



Shropshire Council
Legal and Democratic Services
Shirehall
Abbey Foregate
Shrewsbury
SY2 6ND

Date: Tuesday, 19 April 2022

Committee:
Cabinet

Date: Wednesday, 27 April 2022
Time: 10.30 am
Venue: Council Chamber, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, SY2 6ND

You are requested to attend the above meeting. The Agenda is attached

There will be some access to the meeting room for members of the press and public, but this will be limited for health and safety reasons. If you wish to attend the meeting please email democracy@shropshire.gov.uk to check that a seat will be available for you.

Members of the public will be able to access the live stream of the meeting by clicking on this link:

<https://shropshire.gov.uk/CabinetMeeting27April2022>

Tim Collard Assistant Director – Legal and Governance

Members of Cabinet

Lezley Picton (Leader)
Gwilym Butler
Dean Carroll
Rob Gittins
Kirstie Hurst-Knight
Simon Jones
Cecilia Motley
Ian Nellins
Ed Potter

Your Committee Officer is:

Amanda Holyoak Committee Services Supervisor
Tel: 01743 257714
Email: amanda.holyoak@shropshire.gov.uk

AGENDA

1 Apologies for Absence

2 Disclosable Interests

Members are reminded that they must declare their disclosable pecuniary interests and other registrable or non-registrable interests in any matter being considered at the meeting as set out in Appendix B of the Members' Code of Conduct and consider if they should leave the room prior to the item being considered. Further advice can be sought from the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

3 Minutes (Pages 1 - 6)

To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 6th April 2022, attached.

4 Public Question Time

To receive any questions from members of the public, notice of which has been given in accordance with Procedure Rule 14. Deadline for notification is not later than 5.00 pm on Thursday 21st April 2022.

5 Member Question Time

To receive any questions from Members of the Council. Deadline for notification is not later than 5.00 pm on Thursday 21st April 2022.

6 Whitchurch Swimming Centre Feasibility Study (Pages 7 - 114)

Lead Member – Councillor Cecilia Motley – Portfolio Holder for Communities, Culture, Leisure, Tourism and Transport

Report of Mark Barrow, Executive Director of Place attached

Contact: 01743 258916

7 Draft Housing Allocations Policy for Consultation (Pages 115 - 170)

Lead Member – Councillor Simon Jones – Adult Social Care and Public Health

Report of Mark Barrow, Executive Director of Place, is attached

Tel: 01743 258916

8 ICS Joint Green Plan (Pages 171 - 178)

Lead Member – Councillor Ian Nellins – Climate Change, Natural Assets & The Green Economy

Report of Mark Barrow, Executive Director of Place, is attached. **Please note Appendix A is to follow**

Tel: 01743 258916



Committee and Date

Cabinet

27TH APRIL 2022

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting held on 6 April 2022

In the Council Chamber, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, SY2 6ND

10.30 - 11.35 am

Responsible Officer: Ashley Kendrick

Email: ashley.kendrick@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 250893

Present

Councillor Lezley Picton (Chairman)

Councillors Gwilym Butler, Dean Carroll, Rob Gittins, Kirstie Hurst-Knight, Simon Jones, Cecilia Motley, Ian Nellins and Ed Potter

43 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Andy Begley (Mark Barrow deputising), Councillors Simon Jones (arriving late due to alternative meeting), Julian Dean (arriving late due to alternative commitment) and David Minnery.

44 Disclosable Interests

None were declared.

45 Minutes

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd March 2022 be confirmed as a correct record.

46 Public Question Time

No public questions had been received.

47 Member Question Time

Members were advised that two urgent questions had been received and would be considered first alongside a question received within the deadline.

Member questions were received from the following:

Councillors Andy Boddington and David Vasmer had submitted urgent questions in relation to bus services in Shropshire.

Councillor Rosemary Dartnall had also submitted a question in relation to bus services in Shropshire.

The Portfolio Holder for Communities, Culture, Leisure & Tourism, Transport provided a statement to address all three questions.

Members were given the opportunity to seek clarity on their individual questions and permitted to ask a supplementary question.

In response to a supplementary question from Councillor Dartnall regarding funding, the Portfolio Holder for Communities, Culture, Leisure & Tourism, Transport advised that Shropshire Council would be preparing a further bid for funding through the DfT but that timescales for BSIP funding were currently unknown.

The Portfolio Holder also acknowledged the need to include bus user groups, Town and Parish Councils and other organisations in discussions relating to the future of bus services in Shropshire in order to deliver a 21st century bus service for the county. Concessionary fares and the loss of revenue to bus operators since the pandemic would also be considered by the working group.

Members questions were also received from:

Councillor Rob Wilson (read by Councillor David Vasmer) – in relation to road congestion.

In response to a supplementary question regarding traffic surveying, the Portfolio Holder for Infrastructure advised that he had every confidence in the data which was provided by WSP who were one of the leading national consultants for traffic surveying.

Councillor David Vasmer – in relation to ANPR cameras

By way of supplementary question, Councillor Vasmer asked when other locations may be considered for ANPR cameras in Shropshire. The Portfolio Holder for Climate Change, Natural Assets & Green Economy confirmed that the trial is taking place from May until September and during this period, a decision on other locations can be made.

Councillor Kate Halliday – in relation to the Ockenden Report

By way of supplementary question, Councillor Halliday asked whether an early warning system could be put in place to notify the Council, as a partner, if the system was failing. The Leader advised that becoming part of the ICS would give more opportunity for scrutiny and to share data.

Councillor Heather Kidd (read by Councillor David Vasmer) – in relation to the Ockenden Report.

Councillor Roger Evans – in relation to Shire Services

In response to a supplementary question regarding helping smaller schools with the provision of school meals, the Portfolio Holder for Infrastructure advised that the Council would be working with schools who have chosen to move to in-house catering to assist with the transition. It was agreed that a conversation outside of the meeting with the Portfolio Holder for Children and Education would be beneficial to discuss the context of quotations from the Schools Forum meeting. It was also

agreed that information regarding break even positions would be circulated after the meeting.

The full questions and responses are available from : [Agenda for Cabinet on Wednesday, 6th April, 2022, 10.30 am — Shropshire Council](#)

48 **Scrutiny Items**

There were no scrutiny items.

49 **Consultation on a Draft Policy for the Enforcement and Determination of Financial Penalties for Breaches of Relevant Letting Agency Requirements**

The Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Regeneration and Planning presented the report which sought Cabinet approval to consult on a policy that will set out Shropshire Council's approach to the enforcement and determination of financial (civil) penalties in circumstances where persons engaged in letting agency work and property management business fail to comply with legislative requirements.

Members noted that the findings of the consultation would be brought back to a future meeting.

RESOLVED:

1. That Cabinet approves for consultation, with any necessary amendments, the draft Policy for the Enforcement and Determination of Financial Penalties for Breaches of Relevant Letting Agency Requirements, as set out at Appendix A.
2. That Cabinet instructs the Head of Business and Consumer Protection to undertake a six-week period of consultation and to bring the draft Policy for the Enforcement and Determination of Financial Penalties for Breaches of Relevant Letting Agency Requirements, together with all feedback received from the consultation, back to Cabinet for further consideration and final approval.

50 **Application by Tasley Parish Council for Tasley Parish to be considered as a Neighbourhood Area**

The Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Regeneration and Planning presented the report which sought approval for the application by Tasley Parish Council for the Parish area of Tasley to be considered as a Neighbourhood Area for the purposes of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan.

Members noted that the Plan would enable the Parish to shape its future development, which would see 1600 new houses as part of the existing Local Plan and the emerging Local Plan.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet agreed

1. The proposed Neighbourhood Area identified on the map in Appendix 2, covering the Parish of Tasley as an appropriate basis for the development of a Neighbourhood Plan and notifies Tasley Parish Council accordingly
2. That if the proposed Neighbourhood Area is approved, Tasley Parish Council will be able, but not obligated to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan for that area, which will be subject to public consultation, examination and local referendum as set out in Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 as amended. Assuming any subsequent local referendum is successful, Shropshire Council will then be asked to adopt the final version of the Neighbourhood Plan.

51 Land at Shrewsbury Flaxmill (Road Frontage) Compulsory Purchase Order

The Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Regeneration and Planning presented the report which sought approval to make a Compulsory Purchase Order, and, subject to the confirmation of the Order by the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, to subsequently transfer the land acquired to Historic England, to enable the delivery of a mixed-use development comprising residential accommodation, together with commercial, business and service uses being a key element of the wider regeneration of Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings.

It was felt this was a fantastic addition to Shrewsbury and members were encouraged to visit if they had not already done so.

RESOLVED:

1. Subject to consideration of the matters set out in this report and the prior completion of a CPO Indemnity Agreement (CPOIA), to make a compulsory purchase order pursuant to the Council's powers under section 226(1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by section 99 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) in order to deliver the Scheme and to facilitate the comprehensive redevelopment and regeneration of the Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings, which in turn will contribute to the promotion or improvement of the economic, social and environmental well-being of the Council's area.
2. To authorise:
 - (1) the Assistant Director – Legal and Governance to carry out the functions set out in (a), (b) (c), (d), (e), (f), (g) and (h) below and
 - (2) the Executive Director of Place to carry out the functions set out in (b), (c), (d), (e), (f) (h) below:
 - (a) To negotiate and enter into the CPOIA;
 - (b) Subject to the completion of the CPOIA, and subject to the requirements of the CPOIA, to take all steps to secure the making, confirmation and implementation of the CPO including the publication and service of all

- notices and all preparation and promotion of the Council's case at any public inquiry;
- (c) To identify and acquire all third party interests required to facilitate delivery of the Scheme either by agreement or compulsorily pursuant to the CPO (including pursuant to any blight notices as appropriate) including the conduct of negotiations and making provision for the payment of compensation;
 - (d) To negotiate, agree terms and enter into agreements with interested parties including agreements for the withdrawal of blight notices and/or the withdrawal of objections to the CPO and/or undertakings not to enforce the CPO on specified terms, including where appropriate removing land or rights from the CPO and making provision for the payment of compensation;
 - (e) In the event the CPO is confirmed by the Secretary of State, to advertise and give notice of confirmation and thereafter to take all steps to implement the CPO including the making of a General Vesting Declaration(s) and/or service of Notices to Treat and Notices of Entry in respect of the acquisition of interests in the Order Land;
 - (f) To take all steps in relation to any legal proceedings relating to the CPO including defending or settling claims for compensation which Page 50 Cabinet 6 April 2022 – Land at Shrewsbury Flax Mill (Road Frontage) – Compulsory Purchase Order 5 are referred to the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber) and/or applications to the courts and any appeals;
 - (g) To retain and/or appoint external professional advisers and consultants to assist in facilitating the promotion, confirmation and implementation of the CPO, the settlement of compensation and any other claims or disputes; and
 - (h) Following implementation of the Council's powers of compulsory acquisition, to authorise and take all legal and procedural steps to secure the transfer of the Order Land to Historic England

52 Exclusion of Press and Public

RESOLVED:

That, in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and Paragraph 10.4 [3] of the Council's Access to Information Rules, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items.

53 Chief Officers Pay Award

RESOLVED:

That the recommendations as set out in the report be approved.

Signed (Chairman)

Date:



Committee and Date

Cabinet 27 April 2022

Item

Public

Whitchurch Swimming Centre Feasibility Study

Responsible Officer

Mark Barrow, Executive Director Place
mark.barrow@shropshire.gov.uk
01743 255003

1. Synopsis

- 1.1 This report and attached Appendices provide detailed information on a feasibility study for the provision of a new Swimming and Fitness Centre in Whitchurch. The report seeks approval that proposed plans be the subject of a formal public consultation exercise and that a further report be brought to Cabinet following completion of the consultation.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 At its meeting on 30th June 2021 Cabinet agreed the following recommendations:

- I. Approve that option 6 is the emerging preferred option and should be taken forward to the next stage of feasibility and due diligence. (Option 6 - New alternative build - 6 lane x 25m with moveable floor, 35 station fitness suite, dance studio, Café 20 covers)
- II. Delegate to the Executive Director of Place, in consultation with the Leader and the Portfolio Holder for Communities, Place, Tourism and Transport, the ability to progress the feasibility and due diligence on the emerging new build option, including:
 - Project requirements prepared.
 - Accommodation Schedule.
 - Further review of the business case.
 - Undertake site appraisals to develop opportunities and constraints diagrams to identify opportunities and initial key project risks.
 - Strategic appraisal of planning considerations.
 - Prepare project brief including outcomes.
 - Commissioning relevant surveys.

- Development of block plans.
 - Quantity Surveyor costings.
 - Programming.
 - Prepare initial block massing 3D views and sections to explain relationship with the existing building and scale of proposal/s.
 - Prepare precedent image and concept images for the proposal.
 - Developing Project Strategies
 - Pre-application Planning Advice.
 - Implementation of a public/stakeholder engagement/consultation exercise.
- III. Approve that the additional feasibility work includes a needs assessment for a new library facility in Whitchurch and, also explores the potential for and, cost/benefits of co-locating the library in any new leisure facility development on the site. Noting that if co-locating the library emerges as part of the preferred option a specific public consultation on this will be required.
- IV. Agree that the findings of the additional feasibility work be reported back to a future cabinet meeting.

2.2 A copy of the feasibility study is attached at Appendix 1.

2.3 The cost plan estimates the provision of the facility to be £12.100m. This includes a moveable floor to half the pool which increases the amount of swimming lessons and other activities that can be programmed and improves the business case by an estimated £55,000 per annum. Further detail is provided in section 5.3 of this report. Full details are provided in the cost plan contained in the feasibility study.

2.4 The feasibility study has been directed by the following guiding principles and critical success factors:

- I. Shropshire will be a county where healthier, active lifestyles are encouraged, supported, and facilitated for everyone.
- II. Improve the health and well-being of our residents and visitors, through increasing participation, in physical activity/sport.
- III. Investment in a high-quality leisure offer in the town centre which provides accessible and inclusive activities for all, retains the opportunity to swim in the town centre and provides complementary facilities for fitness and well-being.
- iv. An improved leisure offer - for residents and visitors and to engage people in leisure and physical activities who may not traditionally engage. Maximise the potential of the site and the opportunities for additional income generation opportunities from the facilities.

- v. A commitment to work with a wide range of partner organisations and individuals as co-creators and co-deliverers of leisure facilities so that they best reflect the differing needs of local communities.
- vi. The development is operationally sustainable in the long term and positively contributes to environmental sustainability, carbon neutral targets and, encourages users to adopt active travel - cycling and walking.

2.5 Subject to Cabinet and Council decision the design proposals will be developed in more detail at the relevant design stages.

3. Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to

- I. Note and acknowledge progress and actions undertaken to meet the recommendations of the Cabinet report in June 2021
- II. Agree that the proposed plans be the subject of a formal public consultation exercise and that a further report be brought to Cabinet following completion of the consultation.
- III. Agree that subject to the outcome of the public consultation exercise and Cabinet's consideration of that report, the business case for the project be presented to Council with a recommendation that the development of the Whitchurch Swimming and Fitness Centre be included in the capital programme.

REPORT

4. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

4.1 Opportunities Appraisal - The need for improved swimming and fitness provision in Whitchurch

- 4.2 Built in 1972, Whitchurch Swimming Centre comprised a 25m x 5 lane pool and changing facilities.
- 4.3 This report provides details of the feasibility study that was commissioned to develop initial design for consideration regarding the future provision of this important community facility. The centre has been closed since March 2020, initially due to the national lockdown as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, and further to that as a result of the structural problems identified whilst investigating the cause of a leak from the pool tank which include underpinning issues and deterioration in the fabric of the building.

- 4.4 Property Services Group commissioned investigation work to identify the immediate, medium- and longer-term maintenance requirements and costs associated with these to be able to re-open the existing facility and maintain it to an acceptable standard. Further structural investigation work had to be commissioned to ascertain the structural integrity of the pool and this resulted in the structural engineer stating:

"We caution that the swimming pool is likely to continue to settle due to the inadequate foundations to the swimming pool and structure. Further cracking and lifting of tiles to the pool and pool surround will continue to occur. Whilst further remedial works can be undertaken to address issues at movement joints, lifting tiles, etc we advise that this is not considered cost effective due to the inadequate foundations and the age of the structure. Consideration should be given to the whole life cost of a replacement building and pool over the ongoing running and maintenance costs of the existing facility."

- 4.5 It is important to consider the demographic profile of Shropshire and how this shapes demand for access to leisure and wellness facilities. Energize Active Partnership identify the following key statistics in their Strategy – Actively Improving Lives 2022:

- 1/3 of the Shropshire population will be 65+ by 2033
- 42% of those aged 55+ are active
- 4 out of 5 young people aged 5-15 are not active enough; more than 1/3 are leading sedentary lives by the age of 15
- 1 in 3 children are overweight or obese by the time they leave primary school; more than 1 in 5 children are overweight or obese by school reception year
- Families within lower socio-economic families are more likely to be inactive

- 4.6 Shropshire and Shrewsbury Health priorities identified in the JSNA (Health and Well Being Board Shropshire Sustainability and Transformation Plan 2016-2021) include mental health, including dementia, rising obesity, child poverty and the aging population.

- 4.7 Through the strategic objectives work that has been completed, it has become clear that there is an overarching collective priority, for Shropshire Council and partner organisations, to improve health and well-being at all stages of life, and that physical activity is an integral part of this. Culture, leisure, and creative sectors make a significant contribution to physical, mental and community health and well-being through providing access to affordable activities and experiences. They can contribute to tackling health inequalities through delivering educational opportunity, promoting community cohesion and generating economic growth.

4.8 The Shropshire Council priorities for sport and physical activity, as set out in the Indoor Leisure Facilities Strategy, are identified as follows:

Sport and Physical Activity Strategy Priorities		Links to Corporate Plan Priorities
Strategic Priority 1	To work with partners to support the people of Shropshire to live longer, healthier and quality lives through sport and physical activity with a focus on young and older people.	Yes - all
Strategic Priority 2	To support the resilience of local communities and the development of Place by strengthening local communities through sport and physical activity.	Yes - all
Strategic Priority 3	To support economic growth by developing opportunities for people to reach their full potential by providing employment, volunteering and tourism opportunities.	Yes - all
Strategic Priority 4	To take a cross county Place based approach to the delivery of high quality leisure facilities through targeted investment, partnership opportunities, community empowerment and commercial acumen in order to reduce levels of subsidy.	Yes - all
Strategic Priority 5	To aim to reduce our carbon footprint in line with the commitment of Shropshire Council to the declaration of Climate emergency to become carbon neutral by 2030.	Yes - all

Table 1 Shropshire Council priorities for sport and physical activity

4.9 Evidence of Need - Sport England Facility Planning Model (FPM)

- 4.10 The Sport England Facility Planning Model (FPM) for pools in Shropshire was produced in July 2019.
- 4.11 All three of Shropshire's main market towns – Ludlow, Oswestry and Shrewsbury provide a main swimming pool, or the equivalent of this (minimum 25m x 6 lane) and a learner pool or a learner function. All communities in Shropshire are within 30 minutes of one of these facilities, except for the communities in the north.
- 4.12 Swimming pools in Market Drayton and, prior to its closure Whitchurch, addressed this gap in accessibility.
- 4.13 Swimming pools offer more scope than any other indoor sports facility type, to contribute to an active and healthy lifestyle by residents. They are the only facility type which provides for participation by all age groups and from cradle to grave. Also, swimming is one of the few indoor activities where female participation is higher than male participation and it is also a family-based activity.
- 4.14 The real issue in Shropshire is not the level of provision, but the age and quality of swimming facilities, particularly those providing for community access such as Whitchurch.
- 4.15 Whitchurch Swimming Centre had an estimated used capacity of 82% in the weekly peak period, this was over the 70% 'comfort level' recommended by Sport England. This demonstrates that when open, Whitchurch Swimming Centre had a very high level of use. Accessibility to other facilities is a challenge in the area if one does not have access to a private car; bus services are limited and do not always enable sufficient time to access the next nearest pool.

4.16 Shropshire Council Leisure Facilities Strategy, Evidence of Need for Swimming Pools 2020

Whitchurch Swimming Centre	35% out of 100% Facility Quality Score due to pool tank failing	Poor	Significant investment required. The facility is at the end of its useful life.
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Table 2 Leisure Facilities Strategy Evidence of need

4.17 Proposed Facility Mix

4.18 The feasibility study proposes the following facility mix:

- 25 metre x 6 lane pool with moveable floor to half of the pool.
- 35 station fitness suite.
- Large multi-purpose room - divisible into 2 studio areas for dance, fitness, and youth sessions.
- Changing village plus dry side changing and Changing Places facility
- Reception/server
- Café/vending area
- Outdoor activity area for informal sport, physical activity, and play.

4.19 The rationale for the facility mix is:

- Increased participation and revenue impact from a larger pool; the previous operator has identified significant potential for increasing swimming lessons in the area based on demand. The old facility delivered 600 swimming lessons per month. Equally, there is potential to increase the number of swim memberships.
- A facility offering both fitness and swimming is likely to appeal to a wider range of participants; this provides the opportunity to offer a new swim and gym membership and provide opportunities for revenue generation.
- Increased water space also facilitates an increased capacity for casual i.e., pay and play, swimming.
- The multi-purpose room can be programmed to cater for a range of dance, fitness and young people activities which increases throughput and income generation opportunities.

4.20 The feasibility study has considered a number of modern methods of construction which will be further reviewed at RIBA stage 2. Further details can be found in section 7 of the study.

4.21 Whitchurch Library

4.22 The potential to relocate the existing library from its the town centre location to the proposed new swimming and fitness centre

was reviewed in the initial stages of the feasibility study.

- 4.23 This included a review of a previous report on the civic centre and library which stated that following approval of the Council's Library Services Strategy, 2018 – 2023, the library in Whitchurch has been confirmed as a tier 1 library hub. Library hubs are intended to be conveniently located, multi-functional spaces, gateways to a range of services and, co-located with partners.
- 4.24 It was noted that Whitchurch Civic Centre is on a 99-year lease to Town Council which provides for free occupancy for the library and that the library has had significant money spent on it recently.
- 4.25 It was decided that as there were no operational benefits to moving the library, it would add significant capital costs to the proposed swimming and fitness centre and such a move could adversely impact on high street footfall, the potential relocation of the library was removed from the feasibility study remit.

4.27 Impact of not progressing with the New Swimming and Fitness Centre

- 4.28 The impacts of not progressing the project have been considered and are summarised below:
- The swimming centre remains closed which reduces the opportunities for the Whitchurch community to be physically active which impacts on long term health and social issues.
 - To access pay as you play swimming facilities Whitchurch residents will have to travel some distance, this can have a negative impact on the Council's climate change agenda and carbon reduction targets. Residents without access to a car are disadvantaged as public transport routes to other facilities mean lengthy travel times.
 - Visits by Whitchurch residents to other facilities adds pressure to already busy centres.
 - There is a negative impact from young children not being able to learn to swim which is an important life skill.
 - Primary schools have a statutory duty to provide swimming lessons for children up to Key Stage 2 Level which they will struggle to fulfil.
 - Does not provide any opportunity to impact positively on the Council's Organisational Principles.
 - This option is contrary to recommendations in the Council's adopted Indoor Leisure Facility Strategy 2020 – 2038.
- 4.29 Providing a new facility will:
- Encourage increased participation in physical activity, delivering increased health benefits (physical and mental) to more people as a result of taking part in physical activity
 - Contribute to a more active environment at local level

- Be more cost-effective and efficient to operate than the existing facility as a stand-alone pool requires a high level of subsidy. The financial impact of developing a new facility is detailed in section 5 of this report
- Provides the opportunity for young people to be able to learn to swim
- Contributes positively to several of the Council's Organisational Principles including climate change and carbon reduction
- Requires significant capital investment but secures the provision of a valuable community facility for the long term
- Fully fulfils the recommendation in the Council's adopted Leisure Facilities Strategy 2020 – 38

4.30 Risk Assessment

- 4.31 Several risks associated with the successful delivery of this stage of the project have been identified and these are summarised below together with mitigating actions, the most significant of those are summarised in Table 3 below:

Risk	Mitigation actions
Costs of the overall project are unaffordable in the current financial climate.	Production of the Feasibility Study to prepare initial designs and site capabilities. Detailed capital and revenue cost modelling, including identification of other sources of funding carried out to inform the recommendation of what is affordable and option to be progressed.
Abortive costs for the feasibility work if the project does not proceed beyond this stage.	Completion of a robust feasibility study will provide the Council with the necessary information to make an evidenced based decision on progressing the project.
Timeframe for developing a new facility expands leading to significantly higher development costs.	Establish realistic project programme, with key decision milestones identified and a project team suitably resourced in place to undertake the development work.
Reputational damage as Whitchurch Swimming Centre is the focus of considerable public interest and announcements have been made on carrying out maintenance investigation work	Project team established to manage the maintenance investigation work and new build options feasibility report to be able to prepare a report for consideration by Cabinet.

and a needs assessment for a potential replacement facility.	Clear communications plan developed to keep stakeholders informed.
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Table 3 Significant Risks

- 4.32 An initial key stakeholder exercise was carried out during March and April 2022. A list of the stakeholders and feedback received to date is included at Appendix 2.
- 4.33 An initial Equality, Social inclusion and Health Impact Assessment has been carried out, which indicates the following, should the project be approved:
- 4.34 The equality and health and well-being impacts across Protected Characteristic groupings in Shropshire, and within Whitchurch are anticipated to be positive. This is in line with the policy approach of the service area and the Council, and with consideration for Shropshire as a large and sparsely populated rural county in which market towns provide a sense of place and belonging as well as an access point for facilities and services, including leisure facilities. There are also positive impacts anticipated in relation to our tenth grouping in Shropshire, around social inclusion, provided that efforts are made to consider the needs of people in low-income households with regard to pricing structures.
- 4.35 There is further potential for additional benefits for grouping such as those undergoing gender reassignment, and those for whom single sex swimming opportunities are necessary in order to ensure compatibility with and respect for the requirements of their faith. This may be maximised through attention to changing room configurations, and swim time opportunities.
- 4.36 Proceeding with the option set out in the Feasibility Study, to develop a new facility, will mitigate the current negative impacts of the swimming centre being closed, and promote social inclusion as well as physical and mental health and well-being. It will be necessary to work closely with the SC elected councillors for the area, as community leaders, as well as with all relevant stakeholders

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 This report is written in the context of the Council's medium term financial strategy and on the assumption that the Council wishes to support the continuing availability of public swimming in Whitchurch for the benefit of the community, but that given financial constraints, it must be provided and operated as efficiently and effectively as possible. At this stage no additional finance resource

is required to progress the project to consultation.

5.2 The design and construction of a replacement facility will require significant capital investment by the Council. It is estimated that the capital cost of developing a new facility is £12.100m. This includes the provision of a moveable floor to half the pool which increases the amount of swimming lessons and other activities that can be programmed and improves the business case by an estimated £55,000 per annum.

5.3 Detailed capital costings are included in the feasibility study report. A summary is shown below:

	£
• Construction costs	7,490,308 (includes moveable floor & general fixed equipment)
• External works	1,551,583
• Professional fees	855,983
• BREEAM Excellent	169,838
• Contingency	849,190
• Inflation	1,210,733
• Total	12,127,635

5.4 It should be noted that costs have increased significantly since the original estimates were developed, the total cost was estimated at £6.300m in the 2022/23 - 2026/27 Capital Strategy. There has been a significant uplift in construction costs and the feasibility study also includes for the following.

Non controllable Costs

- Construction cost inflation (from feasibility date to tender return and mid-point of construction) 11.05% based on the proposed construction programme included in the feasibility study. Estimated cost £1,210,733
- The feasibility study shows that to accommodate the scale of facility proposed the entire site area will be required. Preliminary geo-technical studies show that significant works will be required regarding piling and dealing with the sloping site. Estimated costs £400,000
- The feasibility study also includes for the provision of additional car parking which may or may not be a condition of planning. Estimated cost £624,000

Controllable Costs

- Provision of second lift £60,000
- Replacement of Multi Use Games Area with Active Landscaped area and associated works £211,000
- BREEAM Excellent and green technology £395,000

- 5.5 Detailed revenue modelling has taken place, using operational income and expenditure forecasts provided by Strategic Leisure Ltd, taking advantage of their knowledge and experience of the market. The business case shows that the proposed facility mix, including the moveable pool floor, can deliver an estimated average annual operational surplus over its first ten years of £0.150m. However, when considering the financing of the project currently assumed to be 100% Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) over a 40- year term, annual borrowing repayments of £0.483m must also be included in the model.
- 5.6 Table 4 below summarises the projected income and expenditure position for the proposed development for the first 10 years following its proposed completion in 2025 and this highlights a forecast revenue pressure in excess of £0.300m each year. The existing preference to address this is by obtaining alternative funding to reduce the PWLB repayments, potential options are listed in 5.9 and 5.10. Further due diligence will also be undertaken on all figures contained within the model, and an updated forecast revenue position will be provided before any full budgetary approval for the project.

Whitchurch Swimming & Fitness Centre (£m)	Year 0 2025/26	Year 1 2026/27	Year 2 2027/28	Year 3 2028/29	Year 4 2029/30	Year 5 2030/31	Year 6 2031/32	Year 7 2032/33	Year 8 2033/34	Year 9 2034/35	Year 10 2035/36
EXPENDITURE		1.661	1.714	1.756	1.787	1.820	1.853	1.886	1.919	1.952	1.984
Borrowing Repayments	-	0.483	0.483	0.483	0.483	0.483	0.483	0.483	0.483	0.483	0.483
Operational Costs	1.017	1.178	1.231	1.273	1.304	1.337	1.370	1.403	1.436	1.469	1.501
INCOME/SAVINGS		1.138	1.325	1.365	1.404	1.444	1.483	1.562	1.602	1.641	1.681
New Income	1.138	1.325	1.365	1.404	1.444	1.483	1.523	1.562	1.602	1.641	1.681
NET COST TO THE COUNCIL	- 0.121	0.336	0.349	0.352	0.343	0.337	0.330	0.324	0.317	0.311	0.303

- 5.7 The existing revenue budget for the Whitchurch Swimming Pool contract is £0.135m, this budget is now surplus and will be used to offset immediate pressures in the Leisure service area and wider Place directorate. There is a possibility that this budget could be used to partially offset some of the revenue pressure on this project. This needs to be fully explored in the context of the overall financial picture.
- 5.8 Council approved the Capital Strategy in February 2022, in which Whitchurch Swimming Pool was listed as a priority future project, but this remains subject to approval of a business case and, prior to that in the case of Whitchurch, the completion of a public consultation exercise.
- 5.9 Work has been carried out to explore potential funding sources that could contribute to the project. These have included:

- Community Infrastructure Levy

- Grant aid from sources such as Sport England, the Levelling Up Fund or the UK Shared Prosperity Fund
- A review of the leisure operator market and potential input into financing the new facilities

5.10 Work is still ongoing, but a summary of the current position is set out below. Progress will be reported to the Cabinet meeting that considers the outcome of the public consultation exercise and will be built into the financial modelling.

I. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Initial discussions have identified that CIL may be able to make a potential contribution and that this project would likely fall into the second list of 'local priority' projects. Additional work is ongoing with colleagues to identify avenues for closing the funding gap prior to further consideration of what levels of uncommitted CIL could be available.

II. Grant aid

Sport England Strategic Facilities Fund

Sport England is supportive of the project but their current priority is Swimming in Shrewsbury.

Levelling Up Fund

Sport England has confirmed that a number of local authorities included leisure facility developments in Levelling Up Funding round 1 applications and were successful.

The round 2 prospectus has now been issued and the proposed development at Whitchurch could meet two of the priority investment themes including:

- **Regeneration and town centre investment**, building on the Towns Fund framework to upgrade eyesore buildings and dated infrastructure; acquire and regenerate brownfield sites; invest in secure community infrastructure and crime reduction; and bring public services and safe, accessible community spaces into town and city centres.
- **Cultural investment** maintaining, regenerating, or creatively repurposing existing cultural, creative, heritage and sporting assets, or creating new assets that serve those purposes including theatres, museums, galleries, production facilities, libraries, visitor attractions (and associated green spaces), sports and athletics facilities, heritage buildings and sites, and assets that support the visitor economy

Applications to the Levelling Up Fund round 2 must be submitted by July 6th, 2022. Applicants are encouraged to include detail of how their Levelling Up Fund projects would complement other sources of funding, for example the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Shropshire Council is a priority 2 area. As for the first round, the Fund will focus investment in smaller scale, local projects that require less than £20 million of funding. However, there is scope for investing in higher value projects, by exception.

UK Shared Prosperity Fund

Whilst the UK Shared Prosperity Fund may be able to contribute to the overall costs of the Centre, the Shropshire allocation is insufficient to make a significant difference. The overall objectives of the Communities and Place investment priority theme are:

- Strengthening our social fabric and fostering a sense of local pride and belonging, through investment in activities that enhance physical, cultural, and social ties and amenities, such as community infrastructure and local green space, and community-led projects.
- To build resilient and safe neighbourhoods, through investment in quality places that people want to live, work, play and learn in, through targeted improvements to the built environment and innovative approaches to crime prevention.
- Example interventions may include, but are not limited to, visual improvements to town centres and high streets, cultural/visitor economy interventions, litter, waste and graffiti reduction, projects to fight antisocial behaviour, and capital funding to improve neighbourhoods or community projects and initiatives.

III. Leisure Operator Market

Strategic Leisure Ltd has carried out a review of the current position of the operator market. In summary the review states:

"Although the UK leisure operator market was significantly impacted by Covid 19 in Lockdowns, there has generally been good recovery across the sector; on average operators are now achieving circa 72% of pre-Covid income levels.

Interest in new procurement opportunities, which obviously reduced during the pandemic period, is now on the rise again. Experience across consultants managing and delivering leisure management tender processes is that the forward market seems positive and buoyant with prices better in most cases than current business case estimates.

Contracts which comprise at least some newer, or brand new, facilities are of considerably more interest to operators. This is because there is far less risk in the operational management of a new facility with the latest energy and other technologies, that has been designed as a fit for

purpose building. Operators are willing to take responsibility for lifecycle maintenance on a new building, but not on older assets.

Both Sport England and Strategic Leisure Ltd have commented that operators will often contribute to the fit out of facilities, e.g., fitness equipment and catering areas but in their experience contributions into the actual capital build costs are rare.

The proposed timing of the development does not coincide with the Council's incumbent operator being able to contribute as the current management contract will have only two years left to run which would not provide sufficient time for the operator to make a rate of return on any financial contribution.

6. Climate Change Appraisal

6.1 A sustainability strategy for the project was developed with the Council's Climate Change Team. The sustainability requirements for the project are set out below:

I. Carbon Offsetting or Mitigation and Climate Change Adaptation

Shropshire Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and in 2020 adopted its Strategy for achieving net zero on carbon emissions by 2030. In line with this, this project will explore the potential for passive design principles and ensure that the Council can track the lifetime carbon performance of the building. This will include the provision of an audit trail, including quantitative performance measures, including Sport England Sustainability Target Metrics, that provide documentary evidence on a design stage by stage approach to minimising the carbon footprint of the facilities and climate change impact. The lifetime carbon performance study will be used to demonstrate how the design and materials used have taken account of the carbon reduction and climate change agenda and that the performance of the building is operating within the design Parameters. The design will incorporate Sport England design guidance on sustainable facilities. This will have a positive effect.

II. Energy and Fuel Consumption

Building to achieve a BREEAM Excellent rating and a DEC A rating. Design to provide for a passive standard of operation at the facilities, the aim being to achieve as low a carbon footprint as possible at a reasonable cost over the life cycle of the project. This will include the provision of a report to compare the sustainability performance of the existing facility with the new development with the aim that this demonstrates a net improvement. This will have a positive effect

III. Renewable Energy Generation

The Design will take account of the opportunity to be serviced by air or ground water source heat pumps and on-site renewable energy generation such as Photo Voltaic Cells. This will have a positive effect.

- 6.2 The feasibility study contains initial information on how the above aspects will be developed as the design progresses. See sustainability section pages 26 – 27, carbon reduction section pages 35 – 36 and building efficiency section pages 38 - 39. Further work will be carried out on Climate Change and carbon reduction impacts as the design progresses.

7. Background

- 7.1 Whitchurch Swimming Centre closed in March 2020 initially as a Result of the national Covid 19 lockdown. The closure continued after a major leak to the pool was found and further structural problems identified whilst investigating the cause of the leak. The structural investigation work identified that it was not viable to undertake remedial repair works due to the age of the facility and inadequate foundations.
- 7.2 The recommendations in this report are made based on the evidence contained in the feasibility study and other relevant strategies.

8. Additional Information

8.1 Organisation Principles

- 8.2 The development of the Swimming and Fitness project in Whitchurch can support the following priorities identified in the draft Shropshire Plan, healthy people, healthy economy, and healthy environment. It can also support several Organisation Principles, and these are set out in Appendix 4.

