Tunnels via the Mersey Tunnels Act;
- Options to generate further income from other key LCRCA assets;

- Consideration of a tax increment financing scheme, funded on the Business Rates Retention Scheme introduced in 2013-14;
- Local authority bonds; and
- Traffic Management Act powers.

Developing Our Transport Pipeline

The Transport Pipeline Options Appraisal Report in Annex A evidences in full how we developed our refreshed pipeline and CRSTS priority schemes, based on a robust evidence base and vision for transport.

Transport Pipeline Development Process I



The constituent local authorities and LCRCA delivery teams submitted circa 230 concepts for consideration as part of the long list, with a total estimated value of £3-6bn. A qualitative assessment discounted proposals inconsistent with the principles and priorities set out in our economic recovery plan Building Back Better, the Combined Authority Transport Plan, LTP3 and the emerging LTP4. The wider LCR policy context, including the Bus, Long Term Rail and Local Journeys strategies supported further decision making, as well as our housing and skills strategies.

The process resulted in strong proposals for active travel, public transport and re-purposing streets as part of a wider liveable neighbourhoods concept, which support our green, people and place focused recovery. These proposals formed the short list of options that was filtered into four pools:

Pool 1	Pool 2	Pool 3	Pool 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affordable Readily deliverable Offer value for money Prioritised for Business Case development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium term Further work required to confirm the Strategic Outline Case 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long term Feasibility Studies required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major schemes (£>100m) including Liverpool Central and HS2/NPR Station, will also go through the same development process

A value for money assessment indicates our schemes offer high value for money, and initial carbon appraisal demonstrates the impacts on carbon and how they contribute to the LCR and UK net zero targets, as shown in the Impacts section of this prospectus.

A total of 20 schemes were placed into Pool 1 as priority schemes for delivery in 2022-2027 and, following an additional qualitative assessment based on the three key CRSTS objectives of Growth and Productivity, Levelling Up and Decarbonisation, these form our CRSTS programme for 2022/23 to 2026/27.

Our CRSTS schemes best address our key challenges of comparatively low productivity and economic inactivity, poor health and wellbeing and decarbonisation and are aligned with our wider strategic investment.

We have developed a logic-driven investment package that responds to the challenges and opportunities and demonstrates measurable impacts on growth and productivity, levelling up, decarbonisation and health and wellbeing.

Our Logic Map is presented in Annex N.

What We Will Deliver

We have prioritised investment into four corridors and one complementary LCR-wide programme of infrastructure upgrades, to maximise the value delivered to our communities in the short term.

Our investment (detailed in Annexes B to E) is drawn directly from our refreshed Transport Pipeline; our single, coherent programme of transport investment up to and beyond 2032 that is based on robust evidence, responds directly to local and national economic, social, environmental and transport priorities and will deliver tangible, significant improvements for transport users.

We have developed a CRSTS programme that responds to Government's request for a low capital funding scenario (£480m) and a high scenario (£790m). The cost of delivering the schemes within our programme is £792.4m and we are committed to this full investment. A lower allocation will require de-scoping each scheme, reducing the level of impacts achieved.

Each of our priority investment corridors will include measures to enhance sustainable access to and from Liverpool city centre, home to the greatest proportion of productive economic and cultural assets and the largest amount of complementary investment. This will facilitate faster, more reliable access to economic opportunities for people and businesses and efficient freight movements along key corridors.

However, we understand the need for investment directly into our town centres and local communities, which are in more urgent need of levelling up supported by better connectivity. There is also a need for improved connectivity to our neighbouring regions. For these reasons we will also invest in local transport schemes that support local access to transformational growth, revitalised town centres, access to employment and/or intracity movements. These include enhanced access to Southport and improved active travel links between Runcorn, Sci-Tech Daresbury and planned housing growth.

Our investment in Southport directly supports the LCR's first Liveable Neighbourhood, delivered in partnership with Sustrans and the Freshfield Foundation and further Liveable Neighbourhoods will follow at Lodge Lane (Liverpool), Cowley Hill (St Helens) and Wirral, aligned to our transport investment.

This coordinated package of investment at different spatial levels will support movements within local communities and longer journeys, with enhanced connections to opportunities across the city region. The benefits of the investment will be evident within each corridor and more widely, supporting several strategic, long-term transport investment proposals, including:

Liverpool Central

Capacity, accessibility and safety enhancements at the city centre's busiest rail station, coupled with the creation of a multi-use hub integrated into private sector financed retail development and improved public realm and active modes infrastructure will transform the sense of arrival into the heart of the retail core.

Northern Powerhouse Rail/HS2 City Centre Multimodal Station

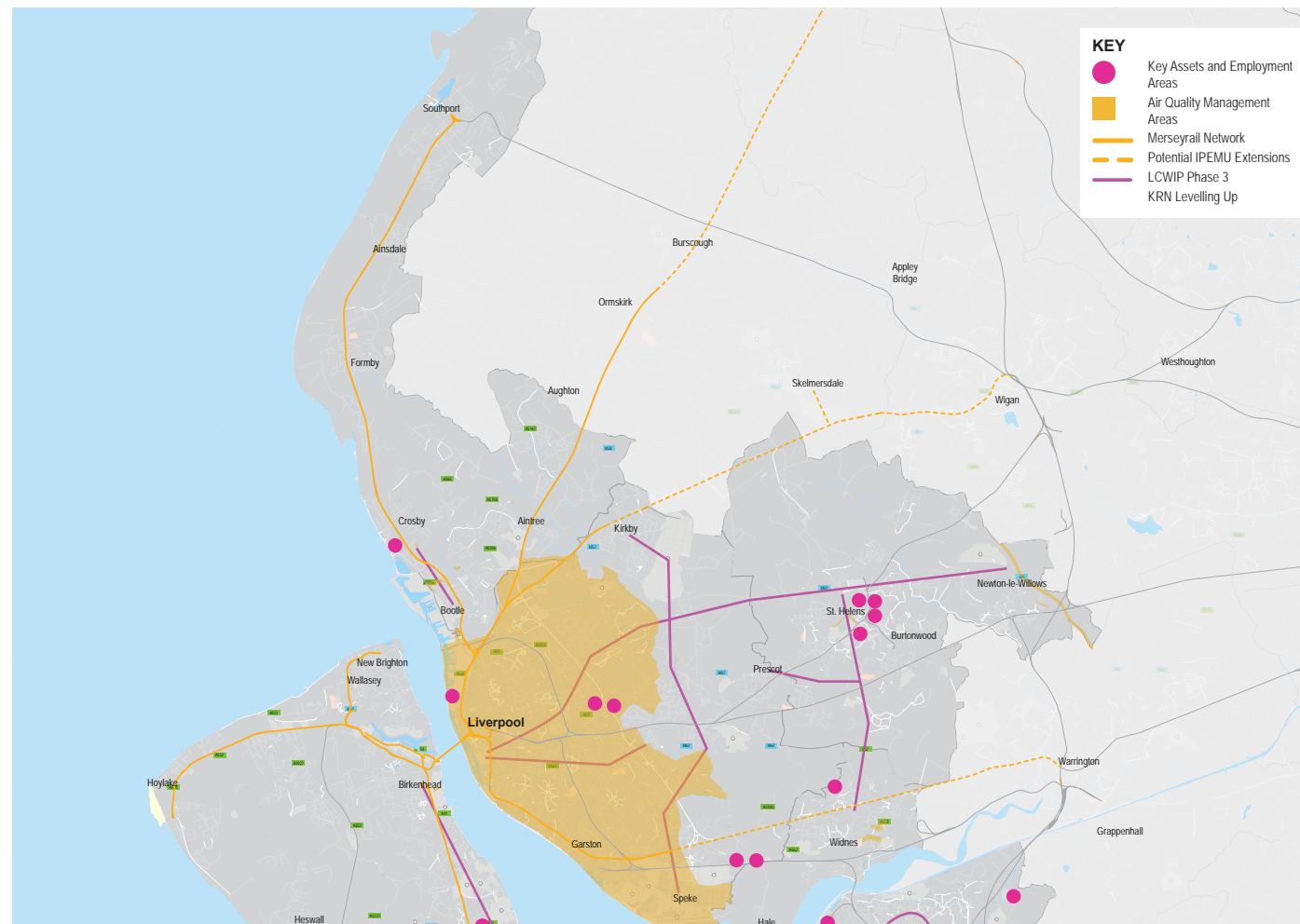
Government and TfN have developed proposals that link the LCR to HS2 and the NPR network, transforming strategic connectivity and releasing capacity on the current network for additional freight services and new local passenger services.

Parkside Multimodal Site

A key asset that will in future facilitate better port connectivity and help re-balance UK freight movements, as part of the City Region's Freeport proposals for which an Outline Business Case is currently under development.

Where our CRSTS schemes align with our Dig Once digital infrastructure strategy, we will seek to install digital infrastructure, delivering a saving of up to 50% on alternative methods of digital infrastructure provision.

LCR-WIDE



We will implement three key active modes and public transport projects across the LCR, maximising the benefits delivered to our communities:

LCWIP Phase 3

Delivery of the third phase of our 600km high-quality walking and cycling network in line with our LCWIP, to improve active travel connectivity to and from Liverpool city centre, St Helens, Knowsley, Birkenhead and Runcorn and offer segregated, coherent routes supported by clear and consistent signage and high-quality cycle parking facilities.

Independently Powered Electric Multiple-Unit

Expansion of the IPEMU project, which we trialled successfully through TCF, to fit Merseyrail trains with battery technology to enable services to run beyond the end of the existing network and enhance public transport connectivity.

KRN Levelling Up

Delivery of a focused programme of KRN upgrades (detailed in Annexes C and D alongside other upgrades) aligned to our investment in the 2022/23 to 2026/27 priority schemes, to provide a fit for purpose, resilient, high-quality highway network for travel by bus, walk and cycle and reduce negative noise and air quality issues for local communities.

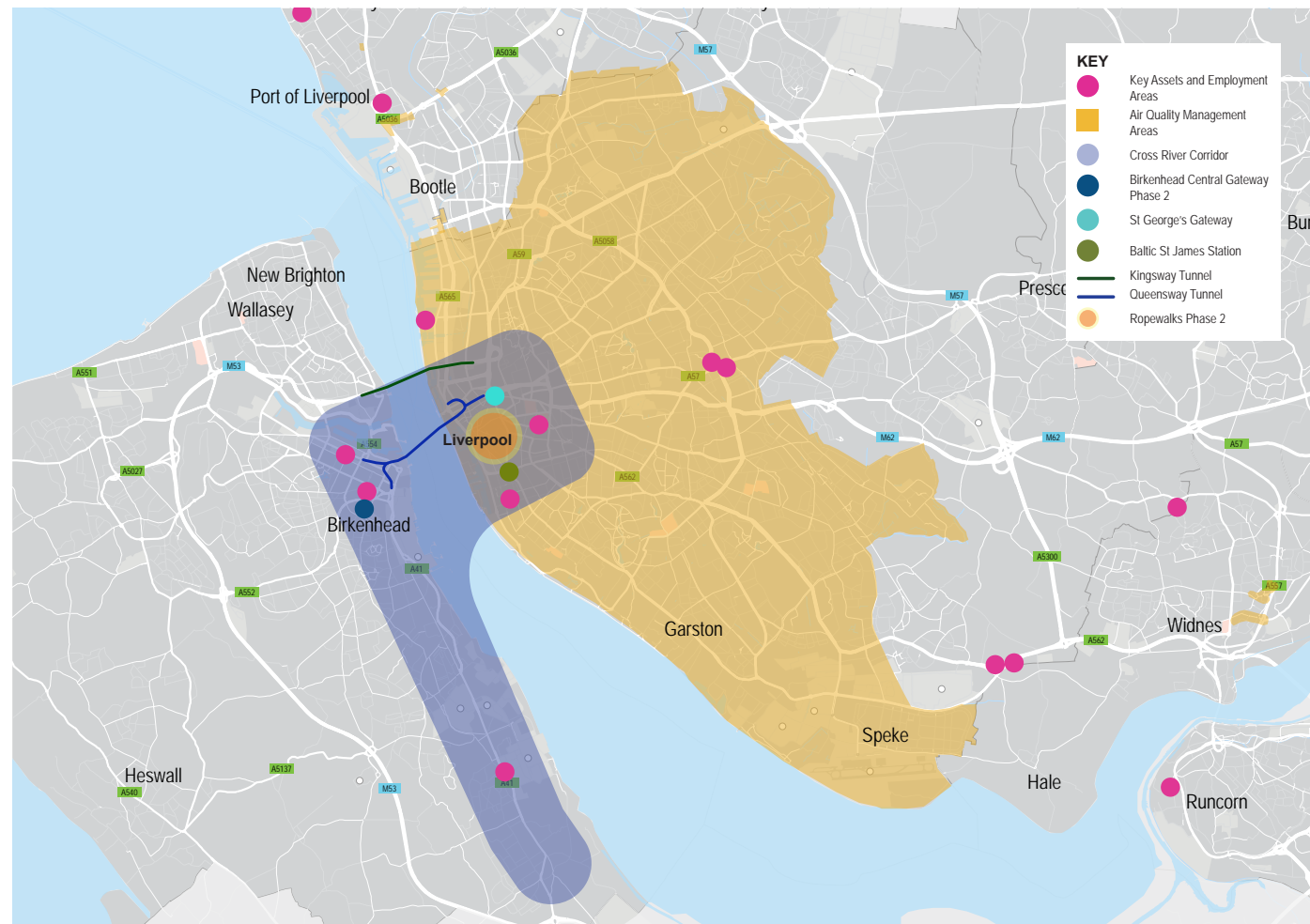
Highways Maintenance

These maintenance packages will deliver key improvements to the City Region's highway network and transport systems. Investing in the wider network and improving the road condition will relieve congestion and improve safety for active travel, bus and other road users. Benefits will extend beyond transport, improving access to key sites in the city region for education, housing, health, growth and productivity.

Historic under-investment means that we currently have a backlog of critical network maintenance activity, and the low funding scenario would only enable us to partially address this backlog, without delivering any wider investment aligned to our CRSTS investment corridors and other strategic investment. We would then need to make difficult decisions that will impact on mode choice and the effective movement of people. As an example, under the high funding scenario our KRN and local road maintenance activity will align with our proposed Green Bus Corridor along the 86 route in South Liverpool, maximising the benefits of complementary investment in bus priority and our active travel network and linking to other key areas of investment in Liverpool city centre and in key employment areas in Speke. Without this coordinated approach, our ability to achieve mode shift and decarbonise the network will be limited.

Project	Driving Growth & Productivity	Levelling Up Towards the Standards of the Best	Decarbonising Transport & Encouraging Modal Shift	Outputs	Delivery	VfM	DfT Ask (£m)
LCWIP Phase 3	New, high-quality active travel routes will enhance sustainable connectivity between housing sites and employment, opening up new opportunities.	All walking and cycling infrastructure will be LTN 1/20 compliant, with segregated routes provided where possible within local constraints. Signage will be clear and consistent, and routes cohesive and without gaps.	The scheme will deliver £1.7m of decongestion benefits and facilitate an uplift in the use of active modes by providing safe infrastructure aligned to key origins and destinations.	52.8km of new and upgraded walking and cycling routes; 49 hectares of upgraded natural habitat; £29.3m health benefits	2024	BCR: 3.3 (local sensitivity test); £86m of monetised benefits	30
IPEMU Extension	New battery technology will enable Merseyrail trains to run beyond the end of the existing network, opening up new employment opportunities.	New rolling stock will provide passengers with a fully accessible, high-quality journey experience, with enhanced connectivity within and beyond the city region.	The project will support an uplift in public transport use using clean fuel technology.	Rolling stock with new battery technology In future, an expanded Merseyrail network to all boroughs	2025	BCR: 7.3; £935m of monetised benefits	71
KRN Levelling Up	Calculated time and vehicle cost savings reduce journey times for commuters and businesses, enabling quicker movement of people and goods.	A resilient KRN is critical to the delivery of bus priority measures and high-quality walking and cycling routes, as well as reducing noise and air quality issues.	The investment will facilitate greater use of public transport and active modes, driving mode shift.	Upgrades to the 24% of the KRN network that is in 'late life' condition, with improved ride quality and resilience.	2026	BCR: 9.9; £410m of monetised benefits	50
Highways Maintenance	Improving the condition of the highway network will reduce congestion and improve journeys for active travel, bus and other users.	A resilient highways network is critical to the delivery of bus priority measures and high-quality walking and cycling routes, as well as reducing noise and air quality issues.	The investment will facilitate greater use of public transport and active modes, driving mode shift.	Complimentary package of maintenance measures to tackle structures, Potholes, Flooding issues, Technology/Communication upgrades and active travel.	2027	BCR: >2	221.7
Non-Highways Maintenance	Maintaining the wider transport network will improve the resilience and reliability of services for public transport and active travel users.	A resilient public transport network is crucial for serving all areas of the city region, improving accessibility to employment, education and health services.	The investment will facilitate greater use of public transport and active modes, driving mode shift.	Supporting maintenance to improve our Ferry, Bus and Rail assets.	2027	BCR: >2	11.3
TCF – Headbolt Lane Station	New rail connectivity will provide access to new and existing employment opportunities across the City Region.	The new station will provide direct access to the rail network in a deprived area of the city region where car ownership is low.	A new rail station with a 15-minute peak time frequency will provide a genuine alternative to the car for longer journeys.	A new rail station, car park and active travel links to the station.	2023	BCR: 1.4	38.2
TCF – Active Travel	Active travel routes will enhance sustainable connectivity between housing sites and employment, opening up new opportunities.	All walking and cycling infrastructure will be LTN 1/20 compliant, with segregated routes provided where possible within local constraints. Signage will be clear and consistent, and routes cohesive and without gaps.	The scheme will deliver £1.7m of decongestion benefits and facilitate an uplift in the use of active modes by providing safe infrastructure aligned to key origins and destinations.	25km of new and upgraded walking and cycling routes.	2023	BCR: 3.5	2.8
TCF – Hydrogen Buses	The new buses will provide an attractive user experience, connecting passengers to key employment sites in the city region.	The 10a Liverpool – St Helens corridor serves areas of high deprivation in east Liverpool, Knowsley and St Helens, providing reliable links to key centres of opportunity.	Shifting fuel to Hydrogen from Diesel on the route will significantly reduce carbon emissions.	20 Hydrogen Buses.	2023	BCR: 1.1	12.5
Total DfT Ask:							437.5

Cross River Corridor



The Cross River Corridor encompasses the economic and cultural heart of the city region, focused on Liverpool city centre on the eastern side of the River Mersey and Birkenhead on the west side, in Wirral. Home to around 360,000 jobs, it hosts a series of key economic assets including:

- World-leading health expertise through the world's first School of Tropical Medicine and the Knowledge Quarter - one of the largest academic and clinical campuses in the UK.
- The Wirral Waters mixed use development, including the Maritime Knowledge Hub centre of excellence.
- A growing creative and digital cluster around the Baltic Triangle.
- A world-class cultural and visitor offer centred around the historic waterfront, the Grade I listed buildings in St Georges Gateway and new attractions such as Eureka.

We will ensure that the high growth areas of Wirral Waters, Baltic Triangle and the Knowledge Quarter are fully integrated with the centres of Birkenhead and Liverpool (and their major transport hubs). By providing high quality active travel infrastructure we will facilitate the uptake of walking and cycling as the clear modal preferences for moving around the central areas and for seamless access to the major bus and rail stations, including a new rail station at the heart of Liverpool's rapidly expanding creative and digital cluster.

We will provide a new public transport gateway to Liverpool's rapidly growing Baltic Triangle, a creative and digital cluster and residential area which sits at the southern edge of the city centre and which is currently poorly served by the public transport network. The new St James station will transform movement in this area, providing a high-frequency, high-quality direct public transport link that will induce mode shift from car. This new gateway will also benefit surrounding deprived residential communities, providing fast, clean connectivity around the LCR.

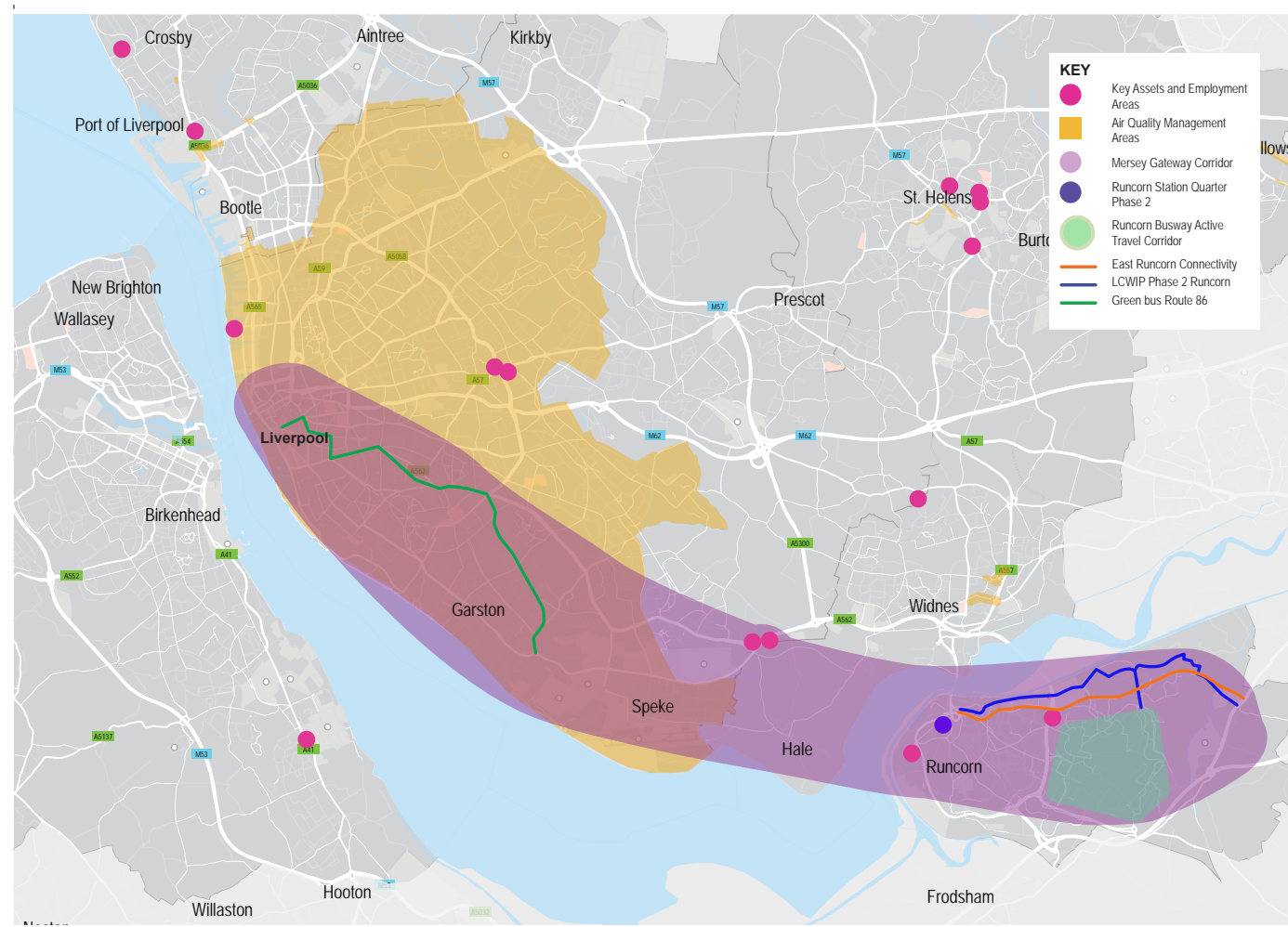
We will ensure that the LCR major transport hubs in Liverpool city centre are resilient now and in future, We will undertake a GRIP 4 study for Liverpool Central station, the city region's busiest Merseyrail station at the heart of the retail core. This is critical in the context of existing station capacity and last mile connectivity issues coupled with the imminent introduction of new rolling stock that offers 50% more capacity.

We will modernise the Kingsway and Queensway tunnel approaches and toll plazas to reduce congestion and improve journey time reliability for critical cross-river bus services, helping to induce mode shift and improving air quality.

Investment into critical maintenance on the KRN will ensure that our highways support safe, reliable and efficient journeys by bus, walking and cycling, as well as increasing the resilience of our KRN to the effects of climate change.

Project	Driving Growth & Productivity	Levelling Up Towards the Standards of the Best	Decarbonising Transport & Encouraging Modal Shift	Outputs	Delivery	VfM	DfT Ask (£m)
Baltic St James Station	A new station that provides direct rail access to the city centre's growing creative and digital cluster opens up new labour catchments and provides the connectivity that investors will expect.	The station's catchment includes areas of significant deprivation and will provide a high-quality public transport link for those areas, supporting access to opportunity.	A new rail station with a 15-minute peak time frequency will provide a genuine alternative to the car for journeys to and from this part of the city centre, which is within an AQMA.	New rail station with forecast annual passenger demand of 3 million (entries & exits)	2025	BCR: 2.6; £167m of monetised benefits	55
Cross River Connectivity	This investment will reduce congestion at the tunnel approaches and toll plaza, improving journey times and enabling easier movement of people and goods in this important cross-river corridor that links two Enterprise Zones and employment centres.	A reduction in congestion will improve journey times and journey quality and improve air quality issues, which are linked to poor health. Cross-river bus services will become quicker and more attractive.	Removing the congestion bottlenecks at the tunnel approaches will significantly improve air quality in the centres of Birkenhead and Liverpool, reducing carbon emissions and improving health.	Reconfiguration of the toll plazas at the Kingsway and Queensway tunnels; journey time reductions	2024	BCR: 2.7; £58m of monetised benefits	20
Ropewalks Phase 2	Ropewalks is one of the city centre's core leisure destinations and is a key route between the city centre, its transport hubs and the Baltic Triangle. Investment in active travel will improve sustainable connectivity and the quality of the environment, attracting additional investment.	The delivery of high-quality public realm and active modes infrastructure will improve Ropewalks as a place to visit, live and invest. This in turn will drive employment growth and wider development.	The prevalence of private vehicles in Ropewalks is detrimental to air quality and the safety of pedestrians and cyclists. Traffic re-routing and new infrastructure will address issues of severance and make active modes more attractive, reducing emissions.	LTN 1/20 compliant new and upgraded walking and cycling links; improved quality of public realm	2024	BCR: 3.2; £24m of monetised benefits	8
Birkenhead Central Gateway Phase 2	This project delivers three of the eight catalytic projects articulated within the Birkenhead 2040 framework and will enable the development of new neighbourhoods with significant capacity for new homes and employment space in the context of the wider regeneration of Birkenhead town centre.	This project underpins the significant regeneration planned for Birkenhead town centre – including the key Wirral Waters development with its Maritime Knowledge Hub. The area will provide new housing and high-value employment opportunities.	The project delivers active travel and green infrastructure to support key regeneration sites in central Birkenhead. These assets will make it significantly more attractive to travel around the town centre on foot or by cycle.	LTN 1/20 compliant new and upgraded walking and cycling links; improved quality of public realm	2024	BCR: 2.2; £67m of monetised benefits	33
St George's Gateway	The St George's Gateway package of active travel and public realm enhancements will link the city centre, Lime Street station, Liverpool John Moores University and the Knowledge Quarter, better integrating this high value growth area and providing enhanced sustainable connectivity.	The Knowledge Quarter and universities are a key catalyst of high value opportunity creation and the provision of sustainable links to city centre transport hubs ensures a high-quality integrated transport experience for employees, visitors and residents.	The investment will address the current unattractiveness of walking and cycling in this part of the city centre, reducing severance and providing high-quality segregated routes.	LTN 1/20 compliant new and upgraded walking and cycling links; improved quality of public realm	2024	BCR: 2.1; £50m of monetised benefits	25
Total DfT Ask:							141

Mersey Gateway



The Mersey Gateway corridor draws together the advanced manufacturing and science clusters along the Mersey estuary in Halton and south Liverpool. The corridor includes:

- The Sci-Tech Daresbury enterprise zone, home to the renowned Daresbury Laboratory and the Hartree Centre.
- Advanced chemicals manufacturing around Weston Point in Runcorn.
- Automotive and pharmaceutical manufacturing in south Liverpool.
- Liverpool John Lennon Airport, the City Region's international air passenger gateway.

This cluster of high-value assets has the potential to drive growth not only within the LCR, but regionally and nationally through the supply chain and

research and innovation. Transport investment in this corridor will strengthen the links between these assets and the City Region's labour pool, centres of academia and research, and domestic and international markets.

We will provide a multi-modal solution to unlock housing and employment growth in East Runcorn, including the Daresbury Enterprise Zone. The combined active modes/highway solution will improve connectivity to Halton and neighbouring Warrington, unlock 71 hectares of development land and provide a cycle superhighway linking Halton to Warrington along the A56 corridor.

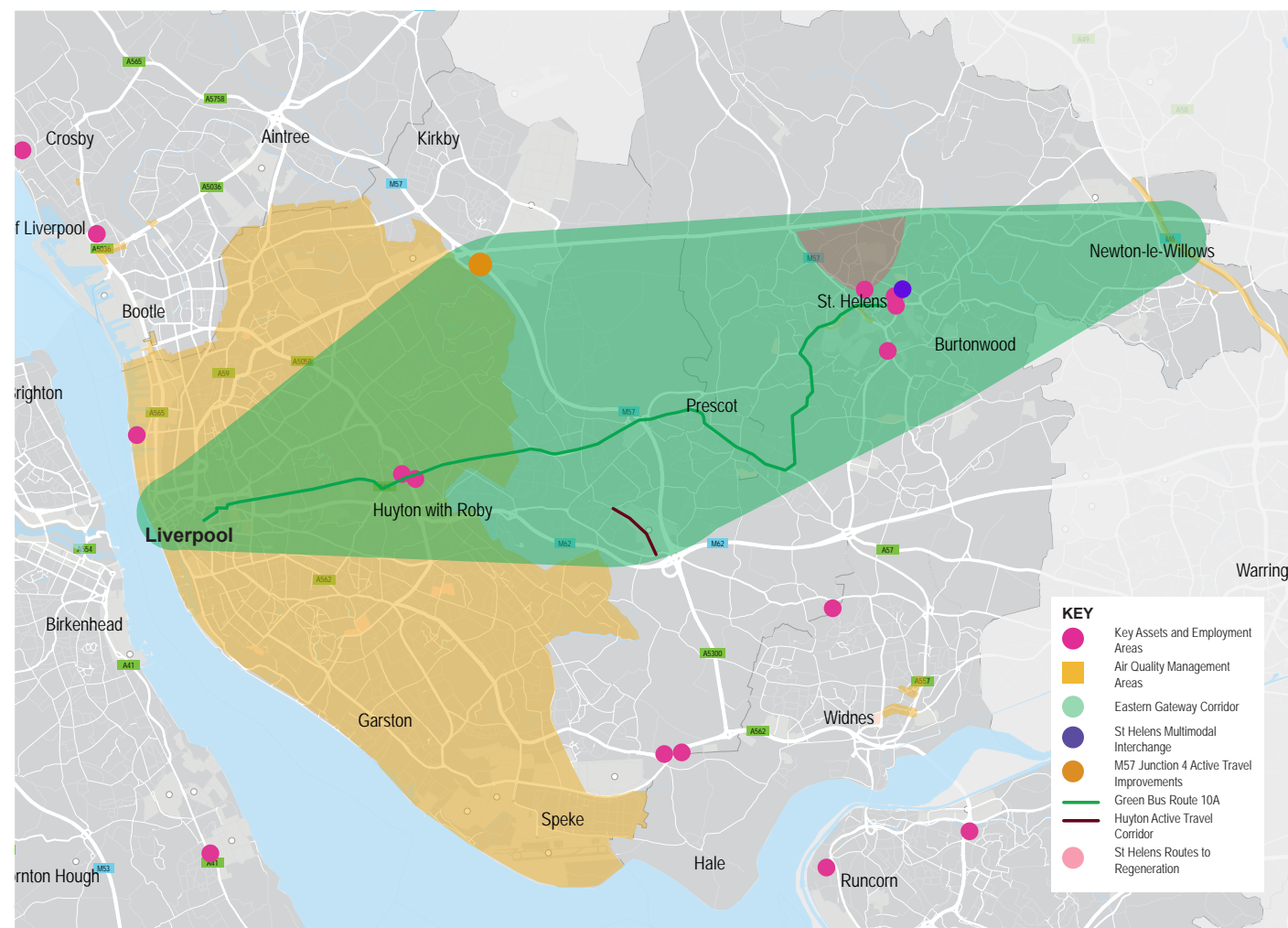
We will remodel Runcorn Station, maximising the value from our TCF Station Quarter project which is creating a new gateway to the town supported by stronger active travel links and providing passengers with a much higher level of journey quality. The station operator Avanti West Coast has demonstrated its support in the letter provided in Annex M.

We will also invest in segregated active travel infrastructure to provide sustainable links between major employment and housing sites within Halton. By providing an attractive alternative to private car for these shorter trips, we can reduce car dependency in deprived communities as well as strengthening links between high value employers and their adjacent communities. The investment will also improve safety for existing users by completely segregating active travellers from busway and highway infrastructure. The investment will also support the regeneration of two large housing areas in the borough.

A Green Bus Corridor will be delivered linking Garston to Liverpool city centre. A combination of traffic signal upgrades, priority lanes and remodelled junctions, the corridor will deliver improved bus journey times and reliability through some of the City Region's most deprived areas whilst improving connectivity between the city centre and the advanced manufacturing and airport sites in south Liverpool.

Project	Driving Growth & Productivity	Levelling Up Towards the Standards of the Best	Decarbonising Transport & Encouraging Modal Shift	Outputs	Delivery	VfM	DfT Ask (£m)
Runcorn Station Quarter Phase 2	The creation of a new station gateway and rebuilt station will offer passengers a significantly enhanced arrival into Runcorn, with better active travel links to the town centre, complementing associated investment through the Town Deal and making Runcorn a much more attractive place to live, work and invest in.	Runcorn can become a catalyst for wider regeneration and growth in Halton, providing sustainable access to labour pools, national markets and supply chains for high value advanced manufacturing in the area.	Improving the coherence between the station and the town centre will improve the attractiveness of rail in relation to private car for trips to the town. It also improves the walkability of Runcorn as a town and provides an attractive alternative to using private car for short trips.	A rebuilt Runcorn rail station, providing local access within the city region and nationally on the West Coast Main Line	2026	BCR: 2.9; £26m of monetised benefits	10
Runcorn Busway Active Travel Corridor	The project connects Runcorn town centre to its residential communities and employment centres, ensuring clean, safe and fast access to employment, education and recreation whilst ensuring that employers are enabled to grow through access to the labour market.	The project delivers high quality alternatives to private car travel for communities in Halton, many of which suffer from deprivation and lack of access to private car.	The project significantly improves the safety and attractiveness of active travel for trips around Halton through segregated infrastructure, which will remove existing barriers to use. By extension, the project will remove local car journeys from the highway network, improving both air quality and carbon emissions.	Repurposing a bus-only corridor to include active travel, linking Runcorn to major housing developments and employment zones	2023	BCR: 2.9; £27m of monetised benefits	10
LCWIP Phase 2 (Runcorn to Daresbury)	A new LTN 1/20 compliant active travel route will link Runcorn with Sci-Tech Daresbury, a key employment and growth hub with plans for a further 10,000 jobs and new housing development, supporting sustainable accessibility and enabling further growth.	The infrastructure will provide a high-quality, direct route between the town centre and employment/housing sites, offering the best possible standard in active modes connectivity.	The new route will provide a viable alternative to vehicle use for people travelling between the two areas, reducing traffic and associated emissions and improving levels of physical activity and health.	A new LTN 1/20 compliant active travel route between Runcorn and Daresbury	2022	BCR: 2.9; £22m of monetised benefits	6
East Runcorn Connectivity	This package of interventions aims to maximise the potential for housing, employment and productivity growth in east Runcorn by improving connectivity to the Daresbury Enterprise Zone from Halton and neighbouring Warrington.	The Enterprise Zone and adjacent employment sites provide a centre of high value employment to Halton and the wider City Region. Addressing access constraints spreads the benefit of these assets by enabling faster and more reliable access.	The package includes significant investment in active modes infrastructure, improving sustainable links to the employment zones and to the nearby housing growth sites, facilitating mode shift for shorter distance trips.	Enhanced multimodal connectivity between Runcorn and Daresbury	2025	BCR: 2.9; £74m of monetised benefits	30.9
Green Bus Corridor 86	The Green Bus Corridor will provide a high-quality bus priority route between Liverpool city centre and Speke / Liverpool John Lennon Airport, close to advanced manufacturing assets in south Liverpool. It will offer passengers a fast, reliable and clean link between both growth areas, supporting greater access to employment.	The route serves a dense suburban corridor with a large student population and a large concentration of employment opportunities. A frequent, high-quality public transport route will drive mode shift, employment and business growth and cleaner air through the future deployment of hydrogen buses.	The delivery of the Green Bus Corridor will significantly enhance the attractiveness of bus and encourage modal shift from car. Improved bus journey times and reduced congestion at key pinchpoints will reduce emissions and improve passenger satisfaction.	A Green Bus Corridor with faster and more reliable journey times and enhanced journey quality	2026	BCR: 2.2; £212m of monetised benefits (3 routes)	30
Total DfT Ask:							86.9

Eastern Gateway



The Eastern Gateway is the City Region's central residential belt, linking Liverpool, Knowsley and St Helens and beyond to neighbouring Warrington and Greater Manchester. The corridor includes important advanced manufacturing assets such as Glass Futures and research facilities in St Helens, major east-west transport arteries and extensive residential areas, many of which experience high levels of deprivation.

Transport investment in this corridor will support transformational regeneration, facilitate the delivery of significant new housing and employment and improve the connectivity of important high-value employment sites. This will be achieved through the targeted delivery of active travel infrastructure and public transport improvements to reduce car dependency for trips between residential and employment sites.

We will deliver a package of multimodal interchange improvements and public realm enhancements to support the radical regeneration of St Helens town centre that is being delivered by St Helens Council in partnership with the English Cities Fund (ECF). By improving public transport hub infrastructure and active travel links across the town centre, we will reduce car dependency in support of the ambitious ECF partnership activity and help unlock land for future development.

North of St Helens town centre, we will reallocate road space on the KRN to provide safe and reliable routes for walking, cycling and bus travel, supporting the consented Cowley Hill housing development that is being delivered on brownfield land and unlocking additional land for further development.

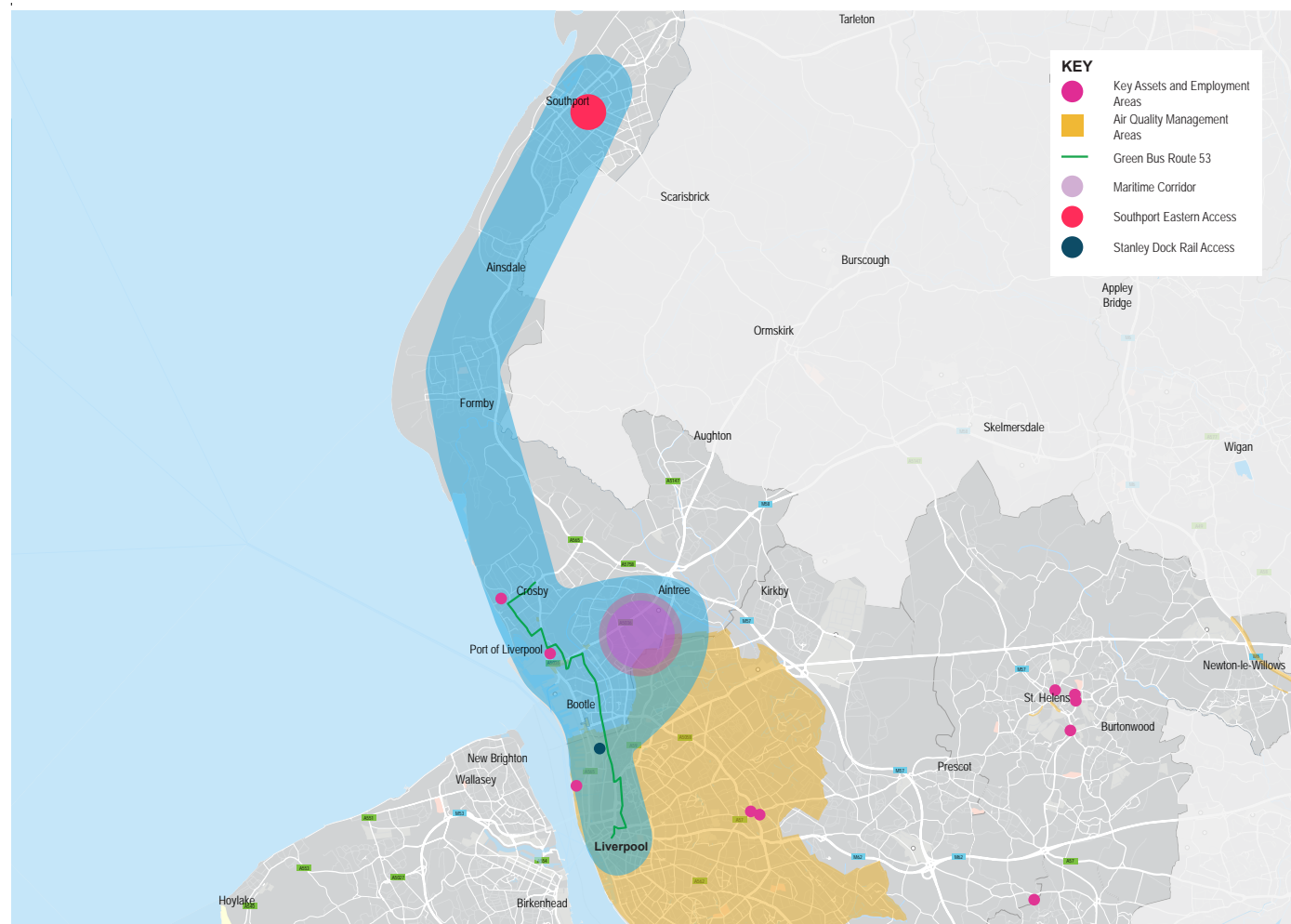
At Junction 4 of the M57, we will deliver walking and cycling infrastructure, bus priority measures and full signalisation to relieve the pinchpoint and reduce the level of emissions and noise associated with queuing traffic. Combined, the solutions will create capacity for housing and industrial growth, linking them to employment zones in Knowsley.

In Huyton, segregated walking and cycling infrastructure will connect Knowsley Business Park (the city region's largest business park which is home to 800 businesses and 15,100 employees) with the town centre and rail station, providing clean and safe end-to-end journey opportunities and targeting the current high reliance on car for short trips. This investment will complement the wider investment in Huyton Village Centre proposed by Knowsley Council in its £20m Levelling Up Fund bid, including support for a new mixed use commercial district and improvements to the station gateway.

A new Green Bus Corridor will provide a new high-quality public transport link between St Helens and Liverpool city centre via Knowsley's key employment areas, served by the city region's first hydrogen buses. This will address worsening journey time and passenger satisfaction issues and provide a clean, reliable service on a corridor with comparatively low levels of car ownership.

Project	Driving Growth & Productivity	Levelling Up Towards the Standards of the Best	Decarbonising Transport & Encouraging Modal Shift	Outputs	Delivery	VfM	DfT Ask (£m)
St Helens Multimodal Interchange	The interchange and public realm improvements are an integral part of ambitious town centre regeneration proposals to deliver transformative growth. This investment will unlock land for future development and enhance connectivity between residential areas and employment opportunities, particularly in the city centre.	Delivering a high quality urban realm and public transport facilities will enable St Helens to compete regionally as a centre of opportunity as part of the wider £25m Towns Fund investment. It will make the town centre a more attractive place to live and invest and increase opportunities for deprived neighbouring areas.	The investment at the bus station and improved links to the rail station will improve facilities, comfort and connectivity for public transport users. This will address existing barriers to use, particularly for access to the town centre, and shift journeys away from private car.	A multimodal transport interchange serving St Helens Town Centre	2024	BCR: 4.1; £37m of monetised benefits	10
St Helens Routes to Regeneration	This multi-modal package will transform journey patterns on the arterial routes north of the town centre. This will significantly improve sustainable access to the town and unlock new housing growth, including the consented brownfield land at Cowley Hill, improving connectivity between high value firms to the south of the town and the residential communities to the north.	The project will deliver high-quality, safe and reliable active travel and bus infrastructure, providing equitable access to opportunity across the borough and, through connections in the town centre, the broader City Region and beyond.	The investment will improve the safety, speed and reliability of both bus and active travel journeys between northern St Helens and the town centre. In making these options more attractive, more short and medium distance journeys will migrate away from private car.	Improved connectivity between St Helens town centre and a major housing development site at Cowley Hill on the Key Route Network	2024	BCR: 1.7; £12m of monetised benefits	10
M57 Junction 4 Active Travel Improvements	This project will help to relieve a concentration of pinch point issues on the highway network in Knowsley by reducing congestion and improving sustainable travel connectivity. This investment is needed to unlock a development site that has a planning application for 1,200 homes and several industrial units.	The project will enhance access through the junction and support safe passage by pedestrians and cyclists, with reduced congestion and improved connectivity to major housing and employment sites.	Improved provision for active modes will enhance safety and make these modes more attractive, helping achieve mode shift. Bus priority measures will reduce public transport journey times and mitigate against localised vehicle emissions.	Active travel and highways improvements around the motorway junction that comply with LTN 1/20 guidance	2024	BCR: 2.9; £26m of monetised benefits	10
Huyton Active Travel Corridor	This project will support the sustainable growth of the Huyton business and industrial park through the provision of safe, clean links to the railway station and town centre.	The communities in Huyton benefitting from the active travel corridor suffer from high levels of deprivation. The link will provide a fast alternative to the car for local journeys and an improved link with the rail station for longer journeys.	The active travel corridor will target the current high proportion of local trips made via private car, addressing current barriers to active travel including safety and a fragmented network.	A package of works along Wilson Road including LTN 1/20 compliant active modes provision	2024	BCR: 3.1; £29m of monetised benefits	10
Green Bus Corridor 10A	The Green Bus Corridor will better connect St Helens with Liverpool city centre via a fast and reliable link between growth and opportunity areas via hydrogen buses.	The Green Bus Corridor will serve areas of high deprivation in east Liverpool, Knowsley and St Helens, providing reliable links to key centres of opportunity.	The delivery of the Green Bus Corridor will significantly enhance the attractiveness of bus travel and encourage modal shift from car, reducing emissions and improving health.	A Green Bus Corridor with bus priority and supporting infrastructure enhancements for passengers	2026	BCR: 2.7; £212m of monetised benefits (3 routes)	30
Total DfT Ask:							70

Coastal Corridor



The City Region's Coastal Corridor extends from the docks to the north of Liverpool city centre to Southport. It is home to a host of energy and clean growth assets, including the world's second largest collection of offshore windfarms, hydrogen production assets and one of the largest tidal ranges in Europe in the Mersey Estuary, which has the potential to become a significant power plant. The corridor also encompasses Liverpool2, one of Europe's most advanced container terminals and the UK's main port for Trans-Atlantic trade, as well as its supporting supply chain and logistics infrastructure. The Sefton Coast contains numerous internationally important wildlife habitats and provides a major leisure destination. Transport investment in this corridor will support the growth of the port and unlock further development land to expand the city region's coastal economic assets.

We will deliver high-quality walking and cycling infrastructure along the Maritime Corridor, helping to connect local communities to employment opportunities and supporting the wider resilience and decongestion of the A5036 and A59 routes, which connect the Port of Liverpool with the motorway network at Switch Island.

In parallel, the introduction of a Green Bus Corridor between Liverpool and Crosby will deliver a high-quality route that connects Liverpool city centre to the Port and high value energy facilities to the north.

Within the CRSTS funding window, we will undertake an extensive study of the city region's freight connectivity requirements, to identify opportunities to transport goods to/from the port by sustainable modes and provide the evidence base for future scheme development.

We will continue our investment in the Merseyrail network and an early example of this will be capacity enhancements at Sandhills station and increased passenger numbers predicted on the completion of the new Everton FC stadium at Bramley Moore Dock. In addition to improving the attractiveness of sustainable travel for stadium users, the enhancements will improve the interchange facilities for passengers travelling on the Northern Line Southport, Ormskirk and Kirkby branches.

In Southport, we will deliver a multimodal package of enhancements to improve access to the east of the town and through to the centre and sea front, aligned to the £37.5m Towns Fund programme, which will help create over 1,000 new jobs and generate an extra £1m visitors a year. This investment also complements the development of the city region's first Liveable Neighbourhood, with an emphasis on people-centred places, clean air and green space.

Project	Driving Growth & Productivity	Levelling Up Towards the Standards of the Best	Decarbonising Transport & Encouraging Modal Shift	Outputs	Delivery	VfM	DfT Ask (£m)
Maritime Corridor	The Maritime Corridor (A5036, A59 and connections) provides a major route for freight, commuter and local traffic, connecting the Port of Liverpool and other major employment and retail sites with the wider motorway network at Switch Island. The scheme will unlock land for employment, better connect communities to opportunities and support growth of the Port of Liverpool.	Facilitating the continuing growth of the Port and adjacent energy facilities will create additional employment opportunities. The nearby residential areas of south Sefton will be provided with high quality active travel infrastructure to travel sustainably for shorter journeys.	A package of active travel measures will support greater modal choice , by creating a safe, integrated and well linked network of walking and cycling routes.	Enhanced multimodal connectivity along the Maritime Corridor	2023	BCR: 4.5; £49m of monetised benefits	12
Stanley Dock Rail Access (Sandhills)	Following the successful planning application by Everton Football Club for a new stadium, an expansion of station capacity is needed at Sandhills. Station improvements will enable the stadium area to operate at full potential whilst generating wider economic benefits to the Bramley Moore dock area, supporting businesses and the local economy.	Underpinning the regeneration potential of the Bramley Moore Dock area through sustainable transport ensures that the new opportunities created – including an estimated 13,000 new jobs – can be accessed sustainably from around the City Region. It also facilitates improved interchange for Northern Line passengers.	Ensuring that sustainable transport is a viable option for travel to the stadium site is critical to ensuring additional pressure is not placed on the highway network.	Enhanced pedestrian access to Stanley Dock (Everton Stadium)	2023/24	BCR: 1.8; £5m of monetised benefits	3
Southport Eastern Access	The eastern side of the town is the critical gateway for visitors to Southport travelling to the seafront and for local communities in accessing employment, services and transport links and this investment will support greater and quicker connectivity.	The improvements will increase journey satisfaction for all current users, and support housing growth in the City Region.	The scheme incorporates a package of active travel measures to ensure choice of travel and to help enhance the development of cycle priority measures under our LCWIP.	Enhanced multimodal connectivity to Southport	2023	BCR: 3.6; £39m of monetised benefits	12
Green Bus Corridor 53	The Green Bus Corridor will link Liverpool city centre and Crosby, providing a fast and reliable north-south link between the Maritime Corridor and Liverpool city centre. This will support links to academia and regional/national markets, and expand access to the labour market.	The Green Bus Corridor serves areas of high deprivation in Liverpool and south Sefton, providing a reliable and fast sustainable option to private car and direct links to key centres of opportunity. Further, the enhanced bus link will reduce car use on the corridor, improving air quality and health outcomes.	The delivery of the Green Bus Corridor will significantly enhance the attractiveness of bus travel and encourage modal shift from car. The increased reliability and improved journey times will reduce bus emissions and improve passenger satisfaction.	A Green Bus Corridor with bus priority and enhanced passenger infrastructure	2026	BCR: 2.7; £212m of monetised benefits (3 routes)	30
Total DfT Ask:							57

Scheme Impacts

Value for Money |

Each of our CRSTS schemes delivers Value for Money (VfM), with calculated Benefit Cost Ratios (BCRs) for the high capital funding scenario ranging from 1.8 to 9.9 (Annex H). All but two CRSTS schemes deliver High or Very High VfM.

Broadly, the schemes that focus investment into new and upgraded active travel infrastructure deliver higher BCRs, as a result of their impacts on decongestion, emissions, physical activity and health and wellbeing. This reflects the positive nature of these schemes on some of the key policy priorities in the LCR and nationally, particularly around decarbonisation, local connectivity and health. In our Air Quality Action Plan and longer-term Transport Pipeline we recognise the criticality of active travel schemes in supporting our clean recovery from COVID-19 and in addressing our long-standing health inequalities that hinder transformational change.

We will maximise the VfM of our investment through the delivery of complementary behaviour change programmes such as Liveable Neighbourhoods that will induce behaviour change and mode shift. However, the VfM impacts will differ proportionally depending on the capital funding allocation we receive and an allocation below £792.4m will require us to descope our schemes, with the potential for proportionally lower VfM.

We have given consideration to the long-term uncertainties surrounding COVID-19 recovery and future travel behaviour and the ways in which these uncertainties influence our ability to make robust investment decisions based on sound data. Through the Urban Transport Group, and with reference to the work undertaken by TfN on its Future Travel Scenarios, we are exploring the evidence to better inform our decision making. Although there is still a degree of uncertainty around the timing of patronage recovery for public transport, it is generally considered that there will in future be growth in public transport and active modes trips and that the infrastructure needs to be in place to accommodate those.

Equalities, Social and Distributional Impacts |

The absolute VfM of our programme is fundamental in making sound investment decisions, but it is also critical to consider how the impacts of our investment will differ across local communities and ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination or particularly significant adverse impacts on any of the protected characteristic groups. The Social Impact Assessment carried out for our CRSTS programme (Annex K) demonstrates positive impacts on journey quality, physical activity, accessibility, severance and personal affordability, as a result of focused investment into public transport, walking and cycling and into the alleviation of key traffic dominated pinchpoints. The Equalities Impact Assessment (Annex J) shows that, once operational, the proposed schemes will have a positive impact on equalities, especially with regard to improving access to employment, healthcare, education and other services and improving air quality. A full EQIA will be carried out for each scheme at outline design stage. The Distributional Impact Assessment (Annex L) shows positive distributional impacts as a result of the package of CRSTS investment.

Decarbonisation and Climate Change |

Our CRSTS programme is one of our immediate next steps in our journey to net zero carbon by 2040 and our wider programme of strategic infrastructure schemes and complementary behaviour change programmes will maximise mode shift and decarbonisation of the transport network.

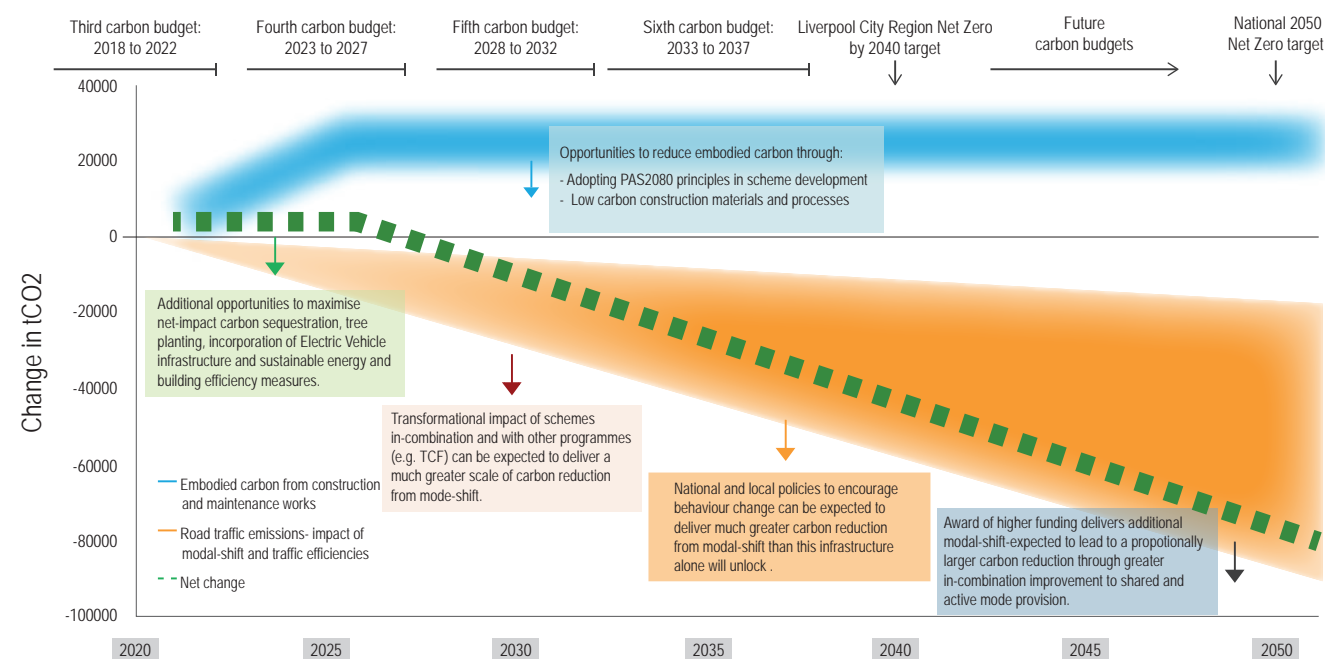
A high-level quantitative assessment of our CRSTS programme estimates a carbon reduction of over 90,000 tCO₂e is likely by 2050 under the low funding scenario. The high funding scenario could increase this to over 170,000 tCO₂e by 2050. These estimates are the sum of schemes in isolation under business as usual assumptions.

This is considered the lower end of possible carbon reduction. In combination with other investment including our BSIP, TCF and wider initiatives such as Liveable Neighbourhoods, our CRSTS programme can have a transformational impact that achieves the mode shift required for a net zero pathway with reference to the UK carbon budgets.

A bottom-up carbon impact review of the investment proposals (Annex I) gives confidence that the schemes proposed support decarbonisation of the transport network in line with the LCR's forthcoming Climate Action Plan and the city region's 2040 net zero carbon target:

- All 20 schemes deliver new or upgraded infrastructure for walking, cycling and/or public transport that will facilitate mode shift.
- Bus corridor infrastructure improvements will support the viability of electric and hydrogen buses as part of the BSIP.
- The IPEMU scheme enables the extension of the Merseyrail network through the use of clean fuel technology.
- 11 schemes will alleviate traffic congestion and reduce associated emissions.
- None of the proposed schemes delivers an increase in highway capacity and city centre schemes support a reallocation of road use from private vehicles to buses and active modes.
- All schemes will be coordinated with the Dig Once strategy, which supports key employment sites and greater levels of home working.

Potential cumulative carbon impact compared to a do-nothing scenario:



Alongside our partners, we will make carbon reduction core to scheme development; seeking to maximise the benefits of modal-shift and congestion reduction while mitigating carbon disbenefits from embodied carbon and any adverse traffic impacts. Wider actions to encourage behaviour change will also support greater mode-shift than new infrastructure alone can unlock. This includes the Liveable Neighbourhoods programme that will reduce car dominance and make shared and active modes the clear modes of choice.

Liveable Neighbourhoods

Aligned to our Transport Pipeline and priority CRSTS schemes, we are working with Sustrans and the Freshfield Foundation to develop our Liveable Neighbourhoods concept, which prioritises people over cars. A series of high-quality public places will be created across the City Region that promote walking and cycling and reduce the amount of traffic. Initially, three areas within our CRSTS priority investment corridors will trial the concept, which link directly to our LCWIP Phase 2 and 3 proposals. Sustrans will work directly with local residents, employees and businesses to design improvements to local streets and deliver a comprehensive behaviour change package. Evidence of this commitment is shown in Annex M.

In addition to helping to mitigate against the impacts of climate change, the CRSTS Programme will support adaption to changing climate conditions:

- Maintenance and improvement schemes will improve the resilience of our infrastructure to new climate extremes; reducing disruption and the carbon emissions such events can cause.
- Upgrades to drainage infrastructure, including Sustainable Urban Drainage, will better protect local communities from flood risk.
- Tree-planting, enhanced public realm and improved travel options will make places more liveable and resilient.

Delivery

Track Record |

Our recent track record demonstrates our ability to deliver, not only on time and to budget but also to deliver the planned outcomes and impacts. We have successfully delivered £500m of investment through the SIF, including devolved Local Growth Funding and Transforming Cities Funding.

Merseyrail Rolling Stock

We have invested £500m of non-Treasury money in a brand new fleet of Merseyrail trains, equipped with the latest battery technology to enable them in future to run beyond the end of the existing Merseyrail network without the need to install an additional third rail. The new trains, which were designed in consultation with members of the public, will deliver additional capacity, enhanced passenger journeys with increased on-board digital connectivity, level platform access and links to our wider investment in our bus and active travel networks.

We will apply lessons learnt in previous scheme delivery to our CRSTS programme, as part of our commitment to continuous improvement. In particular, we have learnt the importance of making best use of DfT capacity funding and in the current financial year 21/22, we have topped up our £5.6m allocation to £17m to ensure that each scheme we invest in is robust, viable and meets our vision. We have identified further development funding requirements which will be factored into future LCRCA budget decisions.

Governance, Assurance and Accountability |

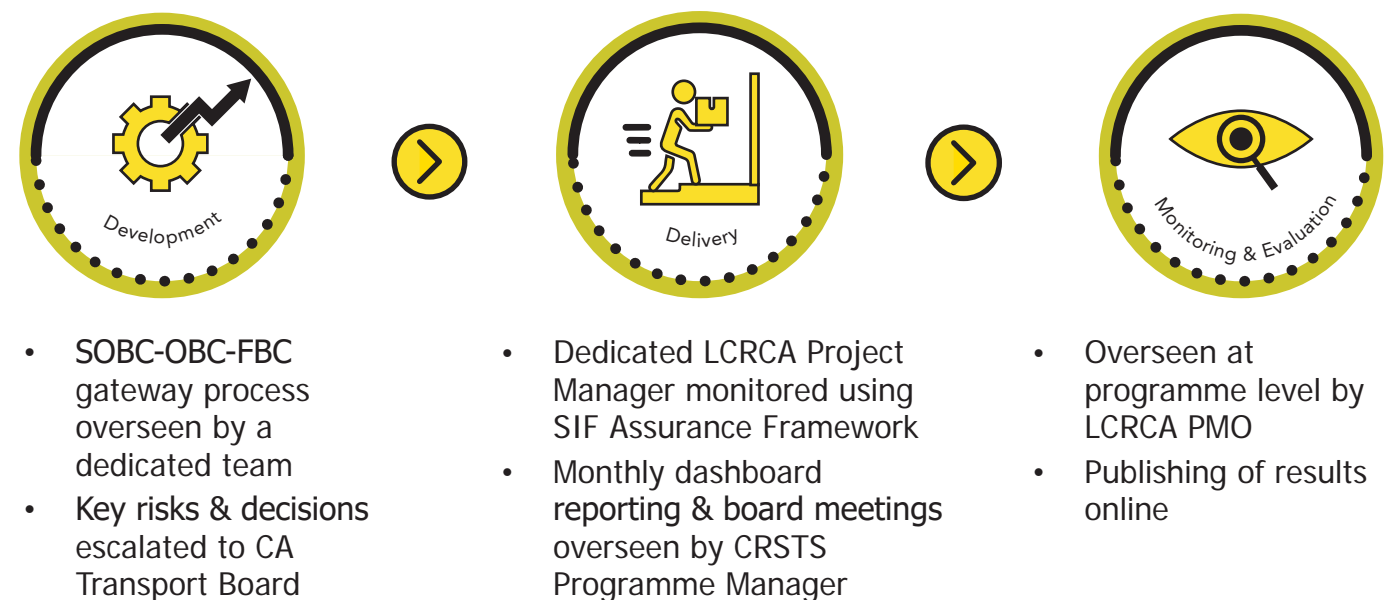
The City Region SIF will be used to administer the LCR's CRSTS funding, which will be ringfenced in a wider single pot that funds a range of cross-sectoral projects that meet city region priorities, integrate social value and help to build communities which are fit for purpose.

All funding administered through the SIF by the Combined Authority as the accountable body is allocated, appraised and monitored in accordance with the LCR National Local Growth Assurance Framework, to manage risk, ensure effective delivery and derive maximum value for money.

The LCRCA Transport Group will manage the delivery of the CRSTS programme centrally and the Assurance Framework outlines clear and transparent procedures for all LCR stakeholders (including the constituent Local Authorities, Merseytravel, the LCR LEP and other key partner agencies) regarding the delivery and spending associated with the SIF.

