

Public Document Pack



EXECUTIVE

Date: Wednesday, 9 February 2022

Time: 1.00pm

Location: Council Chamber, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage

Contact: Ian Gourlay (01438) 242703

committees@stevenage.gov.uk

Members: Councillors: S Taylor OBE CC (Chair), Mrs J Lloyd (Vice-Chair),
L Briscoe, R Broom, J Gardner, R Henry, J Hollywell and J Thomas.

AGENDA

PART I

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2. MINUTES - 19 JANUARY 2022

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 19 January 2022 for signature by the Chair.

Pages 5 – 14

3. MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND SELECT COMMITTEES

To note the following Minutes of meetings of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Select Committees –

Environment & Economy Select Committee – 10 January 2022

Pages 15 – 20

4. COVID-19 UPDATE

To consider an update on the Covid-19 pandemic.

5. GAMBLING ACT 2005 - REVIEW OF STATEMENT OF LICENSING PRINCIPLES

To consider the proposed Stevenage Borough Council Gambling Act Statement of Principles 2022-2025, and to recommend the Statement to Council for adoption.

Pages 21 – 88

6. FINAL GENERAL FUND AND COUNCIL TAX SETTING 2022/23

To consider and recommend to Council the approval of the final General Fund Budget and Council Tax Setting for 2022/23.

Pages 89 – 200

7. RAILWAY STATION MULTI-STOREY CAR PARK - BUSINESS CASE

To consider a Business Case in respect of the proposed Railway Station Multi-Storey Car Park.

[REPORT TO FOLLOW]

8. STEVENAGE CONNECTION AREA ACTION PLAN: ISSUES AND OPTIONS REPORT PUBLIC CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

To seek approval to draft the next version of the Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan: Preferred Options report, to be reported back to the Executive prior to commencing public consultation.

Pages 201 – 396

9. STEVENAGE DESIGN GUIDANCE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT 2021: PUBLIC CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

To consider the feedback from consultation on the draft Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 2021, and to approve the amended SPD prior to a second round of consultation.

Pages 397 – 504

10. FILMING OPPORTUNITIES IN STEVENAGE

To consider the development of a formalised filming offer for Stevenage, designed to attract film, television and documentary makers into the Borough and to create an additional sustainable revenue stream for the Council and to support the local economy.

Pages 505 – 516

11. CAPITAL STRATEGY 2021/22 - 2025/26

To consider a report seeking revisions to the 2021/22 General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme, and approval of the final Capital Programme for 2022/23 for onward recommendation to Council.

Pages 517 – 564

12. ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY INCLUDING PRUDENTIAL CODE INDICATORS 2022/23

To recommend to Council the approval of the Treasury Management Strategy 2022/23, including its Annual Investment Strategy, Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy.

Pages 565 – 604

13. URGENT PART I BUSINESS

To consider any Part I business accepted by the Chair as urgent.

14. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

To consider the following motions –

1. That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in Paragraphs 1 – 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as amended by Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.
2. That Members consider the reasons for the following reports being in Part II and determine whether or not maintaining the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

15. URGENT PART II BUSINESS

To consider any Part II business accepted by the Chair as urgent.

NOTE: Links to Part 1 Background Documents are shown on the last page of the individual report, where this is not the case they may be viewed by using the following link to agendas for Executive meetings and then opening the agenda for Wednesday, 9 February 2022 – <http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/have-your-say/council-meetings/161153/>

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STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE MINUTES

Date: Wednesday, 19 January 2022

Time: 1.00pm

Place: Council Chamber, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage

Present: Councillors: Sharon Taylor OBE CC (Chair), Mrs Joan Lloyd (Vice-Chair), Lloyd Briscoe, Rob Broom, John Gardner, Richard Henry, Jackie Hollywell and Jeannette Thomas.

Also present: Councillor Phil Bibby CC (observer).

Start / End Start Time: 1.00pm
Time: End Time: 2.56pm

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Robin Parker CC (observer).

There were no declarations of interest.

2 **MINUTES - 8 DECEMBER 2021**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 8 December 2021 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.

3 **MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND SELECT COMMITTEES**

In relation to the Minutes of the meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 24 November 2021, and in response to a question from the Chair, the Strategic Director (RP) confirmed that the Council's refuse collection and recycling vehicle fleet had remained operational throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. The Council had sufficient flexibility to redeploy staff and/or employ agency staff in order to maintain a continued service.

In respect of the Minutes of the meeting of the Community Select Committee held on 30 November 2021, and with regard to Neighbourhood Wardens, the Chair advised that a series of short films was soon to be launched on social media and on the SBC website highlighting the work of various front line services, such as the Wardens, Regeneration Team and Stevenage Direct Services.

It was **RESOLVED** that the following Minutes of the meetings of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Select Committees be noted:

Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 24 November 2021

4 COVID-19 UPDATE

The Executive considered an overarching verbal update report from the Strategic Director (RP), together with a short presentation from the Corporate Policy & Research Officer, providing information concerning the Omicron variant and the latest epidemiology statistics relating to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Strategic Director (RP) reported on the latest Government announcement regarding the pandemic. He advised that, as from 26 January 2022, the working from home guidance would be ended; the wearing of masks would no longer be compulsory in indoor settings, including schools; and the compulsory requirement to present Covid vaccination passes prior to entry into certain venues would also be withdrawn (although this would be at the discretion of individual venue operators). He agreed to circulate the full details to Members.

The following issues were raised by Members:

- in response to a question, it was confirmed the availability of Lateral Flow Testing kits had increased nationally from 300,000 per day to over 1 Million per day (particularly via local pharmacies);
- New Nightingale Ward at Lister Hospital – the Senior Environmental & Licensing Manager agreed to raise at the next meeting of the Hertfordshire Health Protection Board the issue of whether this building would remain in situ at the hospital for other uses once the Covid-19 pandemic had subsided;
- Hospitalised Covid-19 cases – the Senior Environmental & Licensing Manager agreed to raise a request for the latest figures regarding the numbers of those hospitalised who were unvaccinated at the next meeting of the Hertfordshire Health Protection Board; and
- Pop-up vaccination centre in Bedwell Ward – Officers were requested to continue to pursue the need for this facility, and that it should be provided on both weekdays and weekends with Public Health colleagues.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Covid-19 update be noted.

5 FUTURE TOWN FUTURE TRANSPORT STRATEGY - 12 MONTH REVIEW

The Executive considered a report in respect of a 12 month review of the Council's Future Town Future Transport Strategy.

The Portfolio Holder for Economy, Enterprise & Transport reminded Members that, in October 2019, the Council had adopted Future Town, Future Transport (FTFT), a transport strategy for Stevenage. FTFT outlined the Council's approach to sustainable transport. It established the key local transport issues and opportunities that existed in Stevenage, and provided a vision and series of objectives for what would be delivered in the future.

The Portfolio Holder for Economy, Enterprise & Transport stated that the report

reviewed progress on FTFT between October 2020 and October 2021. He referred to highlights which included:

- Working with Hertfordshire County Council on the Stevenage Sustainable Travel Town Implementation Plan;
- Significant progress with the new Bus Interchange;
- Progress with the Station Gateway Area Action Plan and Town Deal Business Case;
- Significant progress with regeneration of the Town Centre; and
- Delivery and implementation of Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan routes.

The Portfolio Holder for Economy, Enterprise & Transport commented that the provision of all uncommitted Smart Motorway transport schemes (including the one proposed for between Junctions 6 and 8 of the A1(M)) had been paused for a period of 5 years until 2027, pending the collection of safety data.

The Portfolio Holder for Economy, Enterprise & Transport explained that the FTFT Strategy would henceforth continue to be monitored as part of the quarterly Corporate Performance reports submitted to the Executive.

The following comments were made by Members:

- the Assistant Director (Planning & Regulation) was requested to endeavour to arrange for meetings to take place with appropriate disability groups in order to consult them and seek their ideas on how to overcome practical difficulties experienced by them in transport-related matters;
- the Assistant Director (Planning & Regulation) undertook to highlight the issue of e-scooters as part of the Sustainable Travel Town initiative, with a view to urging the Government to introduce greater regulation of these vehicles, in order that they can be safely used on Stevenage's extensive cycleway network; and
- the Assistant Director (Planning & Regulation) was requested to ensure that disabled access issues were fully taken into consideration as part of the planning process, in order to avoid the need for the retrofitting of disabled facilities after the completion of projects; and
- the Chair clarified that the Council had been able to rebuff attempts by Hertfordshire County Council to introduce on-street parking charges in the Old Town through the Sustainable Travel Town initiative. During 2020-2022, SBC had provided time-limited free parking in the former Waitrose car park to support local businesses recovering from the Covid-19 pandemic.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That the progress with projects included within the Future Town, Future Transport Strategy be noted.
2. That it be noted that the Future Town, Future Transport Strategy will continue to be included within the quarterly Future Town, Future Council monitoring reports.

Reason for Decision: As contained in report.
Other Options considered: As contained in report.

6 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA): BUDGET SETTING AND RENT REPORT 2022/23

The Executive considered a report on the final Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget and Rent Setting 2022/23, for onward recommendation to Council.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources advised that the report was an update of the December 2021 draft HRA rent and budget setting for 2022/23, which had most recently been discussed at a Portfolio Holder Advisory Group meeting in early January 2022.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources stated that the increase in rents was based on September 2021 CPI+1%, as set by legislation. This resulted in a 4.1% increase for 2022/23, although it should be viewed in the context of there having been a low increase in 2021/22, as CPI was only 0.5%, and the 4 years of rent reduction between 2016/17-2019/20. The Overview and Scrutiny had been advised that the 2015/16 average weekly social rent was £98.59. In 2022/23 it would be £103.07, which equated to an increase of 4.54% over 6 years, even with a 4.1% increase next year.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources explained that Social rents would be an average £103.07 per week, LSSO £120.33 and Affordable £167.57. This generated £2.1Million of rental income for the HRA. With service charge increases, there would be 270 properties which would have an increase of £5 - 5.50 per week, and the Strategic Director (CF) confirmed that 57 properties would have an increase which was over £5.50 per week.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources commented that additional growth had been added into the HRA between draft and final totalling £1.28Million, the majority of which related to the £950,000 RCCO decarbonisation bid. The HRA budget was now forecasting a £1.956Million surplus in comparison to the £3.236Million which was estimated in December 2021. The 2022/23 year end HRA balances were projected to be a £28.528Million surplus, which represented a reduction from the £29.7Million surplus previously reported. The minimum level of balances had been assessed and were £3.32Million (2021/22 £2.9Million), and in the short term balances were higher due to the need to repay debt.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing, Health & Older People added that a comparison between HRA property rents per week and private sector rents per week showed that a three-bedroom private sector rental property costs an additional 131%, (2021/22,133%) more per week than a SBC council home and 30% more than the affordable let properties (2021/22 32%).

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. That HRA rent on dwellings be increased, week commencing 4 April 2022, by 4.1% which is an average increase of £4.06 for social rents, £6.60 for

affordable rents and £4.74 for Low Start Shared Ownership homes per week (based on a 52-week year). This has been calculated using the rent formula, CPI + 1% in line with the Government's rent policy, as set out in Paragraph 4.1.1 of the report.

2. That Council be recommended to approve the 2022/23 HRA Budget, as set out in Appendix A to the report.
3. That Council be recommended to approve the 2022/23 growth options, as set out in Section 4.8 of the report, with supporting impact assessments in Appendix B. This includes new match funding for a Decarbonisation Grant application of £950,000.
4. That Council be recommended to approve the 2022/23 Fees and Charges, as set out in Appendix C to the report.
5. That Council be recommended to approve the 2022/23 service charges.
6. That Council be recommended to approve the minimum level of reserves for 2022/23, as shown in Appendix D to the report.
7. That the Rent Increase Equalities Impact Assessments set out in Appendix E to the report be noted.
8. That the contingency sum of £250,000 within which the Executive can approve supplementary estimates be approved for 2022/23 (unchanged from 2021/22).
9. That Council notes the comments from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Portfolio Holder Advisory Group, as set out in Paragraph 4.10 of the report.

Reason for Decision: As contained in report.

Other Options considered: As contained in report.

7 DRAFT GENERAL FUND AND COUNCIL TAX SETTING 2022/23

The Executive considered a report in respect of the draft General Fund and Council Tax Setting 2022/23.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources advised that the report outlined the Government settlement for 2022/23. Due to the continuation of the lower tier grant and the one off service grant, funding was £280,000 higher than expected. However, the latter had been confirmed as being one off, but included compensation for the NI social care cost.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources stated that the report was based on a proposed 2.26% increase for 2022/23 in the SBC share of Council Tax, which equated to a £4.44 rise for a Band C property.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources explained that the Making Your Money Count (MYMC) options had reduced by £15,000, and the play service option changed to

include pop-up play going forward, but due to the configuration of staff this did mean that play centres would not be open as much during holiday times. The MYMC options were modelled on three redundancies, subject to consultation.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources commented that the December 2021 budget was £10.427Million and was now estimated to be £11.004Million, which included £420,000 of transfer of business rate gains. There were pressures of £180,000 which were on-going. Accordingly, the savings target had been increased to £810,000 for 2023/24.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources referred to the risks to projected balances shown at Paragraph 4.12.2 of the report. As balances were £232,000 above the minimum balances, the report recommended that Members approved the identification of a further £250,000 of MYMC options for the June 2022 Medium Term Financial Strategy report.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That the 2021/22 revised net expenditure on the General Fund of £11,755,780 be approved.
2. That the inclusion of the 2022/23 Fees and Charges of £341,780 (Appendix B to the report) in the draft 2022/23 budget, be noted.
3. That the draft General Fund Budget for 2022/23 of £11,004,220 is proposed for consultation purposes, with a contribution from balances of £1,238,955 and a Band D Council Tax of £225.57 (assuming a 2.26% increase).
4. That the updated position on the General Fund Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), summarised in section 4.14 of the report, be noted.
5. That the minimum level of General Fund reserves of £3,471,038 in line with the 2022/23 risk assessment of balances, as shown at Appendix C to the report, be approved.
6. That the contingency sum of £400,000 within which the Executive can approve supplementary estimates be approved for 2022/23 (reflecting the level of balances available above the minimum amount).
7. That the Making Your Money Count (MYMC) options, as set out in Section 4.2 and Appendix A of the report, totalling £780,945 and £39,370 for the General Fund and HRA respectively for 2022/23, be included into the Council's budget setting processes for consideration by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
8. That the Growth options included in Section 4.4 of the report be approved for inclusion in the 2022/23 General Fund (£120,078) and HRA (£63,360) budgets.
9. That the pressures of £1,773,340 be noted, as set out in Section 4.3 of the report.
10. That a further £300,000 be approved for inclusion in the Council's 2022/23

budget setting processes to pump prime Transformation, to enable a significant contribution to the savings targets, as set out in Section 4.12 of the report.

11. That the identification of a further £250,000 of Making Your Money Count (MYMC) options for the June 2022 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) report be approved, as set out in Paragraph 4.12.4 of the report.
12. That the business rate gains only once realised be ring fenced and used for firstly the financial resilience of the Council and, if required, be transferred to the Income Equalisation Reserve, and thereafter they be used for Regeneration or Co-operative Neighbourhood one-off spend.
13. That the 2022/23 Council Tax Support Scheme, as set out in Section 4.6 of the report, be approved.
14. That the decisions taken in Resolutions 3 to 13 above be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration, in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Rules in the Council's Constitution.
15. That the Equalities Impact Assessments, as set out in Appendices D and E to the report, be noted.
16. That the work of the Leader's Financial Security Group (LFSG) in reviewing the efficiency, commercial and fees and charges, as outlined in Section 4.18 of the report, be noted.
17. That key partners and other stakeholders be consulted and their views considered as part of the 2022/23 budget setting process.

Reason for Decision: As contained in report.

Other Options considered: As contained in report.

8 DRAFT CAPITAL STRATEGY 2021/22 - 2025/26

The Executive considered a report in respect of the draft Capital Strategy 2021/22 – 2025/26.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources advised that the capital growth bids received had been classified against a number of different categories, as set out in Paragraph 4.2.1 of the report, and were detailed in Appendix A to the report. These bids totalled £4.863Million over the period 2022/23 - 2025/26, £2.8Million of which fell in 2022/23.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources stated that the report recommended that all of the bids totalling £4.863Million were noted by the Executive for inclusion within the Draft Capital Strategy, subject to a review by Leader's Financial Security Group (LSFG) prior to the final Capital Strategy report being submitted to the 9 February 2022 meeting of the Executive. It was recommended that the growth bids submitted for future years, totalling £2.063Million for the period 2023/24 - 2025/26, should form part of the full review of the Strategy, at which time the capital receipts position would be reviewed again to consider the availability of capital resources.

Members noted that the report identified that the level of unused reserves at the year-end should be circa £800,000 to £1Million, excluding the £350,000 transfer. The LFSG were scrutinising the bids, including monies to fund activities related to implementation of the national waste strategy which the Council would look towards the Government to fund.

Members further noted that the report contained an update on Locality reviews in Section 4.4 and the Towns Fund in Section 4.5.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources advised that the borrowing, interest and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) for 2022/23 for the Council, as required in the Capital Strategy, equated to a total a cost of borrowing of £314,000 in 2022/23.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources stated that the Capital Strategy also included the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme (Section 4.9) and the decarbonisation Fund growth mentioned in the HRA Budget final report. The report contained the HRA Capital Programme, which was estimated to be £64.67Million for 2022/23.

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. That the Draft General Fund Capital Budget for 2022/23 of £31.1Million, as set out in Appendix C to the report, be proposed for consultation purposes (subject to review by Leader's Financial Security Group).
2. That the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) brings a report forward during the 2022/23 financial year setting out the Council's key capital regeneration and community asset ambitions and key land and asset disposals not currently included in the capital strategy, which could be used to meet these Corporate priorities.
3. That the Draft HRA Capital Budget for 2022/23 of £64.7Million, as set out in Appendix D to the report, be proposed for consultation purposes.
4. That the HRA Capital Budget be brought back to Executive in 2022/23 as part of the HRA Business Plan refresh.
5. That the updated forecast of resources 2022/23, as detailed in Appendix C (General Fund) and Appendix D (HRA) to the report, be approved, subject to the consultation process.
6. That the Council's investment strategy for non-treasury assets, as detailed in Appendix E to the report, be approved for consideration by the Executive.
7. That the approach to resourcing the General Fund capital programme, as outlined in the report, be approved.
8. That the funding increase requested for the Bus Station project, as set out in Paragraph 4.1.2 of the report, be approved.

9. That progress on Locality Reviews be noted.
10. That progress on the Towns Fund be noted.
11. That the General Fund growth bids identified for inclusion in the Capital Strategy (Paragraph 4.2.2, table five and Appendix A to the report) be approved in principle, subject to further review work on Capital Priorities being undertaken by officers and the Leader's Financial Security Group.
12. That the HRA budget increases identified for inclusion in the Capital Strategy (Paragraph 4.9.2, table ten and Appendix B to the report) be approved.
13. That the 2022/23 de-minimis expenditure limit (Section 4.11 of the report) be proposed for consideration by the Executive.
14. That the 2022/23 contingency allowances set out in Paragraphs 4.12.1 and 4.12.2 of the report respectively, be proposed for consideration by the Executive.
15. That the Executive delegation set out in Paragraph 4.12.3 of the report, allowing the Executive to approve increases to the capital programme for grant funded projects, be proposed for consideration by the Executive.

Reason for Decision: As contained in report.

Other Options considered: As contained in report.

9 URGENT PART I BUSINESS

SBC Award from Hertfordshire Public Health

The Chair was pleased to announce that the Council had been awarded £90,000 by Hertfordshire Public Health to continue its work in reducing health inequalities in the town over the coming two years. She felt that this was testament to the excellent and proactive approach the Council had taken over a number of years to improve the health and wellbeing of the Borough's residents.

The Chair commented that, as the Council refreshed its Healthy Stevenage Strategy over the coming year, this resource would help in tackling health inequalities that had been brought to the fore during the Covid-19 pandemic, and to work more closely with local Primary Care Networks and the Borough's two flagship Healthy Hubs provided through the Healthy Stevenage Partnership.

The Chair expressed her gratitude to the Hertfordshire Director of Public Health, Professor Jim McManus, and his team for their ongoing commitment to District-level commissioning as a means to improving local health issues.

10 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and

public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in Paragraphs 1 – 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as amended by Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

2. That the reasons for the following reports being in Part II were accepted, and that the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

11 PART II MINUTES - EXECUTIVE - 8 DECEMBER 2021

It was **RESOLVED** that the Part II Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 8 December 2021 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.

12 URGENT PART II BUSINESS

None.

CHAIR

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY SELECT COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date: Monday, 10 January 2022

Time: 6.00pm

Place: Council Chamber - Daneshill House, Danestrete

Present: Councillors: Michael Downing (Chair), Adam Mitchell CC (Vice-Chair), Julie Ashley-Wren, Doug Bainbridge, Wendy Kerby, Maureen McKay, Sarah Mead, Claire Parris and Simon Speller

Start / End Time: Start Time: 06:00 pm
End Time: 08:02 pm

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies were received from Councillors Stephen Booth and Adrian Brown.

There were no declarations of interest.

2 **MINUTES - THURSDAY 18 NOVEMBER 2021**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the committee meeting held on Thursday 18 November 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3 **INTERVIEW WITH PROFESSOR LUBO JANKOVIC DIRECTOR OF UNIVERSITY OF HERTFORDSHIRE ZERO CARBON LAB**

The Committee received a presentation from Professor Lubo Jankovic, Director of Advanced Building Design and the Zero Carbon Lab at the University of Hertfordshire, on assisting the Borough Council as an expert witness in its review process of the Climate Emergency Response.

Professor Jankovic provided the following key update to Committee:

- The Committee was informed that his application for grant funding worth £10k for Developing Climate Emergency Response Policy for Stevenage was successful. The funding was awarded by Research England via the University's Strategic Priorities Fund;
- He advised Members that he had worked on a similar project for Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council funded by the same scheme. The project assessed on how to achieve net zero housing for Welwyn Hatfield;
- He explained that they found out a net zero operational performance that could be achieved with increased insulation, increased air tightness, air source heat pumps, and solar photovoltaic and solar thermal systems;
- He also found out that the houses constructed from conventional materials would achieve net zero by 2065, and houses constructed from a bio sourced

material would reach net zero by 2045.

- The collaboration between the University and the Borough Council would help in using the existing research data and could act as a model for other Council's as a methodology to help determine if the net zero baselines are accurate and if the targets are measurable for each area
- The project would also create science led recommendations to inform the Council's Climate Emergency Policy Response.
- Members were advised that Professor Jankovic would critically review the Council's current Climate Change Emergency Response, and would help develop recommendations.
- The collaboration with the Borough Council would continue until at least 31st March 2022, and there was scope for further collaboration beyond March 2022.

In response to a question from a Member, Professor Jankovic advised Members that there was independent research done during the first lockdown on the level of carbon emission. The research found that the level of carbon emission reduced during the lockdown period, due in a large part from reduced traffic and people working from home. He advised Members that the target date of 2030 for net zero emission would likely to be difficult but not impossible to achieve. However, a 2050 target date would be easier to achieve, with some specific areas and targets being achieved well ahead of the 2030 target but others being harder to achieve such as the retro fitting of the domestic housing stock away from gas boilers.

The Environmental Sustainability Co-ordinator for Housing and Health, David Thorogood, presented CO2 emission data for Stevenage. He advised Members that transport (34%) produced the biggest CO2 emission followed by the domestic (28%), commercial (18%), industry (13%) and public sector (7%). In fact, transport and domestic emissions combined were almost 2 thirds of the overall emissions for the area (64%).

He advised Members that as an authority, the Borough Council may have a small percentage of the overall CO2 emission for the Stevenage area, but as the local authority it had a large role to play in influencing people to make the right choices. The biggest effect the Council could have is to enable people living in Council properties to have less emissions.

He advised Members that he could look in more detail at the carbon emissions for each sector in Stevenage for a future meeting, providing Members with in-depth analytical data.

It was **RESOLVED** that the update from Professor LuboJankovic on the Council's Climate Change Emergency Response be noted.

4 **MEMBER MIND MAPPING AND QUICK WIN IDEAS FOLLOWING THE SESSION WITH HEART COMMUNITY GROUP**

The Chair welcomed two Members of HEART who were in attendance at the meeting and invited them to contribute throughout the meeting.

The Committee received feedback from three Members of the Committee following the Committee's previous meeting in November. The quick win ideas as contained in the agenda pack were put together by Members on achievable small goals to tackle climate change.

Members welcomed the recently published leaflet that was distributed to residents on climate change, but agreed that improvement needed to be made with the Borough Council's communication to residents to keep them informed on the improvements the Council was making in tackling CO2 emissions in Stevenage.

The Committee agreed to work with young people through the Youth Mayor to gather awareness in schools on tackling the carbon emission. Members suggested that an informal meeting session needed to be arranged to discuss working closely with young people and to work through their mind mapping ideas.

Members recognised the need to work closely with HEART as a 'critical friend of the Borough Council', and kick start some of the achievable goals targeting CO2 emission. Members also supported the notion to help to educate residents on Climate Change in order achieve goals set by the Council on Climate Change Emergency. In some instances some residents may be further along the Climate Change journey than others, with areas of deprivation possibly having an influence on this, with a greater emphasis on peoples day to day needs, so the challenge would be to bring all residents along to achieve the significant change that will be needed to address the scope of the climate change challenge.

It was **RESOLVED** that the ideas put forward by Members on achievable goals to tackle the CO2 emission be noted.

5 **NOTES FROM A COP26 GREEN ZONE SEMINAR ON CITIES, REGIONS AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT HOSTED BY THE CARBON TRUST**

The Scrutiny Officer attended a COP26 Green Zone seminar on cities, regions and the built environment. The seminar was hosted by the Carbon Trust. The report by the Scrutiny Officer as contained in the agenda pack summarised the issues discussed in the seminar.

The Scrutiny Officer suggested that the key lessons for Stevenage from the webinar were:

- Be science led and work with local universities and community groups - so a big tick for us in already in this regard.
- We need to broaden the community group activity and work more with local people (this could become a possible recommendation).
- Have a unified approach - could there be more work with all staff required so all grasp the scale of the problem and see the changes made to policy matter?
- Establish the metrics - the review will go a long way to do this.
-

It was suggested that a small group of Members could consider doing a tour of Stevenage on bikes, perhaps led by Cllr Speller to assess the reality of cycling as an

active travel option.

It was **RESOLVED** that the summary of the seminar on COP26 Green Zone be noted.

6 **NOTES FROM A POST COP26 LGIU WEBINAR 19 NOVEMBER 2021**

The Scrutiny Officer attended a post COP26 webinar on 19 November 2021. The seminar was hosted by the Local Government Information Unit (LGIU). The report by the Scrutiny Officer as contained in the agenda pack summarised the issues discussed in the seminar.

The Scrutiny Officer suggested that the key lessons for Stevenage from the webinar were:

- Collaboration drives innovation not competition
- More devolution is needed, local government needs to have the combined size to work together on solutions
- Bidding for the same pot of money from Central Government is a bad way to fund climate change interventions
- You can't sell a hair shirt to the public – you have to make change easily accessible to the public
- Public trust is crucial as is the relationship with citizens. If the public are made aware things like retrofitting employs twice as many people than new build this will resonate
- Engagement with Universities is important
- Don't lecture and preach to businesses – help create collaborative frameworks between large employers and SMEs
- Help people to be able to do the right things

It was **RESOLVED** that the summary of webinar on post COP26 be noted.

7 **MAPPING EXERCISE DOCUMENT FOR THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY REVIEW**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Mapping Exercise Document for the Climate Emergency Review be noted.

8 **URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS**

The Chair accepted an urgent item of Part I Business regarding the ongoing impact of Covid19 on local micro businesses. Members discussed that some local micro businesses were struggling as a result of the pandemic, and asked what the Council could do to support these businesses during these hard times. The Chair and Members agreed to consider a report in relation to Council's support to micro businesses.

The Scrutiny Officer advised Members that the Business Relationship Manager was already in the process of preparing a report, and she was working closely with local micro-businesses.

Members agreed that it would be helpful to arrange an urgent informal meeting where the Business Relationship Manager's report could be discussed.

9 **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

Not required.

10 **URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

None.

CHAIR

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Meeting	Executive
Portfolio Area	Communities, Community Safety and Equalities
Date	9 February 2022

GAMBLING ACT 2005 – REVIEW OF STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

NON KEY DECISION

Authors	Maurice Clay 2175
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1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To consider the Council’s draft Statement of Principles as required under the Gambling Act 2005.
- 1.2 To note that the draft Statement of Principles was considered by the Council’s General Purposes Committee at their meeting on 13 January 2022.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Executive notes the report and agrees the proposed Stevenage Borough Council Gambling Act Statement of Principles 2022-2025 (attached at appendix A).
- 2.2 That the Executive recommends the Stevenage Borough Council draft Statement of Principles to Council for adoption.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council is the licensing authority for the purposes of the Gambling Act and consequently is under a duty to prepare a Statement of Gambling Principles that it proposes to apply in exercising its functions under the Act.
- 3.2 The Statement of Principles sets out the general approach the Council will take when carrying out its regulatory role under the Act and promoting the three licensing objectives:
- preventing gambling from being a source of crime or disorder, being associated with crime or disorder, or being used to support crime
 - ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way
 - protecting children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling.
- 3.3 The Act was conceived as ‘light touch’ legislation, covering a wide range of licensable activities such as adult gaming centres and betting premises. It specifies that Local Authorities should “aim to permit” gambling, provided it is in accordance with the Code of Practice and guidance issued by the Gambling Commission, reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives and in accordance with the Statement of Principles. The effect of this duty is that Licensing Authorities must approach their functions in a way that seeks to regulate gambling by using their powers to promote the licensing objectives rather than by setting out to prevent it altogether.
- 3.4 The Statement seeks to strike a balance between the interests of licence holders, applicants and residents in the promotion of the licensing objectives defined by the Act. Additionally, it outlines the licensing authority’s expectations of licence holders in promoting the licensing objectives, whilst advising on the licensing authority’s obligations under the Act, including its interpretation of the Act and/or Statutory Guidance where necessary. The Statement is designed to offer appropriate protection for residents and a streamlined approach to regulation that eases unnecessary burdens on businesses.
- 3.5 The current Statement was adopted by full Council in June 2019 and must now be reviewed and, where necessary, revised.

Proposed changes

- 3.6 A limited number of additions and amendments to the extant Statement of Principles were consulted upon, to reflect the update in the Guidance published by the Gambling Commission (5th Edition, September 2015).

- 3.7 The draft Statement can be found at Appendix A; all significant additions or variations from the 2019-2022 Statement have been highlighted in grey. There are no changes to the intent or direction in the proposed 2022-2025 Statement, which sets out how the Council seeks to regulate gambling activities under its control and provide a framework for consistent decision making.
- 3.8 The most substantive changes in the new Statement are intended to meet the Commission's most recent guidance and are as follows:
- Additional sections under Part A to highlight our approach to applications received, authorisations under the Act, and an explanation of the role of the Gambling Commission (paragraphs A4-A6).
 - The statement has emphasised the importance of safeguarding (at paragraphs B3.12-20).
 - The statement has emphasised the importance of good environmental management (paragraph C3.1-3.2).
 - Paragraph C4 discusses gambling as a public health issue and the Licensing Authority's ongoing intention to work with the public health team.

Consultation

- 3.9 In preparing the Statement, the licensing authority must publish any proposed document before giving it effect and must consult with:
- the chief officer of police for the licensing authority's area;
 - one or more persons who appear to the authority to represent the interests of persons carrying on gambling businesses in the authority's area;
 - one or more persons who appear to the authority to represent the interests of persons who are likely to be affected by the exercise of the authority's functions under this Act.
- 3.10 To comply with this requirement, the licensing authority published the draft Statement on a dedicated webpage on the Council's website with details of the consultation period and an explanation of how to make a representation. The page was available between 15 November 2021 and 19 December 2021. All organisations listed in Appendix 2 of the Statement were sent a consultation email or letter directing them to the consultation page. Responses were received from three parties; Power Leisure Bookmakers Limited, Gosschalks on behalf of the Betting and Gaming Council and PoHWER (People of Hertfordshire Want Equal Rights), an advocacy and support charity for people who experience disability, vulnerability, distress and social exclusion.

- 3.11 Both Power Leisure Bookmakers Limited and Gosschalks on behalf of the Betting and Gaming Council commented upon new paragraphs B3.12.to B3.20 of the draft policy relating to the additional Licensing Authority expectations for the protection of persons (children and vulnerable adults). The draft Statement of Principles has been adjusted in accordance with the solutions agreed by General Purposes Committee.
- 3.12 Gosschalks, on behalf of the Betting and Gaming Council noted that the requirement under Gambling Act 2005 is that applications are reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives. There is no duty to *promote* the licensing objectives on any body save for the Gambling Commission and that references to 'promote' and 'promotion' should be replaced. They also highlighted that there is no opportunity for a licensed premises or applicant to suggest or propose licence conditions. The Licensing Authority has agreed with this evaluation and has suggested a change to the draft policy wording.
- 3.13 Further comments from Power Leisure Bookmakers Limited related to concern that national data would be used in the local area review and applications relating to premises ready for gambling and the use of provisional applications. These queries have been addressed by General Purposes Committee.
- 3.14 A response was also received from PoHWER containing queries and questions from the organisation on the background to the policy review. These do not affect the content or substance of the Statement of Principles but have been responded to.

Consideration by General Purposes Committee

- 3.15 The draft Statement of Principles was considered by the Council's General Purposes Committee at their meeting on 13 January 2022. Members' comments and questions centred on the proposed new Local Area Profile (LAP), and the following points were raised:
- it was confirmed that two of the three consultation responses were received from gambling industry operators, and that with the exception of the reply from PoHWER, no responses had been received from other stakeholders, such as national or local charities;
 - the LAP would be an evolving document, but would require strengthening once further work was undertaken on evidence gathering from various sources, including the Gambling Commission, Citizens Advice Bureau, the Police and Housing providers. HCC Public Health was keen to move forward with a collaborative approach to tackling gambling issues, which would include the establishment of a robust evidence base. It was hoped

that this would also cover child protection and any data relating to “hidden” gambling issues;

- the evidence base should also include any relevant data to be gleaned from local gambling operators, as well as from the online gambling industry;
- the Chair considered that it may require primary legislation to address the potential harmful risks associated with gambling, particularly amongst vulnerable groups;
- it was clarified that “ensuring that gambling was conducted in a fair and open way” was essentially to ensure that operators abided by legal stipulations and in accordance with the Gambling Commission’s Code of Practice;
- it was confirmed that the Licensing Team received very few complaints in respect of the gambling organisations/premises operating in the Borough. There would be routine inspections of premises by the Licensing Team and each would be risk-rated, meaning that there would be a more regular inspection regime for those premises rated towards the higher levels of the risk range. In terms of enforcement, this included a worst case scenario of licence revocation, but could also involve a requirement for improvements and restrictions of certain activity;
- in terms of the process for logging complaints, Members were advised that complaints could be registered through the Council’s website, and that gambling operators were required to display their licence at their premises (which included the contact details for the SBC Licensing Team);
- although the HCC Public Health Team was encouraging a collaborative approach towards tackling gambling issues, the Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire Local Authorities Licensing Managers met every 6-8 weeks to share feedback and good practice on licensing and gambling matters; and
- it was confirmed that the representation received from PoHWER contained a series of queries and questions which would be responded to separately and did not affect the Statement of Principles. However, Members felt that consideration should be given to inviting a representative(s) from a charitable organisation to a future meeting of the Committee in order to hear their views on gambling issues.

The Committee supported the Licensing Officer’s proposed amendments to the Statement of Principles in response to issues raised during the consultation process, as set out in Paragraphs 3.15 to 3.24 of the report.

- 3.16 During the meeting the Chair made reference to her recent attendance at Hertfordshire County Council’s Gambling Harms Topic Group, convened by

the Health Scrutiny Committee, where Members sought to address the following questions:

- What opportunities and barriers currently exist that can help or hinder the local authority to influence the reduction of gambling harms?
- What is the contribution of partners (other local authorities, NHS, police etc.) to reducing gambling harms?
- How effective is partnership working in Hertfordshire across organisations to tackle gambling harm?

The Chair reported that the Topic Group had provided a useful forum for councillors, experts and partners to explore the local circumstances and impacts of gambling harm, and crucially, to consider how to strengthen the evidence base and improve a countywide approach in prevention and support for future working.

3.17 The General Purposes Committee resolved:

- That the proposed Stevenage Borough Council Gambling Act Statement of Principles 2022 – 2025, as attached at Appendix A to the report, and with the inclusion of the amendments proposed by the Licensing Officer in response to issues raised during the consultation process set out in Paragraphs 3.15 to 3.24 of the report, be agreed.
- That the Executive be requested to agree the Stevenage Borough Council Gambling Act draft Statement of Principles for onward recommendation to Council.

4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION AND OTHER OPTIONS

4.1 Section 349 of the Gambling Act 2005 requires licensing authorities to publish a statement of licensing principles every three years in accordance with prescribed requirements. The adoption of the statement of licensing principles is a non-executive function by virtue of the Act and Statutory Guidance and is reserved for Full Council.

4.2 The only alternative option would be to adopt a Statement that differs in content and/or extent from the document proposed here. An alternative Statement has not been considered as the one proposed achieves an effective balance between ensuring that the licensing objectives are met and avoiding being overly prescriptive or prohibitive to applicants and licence holders. Any wholly revised Statement would be subject to a further full consultation process.

5 IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

- 5.1 Local authorities have the ability to set their own local fees in connection with the Act on a cost recovery only basis, subject to centrally prescribed maximum amounts. The administration and enforcement of the Act, including the adoption of a Statement, places no additional financial burden on the Council as all costs are recovered through fees. Fees will be reviewed as part of the annual budget-setting process.

Legal Implications

- 5.2 The Licensing Authority has a statutory duty to produce a Statement of Principles under the Gambling Act 2005 and review it at least once every three years.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 5.3 The proposed Statement of Principles does not place any barriers or unique requirements on any person on the grounds of ethnicity, gender, religion, or any other protected characteristic. Officers work with all applicants and licence holders, where appropriate, to ensure that the Council's duty under the Equality Act 2010 is met. A brief form Equalities Impact Assessment is attached as Appendix B.

Community Safety Implications

- 5.4 The Act has a community safety implication arising from the licensing objectives. There are currently no local concerns regarding the impact of gambling on community safety, and it does not appear within the Council's community safety plan.

Environmental Implications

- 5.5 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

Other Corporate Implications

- 5.6 It is recognised that the reduction of gambling harms requires a public health approach, prioritising of prevention and education, as well as treatment and support. In this connection the Licensing Authority will seek to forge links with the Healthy Stevenage Partnership with a view to delivering on these priorities for the Council's residents.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

All documents that have been used in compiling this report, that may be available to the public, i.e. they do not contain exempt information, should be listed here:

- BD1 Gambling Act 2005
- BD2 Gambling Act 2005 (Licensing Authorities Policy Statement) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006
- BD3 Guidance for Local Authorities, 5th Edition (Gambling Commission, March 2015)
- BD4 Gambling Act 2005; Stevenage Borough Council Statement of Policy 2019-2022

APPENDICES

- A Gambling Act 2005 draft Statement of Principles 2022-2025
- B Equalities Impact Assessment

Gambling Act 2005

Statement of Principles 2022-25

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PART A – INTRODUCTION

A1. Stevenage Borough

A1.1 Stevenage Borough Council is situated in the County of Hertfordshire, which contains ten District Councils in total. Stevenage was designated as Britain’s first new town in 1946 and the Council area has a population estimated at 88104 (2018), making it the smallest in the County by population. In terms of area it is also the smallest, covering approximately 20 square miles and is surrounded by the districts of North Hertfordshire and East Hertfordshire. A map of the Council area is attached as Appendix 1.

A1.2 Set in the attractive countryside of north Hertfordshire, Stevenage is an urban authority, enjoying the amenities of a well-planned new town, together with a history dating back to Roman times. The town is divided into distinct land use areas, the town centre, Old Town and railway station are the core of the town. They are surrounded by individual residential neighbourhoods containing around 38,000 homes. Local neighbourhood centres provide shops and community facilities for residents. There are two main employment areas, one to the west of the town centre at Gunnels Wood and one to the north-east at Pin Green.

A1.3 There are a range of leisure facilities, retail parks and supermarkets. Open spaces and play areas are well spread throughout the town. Wide roads and a cycle and pedestrian network link all parts of the town. Stevenage’s railway station is on the East Coast Main Line. There are long distance rail links between London and the north. Commuter services connect the town to Kings Cross, Cambridge and Peterborough as well as nearby towns including Hitchin, Letchworth and Welwyn Garden City. The town is connected to Junctions 7 and 8 of the A1(M) which links London, the midlands and the north. The A602 connects Stevenage to Hitchin and Ware while the nearby A505 provides connections between Luton Airport and Cambridgeshire. The urban road network of Stevenage comprises three main north-south routes and four main east-west routes.

A1.4 Licensing authorities are required by the Gambling Act 2005 (the Act) to publish a statement of the principles that they propose to apply when exercising their functions. This statement must be published at least every three years. The statement must also be reviewed from “time to time” and any amended parts re-consulted upon. The statement must be then re-published.

A1.5 Stevenage Borough Council consulted widely upon this statement before finalising and publishing it. A list of those persons consulted is provided in Appendix 2. Our consultation took place between [date] and [date] 2022 and was carried out in accordance the Cabinet Office guidance on consultation principles (published March 2018) which is available at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/691383/Consultation_Principles_1_.pdf

[Number] comments were received during the consultation period.

A1.6 The policy, following consultation, went to Executive Committee on [date] 2022 and then to Full Council on [date] 2022, at which date it received approval. This version will be published by [date] 2022, and will take effect from [date] 2022.

A1.7 Should you have any comments as regards this policy statement please send them by e-mail or letter to the following contact:

Licensing Team, Stevenage Borough Council, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage, SG1 1HN licensing@stevenage.gov.uk

A1.8 It should be noted that this policy statement will not override the right of any person to make an application, make representations about an application, or apply for a review of a licence, as each will be considered on its own merits and according to the statutory requirements of the Act.

A2. The Licensing Objectives

A2.1 In exercising most of their functions under the Act, licensing authorities must have regard to the licensing objectives as set out in section 1 of the Act which are:

- a) Preventing gambling from being a source of crime or disorder, being associated with crime or disorder or being used to support crime;**
- b) Ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way;**
- c) Protecting children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling**

A2.2 It should be noted that the Gambling Commission (“the Commission”) has stated: “The requirement in relation to children is explicitly to protect them from being harmed or exploited by gambling”.

A2.3 This licensing authority is aware that, as per Section 153 of the Act, in making decisions about premises licences and temporary use notices it should aim to permit the use of premises for gambling in so far as it thinks it is:

- In accordance with any relevant code of practice issued by the Commission;
- In accordance with any relevant guidance issued by the Commission;
- Reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives; and
- In accordance with the authority’s statement of principles

A2.4 Part B of this Policy sets out in more detail how this authority will support the attainment of the licensing objectives.

A3. Declaration

A3.1 In producing the final statement, this licensing authority declares that it has had regard to the licensing objectives of the Act, the guidance issued by the Commission (5th edition March 2015), and any responses from those consulted on the statement.

A4. Each application determined on its own merits

A4.1 It is important to note that this Statement of Principles will not override the right of any person to make an application, make representations about an application, or apply for a review of a licence, as the Council will consider each on its own individual merits and in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

A5. Authorisations under the Act

A5.1 The Act provides for three categories of licence; operating licences, personal licences and premises licences. The Council will be responsible for the determination and issuing of premises licences. The responsibility for operating and personal licences rests with the Gambling Commission.

A5.2 Premises licences issued by the Council cover the following types of premises:

- casinos
- bingo premises
- betting premises
- track betting
- adult gaming centres (AGC)
- family entertainment centres (FEC)

A5.3 The Council will be responsible for the determination and issuing of five categories of permit:

- unlicensed family entertainment centre (uFEC) gaming machine permits
- (alcohol) licensed premises gaming machine permits
- prize gaming permits
- club gaming permits
- club gaming machine permits

A5.4 The Council will be responsible for the determination and issuing of two categories of temporary authorisations:

- temporary use notices (TUN)
- occasional use notices (OUN)

A5.6 The Council will be responsible for the determination and registration of applications for small society lotteries.

A6. The Gambling Commission

A6.1 The Commission regulates gambling in the public interest. It does so by keeping crime out of gambling, by ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way and by protecting children and vulnerable people.

A6.2 The Commission:

- provides independent advice to the Government about the way gambling is carried out, the effects of gambling, and the regulation of gambling generally
- issues guidance pursuant to section 25 of the Act about the way licensing authorities exercise their licensing functions under the Act and, in particular, the principles to be applied.
- issues Codes of Practice pursuant to section 24 of the Act about the way in which facilities for gambling are provided, which may also include provisions about the advertising of gambling facilities.

A7. Responsible Authorities

A7.1 The licensing authority is required by regulations to state the principles it will apply in exercising its powers under Section 157(h) of the Act to designate, in writing, a body which is competent to advise the authority about the protection of children from harm. The principles are:

- The need for the body to be responsible for an area covering the whole of the licensing authority's area; and
- The need for the body to be answerable to democratically elected persons, rather than any particular vested interest group.

A7.2 In accordance with the Commission's Guidance for local authorities, this authority designates the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board for this purpose.

A7.3 Any concerns expressed by a responsible authority in relation to their own functions cannot be taken into account unless they are relevant to the application itself and the licensing objectives. In this regard the Council will not generally take into account representations that are deemed to be irrelevant, such as:

- There are too many gambling premises in the locality (because need for gambling facilities cannot be taken into account)
- The premises are likely to be a fire risk (because public safety is not a licensing objective)
- The location of the premises is likely to lead to traffic congestion (because this does not relate to the licensing objectives)
- The premises will cause crowds to congregate in one area causing noise and nuisance (because other powers are generally available to deal with these issues. It should be noted that, unlike the Licensing Act 2003, the Gambling Act does not include as a specific licensing objective the prevention of public nuisance. Any

nuisance associated with gambling premises should be tackled under other relevant laws).

A7.4 The contact details of all the Responsible Authorities under the Act for applications in respect of premises within the Borough of Stevenage are included as Appendix 3. This information is also available via the Council's website at: www.stevenage.gov.uk.

A8. Interested parties

A8.1 Interested parties can make representations about licence applications, or apply for a review of an existing licence. These parties are defined in the Act as follows:

“For the purposes of this Part a person is an interested party in relation to an application for or in respect of a premises licence if, in the opinion of the licensing authority which issues the licence or to which the applications is made, the person:

- a) Lives sufficiently close to the premises to be likely to be affected by the authorised activities,
- b) Has business interests that might be affected by the authorised activities, or
- c) Represents persons who satisfy paragraph (a) or (b)”

A8.2 The licensing authority is required by regulations to state the principles it will apply in exercising its powers under the Act to determine whether a person is an interested party. The principles are: Each case will be decided upon its own merits. This authority will not apply a rigid rule to its decision-making. It will consider the examples of considerations provided in the Commission's Guidance for local authorities at 8.9 to 8.17. It will also consider the Commission's Guidance that "has business interests" should be given the widest possible interpretation and include partnerships, charities, faith groups and medical practices.

A8.3 Interested parties can be persons who are democratically elected such as Councillors and MPs. No specific evidence of being asked to represent an interested person will be required as long as the Councillor or MP represent the ward likely to be affected. Likewise, parish councils likely to be affected will be considered to be interested parties. Other than these however, this authority will generally require written evidence that a person/body (e.g. an advocate / relative) 'represents' someone who either lives sufficiently close to the premises to be likely to be affected by the authorised activities and/or has business interests that might be affected by the authorised activities. A letter from one of these persons, requesting the representation is sufficient.

A8.4 If individuals wish to approach Councillors to ask them to represent their views then care should be taken that the Councillors are not part of the Licensing Committee dealing with the licence application. If there are any doubts then please contact the Licensing team by e-mail at licensing@stevenage.gov.uk or 01438 242242.

A8.5 In the absence of any regulations to the contrary, representations should ideally:

- be made in writing (letter, fax or e-mail);

- be in black ink on single sides of A4 paper;
- indicate the name and address of the person or organisation making the representation;
- indicate the premises to which the representation relates;
- Indicate the proximity of the premises to the person making the representation. A sketch map or plan may be helpful to show this;
- Clearly set out the reasons for making the representation, and which objective it refers to.

A9. Exchange of Information

A9.1 Licensing authorities are required to include in their statements the principles to be applied by the authority in exercising the functions under sections 29 and 30 of the Act with respect to the exchange of information between it and the Commission, and the functions under section 350 of the Act with the respect to the exchange of information between it and the other persons listed in Schedule 6 to the Act. Those persons or bodies are listed in Schedule 6(1) as:

- a constable or police force
- an enforcement officer
- a licensing authority
- HMRC
- the First Tier Tribunal
- the Secretary of State.

A9.2 The principle that this licensing authority applies is that it will act in accordance with the provisions of the Act in its exchange of information which includes the provision that the Data Protection Act 1998 or General Data Protection Regulation will not be contravened. The licensing authority will also have regard to any Guidance issued by the Commission to local authorities on this matter when it is published, as well as any relevant regulations issued by the Secretary of State under the powers provided in the Gambling Act 2005.

A9.3 Details of applications and representations which are referred to a Licensing Committee for determination will be published in reports that are made publicly available. Personal details of people making representations will be disclosed to applicants and only be withheld from publication on the grounds of personal safety where the licensing authority is asked to do so and is satisfied that it is appropriate to do so.

A9.4 The authority will ensure that the information on the returns is accurate and sent to the Commission within agreed timescales.

A9.5 We recognise the need to share information with other agencies about our inspections and compliance activities. The Council has various policies relating to information governance, which will be considered when deciding what information to share and the process for doing so.

A9.6 Information can be accessed by data subjects via a number of routes including a Freedom of Information Request or Subject Access Request.

A10. Enforcement

A10.1 Licensing authorities are required by regulation under the Act to state the principles to be applied by the authority in exercising the functions under Part 15 of the Act with respect to the inspection of premises; and the powers under section 346 of the Act to institute criminal proceedings in respect of the offences specified.

A10.2 This licensing authority's principles are that it will be guided by the Commission's Guidance for local authorities, and will endeavour to be;

- **Proportionate:** regulators should only intervene when necessary; remedies should be appropriate to the risk posed, and costs identified and minimised;
- **Accountable:** regulators must be able to justify decisions, and be subject to public scrutiny;
- **Consistent:** rules and standards must be joined up and implemented fairly;
- **Transparent:** regulators should be open, and keep regulations simple and user friendly; and
- **Targeted:** regulation should be focused on the problem, and minimise side effects.

A10.3 In accordance with the Commission's Guidance for local authorities this licensing authority will endeavour to avoid duplication with other regulatory regimes so far as possible.

A10.4 This licensing authority has adopted and implemented a risk-based inspection programme, based on;

- The licensing objectives
- Relevant codes of practice
- Guidance issued by the Commission, in particular at Part 36
- The council's local area profile
- The principles set out in this statement of licensing policy

A10.5 This may include test purchasing activities to measure the compliance of licensed operators with aspects of the Act. When undertaking test purchasing activities, the licensing authority will undertake to liaise with the Gambling Commission and the operator to determine what other, if any, test purchasing schemes may already be in place. Irrespective of the actions

of an operator on their broader estate, test purchasing may be deemed to be an appropriate course of action.

A10.6 The main enforcement and compliance role for this licensing authority in terms of the Gambling Act 2005 will be to ensure compliance with the premises licences and other permissions that it authorises. The Commission is the enforcement body for operating and personal licences. It is also worth noting that concerns about manufacture, supply or repair of gaming machines or concerns about online or remote gambling will not be dealt with by the licensing authority but will be notified to the Commission.

A10.7 This licensing authority will also keep itself informed of developments as regards the work of the Office for Product Safety and Standards in its consideration of the regulatory functions of local authorities, in particular, with regard to the Regulators' Code (April 2014) which provides a regulatory framework that supports compliance and growth while enabling resources to be focused where they are most needed. We will make available our enforcement and compliance protocols and written agreements upon request.

A10.8 Bearing in mind the principle of transparency, the Council has adopted an Enforcement Policy which sets out the Council's approach to securing compliance with regulatory requirements and applies to all our regulatory functions, including gambling. The Policy is available on the Council's website.

A11. Licensing Authority functions

A11.1 The Licensing Authority has delegated some of its functions to the Licensing Committee and to officers. An explanation of these arrangements is shown in Appendix 5.

A11.2 Licensing Authorities are required under the Act to:

- Be responsible for the licensing of premises where gambling activities are to take place by issuing *Premises Licences*
- Issue *Provisional Statements*
- Regulate *members' clubs* and *miners' welfare institutes* who wish to undertake certain gaming activities via issuing Club Gaming Permits and/or Club Machine Permits
- Issue *Club Machine Permits* to *Commercial Clubs*
- Grant permits for the use of certain lower stake gaming machines at *unlicensed Family Entertainment Centres*
- Receive notifications from alcohol licensed premises (under the Licensing Act 2003) for the use of two or fewer gaming machines
- Issue *Licensed Premises Gaming Machine Permits* for premises licensed to sell/supply alcohol for consumption on the licensed premises, under the Licensing Act 2003, where there are more than two machines

- Register *small society lotteries* below prescribed thresholds
- Issue *Prize Gaming Permits*
- Receive and Endorse *Temporary Use Notices*
- Receive *Occasional Use Notices*
- Provide information to the Gambling Commission regarding details of licences issued (see section above on 'information exchange')
- Maintain registers of the permits and licences that are issued under these functions

It should be noted that local licensing authorities will not be involved in licensing remote gambling at all. This will fall to the Commission via operating licences.

PART B – MEETING THE LICENSING OBJECTIVES

B1. Preventing gambling from being a source of crime or disorder, being associated with crime or disorder or being used to support crime.

B1.1 The Commission will take the lead role in keeping gambling free from crime by vetting applicants for operator and personal licences. The licensing authority will have to be satisfied that the premises will not adversely affect the licensing objective and is compliant with the Commission's Guidance, codes of practice and this policy statement.

B1.2 The licensing authority will expect the applicant to have a good understanding of the local area in which they either operate, or intend to operate, a gambling premises. As part of the application, the applicant will provide evidence to demonstrate that in operating the premises they will meet this licensing objective.

B1.3 Examples of the specific steps the licensing authority may take to address this area can be found in the section covering specific premises in Part C and in relation to permits and notices in Part D of this policy.

B2. Ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way

B2.1 The Commission is the body primarily concerned with ensuring that operators conduct gambling activities in a fair and open way, except in the case of tracks.

B2.2 The licensing authority will notify the Commission of any concerns about misleading advertising, the absence of required game rules, or any other matters as set out in the Commission's Licence Conditions and Code of Practice.

B2.3 Examples of the specific steps the licensing authority may take to address this area can be found in the section covering specific premises in Part C, and in relation to permits and notices in Part D of this statement.

B3. Protecting children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling.

B3.1 Protection of Children: Persons under 18 cannot be admitted to many types of gambling premises. This objective means preventing children from taking part in most types of gambling.

B3.2 Section 45 of the Act provides the definition for child and young person:

Meaning of "child" and "young person"

1) In this Act "child" means an individual who is less than 16 years old.

2) In this Act "young person" means an individual who is not a child but who is less than 18 years old.

B3.3 Children and young persons may take part in private and non-commercial betting and gaming, but the Act restricts the circumstances in which they may participate in gambling or be on premises where gambling is taking place as follows:

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- casinos, betting shops and adult gaming centres are not permitted to admit anyone under 18;
- bingo clubs may admit those under 18 but must have policies to ensure that they do not play bingo, or play category B or C machines that are restricted to those over 18;
- family entertainment centres and premises licensed to sell alcohol for consumption on the premises can admit under 18s, but they are not permitted to play category C machines which are restricted to those over 18;
- clubs with a club premises certificate can admit under 18s, but they must have policies to ensure those under 18 do not play machines other than category D machines;
- All tracks can admit under 18s, but they may only have access to gambling areas on days where races or other sporting events are taking place, or are expected to take place. Tracks will be required to have policies to ensure that under 18s do not participate in gambling other than on category D machines.

B3.4 The licensing authority will have regard to any code of practice which the Commission issues as regards this licensing objective in relation to specific premises.

B3.5 The licensing authority will consider whether specific measures are required at particular premises, with regard to this licensing objective. These measures may include supervision of entrances / machines, segregation of areas, etc. Examples of the specific steps the Council may take to address this area can be found in the section covering specific premises in Part C and in relation to permits and notices in Part D of this policy.

B3.6 Where gambling premises are located in sensitive areas where young and/or vulnerable persons may be present, for example near schools, this licensing authority will consider imposing restrictions on advertising the gambling facilities on such premises where it is considered relevant and reasonably consistent with the Licensing Objectives.

B3.7 Protection of vulnerable people: It is difficult to define the term “vulnerable person”. The Commission, in its Guidance to Local Authorities, does not seek to offer a definition, but will, for regulatory purposes assume that this group includes people:

“who gamble more than they want to, people who gamble beyond their means, elderly persons, and people who may not be able to make informed or balanced decisions about gambling due to a mental impairment, or because of the influence of alcohol or drugs.”

B3.8 The Commission’s Code of Practice clearly describes the policies and procedures that operators should put in place regarding:

- combating problem gambling
- access to gambling by children and young persons
- information on how to gamble responsibly and help for problem gamblers

- customer interaction
- self-exclusion
- employment of children and young persons

B3.9 The licensing authority may consider any of the measures detailed below as suitable methods to protect persons (children or vulnerable persons) from harm or at risk of being exploited by gambling. The business' local risk assessment in accordance with SR code provision 10.1.2, will consider these controls and any subsequent controls that have equal or better effect :

- leaflets offering assistance to problem gamblers should be available on gambling premises in a location that is both prominent and discreet
- training for staff members which focuses on an employee's ability to detect a person who may be vulnerable and providing support to vulnerable persons
- self-exclusion schemes
- operators should demonstrate their understanding of best practice issued by organisations that represent the interests of vulnerable people
- posters and leaflets with GamCare Helpline and website displayed in prominent locations
- external advertising to be positioned or designed not to entice passers-by.

B3.10 It is a requirement of the Commission's Licence Conditions and Codes of Practice (LCCP), under Section 3, that licensees must have and put into effect policies and procedures intended to promote socially responsible gambling.

B3.11 The LCCP say that licensees must make an annual financial contribution to one or more organisation(s) which between them research into the prevention and treatment of gambling-related harm, develop harm prevention approaches and identify and fund treatment to those harmed by gambling.

B3.12 The Council strongly believes that all licensed premises have a responsibility to ensure that safeguarding is a key priority for all businesses in respect of staff, customers and any person in the vicinity of the premises.

B3.13 All business owners and management should sufficiently understand safeguarding matters including, but not limited to:

- gangs and knife crime
- county lines
- modern day slavery
- child sexual exploitation
- supply, distribution or taking of illegal substances

to enable them to spot warning signs of any safeguarding matter and know who to report it

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to. Information and training materials can be found on the websites of Hertfordshire County Council and Hertfordshire Police.

B3.14 Applicants and licence holders are encouraged to ensure that suitable management controls are in place to address potential safeguarding concerns. Measures could include, but would not be limited to:

- awareness training for staff, including indicators to look out for;
- regular patrols of the premises, including external areas and the immediate proximity, to identify any vulnerable persons;
- close monitoring of patrons as they leave the premises;
- recording and reporting concerns to the police;
- implementing suitable safeguarding policies and procedures

B3.15 The Council acknowledges that child sexual exploitation awareness (CSE) should be applied more broadly than licensed premises, particularly as children are not permitted access to most gambling premises. Applicants should be equally aware of children in the proximity of the premises that may be waiting for, or seeking, older persons.

B3.16 Applicants and Licence Holders of relevant premises (pubs and clubs with gaming machines, bingo premises and unlicensed family entertainment centres) are to ensure that suitable management controls are in place to safeguard children against the risk of CSE. Measures may include, but are not limited to:

- awareness training for staff;
- regular patrols of the premises, including external areas and the immediate proximity, to identify any vulnerable children;
- close monitoring of patrons as they leave the premises;
- recording and reporting concerns to the police.

B3.17 The Council anticipates applicants to be aware of 'risk indicators' of CSE which include, but are not limited to:

- developing relationships between a child and an older person
- children in the company of a group of older persons
- children regularly attending premises and meeting with several different older persons, particularly where older persons may be facilitating gambling for children
- children outside of licensed premises developing relationships with an older person, particularly an older person facilitating gambling for children
- children leaving the locality of the premises with older persons, particularly with a group of older persons
- children looking uncomfortable in the company of, or leaving with, older persons, particularly groups of older persons

B3.18 Whilst the Council does not wish to create the impression that all contact between children and older persons is inappropriate, it is strongly of the view that licence holders should be aware of the risks of CSE and should proactively manage their premises to minimise those risks.

B3.19 The Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (HSCB) have a dual role in respect of preventing CSE within licensed premises. The HSCB is a responsible authority under the Act having been nominated by the Council to undertake this function. The HSCB also monitors compliance with the statutory requirements under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Applicants are encouraged to visit

the HSCB website for advice www.hertssafeguarding.org.uk

~~B3.20 The Council expects applicants to demonstrate the measures they will take to safeguard against CSE in their local risk assessment.~~

PART C – PREMISES LICENCES: CONSIDERATION OF APPLICATIONS

C1. General Principles

C1.1 The Act contains three licensing objectives. In this revision of its Statement of Policy, the Licensing Authority seeks to assist applicants by setting out the considerations we will apply when determining applications under the Act.

C1.2 The Council will issue premises licences to allow premises to be used for certain types of gambling. These are:

- a) casino premises,
- b) bingo premises,
- c) betting premises including tracks and premises used by betting intermediaries,
- d) adult gaming centre premises, or
- e) family entertainment centre premises.

C1.3 Premises licences are subject to the requirements set out in the Act and regulations, as well as specific mandatory and default conditions, which the Secretary of State has detailed in regulations. The Council will exclude default conditions and attach others, where were considered appropriate due to evidence of a risk to the licensing objectives. Paragraph C9.1 below clarifies the position with respect to mandatory and default conditions.

C1.4 The Commission has issued Codes of Practice for each interest area for which they must have regard. The Council will also have regard to these Codes of Practice.

C2. Decision making

C2.1 When making decisions about premises licences the Council is under a statutory duty by virtue of s.153 of the Act to aim to permit the use of premises for gambling in so far it is considered to be:

- in accordance with any relevant code of practice issued by the Commission;
- in accordance with any relevant guidance issued by the Commission;
- reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives; and
- in accordance with our Statement.

C2.2 The licensing authority will not accept moral objections to gambling as a valid reason to reject applications for premises licences (except with regard to any 'no casino resolution' - see section on Casinos). Issues of nuisance, planning permission and building regulation are not issues that can be taken into account when considering an application for a premises licence.

C2.3 The licensing authority will not consider whether there is demand for gambling as valid criteria when deciding whether to grant or reject applications for premises licences. Each

application must be considered on its merits without regard for demand, reflecting the statutory 'aim to permit' principle outlined above.

C2.4 However, the authority will consider the location of a premises so far as it relates to the licensing objectives and whether there is need for condition(s) to mitigate risks in respect of gambling in a particular location.

C2.5 The Council's Scheme of Delegation is reproduced at Appendix 5. The General Purposes Committee has been established to deal with licensing issues and the determination of applications in certain cases, i.e. those where representations have been made or where premises licences require review. Uncontentious applications (i.e. those where no representations have been made) will be delegated to officers.

C2.6 Where representations are received the Council will consider whether they are vexatious, frivolous or if they would influence the Council's determination of the application.

C3. Environmental considerations

C3.1 Whilst the Council acknowledges that protection of the environment is not a licensing objective therefore not a relevant consideration in the decision-making process, it has declared a climate emergency and expects applicants to make every effort to protect the environment.

C3.2 Matters that applicants/licence holders could promote to protect the environment include, but are not limited to:

- avoiding single use plastic cups if providing drinks to customers
- avoiding the use of plastic pen for completing betting slips
- consideration of the building's carbon footprint
- company policies on environmental issues

C4. Public health and gambling

C4.1 The Council agrees with the Gambling Commission's position that gambling-related harm should be considered a public health issue.

C4.2 Gambling is a legitimate leisure activity enjoyed by many and the majority of those who gamble appear to do so without exhibiting any signs of problematic behaviour. There are however significant numbers of people who do experience significant harm as a result of their gambling and these people's problems are often undetected.

C4.3 For these problem gamblers, harm can include higher levels of physical and mental illness, debt problems, relationship breakdown and, in some cases, criminality. It can also be associated with substance misuse.

C4.4 There can also be considerable negative effects experienced by the wider group of people around a problem gambler. The health and wellbeing of partners, children, and friends can all be negatively affected.

C4.5 The Council considers that public health teams, whilst not a statutory responsible authority under the Act, can still assist the Council to address problem gambling-related harms in its district.

C4.6 The Council will therefore engage with the local public health team in the further development of this Statement of Principles and the Local Area Profile. The public health team should, where appropriate, be able to assist with matters including, but not limited to:

- identifying and interpreting health data and evidence to inform the review of the Statement and develop a locally tailored local area profile
- making decisions that benefit and protect the health and wellbeing of the district
- conducting a health impact assessment of gambling in the district or assessing any existing relevant data.

C5. Definition of “premises”

C5.1 Premises are defined in the Act as “any place”. Section 152 therefore prevents more than one premises licence applying to any place. However, it is possible for a single building to be subject to more than one premises licence, provided they are for different parts of the building and the different parts of the building can be reasonably regarded as being different premises. This approach has been taken to allow large, multiple unit premises such as a pleasure park, pier, track or shopping mall to obtain discrete premises licences, where appropriate safeguards are in place. However, the authority will pay particular attention if there are issues about sub-divisions of a single building or plot and should ensure that mandatory conditions relating to access between premises are observed.

C5.2 The Commission states in its Guidance to Licensing Authorities that: “In most cases the expectation is that a single building / plot will be the subject of an application for a licence, for example, 32 High Street. But, that does not mean 32 High Street cannot be the subject of separate premises licences for the basement and ground floor, if they are configured acceptably. Whether different parts of a building can properly be regarded as being separate premises will depend on the circumstances. The location of the premises will clearly be an important consideration and the suitability of the division is likely to be a matter for discussion between the operator and the licensing officer. However, the Commission does not consider that areas of a building that are artificially or temporarily separated, for example by ropes or moveable partitions, can properly be regarded as different premises. If a premises is located within a wider venue, a licensing authority should request a plan of the venue on which the premises should be identified as a separate unit. The Commission recognises that different configurations may be appropriate under different circumstances but the crux of the matter is whether the proposed premises are genuinely separate premises that merit their own licence - with the machine entitlements that brings – and are not an artificially created part of what is readily identifiable as a single premises.”

C5.3 The licensing authority takes particular note of the Commission’s Guidance, which states that licensing authorities should pay attention in considering applications for multiple licences for a building, and those relating to a discrete part of a building used for other (non-gambling) purposes. In particular this Authority is aware that entrances and exits from parts of a building covered by one or more licences should be separate and identifiable so that the separation of

different premises is not compromised and that people do not 'drift' into a gambling area. The Authority will pay particular attention to applications where access to the licensed premises is through other premises (which themselves may be licensed or unlicensed). Additionally, the third licensing objective seeks to protect children from being harmed by gambling. In practice, this means not only preventing children from taking part in gambling, but also preventing them from being in close proximity to gambling. Therefore, licence holders should configure premises so that they do not invite children to participate in, have accidental access to or closely observe gambling where they are prohibited from participating.

C5.4 The Guidance also gives a list of factors which the licensing authority should be aware of, which may include:

- Does the premises have a separate registration for business rates?
- Is the neighbouring premises owned by the same person or someone else?
- Can each of the premises be accessed from the street or a public passageway?
- Can the premises only be accessed from any other gambling premises?

C5.5 Clearly, there will be specific issues that the Authority will consider before granting such applications, for example, whether children can gain access; compatibility of the two establishments; and ability to comply with the requirements of the Act. But, in addition, an overriding consideration should be whether, taken as a whole, the co-location of the licensed premises with other facilities has the effect of creating an arrangement that otherwise would be prohibited under the Act.

C5.6 This authority will consider these and other relevant factors in making its decision, depending on all the circumstances of the case.

C5.7 The Commission's relevant access provisions for each premises type are reproduced below:

C5.7.1 **Casinos**

- The principal access entrance to the premises must be from a street (as defined at 7.23 of the Guidance)
- No entrance to a casino must be from premises that are used wholly or mainly by children and/or young persons
- No customer must be able to enter a casino directly from any other premises which holds a gambling premises licence

C5.7.2 **Adult Gaming Centre**

- No customer must be able to access the premises directly from any other licensed gambling premises

C5.7.3 Betting Shops

- Access must be from a street (as per Para 7.23 Guidance to Licensing Authorities) or from another premises with a betting premises licence
- No direct access from a betting shop to another premises used for the retail sale of merchandise or services. In effect there cannot be an entrance to a betting shop from a shop of any kind and you could not have a betting shop at the back of a café – the whole area would have to be licensed.

C5.7.4 Tracks

- No customer should be able to access the premises directly from: -
 - a casino
 - an adult gaming centre

C5.7.5 Bingo Premises

- No customer must be able to access the premises directly from:
 - a casino
 - an adult gaming centre
 - a betting premises, other than a track

C5.7.6 Family Entertainment Centre

- No customer must be able to access the premises directly from:
 - a casino
 - an adult gaming centre
 - a betting premises, other than a track

C5.8 Part 7 of the Commission's Guidance to Licensing Authorities contains further guidance on this issue, which this authority will also take into account in its decision-making.

C6. Premises "ready for gambling"

C6.1 The Guidance states that a licence to use premises for gambling should only be issued in relation to premises that the licensing authority can be satisfied are going to be ready to be used for gambling in the reasonably near future, consistent with the scale of building or alterations required before the premises are brought into use.

C6.2 Premises licence applications will be considered upon application. Where applicants do not have the right to occupy and/or does not have an operating licence issued by the Gambling Commission, the applicant will be advised to submit a provisional statement instead.

C6.3 In deciding whether a premises licence can be granted where there are outstanding construction or alteration works at a premises, this authority will determine applications on their merits, applying a two stage consideration process:

- First, whether the premises ought to be permitted to be used for gambling
- Second, whether appropriate conditions can be put in place to cater for the situation that the premises are not yet in the state in which they ought to be before gambling takes place.

C6.4 Applicants should note that this authority is entitled to decide that it is appropriate to grant a licence subject to conditions, but it is not obliged to grant such a licence.

C6.5 More detailed examples of the circumstances in which such a licence may be granted can be found at paragraphs 7.58-7.65 of the Guidance.

C7. Location

C7.1 The Council will not consider demand issues with regard to the location of premises but will consider the potential impact of the location on the licensing objectives in its decision-making. In line with the Commission's Guidance to Licensing Authorities, the Council will pay particular attention to the protection of children and vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling, as well as issues of crime and disorder.

C7.2 With regards to these licensing objectives it is the Council's policy, upon receipt of any relevant representation to look at specific location issues which include:

- the possible impact that a gambling premises may have on any sensitive premises that provide services to children, young people or vulnerable people; e.g. a school or vulnerable adult centre;
- the possible impact a gambling premises may have on a residential area where there is a high concentration of families with children;
- the nature and size of the gambling activities taking place;
- any levels of crime in the area.

C7.3 A local area profile will be produced by the authority and published on its website. This will highlight areas, if any, within the District which the licensing authority, in consultation with the responsible authorities and other partner agencies (in particular, the Public Health unit of Hertfordshire County Council), considers to present higher than normal risks for the location of a gambling premises. This may be due to large levels of vulnerable persons living in a particular locality, the proximity of a school, youth centre or medical facility, a high level of deprivation, or other factors which the authority believes should be taken into consideration.

C7.4 We expect operators, both when applying for new premises licences and when reviewing their existing premises, to take account of our local area profile within their own local risk assessments (described below), and to implement suitable and sufficient measures to mitigate

any risks identified which may arise as a result of the opening or continuation of trade at those premises.

C7.5 We will use the local area profile in assessing premises licence applications and the risk assessments supplied by the applicant or existing licence holders.

C7.6 The Council will need to be satisfied that there is sufficient evidence that the particular location of the premises would be harmful to the licensing objectives before the location can be considered as inappropriate for a licensed premises. It is a requirement of the LCCP, under Section 10, for licensees to assess the local risks to the licensing objectives posed by the provisions of gambling facilities at each of their premises, and have policies, procedures and control measures to mitigate those risks. In undertaking their risk assessments, they must take into account relevant matters identified in this policy statement.

C7.7 The LCCP say that licensees must review (and update as necessary) their local risk assessments:

- to take account of significant changes in local circumstances, including those identified in this policy statement;
- when there are significant changes at a licensee's premises that may affect their mitigation of local risks;
- when applying for a variation of a premises licence; and
- in any case, undertake a local risk assessment when applying for a new premises licence.

C7.8 This authority will expect the local risk assessment to consider as a minimum:

- the location of services for children such as schools, playgrounds, leisure/community centres and other areas where children will gather;
- the demographics of the area in relation to vulnerable groups;
- whether the premises is in an area subject to high levels of crime and/or disorder.

C7.9 Local risk assessments should show how all vulnerable people, including people with gambling dependencies are protected.

C7.10 This authority would also strongly recommend that the following matters are considered by operators when making their risk assessment, and they have taken action, in the form of conditions, where the operators have not demonstrated that they are sufficiently mitigating the risks. This list is not exhaustive and other factors not in this list that are identified must be taken into consideration:

- Information held by the licensee regarding self-exclusions and incidences of underage gambling;
- Gaming trends that may reflect benefit payments;

- Arrangement for localised exchange of information regarding self-exclusions and gaming trends;
- Urban setting such as proximity to schools, commercial environment, factors affecting footfall;
- Assessing staffing levels when a local college or similar establishment closes for the day, and the students begin to vacate the grounds;
- Proximity of machines to the entrance door ;
- Age verification policies including 'Think 21' and 'Think 25';
- Consideration of line of sight from the counter to gambling machines;
- Larger operators (e.g. William Hill, Coral, Ladbrokes, Betfred, and Paddy Power) are responsible for conducting/taking part in underage testing, the results of which are shared with the Gambling Commission. However, operators are urged to also make the results available to licensing authorities. Where the licensing authority receives intelligence in relation to failed 'Think 21' or similar test purchases, the licensing authority would encourage the consideration of additional tasking over the standard once a year visits as a means of assessing risk;
- Providing the licensing authority with details when a child or young person repeatedly attempts to gamble on their premises. This may provide the Licensing Authority with an opportunity to consider safeguarding concerns.
- Range of facilities in proximity to the licensed premises such as other gambling outlets, banks, post offices, refreshment and entertainment type facilities
- Known problems in the area, street drinkers, youths participating in anti-social behaviour, drug dealing activities, etc.

C7.11 The authority would expect a risk assessment to be tailored to each premises and not solely based on a 'standard' template. The Council would also expect that each assessment is completed by a suitably competent person.

C7.12 It will be the responsibility of the gambling operator to assign the assessor for assessing the local risks for their premises. The person assigned as the assessor must be competent to undertake this role as failure properly to carry out this function could result in a breach of the provisions of the LCCP. The Commission has not produced any guidance on the competencies of assessors, however the Council would expect the assessor to understand how the premises operate or will operate, its design, and where it is located. The assessor will need to understand the local area and can use staff or area managers to assist in gaining an understanding of that local area. The assessor should also be suitably experienced in assessing gambling related risk and identification of appropriate controls.

C7.13 The authority expects that local risk assessments are kept on the individual premises and are available for inspection.

C7.14 It should be noted that this policy does not preclude any application being made and each application will be decided on its merits, with the onus upon the applicant to show how potential concerns can be overcome.

C7.15 This authority expects that local risk assessments and any supplementary information, such as plans, local statistical data, etc., would be presented to this authority as part of any application for a new or variation of a licence

C8. Planning

C8.1 The Commission's Guidance to Licensing Authorities states:

(Para. 7.58) –

In determining applications, the licensing authority should not take into consideration matters that are not related to gambling and the licensing objectives. One example would be the likelihood of the applicant obtaining planning permission or building regulations approval for their proposal. Licensing authorities should bear in mind that a premises licence, once it comes into effect, authorises premises to be used for gambling. Accordingly, a licence to use premises for gambling should only be issued in relation to premises that the licensing authority can be satisfied are going to be ready to be used for gambling in the reasonably near future, consistent with the scale of building or alterations required before the premises are brought into use. Equally, licences should only be issued where they are expected to be used for the gambling activity named on the licence. This is why the Act allows a potential operator to apply for a provisional statement if construction of the premises is not yet complete, or they need alteration, or he does not yet have a right to occupy them.

C8.2 This authority will not take into account irrelevant matters as per the above guidance. In addition this authority notes the following excerpt from the Guidance:

(Para. 7.65) – “

When dealing with a premises licence application for finished buildings, the licensing authority should not take into account whether those buildings have to comply with the necessary planning or building consents. Nor should fire or health and safety risks be taken into account. Those matters should be dealt with under relevant planning control, building and other regulations, and must not form part of the consideration for the premises licence. S.210 of the Act prevents licensing authorities taking into account the likelihood of the proposal by the applicant obtaining planning or building consent when considering a premises licence application. Equally, the grant of a gambling premises licence does not prejudice or prevent any action that may be appropriate under the law relating to planning or building.

C9. Duplication with other regulatory regimes

C9.1 This licensing authority seeks to avoid any duplication with other statutory or regulatory systems where possible, including planning. This authority will not consider whether a licence application is likely to be awarded planning permission or building regulations approval, in its consideration of it. It will though, listen to, and consider carefully, any concerns about conditions

which are not able to be met by licensees due to planning restrictions, should such a situation arise

C9.2 When dealing with a premises licence application for finished buildings, this authority will not take into account whether those buildings have to comply with the necessary planning or buildings consents. Fire or health and safety risks will not be taken into account, as these matters are dealt with under relevant planning control, buildings and other regulations and must not form part of the consideration for the premises licence.

C10. Licensing objectives

C10.1 Premises licences granted must be reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives. With regard to these objectives, we have considered the Commission's Guidance and have set out our policy in Part B.

C11. Conditions

C11.1 The Secretary of State has set mandatory and default conditions and the Commission has set Licence Conditions and Codes of Practice on Operator's Licences which are necessary for the general good conduct of gambling premises, therefore it is unlikely that the Council will need to impose individual conditions imposing a more restricted regime in relation to matters that have already been dealt with.

C11.2 If the licensing authority is minded to impose conditions because there are regulatory concerns of an exceptional nature, then any additional licence conditions must relate to the licensing objectives.

C11.3 Any conditions attached to licences will be proportionate and will be:

- Relevant to the need to make the proposed building suitable as a gambling facility;
- Directly related to the premises and the type of licence applied for;
- Fairly and reasonably related to the scale and type of premises; and
- Reasonable in all other respects.

C11.4 Decisions upon individual conditions will be made on a case by case basis, although there will be a number of measures this licensing authority will consider utilising should there be a perceived need, such as the use of supervisors, appropriate signage for adult only areas, etc. There are specific comments made in this regard under some of the licence types below. This licensing authority will also expect the licence applicant to offer his/her own suggestions as to way in which the licensing objectives can be met effectively.

C11.5 This licensing authority will also consider specific measures that may be required for buildings that are subject to multiple premises licences. Such measures may include the supervision of entrances; segregation of gambling from non-gambling areas frequented by children; and the supervision of gaming machines in non-adult gambling specific premises in

order to pursue the licensing objectives. These matters are in accordance with the Commission's Guidance.

C11.6 This authority will also consider whether additional safeguards are necessary in premises where category C or above machines are on offer and children are admitted. Each premise will be considered individually and additional safeguards may include:

- All such machines are located in an area of the premises which is separated from the remainder of the premises by a physical barrier which is effective to prevent access other than through a designated entrance;
- Only adults are admitted to the area where these machines are located;
- Access to the area where the machines are located is supervised;
- The area where these machines are located is arranged so that it can be observed by the staff or the licence holder; and,
- At the entrance to and inside any such areas there are prominently displayed notices indicating that access to the area is prohibited to persons under 18.

These considerations will apply to premises including buildings where multiple premises licences are applicable.

C11.7 This licensing authority is aware that tracks may be subject to one or more than one premises licence, provided each licence relates to a specified area of the track. As per the Commission's Guidance, this licensing authority will consider the impact upon the third licensing objective and the need to ensure that entrances to each type of premises are distinct and that children are excluded from gambling areas where they are not permitted to enter.

C11.8 It is noted that there are conditions that the licensing authority cannot attach to premises licences, which are:

- Any condition on the premises licence which makes it impossible to comply with an operating licence condition;
- Conditions relating to gaming machine categories, numbers, or method of operation;
- Conditions which provide that membership of a club or body be required (the Act specifically removes the membership requirement for casino and bingo clubs and this provision prevents it being reinstated); and,
- Conditions in relation to stakes, fees, winning or prizes.

C12. Door Supervisors

C12.1 The Commission advises in its Guidance for licensing authorities that if a licensing authority is concerned that a premises may attract disorder or be subject to attempts at unauthorised access (for example by children and young persons) then it may require entrances to the premises are controlled by door supervisors in order to protect of children and vulnerable

persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling, and also in terms of preventing premises becoming a source of crime. The licensing authority is entitled, under those circumstances, to impose a premises licence condition to this effect.

C12.2 Where operators and licensing authorities decide that supervision of entrances/machines is appropriate for particular cases it will need to be decided whether these supervisors need to be SIA licensed or not. It will not be automatically assumed that they need to be, as the statutory requirements for different types of premises vary (as per Guidance, Part 33)

C13. Adult Gaming Centres

C13.1 An Adult Gaming Centre (AGC) is one of three types of amusement arcade. This type of arcade can provide higher pay-out gaming machines (Category B3 and B4) and access is restricted to persons who are aged 18 years or over.

C13.2 This licensing authority will specifically have regard to the need to protect children and vulnerable persons from harm or being exploited by gambling and will expect the applicant to satisfy the authority that there will be sufficient measures to, for example, ensure that under 18 year olds do not have access to the premises.

C13.3 This licensing authority may consider measures to meet the licensing objectives such as:

- Proof of age schemes
- CCTV
- Supervision of entrances / machine areas
- Physical separation of areas
- Location of entry
- Notices / signage
- Specific opening hours
- Self-exclusion schemes
- Provision of information leaflets/helpline numbers for organisations such as GamCare.

This list is not mandatory, nor exhaustive, and is merely indicative of example measures.

C14. Licensed Family Entertainment Centres

C14.1 A Licensed family entertainment centre (LFEC) is the second type of amusement arcade. This type of arcade can provide the lowest two categories of gaming machine (category C and D). Children can enter an LFEC but they can only gamble on category D machines. All category C machines must be located in a separate area, which can only be accessed by persons who are aged 18 years or over.

C14.2 This licensing authority will specifically have regard to the need to protect children and vulnerable persons from harm or being exploited by gambling and will expect the applicant to satisfy the authority, for example, that there will be sufficient measures to ensure that under 18 year olds do not have access to the adult only gaming machine areas.

C14.3 This licensing authority may consider measures to meet the licensing objectives such as:

- CCTV
- Supervision of entrances/machine areas
- Physical separation of areas
- Location of entry
- Notices / signage
- Specific opening hours
- Self-exclusion schemes
- Provision of information leaflets/helpline numbers for organisations such as GamCare
- Measures/training for staff on how to deal with suspected truant school children on the premises

This list is not mandatory, nor exhaustive, and is merely indicative of example measures.

C14.4 This licensing authority will, as per the Commission's guidance, refer to the Commission's website to see any conditions that apply to operating licences covering the way in which the area containing the category C machines should be delineated. This licensing authority will also make itself aware of any mandatory or default conditions on these premises licences, when they have been published.

C15. Casinos

C15.1 The Act states that a casino is an arrangement whereby people are given the opportunity to participate in one or more casino games. Casino games are defined as a game of chance which is not equal chance gaming. This means that casino games offer the chance for multiple participants to take part in a game competing against the house or bank at different odds to their fellow players. Casinos can also provide equal chance gaming and gaming machines. Large and small casinos can also provide betting machines.

C15.2 This licensing authority has not passed a 'no casino' resolution under Section 166 of the Gambling Act 2005, but is aware that it has the power to do so. Should this licensing authority decide in the future to pass such a resolution, it will update this policy statement with details of that resolution. Any such decision will be made by the Full Council.

C16. Bingo premises

C16.1 A Bingo Hall is a place in which Bingo is played. There is no legal definition of Bingo but it is a game in which players mark off numbers on cards as the numbers are drawn randomly by the caller, the winner being the first person to mark off all the numbers on their card.

C16.2 The Commission's Guidance states at paragraph 18.5: "Licensing authorities will need to satisfy themselves that bingo can be played in any bingo premises for which they issue a premises licence." This will be a relevant consideration where the operator of an existing bingo premises applies to vary their licence to exclude an area of the existing premises from its ambit and then applies for a new premises licence, or multiple licences, for that or those excluded areas.

C16.3 This authority notes the Guidance at paragraph 18.9 regarding the unusual circumstances in which the splitting of a pre-existing premises into two adjacent premises might be permitted, and in particular that it is not permissible to locate sixteen category B3 gaming machines in one of the resulting premises, as the gaming machine entitlement for that premises would be exceeded.

C16.4 The authority also notes the Guidance at paragraph 18.7 that children and young people are allowed into bingo premises; however they are not permitted to participate in the bingo and if category B or C machines are made available for use these must be separated from areas where children and young people are allowed.

C17. Betting premises

C17.1 The Act contains a single class of licence for betting premises however within this single class there are different types of premises which require licensing such as high street bookmakers, bookmakers located in self-contained facilities at racecourses as well as the general betting premises licences that track operators will require.

C17.2 With regard to betting machines, Section 181 of the Act states:

"A condition of a betting premises licence may relate to –

- a) the number of machines used on the premises for the purpose of making or accepting bets;
- b) the nature of those machines;
- c) the circumstances in which those machines are made available for use."

C17.3 When considering whether to impose a condition on a licence the council will take into account the size of the premises, the number of counter positions available for person-to-person transactions, and the ability of staff to monitor the use of the machines.

C17.4 Where certain measures are not already addressed by the mandatory and default conditions and the Commission's Codes of Practice or by the applicant, the council may consider licence conditions to address such issues.

C18. Gaming machines in gambling premises

C18.1 The Social responsibility code provisions 9.1.1 and 9.1.2 deal with the provision of gaming machines in betting and bingo premises respectively.

C18.2 Both provisions state that:

Gaming machines may be made available for use on licensed betting/bingo premises only where there are also substantive facilities for non-remote betting/bingo, provided in reliance on this licence, available at the premises.

C18.3 In both cases the provisions require:

- facilities for gambling must only be offered in a manner which provides for appropriate supervision of those facilities by staff at all times; and
- the license must ensure that the function along with the internal and/or external presentation of the premises are such that a customer can reasonably be expected to recognise that it is a premises licensed for the purpose of providing betting/bingo facilities.

C19. Tracks

C19.1 There are no, or very few, opportunities for betting at tracks within the Borough. Only one premises licence can be issued for any particular premises at any time unless the premises is a 'track'. A track is a site where races or other sporting events take place.

C19.2 This licensing authority is aware that tracks may be subject to one or more than one premises licence, provided each licence relates to a specified area of the track. As per the Commission's Guidance, this licensing authority will especially consider the impact upon the third licensing objective (i.e. the protection of children and vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling) and the need to ensure that entrances to each type of premises are distinct and that children are excluded from gambling areas where they are not permitted to enter.

C19.3 This authority will therefore expect the premises licence applicant to demonstrate suitable measures to ensure that children do not have access to adult only gaming facilities. It is noted that children and young persons will be permitted to enter track areas where facilities for betting are provided on days when dog-racing and/or horse racing takes place, but that they are still prevented from entering areas where gaming machines (other than category D machines) are provided.

C19.4 This licensing authority may consider measures to meet the licensing objectives such as:

- Proof of age schemes
- CCTV
- Supervision of entrances / machine areas

- Physical separation of areas
- Location of entry
- Notices / signage
- Specific opening hours
- Self-exclusion schemes
- Provision of information leaflets / helpline numbers for organisations such as GamCare

This list is not mandatory, nor exhaustive, and is merely indicative of example measures.

C19.5 Gaming machines - Where the applicant holds a pool betting operating licence and is going to use his entitlement to four gaming machines, machines (other than category D machines) should be located in areas from which children are excluded. Children and young persons are not prohibited from playing category D gaming machines on a track.

C19.6 Betting machines - This licensing authority will, as per Part 6 of the Commission's Guidance, take into account the size of the premises and the ability of staff to monitor the use of the machines by children and young persons (it is an offence for those under 18 to bet) or by vulnerable people, when considering the number/nature/circumstances of betting machines an operator wants to offer.

C19.7 Applications and plans - The Act requires applicants to submit plans of the premises with their application, in order to ensure that the licensing authority has the necessary information to make an informed judgment about whether the premises are fit for gambling. The plan will also be used for the licensing authority to plan future premises inspection activity.

C19.8 Plans for tracks do not need to be in a particular scale, but should be drawn to scale and should be sufficiently detailed to include the information required by regulations.

C19.9 Some tracks may be situated on agricultural land where the perimeter is not defined by virtue of an outer wall or fence, such as point-to-point racetracks. In such instances, where an entry fee is levied, track premises licence holders may erect temporary structures to restrict access to premises.

C19.10 In the rare cases where the outer perimeter cannot be defined, it is likely that the track in question will not be specifically designed for the frequent holding of sporting events or races. In such cases betting facilities may be better provided through occasional use notices where the boundary premises do not need to be defined.

C19.11 This authority appreciates that it is sometimes difficult to define the precise location of betting areas on tracks. The precise location of betting facilities is not required to be shown on track plans, both by virtue of the fact that betting is permitted anywhere on the premises and because of the difficulties associated with pinpointing exact locations for some types of track. Applicants should provide sufficient information that this authority can satisfy itself that the plan

indicates the main areas where betting might take place. For racecourses in particular, any betting areas subject to the “five times rule” (commonly known as betting rings) must be indicated on the plan.

C20. Travelling Fairs

C20.1 It will fall to this licensing authority to decide whether, where category D machines and/or equal chance prize gaming without a permit is to be made available for use at travelling fairs, the statutory requirement that the facilities for gambling amount to no more than an ancillary amusement at the fair is met.

C20.2 The licensing authority will also consider whether the applicant falls within the statutory definition of a travelling fair.

C20.3 It has been noted that the 27-day statutory maximum for the land being used as a fair, is per calendar year, and that it applies to the piece of land on which the fairs are held, regardless of whether it is the same or different travelling fairs occupying the land. This licensing authority will work with its neighbouring authorities to ensure that land which crosses our boundaries is monitored so that the statutory limits are not exceeded.

C21. Provisional Statements

C21. 1 Developers may wish to apply to this authority for provisional statements before entering into a contract to buy or lease property or land to judge whether a development is worth taking forward in light of the need to obtain a premises licence. There is no need for the applicant to hold an operating licence in order to apply for a provisional statement.

C21.2 Section 204 of the Act provides for a person to make an application to the licensing authority for a provisional statement in respect of premises that he or she:

- expects to be constructed;
- expects to be altered; or
- expects to acquire a right to occupy.

C21.3 The process for considering an application for a provisional statement is the same as that for a premises licence application. The applicant is obliged to give notice of the application in the same way as applying for a premises licence. Responsible authorities and interested parties may make representations and there are rights of appeal.

C21.4 In contrast to the premises licence application, the applicant does not have to hold or have applied for an operating licence from the Gambling Commission (except in the case of a track) and they do not have to have a right to occupy the premises in respect of which their provisional application is made.

C21.5 The holder of a provisional statement may then apply for a premises licence once the premises are constructed, altered or acquired. The licensing authority will be constrained in the matters it can consider when determining the premises licence application and in terms of

representations about premises licence applications that follow the grant of a provisional statement, no further representations from relevant authorities or interested parties can be taken into account unless:

- they concern matters which could not have been addressed at the provisional statement stage, or
- they reflect a change in the applicant's circumstances.

C21.6 In addition, the authority may refuse the premises licence (or grant it on terms different to those attached to the provisional statement) only by reference to matters:

- which could not have been raised by objectors at the provisional licence stage; or
- which in the authority's opinion reflect a change in the operator's circumstances; or
- where the premises have not been constructed in accordance with the plan submitted with the application. This must be a substantial change to the plan and this licensing authority notes that it can discuss any concerns it has with the applicant before making a decision.

C22. Reviews

C22.1 Requests for a review of a premises licence can be made by interested parties or responsible authorities; however, it is for the licensing authority to decide whether the review is to be carried out. This will be on the basis of whether the request for the review is relevant to the matters listed below:

- In accordance with any relevant code of practice issued by the Commission;
- In accordance with any relevant guidance issued by the Commission;
- Reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives; and
- In accordance with the authority's statement of licensing policy.

C22.2 The licensing authority will consider whether the request is frivolous, vexatious, or whether it will cause it to wish to alter/revoke/suspend the licence, or whether it is substantially the same as previous representations or requests for review.

C22.3 The licensing authority can also initiate a review of a particular premises licence, or a particular class of premises licence based on any reason, which is considered appropriate.

C22.4 Once a valid application for a review has been received by the licensing authority, representations can be made by responsible authorities and interested parties during a 28 day period. This period begins 7 days after the application was received by the licensing authority, which will publish notice of the application within 7 days of receipt.

C22.5 The licensing authority must carry out the review as soon as possible after the 28 day period for making representations has passed.

C22.6 The purpose of the review will be to determine whether the licensing authority should take any action in relation to the licence. If action is justified, the options open to the licensing authority are:-

- add, remove or amend a licence condition imposed by the licensing authority;
- exclude a default condition imposed by the Secretary of State or Scottish Ministers (e.g. opening hours) or remove or amend such an exclusion;
- suspend the premises licence for a period not exceeding three months; and
- Revoke the premises licence.

C22.7 In determining what action, if any, should be taken following a review, the licensing authority must have regard to the principles set out in section 153 of the Act, as well as any relevant representations.

C22.8 In particular, the licensing authority may also initiate a review of a premises licence on the grounds that a premises licence holder has not provided facilities for gambling at the premises. This is to prevent people from applying for licences in a speculative manner without intending to use them.

C22.9 Once the review has been completed, the licensing authority must, as soon as possible, notify its decision to:

- the licence holder
- the applicant for review (if any)
- the Commission
- any person who made representations
- the chief officer of police or chief constable; and
- Her Majesty's Commissioners for Revenue and Customs.

PART D – PERMITS/TEMPORARY AND OCCASIONAL USE NOTICE

D1. Unlicensed Family Entertainment Centre gaming machine permits (Statement of Principles on Permits - Schedule 10 paragraph 7)

D1.1 An unlicensed family entertainment centre (FEC) is the third type of amusement arcade. The category of machine in this type of arcade is restricted to the lowest category D and children can enter and gamble.

D1.2 Where a premises does not hold a premises licence but wishes to provide gaming machines, it may apply to the licensing authority for this permit. It should be noted that the applicant must show that the premises will be wholly or mainly used for making gaming machines available for use (Section 238).

D1.3 The Act states that a licensing authority may prepare a statement of principles that they propose to consider in determining the suitability of an applicant for a permit and in preparing this statement, and/or considering applications, it need not (but may) have regard to the licensing objectives and shall have regard to any relevant guidance issued by the Commission under section 25. The Commission's Guidance for local authorities also states: "In their three year licensing policy statement, licensing authorities may include a statement of principles that they propose to apply when exercising their functions in considering applications for permits....., licensing authorities will want to give weight to child protection issues." (24.8)

D1.4 Guidance further states: "An application for a permit may be granted only if the licensing authority is satisfied that the premises will be used as an unlicensed FEC, and if the chief officer of police has been consulted on the application. Licensing authorities might wish to consider asking applicants to demonstrate:

- A full understanding of the maximum stakes and prizes of the gambling that is permissible in unlicensed FECs;
- That the applicant has no relevant convictions (those that are set out in Schedule 7 of the Act; and
- That staff are trained to have a full understanding of the maximum stakes and prizes. (24.9)

It should be noted that a licensing authority cannot attach conditions to this type of permit.

D2. Statement of Principles – Permits on unlicensed FECs

D2.1 This licensing authority will expect the applicant to show that there are policies and procedures in place to protect children from harm. Harm in this context is not limited to harm from gambling but includes wider child protection considerations. The efficiency of such policies and procedures will each be considered on their merits, however, they may include:

- Appropriate measures/training for staff as regards suspected truant school children on the premises;

- Measures/training covering how staff would deal with unsupervised very young children being on the premises;
- Measures/training covering how staff would deal with children causing perceived problems on/around the premises.
- Demonstrate an awareness of local school holiday times and how to contact the local education office should truants be identified.

D2.2 This licensing authority will also expect, as per Commission Guidance, that applicants:

- Demonstrate a full understanding of the maximum stakes and prizes of the gambling that is permissible in unlicensed FECs;
- Have no relevant convictions (those that are set out in Schedule 7 of the Act), and in addition that any management and staff who will be working at the unlicensed FEC have no relevant convictions; and
- Have staff that are trained to have a full understanding of the maximum stakes and prizes.

D2.3 Compliance with any relevant industry Code of Practice for FECs issued by BACTA or other trade associations may be taken by the licensing authority as evidence that (apart from the criteria relating to criminal convictions) the applicant has met the above.

D2.4 Applicants must submit with their application two copies of plans of the premises, to a scale of 1:100, showing the exits/entrances to the premises, location of gaming machines.

D2.5 The licensing authority may refuse an application for renewal of a permit only on the grounds that an authorised local authority officer has been refused access to the premises without reasonable excuse, or that renewal would not be reasonably consistent with pursuit of the licensing objectives.

D3. (Alcohol) Licensed premises gaming machine permits - (Schedule 13 paragraph 4(1))

D3.1 There is provision in the Act for premises licensed to sell alcohol for consumption on the premises to automatically have 2 gaming machines, of categories C and/or D. The premises merely need to notify the licensing authority.

D3.2 The licensing authority can remove the automatic authorisation in respect of any particular premises if:

- Provision of the machines is not reasonably consistent with the pursuit of the licensing objectives;
- Gaming has taken place on the premises that breaches a condition of section 282 of the Act (i.e. that written notice has been provided to the licensing authority, that a fee has been provided and that any relevant code of practice issued by the

Commission about the location and operation of the machine has been complied with);

- The premises are mainly used for gaming; or
- An offence under the Act has been committed on the premises.

D3.3 If a premises wishes to have more than 2 machines, then it needs to apply for a permit and the licensing authority must consider that application based upon: the licensing objectives; any guidance issued by the Commission issued under Section 25 of the Act, and any “such matters” considered relevant.

D3.4 This licensing authority considers that “such matters” will be decided on a case by case basis, but generally there will be regard to the need to protect children and vulnerable persons from harmed or being exploited by gambling. Stevenage Borough Council will expect the applicant to satisfy the authority that there will be sufficient measures to ensure that under-18 year olds do not have access to the adult only gaming machines. Measures which will satisfy the authority that there will be no access may include the adult machines being in sight of the bar, or in the sight of staff who will monitor that the machines are not being used by those under 18. Notices and signage may also be help. As regards the protection of vulnerable persons, applicants may wish to consider the provision of information leaflets/helpline numbers for organisations such as GamCare.

D3.5 It is recognised that some alcohol-licensed premises may apply for a premises licence for their non-alcohol licensed areas. Any such application would most likely need to be applied for, and dealt with as an Adult Gaming Centre premises licence.

D3.6 It should be noted that the licensing authority can decide to grant the application with a smaller number of machines and/or a different category of machines than that applied for. Conditions other than these cannot be attached.

D3.7 Notifications and applications for any number of machines will be dealt with by licensing authority officers.

D3.8 It should also be noted that the holder of a permit must comply with any Code of Practice issued by the Commission about the location and operation of the machine.

D4. Prize Gaming Permits - (Statement of Principles on Permits - Schedule 14 paragraph 8 (3))

D4.1 The Act states that a licensing authority may “prepare a statement of principles that they propose to apply in exercising their functions under this Schedule” which “may, in particular, specify matters that the licensing authority proposes to consider in determining the suitability of the applicant for a permit”.

D4.2 This authority has not prepared a statement of principles. Should it decide to do so, details will be included in a revised version of the Statement.

D4.3 In making its decision on an application for this permit the licensing authority does not need to have regard to the licensing objectives but must have regard to any Commission guidance.

D4.4 It should be noted that there are conditions in the Act by which the permit holder must comply, but that the licensing authority cannot attach conditions. The conditions in the Act are:

- The limits on participation fees, as set out in regulations, must be complied with;
- All chances to participate in the gaming must be allocated on the premises on which the gaming is taking place and on one day; the game must be played and completed on the day the chances are allocated; and the result of the game must be made public in the premises on the day that it is played;
- The prize for which the game is played must not exceed the amount set out in regulations (if a money prize), or the prescribed value (if non-monetary prize); and
- Participation in the gaming must not entitle the player to take part in any other gambling.

D5. Club Gaming and Club Machine Permits

D5.1 Members Clubs and Miners' welfare institutes (but not Commercial Clubs) may apply for a Club Gaming Permit or a Club Machine Permit. The Club Gaming Permit will enable the premises to provide gaming machines (3 machines of categories B, C or D), equal chance gaming and games of chance as set-out in forthcoming regulations. A Club Machine permit will enable the premises to provide gaming machines (3 machines of categories B, C or D).

D5.2 This licensing authority acknowledges the following guidance from the Commission:

"The Act states that members' clubs must have at least 25 members and be established and conducted "wholly or mainly" for purposes other than gaming, unless the gaming is restricted to that of a prescribed kind (currently bridge and whist). Members' club must be permanent in nature, but there is no need for a club to have an alcohol licence." Examples include working men's clubs, branches of Royal British Legion and clubs with political affiliations.

D5.3 The Guidance goes on to state that "licensing authorities may only refuse an application on the grounds that:

- a) the applicant does not fulfil the requirements for a members' or commercial club or miners' welfare institute and therefore is not entitled to receive the type of permit for which it has applied;
- b) the applicant's premises are used wholly or mainly by children and/or young persons;
- c) an offence under the Act or a breach of a permit has been committed by the applicant while providing gaming facilities;

- d) a permit held by the applicant has been cancelled in the previous ten years; or
- e) An objection has been lodged by the Commission or the police.”

D5.4 There is also a ‘fast-track’ procedure available under the Act for premises that hold a Club Premises Certificate under the Licensing Act 2003 (Schedule 12 paragraph 10). As the Commission’s Guidance for local authorities states: "Under the fast-track procedure there is no opportunity for objections to be made by the Commission or the police, and the ground upon which an authority can refuse a permit are reduced." and "The grounds on which an application under the process may be refused are:

- a) that the club is established primarily for gaming, other than gaming prescribed under schedule 12;
- b) that in addition to the prescribed gaming, the applicant provides facilities for other gaming; or
- c) that a club gaming permit or club machine permit issued to the applicant in the last ten years has been cancelled."

D5.5 There are statutory conditions on club gaming permits that no child uses a category B or C machine on the premises and that the holder complies with any relevant provision of a code of practice about the location and operation of gaming machines.

D6. Temporary Use Notices

D6.1 Temporary Use Notices allow the use of premises for gambling where there is no premises licence but where a gambling operator wishes to use the premises temporarily for providing facilities for gambling. Premises that might be suitable for a Temporary Use Notice, according to the Commission, would include hotels, conference centres and sporting venues.

D6.2 The licensing authority can only grant a Temporary Use Notice to a person or company holding a relevant operating licence, i.e. a non-remote casino operating licence.

D6.3 The Secretary of State has the power to determine what form of gambling can be authorised by Temporary Use Notices, and at the time of writing this Statement the relevant regulations (SI no 3157: The Gambling Act 2005 (Temporary Use Notices) Regulations 2007) state that Temporary Use Notices can only be used to permit the provision of facilities or equal chance gaming, where the gaming is intended to produce a single winner, which in practice means poker tournaments.

D6.4 There are a number of statutory limits as regards temporary use notices. Discussion of the meaning of "premises" can be found in Part 7 of the Commission’s Guidance to Licensing Authorities. As with "premises", the definition of "a set of premises" will be a question of fact in the particular circumstances of each notice that is given. The Act defines "premises" as including "any place".

D6.5 In considering whether a place falls within the definition of "a set of premises", the Council will look at, amongst other things, the ownership/occupation and control of the premises.

D6.6 This licensing authority expects to object to notices where it appears that their effect would be to permit regular gambling in a place that could be described as one set of premises, as recommended in the Commission's Guidance to Licensing Authorities.

D7. Occasional Use Notices

D7.1 The licensing authority has very little discretion as regards these notices aside from ensuring that the statutory limit of 8 days in a calendar year is not exceeded. This licensing authority will though consider the definition of a 'track' and whether the applicant is permitted to avail him/herself of the notice.

D8. Small Society Lotteries

D8.1 This licensing authority will adopt a risk based approach towards its enforcement responsibilities for small society lotteries. This authority considers that the following list, although not exclusive, could affect the risk status of the operator:

- submission of late returns (returns must be submitted no later than three months after the date on which the lottery draw was held)
- submission of incomplete or incorrect returns
- breaches of the limits for small society lotteries

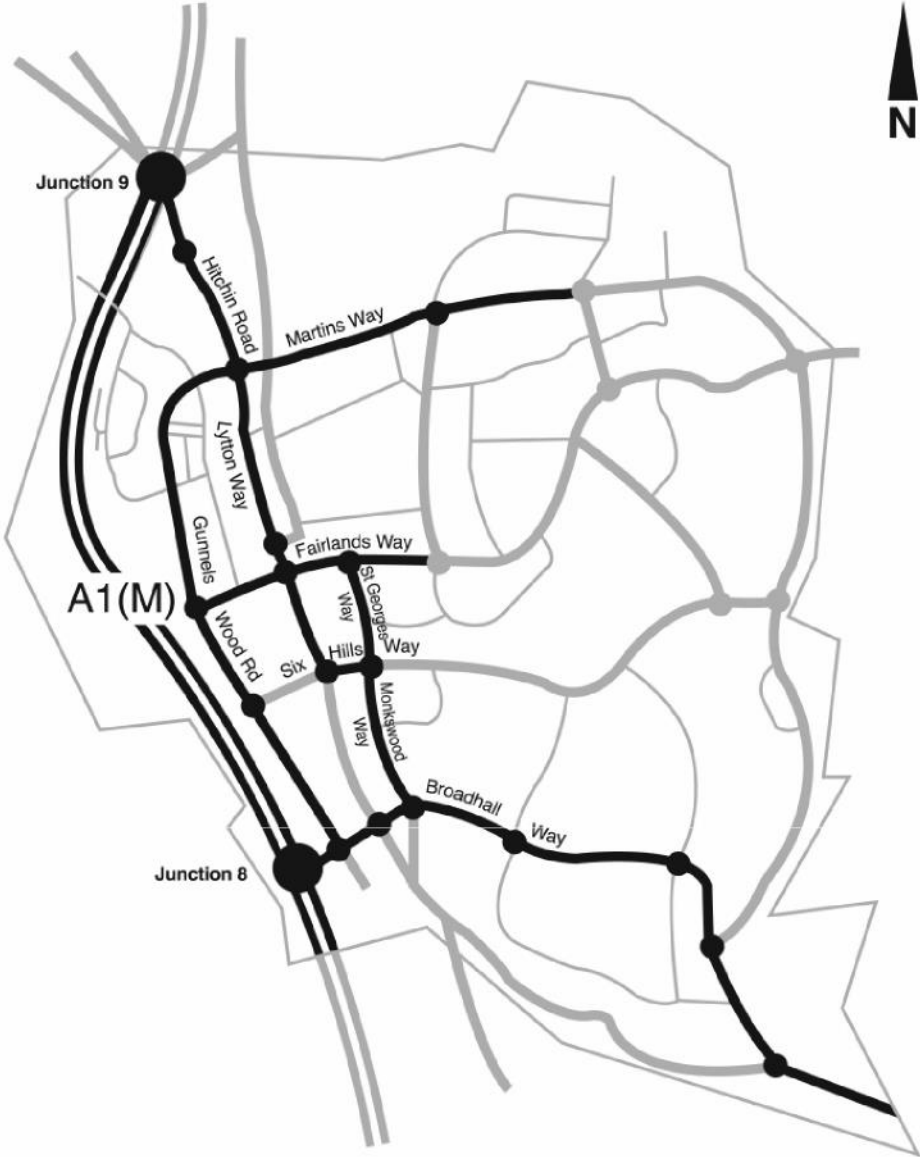
D8.2 Non-commercial gaming is permitted if it takes place at a non-commercial event, either as an incidental or principal activity at the event. Events are non-commercial if no part of the proceeds is for private profit or gain. The proceeds of such events may benefit one or more individuals if the activity is organised:

- by, or on behalf of, a charity or for charitable purposes
- to enable participation in, or support of, sporting, athletic or cultural activities.

D8.3 Charities and community groups should contact this licensing authority on **01438 242242** to seek further advice.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Map of Stevenage Borough Council area



Appendix 2 – Consultees

The Gambling Act requires that the following parties are consulted by Licensing Authorities:

1) The Chief Officer of Police.

The authority has therefore consulted:

a) Hertfordshire Constabulary

2) One or more persons who appear to the authority to represent the interests of persons carrying on gambling businesses in the authority's area. The authority has therefore consulted:

- a) British Amusement Catering Trade Association
- b) British Casino Association
- c) British Association of Leisure Parks, Piers and Attractions Ltd
- d) Business in Sport and Leisure
- e) British Beer and Pub Association
- f) Association of British Bookmakers
- g) The Bingo Association
- h) National Casino Forum
- i) Ladbrokes Coral Group
- j) Mecca Bingo Ltd
- k) William Hill Organisation Ltd
- l) Paddy Power Betfair
- m) Betfred
- n) Admiral Casino
- o) Future Machines Ltd

3) One or more persons who appear to the authority to represent the interests of persons who are likely to be affected by the exercise of the authority's functions under the Gambling Act 2005. The authority has therefore consulted:

- a) Gambling Commission
- b) Licensing Authority

- c) Planning and Development, Stevenage Borough Council
- d) Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service
- e) Environmental Health
- f) HM Revenues and Customs
- g) Local Safeguarding Children Board
- h) Community Safety/Development Stevenage Borough Council
- i) Stevenage Town Centre Manager
- j) Stevenage Community Safety Partnership
- k) Clubs with club premises certificates under the Licensing Act 2003
- l) Premises with licences permitting the sale of alcohol on the premises under the Licensing Act 2003
- m) Stevenage PubWatch
- n) Existing Gambling Permit holders
- o) Residents and local media
- p) East and North Herts NHS Trust
- q) North Herts Council for Voluntary Services
- r) Stevenage Citizen's Advice Bureau
- s) Stevenage Community Trust
- t) North Hertfordshire College
- u) Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce
- v) GamCare

Appendix 3 – Responsible Authorities

Responsible Authority	Contact Details
Gambling Commission	Victoria Square House Tel: 0121 230 6500 Victoria Square Fax: 0121 233 1096 www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk
Licensing Authority	Licensing Team Tel: 01438 242259 Stevenage Borough Council Daneshill House Danestrete Stevenage Herts www.stevenage.gov.uk licensing@stevenage.gov.uk
Hertfordshire Constabulary	Licensing Team Tel: 01438 757367 Stevenage Police Station Fax: 01438 757373 Lytton Way
Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service	District Fire Safety Manager Tel: 01438 847352 Community Fire Safety Dept Longfields Lytton Road licensingactnorth.fire@hertscc.gov.uk
Planning	Development Control Manager Tel: 01438 242838 Stevenage Borough Council Daneshill House plan.devcon@stevenage.gov.uk
Environmental Health	Environmental Health Manager Tel: 01438 242908 Stevenage Borough Council Daneshill House Danestrete envhealth@stevenage.gov.uk

Safeguarding Children Board	Angela Hickin, Safeguarding Manager Tel: 01992 588285 Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Room 173, County Hall
Customs & Excise	HM Revenue & Customs Tel: 0161 827 0333 Excise and Stamp Taxes Gambling Duties Team 4W Ralli Quays www.hmrc.gov.uk

Appendix 4 – Summary of gaming machine categories and entitlements

Category of machine	Maximum stake (from April 2019)	Maximum prize (from Jan 2014)
A	Unlimited – No category A gaming machines are currently permitted	Unlimited – No category A gaming machines are currently permitted
B1	£5	£10,000 [‡]
B2	£2	£500
B3A	£2	£500
B3	£2	£500
B4	£2	£400
C	£1	£100
D – non-money prize	30p	£8

Category of machine	Maximum stake (from April 2019)	Maximum prize (from Jan 2014)
D – non-money prize (crane grab machines only)	£1	£50
D – money prize	10p	£5
D – combined money and non-money prize	10p	£8 (of which no more than £5 may be a money prize)
D – combined money and non-money prize (coin pusher or penny falls machines only)	20p	£20 (of which no more than £10 may be a money prize)

References

† With option of max £20,000 linked progressive jackpot on premises basis only

Premises type	Machine category						
	A	B1	B2	B3	B4	C	D
Large casino (machine/table ratio of 5-1 up to maximum)		Maximum of 150 machines Any combination of machines in categories B to D (except B3A machines), within the total limit of 150 (subject to machine/table ratio)					
Small casino (machine/table ratio of 2-1 up to maximum)		Maximum of 80 machines Any combination of machines in categories B to D (except B3A machines), within the total limit of 80 (subject to machine/table ratio)					

Pre-2005 Act casino (no machine/table ratio)	Maximum of 20 machines categories B to D (except B3A machines), or any number of C or D machines instead		
Betting premises and tracks occupied by pool betting	Maximum of 4 machines categories B2 to D (except B3A machines)		
Bingo premises¹		Maximum of 20% of the total number of gaming machines which are available for use on the premises categories B3 or B4**	No limit on category C or D machines
Adult gaming centre²		Maximum of 20% of the total number of gaming machines which are available for use on the premises categories B3 or B4**	No limit on category C or D machines
Licensed Family entertainment centre³			No limit on category C or D machines
Family entertainment centre (with permit)³			No limit on category D machines
Clubs or miners' welfare institute (with permits)⁴	Maximum of 3 machines in categories B3A or B4 to D*		
Qualifying alcohol-licensed premises			1 or 2 machines of category C or D automatic upon notification
Qualifying alcohol-licensed premises (with licensed premises gaming machine permit)			Number of category C-D machines as specified on permit

Travelling fair						No limit on category D machines
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¹ Bingo premises licence are entitled to make available for use a number of category B gaming machines not exceeding 20% of the total number of gaming machines on the premises. Where a premises licence was granted before 13 July 2011, they are entitled to make available eight ([The Gambling Act 2005 \(Gaming Machines in Bingo Premises\) Order 2009 \(opens in new tab\)](#)) category B gaming machines, or 20% of the total number of gaming machines, whichever is the greater. Category B machines at bingo premises are restricted to sub-category B3 and B4 machines, but not B3A machines.

² Adult gaming centres are entitled to make available for use a number of category B gaming machines not exceeding 20% of the total number of gaming machines which are available for use on the premises and any number of category C or D machines. Where a premises licence was granted before 13 July 2011, they are entitled to make available four category B gaming machines, or 20% of the total number of gaming machines, whichever is the greater. Category B machines at adult gaming centres are restricted to sub-category B3 and B4 machines, but not B3A machines.

³ Only premises that are wholly or mainly used for making gaming machines available may hold an unlicensed FEC gaming machine permit or an FEC premises licence. Category C machines may only be sited within licensed FECs and where an FEC permit is in force. They must be in a separate area to ensure the segregation and supervision of machines that may only be played by adults. There is no power for the licensing authority to set a limit on the number of machines under the FEC permit.

⁴ Members' clubs and miners' welfare institutes with a club gaming permit or with a club machine permit, are entitled to site a total of three machines in categories B3A to D but only one B3A machine can be sited as part of this entitlement.

⁵ Commercial clubs with club machine or gaming permits are entitled to a total of three machines in categories B4 to D.

Appendix 5 – Delegations

The licensing authority will delegate its functions under the Gambling Act 2005 as follows:

Matter to be dealt with	Full Council	Licensing Committee	Officers
Final Approval of 3 year Gambling Statement of Principles	X		
Policy not to permit Casinos	X		
Application for premises licences		Where representations have been received and not withdrawn	Where no representations received/ have been withdrawn
Application for a variation to a licence		Where representations have been received and not withdrawn	Where no representations received/ have been withdrawn
Application for a transfer of a licence		Where representations have been received from the Commission	Where no representations received from the Commission
Application for a provisional statement		Where representations have been received and not withdrawn	Where no representations received/ have been withdrawn
Review of a premises licence		X	
Application for club gaming/club machine permits		Where objections have been made (and not withdrawn)	Where no objections made/ have been withdrawn
Cancellation of club gaming/club machine permits		X	
Applications for other permits			X
Application for permits in alcohol licensed premises (for any number of machines)			X

Cancellation of licensed premises gaming machine			X
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Matter to be dealt with	Full Council	Licensing Committee	Officers
Consideration of temporary use notice			X
Decision to give a counter notice to a temporary use notice			X
Determination as to whether a representation is relevant.			X
Fee Setting (within bands)			X
Small society lottery registration			X

Appendix 6 – Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Act	Gambling Act 2005
Adult Gaming Centres	Commercial premises offering a variety of games and gaming machines. Category B, C and D gaming machines available.
Betting Premises	Currently known as a betting office
Bingo Premises	A commercial club which promotes equal chance gaming in the form of cash or prize bingo.
Casino	A commercial gaming club whereby people are given an opportunity to participate in one or more casino games. Casino games are defined as a game of chance which is not equal chance gaming.
Club gaming permits	Members club (not commercial clubs) permits which authorise the establishment to provide gaming machines, equal chance gaming and games of chance.
Code of Practice	Any code of practice under section 24 of the Gambling Act 2005
Default condition	A specified condition provided by regulations to be attached to a licence, unless excluded by Stevenage Borough Council
Family entertainment centres (FEC)	A centre with a variety of rides and games including amusement machines and skills games. Licensed FECs provide category C and D machines. Unlicensed FECs provide category D machines only, and are regulated through FEC gaming machine permits.
Gaming Machine	A game of chance machine which requires coins or tokens to be activated
Interested Party	Defined by the Act as a person who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Lives sufficiently close to the premises to be likely to be affected by the authorised activities; 2) Has business interests that might be affected by the authorised activities;
Licensing Authority	Stevenage Borough Council
Licensing Committee	This term shall include any duly constituted Licensing Sub-Committee.

Licensing objectives	<p>There are 3 licensing objectives defined in the Gambling Act as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Preventing gambling from being a source of crime or disorder, being associated with crime or disorder or being used to support crime. 2) Ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way 3) Protecting children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling
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Mandatory Condition	A specified condition provided by regulations to be attached to the licence
Premises	Any place
Prize gaming permits	A permit issued to authorise the provision of facilities for gaming with prizes
Regulations	Regulations made under the Gambling Act 2005
Responsible Authority	<p>Defined by the Act as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Licensing Authority 2) Gambling Commission 3) Police 4) Fire Service 5) Planning
Small Society Lottery	A lottery promoted on behalf of a non-commercial society that is registered by the licensing Authority
Temporary Use Notices	These allow use of a premises for gambling where there is no premises licence, but where a gambling operator wishes to use the premises temporarily for providing facilities for gambling
Tracks	Tracks are sites that include horse racecourses and dog tracks
Travelling Fair	A fair consisting wholly or principally of the provision of amusements, provided by people who travel from place to place providing fairs AND in a place which has been used for no more than 27 days in that calendar year
Vulnerable persons	This group includes people who gamble more than they want to; people who gambling beyond their means; and people who may not be able to make informed or balanced decisions about gambling due to a mental impairment, alcohol or drugs.

Brief Equality Impact Assessment APPENDIX B

For a minor operational change / review / simple analysis

What is being assessed?	Revised Gambling Statement of Principles	What are the key aims of it?	To provide information and guidance on the general approach that the Council will take to licensing. The Statement does not prevent anyone from making an application, and each application will be considered on its individual merits.			
Who may be affected by it?	All residents and businesses within Stevenage, and gambling premises in particular.					
Date of full EqlA on service area (planned or completed)	15/11/10					
Form completed by:	Maurice Clay	Start date	06/01/22	End date	06/01/22	
		Review date	December 2024			

What data / information are you using to inform your assessment?	Information provided by the Gambling Commission, feedback from the local consultation on the revised Statement and data collected in the Local Area Profile	Have any information gaps been identified along the way? If so, please specify	Local (district-level) data is not available at present but UTLA level data has been collated in the course of compiling a Local Area Profile
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Explain the potential positive, negative or unequal impact on the following characteristics and how likely this is:			
Age	Positive - The Gambling Act has as an objective to protect children and vulnerable groups from being harmed. This could, if taken to extremes, lead to the	Race	No differential impact

	<p>exclusion of certain groups from gambling activities of any kind without good reasons.</p> <p>By considering each application on its merits, and taking into account the views of all concerned including those of the listed Responsible Authorities, we seek to minimise such restrictions through the use of appropriate conditions where possible and only in extreme cases by exclusion or refusal of applications.</p>		
Disability	No differential impact	Religion or belief	No differential impact
Gender reassignment	No differential impact	Sex	No differential impact
Marriage or civil partnership	No differential impact	Sexual orientation	No differential impact
Pregnancy & maternity	No differential impact	Socio-economic ¹	The statement is intended to aid with local decision making in conjunction with the Gambling Act 2005 and the Gambling Commission's guidance to licensing authorities.
Other	The Statement supports a culture of openness where appropriate information can		

¹Although non-statutory, the council has chosen to implement the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion to consider the impact on people with a socio-economic disadvantage.

	<p>be accessed by all parties. Licensing Committee hearings, when required, will generally be held in public and any enforcement will be in line with the principles promoted within the Regulators' Code. Partnership working and exchange of information (within legal constraints) is also supported with a view to promoting better understanding between those providing gambling opportunities and those potentially affected by them. The Council will seek to mediate between applicants and objectors and reach negotiated settlements wherever possible.</p>	
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Where there is a likely positive impact , please explain how it will help to fulfil our legislative duties to:					
Remove discrimination & harassment	N/A	Promote equal opportunities	N/A	Encourage good relations	Promotion of better understanding between those providing gambling opportunities and those potentially affected by them.

What further work / activity is needed as a result of this assessment?

Action	Responsible officer	How will this be delivered and monitored?	Deadline
None			



Approved by Assistant Director/ Strategic Director:

Date: 06/01/22

Please send this EqIA to equalities@stevenage.gov.uk

Part 1



Agenda item:

Meeting EXECUTIVE/COUNCIL
Portfolio Area RESOURCES
Date 9 February 2022/24 February 2022



FINAL GENERAL FUND AND COUNCIL TAX SETTING 2022/23

KEY DECISION

Authors Clare Fletcher | 2933
Contributor Senior Leadership Team
Lead Officers Clare Fletcher | 2933
Contact Officer Clare Fletcher | 2933

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To consider the Council's draft 2022/23 General Fund Budget, Council Tax Support Scheme -and draft proposals for the 2022/23 Council Tax.
- 1.2 To consider the projected 2021/22 General Fund Budget

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the following proposals be recommended to Council on 24 February 2022:

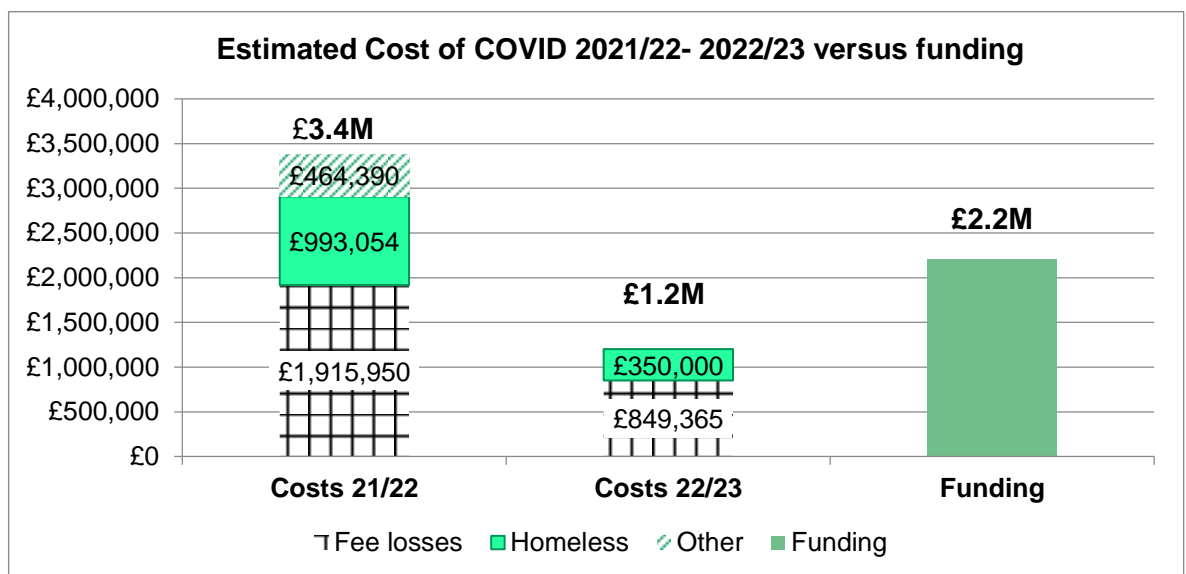
- 2.1 The 2021/22 revised net expenditure on the General Fund of £11,688,050 is approved.
- 2.2 Members note the inclusion of the 2022/23 Fees and Charges of £341,780 (Appendix B to this report) in the draft 2022/23 budget.
- 2.3 The draft General Fund Budget for 2022/23 of £11,206,660, with a contribution from balances of £1,112,817 and a Band D Council Tax of £225.57 (assuming a 2.26% increase).

- 2.4 The updated position on the General Fund Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), summarised in section 4.13 be noted.
- 2.5 The minimum level of General Fund reserves of £3,471,038 in line with the 2022/23 risk assessment of balances, as shown at Appendix C to this report, is approved.
- 2.6 The contingency sum of £400,000 within which the Executive can approve supplementary estimates, be approved for 2022/23, (reflecting the level of balances available above the minimum amount).
- 2.7 The Making Your Money Count (MYMC) options as set out in section 4.2 and Appendix A, totalling £780,945 and £39,370 for the General Fund and HRA respectively for 2022/23 be approved.
- 2.8 The Growth options included in section 4.3 are approved for inclusion in the 2022/23 General Fund (£120,078) and HRA (£63,360) budgets.
- 2.9 That the General pressures set out in section 4.3 to this report be approved.
- 2.10 Members approve a further £300,000 to pump prime Transformation to be included in the Council's 2022/23 budget setting processes to enable to significantly contribute to the savings targets as set out in section 4.11.
- 2.11 Members approve the identification of a further £500,000 of MYMC options for the June 2022 MTFS report as set out in paragraph 4.11.4.
- 2.12 Members approve the use of the business rate gains only once realised and ring fence the use for firstly the financial resilience of the Council and if required to be transferred to the Income Equalisation Reserve and thereafter, they are used for Regeneration or Co-operative Neighbourhood one off spend.
- 2.13 That the 2022/23 Council Tax Support scheme is approved as set out in section 4.6 to this report.
- 2.14 That the comments from Overview and Scrutiny as set out in section 4.19 be noted.
- 2.15 That Members note the Equalities Impact Assessments appended to this report in Appendices D and E.
- 2.16 The work of the Leader's Financial Security Group (LFSG) in reviewing the efficiency, commercial and fees and charges as outlined in section 4.17 of the report is noted.
- 2.17 That key partners and other stakeholders are consulted and their views considered as part of the 2022/23 budget setting process.
- 2.18 That in accordance with the Council's Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules, the Council be recommended to continue with the current Co-operative Corporate Plan, subject to further review in Autumn 2023, (paragraph 4.18.5-4.18.7 refers).

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 This report is an update on the Council's Draft General Fund and Council Tax setting report 2022/23 presented to the January 2022 Executive. This report gives an update on the 2021/22 and 2022/23 budgets with regards to any further savings, growth or pressures. The General Fund Budget forms part of the Council's Budget and Policy Framework. Under Article 4 of the Constitution, the Budget includes: the allocation of financial resources to different services and projects; proposed contingency funds; setting the council tax; the council tax support scheme; decisions relating to the control of the Council's borrowing requirement; the control of its capital expenditure; and the setting of virement limits.

3.2 COVID pressures continue to be significant for the Council and a summary of the net cost of COVID as at January 2022 is summarised in the chart below..



3.3 The January 2022 Executive report summarised the provisional funding settlement for Stevenage which was £280,430 more than the value which was included in the latest MTFs to the December Executive. This was largely due to the inclusion of a further 2022/23 Lower Tier Grant and a one off Services Grant (see also section 4.1).

3.4 The Chancellor announced an additional £1.6Billion per annum (2022/23 to 2024/25) for local government as part of Spending Review 2021 (SR21). The majority of this amount has been included in the Core Spending Power figures. Based on the figures in the Core Spending Power amounts, there has been a national net increase in funding (excluding the multiplier adjustment and Adult Social Care reform funding) of £1.526Billion. A breakdown of this change is shown below and the impact for Stevenage detailed in section 4.1.

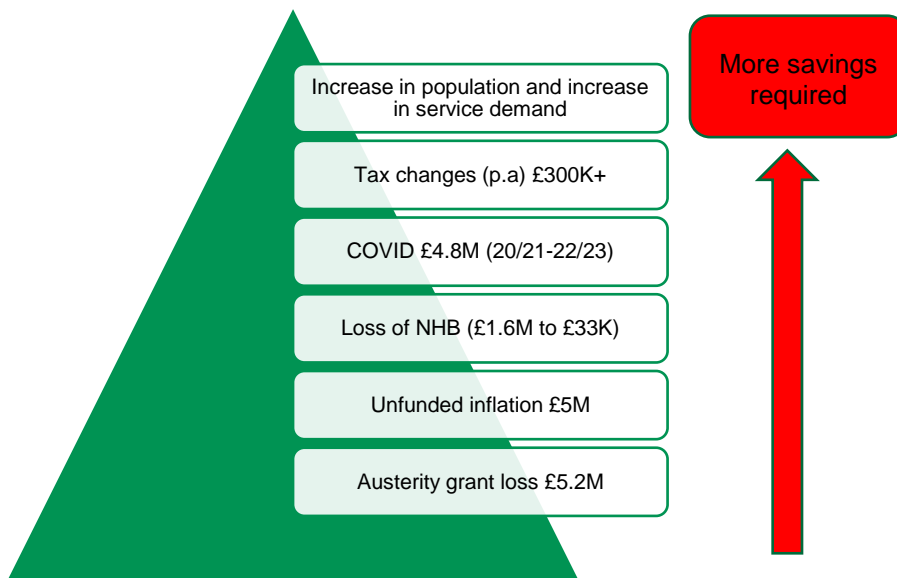
- + £822Million Services Grant – A new grant based on 2013/14 Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA) shares
- + £636Million – Increase to the Social Care Grant

- + £63Million – Inflationary increase to the Improved Better Care Fund
- + £72Million – Increased Revenue Support Grant (RSG) (based on CPI)
- (£68Million) – Reduction in New Homes Bonus Funding
- Council Tax increases for District Council’s up to the greater of £5 on a Band D property or 2%.

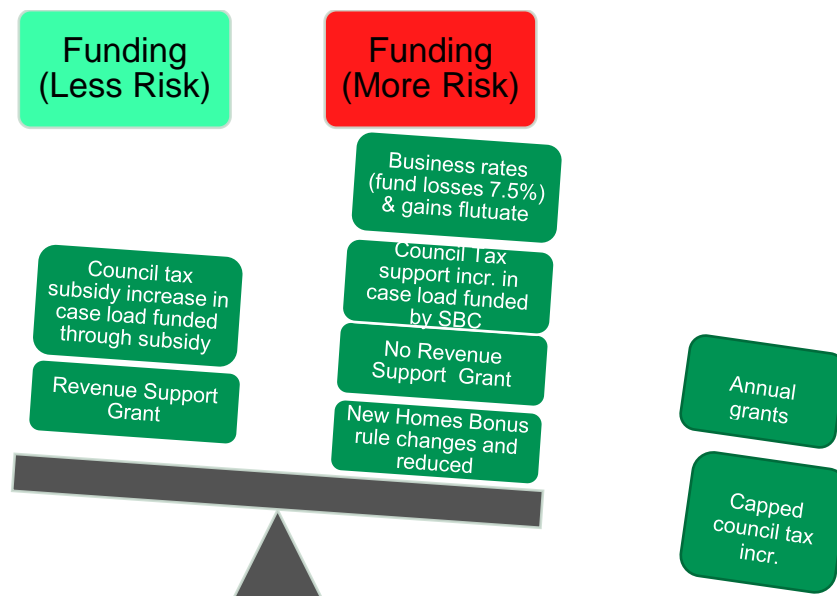
3.5 The Council must set a balanced budget each year (Local Government Finance Act 1992). The Council is required to estimate revenue expenditure and income for the forthcoming year from all sources, together with contributions from reserves, in order to determine a net budget requirement to be met by government grant and council tax.

3.6 The ability to set a balanced budget and retain services has become harder due to the financial impacts of government grant loss, government policy changes and COVID losses in recent years have resulted in the Council having to find cumulative savings of £11Million since 2010/11 through what is now the Making Your Money Count programme.

Pyramid of Pressures for the General Fund

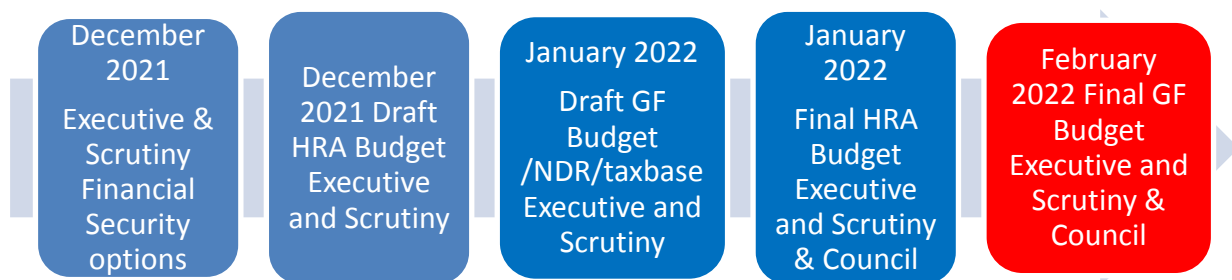


3.7 At the same time there has been a transition towards more inherent risks within local government funding, with fluctuations in caseloads and funding streams, together with annual grant funding for new burdens such as the Homeless Reduction Act, as illustrated below.



3.8 The January Draft budget highlighted additional net pressures of £180,080 for 2022/23, resulting in a net budget of £11,004,220 with a contribution from balances of £1,238,955 and a council tax increase of 2.26% for 2022/23.

3.9 The Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules in the Constitution, prescribe the Budget setting process, which includes a consultation period. The timeline for the implementation of this process is outlined below.



4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION AND OTHER OPTIONS

4.1 Final Finance Settlement 2022/23

4.1.1 On 16 December 2021, the Secretary of State for the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) released a written statement to Parliament on the provisional local government finance settlement 2022/23. The settlement is for one year only and is based on the Spending Review 2021 (SR21) funding levels.

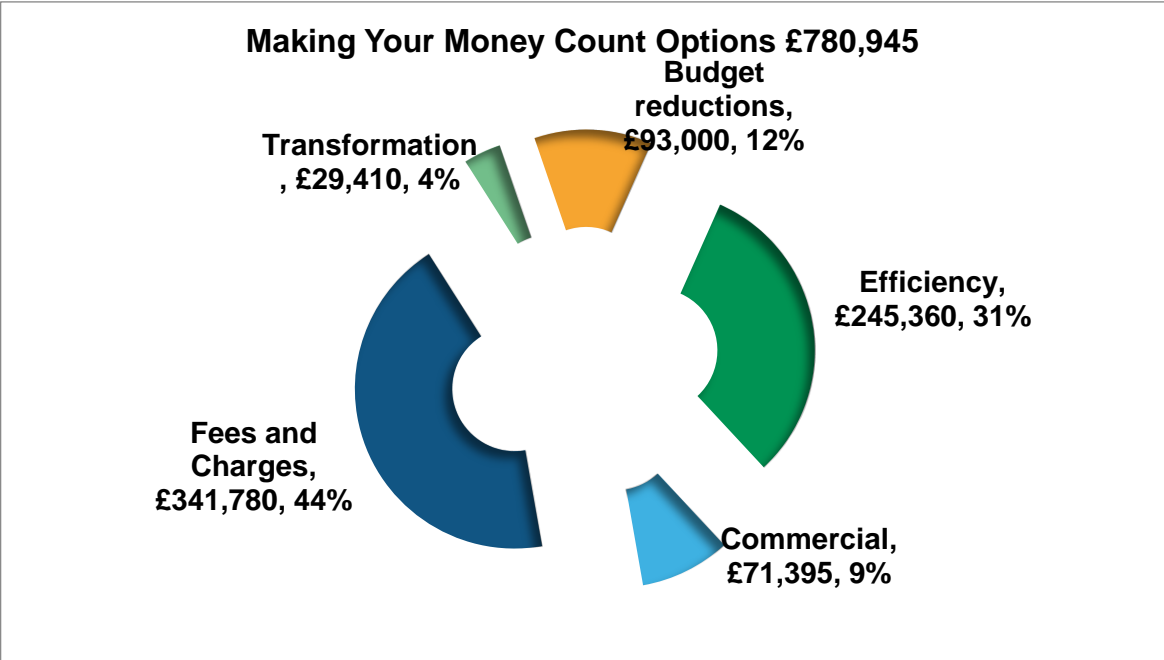
4.1.2 A further year of lower tier services grant was given, with a total national value remaining unchanged at £111Million. Whilst the distribution methodology is the same as 2021/22 (mostly using 2013/14 SFA amounts, but partly providing a minimum funding guarantee so no authority has a reduction in CSP), individual authorities' allocations have changed, due to the minimum funding guarantee element, (Stevenage 2022/23 £115,932 compared to 2021/22 £140,043).