9. Conclusions

- 9.1 The Feasibility Study provides detailed evidence and insight on the opportunities and risks of developing a new swimming and fitness centre in Whitchurch. The study shows that a new development can be accommodated on the site and that the proposed facility mix improves the business case compared to the old facility. As Whitchurch has been without the provision of a swimming pool for a lengthy period it is recommended that the development be given high priority.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

Shropshire Council – A Vibrant Shropshire Cultural Strategy 2021 -2031
Indoor Leisure Facilities Strategy 2020 – 2038
JSNA (Health and Well Being Board Shropshire Sustainability and Transformation Plan 2016-2021)
Energize Shropshire Telford and Wrekin - Actively Improving Lives 2022
Library Services Strategy, 2018 – 2023

Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)

Cllr Cecilia Motley - Communities Place Culture Leisure Tourism & Transport

Local Members

Cllrs Gerald Dakin, Peggy Mullock, and Tom Biggins

Appendices

Appendix 1 Feasibility Study
Appendix 2 Stakeholder engagement feedback
Appendix 3 Initial Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessment (ESHIA)
Appendix 4 Links to Organisation Principles

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Appendix 1: Whitchurch Swimming and Fitness Centre Feasibility Study



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- 1.0 Introduction and background
- 2.0 Appointments
- 3.0 Project brief and outcomes
- 4.0 Appraisal
- 5.0 Planning consultation and considerations
- 6.0 Other consultation
- 7.0 Proposals
- 8.0 Structural and civils report
- 9.0 MEP and sustainability report
- 10.0 Cost report, programme and procurement

APPENDICES

- 1. Alternative site layouts considered during design process
- 2. Business case

Built in 1974, Whitchurch Swimming Centre comprises a 5-lane, 25m pool and changing facilities.

The centre has been closed since March 2020, initially due to the national lockdown as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, and further to that as a result of the structural problems identified whilst investigating the cause of a leak from the pool tank, which include underpinning issues and deterioration in the fabric of the building.

Shropshire Council's Property Services Group has commissioned investigation work to identify the immediate, medium and, longer term maintenance requirements and costs associated with these to be able to re-open the existing facility and maintain it to an acceptable standard. However further structural investigation work has also taken place which has resulted in the structural engineer stating:

"We caution that the swimming pool is likely to continue to settle due to the inadequate foundations to the swimming pool and structure. Further cracking and lifting of tiles to the pool and pool surround will continue to occur. Whilst further remedial works can be undertaken to address issues at movement joints, lifting tiles, etc we advise that this is not considered cost effective due to the inadequate foundations and the age of the structure. Consideration should be given to the whole life cost of a replacement building and pool over the ongoing running and maintenance costs of the existing facility".

Alongside the maintenance investigation works an outline feasibility study was commissioned, through Strategic Leisure Ltd, to review the business case for investment in a new facility to be able to compare this option with carrying out the necessary repairs on the existing facility.

Of the six options considered for replacement, the option recommended by the Council to be taken forward is **option B new build**, with a 6-lane, 25m pool with movable floor, 35-station fitness suite, dance studio and café with 20 covers.

Architects



Roberts Limbrick Ltd

The Carriage Building
Bruton Way
Gloucester GL1 1DG
Tel. 03333 405500
Email: mail@robertslimbrick.com

Quantity Surveyor



Press & Starkey

3rd Floor, West Wing
Rosanne House, Parkway
Welwyn Garden City AL8 6HG
Tel. 01707 325408
Email: welwyngardencity@pressandstarkey.com

Structural / Civils



Furness Partnership

The Paper Hall
Anne Gate
Bradford BD1 4EQ
Tel. 01274 392092
Email: reception@furnesspartnership.com

MEP / Sustainability



CGP | MEP

Royal House
28 Sovereign Street
Leeds LS1 4BA
Tel. 0113 255 2042
Email: enquiries@cgpmp.com

Ecology



Wildwood Ecology

Queen Anne House
66 Cricklade Street
Cirencester GL7 1JN
Tel. 01285 610145
Email: info@wildwoodecology.com

Client objectives

To improve health and well-being at all stages of life and that physical activity is an integral part of this.

Client vision

Shropshire will be a county where healthier, active lifestyles are encouraged, supported and facilitated for everyone. Key aspects include:

- Support for the creation of a high quality and sustainable indoor leisure facility mix, which provides accessible and inclusive activities for all Shropshire residents leading to increased participation and active lifestyles, thereby meeting community need
- Recognising the importance of leisure facilities as relevant community spaces, accessible to all and offering opportunities for the delivery of a wide range of activities, services, support and entertainment to local communities and people
- A commitment to work with a wide range of partner organisations and individuals as co-creators and co-deliverers of leisure facilities so that they best reflect the differing needs of local communities.
- There is a collective priority (Shropshire Council, Health and Wellbeing Board, Energize (Active Partnership) to improve community health and well-being at all stages of life, and that physical activities are integral to this, with a focus on older and young people and families
- There is also a need to ensure that provision (services, activities and facilities) is relevant and sustainable

Other client project outcomes

- Put Shropshire back into the community
 - The development of a new facility could present significant opportunities to implement Social Value initiatives
- Consider the impact of the development on the climate:
 - The development of a new facility will be significantly more energy efficient
 - There will be opportunities for renewable energy generation as part of the new building.

- Carbon off-setting or mitigation: there may be an opportunity for tree planting within a landscaping scheme for a new facility
 - A commitment to quantifying carbon performance as part of any detailed design for a new facility will be included in a design brief
 - Climate change adaptation: building designed in such a way as to respond to climate change so will have a positive or no effect
 - Sustainability requirements
 - Carbon neutrality: Shropshire Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and in 2020 adopted its Strategy for achieving net zero on carbon emissions by 2030. In line with this, this project should explore the potential for Passivhaus and ensure that the Council is able to track the lifetime carbon performance of the building
 - Building expected to achieve a BREEAM Excellent rating and will be subject to a formal assessment. The minimum standard accepted will be 'Very Good'
 - DEC A rating
 - Design to provide for a passive standard of operation at the facilities, the aim being to achieve as low a carbon footprint as possible at a reasonable cost over the life cycle of the project. A commentary on the reasons for not adopting the full Passivhaus accreditation route for the design will be helpful as part of our sustainability audit trail for the project
 - Provision of an audit trail, including quantitative performance measures (including Sport England Sustainability Target Metrics, see link below for information), that provide documentary evidence on a design stage by stage approach, to minimising the carbon footprint of the facilities and climate change impact. Provides for tracking the journey of the development through a lifetime carbon performance study which demonstrates how the design and materials used have taken account of the carbon reduction and climate change agenda and that the performance of the building is operating within the design parameters
 - The design must incorporate Sport England design guidance on sustainable facilities: www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/sustainability
 - Providing a report comparing the sustainability performance of the existing facility with the new development with the aim that this demonstrates a net improvement
 - Design must take account of the opportunity to be serviced by air or water source heat pumps and on site renewable energy generation such as PV
 - Focus on outcomes for customers
 - New facilities will provide greater opportunities for participation which supports living a healthy lifestyle
 - Value for money
 - Business modelling has been carried out on the new build option to compare the life cycle costings of developing a new facility against the costs of the current facility.
 - New facilities provide opportunities for generating significant operational surplus compared to the current subsidy levels required
 - Other aims
 - Social Value: The project will reflect Shropshire Council's Social Value Policy.
- The key themes to be reflected in this project are:-
- Support for the local economy through use of local contractors / sub-contractors; local employment; skills building through training and work placements; apprenticeships; supply chain spend
 - Carbon reduction initiatives through low- or no-emission vehicles; low carbon construction techniques and materials; building efficiency; travel schemes
 - Wellbeing schemes targeted at specific groups of people to increase participation in physical activity
 - Minimising non-recyclable waste from activities
 - A section of Shropshire Council's website is also dedicated to Social Value: <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/social-value/>
- ### The Active Environment
- In line with Uniting the Movement, the 2021 Sport England Strategy the design proposals should comply with Sport England's published Design Guidance. Sport England Design Guidance is available for download at: <https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/design-and-cost-guidance>
 - PRINCE 2

The Council's preference is to follow the PRINCE2 approach and its principles for this project. The Council's Project Boards adopt this approach in terms of key roles and responsibilities; the structure and context provided by PRINCE 2 provides the basis for the Council's approach and decision-making

Feasibility study aims and objectives

- To test the deliverability and affordability of option 6 to further understand the potential to meet the outcomes, costs and ability to generate increased participation and income. (Option 6 is new alternative build, 6-lane x 25m with moveable floor, 35-station fitness suite, dance studio, café 20 covers)
- To explore the potential to co-locate the town's library within the development. It should be noted that if co-locating the library emerges as a feasible proposition, as part of the spatial analysis and site capacity and, forms part of the emerging preferred option a specific public consultation on this element will need to be carried out by Shropshire Council prior to any further recommendation to Cabinet
- Engagement of the Whitchurch community, partners and stakeholders in the feasibility study, including exploring the opportunities for co-location of appropriate other services, e.g. library, is a key objective

Feasibility study output

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Feasibility to be developed to RIBA stage 0-1 and must include the following:-

- Project requirements
- Accommodation schedule
- Site appraisals to inform an opportunities and constraints diagrams to identify opportunities and initial key project risks
- Strategic appraisal of planning considerations
- Project brief including outcomes
- Scoping and commissioning relevant surveys (including but not limited to ground investigation, drainage, utilities and ecological but excluding topographical which is available on request). Collateral warranties from sub-contractors will be required for survey works
- Block plans
- Quantity Surveyor costings (including demolition of the existing building and site preparation costs for the construction of a new facility)
- Indicative project programme
- Initial block plan, massing, 3D views and sections to explain relationship with the existing building and scale of proposal(s).
- Precedent image and concept images for the proposal
- Development of project strategies
- Pre-application planning advice

- Support the Council, through the provision of information and plans, for a review and testing of the business case modelling, by others, to reflect the emerging proposal
- Support the Council with the development and implementation of a public / stakeholder engagement / consultation exercise, including the provision of information, plans and imagery
- The demise of the pool coincides with the transformation plans for Shropshire Council's library services.
- The land adjacent to the current pool footprint accommodates the former youth centre which is not currently used. This is currently owned by Shropshire Council. The feasibility work will need to explore the potential to utilise this area to provide an extended footprint and additional facilities, including the option to relocate the current library service and co-locate this with any new leisure facility development on the site
- The study must consider and compare the pros and cons, including; capital cost, life span, life cycle costings, sustainability and value for money of providing a modern high quality modular facility with a surface mounted pool, compared to a more traditional build

Outcome

Production of a feasibility study report which provides the evidence and insight to enable a recommendation on a preferred development option to be made to Cabinet.

Timescale

Initial draft report by 14 February 2022

Final report week commencing 21 February 2022

Proposed facilities

Sports centre

- Reception
- Café, 20 covers
- 6-lane, 25m pool with a movable floor
- Changing village
- 35-station fitness gym
- Multi-purpose room divisible into two, each half to accommodate 20 persons

Library

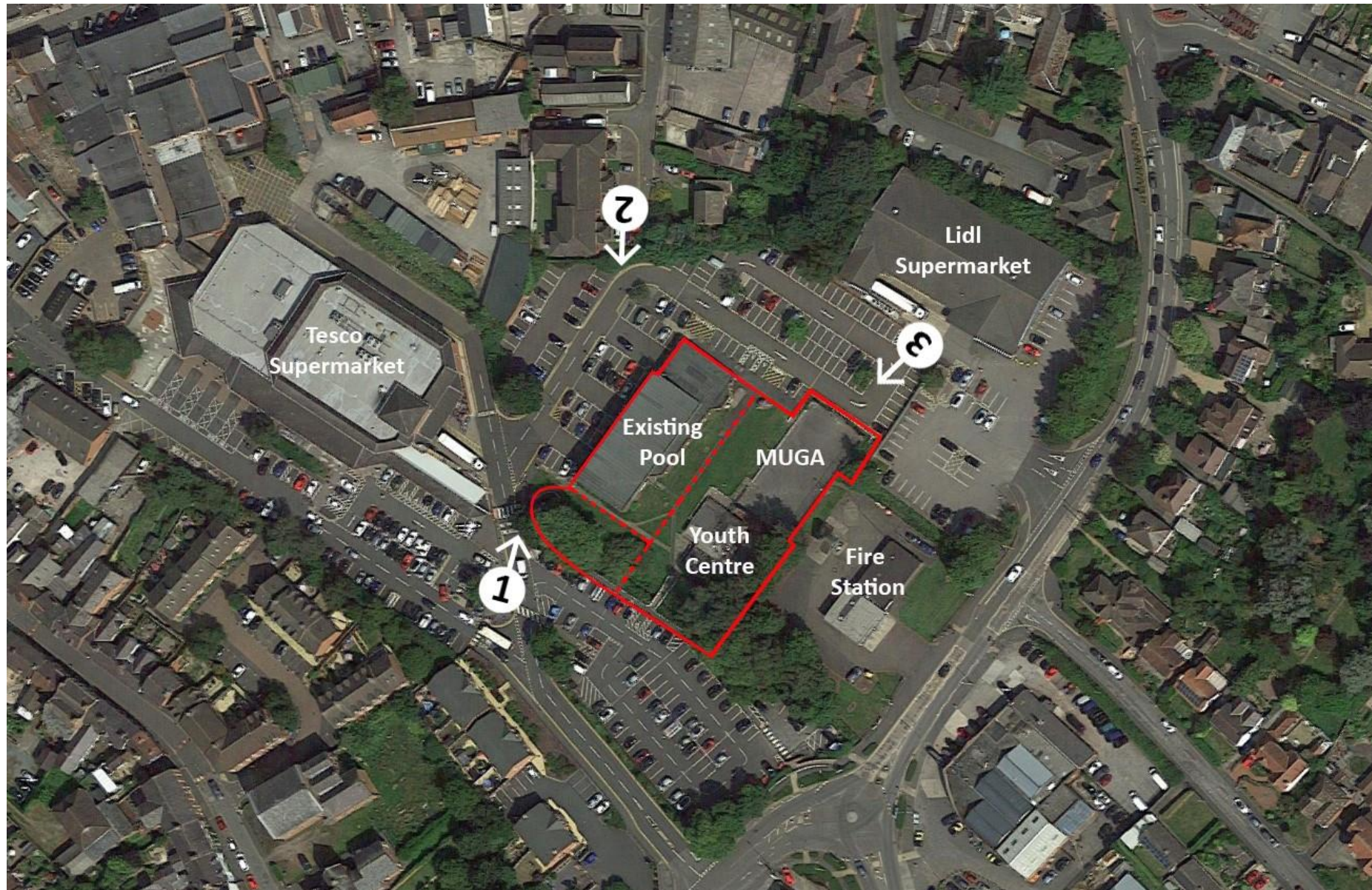
Co-locating the library with the sports centre is to be considered as part of this feasibility study. The brief for the library is to be confirmed.

Rationale for facility mix

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Increased participation and revenue impact from a larger pool; the existing operator has identified significant potential for increasing swimming lessons in the area based on demand. The existing facility delivered 600 swimming lessons per month. Equally, there is potential to increase the number of swim memberships from the existing 180.

- A facility offering both fitness and swimming is likely to appeal to a wider range of participants; this provides the opportunity to offer a new swim and gym membership and provide opportunities for revenue generation.
- Increased water space also facilitates an increased capacity for casual i.e., pay and play swimming.
- A new facility could also be designed to allow for the potential future provision of a new library facility in Whitchurch as part of the library transformation programme.



Overview

- Whitchurch Swimming Centre is located in the market town of Whitchurch in northern Shropshire, approximately 20 miles (30km) north of the county town of Shrewsbury. The centre is on a retail park with shared access roads and car parking facilities. Access is from Bridge Water Street (B5395) off the London and Chester Roads (B5395) via the main A41 (Whitchurch Bypass).
- Site address: Whitchurch Swimming Centre, White Lion Meadow, off, Bridgewater Street, Whitchurch SY13 1BA.
- The approximate total site area covers approx. 3,500m²
- The current facility is located on top of the site which then slopes down a grassed area to an unused multi-use games area (MUGA) The current building is rectangular in plan layout, and mostly open plan around the main pool area with segregated changing and office / welfare facilities
- The land adjacent to the current pool footprint accommodates the former youth centre and MUGA which is not currently used. This is currently owned by Shropshire Council. The feasibility work will need to explore the potential to utilise this area to provide an extended footprint and additional facilities, including the potential to relocate the current library service and co-locate this with any new leisure facility development.

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Existing swimming pool

- Size: the measured survey confirms the net internal area is 718m²
- Use: leisure
- Age: the swimming pool was built in 1974 (47 years old)
- Heritage designation: N/A
- Building fabric: steel frame building consisting of steel column and beams at regular intervals over clad with cavity brickwork and profiled metal cladding panels. Under mono-pitched and flat roofs with bitumen felt coverings. Windows and doors are double glazed powder coated metal.
- The centre has been closed since March 2020, initially due to the national lockdown as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, and further to that as a result of the structural problems identified whilst investigating the cause of a leak from the pool tank which include underpinning issues and deterioration in the fabric of the building. A structural engineer's investigation cautioned that the swimming pool is likely to continue to settle due to the inadequate foundations to the swimming

pool and structure, and that further cracking and lifting of tiles to the pool and pool surround will continue to occur.

- The building has a three phase electrical supply. The building has a gas meter with 54mm connection and feeds an 80mm steel gas pipe supplying the low temperature hot water boilers. The main pool is ventilated by a ducted ventilation system with a central air handling unit with heater / frost batteries and a crossover heat exchanger.
- No 'As built' drawings are available.



Existing pool interior

Existing site

Boundaries and ownership

The site comprises the footprint of the existing swimming pool and the land adjacent to it on the east that accommodates the former youth centre and MUGA and which is currently owned by Shropshire Council. The car parking to the west and north of the site is used as overspill parking by Tesco and the legal agreement with Tesco needs to be clarified by the Council, including the number of spaces assigned to the existing swimming pool, existing youth centre and MUGA and any other legal restrictions. The access road to the car park off Bridgewater Street is within the area leased to Tesco and is understood not to be adopted.

Arboriculture

There are a number of existing mature trees on the site, particularly on the southern boundary adjacent to the existing stream. The proposed location of the leisure centre offers the opportunity to retain many of these trees where they are deemed an asset to the overall development and an arboricultural survey will need to be provided. This should also include the root zones for any trees in adjacent properties (particularly on the eastern boundary) to ensure that these are unaffected by building work.

Acoustics

The closest building to the proposed site is the existing fire station immediately to the east of the site. However, there are residential properties approximately 60-70m from the building to the west (along Pearl Yard), the east (along Bridgewater Street), and to the south beyond the car park access road. It is anticipated that an acoustic report will be required to measure the existing background noise and to establish the



Site view ed from the south (view 1)



Showing existing swimming pool viewed from the north (view 2)



Showing existing MUGA viewed from the north (view 3)

performance requirements for the building fabric and any plant associated with the new building. Internally, Sport England guidance provides details of the reverberation time required for the pool hall.

Drainage

- Foul water

The existing site foul drainage infrastructure comprises commercial and industrial (trade effluent) sewage from the existing swimming pool building. A drainage survey is planned to confirm where the existing foul water from the site discharges. Details of utilities records are contained in section 8.0.

- Surface water

The existing site comprises predominantly brownfield (buildings, car parking and hardstanding) land. A drainage survey is planned to confirm where the existing surface water from the site discharges. Once a drainage survey has been carried out, the proposed strategy for both foul and surface water will be updated to reflect its findings. For further details and recommendations please refer to section 8.0 of this report, together with details of the utilities records obtained.

Ecology

A preliminary ecological appraisal of the site has been carried out by Wildwood Ecology (December 2021), consisting of a desk study and field survey.

The Stagg's Brook local Wildlife Site runs along the southern boundary of the site and, although the proposals will have no direct impact on it, there is the possibility that it will be indirectly impacted by the proposed new building during its construction. It is therefore recommended that a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) is produced outlining how the works can proceed with due regard to the local wildlife site. The report identified that the development may result in impacts on wildlife and habitats affecting the following protected species: bats, European otter, nesting birds and water vole. Recommendations are given regarding the protection required prior to and during construction (including a bat survey) and the report concludes that, provided these are successfully implemented, it should be possible for the proposed development to proceed and for there to be no long-term impact upon the key protected species present at the site.

The report also highlighted that there are wall Cotoneaster bushes present on the site in the planters adjacent to the existing pool. These are invasive plant species included in schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and should be removed in a way that will not risk its spread into the wild.

Asbestos

A copy of the asbestos register for the building has been received and has informed the cost plan. An intrusive asbestos survey of the existing buildings on the site that are to be demolished is required to identify the location and extent of hazardous materials.

Flood risk

The site is generally in Flood zone 1, with a strip of zone 3 to the south of the site next to the water course. In accordance with Environment Agency guidance, a site specific flood risk assessment is not required as the total area of the site is less than 1 hectare; however, as there is a section of Zone 3 to the south a Flood Risk Assessment may be required by the LLFA. A small area of the site is subject to localised surface water flooding according to the EA data; however, the area of the site at risk does not clash with the proposed building location or other proposed site infrastructure. For further details and recommendations please refer to section 8.0 of this report

Ground investigations

A geo-technical site investigation needs to be undertaken with a full report to deem the exact ground conditions on the site. Initial assumptions on the ground conditions have been based on geological maps and historic boreholes in close proximity to the site. These suggest that piled foundations and a suspended ground floor slab will be required for the new building. For further details and recommendations please refer to section 8.0 of this report.

Topography

The site generally slopes down from the west (location of the existing swimming centre)) to the east (existing MUGA location), and along its southern edge there is a steep bank falling towards the stream. A topographical survey based on OS data was prepared by Shropshire Council Property Services Group in November

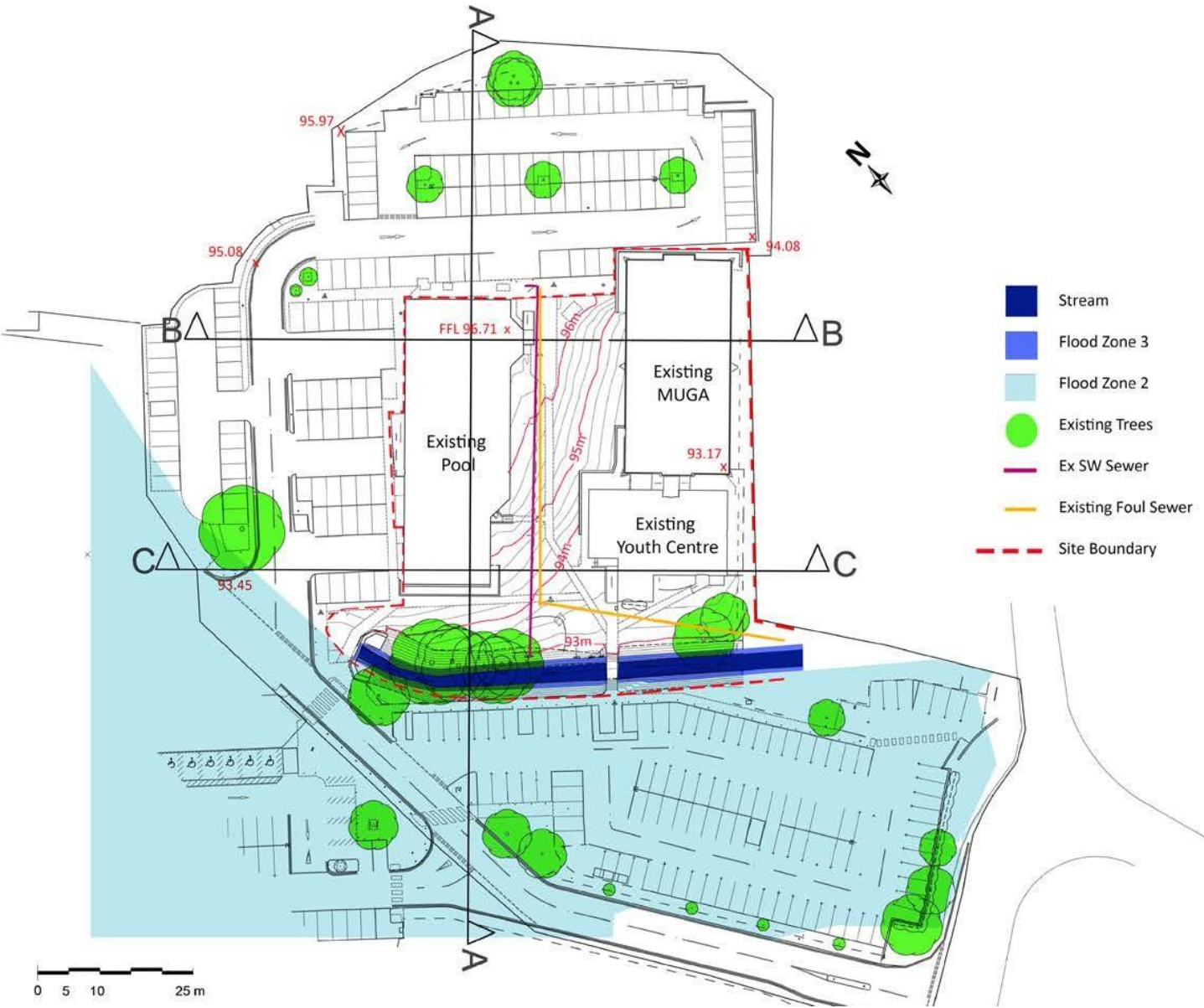
2019, which was used by the design team in the preparation of preliminary design proposals. A more detailed topographical and below ground services survey has been commissioned for the next stage of the design process.

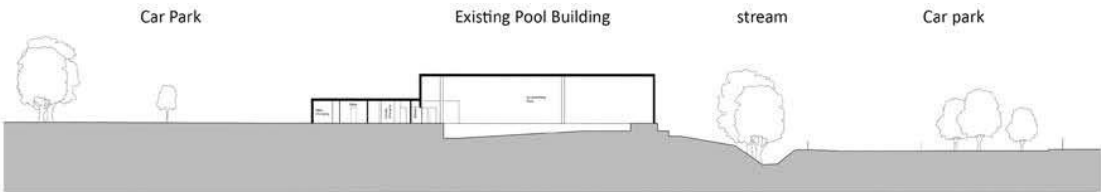
Traffic and highways

The site is well located centrally within the town. It is a 10-15 minute walk from the railway station and is served by adjacent bus stops. There is parking adjacent to the site; however, this is subject to a legal agreement with Tesco which needs clarification (see Boundaries and ownership earlier). A Transport Assessment is likely to be required to determine the parking requirement for the next stage and to assess any traffic impact.

Utilities

A report of the existing utilities on the site has been commissioned from Groundwise Searches Ltd, as summarised in the MEP and sustainability report (section 9.0).

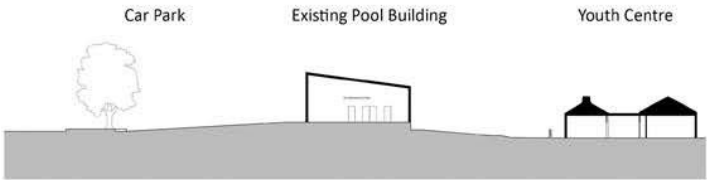




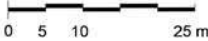
Existing Section A-A



Existing Section B - B



Existing Section C - C



5.0 Planning consultation and considerations

Consultation

No formal pre-application consultation has yet taken place with the planning authority, as this is anticipated to be most usefully undertaken during RIBA stage 2 based on this formalised report. The headings below represent our assumptions and are based on our experience and understanding of typical planning considerations.

Summary of potential planning considerations

Access and transport

A key aspect of the design and suitability of the site for the proposed development will be the additional traffic and parking required to serve the enlarged facilities. The Highway Authority is to advise their parking standards. It is assumed that a transport assessment or statement will be required which will include a parking survey and Green Travel Plan. We have assumed that the additional parking will be to a max. car parking of 1 space per 22m² floor area, with c6% of these provided as accessible spaces, based on the additional floor area created. However, we would expect that this may be reduced from the maximum provision due to its proximity to the bus station and central town centre location. It is also anticipated that the parking arrangements should make provision for coach / minibus parking (for schools, etc.) and for drop-off.

Proximity to conservation area

Although the site is adjacent to, but not in, the conservation area, its proximity may impact on the conservation area setting and consideration should therefore be given to materials and colours to enhance the setting.

Environmental Impact Assessment

The local authority planners are to advise if a formal screening process is required.

Arboriculture

An arboricultural survey and tree protection plan will be required to accompany the planning application.

Ecology

The potential for bats may influence the design of the external lighting in order to minimise impact.

Impact on neighbours

The design will need to consider the impact of noise from internal and external activities (including parking) and building plant on the nearest residential receptors. Additionally, any external lighting will need to be designed to minimise any impact on residential amenity.

External landscaping

The external landscaping around the building and within the parking area should reflect the client's objectives to enhance site ecology, and also designed with consideration of Sport England's 'Active Design Principles' that aim to encourage the inactive to become active through the provision of informal and formal structures that support physical activity.

Flood risk and drainage strategy

The proximity to the stream will generate a requirement to provide an FRA. Surface water run-off will typically require some attenuation and SuDS principles applied.

Signage

A separate external signage application is anticipated to be required.

Stakeholder feedback on public / stakeholder engagement / consultation exercise

No further public consultation has been undertaken at this stage but it is anticipated during RIBA stage 2 and / or stage 3.

Utilities

The utilities companies have been consulted. Details of utilities records have been obtained. The extent of any upgrade to the supplies will depend on clarification by the Council of their sustainability objectives and requirements for electric vehicle charging points within the new parking areas.

Building Control

No contact has been made at this stage. It is assumed that the Council's preference would be to use their internal Building Control rather than use an Approved Inspector.

Client consultation

Shropshire Council have consulted internally regarding the development of the initial brief and in response to this study. This has included consultation with officers in the Culture, Leisure and Tourism team regarding the library and with Youth Services. Further consultation will be required with schools as a key user group in order to establish their method of transport, patterns and frequency of use and child protection requirements.

Further valuable input into the design and brief has been provided by the client's appointed specialist sports advisors, Design Active Ltd, who have commented on the development of the design throughout the stage 1 design period.

Whitchurch Library

The potential to relocate the existing library from its the town centre location to the proposed new swimming and fitness centre was reviewed in the early stages of the feasibility study.

Discussions were held with the portfolio holder and officers in the Culture, Leisure and Tourism (CLT) team including the Assistant Director Communities and Homes, Head of CLT, Culture and Communities Manager and Head of Libraries. This included a review of a previous report on the civic centre and library which stated that following approval of the Council's Library Services Strategy, 2018 – 2023, the library in Whitchurch has been confirmed as a tier 1 library hub. Library hubs are intended to be conveniently located, multi-functional spaces, gateways to a range of services, and co-located with partners.

It was noted that Whitchurch Civic Centre is on a 99-year lease to Town Council which provides for free occupancy for the Library and that the Library has had significant money spent on it recently.

It was concluded that there were no operational benefits to moving the library, it would add significant capital costs to the proposed swimming and fitness centre and such a move could adversely impact on high street footfall. The potential relocation of the library was therefore removed from the feasibility study remit.

Initial discussions with Shropshire Council Youth Services

Initial discussions have been held with colleagues from Shropshire Council's Youth Service. The proposed new facility provides an opportunity to engage more young people in physical activity and sport and is a positive development in this respect.

Engaging with young people will be important through the initial stakeholder engagement and public consultation process. Youth Service colleagues will be happy to support this process.

The development of an informal external activity area with the ability to provide for a range of informal physical and sporting activities, is seen as an important aspect of the new facilities offer to young people and is required to replace and enhance the offer currently provided by the aging Multi Use Games Area.

Proposed leisure centre facilities and useProposed uses / users

- Customer outcomes: new facilities will provide greater opportunities for participation which supports living a healthy lifestyle targeted at the Local Community and meeting community needs
- Wellbeing schemes targeted at specific groups of people to increase participation in physical activity
- Collective priority (Shropshire Council, Health and Wellbeing Board, Energize (Active Partnership) to improve community health and well-being at all stages of life, and that physical activities are integral to this, with a focus on older and young people and families
- Facilities to be relevant
- Swimming pool
 - Swimming lessons: larger swimming pool provides opportunity to increase use for swimming lessons based on demand (existing facility delivered 600 / month)
 - Opportunity to increase swim memberships from the existing 180
 - Larger pool allows increase participation
 - Increased water space also facilitates an increased capacity for casual i.e. pay and play swimming
 - Movable floor allows flexibility of use, from water confidence and lessons to training and competition
- A facility offering both fitness and swimming is likely to appeal to a wider range of participants; this provides the opportunity to offer a new swim and gym membership and provide opportunities for revenue generation
- Leisure facilities are important relevant community spaces, accessible to all and offering opportunities for the delivery of a wide range of activities, services, support and entertainment to local communities and people
- School use

On completion of this study, we understand that the Council anticipates commissioning Strategic Leisure to review and update their business case in relation to the proposed RIBA stage 1 design.

Schedule of accommodation

Ground floor

- Entrance lobby
- Foyer
- Office / staff room
- Café (20 covers), including reception counter, combined with reception and vending area
- Kitchen
- Café toilets, including accessible toilet (pre-turnstile)
- Changing Places (with dual access both from within and outside of the wet changing area)
- Circulation to ground floor and stairs / lift(s) to first floor
- Changing village with a combination of single, double and family cubicles (44 spaces total)
- 2 school group changing rooms (15 persons each)
- Accessible changing room (wet side)
- Toilets (male / female / accessible)
- Showers (open and enclosed)
- Pool hall, including 25m x 13m pool with moveable floor, easy access steps and pool pod
- First aid
- Moveable floor plant room
- Pool store
- Plant room / pool water treatment / wet plant (incl. 2 chemical stores)

First floor

- 2 studios to accommodate 20 persons each (approx. 100m²) with moveable wall between
- Studio storage (this may be a separate space or an enlargement of the studio space)
- 35-station fitness gym
- Fitness changing and showers
- Fitness toilets (male / female / accessible)
- Accessible change (dry side)

Roof

- Roof mounted plant with screening
- Space for PVs / ASHPs if applicable (refer to section 9.0 MEP and sustainability report)

Design strategies and layout

Site layout

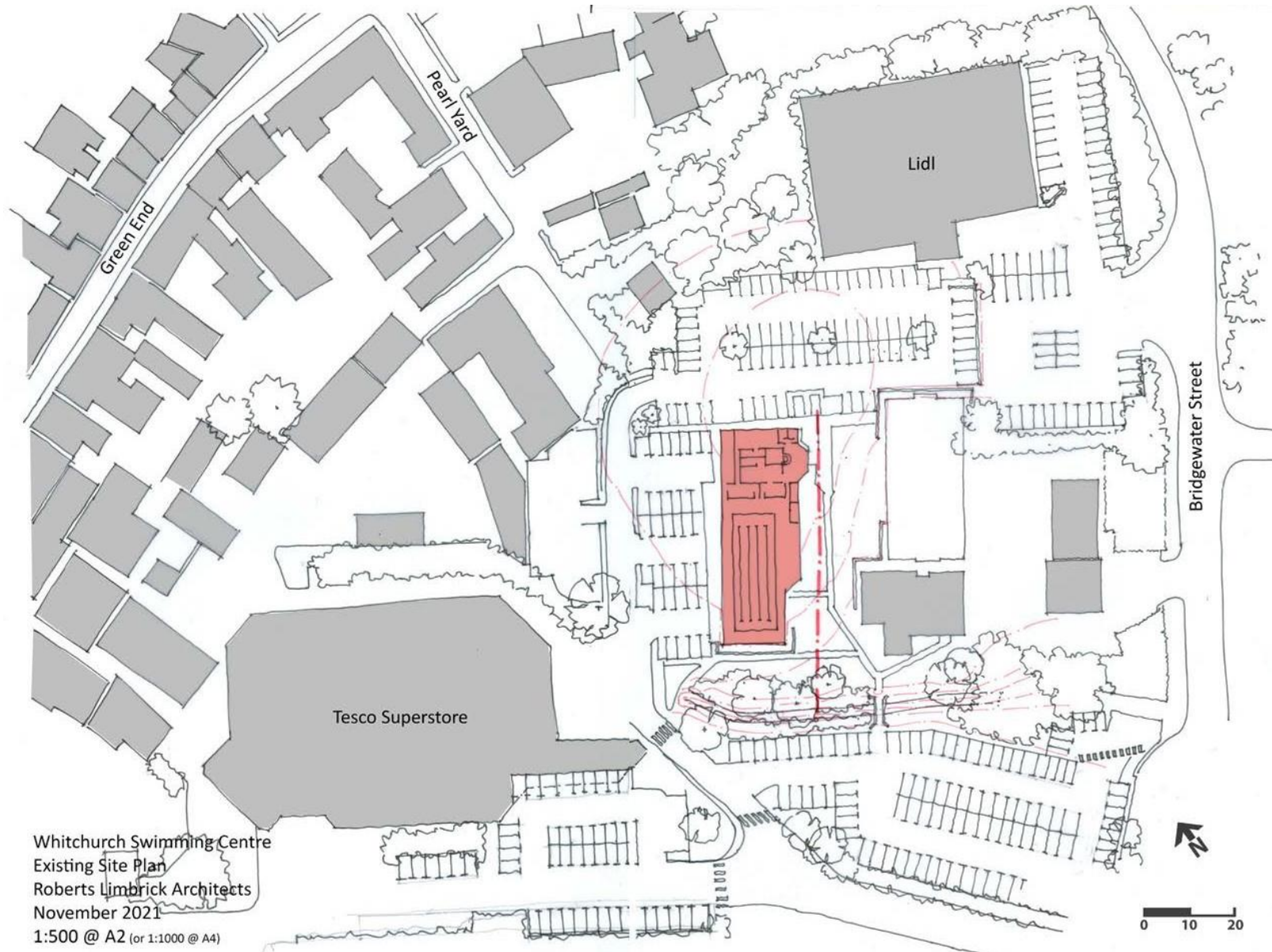
The building is positioned to the east of the site where the existing MUGA and Youth Centre are currently located, close to the boundary with the fire station. This location allows the maximum expansion of the Tesco's overspill carpark and the opportunity to create a drop-off and gathering area in front of the main entrance, which will be to the west elevation. This location places the building equal distances from the residential buildings to the west, east, and south reducing the potential for noise disturbance to residential neighbours.