Each scheme in our CRSTS Programme will be subject to a robust, and independently verified, business case approval process, prior to final determination by the Combined Authority. This process, built upon HM Treasury Green Book principles, including proportionality, involves external independent appraisal and provides assurance that investment and funding decisions are achievable; demonstrate value for money; are aligned with local and national strategies and will deliver the planned outcomes.

SIF Scheme Assurance Process |



All schemes funded through the SIF are subject to enhanced monitoring and evaluation to ensure that the projected outcomes are achieved.

Five Year Funding Settlements

We welcome this opportunity to work with Government to negotiate a five-year transport settlement. This provides us with the funding certainty that is critical to our delivery ambitions: helping us to align our local maintenance and capital investment, coupled with the ability to plan for future years in accordance with the next phases of our Transport Pipeline. We will continue to collaborate with partners and stakeholders to develop our short, medium and long term pipeline. This will continually ensure all of our projects are deliverable, affordable and offer VfM, whilst enabling us to be proactive in responding to ongoing changes in society.

We will complement Government funding with a 21% local funding contribution for the high scenario as detailed in Annex B.

Procurement

The LCRCA Transport Group will oversee the delivery of the CRSTS programme. Projects may be delivered individually or grouped by type or location where this achieves economies of scale and on-time delivery.

It is proposed that the LCRCA central framework, which can also be used by the constituent Local Authorities, be used to appoint suppliers for short-term straightforward schemes that do not require specialist skills. Each Local Authority also has its own framework and term contracts in place locally which can be used to test the market, engage in dialogue and appoint contractors. We have successfully used this strategy in the delivery of our TCF programme, particularly on schemes which have required joint procurement, including our Urban Traffic Management & Control programme and at Hind Street in Birkenhead.

The procurement process will be undertaken in strict accordance with the legislative framework set out in LCRCA's Procurement Strategy and is subject to LCRCA's Procurement Gateway Process.

For each project, our preferred procurement strategy and form of contract will:

Achieve cost certainty;

Minimise further scheme preparation costs;

Allow for contractor experience and input to the construction programme to ensure that it is robust and achievable; and

Allow for contractor input to risk management and mitigation.

Delivery Plan I

The following table summarises our full CRSTS delivery plan in Annex F.

Corridor	Delivery Period						
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	Post 2027
LCR-Wide	Development						
		Delivery					
Cross River	Development						
		Delivery					
Mersey Gateway	Development						
		Delivery					
Eastern Gateway	Development						
		Delivery					
Coastal Corridor	Development						
		Delivery					
Monitoring & Evaluation	Base						
		Monitoring, Evaluation & Reporting					

Risk Management |

We have developed a CRSTS Programme Risk Register (Annex G) that identifies all programme-level risks and provides pre and post-mitigation scoring and mitigation measures. This will be maintained as a live register by the Programme Manager throughout delivery, informed by individual scheme-level risk registers. Monthly project control meetings will be held throughout delivery between each Project Team and the Programme Manager to monitor progress, assess risk and monitor spend against budget. As SRO, John Fogarty (Executive Director Corporate Services - LCRCA & Interim Director General - Merseytravel) will hold overall accountability for project delivery, management, risk management and monitoring and evaluation in line with our SIF Assurance Framework. The SRO will report into the monthly CA Transport Portfolio Board.

Monitoring and Evaluation |

We have committed 0.05% of our capital ask for monitoring and evaluation, which is included in the project costs set out in this prospectus.

LCRCA's Evidence, Research and Intelligence Team will be responsible for developing the detailed monitoring and evaluation programme and carrying out evaluation activity. LCRCA's Programme Management Office (PMO) will lead on the timely and robust collection of monitoring data.

Our approach to M&E is aligned to that set out in the Magenta Book, using monitoring as a tool to check progress against planned targets, and through evaluation seek to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of our programmes and whether anticipated benefits are realised.

The monitoring and evaluation objectives for the CRSTS portfolio are to:

- Demonstrate local progress and the extent to which the programme has met delivery milestones and objectives, including lessons learnt.
- Generate evidence on which interventions are the most effective at achieving the objectives and the progress of outcomes and impacts.
- Apply knowledge about what has worked, how and why to inform future projects/investments.

We will develop a series of research questions to frame the monitoring and evaluation programme, structured around the rationale and design of the programme, management and delivery, impacts, value for money and additionality. The questions will enable a full critique of the original intervention logic, covering all aspects of the logic model to understand the extent of change and why.

Based on the research questions, we will develop a series of key metrics that incorporate Government requirements and our own indicators, at both programme and individual project level. These are likely to include metrics such as bus and rail patronage data, cycle count data and measures of wider physical activity levels, journey times, noise, air pollution and economic metrics. These metrics will be collected for the baseline and then at one, three and five years after implementation, to inform evaluation and reporting.

We will apply lessons learnt from TCF in terms of the monitoring, evaluation and reporting, noting that the DfT highlighted our TCF reporting as 'excellent' and shared it with other Mayoral Combined Authorities as an example of good practice.

The collection of predominantly quantitative data will enable us to compare the outcomes with those predicted within the appraisal and, where possible, existing datasets will be used as part of a proportionate approach to minimise additional costs. New data will only be collected where there is a gap crucial to understanding an intervention's effectiveness, e.g. primary research with beneficiaries and stakeholder feedback. This will be triangulated with secondary data analysis to understand change. Throughout delivery, the PMO will also collect data related to spend, programme and project performance, to inform lessons learnt and future delivery practices.



St. Helens Local Plan Core Strategy

October 2012



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Foreword from St.Helens Local Strategic Partnership and the Cabinet Member for Urban Regeneration, Housing and Culture

St.Helens is a fast changing, modern, developing town. It is vital that we encourage, guide and manage development within the Borough to meet the aspirations of the town and its communities. The future planning of the Borough is one of the key elements in achieving this.

The St.Helens Local Development Framework Core Strategy is a very important document in providing a step towards regenerating and developing the Borough to 2027. It provides the key elements on which future planning policy is built. The Core Strategy contains a very clear Vision of how the Council, its stakeholders and the community see the Borough together with a suite of more detailed objectives to achieve this.

This document is the key strategy which we want to adopt to help in the achievement of the Vision for the town in 2027 and to shape the production of other plans within the Local Development Framework. It has been developed over a number of years through several key public consultation exercises which looked at issues, options and preferred options for moving forward, together with amendments to address changing circumstances. These exercises encouraged significant community involvement which has led to the plan before us today.

We would like to thank everybody in the Council, our stakeholders, and the community who have been involved in developing the Core Strategy or made representations towards its development.



Councillor Marie Rimmer
Leader of St.Helens Council and
Chair of St.Helens Local Strategic Partnership



Councillor Barrie Grunewald
Cabinet Member for Urban Regeneration, Housing
and Culture, St.Helens Council

How to Use this Document

Planning law requires that decisions on planning applications be made in the context of national planning policy, the Development Plan for the area and any other material considerations. The St.Helens Local Plan and the North West Regional Strategy form the Development Plan for the Borough of St.Helens as of the date of adoption.

This Core Strategy is one part of the Development Plan for St.Helens and needs to be read as a whole alongside the saved St.Helens Unitary Development Plan (UDP) policies and the other Development Plan Documents (DPD) policies that together make up the Local Plan for St.Helens. The policies in this Core Strategy should not be read in isolation. The saved UDP policies will eventually be replaced by new DPD policies. Other relevant policies and material considerations may be contained in, amongst others, national planning policy such as the National Planning Policy Framework, Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, national waste policy documents, national minerals policy documents, ministerial statements and government circulars.

A DPD guides how decisions will be made on planning applications, and the St.Helens Core Strategy is the principal DPD for the Borough of St.Helens. The Core Strategy contains strategic policies, provides an overall plan of where development should be located and how we meet the needs of the Borough, and all subsequent DPDs for the Borough, including Area Action Plans (AAPs), must be consistent with it.

Where a Neighbourhood Plan has been adopted for a particular neighbourhood area within the Borough, the Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the Development Plan for that neighbourhood. Planning applications have to be in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Supplementary Planning Documents supplement the Development Plan and are capable of being material considerations in planning decisions.

A list of the latest available St.Helens planning policy documents can be found on the planning policy section of the St.Helens Council website at:

<http://www.sthelens.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/>

If you need clarification on any point, please contact the Planning Policy Team by:

Post: Planning Policy Section, Town Hall, Victoria Square, St.Helens, WA10 1HP

Email: planningpolicy@sthelens.gov.uk

Telephone: 01744 676190

Introduction



1 Introduction

What is the Core Strategy?

1.1 In 2004, the Government introduced new legislation through the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, which replaced Unitary Development Plans (UDP) with Local Development Frameworks (LDF). The St.Helens LDF will be a folder of documents, details of which are contained in the latest adopted Local Development Scheme (LDS). Some of the documents will be Development Plan Documents (DPDs), which will include policies and proposals to guide future development in the Borough.

The Core Strategy is the principal planning document in the LDF and contains:

- **A spatial vision setting out how the Borough will change by 2027**
- **A set of spatial objectives setting the direction for the implementation of the spatial vision**
- **A spatial portrait of St.Helens**
- **Policies to guide development to achieve the vision**
- **A delivery strategy setting out how we will achieve the vision and objectives**
- **A set of targets and indicators for monitoring the implementation of policies**
- **A key diagram providing a visual representation of policies**

1.2 The Core Strategy will provide the spatial context for other planning documents including:

Sustainable Development DPD	Which will contain more detailed policies relating to a wide variety of specific subjects, including ensuring development minimises impact on climate change and is well adapted for climate change that is unavoidable. This will be used for making development control decisions.
Allocations DPD	Which will allocate land for specific purposes.
Proposals Map	Accompanies a DPD to show on a map base the extent of policies and allocations.
Joint Merseyside Waste DPD	Which will provide policy guidance standards for waste management and allocate sites for waste purposes.
Area Action Plans (AAP)	Which will focus in on smaller spatial areas of the Borough and function as a "masterplan" for their future development or regeneration. AAPs will be prepared for St.Helens and Earlestown Town Centres together with one for the proposed Bold Forest Park.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)	Which will expand on or provide further details on policy in DPDs or provide Development Briefs for particular sites in the Borough.
---	--

Table 1.1

How Is the Core Strategy Structured?

1.3 The Core Strategy provides a strategic level plan for how the Borough will develop to 2027. The first stages of the document describe St.Helens now (as it was at adoption in 2012) and identifies the key issues, problems and challenges which face the communities within St.Helens. The Strategy then moves forward to look at what the Vision is for the town by 2027, and identify what detailed objectives need to be met to achieve the overall Vision.

1.4 The Strategy breaks the detailed policies down into two areas: a spatial strategy; and a group of more thematic issues. The spatial strategy provides an overall view for the Borough as a whole, whilst also focusing in more detail on five distinct areas within the Borough. This section also includes the Key Diagram. The thematic issues outline how we will achieve the Vision for different topic areas, which are relevant to all five spatial areas.

1.5 The Strategy includes a delivery and monitoring strategy at Appendix 1, which looks in detail at resources and infrastructure to achieve the vision and sets out detailed targets and indicators which will allow us to monitor performance. Other appendices include a bibliography, a glossary of terms and a list of the saved UDP policies to be replaced by the Core Strategy.

How Has the Core Strategy Been Prepared?

1.6 The Core Strategy has been through a comprehensive process to reach the current stage. The process can be summarised in the chart below.

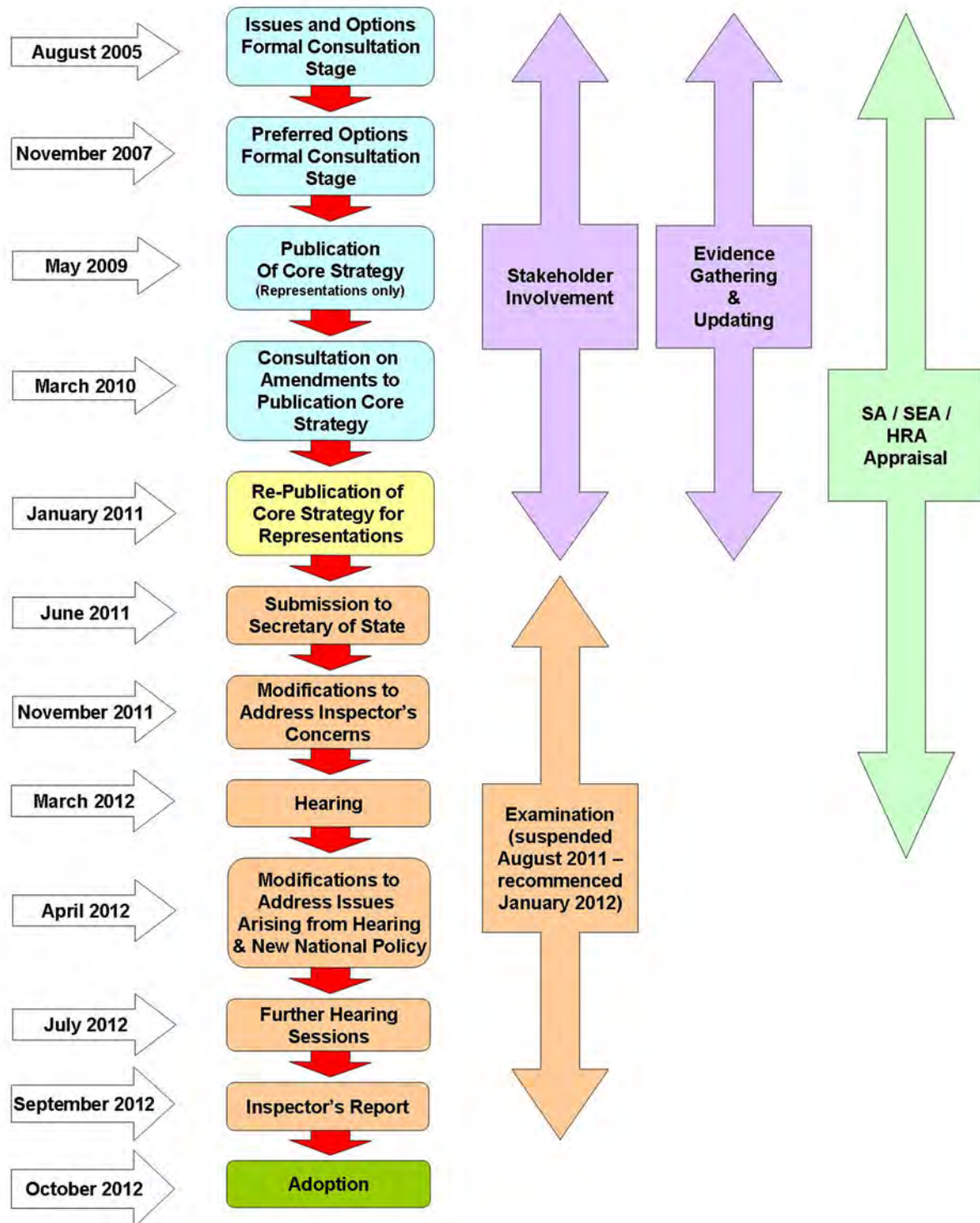


Figure 1.1 Core Strategy Process

1.7 Community and stakeholder involvement has been a key element in production throughout. Two formal stages of Issues and Options and Preferred Options were undertaken in August 2005 and November 2007. The Core Strategy was Published in May 2009 for representations to be made. In order to address issues raised "Amendments to Publication Core Strategy" were issued in February/March 2010. These stages involved a formal consultation with an extensive public involvement exercise being undertaken for a period of six weeks. This has been supplemented by key stakeholder engagement at regular and frequent intervals throughout the plan preparation.

This is evidenced in the reports of the consultations and in the Evolving the Core Strategy Background Paper. This meets the requirement of Regulation 25 in the Local Development Regulations 2004. Following consultation on Amendments to the Core Strategy further revisions were required to address issues that had arisen. Consultation was undertaken on a Republication Core Strategy in January 2011. Consultation on further Changes and Modifications was undertaken in November 2011 and April 2012.

1.8 Alongside the community and stakeholder engagement a constant process of producing and updating the evidence base has been undertaken. The evidence base supports the policies and decisions being proposed in the Core Strategy. The evidence base is a massive undertaking comprising not only legislation, policy, strategy, guidance and best practice at national, regional and subregional levels, but also a suite of local studies on topics ranging from the supply of land for housing to flood risk. A full list of the evidence base is contained in Appendix 2: Bibliography.

What Else is Important?

1.9 The Core Strategy is supported by a number of separate volumes and a detailed evidence base as listed in Appendix 2: Bibliography. The relevant documents are referenced throughout the text, and accessible (when available electronically) on the Council's website ldf.sthelens.gov.uk.

1.10 Alongside the wider evidence base, this version of the Core Strategy is supported by the following documents:

1.11 The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) are a legislative requirement. SA is a systematic appraisal process incorporating the requirements of SEA. The SA assesses the social, environmental and economic effects of the Local Development Framework. This is done to ensure that the decisions made during the plan making process accord with sustainable principles.

1.12 The SA/SEA has appraised the Core Strategy Publication DPD policies both individually and cumulatively, and 'concludes that there are generally adequate policy tools within the document for all of the adverse sustainability effects identified to be mitigated during implementation'. Furthermore, due to the iterative nature of the production of the SA a number of beneficial effects have occurred enabling the Core Strategy to become equipped to promote sustainable development in the future.

1.13 The SA identified a number of significant adverse effects that through the process have now been adequately mitigated. Firstly, the issue of cumulative impact of development in Newton-le-Willows in relation to Parkside has been mitigated by additional criteria in CAS 3.2 and will be mitigated further in the Sustainable Development DPD.

1.14 Secondly, the growth of housing within the Borough will have a negative impact on biodiversity, especially as both greenfield and brownfield land are havens for wildlife and habitats. However, it is felt that suitable mitigation can be provided through policies CP 1 and CQL 1, 2 and 3, which alleviate the incompatibility between the growth of housing and the protection of biodiversity objectives.

1.15 Additionally, concerns were identified over the long term population increase within the Borough and the potential pressure placed on existing infrastructure, services and facilities. Nonetheless, the SA recognised the ability of the Core Strategy to mitigate against these concerns through policies CP 1, CIN 1 and CQL 5.

1.16 The focused changes and minor post publication changes, March 2010, were considered by the consultants who undertook the SA. They considered that the SA would not be significantly affected by the March 2010 changes to the Core Strategy and further detailed SA work was not required. The Re-Publication version of the Core Strategy was reassessed by the consultants in November 2010. An addendum report has been produced which concludes that the policies are generally adequate to deal with any adverse sustainability effects which may be encountered during implementation. Proposed revisions to address issues with the Core Strategy raised by the Inspector underwent SA and the implications for the Habitats Regulations Assessment were reviewed in September 2011. Further details of this are provided in the SA/SEA document produced by Scott Wilson.

1.17 Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is a legislative requirement under the Habitats Directive whereby the impacts of a land use plan are assessed against the objectives for conserving European designated sites. There are no European designated sites within the Borough of St.Helens but there are some designated sites in surrounding areas that the plan could potentially impact upon. These are:

- Liverpool Bay Special Protection Area (SPA)
- Manchester Mosses Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- Martin Mere SPA/Ramsar Site
- Mersey Estuary SPA/Ramsar Site
- Mersey Narrows & North Wirral Foreshore pSPA/pRamsar Site⁽¹⁾
- Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar Site
- Rixton Clay Pits SAC
- Sefton Coast SAC
- River Dee and Bala Lake SAC
- The Dee Estuary SAC, SPA, Ramsar and pSPA extension

1.18 Under the HRA the Council is required to undertake an Appropriate Assessment (AA) to examine the likely impact of any plan on European designated wildlife sites. The assessment concluded that there remained the potential for certain significant adverse 'in combination' effects, as a result of development within St.Helens. The detailed assessment concluded that certain amendments were required in order to demonstrate that the plan would not contribute significantly to the potential 'in combination' effects upon European sites. These amendments, intended to address the issues of water quality/sedimentation and recreational pressure on estuarine/marine sites, were incorporated following the preferred options and include partnership working with Merseyside authorities and the creation of a new post to assess and mitigate against these expected 'in combination' effects to be based at the Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service. The AA concluded that, subject to the minor amendments now included, the Core Strategy contains policy mechanisms for protecting European sites. The consultants considered the Re-Publication Core Strategy, and concluded that only minor changes (from the point of view of the Habitats Directive)

1 pSPA = potential SPA; pRamsar = potential Ramsar

had occurred. Consequently, the findings of the detailed HRA (April 2009) undertaken for the Publication Core Strategy were not significantly affected by the changes to the Core Strategy. Following proposed revisions to address the Inspector's initial concerns, the Core Strategy was reassessed. The Council will keep the collaborative working arrangements under review and, where circumstances change, it will consider appropriate alternative mechanisms to assist in addressing recreational disturbance issues on the identified Natura 2000 sites.

1.19 The Delivery and Monitoring Strategy (DMS) at Appendix 1 sits alongside the Core Strategy and outlines:

- our approach to monitoring the LDF Core Strategy
- a suite of targets and indicators
- the methods of delivering the Vision, Aims and Objectives
- deliverability
- key projects
- infrastructure

1.19A Policies within the Core Strategy provide a balance between providing certainty and the need to build in flexibility to take account of changing circumstances over the Plan period. The DMS is an essential tool in ensuring the effectiveness of the Core Strategy, acting as both an action plan and monitoring tool. The DMS will be monitored at least every year through the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), which is the main mechanism for assessing the Core Strategy's performance and effectiveness. The AMR looks at performance for the period April to March every year and is issued by the end of December each year. It will identify where a policy is being effective or where a revision is needed. The successful monitoring of the Core Strategy will ultimately depend on drawing trends from data spanning a number of years.

1.20 The Reports of Representations prepared for previous consultation stages provide a summary of each representation received together with the Council's response.

1.21 Background Papers have been prepared which provide more detail on how and why the Core Strategy and its policies have been prepared. They also serve as a link between the Core Strategy itself and the wide ranging evidence base. These cover the following topics:

- Evolving the Core Strategy Background Paper
- Housing Background Paper
- Economy and Retail Background Paper
- Quality of Life Background Paper
- Infrastructure Background Paper
- Strategic Fit Background Paper
- Soundness and Legal Self Assessment Background Paper
- List of Saved St.Helens Unitary Development Plan (1998) Policies to be Replaced by the Core Strategy Background Paper
- Parkside Strategic Rail Freight Interchange Background Paper
- The Core Strategy and the Regional Spatial Strategy Background Paper

Consultation

1.22 The preparation of the Core Strategy takes into account the views of the public and stakeholders. Where possible, the strategy will seek consensus. In reality there will be issues where agreement and consensus cannot be achieved. Where this is the case these will be identified, and the approach taken justified.

1.23 At the end of 2005, public consultation took place on the Issues and Options for the Core Strategy. The responses received were used to shape the Preferred Options and a synopsis of the responses was included in the Preferred Options document.

1.24 Consultation on the Core Strategy Preferred Options took place between 8 November and 19 December 2007. Over 1,700 representations were received. In general the objectives and the Preferred Options received support. The main issues generating objection were restricted to: the proposed development of a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI) (Preferred Option CAS 3.7A); and Green Belt Boundary Change – Reserved Employment Land, Haydock (Preferred Option CAS 4.7A).

1.25 With regard to Preferred Options CAS 3.7A a total of 1,192 objections were received in relation to the development of a SRFI on an area based on the former Parkside Colliery. This represented 92.5% of representations on this subject. Objections to the SRFI were also lodged against Preferred Option CSS 1. Concerns centred on:

- Protection of Green Belt boundaries
- Air quality
- Traffic generation
- Upgrading of facilities at Newton-le-Willows station

1.26 The adopted Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) indicates that consideration should be given to the development of an inter-modal freight terminal in this broad location. Policy CAS 3.2 now addresses this issue.

1.27 Objections to the preferred option CAS 4.7 and CE 1 to the identification of an area of land in Haydock for future economic development needs centred on:

- Protection of Green Belt boundaries
- Compliance with RSS
- Consideration of alternative sites and urban land
- Congestion at junction 23 of the M6 motorway

1.28 Further studies have been undertaken to assess economic development need and alternative sites. The outcomes of these studies have informed the development of policy CE 1, which seeks to address provision of land for economic development.

1.29 The above two issues were the main focus for the majority of objections received. The distribution of housing in rural areas, Newton-le-Willows and Haydock, generated a number of objections, as it was considered that the Preferred Option might restrict future development.

1.30 At the original Publication stage in May and June 2009 1,805 representations were received. In general the contents of the document received support. The main issue generating objection was restricted to the proposed development of a SRFI at the former Parkside Colliery (Policy CAS 3.2). Concern was expressed that there was not sufficient evidence regarding the need, scale, deliverability and viability of the scheme.

1.31 As a result of representations received at the Publication stage in 2009, it became clear that we could not proceed to submission to the Secretary of State without undertaking some further work. A new Parkside Background Paper, replacing the original one, was prepared together with a new Policy CAS 3.2, to reflect the findings of the evidence base. Elsewhere the opportunity was taken to make minor amendments and update content. A further period of representation was undertaken on Amendments to the Core Strategy during March to April 2010. A total of 1,538 valid representations were received. The majority of these again related to the proposed SRFI at the former Parkside Colliery. With the exception of Parkside the plan was generally considered acceptable.

1.32 Following publication of the Amendments to the Core Strategy in March 2010, further revisions were required to address issues that had arisen.

1.33 The Re-Publication Core Strategy was published for a period of representation between January and March 2011, and submitted for examination in June 2011.

Stakeholder Consultations

1.34 In order to ensure that the Core Strategy reflects and complements the aspirations of our partners, it is important to share information with key stakeholders. Successful delivery of the development plan is dependent on many bodies supporting and working towards common goals. Meetings have been held with key partners and stakeholders to ensure compliance with other strategies and documents. Such bodies include: St.Helens Chamber; Highways Agency; Environment Agency; Halton St.Helens Knowsley and Warrington LIFT (PCT); St.Helens Children and Young People's Services Department; St.Helens Housing Strategy and Private Sector Initiatives Department; Helena Partnership RSL; United Utilities; Merseytravel; Scottish Power; and Merseyside Police. Further details are contained in the Evolving the Core Strategy Background Paper.

Infrastructure

1.35 In recognition of the importance placed upon robust evidence of what physical, social and green infrastructure is needed to enable the amount of development proposed for the area, as expressed in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), detailed discussions have been held with the utility and service providers to:

- Identify and map areas where current provision is lacking or under stress
- Identify current provision and proposed provision over the lifetime of the plan
- Ensure providers are aware and can prepare for future requirements

1.36 From the research and discussions undertaken there are no major infrastructure or capacity issues that would harm the delivery of the overall strategy. Issues identified are of a more local nature which would affect individual sites and can be remedied by planning obligations, use of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts, or working closely with infrastructure providers.

1.37 The importance of planning obligations and CIL as mechanisms to pay for infrastructure is recognised. A subregional approach to CIL is being explored.

1.38 In terms of **Transport**, St.Helens is well placed for both road and rail transport and in recent years has completed two major road projects in the M62 Link Road and Blackbrook Diversion. The Highways Agency have indicated support for initiatives to increase cycling and walking, and efforts to reduce dependency on car travel within the Core Strategy. The Highways Agency is, in principle, supportive of St.Helens' aspirations for additional development as proposed in the St.Helens Core Strategy. The Highways Agency is generally supportive of the development of a SRFI on the Parkside site and accepts that development of the site will have an impact on the Strategic Road Network (SRN), and that such an impact will require suitable mitigation. The SRN is not currently under stress although the capacity of junction 23 of the M6 motorway and junction 7 of the M62 motorway is an issue. Improvements have been undertaken to accommodate growth in the M62 Link Road Corridor at M62 junction 7.

1.39 Plans have been included within the Merseyside Local Transport Plan (LTP3) for improved rail facilities, with a potential new station at Carr Mill, enhanced park and ride facilities at St.Helens Junction, new bus interchange and park and ride facilities at Newton-le-Willows station. Improvements to cross-boundary public transport services also form part of the LTP. Peak hour rail capacity issues have been identified and schemes to alleviate issues have been proposed. Network Rail are also pursuing a scheme for electrification of the rail line from Liverpool to Manchester and Wigan. Further details are contained in the Infrastructure Background Paper.

1.40 With regard to **Water** United Utilities are responsible for water supply and waste water treatment across St.Helens, whilst the Environment Agency advise on flood and pollution prevention matters. Confirmation has been received from United Utilities that they do not have any concerns with the level or location of growth proposed. The Environment Agency has undertaken a Water Cycle Study to examine the major issues surrounding sourcing of potable water, through to issues of disposal and flood risk. The report concluded that water resources, supply infrastructure and sewerage capacity are not a constraint to growth. Wastewater treatment works have sufficient capacity to meet growth demands in the short term, however St.Helens treatment works may be a constraint in the future, discussions are ongoing to find a resolution. The United Utilities Water Resources Management Plan 2009 indicates sufficient capacity for water provision. United Utilities have confirmed that there are no capacity issues either for treatment works or sewers. Through the Water Framework Directive and the North West Basin Management Plan, plans and actions have been highlighted to return all surface water bodies to Good Ecological Status, or 'Good Ecological Potential' by 2027.

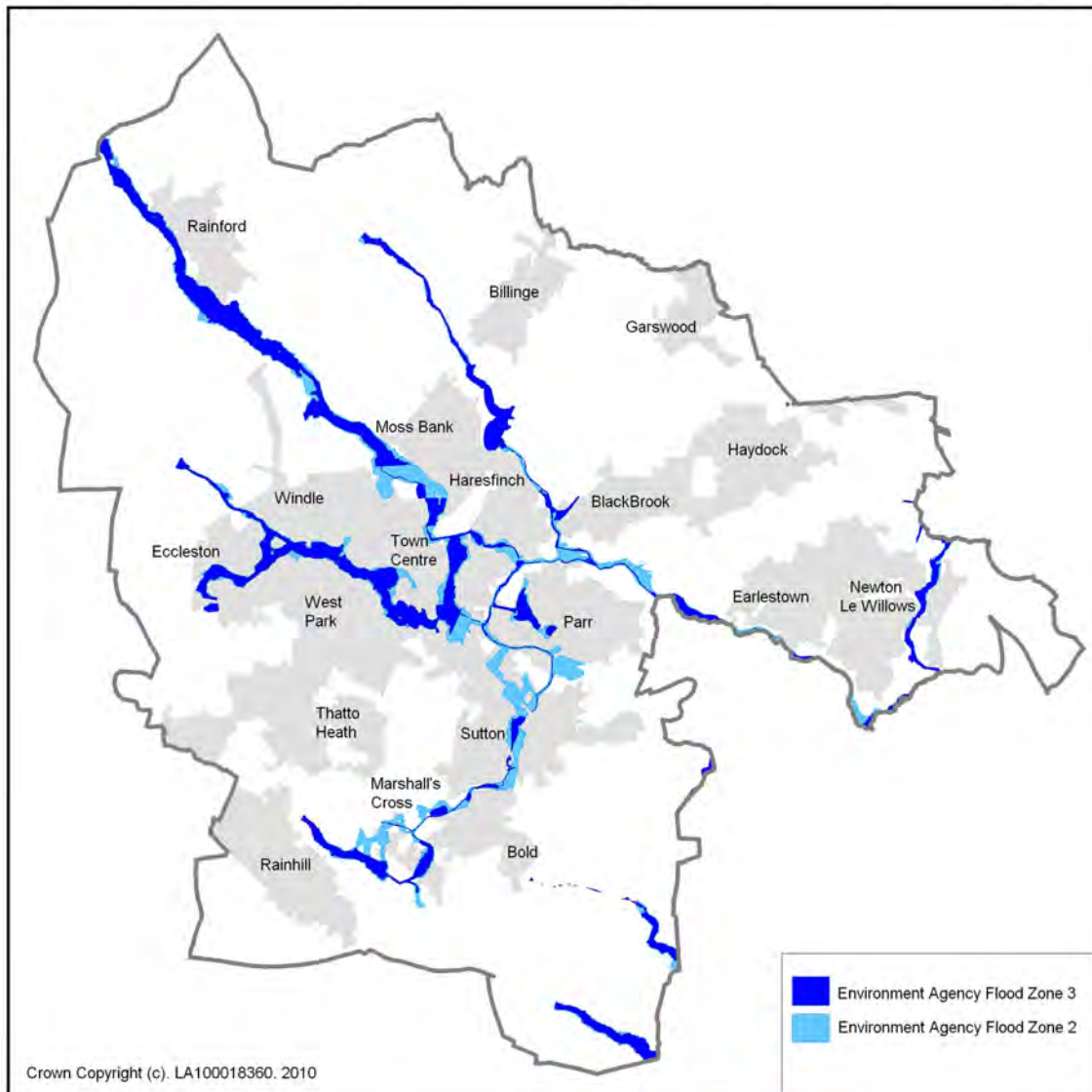


Figure 1.2 St.Helens Flood Zone Areas 2009

1.41 In accordance with the NPPF a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) has been undertaken to identify areas at risk of flooding across the Borough. A relatively small area of the Borough is at risk from flooding. The SFRA found that the main source of flood risk is fluvial flooding from Sankey Brook and its tributaries. The largest potential flood risk across the Borough is that from Carr Mill Dam. Surface water flooding is the secondary source of flooding within the Borough. Furthermore, the SFRA examined a sample of housing and economic sites, further housing sites being considered through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. Of the sites assessed there were no particular flooding concerns identified that would prejudice the overall delivery of the Core Strategy.

1.42 In terms of **Green Infrastructure**, the Open Space Audit concluded that there was no fundamental shortfall of open space in St.Helens. Localised shortfalls could be addressed by the re-use of existing spaces and an improvement in quality.

1.43 With regard to **Electricity**, Scottish Power and Electricity North West are responsible for the supply of electricity across the Borough. Discussions have been held to ensure sufficient supply capacity is available for proposed growth.

1.44 To address **Health** issues regular stakeholder meetings are held with the Primary Care Trust (PCT) through the Planning Health Liaison Group. The Group shares information on respective planning processes and seeks to ensure that there is a correlation between future development and new health infrastructure investment. The St.Helens and Knowsley NHS Trust has been investing heavily in improving infrastructure including the redevelopment of St.Helens Hospital, along with Whiston Hospital on the boundary of Rainhill, in a £338m programme. Existing developments have been taken into account as part of the local NHS Strategic Service Development Plan (SSDP) and Strategic Commissioning Plans. As such, new planned primary care developments are likely to match the potential for increased demand. The proposed replacement of PCTs with General Practitioner led organisations and planned capital spending reductions by the Government may see future plans reduced in scale and this will be taken into account in future DPDs.

1.45 In terms of **Education**, St.Helens secured funding through the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme. The funding received for St.Helens was approximately £50m which excludes investment of £50m in relation to Cowley Language College (now completed) and Hope Academy in Newton-le-Willows (opened 2011), both of which were ahead of the main BSF programme. Schemes at Rainford and De La Salle have funding confirmed, and work has commenced. Sutton High became an Academy in 2010. Improvements were undertaken to several primary schools using funding secured through Primary Capital Strategy, until funding was withdrawn in August 2011. Planned improvements will be completed using other funding streams. The principle of supporting opportunities to replace outdated schools will be supported by the Core Strategy.

1.46 Meetings have been held with **Merseyside Police** to ensure that due consideration is given to the prevention of crime in the Core Strategy. Work will continue with the Force's Architectural Liaison Officer. The **Fire and Rescue Service** are consulted at each stage of development to ensure sufficient resources are available to service proposed development.

1.47 The Borough has sufficient existing and planned infrastructure to meet the requirements for development over the plan period. The Council will continue to work with service providers to ensure planned developments can be accommodated within existing networks, or adequate provision can be made to service their requirements.

Context



2 Context

St.Helens Now

2.1 St.Helens Borough covers a total of 135 square kilometres, of which approximately half is rural and half is urban. Historically, St.Helens has seen rapid development through the Industrial Revolution and whilst a relatively modern town, the intensive process of development has left a legacy of derelict land and land affected by contamination, poor health, high unemployment rates and low educational attainment figures.

2.2 St.Helens is now emerging from the low points of its past and the economic difficulties of the 1980s and early 1990s with a stabilising population, decreasing unemployment rates, decreasing deprivation rates and an increase in health and educational achievements.

2.3 St.Helens is located between the two conurbations of Liverpool (19 km to the west) and Manchester (36 km to the east). It is bounded by Knowsley to the west, West Lancashire to the north, Wigan to the east and Halton and Warrington to the south.

2.4 The M6 and M62 motorways run through the Borough, as does the West Coast Main Line which can be accessed at Wigan and Warrington. The Liverpool to Manchester, via Newton-le-Willows, and the two Liverpool to Wigan railway lines, serving a total of ten stations, also bisect the Borough.



Figure 2.1 St.Helens in the Subregion

2.5 Spatially, the Borough can be presented in five main areas as shown in the plan below:

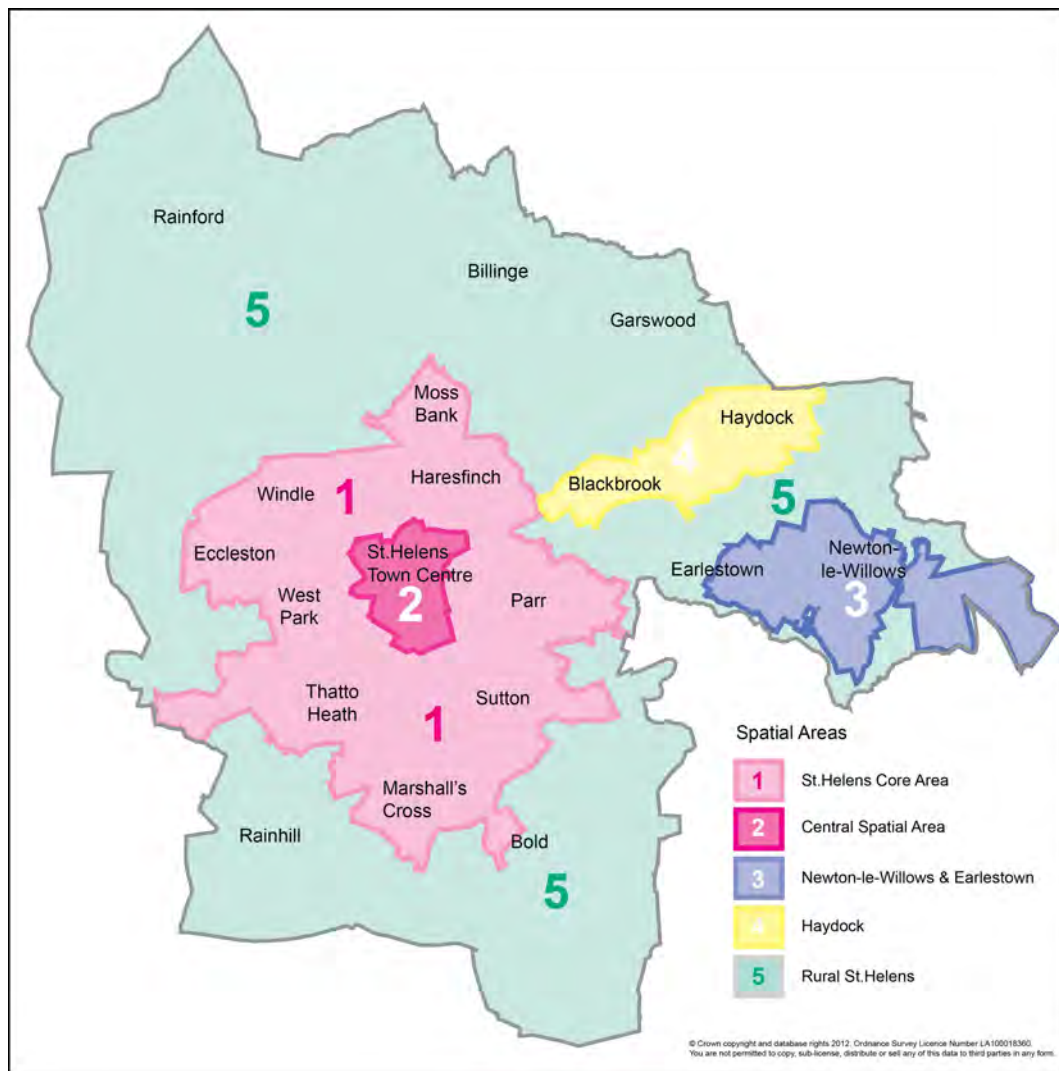


Figure 2.2 Spatial Areas

2.6 Each of these areas is considered later in the document under policies CAS1 to CAS5. The main characteristics of each of the Spatial Areas are summarised below:

Spatial Area	Population	% pop in 5% most Deprived Super Output Areas	% National Land Use Database Sites
St.Helens Core Area	90,061	2.9	61.6
St.Helens Central Spatial Area	11,010	5.5	7.3
Newton-le-Willows Earlestown	22,235	0.8	16.6
Haydock	22,905	0.8	8.9
Rural St.Helens	30,912	0	6.1

Table 2.1 Characteristics of Each Area

Key Linkages

2.7 There are several key influences on the Core Strategy. These are described in full in the Strategic Fit Background Paper. The most important include:

- National Guidance
- Regional Spatial Strategy
- Subregional Strategy
- St.Helens Policy Context

National Guidance

2.8 The majority of national guidance is contained in the National Planning Policy Framework, and is directed at:

- Building sustainable communities for the future
- Delivering sustainable development
- Contributing to the control of climate change

Regional Spatial Strategy For The North West (RSS)

2.9 RSS confirms St.Helens' position in the regional hierarchy, which influences the distribution of housing, retail policy and public transport framework. St.Helens' position in the outer part of the Liverpool City Region places emphasis on meeting local needs. Support is given to regeneration and improvement providing a complementary function to Liverpool City Centre.

2.10 The key RSS requirements for St.Helens are:

- Delivery of 570 dwellings per annum
- Delivery of at least 65% of the housing requirement on previously developed land
- Land at Newton-le-Willows is identified as an area of search for an inter-modal freight terminal
- Continued investment in comparison retailing facilities in St.Helens Town Centre, to ensure a sustainable distribution of high quality retail facilities

2.11 Where the evidence is justified, and not superseded by more recent studies, the overall policy direction of RSS has been maintained in the Core Strategy.

Subregional Context

2.12 St.Helens has a longstanding tradition of partnership working with the other Merseyside districts of Liverpool, Knowsley, Wirral and Sefton including the joint funding of supporting organisations such as Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service. The Merseyside Local Transport Plan is recognised as an excellent example of joint working.

2.13 More recently, Halton has become a member of the partnership which has produced the Liverpool City Region Development Plan and the evolving arrangements for City Region governance including proposals for spatial planning. The Waste DPD is an example of current joint working arrangements.

2.14 A more informal city region network exists, which includes Warrington and West Lancashire, which was responsible for the preparation of the Liverpool City Region Housing Strategy.

2.15 The Core Strategy has been prepared with an awareness of major cross-boundary issues which include:

- implementation of the Liverpool City Region Housing Strategy and joint working with Halton and Warrington on housing land and housing market assessments
- recognition of the importance of the Merseyside Green Belt and seeking a coordinated approach to any future changes or relaxations to accommodate identified development needs
- the potential scale of the proposed SRFI at Parkside and its capacity to impact on Wigan and Warrington
- the cross boundary recreational potential of St.Helens greenspace in particular with Halton and Warrington and the need for further integration with the subregional Green Infrastructure Plan as it evolves in future
- the potential of joint working to resolve issues of cumulative impact arising from HRAs
- implications arising from the proposed OMEGA employment area in Warrington on the Borough's southern boundary

2.16 The Liverpool City Region "Transforming Our Economy" vision is, "to regain our status as a premier European City Region by 2025. We will secure an internationally competitive economy and cultural offer; an outstanding quality of life; and vibrant communities contributing to and sharing in sustainable wealth creation". The five strategic priorities are:

- The Premier Destination Centre
- The Well-Connected City Region
- The Creative and Competitive City Region
- The Talented and Able City Region
- The City Region of Sustainable Neighbourhoods and Communities

2.17 Liverpool City Region Local Investment Plan (LIP) was endorsed in March 2010 setting out the priorities for housing investment across the Liverpool City Region. The LIP will help deliver core strategic objectives for delivering housing and social regeneration identifying the challenges, opportunities and priorities for investment. The areas for housing growth and renewal prioritised in the LIP reflect and support the economic growth priority locations. These are:

- Liverpool City Centre
- The Port of Liverpool
- Parkside (St.Helens)
- Ditton (Halton)

Work has commenced on the preparation of LIP2.

2.18 The Liverpool City Region authorities are developing a Spatial Priorities Plan which leads on from policy LCR 1 which set the Liverpool City Region Priorities.

2.19 In July 2007, the Government Green Paper “Homes for the Future: More Affordable, More Sustainable” was published. This outlined the Government’s plans for delivering three million new homes by 2020. The initiatives announced included an additional round of **New Growth Points** including for the first time in the North of England.

2.20 In July 2008, the three authorities of Halton, St.Helens and Warrington were awarded Growth Point status, known as the Mid Mersey Growth Point.

2.21 As Growth Point status was awarded following consultation on the Core Strategy Preferred Options Report in November and December 2007, the first opportunity that stakeholders and the public had to comment on its implications was the Publication stage in May 2009. It was considered that a further round of consultation in between the Preferred Options and Publication stages was unnecessary as the Core Strategy did not require changes to its overall vision and strategy in order to accommodate Growth Point. No spatial changes were proposed to facilitate the implementation of Growth Point and there was no single site or priority area for the delivery of housing in St.Helens. However, the key opportunities for growth were the three urban villages at Moss Nook, Vulcan Village on the site of the former Vulcan Works and Lea Green on the site of the former Lea Green Colliery. There were also opportunities to subsidise the commencement of development on other sites with existing planning permissions which had stalled in their construction due to financial difficulties. However, due to the ending of Central Government funding the Mid Mersey Growth Point ceased to exist at the end of March 2011.

2.22 Further details of the consultations and the process that the Core Strategy has been through are contained in the Evolving the Core Strategy Background Paper.

St.Helens Policy Context

2.23 The Core Strategy has taken account of, and will support a number of local strategies. Two are, however, overarching:

St.Helens Plan

2.24 The St.Helens Plan 2011-2014 was adopted in July 2011 as both the Sustainable Community Plan for the Borough and the Council’s Corporate Plan. Its vision is to make St.Helens “A modern distinctive, economically prosperous and vibrant Borough”, to be achieved through the following objectives:

Improving People’s Lives

We want people to be:

- Healthy and Active
- Skilled and Educated
- Independent and Empowered

Creating a Better Place

We want St.Helens to be:

- A Thriving, Vibrant and Competitive Place

- A Safer and Stronger Place
- A Cleaner, Greener and Accessible Place

Delivering Effectively Together

We want all Partners to:

- Share the Same Principles and Values
- Consult, Engage and Empower Our Communities
- Be Open, Accessible and Transparent
- Be Successful

2.25 St.Helens Local Area Agreement was the main delivery vehicle for this plan in tackling the key strategic drivers to improve liveability, achieve better health, and reduce worklessness.

City Growth Strategy 2008-2018

2.26 This is the private sector led Economic Strategy for St.Helens and has the following four overarching themes:

- Transforming our business base to increase the number of, and employment levels in, competitive local firms and increase the proportion of the economic base in long-term growth sectors
- Transforming ambition – substantially increasing the participation rates of St.Helens' residents in enterprise by investing in their skills and accessing wider employment opportunities
- Achieving a physical transformation – making St.Helens a more attractive location for residents, investors and visitors
- Transforming perceptions – raising the profile of the Borough as a modern, vibrant and exciting place

Issues, Problems and Challenges



3 Issues, Problems and Challenges

The Key Emerging Issues

3.1 St.Helens total population at mid year 2009 was 177,100⁽¹⁾. Following years of decline (down 5.5% between 1988 and 1991, and 1.1% between 1991 and 2001) the population is now relatively stable. It is projected to increase by 3% by 2027 to 182,500.

3.2 However, St.Helens does have an ageing population with 22.6% of its residents aged 60 years and over, higher than the respective North West (22%) and England and Wales average (21.8%). The Borough also suffers from a declining youth population with 17.6% of its residents aged 14 years and younger, exactly comparable to the North West and England and Wales average, yet a decline from the 19.4% in the 2001 Census. Life expectancy within the Borough remains generally stable, with female life expectancy at 80 years, significantly higher than males at 75.4 years in 2005-2007. These are both marginally under the UK national average in 2005-2007 of 81.5 for females and 77.2 for males.

1 Mid 2009 Population Estimate

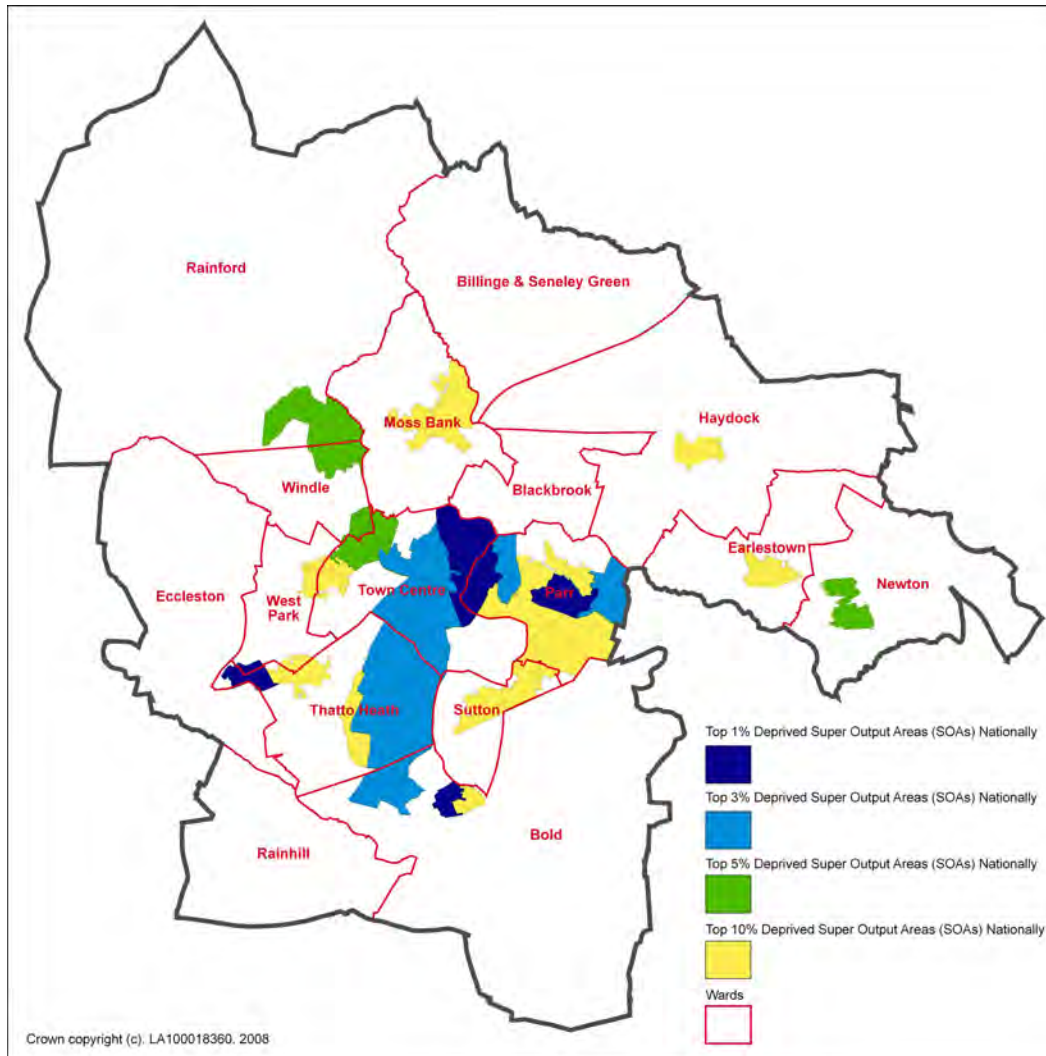


Figure 3.1 Index of Multiple Deprivation: Super Output Areas in St.Helens in the top 1 - 10% most deprived in England, 2007

3.3 Multiple deprivation levels are amongst the highest in the country. St.Helens is ranked as the 51st most deprived authority out of 326 authorities in England⁽²⁾. Despite having improved its relative position from 47th worst in 2007, there remain many challenges. In particular there is a cluster of Super Output Areas (SOAs) falling within the 5% most deprived nationally in the Town Centre, Parr, Thatto Heath and Bold wards, with other pockets of high deprivation in Windle and Newton wards.

3.4 St.Helens has a legacy of poor health linked with deprivation and its industrial past. The major causes of death are heart and circulatory diseases, cancers and respiratory diseases. Despite recent improvements, the Borough's mortality rate remains higher than the national average. Health inequalities remain a problem and new challenges are emerging with people becoming heavier, less fit and much more likely to develop life threatening ill health and poorer quality of life (source: LSP Story of Place, February 2008).

2 IMD 2010

3.5 The local employment rate has improved 1.6% since 2000 with over 69.3% of working age residents now in employment. The gap between the local and national employment rate has now also significantly reduced, standing at only 1%.

3.6 Overall employment rose by 2.7% across the Borough between 2004 and 2010 with around 2,100 net jobs being created. The gap has also been closed in the case of average earnings (now 94.2% of the national average) although here the gap remains significant. Business stock has risen by 14.6% in the period 2004-2009, with the Borough now hosting an additional 540 enterprises, although raising business stock levels to the national average remains a serious long-term challenge⁽³⁾.

3.7 The City Growth Strategy identifies a number of challenges that remain including:

- Low relative business density
- A lack of knowledge-based businesses in St.Helens
- Low aspirations and ambitions, particularly reflected by too many young people leaving school at 16 and not engaging in employment, education or training (NEET) and low qualifications
- A limited supply in the future pipeline of large, developer-ready sites and other employment land

3.8 Significant progress has been made in tackling crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour with reductions in British Crime Survey (BCS) comparator crime and all crime. This has been a high priority informed by a Strategic Assessment in 2008 with actions in place to continue to reduce crime through tackling anti-social behaviour, burglary, theft from motor vehicles and reducing the fear of crime. Policies will need to minimise opportunities for crime and social disorder, particularly through design requirements in new developments.

3.9 The standard of housing has improved significantly in recent years with major investment in new private sector dwellings and the refurbishment of the former Council stock, now owned by Helena Partnerships following voluntary stock transfer in 2002. A key issue, following the rapid rise in house prices since 2000, is that of affordability and the increasing difficulty for those seeking to access the housing market.

3.10 Derelict land remains a key challenge for St.Helens with 261 hectares of previously developed land identified in 2010. While this is also a resource for positive re-use, much is affected by contamination, necessitating remediation. Where the degree of contamination is severe, this will require the consideration of land uses that are less vulnerable to contamination, higher land value uses (such as housing or retail) or public sector interventions to ensure its successful redevelopment. Innovation in remediation technology offers the potential for lowering remediation costs, such as the increasing degree of on-site treatment now possible as opposed to off-site disposal in landfill.

3.11 The Borough of St.Helens has almost equal proportions of urban and rural areas. The countryside surrounding the built-up area is designated as Green Belt, which protects it from inappropriate development. The Overall Spatial Strategy seeks to direct future development to the urban areas and maintain the general extent of the Green Belt in the short to medium-term.

3 Source: ONS

Sufficient land for development needs has been identified within the urban area for the short to medium-term, however, beyond the first ten years of the plan period, removal of land from the Green Belt may be required to meet development needs.

3.12 Any removal of land from the Green Belt will be informed by a study having regard to what is happening in the subregion. This review will take into account, amongst other factors, land supply and needs, and policy approaches across the subregion. Where possible joint working will be undertaken to provide a coordinated approach.

3.13 St.Helens Town Centre forms a focal point for the community and provides a range of shopping, employment and leisure opportunities. It is also the focus of the town's transport network and as such makes an important contribution to sustainable development and social inclusion. However, it is essential to ensure the Town Centre remains competitive with its neighbours by providing additional comparison floorspace.

3.14 Reliance on the car remains high within St.Helens and the promotion of alternatives will remain a key issue. Improved accessibility to, and capacity of, the local rail network is of particular importance.

3.15 St.Helens has been active in securing significant increases to its open space from former derelict land. Much of this is now developing as woodland and species rich grassland, a major opportunity exists to improve accessibility to it. Condition monitoring and positive conservation management remain a key priority, with currently 16% of Local Wildlife Sites in positive conservation management, which needs to be continued and enhanced where practicable.

3.16 Headline issues, problems and challenges, as outlined in Chapters 2 and 3, can therefore be identified which help in shaping the Vision, Aims and Objectives of the Plan. These are:

Key Issues

- Deliver Sustainable Communities
- Reduce Impact of Climate Change
- Maximise Accessibility and Social Inclusion
- Sustaining Population Recovery
- Tackle Social Deprivation
- Reduce Poor Health
- Meet Local Housing Needs
- Reduce Crime
- Management of the Rural Economy
- Enhance the Town Centre
- Deliver Sustainable Development
- Reduce the Need to Travel
- Deliver the St.Helens Plan and City Growth Strategy
- Reduce Worklessness and Develop Entrepreneurial Culture
- Reduce Vacant and Derelict Land

- Protect and Enhance the Environment
- Minimise Pollution

3.17 The following chapter illustrates how these key issues, problems and challenges will be met through a Spatial Vision, Strategic Aims and Objectives of the Core Strategy.

St.Helens in 2027



4 St.Helens in 2027

St.Helens Spatial Vision, Strategic Aims and Objectives

4.1 The St.Helens Plan 2011-2014 Vision is:

“To make St.Helens a modern, distinctive, economically prosperous and vibrant Borough”

4.2 The Core Strategy Vision is derived from this but adds a spatial dimension based on the key issues, problems and challenges summarised earlier in the document.

Core Strategy Spatial Vision

“In 2027, St.Helens will be a regenerated Borough. Taking advantage of its location between Liverpool and Manchester, it will have a vibrant economy, a healthy, safe and attractive environment and inclusive, sustainable communities.

The Town Centre and its surrounding area will be the vibrant focus of the Borough, with expanded shopping and leisure facilities, a new stadium for St.Helens Rugby League Football Club and a redeveloped St.Helens College.

The majority of new housing developed, including affordable housing, will be developed in the core settlement of St.Helens, with particular priority on creating sustainable communities in the deprived areas, including parts of Parr, Thatto Heath, Four Acre and St.Helens Town Centre.

Previously developed land in sustainable locations within Haydock Industrial Estate and the M62 Link Road Corridor will remain priority areas for economic development, together with a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange at Parkside⁽¹⁾.”

St.Helens in 2027

4.3 The following is a visionary statement of how St.Helens will look in 2027, following the successful implementation of the policies outlined in the Core Strategy and Local Development Framework.

Population and Quality of Life

4.4 The Borough’s population, having stabilised by 2011 at the 2001 level, has seen an increase in the number of young people and families living in the Borough. There is increased confidence in the future of St.Helens and the public are proud of their town. The quality of life has improved

¹ The implementation of the SRFI is dependent on a suitable scheme gaining consent.

and it is evident in sustainable and attractive neighbourhoods. Areas such as Parr, Thatto Heath, Four Acre and the Town Centre, once characterised as areas of multiple deprivation, as well as other deprived neighbourhoods, have seen significant levels of investment in environmental improvements and new and improved housing, services, access to employment and training which have contributed to raising the standards of living. Through partnership working with the PCT and other organisations, the health of the population has improved significantly, reflected in longer life expectancy, which now reflects national averages. Training and support has enabled a significant number of people, formerly on disability benefit and out of work, to find appropriate jobs. The needs of older people are met in terms of appropriate housing and accessible services.

Distribution of Development

4.5 The Borough is an attractive economic and residential area. Derelict land and land affected by contamination from former industries has been remediated and used for new development. New development has been concentrated within the built-up areas, with the majority on land that was previously developed.

4.6 St.Helens is a sought after residential area providing a range of good quality housing in different tenures to cater for the needs of different sections of the population, including executive housing, family housing, single person accommodation and special needs housing for older people and people with disabilities.

4.7 New housing has been directed to those areas and sites which have the greatest impact on regenerating the Borough, and is well connected to services, open space and job opportunities, creating sustainable communities. Thus, there are large-scale residential developments at Lea Green, Moss Nook, and Vulcan in Newton-le-Willows. Areas of deprivation such as Parr, Thatto Heath and around the Town Centre have also been targeted for improved and new housing. Land is used efficiently with the highest densities concentrated around transport interchanges and town, district and local centres.

4.8 St.Helens has a diverse, modern economy with a growing enterprise culture, offering a wide range of employment and development opportunities. Haydock and the M62 Link Road Corridor continue to be important economic areas well connected to residential areas by public transport. The majority of new commercial and economic development has taken place in the M62 Link Road Corridor, a broad corridor from Pocket Nook, through the Town Centre and its eastern fringe, southwards along the route of the M62 Link Road and extending eastwards into Sutton. This has included a new rugby league stadium with associated retail and leisure uses on the former United Glass site and office/industrial developments at Lea Green. As part of implementing the City Growth Strategy, there has been considerable emphasis on partnership working to generate and support new business growth in the town with a variety of associated sites and premises. The Sankey Valley Industrial Estate at Newton-le-Willows is a modern, vibrant estate providing employment to the east of the Borough.

4.9 St.Helens Town Centre itself continues to be a successful and vibrant subregional visitor destination offering a range of shopping, leisure and other services. It has a diverse night economy catering for a range of interests and ages. A major new retail development has been completed and St.Helens College continues to be an important economic driver, occupying modern town centre premises.

4.10 Earlestown Town Centre provides an attractive and safe environment for residents and visitors.

4.11 Outside the M62 Link Road Corridor at the former Parkside Colliery, Newton-le-Willows, a rail freight interchange serving the northwest will be nearing completion⁽²⁾.

Green Infrastructure

4.12 The countryside and green spaces in the urban fringe are a well managed, valuable and well used resource for the local community, visitors and wildlife. Working with The Mersey Forest, policies and initiatives are in place to support their economic viability and protect their appearance and positive use for health, recreation, tourism and biodiversity as well as their contribution to reduction in climate change.

4.13 The landscape has been transformed into a mosaic of established and healthy habitats forming a network of mature grasslands, wetlands, woodlands and other priority habitats. The landscape, in particular to the south, has been transformed by the maturing of publicly accessible woodlands on the former collieries at Sutton Manor, Clock Face, and Bold, as well as the surrounding farmland. In the north, a network of footpaths link and provide a focus for recreation, tourism, archaeology and nature conservation between Billinge Hill, Carr Mill Dam and the Stanley Bank area of Haydock.

4.14 There is also an emphasis on “greening” within the built-up area in line with the City Growth concept of the Town in the Forest. Woodlands extend into the town along the main road corridors and Greenways, such as Sankey Valley Park, Ravenhead, Sutton Brook and Newton, form corridors through the built-up areas, suitable for walking, cycling and wildlife. They are complemented by well managed parks, recreation grounds and other urban open spaces providing opportunities for a wide range of recreational, sporting, health and educational activities.

Design and Environment Quality

4.15 The environment of the whole Borough has improved through partnership working, resulting in attractive surroundings and reduced crime and fear of crime. Poor residential environments have been particularly targeted.

4.16 New development is of high quality design, well integrated with surrounding areas, creating a sense of place and incorporating opportunities to minimise crime and accommodate disability requirements. The character of established residential areas including Eccleston and Rainhill are safeguarded from over-intensive new housing development. Enhancement schemes have been completed for the ten Conservation areas.

4.17 There is a definite sense of arrival in the Borough along the main road and rail corridors which are landscaped with well designed frontage development, creating a positive and dynamic impression to residents, investors and visitors. The St.Helens Canal forms a central feature in the Town and of the Ravenhead and Sankey Valley Greenways. The canal is flanked by a number of modern waterside developments.

² The implementation of a SRFI is dependent on a suitable scheme gaining consent.

4.18 Public art and cultural activities play an important role in defining the new-found confidence and quality of life experience in St.Helens. The Borough's physical and cultural heritage are cherished by the community and play an important part in regeneration and increased levels of tourism.

4.19 A proportion of new developments are built to eco-standards, including the conservation of potable water, and renewable energy technologies are in evidence. New developments are also contributing to public art and biodiversity. Working with partners, measures have been put in place to tackle instances of water and air pollution.

4.20 Growth of waste has been reduced to zero and, in partnership with neighbouring authorities, facilities for recycling provided. St.Helens manages waste sustainably, with less waste being sent to landfill as new markets for recycling are explored.