- 4.1.3 A Services Grant (Nationally £822Million) was also announced. It appears as though this is to cover only one year, however the national total funding amount is expected to appear in each of the next two years settlements at a Core Spending Power (CSP) level. The methodology may change so the same level of funding is not guaranteed but this grant includes funding for the increased National Insurance Contributions (NIC's) burden and it might be reasonable to expect all authorities will receive some level of funding going forward, (Stevenage 2022/23 £177,337).
- 4.1.4 The council tax referendum limit will be 2% for local authorities, with social care authorities allowed an additional 1% for the social care precept. The provisional settlement confirmed that districts will be allowed to apply the higher of the referendum limit or £5 (2.26% for Stevenage Borough Council), and that social care authorities will be allowed to 'catch up' any of the 3% referendum limit from last year which was unused.
- 4.1.5 As announced in the 2021 Spending Review, the business rates multiplier has been frozen for 2022/23. Therefore, the three elements of the Business Rates Retention system (Baseline Need, NNDR Baseline and Tariff/Top Up amounts) remain unchanged, (except for pilots, where amounts have increased to reflect grants rolled in). The under-indexing multiplier grant has been increased (by £375Million), in order that local authorities do not lose what would have been the increase to the multiplier.
- 4.1.6 The New Homes Bonus (NHB) 2022/23 allocations have been announced at £554Million, a reduction of £68Million, (part of the £1,526Million as noted at 3.4) on 2021/22. There have been no changes to the scheme for 2022/23, with a single year's new allocation made alongside the outstanding legacy payment for 2019/20. There is no planned legacy payment for 2022/23 (as in 2020/21 and 2021/22), the Stevenage NHB allowance has increased as a result of additional affordable homes created in the Borough by £23,800 to £32,200 over that estimated.
- 4.1.7 Top Up/Tariff Adjustments (Negative RSG) – As in previous years, the government has decided to eliminate the negative RSG amounts, this would have been a cost of £27,146 to Stevenage Borough Council in 2022/23.
- 4.1.8 There was no change to the final settlement between provisional and final. Stevenage's settlement figures are summarised below.

Table 1-Final Finance Settlement (2022/23)	
	Settlement
Business Rates	£2,572,848
Under indexing	£211,363
Total Business Rates	£2,784,211
NHB (legacy payments)	£32,200
Lower Tier services grant*	£115,392
2022-23 Services Grant	£177,337
Total	£3,109,140

4.2 The MYMC Options

4.2.1 The MYMC options approved at the January 2022 Executive for consideration by Overview and Scrutiny totalled £780,945 and remain unchanged from the January report. The Council’s ability to deliver savings, particularly in the current climate is becoming ever more difficult and choices have to be made in weighing up increasing fees and charges versus reducing services, beyond any efficiency savings identified. The options summarised below highlight those which have been met through the Transformation, commercial and insourcing programmes with the remainder secured through budget reductions, (detailed in Appendix A and B to this report).



4.2.2 The 2022/23 budget options include some service reduction in order to meet the necessary level of savings required. The Executive Portfolio holders reviewed their areas of responsibility for discretionary spend in terms of:

- Level of spend
- Ability to deliver so one or two larger savings versus multiple small savings with the former being preferred.

4.2.3 Two options have been put forward for Executive approval to close the funding gap and ensure the Council’s continued financial resilience. These options are summarised below and included in Appendix A.

Table 2 2022/23 Funding the gap				
Service	Potential Staff Redundancy	Description	Service spend	General Fund
Play Service	2	The proposal, subject to consultation, is to reduce the days the play centres are open in the school holidays by three days a week at each centre and for each day reduce by one hour. Pop up play and play outside of play centres would still be part of the offer, (full year saving £100K).	£514,150	£75,000
Funding for Co-operative Neighbourhoods	0	Seed funding was introduced from 2021/22, however CIL funding will be coming on stream in 2022/23 and it is proposed to use prior year under spends/ NDR gains once realised up to £60K to fund works	£18,000	£18,000
	3			£93,000

4.2.4 The decision to recommend these options is to ensure that the General Fund has sufficient balances and the ability to meet the MTFs principle to contribute to balances by 2024/25 so maintaining financial resilience. In addition the Play option will also look to better utilise the buildings and remodel the service. Officers recommend play option one.

4.2.5 The impact of the options in terms of staffing reductions if all of the options are approved would result in an estimated three redundancies. These redundancies will be subject to consultation and remain an indicative number at present.

4.2.6 **Overview and Scrutiny** considered the options at the meeting held on the 25 January 2022 and the Committees comments are set out in section 4.19 to this report.

4.2.7 Fees and charges also are included in the overall MYMC savings package and were approved at the December 2021 Executive and reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny at their meeting of the 14 December 2021. Most will be implemented in January 2022 and are for note. In addition to the fee changes in Appendix B, the notice period for returning a garage has been amended from one week to a month to allow sufficient time and notice to inspect and re-let garages and is in line with normal practice.

4.2.8 The savings options in this report are all on-going to ensure they mitigate the increased costs identified in this report and any inability to deliver them in next or future years will require equivalent value replacement savings

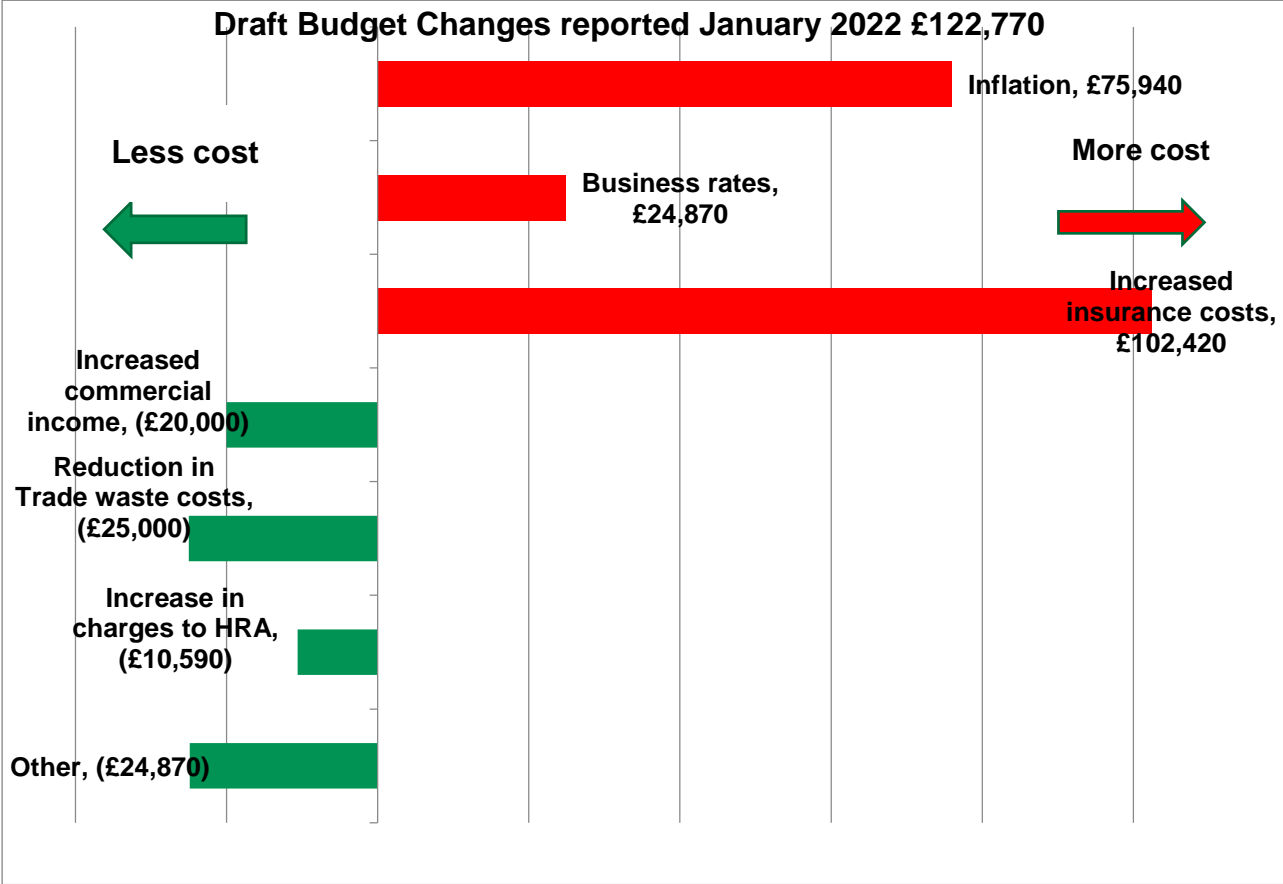
- 4.2.9 The ability to deliver further savings remains a challenge for the vast majority of Councils including Stevenage for the reasons set out in paragraphs 3.6-3.7. The Council's MYMC plan beyond 2022/23 is use the following key work streams to help meet the target;
- Transformation of council activities with more on-line services.
 - Insourcing and commercial options, through the Council's Co-operative and Commercial and Insourcing Strategy
 - The potential expansion of the Revenue and Benefits shared service.
 - The new leisure management procurement to commence April 2023.

These work streams are used alongside fees and charges and council tax increases with service rationalisation utilised only when necessary.

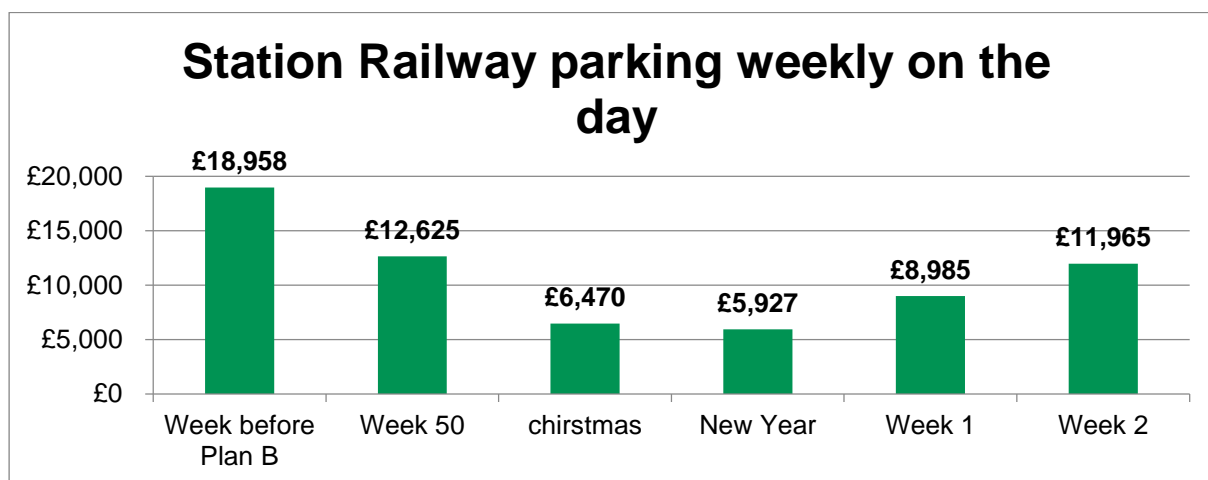
4.2.10 Members approved as part of the January Draft budget report the identification of a further £250,000 of savings to be included in the June 2022MTFS report. The CFO considered this essential as a further financial resilience measure if the impact of COVID or other pressures worsen the Council's General Fund position. This has been revised as set out in paragraph 4.11.4.

4.3 Growth and Pressure currently assumed in the General Fund 2022/23

4.3.1 The 2022/23 December MYMC General Fund budget included growth pressures of £1.65Million, of which 73% were COVID related. In the January report additional £122,770 of net costs was reported as summarised below.



- 4.3.2 In addition to the costs above, further pressures of £33,320 have been included in the 2022/23 budget which are:
- Confirmation of the additional increase for the Shared Revenue and Benefits service SLA 2022/23, £27,520.
 - Increase in standby payments for General Fund housing function £5,800.
- 4.3.3 The impact of the Governments Plan B and work from home if you can directive (now ended), has impacted on the Council's car parking income and the current 2021/22 projection of a loss of £1.5Million could be higher than anticipated. Although the end of Plan B has been announced (27 January 2022) , it is a little early to predict if losses will be higher, however station railway parking has started to increase, as shown below.
- 4.3.4 If parking paid on the day increases from £34K per week (first two weeks of January) to £42K per week then further losses will be minimal. At week 2 (2022) the income was £37.5K. No further losses have been included in the 2021/22 budget and the position will be reassessed as part of the 3rd quarter monitoring report.



4.4 Growth Options

- 4.4.1 The draft budget included growth bids as set out below, these remain unchanged from the January report and include the further growth bid approved for inclusion in the budget at the December Executive. The bids below were welcomed at the December 2021 Overview and Scrutiny meeting.

Table 3- Growth Proposal	Impact of Growth Proposal on Public/ Customers/ Staff/ Members/Partnerships etc (include any impact on key corporate programmes/performance indicator measures) .	£ General Fund	£ HRA	£ Capital
New Climate change officer post and continuation of time limited resources approved for 2020/21-2021/22.	To meet the Climate Change agenda and deadline of zero emissions by 2030, a dedicated post is required (plus the continuation of time limited resources) to drive the priority forward across the Council.	£45,000	£45,000	

Table 3- Growth Proposal	Impact of Growth Proposal on Public/ Customers/ Staff/ Members/Partnerships etc (include any impact on key corporate programmes/performance indicator measures) .	£ General Fund	£ HRA	£ Capital
two new Regeneration officers to meet the increase in programme (Towns Fund, Levelling up, increased Regeneration activity)	The Team are at a critical phase in the business cases; it will be very intensive between now and Christmas to get the first half through, and then efforts will be redoubled January-March to get the 3 rd and 4 th tranches through. The additional two posts will increase capacity to deliver.	£56,718	£0	£25,482
Post to keep digital context for front line and back office staff	There is no post currently to keep the key central information (INTRANET) current, as a source of key data. This will allow up to date information to internal and external customers in a timely fashion.	£18,360	£18,360	£0
		£120,078	£63,360	£25,482

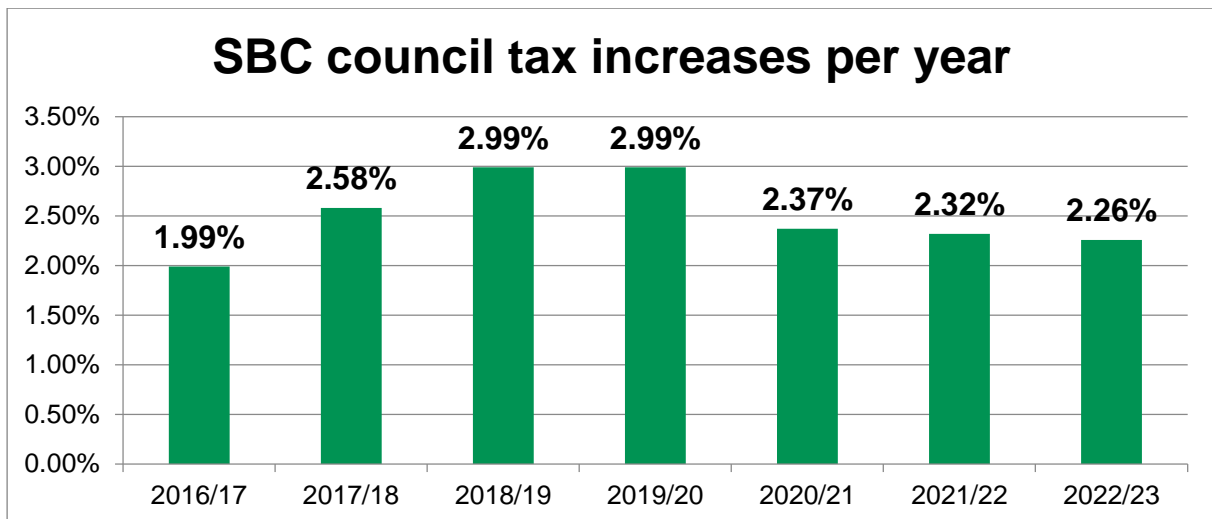
4.5 Council Tax

4.5.1 Part of the budget setting process includes consideration of council tax levels. The provisional settlement allows for a 2% or £5.00 on a Band D (2.26%), whichever is the greater, before a referendum on an amount above this is required. The provisional settlement consultation closed on the 13 January and the outcomes have not yet been published but the Draft Budget assumes the 2.26% increase.

4.5.2 The table below shows the increase per property band based on a 2.26% increase.

Table 4-Council Tax increase modelled for Stevenage Precept 2022/23				
Tax band	2021/22	2.26% increase	Total cost per year	Total cost per week
A	£147.05	£3.33	£150.38	£2.89
B	£171.56	£3.89	£175.45	£3.37
C	£196.06	£4.44	£200.50	£3.86
D	£220.57	£5.00	£225.57	£4.34
E	£269.59	£6.11	£275.70	£5.30
F	£318.60	£7.22	£325.82	£6.27
G	£367.62	£8.33	£375.95	£7.23
H	£441.14	£10.00	£451.14	£8.68

4.5.3 Increasing council tax by 2.26% versus 1.99% gives the Council an additional £17,098 per year, this is below inflation (CPI) and will be the lowest increase since 2016/17 as summarised below.



4.5.4 Council tax is a key funding resource and locally raised taxation has become more important to the General Fund for the reasons set out in paragraphs 3.6-3.7. As in previous years the council tax increase will not be agreed until the February Council meeting. Based on the increasing financial dependency the General Fund budget the CFO recommends a 2.26% increase, (compared to the inflation data for December which was 5.4%).

4.6 Council Tax Support

4.6.1 A local CTS scheme cannot be revised for at least one financial year. A Billing Authority (for example SBC) must consider whether to revise or replace its scheme with another on an annual basis.

4.6.2 Any revision to a scheme must be made by the Council by the 11 March, immediately preceding the financial year in which it is to take effect and will require consultation with those affected. Additionally consideration should be given to providing transitional protection where the support is to be reduced or removed.

4.6.3 The Council must, in the following order, consult with major precepting authorities (i.e. Hertfordshire County Council and Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire), publish a draft scheme in such manner as it thinks fit, and consult such other persons as it considers are likely to have an interest in the operation of the scheme. The CFO wrote to both precepting authorities regarding the proposal for 2022/23 and at the date of writing the report no response had been received from the PCC or HCC.

4.6.4 The current **working age** scheme requires those all maximum benefit only to pay 8.5% of their council tax bill for the year. This equated to £143.87 for a Band C council home in 2021/22 on the total bill (an additional 25% discount for a single person) or £2.77 per week.

4.6.5 Members approved a resolution, during the October 2021 Executive Council Tax Support report, to retain the existing scheme for 2022/23. Members are recommended to agree the existing scheme updated to reflect benefit changes for 2022/23.

4.7 Business Rates Income

- 4.7.1 The December MTFS only included the 2022/23 base line funding for business rates, or the amount the government has assessed the Council needs under its funding needs formula. Any gains above this are not guaranteed and have fluctuated from year to year and cannot therefore fund on-going spend.
- 4.7.2 The CFO recommended in the December 2021 MYMC report that unrealised gains in the business rate reserve, and any new 2022/23 gains that are subsequently forecast, are only allocated for spend (one off in nature), once achieved at the year end, due to the level of balances and the volatility in business rates from year to year. Any gains available shall be reported to Members for spending options in a June report, with a recommended use for Regeneration or Co-operative Neighbourhood one off spend.
- 4.7.3 The completion of the NDR1 form, (issued by the government) determines the level of business rates collectable, level of reliefs due in 2022/23, together with the current business rate yield in January. This has been delegated to the CFO after consultation with the Resources Portfolio holder to approve.
- 4.7.4 The government has announced new 2022/23 business reliefs for the retail and hospitality sector. The government compensates Councils for loss of business rates for these type of new reliefs by giving Section 31 grants, as they suppress the income yield and therefore the Council's share of business rates. Guidance received prior to Christmas shows there will be a limit of £110,000 business rate relief per business (not by premise). This means working out how much relief and therefore S31 grant is due is difficult to assess. Grants may be issued in April and businesses required to sign a declaration to determine whether if any other part of the business has claimed reliefs from other councils or subsidiaries.
- 4.7.5 The January 2022 draft budget report made an initial assessment before the system data could be run to complete the NNDR1. This has now been completed and a comparison of the January and the NDR1 submission are shown below. There has been an estimated £198,222 increase in projected gains.

Table 5- Summary Business Rates	January estimate 2022/23 Budget	February Estimate	Variance
Business Rates SBC share	(£16,393,516)	(£17,691,042)	£1,297,526
S31	(£2,579,722)	(£1,618,316)	(£961,405)
Total Business Rates income	(£18,973,238)	(£19,309,358)	£336,121
Tariff	£15,429,346	£15,429,346	£0
Funding	(£3,543,892)	(£3,880,012)	£336,121
Levy	£338,763	£476,662.00	(£137,899)
Total Retained	(£3,205,129)	(£3,403,350)	(£198,222)
Base line Funding	(£2,783,802)	(£2,783,802)	£0
Total Retained	(£421,327)	(£619,549)	(£198,222)

- 4.7.6 The NNDR 1 shows gains above the baseline level of £2.78Million, however this will be dependent on a number of factors including:
- There are still appeals outstanding from the 2010 list and no appeals have been yet been settled from the 2017 list. These appeals may be settled at sums which are higher than what has been set aside for.
 - The Revenues Team have prioritised the distribution of grants to businesses and the ability to address arrears has been impacted by limited court time.
 - Businesses have received business rate reliefs and a moratorium on eviction for rent arrears (up to the end of March 2022). In 2020/20-2021/22 as this support reduces, there could be a spike in debts and companies going into administration. The Revenues service has been and continues to work with businesses to manage their arrears.
 - For note the 2020/21 gains were significantly impacted by COVID.

4.7.7 The 2021/22 business rates have also been revised (but are subject to the points in paragraph 4.7.6). In 2021/22 (like 2020/21), a significant repayment to the Collection Fund is projected because reliefs were announced (in March 2021), after the level of business rates had been approved for the year. The 2021/22 revised estimate is shown below and includes an increase in the net surplus of £67,731. This increase will be transferred to the NDR reserve until realised and an update will be provided at the June 2022 Executive.

Table 6 -2021/22 Business Rates	January 2021/22 Projected	February 2021/22 Projected	Variance	Repay Collection Fund 2022/23
Business Rates	(£15,114,209)	(£15,257,204)	(£142,995)	(£142,995)
Business Rates Tariff	£15,429,346	£15,429,346	£0	
Levy	£412,640	£474,069	£61,430	
S31 grants NNDR	(£3,886,781)	(£3,872,946)	£13,835	
Total in year business rates	(£3,159,004)	(£3,226,735)	(£67,731)	(£142,995)
Repay 2020/21 NDR losses to collection Fund in 2022/23				£387,834
Total Repayment to the Collection Fund				£244,839

4.7.8 The 2021/22 estimates do not include any assumptions about the COVID Additional Grant Relief (CARF) of £2.6Million announced in December 2021, this is because the scheme has to be devised (in line with government guidelines) and there may be a difference between award and eligibility under the scheme and subsequent reliefs given. S31 grants would be given to compensate councils for the loss of business rate yield, but S31 Grants are paid in the year they fall due and business rates are paid based on the NNDR1 estimate. A consequence could be that assumed S31 grants may not be realised in 2022/23 if the business rate relief given was lower and therefore

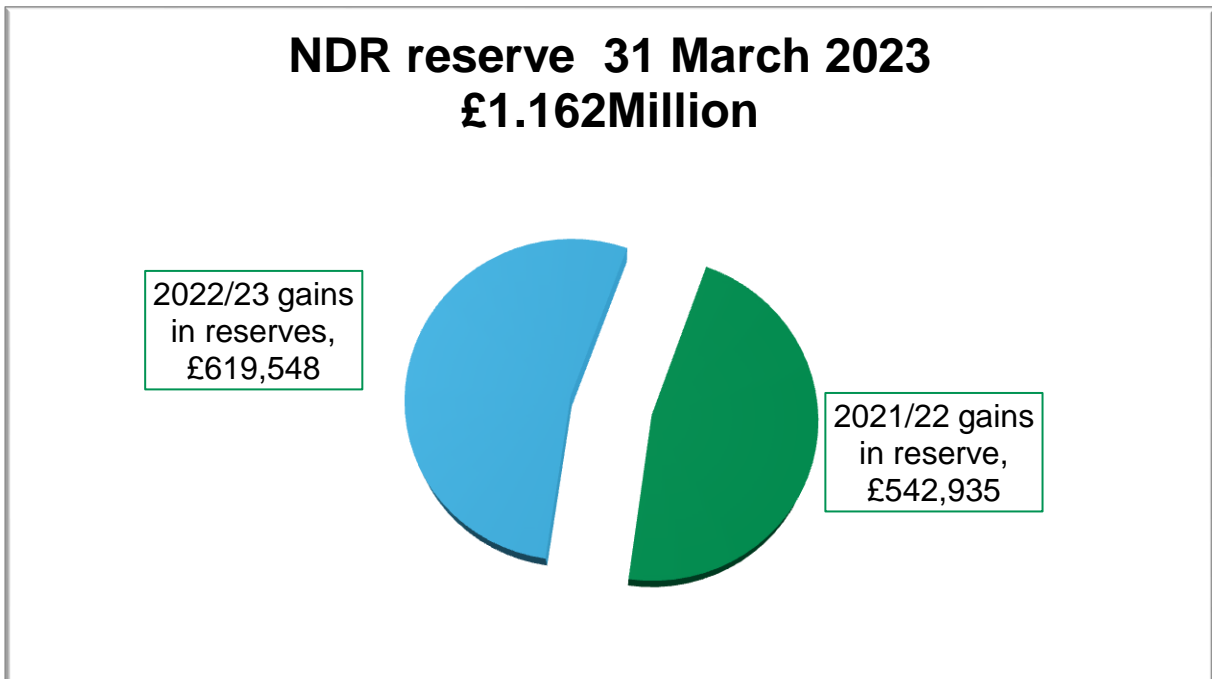
not reimbursed by the government in that year, leading to a deficit which would be recoverable in 2023/24. The impact of the CARF relief will be included in the 2021/22 year end government submission, (NNDR3).

4.7.9 Business rate gains in 2021/22 and 2022/23 have not been included in General Fund balances, with gains transferred to the NDR allocated reserve until realised due to the risks identified in paragraph 4.7.6. Furthermore under the proposed business rate re-set these gains could disappear, to align the business rate yield more in line with the baseline assessment.

4.7.10 The balance of the gains in the NDR allocated reserve, which are not planned to be returned to the General Fund or are uncommitted as at the 31 March 2023, total £1,162,483. The January 2022 Draft report stated,

'The CFO recommends that the primary purpose (of any such gain) should be to ensure the continued financial resilience of the Council and if required to be transferred to the Income Equalisation Reserve and thereafter, they are used for Regeneration or Co-operative Neighbourhood one off spend'.

4.7.11 The January 2022 Draft Budget report recommended that these gains are allocated for spend (one off in nature) once achieved at the year end; this is due to the level of balances and the volatility in business rates from year to year. A summary of the Business Rate balances are shown below.



4.7.12 Any gains available in respect of the 2021/22 gains of £542,171, shall be reported to Members with spending options in June 2022 report. The first call on this funding will be to improve the resilience of the General Fund if required.

4.8 2022/23 General Fund Net Expenditure

4.8.1 The 2021/22 projected and the 2022/23 final General Fund net expenditure is summarised below, including the changes from the December 2021 and January 2022 report.

Table 7 Summary of 2022/23 budget movements		On-going	£	On-going
				£
Total Net budget reported December 2021			£10,427,020	
New Homes Bonus increase in income		N	(£23,800)	
Reduction in 2022/23 savings options		Y	£12,000	£12,000
Draft budget changes		Y	£122,770	£122,770
Climate Change growth option (approved at December Executive)		Y	£45,000	£45,000
Transfer 2022/23 NDR gains to allocated reserve		N	£420,920	
Other		Y	£310	£310
Total budget movements January report			£577,200	£180,080
Increase in Revenue and Benefits contract			£27,520	£27,520
Increase in standby payments for homeless staff			£5,800	£5,800
Increase in NDR admin grant			(£500)	(£500)
Transfer prior year balances from NDR reserve			(£172,000)	
Transfer of increase in 2021/22 gains to allocated reserve (payable in 2022/23)			£143,000	
Transfer of increase in 2022/23 NDR gains to allocated reserves			£198,620	
Total Budget Movements February report			£202,440	£32,820
Updated General Fund 2022/23 net budget			£11,206,660	£212,900

4.8.2 The 2022/23 net budget has increased by a further £202,440 compared to the January 2022 Draft budget, however this includes the in year increase in transfer to NDR reserves of £169,620, with the increase in on-going pressures now totalling £212,900.

4.8.3 The January 2022 draft budget report recommended an increased savings target for future years and that Transformation savings when identified should be taken in 2022/23 to improve the resilience of the General Fund budget.

4.9 2021/22 General Fund working budget

4.9.1 The 2021/22 Net General Fund Budget has reduced by £75,270 which relates to the reduction in the transfer to reserves to business rates reserve to fund the increase in NDR levy and reduction in S31 grants in core resources (and as identified in Table 6 in this report. A summary is shown in the table below.

Table 8 Summary of 2021/22 budget movements		On-going	£	On-going
				£

Table 8 Summary of 2021/22 budget movements		On-going	£	On-going £
Quarter 2 working budget			£11,697,780	
Backdated Ridlin's Business rates (see also Table 4)	Y		£160,000	£33,280
Rental for space at Daneshill	N		(£105,000)	
Daneshill house (asbestos removal/new ways of working)	N		£46,000	
COVID grants				
BEIS (4) administration costs for administering grants	N		(£73,000)	
Protect and vaccinate rough sleepers funding	N		(£185,160)	
COVID spend relating to grants	N		£215,160	
Total budget movements January report			£58,000	£33,280
Reduction in NDR transfer to reserves to fund increased levy and reduction in S31 grants	N		(£75,270)	
Updated General Fund 2022/23 net budget			£11,680,510	

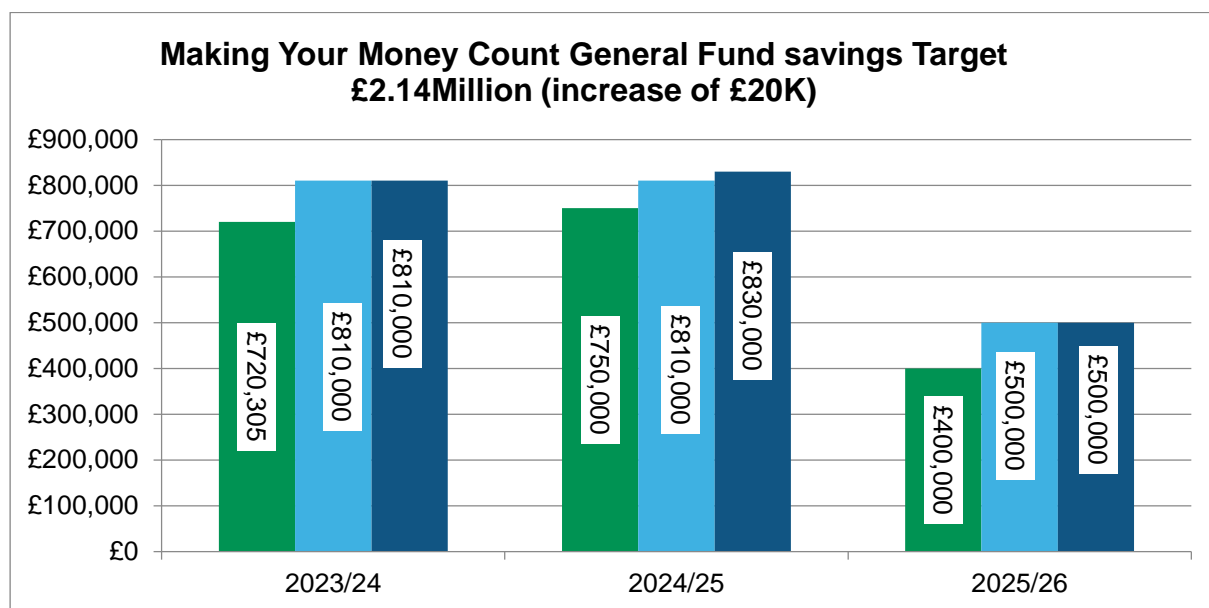
4.10 Projected General Fund Balances

4.10.1 The projected General Fund balances and council tax requirement are below and summarised in Appendix H.

General Fund Budget	2021/22 Estimate	2021/22 Projected	2022/23 Estimate
Net Expenditure	£10,635,570	£11,680,510	£11,206,660
(Use of)/ Contribution to Balances	(£326,066)	(£1,458,912)	(£1,112,817)
Budget Requirement	£10,309,504	£10,221,598	£10,093,842
Lower Tier Grant	(£140,043)	(£140,043)	(£115,392)
Council tax Support grant	(£118,859)	(£118,859)	
Service Grant	£0	£0	(£177,337)
Total grant support	(£258,902)	(£258,902)	(£292,730)
Business Rates net of tariff and levy	(£2,343,779)	(£2,282,349)	(£1,785,034)
S31 grants NNDR	(£815,229)	(£3,872,946)	(£1,618,316)
Total in year business rates	(£3,159,008)	(£6,155,295)	(£3,403,350)
(Return) /Contribution to Collection Fund (NDR) re 2021/22	£0	£0	£2,928,560
(Return) /Contribution to Collection Fund (NDR) re 2020/21	£8,547,930	£8,453,530	£816,665
(Return) /Contribution to Collection Fund (NDR) pre 2020/21	(£821,128)	(£821,128)	£0
Transfer from NNDR reserve	(£8,461,090)	(£5,282,497)	(£3,776,102)
Collection Fund Surplus (ctax)	(£40,152)	(£40,152)	(£50,090)
Council Tax Requirement	£6,117,154	£6,117,154	£6,316,795
Council Tax Base	27,734	27,734	28,004
Council Tax Band D	£220.57	£220.57	£225.57
Council Tax Band C	£196.07	£196.07	£200.51

4.11 Financial Security Targets Future Years

4.11.1 The Financial Security target for 2023/24-2025/26 was revised as a result of the further service pressures identified in the January report (section 4.3), however the increase in on-going costs reported in Table 7 has meant a small revision to the 2024/25 target as shown below, (an increase of £20K on the previous target). This will need to be reviewed at the next MTFS update to ensure firstly that there is a zero draw or a contribution to balances by 2024/25 and secondly to reflect any further impacts of COVID on the General Fund.



4.11.2 This savings target is based on the following pressures and funding assumptions being realised. An on-going continuation of parking and garage income losses as estimated for 2022/23 would increase required savings by circa £1Million, more than doubling the MYMC target for the year.

Table 10-Rationale for Savings Target	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Pressures above the base budget:				
Homeless costs	£410,000	£310,000	£310,000	£60,000
Car Parking losses	£719,760	£0	£0	£0
Garage rental losses	£265,720	£0	£0	£0
Commercial rent bad debt provision	£129,601	£120,000	£120,000	£120,000
Contribution to income equalisation reserve	£150,000	£100,000	£0	£0
Total	£1,675,081	£530,000	£430,000	£180,000
Funding increases:				
Additional grant funding in settlement	(£292,730)	(£120,000)	(£120,000)	£0
Net Pressures	£1,382,351	£410,000	£310,000	£180,000

4.11.3 Savings targets beyond 2022/23 are predicated on an improving position for both garage and car parking income and a reduction in homeless costs. There are other risks in addition to those shown above which are summarised below.

Expenditure and Income	Table 11 – Risks to Financial Resilience	Risk (to increase cost)
Inflation	supply chains issues have led to scarcity of materials and HGV drivers, which impact on the cost of service delivery	high
	2021/22 pay award rejected by the unions, 2022/23 pay inflation could increase with as a result of general inflation increases	high
	Projections for inflation of CPI at 4% will exacerbate inflationary pressures in the General Fund and HRA for pay, goods and services.	high
	The National insurance increase announced for social care will increase contractual commitments	high
COVID	The cost of COVID maybe on-going to the Council as a result of higher homeless costs and lower fees and charges	high
	The impact of COVID on the Council's leisure provider may lead to requests for further support above that given in 2020/21	high
Core funding	The government has signalled a business rate reset in which current gains could be removed through a higher tariff applied to business rates retained	high
	The Fair Funding review could reduce the level of funding deemed by the government to be required by the Council	Medium
	Grant funding for new burdens is announced annually such as homeless or rough sleeper funding which makes recruitment and retention difficult on a permanent basis	high
	There is uncertainty around future years government funding with only a high level three year settlement figure announced in the budget	high

4.11.4 Due to the level of risk outlined above and the assumptions that the Council's three main income streams garages, commercial rents and car parking will in the main achieve pre-2020/21 levels beyond 2022/23, the CFO now recommends that a higher level of savings are identified up to a value of £500K to be allow the Council flexibility over which options could and should be implemented if the General Fund financial resilience reduces and also to consider whether to commence efforts to meet the estimated 2023/24 MYMC

target earlier. The Executive will be updated on possible options at the June 2022 Executive meeting.

- 4.11.5 The MYMC savings options going forward are anticipated to be driven through the Transformation and Commercial and Insourcing Strategy. But if sufficient savings or the timing of savings doesn't coincide with the required target, then the probability of further service reductions is likely as the Council's ability to deliver efficiency savings has diminished.

4.12 Risk Assessment of General Fund balances

- 4.12.1 The General Fund balances have been risk assessed for 2022/23 and the minimum level of balances required is £3,471,038, unchanged from the January report (£3,653,529, 2021/22)
- 4.12.2 The risk assessment of balances includes amounts for general overruns in expenditure and losses of income (1.5% of the gross value) and in addition for specific risks.
- 4.12.3 The impact of COVID on fees and increased costs is included in the risk assessment with an additional £1Million allocated, (£750K fees and £250K costs) in addition to that assumed within the budget.

4.13 General Fund Reserve Projections

- 4.13.1 General Fund balances are projected to be £3.46Million by 2025/26 which means a reduction of £2.9Million from balances held at 1 April 2021.

Table 12 GF Balances £'000	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Revised Balances at 31 March each Year:	(£6,401)	(£4,942)	(£3,829)	(£3,349)	(£3,349)
use of balances	£1,459	£1,113	£480	(£0)	(£117)
General fund Balance 1 March	(£4,942)	(£3,829)	(£3,349)	(£3,349)	(£3,466)

- 4.13.2 The 2022/23 projected year end balances are £3,829,140, (January 2022 report was £3,703,005) which is £358,102 above the risk assessed balances of £3,471,038. This is considered to be only a minimal cushion above the assessed level of reserves, however the risk assessed balances does include £1Million for COVID fee losses and additional costs. This further enforces the recommendation in paragraph 4.11.4 to identify £500K of further potential savings.

4.14 Contingency Sums

- 4.14.1 Members will recall that a Contingency Sum needs to be determined as part of the Budget and Policy Framework in order to avoid the need for all supplementary estimates to be considered by Council during the course of the year. This contingency sum constitutes an upper cumulative limit during the financial year within which the Executive can approve supplementary estimates, rather than part of the Council's Budget Requirement for the year. A sum of £400,000 is proposed for 2022/23 which remains unchanged from

the current year, however due regard will need to be given to breaching minimum balances.

4.14.2 In addition to the delegations the Council is retendering to the leisure contract as identified in paragraph 4.2.9 will be awarding the new leisure contract. The estimate size and length of the contract means this will be an Executive decision.

4.15 Allocated Reserves

4.15.1 The allocated reserves as at 31 March 2023 are estimated to be £3.877Million, of which £1.16Million relates to unrealised 2021/22 and 2022/23 business rate gains. The allocated reserves are summarised in the following table.

Table 13 Movements to/from Allocated Reserves £'000					
Allocated Reserve	Balance as at 1 April 2021	Anticipated transfer to/from reserves	Forecast balance as at 31 March 2022	Anticipated transfer to/from reserves	Forecast balance as at 31 March 2023
New Homes Bonus	(£469)	£230	(£239)	£234	(£5)
Transformation Reserve	(£330)	£0	(£330)	£230	(£100)
Business Rates Reserve	(£1,645)	£627	(£1,017)	(£145)	(£1,162)
Business Rates Reserve S31 grants	(£9,059)	£5,282	(£3,776)	£3,776	£0
Homeless and Rough Sleeper reserve	(£370)	£193	(£176)	£0	(£176)
Regeneration Assets	(£1,017)	£353	(£664)	£40	(£624)
Insurance Reserve	(£76)	£65	(£11)	£0	(£11)
Regeneration Fund (SG1)	(£746)	£206	(£540)	£295	(£245)
Town Centre	(£81)	£0	(£81)	£0	(£81)
Planning Delivery Grant	(£65)	£0	(£65)	£0	(£65)
Income equalisation reserve	(£8)	(£250)	(£258)	(£150)	(£408)
Total	(£13,864)	£6,707	(£7,158)	£4,280	(£2,877)

4.15.2 The use of reserves does not take into account any use of the Income Equalisation reserve which may be required in 2022/23, particularly if fee income is impacted by COVID. The NDR reserves balances are based on the level of business rates as set out in section 4.7.

4.15.3 The SG1 Regeneration reserve balance is projected to total £245K by the 31 March 2023 and is likely to need additional funding from 2023/24 onwards and business rate gains could be utilised to do this.

4.16 Chief Finance Officer's Commentary

4.16.1 The Chief Finance Officer is the Council's principal financial advisor and has statutory responsibilities in relation to the administration of the Council's

financial affairs (Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 and Section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988). This commentary is given in light of these statutory responsibilities.

4.16.2 The Council has evolved its budget strategy to meet multiple challenges as set out in this report in paragraphs 3.6 -3.7. The financial strategy to deal with this is the 'Making Your Money Count' (MYMC) strand of the 'Future Town Future Council' programme.

4.16.3 Officers regularly update the MTFS to ensure that a clear financial position for the Council can be demonstrated over the next five years. This medium term view of the budget gives a mechanism by which future 'budget gaps' can be identified allowing for a measured rather than reactive approach to reducing net expenditure. The MYMC year round approach to identifying budget options means that work is on-going throughout the year to bridge the gap.

4.16.4 The Council has taken significant steps over recent years to balance its budget but as yet does not meet the principle aim of the MTFS to: 'achieve an on-going balanced budget until by 2024/25 by ensuring inflationary pressures are matched by increases in fees and income or reductions in expenditure'.

4.16.5 The impact of COVID has increased financial risk and an update to the June 2022 Executive is planned to give an early indication if further financial resilience measures are required in year. This has been a difficult budget to set, particularly when considering the need to increase fees and charges when the economy is still impacted by COVID versus reducing services and making savings. The financial resilience measures taken/for approval which increase the security of the Council's position, are:

- A June 2022 General Fund MTFS update to the Executive.
- A risk assessment of balances to ensure general reserves held take into account increased risk including an increase for further COVID losses.
- The establishment of an income equalisation reserve (£408,000 by 31 March 2023) which can be returned to the General Fund if fees and charges are lower than projected.
- Reduce the use of reliance on Revenue Contributions to Capital (RCCO) by identifying sites for disposal and using capital receipts rather than revenue (September 2020 MTFS report).
- Identification of a sufficient level of on-going MYMC options to ensure General Fund balances are above or at the minimum level required for 2022/23.
- Use of any business rate gains only when realised and ring fenced to maintain the financial resilience of the General Fund and thereafter FTFC priorities.
- A transformation programme to deliver savings from 2023/24 onwards.

4.16.5 There is a zero draw on balances projected in 2024/25, however there is a significant draw on balances through the MTFS period and a need to deliver savings throughout the MTFS timeframe.

4.16.6 The current projections of balances and the measures the Council has taken to date, and as set in this report, have meant the level of balances projected are sufficient to set the 2022/23 budget, if all options included in the report are approved. However the CFO considers that options totalling £500,000, as set out in paragraph 4.11.4, are brought forward in the June 2022 MTFS update report should the level of reserves subsequently be projected to be lower due to further COVID losses and/or other pressures, in order to improve financial resilience.

4.16.7 While delivering one of the most difficult budgets, the Council is also continuing with its ambitious programmes to transform the town centre and at the same time improve the housing market in Stevenage. Both these priorities may require further investment over time which potentially presents a risk to the budget position subject to the funding sources which are available. There is a ring fenced reserve for Regeneration and further estimates of resources have been included in the General Fund MTFS.

4.17 Leaders Financial Security Group

4.17.1 The LFSG chaired by the Portfolio Holder for Resources, on behalf of the Leader and with cross party representation, met on three occasions in October and November to consider the proposals for efficiencies, commercial and fees and charges. There was majority support by LFSG for the efficiency, commercial and fees and charges options. The comments from LFSG were outlined in the December 2021 MYMC report.

4.17.2 LFSG supported the higher fees and charges levels (option 3) (majority view) and as approved at the December 2022 Executive also recognising the need to balance fee increases versus service reductions.

4.17.3 LFSG also supported the MYMC options with the exception of the reduce options which were not finalised at the time the group met. However a majority supported a reduction to the cost of play (67%) when asked to rank five service areas where a saving (if the Council had to make a reduction to balance the budget) from a discretionary area of spend.

4.17.4 There were a number of questions and points made on savings options and fees and charges including:

- Advertising for car park season tickets is not widely known and needs to be better promoted.
- The group asked officers to review Corey's Mill parking to be better aligned with NHS pricing and requested a further option (option 3).
- The group asked if the stay period at Corey's Mill could be extended beyond the three hours and were advised a traffic control order would be required. A shorter parking period was required to ensure that there was parking available at the site, however the AD Planning & Regeneration sort to look at the possibility of extending the stay time to four hours during 2022/23.
- The free parking Saturdays were questioned as to their ability to increase footfall into the Town Centre and the AD Planning & Regeneration

undertook to see if the monetary value of lost parking income could be better utilised to increase town centre footfall

- Members recommended that EV charging should be a chargeable service and should not be offered free on-street or in car parks, this would be a growing cost as the number of electric powered cars increases.
- The increase in pre-application fees was queried as to the level of increase in fees. Officers explained that a review by the Commercial Manager working with the service had revised charges based on recovering the staff costs to deliver the advice.
- LFSG supported the removal of discounts on parking (through the use of validators) for a number of hotels and other businesses in the town, but also suggested this should not be available for the leisure providers, this was not recommended as part of the officer proposal.
- Members asked for a list of payments to charities and organisations, which is being compiled for review by LFSG (for contributions over £5K).
- One Member asked whether recycling was promoted enough and whether the Council was achieving income from the sale of recyclates. LFSG were advised that recyclate pricing had been suppressed but had recovered during 2021/22, but was subject to significant price fluctuations.

4.18 Consultation

- 4.18.1 In October and November 2021, the Council undertook a survey among residents into how they perceive Stevenage Borough Council services and their local area. The information gathered from residents helps to provide insight on their priorities for the town, the extent to which the Council is perceived to provide value for money and how well services are meeting resident expectations. The full findings of the survey are still being analysed and service areas are beginning to develop actions where appropriate in response.
- 4.18.2 The full findings of the survey will be shared with the Executive and the Cooperative Neighbourhood Board meetings throughout February. This will enable all Councillors to understand perceptions and findings for the town as a whole, and specific priorities and challenges in local areas and help shape how the Council responds to the findings. Ahead of this, the outcomes from key questions on preferred ways for the Council to achieve financial resilience as a result of cuts to the funding it receives, and views on whether the council tax paid to Stevenage Borough Council provides value for money, are shared below given their direct relevance to the budget setting process.
- 4.18.3 The 2021/22 Residents survey shows that resident's preferences are firstly to reduce costs through more on line services. Moving services on line was ranked the highest (out of five options in 2021 and 2017) with 41% of those responding to the survey indicating that this was their preferred option; this ranking has increased from 2017 and supports proposals being developed via the Transformation programme as a method to reduce costs and improve customer satisfaction / response times.

Please tell us your order of preference for each of the following options by ordering them 1 to 5	2021 rank	2017 rank	1st
Reduce time and money spent on paperwork by interacting with more residents and customers online	1	1	41%
Increase income from fees and chargeable services, to keep the council's element of Council Tax as low as possible	2	3	24%
Spend less by reducing or cutting the services that you tell us are not a priority	3	2	16%
Make money by selling more of our services to residents and customers	4	5	9%
Increase our element of Council Tax (for example from 51p per day to 55p per day)	5	4	10%

4.18.4 The 2021 residents' survey asked residents whether the council tax represented value for money and whilst those strongly disagreeing have increased (from 7% to 15%), overall 52% (up from 46% in 2017) agree it is value for money (as shown in the chart below).

	Responses	2021	2017	2015	2013	2011
To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Council Tax paid to Stevenage Borough Council provides good value for money?	Strongly agree	16%	10%	7%	6%	6%
	Tend to agree	36%	36%	39%	39%	40%
	Neither	18%	30%	30%	35%	33%
	Tend to disagree	10%	17%	18%	17%	16%
	Strongly disagree	15%	7%	6%	5%	5%
	Don't know (DNRO)	4%				
	Summary: Agree	52%	46%	46%	45%	46%
	Summary: Disagree	26%	24%	24%	22%	21%

4.18.5 The General Fund MTFS has a set of principles used for financial purposes, one of which is to ensure that resources are aligned with the Council's Corporate Plan and Future Town Future Council (FTFC) priorities and that growth is limited to the Council's top priorities. The Corporate Plan is included in the Budget and Policy Framework and is therefore subject to Council approval.

4.18.6 The current FTFC Co-operative Corporate Plan was approved as a five year plan from 2016 to 2021 and extended for a further year at the February 2021 Council. During 2021 the FTFC priorities have been revised from the eight priorities to five.

4.18.7 Members and officers have continued to focus on responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. In accordance with the Council's Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules, the Council be recommended to continue the adoption of the current Co-operative Corporate Plan, subject to further review in Autumn 2023.

4.19 Feedback from Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- 4.19.1 Overview and Scrutiny considered the Draft General Budget at a meeting held on the 25 January 2022. The CFO reminded Members that the business rate gains above the baseline assessment by government would be held in an allocated reserve until they were realised at the end of each relevant year.
- 4.19.2 A Member of the committee commented on the difficulties of setting the budget in the economic climate for Local Authorities but welcomed the use of the one off business rate gains for the Council's priorities of Regeneration and Co-operative Neighbourhood working.

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial Implications

- 5.1.1 The report deals with Council finances and as such all implications are contained in the main body of the report.

5.2 Legal Implications

- 5.2.1 The Council is required to set a balanced budget each year. The Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires the Council to estimate revenue expenditure and income for the forthcoming year from all sources, together with contributions from reserves, in order to determine a net budget requirement to be met by government grant and council tax.

5.3 Policy Implications

- 5.3.1 The report deals with Council policy and as such all implications are contained in the main body of the report.

5.4 Staffing and Accommodation Implications

- 5.4.1 The 2022/23 budget options include staff implications and these are summarised in paragraph 4.2.6. All the options are subject to consultation and the financial outcomes assumed may change as a result of that consultation taking place.
- 5.4.2 In compliance with SBC's Organisational Change Policy any proposals involving potential redundancies will be fully consulted on with the trade unions and affected staff for a minimum 30-day consultation period, and again may therefore change depending on the outcomes of the consultation process.
- 5.4.3 Officers will continue to work in an open and transparent way with the trade unions, and will provide them with the information required, in accordance with statutory requirements and best employment practice, as soon as this is available. The trades unions will be provided with all relevant information in accordance with the Council's legal obligations.

5.4.4 Wherever possible staff who find themselves in a redundancy situation will be redeployed to a suitable alternative post. If that redeployment results in the staff affected moving into a lower-graded, post pay protection will apply for a 12-month period.

5.5 Equal Opportunities Implications

5.5.1 In carrying out or changing its functions (including those relating to the provision of services and the employment of staff) the Council must comply with the Equality Act 2010 and in particular section 149 which is the Public Sector Equality Duty. The Council has a statutory obligation to comply with the requirements of The Act, demonstrating that as part of the decision-making process, due regard has been given to the need to:

- Remove discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that its unlawful under this Act
- Promote equal opportunities between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Encourage good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

5.5.2 These duties are non-delegable and must be considered by Council when setting the Budget in February 2022.

5.5.3 To inform the decisions about the Budget 2022/23 officers have begun Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) for service-related savings proposals. These are currently in draft form, since they must consider appropriate evidence and the findings of consultation with various stakeholders to inform the decision by Council in February 2022. Where there is a potentially negative impact, officers will collect further information and identify actions to mitigate the impact as far as possible. These EqIAs are summarised and attached in **Appendix D** with further information on the process to date and planned activity. EqIAs for future years' savings will be presented alongside the draft Budget for the relevant year.

5.5.4 An overarching EqIA will also be developed once individual EqIAs are finalised for Council in February 2022. This will consider the collective impact of the Budget on people with protected characteristics.

5.5.5 As well as considering the impact on service delivery and equality, an EqIA concerning all strands of potential discrimination will be required by the Head of Paid Service on proposed redundancies and restructures per savings proposal and as a whole. It is proposed that this will be produced alongside the required restructure consultation documents as it is only at this stage that the actual impact on staff will start to be known. As the proposals will be delivered over a range of different timescales, the whole, i.e. combined EqIA, will be reviewed periodically with the Council's Strategic Leadership Team. All staff impacts are summarised at **Appendix E**.

5.5.6 The staff EQIA recognises that the options identified in Appendix A impact adversely on woman staff members.

5.6 Risk Implications

5.6.1 There are risk implications to setting a prudent General Fund budget if the Financial Security options identified in Appendix A are not achieved and crucially if future options are not found to meet the targets outlined in the report.

5.6.2 There are a number of risks that have been identified and these are set out in the report.

5.7 Climate Change Implications

5.7.1 The Council declared a climate change emergency at the June 2019 Council meeting with a resolution to work towards a target of achieving net zero emissions by 2030. The Transformation programme and the digital on-line agenda will contribute to reducing the Councils carbon footprint.

5.7.2 This report recommends a growth bid for a Climate Change post to support the Council's resolution to meet the 2030 date.

6.0 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

BD1 Draft General Fund Report January Executive 2022

BD2 General Fund Medium Term Financial Strategy (2021/22-2025/26)

BD3 Making Your Money Count Options December 2021 Executive

7.0 APPENDICES

Appendix A General Fund and HRA Budget Options 2022/23

Appendix B Fees and Charges 2022/23

Appendix C Risk Assessment of Balances 2022/23

Appendix D Equalities Impact Assessment overview

Appendix E Staff Equalities Impact Assessment

Appendix F Draft Council Tax resolution

Appendix G Robustness of Estimates

Appendix H Summary General Fund Budget

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APPENDIX A

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

MAKING YOUR MONEY COUNT OPTIONS 2022/23

	General Fund £	HRA
Efficiency	£245,360	£6,700
Commercial	£71,395	£0
Fees and Charges	£212,280	
Extra Fees	£129,500	
Transformation	£29,410	£32,670
Reduction options	£93,000	0
Total	£780,945	£39,370

Ref No	Manager	Name of Service	Description of Savings Proposal	Implementati on costs (any redundancy/ capital)	If staff affected indicate no. of staff	Budget 2021/22	Impact of Saving Proposal on Public/ Customers/ Staff/ Members/Partnerships etc. (include any impact on key corporate programmes/performance indicator measures) .	Potential Timing (put the date you estimate it will be implemented, consider any consultation required)	£ General Fund Year 1	£ HRA Year 1
2022/23 Efficiency Options										
F1	Rob Gregory	CCTV	A reduction in Broadland Guarding Contract (40.45% Stevenage share)	£0	0	£395,470	Contract reduction re-negotiated with provider in 2021/22, the share shown is the SBC saving only, which excludes the partnership saving. Contract being re-tendered for 2022-25	Immediate	15,257	0
F2	Rob Gregory	CCTV	Reduction in CCTV and Parking Manager (40.45%)	£0	0	£33,260	Savings due to retirement of Group Manager- . CCTV will report to Community Safety Manager, Some core business development capacity to support commercial growth to be retained and linked to commercialisation work stream.	Immediate	5,000	0
F3	Zayd Al-Jawad	Planning & Environment	Technical support staff changes	£0	0		Saving from technical Support staffing from 2022/23 onwards.	2021/22	1,990	0
F5	Zayd Al-Jawad	Parking	Combining on and off street parking services	£0	0		Saving from Parking Mgr retiring, the net saving includes changes to two existing job roles	1 September 2021	6,383	0
F6	L Walker	SDS Ops	Service Review	£0	0		Projected £157k saving - reduced by a market forces supplement for HGV driver roles given the national driver shortage etc. And the need for additional management support (1FTE) . Savings potential will reduce as staff progress through the scale points, but could be offset with churn of leavers and starters.	2022/23	27,980	0
F7	L Walker	Herts Agency Agreement	Increased HCC contract price as negotiated in 2021/22	£0	0		Agreement signed for 2021/22 but budget used to complete digital improvements at Cavendish in that year and for 2022/23 onwards a saving for the General Fund	1st April 2022	104,000	0
F8	Clare Fletcher	Shared Revenue and Benefits Service	Reduction in outside officers/control and benefits based on churn and change to contracted hours	£0	0	£1,944,270	Reduction in staff costs through reducing headcount through natural change in hours and non-replacement of staff. This is deemed to be achievable by the Shared Service.	1st April 2022	38,950	0
FS15	Lloyd Walker / Julia Hill	SDS	Cease provision of seasonal bedding displays to roundabouts / hammerheads	£0	0		Replace seasonal bedding schemes with sustainable planting - support Climate Change Strategy and biodiversity as implemented.	now implemented	19,000	0
FS7	Rob Gregory	Corporate Policy and Business Support Team	Reduction of 1FTE- post currently vacant	£0	0	£33,500	Reduction in team by one post, which will also include the re-grading of an existing role. Will reduce some corporate capacity.	1st April 2022	26,800	6,700
TOTAL				£0	0	£2,406,500			£245,360	£6,700

2022/23 Commercial in-sourcing Strand										
C1	N Capuano	Garages	Increase recharges from locks changes to achieve full cost recovery	£0	0		Recovery of costs from tenants for lock changes to ensure full recovery of costs.	Immediate	6,880	0
C8	N Capuano	Garages	Cost recovery re freehold cleansing and weed spraying	£0	0		Recover costs from sold garage owners, will take some time to set up the service charge regime	1 June 2022	14,085	0
C9	L Walker	Trade Waste	Reduce concession for schools and play groups to concessions policy of 25%	£0	0		Currently schools and play groups pay £13.75 versus £22.25 per standard lift, this equates to a 38.2% discount, this proposal is to remove discount, to a £18 price (market based) the saving is based on 80% remaining with the full price model. The exact increase in income is still to be confirmed (estimated January 2022).	1 April 2022	30,430	0

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

MAKING YOUR MONEY COUNT OPTIONS 2022/23

	General Fund £	HRA
Efficiency	£245,360	£6,700
Commercial	£71,395	£0
Fees and Charges	£212,280	
Extra Fees	£129,500	
Transformation	£29,410	£32,670
Reduction options	£93,000	0
Total	£780,945	£39,370

Ref No	Manager	Name of Service	Description of Savings Proposal	Implementati on costs (any redundancy/ capital)	If staff affected indicate no. of staff	Budget 2021/22	Impact of Saving Proposal on Public/ Customers/ Staff/ Members/Partnerships etc. (include any impact on key corporate programmes/performance indicator measures) .	Potential Timing (put the date you estimate it will be implemented, consider any consultation required)	£ General Fund Year 1	£ HRA Year 1
C10	Zayd Al-Jawad	Car parking Concessions	Remove concession validators for hotel and bingo halls	£0	0		Currently validators are in place that discount parking charges for the hotel in the town centre and for Mecca bingo. The proposal based on the Councils financial position is to remove these concessions. (Number needs confirming notional amount included) This has been estimated to be between £20K-£37K saving based on actual usage.	1 April 2022	20,000	0
				£0	0	£0			£71,395	£0

2022/23 Transformation Options

BG1	Ruth Luscombe	CSC	Reduce CSC Opening hours		0	£843,130	Current Customer Services opening hours are 8:30-5:30 for face to face services and 8:00-6:00 for other channels (inc Telephone), Monday to Friday except bank holidays and other closures. This savings proposal is to reduce the opening hours by an hour at the end of the day, to 8:00-4:30 for face to face, and 8:00-5:00 for other channels. This would allow provision of the same service but reduce resourcing by 2FTE. This has been modelled using forecasting tools, and other changes in demand etc. may mean real performance would be different.	1 April 2022	19,600	29,400
BG2	AD Finance & Estates	Facilities	Reduce FM support by 1 part time (staff costs shown in costs)	TBC	1	£0	The hybrid working method has reduced post and other tasks and the Head of Estates considers the post could be removed	1 April 2022	9,810	3,270
				£0	1	£843,130			£29,410	£32,670

2022/23 Reduce Options

BG6	Rob Gregory	Neighbourhood Ward	Remove seed funding for Neighbourhood Wards	£0	0	£18,000	This was introduced in 2021/22 but has yet to be implemented due to 21/22 growth monies being on hold. Alternative funding could come from CIL or prior year underspends say up to a value of £36,000.	1 April 2022	18,000	0
BG3	AD Communities and Neighbourhoods	Play	Reduce the direct costs of play from £514K by £100K over 2 years	TBC	1 or 2	£514,150	The proposal subject to consultation is to reduce the days the play centres are open in the school holidays by three days a week at each centre and for each day reduce by one hour. Pop up play and play outside of play centres would still be part of the offer, (full year saving £100K).	1 June 2022	75,000	0
TOTAL				£0	1 or 2	£514,150			£93,000	£0

£439,165 £39,370

FEES AND CHARGES - RECOMMENDED FEE INCREASES FOR 2022/23		2021/22 Fees	Option 1	Increase £	Income (Reduction) / Increase	Option 2	Option 3
Service	Fees and Charges for 2022/23	2021/22 FEE	2022/23 FEE			Alternative Parking Charges with budget implications	Alternative Parking Charges with budget implications
Car Parks							
New Town:	7am-7pm (6am-7pm at St Georges only) :					Alternative Fee	Total Income Increase (Option 2 Fee)
	Mon-Saturday up to 30 Mins (St Georges & Westgate only)	£0.50	£0.50	£0.00		£0.50	
	Mon-Saturday up to 1 hour	£1.80	£1.80	£0.00		£1.90	£20,000
Short Stay (The Forum, Westgate, St Georges)	Mon-Saturday up to 2 hours	£2.60	£2.70	£0.10	£4,800	£2.70	£5,500
	Mon-Saturday up to 3 hours	£3.30	£3.50	£0.20	£3,600	£3.50	£3,600
	Mon-Saturday up to 5 Hours	£4.00	£4.20	£0.20	£2,400	£4.20	£2,500
	Sunday	£2.20	£2.50	£0.30	£2,800	£2.50	£2,800
	Night Parking 7pm to 7am	£2.00	£2.00	£0.00		£2.00	
Total Short Stay					£13,600		£27,100
Long stay	Mon-Fri before 8.30am	£8.00	£8.50	£0.50	£4,800	£8.50	£4,800
	Mon-Fri 8.30am to 7pm	£5.00	£5.20	£0.20	£4,800	£5.20	£5,000
	Saturday 6am - 6pm	£5.00	£5.20	£0.20	£1,800	£5.20	£2,000
	Sunday	£2.20	£2.50	£0.30	£2,400	£2.50	£2,400
	Night Parking (7pm to 6am or 6pm - 6am)	£2.00	£2.00	£0.00		£2.00	
Total Long Stay					£13,800		£13,800
Railways	Mon-Fri 4am to 4am	£9.00	£9.30	£0.30	£8,800	£9.50	£13,600
	Saturday	£7.20	£7.50	£0.30	£3,200	£7.60	£4,200
	Sunday	£6.80	£7.00	£0.20	£2,700	£7.20	£4,450
Total Railways					£14,700		£22,250
Season Tickets	New Town (price per month)	£89.00	£89.00	£0.00	£0	£91.00	£2,500
	Blue Badge Holders (Season Ticket, price per Annum)	£44.00	£48.00	£4.00	£500	£50.00	£500
	Rail (price per month)	£160.00	£160.00	£0.00	£0	£165.00	£600
Season Tickets SubTotal					£500		£3,600
New Town GRAND TOTAL					£42,600		£66,750
Old Town:							
Primett Rd North	Monday - Saturday 0600-1600 hours						
	up to one hour	£1.10	£1.20	£0.10			£1.30
	up to two hours	£1.50	£1.60	£0.10			£1.80
	up to three hours	£1.90	£2.00	£0.10	£1,500		£2.40
	More than three hours	£5.00	£5.00	£0.00			£5.00
Primett Rd South	Monday-Friday						
	0600-1600hrs	£2.90	£3.00	£0.10			£3.00
	1600-0600hrs	£0.50	£0.50	£0.00			£0.50
	Saturday 0600-1600:						
	up to one hour	£1.10	£1.20	£0.10	£1,500		£1.30
	up to two hours	£1.50	£1.60	£0.10			£1.80
	up to three hours	£1.90	£2.00	£0.10			£2.40
	More than three hours	£2.70	£2.80	£0.10			£3.00
	Saturday 4pm-Monday 6am	£0.50	£0.50	£0.00			£0.50
Church Lane North	Mon-Sat 0600-1600hrs						
	up to one hour	£1.10	£1.20	£0.10			£1.30
	up to two hours	£1.50	£1.60	£0.10			£1.80
	up to three hours	£1.90	£2.00	£0.10	£1,750		£2.40
	More than three hours	£2.70	£2.80	£0.10			£3.00
	Saturday 4pm-Monday 6am	free	free	£0.00			£3.00
Season Tickets	Old Town (price per month)	£46.00	£50.00	£4.00	£2,000		£50.00
Old Town GRAND TOTAL					£6,750		£7,400
Car Parks:	Business Tokens/ Commercial Income	various	various		£4,000		£4,000
Loss of income due to price increase		£0.10	9.75%		-£6,000		-£8,000
TOTAL "All Off Street Car Parks"					£47,350		£62,750
On Street Parking							
Town Centre	up to 30 mins	£0.60	£0.70	£0.10		£0.70	£1.00
	Up to 1 Hour	£1.80	£1.80	£0.00		£1.90	£2.00
	Up to 2 Hours	£2.70	£2.90	£0.20		£2.90	£3.00

FEES AND CHARGES - RECOMMENDED									
FEE INCREASES FOR 2022/23									
		2021/22 Fees	Option 1			Option 2		Option 3	
Service	Fees and Charges for 2022/23	2021/22 FEE	2022/23 FEE	Increase £	Income (Reduction) / Increase	Alternative Parking Charges with budget implications		Alternative Parking Charges with budget implications	
	Up to 3 Hours	£3.50	£3.80	£0.30	£14,000	£3.80	£17,000	£4.00	£25,000
	Up to 4 Hours	£4.50	£5.00	£0.50		£5.00		£5.00	
	Up to 5 Hours	£6.00	£11.00	£5.00		£11.00		£11.00	
	Over 5 hours	£10.00	£11.00	£1.00		£11.00		£11.00	
Corey's Mill Lane	up to 1 hr £1.10 up to 2 hrs £1.70 up to 3 hrs (max stay) £2.20	up to 1 hr £1.10 up to 2 hrs £1.70 up to 3 hrs (max stay) £2.20	up to 1 hr £1.10 up to 2 hrs £1.70 up to 3 hrs (max stay) £2.20	£0.00	£0	up to 1 hr £1.50 up to 2 hrs £2.00 up to 3 hrs (max stay) £3.00	£50,000	up to 1 hr £1.50 up to 2 hrs £2.50 up to 3 hrs (max stay) £4.00	£90,000
On Street Parking Total					£14,000		£67,000		£115,000
Street Naming/Numbering									
Various Options, some examples shown here	First Dwelling Numbering	£105.00	£109	£4.00	£400		£400		£400
	Next ten dwellings (per dwelling)	£56.00	£58	£2.00					
	Naming of new street	£212.00	£220	£8.00					
	Commercial numbering first unit	£278.00	£288	£10.00					
	Commercial numbering further units	£139.00	£145	£6.00					
External Works (e.g. Other LAs)									
Examples of Hourly Charge out rate for staff time (VAT to be added)	Engineering Services Manager	£63.10	£66.25	£3.15	£50		£50		£50
	Principal Engineer	£58.30	£61.25	£2.95					
	Traffic & Parking Enforcement Manager	£55.00	£57.75	£2.75					
	Engineer	£43.50	£45.70	£2.20					
	Inspector	£41.20	£43.25	£2.05					
Town Centre Charges									
Street Hoarding Licences	Hoarding/Scaffold Licence (per week/100m run)	£48.00	£50	£2.00	£480		£480		£480
	Crane Licence	£2,187.00	£2,250	£63.00					
	Skip Licence (per fortnight)	£41.00	£43	£2.00					
On Street Parking									
	H Bar Marking Application fee	£30.00	£31.00	£1.00	£160		£160		£160
	H Bar Marking Fee	£85.00	£88.00	£3.00					
	Parking Bay Suspension (5 bays/wk)	£200.00	£210.00	£10.00					
	Parking Bay Suspension (per additional bay)	£5.00	£6.00	£1.00					
Parking Permits (e.g. Burymead) (selected example charges shown)	First Permit	£56.00	£56.00	£0.00	£0				£0
	Second Permit	£82.00	£82.00	£0.00					
	Third Permit	£108.00	£108.00	£0.00					
	Fourth Permit	£134.00	£134.00	£0.00					
	20 visitor vouchers	£15.00	£15.00	£0.00					
Garages:									
Prices shown are "NET" of VAT. Housing Tenants generally do not pay VAT but other customers do pay VAT, meaning the actual weekly increase for a Category A garage	Standard Garage (Category A)	£12.05	£12.50	£0.45	£103,300				£103,300
	Standard Garage (Category B)	£11.85	£12.25	£0.40					
	Standard Garage (Category C)	£11.45	£11.70	£0.25					
	Premium Sized Garages	£15.00	£15.60	£0.60					
	Road Facing Garages	£13.70	£14.25	£0.55					
Garages Total					£103,300		£103,300		£103,300
Markets:									
	Indoor Market Rents	various	various		£6,980				
	Other Market Fees	£100	£120						

FEES AND CHARGES - RECOMMENDED		2021/22 Fees	Option 1			Option 2		Option 3
FEE INCREASES FOR 2022/23		2021/22 FEE	2022/23 FEE	Increase £	Income (Reduction) / Increase	Alternative Parking Charges with budget implications		Alternative Parking Charges with budget implications
Markets Total					£6,980		£6,980	£6,980
Bulky Waste:								
	3 Items	£45.00	£48.00	£3.00				
	6 Items	£75.00	£78.00	£3.00				
	7 Items	n/a	£88.00	new				
	8 Items	n/a	£97.00	new				
	9 Items	n/a	£106.00	new				
	10 Items	n/a	£115.00	new				
	Cancellation Fee	£11.00	£11.00	£0.00				
Bulky Waste Total					£2,700		£2,700	£2,700
Trade Refuse:	Increase in fees to cover additional increase in disposal costs (example of pricing shown, 1100 litre bin)	£22.25	£23.25	£1.00	£30,000		£30,000	£30,000
Skips:	Increase in fees to cover additional increase in disposal costs (example of pricing shown 6yard skip)	£294.00	£305.00	£11.00	£2,000		£2,000	£2,000
Increase disposal cost of waste for Trade, Clinical, Skips and Transfer Station:					-£18,000		-£18,000	-£18,000
Cemeteries:		various			£11,490			
Cemeteries Total					£11,490		£11,490	£11,490
Parks and Open Spaces:		various			£4,650			
Parks and Open Spaces Total					£4,650		£4,650	£4,650
Allotments:	Price per M ² per year	£0.60	£0.77	£0.17	£12,300			
	100M ² per year	£60.00	£77.00	£17.00				
	250M ² per year	£150.00	£192.50	£42.50				
Allotments Total					£12,300		£12,300	£12,300
Fishing	Adult Day Ticket	£8.20	£8.50	£0.30	£200			
	Junior Day Ticket	£6.15	£6.35	£0.20				
	Night Fishing	£18.40	£19.00	£0.60				
	Average of above	£10.92	£11.28	£0.37				
Fishing Total					£200		£200	£200
Planning:	Major development				£1,800			
	100+ residential units, 6000+sqm of commercial /change of use or where the site is 3ha+ PER 100 units /6000sqm/3ha or part of.	£3,800.00	£3,990	£190				
	Bespoke hourly service for 100+ residential units, 6000+sqm of commercial /change of use or where the site is 3ha+ PER 100 units /6000sqm/3ha or part of	n/a	£192	new				

FEES AND CHARGES - RECOMMENDED										
FEE INCREASES FOR 2022/23										
		2021/22 Fees	Option 1			Option 2		Option 3		
Service	Fees and Charges for 2022/23	2021/22 FEE	2022/23 FEE	Increase £	Income (Reduction) / Increase	Alternative Parking Charges with budget implications		Alternative Parking Charges with budget implications		
	25-99 residential units, 2001-5999sqm of commercial /change of use or where the site is 1ha-3ha. Bespoke hourly service for 25-99 residential units, 2001-5999sqm of commercial /change of use or where the site is 1ha-3ha.	£3,800.00	£3,990	£190						
	Development requiring an EIA if not within the above categories	n/a	£192	new						
	Bespoke hourly service for Development requiring an EIA if not within the above categories	£3,700.00	£3,885	£185						
		n/a	£185	new						
	Other Major Developments									
	Provision of 10-24 dwellings or where the site is between 0.5ha and 1ha. Bespoke hourly service for Provision of 10-24 dwellings, 1001sqm to 2000sqm, or where the site is between 0.5ha and 1ha	£2,250.00	£2,360	£110						
	Change of use or provision of 1001sqm - 2000sqm of commercial floor space or on a site with an area exceeding 1ha.	n/a	£113	new						
		£2,250.00	£2,360	£110						
	Minor Development									
	Single dwelling/replacement dwelling Bespoke hourly service for Single dwelling/replacement dwelling	£225.00	£236	£11						
		n/a	£68	n/a						
	2-5 dwellings Bespoke hourly service for 2-5 dwellings	£445.00	£467	£22						
	n/a	£68	n/a							
6-9 dwellings Bespoke hourly service for 6-9 dwellings	£1,150.00	£1,205	£55							
	n/a	£68	n/a							
Change of use of buildings/new commercial buildings with a floor space between 0-500sqm or on a site with an area up to 0.5ha. Bespoke hourly service for Change of use of buildings/new commercial buildings with a floor space between 0-500sqm or on a site with an area up to 0.5ha	£225.00	£236	£11							
	n/a	£68	n/a							
Change of use of buildings/new commercial buildings with a floor space between 501sqm and 1000sqm or on a site with an area between 0.5ha and 1 ha Bespoke hourly service for Change of use of buildings/new commercial buildings with a floor space between 501sqm and 1000sqm or on a site with an area between 0.5ha and 1 ha	£740.00	£777	£37							
	n/a	£68	n/a							
Householder										
Domestic extensions, conservatories etc. and alterations to residential properties. (WITH SITE VISITS)	£80	£225	£145							

FEES AND CHARGES - RECOMMENDED FEE INCREASES FOR 2022/23									
Service	Fees and Charges for 2022/23	2021/22 Fees 2021/22 FEE	Option 1 2022/23 FEE	Increase £	Income (Reduction) / Increase	Option 2 Alternative Parking Charges with budget implications	Option 3 Alternative Parking Charges with budget implications		
	Domestic extensions, conservatories etc. and alterations to residential properties. (WITHOUT SITE VISITS)	n/a	£175	n/a					
	Specialist Advice Works to listed buildings Developments affecting a conservation area	£159.00	£163	£4.00					
	Advertisements Per Site	£80	£188	£108.00					
	Telecommunications Per Site	n/a	£376	new					
	Meeting with Assistant Director Cost per hour for the assistant director to attend meetings	n/a	£271	new					
Planning Total						£1,800	£1,800		£1,800
	Hackney Carriages:	various	various	£0.00	£0		£0		£360
	Env Health & Licensing:	Housing Act 2004			£360		£360		£360
		Licence for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO)	£750	£775	£25.00				
		Service of Housing Act Notices	£395	£410	£15.00				
	Env Health & Licensing:	Food Premises	various		£500		£500		£500
		Destruction Certificate	£136	£141.50	£5.50				
		Health Certificate	£111	£115.00	£4.00				
	Env Health & Licensing:	Licensing including: Acupuncture, street trading etc.	various	various		£1,660	£1,660		£1,660
	Local Land Charges	Residential Property (Con 29)	£65.40	£68.00	£2.60				
		Residential Property (LLC1)	£17.50	£18.20	£0.70				
		Commercial Property and Areas of Land (Con 29)	£85.20	£88.60	£3.40				
		Commercial Property and Areas of Land (LLC1)	£22.80	£23.70	£0.90				
		Con29O Enquiry Q4	£12.00	£12.50	£0.50				
		Con29O Enquiry Q5-21 (each)	£6.00	£6.25	£0.25				
		Con29O Enquiry Q22	£24.00	£24.95	£0.95				
		Additional Enquiry	£13.08	£13.60	£0.52	£2,200	£2,200		£2,200
	Housing General Fund:	Careline Alarm- private (Shortfall funded from General Fund)	various						
					£224,580		£292,980		£354,080
					£212,280		£280,680		£341,780

Excluding Allotments saving already identified in 2021

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APPENDIX C : RISK BASED ASSESSMENT OF THE LEVEL OF GENERAL FUND BALANCES 2021/22

Potential Risk Area	Comments including any mitigation factors		
Income from areas within the base budget where the Council raises "Fees and Charges"	Potential risk that the budgeted level of income from activities where the Council is charging for services will not be achieved. This is anticipated largely to be as a result of the downturn in economy, but could also be as a result of poor weather, new competition and the impact of Covid-19. All "fees and charges" income is reviewed as part of the monthly/quarterly budget monitoring process. All budgets are profiled over the year based upon previous experience.		
		Calculated Risk	
Specific Areas	Estimated Income	Likelihood Percentage	Balances Required
Parking Income* (on street/off-street)	£4,344,690	2.0%	£86,894
Development Control Income	£412,630	5.0%	£20,632
Recycling Income	£639,960	2.5%	£15,999
Garages	£3,440,570	1.0%	£34,406
Trade Refuse & Skips	£1,068,340	2.5%	£26,709
Indoor Market	£438,580	5.0%	£21,929
Commercial Property Income	£3,584,240	5.0%	£179,212
COVID losses arising from a loss of fees and charges in excess of budgeted for			£750,000
Total			£1,135,780

* The council has a parking account which identifies how parking fees are spent on parking and related costs

Potential Risk Area	Comments		
Demand Led Budgets	Potential risk that spending on parts of the budget where the Council has a legal duty to provide the service increases significantly (including as an impact of Covid-19). Individual budgets reviewed as part of the monthly budget monitoring process. All budgets are profiled over the year based upon previous experience and so any variances should show up during the year.		
		Calculated Risk	
Specific Areas	Estimated Exposure	Likelihood Percentage	Balances Required
Housing Benefit maximum risk based on not meeting threshold for Local Authority errors.	£180,000	40%	£72,000
Loss of Business Rates yield	£2,572,439	maximum loss (7.5%)	£192,933
Lower S31 Grants than anticipated which means the NNDR yield would be higher but would not be returned to the General Fund until 2022/23.	£2,579,722	5%	£128,986
Increase in bad debts as a economic changes impacting on charging for services	£152,000	100%	£152,000
There is an increased cost of Bed and Breakfast as a result of higher homelessness (exposure based on impact of COVID)	£430,000	20%	£86,000
risk of capital works requiring funding as a result of rephasing/deferring works in the Capital Strategy	£250,000	50%	£125,000
Costs related to COVID in ICT, PPE and other related costs	£0		£250,000
Housing Benefit overpayment net income reduces and results in a pressure on the General Fund	£492,480	10%	£49,248
Total			£1,056,167

Potential Risk Area	Comments including any mitigation factors		
Changes since budget was set	Potential risk that things change since the budget estimates were made and the estimates are then under budgeted for.		
		Calculated Risk	
Specific Areas	Estimated Exposure	Likelihood Percentage	Balances Required
Transitional Vacancy Rate 4.5%	£712,090	5.00%	£35,605
Less staff time charged to capital than budgeted	£644,180	10.00%	£64,418
REVISED: pay award is higher than budgeted for 0.25%	£20,145,870		£46,970
Contractual inflation 1% increase	£9,254,742	1.00%	£37,318
Utility and fuel inflation usage/costs increase	£1,113,370	4.50%	£50,102
Borrowing costs will be higher than estimated on new borrowing in Capital Strategy	£64,136	1% increase in borrowing costs for the garage programme	£19,756
Total			£254,168

Potential Risk Area	Comments including any mitigation factors		
Other Risks	Potential risk that savings options will not be realised as a result of delay or unforeseen circumstances.		
		Calculated Risk	
Specific Areas	Estimated Exposure	Likelihood Percentage	Balances Required
Savings Options	£780,945	13.50%	£105,428
Total			£105,428

Potential Risk Area	Comments including any mitigation factors		
Estimated balances required for any over spend or under -recovery of expenditure and income	This calculation replaces the calculation based on Net Expenditure		
		Calculated Risk	
Specific Areas	Estimated Exposure	Likelihood Percentage	Balances Required
Gross Income (excludes specific income listed above)	£25,589,119	1.50%	£383,837
Gross Expenditure (excludes specific expenditure listed above)	£35,710,647	1.50%	£535,660
Total			£919,496

Level of Balances Assumed in General Fund Based on risk

£3,471,038

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FINANCIAL SECURITY: 2022/23 Appendix D

Overall Equality Impact Assessment of proposals

Equality at Stevenage Borough Council

1. Stevenage Borough Council as a service provider, employer and community leader is committed to achieving equal opportunities for everyone. We want to deliver services that are fair, accessible and open to everyone who needs them.
2. Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) are an important part of the process in ensuring that our intention is translated into action. They help to ensure that decisions are made in a fair, transparent and accountable way, considering the needs and the rights of different people in the community.
3. Based on the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, the Equality Impact Assessment considers the impact on the following groups when making decisions, updating policies and starting new projects:
 - Age
 - Disability
 - Gender reassignment
 - Marital status
 - Pregnancy and maternity
 - Race
 - Religion or belief
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation.
4. Although non-statutory, the Council has chosen to adopt the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion in considering the impact on people in terms of their social or economic background.
5. EqIAs also help the Council to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). The Duty states that a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
 - eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is unlawful under this Act
 - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
 - foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

Making Your Money Savings Count Proposals 2022/23

6. Prior to their consideration at Executive in December 2021, all savings proposals were reviewed to determine any potential impact on Stevenage residents in terms of their protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. Some of these have no direct public impact and so have not been subject to any further EqIA.

7. Where a negative, positive or disproportionate impact is likely, Assistant Directors and other appropriate managers have drafted Equality Impact Assessments.
8. This year there are seven proposals that may potentially have a positive, negative or disproportionate impact. These are:
 1. Introducing an annual service charge for the cleansing, sweeping and weeding of garages.
 2. increase in Garage Fees & Charges
 3. Raising off street parking fees
 4. Change to on-street parking tariffs
 5. Removal of car parking validator discounts for commercial business customers and staff in the town centre
 6. Reducing the cost of the Play Service whilst continuing to provide free play opportunities across the town.
 7. Savings in the Customer Service Centre including shortening the opening hours for face to face appointments.
9. The potential impact of these proposals is summarised over the following pages and will inform the recommendations made at Executive and Council in January and February 2022. Action to further analyse or mitigate the impact on people with particular protected characteristics is identified where appropriate.
10. It should be noted that some of the proposals are at a very early stage, and it will only be possible to assess their potential impact once these proposals are further developed. It is therefore probable that further potential impacts will be identified, along with appropriate mitigations, over the coming weeks and months.
11. The following further activity will take place:
 - January – February 2022 - EqlAs further developed, considering further evidence as available
 - February 2022 - Consideration of all completed EqlAs at Council meeting, alongside the budget proposals
 - Ongoing review and update of EQIA's and impact as proposals are further developed and implemented throughout 2022/23, including consultation and engagement as appropriate.

Summary of potential impacts identified as a result of budget proposals

Protected characteristic	Summary potential impact(s)	Mitigating action(s)	Responsible officer
<p>Age</p>	<p>Older people may be on lower/fixed incomes and therefore more vulnerable to socio-economic impacts. ONS data confirms that under 30s and over 65s have lower than average incomes, with ages in between having higher than average incomes, raising the possibility of more than inflationary price increases having a disproportionate effect on them.</p> <p>Ref</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Older people may be more likely to need to visit the hospital area, so any increases in charges for parking in that area could impact them more than other people. Proposals to remove the car parking validator discounts for commercial business customers and staff in the town centre could impact on older people in particular. A high percentage of visitors to the leisure related commercial activity in particular may be elderly and some may be on pension credit. The increase in parking charges may have a negative impact on their finances. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Fees in the vicinity of the hospital would remain significantly cheaper than those offered by the hospital car parks (and therefore clearly below the market rate). There are also good public transport links to the hospital for those able to use them. Signposting to public transport options in and around the town centre, thus avoiding the need to drive in and pay to park. <p>It is believed that many people accessing these business already use the bus rather than drive, so the potential impact will be minimal.</p> <p>Commercial operators have the option to retain the validator machine (for a monthly fee) so that the organisations can continue to offer discounted parking to their workers and customers if they wish. Staff at the Holiday Inn and Holiday Inn Express have the option to purchase car park season tickets, which offer a 10% discount on monthly season</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Assistant Director Planning and Regeneration Assistant Director Planning and Regeneration

	<p>3. Older people may also be negatively impacted by increases in charges for garages. Whilst the increase up to a maximum of 60p a week is considered minimal, for those on pension credit this may make renting some garages unaffordable.</p> <p>4. This also applies to the increased charges for garage freeholders to cover cleansing, sweeping and weeding of their garages.</p> <p>5. Reduced opening hours in the Customer Service Centre at the end of the day would be more likely to impinge upon access for people of working age. While people in many jobs are able to make personal calls during their working day, some may be more restricted from doing this.</p>	<p>ticket rates.</p> <p>3. The proposed increase is very low and it is hoped that this will not provide a barrier to existing and future rentals.</p> <p>If the resident becomes unable to afford the current tier of garages, they will be able to bid on a lower tier, cheaper garage through Choice Based Lettings. Every effort will be made for them to be moved to a lower cost garage (if available).</p> <p>4. The increase is £11.40 per annum (22p per week) so the impact of this in isolation is considered minimal. However the cumulative impact of this and other increases will be considered on a case-by-case basis where people raise questions or concerns.</p> <p>Monitoring of feedback from garage freeholders on the application of the charges, and levels of debt from garage freeholders, will be closely monitored in the lead up to and following implementation.</p> <p>5. Almost all services are now available online which enables customers to access them 24/7.</p> <p>The use of appointments for face to face services means that customers can book a time that's good for them, and provides an opportunity for people who can't / prefer not to use online services to still access the support they need.</p>	<p>3. Assistant Director SDS</p> <p>4. Assistant Director SDS</p> <p>5. Assistant Director Digital and Transformation</p>
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<p>Disability</p>	<p>ONS data confirms the existence of a disability pay gap in the UK.</p> <p>People with disabilities who do not have a Blue Badge allowing them to park for free may therefore be more vulnerable to socio-economic impacts (see below).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The price increase in charges for garages might impact people who are on disability allowance. Whilst the increase up to a maximum of 60p a week is considered minimal, for those on disability benefits this may make renting some garages unaffordable. 2. This also applies to the increased charges for garage freeholders to cover cleansing, sweeping and weeding of their garages. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The proposed increase is very low and it is hoped that this will not provide a barrier to existing and future rentals. If the resident becomes unable to afford the current tier of garages, they will be able to bid on a lower tier, cheaper garage through Choice Based Lettings. Every effort will be made for them to be moved to a lower cost garage (if available). <p>Garages will normally be allocated in date order from the waiting list; however the Council reserves the right to give priority to anyone who is registered disabled upon providing evidence of a blue badge. In exceptional circumstances a case will be reviewed and decided on its merits.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. The fee will be collected through an online payment system and if necessary, can be subject to a flexible payment plans (up to a maximum of 2 payments to cover the debt). <p>The increase is £11.40 per annum (22p per week) so the impact of this in isolation is considered minimal. However the cumulative impact of this and other increases will be considered on a case-by-case basis where people raise questions or</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assistant Director SDS 2. Assistant Director SDS
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	<p>3. Disabled customers are more likely to use face to face services, so any reduced opening hours in the Customer Service Centre could impact them more.</p>	<p>concerns.</p> <p>3. Almost all services are now available online which enables customers to access them 24/7.</p> <p>The use of appointments for face to face services means that customers can book a time that's good for them, and provides an opportunity for people who can't / prefer not to use online services to still access the support they need</p>	<p>3. Assistant Director Digital and Transformation</p>
Gender reassignment	<p>No differential impacts directly related to people having this characteristic have been identified as a result of these proposals.</p>		
Marital status	<p>No differential impacts directly related to people having this characteristic have been identified as a result of these proposals.</p>		
Pregnancy and maternity	<p>Pregnant women may be more likely to attend the hospital, and therefore disproportionately affected by any price rises in on-street parking there.</p>	<p>Fees in the vicinity of the hospital would remain significantly cheaper than those offered by the hospital car parks (and therefore clearly below the market rate). There are also good public transport links to the hospital for those able to use them.</p>	<p>Assistant Director Planning & Regulation</p>
Race	<p>ONS data confirms the existence of an ethnicity pay gap in the UK. People from ethnic minorities may therefore be more vulnerable to socio-economic impacts (see below).</p>		
Religion or belief	<p>No differential impacts directly related to people having this characteristic have been identified as a result of these proposals.</p>		
Sex	<p>ONS data confirms the existence of a gender pay gap in the UK. Women may therefore be more vulnerable to socio-economic impacts (see below).</p>		

<p>Sexual Orientation</p>	<p>No differential impacts directly related to people having this characteristic have been identified as a result of these proposals.</p>		
<p>Socio-economic</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Proposals to remove the car parking validator discounts for commercial business customers and staff in the town centre would impact staff and visitors who will have to pay the standard rates to park in town centre car parks. This may have a particular impact if these people are on low incomes. <p>It is believed that many people accessing these businesses already use the bus rather than drive, so the potential impact will be minimal.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. The price increase in charges for garages might impact people who are on low incomes and in receipt of benefits. Whilst the increase up to a maximum of 60p a week is considered minimal, for those on pension credit this may make renting some garages unaffordable. 3. This also applies to the increased charges for garage freeholders to cover cleansing, sweeping and weeding of their garages. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Customers attending in the evening when there is free parking in the on street bays as an alternative. 2. If the resident becomes unable to afford the current tier of garages, they will be able to bid on a lower tier, cheaper garage through Choice Based Lettings. Every effort will be made for them to be moved to a lower cost garage (if available). <p>Garages will normally be allocated in date order from the waiting list, however the Council reserves the right give priority to anyone who is registered disabled upon providing evidence of a blue badge. In exceptional circumstances a case will be reviewed and judged on its own merit.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. The increase is £11.40 per annum (22p per week) so the impact of this in isolation is considered minimal. However the cumulative impact of this and other increases will be considered on a case-by-case basis where people raise questions or concerns. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assistant Director SDS 2. Assistant Director SDS 3. Assistant Director SDS

	<p>4. Any increase in fees is likely to impact most on those who are already at socio-economic disadvantage. This could mean that parking becomes unaffordable for some people if prices increase significantly.</p> <p>5. Reduced opening hours in the Customer Service Centre at the end of the day would be more likely to impinge upon access for people of working age. While people in many jobs are able to make personal calls during their working day, some may be more restricted from doing this.</p>	<p>The fee will be collected through an online payment system and if necessary, can be subject to a flexible payment plans (up to a maximum of 2 payments to cover the debt).</p> <p>4. The town centre is well served by other modes of transport while fees in the vicinity of the hospital would remain significantly cheaper than those offered by the hospital car parks (and therefore clearly below the market rate).</p> <p>This potential impact may be lessened as more than half of households in the bottom income quartile do not have a car. It is often the case that protected characteristics correlate with lower rates of car ownership.</p> <p>5. Almost all services are now available online which enables customers to access them 24/7.</p> <p>The use of appointments for face to face services means that customers can book a time that's good for them, and provides an opportunity for people who can't / prefer not to use online services to still access the support they need.</p>	<p>4. Assistant Director Planning & Regulation</p> <p>5. Assistant Director Digital and Transformation</p>
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Brief Equality Impact Assessment

What is being assessed?	Introducing a service charge to garage freeholders of £12.14 per annum for the cleansing, sweeping and weeding of their garages, with effect from June 2022. This equates to 23p per week.	What are the key aims of it?	It costs the Council £20,240 per year to provide cleansing, sweeping and weeding services to 2,000 freehold garages. The Council have the ability to charge most freeholders for cleansing, weeding and sweeping under an obligation in the conveyancing documents. The aim is to fully recover these costs.			
Who may be affected by it?	Garage freeholders (residents who have bought their garage from the Council in previous years)		6,565 garages are available for rental from the Council and routine maintenance and cleansing are included in the weekly rent that leaseholders pay. This charge to freeholders ensures that everyone who utilises a garage pays their fair share for cleansing, sweeping and weeding services.			
Date of full EqIA on service area (planned or completed)						
Form completed by:	Nadia Capuano	Start date	June 2022	End date	June 2023	
		Review date	December 2022			

What data / information are you using to inform your assessment?	Garage Improvement Programme, Freeholder Fees Report	Have any information gaps been identified along the way? If so, please specify	
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Explain the **potential positive, negative or unequal impact** on the following characteristics and **how likely** this is:

Age	Unequal – Older garage freeholders if they are on means tested pension credit may find it more difficult to source the funds to pay for the £12.14 annual service fee. However since this is a small amount (22p per week), we expect very few residents from this demographic to be financially burdened by this.	Race	Unequal – Office for National Statistics data confirms the existence of an ethnicity pay gap in the UK. Garage freeholders from ethnic minorities may therefore be more vulnerable to socio-economic impacts. However since this is a small amount (23p per week), we expect very few residents from this demographic to be financially burdened by this.
Disability	N/A	Religion or belief	N/A
Gender reassignment	N/A	Sex	N/A
Marriage or civil partnership	N/A	Sexual orientation	N/A
Pregnancy & maternity	N/A	Socio-economic ¹	Unequal –Low income garage freeholders may find it more difficult to source the funds to pay for the £12.14 annual service fee. However since this is a small amount (23p per week), we expect very few residents from this demographic to be financially burdened by this.
Other	N/A		

¹Although non-statutory, the council has chosen to implement the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion to consider the impact on people with a socio-economic disadvantage.

Where there is a likely positive impact , please explain how it will help to fulfil our legislative duties to:					
Remove discrimination & harassment		Promote equal opportunities	<p>The fee will be collected through an online payment system and if necessary, can be subject to a flexible payment plans (up to a maximum of 2 payments to cover the debt).</p> <p>This charge to freeholders ensures that everyone who utilises a garage pays a fair share of the annual cost incurred by the council by bringing charges in line with those paid by garage tenants.</p>	Encourage good relations	

What further work / activity is needed as a result of this assessment?

Action	Responsible officer	How will this be delivered and monitored?	Deadline
Monitoring of feedback from garage freeholders on the application of the charges	Rebecca Millett	Monitored through feedback and data from Garage Services team	June 2022
Monitoring of levels of debt from garage freeholders	Rebecca Millett	Monitored through feedback from Garages Services team	Ongoing following implementation in June 2022.

Approved by Assistant Director / Strategic Director: Steve Dupoy, Assistant Director SDS

Date: 20.12.21

Full Equality Impact Assessment

What is being assessed?		The increase in Garage Fees & Charges for Financial Year 22-23			
Lead Assessor	Nadia Capuano			Assessment team	Nadia Capuano Daud Latif
Start date	April 2022	End date	March 2023		
When will the EqIA be reviewed?	September 2022				

Who may be affected by it?	Service users / residents
What are the key aims of it?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1: To decrease the void rates of garages to ensure maximum number of residents can benefit from garage services 2: To combat inflationary pressures and increased service costs by ensuring that garage prices rise alongside inflation 3: To ensure revenue generation from garages, assisting the Council with its financial security challenges. 4: To apply a different percentage increase to different garage types (ranging from 2.18% to 4.01%) depending on the specification and demand to provide a wider range of options for residents.

What positive measures are in place (if any) to help fulfil our legislative duties to:					
Remove discrimination & harassment	With the launch of online Choice Based Lettings	Promote equal opportunities	Garage pricing is differentiated (i.e., low	Encourage good relations	

	<p>(CBL), anticipated to go live in late 2021/early 2022, residents will be able to bid on garages that best suit their needs based on factors such as price, affordability, location and distance.</p>		<p>demand garages cost less than premium garages). The proposed fees and charges increases allow for more differentiation and ensure that residents can choose a garage that suits their needs.</p>		
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<p>What sources of data / information are you using to inform your assessment?</p>	<p>Garages databases containing information on the status of all SBC garages, resident requirements and the garages waiting list.</p>
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<p>In assessing the potential impact on people, are there any overall comments that you would like to make?</p>	<p>Garage Services are using a commercial model where low void, high demand areas will see a bigger increase in fees as residents have a high demand product. Conversely, high void, low demand garages will see a smaller increase in fees to help decrease the void rate. Garage tenants with the lowest fee increase will need to pay an additional 25p per week / £13 per year.</p> <p>Garages renters with the highest fee increase will pay an additional 60p weekly / £31 per year. It is anticipated that this minimal fee increase will not adversely affect any garage current renters or deter future renters.</p>
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	Garage prices were benchmarked against other local offers as part of the fees and charges process. Looking at how the SBC proposals compare, the proposed garages pricing ranges from £11.75 to £15.60 and these fees sit directly in the middle of the benchmarked competitors; Luton and Dacorum, who are likely to raise their prices further as part of their reviews of fees and charges for 22/23.
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Evidence and impact assessment

Explain the potential impact and opportunities it could have for people in terms of the following characteristics, where applicable:

Age					
Positive impact		Negative impact	X	Unequal impact	X
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		The price increase might impact the elderly who are on pension credit and could affect young people on low incomes. Renting a garage is a discretionary service and tenants use them for parking their cars or for storage purposes. It is anticipated that elderly residents have the funds to pay the maximum 60p a week extra and that this amount will not be too much extra burden on their finances. If the resident becomes unable to afford the current tier of garages, they will be able to bid on a lower tier, cheaper garage through Choice Based Lettings.			
What opportunities are there	With launch of Choice Based Lettings, potential garage tenants can bid for garages online. Prices and locations will	What do you still need to	Exact go-live date of the implementation of		

to promote equality and inclusion?	be clearly displayed and applicants will be measured against set criteria to award the garage, in a similar way to the management of the current manual waiting list.	find out? Include in actions (last page)	the new online Choice Based Lettings system.
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Disability

e.g. physical impairment, mental ill health, learning difficulties, long-standing illness

Positive impact		Negative impact	X	Unequal impact	X
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment	The price increase might impact on people who are on disability allowance. Renting a garage is a discretionary service and tenants use them for parking their cars or for storage purposes. It is anticipated that disabled residents have the spare funds to pay the maximum 60p a week extra and that this amount will not be too much extra burden on their finances. If the resident becomes unable to afford the current tier of garages, they will be able to bid on a lower tier, cheaper garage through Choice Based Lettings.				
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	<p>With launch of online Choice Based Lettings, potential garage tenants can bid for garages.</p> <p>Garages will normally be allocated in date order from the waiting list; however the Council reserves the right to give priority to anyone who is registered disabled upon providing</p>	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	Exact go-live date of the implementation of the new online Choice Based Lettings system.		

	evidence of a blue badge. In exceptional circumstances a case will be reviewed and decided on its merits. The overall decision will be undertaken by the Garages Manager.		
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Gender reassignment					
Positive impact		Negative impact		Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

Marriage or civil partnership					
Positive impact		Negative impact		Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions		

inclusion?		(last page)	
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Pregnancy & maternity					
Positive impact		Negative impact		Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)			

Race					
Positive impact		Negative impact		Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)			

Religion or belief					
Positive impact		Negative impact		Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

Sex					
Positive impact		Negative impact		Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

Sexual orientation					
e.g. straight, lesbian / gay, bisexual					
Positive impact		Negative impact		Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

Socio-economic²					
e.g. low income, unemployed, homelessness, caring responsibilities, access to internet, public transport users, social value in procurement					
Positive impact		Negative impact	X	Unequal impact	X
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		The price increase might impact residents with a socio-economic disadvantage who are in receipt of benefits. Renting a garage is a discretionary service and tenants use them for parking their cars or for storage purposes. It is anticipated that residents will have the funds to pay the maximum 60p a week extra, and that this amount is not expected to be a large burden on the finances. If the resident becomes unable to afford the current tier of garages, they will be able to bid on a lower tier, lower cost			

²Although non-statutory, the council has chosen to implement the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion to consider the impact on people with a socio-economic disadvantage.

		garage through Choice Based Lettings.	
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	<p>With launch of online Choice Based Lettings, potential garage tenants can bid for garages.</p> <p>Garages will normally be allocated in date order from the waiting list, however the Council reserves the right give priority to anyone who is registered disabled upon providing evidence of a blue badge. In exceptional circumstances a case will be reviewed and judged on its own merit. The overall decision will be undertaken by the Garages Manager.</p>	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	Exact go-live date of the implementation of the new online Choice Based Lettings system.

Other					
please feel free to consider the potential impact on people in any other contexts					
Positive impact		Negative impact		Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions		

inclusion?		(last page)	
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What are the findings of any consultation with:

Staff?	Discussion with Garages & Commercial team regarding garages void rates and inflationary pressures led to the implementation of applying different percentage increase to different garage types (ranging from 2.18% to 4.01%) depending on the specification and demand.	Residents?	Not consulted with
Voluntary & community sector?	Not consulted with	Partners?	Not consulted with
Other stakeholders?	Not consulted with		

Overall conclusion & future activity:

Explain the overall findings of the assessment and reasons for outcome (please choose one) :		
1. No inequality, inclusion issues or opportunities to further improve have been identified		
Negative / unequal impact, barriers to inclusion or improvement opportunities identified	2a. Adjustments made	
	2b. Continue as planned	Some elderly, disabled & socio-economic disadvantaged residents might be negatively affected due to being charged an additional 25p to 60p per week for garages. Every effort will be made for them to be moved to a lower cost garage (if available). It is

		anticipated that the vast majority of garage tenants will be less affected.
	2c. Stop and remove	

Detail the actions that are needed as a result of this assessment and how they will help to remove discrimination & harassment, promote equal opportunities and / or encourage good relations :				
Action	Will this help to remove, promote and / or encourage?	Responsible officer	Deadline	How will this be embedded as business as usual?
The Garages Services team will continue to monitor termination levels, offer assistance to tenants looking for a cheaper garage and assist them with the CBL process	CBL will impartially assign garages to bidders based on waiting time whilst the Garages team will review exceptional cases, promoting equal opportunity. Garages team will also offer assistance when needed to encourage good relations.	Rebecca Millett	April 2022	The Garage Services team already monitor termination levels and offer assistance to tenants looking for a cheaper garage

Approved by Head of Service / Strategic Director: Steve Dupoy, Assistant Director SDS

Date: 20.12.21

Brief Equality Impact Assessment

For a minor operational change / review / simple analysis

What is being assessed?	Raising off street parking fees	What are the key aims of it?	To raise revenue for the council		
Who may be affected by it?	All car park users				
Date of full EqIA on service area (planned or completed)	17/11/2021				
Form completed by:	Andrew Gough	Start date	01/01//21	End date	01/01/22
		Review date	17/11/22		

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What data / information are you using to inform your assessment?	Sectoral knowledge, feedback on existing charges, feedback from past consultations, ONS data.	Have any information gaps been identified along the way? If so, please specify	The public's views on the equalities impacts of this are unknown at this time. Response to the implementation of the new charges will be closely monitored.
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Explain the potential positive, negative or unequal impact on the following characteristics and how likely this is:			
Age	<p>Older people may be on lower/fixed incomes and therefore more vulnerable to socio-economic impacts.</p> <p>ONS data confirms that under 30s and over 65s have lower than average incomes, with ages in between having higher than average incomes, raising the possibility of price increases having a disproportionate effect on them.</p>	Race	<p>ONS data confirms the existence of an ethnicity pay gap in the UK. People from ethnic minorities may therefore be more vulnerable to socio-economic impacts.</p> <p>Refer to “Socio-economic” below.</p>
Disability	<p>Disabled people are more likely to earn less than able bodied people, and will be impacted by the higher cost of season tickets for blue badge holders. However the rate still represents a 46% discount on the full price, mitigating the impact somewhat.</p> <p>ONS data confirms the existence of a disability pay gap in the UK. People with disabilities who do not have a Blue Badge allowing them to park for free may therefore be more vulnerable to socio-economic impacts.</p>	Religion or belief	No unequal impact identified

Gender reassignment	No unequal impact identified	Sex	ONS data confirms the existence of a gender pay gap in the UK. Women may therefore be more vulnerable to socio-economic impacts.
Marriage or civil partnership	No unequal impact identified	Sexual orientation	No unequal impact identified
Pregnancy & maternity	No unequal impact identified	Socio-economic ³	<p>Any increase in fees is likely to impact most on those who are already at socio-economic disadvantage. This could mean that parking becomes unaffordable for some people.</p> <p>At the same time, the town centre is well served by other modes of transport while fees in the vicinity of the hospital would remain significantly cheaper than those offered by the hospital car parks (and therefore clearly below the market rate). This potential impact may be lessened as more than half of households in the bottom income quartile do not have a car. It is often the case that protected characteristics correlate with lower rates of car ownership.</p>
Other	Increased parking charges may promote modal shift away from using cars, leading to improved		

³Although non-statutory, the council has chosen to implement the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion to consider the impact on people with a socio-economic disadvantage.

	public health through reduced air pollution and increased physical activity.	
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Where there is a likely positive impact , please explain how it will help to fulfil our legislative duties to:					
Remove discrimination & harassment		Promote equal opportunities		Encourage good relations	

What further work / activity is needed as a result of this assessment?

Action	Responsible officer	How will this be delivered and monitored?	Deadline
Close monitoring of the response to, and impact of, the new charges	Philip Howard	Monitoring plan to be developed, linked to customer feedback	Sept 2022

Approved by Head of Service / Strategic Director: Zayd Al-Jawad, Assistant Director Planning and Regulation

Date: 06.01.2022

Please send this EqIA to equalities@stevenage.gov.uk

Brief Equality Impact Assessment

For a minor operational change / review / simple analysis

What is being assessed?	Change to on-street parking tariffs	What are the key aims of it?			
Who may be affected by it?	Any motorist				
Date of full EqIA on service area (planned or completed)	17/11/2021				
Form completed by:	Phil Howard	Start date	01/01/2022	End date	01/01/2023
		Review date	17/11/2022		

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What data / information are you using to inform your assessment?	Sectoral knowledge, feedback on existing charges, feedback from past consultations, ONS data.	Have any information gaps been identified along the way? If so, please specify	The public's views on the equalities impacts of this are unknown at this time. Response to the implementation of the new charges will be closely monitored.
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Explain the potential positive, negative or unequal impact on the following characteristics and how likely this is:			
Age	<p>Older people may be on lower/fixed incomes and therefore more vulnerable to socio-economic impacts. They may also be more likely to need to visit the hospital area, where price rises are proposed.</p> <p>ONS data confirms that under 30s and over 65s have lower than average incomes, with ages in between having higher than average incomes, raising the possibility of price increases having a disproportionate effect on them.</p> <p>Refer to “Socio-economic” below.</p>	Race	<p>ONS data confirms the existence of an ethnicity pay gap in the UK. People from ethnic minorities may therefore be more vulnerable to socio-economic impacts.</p> <p>Refer to “Socio-economic” below.</p>
Disability	<p>There is currently a shortage of dedicated blue badge parking both in the town centre and at the hospital. If increased parking charges discourage driving/parking by others, there will be increased parking availability for blue badge holders (who are not charged).</p> <p>ONS data confirms the existence of</p>	Religion or belief	No impacts identified.

	<p>a disability pay gap in the UK. People with disabilities who do not have a Blue Badge allowing them to park for free may therefore be more vulnerable to socio-economic impacts.</p> <p>Refer to “Socio-economic” below.</p>		
Gender reassignment	No impacts identified.	Sex	ONS data confirms the existence of a gender pay gap in the UK. Women may therefore be more vulnerable to socio-economic impacts.
Marriage or civil partnership	No impacts identified.	Sexual orientation	No impacts identified.
Pregnancy & maternity	<p>Pregnant women may be more likely to attend the hospital, and therefore disproportionately affected by any price rises there.</p> <p>Refer to “Socio-economic” to the right.</p>	Socio-economic ⁴	<p>Any increase in fees is likely to impact those who are already at socio-economic disadvantage. This could mean that parking becomes unaffordable for some people.</p> <p>At the same time, the town centre is well served by other modes of transport while fees in the vicinity of the hospital would remain significantly cheaper than those offered by the hospital car parks</p>

⁴Although non-statutory, the council has chosen to implement the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion to consider the impact on people with a socio-economic disadvantage.

			<p>(and therefore clearly below the market rate).</p> <p>Existing and proposed parking charges represent only a small cost compared to the overall expense of running a car, and the less well-off are more likely not to drive (more than half of households in the bottom income quartile do not have a car).</p>
Other	<p>Increased parking charges may promote modal shift away from using cars, leading to improved public health through reduced air pollution and increased physical activity.</p>		

Where there is a likely positive impact , please explain how it will help to fulfil our legislative duties to:					
Remove discrimination & harassment		Promote equal opportunities	<p>Increasing the availability and accessibility of parking for those people holding a blue badge helps to</p>	Encourage good relations	

			provide equality of opportunity for disabled people who may not be able to travel except by car.		
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What further work / activity is needed as a result of this assessment?

Action	Responsible officer	How will this be delivered and monitored?	Deadline
Close monitoring of the response to, and impact of, the new charges	Philip Howard	Monitoring plan to be developed, linked to customer feedback	Sept 2022

Approved by Head of Service / Strategic Director: Zayd Al-Jawad, Assistant Director Planning and Regulation

Date: 06.01.2022

Please send this EqIA to equalities@stevenage.gov.uk

Full Equality Impact Assessment

What is being assessed?		Removal of car parking validator discounts for commercial business customers and staff in the town centre			
Lead Assessor	Nadia Capuano			Assessment team	Nadia Capuano Andy Gough
Start date	April 2022	End date	Ongoing		
When will the EqlA be reviewed?	October 2022				

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Who may be affected by it?	Customers and staff using Mecca Bingo, Holiday Inn and Ibis Hotels. They have current informal arrangements with the Council that include a number of discounts or set rates of parking. These arrangements have not been reviewed since 2014.
What are the key aims of it?	To ensure parity for town centre businesses, staff and customers and ensure that public funds are not subsidising commercial enterprises.

What positive measures are in place (if any) to help fulfil our legislative duties to:					
Remove discrimination & harassment		Promote equal opportunities	This proposal ensures a level playing field and means that visitors and workers in the town centre have access to the same rates for their	Encourage good relations	There will be the option to retain the validator machine (for a monthly fee) so that the organisations can continue to offer

Appendix D

			parking		discounted parking to their workers and customers if they wish. Staff at the Holiday Inn and Holiday Inn Express have the option to purchase car park season tickets, which offer a 10% discount on monthly season ticket rates.
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What sources of data / information are you using to inform your assessment?	Financial information on the extent to which the Council is subsidising private parking Information on levels of demand around parking Research on the promotion of parking rates by Mecca, IBIS and the Holiday Inn
In assessing the potential impact on people, are there any overall comments that you would like to make?	IBIS charge their customers a higher rate than that which is charged by the Council and therefore make a profit on the arrangement.

Evidence and impact assessment

Explain the potential impact and opportunities it could have for people in terms of the following characteristics, where applicable:

Age					
Positive impact		Negative impact	X	Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		A high percentage of visitors to the leisure related commercial activity in particular may be elderly and some may be on pension credit. The increase in parking from between 50p-£1.30 (depending on the time of day that they are parking) may have a negative impact on their finances.			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	Public transport options.		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

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Disability					
e.g. physical impairment, mental ill health, learning difficulties, long-standing illness					
Positive impact		Negative impact		Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions		

inclusion?		(last page)	
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Gender reassignment					
Positive impact		Negative impact		Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

Marriage or civil partnership					
Positive impact		Negative impact		Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

Pregnancy & maternity					
Positive impact		Negative impact		Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

Race					
Positive impact		Negative impact		Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

Religion or belief					
Positive impact		Negative impact		Unequal impact	

Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

Sex					
Positive impact		Negative impact		Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)			

Sexual orientation					
e.g. straight, lesbian / gay, bisexual					
Positive impact		Negative impact		Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					

What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	
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Socio-economic⁵ e.g. low income, unemployed, homelessness, caring responsibilities, access to internet, public transport users, social value in procurement					
Positive impact		Negative impact	X	Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		This change will not impact public transport users as it will affect the price of car parking and it is believed that many of the users arrive by bus. It will impact staff and visitors who will have to pay the standard rates to park in town centre car parks and this may have particular impact if these workers are on low incomes. This however is the same for all town centre workers. Many of the leisure Bingo Hall users attending in the evening when there is free parking in the on street bays as an alternative.			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)			

Other

⁵Although non-statutory, the council has chosen to implement the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion to consider the impact on people with a socio-economic disadvantage.

please feel free to consider the potential impact on people in any other contexts					
Positive impact		Negative impact		Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

What are the findings of any consultation with:

Staff?	Parking staff confirmed the number of validations from these businesses which equated to £60k of subsidy in 2019/20 and is forecasted at £37.7k in 21/22. It is agreed that action is required to protect parking income and ensure parity for visitors and workers in Stevenage.	Residents?	Not consulted
Voluntary & community sector?	Not consulted	Partners?	Not consulted
Other stakeholders?	Letters will be issued to the affected businesses outlining the proposed changes and opening up the potential for dialogue.		

Overall conclusion & future activity

Explain the overall findings of the assessment and reasons for outcome (please choose one):		
1. No inequality, inclusion issues or opportunities to further improve have been identified		
Negative / unequal impact, barriers to inclusion or improvement opportunities identified	2a. Adjustments made	
	2b. Continue as planned	Continue with approach and consider feedback from the affected businesses once communicated
	2c. Stop and remove	

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Detail the actions that are needed as a result of this assessment and how they will help to remove discrimination & harassment, promote equal opportunities and / or encourage good relations :				
Action	Will this help to remove, promote and / or encourage?	Responsible officer	Deadline	How will this be embedded as business as usual?
1. Monitor the impact on businesses		Andy Gough	Ongoing	
2. Monitor the impact on demand		Andy Gough	Ongoing	

Approved by Head of Service / Strategic Director:  Zayd AL-Jawad . Assistant Director Planning & Regulation

Date: 20/12/2021

Brief Equality Impact Assessment

What is being assessed?	Potential Changes to the Play Service	What are the key aims of it?	Play centres are open in the school holidays reduced by three days a week at each centre and for each day reduce by one hour. Pop up play and play outside of play centres would still be part of the offer		
Who may be affected by it?	Young people and families				
Date of full EqIA on service area (planned or completed)	Dec 2021				
Form completed by:	Geoff Caine	Start date	February 2022	End date	Summer 2022
		Review date	February 2022		

What data / information are you using to inform your assessment?	<p>Previous full year service attendance.</p> <p>Annual revenue budget</p> <p>Staffing resources and structure.</p> <p>.</p>	<p>Have any information gaps been identified along the way? If so, please specify</p>	<p>Detailed information on the number of unique user's footfall has not been available as the "open door policy" in place prior to March 2020 resulted in very little data being collected. The Pandemic has inhibited the implementation of the new business model. The service re-opened in mid-July with some restrictions in place, the return of users has been slow therefore measurement of the performance of the service in non-</p>
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			restricted has not been viable.
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Explain the **potential positive, negative or unequal impact** on the following characteristics and **how likely** this is:

Age	<p>General (potential neutral impact)</p> <p>In general terms, the option will still provide a service albeit limited to the young people and families of Stevenage.</p> <p>Older People with caring responsibilities</p> <p>The council will still be providing a free service to young people and families within the town, this is a unique service that no other local authority provides in Hertfordshire</p> <p>Younger People (potential positive impact)</p> <p>The council will still be providing a free service to young people and families within the town, this is a unique service that no other local authority provides in Hertfordshire</p>	Race	<p>Potential Positive Impact</p> <p>The introduction of a new and fit for purpose booking system will provide key user data, which will be able to identify the differing backgrounds of users.</p>
Disability	<p>Potential Positive Impact</p> <p>The service has and will continue to provide services for disabled people.</p>	Religion or belief	<p>Potential Positive Impact</p> <p>Previous service delivery has not analysed users religion or belief and because of the open door policy and lack of data capture. The new booking system would allow us to capture activity within faith groups the views of people</p>

			of different religion or beliefs can be better captured.
Gender reassignment	<p>Potential Positive Impact</p> <p>There is the potential to undertake more focused engagement activity to capture the views of this protected characteristic group.</p>	Sex	<p>Potential Neutral Impact</p> <p>The service will continue to be available for all children and families within the community.</p>
Marriage or civil partnership	<p>Neutral Impact:</p> <p>Not applicable</p>	Sexual orientation	<p>Potential Neutral Impact:</p> <p>The service will continue to be available for all children and families within the community.</p>
Pregnancy & maternity	<p>Neutral Impact:</p> <p>The service actively encourages pregnant women and those on maternity to use the service that have children over 5 years old.</p>	Socio-economic ⁶	<p>Potential Negative Impact:</p> <p>The service will continue to be available for all children and families within the community. Some users may have difficulty in accessing services if the play centre local to them is not open.</p>
Other			

Where there is a likely positive impact , please explain how it will help to fulfil our legislative duties to:					
Remove discrimination & harassment	The Play Service will continue to provide a safe environment that	Promote equal opportunities	The Play Service will continue to provide a safe environment that	Encourage good relations	The Play Service is located in the heart of the community and is

⁶Although non-statutory, the council has chosen to implement the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion to consider the impact on people with a socio-economic disadvantage.

	proactively encourages equal opportunities.		proactively encourages equal opportunities.		a hub for community activity and wellbeing.

What further work / activity is needed as a result of this assessment?

Action	Responsible officer	How will this be delivered and monitored?	Deadline
Agree what option for service reduction is to be implemented	Culture, Wellbeing & Leisure Services Manager	Culture, Wellbeing & Leisure Services Service Plan	February 2022
Restructure service area	Culture, Wellbeing & Leisure Services Manager	Culture, Wellbeing & Leisure Services Service Plan	Summer 2022
Define and implement new operational plans	Culture, Wellbeing & Leisure Services Manager	Culture, Wellbeing & Leisure Services Service Plan	Summer 2022
Implement new booking system	Culture, Wellbeing & Leisure Services Manager	Culture, Wellbeing & Leisure Services Service Plan	Summer 2022

Appendix D

Approved by Assistant Director/ Strategic Director: Rob Gregory , Assistant Director Communities and Neighbourhoods

Date: 20.12.2021

Full Equality Impact Assessment

For a policy, project, service or other decision that is new, changing or under review

What is being assessed?		Customer Services savings option	
Description		<p>Current Customer Services opening hours are 8:30-5:30 for face to face services and 8:00-6:00 for other channels (inc Telephone), Monday to Friday except bank holidays and other closures.</p> <p>This savings proposal is to reduce the opening hours by an hour at the end of the day, to 8:30-4:30 for face to face, and 8:00-5:00 for other channels. This would allow us to provide the same service but reduce resourcing by 2FTE. This has been modelled using forecasting tools, and other changes in demand etc may mean real performance would be different.</p> <p>The efficiency gain arises from being able to resource more evenly throughout the day due to shorter opening times.</p> <p>No additional cost has yet been factored in for increasing the Out of Hours service opening time to cover the 5pm-6pm period.</p>	
Lead Assessor	Greg Arends		Assessment team
Start date	Not yet determined, potentially April 2022	End date	There would be no end date
When will the EqIA be reviewed?	No review anticipated		

Appendix D

Who may be affected by it?	Members of the public using Customer Services face to face services
What are the key aims of it?	Reduced operational costs by reducing opening hours to Customer Services.

What positive measures are in place (if any) to help fulfil our legislative duties to:					
Remove discrimination & harassment		Promote equal opportunities	Almost all services are now available online which enables customers to access them 24/7. The slight reduction in opening hours is mitigated by this. The use of appointments for face to face services means that customers can book a time that's good for them.	Encourage good relations	

What sources of data / information are you using to inform your assessment?	
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In assessing the potential impact on people, are there any overall comments that you would like to make?	<p>The opening hours for access to other Herts districts have been researched. The current telephone opening hours are longer than for any other council. The proposed reduced opening hrs will mean Stevenage still offers the joint-most accessible service, with Three Rivers.</p> <p>Broxbourne council appears to no longer offer a telephone service at all.</p>
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Current phone opening time – 10hrs

Proposed phone opening time – 9hrs

Face to face services are more difficult to assess as not all councils publish full details. 3 councils no longer offer face to face services at all, and only Hertsmere council appears to offer a comparable level of face-to-face service as Stevenage.

Therefore in considering the potential impact on people of the proposed changes, Stevenage will still be providing the widest access of any Hertfordshire district.

Herts District	Telephone	Max telephone hrs open per day	Face to face
Broxbourne	No telephone access obviously available	0hrs	Closed
Dacorum	8:45am to 5:15pm Monday to Thursday, 8:45am to 4:45pm Friday	8.5hrs	Appointment only services unclear, opening hours not stated
East Herts	9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday	8hrs	Herford 10am – 1pm, 2pm – 4pm Tuesday Bishops Stortford 10am – 1pm, 2pm – 4pm Wednesday
Hertsmere	9am – 5:15pm Monday to Thursday, 9am - 5pm Friday	8.25hrs	9am - 5.15pm Monday to Thursday, 9am - 5pm Friday Appointment only
North Herts	9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday	8hrs	Appointment only for foreign pension signing and microfiche viewing in person, no other services. Opening hours not stated

Herts District	Telephone	Max telephone hrs open per day	Face to face
St Albans	8:45am to 5:00pm Monday to Thursday, 8:45am to 4:30pm Friday	8.25hrs	Closed
Three Rivers	8:30am – 5:30pm Monday to Thursday, 8:30-5pm Friday	9hrs	Closed
Watford	8:45am to 5:15pm Monday to Thursday, 8:45am to 4:45pm Friday	8.5hrs	9am-3pm Monday and Friday, 11am-5pm Wednesday
Welwyn Hatfield	9am – 5pm Monday- Thursday 9am -4:45pm Friday	8hrs	Appointment only services unclear, opening hours not stated

Evidence and impact assessment

Explain the potential impact and opportunities it could have for people in terms of the following characteristics, where applicable:

Age					
Positive impact	None identified	Negative impact	None identified	Unequal impact	✓
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		Reduced opening hours at the end of the day are more likely to impinge upon service access for people of working age. While people in many jobs are able to make personal calls during their working day, some may be more restricted from doing this.			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	<p>Almost all services are now available online which enables customers to access them 24/7. The slight reduction in opening hours is mitigated by this.</p> <p>The use of appointments for face to face services means that customers can book a time that's good for them. This provides an opportunity for people who can't / prefer not to use online services to still access the support they need</p>			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

Disability e.g. physical impairment, mental ill health, learning difficulties, long-standing illness					
Positive impact	None identified	Negative impact	None identified	Unequal impact	✓
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		Its is not clear whether Disabled customers are more likely to use our face to face services, so the reduced opening hours could/may impact them . The reason for this is two-fold. Firstly, there are a number of services that are often supported through face to face that disabled people are more likely to use or be eligible for; in particular benefits and housing lettngs services. Secondly, the nature of some disabilities means that some disabled customers are more likely to need the higher levels of support we can offer through the face-to-face service. However, these factors do not apply equally to all types of disability.			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	Almost all services are now available online which enables customers to access them 24/7. These services can be significantly better for people with certain disabilities (e.g. deafness), but can be harder for others to use (e.g. learning difficulties). Nevertheless it does provide an additional access channel for customers that can use it after opening hours are reduced. The use of appointments for face to face services means that customers can book a time that's good for them. And provides an opportunity for people who can't / prefer not to use online services to still access the support they need			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

Gender reassignment					
Positive impact	None identified	Negative impact	None identified	Unequal impact	None identified
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		We have no data on our service users to indicate impacts on the basis of this characteristic, and there is no clear reason to believe it might happen.			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

Marriage or civil partnership					
Positive impact	None identified	Negative impact	None identified	Unequal impact	None identified
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		We have no data on our service users to indicate impacts on the basis of this characteristic, and there is no clear reason to believe it might happen.			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

Pregnancy & maternity					
Positive impact	None identified	Negative impact	None identified	Unequal impact	None identified
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		We have no data on our service users to indicate impacts on the basis of this characteristic, and there is no clear reason to believe it might happen.			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

Race					
Positive impact	None identified	Negative impact	None identified	Unequal impact	None identified
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		We have no data on our service users to indicate impacts on the basis of this characteristic, and there is no clear reason to believe it might happen.			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

Religion or belief					
Positive impact	None identified	Negative impact	None identified	Unequal impact	None identified
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		We have no data on our service users to indicate impacts on the basis of this characteristic, and there is no clear reason to believe it might happen.			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

Sex					
Positive impact	None identified	Negative impact	None identified	Unequal impact	None identified
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		We have no data on our service users to indicate impacts on the basis of this characteristic, and there is no clear reason to believe it might happen.			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

Sexual orientation					
e.g. straight, lesbian / gay, bisexual					
Positive impact	None identified	Negative impact	None identified	Unequal impact	None identified
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment		We have no data on our service users to indicate impacts on the basis of this characteristic, and there is no clear reason to believe it might happen.			
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?			What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)		

Socio-economic⁷					
e.g. low income, unemployed, homelessness, caring responsibilities, access to internet, public transport users, social value in procurement					
Positive impact	None identified	Negative impact	None identified	Unequal impact	
					✓
Please evidence the data and		Reduced opening hours at the end of the day are more likely to impinge upon service access for people who are			

⁷Although non-statutory, the council has chosen to implement the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion to consider the impact on people with a socio-economic disadvantage.

information you used to support this assessment	working. While people in many jobs are able to make personal calls during their working day, some may be more restricted from doing this.		
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?	<p>Almost all services are now available online which enables customers to access them 24/7. The slight reduction in opening hours is mitigated by this.</p> <p>This allows people to make arrangements around their working day (eg before / after work or during lunch for example). However, there is no provision evenings or weekends, so need to be mindful of this</p>	What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)	

Other

please feel free to consider the potential impact on people in any other contexts

Positive impact		Negative impact		Unequal impact	
Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment					
What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion?		What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page)			

What are the findings of any consultation with:

Staff?	The CSC is working with departments to see how services can be adapted , (I.E. key drop off and collections).	Residents?	The 2021 town wide residents survey asked residents to rank five approaches to savings money. The most popular option by far (62% selecting it as first or second choice) was to Reduce time and money spent on paperwork by interacting with more residents and customers online
Voluntary & community sector?	None carried out.	Partners?	None carried out.
Other stakeholders?	Feedback from visitors to the CSC has been that the appointment system means they know when they will be seen and generally welcomed. Emergency cases are seen on the day		

Overall conclusion & future activity

Explain the overall findings of the assessment and reasons for outcome (please choose one):		
1. No inequality, inclusion issues or opportunities to further improve have been identified		
Negative / unequal impact, barriers to inclusion or improvement opportunities identified	2a. Adjustments made	
	2b. Continue as planned	Reduction in opening hours is likely to have an unequal impact for certain protected characteristics. However, the availability of 24/7 online services offers many alternative, and better, access. Even with the proposed reductions, Stevenage will still offer the widest opening access to

		customers of all Hertfordshire districts.
	2c. Stop and remove	

Detail the actions that are needed as a result of this assessment and how they will help to remove discrimination & harassment, promote equal opportunities and / or encourage good relations:

Action	Will this help to remove, promote and / or encourage?	Responsible officer	Deadline	How will this be embedded as business as usual?
Monitoring and review of changes following implementation, based on feedback from a variety of sources including customers?				

Approved by Assistant Director / Strategic Director: Ruth Luscombe

Date: 20.12.2021

Brief Equality Impact Assessment APPENDIX E

For a minor operational change / review / simple analysis

What is being assessed?	Proposed Employee Related Savings for 2022/23	What are the key aims of it?	To consider the potential impact of the proposed employee related savings for 2022/23 on all staff and particularly those under the protected characteristics.		
Who may be affected by it?	Employees within the areas where savings have been identified				
Date of full EqIA on service area (planned or completed)	A full EqIA will be undertaken for each saving individually as part of the relevant employee consultation process				
Form completed by:	Kirsten Frew	Start date		End date	
		Review date			

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What data / information are you using to inform your assessment?	Workforce Equalities Data as of September 2021	Have any information gaps been identified along the way? If so, please specify	Currently no workforce information is held on socio-economic status of the Stevenage Borough Council workforce and therefore this cannot be assessed.
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Explain the potential positive, negative or unequal impact on the following characteristics and how likely this is:			
Age	The age profile of those likely to be impacted by these savings is spread across the age ranges of 30-39, 40-49	Race	All of the employees likely to be impacted by the savings have identified themselves as White British.

Appendix E

	and 50-59. As no employees in the age range of 16-20 or 20-29 are impacted by these savings, it is likely that the options will have a disproportionate effect on those above the age of 30.		
Disability	33.3% of the employees likely to be impacted by these savings have identified themselves as having a disability.	Religion or belief	66.6% of the employees likely to be impacted by these savings have identified themselves as having Christian beliefs and 33.3% as having other religious beliefs.
Gender reassignment	Data for this protected characteristic is incomplete for the employees impacted by the proposed savings options.	Sex	The profile of the employees impacted by the proposed savings is 66.6% female and 33.3% male. The proposed savings are therefore likely to have disproportionate effect on more woman than men.
Marriage or civil partnership	33.3% of those likely to be impacted by the saving proposals have identified themselves as married and 66.6% as single.	Sexual orientation	All employees impacted by the proposed savings have identified themselves as Heterosexual.
Pregnancy & maternity	No information is held on the pregnancy and maternity status of the employees	Socio-economic ¹	No information is held on the socio-economic status of the employees impacted by the

¹Although non-statutory, the council has chosen to implement the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion to consider the impact on people with a socio-economic disadvantage.

Appendix E

	impacted by the proposed savings.		proposed savings.
Other			

Where there is a likely positive impact , please explain how it will help to fulfil our legislative duties to:					
Remove discrimination & harassment	Consider approach to address some of the unequal impacts	Promote equal opportunities		Encourage good relations	Consult with staff and trade unions on the proposed savings.

What further work / activity is needed as a result of this assessment?

Action	Responsible officer	How will this be delivered and monitored?	Deadline
A Full EqIA will be undertaken for each of the proposed savings that impacts upon employees as part of the wider consultation exercise on the proposed changes.	Individual ADs responsible for each proposed Saving	As part of the consultation process.	

Approved by Assistant Director / Strategic Director:

Date:

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STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Wednesday 9 February 2022

COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION

SETTING THE AMOUNT OF COUNCIL TAX FOR THE COUNCIL'S AREA

1. That the following be approved:
 - a. the revised working revenue estimates for the year 2021/22 amounting to £11,680,510 and the revenue estimates for 2022/23 amounting to £11,202,660;
 - b. the contribution from balances totalling £1,458,912 in 2021/22;
 - c. the contribution from balances totalling £1,112,817 in 2022/23.

2. That it be noted that at its meeting on 20 January 2021 the Executive calculated the amount of 28,003.7 Band D equivalent properties as its council tax base for the year 2022/23 in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 made under Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended by Section 74 of the Localism Act 2011.

3. That the following amounts be calculated by the Council for the year 2022/23 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended by Section 74 of the Localism Act 2011:
 - a. £82,562,681 Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2)(a) to (f) of the Act, less the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3)(a) to (d)
 - b. £76,245,886 Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3)(a) to (d) of the Act.
 - c. £6,316,795 Being the amount by which the aggregate at 3a above exceeds the aggregate at 3b above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year.
 - d. £225.57 Being the amount at 3c divided by the amount at 2 above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B (1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year
 - e. Valuation Bands

A	£ 150.38
B	£ 175.44

C	£ 200.51
D	£ 225.57
E	£ 275.70
F	£ 325.82
G	£ 375.95
H	£ 451.14

Being the amounts given by multiplying the amount at 3d. above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

4. a. That it be noted that for the year 2022/23 Hertfordshire County Council have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of the dwellings shown below:

Valuation Bands

A	£
B	£
C	£
D	£
E	£
F	£
G	£
H	£

- b. That it be noted that for the year 2022/23 Hertfordshire Police Authority have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and amended by Section 27 of the Police and Magistrates' Court Act 1994, for each of the categories of the dwellings shown below:

Valuation Bands

A	£
B	£
C	£
D	£
E	£
F	£
G	£
H	£

5. That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 3e. and 4a. and b. above, the Council in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts for council tax for the year 2022/23 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Valuation Bands

A	£
B	£
C	£
D	£
E	£
F	£
G	£
H	£

6. To determine in accordance with Section 52ZB Local Government Finance Act 1992 that the Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2022/23 is not excessive in accordance with principles approved by the Secretary of State under Section 52ZC having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 3e.

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Statement of the Chief finance Officer
Robustness of Estimates and Adequacy of Reserves

1 ROBUSTNESS OF ESTIMATES

The council process for producing the budget estimates involves responsible budget holders and finance officers reviewing and projecting the Base Budget. The Working Budget Estimates are determined against a background of ongoing quarterly budget monitoring for the current financial year and an evaluation of the outturn position and Budgets carried forward from the previous financial year. The 2022/23 Estimates are determined by evaluating and costing all known changes, including pay and price levels, legislative changes, demands for services and policy developments, together with an assumption about the on-going impact of COVID on the councils finances into 2022/23. The council has sufficient reserves to allow a contribution from balances in order to set a balanced budget for 2022/23 and the current Budget Process has rigorously reviewed current budgets to secure another year of necessary Making Your Money Count (MYMC) Savings, the level of which has been compounded by COVID pressures and higher inflationary pressures. As part of the 2022/23 Budget process the council has had to meet the challenge of historic Government Grant reductions, reducing New Homes Bonus, COVID, as well as absorbing inflationary and legislative changes within its Medium Term Financial Strategy. The overall budget process is co-ordinated by the Accountancy Section in liaison with the various Business Units and the council's Strategic Leadership Team. The Budget is recommended by the Executive, for approval by Council after it has been through the Scrutiny process required by the Council's Constitution. The process includes consideration of risks and uncertainties associated with projections of future pay, prices, interest rates and projected levels and timing of other potential liabilities. The challenge to the budget process is provided by both the Leader's Financial Security Group and the Scrutiny and Overview Committee.

The Council has needed to adapt to the on-going central grant reductions, the transfer of funding risk to local government with the localisation of business rates and welfare reforms. Financial monitoring arrangements provide the Executive with a quarterly update on the performance of the budget, with action plans where significant adverse variances have resulted. The Medium Term Financial Strategy is under constant review to ensure that a clear financial position for the council can be demonstrated for the next five years aided by the Council's MYMC priority. This is necessary as the significant cuts in public expenditure and funding from the government have been implemented and there is uncertainty beyond 2022/23 on the level of central support. The increase in frequency with which the MTFs will be reviewed for 2022/23 will increase with a report to the June 2022 Executive in advance of the usual September report. The CFO has identified that further MYMC savings options are required for 2023/24-2025/26 of £2.5Million to ensure a balanced General Fund budget. This target includes the impact of COVID plus an increase in inflationary and other pressures.