The pool hall is placed on the south side of the building, with glazing looking towards the stream, but located back from the trees to limit shading from the trees that line the bank over the stream. As the pool hall is a single storey, the massing of the building can be reduced along this southern edge, reducing the impact of the building above the stream and as viewed from the new housing developments opposite.

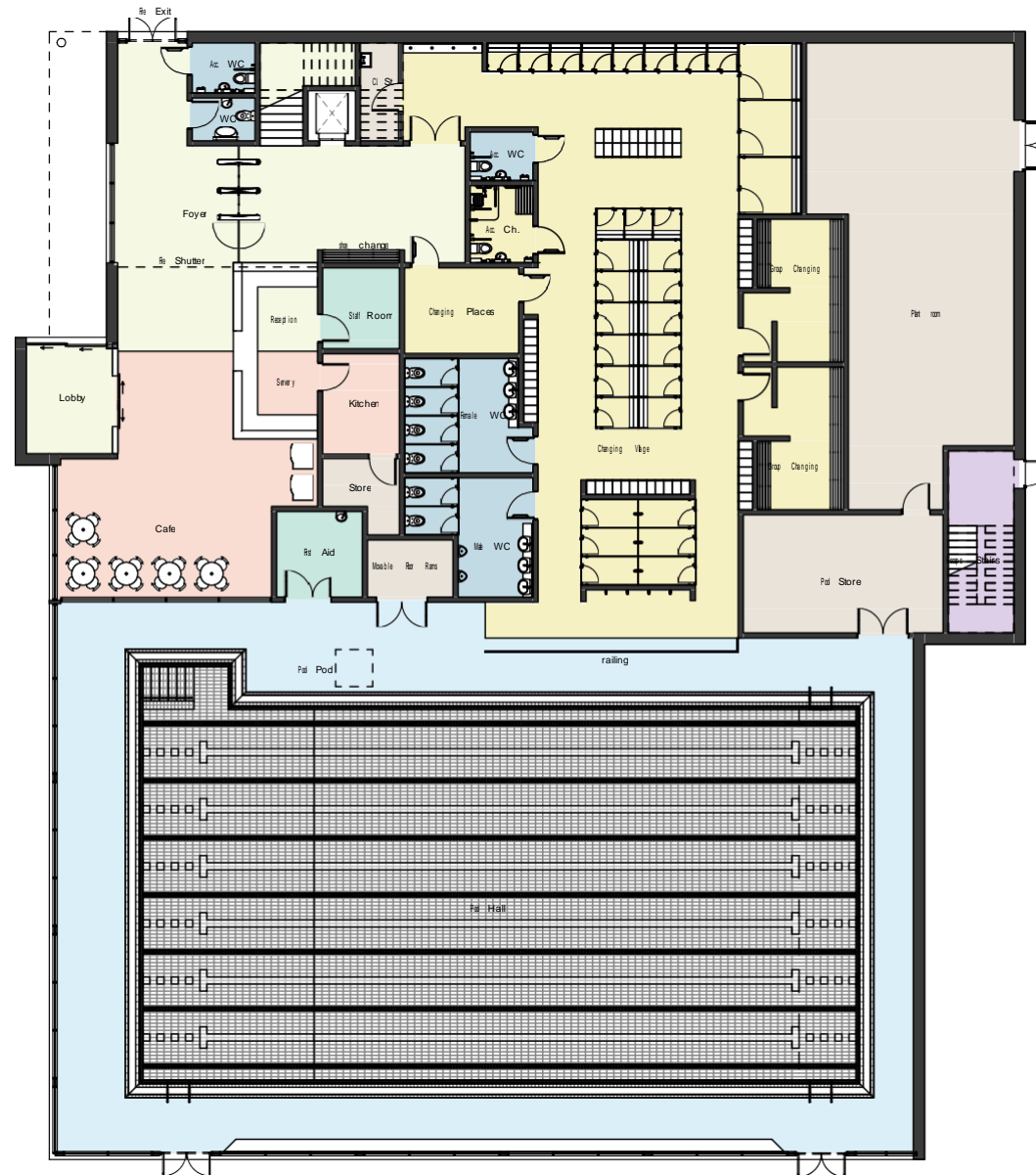
The 2 storey element of the building is to the north of the site, with the fitness gym and studios placed on the upper floor. The north orientation will reduce the need for cooling. The fitness gym, which will be extensively glazed, is placed along the west elevation above the reception and café, presenting an active and welcoming façade to the primary approach to the building from the west, while the two studios look out over the parking to the north, bringing life and activity to this elevation. The plant room and service areas are to the east where they face the boundary and rear façade of the fire station.

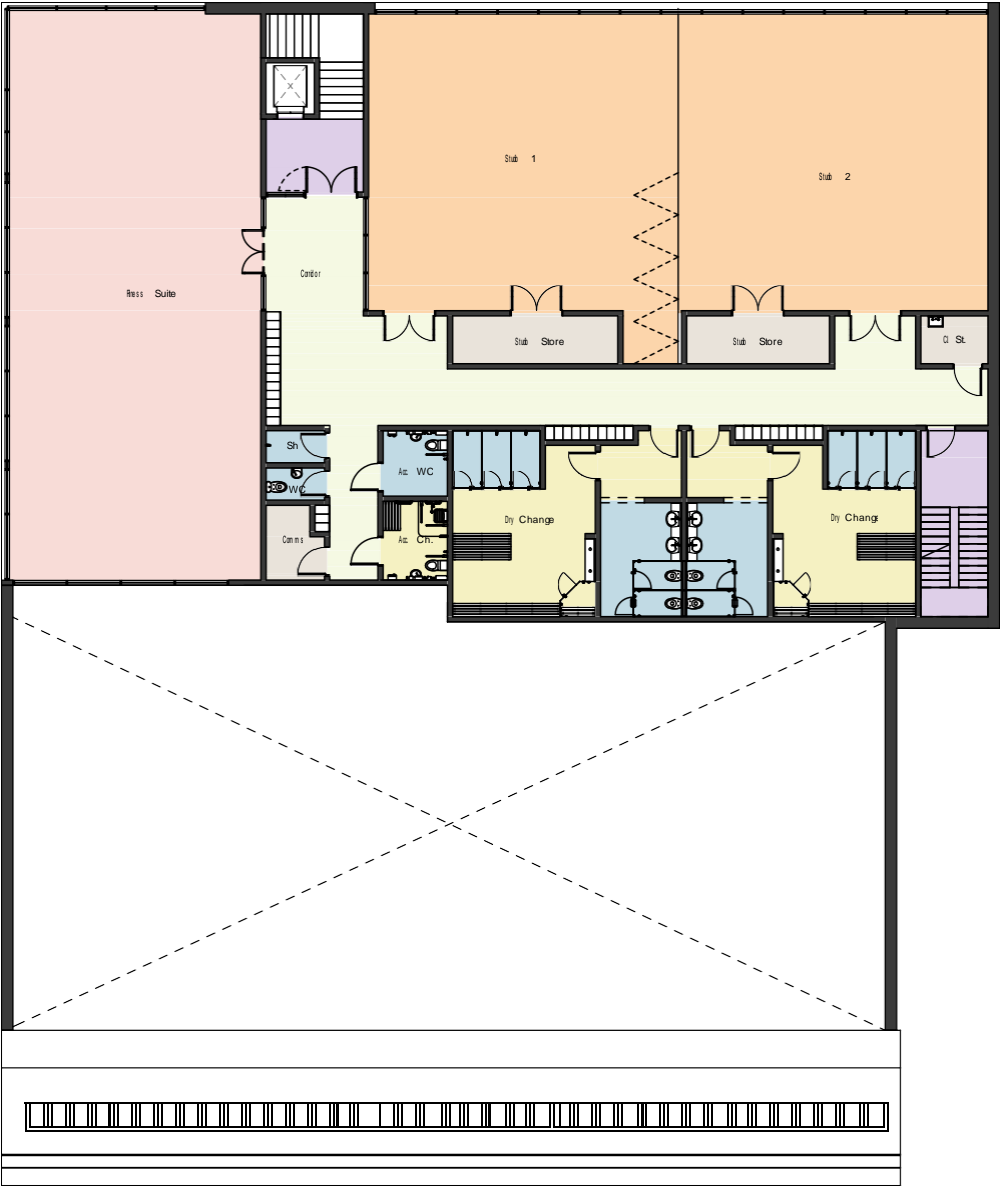
Parking

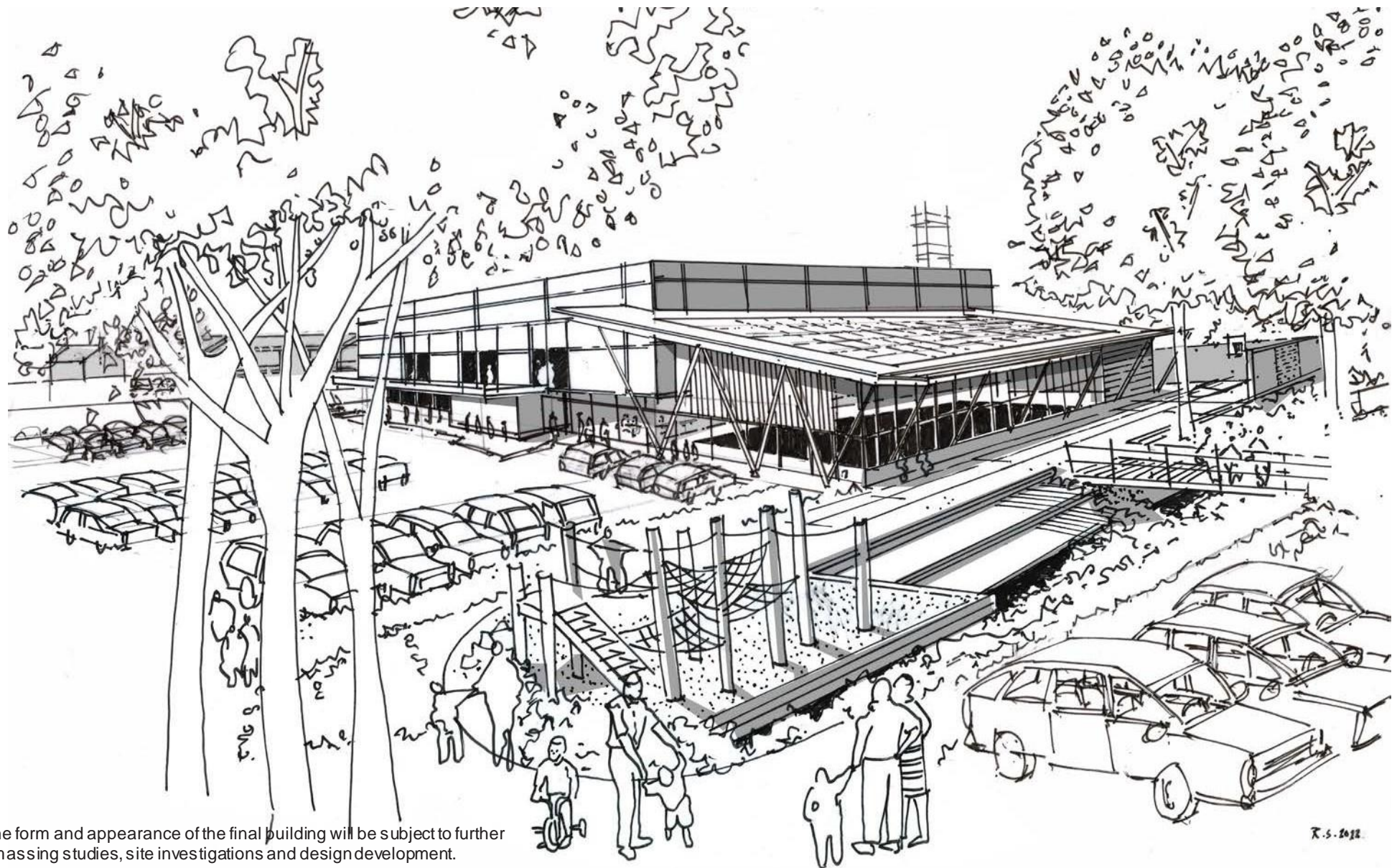
The proposed facility has a GIFA of approximately 1,680m², which is 960m² greater than the existing facility. Using a simple ratio of 22m² per parking bay, this would suggest an increase of 44 spaces from the current provision. Considering the











* The form and appearance of the final building will be subject to further massing studies, site investigations and design development.

constraints of the existing site, it is unlikely that this figure will be achieved and a Transport Assessment and a close interrogation of the current arrangement with Tesco will be required to assess the actual additional parking spaces required, in order to limit the amount of additional parking to be provided.

The external layout will provide a car drop-off area adjacent to the main entrance and disabled parking provision (number to be determined by the Transport Assessment Parking Strategy). Previously, coach drop-off to the existing pool was provided in the upper parking area (adjacent to Lidl) and it is proposed that this remains the strategy for the new pool. Coach parking areas could also be provided in this area, if required, although this needs to be factored into the overall parking strategy.

Cycle parking will be provided in close proximity to the main entrance. This is typically required to be covered.

MUGA / outdoor activity space

The preferred location for the new building is on the site of the existing MUGA. Consultees to the client have stressed the importance to provide some freely accessible outdoor activity space as part of the overall development. The design team investigated a number of site options which could incorporate a free access MUGA (see appendix). These options significantly reduced the potential for providing adequate parking on the site and compromised the ability to provide a drop-off and gathering space outside the main entrance. It has therefore been suggested that alternative activity provision be considered which might be a smaller, more informal hard play area with basketball hoop and goals, outdoor gym equipment, skate boarding areas, bike jump track, or adventure activity area (perhaps within the wooded landscape), or a combination of these. Further consultation will be required to determine the final brief for these, which are to be aimed at the local youth but which could also include facilities that could be attractive to the wider community.

Internal layout

The building has been designed as a high quality facility, meeting the expectations of the users and operators. The facilities are designed to be accessible and inclusive, with clear wayfinding a key consideration. The building is designed to comply with Sport England's published Design Guidance.

Ground floor

Entrance foyer and café area

Users of the building will enter the spacious foyer via a draught lobby and arrive directly at the reception desk where they will be greeted by staff. The space will allow for customer queueing and provide secure controlled access to the facilities (via turnstiles if required). The entrance foyer is also designed to act as café with tables and chairs looking into the pool hall. The reception desk and servery for the café will be joined, helping to reduce staffing demand during quiet periods of the day. Behind the desk is a management office / staff room and a kitchen. Storage is provided for kitchen and vending supplies. Turnstiles adjacent to the reception desk (if provided) will control access to the primary circulation corridor with direct access to all the primary activity spaces and changing rooms at both ground and first floor levels.

Pool changing rooms

The final configuration of the pool changing area will require further discussion during the next consultation phase with the client and stakeholders. The current design proposes a mixture of changing village and 2 group changing rooms for school / group use or to suit varying customer requirements, which could include movable signage to allow additional use as male / female change. The changing areas include disabled changing and toilet facilities and there is a Changing Places facility which is accessible from both the wet changing area and from the dry side to optimise the use of this provision. Consideration is to be given to any requirement for gender neutral toilets.

6-lane, 25m pool

The pool is a 6-lane, 25m pool with a movable floor over half the area, allowing for a wide range of uses. The steps into the pool adjust along with the floor level and allow for easy access to the pool for all user groups. There is also a pool pod hoist for wheelchair user access. A first aid room is provided. The location shown allows for access to the outside to the dry side facilities. Further consideration is to be given to the potential for this to be accessible directly from the outside without blocking views from the foyer.

First floor

Access to first floor

A lift and main staircase are provided to the first floor facilities immediately after the turnstiles where they can be seen from the foyer for ease of wayfinding (note: during the design process it was agreed that in the next phase consideration should be given to the provision of a second lift in accordance with Sport England recommendations).

Fitness gym

The fitness gym is designed to accommodate 35 stations (based on an approximate area of 4.5m² per station). With external views across the forecourt, and internally into the pool hall, this will be an attractive and animated space. The primary entrance to the fitness gym is at the head of the main circulation stair. The detailed layout of the fitness gym and the possible inclusion of a separate assessment room will be developed in the next phases in consultation with the operator. Such a room could also be used for GP referrals, if required.

Studios

There are 2 studios, each approximately 100m² to accommodate classes of 20+ persons. These studios are divided by a retractable wall that can allow for them to operate as one large studio space. The detailed design of these spaces, from finishes (floor, wall and ceiling), acoustic and audio visual requirements, storage, any black-out requirements, etc. will all be subject to detailed consideration during the next phase of user group consultation and is subject to the range of activities envisaged for the spaces.

Fitness changing

The design incorporates separate male and female changing rooms for the fitness gym and studio spaces. There is also an accessible changing room and separate accessible WC, as well as a unisex toilet and unisex shower for those who would prefer not to use the main changing room. As is common in these facilities, it is envisaged that many users will come to the facility already changed and lockers for sports bags, etc. are provided in the circulation spaces and it has been assumed

that standard changing provision set out in some Sport England guidance could be discounted by c65%.

Plant space

A dedicated wet plant / pool water treatment plant room has been included on the ground floor, with an associated service yard to allow for chemical deliveries and storage of recycled and non-recycled waste. PVs are anticipated to be included on the south facing pool hall roof, with ASHPs and other AHU plant located in a screened enclosure on the flat roof area above the first floor facilities. Stair access to this will be required.

Built form and appearance

The new leisure centre will be built with high quality materials of an appropriate standard to enhance the setting of the building and provide an attractive, durable facade. This will include glazing to the main activity spaces to provide an active frontage which is important both in planning terms and for the commercial success of the facilities.

Access / maintenance / inclusion

Consideration should be given to the maintenance of the building. Externally, this will include providing level areas for maintenance equipment and provision for safe access to the roof. Internally, provision should be relatively straightforward, but access to maintain lighting in the pool hall is a particular consideration.

Acoustics

Considerations include limiting sound break-out from facilities and between facilities, sound attenuation of plant and reverberation within the pool hall, as well as generally within all areas in order to provide good speech intelligibility.

Sustainability

Minimising waste from activities

Related to the use of the building, this is mainly the operation of the cafe. Ways to do this will include minimising the use of single use receptacles, e.g. coffee cups,

and consideration of how deliveries will be packaged. In terms of the operation of the building, this might include the use of alternative media for pool water filtration (reducing use of chemicals). Regarding the build, use of pre-fabricated components will reduce on-site waste, such as pre-cast floor planks, structural steelwork, cladding, etc.

Low carbon building techniques

Options will include re-use of masonry materials, resulting from the demolition of the building, use of alternative low carbon concrete (where appropriate), use of materials with good longevity and use of renewable materials that can potentially be re-used in the future on demolition.

Building efficiency

The building may be designed to high levels of insulation, airtightness and associated detailing to minimise any loss and cold bridging. Passivhaus principles can still be applied even if accreditation is not required (which would require a bespoke standard to be written). Any comparable loss of performance could be off-set by an increase in PVs, etc. which potentially could be a more economical approach than achieving Passivhaus accreditation.

Carbon off-setting / mitigation

The external landscaping will allow opportunities for carbon off-setting via tree planting around the building / within the car parking. However, this will be limited by the site area available. The Council may consider other opportunities for carbon off-setting by incorporating planting / trees at other sites they own and providing renewables, e.g. PVs, at these other sites.

Climate change

The building and external works will need to be designed to take into account climate change. This will entail applying SuDS techniques to limit and attenuate surface water run-off and avoid risk of flooding resulting from the development.

Sport England design guidance

Reference to the sustainability guidance will be made in the developing design. It is noted that this guidance is being updated to reflect current thinking. From our ongoing involvement in developing this guidance, we understand that the general approach is to design the building to use electricity from renewable sources (on-site and grid) to heat, light and power the building, whilst acknowledging that domestic hot water generation can be most economically achieved by retaining the use of natural gas. However, the Council can choose to go beyond this, i.e. using electricity for all aspects, if desired. A carbon consultant may be appointed during the next stage to provide the necessary calculations to document and inform design decisions going forward, as well as lifetime performance and tracking.

Modular construction

Due to the topographic ground conditions and other site constraints, it is unlikely that an 'off the shelf' modular building will meet the requirements of this site and associated brief, including design quality requirements. However, modular building techniques can be used as appropriate. This will include:-

- Improved programme
- Improved quality
- Improved safety
- Reduced wastage
- Reduced risk
- Reduced cost
- Improved labour benefits: factory built, more work in fixed location

The following modern methods of construction have been considered and should be further reviewed as the scheme develops during RIBA stage 2.

i. Off-site

- Volumetric / modular construction: pre-fabricated buildings, good for smaller buildings, e.g. changing rooms, pavilions, spaces of a size and scale that can be bolted together on site or incorporated in larger buildings. However, due to the size of the building, this is unlikely to be suitable for this building.

- Hybrid construction: due to size of spaces in leisure centres, hybrid construction is more relevant, i.e. opportunity to incorporate smaller modular units within the building. However, the design layout of the changing areas are bespoke to this facility, i.e. there are no repeating blocks of changing rooms, etc. as might be the case with multiple changing rooms for football.
- Non-systemised primary structure: framed or mass engineered timber (CLT / SIPs / Glulam, etc.), cold rolled or hot rolled steel or precast concrete members, e.g. load bearing beams, columns, walls, staircases, core structures, slabs, ring beams, piles caps, driven piles and screw piles, pre-cast concrete or stainless steel pool tanks. Some of these methods of construction may be suitable.
- Non-structural assemblies: on-structural walling systems (e.g. pre-cast / finished wall assemblies), roof cassettes, non-loadbearing sanitary area pods, risers and plant rooms, as well as pre-formed wiring looms and mechanical engineering composites, e.g.:
 - Packaged boiler plant
 - Prefabricated service distribution
 - Prefabricated pool plant

Some of these methods of construction may be applicable to this project as it develops in detail.

ii. Off-site / on-site

- Composite floors: pre-cast combined with in-situ concrete which can be power floated avoiding screeds; this may be applicable to this project.

iii. On- site improvements

- Flat slab construction: flat floor slabs with no beams, quicker to install on site, reduced floor to floor height; perhaps more useful for smaller spans?

Modern methods of design

- Use of BIM / clash detection, potential for better coordinated design, reduction in site errors
- Better developed design enables pre-fabrication
- Designing to reduce wastage

These methods of design will be applicable to this project, i.e. use of BIM.

Adaptability

The building is proposed to be a wide span framed structure. This will allow for future adaptation to allow for possible changing trends in the future.

Fire

The building is proposed to form a single compartment, with areas of higher fire risk enclosed with enhanced fire resistant construction. Two alternative means of escape have been provided to the first floor; these include the use of the main stair as a protected stair and may entail the use of a fire curtain to separate the stair from the adjacent space, and a fire alarm interface on any turnstiles. Boundary conditions will need to be assessed to establish the degree of fire resistance required and the extent of unprotected glazing. A preliminary fire strategy based on BS9999 will need to be developed in the next stage. The client's requirements beyond life safety will also need to be established, if any.

Option for co-location of the library

The initial assessment of site capacity has established that there is insufficient space to accommodate a relocated library and associated parking. In addition, consultation with library services has established that the current town centre location is better than this site and that relocation may negatively impact on the existing, predominantly older user group.

1. INTRODUCTION

Furness Partnership has been appointed as the structural consultant for the design and construction of a new leisure centre in Whitchurch, Shropshire. This report provides an outline of what information about the site can already be found before we conduct our own site investigations. Presented in this document are the preliminary solutions for the scheme. The proposed developments include the following works:-

- Demolition of the single storey swimming pool
- Construction of a 6-lane swimming pool with 2 storeys to make way for fitness suites and studios
- Construction of additional car parking spaces and other external works.

2. SITE AND GROUND CONDITIONS

Site location map and boundaries

The proposed development is located on the site of the existing Whitchurch Leisure Centre. It is located in the town centre situated between a Tesco (West) and a Lidl (East). The leisure centre shares an unnamed road with Tescos for primary access and parking which you turn on to off Bridgewater Street. To the South West there is also the Whitchurch fire station acting as a boundary for the site.

Initially there were two proposals considered on the site. Option one was to have the new leisure centre situated roughly a little further East, with the patch of grassland to the East being used for the new structure creating new car parking spaces. Option two, the preferred option, would see the pool rotated and the site located on the edge of the East boundary. In the second option the building to the Southeast of the existing leisure centre (the disused Youth Centre) would in turn have to be demolished to accommodate this option. This report focuses on the feasibility of the preferred second option.

Site surveys

At the time of when this report was written no surveys had been undertaken in the location of the proposed new building.



Phase 1 desk study and 2 site investigations have been carried out recently. At the time of writing the findings of the intrusive survey have not been issued, therefore there is limited current information regarding the ground conditions of the site. This report will be updated during the next design stage and once the survey report has been published.

To gather some initial information, the British Geological survey website has been used looking at borehole data from previous investigations as well as MAGIC map provided by the government. There are a number of additional surveys that are required to provide further information in order to progress at the detailed design stage.

These include:

- Detailed Geotechnical and Geoenvironmental site investigation
- Ecology survey
- Flood risk Assessment (FRA)
- Archaeological survey

Ground investigation

A geo-technical site investigation needs undertaking with a full report to follow to deem the exact ground conditions on the site. From this, preliminary recommendations can be made on the type of foundations needed or any mitigation methods needed for geo-environmental matters.

In absence of a site investigation ground conditions have been assumed from nearby historical boreholes.

1. Soil strata

Inspecting geological maps it can be seen the site is located in an area of Halite stone and Mudstone with the area also being located in floodplain clayey and loamy soils. There are five historical boreholes in very close vicinity of the site with one actually being located on the south of the site which date back to 1979 and 1987. There is one that goes down 9m below ground level (bgl) with the rest down to 3.5m bgl. The results showed variation but can be characterised as follows:-

0.0 - 0.4m	Topsoil / car park tarmac
0.4 - 2m	Made ground
2.0 - 3.5m	Soft dark brown sandy and silty clay with organic matter and fragments of pottery
3.5 - 21m	Stiff medium to coarse gravelly sandy clay

In the borehole log to the north of the site, roughly 4m higher up in ground level, firm ground was found at 2m bgl; this may be due to being at the top of the incline. In some of the boreholes, the ground found between 3-5m was peaty at times, which shows infiltration of groundwater. Apart from the borehole north of the site, firm ground was not encountered until 8m bgl, with no rock encountered or hard ground, which indicates pile foundations are needed and hence why the existing pool is slumping down into the ground and a closure of the leisure centre was forced.

Also, due to the brownfield nature of the site, it is likely that made ground is present within the ground make-up. If made ground is present and is determined to be widespread across the site, it may be advisable to found

both the pool and the buildings on piled foundations and to suspend the ground floor slab to minimise the risk of settlement.

2. Infiltration testing

To date there has been no infiltration testing carried out. This will be included as part of the site investigation report to be issued after Stage 2.

3. Groundwater

In the historical boreholes data, groundwater is encountered at depths of 1.4m to 2m, with one borehole filling up to a depth of 1.3m bgl upon revisit. This means that it is likely dewatering will need to be carried out while in construction phase, but is subject to confirmation until a recent ground investigation has been carried out.

4. Contamination testing

To date there has been no contamination testing carried out. This will be included as part of the site investigation report to be issued after Stage 2. Contamination testing will compare select soil samples from site to the appropriate trigger levels as specified in the relevant industry guidelines for the following contaminants (among others):-

- Analysis for metals / metalloids
- Analysis for TPH
- Analysis for speciated PAHs
- Analysis for asbestos

Based on the results of the laboratory analysis, a remediation strategy will be recommended which may impact the design of the structure, and may limit the reuse of site-won soil on site within the landscaped areas.

5. Ground gas

To date there has been no contamination testing carried out. This will be included as part of the site investigation report to be issued after Stage 2.

6. Concrete grade

The aggressive chemical environment for concrete (ACEC) for the site is currently unknown as laboratory testing is yet to be carried out on soil samples from site. This will be included as part of the site investigation report to be issued after Stage 2.

Existing services

An underground services survey is in the process of being carried out after receiving quotes back, which will produce an AutoCAD drawing of all the existing services, as well as a CCTV drainage survey to be carried out.

Topographical survey

The topology of the site is yet unknown. A quote has been received for a topographical survey so, like the services survey at the time when the report is written, it has not been completed but will be finished for Stage 2.

Arboricultural survey

There has been no arboricultural survey carried out. This will also be included as part of the site investigation report to be issued after stage 2. This will give us information on any trees within the site and whether they are of any importance and what quality of life they have.

3. DESIGN STANDARDS

Except as may be modified by the latest edition of specifications, drawings and the requirement of the local Authority, the latest edition of the current standards shall apply, and shall include, but not be limited to, the following:-

1. Building Regulations and Approved Documents
2. EN 1990 Eurocode 0:- Basis of structural design
3. EN 1991 Eurocode 1:- Actions on structures
4. EN 1992 Eurocode 2:- Design of concrete structures
5. EN 1993 Eurocode 3:- Design of steel structures
6. EN 1996 Eurocode 6:- Design of masonry structures

7. EN 1997 Eurocode 7:- Geotechnical design
8. Design Manual for Roads and Bridges
11. CIRIA document: - C753 The SUDS Manual
12. CIRIA document: - C736 Containment Systems for Prevention of Pollution
13. BS 7533-13:2009:- Guide for the design of permeable pavements
14. Satisfaction of current Environment Agency guidelines

4. BASIS OF DESIGN

Structural design drivers

The main drivers governing the structural design solutions are:-

- Large roof span over pool area
- Open plan studios on the 1st floor
- Dynamic performance of first floor structure
- Potentially require a suspended ground floor slab (subject to site investigation results)
- Pool tank construction
- Lateral stability of building frame

Design life

The elements of steelwork and reinforced concrete within the new building will provide a minimum life of 50 years by means of consistent protective coatings or quality concrete and appropriate cover to steel reinforcing bars.

Substructure proposals

There are various factors affecting the foundation systems, including:-

- The building loads
- Recommendations from the site investigation report which has not yet been undertaken; potential for recommendation of piled foundations for columns and suspended ground floor slab if existing ground conditions are found to be poor.
- Suitability of soil conditions for design of ground bearing swimming pool

slab; as above it is likely that the SI will recommend piles / deep trench strips if the soil will lead to large differential settlement.

1. Typical foundations within the 2 storey building

Based on the expected loads the ground information we currently have available from local boreholes, it is expected that the soil will not be suitable for shallow foundations with firm ground not encountered until deep depths. This could mean that pile foundations will be needed if significant made ground or peaty soil is encountered as the foundations will need to extend to the rock layer or decent soil which would allow for a significantly larger bearing pressure.

If the rock is found to be within 4m of the surface (however unlikely), then the most economical approach may be to use trench strip foundations for under the pool slab, deep mass concrete pads for column loads and suspended RC ground beams to support the masonry façade. If the rock is found to be more than 4m down, then a piled pool slab and piled foundation solution are likely to be the most economical option. The number of piles is subject to the pile capacity following the ground investigation. The diameter of piles will be subject to confirmation of pile capacities following further site investigation. The pile caps will generally be incorporated within the depth of the in-situ reinforced ground floor slab where appropriate and should be assumed to be typically 750mm deep.

2. Ground floor slab

If ground conditions prove not suitable for a ground bearing slab (and by extension pad foundations), an RC suspended ground floor slab c250mm thick will be designed to span between pile caps. Where there are no internal columns in open plan areas, additional piles would be required for support of the ground floor slab.

Pool tank options

There are two main options for constructing a pool for Whitchurch Leisure Centre, which are:-

- A stainless-steel pool which consists of stainless-steel walls supported on a cast in-situ RC base slab;
- A cast in-situ reinforced concrete (RC) pool tank.

The choice of pool system is a critical strategic decision for the client. The Client should deliberate the maintenance implications of both options.

Superstructure proposals

1. Superstructure options

The layout for the proposed Whitchurch Leisure comprise an open pool hall with studios and fitness suite on the 1st floor above the wet changing and foyer. The whole structure comprises of Pool hall, wet and dry changing, a plant room, reception with café, two studios and a fitness gym.

The superstructure will be formed of a reinforced concrete ground floor slab and a two storey steel frame build up. There will also be access to the roof for additional plant that will be fixed to the roof top situated above the dry changing areas.

2. Roof structure

The roof structure is yet to be designed as of yet and is waiting of approval from the architect therefore no framing has been designed. There will be large spanning beams over the pool hall that could be glulam, deep steelwork beams or trusses supporting the roof or a structural deck could span across the pool supporting the roof. Whichever materials used in the process will need to be treated properly to resist corrosion due to the pool environment, and is perforated to aid the acoustics of the pool.

3. Corrosion protection

All steelwork within the pool environment, including the pool hall and changing village will be hot rolled and galvanised to combat corrosion. As previously mentioned, one option for the pool hall roof is a structural roof deck. This must be formed of aluminium if it is to be installed in the pool environment as steel would corrode. As the changing rooms will also be within the pool environment as they are open to the pool hall, all steel would need treating as well. This is due to the chlorides in the air of the pool environment will corrode the metal.

4. Vibration

All suspended floors will be designed to provide a vibration response of 8Hz or better in accordance with SCI guidance for floors subject to rhythmic loading.

5. Deflections and movements

The structure will be designed to control deflections to acceptable limits according to the Eurocodes. In general, imposed load deflection will be limited to span / 360. Horizontal deflections due to lateral loading will be limited to height / 300 both for total deflection and sway, subject to cladding requirements.

5. DRAINAGE

Existing site details and proposed development

The existing site extends over an area of brownfield land adjacent to Bridgewater Street in Whitchurch. The site currently comprises the Whitchurch Swimming Centre building and associated car parking, Youth Centre and sports courts. The total area within the site boundary is approx. 1.62 ha.

The proposed development involves demolishing the existing pool building and constructing a new 2-storey leisure centre facility on the site. The existing car park will be remodelled to suit the finalised building proposal.

Flood risk statement

Considering the Environment Agency Flood Mapping, the site is generally shown to be located within Flood Zone 1 which is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) as: *"Land having a less than 1 in 1,000 annual probability of river or sea flooding"*. There is a strip of zone 3 to the south of the site next to the water course.



In accordance with Environment Agency guidance, a site-specific flood risk assessment is not required as the total site area is less than 1 hectare, however as there is a section of Zone 3 to the south a Flood Risk Assessment may be required by the LLFA.

Whilst a site-specific flood risk assessment will assess the risks to the site in detail, the flood risk from river and sea, surface water and reservoir flooding using the Environment Agency Flood Maps has been outlined below:

The site is in flood zone 1 and has a low risk of flooding from the river or sea, according to EA flood maps. A small area of the site is at medium to high risk of localised surface water flooding according to the EA data. However, it is noted that the area of site at risk does not clash with either of the proposed building locations or any of the other proposed site infrastructure.

The site is not at risk of flooding from other sources, such as reservoirs.

Surface water drainage

Existing

The existing site comprises predominantly brownfield (buildings, car parking and hardstanding) land. A drainage survey is planned to confirm where the existing surface water from the site discharges to. Once a drainage survey has been carried out this strategy will be updated to reflect its findings.

The nearest watercourse for discharge is to be confirmed in the next stage. The existing impermeable area within the site boundary is approx. 3500 m² and the existing outflow volume and location from site is to be confirmed following the site survey as part of the next stage of design.

Proposed

The surface water discharge from the proposed development will be made up from the following elements:-

- Building roof area
- Access roads
- Paved areas around new development
- Car parking bays

Surface water discharge hierarchy

The recommended surface water discharge hierarchy set out in the CIRIA SuDS Manual is to utilise soakaways, or infiltration as the preferred option, followed by discharging to an appropriate watercourse. If these options are not feasible then the final option is to discharge to an existing surface water sewer, followed by discharge into a combined public sewer. The strategy is to be completed in the next stage.