Community Facilities

4.21 Earlestown Town Centre and other district and local centres are thriving and vibrant places which are accessible from the surrounding residential areas, which they serve. They provide a local community focus and cater for local needs.

4.22 Education facilities have been transformed, providing life long learning in flexible, well-designed and inspirational learning campuses.

4.23 Working with partners, there is an integration of local services such as health and libraries, especially in poorer areas. New modern health facilities have been provided at Duke Street in the Town Centre and at Newton-le-Willows and Garswood. St.Helens Hospital has been modernised with the addition of new buildings. All sections of the population have access to opportunities for learning and training.

4.24 There is a range of recreational and leisure facilities used by all residents, which also act as major attractions for visitors into the Borough, including Destination St.Helens (a regional sports and leisure centre, with associated conference facilities) at the former United Glass site. A central feature at Destination St.Helens is the new stadium for St.Helens RFC.

Transport

4.25 There is an integrated and well used public transport system and a safe and attractive network of pedestrian routes and cycleways, promoting accessibility in both urban and rural areas, thus helping to reduce social exclusion. The type and location of development meets the needs of the community, minimising the need to travel.

4.26 Bus services are reliable and targeted to a range of passenger requirements. New services now serve the employment areas at Haydock and the M62 Link Road Corridor. There have been improvements at Newton-le-Willows, St.Helens Junction and Garswood stations and there is a new rail station at Carr Mill.

4.27 The Town Centre is easily accessible by car, rail, bus and cycle, as well as on foot from surrounding areas and will be connected with outlying retail parks and the new stadium site. The rebuilt St.Helens Central Station is a major attractor of passengers.

4.28 Various measures are used to manage traffic on the Borough's roads. Industrial traffic is channelled onto the strategic freight network including rail-based connections.

Strategic Aims and Objectives

4.29 The Spatial Vision will be delivered through a number of Strategic Aims and detailed Strategic Objectives. The Objectives, below, are derived from the Key Issues identified in the previous chapter and flow from the Vision. How these relate are shown in the diagram below.

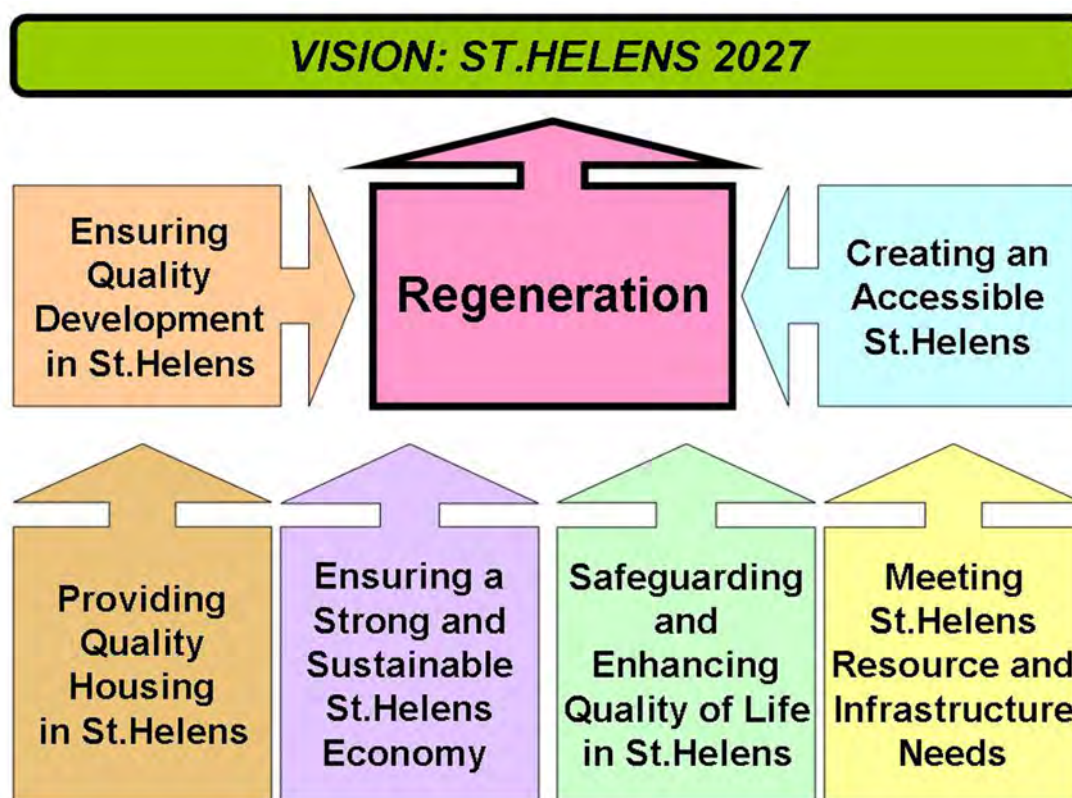


Figure 4.1 Vision: St.Helens 2027

4.30 These Aims and Objectives will meet the issues identified in Chapters 2 and 3.

4.31 The table below illustrates how the Strategic Aims and detailed Strategic Objectives relate, which issues have been addressed and how these will be delivered through the policies contained within the Core Strategy.

Strategic Objectives	Key Issue Addressed	Primary Policy Delivery (3)
SA 1 Regenerating St.Helens		
SO 1.1 To secure the regeneration of the Borough by: steady, sustainable population growth; reducing deprivation through directing development and investment where it is most needed; and by giving priority to development of derelict and vacant sites.	All	CSS 1; CIN 1; CAS 1; CAS 2; CAS 3.1; CAS 3.2; CAS 4; CAS 5
SA 2 Ensuring Quality Development in St.Helens		
SO 2.1 To ensure that new development is of a high quality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deliver Sustainable Development - Reduce Crime - Protect and Enhance the Environment 	CP 1; CQL 1
SO 2.2 To mitigate the effects of, and minimise the impact of, development on climate change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduce Impact of Climate Change - Deliver Sustainable Development - Protect and Enhance the Environment 	CP 1; CQL 1
SO 2.3 To contribute to the development of stronger and safer communities within St.Helens.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deliver Sustainable Communities - Tackle Social Deprivation - Reduce Crime - Deliver Sustainable Development 	CP 1; CQL 1
SA 3 Creating an Accessible St.Helens		
SO 3.1 To improve access for all by facilitating sustainable transport choices, development in accessible locations, an integrated public transport network, and targeted improvements to the transport network.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maximise Accessibility and Social Inclusion - Tackle Social Deprivation - Deliver Sustainable Development 	CP 2 CAS 1; CAS 2; CAS 3.1; CAS 3.2; CAS 4; CAS 5
SA 4 Providing Quality Housing in St.Helens		
SO 4.1 To ensure a sufficient number of new and improved dwellings to meet local needs and delivering sustainable communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meet Local Housing Needs - Reverse Declining Population - Tackle Social Deprivation - Deliver Sustainable Development - Reduce Vacant and Derelict Land 	CH 1; CH 2; CH 3; CAS 1; CAS 2; CAS 3.1; CAS 4; CAS 5
SA 5 Ensuring a Strong and Sustainable St.Helens Economy		

3 The table lists the primary policy delivery mechanisms. Other policies will, however, provide secondary support for aims and objectives

Strategic Objectives	Key Issue Addressed	Primary Policy Delivery (3)
SO 5.1 To provide and protect sufficient land and premises to meet local employment needs and support the implementation of the City Growth Strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reverse Declining Population - Tackle Social Deprivation - Deliver Sustainable Development - Reduce Worklessness and Develop Entrepreneurial Culture - Reduce Vacant and Derelict Land 	CE 1; CAS 1; CAS 2; CAS 3.1; CAS 3.2; CAS 4; CAS 5
SO 5.2 To support the development of the tourism, leisure and rural economy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tackle Social Deprivation - Rural Management - Reduce Worklessness and Develop Entrepreneurial Culture 	CE 1; CAS 5
SO 5.3 To enhance the vitality and viability of St.Helens and Earlestown Town Centres, District and Local Centres and safeguard and enhance St.Helens Town Centre's role as a subregional shopping centre, by securing major town centre developments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhance the Town Centre - Tackle Social Deprivation - Reduce Worklessness and Develop Entrepreneurial Culture 	CE 1; CAS 2; CAS 3.1
SA 6 Safeguarding and Enhancing Quality of Life in St.Helens		
SO 6.1 To ensure the provision of community facilities, including health, education, leisure and culture and encourage their integration to increase convenience and reduce the need to travel.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maximise Accessibility and Social Inclusion - Tackle Social Deprivation - Reduce Poor Health - Deliver Sustainable Communities - Reduce Worklessness and Develop Entrepreneurial Culture 	CQL 5
SO 6.2 To safeguard the quality of the environment, protecting and enhancing local character and distinctiveness, together with biodiversity and geodiversity'.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduce Poor Health - Rural Management - Protect and Enhance the Environment 	CAS 5; CQL 1; CQL 2; CQL 3; CQL 4
SO 6.3 To protect and enhance the multi-functional network of green spaces throughout the Borough and, in partnership, promote positive use and management whilst improving their biodiversity and increasing tree and woodland planting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduce Poor Health - Rural Management - Protect and Enhance the Environment 	CAS 5; CQL 1; CQL 2; CQL 3; CQL 4
SA 7 Meeting St.Helens' Resource and Infrastructure Needs		
SO 7.1 To ensure that St.Helens' infrastructure needs for the future are fully met and that valuable resources within the Borough are safeguarded or used in a sustainable manner.	All	CIN 1; CR 1; CR 2

Table 4.1 Strategic Aims and Objectives

3 The table lists the primary policy delivery mechanisms. Other policies will, however, provide secondary support for aims and objectives

The Key Diagram



5 The Key Diagram

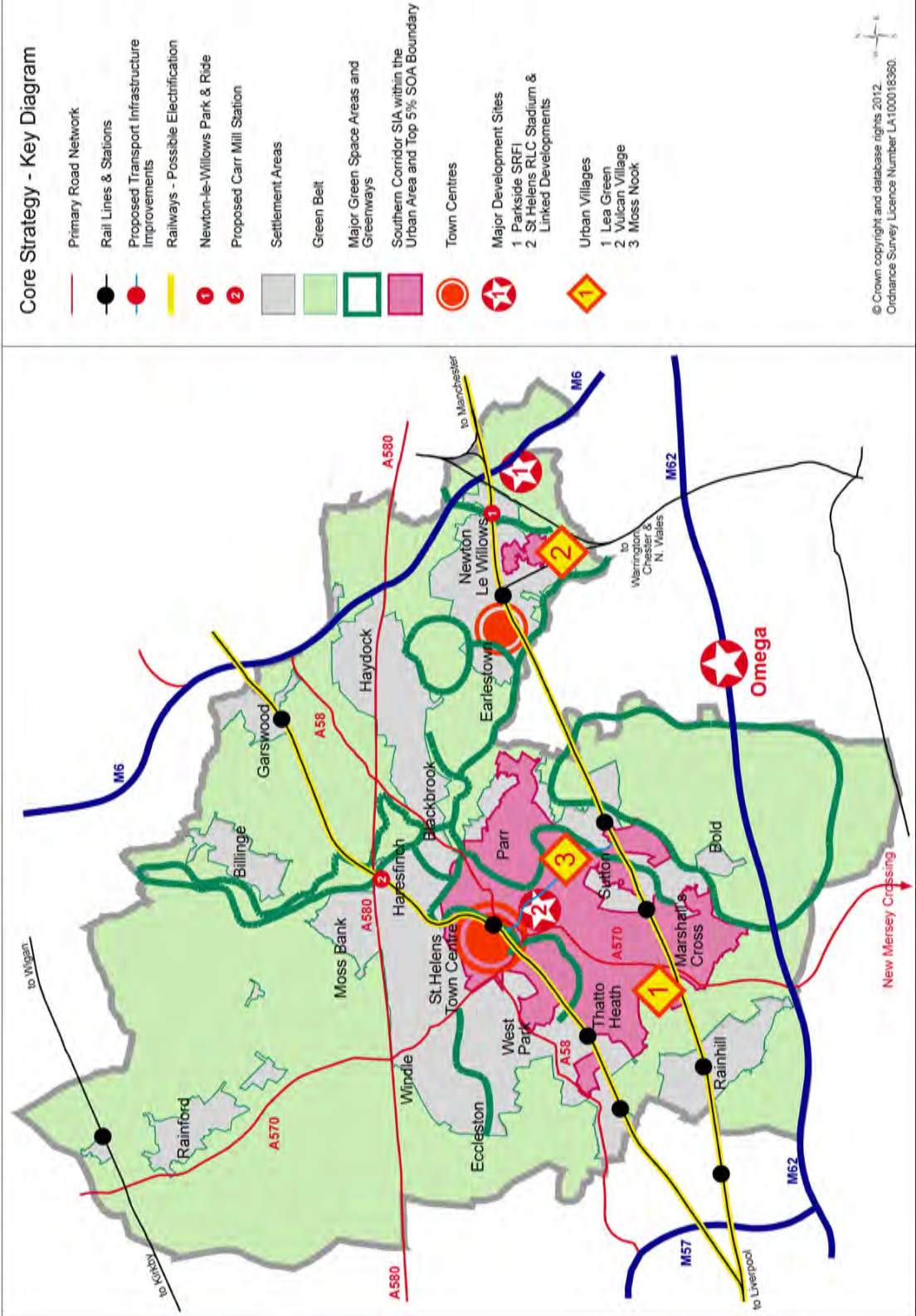


Figure 5.1 Core Strategy - Key Diagram

Overall Spatial Strategy



6 Overall Spatial Strategy

Policy CSS 1

Overall Spatial Strategy

The regeneration of St.Helens to 2027 will be delivered through distributing development across the Borough and supporting regeneration activity.

1. The distribution of development will be as follows:
 - i. The majority of all new development will be directed towards the regional town of St.Helens⁽¹⁾;
 - ii. In the first ten years of the plan the majority (approximately 69%) of new residential development will be directed towards the regional town of St.Helens. The remainder will be directed towards Newton-le-Willows and Earlestown (approximately 23%), Haydock and Blackbrook (approximately 5%) and Rural St.Helens (approximately 3%);
 - iii. St.Helens Town Centre will enhance and protect its market share within the region by securing further retail and leisure development opportunities. Applications for main town centre uses providing greater than 500 square metres gross floorspace in an edge-of-town centre or out-of-town centre location will require an Impact Assessment;
 - iv. Earlestown will remain the second Town Centre within the Borough, whilst Rainhill and Thatto Heath will be classed as District Centres. Applications for main town centre uses providing greater than 300 square metres gross floorspace in an edge-of-district centre or out-of-district centre location will require an Impact Assessment. The following will serve as local centres: Billinge; Chain Lane; Chancery Lane; Clipsley Lane; Eccleston; Fingerpost; Marshall's Cross; Newton-le-Willows; Newtown; Rainford; Sutton; and Denton's Green. Applications for main town centre uses providing greater than 200 square metres gross floorspace in an edge-of-local centre or out-of-local centre location will require an Impact Assessment;
 - v. The main focus for economic development will continue to be previously developed land in sustainable locations within the M62 Link Road Corridor in St.Helens and Haydock Industrial Estate;
 - vi. The reuse of previously developed land in sustainable locations will be prioritised through policy CH 1 parts 3 and 4 and the Allocations DPD;
 - vii. The general extent of the Green Belt as indicated on the Core Strategy Key Diagram will be maintained in the short to medium term. The detailed Green Belt boundary is shown on the Proposals Map. Any strategic review of the Green Belt will be dependent on work carried out at the subregional level;
 - viii. An area of land in the Green Belt, principally based on the former Parkside Colliery, is identified as a strategic location for a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange. Subject to an appropriate scheme being fully developed on site, which meets policy CAS 3.2,

¹ The Regional Town of St.Helens is defined as St.Helens Core Area (Spatial Area 1) and St.Helens Central Spatial Area (Spatial Area 2)

- the land will then be considered favourably for removal from the Green Belt through the Allocations DPD; and
- ix. Elsewhere within the Green Belt area, development will be restricted to within existing settlement boundaries and outside of these areas development will comply with Green Belt policy.

2. Regeneration activity will be supported, including the following:

- i. Neighbourhood Management programmes in the most deprived areas of the Borough including parts of Parr, Thatto Heath, Four Acre and St.Helens Town Centre;
- ii. Better links between areas of deprivation and economic development will be provided by promoting activity on those sites within or in close proximity to areas of deprivation or those with good public transport access;
- iii. Measures for improving links between employment and residential areas will be supported; and
- iv. The implementation of the St.Helens City Growth Strategy.

Strategic Aims Met:	Strategic Objectives Met:
All	All
Key Delivery Items:	
Adoption of Sustainable Development and Allocations DPDs Adoption of a suite of SPDs and Development Briefs Subregional work to consider need to review Green Belt to meet development needs Discuss and where possible agree with neighbouring authorities an approach to meeting development needs with or without releasing Green Belt Implementation of Core Strategy Policies CAS 1 to CAS 5	

Table 6.1

Purpose

6.1 The Overall Spatial Strategy sets out how development will be distributed across the Borough until 2027. It gives a general indication of the level of development of residential, employment and retail uses to be split between the five areas of the Borough⁽²⁾. It also identifies the key planning tools to enable this to happen such as the Green Belt. This is the key strategic policy for the Core Strategy and will be used to shape the Borough's development.

Justification

6.2 The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the North West was published in September 2008. Within the evidence base of the RSS, St.Helens is identified as being part of the third tier of areas where development should be focused in and around the town. Furthermore, evidence⁽³⁾ supporting

2 St.Helens Core Area, St.Helens Central Spatial Area, Newton-le-Willows and Earlestown, Haydock and Blackbrook and Rural St.Helens
3 (North West) Town Centre Assessment Study, White Young Green, July 2005

the RSS identifies St.Helens as a retail centre where comparison retailing should be encouraged and enhanced. Based on evidence of travel to work areas and housing markets, RSS identifies St.Helens as being part of the Liverpool City Region and more specifically as falling within the "outer area" of the City Region. With regards to housing development, RSS requires St.Helens to deliver at least 570 dwellings per year, and this is still considered to be an appropriate level of housing provision. This is covered in more detail in policy CH 1, Meeting St.Helens' Housing Requirement. RSS also outlines the approach to strategic change to the Green Belt within the Borough, requiring any strategic changes to be considered in a subregional context. This approach is maintained in the Core Strategy in recognition of the Green Belt's role both as a restraint to encroachment, but also as a positive planning tool to ensure regeneration of previously developed sites. It is recognised that land may need to be removed from the Green Belt to meet housing needs in the long term, i.e. the 11-15 year period of the plan. However, the amount of land, location(s) and phasing needs to be considered in the subregional context (paragraph 6.11 explains this in more detail).

6.3 The policy seeks to direct the majority of development to the main urban settlements of St.Helens, Haydock and Newton-le-Willows. These areas benefit from having the greatest concentration of previously developed land, the development of which reduces the need for undeveloped land. They also contain the most deprived areas of the Borough where further development and regeneration is most needed. Within the built up areas of the Borough there exists a range of accessible services and facilities which, in turn, would benefit from income generated by new development. Comprehensive public transport services provide links within, and to, other areas - 98% of households live within 400m of a bus route served by at least one bus per hour. Furthermore the built up areas provide the majority of employment and economic opportunities within the Borough.

6.4 The policy, therefore, gives priority to sites with the greatest regeneration benefits in support of Council commitment to regeneration, as evidenced in the St.Helens Plan, City Growth Strategy, and Neighbourhood Renewal.

6.5 Elsewhere, in smaller settlements outside the main urban areas, such as Rainhill, Rainford, Garswood and Billinge, there are few opportunities to accommodate new development without encroaching on the Green Belt. Development here in the short to medium term is expected to be small-scale within existing settlement boundaries. In the long term, release of Green Belt land may be required to meet housing needs.

6.6 The table below summarises the preferred overall spatial distribution of development across the Borough and is informed by the availability of sites and housing capacity identified in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, Employment Land availability and Retail Studies. This distribution may change if Green Belt release for housing is to address any housing land shortfall in the long term (i.e. years 11-15).

Spatial Areas	Residential Development ⁽⁴⁾	Economic Development		Major Retail and Leisure
		With Parkside	Without Parkside	
St.Helens Core Area and Central Spatial Area (CAS 1, CAS 2)	69%	23%	70%	100%
Newton-le-Willows and Earlestown (CAS 3)	23%	68%	6%	-
Haydock and Blackbrook (CAS 4)	4%	4%	12%	-
Rural St.Helens (CAS 5)	3%	4%	12%	-

Table 6.2

6.7 The table above shows that the majority of available sites for residential development lie within the regional town of St.Helens, comprising the St.Helens Core Area and Central Spatial Area, with smaller levels in Newton-le-Willows and Earlestown and Haydock and Blackbrook. The policy therefore reflects this supply in terms of where the majority of new residential development up to 2023/24 will go. However, in accordance with policy CH 1, land to meet housing needs from 2023/24 onwards has not yet been identified, so it is not possible to predict the distribution of housing development by the end of the plan period.

6.8 With regards to economic development (including Parkside) the supply of sites is focused within St.Helens itself and Haydock Industrial Estate. The spatial distribution of the 37 hectares of identified employment land demand in policy CE 1 is likely to broadly follow the distribution of existing employment areas, in particular, the M62 Link Corridor and Haydock employment areas. However, within St.Helens the existing industrial areas are constrained from further development outwards due to being surrounded by development and Green Belt.

6.9 St.Helens Town Centre is the major retail and service centre serving the Borough. It is identified in the RSS as a second tier centre in the region, after Manchester and Liverpool, based on the (North West) Town Centre Assessment Study. The policy seeks to maintain the role of St.Helens Town Centre as the key service centre for the Borough and a significant centre in the region. Earlestown maintains its Town Centre designation. All centres within the Borough have been assessed and given appropriate designations. The policy reflects these designations.

6.10 The St.Helens & Earlestown Retail & Town Centre Uses Study 2011 recommends a range of locally set thresholds for the requirement of an Impact Assessment commensurate to the hierarchy of centres set out in CSS 1. Where an Impact Assessment is required the applicant should agree the scope of the Impact Assessment with the Council at an early stage to ensure the Impact Assessment is proportionate to the scale of the proposed development and provides the required information to address the concerns of the Council. Applicants will still be required to

4 Residential development (% of dwellings) on identified housing land supply up to 2023/24.

demonstrate compliance with the sequential approach to development for all proposals for town centre uses located at the edge of or outside a defined centre. The Allocations DPD will define the Earlestown Town Centre, district centre and local centre boundaries.

6.11 The precise boundary of the Green Belt is currently defined by saved UDP policy S1 and is shown on the Proposals Map. It is envisaged that the general extent ⁽⁵⁾ of the Green Belt will be maintained in the short to medium term (the first 10 years of the plan). Minor amendments to make the detailed Green Belt boundary more robust, and a review to address longer term land requirements, will be considered in the preparation of the Allocations DPD. However, the RSS approach of considering the land supply and needs of the subregion as a whole is considered appropriate in order to see if needs can be met sustainably, including in neighbouring authority areas, before the release of Green Belt land is considered. Consideration needs to be given to the Liverpool City Region Cabinet Area (Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St.Helens, Wirral), the Eastern Housing Market Area (Halton, St.Helens, Warrington) and other neighbours (West Lancashire and Wigan). The cumulative impact of individual authorities' Green Belt releases in combination needs to be taken into account to ensure that impacts on the remaining Green Belt are minimised and that the release is the most sustainable approach.

6.12 The assessment of land supply and need in the Liverpool City Region (the Liverpool City Region Housing and Economic Development Evidence Based Overview Study, May 2011) will inform the Green Belt review. This found that housing and employment land supply is limited in several immediate neighbouring authorities that share employment and housing markets with St.Helens. The nature and extent of further work is yet to be agreed by the authorities. However, it is expected to involve discussions to determine whether or not any needs can be met in neighbouring authority areas (taking into account the findings of the Overview Study) and, if necessary, how to identify and phase Green Belt release in a sustainable manner that would not jeopardise urban regeneration. This work is likely to be undertaken in 2013 subject to approvals across the City Region.

6.13 In relation to housing, the Overview Study found that St.Helens will be unlikely to meet the needs of neighbouring authorities and that, to only a limited extent, is its own undersupply likely to be able to be met by housing capacity in Liverpool and/or Wirral. The study concluded that, where demand cannot be redistributed, further supply will need to be identified to meet St.Helens' own unmet needs beyond 2022/23 (as identified in the 2010 SHLAA) through appropriate planning actions. Policy CH 1 sets out possible such actions, beyond which release of land from the Green Belt may be necessary and would be identified in the Allocations DPD.

6.14 Evidence from the original 2009 Employment Land and Skills Review identified a potential shortage of land for B8 (warehousing) employment uses in St.Helens, however further more recent research on both supply and demand has identified more supply and the potential for surplus existing employment land to be re-used to meet this shortfall. Overall, the evidence indicates that St.Helens should be able to meet its needs for all employment land uses until at least 2027. RSS highlights Newton-le-Willows as an area of search for a regional rail freight facility as discussed in more detail in policy CAS 3.2, Development of a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange at the Former Parkside Colliery.

5 The broad coverage of Green Belt in the area as defined in national policy

Policy CIN 1

Meeting St.Helens' Infrastructure Needs

The infrastructure required to meet St.Helens' needs and to facilitate development will be met through the following:

1. Development being directed to locations that are already well served by infrastructure;
2. The Council working jointly with infrastructure providers to continually identify and meet needs;
3. Requiring developers to provide the necessary infrastructure that their development will require through:
 - i. Providing on or off site provision of infrastructure; or
 - ii. Making payments through a tariff based system, or the Community Infrastructure Levy, or other developer contribution regime;
4. Ensuring that the LDF process and infrastructure providers service planning is aligned; and
5. Supporting various development programmes for service providers in the Borough such as the Primary Care Trust Strategic Services Development Plan or successor documents.

Strategic Aims Met:	Strategic Objectives Met:
SA 1, SA 7	SO 1.1, SO 7.1
Key Delivery Items:	
Adoption of Waste DPD Implementation of Community Infrastructure Levy, tariff based system or other developer contribution regime Supporting Infrastructure Delivery Partners Programmes	

Table 6.3

Purpose

6.15 The NPPF requires the plan to identify what physical, social and green infrastructure is required to enable the amount of development identified. This is a key role of the Core Strategy. This policy provides a central focus for the provision of infrastructure alongside the strategy in policy CSS 1, Overall Spatial Strategy. It is further supplemented by more detailed policies in the document, which either pick up on specific local infrastructure or on infrastructure topics, together with the Delivery and Monitoring Strategy, which will serve as an "action plan" for delivery in the future.

Justification

6.16 Infrastructure is wide ranging and includes: transport; flood defences; utilities and waste; social infrastructure (see CQL 5); and environmental and Green Infrastructure. The planning system provides a much greater emphasis on aligning land use planning and planning for infrastructure. In devising plans it is essential to assess the capacity of existing infrastructure and what the future needs for infrastructure will be to achieve the plan's Vision, Aims and Objectives. The Council have consulted with service providers to ensure sufficient infrastructure exists or is planned to achieve the aims of the Core Strategy.

6.17 In accordance with the principles of sustainable development, priority should be given to sites that are already well served by infrastructure and do not require additional investment. Through policy CSS 1 we seek to direct development within the existing urban areas of the Borough, and predominantly within the town of St.Helens itself. This is where the existing infrastructure is provided and activities are concentrated. By its very nature, however, new development will create pressures on existing infrastructure and this will need to be addressed. The policy above provides a mechanism for doing this.

6.18 Major development schemes will be well planned in advance, and agreement reached as to who and how the new infrastructure will be provided. Where development creates a new infrastructure need, or pressure on existing infrastructure, then it will be expected that the development will contribute towards meeting the needs. This will be achieved through a number of methods including on and off site provision and financial contributions secured through obligations in the short term. The Council is committed to the introduction of a St.Helens Community Infrastructure Levy, having started preparation and secured "Front-runner Round 2" status in 2011, and a planned adoption date of 2013.

Policy CSD 1

National Planning Policy Framework - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

1. When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. It will always work proactively with applicants jointly to seek solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.
2. Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan (and, where relevant, with policies in other DPDs, AAPs and Neighbourhood Plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
3. Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether:

- i. Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or
- ii. Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.

Strategic Aims Met:	Strategic Objectives Met:
All	All
Key Delivery Items:	
Determination of planning applications in line with planning policies Adoption of Sustainable Development and Allocations DPDs Adoption of a suite of SPDs and Development Briefs	

Table 6.4

Purpose

6.19 Policy CSD 1 ensures that the Core Strategy is based upon the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as required by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Justification

6.20 The NPPF was published on 27 March 2012 and came into effect immediately. It contains a presumption in favour of sustainable development ("the Presumption"), which the NPPF states should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan making and decision taking. The Core Strategy is the principal planning policy document for St.Helens and the NPPF states that Local Plans should follow the approach of the Presumption so it is clear that development which is sustainable is approved without delay.

6.21 Policy CSD 1 ensures that the Core Strategy is based upon the Presumption, as required by the NPPF. The policies in the Core Strategy provide clear guidance on how the Presumption will be applied locally. The Core Strategy policies will be supplemented by the Saved UDP Policies (in accordance with their consistency with the NPPF) until they are replaced by policies in other DPDs and AAPs, such as the Sustainable Development and the Allocations DPDs. Should Neighbourhood Plans be produced, their policies will also be relevant.

St.Helens Core Area



7 St.Helens Core Area

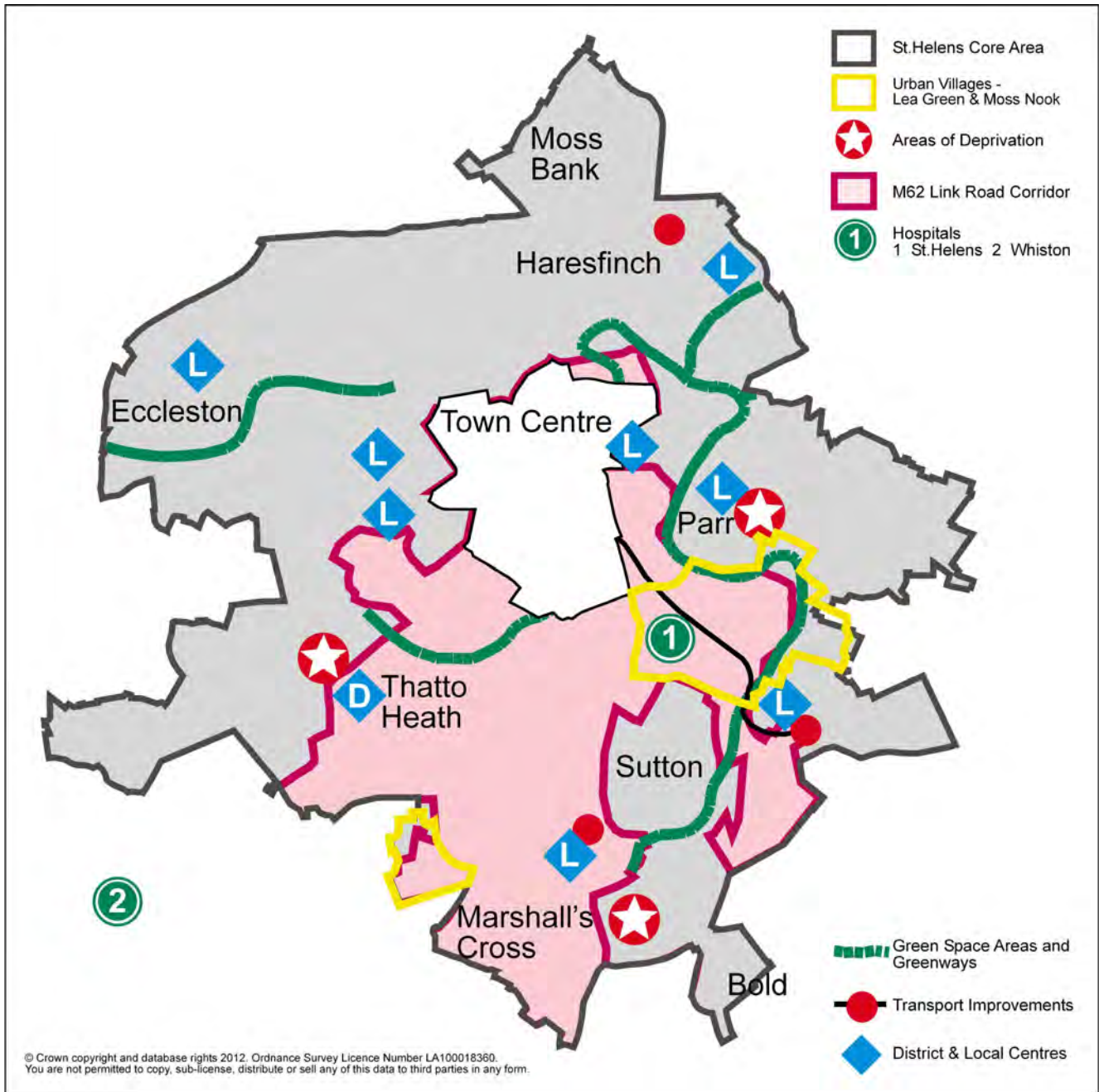


Figure 7.1 Strategy for St.Helens Core Area

Context

7.1 St.Helens Core Area is the main settlement of the Borough with a population of around 90,000 and comprising the built up parts of Parr, Sutton, Bold, Thatto Heath, West Park, Eccleston, Windle and Moss Bank wards. It also includes the outer parts of the Town Centre ward.

7.2 The core contains 5 of the Borough's 10 secondary schools, St.Helens Hospital and 8 of the 14 local retail centres.

7.3 The western side of the Borough is characterised by established residential areas. Pockets of deprivation occur throughout the area. Much of the previously developed land available in the Borough occurs in the Core Area.

Policy CAS 1

St.Helens Core Area Strategy

1. Within the St.Helens Core Area new residential development will be focused towards:
 - i. The two urban villages of Lea Green and Moss Nook;
 - ii. Areas of deprivation, and, in particular areas of Parr, Thatto Heath, and Four Acre; and
 - iii. Elsewhere within the Core Area on suitable previously developed land.
2. Economic development in the St.Helens Core Area will be concentrated on sites within or closely related to the M62 Link Road Corridor and will:
 - i. Bring forward the early development of land with planning permission such as Lea Green Farm East and West;
 - ii. Remove constraints to bring forward industrial sites for development, with initial attention focused on the Sutton area, Gerard's Bridge and Cowley Hill; and
 - iii. Improve the accessibility of economic areas from deprived communities.
3. The Council will support service providers in the St.Helens Core Area to:
 - i. Improve accessibility to the redeveloped St.Helens Hospital; and
 - ii. Facilitate the allocation and development of sites in accessible locations for improved health facilities in Eccleston, Sutton, Parr and Thatto Heath.
4. Green Infrastructure improvements will include:
 - i. Protecting and enhancing the Greenway network comprising Sutton Brook, Ravenhead, Eccleston and Sankey Valley Park Greenways and linkages to them; and
 - ii. Restoring former quarries to Brickfields community woodland, including its integration with the Bold Forest Park.
5. Development will not prejudice and, where appropriate, will support objectives to protect and enhance the accessibility of the Borough through:
 - i. Protecting the route of the St.Helens Central to St.Helens Junction Rail Link;
 - ii. Provision of a new station and associated facilitating development at Carr Mill;
 - iii. Expansion of park and ride facilities at St.Helens Junction;

- iv. Maintaining the effectiveness of the A570 Linkway and M62 junction 7 at Rainhill Stoops; and
 - v. Supporting the electrification of the Liverpool to Wigan and Liverpool to Manchester rail lines.
6. The District Centre of Thatto Heath and existing local centres will be protected and opportunities for the clustering of activities will be encouraged.

Strategic Aims Met:	Strategic Objectives Met:
SA 1, SA 3, SA 4, SA 5	SO 1.1, SO 3.1, SO 4.1, SO 5.1
Key Delivery Items:	
Development of Lea Green and Moss Nook Urban Villages Development of Lea Green Farm East and West Economic Sites Restore and enhance Brickfields and develop a Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan New Railway Station at Carr Mill Enhanced Park and Ride Facilities at St.Helens Junction Station	

Table 7.1

Purpose

7.4 To direct development and investment where it is most needed, ensure community facilities are accessible and ensure a range of transport choices are available.

Justification

7.5 The Core Area contains 3 target neighbourhoods, plus part of the Town Centre neighbourhood area, resulting in almost 13% of its population living in areas considered to be in the 10% most deprived SOAs nationally. The policy aims to direct development to appropriate areas to redress this inequality and significantly improve the Core Area environment by: removing dereliction; creating new uses of greenspace; creating new Green Infrastructure; provision of local services and improved public transport services.

7.6 Directing residential development towards the Urban Villages is in line with the City Growth Strategy and will effect significant improvements to the local environments. The Neighbourhood Management Areas generally correlate with the 10% most deprived areas, and housing is a mechanism to support their regeneration in accordance with the St.Helens Plan.

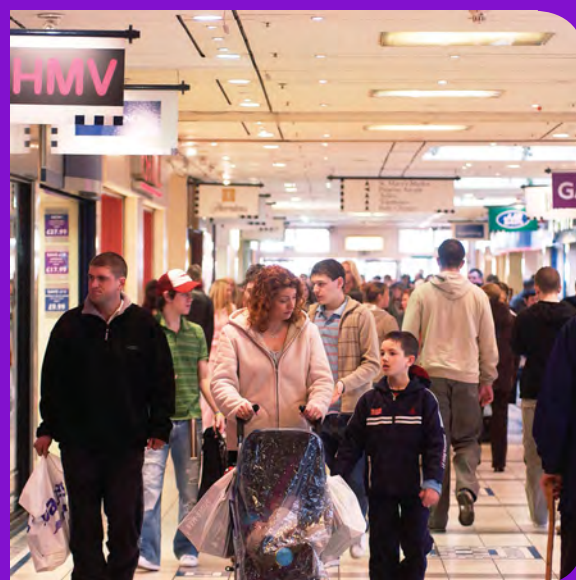
7.7 The area provides one of the main employment opportunities for the Borough and the policy supports the continued regeneration of the M62 Link Road Corridor to help maintain the Borough's economic land supply. It also seeks to ensure accessibility to employment sites for those living in deprived areas. This is consistent with the St.Helens Plan, City Growth Strategy, and the ethos of Neighbourhood Renewal. A development opportunity is available at the Cowley Works site. A development brief has been prepared which seeks to consolidate existing operations on site and intensify economic activity.

7.8 St.Helens suffers from poor health, and improving health is a key aim of the St.Helens Plan. The Council work in partnership with the PCT to facilitate a programme of planned improvements in their Strategic Service Development Plan, which the policy supports. Similarly improvements to education provision are supported.

7.9 St.Helens Core Area benefits from a good distribution of open space. Certain areas, however, have been identified as having below standard provision for access to children's/youth facilities. Policy CAS 1 seeks to improve such facilities together with improving the open space resources and linkages between them. To contribute to this, continued support will be given to the restoration of former derelict land, into Brickfields community woodland, in partnership with NWDA and Forestry Commission Newlands Initiative. An Area Action Plan is proposed to develop a coordinated programme of activities and further details are contained in policy CAS 5 Rural St.Helens.

7.10 Whilst there are good rail links to Manchester from the south of the Borough, there are no direct rail links from the Town Centre. Protecting the existing route of the Central to Junction rail link retains the option to reactivate these links in the future, which is supported in LTP3.

St.Helens Central Spatial Area



8 St.Helens Central Spatial Area

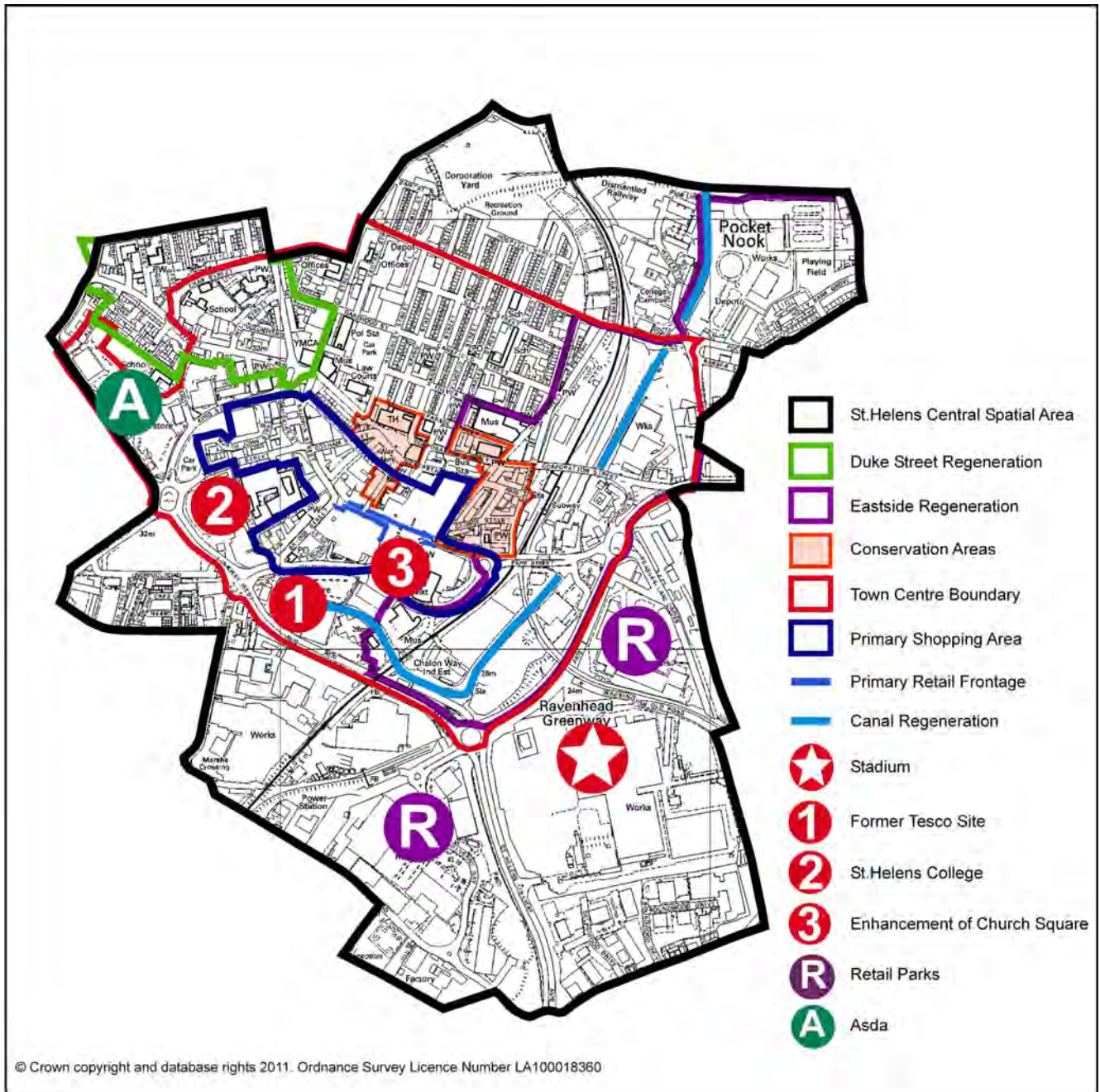


Figure 8.1 Strategy for St.Helens Central Spatial Area

Context

8.1 The St.Helens Central Spatial Area includes the Town Centre and its surrounding hinterland. This includes the residential area to the north of the Town Hall, and the Technology Campus at Pocket Nook. Both these have strong links to the centre. South of the Linkway are the St.Helens and Ravenhead Retail Parks, as well as the former United Glass site, where the new rugby league stadium is to be located. All three sites are sufficiently close to the retail core to facilitate linked trips.

Policy CAS 2

St.Helens Central Spatial Area Strategy

The St.Helens Central Spatial Area is a distinct spatial area of St.Helens but serves a wider subregional role. The Council will work to enhance the St.Helens Central Spatial Area as an accessible and welcoming destination for shopping, leisure, culture, tourism, employment and housing with a high quality built environment and maintain its position in the regional hierarchy and where possible enhance its market share by:

1. Providing around 20,000 square metres (net) of additional comparison retail floorspace. The Council's preference is for this to be through the redevelopment of the former Tesco superstore site on Chalon Way, the enhancement of the existing Church Square shopping centre and/or the development of other sequentially preferable sites in line with national policy and policy CSS 1;
2. Relocating the Tesco superstore to the former United Glass site to cross fund the construction of a new Rugby League Stadium on the same site;
3. Facilitating linked trips between the Primary Shopping Area and other existing and proposed developments within the St.Helens Central Spatial Area, including, amongst others: Asda, the former Tesco superstore site on Chalon Way, St.Helens and Ravenhead Retail Parks, and the stadium site;
4. Encouraging the development of previously developed land for mixed uses including high density residential in and around, and office development in and around, the Town Centre;
5. Supporting the delivery of new health facilities in partnership with the PCT and other health service providers;
6. Monitoring vitality and viability through undertaking regular Town Centre Health Checks;
7. Reviewing appraisals of the Town Centre Conservation Areas and implementing management plans through the St.Helens Central Spatial Area Action Plan;
8. Defining the Primary Retail Frontage, Primary Shopping Area and Town Centre boundaries in accordance with national policy and ensuring the Primary Retail Frontage is predominantly used for retail purposes;
9. Securing opportunities to improve the St.Helens Central Spatial Area's public realm by retaining and enhancing the existing waterway of the St.Helens Canal and securing improvements to Green Infrastructure;
10. Managing pedestrian and vehicular accessibility to meet the varying demands of the Town Centre by:
 - i. Maintaining pedestrian priority within the Town Centre and extending links to adjacent growth areas;
 - ii. Supporting the Town Centre as the hub of the public transport network in St.Helens; and
 - iii. Reducing congestion and maintaining access by managing the demand for long stay car parking in accordance with the emerging St.Helens Car Parking Strategy; and
11. Preparing a St.Helens Central Spatial Area Action Plan to direct the location, design, access and phasing of new development in the Central Spatial Area.

Strategic Aims Met:	Strategic Objectives Met:
SA 1, SA 3, SA 4, SA 5	SO 1.1, SO 3.1, SO 4.1, SO 5.1, SO 5.3
Key Delivery Items: Develop around 20,000 square metres of net additional comparison retail floor space Relocate existing Tesco superstore Develop new stadium for St.Helens RFC Adoption of Central Spatial Area Action Plan Delivery of King Street Development Brief Completion of the redevelopment of St.Helens College	

Table 8.1

Purpose

8.2 The purpose of the policy is to ensure that St.Helens Town Centre remains vital and viable and maintains its market share.

Justification

8.3 Policy W5 of the RSS confirms St.Helens as one of the retail centres where comparison retailing facilities should be enhanced and encouraged to ensure a sustainable distribution of high quality retail facilities.

8.4 A St.Helens & Earlestown Retail & Town Centre Uses Study 2012 was undertaken by White Young Green in 2012 to inform the Core Strategy, updating the 2005 Study. The 2012 Study has identified that the Town Centre's market share has remained broadly similar but there is significant growth in expenditure for comparison goods. There are significant planned developments that could absorb this need but they must come forward to ensure expenditure is retained. The Study has identified that expenditure on clothing and footwear within the Town Centre is particularly low and that new developments for non bulky comparison goods should be concentrated within the Town Centre in order to retain more expenditure. The 20,000 square metres (net) additional comparison retail floorspace set out in CAS 2 is informed by the proposed redevelopment of the former Tesco site at Chalon Way for non food retailing, and includes an allowance for additional floorspace elsewhere within the Town Centre, providing flexibility for further development. The redevelopment of the former Tesco site at Chalon Way and the enhancement of Church Square Shopping Centre will be encouraged by the Council through the St.Helens Central Spatial Area Action Plan and site specific development briefs.

8.5 In May 2008, planning permission was granted for three linked applications. The first was for a superstore and rugby league stadium on the former United Glass Site, south east of the Town Centre. The site is a high profile site in semi derelict condition and is in need of regeneration. The second was for the development of the existing Tesco superstore site on Chalon Way for 25,650 square metres gross of non food retailing. Tesco would vacate this site to cross fund the stadium. The third application related to the existing rugby ground.

8.6 The proposals were consistent with the quantitative need identified in the Retail Capacity Study and the Core Strategy Preferred Options, consulted on in November 2007. The Secretary of State decided not to call in the applications for determination.

8.7 The Church Square Shopping Centre is the main enclosed Shopping Centre and the owners have plans to improve and increase its retail capacity.

8.8 A Central Spatial Area Action Plan will be prepared to coordinate future retail development in terms of location, design, accessibility and phasing. It will also take into account the Town Centre Urban Design Study completed in 2009. The St.Helens Central Spatial Area Action Plan will include policies addressing the following:

St.Helens Central Spatial Area Action Plan

- Provide a detailed boundary for the scope of the AAP and the elements within it
- Provide a framework for the future regeneration and development of the Central Spatial Area and the integration of new development
- Identify sites for improvement and expansion

8.9 With the proposed stadium and superstore on the former United Glass Site, in addition to the existing Retail Parks, there remains an opportunity to pursue their integration with the retail core through improved pedestrian routes, bus services and other means.

8.10 The area to the east of the Town Centre was the subject of a Masterplan in 2002 (Eastside Masterplan). The area was identified as suitable for both office and residential development. Despite recent development including: new apartments; offices for the Council's Children and Young Peoples functions and St.Helens Chamber; and the redeveloped Central Station, remains a priority for further mixed use led improvements, with the canal being an important environmental and accessibility opportunity.

8.11 On the other side of the Town Centre, the Duke Street area is in need of a coordinated approach to regeneration. A Masterplan has been prepared to promote its revitalisation and in the autumn of 2008 construction of a new health centre commenced, the first stage of the regeneration process.

8.12 Improving the quality of the built environment remains an important priority. An Urban Design Analysis was undertaken in 2008 and will guide future work including the reappraisal of the Town Centre's Conservation Areas and proposals for the enhancement of the canal.

Primary Shopping Area

8.13 The primary shopping area in the UDP (referred to as the central shopping area) was inconsistent with advice in Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning for Town Centres, 2005 (PPS6). White Young Green were asked to advise on a future boundary and alternatives were consulted on at the preferred options stage. PPS6 was superseded by Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth, 2009 (PPS4) and that in turn has been superseded by the NPPF. However, the definitions used to define town centre boundaries have remained the same.

The Primary Retail Frontage, Central Shopping Area and the Town Centre boundaries have been defined through reviewing the existing UDP boundaries using the definitions provided by Annex B of PPS4 (and which are materially the same in the NPPF) whilst also considering pedestrian access and the presence of physical barriers. The Primary Retail Frontage is defined as the pedestrianised area of Church Street and is made up of a high proportion of A1 retail uses. Some non retail uses such as banks, restaurants and cafés may be acceptable. Other non retail uses such as betting offices or amusement arcades are not acceptable as they do not assist the function of the Primary Retail Frontage. In order to ensure functionality is maintained the Council will seek to ensure that a least 75% of units in the Primary Retail Frontage remain in an A1 retail use.

8.14 The Town Centre, Primary Shopping Area and Primary Retail Frontage boundaries are shown on the plan overleaf. The Primary Shopping Area boundary is derived by defining the Primary Retail Frontage as the pedestrianised area of Church Street and adding Secondary Frontages which are contiguous and closely related to the Primary Retail Frontage. The Secondary Frontages are an appropriate location for a wide range of retail and non retail town centre uses. The Town Centre is an area where leisure, business and other town centre uses are located next to, or strongly linked to the Primary Shopping Area.

8.15 For the purposes of retail, the appropriate location is within the Primary Shopping Area as defined in Figure 8.2. Proposals for retail uses that are in an edge or out-of-centre location in terms of the Primary Shopping Area will require a Sequential Assessment in accordance with national policy. For all other non-retail main town centre uses the appropriate location is within the Town Centre Boundary as defined in Figure 8.2. Proposals for Main Town Centre Uses that are in an edge or out-of-centre location in terms of the Town Centre Boundary will require a Sequential Assessment in accordance with national policy.

8.16 Sequentially preferable sites are sites that fulfil the sequential approach to site selection set out in national planning policy. All main Town Centre uses in an edge or out-of-centre location that meet the thresholds in policy CSS 1 will require an Impact Assessment in accordance with national policy. Where a Sequential or Impact Assessment is required the applicant should agree the scope of the assessment with the Council at an early stage to ensure the assessment provides the required information to address the concerns of the Council.

8.17 The redevelopment of the Tesco superstore site at Chalon Way may provide an opportunity for an expansion of the defined Primary Shopping Area in a future review of the Core Strategy following the completion of a development that is eligible for inclusion in the defined Primary Shopping Area, as defined in the NPPF.

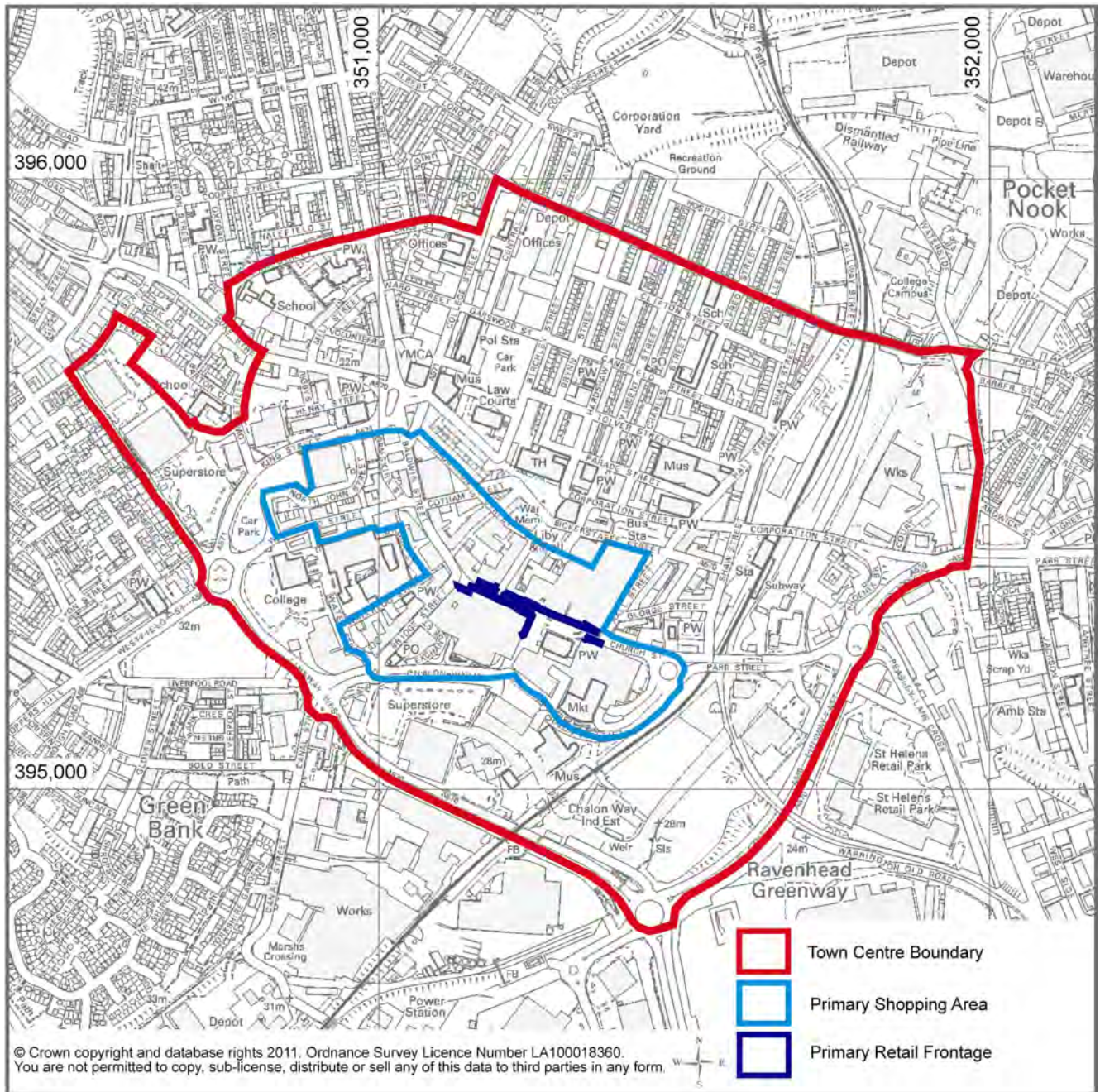


Figure 8.2 Town Centre Development Management Boundaries

Newton-le-Willows and Earlestown



9 Newton-le-Willows and Earlestown

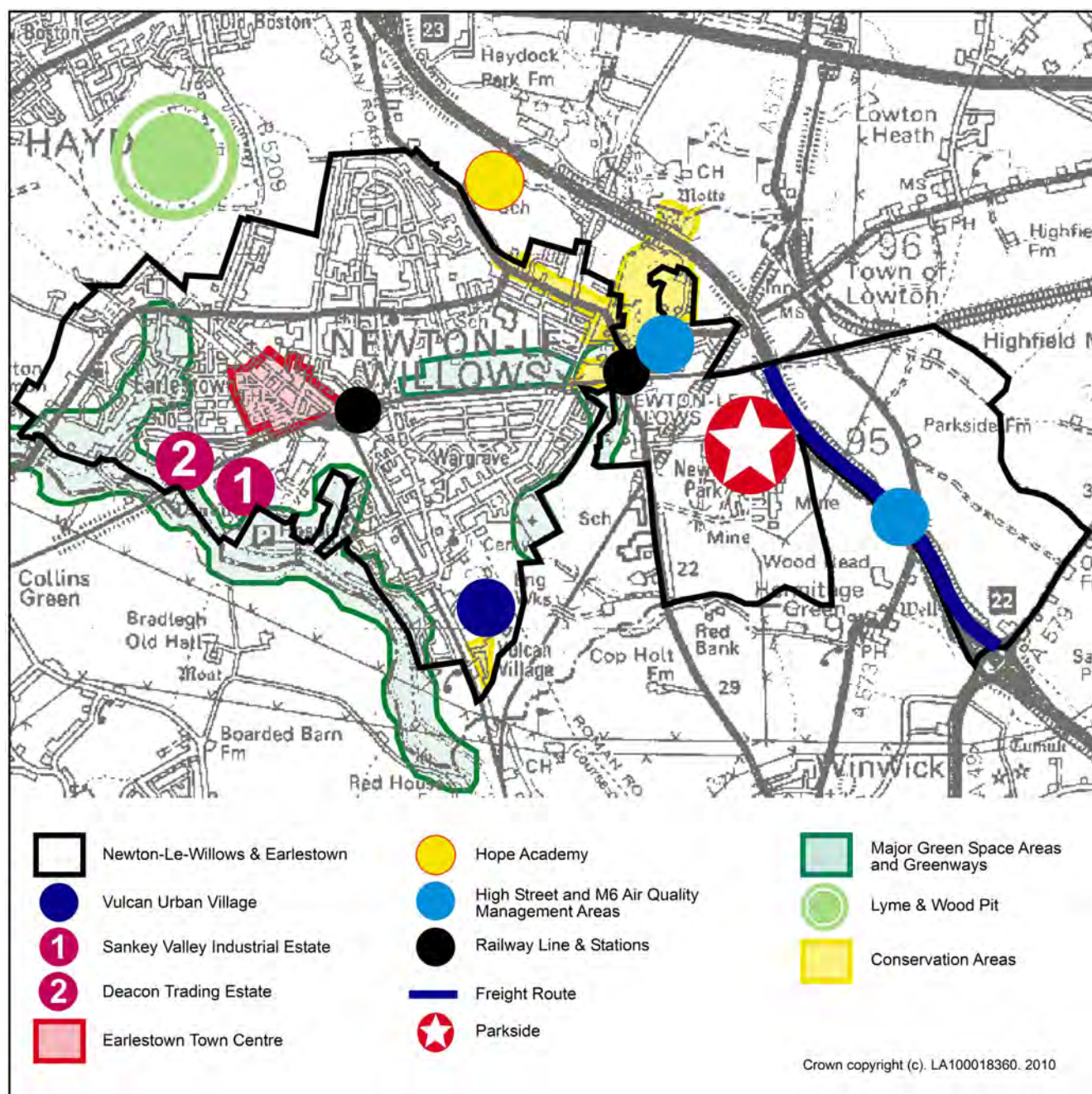


Figure 9.1 Strategy for Newton-le-Willows and Earlestown

Context

9.1 Newton-le-Willows including Earlestown is a freestanding settlement, which combines Newton-le-Willows' characteristics as a historic village centre, and Earlestown's characteristics as a market town with an industrial heritage. It has a population of over 22,000 people. Earlestown is the only other Town Centre in the Borough after St.Helens itself. The area also hosts a community hospital and Hope Academy.

9.2 Located on the eastern edge of the Borough, Newton-le-Willows has significant linkages with Warrington. Owner occupation is lower than the Borough average, with a higher proportion of social rented housing particularly in Earlestown. This also includes Wargrave, the main area of deprivation outside the St.Helens core. Newton-le-Willows contains three of the Borough's Conservation Areas at High Street, Willow Park and Vulcan Village.

Policy CAS 3.1

Newton-le-Willows and Earlestown Strategy

Within Newton-le-Willows and Earlestown:

1. Residential development will be:
 - i. Focused on the development of the Vulcan Urban Village; and
 - ii. Elsewhere, it will take advantage of the availability of suitable previously developed land;
2. The main focus for industrial activity will continue to be the Sankey Valley Industrial Estate. The Parkside Strategic Rail Freight Interchange will have the potential to provide economic benefits to the area also, but given its significance is dealt with in Policy CAS 3.2. The Allocations DPD will consider the future of Deacon Trading Estate in the context of the wider regeneration of Earlestown Town Centre;
3. The function of Earlestown Town Centre as the second largest retail centre in the Borough will be safeguarded through the production and implementation of an Area Action Plan;
4. The redevelopment of the former St.Aelred's Catholic Technology College will be supported;
5. Service providers will be supported in the development of a local health centre by the allocation of a site in an accessible location;
6. Support will be maintained for the following accessibility objectives and development will be prevented from prejudicing their delivery wherever possible:
 - i. Provision of park and ride, bus/rail facilities and station improvements at Newton-le-Willows Station, and the enhancement of Earlestown Station; and
 - ii. Maintaining the effectiveness of the Freight Route Network including M6 junction 23 and ensuring access to local facilities by protecting and enhancing links to Earlestown Station, and developing initiatives to improve access to employment opportunities, such as those at Parkside;
7. Green Infrastructure priorities will include:
 - i. Protecting existing areas of open space;

- ii. The management and enhancement of the Sankey Valley Park, including Red Brow Wood and the Mucky Mountains;
 - iii. Improving access to the Lyme and Wood Pits Country Park; and
8. The cumulative effects of development in combination with Parkside will be a key consideration through the Sustainable Development DPD.

Strategic Aims Met:	Strategic Objectives Met:
SA 1, SA 3, SA 4, SA 5	SO 1.1, SO 3.1, SO 4.1, SO 5.1, SO 5.3
Key Delivery Items:	
Development of Vulcan Urban Village Adoption of Earlestown Town Centre AAP, Sustainable Development and Allocations DPDs Implementation of a Park and Ride facility at Newton-le-Willows Station	

Table 9.1

Purpose

9.3 The purpose of the policy is to provide a strategy for the future development of Newton-le-Willows and Earlestown.

Justification

Housing Provision in Newton-le-Willows and Earlestown

9.4 This policy will ensure a sufficient number of new and improved dwellings are provided to meet local needs and deliver sustainable communities. The Vulcan Urban Village was granted planning permission following a called-in public inquiry. It is proposed that 630 units will be constructed over a period of 6-10 years.

9.5 Associated developments, funded by the developer in order to provide a sustainable community, include:

- A contribution to the fitting out of Newton Community Hospital
- A contribution to the improvement of existing sports facilities, and provision of new sports pitches, bowling green and games area for community use. Infrastructure improvements to footpaths and cycleways, including an extension to the Newton Heritage Trail
- A local centre to include retail units
- The enhancement of Vulcan Village Conservation Area.

9.6 In Earlestown, the former Deacon Trading Estate will be redeveloped for residential-led mixed-use development, following outline planning permission being granted in June 2010. The largely vacant site comprises over 11 hectares which was previously used for storage and distribution and it is estimated that up to 440 new homes will be constructed alongside 3,000 m² of commercial floorspace. Opportunities to link the redevelopment of Deacon Trading Estate with the Town Centre will be explored in the Earlestown Town Centre Area Action Plan.