The Council's Financial Regulations require responsible budget holders to ensure that net expenditure does not exceed the total of their Service budgets. Where, despite the assessment of risks that forms part of the budget process, a budget comes under pressure during the course of the financial year, the council's budgetary framework and Financial Regulations lay down appropriate procedures. Where budget variations cannot be contained overall by the use of virements, these have been reported to Members as part of the quarterly budget monitoring process. In addition requests for supplementary estimates have to be submitted to the Executive or Full Council, as appropriate. Supplementary estimates are met from available balances and reserves, subject to the required level of minimum General Fund balances.

The Strategic Director (S151) considers that the Estimates and the processes used to produce them are sound and robust. A further update on the 2021/22 General Fund and HRA budgets will be presented to the March Executive, together with any on-going impacts.

2 ADEQUACY OF RESERVES

The Council's annual budgetary process and the assessment of the adequacy of Reserves are undertaken in the context of robust medium term financial forecasting. Whilst the Council currently has a levels of Reserves above the minimum risk assessed level, the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy acknowledges that the £3.1Million of these will be utilised in the medium term as a result of projected future under funding, COVID losses not refunded and inflation and growth pressures. This is based on the assumption that there will not be a fundamental change to the Council's core funding under any Government funding review, however the Council does not rely on Business Rate gains which under any 'reset' could see gains disappear and they are recommended for one off spend.

The Council has risk assessed the level of General Fund balances required, based on information from service managers and this was presented to Members as part of the January Draft General Fund Budget report, the level of reserves required for 2022/23 was £3,471,038 and remains unchanged.

Total available General Fund balances as at 1st April 2022 are estimated to be £4,519,958 (after 2021/22 contribution to balances from the General Fund of £1,458,912). Total General Fund balances as at 1st April 2023 are estimated to be £3,829,141 (after 2022/23 contribution from balances to the General Fund of £1,112,817 (including estimated COVID related costs of £1,165,970). These levels of balances meet the minimum level of risk assessed balances that are needed to meet unforeseen expenditure arising in the year and expenses arising before income is received.

Total available HRA balances as at 1st April 2022 are estimated to be £26,571,503, (after contribution to balances in 2021/22 of £1,176,780). Total available HRA balances as at 1st April 2023 are estimated to be £28,527,703 (after contribution to balances in 2022/23 of £1,956,200).

It is estimated that the council will have General Fund £1,977,456 capital receipts and £3,550,000 regeneration ring fenced receipts and £874,482 capital reserve as at 1st April 2022 and the Council has a need to borrow in 2022/23 of £24,087,512 including £15,640,000 for the HRA. This is in addition to the facility for the Wholly Owned Company (WOC) to draw down up to a maximum £15Million subject to Board and client shareholder approval. The current Strategy requires a £350,000 contribution of year end underspends from the General Fund in 2022/23.

It is estimated that the council will have General Fund £1,524,176 capital receipts, £1,458,600 Locality Review Receipts, £3,300,000 ring fenced Regeneration Receipts and £nil capital reserve as at 1st April 2023.

It is estimated that the Council will have HRA £101 capital receipts as at 1st April 2023, (£8,197,749 as at 1 April 2022) and £2,976,397 Major Repair Reserve balances as at 1st April 2023, £11,452,146 as at 1 April 2022). The HRA capital programme is based on the latest stock condition information.

In assessing the adequacy of the council's reserves, the robustness of its Budgetary Process and Systems of Internal Control, the assumptions and uncertainties discussed in the Budget report, and the levels of special provision have been considered.

In coming to a view on the adequacy of reserves, risks in the area of litigation, business continuity, civil emergency, failure of information systems, budgetary control and interest rate calculations have been considered in terms of the possible maximum financial impact and their probability of occurrence. Ongoing assessment of the financial risks to the council, its budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy, are embedded as part of the council's overall Corporate Risk Management processes. On this basis, the Strategic Director (S151) considers the level of general balances to be adequate for the 2022/23 financial year.

3 SPECIFIC RESERVES

As part of the budget preparation process, the current and projected levels of the Council's allocated reserves have been considered. Following this review, the Strategic Director (S151) confirms these reserves are £2,877,497 (General Fund) and £3,422,850 (HRA) as at 1 April 2023, (£7,157,820 (General Fund) and £3,422,850 (HRA) as at 1 April 2022) and continue to be required.

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GENERAL FUND SUMMARY

	ACTUAL 2020/21 £	ORIGINAL 2021/22 £	WORKING 2021/22 £	ORIGINAL 2022/23 £
SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURE PORTFOLIO:				
COMMUNITY SERVICES	105,395	4,161,710	4,164,060	4,340,790
HOUSING SERVICES GENERAL FUND	3,101,942	2,658,140	2,928,790	2,541,860
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	8,497,457	6,548,600	8,155,780	6,422,250
REGENERATION (excluding transfer from allocated reserves)	1,049,959	1,365,720	1,172,870	1,308,280
LOCAL COMMUNITY BUDGETS	106,588	60,500	60,500	60,500
RESOURCES (INCLUDING GARAGES AND COMMERCIAL PROPERTY)	(2,582,620)	(4,193,350)	(5,326,810)	(3,346,950)
RESOURCES - SUPPORT (NET OF RECHARGES)	6,969	70,690	695,560	(78,320)
TRADING ACCOUNTS (SDS)	32	(36,440)	(170,240)	(41,750)
NET GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURE	10,285,721	10,635,570	11,680,510	11,206,660
GOVERNMENT SUPPORT - REVENUE SUPPORT GRANT	0	0	0	0
GOVERNMENT SUPPORT - RETAINED BUSINESS RATES	(2,700,386)	(2,343,779)	(2,282,349)	(1,785,034)
S31 GRANTS	(9,332,101)	(815,229)	(3,872,946)	(1,618,316)
TRANSFER TO/FROM COLLECTION FUND (NDR Tax)	380	7,726,802	7,632,402	3,745,225
TRANSFER TO/FROM NNDR RESERVE	9,350,954	(8,461,090)	(5,282,497)	(3,776,102)
TRANSFER TO/FROM COLLECTION FUND (Council Tax)	(67,265)	(40,151)	(40,151)	(50,090)
INCOME GUARANTEE SCHEME (TAXATION)	(886,329)	0	0	0
LOWER TIER GRANT	0	(140,043)	(140,043)	(115,392)
COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT GRANT	0	(118,859)	(118,859)	0
SERVICE GRANT	0	0	0	(177,337)
DISTRICT PRECEPT	(5,988,601)	(6,117,154)	(6,117,154)	(6,316,795)
USE OF GENERAL FUND BALANCES	662,373	326,067	1,458,913	1,112,817
GENERAL FUND BALANCE:				
BALANCE 1 APRIL	(7,063,243)	(4,519,954)	(6,400,870)	(4,941,958)
USE OF BALANCES IN YEAR	662,373	326,067	1,458,913	1,112,817
GENERAL FUND BALANCE 31 MARCH	(6,400,870)	(4,193,887)	(4,941,958)	(3,829,140)
ALLOCATED RESERVES:				
BALANCE 1 APRIL	(4,398,550)	(12,187,243)	(13,864,465)	(7,157,820)
USE OF BALANCES IN YEAR	(9,165,915)	9,360,648	6,706,644	4,280,323
ALLOCATED RESERVES BALANCE 31 MARCH	(13,564,465)	(2,826,595)	(7,157,820)	(2,877,497)
TOTAL REVENUE RESERVES	(19,965,335)	(7,020,482)	(12,099,778)	(6,706,637)

COUNCIL TAX BANDS FOR 2022/23	2021/22	2022/23
£5 INCREASE:		
BAND A	147.05	150.38
BAND B	171.55	175.44
BAND C	196.06	200.51
BAND D	220.57	225.57
BAND E	269.59	275.70
BAND F	318.60	325.82
BAND G	367.62	375.95
BAND H	441.14	451.14

Meeting Executive
Portfolio Area Environment and Regeneration
Date 9 February 2022



STEVENAGE CONNECTION AREA ACTION PLAN: ISSUES & OPTIONS REPORT PUBLIC CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

KEY DECISION

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1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide Members with an overview of the Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan: Issues and Options public consultation (Appendix D).
- 1.2 To seek Members' approval to draft the next version of the Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan: Preferred Options Report, to be reported back to Executive prior to commencing public consultation.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

That Executive:

- 2.1 Note the content of the draft Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan: Issues and Options Report Consultation Statement (the Consultation Statement).
- 2.2 Agree to progress to the next stage of the Area Action Plan progress, the production of the "Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan: Preferred

Options Report”, (the Preferred Options Report), this report being based on the outcomes of the “Issues and Options” consultation.

- 2.3 Delegate powers be granted to the Assistant Director: Planning and Regulation, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regeneration, to prepare the Preferred Options Report.
- 2.4 Note that the final draft of the Preferred Options Report will be presented to Executive for approval to go out to public consultation in Summer 2022 (formal consultation, if approved, will take place once approved).
- 2.5 Note that the comments of the Planning & Development Committee will be sought and considered on both the Consultation Statement and the content of this Executive Report.
- 2.6 Note that informal engagement with key stakeholders will continue, to test the Preferred Options ahead of preparation of the Area Action Plan Preferred Options Report.

3 BACKGROUND

Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan

- 3.1 An Area Action Plan (AAP) is a type of Development Plan Document (DPD) providing a planning framework for a specific area of opportunity, change or conservation. AAPs give a geographic or spatial dimension and focus for the implementation of policies for that area. AAPs can create new policy over and above the Local Plan [BD1], within the designated AAP area.
- 3.2 The Council, in conjunction with consultancy David Lock Associates (DLA), is developing an emerging Area Action Plan for the Stevenage Station Gateway area, titled the “Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan”. As it will be a DPD, this will become part of the Development Plan for Stevenage, and as such is required to be subject to statutory consultation and examination. The final AAP document is required to be adopted by full Council.
- 3.3 The AAP will provide an opportunity for stakeholders to engage and shape this area. It also acts as a catalyst for developers interested in supporting this important part of the Local Plan.
- 3.4 The requirement to produce the Stevenage Station Gateway AAP (site area TC4 as identified in the Local Plan) resulted from a letter from the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) in March 2019 [BD2]. This lifted the Holding Direction placed on the Stevenage Borough Local Plan in 2017.
- 3.5 Stevenage Borough Local Plan Policy TC4 (“Station Gateway Major Opportunity Area”) states:

Within the Station Gateway Major Opportunity Area, as defined on the Policies Map, planning permission will be granted for:

- a. An extended and regenerated train station;*
- b. New bus station;*
- c. High-density Use Class C3 residential units;*
- d. New multi-storey or basement car parking;*
- e. New Use Class B1 office premises;*
- f. A new Use Class C1 hotel; and*
- g. New Use Class A1 and Use Class A3 restaurant and cafe uses.*

Applications should address the following design and land use principles:

- i. Major reconfiguration of Lytton Way between Fairlands Way and Six Hills Way;*
- ii. Demolition of the Arts & Leisure Centre to facilitate better east-west integration and create new development sites in the environs of the train station;*
- iii. The provision of replacement sports and theatre facilities elsewhere within Stevenage Central;*
- iv. A significantly regenerated and enlarged dual frontage train station of high quality, with associated facilities;*
- v. New public squares on the eastern and western frontages of the train station;*
- vi. High quality office buildings within a short walking distance of the train station;*
- vii. At least one multi-storey car park and cycle parking plus drop-off space.*
- viii. Establishment of an attractive east – west pedestrian route across the East Coast Main Line;*
- ix. High quality landmark gateway environment to create a positive image of Stevenage for all rail visitors.*

- 3.6 The Council provides regular updates to MHCLG (now the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities or DLUHC) on progress with the AAP as one of the conditions set in the Secretary of State's letter to the Council in March 2019.

Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan: Issues and Options Report

- 3.7 The AAP has been developed in conjunction with DLA and the first version of the document was an "Issues and Options" version (Appendix A). The report outlines the core issues that are present within the station area as well as the background policy issues and wider context that affects its development. This represents an early stage of the preparation of an AAP, and a series of initial options that focus on mobility were presented for feedback from targeted stakeholders.
- 3.8 There are a range of high-level policy objectives which align with the Local Plan and national policy direction for the AAP to respond to. These include:
- Sustainable travel considered throughout;
 - Green infrastructure in the public realm;
 - Climate change consideration in all development decisions;
 - Design of the highest architectural standards.



3.9 The high level, strategic options proposed for the area included within the AAP will be strongly influenced by the masterplan for the SG1 development which lies to the east and within the town centre. Connections to this development and connections through into the town square and central area will form the emerging physical context within which the AAP sits.

- 3.10 The Station Gateway area of Stevenage is a key location for economic competitiveness. Other locations which are a similar time distance away from London terminals are seeing considerable commercial growth, for example Reading, Slough, Milton Keynes and Croydon. Stevenage is perfectly placed in terms of mobility, and already hosts major international companies in the Gunnels Wood Industrial Area as well as GlaxoSmithKline (GSK), a major pharmaceutical company.
- 3.11 Creating an attractive, healthy, memorable and enjoyable place in the Station Gateway area will provide the seeds for high quality mixed-use development to come forward and make the most of the station area and contribute widely across the town.
- 3.12 Chapter 6 of the draft Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan: Issues & Options Report is the key chapter for which feedback was targeted from stakeholders who operate within and around the area covered by the AAP.
- 3.13 A series of objectives and key principles have been developed for the emerging framework of the AAP.
- 3.14 Objectives of the emerging framework include creation of a new gateway and arrival experience, enhanced movement and access for all transport modes, creating new mixed used developments to unlock opportunity, integrating green infrastructure throughout the area and ensuring sustainability in mobility alongside low carbon developments, which respect the heritage of the town.
- 3.15 Key design principles of the emerging framework include providing people-friendly spaces, improving links from the rail station to the bus station, improving step-free and disabled access, future-proofing the area for a rail station upgrade, consolidating surface car parking to enable development and to ensure good access for all travel modes, including high quality cycling facilities.
- 3.16 The AAP is being prepared in full knowledge and recognition that a wider masterplan is developing for the Station Gateway area of Stevenage. Up to £500,000 has been committed to ensuring that works for this area are enabled, as well as for deep engagement with a variety of stakeholders.
- 3.17 The emerging framework will fully consider the development of the Bus Interchange on the eastern side of Lytton Way. Significant progress has been made on the construction of the new bus interchange located closer to the railway station. The interchange will provide safe bicycle parking, a comfortable and modern waiting environment for passengers and capacity for electric bus charging, as well as a cafe and mobility store.

Stevenage Bus Interchange (Under Construction)



- 3.18 The AAP will also fully consider the position closely regarding the Multi Storey Car Park planning permission (January 2022), relating to the site north of the Railway Station, which is within the AAP area. Further details are provided in this Report in paragraphs 4.40 to 4.43.
- 3.19 All proposed high-level scenarios for the reconfiguration of Lytton Way have a set of core enhancements, primarily in the North and South zones of the AAP area, north of Swingate and south of Danesgate. These apply to all potential options and include:
- Reduction in width of Lytton Way to be reallocated to pedestrian or cycle movement with associated green infrastructure.
 - An additional segregated cycleway adjacent to Lytton Way, away from the railway tracks.
 - Improved access to the Police Station.
 - A large public square, future-proofed for a new railway station or enhanced station entrance.
 - An east-west “boulevard”, running from the west of the railway line to the town centre and would cross the station and public square.
 - A cycle hub at the southern end of the Station Square plot.
 - Development plots made available by the consolidation of surface car parking into a Multi Storey Car Park (MSCP), subject to funding being available.

Planning Policy Process

- 3.20 The Issues and Options stage is only the first stage of development of the Area Action Plan. This is followed by a “Preferred Options” consultation which will be informed by the Issues and Options consultation response. Following this, the final version of the AAP will be submitted to the Secretary of State. This will be followed by an Examination in Public.
- 3.21 The AAP, as a Development Plan Document, is similar in status to the Local Plan and therefore requires Examination in Public by an appointed Planning Inspector, representing the Secretary of State. Should the AAP pass the soundness tests during the Examination in Public, the gateway process to formally adopting the AAP would progress immediately afterwards.

Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening

- 3.22 Sustainability appraisal and strategic environmental assessment are tools used at the plan-making stage to assess the likely effects of the plan when judged against reasonable alternatives. A sustainability appraisal should be prepared for any of the documents that can form part of a local plan, including core strategies, site allocation documents and area action plans.
- 3.23 During preparation of the Stevenage Borough Local Plan, officers concluded that Policy TC4 (Station Gateway Major Opportunity Area) had no significant environmental impact. The statutory consultees for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening have confirmed that they are content with this position.

- 3.24 There is potential to include stronger wording in the AAP referring to environmental effects of the development. This should reflect the position taken in the Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal, noting the environmental benefits that the preferred option works would provide such as reduction in air pollution and contribution to net zero carbon targets.

Decision of the Executive, February 2021

- 3.25 In February 2021, the Executive approved the publication of the Stevenage Connection AAP: Issues and Options Report for public consultation [BD3].

4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION AND OTHER OPTIONS

Recommendation 2.1: That Executive note the content of the draft Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan: Issues and Options Report Consultation Statement (the Consultation Statement).

- 4.1 Appendix D provides full detail of the public consultation exercise for the Stevenage Connection AAP. A summary of the consultation is given in the following paragraphs.

- 4.2 Consultation on the Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan: Issues and Options Report was held between 12th July 2021 and 5th September 2021, meeting the requirements stipulated for DPD consultations in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

- 4.3 Documents which formed the public consultation included:

- Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan: Issues and Options Report, July 2021 (Appendix A);
- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening for the Area Action Plan, July 2021 (Appendix B).
- A series of consultation questions, related to the content of the AAP (Appendix C).

Early engagement prior to public consultation (prior to 12th July 2021)

- 4.4 Following approval by Executive in February 2021 and prior to the consultation period commencing, some early engagement and publicity was carried out to promote the forthcoming public consultation on the AAP. This engagement included:

- Presenting the Issues and Options Report to and discussion with Stevenage Development Board, 13th May 2021.
- Discussions with key stakeholders to gauge early opinion, ahead of their submission of formal representations to the public consultation. At this stage, discussions were held with Sustrans, the Stevenage Cycling UK

User Group, East Coast Mainline Authorities and internal colleagues at the Council.

- A consultation video was produced, which highlighted the current issues with Stevenage Railway Station, Lytton Way and general connectivity and included a series of “fly-through” shots and images. The Planning Policy team procured a local firm, Pearldrop Ltd, to produce the video, which was published on various social media platforms, including the Council’s own YouTube channel – to promote the Area Action Plan consultation.
- The video, while easily accessible online, was played on location at Stevenage Indoor Market, Stevenage Visitor Centre and other locations across the town.
- A promotional leaflet and poster were produced and distributed around the town, to highlight that the public could “have their say” on proposals to shape Lytton Way and the wider Station Gateway area over Summer 2021.
- Ensuring that the AAP consultation could align with the work programme of the broader Communications and Engagement Plan, managed and updated by the Communities & Neighbourhoods team. This was to ensure that the AAP could be added to any events / engagement with the neighbourhoods of Stevenage, to raise awareness as much as possible.
- Engagement with the wider public through “consultation stalls” at the Railway Station. Here, Council officers were present to listen to members of the public and discuss their views regarding the current issues that face the Station, Lytton Way and surrounding area, as well as inviting people to vote (via a colour chip coin) on their preferred option for the central section of Lytton Way.

Formal public consultation period (12th July to 5th September 2021)

4.5 The AAP consultation document (Appendix A), SEA Screening document (Appendix B) and consultation questions (Appendix C) were advertised on the Council website, on social media and hard copies were made available in Daneshill House and the two town libraries, in accordance with COVID-19 restrictions at the time.

4.6 The formal consultation consisted of:

- Publicity via the Stevenage Borough Council website and social media platforms (including the Council’s Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn pages).
- A link to the Council’s consultation interface, where the public were able to download the AAP and SEA Screening document and submit their observations and representations.
- The consultation interface included a series of “consultation questions”, designed to cover the varying aspects of the AAP and to generate comments on certain sections of the document, for example the cycle path options or general views on connectivity between the Railway Station and Lytton Way. This was primarily to ensure that the Council

received responses on the document as a whole and not just, for example on the proposed options for Lytton Way. The questions were only answered in full by a small number of respondents. However, they proved useful in shaping public opinion across the consultation period and subsequent representations made.

- A series of more formal “key stakeholder meetings” were held virtually; two of the meetings were held in person at Daneshill House, with one meeting followed up by an officer-guided site visit of the AAP area.
- A press release and articles in the Comet newspaper relating to the AAP public consultation.
- Continuation of distribution of leaflets and posters publicising the public consultation. This included distribution at Stevenage Central Library, Daneshill House Reception and Stevenage Railway Station retail outlets.
- Continuation of engagement with the wider public via consultation stalls at the Railway Station and West Gate Shopping Centre, the Town Square and Stevenage Indoor Market.
- The Planning Policy team were assisted by the Communities & Neighbourhoods team and in particular, neighbourhood wardens, in promoting the Area Action Plan consultation across Stevenage to ensure a wide a response as possible.
- The Communities & Neighbourhoods team engaged with community interest groups on the AAP at events that were scheduled for Summer 2021, for example the Irish Centre Social in Bedwell in July 2021. This team placed leaflets and posters on various neighbourhood centre notice boards. This team also engaged with supermarkets and doctors’ surgeries on notice boards, to gauge views on the preferred options for Lytton Way.

4.7 A link to the Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan: Issues and Options Report was sent to all individuals who had signed up to the Council’s planning consultee register. The register mainly consists of individuals who have responded to previous Local Plan consultations or specific planning applications and contains all statutory consultees and Duty to Co-operate bodies, as required by Regulations.

4.8 Those who provided an e-mail address when registering to the list were sent an e-mail with a link to the document and an explanation of the consultation process. This consisted of the majority of all consultees. Approximately 200 letters were sent to individuals who had not provided an e-mail address. The letters advised recipients how they would be able to view the document (both electronically and physically) and the process for responding to the consultation.

4.9 The material consulted on included:

- Vision, ambitions, and aspirations of the AAP.
- Connectivity and access.
- Transport and highways.

- Public realm and sense of arrival at the Railway Station.

Summary of formal responses

- 4.10 A total of 301 representations were received from several consultees as well as internal teams and committees.
- 4.11 Formal responses were received from external bodies and individuals and included:
- Hertfordshire County Council: Growth and Infrastructure Unit.
 - Legal and General.
 - London North Eastern Railway (LNER).
 - Knebworth Estates.
 - Historic England.
 - Hertfordshire Constabulary.
 - Cycling UK Stevenage.
 - Members of the public.
- 4.12 A full summary of responses is provided in Appendix D together with officer responses to each comment as well as a description of any recommendations to be taken forward for consideration when drafting the Preferred Options Report.
- 4.13 A wide range of themes emerged arising from consultation comments, including some of those highlighted below:

Theme	Comments
Vision & Aspirations	<p><i>The proposals all look positive and exciting to see; the Plan will result in a different feel around the Station which can only be positive.</i></p> <p><i>The overall vision for the station as a multi-modal hub, providing a high-quality gateway to the town, has a positive level of support.</i></p>
Existing Environment	<p><i>A full review is required of the routes that people use to walk and cycle to and from the station so that a proper assessment can be made of the adequacy of existing routes.</i></p>
Emerging Framework	<p><i>Additional segregated cycleway needs to tie into the existing cycle network at Six Hills Way and Fairlands Way in order to provide safe connected links to key onward destinations such as Gunnels Wood Road and Stevenage Old Town.</i></p> <p><i>The plans need to make it clear how the new</i></p>

Theme	Comments
	<i>Multi Storey Car Park fits into the scheme in all the options.</i>
Existing cycleways	<p><i>Around this area, the network is practical but not inviting.</i></p> <p><i>The current cycleway has little natural surveillance so can feel unsafe to use.</i></p>
Railway Station	<p><i>Improvements should include enclosed, but transparent, footbridge across Lytton Way to provide weather protection.</i></p> <p><i>New set of steps to the footbridge on the leisure centre side of the road to create a more direct route to the new bus station.</i></p>
Walking & Cycling	<p><i>Access to the station from the Leisure Park needs to be greatly improved. This includes new staircases and ramps at the station itself, and the creation of safe, direct pedestrian routes across the car parks.</i></p> <p><i>Appropriate artwork and other improvements should be made where these routes pass through subways.</i></p>
Active Travel	<i>Signage and lighting of walking routes should be proactively considered to provide a safer and welcoming option to those within a shorter distance of the station; this includes walking routes within and beyond the town centre.</i>
Access	<i>Access to the station for older and disabled people should not be reduced by any changes made or works undertaken as part of this scheme.</i>
Drop off and pick up	<p><i>Accessible, convenient and well-lit areas for passengers to be dropped off or picked up (e.g. by friends or relatives) do not appear to be highlighted.</i></p> <p><i>Directions to Stevenage Station in the area and further away (e.g. on the A1) should be assessed in detail and updated where needed to minimise excess vehicle miles and the potential for conflicts.</i></p>
Connectivity	<i>Increase connectivity between the Leisure Park (and other commercial uses including the</i>

Theme	Comments
	<i>strategic employment area around Gunnels Wood Road) to the west, the station and the Primary Shopping Area and wider Town Centre to the east will help to deliver the strategic growth objectives across the Local Plan period.</i>
Cycle Path Potential Layouts	<p><i>Cycle Path Potential Layout 1 (maintaining the current National Route) was, by far, preferred to Potential Layout 2 (removing the current National Route).</i></p> <p><i>Level differences at Six Hills Way are an issue that need to be overcome.</i></p> <p><i>Removal of the existing cycle path should only be done if required for redevelopment of the station and other sites.</i></p>
Phasing & Temporary Use	<i>The existing footbridge should be retained until there is wider redevelopment enabling suitable alternatives to be provided.</i>
Development Parcels	<p><i>Support for the creation of distinct development parcels.</i></p> <p><i>The AAP should consider future opportunities for the intensification of development and alternative land uses at the Leisure Park.</i></p>
Parking Consolidation	<i>Any new parking should include provision for electrical charging points and cycling parking provision.</i>

4.14 In terms of preferred options for the central section of Lytton Way, suggested by consultees, the following highlights emerged:

Theme	Comments
Safety & Security	<i>All options are positive but need to incorporate safety and security measures.</i>
Movement & Access	<p><i>The AAP should support and enable accessible, convenient, and well-lit areas for passengers to be dropped off or picked up (e.g. by friends or relatives).</i></p> <p><i>Any preferred option should work on the principle that ground level movement is a priority, in terms of attractiveness to pedestrians.</i></p>

Theme	Comments
Option 0	<p><i>Not widely considered a realistic scenario for the AAP. It is contrary to Stevenage Borough Council's own policies (both the Local Plan and the Town Centre Framework) and does not enable any of the objectives, principles or core enhancements of the AAP to be achieved.</i></p>
Option 1	<p><i>Some responses included the option to consider one way traffic flow. This option improves link to the town centre, there are alternative routes to drive.</i></p> <p><i>There is a risk that the road outside the station would be blocked by vehicles dropping off / picking up passengers unless this is strictly monitored and controlled. It is likely that there would be additional delays to bus services travelling along this section</i></p>
Option 2	<p><i>This option addresses several objectives and principles of the AAP, removing the majority of vehicles from in front of the station helping reduce severance with the town centre and supporting the concept of a town square whilst retaining access to the relocated bus station for bus services from both directions.</i></p> <p><i>Vehicle drop off and pick up facilities will need to be provided in the MSCP and southern car park with good direct pedestrian links to the station.</i></p>
Option 3	<p><i>There will be significant disabled access challenges.</i></p> <p><i>This option is best for a new sense of arrival to Stevenage. A fully pedestrianised scheme is considered the only effective option to create a transformation in terms of connectivity between the station and the wider Town Centre and modal shifts.</i></p> <p><i>A new pedestrianised space will also create an opportunity to create a materially different arrival experience which directly connects the Station Gateway into the wider Town Centre.</i></p>

Consultation responses – wider consultation

4.15 During the consultation period, a series of consultation stalls were organised around the town to gauge public opinion on the four options for

Lytton Way (including asking the public to vote for a preferred option by placing a coloured chip coin in a box) as well as obtaining a wide range of comments on the Station Gateway area as a whole.

- 4.16 The main responses for the Lytton Way options, as well as wider responses for the AAP, from consultation stalls and wider engagement are summarised in the tables below:

Option 0 – No change	
Chip Coin Votes	65

Option 1 – All traffic modes	
Chip Coin Votes	100
Comments included	<i>Leave two lanes for traffic with one bus lane</i>
	<i>Would result in additional delays to bus services</i>

Option 2 – Bus and Taxi only	
Chip Coin Votes	121
Comments included	<i>Lytton Way should be solely for buses</i>
	<i>Don't prioritise buses and taxis</i>
	<i>Where will the drop off be if not accessible for cars</i>
	<i>Makes it easier for the area to operate like a Town Square</i>

Option 3 – Pedestrianised Plaza	
Chip Coin Votes	151

Comments included	<i>Impact on / too much traffic if fully pedestrianised</i>
	<i>Access to Station would be better at ground level for all including making it more accessible for disabled people</i>
	<i>Where will the drop off be if not accessible for cars</i>
	<i>Option 3 is best for a sense of arrival</i>
	<i>Would result in long diversions for buses travelling from the north of the town</i>

General Comments	
Car parking	<i>Make it free</i>
	<i>Make a MSCP for the Station</i>
	<i>Ensure there are plenty of EV charging points</i>
	<i>Provide enough drop off / pick up points</i>
Connections	<i>Improve pedestrian and cycling connections from Station to Town Centre</i>
	<i>Ensure that there is emergency vehicle access throughout the area so that the town remains connected</i>
	<i>Improve signage so that movement is easier</i>
Cycle provision	<i>Plenty of safe and secure cycle parking needs to be provided</i>
Sustainability	<i>Make use of living walls, roofs, wood and water walls. Include plenty of flora</i>
	<i>Use the area for pop-up stalls and markets</i>
Art and heritage	<i>Include artwork and sculptures</i>
	<i>Don't lose the hall of fame</i>

Summary of key stakeholder meetings

- 4.17 A total of 9 meetings were held with the key stakeholder groups identified through the early engagement process when the AAP was first drafted and developed. These were as follows:
- Cycling UK Stevenage: 1st July 2021 (prior to public consultation launch)
 - Mace: 2nd July 2021 (prior to public consultation launch)
 - Hertfordshire LEP: 2nd July 2021 (prior to public consultation launch)
 - Hertfordshire County Council: 5th July 2021
 - Govia Thameslink Railway: 7th July 2021
 - Stevenage Bus Users Group: 9th July 2021
 - National Rail: 21st July 2021
 - Sustrans: 23rd July 2021
 - Legal & General: 11th August 2021
- 4.18 In addition, a site visit to the Station Gateway area was held with the Cycling UK Stevenage group on 23rd August 2021.
- 4.19 At each meeting, officers presented a set of PowerPoint slides to the stakeholder group detailing the Area Action Plan. The stakeholder group were then invited to comment on the content of the AAP from their perspective and comments recorded as part of the overall consultation response.
- 4.20 Full details of the key stakeholder meetings are provided in the Consultation Statement (Appendix D). Key issues arising from these meetings included:

Theme	Comments
Vision & Aspirations	<i>Generally supported to provide much needed transformation of this part of the town and to support activities at and around the Railway Station.</i>
Destination & Sense of Place	<i>Potential for exemplary buildings to showcase as a crucial destination.</i>
Cycling	<i>Consideration needed for cycling past or through the Station, not just to and from it. People use the cycle route to commute and travel to places other than the Railway Station. Signage would be beneficial and clear signage is a must.</i>
Connectivity & Movement	<i>Importance of the boulevard link to Town Square, a way finder, offering a viewpoint, vista,</i>

Theme	Comments
	<p><i>and series of connection, and the importance of alignment to the Station.</i></p> <p><i>Further movement analysis could potentially be used to support any future options.</i></p>
Access	<p><i>Regarding the road bridge, there are key issues in terms of future access. Step grade drop needs to be part of the proposed solutions in the Preferred Options.</i></p>
Economy	<p><i>Grow on space is important, for example relating to low carbon development.</i></p> <p><i>The AAP area could work well as a service industry for the aerospace and R&D cluster at Gunnels Wood, and / or supporting the emerging cell and gene cluster.</i></p>
Digital	<p><i>Digital incentives are also very important in this area going forward.</i></p>
Railway Station	<p><i>Entrance at grade is a priority.</i></p> <p><i>There is pressure on future possibilities for a new Station. This should consider how long this would take and the costs of intervention.</i></p>
Lytton Way Options	<p><i>Overall, the proposed Options 1 to 3 have a positive level of support as they are transformative, positive and will result in a different feel around the Station. They will encourage further walking and cycling in the vicinity.</i></p> <p><i>Option 1 – doesn't enable modal shift.</i></p> <p><i>Option 2 – work would need to be undertaken to set out what happens for traffic movements such as drop off, turning and movement</i></p> <p><i>Option 2 & 3 – opens up the barrier of the ring road but will require detailed modelling and assessment.</i></p>

Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening

4.21 No substantive comments were received on the content of the SEA Screening Report during the public consultation.

Summary of all consultation responses and likely preferred option(s) for Lytton Way

- 4.22 The public consultation exercise returned a wide range of responses from members of the public, interest groups and key stakeholders. The AAP covers many planning and policy issues and challenges.
- 4.23 The varied response the Council received, not just on the Options for the central section of Lytton Way, proves that when developing the Preferred Options AAP and taking the AAP through to its final stages, the ambitions and aspirations in the vision for the AAP are of prime importance. This is to ensure that the Station Gateway area of opportunity is brought to life and delivered in the appropriate manner in accordance with other related measures (see paragraphs 4.31 to 4.48).
- 4.24 There was a clear preference for “Potential Layout 1” relating to the cycle path options. This layout retains the existing cycle route, running alongside the railway line and at the extreme western edge of the AAP site boundary.
- 4.25 Potential Layout 2 proposes to remove this cycle path and was not thought as feasible in achieving sustainable and active travel; Potential Layout 1 retains this cycle path and offers the opportunity to connect the AAP area to the town centre (with any Lytton Way Option taken forward) and a new north-south route.
- 4.26 Potential Layout 1 also offers the opportunity to enhance the existing National Cycle Route and create additional cultural features, for example, to celebrate the town and relate to the new identity being created by regeneration of the town centre and a sense of arrival into Stevenage.
- 4.27 Taking everything into consideration, the early indications are that there is a lower level of support for a “do nothing” approach as advocated by Option 0. Transport and accessibility attracted a great deal of interest, for which officers will consider closely for the Preferred Options stage.
- 4.28 Option 2: reduce the central section of Lytton Way to one lane both ways, for buses and taxis only, is emerging as a preferred option. However, Option 3: reduce the central section of Lytton Way to zero lanes to be a pedestrianised plaza, was also very popular across many consultation respondents and key stakeholders. Some elements of this option could be incorporated into any final preferred option.

Recommendation 2.2: That Executive agree to progress to the next stage of the Area Action Plan progress, the production of the “Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan: Preferred Options Report”, (the Preferred Options Report), this report being based on the outcomes of the “Issues and Options” consultation.

- 4.29 Officers have taken all comments and views into account, in a conscientious manner. This has helped to inform and shape the position being reported to Executive.
- 4.30 The following paragraphs detail other important considerations for officers in preparing the Preferred Options version of the AAP.

Hertfordshire County Council Highways Modelling Report

- 4.31 The Hertfordshire County Council response to the Issues and Options consultation specified an order of Preferred Options for the central section of Lytton Way:

1 st choice:	Option 2
2 nd choice:	Option 3
3 rd choice:	Option 1
4 th choice:	Option 0

- 4.32 Officers are currently working with Hertfordshire County Council Highways department on a report that will assess the impacts of each of the Lytton Way options on the highway network around Stevenage, as well as offer potential mitigation measures (Appendix E). The modelling work undertaken is based on a baseline year of 2021, with scenarios based on traffic flows in 2025 and 2031, with and without the A1(M) SMART motorway in operation.
- 4.33 While the emerging Highways Modelling report suggests that Option 1 would have the least impact on traffic flows (particularly at peak hours) around Stevenage, the Hertfordshire County Council AAP consultation response highlighted Option 2 as the most preferred option which aligns with both theirs and our aspirations to improve active travel.
- 4.34 Hertfordshire County Council, through their response to the consultation and through working with officers on the Highways Modelling Report, is in broad agreement with Stevenage Borough Council on the desired direction of travel to take forward in the Preferred Options Report. This aligns with the position taken in preparing Policy TC4 of the Stevenage Borough Local Plan and which had been modelled as part of Local Plan preparation, tested through Examination in Public and subsequently adopted in 2019. The Local Plan includes provision for “*major reconfiguration of Lytton Way between Fairlands Way and Six Hills Way*” (Policy TC4 (i)).
- 4.35 Officers are continuing to work closely with Hertfordshire County Council Highways officers to develop the Preferred Option in the AAP which aligns closest with active and sustainable travel aspirations. It is acknowledged by both parties that substantial intervention would be required to realise the Preferred Option that will materialise in the AAP.
- 4.36 The model indicates that the traffic redistribution caused by traffic causes the highway network around Stevenage town centre, offer challenges in the models with the existing gap parameters. This means neither Option 2 nor Option 3 shows long term operational resilience, with the 2031 scenarios showing a situation where traffic cannot get through the model causing major delays to bus services. This means that at present, the recommended option in highway capacity terms is Option 1, because it is the only option that is not predicted to cause significant congestion.
- 4.37 While the model results make it difficult to recommend Options 2 or 3 from a highway capacity viewpoint, there are other considerations that

officers may need to use when assessing which scheme is most appropriate. Both Option 2 or 3 could work in highway capacity terms if residents of Stevenage and users of the town centre accepted a much higher level of mode shift than would be required for Option 1. The level of ambition in the Stevenage Sustainable Travel Town may make the level of mode shift achievable – however without major behaviour change and modal shift, there are potential risks of causing significant congestion.

- 4.38 Effectively, the roadworks associated with the new bus station have already demonstrated that Option 1 is likely to work. This means that one option could be to test the success or otherwise of Options 2 and 3 by temporarily restricting through traffic on Lytton Way to identify if the reality of this situation is the same as predicted in the model.
- 4.39 The modelling report does touch on some potential mitigation measures, for further investigation, to alleviate the traffic flow impact, including:
- Removal of the bypass lane from Danestrete to Six Hills Way;
 - Additional Right Turn Lane from Fairlands Way to St Georges Way;
 - Amendments to eastbound carriageway on Fairlands Way at St. Georges Way roundabout;
 - Signalisation of north bound Gunnels Wood Road approach to Fairlands Way roundabout;
 - It is also recommended that bus priority measures should be considered to help buses traverse the congested network.

Multi-Storey Car Park (MSCP)

- 4.40 Officers are considering the position closely regarding the Multi Storey Car Park planning permission (January 2022), relating to the site north of the Railway Station [BD4], which is within the AAP area:
- “Construction of Multi Storey Car Park and Secure Cycle Stores to provide 622 car parking spaces of which 30 are accessible “Blue Badge” spaces, 80 secure cycle spaces, and 27 motorcycle spaces with associated hard and soft landscaping works. Up to 25% of car parking spaces are to be provided with active Electric Vehicle charging point and up to 50% of car parking spaces are to be provided with passive Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure for future activation to suit demand. The MSCP is six storeys tall with a central photovoltaic canopy on the open top deck.”*
- 4.41 Officers are also fully aware of the wider work ongoing to deliver the MSCP. A report was presented to Executive in December 2021 [BD5] which provided the technical and financial detail relating to the MSCP and cycle hub at the Railway Station, as part of a wider sustainable transport interchange.
- 4.42 Subject to agreement by Executive, it is anticipated that the contractor for the MSCP can commence works from April 2022. The proposed construction programme for the MSCP is approximately 40 weeks.

- 4.43 Officers will be careful to ensure that the MSCP and associated development is fully recognised and incorporated into the Preferred Options AAP.

Proposed MSCP, north of Stevenage Railway Station



Towns Fund: Station Gateway

- 4.44 Officers are working closely with the Regeneration team at the Council regarding the Towns Fund project on the Station Gateway. This was reported to Stevenage Development Board on 2 December 2021 and to Executive on 8 December 2021 [BD6].

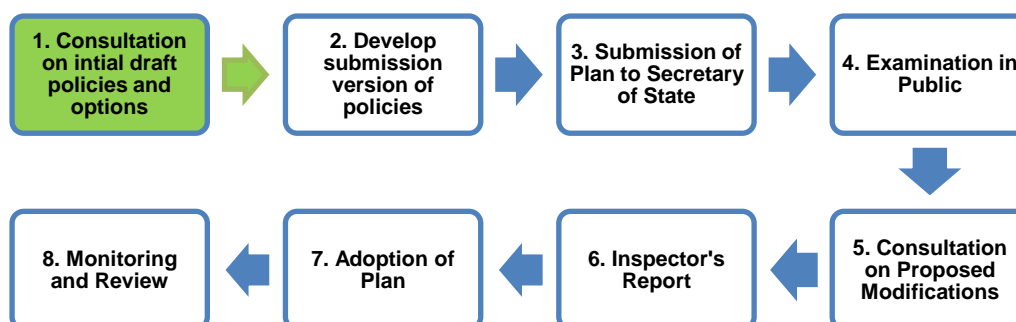
- 4.45 This project involves the delivery of the Multi-Storey Car Park (MSCP) as part of a sustainable transport interchange on the Stevenage North railway car park. The project was being led by the Council and was funded through £6.5m from the Towns Fund and £3.5m direct match funding from SBC and Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership. The land was owned by the Council and the match funding / investment element would be subject to a separate business plan to be considered by the decision-making committees of the Council. The project was fully consistent with the Stevenage Town Investment Plan and was a key first phase to progress the wider Stevenage Gateway scheme without prejudicing the Area Action Plan process.
- 4.46 At Stevenage Development Board on 2 December 2021, it was acknowledged that complementary improvements to Stevenage Railway Station would be required at some point in the future to provide a welcoming aspect for visitors to the town through the Gateway area. The Station Gateway Project Business Case was endorsed and recommended to the Accountable Body (Stevenage Borough Council) for approval.
- 4.47 At Executive on 8 December 2021, the report [BD6, paragraphs 3.20 to 3.25] referred specifically to the Stevenage Borough Local Plan and Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan as a crucial supporting mechanism for the realisation of the Towns Fund project for the wider Station Gateway scheme.
- 4.48 Officers will continue to work with the Regeneration team to ensure that the development of the Towns Fund project for the Station Gateway is fully incorporated into the Preferred Options AAP.

Progression to Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan: Preferred Options Report

- 4.49 The first stage for public consultation, the “consultation on initial draft policies and options”, has been completed. The “Issues and Options” draft of the Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan forms this first stage.
- 4.50 The next stage, “develop submission version of policies” will form the second stage of the Area Action Plan and will form the “Preferred Options” draft for public consultation. This is the stage that officers would like to progress to, based on the representations from the Issues and Options Report.
- 4.51 Following the Preferred Options consultation, the AAP will be submitted to the Secretary of State ahead of an independent Examination in Public by an appointed Planning Inspector.
- 4.52 A final consultation on any modifications proposed by the Inspector to the Plan will be held prior to the Inspector’s Report, which confirms whether the Plan can proceed to formal adoption. Monitoring and review of the Plan is required a period of time after the Plan has been adopted.

Next Steps

- 4.53 The procedure to adopt a new SPD is set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Approximately, it is as follows (as referenced in the Council’s Statement of Community Involvement, or “SCI” [BD7]):



- 4.54 At Executive, Members will have the opportunity to note and review the outcomes of the Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan: Issues and Options public consultation.
- 4.55 The Executive will have the opportunity to discuss the direction of travel in terms of Preferred Option or Options (a combination of Options is a potential outcome), that will be developed when drafting the next version of the AAP document.
- 4.56 This document will then need to be prepared by officers ahead of another round of public consultation, titled the “Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan: Preferred Options Report”.
- 4.57 The Preferred Options AAP would need to be drafted, after the 31 January 2022 Planning & Development Committee meetings (see Recommendation 2.5) and the Executive meeting of 9th February 2022, and any subsequent key stakeholder meetings (see Recommendation 2.6), to go back to the Executive for approval to go out to public consultation.
- 4.58 The table overleaf illustrates an indicative timetable for progression of the Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan.

Stage	Date
Consultation on initial draft policies and options (Issues and Options AAP: Public Consultation)	12 July – 5 September 2021
Develop submission version of policies (Preferred Options AAP: Public Consultation)	Summer 2022 (minimum 6 weeks)
Preferred Options AAP: consider and address responses	Autumn 2022

Stage	Date
<i>Submission of Plan to Secretary of State</i>	Winter 2022
<i>Examination in Public of Plan</i>	Spring 2023
<i>Inspector's Report</i>	Spring / Summer 2023
<i>Adoption of Plan</i>	Summer 2023
<i>Monitoring and Review</i>	From Autumn 2023 (in accordance with Local Plan Review)

4.59 In terms of eventual delivery of schemes and initiatives that support the final Area Action Plan, it is important to note that this is an early stage of preparation of the Area Action Plan and the Issues and Options Report includes aspirational proposals at this stage. This adds limited weight to Local Plan Policy TC4.

4.60 Once the Preferred Options Report is prepared, this will add further weight to Policy TC4 and thereafter until the Area Action Plan is adopted. During the process, it is anticipated that further positive engagement with landowners and key stakeholders in the process will aid early delivery of the eventual schemes on the AAP sites and for the relevant sections of Lytton Way.

Recommendation 2.3: That Executive delegate powers be granted to the Assistant Director: Planning and Regulation, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regeneration, to prepare the Preferred Options Report.

4.61 The draft Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan: Issues and Options Report is appended to this report (Appendix A).

4.62 If the Executive approve to progress to the next stage of drafting the AAP (Recommendation 2.2), it will be necessary to prepare the Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan: Preferred Options Report following this Executive meeting. This will include substantial rewriting of sections, imagery, graphics and any factual changes.

4.63 It is likely that a consultancy will be contacted to assist with the drafting of the Preferred Options draft document.

Recommendation 2.4: That Executive note that the final draft of the Preferred Options Report will be presented to Executive for approval to go out to public consultation in Summer 2022 (formal consultation, if approved, will take place once approved).

4.64 Once the draft Preferred Options version of the Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan is in a position to be reported to Executive, a report will be prepared for approval by Executive to go out to public consultation on the Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan: Preferred Options Report.

- 4.65 This is anticipated to be presented to Executive in Summer 2022; however, this is subject to change. Members will be kept updated on progress with the development of the Preferred Options Report.

Recommendation 2.5: That Executive note that the comments of the Planning & Development Committee will be sought and considered on both the Consultation Statement and the content of this Executive Report.

- 4.66 A special Planning & Development Committee meeting is scheduled for 31 January 2022. A summary of this report will be presented to the special Planning & Development Committee meeting and any subsequent comments or suggestions will be recorded and reported back to Executive on 9 February 2022.
- 4.67 The views of the Planning & Development Committee Members are of significant value in shaping the future direction the Stevenage Connection AAP takes as it progresses into Preferred Options stage. Key concerns expressed previously include the need for wide engagement; potential future changes to Lytton Way; and connectivity between the Railway Station and the town centre, as it progresses through several stages of regeneration.

Recommendation 2.6: That Executive note that informal engagement with key stakeholders will continue, to test the Preferred Options ahead of preparation of the Area Action Plan Preferred Options Report.

- 4.68 The Stevenage Development Board will be consulted on the Issues and Options public consultation findings at their meeting scheduled for 24 February 2022.
- 4.69 Following the Executive meeting on 9 February 2022, there may be scope for further engagement with other key stakeholders to inform them of progress on the AAP and to record any comments they may wish to make.
- 4.70 All views and representations made following the Executive meeting on 9 February 2022 will be collated and included as part of the subsequent report to the Executive, anticipated for Summer 2022, which will seek approval to undergo public consultation on the Preferred Options AAP.

5 IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

- 5.1 The costs associated with producing and consulting on the draft Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan: Issues and Options Report will be met from the agreed departmental budget.

- 5.2 The Planning Policy team procured a local firm, Pearldrop Ltd, to produce the video which was published on various social media platforms – to promote the Area Action Plan consultation. This cost £4,500 to produce.
- 5.3 The Hertfordshire County Council and WSP Highways Modelling Report work, to supplement the Issues & Options Consultation, required a budget of c. £25,000.
- 5.4 All other elements of the public consultation exercise were carried out in-house; the Planning Policy team were assisted by the Communities & Neighbourhoods team and in particular, neighbourhood wardens, in promoting the Area Action Plan consultation across Stevenage to ensure a wide a response as possible.
- 5.5 It is possible that further consultancy assistance will be required to consider costs, feasibility of and graphics related to development of Preferred Options documentation.
- 5.6 Any potential schemes that are referenced in the AAP and subsequently developed will need to be subject to a business case and / or will require third party funding.

Legal Implications

- 5.7 The outcomes of any consultation will be conscientiously considered in developing the Preferred Options version of the AAP, prior to approval by the Executive.
- 5.8 The comments of the Planning & Development Committee have been invited regarding the content of this Report.

Risk Implications

- 5.9 There are no significant risks associated with this report.

Policy Implications

- 5.10 The Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan will accord with and is being produced to supplement policies in the adopted Stevenage Borough Local Plan (2019). As it is a Development Plan Document it may also develop policies over and above the Local Plan for the Stevenage Station Gateway area of opportunity.
- 5.11 The Preferred Options Report, when drafted will align with other corporate Council documents such as the Climate Change Strategy (adopted September 2020), Action Plan and Charter as well as Stevenage's Future Town Future Transport Strategy (2019).

Planning Implications

- 5.12 The Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan will supplement the Stevenage Borough Local Plan (2019).
- 5.13 The document will add to and complement the Development Plan for Stevenage. It will be a material consideration for planning applications.

Environmental Implications

- 5.14 During preparation of the Stevenage Borough Local Plan and the SEA Screening Report for the AAP, officers concluded that Policy TC4 (Station Gateway Major Opportunity Area) had no significant environmental impact. There is potential to include stronger and more focused wording in the Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan: Preferred Options Report referring to environmental effects of any potential future development.

Climate Change Implications

- 5.15 The Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan will seek to provide sustainable travel solutions and promote active modes of transport. This will support the aims and objectives of the Stevenage Climate Change Strategy (September 2020) and contribute to the overall climate change aspirations of the Council.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 5.16 The Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan will seek to improve disabled and step-free access to Stevenage Railway Station; several Issues and Options consultation responses highlighted that this should be a priority. This will therefore offer further opportunities and benefits for all accessing the Railway Station and more widely, connecting to the regenerated town centre in the future.

Community Safety Implications

- 5.17 While the Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan is unlikely to have any direct community safety implications per se; when implementing any of the proposals the delivery body will need to closely consider the potential impacts on community safety.

Other Implications

- 5.18 There will be significant economic implications from future work arising from the Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan.
- 5.19 For example, the AAP could help to maximise opportunity for provision of high-quality facilities for the growing local research and development industry as well as the expanding cell and gene therapy catalyst industry that is seeking future accommodation and opportunities in Stevenage and the wider area.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- BD1 Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011–2031 (May 2019)
<https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/documents/planning-policy/stevenage-borough-local-plan/stevenage-borough-local-plan.pdf>
- BD2 Letter from Rt. Hon. James Brokenshire MP, Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, to Stevenage Borough Council: Stevenage Borough Council’s Local Plan (March 2019)
<https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/documents/planning-policy/holding-direction/the-secretary-of-states-letter.pdf>
- BD3 Meeting of the Stevenage Borough Council Executive, Item 5: Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan: Issues and Options Report for Public Consultation (February 2021)
<https://democracy.stevenage.gov.uk/documents/s27638/Station%20Gateway%20AAP.pdf>
- BD4 Meeting of the Planning & Development Committee, Item 2: Station Car Park North, Lytton Way, Stevenage (January 2022)
<https://democracy.stevenage.gov.uk/documents/s30291/Station%20Car%20Park%20North.pdf>
- BD5 Meeting of the Stevenage Borough Council Executive, Item 6: Construction of a new North Multi-Storey Car Park and Cycle Hub as part of Sustainable Transport Interchange (December 2021)
<https://democracy.stevenage.gov.uk/documents/s30165/Item%206%20-%20New%20Station%20North%20MSCP%20report.pdf>
- BD6 Meeting of the Stevenage Borough Council Executive, Item 5: Towns Fund Business Case: Station Gateway (December 2021)
<https://democracy.stevenage.gov.uk/documents/s30114/Item%205%20-%20Towns%20Fund%20-%20Station%20Gateway%20report.pdf>
- BD7 Stevenage Borough Statement of Community Involvement (November 2018)
<https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/documents/planning-policy/draft-statement-of-community-involvement/statement-of-community-involvement-2018.pdf>

APPENDICES

- A Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan: Issues and Options Report (July 2021)
- B Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan: Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Statement (July 2021)
- C Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan: Consultation Questions (July 2021)
- D Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan: Issues and Options Consultation Statement (January 2022)
- E Stevenage Station Gateway Area Action Plan – Draft Summary of Paramics Model Findings (December 2021)

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STEVENAGE CONNECTION

AREA ACTION PLAN

ISSUES + OPTIONS REPORT



David Lock Associates

July 2021

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01 INTRODUCTION

01 INTRODUCTION

Stevenage's town centre is undergoing a process of renewal and regeneration. As part of this, the area around the station bounded by the railway tracks and Lytton Way has been identified as a key site for new development and change. This key gateway for the town has the potential for significant transformation, based on its well-connected position only 20 minutes from Kings' Cross. Such development could form a key part of the regeneration of the town centre.

This report is the first stage in the process of producing an Area Action Plan (AAP) for the station area. It outlines the key issues that affect the area identified as site TC4 in the Local Plan. It then presents a series of potential options that will form the basis for targeted consultation with stakeholders.

What is an AAP?

An Area Action Plan (AAP) is an optional development plan document which provides specific planning policy and guidance for a particular location or area of significant change. AAPs must be in general conformity with the Local Plan and the NPPF. The key stages of an AAP are summarised below:

- Publication of Issues and Options, which seek the views of stakeholders on Issues and Options for the future development of the area.
- Publication of Preferred Options, to set out the Council's preferred way forward for the area.
- Following consideration of responses to this consultation, the Submission Document will be prepared. This will be submitted to the Secretary of State.
- The fourth stage is the independent Examination of the submitted document. The purpose of this is to consider the soundness of the AAP and representations. A Planning Inspector will be appointed by the Secretary of State to conduct the examination.
- The Planning Inspector will produce a binding report that sets out the final version of the AAP. This will then be adopted by the Council and incorporated in the Local Development Framework.

Stages 1 to 3 will each be subject to a 6-week public consultation (in compliance with SBC's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI; 2018) which sets out statutory consultation requirements).



Figure 1: Stevenage town centre from the air

Why create an Area Action Plan (AAP)?

After reviewing Stevenage's Local Plan during the Hold Direction, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) asked Stevenage Borough Council (SBC) to prepare an Area Action Plan (AAP) for Stevenage Station Gateway Area (identified in the Local Plan as Site TC4). This is a limited area within the wider Stevenage Central area.

The AAP can create new policy over and above the Local Plan and will require its own Sustainable Environmental Assessment at the Issues and Options Stage. Other mechanisms are available to provide appropriate planning and design guidance.

It is important to understand that this version of the Area Action Plan, as an "Issues and Options" Report, is not prescribing specific solutions to the issues and challenges raised. This Issues and Options Report is discussing key concepts and high level, strategic options and scenarios around Stevenage Railway Station, in order to enable potential future development that could take place. It does not, at this early stage, suggest specific proposals for Stevenage Railway Station or relating to Lytton Way.

Stevenage Borough Council is a co-operative Council and will undergo several rounds of consultation, work and co-operation with residents, businesses and key stakeholders to shape the Area Action Plan through these key stages. As a co-operative Council, Stevenage Borough Council will take into account all views and representations before discussing and developing any preferred options.

02 BACKGROUND

02 BACKGROUND

The town centre of Stevenage ('Stevenage Central') is undergoing an extensive process of regeneration, renewal and new development. This ambitious programme builds on Stevenage's heritage as a New Town and its success in attracting people and businesses. Only 20 minutes from London's Kings' Cross, it is exceptionally well-connected and offers similar potential for commercial and residential growth as other locations such as Reading, Croydon and Milton Keynes. The station area is thus crucial for the success of this plan. This section sets out the background studies, policies and activities that form the basis for intervention.

Stevenage Central Regeneration Framework

Published in 2016, the Stevenage Central Regeneration Framework forms the governing masterplan for the town centre, outlining the key objectives, opportunities and vision for regeneration. The core recommendations within the report formed the parameters and basis for the Rail Station Vision study (2017) and underlies the masterplan for the area known as 'SG1'. The Framework has informed the policies in the recently-adopted Local Plan.

Fitting within the Local Plan

Stevenage Borough Local Plan policy TC4 ("Station Gateway Major Opportunity Area") states:

Within the Station Gateway Major Opportunity Area, as defined on the Policies Map, planning permission will be granted for:

- a. An extended and regenerated train station;
- b. New bus station;
- c. High-density Use Class C3 residential units;
- d. New multi-storey or basement car parking;
- e. New Use Class B1 office premises;
- f. A new Use Class C1 hotel; and
- g. New Use Class A1 and Use Class A3 restaurant and cafe uses.

Applications should address the following design and land use principles:

- i. Major reconfiguration of Lytton Way between Fairlands Way and Six Hills Way;
- ii. Demolition of the Arts & Leisure Centre to facilitate better east-west integration and create new development sites in the environs of the train station
- iii. The provision of replacement sports and theatre facilities elsewhere within Stevenage Central
- iv. A significantly regenerated and enlarged dual-frontage train station of high quality, with associated facilities
- v. New public squares on the eastern and western frontages of the train station
- vi. High quality office buildings within a short walking distance of the train station
- vii. At least one multi-storey car park and cycle parking plus drop-off space
- viii. Establishment of an attractive east - west pedestrian route across the East Coast Main Line
- ix. High quality landmark gateway environment to create a positive image of Stevenage for all rail visitors

Within this policy context, there are a range of high-level policy objectives which align with the Local Plan and national policy direction for the AAP to respond to. These include:

- Sustainable travel considered throughout
- Green infrastructure in the public realm
- Climate change consideration in all development decisions
- Design of the highest architectural standards

The options proposed for the area included within the AAP will be strongly influenced by the masterplan for the SG1 development which lies to the east and within the town centre. Connections to this development and connections through into the town square and central area will form the emerging physical context within which the AAP sits.



Figure 2: Stevenage Central Regeneration Framework masterplan



Climate Change

On 12th June 2019, Stevenage Borough Council declared a climate emergency and reconfirmed its commitment to tackling climate change by setting a target to ensure that Stevenage has net-zero emissions by 2030. In September 2020, the Council responded to this emergency by publishing its Climate Change Strategy (2020) which acts as a starting point for the development of a resident-led, co-produced more focused Climate Change Strategy for Stevenage.

As a co-operative Council, Stevenage is committed to act as a community leader and facilitate local people and businesses during the decarbonisation process. The Strategy focusses on four main areas. Most of the carbon emissions in Stevenage come from Transport, People's home and businesses, construction, and utilities. Through focusing on these areas, better understanding their requirements, and engaging with them Stevenage can reach the zero-carbon target.

The Strategy gives valuable direction for the development of a Stevenage tailored Climate Change Action Plan to net zero by 2030. The Action Plan is a live document that will be continuously developed by the local community and is responsive to the opportunities that new technologies and bids for funding may allow. It follows 8 distinctive themes: People, Biodiversity, Transport, Energy and Water, Businesses, Homes, Construction and Regeneration, and Waste and Recycling.

Other Policy Documents

Future Town, Future Transport (2019) is SBC's transport plan responding to Hertfordshire County Council (HCC)'s Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4). This brings forward modal shift and sustainable transport measures across the county.

The document contains a number of policy actions for the 'Stevenage Gateway' area (approximately concurrent with the AAP area). These are split across short term and medium term plans, and the AAP must respond to them.

Short term action plan – immediate actions:

- Relocation of the bus station to be adjacent to the railway station
- A cycling and walking infrastructure plan
- A cycle hire scheme with docking hubs at the railway station and across the town centre
- Rules to allow e-scooters to use cycleways
- Engagement with Network Rail over capacity and access requirements

Short-term action plan – Part 2 (2021-5):

- Improvements to the station environment
- Intermodal interchange at the station including cycle hire, a cycle hub with covered parking and maintenance facilities
- Demand management for car parking

Medium-term action plan (beyond 2025):

- Underpass environment improvements
- Bus priority measures on key streets
- Developing proposals for commercial uses in the gateway area.

03 SETTING THE CONTEXT

03 SETTING THE CONTEXT

The Heart of the Town Centre?

The area around Stevenage railway station is a key location in the centre of the town. It forms the western edge of the traditional town centre 'box' as imagined by the New Town masterplan, and is the first place that many visitors and commuters see.

As Stevenage expands and regenerates in the future, the town centre will expand. The Stevenage Central Regeneration Framework envisages an expansion of the 'box' to encompass land west of the railway, extending towards the Airbus site and taking in intensification of the Leisure Park across the railway tracks. As a result, the station area will move to being at the heart of the town centre, a critical movement node east-west, and one of the best-connected places in the town.

The Local Plan identifies (Policy TC4) a proposal for a radically improved new Stevenage railway station, with National Rail having plans for a 5th platform, as part of a broader central area regeneration scheme. The Local Plan Inspector's Report suggested that the railway station be extended as well as regenerated. From wide engagement with businesses and developers there is an opportunity to significantly enhance this part of the town centre and to enhance east-west connectivity.

The area is thus a key strategic brownfield site opportunity, linking east - west movement. It is a key arrival point for business and visitors, and sits at the heart of the sustainable travel network. Effective use of the land is thus essential to create new employment capacity and jobs, as well as ensure it becomes an attractive and vibrant place in its own right, welcoming people to Stevenage.



Figure 4: Recent station area transformation precedents - clockwise from top left: Oxford, Reading, Sheffield, Slough, Utrecht (Netherlands), Wakefield Westgate

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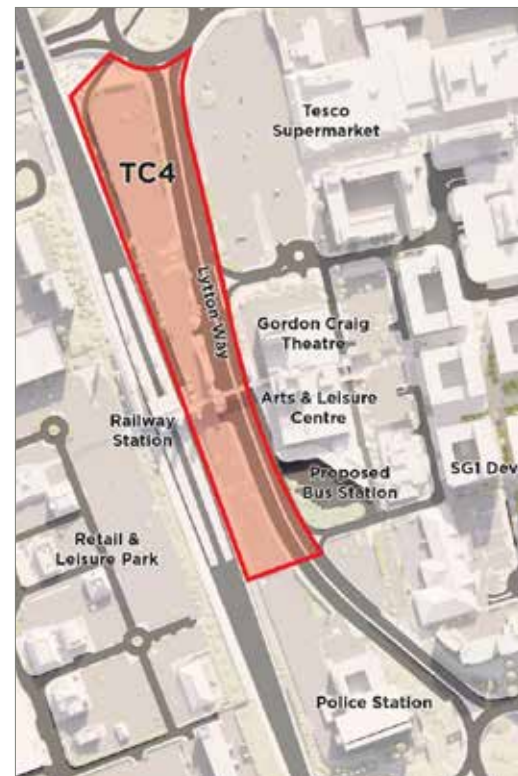


Figure 3: Site plan showing TC4 area and selected nearby locations

The Site

The selected Stevenage Station Gateway AAP area is tightly defined. It abuts the railway land/tracks and includes the dual carriageway of Lytton Way. The ambitious regeneration plans for Stevenage Central anticipated that Lytton Way would largely be redeveloped as part of a major reorganisation of the town's distributor road network.

Most of the site is currently occupied by surface level car parks which largely serve commuters using Stevenage Station. The constrained nature of the site limits both the volume of building which can be accommodated, the range of uses and how the buildings are organised on site.

The site, designated as TC4 in the Local Plan, is approximately 440m from north to south, and varies between 100m wide at the northern end, to 55m at the station entrance. The total site area is about 3ha. The site is oriented roughly north-south, and is situated to the west of the main part of Stevenage town centre.

The boundary of Local Plan Policy TC4 includes the two sites that form the Gordon Craig Theatre / Stevenage Arts & Leisure Centre and proposed new Bus Station development. These sites, current developments and future proposals regarding them are considered in the context of this Area Action Plan but not included for the purposes of the Area Action Plan boundary.

The Opportunity *What can a modern station and station area be?*

Many stations have historically been located at the edge of historic town centres - they were built at the urban edge in the 19th Century. On the far side of the tracks, industrial uses that needed good access to the rail network were often built, or there was marginal land around flood plains. This pattern was repeated in many of the New Towns built post-war, such as in Stevenage. This approach worked when most people lived and worked in the same town, using the station occasionally. In the modern era, intercity connectivity is essential to creating a vibrant, connected, knowledge-based economy such as that seen in Stevenage. Stations are now hubs of development, with pressures to create housing, office space, retail and other commercial space. Without a comprehensive masterplan, the fundamentals of the rail station - that of an accessible transport interchange - can be compromised.

Stations must:

- Be the centre of movement: efficient multi-modal interchanges between all modes of transport, with sustainable modes prioritised;
- Support inclusive growth: responding to the particular needs of their location - for example needs for affordable housing, better commercial space, or regeneration schemes;
- Be at the heart of healthy communities: by making it easy for people to choose active modes of travel at the core of a healthy network, and creating spaces that include nature and prioritise physical and mental health.

Stations are often severing points in the urban fabric - an edge. By turning the station into a public place with a wide and accessible pedestrian bridge, it becomes a link or node to focus around. As the gateway to a place, it forms an essential first impression for visitors, and serves as a reminder to regular users that their town is an attractive, thriving and people-focused place every time they use it.

In the context of Stevenage, the area around the station is a key location for economic competitiveness. Locations a similar time distance away from London terminals are seeing considerable commercial growth, such as Reading, Slough, Milton Keynes and Croydon. Stevenage is perfectly placed in terms of mobility, and already hosts major international companies. Only 20 minutes from the major Kings Cross development and the business area around Farringdon (where Thameslink and Crossrail will interchange), the opportunity to establish a significant business environment adjacent to the station is considerable.

Although the development opportunity is clear, the route towards it requires the creation of a more people-friendly place than currently exists. Creating an attractive, healthy, memorable and enjoyable place will provide the seeds for high quality mixed-use development to come forward and make the most of the station area, and contribute widely across the town.

The Policy & Political Context

Rail transport in the UK has seen enormous growth in recent decades, driven by a combination of increases in commuting due to house price rises, concentrations of jobs in hubs like the City of London, leisure travel and a demand for more sustainable modes of travel. The current COVID-19 pandemic is creating uncertainty about future patterns of rail travel (see below), it remains clear that demand for rapid, sustainable rail travel will be a feature of our medium and long-term mobility future.

Looking to the future, the Transport Secretary has laid out further plans to transform the country's transport infrastructure to help the country 'build out' of COVID-19, supporting the nation's economy, and delivering on the government's key agenda of levelling up the country.

The Government has recently favoured development around stations, in particular for disabled passengers and improving access where possible. The intention is for funding to be made available at a large number of train stations around the UK to make them more accessible. Initiatives will include incorporating accessible toilets and customer information screens, as well as new lifts. This forms a key element of levelling up access for disabled people to transport and opening up opportunities for all.

A range of recent publications set out government policy and best practice thinking which touch upon the themes and objectives to be developed within Stevenage station area.

Decarbonising Transport: Setting the Challenge is a report from the DfT which sets out that in the future active and public transport will be the first choice of transport for most journeys. This will form the basis of the forthcoming transport strategy from the DfT. This is an ambitious and unprecedented document, and gives high-level support for Stevenage's transport strategy and sustainable mobility interventions around the railway station.

Tomorrow's Living Station, a report for Network Rail, envisages railway stations as more than just access points to the rail network, but thriving multi-modal interchanges and mixed-use places, integrated into their communities and responding to their needs.

Our Principles of Good Design by Network Rail, and the Design Council's Think Station report outline core design principles for stations as modern multi-modal travel hubs. Responsiveness to local needs, local context and heritage are important, but good access and excellent mobility functionality are also emphasised.

Building Better, Building Beautiful is a recent report to MHCLG which will inform the upcoming Planning White Paper and revisions to the National Design Guide. It recommends good design and placemaking principles. Although primarily focused on residential developments, it is clear that mixed-use places with a focus on regeneration are essential to creating better towns and cities, based on a 'triangle' of housing, nature and infrastructure. Brownfield sites should be prioritised, and nature given a place in urban areas.

The High Street Report was the underpinnings of the High Street Task Force, within MHCLG. The report recommended a number of approaches to revitalising Britain's town centres for future resilience. These include a better balance of office, retail and residential space, increased town centre residential populations, and more creative provision of facilities in town centres.

MHCLG has supported a range of station-led development opportunities, such as those at York, Taunton and Swindon. The National Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2016-2021 highlights that the Homes and Communities Agency (now Homes England) will work with local authorities and Network Rail to bring forward land around stations for housing, commercial development and regeneration.

Recent court decisions on the climate change impact of infrastructure decisions (such as at Heathrow, and a pending case on the government's road expansion scheme), provide a concrete basis for prioritising sustainable transport over cars. Stevenage Borough Council has declared a climate emergency and vowed to reduce carbon emissions, and a recent study found that Stevenage is one of the worst 10 cities in the UK for air pollution, relative to its size and population.

The Impact of COVID-19

This report has been prepared during the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, which has seen significant disruption to the economy and people's lifestyles. It is clear that some of this disruption will drive lasting change in how we use and view the urban areas in which we live. Although it is too early to predict these lasting changes comprehensively, some principles of urban design have come to the fore in recent weeks and months.

In the future it is clear that new development must consider the importance of:

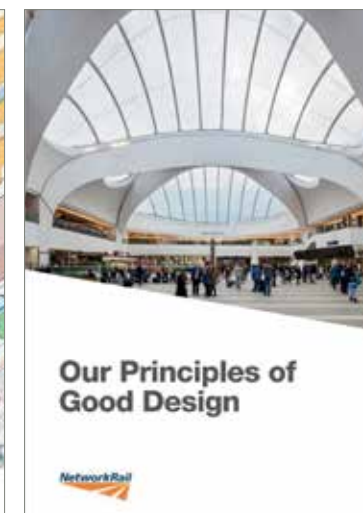
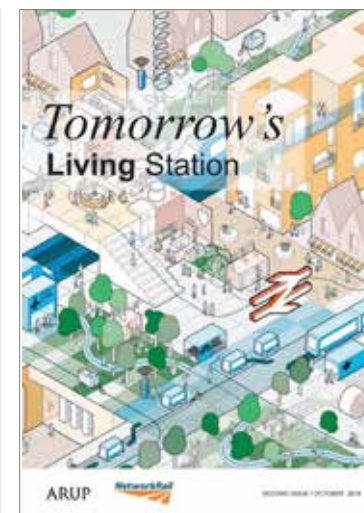
- Local services, shops, healthcare provision and social care
- Provision of space for pedestrians for walking, queueing and socialising
- Comprehensive active travel provision to enable us to get around safely
- Access to networks of open space and integration of nature into streets
- A focus on improving air quality
- Safe spaces for socialising, play and recreation
- Potential demand for larger offices to accommodate distanced desks
- Potential shift to more collaborative spaces including meeting rooms, break out spaces and more reliance on home working
- 'Local working' hubs with good digital connectivity

An important consideration for Stevenage relates to the nature of some of the town's high-tech bioscience and engineering industries. This means that a large number of workers still need to travel to Stevenage to access, for example, laboratory and workshop spaces.

Much media coverage has focused on short-term interventions that local authorities are making to ensure streets are safe for pedestrians and cyclists. These are vital safety measures, but consideration should be given to temporary measures that have other benefits and can be made improved and made permanent in the future. Stevenage already has cycling and walking infrastructure in place which can be positively utilised. In the context of Stevenage's station area, such measures include priority for active travel and improving conflict point safety, as well as increasing space allocated to pedestrians and people versus that allocated to private vehicles.

The impact of COVID-19 on rail travel is uncertain. It seems likely that we will see less peak-time travel in the future, reducing the pressure on rush-hour services as more people work from home or stagger their working hours. Rail demand is likely to return to comparable levels as the economy and situation return to normal in the medium to long term, but potentially spread throughout the day.

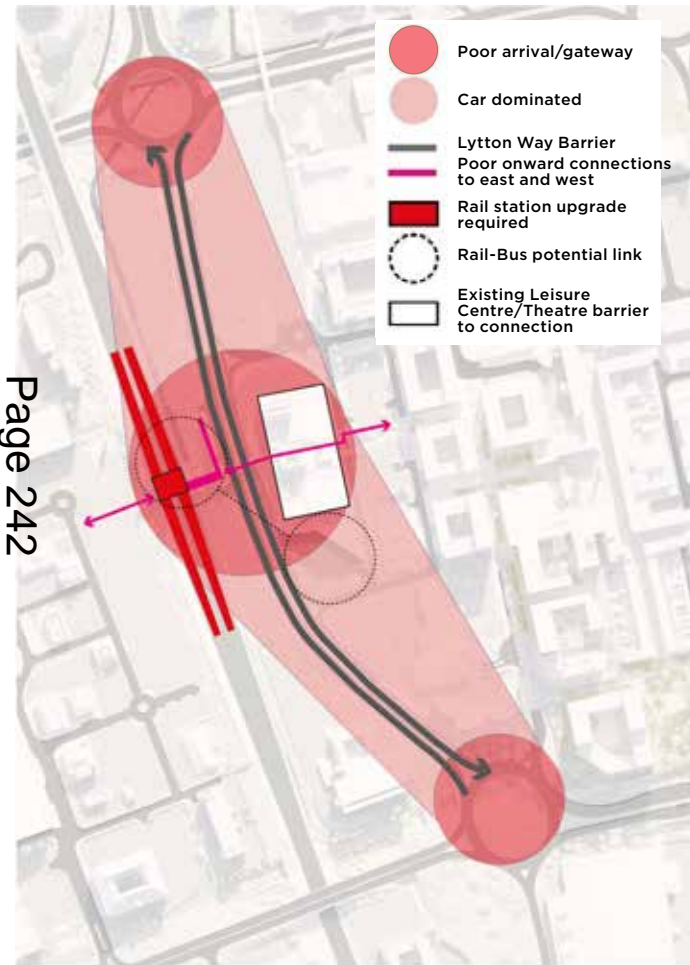
Reports (left to right): Decarbonising Transport; Tomorrow's Living Station; Our Principles of Good Design; Building Better, Building Beautiful; The High Street Report



04 ISSUES & CHALLENGES

04 ISSUES & CHALLENGES

Our analysis has divided the issues within the TC4 station area boundary into three categories; experiential issues, functional issues and development issues. Although there is overlap between them, this forms a useful framework for understanding the main challenges to be addressed.



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Figure 5: Issues and challenges in the station area

The Experience

The experience of arrival forms an important first impression of a place. Areas around railway stations have to work especially hard, due to their need to integrate considerable transport infrastructure and be highly functional places for a variety of user groups. However, this does not require them to be unattractive, and a great many station environs are beautiful, bustling and interesting places that give the visitor and local alike a representative impression of the town they have just arrived at.

Project for Public Spaces, a respected US non-profit organisation, has published research on 'what makes a great place?'. The four key themes work together to create places and spaces that people enjoy and want to go back to. Fulfilling these themes will be an essential part of creating a better station area experience in Stevenage, unlocking development opportunities, better functionality, and a new part of the town centre.

The area around Stevenage station is compromised by:

- Poor access and linkages for pedestrians and over-dominant car infrastructure
- Few uses and activities beyond the station and associated car parking
- Unattractive public realm and landscaping, giving little comfort and a poor image
- No opportunity for street life, connections between people or other sociability

This adds up to a poor arrival experience for anyone visiting Stevenage, a dis-inviting front door for the town and it results in a 'non-place'.



Figure 6: The attributes, intangibles and measurements for a great place (Project for Public Spaces)

Lytton Way - an 'Urban Motorway'

The overriding driver for this poor experience is the presence of Lytton Way, a wide dual carriageway mostly segregated from pedestrians that takes up a great deal of land. It does not function as an urban street that could host other uses and development along it to create an attractive and enjoyable place.

The downgrading and potential removal of Lytton Way for through traffic represents a major principle of the Stevenage Central Framework. A key focus of the Area Action Plan must be implementation strategies for a reduction in the scale of, and a change in character of Lytton Way to create a high quality, functional and successful environment.

The northern and southern entrances to the station area along Lytton Way are similarly poor, with large roundabouts and highway infrastructure creating an environment hostile to pedestrians. The cycling underpasses that run underneath the roundabouts are wide but lack overlooking and could be perceived as unsafe.



Figure 7: View of Lytton Way from south



Figure 8: View of Lytton Way from north

Landscaping & Public Realm Quality

The AAP area suffers from a public realm that is car-dominated and uses predominantly tarmac and other highway surfacing materials. What landscaping is present is limited to buffer strips of grass, and towards the northern and southern ends of the area, some areas with trees. Street trees are present within the car parks but are surrounded by tarmac surfacing. As a result the public realm is a poor environment for anyone not in a car.

Monofunctional and Lacking Uses

At present the station area is a place of transit and only hosts the railway station as a use. Other than crossing the bridge to the retail park (which is amply provided with car parking), there is little other reason to be in the area other than the station. This results in little human activity on the streets, compounding safety issues, and a lack of interest and attraction.

The Arts & Leisure Centre complex presents a blank edge towards the station and does not contribute street activity towards the street. Uses adjacent to the northern and southern ends such as the supermarket and the police station are surrounded by surface car parking.

Functional Issues

Compounding the experiential issues associated with the station environment are a range of functional issues, where the station area could work better for a wide variety of users.

At its heart, a station and its immediate area must function as a transport interchange and mobility hub, smoothly and safely allowing users of all modes of transport to arrive, leave, interchange between modes and find their onward connections. The current station area could perform significantly better than it currently does.

Poor onward connections

At present there are three legible pedestrian connections between the AAP area and the town centre - the overbridge through the Arts & Leisure Centre, Danesgate and Swinsgate. The latter two are

surface streets and cannot be reached from the station itself without crossing Lytton Way, which is not possible due to a lack of pedestrian crossings and a barrier in the centre of the dual carriageway. As a result the only real route is the bridge, which runs directly through the station. Although this is a direct route, it then drops into a surface car park which provides a poor entrance to the town. Other issues include barriers for cyclists from the town centre to the train station and the station lift is not DDA compliant, is badly maintained and causes issues for disabled people. Recent Bus Interchange-related works to calm Lytton Way introduced an at-grade pedestrian/cyclist crossing, three sets of traffic lights, bus-priority lanes and reduced lanes of traffic. This is an incremental move towards the Local Plan's aspiration to remove through-traffic from the road. The AAP should respond to the planned 'East-West Boulevard' and improved pedestrian linkages for Phase 1 of SG1, which has received resolution to grant from SBC.

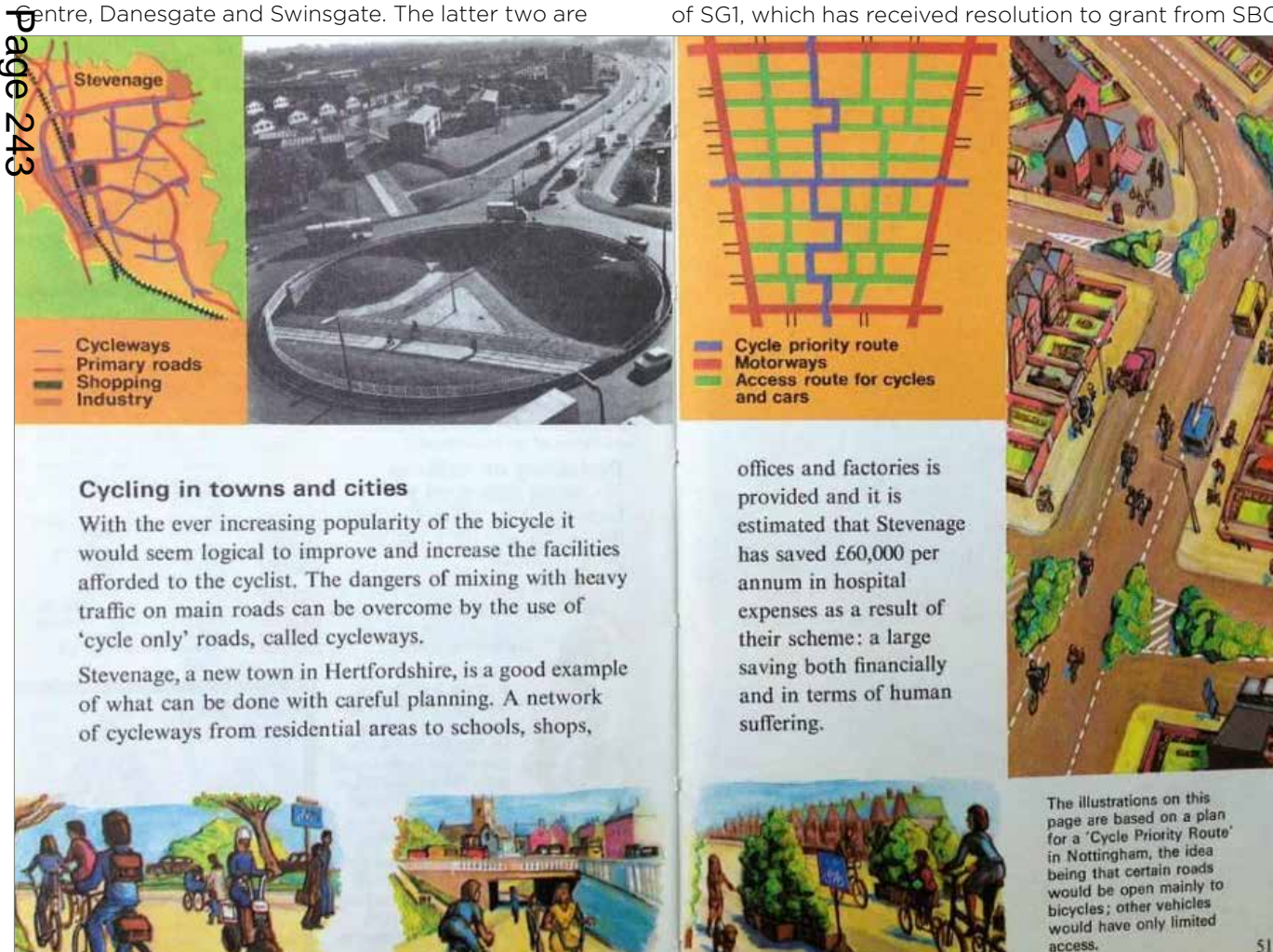


Figure 9: Ladybird book about cycling lauding Stevenage's planning

A barrier to east-west movement

The station area is currently configured as an 'edge' to the town centre, with a single constrained pedestrian connection through the rail station towards the Leisure Park to the west. This constrained connection discourages movement across the railway tracks. Coupled with the poor quality of north-south pedestrian movement and barriers for cyclists through the AAP area, the land is poorly used due to this edge placement.

To realise the aims of the Central Regeneration Framework with the station area as a central node and place within the expanded town centre, a reconfiguration of movement through the area is required. Better connections east-to-west, with the intention of providing a clear pedestrian link all the way from the current town centre to Gunnells Wood Road, require a change to land use and road space allocation outside the station.

Little support for active modes

The station is connected to Stevenage's extensive segregated cycle path network, and hosts 194 cycle parking spaces, which are well used. There is, however, limited space to expand the cycle provision due to site constraints. The Stevenage Cycle Strategy Action Plan calls for additional spaces at the station. Although there is CCTV, bicycle theft remains an issue, the current facilities are only partially covered, and are constricted in space, conflicting with pedestrian movements on pavements. To support Stevenage's ambitious cycle strategy, and build on the New Town legacy of Stevenage as a town built for the bicycle, modern, safe and secure cycle facilities must be provided so that station users can easily interchange between local cycle mobility and regional rail mobility.

Walking to and from the station is also more difficult than it needs to be. Footpaths are narrow, and the main route from the town centre runs across a narrow bridge through the Arts & Leisure Centre complex and above Lytton Way. Although this bridge runs down a ramp by the time it arrives in the town square, this does restrict accessibility and requires all users of the station area to climb a level.

It is vital to improve the station-area environment for active travel modes. As shown in Figure 10, accessibility analysis indicates that the majority of Stevenage is within a 15-minute cycling catchment of the station (around 85-90,000 people), and this catchment is increased with the use of electric bicycles. A significant fraction, approximately 45-50,000 people, are within 10 minutes cycle ride.

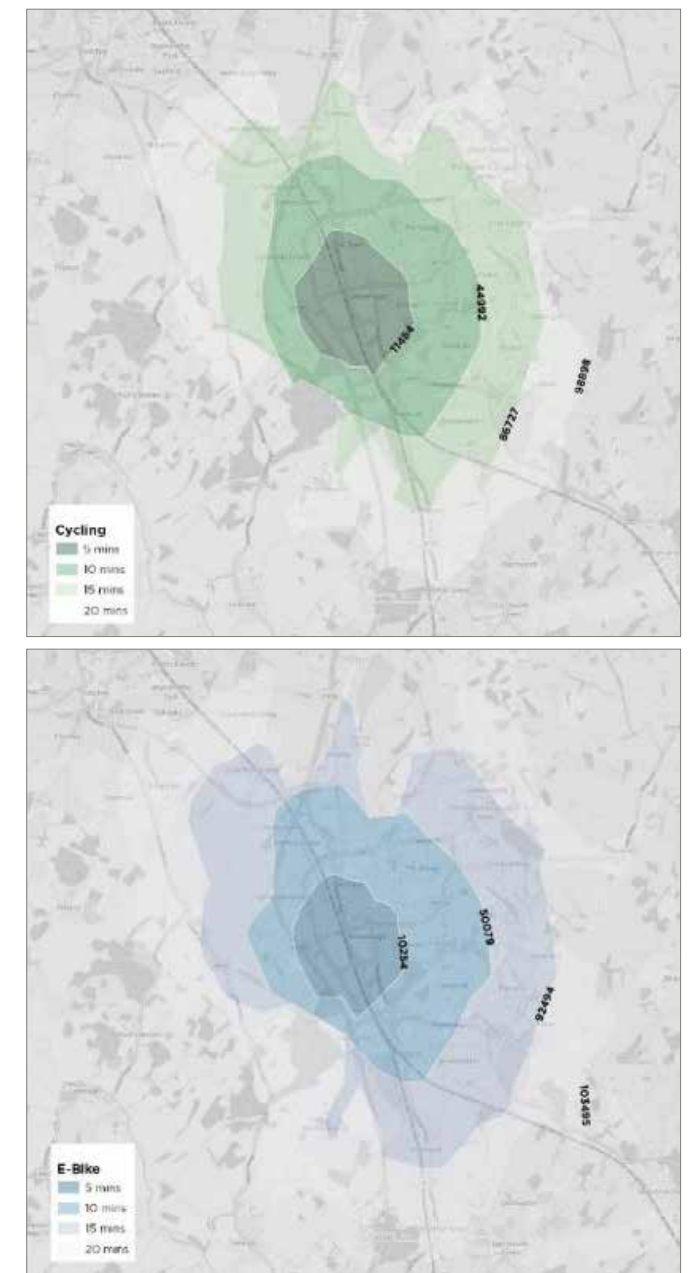


Figure 10: Accessibility isochrones with population enclosed figures (2011) for cycling and e-bike modes

A station in need of an upgrade

Stevenage rail station is one of the three busiest stations in Hertfordshire (along with St Albans and Watford) and is a major stop on the East Coast Main Line. Built in the 1970s, the station buildings are no longer able to adequately cope with the level of passenger traffic through them. With the building of a new terminating platform, and the potential long-term for additional public through traffic using the station bridge to access development on the western side of the tracks, a new station building is necessary.

In 2017 Arup completed a study on different options for a new railway station, based on the parameters set in the Stevenage Central Framework. This reinforced the framework's core principles and the study forms the basis of an understanding for how a new station might interface with the surrounding area. The Arup study found that a new station built on an overbridge to the south of the existing station buildings would be the strongest option. This new axis would align with the Mace SG1 masterplan route into the town centre and the entrance to the new bus station.

Policy TC4 of the Stevenage Local Plan states that within the Station Gateway Major Opportunity Area, planning permission will be granted for an extended and regenerated train station. It is uncertain when a new station would be forthcoming, so it will be necessary for the AAP to include phasing options, which provide future-proofing for accommodating the existing station and the new station, as well as responding to and setting key parameters for a new station building.



Figure 11: View of 'The Square' from Arup's Rail Station Vision Study

Constricted space – except for cars

The area in front of the station is extremely constricted at ground level for any user other than vehicles. There is little pedestrian space for movement along Lytton Way, particularly outside the station where pavements become cramped and filled with street furniture. Pavements have been reallocated as parking space for bicycles, scooters and motorcycles, and also function as waiting areas for cramped bus stops.

Much pedestrian movement occurs on the first floor level, leaving ground level unoccupied except for essential use.

Contrasting this cramped environment for many users is the extensive space given over to vehicles, in carriageway space, slip lanes and car parking. This creates a very large and over-scaled space with underused land.



Figure 12: Public realm colonised by cramped motorcycle parking



Figure 13: Walking, cycle parking, bus stop and other street furniture in a small space

Safety Issues

A range of safety issues present themselves within the station area. Stations are used day and night, and the area surrounding them must perform the basic function of providing safety and reassurance at all hours. Poor overlooking and passive surveillance of the ground level leads to a perception of a lack of safety, particularly when dark. Cycle paths are also isolated and poorly overlooked. A lack of uses fronting the space other than the rail station, where dwell times are typically low as a place of transit, means there are generally few people about.

The dominance of road infrastructure, with high traffic speeds, no crossing points and barrier fencing down the central reservation creates road safety issues where pedestrians and cyclists are unable to safely navigate the environment.

Accessibility Issues

A single, non-Equalities Act-compliant lift is the only alternative to the stairs to get to concourse level from Lytton Way. This poses frequent challenges and difficulties for wheelchair users, parents with pushchairs, the elderly and infirm.

Development Issues

The station area should also be a key location for a range of land uses, particularly commercial space and high density residential buildings, building on the excellent sustainable mobility options. At present, however, the land around the station is used primarily for surface car parking. The key piece of land between Lytton Way and the railway tracks is too constricted in width to accommodate typical commercial or residential developments, and the street environment is too poor to support an attractive, walkable place within which to site new development.

The area around the station is a key location for economic competitiveness. Locations a similar time distance away from London terminals are seeing considerable commercial growth, such as Reading, Slough, Milton Keynes and Croydon. Stevenage is perfectly placed in terms of mobility, and already hosts major international companies. Only 20 minutes from the major Kings Cross development and the business area around Farringdon (where Thameslink and Crossrail will interchange), the opportunity to establish a significant business environment adjacent to the station is considerable.

As a result, this piece of land is valuable for the town and the wider region, and should be more intensively used than it currently is.

Immediately fronting the station is the existing Arts & Leisure Centre and Gordon Craig Theatre complex, with a high-level walkway running through. It is anticipated that this will remain for the foreseeable future, although the Arts & Leisure Centre part may be moved in the medium-term. As such provision should be made in any options for the area to work well with a fully retained or only half-retained building.

Figure 14: Station Quarter, Slough



Figure 16: Ruskin Square, East Croydon



Figure 15: Construction work in Stevenage Town Centre



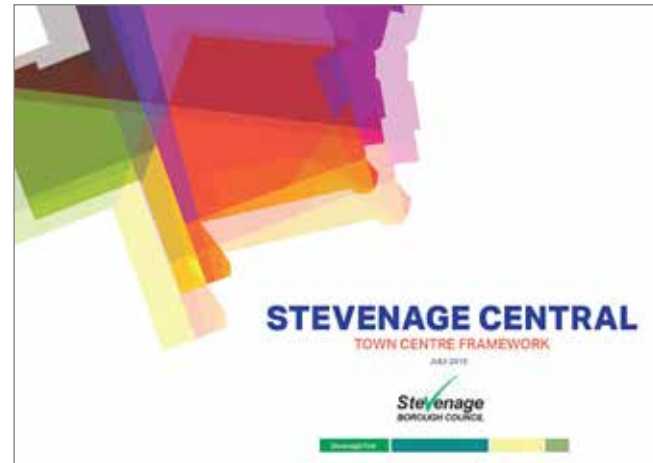
Figure 17: New Santander HQ adjacent to Milton Keynes rail station

Responding to existing work

A significant amount of previous planning and design work has gone on in Stevenage town centre, including the railway station AAP area. The AAP will build upon this work. Much of the previous work undertaken builds in core principles and creates underlying flexibility for future detailed plans to work within.

Stevenage Central Framework (DLA, 2016)

This work established the core principles of movement between the station and town centre, key development sites such as the station, and the principle of removing Lytton Way as a part of the ring road system. It also established the principle of more intensive development to the west of the railway tracks, using the station as a node.



Rail Station Vision (Arup, 2017)

This study was developed by Arup, as Government advisors. It looked at, high-level, urban design options for a new station and how it would interface with the immediate surrounds. All options considered had their merits and there was positive engagement with a wide range of stakeholders. As such the parameters established are key to design options within the AAP area. The preferred option in the report is **The Square**, and this is the option worked up in detail. Other options in the report sought to reduce any day to day disruption for commuters and rail operators.

The design work establishes core parameters to respond to:

- Steps to access the bridge, with a lift to provide step-free access
- Stairways approx. 12m wide at top
- Lift accessed through passage next to retail space
- Bridge at +7m from existing ground level
- Space at +3.5m, which provides access into interior courts at first storey level
- Public right of way across bridge, with entrance and ticket line for station on the bridge above the tracks



Figure 18: Section of preferred option for new railway station

Although this is a long-term vision of how the station could be configured, in the short and medium-term, the design presents some issues for the AAP to respond to:

- The detailed design presented relies upon the removal of the existing Arts & Leisure Centre complex, to re-route the centreline of Lytton Way across that site. At present this is not considered feasible for SBC, so an alternative configuration must be found
- The taxi and drop-off areas ('kiss and ride') are located on the western side of the station. Although this is a long-term option, the AAP area does not include this land and must include taxi and drop-off movements within its boundaries in order to retain that function
- The steps of the bridge on the eastern side run towards the existing Arts & Leisure Centre and miss the opportunity to align with the routing past the bus station and into town that responds to the Mace SG1 masterplan (see below). The Arts & Leisure Centre building is likely to be redeveloped in the future, allowing for a potential at-grade crossing and making the bridge a secondary form of access.

As such the rail station vision provides core principles and parameters to respond to, but is not at present able to form a detailed spatial plan for the centre of the AAP area immediately adjacent to the station. Further detail will be required on configuration of spaces, streets and different mobility modes in the AAP.



The AAP's spatial proposals will reserve a site for a potential new station or enhanced station entrance, following the parameters set out in Arup's work. Reserving a site in planning policy terms ensures that present-day development and proposals do not prejudice future developments to provide a new or enhanced station. Without this approach a considerable and needed improvement for the town could be prevented, and an opportunity lost.



Figure 19: Renders of proposed new station

SG1 Masterplan (Mace, 2018)

The emerging SG1 masterplan (Mace, 2018), proposes the main station-to-town pedestrian route is placed one block to the south of that in the Framework. This aligns with the front of the Arts & Leisure Centre, past the proposed bus station, and then sets up the potential to align with a new railway station building built to the south of the existing station. It will be important to ensure that desire lines are observed between the Mace Boulevard, leading to the Town Square and towards the Station are as direct as possible and maintain visual connection as much as possible.



Figure 20: SG1 masterplan from Design & Access Statement (2019)

05 EXISTING ENVIRONMENT

05 EXISTING ENVIRONMENT

Existing Land Uses

At present the following land uses exist:

- Railway station and associated bridge, access and entrance buildings
- Existing cycleway
- Surface car parking for the station
- Lytton Way highways infrastructure
- Some buffer green space
- Adjacent to the TC4 area is:
 - The Gordon Craig Theatre
 - Stevenage Arts & Leisure Centre
 - Stevenage Police Station
 - Tesco supermarket
 - Stevenage Magistrates' Court



Figure 21 Lytton Way
Proposed Enhancements

The new bus station (currently under construction) will fall within the AAP area directly to the south of the Arts & Leisure Centre on the existing car park.



New bus station adjacent to Arts & Leisure Centre



Existing Movement

- At present a range of different mobility modes cross the area, as shown in Figure 22.
- Pedestrians: an incomplete network of pedestrian links creates a fragmented environment that is difficult to navigate on foot
- Cyclists: the main cycle path runs north-to-south along the railway line edge and through the underpasses at the northern and southern ends of Lytton Way
- Buses: buses currently run north-to-south along Lytton Way and enter the central bus station along Danesgate. There is a bus stop outside the railway station which is constricted in waiting space and must be accessed via the footbridge. The new bus station will occupy space in front of the Arts & Leisure Centre and it is anticipated in the short term that the existing bus loop along Danesgate will be shortened to not include the old bus station
- Taxis and Drop Off: taxis drop off directly outside the station in a combined taxi and public drop-off area. This is very constricted and lacks much space for waiting taxis. It also encourages public drop-off to block the area due to lack of space.
- Parking: there is extensive surface car parking across the TC4 area and it forms the dominant land use. There are a total of 453 surface public car parking spaces within the boundary, along with additional space in a very constricted car park for station staff directly adjacent to the station.
- Servicing: service accesses to the station and neighbouring land uses come from Lytton Way.
- Although the New Town masterplanning approach promoted separation of traffic modes, there are a number of conflict points between cars and active modes, particularly at the station entrance. There are also issues where cars take priority over pedestrians and force more circuitous routes than necessary. Pedestrian flows are expected to change upon completion of the new bus station.
- Level access across the station area is a particular challenge posed by the topography of the Station Gateway site as a whole and may pose some development and mobility issues to address.

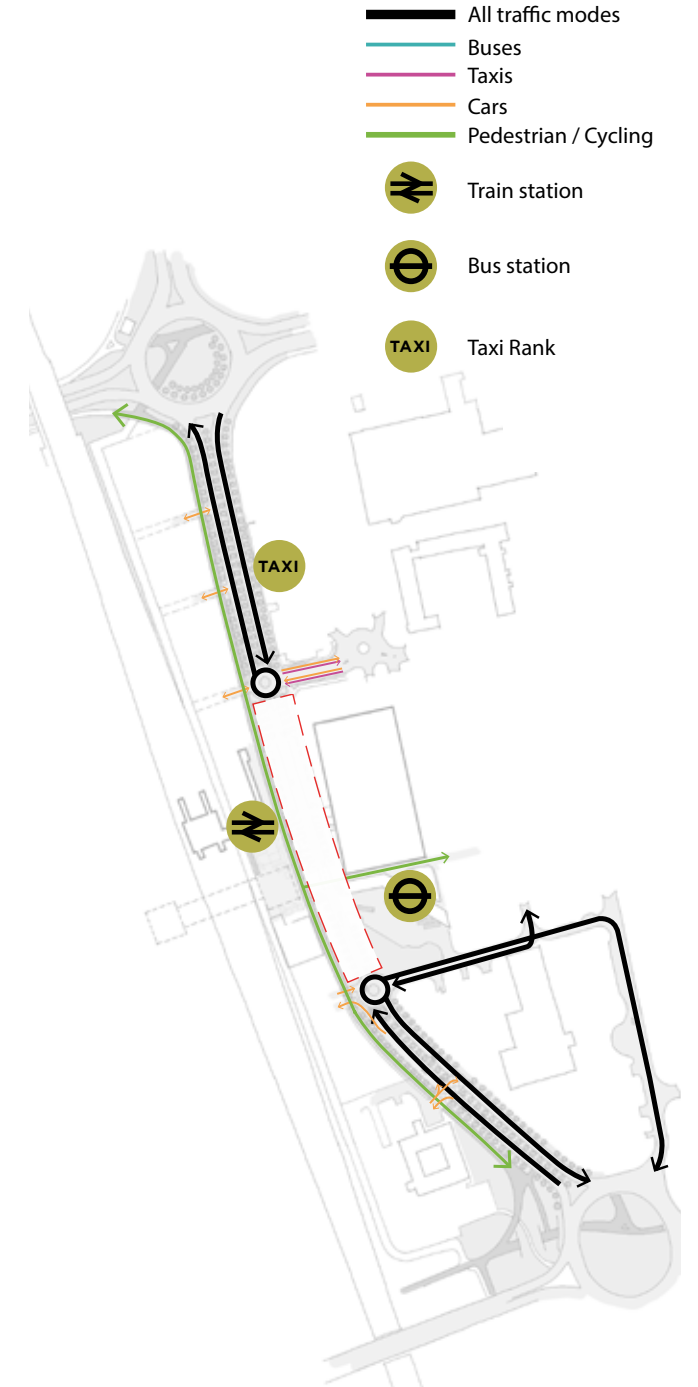


Figure 22 Lytton Way
Access & Movement Strategy

Existing Green Infrastructure

The site contains little green infrastructure (GI) at present, except for highway verges and verges within surface car parking. At the northern end, there is some landscaping and grass adjacent to the roundabout on Lytton Way. Within the car parks, there are some trees that break up the parking. The new bus station (currently under construction) provides some enhancement of GI with trees and grass at the southern edge.

06 EMERGING FRAMEWORK

06 EMERGING FRAMEWORK

Objectives

The baseline analysis presented in previous chapters point towards a series of complementary objectives to address the issues facing the station area. Interventions in the AAP area should deliver:

- **A new gateway and arrival experience:** the station area should create a sense of arrival in a distinctive and vibrant place. It should be welcoming, safe, legible and accessible to all and capitalise on helpful wayfinding and positive signposting.
- **Enhanced movement & access for all modes:** rationalisation of space currently given over to vehicles will increase space for walking and cycling, making movement and access better and easier for all, with good segregation to ensure safety. Effective transport interchange between sustainable modes should be facilitated by grouping of activities and modes.
- **Green infrastructure integrated throughout:** 'greening the grey', by converting surfaces to permeable green infrastructure and habitats provides relief from dense urban environments, enhances biodiversity, creates more pleasant microclimates, improves air quality and urban drainage, and contributes to attractive public realm and placemaking.
- **New mixed use development to unlock the economic opportunity:** Stevenage's location and connectivity create the perfect conditions for strong economic growth. The station area is the ideal place to locate new development to support this, with sustainable transport connections and under-used land. The AAP will support this with a new mix of uses designed to create a vibrant and successful place.

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- **Creating a low-carbon urban village:** mixing new homes, employment, retail and other uses with strong placemaking and exceptional mobility has the potential to deliver on Stevenage's ambitious climate change targets, creating an exemplar development in the heart of the town. It must be flexible to accommodate changing lifestyles, encourage low car ownership rates, and including buildings that are adaptable.
- **Sustainability in mobility, built form and landscaping:** the station area has a significant part to play in creating supporting active travel and other low-carbon travel modes, as well as creating sustainable development opportunities. Development must be future-proofed for new technologies, with resilience and adaptability to new forms of micro-mobility such as e-scooters.
- **Celebrating the heritage of the town:** as one of the original New Towns, with a unique heritage and design, Stevenage's station area must reflect what makes the town special and use it to create a sense of place on arrival and departure.
- **Making the most of digital connectivity and high speed broadband:** many firms and some industries already located in Stevenage operate at a global level and have a tradition of research and development, innovation and high-tech solutions. In order to maintain these industries and attract further economic growth, the town must continue to offer the best possible digital connectivity to businesses, residents and visitors, in particular high speed broadband on arrival to Stevenage Station.



Key principles

To deliver on these objectives, a set of design principles has been adopted that will be carried through the process of creating the AAP. These are:

- Enhance the station arrival experience, wayfinding and signposting to create a people-friendly space
- Improve step-free, disabled and accessible pedestrian links with town centre
- Improve links between rail and bus stations
- Turn Lytton Way into a 'town street'
- Create good access for all travel modes with high quality, attractive cycling facilities, and prioritising sustainable and active modes
- Make ground level the place where pedestrians move
- Consolidate surface car parking to make better use of land and enable development opportunities



- High quality public realm, green infrastructure and creating space and opportunities for landscaping through rationalisation of vehicle space
- Future proof for possible station upgrade, replacement of the Leisure Centre and improved links and development west of the rail station
- Design in flexibility to accommodate changing behaviours and the most up to date and attractive technology and high speed digital connection
- Celebrate the heritage of the town in the fabric, layout and design of the station gateway
- Creating a lasting legacy of high quality placemaking
- Putting people first, at the heart of the decision-making process

Options for Lytton Way

At the heart of the issues affecting Stevenage's station area is the design and function of Lytton Way. It severs the station from the town centre, provides a barrier and unpleasant environment for active travel modes and the public realm, uses land inefficiently so as to create unusable development parcels between it and the railway line, and undermines SBC and HCC's commitment to sustainable transportation.

The Town Centre Regeneration Framework pinpoints the downgrading and potential removal of Lytton Way to through traffic as a key plank of its strategy for good placemaking and regeneration of the town centre. This has been endorsed by the relevant stakeholders and will be carried forward by the AAP as the basis for policy in the area.

To unlock the potential of the AAP area, it is essential first to determine the preferred option for a redesign of Lytton Way. This chapter of the report presents the core enhancements proposed, a range of options for the key central area between Swingate and Danesgate, and then a series of themes that the reconfiguration of Lytton Way will enable.

Core Enhancements

All proposed options for the reconfiguration of Lytton Way have a set of core enhancements, primarily in the northern and southern zones of the AAP area, north of Swingate and south of Danesgate. These apply to all options:

- A reduction in the width of Lytton Way, with the space reallocated to pedestrian or cycling movement, street trees and other landscaped green infrastructure. In these northern and southern areas Lytton Way will remain open to all modes, providing continued access for other parts of the town centre.

- An additional segregated cycleway adjacent to Lytton Way, away from the railway tracks. Making use of the improved street environment along Lytton Way, cycling along this route will become more attractive. Along with built form development along this route, this offers the advantages of creating an overlooked cycling route that will feel considerably safer to users than the current path adjacent to the tracks. It will add movement and vibrancy to the street and create visibility for all modes.
- Improved vehicle access to and egress from the police station, making use of the reduction in speeds and change in character of Lytton Way to offer a limited use right-turn access box.
- A large public square that creates a flexible entrance space from the existing station building, future-proofed for a new station or enhanced station entrance further to the south.
- Facilitation of the key East-West pedestrian 'boulevard' route running from west of the railway line through to the existing town centre, crossing at the railway station and the proposed public square in front. The enhancements proposed enable this connection to be made and provide the key spaces through which it will pass through within the AAP area.
- A 'cycle hub' compatible with existing and potential new station buildings, that contains secure cycle parking, cycle hire schemes, cycle maintenance facilities and the potential for a local transport information point to aid multi-modal interchange. Above the cycle hub on the ground floor would be development opportunities.
- Development plots made available by the consolidation of surface car parking into a multi-storey car park.

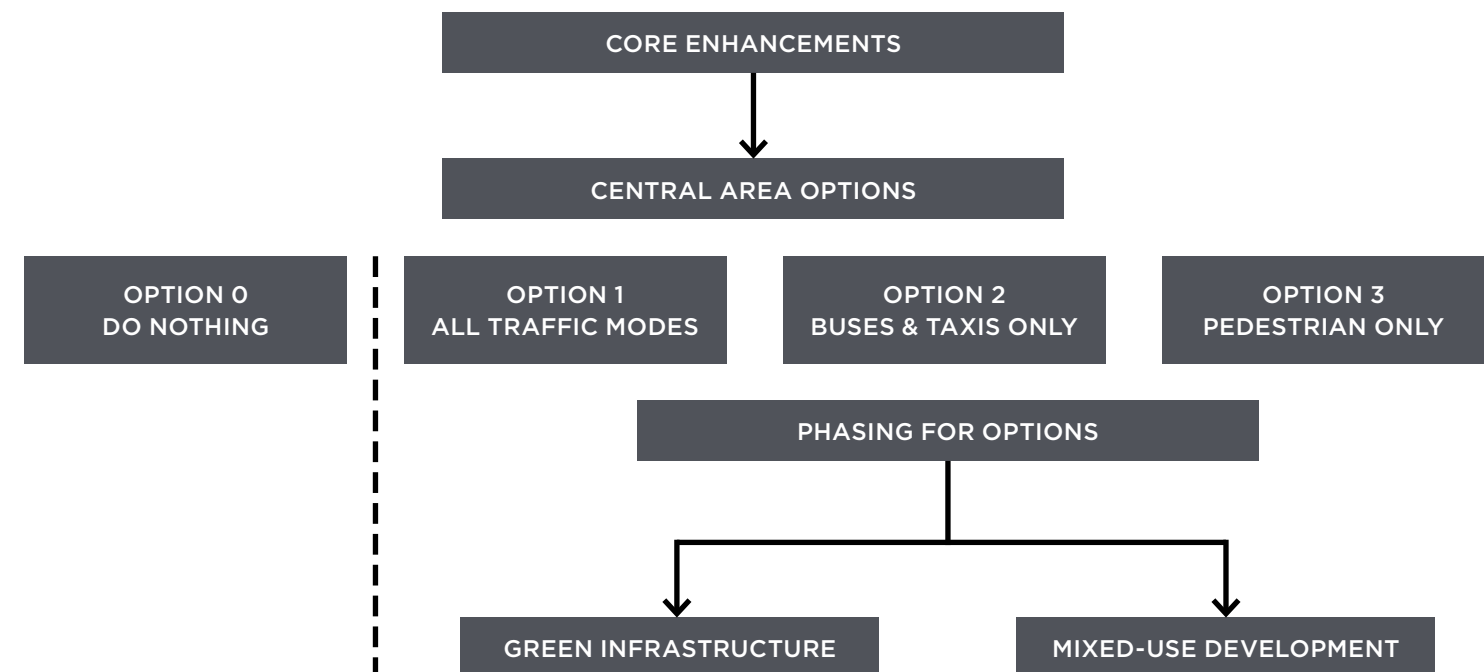
Sections AA, BB and CC demonstrate the re-allocation of land use and street space from underuse vehicle capacity towards active travel and green infrastructure, improving access for all modes while retaining existing functionality and providing a much improved street environment.

The following headings illustrate the core options available within the central area, defined as that south of Swingate and north of Danesgate.

It is important to note that the following Central Area Options 1, 2, and 3 will be subject to detailed highways modelling appraisal which will be carried out by Stevenage Borough Council in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council, the Highway Authority. This will include, for example, the impact of increased traffic flow from the potential reduction in width of Lytton Way, and on access and egress onto and from Lytton Way.

Modelling will also address the impact on key routes in the vicinity. This includes St. George's Way, Gunnels Wood Road and linkages to the A1(M), at peak times in particular. Modelling analysis will inform the Options outlined in this Area Action Plan and help to inform decisions on any Preferred Options chosen for the Area Action Plan.

An additional option, Option 0 for the Stevenage Station Gateway area is for this section of Lytton Way to remain as a 3-lane dual carriageway. This would retain the existing layout of Lytton Way and provide access to the new Bus Interchange. Advantages include retained access for vehicle traffic through this area and linkages with the new Bus Interchange. Disadvantages include the Issues and Challenges, identified in Chapter 4, persisting and not being addressed adequately.



Core Enhancements

All proposed options for the reconfiguration of Lytton Way have a set of core enhancements. These are:

- A reduction in the width of Lytton Way, with the space reallocated from vehicles to people and green infrastructure
- An additional segregated cycleway adjacent to Lytton Way
- Improved vehicle access to and egress from the police station
- A large public square that creates a flexible entrance space from the rail station
- Facilitation of the key East-West pedestrian 'boulevard' route running from west of the railway line through to the existing town

3 options are shown on the following pages for the central area:
1 - ALL TRAFFIC MODES
2 - BUS & TAXI ACCESS ONLY
3 - PEDESTRIANISED CENTRAL PLAZA

3 options are shown on the following pages for the central area:
1 - ALL TRAFFIC MODES
2 - BUS & TAXI ACCESS ONLY
3 - PEDESTRIANISED CENTRAL PLAZA

- All traffic modes
- Buses
- Taxis
- Cars
- Pedestrian / Cycling
- 🚉 Train station
- 🚌 Bus station
- TAXI Taxi Rank

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RAIL STATION

TESCO

THEATRE

LEISURE CENTRE

BUS STATION

POLICE

AA

BB

CC

Figure 23 Core Enhancements
Proposed Enhancements

RAIL STATION

TESCO

THEATRE

LEISURE CENTRE

POLICE

TAXI

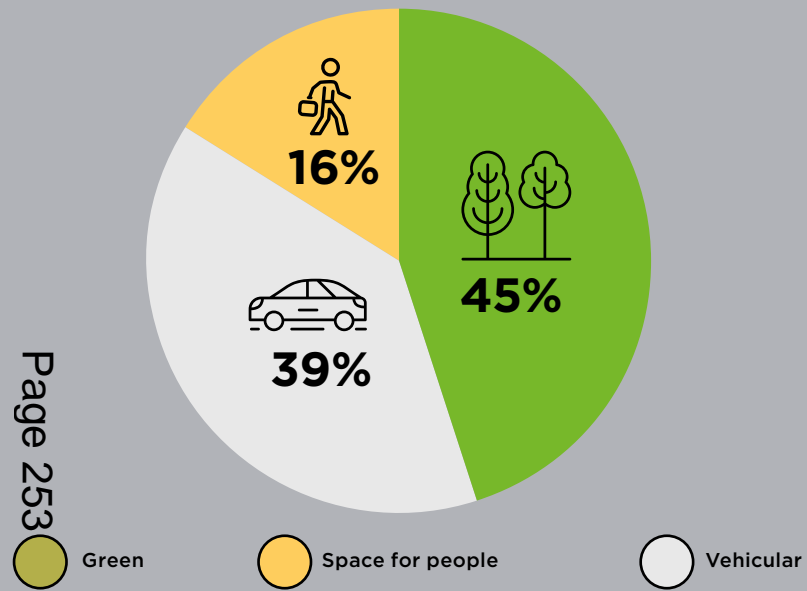
Figure 24 Core Enhancements
Access and Movement

SECTION AA

Illustrative sections showing the existing and proposed sectional profiles of Lytton Way.

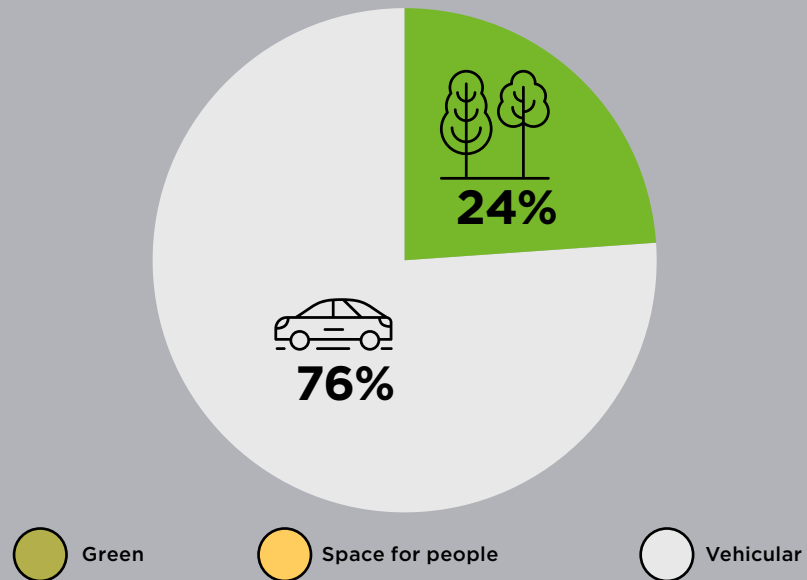
The sections also include an analysis of land-use and activity by width, split into green space, pedestrian realm and vehicular realm. This is represented in the diagrams below showing the splits by percentage of the overall cross section.

01 Proposed overall percentage

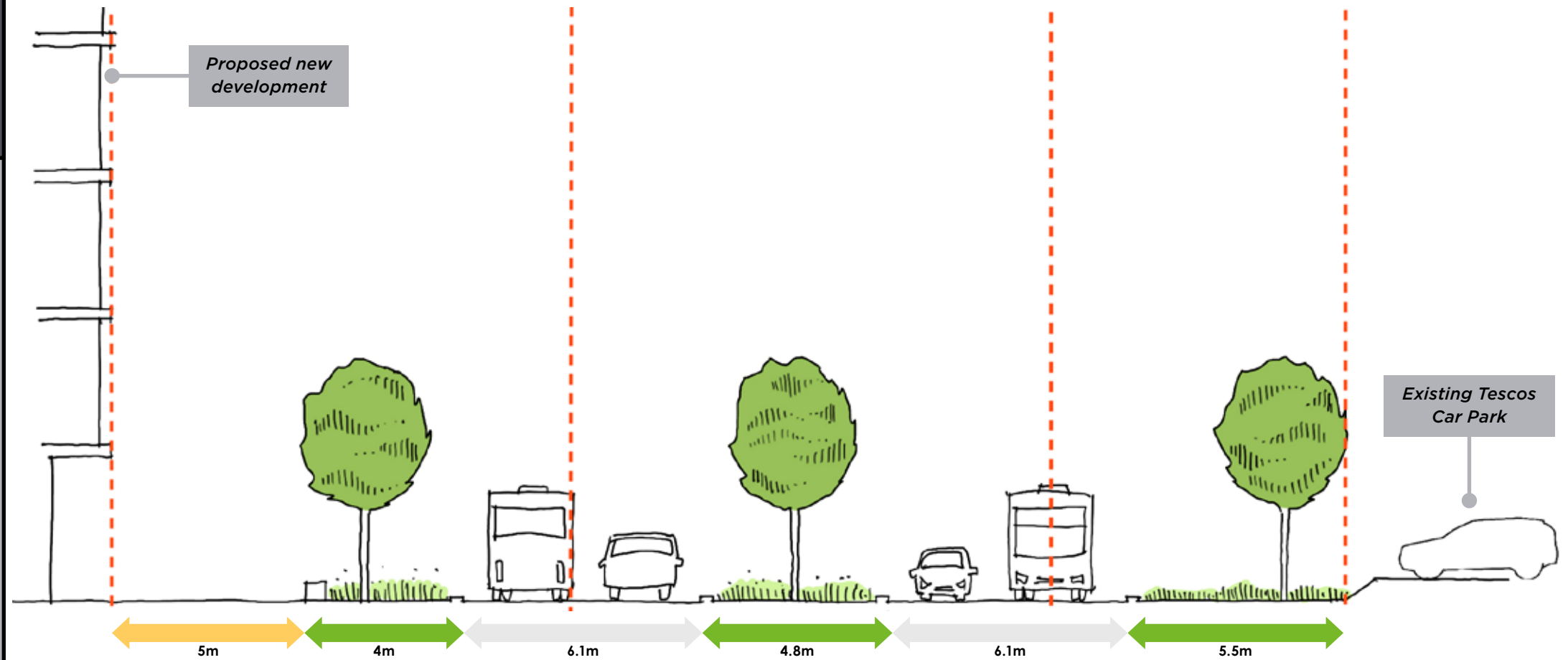


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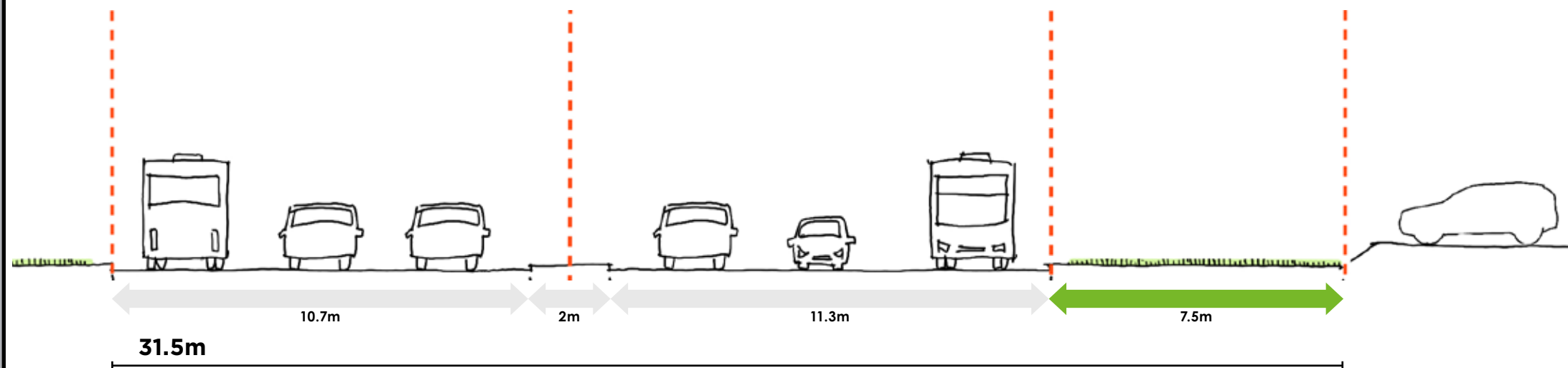
02 Existing overall percentage



01 PROPOSED



02 EXISTING

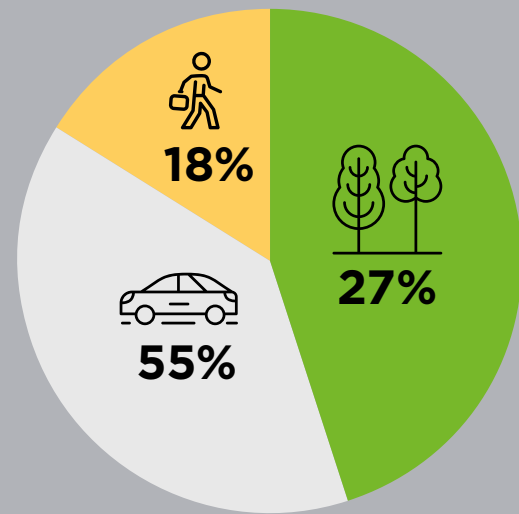


SECTION BB

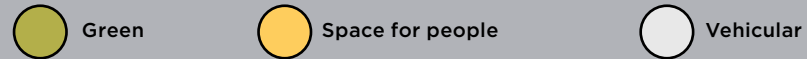
Illustrative sections showing the existing and proposed sectional profiles of Lytton Way.

The sections also include an analysis of land-use and activity by width, split into green space, pedestrian realm and vehicular realm. This is represented in the diagrams below showing the splits by percentage of the overall cross section.

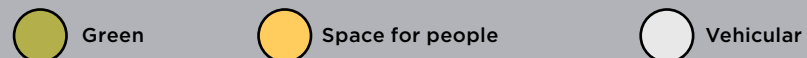
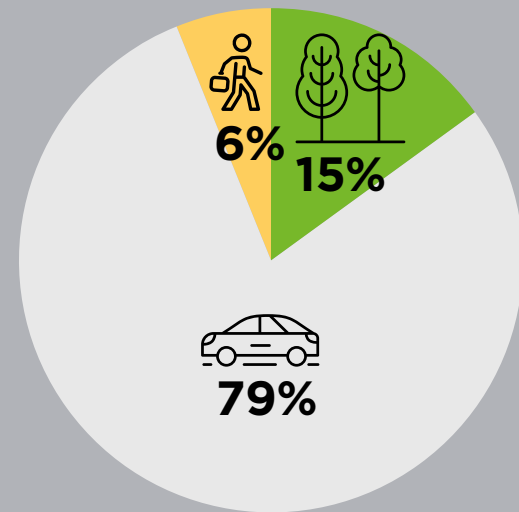
01 Proposed overall percentage



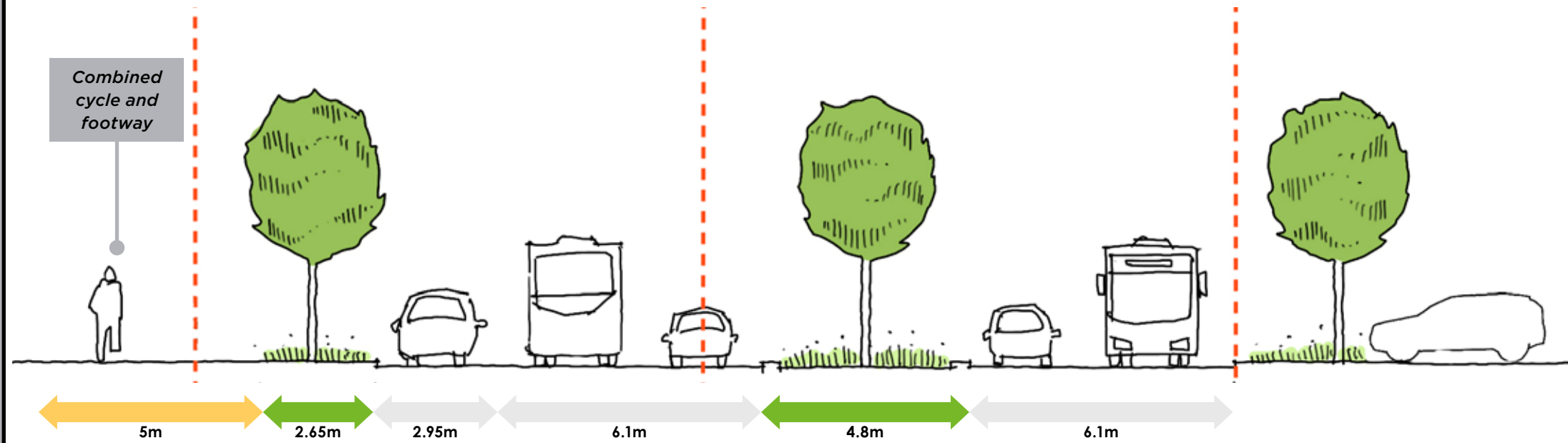
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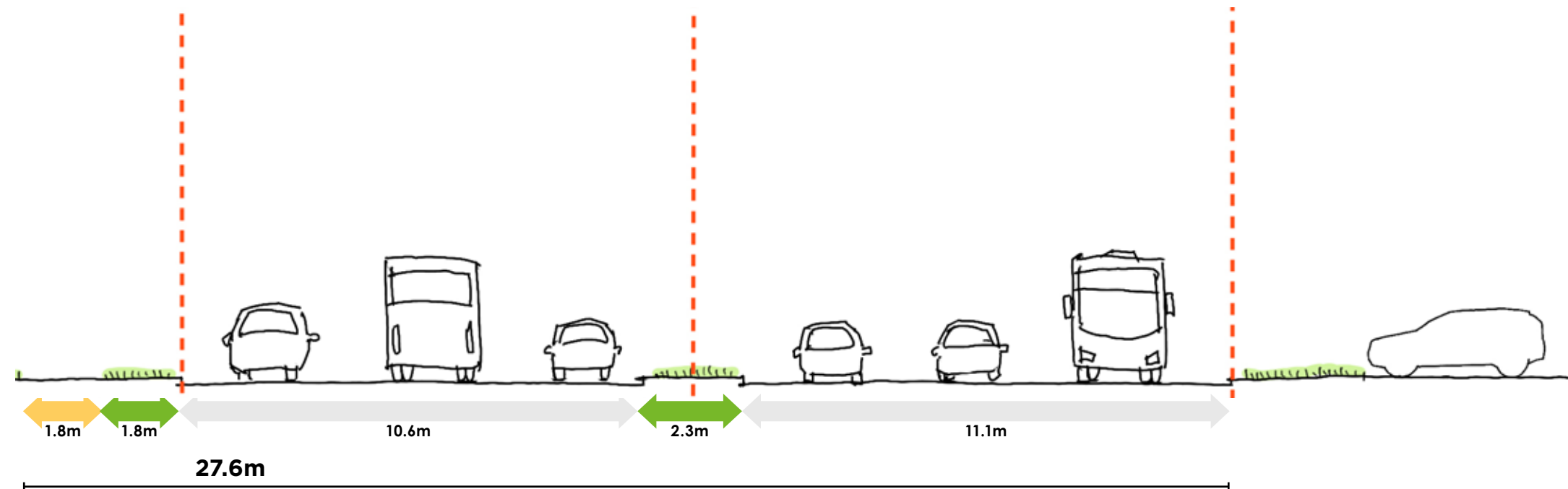
02 Existing overall percentage



01 PROPOSED



02 EXISTING

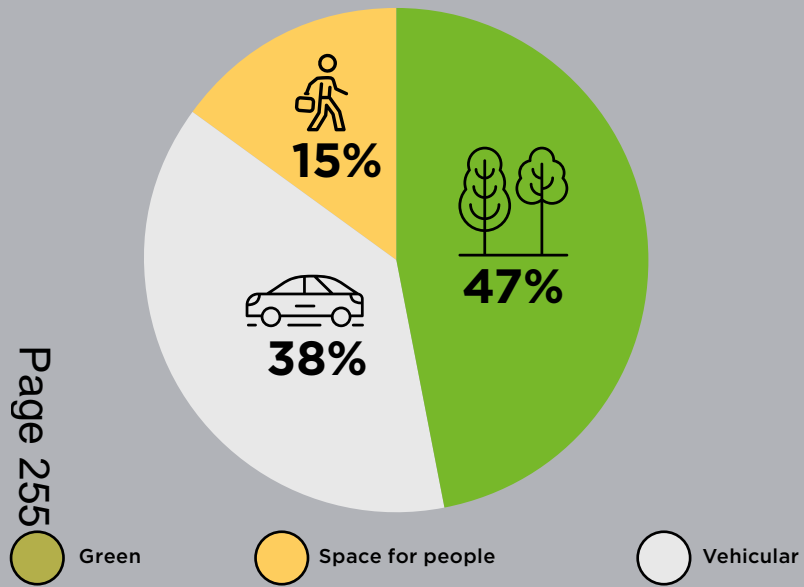


SECTION CC

Illustrative sections showing the existing and proposed sectional profiles of Lytton Way.

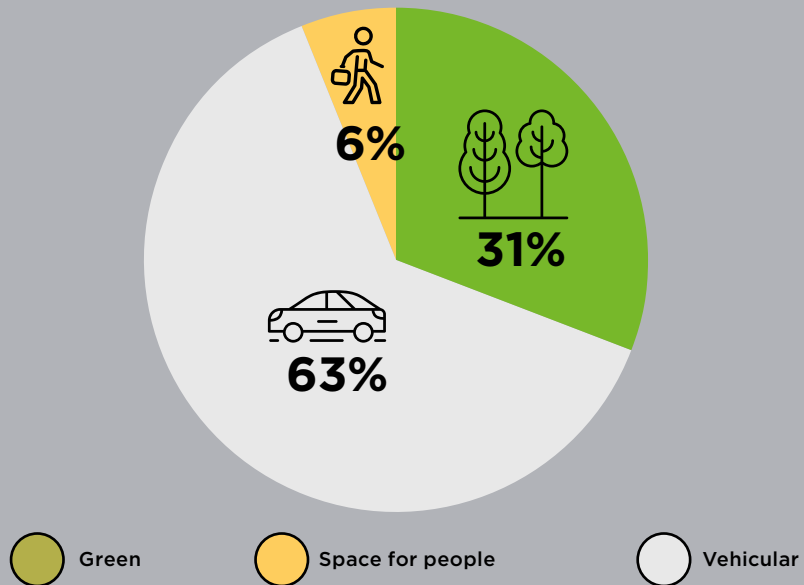
The sections also include an analysis of land-use and activity by width, split into green space, pedestrian realm and vehicular realm. This is represented in the diagrams below showing the splits by percentage of the overall cross section.