SuDS considerations

SuDS will be considered when producing this drainage strategy in an effort to provide effective surface water treatment and slow down the rate of surface water runoff in accordance with National Planning Policy recommendations

and the lead local flood authority SuDS Design Guidance. The following sustainable drainage systems will be considered:-

- Infiltration systems: subject to site infiltration rates.
- Porous pavements: porous / permeable surfaces are proposed for the car park construction as they can provide an effective way to reduce the flow rate of surface water runoff and give the necessary 2-stage treatment required to remove hydrocarbons prior to discharge into the receiving water body.

A suitable maintenance plan for all SuDS features will be produced at detail design stage and should be developed and implemented by the operator once the drainage proposals have been finalised to ensure sufficient operation and treatment is maintained throughout the design life of the development.

Design criteria

All private surface water drains will be designed and constructed in accordance with BS EN 752:2017 and Building Regulations Approved Document H. All adoptable surface water drainage will be designed and constructed to 'Sewerage Section Guidance (SSG) Codes for Adoption' standards, in accordance with the SSG Design & Construction Guidance document.

Foul water drainage

Existing

The existing site foul drainage infrastructure comprises commercial and industrial (trade effluent) sewage from the swimming pool building. A drainage survey is planned to confirm where the existing foul water from the site discharges to. Once a drainage survey has been carried out this strategy will be updated to reflect its findings.

Proposed

Discharge method

A pre-development enquiry will be submitted to confirm whether they have any assets adjacent to the site boundary. This drainage strategy will be updated

once a response is received, however for the purposes of this report it has been assumed that a suitable discharge location will be available. Formal approval to connect into the public drainage network will be agreed through the submission of an S106 application.

Design criteria

New foul drains will be provided to serve all foul producing appliances within the proposed development. All drains will be designed in accordance with BS EN 752:2017 and Building Regulations Approved Document H. All adoptable foul water drainage will be designed and constructed to 'Sewerage Section Guidance (SSG) Codes for Adoption' standards, in accordance with the SSG Design & Construction Guidance document.

Trade effluent

At this stage of the project there is the option to use a microfiltration system rather than a traditional backwashing facility for the proposed swimming pool filters. If a microfiltration system is used then there will be no requirement to discharge trade effluent however for the purposes of this report it has been assumed that a traditional filtration system will be used and trade effluent will be discharged.

Foul waste classified as 'trade effluent' must be connected into the proposed foul network. Formal approval is required to discharge trade effluent and a trade effluent agreement will need to be arranged between the site operator and the operator's chosen water retailer. The trade effluent agreement will stipulate the frequency, volume, and maximum rate at which the operator will be able to discharge trade effluent from their site.

In addition, a pre-development enquiry will be submitted to confirm whether there is capacity within their foul network to accommodate the trade effluent discharge. This drainage strategy will be updated once a response is received however for the purposes of this report it has been assumed that the network will have available capacity.

It is proposed that the discharge rate and discharge volume from the backwashing facilities will be restricted as part of the trade effluent agreement

as it is unlikely that the public network would be able to accommodate the unrestricted backwash rate. Trade effluent from the swimming pool filters will therefore discharge into an isolated foul drainage network and make a separate connection into the main foul drainage network, downstream of a dedicated sampling chamber. The trade effluent network will have a suitably sized backwash storage facility and a mechanism to restrict the flow rate into the main foul drainage network in accordance with the approved trade effluent agreement.

6. CARBON REDUCTION

At Furness Partnership, we understand that as structural engineers we have a huge responsibility to mitigate carbon emissions within the built environment. We calculate the embodied carbon in our structural solutions as standard practice, both early on and at key stages of the project journey. This allows the client to make quantified decisions towards carbon reduction. We follow the following process to achieve embodied carbon reduction in our designs:-



Effective carbon reduction - leisure complex case study

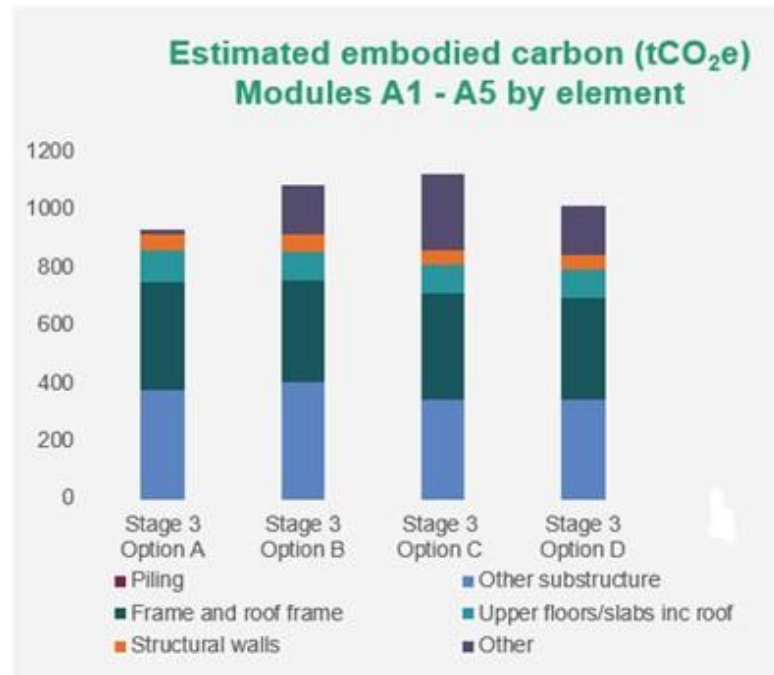
As part of the feasibility and design process we complete a calculation to determine the carbon with our designs and look to mitigate the impacts where possible. At the next design stage, once the structural form is completed for the proposed Whitchurch Leisure Centre, we will be including the assessment we have made to offset the carbon.

In order to inform our designs we have undertaken a theoretical case study to establish design principles for effective carbon reduction. The following paragraphs explain our process:

Carbon calculations were adopted early on in a large-scale sports and leisure complex which ultimately enabled us to achieve a significant carbon reduction of 56kgCO₂e/m². The project involved the structural design of the following:-

- Swimming pool
- First floor fitness suite
- Sport hall
- Changing rooms
- Communal areas

At the first stage of design, 4 schemes were put forward so that the carbon emissions could be compared, and high impact areas identified. The schemes were calculated as follows



These calculations enabled us to target carbon reduction and ultimately improve the SCORs rating by a grade. The following strategies were used to achieve this reduction:-

- Low cement concrete specifications
- Modification of the cladding design to reduce secondary steel used
- Re-use of existing structure where possible
- Improved ground conditions to reduce sub structure
- Optimising the efficiency of design to reduce steelwork

We use these principles at the beginning of the design process to not only design an efficient structural design, but as low carbon option as possible.

7. CIVIL AND STRUCTURAL RISK ITEMS

- Pool tank base design also dependant on findings of further site investigation. Existing ground conditions at pool base level will determine whether pool tank will be designed as ground bearing, suspended between mass concrete trench foundations or piled.
- Clay heave due to removal of trees across the building footprint, and removal of overburden pressure within the pool hall
- Pool type (Myrtha vs traditional reinforced concrete)
- Roof structural form and size of the building still to be finalised by architect.
- Existing foul and surface water drainage connection details still to be finalised following receipt of existing drainage CCTV survey
- Further surveys required to ascertain locations of any existing buried services

8. FURTHER INFORMATION REQUIRED

The further information/surveys are required in order to continue to the next stage:-

- Flood risk assessment
- Geo-technical and geo-environmental site investigation
- CCTV survey of existing drainage
- Survey of existing buried services
- Confirmation of pool type
- Up to date topological survey
- Arboricultural survey

1. SITE / INCOMING SERVICES

To be read in conjunction with record drawings received and Groundwise report. Excerpts found at the end of this section.

- It is anticipated that a new sub-station will be required to serve the refurbishment due to the extent of works required and the services strategy. The required load has been applied for from the utility provider. Budget cost of providing new connection is £81,466.
 - The existing incoming gas supply will be stripped out, no gas will be provided to the development. This is due to the design team receiving further information since issuing the original document that, where feasible, sites should be 100% fossil fuel free. A detailed energy strategy will be developed as the design progresses to maximise the use of renewable energy resources and carbon reduction.
 - The existing incoming water supply will be stripped back to the main branch and a new connection provided to serve the new development. The incoming supply will connect to the cold-water storage tank only and serve all sanitary outlets within the building and pool equipment, no outlets will be served directly from the mains cold water supply.
- It is envisaged that new telecommunications supplies will be required from the local infrastructure, however the provision will need to be confirmed by the Client / end user.

2. PERFORMANCE

Shropshire Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and in 2020 adopted its Strategy for achieving net zero on carbon emissions by 2030. Design to provide for a passive standard of operation at the facilities, the aim being to achieve as low a carbon footprint as possible at a reasonable cost over the lifecycle of the project. The design will adopt lean, green, mean hierarchy of design strategies to ensure that the building is as energy efficient and produce minimum Carbon as possible. An LZCT assessment will be carried out to ascertain the viability of appropriate technologies to meet the project energy and Carbon higher level objectives.

A fabric first approach will be adopted to limit energy input requirement; however this will not quite be Passivhaus standards as can cause issues with lack of connection to the external environment and once air leakage goes below a low number the savings in energy rapidly diminish. Heat recovery technology yields far more energy savings

which will be adopted everywhere possible.

The building will be designed BREEAM to achieve BREEAM 'Excellent', with BREEAM 'Very Good' as a minimum. An EPC A rating is targeted and all design strategies will be applicable to provide this. The EPC will be calculated at all design gateways to ensure progressive compliance.

Throughout the design stages continuous monitoring of the design will be undertaken, this will be done using a combination of thermal analysis and data obtained from monitoring of similar projects so both the fabric and building services designs can be aligned to the requirements of the building to maximise efficiency and performance whilst achieving the operational requirements for the building.

3. BUILDING SERVICES STRATEGIES SUMMARY

The mechanical and electrical services strategies will be developed to ensure compliance with the regulations, clients requirements and energy strategy to provide an energy efficient building services solution.

4. PLANT LOCATIONS

The building has 2 main plant areas, one located at ground floor level and the second on the roof which is open to atmosphere.

Ground floor

- Cold water and Cat 5 storage tank
- Cold water booster set
- Hot water generation: likely via ASHP, ground source heat and / or gas boilers
- Low temperature hot water (LTHW) heating generation: likely via ASHP, ground source heat pump
- LTHW pumps, low loss header, pressurisation unit, etc.
- Chilled water pumps (if applicable)
- Mechanical control panel
- Electrical panel and distribution boards
- LV switch room
- Any local ventilation with highly efficient heat recovery devices
- Specialist swimming pool plant

Roof

- External condenser units
- Air handling units with highly efficient heat recovery units

External

- Air source heat pumps (if applicable)
- PV if applicable

5. ENERGY

Energy use within the building will be a key factor as the design progresses with ensure the building not only achieves Building Regulation Part L2A (2013) compliance but also provides an efficient “in use” design solution. Our approach will be:-

- Fabric
- Energy efficient plant and equipment
- Intelligent controls
- Renewable technologies: roof mounted photo-voltaic (PV) cells and ASHP

6. BUILDING

The mechanical, electrical and public health engineering services will be carefully considered throughout ensuring they are aligned with the aesthetic aspirations and requirements for each space whilst providing the required performance for the area served.

Where identified, all mechanical, electrical and public health services within the C4 corrosion zone will be suitably designed and specified as required, this will include all services and associated supporting equipment both within the space and ceiling void of the space.

The ventilation strategy will be designed to ensure a positive environment is provided around the C4 area to contain the corrosive environment to the pool hall as much as possible.

This will be achieved by designing the pool hall to have a negative pressure environment to the surrounding rooms/areas, make-up air to the pool hall will be provided from the wet changing area ventilation system to protect, where possible, areas outside of the pool hall

7. ELECTRICAL SERVICES

The electrical services systems will include the following:-

- Distribution
 - Main board
 - Split metered distribution boards
 - Containment
- Small power and data
- LED Lighting and emergency lighting
- Fire alarm system
- Earth bonding
- Lightning protection
- Security
 - Intruder alarm
 - CCTV
 - Access control
- Pool alarm (if applicable)
- PA system
- Disabled Disability Act
 - Induction loops / arrays
 - Assistance alarms
 - Refuge system (if applicable)

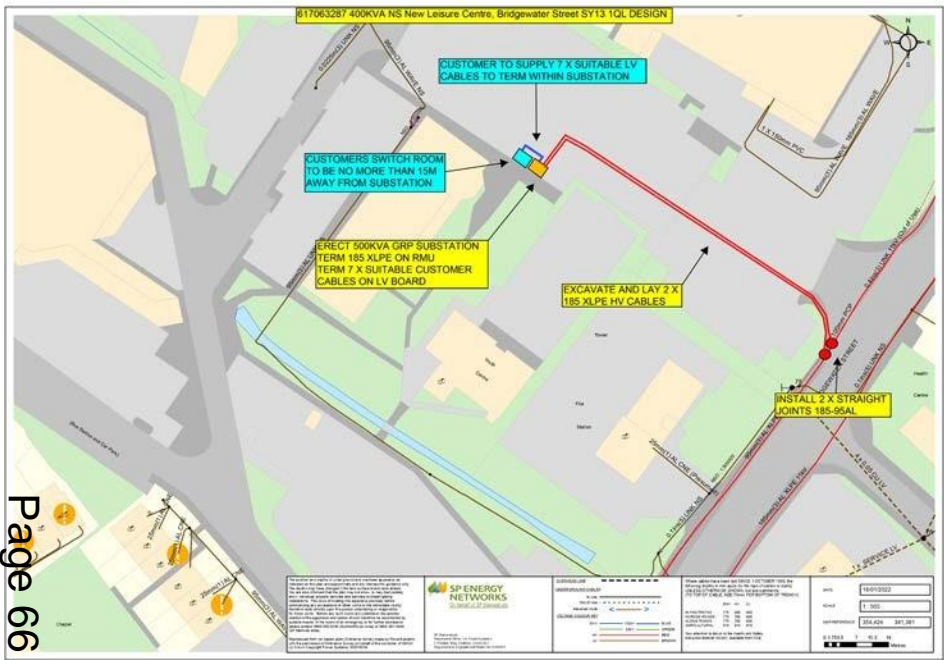


fig x - Electricity

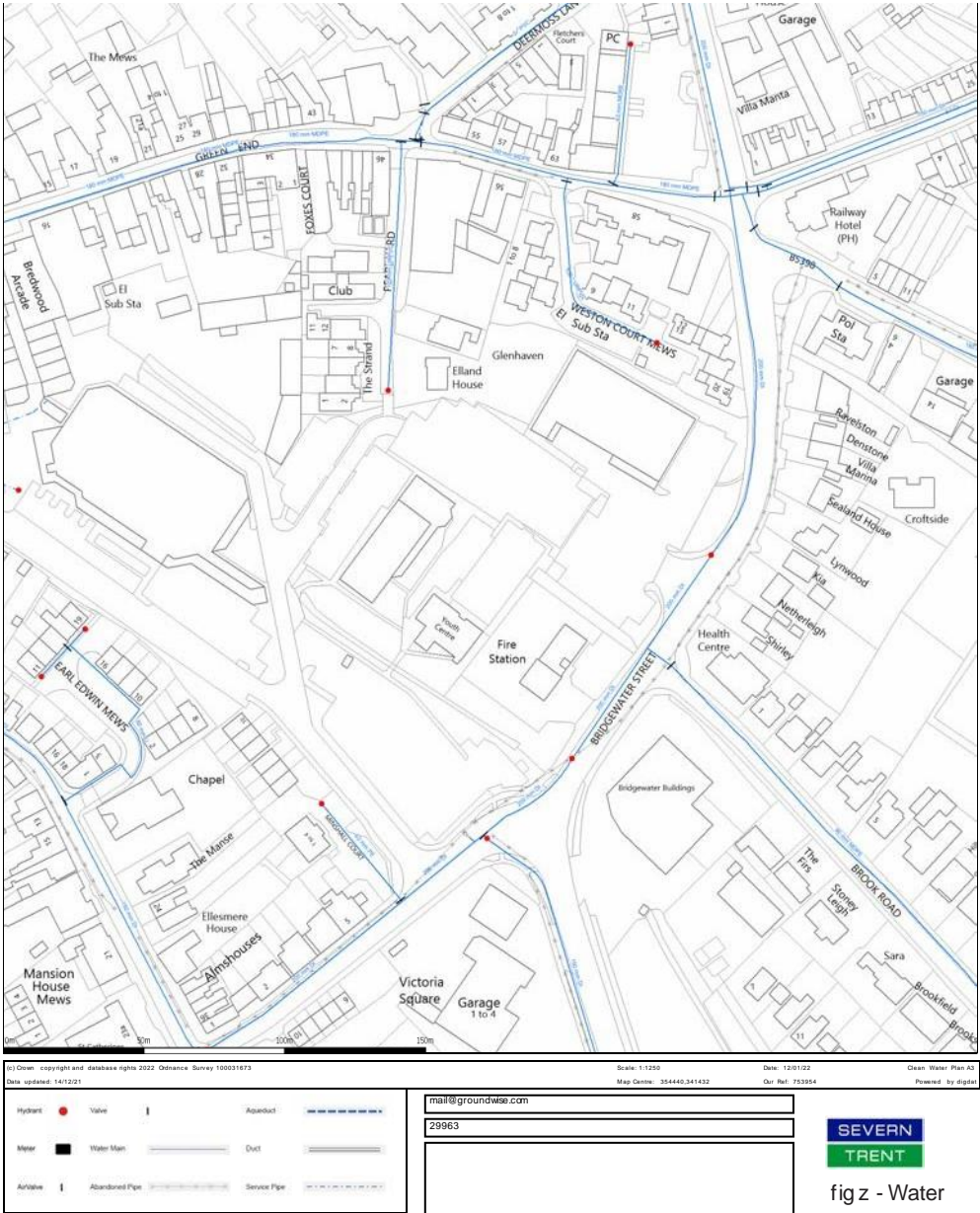


fig z - Water



NOTES ON APPROXIMATE ESTIMATE COSTS

1. The approximate costs in this estimate have been based on the proposed ground and first floor plans issued 19.11.21, the roof plan dated 12.11.21 and site plans dated 12.11.21. It has been assumed that the roof top plant room and access stair as shown on the original drawing dated 12.11.21 will be required. Assumptions on the level of specification required have been made which will require verification with the Architect and Client.
2. We have noted the comments in the brief regarding the problems with the foundations of the existing building, and include an allowance for piled foundations to the new Centre.
3. An existing asbestos survey has been provided which indicates that there is some asbestos present in the existing building. We have therefore included a provisional allowance for asbestos removal.
4. It has been assumed for the purpose of the estimate that a competitive price will be obtained for the works using a Design and Build procurement route.
5. The figures have been based at current price levels. An allowance for inflation has been included based on the proposed programme of a Commencement in the 3rd Quarter of 2023 and Completion in the 2nd Quarter of 2025.
6. We have allowed for a PV panel installation to the roof as shown on the roof drawing issued on 12 November 2021, together with an allowance for an Air Source Heat Pump primary heating source to the building with gas back up.
7. The project build costs have been benchmarked against recent projects that have achieved BREEAM VERY GOOD ratings and a further allowance has been made to upgrade this to BREEAM Excellent rating.
8. No other sustainability options or measures to achieve carbon reduction or a carbon 'neutral' project, other than those stated in item 6 and 7 above have been included in the estimate. Further confirmation will be required from the client during RIBA stage 2, to establish the extent of additional fabric improvements beyond Building Regulations compliance, to achieve the low carbon aspirations as proposed in section 7.

The figures exclude:-

1. VAT
2. Operator procurement
3. Legal costs
4. Ground remediation or measures to deal with contamination.
5. Diversion or lowering of any existing services which may run under, over or adjacent to the site.
6. External works or landscaping beyond the immediate vicinity of the new swimming centre and associated parking as shown on the option 2 base plan dated 12 November 2021.
7. ICT / F,F&E, loose equipment including sports and fitness equipment and Furniture.
8. Any allowance for major cut and fill requirements or retaining works, pending further detail on site levels.
9. Potential Covid 19 impacts or related events
10. Finance charges and legal costs

10.0 Cost report, programme and procurement

Whitchurch Swimming Centre
Option 2 A&Z Rev A
Approximate Estimate

AREA BUILD COSTS

		BASE AREA SCHEDULE				
INTERNAL WORKS						
	Area	Area m2	Total Area - m2	Rate (m2)	Cost	Cost
General						
Entrance, Reception and Office Areas	Entrance lobby	12		£2,400	£28,944	
	Club/Pool Viewing, Inc. Sanitary	66		£2,400	£157,920	
	Girls Kitchen	9		£2,400	£22,296	
	Girls Kitchen Store	6		£2,400	£13,440	
	Staff Room	6		£2,400	£16,168	
	Gemma Room	5		£2,400	£12,144	
	Payroll / Reception	83		£2,400	£197,136	
	Payroll WC	3		£2,400	£9,016	
	Payroll Acc. WC	4		£2,400	£9,640	
	First Floor WC	2		£2,400	£5,280	
	Cleaner's Store (Ground Floor)	5		£2,400	£10,824	
	Cleaner's Store (First Floor)	6		£2,400	£18,552	
	Sub total	206				£495,360
Pool Site						
Pool Hall	8 Lane x 25m Community Pool (ASSEMBLED - moveable floor in FF&E)	558		£3,800	£2,097,200	
	Pool Store	29		£3,300	£96,393	
	Moveable Floor Ramps	6		£3,300	£19,787	
	Pool First Aid	9		£3,300	£28,941	
Changing	Village Changing	182		£3,300	£600,072	
	Group Changing	32		£3,300	£104,148	
	Changing Places	12		£3,300	£38,544	
	Changing Village Male WC	17		£3,300	£55,374	
	Changing Village Female WC	15		£3,300	£48,907	
	Changing Village Accessible WC	4		£3,300	£12,441	
	Changing Village Accessible Change	6		£3,300	£19,569	
Speciators	Spectator seating - N/A	0		£3,300	£0	
	Sub total	866				£3,031,359
Health and Fitness						
Fitness Suite	Fitness Suite	167		£3,000	£502,380	
Studio	Studio 1 (part of divisible room)	112		£2,900	£324,267	
	Studio 1 store	13		£2,900	£38,279	
	Studio 2 (part of divisible room)	113		£2,900	£328,827	
	Studio 2 store	9		£2,900	£26,100	
	Gender Shower adjacent to Fitness Suite	2		£2,900	£6,526	
Dry Change	Dry changing 12 Dry Changing Rooms, including Lockers, Showers & WC's	95		£3,100	£295,899	
	Accessible Changing	6		£3,100	£18,476	
	Accessible WC	5		£3,100	£14,911	
	Sub total	522				£1,550,694
Plant - see allowance below						
	Flotation / hot/cold/teard & Chems/val / rain room / pump pit - assumed GP Plant Room	98		£1,000	£97,900	
	Roofing plant room	111		£1,100	£121,961	
	Sub total	209				£277,915
Circulation - see allowance below						
	Circulation gl - inc. above	0		£2,300	£0	
	Main stair	16		£2,300	£38,938	
	Lifts	6		£2,300	£12,788	
	Fire escape stairs / Roof Plant Room - Stair	49		£2,300	£112,961	
	Circulation Floor Finish	97		£2,300	£223,146	
	Internal Works allowance	161			£347,893	
	Sub total	369				£718,832
Total Internal Works			Total GFAm2	2113	£2,871	£5,843,360
Fixed Fixtures, fittings and equipment						
	General allowance for fixed equipment (excludes Fitness equipment & other loose equipment)			any	£150,000	
	Allowance for Air Source Heat Pump: Installation with gas back-up			any	£150,000	
	Allowance for rooftop PV			any	£75,000	
	Sub total					£375,000
Allowance						

Allowance for Japanese Removal			any	£50,000	
Allowance for Flood Foundations / Sloped Site			any	£400,000	
Provision of Existing Site			any	£80,000	
Sub total					£530,000
TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COSTS (EXCLUDING EXTERNAL WORKS, CONTINGENCY, FF&E, FEES, SURVEYS, VAT & INFLATION)		Total GFA	2113	£3,381	£6,373,360

EXTERNAL WORKS					
External Works and Car parking					
External Works (Drainage)	Building Ground Floor Footprint + Car Parking + Service Yard		5144	£40.00	£205,763
External Works (Lighting)			any		£35,000
External Works (Landscaping)			320	£35.00	£11,200
External Works (Allow for remedial works to bridge over stream)			any		£25,000
External Works (Protection of existing trees)			any		£25,000
External Works (Paths - assumed terraced)			582	£135.00	£78,570
External Works (Provision of above Landscape Area including running track, basketball practice and play areas)			611	any	£180,000
External Works (Allow for provision of basketball hoops and running track markings)			any		£3,500
External Works (Allow for works to stream)			any		£2,500
External Works (Service Yard - assumed terraced)			60	£35.00	£5,100
Car parking - Assumed mix of remote access ways and block paved parking spaces			4160	£150.00	£624,000
Services / Services / Utilities - Assumed re-connection of existing service connections			any		£200,000
Sub Total					£1,391,583
Demolition					
Demolition removal to existing single storey Youth Centre Building			316	any	£10,000
Demolition of existing facilities and site clearance including breaking out of existing car park and hard landscaped areas			any		£150,000
Sub Total					£160,000
Total External Works					£1,551,583

TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COSTS (INCLUDING EXTERNAL WORKS, CONTINGENCY, FF&E, FEES, SURVEYS, VAT & INFLATION)	Total GFA	2113	£4,919	£9,924,943
Allowance for BREXIT EXCELLENCE			2.0%	£199,639
TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COSTS (INCLUDING EXTERNAL WORKS, EXCLUDING CONTINGENCY, FF&E, FEES, SURVEYS, VAT & INFLATION)				£9,725,304

CONTINGENCY					
Design development contingency			5.0%		£424,595
Client contingency			5.0%		£424,595
Sub Total					£849,190
FITTINGS, FIXTURES & EQUIPMENT (FF&E)					
Allowance for losses FF&E / OCT not covered above	Excluded				
PROFESSIONAL FEES					
Professional Fees & Surveys	4% of total construction cost and contingency allowances		9.0%		£855,583
Sub Total					£16,386,991
INFLATION TO MID-POINT OF CONSTRUCTION					
Provision for inflation based on a December 2018 Point of Q2 2024 Q4 2023 main contract start to Q2 2025 completion			11.85%		£1,145,161
Sub Total					£11,512,881
TOTAL PROJECT COSTS (EXCLUDING VAT)					£11,512,881
Options					
Option for Moveable Floor to Main Pool	Assumes floor to half of pool area only				£550,000
Allowance for Inflation as above			11.92%		£65,552
Total Moveable Floor Option Allowance					£615,552

APPROXIMATE ESTIMATE SUMMARY					
Over Internal Floor Area		2113	m2		
Total construction cost rate per m2 (excluding external works, FF&E, Fees, Contingency, Inflation & VAT)		£3,381	£/m2		
Total construction cost rate per m2 (including external works, excluding FF&E, Fees, Contingency, Inflation & VAT)		£4,919	£/m2		
Total construction cost rate per m2 (including external works, Fees, Contingency, excluding FF&E, Inflation & VAT)		£4,906	£/m2		
Total project cost per m2 (including external works, FF&E, Fees, Inflation, excluding FF&E & VAT)		£5,448	£/m2		
Typical Parking Standards - 1 space per 21m2 for D2 uses		101			

WINDFARMER COUNCIL	
WINDFARMER COUNCIL	
PRELIMINARY DRAFT OVERALL MASTER PROGRAMME BASED ON SINGLE STAGE DESIGN & BUILD TENDER WITH SO	
ID Task Name	Start Finish Predecessors Duration 1st Quarter Mar Apr 2nd Quarter Jun Jul 3rd Quarter Sep Oct 4th Quarter Dec Jan 1st Quarter Mar Apr 2nd Quarter Jun Jul 3rd Quarter Sep Oct 4th Quarter Dec Jan 1st Quarter Mar Apr 2nd Quarter Jun Jul 3rd Quarter Sep Oct 4th Quarter Dec Jan 1st Quarter Mar Apr 2nd Quarter Jun Jul 3rd Quarter
1 CABINET REPORTS / PUBLIC CONSULTATION	Wed 06/04/22 Thu 06/04/22 132 days

2	Feasibility/Cabinet Report	Wed 06/04/2024 08:42Z	0 days
3	Public Consultation	Wed 01/06/22 Fri 29/02/22	43 days
4	Report to Cabinet on behalf of Public Consultation (Pre- Day)	Mon 05/06/22 Fri 20/02/22	15 days
5	Recommendation to Council to Capitalise Page 4	Mon 26/09/22 Thu 01/02/24	9 days
6	Council Authorisation Proceeds RBA Step 2	Thu 06/10/22 Thu 01/02/24	0 days
7			
8	APPOINTMENT	Fri 07/02/22 Thu 27/02/22	15 days
9	Agree Procurement Strategy for Design & M	Fri 07/10/22 Thu 01/02/24	1 wk
10	Design Team/ PM/EA/Procure	Fri 14/10/22 Thu 01/02/24	1 wk
11	Authority Consideration/ Approval	Fri 21/10/22 Thu 27/02/24	5 days
12	Design Team/ PM/EA/Procure	Mon 07/10/22 Thu 01/02/24	0 days
13	Project Launch Meeting/ Kick Off	Thu 27/10/22 Thu 01/02/24	0 days
14			
15	SURVEYS	Fri 30/10/22 Fri 09/02/23	116 days
16	SITE SURVEYS/INVESTIGATIONS	Fri 26/10/22 Fri 24/02/23	106 days
17	Review Information Survey/ Initial	Fri 26/10/22 Fri 11/01/23	11 days
18	Confirm that all survey work is complete	Fri 11/01/22 Fri 01/02/23	0 days
19	Prepare Brief / Client Survey/ Prepare	Mon 14/10/22 Fri 09/02/23	40 days
20	Demolition/ Access Survey	Mon 28/10/22 Fri 30/02/23 09:50	25 days
21	Ground Investigation Survey (Stage 1 & Stage 2) (Initial)	Mon 06/10/22 Fri 30/02/23	25 days
22	Detailed Topographical Survey	Mon 14/10/22 Fri 01/02/23	25 days
23	Design/ Finalise/ Issue	Mon 28/10/22 Fri 30/02/23 09:50	20 days
24	Final Risk Assessment/ Design/ Review	Mon 01/10/22 Fri 30/02/23	40 days
25	Utilities / Services Survey/ Assessment	Mon 14/10/22 Fri 30/02/23	35 days
26	QPR Services/ Substation Survey	Mon 12/10/22 Fri 09/02/23 09:50	20 days
27	CCTV Damage Survey	Mon 06/10/22 Fri 01/02/23	20 days
28	Arboricultural Tree Survey/ Comments/ Plan	Mon 19/10/22 Fri 01/02/23	20 days
29	Noise Survey	Mon 09/10/22 Fri 10/02/23	30 days
30	Ecology Survey	Mon 14/10/22 Fri 10/02/23	20 days
31	REPORTS	Mon 09/10/22 Fri 07/02/23	65 days
32	Archaeological/ Desktop/ Dig	Mon 09/10/22 Fri 10/02/23	30 days
33	Traffic Impact Assessment/ Travel Plan	Mon 20/10/22 Fri 24/02/23 09:50	40 days
34	Daylight/ Overheading	Mon 30/10/22 Fri 24/02/23 09:50	40 days
35	Energy Strategy Report	Mon 30/10/22 Fri 09/02/23 09:50	50 days
36	Air Quality Assessment	Mon 30/10/22 Fri 09/02/23 09:50	50 days
37	Flood Strategy Report	Mon 30/10/22 Fri 09/02/23 09:50	50 days
38	Sustainability Statement	Mon 30/10/22 Fri 09/02/23 09:50	50 days
39	BREEM Pre-Assessment	Mon 30/10/22 Fri 09/02/23 09:50	50 days
40			
41	DESIGN	Fri 26/10/22 Thu 09/02/23	135 days
42	RIBA STAGE 2 DESIGN CONCEPT	Fri 26/10/22 Thu 09/02/23	45 days
43	Stage 2 Concept Design	Fri 26/10/22 Thu 09/02/23	6 wk
44	Stage 2 Cost Ref	Fri 09/10/22 Thu 20/02/24	1 wk
45	Report	Fri 23/10/22 Thu 20/02/24	1 wk
46	Authority Signoff	Thu 23/10/22 Thu 20/02/24	0 wk
47			
48	RIBA STAGE 3 DESIGN DEVELOPED	Fri 30/10/22 Thu 09/02/23	45 days
49	Stage 3 Developed Design	Fri 30/10/22 Thu 09/02/24	6 wk
50	Stage 3 Cost Ref	Fri 10/02/22 Thu 20/02/24	2 wk
51	Report	Fri 24/02/22 Thu 20/02/25	1 wk
52	Authority Signoff	Thu 02/03/22 Thu 02/02/25	0 wk
53			
54	RIBA STAGE 4 (plus) TECHNICAL DESIGN	Fri 03/03/22 Thu 29/02/23	35 days
55	Stage 4 Technical Design/ Initial/ Communication/ Bx	Fri 03/03/22 Thu 09/02/23	6 wk
56	Review Data/ Review	Fri 03/03/22 Thu 09/02/23	6 wk
57	Stage 4 Review/ M/ Design	Fri 03/03/22 Thu 09/02/23	6 wk
58	Architect Review/ Bx/ Revision	Fri 14/04/22 Thu 20/02/23	1 wk
59	QPR/ Prepare/ Final/ Review/ Document	Fri 14/04/22 Thu 20/02/23	1 wk
60			
61	PLANNING	Fri 26/10/22 Thu 09/02/23	135 days
62	PLANNING PRE-APP PROCESS	Fri 26/10/22 Thu 09/02/23	70 days
63	Internal Planning Pre-application/ Consultation	Fri 26/10/22 Thu 09/02/23 09:50	6 wk
64	Prepare Planning Pre-application	Fri 16/10/22 Thu 09/02/23 09:50	3 wk
65	Submit Formal Pre-application	Thu 06/10/22 Thu 09/02/23 09:50	0 days
66	Pre-App Decision/ Meet	Fri 06/10/22 Thu 09/02/23 09:50	0 wk
67	Pre-App Response	Thu 02/03/22 Thu 09/02/23 09:50	0 days
68	PLANNING APPLICATION	Fri 17/02/22 Thu 09/02/23	70 days
69	Prepare Full Planning Application	Fri 17/02/22 Thu 09/02/23 09:50	2 wk
70	Submit Planning Application	Thu 02/03/22 Thu 09/02/23 09:50	0 days
71	Planning Decision/ Prepare	Fri 02/03/22 Thu 09/02/23 09:50	10 wk
72	Planning Approval/ Estimated	Thu 01/06/22 Thu 01/06/23	0 days
73			
74	PROCUREMENT	Fri 16/10/22 Mon 07/02/23	227 days
75	MAIN CONTRACTOR PROCUREMENT (Single stage O&M with Prequal)	Fri 16/10/22 Mon 07/02/23	227 days
76	Pre-Selection/ Prepare	Fri 16/10/22 Fri 09/02/23	161 days
77	Agree Procurement Rules	Fri 16/10/22 Thu 20/02/23 09:50	0 wk
78	Prepare SO Document/ Project/ Information	Fri 09/10/22 Thu 01/02/23	5 wk
79	Submit Contract/ Review	Thu 12/01/22 Thu 12/01/23	0 days
80	SO/ Response/ Prepare	Fri 13/01/22 Thu 02/02/23	30 days
81	Score Responses	Fri 03/03/22 Thu 20/02/23	15 days
82	Shortlist/ Interview/ Interview/ Shortlist	Fri 24/03/22 Fri 09/02/23	11 days
83	MAIN CONTRACT/ Tender/ Prepare	Fri 21/04/22 Mon 07/02/23	117 days
84	Finalise/ IT/ Prepare	Fri 21/04/22 Thu 04/02/23	10 days
85	Dispatch/ Tender	Fri 04/05/22 Thu 04/02/23	0 days
86	Tender/ Prepare	Fri 04/05/22 Thu 04/02/23	50 days
87	Tender/ Review	Thu 13/07/22 Thu 07/02/23	0 days
88	Review/ Score/ Tender/ Review	Fri 14/07/22 Fri 10/02/23	21 days
89	Interview/ Contract/ Offer/ Award	Mon 14/08/22 Fri 01/02/23	15 days
90	Select/ Contract	Fri 01/09/22 Fri 01/02/23	0 days
91	Standard/ Prepare	Mon 14/08/22 Mon 10/02/23	0 days
92	Appoint/ Contract	Mon 18/08/22 Mon 10/02/23	0 days
93	Formal/ Contract/ Execution	Thu 10/09/22 Mon 01/02/23	10 days
94			
95	CONSTRUCTION	Mon 04/09/22 Mon 09/02/23	461 days
96	DEMOLITION CONTRACT	Mon 04/09/22 Mon 09/02/23	461 days
97	Mobilisation	Mon 04/09/22 Fri 09/02/23	4 wk
98	Demolition/ Work	Mon 02/10/22 Fri 01/02/23	12 wk
99	Completion/ & Demolition	Fri 01/02/23 Fri 01/02/23	0 days
100	MAIN CONTRACT	Thu 01/09/22 Mon 09/02/23	405 days
101	Contractor/ Detailed Design	Thu 01/09/22 Mon 01/02/23	10 wk
102	Contractor/ Planning/ Check/ Review	Thu 01/09/22 Mon 01/02/23 09:50	0 wk
103	Contractor/ Mobilisation	Thu 01/09/22 Mon 01/02/23 09:50	0 wk
104	Contractor/ Prepare	Thu 01/09/22 Mon 01/02/23	0 wk
105	Testing/ & Commissioning	Thu 01/09/22 Mon 01/02/23	4 wk
106	CLIENT/ FIT/ OFF/ TRAINING	Thu 01/09/22 Mon 01/02/23	10 days
107	Client/ Operator/ Bx/ Off/ Training	Thu 27/05/22 Mon 01/02/23	2 wk
108	Lease/ Commission/ Public	Mon 09/06/22 Mon 01/02/23	0 days