Safeguarding Industrial Activity

9.7 The policy is also designed to protect sufficient land and premises to meet local employment needs in Newton-le-Willows and Earlestown. In terms of employment land supply, there is very little alternative land available for further development. Given the proximity to Haydock, St.Helens, and to some extent Omega in Warrington, employment opportunities exist in the vicinity, although improvements to sustainable transport options will be required. In addition, if the redevelopment of Parkside proceeds the local pool of employment opportunities will increase significantly.

9.8 Sankey Valley Industrial Estate is currently occupied by companies undertaking activities classed as B1, B2, or B8 uses. Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) access to and from Sankey Valley Industrial Estate to the motorway network is through the built up area of Earlestown. A HGV Access Route exists to direct HGV traffic away from Earlestown Town Centre by following Market Street in order to avoid congestion.

Protection of Earlestown Town Centre

9.9 The St.Helens Retail Capacity Study 2005 identified Earlestown Town Centre as a poorly performing centre, showing significant decline since 2001. Whilst Earlestown benefits from good accessibility and a sufficient level of service units, its convenience and comparison sector are below average and in decline. Environmental quality in the Town Centre is poor, exacerbated by an above average vacancy rate. Overall, Earlestown Town Centre is considered to be of limited vitality and viability. An Area Action Plan is proposed to tackle these problems:

Earlestown Town Centre Area Action Plan

- Provide a detailed boundary for the scope of the AAP and the elements within it
- Provide a framework for the future regeneration and development of the Town Centre
- Identify sites for improvement and expansion
- Consider the link between the Town Centre and the future redevelopment of Deacon Trading Estate

Health and Education

9.10 An improved and integrated health facility will be allocated and developed on a site in an accessible location, in line with the PCT Strategic Services Development Plan. Hope Academy, delivered through the Building Schools for the Future programme, opened for the 2011/12 school year. The Academy merges two local secondary schools and a sixth form college and provides a high quality, sustainable learning environment for its pupils. Following the opening of the Academy, the policy also supports the redevelopment of the former St.Aelred's Catholic Technology College.

Green Infrastructure

9.11 Most of the area has access to a park. Mesnes Park has seen significant investment in its facilities in recent years and has been awarded Green Flag status. The open space audit revealed a shortage of parks in the west part of Earlestown. This shortfall is offset to some extent by the presence of natural and semi natural sites and amenity sites. In accord with the open space audit and greenspace strategy, these should be protected and improved where opportunities arise.

9.12 The Sankey Valley Park is an important greenway corridor, following the line of the historic St.Helens Canal with significant stretches still in water. It is of significant value for public access, recreation and tourism with physical and visual links to the urban area. The former Lyme and Wood Pits Colliery site to the north is currently being reclaimed by way of waste disposal operations. Once completed the area will become a significant country park.

Accessibility

9.13 Newton-le-Willows is well located in relation to the M6, Manchester and Warrington. It is for this reason that it is a broad location of choice for a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (see Policy CAS 3.2). It is also a reason for the pressure on Newton-le-Willows station and a key issue is the shortage of associated car parking. The need for improvement has been recognised in the North West Route Utilisation Strategy, CANGO study and Merseyside Local Transport Plan.

Cumulative Impacts of Development

9.14 The Sustainability Appraisal highlighted an issue in relation to the cumulative impacts of Parkside SRFI, together with other major developments in Newton-le-Willows and Earlestown, such as Vulcan Urban Village. Due to the impacts of such major proposals, other schemes coming forward will also need to mitigate against cumulative effects. A detailed policy will be included in the Sustainable Development DPD.

Policy CAS 3.2

Development of a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI) at the Former Parkside Colliery

The site of the former Parkside Colliery and immediately adjacent land is identified as a strategic location which has the potential to facilitate the transfer of freight between road and rail. The Council supports in principle the delivery of a SRFI in this location.

The Council believes a deliverable and viable SRFI can be developed on the western side of the M6 with an operational area of approximately 85 hectares, as shown indicatively on Figure 9.2.

The Council will support the development of the site identified to the west of the M6 as a SRFI, provided that each of the following criteria are met:

1. It meets national Green Belt planning policy tests, including the demonstration of very special circumstances;

2. Direct access to the site from the M6 for HGVs can be obtained avoiding use of Traffic Sensitive Routes identified in the Network Management Plan. Adverse impacts on the Strategic Road Network will be mitigated;
3. Direct access to the rail network is achieved and conforms with rail industry strategies and capacity utilisation;
4. The ability of the local road network to accommodate traffic generated by the development without unacceptable impact on residential amenity and traffic flows;
5. Measures are incorporated which encourage travel to/from the site using sustainable transport modes, including access by public transport, cycle and foot, in accordance with Policy CP 2. A travel plan will be essential;
6. That the character and amenity of the Newton High Street and Willow Park Conservation Areas are preserved or enhanced;
7. Significant adverse impacts from the development itself or associated road and rail access routes should be avoided and, wherever possible, alternative options which reduce or eliminate such impacts should be pursued. Where adverse impacts are unavoidable, measures to mitigate the impact should be adopted. Where adequate mitigation measures are not possible, compensatory measures should be considered and adopted if appropriate. The aim should be to minimise any adverse impact. In applying this policy, a developer should address the following land use impacts as a minimum: environment; biodiversity/ecology; heritage; archaeology; agricultural land; community; quality of life; health; air quality; light; noise; visual intrusion; buffer zones; contributions to sustainable development; waste management; energy generation by renewable means; energy efficiency; water conservation and sustainable drainage; reuse of materials; traffic and sustainable transport; and remediation of land affected by contamination or surface hazards caused by past mining activity;
8. All uses within the site should have the primary purpose of facilitating the movement of freight by rail. Any ancillary uses to this main use must be directly related to the movement of freight by rail and must demonstrate clearly why they need to be located on the site;
9. Impact on Green Belt and landscape character is mitigated by significant landscape and green infrastructure enhancement, including tree planting;
10. Provision for the positive management of existing and new environmental assets;
11. Special regard should be had to the desirability of preserving the Listed Buildings at Newton Park Farm, their setting or any features of special architectural or historical interest which they possess. Should a suitable SRFI scheme require the removal of the Listed Buildings then substantial public benefits will be required including the relocation of the listed structures in a rural setting within the vicinity of Newton-le-Willows and preferably within the St.Helens local authority area;
12. Training schemes will be put in place to increase the opportunity for the local population to obtain employment at the complex; and
13. All other material issues are satisfied.

It is understood, however, that for operational, viability and commercial reasons a larger area of land extending to the east of the M6 motorway may also be required to accommodate an enlarged SRFI. It is considered that any expansion to the east would cover approximately 70

hectares of additional operational land, as shown indicatively in Figure 9.2. The Council will also support the development of land to the east of the M6 provided the above criteria are met, plus the following additional criteria:

14. That the area of land to the western side of the M6 is developed first; and
15. That the SRFI is proven to be not deliverable without the additional eastern land area.

Planning permission will not be granted for any other use of the land shown in Figure 9.2 which would prejudice its use as a rail freight interchange.

Subject to a SRFI being fully developed on site, that meets the requirements listed above, the Council will consider favourably a revision to the Green Belt boundary in the Allocations DPD and Proposals Map, or subsequent revision.

Strategic Aims Met:	Strategic Objectives Met:
SA 1, SA 3, SA 5	SO 1.1, SO 3.1, SO 5.1
Key Delivery Items:	
Development of a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange	

Table 9.2

Purpose

9.15 The policy is required to address the following:

- i. To facilitate the transfer of freight between road and rail by making best use of Parkside's unique locational advantages in terms of road and rail infrastructure;
- ii. The national, regional and local need for a SRFI in this location;
- iii. To identify an appropriate scale of development;
- iv. To outline an appropriate phased release of land;
- v. To outline the criteria that a SRFI proposal will need to satisfy to be considered acceptable;
- vi. To identify a trigger for the consideration of changes to the Green Belt boundary in this location.

Justification

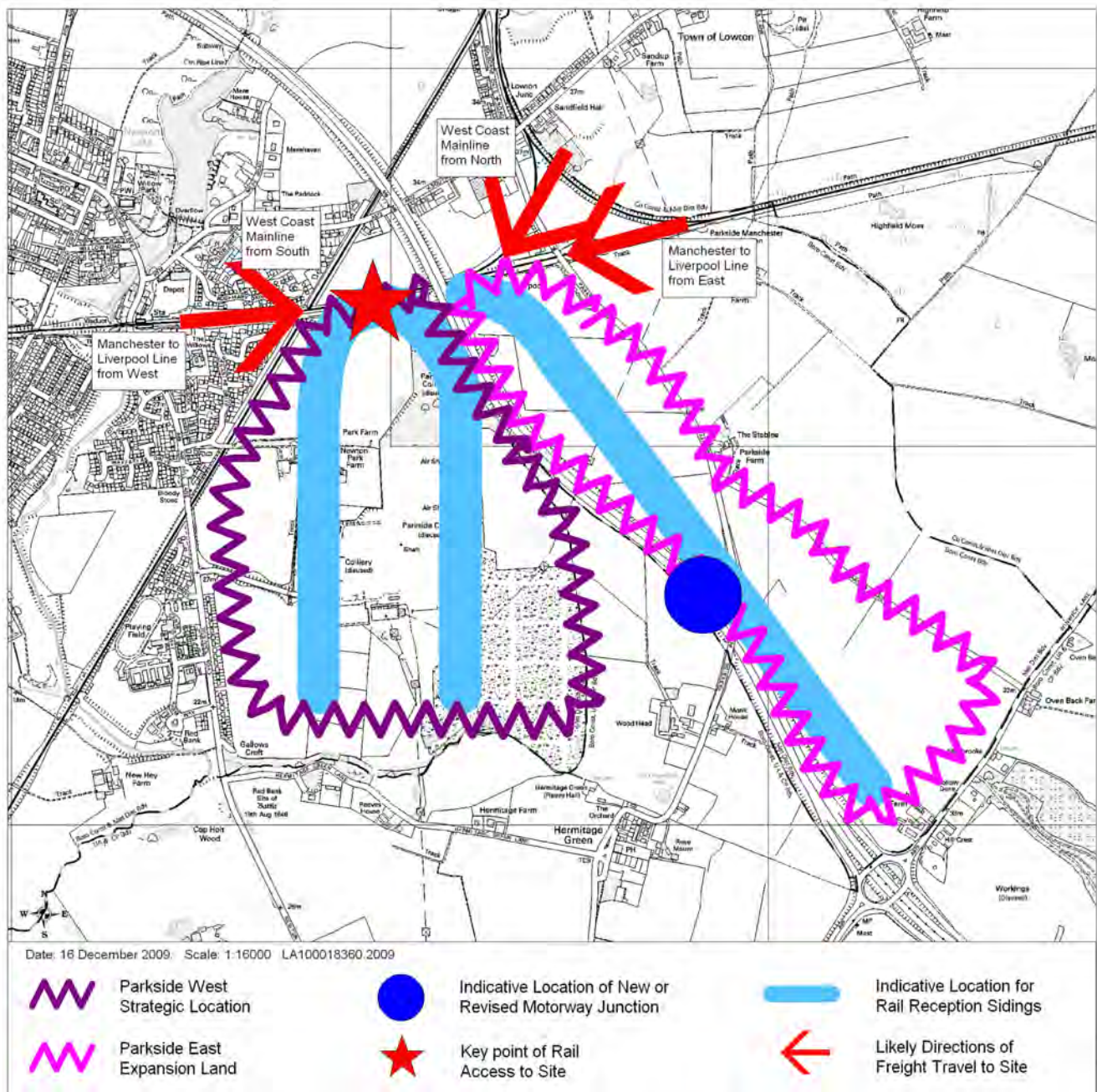


Figure 9.2 Strategic Rail Freight Interchange Site

9.16 A detailed Background Paper outlining the case for a SRFI at Newton-le-Willows has been prepared. The justification below is therefore a summary of the main elements of the Council's case.

Locational and Site Characteristics

9.17 The former Parkside Colliery is located on the south-eastern edge of Newton-le-Willows, approximately 1 km north of Winwick, which is in Warrington administrative area, and 1.5 km south-west of Golborne, which is in Wigan administrative area. It is located within the St.Helens Green Belt which links with the Green Belts of Warrington and Wigan.

9.18 Parkside has the following locational advantages:

- i. it is bordered by the M6 motorway, but not currently directly accessed from it;
- ii. it is within 5 km of the M62 motorway;
- iii. the Liverpool to Manchester railway line borders the site on its northern side, which was formerly directly connected to the colliery; and
- iv. the West Coast Mainline borders the site in a cutting to the west of the site. Access is obtainable off the Liverpool to Manchester link via the Lowton curve, and from the south via Earlestown and Winwick junction.

9.19 It is considered the site is consistent with NPPF paragraph 41, which advises Local Authorities in preparing their development plans to identify and, where there is robust evidence, protect sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choice.

9.20 The former colliery site and associated colliery spoil occupied approximately 54 hectares. This is previously developed land. However, in isolation this area of land would have severe limitations in realising the locational potential of the site as a rail freight interchange. Therefore, a larger area of land to the west of the M6 and potentially to the east would be necessary in order to:

- i. secure direct road access to the M6;
- ii. accommodate the required length of trains and management within the site;
- iii. accommodate the need, including expansion requirements, for inter modal and warehouse facilities; and
- iv. achieve economic viability.

9.21 Road access to the site at present is off the A49, which links to the M6 at junction 23 through the Newton High Street Conservation Area, and south to junction 22 at Winwick. This would not be acceptable as the main access to a freight terminal.

9.22 While direct access to the site from the M6 will be a requirement, the development will inevitably generate traffic movement on the surrounding road network including the A573 and A579 extending into Wigan and Warrington. The impact of this traffic in relation to air quality, noise and vibration will need to be fully assessed and minimised. The delivery of an acceptable SRFI scheme at Parkside is dependent on a suitable scheme being agreed by the Highways Agency and St.Helens Council, which provides appropriate infrastructure to mitigate local and wider off-site traffic impacts of the SRFI.

9.23 Features of environmental significance relating to the site include:

- i. the majority of agricultural land is Grade 2 and 3a quality;

- ii. Gallows Croft Site of Community Wildlife Interest is located on the site's southern edge. The Highfield Moss SSSI is located approximately 150 metres to the northeast of the proposed strategic site;
- iii. there are a number of Listed Buildings and features of archaeological interest in the vicinity, including the Newton Park Farmhouse and Barn, both Grade II Listed;
- iv. the Newton High Street and Willow Park Conservation Areas are to the north of the site on the A49 Warrington to Wigan Road; and
- v. Air quality management – the M6 corridor and Newton High Street have been identified as Air Quality Management Areas.

9.24 In 2006, a planning application was submitted by Astral (now known as ProLogis), for the development of 272 hectares of land to the west and east of the M6 at Parkside for a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange. The proposal included up to 715,000 square metres of rail served warehouse and distribution buildings; train assembly area; container depot within a perimeter landscape setting; and up to 10,000 jobs were predicted. Following lengthy negotiations over the scheme and consideration of amendments, the application was formally withdrawn in the Summer of 2010 due to current economic circumstances. ProLogis however, remain committed to the site and in a joint press release with the Council in July 2010 they stated that *“Although the plans do not work at this time, as a business we recognise that the site remains an ideal location for a rail freight interchange given its proximity to two major railway lines, the M6 and M62.”*

Need for SRFI

9.25 The North West is one of the most significant regions from a freight transport perspective within the UK. The Government's recent sustainable transport policy⁽¹⁾ states the North West is the UK region with the most goods lifted by origin (233 million tonnes) and also the region with the most goods lifted by destination (203 million tonnes lifted). These include a freight non-bulk market for the North West of 74.9 million tonnes and a potential market for rail growth of 21.4 million tonnes.

9.26 Trends indicate long term growth in freight traffic by rail is likely to continue. Recent assessments undertaken by the Rail Freight Group (RFG) using DfT Freight model data indicate a 60% growth in rail freight between 1995 and 2005. Since 1998 intermodal freight on rail has grown by 47%. In the current economic climate, rail freight net tonne miles for 2008/9 showed an increase of 1% over the previous year.

9.27 The significant employment opportunities likely to be created by a SRFI would help in tackling worklessness in the Borough and would strengthen the local and wider subregional and regional economy.

National Policy

9.28 It is Government policy to encourage the transfer of freight from road to rail, for example, The Future of Transport July 2004, Secretary of State Rail Freight Policy Statement July 2005, and Delivering a Sustainable Railway 2007.

1 Delivering A Sustainable Transport System: The Logistics Perspective: Department for Transport December 2008

Regional Policy

9.29 Policy RT8 of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) states that plans and strategies should facilitate the transfer of freight from road to rail and/or water by the identification of sites for inter-modal freight terminals. Consideration should be given to the allocation of land for inter-modal freight terminals in four broad locations including Newton-le-Willows (with access to the West Coast Main Line and Chat Moss Rail Route).

9.30 A review of the Green Belt boundary in the Local Development Framework would be justified in order to accommodate an inter-modal freight terminal in accordance with Policy RT8. If land is removed from the Green Belt in accordance with the policy, there should be a presumption against its development for purposes other than an inter-modal freight terminal.

9.31 The evidence in support of a SRFI in this location was heard at the Examination for the RSS and is still relevant and therefore provides support into the future. The aspiration to develop rail freight in the North West is continued through into the Future North West: Our Shared Priorities document produced in draft form by 4NW and NWDA in August 2010.

9.32 The Regional Freight Strategy (November 2003) recognises the need for a number of inter-modal terminals and distribution centres around the region and the scarcity of ideal locations with good access and rail links as well as a sufficient amount of land for rail connected development. The evidence base which supports the RSS for the North West reinforces this concern, noting that attempts to increase the volume of freight moved by rail or water in the region could be constrained by a shortage of inter-modal freight terminals close to the major origins and destinations of freight in the North West. Furthermore, the evidence base supporting the RSS also identified four broad locations for such development including in the vicinity of Newton-le-Willows.

9.33 In 2004 the former Strategic Rail Authority confirmed the importance of interchange development in the North West, recommending their location within the Liverpool – Warrington – Manchester commercial belt. These principles were confirmed by the DfT in October 2005.

9.34 The NWDA formally designated Parkside as a strategic regional site in December 2001 on the basis of its potential as a suitable location for a regional international freight terminal. It has been identified as a strategic regional site in the Regional Economic Strategies published in 2003 and 2006. Following a review of strategic regional sites, Parkside's designation was reaffirmed in 2009.

9.35 Network Rail published their document 'The Northern Hub' in February 2010 which identifies the importance of Parkside in meeting the needs for transfer of freight between rail and road. Furthermore it identifies improvements in freight route frequencies along the Chat Moss rail corridor to serve Parkside.

9.36 Both the Merseyside Local Transport Plan and City Regional Development Plan recognise the potential of Parkside. A scheme at Parkside is also identified as one of the key projects in delivering "Superport". Superport is the name given to the coordination of projects and activity across the Liverpool City Region to develop a multimodal freight sector to rival such international locations as New York, Dubai and Singapore. The vision of Superport is "to bring together and integrate the strengths of the Ports, Airports and Freight Community to create a 'Superport' for

freight and passenger operations within the Liverpool City Region that will become a key driver of its economy. It will create the most effective and cost efficient environment for freight cargo logistics and passenger transit in the UK⁽²⁾.

Local Policy

9.37 With its location on the Borough's eastern edge, the development of a SRFI will have impacts, both positive and negative, on St.Helens, Wigan and Warrington.

9.38 The development of a more competitive and larger business base is a key objective of the City Growth Strategy (CGS).

9.39 Worklessness remains a key challenge for St.Helens, having been tackled through the now removed Local Area Agreement and its implementation mechanism, the Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (LEGI). The application bid to secure LEGI funding made reference to the economic opportunities created by the strategic location of St.Helens at the centre of the North West motorway network and mid way between the metropolitan growth poles of Manchester and Liverpool. Establishing St.Helens as a regional inter-modal transport hub by delivering the Parkside Freight Terminal was identified as an action in LEGI.

9.40 Wargrave is one of the 5% most deprived Super Output Areas nationally, and is located in the vicinity of Parkside. The number of economically active full-time employees is below St.Helens and national levels, the level of unemployment is above the national average and the proportion of working age population claiming Job Seekers Allowance is higher than regional and national averages.

9.41 The employment opportunities associated with the development will, however, extend beyond St.Helens and Newton-le-Willows. Both Wigan and Warrington are well placed to derive benefits from the development. It will be important that any development, through its travel plan proposals ensures that accessibility to the site by public transport, cycling and by foot from the surrounding areas is maximised.

Scale and Deliverability

9.42 To be deliverable in terms of rail, it is considered that a site for a SRFI should have:

- Connectivity to the rail network for both track work and signalling
- Options for rail electrification
- Space and provision within the site for rail reception sidings, intermodal terminal, marshalling and preparation provision
- Sufficiently level land for the construction of rail facilities
- Rail network capacity and provision outside the site for core freight traffic flows to Parkside
- Acceptance of trains up to 775m in length
- Necessary large gauge clearance within the site and for routes to the site to accept high cube (2.9m (9'6")) containers

2 "Liverpool Superport" Mersey Partnership June 2008.

9.43 The size of a first phase at Parkside, like any other SRFI, is subject to commercial judgement and expectation of demand and will involve a degree of speculation. Attracting distribution and freight users is critical to securing a return.

9.44 Based on experiences at Birch Coppice and DIRFT SRFIs it is anticipated that a first phase of warehousing at Parkside would need to be substantial to capture market share and to begin to recoup high infrastructure costs such as M6 hard shoulder running, relocated M6 junction and abnormal site costs. A first phase of floorspace could be in the region of at least 50% of available site area, this equates to circa 42.5 hectares of land and circa 170,000m² of rail related warehousing.

9.45 Development of the predominantly brownfield land at Parkside West is advocated first of all. Once the western site has reached operational maturity, development to the east of the site would then be countenanced, subject to evidencing economic viability and meeting long term growth/market need.

9.46 The commercial deliverability of a SRFI at Parkside is subject to a number of factors. These factors cannot be accurately measured within a strategic planning assessment of the site. The site does however, offer an attractive SRFI location and this is reflected in the continuing attention from the site's developer/owner.

Viability

9.47 The economic viability of a SRFI is determined by a number of key measures. The site must be commercially attractive to developers and investors and economically sustainable in terms of growing earnings and acceptable rates on return to satisfy funders. The site must be strong commercially in relation to competitive sites, not only in the immediate vicinity and the North West, but also in relation to other potentially competitive SRFIs, over a wider area.

9.48 All SRFIs have high initial investment costs to provide rail and road connection and infrastructure provision and internal site facilities along with the warehouses themselves. This high initial cost must be weighed against the potential for earnings from site operations, and especially the scope to expand the potential and activity of the site according to the expansion and development of the local freight market. The ability to respond and react to the competition from other comparable sites in the region is also an important factor. Lack of scope for expansion to the east of the M6 motorway would reduce the competitive position and raise questions about the business strength of the proposal.

9.49 The site presents a number of constraints including ground conditions and access, however the medium to long term need/demand for SRFI warehousing appears to be strong, based on industry forecasts. On this basis conditions for commercial viability and therefore deliverability are anticipated but subject to:

- Cost of rail infrastructure and other site costs
- Demand from distributors and freight users
- Strength of competing sites
- Availability of development finance on acceptable terms

Green Belt Very Special and Exceptional Circumstances

9.50 Given that Parkside is located within the Green Belt, there is a need to demonstrate that 'very special circumstances' exist to warrant the development of a SRFI in the Green Belt. Furthermore, should a Green Belt boundary amendment be required, then exceptional circumstances would need to be demonstrated.

9.51 It is clear that the development of a SRFI at Parkside would represent inappropriate development in the Green Belt, there would be significant harm to the openness of the Green Belt (substantial impact on the functions of the Green Belt) and other harm as a result of built development. It is considered the benefits of such a development could potentially outweigh the impacts on the Green Belt as the five main purposes would, to some extent, be fulfilled and not be completely undermined in that location. Any development would, however, need to meet all of the criteria in policy CAS 3.2 to be considered acceptable by the Council.

9.52 The development of a SRFI at Parkside is not only concerned with transport, but will make a substantial contribution to economic development, regeneration and employment creation, delivering additional GVA⁽³⁾ to the regional economy and reclaiming brownfield/contaminated land. The site has the potential to provide approximately 7,750 new jobs.

9.53 Through a rare combination of site advantages, Parkside is considered to be a project of exceptional worth. The development of an SRFI at Parkside has significant potential to contribute to the regeneration of St.Helens, and at the same time also has the potential to meet national transportation objectives of seeking the transfer of freight to rail and a reduction in CO2 emissions.

9.54 It is considered that very special circumstances could be demonstrated to permit such an inappropriate development (in Green Belt terms) in the Green Belt. Furthermore, once the site is fully developed, it is likely that exceptional circumstances sufficient to justify the removal of land from the Green Belt at Parkside will have been demonstrated. Alternative opportunities within the urban area are not present by the nature and scale of the type of development and the unique locational characteristics.

3 GVA = Gross Value Added, a measure of the value of goods and services produced in an area

Haydock and Blackbrook



10 Haydock and Blackbrook

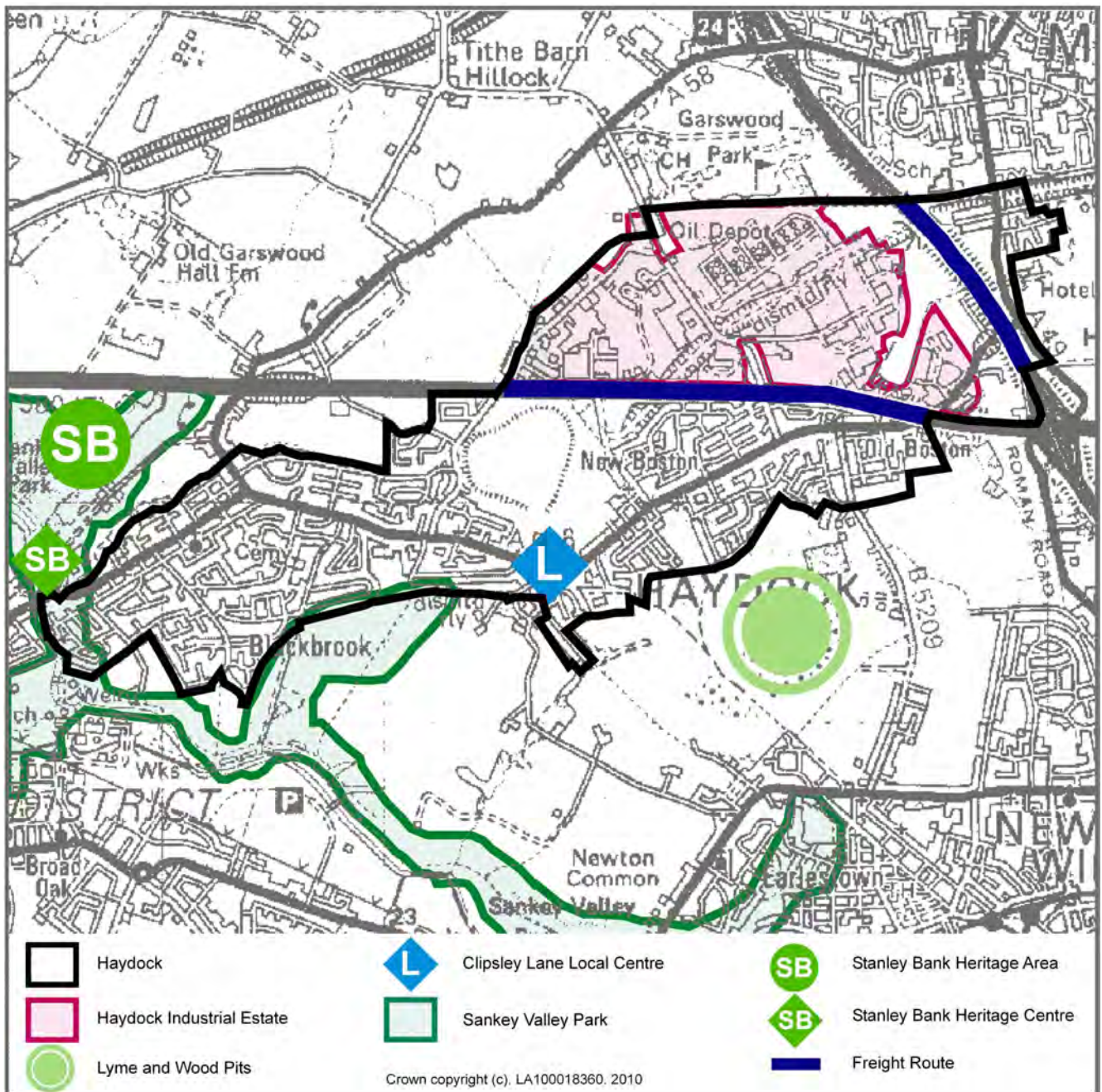


Figure 10.1 Strategy for Haydock

Context

10.1 The settlements of Blackbrook and Haydock stretch out from the St.Helens Core Area in a linear fashion, North Eastwards, towards the A580. Blackbrook and Haydock are mainly residential in nature with around 23,000 people living in the area with supporting community, health care and retail facilities. Haydock Industrial Estate lies to the north, adjacent to the A580. Its efficient transport links with the wider road network have been the key to its success.

10.2 The area has developed along the A58 and A599, leading from St.Helens Town Centre to the Borough boundary with Wigan. Beyond the linear settlement the area is constrained by Green Belt.

10.3 This area, built on mining history, now contains the largest industrial estate in the Borough. The level of economic inactivity and unemployment in Haydock is below the Borough average.

10.4 There is a varied housing stock within the area, with an above Borough average number of owner-occupiers. There are no potential major residential sites within Haydock and any new development is expected to be infill on previously developed land.

Policy CAS 4

Haydock and Blackbrook Strategy

Within Haydock and Blackbrook:

1. Residential development will take advantage of the supply of previously developed land within the urban area;
2. Economic development will continue to be focused on the Haydock Industrial Estate, through development of remaining sites in the Economic Land Supply. The Industrial Estate will be safeguarded for employment generating uses;
3. The continued function of Clipsley Lane as a Local Centre will be supported and enhanced via appropriate development. Further analysis of this centre and its potential future status will be carried out. Any changes to the Borough's retail hierarchy will be made as a future revision to the Core Strategy;
4. Support will be given to health service providers in facilitating the allocation and development of a site, in an accessible location, for an improved health facility and the on-site rebuilding of Haydock Sports College;
5. Support will be maintained for the following accessibility objectives and development will be prevented from prejudicing the outcome wherever possible:
 - i. Maintaining the effectiveness of the Freight Route Network including Junction 23 of the M6 motorway; and
 - ii. Initiatives to improve access to employment opportunities, such as those at the Haydock Industrial Estate;
6. Green Infrastructure priorities will include:
 - i. Protection of existing open space;
 - ii. Management and enhancement of the Sankey Valley Park, including improvements to the Heritage Centre at Stanley Bank; and
 - iii. Provision of access to Lyme and Wood Pits Country Park.

Strategic Aims Met:	Strategic Objectives Met:
SA 1, SA 3, SA 4, SA 5	SO 1.1, SO 3.1, SO 4.1, SO 5.1
Key Delivery Items: Support and enhance Clipsley Lane Local Centre Support the identification of a site for a healthcare facility to meet identified need e.g. a PCT LIFT scheme Provide access to employment opportunities Stanley Bank Environmental Enhancement Project Restoration of Lyme and Wood Pits to Country Park	

Table 10.1

Purpose

10.5 The purpose of this policy is to provide a strategy for the future development of Haydock and Blackbrook.

Justification

10.6 In recent times, Haydock has attracted significant new residential development. However, the major sites have now been developed and there is no overriding need for growth outside the existing settlement boundary.

10.7 Haydock Industrial Estate is the largest industrial estate in the Borough, covering some 126 hectares, and is well located in relation to the M6 motorway. Approximately 4,500 people are employed there.

10.8 There are currently 9 hectares of land available for development, including the former National Coal Board site at Old Boston. Key issues for the estate are:

- Safeguarding industrial uses
- Improving accessibility by sustainable means
- Ensuring development does not adversely affect Junction 23 of the M6 motorway, if appropriate through the use of demand management measures
- Securing additional development opportunities

10.9 Haydock is an elongated settlement, and Clipsley Lane provides the main concentration of local shopping facilities along the length of the A568. The centre lacks many of the attractions, which are commonplace in “District” or “Local” Centres such as a post office or a bank. Despite this, the Local Centres Study considers it performs an important role and policies should seek to protect it. Tesco have completed development of a 3,452 square metre superstore on the south side of Clipsley Lane. The Local Centres Study considers that the area will be enhanced by the store and once trading patterns are established, the function and boundary of the centre should be reassessed. Any resulting changes to the Borough's retail hierarchy will be made as a future revision of the Core Strategy.

10.10 The policy will support the plans of education and health service providers, including possible successor programmes to building schools for the future, Primary Capital Strategy and the PCT Strategic Services Development Plan, for future provision in the area.

10.11 The open space audit revealed that the main deficiencies were in parks and local amenity space. The provision of natural and semi natural spaces and public playing fields help to redress this balance within the context of limited resources available for increasing the amount of the open space overall. It is important to secure improvements and the possible alteration of management regimes on existing sites.

10.12 The linear nature of Haydock increases the accessibility to major green space opportunities on the urban fringe.

Rural St.Helens



11 Rural St.Helens

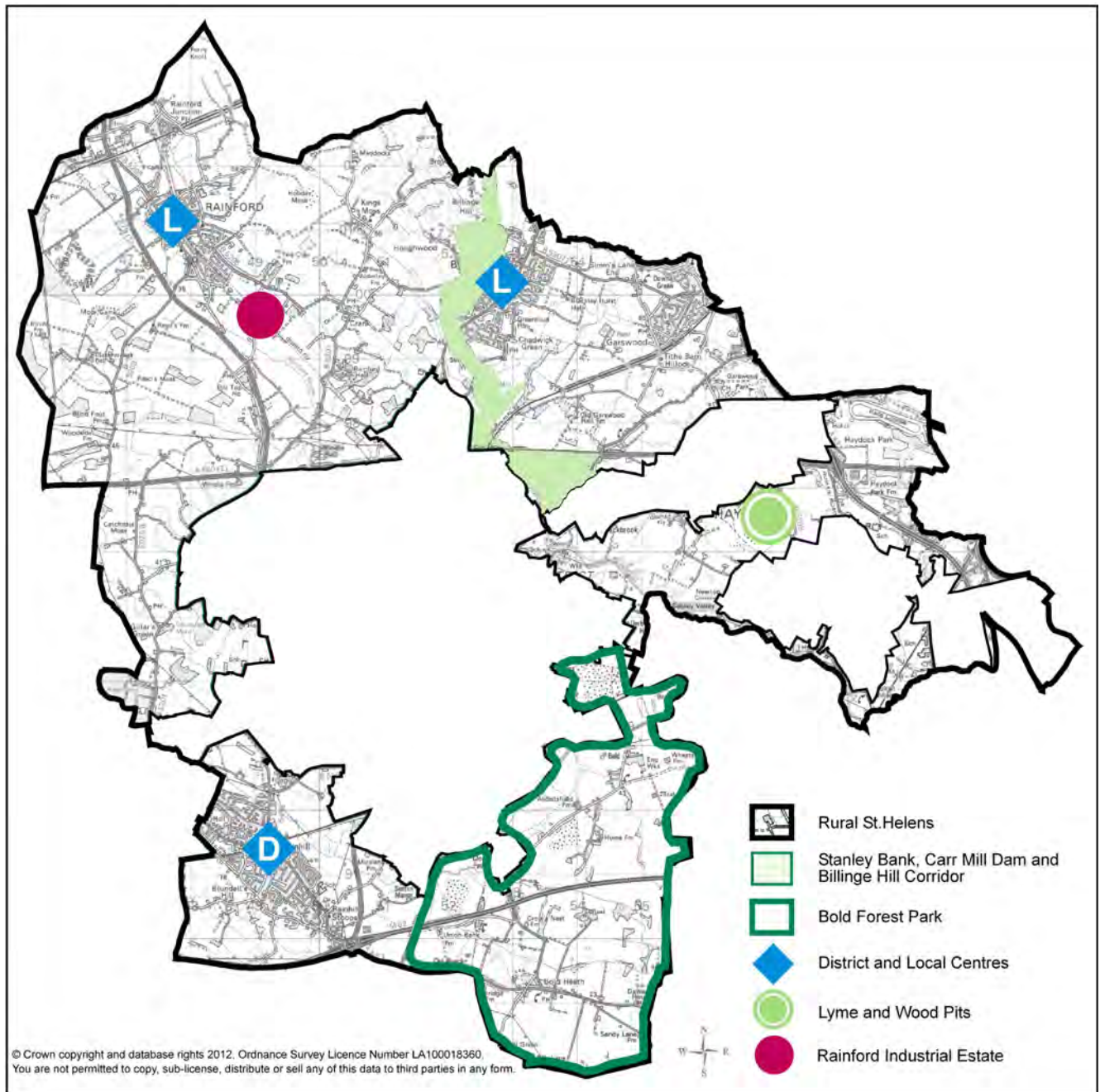


Figure 11.1 Strategy for St.Helens Rural Area

Context

11.1 The rural areas of St.Helens generally correspond to the designated Green Belt. It is predominantly agricultural in character, particularly to the north where the land is of the highest quality. However, it also includes seven golf courses and expanding areas of woodland, especially in the south based on former coal tips and agricultural land.

11.2 The main settlements are excluded from the Green Belt and include Rainford, Billinge, Garswood and Rainhill.

11.3 Generally the area has higher car ownership, lower levels of unemployment and economic inactivity, and higher levels of elderly people. Nevertheless small pockets of deprivation also occur.

11.4 Secondary schools are located at Rainford and Rainhill, with local shopping centres in Rainford and Billinge and a District Centre in Rainhill.

Policy CAS 5

Rural St.Helens

Within Rural St.Helens:

1. Development will be restricted to within existing rural settlement boundaries. Outside of these areas development will comply with Green Belt policy.
2. The positive use of the rural areas will be encouraged to:
 - i. Provide opportunities for access, outdoor sport and recreation;
 - ii. Protect, manage and enhance biodiversity and create opportunities for biodiversity;
 - iii. Protect and enhance landscape character; and
 - iv. Retain land in agricultural, forestry and related uses.
3. Opportunities for economic regeneration and rural tourism through farm diversification where adequate access can be achieved and there is no significant impact upon the character of the area, will be identified and encouraged. Larger scale employment activity will be focused on existing industrial estates at Rainford and Bold.
4. Local services, shops and community facilities will be safeguarded and supported where they are providing for a need. Opportunities to cluster services, shops and community facilities will be encouraged wherever possible.
5. Support will be maintained for the following accessibility objectives and development will be prevented from prejudicing the outcome wherever possible:
 - i. Improving access to employment areas in rural locations; and
 - ii. Improving access to community facilities such as health and education.
6. Green Infrastructure priorities will include:
 - i. Bold Forest Park on the southern edge of the Borough, which will be the subject of an Area Action Plan;
 - ii. Stanley Bank, Carr Mill Dam and Billinge Hill Corridor; and
 - iii. The restoration of the former Lyme and Wood Pits between Haydock and Newton-le-Willows to a Country Park.

Strategic Aims Met:	Strategic Objectives Met:
SA 1, SA 3, SA 4, SA 5, SA 6	SO 1.1, SO 3.1, SO 4.1, SO 5.1, SO 5.2, SO 6.2, SO 6.3
Key Delivery Items:	
Implement the Rural Economy Action Plan Provide access to employment opportunities in rural areas Adopt Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan Implement Green Infrastructure Projects	

Table 11.1

Purpose

11.5 Rural St.Helens provides a unique opportunity to support the main objectives of the Core Strategy through its diverse connection with housing, economy, accessibility and quality of life. This policy aims to cross reference these issues and encourage and support the rural areas and in particular, focus on supporting and diversifying the rural economy to support strategic objective SO 5.1 and making rural areas more accessible, both for employment and housing, but also for recreation and biodiversity to reflect strategic objectives SO 3.1, 4.1, 6.2 and 6.3. Further, the local character and heritage of the rural areas are very important to the Borough and whilst the need for development may exist, there is also a need for sensitive and well judged development to support SA4.

Justification

11.6 Rural St.Helens coincides with the Green Belt, where Green Belt policy will apply, and any development will be informed by the Landscape Character Assessment.

11.7 Nevertheless, the rural areas offer enormous potential for positive use. The St.Helens Urban Fringe Action Plan demonstrated the wide range of existing and potential activities in the countryside in and around the town, including its importance for recreation, health, education and to support regeneration.

11.8 The major opportunity is an area broadly bounded by the A57 to the south, the Borough boundary to the east, A568 to the west and the edge of the built-up areas of Sutton, Clock Face and Sutton Manor.

11.9 Following the restoration and woodland planting of former collieries and agricultural land on the southern fringe of St.Helens, there now exists a major opportunity to implement a coordinated programme of activities to promote its positive use for a range of outdoor activities of benefit to local communities and as an attraction to visitors from further afield. The potential of the area is recognised in the Town in the Forest Strategic Vision and its contribution to the rural economy in the Rural Economy Study of 2007.

11.10 The potential of this area between St.Helens, Warrington and Halton as an accessible area of greenspace to serve the surrounding housing areas was recognised in the Mid-Mersey Growth Point Programme of Delivery.

11.11 The area will be designated as a Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan, to be promoted for recreation in an attractive and accessible wooded outdoor setting. The action plan will include detailed policies addressing the following:

Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan

1. Create new economic opportunities through sustainable development within Bold Forest Park.
2. Create opportunities for tourism and leisure-related business, supported by the natural economy of the Bold Forest Park.
3. Create an easily understood and accessible network of linked open spaces within Bold Forest Park and with surrounding areas.
4. Promote the provision and positive use of green space for the benefit of local communities and visitors.
5. Enhance the natural environment through the targeted delivery of Green Infrastructure programmes that improve and expand the biodiversity and landscape quality of the Bold Forest Park area.

11.12 Other significant Green Infrastructure opportunities are:

- The Stanley Bank area, focusing on the Borough's largest SSSI, but including significant biodiversity and archaeological enhancements linked to the construction of the Blackbrook Diversion. This is supported by Heritage Lottery and other funding
- Carr Mill Dam, the largest area of water in the Borough and a significant opportunity for recreational and tourism-related uses. Subject to recent joint working with owners and stakeholders to take forward an agreed Management Plan, this remains an area of considerable potential. Billinge Hill, located on the northern edge of the Borough, includes a former landfill site restored for public access
- The former Lyme and Wood Pits. Planning permission was granted in 1999 for waste disposal, and subsequent restoration of the former collieries to a country park is now in progress on completed phases of landfill and surrounding land

11.13 Development in the rural areas while limited will nevertheless be important in meeting broader objectives and includes:

- The Rural Economy Study demonstrated that the rural areas offer a highly skilled strong enterprise base with the potential to support improved economic performance. Recommendations included: supporting local service centres; the reuse of existing buildings; supporting the sustainable development of agricultural businesses; and encouraging tourism
- The Local Centres Study of 2006 confirms Rainhill as a District Centre and Rainford and Billinge as Local Centres. Their boundaries will be defined in the Allocations DPD. Policies should seek to protect and enhance the facilities to contribute to meeting the needs of the local population and reduce the need to travel significant distances to access a range of day-to-day facilities. In particular, policies should seek to restrict the loss of retail units through change of use, particularly of vital services such as post offices, pharmacies, banks and newsagents

- The St.Helens Rural Access Study found that travel times to primary schools, post offices, GP surgeries and fresh food stores were mostly acceptable. However, there was a lack of “facility clusters” in rural areas where all four of these local facilities are located within easy walking distance of each other
- The PCT are developing centres across the Borough to provide integrated health services. Rainhill has been identified as an area where such a facility will be pursued

11.14 It is important for the quality of life in St.Helens' rural areas that access to facilities and opportunities for all is maintained by a choice of modes, while the adverse impacts of traffic are minimised.

11.15 The Local Transport Plan (LTP) reflects these principles by identifying broad objectives for the transport strategy, which are set out in the supporting text to policy CP 2.

11.16 The St.Helens Rural Access study undertook an analysis of accessibility by public transport from the rural area to a range of key facilities. In particular, access to many employment sites was difficult. Whiston Hospital and Newton Community Hospital were more difficult to access from many rural communities. Access to further education varied, with the St.Helens College site in Earlestown and Carmel College having significant limitations. The LTP 3 identifies the issues of accessibility in the rural areas of Merseyside.

Ensuring Quality Development in St.Helens



12 Ensuring Quality Development in St.Helens

Context

12.1 It will be expected that all new development will be of a high quality and will not detract from, or harm, the environment.

Policy CP 1

Ensuring Quality Development in St.Helens

All proposals for development within the Borough will be expected, where appropriate, to meet the following standards as a minimum:

1. Quality of the Built Environment

- i. Maintain or enhance the overall character and appearance of the local environment (with regard to siting, layout, massing, scale, design, materials, building to plot ratio and landscaping);
- ii. Safeguard and enhance the built and historic environment;
- iii. Be sympathetic to surrounding land uses and occupiers, avoiding detrimental impact on the amenities of the local area, in particular residential amenities;
- iv. Ensure that the amenities of occupiers of the new development will not be adversely affected by neighbouring uses and vice versa;
- v. Link in with surrounding movement patterns and not be prejudicial to the development of neighbouring land, including the creation of landlocked sites;
- vi. Minimise opportunity for crime and maximise natural surveillance;
- vii. Provide landscaping as an integral part of the development, protecting existing landscape features, providing open space and enhancing the public realm;
- viii. Include or contribute to the provision of public art in appropriate circumstances;
- ix. Demonstrate, through the Design and Access Statement, the appropriateness of the proposal;
- x. Make provision for the needs of special groups in the community such as the elderly and those with disabilities; and
- xi. Residential development to achieve Buildings for Life rating of at least "good".

2. Protection of the Natural and Historic Environment

- i. Safeguard and enhance Green Infrastructure, biodiversity and geodiversity and bring these resources into positive management;
- ii. Avoid unnecessary tree loss and make provision for new and replacement planting;
- iii. Take full account of archaeological remains and, where it is demonstrated preservation is not feasible, that adequate provision is made for their excavation and recording;
- iv. Safeguard or enhance landscape character, including historic landscape and townscape character;

- v. Avoid loss or damage to high quality soils where possible and minimise loss or damage where this can be shown to be unavoidable; and
- vi. Ensure protection of watercourses from encroachment, modification and degradation and return modified and degraded water bodies to sustainable, natural environments where appropriate and feasible.

3. Environmental Quality

- i. Minimise and mitigate against the effects of air, light and water pollution (including contamination of soil, surface water and groundwater resources) and noise, vibration, smells, dust and electromagnetic fields caused by the development;
- ii. Development that is located within or would impact on Air Quality Management Areas will require special consideration with regard to their impacts on air quality;
- iii. Be located in an area where its use is compatible with the identified Flood Zone in the SFRA, avoiding adding to the causes and sources of flood risk and ensuring no adverse impact on other sites. Where this cannot be achieved, but there is an overriding need for the development and a suitable alternative site cannot be identified, protection from the risk of flooding, through the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and/or other appropriate measures and/or flood defences will be required;
- iv. Ensure that the site of the proposed development is not contaminated and/or unstable or that provision can be made for its remediation to an appropriate standard, taking into account its intended use and making use of sustainable remediation technologies; and
- v. Include satisfactory arrangements for the disposal of foul sewage, liquid waste, trade effluent and contaminated surface water.

4. Resource Management

- i. Minimise, and where possible, prevent waste being produced and pursue a strategy which promotes reuse and recycling;
- ii. Minimise consumption of energy and incorporate renewable and low carbon energy generation. An initial target of 10% decentralised and renewable or low carbon energy, subject to feasibility and viability, will be sought on non-residential schemes above 1,000m² and residential schemes of 10 or more dwellings⁽¹⁾;
- iii. Use local and recycled building materials;
- iv. Subject to viability, achieve at least Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 for all new residential development, rising to Level 4 between 2013 and 2016, and Level 6 after 2016⁽¹⁾;
- v. Achieve a BREEAM rating of at least "very good" for non-residential development, subject to viability⁽¹⁾;
- vi. Make efficient use of existing infrastructure and services, and where practicable, avoid the need for new service investment;
- vii. Make efficient use of water;

1 To be updated in the Sustainable Development DPD

- viii. Avoid sterilisation of known mineral resources through development; and
- ix. Not prejudice the delivery/improvement of utility networks.

Strategic Aims Met:	Strategic Objectives Met:
SA 2	SO 2.1, SO 2.2, SO 2.3
Key Delivery Items:	
Adoption of Sustainable Development DPD Adoption of Waste DPD Adoption of a suite of SPDs, including Air Quality, Flooding and Drainage, Green Infrastructure, Noise, and Public Art; Biodiversity, Design and Crime, Design Guidance, Ensuring a Choice of Travel, Hot Food Takeaways, Householder Development, New Residential Development, Residential Character Areas, St.Helens List of Locally Important Buildings, Shopfronts, Telecommunications and Trees and Development SPDs Assessment of planning applications Contribution to delivery of the North West River Basin Management Plan	

Table 12.1

Purpose

12.2 The purpose of the policy is to set out the requirements against which all development and planning applications will be assessed. It is intended to provide a convenient checklist of matters of importance and will be supplemented by policies in the Sustainable Development DPD and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs).

Justification

12.3 The policy is consistent with national and regional policy and will also ensure that development assists in the delivery, of and is consistent with, locally important policy and strategy including, amongst others:

- Crime, Disorder and Drug Reduction Strategy
- Cultural Strategy
- Policy for Nature Biodiversity Action Plan
- Community Greenspace Strategy
- Town in the Forest Strategic Vision
- Landscape Character Assessment
- Climate Change Action Plan
- Air Quality Assessment
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

12.4 The importance of tackling climate change is highlighted by the NPPF. Accordingly, section 4 of policy CP 1 is an important tool for tackling climate change in St.Helens due to its requirements such as waste minimisation, renewable energy and setting minimum Code for Sustainable Homes

and BREEAM standards. The Sustainable Development DPD will review these standards and set out policies to help new development reduce its contribution to the causes of, and cope with the effects of, climate change.

12.5 RSS policy EM 18 advises that in advance of setting local targets for renewable energy generation, an interim target of at least 10% should be applied to all qualifying developments, subject to financial viability. This is considered an appropriate aspiration, subject to careful consideration of the effect on feasibility and viability, and delivery of other important requirements such as open space and affordable housing. This interim requirement will be updated through the Sustainable Development DPD, which will also address wider environmental requirements for residential and non-residential developments. A subregional study on decentralised and renewable or low carbon energy is being undertaken through the Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service and will inform any changes to the interim target.

12.6 Regarding flood risk, the use of flood defences to protect new development is not considered sustainable by the Environment Agency and should be considered as a last resort with more sustainable measures, such as SuDs, considered first. The adoption and/or aftercare of SuDs, flood defences and other appropriate measures will need to be carefully considered and agreed with the Council and other relevant parties.

Creating an Accessible St.Helens



13 Creating an Accessible St.Helens

Context

13.1 The attractiveness of the Borough of St.Helens as a location for either business or new residential development lies in:

- Its location in the heart of the north-west with easy access by road and rail to jobs and markets across the north-west, and in particular in Liverpool, Manchester and Warrington
- Its proximity to national and regional road (M6, M62 and A580) and rail (West Coast Mainline) networks and two major airports (Liverpool and Manchester)

Policy CP 2

Creating an Accessible St.Helens

In order to provide a realistic choice of travel, including access for people with mobility difficulties, all proposals for development within St.Helens (where appropriate) will be expected to meet the following principles, except where specific locational requirements restrict the opportunity for ensuring a choice of travel:

1. Ensuring a choice in mode of travel by:

- i. Locating to sites where there is potential for users to walk or cycle to or from the site and/or the provision of cycle and walking facilities within the site, and/or the improvement of routes or facilities which serve the site; and
- ii. Locating to sites where there is good access to the public transport network and/or the provision of public transport facilities within the site and/or the improvement of public transport and facilities which serve the site.

2. Ensuring access to local facilities by protecting and enhancing:

- i. Safe and convenient pedestrian routes, including Safer Routes to School;
- ii. Links to, and growth of, the identified cycle network, including the extension of the Sustrans National Cycle Network; and
- iii. Public transport facilities.

3. Safe and adequate access to and from the public highway by:

- i. The provision of safe and adequate vehicular, cycle and pedestrian access to and from, and circulation within, a site;
- ii. The provision of adequate on-site parking, which should not exceed the Council's adopted maximum standards, unless it is proven to be essential to avoid highway danger;
- iii. Parking for those of limited mobility, service vehicles, and cycles should meet the Council's minimum guidelines;
- iv. Allowing direct access onto the primary route network only where it does not restrict the capacity of the road or its intended purpose. Where a reasonable alternative exists, direct

access will not be permitted. Any junction or capacity improvements shall be completed before the occupation of the development;

- v. Preventing direct access to the Strategic Road Network other than for the provision of service areas, facilities for the travelling public, maintenance compounds and, exceptionally, other major transport interchanges; and
- vi. Assessing indirect access (by way of an existing access) onto the Strategic Road Network against the development's impact on the Strategic Road Network from 10 years of the occupation of the development.

4. Sustainable location of significant generators of journeys⁽¹⁾ by:

- i. Locating within 800 metres of safe and convenient walking distances of stations on the passenger rail network or within 400 metres of safe and convenient walking distance of stops and interchanges on high-frequency bus service networks;
- ii. Ensuring development which generates significant movement of freight, is located on sites which are served by rail or where rail facilities can be provided as part of the development, or where these options are not available, locating where there is good access to a road designated as a Freight Priority Route;
- iii. Submission of a Transport Assessment in accordance with the Ensuring a Choice of Travel SPD; and
- iv. Preparation of a Travel Plan in accordance with the Ensuring a Choice of Travel SPD.

5. Reduce the adverse impacts of traffic on the community by:

- i. Improving safety and protecting the efficiency of routes by paying regard to the route and road user hierarchies adopted within the LTP and providing off-site improvements where necessary; and
- ii. Supporting initiatives to reduce congestion, air pollution and noise on key routes.

6. Support Local Transport Plan Priorities by ensuring development will not prejudice:

- i. Improved rail links to Manchester and Wigan, including the planned rail electrification;
- ii. Improved rail capacity to Liverpool; or
- iii. Improved station accessibility and facilities.

Strategic Aims Met:	Strategic Objectives Met:
SA 3	SO 3.1
Key Delivery Items:	
Implementation of Local Transport Plan Implementation of Ensuring a Choice of Travel SPD	

Table 13.1

¹ Significant generators of journeys are those requiring at least a Transport Statement in Department for Transport Guidance for Transport Assessments or those classed as Large or Major in Ensuring A Choice of Travel SPD

Purpose

13.2 The purpose of this policy is to create an accessible St.Helens to meet strategic aim SA 3.

Justification

National

13.3 The NPPF explains that transport policies have an important role to play in facilitating sustainable development but also in contributing to wider sustainability objectives. Delivering a Sustainable Transport System outlines the Government's agenda for transport policy in the future. This builds on the recommendations made in the Eddington Study and Stern Review. The Government has set down five areas which future transport policy must focus around. These include: tackle climate change; support economic growth; promote equality of opportunity; contribute to better safety, security and health; and improve quality of life.

City Region

13.4 The third Merseyside Local Transport Plan (LTP) vision is to have a City Region committed to a low carbon future, which has a transport network and mobility culture that positively contributes to a thriving economy and the health and wellbeing of its citizens and where sustainable travel is the option of choice. This is reflected in schemes to promote walking and cycling and safer routes to school, including the St.Helens part of the Sustrans National Cycle Network including Widnes to Wigan via local centres.

13.5 The third Merseyside LTP runs until April 2024, with Implementation Plans until 2014/15. The Local Transport Act 2008 resulted in Passenger Transport Authorities changing to become the Integrated Transport Authorities (ITA) and becoming statutorily responsible for LTPs. As part of this they have a statutory undertaking to consult with St.Helens Council on any policies and proposals.

13.6 The third LTP for Merseyside will focus on delivering six equally weighted goals to deliver a transport system to meet the needs of a growing and successful Merseyside. The goals set are:

1. Help create the right conditions for sustainable economic growth by supporting the priorities of the Liverpool City Region, the Local Enterprise Partnership and the Local Strategic Partnerships;
2. Provide and promote a clean, low emission transport system which is resilient to changes to climate and oil availability;
3. Ensure the transport system promotes and enables improved health and wellbeing and road safety;
4. Ensure equality of travel opportunity for all, through a transport system that allows people to connect easily with employment, education, healthcare, other essential services and leisure and recreational opportunities;
5. Ensure the transport network supports the economic success of the City Region by the efficient movement of people and goods; and
6. Maintain our assets to a high standard.

13.7 The Merseyside Transport Partnership implements the LTP on Merseyside. The partnership includes Merseytravel and the five Merseyside district Councils who work together in a number of areas of transport policy and implementation on Merseyside. In order to focus on specific areas a number of accompanying strategy documents have been produced in conjunction with the second LTP which have included the Bus and Rail Strategies, the Freight Strategy, the Cycling Strategy and the Access Strategy. These have been reviewed and incorporated into the third LTP.

13.8 The Strategic Road Network (SRN) consists of strategic roads managed by the Government's Highways Agency. In St.Helens, the SRN comprises the M6 and M62 motorways. There is a general presumption that no new access onto the SRN will be made except to facilitate its operations (such as the provision of service areas, facilities for the travelling public and maintenance compounds) and, exceptionally, other major transport interchanges. Proposals for the Strategic Rail Freight Interchange at the former Parkside colliery, which would be a major transport interchange, will require direct access to the M6 for heavy goods vehicles, however, this will need to be agreed with the Highways Agency.

13.9 In April 2004, a study of public transport services in the **Culcheth, Ashton, Newton-le-Willows and Golborne (CANGO)** areas was commissioned to generate proposals for improving public transport which would form the basis of a public transport strategy for the area. The study identified several problems caused by a lack of cross-boundary bus services. The resulting strategy proposed:

- New and improved cross-boundary bus routes
- Improved rail station facilities
- Bus priority measures
- Zonal strategy for fare integration across Local Authority boundaries
- A package of improvements to walking and cycling routes across the area
- Preparation of an area wide public transport guide

13.10 A cross-boundary working group for the CANGO area has been set up to look at ways of developing these proposals.

Local

13.11 It is important for the quality of life in St.Helens that access to facilities and opportunities for all are maintained by a choice of modes of travel, while the adverse impacts of traffic are minimised. This is reflected in the St.Helens Plan, which identifies the following delivery themes in achieving a safe and accessible Borough:

- Reduce road traffic accident death and injury
- Provide a fair and safe trading environment, with well-informed consumers and businesses
- Improve the standard of the highway network to support the local economy
- Deliver the Merseyside LTP and associated strategies in St.Helens
- Improve travel choice, affordability and availability of public transport
- Minimise traffic congestion and increase cycling and walking

13.12 The Overall Spatial Strategy of the Core Strategy seeks to concentrate development in the main urban settlements, which are accessible by a choice of sustainable transport modes.

13.13 In order to deliver improvements for walking and cycling in St.Helens, Local Pedestrian and Cycling Strategies have been developed. As part of these strategies Local Area Access Audits of local centres have been undertaken identifying where improvements are needed to make them a fully accessible area. The works identified are hoped to be carried out over the next few years funded through the Local Transport Plan.

13.14 In the past, the need to travel caused by development has been primarily met by providing for car use. This approach is no longer acceptable and the aims of the policy, outlined above, ensure that there is a choice of means to travel to and from development sites, and encourage use of more sustainable means of transport.

13.15 To achieve this the policy requires:

- Developers to demonstrate that a minimum level of accessibility will be achieved for walking, cycling, public transport and vehicular access
- Significant generators of journeys to maximise choice of travel and reduce adverse impacts by locating close to the public transport network (or where appropriate, the Freight Route Network), undertaking a detailed assessment of transport implications with a Transport Assessment and preparing a Travel Plan

Access onto the Primary Route Network

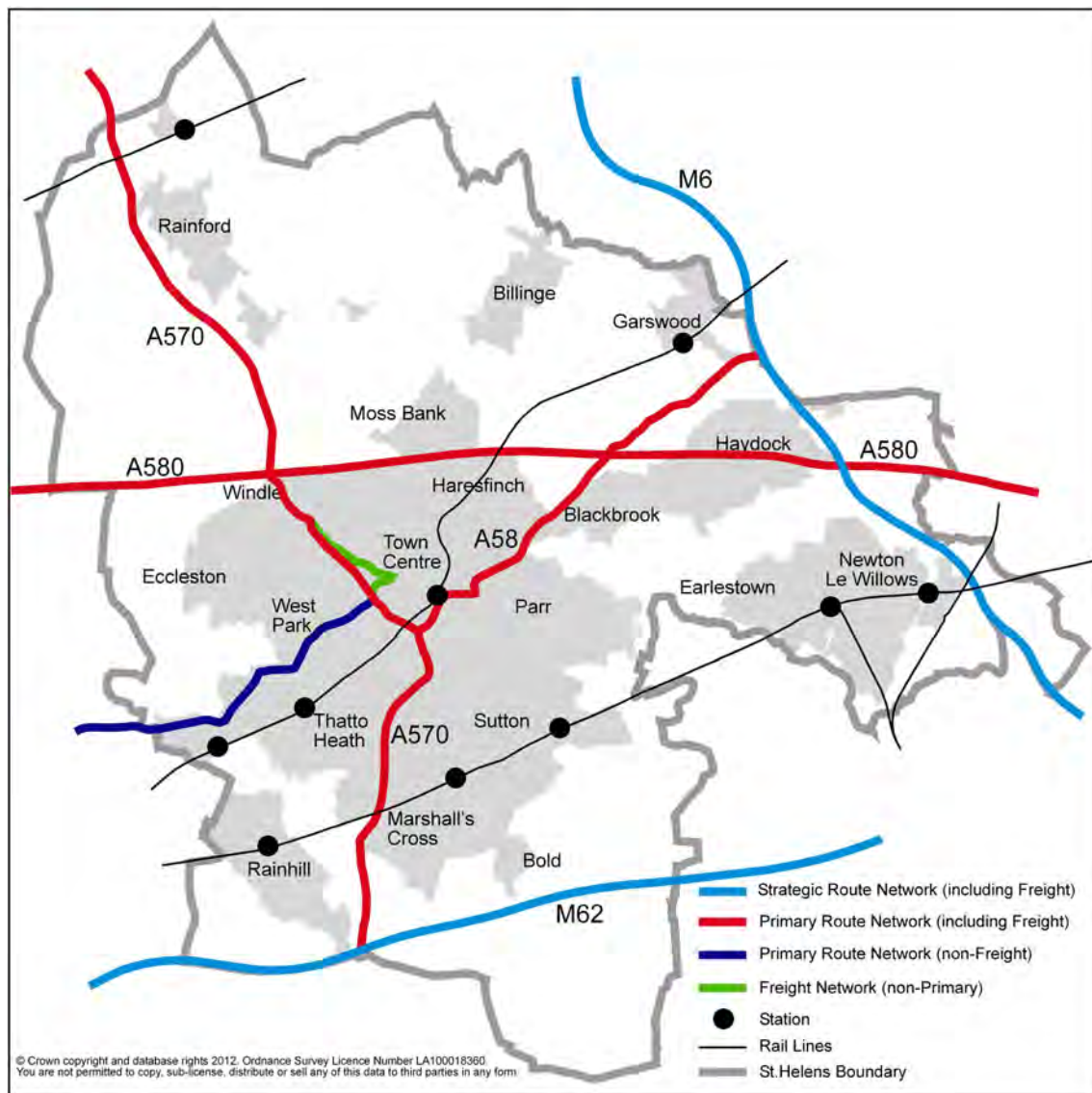


Figure 13.1 Freight & Primary Route Network

13.16 The Primary Route Network consists of the A570, A580 and A58, which are maintained by St.Helens Council, and seeks to ensure efficient intra-urban motor vehicle access between key locations such as towns and key employment locations. The policy will restrict direct access from development onto the Primary Route Network. Direct access onto the Primary Route Network would reduce its effectiveness, thereby increasing congestion (and, consequently, journey time and pollution).