01 Proposed overall percentage

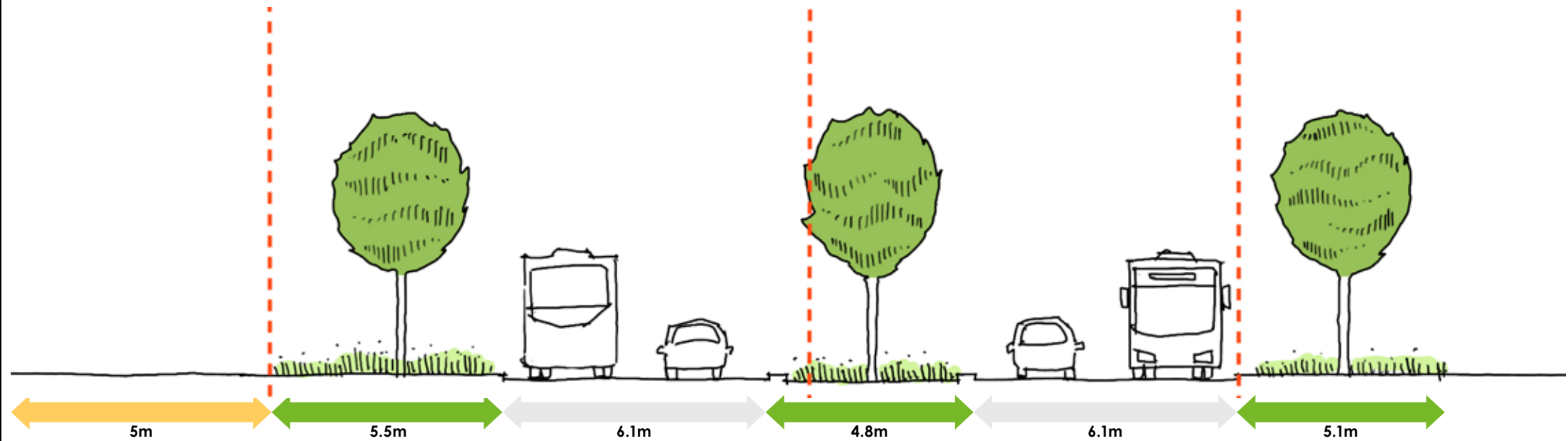


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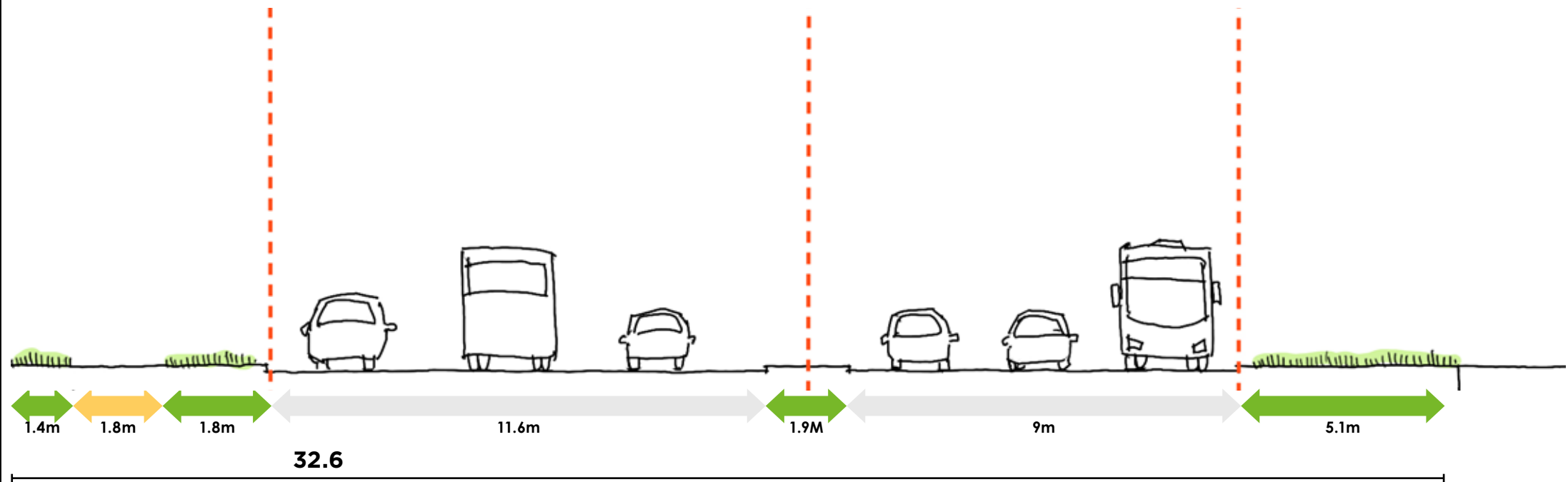
02 Existing overall percentage



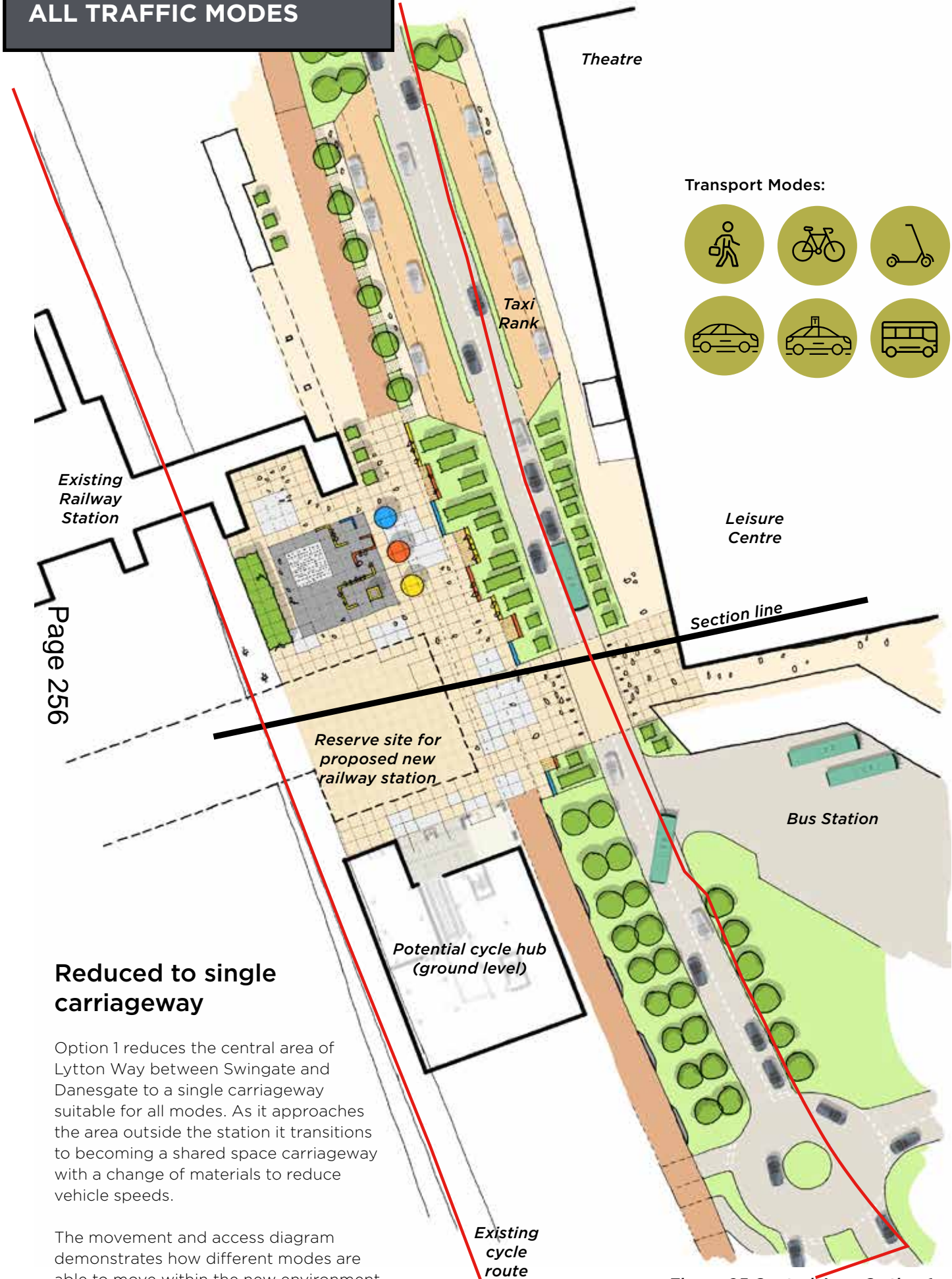
01 PROPOSED



02 EXISTING



**CENTRAL AREA OPTION 1
ALL TRAFFIC MODES**



Transport Modes:

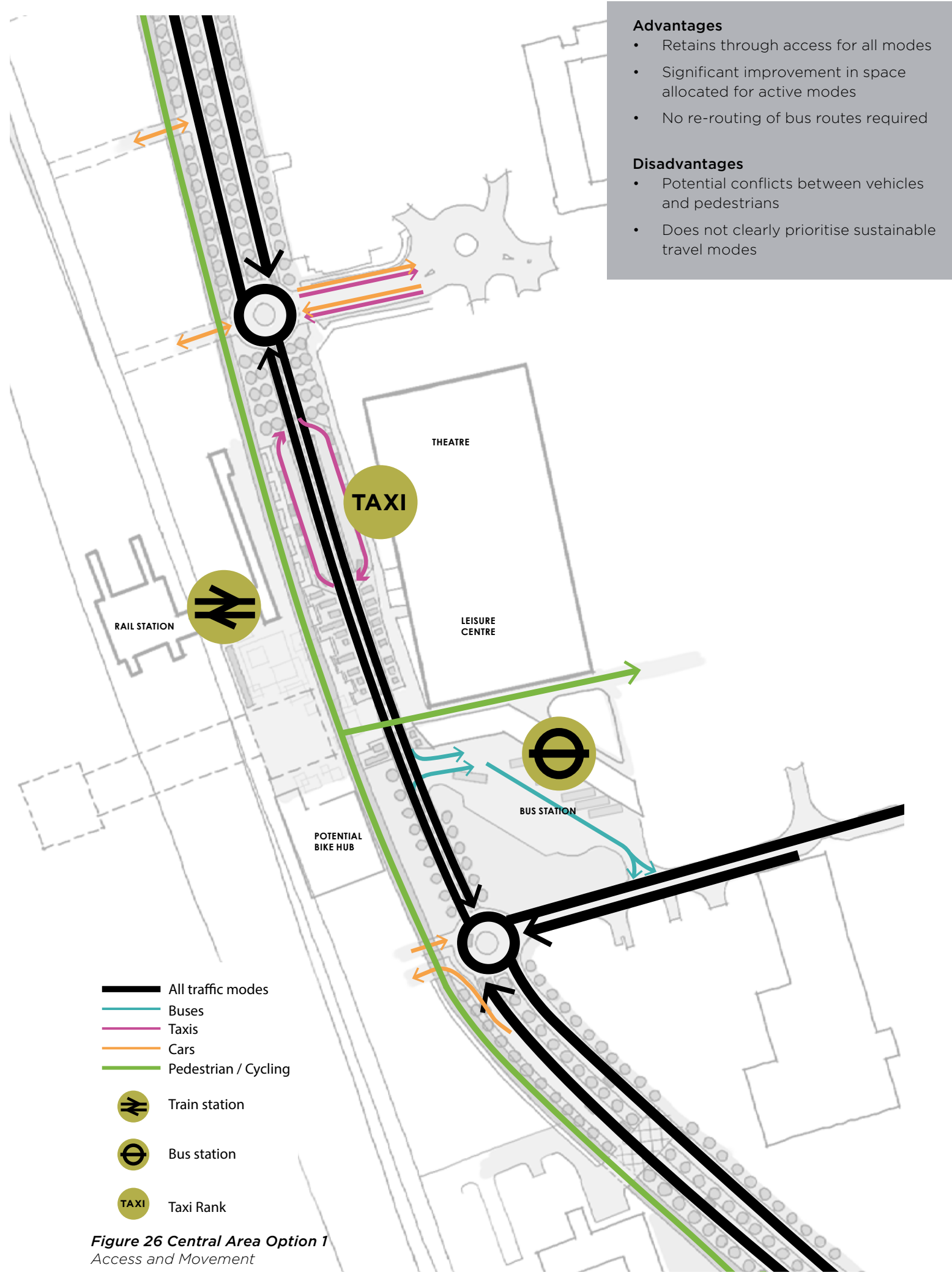
Reduced to single carriageway

Option 1 reduces the central area of Lytton Way between Swingate and Danesgate to a single carriageway suitable for all modes. As it approaches the area outside the station it transitions to becoming a shared space carriageway with a change of materials to reduce vehicle speeds.

The movement and access diagram demonstrates how different modes are able to move within the new environment.

**Figure 25 Central Area Option 1
All Traffic Modes**

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- Advantages**
- Retains through access for all modes
 - Significant improvement in space allocated for active modes
 - No re-routing of bus routes required
- Disadvantages**
- Potential conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians
 - Does not clearly prioritise sustainable travel modes

All traffic modes
 Buses
 Taxis
 Cars
 Pedestrian / Cycling
 Train station
 Bus station
 Taxi Rank

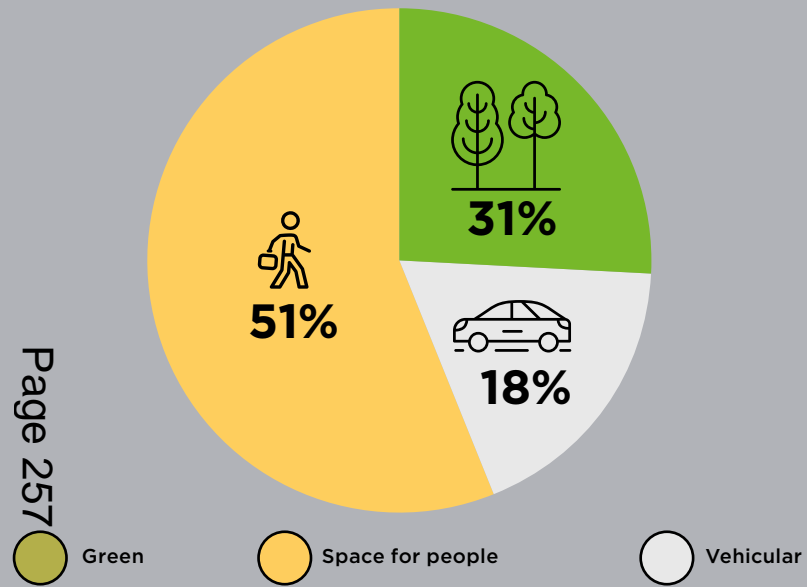
**Figure 26 Central Area Option 1
Access and Movement**

SECTION ALL TRAFFIC MODES

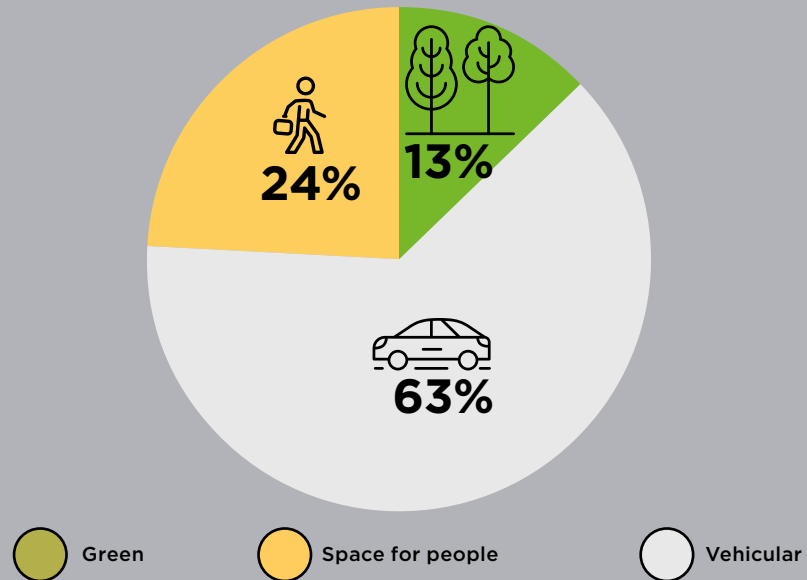
Illustrative sections showing the existing and proposed sectional profiles of Lytton Way.

The sections also include an analysis of land-use and activity by width, split into green space, pedestrian realm and vehicular realm. This is represented in the diagrams below showing the splits by percentage of the overall cross section.

01 Proposed overall percentage



02 Existing overall percentage



Frideswide Square, Oxford

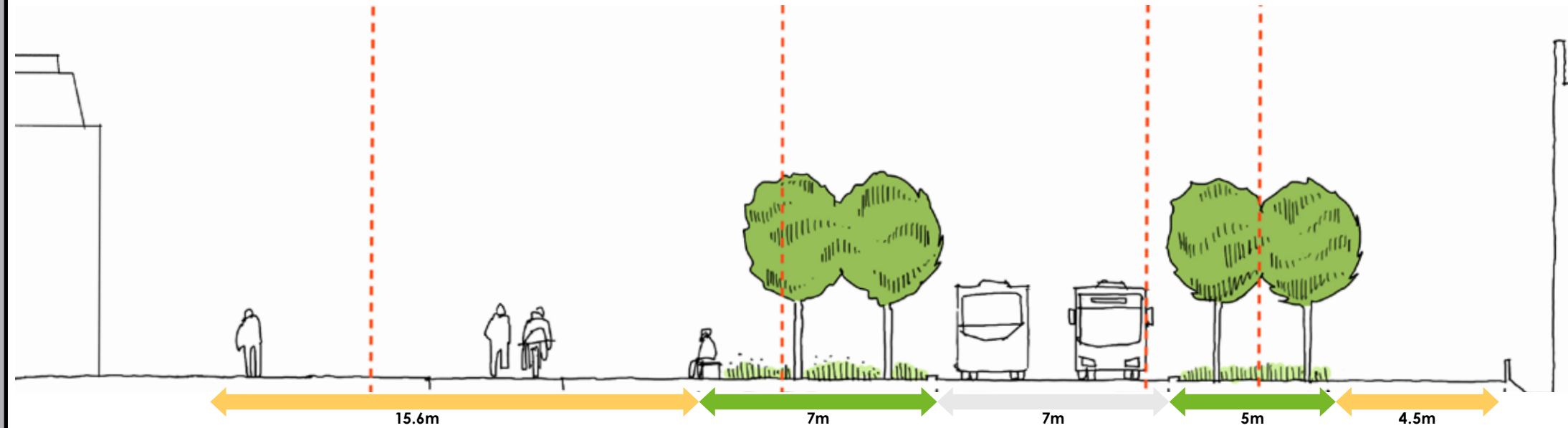


Bahnhofplatz, Aachen, Germany

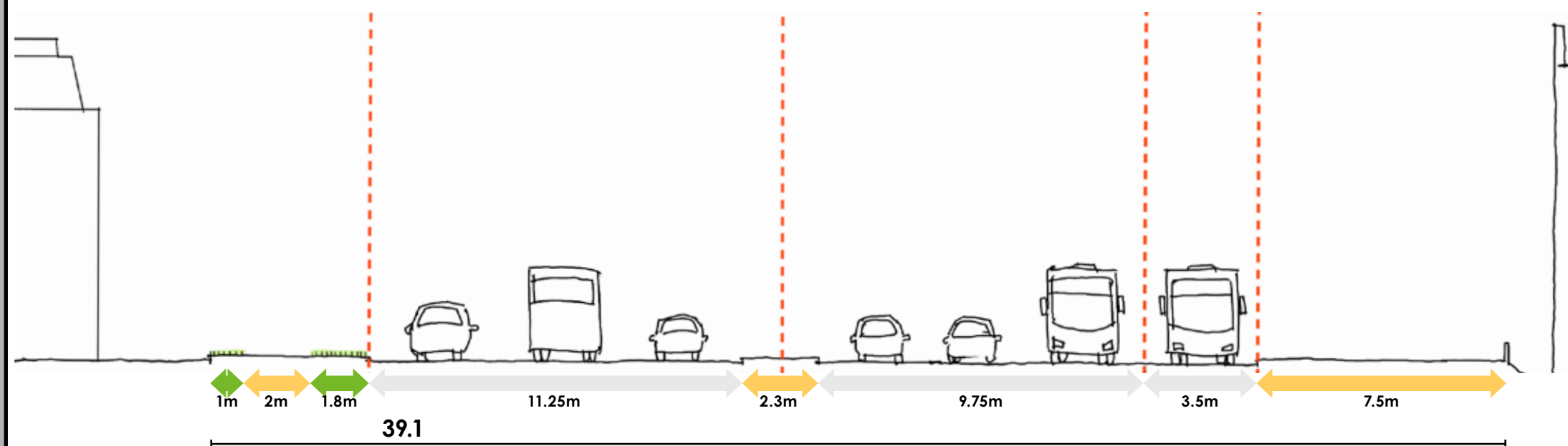


Slough Railway Station

01 PROPOSED



02 EXISTING



CENTRAL AREA OPTION 2 BUS & TAXI ONLY

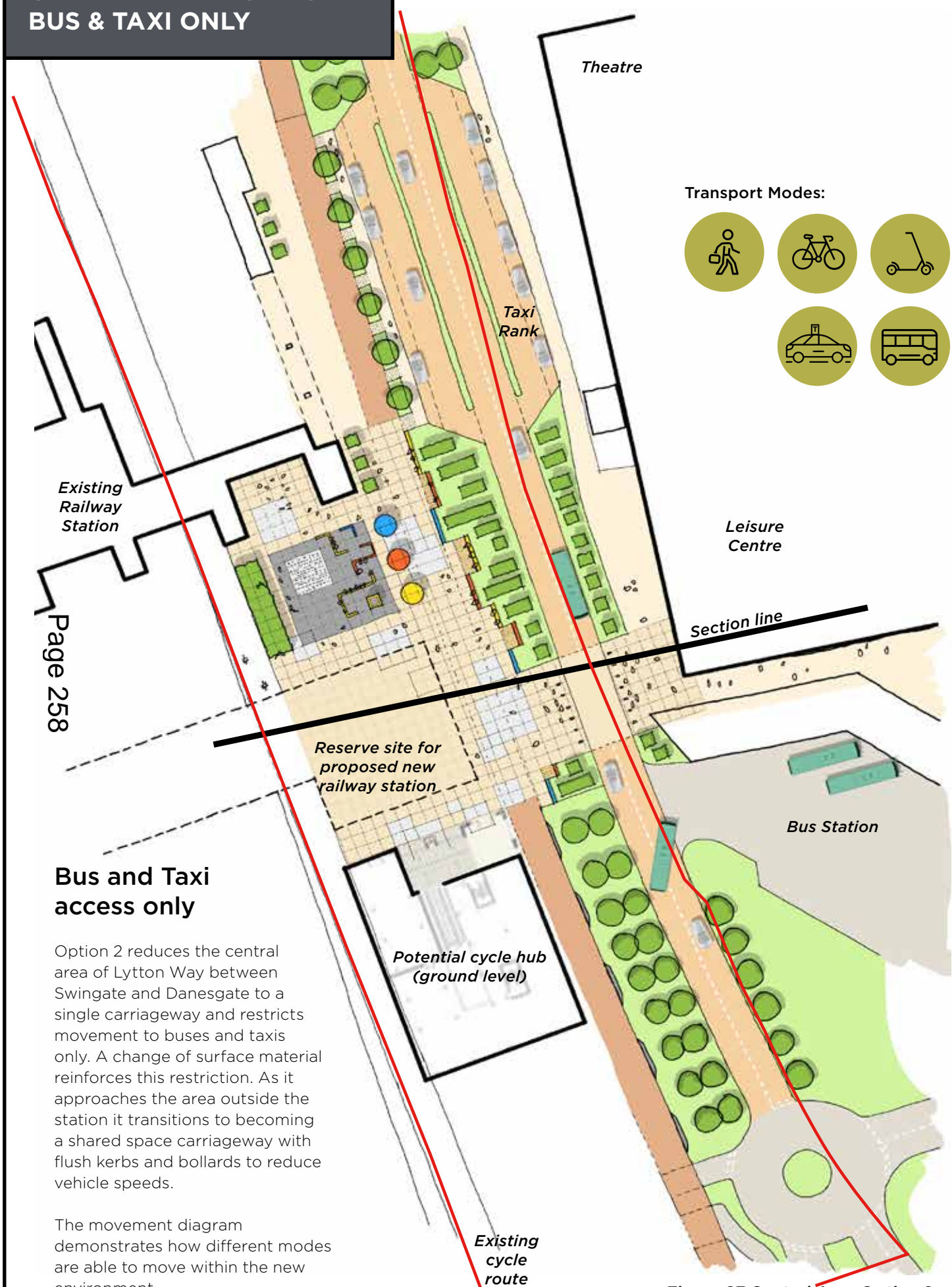


Figure 27 Central Area Option 2
Bus & Taxi only

Bus and Taxi access only

Option 2 reduces the central area of Lytton Way between Swinggate and Danesgate to a single carriageway and restricts movement to buses and taxis only. A change of surface material reinforces this restriction. As it approaches the area outside the station it transitions to becoming a shared space carriageway with flush kerbs and bollards to reduce vehicle speeds.

The movement diagram demonstrates how different modes are able to move within the new environment.

Advantages

- Reduction in vehicle traffic makes pedestrian and cycling movement easier
- Reduction in noise outside station
- No re-routing of bus routes required
- Clear prioritisation of sustainable modes

Disadvantages

- Potential conflicts between buses, taxis and pedestrians, although risk much lower than Option 1
- Potentially significant change to traffic flows around Stevenage town centre

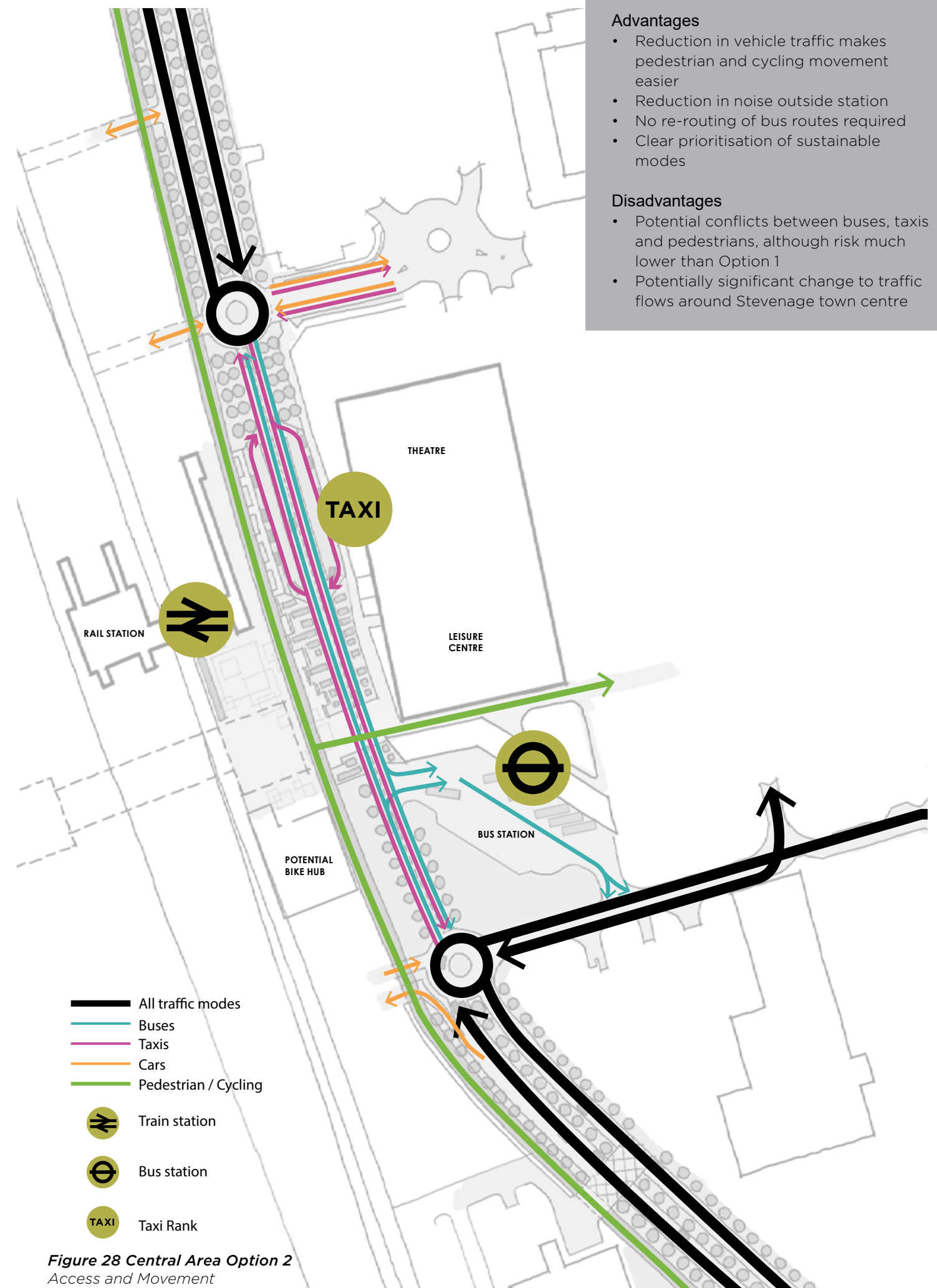


Figure 28 Central Area Option 2
Access and Movement

- All traffic modes
- Buses
- Taxis
- Cars
- Pedestrian / Cycling
- ⚓ Train station
- ⊕ Bus station
- TAXI Taxi Rank

SECTION BUS & TAXI ONLY

Illustrative sections showing the existing and proposed sectional profiles of Lytton Way.

The sections also include an analysis of land-use and activity by width, split into green space, pedestrian realm and vehicular realm. This is represented in the diagrams below showing the splits by percentage of the overall cross section.

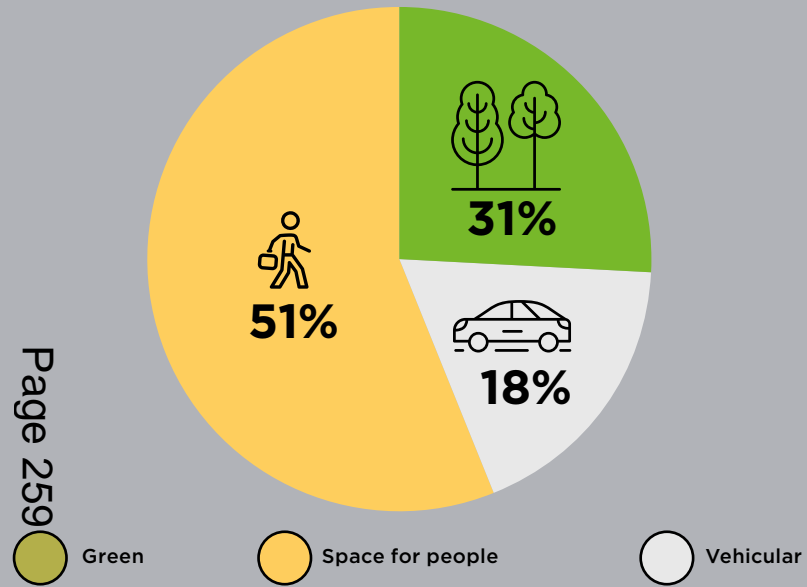


Station Square, Cambridge



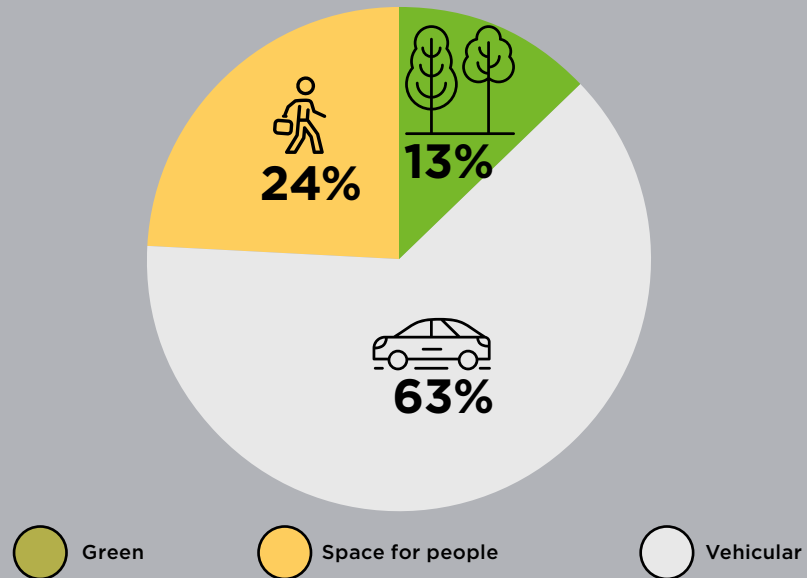
Station Square, Cambridge

01 Proposed overall percentage

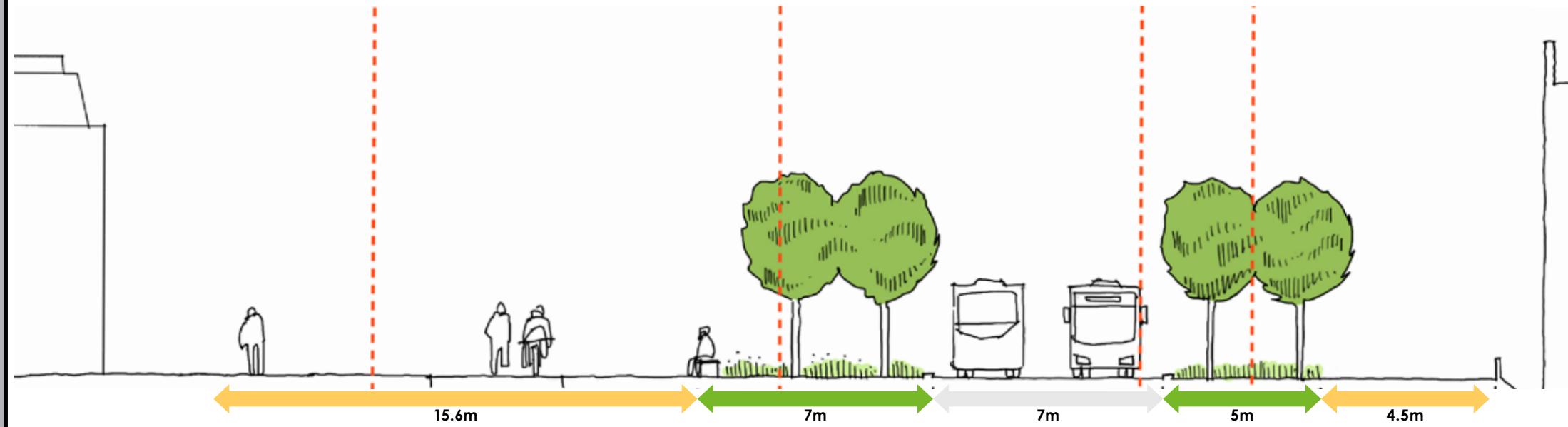


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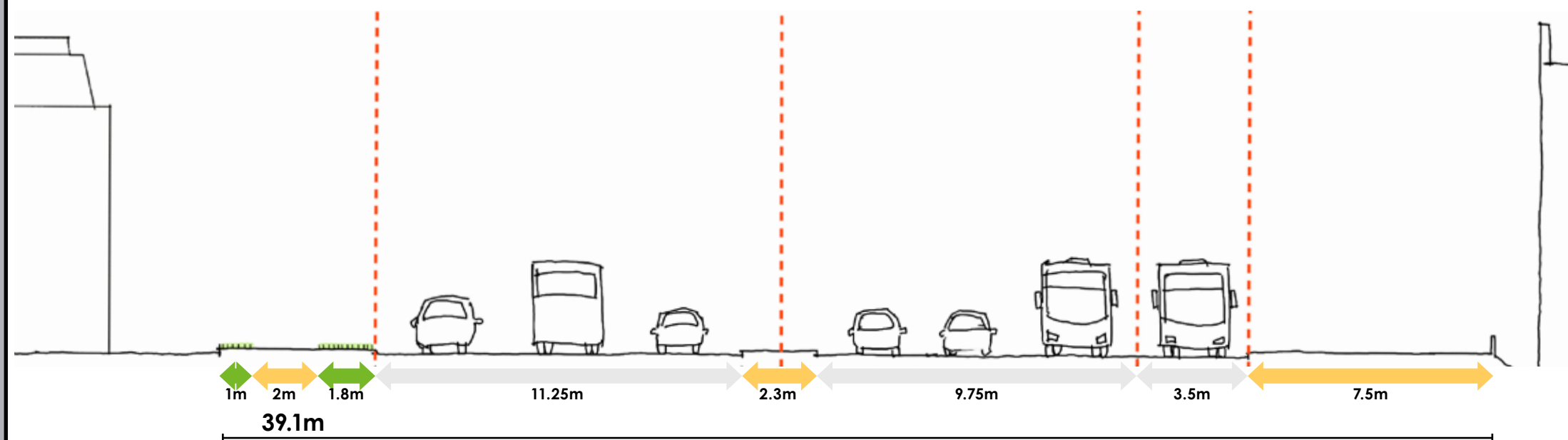
02 Existing overall percentage



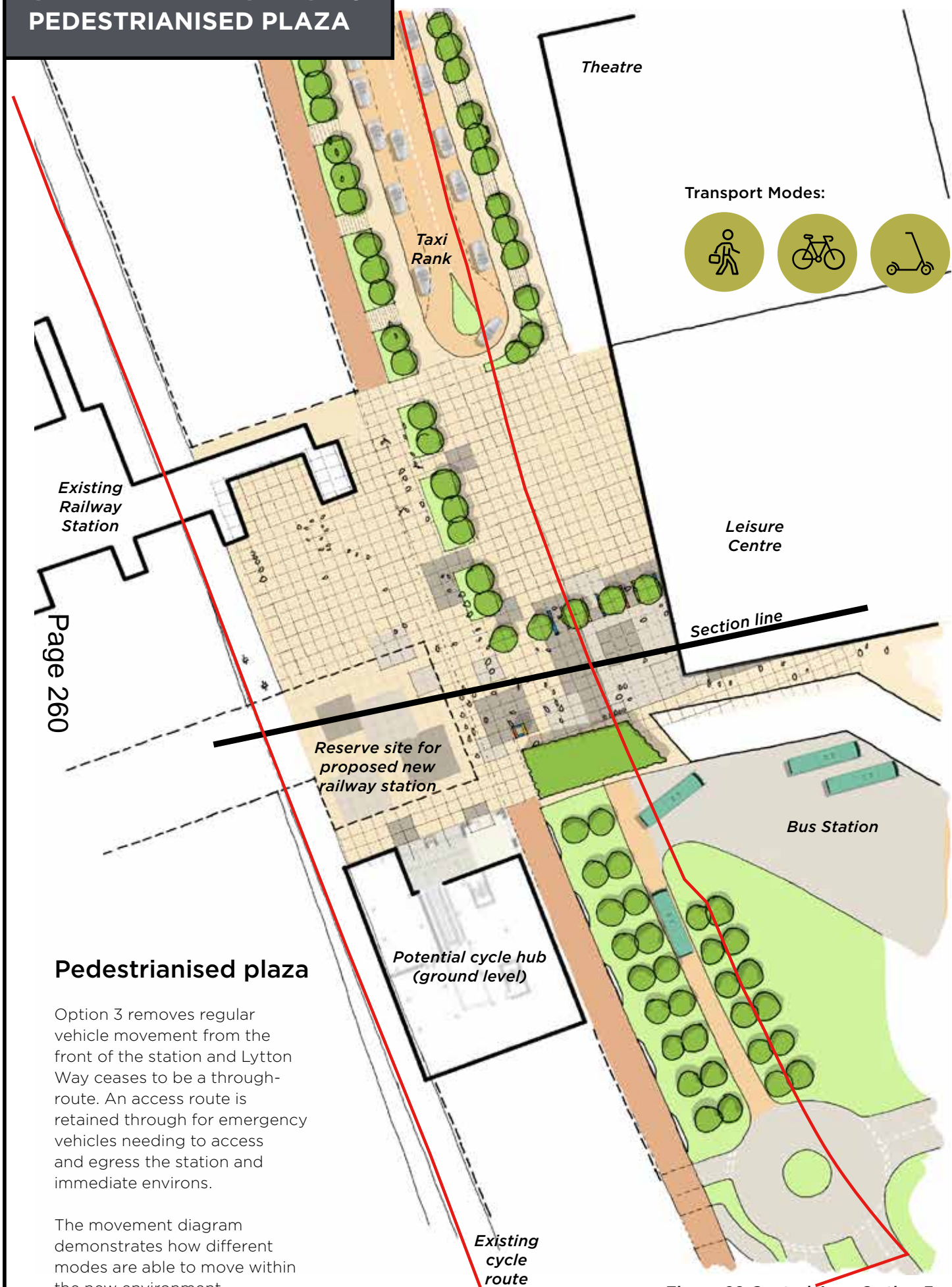
01 PROPOSED



02 EXISTING



CENTRAL AREA OPTION 3 PEDESTRIANISED PLAZA



Pedestrianised plaza

Option 3 removes regular vehicle movement from the front of the station and Lytton Way ceases to be a through-route. An access route is retained through for emergency vehicles needing to access and egress the station and immediate environs.

The movement diagram demonstrates how different modes are able to move within the new environment

Figure 29 Central Area Option 3
Pedestrianised Plaza

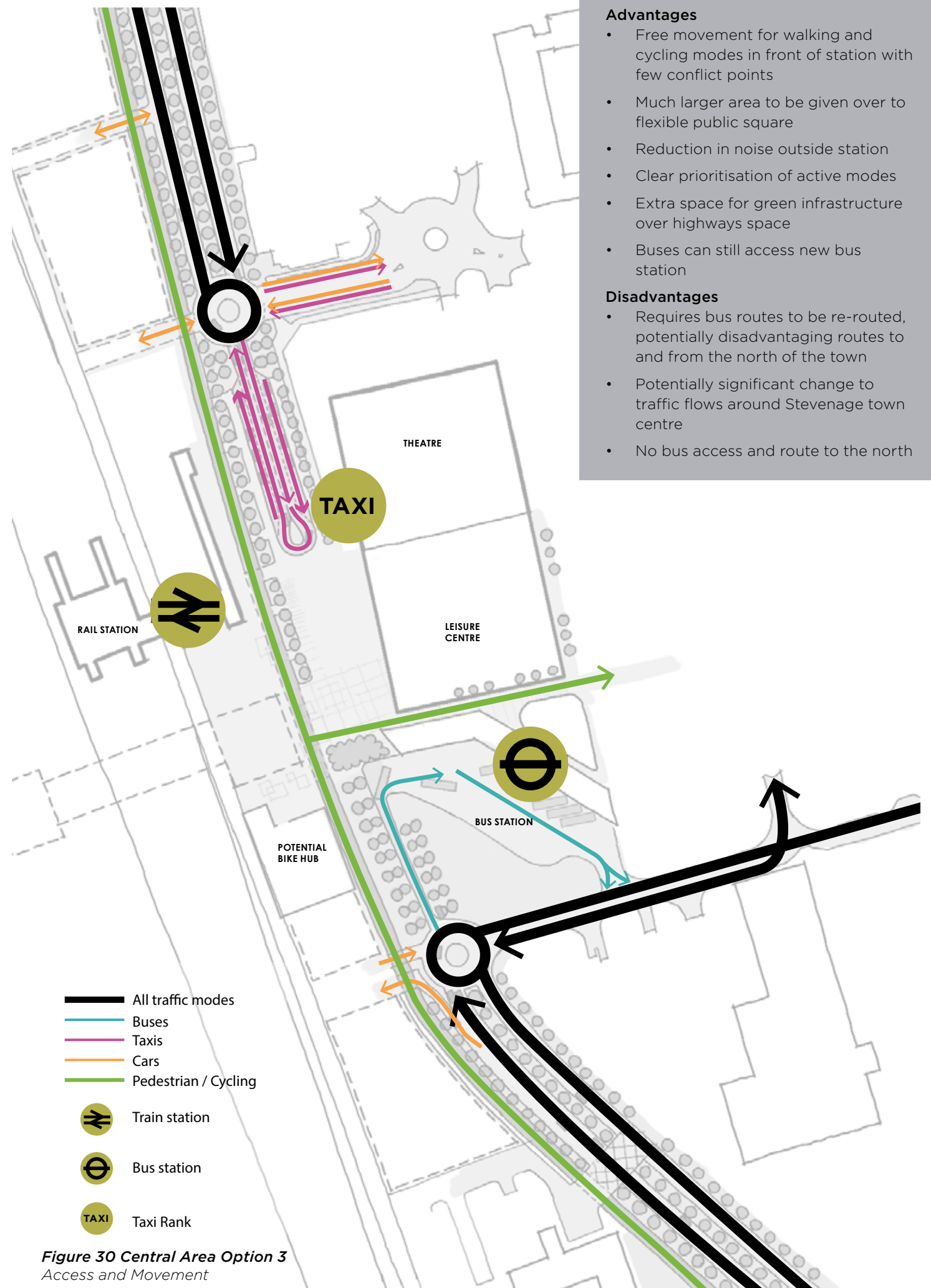


Figure 30 Central Area Option 3
Access and Movement

Advantages

- Free movement for walking and cycling modes in front of station with few conflict points
- Much larger area to be given over to flexible public square
- Reduction in noise outside station
- Clear prioritisation of active modes
- Extra space for green infrastructure over highways space
- Buses can still access new bus station

Disadvantages

- Requires bus routes to be re-routed, potentially disadvantaging routes to and from the north of the town
- Potentially significant change to traffic flows around Stevenage town centre
- No bus access and route to the north

SECTION PEDESTRIANISED PLAZA

Illustrative sections showing the existing and proposed sectional profiles of Lytton Way.

The sections also include an analysis of land-use and activity by width, split into green space, pedestrian realm and vehicular realm. This is represented in the diagrams below showing the splits by percentage of the overall cross section.



Station Hill, Reading

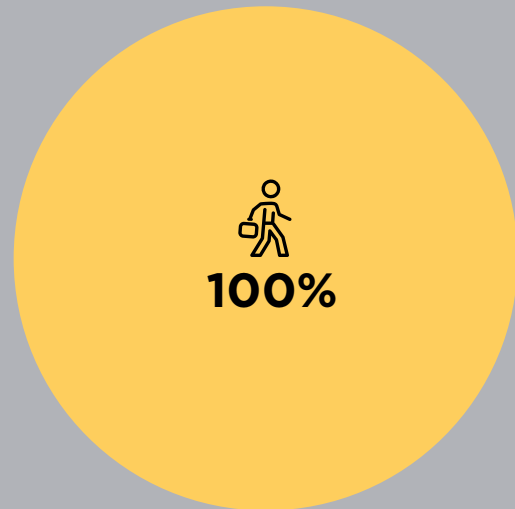


Station Hill, Reading



Utrecht, Netherlands

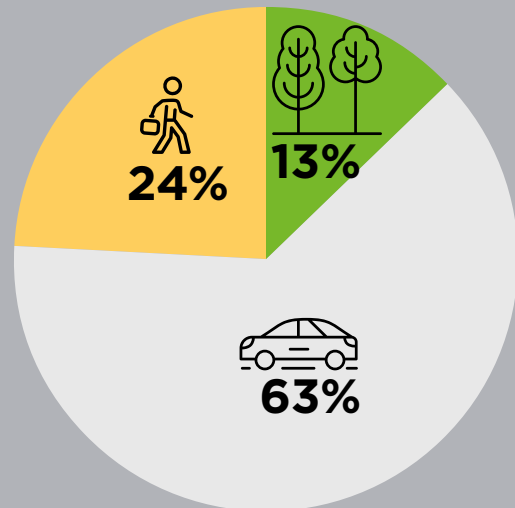
01 Proposed overall percentage



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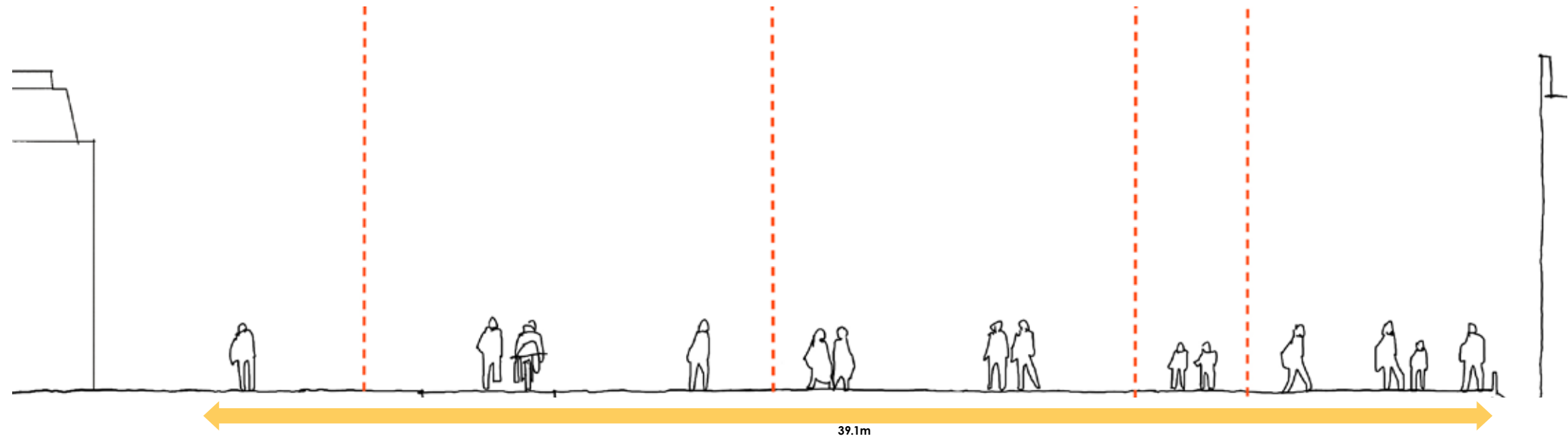
Green Space for people Vehicular

02 Existing overall percentage

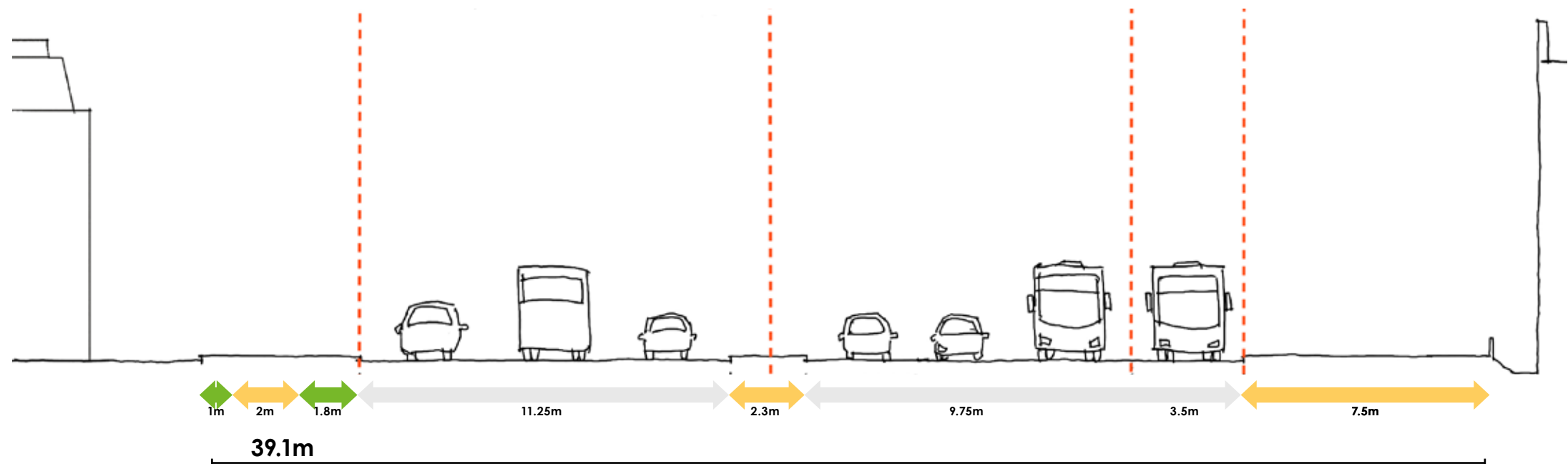


Green Space for people Vehicular

01 PROPOSED



02 EXISTING



CYCLE PATH OPTIONS

The existing cycle path along the edge of the railway tracks has been identified earlier in this document as suffering from a lack of passive surveillance and perceived lack of safety and security. Its position constrains the width of potential development parcels that could otherwise back straight onto the railway tracks. Due to its location pushed to the edge, it appears as a back-of-house or service access and feels secondary to vehicles.

However, the cycle path does provide a direct, uninterrupted and segregated cycle route through the area, although it also functions as the only north-south pedestrian route.

This section proposes two potential options for improving cycle access within the station area, building on its strengths while addressing weaknesses.



1. Looking north. Police station on right



2. Looking south with rail station ahead

At this early stage of the Area Action Plan, Stevenage Borough Council is determined in seeking the very best solutions for sustainable travel. The importance of the cycle link is paramount in any scenario presented. The Council remains committed to providing cycling routes in the town in accordance with the Future Town Future Transport Strategy.

Potential layout 1

This option retains the existing bicycle path and creates a new segregated path within the revised Lytton Way street profile. It is compatible with all three Central Area Options. The provision of a new cycle hub facility can be accessed conveniently from both routes.

Provision of the new path within the enhanced streetscape of Lytton Way contributes to an activated public realm and the increased safety and security this provides. It elevates cycling to the street and makes it more visible as a mobility option.

The new path would be segregated from cyclists by use of a different surface colour and small kerb upstands, as recommended in LTN 1/20 (Cycle Infrastructure Design). The routing along the street would create some potential conflict points with pedestrians, and cars at the multi-storey car park entrance. These would need to be mitigated with clear markings and signage.

Retention of the existing path provides an alternative route for cyclists to follow that would not have conflict points, although a future redesign of the station building could alter its path at that point. However this duplication of routes reduces the efficiency of layout and consequently the area of developable land. It would require development parcels to provide active frontages or overlooking on both aspects, rather than simply backing onto the railway tracks. This would further constraint development options.



Figure 32
Potential layout
option 1

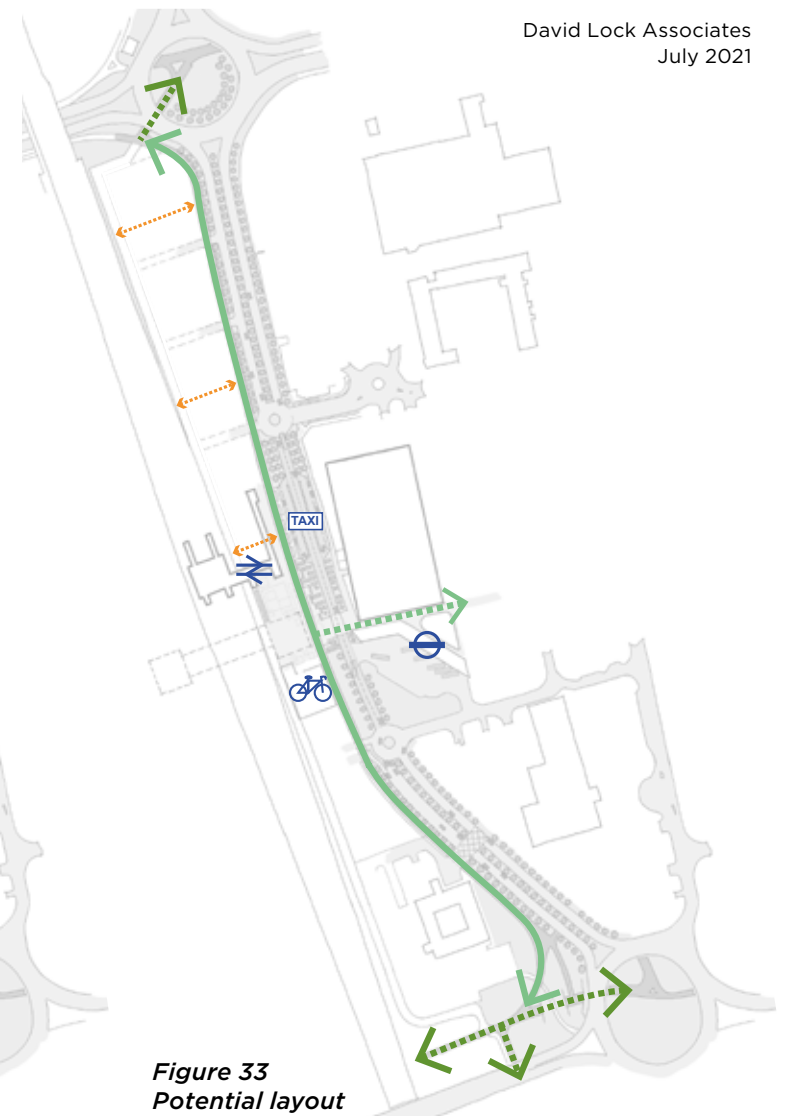


Figure 33
Potential layout
option 2

Potential layout 2

This option removes the existing cycle path but creates a new segregated path within the revised Lytton Way street profile. It is compatible with all three Central Area Options. The provision of a new cycle hub facility can be accessed conveniently from the cycle path.

Provision of the new path within the enhanced streetscape of Lytton Way contributes to an activated public realm and the increased safety and security this provides. It elevates cycling to the street and makes it more visible as a mobility option.

The new path would be segregated from cyclists by use of a different surface colour and small kerb upstands, as recommended in LTN 1/20 (Cycle Infrastructure Design). The routing along the street would create some potential conflict points with pedestrians, and cars at the multi-storey car park entrance. These would need to be mitigated with clear markings and signage.

Removal of the existing path creates a more efficient layout and increases the amount of developable land, and the flexibility of the development parcels as they

are deeper and could place servicing and inactive frontages adjacent to the railway tracks.



Frideswide Square, Oxford

Figure 31 Existing
cycle path layout

PHASING AND TEMPORARY USE

To transform the station area towards one of these options requires a phasing strategy that considers:

- Timing of highway works
- Provision of active travel infrastructure
- Timing of relocation of key mobility uses such as taxi ranks and drop-off
- Relocation and consolidation of station surface car parking

A potential phasing strategy that is robust and flexible enough to accommodate all three options is presented in Figure 34. Phase 1 provides the temporary groundwork for Phase 2, which fully implements the options as presented in this report. Phase 3 considers

potential future developments and how they would interact with the options presented.

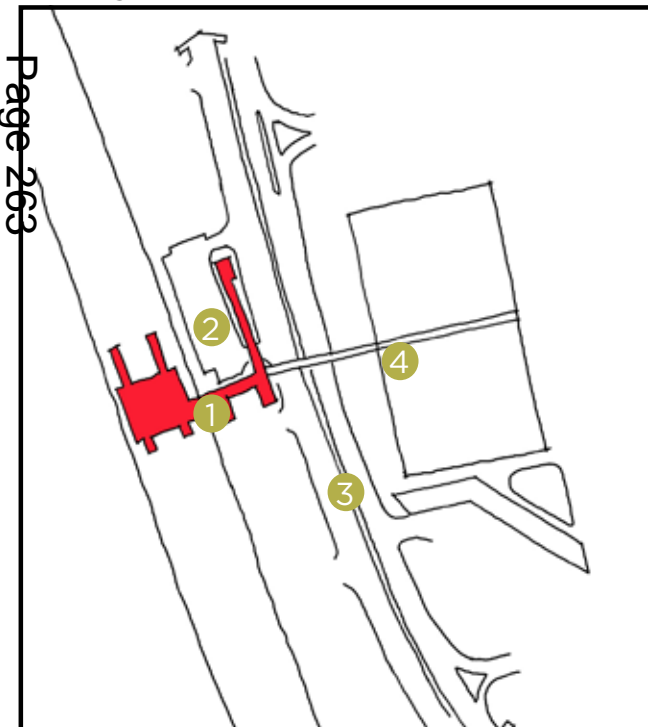
To enable this phased approach, a strategy employing temporary uses should be put in place. The phasing strategy clearly identifies locations suitable for such temporary uses, which can enliven the space around the station and establish the groundwork and footfall for permanent development in the future. This can provide reassurance to potential developers that a location is viable and visited, as well as creating a safer and more vibrant place during the process of transformation.

Precedent studies of temporary or 'meanwhile' uses are presented on the following pages.



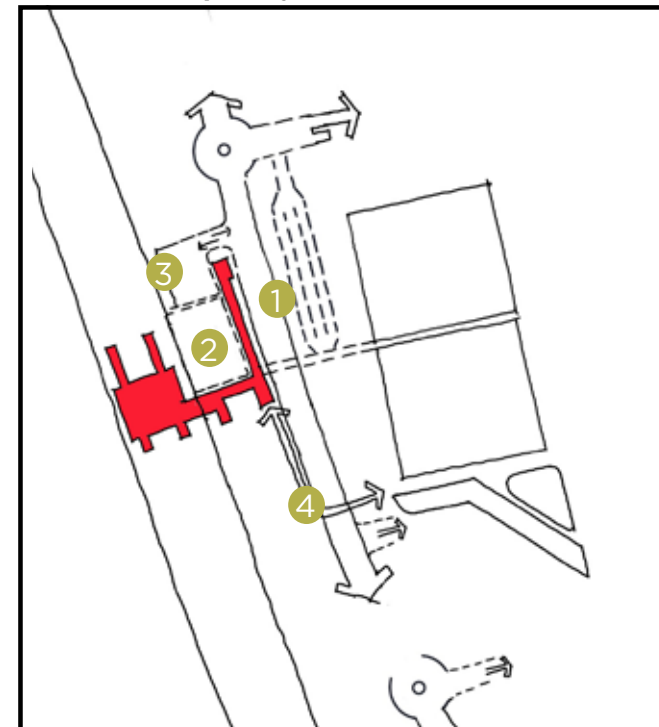
Figure 34 Potential Phasing Strategy

Existing



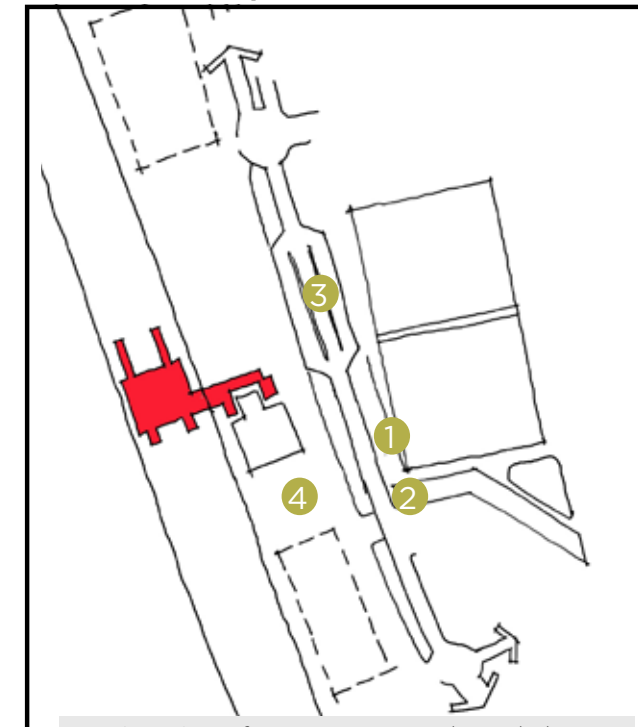
1. Train station
2. Taxi rank and station drop-off
3. Dual carriageway to Lytton Way
4. Sports Centre and bridge link to train station

Phase 1 - Temporary Uses



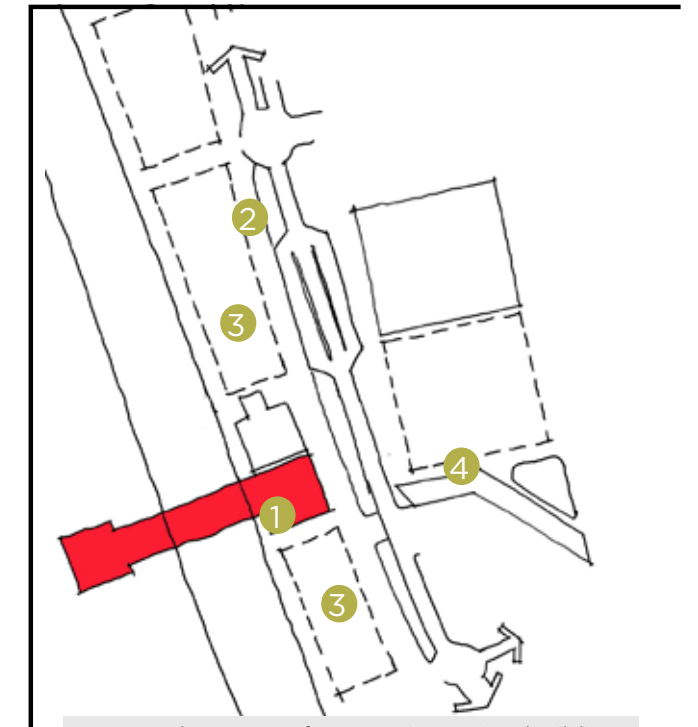
1. Condensing of north and south movements to the western carriageway to enable construction of taxi rank and new Lytton Way Boulevard and removal of pedestrian bridge
2. Temporary pedestrianisation of station drop-off area as 'meanwhile' traffic-free plaza
3. Condensing of taxi rank north of pedestrianised plaza
4. Temporary pedestrian walkway and crossing linking train station to bus station and town centre

Phase 2 - AAP Options



1. Opening of Lytton Way Boulevard along new alignment
2. Creation of a pedestrian super-crossing
3. New taxi rank constructed on-line of Lytton Way Boulevard
4. Creation of new permanent Station Square to south existing train station, future-proofed for new station building to its south

Phase 3 - Future Potential



1. Development of new train station building
2. Completion of Lytton Way Boulevard (shared cycle and footway)
3. Potential development of adjacent parcels
4. Potential redevelopment of the sports centre

PRECEDENT STUDIES 'MEANWHILE USES'

Selection of images of precedent projects to illustrating temporary or 'meanwhile' uses and activation of urban spaces.

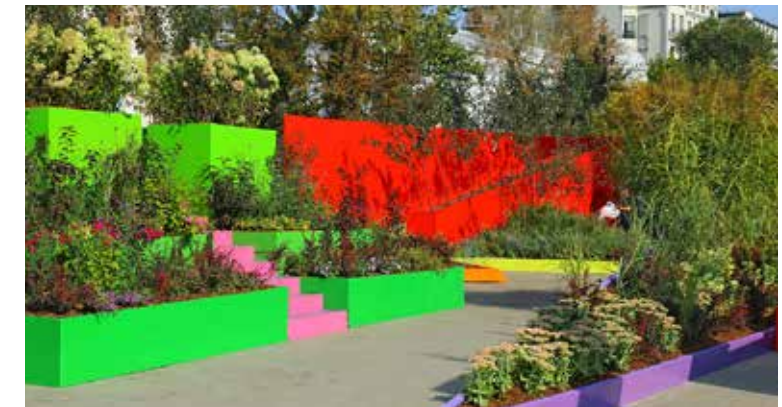
The examples include a range of opportunities for planting, exhibitions, seating, play and cafés. Installation and removal is typically quick and straight forwards requiring minimal invasive construction / demolition.



Kalvebod Waves, Copenhagen (JDS Architects)



Southbank Centre, London



Moscow City day: City without borders
Temporary play & interactive sculpture (Studio Fink)

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Deptford project: re-purposed train carriage as cafe and community meeting point



Barbican, City of London



Hammersmith Grove (project centre)

GREENING THE GREY GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PROVISION

Stevenage, as the UK's original New Town, was designed to ensure that green open space was accessible to all and integrated within the urban built environment. The station area should reflect this heritage and deliver it as part of a vibrant, rich and interesting urban place. The reconfiguration of Lytton Way outlined in this report, along with all of the Central Area Options, deliver opportunities to re-integrate natural habitats and planted landscaping throughout the environment.

Such a strategy provides relief from hard landscaped environments, gives space for biodiversity, improves microclimates with the cooling or shading effects

of trees and plants, offers sustainable surface water management and enhances the experience and appearance of the environment. Above all, new green infrastructure around the station will create a great gateway experience that reflects the green character of the rest of the town.

Opportunities to include green infrastructure exist throughout the proposed options. These include:

- Street trees
- Planted landscaping
- Sustainable drainage features
- Green roofs and walls on new development

CASE STUDY: SHEFFIELD

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One of the most successful urban schemes to incorporate significant new green infrastructure and biodiversity improvements has been the 'Greening the Grey' scheme in Sheffield. Although the scheme covers a wider area than just the station area, it has created significant change throughout the city centre. The scheme has transformed streets that previously only featured hard landscaping materials into habitat-rich spaces, with seating and significantly improved streetscapes. Vehicle space has been reduced and the planting offers separation between transport infrastructure and pedestrians.

A key function of the areas of planting are the collection and storage of rainwater enabled by the increased area of permeable surface. These help to reduce the quantum and slow the flow of stormwater into the City's sewer system.

The planting palette has been selected for its low maintenance requirements. All planting requires a degree of maintenance but this can be minimised through the selection and specification of the right species. Species have also been selected for their aesthetic qualities to create an enhanced streetscape and also for their ecological value as a food source for insects and birds.



USING DEVELOPMENT TO MAKE A PLACE

The reconfiguration of mobility along Lytton Way enables a range of development opportunities to come forward on land previously used for car parking or transport infrastructure.

Opportunities for investment and development are important to identify within this key location. Beyond this, the design of developments should support the creation of the station area as a functional, vibrant, interesting and useful place for the town – a destination as well as a transit point towards other places.

As well as drawing upon the land uses outlined in Policy TC4, this report also draws upon other documents including the SBC Arts & Culture Strategy to define potential uses that could animate and occupy space around the station.

Key principles that have been adopted include:

- Surface car parking for the railway station can be consolidated into either multi-storey car parks (MSCP) or within basements without losing parking capacity but releasing significant land
- Vertical mixed-use within buildings is possible, particularly with commercial uses such as offices and retail sharing the same building
- Maximisation of active frontages and ground-floor opportunities along the streets, particularly around the new station square environment
- Flexibility of space provided is essential to enable the area to grow and adapt as it is developed. Temporary uses and occupation of space can help bridge the gap between today and the future place.

Flexibility

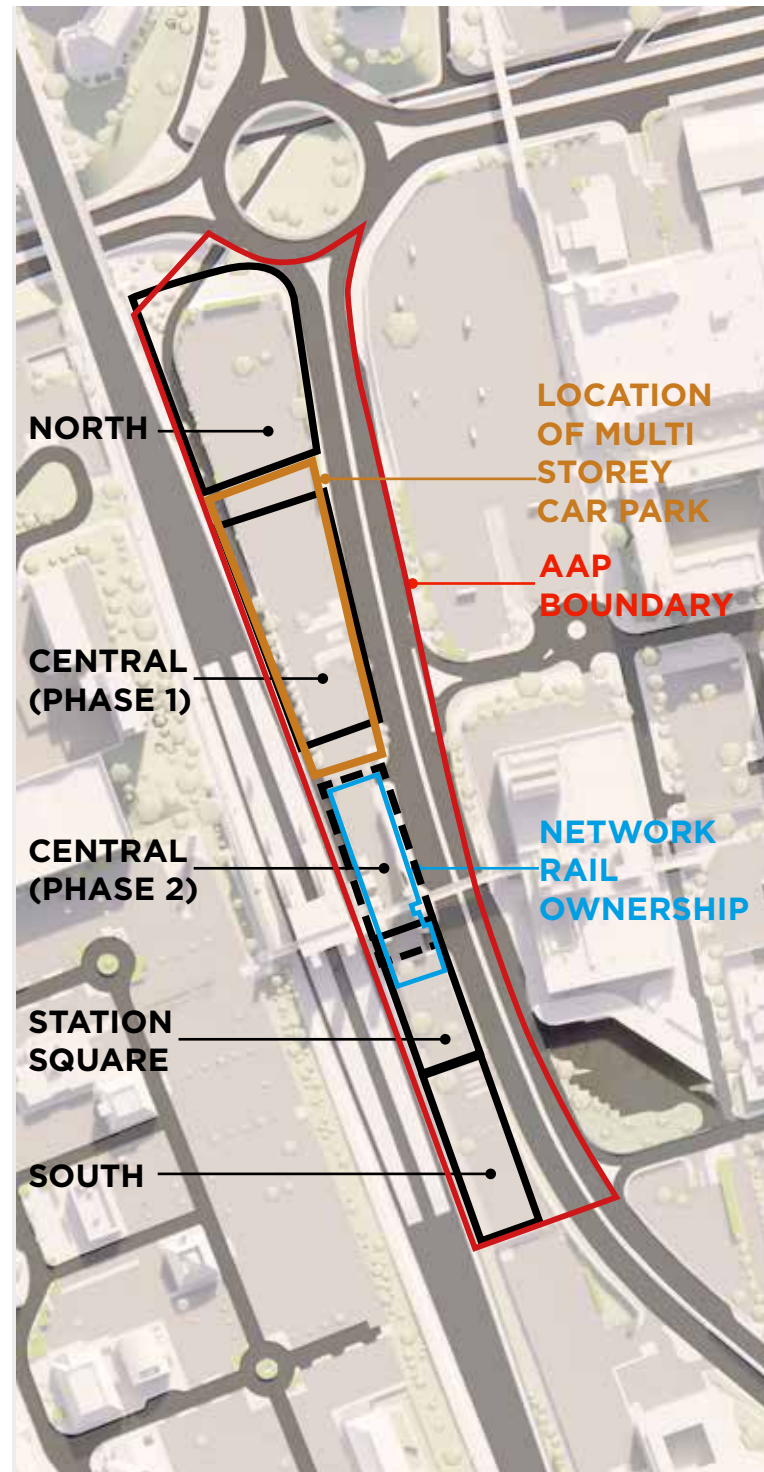
The recent change to the Use Classes Order (UCO) to subsume use classes A1, A2, A3 and B1 into a single class E (subject to some exemptions), presents both issues and opportunities from a planning policy perspective in this location.

At a policy stage it will be less possible for SBC to restrict or specify particular land uses, especially on the ground floor, without more detailed planning policy or restrictions in place. However, this may not be required as the purpose of the use class change is to encourage flexibility to move between different uses as local conditions require. This could present an opportunity for a more adaptive place that can change uses quickly as the area develops over time. From the point of view of the preparation of the AAP, suggested or anticipated uses will still be included in plans for development options, as the space and servicing requirements for retail are considerably different from those of offices.

Development Parcels

Five main development parcels have been identified:

- **North:** made up of the existing surface car parks north of the railway station. This land is currently largely in the ownership of SBC and would have the potential to be developed in an early phase.
- **Central [Phase 1]:** made up of the existing surface car parks north of the railway station. This land is currently largely in the ownership of SBC and has the potential to be developed in an early phase.
- **Central [Phase 2]:** made up of the existing station drop-off areas and immediate surrounds of the existing station, to the north of the proposed square present in all of the Central Area Options. This land is primarily in the ownership of Network Rail, and would only be able to come forward for development after a new railway station building was constructed further to the south, adjacent to the proposed public [station] square.
- **Station Square:** made of the existing surface car parks south of the railway station within the AAP boundary. This land is also currently in the ownership of SBC. This in effect becomes a reserve site, futureproofing the potential to deliver a new rail station should funding become available. As such its delivery is in determinable.
- **South:** made of the existing surface car parks south of the railway station within the AAP boundary. This land is also currently in the ownership of SBC and would have the potential to be developed in an early phase.



Isolated, uncoordinated development proposals that do not effectively respond to the AAP have the potential to compromise effective placemaking efforts and reduce the overall development gains that could be delivered through a comprehensive approach.

It is important to note at this stage that the opportunities offered within each development parcel reflect the very early stage this Area Action Plan is at and are intended to be strategic, high-level details. There will be scope to build on and progress the opportunities identified within each development parcel through the process of developing this Area Action Plan.

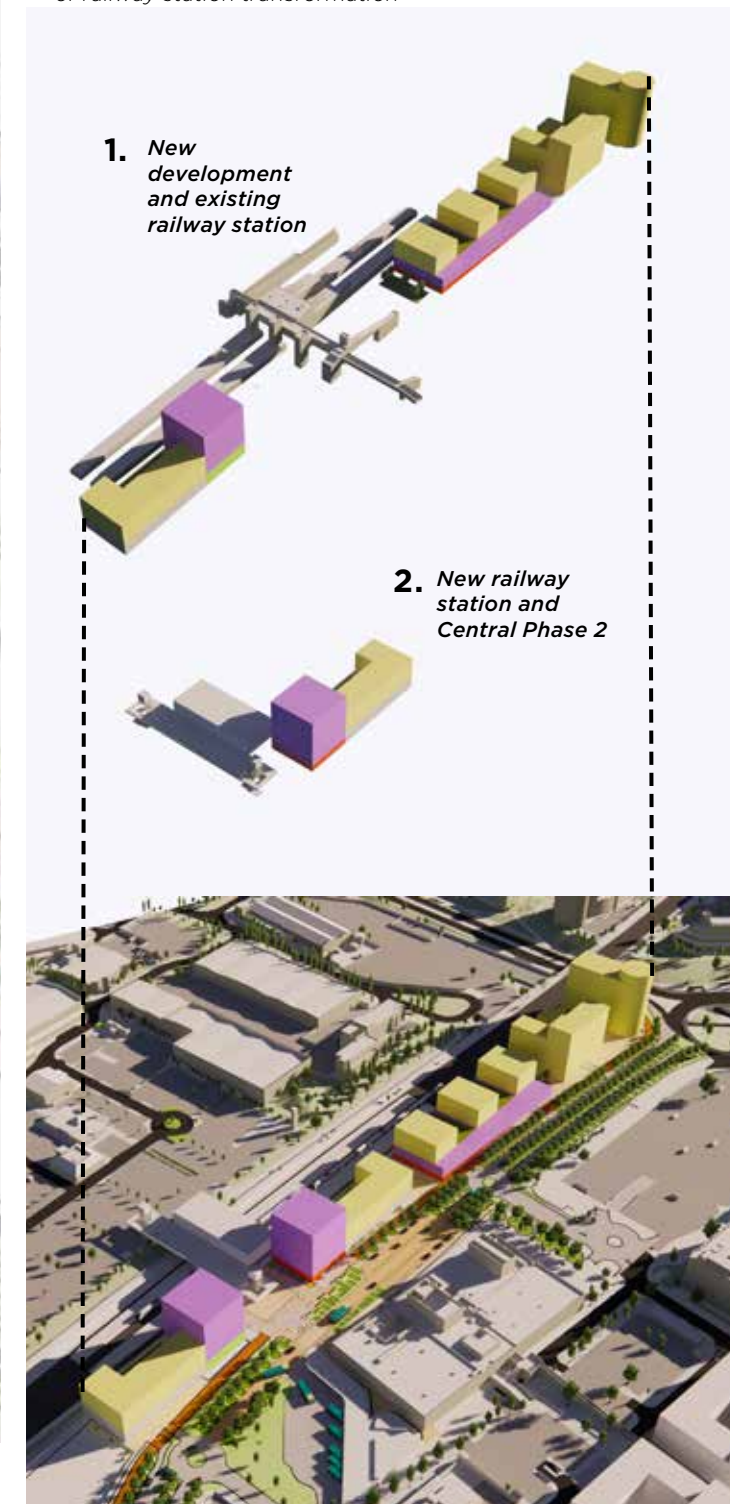
For the most efficient use of land, and to deliver the comprehensive objectives of the regeneration policy, proposals for these development parcels should respond to the AAP's Core Enhancements and mobility options, presented earlier in this chapter. At present, plot widths are compromised by the need to provide pedestrian movement along Lytton Way within curtilage. Redistribution of vehicle space.



Plan of station area showing new railway station in place

Each development parcel has the potential to support a mix of uses that contribute towards the components of placemaking, as identified in chapter 4. Accompanying the description of the potential uses are some illustrations showing how development in the various locations could be designed. These are illustrative and seek to explore key urban design principles.

Perspective showing potential sequencing of railway station transformation



- North:** this parcel offers an opportunity to create a landmark development which could predominantly be residential-led. This is a prominent gateway site and given the lack of adjoining development and the need to create a gateway development, storey heights should be a minimum of 6 storeys and could rise to over 10 storeys, dependent upon the configuration of the buildings. A basement storey of surface car parking, to retain a proportion of commuter parking provision, as well as an element of development parking will be required as part of this development parcel with due consideration given to safe access and egress for vehicles accessing Lytton Way.



North parcel plan location



Development Option 1

The images below show how a variety of building forms could be developed for the Northern site, and in particular buildings heights can be adjusted to create a fitting gateway development.



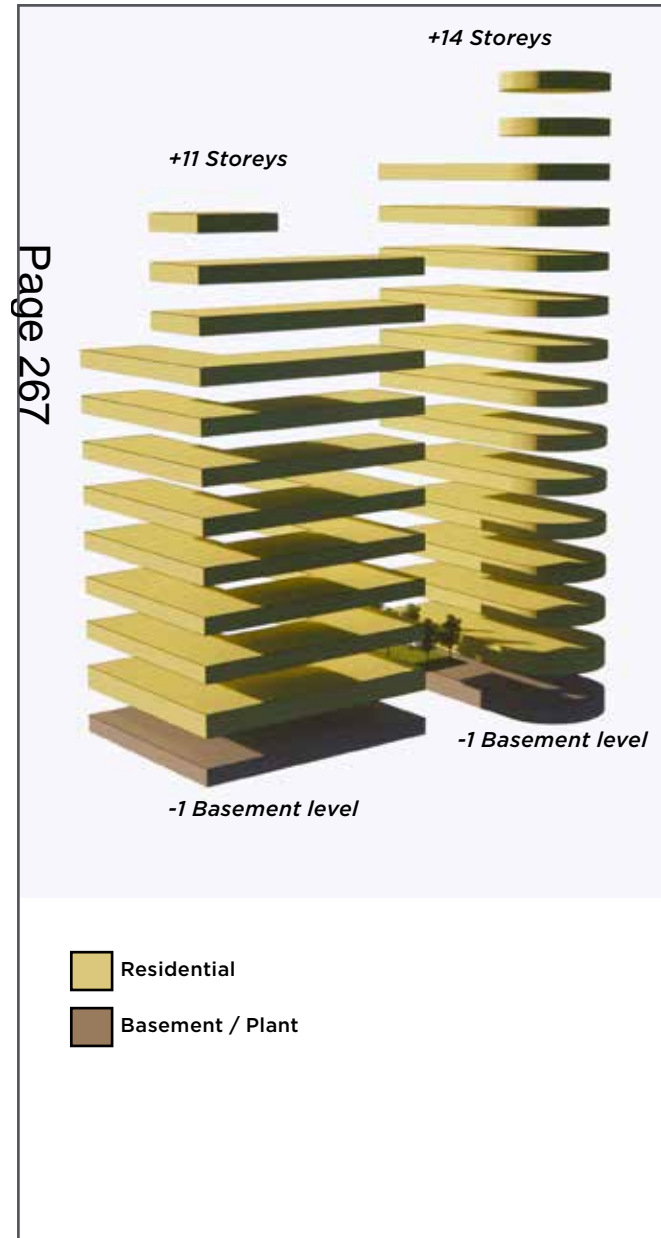
Development Option 1



Development Option 2

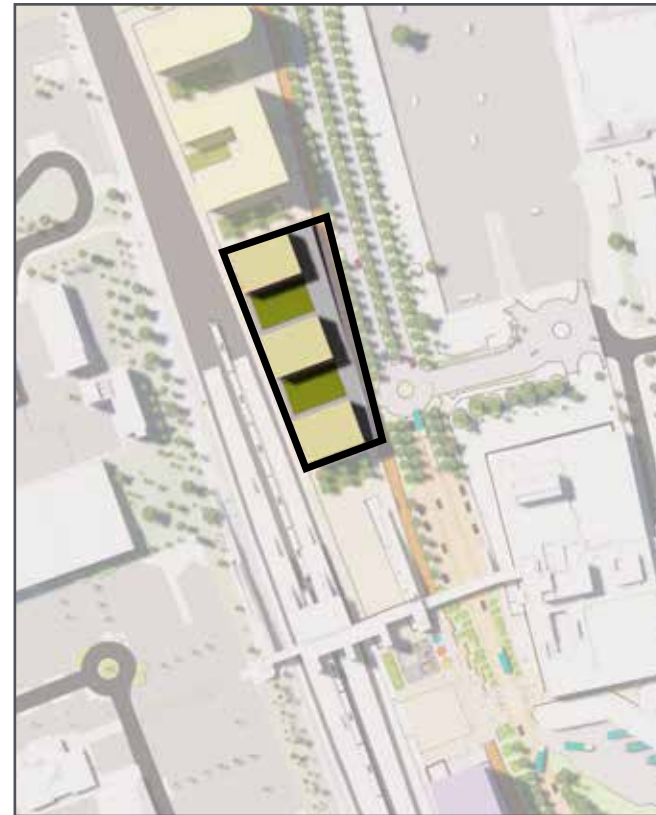


Development Option 3



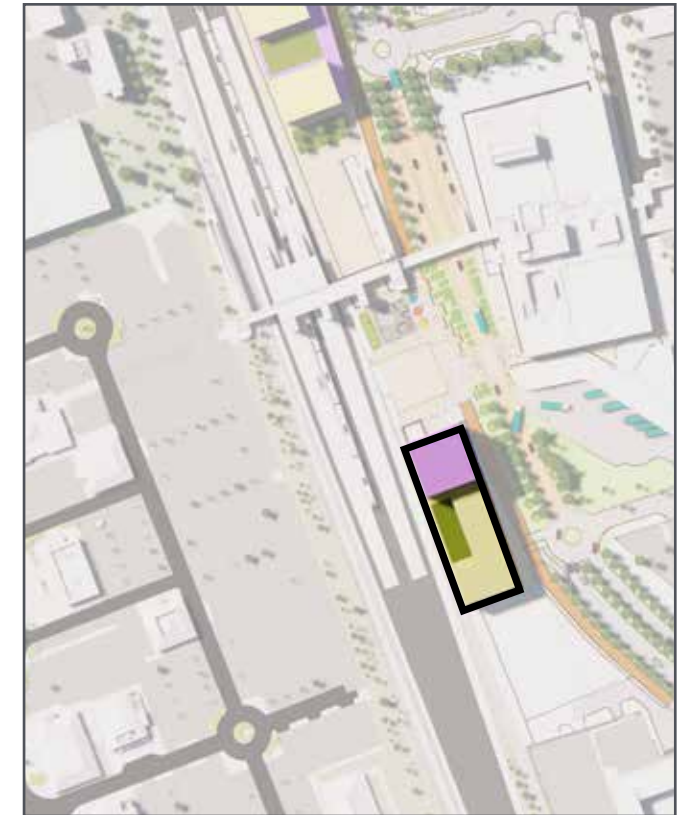
Development Option 1 exploded levels diagram

- Central [Phase 1]:** this parcel will incorporate the new comprehensive multi-storey car park (MSCP). The MSCP will consist of a minimum 600 car parking spaces, provide capacity for a minimum of 25 motorcycle spaces, minimum 80 cycle spaces and 3 accessible cycle spaces. Electric Car charging is also being considered with a view to future travel demand. To support this, there could be additional opportunity to locate hotel, office space and residential with an active ground floor on the remaining land next to the new MSCP. Due consideration will need to be given to safe access and egress for vehicles accessing Lytton Way.



Central Phase 1 plan location

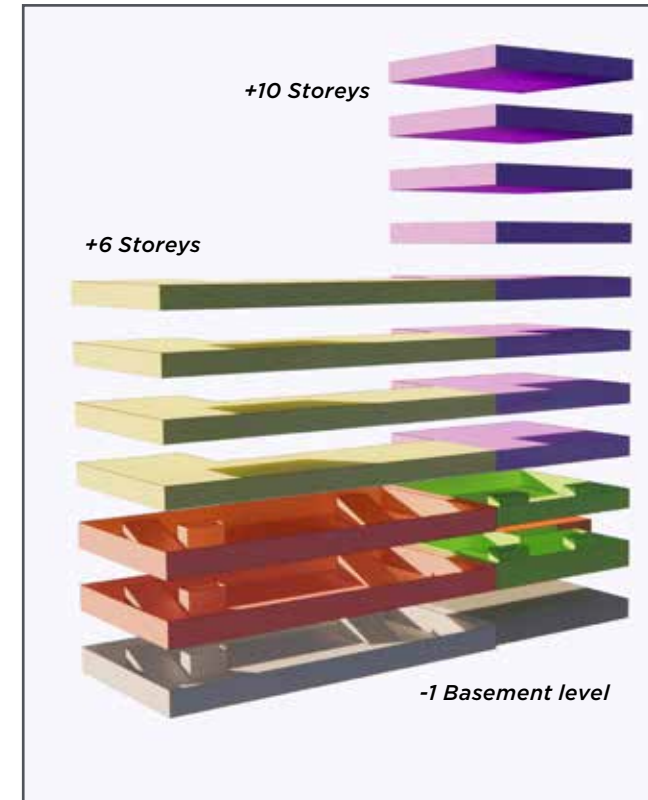
- South:** The northern end of the parcel could be an ideal location for an additional high-quality cycle hub, such as that seen in Cambridge or in Dutch cities, providing accessible and secure cycle parking and maintenance directly adjacent to the existing and proposed new railway station, as well as the bus station. Offices could be located above the cycle hub, with storey heights determined by market demand and consideration for sunlight into the new public space to the north. A cycle hub would be much closer in this location to a potential future rail station and perhaps allow for futureproofing in this south block.



South plan location

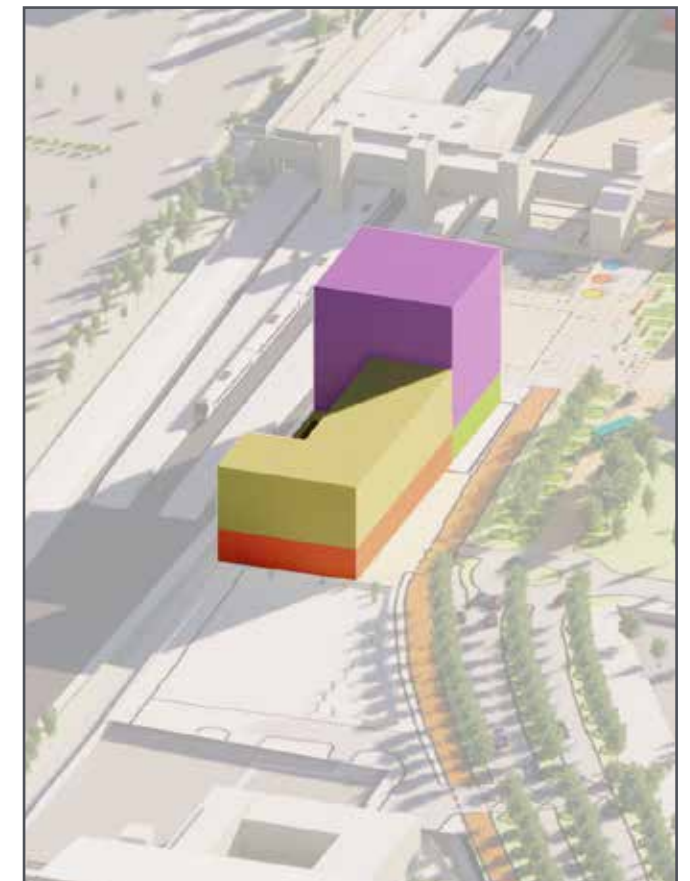


Central Phase 1

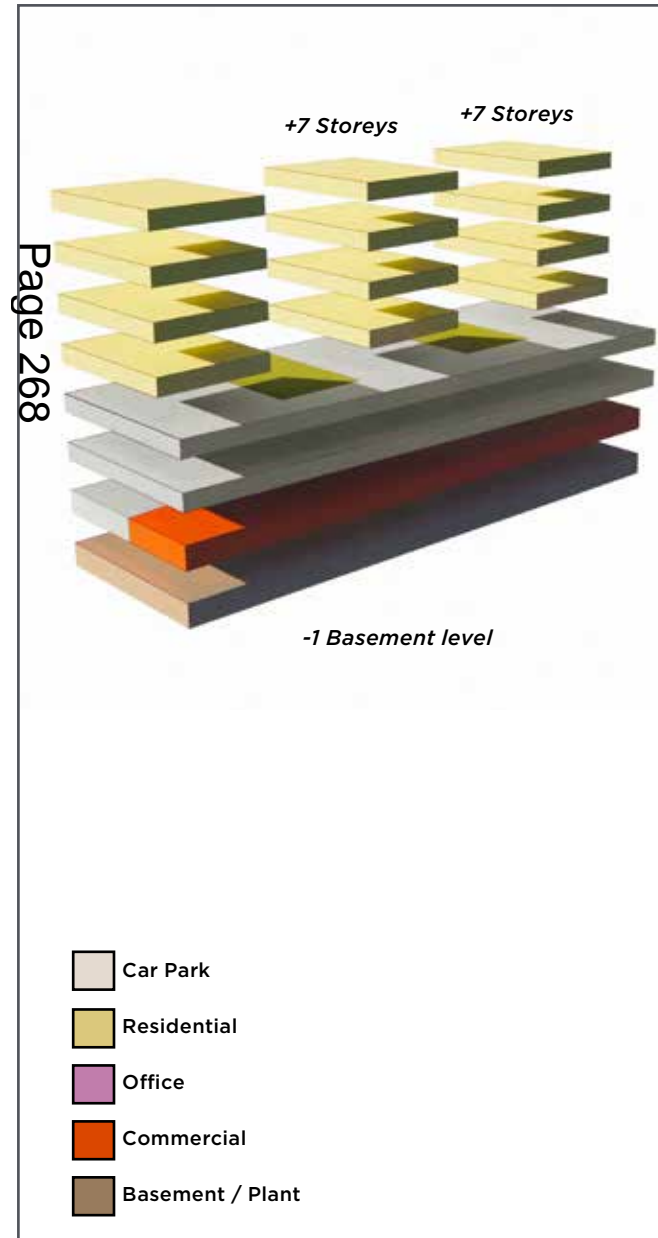


- Residential
- Office
- Commercial
- Cycle Hub
- Car Park
- Basement / Plant

South exploded levels diagram



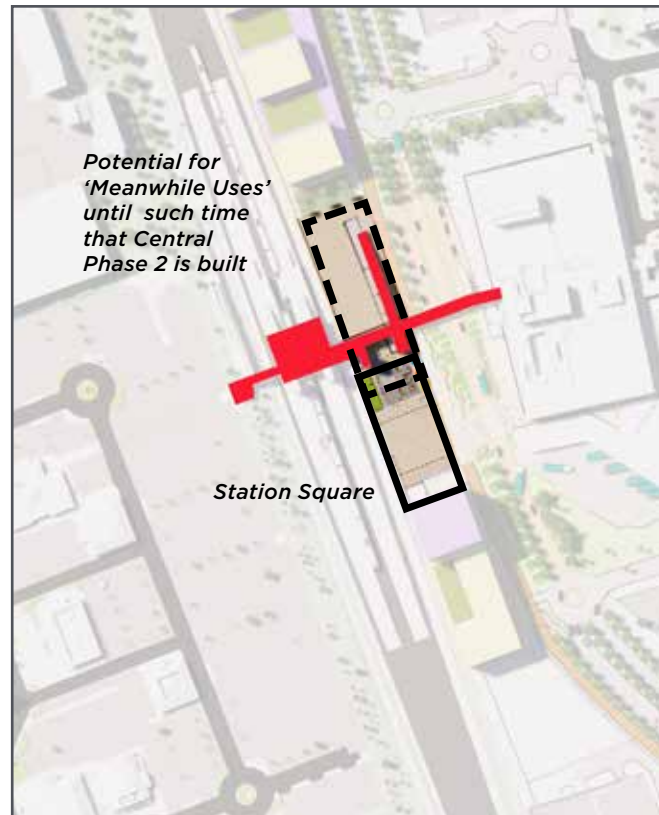
South development



Central Phase 1 exploded levels diagram

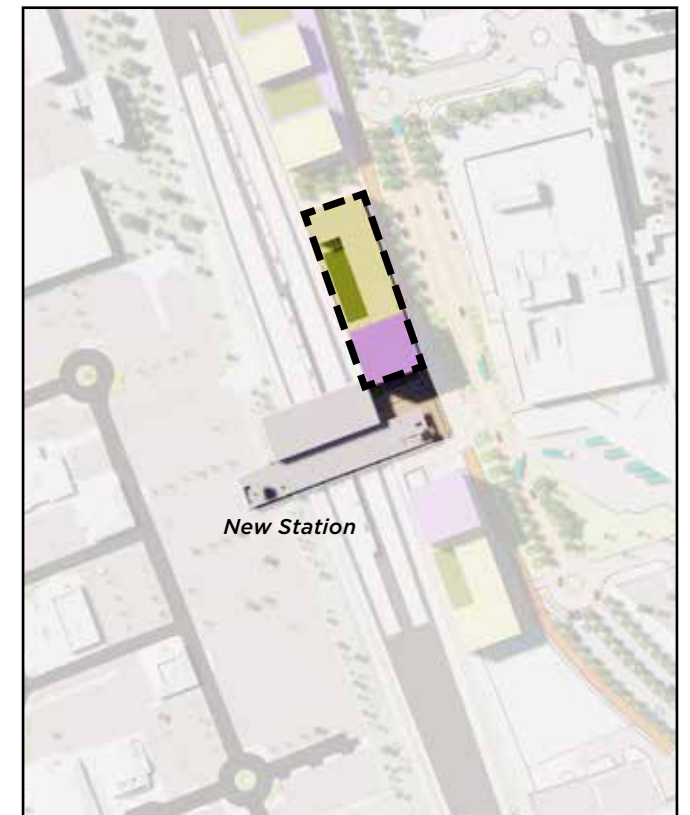
- Car Park
- Residential
- Office
- Commercial
- Basement / Plant

- Station Square:** Whilst this is designated as a longer-term development site, primarily being occupied by a new rail station building it will also form part of the public realm that will define the arrival into Stevenage. Until such time that the rail station is built the site will perform an important role in being the arrival and departure space for Stevenage. As such this should be a well-designed space that will be of high quality and act as an extension of the regeneration of the town centre. The design of the space will need to be designed so that it can accommodate a new rail station building or entrance in part of the space. The design of the space is also a perfect opportunity to support 'Meanwhile Uses' that can evolve and change over time. This could also play a role in supporting SBC's Arts and Cultural Strategy.

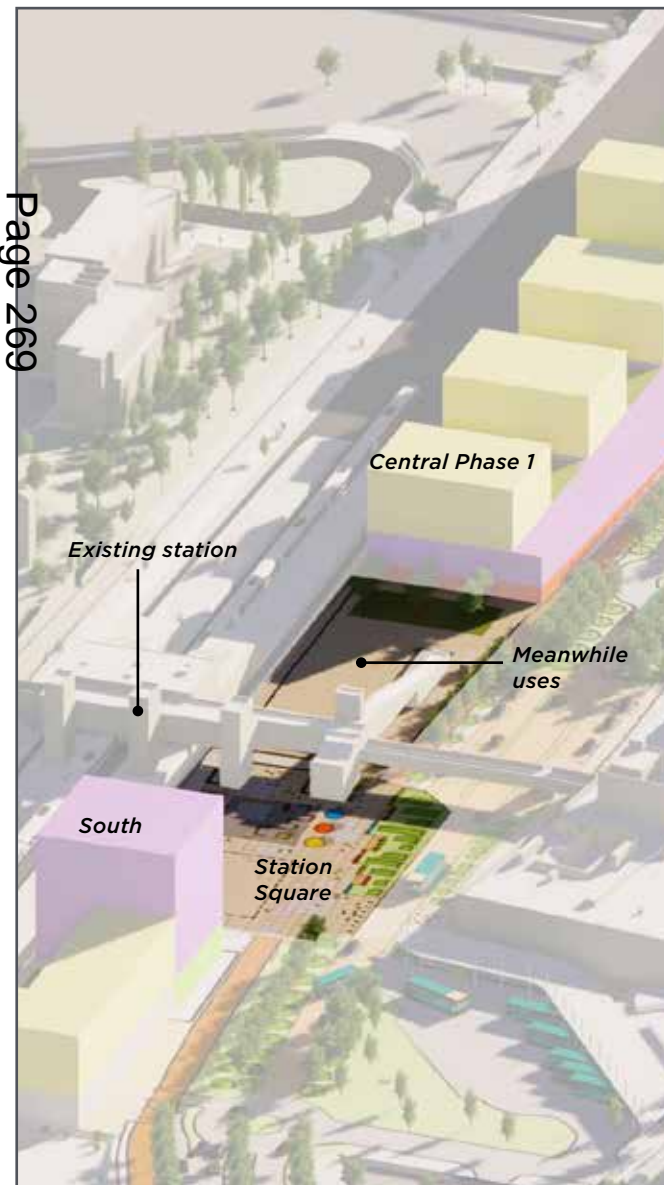


Station Square plan location

- Central [Phase 2]:** this is a longer-term development option that will frame the new public space after a potential new station building is constructed [it would be built largely on the area occupied by the existing rail station]. As such it will have intensive mixed-use, including a vibrant ground floor with retail, café's and other active uses. Above this office uses would successfully capitalise on the highly accessible location. As it is located to the north of the public square, a landmark or feature tower would be appropriate.



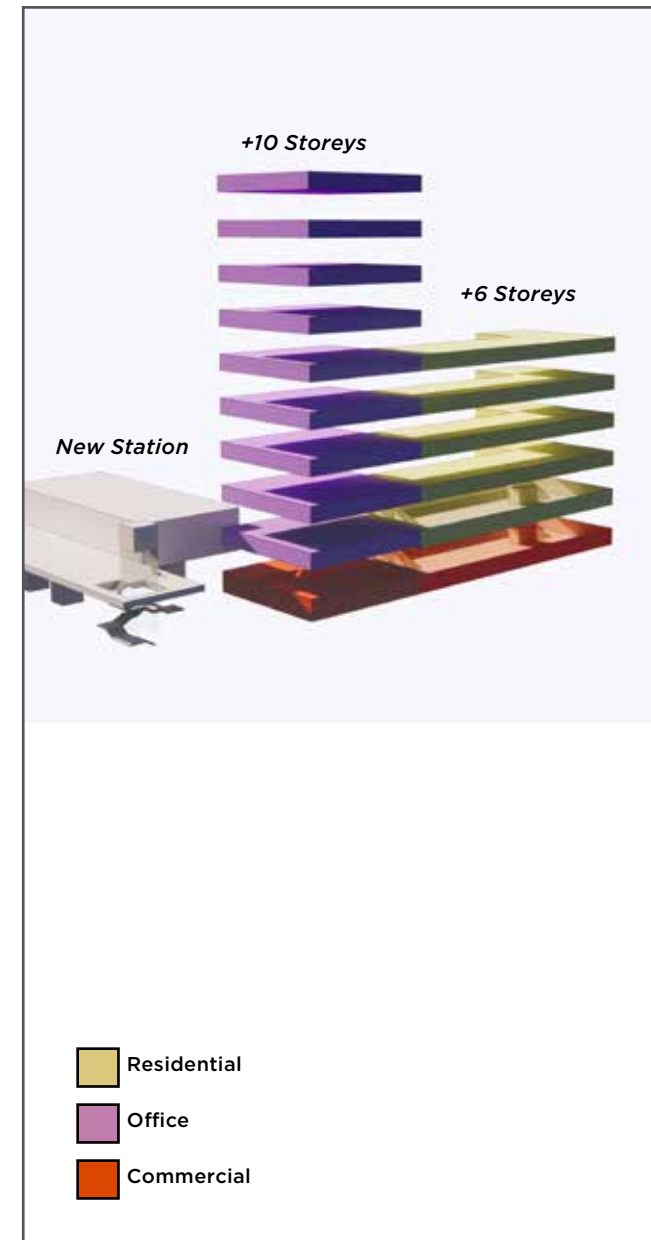
Central Phase 2 plan location



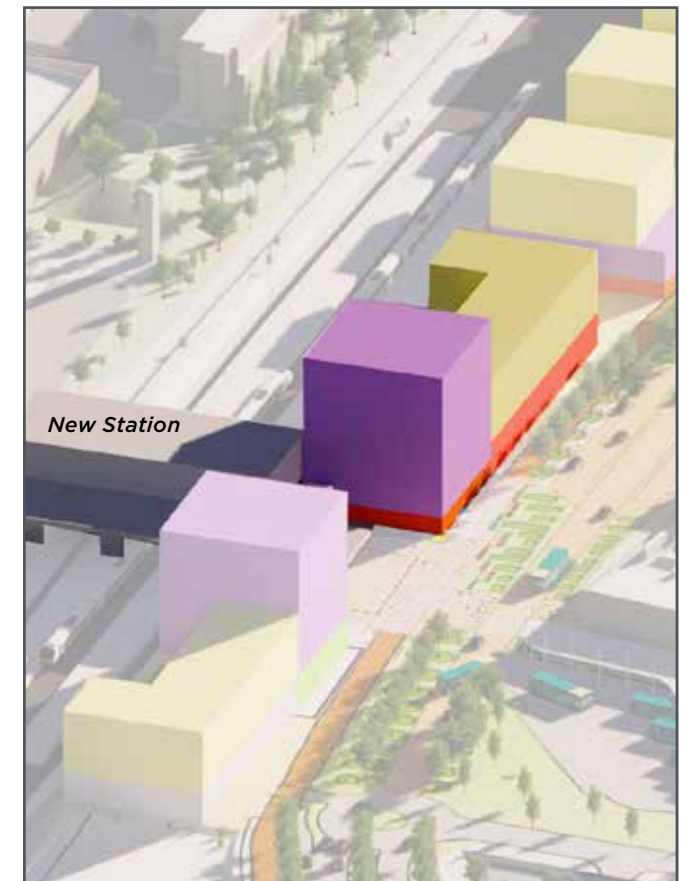
Plan showing Station Square and 'meanwhile uses' area prior to moving the railway station



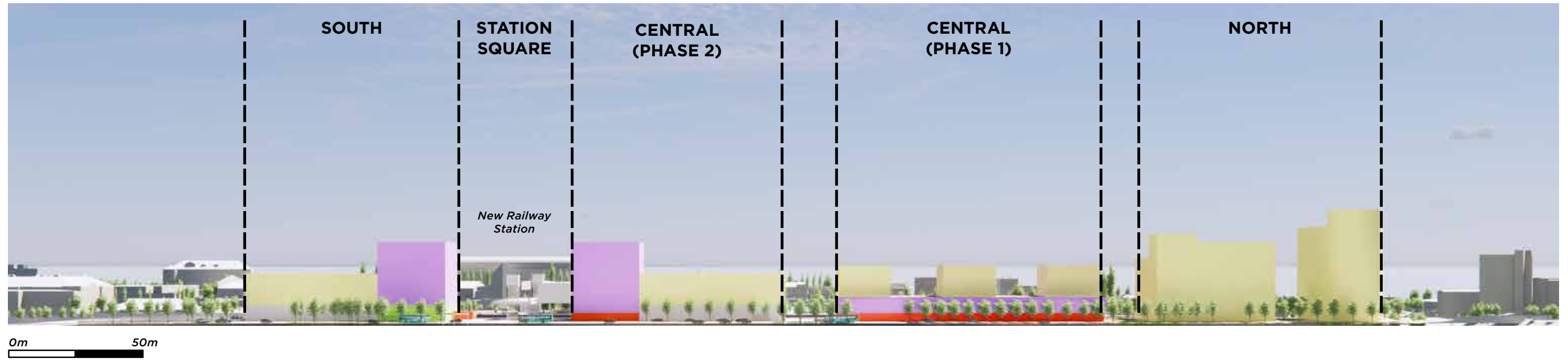
Plan showing new railway station in situ with completion of Central Phase 2 development phase



Central Phase 2 exploded levels diagram



Central Phase 2 development



Perspective view of station area 1



Perspective view of station area 2

Parking Consolidation

The surface car parks adjacent to the railway station provide around 450 parking spaces, and are typically well-used. Consolidation of the existing surface parking will be an essential component of delivering the objectives of the AAP.

Key considerations that should be followed when developing car parking proposals:

- Development phasing should ensure that the first existing surface car park brought forward for development should provide sufficient parking that either replaces the parking displaced, or a comprehensive multi-storey car park (MSCP) that replaces all station car parking that will be displaced across North, Central and South development parcels in due course.
- MSCPs require a significant vehicle access, ideally onto a roundabout or controlled junction, and should be considered carefully in conjunction with the circulation proposals presented earlier in this document.
- MSCPs should be screened by single-aspect development or ground-floor uses to preserve the streetscape and active frontage
- Assuming two double rows of car parking, each at 16m wide, a 4 storey multi-storey car park of length 70m would provide full replacement of the existing station parking places. This is approximately two-thirds of the length of the Station South car park, demonstrating the efficiency of multi-storey parking.
- New development such as residential uses and offices may require additional car parking provision, but this should be limited due to the excellent sustainable transport accessibility of the location. Basement parking is likely to be appropriate for these uses.

A location for a new comprehensive MSCP is being progressed:

- Station North car park – within Central (phase 1) parcel



07 CONCLUSIONS AND FEEDBACK

07 CONCLUSIONS AND FEEDBACK

This report outlines the core issues that are present within the station area as well as the background policy and wider context that affects its development. This is an early stage of the preparation of an AAP, and initial options that focus on mobility are presented for feedback from targeted stakeholders.

Stakeholder Feedback

This report will be circulated to key stakeholders who operate within and around the area covered by the AAP. It seeks targeted feedback from these stakeholders on the following topics set out in Chapter 6:

- The Enhancements for All Options
- Each of the Central Area Options (1, 2 and 3), with a particular focus on issues and opportunities raised by the different mobility options
- The Cycle Path Options (1 and 2)
- Phasing approaches

In addition to these, this stage of the process seeks informal thoughts and feedback on opportunities for and the form of Temporary Uses, Green Infrastructure and potential Development Options.

The next stage of the process of preparation of the AAP will be a formal public consultation on more developed options that have been influenced by feedback from this report.



Stevenage Borough Council

Station Connection Area Action Plan

Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Statement

The Purpose of this Statement

This screening statement has been prepared to determine whether the proposed Station Connection Area Action Plan (AAP) should be subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the European Union Directive 2001/42/EC (SEA Directive) and the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SEA Regulations).

The purpose of the Station Connection AAP is to aid the effective implementation of policies in the Stevenage Borough Local Plan, adopted May 2019. Specifically, the AAP is being introduced to support:

- Policy TC4 – Station Gateway Major Opportunity Area

The AAP will be used as a material consideration in determining planning applications and will provide the basis for development to be taken forward, giving developers and stakeholders certainty as to detailed proposals for the area.

Strategic Environmental Assessment – Regulatory requirements

The basis for Strategic Environmental Assessment legislation is European Directive 2001/42/EC. This was transposed into English law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SEA Regulations). Detailed guidance of these regulations can be found in the Government publication '[A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive](#)' (ODPM, 2005) and [Paragraph 11- 008 of the Planning Practice Guidance](#) (PPG), which states that "a sustainability appraisal should be prepared for any of the documents that can form part of a local plan, including core strategies site allocation documents and area action plans".

Under the requirements of the European Union Directive 2001/42/EC and Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (2004), certain types of plans that set the framework for the consent of future development projects, must be subject to an environmental assessment.

The objective of Strategic Environmental Assessment is to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development.

The 2001 Directive has been updated a number of times, with the most recent Directive issued in April 2014. While Article numbers cited in the 2005 guidance have been updated/removed, the principle of determining whether a Plan or Programme will have likely significant effects on the environment remain the same. Therefore, this screening statement uses the only Government guidance available.

The Strategic Environmental Appraisal Process

The first stage of the process is for the Council to determine whether or not the AAP is likely to have significant effects on the environment. This screening process includes assessing the AAP against a set of criteria (as set out in Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations). The results of this are set out in [Appendix 1](#) of this statement. The aim of this statement is therefore to provide sufficient information to demonstrate whether the AAP is likely to have significant environmental effects.

The Council also has to consult the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England on this screening statement. A final determination cannot be made until the three statutory consultation bodies have been consulted.

Where the Council determines that a SEA is not required, Regulation 9(3) of the SEA Regulations states that the Council must prepare a statement setting out the reasons for this determination. This statement is the draft statement produced by the Council.

Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment?

There is a statutory requirement to undertake a SA appraisal of AAPs. The Council has considered whether an SA might be required. The AAP does not create new policies and verifies existing requirements to help support policies in the Local Plan. The AAP is therefore unlikely to have significant environmental, social or economic effects beyond those of the Local Plan policies which were subject to a comprehensive SA process, incorporating SEA, as part of the Local Plan production requirements.

The Council is required to consider Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). HRA is the process used to determine whether a plan or project would have significant adverse effects on the integrity of internationally designated site of nature conservation importance, known as European sites. The need for a HRA is set out within the [Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010](#), which transposed EC Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC into UK law. A HRA Appropriate Assessment Screening Document was produced during Local Plan preparation and concluded that no policies in the Local Plan would have a likely significant effect of the closest SPA at the Lee Valley, nor it's associated SSSI at Rye Meads.

Copies of the SA and HRA documents for the Local Plan are available here:

<http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/149690/planning-policy/90175/>

Conclusion

On the basis of the screening process, the Council believes that the Station Connection AAP does not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (or Sustainability Appraisal or Habitats Regulations Assessment). This is due to the lack of significant environmental, social or economic effects arising from its implementation above and beyond those of the Local Plan policies which have already been appropriately assessed.

Appendix 1

A Practical Guide to the SEA Directive, ODPM 2005

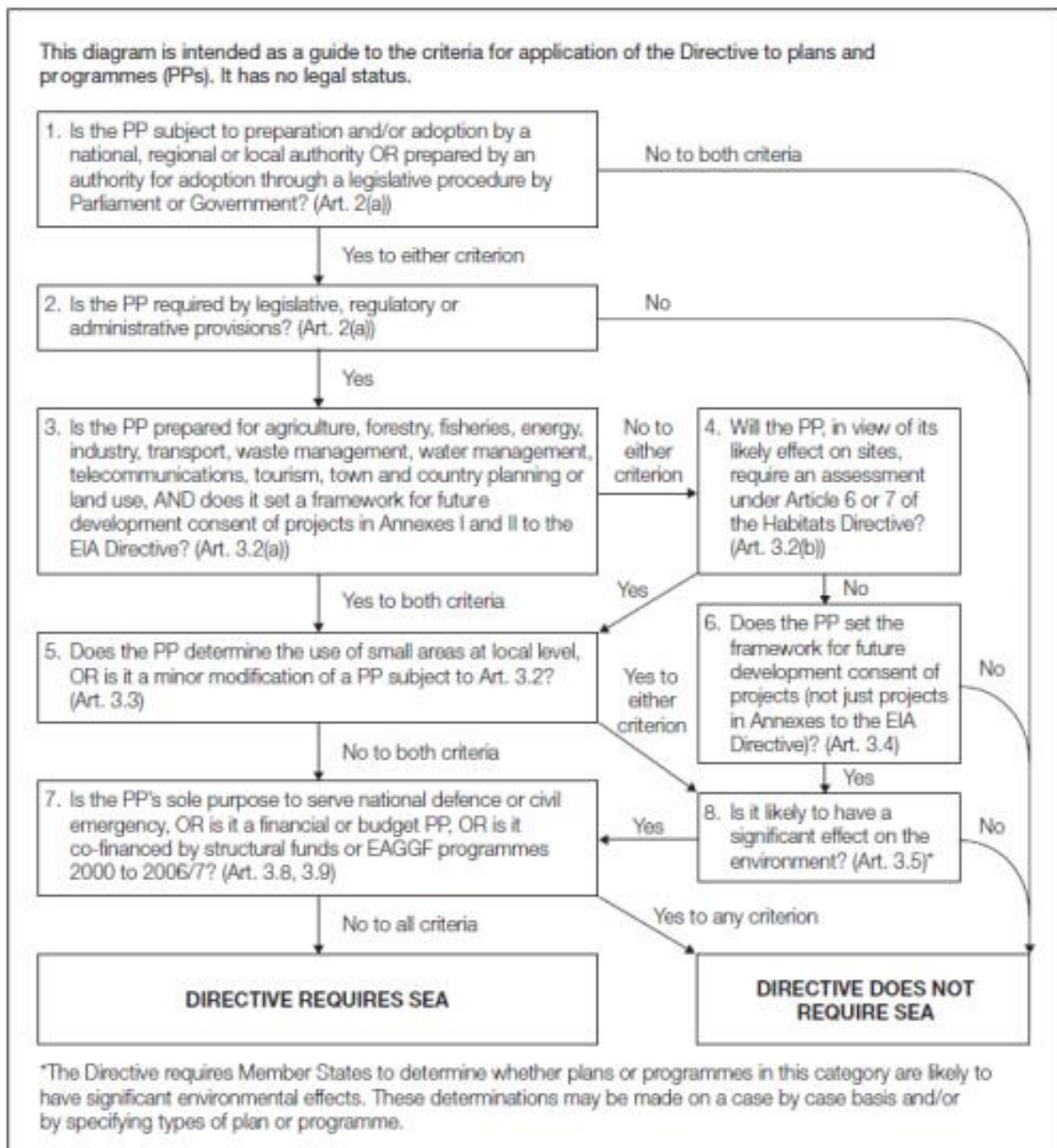


Table 1: Establishing whether these is a need for SEA

Stage	Yes/No	Assessment
1. Is the PP (plan or programme) subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government? (Art. 2(a))	Yes to either criterion: proceed to question 2	Yes, the AAP has been prepared by SBC to provide additional detail to polices contained in the adopted Local Plan (2019)
2. Is the PP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))	Yes: proceed to question 3	Yes, the AAP will become a material consideration upon adoption and is referred to in the adopted Local Plan (2019)
3. Is the PP prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive? (Art 3.2(a))	Yes to both criterion: proceed to question 5	The AAP is prepared for the purpose of Town and Country Planning, to supplement policies in the adopted Local Plan (2019). Yes, the AAP sets a framework for developments that may require EIA although this AAP does not create new policy.
5. Does the PP determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of a PP subject to Art. 3.2? (Art. 3.3)	Yes to first criterion: proceed to question 8	The AAP supplements Local Plan policies relating to parking provision which can be a form of land use.
8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art. 3.5)	No	The AAP is not considered to have a significant effect on the environment. DIRECTIVE DOES NOT REQUIRE THE AAP TO UNDERGO SEA

SEA Directive Criteria (Schedule of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004)	Potential effects of AAP
1. Characteristic of the AAP having particular regard to:	
(a) the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources;	The AAP provides guidance on the requirement for development within the Town Centre boundary.
(b) the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;	The AAP sits alongside the Local Plan (adopted 2019) which was subject to SA incorporating SEA. It will influence plans for the Station Gateway Major Opportunity Area in an urban locations due to the underbound nature of Stevenage Borough.
(c) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;	The AAP provides additional guidance for meeting the development objectives of the adopted Local Plan (2019).
(d) environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme; and	The SA (inc. SEA) of the Local Plan identified a number of benefits arising from the Station gateway Major Opportunity Area policy. The AAP helps support the implementation of these policies.
(e) the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).	The AAP does not influence the implementation of community legislation on the environment.
2. Characteristics of the effect and area likely to be affected having particular regard to:	
(a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;	The AAP is not expected to give rise to any significant environmental effects.
(b) the cumulative nature of the effects;	There are no anticipated negative cumulative effects of the AAP.
(c) the trans-boundary nature of the effects;	The AAP is not expected to give rise to any significant cross-boundary environmental effects.
(d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents);	There are no anticipated negative effects of the AAP on human health.
(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	The AAP is not expected to give rise to any significant effects on population or geographical area.
(f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to— (i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; (ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or (iii) intensive land-use;	The AAP is not expected to affect any local natural characteristics or cultural heritage, and is not expected to lead to the exceedance of environmental standards or promote intensive land-use.
(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.	The AAP is not expected to have an effect on landscapes of national, community or international protection status.

Appendix 2

Responses from Statutory Consultees

Debbie Coates

From: SM-NE-Consultations (NE) <consultations@naturalengland.org.uk>
Sent: 28 January 2021 08:46
To: Debbie Coates
Subject: [External] Stevenage Area Action Plan - SEA Screening Opinion
Attachments: SA screening opinion - NE.pdf
Categories: Important

Dear Ms Coates

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Natural England does not consider that this Area Action Plan – SEA screening opinion poses any likely risk or opportunity in relation to our statutory purpose, and so does not wish to comment on this consultation.

The lack of comment from Natural England should not be interpreted as a statement that there are no impacts on the natural environment. Other bodies and individuals may wish to make comments that might help the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to fully take account of any environmental risks and opportunities relating to this document.

If you disagree with our assessment of this proposal as low risk, or should the proposal be amended in a way which significantly affects its impact on the natural environment, then in accordance with Section 4 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, please consult Natural England again.

Yours faithfully

Dawn Kinrade
Consultations Team
Operations Delivery
Natural England
Hornbeam House, Electra Way
Crewe, Cheshire, CW1 6GJ

Enquiries line: 0300 060 8349
Email: consultations@naturalengland.org.uk

www.gov.uk/natural-england

During the current coronavirus situation, Natural England staff are working remotely and from some offices to provide our services and support our customers and stakeholders.

Although some offices and our Mail Hub are now open, please continue to send any documents by email or contact us by phone to let us know how we can help you.

See the latest news on the coronavirus at <http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus> and Natural England's regularly updated operational update at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/operational-update-covid-19>.

Debbie Coates

From: Marsh, Andrew <Andrew.Marsh@HistoricEngland.org.uk>
Sent: 26 January 2021 12:02
To: Debbie Coates
Subject: [External] Re: Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan – Sustainability Appraisal (SA)/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Opinion

Importance: High

Categories: Important

Dear Debbie

Re: Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan – Sustainability Appraisal (SA)/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Opinion

Thank you for consulting Historic England on the draft SEA Screening Statement for the Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan. As the Government's adviser on the historic environment, Historic England is keen to ensure that the protection of the historic environment is fully taken into account at all stages and levels of the local planning process. We have reviewed the draft SEA Screening Statement and agree with the Council's conclusion that Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required in this instance.

Summary

We hope that the above comments are of assistance, and are very happy to look at and comment on any future drafts if this would assist the Council. Finally, we'd like to stress that and we have not looked at the consultation document exhaustively, and that this opinion is based on the information provided by the Council in its consultation. To avoid any doubt, this does not affect our obligation to provide further advice and, potentially, object to specific proposals, which may subsequently arise where we consider that these would have an adverse effect upon the historic environment.

Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards

Andrew Marsh BSc MA MRTPI
Historic Environment Planning Adviser
Development Advice | East of England
Historic England
Mobile: 07557 828181
Direct line: 01223 582734

Historic England
Brooklands | 24 Brooklands Avenue | Cambridge | CB2 8BU
www.historicengland.org.uk



Historic England

Follow us on Twitter at [@HE_EoE](https://twitter.com/HE_EoE)

Debbie Coates

From: HNL Sustainable Places <HNLsustainablePlaces@environment-agency.gov.uk>
Sent: 19 January 2021 14:36
To: Debbie Coates
Subject: [External] RE: SEA screening Opinion

Dear Debbie

Thank you for consulting us on the draft Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Opinion for the Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan.

We are a statutory consultee in the SEA process and aim to reduce flood risk and protect and enhance the water environment. Based on our review of the draft screening statement, we agree with the environmental issues that have been included and do not have any further comments to make.

Kind regards

Hannah Malyon MSc
Planning Advisor, Hertfordshire and North London Sustainable Places
Environment Agency | Alchemy, Bessemer Road, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire, AL7 1HE

HNLsustainablePlaces@environment-agency.gov.uk

☎ 02084 749666

Pronouns: she/her ([why is this here?](#))

Working days: Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm



**Creating a better place
for people and wildlife**



Does Your Proposal Have Environmental Issues or Opportunities? Speak To Us Early!

If you're planning a new development, we want to work with you to make the process as smooth as possible. We offer a bespoke advice service where you will be assigned a project manager who will be a single point of contact for you at the EA, giving you detailed specialist advice. This early engagement can significantly reduce uncertainty and delays to your project. More information can be found on our website [here](#).

From: Debbie Coates [mailto:Debbie.Coates@stevenage.gov.uk]
Sent: 18 January 2021 11:00
To: HNL Sustainable Places
Subject: SEA screening Opinion

Dear all,

Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan: Issues and Options Report Consultation Questions

APPENDIX C

Chapter	Section	Page*	Question
1	Introduction	6–7	1. Do you have any comments on Chapter 1 – Introduction?
2	Background	10–13	2. Do you have any comments on Chapter 2 – Background?
3	Setting the Context	16–19	3. Do you have any comments on Chapter 3 – Setting the Context?
4	Issues and Challenges	22–31	4. Do you have any comments on Chapter 4 – Issues and Challenges?
5	Existing Environment	34–35	5. Do you have any comments on Chapter 5 – Existing Environment?
6	Emerging Framework	38	6. Do you have any comments on the Objectives, outlined in Chapter 6 – Emerging Framework?
6	Emerging Framework	39	7. Do you have any comments on the Key Principles, outlined in Chapter 6 – Emerging Framework?
6	Emerging Framework	40–49	8. Do you have any comments on the Core Enhancements, outlined in Chapter 6 – Emerging Framework?
6	Emerging Framework	41	9. Do you have any comments on Central Area (Option 0), outlined in Chapter 6 – Emerging Framework?
6	Central Area (Option 1)	50–53	10. Do you have any comments on Central Area (Option 1), outlined in Chapter 6 – Emerging Framework?
6	Central Area (Option 2)	54–57	11. Do you have any comments on Central Area (Option 2), outlined in Chapter 6 – Emerging Framework?
6	Central Area (Option 3)	58–61	12. Do you have any comments on Central Area (Option 3), outlined in Chapter 6 – Emerging Framework?
6	Central Area (Preferred Option)	50–61	13. Please indicate your Preferred Option for the Central Area and state your reasons for choosing this Option (or combination of Options / other Options, if appropriate).
6	Central Area (Additional Options)	50–61	14. Please let us know of any other suggestions regarding the Central Area Options.
6	Cycle Path Options (Potential Layout 1)	62	15. Do you have any comments on Cycle Path (Potential Layout 1), outlined in Chapter 6 – Emerging Framework?
6	Cycle Path Options (Potential Layout 2)	63	16. Do you have any comments on Cycle Path (Potential Layout 2), outlined in Chapter 6 – Emerging Framework?
6	Cycle Path (Preferred Option)	62–63	17. Please indicate your Preferred Option for the Cycle Path Potential Layout and state your reasons for choosing this Option (or combination of Options / other Options, if appropriate).
6	Cycle Path (Additional Options)	62–63	18. Please let us know of any other suggestions regarding the Cycle Path Options.
6	Phasing and Temporary Use	64–65	19. Do you have any comments on Phasing and Temporary Use, outlined in Chapter 6 – Emerging Framework?
6	Greening the Grey	68	20. Do you have any comments on Greening the Grey, outlined in Chapter 6 – Emerging Framework?

6	Using Development to Make a Place	69	21. Do you have any comments on Using Development to Make a Place, outlined in Chapter 6 – Emerging Framework?
6	Development Parcels	70–79	22. Do you have any comments on the indicative Development Parcels, outlined in Chapter 6 – Emerging Framework?
6	Parking Consolidation	80	23. Do you have any comments on Parking Consolidation, outlined in Chapter 6 – Emerging Framework?
7	Conclusions and Feedback	84	24. Do you have any comments on Chapter 7 – Conclusions and Feedback?
General	General Comments	–	25. What are the main issues with Stevenage Railway Station at the moment, in your view?
General	General Comments	–	26. Do you think Lytton Way works well as a main road route alongside Stevenage Railway Station? What are the main problems with Lytton Way at the moment, in your view?
General	General Comments	–	27. Do you think the existing cycleway alongside the Station works well? If no, what are the issues with it?
General	General Comments	–	28. What improvements would you like to see made at Stevenage Railway Station?
General	General Comments	–	29. What improvements to Lytton Way would you like to see?
General	General Comments	–	30. How would you improve connections between the Railway Station, Lytton Way and the Town Centre?
General	General Comments	–	31. Do you have any suggested improvements to walking and cycling to and from the Railway Station?
General	General Comments	–	32. Do you have any suggested improvements to walking and cycling through the Railway Station to other destinations?
			33. Any ideas for what types of developments could replace the surface level car parks around the Railway Station?
			34. Do you have any other suggestions for improvements to the Railway Station, Lytton Way and access to and from the Railway Station?
General	General Comments	–	35. Do you have any other / general comments to make on the Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan: Issues and Options Report?
SEA Screening	General Comments	–	36. Do you have any comments on the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening report that accompanies the Area Action Plan?

Stevenage Borough Council

**Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan
Issues and Options (2021)**

Consultation Statement

12 July 2021 – 5 September 2021

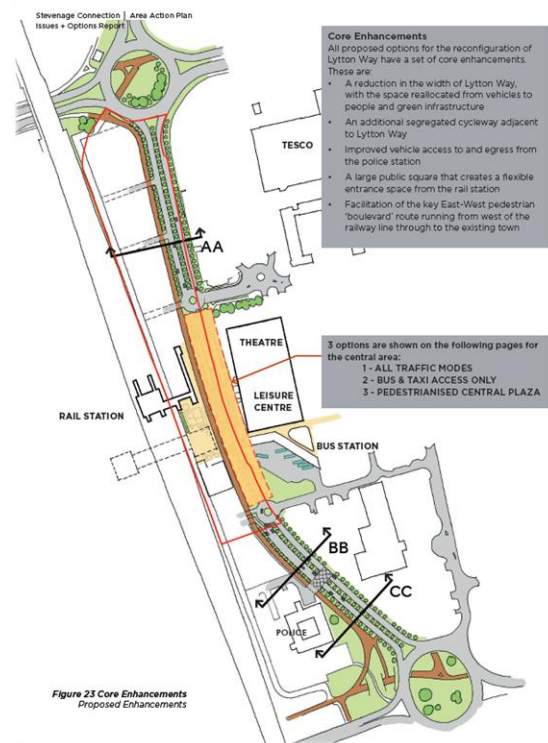


Executive Summary

The Issues and Options Report for the Station Connection Area Action Plan was published for consultation in July 2021. The aim of the report is to develop a sustainable solution for the area around Stevenage Station and improve accessibility and create a sense of arrival whilst supporting the promotion of sustainable forms of transport.

The report set out 4 options for the area adjacent to Stevenage Railway Station incorporating Lytton Way:

- **Option 0** – Do nothing
- **Option 1** – All traffic modes: reduces the central area of Lytton Way between Swingate and Danesgate to a single carriageway suitable for all modes of traffic
- **Option 2** – Bus and Taxi only: reduces the central area of Lytton Way between Swingate and Danesgate to a single carriageway and restricts movement to buses and taxis only
- **Option 3** – Pedestrianised Plaza: removes regular vehicle movement from the front of the station and Lytton Way ceases to be a through-route. An access through-route is retained for emergency vehicles needing to access and egress the station and immediate environs



During the Public Consultation period, officers received upwards of 300 individual representations on the Options set out in the report. These representations came from a variety of mechanisms that officers employed for consultation, including pop up consultation stalls at the Railway Station itself and in and around Stevenage Town Centre, social media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram) and our usual formal consultation procedure incorporating email and postal consultation.

The representations came from a combination of members of the public, statutory consultees and other interested parties.

Initially, Options 2 and 3 seem to be favoured by the public and consultees and there may be scope for these Options to be combined in some way. This will be assessed as part of the preparation of the Preferred Options Report.

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This document sets out how Stevenage Borough Council has undertaken consultation in the preparation of the Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan; Issues and Options stage. The statement provides an overview on the following:
- Who was invited to make representations;
 - How they were invited to do so;
 - Summaries of the main issues raised in the representations; and
 - Next steps for the Area Action Plan (AAP).
- 1.2 This consultation statement complies with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The document will be updated at each stage of the plan making process. It currently details consultation undertaken in relation to:
- Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan: Issues and Options consultation (2021)
- 1.3 The [Local Development Scheme](#) of Stevenage Borough has included the intention to prepare an AAP for this part of Stevenage since 2019 when the Local Plan was adopted. The current Stevenage Borough LDS (2020) continues to include the AAP as a Development Plan Document to be prepared.
- 1.4 The AAP was previously referred to as the Area Action Plan – Railway Station in the LDS; however, in order to reflect the more comprehensive vision being envisaged for the area, and the need to integrate development proposals in the area, the plan has been renamed the Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan.
- 1.5 The adopted Stevenage Borough Local Plan (2019) includes policy allocating land in the area of the railway station for high quality mixed use development, including an extended and regenerated train station, new bus station, high density housing, new multi-storey car parking and new office and retail premises. Revitalisation of the area will be focussed on the updated and enhanced sustainable transport interchange through the development of the new bus station and the regeneration of the train station. The AAP is being developed and involves close collaborative work with Hertfordshire County Council and other stakeholders in the area.
- 1.6 Preparation of the AAP commenced in 2020. The Issues and Options Report was published for consultation in July 2021. Responses to the consultation will be reported to Executive in early 2022.

2 Pre-Public Consultation

- 2.1 Prior to the Issues and Options Report being circulated for public consultation, the report went through some internal consultation and also the constitutional process.
- 2.2 The Report was presented to Stevenage Borough Council chief officers and Members at the following meetings:
- SLT 12 January 2021
 - Clearance Board 22 January 2021
 - Planning and Development Committee 3 February 2021
 - Executive 10 February 2021
 - Overview and Scrutiny Committee 17 February 2021
 - Key stakeholder discussions March – April 2021
 - Stevenage Development Board 13 May 2021
- 2.3 A summary of the comments made in those meetings and other general comments are set out below.

Name/Organisation	Comments	SBC Response
HCC Highways	<i>Bike path options – user experience is a key challenge.</i>	Noted – to be considered further in Issues & Options draft.
HCC Highways	<i>Highways modelling related to the Lytton Way scenarios needs to be developed.</i>	SBC will be working with HCC to produce a report detailing projected impact of the Lytton Way scenarios and model effect on traffic flows.
SLT	<i>Reference to Climate Change and R&D should be made.</i>	Noted – to be included in Issues & Options draft.
Planning & Development Committee	<i>Consultation methods need to go beyond the standard planning policy consultation.</i>	Noted – officers will consider interactive methods of consultation to engage the wider public.
Executive	<i>Accessibility – level access is vital as is the recognition of the need to significantly improve disabled access to the Railway Station.</i>	Noted – additional wording will be reflected in the Issues & Options draft.
O&S	<i>Reference pedestrian crossings.</i>	Noted – will be reflected in the Issues & Options draft.
Key stakeholder discussions	<i>Bike path options – will be a challenge to remove the existing cycle path adjacent to the Station.</i>	Noted – will consider during the Issues & Options public consultation.
Stevenage Development Board	<i>It is important to reference heritage and culture where possible.</i>	Noted – will be reflected in the Issues & Options draft and considered further in AAP drafting.

3 Issues and Options Consultation (2021)

- 3.1 The Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan: Issues and Options report set out the main issues for the site and a series of possible options for its future development.
- 3.2 A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Scoping Report was published for consultation in accordance with the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive and Regulations. The consultation formally sought the views of a wide range of consultees, including the three statutory consultees: Historic England; Natural England; and the Environment Agency. The purpose of the consultation was to gauge the views of consultees on the defined scope of the SA and the proposed level of detail that should be included in the SA. The consultation period ran from 12 July until 5 September 2021.
- 3.3 The draft Issues and Options Report was prepared and approved for public consultation by Stevenage Borough Council Executive Committee on 10 February 2021.
- 3.4 An eight-week public consultation exercise was undertaken from 12 July until 5 September 2021. Representations were invited in respect of the Issues and Options Report and the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report. Representations could be made using an online consultation system linked to the Council website, alternatively, printed response forms were made available which could be posted or emailed to the Planning Policy Team.
- 3.5 The following methods of notification were used to publicise the consultation exercise.
- 3.6 Following approval by Executive in February 2021 and prior to the consultation period commencing, some early engagement and publicity was carried out to promote the forthcoming public consultation on the AAP. This engagement included:
- Discussions with key stakeholders to gauge early opinion, ahead of their submission of formal representations to the public consultation. At this stage, discussions were held with Sustrans, the Stevenage Cycling UK User Group, East Coast Mainline Authorities and internal colleagues at the Council.
 - A consultation video was produced, which highlighted the current issues with Stevenage Railway Station, Lytton Way and general connectivity and included a series of “fly-through” shots and images. The Planning Policy team procured a local firm, Pearldrop Ltd, to produce the video, which was published on various social media platforms, including the Council’s own YouTube channel – to promote the Area Action Plan consultation.
 - The video, while easily accessible online, was played on location at Stevenage Indoor Market, Stevenage Visitor Centre and other locations across the town.
 - A promotional leaflet and poster were produced and distributed around the town, to highlight that the public could “have their say” on proposals to shape Lytton Way and the wider Station Gateway area over Summer 2021.
 - Ensuring that the AAP consultation could align with the work programme of the broader Communications and Engagement Plan, managed and updated by the Communities & Neighbourhoods team. This was to ensure that the AAP could be added to any events / engagement with the neighbourhoods of Stevenage, to raise awareness as much as possible.

- Engagement with the wider public through “consultation stalls” at the Railway Station. Here, Council officers were present to listen to members of the public and discuss their views regarding the current issues that face the Station, Lytton Way and surrounding area, as well as inviting people to vote (via a colour chip coin) on their preferred option for the central section of Lytton Way.

3.7 The formal consultation consisted of:

- Publicity via the Stevenage Borough Council website and social media platforms (including the Council’s Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn pages).
- A link to the Council’s consultation interface, where the public were able to download the AAP and SEA Screening document and submit their observations and representations.
- The consultation interface included a series of “consultation questions”, designed to cover the varying aspects of the AAP and to generate comments on certain sections of the document, for example the cycle path options or general views on connectivity between the Railway Station and Lytton Way. This was primarily to ensure that the Council received responses on the document as a whole and not just, for example on the proposed options for Lytton Way. The questions were only answered in full by a small number of respondents. However, they proved useful in shaping public opinion across the consultation period and subsequent representations made.
- A series of more formal “key stakeholder meetings” were held virtually; two of the meetings were held in person at Daneshill House, with one meeting followed up by an officer-guided site visit of the AAP area.
- A press release and articles in the Comet newspaper relating to the AAP public consultation.
- Continuation of distribution of leaflets and posters publicising the public consultation. This included distribution at Stevenage Central Library, Daneshill House Reception and Stevenage Railway Station retail outlets.
- Continuation of engagement with the wider public via consultation stalls at the Railway Station and West Gate Shopping Centre, the Town Square and Stevenage Indoor Market.
- The Planning Policy team were assisted by the Communities & Neighbourhoods team and in particular, neighbourhood wardens, in promoting the Area Action Plan consultation across Stevenage to ensure a wide a response as possible.
- The Communities & Neighbourhoods team engaged with community interest groups on the AAP at events that were scheduled for Summer 2021, for example the Irish Centre Social in Bedwell in July 2021. This team placed leaflets and posters on various neighbourhood centre notice boards. This team also engaged with supermarkets and doctor’s surgeries on notice boards, to gauge views on the preferred options for Lytton Way.

3.8 A series of exhibition events were held during July and September 2021 at which Council Officers were in attendance to explain the various options and to answer questions. The events took place at the following venues:

- 6 July 2021 – Stevenage Railway Station
 - 27 July 2021 – Stevenage Railway Station
 - 28 July 2021 – Irish Network Stevenage Social, Bedwell Community Centre
 - 13 August 2021 – Stevenage Railway Station
 - 18 August 2021 – Stevenage Indoor Market
 - 25 August 2021 – Stevenage Westgate Shopping Centre
- 3.9 Copies of the Issues and Options Report were made available for inspection, along with supporting documents at the following locations:
- Stevenage Central Library
 - Stevenage Old Town Library
 - Council Office, Daneshill House, Danestrete
 - Online via the Councils website
- 3.10 Statutory consultees, including Duty to Co-operate Bodies and general consultation bodies as set out in Appendix 1 to this document were notified of the Issues and Options Report consultation by email or letter.
- 3.11 Representations received in respect of the consultation exercise are available to view in full on the Stevenage Borough Council consultation portal. A summary of the representations received is included in this statement.
- 3.12 A total of 9 meetings were held with the key stakeholder groups identified through the early engagement process when the AAP was first drafted and developed. These were as follows:
- Cycling UK Stevenage: 1st July 2021 (prior to public consultation launch)
 - Mace: 2nd July 2021 (prior to public consultation launch)
 - Hertfordshire LEP: 2nd July 2021 (prior to public consultation launch)
 - Hertfordshire County Council: 5th July 2021
 - Govia Thameslink Railway: 7th July 2021
 - Stevenage Bus Users Group: 9th July 2021
 - National Rail: 21st July 2021
 - Sustrans: 23rd July 2021
 - Legal & General: 11th August 2021

In addition, a site visit to the Station Gateway area was held with the Cycling UK Stevenage group on 23rd August 2021.

3.13 At each meeting, officers presented a set of PowerPoint slides to the stakeholder group detailing the Area Action Plan. The stakeholder group were then invited to comment on the content of the AAP from their perspective and comments recorded as part of the overall consultation response. Key issues arising from these meetings included:

Theme	Comments
Vision & Aspirations	<i>Generally supported to provide much needed transformation of this part of the town and to support activities at and around the Railway Station.</i>
Destination & Sense of Place	<i>Potential for exemplary buildings to showcase as a crucial destination. There is a big opportunity for this – this is the ultimate way forward for a sense of place in the area.</i>
Cycling	<i>Consideration needed for cycling past or through the Station, not just to and from it. People use the cycle route to commute and travel to places other than the Railway Station.</i> <i>In Stevenage, the cycle infrastructure in place is interesting. Usage is not as high as is currently interrupted by the pandemic. It would be useful to tie in with a programme of behavioural change, increasing the attractiveness of the network.</i> <i>In some places, the National Cycle Network is split. Signage would be beneficial and clear signage is a must.</i>
Connectivity & Movement	<i>Importance of the boulevard – link to Town Square, a way finder, offering a viewpoint, vista, and series of connection, and the importance of alignment to the Station.</i> <i>Further movement analysis could potentially be used to support any future options. A wider policy rationale could be developed to support a Preferred Option – good to keep in mind for a Preferred Options version of the AAP.</i>
Access	<i>Regarding the road bridge, there are key issues in terms of future access. Step grade drop needs to be part of the proposed solutions in the Preferred Options.</i>
Economy	<i>Grow on space element is important, for example relating to low carbon development.</i> <i>The AAP area could work well as a service industry for the aerospace and R&D cluster at Gunnels Wood, and / or supporting the emerging cell and gene cluster.</i> <i>There needs to be consideration of what businesses need in Stevenage and beyond. Need to link to inward investment and the Town Deal.</i>
Digital	<i>Digital incentives are also very important in this area going forward.</i>
Railway Station	<i>Entrance at grade is a priority.</i> <i>There is pressure on future possibilities for a new Station. This should consider how long this would take, the costs of intervention and</i>

Theme	Comments
	<i>implementation of an option needs to be recognised.</i>
Lytton Way Options	<p><i>Overall, the proposed Options have a positive level of support as they are transformative, positive and will result in a different feel around the Station. They will encourage further walking and cycling in the vicinity.</i></p> <p><i>Option 1 doesn't enable modal shift.</i></p> <p><i>Option 2 – work would need to be undertaken to set out what happens for traffic movements such as drop off, turning and movement.</i></p> <p><i>Option 2 & 3 – opens up the barrier of the ring road but will require detailed modelling and assessment. Will allow the Town Centre to expand, and the Leisure Centre.</i></p>

3.14 The consultation representations were reported to the committees listed below, the minutes of which can be viewed online. In summary, Members noted the responses and agreed that further work should be undertaken on developing the preferred options for the site.