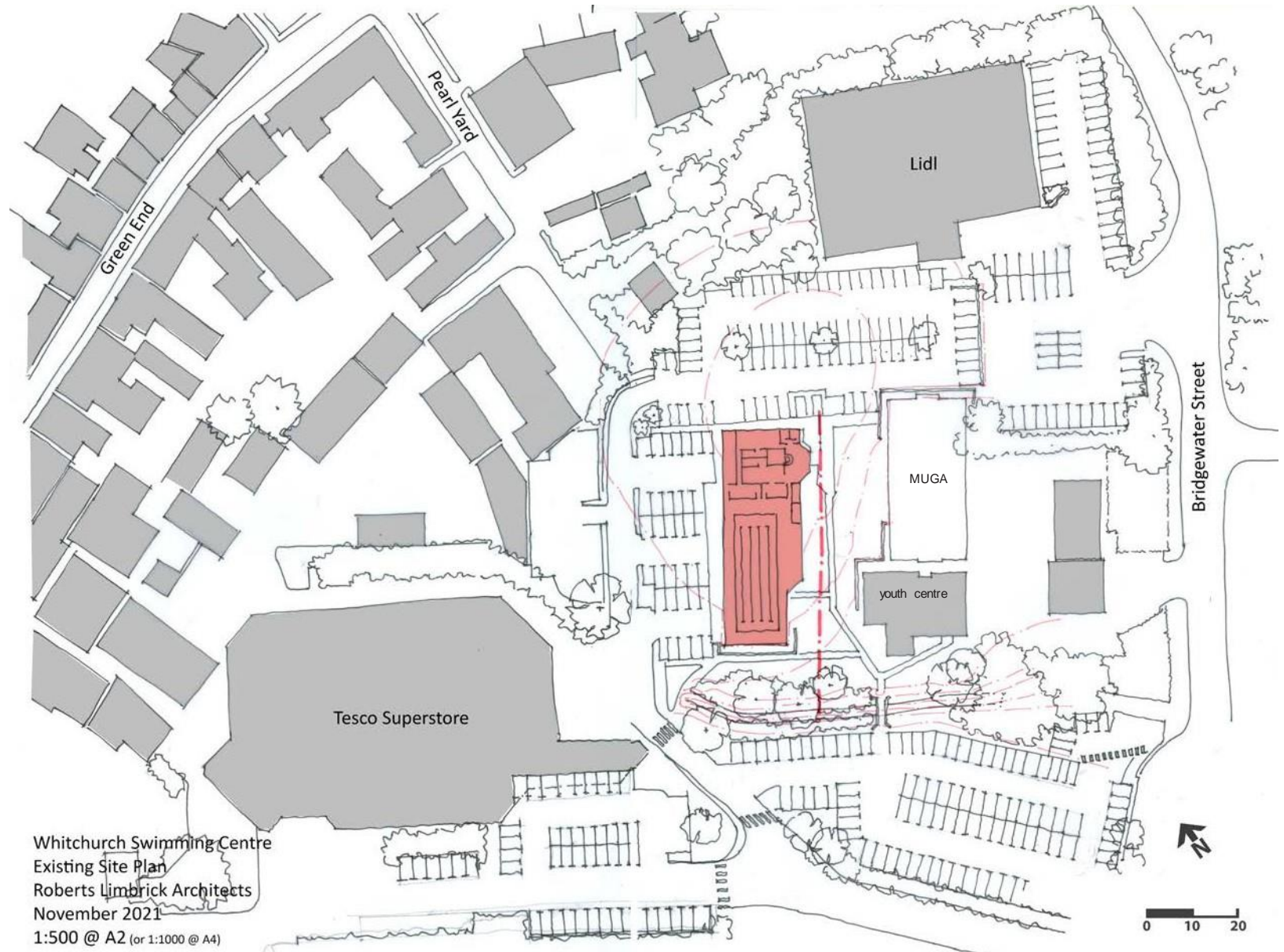
Project Summary
External TaskExternal Milestone
Inactive MilestoneInactive Summary
Manual TaskDuration - only
Manual Summary/ MilestoneManual Summary/ Milestone
Summary/ MilestoneManual Summary/ Milestone
Summary/ MilestoneManual Summary/ Milestone
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Summary/ Milestone

Appendix 1: Alternative site layouts
considered during the design process

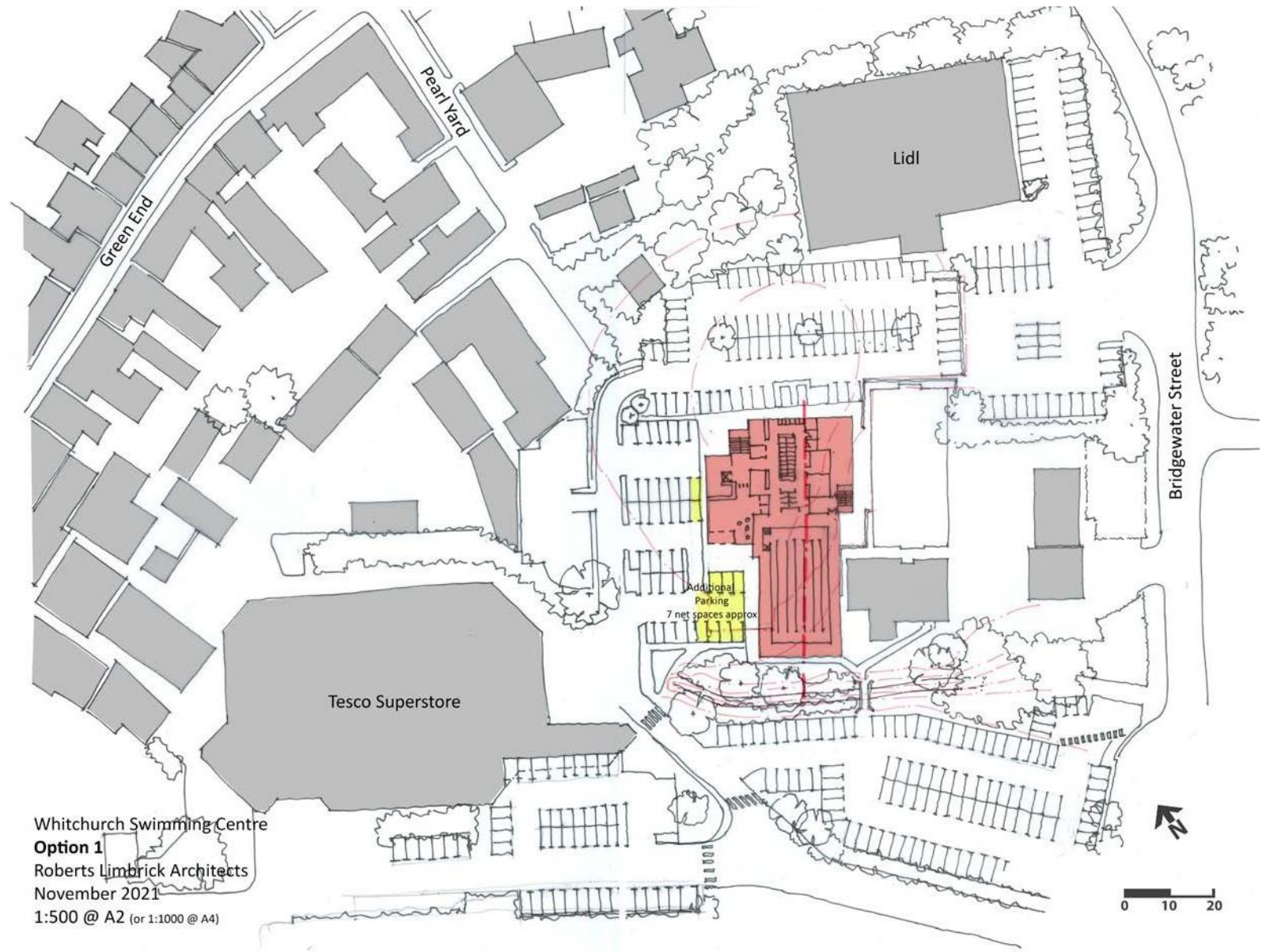
Appendix 2: Business case

Appendix 1: Alternative site layouts considered during the design process

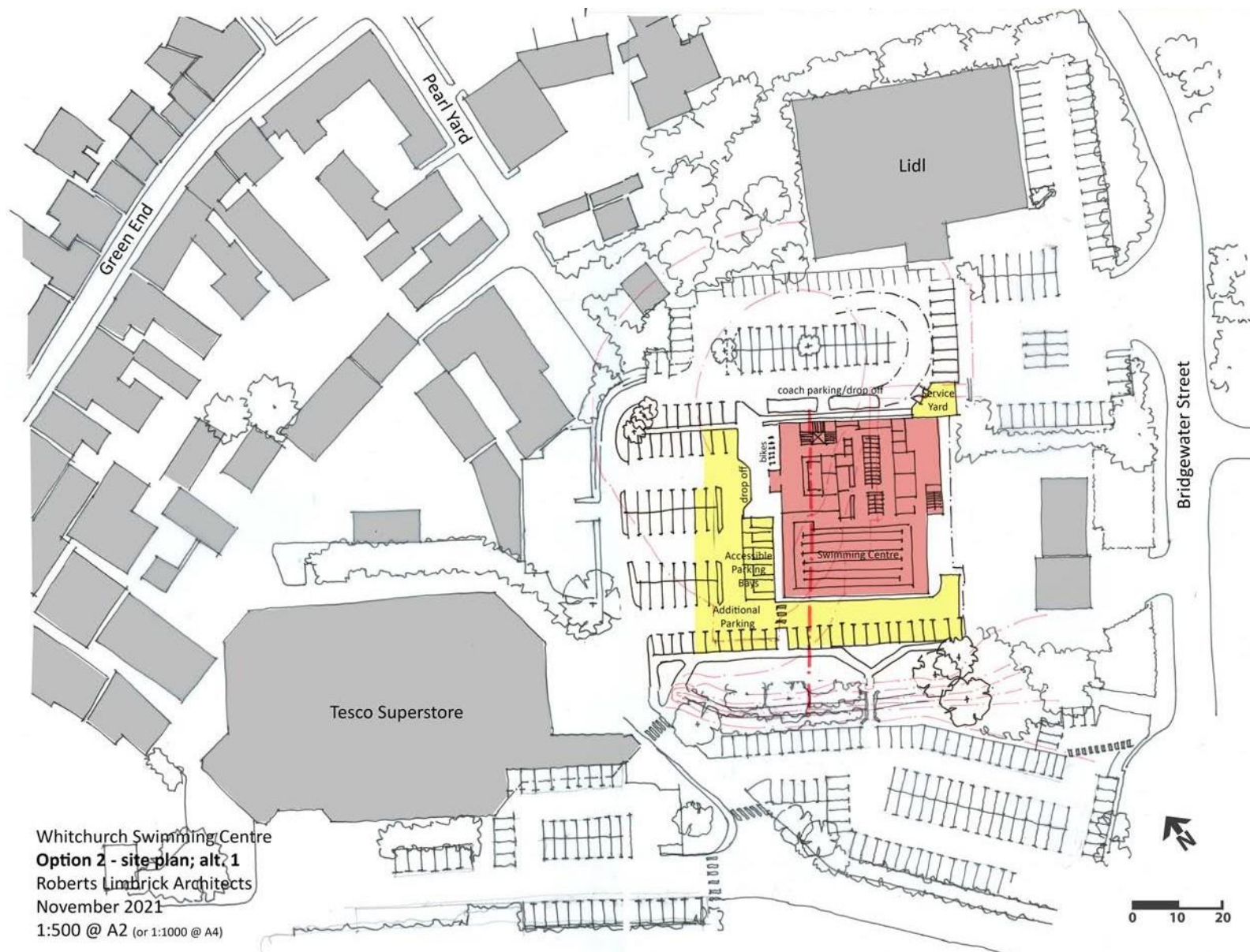
- The existing pool is indicated in red.
- The parking to the north and east of the existing pool building is leased by Tesco.
- The disused MUGA and youth centre are to the east of the existing pool building.



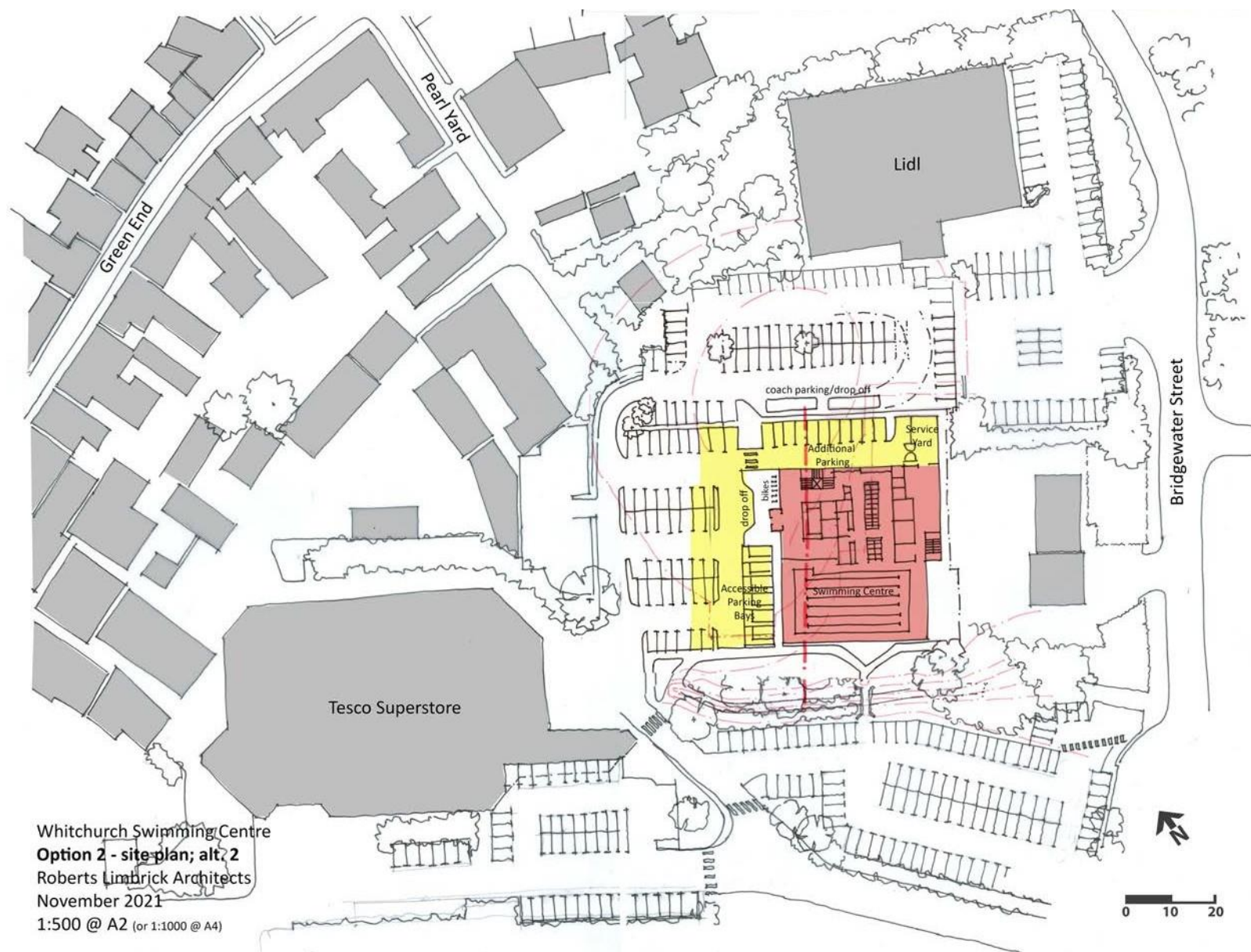
- This proposal places the new leisure centre over the footprint of the existing pool building and the existing disused MUGA and youth centre remain.
- The building arrangement is 'long and thin' and encroaches upon the bank to the stream and the flood zone.
- Very limited additional car parking is provided.



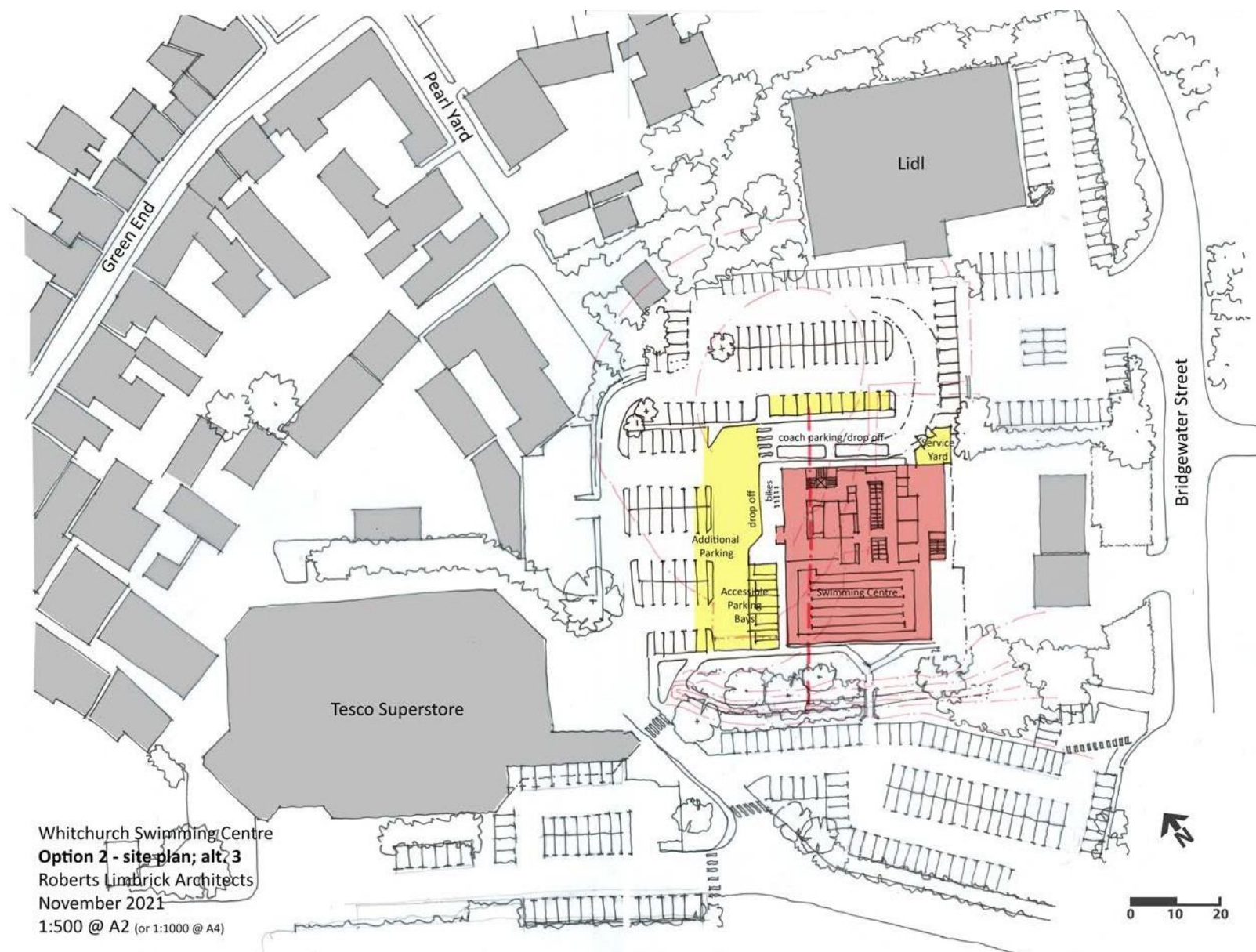
- The new leisure centre is placed northeast of the site.
- The building is approximately square in plan and sits over the disused MUGA and youth centre.
- Additional parking is provided to the west and south of the new building. A drop-off area and gathering space is provided at the main entrance to the building to the west.



- As option 2 alt 1, but to the south of the site providing parking and service yard to the north.
- **This is the preferred arrangement adopted for the design** (see section 7.0 proposal).

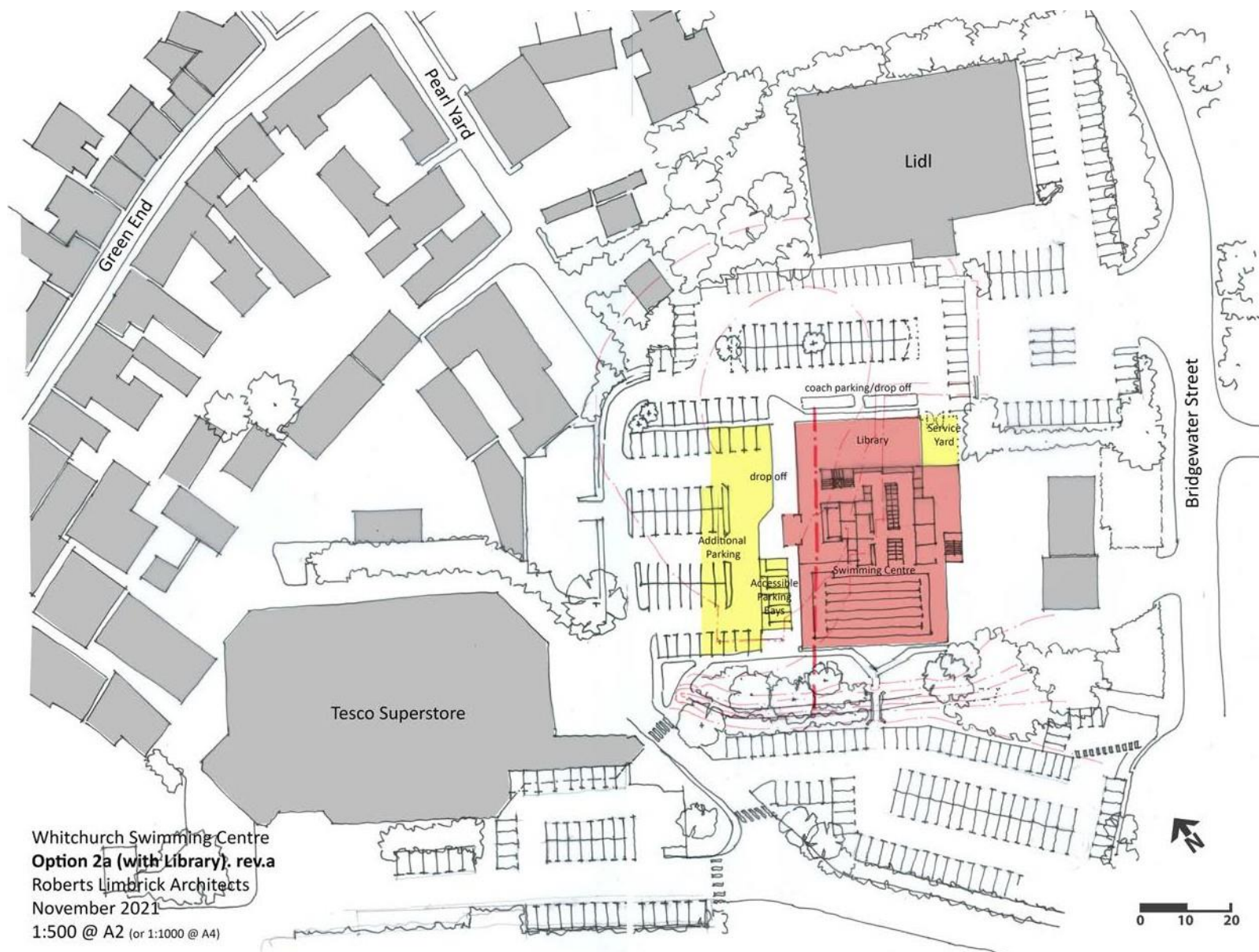


- As option 2 alt 2, but with coach drop-off and parking relocated adjacent to the new building.
- The decision was taken to maintain the existing coach circulation and drop-off arrangement.



- General arrangement as option 2 alt 2, but demonstrating how the library (or other complementary use) could be accommodated to the north of the leisure centre.
- Following the consultation process, the relocation of the library was considered not to be desirable (see section 6.0 other consultation).
- An extension of the new building in this location would reduce the ability to provide additional parking whilst increasing the demand.

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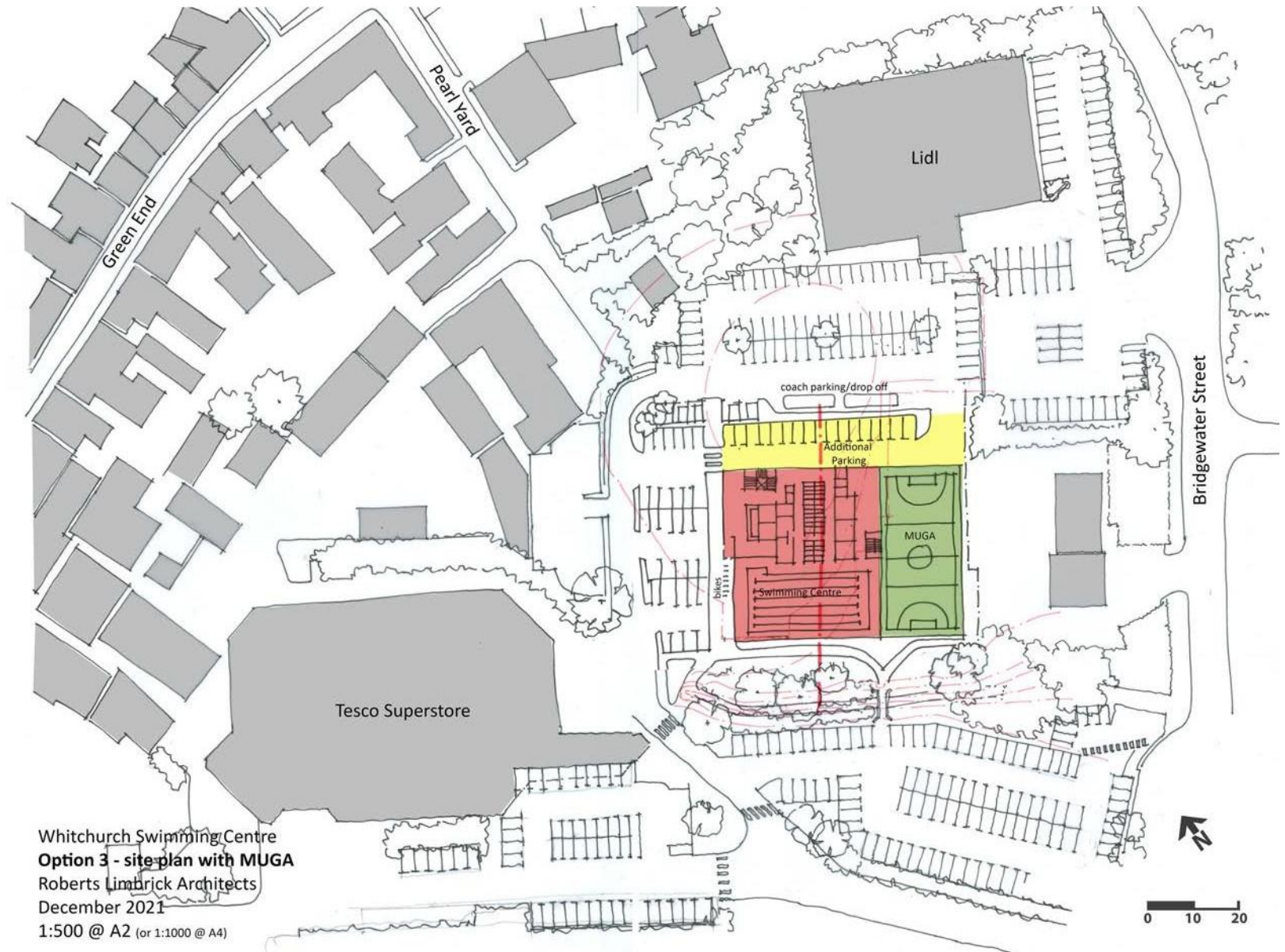
- To replace the existing MUGA, a new MUGA is proposed on the roof of the swimming pool.
- The additional load of the MUGA on the roof will increase the cost of the structure of the building. Two means of escape will be required from the roof.
- The roof top MUGA was considered to be a potential noise nuisance to the neighbouring residences.

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- To retain the existing MUGA, the proposed building is moved to the west of the site.
- The provision of additional parking and drop-off / gathering space at the entry to the building is compromised.
- An alternative provision to a formal MUGA comprising an integrated 'active landscape' was proposed during the design process and in consultation with Youth Services (see section 6.0 other consultation).

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Appendix 2: Business case

Please see Section 5: Financial Implications in the Cabinet report.



Appendix 2: Stakeholder Engagement

	General	Location	Facilities Mix	Design Opportunities
Ward Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overwhelming support. This is an important community facility and needs replacing urgently. Welcome decision regarding leaving library in its current location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town location welcomed. Good access to bus station and car parking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facility mix welcomed. Important to include provision for youth sessions in the programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changing Places provision provides a good opportunity for a town centre facility. Development of an outdoor activity area to compliment the facility is important.
Whitchurch Wasps Swimming Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overwhelming support. 6 lane 25m pool is welcomed Want pool suitable for competitions and hosting galas including spectator provision. Café preferred to vending area. Is fitness offer big enough? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town location best, want construction to progress quickly. Parking can't be limited to 3hrs for galas. If outdoor area is free - security concerns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concern moveable floor is slow between sessions, unreliable and prevents diving starts, etc. Prefer separate learner pool. Spectator area & poolside storage desired. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Swimming-specific training equipment in suites. Nursery/child area. Adjustable starting blocks, electronic timing, display board.
Whitchurch Business Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Don't want locals priced out of top end leisure complex. Is the offer big enough for Whitchurch plus Shropshire, North Wales and Cheshire visitors? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field by SJT has good foundations and better parking. Concerns about enough parking. Impact on shopping from construction and traffic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relocate fire station for space and bigger, better facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration with SJT's offer. If piling anyway, use ground source heat pumps. Exterior could add to wellbeing, e.g. green walls, PV cells, clock. Could be hub for cycling routes.
Fire Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Glad to see messy site improved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction and lorries unlikely to impact the fire station. By agreement, may use their drill yard for parking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fire station had own fitness suite added recently. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Antisocial behaviour – ensure design maximises opportunities to prevent this.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need best offer for low-income children without passing on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being at or near SJT raises Covid-19 and safeguarding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would like to see a community meeting place for free 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellent opportunity for children to connect with others.

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Appendix 3:
Shropshire Council
Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessment (ESHIA)
Initial Screening Record 2021-2022

A. Summary Sheet on Accountability and Actions

Name of proposed service change
Whitchurch Swimming Centre Feasibility Study

Name of lead officer carrying out the screening
Mark Thornewill, Transformation Project Manager – Leisure

Decision, review, and monitoring

Decision	Yes	No
Initial (part one) ESHIA Only?	x	
Proceed to Full ESHIA or HIA (part two) Report?		x

If completion of an initial or Part One assessment is an appropriate and proportionate action at this stage, please use the boxes above. If a Full or Part Two report is required, please move on to full report stage once you have completed this initial screening assessment as a record of the considerations which you have given to this matter.

<p>Actions to mitigate negative impact or enhance positive impact of the service change in terms of equality, social inclusion, and health considerations</p> <p>The proposal is for a replacement swimming centre in Whitchurch, which is a large market town in Shropshire, and for which there has been no direct swimming provision since 2020, due to maintenance issues with the existing pool.</p> <p>The Shropshire Council priorities for sport and physical activity, as set out in the new Leisure Facilities Strategy 2020 - 38 are identified as follows:</p> <p><i>Our Vision is that:</i></p> <p><i>Shropshire will be a county where healthier, active lifestyles are encouraged, supported and facilitated for everyone</i></p> <p>Three core principles underpin the delivery of our vision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support for the creation of a high quality and sustainable indoor leisure facility mix, which provides accessible and inclusive activities for all Shropshire residents
--

leading to increased participation and active lifestyles, thereby meeting community need;

- Recognising the importance of leisure facilities as relevant community spaces, accessible to all and offering opportunities for the delivery of a wide range of activities, services, support and entertainment to local communities and people; and

- A commitment to work with a wide range of partner organisations and individuals as co-creators and co-deliverers of leisure facilities so that they best reflect the differing needs of local communities.

The equality and health and well-being impacts across Protected Characteristic groupings in Shropshire, and within Whitchurch in particular, are anticipated to be positive. This is in line with the above, and with consideration for Shropshire as a large and sparsely populated rural county in which market towns provide a sense of place and belonging as well as an access point for facilities and services, including leisure facilities. There are also positive impacts anticipated in relation to our tenth grouping in Shropshire, around social inclusion, provide that efforts are made to consider the needs of people in low-income households with regard to pricing structures.

There is further potential for additional benefits for grouping such as those undergoing gender reassignment, and those for whom single sex swimming opportunities are necessary in order to ensure compatibility with and respect for the requirements of their faith. This may be maximised through attention to changing room configurations, and swim time opportunities.

Actions to review and monitor the impact of the service change in terms of equality, social inclusion, and health considerations

The current facility does not provide facilities such as an accessible reception counter, and accessible toilet facilities for female customers and access throughout the building for wheelchair users is extremely limited. Doors are manually operated and heavy, and manoeuvrability around toilet provision is impeded. An 'AccessAble' report was recently completed and makes several observations on areas for improving access that will be used to inform the feasibility study and how improvements can be made development for the future provision of the facility.

There is also a need to ensure that provision (services, activities and facilities) is relevant and sustainable.

At the moment, residents and visitors to Whitchurch, and those who work there, are being disadvantaged in equality terms as follows:

- The swimming centre remains closed which reduces the opportunities for

the Whitchurch community to be physically active which impacts on long term health and social issues.

- To access pay as you play swimming facilities Whitchurch residents will have to travel some distance, this can have a negative impact on the Council's climate change agenda and carbon reduction targets. Residents without access to a car are disadvantaged as public transport routes to other facilities mean lengthy travel times.
- Visits by Whitchurch residents to other facilities adds pressure to already busy centres.
- There is a negative impact from young children not being able to learn to swim which is an important life skill.
- Primary schools have a statutory duty to provide swimming lessons for children up to Key Stage 2 Level which they will struggle to fulfil.
- Does not provide any opportunity to impact positively on the Council's Organisational Principles.

Proceeding with the development of a new facility would mitigate these current negative impacts and promote social inclusion as well as physical and mental health and well-being.

It will be necessary to work closely with the SC elected councillors for the area, as community leaders, as well as with all relevant stakeholders

Associated ESHIAs

A Vibrant Shropshire: Cultural Strategy 2021-2031
Leisure Facilities Strategy 2020-2038
Libraries Strategy 2018-2023
Shropshire Great Outdoors Strategy

Actions to mitigate negative impact, enhance positive impact, and review and monitor overall impacts in terms of any other considerations. This includes climate change considerations

Climate change

A sustainability strategy for the project was developed with the Council's Climate Change Team. The sustainability requirements for the project are set out below:

Carbon Offsetting or Mitigation and Climate Change Adaptation

Shropshire Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and in 2020 adopted its Strategy for achieving net zero on carbon emissions by 2030. In line with this, this project will explore the potential for passive design principles and ensure that the Council can track the lifetime carbon performance of the building. This will include the provision of an audit trail, including quantitative performance measures, including Sport England Sustainability Target Metrics, that provide documentary evidence on a design stage by stage approach to minimising the carbon footprint of the facilities and climate change impact. The lifetime carbon performance study will be used to demonstrate how the design

and materials used have taken account of the carbon reduction and climate change agenda and that the performance of the building is operating within the design parameters. The design will incorporate Sport England design guidance on sustainable facilities. This will have a positive effect.