Transport Assessments

13.17 Development proposals that are likely to generate a significant number of trips may benefit from closer scrutiny of a greater number of transport problems and solutions. In such cases, a more detailed assessment of the following, in the form of a Transport Assessment, may be requested:

- Giving access to all means of transport
- Limiting the harm from traffic on safety, noise and air pollution and on the environment or local amenity
- Ensuring safe and easy access for all users

Travel Plans

13.18 A Travel Plan can help reduce the number of car trips to a development. Travel Plans aim to reduce the number of journeys needed, where possible, and to encourage choice and use of sustainable means of transport to development sites. This includes, for example, car-sharing, working from home, awareness-raising campaigns or subsidised public transport season tickets for employees.

Providing Quality Housing in St.Helens



14 Providing Quality Housing in St.Helens

Context

14.1 The Government's key housing policy objective is to ensure that everyone has the opportunity of living in a decent home, which they can afford and which meets their needs, in a community where they want to live. To achieve this, the Government is seeking to widen opportunities for home ownership, ensure the provision of a wide variety of high quality affordable and market housing and create sustainable, inclusive communities. High quality housing developments should be located in areas accessible to jobs, key services and infrastructure.

Policy CH 1

Meeting St.Helens' Housing Requirement

The net housing requirement for the period 2003 to 2027 comprises 13,680 new dwellings. This will be achieved through:

1. Allocating land to meet the outstanding residual requirement for the period 2003-2022;
2. Identifying land for the period 2022-2027, through one or more of:
 - i. Releasing sites from other uses, subject to meeting the requirements of other policies within the Core Strategy;
 - ii. Increasing densities higher than those required in part 6, where appropriate and when considered necessary;
 - iii. Reconsidering potentially suitable sites, as identified by the SHLAA;
 - iv. Releasing land from the Green Belt, provided that it is in line with work being carried out at the Merseyside subregional level;
3. Delivering at least 80% of new dwellings on previously developed land over the plan period as a whole by only permitting new dwellings on a greenfield site where:
 - i. It forms a minor part of a larger development site and is essential to the successful delivery of the development as a whole; or
 - ii. It delivers an overriding significant social, economic and environmental benefit, and it complies with policies for the protection of open space; or
 - iii. The application is for a barn conversion and it can be demonstrated that the site has been marketed for economic use for 2 years, to the satisfaction of the Council, and is not viable for these purposes; or
 - iv. It meets an identified shortfall of land for housing;
4. Supporting the reuse and conversion of appropriate buildings for housing;
5. Removing dereliction on major routes into and through the Borough, contributing to the enhancement of the perception of St.Helens as a place to live or do business;
6. Requiring developments to achieve a minimum density of 30 dwellings per hectare (dph), and requiring higher density developments of 40 dph in sustainable locations where well

served by public transport and 50 dph within and adjacent to St.Helens and Earlestown Town Centres; and

7. Only allowing developments to achieve density lower than those required by part 6 in exceptional circumstances or to safeguard the character of established residential areas from over-intensive and inappropriate new development.

Strategic Aims Met:	Strategic Objectives Met:
SA 4	SO 4.1
Key Delivery Items:	
13,680 net new dwellings completed by 2027 Adoption of Sustainable Development and Allocations DPDs and AAPs Development Briefs Residential Character Areas SPD Adoption of Rural Buildings SPD Householder Development SPD New Residential Development SPD	

Table 14.1

Purpose

14.2 This policy is designed to ensure that a sufficient number of new and improved dwellings are available to meet identified housing needs and to deliver inclusive, sustainable communities.

Justification

The Housing Requirement

14.3 The RSS requires St.Helens to provide at least 10,260 new dwellings over the period 2003 to 2021, with an average completion rate of 570 dwellings per annum (p.a.) net of clearance replacement.

14.4 Policy CH 1 sets out a net housing requirement for the period 2003 to 2027 of 13,680 new dwellings. This has been established by maintaining the RSS's average completion rate of 570 dwellings p.a. for St.Helens, whilst looking forward 15 years, in line with national policy. St.Helens' aspiration for growth is incorporated within the housing target of 570 dwellings p.a.. St.Helens has for some time been pursuing growth in housing and this is illustrated by moving from 400 dwellings p.a. in the superseded RPG13 to 570 dwellings p.a. in the RSS, which the Council encouraged and supported to meet its growth aspirations.

14.5 The housing figures within the RSS are relevant to St.Helens due to the following main reasons:

- The housing provision set out by the RSS was encouraged and supported by the Council
- The RSS was justified through research and its evidence base was tested through an Examination in Public, where it was considered sound

- The RSS target, which has been presented in earlier drafts of the Core Strategy, has not been challenged by any representations made through consultation
- The 2008-based ONS Household Projections project an annual average household change of 400 (2003-2028) for St.Helens
- RS2010's (which was intended to replace the RSS) research forecasts for St.Helens range from 529 dwellings p.a. to 776 dwellings p.a. (2006-2030)
- The RSS target is an annual average over a fifteen year plan period (rather than a minimum or maximum), so any periods of undersupply or oversupply delivery could be addressed over this long term period

14.6 A base date of 2003 for the housing requirement has also been considered appropriate to St.Helens. This is mainly because 2003 is the base date which has been used in the research forecasts in the RSS evidence base. In addition, the high delivery rates witnessed in the early plan period (between 2003/04 and 2006/07) demonstrate what could realistically be achieved in St.Helens and illustrate that there is a commitment to housing growth.

14.7 To meet identified housing needs, the replacement of demolished dwellings needs to be accounted for. Demolitions between 2003/04 and 2010/11 totalled 698. Helena Partnerships have confirmed that the majority of demolitions in St.Helens have already occurred and that their future clearance programme is reducing. Therefore, the 2010 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) has calculated a demolitions allowance of 26 dwellings p.a.. The total demolitions allowance for the period 2003-2027 is therefore 1,114 (i.e. 698 + (16 x 26)).

14.8 In terms of delivery performance to date, there have been 4,474 completions between 2003/04 and 2010/11, which averages 559 gross completions p.a.. This is demonstrated in the 2011 Housing Land Position Statement. Of these completions, 92% took place on previously developed land (PDL). The total and residual housing requirement is summarised in the table below.

Item	Amount
Housing Requirement 2003/04 to 2026/27	13,680
Demolitions 2003/04 to 2010/11	698
Allowance for demolitions 2011/12 to 2026/27	416
Total Requirement 2003/04 to 2026/27	14,794
Completions 2003/04 to 2010/11	4,474
Residual Requirement 2011/12 to 2026/27	10,320

Table 14.2 Housing Requirement

The Housing Evidence Base

14.9 The key piece of evidence in identifying how the housing requirement will be met is the SHLAA which has been used to calculate the Core Strategy Housing Trajectory. The 2010 St.Helens SHLAA (prepared alongside Halton and Warrington Borough Councils) indicates the housing land supply position at April 1st2010. The SHLAA's five and ten year periods show a surplus of dwellings. However, there is a shortfall of land for dwellings in the fifteen year period.

14.10 The Housing Trajectory illustrated below demonstrates past net completions that occurred between April 2003 and March 2011. It also shows projected completions and demolitions (of 26 dwellings p.a.) based on the results of the 2010 SHLAA. The RSS annual housing requirement of 570 dwellings p.a. is used between 2003 and 2027. The cumulative over/under supply has been calculated through the subtraction of actual/projected completions from the annual requirement, taking into account any surplus/deficit from previous years.

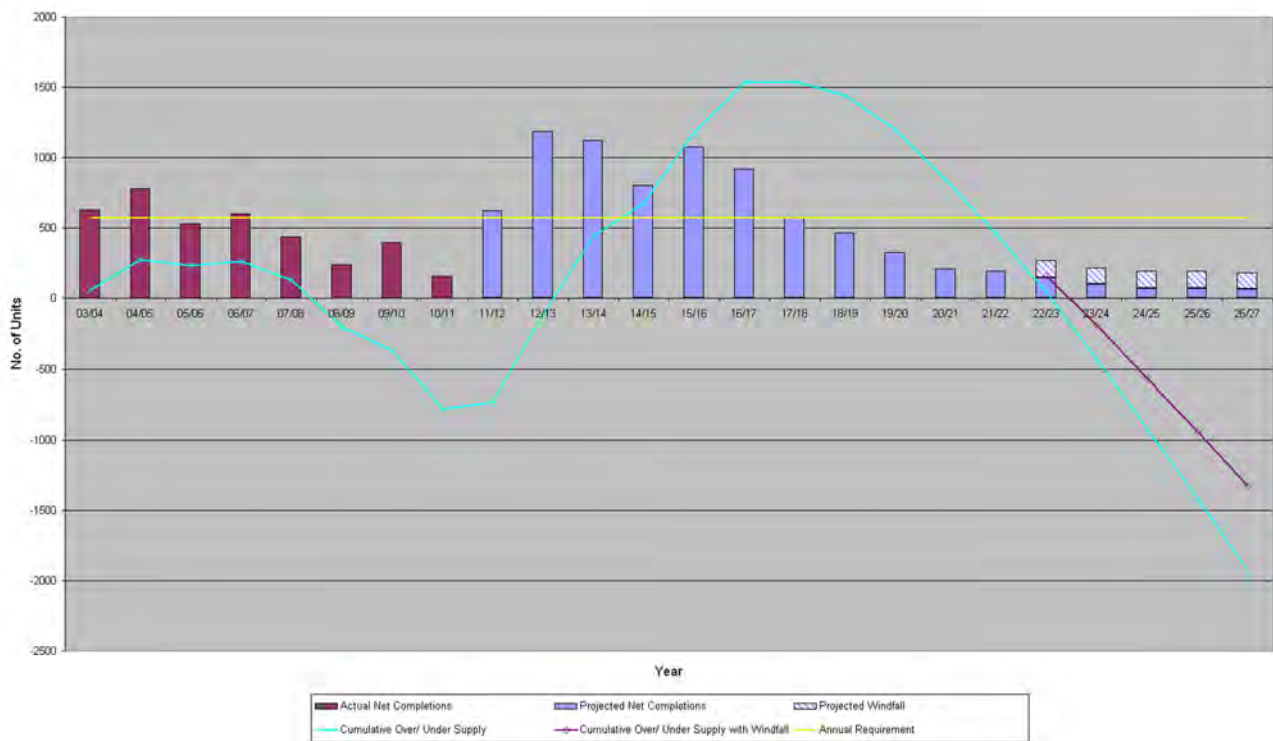


Figure 14.1 Housing Trajectory 2003-2027

14.11 The Council is optimistic that under normal market conditions, the average annual completion rate of 559 gross dwellings can be achieved, as demonstrated by the 2011 Housing Land Position Statement. The evidence to support this includes: past completion rates; the fact that 57% of the total potential supply already has planning permission or is allocated for housing, as demonstrated by the 2010 SHLAA; and that procedures are in place to work with landowners and developers to bring forward further sites.

14.12 There are no major infrastructure constraints, as the supply identified in the SHLAA is located within existing settlement boundaries. However, the relationship between land values and the ability of developers to restore land affected by contamination will be critical and will be taken into account when determining applications, where appropriate.

14.13 The recession, which commenced in 2008, has had a significant impact on the rate of housing completions. For example, the 2011 Housing Land Position Statement indicates total net completions to be 399 in 2009/10, and 157 in 2010/11, against a target of 570. The Housing Trajectory projects that the rate of housing completions will begin to recover in 2012 and will exceed annual requirements in the following years, which will reconcile for the current under-provision. Housing completions and the release of land will continue to be monitored through the Annual Monitoring Report, the annual Housing Land Position Statement and SHLAA, as explained in the Delivery and Monitoring Strategy.

14.14 The Housing Trajectory projects that the Council will be in a position of undersupply from 2023/24. This shortfall could be addressed in four main ways:

i. **Windfall Allowance -**

An analysis of the potential for windfalls to supplement the identified land supply over the 15 years of the plan, with regard to historic windfall delivery rates and expected future trends, was conducted in the 2010 SHLAA. Since the 2004 Urban Capacity Study there have been permissions granted totalling 2,190 dwellings which were not accounted for in the 2004 study. This is equivalent to 31% of the original urban capacity and demonstrates a significant track record of windfalls. Over the last 30 years, the rapid process of deindustrialisation in St.Helens has left a legacy of derelict land and an industrial structure which is continuously subject to change. The Council is aware that there are a number of sites which are currently in active manufacturing use which may close or relocate over the next 15 years. The St.Helens Employment Land and Skills Review also projects that the manufacturing industry, which remains a key source of jobs in St.Helens, is set to see further contraction by around 1,700 jobs. The forecasts suggest that this will continue at a steady rate over the period to 2027 as a result of the shift towards more advanced and less labour intensive manufacturing, productivity improvements and competition from lower cost overseas manufacturers. Furthermore, in 2005 an Interim Planning Policy for Housing (IPP) was introduced to control housing development when the Council was in a position of oversupply. Following the removal of this policy in 2008, a number of sites which were refused permission under the IPP have been granted, or have resubmitted for, permission and this pattern is expected to continue. Taking the above into consideration, it is therefore considered reasonable to apply a windfall allowance for the 11-15 year period of the Core Strategy (between 2022/23-2026/27).

In order to estimate the likely delivery of windfalls in the 11-15 period, the housing completions on windfall sites since 2001 were assessed on small sites (10 or fewer dwellings) and large sites (greater than 10 dwellings). Sites identified in the 2007 Urban Capacity Update and the 2008 and 2009 SHLAAs, sites allocated in the 1998 St.Helens UDP and all greenfield sites were removed from the analysis. Results from the analysis demonstrate how St.Helens has achieved an average of 45 windfall completions p.a. on small sites and 170 p.a. on large windfall sites. Given that a large proportion of windfall has already occurred, it is considered that applying the same rate for years 11-15 would be unreasonable. However, it is considered reasonable to assume that 50% of the large windfall site capacity will be brought forward between years 11-15, equating to 85 dwellings p.a.. Following the SHLAA's methodology, 119 windfall dwellings are projected to be delivered each year between 2022/23-2026/27, demonstrating a windfall capacity of 595 dwellings in years 11-15 of the Core Strategy. However, if it has been considered appropriate to address part of the identified shortfall by

releasing sites from other uses (subject to meeting the requirements of other policies within the Core Strategy), then the windfall allowance identified here could be higher than stated above.

ii. **Increased densities -**

The Core Strategy strikes a balance between seeking higher densities in Policy CH 1 part 6 and protecting the character of established residential areas in part 7. However, if it has been considered appropriate to address part of the identified shortfall by increasing densities, then part 2A(ii) allows minimum densities set out in part 6 to be reviewed at a necessary time through the Sustainable Development DPD or a SPD.

According to the 2011 Housing Land Position Statement, an average density of 40 dwellings per hectare (dph) has been achieved in St.Helens over recent years on development sites with houses as the predominant dwelling type. The Council has also been successful in achieving even higher average densities of 62 dph when apartments are taken into account. This demonstrates that a minimum density of 30 dph can realistically be achieved in St.Helens by making the best use of land, whilst also being acceptable in design terms. However, with the changing market conditions and on the advice of private sector housebuilders in the SHLAA Stakeholder Group, a number of sites in the SHLAA have had their densities reduced commensurate with projected reduced apartment construction. Notwithstanding this, the Core Strategy is a long term plan and the Council remains optimistic that increased densities through apartment schemes will be delivered later in the plan period. The Residential Character Areas SPD considers the appropriate management of densities in areas which are identified as having a particular residential character. In all other cases, densities lower than those set out in part 6 will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances, such as to support regeneration or to meet an identified local need, for example for extra care or supported housing.

iii. **Potentially suitable sites -**

The SHLAA identifies a number of sites that were discounted from the main housing land supply as being potentially suitable with further investigation. These consist of several open space sites and a number of Helena Partnerships sites with potential access issues which may be suitable with further investigation. For example, relevant studies or site appraisals may reveal that open space is no longer required to be retained or that existing properties can be demolished to facilitate access to such sites. Should it be considered appropriate to address part of the identified shortfall by reconsidering potentially suitable sites, then the shortfall could be reduced by approximately 373 units.

iv. **Green Belt release -**

The Council is reluctant to pursue Green Belt release (including small scale non-strategic release) in the short to medium term for two main reasons. Firstly, the assumptions on the above measures (i.-iii.) and recessionary delay create sufficient doubt as to the justification for such a radical change to established Merseyside Green Belt policy. Secondly, a more structured approach to Green Belt release at the Merseyside subregional level is preferable, reflecting the current Liverpool City Region Cabinet area, the Eastern Housing Market Area and our other neighbours.

The first stage of this approach has been completed through the publishing of the Liverpool City Region Housing and Economic Development Evidence Base Overview Study in May 2011. Further work, either collectively or by individual authorities, is likely, building on the study. Therefore, any release of land from the Green Belt to address the identified shortfall will be in line with the results of this subregional level work.

14.15 The PDL Trajectory illustrated below highlights completions taking place on PDL and greenfield sites against the local PDL target of 80%. It demonstrates that the target has been, and is projected to be, consistently exceeded which highlights the Council's commitment to regeneration by delivering housing on PDL.

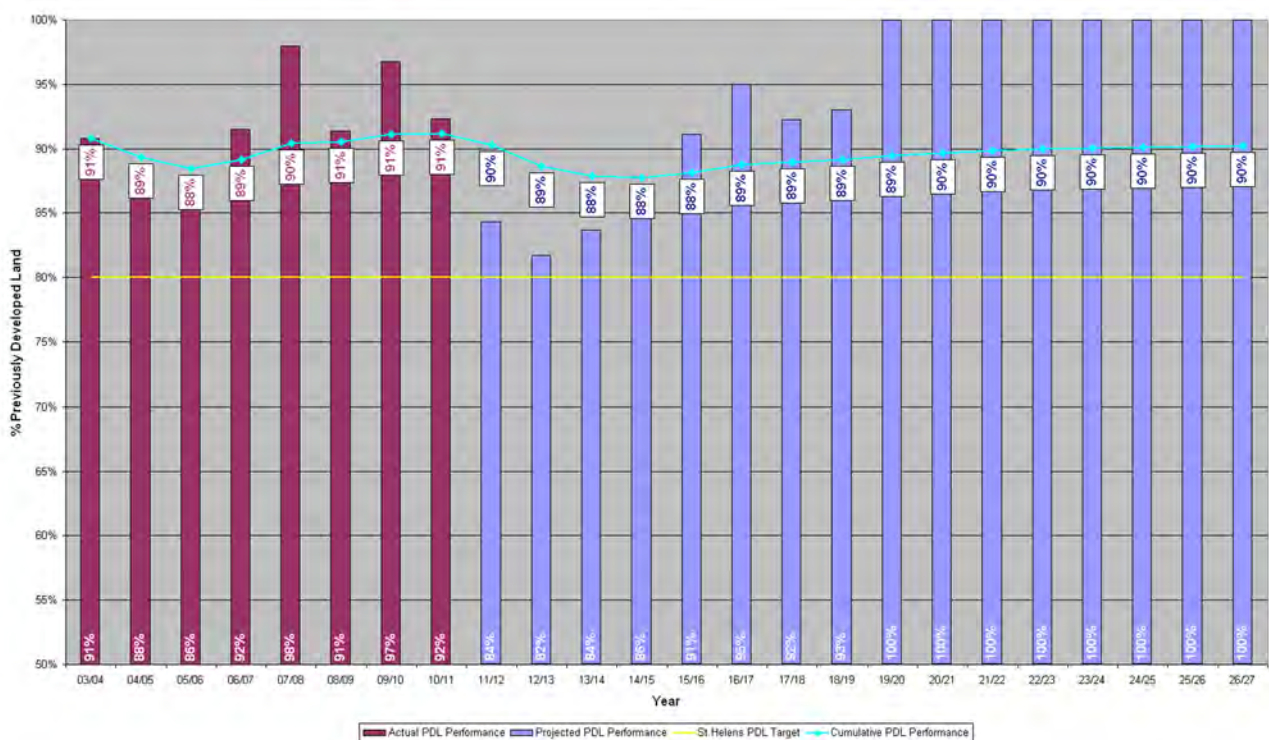


Figure 14.2 Previously Developed Land Trajectory 2003-2027

14.16 St.Helens has a plentiful supply of PDL and to achieve sustainable housing growth, development is prioritised on this land. The RSS target for St.Helens and Halton is to achieve at least 65% of residential development on PDL. The PDL Trajectory indicates that 90% of the total supply is on PDL. As St.Helens has such a high level of PDL, it is considered that a target of 80% of housing completions on PDL throughout the plan period as a whole is both achievable and realistic. Nonetheless, there will be a need for a small proportion of greenfield land and the policy sets out criteria for its development, including where there is an identified shortfall of housing land. However, it has been calculated that, even if the identified housing shortfall at the end of the plan period was solely met through greenfield land, the 80% PDL target would still be achieved.

Policy CH 2

Meeting St.Helens' Housing Needs

A suitable mix of high quality housing will be provided to deliver sustainable communities in accordance with identified local needs. This will be achieved by:

The delivery of Affordable Housing through:

1. Supporting new provision by Registered Providers of Social Housing;
2. Requiring all private sector development to contribute as follows:
 - i. A Borough-wide target of at least 30% of the total capacity of all new residential development on sites of 5 or more units to be affordable;
 - ii. On sites between 5 and 14 units, a commuted sum in lieu of on-site provision may be acceptable unless there is an overriding local need for on-site provision;
 - iii. On sites of 15 or more units the presumption will be for on-site provision unless no local need exists, in which case a commuted sum in lieu of on-site provision will be required;
 - iv. Any relaxation of the above requirement will only be considered if fully justified by an independent site-specific economic viability study.

The delivery of a suitable housing mix and special needs housing through:

3. The provision of units, including apartments and bungalows, to meet the needs of an ageing population and smaller households;
4. Planning for extra care and supported housing appropriate to local needs; and
5. Higher value market housing to support economic development within the Housing Market Area.

Strategic Aims Met:	Strategic Objectives Met:
SA 4	SO 4.1
Key Delivery Items:	
Affordable Housing SPD Implementation of Housing Strategy	

Table 14.3

Purpose

14.17 This policy is designed to ensure that the housing being delivered meets the needs of the Borough over the plan period by providing suitable mixes of market housing, Affordable Housing, and special needs accommodation.

Justification

The Housing Market Area

14.18 The 2007 Liverpool City Region Housing Strategy (LCRHS) recognised that St.Helens had housing market linkages with Liverpool, Sefton, Knowsley, Halton and Warrington. However, the strongest links were with Halton and Warrington and for that reason St.Helens was aligned with these two authorities in the Eastern Housing Market Area. This conclusion was consistent with local research (Geography for St.Helens Housing Market Assessment Activity, 2006).

Establishing Housing Need

14.19 The joint Mid Mersey Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), involving St.Helens, Halton and Warrington, was completed in May 2011. A subregional SHMA has been published alongside the SHMA for St.Helens, providing an overarching picture of need across the Eastern Housing Market Area.

14.20 The SHMA identifies a need for 1,225 affordable units p.a. in St.Helens between 2011-2016. This high level of housing need in part reflects the costs of market housing and local incomes (particularly of younger households) and the decline in stock of Affordable Housing over the last decade. Future population and household growth is expected to see a large increase in the proportion of older people, along with significant decreases in average household sizes. A notable proportion of all households have a disability or specific needs that require a range of support and adaptations. The SHMA identifies that around 50 units p.a. of specialist accommodation is required to 2026. Therefore, it is important that a range of good quality accommodation is provided to meet the needs of the ageing population and other households, such as sheltered, new build adapted and extra care properties, in addition to providing adaptations to existing homes.

14.21 The SHMA broadly reflects the findings of the 2006 Housing Market and Needs Assessment (HMNA) and confirms that the approach taken towards addressing affordability in this policy is appropriate. The HMNA identified a need for 306 affordable units p.a. between 2006-2016 and recommended that at least 30% of the total capacity of all suitable sites should be affordable.

Suitable Mix

14.22 In order to deliver a suitable mix of housing in St.Helens, the policy requires that 70% of additional housing should be provided as market housing. The SHMA identifies that approximately a third of this demand comes from families (31.6%), a third from couples and multi-person households (31.6%), almost a quarter from single households (23.1%) and over an eighth from older people (13.6%). The policy also recognises the importance of providing aspirational market housing to support economic development and regeneration.

14.23 The policy requires that the remaining 30% of additional housing should be provided as Affordable Housing. Whilst there is an identified Borough need for Affordable Housing, the policy takes into account the relative local need in the interests of creating mixed and balanced communities. A local need is interpreted as being the need in a geographical and functionally related group of wards where the site is located, as informed by the most up-to-date SHMA. The policy explains how the evidence about the local need will be applied on sites of varying thresholds

to determine whether Affordable Housing will be provided on or off-site. If there is no identified local need, the policy ensures that a commuted sum will be sought to address the identified Borough need.

14.24 The SHMA identifies that the size and type of Affordable Housing required is predominantly for smaller (1 & 2 bedroom) homes (70-80%), although there is also a significant requirement for larger (3 and 4+ bedroom) homes (20-30%). The Affordable Housing SPD breaks down the 30% Affordable Housing target into appropriate tenures and also includes further details on how Affordable Housing will be secured and delivered.

14.25 The existing housing stock is skewed towards terraced and semi-detached properties, with relatively few flats and detached properties. However, as it is recognised that housing mix will change throughout the plan period, the types of dwellings required above will likely be updated by the next SHMA. Therefore, each application will be considered on its own merits and the composition of the surrounding area will be taken into consideration, alongside the evidence identified in the most up-to-date SHMA.

Economic Viability

14.26 A Housing Viability Study (HVS) (an economic viability assessment of residential development) was undertaken in February 2009 to inform Affordable Housing policies within the LDF. The viability of 20 sites of varying sizes in different areas across the Borough was assessed, taking the 30% Affordable Housing target into consideration.

14.27 The HVS has a base date of April 2008 and assumed that the housing market at the time of study (January/February 2009) was represented by 90% of the market value of April 2008. The HVS also examined the viability at levels of 110% and 120% of April 2008's market value, although it was noted that this situation would be unlikely to occur for at least another 3-4 years from the time of the study.

14.28 Using the 30% Affordable Housing target, as recommended by the HMNA, results indicated that no sites were viable under market conditions at the time of the study (90%) and only 3 sites were viable under the market conditions as of April 2008 (100%). A 10% increase in market prices (110%) provided a remarkably different picture with 14 out of 20 sites being viable or at least marginal, and a 20% increase in market prices (120%) showed that 17 out of 20 sites were viable and some could accommodate a higher Affordable Housing element of 40%.

14.29 Results also highlighted that developer's profits do not appear to be affected by variations in thresholds. Different types of developers take on differing sizes of schemes, so that smaller developments will typically be undertaken by more locally based developers or building companies who will likely have lower overheads compared to the larger national house builders. It further recommended that a threshold of 5 or more dwellings could be applied, although it is unlikely that Registered Providers of Social Housing would be willing to purchase one or two dwellings on a site from a developer, therefore a commuted sum may be a more feasible option on such sites, unless local needs dictate otherwise.

14.30 In addition to the above, a 20% Affordable Housing target was applied to all sites, which demonstrated an improvement in the viability of most sites. However, these improvements were not as significant as those caused by market price changes and the study recommended not reducing the target based on current depressed economic conditions, as the policy covers the entire plan period.

14.31 If a developer considers that the Affordable Housing requirements set out by this policy are not viable on a specific site, then this will need to be justified through an independent financial appraisal. Developers will be expected to fund an independent financial appraisal, undertaken by a consultant appointed by the Council on a retainer contract demonstrating their justification. Further details on how the economic viability of specific sites will be considered are included in the Affordable Housing SPD.

Policy CH 3

Meeting the Needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

The Council will take account of identified needs for permanent pitches for Gypsies and Travellers, together with plots for Travelling Showpeople when determining planning applications for new sites, or the loss of existing sites. The need for allocated sites will be reviewed and if necessary, sites will be identified in the Allocations DPD.

Proposals for sites will need to meet relevant criteria in policies CP 1 and CP 2. Particular emphasis will be placed on ensuring that sites are within a reasonable distance of schools, shops and other facilities, can be accessed by foot, cycle or public transport and can provide safe access to the highway network. Sites for Travelling Showpeople will need to be suitable for maintenance and testing of equipment and must not prejudice the operations of existing employment uses. Conditions and/or section 106 obligations will be used limiting the hours that equipment can be tested and ensuring the long term maintenance of landscaping.

Transit accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers will be provided at a site at Sherdley Road.

Strategic Aims Met:	Strategic Objectives Met:
SA 4	SO 4.1
Key Delivery Items:	
Deliver pitches for Gypsies and Travellers in accordance with identified needs.	

Table 14.4

Purpose

14.32 The policy will contribute towards strategic objective SO 4.1, which seeks to ensure sufficient housing is provided to meet the needs of the whole community.

Justification

14.33 St.Helens has a steadily growing population of Gypsies and Travellers. Age profiles indicate a high level of older children that will be looking to form their own independent households in coming years and indications are that they wish to stay within St.Helens. Parents expect their children to form independent households at around the age of 16-19.

14.34 Existing Council provision currently stands at 29 pitches on private sites with planning permission and 20 on Council owned sites. A further 3 sites, providing approximately 14 pitches, are tolerated but without planning permission.

14.35 St.Helens participated in the Cheshire Partnership Area Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA), which was completed in March 2007. The GTAA recognised the need to provide a variety of transit provision, in order to cater for the variety of needs. Transit sites are intended for short stays, the current lack of provision contributes to a cycle of unauthorised encampments, and additional provision could help prevent such occurrences. St.Helens has secured in excess of £1 million from the Department of Communities and Local Government to develop a short stay site, providing up to 16 pitches.

14.36 The GTAA identified that over the years 2006-2011, within St.Helens, the residential accommodation need would be 17 additional pitches, and a further 14 by 2016. No need for a Travelling Showpeople's site was identified.

14.37 The Government has indicated a commitment to taking steps to resolve some of the long-standing accommodation issues for members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities. Work undertaken to inform the partial review of the North West Regional Spatial Strategy used the figures arising from the GTAA work, together with seeking a more balanced share of meeting need across districts. This work was subject to Examination in Public and, whilst the Panel's report was not issued, it recommended provision of 28 permanent Gypsy and Traveller pitches in St.Helens, together with 5 transit pitches, by 2016. It recommended that the overall provision be increased by 3% annually. The report also endorsed the results of the evidence work with Travelling Showpeople, recommending provision of 6 plots in St.Helens by 2027.

14.38 The current Gypsy and Traveller accommodation pattern within St.Helens does not, however, reflect the level of need identified through these reports. The unauthorised sites, comprising approximately 14 pitches, generate need within the GTAA but are actually tolerated sites, which, by the passage of time, have become exempt from enforcement action. The Council has accepted the principle of the existing land use, consequently their residents will not be seeking accommodation on alternative authorised sites. Vacancies exist on several authorised sites across the Borough, and there was only one unauthorised encampment in the Borough between 2008 and 2011. Given this situation, it is considered that there is no pressing need and the situation should be kept under review to assess the level of provision required within the Borough.

14.39 If necessary, future provision in St.Helens will be brought forward through the Allocations DPD and monitored through Core Output indicator H4. It is considered that the criteria outlined in the policy would be relevant to both Gypsy & Traveller and Travelling Showpeople requirements.

Ensuring a Strong and Sustainable St.Helens Economy



15 Ensuring a Strong and Sustainable St.Helens Economy

Policy CE 1

A Strong and Sustainable Economy

Sufficient land and premises will be provided to strengthen and diversify the Borough's economic base and to support the City Growth Strategy and other economic regeneration and development initiatives through:

1. Providing at least 37 hectares of land to meet local needs for B1, B2 or B8 purposes to 2027. This will be met through:
 - i. The identification of a range of sites within the Allocations DPD;
 - ii. Supporting the reuse, reconfiguration or redevelopment of vacant, derelict, or older employment land and premises for commercial purposes.
2. Supporting the development of a SRFI at Parkside, in line with policy CAS 3.2, to meet a regional or subregional need.
3. A. The reuse, reconfiguration or redevelopment of sites and premises last used for B1, B2 or B8 purposes for B1, B2 or B8 uses will be supported where they have:
 - i. Suitable road access
 - ii. An acceptable impact on neighbouring land uses.

B. Where it is demonstrated that land or premises for B1, B2 or B8 purposes is no longer suitable or economically viable for B1, B2 or B8 use then the site's suitability for other employment generating uses must be considered before non employment generating uses.
4. Focusing economic development to those sites that are either within, in close proximity to, or have easy public transport access to the most deprived areas of the Borough. Where this is not possible then developments will be expected to contribute to improving such links.
5. Supporting the development of sites in the economic land supply through marketing, securing of public funding and the production of development briefs.
6. Encouraging the development of B1 office uses within and adjacent to St.Helens Town Centre through the implementation of the East Side Masterplan and the development of site specific development briefs.

7. Supporting the reuse of suitable buildings in rural areas for appropriate employment uses by favourably considering planning applications proposing suitable rural economic development.
8. Supporting the protection, creation, enhancement and expansion of tourism resources and facilities, by favourably considering appropriate planning applications which support the tourism strategy, including Destination St.Helens.
9. Supporting the creation of and expansion of small businesses.

Strategic Aims Met:	Strategic Objectives Met:
SA 5	SO 5.1, SO 5.2, SO 5.3
Key Delivery Items:	
Provide 37 hectares of land for B1, B2 or B8 purposes by 2027 Development of Parkside Strategic Rail Freight Interchange Adoption of Allocations DPD Implement City Growth Strategy	

Table 15.1

Purpose

15.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure the demand for land for economic development is met in support of Strategic Aim SA 5 and its associated objectives.

Justification

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

15.2 The NPPF states that the Government is committed to securing economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity, building on the country's inherent strengths, and to meeting the twin challenges of global competition and of a low carbon future.

15.3 RSS policy W3, Supply of Employment Land, table 6.1, sets out the provision of employment land from 2005 to 2021 for the region. In the case of the Merseyside subregion it shows a need for 1,728 hectares of land, an increase of 494 hectares from the 2005 base. This increase takes into account an 18.5% projected increase in take-up and a 20% flexibility factor.

Liverpool City Region Overview Study

15.4 The Liverpool City Region (LCR) authorities and neighbouring authorities have appointed consultants to prepare the LCR Overview Study to assess the future housing and employment requirements across the Liverpool City Region. The Overview Study examines each authority's housing and employment land evidence base to identify potential surpluses and deficits that might exist. These are then assessed to identify if the demands of the subregion can be met without the

need to release land from the Green Belt. The Study concluded that whilst St.Helens appeared to have a small surplus of employment land it was unlikely to be suitable for meeting the needs of neighbouring authorities.

City Growth Strategy

15.5 The policy set out in CE 1 will support the aims and objectives of the City Growth Strategy by ensuring there is a range of sites and premises that are deliverable and available to support new business start ups, creative and innovative businesses and the retention of local businesses who are looking to expand.

15.6 The approach set out by the Council was to draw on recent data on the supply of land and premises provided by the St.Helens Employment Land & Premises Study May 2011 to inform the Labour Supply "Local Housing Demand Variant" Scenario. To achieve this URS Scott Wilson and CBRE produced the Review of Employment Land in St.Helens to 2027 (September 2011) which reappraised the Borough's employment land supply and provided commentary on the supply and demand for large scale warehousing and distribution across the North West.

St.Helens Employment Land & Skills Review April 2009

15.7 Consultants were appointed by the Council to carry out an employment land and skills review, which was undertaken in accordance with guidance issued by the Government. Four different scenarios were used to forecast the demand for land up to 2025. The Labour Supply "Local Housing Demand Variant" Scenario has been used because it is considered by the Council as using the best assumptions about growth over the plan period.

15.8 Labour Supply "Local Housing Demand Variant" Scenario looks at forecast housing delivery over the plan period and considers how the Borough's population and workforce might change over the forecast period. The forecast is adjusted to account for development that has already taken place and to include a flexibility factor in order to make provision for unforeseen events and also to account for vacant units which may be present in the Borough.

15.9 The forecast has shown a small level of growth for offices, a decline in demand for industrial premises and high level growth in demand for warehousing and distribution premises.

15.10 Due to a delay in the projected adoption of the Core Strategy, the Labour Supply "Local Housing Demand Variant" Scenario was recalculated in August 2010 in order to extend them to 2027. Further amendments then followed in 2011 taking into account the findings of the Review of Employment Land in St.Helens to 2027. The demand forecast for B8 has been split to reflect the mix of small, medium and large scale industrial/logistics units identified by the Review of Employment Land in St.Helens to 2027. An appropriate employment floorspace density per employee was then applied. The result has been to make the scenario more reflective of the current supply of employment land within the Borough particularly in relation to meeting the needs for warehousing and distribution over the life of the Core Strategy.

Supply of Employment Land

Review of Employment Land in St.Helens to 2027

15.11 Additional work was carried out in August 2011 to reappraise the supply identified in the St.Helens Employment Land & Premises Study May 2011 in order to assess more closely the suitability, deliverability and availability of the supply. This considered the impact of recent development, a market overview for both industrial (B2) and warehousing and distribution (B8) and a reassessment of the assumptions in relation to the likelihood of development. The buildings in the Borough's current overall supply were split into three types:

- Small sized industrial/warehousing and distribution units (1,000 square feet to 15,000 square feet)
- Medium sized industrial/warehousing and distribution units (15,000 square feet to 100,000 square feet)
- Large sized industrial/warehousing and distribution units (100,000 square feet and above)

15.12 Based on the Study published in May 2011, 15% of the current overall supply is large scale B8 warehousing and distribution premises. From the reappraisal a supply of 86.12 hectares was identified. Much of this is considered as being suitable for mixed B2 and B8, which reflects the reality that much of the overall supply is made up of mixed B2/B8 use sites, which are difficult to separate from each other. The supply of land is detailed in Table 15.2 below.

	B1(a) Office (ha)	Small/Medium Scale B2/B8 (ha)	Large Scale B2/B8 (ha)	Total (ha)
Immediately Deliverable in Short Term*	11.15	24.62	10.45	46.22
Potentially Deliverable in Medium/Long Term*	0.00	34.90	5.00	39.90
Total (ha)	11.15	59.52	15.45	86.12
* Study commissioned in 2010 with a Core Strategy end date of 2026 but later changed to 2027				

Table 15.2 Land Supply

15.13 A total of 15.45 hectares of land in St.Helens has been identified as suitable for large scale B2/B8. Of this, 10.45 hectares is considered as immediately deliverable. In addition, 32 hectares of land was identified as potentially being suitable for some form of redevelopment for B8. However, these sites are considered to be "Windfall" with little certainty on when they may come forward. Because of this, they have not been included within the supply identified in the table above but their potential for redevelopment is apparent. Indeed, the Council is aware from pre application discussions that some of these sites may become available in the future. The forecast negative need for B2 industrial supports this further.

15.14 The Review of Employment Land in St.Helens to 2027 has also examined the supply of large scale (100,000 square feet and over) industrial and warehousing sites and premises across the North West. It identified that there is a total of 590 hectares in the North West, of which 273 hectares are immediately deliverable. Based on past take-up this represents an adequate supply in the short to medium term (0-10 years). In the longer term (11-15 years), there is expected to be a shortfall of around 74 hectares.

15.15 A supply of 142 hectares of immediately deliverable land has been identified within neighbouring Boroughs. This is considered sufficient for the short to medium term (0-10 years). There is potential for the proposed development at Parkside to meet some element of demand for regional scale rail linked warehousing. The proposed development at Parkside is not expected to come forward until the latter part of the plan period.

15.16 In order to identify how the Borough can meet the forecast demand the supply is then considered. Information held by the Valuation Office Agency has been used to apportion the mixed B2/B8 supply against individual use classes so they can then be compared against the demand figures produced by the forecast and the balance between the two are then calculated. The balance between supply and demand is shown in table 15.3 below.

Balance of Supply and Demand to 2027					
Use Class	Demand (ha)	Short Term Supply (ha)	Medium/Longer Term Supply (ha)	Total Supply (ha)	Balance* (ha)
B1 Office (2 storey)	(+) 5	10	0	10	(+) 5
B2 Manufacturing	(-) 18	13	15	28	(+) 46
B8 Warehousing	(+) 32	17	20	37	(+) 5
*Includes the following correction factors 20% safety margin (increases demand) 20% to account for growth in 2006 to 2011 (reduces demand) 14% vacancy rate (reduces supply)					

Table 15.3 Balance of Supply and Demand to 2027

15.17 The table above shows a total demand of 37 hectares (for B1, B2 & B8) and a total supply of 75 hectares (for B1, B2 & B8) which consists of a short term supply of 40 hectares and a medium to longer term supply of 35 hectares (for B1, B2 & B8). The table above shows that there is sufficient supply to meet the Borough's local employment land needs over the plan period. This could be supplemented further by around 32 hectares of "Windfall Sites" which have been assessed in terms of their suitability, although no assumptions have been made regarding the proportion which may come forward over the plan period. The Council will continue to monitor the take-up and supply of land to ensure sufficient land is provided to meet the Borough's needs.

15.18 The Council will encourage and support the reuse and redevelopment of employment land and premises to meet the needs of modern business and provide employment for the Borough's residents particularly where there is suitable road access, no negative impacts on neighbouring land uses and they are well linked to the most deprived areas.

15.19 The Council will support the development of suitable employment sites through marketing, securing of public funding where available and the production of site specific development briefs which will provide certainty to developers.

15.20 It is acknowledged that in some instances employment land and premises may no longer be considered suitable or viable for employment purposes and should be considered for other uses. Where the Council considers the site suitable for continued use, reconfiguration or redevelopment but an applicant considers this to be economically unviable, an assessment of economic viability and/or a marketing exercise over a period agreed with the Council would be required. The sites suitability for other employment generating uses should be considered before non employment generating uses.

15.21 St.Helens Town Centre is considered as the most appropriate location for new office development due to its land in the east of the Town Centre covered by the Eastside Masterplan that provides opportunities to deliver office development benefiting from sustainable transport links and proximity to other services and facilities.

15.22 Tourism, leisure and the rural environment all make important contributions to the economy of St.Helens. Appropriate proposals, which expand or enhance these aspects of the economy in St.Helens will be considered favourably.

Safeguarding and Enhancing Quality of Life in St.Helens



16 Safeguarding and Enhancing Quality of Life in St.Helens

16.1 Green Infrastructure is an integrated network of open spaces (including water) within the countryside and urban areas, having a wide range of functions and value, for recreation and tourism, public access, health, education, biodiversity, land and water management, mitigation of climate change, enhancement of the landscape, regeneration and green economic values.

Policy CQL 1

Green Infrastructure

The Council will protect, manage, enhance and where appropriate expand the Green Infrastructure network in the following ways:

1. Identify the network and prepare detailed policies, in the Sustainable Development and Allocations DPDs, for its protection taking account of the standards for open space provision derived from the Open Space Study;
2. Reinforce the protection of greenways and linkages between sites;
3. Support the delivery of programmes and strategies to enhance allotment provision, sports provision and youth and children's play facilities;
4. Promote and improve the accessibility of open space within walking distance of housing, health, employment and education facilities;
5. Require new development to contribute to the expansion and/or improvement of Green Infrastructure in accordance with local circumstances; and
6. Support open space improvements through a programme of Green Flag designation.

Strategic Aims Met:	Strategic Objectives Met:
SA 2, SA 6	SO 2.1, SO 2.2, SO 6.2, SO 6.3
Key Delivery Items: Adoption of Sustainable Development and Allocations DPDs Adoption and implementation of Bold Forest Park AAP Stanley Bank, Carr Mill Dam and Billinge Hill Corridor Restoration to country park of the former Lyme and Wood Pits Sankey Valley Park, between St.Helens and Warrington Restoration of the former Ibstocks Quarry Existing Green Flag designations maintained and new ones achieved Delivery of the Mersey Forest Adoption of Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity SPDs Contribution to the delivery of the North West River Basin Management Plan	

Table 16.1

Purpose

16.2 The policy will contribute to delivering Strategic Aims SA 2 Ensuring Quality Development and SA 6 Safeguarding and Enhancing Quality of Life.

Justification

16.3 Green Infrastructure is the network of green and blue spaces that lie within and between cities, towns and villages, providing multiple social, economic and environmental benefits. Examples include open spaces, rivers and canals, as well as the less obvious examples of street trees and hedgerows.

16.4 The Council's Green Space Strategy, adopted in 2008 following public consultation, recognises the overlapping nature of countryside and open spaces. There are nine key objectives with planning identified as one of the implementation mechanisms.

16.5 In St.Helens it includes the countryside around the towns, which accounts for 50% of the Borough's land area. This is predominantly productive farmland so the approach to its future use will be primarily through liaison and partnership working with key landowners and agents, and the implementation of Green Belt policies. The importance of the countryside around St.Helens was recognised by the pilot study 'Countryside In and Around Towns' undertaken with the Countryside Agency (now Natural England) in 2006.

16.6 Open space forms a part of Green Infrastructure and for the purposes of this policy includes formal intensively managed open space such as parks, sports grounds, amenity green space, play areas, allotments, cemeteries and church yards. It also includes natural and semi-natural open space, which is less intensively managed with more attention given to natural habitats of value to wildlife. Many of these areas form greenway links between the countryside and urban areas. The NPPF states that access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities. The Council commissioned consultants, to undertake a study to examine the provision of open space in the Borough. In accordance with the advice in the NPPF for studies to identify specific needs, surpluses and deficits, the study report (2006) recommends local standards in order to assess provision in the Borough. The standards have been derived following an audit of existing provision and consideration of the local community's view on existing levels of provision and accessibility, which were researched as part of the study. The study has concluded that, overall, there is sufficient quantity of open space, however, there are issues with quality and accessibility. It is, therefore, important that policies make provision for the protection and provision of open space to meet the community's needs and safeguard the visual amenity and character of the built up areas.

16.7 The Council intends to update the Playing Pitch Assessment and Open Space Study and review the recommended local levels of provision in order to inform the Sustainable Development and Allocations DPDs.

Open Space Type	Quantity (ha per 1000 pop)	Accessibility (distance/time)
Parks and gardens	0.8	1.2 km (15 minutes walk)
Natural and semi-natural open space	2.0	1.2 km (15 minutes walk)
Amenity greenspace	1.0	400m (5 minutes walk)
Provision for children and young people	0.1	800m (10 minutes walk)
Outdoor sports facilities	1.68	6 km (15 minutes drive time)
Allotments and community gardens	0.1	1.2 km (15 minutes walk)

Table 16.2 Standards for Open Space Provision (Source: St.Helens Open Space Study 2006)

16.8 The 1998 UDP identified a strategic network of greenways linking open spaces along the major linear features of the Borough, such as river valleys, canal systems and disused railway lines. These continue to be an important asset of the Green Infrastructure network. The Sankey Valley Park has been confirmed as an important link between St.Helens and Warrington, providing access to open countryside for residential areas. The 1998 UDP identified Sites of Community Wildlife Interest (now known as Local Wildlife Sites) and Local Nature Reserves. In addition to their importance for wildlife, these sites form an essential part of the Green Infrastructure network for the Borough and wider subregion.

16.9 Improvements to the Green Infrastructure network are being pursued through a number of programmes and strategies including:

- Community Green Space Strategy, February 2008
- Policy for Nature, March 2006
- Playing Pitch Strategy, August 2002 (and any subsequent update)
- Liverpool City Region Ecological Framework

16.10 The local authority has been active in creating new areas of open space and promoting their positive use. The following areas will be significant priorities for action and are described in more detail in the spatial policies:

- The Bold Forest Park, South St.Helens mainly through Bold and Sutton
- Stanley Bank, Carr Mill Dam and Billinge Hill Corridor
- Restoration to country park of the former Lyme and Wood pits
- Sankey Valley Park, between St.Helens and Warrington
- The former Ibstocks Quarry

16.11 The Water Framework Directive provides the mechanism to return all surface water bodies to Good Ecological Status or Good Ecological Potential. In St.Helens this is being implemented via the North West River Basin Management Plan. This sets out a number of objectives and actions to alleviate pressures on surface water bodies.

Policy CQL 2

Trees and Woodlands

The multi-purpose value of trees, woodlands and hedgerows will be protected and enhanced by:

1. Requiring developers to plant new trees, woodlands and hedgerows on appropriate sites or contribute to off site provision and elsewhere support new planting;
2. Conserving, enhancing and managing existing trees, woodlands and hedgerows;
3. Requiring absolute protection for all ancient woodland within the Borough;
4. Ensuring that development does not damage or destroy any tree subjected to a Tree Preservation Order, any other protected tree, any other tree of value including veteran trees, or hedgerow unless it can be justified for good arboricultural reasons or there is a clearly demonstrated public benefit, which outweighs the value of the tree(s) and/or hedgerow(s). Where trees are justifiably lost the replacement of trees will be required on at least a 2 for 1 ratio;
5. Supporting proposals, which assist in the positive use of woodlands for green infrastructure purposes including recreation, education, health, biodiversity, geological conservation, tourism and economic regeneration; and
6. Implementing the Town in the Forest Initiative, Mersey Forest Plan and Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan.

Strategic Aims Met:	Strategic Objectives Met:
SA 6	SO 6.2, SO 6.3
Key Delivery Items:	
Adoption of Sustainable Development, Allocations DPD and Proposals Map	
Implementation of Trees and Development and Biodiversity SPDs and Community Infrastructure Levy	
Adoption of and implementation of Bold Forest Park AAP	
Delivery of Mersey Forest	

Table 16.3

Purpose

16.12 Trees and woodlands are integral in creating places with a sense of character and local distinctiveness as well as providing wider benefits for a variety of functions including biodiversity, mitigating against climate change, increasing ecological networks all in line with Strategic Objectives SO 6.2 and 6.3.

Justification

16.13 Trees and woodlands are an integral component of Green Infrastructure forming part of the network of natural habitats and improving the visual appearance of the countryside and urban areas and providing opportunities for the positive use of the Green Infrastructure for climate change, recreation, education, health, biodiversity, regeneration and mitigation of environmental processes such as air pollution, water retention and run-off, which is consistent with the Regional Forestry Framework Woodland Strategy, St.Helens Landscape Character Assessment, North Merseyside Biodiversity Action Plan and targets, Town in the Forest Initiative and Policy for Nature St.Helens.

16.14 Trees are an important part of our environment and their successful retention in new developments is for the benefit of the whole community. The successful retention of healthy trees and planting of new trees as part of a new development can have numerous benefits.

16.15 Trees can:

- Enhance the landscape character of an area
- Be a vital component of our Green Infrastructure
- Help to create a more positive image of an area and so help to encourage economic regeneration and inward investment
- Soften and screen buildings
- Enhance property prices (property prices in tree-lined streets can be worth 18% more than in similar streets without trees)
- Provide a vital role in biodiversity and the urban ecosystem by helping to support a great variety of wildlife
- Save up to 10% of energy consumption through their moderation of the local climate
- Produce oxygen and help to lock up carbon emissions that contribute to global warming
- Help to stabilise ground
- Absorb water, control run-off and so help reduce flood risk
- Reduce noise by acting as a sound barrier
- Help to filter out pollution
- Provide shade
- Help alleviate the effects of extreme temperature and help to filter out harmful ultra violet radiation
- Help to improve mental well being and reduce the stress of urban living

16.16 St.Helens has been a partner in The Mersey Forest (1 of 12 Community Forests) since its inception in 1994. Since then, the area of new habitat or woodland has increased by 3,750 hectares (at least 300 hectares have been created in St.Helens through Wasteland to Woodland) and the longer term objective is to create 8,000 hectares.

16.17 Woodlands have a wide range of benefits recognised in both the Mersey Forest Plan and the North West Regional Forestry Framework. Of particular significance in St.Helens is the contribution to urban regeneration. The LDF will be instrumental in delivering the St.Helens Woodland Strategy, which in turn, was prepared in response to the City Growth Strategy objective of creating the 'Town in the Forest'.

16.18 The North West Regional Forestry Framework is part of a wider national agenda on the protection, conservation and management of trees and woodlands across the UK. The Framework recognises the diverse, habitat rich and thriving 'green tourism' opportunities of our current trees and woodlands and sets out 'An Agenda for Growth' to help shape the woodland and forestry sector over the next 20 years.

16.19 Town in the Forest (2006) recognises the importance of St.Helens undergoing an urban renaissance and utilising the urban fringe as a mechanism for urban renewal, through the development of linear forests in urban areas and connecting to community woodlands on the periphery.

16.20 All trees have a potential value to the character and amenity of the area. While particularly important trees will continue to be protected by Tree Preservation Orders, the policies will recognise that other trees affected by development should be identified, safeguarded, and where necessary, replaced.

16.21 Biodiversity Action Plans are crucial tools in the protection, conservation, enhancement and management of habitats and species throughout the UK. Currently a hierarchy of Biodiversity Action Plans exist ranging from the UK, through regional, subregional and finally on a local level. The UK Biodiversity Action Plan is the Government's response to the Convention on Biological Diversity signed in 1992 and recognises the UK's existing biological resource at the same time as developing a wide range of species and habitat plans. The North Merseyside Biodiversity Action Plan develops area-specific action plans and concentrates resources on developing and managing habitats and species native to the specific areas and offers guidance on a local level.

16.22 Policy for Nature: St.Helens Local Biodiversity Action Plan (March 2006), is the third biodiversity action plan for St.Helens and aims to work with the community to encourage wildlife by protecting and enhancing habitats and species, raising awareness, managing land positively for biodiversity, managing harmful exotic species and encouraging greater training opportunities.

16.23 St.Helens Landscape Character Assessment (2006) identifies and evaluates the character of areas throughout the Borough and provides a set of broad objectives and constraints to inform future development within the Borough.

Policy CQL 3

Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

The Council will protect and manage species and habitats, as well as enhancing and creating habitats and linkages between them by:

1. Identifying the location of sites of importance for biodiversity and geological conservation differentiating between SSSIs, Local Nature Reserves, Ancient Woodlands, Local Wildlife and Geological Sites through the Allocations DPD and AAPs and bringing sites into active conservation management;
2. Ensuring the creation, extension and better management of Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats, including the further designation of Local Nature Reserves;

3. Requiring developers, where appropriate, to incorporate habitat features, which will contribute to the Borough's ecological and geological resource;
4. Requiring that, where harm to protected species or habitats is unavoidable, that developers ensure suitable mitigation measures are implemented to enhance or recreate the features, either on or off-site and bring sites into positive conservation management;
5. Reducing habitat and species fragmentation by developing a functioning ecological framework for the Borough;
6. Requiring all development proposals to be based on ecological assessments, where appropriate, including where sites are derelict, vacant or previously developed land. Surveys must be undertaken at appropriate times of year for the relevant habitats, species, flora and fauna; and
7. Ensuring that any development affecting nationally and locally important sites and protected species will only be acceptable if there is clear evidence that the development outweighs the nature conservation interest.

Strategic Aims Met:	Strategic Objectives Met:
SA 6	SO 6.2, SO 6.3
Key Delivery Items:	
Adoption of Sustainable Development and Allocations DPDs and AAPs Adoption of Biodiversity SPD Adoption of Green Infrastructure SPD Implementation of Biodiversity Action Plan	

Table 16.4

Purpose

16.24 The policy will contribute to the delivery of Strategic Aim SA 6 'Safeguarding and Enhancing Quality of Life in St.Helens' with particular reference to Strategic Objectives SO 6.2 and 6.3.

Justification

16.25 Biodiversity is an essential part of the Earth's life support system. It supports many basic natural services for human life such as fertile soil, clean air and food provision. It also directly contributes to the quality of life. Planning has a role to play in protecting biodiversity and the Core Strategy is consistent with guidance in the NPPF.

16.26 The UK Biodiversity Action Plan highlights the contribution which wildlife habitats in towns and cities make to the quality of life. This is further emphasised at the local level in the North Merseyside Biodiversity Action Plan.

16.27 In St.Helens the importance and value of biodiversity is reflected in the Policy for Nature which is structured around five objectives:

- Habitats and species, protection and enhancement

- Raising awareness and improving accessibility to nature
- Site management
- Exotic species control
- Training and awareness

16.28 The protection of important sites including SSSIs, Local Nature Reserves, Ancient Woodlands and Local Wildlife and Geological Sites will be addressed in the Sustainable Development and Allocations DPDs as well as the Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure SPDs. The existing Greenway network identified in the St.Helens UDP will be reviewed as part of the Allocations DPD process.

16.29 An Ecological Framework is a strategy that reduces habitat fragmentation and isolation of species. It includes a map-based element which identifies core biodiversity assets, the connectivity between them and potential opportunities for habitat enhancement and expansion. The Ecological Framework will be delivered through contributions from developments and a broad range of projects and initiatives including the 'Forever Meadows Project', 'North West Lowlands Water Vole Project' and the 'Brown Hares' Initiative'. The adopted Biodiversity SPD provides further details on the purpose and extent of an Ecological Framework, as well as detail on links to Green Infrastructure, invasive species control, conservation management and when an ecological assessment is necessary.

16.30 The policy recognises that all development has the potential to affect biodiversity and that site survey, mitigation and compensation will feature in the processing of planning applications.

16.31 Geology remains an important focus of the policy and Local Geological Sites (LGS) (formerly known as Regionally Important Geology Sites (RIGS)) will be identified through the Allocations DPD and AAPs and fully considered through the planning process, as appropriate. There are currently 11 LGS in St.Helens as identified through the established Merseyside Local Sites Partnership group which are:

- Windlehurst Quarry
- Crank Caverns
- Wargrave Quarry
- Taylor Park
- Carr Mill Dam
- Billinge Plantations
- Billinge Quarry
- Shaley Brow Quarry
- Brook 150m ENE of Houghwood Golf Course
- Brook 130m NE of Houghwood Golf Course
- Clinkham Wood North, Moss Bank

Policy CQL 4

Heritage and Landscape

The Council will protect, conserve, preserve and enhance St.Helens historic built environment and landscape character including designated and undesignated heritage assets such as Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Registered Parks and Gardens, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, archaeological sites and buildings and structures of local interest by:

1. Protecting landscape character as well as important urban open space from development which would harm these assets;
2. Enhancing the value of St.Helens' historic built environment and landscape character by implementing Conservation Area Management Plans, education, interpretation and public access measures;
3. Ensuring all new development respects the significance and distinctive quality of the built and historic environment and landscape character and is of a high standard of design, reinforcing St.Helens' local distinctiveness; and
4. Ensuring that all development is located and designed in a way that is sensitive to its historic landscape and setting and retains or enhances the character and context.

Strategic Aims Met:	Strategic Objectives Met:
SA 6	SO 6.2, SO 6.3
Key Delivery Items:	
Adoption of St.Helens List of Locally Important Buildings SPD Completion of Conservation Area Appraisals Implementation of Conservation Area Management Plans Implementation of Article 4 Directions Implementation of grant schemes	

Table 16.5

Purpose

16.32 The above policy contributes to achieving Strategic Aim SA 6 'Safeguarding and Enhancing Quality of Life' with particular reference to Strategic Objectives 6.2 and 6.3.

Justification

16.33 St.Helens' historic built environment is an important asset of local, regional and in some instances, national significance. The NPPF requires the appropriate conservation of designated and undesignated heritage assets. "Designated heritage assets" include Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Scheduled Ancient Monuments and archaeological sites. However, in addition

to nationally important buildings and areas of architectural or historic interest, there are heritage assets identified by the local planning authority as buildings or structures of local interest. These buildings and structures make a valuable contribution to the distinctiveness of the Borough.

16.34 The policy is consistent with the NPPF which places emphasis on identifying and protecting the significance of heritage assets. Significance is defined as the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest, which may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic.

16.35 Accordingly, all new development should be based on a thorough understanding of the context, significance and distinctiveness of its site and surroundings and should be of high quality in terms of its urban, landscape and architectural design and materials.

16.36 A series of criteria policies in the Sustainable Development DPD will set out the detailed requirements for considering proposals for development in order to secure high quality, sustainable development.

16.37 St.Helens has ten Conservation Areas which have undergone character appraisal and all have Conservation Area Management Plans in place.

16.38 As well as designated heritage assets the Council has also prepared St.Helens List of Locally Important Buildings SPD to offer additional guidance and protection to buildings and structures within the Borough. They are identified as locally distinctive, enhancing the environment.

Policy CQL 5

Social Infrastructure

Social Infrastructure including health, education, neighbourhood retail or leisure, built sports, cultural, emergency service and community facilities and institutions will be protected, provided and enhanced to support sustainable communities by:

1. Protecting existing facilities from their loss where there is an identified need⁽¹⁾;
2. Supporting improvements to provision where there is an identified need;
3. Safeguarding and allocating sites where there is an identified, planned provision;
4. Where appropriate, secure developer contributions to enhance provision of social infrastructure; and
5. Requiring new Social Infrastructure to be located in sustainable locations, and where possible be clustered with other facilities.

Strategic Aims Met:	Strategic Objectives Met:
SA 2, SA 6	SO 2.3, SO 6.1

¹ The requirement for an identified need to be demonstrated does not apply to built sports facilities, which are afforded a higher degree of protection by national planning policy

Strategic Aims Met:	Strategic Objectives Met:
Key Delivery Items:	
Implementation of Building Schools for the Future Implementation of Primary Capital Strategy Implementation of the PCT's SSDP Completion of the redevelopment of St.Helens College	

Table 16.6

Purpose

16.39 The policy meets the Strategic Aims SA 2 and SA 6 with particular reference to Strategic Objectives SO 2.3 and 6.1.

Justification

16.40 The policy is consistent with National policy.

16.41 "Social Infrastructure" covers a wide range of social and community facilities. For the purposes of policy CQL 5 this includes:

- Health - primary, acute, independent
- Education - early years, primary and secondary schools, further education
- Cultural and community facilities - indoor sports facilities, libraries, community centres, arts and performance, social clubs
- Neighbourhood retail - corner shops, post offices
- Emergency services - Police, Fire & Rescue, Ambulance
- Other uses exhibiting similar characteristics could be included

16.42 The provision of adequate Social Infrastructure is essential to maintain a sustainable community and improve quality of life. The development of sustainable communities is central to Government policy and the St.Helens Plan.

16.43 Accessibility to facilities is critical to their utilisation and the grouping of facilities together in town, district or local centres should be aimed for. The importance of district and local centres and the grouping of facilities in these areas was recognised in the Local Centres Study (2006). In terms of retail or leisure, this policy only applies to those of a small scale below local centres.

16.44 The Issues and Options questionnaire response strongly supported the LDF adopting a positive approach to PCT developments and the grouping of health facilities with other community needs.

16.45 Building Schools for the Future (BSF), was the biggest ever school buildings investment programme. The aim was to rebuild or renew nearly every secondary school in England. BSF represented a new approach to capital investment, bringing together significant investment in buildings and in Information and Communications Technology (ICT). The number of schools to be developed has been significantly reduced by the Coalition Government. However, schemes at Rainford High and De La Salle have had funding confirmed and are under construction. Sutton

High secured Academy status in 2010 and improvements are currently at the planning stage. Improvements have also been undertaken to several primary schools using funding secured through Primary Capital Strategy, until funding was withdrawn in August 2011. Planned improvements will be completed using other funding streams. The principle of supporting opportunities to replace outdated schools will be supported by the Core Strategy.

16.46 Built sports facilities are given a higher degree of protection by national policy than the wording in CQL 5 point 1. National planning policy states that open space, sports and recreational buildings should not be built on unless an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown that they are surplus to requirements. The St.Helens Indoor Sport and Leisure Strategy, completed in 2010, considered Council and school leisure facilities including sports halls, swimming pools, health and fitness provision and synthetic turf provision. This and future updates will be used to inform decisions regarding the need for facilities and inform the Allocations DPD, Sustainable Development DPD and if necessary, the Community Infrastructure Levy.

Minerals and Waste



17 Minerals and Waste

Policy CR 1

Minerals

1. The Council will seek to achieve a steady and adequate supply of minerals to ensure that the Borough contributes towards meeting the region's identified needs. Proposals for the exploration and extraction of minerals, coalbed methane and coal mine methane will be considered against national and regional guidance, together with criteria set out in the Sustainable Development DPD, to ensure it would be acceptable in terms of impact on:
 - i. Dwellings, schools, offices, care homes or other sensitive uses;
 - ii. The built or natural environment; or
 - iii. The highway network.
2. Mineral Safeguarding Areas will be identified around deposits of coal, brick clay and sandstone, considered to be of current or future economic importance.
3. The Council will encourage the use of substitute, secondary or recycled sources, in preference to primary land-won aggregates, by encouraging temporary materials-recycling facilities on the sites of major demolition or construction projects and encouraging provision of permanent recycling plants for construction and demolition waste in appropriate locations.