- Planning & Development Committee – 31 January 2022
- Executive – 9 February 2022
- Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 15 February 2022

3.15 The responses received to the Issues and Options Report were used to inform the preparation of the Preferred Options Report.

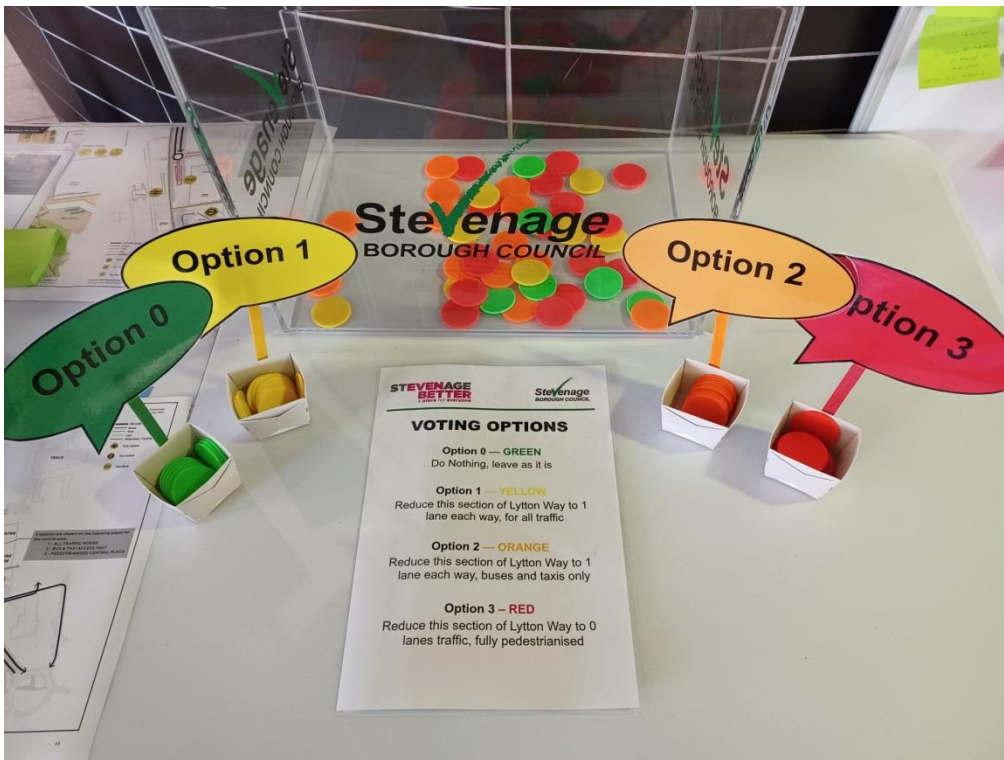
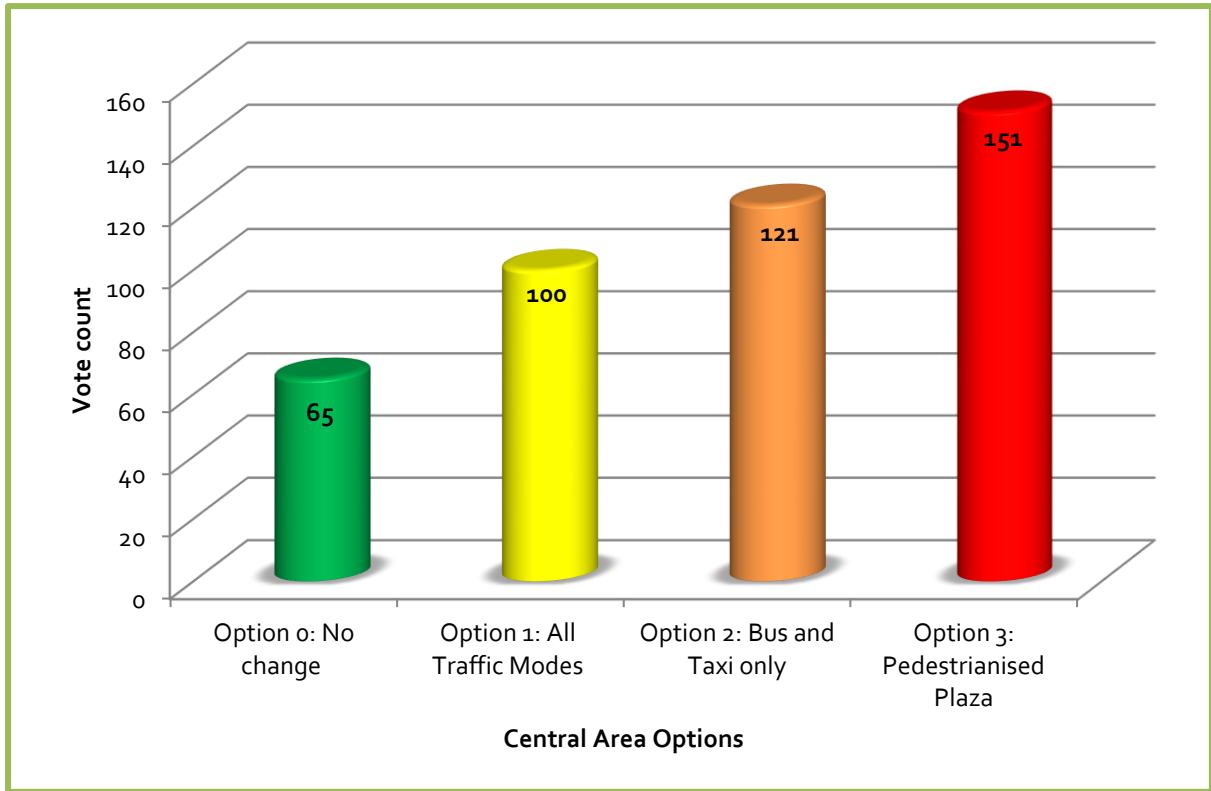
4 What were the main issues raised during the consultation?

4.1 The main topics raised during the consultation were:

- *Vision, ambitions, and aspirations of the AAP.*
- *Transport and highways improvements, in particular the cycle routes and proposed options to reconfigure Lytton Way.*
- *Active travel and sustainability.*
- *Safety and security.*
- *Public realm and sense of arrival at the Railway Station.*
- *Integration of culture, art and heritage.*
- *Traffic flow around the immediate area.*
- *Improved connection, wayfinding and signposting between the Bus Station and Train Station.*
- *Accessibility issues / disabled parking provision.*
- *A series of general comments.*

5 Votes and opinions

- 5.1 As part of the consultation, the Planning Policy team ran a series of “consultation stalls” at Stevenage Railway Station, the Indoor Market and West Gate Shopping Centre to gauge views on the public on the Area Action Plan, while having the indicative options for potential changes to Lytton Way on display.
- 5.2 Members of the public who visited the stalls were provided leaflets with more details regarding the Area Action Plan consultation and where to submit formal comments.
- 5.3 People were asked their general views about the Station in terms of arrival, their thoughts on Lytton Way alongside the Railway Station in its current use as well as about connections from the Railway Station through to the Town Centre and other areas of the town.
- 5.4 People were given an opportunity to express their comments via post-it notes and marking out of 10 on a tally chart, regarding Station arrival, Lytton Way and connectivity.
- 5.5 The main part of the consultation stalls involved the public being invited to vote for their preferred option for Lytton Way by taking chip coins and placing in a Perspex box, with different colour chip coins representing the 4 different options.
- 5.6 Officers asked members of the public to vote for their preferred option, as set out in the Issues and Options Report, as part of the stall events, at the Irish Network Stevenage Social as well as at community centre and neighbourhood notice boards, notice boards at some of the Living Schemes, supermarkets, town centre shops and doctor surgeries.
- 5.7 The early phase of the consultation was held before COVID-19 restrictions in England were eased (on 19th July 2021); all appropriate measures were taken to ensure that public engagement was COVID-secure as much as possible. For example, provision of hand sanitisers at consultation stalls and masks worn when appropriate.
- 5.8 Officers received a total of 437 chip coin votes. The votes are shown overleaf:



5.9 There is a clear appetite for change in the Station Gateway area and a more sustainable change with public transport and pedestrianisation.

**CENTRAL AREA OPTION 2
BUS & TAXI ONLY**

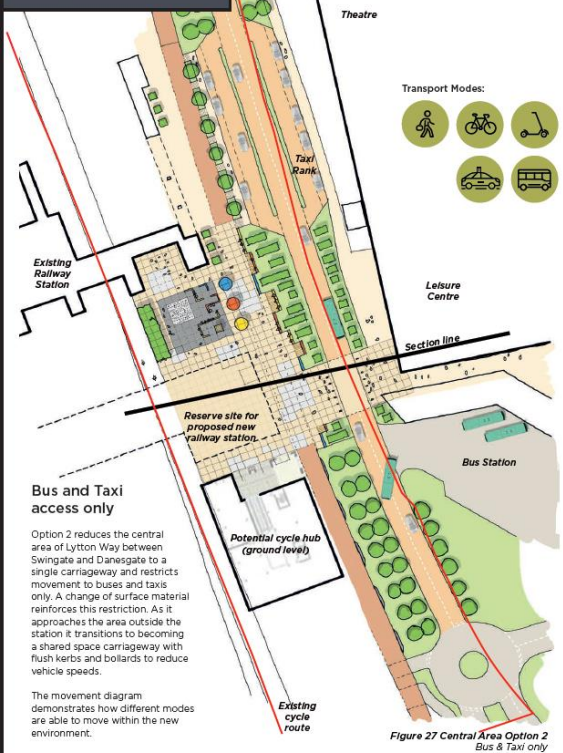


Figure 27 Central Area Option 2 Bus & Taxi only

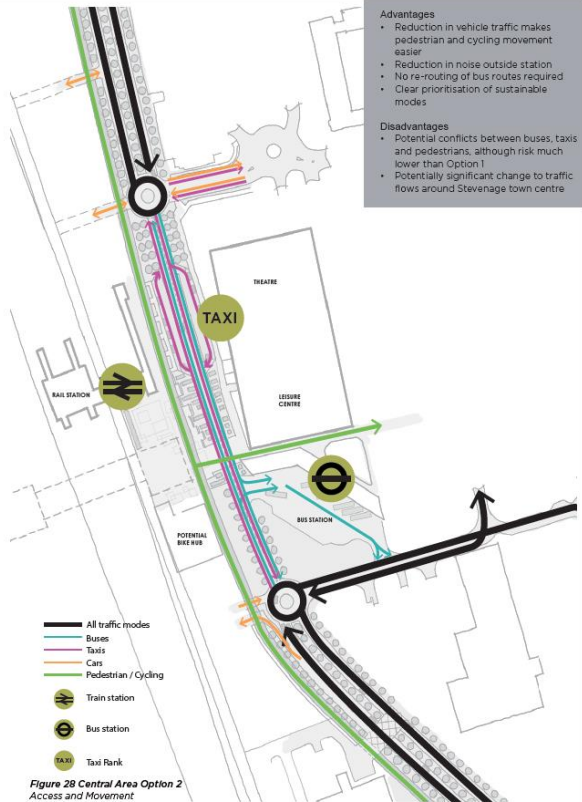


Figure 28 Central Area Option 2 Access and Movement

- Advantages**
- Reduction in vehicle traffic makes pedestrian and cycling movement easier
 - Reduction in noise outside station
 - No re-routing of bus routes required
 - Clear prioritisation of sustainable modes
- Disadvantages**
- Potential conflicts between buses, taxis and pedestrians, although risk much lower than Option 1
 - Potentially significant change to traffic flows around Stevenage town centre

**CENTRAL AREA OPTION 3
PEDESTRIANISED PLAZA**

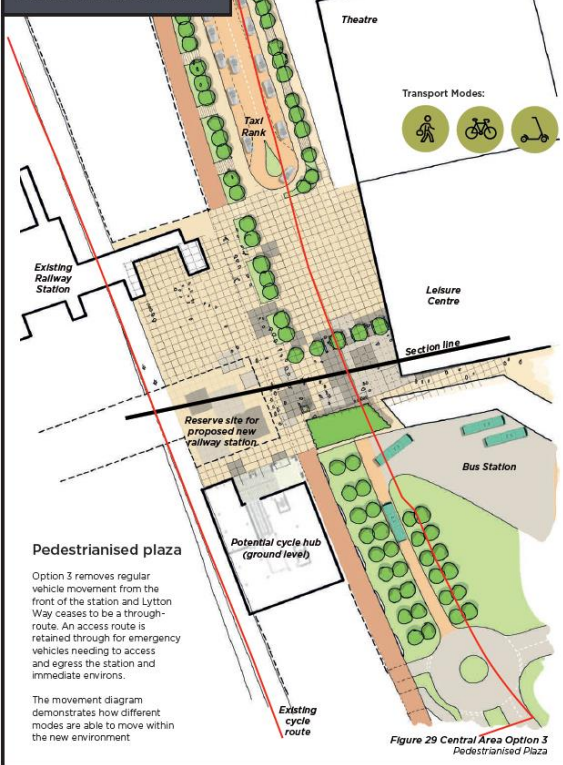


Figure 29 Central Area Option 3 Pedestrianised Plaza

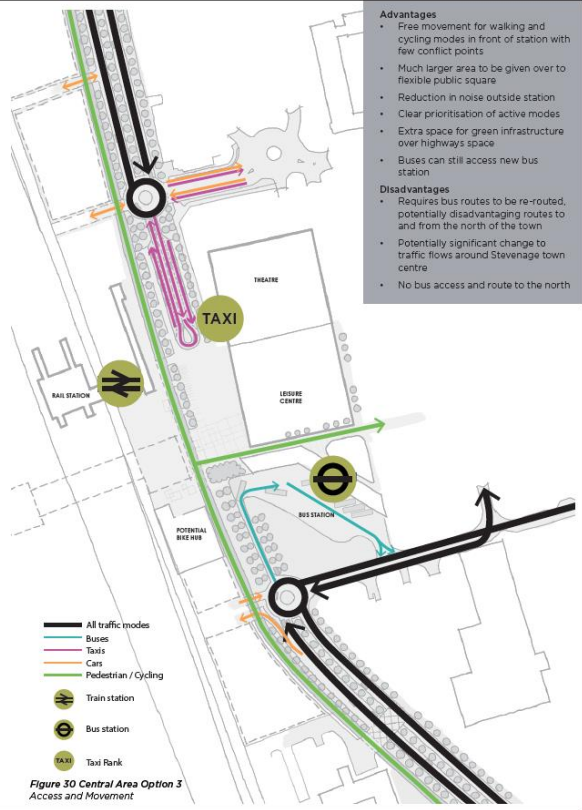
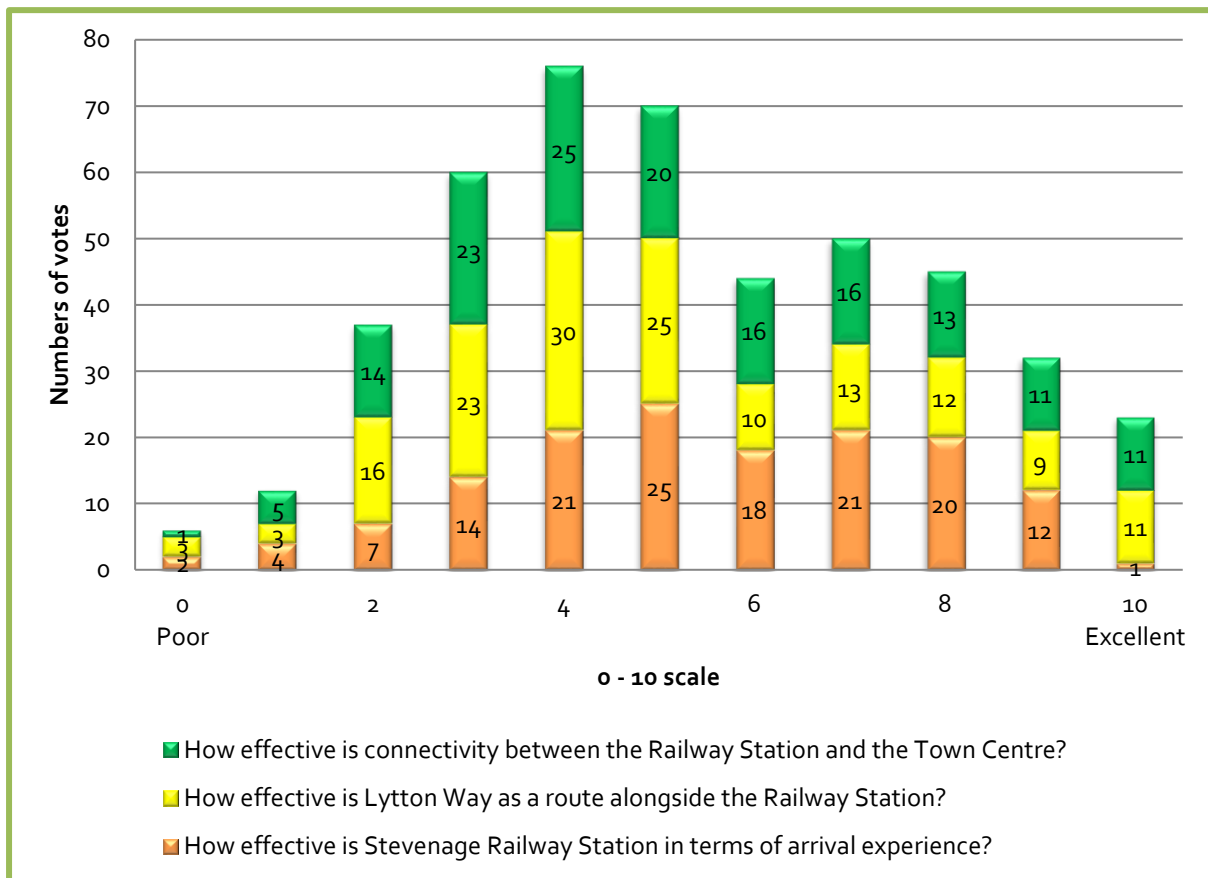


Figure 30 Central Area Option 3 Access and Movement

- Advantages**
- Free movement for walking and cycling modes in front of station with few conflict points
 - Much larger area to be given over to flexible public square
 - Reduction in noise outside station
 - Clear prioritisation of active modes
 - Extra space for green infrastructure over highways space
 - Buses can still access new bus station
- Disadvantages**
- Requires bus routes to be re-routed, potentially disadvantaging routes to and from the north of the town
 - Potentially significant change to traffic flows around Stevenage town centre
 - No bus access and route to the north

5.10 Officers also asked the public’s opinion of current experiences of the Station Gateway area. Officers received a total of 100 votes. These opinions are set out below.



5.11 It is clear that the effectiveness of the experience in the Station Gateway area is currently not particularly positive, with the majority of the votes being in the 3 – 5 range on a scale of 0 (poor) to 10 (excellent).

5.12 There is clearly a public appetite to improve the effectiveness and functionality of the Station Gateway Area in Stevenage.

6 How has the Council responded to these Issues and Options?

6.1 A complete schedule of consultation responses, the Council’s response to the comments is provided overleaf.

6.2 The opinions and views of the public will be considered when officers work through the preferred options stage and this will then be subject to public consultation once again.

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Member of Public	I&O1	General comment	There will be too much traffic if the area is pedestrianised	We are awaiting the results of Hertfordshire Highways modelling and this will be considered prior to moving to the next stage of consultation
Member of Public	I&O2	General comment	Thoroughfare from north - where would this move to under option 1?	This would not be impacted by Option 1 if it were to be implemented.
Member of Public	I&O3	General comment	Traffic flow at the weekends (particularly to the South) will be significantly impacted.	We are awaiting the results of Hertfordshire Highways modelling and this will be considered prior to moving to the next stage of consultation
Member of Public	I&O4	General comment	Will traffic be re-directed along Gunnels Wood Road? Concerns as I live along the road and don't want additional traffic.	We are awaiting the results of Hertfordshire Highways modelling and this will be considered prior to moving to the next stage of consultation
Member of Public	I&O5	General comment	Bus station will significantly improve connection to public transport from the station.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O6	General comment	Will there be a pedestrian crossing to the bus station?	The new Bus Interchange will make provision for at-grade pedestrian crossing; this will be considered when designing the Preferred Option on the AAP.
Member of Public	I&O7	General comment	Connection to the current bus station could be better.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O8	General comment	There should be dedicated bays at the bus station, like at Luton Airport.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O9	General comment	Position of the bus stop next to the station needs looking at.	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Member of Public	I&O10	General comment	Older people need to be considered - the distance from the bus station and the town centre has increased.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O11	General comment	Create an underpass similar to Gunnels Wood Road to keep the traffic flow.	The cost of such a project would make the project unviable
Member of Public	I&O12	General comment	Build a bridge from the bus station to the train station.	The cost of such a project would make the project unviable
Member of Public	I&O13	General comment	Elevated road? Flyover? Would be losing an important part of town with these options, we need traffic going through.	The cost of such a project would make the project unviable
Member of Public	I&O14	General comment	The road should be solely for buses.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O15	General comment	Don't prioritise buses and taxis - combine options 1 and 3.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O16	General comment	Cycle Hub would be useful. Link up to a major transport hub/active travel.	A cycle hub is featured in options 1 - 3
Member of Public	I&O17	General comment	Free Parking as an incentive.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O18	General comment	Leave 2 lanes for traffic with 1 bus lane.	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Member of Public	I&O19	General comment	Access to station would be better at ground level as opposed to its current location.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O20	General comment	Option 1 - still need to have traffic flow on Lytton Way. Consider one way traffic flow?	We are awaiting the results of Hertfordshire Highways modelling and this will be considered prior to moving to the next stage of consultation
Member of Public	I&O21	General comment	Access to Tesco could be impacted if it's reduced to 1 lane.	We are awaiting the results of Hertfordshire Highways modelling and this will be considered prior to moving to the next stage of consultation
Member of Public	I&O22	General comment	Concerned about getting rid of the Stevenage Hall of Fame.	Noted. It is possible that this can be relocated elsewhere
Member of Public	I&O23	General comment	The ramp is useless and the lift is not DDA compliant - needs improvement	Noted
Member of Public	I&O24	General comment	Keen not to see any more light pollution.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O25	General comment	As a pedestrian, there are issues with ground level access to the town centre and bus station.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O26	General comment	Needs more disabled parking	Noted
Member of Public	I&O27	General comment	Better accessibility needed for disabled people coming from the bus station.	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Member of Public	I&O28	General comment	Disabled access challenges if option 3 is chosen.	Noted. Disabled access would be designed into the scheme
Member of Public	I&O29	General comment	Disabled access and position of the bus station near the train station is an issue.	Noted. Disabled access would be designed into the scheme
Member of Public	I&O30	General comment	What are the plans for commuter parking?	A MSCP is being proposed on the northern station carpark to facilitate additional commuter parking
Member of Public	I&O31	General comment	Accessibility at ground level? Will there be future station upgrades going forward?	It is understood that Network Rail as station upgrades scheduled in their future works programme
Member of Public	I&O32	General comment	Have traffic surveys of buses/taxis been undertaken and considered in the modelling?	We are awaiting the results of Hertfordshire Highways modelling and this will be considered prior to moving to the next stage of consultation
Member of Public	I&O33	General comment	Option 2 - will the taxi rank also be a drop off point?	Yes
Member of Public	I&O34	General comment	Where will the drop off area be for the train station?	Yes
Member of Public	I&O35	General comment	How will this impact both sides of Lytton Way?	We are awaiting the results of Hertfordshire Highways modelling and this will be considered prior to moving to the next stage of consultation
Member of Public	I&O36	General comment	How will the emergency services be affected? Can the police get to the Old Town quickly if pedestrianised?	Emergency access is proposed in Option 3

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Member of Public	I&O37	General comment	Need more EV charging points and car park provision at the station. Do the plans account for this?	A MSCP is being proposed on the northern station carpark to facilitate additional commuter parking. EV charging points would be included as part of this redevelopment
Member of Public	I&O38	General comment	Where will the Leisure Centre and Theatre go as part of these proposals?	The Leisure Centre and Theatre are not proposed to be moved as part of these proposals
Member of Public	I&O39	General comment	Bikes are being stolen from the bike racks. Will you consider active surveillance for this in the plans?	This is something that would be considered in the wider context of the area
Member of Public	I&O40	General comment	Option 3 is best for a new sense of arrival.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O41	General comment	This is a good opportunity to link the town centre regeneration to the station as it is currently fragmented.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O42	General comment	Need to be able to walk everywhere to keep people fit.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O43	General comment	Option 1 - improves link to town centre, there are alternative routes to drive.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O44	General comment	Station worker - Access to the rail station for services/working is vital.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O45	General comment	All options are good but need to seriously incorporate safety	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Member of Public	I&O46	General comment	Bulldoze the public toilets in the town centre - it doesn't help the sense of arrival.	Outside the remit of this Station Gateway Area
Member of Public	I&O47	General comment	Pedestrianise the Old Town/High Street.	Outside the remit of this Station Gateway Area
Member of Public	I&O48	General comment	People living in the town won't be using the services as much - is a café culture the thing we need in Stevenage?	Noted
Member of Public	I&O49	General comment	I know for a fact that they haven't got permission for the Bus Station. You're going to do what you want anyway.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O50	General comment	Town Square paving is a waste of money. Paving is slippery when wet and never clean.	Outside the remit of this Station Gateway Area
Member of Public	I&O51	General comment	Rail worker - we ideally need bus/taxi access to be maintained to the rail station.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O52	General comment	Go back to the old station site. We need the travellator back at the ramp to the taxi rank.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O53	General comment	Speed Cameras on Lytton Way.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O54	General comment	Better Toilet facilities.	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Member of Public	I&O55	General comment	Need for disabled parking.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O56	General comment	Bus Station is a long way from Tesco for elderly or those with mobility issues	Noted
Member of Public	I&O57	General comment	Where will the bus stops be?	The bus station is currently being built on the opposite side of Lytton Way to the Railway Station
Member of Public	I&O58	General comment	Park and Ride option would be welcomed.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O59	General comment	Use of SLL car park by commuters leading to no parking for SLL users.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O60	General comment	Talk of a production factory in the Town Centre? It was in the Comet?	Outside the remit of this Station Gateway Area
Member of Public	I&O61	General comment	Many at the Irish Centre don't use the Town Centre anymore as no decent shops and nothing to go there for.	Outside the remit of this Station Gateway Area
Member of Public	I&O62	General comment	Not enough done for / spent on communities.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O63	General comment	Electric scooters on the cycle ways and other pathways - speeding and dangerous driving. People feel unsafe.	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Member of Public	I&O64	General comment	I love this, actually feel optimistic about that whole area being revamped and modernised! Felt for years now that the Station needs a complete overhaul, it feels like one of the most awkward train stations.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O65	General comment	Have you seen that ramp for the new platform at the train station? It's actually criminal how Higley Pigley (sic) it is. I'd start with that. Oh and maybe give the train station a new exterior. The red brick modern Brutalist design makes it look really dated.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O66	General comment	What are the main issues with Stevenage Railway Station? Very well put in the video that there is lack of a sense of arrival. The station is unfriendly and awkwardly shaped, it is not 'aesthetically pleasing' to the eye! It's positioning does not make it feel part of the town centre. For those with mobility issues, buggies/prams or luggage it is a very difficult station to use, it could be laid out far better.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O67	General comment	What improvements would you like to see made at Stevenage Railway Station? It needs to be bigger with nice cafe(s) and shops (little M&S food or Waitrose). It would be far better as a ground level station with underground/multi-storey parking	Noted
Member of Public	I&O68	General comment	For the railway station, could some kind of barrier be put up between the platform and tracks as every year some poor person seems to take their life there? Rather than aesthetics I'd much rather see safety barriers at the train station	Noted
Member of Public	I&O69	General comment	So if the carparks by the station are to be built on, where will people park?	A MSCP is being proposed on the northern station carpark to facilitate additional commuter parking

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Member of Public	I&O70	General comment	Some affordable long stay parking would be great. To be able to shop and not pay high charges or be able to commute easier.	A MSCP is being proposed on the northern station carpark to facilitate additional commuter parking
Member of Public	I&O71	General comment	Either an underground car park beside the station or a multistory (sic) car park, then all those commuters who work in the City will have somewhere to park instead of the surrounding streets. Don't put a pelican or zebra crossing on lytton (sic) way, that is a death scene waiting to happen. As for the lack of sense of arrival, short of employing a brass band playing on the platforms and cheerleaders waving "Welcome to Stevenage" banners, there is not much you can do	A MSCP is being proposed on the northern station carpark to facilitate additional commuter parking
Member of Public	I&O72	General comment	A multi storey carpark, 24 hours, secure and easy to access. The lack of parking near the station is a major, major problem. Stevenage is growing and in order to encourage the use of the train rather than driving, you need parking that stays open past 8pm. Without that everything else is pointless.	A MSCP is being proposed on the northern station carpark to facilitate additional commuter parking
Member of Public	I&O73	General comment	On the other side they should build a multi story that goes up and down. 24 hour.	A MSCP is being proposed on the northern station carpark to facilitate additional commuter parking
Member of Public	I&O74	General comment	A multistorey (sic) car park at the station - like Hatfield got - with lots of bicycle and motorcycle parking at ground level.	A MSCP is being proposed on the northern station carpark to facilitate additional commuter parking
Member of Public	I&O75	General comment	Free parking!!! That is why people choose supermarkets and retail parks! £1.80 for an hour just to nip to a couple of shops.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O76	General comment	Some affordable long stay parking would be great. To be able to shop and not pay high charges or be able to commute easier.	A MSCP is being proposed on the northern station carpark to facilitate additional commuter parking

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Member of Public	I&O77	General comment	We need more car parking not Less	A MSCP is being proposed on the northern station carpark to facilitate additional commuter parking
Member of Public	I&O78	General comment	it would be nice if we had cheaper parking, but that will never happen. Doesn't matter how much money you throw at the town center (sic) if the parking fees are to high people will not go there.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O79	General comment	Free parking will bring in more revenue,from (sic) visiting shoppers.evening (sic) if its couple days a week,bette (sic)r than nothing.I shop out of town on days I know car parking is free in other towns etc.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O80	General comment	I'm pretty certain that car parks provide much needed revenue to help fund all the other things SBC does for residents... Many councils (sic) are in the same position, financially.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O81	General comment	Free Parking helps fund the pay rises they keep giving themselves	Noted
Member of Public	I&O82	General comment	Isn't very user friendly the website used. Would be better if I could respond as I'm reading along instead of having to read it all first and then having to remember when going through each individual box.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O83	General comment	Can we have a working link please? Much obliged	Noted
Member of Public	I&O84	General comment	The link doesn't work	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Member of Public	I&O85	General comment	Hi there, the portals and various websites that this process takes you through is very confusing, but I know quite a few people who would be more than (sic) willing to share their opinions on this if it were easier to access, could I suggest ideas on other people's behalf?	Noted
Member of Public	I&O86	General comment	What are the main problems with Lytton Way? Pulling out from Tesco car park onto Lytton Way has always felt a little intimidating and for those who do not know the town confusing! You really have to get to where you need to be quick. Lytton Way being a major dual carriageway limits the pedestrian flow to and from the town centre. I suppose it adds to the brutalist nature of 50s Stevenage.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O87	General comment	What improvements to Lytton Way would you like to see? I'd like to see the road basically cut out entirely to through traffic and redesigned to allow for access to the bus and train stations only, perhaps parking. It would be lovely to see a modern pedestrianised 'Avenue' lined with some trees and planters towards the town centre.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O88	General comment	Do you have any suggested improvements to walking and cycling to and from the Railway Station? The entry and exit to the station needs to face onto 'something' such as a plaza of activity rather than a dual carriageway with no clear path links. The main walk way through to the town or the old town needs ground level and pleasant, as above in the style of an avenue featuring plants and flowers. It would be lovely to reposition the cycle track. Need to avoid areas of intimidation and have as much open plan style as possible.	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Member of Public	I&O89	General comment	Do you have any other suggestions for improvements to the Railway Station, Lytton Way and access to and from the Railway Station? I think I've pretty much said everything I am thinking! Please make more of a destination and focal point than a throughway of traffic, there are enough surrounding roads in the town to cater for that. This is a really good opportunity to transform the area, please do start again with it!	Noted
Member of Public	I&O90	General comment	It's interesting SBC asks for views but the works have already started by HCC. Don't you two ever work together, and what happens if SBC or HCC don't agree with the ridiculous idea of a pelican crossing on Lytton way next to the bridge currently there, or closing Lytton way, or having a bus Lane	Noted
Member of Public	I&O91	General comment	The plan is, and always has been to remove Lytton Way to traffic. Not sure how much notice "the leader" and her team of planners will take of comments.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O92	General comment	How can comments help when the work for the new pedestrian crossing/traffic lights are taking place with the electrics in place ready for install. It may be HCC doing it but you guys hould (sic) be working together and not doing separate consultations	Noted
Member of Public	I&O93	General comment	Need to update that swimming pool, it's pants	Outside the remit of this Station Gateway Area
Member of Public	I&O94	General comment	What town centre do you expect commuters to make the most of? There's nothing left in town for residents to bother using it, so commuters will be doing a quick fly past too, unless of course they rally (sic) need a new phone, a coffee or something from a charity shop. What else is there?	Outside the remit of this Station Gateway Area

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Member of Public	I&O95	General comment	The town centre is a mess. Not a lot of great shops left	Outside the remit of this Station Gateway Area
Member of Public	I&O96	General comment	Not sure why you canvass views - this council never seems to take them into consideration and forges on with their own agenda - just look at the town centre - what a jewel in their crown that is! Good job - Hitchin and WGC are only a short journey away.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O97	General comment	SBC ask for input and then do exactly as they please, perhaps they just have to be ssen (sic) going through the motions	Noted
Member of Public	I&O98	General comment	What will people be visiting? All the new flats because there won't be any shops left.	Outside the remit of this Station Gateway Area
Member of Public	I&O99	General comment	Just some of the comments that demonstrates how out of touch you really are. You have failed the people of this town on far too many occasions. You now need to win back people's trust by delivering. I can only echo some of the comments that there are much nicer towns to visit and spend time in close by.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O100	General comment	Why ask us? You'll do what you want anyway, regardless of our views.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O101	General comment	More shops pleas, less flats.	Outside the remit of this Station Gateway Area
Member of Public	I&O102	General comment	Like many other Stevenage residents, I don't go to town anymore and now Matalan has shut too. Ghost town.	Outside the remit of this Station Gateway Area

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Member of Public	I&O103	General comment	I'd love to see more shops on the town, cheaper parking, nicer and cleaner toilet facilities and our poor swimming pool is in desperate need of some investment, it's old and tired on the outside as well as inside. The staff there work hard to make the best of what they have but the place deserves a complete face lift.	Outside the remit of this Station Gateway Area
Member of Public	I&O104	General comment	Also train stations bad for commuters now just wait till you build the high rises on Matalan (sic) and the old staples site also by the post office it's going back to the 60s no one builds high rises anymore	Noted
Member of Public	I&O105	General comment	How can all of this go ahead without Shutter Speed Steve getting his "donation"?	Noted
Member of Public	I&O106	General comment	What is the demolition date of Swingate House or when roughly will it take place? It's not Railway Station I know but it is Town Centre.	Outside the remit of this Station Gateway Area
Member of Public	I&O107	General comment	No point saying anything...have you ever known the council or government to ever listen to the public.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O108	General comment	They will do what they want to do.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O109	General comment	I know the plans are made and accepted beforehand	Noted
Member of Public	I&O110	General comment	Fantastic opportunity for us to have a say well done Sharon Taylor and team	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Member of Public	I&O111	General comment	They don't listen when you have your say especially "the leader"	Noted
Member of Public	I&O112	General comment	I don't believe that the council don't listen. Are you sure it isn't just that your not saying anything? Or perhaps what you want ends up being impractical or incompatible with the majority needs?	Noted
Member of Public Page 313	I&O113	General comment	Stevenage needs to look at enticing people in to the town to shop eat and for entertainment. We need a decent shopping area catering for all taste. Bright and clean facilities that facilitate a pleasant shopping experience where one can browse and be able to grab a coffee or bite to eat . This means there needs to be easy parking that is not restricted by high cost or the fact that there is a football match going on. Even the once pleasant high street with its boutiques and shops has seen drastic change and a loss of many shops. I know many Stevenage residents would rather go elsewhere to Hitchin, Biggleswade, Welwyn Garden and Hatfield rather than shop here in the town it would be lovely to see some improvement.	Outside the remit of this Station Gateway Area
Member of Public	I&O114	General comment	I doubt anything can be done about losing shops, that's down to forces beyond SBC's control - change in consumer behaviour, private landlords, UK Government planning rules, and so on - but perhaps there's some things which can be done by SBC about making this central arrival location a nicer area with fewer tunnels and visual obstacles.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O115	General comment	How many council homes are going in the town centre	Outside the remit of this Station Gateway Area

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Member of Public	I&O116	General comment	You don't take ANY notice of what the residents want so what's the point?	Noted
Member of Public	I&O117	General comment	So, everyone who lives or works in the High St & Old Town "jumped with joy" after the fitting of "parking meters" everywhere "consultation" ??	Outside the remit of this Station Gateway Area
Member of Public	I&O118	General comment	Some new shops in the town centre would be a good addition and some nice little bars	Outside the remit of this Station Gateway Area
Member of Public	I&O119	General comment	Please try to create as many wildlife friendly and green spaces as possible	Outside the remit of this Station Gateway Area
Member of Public	I&O120	General comment	Stevenage has a lot of wildlife friendly places	Outside the remit of this Station Gateway Area
Member of Public	I&O121	General comment	I have lived in Stevenage all my life and I'm aware that Stevenage has made good efforts to protect grass verges and (sic) plant more trees. With a growing population and more buildings being allowed there will never be enough wildlife (sic) areas in the UK nevermind Stevenage. All council building programmers need to consider wildlife corridors, effective planting and the environment much better than they currently do in my opinion.	Outside the remit of this Station Gateway Area
Member of Public	I&O122	General comment	Improving Stevenage. Ambitious.	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Member of Public	I&O123	General comment	Do you think the existing cycleway alongside the Station works well? Yes and no - it links well but is hidden! For many years of my life I did not know it was even there! To be honest, having used the cycle tracks when commuting, the winter dark evenings were a little uncomfortable to use on the way home. There is a sense of anybody could do anything here and not be seen! It's practical but not 'nice'.	Noted
Member of Public	I&O124	General comment	The new bus station is far too far away from the few remaining shops. The only shops worth bothering with are Wilko and Savers. Stevenage has too many cheap and nasty shops. It's much nicer to stroll around Hitchin which has some character which Stevenage will never have.	Outside the remit of this Station Gateway Area
Member of Public	I&O125	General comment	Link isn't working for me on my phone. But accessibility is a must. Ease of access too, not having to go all around buildings and roads to find a ramp or lift. The lift from the taxi rink/car park up to the station is often broken. Also accessibility from Fulton close to the leisure park and train station- there are no drop kerbs. Are these some things you are going to address?	Noted
Cycle UK Stevenage	I&O126	General comment	At the south end of the proposed cycleway, there are some serious infrastructure issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One route crosses an emergency exit from the police station • Significant differences in levels between Six Hills Way and Lytton Way 	Noted
Cycle UK Stevenage	I&O127	General comment	The proposed cycleway would need to cross the main entrance to Stevenage Police Station causing significant safety issues	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Cycle UK Stevenage	I&O128	General comment	There is a conflict travelling north-south across the Station entrance where there is proposed to be in an increase in pedestrians – this may cause a safety issue	Noted
Cycle UK Stevenage	I&O129	General comment	Cyclists will require cycle parking at the north and south of the railway station rather than just one facility	Noted
Cycle UK Stevenage	I&O130	General comment	Cyclists will need to cross the proposed MSCP entrance and this may result in safety issues. A solution may be ramped access for vehicles so that cycles can pass by via underpass	Noted
Cycle UK Stevenage	I&O131	General comment	There are also other crossings that would need to be negotiated; at the drop off zone and also for business deliveries. These would also raise safety issues	Noted
Cycle UK Stevenage	I&O132	General comment	There is no proposed cycleway infrastructure at the north end of the AAP site. Any replacement route would need to take up the same horizontal space to maintain an acceptable gradient and could compromise available space for other developments	Noted
Cycle UK Stevenage	I&O133	General comment	Commercial units should have entrances facing the cycleways to give people reasons to cycle to the premises	Noted
Cycle UK Stevenage	I&O134	General comment	There needs to be good provision to enable cyclists to access the first floor of the rail station	Noted
Cycle UK Stevenage	I&O135	General comment	The cycleways need to be maintained properly to an appropriate standard to encourage cyclists to use them	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Cycle UK Stevenage	I&O136	General comment	The pedestrian footway crosses the cycleway at the southern end of the site adjacent to the Police Station. The footway should be re-routed to stay on one side of the cycleway from the Six Hills Way junction to improve safety and visibility.	Noted
Cycle UK Stevenage	I&O137	General comment	When Tesco's is rebuilt, it should incorporate a covered cycleway and footway with store entrance from the bridge over Fairlands to Swingate	Outside the remit of this Station Gateway Area
Member of Public	I&O138	General comment	The design of the area should incorporate a usable space such as a village green rather than just trees in pavement	Noted
Member of Public	I&O139	General comment	Make Lytton Way buses, taxis, public service vehicles and emergency vehicles only and place stairs that go immediately from the bus station up to the footbridge over Lytton Way	Noted
Member of Public	I&O140	General comment	Make all buses go south down Lytton Way and fully remove all of Lytton Way which can then become the station gateway area	Noted
Member of Public	I&O141	General comment	Remove Lytton Way and make buses go down Danestrete and removes the complicated issue of getting pedestrians from east to west	Noted
Member of Public	I&O142	General comment	Do not put a zebra/pelican crossing in, instead provide lifts and stairs down from inside the bus station, under the road and up and out into the train station or add in an immediate bus station to the Gordon Craig stairs and lifts or ramps	Noted
Coal Authority	I&O143	General comment	No comment	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O144	Introduction	Under section 'Why create an Area Action Plan,' SBC were asked to prepare this to support 'Policy TC4: Station Gateway Major Opportunity Area' rather than site TC4?	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O145	Background	Include the Local Walking Cycling Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) in 'other policy documents'. The aim is to make Stevenage a highly vibrant and sustainable town which requires the promotion of all modes of transport to reduce vehicle use and dependency.	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O146	Setting the context	There should be some context to the wider Stevenage Town Centre regeneration project showing the links of the town centre moving west and how this sits with the AAP and not been framed in isolation.	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit		Setting the context	The overall vision for the station as a multi-modal hub, providing a high-quality gateway to the town, is supported. The county Council's Rail Strategy (December 2020) notes that the station "requires a significant rebuild to provide safe circulation space and to create a welcoming gateway to the town".	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit		Setting the context	It should be noted that the final DfT Decarbonising Transport plan has now been published	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit		Setting the context	LTN 1/20 sets out new guidance of cycling infrastructure	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O147	Issues and Challenges	No context or map/drawing is provided to show the relocation of Stevenage Bus Interchange to Lytton Way, which is currently being developed, whilst there is a plan showing the SG1 Masterplan (Mace 2018) the bus interchange has been omitted for consideration of developments/vision for the area. This highlights the fragmented approach in representing SG1 & Bus Interchange on the issues and challenges that will have an impact on the AAP.	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O148	Issues and Challenges	<i>[p.25] "Although this bridge runs down a ramp by the time it arrives in the town square, this does restrict accessibility and requires all users of the station area to climb a level."</i> It should be noted that although the route via the bridge is rather utilitarian, it does provide clear and easy access between the station and the town centre for the majority of users. It is essential that this route is retained until a high-quality alternative has been provided.	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O149	Issues and Challenges	The comment regarding the need to climb a level is unclear. All users of the station will need to climb a level to access the gate lines.	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O150	Issues and Challenges	It is essential that land is safeguarded to enable the Rail Station Vision developed by Arup to be delivered. Greater efforts should be made to push this scheme through as soon as possible.	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O151	Existing Environment	Figure 21 Lytton Way: Consider having a key to identify key buildings e.g. Gordon Craig, new bus station, police station, and car parks etc. Use the labels from Figure 23 to provide definition.	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O152	Existing Environment	Figure 22: Identifies bus and taxis on the key but these modes are not represented on the graphic – are these included in 'All traffic modes?'	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O153	Existing Environment	A full review is required of the routes that people use to walk and cycle to and from the station so that a proper assessment can be made of the adequacy of existing routes.	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O154	Existing Environment	Has any account been taken of the needs for rail replacement buses? Traditionally these have used the bus stops in front of the station, but a new facility was set up in the retail park whilst Platform 5 was being constructed.	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O155	Emerging Framework	<i>"A new gateway and arrival experience"</i> This should also incorporate the concept that the station has a presence in the urban landscape i.e. it is highly visible to people in the town.	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O156	Emerging Framework	<i>"Enhanced movement & access for all modes: - Effective transport interchange between sustainable modes should be facilitated by grouping of activities and modes."</i> The emphasis should be on effective interchange – the activities do not also need to be grouped to be effective.	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O157	Emerging Framework	Needs to refer to the importance of good east west links between the station, town centre and leisure park area.	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O158	Emerging Framework	Consider including the multi-storey car park number of potential spaces (consolidated/being provided), there will be good provision of electrical charging points and cycle parking to support Stevenage BC commitment to their climate change declaration and to deliver net zero carbon emissions by 2030.	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O159	Emerging Framework	<p><i>"Make ground level the place where pedestrians move"</i></p> <p>The principle should be making the ground level much more attractive to pedestrians. However, pedestrians should be enabled to move at whatever level they want to (e.g. the option of using the current footbridge should not be discounted until there is wider redevelopment enabling suitable alternatives to be provided). Suggest rewording to say provide new options for people to move at ground level.</p>	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O160	Emerging Framework	In the areas covered by cross sections BB and CC, why are pedestrian facilities not being provided on the eastern side of the carriageway?	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O161	Emerging Framework	Additional segregated cycleway needs to tie into the existing cycle network at Six Hills Way and Fairlands Way in order to provide safe connected links to key onward destinations such as Gunnels Wood Road and Stevenage old town.	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O162	Emerging Framework	It would be useful if the pie charts of land use differentiated between pedestrians and cyclists.	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O163	Emerging Framework	The plans need to make it clearer how the new Multi Storey Car Park fits into the scheme in all the options.	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O164	Emerging Framework	Option 0 is not clearly illustrated: Page 42 introduces Options 1-3 followed by the cross sections' AA/BB/CC and then to Central Area Option 1: All Traffic Modes.	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O165	Emerging Framework	Hertfordshire County Council do not consider Option o (Do Nothing) is a realistic scenario for the AAP. It is contrary to Stevenage Borough Councils own policies (both the Local Plan and the Town Centre Framework) and does not enable any of the objectives, principles or core enhancements of the AAP to be achieved	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O166	Emerging Framework	It is not a realistic option given the relocation of the bus station site and the requirement to provide pedestrian connectivity with the station and associated bus priority measures	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O167	Emerging Framework	The new multi storey car park will require new access onto Lytton Way. This will be difficult to achieve given the current number of traffic lanes. For these reasons we do not support this option	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O168	Option 1	It is difficult to see how the 'town square' would operate safely given the potential traffic volumes. There is a risk that the road outside the station would be blocked by vehicles dropping off / picking up passengers unless this is strictly monitored and controlled.	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O169	Option 1	It is likely that there would be additional delays to bus services travelling along this section.	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O170	Option 1, 2,& 3	The bus station being delivered at Lytton Way has the provision of coach stands prior to entering the main bus station. This does not look like it has been considered in Figure 25 (Figure 27 or Figure 29), where will the coach stands be provided as it appears to be in conflict with the pedestrian crossing point.	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O171	Option 1, 2,& 3	Confirmation needed on what the two-vehicle access/egress points to the west from the new Swingate roundabout and north of the roundabout will be for?	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O172	Option 1, 2,& 3	Cycling provision in any of the options needs to be considered in line with LTN 1/20 guidance.	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O173	Option 1, 2,& 3	We consider that there are advantages in retaining the existing footbridge until redevelopment of the station and wider area takes place as it does provide a traffic free route for pedestrians at station level	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O174	Option 2	This option will make it easier for the area outside the station to operate more like a town square with a lower volume of vehicles passing through it. Control to prevent other types of vehicles is critical. Vehicle drop off and pick up facilities will need to be provided in the MSCP and southern car park with good direct pedestrian links to the station. Preferred option #1	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O175	Option 2	Option 2 addresses a number of objectives and principles of the AAP, removing the majority of vehicles from in front of the station helping reduce severance with the town centre and supporting the concept of a town square whilst retaining access to the relocated bus station for bus services from both directions.	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O176	Option 3	Access by buses from the north will involve long diversion routes and additional delay for services. Preferred option #2	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O177	Option 3	The taxi rank to the north of the station will result in longer journey times and from the south and disadvantage those travelling to / from this direction.	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O178	Option 3	Hertfordshire County Council have not had direct input on the options proposed in the AAP, we would therefore like to discuss these in further detail with Stevenage Borough Council to understand the impact of them on the network and how they relate to the wider redevelopment proposals in Stevenage	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O179	Potential layout 1	HCC requests that SBC discusses cycling provision options with HCC Officers in more detail and include the Highway Authority in the design process to ensure a route is developed to encourage sustainable/direct and safe access.	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O180	Potential layout 1	Cycling provision in any of the options needs to be considered in line with LTN 1/20 guidance. The new cycle path needs to have dedicated crossing facilities across the side road accesses to the car parks and police station.	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O181	Potential layout 1	Further consideration needs to be given to the connections of the proposed cycle path with the existing cycle network on Six Hills Way and at Fairlands Way. Level differences at Six Hills Way are an issue that need to be overcome. Preferred option #1	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O182	Potential layout 2	Removal of the existing cycle path should only be done if required for redevelopment of the station and other sites. Preferred option #2	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O183	Cycle Path Options	Consideration needs to be given to crossing of side road accesses and also provision for cyclists wanting to access Swingate and Danesgate via the proposed new roundabouts.	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O184	Phasing and temporary use	The existing footbridge should be retained until there is wider redevelopment enabling suitable alternatives to be provided and should not be pursued as part of the first phase.	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O185	Phasing and temporary use	The phasing needs to recognise the changes already planned as part of the bus station relocation. A new crossing is due to be provided as part of this. This will be a permanent facility that will need to be adapted rather than a temporary facility.	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O186	Phasing and temporary use	HCC and stakeholders need to be involved in early discussions regarding any phasing and temporary use options to minimise the impact on the network and ensure a cohesive plan is delivered.	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O187	Greening the grey	HCC is in support of improved urban realm but want to be involved in these discussions to ensure that there are no impacts on Highway assets and any maintenance discussions. HCC wants to ensure that any proposed improvements do not obstruct access for users and support the principles in LTP4.	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O1888	Using development to make a place	HCC needs to be included in any early and ongoing discussions regarding the proposed MSCP particularly the impact this will have on Lytton Way and the surrounding network.	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O189	Using development to make a place	Any development opportunities SBC are considering along Lytton Way, HCC encourage SBC to have early engagement and pre-application discussions meeting with Officers	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O190	Parking consolidation	SBC need to clearly state where the car parks around the town centre are located and spaces they offer, where existing car parks are being lost or numbers of spaces reduced. We require a plan clearly showing existing and proposed parking provision and number of spaces and the balance between short and long stay provision. We also require confirmation on the net number of spaces (compared with existing provision and the likely balance between short and long stay provision. An increase in the number of spaces would be contrary to LTP4 and work against Stevenage’s Climate Change declaration and Sustainable Transport Town status.	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O191	Parking consolidation	Any new parking should include provision for electrical charging points and cycling parking provision.	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O192	Conclusions and feedback	There was no question included on the development parcels. The Highway Authority would expect SBC to have early engagement and pre-application discussions meeting with Officers on these matters due to the impact this would have on the highway network and ensuring LTP4 principles and sustainable connections are sought into the wider network.	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O193	Main issues with Stevenage Railway Station	<p>The county council's Rail Strategy notes the following about the station:</p> <p><i>"The station buildings date from 1973 and are now inadequate in terms of platform widths, staircase capacity and booking hall space. The overall operation and appearance of the station is substandard for a town which is home to international pharmaceutical and aerospace companies".</i></p> <p>The current plans will not address the platform width issue. Discussions should be held with Network Rail to determine what land might be needed if the opportunity ever arose to re-build the platforms, such that any required land can be safeguarded in the development proposals.</p>	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O194	Main issues with Stevenage Railway Station	<p>The current arrangement of the gate line being at a different level to the platforms and Lytton Way results in access difficulties for elderly and disabled users and those with pushchairs and bicycles. The current lift provision is poorly located and inconvenient to use.</p>	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O195	Does Lytton Way work as a main road	<p>Stevenage's central grid highway layout means that there are other appropriate routes for north / south traffic through the town. In its current form, high priority is given to vehicles. This encourages high levels of car trips to the town centre and undermines efforts to encourage people to travel by more sustainable means. The multi lane layout prevents integration of the station and the Leisure Park area to the west with the town centre.</p> <p>Whilst it is currently possible to directly walk from the town centre to the station and leisure park at first floor level via the overbridge, changing land use (e.g. the relocation of the bus station) mean that Lytton Way will increasingly act as a barrier between the station area and the town centre.</p>	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O196	Does the existing cycleway work well	<p>Whilst providing a direct north south route between Six Hills Way and Fairlands Way, the current cycleway has little natural surveillance so can feel unsafe to use. The fences and walls on either side reduce the available width and limit access opportunities to the track.</p> <p>Access to the station and cycle parking area is not clear and is poor (narrow, hidden between walls and badly signed)</p>	Noted
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 328</p> HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O197	What improvements would you like to see at the railway station	<p>The real improvement required is the delivery of the Railway Station Vision as set out by Arup.</p> <p>In advance of this, some improvements could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating an enclosed, but transparent, footbridge across Lytton Way to provide weather protection. • A new set of steps to the footbridge on the leisure centre side of the road to create a more direct route to the new bus station. • Re-instatement of the traveller. • Improved staircases / ramps from the retail park. • Additional high quality cycle parking 	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O198	What improvements would you like to see to Lytton Way	HCC encourages SBC to engage with Officers to discuss the opportunities for Lytton Way to ensure that a deliverable plan is achieved that ensures Lytton Way provides a future proof plan that brings benefit to the area, delivers the SBC's commitment to support the Climate Change agenda and encourages and supports sustainability	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O199	Improvements between Station, Lytton Way and Town Centre	<p>Prior to any wider redevelopment, the current footbridge across Lytton Way should be enclosed in transparent material to provide weather protection. The ramp from the leisure centre towards the town centre needs to be widened.</p> <p>Any surface level pedestrian crossing should align with clear east west routes to the town centre.</p>	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O200	Improvements to walking and cycling from station	<p>Additional cycling parking facilities should be secure, weatherproof and provide convenient access to the station and cycle tracks. The station is an ideal location for a cycle hub. This should include the ability to hire a cycle.</p>	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O201	Any suggested improvements to walking and cycling through station	<p>A full assessment should be made of pedestrian and cycle desire lines from key origins / destinations in the town (e.g. housing, town centre, employment areas) to determine where further improvements may be required.</p>	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O202	Any suggested improvements to walking and cycling through station	<p>Access to the station from the Leisure Park needs to be greatly improved. This includes new staircases and ramps at the station itself, and the creation of safe, direct pedestrian routes across the car parks</p>	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O203	Any suggested improvements to walking and cycling through station	<p>Currently there is no direct access from the station to the Leisure Park with cyclists having to take a circuitous route via Six Hills Way. If this location is redeveloped this should be an aspiration.</p>	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O204	Any suggested improvements to walking and cycling through station	Appropriate artwork and other improvements should be made where these routes pass through subways	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O205	Development replacements on car parks	The station is the gateway to Stevenage and any uses should provide high quality buildings with uses and densities that make the most of the transport hub location. This could include flexible working spaces, uses such as hotels, HQ type offices with potentially some higher density residential development.	Noted
HCC – Growth and Infrastructure Unit	I&O206	Development replacements on car parks	Thought should also be given as to what the future role of the station will be e.g. might it become a hub for parcels traffic (as currently being developed by Orion in other parts of the country) and hence the need for a transfer depot from rail to perhaps e-cargo bikes.	Noted
Hertfordshire Constabulary	I&O207	General comment	I have heard that there are plans for a crossing at street level from the Railway Station to the Bus Station across the carriageways of Lytton Way. I am unsure why this is necessary when there is an overbridge but it may relate to access for disabled or less mobile pedestrians.	Noted
Hertfordshire Constabulary	I&O208	General comment	I would encourage some thought as to whether this is necessary and safe, given that on many occasions on a daily basis Police Cars leave the Police Station to attend emergencies. A street level crossing will increase the likelihood and frequency of pedestrians encountering moving vehicles, and some of these vehicles will be Police vehicles on an emergency response. The consequence of this could be death or serious injury.	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Historic England	I&O209	General comment	While we accept that the red line area is outside the immediate setting of the Town Square Conservation Area and associated heritage assets and is therefore not a highly sensitive location, the wider town centre area does form an intrinsic part of the setting of the central area and the master planning is itself of historical interest, and this should be borne in mind as proposals are developed	Noted
Historic England	I&O210	General comment	The AAP incorporates the general plan that the railway station - designed and constructed in the early 1970s - is to be redeveloped and demolished - along with the leisure centre. Earlier modernist stations at Harlow and Broxbourne are listed, but this one is not. We have previously highlighted that it may be useful for the Council to seek a Certificate of Immunity (COI) from listing for the station if they wish to demolish it.	Noted
Member of public	I&O211	General comment	There is a critical need for significantly more station parking. You could address the connectivity by having multiple station parking areas, some on leisure park some at the station and some over the road for the main town and theatre. Don't just restrict station parking to the station, give people options	Noted
Member of public	I&O212	General comment	Use living walls, roofs and plant trees and bulbs and shrubs, a more natural approach, wood and water walls would soften the area.	Noted
Member of public	I&O213	General comment	Make sure bike parking is easy to use and safe and plentiful with lockers and seating	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Member of public	I&O214	General comment	So travellers using the station don't worry if there will be a parking space (which is a major issue currently) you could offer a Stevenage station parking Ap allowing users to get updates on how many spaces are free. A simple count of vehicles in is affordable and a great service to your travellers. Also use modern technology for people to pay for their parking	Noted
Member of public	I&O215	General comment	Design does not look out onto Lytton way Parking spaces are not tiny or difficult to park in Green and natural materials so travellers are cocooned by with living walls and simple planting and not cement. Water is also good and not difficult to maintain if designed well.	Noted
Member of public	I&O216	General comment	Include one wow factor it could be a tree that grows from ground floor through to upper station entry level All Walkways to be made greener in the initial design and be consistent in design to connect all areas leisure park, station and town .	Noted
Member of public	I&O217	General comment	The whole design is like a mini town with seats, coffee spots, facilities eg loos , great signage and a map of the town and station and leisure park designed to be cohesive and seem less Keep taxi rank separate from cycle zone and pick up & drop off zones Ensure there are lifts next to disabled parking area and a smooth flow for these customers Electric charges in parking areas	Noted
Member of the public	I&O218	General comment	The cycleway past Stevenage railway station has been a Cycling Super Highway since before they were even dreamt of in London. Stevenage pioneered segregated cycleways in the UK. This is not the time to be going backwards	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Member of public	I&O219	General comment	<p>The route is used by hundreds of cyclists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ who ride to the station. That was clearly demonstrated by the need to increase the number of cycle parking spaces at the station. ☑ who perform cycle – train – cycle journeys i.e. they take their bike on a train (they need that process to be facilitated), and ☑ this is crucially important but overlooked in the consultation documents which concentrate on connections with trains and other modes of transport this is a key through cycle route between the north and south of the town. 	Noted
Member of public	I&O220	General comment	<p>This is a fantastic continuous through cycle route inherited from the new town. The very fact that it is parallel with the railway means it is not interrupted. It is wide enough for two way cycle traffic and there is a separate footway.</p>	Noted
Member of public	I&O221	General comment	<p>Its importance as a through route was emphasised by its inclusion in NCN 12. This is the part of the National Cycle Network which links north London with Peterborough</p>	Noted
Member of public	I&O222	General comment	<p>An allocations deal has been done between the Thomas Alleyne Academy (at the north end of the High Street) and Roebuck School in the south of the Borough. Cycling would be an ideal way for those young people to get to school and that part of NCN 12 is an obvious traffic free part of their route. Already about 140 students cycle to Thomas Alleyne.</p>	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Member of public	I&O223	General comment	There is very little wrong with the existing through route between Six Hills Way and Fairlands Way that would not be solved by regular maintenance and trimming of the trees and bushes at the north end. Branches can obscure the lights as the route dips and curves towards Fairlands Way. Perhaps additional lights could be provided there and where the police station extension meant a see through fence was replaced by a blank wall. For those concerned about community safety the route has the advantage that it is overlooked by passengers on platform one and passes the police station	Noted
Member of public	I&O224	General comment	Other nearby cycle routes have already been lost or degraded in recent years for example the route past Tesco, the route from Fairlands Way to the Queensway and more recently the section of route passing the Leisure Centre and connecting with Six Hills Way. Many cyclists are concerned by the replacement of the London Road route by a narrow shared use squeeze past the new bus station near the leisure centre. We are anxious about future conflicts and complaints. The route by the railway is needed to connect the north and south parts of the cycleway network.	Noted
Member of public	I&O225	General comment	The proposal to replace the continuous route is very two dimensional and takes no account of levels. For example the climb up to the proposed new route up from the Fairlands Way cycleway would be very challenging. At the south end the indicated route is currently a flight of steps up a steep bank.	Noted
Member of public	I&O226	General comment	The current route is used by large numbers of cyclists, runners, joggers and pedestrians	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Member of public	I&O227	General comment	While I would have no objection to, and indeed would support, additional good quality cycle links being provided elsewhere in the town centre area a sub-standard stop start route alongside Lytton Way would be a very poor substitute as a through route. It would be frustrating for cyclists including those who are not as physically able as some and almost inevitably create unnecessary conflicts with pedestrians and motor traffic.	Noted
Member of public	I&O228	General comment	If this "Cycling Super Highway" was lost just as they are being created elsewhere the local authorities would lose all credibility as advocates for sustainable transport and active travel	Noted
Member of public	I&O229	General comment	Inspired by a fairly recent cycle and pedestrian bridge near Cambridge station I suggest a new and additional cycleway bridge from a junction in the existing cycleway just as it starts to descend.	Noted
Member of public	I&O230	General comment	This would go over Fairlands Way and come down again alongside the existing bridge near Ditchmore Lane. By taking advantage of the existing topography any gradients would be realistic. There is no suggestion of not needing the existing links to Fairlands Way and up from Fairlands Way to Saffron Ground (Ditchmore Lane).	Noted
Member of public	I&O231	General comment	There will still be a need to restore and provide cycle links into the town centre have already commented that by concentrating on connections there is a risk of losing sight of the needs of those making local journeys.	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Member of public	I&O232	General comment	I fear that the new bus station will only be a temporary fix. The site is too cramped for the forward in, reverse out style of operating buses and the routes in and out will add to journey times e.g. leaving south to go north. A visit to Luton airport will illustrate the space, safety signals, etc., needed to operate with buses reversing. It does seem that public transport and cycling have been and are being excluded from a larger part of the town centre (which is where a lot of people want to go) while car access and car parks remain.	Noted
Member of public	I&O233	General comment	If a new electric public transport route is going to happen on a Roaring Meg – town centre – old town (or preferably a Roebuck – Roaring Meg – town centre – old town – Lister Hospital) spine route you need to be planning for that as a through route now	Noted
Knebworth Estates	I&O234	General comment	Knebworth Park makes significant use of Stevenage Railway Station. It is generally supportive of the aspirations of the David Lock Associates report, but is concerned by one key omission in the report's proposals.	Noted
Knebworth Estates	I&O235	General comment	Despite saying on p.30 that "the AAP area... must include... drop-off movements within its boundaries", neither 'drop-off' nor 'pick-up' solutions appear to be mentioned anywhere in the proposals.	Noted
Knebworth Estates	I&O236	General comment	However much we wish to encourage walking, cycling and public transport, the reality is that not everyone in Stevenage is able to reach Stevenage Station using these modes of transport, even in fair weather.	Noted
Knebworth Estates	I&O237	General comment	Knebworth Park (SG1 2AX) is a case in point. Crossing the Junction 7 roundabout is a challenge on foot, on a bicycle, or using public transport.	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Knebworth Estates	I&O238	General comment	A provision for 'drop-off' and 'pick-up' by car is a vital for a key transport hub like Stevenage Station – both railway station and bus station. All that is apparent in the report are roundabouts turning vehicle traffic back or away from the railway station. Are the roundabouts to be used for 'drop-off'?	Noted
Knebworth Estates	I&O239	General comment	Even more of an issue is 'pick-up'. A word search for 'pick up'/'pick-up' in the report returns no instances. This cannot be right in a report on a key transport hub. 'Drop-off' requires provision for cars to pull over, then pull away. 'Pick-up' actually requires a place for cars to wait, even for trains that are on time.	Noted
Knebworth Estates	I&O240	General comment	Maybe 'drop-off' and 'pick-up' are intended for the ground floor of new MSCP? If this is the case, the report should say so. It should also reassure that this facility will be sufficient, and perhaps even improve on the existing provision (which is fairly criticised in the report)?	Noted
LNER	I&O241	Preferred area option	Our preference is for Option 3 (Pedestrianised Plaza) as we believe this presents the greatest overall benefit to the Stevenage community as well as those using the station to travel to, from or through the area. It also best aligns with the plans for a future upgrade to the station itself. However, this preference is based on the concerns raised below being addressed.	Noted
LNER	I&O242	Promotion and facilities for active travel	While several segregated cycle routes already exist in the area, our view is that more can be done to encourage their use, including increased provision of safe and secure bicycle parking at and near Stevenage Station.	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
LNER	I&O243	Promotion and facilities for active travel	We welcome the opportunity to work with the Council and Network Rail on the delivery of the proposed bicycle hub adjacent to the new public open space. The hub delivered at Brighton Station could be a good precedent for this	Noted
LNER	I&O244	Promotion and facilities for active travel	Signage and lighting of walking routes should be proactively considered to provide a safer and welcoming option to those within a shorter distance of the station. This includes walking routes within and beyond the town centre.	Noted
LNER	I&O245	Private vehicle access and parking	It is important to note that large numbers of those outside of the centre of areas such as Stevenage have far greater dependency on private vehicles. To ensure residents of these areas are not discouraged or excluded from intercity rail travel, LNER continues to support an increase in car parking at or adjacent to stations where it is appropriate.	Noted
LNER	I&O246	Private vehicle access and parking	Care should be taken to ensure the levels of private vehicle parking at and near Stevenage station are sufficient to meet demand from those without access to local public transport, cycling or walking routes.	Noted
LNER	I&O247	Private vehicle access and parking	We support parking being consolidated and expanded over time as part of the identified development parcels in order to open more space for other community and commercial uses. Any new structures should be adaptable to future community needs (e.g. additional cycle hub facilities).	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
LNER	I&O248	Private vehicle access and parking	Vehicle movements to and from parking facilities must also be considered, with our teams noting the roundabout to the north end of Lytton Way will require particular attention to ensure it does not become a bottleneck. In particular, we are keen to reduce the potential for negative parking experiences to reduce someone's interest in again visiting Stevenage or travelling by rail.	Noted
LNER	I&O249	Universal access	Access to the station for older and disabled people should not be reduced by any changes made or works undertaken as part of this scheme. Any improvement works should be seen as an opportunity to enhance access for all, reduce friction for those changing between modes (e.g. bus to train) and improve accessibility.	Noted
Page 339 LNER	I&O250	Universal access	Enhanced station facilities as part of its future upgrade should complement any changes made as part of these proposals, with every effort made to minimise the need to change any works undertaken (e.g. demolish recently built structures).	Noted
LNER	I&O251	Directions to and space for drop offs and pick ups	Accessible, convenient and well-lit areas for passengers to be dropped off or picked up (e.g. by friends or relatives) do not appear to be highlighted in any of the three options. We would like to see this given greater priority.	Noted
LNER	I&O252	Directions to and space for drop offs and pick ups	We would also encourage the Council to work with ridesharing services to designate a dedicated area away from the taxi rank and private vehicle facilities.	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
LNER	I&O253	Directions to and space for drop offs and pick ups	Directions to Stevenage Station in the area and further away (e.g. on the A1) should be assessed in detail and updated where needed to minimise excess vehicle miles and the potential for conflicts. Drivers should be informed early of the most direct route and, where technology allows, the availability of parking spaces.	Noted
Transport for London	I&O254	General comment	No comments	Noted
Member of public	I&O255	General comment	Close entrance to Tesco from Lytton way, use Fairland Way entrance, Staples area included. (do not accept complaints from Tesco)	Noted
Member of public	I&O256	General comment	Tesco car park shared with GCT for evenings (as reduced car parking in new scheme)	Noted
Member of public	I&O257	General comment	The access to Westgate car park and supplied to shops maintained from R/A One way through road (south only) Maintain the station south car park access from R/A	Noted
Member of public	I&O258	General comment	Taxi and Bus only access through Lytton way to bus terminals and taxi drop off, limited taxi waiting only. Two roundabouts on Lytton way as suggestions	Noted
Member of public	I&O259	General comment	Existing north carriage way used as u turn car drop off from north and south Stevenage Better access to present taxi drop off area converted for bikes and motor bikes only	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Member of public	I&O260	General comment	Maintain and upgrade cycle track and enhance the security of the bikes and CCTV (that works) All security (camera's and monitoring) upgraded	Noted
Member of public	I&O261	General comment	Use the new pathed area for pop up stalls for food drinks and coffee area, maybe market stalls (need something in this large pathed void)	Noted
Member of public	I&O262	General comment	Install moving walk ways from bus station to station	Noted
Member of public	I&O263	General comment	Install sensible sized lifts east of Lytton way to bridge next to GCT.	Noted
Member of public	I&O264	General comment	Walk way across Lytton Way to be covered if not an enclosed and an extended tunnel. Enhance and enclose the ramp from GCT tunnel to the Mecca Bingo	Noted
Member of public	I&O265	General comment	Convert Bingo back to a dance hall or other attraction (the good old days,) Stevenage can't accept one of its main attractions is a bingo hall; we must drive the quality up!	Outside the remit of the Station AAP
Member of public	I&O266	General comment	Two large multi storey Car parks built on Leisure park for station (during the day and leisure at night)	Outside the remit of the Station AAP
Member of public	I&O267	General comment	Station car park north converted for other use as other ideas.	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Member of public	I&O268	General comment	Station should have two accesses to and from platform, one outbound, one inbound, so they can have a narrower mouth and causing less congestion around entrances	Noted
Member of public	I&O269	General comment	Make a bonfire of any plans to move the station! Ditto for plans to knock down GCT as it is the best theatre and sports complex for thirty miles!	There are no plans to move the station and the theatre is outside the remit of the Station AAP
Member of public	I&O270	General comment	Improve the access and signage to the Healthy hub (GCT)	Noted
Member of public	I&O271	General comment	Remove the glass obscuring pattern on glass through the GCT so activities can be seen from the walkway	Noted
Member of public	I&O272	General comment	The Emerging Framework needs to be changed so a central area created to facilitate other options.	Noted
Member of public	I&O273	General comment	The double roundabouts works but still too much traffic!	Noted
Member of public	I&O274	General comment	Option 2 works best but must be one way only giving access to drop off and pick up from bus and taxi must have drop off areas close at hand for cars also	Noted
Member of public	I&O275	General comment	Option 3 is a none starter Just a big open space full of nothing why have all this access to what?	Noted
Member of public	I&O276	General comment	The Central Area must have pop up stalls like drinks and eats market stalls maybe.	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Member of public	I&O277	General comment	Cycle access and storage must be improved and security of equipment.	Noted
Member of public	I&O278	General comment	Lytton way is a main route from North Stevenage to South Stevenage, the three main trunk options are Gresley way, Gunnels wood Road and Lytton. Therefore, it is carrying a lot of traffic not destined for the town centre or the transport hubs. To use the road for what should have been the primary use, through traffic should be eliminated if possible. This could be achieved partially by making the road a one way (South) and accessing car parks etc via alternatives or removing the carparks all together. The present north Station car park should be closed and suitable multi story car parking serving the station created on the leisure park. Access to the Tesco car park should be via Fairlands way only. The bus station will work with a southern route only. It will have access only for bus and taxis. The two ends will have roundabouts as per the options and considerate for car dropping off passengers for the station.	Noted
Member of public	I&O279	General comment	Cycle access should be encouraged and a wider access created to the now taxi drop off where bike storage shall be enhanced.	Noted
Member of public	I&O280	General comment	The width of the accesses to the station are a problem giving width for both those getting on and off, there should be an on and a separate off ramp to the concourse.	Noted
Member of public	I&O281	General comment	Lytton way access to buses and taxis via walkways and covered walk ways. To the town centre via a covered walk way Maybe via moving walkways (like airports)	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Member of public	I&O282	General comment	Pathways from transport drop off area but must be covered!	Noted
Member of public	I&O283	General comment	Roads adjacent to the station should be closed and this used for other purposes. Car parking should be multi-level and in the leisure park are accessed from Six hills way and Fairlands Way	Noted
Member of public	I&O284	General comment	Bus car and taxi drop offs all available with good facilities for cycling.	Noted
Member of public	I&O285	General comment	The leisure centre should not be altered or moved we must retain this facility as it should be serviced and have car parking by sharing the use of the present Tesco car parks. The theatre and facilities are mainly used in the evenings so will not clash with maximum use for the shop.	Noted
Savills on behalf of Legal and General	I&O286	General comment	L&G supports the general requirement for a dedicated plan and strategy for the area around the station given its importance and 'gateway' status.	Noted
Savills on behalf of Legal and General	I&O287		L&G supports the Issues and Challenges that are identified in Section 4.0 of the SCAAP. The current arrival experience does not align with the wider, strategic objectives for Stevenage and Lytton Way acts as a substantial barrier to connectivity (restricting ease of movement east to west).	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Savills on behalf of Legal and General	I&O288		There is also constraint on connectivity between the Leisure Park and the wider Town Centre. A key objective as part of any Area Action Plan should be to enhance accessibility and connectivity to create a more cohesive Town Centre.	Noted
Savills on behalf of Legal and General	I&O289		Increasing connectivity between the Leisure Park (and other commercial uses including the strategic employment area around Gunnels Wood Road) to the west, the station and the Primary Shopping Area and wider Town Centre ¹ to the east will help to deliver the strategic growth objectives across the Local Plan period	Noted
Savills on behalf of Legal and General	I&O290		A more cohesive and connected Town Centre will create greater opportunities for development to meet local needs in a sustainable location	Noted
Savills on behalf of Legal and General	I&O291		L&G supports the Objectives and Key Principles set out in Section 6.0 of the SCAAP. The importance of connecting and integrating the Leisure Park and employment uses to the west with the wider, defined Town Centre through physical improvements should be explicitly identified within this section.	Noted
Savills on behalf of Legal and General	I&O292		In terms of the Core Enhancements, L&G supports Core Area Option 3 which aims to create a 'Pedestrianised Plaza' on Lytton Way. A fully pedestrianised scheme is considered the only effective option to create a transformation in terms of connectivity between the station and the wider Town Centre and modal shifts. A new pedestrianised space will also create an opportunity to create a materially different arrival experience which directly connects the station gateway into the wider Town Centre.	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Savills on behalf of Legal and General	I&O293		L&G supports the creation of distinct development parcels. It is acknowledged that the scale and form of development in the SCAAP is illustrative at this stage, the station gateway is suitable for tall buildings and denser forms of development	Noted
Savills on behalf of Legal and General	I&O294		Whilst not included within the boundary of the SCAAP, it would be beneficial if some additional detail could be included on how a new station square may interact and connect with the Leisure Park. As set out above, the SCAAP should take into account future opportunities for the intensification of development and alternative land uses at the Leisure Park.	Noted
Page 346 Savills on behalf of Legal and General	I&O295		L&G supports the emerging SCAAP subject to the comments made above. In particular L&G supports 'Core Area Option 3' which includes the creation of a pedestrianised plaza on Lytton Way. This is considered to be the only effective way of delivering transformational change to both modes and patterns of travel and the arrival experience into Stevenage Town Centre	Noted
Savills on behalf of Legal and General	I&O296	General comment	Although the SCAAP focuses on the station and immediate gateway, the emerging plans have the potential to effectively connect the key transport node, Town Centre (including the Leisure Park) and the strategic employment areas to the west.	Noted
Savills on behalf of Legal and General	I&O297		Why it is necessary to have so many steps and stairs while using Stevenage Station? The trains run at ground level.	This is a matter for Network Rail
Member of the public	I&O298		If more land is available why not enlarge the station at ground level, by having the ticket/ booking office/ at ground level.	This is a matter for Network Rail

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Member of the public	I&O299		By all means keep the walkway from the Leisure Park to the Town Centre over Lytton Way, but ground access to the trains. The problem then is crossing Lytton Way from the Town centre. Surely either a walkway underpass, or a ground level bridge over an underpass in Lytton Way as along Gunnels Wood Road for traffic and pedestrians to keep safely apart. Knebworth and occasional user of Stevenage Station.	Noted
Member of the public	I&O300		From being dropped off by car at Stevenage Station you have to walk up the covered causeway to the booking office about twenty steps. having bought your ticket, (or with a rail pass) you then have to walk down some fifteen steps to access the platform. This is inefficient, time wasting and unnecessary.	Noted
Member of the public	I&O301		This would help get rid of that ghastly Seventies covered steps to access the booking office! Up and down, most inefficient and time wasting!	Noted

Appendix 1 – Consultees

Specific Consultee Bodies and Duty to Cooperate Bodies consulted

- *The Coal Authority,*
- *The Environment Agency,*
- *Historic England,*
- *The Marine Management Organisation,*
- *Natural England,*
- *Network Rail,*
- *Highways England,*
- *East And North Herts NHS Trust*
- *East and North Herts Clinical Commissioning Group*
- *Communications operators/organisations (including; Mobile Operators Association, BT Cellnet Limited, Telefónica, O2 UK Limited, Telereal Trillium, T-Mobile, Virgin Media, Virgin Mobile, Vodafone Ltd.,)*
- *The Homes and Communities Agency*
- *North Hertfordshire District Council*
- *East Hertfordshire District Council*
- *Other Hertfordshire authorities (including; Borough of Broxbourne, Dacorum Borough Council, Hertsmere Borough Council, St Albans City And District Council, Three Rivers District Council, Watford Borough Council, Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council)*
- *Hertfordshire County Council (including Growth & Infrastructure Unit, Public Health, Passenger Transport)*
- *Hertfordshire Highways*
- *Hertfordshire LEP*
- *Parish councils (including; Aston Parish Council, Codicote Parish Council, Datchworth Parish Council, Graveley Parish Council, Knebworth Parish Council, St Ippolyts Parish Council, Walkern Parish Council, Weston Parish Council, Woolmer Green Parish Council, Wymondley Parish Council)*
- *Hertfordshire Constabulary*
- *Anglian Water*
- *Thames Water*
- *Veolia Water Central (VWC)*
- *National Grid*

General consultation bodies / organisations

<i>5th Stevenage Air Scout Group</i>	<i>Broadwater Community Association</i>
<i>Aberdeen Asset Management</i>	<i>Broom Barns JMI</i>
<i>Active4Less</i>	<i>Brown And Lee</i>
<i>Adlington Planning Team</i>	<i>Brown And Lee Chartered Surveyors</i>
<i>Age Concern Stevenage</i>	<i>Buddhist Centre</i>
<i>Ahmadiyya Muslim Association</i>	<i>Building Research Establishment</i>
<i>Aldi Stores</i>	<i>Bus Users Group Stevenage</i>
<i>Aldwyck Housing Association</i>	<i>C.D.Bayles</i>
<i>Almond Hill Junior Mixed School</i>	<i>Campaign for Real Ale</i>
<i>Alzheimer's Society</i>	<i>Campaign For Real Ale Ltd</i>
<i>Anglian Water</i>	<i>Camps Hill Community Primary School</i>
<i>Aragon Land And Planning</i>	<i>Canyon Play Association</i>
<i>Archangel Michael And St Anthony Coptic Orthodox Church</i>	<i>Carers in Hertfordshire</i>
<i>Arriva</i>	<i>Catesby Property Group</i>
<i>Arriva The Shires And Essex Buses</i>	<i>CBRE Ltd.</i>
<i>Ashtree Primary School</i>	<i>Central Bedfordshire UA</i>
<i>Asian Women Group</i>	<i>Centrebus</i>
<i>Association of North Thames Amenity Societies</i>	<i>Chair North Herts Ramblers Group</i>
<i>Aston Parish Council</i>	<i>Chambers Coaches Stevenage Ltd</i>
<i>Aston Village Society</i>	<i>Chells Community Association</i>
<i>Aviva Investors</i>	<i>Chells Manor Community Association</i>
<i>BAA Safeguarding Team</i>	<i>Chells Scout Group</i>
<i>Barclay School</i>	<i>Chelton Radomes</i>
<i>Barker Parry Town Planning</i>	<i>Christadelphian Community</i>
<i>Barnwell School</i>	<i>Churches Together</i>
<i>BEAMS Ltd</i>	<i>Churches Together in Stevenage</i>
<i>Bedwell Community Association</i>	<i>Circle Anglia</i>
<i>Bedwell Primary And Nursery School</i>	<i>Citizens Advice Bureau</i>
<i>Bell Cornwell LLP</i>	<i>Clague Ashford</i>
<i>Bellway (Northern Home Counties)</i>	<i>Codicote Parish Council</i>
<i>Bellway Homes</i>	<i>Colinade Associates Ltd</i>
<i>Bellway Homes Miller Homes</i>	<i>Colliers International</i>
<i>Bellway Homes, Miller Homes & Wheatley Plc</i>	<i>Commercial Estates Group</i>
<i>Bidwells</i>	<i>Connexions Stevenage</i>
<i>Bloor Homes</i>	<i>Cortex</i>
<i>Bloor Homes South Midlands</i>	<i>Costco Wholesale UK Ltd</i>
<i>Borough of Broxbourne</i>	<i>Countryside Management Service</i>
<i>Bragbury End Residents Group</i>	<i>Countryside Properties plc, Stevenage Rugby Club and the Homes and Communities Agency (Cambridge)</i>
<i>Bridge Builders Christian Trust</i>	<i>CPRE Hertfordshire</i>
<i>British Horse Society</i>	<i>Crossroads Care (Hertfordshire North)</i>

<i>Croudace Strategic Ltd</i>	<i>Finishing Publications Ltd</i>
<i>CTC The National Cycling Charity</i>	<i>First Plan</i>
<i>Cycling UK Stevenage</i>	<i>Fitness First Plc</i>
<i>Dacorum Borough Council</i>	<i>Friends of Forster Country</i>
<i>Datchworth Parish Council</i>	<i>Friends of the Earth (Luton)</i>
<i>Davies And Co</i>	<i>Friends Religious Society</i>
<i>Defence Infrastructure Organisation</i>	<i>Friends, Families and Travellers and Traveller Law Reform Project Community Base</i>
<i>Deloitte</i>	<i>Fusion</i>
<i>Department For Business, Innovation and Skills</i>	<i>Gabriel Securities Ltd</i>
<i>Department For Culture Media And Sport</i>	<i>Genesis Housing Group</i>
<i>Department For Environment Food And Rural Affairs</i>	<i>GHM Consultancy Group Ltd (Logic Homes)</i>
<i>Department For Transport Rail Group</i>	<i>Giles Junior School</i>
<i>Design Council</i>	<i>Giles School</i>
<i>Dixons Dispatch Ltd</i>	<i>Glanville</i>
<i>Douglas Drive Senior Citizens Association</i>	<i>Glasgow City Council</i>
<i>DPDS Consulting Group</i>	<i>GlaxoSmithKline</i>
<i>EADS Astrium</i>	<i>Government Equalities Office</i>
<i>East and North Herts Clinical Commissioning Group</i>	<i>Graveley Against SNAP Proposals (GASP)</i>
<i>East and North Herts NHS Trust</i>	<i>Graveley Parish Council</i>
<i>East Coast</i>	<i>Graveley School</i>
<i>East Hertfordshire District Council</i>	<i>Great Ashby Community Council</i>
<i>East Herts District Council</i>	<i>Great Ashby Community Group</i>
<i>East Herts Footpath Society</i>	<i>Great Ashby Community Resource Centre</i>
<i>East of England Ambulance Service</i>	<i>Greene King Plc</i>
<i>East Of England Local Government Association (formerly EERA)</i>	<i>Greenside School</i>
<i>Eastlake Stevenage Limited</i>	<i>Gregory Gray Associates</i>
<i>Ecovril Ltd</i>	<i>Gujarati Hindu Association</i>
<i>Endurance estates</i>	<i>Hanover Housing Association</i>
<i>Environment Agency</i>	<i>HAPAS</i>
<i>Epping Forest District Council</i>	<i>Heaton Planning Ltd</i>
<i>Essex County Council</i>	<i>Hermes Real Estate Investment Ltd</i>
<i>Executive</i>	<i>Hertford Road Community Association</i>
<i>F&C REIT Asset Management</i>	<i>Hertfordshire Action on Disability</i>
<i>Fairlands Primary School And Nursery</i>	<i>Hertfordshire Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders</i>
<i>Fairlands Valley Sailing Centre</i>	<i>Hertfordshire Association Of Parish And Town Councils</i>
<i>Fairview Road Residents Association</i>	<i>Hertfordshire Association of Parish and Town Councils / Welwyn Hatfield Association of Local Councils</i>
<i>Featherstone Wood Primary School</i>	<i>Hertfordshire Association Of Young People</i>
<i>Fields in Trust</i>	<i>Hertfordshire Biological Records Centre</i>

<i>Hertfordshire Care Trust</i>	<i>Iceni Projects Ltd</i>
<i>Hertfordshire Chamber Of Commerce And Industry</i>	<i>Independent Custody Visitors Scheme</i>
<i>Hertfordshire Constabulary</i>	<i>Intercounty Properties</i>
<i>Hertfordshire County Council</i>	<i>J Young Investments Ltd.</i>
<i>Hertfordshire County Council (Archaeology)</i>	<i>JB Planning Associates</i>
<i>Hertfordshire County Council (Estates)</i>	<i>Jehovah's Witnesses</i>
<i>Hertfordshire County Council (Highways)</i>	<i>John Henry Newman RC School</i>
<i>Hertfordshire County Council Public Health</i>	<i>Jones Day</i>
<i>Hertfordshire Fire And Rescue Service</i>	<i>Jones Lang LaSalle</i>
<i>Hertfordshire Gardens Trust</i>	<i>Kirkwells</i>
<i>Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service</i>	<i>Knebworth Estates</i>
<i>Hertfordshire Highways</i>	<i>Knebworth House Education and Preservation Trust</i>
<i>Hertfordshire LEP</i>	<i>Knebworth Parish Council</i>
<i>Hertfordshire Police</i>	<i>Lambert Smith Hampton</i>
<i>Hertfordshire Police Authority</i>	<i>Land Registry Head Office</i>
<i>Hertfordshire Police Eastern Area</i>	<i>Lanes New Homes</i>
<i>Hertfordshire Property (HCC)</i>	<i>Langley Parish Meeting</i>
<i>Hertfordshire Society for the Blind</i>	<i>Larwood School</i>
<i>Hertfordshire Stop Smoking Service</i>	<i>Lepus Consulting</i>
<i>Hertfordshire University</i>	<i>Letchmore Infants And Nursery School</i>
<i>Hertfordshire Visual Arts Forum</i>	<i>Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation</i>
<i>Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust</i>	<i>Leys Primary And Nursery School</i>
<i>Herts Against the Badger Cull</i>	<i>Lincolns Tyre Service Ltd.</i>
<i>Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust</i>	<i>Living Streets</i>
<i>Herts Gay Community</i>	<i>Lodge Farm Primary School</i>
<i>Hertsmere Borough Council</i>	<i>London and Cambridge Properties Ltd</i>
<i>Hightown Praetorian Churches Housing Association</i>	<i>London Borough of Barnet</i>
<i>Highways England</i>	<i>London Borough of Enfield</i>
<i>Hill Residential Limited</i>	<i>London Borough of Harrow</i>
<i>HilliersHRW Solicitors LLP</i>	<i>London Gypsies and Travellers Unit</i>
<i>Historic England</i>	<i>Longmeadow Primary School</i>
<i>Hitchin Town Action Group</i>	<i>Lonsdale School</i>
<i>Holiday Inn Express</i>	<i>Luton Borough Council</i>
<i>Holy Trinity Church</i>	<i>Mantle</i>
<i>Home Builders Federation</i>	<i>Marine Management Organisation</i>
<i>Home Group</i>	<i>Marriotts Gymnastics Club</i>
<i>Homes And Communities Agency</i>	<i>Marriotts School</i>
<i>Howard Cottage Housing Association</i>	<i>Martin Ingram Opticians</i>
<i>Howard Property Group</i>	<i>Martins Wood Primary School</i>
<i>HSBC Trust Company (UK) Limited</i>	<i>Mayor of London</i>
<i>Hubert C Leach Ltd</i>	<i>MBDA UK Ltd</i>
<i>Hythe Ltd</i>	<i>Miller Strategic Land</i>
<i>Mind in Herts</i>	<i>Pin Green Community Centre</i>

<i>MKG Motor Group</i>	<i>Pin Green Residents Association</i>
<i>Moss Bury Primary School</i>	<i>Pin Green Residents Group</i>
<i>Moult Walker Chartered Surveyors</i>	<i>Planning Issues Ltd</i>
<i>MS Society Mid Hertfordshire</i>	<i>Planning Potential Ltd</i>
<i>NaCSBA</i>	<i>Planware Ltd</i>
<i>National Express</i>	<i>Planware Ltd.</i>
<i>National Housing Federation</i>	<i>POhWER</i>
<i>Natural England</i>	<i>Princes Trust</i>
<i>Network Rail</i>	<i>Putterills Of Hertfordshire</i>
<i>NFGLG</i>	<i>Rapleys LLP</i>
<i>NHS East and North Hertfordshire CCG</i>	<i>REACT</i>
<i>North Hertfordshire and Stevenage Green Party</i>	<i>Redrow Homes (Eastern) Ltd</i>
<i>North Hertfordshire College</i>	<i>Redrow Homes Eastern Division</i>
<i>North Hertfordshire District Council</i>	<i>Regional Land Holdings Ltd.</i>
<i>North Hertfordshire Friends Of The Earth</i>	<i>Relate North Hertfordshire And Stevenage</i>
<i>North Hertfordshire People First</i>	<i>Renshaw UK Limited</i>
<i>North Herts & Stevenage Green Party</i>	<i>rg+p Ltd</i>
<i>North Herts and Stevenage Community Learning Disability Team</i>	<i>Richborough Estates</i>
<i>North Herts Homes</i>	<i>Ridgmond Park Training Centre</i>
<i>North Herts People First</i>	<i>River Beane Restoration Association</i>
<i>North Stevenage Consortium</i>	<i>Road Haulage Association</i>
<i>Odyssey Group Holdings</i>	<i>Roebuck and Marymead Residents Association</i>
<i>Office for Rail Regulation</i>	<i>Roebuck Nursery And Primary School</i>
<i>Old Stevenage Community Association</i>	<i>Round Diamond Primary School</i>
<i>On Behalf Of St. Peter's Church</i>	<i>RPF Developments</i>
<i>Origin Housing Group</i>	<i>RPS Planning and Development Ltd</i>
<i>Oval Community Centre</i>	<i>RSPB</i>
<i>PACE</i>	<i>Sainsbury's Supermarkets Ltd</i>
<i>Paradigm Housing Group</i>	<i>Savils</i>
<i>Passenger Transport Unit, Hertfordshire County Council</i>	<i>Saving North Herts Green Belt</i>
<i>Patient Liaison Group</i>	<i>Secretary of State for Communities</i>
<i>Peacock And Smith</i>	<i>Seebohm Executors</i>
<i>Peartree Spring Junior School</i>	<i>Shephalbury Sports Academy</i>
<i>Pennyroyal Ltd.</i>	<i>Shephall Community Association</i>
<i>Pentangle Design</i>	<i>Shephall Residents Association</i>
<i>Persimmon Homes</i>	<i>Showmen's Guild Of Great Britain</i>
<i>PHD Associates</i>	<i>Simmons And Sons</i>
<i>Physically Handicapped And Able Bodied Club</i>	<i>South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership</i>
<i>Picture Ltd</i>	<i>Sport England</i>
<i>Pigeon Investment Management Ltd</i>	<i>Sport Stevenage</i>
<i>Pigeon Land Ltd</i>	<i>Springfield House Community Association</i>
<i>St Albans City And District Council</i>	<i>Thames Water Property</i>

<i>St Ippolyts Parish Council</i>	<i>The Baha'I Community of Stevenage</i>
<i>St Margaret Clitherow RC Primary School</i>	<i>The Campaign for Real Ale</i>
<i>St Nicholas Community Centre</i>	<i>The Coal Authority</i>
<i>St Nicholas School</i>	<i>The Greens & Great Wymondley Residents Association</i>
<i>St Vincent De Paul RC Primary School</i>	<i>The Guinness Trust</i>
<i>St. Nicholas and Martins Wood Residents Association</i>	<i>The Guinness Partnership</i>
<i>Stanhope Plc</i>	<i>The Gypsy Council</i>
<i>STARCOURT CONSTRUCTION LTD</i>	<i>The Hitchin Forum</i>
<i>Stevenage And North Hertfordshire Indian Cultural Society</i>	<i>The Living Room</i>
<i>Stevenage and North Herts Women's Resource Centre</i>	<i>The National Trust</i>
<i>Stevenage Borough Council</i>	<i>The Nobel School</i>
<i>Stevenage Borough Council Transportation Development</i>	<i>The Salvation Army</i>
<i>Stevenage Business Initiative</i>	<i>The Theatres Trust</i>
<i>Stevenage Caribbean and African Association</i>	<i>The Woodland Trust</i>
<i>Stevenage Caribbean And African Association (SCARAFa)</i>	<i>Theatres Trust</i>
<i>Stevenage Cricket Club</i>	<i>Thomas Alleyne School</i>
<i>Stevenage CVS</i>	<i>T-Mobile</i>
<i>Stevenage Depression Alliance</i>	<i>TRACKS (Autism)</i>
<i>Stevenage Haven</i>	<i>Transport for London</i>
<i>Stevenage Irish Network</i>	<i>Trotts Hill Primary And Nursery School</i>
<i>Stevenage League Of Hospital Friends</i>	<i>Troy Planning</i>
<i>Stevenage Mosque</i>	<i>Turley</i>
<i>Stevenage Polish Association</i>	<i>Universities Superannuation Scheme Ltd</i>
<i>Stevenage Quakers</i>	<i>USF Nominees Ltd.</i>
<i>Stevenage Regeneration Ltd.</i>	<i>Veale Associates</i>
<i>Stevenage Sikh Cultural Association</i>	<i>Veolia Water Central (VWC)</i>
<i>Stevenage Town Rugby Club</i>	<i>VEOLIA WATER CENTRAL LIMITED</i>
<i>Stevenage Women's Refuge</i>	<i>Vincent And Gorbing Planning Associates</i>
<i>Stevenage World Forum For Ethnic Minorities</i>	<i>Virgin Media</i>
<i>Stevenage Youth Council</i>	<i>Visit East Anglia</i>
<i>Stewart Ross Associates</i>	<i>Vodafone Ltd</i>
<i>Strutt and Parker LLP</i>	<i>Waitrose Ltd</i>
<i>Symonds Green Community Association</i>	<i>Walkern Parish Council</i>
<i>Taylor Wimpey</i>	<i>Watford Borough Council</i>
<i>Taylor Wimpey / Persimmon</i>	<i>Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council</i>
<i>Telefónica O2 UK Limited</i>	<i>Welwyn Hatfield Council</i>
<i>Telereal Trillium</i>	<i>West Stevenage Consortium</i>
<i>Terence O'Rourke Ltd</i>	<i>Weston Parish Council</i>
<i>Thames Water</i>	<i>Wheatley Homes</i>
<i>Wheatley Homes Ltd</i>	<i>Woolmer Green Parish Council</i>

<i>Willmott Dixon Housing</i>	<i>WPNPF</i>
<i>Wm Morrisons Supermarket Plc</i>	<i>Wyndley Parish Council</i>
<i>Women's Link</i>	<i>Wyvale Garden Centres Ltd</i>
<i>Woodland Trust</i>	<i>Young Pride in Herts</i>
<i>Woolwich Infant And Nursery School</i>	<i>Youth Council</i>


Approximately 950 individuals on the Council consultation register were also consulted.

Appendix 2 – Consultation Publicity

Consultation Questions

Chapter	Section	Page ^s	Question
1	Introduction	6–7	1. Do you have any comments on Chapter 1 – Introduction?
2	Background	10–13	2. Do you have any comments on Chapter 2 – Background?
3	Setting the Context	16–19	3. Do you have any comments on Chapter 3 – Setting the Context?
4	Issues and Challenges	22–31	4. Do you have any comments on Chapter 4 – Issues and Challenges?
5	Existing Environment	34–35	5. Do you have any comments on Chapter 5 – Existing Environment?
6	Emerging Framework	38	6. Do you have any comments on the Objectives, outlined in Chapter 6 – Emerging Framework?
6	Emerging Framework	39	7. Do you have any comments on the Key Principles, outlined in Chapter 6 – Emerging Framework?
6	Emerging Framework	40–49	8. Do you have any comments on the Core Enhancements, outlined in Chapter 6 – Emerging Framework?
6	Emerging Framework	41	9. Do you have any comments on Central Area (Option 0), outlined in Chapter 6 – Emerging Framework?
6	Central Area (Option 1)	50–53	10. Do you have any comments on Central Area (Option 1), outlined in Chapter 6 – Emerging Framework?
6	Central Area (Option 2)	54–57	11. Do you have any comments on Central Area (Option 2), outlined in Chapter 6 – Emerging Framework?
6	Central Area (Option 3)	58–61	12. Do you have any comments on Central Area (Option 3), outlined in Chapter 6 – Emerging Framework?
6	Central Area (Preferred Option)	50–61	13. Please indicate your Preferred Option for the Central Area and state your reasons for choosing this Option (or combination of Options / other Options, if appropriate).
6	Central Area (Additional Options)	50–61	14. Please let us know of any other suggestions regarding the Central Area Options.
6	Cycle Path Options (Potential Layout 1)	62	15. Do you have any comments on Cycle Path (Potential Layout 1), outlined in Chapter 6 – Emerging Framework?
6	Cycle Path Options (Potential Layout 2)	63	16. Do you have any comments on Cycle Path (Potential Layout 2), outlined in Chapter 6 – Emerging Framework?
6	Cycle Path (Preferred Option)	62–63	17. Please indicate your Preferred Option for the Cycle Path Potential Layout and state your reasons for choosing this Option (or combination of Options / other Options, if appropriate).
6	Cycle Path (Additional Options)	62–63	18. Please let us know of any other suggestions regarding the Cycle Path Options.
6	Phasing and Temporary Use	64–65	19. Do you have any comments on Phasing and Temporary Use, outlined in Chapter 6 – Emerging Framework?
6	Greening the Grey	68	20. Do you have any comments on Greening the Grey, outlined in Chapter 6 – Emerging Framework?
6	Using Development to Make a Place	69	21. Do you have any comments on Using Development to Make a Place, outlined in Chapter 6 – Emerging Framework?
6	Development Parcels	70–79	22. Do you have any comments on the indicative Development Parcels, outlined in Chapter 6 – Emerging Framework?
6	Parking Consolidation	80	23. Do you have any comments on Parking Consolidation, outlined in Chapter 6 – Emerging Framework?
7	Conclusions and Feedback	84	24. Do you have any comments on Chapter 7 – Conclusions and Feedback?
General	General Comments	–	25. What are the main issues with Stevenage Railway Station at the moment, in your view?
General	General Comments	–	26. Do you think Lytton Way works well as a main road route alongside Stevenage Railway Station? What are the main problems with Lytton Way at the moment, in your view?
General	General Comments	–	27. Do you think the existing cycleway alongside the Station works well? If no, what are the issues with it?
General	General Comments	–	28. What improvements would you like to see made at Stevenage Railway Station?
General	General Comments	–	29. What improvements to Lytton Way would you like to see?
General	General Comments	–	30. How would you improve connections between the Railway Station, Lytton Way and the Town Centre?
General	General Comments	–	31. Do you have any suggested improvements to walking and cycling to and from the Railway Station?
General	General Comments	–	32. Do you have any suggested improvements to walking and cycling through the Railway Station to other destinations?
			33. Any ideas for what types of developments could replace the surface level car parks around the Railway Station?
			34. Do you have any other suggestions for improvements to the Railway Station, Lytton Way and access to and from the Railway Station?
General	General Comments	–	35. Do you have any other / general comments to make on the Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan: Issues and Options Report?
SEA Screening	General Comments	–	36. Do you have any comments on the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening report that accompanies the Area Action Plan?

Promotional Video



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The consultation runs from 12 July to 5 September.
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APPENDIX E

Stevenage Borough Council

STEVENAGE STATION GATEWAY AREA ACTION PLAN

Modelling Summary Technical Note





Stevenage Borough Council

STEVENAGE STATION GATEWAY AREA ACTION PLAN

Modelling Summary Technical Note

TYPE OF DOCUMENT (VERSION) PUBLIC

PROJECT NO. 70085521

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Stevenage Borough Council

STEVENAGE STATION GATEWAY AREA ACTION PLAN

Modelling Summary Technical Note

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APPENDIX B

MODEL RESULTS (WITH SMART MOTORWAY)

APPENDIX C

BUS DATA

APPENDIX D

MODEL RESULTS (SENSITIVITY TEST)

APPENDIX E

BUS DATA (SENSITIVITY TEST)

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 FOREWORD

- 1.1.1. This report has been prepared on behalf of Stevenage Borough Council to describe the transport modelling of the various proposals associated with the Stevenage Station Gateway Area Action Plan. The impacts of the AAP proposals that may affect traffic capacity or routing have been tested using the Stevenage Town Centre S-Paramics model and the results are summarised in this report.
- 1.1.2. Unless specified otherwise, references to “Lytton Way” in this report are describing the section of road between A1155 Fairlands Way and A1070 Six Hills Way only, including the roundabout junctions at either end of that section.
- 1.1.3. This report represents a shortened version of the final modelling report which has been prepared as an interim reporting stage to provide results for discussion between officers at SBC and HCC.

1.2 STEVENAGE STATION GATEWAY AAP

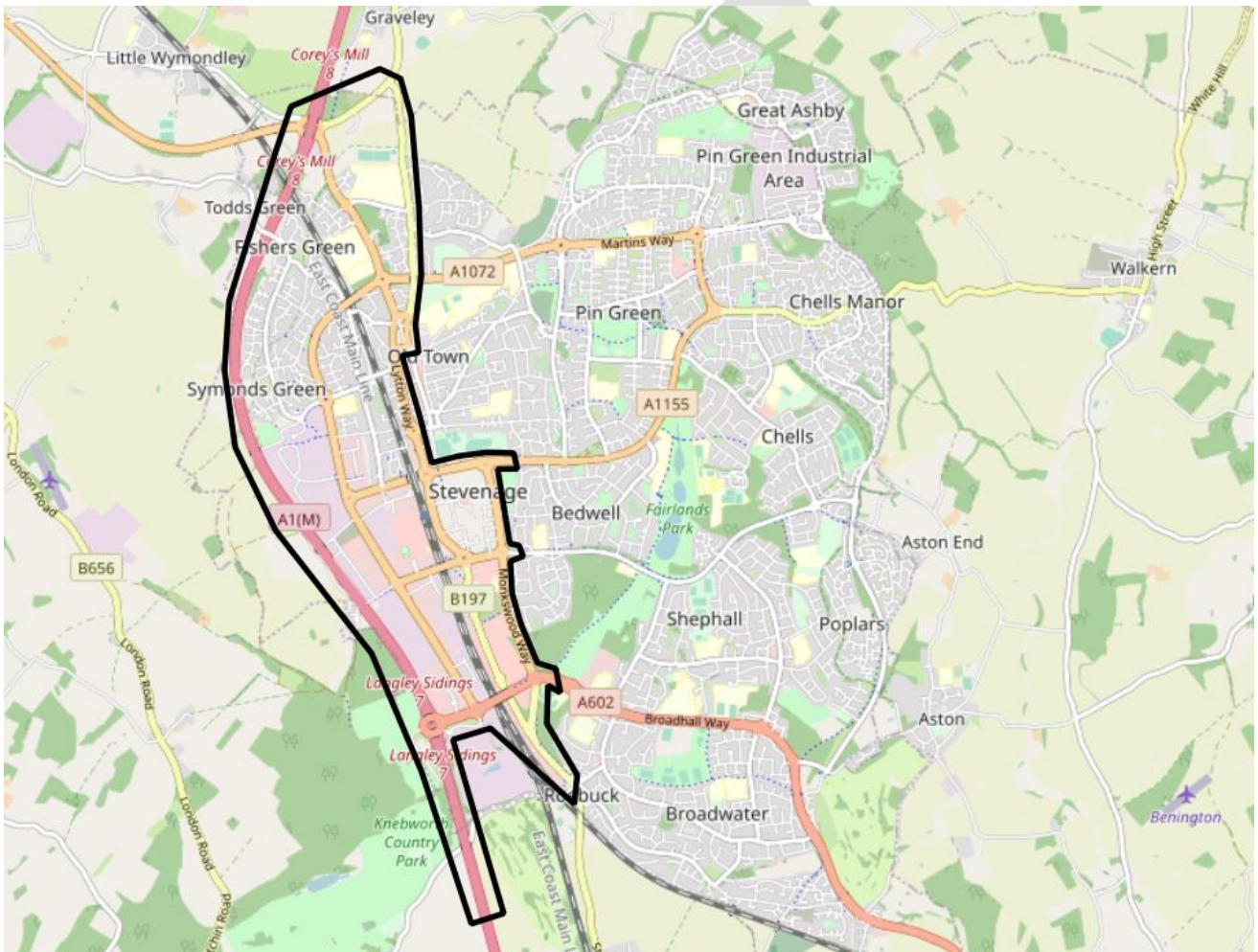
- 1.2.1. The first paragraph of the Stevenage Connection Area Action Plan (AAP) Issues and Options Report (July 2021), hereafter referred to as “the AAP”, describes the purpose of the AAP as follows:
- “Stevenage’s town centre is undergoing a process of renewal and regeneration. As part of this, the area around the Railway Station bounded by the railway tracks and Lytton Way has been identified as a key site for new development and change. This key gateway for the town has the potential for significant transformation, based on its well-connected position only 20 minutes from Kings Cross. Such development could form a key part of the regeneration of the town centre.”*
- 1.2.2. The initial stage of the project seeks to identify the options available in the vicinity of Stevenage railway station, to deliver the following objectives:
- A new gateway and arrival experience
 - Enhanced movement and access for all modes
 - Green infrastructure integrated throughout
 - Creating a low-carbon urban village
 - Sustainability in mobility, built form and landscaping
 - Celebrating the heritage of the town
 - Making the most of digital connectivity and high-speed broadband
- 1.2.3. In addition, the relocation of the main town centre bus interchange from Town Square to the site located to the south of the Stevenage Arts and Leisure Centre offers an opportunity to rethink the interchange between different modes in Stevenage town centre due to the much closer proximity of railway and bus stations and offers an opportunity to redesign and repurpose Lytton Way to help meet the objectives of the AAP.
- 1.2.4. The AAP identifies Lytton Way as a key barrier to the council’s commitment to sustainable transport in Stevenage because it severs the station from the town centre and provides an unpleasant environment and public realm for active travel modes. The council’s Town Centre Regeneration Framework identifies a potential downgrade or removal of Lytton Way as a key part of the placemaking and regeneration strategy for the town centre.

1.2.5. The traffic modelling that is described in this report has been undertaken to look at the impacts of various options for the downgrade or removal of Lytton Way on both traffic in Stevenage town centre and on the operation of local bus services. Further details of the schemes that have been assessed in the transport model are provided later in the report.

1.3 STEVENAGE TOWN CENTRE S-PARAMICS MODEL

1.3.1. The Stevenage Town Centre S-Paramics model is a traffic micro-simulation model of the western side of Stevenage, bordered by the A1M to the west and the A602 (Monkswood Way and St Georges Way to the east). The model study area contains both Junctions 7 and 8 of the A1(M) along with key routes through the town – the study area of the model is shown in Figure @ below.

Figure 1-1 - Town Centre Model Study Area



1.3.2. While traffic microsimulation models are very detailed, they are sometimes the only tool that can be used to understand the interactions between junctions, particularly in congested networks where queues may extend back to or past the next junction upstream with knock-on impacts on the operation of adjacent junctions.

1.3.3. The model includes various driving behaviours (including headway, gap acceptance and driver aggression) that can be calibrated to match observed traffic conditions. This means that the model is



calibrated to match the existing behaviours of drivers in Stevenage and is representative of how people travel through the network.

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2 AREA ACTION PLAN MEASURES

2.1 POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

2.1.1. The modelling includes for a development representing the following land uses

Table 2-1 – Modelled Land Uses

	Total
Residential	Up to 1000
Commercial (A1/A3)	Up to 5,000
Hotel	Up to 140
Office (B1)	Up to 3000
MSCP	Approx. 750

2.2 AAP PROPOSALS FOR LYTTON WAY

2.2.1. The AAP contains a set of “core enhancements” for Lytton Way, which focus on the northern (Fairlands Way to Swingate) and southern (Danesgate to Six Hills Way) sections, which will apply in all options:

- Reduction in the width of Lytton Way, with the northern and southern section’s remaining open to all vehicles.
- Conversion of the Lytton Way/ Danesgate and Lytton Way/ Swingate junctions to small roundabouts.
- Improved vehicle access/ egress to/ from the police station, with the option of being able to provide a limited movement right turn egress from the police station if traffic volumes and speeds allow.
- Provision of a new segregated cycleway adjacent to Lytton Way
- Provision of a large public square outside the station
- Facilitation of an east-west pedestrian boulevard running from west of the railway line, through the railway station, to the existing town centre.
- Provision of a cycle hub

2.2.2. The AAP then considers three options for the central section of Lytton Way, between Swingate and Danesgate, as follows:

- Option 1: single carriageway open to all traffic
- Option 2: single carriageway open to buses and taxis only.
- Option 3: closure to all vehicles (except emergency vehicles) to create a pedestrianised plaza between the railway station and leisure centre.

2.2.3. These schemes are described in more detail in the main modelling report.

2.3 INDICATIVE AAP DEVELOPMENT TRIP GENERATION

- 2.3.1. The AAP land use trip generation has been calculated using data sources such as TRICS or using similar trip rates to those agreed for other developments in Stevenage town centre. Further details of the calculations for these trips can be found in the detailed modelling report.

2.4 COMMITTED AND PLANNED DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES

- 2.4.1. The following committed or planned developments located in the town centre area have been included in the modelling:

- SG1 Masterplan.
- Redevelopment of Matalan site.
- Redevelopment of BHS site; and
- Redevelopment of the Icon site.

Trip generation information for these sites have been taken from their respective Transport Assessments and have been added to the model in appropriate zones. It has been assumed that the development traffic will be added in addition to any existing demands, unless otherwise described in the Transport assessments. Further details of this process can be found in the detailed modelling report.

2.5 COMMITTED AND PLANNED HIGHWAY SCHEMES

- 2.5.1. In addition to the committed developments, the modelling also includes several committed highway schemes, including:

- the proposed throughabout at the A602/ Gunnels Wood Road/ GSK junction; and
- the A1(M) Junctions 6 to 8 "smart motorway" proposals.

- 2.5.2. The A602/ Gunnels Wood Road scheme involves replacing the existing roundabout with a signal-controlled throughabout. This scheme is in both the baseline and forecast year models.

- 2.5.3. The A1(M) "Smart Motorway" is a scheme that seeks to use the existing hard-shoulder on the A1(M) as a traffic lane during peak times. The Smart Motorway will also include variable speed limits on gantries above the carriageway. At present, there is some doubt about the Smart Motorway programme in England, with the A1(M) scheme paused while the Government undertakes a review of existing Smart Motorways. The traffic modelling includes versions of the model with and without the Smart Motorway scheme to understand the importance of the Smart Motorway to the AAP proposals.

3 MODEL

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This section summarises the main modelling points associated with the AAP project. Further detail can be found in the detailed modelling report.

3.2 ASSESSMENT YEARS

3.2.1. The model will be run for three assessment years, namely:

- 2021
- 2025; and
- 2031

3.2.2. Details of how these traffic flows were derived are contained in the main modelling report.

3.3 MODEL SCENARIOS

3.3.1. The model will test the following four scenarios for the 2025 and 2031 assessment years:

- Baseline
- Baseline with Lytton Way Option 1
- Baseline with Lytton Way Option 2
- Baseline with Lytton Way Option 3

3.3.2. Full details of how the traffic flows have been predicted for these scenarios are contained in the main modelling report.

3.4 BASELINE MODEL CHANGES

3.4.1. A key source of model lock-ups, particularly with the scheme, was observed to be A1(M) Junction 7 which repeatedly locked up due to poor lane discipline on the A602 approach, the roundabout circulatory and on the two merges. The changes at this junction include:

- Amendments to roundabout lanes to better reflect on-street driver behaviour
- Amendments to signal times in the “with development” scenarios due to the impact of the additional right turning vehicles to the GSK site.
- Additional circulatory lane just before southbound diverge (this better reflects the on-street junction arrangement)
- Minor node distance tweaks to allow two lane use to continue further around the junction before merging on slip-roads

3.4.2. There were also several locations in the model where vehicles were u-turning in locations where they would not normally be able to (i.e. at locations where two links split from a single link). This behaviour was prevented to stop vehicles unrealistically turning left at a junction then u-turning at the first available point.

3.4.3. The Signal timings at the A602/ Martins Way junction have been amended to provide a better flow throughput from north to south on the A602 to prevent the roundabout from locking up frequently (as it did with the previous signal timings).

3.5 SENSITIVITY TESTS

- 3.5.1. When reviewing the modelling, it became apparent that one of the causes of the model locking up was that the validation had used a set of very high gap acceptance parameters and that the lane discipline at some junctions was poor, restricting the traffic throughput. While these assumptions were acceptable for the less congested conditions to which the model was validated, the level of congestion being predicted in some scenarios means that those parameters may not be appropriate in a much more congested network.
- 3.5.2. While drivers have the luxury of accepting a larger gap during uncongested conditions, behaviour generally changes the longer a driver waits for a gap until such time as a driver accepts any gap they can safely pull into – even if this causes a vehicle behind to brake. As such, the majority of gaps have been reduced from a default of 4 seconds to 2.5 seconds, unless the arm is very congested where vehicles are permitted to find a zero second gap (in practice the vehicle still pulls out safely, just in a manner to cause the vehicle behind to partly give-way. It is also noted that the model cannot account for the typical let out behaviour that drivers often observe when in a queue (i.e. letting one vehicle exit a side road into the queue in front of the other.
- 3.5.3. A sensitivity test has therefore been undertaken to identify the impact of modelling a more aggressive set of driver behaviour rules.
- 3.5.4. A further sensitivity test looking at potential mitigation options at the most congested junctions has also been prepared.

3.6 ASSUMED MODE SHIFTS

- 3.6.1. Due to the predicted levels of congestion in the model it has been necessary to apply a mode shift away from car to all model zones. This is effectively the reduction in the traffic demand that would be required to achieve the results shown in the model results. The mode shift is applied by using a reduced flow percentage when starting the model simulation, and applies to all zones across the model equally.
- 3.6.2. WSP believes that the application of these mode shifts is justified because of the various Sustainable Travel Town and Active Travel Fund schemes that are being considered across Stevenage will help encourage travel by non-car modes. At present the modelling applies a maximum mode shift of 15%, however WSP understands that officers believe even larger mode shifts may be possible given the right conditions.
- 3.6.3. The percentage mode shift that has been applied in each model scenario is summarised in Table 3-1.

Table 3-1 – Required % Traffic Demand Reduction (or mode shift)

Scenario	No Smart MW		With Smart MW	
	AM	PM	AM	PM
2021 baseline	100	100	-	-
2025 Baseline	100	100	100	100
2025 Option 1	100	100	100	100
2025 Option 2	100	100	100	100
2025 Option 3	95	95	95	95
2031 Baseline	90	90	90	90
2031 Option 1	90	90	90	90
2031 Option 2	90	90	90	90
2031 Option 3	85	85	85	85

3.6.4. A secondary test, applying a 25% mode shift in the 2031 Option 3 has also been tested.

4 MODELLING RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

- 4.1.1. This section summarises the model results from the main model scenarios. Section 5 summarises the results of the sensitivity tests
- 4.1.2. This report has been prepared on behalf of Stevenage Borough Council to describe the transport modelling of the various proposals associated with the Stevenage Station Gateway Area Action Plan. The impacts of the AAP proposals that may affect traffic capacity or routing have been tested using the Stevenage Town Centre S-Paramics model and the results are summarised in this report.
- 4.1.3. The modelling described in this
- 4.1.4. Unless specified otherwise, references to “Lytton Way” this report are describing the section of road between A1155 Fairlands Way and A1070 Six Hills Way only, including the roundabout junctions at either end of that section.

4.2 NETWORK PERFORMANCE

- 4.2.1. The network performance statistics that have been calculated from the Paramics model are as follows:
- Average journey time in seconds across all vehicles.
 - Total number of vehicles completing a journey
- 4.2.2. The total number of vehicle statistic is important when comparing different journey times across scenarios because it can help to identify where a model is suffering greater congestion (i.e. a scenario with a significantly lower travel time may also have a lower number of vehicles, suggesting that the model is very congested and more of the shorter, faster journeys are being completed)
- 4.2.3. Table 4-1 summarises the network performance statistics for the scenarios without the A1(M) smart motorway.

Table 4-1 – Network Performance Results (Without Smart Motorway)

Scenario	Average JT (s)		Total Vehicles	
	AM	PM	AM	PM
2021 baseline	300	316	24191	27302
2025 Baseline	466	421	23540	28625
2025 Option 1	603	421	24555	28847
2025 Option 2	793	397	21637	4248

2025 Option 3	646	451	23262	11721
2031 Baseline	562	484	17829	21372
2031 Option 1	402	282	24402	27189
2031 Option 2	513	468	24421	16082
2031 Option 3	448	510	23092	20068

4.2.4. Table 4-2 summarises the network performance statistics for the scenarios with the proposed smart motorway in place on the A1(M).

Table 4-2 – Network Performance Results (Without Smart Motorway)

Scenario	Average JT (s)		Total Vehicles	
	AM	PM	AM	PM
2021 baseline	300	316	24191	27302
2025 Baseline	291	460	25216	27712
2025 Option 1	621	421	26864	28943
2025 Option 2	641	551	25509	10657
2025 Option 3	544	578	23996	14069
2031 Baseline	388	476	26512	17231
2031 Option 1	400	284	24429	27177
2031 Option 2	416	523	24358	16022
2031 Option 3	359	553	23085	21042

4.2.5. The network performance results show that overall, Option 1 provides the best performance of the three options, although (particularly in the AM Peak) this can be worse than the performance of the

baseline conditions. The model shows that the Option2 and 3 schemes serve significantly less traffic than the Option 1 network. On the basis of the network performance statistics, Option 1 appears to be the best option overall.

4.3 JOURNEY TIMES

4.3.1. The model contains several journey time routes representing the main traffic corridors within the model. The modelled journey times are measured along key journey time routes, as shown in Table 4-3

Table 4-3 – Journey Time Routes in Stevenage Paramics model

Route	Description
1E	A602 (A1(M) to Valley Way)
1W	A602 (Valley Way to A1(M))
2E	Six Hills Way (Gunnels Wood Road to Rockingham Way)
2W	Six Hills Way (Rockingham Way to Gunnels Wood Road)
3E	Fairlands Way (Gunnels Wood Road to Siam Road)
3W	Fairlands Way (Siam Road to Gunnels Wood Road)
4E	Gunnels Wood Road and Martins Way (A602 to Grace Way)
4W	Gunnels Wood Road and Martins Way (Grace Way to A602)
5N	Monkswood Way and St Georges Way (London Road to Fairlands Way)
5S	Monkswood Way and St Georges Way (Fairlands Way to London Road)
6N	North Road (Gyratory to Gresley Way)
6S	North Road (Gresley Way to Gyratory)

4.3.2. Table 4-4 summarises the AM peak hour vehicle journey times in the scenarios that do not include the Smart motorway scheme on the A1(M).

Table 4-4 – Vehicle Journey Times (AM Peak, without Smart Motorway)

AM Peak	Baseline			2025			2031		
	2021	2025	2031	Opt.1	Opt.2	Opt.3	Opt.1	Opt.2	Opt.3
1E	81	84	81	77	91	87	77	87	84
1W	155	226	293	282	500	149	158	288	135
2E	91	100	95	127	153	98	128	99	95
2W	521	674	699	1279	895	485	1200	736	380
3E	90	94	96	96	178	242	96	124	101
3W	257	414	475	443	653	1143	275	463	776
4E	275	276	280	276	362	281	274	322	281
4W	321	382	429	417	723	682	371	528	464
5N	216	286	380	361	973	218	352	759	204
5S	160	167	177	188	186	368	202	168	359
6N	138	280	302	229	221	143	186	183	136
6S	174	1323	1646	1271	908	161	378	419	147

4.3.3. Table 4-5 summarises the AM peak hour vehicle journey times in the scenarios that do not include the Smart motorway scheme on the A1(M).

Table 4-5 - Vehicle Journey Times (PM Peak, without Smart Motorway)

PM Peak	Baseline			2025			2031		
	2021	2025	2031	Opt.1	Opt.2	Opt.3	Opt.1	Opt.2	Opt.3
1E	105	127	202	107	0	267	93	201	190
1W	145	149	160	143	0	0	139	179	198
2E	178	242	417	169	0	1614	124	0	1001
2W	98	119	184	235	0	240	117	323	258
3E	99	107	195	108	0	0	100	1090	978
3W	113	123	213	127	0	375	112	454	469
4E	376	505	552	430	0	600	353	973	590
4W	302	340	392	386	0	821	296	1299	625
5N	325	467	563	502	0	672	268	644	495
5S	290	390	555	487	0	246	284	203	250
6N	144	155	163	166	125	154	141	143	137
6S	132	136	141	144	0	316	134	239	166

4.3.4. Table 4-6 summarises the vehicle journey times from the AM peak with smart motorway scenario models.

Table 4-6 – Vehicle Journey Times (AM Peak, with Smart Motorway)

AM Peak	Baseline			2025			2031		
	2021	2025	2031	Opt.1	Opt.2	Opt.3	Opt.1	Opt.2	Opt.3
1E	81	84	81	77	91	87	77	87	84
1W	155	226	293	282	500	149	158	288	135
2E	91	100	95	127	153	98	128	99	95
2W	521	674	699	1279	895	485	1200	736	380
3E	90	94	96	96	178	242	96	124	101
3W	257	414	475	443	653	1143	275	463	776
4E	275	276	280	276	362	281	274	322	281
4W	321	382	429	417	723	682	371	528	464
5N	216	286	380	361	973	218	352	759	204
5S	160	167	177	188	186	368	202	168	359
6N	138	280	302	229	221	143	186	183	136
6S	174	1323	1646	1271	908	161	378	419	147

4.3.5. Table 4-7 summarises the vehicle journey times from the AM peak with smart motorway scenario models.

Table 4-7 - Vehicle Journey Times (PM Peak, with Smart Motorway)

PM Peak	Baseline			2025			2031		
	2021	2025	2031	Opt.1	Opt.2	Opt.3	Opt.1	Opt.2	Opt.3
1E	105	127	202	107	0	267	93	201	190
1W	145	149	160	143	0	0	139	179	198
2E	178	242	417	169	0	1614	124	0	1001
2W	98	119	184	235	0	240	117	323	258
3E	99	107	195	108	0	0	100	1090	978
3W	113	123	213	127	0	375	112	454	469
4E	376	505	552	430	0	600	353	973	590
4W	302	340	392	386	0	821	296	1299	625
5N	325	467	563	502	0	672	268	644	495
5S	290	390	555	487	0	246	284	203	250
6N	144	155	163	166	125	154	141	143	137
6S	132	136	141	144	0	316	134	239	166

4.4 QUEUING

4.4.1. The model contains a large number of queue measurement routes which report the length of queues in metres from the give-way line at a junction. What these routes do not provide is details of queues which block back through upstream junctions or information

In general, the majority of the queueing is focussed on the following six junctions:

- Fairlands Way/ Gunnels Wood Road
- Fairlands Way/ Lytton Way
- Fairlands Way/ St Georges Way
- Six Hills Way/ Gunnels Wood Road
- Six Hills Way/ Lytton Way
- Six Hills Way/ Monkswood Way/ St Georges Way.

4.4.2. In the Option 2 and Option 3 scenario models, the model visualisation shows significant congestion surrounding the town centre, with queues nearly forming a circle around Six Hills Way, Fairlands Way, Gunnels Wood Road and St Georges Way. The model also shows queueing southbound into the Fairlands Way/ Lytton Way junction which extends back up the A602 to (and sometimes beyond) the gyratory located to the north of Old Stevenage town centre.

4.4.3. Overall, it is considered that the level of queue congestion shown in the Option 2 and Option 3 models is likely to result in severe delays to bus services serving the town centre.

4.5 IMPACTS ON BUS SERVICES

Introduction

- 4.5.1. The new Stevenage Bus Station is located to the east of Lytton Way and will be directly affected by any highway proposals associated with the AAP scheme. At a high level, Option 1 provides the opportunity to reduce the length of some bus-station bound bus services, either by providing a right turn directly to the bus station access or by buses being able to U-turn sooner on entry to the bus station

Stevenage Bus Services

- 4.5.2. The bus services in Stevenage can broadly be split into two types, namely:
- Town services, providing connections between areas located within Stevenage; and
 - Intra-urban services, providing connections from Stevenage to destinations such as Hitchin, Watford and Luton.
- 4.5.3. Ideally the AAP proposals would not affect either type of bus service, but the intra-urban services cannot as easily be replaced by a mode shift to local walking/ cycling schemes. This means that it is more important to ensure that the intra-urban services can continue to operate successfully.
- 4.5.4. WSP has divided the bus services into the two groups above and has then looked at the impact on those bus services. Detailed tables showing the modelled journey times on about 57 separate bus route sections within the model (one section is a route from the edge of the model to another edge of the model or the bus station) are contained in Appendix @.

4.6 CONCLUSION/ RECOMMENDATION

- 4.6.1. When considering a recommendation based on the models with unamended model parameters (i.e. the non-Sensitivity Test models) there are several factors to consider. Based on “near-full” traffic demands, Option 1 is the best performing overall, because it allows the most traffic through the network while resulting in the least congestion, particularly in the PM Peak. On this basis of traffic capacity alone, Option 1 would be the recommended option. It is also noted that the roadworks associated with the construction of the new Stevenage Bus Station have effectively trialled the reduction in traffic capacity associated with Option 1 with little apparent impact.
- 4.6.2. However, traffic capacity is not the only consideration in terms of the AAP schemes, with placemaking and sustainable travel being key priorities, particularly associated with the Stevenage Sustainable Travel Town goals. This means that if residents and businesses of Stevenage are willing to accept potentially large mode shifts away from travel by private car towards more sustainable modes such as public transport, walking and cycling, the level of congestion predicted to be associated with options 2 and 3 could be reduced. The level of mode shift associated with these two Options operating successfully could be more than 25%, which would represent a significant behavioural change for the local community which may require further consultation with the community.

4.7 POTENTIAL OPTION 2/ 3 TRIAL

- 4.7.1. As described earlier in the report, the temporary lane closures that were in place during construction of the bus station have effectively demonstrated that the Option 1 road layout is likely to operate

successfully. If possible, it therefore suggested that a short term trial of closing Lytton Way outside the railway station could be tested, maintaining emergency vehicle, bus and taxi access.

4.7.2. For example, a temporary road closure could be installed on Lytton Way using traffic

4.7.3. WSP is uncertain if such measures could be trialled “on street”, but is something that could be considered to demonstrate to local residents that the scheme operates successfully.

DRAFT

5 SENSITIVITY TESTS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

- 5.1.1. As described earlier in this report, the forecast year models for Options 2 and 3 (in particular) highlighted that there were many locations in the model where gap parameters at junctions were unduly pessimistic (i.e. vehicles were looking for a very large gap) which meant that when the network became congested, the driver behaviour was not aggressive enough for vehicles to use the smaller, rarer gaps that were available in the model.
- 5.1.2. Additionally, there were several roundabouts where the roundabout lane discipline was not properly refined, which was leading to vehicles crossing on entry to the roundabout, and reducing capacity, because vehicles were simply using the wrong lane for their manoeuvre.
- 5.1.3. More details of the changes made during the sensitivity test are provided in the full modelling report. The remainder of this section reports the model results for the sensitivity test scenarios, where the sensitivity test scenarios are described as follows:
- Sensitivity 1 = 2031 Option 3 model with amended parameters
 - Sensitivity 2 = 2031 Option 3 model with amended parameters and highway improvements
- 5.1.4. These scenarios all assume that the A1(M) smart motorway has been constructed.

5.2 HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS

- 5.2.1. Sensitivity test 2 includes the following highway improvements
- Removal of the bypass lane from Danestrete to Six Hills Way
 - Additional Right Turn Lane from Fairlands Way to St Georges Way
 - Amendments to eastbound carriageway on Fairlands Way at St Georges Way roundabout
 - Signalisation of NB Gunnels Wood Road approach to Fairlands Way roundabout
 - Minor tweaks to lane destinations at Six Hills Way/ St Georges Way roundabout.

5.3 NETWORK PERFORMANCE

- 5.3.1. Table 5-1 summarises the network performance statistics for the sensitivity test scenarios

Table 5-1 – Network Performance Statistics (Sensitivity Tests,

Scenario	Journey Time (s)		Total Vehicles	
	AM	PM	AM	PM
2031 Option 3	359	553	23085	21042
2031 Sensitivity 1	391	491	22216	19758
2031 Sensitivity 2	413	503	22242	24577

Table 5-3 – Comparison of Sensitivity Test 2 vs 2031 Option 3 with no amendments

Route	AM	PM
1E	3	-52
1W	3	-24
2E	-2	-906
2W	294	104
3E	-	-
3W	-137	-126
4E	-7	-294
4W	-110	-99
5N	-58	-136
5S	-202	-77
6N	1	0
6S	8	-1

5.4.3. It is evident that the majority of journey times within the model are faster in the AM and PM peaks, with the exception of route 2W (Six Hills Way between Rockingham Way and Gunnels Wood Road). It is noted that the opposite direction shows a substantial journey time reduction.

5.5 QUEUES

5.5.1. Table 5-4 summarises the modelled queue lengths at several locations within the model study area. The table also includes a comparison between Sensitivity test 2 and the 2031 Option 3 model results.

Table 5-4 – Average Queue lengths (metres)

	AM Peak				PM Peak			
	Opt 3	ST1	ST2	ST2 vs Opt3	opt 3	ST1	ST2	ST2 vs Opt3
1 Fairlands Way E	336.6	179.8	337.9	1	79.2	91.2	76.8	-2
1 St Georges Way	194.0	386.0	51.6	-142	375.2	376.5	359.8	-15
1 Fairlands Way W	99.4	68.5	43.2	-56	344.2	296.5	395.4	51
2 St Georges Way N	252.4	87.1	40.4	-212	244.0	100.8	101.6	-142
2 Six Hills Way E	343.9	334.0	82.7	-261	58.0	97.4	35.7	-22
2 A602 S	47.6	178.7	50.7	3	303.7	333.4	159.5	-144
2 A602 W	41.3	73.1	23.5	-18	205.2	220.9	183.0	-22
3 Six Hills Way W	25.8	45.2	28.2	2	439.6	352.6	83.2	-356
3 Lytton Way	2.7	10.9	4.7	2	127.7	123.9	41.4	-86
3 Danestrete	0.0	6.9	4.3	4	159.5	168.3	34.4	-125
3 A602 E	18.1	154.1	66.8	49	22.3	23.2	6.5	-16
3 London Road S	6.5	444.8	261.9	255	103.7	134.1	7.3	-96
4 Lytton Way N	44.5	48.0	34.0	-11	280.8	279.9	279.8	-1
4 Fairlands Way E	46.6	65.7	38.7	-8	144.6	227.1	101.6	-43
4 A602 S	82.5	86.9	56.3	-26	211.7	205.1	205.5	-6
4 A1155 W	40.0	31.5	25.1	-15	474.3	476.6	450.4	-24
5 Gunnells Wood Rd N	79.9	146.0	84.4	5	195.2	107.1	100.2	-95
5 Six Hills Way WB	413.7	536.3	540.9	127	202.1	411.2	326.3	124
5 Six Hills Way EB	3.4	6.6	4.2	1	106.9	108.0	109.5	3
5 Gunnells Wood Road NB	57.2	68.3	39.0	-18	216.6	149.0	64.8	-152
6 Monkswood Way	0.0	0.3	0.2	0	0.5	4.9	0.0	-1
6 London Road S	6.0	106.7	3.7	-2	20.4	38.7	8.4	-12
6 London Road N	5.5	172.2	5.8	0	35.9	73.1	34.6	-1
Gunnels Wood Road	46.0	15.3	12.2	-34	576.3	164.9	52.9	-523
GSK	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	33.1	13.2	6.4	-27
A602 EB	145.8	103.6	91.4	-54	227.3	157.6	208.9	-18
A602 WB	8.6	432.2	20.9	12	75.6	225.1	20.0	-56

	AM Peak				PM Peak			
	Opt 3	ST1	ST2	ST2 vs Opt3	opt 3	ST1	ST2	ST2 vs Opt3
RM Monkswood Way SB	41.8	51.6	37.4	-4	62.9	121.3	76.6	14
RM Monkswood Way NB	31.2	319.0	31.3	0	102.0	150.3	83.6	-18
RM A602 WB	40.6	115.4	32.8	-8	94.4	124.2	63.3	-31
RM A602 EB	19.6	24.7	17.4	-2	186.9	181.1	42.4	-144

5.5.2. The predicted queue lengths again show that the Sensitivity Test 2 scheme and mode shift generally operates better than the original 2031 Option 3 model without the sensitivity test 2 parameters.

5.6 BUS SERVICE IMPACTS

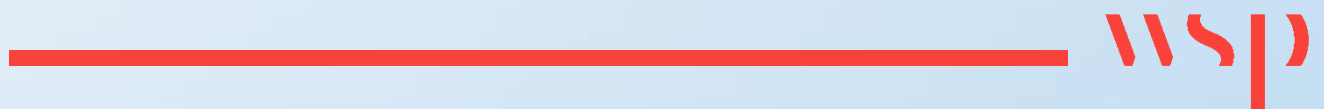
Tables summarising the bus service impacts of the proposed sensitivity test are contained in Appendix E. The bus data shows a similar pattern to that of the vehicle journey times, with services generally being faster and more reliable under the Sensitivity test 2.

5.7 CONCLUSION

5.7.1. The Sensitivity tests have shown that the Option 3 scheme could operate more successfully than predicted in the original modelling assuming a more aggressive driver behaviour and the implementation of highway capacity improvements. It is noted however, that the highway improvements are not LTP4 compliant as they are led primarily by the need to provide traffic capacity rather than improve sustainable modes such as walking and cycling. The schemes that have been modelled will also need further design development to identify if they could be implemented on-street.