Energy and Fuel Consumption

Building to achieve a BREEAM Excellent rating and a DEC A rating. Design to provide for a passive standard of operation at the facilities, the aim being to achieve as low a carbon footprint as possible at a reasonable cost over the life cycle of the project. This will include the provision of a report to compare the sustainability performance of the existing facility with the new development with the aim that this demonstrates a net improvement. This will have a positive effect

Renewable Energy Generation

The Design will take account of the opportunity to be serviced by air or ground water source heat pumps and on-site renewable energy generation such as Photo Voltaic Cells. This will have a positive effect.

The feasibility study contains initial information on how the above aspects will be developed as the design progresses. See sustainability section pages 26 – 27, carbon reduction section pages 35 – 36 and building efficiency section pages 38 - 39. Further work will be carried out on Climate Change and carbon reduction impacts as the design progresses.

Health and well being

There is a collective priority (Shropshire Council, Health and Wellbeing Board, Energize Active Partnership) and agenda to improve community health and well-being at all stages of life, and that physical activities are integral to this, with a focus on older and young people and families.

Redevelopment of a new larger facility, subject to agreement by Council, has the potential to offer an increased range of facilities which will:

- Encourage increased participation in physical activity;
- Deliver increased health benefits (physical and mental) to more people as a result of taking part in physical activity;
- Contribute to a more active environment at local level;
- Be more cost-effective and efficient to operate through co location of appropriate other services;
- Improve service provision and accessibility to individuals and groups in the community.

Economic and societal/wider community

The Cabinet report has been written in the context of the Council’s medium term financial strategy and on the assumption that the Council wishes to support the continuing availability of public swimming in Whitchurch for

the benefit of the community, but that given financial constraints, it must be provided and operated as efficiently and effectively as possible.

There is potential for national funding opportunities, as Sport England has confirmed that a number of local authorities included leisure facility developments in Levelling Up Funding round 1 applications and were successful. The round 2 prospectus has now been issued and the proposed development at Whitchurch could meet two of the priority investment themes including:




Regeneration and town centre investment, building on the Towns Fund framework to upgrade eyesore buildings and dated infrastructure; acquire and regenerate brownfield sites; invest in secure community infrastructure and crime reduction; and bring public services and safe, accessible community spaces into town and city centres.



Cultural investment maintaining, regenerating, or creatively repurposing existing cultural, creative, heritage and sporting assets, or creating new assets that serve those purposes including theatres, museums, galleries, production facilities, libraries, visitor attractions (and associated green spaces), sports and athletics facilities, heritage buildings and sites, and assets that support the visitor economy

Organisation Principles




The development of the Whitchurch Swimming Centre project could support the following Organisation Principles:

Table 1 Organisation Principles:

Organisation Principle	How supported
	The development of a new facility could present significant opportunities to implement Social Value initiatives.
	See above section
	Through the strategic objectives work that has been completed on the provision of a new improved leisure facility offer it has become clear that there is an overarching collective priority for Shropshire Council and a number of partners to improve health and well-being at all stages of life, and that physical activity is an integral part of this. New facilities will provide greater opportunities for participation which supports living a healthy lifestyle.

 <p>Shropshire Council</p> <p>Make decisions based on current data and intelligence</p>	<p>The Leisure Facilities Strategy 2020 – 2038, Whitchurch Swimming Centre Outline Feasibility Study and Building Condition Report have provided insight and evidence on options for repairing the existing facility or options for developing a new one to improve on current service delivery.</p>
 <p>Shropshire Council</p> <p>Provide Value for Money</p>	<p>Business modelling has been carried out on the new build options to compare the lifecycle costings of developing a new facility against the costs of the current facility. New facilities provide opportunities for generating significant operational surplus compared to the current subsidy levels required.</p>


Scrutiny at Part One screening stage

People involved	Signatures	Date
<i>Mark Thornewill Transformation Project Manager - Leisure</i>		21 st March 2022
<i>Peter Davis Leisure Services Manager</i> <i>Amanda Cheeseman Public Health Development Officer</i>	 <i>Amanda Cheeseman</i>	31 st March 2022 4 th April 2022
<i>Any external support**</i> Mrs Lois Dale Rurality and Equalities Specialist		5 th April 2022

**This refers to other officers within the service area*

***This refers to support external to the service but within the Council, e.g., the Rurality and Equalities Specialist, the Feedback and Insight Team, performance data specialists, Climate Change specialists, and Public Health colleagues*

Sign off at Part One screening stage

Name	Signatures	Date
Mark Thorneill		5 th April 2022
Accountable officer's name		

**This may either be the Head of Service or the lead officer*

B. Detailed Screening Assessment

Aims of the service change and description
<p>Built in 1972, Whitchurch Swimming Centre comprises a 25m x 5 lane pool and changing facilities.</p> <p>The initial report prepared for Cabinet on 27th April 2022, for which this is the initial screening ESHIA, provides an update on the condition of the centre and options for consideration regarding the future provision of this important community facility.</p> <p>The indicative timeline for the feasibility study, subject to approval by Cabinet, was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement of external professional support and surveys as required for the feasibility study phase - July to August 2021. • Feasibility study and public/stakeholder engagement/consultation exercise - September 2021 to February 2022. • Report back to Cabinet April 2022. <p>The centre has been closed since March 2020, initially due to the national lockdown as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, and further to that as a result of the structural problems identified whilst investigating the cause of a leak from the pool tank which include underpinning issues and deterioration in the fabric of the building.</p> <p>Property Services Group has commissioned investigation work to identify the immediate, medium and, longer term maintenance requirements and costs associated with these to be able to re-open the existing facility and maintain it to an acceptable standard. Further structural investigation work has also taken place which has resulted in the structural engineer stating that due to structural issues</p>

repairs will not provide good value for money and will not provide a sustainable facility for the future.

Alongside the maintenance investigation works an outline feasibility study was commissioned to review the business case for investment in a new facility to be able to compare this option with carrying out the necessary repairs on the existing facility.

The following options have therefore been considered:

1. Option 1 - Do nothing
2. Option 2 - Instigate the required repair and maintenance works
3. Option 3 - New traditional build – 6 lane x 25m with moveable floor, Café 15 covers
4. Option 4 - New traditional build - 6 lane x 25m with moveable floor, 35 station fitness suite, Café 20 covers
5. Option 5 - New traditional build – 6 lane x 25m with moveable floor, 35 station fitness suite, dance studio, Café 20 covers
6. Option 6 - New alternative build - 6 lane x 25m with moveable floor, 35 station fitness suite, dance studio, Café 20 covers

Full details of the feasibility study options appraisal are contained in Appendix 1 to the Cabinet report for 27th April 2022.

Based on their ability to meet the strategic outcomes, option 6 looks to meet the greatest range, but officers need to test the deliverability and affordability of the new build options to further understand the potential to meet the outcomes, costs and ability to generate increased participation and income.

Cabinet is to consider an initial report and is being recommended to:

- I. Approve that option 6 is the emerging preferred option and should be taken forward to the next stage of feasibility and due diligence.
- II. Delegate to the Executive Director of Place, in consultation with the Leader and the Portfolio Holder for Communities, Place, Tourism and Transport, the ability to progress the feasibility and due diligence on the emerging new build option, including: Implementation of a public and stakeholder /engagement consultation exercise.
- III. Approve that the additional feasibility work includes a needs assessment for a new library facility in Whitchurch and, also explores the potential for and, cost/benefits of co-locating the library in any new leisure facility development on the site. Noting that if co-locating the library emerges as part of the preferred option a specific public consultation on this will be required.
- IV. Agree that the findings of the additional feasibility work be reported back to a future cabinet meeting.

Intended audiences and target groups for the service change

All those who live in, work in or visit Whitchurch
 Energize
 Local MPs
 Government Departments and Agencies
 Schools
 Shropshire Council Councillors for the area
 Sport England
 Whitchurch Town Council
 Other stakeholders involved in leisure facility provision and library provision

This list is not exhaustive and will be added to

Evidence used for screening of the service change

Feasibility Study for Whitchurch Swimming Centre
 Shropshire Council – A Vibrant Shropshire Cultural Strategy 2021 -2031
 Indoor Leisure Facilities Strategy 2020 – 2038
 JSNA (Health and Well Being Board Shropshire Sustainability and Transformation Plan 2016-2021)
 Energize Shropshire Telford and Wrekin - Actively Improving Lives 2022
 Library Services Strategy, 2018 – 2023

Specific consultation and engagement with intended audiences and target groups for the service change







An initial key stakeholder exercise was carried out during March and April 2022. A list of the stakeholders and feedback received to date is included at Appendix 2.





Initial equality impact assessment by grouping (Initial health impact assessment is included below)

Please rate the impact that you perceive the service change is likely to have on a group, through stating this in the relevant column.

Please state if it is anticipated to be neutral (no impact) and add any extra notes that you think might be helpful for readers.

Protected Characteristic groupings and other groupings in Shropshire	High negative impact <i>Part Two ESIIA required</i>	High positive impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>	Medium positive or negative impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>	Low positive, negative, or neutral impact (please specify) <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>
<u>Age</u> (please include children, young people, young people leaving care, people of working age, older people. Some people may belong to more than one group e.g., a child or young person for whom there are safeguarding				

concerns e.g., an older person with disability)				
Disability (please include mental health conditions and syndromes; hidden disabilities including autism and Crohn's disease; physical and sensory disabilities or impairments; learning disabilities; Multiple Sclerosis; cancer; and HIV)				
Gender re-assignment (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)			 Provided that changing room configurations reflect the needs of this grouping	
Marriage and Civil Partnership (please include associated aspects: caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				
Pregnancy and Maternity (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)			 Provided that changing room configurations reflect the needs of this grouping	
Race (please include ethnicity, nationality, culture, language, Gypsy, Traveller)			 Provided that changing room configurations reflect the	

			needs of this grouping	
<u>Religion and belief</u> (please include Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Judaism, Nonconformists; Rastafarianism; Shinto, Sikhism, Taoism, Zoroastrianism, and any others)			 Provided that changing room configurations reflect the needs of this grouping	
<u>Sex</u> (this can also be viewed as relating to gender. Please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)			 Provided that changing room configurations reflect the needs of this grouping	
<u>Sexual Orientation</u> (please include associated aspects: safety; caring responsibility; potential for bullying and harassment)				
<u>Other: Social Inclusion</u> (please include families and friends with caring responsibilities; households in poverty; people for whom there are safeguarding concerns; people you consider to be vulnerable; people with health inequalities; refugees and asylum seekers; rural communities; veterans and serving members of the armed forces and their families)				

Initial health and wellbeing impact assessment by category

Please rate the impact that you perceive the service change is likely to have with regard to health and wellbeing, through stating this in the relevant column.

Please state if it is anticipated to be neutral (no impact) and add any extra notes that you think might be helpful for readers.

Health and wellbeing: individuals and communities in Shropshire	High negative impact <i>Part Two HIA required</i>	High positive impact	Medium positive or negative impact	Low positive negative or neutral impact (please specify)
<p>Will the proposal have a <i>direct impact</i> on an individual's health, mental health and wellbeing?</p> <p>For example, would it cause ill health, affecting social inclusion, independence and participation?</p> <p>.</p>		<p>Improved fitness and weight maintenance; Regular physical activity; Regular social activity; Reduce risk of non-communicable diseases (obesity, diabetes (T2), CVD); Increased social interaction, social ties and networks; Reduce the risk of developing mental health illnesses; Therapeutic benefits for treating physical and mental illnesses including type 2 diabetes, depression, age related cognitive and physical decline</p>		
<p>Will the proposal <i>indirectly impact</i> an individual's ability to</p>		<p>Healthy ageing and independence</p>		

<p>improve their own health and wellbeing?</p> <p>For example, will it affect their ability to be physically active, choose healthy food, reduce drinking and smoking?</p> <p>.</p>		<p>(mental and physical);</p> <p>Healthy childhood development: swimming is important skill to learn from a young age;</p> <p>Community involvement (volunteering)</p> <p>Develop life skills of young people via interactions with peers, parents and coaches;</p> <p>Health equity: community leisure services are accessible for all population groups;</p> <p>Association with health promoting activities and choices;</p> <p>Young ages active play helps develop healthy habits, enjoyment of physical activity and physical literacy skills</p>		
<p>Will the policy have a <i>direct impact</i> on the community - social, economic and environmental living conditions that would impact health?</p> <p>For example, would it affect housing, transport, child development, education, employment</p>		<p>Safe play area for children and young people;</p> <p>Building healthy social and cultural norms;</p> <p>Healthy Communities</p>	<p>Medium positive: Reduction in loss of productivity from absenteeism or lower productivity due to ill</p>	

opportunities, availability of green space or climate change mitigation? .		and sense of belonging; Neighbourhood pride and improved aesthetics; Inclusivity of under-represented groups; Increased levels of perceived safety; Positive effect on educational outcomes, including psychological and cognitive benefits	health; Increases in skills and academic performance for young people; Employment and training opportunities Identifying talent and future athletes	
Will there be a likely change in <i>demand</i> for or access to health and social care services? For example: Primary Care, Hospital Care, Community Services, Mental Health, Local Authority services including Social Services? .		Reduced burden on health care services and savings from improved mental and physical health; Free up health resources to deal with non-preventable problems;		

Identification of likely impact of the service change in terms of other considerations including climate change and economic or societal impacts

Climate Change Appraisal

Energy consumption. Retaining the existing facility will not have a positive impact on energy consumption. The development of a new facility will be significantly more energy efficient than the current pool due to the ability to introduce new technology and sustainability practices.

Renewable Energy Generation. There will be opportunities for renewable energy generation as part of the new building.

Carbon offsetting or mitigation. There may be an opportunity for tree planting within a landscaping scheme for a new facility

A commitment to quantifying carbon performance as part of any detailed design for a new facility will be included in a design brief should this option be decided upon.

Health and well being

The development of the Swimming and Fitness project in Whitchurch can support priorities around healthy people, healthy economy, and healthy environment. It can also support several Organisation Principles, and these are set out in Appendix 4 to the Cabinet report.

The Feasibility Study provides detailed evidence and insight on the opportunities and risks of developing a new swimming and fitness centre in Whitchurch. The study shows that a new development can be accommodated on the site and that the proposed facility mix improves the business case compared to the old facility. As Whitchurch has been without the provision of a swimming pool for a lengthy period it is recommended that the development be given high priority

A preliminary ecology survey has been carried out as part of the feasibility study. Further survey work will take place during the next design phases.

Guidance Notes

1. Legal Context

It is a legal requirement for local authorities to assess the equality and human rights impact of changes proposed or made to services. It is up to us as an authority to decide what form our equality impact assessment may take. By way of illustration, some local authorities focus more overtly upon human rights; some include safeguarding. It is about what is considered to be needed in a local authority's area, in line with local factors such as demography and strategic objectives as well as with the national legislative imperatives.

Carrying out these impact assessments helps us as a public authority to ensure that, as far as possible, we are taking actions to meet the general equality duty placed on us by the Equality Act 2010, and to thus demonstrate that the three equality aims are integral to our decision making processes.

These are: eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advancing equality of opportunity; and fostering good relations.

These screening assessments for any proposed service change go to Cabinet as part of the committee report, or occasionally direct to Full Council, unless they are ones to do with Licensing, in which case they go to Strategic Licensing Committee.

Service areas would ordinarily carry out a screening assessment, or Part One equality impact assessment. This enables energies to be focussed on review and monitoring and ongoing evidence collection about the positive or negative impacts of a service change upon groupings in the community, and for any adjustments to be considered and made accordingly.

These screening assessments are recommended to be undertaken at timely points in the development and implementation of the proposed service change.

For example, an ESHIA would be a recommended course of action before a consultation. This would draw upon the evidence available at that time, and identify the target audiences, and assess at that initial stage what the likely impact of the service change could be across the Protected Characteristic groupings and our tenth category of Social Inclusion. This ESHIA would set out intended actions to engage with the groupings, particularly those who are historically less likely to engage in public consultation eg young people, as otherwise we would not know their specific needs.

A second ESHIA would then be carried out after the consultation, to say what the feedback was, to set out changes proposed as a result of the feedback, and to say where responses were low and what the plans are to engage with groupings who did not really respond. This ESHIA would also draw more upon actions to review impacts in order to mitigate the negative and accentuate the positive. Examples of this approach include the Great Outdoors Strategy, and the Economic Growth Strategy 2017-2021

Meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty through carrying out these ESHIAs is very much about using them as an opportunity to demonstrate ongoing engagement across groupings and to thus visibly show we are taking what is called due regard of the needs of people in protected characteristic groupings

If the screening indicates that there are likely to be significant negative impacts for groupings within the community, the service area would need to carry out a full report, or Part Two assessment. This will enable more evidence to be collected that will help the service area to reach an informed opinion.

In practice, Part Two or Full Screening Assessments have only been recommended twice since 2014, as the ongoing mitigation of negative equality impacts should serve to keep them below the threshold for triggering a Full Screening Assessment. The expectation is that Full Screening Assessments in regard to Health Impacts may occasionally need to be undertaken, but this would be very much the exception rather than the rule.

2. Council Wide and Service Area Policy and Practice on Equality, Social Inclusion and Health

This involves taking an equality and social inclusion approach in planning changes to services, policies, or procedures, including those that may be required by Government.

The decisions that you make when you are planning a service change need to be recorded, to demonstrate that you have thought about the possible equality impacts on communities and to show openness and transparency in your decision-making processes.

This is where Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessments (ESHIA) come in. Where you carry out an ESHIA in your service area, this provides an opportunity to show:

- What evidence you have drawn upon to help you to recommend a strategy or policy or a course of action to Cabinet.
- What target groups and audiences you have worked with to date.
- What actions you will take in order to mitigate any likely negative impact upon a group or groupings, and enhance any positive effects for a group or groupings; and
- What actions you are planning to review the impact of your planned service change.

The formal template is there not only to help the service area but also to act as a stand-alone for a member of the public to read. The approach helps to identify whether or not any new or significant changes to services, including policies, procedures, functions, or projects, may have an adverse impact on a particular group of people, and whether the human rights of individuals may be affected.

This assessment encompasses consideration of social inclusion. This is so that we are thinking as carefully and completely as possible about all Shropshire groups and communities, including people in rural areas and people or households that we may describe as vulnerable.

Examples could be households on low incomes or people for whom there are safeguarding concerns, as well as people in what are described as the nine 'protected characteristics' of groups of people in our population, e.g., Age. Another specific vulnerable grouping is veterans and serving members of the Armed Forces, who face particular challenges with regard to access to Health, to Education, and to Housing.

We demonstrate equal treatment to people who are in these groups and to people who are not, through having what is termed 'due regard' to their needs and views when developing and implementing policy and strategy and when commissioning, procuring, arranging, or delivering services.

When you are not carrying out an ESHIA, you still need to demonstrate and record that you have considered equality in your decision-making processes. It is up to you what format you choose.–You could use a checklist, an explanatory note, or a document setting out our expectations of standards of behaviour, for contractors to

read and sign. It may well not be something that is in the public domain like an ESHIA, but you should still be ready for it to be made available.

Both the approaches sit with a manager, and the manager has to make the call, and record the decision made on behalf of the Council. Help and guidance is also available via the Commissioning Support Team, either for data, or for policy advice from the Rurality and Equalities Specialist. Here are some examples to get you thinking.

Carry out an ESHIA:

- If you are building or reconfiguring a building.
- If you are planning to reduce or remove a service.
- If you are consulting on a policy or a strategy.
- If you are bringing in a change to a process or procedure that involves other stakeholders and the wider community as well as particular groupings

For example, there may be a planned change to a leisure facility. This gives you the chance to look at things like flexible changing room provision, which will maximise positive impacts for everyone. A specific grouping that would benefit would be people undergoing gender reassignment

Carry out an equality and social inclusion approach:

- If you are setting out how you expect a contractor to behave with regard to equality, where you are commissioning a service or product from them.
- If you are setting out the standards of behaviour that we expect from people who work with vulnerable groupings, such as taxi drivers that we license.
- If you are planning consultation and engagement activity, where we need to collect equality data in ways that will be proportionate and non-intrusive as well as meaningful for the purposes of the consultation itself.
- If you are looking at services provided by others that help the community, where we need to demonstrate a community leadership approach

For example, you may be involved in commissioning a production to tour schools or appear at a local venue, whether a community hall or somewhere like Theatre Severn. The production company should be made aware of our equality policies and our expectation that they will seek to avoid promotion of potentially negative stereotypes. Specific groupings that could be affected include: Disability, Race, Religion and Belief, and Sexual Orientation. There is positive impact to be gained from positive portrayals and use of appropriate and respectful language in regard to these groupings in particular.

3. Council wide and service area policy and practice on health and wellbeing

This is a relatively new area to record within our overall assessments of impacts, for individual and for communities, and as such we are asking service area leads to

consider health and wellbeing impacts, much as they have been doing during 2020-2021, and to look at these in the context of direct and indirect impacts for individuals and for communities. A better understanding across the Council of these impacts will also better enable the Public Health colleagues to prioritise activities to reduce health inequalities in ways that are evidence based and that link effectively with equality impact considerations and climate change mitigation.

Health in All Policies – Health Impact Assessment

Health in All Policies is an upstream approach for health and wellbeing promotion and prevention, and to reduce health inequalities. The Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is the supporting mechanism

- Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is the technical name for a common-sense idea. It is a process that considers the wider effects of local policies, strategies and initiatives and how they, in turn, may affect people's health and wellbeing.
- Health Impact Assessment is a means of assessing both the positive and negative health impacts of a policy. It is also a means of developing good evidence-based policy and strategy using a structured process to review the impact.
- A Health Impact Assessment seeks to determine how to maximise health benefits and reduce health inequalities. It identifies any unintended health consequences. These consequences may support policy and strategy or may lead to suggestions for improvements.
- An agreed framework will set out a clear pathway through which a policy or strategy can be assessed and impacts with outcomes identified. It also sets out the support mechanisms for maximising health benefits.

The embedding of a Health in All Policies approach will support Shropshire Council through evidence-based practice and a whole systems approach, in achieving our corporate and partnership strategic priorities. This will assist the Council and partners in promoting, enabling and sustaining the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities whilst reducing health inequalities.

Individuals

Will the proposal have a *direct impact* on health, mental health and wellbeing?

For example, would it cause ill health, affecting social inclusion, independence and participation?

Will the proposal directly affect an individual's ability to improve their own health and wellbeing?

This could include the following: their ability to be physically active e.g., being able to use a cycle route; to access food more easily; to change lifestyle in ways that are of positive impact for their health.

An example of this could be that you may be involved in proposals for the establishment of safer walking and cycling routes (e.g., green highways), and changes to public transport that could encourage people away from car usage. and increase the number of journeys that they make on public transport, by foot or on bicycle or scooter. This could improve lives.

Will the proposal *indirectly* impact an individual's ability to improve their own health and wellbeing?

This could include the following: their ability to access local facilities e.g., to access food more easily, or to access a means of mobility to local services and amenities? (e.g. change to bus route)

Similarly to the above, an example of this could be that you may be involved in proposals for the establishment of safer walking and cycling routes (e.g. pedestrianisation of town centres), and changes to public transport that could encourage people away from car usage, and increase the number of journeys that they make on public transport, by foot or on bicycle or scooter. This could improve their health and well being.

Communities

Will the proposal directly or indirectly affect the physical health, mental health, and wellbeing of the wider community?

A *direct impact* could include either the causing of ill health, affecting social inclusion, independence and participation, or the promotion of better health.

An example of this could be that safer walking and cycling routes could help the wider community, as more people across groupings may be encouraged to walk more, and as there will be reductions in emission leading to better air quality.

An *indirect impact* could mean that a service change could indirectly affect living and working conditions and therefore the health and well being of the wider community.

An example of this could be: an increase in the availability of warm homes would improve the quality of the housing offer in Shropshire and reduce the costs for households of having a warm home in Shropshire. Often a health promoting approach also supports our agenda to reduce the level of Carbon Dioxide emissions and to reduce the impact of climate change.

Please record whether at this stage you consider the proposed service change to have a direct or an indirect impact upon communities.

Demand

Will there be a change in demand for or access to health, local authority and social care services?

For example: Primary Care, Hospital Care, Community Services, Mental Health and Social Services?

An example of this could be: a new housing development in an area would affect demand for primary care and local authority facilities and services in that location and surrounding areas. If the housing development does not factor in consideration of availability of green space and safety within the public realm, further down the line there could be an increased demand upon health and social care services as a result of the lack of opportunities for physical recreation, and reluctance of some groupings to venture outside if they do not perceive it to be safe.





For further information on the use of ESHIAs: please contact your head of service or contact Mrs Lois Dale, Rurality and Equalities Specialist and Council policy support on equality, via telephone 01743 258528, or email lois.dale@shropshire.gov.uk.


For further guidance on public health policy considerations: please contact Amanda Cheeseman Development Officer in Public Health, via telephone 01743 253164 or email amanda.cheeseman@shropshire.gov.uk

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Appendix 4: Organisation Principles

The development of the Swimming and Fitness project in Whitchurch can support the following priorities identified in the Shropshire Plan, healthy people, healthy economy, and healthy environment. It can also support the following Organisation Principles:

Organisation Principle	How supported
 Shropshire Council Put Shropshire back into the Community	The development of a new facility will present significant opportunities to implement Social Value initiatives.
 Shropshire Council Consider the impact of our activities on the climate	See section 6 of the report
 Shropshire Council Focus on outcomes for customers	Through the strategic objectives work that has been completed on the provision of a new improved leisure facility offer it has become clear that there is an overarching collective priority for Shropshire Council and partners to improve health and well-being at all stages of life, and that physical activity is an integral part of this. New facilities will provide greater opportunities for participation which supports living a healthy lifestyle.
 Shropshire Council Make decisions based on current data and intelligence	Several reports including the Indoor Sports Facility Strategy, the feasibility study and business modelling have provided insight and evidence into the impact of providing a new facility.

	<p>The Council subsidised the old facility by some £137,000 per year increasing the attractiveness and mix of uses will help to create a more sustainable facility in the future.</p>
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Committee and Date

Cabinet

27 April 2022

Item

Public

DRAFT HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY FOR CONSULTATION

**Responsible
Officer
Email**

Jane Trethewey, Assistant Director Homes and
Communities
jane.trethewey@shropshire.gov.uk

1. Synopsis

- 1.1. A draft revised policy for allocations to Council owned stock and nominations to housing associations¹ has been prepared. Cabinet is requested to approve the draft policy, to be subject to an eight-week consultation period.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. The revised policy seeks to make best use of the flexibilities provided under the Housing Act 1996 to ensure social housing is allocated to those in the greatest need and support strategic housing priorities.
- 2.2. The draft policy has been subject to initial scrutiny by the Communities Overview Committee. Following the proposed eight-week public consultation period and the consideration of feedback, the proposed final draft policy will be further scrutinised by the Communities Overview Committee before it is presented to Cabinet and Council for approval and adoption.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. Cabinet is asked to approve that the draft policy, set out in Appendix I, be subject to an eight-week public consultation period, and for this to include formal consultation with all Private Registered Providers currently operating in Shropshire.

¹ Registered with the Regulator of Social Housing, known formally as Private Registered Providers

REPORT

4. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

4.1. The initial review of the existing allocations policy and scheme identified three options for the future operation of the scheme:

- (i) Continue using choice-based lettings (CBL) and a common register, widening the policy and scheme to include all forms of affordable housing and encourage those housing associations operating in Shropshire who are not part of the existing scheme to take part.
- (ii) Continue using CBL, but move to having a housing register to allocate to council owned stock and provide nominations to housing associations, this requires formal nomination agreements to be resurrected or drawn up with all the large housing associations operating in Shropshire; and
- (iii) Option (ii), but no longer to use CBL but to use direct lets for allocations to council owned stock and nominations to housing associations.

4.2. The risks associated with each option are as follows:

- (i) By using an approach where each housing association uses their own policy and process for deciding which applicant is offered a property it can be difficult to ensure that those applicants in the highest need are able to access affordable housing.
- (ii) Although this option requires the need to introduce and monitor nomination agreements with all large housing associations who are registered with the Regulator of Social Housing, given that the Council will be providing nominations the risk of those in the greatest need being overlooked for an offer of housing is minimised; and
- (iii) Applicants are familiar with the CBL model which can also be used to publicise new affordable and supported housing developments; therefore, it would be a risk not to continue with this model and further exploit its potential.

4.3. The initial review considered future access to the housing register:

- (i) Continue with an open housing register, where the only ground for applicants to be disqualified for an allocation (and nomination) of social housing is due to unacceptable behaviour; and
- (ii) Introduce additional qualification criteria whereby applicants are required to have a local connection and to

be unable to afford to meet their housing needs in the open market.

4.4. The risks associated with each consideration are:

- (i) Given that social housing is such a scarce resource there is a risk that continuing with an open register would not ensure that those in the greatest housing need, especially those to whom the local authority has a duty to rehouse, are allocated accommodation; and
- (ii) There is the risk that there could be insufficient applicants for properties in lower demand, for example, older persons' bedsit accommodation. However, should this situation arise, it should be considered in the landlord's asset management strategy and lead to an options appraisal as to whether to repurpose, remodel or redevelop these homes, to ensure that the housing offer meets current aspirations.

4.5. Following public consultation, which is to include formal consultation with all Private Registered Providers operating in Shropshire, the above risk assessment will be reviewed, and a further assessment will be undertaken.

4.6. An Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessment (ESHIA) initial screening record has been completed; this is at Appendix II. This does not identify any issues with the proposed draft policy and scheme but will be kept under review. A further assessment will be carried out following consultation on the draft revised policy.

5. Financial Implications

5.1. The operation of the Council's allocation policy is currently funded by the General Fund, with STAR Housing and partner housing associations who advertise their void properties paying the Council a fee for each advertisement. Given the proposed move to a Council housing register and nomination agreements, it will be prudent to review the existing funding arrangements. Any revised proposals will need to ensure that the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) only funds the allocation of dwellings held in the HRA.

6. Climate Change Appraisal

6.1. It is acknowledged that the Policy is expected to have a 'no effect' outcome on the climate change impacts listed below:

- energy and fuel consumption (buildings and/or travel)

- renewable energy generation
- carbon offsetting or mitigation, and
- climate change adaptation.

6.2. There are no other anticipated environmental impacts associated with the recommendations in this report.

7. Background

7.1. As the local housing authority Shropshire Council must comply with Part VI of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) when making allocations to local authority owned stock and nominations to Private Registered Provider (housing associations registered with the Regulator of Social Housing) accommodation.

7.2. Statutory guidance on social housing allocations for local authorities in England (January 2022) sets out how allocation schemes are to be framed. In summary the guidance covers:

- who is eligible for allocation, this relates to immigration status;
- how local housing authorities can determine who can qualify for an allocation, this can be relate to local connection, financial resources and unacceptable behaviour; and
- the categories of persons that an allocation scheme must give “reasonable preference” to, this includes households who are homeless (not just those considered to be statutory homeless), overcrowded households, persons with medical and welfare needs, and those suffering from hardship.

7.3. The Council’s existing allocation policy and scheme, “Shropshire Affordable Housing Allocation Policy and Scheme” was launched in 2014. Called HomePoint this is a common housing register which uses choice-based lettings (CBL) to allocate all Council owned stock (managed by its Arm’s Length Management Organisation, STAR Housing) and void dwellings from partner Private Registered Providers. However, since 2014 a sharp increase in housing costs in the private sector has resulted in all forms of social housing, including supported accommodation and low-cost home ownership products, becoming a scarce and important resource. It is now vital for the Council to ensure that those applicants in the greatest need are allocated social and affordable housing. Moreover, the policy review has been influenced by the strategic need to:

- Prevent and tackle homelessness, including reducing the pressure on temporary accommodation;
- Promote independent living and reduce admissions to residential care, by ensuring the best use of all tenures and types of social housing; and

- Enable key workers on low incomes to access affordable housing.
- 7.4. It is therefore proposed to create an allocations policy for applications to the Housing Register; the allocation of the housing stock owned by the Council and managed by STAR Housing; and nominations to Private Registered Providers for social and affordable rented and low-cost home ownership² properties and, in some circumstances, to private landlords. This is contained at Appendix I.
- 7.5. The CBL process would remain in place, but formal nominations arrangements would be introduced, with all large Private Registered Providers being required to agree to nomination rights to 100% of allocations to new build homes, with nominations to re-lets and all existing stock be agreed on an individual basis.
- 7.6. It should be noted that the Housing Act 1996 refers to the need for Private Registered Providers to co-operate with local housing authorities to offer housing to people in priority need and who are homeless. In addition, Housing Corporation³ Regulatory Circular, 02/03 Regulation, February 2003 refers to nomination agreements between local authorities and housing associations (Private Registered Providers) and how these should be for a minimum of 50% void dwellings on re-let. Moreover, The Regulator of Social Housing's Tenancy Standard (2012) sets a specific expectation that, "registered providers shall co-operate with local authorities' strategic housing function, and their duties to meet identified local housing needs. This includes assistance with local authorities' homelessness duties, and through meeting obligations in nominations agreements".
- 7.7. To ensure the Council is meeting local housing and support needs of those who are unable to meet their needs through the market, the draft revised policy contains qualification criteria relating to local connection, a financial assessment and unacceptable behaviour.
- 7.8. With statutory exceptions relating to the Armed Forces, ex-service personnel, existing social tenants moving to employment in Shropshire, and persons who need to move from another local authority area to escape domestic abuse or other forms of violence or harm, the proposed local connection is either residency (living in Shropshire for the last year), close family living in Shropshire, or being employed in Shropshire.
- 7.9. It is proposed that applicants who would be able to purchase or rent market priced housing within Shropshire which is suitable for their

² With the exception of Homes England grant funded shared ownership properties on non-exception sites

³ This body became part of the Homes and Communities Agency and is now called Homes England.

needs would not qualify to be on the housing register. The draft policy proposes that the threshold for access to accommodation in the open market is an income of £50,000 gross per annum or savings and assets (including equity in a property) of more than £200,000 or both. However, as a transitional arrangement, existing applicants who are assessed as able to purchase or rent market housing within Shropshire which is suitable for their needs, would be able to remain on the register but be placed in the lowest band.

- 7.10. Although the existing policy disqualifies persons on the grounds of unacceptable behaviour, this is based on a very stringent test. The draft revised policy recognises that there can be no blanket restrictions as each case needs to be considered on its own merits. However, it sets out a list of example scenarios where an applicant could be disqualified from an allocation of housing.
- 7.11. The draft policy also increases the number of bands from four to seven. Thus, allowing for greater differentiation in prioritising categories of applicants who are required to be given reasonable preference under the Housing Act 1996 and also recognising the needs of those applicants who may not be in a reasonable preference group but are still in housing need and are a strategic priority for the Council, for example, key workers in low-paid employment.
- 7.12. In addition, by the policy applying to all forms and tenures of social housing and introducing qualifying criteria relating to local connection and financial resources, this means that there is greater clarity on the evidence to support affordable and specialist housing development.

8. Additional Information

- 8.1. If a local housing authority intends to adopt a revised allocations policy and scheme or instead alter the existing scheme to reflect a major change of policy the Housing Act 1996 requires it to send a copy of the draft scheme, or proposed alteration, to every Private Registered Provider with whom they have nomination arrangements, ensuring they have a reasonable opportunity to comment on these proposals. Nomination arrangements are currently in place with the Private Registered Providers who own the dwellings which were subject to Large Scale Voluntary Transfers undertaken prior to Shropshire Council being formed. Given the proposed move from a common housing register, which seeks to operate without enforcing formal nomination processes, to a scheme which will reinvigorate existing agreements and introduce new ones with all large Providers currently operating in Shropshire and any new Providers planning to deliver affordable housing in the

area, it is recommended that all 32 Private Registered Providers currently operating in Shropshire are consulted.

- 8.2. The rationale for the review of the allocations policy and the proposed changes to the policy and scheme have been subject to an initial discussion at a meeting of Shropshire's Social Housing Forum in March 2022. The Forum comprises the Council, its ALMO STAR Housing, and five Private Registered Providers, representing approximately 90% of all social housing in Shropshire.

9. Conclusions

- 9.1. The proposed draft policy seeks to ensure that the Council complies with the Housing Act and makes use of the flexibilities it provides, combined with an approach to ensure those in the greatest housing need are allocated social housing, be this existing or new build for rent or low-cost home ownership.