Strategic Aims Met:	Strategic Objectives Met:
SA 7	SO 7.1
Key Delivery Items	
Adoption of Sustainable Development and Allocations DPDs and AAPs	

Table 17.1

Purpose

17.1 To ensure that valuable resources within the Borough are safeguarded or used in a sustainable manner.

Justification

17.2 St.Helens is a Unitary Authority and therefore has the statutory duties of a Minerals Planning Authority. As such it is required to put in place evidence-based minerals policies within its emerging LDF.

17.3 St.Helens has been a significant producer of minerals in the past, including the extraction of coal (both deep-mined and open cast), clay, sandstone and sand and gravel. However, although significant reserves of these minerals remain, activity has recently declined to the point that there is only one active extractive operation – Bold Heath Quarry (sand and crushed sandstone) – in the Borough. The level of future interest in exploiting the Borough's aggregate and minerals resources is uncertain, although there have been recent applications to undertake open cast coal extraction (unsuccessful) and to generate power from methane gas emitted by abandoned coal workings (permitted but not implemented).

17.4 Mineral resources are finite and are likely to be lost when building or other forms of development takes place. Resources which are scarce or economically important should therefore be safeguarded from sterilisation. Where development is inevitable, the prior extraction of resources will be encouraged, where this is feasible in terms of size and location, and subject to compliance with the other plan policies and proposals. Prior extraction of mineral resources can also have the benefit of removing land instability issues on certain sites.

17.5 The evidence base for aggregates and minerals planning are: (i) the resource maps prepared by British Geological Survey (BGS) in 2006; (ii) surface coal resource plans prepared by the Coal Authority in 2009; and (iii) Mineral Planning on Merseyside 2008.

17.6 Whilst the BGS data does provide a partial evidence base, St.Helens along with the other Merseyside Districts recognised that the evidence base was not sufficiently comprehensive or up-to-date to support this process. In order to remedy this information gap, a study was undertaken to:

- Identify Merseyside's potentially viable mineral deposits and related infrastructure and indicate where the exploitation of deposits is constrained by development, or other environmental or planning policy reasons
- Identify potential areas where mineral safeguarding policies could be applied, with appropriate justification
- Gauge the likely commercial interest in exploiting the identified mineral resources and related infrastructure in the period to 2020
- Provide advice on the most appropriate mechanism to deliver aggregate and minerals policy

17.7 National policy guidance requires mineral resources that are, or may become, of economic importance to be safeguarded, by including them in a mineral safeguarding area (MSA). The presence of a MSA does not in itself preclude other forms of development. Its purpose is to alert prospective developers to the existence of mineral resources, so that they can be taken into account at the earliest possible stage of development proposals.

17.8 The starting point for the identification of MSAs is the BGS maps⁽¹⁾, supplemented by the Coal Authority's surface coal resource maps. Guidance on how to define MSAs is contained in 'A guide to mineral safeguarding in England' (BGS 2007). Further work is needed to define the extent of the MSAs. An assessment of the extent and potential viability of each mineral will be undertaken. This could result in an extended or reduced resource boundary, to take account of possible sterilisation from proximal development, or to eliminate those areas where extraction

1 Digital Geological Map of Great Britain.

would not be appropriate. MSAs will be identified in the Allocations DPD and shown on the Proposals Map. Criteria which will apply in designated MSAs will also be included in the Sustainable Development DPD.

17.9 The Merseyside Study identified that there is a sufficient landbank of aggregates to meet short term requirements, though alternatives to existing reserves will be needed in the long term.

17.10 The minimum required landbank for aggregates is 7 years. The subregional landbank for aggregates is estimated as 12.18 years. Whilst, it is not possible to say what St.Helens, or even the Merseyside subregion, contribute to this estimate, due to commercial confidentiality, the sub-area apportionment of North West aggregate production is likely to be met for the period up to 2018, and there is no requirement to identify further reserves at present.

17.11 Policies for minerals working will be developed in the Sustainable Development DPD. Prior to the adoption of the Sustainable Development DPD, considerable weight should be placed on more recent national and regional minerals planning policy and saved policies from St.Helens UDP, to determine any minerals planning applications or to inform decisions relating to minerals sterilisation and safeguarding. The Sustainable Development DPD will include policies to:

- Manage applications for mineral extraction on sites which have not been identified for potential mineral development
- Manage the prior extraction of minerals on proposed development within MSAs
- Ensure sustainable transportation of minerals
- Ensure restoration and aftercare of minerals sites
- Enable the production of recycled aggregates

17.12 Where planning permission is granted for mineral extraction, the Council will expect that all minerals with an economic value within the approved site are exploited.

Policy CR 2

Waste

The Council will promote sustainable waste management in accordance with the waste hierarchy, work with other Merseyside and Halton authorities (through the preparation of the Merseyside and Halton Joint Waste DPD) to:

1. Assist in the implementation of a resource recovery-led strategy for sustainable waste management;
2. Identify and safeguard (where appropriate) waste management sites in appropriate locations for waste purposes only;
3. Ensure that the Borough makes its contribution towards meeting the identified subregional waste management needs;
4. Encourage good design in new development in order to minimise waste and promote the use of recycled materials, and to facilitate the collection and recycling of waste;

5. Encourage the sustainable transport of waste and promote use of site waste management plans; and
6. Ensure that waste management facilities are developed whilst minimising the impacts on the environment and communities of the Borough.

Strategic Aims Met:	Strategic Objectives Met:
SA 7	SO 7.1
Key Delivery Items:	
Adoption of Allocations DPD and AAPs	
Adoption of Waste DPD	
New Resource Recovery Contract Operational	

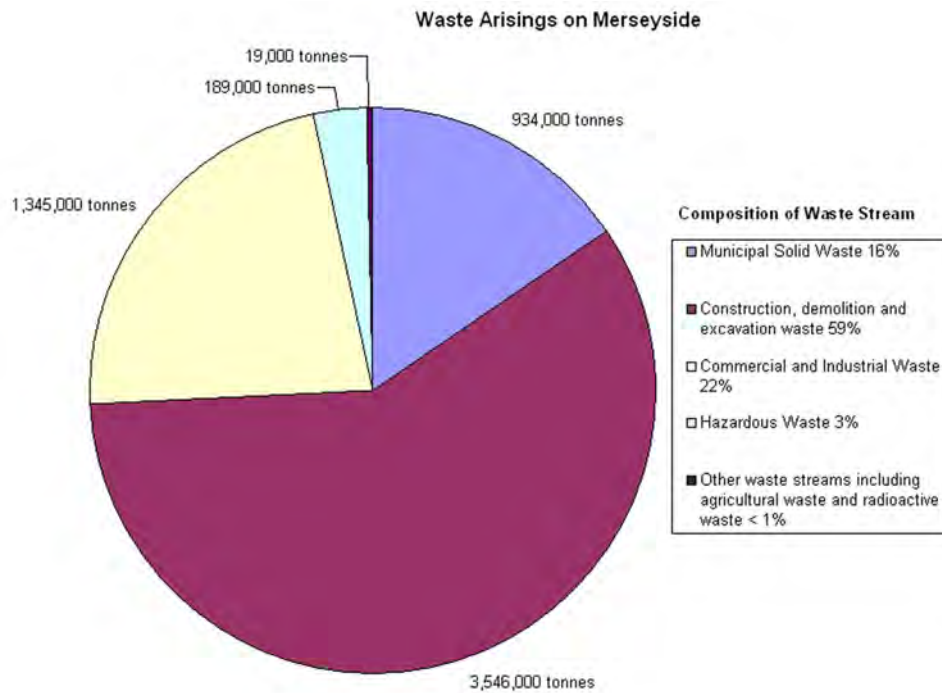
Table 17.2

Purpose

17.13 To ensure that St.Helens is as sustainable and self sufficient as possible in terms of waste management.

Justification

17.14 European legislation, Government targets, increasing waste generation, the need for improved environmental protection and rising public expectations all drive the need for rapid changes in our approach to managing waste. In particular, Merseyside needs to reduce its reliance on landfill by providing alternative facilities for recycling, reprocessing, treatment and disposal. Merseyside is a significant producer of waste. The latest figures for waste arisings on Merseyside are:



17.15 Agreement has been reached, across the authorities of Merseyside and Halton to prepare a joint DPD, the Merseyside and Halton Joint Waste Development Plan Document (Waste DPD). The proposed Waste DPD is Merseyside's preferred approach to implementing the principles of sustainable waste management for all waste streams.

17.16 The Waste DPD will ensure the right mixes of sites are identified, to maximise the potential for driving waste up the hierarchy. Whilst there is significant uncertainty in future trends in waste arisings in Merseyside, it is clear that significant investment will be required in new sustainable waste management facilities for all waste streams, because landfill is the waste disposal option of last resort.

17.17 It is intended to adopt the joint Waste DPD by November 2012. A Spatial Strategy and Sites Report was prepared outlining the various strategies available and recommending a Subregional Sites-based Spatial Strategy. The report included the best performing sites identified through a criteria based methodology. Consultation on the Spatial Strategy and Sites Report, fed into the Preferred Options Report. The preferred spatial strategy is a resource recovery-led strategy which aims to maximise the ability to achieve self-sufficiency in waste management. Consultation on the Preferred Options Report was undertaken May-July 2010, and a further consultation period on four replacement sites, Preferred Options 2, was completed in June 2011. The results of these consultations fed into a Publication Draft Waste DPD, issued late 2011. Phasing of the preparation of the Waste DPD will help to reduce planning and procurement risk to the implementation of the Merseyside Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS).

Appendix 1: Delivery and Monitoring Strategy

1 Appendix 1: Delivery and Monitoring Strategy

1.1 The role of this appendix is to supplement the St.Helens Local Development Framework Core Strategy by expanding on how we will deliver the items in the Core Strategy and how we will monitor the Core Strategy's performance. The Delivery and Monitoring Strategy (DMS) will serve both as an "action plan" but also as a monitoring tool which will be updated through the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR).

1.2 The DMS mirrors the structure of the Core Strategy. The following chapters are divided by using the Key Aims of the Core Strategy and highlight the key tasks and key indicators that will allow us to assess performance against meeting those aims. The tables are laid out as follows:

Key Delivery Items				
Item	Cost and Funding	Who	Delivery	Time Frame
This identifies the particular project or action	This identifies the cost of the item (where appropriate) and the sources of funding	This identifies who is responsible for delivery	This outlines the current stage of the item and future stages	This shows the completion date

Table 1.1

Targets and Indicators			
Item	Baseline	Target	How
This identifies the particular target or indicator	This identifies the latest data we have for this indicator	This identifies the target for the plan period or per annum	This identifies how we will report progress or collect data

Table 1.2

1.3 We will monitor all of the items in the DMS every year through the AMR. The AMR is a statutory requirement and looks at performance for the period April to March every year and is issued by the end of December in each year.

CSD 1 National Planning Policy Framework - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Key Delivery Items				
Item	Cost and Funding	Who	Delivery	Time Frame
Determination of planning applications in line with planning policies	St.Helens Council (STHMBC)	STHMBC	Ongoing	Ongoing
Adoption of Sustainable Development and Allocations DPDs	LDF Budget	STHMBC	As per latest LDS	Adoption mid 2015

Key Delivery Items				
Item	Cost and Funding	Who	Delivery	Time Frame
Adoption of a suite of SPDs and Development Briefs	LDF Budget	STHMBC	As per latest LDS	Adopted by various dates

Table 1.3

Targets and Indicators			
Item	Baseline	Target	How
Percentage of major planning applications determined within 13 weeks	2011/12: 77.42%	As per latest St.Helens Performance Indicator Target, was 71% for 2011/12	AMR
Percentage of minor planning applications determined within 8 weeks	2011/12: 94.58%	As per latest St.Helens Performance Indicator Target, was 88% for 2011/12	AMR
Percentage of other planning applications determined within 8 weeks	2011/12: 96.85%	As per latest St.Helens Performance Indicator Target, was 95% for 2011/12	AMR
Percentage of appeals allowed against the authority's decision to refuse planning applications	2011/12: 18%	As per latest St.Helens Performance Indicator Target, was 30% for 2011/12	AMR

Table 1.4

SA 1 Regenerating St.Helens

Objective: SO 1.1: To secure the regeneration of the Borough by: steady, sustainable population growth; reducing deprivation through direct development and investment where it is most needed; and by giving priority to development of derelict and vacant sites

CSS 1 Overall Spatial Strategy

Key Delivery Items				
Item	Cost and Funding	Who	Delivery	Time Frame
Adoption of Sustainable Development DPD	LDF Budget	STH-MBC	As per latest LDS	Adopted by mid 2015
Adoption of Allocations DPD	LDF Budget	STH-MBC	As per latest LDS	Adopted by mid 2015
Subregional work to consider need to review Green Belt to meet development needs	LDF Budget	STH-MBC	To be agreed	By end of 2012
Discuss and where possible agree with neighbouring authorities an approach to meeting development needs with or without releasing Green Belt	LDF Budget	STH-MBC	To be agreed	By mid 2013
Adoption of a suite of SPDs	LDF Budget	STH-MBC	As per latest LDS	Adopted by various dates
Implementation of Core Strategy Policies CAS 1 to CAS 5	See tables below	See tables below	See tables below	2027

Table 1.5

Targets and Indicators			
Item	Baseline	Target	How
Distribution of Residential Development up to 2023/24	2009 Annual Monitoring Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 69% St.Helens 23% Newton-le-Willows and Earlestown 4% Haydock and Blackbrook 3% Rural St.Helens 	AMR; Housing Land Position Statement; Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

Table 1.6

CAS 1 St.Helens Core Area

Key Delivery Items				
Item	Cost and Funding	Who	Delivery	Time Frame
Development of Lea Green Urban Village	Private developers funds	Morris Homes, St.Modwen	There are 3 principle developers of the Urban Village across four identified phases - Morris Homes, St.Modwen and Mersey Investments. Outline planning consent exists for the development of a maximum of	A maximum of 725 units by 2027

Key Delivery Items				
Item	Cost and Funding	Who	Delivery	Time Frame
		and Mersey Investments	550 units within phases 1 and 2. Morris Homes are actively developing within phase 1 and as of April 2011, 130 units have been completed of the 349 intended within this phase. St.Modwen have reserved matters approval for 152 houses within phase 2 and Mersey Investments have approval for 48 units in phase 3. A fourth phase is identified in the SHLAA for 135 units but a lower number circa 116 units is expected to be developed, subject to the granting of planning permission. On the basis of the development thus far and the most recent information, it is anticipated that the completed Urban Village will be in the region of 665 houses and apartments over the four phases	
Development of Moss Nook Urban Village	Private developers funds	H J Banks	Amended planning permission in outline exists for the development of 900 units. H J Banks have remediated phase 1 and excavated drains. Works on site, however, are currently suspended	900 by 2031
Development of Lea Green Farm East and West Economic Sites	Lea Green East £45m Private Sector	Langtree and other Private Developers	Phase 1 of Mere Grange complete. Lea Green West phase 1 offices have been completed and spine road installed	19.5ha by 2015
Restore and enhance former quarries and develop a Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan	£200-400K	Mersey Forest; North West Development Agency; Ibstock Brick Ltd; Forestry Commission; Cory Environmental	Forest Section complete 2010 Phase 2 restoration commenced 2011	2014
New Railway Station at Carr Mill	£6m from LTP and Developer	Merseytravel	Included in LTP and development brief for adjacent site, including station site, now adopted by Council. Discussions ongoing between land owners and developer of site	2024 (subject to land ownership issues and funding)

Key Delivery Items				
Item	Cost and Funding	Who	Delivery	Time Frame
Enhanced Park and Ride Facilities at St.Helens Junction Station	Developer contributions	Merseytravel with support from STHMBC	Design stage commenced 2009	2015

Table 1.7

CAS 2 St.Helens Central Spatial Area

Key Delivery Items				
Item	Cost and Funding	Who	Delivery	Time Frame
Develop new stadium for St.Helens RFC	£75m secured	St.Helens RFC; Langtree; Tesco; NWDA; Private Developers with support from STHMBC	Stadium and foodstore due to be completed by end of 2011	2012
Relocate existing Tesco foodstore				
Develop at least 20,000m ² of net additional comparison retail floor space	TBA Private sector	Spenhill Developments with support from STHMBC	Site became available following the relocation of the Tesco store in late 2011	2015
St.Helens Central Spatial Area Action Plan Adopted	LDF Budget	STHMBC	Initial issues and stakeholder involvement 2012	Preparation to commence following adoption of Allocations and Sustainable Development DPDs
Complete redevelopment of St.Helens College	£60 million secured from Learning and Skills Council	St.Helens College	Completed entire scheme: 17,500m ² of teaching buildings	Completed 2011

Table 1.8

Targets and Indicators			
Item	Baseline	Target	How
BD4 - Total amount of floorspace for town centre uses	2008 = 7,448m ²	20,000m ² cumulative	STHMBC through AMR

Town centre ground floor vacancy rates	2008 = 10.27%	Maintain below GB average	STHMBC through Health Check
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Table 1.9

CAS 3.1 Newton-le-Willows and Earlestown Strategy

Key Delivery Items				
Item	Cost and Funding	Who	Delivery	Time Frame
Development of Vulcan Urban Village	Private developers funds	Private Developers with support from STHMBC	Infrastructure requirements have already been implemented in early site works. Planning permission in outline for 630 units exists on the site. Construction of the first phase (138 homes) by Jones Homes is underway and the first units will be completed in 2011/12	630 houses completed by 2021
Adoption of Earlestown Town Centre AAP	STHMBC Staff Time and LDF Budget	STHMBC	Preparation to begin 2011	Preparation to commence following adoption of Allocations and Sustainable Development DPDs
Adoption of Sustainable Development and Allocations DPDs	LDF Budget	STHMBC	As per latest LDS	Adoption mid 2015
Implementation of Hope Academy	£30.2m BSF Funding Secured	Liverpool Hope University; Catholic Archdiocese of Liverpool; Liverpool Anglican Diocese; STHMBC	Completed 2011	New Academy delivered in 2011
Implementation of a Park and Ride facility at Newton-le-Willows Station	£15 million from LTP	North West Operational Programme; Network Rail; Merseytravel; RFA2	Phase 1 - Planning permission granted for car park element	Phase 1 - operational late-2011
			Phase 2 - car park extension and bus interchange currently in discussions with various agents and land owners	Phase 2 - post 2011

Table 1.10

Targets and Indicators			
Item	Baseline	Target	How

Proportion of vacant units in Earlestown Town Centre	Earlestown Town Centre Health Check July 2009 - 16%	Reduce Annually	AMR
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Table 1.11

CAS 3.2 Development of a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange at the Former Parkside Colliery

Key Delivery Items				
Item	Cost and Funding	Who	Delivery	Time Frame
Development of Strategic Rail Freight Interchange	£550 million	Prologis; Network Rail; Highways Agency; STHMBC	Planning Application has been withdrawn. A resubmitted scheme, to better align the scheme to potential occupiers needs, is expected in the next two to three years. Critical infrastructure includes access to the rail network (agreed in principle with Network Rail) and a new/revised junction direct to the M6 (agreement in principle with Highways Agency)	2027

Table 1.12

CAS 4 Haydock and Blackbrook

Key Delivery Items				
Item	Cost and Funding	Who	Delivery	Time Frame
Support and Enhance Clipsley Lane Local Centre	LDF Budget and Private sector funding	STHMBC and Private Sector	Undertake further detailed work on the future role, function, and enhancement of the local centre	By 2011
Identify a site for a PCT LIFT scheme	PCT funding	PCT/Partners for LIFT; STHMBC	Suitable site with appropriate infrastructure	By 2024
Freight Network	LTP Capital Programme	LTP Partners	Congestion Monitoring and improvement plan for A58	By 2011
Access to employment	LTP; STHMBC	LTP Partners	Implement access improvements to Haydock Industrial Estate	By 2012
Stanley Bank	£1m+ from HLF and other partners	STHMBC; Groundwork; Mersey Basin	Environmental enhancement project providing links to education and Community Involvement. Completed and opened to the public in 2011	2011
Lyme and Wood Pits Country Park	Cory Environmental Planning Obligation	Cory Environmental; STHMBC	Implement the restoration of the landfill site and surrounding land into a Country Park, requirement of planning permission	By 2013 80% restored

Table 1.13

CAS 5 Rural St.Helens

Key Delivery Items				
Item	Cost and Funding	Who	Delivery	Time Frame
Implement the Rural Economy Action Plan	Various	STHMBC as lead	Action Plan adopted Individual projects being pursued	2007 Ongoing
Provide Access to Employment Opportunities in Rural Areas	LTP; STHMBC	LTP; STHMBC	Ongoing	Ongoing
Implement Various Green Infrastructure Projects	Various	STHMBC as lead	Individual projects progressing	Ongoing
Adopt Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan	STHMBC staff time; LDF budget; Forest Park funding	STHMBC; Mersey Forest	Preparation commenced 2009	Adoption mid 2014

Table 1.14

SA 2 Ensuring Quality Development in St.Helens

Objective: SO 2.1: To ensure new development is of a high quality

Objective: SO 2.2: To minimise the impact of development on climate change

Objective: SO 2.3: To contribute to the development of stronger and safer communities within St.Helens

CP 1 Ensuring Quality Development in St.Helens

Key Delivery Items				
Item	Cost and Funding	Who	Delivery	Time Frame
Adoption of Sustainable Development DPD	LDF Budget	STHMBC	In accordance with latest LDS	Adoption mid 2015
Adoption of a Suite of SPDs	LDF Budget	STHMBC	In accordance with latest LDS	Adopted by various dates
Assessment of Planning Applications	Planning Application Fees	STHMBC	In line with DC targets	2013

Key Delivery Items				
Item	Cost and Funding	Who	Delivery	Time Frame
Adoption of Waste DPD	STHMBC and other Greater Merseyside Authorities	STHMBC and other Greater Merseyside Authorities	In accordance with latest LDS	2012
North West River Basin Management Plan	Unknown	All	Ongoing	2015

Table 1.15

Targets and Indicators			
Item	Baseline	Target	How
NI 186 Per capita reduction in CO2 emissions	Baseline 2006 9.42 tonnes per capita	5% reduction	AMR
E1 Number of Planning Permissions Granted Contrary to Environment Agency advice on flooding and water quality grounds	AMR 2008 = 0	0	AMR
E3 Renewable Energy Generation	Not currently measured	EM18 RSS and policy CP 1 provides interim target of 10% to be updated in Sustainable Development DPD	AMR
H6 Housing Quality – Building for Life Assessments Number and proportion of total new build completions reaching very good, good, average and poor ratings	Not currently measured	100% of residential completions to achieve at least good	AMR
Number of residential developments achieving at least Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 rising to Level 4 between 2013 and 2016 and Level 6 after 2016	Not currently measured	100% of residential completions to achieve at least level required by Building Regulations. To be updated in Sustainable Development DPD	AMR
Number of developments achieving BREEAM rating of very good	Not currently measured	100% of non-residential completions to achieve at least very good. To be updated in Sustainable Development DPD	AMR

Table 1.16

SA 3 Creating an Accessible St.Helens

Objective: SO 3.1: To improve accessibility for all by facilitating sustainable transport choices, development in accessible locations, an integrated public transport network, and targeted improvements to the transport network

CP 2 Creating an Accessible St.Helens

Key Delivery Items				
Item	Cost and Funding	Who	Delivery	Time Frame
Implementation of Local Transport Plan	Merseytravel; STHMBC	Merseyside Transport Partnership; Bus and Rail Providers	LTP3 Strategy runs till 2024 and Implementation Plans till 2014/15	2024 and 2014/15
Implementation of Ensuring a Choice of Travel SPD	LDF Budget	STHMBC	Application of standards and objectives within SPD	Adopted 2010
Connect 2 Links to School	£104k Sustrans	Merseyside Transport Partnership	Funding secured	December 2011
Facilitating Sustainable Access to Employment in Merseyside	£800k LSTF	Merseyside Transport Partnership	Funding secured	2014/15

Table 1.17

Targets and Indicators			
Item	Baseline	Target	How
A1 Cycling Index of Usage	2011	Maintain or improve	STHMBC contribution to LTP3 Annual Monitoring
B1 National Accessibility Indicator (previously Economic Impact Education indicators)	2011	Maintain or improve	STHMBC contribution to LTP3 Annual Monitoring
B3 Mode Share of Journeys to School	2011	Maintain or improve	STHMBC contribution to LTP3 Annual Monitoring
Mode Share of Journeys into St.Helens Town Centre	2011	Increase % using sustainable modes	STHMBC staff time to monitor
% of new dwellings built within 800m of rail station or 400m of bus service	N/A	100%	STHMBC staff time to monitor

Table 1.18

SA 4 Providing Quality Housing in St.Helens

Objective: SO 4.1: To ensure a sufficient number of new and improved dwellings to meet local needs and delivering sustainable communities

CH 1 Meeting St.Helens' Housing Requirement

Key Delivery Items				
Item	Cost and Funding	Who	Delivery	Time Frame
Adoption of Sustainable Development and Allocations DPDs	LDF Budget	STHMBC	As per latest LDS	Adoption mid 2015
Adoption of St.Helens Central Spatial Area and Earlestown Town Centre AAPs	STHMBC Staff Time and LDF Budget	STHMBC	Preparation commencing 2012	Preparation to commence following adoption of Allocations and Sustainable Development DPDs
Development Briefs	LDF Budget; Private Developers	STHMBC; Private Developers	When required	Ongoing
13,680 net new dwellings completed by 2027	Private Developers and RPs	Private Developers and RPs	Planning process	2027
Residential Character Areas SPD	LDF Budget	STHMBC	Adopted June 2010	Complete
Adoption of Rural Buildings SPD	LDF Budget	STHMBC	Initial preparation to begin 2011	Adoption 2012
Householder Development SPD	LDF Budget	STHMBC	Adopted June 2011	Complete
New Residential Development SPD	LDF Budget	STHMBC	Adopted June 2011	Complete

Table 1.19

Targets and Indicators			
Item	Baseline	Target	How
NI 154 (Core Output H2b)- No. of net additional dwellings to be provided each year	2010/11: 157 units	570 per annum	STHMBC Staff Time and Budget; Private Developers; Annual monitoring through Annual Completions Survey; Allocations DPD; Development Briefs
Five year supply of deliverable housing sites	2011/12 - 2015/16: 153%	100%	SHLAA and Annual monitoring through Annual Completions Survey.
H1- Housing Target for Plan Period	N/A	13,680 net new dwellings	Allocations DPD; Development Briefs

Targets and Indicators			
Item	Baseline	Target	How
H2a- Net additional dwellings in previous years	Average of 472 units to date (2003/04-2010/11)	570 per annum	Annual monitoring through Annual Completions Survey
H2c- Net additional dwellings for future years	N/A	570 per annum	Allocations DPD; Development Briefs
H2d- Managed Delivery Target	2010/11: 619 units	570 per annum	Annual monitoring through Annual Completions Survey
H3- Proportion of new and converted dwellings on PDL	2010/11: 92.35%	80%	Allocations DPD; Annual monitoring through Annual Completions Survey
% of new dwellings provided at <30 dph; 30-50 dph; and >50 dph	2010/11: 4.92% <30 dph; 55.74% 30-50 dph; and 39.34% >50 dph	Minimum of 40 dph in sustainable locations, 50dph within and adjacent to St.Helens and Earlestown Town Centres, and 30 dph elsewhere.	Annual monitoring through Annual Completions Survey; Residential Character Areas SPD
Proportion of vacant dwellings	2010/11: 3.7%	Reduce proportion of vacant dwellings annually	AMR

Table 1.20

CH 2 Meeting St.Helens' Housing Needs

Key Delivery Items				
Item	Cost and Funding	Who	Delivery	Time Frame
Affordable Housing SPD	LDF Budget	STHMBC	Adopted January 2010	Complete
Implementation of Housing Strategy	Council's Budget	STHMBC	Adopted Spring/Summer 2009	Complete

Table 1.21

Targets and Indicators			
Item	Baseline	Target	How
NI 155 (Core Output H5)- No. of affordable homes delivered per year	2010/11: 87 affordable units	100 affordable units per annum. If target not achieved for three consecutive years, then viability to be reviewed and revision to target considered	Affordable Housing SPD; Working with RPs and Developers

Table 1.22

CH 3 Meeting the Needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

Key Delivery Items				
Item	Cost and Funding	Who	Delivery	Time Frame
Provide permanent pitches for Gypsies and Travellers & Travelling Showpeople in accordance with need, and deliver new transit site	Delivery of transit site £1,447,965 (but this excludes the costs of the CPO) from Gypsy and Traveller Sites Grant 2006-2008. This is secured HCA funding	STHMBC RPs Private Developers	CPO being prepared	2016

Table 1.23

Targets and Indicators			
Item	Baseline	Target	How
H4- Net Additional Pitches (Gypsy and Traveller)	2008/09: 50 existing pitches	In accordance with identified needs	Private Investors provision of additional pitches, regularisation of unauthorised pitches

Table 1.24

SA 5 Ensuring a Strong and Sustainable St.Helens Economy

Objective: SO 5.1: To provide and protect sufficient land and premises to meet local employment needs and support the implementation of the City Growth Strategy

Objective: SO 5.2: To support the development of the tourism, leisure and rural economy

CE 1 A Strong and Sustainable Economy

Key Delivery Items				
Item	Cost and Funding	Who	Delivery	Time Frame
Develop 37ha of land for B1, B2 & B8 by 2027	Unknown	Developers with Public Sector assistance	Existing Planning Consents, Development briefs and site marketing	2027
Development of Parkside Strategic Rail Freight Interchange	£550 Million	Prologis	Planning application has been withdrawn. A resubmitted scheme to better align the scheme to potential occupiers needs is expected in the next two to three years	2027

Key Delivery Items				
Item	Cost and Funding	Who	Delivery	Time Frame
Adoption of Allocations DPD and Proposals Map	LDF Budget	STHMBC	As per latest LDS	Adoption mid 2015
Implement City Growth Strategy		Public/Private Sector Partnership	Identified schemes being progressed	2018

Table 1.25

Targets and Indicators				
Item	Baseline	Target	How	
URH 80 (NI 171) New business births	2010/11 = 445 achieved	Annual Target = 400	AMR	
BD1 Total amount of additional employment floorspace – by type	2010 AMR = 53,169m ²	No target	AMR and annual completions survey	
BD2 Total amount of employment floorspace on previously developed land – by type	2010 AMR = 100%	75%	AMR and annual completions survey	
BD3 Employment land available – by type	2010 AMR = 87ha	No target	AMR and annual completions survey	
Amount of floorspace developed by type in employment areas	2010 AMR = 11,135m ²	No target	AMR and annual completions survey	
Total amount of industrial/commercial floorspace lost to other uses	2010 AMR = 65,304m ²	0 loss	AMR and annual completions survey	

Table 1.26

SA 6 Safeguarding and Enhancing Quality of Life in St.Helens

Objective: SO 6.1: To ensure the provision of community facilities, including health, education, leisure and culture and encourage their integration to increase convenience and reduce the need to travel

Objective: SO 6.2: To safeguard the quality of the environment, protecting and enhancing local character and distinctiveness

Objective: SO 6.3: To protect and enhance the multi-functional network of Green Infrastructure throughout the Borough and, in partnership, promote positive use and management

CQL 1 Green Infrastructure

Key Delivery Items				
Item	Cost and funding	Who	Delivery	Time Frame
Adoption of Sustainable Development and Allocations DPDs and Proposals Map	LDF Budget	STHMBC	As per latest LDS	Adoption mid 2015
Adoption of Bold Forest Park AAP and implementation of Bold Forest Park project	LDF Budget; Forest Park Funding	STHMBC; Mersey Forest	The Forest Park has undergone a feasibility assessment by consultants completed in July 2010. The study has been contracted through Mersey Forest but as yet there are no definitive plans or potential timescales for delivery. The Forest Park AAP has commenced	Adoption mid 2014 (AAP)
Stanley Bank, Carr Mill Dam and Billinge Hill Corridor	£1m+	HLF; STHMBC; Groundwork Merseyside; EA	Project underway at Stanley Bank	2011
Restoration to country park of the former Lyme and Wood pits	Cory Environmental Planning Obligation	Cory Environmental	Obligation to create country park as part of permission for tip	Phased from 2011; 80% complete by 2013
Sankey Valley Park, between St.Helens and Warrington	£1,090,000 (£865,000 already used)	A partnership approach with Groundwork, Mersey Basin Campaign and EA	Projects are all ongoing until 2011	2011
The former Ibstock Quarry	£200-400K	Forestry Commission; Cory Environmental	Phase 1 of development complete	Complete
			Phase 2 restoration commenced 2011 expected delivery within two years	2013
Existing Green Flag status maintained and additional ones achieved	Heritage Lottery Fund; STHMBC; Area Based Grant	STHMBC	Improvements to: Victoria Park; Queens Park	Application for Green Flag status annually
Delivery of Mersey Forest	Mersey Forest	Mersey Forest; STHMBC	In accordance with the Mersey Forest Delivery Plan 2009-2014	2014

Key Delivery Items				
Item	Cost and funding	Who	Delivery	Time Frame
Adoption of Biodiversity SPD	LDF Budget	STHMBC	Preparation began 2010	Adoption 2011
Adoption of Green Infrastructure SPD	LDF Budget	STHMBC	As per latest LDS	Adoption late 2012/13
North West River Basin Management Plan	Unknown	All	Ongoing	2015

Table 1.27

Targets and Indicators			
Item	Baseline	Target	How
Length of Greenway lost to development (km)	Not currently measured	No net loss	STHMBC staff time to monitor
Amount of Open Space lost to development (Ha)	Not currently measured	Identify and protect all sites over 0.4ha (0.2ha for playing pitches)	STHMBC staff time to monitor
No.of Green Flag Status Parks	Baseline 2008 = 9	Achieve additional designations Borough wide	STHMBC staff time and Budget Grant Aid applied where possible

Table 1.28

CQL 2 Trees and Woodlands

Key Delivery Items				
Item	Cost and funding	Who	Delivery	Time Frame
Adoption of Sustainable Development and Allocations DPDs	LDF Budget	STHMBC	As per latest LDS	Adoption mid 2015
Adoption of Trees and Development SPD and implementation of CIL	LDF Budget	STHMBC	Trees and Development SPD Adopted	2008
			Implementation of CIL	Summer 2013
Adoption of Bold Forest Park AAP and implementation of Bold Forest Park project	LDF Budget; Forest Park Funding	STHMBC	Currently beginning preparation of the AAP	Adoption mid 2014 (AAP)

Key Delivery Items				
Item	Cost and funding	Who	Delivery	Time Frame
Delivery of Mersey Forest	Mersey Forest	Mersey Forest; STHMBC	In accordance with the Mersey Forest Delivery Plan 2009-2014	2014

Table 1.29

Targets and Indicators			
Item	Baseline	Target	How
Mersey Forest tree coverage created (ha)	Not currently monitored	No target	Mersey Forest staff time and funding from Planning Obligations/Section 106
Number of trees provided through Planning Obligations	Not currently monitored	Two new trees per one tree lost to development	STHMBC staff time to monitor
Changes in areas of woodlands (ha)	Not currently monitored	No target	STHMBC alongside the North West Regional Forestry Framework and Mersey Forest Partnerships

Table 1.30

CQL 3 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

Key Delivery Items				
Item	Cost and funding	Who	Delivery	Time Frame
Adoption of Sustainable Development and Allocations DPDs	LDF Budget	STHMBC	As per latest LDS	Adoption mid 2015
Adoption of Biodiversity SPD	LDF Budget	STHMBC	STHMBC adopted SPD in 2011	Adopted 2011
Implementation of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)	LDF Budget	STHMBC; Merseyside Biodiversity Partnership	BAP adopted. Individual projects being progressed	Ongoing
Adoption of Green Infrastructure SPD	LDF Budget	STHMBC	As per latest LDS	Adoption 2012/13

Table 1.31

Targets and Indicators			
Item	Baseline	Target	How
The condition of Stanley Bank Meadow SSSI	Favourable condition	Maintain current status	STHMBC
Percentage of local wildlife and geological sites in favourable condition	(2011) - 16.2% in conservation management (implying the habitat is in favourable condition)	75% of local wildlife and geological sites in favourable condition by 2027	Merseyside Local Sites Partnership (MLSP Annual Monitoring Report) and STHMBC
Extent and condition of key habitats for which BAPs have been established	Local Sites Partnership AMR 2008	No target	Local Sites Partnership (LSP Annual Monitoring Report)
Area of new habitats created	To be confirmed	35ha of new woodland created, 1ha of new wetland habitat created, 31ha of new grassland habitat created by 2027	To be confirmed
Area of Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	6 sites totalling 109.39ha	Meet Natural England guidance of 1ha of LNR land per 1000 population by 2027	To be confirmed

Table 1.32

CQL 4 Heritage and Landscape

Key Delivery Items				
Item	Cost and funding	Who	Delivery	Time Frame
Adoption of List of Locally Important Buildings SPD	LDF Budget	STHMBC	Preparation began in 2011	Adopted in 2011
Completion of Conservation Area Appraisals	LDF Budget	STHMBC	Appraisals have been completed for all areas	
Implementation of Conservation Area Management Plans	LDF Budget	STHMBC	Management plans have been completed for all areas	2011 completed

Key Delivery Items				
Item	Cost and funding	Who	Delivery	Time Frame
Implementation of Article 4 Directions	STHMBC Budget	STHMBC	Ongoing	
Implementation of Article 4 grant schemes	STHMBC Budget	STHMBC	Ongoing	2011

Table 1.33

Targets and Indicators			
Item	Baseline	Target	How
Number of Listed Buildings	2008 = 145	No loss	DCMS; English Heritage; STHMBC
Number of Scheduled Ancient Monuments	2008 = 11	No loss	STHMBC staff time to monitor
Properties in English Heritage's Buildings at Risk register	2008 = 3	No target	English Heritage; STHMBC staff time to monitor
Number of Conservation Areas with up to date Conservation Area Management Plans	10/10 in 2011	Maintain up to date management plans	STHMBC staff time to monitor

Table 1.34

CQL 5 Social Infrastructure

Key Delivery Items				
Item	Cost and funding	Who	Delivery	Time Frame
Implementation of CIL	LDF Budget	STHMBC	Preparation	Summer 2012
Improvements to Secondary Education Facilities	BSF Funds	STHMBC	Development completed for the Cowley Language College and Hope Academy. Development work is underway for De La Salle and Rainford High Schools and planned for Sutton Academy	De La Salle 2013; Rainford High 2013; Sutton Academy 2013
Improvements to Primary Education Facilities	STHMBC Budget and Department for Education	STHMBC	Individual projects in strategy	Ongoing

Key Delivery Items				
Item	Cost and funding	Who	Delivery	Time Frame
Health facilities programme	PCT/Successor Bodies budgets	PCT/Successor Bodies	In accordance with the Strategic Service Delivery Plan due to be finalised in 2011	Eccleston Health Centre 2012 Rainhill Health Centre 2013/14
Complete redevelopment of St.Helens College	£60 million	St.Helens College	17,500 sqm of teaching buildings completed	Completed 2011

Table 1.35

Targets and Indicators			
Item	Baseline	Target	How
Index of Multiple Deprivation	IMD 2007 = 47th	Improve deprivation levels across all SOAs	National Audit - STHMBC to analyse and extract relevant data
Access to GP, Hospitals, Primary and Secondary Schools, Town and Local Centres by Public Transport	2008 GP = 99.6% Hospital = 96% Primary School = 99.4% Secondary School = 91.4%	Improve overall accessibility where possible	Accession software within STHMBC/LTP targets
Amount of Social Infrastructure lost to development	Not currently measured	No net loss unless surplus to requirements	STHMBC within the AMR

Table 1.36

SA 7 Meeting St.Helens Resource and Infrastructure Needs

Objective: SO 7.1: To ensure that St.Helens infrastructure needs for the future are fully met and that valuable resources within the Borough are safeguarded or used in a sustainable manner

CR 1 Minerals

Key Delivery Items				
Item	Cost and Funding	Who	Delivery	Time Frame
Adoption of Sustainable Development and Allocations DPDs and AAPs	LDF Budget	STHMC	In line with latest LDS	Mid 2015 for Sustainable Development and Allocations DPDs; preparation of AAPs to commence following adoption of Allocations and Sustainable Development DPDs

Table 1.37

Targets and Indicators			
Item	Baseline	Target	How
M1 Production of primary land won aggregates by mineral planning authority	2008 = 264 tonnes	Maintain current supply	AMR
M2 Production of secondary and recycled aggregates by mineral planning authority	Not currently measured	No target until baseline known	AMR

Table 1.38

CR 2 Waste

Key Delivery Items				
Item	Cost and Funding	Who	Delivery	Time Frame
Adoption of Sustainable Development and Allocations DPDs and AAPs	LDF Budget	STHMBC	In line with latest LDS	Mid 2015 for Sustainable Development and Allocations DPDs; preparation of AAPs to commence following adoption of Allocations and Sustainable Development DPDs
New Resource Recovery Contract	PFI credits and LA funding	Merseyside & Halton Waste Partnership	Contract to be let 2012	Operational by 2014
Adoption of Waste DPD	STHMBC and other Greater Merseyside Authorities	STHMBC and other Greater Merseyside Authorities	In accordance with latest LDS	2012

Table 1.39

Targets and Indicators			
Item	Baseline	Target	How
W1 Capacity of new waste management facilities by waste planning authority	Figures available from the Waste DPD when adopted	To meet the specific targets outlined in the Joint Merseyside Waste DPD - Needs Assessment, making an appropriate contribution to subregional needs	AMR
W2 Amount of municipal waste arising, and managed by management type waste planning Authority	2008 = 75,290 tonnes	50% recycled/composted by 2020 40% residual waste treated by 2020 Max 10% residual waste landfilled by 2020	AMR

Table 1.40

CIN 1 Meeting St.Helens' Infrastructure Needs

Key Delivery Items				
Item	Cost and Funding	Who	Delivery	Time Frame
Introduction of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	LDF Budget	STHMBC	Front-runner round 2 status received 2011	Summer 2013
Implementation of CIL, or other developer contribution regime	Developer contributions	STHMBC	Dependent on new regulation & guidance	2012
Supporting Infrastructure Delivery Partners Programmes	Service Providers	STHMBC; Service Providers	Various strategies and programmes proposed	Various
Adoption of Waste DPD	STHMBC and other Greater Merseyside Authorities	STHMBC and other Greater Merseyside Authorities	In accordance with latest LDS	2012

Table 1.41

Appendix 2: Bibliography

2 Appendix 2: Bibliography

This is a list of the documents referred to in the Core Strategy, listed in order of appearance. All documents are available online within the [LDF Evidence Base](#), which contains further contextual and superseded documents.

LDF Evidence Base Reference	Title of Document	Author	Date of Publication
LPS07A	NHS Strategic Service Development Plan	St.Helens, Knowsley, Halton and Warrington Primary Care Trusts	November 2007
RP09	North West Regional Strategy (The North West of England Plan - Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021)	GONW	September 2008
SRP04	The [Second] Local Transport Plan for Merseyside (2006 to 2011)	Merseytravel	2006
SRP21	The Third Local Transport Plan for Merseyside (LTP3)	Merseytravel	April 2010
SRP14	Liverpool City Regional Housing Strategy	GVA Grimley for DCLG	2007
SRP02	Liverpool City Region (Transforming our Economy) [also known as the "Liverpool City Region Development Plan"]	The Mersey Partnership	May 2005
NP63	Government Green Paper "Homes for the Future: More Affordable, More Sustainable"	HM Government	July 2007
LPS39	St.Helens Plan 2011 - 2014	St.Helens Council	2011
LPS02	City Growth Strategy	St.Helens Council	2008
LPS33	Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership: Disorder Strategic Assessment 2008 - 2009	St.Helens Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership	August 2008
RP17	North West Town Centre Assessment Study	White Young Green for North West Regional Assembly	June 2005

LDF Evidence Base Reference	Title of Document	Author	Date of Publication
TP47	St.Helens Employment Land & Skills Review 2009	Regeneris for St.Helens Council	April 2009
NP53	Planning Act 2008	DCLG	November 2008
TP10	St.Helens Retail Capacity Study	White Young Green for St.Helens Council	May 2005
LPS06	Eastside Masterplan	St.Helens Council	2002
TP54	St.Helens Town Centre Urban Design Analysis	St.Helens Council	2008
TP22	St.Helens Town Centre and Primary Shopping Area Boundary - Potential Future Options	White Young Green for St.Helens Council	December 2006
TP29	North West Route Utilisation Strategy	Network Rail	May 2009
TP34	CANGO study	GMPTE, Merseytravel, Warrington BC, Wigan MBC and St.Helens Council	2004
TP52	Delivering A Sustainable Transport System: The Logistics Perspective	Department for Transport	November 2008
NP28	The Future of Transport White Paper	Department for Transport	July 2004
TP53	Delivering a Sustainable Railway White Paper	Department for Transport	July 2007
RP15	Future North West: Our Shared Priorities	4NW/NWDA	August 2010
RP08	North West Regional Freight Strategy	North West Freight Advisory Group	November 2003
RP19	The Northern Hub Rail Study	Network Rail	February 2010
SRP23	Liverpool Superport	The Mersey Partnership	June 2008
LPS15	Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (LEGI) - St.Helens Application Form	Regeneris for St.Helens Council	December 2005

LDF Evidence Base Reference	Title of Document	Author	Date of Publication
TP13	St.Helens Local Centres Study	White Young Green for St.Helens Council	September 2006
LPS18	Countryside In and Around Town Pilot Project (St.Helens Urban Fringe Action Plan)	Mersey Forest, Natural England, St.Helens Council	June 2006
LPS17	Town in the Forest Strategic Vision for Woodland Planting	Gillespies	June 2005
LPS24	St.Helens Rural Economy Action Plan and Strategy	St.Helens Council	April 2007
TP37	St.Helens Rural Access Study	JMP Consulting for St.Helens Council	July 2007
LPS10	Crime, Disorder and Drug Reduction Strategy 2005-2008	St.Helens Council	2005
LPS09	Cultural Strategy - The Future in Our Hands: A Cultural Strategy for St.Helens 2002-2007	St.Helens Council	2002
LPS11	Policy for Nature: St.Helens Local Biodiversity Action Plan	St.Helens Council	March 2006
LPS20	St.Helens Community Greenspace Strategy	St.Helens Council	February 2008
TP19	St.Helens Landscape Character Assessment;	Land Use Consultants for St.Helens Council	January 2006
LPS34	St.Helens Climate Change Action Plan 2009-2012	St.Helens Council	March 2009
TP51	St.Helens Air Quality Updating & Screening Assessment for St.Helens 2009	St.Helens Council	May 2009
TP21	St.Helens Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	Atkins for St.Helens Council	2009
N/a	The Eddington Transport Study	HM Government	December 2006

LDF Evidence Base Reference	Title of Document	Author	Date of Publication
N/a	Stern Review Report on the Economics of Climate Change	HM Treasury	October 2006
N/a	Local Transport Act 2008	HM Government	2008
TP59	ONS 2008 based Household projections 2010 (Table 406 - St.Helens)	ONS	2010
RP18	Initial Technical Work on Housing Provision and Job Growth Figures for the North West - Technical Background Paper	4NW	July 2010
TP35B	St.Helens Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) 2010	St.Helens Council	December 2010
TP01C	2010 Housing Land Position Statement	St.Helens Council	2010
TP07	2007 Urban Capacity Update	St.Helens Council	2007
LPS23	Geography for St.Helens Housing Market Assessment Activity 2006	Experian for St.Helens Council	February 2006
TP55	St.Helens Strategic Housing Market Assessment	GL Hearn and JG Consulting for St.Helens Council	May 2011
TP20A	St.Helens Housing Market and Needs Assessment	DCA for St.Helens Council	2006
LDF30A	Affordable Housing SPD	St.Helens Council	January 2010
TP36	Housing Viability Study	DVS for St.Helens	February 2009
TP25	Cheshire Partnership Area Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation and Related Services Assessment	SHUSU & University of Salford for Cheshire Partnership Area	May 2007
LPS08	St.Helens Tourism and Visitor Strategy 2002 – 2006	St.Helens Council	July 2003
NP06A	Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth	DCLG	December 2009

LDF Evidence Base Reference	Title of Document	Author	Date of Publication
NP08	Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning for Town Centres (Cancelled)	DCLG	2005
SRP24	Liverpool City Region Housing and Economic Development Evidence Base Overview Study	GVA Grimley for the Liverpool City Region Partners	May 2011
SRP24A	Liverpool City Region Housing and Economic Development Evidence Base Overview Study - Appendices	GVA Grimley for the Liverpool City Region Partners	May 2011
TP57D	Review of Employment Land in St.Helens to 2027	URS Scott Wilson	September 2011
TP47G	St.Helens Core Strategy: Employment Land and Skills Review Update Report	Regeneris for St.Helens Council	September 2011
TP57	St.Helens Employment Land and Premises Study - report only	Scott Wilson for St.Helens Council	May 2011
TP57A	St.Helens Employment Land and Premises Study - appendices only	Scott Wilson for St.Helens Council	May 2011
LPS20	St.Helens Community Green Space Strategy	St.Helens Council	2008
TP38	St.Helens Open Space Study	PMP for St.Helens Council	February 2006
TP60	St.Helens Playing Pitch Assessment – Report	KKP for St.Helens Council	August 2002
TP60A	St.Helens Playing Pitch Assessment – Strategy and Action Plan	KKP for St.Helens Council	August 2002
RP20	North West River Basin Management Plan	DEFRA/EA for St.Helens Council	2006
RP21	North West Regional Forestry Framework Woodland Strategy	NW Regional Forestry Framework Partnership	2009
SRP03	North Merseyside Biodiversity Action Plan	Merseyside Biodiversity Group	2001 reviewed 2007
NP73	UK Biodiversity Action Plan	HM Government	January 1994

LDF Evidence Base Reference	Title of Document	Author	Date of Publication
LPS36	St.Helens Indoor Sport and Leisure Strategy	St.Helens Council	2010
TP56	Surface Coal Resource Plans	The Coal Authority	May 2011
SRP17	The Evidence Base for Mineral Planning on Merseyside	Urban Vision	August 2008
NP62	A guide to minerals safeguarding in England	British Geological Survey (BGS)	2007
SRP26	Merseyside and Halton Joint Waste DPD Preferred Options	Merseyside Authorities	December 2010
SRP25	Merseyside Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy 2008	Merseyside Authorities	2008

Table 2.1

Appendix 3: Glossary of Terms

3 Appendix 3: Glossary of Terms

Term	Description
4NW	4NW replaced the former North West Regional Assembly (NWRA), which was the Regional Planning Body responsible for producing the North West RSS. Its name was changed in 2008 to 4NW, and 4NW was abolished in 2011.
Accessibility	The ease at which people have access to key services at a reasonable cost and in a reasonable time.
Affordable Housing	Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.
Aggregates	Granular or particulate material that is suitable for use in construction as concrete, mortar, roadstone, asphalt or drainage courses, or for use as constructional fill or railway ballast.
Allocation	The designation of land within a development plan for a particular use such as residential development.
Authority's Monitoring Reports/Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)	The Authority's Monitoring Reports are a series of reports that can be reported as soon as the information is available and/or combined as an annual report (Annual Monitoring Report) which sets out the progress in terms of producing LDDs against the timetable set out in the LDS, the progress in implementing policies and setting out any necessary revision to the LDS.
Appropriate Assessment (AA)	An assessment of the potential effects of a proposed plan on one or more European Habitat Sites.
Area Action Plan (AAP)	Area Action Plans will have a geographic or spatial dimension and focus upon implementation. They will provide an important mechanism for ensuring development of an appropriate scale, mix and quality for key areas of opportunity, change or conservation. Such plans could be relevant to a wide range of circumstances and will benefit from having development plan status.
Biodiversity	The whole variety of life encompassing all genetic, species and ecosystem variations.
Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)	A Biodiversity Action Plan is a strategy prepared for a local area aimed at conserving and enhancing biological diversity.
BREEAM	Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method a voluntary measurement rating for green buildings.

Brownfield	See "Previously Developed Land".
Bulky Goods	Bulky Goods include furniture, waste, electrical and electronic equipment and wood.
Business Planning Zone	A designated site or area where planning permission is not required for certain developments. The overall aim is to enhance the regeneration of derelict land and land affected by contamination.
City Growth Strategy	Private sector led economic strategy for St.Helens.
Community Plan	A long term plan that seeks to promote the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the Borough. It builds on the Local Agenda 21, St.Helens City Growth Strategy and other strategies in contributing to sustainable development. It has been developed with the help of local organisations and local people.
Comparison Goods (Retail)	Comparison retailing is the provision of items not obtained on a frequent basis. These include clothing, footwear, household and recreational goods.
Conservation Area	Areas of special architectural or historic interest, designated under S69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
Convenience Goods (Retail)	Convenience retailing is the provision of everyday items including food, drinks, newspapers/magazines and confectionery.
Core Strategy	A DPD that sets out the vision, spatial strategy and core policies for the spatial development of the Borough. All other Development Plan Documents must be in conformity with it.
Countryside In and Around Towns	The Countryside In and Around Towns Initiative was a pilot study supported by Natural England. St.Helens was one of a number of Local Authorities to undergo a pilot study assessing the role of the countryside in and around towns, green infrastructure issues and the role of the urban fringe.
Curtilage	A legal term describing the enclosed area of land around a dwelling.
DCLG	Department for Communities and Local Government.
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.
Derelict Land and Buildings	Land so damaged by previous industrial or other development that it is incapable of beneficial use without treatment. This includes abandoned and unoccupied buildings (including former residential dwellings) in an advanced state of disrepair, land damaged by development, but which has been, or is being, restored.
Designated Heritage Asset	Designated under the legislation as a World Heritage Site, Scheduled Ancient Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area.

Development	Building, engineering and other operations associated with land and/or the change of use of buildings or land.
Development Plan	Consists of the RSS and the DPDs contained within the LDF and provide the framework for development and land use decisions in the Borough.
Development Plan Document (DPD)	An LDD that has been subject to an independent examination run by a Planning Inspector. Once adopted, following an inquiry, these documents will have statutory status as defined by Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. DPDs form part of the statutory development plan.
District Centres	District Centres will usually comprise groups of shops often containing at least one supermarket or superstore, and a range of non-retail services, such as banks, building societies and restaurants, as well as local public facilities such as a library.
Dwelling	A single self-contained household space (an unshared dwelling) or two or more household spaces at the same address that are not self-contained, but combine to form a shared dwelling that is self-contained. A household space is the accommodation that a household occupies, and self-containment means that all rooms, including the kitchen, bathroom and toilet are behind a door (but not necessarily a single door) only that household can use. In most cases, a single household space will be an unshared dwelling.
Ecological Framework	A strategy that aims to reduce habitat fragmentation and species isolation. It includes a map-based element, which identifies core biodiversity assets, the connectivity between them and potential opportunities for habitat expansion and creation.
Edge of Centre	For retail purposes, a location that is well-connected to, and within up to 300metres of, the Primary Shopping Area. For all other main town centre uses, a location within 300 metres of a town centre boundary. For office development, this includes locations outside the town centre but within 500 metres of a public transport interchange. In determining whether a site falls within the definition of edge of centre, account should be taken of local circumstances.
Environment Agency (EA)	Agency responsible for matters relating to surface water drainage, flooding and water quality.
Flood Plain	Land adjacent to a watercourse over which water flows in times of flood, or would flow but for the presence of flood defences, where they exist.
Flood Risk Assessment	Flood Risk Assessments consider the specific risk of flooding to a development being proposed over its currently expected lifetime and its possible effects on flood risks elsewhere in terms of its effects on flood flows and flood storage capacity and the run-off implications.

Flood Zone 1	The annual probability of flooding is lower than 0.1%. Technical Guidance to the National Planning Policy Framework imposes no constraints upon development here.
Flood Zone 2	Flood Zone 2 is defined as 'Medium Probability' with an annual probability of flooding between 0.1 and 1.0% for fluvial and 0.1 and 0.5% for tidal and coastal flooding. The Technical Guidance to the NPPF recommends that Flood Zone 2 is suitable for most development with the exception of Highly Vulnerable uses (unless the Exception Test is passed), as defined within Table 2 of the Technical Guidance.
Flood Zone 3	Flood Zone 3 is defined as 'High Probability' with an annual probability of flooding of 1.0% or greater for fluvial and 0.5% or greater for tidal or coastal. The Technical Guidance to the NPPF recommends that appropriate development is based upon a further classification of Flood Zone 3 into: 3a High Probability; and 3b Functional Floodplain. Greater constraints are placed upon development within Flood Zone 3 compared to any other Flood Zone; refer to Table 2 of the Technical Guidance for details.
Geodiversity	Geodiversity is the variety of rocks, minerals, fossils, soils, landforms and natural processes.
Government Office for the North West (GONW)	The Regional Government Office that was responsible for implementing national policy in the North West region and ensuring consistency of Local Planning Authorities' policies and plans with national policies. All regional Government Offices were closed in March 2011, and most functions, including the above, were discontinued.
Gross Domestic Product (GDP)	A measure of total economic activity within a region.
Gross Value Added	Gross Value Added is a measure of the value of goods and services produced in an area.
Green Belt	Areas of land where development is particularly tightly controlled. The purpose is to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas; to prevent neighbouring towns from merging; to safeguard the countryside from encroachment; to preserve the setting and special character of historical towns; and to aid urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
Greenfield Land	Land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures; land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time.

Green Infrastructure	Green infrastructure is the region's life support system – the network of natural environmental components and green and blue spaces that lie within and between cities, towns and villages which provide multiple social, economic and environmental benefits. In the same way that the transport infrastructure is made up of a network of roads, railways, airports etc. green infrastructure has its own physical components, including parks, rivers, street trees and moorland.
Ha	Abbreviation for 'hectares', a measurement of area equivalent to 10,000 square metres.
Habitats Regulations	Provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance.
Heritage Asset	A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. They include designated heritage assets (as defined in the NPPF) and assets identified by the Local Planning Authority (including local listing).
Highways Agency (HA)	Maintain and manage the motorway and trunk road network in England.
Housing Density	Housing density is a measure of the number of dwellings which can be accommodated on a site or in an area and is expressed in dwellings per hectare (dph). It is calculated by including only those site areas which will be developed for housing and directly associated uses, including access roads within the site, private garden space, car parking areas, incidental open space and landscaping and children's play areas, where these are provided.
Index of Multiple Deprivation	The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is a measure of multiple deprivation at the small area level.
Infrastructure	Roads, water supply, sewage disposal, schools and other community facilities needed to support housing, industrial and commercial activity.
Intermediate Affordable Housing	Intermediate housing is homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels subject to the criteria in the Affordable Housing definition above. These can include shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent, but not affordable rented housing. Homes that do not meet the above definition of affordable housing, such as "low cost market" housing, may not be considered as affordable housing for planning purposes.
Issues and Options	First stage in the LDF process and facilitates community and stakeholder involvement.
Key Diagram	Diagrammatic interpretation of the spatial strategy as set out in the Core Strategy.

Land affected by Contamination	Land where the actual or suspected presence of substances, in, on or under the land may cause risk to people, property, human activities or the environment regardless of whether or not the land meets the definition of contaminated land in Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990
Landbank	A stock of planning permissions for reserves that ensure continuity of production for a set number of years.
Landscape	A landscape is a concept, a real or imaginary environment, image or view in which the land, and natural and semi-natural elements, are prominent, dominant or the only ones. Landscapes may, and often do, include humans and man-made components as well. They are the product of the appearance, uses and perceptions of places that are part of the outdoor environment.
Landscape Character	The distinct and recognisable pattern of elements that occurs consistently in a particular type of landscape, and how this is perceived by people. It reflects particular combinations of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use and human settlement. It creates the particular sense of place of different areas of the landscape.
Landscape Character Assessments	An approach to assessing and recording those features and characteristics that constitute a particular landscape as a basis for informed planning and policy decisions that respect and enhance that character and a local sense of place.
Listed Buildings	Buildings and structures, which have been identified by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, as being of special architectural or historic interest and whose protection and maintenance are the subject of special legislation. Their curtilage and setting is also protected. Listed Building Consent is required before any works are carried out on a Listed Building. They are graded I, II* and II.
Liverpool City Region	RSS (2008) defines the Liverpool City Region as “comprising City of Liverpool and local authority districts of Halton, Knowsley, Sefton, St.Helens, Wirral, and extends as far as Chester, Ellesmere Port and Neston, Vale Royal and West Lancashire”. The Liverpool City Region Board (as of 2012) has representatives from the City of Liverpool and local authority districts of Halton, Knowsley, Sefton, St.Helens, Wirral and West Lancashire. The LCR Development Plan (2005) took into account the area of Liverpool, St.Helens, Wirral, Knowsley, Sefton and Halton plus the adjacent areas of Warrington, Chester, Ellesmere Port and Neston (West Cheshire) and North Wales and West Lancashire.
Local Centres	Local Centres include a range of small shops of a local nature, serving a small catchment. Typically, local centres might include, amongst other shops, a small supermarket, a newsagent, a sub-post office and a pharmacy. Other facilities could include a hot-food takeaway and

	laundrette. In rural areas, large villages may perform the role of a local centre.
Local Development Document (LDD)	A document that forms part of the LDF. LDDs include Development Plan Documents, Supplementary Planning Documents and the Statement of Community Involvement. These are explained below.
Local Development Framework (LDF)	<p>A portfolio of Local Development Documents which will provide the framework for delivering the spatial planning strategy for the area.</p> <p>It includes documents which are part of the development plan. There are two types of such documents, Development Plan Documents (DPD), which are subject to independent examination, and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) which elaborate on policies in DPDs and are not subject to independent examination.</p>
Local Development Scheme (LDS)	A 3-year programme that sets out the details, the timescales and the arrangements for production for each document that will form part of the LDF.
Local Enterprise Partnership	A body, designated by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, established for the purpose of creating or improving the conditions for economic growth in an area.
Local Geological Site	A site designated for its important geodiversity features using guidelines adopted across North Merseyside.
Local Nature Reserve	Places with wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally.
Local Planning Authority	The Authority that is empowered by law to exercise planning functions.
Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)	A partnership of public, business, voluntary and community organisations in St.Helens.
Local Transport Plan (LTP)	A Transport Plan produced by the five Merseyside Local Authorities and Merseytravel on behalf of all the Merseyside Districts. It sets out the strategy for dealing with transport matters in Merseyside, including the improvement of local transport provision. It is used as the basis for allocating resources and capital expenditure.
Local Wildlife Site	A site designated for its important biodiversity features using guidelines adopted across North Merseyside.
Main Town Centre Use	Retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment facilities the more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, night-clubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres, and bingo halls); offices; and arts,

	culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).
Mersey Forest	A partnership project which aims to create woodlands which bring benefits to people, wildlife and the economy.
Merseyside Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)	The Merseyside Biodiversity Action Plan is a subregional plan recognising the importance of habitats and species within the subregion and creating management plans for protected and at risk habitats and species identified through the United Kingdom Biodiversity Action Plan.
Mid-Mersey Growth Point	One of the successful bids for the Second Round Growth Points, incorporating St.Helens, Halton and Warrington. Growth Point promoted sustainable housing and economic growth. Due to the ending of Central Government funding the Mid Mersey Growth Point ceased to exist at the end of March 2011.
Minerals Planning Authority (MPA)	The Local Authority responsible for the planning of minerals issues.
Municipal Waste	Waste collected by or on behalf of the Local Authority.
National Land Use Database (NLUD)	The National Land Use Database provides an inventory of the national stock of Brownfield sites and a tool for monitoring the supply and reuse of previously developed land and buildings to Local Planning Authorities.
Network Management Plan	A programme to manage and ensure the expeditious movement of traffic on the St.Helens and surrounding road networks.
North West Development Agency (NWDA)	The agency that was responsible for leading economic development and regeneration in the North West but was closed in 2012.
North West River Basin Management Plan	The North West's plan for protecting and improving the water environment which has been developed in consultation with organisations and individuals. It sets out the main issues for the water environment and the actions which need to be undertaken to deal with them.
North West Regional Aggregates Working Party (NWRAP)	The agency responsible for collecting data on the production of aggregates.
North West Regional Assembly (NWRA)	A partnership which promotes the economic, environmental and social wellbeing of the North West.
Out of Centre	A location which is not in, or on, the edge of a centre but not necessarily outside the urban area.
Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (PCPA), 2004	A planning system established by legislation in 2004 which aimed to streamline the planning process, strengthen community and stakeholder involvement and ensure that plans achieve sustainable development.