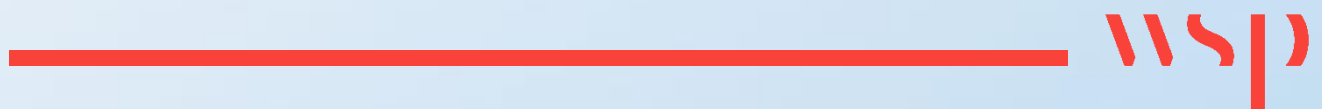
Appendix A

MODEL RESULTS (WITHOUT SMART MOTORWAY)



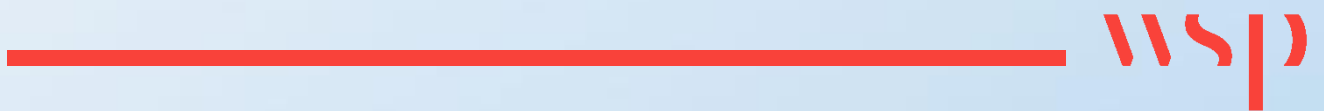
Appendix B

MODEL RESULTS (WITH SMART MOTORWAY)



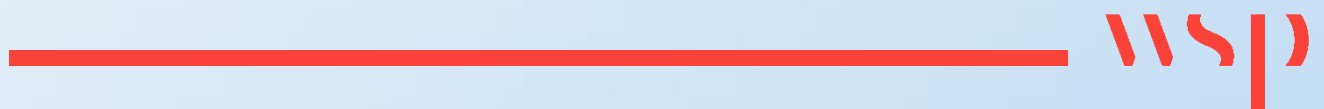
Appendix C

BUS DATA



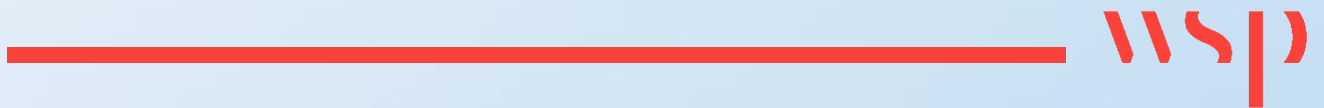
Appendix D

MODEL RESULTS (SENSITIVITY TEST)



Appendix E

BUS DATA (SENSITIVITY TEST)





Unit 9, The Chase
John Tate Road, Foxholes Business Park
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wsp.com

Meeting Executive
Portfolio Area Environment and Regeneration
Date 9 February 2022



STEVENAGE DESIGN GUIDANCE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT 2021: PUBLIC CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

KEY DECISION

Author Deborah Coates | 2865
Lead Officer Zayd Al-Jawad | 2257
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1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide Members with an overview of the draft Stevenage Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 2021 public consultation (Appendix A).
- 1.2 To seek Members' approval to significantly amend, in line with the points raised in the Consultation Statement, and to publicly consult on the second draft Stevenage Design Guidance SPD 2021.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the content of the Stevenage Design Guidance SPD 2021 Consultation Statement (Appendix B) be noted.
- 2.2 That delegated powers be granted to the Assistant Director: Planning and Regulation, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment

and Regeneration, to make minor amendments as are necessary in the final preparation of the second draft SPD prior to its consultation.

- 2.3 That the second draft Design Guidance SPD, as attached at Appendix A, be published for consultation in September 2022 for a minimum of six weeks (speculatively 5 September to 17 October 2022).
- 2.4 That the Local List of Heritage Assets be published on the Stevenage Borough Council Webpage.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are produced to add detail to the policies included in an adopted Local Plan (BD1). They are used to build upon and provide further guidance for development on specific sites or on particular issues. Whilst they are not part of the Development Plan¹ for an area, and cannot add unnecessarily to the financial burdens on development, the contents of a SPD are a material consideration when determining a planning application.
- 3.2 The Council has a Design Guide SPD which was adopted in October 2009 (BD2). The document was produced to supplement policies in the District Plan Second Review (2004) and focusses on traditional design ideas such as the separation distance of homes and the design of suburban roads. The overarching aim of the SPD is to ensure that development in Stevenage results in optimal design for different areas of development including safety, habitat, privacy etc. It requires developments to include aspects of design that provide model conditions for the residents of Stevenage and for the environment.
- 3.3 The SPD provides instructions of what to provide and how to provide appropriate design of different types of development in Stevenage. For residential development, this includes privacy, separation distances and extensions for example. For non-residential development, the design guide includes less guidance and this is an area that needs refining.

Policy Background

- 3.4 The purpose of the Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document 2021 is to give more detail to the current Strategic Policy 8: Good design, in the Stevenage Borough Local Plan, and also Detailed Policy GD1: High quality design.
- 3.5 National Government have a range of documents that consider levels of differing design standards including:
 - Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard (2015)
 - Living with beauty: promoting health, well-being and sustainable growth (2020)

¹ The Development Plan for an area comprises the adopted Local Plan, the Waste Local Plan, the Minerals Local Plan and any adopted Neighbourhood Plans (of which there are none currently in Stevenage).

- Creating space for beauty: interim report of the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission (2019)
- Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission (2021)
- National Design Guide (2021)
- Draft National Model Design Code (2021)

These all promote good quality and thoughtful design to enhance environments for residents and biodiversity.

- 3.6 Other SPDs that the Council has already adopted, including the Sustainable Transport SPD and the Impact of Development on Biodiversity SPD, have been incorporated and referenced in the document to ensure that the SPD remains robust and relevant.
- 3.7 To confirm, as requested by the Executive previously, the Design Guidance SPD appendices (Local Heritage List and Public Realm Guidance) were separated out from the main document and were used as supporting documents in order to reduce the length and complexity of the Design Guidance SPD.

4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION AND OTHER OPTIONS

Recommendation 2.1: That the content of the draft Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document 2021 Consultation Statement be noted.

- 4.1 The draft Design Guidance SPD 2021 Consultation Statement is included in Appendix A. A broad overview of the key points from the draft version is presented below.
- 4.2 Design Consultants held an All-Member Session in July 2021 to bring them up to date with the National Design Guide in preparation for the public consultation.
- 4.3 Consultation on the draft Design Guidance SPD was held between 20 September to 15 November 2021 and was then extended for a further two weeks until 29 November 2021.
- 4.4 A total of 157 representations were received from a number of key consultees as well as internal teams.
- 4.5 Responses were received from
- Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team
 - Hertfordshire Constabulary
 - Knebworth Estates
 - Historic England
 - Members of the public
- 4.6 A full summary of responses is provided in Appendix A together with officer responses to each comment.

4.7 The key responses are summarised in the table below

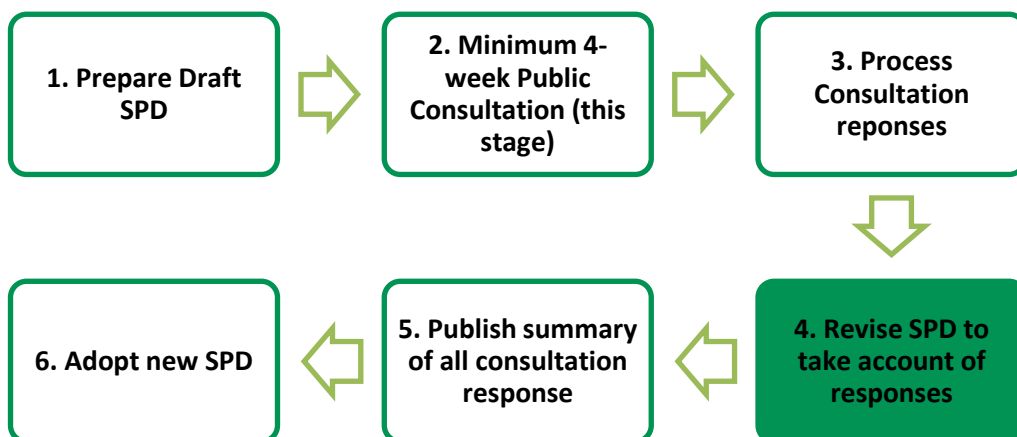
Response	Reasons for Amendment
Remove references to promoting fossil fuel efficiency	To promote the use of sustainable forms of energy supply.
Refer to new and updated documents from Sports England, Herts County Council (HCC) and Historic England	To ensure the robust nature of the document in light of updated reference documents.
Embed 'active design' throughout the document	Help to promote a more physically active and mentally stimulating environment in all aspects of design.
Reconsider the element of movement and how Stevenage was designed to not preclude one or other form of transportation	Ensure that the document is inclusive and supportive of the forms of transport that individuals chose to use.
Review the guidance of signage in the Town centre	Requirements of the Design Guidance SPD exceed what is permitted by law.
Strengthen the guidance relating to building in residential gardens	Gardens are not considered to be previously developed land and this point needs reiterating.
Reference HCC's role as Lead Local Flood Authority	Factual amendment.
Review the proposed species for street tree planting	Biosecurity regulations, for example Ash Dieback.
Review references to hedgerows etc.	The use of the word 'attractive' implies negativity to something that is aesthetically unattractive, would be more appropriate to use alternative language such as 'important' or 'valued'.
Updated document in relation to Part Q of Building Regulations	To ensure the robust nature of the document in light of updated reference documents.
Update lighting standards	To ensure the robust nature of the document in light of updated reference documents.

Recommendation 2.2: That delegated powers be granted to the Assistant Director: Planning and Regulation, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regeneration, to make minor amendments as are necessary in the final preparation of the second draft SPD prior to its consultation.

- 4.8 The draft Design Guidance SPD 2021 is appended to this report. However, it may be necessary to make minor changes prior to the consultation start date. This might include cosmetic adjustments, the correction of typographical errors and any minor factual changes.
- 4.9 It is recommended that any such amendments be approved via delegated powers.

Recommendation 2.3: That the second draft Design Guidance SPD be published for consultation in September 2022 for a minimum of six weeks (speculatively 5 September to 17 October 2022).

- 4.10 The procedure to adopt a new SPD is set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. In summary, it is as follows:



- 4.11 We have completed the first consultation for a minimum four week period. Following this, the Council must consider the consultation responses, produce a document stating the main issues raised by respondents, and summarise how the issues have been addressed by the Council.
- 4.12 Because the amendments that need to be made to the document are deemed significant, the document will need to be consulted upon once again once the amendments have been made.
- 4.13 The proposed second consultation in September allows time for officers to work on the document and ensure that is preparation is thorough prior to the consultation.
- 4.14 The current Design Guide SPD, 2009, is still a material consideration in the determination of planning applications; as is the draft Design Guidance SPD, as per the consultation version 2021, although to a lesser extent. This means that we are not undermining our position in terms of design in the period of our second consultation.

- 4.15 In addition, the second consultation ensures that we exercise good practice in relation to the amendments that we need to make.
- 4.16 The second consultation will be an appropriate consultation, in line with the Regulations, given the responses from the first consultation. In addition, it does provide an opportunity to further publicise the good work that the Council are doing in relation to the design of buildings and public realm in the Borough.
- 4.17 The timetable for consultation and adoption has been updated and is currently as follows:

Stage	Date
Planning and Development Committee	31 January 2022
Executive	9 February 2022
8-week public consultation	September – October 2022
Consider and address responses	Autumn 2022
Adopt SPD through Executive	December 2022

- 4.18 As with any consultation exercise, it is not known how many responses will be received so the post-consultation stages will not be known for definite until a later date.

Recommendation 2.4: That the Local List of Heritage Assets be published on the Stevenage Borough Council Webpage.

- 4.19 The Local Heritage List, that acts as a supporting document to the Design Guidance 2021, has been published on the Council's webpage along with information detailing how nominations for new buildings and the associated evaluation criteria.
- 4.20 This is a live document and buildings will be assessed as and when they are submitted to the Planning Policy Team.
- 4.21 In due course, the List will be expanded to include art, sculpture and parks.

5 IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

- 5.1 The costs associated with producing and consulting on the second draft Design Guidance SPD will be met from the agreed departmental budget.
- 5.2 Any potential schemes that are mentioned in the SPD will need to be subject to a business case and / or will require third party funding.

Legal Implications

- 5.3 Consultation on the draft Design Guidance SPD will be undertaken in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 5.4 The outcomes of any consultation must be conscientiously taken into account in finalising the SPD to take responses into account prior to approval by the Executive.

Risk Implications

- 5.5 There are no significant risks associated with producing the draft Design Guidance SPD.

Policy Implications

- 5.6 The draft Design Guidance SPD accords with, and has been produced to supplement policies in, the adopted Stevenage Borough Local Plan (2019).

Planning Implications

- 5.7 The draft Design Guidance SPD will supplement the recently adopted Stevenage Borough Local Plan (2019).
- 5.8 If adopted after consultation, the document will not form part of the Development Plan for Stevenage. However, it will be a material consideration for planning applications.

Climate Change Implications

- 5.9 The draft Design Guidance SPD has the potential to have a positive impact on climate change through the multiple benefits that prioritising the design of development and incorporating innovative technologies.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 5.10 The draft Design Guidance SPD does not have any direct equality or diversity implications. When implementing any of the proposals the delivery body will need to consider the potential impacts on different community groups, in particular those who are less mobile or disabled.

Community Safety Implications

- 5.11 Whilst the draft Design Guidance SPD does not have any direct community safety implications itself, when implementing any of the proposals the delivery body will need to consider the potential impacts on community safety.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

BD1 Stevenage Borough Local Plan, 2011-2031

BD2 Stevenage Design Guide 2009 SPD

BD3 Local Heritage List

<https://democracy.stevenage.gov.uk/documents/s28792/Item%206%20-%20Appendix%20A%20-%20Design%20Guidance%20SPD%202021.pdf>

BD4 Town Centre Public Realm Design

<https://democracy.stevenage.gov.uk/documents/s28793/Item%206%20-%20Appendix%20E%20to%20Appendix%20A%20-%20BDP%20work.pdf>

APPENDICES

A Draft Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document 2021

B Consultation Statement

STEVENAGE DESIGN GUIDANCE 2021

Supplementary Planning Document



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Part 1 – Purpose of the Stevenage Design Guidance

Introduction

1.1 Stevenage Design Guidance 2021 supports the strategic and detailed policies in the Stevenage Borough Local Plan (SBLP). This guidance forms a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which is an additional 'material consideration' in planning decisions. This guidance replaces the Stevenage Design Guide 2009; updating advice where appropriate and providing new guidance on matters introduced or strengthened in the SBLP.

1.2 This document was adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document at a meeting of the Executive Committee of Stevenage Borough Council on **XX XXXX 2021**.

1.3 A draft version of this document was subject to public consultation between 9 August 2021 and 4 October 2021. The consultation was carried out in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004, as well as Stevenage Borough Council's Statement of Community Involvement. A summary of the representations received and the Council's response to these is set out in the **Statement of Consultation** which accompanies this document.

How to use this design guidance

1.4 This Stevenage Design Guidance sets out clear design principles to guide future development in Stevenage. It encourages a design led approach to all development, from large residential schemes to modest residential extensions and small infill developments.

1.5 This Guide provides design principles for all developments, accompanied by illustrations and good practice examples, to help deliver good design and clearly signpost where more detailed guidance can be accessed. It aims to be user-friendly and does not seek to replicate existing policy and regulations that will continue to apply to all development.

Looking forward

1.6 This guidance has been prepared in the context of social, economic and environmental change. Technological change is rapid, with developments in digital, artificial intelligence and machine learning affecting our lives at all scales.

1.7 The demographics of Stevenage are also driving change as the population ages, the needs of some residents are changing from those originally provided for through the development of the New Town. Young people's expectations are changing too; leading to new lifestyles and new models of home ownership.



Image: Hertfordshire LEP

1.8 We expect continuing change as a consequence of climate change, changing home ownership models and technological changes. It is likely to emerge and embed in society rapidly. It will influence the planning, design and construction of new homes and places.

Components for good design

1.9 Urban design is the design of towns and cities, streets and spaces, and concerns all aspects of the public realm, including the detailed design of buildings and landscapes, the way in which places work and the relationships between existing and new developments.

1.10 Good design translates into more than the appearance of buildings. It is important in both small residential extensions and large-scale developments that introduce form and materials and the creation of new streets and spaces. Functionality and practicality are embedded in design and are as important as the visual quality of a building or large scale development.

1.11 Well-designed neighbourhoods help build communities, give them a sense of belonging and make residents feel safe. Often this can be through simple approaches such as natural surveillance, an easy technique created when new streets and public open spaces are overlooked by windows and doors.

1.12 Carefully positioned car parking and cycle storage, as well as integrated refuse and recycling bins, also help to create a sense of order and reduce litter and vandalism.



Image Studio RHE

1.13 The quality of open space and the way in which new streets and spaces are designed directly affects how people feel about a place and the whole community benefits from a commitment to usable green space. Access to open space also has a direct impact on the health and wellbeing of those able to take advantage of it.

1.14 For commercial development, well designed buildings are good for business. The flexibility to respond to changing social and economic circumstances is important, as are design solutions which encourage creativity and innovation. Investment in good quality design provides a higher return on the investment made.

1.15 Good design in all development is inclusive and accessible for everyone, has a positive impact on the environment, integrates into its immediate and wider surroundings, provides flexibility for future

change, is easily maintained and delivers a return on investment.

1.16 All places and spaces are different, and design is not about starting again from a blank canvas. The context and character of a place needs to be taken into account and renewal rather than demolition is encouraged where possible. There is no 'perfect blueprint' for good design, and trying to apply the same rigid principles everywhere would result in a loss of local distinctiveness and, therefore, counteract the objectives of the initial application of urban design principles.

1.17 The government has placed a great deal of emphasis on the importance of creating well designed places. The [Design Council](#) provides an advisory service to the government and various best practice guidance publications have since been produced.

The relationship between the Stevenage Borough Local Plan and the Stevenage Design Guidance

1.18 National and local planning policies influence whether a site is suitable for development and the form and nature of development. A planning review of relevant planning policy documents, including the Stevenage Borough Local Plan Policies SP8: Good Design, and GD1: High Quality Design, should be undertaken.

1.19 In addition, there is a series of other documents, including, [Conservation Area Management Plans and Appraisals](#) and [Supplementary Planning Documents](#) (SPD's) which are adopted or endorsed by the Council. These are material planning considerations in planning decisions and should be considered in the design of new development.

1.20 In some instances, construction may be able to proceed without the need for a formal planning application/approval. This is known as '[Permitted Development](#)' (PD) rights. They derive from general planning permission granted by Parliament rather than the Local Planning authority. Further details are available from the [Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government](#) website.

1.21 Even if you do not need to make a planning application, you should follow good design principles, with materials, forms and architectural detailing.

1.22 In addition to planning policy, applicants should consider best practice in terms of sustainable design, creating better environments and the quality of the built form. Further advice is available from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE), Historic England and Landscape Institute publications.



www.designcouncil.org.uk



www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/building-futures/building-futures.aspx

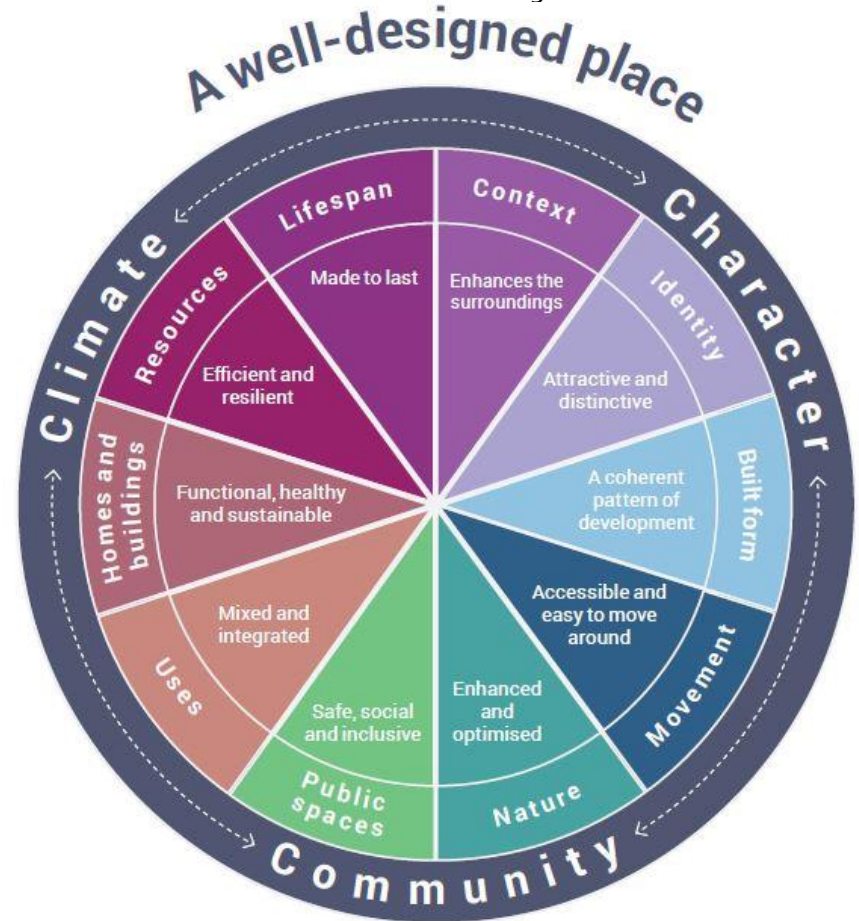
Introducing the ten characteristics

1.24 The National Design Guide notes that well-designed places have individual characteristics which work together to create its physical character. These ten characteristics help to nurture and sustain a sense of community. They work positively to address environmental issues affecting climate. They all contribute towards the cross-cutting themes for good design set out in the NPPF.

1.25 This document is divided up into each of these ten characteristics in order to ensure that this guidance reflects accurately the characteristics of the National Design Guide.

1.23 Hertfordshire County Council, in partnership with the Hertfordshire District and Borough council's, have produced [Building Futures](#); a web-based guide to ensuring sustainable development in Hertfordshire. Aimed at planners and developers, it advocates high quality urban design as a catalyst for promoting sustainability. Modules within this guide contain information on energy, air, water, waste, safety and materials, which all interrelate to form an extensive design guide for sustainable and successful development. [Building Futures](#) must be read, in conjunction with this SPD, to ensure the sustainability of all development proposals.

Fig 1 – Ten characteristics from the National Design



Part 2: The ten characteristics

Context

NPPF Chapters 8, 12, 14, 15, 16

C.1 Context is the location of the development and the attributes of its immediate, local and regional surroundings.

C.2 An understanding of the context, history and the cultural characteristics of a site, neighbourhood and region influences the location, siting and design of new developments. It means they are well grounded in their locality and more likely to be acceptable to existing communities. Creating a positive sense of place helps to foster a sense of belonging and contributes to well-being, inclusion and community cohesion.

Value heritage, local history and culture

C.3 Stevenage is Britain's first New Town. Designated in 1946, it was the solution to address overcrowding that was being experienced in the ravages of bomb-damaged London which lies approximately 30 miles south.



Image: BBC News

C.4 The New Town developed around the Old Town of Stevenage, and enveloped small pockets of rural settlement. The original Masterplan for the town was inspired by the Garden Cities movement, and incorporated a number of distinctive urban design features which made the development of New Towns a revolutionary stage in planning history.

C.5 Owing to its identity as Britain's first New Town, the inception of Stevenage has a prodigious place in development history in the United Kingdom. It is, therefore, crucial that the individuality of Stevenage is preserved, and enhanced. Once Stevenage's original features are lost they can never be replaced.

C.6 The Borough is broadly urban in its nature and is made up of a number of residential neighbourhoods. These neighbourhoods make Stevenage distinct in that they are individual and separate from the town's industrial areas of Gunnels Wood, adjacent to the A1(M), and Pin Green, to the north of the town.

C.7 Some of the neighbourhoods have ancient historic cores from which the neighbourhood has grown, such as Shephall, Symonds Green and Chells Manor. Historically, these small original settlements developed along the Great North Road because Stevenage was a significant staging post with inns catering for travellers heading to and from London.

C.8 Many of the New Town principles have led to the creation of a successful place; however, some have not worked so effectively, in the way they were planned.

Understand and relate well to the site, its local and wider context

C.9 Since the town was developed, revised and nationally recognised principles of 'best practice' design have been produced. For the existing urban fabric of Stevenage there are opportunities to improve design through the integration of new schemes and the development of public realm improvements.

C.10 Generally accepted principles of good urban design should be adhered to in all new developments, but there are particular elements relevant to this New Town which require specific attention. In order to do this successfully, it is important that an understanding of the existing character of the town is formed, and that we learn from what has been successful and what has been less successful within the town.

C.11 A Stevenage Urban Character Assessment (Appendix A) was produced in 2008, which details the main characteristics of the residential areas within the town. This indicates the key features of the different neighbourhoods and highlights any relevant development considerations; providing details of both positive and negative aspects of the localities. This evidence is useful in providing a broad basis for site character appraisals and should be used as such when creating development proposals. It is important to note that the study covers neighbourhood areas as a whole and it is essential that each site is further assessed, on an individual basis.

C.12 An important part of considering development in Stevenage is to demonstrate a clear link between the appraisal of the context, any applicable planning designations, the character of the site, physical constraints and opportunities and the development proposals. This rationale will need to be explained through the Design and Access Statement that will accompany the planning application.

C.13 Stevenage's environment is protected by a number of local and national designations including Local Wildlife Sites, Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments which seek to preserve the area's natural and built environment for future generations. Applicants should check the SBLP Proposals Map and carry out their own desktop analysis, referring to the Council's website for further details.

C.14 A substantial amount of new housing is now required in Stevenage in order to meet the Objectively Assessed housing figures produced by Central Government. This provides the opportunity for Stevenage to learn from any past mistakes, make a real impact in terms of urban design, by modernising the town and preserving and enhancing the existing surroundings and historical attributes of Stevenage, where appropriate.

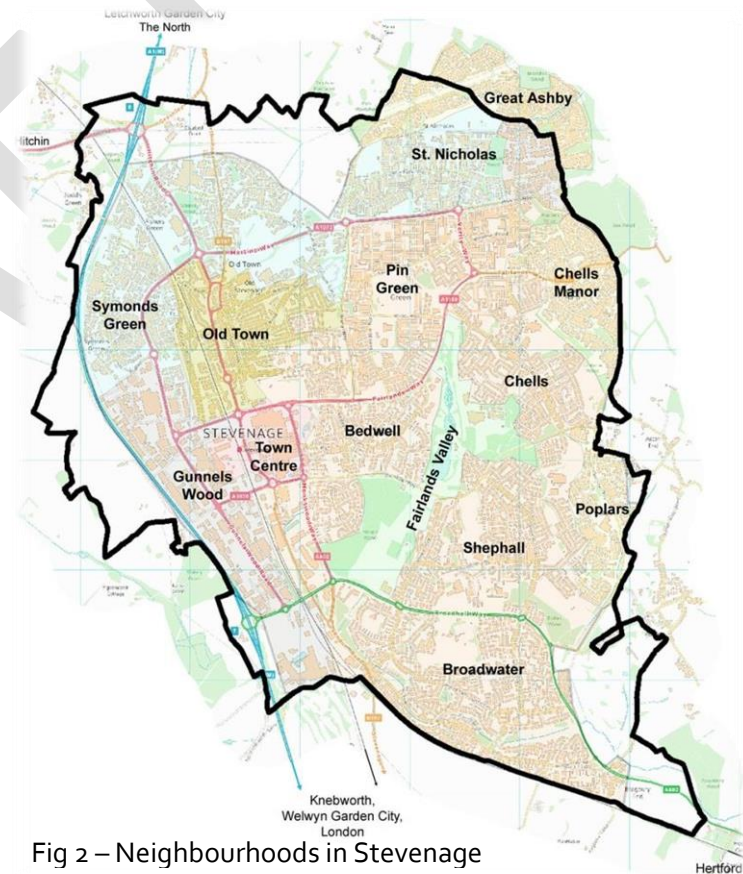


Fig 2 – Neighbourhoods in Stevenage

Image: Stevenage Borough Council

Fig 3 - Stevenage Borough Local Plan Policies Map

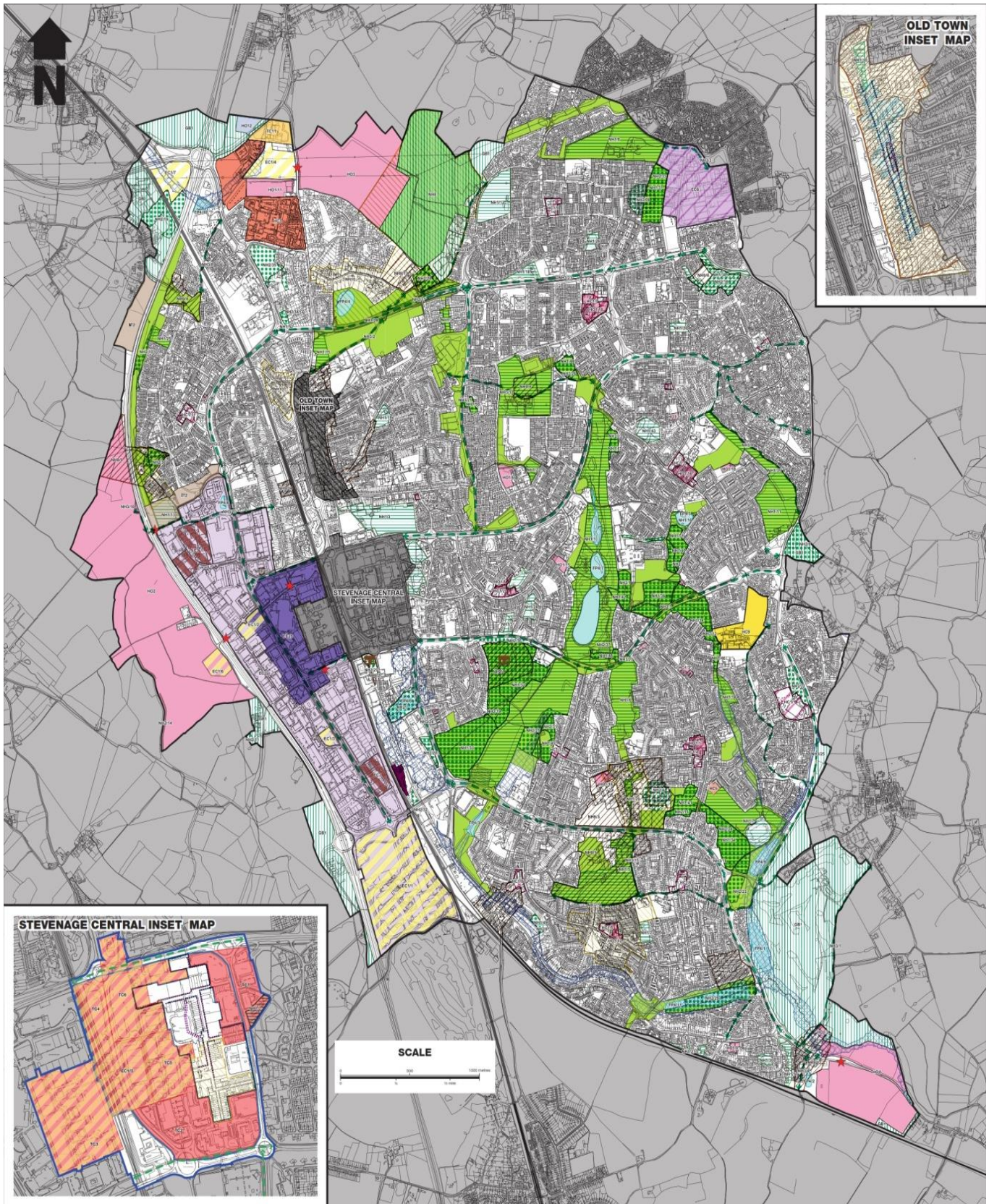


Image: Stevenage Borough Council

C.15 A high quality environment is essential for providing a good quality of life for residents. A well designed and managed space not only provides a visually attractive environment, but can also help to ensure that a place is easy to move around and within, is safe and secure, and is useful for all members of the community.

C.16 An understanding and analysis of the original New Town design concepts led to some key issues becoming apparent. These have been used as key themes, which run throughout the entirety of this guidance. Considering these concepts at all stages of the development process will provide a good basis for the creation of a successful place; based on the recognised principles of urban design, but also building on the existing fabric of the town without taking away from Stevenage's history as Britain's first Mark One New Town. The themes have been identified as follows:

- ✓ Sustainability – incorporate principles of sustainable development from a town-wide perspective to measures incorporated into an individual property.
- ✓ Increasing densities – encourage high densities in accessible locations.
- ✓ Respecting existing characteristics – respect local characteristics and preserve and enhance existing features, where appropriate.
- ✓ Legibility – provide landmark developments at nodal points.
- ✓ Design innovation – showcase Stevenage as an exemplar of high quality design; creating safer places through urban design techniques.

C.17 One of the key aspects of the original Masterplan for Stevenage was self-containment; on a town-wide scale, a balanced ratio of jobs and houses were provided, housing was allocated to people who had jobs in the town, reducing the need for residents to commute to work outside Stevenage. On a more local level, residents were accommodated within six distinct neighbourhoods, each containing their own Neighbourhood Centre; accommodating shops, pubs, schools, community centres and other services essential for facilitating self-containment. The aim was to reduce the need to travel into the Town Centre, enhance community relations and facilitate the success of local businesses.

C.18 These self-containment objectives are directly in line with the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) as well as healthy living aspirations. Although Stevenage is not completely self-contained, the Neighbourhood Centres have proved to be a particularly popular and well-used element of the town. With flats provided on the upper levels of the developments, they also provide multi-functional areas, which are now regarded as an important feature of good design; in terms of providing an active environment for natural surveillance and encouraging community spirit.

C.19 Sustainable development runs as a theme throughout this guidance and key ideas are highlighted within appropriate sections. However, the main principles for sustainability in design are listed within this chapter.

C.20 This is not a fully comprehensive guide for sustainability, as there is a vast amount of information already available within the public realm. In addition, technologies are constantly being updated; therefore, it is essential that evolving guides are used.

C.21 Planning is crucial in the management of sustainable development, and with sustainability now at the heart of the government agenda, Local Authorities produce policies and guidance which supports these principles.

C.22 Our SBLP ensures that all new developments incorporate methods for encouraging sustainable transport, maintain and enhance biodiversity, minimise resource usage and reduce the overall environmental impacts of the development. Our policies also promote the use of renewable energies.

C.23 Planners, designers and developers need to work together to ensure climate change is taken into account at all stages of the development process.

C.24 With the amount of new development required in the town, there is the opportunity to make substantial gains in fostering sustainability. All new developments should minimise their carbon footprints. And existing homes and buildings can embrace retrofitting technologies to make a significant contribution to sustainability and climate change objectives. Government grants remain available for home owners to install energy efficient technologies.

C.25 Sustainable development not only helps tackle climate change but also provides benefits for communities including improved health and well-being and an enhanced quality of life.

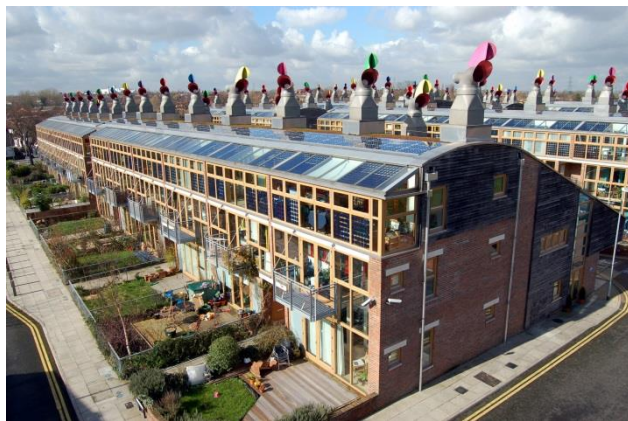


Image: HouseSimple

C.26 Developers benefit from offering developments which are built sustainably. Consumers are more environmentally conscious and want to reside in eco-friendly homes, which reduce their impact upon the environment, as well as minimising household bills.

C.27 Corporate Social Responsibility is being seen as an increasingly important part of a company's reputation.

C.28 Comprehensive sustainability guidance can be found within Hertfordshire's sustainable development guide '[Building Futures](#)'. Specific information on methods, techniques and best practice case studies, as well as expanding on the main principles put forward within this SPD are included in this guidance.

C.29 Another feature of the town's development was the relatively low density of housing. This was a result of the aspiration to provide an 'open town', following the principles of the Garden Cities movement; with high levels of open space, an extensive network of green corridors and wide roads throughout the town. Most of the residential areas have a high prevalence of two storey, terraced, properties, each with its own private garden.

C.30 Housing is an area of weaknesses across the town. One of the main issues is the lack of an appropriate mix of housing sizes, types and tenures. There is a high proportion of three bedroom properties, and a lack of one and two bedroom properties, although this has been helped by the recent office to residential conversions that having been taking place in the Town Centre, as well as larger

Fig 4 – Principles of the Garden City Movement

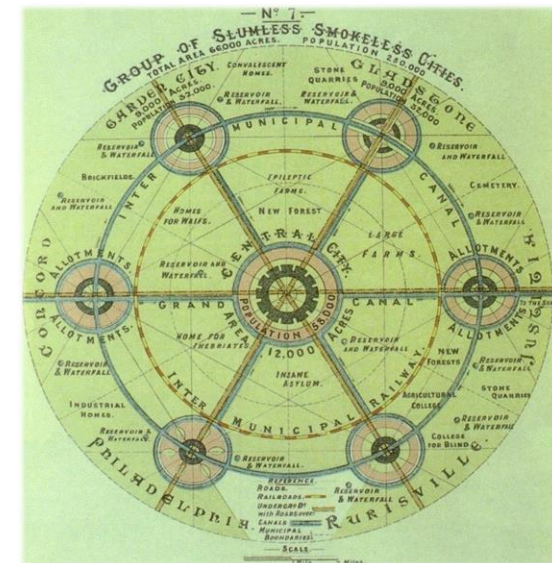


Image: Groundsure.com

homes. The lack of housing mix is exacerbated by changes in demographics leading to an increase in the number of single person households and couples needing homes.

C.31 Due to [growth requirements for the town](#), there is a need to provide a substantial number of additional homes in Stevenage. Higher density development is set out as a key requirement of National guidance, and, where appropriate, densities will need to be raised in order to meet these targets for new homes. This will need to be carefully balanced with the need to retain open space provision within the urban area as access to open space was a key original feature of the town.

I.1 The identity or character of a place comes from the way that buildings, street and spaces, landscape and infrastructure combine together and how people experience them. It is not just about the buildings or how a place looks, but how it engages with all of the senses. Local character makes places distinctive. Well-designed, sustainable places with a strong identity give their users, occupiers and owners a sense of pride, helping to create and sustain communities and neighbourhoods.

Respond to existing local character and identity

I.2 As a result of the prevalence of two storey, terraced properties, a reasonably continuous building height is broadly provided across the residential areas of the town. However, the Neighbourhood Centres do generally contain three storey buildings, helping to demonstrate their importance within the locality.

I.3 Although much of the original housing is similar in style, subtle differences exist between the housing in each of the residential areas, mainly attributable to the materials used. Since the initial development of the New Town, further neighbourhoods have been created, which follow the same basic principles, but also allow for modernisation.

I.4 The character of the town's housing varies more significantly between the original New Town housing, such as Bedwell and Shephall, and the modern estates built throughout the 1980's and 1990's, including Great Ashby, Chells Manor and Poplars. The more recent developments have respected the neighbourhood development strategy of the town but have strengthened the design and aesthetic value, by becoming a visible new extension with their own character.

I.5 There is a need to take this further in the future, as innovation in design, and contemporary architectural achievement is currently lacking in the town. Stevenage will benefit from landmark developments at key nodal points, which will assist in linking areas, as well as improving the legibility of the place, as set out in Policy EC5 of the SBLP. However, care should be taken to respect the existing characteristics of the town, and not to take value away from the New Town concepts.

I.6 Combining these ideas, contemporary buildings at appropriate locations will help achieve the higher densities required, as well as carrying forward and enhancing Stevenage's unique sense of place.

Well-designed, high quality and attractive

I.7 Places should be visually attractive and aim to bring pleasure to users and passers-by. They should cater for all users and be well-designed.

L.8 Well-designed places should appeal to all of the senses; its enduring distinctiveness, attractiveness and beauty are all effected by its looks, feels, sounds and even smells.

L.9 Buildings should:

- adopt typical building forms of the neighbourhood in which they are situated – developers should refer to Appendix A – Urban Character Assessments for more detail;
- draw upon the architectural precedents that are prevalent in the local area;
- use local building, landscape and topographical features, materials and plant types;
- introduce built form and appearance that adds new character and difference to places; and
- create a positive and coherent identity that local communities and residents alike can identify with.

Create character and identity

L.10 Character starts to be determined by the siting of development in the wider landscape, then by the layout. It continues to be created by form, scale, design, materials and details of buildings and landscape. In this way it creates a coherent identity that everyone can identify with, including the local communities and residents.

L.11 Where the scale or density of new development is very different to the existing place, it may be more appropriate to create a new identity rather than scale up the character of an existing place in its context. New character may also arise from a response to how today's lifestyles could evolve in the future, or to the proposed method of development and construction.

L.12 Where the character of an existing place has limited or few positive qualities, then a new and positive character will enhance its identity.

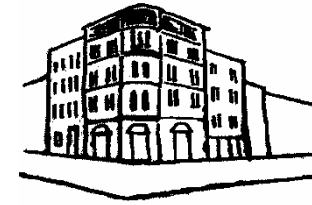
B.1 Built form is the three-dimensional pattern or arrangement of development blocks, streets, buildings and open spaces. It is the interrelationship between all these elements that creates an attractive place to live, work and visit, rather than their individual characteristics. Together they create the built environment and contribute to its character and sense of place.

Compact form of development

B.2 The size and scale of a building, especially in relation to its context, is an important consideration when planning a development. Buildings and new developments should relate to their neighbouring buildings, 'stepping up' or gradually increasing from one height to another and they should not inappropriately dominate the street scene. Buildings should create landmark developments and incorporate taller buildings at nodal points, and in easily accessible locations.

B.3 Well designed, tall buildings can make a positive impact on a place, especially if they are to become identifiable landmarks at key nodal points.

B.4 Tall buildings should be carefully positioned to mark prominent landmarks, making it easier for people to find their way around, emphasising corners, particularly at important junctions or gateways, by curving the frontage, wrapping the fenestration around the corner or terminating the roof differently. Tall buildings can further emphasise corner building by raising the height of roof thereby creating visual interest and a distinctive identity, meaning that they can also be effective as landmark developments. These buildings should be designed to a high quality, as they are to become a prominent feature across the town, showcasing architectural innovation and best practice. Tall buildings help frame and define existing views, rather than blocking important features out and as such they should not appear out of place within the existing landscape or destroy existing views and reduce continuity.



Taller developments should gradually increase in height from their neighbours

B.5 Views of and from the public realm can also enhance legibility throughout the town, and should therefore be protected as far as possible.

B.6 The use of tall buildings can also be beneficial in accommodating higher densities within Stevenage. Higher densities buildings can support public transport facilities and use land resources in a more sustainable and efficient way. They need to be designed in an effective way so that problems of overcrowding and reduced space standards do not arise. Tall buildings will be encouraged in easily accessible areas, and where space has previously been used ineffectively.

Appropriate building types and forms

B.7 Buildings should follow the existing building line of the area and respond positively to the existing frontage of a street. A sense of enclosure should be created by reducing the number of blank frontages and underutilised space. This will all contribute to improving the quality of the street scene.

B.8 Setback distances should be minimised to ensure buildings interact effectively with the existing public realm. Variation from the building line will only be allowed where it would not have any substantial impact on the surrounding environment and street scene.

B.9 The concept of buildings defining and creating public spaces is extremely important. Buildings should be located so that a clear distinction can be made between their public fronts and private backs and they should actively add interest to the public realm. This can be achieved through design details such as a large number of windows and doors, evident internal uses, and narrow building widths creating a variety of different frontages and building functions. Frontages should create interest and add vitality at ground level and provide the opportunity for a busy social environment and a good level of surveillance. Active frontages should be visible on all publicly facing walls on multi-fronted buildings, where more than one side faces the public realm, thereby avoiding blank frontages being created and should use high walls or hedgerows to separate private gardens from the public space where back gardens face out onto the public realm.

B.10 The relationship between building heights and street widths is important in identifying the enclosure of a place. Building frontages should provide a sufficient sense of enclosure, allowing for natural surveillance and providing an acceptable density for the area. Building frontages should allow for sufficient natural light and ventilation into the buildings and the street below and create a balanced feel to the area by incorporating both sides of the street. Combining tall buildings with very narrow streets will not be acceptable as this creates passageways which are not overlooked and do not allow for enough natural light and air to impact upon a building.

M.1 Patterns of movement for people are integral to well-designed places. They include walking and cycling, access to facilities, employment and servicing, parking and the convenience of public transport. They contribute to making high quality places for people to enjoy. They also form a crucial component of urban character. Their success is measured by how they contribute to the quality and character of a place, not only how well they function.

An integrated network of routes for all modes of transport

M.2 The extensive transport network was an integral part of the New Town’s original design and layout. Facilities are provided for all forms of movement, including walking and cycling. These allow residents easy access to the separated land uses within the town. Consideration was also given to safety, and routes for vehicular and non-vehicular traffic were separated in an attempt to reduce the occurrence of road traffic accidents.

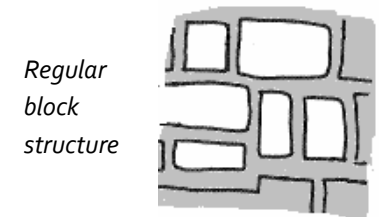
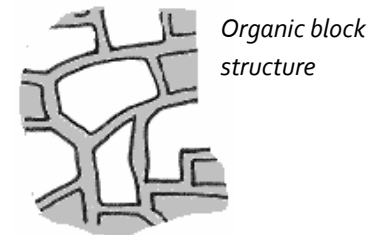
M.3 On the primary transport routes, routes for pedestrians and cyclists run alongside vehicular routes, but at junctions’ vehicles are given priority and non-vehicular traffic is forced to travel under a series of underpasses in order to cross the roads.



Image: Stevenage Borough Council

This makes it easier to travel by car, rather than promoting the benefits of sustainable transport. It also creates safety concerns, as some sections of routes receive no natural surveillance, and as people attempt to follow desire lines without appropriate pedestrian access provisions. In terms of pedestrian and vehicular access to homes, a large proportion of housing was built following Radburn layout principles; houses were built to face each other, with the front being only accessible on foot, and the provision for cars made at the rear. Again, this has led to a lack of natural surveillance, as well as rear parking courts being underutilised, and insufficient access for emergency services.

M.4 The separation of land uses is apparent throughout the town, with the residential areas being separated from employment areas, leisure uses and the Town Centre. This could be considered contrary to sustainability principles, as it increases the need to travel. However, the land use zoning has worked in Stevenage because of the ease of access to and from these areas by all modes of transport.



A clear structure and hierarchy of connected streets

M.5 Streets should be designed as public and social spaces and not just respond to engineering requirements. They should carefully consider what activities would like to be seen on streets i.e. walking safely within the neighbourhood without feeling threatened by traffic from nearby streets, cross the road easily, window shop, and socialise with friends in the outside areas of bars and restaurants. Streets should feature elements of community assets, such as open space, to evoke a better sense of community between residents of the street or visitors to the street. They should provide direct and attractive connections between key facilities that are suitable for all types of movement, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists.

M.6 Streets should use a grid-type layout, which creates block sites for development. A variety of block sizes and shapes should be used to provide an effective balance and to promote diversity within a place. They should make use of existing infrastructure to minimise its impact upon the environment and take account of the existing routes around the site from the initial design stage. Existing routes should be improved where necessary, and consider accessibility for emergency services, delivery vehicles and refuse collection vehicles.

M.7 Places should be easy to get to and from, as well as easy to travel within, by all modes of transport. In line with sustainability and health objectives, movement on foot or by bicycle should be made as convenient as travelling by car. This should help to encourage physical activity.

M.8 A [Mobility Strategy](#) has been developed for Stevenage. Developers are encouraged to consult the [Mobility Strategy](#) to develop and enable the implementation of sustainable methods of transport for developments in Stevenage.

M.9 The cycling routes of Stevenage are extensive and the network was originally built into the fabric of the town as part of the vision of the New Town. New development should continue to extend the network as the town grows enabling the vision of segregated sustainable movement throughout the Borough to continue.

M.10 Walking and cycling provision should always be prioritised when designing access routes to, from and through developments.

M.11 Walking routes should be short, overlooked by surrounding buildings and activities, well-lit and not situated between blank frontages and they

Fig 5 – Cycle routes in Stevenage

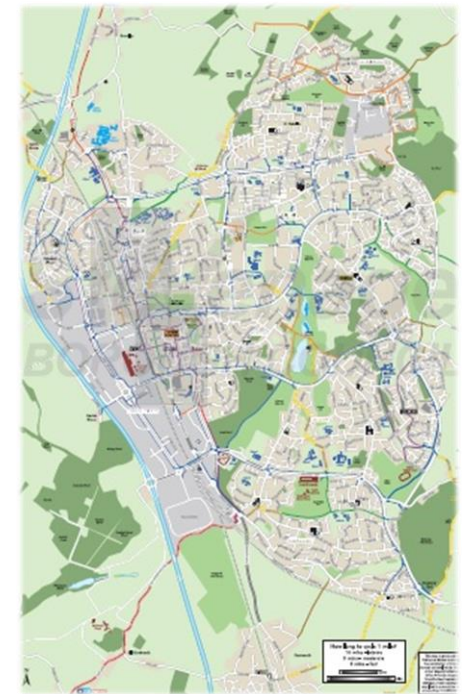


Image: Stevenage Borough Council



<http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/content/15953/26379/43876/Stevenage-Mobility-Strategy-December-2016.pdf>

should make people feel safe when using them.

M.12 The inclination to walk is also influenced by the quality and attractiveness of the route. Routes should not be alongside a busy road as this can be unappealing and they should be convenient, direct and safe route through a town centre, residential area or an area of open space can encourage people to make extensive use of these facilities, helping improve the health of residents and the vitality of the town.

M.13 Where major traffic routes cross over major pedestrian routes, they should be defined by wide crossings on the same level, lighted and landscaped.



Image: Pauline Maryan

M.14 Implementing features which aim to aid pedestrian safety can inadvertently impede it. Introducing barriers around a main road can prevent people from crossing the road where they want to cross, and therefore hinder their direct route. This reinforces vehicle priority further.

M.15 Stevenage also comprises numerous subways where segregated footpaths and cycleways run under the main vehicle roads. Whilst being a useful way of ensuring the flow of traffic on both the cycle/pedestrian network and that on the road, these can cause safety concerns resulting in these routes being underutilised.

M.16 Encouraging the use of such conveniences by making them attractive and useful means of transit will discourage any antisocial behaviour in these areas.

M.17 Subways or footbridges should be well lit and as short and as wide as possible. They should be visible throughout (the exit should be visible from the entrance) and CCTV should be installed.

M.18 A number of underpasses in Stevenage feature public artwork, for example that which features in the Town Gardens and St Georges underpasses depict cast concrete reliefs of contemporary life by William Mitchell and were installed in 1973. Use of these areas for formal public art and cultural purposes will be encouraged.

M.19 Cycling routes should run alongside vehicular roads and be physically segregated cycle routes, rather than marked on the road. They should also connect to the already existing vast cycle network.

M.20 Providing a sufficient amount of appropriate parking for bicycle users is essential for promoting sustainable transport throughout the town and for encouraging a reduction in private vehicle usage. Both short and long term cycle

Fig 6 – Bus routes in Stevenage



Image: Stevenage Borough Council

parking facilities should be provided. Storage for bicycles overnight should be provided as secure and covered, and should be integrated into the initial design of the development and not added as an afterthought. Cycle parking should ideally be accommodated within an individual site rather than as larger communal stores - larger stores can encourage crime if poorly lit and inappropriately sited.

M.21 Public transport provision is reasonably well provided for in Stevenage, with bus routes throughout the town, and a centrally located train station. However, people often have a preference for car use and so public transport needs to become a viable and attractive alternative option.

M.22 Road layout should ensure public transport is given priority and incorporate bus priority measures to reduce public transport travel times.

M.23 Higher density developments help to support public transport and vice versa. Higher densities should therefore be encouraged, in appropriate locations in order to support sustainability objectives. This can, in turn, bring about social benefits, such as improved health and fitness through people reducing their car use and walking to and from public transport provision.

M.24 Stevenage has a moderately extensive bridleway network around the town and it extends into the surrounding countryside. Whilst enabling transit by horse and pony, cyclists and pedestrian can also utilise them. Areas of disconnect in the network should be identified through development and appropriate connections should be designed into developments to facilitate the ongoing use of the network.

M.25 Streets should incorporate soft landscaping, in particular trees, to combat air pollution from vehicle emissions without creating a tunnel-like effect that will trap pollutants in the road corridor.

M.26 Tree species that should be considered are:

- Hackberry (*Celtis australis*)
- Common ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*)
- Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*)
- Ginkgo (*Ginkgo biloba*)
- Elm (*Ulmus minor*)
- Wild linden (*Tilia cordata*)
- Turkey oak (*Quercus cerris*)
- Broad-leaved linden (*Tilia platyphyllos*)

Fig 7 – Bridleway routes in Stevenage

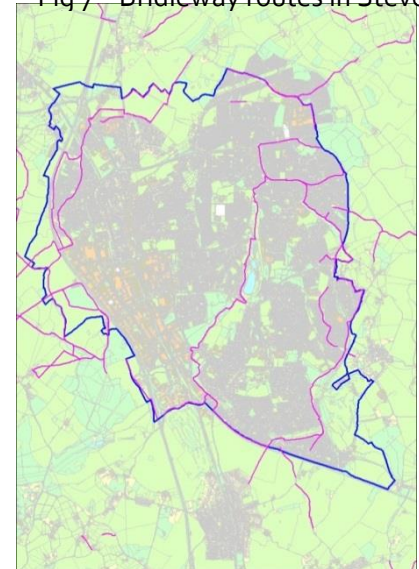


Image: Stevenage Borough Council

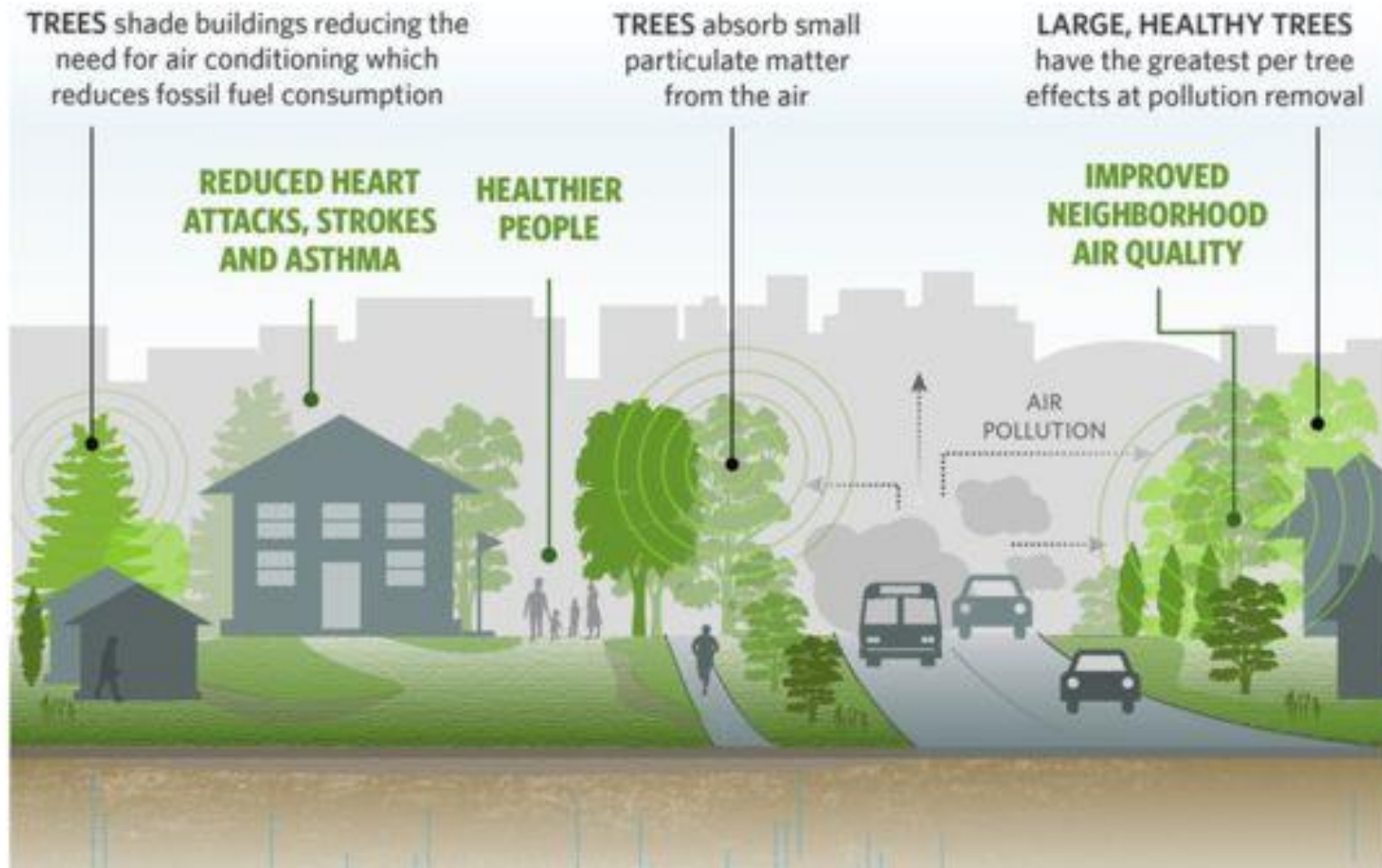


Image: BBC News

Well-considered parking, servicing and utilities infrastructure for all users

M.27 Car and cycle parking provision should be made in line with the requirements of our [Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD](#). Garages and carports should be set back from the street frontage and located close to the property that they serve, to avoid dead frontages. They should not be segregated blocks as these are not easily flexible for future change, do not allow spaces to be shared, and also suffer from a lack of natural surveillance.

M.28 Car parking in large developments should be creative; such as undercroft or basement parking as this preserves street frontages and uses land more effectively. Landscaping should be used to minimise visual impact and, where security may be an issue, should be lit from dusk till dawn with energy efficient lighting and parking should be provided on several storeys and the visual impact reduced by 'wrapping around' single aspect apartments or other uses.

M.29 Traffic calming not only aids pedestrian safety, but by encouraging slower driving it can also help to reduce vehicle emission levels, and thus improve sustainability. Traffic speeds should be managed by the arrangement of buildings and spaces via simple, effective street design and not using barriers, unnecessary signage and traffic calming measures.

M.30 Streets should ensure that they cater for all levels of mobility. Steps and steep inclines should be replaced in favour of gentle inclines which enable mobility impaired people to use them fully as well as parents with pushchairs and young children. Narrow paths and road crossings should be avoided in favour of wide pathways which cater for wheel chairs, mobility scooters and pushchairs.

M.31 Ever improved technologies are being developed to help enable visually impaired individuals navigate streets such as Soundscape; the use of nodes allow the user to explore their environment and direct them to their destination. Such technologies have recently been piloted in Peterborough and we would support the implementation of the use of these technologies in Stevenage. Such technologies should be used alongside tried and tested methods of enabling visually impaired individuals to independently find their way around the town.

M.32 Residential developments should ensure that Mode 2 or Mode 3 electric vehicle (EV) charging points are installed for each residential unit. Where a garage is provided, the EV charging point should ideally be located at an accessible point near the entrance of the garage. Where resident parking is provided, EV charging points should be positioned in areas to serve the maximum number of residents at any one time.

M.33 In commercial and/or employment developments, Mode 3 and/or Mode 4 EV charging points should be provided to enable visitors and employees to utilise the facility. Again, the provision should be located in a suitable position to serve as many EV users as possible. Levels of requirement



Image: BBC News

will be dictated by the type of development and more information can be found in the Stevenage Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD.

M.34 Commercial/employment EV charging points should be signed and marked for 'Electric Vehicle Charging Only' and Mode 4 charging points should be limited to 1 hour stay. The units should be protected from collision and positioned to avoid becoming an obstruction or trip hazard. Charging point controls, display and sockets or tethered plugs must be placed at a height of between 0.75 and 1.2 metres from the ground as per the British Standard on the design of buildings [BS8300-1:2018](#) and [BS8300-2:2018](#).

M.35 The level of provision must accord with the standards set out in our [Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD](#).

N.1 Public open spaces are open to all. They provide opportunities for comfort, relaxation, stimulation and social interaction in a safe environment, to encourage interaction in an open space, its location and structure needs careful consideration along with its activities, versatility and how it can be used and accessed by all groups of people.

Provide high quality, green open spaces with a variety of landscapes and activities including play

N.2 Stevenage was designed to incorporate a network of open spaces and green corridors, which provide an important resource for biodiversity and recreation within the town. These are a key feature of New Town development and should be protected, maintained and extended as far as possible. Open space should be located so that it makes the most of existing natural features such as footpaths, trees and water as these can help to create attractive spaces, as well as encouraging biodiversity. Developments should consider existing open space features and include them within proposals and protect and enhance attributes and this can help a new development to integrate effectively into the existing area, as well as retaining important original features such as ancient lanes and associated hedgerows within the town.

N.3 Planting schemes should include wildlife friendly planting which allows for refuge for animals as well as a food source for insects and pollinators.

N.4 A range of different habitats should be provided in larger developments, for example trees, grassland and wetlands. Developers should refer to the Councils [Amenity Tree Management Policy](#) for more information.

N.5 Play spaces for children and young people should be provided across the borough and should include a range of larger and smaller open spaces which should include unequipped playscapes which provide an attractive landscape for young people of all ages, but also encourage informal/imaginative play through the provisions of features such as mounding, tree planting, at level maze etc. This should be done in a way that provides distinct areas for different age groups, but so that parents and carers are able to maintain visual contact with the young people.

N.6 Play spaces must be fully accessible for young people of all abilities and support inclusive play. Such areas should include suitable tree planting to allow for shading, combined with the provision of benches, litter bins, wider open space for picnics and low key kick about games for example. They should be highly visible and well overlooked with hard wearing, low maintenance equipment and suitable fenced to prevent access by dogs.

Fig 8 – Open Space in Stevenage

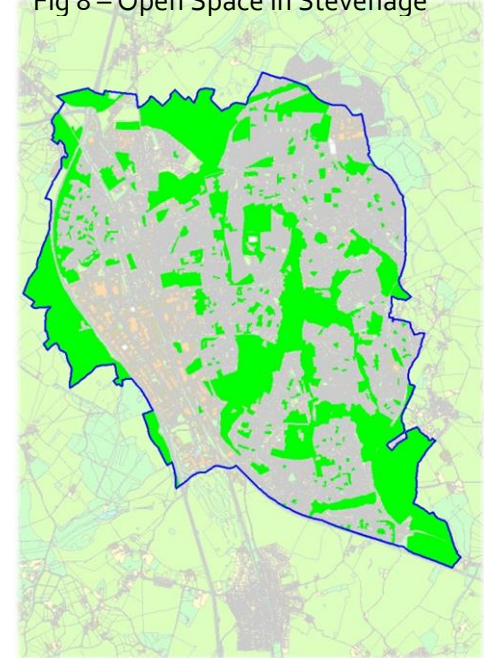


Image: Stevenage Borough Council

Improve and enhance water management

N.7 Stevenage suffers from surface water flooding, as evidenced in the Environment Agency’s Surface Water Flood Maps. Flooding is likely to become more of a problem in the future due to climate change. As such, buildings and developments should maximise the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) techniques across development sites and individual buildings to allow rainwater to percolate into the ground. These SuDS features should provide sustainable solutions for flood and pollution reduction as well as landscape and wildlife benefit. Large scale SuDS schemes should be designed to ensure that they provide a valuable natural habitat and improve water quality, as well as reducing flood risk. The ongoing management of these schemes must also be considered at an early stage.

N.8 The Council are keen to promote the use of green roofs and walls, as well as blue roofs to achieve sustainable water management in the future.

Fig 9 – Areas of surface water flooding in Stevenage

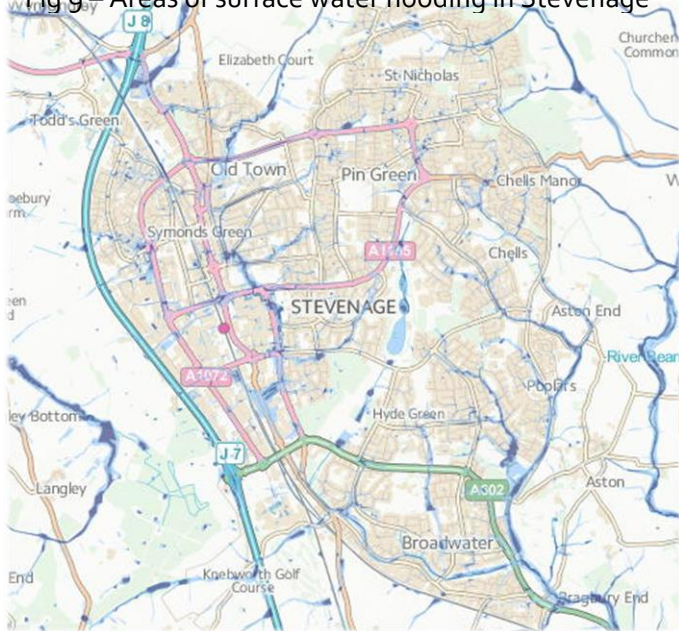
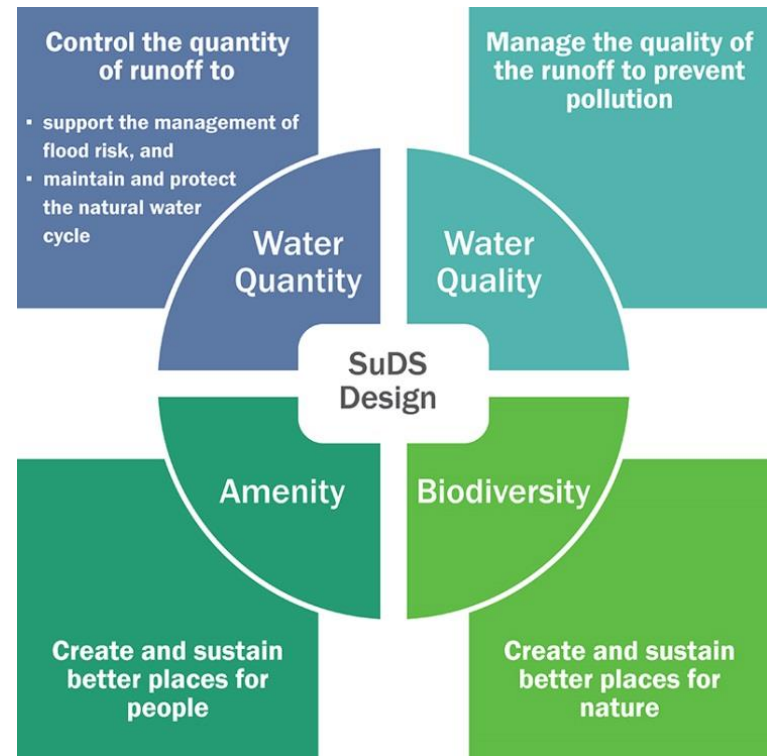


Image: Environment Agency



Support rich and varied biodiversity

N.9 Stevenage benefits from high levels of open space and an extensive network of green corridors. This is a feature of the town that should be protected and enhance. As such, there is a requirement for all development to contribute towards improving the provision, quality and/or accessibility of local and strategic open space. This could be achieved through appropriate contribution or direct provision. Where direct provision is made, open spaces should form part of a green infrastructure network and make a positive contribution towards the townscape. They should be of high quality and have a primary role or function to prevent it becoming misused, unused or neglected. Open spaces should reflect the local context in the design of the local open spaces, which could be achieved through the use of materials, trees, planting, lighting and street furniture and thereby be multi-functional. Open spaces are ideal areas that can include provision for SuDS, benefit biodiversity and provide habitat, and they can also deliver high quality usable open and recreational space for residents to enjoy.

N.10 Developments should refer to Stevenage Borough Council's [Impact of Development on Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document](#) and also the Council's [Biodiversity Action Plan](#) if they are likely to impact upon existing wildlife sites and other habitats in the town. SBC requires all new developments to take account of existing biodiversity, and to make all reasonable efforts to avoid habitat loss, fragmentation or disturbance of the ecosystem. Where this is not possible, excellent mitigation measures will be sought.

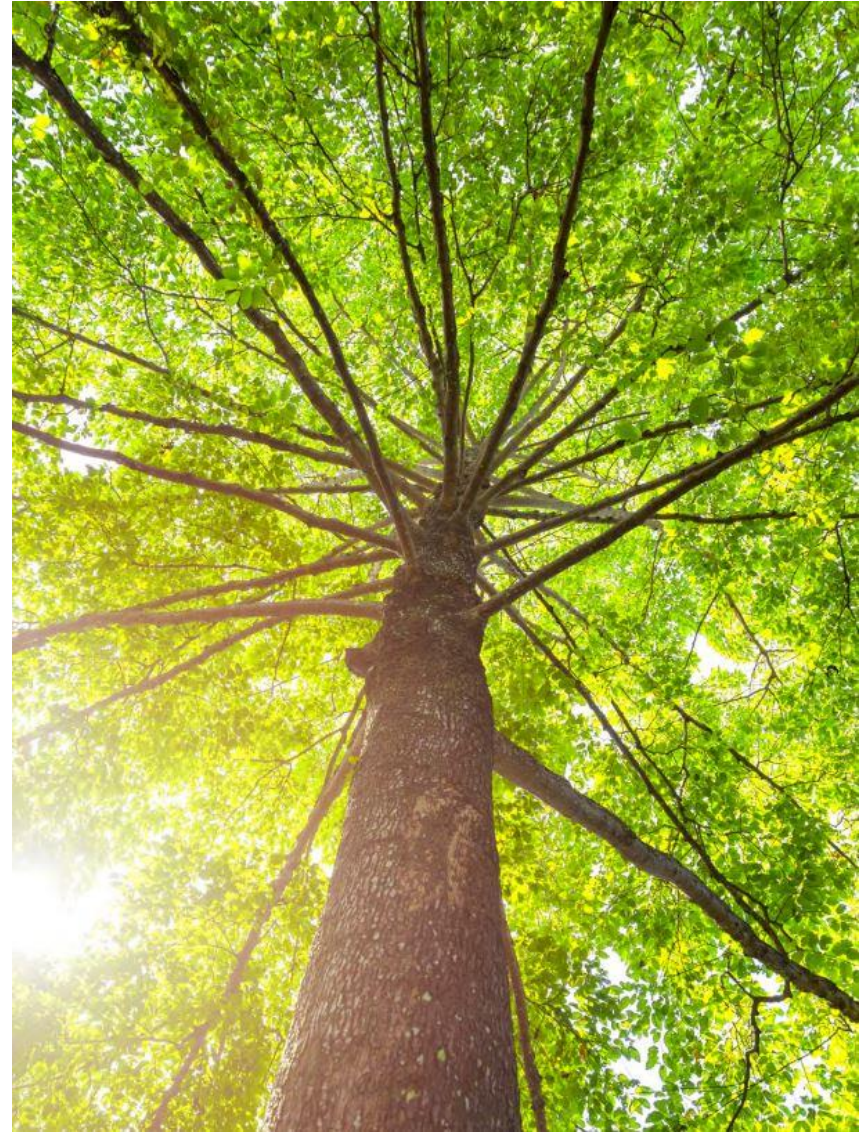


Image: Stevenage Borough Council

P.1 The quality of the spaces between buildings is as important as the buildings themselves. Public spaces are streets, squares and other spaces that are open to all. They are the setting for most movement. The design of a public space encompasses its siting and integration into the wider network of routes as well as its various elements. These include areas allocated to different users – pedestrians, cyclists and cars – for different purposes such as movement or parking, hard and soft surfaces, street furniture, lighting, signage and public art.

Create well-located, high quality and attractive public spaces

P.2 Public spaces should be considered as part of the original design scheme and must not just be applied, as an afterthought, to leftover space. An expert should be consulted to ensure that the planting selected is appropriate to the scheme and the site context.

P.3 How attractive and well-maintained a place is can directly affect how people treat it; if a place is in good condition, people tend to treat it better and vice versa. Places should be designed for use during all seasons and by all members of the community. Landscaping of the public realm should be designed so that it is easy to maintain and manage, it should be wildlife friendly and include climate change tolerant planting in addition to providing year round interest, or can mature into a high quality space. It should ensure the long-term viability of street furniture to prevent some products creating eyesores and attracting crime. Street furniture should be made of a sustainable choice of materials, eg FSC timber or recycled/composite materials, it should have a small carbon footprint and have longevity of materials. Public realm should be uncluttered and should not reduce accessibility through the use of inappropriately sited street furniture pieces that can hinder access, especially for mobility impaired users and pushchairs.

P.4 Public realm should be coordinated and specifically designed to enhance the area and should include extensive soft landscaping, such as the planting of trees and shrubs, that is integrated into external areas of a development site in order to provide shelter and screen intrusive elements of the public realm but also provide green corridors for both people and wildlife that are aesthetically pleasing. Planting should be suitable to its location and, for trees, please refer to the [Amenity Tree Management Policy](#). Suitable planting will also help moderate temperatures in an urban environment and contribute to the objectives set out in the Councils [Climate Change Strategy](#).



Image: ANS Global – University of York,
Environmental Building



Image: Pancras Square

P.5 Buildings surrounding public spaces should consider the installation of green walls and roofs as an alternative to traditional landscaping schemes, where space for green infrastructure and landscaping features is limited. These can help to improve the energy efficiency of buildings by retaining heat, and

have additional advantages such as helping to increase biodiversity levels and reducing surface water run-off.

Provide well-designed spaces that are safe

Lighting

P.6 Places should be well lit to provide a safe environment for pedestrians, and with particular attention being paid to key movement axes and desire lines across public spaces. However, light pollution, including glare, skyglow, light trespass and clutter, should be avoided to prevent energy wastage and reduce disruption to the natural day-night pattern and shifting the delicate balance of the environment.

P.7 Street lighting should be decorative as well as functional and enliven the whole of the area in a visually coherent and interesting manner. Street, building and advertisement lighting in the town centre should be creative and innovative but also ensure that streets and spaces are sufficiently well lit to promote personal safety. Lighting provision between adjacent developments should be coordinated to reduce clutter and does not overwhelm the space, particularly in predominantly pedestrian spaces;



Image: My Modern Met – spray-on solution for energy-free alternative to lighting

P.8 Parking area lighting should be appropriate for car drivers to see pedestrians and also be appropriate for pedestrians to see and be seen going to and from parked cars. The lighting should be mounted horizontally (0 degrees tilt) at a height of 4-5m. Luminaires with an Upward light Output Ratio (ULOR) of zero will achieve this and not include bollards as a primary source of lighting.

P.9 British Standards [BS EN 13201-2:2015](#) and [BS 5489-1:2013](#) make recommendations for lighting levels of areas with mixed vehicle/pedestrian usage. The application of these standards, and any associated design, should be design by competent lighting designers.

P.10 The design criterion is for horizontal illuminance. If it appears that light is going into windows of adjacent properties, vertical illuminance calculations may be required. Lighting class P5 would generally be appropriate for lighting design purposes. Average maintained illuminance (E_{av}) = 2 lux Minimum maintained illuminance (E_{min}) = 0.4 lux. This gives a minimum Uniformity of Illuminance (U_o) of 0.2.

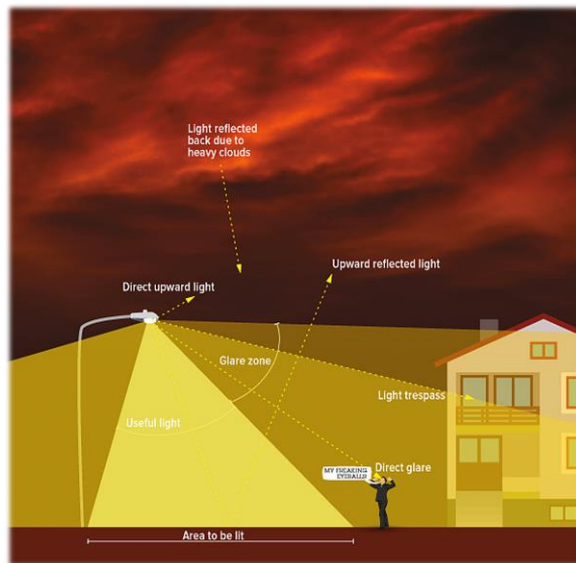


Image: www.Darksky.org

Safety and surveillance

P.11 Public space should be safe for everyone to make use of, at all times of the day. Carefully designed and managed urban environments are effective in reducing levels of crime and vandalism, as well as reducing the fear of crime. Generally people feel more comfortable using public areas in which they can be seen and heard, and which look like they are not commonly affected by criminal activity. Creating spaces which are 'safe' is a key consideration for Stevenage.

P.12 Safety must be considered at every stage of the design process, and all principles should be incorporated as appropriate. Further information on the principles of designing out crime is put forward by '[Secured by Design](#)', the UK Police flagship initiative.

P.13 Creating defensible space involves ensuring clear physical or symbolic boundaries are present between public and private spaces.

P.14 Spaces should be clearly defined in terms of ownership and use and include small, semi-private areas, provided behind a low wall, railing or fence, where the existing building lines allow for properties to be set back from the street. Spaces should ensure that boundaries are not too high; a balance needs to be achieved between the security of public and private spaces. Developments and buildings should maximise natural surveillance throughout the area including in areas of fully private space, such as back gardens. Natural surveillance should not be confused with formal surveillance such as CCTV.

P.15 All developments must increase the sense of security in an area and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour levels. Buildings should be orientated so that windows and doors face out onto streets, squares and footpaths and the internal layout of buildings should be organised so that the most used



Image: Secured by Design

rooms are those which have windows overlooking public spaces. Entrances to buildings should be clearly visible and accessible from the street and visible from inside the building - recessed entrances should be avoided. All buildings should have a similar setback distance to ensure that overlooking is not limited by a building projecting too far out and blocking the view and landscaping should not block sightlines. Spaces should contain both daytime and evening functional uses and ensure a mix of residents by integrating different types and tenures of housing to support a range of household sizes, ages and incomes. Residents with different lifestyles can create a more active environment, as people are around at varying times of the day.

P.16 It is essential that a balance is achieved between the need to promote permeability and the need to prevent uncontrolled and unwelcome access to private space and buildings. Creative design is required



<http://www.securedbydesign.com/>

to ensure that places are both well-connected and secure. Buildings and developments should actively avoid public access to rear gardens and ensure routes for pedestrians and cyclists are well overlooked and are not in areas of limited levels of natural surveillance. Indoor, defensible cycle parking provision should be provided whilst car parking should avoid large, open and unsupervised areas of communal parking and communal garage blocks.

P.17 Properties with open access or easily climbable boundaries make easier targets for crime. The more difficult it is for a potential offender to access a property, the greater the deterrent to trespass. Natural crime reduction methods should be utilised where possible. Exceptions can be made where roads do not run through the development and dead frontages or dead ends cannot be avoided and if publicly visible security measures such as fences or gates are necessary, they should be designed as sculptures or art.

P.18 Clean and well-maintained environments are symbolically important as they give the message that people care about an area and exercise control over an area, not tolerating anti-social behaviour.

Make sure public spaces support social interaction



Image: Peter O'Connor

P.19 Stevenage is rich in public art across the town and we want to encourage the continuation of this culture through redevelopment. Public art can play a major part in giving a place a distinct character and identity. It can also attract people to a place; enhancing the economy and creating a sense of place. However, it needs to be integrated at the start of the design process and not put in as an afterthought.

P.20 Art can be incorporated in imaginative ways such as, within the floorscape and as a part of functional facilities like cycle racks, seating and signage. However, it should relate to the surrounding area, drawing from the historical significance or specific location of a place, and not just randomly selected.

P.21 Directional signage can clutter the public realm. However, it can also provide an opportunity to enhance the landscape, by ensuring design which is consistent and co-ordinated throughout a place, and which complements other elements of the street scene. Signage should be mounted on existing structures such as buildings, walls and posts, where possible and direct pedestrians and cyclists, as well as vehicle users. Signage should enable the easiest and most direct routes to encourage people to walk or cycle, in line with sustainability, health and environmental objectives; designers should start from a position of having no

signs, and street layout should aim to make the environment self-regulatory



Image: Adam Styles Creative Metal

U.1 Sustainable places include a mix of uses that support everyday activities, including live, work and play.

U.2 Well-designed neighbourhoods need to include an integrated mix of tenures and housing types that reflect local housing need and market demand. They are designed to be inclusive and to meet the changing needs of people of different ages and abilities. New development reinforces existing places by enhancing local transport, facilities and community services, and maximising their potential use.

U.3 Where there is rapid social and economic change, such as sustainable growth or diversification in rural communities or town centres, well-designed buildings and places are able to accommodate a variety of uses over time.

A mix of uses

Retail

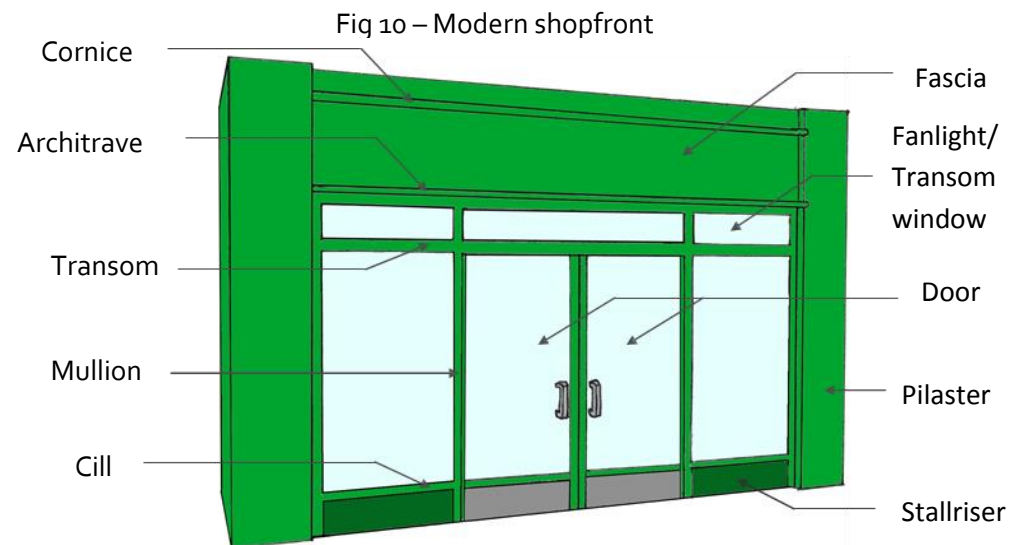
U.4 Many of the shopfronts in the Town and Neighbourhood Centres are more modern looking. Modern interpretations of traditional shop fronts generally have less ornamental detailing than traditional shop fronts but they still create a 'frame' to the shop front. Modern shop front designs should generally follow the approach of traditional shop fronts albeit interpreted in a modern manner.

U.5 In order that these modern interpretations enhance the character and appearance of retail areas these should include well-proportioned components which also exhibit a level of depth and detailing to these.

U.6 The diagram illustrates the basic architectural features that make up modern shopfronts.

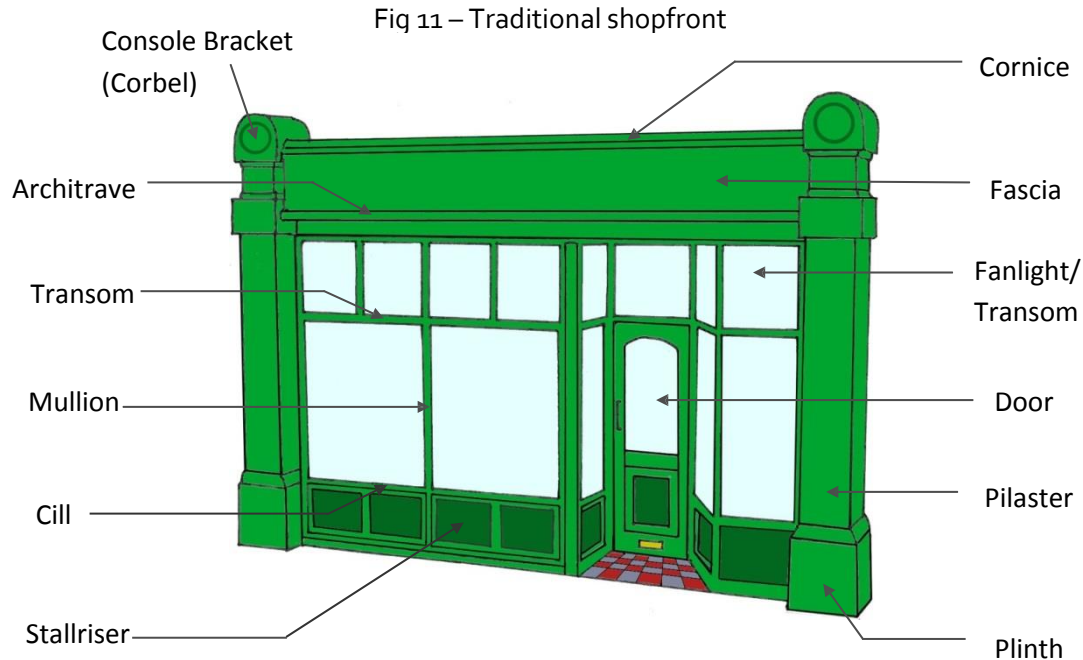
U.7 Shopfront alterations should respect the detailed design, materials, colour and architectural features of the shopfront and building itself, including the setting of the shop i.e. is it in the New Town area of Stevenage or is it situated in the historic setting of the Old Town.

U.8 Planning permission will generally be required for a new shopfront; alterations to an existing shopfront including awnings and canopies, external security shutters, blinds, grilles and security



measures; and change of use will generally require planning permission.

U.9 The more traditional shopfronts, such as those found in the Old Town, feature similar architectural features and these are illustrated below.



U.10 Each of these traditional elements of a shopfront has a practical purpose, as well as contributing to the character of the building.

U.11 Planning permission is not normally required for routine maintenance works, such as redecoration or straightforward repairs.

U.12 Any alterations (or replacement) of shopfronts that form part of a listed building will require [Listed Building Consent](#) and will need to be consistent with the age and style of the building. More stringent controls will apply for works including re-painting a shopfront in a different colour, installing a security alarm or extractor fan, altering the shop interior, installing blinds or shutters, and advertisements.

U.13 [Conservation Area Consent](#) is required for the proposed complete or substantial demolition of any building in a conservation area, including the removal of a shopfront or of any feature that gives character to a building.

U.14 In assessing applications to alter shopfronts within Conservation Areas special attention will be given to the desirability of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the Conservation Areas.

U.15 For shops in Conservation Areas, reference should also be made to the relevant [Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan](#). These describe the area and its special character and include guidelines that provide the framework for development proposals in the area and the appraisals contain audits of shopfronts of merit.

U.16 [Advertisement consent](#) is a separate procedure that applies to the display of advertisements on shopfronts and [Building regulations consent](#) will be required for all work which alters the shop's structure, changes its fire escape, or would make access difficult for those with disabilities.

U.17 More specific detail regarding key shopfront components can be found in [Appendix B](#).

A mix of home tenures, types and sizes

U.18 The aim of any residential development should be to provide a good living environment for occupants. Development should respect the surrounding buildings, in terms of their scale and massing, height, building lines, design and the materials used. However, it is accepted that housing layouts should take account of changing functional requirements. Occasionally, it may be appropriate to create pastiche developments. However, it is possible for a development to respect its local surroundings but still incorporate contemporary styles and new technologies.

U.19 Different types and tenures of homes should be well-integrated and support a range of household sizes, ages and incomes. They should be suitable for all members of the community and promote social diversity by reducing exclusion. They should enable residents to be able to move to smaller or larger homes without the need to leave their neighbourhoods and allow families to live close together. Houses should be indistinguishable from each other.

Privacy and scale

U.20 In order to ensure that a reasonable degree of privacy for residents is provided, both within their habitable rooms and garden areas, the position of dwellings, and the arrangement of their rooms and windows, should not create significant overlooking of other dwellings' windows or private garden areas and not lead to any overbearing impacts or adversely affect the residential amenities of existing dwellings.

U.21 The following minimum separation distances should be achieved:

No of Storeys	Type of Separation	Min. distance (metres)
Between existing and new 2 storey or a mix of 1 and 2 storey dwellings	Back to Back	25m
	Back to Side	15m
Between new 2 storeys or a mix of 1 and 2 storey	Back to Back	20m
	Back to side	12m
Over 2 storeys between existing and new dwellings	Back to Back	35m
	Back to Side	25m
Between new dwellings over 2 storeys in height	Back to Back	30m
	Back to Side	20m

U.22 In all cases a 1.8m high solid wall or fence should be provided between the rear gardens of properties which back onto each other. Where the boundary adjoins a footpath, a minimum of 0.5m setback should be provided to avoid the creation of an alleyway effect, or appear overbearing on the streetscape.

Residential extensions

U.23 Although some extensions are permitted development, others may require both [planning permission](#) and [building regulation approval](#). All applications for extensions and alterations will be considered on their individual merits.

U.24 Extension proposals should respect the size, height, materials, features and layout of the building concerned, as well as the surrounding buildings. They should be built so that they look like a part of the main building rather than an obvious addition to it and not adversely affect the amenities of occupiers.

U.25 Further details of residential extensions can be found in [Appendix C](#).

Socially inclusive

U.26 Places need to be able to adapt to changing circumstances. Towns and cities, for example, must change when industries rise and decline and houses need to be adaptable for when children get older and their requirements change. Places should be designed so that they are capable of being used for a range of activities; a public square, for example, can be used effectively for festivals, markets and events.

U.27 Residential buildings should be future proofed; building higher attic spaces for future conversions and ensuring ground floors can benefit from higher ceilings to be easily adapted for commercial uses later.

U.28 Sub-dividing large development parcels and allocating them to different developers can generate a wider range of building types, tenures and uses, which can encourage a more diverse community.

H.1 Well-designed homes and buildings are functional, accessible and sustainable. They provide internal environments and associated external spaces that support the health and well-being of their users and all who experience them.

H.2 They meet the needs of a diverse range of users, taking into account factors such as ageing population and cultural differences. They are adequate in size, fit for purpose and are adaptable to the changing needs of their occupants over time.

H.3 Successful buildings also provide attractive, stimulating and positive places for all, whether for activity, interaction, retreat or simply passing by.

Healthy, comfortable and safe internal and external environment

H.4 All developments are required to make efforts to minimise energy usage and to incorporate methods of using renewable energy, including reducing energy demand, using passive environmental systems, e.g. natural ventilation, daylighting and passive solar gains, using high levels of insulation and air tightness in the fabric of the building, specifying energy efficient services, controls and appliances, implementing water recycling and the provision of water butts, using renewable energy, using low/zero carbon technologies to provide as much of the energy load as is technically and economically feasible, minimising use of fossil fuels, and using efficient fossil fuel technologies, such as Combined Heat and Power and condensing boilers.

H.5 For major housing schemes, the nationally recognised [Building for Life](#) criteria should be used to assess their functionality, attractiveness and sustainability. This is a national standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. It promotes high quality design, as well as celebrating best practise in the house building industry. Building for Life is a partnership between several national agencies, led by [CABE](#) and the [Home Builders Federation](#).

Noise

H.6 Noise can adversely affect peoples' quality of life and exposure to unwanted noise can affect our health and welfare. Protection against noise in the construction, design and layout of residential developments is essential to ensure that existing or future residents are not subjected to unacceptable levels of noise in their own homes. The likelihood of noise affecting future residents is a key factor in assessing the suitability of a site for residential use.

H.7 Residential development should be restricted to areas with low ambient noise levels and utilise noise control measures in order to make residential development feasible, wherever possible, to maximise the potential of previously developed land. They should employ solutions to technically complex acoustic problems through specialist advice. Delaying contact with such specialists until later in a project may result in avoidable additional costs being incurred at the design and construction stages.

H.8 Where it is unlikely that residents will be able to keep windows open or sit on/in a balcony/garden without being bothered by one or more external noise sources, such as traffic, industrial noise or customers of entertainment venues, noise will be a material planning consideration and, under these circumstances, a noise survey will be required.

H.9 New residential dwellings, exposed to noise from existing sources, will be assessed in accordance with [National Planning Policy Guidance](#) and BS 8233:2014. National guidance assesses sites according to a noise exposure hierarchy.

H.10 It is likely that many sites within Stevenage, suitable for new housing, will be exposed to existing noise levels contained within, or on the boundary of 'noticeable and not intrusive' and 'noticeable and intrusive'.

H.11 Developments shall require proposals to achieve acceptable internal noise levels. Ideally, with windows open. However, on some potentially noisy sites in the Borough, an alternative means of purge ventilation will be required. They should demonstrate that all other mitigation measures have been exhausted to reduce external/internal noise levels where internal noise levels can only be achieved with closed windows. Developments should ensure that garden areas are usable and not unduly impacted upon by noise. Ideally noise levels in these outside amenity areas shall not be above the 55dB LAeq (16hour) range 50-55dB. To achieve this level of exposure to existing noise it may be necessary to provide amenity areas carefully sited away from noise-exposed facades and/or the provision of acoustic screening. The assessment of the noise exposure of outdoor amenity space shall be included in a noise survey report. The layout of mixed flatted and housing developments should be orientated in such a way to create an acoustic barrier through the use of the flatted element of the development closer to the noise source. They should mitigate external noise affecting noise sensitive developments by including screen fencing, vegetation buffers, insulation in the walls and roof, the use of double glazing in windows and the use of intervening buildings or structures, such as garages. Development should include engineering solutions to reduce the impact of noise at the point of generation as well as limiting the noise within the building. The layout of the site and building layout, including screening and buffering, can mitigate against noise, as can limiting the operational hours and restricting activities that can occur on site.

Well-related to external amenity and public spaces

H.12 All dwellings, including flats, should have private open space. The only exception to this is where flats are developed in very central locations, where public open space is easily accessible and higher densities are required.

H.13 Private open space should be located conveniently for use by residents and in a position that is not overlooked by neighbouring buildings; normally to the rear of the building, and in the case of flats the private space will usually form part of the garden or communal amenity space, and not an area of landscaping.

H.14 For new houses the minimum standard garden space for terraced and semi-detached houses should normally be 50 square metres. Each dwelling should normally have a minimum rear garden depth of 10m. The shape and slope of the garden should ensure that it is useable. Larger detached houses will generally be required to provide a larger rear garden area. The garden should normally be enclosed by a 1.8m high close boarded fence or wall and direct access should be afforded to rear gardens for activities such as refuse storage, cycle parking and maintenance.

H.15 In new flatted developments where there is no communal space balconies or roof gardens should be provided for the occupants of these units. These should be located so as to afford privacy to the occupant, normally to the rear of buildings. However, they should not compromise the privacy of existing dwellings. SBC will normally aim to achieve a minimum useable communal area of 50 square metres for schemes up to 5 units, plus an additional 10 square metres per additional unit over 5. Garage courts, parking areas and bin storage areas are not considered as part of the useable garden amenity requirements.

H.16 All rear gardens and communal open spaces should generally enjoy a reasonable amount of sunlight and have a relatively open outlook.

Sunlight, daylight and orientation

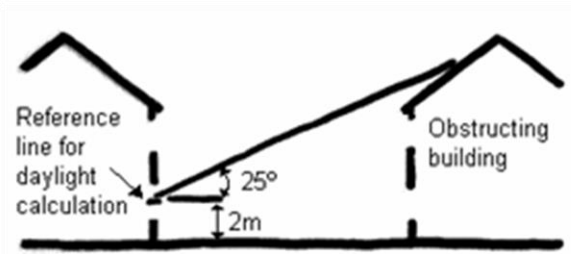
H.17 New developments should be designed to ensure that a satisfactory level of sunlight and daylight is provided for the occupants of both existing and proposed dwellings.

H.18 Where there is doubt that adequate sunlight and daylight will be achieved, indicators will be used to assess the amount of light reaching a new or existing window:

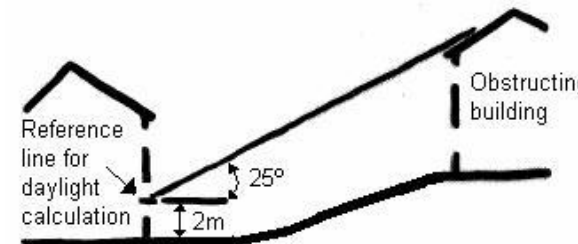
H.19 The Building Research Establishment (BRE) guidelines "[Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: A Guide to Good Practice](#)" second edition, will be used. It provides guidance on avoiding unacceptable impacts and sets out non-mandatory targets for levels of daylight and sunlight within existing and proposed developments. In particular, account will be taken of the size and position of windows to neighbouring buildings. However, indicators will not be applied to all schemes; only to those where there is doubt that adequate lighting may be achieved. This can be established by undertaking a simple 25 degree 'rule of thumb' test using the BRE guidelines as identified in the diagram on the next page:

- From a point 2 metres above ground level at the horizontal centre of the protected window draw a line perpendicular to the window and at an angle of 25 degrees to the horizontal (see the drawing above). If the proposed development cuts this line then it is likely to interfere with the diffuse skylight enjoyed by the existing building. This being the case the proposal is likely to cause problems of loss of light and it will be necessary to undertake a detailed sunlight and daylight assessment.

BRE Guidelines: 25 Degree Test



Section in plane perpendicular to the main face of the building.



On sloping sites overshadowing is more of a problem and greater spacing is required to obtain the same access to daylight for buildings lower down the

H.20 Where possible dwellings should be laid out so that the main bedroom and the kitchen benefit from the morning sun and living rooms benefit from the afternoon and evening sun. Low building depths should be encouraged to reduce the amount of artificial lighting required and reduce energy consumption. Dwellings should be orientated to maximise 'passive solar gain' in order to provide environmental benefits and minimise the amount of fuel used. Primary frontages should broadly face the south in order to optimise the solar potential of the site and dwellings should maximise solar gain through the use of technologies such as solar panels and solar hot water systems. Their use is encouraged where appropriate.

H.21 However, the form and character of the area may dictate a particular arrangement of buildings which is at odds with these objectives. In such a case, it will be for the designer to creatively combine both constraints.

Residential development of houses

H.29 Residential developments of houses are usually serviced by a kerbside waste and recyclables collection. The designs for waste and recycling facilities need to ensure that internal and external storage areas are designed into each dwelling and that internal space is provided for recycling storage, kitchens and utility rooms are generally the most appropriate locations. Storage for recyclables (in the case of SBC paper, glass, plastics and cans, and garden waste are all collected separately), organic kitchen waste and non- recyclable waste is provided and recycling waste storage comprises either a box or bag which are normally stored inside and taken to the kerbside on collection days. Organic waste (food) kitchen caddies are stored inside the property and emptied into larger external, free-standing organic waste receptacles. External space for the storage of garden waste should be provided and external storage for both waste and recyclables outside the buildings within the curtilage (for waste collector).

Residential development of flatted dwellings

H.30 Collection services for flatted developments vary depending on the individual circumstances of the premises. However, a kerbside collection is preferred. Developments need to ensure that internal storage is located in an accessible and communal area inside each dwelling and is easily accessible, but secure, from external storage areas, near to areas of high waste production, and hard wearing and washable - kitchens and utility rooms are generally the most appropriate. Internal storage areas where recyclables can be separated at the source should be provided, and dwellings should be provided with capacity for receptacles for each recyclable component (including food waste), according to the separation at the relevant "bring" facility e.g. glass, cans, plastic bottles, paper (single banks for mixed collections), etc, and for non-recyclable waste. They should provide for both mixed recyclables, organic kitchen waste and non- recyclable waste, and, for recyclables must have at least twice, if not three times, the capacity of storage for non-recyclable waste to account for the separation requirements and the frequency of removal from the dwelling.

External Bins for waste and recycling storage:

H.31 Bins for waste and recycling storage vary in size and an appropriate combination must be provided to accommodate the needs of the development.

H.32 The following is a summary of the bins currently used in waste and recyclables storage to provide a guide to the space requirements.

Bin Type	Use	Domestic / Trade	External Dimensions mm H x L x D (H + open lid)
180ltr Wheelie Bin (Black)	General Waste	Domestic	1070 x 580 x 730
240ltr Wheelie Bin (Brown)	Green & Food Waste	Domestic	1100 x 600 x 800
60ltr Bag (Black)	Recyclables - Plastic & Cans	Domestic	490 x 350 x 350
60ltr Bag (Blue)	Recyclables - Paper & Card	Domestic	490 x 350 x 350
23ltr Caddy (Red)	Glass	Domestic	405 x 320 x 400
23ltr Caddy	Food Waste	Domestic	405 x 320 x 400
240ltr Wheelie Bin (Black)	General Waste	Domestic	1100 x 600 x 800
360ltr Wheelie Bin	General Waste / Recyclables	Domestic / Trade	1120 x 630 x 890
660ltr Eurobin	Recyclables	Trade	1400 x 1300 x 720
1100ltr Eurobin	General Waste / Recyclables	Trade	1400 x 1300 x 1000

(NB: This list, including the bin dimensions, is subject to change. It is only to be used for preliminary design purposes)

External storage area features:	Housing developments	Flatted developments
Should be located within 10 metres of an external access but not near ground storey windows.	✓	✓
Storage and collection points must be as close as possible to, and preferably within 10 metres of, a place suitable for a collection vehicle to stop.	✓	✓
Must be at or near street level, and should be accessible via appropriately sized and graded ramps to allow bins to be wheeled to and from the collection point easily.	✓	✓
Must be safe for users by being well lit and visible from public vantage points and nearby dwellings / tenancies.	✓	✓
Should be unroofed, unless they are fully enclosed and secured (ideally inaccessible to animals).	✓	✓
Should be accessible for collection purposes and not impede pedestrian or vehicular access on public thoroughfares or to and from buildings.	✓	✓
Should be located as close to the front property boundary as possible, preferably behind the front boundary wall, without detracting from the street scene.		✓
<p>Consideration should be given to the</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • allocation of additional external storage space in the future, e.g. additional bins, • composting facilities - in residential development with a garden or landscaping, • provision of onsite storage for bulky waste (i.e. furniture) items and potential opportunities for re- use of these items. 		✓

Servicing and utilities

H.33 Building services equipment, whether it is used for heating and cooling, communications, power, plumbing, ventilation, access or security, if not considered appropriately, can cause significant visual blight and nuisance for neighbours.

H.34 The necessary building services equipment should be incorporated into development, while having minimal impacts on their environment. Impacts that are likely to require minimisation or mitigation include visual blight, light nuisance, noise nuisance and vibration, odour, and other environmental pollutants or nuisance.

H.35 In new development, all building services equipment must be integrated within the building or development structure and should not be a dominant feature of the building. It must be incorporated into the external building design where, because of its nature, it cannot be integrated within the building;

H.36 In refurbished development, plant and machinery should be accommodated within the building structure, or incorporated into the design of external modifications.

H.37 Other design considerations for building services equipment include screening or other techniques to minimise the impacts of plant, machinery and ducting must, in themselves, not cause visual blight. Plant and machinery on roofs should not be visible from the street, public vantage points or from immediately adjacent buildings. The design and materials used for plant, machinery and ducting, as well as for ancillary structures such as screening, where located on the exterior of the building, must be consistent with those of the building and, where possible, plant and machinery should be designed in such a way that does not lead to issues of safety and security.

H.38 Where building services equipment is required on the outside of a building, it must not obscure access to daylight and sunlight, or provide any nuisance for occupants of the development or adjacent buildings. It should be separated or insulated from occupants and neighbours who are likely to be sensitive to noise disturbance if plant and machinery has moving parts. Techniques to achieve this separation include the use of flexible ducting, or resilient mountings for structure-borne plant and machinery. Plant and machinery must ensure that where mechanical or passive ventilation is required to remove odour emissions, the release point for odours must be located above the roofline of the building and, where possible, adjacent buildings.

H.39 In addition, plant and machinery, particularly where located on roofs, must not preclude the installation of required onsite renewable energy facilities in the proposal and due consideration must also be given to the possibility of future renewable energy installations.

H.40 Special consideration should be given to the installation of plant, machinery and ducting on listed buildings and in conservation areas as fewer external solutions are likely to be appropriate in these locations. Installations must be in keeping with the design and materials of the building and [listed building consent](#) is likely to be required for works to a listed building.

H.41 Access to plant and machinery must be provided to allow for convenient and safe servicing and replacement of installations. Machinery must be properly installed and maintained to ensure that impacts are properly mitigated and the situation does not deteriorate over time with continued

operation. Plant and machinery should be located as close as possible to their end use, e.g. boilers should be located near to the hot water or heating users, to minimise use of ducting materials, loss of resource and visual blight. Whilst disused plant, machinery and ducting must be removed from the exterior of buildings before replacements can be installed. Only in exceptional circumstances will these be allowed to remain.

R.1 Well-designed places and buildings conserve natural resources including land, water, energy and materials. Their design responds to the impacts of climate change. It identifies measures to achieve:

- mitigation, primarily by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and minimising embodied energy; and
- adaptation to anticipated events, such as rising temperatures and the increasing risk of flooding.

R.2 A compact and walkable neighbourhood with a mix of uses and facilities reduces demand for energy and supports health and well-being. It uses land efficiently so helps adaptation by increasing the ability for CO₂ absorption, sustaining natural ecosystems, minimising flood risk and the potential impact of flooding, and reducing overheating and air pollution.

Follow the energy hierarchy

R.3 Energy efficiency should be considered at the earliest stages of design and buildings should reduce energy demands required to heat, cool, light and run buildings, thereby reducing carbon emissions and energy bills. They should improve energy efficiency using a variety of passive design measures and create innovative, high-quality urban environments.

R.4 There are many different energy efficiency options. Their application depends on the type of project, and, in particular, whether it is a new development or a refurbishment project. However, buildings and developments should utilise the waste heat produced when fuel is burnt to generate electricity through CHP systems, to heat homes and water. Individual homes should install micro-CHPs as an alternative to the traditional gas central heating boiler, while also providing electricity. Furthermore, they should utilise biomass fuels from a local sustainable source using:

- stand-alone stoves providing space heating for a single room; and/or
- boilers connected to central heating and hot water systems.

Selection of materials and construction techniques

R.5 The standard of design in new developments has a major impact upon the quality of the environment. Good design can enhance the appearance of places and our use and enjoyment of them. Well-designed buildings should function well and should be able to adapt to changing circumstances. They should use appropriate materials and design details to achieve and maintain character and distinctiveness. Building features should vary throughout the different areas of the town whilst following the same basic design principles. They should draw on the scale, texture and colour of the building materials used throughout the surrounding area and use innovative design approach other than pastiches appropriate to the new town. Materials can be innovative and contemporary but should relate to the existing palette of colours and textures. Buildings should use locally sourced materials to effectively retain local

distinctiveness. This will also help reduce the impacts of transportation on the environment, thus conforming to sustainability objectives. It can also reduce development costs. They should use environmentally friendly materials and generally arrange windows and doors symmetrically; however, random arrangements can be appropriate when they form part of an organised and distinctive effect, and when they fit in with the surrounding character of the buildings. Buildings should include chimneys as appropriate to help create varied and interesting rooflines, and provide a visual connection with the architectural style of the existing area. They should ensure boundary fences, parking provision and landscaping are in-keeping with the surrounding area. Careful attention should be paid to decisions such as whether fences or hedgerows should be used, whether paving a currently green area would cause it to stand out unacceptably, and where parking provision should be made.

R.6 These factors need to be considered at the initial design process, as they can all make a significant difference as to whether a building fits in with the surrounding context of the area or not, and whether a place is successful.

R.7 Buildings should use high thermal mass materials, such as concrete, brick and stone, to absorb and retain solar heat during the day and maximise insulation to reduce heat loss; the rate of heat transfer through building elements is measured as a 'U-Value'. The lower the U-Value is, the less significant the heat losses are, and the more energy efficient the building materials are. U-Values listed in Building Regulations should be considered as a minimum standard and should always be improved upon where viable and technically practicable.

R.8 Buildings should have high energy efficiency appliances installed at the development stage and use control systems, such as motion or light detecting sensors, to increase energy efficiency.

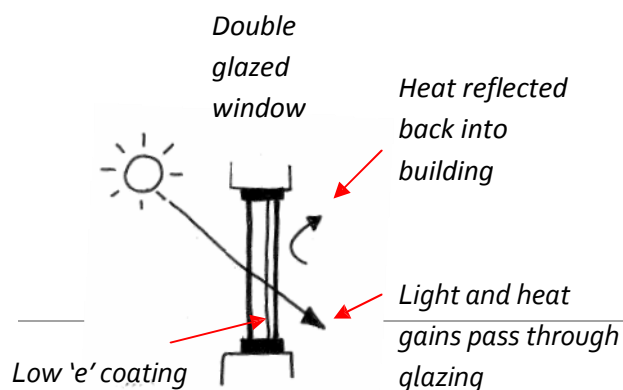
Maximise resilience

Wind

R.9 Buildings should incorporate natural ventilation ensure air quality is maintained and use atria and courtyards in an effective way to maximise natural ventilation. They should ensure voids between groups of buildings to encourage natural ventilation in the centre of deep plan developments whilst minimising heat loss through air leakage and ensure junctions between different building materials do not allow air to leak in or out of the building. Wind turbines (of varying scales) should be employed as a viable form of energy generation where appropriate.

Sunlight and daylight

R.10 Buildings should provide an adequate level of daylight and sunlight and reduce the amount of artificial light required. They should have low building depths to reduce the amount of artificial light; a depth of 9-13m provides maximum flexibility for natural lighting and ventilation. Buildings should employ techniques to bring light into the building if building depths are high. This would include design features such as atria, courtyards and sun tubes and they should ensure that any new



extensions do not affect the amount of natural light being received by existing buildings. Buildings should be located far enough apart to not cause overshadowing. Although, buildings which are too far apart can result in continuity and enclosure objectives not being achieved. They should maximise the benefits of 'passive solar gain' to provide environmental benefits and minimise the amount of fuel used. Buildings should be positioned carefully so that their primary frontages are orientated broadly to the south, in order to maximise the opportunity for passive solar gain and they should capture solar energy using Photovoltaic (PV) cells or solar water heating panels on south facing, unshaded roofs

Ground and air source heat pumps

R.11 Buildings should utilise the constant below ground temperate through ground source heat pumps and transfer heat from below the frost line into the building. In addition, they should extract the heat from the air using air source heat pumps.

Water consumption

R.12 Stevenage is in a region which receives one of the lowest levels of rainfall in the UK and, in recent years, the amount of water being consumed is steadily increasing. Reducing the amount of water needed for day-to-day activities is, therefore, essential for maintaining a sustainable lifestyle.

R.13 Buildings should reduce water consumption to 110 litres per person per day and collect and reuse rainwater for activities such as washing clothes, toilet flushing and garden irrigation. Care should be taken to ensure that elements of these schemes are designed into buildings effectively and are not visually intrusive

L.1 Well-designed places sustain their beauty over the long term. They add to the quality of life of their users and as a result, people are more likely to care for them over their lifespan. They have an emphasis on quality and simplicity.

Well managed and maintained

L.2 Developments should be well designed to ensure that they are robust, durable and easy to look after. They should be designed to ensure that the maintenance and management responsibilities are clearly defined and these roles are agreed by the necessary parties in advance.

L.3 Management of local waste, cleaning, parking, internal common spaces, shared spaces and public spaces should all be considered from the outset and these regimes should be considered from the early stages of the design process.

Adaptable to changing needs and evolving techniques

L.4 Consideration should be given to the changing needs in terms of health and mobility of the user. This is particularly relevant to private users of homes and gardens; such places should be designed to be flexible and able to adapt to the changing needs of the user.

L.5 This is also relevant to potential changes in lifestyle due to developing technologies i.e. electric vehicles, remote working etc.

L.6 Consideration should be given to the provision of high-speed digital connectivity in order to ensure the provision of options and information for education, health, leisure, social interaction, businesses and home working. Something that has become evident over the past year.

A sense of ownership

L.7 Well-designed places clearly define the boundaries for private, shared and public spaces; as such, occupants will place more value and take ownership of those spaces.

L.8 Shared spaces should be visible and easy to get to so that they are accessible to all users. They should also ensure that they are flexible so that they can be used for a variety of activities.

Stevenage Borough Council

**The Draft Design Guidance Supplementary
Planning Document (2021)**

Consultation Statement

20 September 2021 – 29 November 2021



Introduction

This document has been prepared to show how the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 were adhered to during the production of the Stevenage Borough Council Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (2021).

The SPD will be a material consideration in planning decisions and the purpose of the SPD is to give further guidance and clarity regarding policies SP8: Good design and GD1: High quality design of the adopted Stevenage Borough Local Plan.

Town and Country Planning Regulations

The SPD has been produced in accordance with Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The most relevant regulations relating to the process are as follows:

- Regulation 12: Regulation 12(a) requires the Council to produce a consultation statement before adoption of the SPD, this must set out who was consulted, a summary of the issues raised, and how these issues were incorporated in to the SPD.
- Regulation 12(b) requires the Council to publish the documents for a minimum 4 week consultation, specify the date when responses should be received and identify the address to which responses should be sent.
- Regulation 35: Regulation 12 states that when seeking representations on an SPD, documents must be available in accordance with Regulation 35. This requires the Council to make documents available by taking the following steps;
 - Make the document available at the principal office and other places within the area that the Council considers appropriate;
 - Publish the document on the Council's website

Details of consultation

Following approval at a meeting of the SBC Executive, consultation was undertaken on the Draft Design Guidance SPD for a period of over ten weeks, from 20 September to 29 November 2021. Consultation was undertaken in line with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. Consultees who have previously signed up to the planning consultation list were contacted by email, or by post where no email address had been provided.

The consultation was also advertised on the Council's website home page and Planning Policy pages. It also appeared on the Stevenage Borough Council social media pages A hard copy of the consultation document was available at the Council offices and in the Customer Service Centre.

Representations were submitted on the Council's planning consultation portal, Objective (<https://stevenage-consult.objective.co.uk/portal/>), or were sent via email to Planning.Policy@Stevenage.gov.uk.

Who was consulted?

A list of consultees is provided in Appendix 1.

What were the main issues raised during the consultation?

The main topics raised during the consultation were:

Response	Reasons for Amendment
Remove references to promoting fossil fuel efficiency	To promote the use of sustainable forms of energy supply
Refer to new and updated documents from Sports England, HCC and Historic England	To ensure the robust nature of the document in light of updated reference documents
Embed 'active design' throughout the document	Help to promote a more physically active and mentally stimulating environment in all aspects of design
Reconsider the element of movement and how Stevenage was designed to not preclude one or other form of transportation	Ensure that the document is inclusive and supportive of the forms of transport that individuals chose to use
Review the guidance of signage in the Town centre	Requirements of the Design Guidance SPD exceed what is permitted by law
Strengthen the guidance relating to building in residential gardens	Gardens are not considered to be PDL and this point needs reiterating
Reference HCC's role as Lead Local Flood Authority	
Review the proposed species for street tree planting	Biosecurity regulations, for example Ash Dieback
Review references to hedgerows etc.	The use of the word 'attractive' implies negativity to something that is aesthetically unattractive, would be more appropriate to use alternative language such as 'important' or 'valued'
Updated document in relation to Part Q of Building Regulations	To ensure the robust nature of the document in light of updated reference documents
Update lighting standards	To ensure the robust nature of the document in light of updated reference documents

How has the Council responded to these issues and what changes has the Council made to the SPD document as a result?

The main concepts and principles of the Draft SPD have been maintained and brought forward into the draft revised version of the SPD taking into account a number of significant amendments suggested by respondents' comments.

A complete schedule of consultation responses, the Council's response to the comments and the areas of changes proposed in the SPD are provided overleaf:

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
TFL	DG1		No Comments	Noted
Member of the public	DG2	Resources	I think the time has come to say goodbye to promoting fossil fuel efficiency in the form of condensing boilers, CHP or indeed biomass-burning stoves. Suggest/amend R4 and similar references in H4	Noted
Member of the public	DG3	Purpose of the Stevenage Design Guidance	A very broad brush summary, much detail needs to be added	Noted, the purpose is to give guidance and not a prescribed method for design
Member of the public	DG4	Context	Yes, (agree) to content although more detail needed and no further additions required at this stage	Noted, the purpose is to give guidance and not a prescribed method for design
Member of the public	DG5	Built Form	More emphasis on heritage - particularly New Town heritage and setting	Noted
Member of the public	DG6	Public Spaces	More emphasis on heritage and setting. Addition of important heritage gardens such as the Town Centre garden designed by Gordon Patterson for the new town. Local Lists for Parks and Gardens of Historic Interest are the subject of a government initiative and also Guidance from Historic England. Herts Gardens Trust has assisted many LPAs in Hertfordshire to develop these for their area	Noted. The Local List is concentrating on the buildings within Stevenage currently but will be expanded to incorporate art and sculpture and also parks and gardens
Sport England	DG7	Context	It is noted that Policy SP2 (Sustainable Development in Stevenage) of the adopted Local Plan requires development proposals to produce places and spaces that enable people to live a healthy lifestyle and the Stevenage Community Strategy specifically promotes active lifestyles. Furthermore, Hertfordshire County Council's Health and Wellbeing Planning Guidance https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/health-in-herts/healthy-places/the-role-of-public-health-in-planning.aspx promotes healthy and active lifestyles through design.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Sport England	DG8	General Comments	<p>Support is offered for how the design guidance has implicitly encouraged physical activity through design under the ten characteristics especially in relation to mobility, nature and public spaces. However, in view of the above context it would be helpful if a section of the design guidance specifically and explicitly provided guidance on how developments can be designed to promote healthy and active lifestyles. Sport England, in conjunction with Public Health England, has produced 'Active Design' https://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/active-design/, a guide to planning new developments that create the right environment to help people get more active. The guidance sets out ten key principles for ensuring new developments incorporate opportunities for people to take part in sport and physical activity. The Active Design principles are aimed at contributing towards the Government's desire for the planning system to promote healthy communities through good urban design. It is therefore requested that the design guide includes a specific section which sets out advice (e.g. listing the 10 Active Design principles) on how developments can be designed to promote physical activity and this can signpost to Active Design for further detail</p>	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 472</p> <p>Sport England</p>	DG9	Movement	<p>The guidance in the 'Movement' section of the document is welcomed as much of it would support physical activity. In particular, the guidance in paragraphs M5, M7, M9, M10, M11, M12, M16, M19, M20, M24 and M30 would encourage activity and be consistent with Sport England/Public Health England's Active Design principles, especially the principles relating to 'Activity for All', 'Connected Walking & Cycling Routes' and 'Appropriate Infrastructure'. The following suggestions are made about how the guidance could be improved to enhance opportunities for encouraging physical activity through design:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As well as developments providing connections to enhance the bridleway network as set out in M24, new developments on the periphery of Stevenage should be expected to provide pedestrian/cycle links to connect with existing public rights of way to allow residents of new development to easily walk/cycle from the development into the countryside for leisure purposes; • New pedestrian/cycle routes should be waymarked and supported by distance markers to encourage leisure use of these routes e.g. to support residents to complete daily running distances from their homes; • Where possible, cycle and pedestrian paths should be segregated to avoid conflicts between pedestrians and cyclists which may discourage use; • In both residential and other developments, cycle parking should be located in prominent and secure locations to make it a more attractive option than using the car e.g. at the entrance to public buildings rather than a corner of a remote car park. In places where there is significant demand for cycle storage, provision should be made for basic bike maintenance facilities such as public foot pumps 	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Sport England	DG10	Nature	<p>The guidance in the 'Nature' section of the document is welcomed as much of it would support physical activity. In particular, the guidance in paragraphs N5 and N6 would encourage activity and be consistent with Sport England/Public Health England's Active Design principles especially the principles relating to 'Activity for All', Network of Multi-functional Open Space' and 'Appropriate Infrastructure'. The following suggestions are made about how the guidance could be improved to enhance opportunities for encouraging physical activity through design:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It should be made explicit that new open spaces should be designed so that they are multi-functional so that they encourage people to visit the spaces for a range of activities and therefore be suitable for meeting the activity needs of all groups within the community. For example, designing spaces so that they can be used for sport and informal recreation, designing SuDS so that they attract people to visit them as a destination and are supported by footpaths/seating; • Open spaces should be designed to integrate with existing and proposed active travel routes so that open spaces along the routes can be used for physical activity while people are travelling to their destination and to encourage walking/cycling to the open space for leisure purposes; • Where appropriate, open space should have waymarked routes e.g. circular walking/running routes with distance markers 	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Sport England	DG11	Public Spaces	<p>The guidance in the 'Public Spaces section of the document is welcomed as much of it would support physical activity. In particular, the guidance in paragraphs P3, P4, P6, P15 and P21 would encourage activity and be consistent with Sport England/Public Health England's Active Design principles especially the principles relating to 'Activity for All', Network of Multi-functional Open Space', 'High Quality Streets & Spaces and 'Appropriate Infrastructure'. The following suggestions are made about how the guidance could be improved to enhance opportunities for encouraging physical activity through design:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It should be made explicit that new public spaces such as civic spaces should be designed so that they are multi-functional so that they encourage people to visit the spaces for a range of activities and therefore be suitable for meeting the activity needs of all groups within the community. For example, designing civic spaces so that they can be used for events and informal activity as well as providing a community focal point, landscaping etc; • Public spaces should be designed to support informal children's play as this will encourage parents to visit and spend time in the public spaces • Where appropriate, especially in town and neighbourhood centre settings, new or enhanced public spaces should be supported by public conveniences, drinking fountains and accessible seating to encourage visits by all groups within the community and to encourage people to spend time in these spaces. 	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Sport England	DG12	Uses	<p>The guidance in paragraph U26 of the 'Uses' section of the document is welcomed as designing places so that they are capable of being used for a range of activities would support physical activity. This would be consistent with Sport England/Public Health England's Active Design principles especially the principles relating to 'Activity for All' and 'High Quality Streets & Spaces'. The following suggestions are made about how the guidance could be improved to enhance opportunities for encouraging physical activity through design:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It should be made explicit that community uses should be co-located wherever possible in order to support linked trips by active travel modes. For example, schools, shops, workplaces, open space. Where appropriate, uses should be integrated into the same building to encourage their use e.g. combining leisure uses with health services and community facilities; • Co-located community uses should be focal points within active travel networks 	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 474</p> <p>Sport England</p>	DG13	Homes and Buildings	<p>In accordance with the 'Active Buildings' principle of Sport England/Public Health England's Active Design guidance, the following suggestions are made about how the guidance could be improved to enhance opportunities for encouraging physical activity through design of new homes and buildings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The guidance on flatted developments should encourage roof gardens and podiums to provide some communal space within the development that could provide opportunities for physical activity e.g. outdoor gym equipment, space for informal exercise; • Buildings should be designed to promote the use of the stairs and consider providing feature staircases; • Employment/community buildings should be supported by cycle storage, lockers, showers and changing rooms; • Informal sports facilities should be integrated into larger buildings e.g. table tennis in atriums/courtyards; • Space for parking wheelchairs and pushchairs should be incorporated into places of work and community buildings 	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Knebworth Estates	DG14	Movement	<p>'On the primary transport routes, routes for pedestrians and cyclists run alongside vehicular routes, but at junctions' vehicles are given priority and non-vehicular traffic is forced to travel under a series of underpasses in order to cross the roads. This makes it easier to travel by car, rather than promoting the benefits of sustainable transport.'" This is a bizarre negation of one of the brilliant principles of the New Town's original design. The separation of vehicle and cycle lanes has led to road safety and convenience for all. Implying that car travel would be better inconvenienced contradicts LTP4's own assertion that "This policy is not anti-car and car use is recognised as being an essential part of the county's future transport system." (LTP4 p.44)</p>	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
<p>SBC Communities and Neighbourhoods</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 475</p>	DG15	General Comments	<p>it could be argued that the below points help define Stevenage’s heritage value and should be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first New Town, and thus the first full-scale manifestation of the New Towns Act 1946 • The earliest and most significant pedestrianised Town Centre of its type and scale in the world • The first grade-separated cycling and pedestrian infrastructure of its type and scale in the world • Revolutionary architecture that represented the New Town’s social progress. It progressed modernist design language by further utilising and expressing modern materials and functions, and in the process, Stevenage was nationally important for pushing the UK from the Festival Style toward Brutalism. The Town Centre is particularly special for its unified and harmonious design, which was led by Leonard Vincent and his teams from the first 1949 concept through the 1970s (although the fourth phase centred on the Forum shopping street was designed by external agencies and lacked such unity) • Its overall state of preservation is remarkable. It is better preserved than any other British new town, and it has more architectural value than any other pedestrianised precinct from its 1950s and 60s generation • A pioneering public art programme, which integrated art commissions from the beginning, demonstrating the contemporaneous approach to rebuilding cities after the war in which public art was used to boost public morale and add distinctiveness. It was also a progression from the Werkbund and Bauhaus, which sought to integrate the arts (including art and architecture) into functional designs for the masses 	Noted
SBC Communities and Neighbourhoods	DG16	General Comments	Historic England notes that it is hard to appreciate how pioneering the Town Centre was because of how much it influenced subsequent developments around the world. Elevating this appreciation would be advantageous, and place-branding could help.	Noted
SBC Communities and Neighbourhoods	DG17	General Comments	In terms of conservation, obviously the NPPF, HE’s conservation principles, etc. should be referenced for designated and non-designated heritage assets.	Noted. These are already referenced in the document and in the Local Listing document that supports the Design Guidance document

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);"> Page 216 SDC Communities and Neighbourhoods </p>	DG18	General Comments	<p>I also believe the below design aspects are integral to the town’s heritage value and should be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unified concept – extends through at least the first three phases of work and almost every aspect of architectural and layout design. This unified concept was both harmonious (meant to create a backdrop to socialising and advertising) while full of variety, character, and distinctiveness • spatial layout - rectilinear design with intentional character added through subtle changes in plane (i.e., doglegs on Queensway) • materiality - Stevenage marks a progression toward an even greater embrace of modern materials, technology, and function; therefore, the use of modern materials and the way in which they were treated (exposed, painted white, etc.), especially the increased expression of concrete, is especially significant. • elevation grid designs – often enabled through often enabled through curtain walling, employing a 3 ft. 4 in. module using a 20 ft. grid, with shop frontages varying from 20 ft. to 120 ft. • coloured composite panelling – most of the coloured panels in the upper floors of commercial premises in Queensway survive • massing and height - There exists an overall townscape vision, with buildings of three-storey height, with taller structures limited to considered points of interest • canopies and cross-canopies – helped to unify the rectilinear design and enable freer advertising. This includes the public art – commissions integrated into the overall TC plan, and the SDC encouraged local artists. HE note three major commissions – Gyula Bajo’s unnamed mural for the Co-operative House, Joy Ride by Franta Belsky, and Peter Lyon’s unnamed sculpture mounted on 21-23 Town Square. The later William Mitchell commissions for two underpasses on St George’s Way are also highly significant. Bajo’s mural and Mitchell’s Scenes Also worth mentioning is David Norris’ Women and Doves in Town Centre Gardens, and Seated Figures by David Noble in The Towers grounds. End blocks were also notable features, which often featured artwork or lettering • street furniture – including lamp standards, special post boxes, concrete flower planters and ‘bike parks’ placed at the centre of the shopping ways • signage – SDC’s cohesive scheme included illuminated signs, ‘brightness zoning’ at night, directional and hanging signs under the canopies, the lettering used for names of stores, and even the placement of such lettering (although, generally, the idea was to control the architecture as a unifying element to allow freer fascia, signage, advertising) • paving - paving was in two shades of grey, ‘with random panels of granite setts round trees and where changes of level take place’ • trees – particularly pre-existing historic trees, within the public realm as points of interest and to define spaces 	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
SBC Communities and Neighbourhoods	DG19	General Comments	<p>In terms of valuation, HE's tiers of significance can be referenced for planning consideration, including our local list:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HE believe the conservation area should be extended to include: the remainder of the first-phase commercial area (the L-shaped block comprising 1-15 Town Square (numbers 17-19 are already included)), and even to extend north to take in the extension of 1962-4, including the two-storey bridge. However, it's worth noting, as the NPPF does, that not all elements of a conservation area contribute to its significance, just as there may be listed structures such as Joy Ride and the Clock Tower that are attributed more value as listed structures. • Also within the first tier of significance are: the bus station, surviving car parks and garaging on the service roads (The Quadrant and East Gate), Queensway up to and including Park Place, Daneshill House, and The Towers. • The second tier of significance includes: Mecca Dance Hall, County library and health centre, and outpatients' clinic, police station and adjacent garages, Southgate House, fire and ambulance station, Bowes Lyon House, and the swimming pool • 'Of these, the most intact and notable architecturally are the dance hall, the outpatients' clinic, the library and health centre, and Bowes Lyon House – perhaps most unique, in terms of its design and survival, is the youth centre, though most prominent on account of its height is Southgate House' • Third tier includes: Swingate House, Brickdale House, Queensway North, and the multi-storey car-park. 	Noted
SBC Communities and Neighbourhoods	DG20	General Comments	Work from the 70s, which includes buildings on The Forum (street) and others are not considered as significant; although, the Arts & Leisure Centre and its ramp are. However, this is just a TC assessment. There must be loads of other worth consideration, such as the FIRA building.	Noted
SBC Communities and Neighbourhoods	DG21	General Comments	Have we considered commissioning a similar Statement of Significance? This would provide a holistic assessment of the town rather than just conservation areas.	Noted
SBC Communities and Neighbourhoods	DG22	General Comments	Lastly, an argument in favour of development relates to the failed vision for a civic centre. There were at least three versions of plans from the early 60s to mid-70s to create a civic centre that would include law courts, registry office, art gallery, museum, and Council offices. These plans were repeatedly shelved to create more retail premises, which explains ongoing high street issues, and although some of this was fulfilled piecemeal, there's an opportunity to realise the New Town's original objectives through purpose-built Council offices, a museum, and art gallery.	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
British Sign and Graphics Association	DG23	General Comments	We have carefully examined the proposed guidance in this draft SPD and are concerned that, in some aspects, it exceeds what is permitted in law; that it is impractical and unrealistic; that it totally fails to take account of the actuality of Stevenage's shopping environment; and that its requirements are unduly onerous and excessive. We recognize that the SPD aims to improve shopfront design; and we concur that this is, of course, always desirable in the interests of the appearance, character, vitality and viability of shopping streets. But we are convinced that such improvement should not be sought through advice which is impractical and expensive. Shop owners are far more likely to follow guidance which is not overly demanding; yet still achieves a measure of visual improvement to the area as a whole. The SPD should not be a tool with which to beat applicants; it should encourage reasonable improvements for which shop owners will be more willing to foot the bill.	Noted, We believe that given the unique original character of the Town Centre that the requirements for shop frontages are within keeping with the original vision of the Town Centre during its conception.
British Sign and Graphics Association	DG24	General Comments	Please remove the apostrophe from "fascia's" – it is a plural, not a possessive (or use the correct, but outdated, Latin plural "fasciae").	Noted
British Sign and Graphics Association	DG25	Pg 78	"Projecting and hanging signs". Hanging signs often have their fixings above the fascia so that the sign itself hangs at fascia level. This is essential for headroom. Also, certain premises (eg public houses) traditionally display hanging signs at higher level. There is no justification for the advice that all such signs should be placed at the side of the shopfront; this is a matter of choice and design. There may well be situations where a projecting or hanging sign is suitable though not to the side of the fascia. Why should signs at upper floors "be discouraged"? The Regulations do not permit such "in principle" advice. Every application must be determined on individual merit. If any sign above ground floor level is acceptable in its own right (on grounds of amenity and public safety) then it must be permitted. We suggest that this whole section be deleted. The previous general section on "Signs, advertisement and hoardings" gives all the advice that is necessary, including projecting and hanging signs.	Noted, We believe that given the unique original character of the Town Centre that the requirements for shop frontages are within keeping with the original vision of the Town Centre during its conception.
British Sign and Graphics Association	DG26	Pg 79	"Retractable" (awnings) – last bullet point. Canopies/blinds/awnings with advertising are advertisements (including their structure) within the statutory definition. They will not always require advertisement consent. Many will fall into Class 5 deemed consent and not require express advertisement consent. The bullet point should be re-drafted accordingly.	Noted. Discuss with DM
British Sign and Graphics Association	DG27	Pg 82	"All advertisements". For the reasons we give above "only acceptable at fascia level or below" should be deleted. Such categorical advice goes far beyond what the law and Government advice permits.	Noted, We believe that given the unique original character of the Town Centre that the requirements for shop frontages are within keeping with the original vision of the Town Centre during its conception.