List of Background Papers

Shropshire Affordable Housing Allocation Policy and Scheme

Cabinet Member

Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Public Health

Portfolio Holder for Physical Infrastructure

Local Member

All

Appendices

Appendix I: Draft revised allocations policy

Appendix II: Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessment

Appendix I: Draft revised allocations policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Housing Allocation Policy and Scheme applies to the Shropshire Council unitary local authority area. References to Shropshire and the Council refer to the unitary local authority of Shropshire.
- 1.2 This document sets out Shropshire Council's Policy for applications to the Housing Register; the allocation of the housing stock owned by the Council, which is managed by its Arm's Length Management Organisation (ALMO), Shropshire Towns and Rural (STAR) Housing; and nominations to housing associations registered with the Regulator of Social Housing (for social and affordable rented and low cost home ownership⁴ properties) and to private landlords.
- 1.3 Officers act under delegated powers in accordance with this policy. All allocations and nominations are made from the Housing Register.

2. Aims of the Allocation Policy and Scheme

- 2.1 In Shropshire the demand for affordable housing exceeds available supply. Therefore, this housing allocation policy and scheme seeks to meet the following aims:
 - Ensure people in the greatest housing need have the greatest opportunity to access suitable housing that best meets their needs;
 - To prevent and relieve homelessness;
 - To make best use of the Council's and housing association stock;
 - To help the Council meet statutory and strategic aims;
 - To help contribute to the development of sustainable communities; and
 - To allow for the greatest degree of choice possible in the allocation of affordable housing.
- 2.2 Whilst this Policy is intended to be comprehensive, the Council recognises that it is not possible to cover every eventuality. In special cases with exceptional needs, the Council has the discretion to award additional priority and approve offers of accommodation taking into consideration all factors relevant to the application.

⁴ With the exception of Homes England grant funded shared ownership properties on non-exception sites

3. Eligibility

- 3.1 Applicants ineligible under Government regulations will not be eligible to be accepted onto the Housing Register. Eligibility is a question of immigration status. The rules regarding eligibility are complex and subject to regular changes in immigration law. Applicants who are not British citizens can request further information from the Council before making an application.
- 3.2 Any applicant who has been excluded from the Housing Register on the grounds of ineligibility will be given written notice of the decision and the reasons for it and advise of their right of appeal (see section 40).

4. Qualification Criteria

- 4.1 The Council will usually only accept applications to the Housing Register who are in housing need. Housing need qualifying criteria is set out in Bands 1 to 6 in Appendix A.

Local connection

- 4.2 The Council will usually only accept applications to the Housing Register from an applicant with a local connection to the Shropshire Council area. Local connection means that the applicant or a person who might reasonably be expected to reside with them either:
- Is normally resident within the local authority area of Shropshire; or
 - Has a local connection with the area by virtue of family association or secure employment.
- 4.3 Normally resident means resident in accommodation for a period of at least one year immediately prior to an application being made. This does not include being detained in prison or resident in a bail hostel. Persons occupying holiday or other temporary accommodation (for example, hospital or student housing) are not considered as normally resident unless they can demonstrate that this has been their sole or main home for a period of at least five years.
- 4.4 Family association normally means that the applicant has parents, grandparents, adult children, grandchildren, a brother or a sister currently living in Shropshire and has been normally resident within Shropshire for at least five years. In exceptional circumstances and where support is required family association may include extended family, each case will be determined on its own merits. Applicants will be required to provide proof of local connection by virtue of family association.

4.5 Secure employment means the employment or self-employment of the applicant or an adult member of the household for at least one year's duration and at least 20 hours per week. Where this employment has been for less than one year at the time of application or is on a zero-hour contract, evidence will be required to confirm the nature of the employment.

4.6 Local connection requirements will not apply to the following applicants:

- members of the Armed Forces and former Service personnel, where the application is made within five years of discharge;
- bereaved spouses and civil partners of members of the Armed Forces leaving Services Family Accommodation following the death of their spouse or partner;
- serving or former members of the Reserve Forces who need to move because of serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service;
- existing social housing tenants in England who have a reasonable preference because of a need to move to Shropshire to avoid hardship and if they work or have been offered work in Shropshire and have a genuine intention to take up that offer;
- persons who need to move from another local authority area to escape domestic abuse; and
- persons who need to move from another local authority area to escape other forms of violence or harm.

Unacceptable behaviour

4.7 Applicants will not be accepted on to the Housing Register where it is decided that the applicant, or a member of the household with whom the applicant would usually reside, has behaved unacceptably.

4.8 Examples of unacceptable behaviour could include:

- Significant⁵ rent or mortgage arrears or breach of tenancy obligations where no attempt is being made to repay the debt or remedy the breach;
- Cautioned or convicted of a nuisance, anti-social or violent offence;
- Subject to an injunction under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 or an Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) or equivalent;

⁵ For example, those with amounts exceeding £1,000 may be disqualified from the Housing Register until the amount has been reduced to below £1,000 or consecutive payments for 26 weeks have been made, unless there are agreed extenuating special circumstances.

- Conduct likely to cause serious nuisance, annoyance or harassment to neighbours;
- Using accommodation or allowing it to be used for immoral or illegal purposes;
- Fraudulent or duplicitous behaviour to obtain accommodation;
- Serious damage to or neglect of a property by the tenant or other occupants; or
- Committing violent or anti-social behaviour, or domestic, racist or other abuse.

4.9 Cases will be considered on an individual basis. The following criteria will be applied in determining whether an applicant (this includes existing Council tenants) is excluded from being able to go on the Housing Register for re-housing because of their unacceptable behaviour:

- There must be reliable evidence of unacceptable behaviour;
- In normal circumstances the behaviour concerned should have occurred within the last two years. In cases of a more serious nature, for example those involving criminal prosecution, a longer timescale may be appropriate; and
- There must be reasonable grounds for believing that the behaviour could continue or be repeated. For example, the applicant may have issued threats or there might be a history of repeat offending.

4.10 The decision as to whether to exclude an applicant from the Housing Register on the basis of unacceptable behaviour, be this due to the applicant's behaviour or the behaviour of a member of the household with whom the applicant would usually reside, will be made by the Shropshire Council's Head of Housing, Resettlement and Independent Living Protection.

Financial and Needs Assessment

4.11 Applicants with a household income of more than £50,000 gross per annum or savings and assets (including equity in a property) of more than £200,000 or both will usually be considered as not being in housing need and will not qualify to be on the housing register. Lump sums awarded to Armed Forces service personnel injured or disabled in action will be disregarded.

4.12 The financial assessment will have regard to the financial resources of the applicant and the cost and availability of alternative suitable accommodation. Such applicants who can demonstrate that they have health or support needs that they are unable to meet in the open market will be considered on their individual merits by the Head of Housing, Resettlement and Independent Living. Examples include:

- an applicant who is eligible for a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) to fund major adaptations to their existing home, where it is more cost-effective for the authority to re-house the applicant in accommodation appropriate to their housing need;
- an older person is committed to paying for care or support costs in order to remain living independently; and
- an applicant who requires specific accommodation to meet their housing needs but this accommodation is not available in the private sector, other than that provided by the STAR Housing or a housing association.

4.13 As with all other decisions made under this policy, any applicant who is deemed to have such resources as not to qualify to be accepted onto the Housing Register will have a right of appeal against that decision. Please see Appeals and Complaints Section (section 40).

4.14 Where an application to the Housing Register would not otherwise be accepted on the grounds of failing to meet the qualification criteria, as the Local Housing Authority, the Council will retain the discretion in exceptional circumstances where it is considered necessary to dis-apply the qualification criteria and / or place the applicant in any other Band as set out in this policy.

4.15 Any applicant who has been excluded from the Housing Register on the grounds of failing to meet the qualification criteria will be given written notice of the decision and the reasons for it and advised of their right of appeal (see section 40).

5. Transitional arrangements

5.1 Subject paragraphs 4.12 and 4.13, existing applicants on the Housing Register with a household income of more than £50,000 gross per annum or savings and assets (including equity in a property) of more than £200,000 or both, who have a local connection to Shropshire (as set out above), will be considered to be able to meet their housing need through the open market and placed in Band 7.

6. Age of Applicants

6.1 Applicants will normally be at least 18 years of age. In the case of 16 and 17 year olds applicants must be care leavers or homeless / threatened with homelessness, and not deemed to be a child in need following an investigation by Social Services under section 17 of the Children Act 1989⁶. Applicants under the age of 18 must have a recognised support package and financial guarantor or guardian before being accepted on to the register.

⁶ In this instance an application will be made by Social Services on behalf of the child in needs and a support package will be in place.

7. Homeless Applicants

- 7.1 Shropshire Council has a duty to secure suitable accommodation for homeless households who are eligible for assistance, in priority need, have a local connection and who are not intentionally homeless, in Council, other Registered Provider (housing associations registered by the Regulator of Social Housing) or suitable private rented accommodation. Discharge of the main homelessness duty to the private rented will be made in line with the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012.
- 7.2 It is important that persons who are homeless or threatened with being made homeless seek advice from Shropshire Council, or their local council, at the earliest opportunity.

8. Transfer Applicants

- 8.1 Existing tenants of Shropshire Council will be subject to the provisions of the Allocation Policy. Tenants wishing to transfer will not normally be considered for re-housing until they have been resident in their present home for one year.

9. Applying to the Housing Register

- 9.1 Persons wishing to register must complete an Application Form. The application can either be completed using a paper application form or online through the Shropshire Council website. Paper applications can be printed from the website and are available by post from Shropshire Council's Customer Contact Points.
- 9.2 Applicants are advised to check carefully the full postage has been paid when sending applications or correspondence, as Shropshire Council cannot collect underpaid mail.
- 9.3 The Application will then be assessed by Shropshire Council. Applicants will receive a written response confirming whether their application has been accepted. If accepted, the applicant will be provided with written notification of the Band in which they have been placed and given a registration date.
- 9.4 Where an applicant is not satisfied with the way their application has been assessed or determined they have a right of appeal (see Section 40).

10. Verification

- 10.1 On completing the Application Form applicants give permission for Shropshire Council to verify (check) the information that they have provided or will re-provide prior to any offer being made or any

change of circumstance. This includes permission to contact other Council departments, for example Council Tax and Social Services, and other people or organisations such as previous and current landlords, the UK Border Agency and the police. Applicants will not be made an offer of accommodation until all information requested has been provided and verified. Appendix C lists the information applicants are required to submit to verify their housing application at both application and offer stage.

10.2 Shropshire Council may share information as appropriate where this is legally required and when providing nominations to housing associations and private landlords.

11. False statements and withholding information

11.1 Ensuring all the information provided is true and accurate is the responsibility of the applicant. Verification checks will be undertaken at the point of offer to confirm the information on the application form is correct and up to date.

11.2 It is a criminal offence for applicants knowingly or recklessly to give false information; or to knowingly withhold information. It can carry a fine and in separate civil proceedings can lead to the loss of any accommodation let as a result of Shropshire Council relying on that false information.

11.3 Applicants are required to sign paper applications and certify online applications confirming the details they have given are correct to the best of their knowledge.

11.4 This Scheme falls within the provisions of Part VI of the Housing Act 1996. Section 171 of the Act states:

- (1) A person commits an offence if, in connection with the exercise by a local housing authority of their functions under this Part:
 - (a) they knowingly or recklessly make a statement which is false in material particular, or
 - (b) they knowingly withhold information which the authority has reasonably required them to give in connection with the exercise of those functions.
- (2) A person guilty of an offence under this section is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale.

11.5 Consequently, where Section 171 applies, Shropshire Council may bring a prosecution which if successful could result in a fine of an unlimited amount.

11.6 Where false information is found to have been given, the applicant may also be disqualified from the Housing Register on the grounds of unacceptable behaviour. Where false information has resulted in the applicant obtaining accommodation, the relevant Landlord may bring possession proceedings for recovery of the property.

12. Worsening of Circumstances

12.1 Applicants must not deliberately worsen their circumstances in order to obtain greater preference on the Housing Register. If an applicant is found to have deliberately worsened their circumstances they will either be placed in the Band corresponding to their circumstances at the time of their original application or may be disqualified from the Housing Register on the grounds of unacceptable behaviour.

12.2 Examples of deliberate worsening of circumstances might include:

- Selling a property that is affordable and suitable for an applicant's needs;
- Disposing or gifting assets, including property;
- Moving from a secure Assured Tenancy to insecure, overcrowded accommodation, where there is no good reason for this move; and
- Where there is evidence that it was reasonable for an applicant to have remained in their original accommodation.

12.3 Where an applicant has little or no control over their move to alternative accommodation, this will not be considered as a deliberate worsening of circumstances.

13. Change in Circumstances

13.1 If an applicant's circumstances change Shropshire Council must be informed straight away or as soon as is reasonably practicable. Examples of changes include change of address or change in family size.

13.2 If an applicant's circumstances change they may cease to be eligible for inclusion on the Housing Register, and their application will be disqualified. They will be informed if this is the case and advised of any right of appeal (see Section 40).

14. Statutory Requirements

14.1 Under the Housing Act 1996 Shropshire Council has to ensure that when allocating and nominating to housing accommodation **reasonable preference** is given to the following groups:

- people who are homeless within the meaning of Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 (including those who are intentionally homeless and those not in priority need);
- people who are owed a duty by any housing authority under the Housing Act 1996 sections 190(2), 193(2) or 195(2) (or under section 65(2) or 68(2) of the Housing Act 1985) or who are occupying accommodation secured by any such authority under section 192(3);
- people occupying insanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions;
- people who need to move on medical or welfare grounds, including grounds relating to a disability; and
- people who need to move to a particular locality in the district of the authority, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship (to themselves or to others).

14.2 The Housing Act 1996 also requires that housing authorities must give **additional preference** to the following categories of applicants who fall within one or more of the reasonable preference categories and who have urgent housing needs:

- former members of the Armed Forces⁷
- serving members of the Armed Forces who need to move because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service;
- bereaved spouses and civil partners of members of the Armed Forces leaving Services Family Accommodation following the death of their spouse or partner; and
- serving or former members of the Reserve Forces who need to move because of serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service.

14.3 Those applicants who are in the above categories and are placed in Bands 1 to 6 and are considered to have urgent housing needs will be given additional priority so that they are considered for re-housing ahead of other applicants in their respective Band.

15. The Banding System

15.1 The Allocations Policy is based on six Bands with specific qualifying criteria (see Appendix A for more details). Each applicant's housing need and other circumstances are assessed on the information provided and the applicant is placed in the **highest** Band their circumstances allow. Within each Band applicants are ranked in date order from when they were registered into that Band.

⁷ Usually where the application is made within five years of discharge.

16. Statement of Choice

- 16.1 Shropshire Council is committed to offering the greatest choice possible in the allocation of affordable housing in the county, whilst ensuring that housing is allocated to those with the greatest need.
- 16.2 There will be certain situations where choice cannot be offered in the allocation of housing, such as when the Council needs to make a direct let as a matter of urgency. These circumstances are detailed within the scheme.
- 16.3 With the exception of these limited circumstances, housing will only be allocated to applicants who apply for a specific property, and all applicants have the opportunity to bid for properties they are entitled to be considered for, having regard to household size and other eligibility criteria.

17. How the Scheme Operates

- 17.1 All properties managed by STAR Housing that become available for letting and all housing association properties where the Council has nomination rights will be advertised through choice-based lettings. Housing associations and private landlords are able to advertise other properties where nomination rights do not apply. The scheme operates on a weekly property cycle from a Wednesday to the following Tuesday. The exact rent, service charge, for sale price, tenancy type and length of tenancy will be clearly advertised on the property details.
- 17.2 Those applicants who have been accepted onto the Housing Register can then bid (apply) for properties that are advertised. Applicants able to apply (bid) for one property each cycle. When the bidding period has closed the advertised property will be offered to the bidder in the highest Band for whom the property is suitable and who has been within that Band for the longest period of time, unless otherwise provided by this Policy.
- 17.3 In the event that the bidder does not want to accept the property then it will be offered to the bidder in the same Band who has been waiting the second longest and then so on. Only when bidders in the highest Band have been considered, will the those in the next highest Band be offered the property.
- 17.4 When a property is allocated, notification will be given on the Shropshire Council website identifying the Band of the successful applicant and their registration date.

18. Bedroom entitlement

- 18.1 Where possible, adverts will show the number of bedrooms available and number of people they are suitable for to enable eligibility to be exactly matched, for example, three bedroom five persons. Adverts will also show if any restrictions apply to the type of household that can apply.
- 18.2 Those applying for properties should ensure their income, including housing and welfare benefits, is sufficient to fully cover all the rent and charges associated with the accommodation.
- 18.3 The number of bedrooms required for each household is calculated in accordance with age, sex, marital status composition and the relationship of the members to one another. A separate bedroom is required for each married or cohabitating couple, for any other person aged 16 years or over, for each pair of children aged 0 to 15 years of the same sex, and for each pair of children under 10 years of the same or opposite sex. If that is not possible, he or she is counted as requiring a separate bedroom, as is any unpaired child under the age of 10 years. Additional bedroom/s required because of a medical condition/s will be considered as part of the medical assessment procedure.
- 18.4 Appendix D gives examples of what size and type of property an applicant can usually expect to be offered, therefore, should bid for.

19. Supported accommodation

- 19.1 Applicants can indicate whether they want to be considered for supported accommodation on the application form but will usually be offered one only if they meet the following criteria:
- Older persons' sheltered or independent living accommodation – applicants aged 55 or over with support needs. Applicants will be expected to sign-up to a support package.
 - Older persons' extra care sheltered accommodation – applicants aged 55 or over with support and/or care needs. Applicants require a referral from a social care manager to be considered for this type of housing. Applicants will be expected to sign-up to a support and care package.
 - Other supported housing - applicants must meet the requirements set out in each scheme's eligibility criteria. Applicants will usually require a referral from a social care manager to be considered for this type of housing. Applicants will be expected to sign-up to a support and / or care package as appropriate.
- 19.2 Bungalows will usually only be offered to applicants who have poor health and/or a disability who require accommodation on one level.

- 19.3 Other properties may be designated, for a limited period of time, for applicants who fall into a particular age category to ensure the continued sustainability of a particular block or area of housing. These may be subject to local lettings policies (see below).

20. Support / Care Packages

- 20.1 Some applicants (such as care leavers, and people with serious mental illness, dementia, or learning disabilities) will only be eligible for an offer of accommodation once it is confirmed that they have a recognised support/care package in place. This support/care package need not be provided through Social Services, but could include other forms of support, for example from family or friends. The support/care package will be reconfirmed before an offer of accommodation is made to ensure that applicants are supported to live successfully in their new home.

21. Advice and assistance

- 21.1 Shropshire Council is unable to provide personal appointments. However, staff are able to signpost applicants to other sources of advice and assistance including those of dedicated teams and organisations throughout Shropshire. In particular, assistance will be provided to anyone who may have difficulty participating due to disability, learning disability, illness, age, not speaking English as a first language, or any other reason that might make it harder for them to fully participate within the scheme. Where applicants are unable to submit bids themselves an assisted bidding process can be offered.

22. Information about the Allocation Policy and Scheme

- 22.1 Anyone who wishes is entitled to a free summary of the Allocation Policy and Scheme, which can be obtained from Shropshire Council. A copy of this document is available to be downloaded from the Shropshire Council website.
- 22.2 Applicants to the Housing Register are also entitled to request details of information that has been used to assess their application. Requests must be submitting in writing.
- 22.3 When each property advertised has been successfully allocated, the banding and registration date of the successful applicant will be made available on the website. This information should be sufficient for applicants to determine their prospects of success in obtaining housing, and to estimate how long they are likely to have to wait to obtain such housing.

23. Local lettings plans and policies

23.1 Local Letting Plans are usually introduced to:

- Balance communities to achieve sustainable neighbourhoods;
- Deliver specific local strategic outcomes; and
- Due to planning conditions.

23.2 Affordable housing dwellings may be subject to special planning conditions or legal restrictions applied through Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) specifying local occupancy or employment conditions on who is able to live in the accommodation. These conditions are usually found in rural settlements and aim to ensure that applicants on the Housing Register who have a local connection with a specific parish or defined area are given priority for rehousing, over and above those who do not have that connection. Each Section 106 document will set out the specific detail of the Local Lettings Policy.

23.3 Where a Local Letting Plan or Policy is in place, priority will normally be given to applicants who directly meet the criteria of the Plan. Details of each Local Letting Plan or Policy will be available on request from the Council. Advertisements for properties included in the Local Letting Plan will specify the required criteria.

24. Letting privately rented accommodation

24.1 Private landlords (this does not include housing associations registered with the Regulator of Social Housing) who offer affordable housing to households on the Housing Register may use additional criteria when selecting prospective tenants. The use of a Private Landlord's Letting Plan must be agreed with Shropshire Council and referred to in the property advertisement. The Plan must also be available to applicants on request.

25. Sensitive lets

25.1 Shropshire Council and its ALMO, STAR Housing, may from time to time identify specific properties for Sensitive Let. This means specific criteria will be applied to individual homes to achieve wider objectives. Where a Sensitive Let is identified, priority may be given to applicants who directly meet the required criteria. Advertisements for properties defined as Sensitive Lets will specify the required criteria.

26. Direct lets

26.1 Shropshire Council and its ALMO, STAR Housing, may from time to time need to make a Direct Let of a property to an applicant in

exceptional or urgent circumstances, for example to facilitate or maintain essential support arrangements, or for an applicant who has very specific housing requirements. Properties identified for a Direct Let will be advertised in the normal way but will not be available for bids.

27. Adapted properties

27.1 Properties which have been adapted to meet the needs of people with disabilities will be identified when advertised. Priority will normally be given to people requiring the adaptations provided.

28. Offers of accommodation

28.1 Applicants have a responsibility to ensure their contact details are up to date including, change of address, contact telephone numbers and email addresses. Shropshire Council publishes a list of supporting information required at point of offer which applicants are expected to have available immediately for verification. In most instances offers of accommodation will be made by telephone and applicants will be given three working days to respond. If applicants do not respond within this timescale, the offer may be withdrawn.

28.2 Where the offer of accommodation is to an applicant where a statutory homeless duty is owed by Shropshire Council, they will be given three working days for applicants to respond. If no response is received the Landlord will notify the Housing Options Team and agree whether to withdraw the offer.

28.3 Those applicants, with the exception of those with a homeless duty, who have refused or have failed to make contact on four or more occasions within a twelve-month period when suitable offers of accommodation have been made through the Allocation Scheme, will be deferred and therefore be declined further offers for a period of up to six months. The Council will write to the applicant and inform them of the reason as to why they have been deferred.

28.4 Landlords will make formal offers of accommodation in writing, either by letter or email.

29. Medical assessment procedure

29.1 Shropshire Council will assess and verify medical need/s which are directly affected by the applicant's accommodation and where a move to more suitable accommodation is needed.

29.2 Information is taken from the application with any supporting evidence to determine if there is a medical need and the level of this need. In exceptional circumstances, an independent medical assessment may be sought.

30. Joint applications

30.1 Joint applications can be made by:

- A married couple;
- A civil partnership couple;
- Partners (including same sex couples)⁸;
- A parent with a child aged 21 years or over; and
- Siblings.

30.2 Where a sole application becomes a joint application, the original or earliest registration date of the two will apply. Should the parties of the joint application then wish to separate their applications, the respective dates at which they each separately joined will then apply.

30.3 Notwithstanding the above joint applications, joint tenancies will not usually be issued to parent and a child aged 21 years or over or to siblings.

31. People in prison

31.1 Applications will be accepted from those currently in prison provided eligibility and qualification criteria are met. Shropshire Council works with a range of agencies to prepare people for release from prison and to prevent homelessness. While preparation for release may begin sometime prior to release, applicants should be mindful that bids made one month or more before the release date will not normally be considered.

31.2 Upon release an update application will be required and if applicable liaison with any support workers and agencies.

31.3 Emergency cases will be referred to Shropshire Council's Housing Options Team.

32. Pregnancy

32.1 Where a household member is pregnant, the pregnancy will only be considered once a medical certificate such as a MATB1 is received. Until the birth and the sex of the child or children can be confirmed the bedroom entitlement assumption will be set at the minimum number according to the above criteria.

⁸ This does not include friends.

33. Access to children

33.1 In the case of divorced or separated parents / guardians, a child will typically be expected to reside with one parent / guardian as their main residence. Unless otherwise stated in a legal document, the other parent / guardian will not receive any bedroom entitlement for access visits.

34. Fostering and adoption

34.1 Where a household has formal evidence that, subject to a suitable property becoming available, approval would be given to foster or adopt a child or children, subject to confirmation from a Social Worker, each child would usually be entitled to a separate bedroom. Verification of fostering and/or adoption arrangements will be carried out at point of offer of accommodation.

35. University / full-time study away from home

35.1 Household members studying away from home in full-time courses will be considered in bedroom entitlement unless they are the main applicant.

36. Overnight carers

36.1 Where a household has formal evidence that an overnight carer or team of carers is needed three or more nights per normal week, a carer shall be included in the bedroom eligibility calculation.

37. Applications from employees, board members, councillors and their relatives

37.1 Applications are monitored carefully to ensure that all allocations are made in line with this policy and no favour is given to those with close links to Shropshire Council, STAR Housing or housing associations with housing stock in Shropshire.

38. Property adverts

38.1 Available properties are published each week. The scheme operates on a weekly property cycle from a Wednesday to the following Tuesday with applicants able to bid (apply) for one property each cycle.

38.2 Those applicants with email addresses will be sent a weekly link to available properties. Those applicants who have no internet access, with no one able to bid on their behalf, can request that the Council undertakes bidding on their behalf.

39. Equal Opportunities Statement

39.1 Shropshire Council believes that it is a fundamental right for everyone to be treated fairly, with respect and dignity; in the implementation of this policy it will ensure that this right is promoted and upheld.

40. Appeals and complaints

40.1 Any applicant to Shropshire Council's Housing Register has a right to make an appeal if they disagree with a decision made by the Council, such as disqualifying them from registration, the banding awarded and / or make a complaint if they believe Shropshire Council has done acted incorrectly.

40.2 For decisions made by Shropshire Council the applicant should appeal / complain in writing to the Head of Housing, Resettlement and Independent Living. An applicant can also appoint an advocate and, once appointed, Shropshire Council will deal directly with that advocate.

40.3 There are two stages to the appeal / complaints process:

Stage 1

The appeal must be made in writing within 21 calendar days of the date of the decision letter, stating the grounds for the appeal. The appeal will be considered by the Head of Housing, Resettlement and Independent Living or nominated representative, and a decision will normally be given within 21 calendar days. In complex cases it may not be possible to give a decision in 21 days and may take longer. Where this is the case the applicant will be notified in writing prior to expiry of the 21 day period.

Stage 2

If the applicant is unhappy with the decision made by the Head of Housing, Resettlement and Independent Living they may request that a further review be carried out by the Director of People or their nominated representative. This request must be made in writing within 7 days. Again, a decision will normally be given in 21 days, subject to extension where necessary.

40.4 If still unhappy with the outcome of the appeal, the applicant may make a complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman.

40.5 A copy of the full appeals and complaints procedure is available from Shropshire Council.

40.6 Where an offer of accommodation has been made to discharge the main homelessness duty, this will be subject to a different review process.

41. Monitoring and Review

41.1 Shropshire Council monitors all allocations and reports this in a 'Quarterly Monitoring and Statistics Report' which is published and available to download from the Shropshire Council website.

Appendix A: Bandings

All qualifying applicants will be allocated to one of the following Bands according to their particular circumstances.

Band 1:

Band 1A

Homeless households who are owed the main duty and are currently accommodated in emergency accommodation and other emergency cases:

- Households who are homeless and are owed the main duty including when they have become homeless or the Relief Duty has come to an end and they have been assessed as being eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless, in priority need and have local connection and are currently accommodated in emergency accommodation provided by the Council.
- Other households in emergency housing need where the authority has a statutory duty to provide housing.

Band 1B

Homeless households who are owed the main duty and where Council tenants need to move due to major works or demolition:

- Households who are homeless and are owed the main duty including when they have become homeless or the Relief Duty has come to an end and they have been assessed as being eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless, in priority need and have local connection.
- Where Shropshire Council require tenants to move to alternative accommodation to allow major works to be undertaken (such as modernisation or demolition).

Where households are homeless and owed the main duty Shropshire Council's Housing Options Team will bid on applicants' behalf for each suitable property that becomes available. When a successful bid is made for a property the applicant will be notified of this and, subject to rights of review under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended), this will constitute an offer of housing under Part VI as a discharge of the Council's homelessness duty.

Band 2:

Homeless households who are owed the Relief Duty, urgent medical need, hospital discharge; care leavers, serious disrepair and persons who are fleeing domestic abuse or other forms of violence or harm:

- Applicants who are homeless and are owed the Relief Duty and would be owed or likely to be owed the Main duty when the Relief

Duty came to an end, because they are or are likely to be in priority need and unintentionally homeless.

- Urgent medical need where the applicant's (or member of their household who is moving with them) condition is currently directly affected by their accommodation and an urgent move is needed to have a positive effect on their medical condition, or where as a result of their condition their current accommodation is not suitable to their needs. An investigation will be carried out. For Urgent Medical Need it is generally expected that the property cannot reasonably be occupied as the applicant is either unable to use or has serious difficulty using an essential part of the property, for example, the WC.
- Applicants who have been released from hospital and cannot return to the property. Severity of medical illness does not determine the housing banding. Medical evidence will be required.
- Where a young person who has been looked after, fostered or accommodated by the Local Authority, is engaging fully with support provided, a duty to rehouse accepted by Shropshire Council and deemed to be within 6 months of being ready for independent living.
- Serious disrepair refers to the condition of the current accommodation. This will apply where the Council has deemed the applicant's home to have the presence of Category 1 Hazards, Bands A - C under the Housing Health & Safety Rating System and these Hazards cannot be resolved or reduced to a Category 2 Hazard within 6 months.
- Applicants who are fleeing domestic abuse or other forms of violence or harm. All applications will be taken seriously and will be fully assessed in conjunction with partner agencies and landlords.

Unless specified otherwise in this policy, Band 2 will normally be valid for eight weeks from date of award. If accommodation has not been secured in this period there will be a review carried out. If no suitable properties have become available during the period time in Band 2 will be extended for a further period, usually six weeks. If the applicant has been bidding for suitable properties but has not been successful, the status may be extended. If however, the applicant has failed to bid for properties, or has been bidding for unsuitable properties, the reasons for this will be determined and if there are valid reasons the time in Band 2 may be extended, but where there are insufficient reasons, the Band will be withdrawn and the applicant will be reassessed accordingly.

Band 3:

Resettlement, homelessness prevention, serious medical need, use and occupation, over-crowding, under-occupation and members of the armed forces to be discharged within six months:

- Resettlement - applicants have been assessed as ready to move from hostel or other temporary supported accommodation into settled accommodation. Where appropriate, arrangements will be made for tenancy support.
- Applicants who are threatened with homelessness and are owed the Prevention Duty and would be likely to be owed the Main duty if both the Prevention Duty and any Relief Duty that followed on were to end unsuccessfully and they would be, or would likely to be, found to be in priority need and unintentionally homeless.
- Serious medical need will apply where the applicant's (or member of their household who is moving with them) condition is currently directly affected by their accommodation and a move is needed to have a positive effect on their condition, or where as a result of their condition their current accommodation is detrimental to health and wellbeing. An investigation will be carried out.
- Use and occupation - following the death of the tenant, occupiers of Council dwellings who either do not have succession rights or a non-statutory succession cannot be granted as the current property would be under-occupied or considered unsuitable. Following notice served by a tenant and an assignment cannot be granted to the remaining occupants.
- Overcrowding – assessments will be based on the bedroom entitlement at Appendix D. Lodgers will not be included in the assessment.
- Under-occupation by one or more bedrooms by a tenant of a Registered Provider where the property is in Shropshire.
- Where a member of the British Armed Forces is going to be discharged within 6 months or has been discharged but been unsuccessful in finding permanent suitable accommodation. If part of a couple separating, this criterion would not apply to their ex-partner's application. Those that have been dishonourably discharged will be considered individually based upon the circumstances and reasons for the discharge.

Band 4:

Need to give or receive support, moderate medical need, disrepair, overcrowding, excessive travel and homelessness:

- Give or receive support from close family members and / or move closer to local facilities. Where not having a move would result in serious detriment.

- Moderate medical need where the applicant's (or member of their household who is moving with them) condition is currently directly affected by their accommodation and a move is needed to have a positive effect on their condition, or where as a result of their condition their current accommodation is not suitable to their needs
- Disrepair where the Council has deemed the applicant's home to have the Presence of Category 2 Hazards, Band D under the Housing Health & Safety Rating System.
- Excessive travel, where applicants in, or due to be in, permanent full-time employment (20+ hours per week) are subject to excessive travel (over 1 hour each way).
- Homeless is where the Council accepts a household is homeless but to whom it does not owe a duty to secure settled accommodation because they are not considered to be in priority need or because they are intentionally homeless.

Band 5:

Sharing essential facilities, forced to live apart, above ground floor flat with child or pregnant, and key workers:

- Sharing essential facilities such as bathroom, toilet or kitchen with a separate household⁹.
- Family forced to live apart, where the family that has previously lived together find themselves in circumstances where it is impractical to reside in the same house due to financial, work or other commitments.
- The applicant has a child under ten or is pregnant and lives in a first floor flat or above.
- The applicant is considered by the Council to be a key worker.

Band 6:

Following a financial and need assessment, applicant would not be able to purchase or rent market priced housing within Shropshire which is suitable for their needs.

Band 7:

Following a financial and need assessment, applicants who would be able to purchase or rent market priced housing within Shropshire which is suitable for their needs.

⁹ Where the households sharing essential facilities are parents and their adult children this does not apply

Appendix B: Glossary and definition of terms

Allocation Policy and Scheme	This explains the rules that determine how Shropshire Council allocate and nominates to affordable housing properties.
Affordable Housing	Affordable housing comprises social and affordable rented accommodation and low-cost home ownership products [see NPPF]
Affordable Rents	Affordable rents set at up to 80% of local open market rents.
Bidding for a Property	The applicant's way of expressing an interest in being re-housed in that property
Choice-Based Lettings	More commonly known as CBL. A process used to advertise available properties and asking applicants to choose for themselves the properties they would like to be considered for.
Community Benefit	An allocation used to promote the best interests of the local community, detailing how the eligibility for a property departs from the standard criteria within the Allocation Policy.
Direct Let	Used in urgent situations where the Council directly allocates or nominates to a property.
Housing Register	The list of all those registered with Shropshire Council for affordable housing.
Key worker	Someone whose role provides an essential service deemed crucial to the economy and wellbeing of society, including, but not limited to, emergency responders and operators of critical infrastructure.
Local Letting Plans	Specifies how the qualification and eligibility for a property departs from the standard criteria within the Allocation Policy.
Main Duty	Where a homeless household is found by the local housing authority to be eligible for assistance, homeless but not intentionally so, in priority need and with a local connection they are owed the main duty of an offer of suitable accommodation.
Prevention Duty	If a homeless household is eligible for assistance and threatened with homelessness within 56 days, the

	local housing authority is required to work with them to prevent them becoming homeless.
Registered Providers	Housing organisations that are registered with the Regulator of Social Housing. Local authorities who own social housing stock are Registered Providers. Private Registered Providers are usually called Housing Associations.
Relief Duty	If a homeless household is eligible for assistance and is homeless, regardless of priority need, the local authority is required to take reasonable steps assist the household to obtain accommodation, this duty could last for up to 56 days.
Sensitive Let	Used for specific properties in the best interests of the local community.
Section 21 Notice	A formal document giving two months' notice on an Assured Shorthold Tenancy to vacate a property.
Section 106 Agreement	Some properties may be restricted under agreements pursuant to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), imposing conditions on who is eligible to be allocated / nominated, such as including a local connection requirement to a specific parish or area.
Shared Ownership	Where a person buys a proportion of a new home and pays rent on the remaining portion.
Statutory Homeless	A term that refers to people or families to whom a local housing authority has a duty to make an offer of suitable accommodation – this could be a council or housing association property or a twelve-month tenancy of private rented accommodation.

Appendix C: List of information required to verify an offer of accommodation

Local Connection

A copy of one of the following documents either from the applicant or from the close relative must be provided:

- Council tax bill
- Employment or contract of employment details
- Tenancy agreement

Without the documentation shown above, your local connection will not be verified.

Identification

- Passport sized photograph of applicant
- Original or certified copy of birth certificate or passport for applicant and for each household member included on the applicant's application
- Where applicable, proof of name change via Deed Poll
- Where applicable, original or certified copy of Marriage certificate

Housing

- A copy of Tenancy agreement
- A copy of Licence agreement
- A letter from friend or relative confirming the applicant's living arrangements - (letter should state date when the applicant moved in and number of bedrooms to which they have access)
- A current valuation of the applicant's home
- A copy of the applicant's latest mortgage statement
- Confirmation of Tied accommodation

Income

A copy of award letter or bank statements showing the following amounts:

- Employment Support Allowance
- Income Support
- Child Benefit
- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit
- Incapacity benefit
- DLA
- Carer's allowance

- Pension credit
- State Pension
- Occupational Pension
- Last 3 months or 5 weeks of payslips for each employment
- A copy of self-employed accounts

Appendix D: Size and type of properties eligibility criteria

It is expected that for working age applicants the size of property for which they are entitled is in line with the DWP bedroom standard, however if applicants can demonstrate that they are able to pay rent with or without recourse to Housing Benefit, they may be considered for a property with an additional bedroom, this being subject to availability.