Planning Inspectorate (PINS)	Independent Planning Inspectors who are appointed by the Secretary of State to carry out an independent examination into the “soundness” of DPDs.
Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs)	A series of policy documents that were published by Government on different aspects of planning policy such as housing, town centres and nature conservation. The Local Planning Authority had to have regard to, and take into account, PPGs when preparing development plans and dealing with planning applications. All PPGs have been revoked and replaced by the NPPF.
Planning Policy Statement (PPSs)	A series of policy documents that were published by Government, setting out national policy on different planning matters. All PPSs have been revoked and replaced by the NPPF except for PPS10, which will stay in force until replaced by a National Waste Management Plan.
Preferred Options	The stage of the LDF process that takes account of public and stakeholder interest, providing enough information to ensure that people can understand the implications of the Preferred Options and the opportunity to select alternative options.
Previously Developed Land (PDL)	Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings • land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures • land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments • land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time
Primary Route Network (PRN)	The PRN was first established in the mid 1960s, and in conjunction with motorways, provides a national network for long distance traffic movements throughout Great Britain. It consists of all-purpose trunk roads together with the more important principal ('A' Class) roads for which local highway authorities are responsible. Although not a road classification as such, Primary Routes are designated by the Secretary of State and are required to be open to all classes of traffic without restriction. The PRN is identifiable by green background direction signs.
Proposals Map	An illustrative diagram of the main proposal designations and areas where specific policies or Area Action Plans apply.
Public Realm	Publicly owned streets, sidewalks, rights of ways, parks and other publicly accessible open spaces, and public and civic buildings and facilities.

Regeneration	A regeneration activity is one which is part of a wide and balanced approach to enhancing the overall wellbeing of a community, through social, physical and economic improvements - combining economic competitiveness, environmental sustainability and social equity to bring about renewal.
Regional Planning Guidance (RPG)	Policy guidance that was issued by the Government for the region. They were replaced by statutory Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS).
Regional Poles	Chief metropolitan centres of the North West which are also currently and/or, potentially, major centres of employment and drivers of economic growth. They comprise the city centres of Manchester/Salford and Liverpool.
Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)	A document that sets out the planning policies in respect of the development and use of land in the region, which was prepared by the regional planning body. It forms part of the statutory development plan for the district. The LDF must be in conformity with the RSS. Regional strategies remain part of the development plan until they are abolished by Order using powers in the Localism Act. It is the government's clear policy intention to revoke the regional strategies outside of London, subject to the outcome of the environmental assessments that are currently being undertaken.
Registered Parks and Gardens	Registered Parks and Gardens are historic parks and gardens which make a rich and varied contribution to the landscape. A register of all the historic parks and gardens in the country is kept by English Heritage.
Registered Provider of Social Housing (RP)	A landlord registered with the Housing Corporation who provides and manages affordable housing.
Renewable Energy	Energy that is produced without using exhaustible fuel sources such as oil, coal or gas. It includes energy from the sun, wind, sea and water, as well as from plant material and combustible or digestible industrial, agricultural and domestic waste materials.
Saved Policies/Plan	Policies within unitary development plans, local plans and structure plans that are saved, and still relevant as material considerations, during production of replacement Development Plan Documents.
Scheduled Ancient Monument	A feature of national historical or archaeological importance, either above or below the ground, which is included in the schedule of monuments as identified by the Secretary of State.
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)	The SFRA looks at flood risk at a strategic level across the Borough.
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	Nationally important areas of land, designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as being of special interest for nature or geological conservation.

Site Specific Allocations	A document detailing site-specific allocations of land, this must set out clearly the links to relevant policies in other DPDs.
Small and Medium Enterprises (SME)	Companies whose headcount or turnover falls below certain limits.
Spatial Planning	An inclusive process ensuring the best use of land by weighing up competing demands and taking into account social, economic and environmental considerations to deliver sustainable development. These considerations include access and movement, health, education, employment, and crime.
Stakeholder	A stakeholder is a person or organisation that has an interest in a field or area of work. Within planning there are three statutory stakeholders who are consulted during the planning process. These are Natural England, the Environment Agency and English Heritage. Other stakeholders may include developers, architects, environmentalists who have an interest in the planning process.
Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)	A document that forms part of the LDF and which sets out how the Council will involve the community and other stakeholders in the preparation, alteration and review of all DPDs and SPDs and on planning applications. The SCI is no longer subject to independent examination. All DPDs and SPDs will have to show how they have conformed to it.
Statutory Body	Set up as a result of an Act of Parliament, to carry out given functions.
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)	A key evidence base document and establishes realistic assumptions about the availability, suitability and the likely economic viability of land to meet the identified housing need for housing over the plan period.
Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)	A key evidence base document and identifies the scale and mix of housing and the range of tenures that the local population is likely to need over the plan period.
Strategic Road Network	Roads across the borough essential to free and safe movement of traffic throughout the region.
Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)	A sequence of water management practices and facilities designed to drain surface water in a manner that will be more sustainable.
Super Output Area (SOA)	Geographical breakdown of the Borough into small geographical areas. There are 118 SOAs in the Borough.
Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)	An LDD, which is subject to public consultation but is not subject to an independent public inquiry. They form a material consideration in determining planning applications but do not have the weight of development plan status. Their purpose is to elaborate on policies in DPDs.

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)	Non-statutory policy documents elaborating on policies and proposals in a UDP. These were replaced by SPDs under the new legislation.
Sustainability	Ensuring that the decisions taken now do not prejudice the ability of future generations to enjoy an acceptable quality of life.
Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA)	Sustainability Appraisal is an assessment of the implications of policies and proposals in DPDs in respect of sustainable developments objectives covering environmental, social and economic issues. SA includes the requirements for a Strategic Environmental Assessment.
Town and Country Planning (Local Development) Regulations 2004	Regulations detailing the legal requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
Traffic Sensitive Routes	Routes designated under Section 64 of the New Roads and Street Works Act where unacceptable delays and disruption should be avoided and where activities that affect their operation should be limited.
Transport Assessment	A Transport Assessment provides detailed information on a range of transport conditions before, during and following the construction of a proposed development.
Travel Plan	A Travel Plan is a package of measures produced by employers and schools to encourage staff, pupils and parents to use alternatives to single occupancy car use.
Tree Preservation Order (TPO)	A TPO is an order made by a Local Planning Authority in respect of trees or woodlands.
Unitary Development Plan (UDP)	Planning policy document under previous legislation. UDPs will now be replaced by LDFs.
Use Classes Order	The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 2010 specifies sixteen classes of land use. Change of use within a use class does not normally require planning permission.
Vacant Buildings	Unoccupied buildings, that are structurally sound and in a reasonable state of repair (i.e. capable of being occupied in their present state).
Ward	Electoral wards are the key building block of UK administrative geography.
Water Framework Directive	A European Union Directive which commits member states to achieve good ecological status of all water bodies including; surface waters, groundwater, estuaries, and marine waters up to one mile from low water. The Directive looks at the ecological health of surface water bodies as well as achieving traditional chemical standards.

Windfall Sites	Sites which have not been specifically identified as available in the Local Plan process. They normally comprise previously-developed sites that have unexpectedly become available.
Worklessness	Worklessness is a term used to describe those who are economically inactive. The economically inactive are people of working age who are not working, are not in full time education and are not actively seeking employment.

Table 3.1 Glossary

Appendix 4: Saved UDP policies to be replaced by the Core Strategy

4 Appendix 4: Saved UDP policies to be replaced by the Core Strategy

4.1 The following list is of saved policies from the St.Helens Unitary Development Plan (1998) that will be replaced by policies in the Core Strategy.

UDP Policy	Core Strategy
1. Part One Policies	
Policy: S1 Green Belt	Policy retained
Policy: S2 Provision of Land for Economic Development	CE 1
Policy: S3 Priority Locations for Economic Development	CSS 1, CAS 1, CAS 2, CAS 3.1, CAS 3.2, CAS 4 , CAS 5, CE 1
Policy: S4 Economic Development Outside Allocated Areas	CSS 1, CAS 1, CAS 2, CAS 3.1, CAS 3.2, CAS 4 , CAS 5, CE 1
Policy: S7 Sustainable Development	CP 1, CP 2
Policy: S8 Derelict and Vacant Land	CSS 1
Policy: S9 The Countryside	CP 1, CAS 5, CQL 1, CQL 2
2. General Development	
Policy: GEN 1 Primacy of the Development Plan	CP 1, CP 2, CQL 3, CQL 4, CIN 1
Policy: GEN 2 Good Environments	CP 1
Policy: GEN 3 Equal Access Opportunities	CP 1, CP 2
Policy: GEN 4 Security and Crime Prevention	CP 1
Policy: GEN 5 Design and Layout of New Housing	CP 1, CP 2
Policy: GEN 6 Incidental Open Space Provision	Policy retained
Policy: GEN 7 Institutional and Communal Uses	CP 1 and CP 2
Policy: GEN 8 Householder Developments	Policy retained
Policy: GEN 9 Parking and Servicing	CP 2
Policy: GEN 10 Advertising in St.Helens	Policy retained
Policy: GEN 11 Telecommunications Apparatus	Policy retained
Policy: GEN 12 Lighting and Security Apparatus	Policy retained
Policy: GEN 14 Backland and Tandem Developments	Policy retained

3. Green Belt Policies

Policy: GB1 General Criteria for Development Control in the Green Belt	Policy retained
Policy: GB2 General Criteria for Development Control in the Green Belt	Policy retained
Policy: GB3 Major Existing Development Sites in the Green Belt	Policy deleted
Policy: GB5 Redundant Occupancy Conditions	Policy retained
Policy: GB6 Alterations and Extensions to Existing Dwellings	Policy retained
Policy: GB6A Replacement of Existing Dwellings in the Green Belt	Policy retained
Policy: GB7 Change of Use of Existing Buildings	Policy retained
Policy: GB8 Change of Use of Existing Buildings into Dwellings	Policy retained
Policy: GB10 Recreational Developments	CP 1
Policy: GB12 Development Adjoining Green Belt	CP 1

4. Economy

Policy: ECON1 Economic Development Land Allocation	Policy retained
Policy: ECON 2 Development of Tourism	CE 1

5. Retailing

Policy: RET 1 Retail Development in Existing Centres	Policy retained
Policy: RET2 Out-of-Centre Retail Development	CSS 1, CAS 2
Policy: RET3 Amusement Centres	Policy retained
Policy: RET4 Hot Food Shops, Restaurants and Cafés	Policy retained
Policy: RET5 Taxi Offices	Policy retained
Policy: RET6 Alterations and New Shop Fronts	CP 1

6. Transport

Policy: TRA2 Traffic Calming	CP 2
Policy: TRA3 New Rail Facilities	Policy retained

Policy: TRA4 Park and Ride	Policy retained
Policy: TRA5 Rail / Bus Interchange	Policy retained
Policy: TRA6 Sutton Oak Link Line	Policy retained
Policy: TRA7 Cycling	CP 2

7. Residential Land Supply

Policy: RES1 Residential Land Allocation	Policy retained
Policy: RES2 Affordable Housing	CH 2
Policy: RES3 Vacant Floorspace	Policy retained

8. Environment

Policy: ENV1 Protection of Open Space	Policy retained
Policy: ENV2 School Playing Fields	Policy retained
Policy: ENV3 Greenways	Policy retained
Policy: ENV4 Statutory Site Protection	Policy retained
Policy: ENV 5 Sites of Community Wildlife Interest & Local Nature Reserves	Policy retained
Policy: ENV7 Nature Conservation within Development Sites	CQL 3
Policy: ENV9 Species Protection Policy	CQL 3
Policy: ENV10 The Mersey Forest	Policy retained
Policy: ENV11 Tree Surveys	Policy retained
Policy: ENV12A & 12B Development Affecting Existing Trees	Policy retained
Policy: ENV13 New Tree Planting on Development Sites	Policy retained
Policy: ENV16 Design of Agricultural and Forestry Developments	Policy retained
Policy: ENV17 Farm Diversification	Policy retained
Policy: ENV18 Landscape Protection	CP 1
Policy: ENV20 Landscape Renewal	Policy retained
Policy: ENV21 Environmental Improvements Within Transport Corridors	Policy retained
Policy: ENV22 St.Helens Canal	Policy retained

Policy: ENV23 Archaeology	Policy retained
Policy: ENV24A Designation and Review of Conservation Areas	Policy retained
Policy: ENV24B Development in Conservation Areas	Policy retained
Policy: ENV25 Listed Buildings	Policy retained
Policy: ENV26 Contaminated Land	Policy retained
Policy: ENV27 New Hazardous Development	Policy retained
Policy: ENV28A and 28B Development within Health & Safety Executive Consultation Zones	Policy retained
Policy: ENV29 Pollution Control	CP 1
Policy: ENV30 Drainage	Policy retained
Policy: ENV31 Storage of Caravans	Policy retained

9. Recreation

Policy: REC1 Indoor Recreation	CQL 5, CQL 1, CP 2
Policy: REC2 Development Affecting Recreational Facilities	Policy retained
Policy: REC3 Children's Play	Policy retained
Policy: REC4 Allotments	Policy retained
Policy: REC5 Strategic Footpaths and Cycleways	Policy retained
Policy: REC6 Key Recreation Areas	Policy retained
Policy: REC7 Water Features	Policy retained
Policy: REC8 Community Facilities	CQL 5

10. Mineral Policies

Policy: MIN1 Development Control Criteria	Policy retained
Policy: MIN2 Operational Criteria	Policy retained
Policy: MIN5 Use of Secondary Aggregates	Policy retained
Policy: MIN6 Transport of Minerals	Policy retained
Policy: MIN7 Review of Minerals Permissions	Policy retained

11. Waste Disposal Policies

Policy: WD1 Development Control Criteria	Policy retained
Policy: WD2 Operational Criteria	Policy retained

12. Part Two Area Policies

Policy: Area 1 Newton-le-Willows – Area Policies AP1.1 & AP1.3	Policy retained
Policy: Earlestown Town Centre –Inset Map - Inset Policies E1, E2, E5, E6	Policy retained
Policy: Area 2 Haydock & Blackbrook - Area Policy AP2.1	CP 2
Policy: Area 5 Southern Corridor AP5.1	Policy retained
Policy: St.Helens Town Centre Inset Map - Policies TC1 and TC2.	CAS 2 - The Town Centre boundary, Primary Shopping Area and Primary Retail Frontage are updated by the St.Helens Town Centre Development Management Boundaries diagram in policy CAS 2
St.Helens Town Centre Inset Map - Policies TC3 to TC12 inclusive	Policies retained
Policy: Area 6 Parr, Sutton and Bold – Area Policies AP6.1, AP6.2 & AP6.4	Policy retained
Policy: Sutton Village – Inset Map - Inset Policies SV1 and SV2	Policy retained

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2003-2004
Rethinking Construction
2007-2008
Healthy Schools
2008-2009
Improving Accessibility

2009-2010
Homes for the Future
2009-2010
Raising economic prosperity through partnership

St Helens Towns Fund Business Case



Connected Places St Helens Multi Modal Interchange

July 2022

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Towns Fund – Connected Places

The Connected Places programme looks to deliver upgraded sustainable transport infrastructure facilities to complement and unlock the broader regeneration of St Helens Town Centre. The scheme consists of the following elements:

- A new bus station as a premier standard ‘gateway’ to a redeveloped Town Centre. The bus station will incorporate nine operational stands, seven layover stands and a modern travel centre facility, with increased capacity to accommodate future passenger growth and an enhanced customer experience. Green roofs and photo-voltaic materials will help to provide sustainable power for the facility and encourage biodiversity. Improved pedestrian priority and public realm will enhance connectivity to St Helens Rail Station, establishing a multimodal interchange facility at the heart of the regenerated town centre. Public realm upgrades around the bus station will provide new public space connecting cultural facilities such as the Theatre Royal and The Gamble building to the wider regenerated town centre.
- Upgraded public realm in key retail and evening economy centres to enhance permeability, improve wayfinding legibility, and increase footfall. This will include improved crossing facilities, additional high-quality public space, greenery and cycling facilities.
- Installation of new high-quality pedestrian and cycle connections crossing the ‘concrete collar’ of the St Helens Linkway, facilitating coherent, direct, safe, comfortable, and attractive access into St Helens town centre on foot and by bike.

The business case for Towns Fund investment will focus on the bus station element of this overall programme, forming a minority contribution alongside the Liverpool City Region Sustainable Transport (CRSTS) investment.

Strategic Case

The Strategic Case comprises: 1) the case for change in terms of environmental sustainability, quality of facilities, safety and security and supporting town centre regeneration; 2) the rationale and market failures present that mean government intervention is necessary; 3) alignment with national policies and strategy such as the levelling up white paper and bus back better; 4) alignment with local and regional policies such as the Liverpool City Region Bus Service Improvement Plan; 5) the socioeconomic context; 6) the scheme’s vision and objectives; 7) expected outcomes and alignment between the proposed investment and the Town Investment Plan themes; 8) key stakeholders; and 9) dependencies and constraints.

There is clear need for the project with an existing facility that not only provides a sub-par experience for existing users, it does not have enough capacity to cope with anticipated growth, particularly as a result of the Liverpool City Region Bus Service Improvement Plan that will see a significantly enhanced public transport provision across the region.

The following objectives have been identified for the project:

- Environment and Sustainability – provide sustainable alternatives to the car for travelling into and out of St Helens town centre, make public transport more attractive as a mode choice and enhance the user experience.
- Economic Development and Regeneration – support sustainable growth of St Helens town centre, making it more attractive to investors and for visitors to stay and shop longer.
- Access to Opportunity – provide convenient and sustainable travel opportunities for the community to connect to jobs, retail, leisure, culture and heritage.

There remain a number of key dependencies associated with land assembly, planning consent and match-funding. Work to address these dependencies is moving at pace: a strategy is in place to acquire interests required for the delivery of the bus station; the English Cities Fund hybrid planning application relates in-part to the bus station; and engagement with sub-regional partners to secure additional funding from the CRSTS.

Economic Case

The purpose of the Economic Case is to identify the option that delivers best public value to society and provide a formal assessment of value for money in line with HM Treasury Green Book and Department for Transport's Transport Analysis Guidance (TAG).

An extensive option selection process has been undertaken. First, consideration of 13 different locations found that only the existing bus station site is capable is viable whilst providing the capacity needed to meet the scheme objectives. Second, consideration of 22 different design variations has identified the layout which best serves the facilities needs and fits in with the surrounding transport network.

Economic appraisal, informed by a demand model, quantifies and monetises the marginal external cost benefits of additional mode shift that will be result from the scheme primarily in terms of decongestion, fewer accidents and improved environmental outcomes, in addition to journey quality benefits relating to a new interchange facility. Set against the cost of the scheme, this results in a benefit cost ratio of 3.09. Non monetised impacts and other appraisal considerations are identified.

Table A1: Appraisal Summary Table	
	Proposed option
[A] PV of initial benefits (£000)	£53,472
[B] PV of adjusted benefits (£000)	£53,472
[C] PV of public sector costs (£000)	£17,318
[D] PV of Towns Fund only costs (£000)	£4,871
[E] PV of project costs ¹ (£000)	£17,318
NPSV (£000) [A-C]	£36,154
Initial BCR (xx:1) [A/C]	3.09
Adjusted BCR (xx:1) [A+B/C]	3.09
Total project cost BCR [A/E]	3.09

The scheme is judged to provide high value for money, and this is robust to sensitivity analysis. For the BCR to fall to 1.0, either scheme benefits would have to reduce by 68% or costs would have to increase by 209%. Land assembly costs remain unknown at this stage; however, the sensitivity analysis demonstrates that even allowing for these costs, the project is likely to represent value for money.

Financial Case

The Financial Case demonstrates that the bus interchange is viable to deliver and is sustainable in the long term given that operation and maintenance costs will be no different to the existing facility. The capital investment of £10.7m will be majority funded (£7.45m) by the CRSTS and minority funded (£3.25m) by Towns Fund. Funding will support investment in construction and professional fees. A summary is provided in the table below.

Table A2: Expenditure profile					
Cost line	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Total
Professional fees	£347,783	£460,377	£460,377	£460,377	£1,391,130
Construction				£9,274,200	£9,274,200
TOTAL	£347,783	£460,377	£460,377	£9,734,577	£10,665,330

It is noted that the capital cost estimate does not allow for costs associated with land assembly. Further detail is emerging in respect of this element and the analysis will be updated in due course. It is envisaged that this cost will be met through CRSTS funding with no impact on the Towns Fund allocation.

Commercial Case

St Helens Borough Council ran a competitive tender exercise using the Merseytravel Consultancy Services Multi Party Framework Agreement 2019-2023, to procure the design contractor for the interchange, and duly appointed WSP and their architect partners Austin Smith Lord. Procurement for the next stage of the design work, up to RIBA 4, including design and build specification is under way at the time of writing this business case.

The programme plan for 2022/23 includes for the development of the procurement strategy during September 2022 for the design and build contract. This will be developed in partnership between St Helens Borough Council and the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA), who manage a large estate of bus stations across the city region and will ultimately manage the St Helens Bus Station.

St Helens Borough Council's procurement and contracting arrangements are designed to ensure that best value is achieved for the public purse.

Management Case

A governance structure, with Terms of Reference, has been implemented for this project. This structure has the Programme Board and Delivery Group at the centre, with the LCRCA Transport Committee, LCRCA Transport Investment Team, Town Deal Board, St Helens Borough Council Cabinet, ECF Steering/Executive Groups and wider stakeholders on the periphery.

Roles and responsibilities of the Programme Board and Delivery Group are defined.

An initial risk assessment has been prepared by the design team with input from the Project Manager. Key risks identified at this stage relate to land assembly, planning and consents, and funding. A risk workshop is planned which will support a detailed assessment of risk in respect of the proposed design option and confirm the proposed management arrangements.

The project programme/key milestones are set out below.

Table A3: Overarching project milestones		
Activities	Target Date	Status
Outline Planning Permission	Q2 22/23	On track. Submitted as part of ECF Masterplan submission April 2022
RIBA Stage 3 Designs approved	Q2 22/23	On track. WSP design team developing proposals, design workshops held in June/July 2022.
Land Acquisition complete	Q4 22/23	Programmed and resourced activity for 22/23
Detailed design to RIBA stage 4	Q1 23/24	Programmed and resourced activity for 22/23 and 23/24
Final costings	Q1 23/24	Programmed and resourced activity for 22/23 and 23/24
Full Planning Permission	Q2 23/24	Programmed and resourced activity for 22/23 and 23/24
Design and Build Contract procured	Q3 23/24	Programmed activity for 22/23 and 23/24
Start on site	Q1 24/25	Programmed activity for 24/25

Table A3: Overarching project milestones		
Activities	Target Date	Status
Completion and handover to Merseytravel	Q1 25/26	On track

Both St Helens Borough Council and the LCRCA have significant track records of successfully delivering major transport investment projects. These include junction upgrades on the A570 St Helens Linkway, a £6.7m improvements scheme at A580/A570 Windle Island, Newton-Le-Willows Station redevelopment and rebuilding St Helens Central Station.

An extensive communication and stakeholder engagement plan is in operation with regular meetings with key stakeholders (various authorities, transport operators and developers) and a live stakeholder engagement tracker has been developed.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. St Helens Town Investment Plan

In September 2019, the government formed the Towns Fund – a £3.6 billion initiative with the objective to drive economic regeneration. St Helens was selected as one of the 100 towns invited to develop proposals for a Town Deal in accordance with the objectives of the Fund, to drive the economic regeneration of towns to deliver long term economic and productivity growth through:

- Urban regeneration, planning and land use
- Skills and enterprise infrastructure, and
- Connectivity.

The development of a Town Investment Plan (TIP) marked the first stage of agreeing a Town Deal with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). Building on the shared understanding of the town, the St Helens Town Deal Board developed and agreed the following vision for St Helens over the next 10 years that is ambitious and, importantly, deliverable:

*“By 2030 St Helens will be **culturally centred**, will nurture and celebrate its **cultural and industrial heritage**, will build upon its creative and innovative gene in **glass making and foundation-industries** to innovate and **do things differently**, and create new opportunities, including those from the City Region. **Vibrancy** will be created for the town centre; the town will be a **smaller, accessible, and enjoyable place to come together** and will be a place where the community will learn from one another, improve their **physical and mental wellbeing** and where people want to live, work and visit. Businesses and residents will be attracted to the new opportunities available, will have **quality spaces** to dwell and linger and will benefit from **improved transport and digital connections** borough-wide”*

Under this vision, the Town Investment Plan outlined a plan for growth and investment aimed at levelling up local communities. The investment strategy built upon a comprehensive review of the town’s key challenges and opportunities, informed by a thorough stakeholder engagement and consultation process with the public and key stakeholders. The projects were prioritised through a robust selection process, consisting of the alignment with the following strategic intervention themes and objectives:

1. Establishing the foundation for future growth through the catalytical impact of Glass Futures and the opportunity to harness innovation and skills for the benefit of the local community.
2. Delivering a high-quality residential offer within the town centre to meet housing need, diversify the town centre housing stock and providing the opportunity for a new residential population to thrive in the town centre as part of our wider place-making ambitions.
3. To create a more sustainably accessible Town Centre to respond to changing high-street functions; shrinking the proportion of retail and introducing a diverse mix of town centre uses to complement the residential offer. Creating the right spaces and places for independent businesses to thrive and building on the opportunities of greater footfall and visitors into St Helens as a result of Glass Futures.
4. Positively changing the perceptions of the town and the borough through maximising St Helens’ heritage and cultural assets to provide a distinctive offer for visitors, residents and businesses and introducing meanwhile uses to create a vibrant, animated place.
5. To enable our children, young people and the local community to raise their aspirations and take pride in their place through providing the right places and spaces to meet, collaborate, learn and

develop their skills to benefit from new employment opportunities and the transformational growth of the borough.

6. Ensuring digital inclusion and laying the foundations for communities, businesses and visitors to digitally connect, for businesses and investment to be attracted into the borough and supporting residents and businesses to be able to adapt to a new digital agenda.
7. Connecting communities with employment opportunities through ensuring sustainable movement and accessibility for St Helens town centre and borough wide.
8. Building on the St Helens Cares model to create a first-class health, wellbeing and social care hub for the town and improve residents' health outcomes.

Table 1-1: St Helens Town Investment Plan's strategic intervention themes and objectives		
Themes	Description	Objectives
Urban Regeneration and Land Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land remediation Uplift in number of town centre residents Promoting greater vibrancy and activity within the town centre Delivering enhanced townscape, public realm and amenity Securing greater town centre footfall, dwell-time and expenditure Create new employment opportunities and business start-ups Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. 	SO1 – A smaller, sustainable and accessible town centre
		SO2 – Delivering a high-quality residential offer
		SO3 – Changing Perceptions
		SO4 – Establishing Foundations for future growth
Culture and Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved cultural and heritage offer Increased visitor numbers Greater dwell time Jobs created/safeguarded 	SO5 – Raising community and young people's aspirations
Employment, Skills and Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support business start-ups Support existing businesses Learners supported to secure qualifications and skills Land value uplift Jobs created/safeguarded Improve health and wellbeing 	SO6 – Improving Health Outcomes
Connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved affordability, convenience, reliability, and sustainability of travel options to and from places of work and places of interest. Reduce congestion within the town Enhanced high street and town centre experience that prioritises pedestrians Increased digital use by businesses Increased ability of residents to work remotely/flexibly Secure digital inclusion Enhanced digital skills for residents and businesses 	SO7 – A future-proofed town
		SO8 – Connected Communities

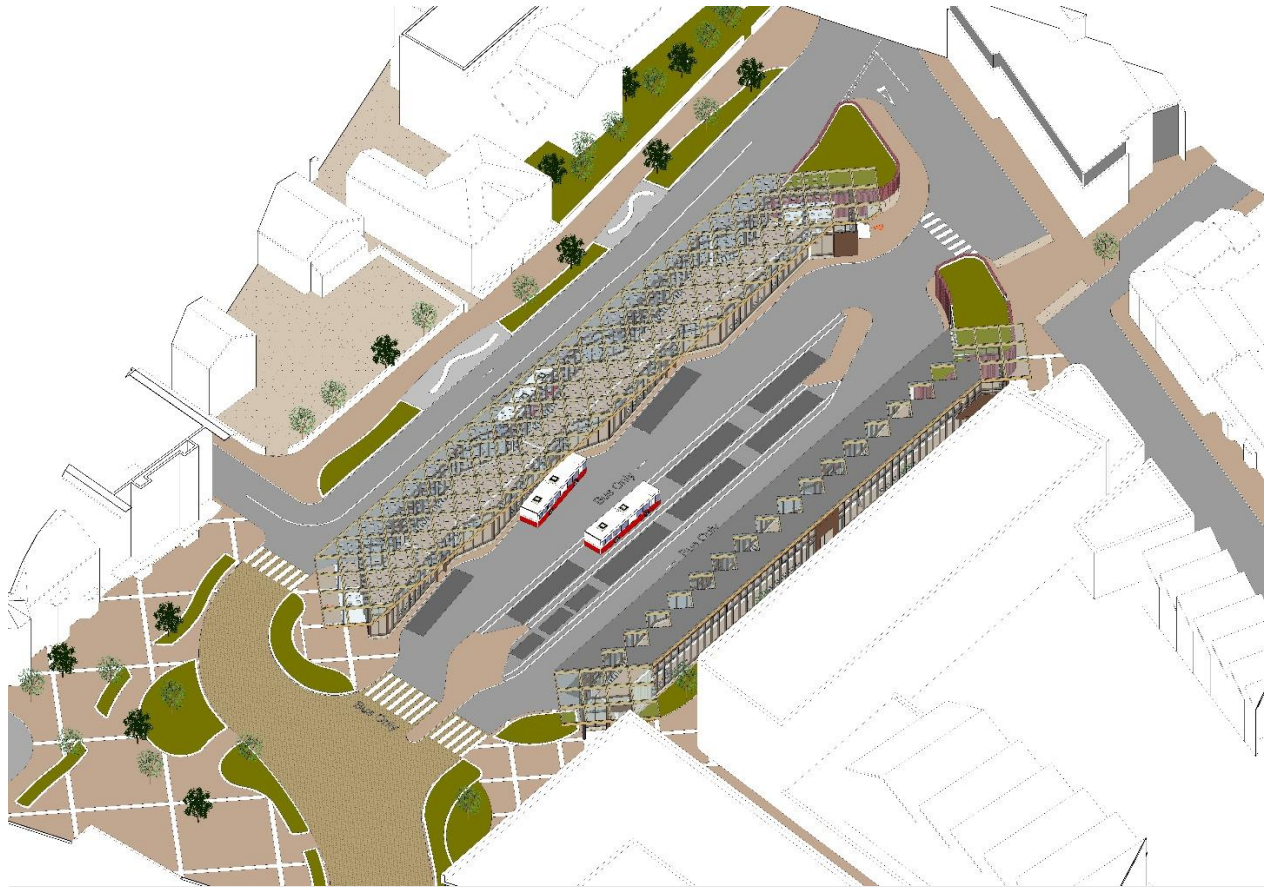
1.2. Connected Places

The Connected Places programme looks to deliver upgraded sustainable transport infrastructure facilities to complement and unlock the broader regeneration of St Helens Town Centre. The scheme consists of the following elements:

- A new bus station as a premier standard 'gateway' to a redeveloped Town Centre. The bus station will incorporate nine operational stands, seven layover stands and a modern travel centre facility, with increased capacity to accommodate future passenger growth and an enhanced customer experience. Green roofs and photo-voltaic materials will help to provide sustainable power for the facility and encourage biodiversity. Improved pedestrian priority and public realm will enhance connectivity to St Helens Rail Station, establishing a multimodal interchange facility at the heart of the regenerated town centre. Public realm upgrades around the bus station will provide new public space connecting cultural facilities such as the Theatre Royal and The Gamble building to the wider regenerated town centre.
- Upgraded public realm in key retail and evening economy centres to enhance permeability, improve wayfinding legibility, and increase footfall. This will include improved crossing facilities, additional high-quality public space, greenery and cycling facilities.
- Installation of new high-quality pedestrian and cycle connections crossing the 'concrete collar' of the St Helens Linkway, facilitating coherent, direct, safe, comfortable, and attractive access into St Helens town centre on foot and by bike.

The Towns Fund business case will focus on the bus station element of this overall programme, forming a minority contribution alongside the Liverpool City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS).





1.3. This Business Case

AMION Consulting has led a team supported by WSP and CBRE, working in collaboration with the project team from St Helens Borough Council, to produce this Business Case in line with HM Treasury Green Book requirements and published guidance for Towns Fund Stage 2 Business Cases.

Therefore, the Business Case continues in five further sections, as follows:

- **Strategic Case** – describes the proposed investment as well as its primary vision and project objectives, strategic alignment, rationale for intervention, and key stakeholders;
- **Economic Case** – assesses the economic costs and benefits of alternative intervention options in compliance with government guidance, as well as risks and optimism bias;
- **Financial Case** – sets out the financial costs, receipts, funding, and risks associated with the project;
- **Commercial Case** – outlines the commercial deliverability of the project, identifying the procurement route, potential for risk transfer, and wider considerations; and
- **Management Case** – describes the proposed management arrangements, including stakeholders, governance, resources, milestones, and risk management.

STRATEGIC CASE

2. STRATEGIC CASE

2.1. Introduction

The Strategic Case sets out the context and rationale for intervention, key stakeholder requirements, risks, dependencies, and constraints.

2.2. Case for Change

2.2.1. Environmental Sustainability

The current bus station has limited capacity, meaning it cannot provide services for anticipated increases in patronage resulting from Local Plan growth and LCR bus reform. Without adequate provision, mode share for sustainable transport will be held back, resulting in an unacceptable amount of car usage within the town and the resultant greenhouse gas and air quality impacts. Limited space within facility also means that buses idle with engines running on Corporation Street, constant exhaust emissions close to pedestrians. Active travel links to the town centre and public transport interchanges are limited, unclear and poor quality.

2.2.2. Quality of Facilities

The current bus station has outdated facilities, which are not attractive to passengers or local businesses. This reduces footfall and ultimately bus patronage. Wayfinding is also challenging, making traversing the town centre, interchanging between different modes of sustainable travel (rail, bus, walking and cycling) and finding the correct services difficult.

The current facility gives a poor sense of arrival in the town centre, which if not updated it will be a blight on transformed town centre. The surrounding area is unattractive, which if not addressed will undermine town centre regeneration efforts and reduce uptake of sustainable travel modes.

2.2.3. Safety and Security

There are safety and security issues with the existing facility. In terms of safety, whilst there have only been a couple of reported road traffic collisions in the last five years (which were slight in severity), perceived safety is poor in what is a vehicle dominated environment. This again contributes to an unattractive town centre environment, undermining broader regeneration efforts. In terms of security, the facility cannot be locked at night and there is crime reported within the vicinity every month – mostly public order, violence and anti-social behaviour offences.

2.2.4. Town Centre Growth and Regeneration

St Helens is undergoing significant economic development and proposed investment. The Council is working in partnership with the English Cities Fund (ECF) to advance ambitious proposals for the regeneration of the town centre. Phase 1 of the overall town centre masterplan is seeking Towns Fund investment to support the regeneration of the existing Hardshaw Centre to provide new hotel, office and retail accommodation, alongside a new market hall facility and town centre housing. This wider scheme, which will secure the regeneration of zones immediately adjacent to the bus station, is being advanced under an overarching outline planning application, with a significant degree of coordination in the design phase.

The current bus station facility is a limiting factor in this growth. A lack of capacity means new development would be associated with excessive vehicle congestion, limiting scope for planning and attracting investors. This would further be compounded by the facility being outdated and unattractive, working against the objectives of the wider town centre development and regeneration. This is particularly significant as the

bus station will form an immediate frontage to key regeneration elements, including the new hotel and office, and the redevelopment of The Gamble building, as well as existing uses such as the Theatre Royal.

2.2.5. Summary

The above analysis identifies several inter-linked needs in the town, which is holding back economic development and sustainable travel, as follows:

- There is a need to provide additional public transport capacity to enable St Helens town centre to grow and to realise latent demand, resulting in modal shift and improved environmental outcomes;
- There is a need to provide higher quality facilities to increase attractiveness, improve perceived safety and wellbeing, and promote broader regeneration efforts; and
- There is a need for better integration of sustainable transport facilities within the town centre.

The proposals for this Connected Places Towns Fund project are, therefore, directly aligned to an identified need.

2.3. Rationale and market failure

A redeveloped, larger high-quality bus station is required to ensure the inter-linked needs are met, and the variety of opportunities are capitalised upon to ensure long-term sustainable growth. The interventions are associated with the following market failures:

- **Coordination issues** – redevelopment of the bus station and associated public realm and active travel infrastructure is a central component of the town centre regeneration. A piecemeal, non-integrated approach would lead to an ineffective solution, if any at all.
- **Public goods** – whilst not a pure public good, transport infrastructure has public good characteristics, as they are available for all to use (non-excludable) and can be used by many individuals simultaneously (non-rivalrous in consumption); furthermore, the public realm is free at the point of use. Investment therefore would not be forthcoming from private funds. The project does however have a direct effect on a pure public good, the air we breathe, with its impact on carbon emissions and air quality.
- **Positive externalities** – the project will result in significant modal shift away from the private car. This is associated with several positive externalities including: reduced congestion, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, better air quality, less noise pollution, lower rates of highway infrastructure wear and a reduction in demand for fossil fuels. The scheme, with its increased levels of accessibility and improved public realm may also lead to increases in land values for surrounding residential and commercial properties.
- **Imperfect information** – the existing facility exhibits poor wayfinding, limiting the flow of information to transport users, leading to wasted time and lower take up of sustainable travel modes.

Without Towns Fund investment, the Connected Places project will not progress due to the existing barriers and market failures in place.

2.4. Policy Alignment and Strategic Context

The project has been prioritised during St Helens' Town Investment Plan development due to the alignment between the project vision and several overarching national ambitions within policy documents such as the UK Plan for Growth 2021¹, including:

¹ HM Treasury, (2021); Our Plan for Growth: Build Back Better

- **Levelling Up White Paper** – transport infrastructure, an important component of physical capital, stressed in the 2022 Levelling Up White Paper, as it improves connectivity within and between different parts of the UK, increases market access, connects people to jobs and is vital to support wider regeneration of high streets, town centres and cities. Public transport specifically is one of the focus areas for the 12 national levelling up missions, with an aim of making local public transport connectivity across the country to be closer to London’s standards by 2030.
- **Bus Back Better** – published in 2021, Bus Back Better sets is the Government's national strategy for delivering better bus services for passengers across England, through ambitious and far-reaching reform of how services are planned and delivered, to reverse decades of declining patronage that was accelerated by the pandemic. It states how bus projects achieve on average very high value for money and are key to delivering wider government priorities of improving productivity, levelling up and net zero. The strategy is made up of many components, including providing better and cleaner vehicles, more frequent services, increased use of franchising, more bus priority measures, and integrated ticketing for simpler and cheaper fares.
- **Clean Growth Strategy** – the 2017 Government strategy for growing national income while cutting greenhouse gas emissions makes reference to the accelerated adoption of low emission buses.

The delivery of the Connected Places project within the St Helens Town Investment Plan also strongly aligns with stated objectives of a range of sub-regional and local plans and strategies:

Table 2-1: Alignment with regional and local policies	
Policy document	Alignment
LCRCA Transport Plan	States a key priority for local bus services is to create conditions where services operate on time and with attractive journey times relative to the private car. Investing in the key route network is crucial for this, of which the A57 corridor connecting St Helens with Liverpool City Centre is listed as a priority for the Green Bus Routes programme.
LCR Bus Strategy	2016 document setting out how bus services will be improved within the Liverpool City Region. Notes the importance of improving the customer experience “off bus” e.g., at bus stations and makes reference to a 10-year bus station investment programme.
LCR Bus Service Improvement Plan	<p>Published in 2021 and in aligned to Bus Back Better, the Bus Service Improvement Plan is a £667.4m investment over 2022-2025 aiming to create a fairer, stronger, cleaner, connected and vibrant city region. The plan has five priorities: 1) quick and reliable journeys – through ‘Green Bus Routes’ bus priority measures and a Bus Rapid Transit system; 2) a comprehensive and integrated bus network – with enhanced physical and temporal coverage; 3) contactless ticketing with fare capping and reductions; 4) an excellent passenger experience through MetroBus branding and a passenger charter; and 5) an emission free bus system by scaling up the deployment of zero emission buses.</p> <p>The bus service between Liverpool and St Helens features heavily in the plan and will hit all five priorities, whilst the Connected Places scheme is specifically mentioned: <i>“The Green Bus Route between St Helens town centre and Liverpool City Centre will be served by the city region’s first fleet of hydrogen-powered buses, with a new multimodal interchange in St Helens town centre as part of a transformative regeneration scheme.”</i> Up to £60m from the Transforming Cities Fund and the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement has been earmarked for Liverpool to Knowsley and St Helens Green Bus Route, with a Business Case expected in 2022 and a benefit cost ratio representing high value for money.</p> <p>In March 2022, leaders on the LCRCA voted unanimously to confirm franchising as the region’s preferred future model for running the bus network and services.</p>
LCR Local Journeys Strategy	The Liverpool City Region Local Journeys Strategy sets out the combined authority’s transport strategy across multiple transport modes and geographies for journeys which are, broadly, less than 5km in length and with an origin or destination in the LCR.

Table 2-1: Alignment with regional and local policies

Policy document	Alignment
	The Connected Places project will support the overall vision and a number of the strategy's objectives including 'Adopt a whole-journey approach and promote active travel choices for access to bus and rail hubs for longer journeys' which the redeveloped bus station will facilitate and 'target investment to maximise value for money' as demonstrated by the economic case. The project will also support the objective to 'promote behavioural change as part of a targeted programme of actions to improve the attractiveness, safety and marketability of walking, cycling and public transport networks' as a modernised bus station will result in improved perceptions of the public transport network, encouraging more residents to use the public transport network (buses) for local journeys.
LCR Climate Action Plan	The Combined Authority declared a Climate Emergency in June 2019 and set an ambitious goal to become carbon neutral by 2040, ten years before the national target. The Climate Action Plan was drawn up to ensure 'opportunities for early action are not missed' and to act as a framework for the LCR's actions towards climate and sustainability goals. Relevant actions to the bus station in St. Helens include 'improve the 10A bus corridor between Liverpool and St Helens, including signal technology upgrades, priority lanes, red routes and bus stop upgrades', 'recover patronage of the bus network through the development and implementation of a Recovery Bus Partnership' and 'purchase 20 hydrogen fuelled double decker buses, to be used initially on the 10/10A corridor between Liverpool, Knowsley and St Helens (targeting air quality action areas)'.
LCR Sustainable Transport Settlement – Investment Prospectus	<p>The Investment Prospectus sets out how the LCR would use its share of the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlements funding to support growth and productivity, decarbonisation and levelling up while building long-term fiscal sustainability locally.</p> <p>The prospectus identifies a pipeline of priority projects including the Green Bus Corridor (10A) between Liverpool city centre and St Helens and the St Helens Town Centre Multimodal Interchange (this project).</p>
LCR Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan	The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) is a strategic approach to developing a cohesive network of high standard active travel routes across the region. The LCWIP will help to deliver the strategic objectives set out in the LCRCA Transport Plan (2019) in relation to cycling and walking. St. Helens is identified as one of the ten town/district centres identified for investment within the LCWIP Phase 1 with 6.3km new and upgraded cycleway to be delivered in the town.
Town Centre Investment Plan	<i>Transforming Our Town: Planning for the future of St Helens Town Centre</i> (2017) has been developed by St. Helens Council to provide a blueprint for the regeneration of the town centre. It sets out the vision for the town centre to 'rejuvenate the town centre, encourage investment, grow the local economy and increase job opportunities - while looking after all the things that make St Helens a unique place'. The strategy highlights the town's need for improved connectivity including the potential for a town centre modal interchange.
St Helens Town Centre Masterplan Framework	The Masterplan Development Framework for St. Helens has been developed by St Helens Borough Council and the English Cities Fund (ECF) to bring forward regeneration across the borough, prioritising St Helens and Earlestown town centres. The framework's review of the current town centre performance finds that the bus station is poorly connected to the wider town centre with very limited public realm. The framework therefore contains proposals for a redesigned bus station to provide a more pleasant and safer environment for pedestrians and enhanced north-south pedestrian routes.
St Helens Borough Strategy	<i>Our Borough Strategy: 2021-2030</i> highlights SHBC's six key strategic priorities to 2030 which will guide its actions. Of particular relevance to this business case are Priority Four: Support a strong, thriving, inclusive and well-connected local economy and Priority Five: Create green and vibrant places that reflect our heritage and culture.

Table 2-1: Alignment with regional and local policies

Policy document	Alignment
St Helens Local Plan 2022-2037	St Helens Local Plan 2020-2035 shows the vision for future development in the borough following extensive consultation and review. One of the key priorities of the Local Plan is 'Investing in infrastructure and transport' with the plan supporting improvements and upgrades to sustainable transport modes and their networks, such as the Connected Places project.
St Helens Healthy Weight Strategy	St Helens Healthy Weight Strategy 2020-2025 has the long-term aim to halve the number of children in St Helens that are obese by the year 2030. The plan includes the objective of "Planning and creating an environment that promotes physical activity and healthy eating" which will be supported by the improved opportunities for active travel as a result of the bus station redevelopment.
St Helens Climate Response Plan	St Helens Borough Council declared a Climate Emergency in July 2019 and, together with partner organisations, is aiming to make the borough net zero by 2040. The Climate Response Plan includes promoting active travel as a key activity, including making it easier, quicker, cheaper and safer to move around by low-carbon modes – including buses.

2.5. Socio-Economic Context

As of 2019, GVA in St Helens stood at £2.7 billion, representing a concerning decline of 7.3% since 2010. At £14,962, GVA per capita is almost half of the UK average (£28,996) and has decreased by 10.1% since 2010. Productivity, as measured by GVA per job, is also substantially lower than the UK average (£43,321 versus £56,670 for the UK).

Employment totalled 61,000 in the St Helens local authority in 2020, falling slightly by 1.6% when considering the change from 2015. Sectoral analysis of the economy reveals that the health sector accounts for the highest number of jobs of any sector (8,000 or 13%), with retail and transport & storage closely following (7,000 jobs in each sector).

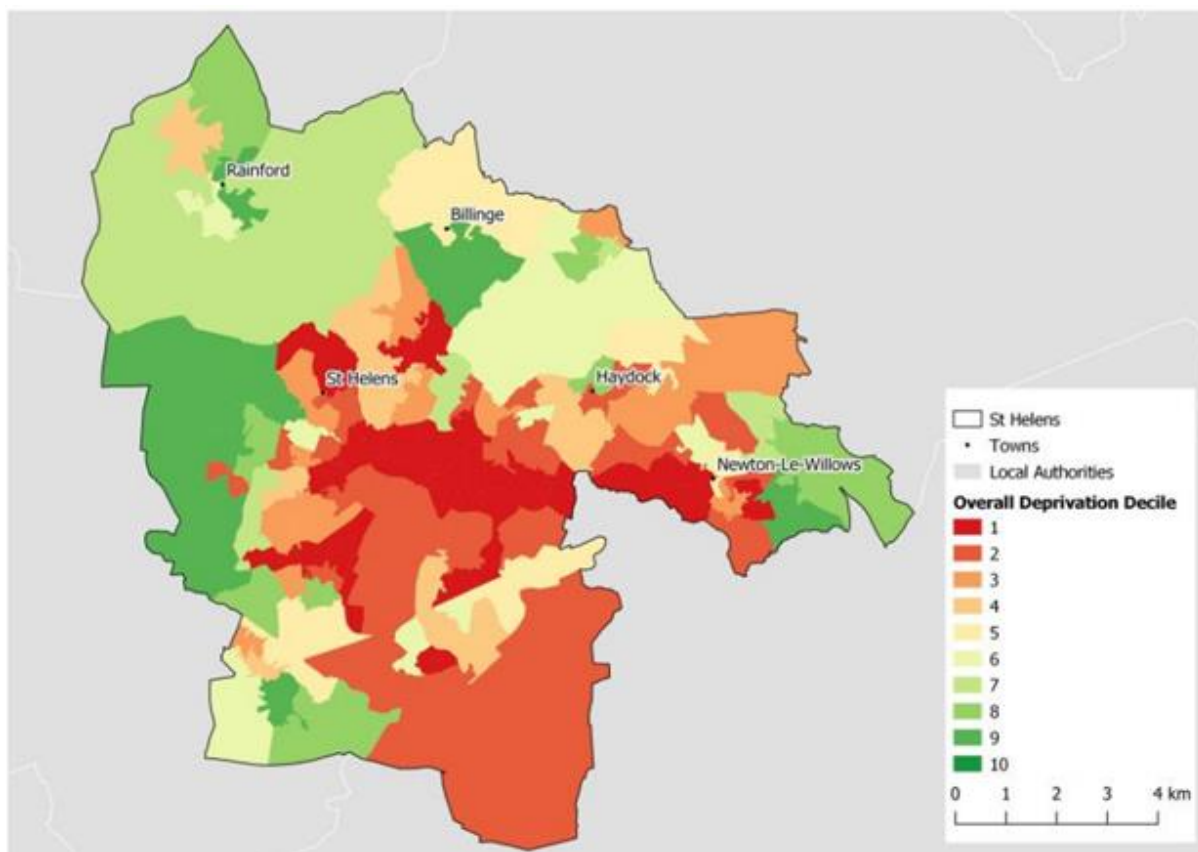
Despite declines in GVA and employment in recent years, the number of businesses in St Helens has been increasing and currently stands at 4,950. Businesses are supported by good strategic transport links and broadband connectivity infrastructure – 81% of premises have gigabit connectivity which is significantly higher than the UK average of 26.7%. Logistics and transport, glass manufacturing and security services are particularly important for St Helens, with low carbon heat and energy efficiency sectors also expected to be the largest drivers of future green jobs. However, there are relatively few businesses in knowledge-based industries (26.7% of all St Helens businesses compared to 33.5% regionally and 36.3% nationally). Meanwhile, the 1.6% proportion of innovation jobs in St Helens is lower than Liverpool City Region (2.7%), the Northwest (3.8%) and Great Britain (4.9%).

With a total population of 181,095, the proportion of St Helens residents with no qualifications in 2021 (6.4%) was slightly lower than the Northwest average (7.5%) or nationally (6.7%). Meanwhile, 39% of residents had NVQ4+ qualifications, which is slightly higher than regionally (38.5%) but lower than the UK (43.5%). When considering the pattern of earnings in the borough, resident earnings in St Helens in 2021 (£29,355) were lower than workplace earnings (£32,601), however prior to this, from 2015-20, resident wages exceeded those of workers. Interestingly, whilst St Helens' resident earnings in 2021 were below regional and national averages, workplace earnings exceeded the Northwest and UK figures.

The most recent claimant count data for St Helens reveals the proportion of total working age residents who are claimants is 4.6%. This proportion is slightly lower than regionally (4.8%) however higher than the 4.2% national proportion.

According to the Index of Multiple Deprivation, almost a quarter of St Helens' neighbourhoods are amongst the 10% most deprived in England, whilst there are no neighbourhoods in the least deprived 10%.

Deprivation is concentrated particularly in the town centre, the south and east of the borough as shown in the figure below.



Health deprivation is particularly acute, with 81.5% of LSOAs in St Helens within the 30% worst performing for health in England.

2.6. Vision and Objectives

As stated in the overall introduction, the vision for St Helens' Town Investment Plan is as follows, which the Connected Places project plays a huge contributory role in achieving:

*"By 2030 St Helens will be **culturally centred**, will nurture and celebrate its **cultural and industrial heritage**, will build upon its creative and innovative gene in **glass making and foundation-industries** to innovate and **do things differently**, and create new opportunities, including those from the City Region. **Vibrancy** will be created for the town centre; the town will be a **smaller, accessible, and enjoyable place to come together** and will be a place where the community will learn from one another, improve their **physical and mental wellbeing** and where people want to live, work and visit. Businesses and residents will be attracted to the new opportunities available, will have **quality spaces** to dwell and linger and will benefit from **improved transport and digital connections** borough-wide"*

The overarching aim of the Connected Places project is to increase the uptake of non-car modes, especially bus, in the context of regeneration of the town centre.

The following objectives are proposed for the project:

- Environment and Sustainability – provide sustainable alternatives to the car for travelling into and out of St Helens town centre, making public transport more attractive as a mode choice and enhance the user experience.

- Economic Development and Regeneration – support sustainable growth of the town centre, making it more attractive to investors and for visitors to stay and shop longer.
- Access to Opportunity – provide convenient and sustainable travel opportunities for the community to connect to jobs, retail, leisure, culture and heritage.

2.7. The Proposed Investment

2.7.1. Description

The proposed project that this business case relates to involves an improved Bus Station in St Helens town centre. This will comprise widening the area for the bus station to create a more pedestrian and cycle friendly space, with enhanced public realm, walking routes, new bus stands (up to 17) and better legibility and connectivity with the town centre, St Helens Central (Rail Station) and the civic quarter of the town via Bickerstaffe Street.

The project is part of the broader “Connected Places” scheme, which in addition to the new bus station involves:

- *Upgraded public realm connectivity between the bus station and St Helens Central rail station;*
- *Improved public realm, including active transport connectivity, in the western half of St Helens town centre, including Bridge Street, Ormskirk Street and Westfield Street;*
- *Installation of new pedestrian crossings and improved connectivity between the Linkway (A58), key housing areas and the town centre; and*
- *New cycle hub located at St Helens Central rail station.*

Table 2-2 identifies the alignment between the project and the main strategic intervention themes and objectives set out in the Town Investment Plan.

Table 2-2: St Helens Town Investment Plan’s strategic intervention themes and objectives	
Strategic Intervention Objectives	Alignment with Town Investment Plan themes
Environment and sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting more sustainable modes of transport to support key strategic objectives around: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ S07 – a future-proofed town; ○ S08 – connectivity.
Economic development and regeneration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban regeneration and land use – the delivery of a modern facility set within a high-quality public realm environment contributes to the following strategic objectives under this theme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SO1 – A smaller, sustainable and accessible town centre; ○ SO3 – Changing Perceptions; ○ SO4 – Establishing Foundations for future growth. • S08 - Connected Communities – reducing congestion and enhancing the experience of bus users and pedestrians.
Access to opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S08 - Connected Communities – Improved affordability, convenience, reliability, and sustainability of travel options to and from places of work and places of interest in the town centre. • S05 - Raising community and young people’s aspirations – enhancing community access to opportunities for employment, services and leisure within the town centre, including for younger age groups.

2.7.2. Logic Model and Outputs

Proposals for the Connected Places project have been advanced by St Helens Borough Council in consultation with a range of key partners, notably the LCRCA, as appropriate for a major investment in a public transport hub. The project's logic chain in **Appendix A** demonstrates the flow of outputs and outcomes arising from the project's activities, including how low-income and deprived groups are prioritised within the intervention.

The activities and outputs for the project have been developed in line with these objectives. The overarching outcomes expected to arise from the project's activities and outputs are summarised in **Table 2-3** below.

Table 2-3: Expected outcomes to 2030			
	Environment and sustainability	Economic development and regeneration	Access to opportunity
Short-term outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mode shift from private to public and sustainable transport options• Reduced congestion in the vicinity of the bus station• Support transition to electrical bus services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improved quality of facilities and offer within bus station• High quality public realm providing clear linkages with wider regeneration activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhanced capacity ensuring that services are capable accommodating additional services• Reduced congestion resulting in improved service resilience
Longer-term outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduction in congestion across the town centre as enhanced services support mode shift• Improvement in local air quality• Reduction in average emissions per capita	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Change in passenger experience and overall levels of satisfaction• Catalysing long term investment in the town centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase in passenger numbers, including within target cohorts

2.8. Stakeholders

The Town Deal Town Investment Plan (TIP) development stage required substantial engagement activity to be undertaken

Regular meetings take place with the following key stakeholders Merseytravel; Bus operators; Liverpool City Region; ECF; Rail operators; Network Rail; and Consultants working on The Gamble project. More detail on the stakeholder management plan is provided within the Management Case.

The support for the project is demonstrated in the Letters of Support from key stakeholders in **Appendix B**.

2.9. Dependencies and Constraints

There are several key strategic dependencies and constraints. It is envisaged that these issues will be addressed as part of the ongoing design development of the project and associated due diligence. However, at this point, the following remain importance dependencies:

- Land assembly – the delivery of proposals for the redevelopment of the bus station is dependent upon the acquisition of a number of third-party interests. The acquisitions are being progressed by St Helens Borough Council under an internal budget allocation. Specialist support has been sought in relation to the acquisition of relevant interests required to deliver the project but at this stage the project remains dependent upon securing vacant possession;

- Masterplanning – led by ECF for the wider town centre. Proposals for the Connected Places project are well aligned with the adopted St Helens Town Centre Masterplan Development Framework which underpins the emerging design for Phase 1 of the town centre regeneration project. While strongly aligned, the wider town centre project does not constitute a dependency;
- Planning consents – a outline planning application has been submitted for the bus station works as part of a wider hybrid application covering Phase 1 of the proposed town centre regeneration project. The delivery of the bus station project will be dependent upon securing relevant detailed planning consents;
- Confirmation of funding – in addition to Towns Fund, the project is dependent upon securing capital funding provisionally allocated through the Liverpool City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (LCRSTS). The Business Case for this funding will be developed once the project has advanced to RIBA Stage 4. While this is a key dependency, the project is identified within the LCRSTS as a priority investment.

ECONOMIC CASE

3. ECONOMIC CASE

3.1. Introduction

The purpose of the economic dimension of this business case is to identify the proposal that delivers best public value to society, including wider social and environmental effects.

3.2. Approach to economic case

The Economic Case assesses the economic impacts of the scheme and whether value for money for the public sector is optimised. This involves developing a long list of options, with the options qualitatively compared to identify a shortlist. A quantitative comparison of the shortlisted options and the Reference Case is then set out to identify the preferred option. Sensitivity analysis follows to test the quantitative findings of the preferred option.

The assessment of economic benefits has been undertaken in full compliance with the latest HM Treasury Green Book (2020) and relevant Departmental guidance, particularly DfT Transport Analysis Guidance (TAG). There are several over-arching assumptions which apply to the value for money assessment (unless otherwise stated):

- all short-listed options have been appraised over a 60-year period, consistent with appraisal guidance for significant transport projects and appropriate given the scheme's likely asset life;
- where Present Value figures are presented, cost and values have been discounted at 3.5%;
- all monetised costs and benefits have been converted to 2022 prices, with general inflation excluded;
- the costs and benefits of the intervention options are presented in net terms and relative to the reference case; and
- optimism bias has been calculated using HM Treasury/DfT TAG methodology and included in the value for money analysis.

3.3. Approach adopted

The framework for assessing the economic benefits of the scheme has been developed having regard to the HM Treasury Green Book and DfT guidance, but also DLUHC, BEIS and DCMS guidance where applicable. As set out within the DLUHC Appraisal Guide, projects should be appraised on the basis of a benefit cost ratio (BCR) reflecting the private benefit associated with the change in land use and the external benefits (and costs) of the scheme, compared to the net public sector cost. **Table 3-1** sets out a summary from the DfT TAG of the potential benefits and costs that inform the assessment of the value for money.

Table 3-1: Description of the benefits and costs identified within DfT TAG

	Category of Impact	Impacts typically monetised	Impacts that can be monetised but can only inform an adjusted BCR or switch value	Impacts that are not feasible or practical to monetise
Present value benefits (numerator)	Economy	Business users and private sector providers (including revenues)	Reliability impact on business users Wider Economic Impacts	
	Environment	Noise Air quality Greenhouse gases	Landscape	Townscape Historic Environment Biodiversity Water environment
	Social	Commuting and other users Accidents Physical activity Journey quality	Reliability impact on commuting and other users Option and non-use values	Security Access to services Affordability Severance
Present value cost (denominator)	Public Accounts	Costs to broad transport budget Indirect tax revenues		

The calculation of costs and benefits has been undertaken based on TAG, with relevant impacts appraised, as set out in the Economic Benefits section below. Given the cross-sectoral nature of Towns Fund, other welfare cost benefit analysis based departmental guidance has been used, where applicable, that correspond to an impact not covered by TAG.

3.4. Shortlisting of options

3.4.1. Overview

Option development and shortlisting has been undertaken in two stages. First, consideration of the appropriate location of the redeveloped facility, and second, the configuration. An Options Report, prepared by WSP is contained in Appendix C. This section provides a summary of that work.

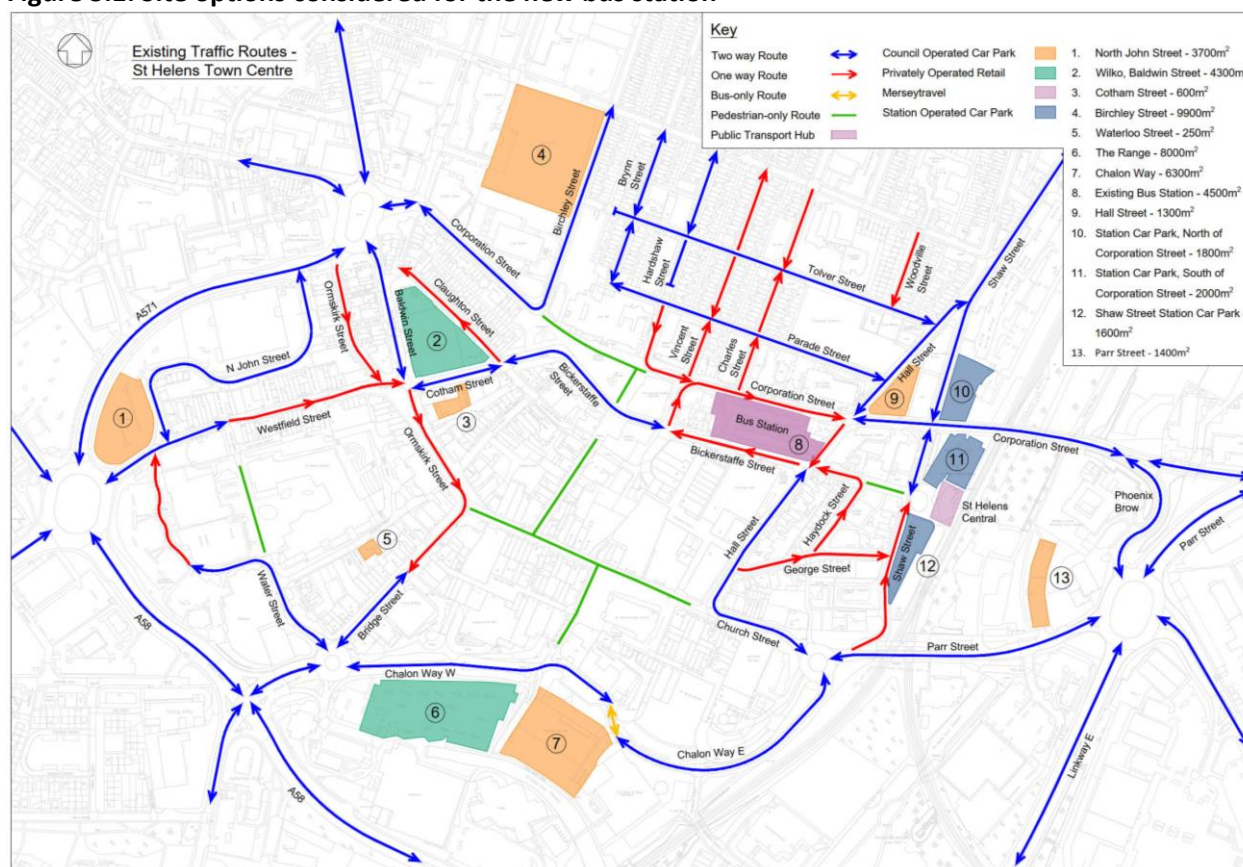
3.4.2. Scheme Location

The first round of option sifting undertaken related to the location of the redevelopment of St Helens bus station. Several locations have been considered by the Council for the facility, including:

1. North John Street
2. Wilko, Baldwin Street
3. Cotham Street
4. Birchley Street
5. Waterloo Street
6. The Range
7. Chalon Way
8. Existing Bus Station
9. Hall Street (Millennium Centre)
10. Station Car Park, North of Corporation Street
11. Station Car Park, North of Corporation Street
12. Shaw Street Station Car Park
13. Parr Street

The sites are illustrated in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1: Site options considered for the new bus station



Sites have been primarily selected on the basis of being currently on land used for car parking and therefore assumed to have a degree of availability for development. Sites 2 and 6 were included due to their strategic location despite requiring acquisitions. In terms of search area, sites have only been considered when they fall inside the town centre area bounded by the A571 and A58 roads, on the basis that a site outside of this area would likely be too remote to the main town centre amenity and the masterplan area.