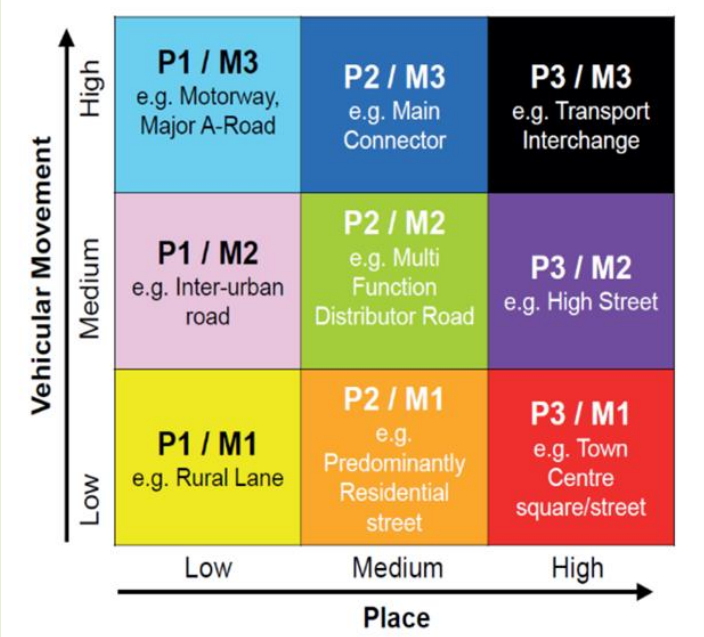
Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
British Sign and Graphics Association	DG28	Pg 84	<p>"Internally illuminated box signs are discouraged". This conflicts with the next sentence. Internally illuminated letters may be achieved by individual letter boxes or by a larger fret-cut fascia panel. But in either case, some sort of "box" is required. We suggest that "internally illuminated box signs" be deleted and replaced by:</p> <p>"Older-style, bulky and fully internally illuminated box signs, often crudely fixed to existing fascias, ..."</p> <p>The advice would then align with "Fascias" on page 76</p>	Noted
SBC Planning and Regulation	DG29	General Comments	An increasing number of agents are pushing back against our advice/refusals of planning permission for windfall housing in relation to Policy HO5(a). We have taken the stance that residential gardens fail this policy because they are not PDL and they do not fit our interpretation of 'small under used urban site' because they are gardens and therefore in use. ...we can add a small paragraph to the end of the Context section for new housing that outlines our position/defines this policy criteria. This will help us have something definitive to pin the refusal too	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Robin Buckle Urban Design Ltd	DG30	General Comments	The design guidance needs to be clearly set out but the document also needs to be accessible and not overly long. People will generally be put off by a tome so brevity is important. We would suggest, at the very least, that the Local Heritage List and Character Area Assessments are stripped out and replaced with a links. The document would benefit from links to the other appendices. The shorter and punchier the SPD can be, the more likely it will be that it is read and used.	Noted. The Local Heritage List and the Town Centre Public Realm documents have been removed from the appendices and are standalone supporting documents
Robin Buckle Urban Design Ltd	DG31	General Comments	The writing needs to be tightened up to stand up to scrutiny at public inquiries/ appeals. It should clearly state what is important and why, referencing National and SBC policies/ guidance and setting out specific requirements for applicants.	Noted
Robin Buckle Urban Design Ltd	DG32	General Comments	The document needs significant graphic design input in its final form. As a document about design, it needs to be well-designed itself.	Noted
Robin Buckle Urban Design Ltd	DG33	General Comments	Much better images are required – these should embody the design aspirations and quality that Stevenage is seeking, and we illustrated some of these in the Design presentation so there should be plenty of options in that regard.	Noted
Robin Buckle Urban Design Ltd	DG34	Purpose of the Stevenage Design Guidance	Introduction and How to use this guide - This is a perfectly adequate introduction.	Noted. Support welcomed
Robin Buckle Urban Design Ltd	DG35	Looking Forward	Para 1.6 - 8. I think you need to explain the implications of those changes on design - what will they mean for the built environment both existing and new.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Robin Buckle Urban Design Ltd	DG36	Components of Good Design	Paragraphs 1.8 to 1.16. These read as a series of statements which are occasionally muddled and do not set out a compelling description of design, why it matters and why this is important to Stevenage.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Robin Buckle Urban Design Ltd	DG37	1.17	The Design Council do provide a review and wider service but it is not funded by the government. Other providers do offer similar services and SBC have used one of those - Design South East - so probably best not to mention any organisation by name.	Noted
Robin Buckle Urban Design Ltd	DG38	Context	We think it is positive to see the adoption of the ten characteristics of well-designed places set out in the National Design Guide, as a structure for this document. It is also good to see the pioneering spirit of Stevenage, as the UK's first New Town, celebrated and referred to extensively throughout the draft SPD: a very good starting point. However, the clarity of the overall document structure needs to be carried through in the individual sections, and, having reviewed the first of these (Context), we do not feel that has been applied with the result that the document lacks clarity and authority.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Page 480 Robin Buckle Urban Design Ltd	DG39	Context	The National Design Guide and its accompanying document, The National Model Design Code, sets out a very clear structure for each of the ten characteristics. This should be made specific to individual aspects; for Stevenage's Design Guidance Context section we would recommend the following as a guide: 1. Introduction 2. What makes Stevenage special 3. Character Studies a. The neighbourhoods and places of Stevenage b. Site Context c. Site Assessments 4. Cultural Heritage a. Historic Assessment b. Heritage Assets 5. Good practice examples 6. Checklist	Noted
Robin Buckle Urban Design Ltd	DG40	C1	Context is the location of the development and the attributes of its immediate, local and regional surroundings.	Noted
Robin Buckle Urban Design Ltd	DG41	C2	An understanding of the context, history and the cultural characteristics of a site, neighbourhood and region influences the location, siting and design of new developments. It means they are well grounded in their locality and more likely to be acceptable to existing communities. Creating a positive sense of place helps to foster a sense of belonging and contributes to well-being, inclusion and community cohesion.	Noted

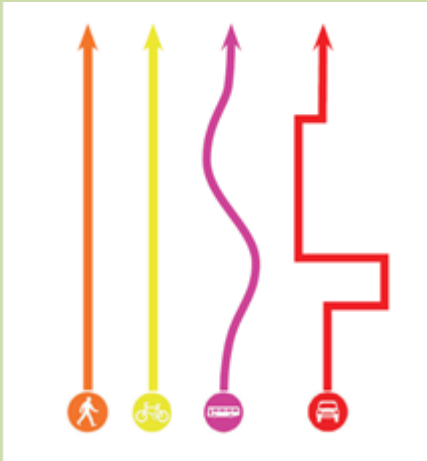
Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Robin Buckle Urban Design Ltd	DG42	C2	Introduction. Writing needs to be tightened up and reference should be made to the National Design Guide from which this came: i.e. "The National Design Guide states ..."	Noted
Robin Buckle Urban Design Ltd	DG43	C3	Stevenage is Britain's first New Town. Designated in 1946, it was the solution to address overcrowding that was being experienced in the ravages of bomb-damaged London which lies approximately 30 miles south. This would go in section 2: What makes Stevenage Special. This is where the Garden Cities diagram should go (sic)	Noted
Robin Buckle Urban Design Ltd	DG44	C4 – C5	A section is required here to introduce the idea of character studies and their importance	Noted
Robin Buckle Urban Design Ltd	DG45	C6	This would then be the core of the section 3a The neighbourhoods and places of Stevenage, accompanied by a map of the neighbourhoods and places	Noted
Robin Buckle Urban Design Ltd	DG46	C7 – C9	This should move to 4b Historic Assets. It is a big document and its inclusion within the Design Guidance makes the guidance a large and unwieldy document. Better to make it a stand-alone document and simply reference it in the design guidance. This will also avoid complications with updating, consultation etc.	Noted
Robin Buckle Urban Design Ltd	DG47	C10	This needs rewording, but could form part of the introduction	Noted
Robin Buckle Urban Design Ltd	DG48	C11 – C12	Again the inclusion of this as an Appendix is problematic (see above re Appendix D). It should be referenced in 3a "The neighbourhoods and places of Stevenage"	Noted
Robin Buckle Urban Design Ltd	DG49	C13	Would go in Section 3b	Noted
Robin Buckle Urban Design Ltd	DG50	C14	The relevant documents should be referenced	Noted
Robin Buckle Urban Design Ltd	DG51	C17 - C20	This should all go in Section 2. What makes Stevenage special	Noted
Robin Buckle Urban Design Ltd	DG52	C21-29	This should all go in the chapter on Resources (which is the NDG on Sustainability). It also needs rewritten to be less of a commentary on sustainability and a tight piece stating the importance of sustainability, referencing National and SBC policies/ guidance and setting out specific requirements for applicants	Noted

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Robin Buckle Urban Design Ltd	DG53	C30	Again section 2. What makes Stevenage special	Noted
Robin Buckle Urban Design Ltd	DG54	C31 – C32	Para 31 - 32 Move to HOMES AND BUILDINGS chapter	Noted
Robin Buckle Urban Design Ltd	DG55	C1 & C2	C1 and C2. In para 1.5 it says the Guide “does not seek to replicate existing policy and regulations” but C1 and C2 are uncredited definition of ‘context’ directly from the National Design Guide. Fine to use references but they should be credited, especially where the reference document is the National Design Guide which adds some weight. This is also true of I1 in Identity section, B1 of Built form section etc.	Noted
Robin Buckle Urban Design Ltd	DG56	Context	Very little of this section is about context, with much of the text as identified above, needing to go in separate sections.	Noted
Page 482 Robin Buckle Urban Design Ltd	DG57	General Comments	<p>We understand that the consultation process will have produced comments from a range of people and organisation and that to radically change the document may compromise the process. Nevertheless, our recommendation would be to recast the document to be a strong and coherent companion to the SBC Local Plan policies, providing a document which clearly sets out the ambitions of the council, guides developer to produce good design and supports challenges to poor design. The options from our perspective are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rewrite the document. This would be our preferred recommendation for the reasons set out above and we’d suggest using someone who is an urban designer with a track record of writing this type of document - they may also have a planning qualification so they can understand the planning context. 2. Rewrite the document using your existing design consultants. This might be quicker because of our knowledge of Stevenage, the guidance and the approach used by developers and house builders 3. There is, of course, a third option which would be for the document to be recast in-house with comments from ourselves but we thought that this could be a far more protracted process and a fairly turgid exercise 	Noted
Robin Buckle Urban Design Ltd	DG58	General Comments	We assume that the council will employ a graphic designer to put the document together in a final version and would certainly recommend that one is engaged. Happy to recommend individuals if you do not have an in-house resource.	Noted
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG59	General Comments	Hertfordshire County Council are the Highways Authority and the SPD needs to give more recognition to our role in the planning application process and the need for development access arrangements and mitigation measures to comply with our Local Transport Plan 4 requirements.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG60	General Comments	We are currently developing our own Place and Movement Design Guidance as a replacement to Roads in Herts to embed the LTP4 thinking in our requirements for developers and in the development of our own schemes, in particular the need to prioritise active and sustainable modes above those of private car users. Please find attached our comments (primarily on your Movement and Place sections) which reflect this thinking.	Noted
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG61	Introduction	Need to replace the inappropriate image of a cyclist on an unauthorised zebra type crossing	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG62	1.1	This should include mention of long-term sustainability through use of durable, low maintenance materials.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG63	1.23	HCC should be recognised as the highway authority and its emerging Place & Movement Planning and Design guidance should be referenced.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
<p>Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team</p>	<p>DG64</p>	<p>1.23</p>	<p>To aid the practical application of its Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) policies Hertfordshire has developed a 'Place and Movement,' P&M matrix, which recognises the different functionalities that streets will need to have. The matrix provides a basis for deciding which activities should be prioritised, where the balance of provision should lie helps and, in doing so, helps identify what is the appropriate highway provision for the various users.</p> <p>Nine categories have been defined and ordered from a high to low significance in relation to the place or movement function with each cell of the matrix. All sections of HCC's highway network have been assigned a P&M category and HCC will agree the appropriate designation for all new public highways and highway improvements. A design menu card has been prepared for each P&M category, setting out appropriate geometric standards and appropriate provision of highway features, including facilities for walking, cycling and passenger transport. There should be a clear statement that HCC is likely to object to planning applications that fail to comply to its LTP4 requirements and will only later adopt highway infrastructure that complies with the guidance</p> 	<p>Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation</p>
<p>Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team</p>	<p>DG65</p>	<p>1.23</p>	<p>The county council will work with development promoters and the district and borough councils to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure the location and design of proposals reflect the LTP Transport User Hierarchy and encourage movement by sustainable transport modes and reduced travel demand. 2. Ensure access arrangements are safe, suitable for all people, built to an adequate standard and adhere to the county council's Highway Design Standards. 3. Consider the adoption of access roads and internal road layouts where they comply with the appropriate adoption requirements and will offer demonstrable utility to the wider public. Where internal roads are not adopted the county council will expect suitable private management arrangements to be in place. 	<p>Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation</p>

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG66	1.23	Reference should also be made to HCC's role as Lead Local Flood Authority.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG67	B9	But in doing so, this should not create unattractive, narrow alleyways.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG68	M4	The potential opportunity has been made for access by all modes, but in practice walking and cycling is under-represented.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG69	M4	Key destinations (employment, education, retail, leisure facilities) should be located close to where people live enabling easy walking and cycling. They should be carefully located throughout a development, rather than concentrated in one area leaving some residents without easy access to one land-use or another. Similarly, the close proximity of new development with linkages to existing facilities is also vital.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG70	M4	Promoting sustainable development demands the shaping of schemes that reduce the need for car-based travel at the outset. Walking, cycling and passenger transport should be at the core of the transport infrastructure provision. The consideration of transport at the planning stage for developments have traditionally been based on the relatively free movement and parking of motorised traffic vehicles. Provision for sustainable modes of transport tended to involve significant compromises as it had to be squeezed within the planning 'redline' at a later stage alongside	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG71	M4	Retrofitted traffic calming. Transport proposals should be developed to a level of detail that adequate spacial provision for walking, cycling and passenger transport is demonstrated within planning applications.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG72	M5	And create a proposed environment in which vehicle speeds will be managed naturally so as to avoid the need for supplementary traffic calming features.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
<p>Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 486</p>	DG73	M6	<p>Developments should be permeable for sustainable modes whilst the number of access points for the private car should be limited to a single point.</p> <p>When filtered permeability is introduced at a network wide level walking, cycling and passenger transport become quicker than driving a car, and therefore the preferred choice for shorter distance trips.</p> <p>The road serving the development should be looped and the connecting link to the existing highway network should not have other junctions within its length, nor have direct access to dwellings. It should be kept short but greater than 25m in length. The design should aim to achieve the same design speed as the road it connects to (preferably 30kph).</p> <p>Additional accesses for cars into the development from the existing network will only be considered where the development can clearly demonstrate that after all the measures to support sustainability have been implemented an unacceptable impact remains because of the residual vehicle-based trips</p> <p>Any development of 50 units and above shall include provision for one emergency-only access as well as the one general vehicular access.</p> 	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG74	M7	<p>Planning for higher density, mixed-use developments, encourages greater trip internalisation and use of sustainable modes. Incorporating high quality walking, cycling and passenger transport infrastructure at the outset will encourage higher proportions of travel by these modes.</p>	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG75	M7	<p>The design of the urban environment should encourage active travel and contribute positively to public health and social wellbeing. A key part of this is limiting the access of motor vehicles, and where</p>	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG76	M7	<p>Access is provided, the volume and speed of vehicles in the public realm (including public squares and residential streets). This is controlled through car parking and traffic management measures such as filtered permeability</p>	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG77	M9	<p>The provision should be in accordance with latest planning and design guidance relating to provision for cycling and walking (e.g. HCC's Place & Movement Planning and design Guidance and LTN 120) rather than replicating existing provision.</p>	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG78	M10	<p>Their provision should meet five core design principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety (including perception of safety) • Directness • Coherence • Comfort • Attractiveness 	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG79	M10	Links with the wider pedestrian network, both existing and planned should be created. Particular consideration should be given to connecting pedestrian routes with local centres, healthcare facilities and schools. In addition, opportunities to link to the existing rights of way network for active leisure pursuits should be taken up where safe and practical.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG80	M11	Routes should be relatively flat. Walking routes should be carefully positioned and provide easy access for all, regardless of physical ability	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG81	M12 &13	Pedestrians should be given priority at crossings.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG82	M14-19	Cycling provision should be in accordance with the assigned P&M categories. Some cycling routes in residential streets with 20mph limits can be on street. Active Travel Links should connect development areas for walking and cycling only.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG83	M14-19	Cycle routes should be designed such that anyone aged 12 to 80 could be expected to cycle along them independently and safely	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG84	M20 &21	The introduction of transport hubs will provide convenient interchange at a neighbourhood level for passenger transport modes and last mile connectivity between passenger transport, demand responsive transport (e.g. taxi and app-based travel), car clubs, bike, eBike share and other services. They can also offer amenities such as electric vehicle charging points, cycle storage, workspaces, wifi, cafés and bike repair.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG85	M20 &21	<p>Basic transport hubs have three key characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interchange for passenger transport and active travel modes • The provision of space for rest and shelter that integrates or complements the surrounding public realm, while reducing dominance of the private car • A pillar or sign which identifies the space as a transport hub which is part of a wider network and ideally provides digital travel information 	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG86	M20 &21	At their simplest a transport hub could contain a pillar, space for rest and shelter with cycle parking and provision passenger transport services to pick up and drop off. Transport hubs are a scalable concept that can be expanded, and strengthened to reflect local needs and demand, through alignment with other, non-mobility functions, aggregating community, economy and mobility into single multi-functional and multi-modal places.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG87	M22	And provide reliability. Bus priority measures should not be provided at the expense of walking and cycling needs.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG88	M23 - 27	Car parking provision in terms of its location, quantity, cost and the way users pay for it, is a strong influence on car use, and a key demand management tool. The availability of parking is also a determinant in whether people choose to own a car or not.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG89	M23 - 27	Low car ownership in new developments can be encouraged from the beginning through restricting residential parking levels and controlling on-street parking. By providing suitable alternatives (active modes for short journeys and passenger transport for longer journeys), this can be further enabled. Land use planning which places parking at the edge, or outside the development (with allowances for those with protected characteristics), alongside traffic demand management measures to reduce the permeability of the development to car traffic, can help to reduce the convenience of driving.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG90	M23 - 27	Over provision of car parking opportunity is likely to facilitate unsustainable traffic growth, while under provision can introduce highway safety risks or significantly impede the free flow of traffic. These likely outcomes could lead to a 'severe' impact in development management terms.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG91	M28	It is reasonable to expect that many residents will choose to own cars in the short term, at least and they should be able to drop off and pick up at their homes, but that does not mean they need to park their cars there. Rather, (with exemptions for those with protected characteristics) they could park their cars in communal multi-storey car parks at the edge of the development. For this they could pay a one-off purchase charge based on the construction costs and a monthly charge to cover ongoing maintenance. Households without cars would not be subject to these charges and therefore do not in any way subsidise the cost of parking provision for car owners.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG92	M28	Forcing cars to park in car parks on the outskirts not only decreases the convenience of owning a car, it also prevents cars from negatively impacting on public space. Moreover, if and when private car ownership and use reduces due to the introduction of Mobility as a Service (MaaS) the scale and use of the car parking infrastructure can be changed.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG93	M29	Replace the words 'Traffic calming' with 'Low speeds'	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG94	M.30	Streets should ensure that they cater for all levels of mobility. Steps and steep inclines should be replaced in favour of gentle inclines which enable mobility impaired people to use them fully as well as parents with pushchairs and young children. Narrow paths and road crossings should be avoided in favour of wide pathways which cater for wheel chairs, mobility scooters and pushchairs.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG95	M.31	Ever improved technologies are being developed to help enable visually impaired individuals navigate streets such as Soundscape; the use of nodes allow the user to explore their environment and direct them to their destination. Such technologies have recently been piloted in Peterborough and we would support the implementation of the use of these technologies in Stevenage. Such technologies should be used alongside tried and tested methods of enabling visually impaired individuals to independently find their way around the town.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG96	M.32	Residential developments should ensure that Mode 2 or Mode 3 electric vehicle (EV) charging points are installed for each residential unit. Where a garage is provided, the EV charging point should ideally be located at an accessible point near the entrance of the garage. Where resident parking is provided, EV charging points should be positioned in areas to serve the maximum number of residents at any one time.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG97	M.33	In commercial and/or employment developments, Mode 3 and/or Mode 4 EV charging points should be provided to enable visitors and employees to utilise the facility. Again, the provision should be located in a suitable position to serve as many EV users as possible.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG98	General Comments	The SBC guidance is silent on highway drainage, yet it is a key design consideration and can contribute considerably to the street scene and public realm when done right.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG99	General Comments	<p>HCC seeks sustainable drainage solutions that will prevent floods, but also support the wider policy objectives of LTP4 and HCC's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2 (2019-29). In particular, solutions need to demonstrate that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flood and groundwater will be managed to protect highway assets and to minimise the nuisance, damage or health and safety hazards Pollution & contamination will be controlled and mitigated The quality of public space and local landscape will be protected and enhanced, thereby encouraging active travel Environmental mitigation or net gains for biodiversity, habitats and natural landscape will be achieved contributing to the target of a 20% increase in green and blue habitats and spaces, across Hertfordshire Whole life costs are optimised and fundable 	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG100	General Comments	<p>The prioritisation of flood management solutions is as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Infiltration To a surface water body To a surface water sewer or drainage system To a combined sewer 	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG101	General Comments	Sustainable and nature based solutions (NBS) shall be prioritised, and designed in collaboration with ecological expertise.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG102	General Comments	It should be noted that HCC will only adopt the highway drainage systems that only manage surface water that falls onto the adoptable area.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG103	P1 & 2	The life cycle of highway assets needs to be a key consideration during the initial design and specification and within the planning for the long-term stewardship of adoptable highways.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG104	P1 & 2	A Whole Life Management Plan will be required by HCC to provide clarity as to who is going to own the various highways and transport assets, who is going to maintain and manage them and how they are going to be funded.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG105	P1 & 2	An indicative Whole Life Management Plan will be required alongside any Outline Planning Application setting out broad principles. A draft Whole Life Management Plan will be required at the Full Planning Application stage setting out proposals for each asset type. The final version shall contain detailed arrangements asset by asset for inclusion within the Section Agreements.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG106	P3	Reduce accessibility through the use of inappropriately sited street furniture pieces that can hinder access, especially for mobility impaired users and pushchairs.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG107	P4	Trees to be planted within the highway need to be selected from HCC's approved list of species. 1	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG108	P5 & 6	Highway lighting design needs to be in accordance with HCC's requirements set out in the P&MPDG	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG109	P5 & 6	The highway is not to be illuminated unless in doing so it meets one or more of the criteria of supporting the local economy, maintaining safety and accessibility and preventing crime and disorder. For safety purposes, major junctions, roundabouts, traffic calming, centre islands, pedestrian crossings, splitter islands and CCTV areas are likely to require full night lighting (FNL). Highways in towns and villages are subject to Part Night Lighting (PNL) with staged dimming, unless they meet the aforementioned exception criteria, in which case they are subject to full night lighting.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG110	P5 & 6	HCC is prepared to maintain and operate third party owned lighting on the highway on a rechargeable basis providing that the lighting assets comply with HCC requirements.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG111	P7 - 12	Consideration of Counter Terrorism measures should be given when developing the planning application as these can sympathetically form an integral part of the public realm proposals and without them appearing to be obtrusive or incurring a significant extra cost if they are incorporated as additional features during final design	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG112	P13	There need not be hard boundaries in the public realm between public highway and non-highway, but the design and specification of highway assets must meet HCC's standards	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG113	P14 - 17	Methods should be utilised where possible. Exceptions can be made where roads do not run through the development and dead frontages or dead ends cannot be avoided and if publicly visible security measures such as fences or gates are necessary, they should be designed as sculptures or art.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG114	P18	Make sure public spaces support social interaction	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG115	M26	The promotion of street trees is fully supported due to the wide range of benefits that they deliver.	Noted. Welcome the support
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG116	M26	There is concern for the list of proposed species and whether or not they are indeed appropriate for street tree planting. With regards to Ash (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>), there remains significant concern for the planting of new ash trees that are subject to strict biosecurity regulations to combat the spread of 'Ash Dieback,' a disease which has led to a serious decline of Ash trees in the UK since around 2006.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG117	M26	It is advised that the approach should reflect the recommendations of industry recognised guidance 'Trees in Hard Landscape A Guide for Delivery, Trees and Design Action Group' (TDAG) which states that " <i>The temptation is strong to call for simple lists of "suitable trees" for urban settings. This is less useful than it might seem: "safe" lists can result in overly limited choices that produce the disease-prone monoculture biases that most towns and cities face today.</i> "	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG118	M26	The guide goes on to say that it is essential to choose the right tree for the right place. It states that the possible combinations of the variables that influence tree choices are so numerous and recommends conducting a site-specific robust assessment with support from a knowledgeable tree expert as the best approach.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG119	Nature	This section is titled 'Nature,' the introductory sentence refers to 'Public open spaces, and the first section talks about 'green open spaces and green corridors.' The following section is then title 'Public spaces.'	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG120	Nature	Overall, there is concern for the lack of clarity between the different roles and functions of each open space typology – for example it should be clear that not all open spaces may be suitable for both people and wildlife, indeed there may be areas where it is important to restrict public access to protect sensitive habitats.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG121	Nature	It is surprising that green infrastructure (GI) is only mentioned twice within the SPD document. Multifunctionality (ecosystem services/soil/water/air regulation) and connectivity (people and/or wildlife) are at the heart of the GI approach and represent the framework of green/blue spaces that public open spaces and movement routes sit within. It is suggested that this section would benefit from being renamed as 'Green Infrastructure' and reframed to promote a GI approach and its numerous benefits.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG122	Landscaping	The statement that " <i>proposals should not result in the loss of attractive trees or hedgerows...</i> " is not supported. Unattractive trees/hedgerows can still have historic, or biodiversity, or other importance values.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG123	Landscaping	The term "attractive" is subjective and with regards to trees, could be more strongly worded to reflect the intent of the local plan policy (NH5) for trees which states that " <i>Existing trees must be protected and retained where possible, and sensitively incorporated into developments.</i> "	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG124	Landscaping	With regard to hedgerows, the local plan under various policies refers to the importance of existing historic hedgerows that should be protected.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire County Council Growth and Infrastructure Team	DG125	Landscaping	It is suggested that the terms 'important' and 'valued' would be more appropriate here and reflect national/local policy.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Historic England	DG126	General Comments	We support the preparation of this Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), and consider that the guidance contained within this document establishes a clear and consistent approach which will ensure that development comes forward in a manner that contributes to the creation of successful and sustainable places. We're particularly pleased to see the numerous references to the historic environment within the SPD, including acknowledgement of the important role that the historic environment plays in place-making. In particular the SPD makes numerous references to the special qualities of the New Town of Stevenage - the first British new town designated following the New Towns Act of 1946. Like other new towns located in the South-East, it was built with the aim of providing overspill accommodation for Londoners. We particularly welcome the section on Stevenage Town Centre, especially paragraphs S.1 to S.7 which highlight and discuss Stevenage's unique post-war designated heritage assets - the Conservation Area and the two listed structures of The Clock Tower (Grade II Listed) and the Joyride Statue (also Grade II Listed).	Noted. Welcome the support
Historic England	DG127	General Comments	The importance of distinctive place making is emphasised in both Government and Historic England guidance. We reiterate our advice that development should draw on local vernacular/building materials and village forms, allowing development to have a clear and distinctive character. To this end we support the analysis set out in paragraphs S.19 - S.20 (window types), and S.21 - S.31 (elevation proportions and uses) which will assist in ensuring that development proposals respond to and reflect the uniqueness of the Town Centre - 'drawing inspiration from the urban form' (paragraph S.9).	Noted. Welcome the support
Historic England	DG128	General Comments	The SPD would be improved if it included a list of the technical evidence that developers may need when preparing their plans for new development (depending on the location and local context), for example archaeological assessments, heritage impacts assessments etc. Of particular relevance is the Historic England research report on Stevenage town centre, authored by Emily Cole with Elain Harwood. This has been written to inform planning discussions and to record buildings due to be demolished. It is available online at: https://historicengland.org.uk/research/results/reports/8209/TheNewTownCentreStevenageHertfordshire_ArchitectureandSignificance	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Historic England	DG129	General Comments	The Council could also make reference to Historic England's 'Streets for All' publications. These documents provide updated practical advice for anyone involved in planning and implementing highways and other public realm works in sensitive historic locations. It sets out means to improve public spaces without harming their valued character, including specific recommendations for works to surfaces, street furniture, new equipment, traffic management infrastructure and environmental improvements. The advice draws on the experience of Historic England's planning teams in the development of highways and public realm schemes. Case studies show where highways works and other public realm schemes have successfully integrated with and enhanced areas of historic or architectural sensitivity. https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/streets-for-all/ .	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Historic England	DG130		Please also see our advice for highways engineers and designers: https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/caring-for-heritage/streets-for-all/highwayengineers-and-designers/ .	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire Constabulary	DG131	General Comments	You should be aware of some impending changes to part 'Q' Security of Building Regs. This will probably impact on Residential Extensions (Page 43). The revised Part Q is awaiting Ministerial sign off. Among the revises is that it will no longer just apply to new build residences but will also incorporate refurbishments and extensions. Having said that paragraph U.23 appears to have covered that. I note also some of the other standards and organisations have changed and I am inserting the revisions - which I will include in my comments	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire Constabulary	DG132	1.11	After 'windows' add 'this only applies to active rooms.' For Policing purposes active rooms do not include bedrooms, bathrooms, Toilets and hallways.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire Constabulary	DG133	1.17	In addition, there is the National Modal Design Code (NMDC) and the Police preferred minimum security that is 'Secured by Design' (SBD). The NMDC is the new design code issued by the Government. SBD is cited in part 2 'Open Public Space'	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire Constabulary	DG134	1.22	HCA outdated. Now replaced by Homes England & the Regulator for Social Housing	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire Constabulary	DG135	c.17	Sustainability notes that SBD can also assist in lowering the Carbon Footprint of dwellings. Ken Pease – 'The Carbon Cost of Crime and Its Implications' July 2009. A dwelling burglary can generate 2.5 tonnes of carbon & SBD gives >70% reduction in burglaries.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire Constabulary	DG136	l.12	'Radburn' Style estates suffer from over permeability & poor wayfinding. See layout of St. Nicholas & Martins Wood estates.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire Constabulary	DG137	B.4	Tall buildings can suffer with 'Micro climates'. Southgate House/ Vista Towers - wind shear. The Forum towards Tesco – cold & windy	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire Constabulary	DG138	M.17	Subway design – Surface crossings are more preferable. If subways are used then entrances/exit must be designed with curved entrance/exits and not ones that are at 90°. This helps to reduce fear of crime/	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire Constabulary	DG139	M.20	Cycle storage. Use fixtures that are third party certified to either SBD or Sold Secure silver/gold standard. Also consider CCTV coverage and changing rooms etc.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Hertfordshire Constabulary	DG140	M.28	Parking provisions. Where basement or undercroft provision is used ensure they are well lit and secure. Consider use of CCTV. In addition, seek advice from the Fire Service regarding issues with Electric Vehicle fire etc.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire Constabulary	DG141	M.32	EV Charging Points. Avoid having charging cables crossing over paths etc as this is an obstruction & illegal. See M.28 ref Fire issues.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire Constabulary	DG142	Public Spaces	Reference National Modal Design Code. Part 2 section 8 'Public Space'	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire Constabulary	DG143	P.6	Lighting. Uniformity must be >20% using light sources that have a Colour Rendition Index of >60 (i.e. 'white' light)	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire Constabulary	DG144	P.9	Lighting Standards. Note BS EN 13201-2:2015 is currently under review. BS 5489-1 is now 2020 not 2013 edition.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire Constabulary	DG145	P.12	SBD. Contact Hertfordshire Constabulary's Crime Prevention Design Service (CPDS) for further details (ideally at the pre-app stage)	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire Constabulary	DG146	P.16	Parking Provision. Avoid insecure rear parking courts and poor surveillance opportunities.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire Constabulary	DG147	P.21	Signage. Ideally ensure that signage is legible – especially for those who are partially sighted.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire Constabulary	DG148	U.19	Ensure developments are 'tenure blind' with the social element 'pepper potted' throughout the site. There should be no means of identifying the social element from the market housing.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire Constabulary	DG149	U.22	Fencing & alleyways. Consider different fencing materials such as weld mesh together with suitable planting. This increases surveillance and opens up alleyways whilst still maintaining the privacy of residents.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire Constabulary	DG150	U.28	Compartmentalisation. In large scale housing (20+) flat in one block then 'Compartmentalisation must be considered to prevent unauthorised access.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire Constabulary	DG151	H.5	Building for life. Also mention that SBD deals with addressing issues regarding crime etc. and can also help with the sustainability of a development by the reduction of the carbon footprint.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire Constabulary	DG152	H.13	Private space. These areas have to be made secure as >60% of burglaries occur at the rear or side of properties due to lack of surveillance.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation

Name/Organisation	Comment ID	Paragraph	Comments:	SBC Response
Hertfordshire Constabulary	DG153	Servicing and Utilities	Utility Meters. These should be fitted externally to reduce bogus callers etc. Also consider using 'Smart' meters.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire Constabulary	DG154		Pin Green. Add Radburn style	Noted
Hertfordshire Constabulary	DG155		St Nicholas. Add Radburn style	Noted
Hertfordshire Constabulary	DG156		Shutters. Avoid 'toughen' glass – this has no security value. Replace 'laminated' with glazing to BS 356:2000 P1a minimum.	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation
Hertfordshire Constabulary	DG157		Cash Machines. Security advice is available from Hertfordshire Constabulary's CPDS & the local Crime Prevention Design Advisor (CPDA).	Noted, section will be reviewed in line with recommendation

Appendix 1 - Consultees

Specific Consultee Bodies and Duty to Cooperate Bodies consulted

- *The Coal Authority,*
- *The Environment Agency,*
- *Historic England,*
- *The Marine Management Organisation,*
- *Natural England,*
- *Network Rail,*
- *Highways England,*
- *East And North Herts NHS Trust*
- *East and North Herts Clinical Commissioning Group*
- *Communications operators/organisations (including; Mobile Operators Association, BT Cellnet Limited, Telefónica, O2 UK Limited, Telereal Trillium, T-Mobile, Virgin Media, Virgin Mobile, Vodafone Ltd.,)*
- *The Homes and Communities Agency*
- *North Hertfordshire District Council*
- *East Hertfordshire District Council*
- *Other Hertfordshire authorities (including; Borough of Broxbourne, Dacorum Borough Council, Hertsmere Borough Council, St Albans City And District Council, Three Rivers District Council, Watford Borough Council, Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council)*
- *Hertfordshire County Council (including Growth & Infrastructure Unit, Public Health, Passenger Transport)*
- *Hertfordshire Highways*
- *Hertfordshire LEP*
- *Parish councils (including; Aston Parish Council, Codicote Parish Council, Datchworth Parish Council, Graveley Parish Council, Knebworth Parish Council, St Ippolyts Parish Council, Walkern Parish Council, Weston Parish Council, Woolmer Green Parish Council, Wymondley Parish Council)*
- *Hertfordshire Constabulary*
- *Anglian Water*
- *Thames Water*
- *Veolia Water Central (VWC)*
- *National Grid*

General consultation bodies/organisations

<i>5th Stevenage Air Scout Group</i>	<i>Broadwater Community Association</i>
<i>Aberdeen Asset Management</i>	<i>Broom Barns JMI</i>
<i>Active4Less</i>	<i>Brown And Lee</i>
<i>Adlington Planning Team</i>	<i>Brown And Lee Chartered Surveyors</i>
<i>Age Concern Stevenage</i>	<i>Buddhist Centre</i>
<i>Ahmadiyya Muslim Association</i>	<i>Building Research Establishment</i>
<i>Aldi Stores</i>	<i>Bus Users Group Stevenage</i>
<i>Aldwyck Housing Association</i>	<i>C.D.Bayles</i>
<i>Almond Hill Junior Mixed School</i>	<i>Campaign for Real Ale</i>
<i>Alzheimer's Society</i>	<i>Campaign For Real Ale Ltd</i>
<i>Anglian Water</i>	<i>Camps Hill Community Primary School</i>
<i>Aragon Land And Planning</i>	<i>Canyon Play Association</i>
<i>Archangel Michael And St Anthony Coptic Orthodox Church</i>	<i>Carers in Hertfordshire</i>
<i>Arriva</i>	<i>Catesby Property Group</i>
<i>Arriva The Shires And Essex Buses</i>	<i>CBRE Ltd.</i>
<i>Ashtree Primary School</i>	<i>Central Bedfordshire UA</i>
<i>Asian Women Group</i>	<i>Centrebus</i>
<i>Association of North Thames Amenity Societies</i>	<i>Chair North Herts Ramblers Group</i>
<i>Aston Parish Council</i>	<i>Chambers Coaches Stevenage Ltd</i>
<i>Aston Village Society</i>	<i>Chells Community Association</i>
<i>Aviva Investors</i>	<i>Chells Manor Community Association</i>
<i>BAA Safeguarding Team</i>	<i>Chells Scout Group</i>
<i>Barclay School</i>	<i>Chelton Radomes</i>
<i>Barker Parry Town Planning</i>	<i>Christadelphian Community</i>
<i>Barnwell School</i>	<i>Churches Together</i>
<i>BEAMS Ltd</i>	<i>Churches Together in Stevenage</i>
<i>Bedwell Community Association</i>	<i>Circle Anglia</i>
<i>Bedwell Primary And Nursery School</i>	<i>Citizens Advice Bureau</i>
<i>Bell Cornwell LLP</i>	<i>Clague Ashford</i>
<i>Bellway (Northern Home Counties)</i>	<i>Codicote Parish Council</i>
<i>Bellway Homes</i>	<i>Colinade Associates Ltd</i>
<i>Bellway Homes Miller Homes</i>	<i>Colliers International</i>
<i>Bellway Homes, Miller Homes & Wheatley Plc</i>	<i>Commercial Estates Group</i>
<i>Bidwells</i>	<i>Connexions Stevenage</i>
<i>Bloor Homes</i>	<i>Cortex</i>
<i>Bloor Homes South Midlands</i>	<i>Costco Wholesale UK Ltd</i>
<i>Borough of Broxbourne</i>	<i>Countryside Management Service</i>
<i>Bragbury End Residents Group</i>	<i>Countryside Properties plc, Stevenage Rugby Club and the Homes and Communities Agency (Cambridge)</i>
<i>Bridge Builders Christian Trust</i>	<i>CPRE Hertfordshire</i>
<i>British Horse Society</i>	<i>Crossroads Care (Hertfordshire North)</i>

<i>Croudace Strategic Ltd</i>	<i>Finishing Publications Ltd</i>
<i>CTC The National Cycling Charity</i>	<i>First Plan</i>
<i>Cycling UK Stevenage</i>	<i>Fitness First Plc</i>
<i>Dacorum Borough Council</i>	<i>Friends of Forster Country</i>
<i>Datchworth Parish Council</i>	<i>Friends of the Earth (Luton)</i>
<i>Davies And Co</i>	<i>Friends Religious Society</i>
<i>Defence Infrastructure Organisation</i>	<i>Friends, Families and Travellers and Traveller Law Reform Project Community Base</i>
<i>Deloitte</i>	<i>Fusion</i>
<i>Department For Business, Innovation and Skills</i>	<i>Gabriel Securities Ltd</i>
<i>Department For Culture Media And Sport</i>	<i>Genesis Housing Group</i>
<i>Department For Environment Food And Rural Affairs</i>	<i>GHM Consultancy Group Ltd (Logic Homes)</i>
<i>Department For Transport Rail Group</i>	<i>Giles Junior School</i>
<i>Design Council</i>	<i>Giles School</i>
<i>Dixons Dispatch Ltd</i>	<i>Glanville</i>
<i>Douglas Drive Senior Citizens Association</i>	<i>Glasgow City Council</i>
<i>DPDS Consulting Group</i>	<i>GlaxoSmithKline</i>
<i>EADS Astrium</i>	<i>Government Equalities Office</i>
<i>East and North Herts Clinical Commissioning Group</i>	<i>Graveley Against SNAP Proposals (GASP)</i>
<i>East and North Herts NHS Trust</i>	<i>Graveley Parish Council</i>
<i>East Coast</i>	<i>Graveley School</i>
<i>East Hertfordshire District Council</i>	<i>Great Ashby Community Council</i>
<i>East Herts District Council</i>	<i>Great Ashby Community Group</i>
<i>East Herts Footpath Society</i>	<i>Great Ashby Community Resource Centre</i>
<i>East of England Ambulance Service</i>	<i>Greene King Plc</i>
<i>East Of England Local Government Association (formerly EERA)</i>	<i>Greenside School</i>
<i>Eastlake Stevenage Limited</i>	<i>Gregory Gray Associates</i>
<i>Ecovril Ltd</i>	<i>Gujarati Hindu Association</i>
<i>Endurance estates</i>	<i>Hanover Housing Association</i>
<i>Environment Agency</i>	<i>HAPAS</i>
<i>Epping Forest District Council</i>	<i>Heaton Planning Ltd</i>
<i>Essex County Council</i>	<i>Hermes Real Estate Investment Ltd</i>
<i>Executive</i>	<i>Hertford Road Community Association</i>
<i>F&C REIT Asset Management</i>	<i>Hertfordshire Action on Disability</i>
<i>Fairlands Primary School And Nursery</i>	<i>Hertfordshire Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders</i>
<i>Fairlands Valley Sailing Centre</i>	<i>Hertfordshire Association Of Parish And Town Councils</i>
<i>Fairview Road Residents Association</i>	<i>Hertfordshire Association of Parish and Town Councils / Welwyn Hatfield Association of Local Councils</i>
<i>Featherstone Wood Primary School</i>	<i>Hertfordshire Association Of Young People</i>
<i>Fields in Trust</i>	<i>Hertfordshire Biological Records Centre</i>

<i>Hertfordshire Care Trust</i>	<i>Iceni Projects Ltd</i>
<i>Hertfordshire Chamber Of Commerce And Industry</i>	<i>Independent Custody Visitors Scheme</i>
<i>Hertfordshire Constabulary</i>	<i>Intercounty Properties</i>
<i>Hertfordshire County Council</i>	<i>J Young Investments Ltd.</i>
<i>Hertfordshire County Council (Archaeology)</i>	<i>JB Planning Associates</i>
<i>Hertfordshire County Council (Estates)</i>	<i>Jehovah's Witnesses</i>
<i>Hertfordshire County Council (Highways)</i>	<i>John Henry Newman RC School</i>
<i>Hertfordshire County Council Public Health</i>	<i>Jones Day</i>
<i>Hertfordshire Fire And Rescue Service</i>	<i>Jones Lang LaSalle</i>
<i>Hertfordshire Gardens Trust</i>	<i>Kirkwells</i>
<i>Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service</i>	<i>Knebworth Estates</i>
<i>Hertfordshire Highways</i>	<i>Knebworth House Education and Preservation Trust</i>
<i>Hertfordshire LEP</i>	<i>Knebworth Parish Council</i>
<i>Hertfordshire Police</i>	<i>Lambert Smith Hampton</i>
<i>Hertfordshire Police Authority</i>	<i>Land Registry Head Office</i>
<i>Hertfordshire Police Eastern Area</i>	<i>Lanes New Homes</i>
<i>Hertfordshire Property (HCC)</i>	<i>Langley Parish Meeting</i>
<i>Hertfordshire Society for the Blind</i>	<i>Larwood School</i>
<i>Hertfordshire Stop Smoking Service</i>	<i>Lepus Consulting</i>
<i>Hertfordshire University</i>	<i>Letchmore Infants And Nursery School</i>
<i>Hertfordshire Visual Arts Forum</i>	<i>Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation</i>
<i>Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust</i>	<i>Leys Primary And Nursery School</i>
<i>Herts Against the Badger Cull</i>	<i>Lincolns Tyre Service Ltd.</i>
<i>Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust</i>	<i>Living Streets</i>
<i>Herts Gay Community</i>	<i>Lodge Farm Primary School</i>
<i>Hertsmere Borough Council</i>	<i>London and Cambridge Properties Ltd</i>
<i>Hightown Praetorian Churches Housing Association</i>	<i>London Borough of Barnet</i>
<i>Highways England</i>	<i>London Borough of Enfield</i>
<i>Hill Residential Limited</i>	<i>London Borough of Harrow</i>
<i>HilliersHRW Solicitors LLP</i>	<i>London Gypsies and Travellers Unit</i>
<i>Historic England</i>	<i>Longmeadow Primary School</i>
<i>Hitchin Town Action Group</i>	<i>Lonsdale School</i>
<i>Holiday Inn Express</i>	<i>Luton Borough Council</i>
<i>Holy Trinity Church</i>	<i>Mantle</i>
<i>Home Builders Federation</i>	<i>Marine Management Organisation</i>
<i>Home Group</i>	<i>Marriotts Gymnastics Club</i>
<i>Homes And Communities Agency</i>	<i>Marriotts School</i>
<i>Howard Cottage Housing Association</i>	<i>Martin Ingram Opticians</i>
<i>Howard Property Group</i>	<i>Martins Wood Primary School</i>
<i>HSBC Trust Company (UK) Limited</i>	<i>Mayor of London</i>
<i>Hubert C Leach Ltd</i>	<i>MBDA UK Ltd</i>
<i>Hythe Ltd</i>	<i>Miller Strategic Land</i>
<i>Mind in Herts</i>	<i>Pin Green Community Centre</i>

<i>MKG Motor Group</i>	<i>Pin Green Residents Association</i>
<i>Moss Bury Primary School</i>	<i>Pin Green Residents Group</i>
<i>Moult Walker Chartered Surveyors</i>	<i>Planning Issues Ltd</i>
<i>MS Society Mid Hertfordshire</i>	<i>Planning Potential Ltd</i>
<i>NaCSBA</i>	<i>Planware Ltd</i>
<i>National Express</i>	<i>Planware Ltd.</i>
<i>National Housing Federation</i>	<i>POhWER</i>
<i>Natural England</i>	<i>Princes Trust</i>
<i>Network Rail</i>	<i>Putterills Of Hertfordshire</i>
<i>NFGLG</i>	<i>Rapleys LLP</i>
<i>NHS East and North Hertfordshire CCG</i>	<i>REACT</i>
<i>North Hertfordshire and Stevenage Green Party</i>	<i>Redrow Homes (Eastern) Ltd</i>
<i>North Hertfordshire College</i>	<i>Redrow Homes Eastern Division</i>
<i>North Hertfordshire District Council</i>	<i>Regional Land Holdings Ltd.</i>
<i>North Hertfordshire Friends Of The Earth</i>	<i>Relate North Hertfordshire And Stevenage</i>
<i>North Hertfordshire People First</i>	<i>Renshaw UK Limited</i>
<i>North Herts & Stevenage Green Party</i>	<i>rg+p Ltd</i>
<i>North Herts and Stevenage Community Learning Disability Team</i>	<i>Richborough Estates</i>
<i>North Herts Homes</i>	<i>Ridgmond Park Training Centre</i>
<i>North Herts People First</i>	<i>River Beane Restoration Association</i>
<i>North Stevenage Consortium</i>	<i>Road Haulage Association</i>
<i>Odyssey Group Holdings</i>	<i>Roebuck and Marymead Residents Association</i>
<i>Office for Rail Regulation</i>	<i>Roebuck Nursery And Primary School</i>
<i>Old Stevenage Community Association</i>	<i>Round Diamond Primary School</i>
<i>On Behalf Of St. Peter's Church</i>	<i>RPF Developments</i>
<i>Origin Housing Group</i>	<i>RPS Planning and Development Ltd</i>
<i>Oval Community Centre</i>	<i>RSPB</i>
<i>PACE</i>	<i>Sainsbury's Supermarkets Ltd</i>
<i>Paradigm Housing Group</i>	<i>Savils</i>
<i>Passenger Transport Unit, Hertfordshire County Council</i>	<i>Saving North Herts Green Belt</i>
<i>Patient Liaison Group</i>	<i>Secretary of State for Communities</i>
<i>Peacock And Smith</i>	<i>Seebohm Executors</i>
<i>Peartree Spring Junior School</i>	<i>Shephalbury Sports Academy</i>
<i>Pennyroyal Ltd.</i>	<i>Shephall Community Association</i>
<i>Pentangle Design</i>	<i>Shephall Residents Association</i>
<i>Persimmon Homes</i>	<i>Showmen's Guild Of Great Britain</i>
<i>PHD Associates</i>	<i>Simmons And Sons</i>
<i>Physically Hanidcapped And Able Bodied Club</i>	<i>South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership</i>
<i>Picture Ltd</i>	<i>Sport England</i>
<i>Pigeon Investment Management Ltd</i>	<i>Sport Stevenage</i>
<i>Pigeon Land Ltd</i>	<i>Springfield House Community Association</i>
<i>St Albans City And District Council</i>	<i>Thames Water Property</i>

<i>St Ippolyts Parish Council</i>	<i>The Baha'I Community of Stevenage</i>
<i>St Margaret Clitherow RC Primary School</i>	<i>The Campaign for Real Ale</i>
<i>St Nicholas Community Centre</i>	<i>The Coal Authority</i>
<i>St Nicholas School</i>	<i>The Greens & Great Wymondley Residents Association</i>
<i>St Vincent De Paul RC Primary School</i>	<i>The Guinness Trust</i>
<i>St. Nicholas and Martins Wood Residents Association</i>	<i>The Guinness Partnership</i>
<i>Stanhope Plc</i>	<i>The Gypsy Council</i>
<i>STARCOURT CONSTRUCTION LTD</i>	<i>The Hitchin Forum</i>
<i>Stevenage And North Hertfordshire Indian Cultural Society</i>	<i>The Living Room</i>
<i>Stevenage and North Herts Women's Resource Centre</i>	<i>The National Trust</i>
<i>Stevenage Borough Council</i>	<i>The Nobel School</i>
<i>Stevenage Borough Council Transportation Development</i>	<i>The Salvation Army</i>
<i>Stevenage Business Initiative</i>	<i>The Theatres Trust</i>
<i>Stevenage Caribbean and African Association</i>	<i>The Woodland Trust</i>
<i>Stevenage Caribbean And African Association (SCARAFa)</i>	<i>Theatres Trust</i>
<i>Stevenage Cricket Club</i>	<i>Thomas Alleyne School</i>
<i>Stevenage CVS</i>	<i>T-Mobile</i>
<i>Stevenage Depression Alliance</i>	<i>TRACKS (Autism)</i>
<i>Stevenage Haven</i>	<i>Transport for London</i>
<i>Stevenage Irish Network</i>	<i>Trotts Hill Primary And Nursery School</i>
<i>Stevenage League Of Hospital Friends</i>	<i>Troy Planning</i>
<i>Stevenage Mosque</i>	<i>Turley</i>
<i>Stevenage Polish Association</i>	<i>Universities Superannuation Scheme Ltd</i>
<i>Stevenage Quakers</i>	<i>USF Nominees Ltd.</i>
<i>Stevenage Regeneration Ltd.</i>	<i>Veale Associates</i>
<i>Stevenage Sikh Cultural Association</i>	<i>Veolia Water Central (VWC)</i>
<i>Stevenage Town Rugby Club</i>	<i>VEOLIA WATER CENTRAL LIMITED</i>
<i>Stevenage Women's Refuge</i>	<i>Vincent And Gorbing Planning Associates</i>
<i>Stevenage World Forum For Ethnic Minorities</i>	<i>Virgin Media</i>
<i>Stevenage Youth Council</i>	<i>Visit East Anglia</i>
<i>Stewart Ross Associates</i>	<i>Vodafone Ltd</i>
<i>Strutt and Parker LLP</i>	<i>Waitrose Ltd</i>
<i>Symonds Green Community Association</i>	<i>Walkern Parish Council</i>
<i>Taylor Wimpey</i>	<i>Watford Borough Council</i>
<i>Taylor Wimpey / Persimmon</i>	<i>Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council</i>
<i>Telefónica O2 UK Limited</i>	<i>Welwyn Hatfield Council</i>
<i>Telereal Trillium</i>	<i>West Stevenage Consortium</i>
<i>Terence O'Rourke Ltd</i>	<i>Weston Parish Council</i>
<i>Thames Water</i>	<i>Wheatley Homes</i>
<i>Wheatley Homes Ltd</i>	<i>Woolmer Green Parish Council</i>

<i>Willmott Dixon Housing</i>	<i>WPNPF</i>
<i>Wm Morrisons Supermarket Plc</i>	<i>Wymondley Parish Council</i>
<i>Women's Link</i>	<i>Wyvale Garden Centres Ltd</i>
<i>Woodland Trust</i>	<i>Young Pride in Herts</i>
<i>Woolenwich Infant And Nursery School</i>	<i>Youth Council</i>

Approximately 950 individuals on the Council consultation register were also consulted.

Meeting EXECUTIVE

Portfolio Area Resources and Children, Young People, Leisure and Culture

Date 9TH February 2021



FILMING OPPORTUNITIES IN STEVENAGE

KEY DECISION

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The report details the development of a formalised filming offer for Stevenage, designed to attract film, television and documentary makers into the Borough and to create an additional sustainable revenue stream for the Council and to support the local economy.
- 1.2 The report outlines the aspiration to increase the awareness of Stevenage as Britain's first post-World War Two New Town and promote its cultural ambitions.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive:

- 2.1 Note the need to formalise the arrangements for filming within the Borough in order that the Council will be in a better position to generate interest as a destination creative town and ensure that income is appropriately generated from the use of Council assets.
- 2.2 Approve the plan as outlined section 4 below as the Council's "filming offer".
- 2.3 Approve the implementation of the Council's scale of charges for filming, as set out in Appendix B below.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council's Cultural Strategy is a 10 Year Strategy for Arts and Heritage. It focuses on a number of key themes in order to build the profile of Stevenage as a destination creative town. These include widening the cultural offer, increasing cultural engagement, connecting and advocating cultural opportunities and celebrating the heritage of Stevenage.
- 3.2 Running parallel to the Cultural Strategy is the Council's Co-operative Commercial and Insourcing Strategy. This sets out a bold approach to commercial activity, and it acknowledges that in order to create new sustainable revenue streams, to help protect Council services, the Council may have to do things differently, have a more pro-active approach to income generation and accept more risk than previously.
- 3.3 Councils generally own a large number of assets which can present attractive opportunities to film-makers for location shoots. These include parks, town centre locations, woods, tower blocks and civic buildings. Often when filming, larger productions will require space nearby for their base, which can comprise of cars, lorries, mobile toilets, dressing rooms, and will be ideally situated in a car park near to a main filming location.
- 3.4 Many councils charge for filming on their land and the levels of income from filming depend on how much and what types of filming take place. Research indicates that for borough councils, the income brought in from filming can typically range from £5k - £60k per annum.
- 3.5 Although television production companies expect to pay to film on Council land, the Council does not currently charge for filming in the Borough and locations are offered free of charge. The Council received an average of 25 requests a year for films and documentary shoots between 2017- 2019, for varying time periods.
- 3.6 Currently, the main areas of interest for film production companies are Fairlands Valley Park, tower blocks, street scenes and the multi-storey car park. On two occasions requests were declined due to reputational concerns as they included scenes that involved drugs/illegal and violent behaviour. This sort of issue is addressed in the filming terms and conditions (Appendix A). The interest generated so far has been achieved without promotion, however with an enhanced profile there is the potential to grow this demand.
- 3.7 Working on the historic guideline of 25 production requests per year, it is estimated that in the region of £25,000 per annum could have been generated in additional gross income. This is based the assumption that the 25

productions would have been split between 15 small productions, 8 medium productions and 2 large scale productions. However, larger productions filmed over several days provide an opportunity to generate far higher levels of additional income.

- 3.8 Locally in Hertfordshire, there is huge investment in film production, equating to £1.5Billion over the next three years. Plans for a £700million "world-class" film and TV studios facility in Broxbourne have been announced by a Hollywood studio, with the companies anticipating that it will "contribute £300million annually to the local economy" and could create up to 4,500 jobs.
- 3.9 It would therefore be timely for the Council to position itself to provide a clear offer for filming opportunities, to showcase and raise the profile of the Borough and realise the ambitions outlined in the Cultural Strategy whilst generating much needed revenue.
- 3.10 Research shows that many other local authorities have successfully developed sustainable income streams through their approach to filming opportunities and other local authorities in Hertfordshire have established pricing structures for filming charges.

4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION AND OTHER OPTIONS

- 4.1 The formalisation of the filming offer is recommended as it supports the overarching ambition outlined in the Cultural Strategy, to make Stevenage a creative destination town.

"The Filming Offer"

- 4.2 It is understood that film makers require warehouses, offices, high streets and tower blocks as well as parks and open spaces. It is anticipated that encouraging filming will raise the town's profile, boost engagement and public interest in the local area and attract more screen tourism. Within the industry there is a tendency for producers to return to successful locations.
- 4.3 Increased filming in the town would widen cultural opportunities for local residents, practitioners, and organisations through involvement opportunities in the productions.
- 4.4 Identifying and promoting filming opportunities aligns with the aspirations detailed in the Cultural Strategy around drawing in artists and creatives (in a range of disciplines) from London and providing opportunities that support developing local talent.

- 4.5 It is anticipated that through positive representations of the town's heritage and communities, Stevenage's public reputation / profile will be enhanced. There may also be better recognition of Stevenage as the first new town, which has built a legacy of social progress and pioneering design, art, planning, and engineering. This in turn would improve interest in Stevenage as a cultural destination for visitors and other cultural entities and in turn boost the local cultural economy and knowledge / skills.
- 4.6 Stevenage has a uniqueness in its architecture and landscapes which is appealing to film production companies. The core offer will centre on:
- Pedestrianised New Town - Open town square, Indoor Market with adjacent 1000+ capacity multi-storey car park, train & bus stations, flats & retail areas, Stevenage Museum, Co-Space.



New Town Clocktower and Statue



Indoor Market and Multi-Storey Car Park

- Old Town – Quiet streets, green spaces and a row of independent shops and restaurants on a quaint high street
- Many green spaces & parks including Fairlands Valley Park, Hampson Park, Town Centre Gardens, King George V Playing Fields and St Nicholas Park



Large Swim Fairlands Valley Park
Club grounds

- Urban settings - Residential areas, high rise towers, estates, garage units and alleyways.
 - Roads and pavements - Wide, open roads, with many roundabouts. A unique 46 kilometre cycle network running throughout the town with its own roundabout system.
 - The Bus Interchange (when complete)
- 4.7 The Council could also encourage other types of film and photography in the town, from students creating pieces for their degrees to local businesses using locations as the backdrop for their next marketing campaign. Activities of this nature would be subject to the standard filming terms and conditions though the Council would consider waiving its charges in some circumstances.
- 4.8 It is proposed that the Council implement a charging regime for filming within the Borough in order to cover the costs of providing the service and to create an additional sustainable revenue stream.
- 4.9 Comprehensive filming terms and conditions (Appendix A) will be implemented and applied to all agreements moving forwards to support with filming requests; these conditions were approved by an officer delegated decision in November 2021.
- 4.10 The filming terms and conditions also help to protect the Council in terms of supporting appropriate filming opportunities that will have a positive impact and are in line with the Council's policies. The terms and conditions will be applicable to all filming agreements.
- 4.11 The marketing of Stevenage as a filming location will take place separately; and terms and conditions will be issued when a filming request is being negotiated.
- 4.12 It is proposed that an external communications plan is created to promote the Borough as a filming location that can be supported and promoted via formal channels plus officer and Member networks. It will apply to the Council's own assets only. Marketing materials will include photos, video clips and links to Google maps to promote the locations.
- 4.13 Filming requests are currently administered by the Marketing and Communications team, however to grow the opportunity within the current resource constraints, it is proposed to manage requests and the process through a managed services contract. This contract will be procured in accordance with the Council's contract regulations.

- 4.14 Through such a contract, the service provider will:
- Provide software in the form of a cloud-based application; simplifying the processes needed for film producers to complete the relevant permits they need to complete and lessening the administrative burden on the Marketing and Communications team.
 - Improve turnaround times for film production applications (many providers authorise within 24 hours).
 - Actively promote the Council's filming locations to thousands of filmmakers.
 - Support the Council in becoming 'film friendly' through a streamlined service.
- 4.15 The software will also enable officers to have a monitoring platform and removes the need for large administrative inputs. Alongside the system, officers will provide a catalogue of suitable locations, in order to control the opportunities and enquires, as a starting point.
- 4.16 Location managers and scouts actively contact filming agencies to ask them what locations they have, which could generate more filming for the Borough then if it were managed in-house.
- 4.17 The fee for this service is typically 20% of revenue return to the service provider. These types of contract, 'managed solutions', are attractive as there is no initial outlay, they require minimal staff input and there is an agreed share income split between the company and the Council. This 'risk & reward' model also provides an incentive to the company. This low-risk approach can be used to test the water and procurement of the managed solution is now underway. Once the contract term is nearing its end, options for re-letting the contract or insourcing the work will be considered.
- 4.18 The contract will be closely monitored. This will be done by the Service Manager, who will retain oversight of contract performance and how the Council is portrayed, with the support of the commercial team.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

- 5.1 Officers engaged with other Councils who have long established filming offers, and they reported an uplift in the secondary revenue achieved for the local economy. It is therefore reasonable to assume that filming will have a positive impact in Stevenage, supporting local businesses and community wealth building. This is likely to take the form of:
- Increased footfall in the Borough

- Increased usage of local catering facilities, hotels, office spaces and parking services
 - Increased employment opportunities
- 5.2 Having calculated the costs of servicing a filming request and benchmarked with other local authorities, a guideline pricing structure has been created (Appendix B). It is proposed that a differential pricing structure is implemented and it is understood that crew size (the number of people hired by the production company to produce the film) is the best proxy for budget. It is recommended that pricing, particularly for the larger projects, is based on guideline pricing (prices starting 'from') to allow sufficient flexibility to attract film makers and tailor quotations based on the size of the project (for example 'blockbuster' films being charged a higher rate than local amateur productions). This pricing structure therefore sets out principles of charging but retains flexibility in order to provide an attractive offer for film production companies and scale up or scale down accordingly.
- 5.3 It is recommended that the guideline pricing is reviewed annually as part of the fees and charges process and in light of demand moving forwards. The first review point would be scheduled for fees and charges setting for 2024/25.

Legal Implications

- 5.4 There are no immediate legal implications highlighted in the filming proposal. The filming terms and conditions set out the permissions that filmmakers need to obtain prior to commencing filming activity and the conditions within which they have to operate.

Risk Implications

The exploration of this opportunity is based upon the following assumptions:

- 5.5 That there is suitable opportunity to formalise the filming offer and in turn diversify the commercial opportunity by offering the Borough as a paid location.
- 5.6 That through the filming opportunities it will be possible to build on a positive reputation of the Town and request inclusion in the credits at the end of the production.
- 5.7 That the storylines for the filming proposals will be discussed prior to approval and if the Council believe that a filming opportunity will contribute to a negative reputation of the Town, the proposal can be rejected based on reputational risk.
- 5.8 That although guideline pricing will be set, some flexibility will be permitted around pricing in order to maximise opportunities.
- 5.9 That Officers will promote filming opportunities through an external communications plan (including websites, press and social media) and through their own networks.

Policy Implications

- 5.10 This approach links to ambitions outlined in the Cultural Strategy and the Co-operative Commercial and Insourcing Strategy.

5.11 **Equalities and Diversity Implications**

Equalities and Diversity implications will be taken in to consideration when filming requests are submitted.

Information Technology Implications

- 5.12 There are IT prerequisites in the procurement of the managed contract. The Council will receive a data backup (ideally quarterly but negotiable) as an insurance in case the company should suddenly stop trading and the company are required to pass the Council's GDPR checks.

APPENDICES

- A Filming Terms and Conditions
- B Guideline Filming Pricing

APPENDIX A: FILMING TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. The Company, its employees and persons authorised by it shall have non-assignable, non-exclusive permission to enter upon and use the Licence Area for the sole purpose of the Production.
2. No filming, telerecording, sound recording or photography shall take place outside the Licence Area or outside the date(s) and time(s) detailed overleaf without the prior written consent of the Council.
3. The Company shall not carry out any activity whether connected to the Production or not upon or around the License Area which is illegal or otherwise in breach of UK laws.
4. The Council, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to reject any filming requests that are harmful to the License Area's reputation.
5. In the event of the Company being unable for reasons beyond its control to complete the Production within the date(s) and time(s) agreed, it is agreed that this Agreement shall continue in full force and effect for such further period as the Council may permit in writing for completion of the Production.
6. For locations where parking is payable, the Council agrees to allow parking at the advertised rate or at a rate agreed between the parties for Production, technical and crew vehicles including location caterers vans and space for caravans, mess rooms, make-up, wardrobe and rest rooms used or engaged by the Company for the Production for the date(s) and time(s) agreed.
7. The Company shall either:
 - (a) make good forthwith to the satisfaction of the Council any loss or damage to the Licence Area or the contents or the facilities granted to the Company provided that the Company is notified of the loss or damage within 14 days of completion of the Production, or,
 - (b) at the Council's election pay compensation to the Council for such loss or damage within 14 days of service of written demand by the Council on the Company.
8. The Company shall indemnify and keep indemnified the Council against all actions, proceedings, costs, claims and demands which may be brought or made against the Council in respect of personal injury, death or damage to property arising directly or indirectly out of the Company's use of the Licence Area.
9. The Company shall ensure that the License Area is kept clear of litter and that arrangements are made for litter collection and disposal. In the event of breach of this clause the Company agrees to reimburse the Council for the reasonable costs of carrying out any necessary clearance works.
10. It is a condition precedent to entering into this agreement that the Company shall provide before the start of the Production, and to the satisfaction of the Council or its Insurance Company, evidence that the Company has, at its own expense, taken out sufficient insurance policies to cover all liabilities under this Agreement (which must include Public Liability Insurance to a minimum of £10 million).
11. It is a condition precedent to entering into this agreement that the Company shall ensure that its employees and contractors comply during the Production with current Health & Safety legislation. All locations and projects must be assessed for risk and hazard, with a full risk assessment report being provided before the start of the Production.
12. In recognition of the rights and facilities being granted to the Company under this Agreement, the Company agrees to pay to the Council the agreed fee before starting the Production. Any additional days filming, telerecordings, sound recording or photography as provided for in Clause 5 shall be paid for at the rates set out in the Council's Guidelines for Fees before the Production is completed.

13. The Company will inform the Council before the start of the Production of any aspects of the proposed Production which shall involve any particular risk of fire, floods or damage and the Company shall pay the Council's cost of taking any special precautions which are in the opinion of the Council necessary to counter the said risk before starting the Production.
14. The Council accepts that the Company's editorial decision shall be final and that nothing in this Agreement shall be taken to imply any obligation on the part of the Company to show or broadcast the Production either in whole or in part.
15. The Council accepts that all world television rights, titles, interests and rights for world showing to paying and non-paying audiences and/or for home entertainment whether by means of digital / physical media or otherwise in relation to the films, telerecordings, sound recordings or photographs taken or made by the Company shall vest in the Company.
16. The Company will permit the Council to photograph any part of the Film and to reserve the right to use such photographs for promotional use only. The Council undertakes not to use such photographs until after the Production release date, unless otherwise agreed.
17. The Company will supply the Council with 20-30 seconds of video clip for promotional use on the Council's web-site. This will not be downloadable and shall be for viewing purposes only.
18. The Council reserves the right to charge the Company an additional fee if it discovers that the Company has misrepresented the production, method or purpose of the Production in any way to the Council. The Council will charge a Fee or such part as is deemed reasonable. The Council will not be liable for any additional costs which the Company may incur.
19. The Company will not use drones, helicopters, firearms, fireworks or explosives, without obtaining the written consent of the Council and all other Necessary Consents relating to such use, prior to commencement of the Production.
20. The Company will not use or permit to be used any musical instrument, wireless receiving set, gramophone or any other music player or cause any nuisance whatsoever, unless specifically agreed in writing by the Council.
21. The Company will provide all electricity required externally by means of generators.
22. The Company will not carry out any activity which may, in the Council's opinion, cause prolonged nuisance or annoyance to persons using the License Area or members of the public passing by the Location.
23. The Company shall not hold itself out as part, agent or employee of the Council.
24. The rights granted under the Licence Agreement are not assignable to another party.
25. Either party may terminate this Agreement immediately if the Production cannot be made because of force majeure or any other cause beyond the reasonable control of the parties or if the other party is in breach of or has not observed any of the terms and conditions of this Agreement (without prejudice to any other remedies which may exist). Termination under this Clause is without prejudice to any outstanding or unresolved claims the Council may have against the Company under this Agreement at the date of termination for fees, expenses and/or compensation for loss or damage. In addition, the Council reserves the right to impose a £100 administration charge in the event of cancellation by the Company for any reason outside the provisions of this clause which shall be due and payable to the Council with immediate effect.
26. This Agreement shall be governed and construed in accordance with English law.

APPENDIX B: GUIDELINE FILMING PRICING

Type/ Duration of Filming	Prices Starting From
Small scale productions – up to 9 cast and crew members	
Up to one hour	£175
Half day rate (1-4 hours)	£350
Full day rate	£650
Medium scale productions – 10 -29 cast and crew members	
Half day rate (1-4 hours)	£800
Full day rate	£1,500
Large scale productions – 30+ cast and crew members	
	Prices starting from £2k – available on request
Special rates	
News coverage	£0 (charges apply if using a drone)
Student filming as part of academic course	£0
Charities	£0
Additional charges apply for:	
Exclusive use of parking spaces Suspension of parking bays Use of car park as a unit base for a fleet of vehicles Use of specialist support Extra licenses (for example drones or cherry pickers) Administration charge if request does not go ahead - £100	

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Meeting EXECUTIVE/COUNCIL
Portfolio Area Resources
Date 9 FEBRUARY/24 FEBRUARY 2022



DRAFT CAPITAL STRATEGY 2021/22-2025/26

KEY DECISION

Authors Belinda White x2515
Contributors Senior Leadership Team
Lead Officers Clare Fletcher
Contact Officer Clare Fletcher

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek revisions to the 2021/22 General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme and approve the final Capital Programme for 2022/23.
- 1.2 To provide Members with an update on the Council's Five Year Capital Strategy and the resources available to fund the Capital Strategy.
- 1.3 To provide Members with an update on the Council's investment strategy as required by the updated prudential code.
- 1.4 To set out the Council's approach to funding its key Future Town Future Council Cooperative Corporate Plan priorities.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the following proposals be recommended to Council on 24 February 2022:

- 2.1 Final General Fund Capital Growth Bids for 2022/23 as detailed in Appendix A (and incorporated into Appendix C) to the report be approved.
- 2.2 The revisions to the 2021/22 General Fund budget as incorporated into Appendix C to the report be approved.
- 2.3 The Final 2022/23 General Fund Capital Programme as detailed in Appendix C to this report be approved, together with the recommended resourcing.
- 2.4 That the CFO brings a report forward during the 2022/23 financial year setting out the Council's key capital regeneration and community asset ambitions and

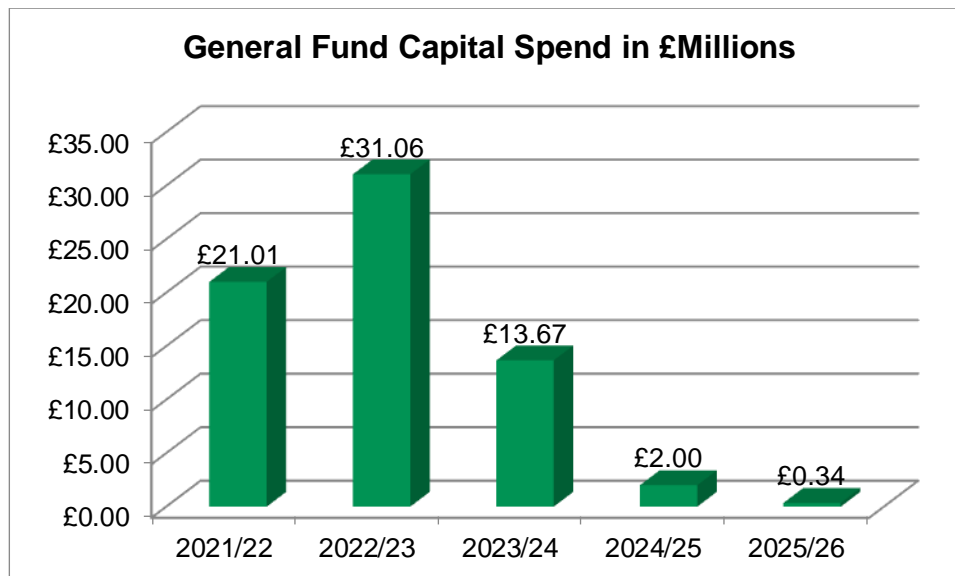
key land and asset disposals, not currently in the capital strategy to determine a funding strategy to meet these Corporate priorities.

- 2.5 That the Final HRA budget requests for 2022/23 as detailed in Appendix B (and incorporated into Appendix D) to the report as approved at the 26 January Council be noted.
- 2.6 That the Final 2022/23 HRA Capital Programme as detailed in Appendix D to the report be approved.
- 2.7 That the updated forecast of resources 2022/23 as detailed in Appendix C (General Fund) and Appendix D (HRA) to the report be approved.
- 2.8 That the Council's investment strategy for non-treasury assets as detailed in Appendix E be approved for consideration by the Executive.
- 2.9 That the funding increase requested for the Bus Interchange scheme as set out in paragraph 4.1.2 be approved.
- 2.10 That the Executive be given delegated authority to approve all of the On Hold schemes, so that they can go ahead depending on the outcome of the work identified as set out in paragraph 4.3.1.
- 2.11 That the 2022/23 de-minimis expenditure limit, as set out in section 4.11 of the report, be approved.
- 2.12 That the 2022/23 contingency allowances respectively in paragraphs 4.12.1 and 4.12.2 of the report be approved.
- 2.13 That the Executive delegation set out in paragraph 4.12.3 of the report, allowing Executive to approve increases to the capital programme for grant funded projects, be approved.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 This report is an update on the Council's Draft General Fund and HRA capital strategy 2021/22- 2025/26 presented to the January 2022 Executive meeting. This report updates Members on any changes to the capital programme previous presented for 2021/22- 2025/26 and the resourcing for both the General Fund and HRA programme.
- 3.1.2 The draft General Fund capital programme totalled £68.1Million and is summarised in the graph below.



- 3.1.3 The purpose of the Capital Strategy is to outline how the Council determines its priorities for capital investment and how much it can afford to borrow as well as setting out any associated risks. The Leaders Financial Security Group have reviewed the capital bids for 2022/23 contained within the draft Capital Strategy and the results of that review are included in this report.
- 3.1.4 The framework the government uses to control how much councils can afford to spend on capital investment is known as the Prudential Framework. The objectives of the Prudential Code, which sets out how this framework is to be applied, are to ensure that local authorities' capital investment plans are:
- affordable, prudent and sustainable and that:
 - treasury management decisions are taken in accordance with good professional practice;
 - local strategic planning, asset management planning and proper option appraisal are supported.
- 3.1.5 The Government issued guidance on the disclosures required in the Capital Strategy from 1 April 2018 onwards which includes:
- an Investment Strategy;
 - disclosure of other investments and their contribution to service delivery objectives and/or place making role;
 - indicators that allow Members and the public to assess a local authority's total risk exposure as a result of investment decisions, including how these investments have been funded, rate of return and additional debt servicing costs taken on;
 - the approach to assessing the risk of losses being made before entering and whilst holding an investment; and
 - the steps taken to ensure that elected Members and Statutory officers have the appropriate skills and governance.
- 3.1.6 Some of these disclosures may be outlined in the Treasury Management Strategy instead of the Capital Strategy.

3.2 General Fund Investment Strategy

- 3.2.1 For a number of years capital spend has been prioritised due to the limited availability of capital receipts and the Council's ability to afford the revenue impact of borrowing costs. Accordingly the council applied a 'fix on fail' approach to assets with no significant asset improvements being included in the capital programme, with the exception of a few schemes which have been funded through New Homes Bonus i.e. play ground improvements, or where there has been a need to protect revenue income streams such as the garage improvement programme funded from a combination of borrowing, disposals and available capital resources.
- 3.2.2 The Asset Management Strategy approved by the Executive on the 11 July 2018 included a key action for the Council to undertake locality reviews of its current land and buildings. The locality reviews would seek to generate new opportunities for better use of existing buildings, to identify potential sites to release for sale along with land options for the Council's own home building programme. To date a number of land sites have been identified for disposal and those receipts included in the capital programme and so reducing the use of revenue contributions to capital. The remaining review of the Councils community assets is on-going.
- 3.2.3 Condition Surveys of the Councils assets was completed in 2019 and they were used to inform growth bids approved in this and previous Capital Strategies. It should be noted though that the surveys were focused on keeping existing sites operational rather than making improvements or future proofing them.
- 3.2.4 The Council plans to utilise New Homes Bonus (NHB) to fund the playground improvement programme along with some, other capital projects and the Capital Reserve as follows:

Table 1: New Homes Bonus	2021/22	2022/23
Play & Bins (Capital) CNM	£342,000	£65,027
Electric Car Charging Points	£2,630	
Town Centre Ramps Improvements	£350	
Contribution to Capital Reserve	£250,000	£177,588
Total Expenditure	£594,980	£242,615
Balance in NHB reserve	£837,595	£242,615
In year Funding		
Expenditure in year	£ 594,980	£242,615
Balance remaining in NHB available	£242,615	£0

- 3.2.5 The Capital Strategy includes key priorities such as 'Transforming our Town' projects, Housing Development initiatives and IT investment (predominantly

related to schemes identified through the joint ICT Partnership Strategy between East Herts District Council and Stevenage Borough Council).

- 3.2.6 Prudential Borrowing remains an option to fund capital schemes, but due to the additional revenue cost this has to the General Fund, any such proposals would require a business case to be completed to determine the benefit to the Council. Generally this approach would be used to fund income generating schemes which support the Making Your Money Count (MYMC) ambitions. The issue of affordability has been exacerbated in recent times by the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the Council's finances and as set out in the General Fund report to this Executive.
- 3.2.7. The Council has previously approved land and asset disposals and an updated schedule of these (net of disposal fees) is set out in table two. In addition to these are a few key sites to be included in a report by the CFO, together with the Council's key regeneration ambitions during the 2022/23 financial year.

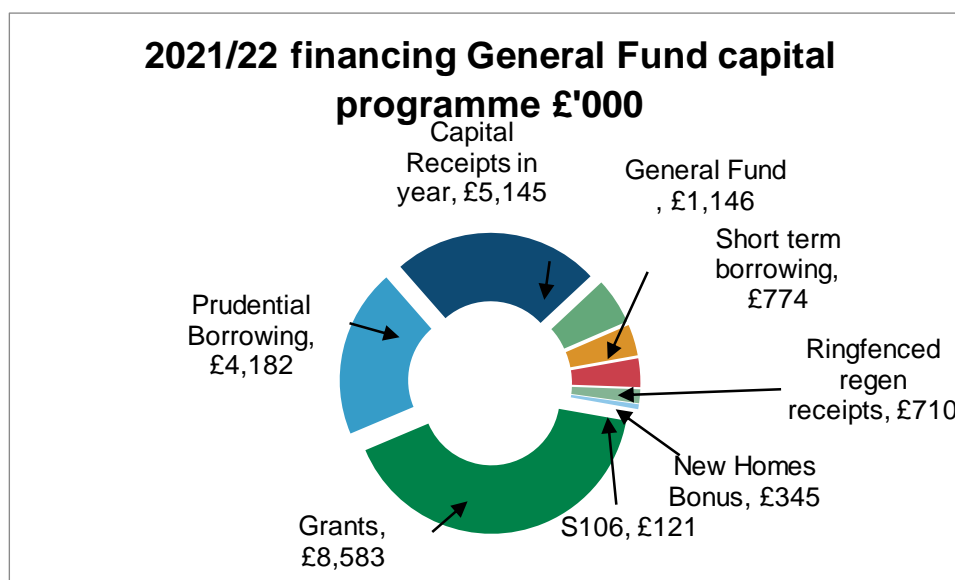
Table 2: 2020/21 Disposal Schedule (General Fund)			
Forecast receipts	January Draft	February Final revised	Variance
	£	£	£
Total 21/22 Capital Receipts Estimate	(5,183,715)	(5,523,676)	(339,961)
Total 22/23 Capital Receipts Estimate	(5,736,816)	(5,455,560)	281,256
Total 23/24 Capital Receipts Estimate	(10,172,500)	(10,172,500)	0
Total 24/25 Capital Receipts Estimate	0	0	0
Major Capital Receipts Programme	(21,093,031)	(21,151,736)	(58,705)

- 3.2.8 The receipts included in this report do not include SG1 receipts (other than receipts estimated to be due in 2022/23 which are ring fenced to fund the Public Sector Hub), other ring-fenced Regeneration receipts and Locality receipts.
- 3.2.9 The Capital Strategy includes the use of Section 106 (S106) monies that have been earmarked to support current and future capital schemes. The table below shows the current anticipated usage of these:

Table 3: S106 Update				
Available for financing		2021/22 Forecast use	Budgeted in Future Years	remaining
	£'s	£'s	£'s	£'s
Affordable Housing	302,825	302,825	0	0
Children's Play space	14,986	14,986	0	0
Outdoor Sports/Open Space Facilities	18,957	18,957	0	0
Community / Greenspace / Ecological Infrastructure	70,338	70,338	0	0
Parking / Transport	118,550	0	0	123,760
Gardening Club	4,576	0	0	4,576
Arboretum	25,420	0	0	25,420

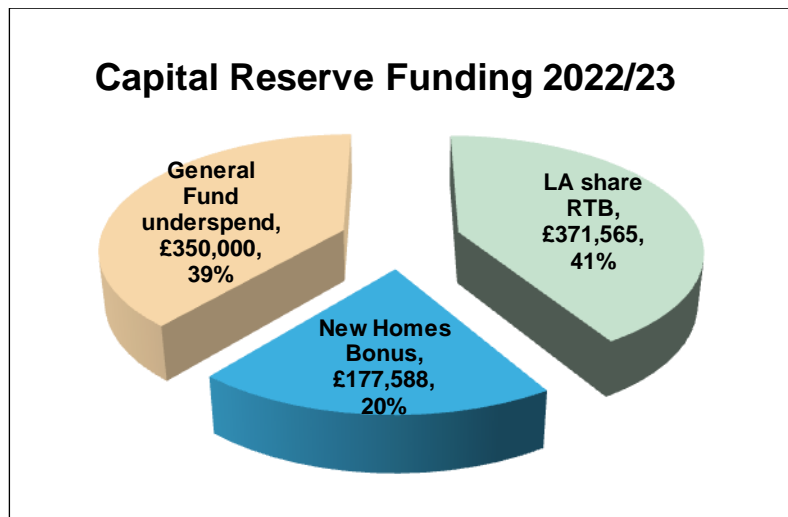
Table 3: S106 Update				
Available for financing		2021/22 Forecast use	Budgeted in Future Years	remaining
	£'s	£'s	£'s	£'s
Biodiversity Net Gain	45,867	0	0	45,867
Pedestrian Link	35,000	0	0	35,000
Household Surveys	15,990	0	0	15,990
Air Quality	5,335			5,335
Total	657,842	407,105	0	255,947

3.2.10 The current capital programme (approved February 2021 and as subsequently amended through the quarterly monitoring and supplementary reports), is fully funded and shown in the following chart which reflects the Quarter one and two monitoring report to the October 2021 Executive. The Grants figure includes £3.7Million of LEP funding.



3.2.11 The level of General Fund resources available at the end of 2021/22 in the Quarter one and two report was £1.5Million (all from Capital Receipts) which increased to £4.8Million in 2022/23. However this position has been updated and is now as set out in paragraph 4.1.3 table four and reflects some slippage in programmes identified during the budget setting process.

3.2.12 The Capital Reserve has been a significant source of the programme funding in prior years. It includes a NHB contribution of £178K in 2022/23 along with a forecasted £350K from General Fund revenue underspends and £372K from the Local Authority Share of Right to Buy receipts, as shown in the following chart.



3.3 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Investment Strategy

- 3.3.1 **Background:** The HRA capital programme was revised as part of the HRA Business Plan (BP) update to the December 2019 Executive. The 30 year HRA capital programme included £1.485Billion with additional borrowing.
- 3.3.2 The 2019/20 HRA BP included more borrowing than in the 2018 HRA BP, a more ambitious new build programme and an increase in capital works to existing homes. The new borrowing in the 2018 BP totalled £116.6Million, however the 2019 update included new borrowing of £322.2Million.
- 3.3.3 The additional capital expenditure that was approved as part of the HRA BP over the 30 years included £201Million of projected capital expenditure as well as revenue growth which funded planned maintenance, anticipated changes relating to the Hackett review and decent homes works.
- 3.3.4 The new build programme increased from £582Million to £645.6Million in the 2019 HRA BP, with 2,433 new build homes in total over the life of the Business Plan and an additional 175 units in the first 10 years of the programme.
- 3.3.5 Since then the programme has been increased including an increase of £11.3Million for the Kenilworth scheme procurement (reported to the Executive in January 2020), the updated figures for which were included in the Final Capital Strategy approved by the Executive and Council in February 2020. The net change to the approved budget for the period 2019/20 to 2024/25 was £10.2Million.
- 3.3.6 The 2022/23 growth for the HRA Capital Strategy was approved at the January 2022 Council as part of the 2022/23 Rent Setting and HRA budget report A refresh of the first 5 years of the HRA BP has recently been undertaken and a full review will take place in 2022.

3.4 Budget and Policy Framework

- 3.4.1 The process for approving capital budgets is set out in the Budget and Policy Framework in the Constitution. This includes a consultation period and the timescale required to implement this is outlined below:

Date	Meeting	Report
Jan-22	Executive	Draft 2021/22 General Fund and HRA Capital Strategy
	Overview and Scrutiny	Draft 2021/22 General Fund and HRA Capital Strategy
Feb-22	Executive	Final 2021/22 General Fund and HRA Capital Strategy
	Overview and Scrutiny	Final 2021/22 General Fund and HRA Capital Strategy
	Council	Final 2021/22 General Fund and HRA Capital Strategy

4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION AND OTHER OPTIONS

4.1 Capital Programme – 2021/22-2022/23 General Fund

4.1.1 Due to the ongoing financial pressures arising from the COVID pandemic and the need to focus on improving General Fund resilience, the CFO recommended adopting the following approach to officers with regards to submitting Capital Bids for 2022/23:

- Review existing budgets in the Capital Strategy for completeness and to advise if circumstances have changed, and
- Only submit bids that are urgent or support the delivery of a top priority as funding is limited

A full review of the Strategy is planned to be carried out for 2023/24 onwards.

4.1.2 For 2021/22 £300K additional funding has been requested for the Bus Interchange scheme. This funding is required to complete works by mid-March 2022 and it will be funded by underspends from another project, town centre reserves/general receipts, and ring-fenced Regeneration Assets Reserve monies. The additional funding is required due to an expansion of the scope of the original scheme to include additional elements such as enhancement of the public realm connection between the Town Square and the Bus Interchange. This funding will also allow for an element of contingency to be retained, as the existing contingency has been utilised due to the impacts of carrying out construction during the Covid-19 pandemic. Any unspent monies will be returned to the ring-fenced Regeneration Assets Reserve.

4.1.3 A summary of the 2022/23 growth bids presented in the Draft Capital Strategy to January Executive is summarised in table four below, and is set out in full in Appendix A (Growth bids) and Appendix C (General Fund Capital Strategy).

	2021/22 £	2022/23 £	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	Total £
SLIPPAGE	(2,107,310)	2,107,310	0	0	0	0
GROWTH BIDS		2,800,115	1,075,720	646,000	341,000	4,862,835
TOTAL	(2,107,310)	4,907,425	1,075,720	646,000	341,000	4,862,835

(reduction)/increase in forecast expenditure

4.2 Capital Bids Included in the Capital Programme

4.2.1 The capital growth bids received have been classified against a number of different categories. These bids totalled £4.863Million over the period 2022/23 - 2025/26, the profile of the expenditure is shown in the table below and detailed in Appendix A:

Table 5: Update following 2021/22 Capital Bids process						
		22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	Total
		£	£	£	£	£
Priority 3	Mandatory requirements (including Health & Safety)	810,000	415,500	170,000	65,000	1,460,500
Priority 4	Schemes to maintain operational efficiency	977,115	459,220	275,000	135,000	1,846,335
Priority 8	Schemes that further the Council's Corporate Plans	223,000	201,000	201,000	141,000	766,000
Priority 11	New Burdens	790,000	0	0	0	790,000
Total		2,800,115	1,075,720	646,000	341,000	4,862,835

4.2.2 In the draft Capital strategy it was recommended that all the bids be agreed in principle by the Executive, subject to a review by Leaders Financial Security Group. This has been completed and the scoring and prioritisation is detailed in Appendix A.

4.2.3 The result is that based on the majority scoring ,LSFG recommend the removal of the following items from the draft capital programme:

Table 6: Update to 2022/23 Bids following challenge process					
Scheme	Priority	2022/2023	Service	Average Score	Outcome
		Growth Bid			
		£			
Provision for maintenance works at closed cemeteries	3	50,000	SDS	0.2	Not Supported
Water Tank and system, Shephalbury Bowls	4	15,000	SDS	0.4	Not Supported
SBC grants to businesses to reduce their carbon emissions	8	8,000	P&R	0.4	Not Supported
TOTAL		73,000			

It should be noted that although these bids were not supported by LFSG, the service could bid from the Deferred Works Reserve if the works become required.

4.2.4 The following items were also not recommended for the reasons outlined below. The Deferred Works Reserve has been increased by the sum of £535K, so that the schemes could go ahead if a health and safety need arises or the bid is subsequently supported.

Table 7: Update to 2022/23 Bids following challenge process					
Scheme	Priority	2022/2023 Growth Bid	Service	Outcome	LFSG Reason
		£			
Daneshill fire doors	3	150,000	F&E	On Hold	Not all doors may need replacing, Officers to confirm if this requires stairwell doors or all doors. Decision deferred pending the outcome
Bedwell Community Centre roof fascia replacement	3	50,000	F&E	On Hold	Survey results needed first, hold £ in the reserve
St Nicholas Pavilion reroofing	4	150,000	F&E	On Hold	defer until Locality review results and potential use of the building
St Nicholas Pavilion replace windows	4	75,000	F&E	On Hold	defer until Locality review results and potential use of the building
Chells Manor - boiler replacement and hot water works	4	50,000	F&E	On Hold	defer until Locality review results and potential use of the building
St Nicholas play centre roof	4	30,000	F&E	On Hold	defer until Locality review results and potential use of the building. Roof works anticipated to last longer than the life of the building
The Oval reroofing ('youth wing')	4	30,000	F&E	On Hold	The Oval is a Housing Development regeneration site included in the HRA Business Plan
TOTAL		535,000			

4.2.5 The growth bids submitted for future years, totalling £2.823Million for the period 2023/24 - 2025/26, are included in Appendix A and C but are indicative only. These should form part of the full review of the Strategy planned as per paragraph 4.1.1, at which time the capital receipts position will be reviewed again to consider the availability of capital resources.

4.3 Capital Contingency

4.3.1 As in previous years, it is recommended that a contingency allowance (the Deferred Works Reserve) should be included in the capital strategy in the event that any works become unavoidable during the financial year. This has been previously been included at the level of £200k per annum. However due to the bids that have been placed on hold as per paragraph 4.2.4 and set out in table seven, and other potential larger pieces of work for which there is currently insufficient information available as per paragraph 4.6.3, it is recommended that the Deferred Works Reserve for 2022/23 be increased as set out in the table

below. This includes an amount to protect key income streams in 2022/23 for parking and garages

Table 8: Deferred Works Reserve 2022/23	
Purpose	£
General Deferred Works Reserve for urgent in-year requests	200,000
To fund 'On Hold' schemes depending on the outcome of the work identified	535,000
Potential larger areas of work such as Garages Asbestos and MSCP	300,000
TOTAL	1,035,000

It is also recommended that Executive be given delegated authority to approve all of the On Hold schemes, so that they can go ahead depending on the outcome of the work identified. This would be in addition to the usual contingency allowance delegation of £250,000 to Executive.

4.4 Locality Review Update

- 4.4.1 A key recommendation from the June 2020 MTFs COVID recovery report was that a pipeline of land disposals be identified from Locality Reviews to help maintain the resilience of General Fund balances, by removing the revenue contribution to capital. There was also a need to generate additional capital receipts to help fund any shortfalls from the reduction or cessation of New Homes Bonus (NHB).
- 4.4.2 The Council's Estates Team has reviewed the sites identified and reported to the Locality Review Board, which has been meeting regularly and is sponsored by the Strategic Director (CFO). The Board includes officers from different business units who use or manage the Council's assets.
- 4.4.3 It was previously estimated that the potential sales should generate around £4.5Million in receipts, after taking into account disposal fees of approximately 4%. There have been a number of site issues but the Estates Team are progressing this work. The value of sites will be monitored to determine target value versus actual, however currently the overall value is estimated to be lower, which may impact on the General Fund in future years.
- 4.4.4 A schedule of the forecast receipts (net of disposal fees) and the timing of these is set out in table nine below:

Table 9: Locality Review Site Disposals	
Tranche	Estimated receipt
Tranche 1 – Year 1 2021/22	£336,000
Tranche 2 – Year 2 2022/23	£2,361,600
Tranche 3 – Year 3 2023/24	£960,000
Total Forecast Locality Review Receipts	£3,657,600

4.5 Towns Fund Update

- 4.5.1 The most recent report to Members relating to the Towns Fund were Item 5 'Towns Fund - Station Gateway report' and Item 6 'New Station North MSCP report' to Executive on 8 December 2021. Further reports are due to be taken to Special Executive meetings scheduled for 2 February 2022 and 4 March 2022 to consider business cases for other Towns Fund schemes. The profile shown below is indicative based on the content of the submission, which will be reviewed following the submission of all of the business cases. The profiling of the full £37.5Million at project level will be included in the Final Capital Strategy, once all business cases are completed.

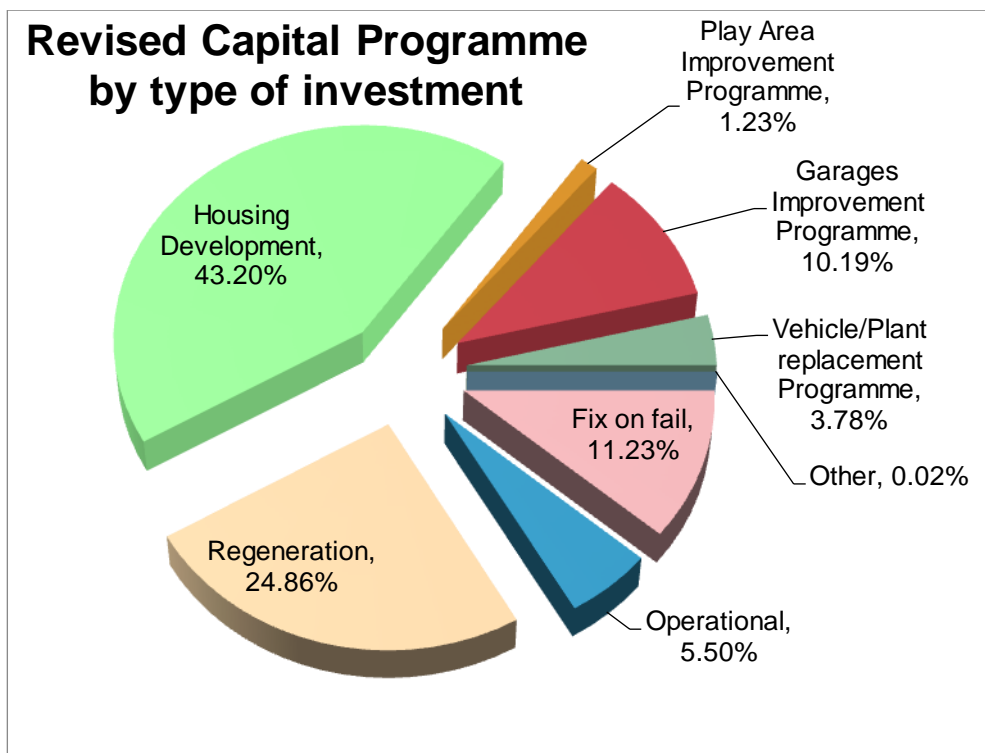
Table 10: Towns Fund profile (summary)						
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Capital	650,000	8,100,000	12,100,000	9,150,000	7,400,000	37,400,000
Revenue	50,000	50,000	-	-	-	100,000
Total	700,000	8,150,000	12,100,000	9,150,000	7,400,000	37,500,000

4.6 Summary Capital Programme 2021/22-2025/26

- 4.6.1 The revised Capital Strategy for 2021/22-2025/26 totals £68.0Million, including the approved 2022/23 and indicative future years growth bids totalling £3.991Million. This is summarised in table 11 below, and in detail in Appendix C.

Table 11: Revised Capital Programme						
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Stevenage Direct Services	2,684	4,669	4,326	265	133	12,078
Housing Development	7,051	13,257	8,504	575	0	29,386
Finance and Estates	1,650	1,770	780	365	135	4,700
IT & Digital	399	674	104	104	0	1,282
Regeneration	8,279	8,100	0	0	0	16,379
Communities and Neighbourhoods	364	735	90	65	15	1,269
Planning and Regulatory	418	270	365	365	0	1,418
Deferred Works Reserve	83	1,035	200	200	0	1,518
TOTAL	20,929	30,510	14,369	1,939	283	68,030

- 4.6.2 The figures in Table eight have been converted into a pie chart below to outline the relative capital investment in these different areas and which shows the limited amount of added value in the current capital programme.



4.6.3 As set out in paragraph 4.3.1, the revised capital programme set out above and in Appendix C does not include a number of potential items that may require additional capital expenditure. Those for which some information is available are set out in the following table:

Table 12: Risk of potential additional capital financing requirements	
Purpose	£000
Refurbishment needs for remedial works for garage impacted by asbestos	TBA
Funding for both the estate and fleet in order to help meet the Council's commitment to be carbon zero by 2030	TBA
Digital interventions to support the transformation programme	TBA
Actions arising from the SOCITM review due to conclude in March 2022 and a refresh of the IT Strategy and which would be subject to business cases	TBA
Smaller 180 Litre residual bins for general household waste may need to be purchased, due to the potential for introducing weekly recycling as part of the roll out of separate food waste collections, if there is an increase recycling and reduction in residual waste.	600
The bid of £100K in 2022/23 for Ridlins Athletics represents the minimum work required to maintain operational integrity. There could be a requirement for major capital expenditure within the next three years of circa £900K depending on a long-term review of the site and facilities	900
TOTAL	1,500

The programme will remain fix-on-fail too, leading to the potential need to incur expenditure on Council-owned buildings and other assets. Where additional

capital expenditure is needed the information will be brought to Members for consideration in subsequent reports.

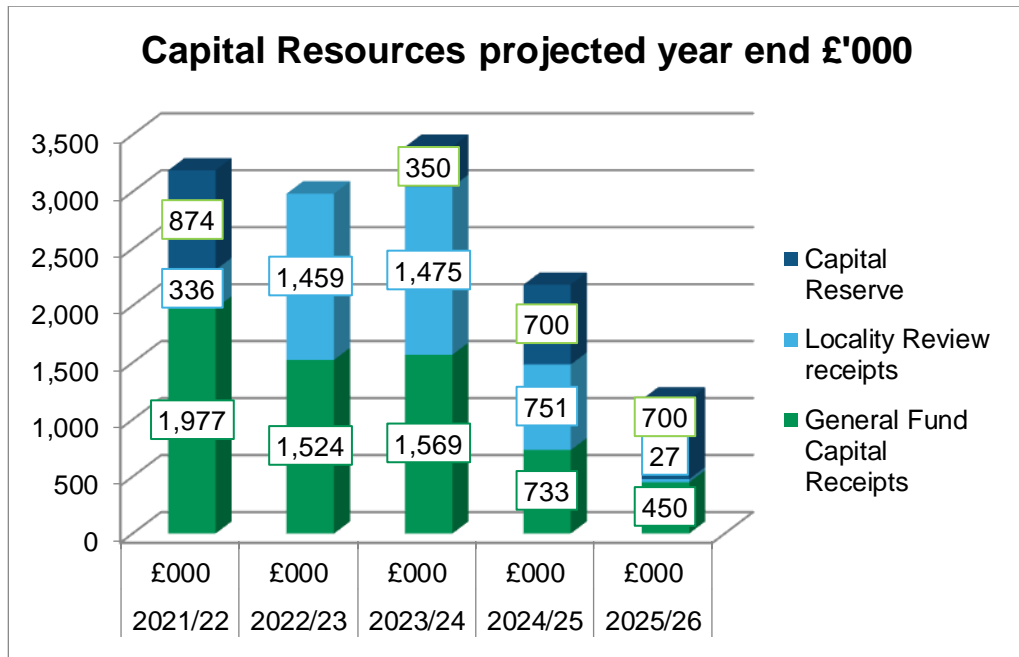
4.7 Capital Resources for the General Fund Capital Strategy

4.7.1 The projected resources used to fund the Capital Strategy totalling £68.0Million, including the approved 2022/23 and indicative future years growth bids totalling £3.991Million. This is summarised in table 13 below, and detailed in Appendix C.

Table 13: Revised Capital Programme						
	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Capital Receipts	3,997	5,135	7,074	836	283	17,325
Locality Review Receipts	0	1,239	944	724	0	2,907
Grants and other contributions	4,908	4,746	3,916	0	0	13,570
S106's	121	0	0	0	0	121
LEP	3,674	0	0	0	0	3,674
RCCO	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reserves	280	0	0	0	0	280
Ringfenced regeneration receipts	710	1,050	0	0	0	1,760
SG1 receipts	800	5,000	0	0	0	5,800
Capital Reserve (Housing Receipts)	271	534	375	379	0	1,559
Capital Reserve (Revenue Savings)	866	1,240	0	0	0	2,106
New Homes Bonus	345	65	0	0	0	410
Prudential Borrowing Approved	4,182	8,448	2,060	0	0	14,689
Short Term borrowing and funded from private sale	774	3,054	0	0	0	3,828
Funding Gap	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	20,929	30,510	14,369	1,939	283	68,030

4.7.2 The 2023/24 capital programme now includes the capital bid to fund food waste collection costs, that should be met from government new burdens funding. However no government announcements have been made thus far, which effectively reduces the capital receipts the council has available to spend. The relevant growth bids included in the revised capital strategy are £630K for 5 Food Collection Vehicles and £160K to meet the cost of the receptacles for the new rounds.

4.7.3 The use of capital receipts is dependent on delivery of the disposal sites to the market. The revised capital strategy leaves balances remaining at the end of the years as summarised in the chart below, which includes both General Capital Receipts and Locality Review Receipts as they are available for use in the Capital Programme. Ring-fenced Town Centre Transformation and SG1 receipts have been excluded.



4.7.4 The yearend level of capital receipts/capital reserve balances estimated to be required by the CFO is a minimum £800K-£1 Million (before any assumptions about unbudgeted revenue contributions to capital of £350K. Based on an assessment of the profile of sites in the disposal programme, (noting that there are a small number of high value sites) and considering:

- A delay in the disposal of individual sites
- Capital receipt values being less than currently forecast.
- The Locality Review Receipts are required for future years
- The Capital Reserve balance relies on unbudgeted revenue underspends,

The balance was forecast to be £842K at the end of 2022/23 in the draft capital strategy. Following the review by Leaders Financial Security Group, the balance is now forecast to be £1.459 excluding Locality receipts used in future years at the end of 2022/23. There is a £350K unbudgeted revenue underspend in 2022/23 built into the capital financing assumptions. If this does not arise the remaining balances would be £2.633Million. The CFO considers this to be a sufficient year-end balance

4.7.5 The other main risks to the capital programme are:

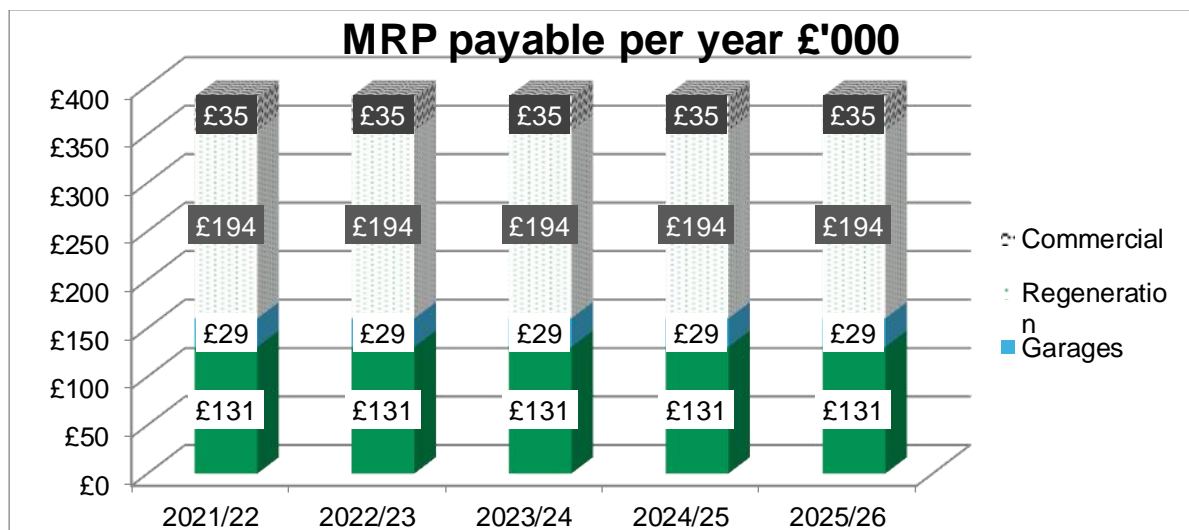
- Potential for scheme overspends
- Insufficient funding for new projects such as the wider town regeneration of assets including neighbourhoods, leisure centre and community assets or for emerging issues not currently in the capital programme
- Potential not to spend any remaining Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) monies by the deadline and therefore some costs falling on the Council's resources
- Potential for delay in realising capital receipts – there are £7.8Million of land/asset sales to be achieved in 2022/23 as shown in tables two and six, however the Locality Review Receipts are required for later years

- The deferred works budget may not be sufficient to fund any schemes not currently funded in the Strategy due to the ongoing fix-on-fail approach.
- Potential for additional costs required for Major Regeneration schemes, therefore some costs may fall on the Council's resources
- Cost volatility and increased client risk in construction projects due to the impact of Covid-19, which has resulted in supply chain pressures and significant price increases across the construction sector

4.7.6 The officer Business Case Assurance Panel and the Stevenage Development Board also need to ensure that external funding is maximised to reduce risks to the Council's finances.

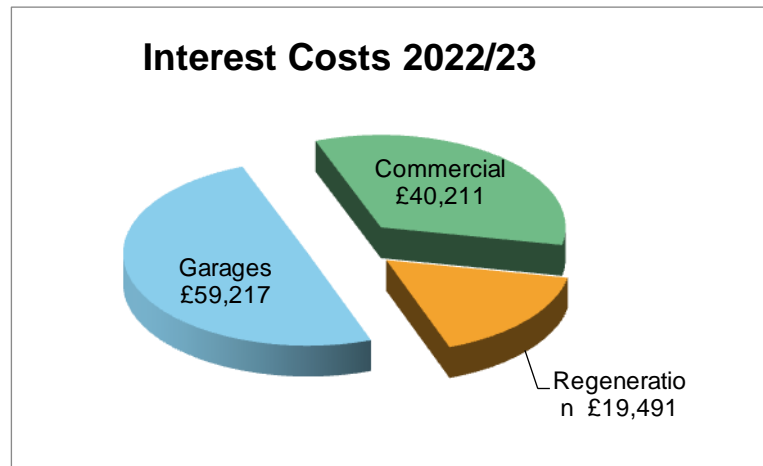
4.7.7 If there is a shortfall in funding borrowing can be considered to fund capital expenditure. In the recent past borrowing has been used when the costs of borrowing have been funded from receipts generated, e.g. commercial property purchases or the business case has determined that the borrowing costs are in the main, funded as was the case in relation to the garage investment programme.

4.7.8 The use of borrowing would place an on-going pressure on the General Fund and would require an increase in the level of Financial Security savings required in future years. The current level of Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) paid in the General Fund is shown in the following chart.

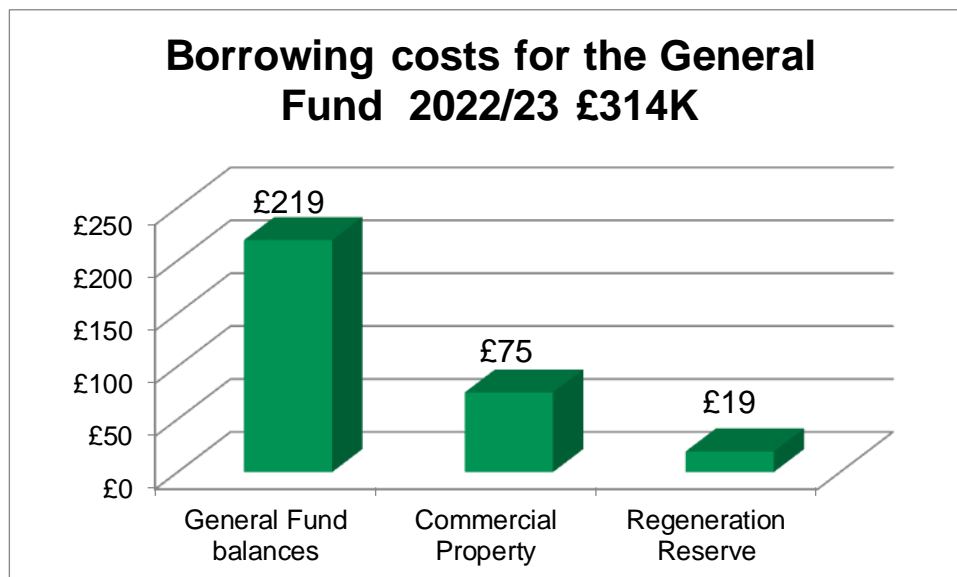


4.7.9 All of the commercial and regeneration property MRP (and interest) is funded from income generated from those assets, as would any borrowing costs relating to the Housing Wholly Owned Company when the company draws down borrowing from the Council. MRP is payable regardless of whether the borrowing is taken externally or whether internal investment balances are used.

4.7.10 The 2022/23 projected interest costs on borrowing is estimated to be £118,919 (2021/22 £123,750).



4.7.11 The total cost of borrowing in 2022/23 is £314K or an estimated 1% of gross General Fund expenditure. However the majority of this cost is met from within the income generated from assets as shown below.



4.7.12 Interest rates were 2.07% for a 25 year loan as at 5/1/2022 which would mean a cost per £million (based on assets with a 25 year life) of £60,700 (interest and MRP). An annual use of borrowing would represent an incremental increase in General Fund costs, which would need to be met from increasing the Making Your Money Count Target for the General Fund.

4.8 Other capital investments and Finance Lease

4.8.1 The Council purchased a number of properties in the town centre to enable it to meet its regeneration aims. These properties were purchased from a combination of borrowing, third party funding i.e. LEP and SBC resources. These properties have been purchased for regeneration purposes and therefore do not fall under the Property Investment Strategy. Prior to making these strategic acquisitions full risk assessments were undertaken to ensure the cost of carrying these assets in the short to medium term could be met by the Council. The Regeneration Asset allocated reserve has been setup specifically to cover these costs.

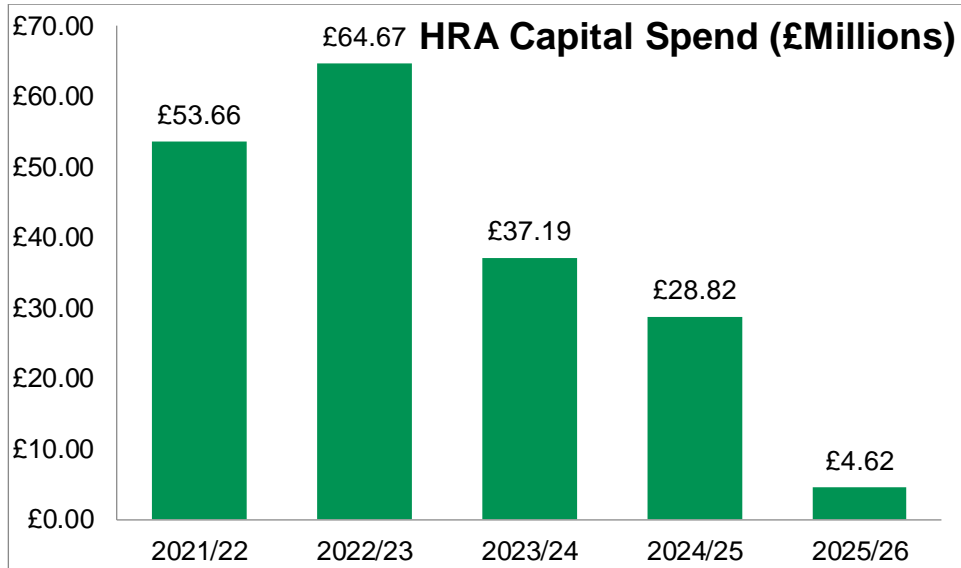
- 4.8.2 The Council undertook a long term finance lease for a mixed development scheme on Queensway in the town centre. This is a lease arrangement and falls outside the scope of capital investment. Prior to the decision to proceed being made a risk assessment was undertaken and presented to Members. Key Officers were given training on their roles and responsibilities for the new governance arrangements associated with the Limited Liability Partnership.
- 4.8.3 Links to the Council’s Cooperative Commercial and Insourcing Strategy - The Council’s investment in loans, shares and commercial property plays a part in the more commercial approach to the Council’s activities, including its work with businesses and community partners. The Service and Commercial Investment Strategy at Appendix E sets out the investment activity and risk management processes which support this.
- 4.8.4 External legal, financial and commercial advice is procured to ensure the validity and viability of business cases presented to Members.

4.9 Capital Programme - Housing Revenue Account (2021/22-2025/26)

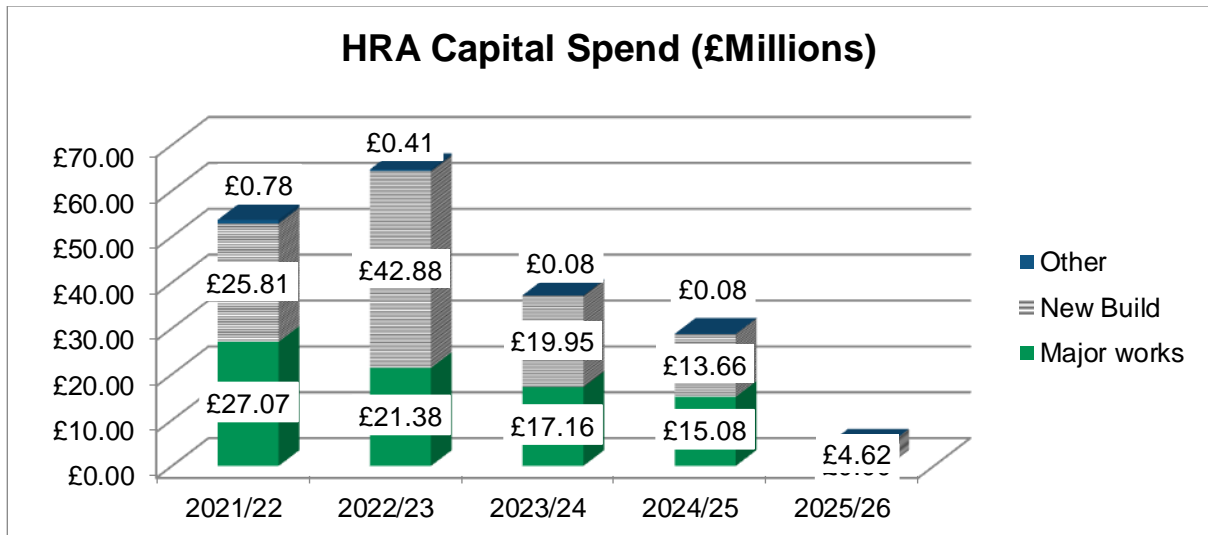
- 4.9.1 The HRA business plan identified an increase in borrowing and a reduction in revenue contributions to capital (see also section 3.3). Some of the borrowing identified has been taken externally, the remainder has utilised internal balances.
- 4.9.2 Alongside the General Fund exercise set out in paragraph 4.1.1, officers have also identified some slippage in the HRA capital programme of £202K from 2021/22 to 2022/23 and the January 2022 Council meeting approved growth totalling £2.850Million for decarbonisation in 2022/23. The Council has made a bid to the Government’s Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme, with a total value of £2.850Million if the bid is successful, with a third of the scheme funded by the Council to meet the grant requirements. As these works were not anticipated in the business plan, an additional revenue contribution to capital of £950K was approved at the January 2022 Council to secure the £1.9Million of grant. The Council has not been told whether the bid has been successful yet. This additional use of reserves will need to be re-balanced when the HRA Business Plan is reviewed in the summer, but will only be needed if the bid succeeds. The changes are set out in the table below.

Table 14: Update from the 2022/23 Capital Bids process						
	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
SLIPPAGE	(201,610)	201,610	0	0	0	0
GROWTH BIDS	0	2,850,000	0	0	0	2,850,000
TOTAL	(201,610)	3,051,610	0	0	0	2,850,000

- 4.9.3 The revised draft capital strategy budget for 2021/22 - 25/26 totals £188.9Million is set out in Appendix D and summarised below.

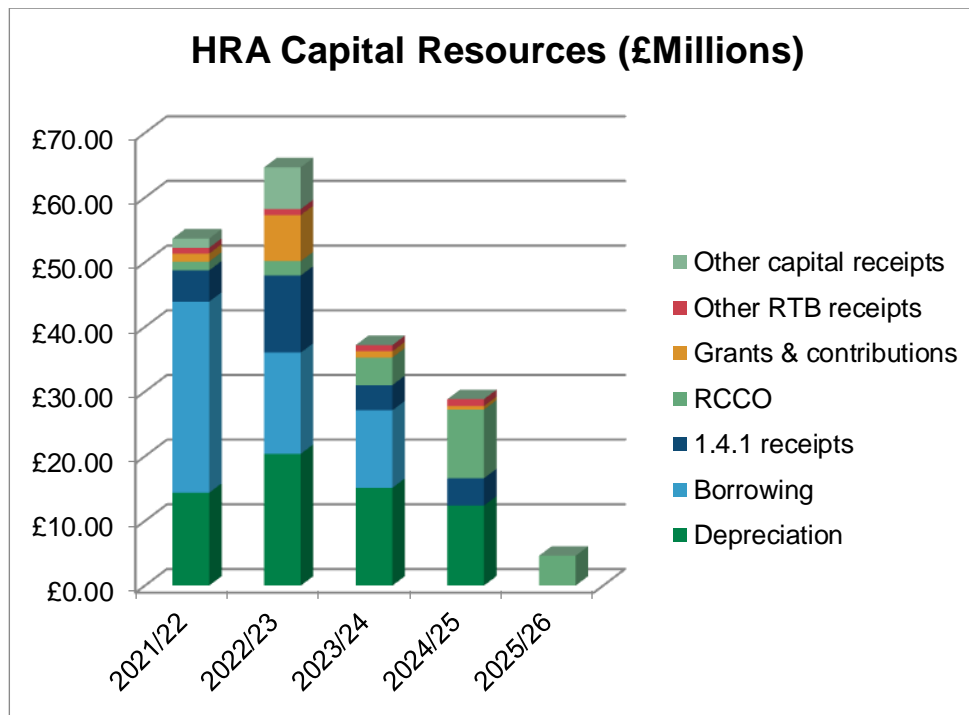


4.9.4 The split between major works, new build and other is shown in the following chart.

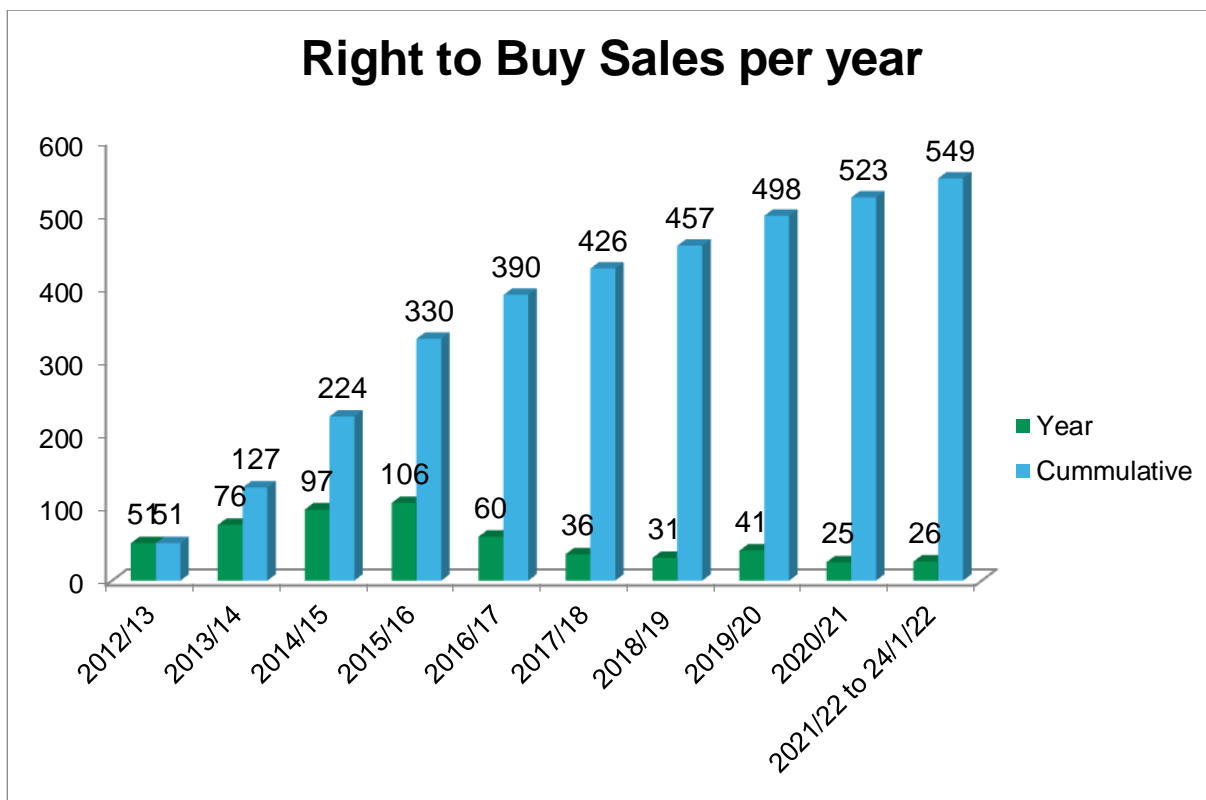


4.10 Capital Programme – HRA Resources (2021/22-2025/26)

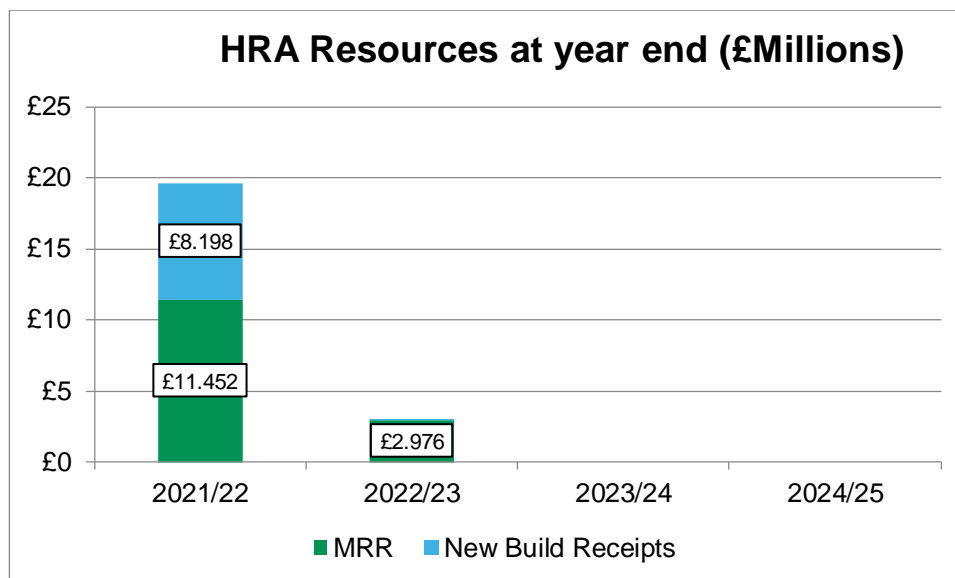
4.10.1 The resourcing of the current HRA capital programme funding is summarised in the following chart. The largest percentage is funded by the Major Repairs Reserve (MRR) via depreciation charges (33%) followed by borrowing (30%). Capital receipts from right to buy sales of council houses (New Build 1-4-1 receipts) forms 13% of total funding; however as Members are aware the 1.4.1 receipts have restricted use.



- 4.10.2 The closing HRA balances will form part of the 2022 HRA BP review as the HRA BP needs rebalancing.
- 4.10.3 The HRA risk assessment of balances reflects the need to hold higher reserves to fund interest rate fluctuations and a Water Rates provision. £5.7Million has set been aside in allocated reserves for these purposes. The recent HRA MTFS set the minimum level of balances for the HRA as £2.985Million.
- 4.10.4 The HRA capital programme funding has been based on 35 Right To Buy (RTB) sales per year (2019/20 onwards) although it was reduced for 2020/21 due to a reduction in house sales following restrictions under the first period of lockdown during the coronavirus pandemic. RTB's have fluctuated since self-financing was introduced and in 2021/22 (up to 26/1/2022) there have been 26 RTB sales.



- 4.10.5 There has been one government policy change impacting upon the HRA since the last capital strategy was set. There is now a five year deadline to spend the one for one balance of the HRA Right to Buy receipts. If not spent the receipt must be returned to the government with interest (calculated at 4% above base rate). Under the new regulations, spending on open market acquisitions is now restricted. These restrictions will be phased in over the next four years and from 2024/25, will only permit 30% of these properties to be funded from receipts. However, the cap does not apply to the first 20 properties delivered in any one year. The phasing of RTB funded build schemes will be reviewed as part of the 2022 refresh off the HRA Business Plan.
- 4.10.6 The capital expenditure financed by borrowing for 2019/20 was £7.057Million, of which £4.010Million external borrowing was taken. There was further slippage of external borrowing in 2020/21, as external borrowing of £10.0Million was taken compared to financing of £20.857Million. None of the 38.594Million planned borrowing for 2021/22 has been taken externally to date but is still planned to be taken before the end of the financial year.
- 4.10.7 A variable element of the resources available at year end is the restricted use 1-4-1 receipts as shown in the following chart, the level of restricted 1.4.1 receipts has significantly reduced due to lower RTB's, a higher new build programme and a change to the 1.4.1 regulations. As set out in paragraph 4.10.5, the government changed the deadline by which these receipts needed to be spent or returned with interest. The following chart sets out the current forecast position.



4.10.8 Given the slippage identified and the level of unrestricted HRA resources available it is recommended that the budget increases are approved. The revised Capital Strategy for 2021/22-2024/25 including the slippage identified and the budget increases is set out in detail in Appendix B and Appendix D.

4.11 De Minimis Level for Capital Expenditure 2022/23

4.11.1 Accounting best practice recommends that the Council approves a de minimis level for capital expenditure, or a value below which the expenditure would not be treated as capital. This would mean that the expenditure would not be recorded on the asset register nor be funded from capital resources.

4.11.2 The limit set for 2022/23 remains unchanged at £5,000 in the Draft Capital Strategy; this applies to a scheme value rather than an individual transaction.

4.12 Contingency Allowance for 2022/23

4.12.1 The contingency allowance for 2021/22 is £250,000, the contingency proposed for 2022/23 remains at £250,000, for schemes requiring funding from existing capital resources. A limit of £250,000 is also set for schemes for each Fund that have new resources or match funded resources identified in addition to those contained within this report. This limit applies individually to both the General Fund and the HRA. This contingency sum constitutes an upper limit on both funds within which the Executive can approve supplementary estimates, rather than part of the Council's Budget Requirement for the year.

4.12.2 The contingency allowance for 2021/22 is £500,000 in relation to the use of restricted use or 1.4.1 receipts for registered providers to ensure that the Council achieves nominal rights and doesn't have to return 1.4.1 receipts to the government. This contingency allowance is a recommended to remain at the same level of £500,000 for 2022/23.

4.12.3 Separate to the contingency allowance in paragraph 4.11.1, is the delegation to Executive or Portfolio Lead/Leader of the Council to approve increases to the capital programme for grant funded projects, when external funding sources have

been secured. Officers propose that this contingency allowance remains as £5,000,000 where a scheme is fully funded from 3rd party contribution/grant.

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial Implications

5.1.1 This report is financial in nature and consequently financial implications are included in the above.

5.2 Legal Implications

5.2.1 None identified at this time

5.3 Equality and Diversity Implications

5.3.1 This report is of a technical nature reflecting the projected spend for the year for the General Fund capital programme. None of the budget changes reported will change any existing equalities and diversity policies and it is not expected that these budget changes will impact on any groups covered by statutory equalities duties.

5.3.2 Schemes contained within the capital programme will have an EQIA particularly those relating to housing schemes.

5.4 Risk Implications

5.4.1 The significant risks associated with the capital strategy are largely inherent within this report.

5.4.2 There is a risk that the value of land sales is not realised due to the impact of COVID on the confidence on the market or prices are lower than anticipated due to higher material costs as set out in paragraph 4.7.5 linked to BREXIT/COVID.

5.4.3 The 2021/22 year end level of available receipts is low in comparison to the size of the programme and is reliant on the delivery of key sales which could be impacted as set out above. Should this happen, in-year action may be required to hold expenditure or prudential borrowing may be required increasing the burden to the General Fund.

5.4.4 The Council manages this risk by reviewing and updating the Strategy quarterly, including resources where a sale is likely to complete. This will enable action to be taken where a receipt looks doubtful.

5.4.5 A significant risk exists that works deferred due to lack of funding become urgent in year, requiring completion on grounds of health and safety. A reasonable assessment has been made in the prioritisation process to try to keep this risk to a minimum, and these schemes are monitored by Assets and Capital Board.

5.4.6 The risk in achieving the level of qualifying HRA spend to fully utilise retained one for one receipts has been reduced (unlike in previous years) with the change to the one for one receipt rules as set out in this report.