If a person named on an application as being part of the household is aged 16 or over they are classed as a person who is not a child and, therefore, as needing their own bedroom.

Households will usually be able to choose the floor level on which they want to live (depending on property type) unless there is an assessed need for a particular floor level. For example, if priority for ground floor accommodation is recommended on medical grounds.

The criteria listed below will usually be used when deciding what property is suitable for a household.

Household	Properties usually considered suitable
Single person of working age ¹⁰	Room in shared house, bedsit or 1 bedroom flat
Single person over working age	Bedsit, 1 or 2 ¹¹ bedroom flat or bungalow
Couple both of working age	1 bedroom flat
Couple with one or both over working age	1 or 2 bedroom flat or bungalow
Pregnant woman with no other children	1 or 2 bedroom flat, maisonette or house
Family with one child	2 bedroom flat, maisonette or house
Family with two children aged under 10	2 bedroom flat, maisonette or house
Family with two children aged under 16 of the same sex	2 bedroom flat, maisonette or house
Family with two children of different sex, where one or both children are aged 10 or over	3 bedroom flat, maisonette or house
Family with three children	3 bedroom flat, maisonette or house
Family with four children	3 or 4 ¹² bedroom flat, maisonette or house

¹⁰ Working age includes anyone who is under the State Pension Credit age of the time

¹¹ Usually only following agreement from Social Services

¹² Depending on age and sex of children

Family with five or more children	4 or 5 ¹³ bedroom house
Household needing 2 bedrooms where all are adults	2 bedroom flat or maisonette

¹³ Depending on age and sex of children

Appendix E: List of Local Lettings Plans and Policies

Hanley Lane, Bayston Hill
Oak Meadow, Bishops Castle
Chapel Close, Bomere Heath
Rastick Close, Bridgnorth
Tasley Area, Bridgnorth
Wenlock Rise, Bridgnorth
Love Lane, Cleobury
Shrewsbury Road, Cockshut
Brook Close, Condover
The Leasowes, Ford
Bearcroft, Hinstock
Warren Court, Market Drayton
Orchid Meadow, Minsterley
Callaughton Lane, Much Wenlock
Castle Fields, Oswestry
Plas Ffynnon Way, Oswestry
Willow Gate, Castle Street, Oswestry
Wingate Way, Park Hall, Oswestry
Thomas Beddoes, Shifnal
Battlefields, Shrewsbury
Sweetlake Meadow, Shrewsbury
White Lodge, The Mount, Shrewsbury
Bower Farm, St Martins
Church Farm, Tilstock
Round Meadow, Wem
Saxon Fields, Wem
Pipegate, Woore

Appendix II: Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessment (ESHIA)

Initial Screening Record

A. Summary Sheet on Accountability and Actions

Name of proposed service change
<i>Revised housing allocations policy</i>

Name of lead officer carrying out the screening
Melanie Holland

Decision, review, and monitoring

Decision	Yes	No
Initial (part one) ESHIA Only?	✓	
Proceed to Full ESHIA or HIA (part two) Report?		✓

If completion of an initial or Part One assessment is an appropriate and proportionate action at this stage, please use the boxes above. If a Full or Part Two report is required, please move on to full report stage once you have completed this initial screening assessment as a record of the considerations which you have given to this matter.

Actions to mitigate negative impact or enhance positive impact of the service change in terms of equality, social inclusion, and health considerations
<p>The proposed changes to the housing allocations policy and scheme seek to ensure that all forms of social housing, this includes supported housing and low-cost home ownership products, are allocated to those persons in the greatest housing need. Therefore, seeking to ensure equality of opportunity and social equality is promoted through access to suitable housing to allow people to be able to participate in society and to ensure the provision of suitable housing for people's health and support needs will improve people's quality of life and reduce admissions to hospital and residential care. By having a policy which covers allocations and nominations to all forms of social housing and introducing local connection and financial assessment qualification criteria, this should result in not just housing been allocated to those in greatest housing need, but also provide strong evidence of need and</p>

demand, which will greatly assist the Council and its partners to enhance the positive impact of the policy change through the enabling and delivery of additional social housing.

Actions to review and monitor the impact of the service change in terms of equality, social inclusion, and health considerations

The draft revised policy and scheme will be subject to public consultation; once the finalised policy and scheme is agreed, part of the implementation process will involve contacting all existing applicants to advise them of the policy changes, applicants who are no longer qualify for an allocation or feel that they have less priority than previously have a right of appeal. Following the implementation of the revised policy it will be subject to ongoing monitoring, both in terms of allocations of Council owned stock and housing association compliance with nomination agreements, to ensure that those applicants in the greatest housing need are being allocated social housing. In addition, as a minimum, there will be quarterly monitoring of housing demand as evidenced by the housing register, in terms of first choice parish and type and size of property. This data will be used to development and asset management plans, so as to ensure that new and existing social housing meets need and reflects aspirations.

Associated ESHIAs

Following the end of the public consultation on the draft revised policy a second screening ESHIA will be undertaken.

Actions to mitigate negative impact, enhance positive impact, and review and monitor overall impacts in terms of any other considerations. This includes climate change considerations

This is the section in which to please outline any actions to mitigate negative or enhance positive impacts in terms of economic, environmental, or wider societal considerations, and actions to review and monitor the overall impact of the service change accordingly.

Climate change

As the housing allocations policy and scheme is purely concerned with allocations and nominations for existing social housing stock a climate change appraisal is not relevant.


Health and well being

Being able to access an affordable dwelling which meets a household's needs is essential to health and well-being. For example, this could be an allocation of a flat in an extra care sheltered scheme to an older person with disabilities, allowing them to be able to continue to have "their own front door" and live independently instead of moving into residential care or potentially being admitted to hospital due to a fall. Or instead providing a house which is affordable, of good quality and has security of tenure to a family threatened with homelessness, allowing them to create a home for their children and reducing the worry of a no fault eviction or being able to afford an increase in rent.

Economic and societal/wider community

By ensuring that those in the greatest housing need are allocated social housing, the benefits are not limited to improving the individual health and wellbeing of those allocated housing but can be much wider. For example, the provision of affordable housing can result in some being able to escape the "benefits trap" and take a job as a care assistant. Moreover, enabling someone with learning disabilities and autism to choose to live independently in supported housing, is essential to ensuring an inclusive society.

Scrutiny at Part One screening stage

People involved	Signatures	Date
<i>Lead officer carrying out the screening</i>		23 March 2022
<i>Any internal service area support*</i>		
<i>Any external support**</i>		

****This refers to other officers within the service area***

*****This refers to support external to the service but within the Council, e.g., the Ruralities and Equalities Specialist, the Feedback and Insight Team, performance data specialists, Climate Change specialists, and Public Health colleagues***

Sign off at Part One screening stage

Name	Signatures	Date
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Lead officer's name		
Accountable officer's name		

****This may either be the Head of Service or the lead officer***

B. Detailed Screening Assessment

Aims of the service change and description

The Council's existing allocation policy and scheme, "Shropshire Affordable Housing Allocation Policy and Scheme" was launched in 2014. This is a common housing register which uses choice based lettings (CBL) to allocate all Council owned stock (managed by its Arm's Length Management Organisation, STAR Housing) and void dwellings from partner Private Registered Providers. However, since 2014 there has been a sharp increase in housing costs in the private sector, resulting in all forms of social housing, including supported accommodation and local cost home ownership products becoming a very scarce and important resource. It is now become vital that the Council ensures that those applicants in the greatest need are allocated social and affordable housing which in recent years, due to the increase in housing costs in the private sector, has become a very important resource. Moreover, the policy review has been influenced by the strategic need to:

- Prevent and tackle homelessness, including reducing the pressure on temporary accommodation;
- Promote independent living and reduce admissions to residential care, by ensuring the best use of all tenures and types of social housing; and
- Enabling key workers on low incomes to be able to access affordable housing.

It is therefore proposed to move to where the Council has an allocations policy for applications to the Housing Register; the allocation of the housing stock owned by the Council, which is managed by STAR Housing; and nominations to Private Register Providers for social and affordable rented and low cost home ownership (with the exception of

Homes England grant funded shared-ownership dwellings) properties and, in some circumstances, to private landlords.

The CBL process would remain in place, but formal nominations arrangements would be introduced, with all large Private Registered Providers to require to agree to nomination rights to 100% of allocations to new build housing, with nominations to re-lets and all existing stock be agreed on an individual basis. It should be noted that the Housing Act 1996 refers to the need for Private Registered Providers to co-operate with local housing authorities to offer housing to people in priority need and who are homeless. In addition, Housing Corporation Regulatory Circular, 02/03 Regulation, February 2003 refers to nomination agreements between local authorities and housing associations (Private Registered Providers) and how these should be for a minimum of 50% void dwellings on re-let.

To ensure the Council is meeting local housing and support needs of those who are unable to meet their needs through the market, the draft revised policy contains qualification criteria relating to local connection, a financial assessment and unacceptable behaviour.

With statutory exceptions relating to the Armed Forces, ex-service personnel and existing social tenants moving to employment in Shropshire, the proposed local connection is either residency (have lived in Shropshire for the last year), close family living in Shropshire, or being employed in Shropshire.

It is proposed that applicants who would be able to purchase or rent market priced housing within Shropshire which is suitable for their needs would not qualify to be on the housing register. The draft policy proposes that the threshold for being able to access accommodation in the open market is an income of £50,000 gross per annum or savings and assets (including equity in a property) of more than £200,000 or both. However, as a transitional arrangement, existing applicants who are assessed as able to purchase or rent market housing within Shropshire which is suitable for their needs, would be able to remain on the register but be placed in the lowest band.

Although the existing policy disqualifies persons on the grounds of unacceptable behaviour, this is based on a very stringent test. The draft revised policy recognises that there can be no blanket restrictions as each case needs to be considered on its merits, however, sets out a list of example scenarios where an applicant could be disqualified from an allocation of housing.

The draft policy also increases the number of bands from four to seven. Thus allowing for greater differentiation in prioritising categories of applicants are required to be given reasonable preference under the Housing Act 1996 and also recognising the needs of those applicants

who may not be in a reasonable preference group but are still in housing need and are a strategic priority for the Council, for example, key workers in low-paid employment.

In addition, by the policy applying to all forms and tenures of social housing and introducing qualifying criteria relating to local connection and financial resources, this means that there is greater clarity on the evidence to support affordable and specialist housing development.

Intended audiences and target groups for the service change

The proposed changes to the allocations policy and scheme will affect applicants currently on the housing register and future applicants wishing to join. Although there is a proposal for a local connection and financial assessment qualification criteria, the revised scheme will encompass all forms of social housing, including supported housing and low-cost home ownership, so for those qualifying applicants there is greater opportunity of being allocated housing.

In addition, moving from a common housing register to the Council making allocations and nominations from a local authority housing register, will also change the way the Council works with housing associations. However, this approach is considered a standard model for allocating social housing, especially in areas of scarce affordable housing and high housing need.

Elected Members are also likely to be affected by the proposed changes as they may be contacted by applicants.

Evidence used for screening of the service change

The evidence used for developing the proposed changes to the allocation policy and scheme includes: homelessness data (including the numbers of households in temporary accommodation); housing need and demand data from the existing housing register; housing market data; research on key workers; statutory guidance on social housing allocations for local housing authorities in England; and good practice.

Specific consultation and engagement with intended audiences and target groups for the service change

The proposed eight-week public consultation will include formal consultation with all 32 Private Registered Providers operating in Shropshire and media publicity to raise awareness with Council tenants and existing and potential applicants.

Initial equality impact assessment by grouping (Initial health impact assessment is included below)

Please rate the impact that you perceive the service change is likely to have on a group, through stating this in the relevant column.

Please state if it is anticipated to be neutral (no impact) and add any extra notes that you think might be helpful for readers.

Protected Characteristic groupings and other groupings in Shropshire	High negative impact <i>Part Two ESIIA required</i>	High positive impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>	Medium positive or negative impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>	Low positive, negative, or neutral impact (please specify) <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>
<u>Age</u> (please include children, young people, young people leaving care, people of working age, older people. Some people may belong to more than one group e.g., a child or young person for whom there are safeguarding concerns e.g., an older person with disability)			✓	
<u>Disability</u> (please include mental health conditions and syndromes; hidden disabilities including autism and Crohn's disease; physical and sensory disabilities or impairments; learning disabilities;			✓	

Multiple Sclerosis; cancer; and HIV)				
<u>Gender re-assignment</u> (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				✓
<u>Marriage and Civil Partnership</u> (please include associated aspects: caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				✓
<u>Pregnancy and Maternity</u> (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				✓
<u>Race</u> (please include ethnicity, nationality, culture, language, Gypsy, Traveller)				✓
<u>Religion and belief</u> (please include Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Judaism, Nonconformists; Rastafarianism;				✓

Shinto, Sikhism, Taoism, Zoroastrianism, and any others)				
<u>Sex</u> (this can also be viewed as relating to gender. Please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				✓
<u>Sexual Orientation</u> (please include associated aspects: safety; caring responsibility; potential for bullying and harassment)				✓
<u>Other: Social Inclusion</u> (please include families and friends with caring responsibilities; households in poverty; people for whom there are safeguarding concerns; people you consider to be vulnerable; people with health inequalities; refugees and asylum seekers; rural communities; veterans and serving members of the armed			✓	

forces and their families)				
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Initial health and wellbeing impact assessment by category

Please rate the impact that you perceive the service change is likely to have with regard to health and wellbeing, through stating this in the relevant column.

Please state if it is anticipated to be neutral (no impact) and add any extra notes that you think might be helpful for readers.

Health and wellbeing: individuals and communities in Shropshire	High negative impact <i>Part Two HIA required</i>	High positive impact	Medium positive or negative impact	Low positive negative or neutral impact (please specify)
Will the proposal have a <i>direct</i> impact on an individual's health, mental health and wellbeing? For example, would it cause ill health, affecting social inclusion, independence and participation? .			✓	
Will the proposal <i>indirectly</i> impact an individual's ability to improve their own health and wellbeing? For example, will it affect their ability to be physically active, choose healthy food, reduce drinking and smoking? .			✓	

<p>Will the policy have a <i>direct impact</i> on the community - social, economic and environmental living conditions that would impact health?</p> <p>For example, would it affect housing, transport, child development, education, employment opportunities, availability of green space or climate change mitigation?</p> <p>.</p>				✓
<p>Will there be a likely change in demand for or access to health and social care services?</p> <p>For example: Primary Care, Hospital Care, Community Services, Mental Health, Local Authority services including Social Services?</p> <p>.</p>			✓	

Identification of likely impact of the service change in terms of other considerations including climate change and economic or societal impacts

As the housing allocations policy and scheme is purely concerned with allocations and nominations for existing social housing stock a climate change appraisal is not relevant.

With respect to the Human Rights Act, this does not give a person a right to a home or other accommodation, instead it contains a right to respect for a home that a person already has. The Housing Act 1996 and the associated statutory guidance on social housing allocations for local authorities in England sets out the legal framework for the Council to establish its allocation policy and scheme. The Council must comply with the Housing Act 1996, even if the statute appears to infringe the Human Rights Act, for example in terms of eligibility. However, the operation of allocation schemes must avoid unjustified discrimination (which may be contrary to Article 14 of the Human Rights Act) and procedural unfairness (which may be contrary to Article 6 of the Act). The revised draft allocations policy and scheme has been considered in terms of this, and as show in section 21 of the draft policy, advice and assistance, including assisted bidding is provided to ensure all persons are able to apply to the scheme and applicants are able to submit bids.

With respect to the public sector equality duty, through ensuring those applicants in the greatest housing need are allocated social housing the draft revised policy seeks to promote social inclusion.

Guidance Notes

1. Legal Context

It is a legal requirement for local authorities to assess the equality and human rights impact of changes proposed or made to services. It is up to us as an authority to decide what form our equality impact assessment may take. By way of illustration, some local authorities focus more overtly upon human rights; some include safeguarding. It is about what is considered to be needed in a local authority's area, in line with local factors such as demography and strategic objectives as well as with the national legislative imperatives.

Carrying out these impact assessments helps us as a public authority to ensure that, as far as possible, we are taking actions to meet the general equality duty placed on us by the Equality Act 2010, and to thus demonstrate that the three equality aims are integral to our decision making processes.

These are: eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advancing equality of opportunity; and fostering good relations.

These screening assessments for any proposed service change go to Cabinet as part of the committee report, or occasionally direct to Full Council, unless they are ones to do with Licensing, in which case they go to Strategic Licensing Committee.

Service areas would ordinarily carry out a screening assessment, or Part One equality impact assessment. This enables energies to be focussed on review and monitoring and ongoing evidence collection about the positive or negative impacts of a service change upon groupings in the community, and for any adjustments to be considered and made accordingly.

These screening assessments are recommended to be undertaken at timely points in the development and implementation of the proposed service change.

For example, an ESHIA would be a recommended course of action before a consultation. This would draw upon the evidence available at that time, and identify the target audiences, and assess at that initial stage what the likely impact of the service change could be across the Protected Characteristic groupings and our tenth category of Social Inclusion. This ESHIA would set out intended actions to engage with the groupings, particularly those who are historically less likely to engage in public consultation e.g. young people, as otherwise we would not know their specific needs.

A second ESHIA would then be carried out after the consultation, to say what the feedback was, to set out changes proposed as a result of the feedback, and to say where responses were low and what the plans are to engage with groupings who did not really respond. This ESHIA would also draw more upon actions to review impacts in order to mitigate the negative and accentuate the positive. Examples of this approach include the Great Outdoors Strategy, and the Economic Growth Strategy 2017-2021

Meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty through carrying out these ESHIAs is very much about using them as an opportunity to demonstrate ongoing engagement across groupings and to thus visibly show we are taking what is called due regard of the needs of people in protected characteristic groupings

If the screening indicates that there are likely to be significant negative impacts for groupings within the community, the service area would need to carry out a full report, or Part Two assessment. This will enable more evidence to be collected that will help the service area to reach an informed opinion.

In practice, Part Two or Full Screening Assessments have only been recommended twice since 2014, as the ongoing mitigation of negative equality impacts should serve to keep them below the threshold for triggering a Full Screening Assessment. The expectation is that Full Screening Assessments in regard to Health Impacts may occasionally need to be undertaken, but this would be very much the exception rather than the rule.

2. Council Wide and Service Area Policy and Practice on Equality, Social Inclusion and Health

This involves taking an equality and social inclusion approach in planning changes to services, policies, or procedures, including those that may be required by Government.

The decisions that you make when you are planning a service change need to be recorded, to demonstrate that you have thought about the possible equality impacts on communities and to show openness and transparency in your decision-making processes.

This is where Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessments (ESHIA) come in. Where you carry out an ESHIA in your service area, this provides an opportunity to show:

- What evidence you have drawn upon to help you to recommend a strategy or policy or a course of action to Cabinet.
- What target groups and audiences you have worked with to date.
- What actions you will take in order to mitigate any likely negative impact upon a group or groupings, and enhance any positive effects for a group or groupings; and
- What actions you are planning to review the impact of your planned service change.

The formal template is there not only to help the service area but also to act as a stand-alone for a member of the public to read. The approach helps to identify whether or not any new or significant changes to services, including policies, procedures, functions, or projects, may have an adverse impact on a particular group of people, and whether the human rights of individuals may be affected.

This assessment encompasses consideration of social inclusion. This is so that we are thinking as carefully and completely as possible about all Shropshire groups and communities, including people in rural areas and people or households that we may describe as vulnerable.

Examples could be households on low incomes or people for whom there are safeguarding concerns, as well as people in what are described as the nine 'protected characteristics' of groups of people in our population, e.g., Age. Another specific vulnerable grouping is veterans and serving members of the Armed Forces, who face particular challenges with regard to access to Health, to Education, and to Housing.

We demonstrate equal treatment to people who are in these groups and to people who are not, through having what is termed 'due regard' to their needs and views when developing and implementing policy and

strategy and when commissioning, procuring, arranging, or delivering services.

When you are not carrying out an ESHIA, you still need to demonstrate and record that you have considered equality in your decision-making processes. It is up to you what format you choose. You could use a checklist, an explanatory note, or a document setting out our expectations of standards of behaviour, for contractors to read and sign. It may well not be something that is in the public domain like an ESHIA, but you should still be ready for it to be made available.

Both the approaches sit with a manager, and the manager has to make the call, and record the decision made on behalf of the Council. Help and guidance is also available via the Commissioning Support Team, either for data, or for policy advice from the Rural and Equalities Specialist. Here are some examples to get you thinking.

Carry out an ESHIA:

- If you are building or reconfiguring a building.
- If you are planning to reduce or remove a service.
- If you are consulting on a policy or a strategy.
- If you are bringing in a change to a process or procedure that involves other stakeholders and the wider community as well as particular groupings

For example, there may be a planned change to a leisure facility. This gives you the chance to look at things like flexible changing room provision, which will maximise positive impacts for everyone. A specific grouping that would benefit would be people undergoing gender reassignment

Carry out an equality and social inclusion approach:

- If you are setting out how you expect a contractor to behave with regard to equality, where you are commissioning a service or product from them.
- If you are setting out the standards of behaviour that we expect from people who work with vulnerable groupings, such as taxi drivers that we license.
- If you are planning consultation and engagement activity, where we need to collect equality data in ways that will be proportionate and non-intrusive as well as meaningful for the purposes of the consultation itself.
- If you are looking at services provided by others that help the community, where we need to demonstrate a community leadership approach

For example, you may be involved in commissioning a production to tour schools or appear at a local venue, whether a community hall or somewhere like Theatre Severn. The production company should be made aware of our equality policies and our expectation that they will seek to avoid promotion of potentially negative stereotypes. Specific groupings that could be affected include: Disability, Race, Religion and Belief, and Sexual Orientation. There is positive impact to be gained from positive portrayals and use of appropriate and respectful language in regard to these groupings in particular.

3. Council wide and service area policy and practice on health and wellbeing

This is a relatively new area to record within our overall assessments of impacts, for individual and for communities, and as such we are asking service area leads to consider health and wellbeing impacts, much as they have been doing during 2020-2021, and to look at these in the context of direct and indirect impacts for individuals and for communities. A better understanding across the Council of these impacts will also better enable the Public Health colleagues to prioritise activities to reduce health inequalities in ways that are evidence based and that link effectively with equality impact considerations and climate change mitigation.

Health in All Policies – Health Impact Assessment

Health in All Policies is an upstream approach for health and wellbeing promotion and prevention, and to reduce health inequalities. The Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is the supporting mechanism

- Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is the technical name for a common-sense idea. It is a process that considers the wider effects of local policies, strategies and initiatives and how they, in turn, may affect people's health and wellbeing.
- Health Impact Assessment is a means of assessing both the positive and negative health impacts of a policy. It is also a means of developing good evidence-based policy and strategy using a structured process to review the impact.
- A Health Impact Assessment seeks to determine how to maximise health benefits and reduce health inequalities. It identifies any unintended health consequences. These consequences may support policy and strategy or may lead to suggestions for improvements.
- An agreed framework will set out a clear pathway through which a policy or strategy can be assessed and impacts with outcomes

identified. It also sets out the support mechanisms for maximising health benefits.

The embedding of a Health in All Policies approach will support Shropshire Council through evidence-based practice and a whole systems approach, in achieving our corporate and partnership strategic priorities. This will assist the Council and partners in promoting, enabling and sustaining the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities whilst reducing health inequalities.

Individuals

Will the proposal have a *direct impact* on health, mental health and wellbeing?

For example, would it cause ill health, affecting social inclusion, independence and participation?

Will the proposal directly affect an individual's ability to improve their own health and wellbeing?

This could include the following: their ability to be physically active e.g., being able to use a cycle route; to access food more easily; to change lifestyle in ways that are of positive impact for their health.

An example of this could be that you may be involved in proposals for the establishment of safer walking and cycling routes (e.g., green highways), and changes to public transport that could encourage people away from car usage. and increase the number of journeys that they make on public transport, by foot or on bicycle or scooter. This could improve lives.

Will the proposal *indirectly impact* an individual's ability to improve their own health and wellbeing?

This could include the following: their ability to access local facilities e.g., to access food more easily, or to access a means of mobility to local services and amenities? (e.g. change to bus route)

Similarly to the above, an example of this could be that you may be involved in proposals for the establishment of safer walking and cycling routes (e.g. pedestrianisation of town centres), and changes to public transport that could encourage people away from car usage, and increase

the number of journeys that they make on public transport, by foot or on bicycle or scooter. This could improve their health and well being.

Communities

Will the proposal directly or indirectly affect the physical health, mental health, and wellbeing of the wider community?

A *direct impact* could include either the causing of ill health, affecting social inclusion, independence and participation, or the promotion of better health.

An example of this could be that safer walking and cycling routes could help the wider community, as more people across groupings may be encouraged to walk more, and as there will be reductions in emission leading to better air quality.

An *indirect impact* could mean that a service change could indirectly affect living and working conditions and therefore the health and well being of the wider community.

An example of this could be: an increase in the availability of warm homes would improve the quality of the housing offer in Shropshire and reduce the costs for households of having a warm home in Shropshire. Often a health promoting approach also supports our agenda to reduce the level of Carbon Dioxide emissions and to reduce the impact of climate change.

Please record whether at this stage you consider the proposed service change to have a direct or an indirect impact upon communities.

Demand

Will there be a change in demand for or access to health, local authority and social care services?

For example: Primary Care, Hospital Care, Community Services, Mental Health and Social Services?

An example of this could be: a new housing development in an area would affect demand for primary care and local authority facilities and services in that location and surrounding areas. If the housing development does not factor in consideration of availability of green space and safety within the public realm, further down the line there could be an increased demand upon health and social care services as a result of the lack of opportunities for physical recreation, and reluctance of some groupings to venture outside if they do not perceive it to be safe.

For further information on the use of ESHIAs: please contact your head of service or contact Mrs Lois Dale, Rurality and Equalities Specialist and Council policy support on equality, via telephone 01743 258528, or email lois.dale@shropshire.gov.uk.

For further guidance on public health policy considerations: please contact Amanda Cheeseman Development Officer in Public Health, via telephone 01743 253164 or email amanda.cheeseman@shropshire.gov.uk

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<u>Committee and Date</u>
Cabinet 27 th April 2022

<u>Item</u>
Public

Integrated Care System: Approval of Draft Joint 'Green Plan'

Responsible Officer Andy Begley
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1. Synopsis

- 1.1 The Shropshire ICS Board has committed to preparing and adopting a joint 'Green Plan' to provide a joint response to the challenge of climate change. Officers have worked with ICS colleagues to prepare the draft plan attached for approval by individual ICS organisations prior to its adoption by the Board in May 2022.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin Sustainable Transformation Partnership (STP) became an Integrated Care System (ICS) from 1st April 2021. In an integrated care system, NHS organisations, in partnership with local authorities and other partners, take collective responsibility for managing resources, delivering NHS care, and improving the health of the population they serve. Health and social care services will need to respond to the health emergency that climate change brings, which will need to be embedded into everything we do now and in the future.
- 2.2. The ICS Board has established a 'Climate Change Working Group' which reports to the Population Health Board and has been supported by Shropshire Council officers. The Working Group has drafted the draft 'Joint Green Plan' attached as Appendix 1 to identify opportunities in the system where we can share learning, optimise efficiencies, and capitalise on collaborative working.
- 2.8 The draft joint 'Green Plan' outlines the progress made so far, key targets, timeframes and collaboration opportunities between system partners for the following topics:
 - Leadership and Workforce
 - Sustainable Models of Care
 - Digital Transformation
 - Travel and Transport
 - Estates (Hard Services)

- Facilities (Soft Services - including Waste)
- Medicines
- Supply Chain & Procurement
- Food & Nutrition
- Adaptation

2.9 The 'Green Plan' includes an action plan which outlines collective goals not only at system level, but at organisation level with appropriate support from the ICS. For each action, the plan identifies what resource is needed, a target delivery date and the means of measuring progress.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. That Cabinet approves the draft ICS Green Plan attached at Appendix 1
- 3.2. That Cabinet supports the principle of collaborative working on relevant actions in the Action Plan contained in the document

REPORT

4. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 4.1. The climate crisis is a serious threat to the lives of millions of people both globally nationally and locally. The mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions and adaptation measures to build resilience is now urgent and essential to prevent the worst outcomes. Even if we are successful in mitigating the worst effects, we will continue to experience more pronounced and frequent episodes of extreme weather effects. The much greater frequency of extreme weather events will significantly increase insurance risks and threaten the health, wellbeing and future resilience of our communities.
- 4.2. The climate crisis therefore represents a significant strategic risk to public health and wellbeing and the delivery of health and social care services across Shropshire. This risk is most likely to manifest itself in terms of increases in the demand for health and social care services, financial impacts such as operating costs and impacts on the health and well-being of staff and residents as service users.
- 4.3. The Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment (ESIIA) completed for Shropshire Council's corporate Climate Strategy (December 2020) indicates that taking co-ordinated action across the ICS System is likely to have a positive effect on all groups in society. The climate emergency will have significant impacts on the whole of Shropshire and all its diverse communities, from those

living or working in our rural areas to those living or working in our market towns, as well as those that travel into our county and across our porous borders.

- 4.4. Individual ICS System partners will need to progressively engage with their staff and service users to explore the need for, and implications of, service changes which may result from the adoption of carbon reduction measures and will need to adopt an agile approach keep abreast of national good practice in order to maximise opportunities for equality and social inclusion within the overall policy context of addressing the climate emergency. We will continue to liaise with Telford and Wrekin Council to ensure that actions by local authorities to maximise positive equality impacts across communities are complementary to each other, as for example with the current work led by Public Health colleagues on health inequalities plans for each area, and that they link in with actions by health colleagues in terms of NHS policy drivers.
- 4.5. Taking active steps to collaborate as part of the adoption and delivery of a joint approach across the ICS will make a demonstrable contribution to reducing the carbon footprint of the wider county. Through their service delivery and procurement decisions, Shropshire Council's health and social care services are in a position to 'lead by example' and make a strong positive contribution to the delivery of the joint ICS Green Plan.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1. Measures to reduce the carbon footprint of the ICS system and adapt service delivery to address the impacts of extreme weather events will significantly reduce future financial risk and may potentially generate revenue savings as well as delivering against NHS England policy and the respective corporate responsibilities of ICS system partners, including Shropshire Council. However, improving carbon performance and resilience will require significant capital investment in energy efficiency, low carbon technologies and renewable energy generation.
- 5.2. The majority of Shropshire Council's carbon footprint for health and social care services is derived from work which is commissioned from external organisations and the Climate team are working closely with the Procurement team to identify the carbon impact of specific contracts and to discuss these further with suppliers as part of the procurement process. Any specific initiatives relevant to Shropshire Council in the Green Plan would need to be evaluated on its merits prior to inclusion in the Council's Capital Programme.
- 5.3. However, failing to reduce carbon emissions and implement climate change adaptation measures represents a significant financial threat to the revenue costs of health and social care services. This means that there is an incentive for the Council and other ICS System partners to 'Invest to Save' to mitigate the risk of future costs.

- 5.4. The significant forecast increases in the cost of fossil fuels, inevitably means that diversification into other forms of energy usage (of which renewable energy is a significant part) mean that the viability of invest to save schemes for the implementation of renewable energy are becoming more and viable and the long-term financial merits of decarbonisation are becoming more compelling.
- 5.5. The Council has set aside a budget of £0.500m to fund the Climate change task force in 2022/23 and it is not anticipated that this paper will give rise to additional pressures on revenue budgets.

6. Climate Change Appraisal

- 6.1. **Energy and fuel consumption:** The Action Plan section of the draft ICS Green Plan identifies a range of projects and initiatives which would contribute positively to the reduction of carbon emissions by facilitating improved energy efficiency and carbon performance across the health and social care services delivered by ICS System partners;
- 6.2. **Renewable energy generation:** The draft Green Plan summarises the existing generation of renewable energy by system partners and the Action Plan commits partners to further investment in on-site renewable energy generation as part of their Estates Strategies;
- 6.3. **Carbon offsetting or mitigation:** Whilst the draft Green Plan does not explicitly address carbon offsetting (the main focus is on reducing emissions), it does commit ICS partners to managing their estates in a way which reflect the need to protect and improve biodiversity;
- 6.4. **Climate Change adaptation:** The draft Green Plan recognises the need for Adaptation and resilience measures and identifies opportunities for ICS Partners to work together to provide contingency, support or mutual aid from the wider system.

7. Background

- 7.1. Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin Sustainable Transformation Partnership (STP) became an Integrated Care System (ICS) from 1st April 2021. In an integrated care system, NHS organisations, in partnership with local authorities and other partners, take collective responsibility for managing resources, delivering NHS care, and improving the health of the population they serve.
- 7.2. The NHS aims to provide health and high-quality care for all, now and for future generations. This requires a resilient NHS, which also needs to respond to the health emergency that climate change brings, which will need to be embedded into everything we do now and in the future.

- 7.3. The ICS has established a 'Climate Change Working Group' which reports to the Population Health Board and has been supported by Shropshire Council officers. The Working Group has drafted the draft 'Joint Green Plan' attached as Appendix 1 to identify opportunities in the system where we can share learning, optimise efficiencies, and capitalise on collaborative working.
- 7.4. The next three years will be fundamental in building collaboration on this agenda across the ICS and establishing early investment to maximise benefits later. During 2022 the ICs will identify a Sustainability Lead for the ICS - a person accountable to the board lead and responsible for providing support to the respective organisations within the ICS, holding those organisations to account and ensuring that their respective action plans are being addressed in the agreed timeframes.
- 7.5. Establishing an accurate baseline is also a priority. To do this, the aim is to determine the carbon footprint for the overall ICS system from scopes 1 & 2 emissions by April 1st, 2023, with scope 3 emissions later in 2023. The ICS will also review waste metrics, travel and medicines to provide a point of reference from which to measure progress.
- 7.6. Adopting a collaborative approach to both the actions at organisational and system levels will ensure that the system can maximise benefits and realise any financial saving opportunities. It will also provide consistency in reporting and some resilience in terms of team member movement.
- 7.7. The draft ICS 'Green Plan' sets out a number of key objectives:
 - i. Establish system baseline positions
 - ii. Ensure that the right people are delivering our net zero agenda
 - iii. Consider how we can deliver care in a sustainable, balanced way
 - iv. Harness digital technologies to approach a multifaceted challenge of delivering quality care outcomes, improving the quality of our care and diagnostics, reducing waste, and optimising our building services
 - v. Encourage our communities to avoid contributing to our carbon output
 - vi. Focus on our supply chain's commitments to achieving net zero
 - vii. Develop decarbonisation plans, continuing our transition to renewable energy, and in the interim making every kilowatt of fossil fuel energy count
 - viii. Adopt practices to avoid creating waste that persists in nature, and recycling those we cannot

- ix. Adapting our services to meet the challenges of climate change and extreme weather events
- x. Encourage biodiversity at our properties

7.8 The draft joint 'Green Plan' structure follows the relevant NHS England guidance on Green Plans and focuses on opportunities for collaboration on the following topics:

- Leadership and Workforce
- Sustainable Models of Care
- Digital Transformation
- Travel and Transport
- Estates (Hard Services)
- Facilities (Soft Services - including Waste)
- Medicines
- Supply Chain & Procurement
- Food & Nutrition
- Adaptation

7.9 This structure forms the basis of the 'Green Plan' strategy, which discusses under each of the sub-headings above, the progress made so far (and baselines, where applicable), key targets, timeframes and collaboration opportunities between system partners.

7.10 The 'Green Plan' also includes an action plan which outlines collective goals not only at system level, but at organisation level with appropriate support from the ICS. For each action, the plan identifies what resource is needed, a target delivery date and the means of measuring progress.

7.11 Named Executives will have oversight with a local or named lead for each individual action. The target dates and completion of the actions will be monitored by the ICS Climate Change Working Group and assurances/escalations will be provided to ICS Board. Executive leads are to be agreed for each area over the next 12 months.

8. Conclusions

8.1. The ICS has established a 'Climate Change Working Group' which has drafted a 'Joint Green Plan' to identify opportunities in the system where we can share learning, optimise efficiencies, and capitalise on collaborative working.

8.2. The 'Green Plan' includes an action plan which outlines collective goals not only at system level, but at organisation level with appropriate support from the ICS. For each action, the plan identifies what resource is needed, a target delivery date and the means of measuring progress.

- 8.3. The target dates and completion of the actions will be monitored by the ICS Climate Change Working Group and assurances/escalations will be provided to ICS Board. Executive leads are to be agreed for each area over the next 12 months.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

- Shropshire Council Climate Strategy & Action Plan (December 2020)
- Shropshire Council Climate Strategy & Action Plan Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment (ESIIA) (December 2020)

Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)

Ian Nellins

Local Member

n/a

Appendices

- 1 Draft Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin Integrated Care System 'Green Plan'