The below table demonstrates the longlist of options considered based on the above locations.

Table 3-2: Longlist options scoping

Location	Existing Use	Pros	Cons	Summary
1 North John Street	Council Car Park	Decent size, on existing routes	Removed from Town Centre	Not a viable alternative
2 Wilko, Baldwin Street	Privately Operated Retail	Decent size, on existing routes	Private Ownership, awkward shape for layout, removed from rail station	Would need further investigation but significant challenges
3 Cotham Street	Council Car Park	On existing routes	Likely too small	Could act as layover space for Site 2 – but limited potential as primary location
4 Birchley Street	Council Car Park	Large, regular shape site	Removed from existing routes, rail station and town centre	Not a viable alternative

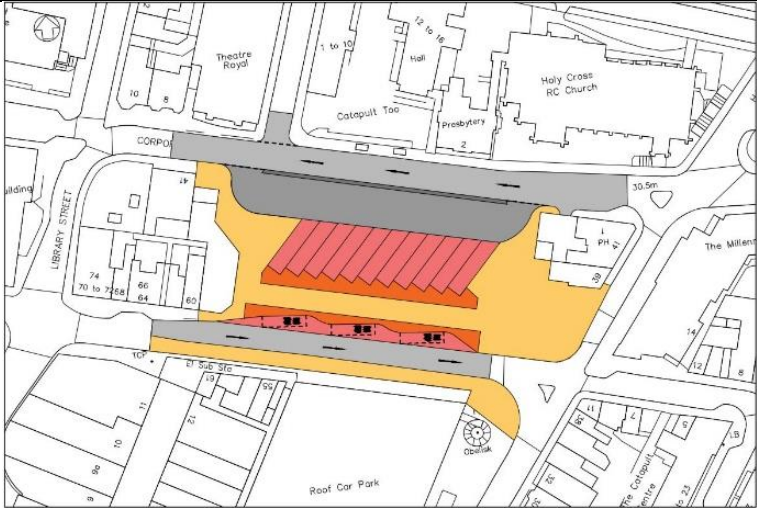
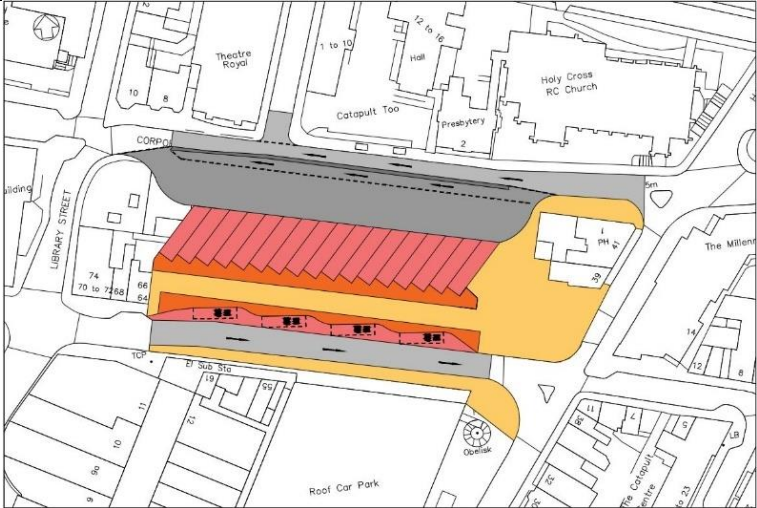

5 Waterloo Street	Council Car Park	Council ownership	Too small, hard to access for buses	Not a viable alternative
6 The Range	Privately Operated Retail	Large site, on some existing routes	Private business, removed from rail station	Not a viable alternative
7 Chalon Way	Council Car Park	Large site, on some existing routes	Removed from rail station, offers other development opportunity	Not a viable alternative
8 Existing Bus Station	Merseytravel	Established site, can be expanded	Conservative option	Viable site
9 Hall Street (Millenium Centre)	Council Car Park	On existing routes	Likely too small	Could act as layover space for Site 8 – not viable as a standalone location
10 Station Car Park, North of Corporation Street	Station Operated Car Park	Excellent opportunity for public transport interchange	Constrained site, needed for station parking	Not a viable alternative
11 Station Car Park, North of Corporation Street	Station Operated Car Park	Excellent opportunity for public transport interchange	Constrained site, needed for station parking	Not a viable alternative
12 Shaw Street Station Car Park	Station Operated Car Park	Excellent opportunity for public transport interchange	Constrained site, would require traffic flow changes to permit access	Not a viable alternative
13 Parr Street	Council Car Park	Good tie in with masterplan area	Constrained site, would require changes to bus routing	Not a viable alternative



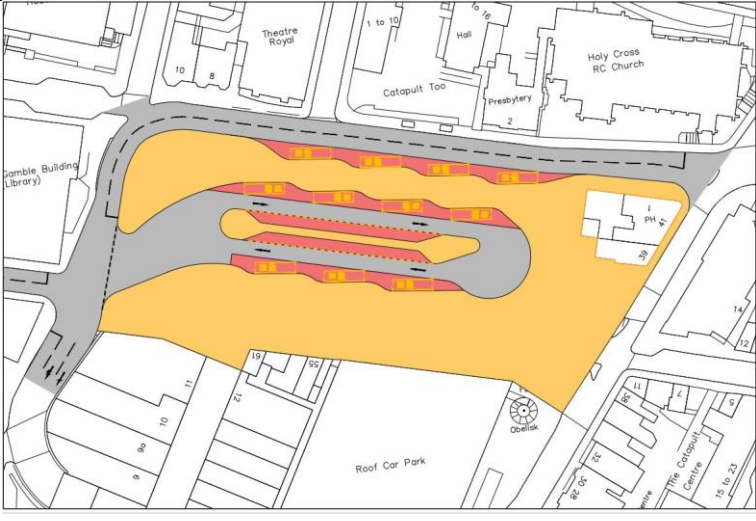
The existing bus station site was subsequently selected.

3.4.3. Scheme Configuration

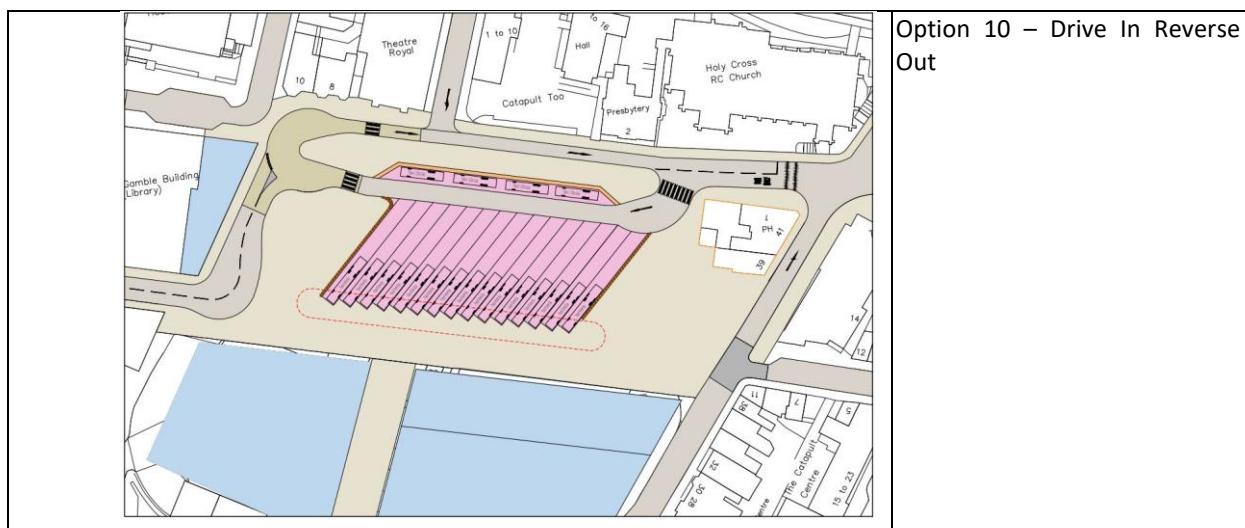
Ten general arrangements for the bus station facility, located on the existing site, have been considered. These are set out in Table 3.3.

Table 3-3: Layout configurations

Layout	Option no. and description
 A street layout map showing Corporation St and Bickerstaffe St. A red hatched area indicates a proposed road widening or lane change. The map includes labels for 'Theatre Royal', 'Catapult Too', 'Presbytery', 'Holy Cross RC Church', 'The Millen', 'Library Street', 'Roof Car Park', and 'Obelisk'. A scale bar indicates 30.5m.	Option 1 – Drive in / Reverse Out, Reverse traffic flow on Corporation St and Bickerstaffe St
 A street layout map showing Corporation St and Bickerstaffe St. A red hatched area indicates a proposed road widening or lane change. The map includes labels for 'Theatre Royal', 'Catapult Too', 'Presbytery', 'Holy Cross RC Church', 'The Millen', 'Library Street', 'Roof Car Park', and 'Obelisk'. A scale bar indicates 30.5m.	Option 2 – Drive in / Reverse Out, Reverse traffic flow on Corporation St and Bickerstaffe St, bypass layover space, additional space take
 A street layout map showing Corporation St and Bickerstaffe St. A red hatched area indicates a proposed road widening or lane change. The map includes labels for 'Theatre Royal', 'Catapult Too', 'Presbytery', 'Holy Cross RC Church', 'The Millen', 'Library Street', 'Roof Car Park', and 'Obelisk'. A scale bar indicates 30.5m.	Option 3 – Reconfiguration and expansion of the existing arrangement – traffic direction retained

	<p>Option 4 – Reconfiguration and expansion of the existing arrangement – traffic direction reversed on Corporation St/Bickerstaffe St</p>
	<p>Option 5 – Linear Arrangement with part pedestrianised and reverse traffic flow direction on Bickerstaffe</p>
	<p>Option 6 – Closed Horseshoe arrangement</p>

	<p>Option 7 – Horseshoe arrangement with egress</p>
	<p>Option 8 – Closed, Horseshoe arrangement accessed from eastern end</p>
	<p>Option 9 – Access from both ends</p>



An option sifting process, based on the strategic fit, potential value for money and deliverability has been undertaken for each of the 10 configurations. This has identified Option 7 – delivering a horseshoe configuration with egress – as the preferred way forward. While design configuration will continue to be refined as part of ongoing dialogue with funding and operational partners, the proposed option is the confirmed basis for the project.

Table 3-4: Layout configurations

Option	Strategic Fit	Potential VFM	Deliverability	Strategic appraisal
1				Drive in Reverse Out unacceptable to end user Merseytravel
2				Drive in Reverse Out unacceptable to end user Merseytravel
3				Insufficient number of stands, layover space would need to remain on street
4				Insufficient number of stands, layover space would need to remain on street
5				Large footprint dominating the local area, benefit of 29pedestrianizing Bickerstaffe Street would not be realised
6				Single point of entry/exit unacceptable to end user Merseytravel
7				Option selected
8				Single point of entry/exit unacceptable to end user Merseytravel, entry at eastern end means higher number of buses circulating around the bus station as dominant movements are to and from the west of the bus station
9				Unacceptable impact on the emerging Gamble square proposals. Difficult for non-bus passengers to cross the facility safely
10				Drive in Reverse Out unacceptable to end user Merseytravel

3.5. Economic costs

The financial costs of the proposed interventions have been developed by WSP and are set out in the Financial Case. These have been given in present (Q2 2022 prices²). It is noted that land acquisition costs

² There is therefore no need to index future costs to constant 2022 prices.

have not been included at this stage pending confirmation of the status of the land assembly and associated budgets. This will be included in the next draft of the Business Case.

The following amendments and assumptions have been made to incorporate the financial costs into economic costs for this assessment, in line with Green Book guidance:

- To adjust from factor costs to market prices, for comparability with the scheme benefits, the TAG market price adjustment factor of 1.19 has been applied, which accounts for indirect taxation. This is not double counting, as VAT (or any other tax) is excluded from the cost estimates.
- A profile of costs has been applied based on an estimate from the draft project programme (more detail is provided in the financial case).
- The constant price costs have been adjusted to present value costs by applying the Treasury's Social Time Preference discount rate of 3.5% per annum. Public capital expenditure within the programme is expected to run until 2025, which aligns with the Towns Fund guidance (Towns Fund funding must be spent by 2025/26).
- No operating, maintenance or renewal costs have been included as it is understood that these will be the same or less than the existing facility.

The estimated undiscounted and discounted public sector costs of each option are set out below.

Table 3-5: Summary public sector present value costs (£000)

	2022	2023	2024	2025	Beyond	Total net present cost
Option 1	£413.9	£399.9	£5,537.6	£5,350.3	£0	£11,701.7

Optimism bias is the proven tendency for appraisers to be optimistically biased about key project parameters, including capital costs and operating costs and project duration. Given the project's stage of development, and a lack of formal quantified risk assessment, it is appropriate to apply optimism bias for the economic cost.

The optimism bias adjustment factor has been selected from TAG Unit A1.2, Table 8, for Stage 2 building projects. This gives a value of 48%.

The discounted net present public sector cost including Optimism Bias for each intervention option is set out below.

Table 3-5: Summary public sector economic costs with OB (£000)

	2022	2023	2024	2025	Beyond	Total net present cost
Option 1	£612.5	£591.8	£8,195.6	£7,918.5	£0	£17,318.5

3.6. Demand Model

The economic benefits for the scheme relate to its use. A credible assessment of demand is therefore needed to drive the economic benefit calculations.

3.6.1. Do Minimum

Bus timetables for services that use St Helens bus station (and stops on surrounding streets that the new facility will replace) have been reviewed to provide a total number of departures. This amounts to 1,487 per weekday, 1,238 on a Saturday and 722 on a Sunday, totalling 9,395 per week, 488,540 per year and 1,342 on an average day.

By operator, 82% of the services are provided by Arriva Merseyside, 8% by Stagecoach, 5% by Huyton Travel, 4% by Hattons Travel and the remainder by smaller operators.

To convert these services into passenger numbers, the PSV occupancy factor of 12.2 from the TAG Databook has been applied, resulting in 5,960,188 passengers.

For total patronage of services that stop at the interchange at some point of the route, data provided by Merseytravel indicates this was 11,188,672 for Arriva passengers in 2019 (the last non-Covid impacted year). Data for the first part of 2022 suggests current patronage is roughly back up to pre-Covid levels. 82% of the passengers modelled to use the bus station (i.e., those that use services provided by Arriva Merseyside) is 4,871,558, meaning that 43.5% of passengers that use bus routes that stop at the St Helens bus interchange, are users of the interchange themselves and the remaining 56.5% only board and alight at other points of the routes.

3.6.2. Do Something

The proposed St Helens replacement bus station will provide additional capacity, which will be able to accommodate the forecast increases in bus patronage. The Liverpool City Region Bus Service Improvement Plan, operating under a franchising model, is forecast to generate 11% more patronage than the current system. Given that the current facility is accepted to be at full capacity, this 11% growth rate has been used to estimate the impact of the scheme on passenger numbers. This results in a total of 6,615,809 annual users, an increase of 655,621.

Of the new users, the amount that would have previously travelled by car has been estimated by applying bus diversion factors from the TAG Databook, specifically a factor of 29% which represents urban conurbations³. This means that 190,130 of the new bus station users would have otherwise travelled by car. Applying the average car occupancy figure of 1.57 from the TAG Databook, this equates to 121,102 car trips saved annually as a result of the scheme for the new bus station users. Using the average distance of a car trip from the 2019 National Travel Survey (8.4 miles or 13.4km), this results in 1,627,610km car km saved. Applying a factor of 2.297 to account for the bus route users that do not use the station⁴ increases this to 3,738,186km that is saved annually as a result of the scheme.

In all modelling, it has been assumed that 20% of the new passengers are realised in year 1, 40% of in year 2, 60% in year 3, 80% in year 4 and the full 100% from year 5 onwards.

3.6.3. Exclusions

Additional induced demand from a higher quality bus interchange (independent of capacity). The improved facilities lead to a reduction in generalised travel cost (explained in the economic benefits section). A reduction in generalised travel cost (perceived financial and non-financial costs of travel), is typically associated with an increase in demand, assuming the price elasticity of demand is not perfectly inelastic (equal to zero). The resultant change in demand would be calculated by the percentage change in generalised travel cost multiplied by the relevant elasticity⁵. However, a whole journey generalised travel cost for St Helens bus station users is not known (or proportionate to calculate), therefore this has been excluded.

Background growth in demand. Whilst population growth will (all other things being equal) increase travel demand, bus patronage has been in decline nationally for decades and there is much uncertainty in future

³ St Helens is part of the Liverpool City Region.

⁴ The new services that can operate as a result of the increased bus station capacity, will allow new bus users on the routes even if they do not use the bus station itself.

⁵ TAG Unit M2 (Variable Demand Modelling) states that public transport fare elasticity of demand typically lies between -0.2 and -0.9. This means that a 1% increase in generalised travel cost for public transport would result in between a 0.2% and 0.9% decrease in demand. Price elasticity of demand for public transport is therefore relatively inelastic.

travel behaviour over the coming years. Therefore, for simplicity, it has been assumed that demand will be constant throughout the appraisal period (after the five years build up).

3.7. Economic benefits

3.7.1. Project outcomes and impacts

Key economic outcomes and impact will comprise the below list of benefits. These benefits are calculated in line with TAG Guidance, are Level 1 impacts and therefore, are included in the initial BCR:

- Reduction in marginal external costs from mode shift; and
- Journey quality benefits.

All benefits have been calculated over a 60-year appraisal period, with an assumed opening year of 2026. The first 30 years are discounted at 3.5% back to 2022, and the subsequent 30 years are discounted at 3% back to 2022, in line with HM Treasury Green Book and DfT TAG. All values have been taken from the TAG Databook in 2010 prices and increased to 2022 prices using the GDP deflator (a factor of 1.2757).

Reduction in Marginal External Costs

A reduction in car kilometres is associated with a reduction in marginal external costs in relation to:

- Decongestion – i.e., other road users receiving user benefits as a result of fewer vehicles on the road;
- Reduced infrastructure wear;
- Fewer accidents;
- Improved local air quality;
- Less noise pollution;
- Lower greenhouse gas emissions; and
- Smaller indirect taxation yield (disbenefit).

“Inner and outer conurbations” marginal external cost values, weighted by North West road type usage and congestion levels have been applied to the reduction in vehicle kilometres set out in the demand model section (including five year build up).

Table 3-6: Marginal External Cost Benefits, 60-year PVB, 2022 prices, discounted to 2022 (000)

Benefit	PVB
Decongestion	£17,289
Infrastructure	£49
Accidents	£1,453
Local air quality	£347
Noise	£138
Greenhouse gas emissions	£1,032
Indirect taxation	-£750
Total	£19,558

Journey Quality Benefits

The TAG Databook provides Segmented values of bus quality interventions in generalised minutes. One of these is for new interchange facilities⁶. The full benefit has been applied to the 5,960,188 existing bus station users, whilst half the benefit has been applied to the 655,621 new users⁷ in line with the rule of a half for changes in consumer surplus.

The generalised minutes have been applied to the value of time, which differ by journey purpose. All week average percentage of person trips by purpose for PSV passengers has been obtained from the TAG Databook, resulting in 1.9% work trips, 18% commuting trips and 80.1% other. The relevant values of time have then been used from the TAG Databook.

Table 3-7: Journey quality benefits for new interchange, 60-year PVB, 2022 prices, discounted to 2022 (000s)

	Work trips	Commuting trips	Other trips	Total
Present value accounting for additionality (cumulative, £000)	£1,149	£10,809	£21,956	£33,915

3.8. Non monetised impacts and other appraisal considerations

3.8.1. Extent of disbenefits to highway users

The scheme includes rationalisation of the immediate local road network, closing some movements for vehicles. Whilst it could be argued that this may cause disbenefits to highway network users, it is not considered to be significant. Furthermore, modelling in a local microsimulation model would likely exaggerate any disbenefit as the opportunities for rerouting and variable demand are limited. Whilst a strategic transport model would give a more accurate representation, due to the ability to reroute across the town centre and modal shift, commissioning such work is completely disproportionate for the scale of impact. This is therefore considered to be a slight adverse non monetised impact, however wholly insignificant compared to the decongestion benefit estimated as part of the marginal external cost calculations.

It should also be noted that the primary destination for non-bus highway users in the vicinity of the bus station, the Hardshaw Centre carpark, is being demolished as part of the wider regeneration programme, with alternative parking provision to be located elsewhere in the town centre. This will therefore significantly reduce demand from non-bus highway users in the vicinity of the bus station, eliminating any slight adverse non-monetised impact in this area.

Traffic surveys undertaken in March 2022 (free from any restrictions on travel that might have otherwise been in place over the last two years as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic) revealed that bus and taxi movements represent notable proportions of total daily weekday vehicle movements on both Library Street (54%) and Bickerstaffe Street (55%). These statistics support the notion that any disbenefits to highway users more generally (much of the non-bus and taxi traffic is made up of servicing vehicles which will either be able to continue at prescribed times of day or are currently servicing premises within the Hardshaw Centre) will be extremely limited.

3.8.2. Safety

The rationalisation of highway movements and the design of the bus station facility will reduce the conflict between vehicles (particularly buses) and pedestrians. This, in turn, will reduce the likelihood of road traffic

⁶ The full list is Audio Announcements; CCTV at Bus Stops; CCTV on Buses; Climate Control; New Bus Shelters; New Bus with Low Floor; New Interchange Facilities; On-Screen Displays; RTPi (at bus stops); Simplified Ticketing; and Trained Drivers. To avoid potential double counting, only new interchange facilities has been selected.

⁷ As with the MEC benefits, the new users feature a five year build up.

collisions occurring and the perceived feeling of safety will improve. Given there is not an existing road safety problem in this location, this is considered to be a slight beneficial non monetised impact.

3.8.3. Wider Economic Impacts

Wider economic impacts, in a transport context, refers to benefits of a transport scheme being realised outside of the transport market, such as in the land, labour or product markets. TAG covers three types of wider economic impact: induced investment; labour market impacts; and productivity.

Improved public transport accessibility can lead to labour market and productivity benefits, where more workers can access employment opportunities, travel further to take up more productivity jobs and realise economies of agglomeration from improved sharing, matching and learning. However, the bus station itself merely provides the additional capacity for new services to operate. It would be complimentary schemes such as bus priority measures and other new public transport infrastructure that could realise these benefits.

There is a very real potential, however, that the scheme could unlock development, realising benefits in the land market through a mechanism termed dependent development. The scheme is particularly aligned with proposals for the regeneration of St Helens town centre, including the delivery of a new hotel, office accommodation and residential units. The benefits arising from investment in the town centre will be captured separately within the business case for the Phase 1 project, which is being progressed in parallel with the Connected Places Towns Fund bid. On this basis, no benefits arising from the future regeneration scheme have been attributed to Connected Places within this economic appraisal, although these benefits are reflected in the strategic case rationale for the project. Additional service capacity at the bus station will help support major housing allocations set out in the emerging St Helens Borough Local Plan, which forecasts 7,000 new homes and 265 hectares of new employment space in the borough by 2037.

3.8.4. Distributional Impacts

One of the key reasonings for the Towns Fund is to help level up the country, seeking to help rebalance activity from London and the Southeast to deteriorating town centres that have fallen behind. St Helens is designated as the 26th most deprived local authority in the country (out of 317 local authorities) according to the 2019 IMD Rankings from DLUHC.

The 2019 *Transport and inequality: An evidence review for the Department for Transport* by Natcan reports that “Those who depend more on the bus network to participate in the labour market tend to be lower paid, live in areas of deprivation, and are more likely to turn down employment due to transport limitations.” Improvements to bus facilities and services will therefore provide a higher level of benefit to those that are worse off in society compared to those that are better off. This is further compounded by the limited rail coverage in St Helens compared to other parts of the Liverpool City Region, placing a great reliance on bus services for public transport provision.

3.9. Non-quantified local benefits

Building upon the analysis of quantifiable effects, consideration of other more local economic, social, and environmental benefits has been undertaken. Note that these are not considered to be additional to any of the impacts discussed above and therefore are not formally part of the value for money assessment:

- Regeneration – the scheme is an integral part of the wider proposals for the regeneration of the town centre through a transformation intervention, progressed by SHBC in partnership with ECF. The enhanced bus station will improve the accessibility and attractiveness of surrounding developments.
- Image – the new bus station will provide a significant improvement in appearance compared to the existing facility, appearing less cluttered with less severance. For those travelling to the town centre by public transport, this will be an aesthetically pleasing gateway.

- Community benefits – the new facility will enable the local community's accessibility needs to be met and lead to enhanced civic pride.
- Future proofing bus services – the facility will enable mode bus passengers' numbers to be sustained and even grow in the future, as well as accommodating the adoption of new technologies such as zero emission vehicles.

A scoring and weighting framework has been adopted to assess the potential scale of the wider benefits under each option. Performance against each criterion is scored out of 10, while the weighting reflects the relative importance ascribed to each benefit based on the objectives for the project. Table 22 presents the assessment of non-quantifiable effects.

Table 3-8: Contribution to local growth and development

	Weight	Option 1
Criterion		
1 Regeneration	25%	9
2 Image	25%	7
3 Community benefits	25%	8
4 Future proofing bus services	25%	9
Overall score (out of 40)		33
Weighted score (out of 10)		8.25

3.10. Value for money assessment

The key results of the Economic Case based on quantified benefits are summarised in the Appraisal Summary Table.

Table 3-9: Value for money assessment

	Option 1
[A] PV of initial benefits (£000)	£53,472
[B] PV of adjusted benefits (£000)	£53,472
[C] PV of public sector costs (£000)	£17,318
[D] PV of Towns Fund only costs (£000)	£4,871
[E] PV of project costs ¹ (£000)	£17,318
NPSV (£000) [A-C]	£36,154
Initial BCR (xx:1) [A/C]	3.09
Adjusted BCR (xx:1) [A+B/C]	3.09
Total project cost BCR [A/E]	3.09

The preferred option represents high value for money.

3.11. Sensitivity

3.11.1. Scenario testing

Sensitivity analysis has been undertaken to test the robustness of the value for money estimates and their susceptibility to change in any of the key conditions underlying the programme.

The first form of sensitivity analysis is scenario testing. This approach considers the potential implications of changes to key outputs or costs for the delivery of economic benefits and value for money. The scenarios include some more ‘technical’ changes – for example, adjusting optimism bias or other assumptions.

The following scenarios have been run:

- **Scenario 1:** Increased optimism bias to 70% (Stage 1 building projects)
- **Scenario 2:** Reduced demand uplift to 7%, which represents the enhanced partnership bus reform model, as an alternative to franchising
- **Scenario 3:** 20% reduction to base demands
- **Scenario 4:** 40% reduction to base demands

The effects of these tests on the initial BCR are shown in the below table.

Table 3-10: Sensitivity tests

	Option 1
Core scenario	3.09
Sensitivity test 1	2.69
Sensitivity test 2	2.65
Sensitivity test 3	2.47
Sensitivity test 4	1.85

3.11.2. Switching values

The second form of sensitivity analysis is the switching values method. This approach identifies the point at which the programme moves from offering ‘acceptable’ value to money (a BCR of over 1.0) to ‘poor’ value for money (a BCR of under 1.0), as defined in the DCLG Appraisal Guide. The switching values for both costs and benefits are assessed.

The below table presents the results from the switching values analysis. As can be seen, considerable changes to either the benefits or the costs must occur for Option 1 to not represent good value for money. This analysis has taken place on the initial benefits. This provides a high degree of confidence that the project will continue to represent value for money, even accounting for land assembly costs which have not been included at this stage.

Table 3-11: Switching values

	Option 1
Percent change in net additional benefits	-67.6%
Percent change in net costs	208.8%

3.12. Summary

From the analysis set out above, Option 1 has been identified as the preferred option on the basis that it offers the most effective and efficient approach. It has a core BCR of 3.09 and represents high value for money. This option has also been shown to be robust to sensitivity analysis and performs strongly in terms of local non monetised impacts.

FINANCIAL CASE

4. FINANCIAL CASE

4.1. Introduction

The Financial Case has been prepared with a view to clearly demonstrating that the project is both deliverable and sustainable in long term use subject to securing initial grant funding support. Given that the scheme is the provision of transport infrastructure for use by existing public transport operators, there is no financial modelling or associated business plan for the operation of the facility.

4.2. Capital Costs and Profile

Preparation of scheme costs have been undertaken by Quantity Surveyors at WSP, based on a design and bill of materials provided by Austin Smith Lord. Rates are based on the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) Building Cost Information Services (BCIS) for new build coach and bus stations. A copy of the cost assessment is included at Appendix F.

The estimate, a total of £10,665,330 in Q2 2022 prices comprises the following:

- Construction including contractors' preliminaries of £7,728,500;
- Professional fees of £1,159,275 (15%); and
- Risk allowance of £1,777,555 (20%).

Note that these costs do not include optimism bias, which is taken into account within the Economic Case.

A profile/cashflow has been estimated based on the current scheme programme which assumes that construction will take place during the 2024/25 financial year. Professional fees relating to RIBA 2 design, RIBA 4 design, tender documents, procurement of design and build contract and any other activities are assumed to be split equally between the 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25 financial years.

A summary of the expected cost profile is outlined in **Table 4-1**.

Table 4-1: Expenditure profile					
Cost line	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Total
Professional fees	£347,783	£460,377	£460,377	£460,377	£1,391,130
Construction	-	-	-	£9,274,200	£9,274,200
TOTAL	£347,783	£460,377	£460,377	£9,734,577	£10,665,330

4.3. Land Acquisition Costs

While it is understood that the delivery of the proposed intervention is dependent upon securing a number of third-party interests, no allowance has been made for costs associated with the acquisition of land and premises at this stage pending clarification as to the overall cost and status of the land assembly strategy. This will be set out within the Full Business Case prepared in support of match-funding grant applications but is expected to be deliverable within an extended budget envelope without necessitating a requirement for additional Towns Fund investment.

4.4. Operation and Maintenance Costs

The new bus station building will include a range of design features that will improve the efficiency of the building and therefore ongoing cost savings compared to the current facility in addition to lower (traded) carbon emissions.

These proposed features are likely to include:

- Led lighting with smart controls;

- Sedum roof which will absorb carbon dioxide;
- A glue Lam frame (this has much lower embodied carbon than steel) and is from Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) approved timber;
- Photovoltaic cells on the roof of the structure that will generate electricity;
- Rainwater gardens adjacent to the building, which will slow the flow of rain into the main drains as a form of flood mitigation;
- Water attenuation tanks; and
- Aluminium curtain walling will feature recycled material.

However, the new facility will cover a larger physical footprint than existing, which will increase operation and maintenance costs. Therefore, it is considered that ongoing costs will not be significantly different to the current interchange and have therefore been assumed to be zero in this business case.

4.5. Funding Sources

[Error! Reference source not found.](#) provides a summary of required funding sources in order to deliver the project.

Table 4-2: Funding sources – total project costs		
Type	Source	Total Amount
Public sector	Towns Fund	£3.25m
Public sector	City Region sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS)	£7.45m
Total		£10.7m

The Towns Fund is a minority funder of the scheme, with the majority coming from the Liverpool City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS). A Business Case will be submitted for CRSTS funding later in 2022 for the remaining bus interchange funding, as well as the other elements of the Connected Places project i.e., the public realm and active travel infrastructure.

In addition, any outstanding land assembly costs will be met within the overall funding envelope for the project. As the allocation of Towns Fund is fixed, outstanding costs will be resourced through third party funding.

COMMERCIAL CASE

5. COMMERCIAL CASE

5.1. Introduction

The Commercial Case sets out the proposed delivery arrangements for the Towns Fund scheme, which will be implemented by St Helens Borough Council as the applicant organisation.

The commercial case details the status of the project. This provides a clear basis for moving the project forward at pace, allowing for a clear understanding and apportionment of risk.

5.2. Commercial deliverability

Consideration has been given to options for the delivery structure for the St Helens Multi Modal Interchange project, having regard to the construction and ongoing operation of proposed facilities.

A successful application to the Liverpool City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (LCRSTS) pre-development fund facilitated the initial design stage for the project. This design work commenced in November 2021, and the initial stage concludes in June 2022. Further funding from that source has been secured for 22/23 financial year. This will allow for detailed design of the bus station to be taken to RIBA 4 stage, and the successful design consultancy team will develop the specification for design and build. This second stage design work will continue all through 22/23 financial year, concluding Q1/2 of 2023/24.

Appendix D contains the Programme Plan for design work for 2022/23, including all technical tasks, and includes the latest whole-life programme plan.

5.3. Procurement strategy

5.3.1. Overview

The 1st stage of procurement for this project was the initial design work for all the elements of the St Helens Multi Modal Interchange project (bus station, public realm and active travel).

St Helens Borough Council's procurement team ran a competitive tender exercise, using the Merseytravel Consultancy Services Multi Party Framework Agreement 2019 – 2023 (ref DN354139). WSP, with their architect partners Austin Smith Lord were successful in this competition, and work commenced in November 2021 to take forward the high-level designs included in the ECF Town Centre Masterplan. The initial design stage was envisaged to be completed April 2022, but this has been extended to June 2022 to allow more detailed analysis and modelling of bus stand allocations and junction safety for all vehicles and pedestrians.

Procurement for the next stage of the design work, up to RIBA 4, and including design and build specification is under way at the time of writing this Business Case.

The programme plan for 2022/23 includes for the development of the procurement strategy during September 2022 for the design and build contract. This will be developed in partnership between the Council and Merseytravel, who manage a large estate of bus stations across the city region and will ultimately manage the St Helens Bus Station.

St Helens Borough Council's procurement and contracting arrangements are designed to ensure that best value is achieved for the public purse.

5.3.2. Operator procurement

Once the build has been completed, the bus station will be handed over to the LCRCA to manage the facility and operations, in line with their processes for the remainder of their bus station estate across the city region.

5.3.3. Social Value

The procurement strategy for the next stage of technical support, and the design and build contract, will include requirements for suppliers to set out details of social value benefits in line with St Helens Borough Council's and the LCRCA's Social Value policies.

5.4. Risk allocation

A programme risk, issues and opportunities register has been compiled by St Helens Borough Council, and is attached as Appendix C. The register, which currently contains 16 entries, is managed by the scheme's programme manager and includes the following information:

- A unique ID for each entry;
- The date the entry was raised;
- Status;
- Element in the programme;
- Whether it is a risk, an opportunity or an issue;
- The risk type e.g., performance, technical, statutory/legal, or health and safety;
- Opportunity type if applicable;
- The cause/event in which it occurs;
- A description;
- The consequences of it happening;
- An initial rating in terms of impact (1-5), likelihood (1-5), and RAG rating based on the numerical value of the product of impact and likelihood;
- Mitigation actions;
- Action due date;
- Action owner;
- Mitigation type;
- Log of completed actions; and
- Current rating based on residual risk, mitigated impact and mitigated likelihood with a mitigated RAG rating.

At present, the most serious risks, based on their potential impact and likelihood (rating 20 out of 25 or above) are as follows:

- **Land ownership.** A technical risk in terms of the land and property required to deliver the scheme note being owned by the council (rating 25/25). Mitigation action is to ensure that CPO process is underway.
- **Location of travel shop facility,** a technical risk (rating 20/25). Mitigation actions are to agree with ECF the options for housing the travel shop and confirm who will pick up responsibility for delivery.
- **CPO.** A statutory/legal risk in terms of its potential for challenge (rating 20/25). Ongoing mitigation actions are to engage competent legal and property advisors to guide process, ensuring transparency in decision making.

- **Planning.** A statutory/legal risk in terms of potential for challenge (rating (20/25). Ongoing mitigation is proactive engagement with key stakeholders relating to planning application, robust consultation process and use feedback to influence design.
- **Construction.** A health and safety risk in terms of it being a constrained site (rating 20/25). Mitigation action is to seek ECI advice to look at phasing of works, logistics of keeping the site operational and locations of site compounds.

The approach to risk management is set out within the Management Case.

5.5. Project Status

5.5.1. Overview

The principal of a new bus station in St Helens was initially considered as part of the LCRCA's proposed improvements to the Route 10A, which is a flagship high frequency route running from St Helens to Liverpool. The business case for these improvements cited an improved St Helens bus station within it, and Merseytravel commissioned Waterman to consider whether the bus station should move within the town, remain in situ without upgrade, or be improved within the existing site.

This principal was then picked up as part of the ECF Masterplan for St Helens Town Centre. The Masterplan recognised the opportunity that a new, improved bus station could provide in terms of the overall regeneration of the town centre, acting as a gateway to proposed new retail and commercial offers in the town, and providing an important transport hub to serve the new residential population.

Different layout options were developed, working alongside the LCRCA who will be the end user of the project, with the concept design being developed based on operational parameters (number of stands, layover spaces, built amenity etc) specified by the LCRCA, set against aspirational architectural design and proposed improvements to public realm space and changes to highway configuration, with priorities afforded to pedestrians and buses over the private car.

A concept layout, which showed an expanded, reconfigured bus station on the site of the existing, with layover space and operational stands included in the footprint of the bus station, with some changes to general traffic circulation, was incorporated within consultation material for the masterplan in Autumn 2021, and the proposals were well received by the public.

Starting in November 2021 St Helens Borough Council commissioned a consultant team, WSP, to develop designs for the reconfigured bus station to RIBA Stage 3 plus. This design development work is progressing and is ongoing and should conclude by the end of June 2022.

A programme plan for 2022/23 has been developed and includes a high-level plan for the whole project. Once approvals have been given for initial design work, the detailed design will commence June/July 2022.

The programme plan also includes supplementary activity that forms part of the St Helens Borough Council's wider Connected Places initiative, including:

- Enhanced public realm around the bus station area, the link between bus and rail stations, and some of the surrounding streets including Church Street, Ormskirk Street, Westfield Street, Bridge Street;
- Active travel enhancements to and around the town centre, including safe and direct links across the Linkway, and including cycle parking provision at the bus and rail stations;
- Town Centre Movement Strategy, a detailed plan of interim movement arrangements to keep the town centre functioning during demolition and construction; and
- Town Centre Car Parking Strategy. Setting out general principles for car parking (recognising objectives to increase modal share to bus) quality, pricing and locations.

5.5.2. Land ownership

ECF, who are managing delivery of the Town Centre Masterplan, have taken responsibility for land referencing and land acquisition. Keppie Massie Ltd, Surveyors and Property Consultants, have been approved by the ECF Town Centre Masterplan Steering Group as the engagement partner for the acquisition of properties in the bus station, and they will also support CPO activity. ECF are leading on this piece of work as St Helens Borough Council's partner for consistency with any activity required for Vacant Possession of the Hardshaw Centre. St Helens Borough Council will work closely with ECF/Keppie Massie to capture key activities and milestones for integration as dependencies into the Bus Station Programme Plan.

5.5.3. Funding agreements

The total cost of the bus station is estimated at £10.67m. This application seeks to secure £3.25m of funding from Towns Deal, with the remainder to be secured from the Liverpool City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS). A £10m allocation has been listed in the April 2022 CRSTS funding allocation report, after being listed as one of the priorities in the original prospectus to government.

5.5.4. Planning consent

Planning consent has yet to be secured for the bus station, and consent for this is scheduled to be applied for in Autumn 2022. The town centre masterplan was submitted as a hybrid planning application in March 2022. This included detail on the proposed demolition of sites required for the development of the bus station, including properties within the footprint area, and outline consent on the remainder of the proposals set out in the town centre regeneration masterplan. This application is scheduled to be determined in September 2022.

5.6. State subsidy

The bus station will be publicly owned and operated (by the LCRCA) and used by private bus operators on a commercial basis. While it is not envisaged that the scheme will constitute subsidy, St Helens Borough Council has procured independent legal advice to confirm compliance as part of the assurance process. This will be reported within the assurance report.

MANAGEMENT CASE

6. MANAGEMENT CASE

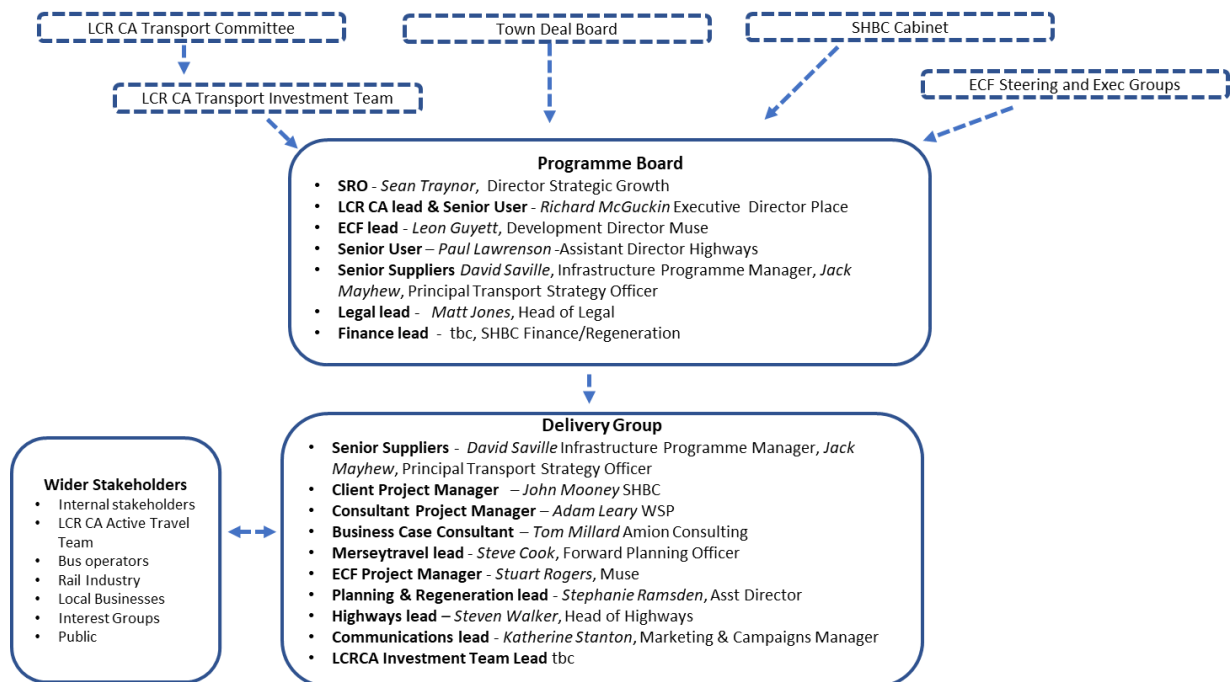
6.1. Introduction

This section sets out the management case for the proposed project, including the governance structure, project management arrangements, key milestones, track record, and stakeholder engagement strategy.

6.2. Project organisation and governance

A summary of the roles and responsibilities of key participants in respect of the key Governance functions is outlined below.

A governance structure, with Terms of Reference has been implemented for this project. The organogram below highlights the composition and function of the Programme Board and Delivery Group. The Terms of Reference, setting out roles and responsibilities can be found at Appendix F.



Responsibilities of the Programme Board - During the programme the Board will:

- Provide guidance and direction to the Delivery Group, keeping it within agreed constraints and ensuring delivery against identified objectives
- Identify and commit appropriate resources required for successful delivery
- Review each work stage and deliverable and approve progression to next
- Approve any Requests for Change
- Scrutinise and approve submission of Business Case(s) and funding bids
- Scrutinise and approves Project Initiation Document(s)
- Ensure appropriate communication about the project takes place with relevant stakeholders
- Assume responsibility for benefits realisation

The Programme Board will meet quarterly, or when required to provide approvals or decision making.

Responsibilities of the Delivery Group - During the programme the Delivery Group will:

- Undertake programme planning
- Manage the programme budget
- Manage delivery of technical tasks
- Ensure alignment of planning, design and activities with other Town Centre regeneration projects, particularly phasing with ECF Town Centre Masterplan
- Actively manage risks through risk workshops and management of risk register
- Undertake progress reporting to Programme Board and funders
- Manage stakeholder engagement and public consultation
- Produce compliant business cases for funding
- Procure technical support for design and construction of all elements

The Delivery Group will meet monthly and produce formal records of meetings.

6.3. Programme and milestones

The key milestones derived by this date are set out in [Error! Reference source not found.](#) below.

Table 6-1: Overarching project milestones		
Activities	Target Date	Status
Outline Planning Permission	Q2 22/23	On track. Submitted as part of ECF Masterplan submission April 2022
RIBA Stage 3 Designs approved	Q2 22/23	On track. WSP design team developing proposals, design workshops in June/July 2022.
Land Acquisition complete	Q4 22/23	Programmed and resourced activity for 22/23
Detailed design to RIBA stage 4	Q1 23/24	Programmed and resourced activity for 22/23 and 23/24
Final costings	Q1 23/24	Programmed and resourced activity for 22/23 and 23/24
Full Planning Permission	Q2 23/24	Programmed and resourced activity for 22/23 and 23/24
Design and Build Contract procured	Q3 23/24	Programmed activity for 22/23 and 23/24
Start on site	Q1 24/25	Programmed activity for 24/25
Completion and handover to Merseytravel	Q1 25/26	On track

The team will ensure these milestones are met through rigorous programme planning, management of risks, resourcing of technical designs, application of compliant procurement policies, and a robust programme governance process.

6.4. Project Management

6.4.1. Overview

The first Project Initiation Document, setting out background, scope, benefits, assurance process, stakeholders, and risks/dependencies was developed in November 2021 and is attached as **Appendix G**.

Through the initial design stage (November 21 to June 22) The Client (St Helens Borough Council) Project Manager has been working alongside the Consultant Project Manager to take responsibility for the day-to-day management of the project. Weekly project update meetings have taken place. Alongside more in-depth monthly project meetings, attended by most key stakeholders. Notes from all of these meetings have been documented.

As the project moves to more detailed design, a Programme Manager has been appointed in June 2022 to take overall responsibility, managing the Delivery Group, and reporting to the Programme Board.

6.4.2. Project team

A project Delivery Group is now in place for the project (set out in 6.2 above) and reports to the Programme Board.

6.4.3. Change control

Change control processes for this specific project will be managed by the SHMMI Programme Manager, with regular dashboard reporting to the Programme Board. Major change requests will be escalated to Programme Board for consideration and approval.

At a programme level, change control will be managed under the Assurance Framework for the St Helens Town Deal. The Programme Board will deal with any issues as they arise relating to achieving the successful delivery of the project. Any significant changes to the project scope, timescales or budgets will by default be reported to the Town Deal Board, who will need to approve any such changes (including escalating and requesting project change requests from DLUHC).

6.5. Risk management

The Council has an established approach to risk management in relation to major capital projects and programmes which will be utilised and implemented on this project. In line with Government guidance, this involves establishing Risk Management Plans and Risk Registers appropriate to the design stage and the scale and complexity of the project.

An initial risk workshop was held June 2022 that will facilitate the development of a more comprehensive risk register covering the whole life of the project. The risk register will be managed by the Programme manager, reporting to the Programme Board (Appendix E).

6.6. Track Record

6.6.1. St Helens Borough Council

SHBC has a significant track record of successfully delivering major transport investment projects.

Table 6-1: Council's track record

A570 Linkway / Elton Head Road Junction Upgrade

A £3.7m LGF1 highways-led scheme delivered as per the delivery programme during 2018/2019 to remodel the A570 St Helens Linkway junction with Elton Head Road (Sutton Hall Junction) from a priority roundabout to a signal-controlled crossroads. The scheme has been successful in reducing issues with congestion, as well as significantly improving access around the junction for pedestrians and cyclists through the provision of new crossing facilities and paths. These works were procured and delivered using the Council's TMC 15 – Engineering Works Framework (2017-2021).

A570 Linkway / Scorecross Junction Upgrade

A £1.2m LGF1 highways-led scheme which is currently on site and is on track for delivery completion in March 2021. The scheme introduces localised widening and new active facilities around Sherdley roundabout, as well as a speed limit reduction on all approaches to improve safety. As per the A570 Linkway/Elton Head Road junction upgrade, these works were also procured and delivered using the Council's TMC 15 Engineering Works Framework.

Windle Island Improvements

A £6.7m highways-led scheme delivered by Balfour Beatty through the Scape framework, with the aim of improving traffic flow and safety at this important junction on the Key Route Network. The scheme, which was delivered to budget and four weeks ahead of schedule in April 2019, was funded through the LCRCA KRN Fund. It is widely considered a success by officers, local politicians and road users in terms of congestion reduction and improved safety.

Emergency Active Travel Fund (EATF)

During 2020 SHBC delivered new active travel infrastructure with the support of LCRCA as part of Tranche 1 of this Government initiative. St Helens Council quickly mobilised resources to introduce measures which have converted existing advisory cycle lanes on Chester Lane, Jubits Lane and Clock Face Road to segregated cycle tracks. The Council has now also agreed a series of Active Travel Fund (ATF) Tranche 2 measures with LCRCA, which will complement the Tranche 1 measures and the routes delivered as part of the ERIC Package, offering a coherent network between key destinations. The implementation of the Tranche 1 measures was procured using the Council's TMC 15 Engineering Framework.

6.6.2. Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (Merseytravel)

LCRCA has a significant track record of successfully delivering major transport investment projects.

Table 6-2: LCRCA's track record

Newton-Le-Willows Station Redevelopment

£18.9m redevelopment of Newton-Le-Willows station and extension of the station car park to provide bus interchange and step free access for passengers, with the provision of a re-designed booking office and new pedestrian access to both platforms, which was completed in 2019. The LCRCA project team worked with officers from SHBC to release land owned by the council, as well as working closely on issues around highway access and additional land acquisition to successfully complete the scheme. Project contractors managed by LCRCA not only delivered station elements but also undertook highways improvements on behalf of SHBC. The project was led by a strategic Project Board similar to that proposed for the ERIC Package, that was attended by all partners including St Helens Borough Council, Network Rail, LCRCA and NTL, and a stakeholder working group.

St Helens Junction Station Car Park

The 2017, £792k expansion of St Helens Junction station car park on land adjacent to the station, where project partners LCRCA, St Helens Borough Council, NTL, Network Rail and Vextrix successfully delivered 242 new spaces on time and to budget.

Rebuilding St Helens Central Station

£6m redevelopment of the existing station to make it fully accessible and provide a better link between the town centre and rail network. Works were undertaken in 2007 through a partnership of LCRCA, St Helens Borough Council, NTL and Network Rail.

6.7. Communication and stakeholder engagement

6.7.1. Project reporting

Consultant and Client meet on a minimum weekly basis and a highlight report outlining activity, upcoming commitments, issues and project risks is shared in advance of this session. Further to this, there are

monthly project team meetings that are attended by technical experts and key stakeholders from the client team, English Cities Fund, Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (Merseytravel).

The client and consultant team also have monthly Programme and Risk sessions scheduled.

The client Project Manager is required to report on progress monthly to the Liverpool City Region Project Management Office. The screenshot from the monthly reporting process is included in Appendix H.

6.7.2. Stakeholder engagement plan

Successful stakeholder engagement is a critical component of this project. Regular meetings take place with the following key stakeholders:

- LCRCA (Merseytravel) – to discuss and review latest design proposals to ensure bus station is fit for purpose from an operational perspective;
- Bus operators – to understand their requirements and gain feedback on emerging proposals;
- LCRCA – regular update meetings on project progress and future funding requirements;
- ECF – to ensure integration of this project with design and construction of the wider Town Centre Masterplan. Also, ECF are leading on the securing of vacant possession to enable project delivery;
- Rail operators and Network Rail – to seek feedback on designs for the link between bus and rail station; and
- Consultants working on The Gamble project – to ensure designs for these adjacent facilities are successfully aligned.

A live stakeholder engagement tracker is regularly updated (Appendix I) as all stakeholder engagement takes place.

This tracker includes the following information:

- Scheme objectives and key messages (to ensure consistency of communications);
- Organisations;
- Key Contacts;
- Role/Responsibility;
- Contact Details;
- Engaged to Date (Y/N);
- Project Team Interface;
- Engagement Strategy;
- Engagement to Date;
- Notes;
- Level of Interest (High/Medium/Low);
- Level of Influence (High/Medium/Low);
- Approach; and
- Aim of Consultation.

6.8. Benefit, monitoring, and evaluation

6.8.1. Overview

The St Helens Town Fund Programme will adhere to the requirements of the 'Towns Fund Monitoring and Evaluation Guidance' (April 2021) which clearly identifies the differing responsibilities for monitoring and evaluation.

6.8.2. Project monitoring

In line with the guidance issued by DLUHC, mandatory indicators will be collected and reported on by the Programme Management Team. While data will largely be presented for the programme as a whole, it will be collated from information returned by the individual project managers. These indicators relate to inputs, activities and outputs which will be reported on a six-monthly basis; and intermediate qualitative outcomes, and a limited set of quantitative outcomes such as jobs and footfall on an annual basis.

Table 6-3: Programme level mandatory indicators			
Theory of Change	Indicators	Reporting	
		June	Dec
Level 1: Inputs and activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £ spent directly on project delivery £ co-funding spent on project delivery (public and private) £ co-funding committed (public and private) Percentage of projects started on time (based on contract) 	x	x
Level 2: Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of temporary full-time jobs supported during implementation Number of projects successfully completed Percentage of projects completed within budget Percentage of projects completed on time 	x	x
Level 3: Intermediate outcomes	Self-assessment on: Leadership and vision; delivery capacity and capability; financial viability and ability to attract investment; and accountability, collaboration and responsive governance.	x	
Level 4: Outcomes (annually)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of FTE permanent jobs created through the projects Number of FTE permanent jobs safeguarded through the projects 	x	

Project outputs and outcomes comprise a mix of DLUHC project specific measures (selected from the DLUHC guidance for Towns Fund interventions) and local measures which reflect priorities for the area. As shown in **Error! Reference source not found.**, these benefits have been allocated an owner, with responsibility for forecasting and monitoring achievements. Benefits will continue to be reassessed, as new benefits may emerge as the project progresses and expectations change. Data will be collected on an ongoing basis and reported on annually to DLUHC.

Table 6-4: Project-specific outputs and outcomes for the Connected Places project		
Key Performance Indicators	Responsibility/ Reporting Lead	How data will be collected
Mandatory Indicators		
£ spent directly on project delivery	St Helens Borough Council Project Manager	Data will be collected from the SHBC financial management system. It is envisaged that separate codes will be established for the project to track Towns Fund expenditure and other investment by the Council. Data will be reported to the Programme Manager and stored in a specific folder on the Council’s server. Indicators will be reported to DLUHC using the prescribed system and in accordance with data handling protocols.
£ co-funding spent on project delivery (public and private)	St Helens Borough Council Project Manager	
£ co-funding committed (public and private)	St Helens Borough Council Project Manager	
Number of temporary FT jobs supported during project implementation	St Helens Borough Council Project Manager	Data will be provided by the lead contractor for the capital works in accordance with the agreed social value framework. Data will be reported to the Programme Manager and stored in a specific folder on the Council’s server. Indicators will be reported to DLUHC using the prescribed system and in accordance with data handling protocols.
Number of full-time equivalent (FTE) permanent jobs created through the projects	St Helens Borough Council Project Manager	Data will be provided by LCRCA (Merseytravel) as operator of the bus station, informed by engagement with relevant third-party users and occupiers.
Number of full-time equivalent (FTE) permanent jobs safeguarded through the projects	St Helens Borough Council Project Manager	Data will be reported to the Programme Manager and stored in a specific folder on the Council’s server. Indicators will be reported to DLUHC using the prescribed system and in accordance with data handling protocols.
Outputs		
Transport facilities delivered	St Helens Borough Council Project Manager	Data will be provided by the lead contractor for the capital works based on a signed certificate of practical completion. Data will be reported to the Programme Manager and stored in a specific folder on the Council’s server. Indicators will be reported to DLUHC using the prescribed system and in accordance with data handling protocols.
Increased number of bus stands	St Helens Borough Council Project Manager	
Public realm improved	St Helens Borough Council Project Manager	
Commercial floorspace created/ improved	St Helens Borough Council Project Manager	
Outcomes		
Increased patronage of bus services	LCRCA (Merseytravel)	Data provided by LCRCA (Merseytravel), providing a clear basis for determining levels of patronage.
Improved bus service quality	LCRCA (Merseytravel)	Quality assessment informed by survey of passengers using facilities and compared to baseline.
Enhanced traffic flows and reduced congestion within the town centre	St Helens Borough Council	Monitoring of traffic flows (including bus and car movements) in the vicinity of the bus station and across the town centre to be monitored by SHBC and verified by LCRCA (Merseytravel).
Improved public realm environment	St Helens Borough Council	Improved quality of environment verified through a town centre-based survey of users and non-users.

As the Accountable Body, St Helens Borough Council will maintain full records of all costs relating to the Project. Dedicated cost Project Codes will be established within the financial accounting system and a financial accountant appointed to monitor scheme delivery, spend and comparison to budget. In the initial design and delivery phase there will be a focus on adherence to the defined programme, forecast cost and risk mitigation (including a review of the total risk profile) so monitoring will focus on the inputs (e.g., spend); activities (e.g., construction activity) and final outputs delivered (e.g., floor space delivered; land developed).

6.8.3. Benefits Maximisation and targeting

Maximising local benefits is a core principle that will underpin all activities delivered by Towns Fund partners and delivering social, economic, and environmental value is key to this.

St Helens Borough Council and its partners will maximise the social value that can be delivered through contracts both during the implementation of projects and subsequent operational phases of delivery. As outlined above, project partners will act within the regulations governing public procurement and will be expected to demonstrate social value outcomes associated with all contracts.

6.8.4. Evaluation

While the impact evaluation will be led by DLUHC and the external evaluation provider, it is understood that deep dive case studies will be identified and resourced by DLUHC.

While local evaluations are not mandatory, there is a recognition that some areas may have an interest in measuring different outcome indicators to those mentioned in the guidance to identify whether particular groups may have been reached through project activity. St Helens Borough Council will work with the national provider where appropriate to provide suitable case study projects for assessment, where existing local evaluation activities can add value.

APPENDIX XX – Monthly Reporting Process Screenshot

<div><div><div><div><div></div><div>LIVERPOOL CITY REGION</div></div><div><div>METRO MAYOR</div><div>LIVERPOOL</div></div><div><div>NORTHERN POWERHOUSE</div><div>LIVERPOOL</div></div><div><div>Liverpool City Region</div><div>Local Enterprise Partnership</div></div></div></div></div>										Project Name : St Helens Town Centre Multimodal Interchange										Period		1	
																				Period Ending		30/04/2022	
Project No		ICTF1010		Commentary for this period										Summary of project activities planned for the next period									
Project Sponsor		St Helens		<p>Design for all elements continuing at pace. Client design workshop was held on 21/4 for consultants to present emerging designs. Stakeholder engagement plan in preparation to inform consultation with local businesses and stakeholders from June.</p> <p>Ongoing analysis of entrance/exit points for bus station that impact on functionality and capacity at junctions continues - discussions early May regarding outcome of Road Safety Audit.</p> <p>Amion Consulting Ltd commencing work on Towns Fund element of bus station funding (£3m circa) with support from Council and WSP.</p> <p>Workshop has identified spending objectives and measurable benefits.</p> <p>Traffic Surveys taken place on roads around bus station to inform impacts on all mode movement, including supporting later stages of design work.</p> <p>Project governance proposals developed, currently being reviewed by SHBC Leadership team.</p> <p>Detailed work under way for 22/23 Programme Plan to support procurement of further technical support.</p>										Work to continue on design and costing of all elements.									
Project Manager		Jack Mayhew												Workshop with ECF to ensure alignment of designs with Town Centre Masterplan detailed design.									
Current Phase		Concept (pre-OBC)												Further iteration of all elements designs to be presented to Council for review.									
Next Key Milestone		Detailed Project Design												Meeting with Merseytravel and operators to be held to seek final agreement on design and access points. This will be supported by Visim model in the next stage of works, to be scoped.									
														First draft of Business Case for Towns Deal Funding of Bus Station element to be completed (n.b. this complementary activity is not financed through LCR funds)									
														Recruitment for 1 year Programme Manager to commence									
														Risk Workshop to be held, moving focus from design commission to whole life project.									
														Procurement for technical support to develop proposals to RIBA 4 and up to ITT for Build to commence.									
														Complete work on 22/23 Programme Plan									
Project Rag Status																							
Delivery Progress		Annual financial profile		Outputs		Planned spend this period		Risk															
Major issues have caused significant delay		A variance in excess of +/-10% against the last approved financial profile for this year now expected.		Project likely not deliver outputs without an extension to the project timeline/scope change.		Variances in excess of +/-10% found against the last forecast spend profile for this period.		A major risk(s) has been realised or a risk identified and a yet to be mitigated, or mitigation has failed.															
Issues have arisen causing delays of greater than 3 months		A variance of between +/-7% & +/-10% against the last approved financial profile for this year now expected.		Delays of <3 months. Outputs still deliverable within the existing project timeline but challenging.		Variances of between +/-7% & +/-10% found against the last forecast spend profile for this period.		A major risk(s) which has been previously identified in the risk register, has mitigation in place, but time & cost implications may still be experienced.															
Issues have arisen causing delays of between 4 weeks but less than 3 months		A variance of between +/-5% & +/-7% against the last approved financial profile for this year now expected.		Delays of 3 months. Outputs deliverable but will require re-profiling within the existing timeline.		Variances of between +/-5% & +/-7% found against the last forecast spend profile for this period.		A risk(s) has materialised but mitigation is in place, time and cost not be negatively impacted.															
Minor issues have arisen causing delay of less than 4 weeks		A variance of between +/-2% & +/-5% against the last approved financial profile for this quarter expected		delay < 4 weeks. Project can be brought on track to deliver outputs as programmed.		Variances of between +/-2% & +/-5% found against the last forecast spend profile for this period.		A risk(s) has materialised but mitigation is in place. Expectation that project can be brought on track to deliver.															
No significant problems arisen in previous quarter.		A variance of up to +/-2% found against the last approved financial profile for this quarter		Project is on track to deliver outputs as programmed.		Variances of up to +/-2% found against the last forecast spend profile for this period.		No significant risk(s)															
Key issues experienced																							
Proposed resolution or escalation																							
1																							
Project Management Support extension. Due to procurement issues on St Helens North Housing Access scheme and joint resourcing approach, project management extension is required.																							
2																							
Still seeking final agreement between design team and bus operators/Merseytravel relating to potential bus movements within the proposed facility, affecting buses ability to access certain stands from layover points. This has delayed completion of design activities by circa two-three months, with potential for further delays if not resolved quickly. Road Safety Audits indicate concerns for pedestrian safety if entrance/exit is provided eastern end of bus station.																							
3																							
Complex ownership/ stakeholder environment, with lack of established programme management framework for decision-making, escalation and gateway approvals. Lack of senior representative from LCRCA. This makes agreeing a final design compromise challenging as there are several ultimate decision-makers but no formal structure for managing such decisions																							
Project governance arrangements drafted and formal mechanism being established moving forward.																							
Top Risks		Pre-mitigation impact		Mitigation action										Post-mitigation impact									
1		Critical		Revised programme for this 1st phase of designs now anticipates completion end of June 2022 - This risk has become more critical given ongoing discussions with Merseytravel and bus operators to revisit key design assumptions										High									
2		High		ECF and SHBC Officers involvement in regular design workshops. ECF design team sub-contracted into project team for further continuity and alignment										Low									
3		Critical		Continued engagement with Merseytravel and Bus Operators to table and discuss design iterations. This is the primary cause of programme delay. A number of design options are being sketched up to establish the full implications of all options but formal project governance arrangements need to be established ASAP to determine final outcome. Visim model to be commissioned to test options to satisfy stakeholders.										Critical									
4		Critical		Work being scoped out to take forward all land acquisition activity around masterplan and SHMMI project. Still awaiting details										Critical									
Assurance Manager (PMO) Comments																							
Free text description for PMO comments (to be completed by LCRCA)																							
Key Milestone		Current period		Last Period																			
		Baseline		Forecast/Actual		Variance calendar days		Forecast/Actual		In Period variance													
Detailed project designs		31-Mar-22		17-Jun-22		78		29-Apr-22		49													
Project Management Support		31-Mar-22		29-Jul-22		120		29-Jul-22		0													
						0																	
						0																	
						0																	