5.5 Climate Change Implications

- 5.5.1 In their current form the Council's buildings do not currently support the climate change agenda in terms of energy efficiency or divestment of use of fossil fuels.
- 5.5.2 However, there is an opportunity through the local asset review programme to build in design principles to improved / future assets in terms of energy efficiency and sustainable energy sources. This should be a core principle of any future designs arising from the local asset reviews. There would be a further benefit of reduced energy costs.
- 5.5.3 The climate change agenda is far wider than the buildings the Council uses. For example the Council is also examining the vehicle fleet and consideration will be given to reducing its carbon impact.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- BD1 Draft Capital Strategy (January 2022 Executive)
- BD 2 Final Housing Revenue Account Rent Setting & Budget report 2022/23 (January 2022 Executive) – elsewhere on this agenda
- BD 3 Medium Term Financial Strategy: Housing Revenue Account – Business Plan Review (including 1st and 2nd Quarter HRA Revenue Budget Monitoring 2021/22) (November 2021 Executive)
- BD 4 HRA Business Plan 2020 update (December 2019 Executive)

Appendices

- A - General Fund Capital Bids
- B - HRA Capital Bids
- C - General Fund Final Capital Strategy
- D - HRA Final Capital Strategy
- E - Service and Commercial Investment Strategy

APPENDIX A - GENERAL FUND GROWTH BIDS



Scoring:
not agreed 0
agreed 1

Scheme	Priority	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Reason for Request	Any other Relevant Information	Service	Average Score	OUTCOME
		Growth Bid	Growth Bid	Growth Bid	Growth Bid				for 22/23	
		£	£	£	£					
Priority 3: Mandatory requirements (Including Health & Safety)										
EPC remedial	3	200,000				To comply with current regulations. Energy improvements to achieve an energy rating of E or better required to existing let commercial properties.	Cost estimates based on improvement works required to anticipated 15 properties at average cost £15K = £250K	F&E	1.00	APPROVED
Daneshill fire doors	3	150,000				Estimated growth bid required to upgrade the fire doors as detailed in the Fire Risk Assessment.	Estimated bid based on original tender returns. Scope of works are being reviewed by the fire company to reassess the risk while taking into account the remaining life of the building.	F&E	Decision deferred pending the challenge on whether the doors really do need replacing	DEFERRED
Fire stopping works at SALC	3	100,000				Recent fire risk assessment has identified the requirement to undertake these works, we need to undertake further investigations to ascertain exact cost of priority works	The cost is currently estimated for investigations are being undertaken	C&N	1.00	APPROVED
MSCP lighting upgrade - LED (phased)	3	75,000	75,000	75,000		To ensure adequate lighting levels are maintained. High level replacements / maintenance. Legislation in Sept 2023 phasing out the sale of Fluorescent lights.	High level replacements / maintenance	F&E	1.00	APPROVED May be better from a H&S perspective and more economical to do this all in one year
Provision for maintenance works at closed cemeteries	3	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	Works required at closed cemeteries i.e Paths, Walls etc. In the last two years works has been needed not previously budgeted	Insurance risk	SDS	0.20	NOT SUPPORTED
Cemeteries System	3	50,000				Critical to operate service and legal requirements for record keeping	Old database not supported going forwards (365 / Windows 10) so need a new system. There are financing options available.	SDS	1.00	APPROVED
Bedwell Community Centre roof fascia replacement	3	50,000				Replacement of rotten external stud wall above perimeter windows. -	Possible structural failure condensation identified as causing some problems only part of structure inspected so need to undertake detailed full survey in the new year to expose concealed structural timbers to confirm full scope of the works	F&E	Survey results first, hold £ in the reserve	DEFERRED
Bedwell Neighbourhood centre canopy repairs	3	30,000	0	0	0	Metal gutters and structure corroded with risk of pieces falling onto the public below.	Detailed survey to be carried out on structure to confirm full scope of the works	F&E	1.00	APPROVED
Replacement Camera programme	3	25,000	35,000	40,000	10,000	Cameras are at a high risk of failure, due to a lack of investment in a replacement programme this is for the end of life replacement for 18 cameras in 22/3, and 24 cameras in 23/24, and 26 cameras 24/25, plus 7 cameras 25/26.	Health and safety slip hazard	C&N	0.60	APPROVED
MSCP resurface worn stairwell floor	3	20,000	40,000			To ensure internal environment for occupation	Phased over 2 years £20K increase in capital programme for 2022/23 to complete the 2 higher use staircases and the remaining 2 in 2023/24	F&E	1.00	APPROVED May be better from a H&S perspective and more economical to do this all in one year
Bedwell CC - Replace extract fans and electric heaters	3	5,000				This is a mobile camera replacement programme as required to ensure we can place cameras in hotspots of ASB as they occur	Extract fans need repair or replacing to reduce condensation and ensure adequate ventilation. The heating system was repaired and replaced two years ago, the electric heaters are supplementary and can be repaired/replaced as required.	F&E	0.80	APPROVED
ASB team mobile camera	3	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	Replacing end of life lighting with LED complying with regulations (fluorescents phased out). Existing doors in poor condition requiring replacement and some fire upgrades. Lift end of life and risk of disruption and failure causing access difficulties to all areas and non compliance.	As required by the SoSafe Community Safety action and agreed by RAG members.	C&N	0.80	APPROVED
BTC Essential works - Replace / upgrade doors, Lighting and control upgrade and replacement of lift in the new block	3		195,000			To ensure compliant lighting levels replacing with LED. Legislation in Sept 2023 phasing out the sale of Fluorescent lights.	Fitting LED will improve energy efficiency and saving on electric costs.	F&E		
Chellis Manor - lightning upgrade	3		10,000			To prevent site flooding		F&E		
Westin Road ABS Pump	3	0	5,500	0	0			SDS		
Mandatory requirements total		760,000	415,500	170,000	65,000					
Priority 4: Schemes to maintain operational efficiency										
St Nicholas Pavilion reroofing	4	150,000				Whilst the roof has shown no signs of leaking the flat roof is in very poor condition therefore there is a risk of water ingress causing damage to the fabric and structure leading to possible health and safety issues (Electric) and disruption to the operations and possible closure of areas or the whole building.	There are currently no bookings until May 2023, bookings are limited and there will not be a return on investments, whilst patchwork repairs may be viable this is dependent on the location of any leaks and if it is repairable the council needs to decide the future life of this facility. The asset team are looking to lease the facility, so it needs to be decided if the investment is viable on a financial lease return to SBC.	F&E	defer doing it and look at community centre review	DEFERRED
Lift replacement at SALC	4	140,000	0	0	0	As identified in 2019, the lift will need replacing during 2023, and a temporary lift solution may be required whilst works are being undertaken	The budget is to repair the floodlights and carry out essential H&S works and maintain operational integrity	C&N	0.80	APPROVED
Ridings Athletics	4	100,000				Condition surveys have been completed for the building M&E plus athletics track and supporting facilities there will be a requirement for major capital spend within the next three years	Cost is a worse case estimate, we are hoping to reduce to 70k	C&N	0.80	APPROVED
Replacement bridge at Golf Centre & other bridge works	4	90,000				A bridge collapsed this year due to erosion caused by flooding, at the course, the bridge is in a key location and needs to be resolved to avoid injury to players, other bridges are at risk due to erosion and works will need to be undertaken to avoid further damage to bridges	The windows are made of soft wood and are rotting, if this was agreed the works would need to be completed in conjunction with the roof works as the windows are at high level. Given the dilapidations of this facility and the investment required the council needs to decide its future viability.	F&E	defer doing it and look at community centre review	DEFERRED
St Nicholas Pavilion replace windows	4	75,000				Risk of boiler failure - building will not operate if boiler fails. Has been regular serviced high risk of failure end of life.	The boiler is currently working and serviced on a regular basis, further investigations are taking place to understand if parts are available should it fail. The boiler has reached the end of its economic life. The facility has been well used as a vaccination centre but the general usage of the facility is very low	F&E	defer doing it and look at community centre review	DEFERRED
Chellis Manor - boiler replacement and hot water works	4	50,000				Had been budgeted for in 21/22 but the funding was reallocated to purchase a replacement mower which was required urgently	Linked to national Resources & Waste Strategy, and requirement to provide separate weekly food waste service to all residents in future. The pilot will inform a future capital bid for wider roll-out	SDS	1.00	APPROVED
Maxi Truck EL 4WD 4WD articulated truck with a 1,000kg - 1,500kg load capacity	4	35,000	0	0	0	Pilot project to deliver improvements for access, infrastructure, receptacles and signage to support increased recycling in flat blocks, and to enable future food waste collections	Only highlighting at this stage as potential to convert existing Housing vehicle if it can be transferred	SDS	0.60	APPROVED
Flat block waste management infrastructure	4	30,000				Commercial skip development impacts on being able to service grounds after ceasing yellow huts		SDS	0.80	APPROVED
Vehicle (Grounds)	4	30,000	0	0	0	Play Fitter - New duty on service review. Box Van	The building is of a modular type which is in poor condition and beyond its designed lifespan it is supported by metal struts which have twisted over time, whilst it is structurally sound the consequence is that the building is no longer true or square which has resulted in pools of water laying on the roof as there is no not any falls to drainage, and the roof surface is in poor condition. Whilst there is no evidence of leaking at this time there is a risk that the roof will fall although some patch repairs may be viable dependent on the source of the problem. What has not been costed is that the roof insulation would also likely need to be replaced	SDS	0.80	APPROVED
Vehicle (Play)	4	30,000	0	0	0	Roof covering end of life. Reroofing required to ensure building operations are maintained. Risk of water ingress causing damage to the fabric and structure leading to possible health and safety issues (Electric) and disruption to the operations and possible closure of areas or the whole building.		F&E	defer doing it and look at community centre review	DEFERRED
St Nicholas play centre roof	4	30,000	0	0	0			F&E	defer doing it and look at community centre review	DEFERRED

Scheme	Priority	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Reason for Request	Any other Relevant Information	Service	Average Score for 22/23 Growth Bid	OUTCOME
		£	£	£	£					
Priority 4: Schemes to maintain operational efficiency (Cont.)										
8-10 The Glebe roof replacement	4	30,000	0	0	0	Roof covering end of life and in very poor condition. Reroofing required to ensure building operations are maintained. High Risk of water ingress causing damage to the fabric and structure leading to possible health and safety issues (Electrics) and disruption to the operations and possible closure of areas or the whole building.	This facility is well used by the Living Room Charity, the modular building itself is in fair condition but the roof is in very poor condition and it is surprising that no leaks are apparent, patch repairs may be able to rectify any problems that do occur but this is dependent on the type of problem and its location.	F&E	1.00	APPROVED
MSCP / Indoor Market guttering	4	30,000				Water ingress causing water damage to stall holders possessions and leading to possible closure.	Risk of compensation - loss of income	F&E	1.00	APPROVED
The Oval reroofing (youth wing)	4	30,000				Roof covering end of life. Reroofing required to ensure building operations are maintained. Risk of water ingress causing damage to the fabric and structure leading to possible health and safety issues (Electrics) and disruption to the operations and possible closure of areas or the whole building. Used as preschool, the rest of the roofs at the Oval have been done, if it leaks it can be patched repaired	The main roofs of the Oval have all been replaced, with the exception of this part of the building which is hired to and used by Barnard's used as a family central, patchwork repairs can be undertaken depending on the location and nature of the problem.	F&E		DEFERRED
Play Area Improvements	4	25,515	0	0	0	Inflation increase on 2017 figures	Relevant for 2022/2023. The budget has not increased in line with inflation so we will achieve less for the investment.	SDS	1.00	APPROVED
Rotary Gang Mowers	4	25,000	0	0	0	Meadow Grass - increased demand of meadow areas under bio-diversity agenda	Would have to outsource if do not buy	SDS	1.00	APPROVED
Wood Chippers	4	25,000	25,000	0	0	Replacement for end of life equipment - critical to role	They are approx. £25k each, ideally we would want one in 22/23 and one 23/24.	SDS	1.00	APPROVED
Water Tank and system, Shephalbury Bowls	4	15,000	0	0	0	Failed system which means manual watering / cost		SDS	0.40	NOT SUPPORTED
Replacement for Cemeteries Dump Truck	4	15,000	0	0	0	End of life vehicle		SDS	1.00	APPROVED
Douglas Drive day centre - replace electric wall heaters	4	10,000				Heaters end of life and high risk of falling. Fix on fail approach could be adopted.	Use of Temporary heaters could be used if heating fails	F&E		REMOVED
Applied Sweeper LK18 HCF	4	5,800	0	0	0	top-up as existing budget too low	Current budget is for £58,200	SDS	1.00	APPROVED
Applied sweeper green machine LK18 HCE	4	5,800	0	0	0	top-up as existing budget too low	Current budget is for £58,200	SDS	1.00	APPROVED
Bedwell Community Centre reroofing	4		125,000			Roof covering end of life. Reroofing required to ensure building operations are maintained. Risk of water ingress causing damage to the fabric and structure leading to possible health and safety issues (Electrics) and disruption to the operations and possible closure of areas or the whole building.	Risk of water ingress causing damage to the fabric and structure. Risk of flood causing areas of centre to close.	F&E		
Pear tree pavilion - reroofing	4		100,000				Worn pitched roof covering to the older part of the building - this is a metal sheet system made to look like traditional tiling - Survey Report recommends to renew the covering in 2021 2022 at an estimated cost £50k there is no evidence of any current leaks.	F&E		
KGV reroofing and gutter replacement	4		75,000			Roof covering end of life. Reroofing required to ensure building operations are maintained. Risk of water ingress causing damage to the fabric and structure leading to possible health and safety issues (Electrics) and disruption to the operations and possible closure of areas or the whole building.	There is no evidence of leaks in the roof and gutter, can take a fall and fix approach	F&E		
St Nicholas Annex refurbish metal roof	4		60,000			Extend life of asset (10-15 years) if refurbishment not carried out now full reroofing required in next couple of years Metal corrosion treatment	This is occupied by the Community Centre preschool, the metal of is unique and failure to treat with anti-corrosion treatment within the next two years will result in the roof being beyond repair and will therefore cost significantly more to replace	F&E		
Mobbisbury Way Neighbourhood Centre canopy reroofing	4		30,000			Roof covering end of life - Risk of water leaks dripping on the public using the shops and causing long term deterioration of the structure - if left this could lead to collapse.	To keep the centres maintained and in good condition to encourage use by the public - Easier to retain and attract new lettings Detailed survey to be carried out as part of the stock condition surveys	F&E		REMOVED
Play Area Improvements	4	0	24,220	0	0	Inflation increase on 2017 figures	Relevant for 2023/24. The budget has not increased in line with inflation so we will achieve less for the investment.	SDS		
KGV Pavilion Replace electric heating and lighting	4		20,000			maintaining the operation of the building, working at the	The system is adequate for this building at the moment and a fall and fix approach should be adopted.	F&E		
BTC - Replace roof lights, gutters and fascia's to the old bit	4			150,000		The rainwater goods, roof lights and fascia's are at the end of their life	All works identified during the 2018 condition survey by specialist M&E consultant. Subject to repair responsibilities	F&E		
Timebridge - reroofing	4			85,000		Roof covering end of life. Reroofing required to ensure building operations are maintained.	Building leased and is currently part of the community asset review	F&E		
The Glebe Neighbourhood Centre canopy reroofing	4			40,000		Roof covering end of life. Risk of water leaks dripping on the public using the shops and causing long term deterioration of the structure. If left this could lead to collapse.	To keep the centres maintained and in good condition to encourage use by the public - Easier to retain and attract new lettings Detailed survey to be carried out as part of the stock condition surveys	F&E		
St Nicholas CC reroofing	4			125,000		Roof covering end of life. Reroofing required to ensure building operations are maintained. Risk of water ingress causing damage to the fabric and structure leading to possible health and safety issues (Electrics) and disruption to the operations and possible closure of areas or the whole building.	Included in the locality review	F&E		
The Oval - replace heaters in Hall and dining room	4				10,000	Risk of heaters falling - operations of building affected.	Life of building unknown	F&E		
Maintain operational efficiency total		967,115	429,220	275,000	135,000					
Priority 8: Schemes that further the Council's Corporate Plans										
Shrub bed programme	8	133,000	133,000	133,000	133,000	Replacement / improvements to public realm		SDS	0.60	APPROVED
Core ICT Equipment for Additional Staff	8	70,000	0	0	0	Roll-out of new ways of working	Only £30k for HRA share was approved for 22/23, not the General Fund as well.	IT	1.00	APPROVED
Review of Biodiversity Action Plan	8	12,000	0	0	0	Current plan (2017-2022) for review in 2022.	Intend to incorporate Biodiversity Net Gain proposals which will generate income (from developers) to support delivery of BAP.	SDS	0.60	APPROVED
SBC grants to businesses to reduce their carbon emissions	8	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	As per Oct Exec. Report. Grants to help local Stevenage businesses decrease their carbon emissions.		P&R	0.40	NOT SUPPORTED
Cashless on street parking transition	8	0	60,000	60,000	0	Replace the current cash only on street parking machines with, cashless / and card only machines.		P&R		
Council's Corporate Plans total		223,000	201,000	201,000	141,000					
Priority 11: New Burdens										
Receptacles for new rounds etc	11	0	630,000	0	0	Possible 23/24 - new burden funding	Based on food only. If went for recycling option would be £700,000 but funding may be available for some of this	SDS		
Food collection vehicles (x5)	11	0	160,000	0	0	Possible 23/24 - new burden funding	Need to use other resources to fund this until the new burden funding is received. Increased to reflect food only based on further work done on Round-Op	SDS		
New Burdens total		0	790,000	0	0					
TOTAL GROWTH BIDS		1,950,115	1,835,720	646,000	341,000					

APPENDIX A - GENERAL FUND GROWTH BIDS



Scoring:
not agreed 0
agreed 1

Scheme	Priority	2022/2023 Growth Bid £	2023/2024 Growth Bid £	2024/2025 Growth Bid £	2025/2026 Growth Bid £	Reason for Request	Any other Relevant Information	Service	Average Score for 22/23 Growth Bid	OUTCOME
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- Priority 1 Return on investments
- Priority 2 Income generating
- Priority 3 Mandatory requirements (including Health & Safety)
- Priority 4 Schemes to maintain operational efficiency
- Priority 5 Match funding schemes
- Priority 6 Financial efficiency
- Priority 7 Urgent works (that reduce the risk of litigation)
- Priority 8 Schemes that further the Council's Corporate Plans
- Priority 9 Schemes that reduce or mitigate risks included in the Corporate Risk Register
- Priority 10 Schemes that develop or improve partnership working
- Priority 11 New Burdens

Growth bid priority		2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	TOTAL
Priority 1	Return on investments	0	0	0	0	0
Priority 2	Income generating	0	0	0	0	0
Priority 3	Mandatory requirements (Inclu	760,000	415,500	170,000	65,000	1,410,500
Priority 4	Schemes to maintain operation	967,115	429,220	275,000	135,000	1,806,335
Priority 5	Match funding schemes	0	0	0	0	0
Priority 6	Financial efficiency	0	0	0	0	0
Priority 7	Urgent works (that reduce the r	0	0	0	0	0
Priority 8	Schemes that further the Council	223,000	201,000	201,000	141,000	766,000
Priority 9	Schemes that reduce or mitigat	0	0	0	0	0
Priority 10	Schemes that develop or impro	0	0	0	0	0
Priority 11	New Burdens	0	790,000	0	0	790,000
Total growth bids		1,950,115	1,835,720	646,000	341,000	4,772,835
		0	0	0	0	0

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APPENDIX B - HRA GROWTH BIDS

Scheme	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Reason for Request
	Growth Bid	Growth Bid	Growth Bid	Growth Bid	
	£	£	£	£	
Capital Programme Excluding New Build					
Decarbonisation	2,550,000	0	0	0	To be EPC C by 2030 Net Zero, Scoping works, pilots (whole house including heat source), PAS 2035 surveys, additional data collection and modelling.
Decarbonisation	300,000	0	0	0	
HRA Growth Bids	2,850,000	0	0	0	

Both growth items would be subject to funding from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme, net cost to SBC £950K

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APPENDIX C - GENERAL FUND CAPITAL STRATEGY

Cost Centre	Scheme	2021/2022						2022/2023					2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
		Working Budget £	Actuals 26 September 2021 £	January Draft Budget £	Variance Working v Draft Budget £	February Final Revised Budget £	Variance Draft v Final Budget £	Working Budget £	January Draft Budget £	Variance Working v Draft Budget £	February Final Revised Budget £	Variance Draft v Final Budget £	February Final Revised Budget £	February Final Revised Budget £	February Final Revised Budget £
	General Fund - Schemes														
confirmed	Stevenage Direct Services	3,686,352	511,426	2,761,582	(924,770)	2,684,082	(77,500)	3,244,620	5,446,505	2,201,885	4,669,005	(777,500)	4,326,440	265,000	133,000
	Housing Development	7,051,059	372,546	7,051,059	0	7,051,059	0	13,256,607	13,256,607	0	13,256,607	0	8,503,718	574,900	0
	Finance and Estates	2,394,020	28,738	1,649,790	(744,230)	1,649,790	0	694,850	2,364,750	1,669,900	1,769,750	(595,000)	780,000	365,000	135,000
	Digital & Transformation	896,830	241,069	399,190	(497,640)	399,190	0	106,820	674,460	567,640	674,460	0	104,220	104,220	0
	Regeneration	7,779,480	4,356,006	8,279,480	500,000	8,279,480	0	2,474,000	8,100,000	5,626,000	8,100,000	0	0	0	0
	Communities and Neighbourhoods	364,440	8,288	364,440	0	364,440	0	275,000	735,000	460,000	735,000	0	90,000	65,000	15,000
confirmed	Planning and Regulatory	417,900	185,338	417,900	0	417,900	0	270,000	278,000	8,000	270,000	(8,000)	365,000	365,000	0
	Deferred Works Reserve	23,310	0	82,640	59,330	82,640	0	200,000	200,000	0	1,035,000	835,000	200,000	200,000	0
	Total Schemes	22,613,391	5,703,411	21,006,081	(1,607,310)	20,928,581	(77,500)	20,521,897	31,055,322	10,533,425	30,509,822	(545,500)	14,369,378	1,939,120	283,000
	General Fund -Resources														
BG902	Capital Receipts	5,733,408		4,874,579	(858,829)	4,797,079	(77,500)	4,595,387	10,680,331	6,084,944	10,134,831	(545,500)	7,073,942	836,087	283,000
	Locality Review receipts	474,000		0	(474,000)	0	0	765,000	1,239,000	474,000	1,239,000	0	944,000	724,000	
BG461	Grants and other contributions	4,908,201		4,908,201	0	4,908,201	0	4,746,012	4,746,012	0	4,746,012	0	3,916,192	0	
BG860	S106's	121,332		121,332	0	121,332	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
BG904	LEP	3,674,480		3,674,480	0	3,674,480	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Reserves	179,870		279,870	100,000	279,870	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
BG905	Ringfenced regeneration receipts	210,000		710,000	500,000	710,000	0		1,050,000	1,050,000	1,050,000	0			
BG903	Capital Reserve (Housing Receipts)	432,886		270,772	(162,114)	270,772	0	371,565	533,679	162,114	533,679	0	375,280	379,033	
BG916	Capital Reserve (Revenue Savings)	1,578,323		865,955	(712,368)	865,955	0	527,588	1,239,956	712,367	1,239,956	0	0	0	
BG920	New Homes Bonus CNM	344,980		344,980	0	344,980	0	65,027	65,027	0	65,027	0	0	0	
	Prudential Borrowing Approved	4,181,901		4,181,901	0	4,181,901	0	6,397,512	8,447,512	2,050,000	8,447,512	0	2,059,964	0	
	Short Term borrowing and funded from private sale	774,010		774,010	0	774,010	0	3,053,806	3,053,806	0	3,053,806	0	0	0	0
	Funding Gap	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Total Resources (General Fund)	22,613,391		21,006,081	(1,607,310)	20,928,581	(77,500)	20,521,897	31,055,322	10,533,425	30,509,822	(545,500)	14,369,378	1,939,120	283,000
				0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

APPENDIX C - GENERAL FUND CAPITAL STRATEGY

Cost Centre	Scheme	2021/2022						2022/2023					2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
		Working Budget £	Actuals 26 September 2021 £	January Draft Budget £	Variance Working v Draft Budget £	February Final Revised Budget £	Variance Draft v Final Budget £	Working Budget £	January Draft Budget £	Variance Working v Draft Budget £	February Final Revised Budget £	Variance Draft v Final Budget £	February Final Revised Budget £	February Final Revised Budget £	February Final Revised Budget £
BG902	General Funds Receipts														
	Unallocated B/fwd	(999,592)		(999,592)	0	(999,592)	0	(1,468,727)	(1,559,995)	(91,269)	(1,977,456)	(417,461)	(1,524,176)	(1,568,928)	(732,841)
	In Year Receipts	(6,751,275)		(5,183,715)	1,567,560	(5,523,676)	(339,961)	(7,456,296)	(5,736,816)	1,719,480	(5,455,560)	281,256	(10,172,500)	0	0
	Used in Year	5,733,408		4,074,579	(1,658,829)	3,997,079	(77,500)	4,595,387	5,680,331	1,084,944	5,134,831	(545,500)	7,073,942	836,087	283,000
	Ring Fenced Receipts Used to Repay ST Borrowing	548,732		548,732	0	548,732	0	774,010	774,010	0	774,010	0	3,053,806	0	0
	General Fund Receipts Unallocated C/fwd	(1,468,727)		(1,559,995)	(91,269)	(1,977,456)	(417,461)	(3,555,626)	(842,471)	2,713,155	(1,524,176)	(681,705)	(1,568,928)	(732,841)	(449,841)
BG911	Locality Review receipts														
	Unallocated B/fwd				0		0	(33,200)	(336,000)	(302,800)	(336,000)	0	(1,458,600)	(1,474,600)	(750,600)
	In Year Receipts	(507,200)		(336,000)	171,200	(336,000)	0	(1,963,200)	(2,361,600)	(398,400)	(2,361,600)	0	(960,000)	0	0
	Used in Year	474,000		0	(474,000)	0	0	765,000	1,239,000	474,000	1,239,000	0	944,000	724,000	0
	Receipts Unallocated C/fwd	(33,200)		(336,000)	(302,800)	(336,000)	0	(1,231,400)	(1,458,600)	(227,200)	(1,458,600)	0	(1,474,600)	(750,600)	(750,600)
BG905	Ringfenced regeneration receipts														
	Unallocated B/fwd				0		0	0	(4,350,000)		(4,350,000)	0	(3,300,000)	(3,300,000)	(3,300,000)
	In Year Receipts			(5,060,000)	(5,060,000)	(5,060,000)	0					0			
	Used in Year			710,000	710,000	710,000	0		1,050,000		1,050,000	0			
	Reserve Unallocated C/fwd	0		(4,350,000)	(4,350,000)	(4,350,000)	0	0	(3,300,000)	(3,300,000)	(3,300,000)	0	(3,300,000)	(3,300,000)	(3,300,000)
	SG1 Receipts														
	Unallocated B/fwd				0		0	0	800,000		800,000	0	0	0	0
	In Year Receipts	(900,000)			900,000		0	(2,474,000)	(5,800,000)		(5,800,000)	0			
	Used in Year	900,000		800,000	(100,000)	800,000	0	2,474,000	5,000,000		5,000,000	0	0	0	0
	Reserve Unallocated C/fwd	0		800,000	800,000	800,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BG903 & BG916	Capital Reserve														
	Unallocated B/fwd	(1,393,323)		(1,393,323)	0	(1,393,323)	0	0	(874,482)	(874,482)	(874,482)	0	0	(350,000)	(700,000)
	In Year Resource	(617,886)		(617,886)	0	(617,886)	0	(899,153)	(899,153)	0	(899,153)	0	(725,280)	(729,033)	0
	Used in Year	2,011,209		1,136,727	(874,482)	1,136,727	0	899,153	1,773,635	874,481	1,773,635	0	375,280	379,033	0
	Capital Reserve Unallocated C/fwd	0		(874,482)	(874,482)	(874,482)	0	1	0	(0)	0	0	(350,000)	(700,000)	(700,000)

APPENDIX C - GENERAL FUND CAPITAL STRATEGY

Cost Centre	Scheme	2021/2022						2022/2023					2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
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	Stevenage Direct Services														
	Parks & Open Spaces														
KC218	Hertford Road Play Area (S106 Funded)	25,000		25,000	0	25,000	0			0					
KE911	Play Area Improvement Programme	325,030	44,975	325,030	0	325,030	0	243,500	243,500	0	243,500	0	220,000		
GROWTH	Play Area Improvement Programme				0				25,515	25,515	25,515	0	24,220		
KE097	Litter bins	103,000	9,363	103,000	0	103,000	0	83,000	83,000	0	83,000	0	10,000	4,000	
KE329	Play Areas Fixed Play	40,810	22,741	40,810	0	40,810	0			0	0	0			
KE494	Green Space Access Infrastructure	100,000	91,624	100,000	0	100,000	0	201,000	201,000	0	201,000	0	128,000	128,000	
KE916	Peartree skate park	40,000		40,000	0	40,000	0			0	0	0			
KE917	Ridlins Athletics Facility	30,000		30,000	0	30,000	0			0	0	0			
	Other														
KG002	Garages	2,400,870	317,989	1,500,000	(900,870)	1,500,000	0	2,265,720	3,166,590	900,870	3,166,590	0	2,265,720		
KS263	Waste and Recycling System	43,900		20,000	(23,900)	20,000	0		23,900	23,900	23,900	0			
KE520	Welfare improvements at out based hubs	10,000		10,000	0	10,000	0			0	0	0			
KE914	FVP Dam Works	45,000		45,000	0	45,000	0			0	0	0			
KE915	Waste receptacles	40,000		40,000	0	40,000	0			0	0	0			
GROWTH	Flat block waste management infrastructure				0				30,000	30,000	30,000	0			
GROWTH	Water Tank and system, Shephalbury Bowls				0				15,000	15,000	0	(15,000)			
GROWTH	Shrub bed programme				0				133,000	133,000	133,000	0	133,000	133,000	133,000
GROWTH	Review of Biodiversity Action Plan				0				12,000	12,000	12,000	0			
GROWTH	Cemeteries System				0				50,000	50,000	50,000	0			
GROWTH	Provision for maintenance works at closed cemeteries				0				50,000	50,000	0	(50,000)	0	0	0
	Vehicles, Plant, Equipment														
KE349	Waste Receptacles	0		0	0	0	0			0	0	0			
KE497	Trade Waste Containers	40,000		40,000	0	40,000	0	20,000	20,000	0	20,000	0	20,000		
Various	Vehicle/Plant replacement Programme - see Appendix C1	442,742	24,735	442,742	0	365,242	(77,500)	431,400	1,393,000	961,600	680,500	(712,500)	1,525,500	0	
	Total Stevenage Direct Services	3,686,352	511,426	2,761,582	(924,770)	2,684,082	(77,500)	3,244,620	5,446,505	2,201,885	4,669,005	(777,500)	4,326,440	265,000	133,000
	Housing Development Scheme (Joint GF/HRA)														
KG032	Building Conversion into New Homes - Ditchmore Lane	0	(11,315)	0	0	0	0			0	0	0			
Various	Housing Development Schemes (Joint GF/HRA)	3,836,912	383,861	3,836,912	0	3,836,912	0	8,874,818	8,874,818	0	8,874,818	0	8,334,474	574,900	0
KG038	Wholly Owned Housing Development Company (WOC)*	3,214,147		3,214,147	0	3,214,147	0	4,381,789	4,381,789	0	4,381,789	0	169,244	0	0
	Total Housing Development (including grants to Registered P	7,051,059	372,546	7,051,059	0	7,051,059	0	13,256,607	13,256,607	0	13,256,607	0	8,503,718	574,900	0
	<i>*the capital programme includes £7.765Million for the WOC as per the reports to Executive in January 2021 and Council in February 2021, however members have approved up to £15Million</i>														

APPENDIX C - GENERAL FUND CAPITAL STRATEGY

Cost Centre	Scheme	2021/2022						2022/2023					2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
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	Finance & Estates														
	Estates														
KS278	New Management Software	75,000		75,000	0	75,000	0			0	0	0			
KR916	Commercial Properties Refurbishment (MRC Programme)	207,300		207,300	0	207,300	0	231,850	231,850	0	231,850	0	0		
KR150	Works to improve vacant premises prior to re-letting	55,000		55,000	0	55,000	0	15,000	15,000	0	15,000	0	15,000	15,000	
KR155	EPC Surveys	60,000		60,000	0	60,000	0	60,000	60,000	0	60,000	0			
KR156	EPC remedials	20,000		20,000	0	20,000	0		250,000	250,000	200,000	(50,000)			
KR157	Building condition and Insurance valuation Survey	75,000		75,000	0	75,000	0	75,000	75,000	0	75,000	0			
	Play Centres														
ON HOLD	St Nicholas play centre roof				0				30,000	30,000	0	(30,000)			
	Community Centres														
KE902	Community Centres General	1,820		1,820	0	1,820	0			0	0	0			
KE471	St Nicholas - Boiler and Hot Water Installation Upgrade	0		0	0	0	0			0	0	0			
KE515	St Nicholas Annexe - External Decorations	0		0	0	0	0			0	0	0			
KE472	The Oval - Replace Radiators	0		0	0	0	0			0	0	0			
KE499	The Oval - Replace Windows	0		0	0	0	0			0	0	0			
KE484	Springfield House - Boiler upgrade	0		0	0	0	0			0	0	0			
KE488	Springfield House - Boundary Wall	0		0	0	0	0			0	0	0			
KE528	Community Centres: 2019/20 Backlog H&S Works	15,000		15,000	0	15,000	0			0	0	0			
KE529	Community Centres Urgent and H&S Works	41,350		41,350	0	41,350	0	60,000	20,000	(40,000)	20,000	0			
KR159	St Nicholas POD removal	15,000		15,000	0	15,000	0			0	0	0			
GROWTH	Bedwell CC - Replace extract fans and electric heaters				0				5,000	5,000	5,000	0			
ON HOLD	Bedwell Community Centre roof fascia replacement				0				50,000	50,000	0	(50,000)			
ON HOLD	Chells Manor - boiler replacement and hot water works				0				50,000	50,000	0	(50,000)			
GROWTH	Douglas Drive day centre - replace electric wall heaters				0				10,000	10,000	0	(10,000)			
GROWTH	Bedwell Community Centre reroofing				0					0	0	0	125,000		
GROWTH	Chells manor - lightning upgrade				0					0	0	0	10,000		
GROWTH	St Nicholas Annex refurbish metal roof				0					0	0	0	60,000		
GROWTH	Timebridge - reroofing				0					0	0	0		85,000	
GROWTH	St Nicholas CC reroofing				0					0	0	0			125,000
	Neighbourhood Centres														
GROWTH	Bedwell Neighbourhood centre canopy repairs				0				30,000	30,000	30,000	0			
GROWTH	8-10 The glebe roof replacement				0				30,000	30,000	30,000	0			
ON HOLD	The Oval reroofing ('youth wing')				0				30,000	30,000	0	(30,000)			
GROWTH	Mobbsbury Way Neighbourhood Centre canopy reroofing				0					0	0	0			
GROWTH	The Glebe Neighbourhood Centre canopy reroofing				0					0	0	0		40,000	
GROWTH	The Oval - replace heaters in Hall and dining room				0					0	0	0			10,000

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	Estates cont.														
	Park Pavilions														
ON HOLD	St Nicholas Pavilion reroofing				0				150,000	150,000	0	(150,000)			
ON HOLD	St Nicholas Pavilion replace windows				0				75,000	75,000	0	(75,000)			
GROWTH	Peartree pavilion - reroofing				0					0	0	0	100,000		
GROWTH	KGV Pavilion Replace electric heating and lighting				0					0	0	0	20,000		
GROWTH	KGV reroofing and gutter replacement				0					0	0	0	75,000		
	Depots														
KE526	Depots: Urgent and H&S Works	339,900		125,000	(214,900)	125,000	0		374,900	374,900	374,900	0			
KE527	Depots: Planned Preventative Works (reroof)	469,330	0	30,000	(439,330)	30,000	0	55,000	280,000	225,000	280,000	0			
KE526	Cavendish Road Fire protection works	250,000		125,000	(125,000)	125,000	0		125,000	125,000	125,000	0			
KR160	Cavendish depot - IT server room - gas suppression air permeability prevention works	20,000		20,000	0	20,000	0			0	0	0			
KR161	Cavendish Depot IT/CCTV gas suppression works	40,000		40,000	0	40,000	0			0	0	0			
	Other														
Growth	MSCP: Urgent and H&S Works	0		0	0	0	0	20,000	20,000	0	20,000	0			
KE536	Multi Storey Car Park - Installation of emergency lighting	50,000		50,000	0	50,000	0			0	0	0			
KR158	Town Plaza	35,000		35,000	0	35,000	0			0	0	0			
	Fairlands valley farmhouse roofing works			35,000	35,000	35,000	0			0	0	0			
GROWTH	MSCP lighting upgrade - LED (phased)				0				75,000	75,000	75,000	0	75,000	75,000	
GROWTH	MSCP resurface worn stairwell floor				0				20,000	20,000	20,000	0	40,000		
GROWTH	MSCP / Indoor Market guttering				0				30,000	30,000	30,000	0			
	Council Offices														
KR900	Council Offices	0		0	0	0	0				0	0			
KR141	Corporate Buildings - Essential Health & Safety Electrical Work	0		0	0	0	0				0	0			
KR149	Daneshill House - Test & Risk Assessment Remedial Works	0		0	0	0	0				0	0			
KR151	Daneshill: 2019/20 Backlog Urgent and H&S Works	0	4,883	0	0	0	0			0	0	0	65,000		
	Daneshill: Urgent and H&S Works	58,190		58,190	0	58,190	0			0	0	0			
ON HOLD	Daneshill fire doors				0				150,000	150,000	0	(150,000)			
	Operational Buildings														
KE503	Indoor Market - Urgent Health & Safety Works	0	(1,047)	0	0	0	0			0	0	0			
KR152	BTC 2019/20 Backlog H&S Works	30,000		30,000	0	30,000	0			0	0	0			
KR153	BTC Urgent and H&S Works	80,300	17,302	80,300	0	80,300	0	6,000	6,000	0	6,000	0			
KR154	BTC Planned Preventative Works	455,830	7,600	455,830	0	455,830	0	172,000	172,000	0	172,000	0	0	0	
GROWTH	control upgrade and replacement of lift in the new block				0					0	0	0	195,000		
GROWTH	and workshops				0					0	0	0		150,000	
	Total Finance & Estates	2,394,020	28,738	1,649,790	(744,230)	1,649,790	0	694,850	2,364,750	1,669,900	1,769,750	(595,000)	780,000	365,000	135,000

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	Corporate Projects, Customer Services & Technology														
	IT General														
KS268	Infrastructure Investment	743,140	238,439	341,630	(401,510)	341,630	0	104,220	505,730	401,510	505,730	0	104,220	104,220	
KS318	Core ICT Equipment for Additional Staff	70,000		0	(70,000)	0	0		70,000	70,000	70,000	0			
GROWTH	Core ICT Equipment for Additional Staff			0	0				70,000	70,000	70,000	0			
KS319	2012 Migration Servers	26,130		0	(26,130)	0	0		26,130	26,130	26,130	0			
	Total IT General	839,270	238,439	341,630	(497,640)	341,630	0	104,220	671,860	567,640	671,860	0	104,220	104,220	
	Connected to Our Customer (CTOC)														
KS271	Corporate Website - Redesign	4,420	131	4,420	0	4,420	0	2,600	2,600	0	2,600	0			
KS274	New CRM Technology	53,140	2,500	53,140	0	53,140	0			0	0	0			
	Total CTOC	57,560	2,631	57,560	0	57,560	0	2,600	2,600	0	2,600	0	0	0	
	Total Corporate Projects, Customer Services & Technology	896,830	241,069	399,190	(497,640)	399,190	0	106,820	674,460	567,640	674,460	0	104,220	104,220	
	Regeneration														
KE384	Town Centre Improvements Phase 2 incl Wayfinding signage	0	11,997		0	0	0			0	0	0			
Various	Land Assembly (GD1)	0		800,000	800,000	800,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
KE439	Town Square Improvements (GD1)	0		0	0	0	0			0	0	0			
KE466	Bus Interchange (GD3)	3,499,970	3,200,209	3,799,970	300,000	3,799,970	0			0	0	0			
KE533	Multi Storey Car Park (GD3) 'Sustainable Transport'	172,630	68,846	172,630	0	172,630	0			0	0	0			
KE535	Town Fund Delivery - North Block fit-out	1,121,880	1,073,426	1,021,880	(100,000)	1,021,880	0			0	0	0			
KE506	Public Sector Hub	900,000			(900,000)	0	0	2,474,000	5,000,000	2,526,000	5,000,000	0			
	Repay LEP Site Assembly loan	210,000		210,000	0	210,000	0			0	0	0			
KE541	Railway Station Multi-Storey Car Park			400,000	400,000	400,000	0		3,100,000	3,100,000	3,100,000	0			
KE538	Towns Fund	1,875,000		1,875,000		1,875,000	0				0	0			
	Total Regeneration	7,779,480	4,356,006	8,279,480	500,000	8,279,480	0	2,474,000	8,100,000	5,626,000	8,100,000	0	0	0	
	Community & Neighbourhoods														
KC900	Arts and Leisure Centre - Pipework	0	1,067	0	0	0	0			0	0	0			
KC202	Fairlands Valley Park - Aqua	11,360		11,360	0	11,360	0			0	0	0			
KC224	Leisure Stock Condition	0		0	0	0	0	20,000	20,000	0	20,000	0			
KC230	Pin Green Play Centre Equipment	20,000	910	20,000	0	20,000	0			0	0	0			
KE224	CCTV - Replacement Cameras (Community mobile cameras)	4,670	4,371	4,670	0	4,670	0	5,000	5,000	0	5,000	0	5,000	5,000	
KE507	Cycleways Installations (subject to £100k Arts Council grant bid)	10,000		10,000	0	10,000	0			0	0	0			
KC232	SALC and the Swim Centre Urgent and H&S Works	241,460		241,460	0	241,460	0	100,000	100,000	0	100,000	0	45,000		
KC231	SALC, Swim Centre, and Fairlands Valley Sailing Centre	19,950		19,950	0	19,950	0			0	0	0			
KC233	Stevenage Arts & Leisure Water leak - Reroofing	30,000	980	30,000	0	30,000	0			0	0	0			
GROWTH	Stevenage Swimming Centre Pool circulation pumps	0		0	0	0	0			0	0	0		15,000	
GROWTH	Stevenage Swimming Centre Electrical distribution boards	0		0	0	0	0			0	0	0	0		

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	C&N cont.															
GROWTH	SLL Leisure management - end of contract capital provision							150,000	150,000	0	150,000	0				
KC235	Boat house as essential H&S works for dry rot	27,000	961	27,000	0	27,000	0			0	0	0				
GROWTH	Ridlins Athletics				0			100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	0				
GROWTH	Fire stopping works at SALC				0			100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	0				
GROWTH	Lift replacement at SALC				0			140,000	140,000	140,000	140,000	0				
GROWTH	Replacement bridge at Golf Centre & other bridge works				0			90,000	90,000	90,000	90,000	0				
GROWTH	Replacement Camera programme				0			25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	0	35,000	40,000	10,000	
GROWTH	ASB team mobile camera				0			5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	0	5,000	5,000	5,000	
	Total Community & Neighbourhoods	364,440	8,288	364,440	0	364,440	0	275,000	735,000	460,000	735,000	0	90,000	65,000	15,000	
	Planning & Regulatory															
KE119	Off Street Car Parks (Multi Storey Car Parks)	278,560	171,820	278,560	0	278,560	0	215,000	215,000	0	215,000	0	250,000	250,000		
KE530	Car Park Equipment - Digitalisation	20,000		20,000	0	20,000	0			0	0	0				
KE516	Town Centre Ramps Improvements	10,000	9,598	10,000	0	10,000	0			0	0	0				
KE201	Hard standings	25,000	75	25,000	0	25,000	0	25,000	25,000	0	25,000	0	25,000	25,000		
KE100	Residential Parking	23,160		23,160	0	23,160	0			0	0	0				
KE470	Electric Car Charging Points	2,630		2,630	0	2,630	0			0	0	0				
KE217	Parking Restrictions	17,550	2,317	17,550	0	17,550	0	15,000	15,000	0	15,000	0	15,000	15,000		
KE444	Coreys Mill Lane - Additional Parking Capacity	26,000	1,529	26,000	0	26,000	0			0	0	0				
KE531	Workplace Travel Plan	15,000		15,000	0	15,000	0	15,000	15,000	0	15,000	0	15,000	15,000		
GROWTH	SBC grants to businesses to reduce their carbon emissions				0			8,000	8,000	8,000	0	(8,000)	0	0	0	0
GROWTH	Cashless on street parking transition	0		0	0	0	0			0	0	0	60,000	60,000		
	Total Planning & Regulatory	417,900	185,338	417,900	0	417,900	0	270,000	278,000	8,000	270,000	(8,000)	365,000	365,000	0	
KR911	Deferred Works Reserve	23,310		82,640	59,330	82,640	0	200,000	200,000	0	1,035,000	835,000	200,000	200,000		

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Cost Centre	Scheme	2021/2022					2022/2023			2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	
		Working Budget £	Actual to 27 September 2021 £	January Draft Budget £	Variance Working v Draft Budget £	February Final Revised Budget £	Variance Draft v Final Budget £	January Draft Budget £	February Final Revised Budget £	Variance Draft v Final Budget £	February Final Revised Budget £	February Final Revised Budget £	February Final Revised Budget £
	SUMMARY												
	Capital Programme Excluding New Build Special Projects & Equipment	27,069,080	4,430,521	27,069,080		27,069,080		21,382,220	21,382,220		17,155,630	15,082,650	
	New Build (Housing Development)	25,806,040	6,527,976	25,806,040		25,806,040		42,877,360	42,877,360		19,954,250	13,659,140	4,615,470
	Digital & Transformation	822,510	50,389	620,900	(201,610)	620,900		381,680	381,680		51,330	51,330	
	TOTAL HRA CAPITAL PROGRAMME	53,857,120	11,003,538	53,655,510	(201,610)	53,655,510		64,666,260	64,666,260		37,186,210	28,818,120	4,615,470
	HRA USE OF RESOURCES												
BH930	MRR (Self Financing Depreciation)	8,237,760		14,350,383	6,112,623	14,350,383		20,376,168	20,376,168		15,114,825	12,381,197	
BH902	Land Receipts	1,433,500		1,433,500		1,433,500		6,450,000	6,450,000				
BH902	Unpooled Receipts												
BH901	New Build Receipts	9,277,820		4,833,462	(4,444,358)	4,833,462		11,931,396	11,931,396		3,902,093	4,216,786	
BH903	Debt Provision Receipts	898,217		898,217		898,217		936,391	936,391		975,881	1,058,398	
BH905	Section 20 Contribution							500,000	500,000		955,094	567,636	
	Borrowing	29,547,303		29,547,303		29,547,303		15,640,000	15,640,000		11,980,000		
	S106			302,825	302,825	302,825							
	Developer Contributions (Kenilworth)	3,531,960			(3,531,960)			4,728,545	4,728,545				
	Revenue Contribution to Capital			1,359,260	1,359,260	1,359,260		2,203,760	2,203,760		4,258,317	10,594,103	4,615,470
	Buy Back Allowance												
	Grant	930,560		930,560		930,560		1,900,000	1,900,000				
	TOTAL HRA RESOURCES FOR CAPITAL	53,857,120		53,655,510	(201,610)	53,655,510		64,666,260	64,666,260		37,186,210	28,818,120	4,615,470
					0								
	Major Repair Reserve Bought Forward (BH930)	(14,318,529)		(14,318,529)		(14,318,529)		(11,452,146)	(11,452,146)		(2,976,397)	(0)	
	Depreciation (increasing MRR)	(12,843,261)		(11,484,000)	1,359,260	(11,484,000)		(11,900,420)	(11,900,420)		(12,138,428)	(12,381,197)	
	MRR Used (decreasing MRR)	8,237,760		14,350,383	6,112,623	14,350,383		20,376,168	20,376,168		15,114,825	12,381,197	
	Major Repair Reserve Carried Forward	(18,924,029)		(11,452,146)	7,471,883	(11,452,146)		(2,976,397)	(2,976,397)		(0)	(0)	
	Total RTB Receipts Bought Forward	(10,893,204)		(10,893,204)	0	(10,893,204)		(8,197,749)	(8,197,749)		(101)	1	0
	Total RTB Receipts Received	(4,469,724)		(4,469,724)		(4,469,724)		(11,120,139)	(11,120,139)		(4,877,871)	(5,275,185)	
	Total RTB Receipts Used by HRA & General Fund (for RP)	10,176,037		7,165,179	(3,010,858)	7,165,179		19,317,787	19,317,787		4,877,974	5,275,184	
	Total RTB Receipts Carried Forward	(5,186,891)		(8,197,749)	(3,010,858)	(8,197,749)		(101)	(101)		1	0	0

Cost Centre	Scheme	2021/2022					2022/2023			2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
		Working Budget £	Actual to 27 September 2021 £	January Draft Budget £	Variance Working v Draft Budget £	February Final Revised Budget £	Variance Draft v Final Budget £	January Draft Budget £	February Final Revised Budget £	Variance Draft v Final Budget £	February Final Revised Budget £	February Final Revised Budget £
	CAPITAL PROGRAMME EXCL. NEW BUILD											
	Planned Investment including Decent Homes											
KH157	Decent Homes - Redecs		34									
Various	Decent Homes - Internal/External Works	3,060,000	325,462	3,060,000		3,060,000		2,257,060	2,257,060		5,450,000	6,750,000
Various	Decent Homes External Works											
Various	Decent Homes - Roofing											
Various	Decent Homes - Flat Blocks	13,301,930	2,732,671	13,301,930		13,301,930		11,000,000	11,000,000		6,600,000	2,000,000
KH205	Communal Heating	2,681,560	582,523	2,681,560		2,681,560						
KH092	Lift Installation - Inspection & Remedial Works	941,550	203,267	941,550		941,550		300,000	300,000			
KH287	Temporary Lift Provision - Flat Blocks											
KH291	Sprinkler Systems - Flat Blocks	2,628,410	27,379	2,628,410		2,628,410						
KH294	High Rises - Preliminary Works	46,590	533	46,590		46,590						
Future Year	High Rises - Improvement Works							1,750,000	1,750,000		1,750,000	1,750,000
Future Year	New Schemes to be created										215,260	
	Health & Safety											
KH085	Fire Safety	444,090	33,573	444,090		444,090		85,000	85,000		85,000	500,000
KH311	Additional fire stopping works		9,778					877,070	877,070		917,420	959,620
KH110	Asbestos Management	300,000	92,057	300,000		300,000		300,000	300,000		300,000	300,000
KH111	Subsidence	101,290	26,883	101,290		101,290		100,000	100,000		100,000	100,000
KH114	Contingent Major Repairs	399,670	67,005	399,670		399,670		340,000	340,000		365,440	500,000
	Estate & Communal Area											
KH223	Asset Review - Challenging Assets	856,780	81,348	856,780		856,780		857,770	857,770		857,770	857,770
KH224	Asset Review - Sheltered (non RED)		21,716									
	Other HRA Schemes											
KH318	Stock condition Surveys	60,000	685	60,000		60,000		60,000	60,000		60,000	80,000
KH174	Energy Efficiency Pilot Projects	1,397,210	25,343	1,397,210		1,397,210		20,000	20,000		20,000	420,000
KH094	Disabled Adaptations	850,000	200,265	850,000		850,000		585,320	585,320		650,000	650,000
GROWTH	Decarbonisation							2,550,000	2,550,000			
GROWTH	Decarbonisation							300,000	300,000			
	TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME EXCL. NEW BUILD	27,069,080	4,430,521	27,069,080		27,069,080		21,382,220	21,382,220		17,155,630	15,082,650
	SPECIAL PROJECTS & EQUIPMENT											
	HRA Equipment											
KH015	Capital Equipment (including Supported Housing Equip)		(5,348)									
GROWTH	Capital Equipment (including Supported Housing Equip)	44,150		44,150		44,150		25,000	25,000		25,000	25,000
KH278	Vans for RVS	115,340		115,340		115,340						
	Sub Total Special Projects & Equipment	159,490	(5,348)	159,490		159,490		25,000	25,000		25,000	25,000

Cost Centre	Scheme	2021/2022						2022/2023			2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
		Working Budget £	Actual to 27 September 2021 £	January Draft Budget £	Variance Working v Draft Budget £	February Final Revised Budget £	Variance Draft v Final Budget £	January Draft Budget £	February Final Revised Budget £	Variance Draft v Final Budget £	February Final Revised Budget £	February Final Revised Budget £	February Final Revised Budget £
	CAPITAL PROGRAMME NEW BUILD												
	New Build Programme - eligible for 1-4-1	23,194,550	4,755,132	23,194,550		23,194,550		30,730,990	30,730,990		18,268,990	13,225,780	4,615,470
	New Build Programme - ineligible	2,611,490	1,772,843	2,611,490		2,611,490		12,146,370	12,146,370		1,685,260	433,360	
	Build for sale												
	TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME NEW BUILD	25,806,040	6,527,976	25,806,040		25,806,040		42,877,360	42,877,360		19,954,250	13,659,140	4,615,470
	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY												
	IT General (IT)												
KH268	Infrastructure Investment	327,010	2,598	168,270	(158,740)	168,270		210,070	210,070		51,330	51,330	
KH315	Core ICT Equipment for Additional Staff	30,000			(30,000)			60,000	60,000				
KH316	2012 Migration Servers	12,870			(12,870)			12,870	12,870				
	Total General IT	369,880	2,598	168,270	(201,610)	168,270		282,940	282,940		51,330	51,330	
	HRA												
KH267	ICT Programme (Business Plan)	6,830	17,000	6,830		6,830							
GROWTH	ICT Programme (Business Plan)	72,380		72,380		72,380							
KH265	Tablets		(3,913)										
	Total Other HRA	79,210	13,087	79,210		79,210							
	Connected To Our Customers (CTOC)												
KH271	Corporate Website - Redesign	2,280	68	2,280		2,280		1,330	1,330				
KH288	New CRM Technology (Digital Platform)	137,710	33,436	137,710		137,710		97,410	97,410				
	Total CTOC	139,990	33,504	139,990		139,990		98,740	98,740				
	Housing All Under One Roof programme (HAUOR)												
KH283	Housing Improvements - Northgate online	80,660	1,200	80,660		80,660							
GROWTH	Housing Improvements - Northgate online	21,870		21,870		21,870							
KH260	On-Line Housing Application Form - RAPID KZ107	42,910		42,910		42,910							
GROWTH	On-Line Housing Application Form - RAPID KZ107	9,090		9,090		9,090							
KH286	Housing Document Mgt System (Repairs end to end)	46,460		46,460		46,460							
GROWTH	Housing Document Mgt System (Repairs end to end)	32,440		32,440		32,440							
	Total HAUOR	233,430	1,200	233,430		233,430							
	TOTAL ICT INCLUDING DIGITAL AGENDA	822,510	50,389	620,900	-201,610	620,900		381,680	381,680		51,330	51,330	

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APPENDIX E: Investment Strategy

Compliance with the main requirements of the Government's Statutory Guidance on Local Authority Investments (MHCLG, 2018) is shown by cross reference in square brackets to the relevant paragraph of the Guidance.

1. Scope and Purpose of Strategy

1.1. "Investments" covers financial investments, including loans and shares, which have been made to support service and commercial objectives. Non-financial investments such as commercial property are included where the main objective is financial return [4]. The purchase of Essex House was an investment made with the objective of financial return, the other properties in the Council's asset register listed as Investment Buildings, such as Neighbourhood Centres and Workshops, fall outside of this strategy. Investments taken for treasury management reasons also fall outside of this strategy and are covered in the Treasury Management Strategy and Policy.

1.2. This strategy sets out the Council's approach to such investments, including their governance, addressing the Government Guidance on Local Authority Investments.

1.3. Investment values provided in this Appendix are the book values in the Council's accounts, unless otherwise stated.

2. Objectives of the Strategy

2.1. To use investments where appropriate and prudent to support the Council's Future Town Future Council (FTFC) aims, including regeneration of the town centre, housing delivery and co-operative neighbourhood management.

2.2. To ensure that investment decisions and management connects with the Council's Financial Security priority, to achieve financial stability for the council so that it maintains a prudent level of balances, while at the same time being able to deliver on the FTFC aims.

2.3. To review existing investments with a view to maximising the commercial return from them.

2.4. To manage risks in accordance with the Council's risk appetite and financial circumstances (including due diligence when making investment decisions).

2.5. To ensure that all commercial investments, actions and decisions are ethical in nature and have a positive impact on the community, delivering additional social value and contributing to community wealth building where possible.

3. The Existing Investment Portfolio

3.1. The Council's service and commercial investments are as follows

Table One: Service and Commercial investments			
Name	Value 31/03/20 £'000	Equity Share %	Reason for Investment
Hertfordshire CCTV Ltd	£43 (of £118)	37%	Service investment - Equity
Hertfordshire Building Control Ltd	Not available	12.5%	Service investment - Equity
Hertfordshire Building Control Ltd	£107		Service investment – Long Term Loan
Queensway Properties (Stevenage) LLP	£1,491.5 [of £1.493]	99.9%	Service investment - Equity NB the 0.1% is owned by Marshgate PLC so by SBC but indirectly
Queensway Properties (Stevenage) LLP	£11,824		Service investment – Finance Lease
Queensway Properties (Stevenage) LLP	£6,274	N/A	Service investment - Long Term Loan
Marshgate Ltd	£0	100%	Service investment - Equity
UK Municipal Bonds Agency	£10	0.14%	Service investment - Equity
Essex House	£1,756	N/A	Commercial investment - Property

3.2. The value of financial investments at 31 March 2021 was £91.2Million comprising service and commercial investments of £21.5Million (in Table one) and Treasury Investments of £69.7Million.

4. Investment Policy and Strategy 2021/22+

4.1. Joint working and joint delivery arrangements are key to the provision of Council services. Financial investments are likely to be an ongoing result of these delivery arrangements.

4.2. The Council recognises that all investments carry the risk of financial loss and an estimate of potential losses needs to be identified from the outset.

4.3. The Council will be particularly cautious where service investments are funded wholly or partly from borrowing. Debt “gearing” creates additional costs of interest and repayment. It creates a fixed liability and a fixed repayment obligation, whilst the investment's value and income are at risk.

4.4. There remains no scope for the Council to enter into any new, purely commercial, investments, following the change of the lending terms for the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) in November 2020. The Council cannot have any scheme in the Capital Strategy where the investment is purely for financial gain,

regardless of whether the transaction would notionally be financed from a source other than the PWLB, or the Council will not be eligible to borrow from the PWLB.

4.5. The Council's risk appetite in relation to new investments is low, including the need to balance the revenue budget and manage the level of debt financing costs. Any new investments will therefore be expected to:

- Show a compelling contribution to the Council's core objectives and planned service strategies, and must be prioritised within the Council's available resources.
- Evidence a low financial risk with a commensurate financial return, or if returns are below commercial levels, provide clear non-financial benefits to the Council which demonstrate strong value for money.
- Strike a prudent balance between security, liquidity and yield (whilst recognising that the delivery of strong service benefits may sometimes justify a higher financial risk) [29].

4.6. Any shortfall in budgeted net income from service and existing commercial investments will be managed through the Council's regular budget monitoring processes [44].

4.7. The arrangements for realising investments and managing liquidity risk will depend on the purpose and nature of the investment in each case. Where investments have been made to support service purposes and have been funded from cash resources, there is not a funding pressure to have an investment exit route in place. Where investments are funded by borrowing, the Council's MRP Policy sets out the arrangements to repay debt without resorting to a sale of the investments [42-43].

5. Financial Investment Plans and Limits for 2021/22+

5.1. The forecast changes to the existing investment portfolio are

- to invest in the new Housing Wholly Owned Company (WOC), following approval of the report by Executive in January 2021, which provided an update on planned activity. Loan agreements between the Council and Marshgate are currently being agreed (the new Housing WOC is an expansion of Marshgate PLC).
- financing for a further finance lease to Queensway LLP for the residential phase of development.

5.2. The main financial risk when investing in loans and equity is that the loan repayments are not made, and that the shares lose value or dividends are less than expected.

5.3. Investments may also carry liquidity risk, which is the risk that funds may be tied up in investments and not available if needed for other purposes. The Council's due diligence procedures for investments review liquidity risk, including how exit routes

have been considered and the appropriate maximum period for investments to be committed [42].

6. Investment Indicators

6.1. The Key Performance Indicators approved by the Commercial & Investment Executive Committee following the convening in October 2020, the use of which is recommended by the Government Guidance [23]:

Table Two: Key Performance Indicators	
Reporting Category	Reporting Metric
Overarching Commercial Key Performance Indicators	
KPI 1 - Increase in revenue from fees and charges	Percentage (%)
KPI 2 – Current partnerships for cost savings or income generation	Number (no.)
KPI 3 – Income generated or costs saved through commercial activities	Monetary (£)
KPI 4 – Additional savings from insourcing services/functions	Monetary (£)
KPI 5 - Commercial business cases on track to deliver business case (approved and live)	Number (no.)
KPI 6 - Social value generated through commercial activity	Narrative
KPI 7 - Staff trained in contract management	Number (no.)
KPI 8 - Staff reporting confidence in commercial decision making	Number (no.)
Area specific Key Performance Indicators	
KPI 9 -Income from car parking	Monetary (£)
KPI 10 - Income from small land sales	Monetary (£)
KPI 11 - Income from commercial property	Monetary (£)
KPI 12 - New commercial property lets	Number (no.)
KPI 13 - Return from commercial assets/yield from acquisitions and investments	Percentage (%)
KPI 14 - Occupied garages as a percentage of stock	Percentage (%)
KPI 15 - Garages refurbished due to the Garage Improvement Programme (GIP)	Number (no.)
KPI 16 - Indoor Market occupied units (excluding those hired at charitable rates)	Percentage (%)
KPI 17 - New businesses setting up in the Indoor Market	Number (no.)
KPI 18 - Level of footfall in the Indoor Market	Number (no.)
KPI 19 - Trade waste gains and losses	Monetary (£)

7. Governance

7.1. The Commercial & Investment Executive Working Group has been formed to provide strategic leadership, to build a robust commercial culture and support the development of Co-operative Commercial and Insourcing programmes of work. The Working Group makes recommendations to the Executive and encourages the organisation to work commercially and efficiently, achieving value for money, and delivering the Co-operative Commercial and Insourcing Strategy.

7.2. The Working Group's Terms of Reference are:

To advise and make recommendations to the Executive on the following:

- 1.0 New income streams and commercial business cases (including those that are key decisions).
- 2.0 Financial resources where necessary to progress commercial projects.
- 3.0 Individual Schemes within the Programme.
- 4.0 The development of new opportunities through establishing a risk appetite that stimulates the evaluation of new emerging markets and opportunities.
- 5.0 Documents relating to the Co-operative Commercial and Insourcing Strategy and regularly review the Strategy.
- 6.0 The delivery of approved business cases and all aspects of the Co-operative Commercial and Insourcing Strategy.
- 7.0 Strategic leadership to build a robust commercial culture.
- 8.0 Key performance indicators of all income generating functions.
- 9.0 Key commercial arrangements including contracts, contract and performance management processes and major service developments and track the progress of such developments.

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Meeting Audit/ Executive/ Council
Portfolio Area Resources
Date 08 February/ 09 February/ 24 February 2022



ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY INCLUDING PRUDENTIAL CODE INDICATORS 2022/23

NON KEY DECISION

Author –Belinda White Ext 2430
Contributors – Lee Busby Ext.2933
Lead Officer – Clare Fletcher
Contact Officer – Clare Fletcher

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To recommend to Council the approval of the Treasury Management Strategy 2022/23, including its Annual Investment Strategy, Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy following considerations from Audit and Executive committees.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- 2.1 Subject to any comments from Audit Committee and Executive, the Treasury Management Strategy is recommended to Council for approval.
- 2.2 Members approve the Prudential Indicators for 2022/23.
- 2.3 Members approve the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council is required to operate a balanced budget, which broadly means that cash raised during the year will meet cash expenditure. Part of the treasury management operation is to ensure that this cash flow is adequately planned, with cash being available when it is needed. Surplus monies are

invested in low-risk counterparties or instruments commensurate with the Council's low risk appetite, providing adequate liquidity initially before considering investment return.

3.2 The second main function of the treasury management service is the funding of the Council's capital plans. These capital plans provide a guide to the borrowing need of the Council, essentially the longer-term cash flow planning, to ensure that the Council can meet its capital spending obligations. This management of longer-term cash may involve arranging long or short-term loans or using longer-term cash flow surpluses. On occasion, when it is prudent and economic, any debt previously drawn may be restructured to meet Council risk or cost objectives.

3.3 The contribution the treasury management function makes to the authority is critical, as the balance of debt and investment operations ensure liquidity or the ability to meet spending commitments as they fall due, either on day-to-day revenue or for larger capital projects. The treasury operations will see a balance of the interest costs of debt and the investment income arising from cash deposits affecting the available budget. Since cash balances generally result from reserves and balances, it is paramount to ensure adequate security of the sums invested, as a loss of principal will in effect result in a loss to the General Fund Balance.

3.4 CIPFA defines treasury management as:

"The management of the local authority's borrowing, investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks."

3.5 Whilst any commercial initiatives or loans to third parties will impact on the treasury function, these activities are generally classed as non-treasury activities, (arising usually from capital expenditure), and are separate from the day-to-day treasury management activities.

3.6 Reporting

3.6.1 The Council is required to receive and approve (as a minimum) three main treasury reports each year. The annual treasury management strategy including the Prudential Indicators (this report) is forward looking, it is the first and most important of the three and includes:

- Treasury Management Strategy
- Investment Strategy
- Capital Plans and Prudential Indicators
- Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy

3.6.2 The second is the mid-year treasury management report – this is primarily a progress report and will update members on the capital position, amending Prudential Indicators as necessary, and whether any policies require revision.

3.6.3 The third is the annual treasury report – this is a backward looking review document and provides details of a selection of actual prudential and

treasury indicators and actual treasury operations compared to the estimates within the strategy.

- 3.6.4 Before being recommended to Council the reports are required to be adequately scrutinised, and this is undertaken by the Audit Committee and Executive.

3.7 Treasury Management Strategy for 2022/23

- 3.7.1 The strategy for 2022/23 covers two main areas:

Capital issues

- i) the capital programme and the associated Prudential Indicators;
- ii) the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy.

Treasury management issues

- i) the current treasury position;
- ii) treasury indicators which limit the treasury risk and activities of the Council;
- iii) prospects for interest rates;
- iv) the borrowing strategy;
- v) policy on borrowing in advance of need;
- vi) the investment strategy;
- vii) creditworthiness policy; and
- viii) the policy on use of external service providers.

These elements cover the requirements of: the Local Government Act 2003; the CIPFA Prudential Code; the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC, formerly the MHCLG) MRP Guidance; the CIPFA Treasury Management Code; and DLUHC Investment Guidance.

- 3.7.2 The Council's Capital Strategy is reported separately from the Treasury Management Strategy. Non-treasury investments are reported through the former, ensuring the separation of the core treasury function under security, liquidity and yield principles, and the policy and commercialism investments usually driven by expenditure on an asset.

- 3.7.3 The contribution of Treasury Management to the Council is critical, as the balance of debt and investment operations ensure liquidity or the ability to meet spending commitments as they fall due, either on day-to-day revenue or for larger capital projects. Treasury operations will see a balance of the interest costs of debt and the investment income arising from cash deposits affecting the available budget. Since cash balances generally result from reserves and balances, it is paramount to ensure adequate security of the sums invested, as a loss of principal will in effect result in a loss to the General Fund Balance.

- 3.7.4 The returns achievable on the Council's investments are currently modest based on the low Bank of England base rate and the risk appetite of the TM Strategy, which is compliant with the advice from the Council's treasury advisors, Link Asset Management. The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) raised the Bank of England base rate (Bank Rate) on 16 December 2021 to 0.25%, the first increase since it was cut to 0.10% on 19 March 2020 in response to the Coronavirus pandemic. In 2021/22 investment returns of 0.35% are forecast with a target of 0.58% for 2022/23.
- 3.7.5 The UK left the European Union on 31 January 2020 and an exit deal was agreed between the UK and the EU just before the end of the transition period on 31 December 2020. The initial agreement with the EU only covered trade, so further work remains on the services sector. However if the UK invokes article 16 of the Brexit deal over the dislocation in trading arrangements with Northern Ireland, this has the potential to result in a no-deal Brexit. Trade agreements are also still to be agreed with other countries. Brexit is likely to lead to a long-term structural change in the UK economy, impacting areas such as trade, investment and immigration. The HRA and General Fund capital strategies both have significant borrowing requirements over the next few years and officers continue to monitor movements in the borrowing rates.

4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION AND OTHER OPTIONS

- 4.1 Legislative and other changes impacting on the Treasury management strategy
- 4.1.1 Revised Treasury Management and Prudential Codes were issued by CIPFA on 20 December 2021. CIPFA has stated that there will be a soft introduction of the codes with local authorities not being expected to have to change their current draft TMSS/AIS reports for 2022/23 unless they wish to do that. Full implementation will be required for 2023/24. The revised codes will have the following implications:
- a requirement for the Council to adopt a new debt liability benchmark treasury indicator to support the financing risk management of the capital financing requirement
 - clarify what CIPFA expects a local authority to borrow for and what they do not view as appropriate. This will include the requirement to set a proportionate approach to commercial and service capital investment
 - address ESG issues within the Capital Strategy
 - require implementation of a policy to review commercial property, with a view to divest where appropriate
 - create new Investment Practices to manage risks associated with non-treasury investment (similar to the current Treasury Management Practices)

- ensure that any long term treasury investment is supported by a business model
- a requirement to effectively manage liquidity and longer term cash flow requirements
- amendment to TMP1 to address ESG policy within the treasury management risk framework
- amendment to the knowledge and skills register for individuals involved in the treasury management function - to be proportionate to the size and complexity of the treasury management conducted by each council
- a new requirement to clarify reporting requirements for service and commercial investment, (especially where supported by borrowing/leverage)

In addition, all investments and investment income must be attributed to one of the following three purposes:

Treasury management

Arising from the organisation's cash flows or treasury risk management activity, this type of investment represents balances which are only held until the cash is required for use. Treasury investments may also arise from other treasury risk management activity which seeks to prudently manage the risks, costs or income relating to existing or forecast debt or treasury investments.

Service delivery

Investments held primarily and directly for the delivery of public services including housing, regeneration and local infrastructure. Returns on this category of investment which are funded by borrowing are permitted only in cases where the income is "either related to the financial viability of the project in question or otherwise incidental to the primary purpose".

Commercial return

Investments held primarily for financial return with no treasury management or direct service provision purpose. Risks on such investments should be proportionate to a council's financial capacity – i.e., that 'plausible losses' could be absorbed in budgets or reserves without unmanageable detriment to local services. An authority must not borrow to invest primarily for financial return.

As this Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy deals solely with treasury management investments, the categories of service delivery and commercial investments are dealt with as part of the Capital Strategy report. Members will be updated on how all the Code changes will impact our current approach and any changes required will be formally adopted within the 2023/24 TMSS report.

- 4.1.2 The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC, formerly MHCLG) is proposing to tighten up regulations around local authorities financing capital expenditure on investments in commercial projects for yield and has already closed access to all PWLB borrowing if such schemes are included in an authority's capital programme, under the revised lending terms published in November 2020. The new CIPFA codes have also adopted a similar set of restrictions to discourage further capital expenditure on commercial investments for yield. However, this does not mean that local authorities may not currently have the legal powers to undertake such capital expenditure despite such guidance and regulation.
- 4.1.3 The DLUHC is also conducting a consultation on amending MRP rules for England. Details of the proposals are set out in paragraph 4.7.1.
- 4.1.4 Each Local Authority is asked to submit a high-level description of their capital spending and financing plans for the following three years, including their expected use of the PWLB. As part of this, the PWLB will ask the CFO to confirm that there is no intention to buy investment assets primarily for yield at any point in the next three years. This assessment is based on the CFO's professional interpretation of guidance issued alongside the PWLB lending terms. Local Authorities cannot have any scheme in the Capital Strategy where the investment is primarily for financial gain, regardless of whether the transaction would notionally be financed from a source other than the PWLB. If they have such a scheme then the Council will not be eligible to borrow from the PWLB meaning they will no longer be able to access borrowing at favourable rates.

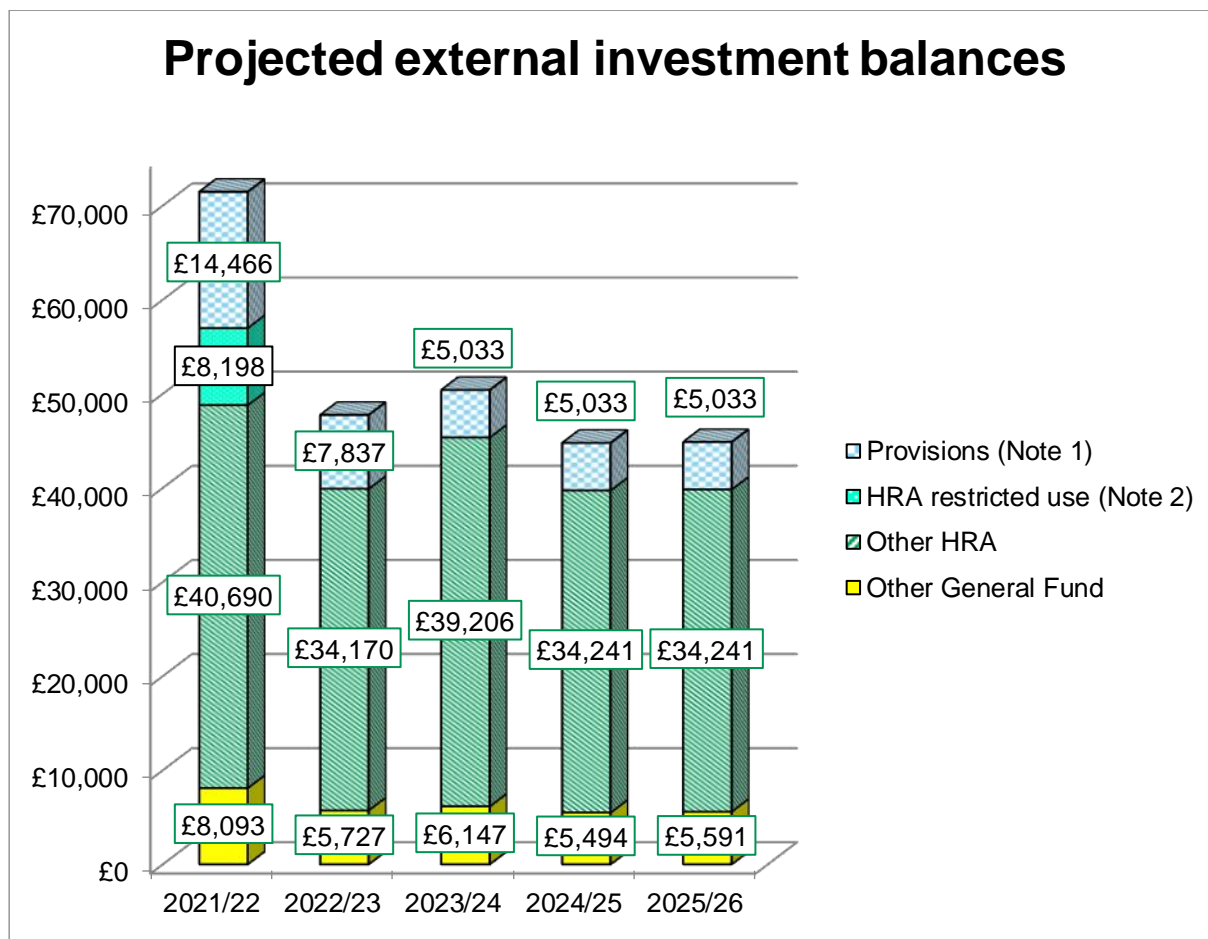
4.2 Comments from the Audit Committee and Executive

- 4.2.1 The report will be updated with any considerations from the Audit Committee meeting of 8 February and presentation at the Executive meeting of 9 February. The Council's cashflow will also been updated if needed in line with the latest General Fund Budget and Capital Strategy reports.

4.3 Performance of Current Treasury Strategy

- 4.3.1 For the financial year 2021/22 to 31 December 2021 returns on investments have averaged 0.34% and total interest earned was £201,159 contributing to General Fund and Housing Revenue Account revenue income.
- 4.3.2 Cash balances as at 31 December 2021 were £79.93Million and are forecast to be £71.4Million as at 31 March 2022. The Council's balances are made up of cash reserves e.g. HRA and General Fund balances, restricted use receipts e.g. right to buy one for one receipts and balances held for provisions such as business rate appeals. The cash balances figure available for investment of £71.4Million is less than the total forecast Reserves and Balances figure of £82.0Million because the HRA and the General Fund have used balances totalling £10.5Million in lieu of external borrowing due to low interest rates leading to a poor return on investments (see also paragraph 4.6.8).
- 4.3.3 In considering the Council's level of cash balances, Members should note that the General Fund MTFs and Capital Strategy have a planned use of resources over a minimum of 5 years and the HRA Business Plan (HRA BP) a planned use of resources over a 30 year period, which means, while not

committed in the current year; they are required in future years. This means that the Council's cash for investment purposes of £71.4Million as at 31 March 2022 is going to be used for revenue and capital plans approved by Members. This impact on cash available to invest is shown in the chart below.



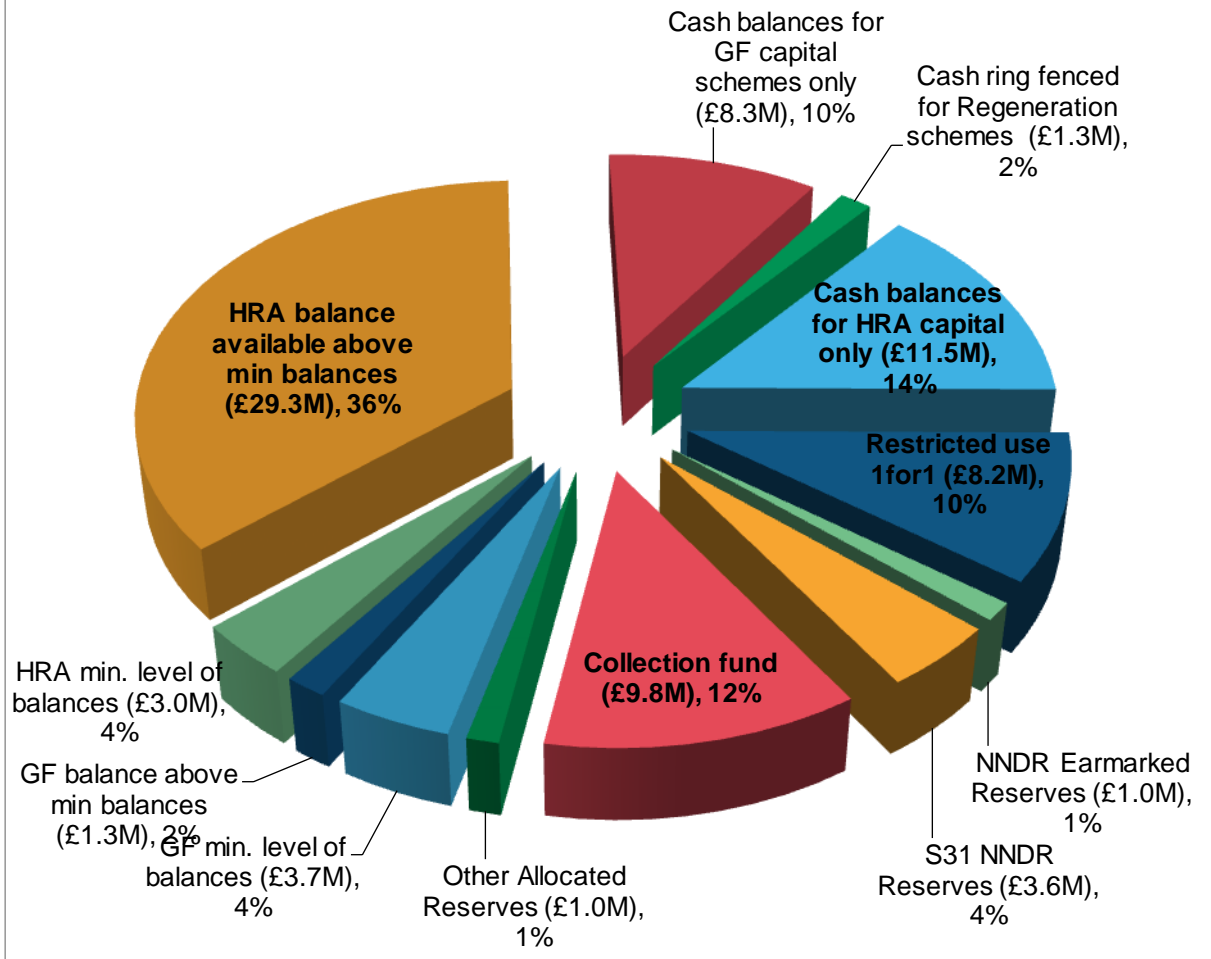
Note 1: Council Tax & NNDR (Business Rates) held for bad debts and appeals

Note 2: Right to buy (RTB) new build receipts

4.3.4 The balances projected to be held as at 31 March 2022 include balances invested that cannot be used to run services. These include balances related to restricted RTB receipts which in 2021/22 total £8.2Million. There are also balances held for future events such as business rate appeals yet to be realised and again these balances cannot be used to fund services.

4.3.5 The majority of balances are provisions for the repayment of HRA debt and other liabilities (35.8%) and to fund the Council's capital programme (34.1%, which includes 10.0% restricted RTB receipts for new builds). Despite these sums held for the capital programme, external borrowing is still required as detailed in the 2022/23 capital strategy report. The forecast balances are summarised in the following chart.

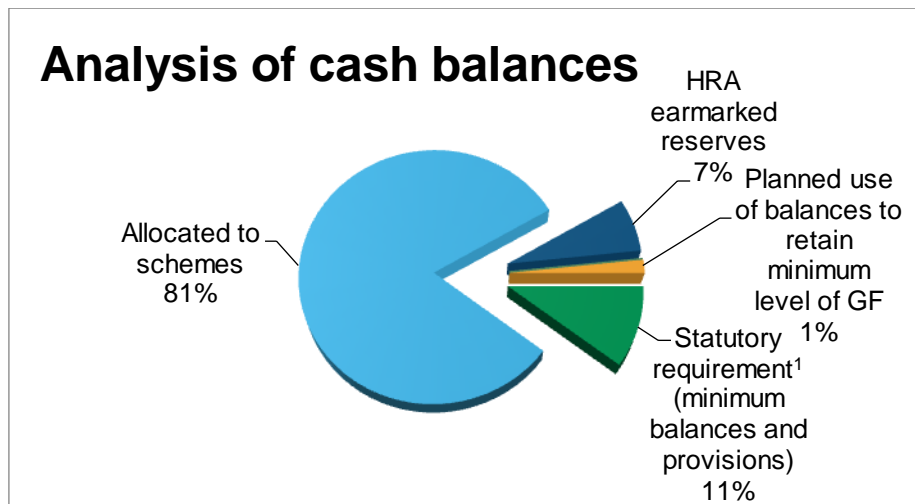
Forecast Reserves as at 31 March 2022



Note 1: balances include internal borrowing of £10.5Million

Note 2: £9.8Million Collection Fund includes £3.1Million relating to Section 31 Business rates relief

4.3.6 These cash balances can be further analysed between allocated, held for statutory requirements and held for third parties. This identifies that all cash balances have been allocated, so unless allocated reserves are no longer needed in the future, there are currently no cash resources available for new projects. In addition the capital strategy identifies the need for external borrowing and a number of capital schemes have not been approved due to the lack of funding resources.



Note 1: Statutory requirement includes the £3.1m relating to Section 31 Business rates relief to be repaid in 2022/23

4.3.7 The Council’s current investment portfolio consists of “conventional” cash investments: deposits with banks and building societies, Money Market Funds and loans to other Local Authorities. Currently no investments have been made with any of the other approved instruments within the Specified and Non-specified Investment Criteria (see Appendix D).

4.3.8 There have been **no breaches** of treasury **counter party limits**, with the investment activity during the year conforming to the approved strategy. Any breach would be notified to the Chief Finance Officer. The Council has had no liquidity difficulties and no funds have been placed with the Debt Management Office (DMO) during 2021/22 to date, demonstrating that counterparty limits and availability for placing funds approved in the TM Strategy were working effectively. It is possible that surplus funds borrowed during 2021/22 and 2022/23 will be placed in the DMO temporarily, if PWLB borrowing rates are advantageous and cash balances due to the timing of taking out new loans would breach other counterparty limits.

4.4 Review of the Treasury Management Strategy and Proposed changes

4.4.1 During the last TM Strategy review, counterparty limits for short term investments (invested for up to one year) were increased from £8Million to £10Million when cash balances are higher than £30Million. This was in order to remain flexible in managing large increases in cash balances, predominantly due to Government grant funding to local authorities to help deal with the COVID crisis. This has worked well, and no further changes are proposed at this time.

4.5 Prudential Indicators

4.5.1 It is a requirement of the Local Government Act 2003 that Councils must ‘have regard to the Prudential Code and set Prudential Indicators to ensure capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable’.

4.5.2 This Strategy's Prudential Indicators are included in Appendix C and are based on the Final Capital Strategy report to the Executive on 9 February 2022 to be approved at Council on 24 February 2022.

4.5.3 **The Operational boundary** is the limit beyond which external debt is not normally expected to exceed and in most cases will be similar to the Council's Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). The proposed limit for 2022/23 is £352.821Million. Officers recommend that the operational borrowing limit is revised to reflect:

- To accommodate uncertainty regarding the timing of significant land sales.
- To reflect the identified borrowing requirement in the capital strategy.
- To reflect the capital programme financing requirement includes capital receipts and the uncertainty of when these receipts may materialise.
- To reflect the valuation of the finance lease for the residential phase of the Queensway development in the town centre.
- The Housing Wholly Owned Company (WOC) Model (report to Council in February 2021) was for development schemes totalling £7.765 Million, and this was included in the Capital Strategy funded by borrowing. The WOC report requested a maximum investment of up to £15Million which is included in the borrowing limits.

Operational Boundary	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
General Fund	50,155	58,037	59,353	58,559	57,754
Queensway residential	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
HRA	264,144	279,784	291,764	291,764	291,764
TOTAL	329,299	352,821	366,117	365,322	364,518
Previous Operational Boundary	324,371	345,843	359,180	358,426	

4.5.4 The **Authorised limit** for external debt represents a control on the maximum level of borrowing. This represents the legal limit to which the Council's external debt cannot exceed. The proposed limit for 2022/23 is £360.821Million.

4.5.5 The Council is asked to approve the following authorised limit.

Authorised Limit for external debt	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
General Fund Finance lease (accounted for as borrowing)	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000

Authorised Limit for external debt	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
General Fund additional borrowing facility available to the Housing WOC Wholly Owned Company	7,235	7,235	7,235	7,235	7,235
General Fund Borrowing for capital expenditure	44,920	52,802	54,118	53,324	52,519
Total Borrowing - General Fund	67,155	75,037	76,353	75,559	74,754
Borrowing - HRA	270,144	285,784	297,764	297,764	297,764
TOTAL	337,299	360,821	374,117	373,322	372,518
Previous Authorised Limit	332,371	353,843	367,180	366,426	

4.6 The Council's Borrowing Position

4.6.1 The Council had external debt of £218.835Million as at 31 December 2021 and is broken down as follows:

Purpose of Loan	PWLB Loan £'000
General Fund Regeneration Assets	2,151
HRA	
Decent Homes	21,773
Self Financing	194,911
Total HRA Loans	216,684
Total Debt at 31st December 2021	218,835

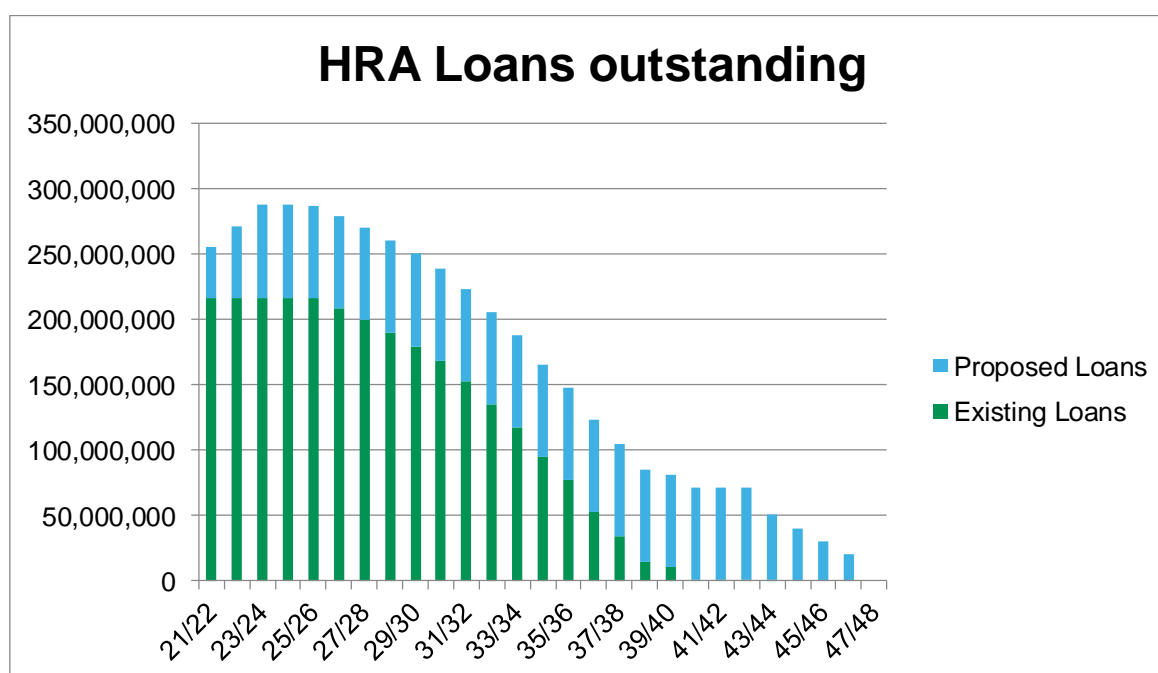
4.6.2 A proportion of the HRA borrowing included in the HRA Business Plan and used to finance the capital programme has not been taken externally to date. The capital expenditure financed by borrowing for 2019/20 was £7.057Million, of which £4.010Million external borrowing was taken. There was further slippage of external borrowing in 2020/21, as external borrowing of £10.0Million was taken compared to financing of £20.857Million. The borrowing of £9.047Million, to catch up on borrowing not taken in prior years. None of the £29.547Million planned borrowing for financing the 2021/22 HRA capital programme has been taken externally to date, but is still planned to be taken before the end of the financial year. This external borrowing has not been taken, partly due to slippage in the HRA Capital Programme and partly because internal reserves and balances have been used instead. The timing of taking external borrowing is dependent on the level of cash balances held and forecast borrowing rates.

4.6.3 The following table shows the forecast borrowing for the HRA, along with the total interest payable by the HRA over the next 5 years if all the borrowing in the current HRA capital programme is taken out externally.

HRA Borrowing and Interest			
Financial Year	Forecast New Borrowing	Total Borrowing	Interest Payable
	£'000	£'000	£'000
2021/22	£38,594	£255,278	£7,261
2022/23	£15,640	£270,918	£8,279
2023/24	£16,837	£287,756	£8,650
2024/25	£NIL	£287,756	£8,650
2025/26	£NIL	£287,256*	£8,649

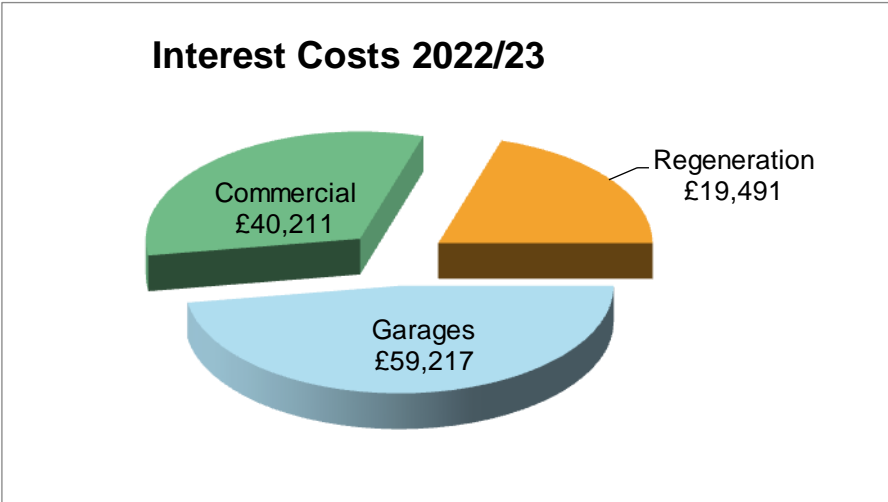
*the first Self Financing loan maturity is £500K in 2025/26

4.6.4 The following graph shows the loan outstanding over the life of the HRA BP. This shows that taking additional debt early in the life of the plan will lead to higher levels of loans over the 30 years. However, this will enable significantly needed investment in the existing stock and the ability to build and purchase new housing within the next 10 years. The maximum debt in the plan is now £288Million.



4.6.5 The 30 year business plan for the HRA budgets for debt repayments based on current and new borrowing (detailed above), taking into account assumptions on rent income, associated expenditure and estimates on interest rates. The HRA is balanced across the 30 years, with significant reserves in place to repay the self-financing debt.

- 4.6.6 In 2021/22 there has been a General Fund loan repayment of £131,579 in August 2021, and a further £131,579 is due to be repaid in February 2022. In addition approved prudential borrowing for the Garage strategy is due to be taken, the timing of which is dependent on when the expenditure is incurred. There is also planned borrowing for the Housing WOC in 2021/22 to 2023/24. The primary aim of the Housing WOC is for housing rather than yield so borrowing from the PWLB is still permitted as set out in paragraph 4.1.2. To optimise the cash benefits to the General Fund revenue account it may be beneficial to fund the investment from other capital receipts rather than borrowing. To that extent funding will be a treasury management decisions and Members are asked to note that the final financing arrangements for the Housing WOC investment will be considered by the S151 officer.
- 4.6.7 The majority of the interest payable on General Fund borrowing is funded by the assets associated with the expenditure. This includes the Town Square and Town Plaza Regeneration assets and the Commercial Property Essex House. The Housing WOC will pay interest on borrowing taken in relation to any loans made to the Housing WOC, as does Queensway Properties (Stevenage) LLP. The 2022/23 projected interest costs on borrowing is estimated to be £118,919 (2021/22 £107,243).



4.6.8 Cash and investment balances have been used in preference to external borrowing as the costs of internal debt (investment interest foregone at 0.34%) is lower than external borrowing (2.22% based on 25 year loan). It is the view of the Chief Financial Officer that this approach will continue to be considered while interest rates remain low.

4.7 Minimum Revenue Provision

4.7.1 DLUHC issued “Consultation on changes to the capital framework: Minimum Revenue Provision” on 30th November 2021 to last for 10 weeks until 8th February 2022. The paper primarily covers the concerns that the government has in respect of compliance with the duty to make a prudent revenue provision, which may result in an underpayment of MRP. The consultation document states that the DLUHC are not intending to change the statutory MRP guidance, but to clearly set out in legislation the practices that

authorities should already be following. The scope of the consultation includes the statement that local authorities have flexibility in how they calculate MRP, providing it is 'prudent'. DLUHC has worked with the sector, CIPFA and other stakeholders to identify problematic practices and is now proposing changes to regulations to make sure authority practices are consistent and fully compliant with the intent of the Framework. The proposed change to the regulation is set out below.

4.7.1.1 The government is proposing additional text to be added to the 2003 Regulations to make explicit that:

1. Capital receipts may not be used in place of the revenue charge. The intent is to prevent authorities avoiding, in whole or part, a prudent charge to revenue. It is not the intention to prevent authorities using capital receipts to reduce their overall debt position, which may have the effect of reducing the MRP made with respect to the remaining debt balance.

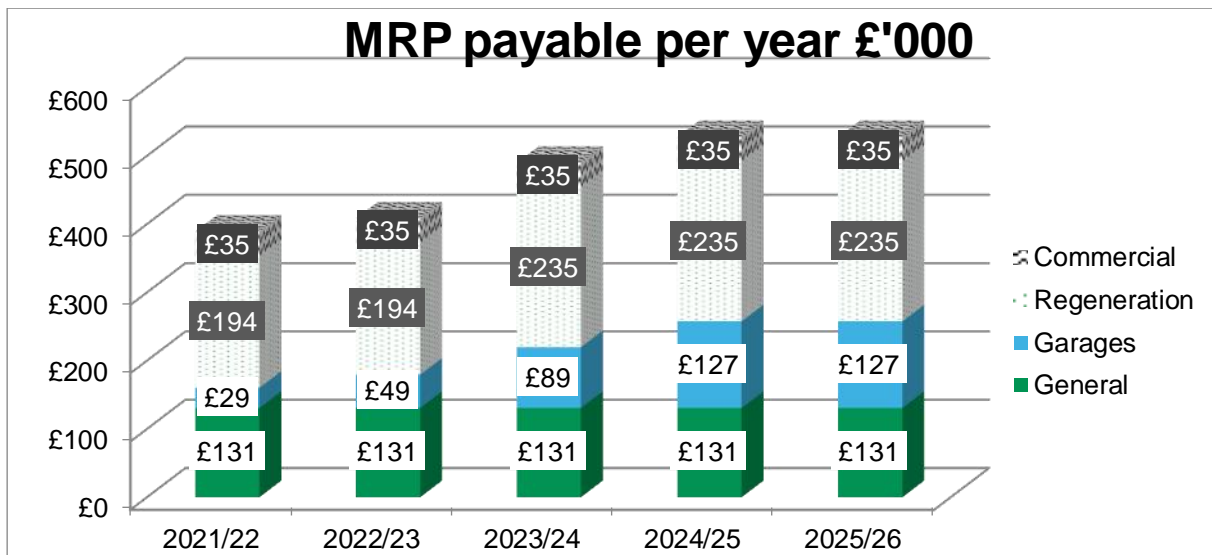
2. Prudent MRP must be determined with respect to the authority's total capital financing requirement. The intent is to stop the intentional exclusion of debt from the MRP determination because it relates to an investment asset or capital loan. Authorities should still be able to charge MRP over the period in which their capital expenditure provides benefits and begin charging MRP in the year following capital expenditure, in accordance with proper accounting practices set out in the government's statutory guidance on Minimum Revenue Provision.

4.7.1.2 These changes are not intended to have any impact on the Housing Revenue Account, or on treasury management activities that do not score as capital spend. The government wants authorities to still be able to exercise judgement in determining a prudent amount and does not want to move back to a prescriptive method.

4.7.1.3 Officers have been reviewing the potential impact the changes may make to the MRP charged to revenue and are taking this into account when making borrowing decisions. This is set out in Appendix B. In the meantime the MRP calculations set out below and in Appendix B are made on the current basis.

4.7.2 Where General Fund capital expenditure has been funded from borrowing, whether this be actual external borrowing or internal borrowing the Council is required to set aside a MRP. This amount is calculated based on the approved MRP policy (Appendix B) based on the life of the asset.

4.7.3 Borrowing decisions and subsequent MRP payments impact on the affordability of capital schemes. Current projections of MRP payments based on the updated policy are detailed in the following chart. This excludes the technical requirement to charge MRP on loans to other companies in the accounts, as these borrowing costs are recharged.



4.8 Future borrowing requirements

- 4.8.1 The Council is currently maintaining an under-borrowed position. This means that the capital borrowing need (the Capital Financing Requirement), has not been fully funded by taking loans out with PWLB. Instead the Council's reserves, balances and cash flow have been used (as set out in paragraphs 4.3.2 and 4.6.8). This strategy is prudent as investment returns are low and counterparty risk is still an issue that needs to be considered.
- 4.8.2 Against this background and the risks within the economic forecast, caution will be adopted with the 2022/23 treasury operations. The Assistant Director (Finance and Estates) will monitor interest rates in financial markets and adopt a pragmatic approach to changing circumstances.
- 4.8.3 It is the Council's intention not to borrow in advance of need. However, should this happen as part of the optimising treasury management position of the Council and minimising borrowing risks, the transaction will be accounted for in accordance with proper practices.
- 4.8.4 The Council's treasury advisors forecast four increases to the Bank Rate from the current rate of 0.25%, one in quarter 2 of 2022 to 0.50%, then quarter 1 of 2023 to 0.75%, quarter 1 of 2024 to 1.00% and, finally, one in quarter 1 of 2025 to 1.25%. Base rate and borrowing rate forecasts are shown in the table below. However there is volatility and uncertainty, over the impact of Covid on the economy in particular, and rates are monitored regularly.

Link Group Interest Rate View		20.12.21								
	Dec-21	Mar-22	Jun-22	Sep-22	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24
BANK RATE	0.25	0.25	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	1.00
3 month ave earnings	0.20	0.30	0.50	0.50	0.60	0.70	0.80	0.90	0.90	1.00
6 month ave earnings	0.40	0.50	0.60	0.60	0.70	0.80	0.90	1.00	1.00	1.10
12 month ave earnings	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.80	0.90	1.00	1.10	1.10	1.20
5 yr PWLB	1.40	1.50	1.50	1.60	1.60	1.70	1.80	1.80	1.80	1.90
10 yr PWLB	1.60	1.70	1.80	1.80	1.90	1.90	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.10
25 yr PWLB	1.80	1.90	2.00	2.10	2.10	2.20	2.20	2.20	2.30	2.30
50 yr PWLB	1.50	1.70	1.80	1.90	1.90	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.10	2.10

Source: Link Asset Services 20 December 2021

- 4.8.5 The Treasury's Certainty Rate for borrowing remains available and enables the Council to take PWLB loans at 20 basis points (0.2%) below the standard PWLB rate. The rates shown in the table above include that adjustment. The PWLB Certainty Rate margin remains set at gilts +80 basis points. There are also other potential sources of borrowing for Local Authorities, such as the Municipal Bond Agency, public listed bonds and forward starting private placements where a rate is agreed at the time they are entered into and the money drawdown at an agreed future date. The public listed bond issues and private placements can include those where proceeds of borrowing are used for a green or sustainable format (ESG principles).
- 4.8.6 The HRA BP existing loans have an average interest rate of 3.2% based on £216.684Million of borrowing. As set out in the table in paragraph 4.6.3, the current forecast includes allowance for new loans totalling £38,594,452 in 2021/22, £15,640,000 in 2022/23 and £16,837,066 in 2023/24. The decision when to take the new borrowing will be reviewed, weighing up the cost of carry and the prevailing borrowing rate. The interest payable in 2021/22 and 2022/23 is estimated to be £7,260,813 and £8,279,258 respectively.
- 4.8.7 The HRA BP continues to include borrowing based on affordability as identified in the BP action plan. This has resulted in lower levels of revenue contributions to capital than before the lifting of the HRA Debt Cap.

4.9 Investments

- 4.9.1 As set out in paragraph 4.1.1, Revised Treasury Management and Prudential Codes were issued by CIPFA on 20 December 2021, however CIPFA has stated that there will be a soft introduction of the codes with local authorities not being expected to have to change their current draft TMSS/AIS reports for 2022/23 unless they wish to do that. Full implementation will be required for 2023/24. The Council complies fully with CIPFA Treasury Management Code 2017 and will fully implement the 2021 Code from 2023/24. The Council also complies with guidance on self-financing and the investment guidance issued by DLUHC.
- 4.9.2 In managing the TM function other areas kept under review include:
- Training opportunities available to Members and officers (the most recent training for Members took place on 14th October 2021)

- That those charged with governance are also personally responsible for ensuring they have the necessary skills and training
- A full mid-year review of the TMS will be reported in 2022/23

- 4.9.3 The 2021/22 Strategy uses the credit worthiness service provided by Link Asset Services (formerly known as Capita Treasury Solutions) the Council's treasury advisors. This service uses a sophisticated modelling approach which utilises credit ratings from the three main credit rating agencies and is compliant with CIPFA code of practice.
- 4.9.4 While Link Asset Services may advise the Council, the responsibility for treasury management decisions remains with the Council at all times and officers do not place undue reliance on the external service advice.
- 4.9.5 The TM limits for 2022/23 (Appendix D) have been reviewed. No changes are considered necessary since that agreed as part of the Mid-Year Review of 2021/22 (the limit for each counterparty was increased for investments of up to one year including Money Market Funds, from £8Million to £10Million, when cash balances are higher than £30Million. If cash balances are less than £30Million the limit remained at £5Million per counterparty).
- 4.9.6 The latest list of "Approved Countries for Investment" is detailed in Appendix E. This lists the countries that the Council may invest with providing they meet the minimum credit rating of AA-. The Council retains the discretion not to invest in countries that meet the minimum rating but where there are concerns over human rights issues.

4.10 Non Treasury Investments

- 4.10.1 The CIPFA Prudential and Treasury Codes recommend that authorities' capital strategies should include a policy and risk management framework for all investments. The Codes identify three types of local authority investment:
- Treasury management investments, which are taken to manage cashflows and as part of the Council's debt and financing activity
 - Commercial investments (including investment properties), which are taken mainly to earn a positive net financial return (previously purchased commercial investments only as Council's are no longer permitted to access PWLB rates if they invest in commercial investments primarily for gain.
 - Service investments, which are taken mainly to support service outcomes
- 4.10.2 The Government issued revised investment guidance on 2 February 2018, which strengthens the management and reporting framework relating to commercial and service investments and further guidance on 26 November 2020 as a response to the consultation on the future lending terms of the PWLB. The 2022/23 Capital Strategy includes more details on the Councils non treasury investments.

4.11 Other Treasury issues

- 4.11.1 **UK Sovereign rating and investment criteria:** The UK sovereign rating is currently on the lowest acceptable level suggested for approved countries as set out in Appendix E. In October 2020, Moody's downgraded the rating to Aa3 (AA- equivalent), the same as Fitch, while Standard & Poor's has it rated at AA. The UK sovereign rating could come under pressure from the impact of COVID and / or following the UK's exit from the EU. The Council's investment criteria only use countries with a rating of AA- or above. The UK rating will be exempt from the sovereign rating investment criteria so in this event if it were to result in the UK being downgraded below AA- it would not impact on the Council's ability to invest with UK institutions. Other investment criteria will be considered in this event to ensure security of funds for the Council.
- 4.11.2 **Queensway Properties (Stevenage) LLP:** In December 2018 the Council entered into a 37 year agreement with Aviva to facilitate the regeneration of Queensway in the town centre. A separate legal entity, Queensway Properties (Stevenage) LLP, was incorporated to manage the rental streams and costs associated with the scheme. The Council's treasury management team offered its services to the LLP to manage and invest its surplus cash flows through a service level agreement, however to date no investment activities have been undertaken on their behalf.
- 4.11.3 **Queensway Properties (Stevenage) LLP 2nd phase:** the first phase of the head lease was recognised on the Council's balance sheet and the operational borrowing limit was increased to reflect the valuation. When the second phase of residential properties becomes available to let the Council's lease payments will increase to reflect this. As such the balance sheet valuation of the finance lease will increase and the operational and authorised borrowing limits for the General Fund have been increased accordingly. This has been reflected in the TM indicators.
- 4.11.4 **Housing WOC:** as set out in paragraphs 4.5.3 and 4.6.6, the Housing Wholly Owned Company (WOC) report seeks approval for up to £15Million of investment from the Council, which would be in the form of a mix of equity funding and loans. The proof of concept included in the Housing WOC Model is for development schemes totalling £7.765 Million, and the Council's funding of this investment has been included in the Final Capital Strategy as all funded by borrowing. As individual schemes are agreed the Capital Strategy will be updated. £7.235 Million, the balance of the £15Million potential investment in the Housing WOC is included in the borrowing limits. However as set out in paragraph 4.6.6, it may be beneficial to fund the Council's investment from other capital receipts rather than borrowing.
- 4.11.5 **IFRS16 – Leasing:** As reported previously, some currently off balance sheet leased assets may need to be brought onto the balance sheet under IFRS 16, however in December 2020 the CIPFA LASAAC Local Authority Accounting Code Board announced the deferral of the implementation of IFRS 16 Leases in the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom (the Code) until the 2022/23 financial year.

5. IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial Implications

- 5.1.1 This report is of a financial nature and reviews the treasury management function for 2021/22 to date. Any consequential financial impacts of the Strategy will be incorporated into the Capital Strategy updates and subsequent quarterly budget monitoring reports.
- 5.1.2 During the financial year to date officers have operated within the Treasury and Prudential Indicators set out in the Council's Treasury Management Strategy Statement and in compliance with the Council's Treasury Management Practices.

5.2 Legal Implications

- 5.2.1 Approval of the Prudential Code Indicators and the Treasury Management Strategy Indicators are intended to ensure that the Council complies with relevant legislation and best practice.
- 5.2.2 There have been no changes to PWLB borrowing arrangements since the last Treasury report however there is ongoing consultation on changes to the MRP rules for England. Officers will ensure that any changes are reflected in treasury operations and reporting requirements.

5.3 Risk Implications

- 5.3.1 The current policy of minimising external borrowing only remains financially viable while cash balances are high and the differentials between investment income and borrowing rates remain. Should these conditions change the Council may need to take borrowing at higher rates which would increase revenue costs.
- 5.3.2 There remains uncertainty on the impact of exiting the EU on UK economy and borrowing rates. Officers monitor interest rate forecasts to inform the timing of borrowing decisions.
- 5.3.3 The Council's Treasury Management Strategy is based on limits for counterparties to reduce risk of investing with only a small number of institutions.
- 5.3.4 The thresholds and time limits set for investments in the Strategy are based on the relative ratings of investment vehicles and counterparties. These are designed to take into account the relative risk of investments and also to preclude certain grades of investments and counterparties to prevent loss of income to the Council.

5.4 Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 5.4.1 This report is technical in nature and there are no implications associated with equalities and diversity within this report. In addition to remaining within agreed counterparty rules, the Council retains the discretion not to invest in countries that meet the minimum rating but where there are concerns over

human rights issues. Counterparty rules will also be overlaid by any other ethical considerations from time to time as appropriate.

- 5.4.2 The Treasury Management Policy does not have the potential to discriminate against people on grounds of age; disability; gender; ethnicity; sexual orientation; religion/belief; or by way of financial exclusion. As such a detailed Equality Impact Assessment has not been undertaken.

5.5 Climate Change

- 5.5.1 The council's investment portfolio is sterling investments and not directly in companies. However the treasury management team will review the use of Money Market funds to ensure, where possible, money market funds that invest in environmentally sustainable companies are used. In this way the TM team will align with the Councils ambition to attempt to be carbon neutral by 2030.

Background documents

- BD1 Annual Treasury management Review of 2020/21 (13 October 2021 Council)
- BD2 2021/22 Mid-Year Treasury Management Review (15 December 2021 Council)
- BD3 Final Capital Strategy 2021/22 – 2025/26 (Executive 9 February 2022 and Council 24 February 2022)

Appendices

- A Treasury Management Strategy
- B Minimum Revenue Provision Policy
- C Prudential Indicators
- D Specified and Non-Specified Investment Criteria
- E Approved Countries for investment

Appendix A Treasury Management Strategy 2022/23

Treasury Management Policy Statement

- 1.1 The Council defines its treasury management activities as: “*The management of the authority’s investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks*”.
- 1.2 The Council regards the successful identification, monitoring and control of risk to be the prime criteria by which the effectiveness of its treasury management activities will be measured. Accordingly, the analysis and reporting of treasury management activities will focus on their risk implications for the organisation.
- 1.3 The Council acknowledges that effective treasury management will provide support towards the achievement of its business and service objectives. It is therefore committed to the principles of achieving value for money in treasury management, and to employing suitable comprehensive performance measurement techniques, within the context of effective risk management.
- 1.4 As set out in the Treasury Management Strategy 2022/23, this Strategy has been prepared in accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Management Code 2017. The Council complies fully with CIPFA Treasury Management Code 2017 and will fully implement the 2021 Code from 2023/24. The Code requires the Council to approve the Treasury Management Strategy annually and to produce a mid-year report. In addition, Members in both Executive and Scrutiny functions receive monitoring reports and regular reviews. The aim of these reporting arrangements is to ensure that those with ultimate responsibility for the treasury management function appreciate fully the implications of treasury management policies and activities, and that those implementing policies and executing transactions have properly fulfilled their responsibilities with regard to delegation and reporting.
- 1.5 The Act requires the Council to set out its Treasury Management Strategy for borrowing and to prepare an Annual Investment Strategy to set out the Council's policies for managing its investments and for giving priority to the security and liquidity of those investments.

2. Annual Investment Strategy

- 2.1 The Council is required to prepare an Annual Investment Strategy. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC, formerly the MHCLG) and CIPFA have extended the meaning of ‘investments’ to include both financial and non-financial investments. This report deals solely with financial investments, (as managed by the treasury management team). Non-financial investments, essentially the purchase of income yielding assets, are covered in the Capital Strategy, (a separate report).

The Council's investment policy has regard to the following:

- Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) Guidance on Local Government Investments (“the Guidance”)
- CIPFA Treasury Management in Public Services Code of Practice and Cross Sectoral Guidance Notes 2017 (“the Code”)
- CIPFA Treasury Management Guidance Notes 2018

The Council's investment priorities will be security first, portfolio liquidity second and then yield, (return).

2.2 The guidance from the DLUHC and CIPFA place a high priority on the management of risk. This authority has adopted a prudent approach to managing risk and defines its risk appetite by the following means: -

- a. Minimum acceptable **credit criteria** are applied in order to generate a list of highly creditworthy counterparties. This also enables diversification and thus avoidance of concentration risk. The key ratings used to monitor counterparties are the short term and long-term ratings.
- b. **Other information:** ratings will not be the sole determinant of the quality of an institution; it is important to continually assess and monitor the financial sector on both a micro and macro basis and in relation to the economic and political environments in which institutions operate. The assessment will also take account of information that reflects the opinion of the markets. To achieve this consideration the Council will engage with its advisors to maintain a monitor on market pricing such as “**credit default swaps**” and overlay that information on top of the credit ratings.
- c. **Other information sources** used will include the financial press, share price and other such information pertaining to the banking sector in order to establish the most robust scrutiny process on the suitability of potential investment counterparties.
- d. This authority has defined the list of **types of investment instruments** that the treasury management team are authorised to use. There are two lists in appendix D under the categories of ‘specified’ and ‘non-specified’ investments.
 - **Specified investments** are those with a high level of credit quality and subject to a maturity limit of one year.
 - **Non-specified investments** are those with less high credit quality, may be for periods in excess of one year, and/or are more complex instruments which require greater consideration by members and officers before being authorised for use.

The Council has determined that it will limit the maximum total exposure to non-specified investments as detailed in Appendix D.

- e. **Lending limits and Transaction Limits**, (amounts and maturity), for each counterparty will be set through applying the matrix table in Appendix D and will consider investments longer than 365 days
- f. This authority has engaged **external consultants**, Link Asset Services, to provide expert advice on how to optimise an appropriate balance of security, liquidity and yield, given the risk appetite of this authority in the context of the expected level of cash balances and need for liquidity throughout the year.
- g. All investments will be denominated in **sterling**.
- h. The Council only invests in counterparties with a high credit quality in the UK or other countries meeting minimum AA- sovereign rating. The Council understands that changes have taken place to the ratings agencies and that their new methodologies mean that sovereign ratings are now of lesser importance in the assessment process. However, the Council continues to

specify a minimum sovereign rating as the underlying domestic and where appropriate, international, economic and wider political and social background will still have an influence on the ratings of a financial institution (see Appendix E).

- i. As a result of the change in accounting standards for 2018/19 under IFRS 9, this authority considered the implications of investment instruments which could result in an adverse movement in the value of the amount invested and resultant charges at the end of the year to the General Fund. No changes were deemed to be required to the use of existing approved investment instruments. (The DLUHC) enacted a statutory over-ride from 1.4.18 for a five-year period until 31.3.23 following the introduction of IFRS 9 over the requirement for any unrealised capital gains or losses on marketable pooled funds to be chargeable in year. This has the effect of allowing any unrealised capital gains or losses arising from qualifying investments to be held on the balance sheet until 31.3.23: this was intended to allow councils to initiate an orderly withdrawal of funds if required.).

2.3 The borrowing of monies purely to invest or on-lend in order to make a return is unlawful and this Council will not engage in such activities.

3 Creditworthiness policy

3.1 The primary principle governing the Council's investment criteria is the security of its investments, although the yield or return on the investment is also a key consideration. Based on this this main principle, the Council will ensure that:

- It maintains a policy covering the categories of financial instruments it will invest in, maximum investment duration, criteria for choosing counterparties with adequate security, and monitoring their security.
- It has sufficient liquidity in its investments. For this purpose it will set out procedures for determining the maximum periods for which funds may prudently be committed. These procedures also apply to the Council's Prudential indicators of the maximum principal sums invested in excess of 364 days.

3.2 The Assistant Director (Finance and Estates) will maintain a counterparty list in compliance with the criteria in the Strategy for Specified and Non-Specified Investment and will revise the criteria and submit them to Council for approval as necessary.

3.3 In determining the credit quality, the Council uses the Fitch credit ratings, together with Moody and Standard & Poor's equivalent where rated. Not all counterparties are rated by all three agencies and the Council will use available ratings.

3.4 The Council also applies the creditworthiness service provided by Link Asset Services. This service employs a sophisticated modelling approach utilising credit ratings from the three main credit rating agencies - Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poor's. The credit ratings of counterparties are supplemented with the following overlays:

- Credit watches and credit outlooks from credit rating agencies;
- Credit Default Swap (CDS) spreads. A CDS is a contract used to insure the holder of a bond against default by the issuer. A CDS can act as an indicator of default risk and provide an early warning of likely changes in credit ratings;

- Sovereign ratings to select counterparties from only the most creditworthy countries.

Link Asset Services modelling approach combines credit ratings, credit watches and credit outlooks in a weighted scoring system which is then combined with an overlay of CDS spreads for which the end product is a series of colour coded bands which indicate the relative creditworthiness of counterparties. These colour codes are used by the Council to determine the suggested duration for investments.

3.5 Credit ratings will be monitored whenever an investment is to be made, using the most recent information. The Council is alerted to changes to ratings of all three agencies through its use of the Link creditworthiness service.

- If a downgrade results in the counterparty / investment scheme no longer meeting the Council's minimum criteria, its further use as a new investment will be withdrawn immediately.
- In addition to the use of credit ratings the Council will be advised of information in movements in credit default swap spreads against the iTraxx benchmark and other market data on a daily basis via its Passport website, provided exclusively to it by Link Asset Services. Extreme market movements may result in downgrade of an institution or removal from the Council's lending list.

3.6 Sole reliance will not be placed on the use of this external service. In addition the Council will also use market data including information on government support for banks and the credit ratings of that government support.

3.7 The Council receives updates from Link on future changes to Money Market Funds (MMF) that might affect the liquidity or risk of the fund. The Council is likely to change its approach to the use of MMF should liquidity or risk be adversely affected.

3.8 There are alternatives to the PWLB for borrowing, for both the General Fund and the HRA, including the UK Municipal Bonds Agency. The UKMBA provides funding through three lending programmes. Current UKMBA trading levels in the market, inclusive of all fees, are lower than the PWLB Certainty rate at like maturities.

- Proportionally guaranteed, pooled loans of £1 million or more for maturities greater than one year.
- Standalone loans to a single local authority for £250 million or more for maturities greater than one year. These loans are outside of the proportional guarantee and are guaranteed solely by the borrower, who must obtain an external credit rating from one or more of the major credit rating agencies.
- Short term, pooled loans, outside of the proportional guarantee for maturities of less than one year.

To date the borrowing rates available were lower than those offered for comparable loans available from the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB) at the time of issuance. The Council may make use of this alternative source of borrowing as and when appropriate.

3.9 **In-house funds.** Investments will be made with reference to the core balance and cash flow requirements, anticipated capital financing requirements and the outlook for short-term interest rates (i.e. rates for investments up to 12 months). Greater returns are usually obtainable by investing for longer periods. While most cash balances are required in order to manage the ups and downs of cash flow, where cash sums can be identified that could be invested for longer

periods, the value to be obtained from longer term investments will be carefully assessed.

- If it is thought that Bank of England base rate (Bank Rate) is likely to rise significantly within the time horizon being considered, then consideration will be given to keeping most investments as being short term or variable.
- Conversely, if it is thought that Bank Rate is likely to fall within that time period, consideration will be given to locking in higher rates currently obtainable, for longer periods.

4 Country limits

- 4.1 The Council has determined that it will only use approved counterparties from UK or selected countries with a minimum sovereign credit rating of AA- from Fitch Ratings (or equivalent from other agencies if Fitch does not provide). This is part of the criteria used to produce the Council's Counterparty List.

5 Current Investments and Interest Rate Forecast

- 5.1 At the 31 December 2021 the Council had £79.93Million on deposit with various financial institutions.
- 5.2 **Interest Rate Forecast** - The Bank of England base rate is 0.25% as at 13 January 2022. Link forecast that Bank Rate will increase over the next few years.

Link Group Interest Rate View		20.12.21								
	Dec-21	Mar-22	Jun-22	Sep-22	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24
BANK RATE	0.25	0.25	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	1.00
3 month ave earnings	0.20	0.30	0.50	0.50	0.60	0.70	0.80	0.90	0.90	1.00
6 month ave earnings	0.40	0.50	0.60	0.60	0.70	0.80	0.90	1.00	1.00	1.10
12 month ave earnings	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.80	0.90	1.00	1.10	1.10	1.20
5 yr PWLB	1.40	1.50	1.50	1.60	1.60	1.70	1.80	1.80	1.80	1.90
10 yr PWLB	1.60	1.70	1.80	1.80	1.90	1.90	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.10
25 yr PWLB	1.80	1.90	2.00	2.10	2.10	2.20	2.20	2.20	2.30	2.30
50 yr PWLB	1.50	1.70	1.80	1.90	1.90	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.10	2.10

Source: Link Asset Services 20 December 2021

5.3 Investment returns expectations.

The UK left the European Union on 31 January 2020 and an exit deal was agreed between the UK and the EU just before the end of the transition period on 31 December 2020. The initial agreement with the EU only covered trade, so further work remains on the services sector. However if the UK invokes article 16 of the Brexit deal over the dislocation in trading arrangements with Northern Ireland, this has the potential to result in a no-deal Brexit. Trade agreements are also still to be agreed with other countries. Brexit is likely to lead to a long-term structural change in the UK economy, impacting areas such as trade, investment and immigration.

Bank of England base rate is a significant factor for investment yields, and as can be seen in the table above there is an expectation that it will increase from the current rate of 0.25%, in quarter 2 of 2022 to 0.50%, then quarter 1 of 2023 to 0.75%, quarter 1 of 2024 to 1.00% and, finally, in quarter 1 of 2025 to 1.25%. The Council has forecast investment returns of 0.35% in 2021/22 and is budgeting for returns of 0.58% in 2022/23 based on the average earnings seen in the table above.

6 Borrowing Strategy and Policy on Borrowing in Advance of Need

- 6.1 The Council is currently maintaining an under-borrowed position. This means that the capital borrowing need (the Capital Financing Requirement), has not been fully funded with loan debt as cash supporting the Council's reserves, balances and cash flow has been used as a temporary measure. This strategy is prudent as investment returns are low and counterparty risk is still an issue that needs to be considered.
- 6.2 Against this background and the risks within the economic forecast, caution will be adopted with the 2022/23 treasury operations. The Assistant Director (Finance and Estates) will monitor interest rates in financial markets and adopt a pragmatic approach to changing circumstances.
- 6.3 The Operational Boundary and Authorised Borrowing Limits must be approved as part of the Prudential Code Indicators before the start of each financial year. The revised 2021/22 limits and proposed limits for 2022/23 are:

	2021/22	2022/23
	£000	£000
Operational Boundary	329,299	352,821
Authorised Limit	337,299	360,821

- 6.4 Based on the capital programme 2022/23 (February 2022 Update) resourcing projections, the Council has the following borrowing requirements in 2022/23:
- General Fund £8,447,512 (£2,015,723 in relation to the 10 year plan for the garages estates approved by Council on 20 July 2016, £4,381,789 in relation to the wholly owned housing development company and £2,050,000 towards the costs of the Railway Station Multi-Storey Car Park).
 - HRA £15,640,000 (£18,011,767 on work to existing housing stock and £11,535,536 on housing development).
- 6.5 The Council will not borrow more than or in advance of its needs purely in order to profit from the investment of the extra sums borrowed. Any decision to borrow in advance will be considered carefully to ensure value for money can be demonstrated and that the Council can ensure the security of such funds.
- 6.6 In determining whether borrowing will be undertaken in advance of need the Council will;
- ensure that there is a clear link between the capital programme and maturity profile of the existing debt portfolio which supports the need to take funding in advance of need
 - ensure the ongoing revenue liabilities created, and the implications for the future plans and budgets have been considered
 - evaluate the economic and market factors that might influence the manner and timing of any decision to borrow
 - consider the merits and demerits of alternative forms of funding
 - consider the alternative interest rate bases available, the most appropriate periods to fund and repayment profiles to use.
- 6.7 Borrowing may be taken to facilitate investment in regeneration and/or economic improvements for the town. This may include investment in special purpose vehicles owned by the Council to facilitate regeneration aspirations. Any such investments will be presented to Members.

7 End of year investment report

- 7.1 At the end of the financial year, the Council will report on its investment activity as part of its Annual Treasury Outturn Report.

8 Policy on the use of external service providers

- 8.1 In October 2021, the Council reappointed Link Asset Services as its treasury management advisors on a three year contract. The new contract commenced on 26 October 2021.

- 8.2 The Council recognises that responsibility for treasury management decisions remains with the organisation at all times and will ensure that undue reliance is not placed upon our external service providers.

- 8.3 It also recognises that there is value in employing external providers of treasury management services in order to acquire access to specialist skills and resources. The Council will ensure that the terms of their appointment and the methods by which their value will be assessed are properly agreed and documented, and subjected to regular review.

9 Scheme of Delegation and Role of Section 151 officer

- 9.1 **The Council** has the role of:

- receiving and reviewing reports on treasury management policies, practices and activities
- approval of annual strategy.
- approval of/amendments to the organisation's adopted clauses, treasury management policy statement and treasury management practices
- budget consideration and approval
- approval of the division of responsibilities
- receiving and reviewing regular monitoring reports and acting on recommendations
- approving the selection of external service providers and agreeing terms of appointment

- 9.2 **The Audit Committee** has the role of reviewing the policy and procedures and making recommendations to Council.

- 9.3 **The Section 151 Officer** has the role of:

- recommending clauses, treasury management policy/practices for approval, reviewing the same regularly, and monitoring compliance
- submitting regular treasury management policy reports
- submitting budgets and budget variations
- receiving and reviewing management information reports
- reviewing the performance of the treasury management function
- ensuring the adequacy of treasury management resources and skills, and the effective division of responsibilities within the treasury management function
- ensuring the adequacy of internal audit, and liaising with external audit
- recommending the appointment of external service providers.

- preparation of a capital strategy to include capital expenditure, capital financing, non-financial investments and treasury management, with a long term timeframe ensuring that the capital strategy is prudent, sustainable, affordable and prudent in the long term and provides value for money
- ensuring that due diligence has been carried out on all treasury and non-financial investments and is in accordance with the risk appetite of the authority
- ensure that the authority has appropriate legal powers to undertake expenditure on non-financial assets and their financing
- ensuring the proportionality of all investments so that the authority does not undertake a level of investing which exposes the authority to an excessive level of risk compared to its financial resources
- ensuring that an adequate governance process is in place for the approval, monitoring and ongoing risk management of all non-financial investments and long term liabilities
- provision to Members of a schedule of all non-treasury investments including material investments in subsidiaries, joint ventures, loans and financial guarantees
- ensuring that members are adequately informed and understand the risk exposures taken on by an authority
- ensuring that the authority has adequate expertise, either in house or externally provided, to carry out the above
- creation of Treasury Management Practices which specifically deal with how non treasury investments will be carried out and managed, to include the following (covered in Annual Capital Strategy Report).

In addition, high value and/or urgent payments can be made by CHAPS by the Treasury Team, however as these can have a material impact on cash flows on the day, authorisation for this type of payment must be obtained from the S151 or deputy S151 Officer.

9.4 Reporting arrangement to the Council and the Audit Committee is as below:

Area of Responsibility	Council Committee	Frequency
Treasury Management Policy Statement (revised)	Council	Initial adoption in 2010
Treasury Management Strategy / Annual Investment Strategy / Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy	Council	Annually before the start of the year
Treasury Management Strategy / Annual Investment Strategy / MRP policy – mid-year report	Council	Annually before the end of the year
Treasury Management Strategy / Annual Investment Strategy / MRP policy – updates or revisions at other times	Council	As required.

Area of Responsibility	Council Committee	Frequency
Annual Treasury Outturn Report	Council	Annually by 30 th November
Scrutiny of Treasury Management Strategy	Audit Committee	Annually before the start of the year
Scrutiny of Treasury Management performance	Audit Committee	Quarterly (General Fund updates)

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Appendix B (February 2022 Update)

Minimum Revenue Provision Policy

Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement 2022/23

From 2013/14, the council has not had a fully funded capital programme, and although there has not been a need to borrow in full externally, due to the use of investment balances, it is necessary to make adequate provision for the repayment of debt in the form of Minimum Revenue Provision, including in 2021/22 for the unfunded element of 2011/12 to 2014/15 expenditure. The **preferred method for existing underlying borrowing is Option 3 (Asset Life Method)** whereby the MRP will be spread over the useful life of the asset. Useful life is dependent on the type of asset and was reviewed in 2019/20. Following that review asset lives now ranges from 7 years (ICT equipment) to 50 years (Investment properties, regeneration sites and car parks for example).

In applying the new asset lives historic MRP had been overpaid and in accordance with current MHCLG MRP Guidance can be reclaimed in future years. The council has a policy to ring fence costs and income associated with regeneration assets and as such has shown these MRP changes separately, see table below. The overpayment of £1,057,660.39 results in no MRP needing to be charged to the accounts for the regeneration assets until 2025/26, when a partial charge will be required, utilising the remainder of the overpayment balance.

voluntary MRP made		Use of overpayment	
	Regeneration		Regeneration
2012/13	£46,929.65	2020/21	£193,703.12
2013/14	£140,788.95	2021/22	£193,703.12
2014/15	£163,165.30	2022/23	£193,703.12
2015/16	£141,355.30	2023/24	£193,703.12
2016/17	£141,355.30	2024/25	£193,703.12
2017/18	£141,355.30	2026/26	£89,144.79
2018/19	£141,355.30		
2019/20	£141,355.30		
cumulative total	£1,057,660.39	cumulative total	£1,057,660.39

The Council approved a **Property Investment** Strategy – an investment of £15Million in property funded from prudential borrowing. As having Investments for Yield in the capital strategy are no longer permitted, only the MRP payable of £35,119 per year on the investment made of £1,755,950 which will be payable. This was calculated under **Option 3 (Asset Life Method) and the annuity method**, which links the MRP to the flow of benefits from the properties.

The forecast annual MRP for 2022/23 is £408,312 based on the capital expenditure in the draft 2021/22 Financial Accounts, with the lower figure of £214,609 needing to be charged to the 2022/23 Financial Accounts taking into account the overpayment on the regeneration assets. The forecast annual MRP for 2023/24 is £489,626 with £295,923 to be charged to the 2023/24 Financial Accounts.

Finance lease payments due as part of the Queensway regeneration project are also applied as MRP, funded from the payments received in the year, as will any MRP due on borrowing taken in relation to the Housing Wholly Owned Company.

Additional Information

1. What is a Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)?

The Minimum Revenue Provision is a charge that Councils which are not debt free are required to make in their accounts for the repayment of debt (as measured by the underlying need to borrow, rather than actual debt). The underlying debt is needed to finance the capital programme. Capital expenditure is generally expenditure on assets which have a life expectancy of more than one year e.g. buildings, vehicles, machinery etc. It is therefore prudent to charge an amount for the repayment of debt over the life of the asset or some similar proxy figure, allowing borrowing to be matched to asset life. Setting aside an amount for the repayment of debt in this manner would then allow for future borrowing to be taken out to finance the asset when it needs replacing at no incremental cost. The manner of spreading these costs is through an annual Minimum Revenue Provision, which was previously determined under Regulation, and is now determined by Guidance.

2. Statutory duty

Statutory Instrument 2008 no. 414 s4 lays down that:

“A local authority shall determine for the current financial year an amount of minimum revenue provision that it considers to be prudent.”

The above is a substitution for the previous requirement to comply with regulation 28 in S.I. 2003 no. 3146 (as amended).

There is no requirement to charge MRP where the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) is nil or negative at the end of the preceding financial year.

The share of Housing Revenue Account CFR is not subject to an MRP charge.

3. Government Guidance

Along with the above duty, the Government issued guidance which came into force on 31st March 2008 which requires that a Statement on the Council's policy for its annual MRP should be submitted to the full Council for approval before the start of the financial year to which the provision will relate.

The Council is legally obliged to “have regard” to the guidance, which is intended to enable a more flexible approach to assessing the amount of annual provision than was required under the previous statutory requirements. The guidance offers four main options under which MRP could be made, with an overriding recommendation that the Council should make prudent provision to redeem its debt liability over a period which is reasonably commensurate with that over which the capital expenditure is estimated to provide benefits. The requirement to ‘have regard’ to the guidance therefore means that:

Although four main options are recommended in the guidance, there is no intention to be prescriptive by making these the only methods of charge under which a local authority may consider its MRP to be prudent.

It is the responsibility of each authority to decide upon the most appropriate method of making a prudent provision, after having had regard to the guidance.

The four recommended options are thus:

Option 1: Regulatory Method

Under the previous MRP regulations, MRP was set at a uniform rate of 4% of the adjusted CFR (i.e. adjusted for "Adjustment A") on a reducing balance method (which in effect meant that MRP charges would stretch into infinity).

This historic approach must continue for all capital expenditure incurred in years before the start of this new approach. It may also be used for new capital expenditure up to the amount which is deemed to be supported through the Supported Capital Expenditure (SCE) annual allocation.

Option 2: Capital Financing Requirement Method

This is a variation on option 1 which is based upon a charge of 4% of the aggregate CFR without any adjustment for Adjustment A, or certain other factors which were brought into account under the previous statutory MRP calculation. The CFR is the measure of an authority's outstanding debt liability as depicted by their balance sheet.

This is not applicable to the Council as it is for existing non supported debt

Option 3: Asset Life Method.

This method may be applied to most new capital expenditure, including where desired that which may alternatively continue to be treated under options 1 or 2.

Under this option, it is intended that MRP should be spread over the estimated useful life of either an asset created, or other purpose of the expenditure. There are two useful advantages of this option:

- Longer life assets e.g. freehold land can be charged over a longer period than would arise under options 1 and 2.

- No MRP charges need to be made until the financial year after that in which an item of capital expenditure is fully incurred and, in the case of a new asset, comes into service use (this is often referred to as being an 'MRP holiday'). This is not available under options 1 and 2.

There are two methods of calculating charges under option 3:

- equal instalment method – equal annual instalments,

- annuity method – annual payments gradually increase during the life of the asset.

This is the preferred method as it allows costs to be spread equally over the life of the asset.

Option 4: Depreciation Method

Under this option, MRP charges are to be linked to the useful life of each type of asset using the standard accounting rules for depreciation (but with some exceptions) i.e. this is a more complex approach than option 3.

The same conditions apply regarding the date of completion of the new expenditure as apply under option 3.

This method is not favoured by the Council as if the asset is subject to a downturn in value, then that amount would have to be written off in that year, in addition to the annual charge.

4. Date of implementation

The previous statutory MRP requirements ceased to have effect after the 2006/07 financial year. Transitional arrangements included within the guidance no longer apply for the MRP charge for 2009/10 onwards. Therefore, options 1 and 2 should only be used for Supported Capital Expenditure (SCE). The CLG document remains as

guidance and authorities may consider alternative individual MRP approaches, as long as they are consistent with the statutory duty to make a prudent revenue provision.

Current Consultation

As set out in the report, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC, formerly MHCLG) issued “Consultation on changes to the capital framework: Minimum Revenue Provision” on 30th November 2021 to last for 10 weeks until 8th February 2022. The government is proposing additional text to be added to the 2003 Regulations to make explicit that:

1. Capital receipts may not be used in place of the revenue charge. The intent is to prevent authorities avoiding, in whole or part, a prudent charge to revenue. It is not the intention to prevent authorities using capital receipts to reduce their overall debt position, which may have the effect of reducing the MRP made with respect to the remaining debt balance.

2. Prudent MRP must be determined with respect to the authority’s total capital financing requirement. The intent is to stop the intentional exclusion of debt from the MRP determination because it relates to an investment asset or capital loan. Authorities should still be able to charge MRP over the period in which their capital expenditure provides benefits and begin charging MRP in the year following capital expenditure, in accordance with proper accounting practices set out in the government’s statutory guidance on Minimum Revenue Provision.

These changes are not intended to have any impact on the Housing Revenue Account, or on treasury management activities that do not score as capital spend. The government wants authorities to still be able to exercise judgement in determining a prudent amount and does not want to move back to a prescriptive method.

Officers have been reviewing the potential impact the changes may make to the MRP charged to revenue and are taking this into account when making borrowing decisions. Point 2 above is already complied with, MRP is charged on any capital expenditure which relates to an investment asset or capital loan. The impact may arise from Point 1 in that the way capital receipts are applied as part of available capital financing may change.

Appendix C									
2022/23 Treasury Management Strategy									
Treasury Management Prudential Indicators									
	2021/22	2021/22	2022/23	2022/23	2023/24	2023/24	2024/25	2024/25	2025/26
Capital Expenditure (Based on Final Capital Strategy February 2022):	Original February 2021	Revised Final Cap Feb 22 Exec	Original February 2021	Revised Final Cap Feb 22 Exec	Original February 2021	Revised Final Cap Feb 22 Exec	Original February 2021	Revised Final Cap Feb 22 Exec	Revised Final Cap Feb 22 Exec
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
General Fund	17,400	20,929	20,145	30,510	26,137	14,369	14,795	1,939	283
HRA	52,488	53,656	56,858	64,666	37,256	37,186	28,748	28,818	4,615
Total	69,887	74,584	77,004	95,176	63,393	51,556	43,543	30,757	4,898
	2021/22	2021/22	2022/23	2022/23	2023/24	2023/24	2024/25	2024/25	2025/26
Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream:	Original February 2021	Revised Final Cap Feb 22 Exec	Original February 2021	Revised Final Cap Feb 22 Exec	Original February 2021	Revised Final Cap Feb 22 Exec	Original February 2021	Revised Final Cap Feb 22 Exec	Revised Final Cap Feb 22 Exec
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
General Fund Capital Expenditure	4.78%	5.27%	5.28%	5.52%	6.12%	6.17%	6.73%	6.59%	6.42%
HRA Capital Expenditure	16.82%	15.71%	17.09%	17.18%	17.08%	17.36%	16.16%	16.44%	15.19%
General Fund: Net revenue stream is the RSG, NNDR grant and Council Tax raised for the year. HRA: The net revenue stream is the total HRA income shown in the Council's accounts from received rents, service charges and other incomes. The ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream reflects the high									
	2021/22	2021/22	2022/23	2022/23	2023/24	2023/24	2024/25	2024/25	2025/26
Authorised Limit for external debt	Original February 2021	Revised Final Cap Feb 22 Exec	Original February 2021	Revised Final Cap Feb 22 Exec	Original February 2021	Revised Final Cap Feb 22 Exec	Original February 2021	Revised Final Cap Feb 22 Exec	Revised Final Cap Feb 22 Exec
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Borrowing - General Fund	45,294	52,155	51,126	60,037	52,484	61,353	51,730	60,559	59,754
Borrowing - Queensway residential	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
Borrowing - HRA	272,076	270,144	287,716	285,784	299,696	297,764	299,696	297,764	297,764
Total	332,371	337,299	353,843	360,821	367,180	374,117	366,426	373,322	372,518
The authorised limit in that it is the level up to which the Council may borrow without getting further approval from Full Council. The Council may need to borrow short term for cash flow purposes, exceeding the operational boundary. The authorised limit allows for £8m headroom above the Operational Boundary (£2m General Fund and £6m HRA), which is in addition to our capital plans.									
	2021/22	2021/22	2022/23	2022/23	2023/24	2023/24	2024/25	2024/25	2025/26
Operational Boundary for external debt	Original February 2021	Revised Final Cap Feb 22 Exec	Original February 2021	Revised Final Cap Feb 22 Exec	Original February 2021	Revised Final Cap Feb 22 Exec	Original February 2021	Revised Final Cap Feb 22 Exec	Revised Final Cap Feb 22 Exec
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Borrowing - General Fund	43,294	50,155	49,126	58,037	50,484	59,353	49,730	58,559	57,754
Borrowing - Queensway residential	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
Borrowing - HRA	266,076	264,144	281,716	279,784	293,696	291,764	293,696	291,764	291,764
Total	324,371	329,299	345,843	352,821	359,180	366,117	358,426	365,322	364,518
The operational boundary differs from the authorised limit in that it is the level up to which the Council expects to have to borrow. The Council may need to borrow short term for cash flow purposes, exceeding the operational boundary. The operational boundary allows for £7m headroom in addition to our capital plans (£5m General Fund and £2m HRA) plus the additional borrowing facility that may be drawn									
	2021/22	2021/22	2022/23	2022/23	2023/24	2023/24	2024/25	2024/25	2025/26
Gross & Net Debt	Original February 2021	Revised Final Cap Feb 22 Exec	Original February 2021	Revised Final Cap Feb 22 Exec	Original February 2021	Revised Final Cap Feb 22 Exec	Original February 2021	Revised Final Cap Feb 22 Exec	Revised Final Cap Feb 22 Exec
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Gross External Debt - General Fund	6,444	6,201	12,710	14,385	14,770	16,445	14,770	16,445	16,445
Gross External Debt - HRA	257,089	255,278	272,729	270,918	284,709	287,756	284,709	287,756	288,256
Gross External Debt	263,533	261,479	285,439	285,304	299,479	304,201	299,479	304,201	304,701
Less Investments	(58,969)	(71,447)	(49,005)	(47,735)	(47,604)	(50,386)	(42,297)	(44,767)	(44,864)
Net Borrowing	204,564	190,032	236,434	237,569	251,875	253,815	257,181	259,433	259,836
The Gross External Debt is the actual debt taken out by the Council plus any relevant long term liabilities. The Net Borrowing is defined as gross external debt less investments. The net borrowing requirement may not, except in the short term, exceed the total capital financing requirement in the preceding year, plus the									
	44651	2021/22	2022/23	2022/23	2023/24	2023/24	2024/25	2024/25	2025/26
Capital Financing Requirement	Original February 2021	Revised Final Cap Feb 22 Exec	Original February 2021	Revised Final Cap Feb 22 Exec	Original February 2021	Revised Final Cap Feb 22 Exec	Original February 2021	Revised Final Cap Feb 22 Exec	Revised Final Cap Feb 22 Exec
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Capital Financing Requirement GF	31,060	37,920	36,892	45,802	38,249	47,118	37,495	46,324	45,519
Capital Financing Requirement HRA	264,076	262,144	279,716	277,784	291,696	289,764	291,696	289,764	289,764
Total Capital Financing Requirement	295,136	300,064	316,608	323,586	329,945	336,882	329,191	336,088	335,283
The Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) reflects the amount of money the Council would need to borrow to fund its capital programme. This is split between the Housing Revenue Account CFR (HRACFR) and the General Fund CFR (GFCFR).									

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Appendix D
Specified and Non-specified Investment Criteria
(including Treasury Limits and Procedures)

2022/23 Treasury Management Strategy

Table 1

Specified Investments are sterling denominated with maturities up to maximum of one year and must meet the following minimum high credit quality criteria:

Investment Counterparty	Investment Instrument	Minimum High Credit Quality Criteria	Investment Duration
Banks or Building Societies	Overnight Deposit	Fitch: Short Term F1 and Long Term A and Moody, Standard & Poor, equivalent where rated, the lowest rating used where different	Maximum duration as per Treasury Advisor's (Capita's) colour coded Credit List, and less than one year
	Notice Account	Part-nationalised or Nationalised UK banking institutions (subject to regular reviews of government share percentage).	
	Short Term Deposit		
Debt Management Office or UK Local Authority	Any deposit	No limit.	
Money Market Funds	Instant Access or with Notice	AAA rated	Instant Access or notice period up to one year

Table 2

Non-Specified Investment are sterling denominated with a maturity longer than one year but no longer than five years, and must meet the following criteria:

Investment Counterparty	Investment Instrument	Minimum High Credit Quality Criteria	Investment Duration
Banks or Building Societies	Any deposits with maturity up to a maximum of five years	Fitch: Short Term F1+ and Long Term AA- and Moody, Standard & Poor, equivalent where rated, the lowest rating used where different	Maximum duration suggested by Treasury Advisor's (Capita's) colour coded Credit List, and not in excess of five years
Debt Management Office or UK Local Authority		No Limit.	

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Table 3 **Treasury Limits**

Investment Instrument	Cash balances less than £30Million	Cash balances higher than £30Million
	Limits	Limits
Variable Rate Investments (Excluding Enhanced Cash Funds)	Maximum holding £30M	Maximum holding 100%
Counterparty limits (to encompass all forms of investment)	Maximum £5M	Maximum £10M
Instant Access Or Overnight Deposit	Maximum holding 100%	
Fixed Rate less than 12 month maturity	Maximum holding 100%	
Fixed Rate more than 12 months to maturity (includes all types of Fixed Rate Investments i.e. Certificates of Deposits)	Maximum £5M	Maximum £10M
Money Market Funds - Traditional Instant Assess (Counterparty Limit per Fund)	Maximum £5M per MMF	Maximum £10M per MMF
	No limit on total cash held	
Enhanced Cash Funds	Maximum £3M	
Certificates of Deposits	Maximum £5M	
Property Funds	Maximum of £3M - No durational limit. Use would be subject to consultation and approval	

Procedures of Applying the Criteria and Limits	
	Before the Treasury Team makes an investment, the Team will follow the follow procedure to ensure full compliance with the Specified and Non-Specified Criteria and Treasury Limits:
1	Check that the Counterparty is on the Counterparty List (also known as Current Counterparty Report for Stevenage) produced by Link Asset Services (LAS), specifically meeting the Council's Specified and Non-specified Minimum High Credit Quality Criteria in the above Table 1 & 2. If it is not on the list, the Treasury Team will not invest with them.
2	If the Counterparty is on the list, then the Treasury Team refers to the Credit List produced by LAS in colour coding, to determine the maximum investment duration suggested for the deposit, as per the column of Suggested Duration (CDS Adjusted with manual override).
3	Refer to the Treasury Limits in the above Table 3 to ensure the amount invested complies with the Treasury Limits.

APPENDIX E: Approved Countries (with Approved counterparties) for Investments (January 2022)

Based on lowest available rating

AAA

- Australia
- Denmark
- Germany
- Netherlands
- Singapore
- Sweden
- Switzerland

AA+

- Canada
- Finland
- U.S.A.

AA

- United Arab Emirates
- France

AA-

- Belgium
- Qatar

The UK is exempt from the sovereign rating criteria as recommended by Link Asset Services. The UK sovereign rating is currently AA-.

The above list includes the possible countries the Council may invest with. Not all of these countries are used or will be used in treasury management investments

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